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# **Cheltenham Township Comprehensive Plan**

Montgomery County Planning Commission

Adopted February 2005



**TOWNSHIP OF CHELTENHAM  
RESOLUTION NO. 10-05**

**AUTHORIZING THE ADOPTION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CHELTENHAM, DATED JULY 2004, IN ITS ENTIRETY, AND INCORPORATING THEREIN ANY OR ALL PUBLIC COMMENT, AS AGREED UPON AND READ INTO THE RECORD AT SAID PUBLIC HEARING.**

WHEREAS, the Township of Cheltenham Planning Commission, upon the request of the Board of Commissioners, and in accordance with Section 209.1 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), prepared a new draft Comprehensive Plan, dated July 2004, with input from township citizen advisory boards, commissions, and technical assistance from the Montgomery County Planning Commission and Township Staff; and

WHEREAS, the last Comprehensive Plan was prepared in 1977 for the Township of Cheltenham and was subsequently adopted by the Board of Commissioners that same year; and

WHEREAS, this new Comprehensive Plan Update serves as a community vision through the year 2025, and includes maps, charts and textual matter, and establishes policies and guidelines for future development, preservation of open space, historic resources, environmental sensitive issues, community facilities, transportation systems, and maintaining the existing housing stock as well as identifying implementation strategies for economic development initiatives and future land use issues; and

WHEREAS, the new Comprehensive Plan Update was discussed at the Building and Zoning Committee meetings of the Board of Commissioners in July, August, and September 2004; and

WHEREAS, on October 13, 2004, the Planning Commission held a special public meeting on the new Comprehensive Plan Update to present the document to the community and receive input; and

WHEREAS, the new Comprehensive Plan Update was subsequently circulated to the surrounding and adjacent municipalities, school districts and county planning commission in accordance with Section 302 of the Pennsylvania MPC for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, all public comment from the special meeting on October 13, 2004 and comments received from surrounding municipalities, school districts, and the County, was recorded in correspondence dated February 3, 2005 from the Montgomery County Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, the February 3, 2005 correspondence was read into the record at the public hearing of the Board of Commissioners on February 15, 2005, being duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the Pennsylvania MPC, Section 302; and

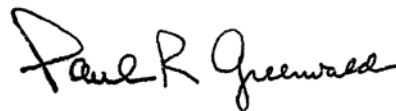
WHEREAS, at said public hearing, any and all, additional written or oral comments was received and considered, as well, prior to the Board of Commissioners' consideration of adopting the new Comprehensive Plan.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Cheltenham, County of Montgomery, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, that it hereby adopts by an affirmative vote the Comprehensive Plan Update dated July 2004, in its entirety subject to the following:

- 1) Any or all public comments deemed appropriate and agreed upon by the Board of Commissioners at the February 15, 2005 public hearing shall be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan Update by the Township's Planning Consultant and Township Staff.
- 2) The Comprehensive Plan Update shall bear on the front cover, the adoption date of the Board of Commissioners, which is the date said resolution was passed.
- 3) The resolution of adoption shall be made part of the Comprehensive Plan Update and included in the preface accordingly.
- 4) This Comprehensive Plan Update supersedes the adoption of the 1977 Comprehensive Plan.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Cheltenham, County of Montgomery, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, at its meeting held at Curtis Hall, 1250 West Church Road, Wyncote, Pennsylvania 19095 on February 15, 2005.

TOWNSHIP OF CHELTENHAM



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Paul R. Greenwald, President  
Board of Commissioners

ATTEST



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David G. Kraynik, Secretary/Manager

(SEAL)

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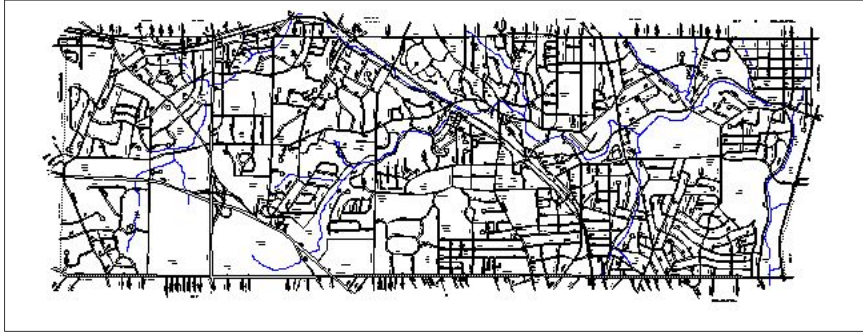
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## INTRODUCTION



The comprehensive plan serves as the vision for a community. It provides policy guidelines for future development of the community. The comprehensive plan was prepared following the Pennsylvania Municipalities Code (MPC) guidelines for the creation of a plan.

A comprehensive plan provides the most effective basis for the development of land use ordinances and other public policy. A comprehensive plan is not a static document, which should be examined and changed as the community changes.

Cheltenham's last comprehensive plan was adopted in 1977. Numerous changes have occurred since then and the Township has decided to reexamine its comprehensive plan and address issues such as economic development and maintaining and enhancing the existing housing stock. This plan will then provide the citizens of the community a vision for Cheltenham Township and its neighborhoods.

This plan was prepared with the assistance of the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC), under planning assistance contracts.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cheltenham Township, a charming community with mature tree lined streets and distinctive older homes, offers convenient access to the City of Philadelphia. The community provides a wide-variety of community services and an outstanding school system to its residents. The Township is a fairly affluent community with a diverse housing stock and an aging and diversifying population. Cheltenham, as a fully developed inner-ring suburb of Philadelphia, may face certain demographic issues that face many core cities. However, the Township's focus on priority economic revitalization, as well as improvements to infrastructure, encouragement of maintenance of privately-owned commercial areas and housing stock, improvements to public transportation, and planned improvements in educational facilities by the school district are helping the Township plan through 2025.

The Cheltenham Comprehensive Plan has been developed to be a guide for land use planning in the community. Each chapter of the plan focuses on background and policy discussions relating to: a community profile and demographic information, goals and objectives, an inventory of natural and scenic resources, a housing element, an historic preservation element, a transportation plan, a community facilities plan, an open space plan, an economic development element, an existing and future land use plan, and an implementation element.

The Goals and Objectives Chapter discusses the Township's overall policies. Overall, the Township's goal in the comprehensive plan is to preserve and enhance the existing commercial, residential, and open space features of the Township to improve the quality of life, while promoting economic development initiatives. Other goals fall into subject categories: economic development, housing, commercial, office, transportation, industrial, recreation and open space, community facilities, environmental, and historic preservation. These goals are described below:

- Cheltenham will enhance the Township's assets by increasing the tax base and continuing the revitalization and redevelopment of both commercial and residential areas.
- The Township will maintain and enhance the Township's diverse housing stock and encourage additional commercial development that is compatible with surrounding areas.
- The Township will also accommodate office development that can provide employment opportunities and contribute to the Township's tax base without sacrificing the residential character of the Township.
- Cheltenham will also continue to promote program and incentives for business retention and recommitment through its Cheltenham Main Street Program, façade enhancement program, tax abatement program, and facilitation of the creation of a community development corporation.
- Another goal is to provide a safe, efficient transportation system that balances automobile, pedestrian, and public transportation.
- Cheltenham will maintain existing industrial uses within the Township, while allowing new environmentally-friendly/hi-tech light industrial uses.
- In terms of recreation and open space, the Township will maintain and enhance the Township's parks and recreation areas and encourage the linear greenway and pedestrian walking trail connections of open space.
- The Township will also enhance the efficient utilization of existing community facilities and replacement of obsolete facilities.

- The environmental goal is to promote the unique natural features of the Township and encourage the preservation and enhancement of these irreplaceable features.
- Finally, the historic preservation goal is to promote the architecturally significant historic resources that are located within the community and encourage the preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of these irreplaceable structures and landscapes.

The Community Profile Chapter of the plan provides a description of Cheltenham's regional setting, existing land use patterns by neighborhood, and demographic information on the Township on a community level and neighborhood level. The Natural and Scenic Resources Chapter describes Cheltenham's environmental features such as geology, soils, hydrology, and its scenic resources. The protection of the Tookany Creek Watershed is discussed in the chapter and the recommendations from the Tookany Creek Watershed Management Plan are highlighted. Cheltenham's housing stock and policies to maintain and enhance its housing stock are discussed in the Housing Chapter. Neighborhood preservation is one of the key features of the chapter.

The Historic Preservation Chapter gives an overview of Cheltenham's historic development, inventories Cheltenham's sites listed or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, discusses issues related to the LaMott and Wyncote historic districts, and possible creation of future historic districts. Roads and road improvements, public transportation systems, and alternative transportation methods is detailed in the Transportation Chapter. The Community Facilities Chapter discusses sewer, water, and stormwater collection as well as the community's administration facilities and other institutions. The chapter provides information on the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting process that the Township is required to follow.

The Open Space Chapter discusses the community's existing parks and open space areas, trails, and park and recreation programs. The chapter is a brief overview of the Township's open space priorities that will be further elaborated in the soon to be updated Township open space plan. The Economic Development Chapter discusses commercial development in the Township and the Township's economic revitalization efforts. Economic development is a key goal for the community and a separate chapter on this topic indicates this emphasis. The Land Use Chapter provides information on existing land use and future land use policies. The existing land use section discusses past growth patterns and presents an inventory of existing land use categories (residential, commercial, industrial, etc.). The future land use section of the chapter includes an analysis of the goals and objectives for future development and redevelopment initiatives. The plan also presents a strategic plan for key areas of the Township that could impact the community's future development patterns. The chapter then presents an overall future land use plan for the Township.

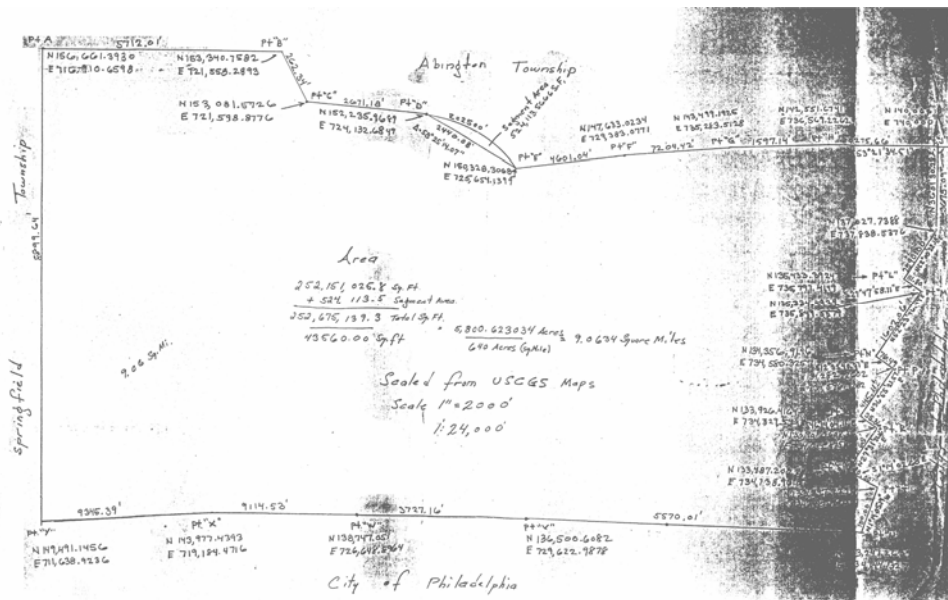
The plan provides goals, objectives, and policies throughout the plan. In order to implement the policies outlined in the plan, a series of actions are recommended for the Township to pursue in the Implementation Chapter, which summarizes the policies in the plan and discusses neighboring plans of Springfield, Upper Dublin, Jenkintown, Abington, and the City of Philadelphia, and how they might impact Cheltenham and how each could initiate sensitive contextual design.



# Chapter 1 COMMUNITY PROFILE

## Cheltenham and Its Regional Setting

Cheltenham Township includes an area of approximately 5,600 acres of land or 9.06 square miles. The Township is bordered on the south and east by the City of Philadelphia. Springfield Township is to the west and Abington Township and the Borough of Jenkintown are to the north. Cheltenham Township is an example of a first-generation, inner-ring suburb that experienced most of its growth during the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries. The community's development has been strongly influenced by the City of Philadelphia. The building of the rail lines and trolley lines into the community made the Township a gateway to the northern suburbs of Philadelphia.



Source: Map drawn by Joseph Couch

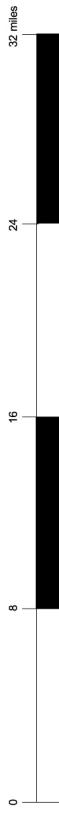
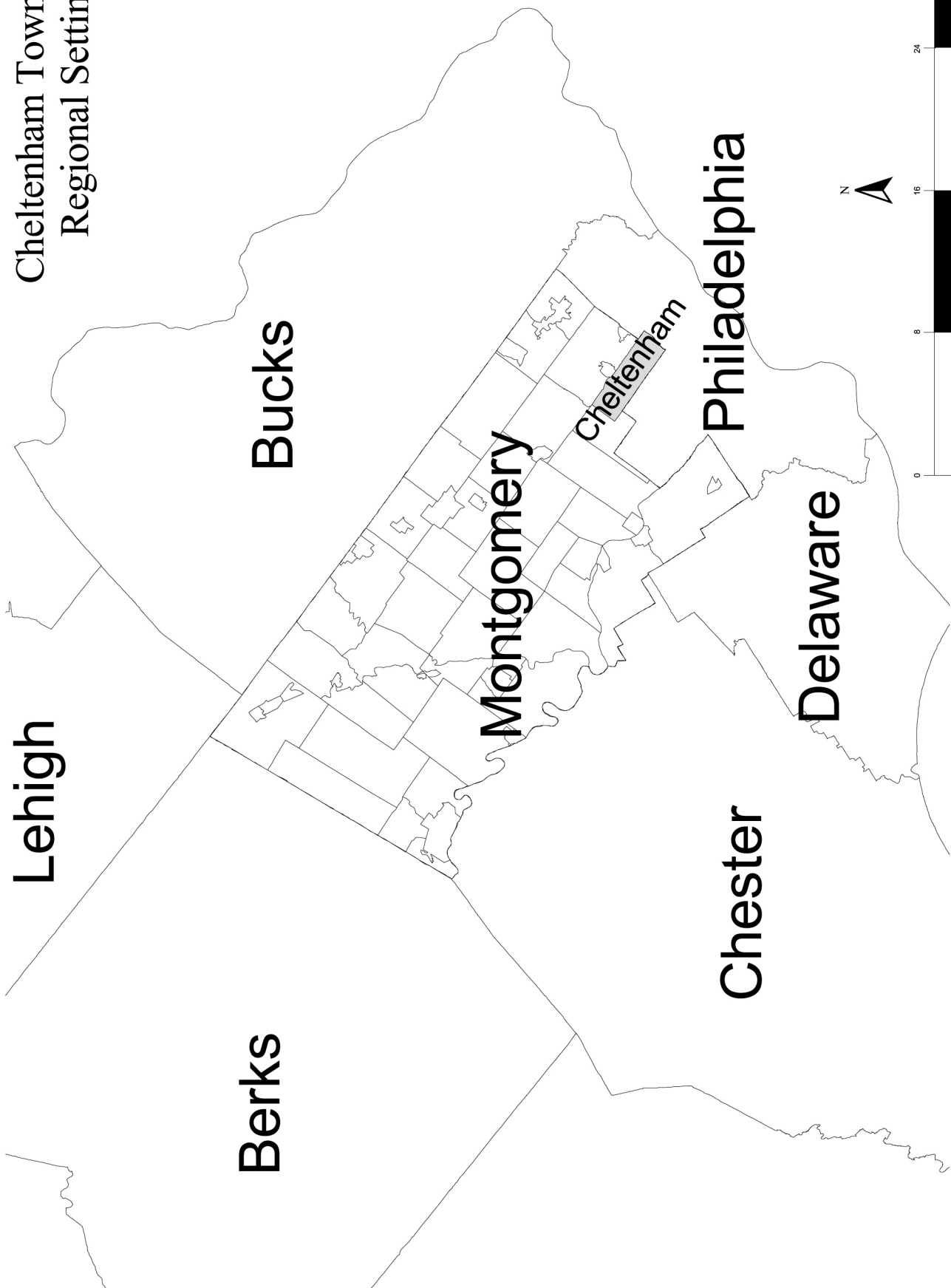
The Township is highly developed and is traversed by tributaries of the Tookany Creek, which run the length of the Township. Mature trees help create a canopy over the streets and coupled with the unique architecture, contribute to the charming streetscapes within the Township. Several major retail areas serve Cheltenham, including Cheltenham Shopping Center, Cedarbrook Mall, the Melrose Park commercial district, as well as the town center area of Elkins Park, the East Cheltenham Avenue business corridor, and commercial areas along Limekiln Pike, Easton Road, and Glenside Avenue in Glenside. These shopping areas face competition from newer retail centers outside of the Township such as the Willow Grove Mall and the Keswick area of Abington Township.

An extensive network of SEPTA Regional Rail and bus service, as well as its own local bus service, Cheltenham Transit Service, serves the Township.

## Existing Land Use Patterns

Cheltenham Township is predominantly built out, however significant areas remain with the potential for growth. Low-density development occurs mostly in the Wyncote and Laverock areas of the Township. Glenside, Elkins Park, and sections of LaMott contain much of the medium density development. Higher density development occurs in Cedarbrook, LaMott, and Cheltenham Village.

# Cheltenham Township Regional Setting



Base map prepared by the  
Montgomery County Planning Commission  
July 2004

This map is based on 2000 aerial photographs. Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals tax maps, Township Officials and field surveys conducted by the County Planning Commission. All attempts were made to maintain relative accuracy, however, this map should not be used for engineering purposes.

Figure 1

Commercial land uses also occur along Old York Road, Church Road, and Easton Road. This comprehensive plan identifies existing land use patterns within the Township and these neighborhoods.

### Neighborhoods

As noted above, the majority of the Township is built out and has been developed into many unique and beautiful neighborhoods. These neighborhoods each have a distinct character, yet are connected by similar characteristics. The high quality of architectural design in the residential structures and the older commercial structures provide the community with an enduring legacy. The use of local Wissahickon Schist stonework provides continuity between neighborhoods that were developed over different periods.

#### *Cedarbrook*

Cedarbrook is a large area in the west central region of the Township. The majority of the district was developed during the postwar period. There are a few areas on the southern end of Rice's Mill Road that were developed at a period between the two World Wars. Many of the neighborhoods do not have sidewalks, but have many community facilities. The neighborhood has two schools: Cheltenham High School, which is located on Rice's Mill Road and Cedarbrook School, which is located near Ogontz Avenue. Curtis Hall and Arboretum are located on the northern portion of the neighborhood at Church Road and Greenwood Avenue. The area has many subdivisions that are not internally connected since the road structure in the neighborhood developed around Rock Creek and the natural resources of the area.



*Central Avenue*

#### *Cheltenham Village*

Cheltenham Village, the oldest section of the Township (formerly known as Milltown), is situated in the Township's northeastern corner. The development of the area follows a typical grid pattern, established by adjacent neighborhoods in Philadelphia. The neighborhood design can be classified as an urban village with traditional narrow lots and small yards, allowing the majority of the residents a 5-minute walk to the commercial area along Central Avenue. The Tookany Creek and the adjacent hills and bluffs separate the community from the rest of the Township. The area has many community facilities such as the Cheltenham Art Center and Tookany Park.

The neighborhood is also surrounded by other large properties such as the former Elkins Park Hospital, Ashbourne Country Club, and Melrose Country Club. Cheltenham Village is served by rail at the Ryers and Cheltenham Regional Rail stations on the R-8 Line which lead to Center City going southbound.

#### *Cheltenham Hills*

Cheltenham Hills is located in the geographic center of the Township. The area has rolling terrain like much of the Township. The many valleys are defined by Rock Creek and Tookany Creek, which combine near the SEPTA Rail Line. Residents enjoy a few community facilities such as the Ashbourne School. The housing stock of the area is diverse. The northern portion of the neighborhood near Church Road consists of traditional dwellings, several of which are designed in American Revival styles, but Colonial Revival styles are the most prominent. The residential structures become larger near Ashbourne Road. This area retains the historic character of the neighborhood. A few large estates remain in the area, which have the potential to be reused in the future.



*Constructed by PAB Widener from 1898 to 1900, Lynnwood Hall was designed after an English manor located at Prior Park, Bath, England. The structure became Faith Theological Seminary in 1952 and is now owned by the First Korean Church of New York.*

### *Edgehill*

Edgehill is located in the northwestern corner of the Township. The area of Edgehill has historically been divided between the three Townships of Cheltenham, Abington, and Upper Dublin. The village received the name Edgehill in 1837 from the site in Abington where the famous Revolutionary Battle of Edgehill took place. Many small-scale homes line the streets of this pedestrian-oriented area. Within a few blocks of these residential streets are commercial establishments along Limekiln Pike.

### *Elkins Park*

Elkins Park was named in honor of William Lukens Elkins, who had constructed the Elkins Park Railroad Station on the Reading Line in 1899 at his own expense. The majority of Elkins Park was developed between the last decade of the nineteenth century and the 1930s. The architecture of the area varies from Queen Anne to Colonial Revival. Infill housing has occurred in many of the older areas from the 1950s to the present. Elkins Park developed over many decades, and as a result, has some discontinuity between the southern areas and northern areas of the neighborhood. Additionally, the area has a small commercial district near the Regional Rail Line that serves as its focal point. However, many of the areas are connected by the widespread use of local stone and vernacular landscaped elements that are common to the region. The area around the rail station has a few apartments and retail establishments. Commercial uses can also be found around Old York and Church Road. Benjamin Meyers Elementary School and other public institutions, such as the post office are located in the area. The Township municipal buildings are located in Elkins Park. Many of the streets in the neighborhood have sidewalks and beautiful tree canopies.

The most important historic landmark in the Township is the Richard Wall House. The original section of the home dates to 1682. The site was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on June 28, 1979. The home has been owned by the Township since 1932 and is located in Wall Park.



### *Glenside*

Glenside is located in the northwestern section of the Township. The commercial core of the area is along Easton Road and Glenside Avenue with residential neighborhoods within walking distance. The core of the area surrounds the Glenside Train Station. Many neighborhood schools such as Bishop McDevitt High School and Glenside Elementary School are located in the area. Other community facilities in the area include Grove Park, Renninger Park, the Glenside Post Office, Glenside Library, and Glenside War Memorial Hall. Geographically there is also a large portion of Abington Township that is part of the Glenside area. Many of the neighborhood's natural areas are along the tributaries of Tookany Creek.

### *Buttonwood Way*

### *LaMott*

LaMott, originally known as Camptown, took the name LaMott as a tribute to Lucretia Mott, who died there in 1880. Lucretia Mott was a noted Quaker abolitionist and suffragette whose beliefs in racial harmony and equality were well known to the anti-slavery community.

LaMott is a unique area of the Township and can be divided into at least three sub-neighborhoods. Many of the areas have developed over time and as a result there is a variety of housing styles, sizes, and types within the area. These areas include the older area with a gridiron street pattern near Cheltenham Avenue, Lynnewood Gardens, and the northern section of LaMott above Beech Avenue. The oldest area is located along Cheltenham Avenue at the northern end of Broad Street, which extends from Center City. The area is very dense with small and efficient lots. Newer twins are located along Cheltenham Avenue

and were developed around the same period as the neighborhoods in Philadelphia south of the Township. The areas north of Willow and Beech Avenues have large, single-family homes and large estates.



*Latham Park*

Latham Park, a small neighborhood within LaMott, was developed in 1912. It is located between Beech and Willow Avenues and consists of twenty-eight acres fronting on Old York Road. The wrought iron gates are attributed to the renowned local architect Horace Trumbauer and were forged by Samuel Yellin. The site was the original location of the Lucretia Mott home, which was torn down to make way for the development.

LaMott is also home to Temple University Tyler School of Fine Arts and the Dominican Retreat, both of which are on former residential estates. In addition, there are public institutional buildings such as the LaMott Library and the School District Administration Building. A large portion of LaMott has been developed into Lynnewood Gardens.

Lynnewood Gardens was developed in 1948 and is a large garden apartment complex with playgrounds, recreation facilities, and modern conveniences. Only a few scattered apartment buildings were found in the community prior to this development. Currently, the development is undergoing many renovations to both the buildings and the grounds. The apartments are arranged and built in a garden style. Each dwelling unit has its own front entrance facing public green space. Parking is located in parking courts at the rear of the buildings with detached garage structures.

LaMott was certified as a historic district in April of 1975 by the Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission. LaMott was also the site of Camp William Penn, the country's first recruiting and training camp for African-American soldiers. The Camptown Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission on October 31, 1985.

### *Laverock*

Laverock takes its name from the estate of Laverock Hill owned by Isaac T. Starr. The name was first used in 1899 when the post office was established. Laverock has two principal land uses, residential and institutional. There are three large institutional uses that separate the residential area from the rest of the Township and therefore the residential area relates more to the adjoining areas of Springfield Township. The institutional uses that are located in the neighborhood are: the Westminster Theological Seminary located north of Route 309, Arcadia University located at Church and Easton Roads, and Holy Sepulchre Cemetery located between Easton and Waverly Roads. The residential neighborhood has a rolling terrain and a picturesque setting. The architectural style of the area is mainly Revival styles such as Colonials and Tudors with some regional variations. There are portions of the area that were developed in the post-World War II era and the housing stock consists of large tri-levels and Colonials. The area has many pedestrian features such as sidewalks, residential style lighting, and streets with mature tree canopies.



*Knox Road*

### *Melrose Park*

Melrose Park, like many of the neighborhoods in the Township, developed over a long period of time resulting in a range of housing styles and street design. The older areas of Melrose Park developed around the Melrose Park Regional Rail Station, which is located along Valley Road. Around the station there are a number of commercial uses and single-family homes. There are a few apartment buildings located near the station. The architectural style of this older area is mainly of Victorian and post-Victorian styles. Many of the homes are constructed of local stone and built in Revival styles. This area developed around the same time as the neighborhoods adjacent to the Elkins Park Regional Rail Station. The development pattern is the densest near the station and decreases in density further east. Around the time of World War II, the area saw a large increase in development in the eastern portion of the neighborhood. The area east of New Second Street and Oak Lane Road was developed during the 1940s and into the late 1960s. Tree lined streets as well as wide streets with large front lawns are typical. Melrose Park County Club, located on the east side of the neighborhood, separates the area from the Tookany Creek area and the City of Philadelphia. The Ashbourne Country Club is located to the north of the area.



*Royal Ave*

### *Wyncote*

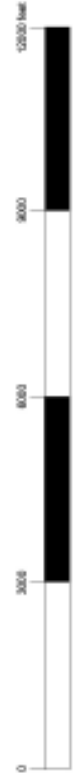
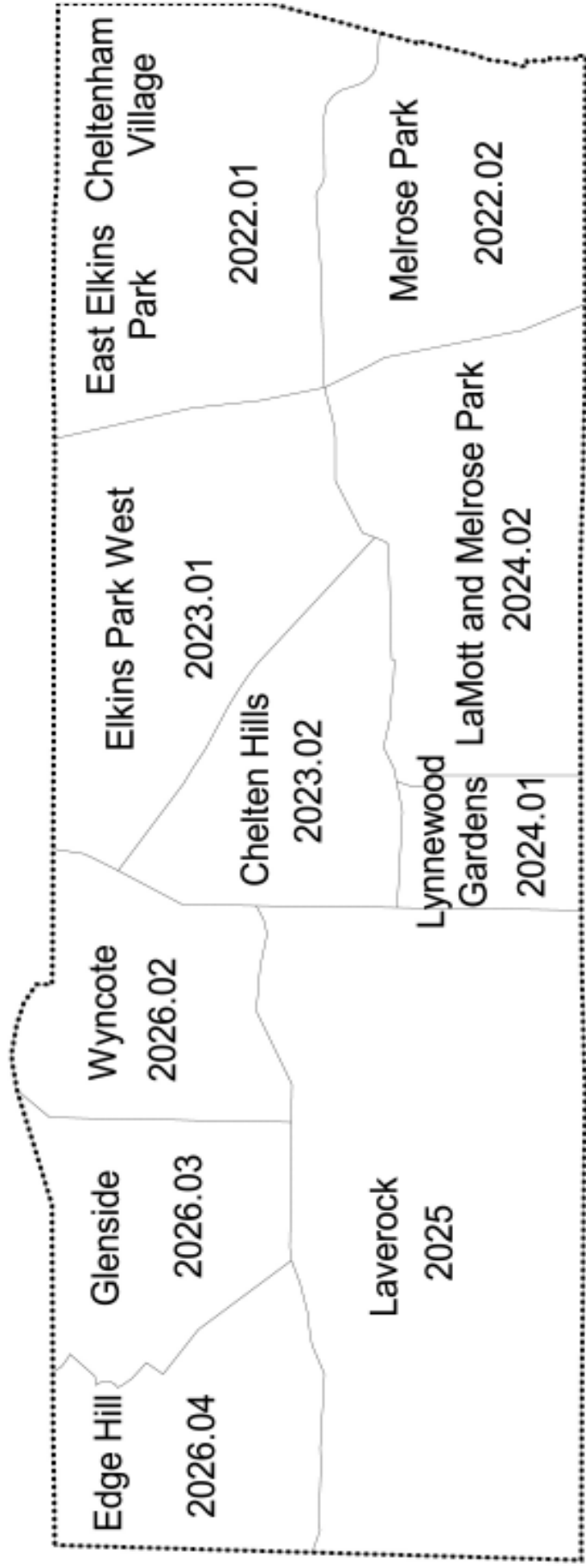
The Wyncote area was originally an estate settled by Abraham Barker in the 1860s. The estate was subdivided in 1877 and was developed as Wyncote. The area became a village in the late 1880s where many wealthy families constructed summer homes because of the area's proximity to the Wyncote-Jenkintown Regional Rail Station. Man-made features such as the rail line to the north and east, Church Road to the south, and Mill Road to the west, define the boundaries of the area. Higher density development can be found closest to the Wyncote-Jenkintown Regional Rail Station. Commercial development extends from the train station along Greenwood Avenue for a few blocks. The commercial area and portions of the surrounding neighborhoods were placed on the National Register of Historic Places on October 16, 1986. Community facilities in the neighborhood include parks and a bird sanctuary, as well as neighborhood schools and a post office. The architectural style of the area varies and ranges from Victorian styles such as Queen Anne to early twentieth century Revival styles. In a few areas, infill housing has occurred throughout the last few decades.

## **Demographics**

Demographic trends can indicate certain changes and transformations within a community. It is important to understand these changes while planning the future of a community. A number of demographic changes in Cheltenham Township over the past few decades are discussed below. Topics include population, housing, age, race, education, income, and employment. In this section, Township and neighborhood data are highlighted.

Some of the data contained in this section is expressed by Census Tracts, which have boundaries similar to the many neighborhoods in the Township. Census Tracts are small, relatively permanent areas into which standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSA) and certain other areas are divided for the purpose of providing statistics for small areas. Tracts generally have between 2,500 and 8,000 residents. Census Tracts are identified by a 4-digit basic code and may have a 2-digit suffix. The 2000 Census Tracts can roughly be applied to Cheltenham's neighborhoods. They are: 2022.01 (East Elkins Park and Cheltenham Village), 2022.02 (Melrose Park), 2023.01 (Elkins Park West), 2023.02 (Cheltenham Hills), 2024.01 (Lynnewood Gardens), 2024.02 (LaMott and Melrose Park), 2025 (Laverock), 2026.02 (Wyncote), 2026.03 (Glenside), and 2026.04 (Edge Hill). Figure 2 shows the Census Tract locations.

# Cheltenham Township Census Tracts



This map is based on 2021 aerial photography, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals tax maps, Township Officials, and field surveys conducted by the County Planning Commission. All attempts were made to maintain real accuracy; however, this map should not be used for engineering purposes.

Base map prepared by the  
Montgomery County Planning Commission  
July 2024

Figure 2

The data presented below comes from a variety of sources including the U.S. Census, the Montgomery County Planning Commission, and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission.

### Population

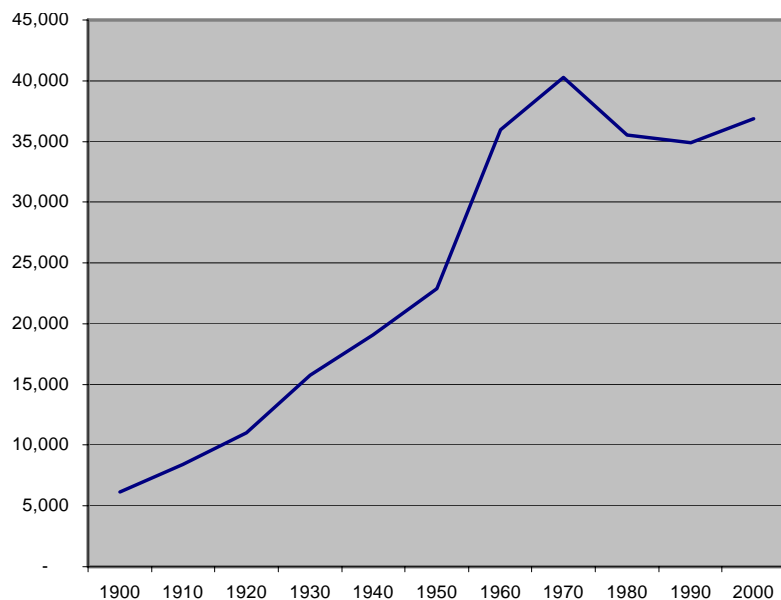
Table 1 shows population totals and percent change in population for the years 1900 to 2000. According to the 2000 Census, Cheltenham's population increased by 5.6 percent to a population of 36,875. While the population increased in 2000, it is expected that Cheltenham's population will gradually decline (see discussion on population projections). However, Cheltenham Township believes that the population will remain relatively stable and with additional housing starts the population may slightly increase.

Table 1  
Population Totals and Change: 1900-2000

| Year | Population | Percent Change |
|------|------------|----------------|
| 1900 | 6,154      | —              |
| 1910 | 8,434      | 37.0%          |
| 1920 | 11,015     | 30.6%          |
| 1930 | 15,731     | 42.8%          |
| 1940 | 19,082     | 21.3%          |
| 1950 | 22,854     | 19.8%          |
| 1960 | 35,990     | 57.5%          |
| 1970 | 40,238     | 11.8%          |
| 1980 | 35,509     | -11.8%         |
| 1990 | 34,923     | -1.7%          |
| 2000 | 36,875     | 5.6%           |

Source: U.S. Census

Figure 3  
20<sup>th</sup>-21st Century Population Growth - Cheltenham Township



As shown in Figure 1 Cheltenham's population grew steadily until 1970, when the population peaked at over 40,000. The slow growth between 1940 and 1950 is most likely explained by the wartime economy. The significant increase between 1950 and 1960 is typical of post-World War II suburban growth that occurred in many suburban communities bordering large cities all across the nation. Communities such as Springfield have seen a decline in population, while Upper Dublin has seen a steady increase in population. Abington showed a similar rise and decline as well. The County as a whole has increased over 14 percent since 1960, due primarily

to development in the northern and western areas. Cheltenham's population growth, subsequent decline, and forecasted stabilization are very typical of many older suburbs outside other major cities.

Based on projections provided by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) Cheltenham's population is predicted to decrease to 36,730 by the year 2025, see Table 2. Compared to 2000, the 2025 forecast represents a 0.4 percent decline in population. Similar declines are expected for other older municipalities in the region, such as the Abington, Springfield, and Jenkintown. The Township staff disagrees with the population projections for Cheltenham and believes that the population will remain relatively stable or slightly increase. While many communities in the eastern end of Montgomery County are experiencing population loss, the County overall is predicted to increase in population by 14.3 percent.



Table 2  
Population Forecasts: 2000-2025

|                  | 2000 Census | 2005 Forecast | 2010 Forecast | 2015 Forecast | 2020 Forecast | 2025 Forecast | 2000-2025 Percent Change |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| Cheltenham       | 36,875      | 36,900        | 36,770        | 36,700        | 36,680        | 36,730        | -0.4%                    |
| Abington         | 56,103      | 56,090        | 55,960        | 55,830        | 55,690        | 55,790        | -0.6%                    |
| Jenkintown       | 4,478       | 4,430         | 4,430         | 4,380         | 4,320         | 4,280         | -4.4%                    |
| Springfield      | 19,533      | 19,550        | 19,490        | 19,380        | 19,320        | 19,320        | -1.1%                    |
| Upper Dublin     | 25,878      | 26,340        | 26,730        | 27,010        | 27,150        | 27,370        | 5.8%                     |
| Montgomery Co.   | 750,097     | 776,340       | 797,990       | 818,210       | 838,700       | 857,030       | 14.3%                    |
| Philadelphia Co. | 1,517,550   | 1,500,010     | 1,484,990     | 1,505,010     | 1,515,010     | 1,500,000     | -1.2%                    |

Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

In general, projections are based on several factors, including past levels of development, recently proposed development, proximity to employment centers, available land and public facilities. Also, lifestyle changes, such as fewer children per family, deferral of marriage, and child rearing may contribute to lower totals.

### Age Group Trends

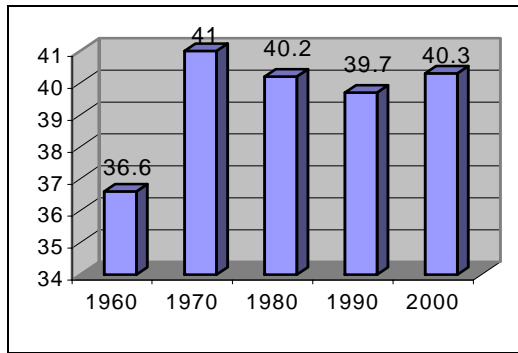
Table 3 shows the population age breakdown of Cheltenham and its neighbors for the year 2000. Comparing Cheltenham and its neighbors to the County as a whole, the eastern end of the county is generally older. There are smaller percentages of pre-school and school aged children and greater percentages of senior citizens than the rest of the county. This is partially explained by the rapidly developing central and western municipalities that have larger average households and generally more children per household.

Table 3  
Age Cohorts: 2000

| Age Group | Cheltenham |       | Abington |       | Jenkintown |       | Philadelphia |       | Springfield |       | Upper Dublin |       |
|-----------|------------|-------|----------|-------|------------|-------|--------------|-------|-------------|-------|--------------|-------|
|           | #          | %     | #        | %     | #          | %     | #            | %     | #           | %     | #            | %     |
| < 5       | 1,886      | 5.1%  | 3,248    | 5.8%  | 213        | 4.8%  | 98,161       | 6.5%  | 1,054       | 5.4%  | 1,558        | 6.0%  |
| 5-9       | 2,278      | 6.1%  | 3,656    | 6.5%  | 288        | 6.4%  | 112,111      | 7.4%  | 1,129       | 5.8%  | 1,980        | 7.7%  |
| 10-14     | 2,656      | 7.1%  | 3,987    | 7.1%  | 332        | 7.4%  | 112,726      | 7.4%  | 1,261       | 6.5%  | 2,275        | 8.8%  |
| 15-19     | 2,559      | 6.9%  | 3,433    | 6.1%  | 260        | 5.8%  | 110,701      | 7.3%  | 1,072       | 5.5%  | 1,718        | 6.6%  |
| 20-24     | 2,168      | 5.8%  | 2,340    | 4.2%  | 183        | 4.1%  | 117,609      | 7.7%  | 579         | 3.0%  | 841          | 3.3%  |
| 25-34     | 4,624      | 12.4% | 6,426    | 11.5% | 506        | 11.3% | 224,864      | 14.8% | 2,113       | 10.8% | 2,311        | 8.9%  |
| 35-44     | 5,304      | 14.2% | 9,114    | 16.3% | 703        | 15.7% | 219,910      | 14.5% | 2,924       | 15.0% | 4,269        | 16.5% |
| 45-54     | 5,493      | 14.8% | 7,901    | 14.1% | 659        | 14.7% | 182,530      | 12.0% | 2,999       | 15.4% | 4,599        | 17.8% |
| 55-59     | 1,858      | 5.0%  | 2,890    | 5.2%  | 210        | 4.7%  | 67,280       | 4.4%  | 1,056       | 5.4%  | 1,637        | 6.3%  |
| 60-64     | 1,536      | 4.1%  | 2,409    | 4.3%  | 184        | 4.1%  | 57,936       | 3.8%  | 790         | 4.0%  | 1,151        | 4.5%  |
| 65-74     | 3,042      | 8.2%  | 5,073    | 9.0%  | 434        | 9.7%  | 107,048      | 7.1%  | 1,780       | 9.1%  | 2,051        | 7.9%  |
| 75-84     | 2,751      | 7.4%  | 4,109    | 7.3%  | 362        | 8.1%  | 79,335       | 5.2%  | 1,880       | 9.6%  | 1,126        | 4.4%  |
| 85+       | 1,080      | 2.9%  | 1,517    | 2.7%  | 144        | 3.2%  | 27,339       | 1.8%  | 896         | 4.6%  | 362          | 1.4%  |

Source: U.S. Census

Figure 4  
Median Age, Cheltenham Township:  
1960-2000



Source: U.S. Census

Table 4  
Age Group, Cheltenham Township: 1980-2000

| Age Group |        |      | 1990   |      | 2000   |      |
|-----------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|------|
|           |        | %    | #      | %    | #      | %    |
| < 5       | 1,555  | 4.4  | 2,095  | 6.0  | 1,886  | 5.1  |
| 5-24      | 9,693  | 27.3 | 8,011  | 22.9 | 9,661  | 25.9 |
| 25-64     | 17,508 | 49.3 | 17,813 | 51.0 | 18,815 | 50.5 |
| 65+       | 6,753  | 19.0 | 7,004  | 20.1 | 6,873  | 18.5 |

Source: U.S. Census

Table 5 examines the age distribution throughout the Township by Census Tract. The LaMott neighborhood has the lowest median age, with Glenside showing the second lowest median age. The highest median age is in the Wyncote neighborhood.

Table 5  
Median Age, Cheltenham Neighborhoods: 2000

|      | 2022.01<br>East Elkins Park<br>and Cheltenham<br>Village | 2022.02<br>Melrose<br>Park | 2023.01<br>Elkins<br>Park West | 2023.02<br>Cheltenham<br>Hills | 2024.01<br>Lynnewood<br>Gardens | 2024.02<br>LaMott and<br>Melrose Park | 2025<br>Laverock | 2026.02<br>Wyncote | 2026.03<br>Glenside | 2026.04<br>Edge Hill |
|------|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 2000 | 39.3   | 41.3                       | 42.4                           | 46.9                           | 28.0                            | 40.3                                  | 46.7             | 49.6               | 36.7                | 39.6                 |

Source: U.S. Census

## Race

Nationally, racial diversity has continued to increase. Cheltenham is a very diverse township. Table 6 indicates the 1990 data. The 1990 and 2000 Census data cannot be compared due to the reorganization of race categories for the 2000 Census. Therefore, the 2000 data will be discussed separately.

According to the 2000 Census, Cheltenham's population is 66 percent white, 25 percent African-American, and 6 percent Asian. The remaining 2.5 percent consist of American Indian, and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, Some Other Race, and Two or More Races. Compared to its neighboring municipalities in Montgomery County, Cheltenham is the most diverse.

The neighborhoods adjacent to Philadelphia have the largest number of non-white residents. The neighborhoods that are north of Church Road have the lowest number of non-white residents. This division of ethnic groups in older suburban communities adjacent to large cities is common and can be seen throughout the country.

## Educational Attainment

Educational attainment is generally an indicator of an individual's income potential, economic status, and occupation. According to the 2000 Census, 49 percent of Township residents, who are 25 years and older, have a bachelor's degree or higher. In comparison, Montgomery County only has 38.8 percent of its residents with a bachelor's degree or higher. The Township shares this high educational attainment level with other surrounding communities such as Jenkintown and Upper Dublin. At the neighborhood

level according to the 2000 Census, Elkins Park West and Melrose Park have the highest proportion of residents with college degrees in the community.

Table 6  
Racial Composition by Municipality: 1990

| RACE                           | Cheltenham |       | Abington |       | Jenkintown |       | Philadelphia |       | Springfield |       | Upper Dublin |       |
|--------------------------------|------------|-------|----------|-------|------------|-------|--------------|-------|-------------|-------|--------------|-------|
|                                | #          | %     | #        | %     | #          | %     | #            | %     | #           | %     | #            | %     |
| White                          | 27,745     | 79.4% | 50,374   | 89.4% | 4,362      | 95.4% | 848,586      | 53.5% | 18,556      | 94.6% | 21,827       | 90.8% |
| Black                          | 5,284      | 15.1% | 4,605    | 8.2%  | 161        | 3.5%  | 631,936      | 39.9% | 744         | 3.8%  | 1,115        | 4.6%  |
| American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut | 57         | 0.2%  | 61       | 0.1%  | 0          | 0.0%  | 3,454        | 0.2%  | 10          | 0.1%  | 19           | 0.1%  |
| Asian or Pacific Islander      | 1,755      | 5.0%  | 1,178    | 2.1%  | 37         | 0.8%  | 43,522       | 2.7%  | 273         | 1.4%  | 1,049        | 4.4%  |
| Other Race                     | 82         | 0.2%  | 104      | 0.2%  | 14         | 0.3%  | 58,079       | 3.7%  | 29          | 0.1%  | 18           | 0.1%  |
| Hispanic Origin (of any race)  | 387        | 1.1%  | 531      | 0.9%  | 62         | 1.4%  | 89,193       | 5.6%  | 157         | 0.8%  | 176          | 0.7%  |

Source: U.S. Census

Table 7  
Racial Composition by Municipality: 2000

| RACE                                       | Cheltenham |       | Abington |       | Jenkintown |       | Springfield |       | Philadelphia |       | Upper Dublin |       |
|--|------------|-------|----------|-------|------------|-------|-------------|-------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|
|  | #          | %     | #        | %     | #          | %     | #           | %     | #            | %     | #            | %     |
| White                                      | 24,503     | 66.4% | 47,194   | 84.1% | 4,192      | 93.6% | 17,294      | 88.5% | 683,267      | 45.0% | 22,637       | 87.5% |
| Black or African American                  | 9,074      | 24.6% | 6,072    | 10.8% | 179        | 4.0%  | 1,623       | 8.3%  | 655,824      | 43.2% | 1,402        | 5.4%  |
| American Indian and Alaska Native          | 46         | 0.1%  | 51       | 0.1%  | 2          | 0.0%  | 25          | 0.1%  | 4,073        | 0.3%  | 23           | 0.1%  |
| Asian                                      | 2,376      | 6.4%  | 1,832    | 3.3%  | 42         | 0.9%  | 376         | 1.9%  | 67,654       | 4.5%  | 1,611        | 6.2%  |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander | 23         | 0.1%  | 28       | 0.0%  | 1          | 0.0%  | 1           | 0.0%  | 729          | 0.0%  | 1            | 0.0%  |
| Some other race                            | 290        | 0.8%  | 288      | 0.5%  | 22         | 0.5%  | 66          | 0.3%  | 72,429       | 4.8%  | 49           | 0.2%  |
| Two or more races                          | 563        | 1.5%  | 638      | 1.1%  | 40         | 0.9%  | 148         | 0.8%  | 33,574       | 2.2%  | 155          | 0.6%  |

Source: U.S. Census

Table 8

Racial Composition by Census Tract, Cheltenham Township: 2000

|  | 2022.01<br>East Elkins Park<br>and Cheltenham<br>Village | 2022.02<br>Melrose<br>Park | 2023.01<br>Elkins<br>Park West | 2023.02<br>Cheltenham<br>Hills | 2024.01<br>Lynnewood<br>Gardens | 2024.02<br>LaMott and<br>Melrose Park | 2025<br>Laverock | 2026.02<br>Wyncote | 2026.03<br>Glenside | 2026.04<br>Edge Hill |
|--|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| White                                      | 4,234  | 1,561                      | 4,254                          | 1,734                          | 200                             | 2,743                                 | 2,758            | 2,402              | 2,735               | 1,882                |
| Black or African American                  | 315  | 810                        | 250                            | 458                            | 2,768                           | 1,602                                 | 2,005            | 215                | 306                 | 345                  |
| American Indian and Alaska Native          | 3  | 7                          | 3                              | 2                              | 8                               | 9                                     | 8                | 2                  | 4                   | 0                    |
| Asian                                      | 318  | 435                        | 262                            | 72                             | 341                             | 591                                   | 145              | 34                 | 103                 | 75                   |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander | 1  | 1                          | 2                              | 0                              | 0                               | 1                                     | 15               | 3                  | 0                   | 0                    |
| Some other race                            | 29   | 61                         | 44                             | 6                              | 51                              | 61                                    | 12               | 5                  | 9                   | 12                   |
| Two or more races                          | 53   | 78                         | 50                             | 45                             | 104                             | 98                                    | 69               | 14                 | 30                  | 22                   |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>4,953</b>   | <b>2,953</b>               | <b>4,865</b>                   | <b>2,317</b>                   | <b>3,472</b>                    | <b>5,105</b>                          | <b>5,012</b>     | <b>2,675</b>       | <b>3,187</b>        | <b>2,336</b>         |

Source: U.S. Census

Table 9

Educational Attainment (Persons age 25 and older), Cheltenham Township: 2000

| Municipality | Less than 9th Grade | 9th to 12th Grade, No Degree | High School Graduate | Some College, No Degree | Associate Degree | Bachelor's Degree | Graduate or Professional Degree |
|--------------|---------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| Cheltenham   | 1.8%                | 6.2%                         | 21.7%                | 16.8%                   | 4.3%             | 25.5%             | 23.6%                           |
| Abington     | 2.6%                | 7.4%                         | 27.8%                | 18.5%                   | 5.8%             | 22.1%             | 15.8%                           |
| Jenkintown   | 1.4%                | 5.7%                         | 21.0%                | 20.3%                   | 4.7%             | 25.9%             | 21.1%                           |
| Philadelphia | 7.5%                | 21.3%                        | 33.3%                | 15.6%                   | 4.4%             | 10.3%             | 7.5%                            |
| Springfield  | 2.5%                | 9.0%                         | 21.9%                | 15.2%                   | 5.8%             | 26.9%             | 18.7%                           |
| Upper Dublin | 2.7%                | 4.6%                         | 17.4%                | 12.1%                   | 5.7%             | 32.0%             | 25.6%                           |

Source: U.S. Census

Table 10

Educational Attainment (Persons age 25 and older), Cheltenham Neighborhoods: 2000

|                        | 2022.01<br>East Elkins Park and<br>Cheltenham Village | 2022.02<br>Melrose Park | 2023.01<br>Elkins Park West | 2023.02<br>Cheltenham Hills | 2024.01<br>Lynnewood Gardens | 2024.02<br>LaMott and Melrose Park | 2025<br>Laverock | 2026.02<br>Wyncote | 2026.03<br>Glenside | 2026.04<br>Edge Hill |
|------------------------|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| No High School Diploma | 10.3%   | 6.1%                    | 2.3%                        | 0.4%                        | 14.4%                        | 7.9%                               | 10.1%            | 16.0%              | 6.2%                | 8.2%                 |
| High School Graduate   | 27.8%   | 19.6%                   | 13.5%                       | 17.6%                       | 31.2%                        | 20.8%                              | 23.2%            | 18.0%              | 26.3%               | 19.7%                |
| 1-3 Years College      | 23.3%   | 23.7%                   | 19.7%                       | 15.7%                       | 30.0%                        | 21.3%                              | 20.2%            | 16.0%              | 20.3%               | 20.8%                |
| Bachelor's Degree      | 23.8%   | 30.4%                   | 32.4%                       | 27.0%                       | 16.0%                        | 21.2%                              | 23.7%            | 23.4%              | 29.8%               | 27.0%                |
| Graduate Degree        | 14.7%   | 20.3%                   | 32.2%                       | 39.2%                       | 8.4%                         | 28.7%                              | 22.9%            | 26.5%              | 17.5%               | 24.2%                |

Source: U.S. Census

### Average Household Size

Nationally, the average household size has been declining since the first Census in 1790. In Cheltenham, as shown in Table 11, the average household size dropped 14.8 percent from 1970 to 2000, a decline similar to what has been experienced by nearby communities and the County overall. Generally, this decline is attributed to several factors, including an aging population, lower fertility rates, increasing divorce rates, couples delaying marriage, and increases in non-family households. While it is expected that Cheltenham’s average household size will decline over time, it did remain constant between 1990 and 2000 as a result of more children being born than expected. The relationship between average household size and population changes can be significant. As the average declines, the population becomes more dispersed, requiring more dwelling units for fewer people.

Table 11  
Average Household Size: 1970-2000

| 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
|------|------|------|------|
| 2.90 | 2.57 | 2.47 | 2.47 |

Source: U.S. Census

### Housing Type

Below is a breakdown by housing type into the following categories: single-family detached, single-family attached, multifamily, and mobile home/other. The last category may include mobile homes, recreational vehicles, or other types of residential arrangements. A balanced and diverse range of unit types is important for serving the needs of households that are at different stages of life.

Cheltenham’s housing stock consists of a full range of types, as shown in Table 12, with single-family detached dwellings being the most common at 51 percent. Multifamily, either low- or high-rise apartments, make up the next largest group with about 37 percent. Single-family attached (either twins or row houses) make up 12 percent and only 0.1 percent of the housing stock falls into the category of “other.” The Township has a diversified housing stock unlike typical suburbs of major cities. The advantage to this mixture of housing types is that it allows the residents of the Township to age in place. There are many housing options for young couples, families, single adults, and empty nesters.

Table 12  
Housing Totals by Type, Cheltenham and Neighbors: 2000

|              | Single-Family Detached | Single-Family Attached | Multifamily | Mobile Home / Other |
|--------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| Cheltenham   | 51.1%                  | 11.9%                  | 36.9%       | 0.1%                |
| Abington     | 71.0%                  | 7.9%                   | 21.0%       | 0.1%                |
| Jenkintown   | 29.8%                  | 19.9%                  | 49.9%       | 0.4%                |
| Philadelphia | 8.1%                   | 60.1%                  | 31.6%       | 0.1%                |
| Springfield  | 75.2%                  | 10.4%                  | 14.3%       | 0.2%                |
| Upper Dublin | 74.2%                  | 14.7%                  | 10.9%       | 0.1%                |

Source: U.S. Census

### Tenure and Vacancy

Housing tenure defines occupants of a unit as either owners or renters. Generally, homeownership is encouraged because it is believed that owner-occupied units are better maintained than renter-occupied units. In general, high homeownership rates have perceived benefits for the community, including neighborhood stability, stable or increasing home values, and the establishment of a sense of community.

In a given area, changes in tenure can occur over time for two primary reasons. The primary cause would be the construction of a large number of units either rental or ownership. Second, the tenure of the existing stock can change, as housing ages and becomes less desirable for owner occupancy and thus becomes subdivided into rental units.

As shown in Table 13, in 1970 the percentage of units that were owner-occupied in Cheltenham was 71.8 percent. By 1990 the figure dropped to 67.6 percent. Cheltenham's percentage of owner-occupied units in 1990 was lower than any of the neighboring townships (Abington 78.5 percent, Springfield 85.6 percent, and Upper Dublin 87.8 percent). The percentage of owner-occupied units in Montgomery County in 2000 was 73.5 percent. In 2000, the percentage of owner-occupied units in Cheltenham was 64.5 percent, which is still lower than its neighboring municipalities.

Table 13  
Housing Tenure: Owner-Occupied Units

| Municipality | 1970    |       | 1980    |       | 1990    |       | 2000    |       |
|--------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
|              | #       | %     | #       | %     | #       | %     | #       | %     |
| Cheltenham   | 8,526   | 71.8% | 8,768   | 65.6% | 9,289   | 67.6% | 9,246   | 64.5% |
| Abington     | 15,458  | 82.8% | 16,471  | 80.5% | 16,903  | 78.5% | 17,205  | 79.3% |
| Jenkintown   | 1,023   | 42.6% | 1,011   | 50.2% | 1,292   | 66.2% | 1,321   | 64.9% |
| Philadelphia | 387,311 | 58.6% | 378,097 | 61.0% | 373,601 | 62.0% | 349,633 | 59.3% |
| Springfield  | 5,515   | 88.2% | 5,828   | 86.9% | 6,063   | 85.6% | 6,148   | 82.3% |
| Upper Dublin | 4,502   | 89.3% | 5,710   | 85.0% | 7,205   | 87.8% | 8,147   | 88.8% |

Source: U.S. Census

The renter-occupied figures are shown in Table 14. In 1990, the figure for Cheltenham was 32.4 percent, compared to 28.2 percent in 1970. The percentage of renter-occupied units from 1990 to 2000 in Cheltenham is similar to the Borough of Jenkintown and far above the Townships of Springfield and Upper Dublin. In 2000, the percentage of renter-occupied units in Cheltenham was 35.5 percent.

Table 14  
Housing Tenure: Renter-Occupied Units

| Municipality | 1970    |       | 1980    |       | 1990    |       | 2000    |       |
|--------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
|              | #       | %     | #       | %     | #       | %     | #       | %     |
| Cheltenham   | 3,350   | 28.2% | 4,604   | 34.4% | 4,458   | 32.4% | 5,100   | 35.5% |
| Abington     | 3,212   | 17.2% | 4,000   | 19.5% | 4,640   | 21.5% | 4,485   | 20.7% |
| Jenkintown   | 1,377   | 57.4% | 1,001   | 49.8% | 661     | 33.8% | 714     | 35.1% |
| Philadelphia | 273,890 | 41.4% | 241,684 | 39.0% | 229,474 | 38.1% | 240,438 | 40.7% |
| Springfield  | 741     | 11.8% | 876     | 13.1% | 1,019   | 14.4% | 1,323   | 17.7% |
| Upper Dublin | 538     | 10.7% | 1,008   | 15.0% | 1,001   | 12.2% | 1,027   | 11.2% |

Source: U.S. Census

The U.S. Census Bureau defines a vacant unit as one that is habitable but unoccupied. Previous censuses calculated an overall vacancy rate for a municipality. The 2000 Census looks at a homeowner and rental vacancy rate separately. The 2000 homeowner vacancy rate for the Township was 0.6 percent while the renter vacancy rate was 5.0 percent. Below are the vacancy rates by Census Tract (Table 15).

Table 15

Homeowner and Rental Vacancy Rates, Cheltenham Census Tracts: 2000

|           | 2022.01<br>East Elkins<br>Park and<br>Cheltenham<br>Village | 2022.02<br>Melrose<br>Park | 2023.01<br>Elkins Park<br>West | 2023.02<br>Cheltenham<br>Hills | 2024.01<br>Lynnewood<br>Gardens | 2024.02<br>LaMott and<br>Melrose Park | 2025<br>Laverock | 2026.02<br>Wyncote | 2026.03<br>Glenside | 2026.04<br>Edge Hill |
|-----------|---|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Homeowner | 0.9%  | 0.3%                       | 0.5%                           | 0.2%                           | 0.0%                            | 0.9%                                  | 0.5%             | 0.6%               | 1.0%                | 0.3%                 |
| Rental    | 1.9%  | 7.1%                       | 10.4%                          | 7.2%                           | 3.2%                            | 3.4%                                  | 8.0%             | 0.6%               | 3.4%                | 3.8%                 |

Source: U.S. Census

**Income**

The median household income for the Township increased by 87.8 percent between 1979 and 1989, which signifies stability in regard to the economic status of the residents of the Township. Cheltenham’s median household income in 1999 was \$61,713, which is a 31.2 percent increase from 1989. Lynnewood Gardens has the lowest median household income within Cheltenham while the Cheltenham Hills neighborhood has the highest median household income.

Table 16

Household Median Income, Cheltenham Census Tracts: 1999

|      | 2022.01<br>East Elkins<br>Park and<br>Cheltenham<br>Village | 2022.02<br>Melrose<br>Park | 2023.01<br>Elkins Park<br>West | 2023.02<br>Cheltenham<br>Hills | 2024.01<br>Lynnewood<br>Gardens | 2024.02<br>LaMott and<br>Melrose Park | 2025<br>Laverock | 2026.02<br>Wyncote | 2026.03<br>Glenside | 2026.04<br>Edge Hill |
|------|---|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1999 | 58,633  | 70,457                     | 75,698                         | 81,233                         | 31,696                          | 67,614                                | 63,719           | 73,641             | 60,773              | 73,068               |

Source: U.S. Census

**Labor Force**

The labor force data can be examined in two ways. Labor force can be viewed in terms of the occupation or the type of industry. The occupation category examines the kind of labor a person is doing, while the industry examines the type of business or industry in which one is employed.

**Labor Force by Occupation**

The labor force has traditionally been divided into specific occupations. In Table 17 the occupation of residents for Cheltenham Township is shown for 2000. The community has seen an increase in professional and managerial, managerial, and other occupations. The community has seen a decline in all other occupations, which is not surprising since the Township experienced a decrease in population and has seen an increase of residents who are no longer in the workforce.

Table 17

Resident Labor Force by Detailed Occupation: 2000

| Occupation  | 2000  |
|---|-------|
| Management, Professional, and Related Services              | 53.6% |
| Service Occupations   | 8.7%  |
| Sales and Office Occupations                                | 26.2% |
| Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations                  | 0.1%  |
| Construction, Extraction, and Maintenance Occupations       | 4.4%  |
| Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations | 7.0%  |

Source: U.S. Census

The occupational status of the residents of each neighborhood in Cheltenham is shown in Table 18.

Table 18

Resident Labor Force by Detailed Occupation and Neighborhood: 2000

|                        | 2022.01<br>East Elkins<br>Park and<br>Cheltenham<br>Village | 2022.02<br>Melrose Park | 2023.01<br>Elkins Park<br>West | 2023.02<br>Cheltenham Hills | 2024.01<br>Lynnewood<br>Gardens | 2024.02<br>LaMott and<br>Melrose Park | 2025<br>Laverock | 2026.02<br>Wyncote | 2026.03<br>Glenside | 2026.04<br>Edge Hill |
|------------------------|---|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Mgmt. and Professional | 45.6%   | 55.1%                   | 63.7%                          | 67.6%                       | 30.2%                           | 56.5%                                 | 52.4%            | 63.0%              | 46.9%               | 64.0%                |
| Service Occupations    | 10.7%   | 5.9%                    | 3.2%                           | 6.1%                        | 19.2%                           | 8.4%                                  | 7.6%             | 5.4%               | 13.2%               | 5.6%                 |
| Sales                  | 30.7%   | 25.8%                   | 23.3%                          | 23.1%                       | 31.0%                           | 24.2%                                 | 31.7%            | 23.9%              | 23.4%               | 21.3%                |
| Farming                | 0.0%  | 0.0%                    | 0.0%                           | 0.0%                        | 0.0%                            | 0.7%                                  | 0.0%             | 0.0%               | 0.4%                | 0.0%                 |
| Construction           | 8.1%  | 3.3%                    | 4.2%                           | 1.3%                        | 5.1%                            | 2.7%                                  | 2.2%             | 3.5%               | 8.5%                | 2.9%                 |
| Production             | 5.6%  | 9.9%                    | 5.5%                           | 2.0%                        | 14.4%                           | 7.6%                                  | 6.1%             | 4.1%               | 7.6%                | 6.2%                 |

Source: U.S. Census

### Industrial Sectors

Examining the labor force by industry provides a different view of the community work force. The dominant industry that employs Township residents is the educational, health, and social service industries. The service industry during the last few decades has seen a steady increase throughout the country. Because of this, the 2000 Census has a number of additional service categories. In the Township, almost one-third of the residents are employed within the service industry. Manufacturing, which at one time was the predominate industry in the country, has seen an approximate decrease of 28.5 percent in the Township since 1990. The retail trade has also decreased by 34 percent since 1990.

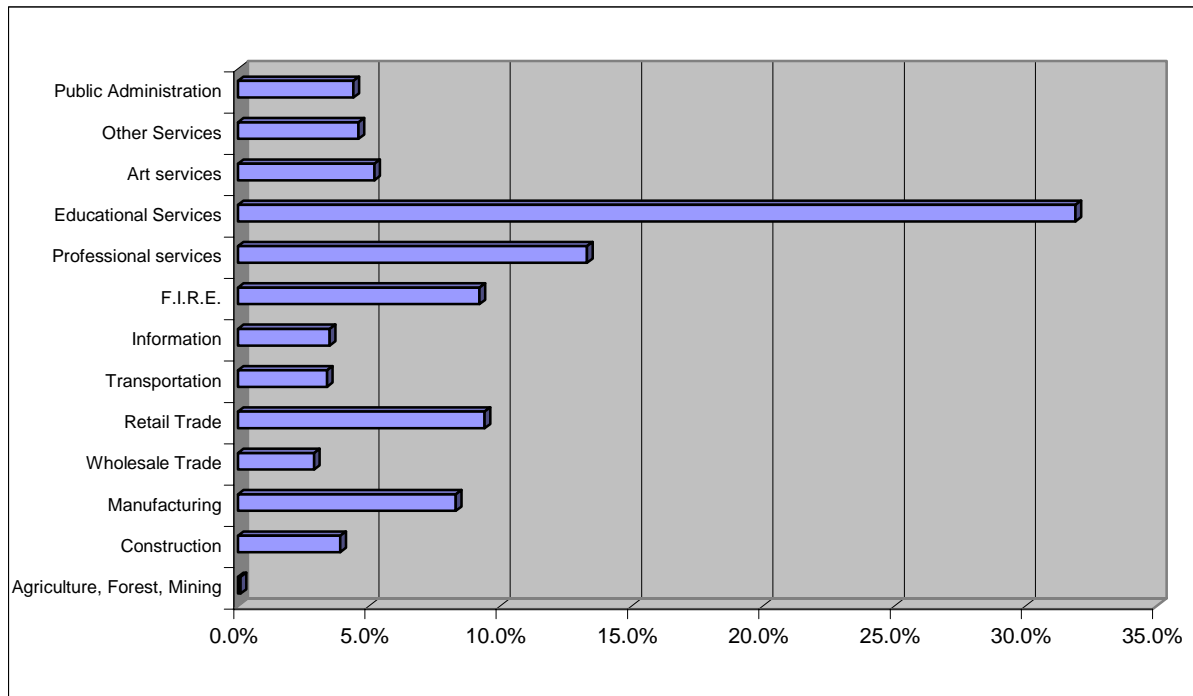
### Employment Forecast

As shown in Table 19 the Township is forecasted to lose jobs by the year 2025. The forecasts are provided by DVRPC and are based on a number of figures applied at the municipal level based on current land use and proposed projects. Thus, the figures should be fairly accurate but should not be considered exact. The number of jobs in the Township is projected to decrease slightly by 2025; however issues such as future land use, zoning, and transportation improvements can have a significant effect on this forecast. Cheltenham has more jobs than neighboring municipalities in Montgomery County, with the exception of Abington and Upper Dublin. The Willow Grove Mall in Abington and the Fort Washington Office Center in Upper Dublin raises the employment totals for both of those communities. The estimated employment decreases for Cheltenham and neighboring communities are far below that of the County as a whole. This trend is most likely explained by the amount of development expected to occur and the influx of jobs along the Route 422 and Interstate-476 corridors in the central and western portions of Montgomery County.

Table 20 shows the top three destinations for resident workers in 2000. For Cheltenham and neighboring communities, Philadelphia is the top work place destination. In fact, 42 percent of Cheltenham's resident workers worked in Philadelphia – the most of any municipality in the county. The second most popular destination for working Cheltenham residents is within the Township, followed by Abington Township. Clearly, Cheltenham continues to be primarily a bedroom community for Philadelphia, the role it has served for much of the last century. While this role may have been decreasing over the years, the number of residents who work in Philadelphia is still quite substantial.



Figure 5  
Resident Labor Force by Industrial Sector: 2000



Source: U.S. Census

Table 19  
Employment Estimates and Forecast: 1990-2025

| Municipality     | Total Employment, 1990 Census | Total Employment, 1997 estimate | 2000 Forecast | 2005 Forecast | 2010 Forecast | 2015 Forecast | 2020 Forecast | 2025 Forecast |
|------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Cheltenham       | 14,034                        | 13,309                          | 13,200        | 13,000        | 12,850        | 12,750        | 12,650        | 12,500        |
| Abington         | 28,414                        | 26,757                          | 26,350        | 26,000        | 25,700        | 25,450        | 25,150        | 25,000        |
| Jenkintown       | 5,829                         | 5,439                           | 5,250         | 5,250         | 5,250         | 5,250         | 5,250         | 5,250         |
| Springfield      | 8,079                         | 8,029                           | 7,850         | 7,750         | 7,650         | 7,500         | 7,400         | 7,300         |
| Upper Dublin     | 20,111                        | 20,995                          | 21,000        | 21,600        | 22,400        | 23,100        | 23,800        | 24,500        |
| Montgomery Co.   | 457,501                       | 485,435                         | 491,200       | 505,350       | 520,250       | 535,900       | 551,450       | 567,700       |
| Philadelphia Co. | 836,874                       | 786,015                         | 786,150       | 790,150       | 797,750       | 812,200       | 833,550       | 840,250       |

Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

Table 20  
Top Three Destinations of Resident Workers: 2000

| Municipality | Destination I      | Destination II          | Destination III        |
|--------------|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Cheltenham   | Philadelphia 42.1% | Cheltenham Twp. 15.3%   | Abington Twp. 5.5%     |
| Abington     | Philadelphia 23.9% | Abington Twp. 20.6%     | Horsham Twp. 5.2%      |
| Jenkintown   | Philadelphia 24.6% | Jenkintown Bor. 21.3%   | Abington Twp. 12.9%    |
| Philadelphia | Philadelphia 75.4% | Lower Merion Twp. 1.6%  | Bensalem Twp. 1.4%     |
| Springfield  | Philadelphia 27.5% | Springfield Twp. 16.6%  | Upper Dublin Twp. 4.2% |
| Upper Dublin | Philadelphia 23.3% | Upper Dublin Twp. 16.4% | Abington Twp. 4.7%     |

Source: U.S. Census

## **Conclusions**

The compilation of the demographic information presents an interesting picture of Cheltenham. Based on the above information, Cheltenham is a fairly affluent community with a diverse housing stock and an aging and diversifying population. As mentioned previously, the current issues facing the Township are very similar to issues facing other older suburbs bordering major cities across the country. Cheltenham, as a fully developed inner-ring suburb of Philadelphia, may face certain demographic issues that face many core cities. However, the Township's focus on priority economic revitalization, as well as improvements to infrastructure, encouragement of maintenance of privately-owned commercial areas and housing stock, improvements to public transportation, and planned improvements in educational facilities by the school district are helping the Township plan through 2025.

## Chapter 2

# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### General Overall Goal

Preserve and enhance the existing commercial, residential, and open space features of the Township to improve the quality of life, while promoting economic development.

### Economic Development

Enhance the Township's economic assets by increasing the tax base and continuing the revitalization and redevelopment of both the commercial and residential areas.

#### OBJECTIVES:

- Pursue the vision outlined in the Commercial District Enhancement Plan.
- Adopt pedestrian-friendly policies and ordinances within the commercial districts as outlined in the Commercial District Enhancement Plan.
- Increase the commercial and industrial tax base by encouraging development of commercial and office uses in appropriate locations.
- Utilize innovative techniques to encourage improvements on commercial properties.
- Encourage public/private partnerships.

### Housing

Maintain and enhance the Township's diverse housing stock.

#### OBJECTIVES:

- Continue to meet fair share requirements.
- Encourage the rehabilitation, conservation, and preservation of existing housing stock.
- Encourage age-defined and retirement housing in appropriate areas.
- Support home business occupations, including bed and breakfasts that promote economic development and are compatible with the surrounding residential character.
- Encourage infill housing to be architecturally compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.



### Commercial

Encourage additional commercial development that is compatible with surrounding areas.

#### OBJECTIVES:

- Identify and encourage commercial redevelopment and reuse opportunities in appropriate areas.
- Enhance existing commercial areas in coordination with the Main Street Program.
- Direct new large scale commercial uses to major arteries and encourage existing and new pedestrian-oriented neighborhood commercial uses in appropriate areas.
- Create development incentives to stimulate aesthetically pleasing development.
- Encourage and support necessary infrastructure improvements in commercial areas to assist with the overall economic development effort.

## **Office**

Accommodate office development that can provide employment opportunities and contribute to the Township's tax base without sacrificing the residential character of the Township.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Encourage office development along transportation nodes.

## **Transportation**

Provide a safe, efficient transportation system that balances automobile, pedestrian, and public transportation.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Identify a priority listing of road improvements and coordinate with PENNDOT on road improvements.
- Utilize design guidelines for the commercial districts to create a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- Evaluate the timing of traffic signals and introduce more visible signs to enhance traffic flow.
- Partner with SEPTA to evaluate its stations and service within the Township.
- Evaluate bus and transit schedules for needed service improvements.
- Evaluate transit stops for suitability and safety.
- Encourage an extensive pedestrian sidewalk network.
- Evaluate off-street and on-street parking.
- Evaluate the need for traffic calming measures in residential areas.

## **Industrial**

Maintain existing industrial uses within the Township, while allowing new environmentally-friendly/hi-tech light industrial uses.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Allow for light industrial uses on large developable parcels.
- Establish controls to protect existing residential areas around any new industrial development.

## **Recreation and Open Space**

Maintain and enhance the Township's parks and recreation areas and encourage the connection of open space.



### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Connect the Tookany Creek greenway.
- Coordinate with area park commissions and "Friends" groups.
- Expand the existing trail network through acquisition or the purchase of easements.
- Update the municipal open space plan.
- Preserve significant open space areas.
- Consider the long-term implications in future acquisitions of open space.
- Eradicate invasive species in open space areas.

## **Community Facilities**

Enhance the efficient utilization of existing community facilities and replacement of obsolete facilities.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Continue to provide outstanding municipal services as well as an outstanding public and private education system.
- Develop a plan for consolidating and/or relocating certain Township facilities to allow for potential reuse of commercially developable sites.
- Update plans and studies for the Township's community facilities.
- Plan and continue compliance with the six elements of the Stormwater Phase II Final Rule.
- Review zoning regulations for telecommunications.

## **Environmental**

Promote the unique environmental areas of the Township and encourage the preservation and enhancement of these irreplaceable features.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Enhance and protect the Township's valuable creeks and streams.
- Adopt ordinances and other regulations that will protect against pollution, increase water quality, and protect stream corridors.
- Explore possibilities for protecting the scenic resources of Cheltenham.

## **Historic Preservation**

Promote the unique historic resources that are located within the community and encourage the preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of these irreplaceable structures and landscapes.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Enhance and promote the Township's historic districts through legal guidelines and incentives, public awareness, and an improved architectural review board.
- Encourage the development of new districts and the expansion of existing historic districts.
- Encourage the development of design guidelines for each historic district.
- Register specific landmark structures to the National Register for Historic Places.





## Chapter 3

# NATURAL AND SCENIC RESOURCES

This section inventories the natural and scenic resources that exist within the Township. Natural features play an important part in the development and quality of life within a community. Cheltenham has many valuable natural resources that contribute to the quality of life of its residents. Natural resources include environmentally sensitive areas and manmade environments as well as unseen resources such as geology and soils. These unseen resources in turn affect the health and vitality of the woodlands, streams, and wildlife. Scenic resources, such as scenic roads and views, also contribute to the overall aesthetic quality of the Township. Both natural features and scenic resources should be taken into consideration when formulating planning policy for the community.

### Natural Resources

#### Geology

The geology of an area is the foundation of the natural features of a community. Except for surface outcrops, bedrock geology is unseen and as a result its influence on natural features is not always acknowledged. Bedrock, along with the hydrological cycle, is responsible for the change in elevation, location of watercourses, and orientation. Orientation, in turn, will influence vegetative communities, soils, and availability of sunlight. The bedrock or parent material has a great influence on the type of soil formed. For example, hard igneous bedrock has resulted in soils with a high stone and boulder content. Groundwater yields differ from one bedrock formation to the next. In Montgomery County, the differences range from less than one gallon per minute (gpm) to more than thirty gpm.

Montgomery County is located in the Triassic Lowland and Piedmont Upland sections of the Piedmont Physiographic Province. The Triassic Lowlands are primarily red shales and sandstone, with intrusions of diabase. Four formations – Stockton Sandstone/Conglomerate/Shale, Lockatong, Argillite/Shale, Brunswick Shale/Sandstone, and diabase comprise the Triassic Lowland. Cheltenham Township is located in the Piedmont Upland section. The formations underlying Cheltenham are described below.

#### *Conestoga Limestone*

Conestoga Limestone forms a limestone valley that extends eastward from Lancaster County through Chester County, tapering off in Abington Township. This limestone formation is found in portions of Laverock and Edge Hill. The soils formed from this parent material are fertile and the groundwater yields are good when solution channels (underground streams) are tapped. This formation is one of the smallest formations found in the Township, covering a small portion of Edge Hill.

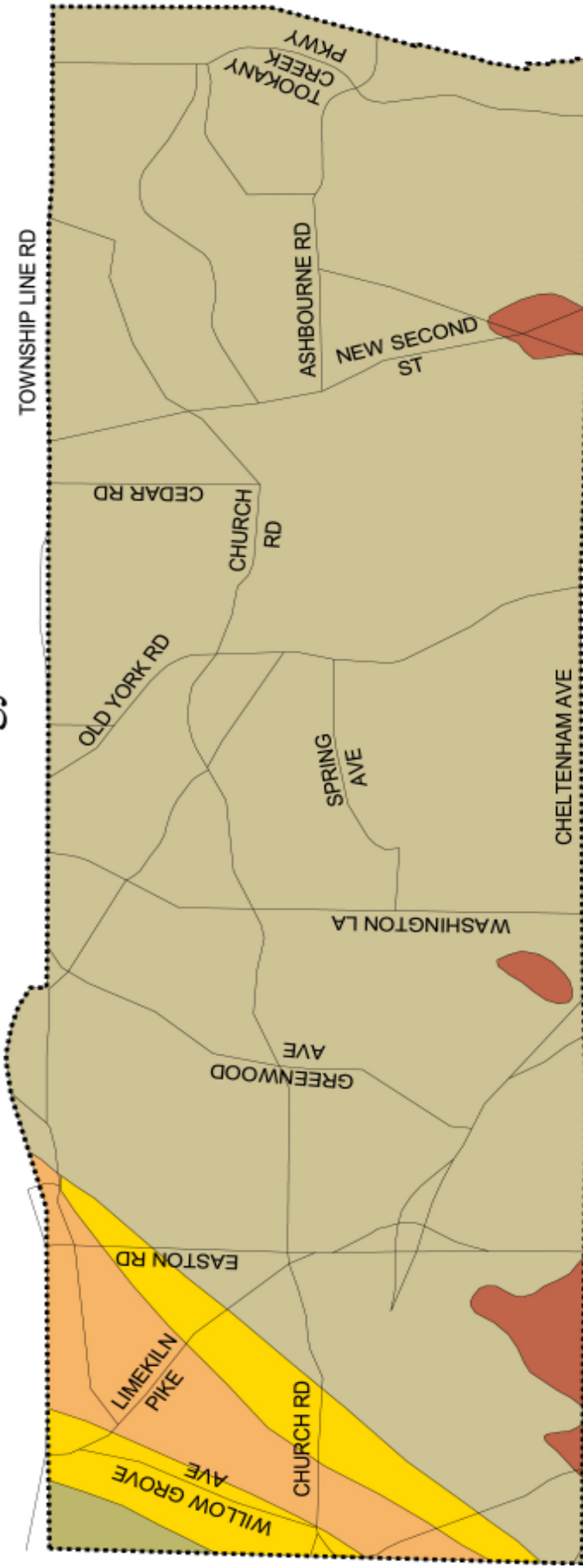
#### *Chickies Quartzite*

This formation is located between the Wissahickon Schist and the Felsic Gneiss formations, forming a band that extends from the Springfield Township line in Laverock across Church Road into parts of Wyncote. Quartzite is a metamorphic rock formed when sandstone is exposed to extreme heat and pressure. It is hard, dense rock that weathers slowly and forms prominent narrow hills and ridges. It contains poor groundwater supplies.

#### *Wissahickon Schist/Felsic Gneiss*

Wissahickon Schist/Felsic Gneiss is the major formation in the Township, covering most of the neighborhoods of Wyncote, Cheltenham Hills, LaMott, Elkins Park, and Melrose Park. The Schist are stronger rock and are highly weathered near the surface; the Felsic areas are harder, more resistant to weathering and have relatively steep but stable slopes. Joints through which groundwater flows are moderately abundant making groundwater yields variable, through generally moderate (usually less than

# Cheltenham Township Geology



- BRYN MAWR
- CHICKIES
- CONESTOGA
- FELSIC GNEISS
- WISSAHICKON

Base map prepared by the  
Montgomery County Planning Commission  
July 2004

This map is based on 2002 aerial photographs, Montgomery County Board of Assessors' maps, County Office files, and field surveys of Montgomery County Planning Commission staff. Every effort is made to maintain relative accuracy, however, this map should not be used for engineering purposes.

Figure 6



twenty gpm). This stone has been used for the construction of many prominent homes and structures within the Township. Wissahickon Schist is also the prominent stone used in Philadelphia neighborhoods such as Chestnut Hill. This stone contributes to the regional character of Cheltenham and other communities near the Wissahickon Creek.

### *Bryn Mawr*

The Bryn Mawr formation is found in a small portion of Melrose Park near Cheltenham Avenue and in an area near the Cheltenham Mall. A mix of gravel and sand, it is deeply weathered with moderate to high permeability and good surface drainage. It is generally not considered to be an important aquifer, although good water yields may be obtained from shallow wells.

### **Steep Slopes**

The presence of steep slopes often leads to limitations on development. Slope or frequency of change in elevation of the land is an important environmental condition, where the slope of the land is defined as the change in vertical elevation over a specified horizontal distance. These changes in elevation throughout the community contribute to the rolling country setting that many residents associate with Cheltenham.

The slope and soils present on steep slopes are a result of the vegetation, underlying geology, and precipitation levels. Maintaining the right balance through proper vegetative cover and minimizing development reduces the danger to public health and safety posed by unstable hillsides. Due to the uniqueness of the steep slope environment, the slope susceptibility to erosion and mass movement may be greater than the surrounding areas especially if vegetation is removed. Increased runoff and sedimentation from disturbed slopes necessitate further public expenditure for flood control and storm water management. In addition, unique wildlife habitats are often present on these slopes. For all these reasons, steep slopes need to be preserved and protected.

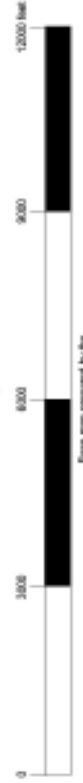
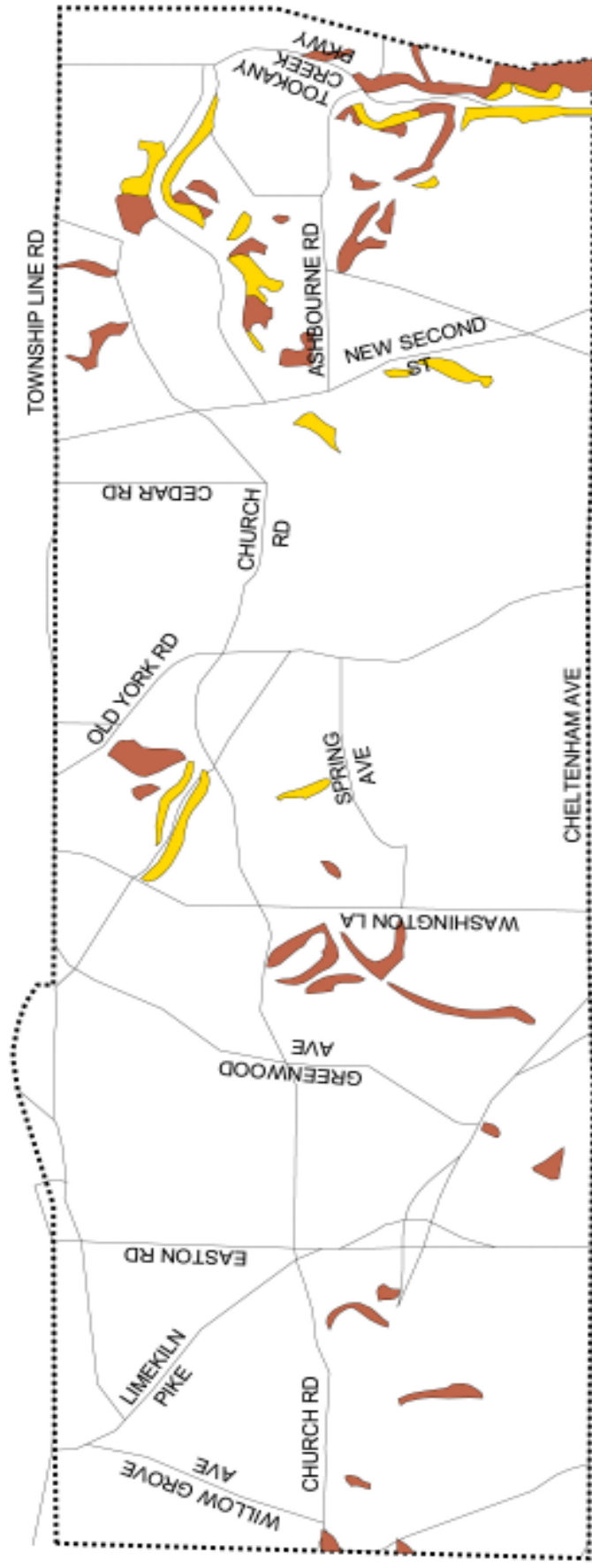
Overall, steep slopes are not a major feature of Cheltenham Township. The steep slopes are generalized from the Soil Survey of Montgomery County and are indicated in Figure 7. The steep slopes present are primarily along the banks of Rock Creek in the Cedarbrook and Cheltenham Hills neighborhoods, the quarry area along Willow Grove Avenue in Edge Hill, and along the Tookany Creek. The most prevalent areas of steep slopes are along the Tookany Creek Parkway area where many of the slopes are 25 percent or more. Cheltenham has provisions in the zoning ordinance to regulate steep slopes. The Steep Slope Conservation District is defined as those areas that have slopes of 15 percent or more.

### **Soils**

Soils are one of the most important natural features to consider when making planning decisions. Soils, as a natural assortment of organic materials and mineral fragments, cover the earth and support plant life. The composition of soils can change over time as a result of weathering of rock or from the activity of soil organisms. Soils can vary with respect to depth to bedrock, depth to groundwater, color, mineral characteristics, fertility, texture, and degree of erosion. The type of soil influences the vegetative land cover, which in turn affects the quality and quantity of surface and groundwater, wildlife diversity, erosion rates, and the overall aesthetic nature of the landscape. The soils in Cheltenham Township are a result of the hydrology and the weathering capacity of the underlying geology. The orientation of the land and the types of vegetation also affect soils.

Soil scientists have classified the soils found in Montgomery County into several groups called soil series. Soils identified with the same series will have similar subsurface characteristics. However, the surface characteristics of soils within a particular series can vary in slope, degree of erosion, size of stones, and by other features. Soils can also be divided into other categories such as prime and important agricultural soils, hydric soils, and alluvial soils.

# Cheltenham Township Steep Slopes



Base Map Provided by the  
Montgomery County Planning Commission  
July 2000

This map is based on 2000 aerial photography, Montgomery County Board of Assessment, Accession Tax Maps, Overlay Districts, and Best Management Practices. It is not intended to be used for engineering purposes. However, the map should not be used for engineering purposes.

Figure 7

### *Prime and Important Agricultural Soils*

The agricultural capability of soils is based on fertility, depth to bedrock and groundwater, texture, erodibility, and slope. Soils are classified as prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, and other land. Prime farmland includes deep, well-drained, and moderately sloped soils that can support high yields of crops with little management. Farmland of statewide importance includes soils that support cultivation, but require careful crop management. The remaining soils are best used for pasture and woodlands or nonagrarian uses. Cheltenham Township's prime and important soils are indicated on Figure 8.

### *Hydric Soils*

Hydric soils are periodically wet soils in an undrained condition that often support the growth of wetland vegetation. Some hydric soils are found in drained conditions; these will exhibit wetland vegetation. Hydric soils that have been drained for agricultural use are one example of this situation. Soils with major hydric components are a conservative indicator of wetlands. Other soils may have hydric components in limited settings, such as depressions, bottom lands, swales, drainage ways, and alluvial soils.

### *Alluvial Soils*

Related to hydric soils, alluvial soils are frequently, but not always, located within a floodplain. These soils have been deposited by flowing water and are not stable as a result of their texture and composition. The presence of alluvial soils is only one indicator of a floodplain. Changes in the tributary drainage area or slope of the adjacent stream may create a floodplain that is either larger or smaller than the area of alluvial soils. Also, alluvial soils do not indicate the probability of recurrence of a flood (for example, a 100-year flood). An important aspect of alluvial soils is that they often form aquifer recharge areas – places where rainwater can be quickly absorbed by the earth.

Cheltenham Township's hydric soils and alluvial soils are along its creeks seen in Figures 9 and 10. The prevalence of these soils are yet another reason why the creek valleys are extremely important to Cheltenham's environmental health.

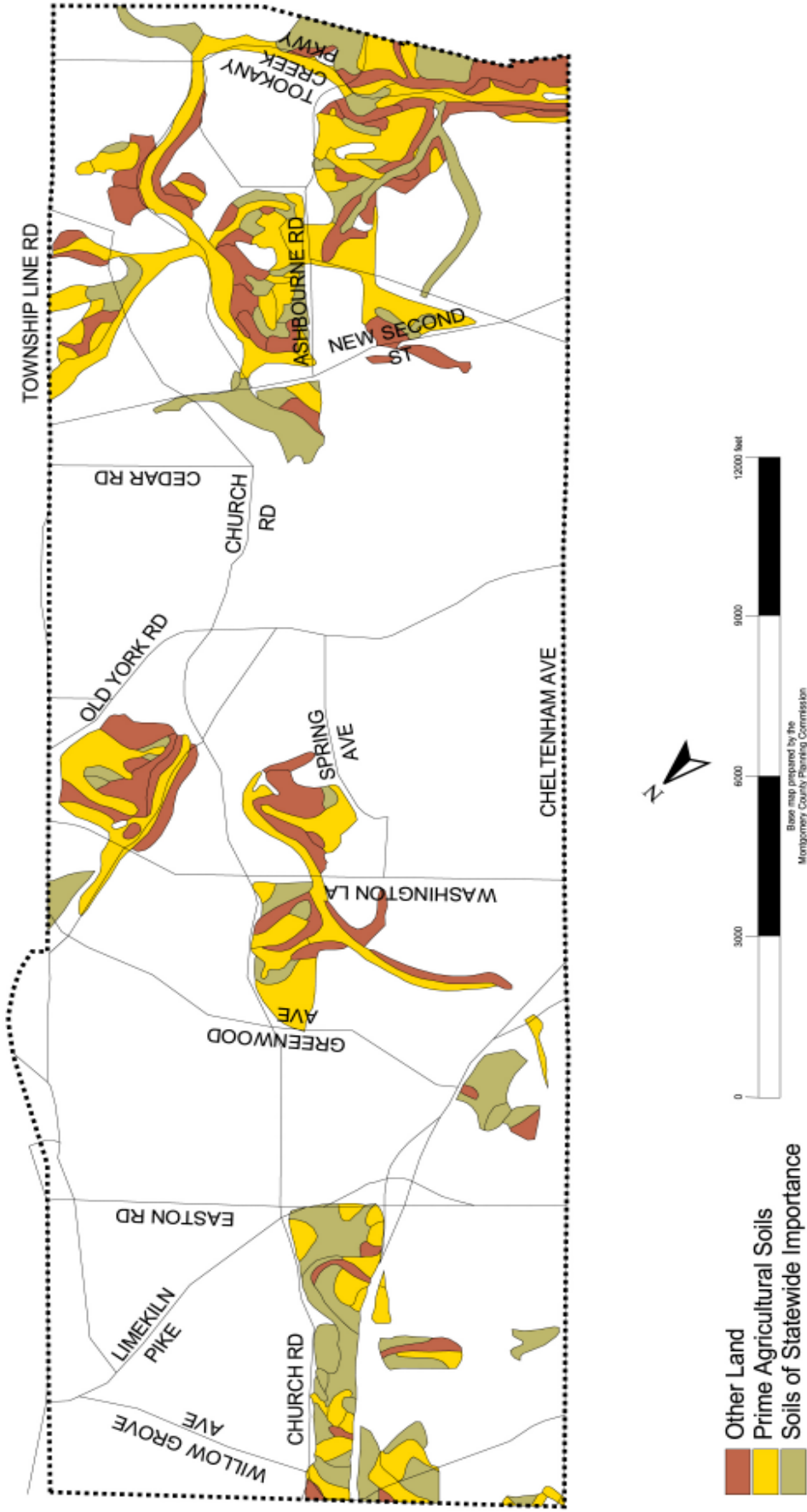
### **Woodlands**

Originally Cheltenham Township was a dense forest of hardwoods that covered 99 percent of the Township. Oaks primarily covered the land, but Chestnut, Tulip, Poplar, Hickory, Ash, Red Maple, and Dogwoods were also present. As the community became populated, clearing and cultivation, and rapid development reduced the woodlands to isolated areas. Based upon the principle types of woodlands remaining in the county, Cheltenham woodlands consist of the following:



- § *Red Oak* – About 60 percent of all remaining woodlands are comprised of Northern Red Oak, but Black, Scarlet, and Chestnut Oaks are also abundant.
- § *Ash/Maple/Elm* – About 19 percent of all remaining woodland consists of minor species such as Slippery Elm, Yellow Birch, Black Gum, Sycamore, and Poplar.
- § *Eastern Red Cedar* – About 18 percent of Montgomery County's wooded acres with this species and associated species that include Gray Birch, Red Maple, Sweet Birch, and Aspen.
- § *Sugar Maple/Beech/Yellow Birch* – The remaining three percent of woodlands comprise this association. Associated species include Red Maple, Hemlock, Northern Red Oak, White Ash, and Tulip Poplar.

# Cheltenham Township Prime and Important Agricultural Soils



Base map prepared by the  
Montgomery County Planning Commission  
July 2004

This map is based on 2000 aerial photography, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals tax maps, Township Officials, and field surveys. It is intended for general informational purposes only. It is not intended to maintain relative accuracy, however, this map should not be used for engineering purposes.

Figure 8

# Cheltenham Township Hydric Soils

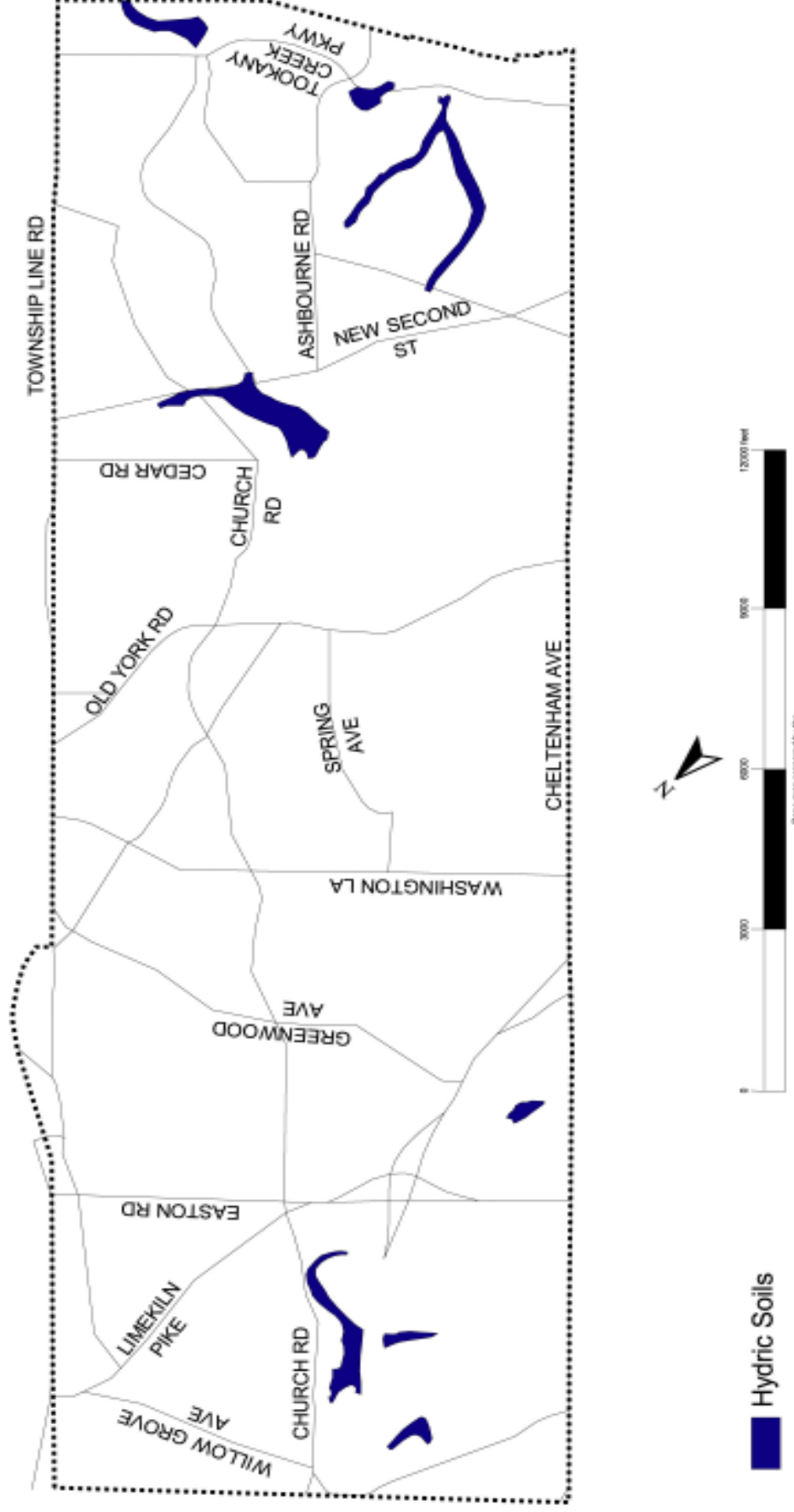
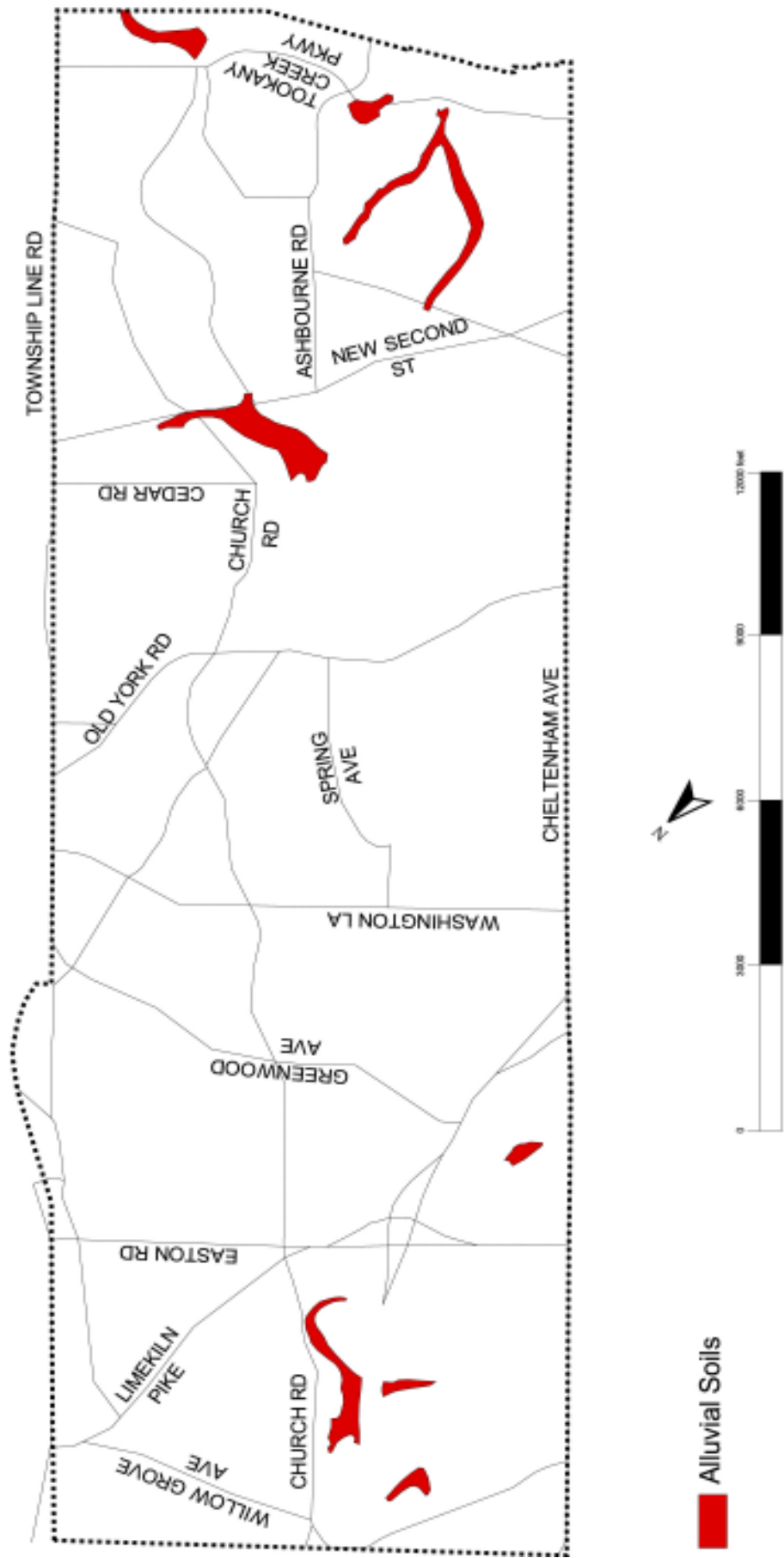


Figure 9

# Cheltenham Township Alluvial Soils



Base map provided by the Montgomery County Planning Commission July 2004

This map is based on 2000 aerial photographs, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Aerials topographic, County Census, and field surveys conducted by Montgomery County Planning Commission staff. It is not intended to replace existing records. However, this map should not be used for engineering purposes.

Figure 10

The importance of woodlands and hedgerows is twofold. They serve both functional and aesthetic purposes. Functionally, woodlands prevent erosion, provide wildlife habitat, increase water quality for streams and creeks, and offer recreational opportunities for residents.

Woodlands also have an important aesthetic purpose. In Cheltenham particularly the woodlands create a unique streetscape and environment.

The woodlands in Cheltenham come in many forms. Often the woodlands come in scattered stands that can be found strung along alluvial soils. Large blocks are often found on ridges, steep slopes, and areas that are not practical for cultivation and development. Cheltenham, however, has many important woodlands that can be found on large estates and community parks. Figure 11 indicates the woodlands in the Township. One of the Township's most significant properties is the Curtis Arboretum. The Curtis Arboretum, owned by the Township, is 45 acres and is listed on the National Register. Should other estates be developed, it is important that the woodlands are protected and retained, especially along the creeks.

### **Hydrology**

Water is a valuable resource, consumed by people and industry, employed in the assimilation of treated sewage and is integral to the landscape. The average rainfall in the county varies from 43 inches near City Line Avenue to 47 inches near Green Lane Reservoir. It should be noted that in any given year, annual precipitation could vary from the average by as much as ten inches. Generally speaking 25 percent of precipitation becomes direct run off, 50 percent evaporates or is transpired by plants, and 25 percent replenishes groundwater. The surface water that falls on or is carried through Cheltenham affects the topography, soil vegetation, and groundwater and comes from two sources: direct runoff and groundwater. A third man-made source may also contribute to stream flow – effluent from sewage treatment plants, which tend to dampen the variant between high and low-flow periods.

### **Groundwater**

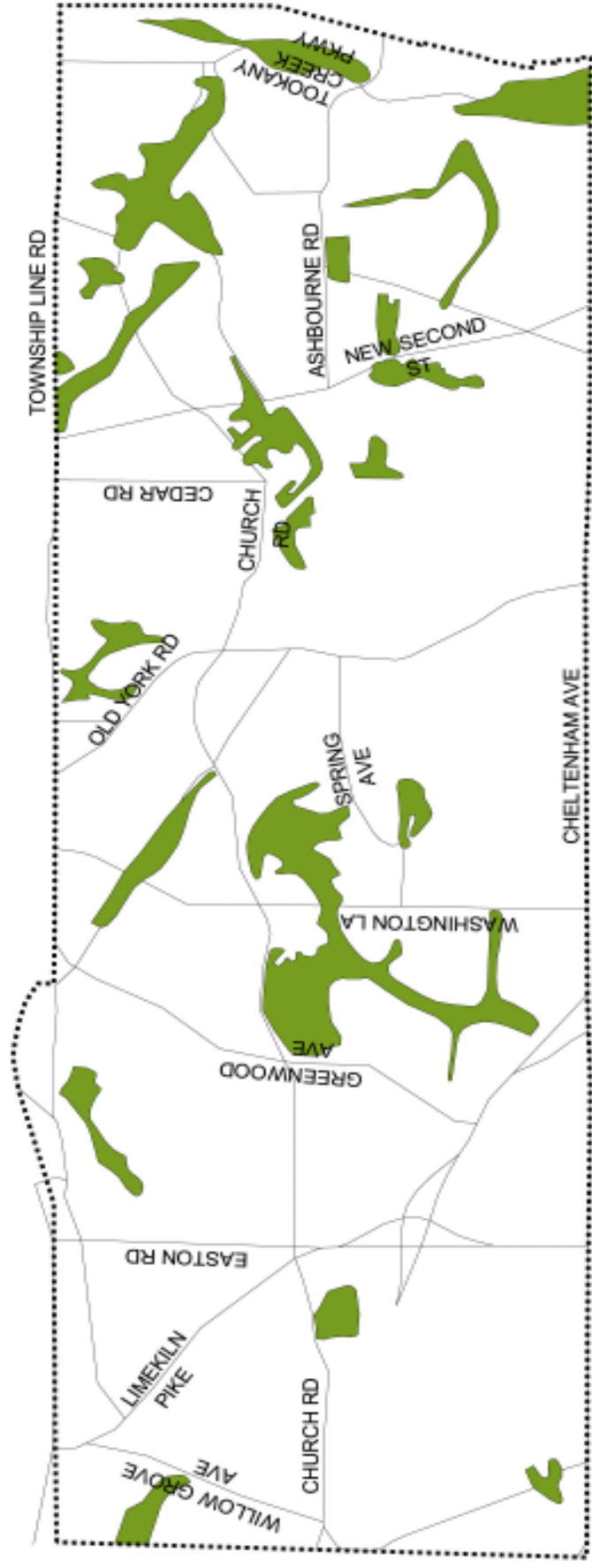
Groundwater flows through cracks in bedrock or unconsolidated rock much slower than surface water. It can be used as a source of drinking water and also for industrial purposes when surface water is unavailable. Replenishment of groundwater occurs slowly. Precipitation and sometimes stream water seeps through the soils into the underlying groundwater aquifer. Open, undisturbed land is essential to groundwater recharge. Vegetation helps to retain precipitation, allowing infiltration into the soil rather than surface runoff. Impervious surfaces from development prevent infiltration of precipitation.

### **Wetlands**

Wetlands are an important resource and are worthy of protection. It is often easier to discuss the benefit of wetlands than it is to delineate the wetland itself. In some cases, wetlands are easily identifiable through the presence or influence of water. However, many wetlands have only seasonal flooding. For much of the year, surface water may not be present. Other wetlands develop in areas where the soil is saturated for long periods, but never flooded. The Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers defines wetlands as “those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.”

Wetlands provide habitat for birds, amphibians, and fish, which support other wildlife. Wetlands also mitigate flooding by holding back floodwater as well as slowing stream velocity. Water quality is also improved. As water flows through a wetland, its path is slowed and deposits some of its sediment load. Additionally, wetland vegetation absorbs nutrients that can cause algae blooms and other pollution problems. Wetlands that are located in depressions encourage infiltration of stormwater and contribute to groundwater recharge.

# Cheltenham Township Woodlands



Woodlands



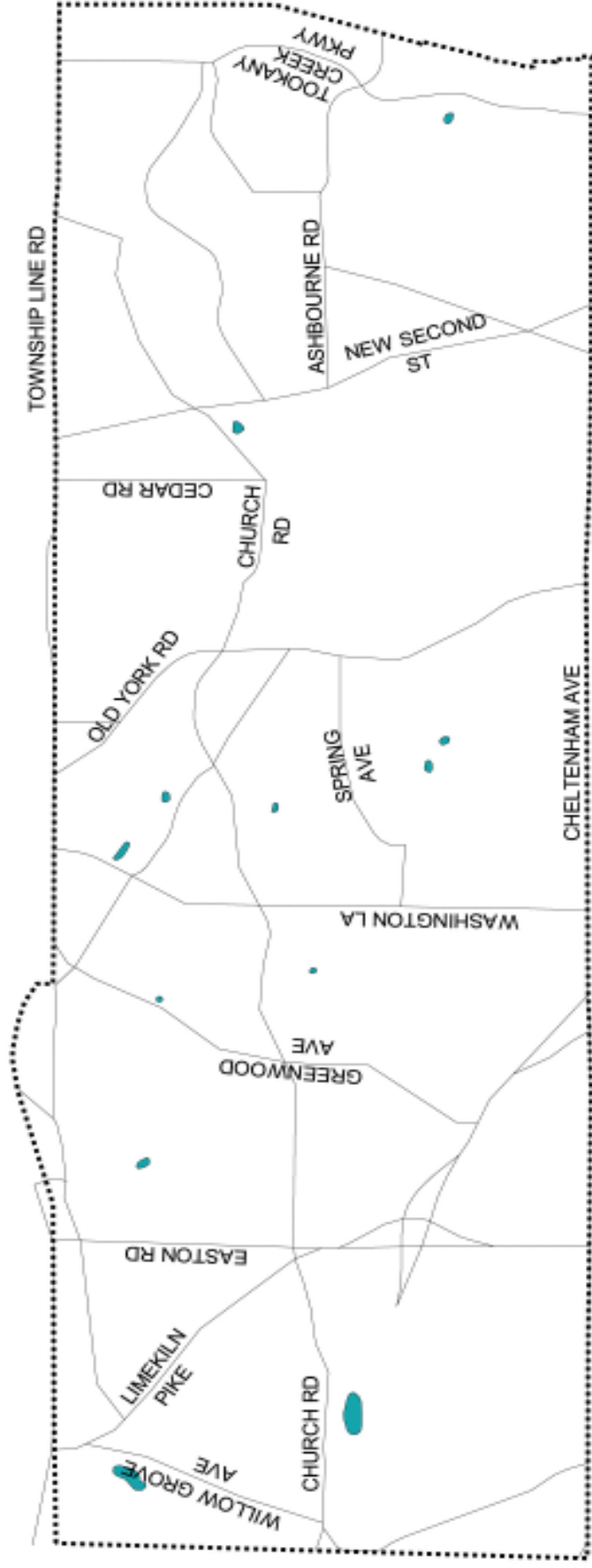
Base map prepared by the  
Montgomery County Planning Commission  
July 2004

This map is based on 2002 aerial photography. Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals has verified Township, City, and Federal boundaries conducted by the County Planning Commission. All attempts were made to maintain relative accuracy. However, this map should not be used for engineering purposes.

Figure 11



# Cheltenham Township Wetlands



Wetlands



Map file prepared by the  
Montgomery County Planning Commission  
July 2004

This map is based on 2000 aerial photography, Montgomery County Board of Assessment and Planning, and other data. It is not intended to be used as a substitute for a site visit. All wetlands were a single to maintain relative accuracy. However, this map should not be used for engineering purposes.

Figure 12

Cheltenham Township has an insignificant amount of wetlands according to the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), prepared by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service (Figure 12). Many of these wetlands are located along the Tookany Creek, Rock Creek, and Jenkintown Creek. It is important to note other wetlands may exist given that NWI uses a general classification of wetlands. Hydric soils, particularly Bowmansville, Croton, Doylestown, Hatboro, and Watchung soils, may indicate the presence of wetlands.

### **Stream Corridors**

Natural resources such as water quality are often compromised in areas of heavy development. Fortunately, Cheltenham has managed to preserve and make full use of many of its natural features.



Tookany Creek currently provides significant water and recreational resources for the residents of the region as it meanders through a series of parks and significant linear greenway along the Tookany Creek Parkway. Cheltenham is currently participating in the Tookany Creek Watershed Management Plan with its neighboring municipalities of Abington, Jenkintown, and Rockledge. The protection and preservation of the creekside and its adjacent resources is a key goal of the watershed management plan. Watershed management planning is a first step for a stream to be eligible for the

Pennsylvania Rivers Conservation Registry. Cheltenham and its neighboring municipalities will coordinate and prioritize stream bank and riparian buffer areas with the Tookany-Tacony/Frankford Watershed Partnership to ensure that environmental performance indicators are captured (biological assessments performed to quantify benefits of improvements) to measure water quality.

Cheltenham also has several ponds in addition to the creeks. They include: the Curtis Arboretum ponds, two ponds at the Dominican Retreat House, the Kleinheinz Memorial pond adjacent to Tookany Creek Parkway, the Melrose Country Club pond adjacent to Tookany Creek Parkway, Rock Creek Pond adjacent to Serpentine Lane, Waverly Road Pond between Keswick and Rice's Mill Road, and the Greenwood Avenue Ponds.

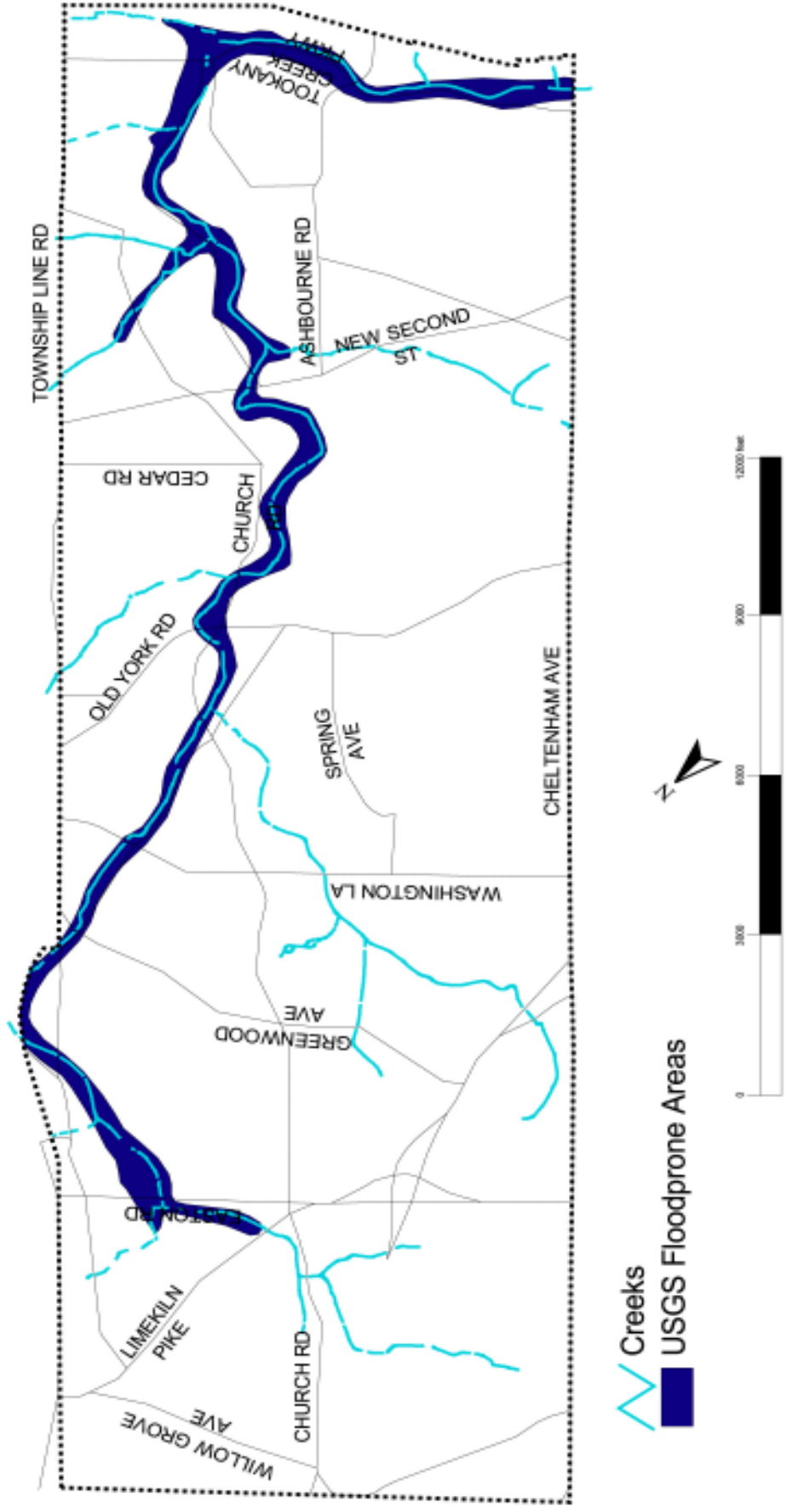
### **Floodplain Riparian Areas**

The 100-year floodplain is a feature that will affect the health, safety, and welfare of Cheltenham's residents. For much of the time the floodplain may be dry, however during storms the floodplain stores and conveys large quantities of floodwater. Development within the floodplain boundaries reduces the carrying capacity and increases the height and destructive ability of floodwater. The floodplain and stream corridor also serves other functions besides carrying floodwaters. The stream corridor when in good condition can help minimize erosion and water pollution, protect water quality, provide animal habitats, and provide recreational opportunities. Cheltenham Township is a part of Pennsylvania's Delaware Estuary Coastal Zone program. The grant program provides funding for planning, design, engineering, research projects, and acquisitions projects related to the Delaware Coastal Zones. Figure 13 indicates floodprone areas within the Township.

### **Scenic Resources**

Cheltenham Township has many historic transportation corridors and scenic resources. The Township Planning Commission has identified four areas as scenic roads and one area as a scenic view area. Many of these scenic roads have environmental features that have been preserved as open space or are used for recreational uses. In Cheltenham many of these scenic roads have buildings that are examples of the development and history of the community. Figure 14 indicates the location of these scenic resources described below.

# Cheltenham Township USGS Floodprone Areas

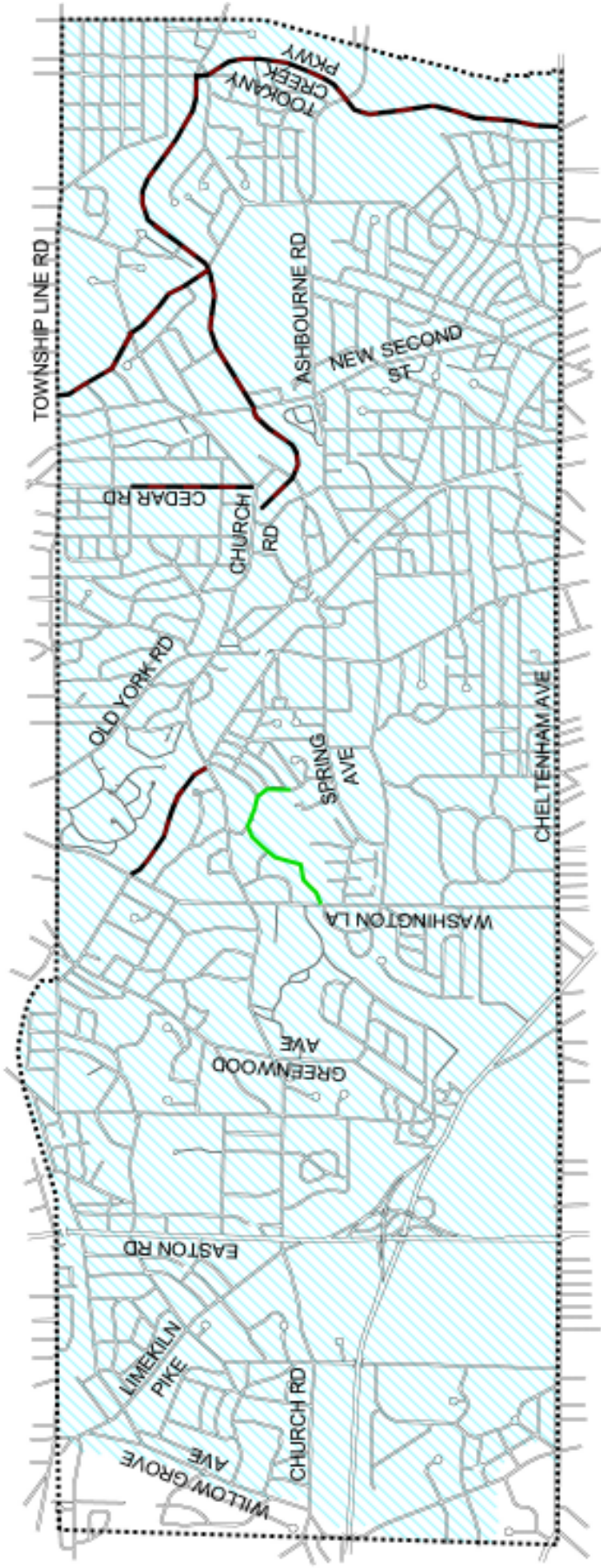


Base map prepared by the  
Montgomery County Planning Commission  
July 2004

This map is based on 2000 aerial photographs, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals tax maps, Township Official, and field surveys conducted by the County Planning Commission. All attempts were made to maintain relative accuracy, however, this map should not be used for engineering purposes.

Figure 13

# Cheltenham Township Scenic Roads and Scenic Areas



Map provided by the  
Montgomery County Planning Commission  
July 2004

This map is based on 2000 aerial photography, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals tax maps, Township officials, and field surveys conducted by the County Planning Commission. All attempts were made to maintain relative accuracy; however, this map should not be used for engineering purposes.

-  Scenic View
-  Scenic Roads
-  Scenic View - Tookany Creek Watershed

Figure 14

### Scenic Roads

- Tookany Creek Parkway – This scenic area extends along the banks of the Tookany Creek from Second Street in a “U” shape around to Cheltenham Avenue.
- Jenkintown Road from Township Line Road to Tookany Creek.
- Cheltenham Hills Drive from Washington Lane to Church Road.
- Cedar Road between Church and Sterling Roads.



### Scenic Views and Scenic Areas

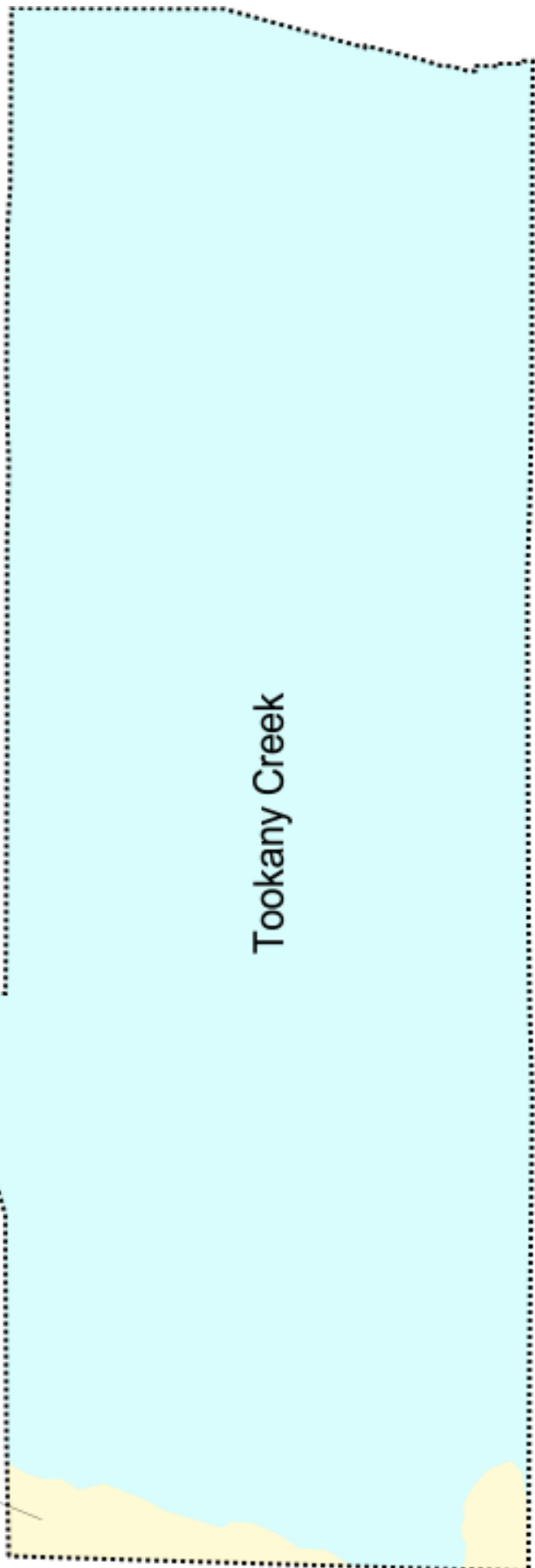
- Rock Lane and Serpentine Lane along their southern boundary north of Hidden Lane.
- Tookany Creek Watershed.

Ninety-eight percent of the Township lies within the Tookany Creek Watershed. The remaining 2 percent lies within the Wissahickon Creek Watershed. Figure 15 shows the boundaries of Cheltenham’s two watersheds.

# Cheltenham Township Watersheds

Wissahickon Creek

Tookany Creek



Base map prepared by the  
Montgomery County Planning Commission  
July 2004

This map is based on 2000 aerial photographs, Montgomery County Board of Assessment and Planning maps, Cheltenham Creek, and field surveys conducted by the Montgomery County Planning Commission. While every effort is made to maintain relative accuracy, however, this map should not be used for engineering purposes.

Figure 15

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

**GOAL: PROMOTE THE UNIQUE ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS OF THE TOWNSHIP AND ENCOURAGE THE PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THESE IRREPLACEABLE FEATURES.**

Cheltenham Township will ensure that its natural resources are protected and preserved through the policies outlined below. Further discussion of how the natural features of Cheltenham Township can be integrated with policies for parks and recreation will be discussed in the Open Space Chapter.

**Objective 1: The Township will continue to enhance and protect its valuable creeks and streams.**

Cheltenham Township's creeks and streams are extremely valuable and important environmental assets. In order to enhance and protect them the Township will participate in the Stream ReLeaf program, continue to participate in the Tookany Creek Watershed Management Plan, the Tookany-Tacony/Frankford Watershed Partnership, and form an environmental advisory council.

*Policy 1.1 - Cheltenham Township will participate in the Stream ReLeaf program.*

The Department of Environmental Protection sponsors the Stream ReLeaf program. It encourages the use and conservation of streamside buffers. Cheltenham Township will participate in the program to enhance and protect its riparian forests.

*Policy 1.2 - Continue to enhance and protect the Tookany Creek Watershed.*

Cheltenham will continue to participate in the Tookany Creek Watershed Management Plan with its neighboring municipalities of Abington, Jenkintown, and Rockledge. Cheltenham will also continue to participate in the Tookany-Tacony/Frankford Watershed Partnership. Cheltenham will continue to encourage protection of the watershed through public education, such as stewardship education in riparian corridors, the creation of ordinances (discussed further in Objective 2), and implementation of best management practices.

*Policy 1.3 - Coordinate with neighboring municipalities to form a regional Environmental Advisory Council.*

Further regional cooperation regarding environmental issues should be pursued that would bring together the City of Philadelphia and its neighboring suburbs to the north. Abington Township currently has an Environmental Advisory Council.

**Objective 2: The Township will adopt a number of ordinances and other regulations to protect against pollution, encourage increased water quality, and protect stream corridors.**

Cheltenham can further protect its natural resources through the Township's zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances. The current ordinances should be reviewed for effectiveness in protecting against pollution.

*Policy 2.1 - Adopt a stormwater ordinance to protect against non-point source pollution.*

A stormwater ordinance would encourage infiltration to reduce the volume of runoff and reduce flooding. It would also require best management practices for water quality to provide filtration and removal of

pollutants prior to entering a stream. While a stormwater ordinance mainly applies to new development or redevelopment, a program could be established (perhaps by the EAC) to retrofit existing commercial areas or existing stormwater management basins.

*Policy 2.2 - Adopt a riparian corridor ordinance to complement the existing steep slope and floodplain ordinances.*

A riparian corridor ordinance would create buffer zones along streams through the establishment of setbacks from the stream bank. Such an ordinance would preserve the existing vegetation and protect a stream's water quality and the in stream and riparian habitat. The ordinance would recommend using indigenous trees and native species for stabilizing riparian buffers. Along with adopting a riparian corridor ordinance, it is important that education about riparian buffers and watershed issues be an important component.

*Policy 2.3 - Review the steep slope ordinance.*

The Township should evaluate the steep slope ordinance to consider the following issues: consider applying an averaging technique for steep slopes, consider how to address man-made steep slopes and roadside embankments, and consider what triggers steep slope definition.

*Policy 2.4 - Adopt a strong landscape ordinance with tree protection standards to ensure the protection of Cheltenham's woodlands.*

Cheltenham's valuable woodlands and street canopy can be protected through an encompassing landscape ordinance that sets tree protection standards, including the removal limits and construction standards, as well as requirements for street trees and other protective measures. One of the provisions that is important in the proposed ordinance is a street tree replacement requirement (if one tree is removed, one tree should be planted). The percentage of wooded lots should be considered when formulating a landscape ordinance, as it is important to protect these valuable resources. While Cheltenham currently has an ordinance on trees (Chapter 280), a strong landscape ordinance in the subdivision and land development ordinance would further ensure the protection of woodlands and introduce further standards.

*Policy 2.5 - Encourage the development of regulations and controls that will enhance high water quality for the water corridors throughout the Township.*

The Township should employ Best Management Practices (BMPs) to benefit high water quality and contribute to habitat protection.

*Policy 2.5 - Ensure that as development occurs, vulnerable lands are protected by requiring open space and resource protection.*

A minimum percentage of open space should be included in any new development or redevelopment. Green area standards can be required that may include natural areas, landscaping, and pedestrian amenities. Standards would ensure the protection of other environmental resources such as wetlands, soils, groundwater, and steep slopes.

**Objective 3: *The Township will explore possibilities for protecting the scenic resources of Cheltenham.***

*Policy 3.1 - Consider zoning regulations for protection of the Township's scenic resources.*

The Township will explore regulation of its scenic resources through a zoning overlay that will seek to preserve and protect Cheltenham's important viewsheds.



*Policy 3.2 - Consider applying to the National Scenic Byways Program.*

In addition to exploring an overlay district, the Township will consider applying to the National Scenic Byways Program to preserve its scenic roadways.



## Chapter 4 HOUSING

Cheltenham Township includes an area of approximately 5,600 acres of land. The majority of this land has developed over time into several unique residential neighborhoods. The wide varieties of housing types and unique neighborhoods found throughout the Township have historically attracted people to make Cheltenham their home. This housing element has been developed in order to plan for the continued success of these neighborhoods as well as to address the future housing needs of the Township.



Cheltenham has identified five main objectives that will serve as the foundation for achieving the Township’s housing goal to “*maintain and enhance the Township’s diverse housing stock*”. These objectives recognize the unique housing and diverse population that exists in Cheltenham and places significant emphasis on working to retain these qualities.

For each objective established within this chapter there are one or more policies listed that provide more specific direction as to how the Township will strive to execute the objective. Policy direction can include activities, programs, and land development regulations used to implement the comprehensive plan. The Housing Chapter utilizes select demographic information and projections from the 2000 Census. Additional demographic data can be found within the Community Profile Chapter of this comprehensive plan.

### Existing Conditions

Cheltenham Township has a diverse housing stock that includes single-family homes, twins, duplexes, townhouses, and apartment homes. The housing stock is also diverse in terms of architectural design, which includes styles such as Queen Anne, Victorian, and Colonial Revival.

According to the 2000 Census, Cheltenham Township has a total of 14,897 housing units. This represents a 3 percent increase from the 1990 Census. Housing types from the 2000 Census are indicated in Table 21. The diversity of housing type in Cheltenham is greater than in surrounding Townships such as Springfield and Abington. This diversity indicates that residents in Cheltenham have the opportunity to choose from a greater mix of housing types as their housing needs change over time. Cheltenham is not a typical suburb given its housing stock. The Township has everything from larger estates to apartments, which is particularly important given the range of households such as young married couples to elderly residents.

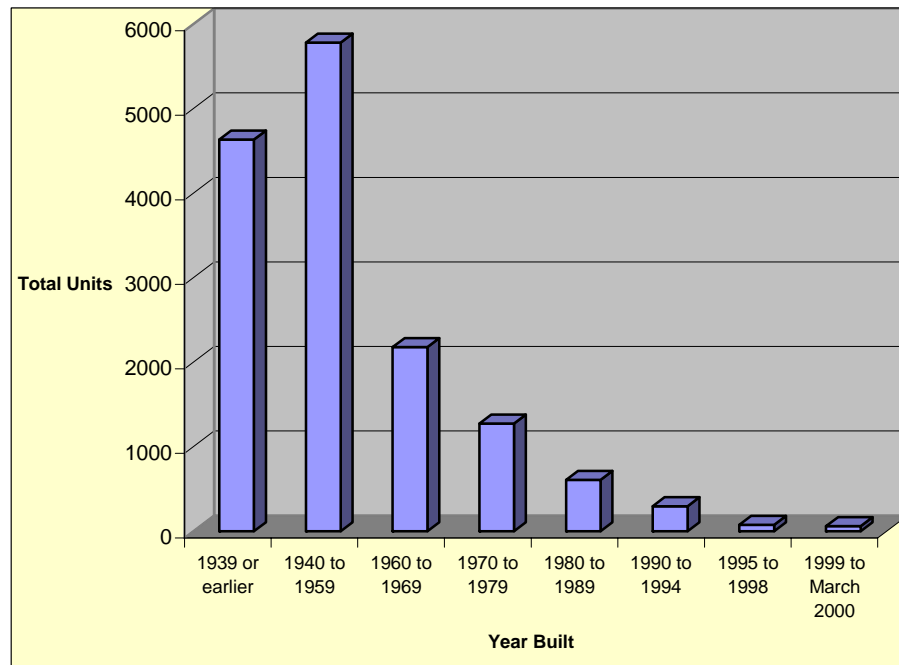
Table 21  
Housing Types: 2000

|              | Single-family Detached | Single-family Attached | Multifamily | Mobile Home/Other |
|--------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Cheltenham   | 51.1%                  | 11.9%                  | 36.9%       | 0.1%              |
| Abington     | 71.0%                  | 7.9%                   | 21.0%       | 0.1%              |
| Jenkintown   | 29.8%                  | 19.9%                  | 49.9%       | 0.4%              |
| Springfield  | 75.2%                  | 10.4%                  | 14.3%       | 0.2%              |
| Upper Dublin | 74.2%                  | 14.7%                  | 10.9%       | 0.1%              |

Source: U.S. Census

The majority of housing in Cheltenham, approximately 39 percent, was built between 1940 and 1959. The second largest percentage, 31 percent, was built in 1939 or earlier. Of the current total housing stock, 7 percent has been built within the last twenty years (see Figure 16). While there are still areas with significant redevelopment potential within the Township, Cheltenham is becoming a built-out community, which contributes to the decreasing amount of new housing development. This mix of housing units of various ages has also contributed to the diverse architectural styles found in Cheltenham. Future housing initiatives will have to consider the age of the housing stock within the Township.

Figure 16



Source: U.S. Census

The average household size in Cheltenham has been decreasing during the past three decades. In 1970, the average household size in the Township was 2.9 persons per occupied housing unit. In 1980, the average household size was 2.57 per unit and the 1990 and 2000 Census reported an average household size of 2.47 persons per unit. Household size throughout the county and the nation are expected to decline over time, which can be attributed to the aging of the population, families choosing to have fewer children than their counterparts from thirty years ago, as well as the increase in single parent households. Cheltenham's average household size remained constant between 1990 and 2000 due to an unexpected number of children born between 1990 and 2000. Household size is important to consider when looking at future demand for housing units because a smaller average household size means that more housing units are required to accommodate the population.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

### ***GOAL: MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE TOWNSHIP'S DIVERSE HOUSING STOCK***

#### ***Objective 1: The Township will continue to meet fair share housing requirements.***

Fair share requirements indicate that a community must provide a wide variety of housing types to meet the housing needs of existing and future residents. This includes providing for the potential development of fair share housing types (single-family attached dwellings, twins, duplexes, multifamily units, and mobile home parks).

*Policy 1.1 - The Township will provide and retain residential zoning districts that permit the development of a range of housing types, at varying densities, consistent with fair share requirements.*

One way to determine whether a community is addressing fair share requirements is to look at the amount of land zoned for fair share housing types. Typically, the amount of land should fall somewhere between 2.7 percent and 3.5 percent of a municipality's total land area. Within Cheltenham, approximately 25 percent of the total land is zoned to permit fair share housing types. The districts that provide these types include the R5 Residential, R6 Residential, R7 Residential, R8 Residential Districts, the M1, M2, and M3 Multiple Dwelling Zoning Districts, as well as the C1 Commercial District. Cheltenham is meeting fair share requirements by providing a significant amount of land zoned for fair share housing types.



Another fair share determinant considers the ratio of existing single-family housing units to other housing types. In 2000, 37 percent of the total number of housing units within the Township was multifamily, which include low and high-rise apartments. This percentage represents the second largest type of housing within the Township. Single-family detached units comprise 51 percent of the total units and single-family attached units, either twins or townhouses, make up 12 percent of the total number of units within the Township. Thus, nearly half of the housing units within the Township are comprised of either single-family attached or multifamily units. This ratio indicates that Cheltenham is providing a full range of housing types to its residents and suggests that fair share requirements are being addressed. Table 21 indicates housing units by types as a percentage of the total for Cheltenham as well as a few of the

Township's surrounding communities. The data in Table 21 indicates that the Township is not only consistent with surrounding communities but it actually contains a greater level of housing diversity than many of its neighboring communities. Additionally, the Township amended the zoning ordinance in 1996 to include a provision for mobile home parks. With this addition, the Township created the potential for every type of housing unit to be developed within Cheltenham.

*Policy 1.2 - The Township will provide new housing units consistent with projected population need.*

As the preceding analysis has indicated, Cheltenham is currently meeting its fair share requirements by providing a wide variety of housing types throughout the Township. Cheltenham must then focus upon maintaining this diverse housing stock as well as meeting future housing demands.

Population growth is the basic determinant of housing or dwelling units needed. Based on the population forecasts found in Table 22 the population in Cheltenham is expected to decrease by approximately 150

persons by the year 2025. However, the Township believes that their population will remain relatively stable or increase slightly. It is anticipated that the current housing stock will meet the needs of the future population.

Table 22  
Population Forecasts: 2000-2025

|            | 2000 Census | 2005 Forecast | 2010 Forecast | 2015 Forecast | 2020 Forecast | 2025 Forecast | 2000-2025 % Change |
|------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Cheltenham | 36,875      | 36,900        | 36,770        | 36,700        | 36,680        | 36,730        | -0.4%              |

Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

**Objective 2: The Township will encourage the rehabilitation, conservation, and preservation of the existing housing stock**

As stated previously, Cheltenham contains a diverse housing stock, which is anticipated to meet the housing needs of the population through the year 2025. Thus, the preservation and maintenance of these existing units becomes increasingly significant. Additionally, the preservation and rehabilitation of housing contributes to the maintenance of neighborhood character within the Township. The preservation and maintenance of historical housing will be discussed in detail within the Historic Preservation Chapter of this comprehensive plan.

*Policy 2.1 - The Township will consider regulations/codes to ensure that all housing units are maintained in a manner that is consistent with the comfort, safety, and general welfare of the Citizens of Cheltenham.*

Overall, the housing stock in Cheltenham is in excellent condition. However, a poorly maintained house or property can have a negative impact on surrounding properties as well as the neighborhood as a whole. The Township will explore ways to ensure that properties are maintained in a manner that is consistent with Township goals and objectives. This should include adopting a property maintenance code. The code’s standards could include maintenance requirements for fences and walls, sidewalks, public rights-of-way, maintenance of structures, and landscaping. Additional standards could limit the amount and location of outdoor storage within residential neighborhoods. Property maintenance standards can be very useful for maintaining vacant or rental housing units where the owner of the property may not be living on-site.

The Township will also review existing code enforcement procedures to determine the best way to enforce property maintenance standards. While such issues of property maintenance are often complaint-based, the Township may consider taking a proactive approach that could involve site inspections by a code enforcement officer on a regular basis.

In addition, the Township will consider upgrading its real estate registration process, which would involve pre-settlement inspections to address the issues regarding street address, smoke detectors, curbs, sidewalks, street trees, and sump pumps.

*Policy 2.2 - The Township will continue to provide information to residents regarding assistance options for the rehabilitation of existing residential units.*

The Township will continue to explore federal and state housing rehabilitation grants and loan programs to determine how they can be utilized to help preserve the existing housing stock. This information will continue to be conveyed to the residents of Cheltenham in order to allow



them to avail themselves of any rehabilitation assistance that may be available. The Township is currently working with the Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Development on creating a housing program for the LaMott community.

***Objective 3: The Township will continue encourage age-defined and retirement housing in appropriate areas.***

Over the last thirty years the Township has seen a steady increase in the number of persons 65 years of age or older. In 2000, 19 percent of the Township's population was 65 year of age or older and this figure is expected to continue to increase. Additionally, the number of persons per household within Cheltenham has also decreased over the last thirty years. This trend is partly attributed to the aging population. Future housing initiatives will have to consider this aging population and the types of housing units required to address their needs.

*Policy 3.1 - The Township will continue to encourage housing for elderly with special needs in residential areas or areas of residential character through consistent application of the zoning ordinance.*

The Township currently permits life care facilities for the elderly within the LC Zoning District. The district was designed to only permit the development of housing for elderly with special needs. The Township also permits old age homes by special exception within the R5, R6, R7, and R8 Residential Districts. Recognizing the aging population and the increased potential need for this type of housing, the Township will evaluate existing conditions to determine whether additional sites for this type of housing are needed. Specifically, the Township will explore permitting assisted living facilities within existing multifamily and office zoning districts where feasible. The Township will continue to review development regulations to assure that they are not overly restrictive relative to this type of use. The Township will also revise its zoning ordinance to reflect current land use language regarding elderly housing and assisted living.

***Objective 4: The Township will encourage home businesses as well as residential conversions when they are compatible with the surrounding properties, the neighborhood, and the economic development goals of the Township.***

Numerous cities and towns throughout the country are facing the issue of home businesses and the conversion of residential structures into commercial, office, or multifamily uses. Today's technology is making it easier for people to run a primary business or satellite office from home. Additionally, many communities are finding that, over the years, development patterns may have caused residential structures to be located in areas that have become more commercial in nature.

Cheltenham has historically been a primarily residential Township with approximately 3,000 acres of land utilized for residential purposes. These residential structures include many older homes that are quite large by today's standards. Many of these structures can prove difficult to maintain or are not desired by smaller households. Additionally, development patterns have changed over the years resulting in certain residential areas becoming more commercial or office-like in nature. This, combined with the small amount of office and commercial space available, require that the Township take a proactive response to home businesses in the effort to promote economic development and maintain the residential character of its neighborhoods.

*Policy 4.1 - The Township will continue to implement the Home Business Ordinance.*

In February of 1999, the Township revised its zoning ordinance regarding the permitting and regulation of home businesses. Previously the Township only permitted home businesses to include professions of law and medicine. Recognizing the changes in technology and economic conditions, the Township has amended the code to permit a broader range of home occupations and include more specific regulations to

ensure the maintenance of residential character. These include but are not limited to: requiring that the business only be operated by the owner of the residence, limiting the number of employees to two, and prohibiting outdoor display or storage of goods. The ordinance requires that owners of home businesses obtain a business license and a health license if required. The Township will continue to support home businesses that are compatible with the neighborhood through consistent implementation of the home business ordinance. The Township will also review this ordinance on a regular basis to determine the need for revisions based on its performance within the community. Recently, the Township has begun considering a bed and breakfast ordinance in order to allow and regulate this type of use within certain residential districts.

*Policy 4.2 - The Township will continue to permit residential conversions that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.*

Converting single-family residential structures into multifamily or nonresidential uses can bring many benefits to a community such as Cheltenham. The average household size within the Township has decreased and the number of persons over the age of 65 has increased. Permitting certain larger single-family homes to be converted to multifamily uses can provide housing alternatives to these smaller households. It can be especially convenient to older residents who find the larger structures too difficult to maintain alone. Additionally, allowing residential structures to be converted to nonresidential uses can have a positive economic impact on a municipality such as Cheltenham, that has limited commercial and office zoning.

While residential conversions can have several positive effects, they may also create numerous concerns regarding neighborhood continuity and preservation that must be addressed. These concerns include issues of property maintenance, increased traffic through residential areas, and the alteration of residential façades. Accordingly, when a municipality decides to permit the conversion of single-family residential structures appropriate regulations must be in place to address these concerns.

The Township currently permits the conversion of single-family residential structures into multifamily uses within the R8 Residential Zoning District. This is permitted only by special exception and subject to certain conditions, which include no major structural alteration of the building, a minimum lot area of 2,000 square feet per family, and no reduction of yard or building area. The Township will analyze additional districts to determine whether such residential conversions are appropriate elsewhere and whether further regulatory conditions are required.

The Township currently permits, by variance, the conversion of a residence for use as executive offices or research laboratories within the R3, R4, R5, R6, R7, and R8 Zoning Districts subject to several conditions. Recognizing the importance of such conversions and the need to maintain neighborhood compatibility, the Township will review the existing regulations to determine the possibility of permitting additional compatible uses that retain the character of the surrounding neighborhood. Additionally, the Township will consider permitting the aforementioned residential conversions by special exception or conditional use rather than by variance as is currently required.

The Township will also take a comprehensive look at existing development patterns. Areas that may have been primarily residential in the past but have become more commercial over the years will be identified. Once these areas are identified the Township can determine the most appropriate course of action such as implementing an overlay district or possibly rezoning the area in question.

***Objective 5: The Township will continue to support the unique characteristics of its neighborhoods and encourage infill and redevelopment activities that are consistent with the existing character of these neighborhoods.***

Neighborhoods can be defined as diverse social and economic entities with unique characteristics recognized by residents and the community as a whole. Strong neighborhoods combine public spaces,



social infrastructure, economic opportunity, urban services, and a safe environment. Neighborhoods should be recognized as the building blocks of community development. In short, strong communities are built out of strong neighborhoods.



As noted earlier, Cheltenham Township is primarily built out and over the years numerous unique and beautiful neighborhoods have developed. These neighborhoods boast distinctive character and architectural design. For example, Colonial Revival styles are the most prominent in the Cheltenham Hills area and Victorian and early 20th century styles are most prominent in the Melrose Park area. It is this type of neighborhood individuality and defining characteristics that the Township wishes to preserve.

A 1997 survey by Eshelman & Townsend, Ltd. of the residents of Cheltenham revealed that the Township is in fact a community of neighborhoods with the majority of residents identifying with their immediate neighborhood rather than the Township as a whole. Thus, the Township recognizes that a thorough comprehensive plan must address these neighborhoods and plan for their continued success.

*Policy 5.1 – The Township will continue to work with the residents to establish neighborhood demographics and related mapping tools for use in future planning initiatives.*

Cheltenham’s neighborhoods were developed over a period of more than a half a century. Within these neighborhoods there are generally accepted and understood boundaries. The Township will review these boundaries and develop an official neighborhood map. Once neighborhood boundaries are formalized, statistics such as population, housing type, and tenure can be developed. These statistics can then be utilized to identify areas of concern, develop a neighborhood vision, and support the need for maintaining the unique character of each neighborhood. Additional mapping efforts could show neighborhood resources such as religious institutions, community centers, and neighborhood historic landmarks.

*Policy 5.2 - The Township will continue to support collaborative neighborhood planning initiatives.*

As stated earlier, many of the Township’s residents strongly identify with the neighborhood in which they live. In order for the Township to implement the housing objectives found within this element, such as compatible infill development, the Township must have a clear understanding of the existing character and the unique sense of place that is found within each neighborhood. Furthermore, the Township must remain informed of ongoing concerns and issues that arise within each neighborhood.

In this regard, the Township will encourage neighborhood-based coalitions that can assist in the articulation of neighborhood views on community-wide issues. Neighborhoods should be encouraged to determine the best organizational structure suited to meet their needs such as, but not limited to neighborhood associations, co-ops, advisory boards, and neighborhood improvement districts. Once such groups are established, the Township may want explore developing neighborhood plans that address specific concerns and plans for the future.

*Policy 5.3 – The Township will ensure that infill development and redevelopment initiatives are consistent with the protection of the existing character of the neighborhood through consistent application of the zoning ordinance.*

Consistent application of the zoning ordinance is one way to achieve infill residential development that is consistent with existing development patterns. Lot dimensions, density, and building mass often contribute to established development patterns within a neighborhood. Therefore, the use of zoning requirements can help retain the unique character of the neighborhood. Variances can serve to undermine the continuity and maintenance of residential character that such development regulations strive to

protect. Accordingly, the Township will continue to thoroughly review all variance applications to insure that the resulting development will maintain the current character of the neighborhood. The Township will also continue to review zoning requirements on an ongoing basis to ensure that existing requirements are consistent with the Township's infill development objectives. The Township will consider a review process for infill development as well as additions to housing to address stormwater management, grading, erosion and sediment control, and landscaping.

*Policy 5.4 - The Township will continue to explore ways to maintain and promote infill development and redevelopment that is consistent with the neighborhood.*

Identifying defining neighborhood characteristics is one important step toward maintaining and promoting compatible infill development. In this regard the Township will work with each neighborhood to develop neighborhood conservation plans. Such plans will include an analysis of existing conditions within the each neighborhood to identify specific characteristics that the neighborhood wishes to preserve. This analysis will then be utilized to develop a neighborhood style guide. Such a guide will contain those characteristics that are considered vital in establishing the unique character of the neighborhood. This style guide can serve as a tool to promote infill development that is consistent and compatible with the neighborhood.

Additionally, the Township will explore ways in which the essential components found within the neighborhood conservation plans may be incorporated into zoning regulations. This may be achieved in the form of an overlay district with design guidelines for the neighborhood. The Township will continue to explore the issue of an overlay district to determine how it can best be utilized within the Township.

## Chapter 5

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION



Cheltenham Township, as it exists today, is the product of over 300 years of history. The interactions of numerous generations have created a tapestry of events and people that have shaped both the physical and cultural development of the Township. The story of Philadelphia's first suburb is filled with names of local, regional, and national significance. The physical manifestation of this history is the unique building stock that lends Cheltenham its sense of place and character. It is the express desire of the Township to promote and preserve these historical artifacts through the expansion of regulatory tools and historic preservation efforts.

### History

#### First Purchasers

Cheltenham Township was created in 1682 as part of Philadelphia County. It was not until September 10, 1784 that Montgomery County was formed and Cheltenham became its smallest Township. William Penn deeded land grants to fifteen fellow Englishmen. Each was deeded a small parcel of land in the City of Philadelphia and a larger area, comprising of between 100 and 500 acres, in Cheltenham Township. Two of the "First Purchasers," Toby Leech and Richard Wall, settled in the Township and became instrumental in its early beginnings. They are considered to be the Township's Founding Fathers. Both were actively involved in the religious, political and social growth of the new community.

Toby Leech was a successful businessman and was involved in many enterprises upon his arrival in Cheltenham. He established a corn and fulling mill along the Tookany Creek, which gave Mill Road its name. One of the structures built by Tobias Leech across from his tannery and bake ovens was used to house his enslaved workers. It still stands today on Church Road. Another house Toby Leech built for his grandson Abraham, remains at Old Soldiers Road and Ryers Avenue. In addition to the tannery and bakery in Cheltenham, Toby Leech was involved in land transactions in Philadelphia, Delaware and Chester Counties.

Richard Wall's house stands at the entrance to Wall Park. The original section of the house is dated 1682 and additions were completed in 1727 and 1800. It is the most historic building in the Township and, until 1978, was the oldest house in continuous residence in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Wall name was lost when Sarah Wall, Richard's granddaughter, married George Shoemaker. The Shoemaker name is another name mentioned quite frequently in association with early development in the Township. Their daughter-in-law developed the Shoemaker Mill on the Tookany Creek, and Shoemakertown (now part of Elkins Park) developed around it.

Humphrey Morrey (also referred to as Merry) was another significant First Purchaser. He was heavily involved in politics and served as the first mayor of Philadelphia between 1691 and 1701. His only surviving son, Richard, inherited this land grant, in addition to other land that was acquired by Humphrey Morrey. Richard Morrey was one of the first Americans to free his slaves and distribute land to them. The area in which they settled, which was one of the first African-American settlements in the country, became known as Guineatown because many of the slaves had originally come from Guinea. Later the area would become known as Edge Hill, named after the Revolutionary War battle that was fought nearby in Abington Township. Most recently it has been considered as part of the Glenside district.

Richard Morrey fathered five children by his mistress, Cremona, who was herself one of Morrey's freed slaves. After his death, Cremona Morrey later married John Frey. Upon her death, the Morrey children contested the land. Eventually, it was agreed that the land would be sold and the proceeds divided among her children. Cremona Frey Jr., Cremona's daughter by John Frey, settled on a portion of the remaining land and the house that was built there still stands, although much altered, on Limekiln Pike near Waverly Road.

The Mather family is another notable name in Cheltenham's history, though no one in the family was among the First Purchasers. Joseph Mather came from England as an indentured servant and upon the completion of his servitude, married Elizabeth Russell, whose father, John Russell, was one of the First Purchasers. The centrally located original 300 acre tract purchased by John Russell was divided over successive generations of Mather descendants, which through intermarriage, would also come to include descendants of the Wall and Leech families. The house built by Bartholomew Mather in 1781 at the northeast corner of Church Road and Washington Lane is of note for its historical significance. During the Revolutionary War, a spring on the property was used as a watering place by American and British troops fighting in the Battle of Edge Hill. During the Civil War, the house was used as a stop along the Underground Railroad. The house was later demolished.

### **Early Industrial Development**

The Tookany Creek proved to be the lifeblood of Cheltenham's early development. The creek provided industrial opportunities for early settlers and entrepreneurs. Many of the mills along the creek began as gristmills and were expanded to accommodate the changing needs of the local population as well as to reflect the changing technology of the times. As the mills prospered, small villages containing workers' housing and supporting businesses grew up around them. By the early twentieth century, most of the mills had been abandoned and demolished and the Township began the process of reacquiring the land along the Tookany Creek as recreation and open space. However, the mills have left a permanent mark on land use in the Township because the original villages developed around them.

In 1690 Richard Dungworth built the Township's first gristmill. The ownership of this mill changed hands a few times and was eventually purchased by Benjamin Rowland Sr. This mill was then incorporated into the thriving shovel manufacturing business that had been developed by his nephew, Benjamin Rowland Jr. By the 1880s, T. Rowland and Sons was the second largest producer of shovels in the United States. The large number of employees that were employed at the Rowland complex precipitated the development of Milltown, which later became known as Cheltenham Village. The mill was abandoned and demolished in 1929, but the Shovel Shop at 300 Ashbourne Road remains as a testament to the village's early history.

Areas of what is now Elkins Park developed around early mill establishments. Shoemakertown, later known as Ogontz, grew around a mill developed by Dorothy Shoemaker and her brother-in-law, Richard Mather, in 1746. At its peak productivity, the mill was known as Charles Bosler, Flour and Feed. The mill has since been demolished. Adjacent to Shoemakertown, the village of Ashbourne grew around a mill that had originally been built by Toby Leech in 1706. The mill reached its greatest prominence as the Meyer and Ervien Fork Factory in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Very few of the original mills along Tookany Creek, or branches thereof, remain in the Township. C. Hammond's Tacony Edge Tool Works, which produced hammers and sledges, was eventually purchased for residential use. Knight's Mill, also known as Paxson's Mill and Rice's Mill, no longer exists. Originally the mill produced flour, but in the twentieth century, it was converted to a carpentry mill that produced commodities such as window and doorframes, shutters and stairs. A few of the outbuildings were converted to residential use and some of the foundations were incorporated into new structures.

### **Estate Development**

During a fifty year period spanning the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, Cheltenham established itself as one of Philadelphia's most prominent suburbs. It is during this time span that some of Philadelphia's most influential high society members constructed large estates in the Township. The palatial estates not only afforded their owners the opportunity to escape the overcrowded city, but also provided them a place in which to entertain their contemporaries and showcase their wealth. Many large mansions dotted the landscape by the early twentieth century as wealthy estate owners tried to outdo each other.

Jay Cooke was one of the first notable figures to build an estate in Cheltenham. Cooke established himself as a railroad tycoon and was known as the "financier of the Civil War" because he successfully negotiated a federal loan for the war by selling treasury notes to the masses. He was also involved in the abolitionist movement and provided stops along the Underground Railroad. He was involved in the community and contributed to the construction of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, where his mausoleum is now housed. His stately "Ogontz" mansion was located on a 200 acre estate bordered by Ashbourne Road, Washington Lane and Church Road. In 1883 it was converted to the Ogontz School for Girls. This finishing school operated on the site until 1917 when it moved to Abington. Joseph Widener purchased the property and the house was demolished. A few years later Ronaele Manor was constructed on this site.

John W. Wanamaker was another famous Philadelphia businessman who constructed his estate in Cheltenham. Lindenhurst, complete with its own railroad station, was built on a seventy-seven acre parcel bordered by Township Line Road, Old York Road and Washington Lane. The first Lindenhurst was destroyed by fire in 1907 and the second Lindenhurst was demolished in 1944. Henry W. Breyer, Jr., of ice cream fame, purchased the abandoned property in 1929. Breyer donated the former Wanamaker land to the Boy Scouts of America for use as a wildlife preserve.

Abraham Barker was half of the financing team of Barker Brothers. His estate, Lyndon, was located south of Church Road between Greenwood Avenue and Washington Lane. His son, Wharton is the only Cheltenham resident to run for president. He was the Fusion Populist candidate in 1890 but lost to incumbent William McKinley. After the Barker Brothers suffered financial failure Cyrus W. Curtis purchased the estate. Curtis had acquired his wealth in the newspaper business publishing magazines such as the *Saturday Evening Post* and the *Ladies' Home Journal*. Curtis established an impressive arboretum on the property and after his death Lyndon was demolished while the potting shed and pergola were retained and the property donated to the Township. George Horace Lorimer, editor of Curtis' *Saturday Evening Post*, built his home, Belgrame, a half mile west of Lyndon.





William Welsh Harrison commissioned Horace Trumbauer in 1893 to design the gothic castle that now stands as the administration building for Arcadia University. Trumbauer's design of Grey Towers established him as Cheltenham's premier architect. Many of his designs were patterned on castles and palaces in Europe. An example of this is Lynnewood Hall, which was designed for transportation magnate P.A.B. Widener. This striking building was patterned after Prior Park in Bath, England and the gardens were designed in the formal French style. Trumbauer was originally sought out by the wealthy elite to design large estate buildings, but he also designed many of the smaller area residences.

William L. Elkins commissioned Trumbauer to build numerous buildings that still remain in the Township. Elstowe Manor was completed in 1902 and is now the Dominican Retreat House, Prouille. In 1896, Trumbauer designed Cheltenham House, which was the home of Elkins' son, George. Another stately mansion designed by Trumbauer was given by Elkins as a

wedding present to his daughter, Stella, upon her marriage to George Tyler. In 1932, upon Mrs. Tyler's donation, the building became the Stella Elkins Tyler School of Art of Temple University.

Another Cheltenham resident of note is John B. Stetson, maker of the infamous "ten-gallon hat." His residence, Idro, was located on Old York Road near Juniper Avenue. Several literary notables resided in Cheltenham. Harriet Beecher Stowe resided on Elm Avenue while she composed the classic novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; while John Luther Long, who penned the story that would become Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, lived on Ashbourne Road. Ezra Pound, the noted American poet, was raised in Wyncote and attended the Cheltenham Military Academy.

## Historic Districts

Cheltenham has two districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The first district, LaMott, is a post-Civil War residential development known historically as the location of the first training grounds for African-American troops. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on October 31, 1985 and contains 35 units. The second district, Wyncote, is a late nineteenth/early twentieth century wealthy suburb noted for its architectural significance. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on October 16, 1986 and has 178 units.

### LaMott

This historic district is located in the south central portion of the Township. It is bounded by Penrose Avenue, Graham Lane, Dennis Street, and Cheltenham Avenue. Lucretia Mott lived here from the 1850s to her death in 1880. She was well known as a committed abolitionist, advocate for women's rights, and Quaker minister. Her Quaker views led her to become strongly involved with the abolitionist movement and her home, Roadside, was used as a stop along the Underground Railroad. In 1911, the home was demolished and an important historical landmark was lost. The exclusive Latham Park residential community is now located on the site and a Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission historical marker has been placed at its entrance as a memorial to Lucretia Mott's contributions to the community.

The residential development of LaMott can largely be attributed to Mott's son-in-law, Edward M. Davis. Davis was involved in speculative land development activities not only in LaMott, but throughout the Township. Davis' land company owned large tracts of land in the Township and sold them to wealthy Philadelphians such as John Wanamaker and Jay Cooke. During the Civil War, Davis donated a tract of land to be used to train African-American troops for the Union forces. Camp William Penn, as it was called, operated between 1863 and 1865, and was the first such facility in the country constructed to solely train African-American recruits.

After the War, Davis returned to land speculation and sold off many of the parcels to working class families. At the same time, Thomas Keenan, another local real estate speculator, built houses from timbers salvaged from the Camp William Penn barracks. The neighborhood became known as Camptown, in honor of the camp that was once located there. Initially, white working class families, most of them Irish immigrants, inhabited the area. Gradually, working class African-Americans began to purchase lots. William A. Ritchie was an influential force in the integrated development of this community. He founded the LaMott Building and Loan Association and was instrumental in helping other African-American home and business owners settle in LaMott, thereby, establishing LaMott as one of the first racially integrated suburban communities. The community continued to prosper and gain population and the original schoolhouse that had been built by Edward M. Davis was replaced in 1878. This building now serves as the LaMott Community Center. Davis also donated the land for the original LaMott African Methodist Episcopal church that was constructed in 1888 and rebuilt in 1911.

LaMott was chosen as the official name of the community when a post office was established in 1885. The name Camptown was already in use by another Pennsylvania community and a new name had to be chosen for the post office. Residents decided on LaMott as a tribute to the woman who had been instrumental in the community's development.

### **Wyncote**

Wyncote was developed as a wealthy residential neighborhood in the late 1880s. The general borders of the district are Glenview Avenue, the SEPTA railroad line, Webster Avenue and Church Road. The district itself was created in a piecemeal fashion by six different developers as four distinct developments: Wyncote Village, the Redfield development, the Walt development, and the Tyson development. Lots were subdivided and well-known architects such as Horace Trumbauer and Frank Furness designed many of the residences. The most popular building style was Queen Anne, although Second Empire, Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival styles can also be found in the district. Deed restrictions were written to include minimum building costs, lot sizes, and setbacks. Thus, it was ensured that the area would remain an exclusive suburb. The Wyncote Improvement Association was also established in the 1890s to further this goal. By 1915, most of the lots had been developed.

The district also contains several non-residential buildings. All Hallows Episcopal Church, designed by Frank Furness, built in 1897, and the Calvary Presbyterian Church, built in 1899, were designed in the English Gothic style. The Wyncote-Jenkintown Train Station and waiting room, designed by Horace Trumbauer, are also included in the district because of the railroad's contribution to the growth of the community.

### **Scattered Site Inventory**

Much of Cheltenham's residential development started in the late nineteenth century as wealthy Philadelphians looked to outlying areas to develop their summer residences. Each tried to outdo the rest and hired famous architects such as Horace Trumbauer and Frank Furness and renowned landscape architects like the Olmsted Brothers to design their palatial estates. As Cheltenham Township began to develop as a middle-class suburb in the 1930s, many of these estates were subdivided and their magnificent residences demolished to make way for smaller dwellings. In some cases the outbuildings, such as greenhouses or butlers' residences, were converted into single-family dwellings. Still other buildings, such as the main building at Temple's Tyler School of Art and the Westminster Theological Seminary, survived demolition to be reincarnated as institutional uses.

The inventory that follows highlights some of these notable buildings within the Township. The majority of the survey was compiled using the Cultural Resources Survey prepared for Cheltenham Township by the Preservation Design Partnership in September of 1999, the Inventory of Historic and Cultural Resources prepared by Montgomery County in 1975, and the National Register Listed and Eligible Properties List from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Bureau for Historic Preservation from August 2002. The table lists properties as listed on the National Register of Historic

Places or as a property eligible or recommended for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The other resources listed in the table are local cultural resources. The National Register of Historic places are the country's official list of cultural resources and are authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

Table 23 Cheltenham Historic and Cultural Resources

\* Property Listed on the National Register of Historic Places

△ Property Eligible or Recommended for Listing on the National Register of Historic Places

| Map Number | Property Address   | Common Name  | Date        | Description   |
|------------|--|--|-------------|---|
| 1          | Ryers Avenue and Old Soldiers Road   | Leech Homestead  | c.1721      | This house was built by Toby Leech for his grandson Abraham. Leech was one of the original land grant recipients from England to settle in Cheltenham.  |
| 2*         | 300 Ashbourne Road   | Rowland House/Shovel Shop                                    | c.1774      | In the 19 <sup>th</sup> century, the Rowland Mill complex was the second largest producer of shovels in the U.S. This building is one of the few remnants from that era.  |
| 3          | 309, 315-17, 329, 334-36, and 342-44 Laurel Avenue; 603 Central Avenue; 304-06 and 308-10 Highland Avenue; 817-19 Rowland Avenue; 415 and 433 Ashbourne Road | Milltown Development/ Lower Mill of Rowland Complex          | c.1820-1877 | These properties were part of the development that surrounded the Lower Mill of the Rowland Mill Complex. The house at 433 Ashbourne Road was built by Revolutionary War Colonel Samuel Miles. It was later purchased by Thomas Rowland, owner of the T. Rowland and Sons Shovel Manufactory, who made additions to the house. The current house at 415 Ashbourne Road was once part of the shovel factory. |
| 4*         | 439 Ashbourne Road   | George K. Heller School                                      | c.1795      | This was the site of the first school in the Township. The original building was replaced in 1883 with the current building. It is now used as the Cheltenham Art Center and is the oldest remaining school building in Cheltenham.   |
| 5          | Elm Avenue   | Harriet Beecher Stowe House                                  | c.1730      | Harriet Beecher Stowe resided at this site while she wrote <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> .   |
| 6          | 8003, 8026, 8028 and 8032 Jenkintown Road  | Milltown Development/ Upper Mill of Rowland Complex          | c.1840-66   | The houses on these lots are associated with the Upper Mill of the Rowland mill complex. It was operated as a tilt hammer and blade mill.   |
| 7          | 216 Church Road  | Tacony Edge Tool Works                                       | c.1800      | This property was one of the buildings included in the Charles Hammond's Tacony Edge Tool Works. He purchased the acreage in 1843 for his milling operation and the house at the current site may have already been on the property when Hammond purchased the property.  |
| 8△         | 250 Ashbourne Road   | John Luther Long House                                       | c.1880-90   | This house was once owned by John Luther Long. Long published the story in 1898 and it eventually became the libretto for Puccini's opera, <i>Madame Butterfly</i> .  |
| 9△         | 7811 Mill Road   | Springdale   | c.1840-60   | The house and barn at this site were originally part of William Elliot's "Springdale" estate in the late 19 <sup>th</sup> century. The property was later purchased by Lester Dingee, a Township Commissioner, who had a real estate and a hops business in Cheltenham.   |
| 10△        | 7704-06, 7714,7716, 7720, 7730, 7732,7736, 7703, 7725, and 7733 Mill Road  | Ashbourne Village Development/ Myers and Ervien Fork Factory | c.1860-75   | All of the houses included here are part of the development that once surrounded the Myers and Ervien Fork Factory, founded in 1848. The factory itself became an experimental chemical factory in 1915.  |



| Map Number | Property Address                     | Common Name  | Date      | Description   |
|------------|--------------------------------------|--|-----------|---|
| 11         | Ashbourne Road                       | Shoemaker Burial Grounds                             |           | The gravestones at this cemetery date back to the 1700s. It contains the graves of Richard Wall Jr. and some of his descendants.  |
| 12         | 453 Sterling Road                    | Lynn Residence                                       | c.1974    | Designed by architect Robert Lynn as his own dwelling. The house is distinctive because of the central projecting round tower at its entrance.  |
| 13         | 8203, 8219-21 and 8225 Forest Avenue | Ashbourne Development/ Myers and Ervien Fork Factory | c.1890    | The houses at 8219 and 8225 were once owned by members of the Ervien family, who were partners in the Myers and Ervien Fork Factory. The houses are notable for their Queen Anne style architecture. Elkins Park, Inc. subdivided and developed the surrounding area in the early 1900s.          |
| 14         | 8231 Old York Road                   | Beth Sholom Synagogue                                | c.1950    | This synagogue is a conceptualization of Mount Sinai designed by prominent architect, Frank Lloyd Wright.   |
| 15*        | 8230 Old York Road                   | Township Administration Building                     | 1915      | Henry W. Breyer, of ice cream fame, purchased land adjacent to the Wanamaker estate at the southwest corner of Old York Road and Township Line. Breyer's home called Haredith, was designed by William F. Koelle. The structure has been used as the Township Administration Building since 1956. |
| 16*        | Church and Old York Roads            | Wall House   | c.1682    | Until 1978, this was the oldest house in Pennsylvania still in continuous use. Richard Wall received one of the first land grants in the Township. Several additions have been made to original residence. The Township owns the site and the house stands at the entrance to Wall Park.          |
| 17*        | Spring and Park Avenues              | Elkins Park Railroad Station                         | c.1899    | The station was built by William Elkins and served what was then the Ogontz Park area and what is today Elkins Park. This station spurred the suburban growth of the early 20 <sup>th</sup> century.  |
| 18Δ        | 502 Spring Avenue                    | Elkins-Cole House                                    | c.1898    | This house was part of William Elkins' "Ogontz Park" residential development that centered on the Elkins Park train station. The house was designed by Horace Trumbauer and is typical of the houses built in the area at the time.   |
| 19Δ        | 404 Ashbourne Road                   | William E. Dobbins House                             | c.1878    | This stone Victorian house was once owned by William Dobbins. William was the son of Richard Dobbins, who was a prominent builder in the area. The William Dobbins House was surrounded by "Elerslie," the large estate owned by his father.  |
| 20Δ        | 429 Ashbourne Road                   | Sylvan Edge  | c.1927    | This Georgian Revival house was deigned by the renowned Philadelphia architecture firm of Tilden, Register & Pepper and is representative of the suburban housing constructed at the time.  |
| 21*        | 7805 Old York Road                   | St. Paul's Episcopal Church                          | c.1861    | This church, which was financed by Jay Cooke and Robert Shoemaker, is the Township's oldest remaining religious institution. This church contains Tiffany windows.  |
| 22         | 7800 Old York Road                   | Pen-Mar  | c.1860    | The house is of note because it was owned by Dr. J. Frederick Herbert. Herbert was the first president of the Old York Road Fire Company of Cheltenham.   |
| 23Δ        | 628 Stetson Road                     | Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Oser House                        | c.1940-42 | This Modern style house was designed by Louis Kahn, an influential architect of the 20 <sup>th</sup> century.   |
| 24Δ        | 7725 Penrose Avenue                  | Georgian Terrace/ Stella Elkins Tyler School of Art  | c.1905    | This Horace Trumbauer designed house was given by George W. Elkins as a wedding present to his daughter, Stella. When Stella Tyler moved in 1932, she donated the building to Temple University for use as an art school.   |

| Map Number | Property Address   | Common Name  | Date                                     | Description   |
|------------|--|--|--|---|
| 25         | 811, 855, 861-63, 869 Rock Lane and 786 West Church Road         | Cheltenham Hills Village Development/<br>Mather's Mill | c.1850                                   | These houses were part of the development surrounding Mather's grist and saw mill. The mill was later referred to as Kulp's Grist and Saw Mill in the late 19 <sup>th</sup> century.  |
| 26         | 1007 Serpentine Lane   | General Pardee-<br>Play House and<br>Guest House       | c.1860-<br>80                            | This house is one of the converted outbuildings remaining from the 31 acre estate that belonged to Brigadier General Arivistus Pardee, Jr. Pardee commanded the 147th Pennsylvania division in the Civil War. Pardee Field in Gettysburg was named in his honor.  |
| 27         | 7907 Toby Leech Drive,<br>7918-22 Hidden Drive, 900<br>Rock Lane | Ronaele Manor<br>Outbuildings                          | c.1925-<br>26                            | These three buildings were once part of the 114 acre Ronaele Manor estate owned by Eleanor Widener Dixon and Fitz Eugene Dixon. The buildings on the estate were designed by Horace Trumbauer and the grounds were designed by the Olmsted Brothers. The main building was demolished in 1974, but these outbuildings were converted to residences. The residence at 7907 Toby Leech Drive was the head butler's residence; the multi-family structure at 7918-22 Hidden Lane was part of the garage and greenhouse complex, and the residence at 900 Rock Lane was a skating pavilion and teahouse, and stood on the original site of Jay Cooke's mausoleum. |
| 28         | 125, 127, 129 and 131<br>Washington Lane                         | Heacock Subdivision                                    | c.1891                                   | These properties were subdivided from the estate of State Senator Joseph Heacock after his death. These four Queen Anne style houses appear to be some of the first houses built after the subdivision.   |
| 29         | Church Road and<br>Washington Lane                               | Mather House   | c.1781                                   | The house on this site was built by Bartholomew Mather. An historical marker on the site notes that the site was used by American and British troops during the Revolutionary War. The house may also have been a stop along the Underground Railroad during the Civil War.   |
| 30         | 1468 Ashbourne Road and<br>1421 Hopeland Road                    | Hopeland   | c.1770<br>and<br>c.1913,<br>respectively | These houses were both part of the 22 acre "Hopeland," estate, which was subdivided from Jay Cooke's 100 acre estate. Hopeland was owned by Sydney F. Tyler, father-in-law of Stella Elkins Tyler. Horace Trumbauer remodeled some of the outbuildings on the site include these two structures.  |
| 31Δ        | 8107 Accomac Road  | Keewaydin  | c.1892                                   | This stone Shingle style house is one of the many houses designed by Horace Trumbauer for the new wealthy elite that moved to Cheltenham around the turn-of-the-century.  |
| 32*        | 1150 West Church Road  | Milmoral   | c.1900                                   | H.G. Fetterolf established himself as the owner of a carpet and rug manufacturing firm in Philadelphia. The colonial revival style dwelling is characteristic of those constructed in Wyncote by Philadelphia's new wealth. The property is currently privately owned and will be listed on the National Register.  |
| 33         | 166 Fernbrook Avenue   | The Pound House  |  | The noted American poet Ezra Pound resided in Wyncote between 1893 and 1908.  |
| 34*        | Church and Greenwood<br>Avenues                                  | Curtis Hall and<br>Arboretum                           | 1896                                     | Lyndon, the estate of Wharton Barker that was later purchased by Cyrus H. K. Curtis, once stood on this site. The Barker residence was demolished in 1895. The grounds of Curtis' estate were designed by the renowned landscape architects, the Olmstead brothers. The Victorian Mansion has been demolished but the music hall and arboretum are now owned by the Township and is open to public.   |

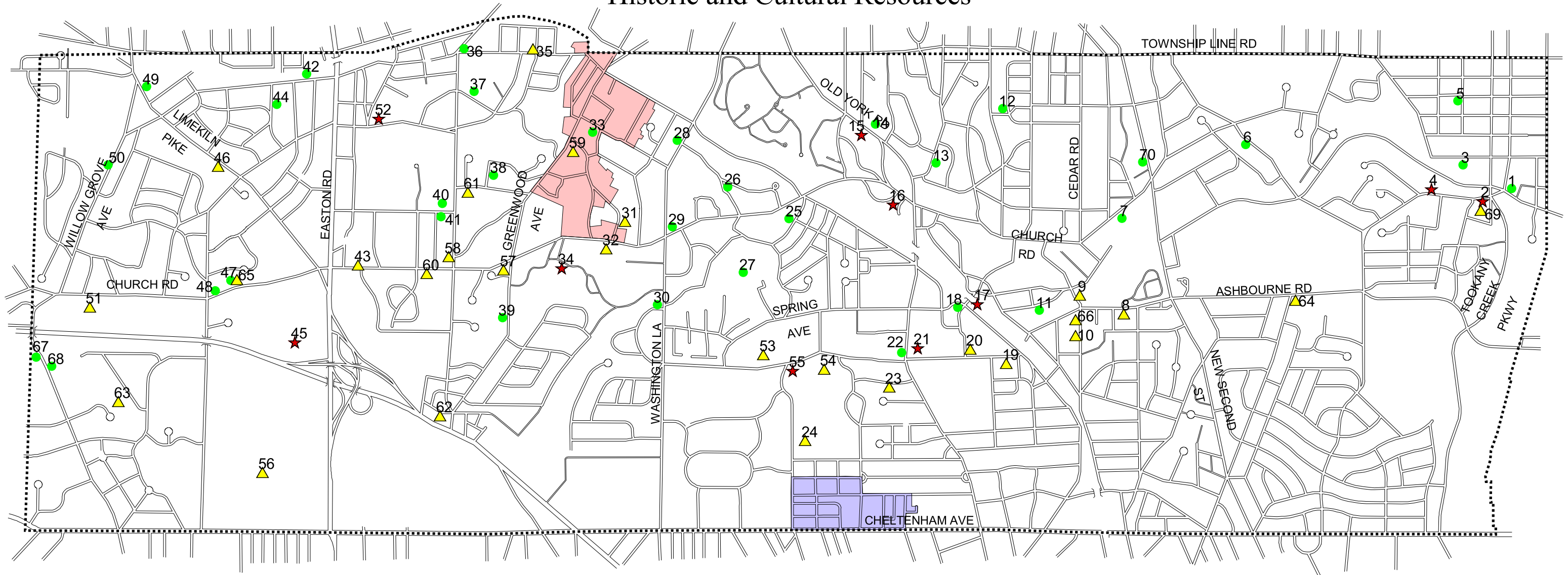
| Map Number | Property Address                         | Common Name                             | Date        | Description   |
|------------|--|---|-------------|---|
| 35Δ        | 31 Hewett Road                           | Charles Hewett House                    | c.1892      | This was one of the houses originally built as part of Wanamaker's Beechwood Heights development. The development was in close proximity to the Jenkintown train station as was typical of suburban development at the time. This particular house appears to be the work of Horace Trumbauer.  |
| 36         | 835 Glenside Avenue                      | Knight's Mill                           | c.1725      | The first grist mill on this site was owned and operated by Isaac Knight. It was also later part of Daniel Rice's and Paxson's mill complexes.  |
| 37         | 215 Hewett Road                          | Brannin House                           | c.1850-60   | This house was originally part of a larger estate that was subdivided. Hewett Road and multiple house lots had been laid out on the property by 1927.   |
| 38         | 434 Crescent Road                        | Breezewood                              | c.1897      | This stone Colonial Revival house was designed by Horace Trumbauer. The original property included a stable, which is now a residence, and two small frame buildings.   |
| 39         | 1015-17 Greenwood Avenue                 | Elvetham                                | c.1806      | These properties were part of the original 28 acre estate owned by Charles Hewett who was one of the first officers of the Jenkintown National Bank.  |
| 40         | 213 Royal Avenue and 316 Rices Mill Road | Lifeland                                | c.1850-90   | The "Lifeland" estate was one of the many summer retreat houses built by Philadelphia's new wealth at the turn of the century. The original estate contained a windmill, which has since been removed.  |
| 41         | 315 Sinkler Road                         | Potter's Shed                           | c.1900-05   | Designed by Horace Trumbauer as part of the greenhouse complex for John Gribbel's 42 acre estate, "Saint Austell Hall." The building was later converted to a residence.  |
| 42Δ        | 101 W. Glenside Avenue                   | Glenside Train Station                  | c.1873      | One of the few remaining stations of the original Reading Railroad stations that is still in use.   |
| 43Δ        | 1601 W. Church Road                      | Trolley Power Station Building          | c.1897-1909 | This building was the powerhouse for Widener and Elkins' Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company's Philadelphia and Willow Grove Street Railway. The building now hosts professional offices and is now part of Arcadia University.  |
| 44         | 141 S. Lynnwood Avenue                   | Shady Nook Farm                         | c.1860-77   | This Gothic Revival style house was originally part of a 57 acre farm inherited by David Heist. Heist was very active in Township affairs as a director of the Limekiln Turnpike Company, member of the Lutheran Church of Germantown, director of Jenkintown National Bank and a member of the Cheltenham School Board.  |
| 45*        | Easton Road and Limekiln Pike            | Grey Towers                             | 1894        | The castle was originally part of W. W. Harrison's estate. The castle was an early design of Horace Trumbauer, and Grey Towers established his reputation with the wealthy estate owners in Cheltenham. The castle is now used as a dormitory and social center by Arcadia University. This property is a National Historic Landmark.   |
| 46Δ        | 312 and 318 Limekiln Pike                | Guineatown Development/<br>Morrey House | c.1766-1800 | Both of these properties were once part of an estate that was owned by Richard Morrey, a son of one of the original land grant recipients. The original dwellings on these lots were originally built by the daughter of Morrey's mistress and have been incorporated into the existing buildings. Morrey freed his slaves and deeded land grants to them; the area in which they settled became known as Guineatown because many of them had come from New Guinea. |

| Map Number | Property Address   | Common Name   | Date      | Description  |
|------------|--|---|-----------|--|
| 47         | 2539 W. Church Road  | Sunnyside   | c.1756    | This Georgian style house is probably associated with early mill development in the Harmer Hill village. The house was later incorporated into the "Sunnyside" estate.   |
| 48         | 2547, 2549 and 2551W. Church Road  | Harmer Hill Development   | c.1860-70 | These houses are associated with the Harmer Hill village located at Limekiln Pike and Easton Road. The village is now known as Waverly Heights.  |
| 49         | 43-45 Limekiln Pike  | Schmidheiser's General Store  | c.1883    | This general store, in conjunction with a hotel, blacksmith, wheelwright and lumber and coal business, once served the village of Edge Hill.   |
| 50         | 113, 119 and 139 Carroll Avenue;<br>300-308, 334 and 422 Willow Grove Avenue | Edge Hill Development/Edge Hill Iron Company                                | c.1840-77 | These residences were originally workers' housing associated with the Edge Hill Iron Company and Iron Ore Mine located in adjacent Springfield Township.   |
| 51△        | 2960 Church Road   | Westminster Theological Seminary  | 1891      | This Late Gothic Revival building was part of the "Sunset" estate owned by Clay Kemble, who was a director of the Union Traction Company along with Widener and Elkins. James Windrim, who is known for his design of the Masonic Temple in Philadelphia, designed the house.  |
| 52*        | 185 Keswick Ave  | Glenside War Memorial Hall  |           | The building was dedicated on Memorial Day 1927 to WWI veterans. On Veteran's Day 1944, it was rededicated to veterans of all U.S. wars. The Township purchased it in 1968.  |
| 53△        | 920 Spring Ave, Elkins Park  | Lynnewood Hall, Faith Theological Seminary, First Korean Church of New York | 1900      | Constructed by PAB Widener from 1898 to 1900, Lynnewood Hall was designed after an English manor located at Prior Park, Bath, England. Lynnewood Hall contained Widener's extensive art collection, which became one of the core collections for the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. The structure became Faith Theological Seminary in 1952 and is now owned by the First Korean Church of New York.  |
| 54△        | Ashbourne Road and Juniper Ave   | Dominican Retreat House   | 1902      | William L. Elkins bought John Michener's estate and renamed it the Needles. In 1898, Elkins demolished the Needles and began construction of Elstowe Manor, which was completed in 1902. The Dominican Sisters purchased the home and surrounding land in 1932. The Dominican Sisters added a dormitory wing in 1961 and use the building as a center.   |
| 55*        | Penrose Avenue and Ashbourne Road  | Cheltenham House/Elkins, George House                                       | c. 1896   | Designed by Horace Trumbauer in 1896, this was the home of William Elkin's son, George W. Elkins. A 1909 fire damaged the interior and it was rebuilt to Trumbauer design. The Dominican Sisters purchased it in 1949 from the Stephano family and renamed the building St. Dominic's Hall.  |
| 56△        | Waverly Rd, 309, Cheltenham Ave, Easton Road                                 | Holy Sepulchre Cemetery   | c. 1892   | The cemetery land was purchased over a period of years from various owners. Archbishop Ryan purchased the original 50 acres at the northwest corner of Easton Road and Cheltenham Avenue in 1892. The first burial was in 1894. Subsequent land acquisitions were in 1893, 1897, 1910, 1928, and 1929. The cemetery is administered from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and extends along Cheltenham Avenue from Easton to Waverly Roads and to the 309 Expressway. |
| 57△        | 1299 Church Road   | John C. Martin Estate   |           |  |

| Map Number | Property Address                                 | Common Name   | Date    | Description  |
|------------|--|---|---------|--|
| 58Δ        | 333 Rices Mill Rd                                | Wyncote Elementary School   |         | Current school   |
| 59Δ        | 301 Bent Rd, Wyncote                             | Bend Terrace  | c. 1892 | William C. Cochran built this house to a design by Horace Trumbauer in French-Normandy style. Henry K. Walt, president of Jenkintown Trust Company bought it from Cochran in the early 1890s. The estate was subdivided around 1980 and Cheltenham Township bought a large portion of the ground and dedicated Robinson Park in October 1995.  |
| 60*        | Church Road, Wyncote                             | Fallow Field  |         |  |
| 61Δ        | Rices Mill Road and Deaver Road                  | Grau Property   |         |  |
| 62Δ        | Limekiln Pike                                    | Cedarbrook Hills Historic District  |         |  |
| 63Δ        | Southside of Willow Grove Avenue                 | Cresheim Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad  |         |  |
| 64Δ        | Oak Lane and Ashbourne Rd, Southeast corner      | Pleasant Hill Farm/Kerlin Farm  | 1686    | Everard Bolton built the original house on Kerlin Farm. During the American Revolution, the property became known as Pleasant Hill. The property became known as Heidelberg under new owners Robert and Margaret Haines in 1850. Following ownership by the Haines family for almost 100 years, the property was bought by Hugh and Janet McLaughlin and Josephine and Alfred Bowker in 1944. In 1985, Betty Barclay became the owner. |
| 65Δ        | 2539 W Church Rd                                 | Schulz Property   |         |  |
| 66Δ        | Mill Road, Union Avenue, Ashbourne Rd            | Elkins Park Historic District   |         | The Township is applying for a Certified Local Government Grant to document the feasibility of creating an Elkins Park Historic District.  |
| 67         | 1777 Willow Grove Avenue                         | Starr Residence Falcon Hill   | c. 1890 | Falcon Hill was the residence of John C. Sims. Isaac T. Starr bought the estate and renamed it Laverock Hill. Architect Charles A. Platt was hired by Starr to remodel the residence and gardens and in 1915 landscape architect Ellen Ship designed the layout of the garden. A portion of farmland in the Starr estate was needed for Route 309 and the remaining farmland was sold for residential development in the 1950s.        |
| 68         | 1740 Willow Grove Avenue                         | Platt Residence   |         | Owned by Charles A. Platt III. Additions to the house and alterations were made in 1915 based on plans by Joseph P. Sims.  |
| 69Δ        | Central Avenue between Ashbourne Rd and Hillside | Cheltenham Village District   |         |  |
| 70         | New Second Street north of Church Road           | Ashmead House   | c. 1705 | John Ashmead, purchased a land grant from William Penn. While there is a question about when the house was built, the original part of the house was built around 1705 by Thomas Ashmead. In 1761, William Thomson bought the land and it remained in the family until around 1920. Fitz Eugene Dixon Sr. was the next owner until his death when the property was sold to the Bill Cosby family in 1983.                              |
| Δ          | Various Locations                                | Train stations – Elkins Park, Glenside, Wyncote-Jenkintown, Ogontz, Melrose Park, Cheltenham and Lawndale |         | The Township will be pursuing a thematic nomination to document the historical importance of the railroad in Cheltenham.   |



# Cheltenham Township Historic and Cultural Resources



- ★ Property Listed on National Register
- Cultural Resource
- ▲ Eligible or Recommended for National Register Listing

- LaMott Historic District
- Wyncote Historic District

Figure 17



Base map prepared July 2004



**MCPC** Montgomery  
County  
Planning  
Commission

Montgomery County Courthouse - Planning Commission  
PO Box 311 Norristown PA 19404-0311  
(p) 610 278-3722 (f) 610 278-3941  
www.montcopa.org/plancom

This map is based on 2000 ortho photography and official sources. Property lines were compiled from individual block maps from the Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, with no verification from the deed. This map is not meant to be used as a legal definition of properties or for engineering purposes.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

**GOAL: PROMOTE THE UNIQUE HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES THAT ARE LOCATED WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AND ENCOURAGE THE PRESERVATION, REHABILITATION, AND RESTORATION OF THESE IRREPLACEABLE STRUCTURES AND LANDSCAPES.**

Cheltenham Township has many historically and culturally significant structures that contribute to its charm and allure. Some of these structures are significant because of an event that occurred there, a person who lived there or the person who built it; but most are significant because of their unique architecture. Much of Cheltenham's architecture is the product of a bygone era and will never be recreated in new development. The factor that makes these structures unique also makes them vulnerable age. It is the intent of the Township to preserve its housing stock and encourage the private preservation and maintenance of buildings in an effort to save Cheltenham's outwardly visible charm.

***Objective 1: The Township will enhance and promote Historic Districts through legal guidelines and incentives, public awareness guidelines and an improved architectural review board.***

Cheltenham currently has two districts protected by its H-D Historical District. The LaMott District and the Wyncote District are both listed on the National Register of Historic Places. As such, the Township adopted zoning legislation to allow for proper oversight of properties within these unique communities. It is the goal Cheltenham Township to augment these existing regulations and to develop new guidelines and incentives that will encompass a larger portion of the Township's cultural and historic resources.

*Policy 1.1 - The Township will protect its historic districts through the fair and efficient application of legal guidelines and incentives.*

It is the intent of the Township to preserve its building stock through flexible legal mechanisms, such as the Board of Historic Architectural Review (BHAR), so as not to create unyielding guidelines that create undue hardships for property owners who wish to improve or renovate existing buildings. The Township will evaluate existing zoning districts to ensure that zoning code regulations can be reasonably applied to older structures that were most likely constructed before zoning was adopted in Cheltenham. The Township will apply existing regulations and create new regulations so as to minimize or avoid the time and expense associated with the variance procedure that may discourage home and business owners from making physical improvements to their home or business.

*Policy 1.2 - The Township will promote and showcase its historic districts through education, public awareness and community involvement.*

In an effort to effectively market its historic districts, the Township will supplement existing efforts to make information about cultural events available to residents as well as area realtors. Visual keys such as distinctive street signs and gateway signs will make residents and visitors aware of the area and its historic significance. Also, Cheltenham will continue to use its web page as a conduit for information concerning its historic districts and other culturally significant sites. The website currently contains information about the LaMott district and the Wall House, but will be augmented to include information about the Wyncote district as well as other sites that have been inventoried in this chapter. In addition to historical accounts, the website will include links to local and national historical associations as well as include a list of resources that may be consulted for further information.

One important asset for the Township is the Wall House. The Township owns and operates the Wall House as a museum and it is staffed by volunteers from the Historical Commission. The museum is open



to the public on Sundays from 1 PM to 4 PM. The Township is currently applying to the American Association of Museums in order to become an accredited museum and is applying for grants from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to help promote the history of the Township.

The Township will also perform outreach to residents living in historic structures or districts. Residents may not be aware of the significance of their dwelling or business or the proper technique for making additions or improvements to the structure. Flyers and workshops will be made available to residents, informing them of proper maintenance techniques and code regulations that may be applicable to their building. This type of outreach will promote awareness and help residents to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of their community.

Community interest groups and events are another technique the Township will employ to enhance community pride. The Township currently sponsors numerous events such as Market Day, the Glenside Street Fair, and the Antiques and Collectibles Show and Sale to promote historic resources. Cheltenham will continue to sponsor Township-wide events as well as events sponsored by local community groups who advance the cause of history and culture in their respective communities. A bulletin board will be added to the web page for the promotion of such events.

*Policy 1.3 - The Township will reevaluate and enhance the role of the Board of Historic Architecture Review.*

The H-D Historic District ordinance was added to the Township's zoning ordinance in 1974. It established a Board of Historic Architectural Review (BHAR) to guide any development or redevelopment in the LaMott and Wyncote districts. The Board serves as an advisory committee on matters of new construction, alterations and demolition of buildings in the district and has the authority to issue or deny a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for applications within these districts. The BHAR evaluates each proposal in terms of its effect on the district and the design, arrangement, texture, material, color, and relation to other structures and signs.

Currently, Cheltenham is the only Township in the State that has two BHARs to oversee its districts. While the districts are protected by the same ordinance, each is significant for different reasons and has its own unique features. The Certified Local Government program and the Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission suggest that the Township reevaluate the structure of the BHAR and look into establishing one BHAR that would contain members from each district. This merger would allow for a more specialized review and evaluation of each district's needs. The Township will evaluate the possibility of amending the HD Historical District guidelines in the zoning ordinance to effectuate these changes.

***Objective 2: The Township will encourage the development of new historic districts and the expansion of existing historic districts.***

In an effort to promote Cheltenham's historic nature, the *Cultural Resources Survey* was drafted by the Preservation Design Partnership in September 1999. The Survey is an inventory of historic buildings recognized at the national, state or local level, as well as those that have the potential to be recognized as such. The Township will seek to officially adopt this survey and utilize this information to augment the existing H-D Historical District that currently applies to the LaMott and Wyncote historical districts. It will also seek to create new historical districts or overlay districts in other areas in an effort to promote adaptive reuse and the retrofitting of buildings.

*Policy 2.1 - The Township will extend its H-D Historical Zoning District designation significance to other neighborhoods and communities with historic or cultural significance.*

The *Cultural Resources Survey* prepared by the Preservation Design Partnership has identified structures that potentially contribute to a historic district. Many of these are structures that were once part of early villages that formed around the early mill development along the Tookany Creek. The Township will

evaluate the feasibility of expanding the H-D Historical District zoning classification to create new districts around these properties.

The Township will try to create new H-D Historical Districts such that they will be complementary to the Enhancement Districts as defined in the recently adopted Commercial District Enhancement Plan (CDEP). The Enhancement Districts as defined in the CDEP are the Glenside District, Elkins Park East and West Districts, East Cheltenham Avenue District and the Cheltenham Village District. The redevelopment goals as defined in the CDEP are similar to those that may be found in some of the potential H-D Historical Districts. The CDEP promotes façades that are reflective of pedestrian-friendly villages, the development of design guidelines that are a continuance of existing architectural themes and the compatibility of neighboring properties. Properties in the Enhancement Districts will also be eligible to receive grant money for renovations or façade improvements. The overlay of the Enhancement District and the H-D Historical District designation will work to improve the physical composition of the district as well as provide financial incentives to property owners.

***Objective 3: The Township will encourage the development of design guidelines for each historic district.***

The evaluation of the development or redevelopment of a property within an H-D Historic District is a subjective process. The Township will work to ensure an even-handed application of standards that will create a framework within which the BHAR and the applicant can work together to establish a finished product that will enhance the overall district.

*Policy 3.1 - The Township will adopt “Visual Compatibility Standards” for its Historic Districts*

In conjunction with the H-D Historical District ordinance, the Township will seek to adopt a list of “Visual Compatibility Standards” that would guide efforts to promote redevelopment and reuse that is compatible with existing development. In assessing visual compatibility, the following “visual compatibility factors” (taken largely from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission’s *Model Historic District Ordinance*) would be considered in reviewing applications for new construction, alterations, additions or replacements affecting an historic landmark or an improvement within an historic district:

*Height and Scale.* The height of the proposed building should be visually compatible with adjacent buildings.

*Proportion of the Building’s Front Façade.* The relationship of the width of the building to the height of the front elevation should be compatible with that of the buildings to which it is visually related.

*Proportion of Window and Door Openings.* The relationship of the width of the windows to the height of the doors in a building should be visually compatible with the buildings and places to which it is related.

*Rhythm of Filled Spaces between Buildings.* The relationship of filled spaces to open space between the building and those that adjoin it should be compatible with the buildings and places to which it is visually related.

*Rhythm of Solids to Voids on Façades Fronting on Public Places.* The relationship of solids to voids in the façades of the building should be visually compatible with the buildings and places to which it is related.

*Rhythm of Entrance and Porch Projections.* The relationship of the building’s entrance and porch projections to the street should be compatible with those to which it is visually related.

*Roof Shape.* The roof shape of a building should be visually compatible with buildings to which it is related.

*Relationship of Materials, Texture and Color.* The relationship of materials, textures and color of the façade and roof of a building should be visually compatible with the predominant materials used in the buildings to which it is related. New construction should use materials similar to what is found in existing buildings such as, brick, stone, stucco, shingles, etc.

*Scale of Building and/or Structure.* The size and massing of a building in relationship to open spaces, the windows, door openings, porches, and balconies should be compatible with the buildings to which it is visually related.

*Wall of Continuity.* Appurtenances of a building such as walls, open-type fencing, or evergreen-landscape masses, should form cohesive walls of enclosure along a street, to the extent necessary to maintain visual compatibility of the building and places to which it is related.

*Directional Expression of Front Elevation.* A building should be visually compatible with the buildings to which it is visually related in its dimensional character, whether this is vertical character, horizontal character, or non-directional character.

*Exterior Features.* The exterior features of a building, such as lighting, fences, signs, sidewalks, driveways, and parking areas should be compatible with the features of those buildings which it is visually related to and should be appropriate for the historic period for which the building is significant.

*On-Site Parking.* In an effort to maintain pedestrian-friendly communities, parking facilities should be encouraged to be placed to the rear of the building. When this is not possible, parking should be placed to the side of the lot and buffered from adjacent properties. Parking in the front of buildings should be discouraged to the greatest extent possible, so as to prevent vehicles from dominating the landscape.

*Policy 3.2 - The Township will adopt design guidelines for its Commercial District Enhancement Plan (CDEP) districts which will complement the H-D Historical Districts.*

As new H-D Historical Districts are added, the Township will seek to establish a set of design guidelines that will develop a framework for development in each of the districts but will allow for enough flexibility that will accommodate the individual needs of each property. These design guidelines will establish some conformity for building materials, colors, signs, textures, and scale. As discussed in Policy 2.1, the design goals of the H-D Historical Districts and the Commercial Enhancement Districts are similar in many respects. Where Historic Districts and Commercial Enhancement Districts overlap, it would be advantageous for the Township to establish design guidelines that are complimentary.

***Objective 4: The Township will begin to register specific landmark structures to the National Register of Historic Places.***

As can be seen in the scattered site inventory in this chapter, there are many sites that do not contribute to a historic district, but are nonetheless culturally significant. In an effort to recognize and offer some kind of protection to these sites, the Township will seek to nominate eligible properties for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. While inclusion on the National Register does not ensure that a building will not be demolished, it does afford some level of protection to historic and culturally significant buildings and incentives to the owner of the property.

*Policy 4.1 - The Township will remain proactive in matters of historic preservation and continue to participate in the state's Certified Local Government Program.*

Cheltenham Township has been a participating local government in the Certified Local Governments Program instituted by the Bureau for Historic Preservation of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission since 1994. The program was begun in 1980 to give grant money to qualifying local governmental units and to allow them review nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. To qualify for the program, the local government must have an historic preservation ordinance in place and a historical review board. The Township will continue to participate in the Certified Local Government Program and utilize available funding to historic preservation efforts in Cheltenham.

*Policy 4.2 - The Township will recruit structures for inclusion on the National Register of Historic places.*

The Township has taken a proactive stance in nominating properties for inclusion on the National Register for Historic places and will continue to do so. Thus far, the Township has two districts (LaMott and Wyncote) and nine properties (Curtis Arboretum, Elkins Railroad Station, Grey Towers, George K. Heller School, Rowland House/Shovel Shop, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Wall House, Milmoial, and Wyncote Elementary) on the National Register. It is currently in the process of nominating other eligible properties, including the Township Administration Building (Breyer Estate), and the train stations within the Township. In addition, the Township is applying for a Certified Local Government Grant to document the feasibility of creating an Elkins Park Historic District.

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## **Chapter 6**

# **TRANSPORTATION**

This chapter examines the existing transportation infrastructure within the Township, including issues related to roads, public transportation, and pedestrian travel. Many suburban communities throughout the region and the United States have only one major choice for transportation: the private automobile. Cheltenham, however, has many alternative transportation modes currently in place. The Township not only has a well-established road system, but also rail, bus, and pedestrian systems that service many segments of the population. These systems will be discussed in more detail below. It is important however, to realize that all these methods of transportation are inherently linked.

### **Roads**

#### **General Roadway Conditions**

Cheltenham Township has 1.65 miles of County roads and 21.82 miles of State roads. Major roads in the Township include PA Route 309, PA 73 (Church Road), PA 611 (Old York Road), and PA 152 (Limekiln Pike).

#### **Functional Classification System**

Functional classification was developed as a tool for comprehensive transportation planning and divides roads into a hierarchy by the service and function that they provide. Based on standards established by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), it is used by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (Penn DOT) for appropriate design guidelines, as well as to coordinate road functions and highway improvements among neighboring municipalities, the county, the region, and the state.

#### **Road Hierarchy**

The hierarchy of roads includes expressways and other limited access highways, arterials, collectors, and local roads. These can be further divided into subcategories such as the designations of principal and minor arterials or major and minor collectors. The current classification for Cheltenham is shown in Figure 18.

#### **Expressways**

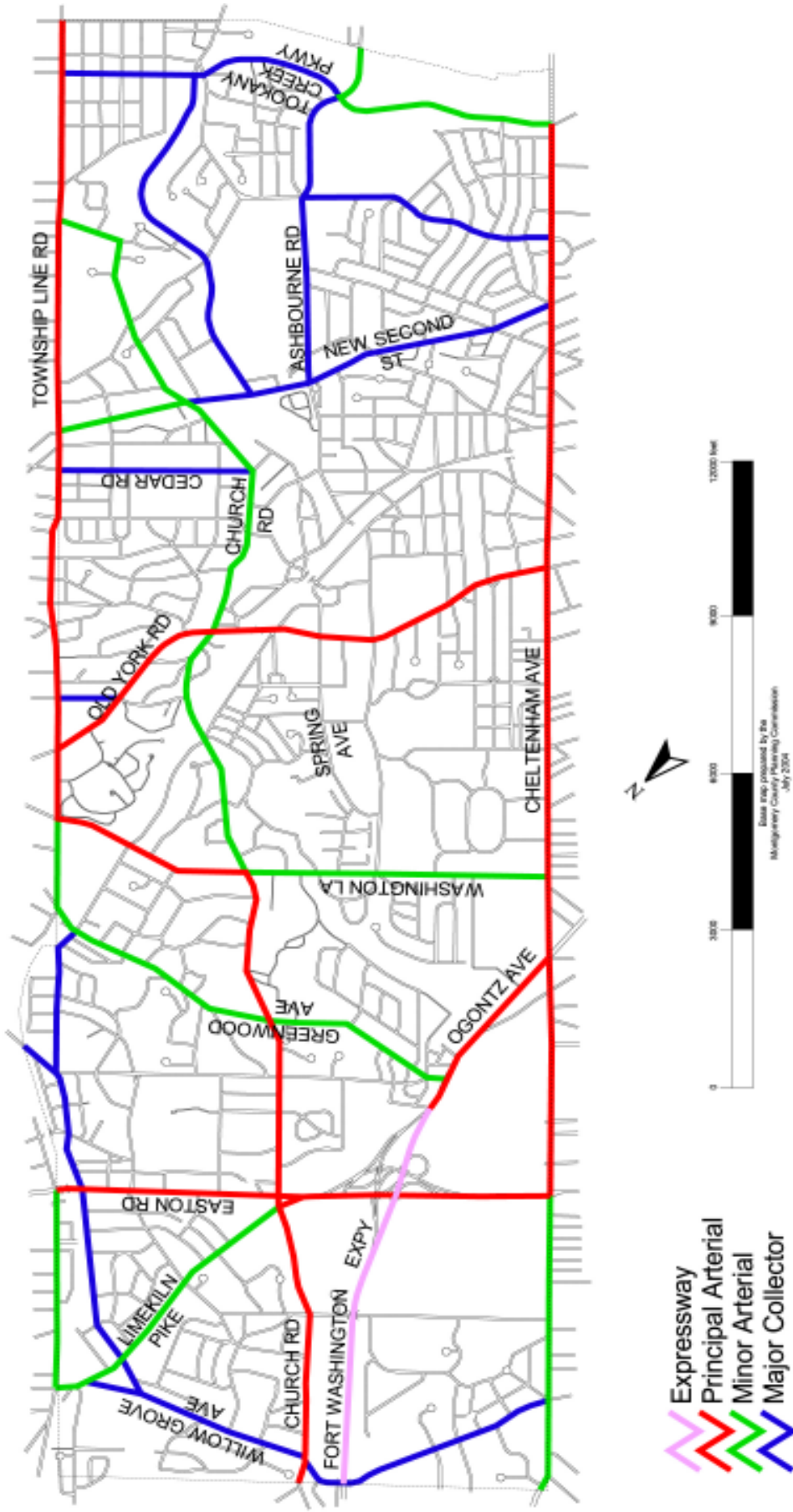
The highest level of road classification is the expressway, which is a multi-lane highway with fully controlled access usually provided only at grade-separated interchanges. Expressways are used in corridors that need to move high volumes of traffic at high speeds while providing high levels of safety and efficiency and usually traverse and connect metropolitan areas. The only expressway in Cheltenham is the Fort Washington Expressway (PA Route 309).

#### **Arterials**

An arterial provides a high degree of mobility to better serve trips of longer length. Since access to abutting property is not their major function, access controls are desirable to enhance mobility. Arterials include state numbered routes such as PA-73 (Church Road) and other important roads such as PA-152 (Limekiln Pike). Arterials are divided into two sub-classes:

- A. Principal Arterial. A principal arterial is any major highway that is not an expressway. Generally it provides between two and four through lanes of travel depending on traffic volume and land use intensity. They serve major activity centers and carry a high proportion of cross-county traffic. Examples in Cheltenham are Church Road (west of Washington Lane), Cheltenham Avenue (east of Easton Road), and Township Line Road.

# Cheltenham Township Highway Functional Classification



Base map prepared by the  
Montgomery County Planning Commission  
July 2004

This map is based on 2000 aerial photographs, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals tax maps, Township Officials, and field surveys conducted by the Locality Planning Commission. All attempts were made to ensure accuracy, however, the map should not be used for engineering purposes.

Figure 18

- B. **Minor Arterial.** Minor arterials interconnect with and augment principal arterials. They are generally spaced at intervals consistent with population density and carry traffic within or between municipalities. Further, they link other areas not connected by principal arterials and provide key connections between roads of higher classification. Greenwood Avenue, Church Road (east of Washington Lane), and Tookany Creek Parkway (south of Ashbourne Road) are examples of minor arterials in Cheltenham.

### **Collectors**

Collectors provide a mix of accessibility and mobility. They typically serve trips up to four miles in length and channel or distribute traffic to or from a road of a higher classification. Collectors are also divided into two sub-classes:

- A. **Major Collector.** A major collector provides a combination of mobility and access with a priority on mobility. Ideally, access is partially controlled with preference given to through traffic. Access is permitted with at-grade intersections and major access driveways of selected land uses such as a retail or employment center. They accommodate trips within and between neighboring municipalities. Further, they may serve as a major road through large industrial or office parks or provide key connections between roads of higher classification. Roads in Cheltenham in this category include Willow Grove Avenue, Meetinghouse Road (north of Old York Road), Cedar Road, New Second Street, Central Avenue, Glenside Avenue, and Ashbourne Road.
- B. **Minor Collector.** A minor collector provides a combination of mobility and access with a priority on access. They allow access to abutting property with little or no restriction. Generally, minor collectors accommodate shorter trips within a municipality. They are spaced to collect traffic from local roads and neighborhoods and channel it to major collectors and arterial. There are no minor collectors in Cheltenham Township according to PENNDOT classifications.

### **Local Roads**

Local roads and streets have relatively short trip lengths, generally not exceeding one mile. Because property access is the main function, there is little need for mobility or high operating speeds. This function is reflected by use of lower posted speeds. Local roads provide a link between property access and the collector road network. Through traffic is discouraged from using local roads.

### **Design Guidelines**

General design guidelines are shown in Table 24 for each of the road categories of the Functional Classification System. More specific explanations follow.

#### *Right-of-Way*

The right-of-way is publicly owned land that contains all elements of a highway or roadway and its related functions. This includes travel lanes, turning lanes, shoulders, parking lanes, and border areas (which might contain sidewalks or paths, curbing, and grass areas). Right-of-way widths are determined partly by the functional classification, but other factors such as the surrounding development pattern, or the style of road.

#### *Number of Lanes*

Number of lanes refers to the number of continuous travel lanes assigned to a road. This number is determined by traffic volume, level of service, and capacity conditions. Two travel lanes are appropriate on low volume roads such as local roads and minor collectors. A continuous two-way center left-turn lane may be desirable in highly congested commercial areas along major collectors and arterials. The lane would provide a safe area for turning movement while permitting an uninterrupted flow of through traffic. Depending upon traffic demand and available right-of-way, some roads, such as arterials, may have four or more travel lanes in addition to turning lanes. Expressways have a minimum of two lanes per direction, physically separated by a median or barrier.



Table 24  
Highway Functional Classification and Design Guidelines

| Functional Classification | Right-of-Way (1) | Number of Lanes (2)                 | Travel Lane Width (3) | Left Turn Lane Width (3) | Paved Shoulder Width (4) | Parking Lane Width (5) | Bicycle Lane Width (6) | Border Area (7) |                      |
|---------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
|                           |                  |                                     |                       |                          |                          |                        |                        | Grass Strip     | Sidewalks/ Paths (8) |
| <b>Expressways</b>        | 120'-300'        |                                     |                       |                          |                          |                        |                        |                 |                      |
| Urban                     |                  | 4-6                                 | 12'                   | N/A                      | 10'-12'                  | N/A                    | N/A                    | N/A             | 12'                  |
| Rural                     |                  | 4-6                                 | 12'                   | N/A                      | 10'                      | N/A                    | N/A                    | N/A             | 12'                  |
| <b>Arterials</b>          |                  |                                     |                       |                          |                          |                        |                        |                 |                      |
| Principal                 | 80'-100'         | 2-5                                 | 12'-14'               | 11'-12'                  | 8'-10'                   | 8'-10'                 | 5'-6'                  | 5'              | 4'-8'                |
| Minor                     | 80'-100'         |                                     |                       |                          |                          |                        |                        |                 |                      |
| Urban                     |                  | 2-5                                 | 11'-14'               | 11'-12'                  | 8'-10'                   | 8'-10'                 | 5'-6'                  | 5'              | 4'-8'                |
| Rural                     |                  | 2-3                                 | 11'-14'               | 11'-12'                  | 4'-10'                   | N/A                    | 5'-6'                  | 5'              | 4'-8'                |
| <b>Collectors</b>         |                  |                                     |                       |                          |                          |                        |                        |                 |                      |
| Urban                     | 60'-80'          | 2-3                                 | 11'-14'               | 10'-12'                  | 6'-10'                   | 8'-10'                 | 5'-6'                  | 4'              | 4'-8'                |
| Rural Major               | 60'-80'          | 2                                   | 11'-13'               | N/A                      | 6'-10'                   | GNA*                   | 5'-6'                  | GNA             | GNA                  |
| Rural Minor               | 60'              | 2                                   | 10'-12'               | N/A                      | 2'-8'                    | GNA                    | 5'-6'                  | GNA             | GNA                  |
| <b>Local Roads</b>        |                  |                                     |                       |                          |                          |                        |                        |                 |                      |
| Urban                     | 50'              | [Total Cartway Width 26 to 30 Feet] |                       |                          |                          |                        |                        | 4'              | 4'-8'                |
| Rural                     |                  | [Total Cartway Width 20 to 30 Feet] |                       |                          |                          |                        |                        | GNA             | GNA                  |

Notes:

1. Right of Way: The right-of-way is variable in order to accommodate highly urbanized and laterally restricted areas as well as unrestricted areas.
2. Number of Lanes: The number of lanes is variable in order to accommodate the traffic volume, turning movements, and land capacity demand for selected level of service. This number does not include right-turn lanes where needed.
3. Range of Lane Width: The width of lanes are based upon minimum and desirable standards as well as other conditions such as being adjacent to a curb to the anticipation of heavy truck traffic.
4. Shoulder: The width of shoulders are based upon minimum and desirable standards as well as other conditions such as highly urbanized and laterally restricted areas, or the anticipation of heavy truck traffic. Wide shoulders may function as bike lanes.
5. Parking Lane: The width of parking lanes are based upon minimum and desirable standards as well as other conditions such as lot size, intensity of development or potential for use as a traffic lane where required by future demand. For principal arterials, parking lanes are only recommended in highly developed areas.
6. Bicycle Lane: A portion of a roadway, which has been designated by striping, signing or pavement markings for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists. Width specifications must be in accordance with FHWA/AASHTO standards. Refer also to the "Bicycling Road Map: A Bike Mobility Plan for Montgomery County, Pennsylvania," MCPC, 1998.
7. Border Area: The presence of curbing, grass strips, and sidewalks will depend upon adjacent land uses and site conditions. Otherwise, the border area would consist of a drainage swale and slope.
8. Sidewalks/Paths: The width of sidewalks is based upon minimum desirable standards as well as other conditions such as within an urbanized area. Narrower sidewalks may be acceptable under certain circumstances. Paths for multi-use purposes, pedestrians/bicyclists may be desirable in lieu of sidewalks in rural areas or parallel to an expressway.

\*GNA: Generally Not Applicable

Source: Derived from design ranges specified by AASHTO, PENNDOT, and other design manuals.

### *Travel Lanes*

Width and condition of pavement surface are two important safety and comfort features of a highway. Typical lane widths are ten to fourteen feet. Twelve feet is desirable for all roads except minor collectors and local roads. A ten-foot wide lane is considered adequate for minor collectors and local roads where oncoming and passing vehicles are infrequent and the proportion of trucks is low. Although lane widths of twelve feet for most functional classifications are desirable, there are circumstances that necessitate more narrow lanes. In urban areas where right-of-way and development become the controlling factor, eleven-foot wide lanes are acceptable. If adjacent to a curb, a fourteen-foot width (thirteen feet minimum) is desirable, as drivers tend to shy away from the curb edge.

### *Left-Turn Lanes*

A left-turn lane is an auxiliary lane for the exclusive use of left turning vehicles. Rear end collisions and loss in operational efficiency are evident on these roads where these lanes are not provided. The left-turn lane should be as wide as the through lane, but not less than ten feet. The length of a left-turn lane consists of a deceleration length, storage length and entering taper. Pavement striping, contrasting pavement texture, signs and physical separators may be used to delineate the lane. A left turn lane with a median may be used at major intersections or entrances to major employment or retail centers to control access points.

### *Parking Lanes*

Movement of vehicles is the primary function of a roadway network. Parking on an arterial street is not desirable because it generally decreases lane capacity, impedes traffic flow, and increases accident potential. However, segments of the network may be required to provide for the parking of vehicles as a result of adjacent lane use. When on-street parking is required, parallel parking is the preferred method. It is generally allowed and accepted on local roads, although not always designated. It may also be necessary where there is inadequate off-street parking. Curb parking on urban arterial streets is often necessary, but is acceptable when the travel lane(s) can accommodate the traffic volume.

Many urban residential areas use pavement widths of between twenty-six and thirty feet for mobility and parking. When parking occurs on both sides of the street, this dimension assures adequate space for one moving lane. Most vehicles park within six to twelve inches of the curb when parking parallel and occupy an area approximately seven feet wide. The minimum desirable width of a parking lane is eight feet.

### *Bicycle Lanes*

Bicycle movement should be considered on most roads. While a separate parallel off-road bicycle path is most desirable, it is usually necessary to accommodate bicycles on the roadway surface. In these situations, designated bicycle lanes should be considered.

Designating road space for bicyclists and motorists through signage can increase the sense of safety of the bicyclist. Also, passing motorists are less likely to swerve out of their lane to avoid a bicyclist. Bicycle lanes should always be one-way facilities and carry traffic in the same direction as the motor vehicle traffic. Five feet is the desirable minimum lane width.

### *Curbing*

Curbs control drainage, delineate pavement edge, provide aesthetics, reduce maintenance operations, and limit access points to roadside development. Barrier curbs, the most common type, are relatively high and steep faced. Ranging in height from six to nine inches, they are designed to inhibit or at least discourage a vehicle from leaving the road. The width of a curb is generally up to eight inches. Where they are not used, grading is required to carry surface runoff in swales or natural drainage areas.

## Traffic Volumes

One factor that influences the redesign of highways and roads is the average daily traffic (ADT), that is, travel on a single road in a typical day. The ADT is one factor in the complex puzzle of street design and construction. There are general ADT ranges that can be used in making policy decisions, however they should not be used as design criteria.

Table 25 shows average annual daily traffic counts for various locations around the Township. Average annual daily traffic counts are determined by counting the number of vehicles that pass a certain point on a road segment. For example, as shown on Table 25 the count of 41,636 means that 41,636 vehicles passed between a certain point in both directions along Cheltenham Avenue between Easton Road and Broad Street in 2000. The counts typically include all types of vehicles traveling in both directions during a 24-hour period.

Table 25  
Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts, Cheltenham Township

| Road              | Location (between)          | Traffic Volume | Date of Data Collection |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| Cheltenham Avenue | Easton Road & Broad St      | 41,636         | 2000                    |
| PA 309            | Greenwood & PA 152 ramps    | 37,841         | 1998                    |
| Church Road       | Greenwood & Washington Lane | 16,525         | 2000                    |
| Old York Road     | GreenBriar & Foxcroft       | 21,711         | 2000                    |
| Easton Road       | Cheltenham Avenue & 309     | 16,834         | 1995                    |

Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

## Current Road Improvements

### Fort Washington Expressway (US Route 309)

The expressway is under going a complete restoration under PENNDOT's Twelve-Year Plan. Among other improvements, this will include reconstruction of entrance and exit ramps to improve safety, bridge repair or replacement and road resurfacing. The project began in 2001 and is expected to be complete by 2007. The importance of this for Cheltenham is that although the road will not be entirely closed during the reconstruction, there will most likely be detours and alternative routes sought by drivers seeking to avoid the potential delays caused by the construction. As a result, major roads within the Township may be affected, such as Limekiln Pike, Church Road, Willow Grove Avenue, and Cheltenham Avenue. Route 309 provides the Township's only expressway access to the PA Turnpike. Parcels on the western section of the Township can be accessed quickly from the Turnpike via Route 309. In the long term, this could prove extremely valuable given the Townships redevelopment efforts in these areas.

### Township Line Road

Township Line Road is currently being improved by PENNDOT. The improvements include turning lanes and wider shoulders in various sections of the road. The improvements are expected to be complete in 2006.

### Church Road

As part of PA 73, a major east-west county road, Church Road is an important link to outside areas and connects other important roads within the Township, such as Easton Road and Old York Road. As a result of its function as a principal arterial, traffic volumes are high. Due to its narrow cartway, topographical diversity and significant curves Church Road has many intersections that can be dangerous. Currently, parts of Church Road are undergoing reconstruction.

### *Greenwood Avenue and Church Road*

This intersection can be hazardous due to the narrow widths of both roads. The slight changes in elevation on both roads also contribute to the difficulty in the intersection. Although neither road provides much in the way of land for potential widening, the possibility of widening on both roads only near the intersection could be explored. This road is scheduled for PENNDOT improvement in 2005.

### *Willow Grove Avenue and Church Road*

This intersection is made dangerous by the fact that the southerly approach for Willow Grove Avenue is offset when it intersects Church Road. Combined with the lack of sight distance for drivers on eastbound Church Road and the elevation changes this intersection has seen its share of traffic accidents. This road is scheduled for PENNDOT improvements as part of the Church Road improvements.

## **Traffic Calming**

Traffic in Cheltenham Township and the region continues to increase. This increased traffic and higher speeds reduce the livability of a street, or the marketability of a street for retail uses. Slower traffic speeds and volumes, allow for more pedestrian street activity. Below are some typical traffic calming measures that can be utilized to slow traffic.

Table 26  
Design Speed of Traffic Calming Devices

| Device                                      | Design Speed |
|---|--------------|
| Speed Hump (standard Watts design)          | 15-20 mph    |
| Speed Table (long flat-topped hump)         | 25-30 mph    |
| Roundabout/circle (25-foot diameter island) | 20-25 mph    |
| Chicane (90-foot radii)                     | 20-25 mph    |
| Chicane with speed table                    | 15-20 mph    |
| Narrowing (two-lane)                        | 30-35 mph    |
| Narrowing with speed table                  | 20-25 mph    |
| Narrowing (single-lane angled)              | 12-15 mph    |
| Raised Junction                             | 12-15 mph    |

*Source: Best Development Practices, Reid Ewing*

## **Streetscape Elements**

A number of streetscape enhancements can assist in creating a pedestrian-friendly environment. Enhancing the streetscape can also serve as a traffic calming device. Amenities such as street trees, lighting, furniture and paving are discussed below.

### *Street Trees*

Street trees often are the most visually noticeable element of the street. The sense of place for American cities and towns often is a function of the tree-lined streets it has. Cheltenham is one community that is known for its tree canopy. Street trees also provide a useful and practical separation of pedestrians and traffic when planted in residential or commercial areas. Street trees not only add a perceived value but also a monetary value, since homes on streets with large tree canopies often sell for a slightly higher value than a counterpart on a street without trees. Cheltenham will initiate policies and a program of tree replacement and maintenance.

### *Lighting*

Street illumination influences the appearance of a street. Lighting of a street can be approached in two ways. The first is to create a sense of place while providing light for safety. The other approach is to create an environment that is efficient for automobile traffic. Typically, the cobra fixture is used today in a utilitarian manner. The need for lighting for automobile traffic allowed many communities to disregard

the civic beauty of lighting for the efficiency and safety of automobile traffic. Street lighting has been directed to the safety of the automobile and not the pedestrian or the appearance of a street. The best lighting is a fixture that is not too high, preferably under 20 feet. This type of fixture allows the light to reach the ground quicker and adds to the human scale of a street.

*Furniture and Paving*

Street furniture and paving textures are typically reserved for traditional commercial and office areas. Today shopping districts and malls have amenities in the public realm. Areas that do not have these amenities are often viewed as declining and unfriendly environments for pedestrians. A street can be seen as an extension of the interior of buildings and residence. Street furniture invites the shopper to linger and enjoy. Street furniture such as benches/bus shelters often can be found in residential areas near transit lines, providing residents an attractive and restful place, and also encouraging the use of transit. Trash receptacles, benches, bus shelters, public art, and other street furniture can be designed in a manner that is aesthetically pleasing. Street furniture should be consistent with the design recommendations of the Commercial District Enhancement Plan.

**Public Transportation Systems (Bus and Train)**



**Rail Service**

Within Cheltenham’s border there are four Regional Rail stations, Elkins Park, Glenside, Melrose Park, and Wyncote-Jenkintown, operated by the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), see Figure 19. Township residents also have easy pedestrian access to additional Regional Rail stations including Cheltenham, Lawndale, Ryers, and Olney (just outside the Township’s borders in Philadelphia) on the R-8 Line and the North Hills station (in Abington Township) on the R-5 Line. The Regional Rail system provides easy access to Center City, the Philadelphia International Airport,

other sections of Philadelphia, and the entire region.

Table 27  
Train Service by Station

| Station              | R1 | R2 | R3 | R5 | R8 |
|----------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Glenside             | X  | X  |    | X  |    |
| Wyncote - Jenkintown | X  | X  | X  | X  |    |
| Elkins Park          | X  | X  | X  | X  |    |
| Melrose Park         | X  | X  |    | X  |    |
| Ryers                |    |    |    |    | X  |
| Cheltenham           |    |    |    |    | X  |
| Lawndale             |    |    |    |    | X  |
| Olney                |    |    |    |    | X  |

SEPTA is beginning to upgrade its train stations to make them accessible in accordance with ADA standards. New platforms at Melrose Park Train Station will be built and a new station house on the outbound side will be constructed. Following improvements at Melrose Park, SEPTA will upgrade these stations in the following order: Elkins Park, Glenside, and Wyncote-Jenkintown.

According to the 2000 Census, 6.2 percent of the labor force in the Township use the Regional Rail system to get to work. Cheltenham’s extensive rail network is a distinctive attribute that makes the community a desirable place to live.

## **Train Station Parking**

The origin of the stations occurred at the beginning of the century when residents would walk to the station or were driven to the station when there was no need for parking. As a result train station parking lots do not adequately meet the needs of today's commuters. Because expansion of the stations are not likely due to the density of structures and the surrounding uses, the parking demand leads to commuters parking on residential streets.



The Township has hired consultants to plan for the development of a parking garage at the Glenside Station. The study for the Glenside train station vicinity will also involve an implementation plan for enhancing the Glenside commercial area. In addition, a garage will be built at the Wyncote-Jenkintown station.

## **Bus Service**

*SEPTA (Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority)*

There are eleven bus routes, operated by the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) that serve Cheltenham Township with access to surrounding communities. Figure 19 shows Routes 6, 18, 22, 28, 55, 57, 70, 77, 80, C, and XH.

According to the 2000 Census, 4.1 percent of Cheltenham's workforce over the age of 16 commutes by bus. There are many businesses located within the Township that directly rely on the bus system. The bus system allows their employees an alternative mode of travel other than the automobile to get to and from work. The bus system also allows many consumers to reach businesses.

### *Cheltenham Township Private Bus System*

The Township has its own bus system. The system has one major route that winds throughout the neighborhoods of the Township (see Figure 20). The majority of the riders are senior citizens. Major stops occur at neighborhood centers and shopping areas such as the Rowland Community Center and Cedarbrook Plaza. The bus system is funded through state grants, which supplement fares.

Cheltenham Township recognizes that the bus system is particularly important given its aging population (as shown by the 2000 Census) and will continue to support this system. However, operating the bus system is quite costly and the Township will be searching for alternative funding and additional state grants.

In addition, Cedarbrook Hill, Wyncote House, and other apartments offers shuttle service to area train stations and shopping.

## **Pedestrian Circulation**

### **Township Sidewalks**

Sidewalks often are seen as an element of the road network. However, sidewalks are a critical infrastructure system within the Township. Sidewalks are an integral part of the landscape in many of the neighborhoods in Cheltenham. The sidewalk network provides safe and pleasant pedestrian movement within neighborhoods and throughout the Township. Sidewalks also provide an alternative means of access to key activity centers, such as schools, shopping areas and parks. In addition, they can provide an important link with public transportation facilities such as bus stops and Regional Rail stations. The continuity of this system is critical and should be interconnected and developed with a sophisticated plan of implementation. Disconnected or intermittent sidewalks are the equivalent of dead end streets. Where there is not the width for concrete sidewalks, meandering sidewalks that go around trees or other obstacles are appropriate such as the path on Rice's Mill Road. Specifications regarding sidewalks should be included in the subdivision and land development ordinance.

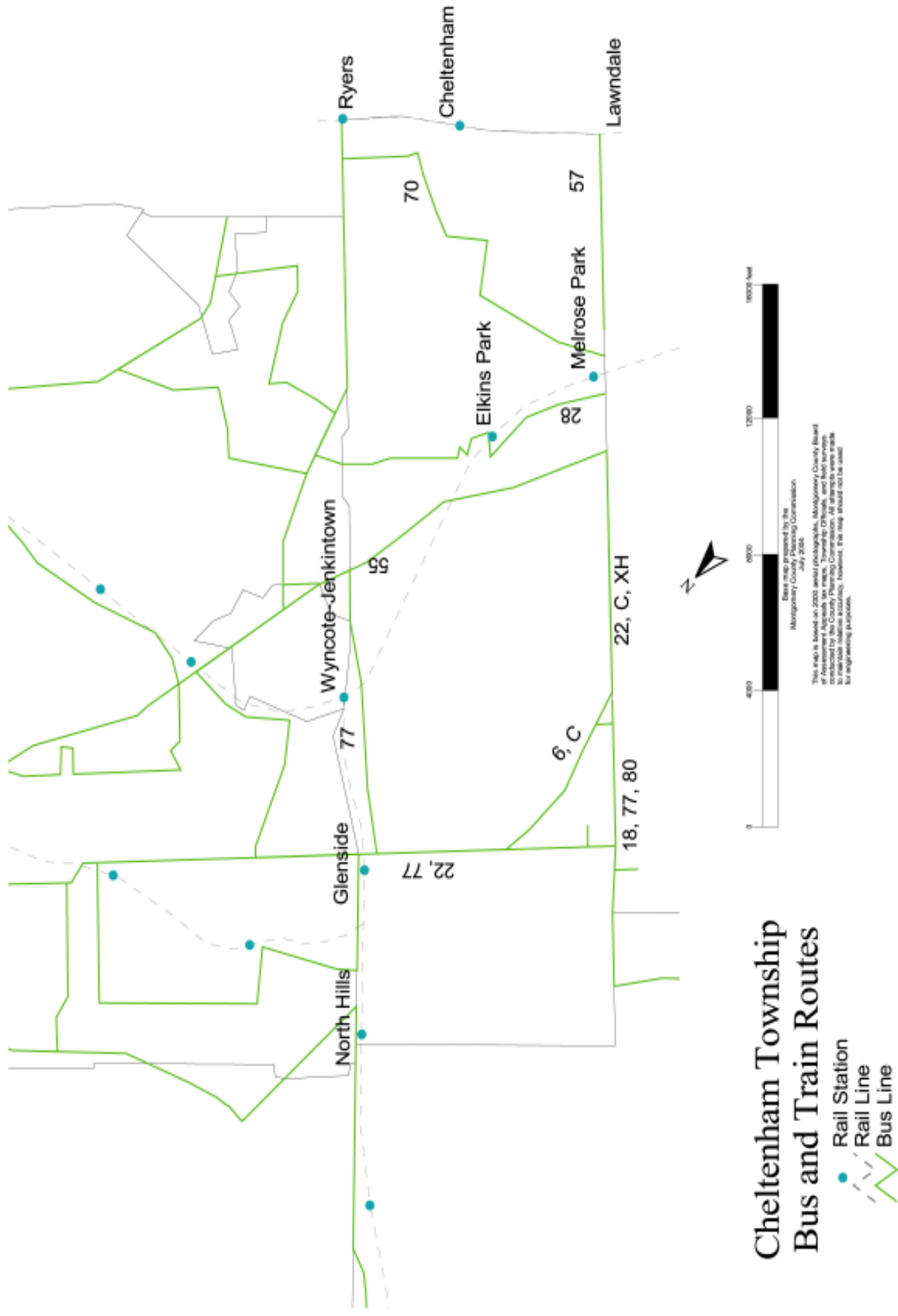


Figure 19



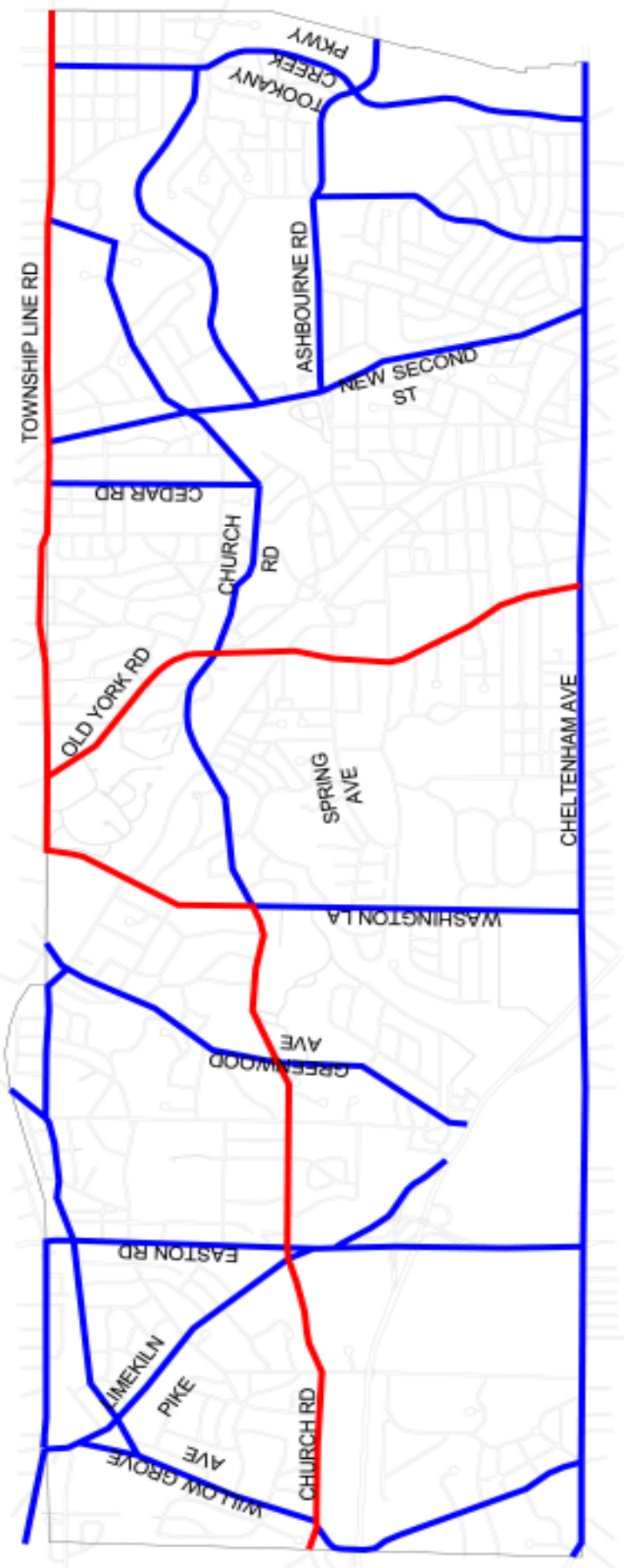


## **Alternative Transportation Methods**

### **Bicycle Routes and Trails**

Trails and bike routes are a viable alternative transportation method. Because Cheltenham consists of tight knit neighborhoods, bike routes and trails are appropriate. More and more, transportation policy has recognized bicycling as a legitimate transportation option. One of the stated goals within the Township's Plan for Municipal Parks, Open Space and Recreation prepared in 1995 is to, "Explore the possibility of acquisition or easement purchase of the rights-of-way for pedestrian/bikeway trail purposes." Dedicated trails within a community provide not only a means of transportation but are also valuable recreational amenities as well. The Montgomery County Bicycling Road Map: A Bike Mobility Plan for Montgomery County, Pennsylvania of 1998 also encouraged making the County more "bicycle friendly." The plan suggested a series of primary and secondary bike routes (Figure 21). Primary bike routes are key bicycling corridors that link major destinations and contribute to an interconnected on-road bicycling network. Secondary bicycle routes are all arterials and collectors not otherwise categorized as primary routes. For further discussion on trails please refer to the Open Space Chapter.

# Cheltenham Township Suggested Bike Routes



Base map prepared by the  
Montgomery County Planning Commission  
July 2004

This map is based on 2000 aerial photographs. Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals tax maps, Township Offices, and field surveys conducted by the County Planning Commission. All attempts were made to ensure relative accuracy, however, this map should not be used for engineering purposes.

- Primary Bike Routes
- Secondary Bike Routes
- Roads

Figure 21

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

**GOAL: CHELTENHAM WILL PROVIDE A SAFE, EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT BALANCES AUTOMOBILE, PEDESTRIAN, AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.**

**Objective 1: The Township will continue to develop a priority list of road improvements and will coordinate with PENNDOT on road improvements.**

Many of the major arterials within the Township are narrow and have defining features such as stonewalls within a few feet of the cartway. The Township is also experiencing ever increasing speeds on arterial and local residential streets. The unique features such as the stonewalls are in effect keeping speeds on some major arterials slower than more modern and improved streets, but are also causing safety concerns.

*Policy 1.1 - The Township will evaluate the right-of-way widths of its roads.*

An evaluation of specific areas that need improvement should be examined. Each of these areas should be evaluated in terms of what is important. Policies related to development and road improvements should be determined for appropriate locations.

**Objective 2: The Township will utilize the design guidelines for its commercial districts to create pedestrian-friendly environments.**

Encouraging or requiring common driveways, shared parking, controlled turning movements (e.g. right turn only), alternative access points (e.g. local streets), and increased landscaping could all potentially contribute to the creating a more pleasant commercial environment for pedestrians. The Township should utilize the Commercial District Enhancement design guidelines and update the zoning ordinance to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

**Objective 3: The Township will evaluate the timing of its traffic signals and introduce more visible signs to enhance traffic flow.**

Since Cheltenham is an older, developed community, existing signals should be evaluated to determine if upgrading is warranted. Timing should be evaluated to enhance traffic flow and minimize air pollution. This could be particularly beneficial for busy or problem intersections such as Greenwood Avenue and Church Road and Township Line Road and Meetinghouse Road.

*Policy 3.1 - The Township will continue to participate in the Montgomery County Consortium of Communities to apply for funding of traffic signal updates.*

The Township is currently participating with the Montgomery County Consortium of Communities to apply for funding to update traffic signals. Green, yellow, and red LED lights will be put up in the Township.

*Policy 3.2 - The Township will continue to enhance driving safety.*

Cheltenham Township is introducing larger street signs for better readability and to help vehicles navigate throughout the Township.

**Objective 4: Cheltenham will partner with SEPTA to evaluate its stations and service within the Township.**

While the Township does not have control over the train stations Cheltenham could encourage SEPTA to make improvements to help enhance the stations and subsequently the Township.

The Township is currently partnering with SEPTA, Montgomery County, and DVRPC in working with a consultant on the development of a parking garage at Glenside Station and its accompanying commercial revitalization. Coupled with the Main Street Program and continued Township revitalization efforts, this project will have a significant impact on the Glenside commercial area. In addition, the Wyncote-Jenkintown Parking garage feasibility study is also underway.

*Policy 4.1 - The Township will facilitate cooperation with SEPTA by exploring funding sources for train stations improvements.*

The Township should explore the option of working with the adopt-a-station program through SEPTA. Other options include looking into historic preservation registration for the train stations and surrounding railroad landscape, allowing for the opportunity to apply for preservation funds. The Township may also encourage SEPTA to apply for funding from state and federal sources for improvements.

***Objective 5: Bus Service and Public Transportation will be evaluated to determine if there are additional needs.***

Many train stations have connections to bus routes, however the schedules between the two systems should be linked carefully. Potential transit riders often will choose not to take public transit if the connections are not likely or there are prolonged periods between service. This inefficiency of the system creates additional and unnecessary traffic on the Townships roads.

*Policy 5.1 - The Township will evaluate its transit system and will make recommendations to SEPTA based on its findings.*

The Township should encourage SEPTA to maintain an efficient transit system in the Township so the employers and residents can be served efficiently. Coordination of the systems should be looked at annually by the Township to determine if the residents and business are being served adequately.

Given that the Melrose Park Train Station is undergoing improvements to the station, Cheltenham Township will encourage SEPTA to expand service. The station currently has the least amount of train service in Cheltenham Township.

***Objective 6: The Township will evaluate its current transit stops for suitability and safety.***

There are many locations within the Township that do not have pedestrian-oriented transit stops, in particular the intersections of Ogontz Avenue and Cheltenham Avenue and Washington Avenue and Cheltenham Avenue which do not have transit or pedestrian-oriented amenities such as convenient and well marked walkways. The connections from a transit stop to commercial or office development in many locations is not convenient and riders must walk through vast parking areas to get to their destination. As commercial and employment centers are developed and redeveloped, transit stops and connections should play a critical role in the planning of that area. A successful and well-planned transit system could be used as a tool for economic development in many areas of the community.

*Policy 6.1 - The Township will create transit-oriented design guidelines.*

The Township should consider adding transit oriented design guidelines and transit stop design element requirements to its subdivision and land development ordinance for areas along major transportation routes, just as it does for landscaping and road improvements. Transit routes should be modified to address the needs of new developments. The Township should also look into funding for better transit stops, shelters, and better and safer pedestrian crossings.

*Policy 6.2 - The Township will create TRID concepts.*

The Township will also consider the new transit revitalization investment district (TRID) concept for around the train stations and bus terminals in accordance with Act 238, Transit Revitalization Investment District legislation passed by the Pennsylvania legislature. This could be accomplished as an overlay district with requirements meeting the goals and objectives for transit-oriented development. The intent of this district is to encourage community and economic development around transit stations and increased transit ridership. It should also address the revitalization of existing station stops, platforms and shelters, and the reuse of station houses.

***Objective 7: The Township will encourage an extensive pedestrian sidewalk network.***

Sidewalks in residential areas are generally four feet wide. Sidewalks in commercial areas, near schools or other pedestrian generator areas are generally wider. The sidewalks in many areas of the Township are in need or repair. The Township should explore options to help maintain its extensive sidewalk network.

*Policy 7.1 - The Township will evaluate the existing sidewalk network and establish a program to implement sidewalk improvements.*

Cheltenham will identify the locations and condition of sidewalks within the Township. This evaluation should also include the existence or non-existence of handicap curb cuts and marked or unmarked cross walks. The Township should then consider adopting a three-phased sidewalk program. The first phase should be to develop a master plan for a sidewalk system. The second phase should be to develop a prioritized program to connect and repair the existing sidewalk network. The third phase should be to develop a program for the future to annually evaluate the sidewalk network – this typically is done by neighborhood on a rotating basis.

***Objective 8: The Township will evaluate off-street and on-street parking.***

The Township will evaluate its on-street parking as well as its municipal lots to determine if parking is efficiently utilized. In the commercial areas in particular, Cheltenham will evaluate the on-street parking needs and prioritize roads for on-street parking as well as re-striping on-street and off-street parking areas to maximize parking.

*Policy 8.1 – The Township will prioritize which roads within the commercial areas should allow on-street parking.*

On most urban collector roads, the minimum parking lane is eight feet. A width of eight to ten feet is most desirable because it provides better clearance and the potential to use the parking lane during peak periods as a through lane. This width can also accommodate transit operations. The Township will need to evaluate the commercial areas carefully, since there are a number of issues that need to be addressed. Issues include whether traffic calming devices should be installed and whether the parking lanes should not be used during peak traffic periods.

*Policy 8.2 – The Township will re-stripe on-street parking areas and municipally owned lots to maximize the amount of parking.*

In many areas such as near rail stations and in business districts additional parking can be provided. Re-striping of parking spaces could allow for more parking to occur. Alternative parking such as diagonal parking on side streets may provide additional parking, but may necessitate some additional one way parking. The Township should re-stripe or in some cases stripe areas that have high on-street parking demands to allow for orderly and efficiency in parking. In selected areas the traffic circulation patterns should be studied to determine if diagonal parking would provide additional spaces in a safe and efficient layout. Additionally, Cheltenham's municipal lots should be evaluated to determine if re-striping of spaces will maximize the amount of parking.

***Objective 9: The Township will consider introducing traffic calming in residential areas.***

Cheltenham has a variety of street conditions that affect the speed of vehicular traffic. In many residential areas the streets are very wide with two travel lanes and two parking lanes. In some areas where residents do not have garages or ample off street parking these widths may be appropriate, however in other areas the need for on street parking is not as great.

*Policy 9.1 - The Township will study the existing street conditions to determine where traffic calming measures are appropriate.*

Cheltenham has studied the existing road conditions and traffic speeds to determine where traffic calming would be appropriate. Measures, such as the devices discussed earlier in the chapter may be appropriate. Orth-Rodgers Associates, Inc. conducted a traffic analysis and parking study for the commercial districts mentioned in the Commercial District Enhancement Plan. Further traffic analyses may be necessary for those areas of the Township not addressed by the CDEP or the Community Revitalization Plan.



## Chapter 7

# COMMUNITY FACILITIES

There are numerous public services and facilities, which must be provided by local government to meet the daily health, safety, convenience, and cultural needs of the community. Community facilities refer to a variety of public and non-public uses and services that may be provided to residents of a community, such as emergency services, schools, solid waste disposal, sewer and water service, government office facilities, and libraries. The management of these facilities is extremely important since they have a direct impact on residents. This section examines the existing status and condition of the facilities and services in Cheltenham. In general, Cheltenham has a reputation for outstanding community services. The Township should strive to enhance the efficient utilization of existing community facilities and services and replace obsolete facilities.

### Administrative Campus

The Township's administrative facilities are located on the west side of Old York Road in Elkins Park. The stone building was originally built in 1915 as a residence for Henry Breyer. In 1956, the Township purchased the building and began renovations. At that time the Township's administrative facilities and police department were relocated to the Breyer estate. In 1970, a police administration building was constructed next to the Breyer house. In 1973, Cheltenham Township's Public Service Facility, located on the northeast corner of Church and Old York Roads, was constructed. It serves as the operation, maintenance, repair, and administration headquarters for several of the Township's departments. There are 31 full time and 11 part time employees in the Township Administration Department and 65 full time employees at the Public Works Department. Cheltenham Township is also home to two district justices. District Court #38-01-03 is located on the administrative campus and District Court #38-01-02 is located at the Public Works Facility.



The Township currently owns fourteen buildings, of which 8 are historic and 6 are listed or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The Township has restored these buildings and believes that these are resources are very important. These municipal buildings can serve as an example of adaptive reuse and historic preservation. The Shovel Shop has a commercial tenant, the Wall House has a museum, and Curtis Hall and Glenside War Memorial Hall are rentable facilities.

One of the preliminary recommendations from the Township's draft Long Range Plan of 1995-2000 regarding municipal buildings is a comprehensive evaluation of the Township's existing buildings to evaluate potential cost inefficiencies, space problems, and other relevant issues. The Long Range Plan also notes that a cost benefit analysis should be performed to address municipal operations in separate facilities versus the consolidation of municipal operations in one complex. In 2000, Cheltenham hired an appraiser to evaluate the Township administrative facility as well as the Public Service Facility.

### Fire Protection

Cheltenham residents enjoy the peace of mind knowing the Township is well served in the area of fire protection. The Township's five volunteer fire companies are located throughout the Township. The five companies, Cheltenham, Elkins Park, Glenside, LaMott, and Ogontz combine to provide outstanding response time throughout the Township with over 200 volunteers. Firefighters receive first-



rate training at the recently rebuilt William N. Gottschalk Fire Training Center on Tookany Creek Parkway. The Long Range Plan recommended an analysis of Township fire services. The analysis should explore the possibility of adopting a more regional approach to fire protection services.

Should any contaminants enter into the Township's community facilities, the Township works closely with DEP and the Township Emergency Management Team as a part of remediation and cleanup.

## **Emergency Services**

Cheltenham has its own Emergency Medical Services (EMS) department. The service started in 1982 as a division of the Police Department. Today, Cheltenham's EMS has three state-of-the-art ambulances and other emergency vehicles as well as career and volunteer staff members. There are 9 full time employees in the EMS department. In addition to emergency medical service the Township is home to Elkins Park Hospital, which is part of the Tenent Health Care Company.

## **Police Department**

Cheltenham Township has a very proactive police force. The department has many programs such as the Alert Neighbors Program that has been active for over 25 years. This program is an umbrella program for many other specific programs such as the neighborhood watch and the crime prevention programs, which are designed for specific target groups such as children, senior citizens, and schools. The police are also very active in programs such as DARE, COPS in Schools program, and an anti-graffiti program. A newer police station will be built on the existing administration campus. The police department has 86 officers plus the canine unit and dispatchers.



## **Libraries**

The public libraries have been an integral service provided in Cheltenham Township since the first library opened in Glenside in 1928. As many of the other municipal services, the libraries are conveniently located throughout the Township to meet the needs of its residents. In addition to the Glenside Library, the East Cheltenham, Elkins Park, and LaMott libraries serve the Township. A recommendation from the Long Range Plan includes a study of possible consolidation of libraries to provide better services as well as the feasibility of reuse of the existing library buildings and sites. A more recent study in 2001, entitled "Imaging the Future: Cheltenham Township Library System 2000- 2005" conducted by library consultants, recommended retaining the existing four libraries at their current locations, modernizing those locations, and exploring the possibility of a new library site.

Consideration should also be given to how the libraries act within the communities. Libraries are often more than a typical bookstore. They provide a quiet place for older children to study after school or a place for the elderly to read the paper and keep acquainted with others from the neighborhood. Libraries within many of the neighborhoods provide a link between individual residents and the larger community of Cheltenham. It will be important to not only evaluate the efficiency of the libraries from an operational status but also from a social and community status as well.

## **Community Centers**

Cheltenham has two community centers, the LaMott Community Center and the Rowland Community Center. The community centers offer classes and recreation activities and are used as polling places during elections. The LaMott Community Center houses the LaMott library and the Rowland Community Center houses the East Cheltenham Library.

## Schools

Cheltenham has a long tradition of excellence in public education. In fact, School Match, a school-district rating service, gave Cheltenham Schools a competitive test score of 99 percent. This score translates to the top one percent of public schools nationally. The district consists of seven schools, Cheltenham, Glenside, Myers, and Wyncote Elementary Schools, Elkins Park School, Cedarbrook Middle School, and Cheltenham High School. The district is affiliated with the Eastern Montgomery County Area Vocational Technical School located in Upper Moreland Township. It offers vocational-technical training to both secondary and post-secondary students. Currently, the school district is planning renovations of the high school facilities. The student population in the Township is stable and no other new schools, school additions, or closings are planned for the future.



Table 28  
School Enrollment Cheltenham School District 2002-2003

| School                       | Enrollment   |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| Cedarbrook Middle School     | 827          |
| Cheltenham Elementary School | 431          |
| Cheltenham High School       | 1,704        |
| Elkins Park School           | 744          |
| Glenside Elementary School   | 368          |
| Myers Elementary School      | 392          |
| Wyncote Elementary School    | 400          |
| <b>Total Enrollment</b>      | <b>4,866</b> |

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education

In addition to excellent public schools, the Township has numerous private and/or parochial schools. The major private high schools include Bishop McDevitt in Glenside and Melrose Academy in Melrose Park.



The Township also has several post-secondary institutions within its borders. These institutions include Arcadia University in Glenside and Temple University's Tyler School of Fine Arts in Elkins Park.

## Arts Center

Cheltenham has its own Center for the Arts located in the Cheltenham Village area of the Township near the Tookany Creek and park. The facility was developed in 1940, and concentrates on the visual and performing arts. The art center has four full time staff and a faculty of 25 people. There are many programs that have developed over the years. Among these are outreach programs to seniors in the area, as well as art programs in nearby Philadelphia Public Schools. Classes are offered during three sessions throughout the year: spring, summer, and fall. A summer art camp for children and youth is offered in mid-summer.

Exhibits rotate throughout the year from September to June. The center has two galleries, one large and one small. In these galleries the center has on average six to eight exhibits per year. Community theater is another active area of the arts center. Action Arts, Twilight Productions, and 727 Theatre Group are three groups who actively are involved with the theater throughout the year. Action Arts and 727 Theatre Group provide many theater performances for families and adults throughout the year, while Twilight Productions produces children's programs. There are also a number of organizations that use the theater facilities for dance, comedy, and other performances. The Printmakers Guild and the Clay Guild are also associated with the center. In the future the center is planning to expand its classes and continue upgrading the aging facility.

## **Sewage Facilities**

Under the Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act (Act 537), each municipality is responsible for maintaining a sewage facilities plan. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) administers the Sewage Facilities Planning Program.

Most of the Township is served by existing sewer lines (Figure 22). The Township's existing plan is the Montgomery County Sewage Facilities Plan, developed in 1972. The 1972 plan identifies proposed growth areas. Despite the fact that most of the Township is served there are five identified proposed growth areas. The two most important proposed growth areas are the Melrose and Ashbourne Country Clubs. Since the Township identifies these areas as growth areas, it is important for the Township to determine the type of development that would most beneficial in these locations and encourage that type of activity. If sewer lines were installed at the two country clubs mentioned above, the sewage would most likely be treated by the Philadelphia facility. The Township's overall future needs are tied to its infill and redevelopment opportunities. Specifically, sites currently undeveloped or underdeveloped will generate additional flows if they are developed or more fully used in the future. It is anticipated that available sewage capacity will not be a determining factor in the development of the proposed growth areas.

In 1998, Montgomery County wrote a Sewage Treatment Facilities Status Report, which serves an overview of publicly owned sewage facilities in Montgomery County. Currently, most of the Township is served by sewage facilities. Through connections to the Abington Township and Philadelphia systems, the sewage is treated and disposed of outside the Township. The Abington Township Sewage Treatment Plant - Sandy Run Waste Water Treatment Plant, which serves Cheltenham, has a rated capacity of 3.91 million gallons per day (mgd). The average flow in the plant in 1999 was 2.562 mgd. The municipalities served by Abington include Upper Dublin, Abington, Cheltenham, Upper Moreland, and Springfield. The 1998 status report also indicates that Cheltenham's conveyance system is under prohibition for new connections in the Laverock area and part of Glenside. The Township has an ongoing Infiltrative and Inflow Abatement program to address this issue.

## **Water Supply**

Cheltenham is among the many eastern Montgomery County communities that are serviced by the Philadelphia Suburban Water Company (PSWC). The majority of the company's water is withdrawn from surface water. At this time, PSWC has no plans for system changes that will significantly affect service and anticipates adding service only as new development warrants. Like sewage capacity, available water service should not be a hindrance to infill or redevelopment efforts within Cheltenham Township. Cheltenham's water lines can be seen in Figure 23.

## **Storm Sewer Collection System**

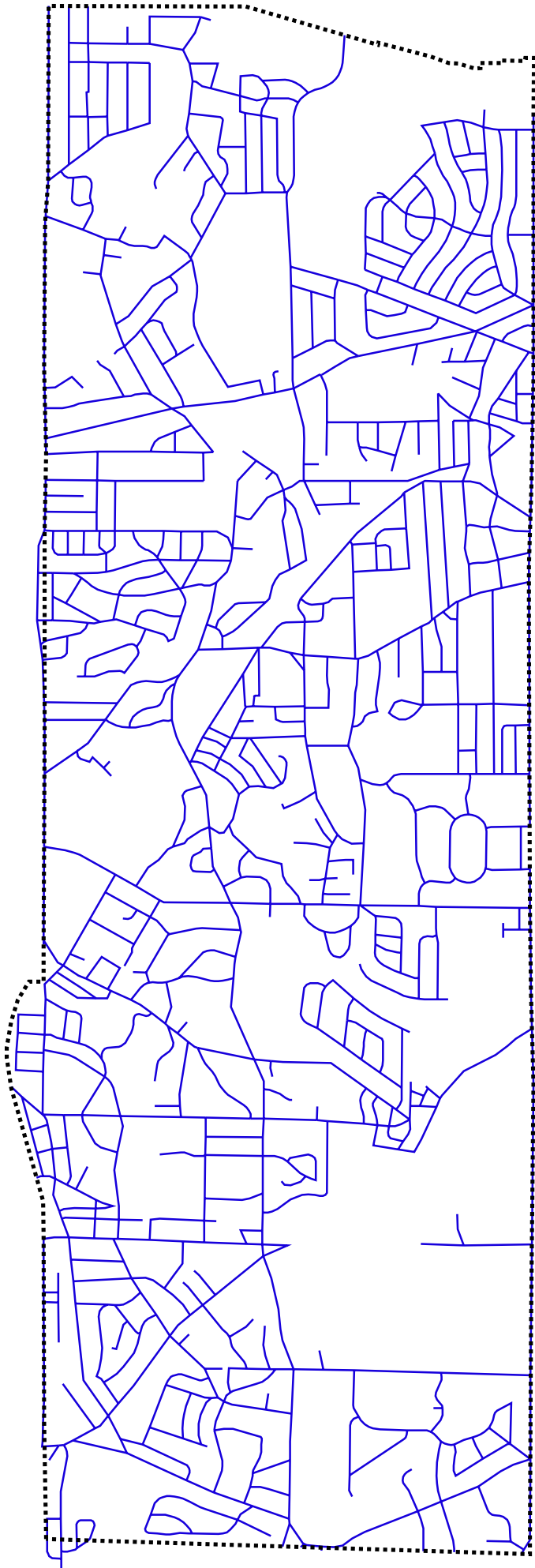
The Clean Water Act led to Phase I of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) storm water program. Phase I relies on National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits to address storm water runoff from medium and large municipal storm sewer systems, construction activity that disturbs five acres of land or more, and certain industrial activities. Phase II applies to operators of

# Cheltenham Township Sewer Lines



Figure 22

# Cheltenham Township Water Lines



Water Lines

Figure 23



Base map prepared July 2004



**MCP**C  
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Montgomery County Courthouse - Planning Commission  
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This map is based on 2000 ortho photography and official sources. Property lines were compiled from individual block maps from the Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, with no verification from the deed. This map is not meant to be used as a legal definition of properties or for engineering purposes.

regulated small municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) and smaller construction sites. The Storm Water Phase II Final Rule has a number of requirements that municipalities will need to follow. There are six program elements: public education and outreach, public participation/involvement, illicit discharge detection and elimination, construction site runoff control, post-construction runoff control, and pollution prevention/good housekeeping. Cheltenham Township was required to obtain a NPDES Phase II permit beginning in 2003.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

### **GOAL: ENHANCE THE EFFICIENT UTILIZATION OF EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND REPLACEMENT OF OBSOLETE FACILITIES.**

**Objective 1:** *Continue to provide outstanding municipal services as well as an outstanding public and private education system.*

The Cheltenham School system is a major attractor for people wishing to relocate to Cheltenham. The Township will continue to provide outstanding services for its residents.

**Objective 2:** *Develop a plan for consolidating and/or relocating certain Township facilities to allow for potential reuse of commercially developable sites.*

**Objective 3:** *Consider updating plans and studies for the Township's water and sewer planning.*

*Policy 3.1 - Investigating updating the Sewage Facilities Plan.*

The Township should review its Act 537 Plan. The policies contained within Act 537 Plans, indicate to landowners and businesses the methods that are provided for sewage disposal within the Township. Act 537 Plans are approved by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and will be reviewed for consistency when any sewage facility permit or planning module is submitted.

*Policy 3.2 - Consider revising the connection/taping fee.*

*Policy 3.3 - Continue the Infiltrative and Inflow Abatement program.*

**Objective 4:** *Plan and continue compliance with the six elements of the Stormwater Phase II Final Rule.*

**Objective 5:** *Review zoning regulation for telecommunications.*

*Policy 4.1 - The Township will revise the Zoning Ordinance to update regulations for telecommunications.*

The Township will revise the telecommunication regulations to encourage co-location of communications, encourage location on community facilities, and add regulations for the removal of non-occupied cell towers.

**Objective 5:** *Encourage cables subject to regular damage to be placed underground.*

*Policy 5.1: The Township will encourage the burial of cables in areas of Township projects.*

The Township will endeavor to bury cables underground in particular in areas of streetscape improvements followed by other commercial areas, historic districts, and near parks and open space.

## Chapter 8 OPEN SPACE



The term open space generally refers to land which is undeveloped or predominantly undeveloped and is permanently preserved as open space for public or private use. Open space land is generally protected for a purpose such as conserving natural features or providing recreational activities. Cheltenham Township has a wealth of parkland and recreation opportunities. The Township continues to believe that open space is of vital importance for its neighborhoods.

Existing open space resources, future needs, and proposed new open space in Cheltenham are examined in detail in the Plan for Municipal Parks, Open Space and Recreation prepared by Carter Van Dyke Associates, Inc. in February 1995. This chapter utilizes and expands upon this plan.

### Existing Parkland and Open Space

Cheltenham currently has almost 400 acres of park and recreation land both active and passive in use. Much of the acreage is provided in small neighborhood parks throughout the community. Practically every neighborhood has reasonable access to neighborhood parks. Cheltenham's private and public open space is indicated in Figure 24 and Table 29 lists each park.



### Golf Courses

- Cedarbrook Hills Country Club (115 acres)
- Ashbourne Country Club (108 acres)
- Melrose Country Club (117 acres)

### Establishing Park and Open Space Acreage Needs

A 1983 guide by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), *Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines* provided strategies for calculating the acreage needs of municipal park systems.<sup>1</sup> The 1983 guidelines suggested a municipal park system include 6.25 to 10.5 acres of land per 1,000 people. These standards, as well as standards from Delaware Valley Regional Planning

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<sup>1</sup> National Recreation and Park Association (1983) *Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines*



Table 29  
Existing Parks and Open Space

| Name  | Location  | Acreage | Use                       |
|---|---|---------|---------------------------|
| Academy Lane  | Academy Lane  | 1.78    |                           |
| Ashmead Road  | Ashmead Road  | 2.57    |                           |
| Bickley Road  | 107 Bickley Road                                    | 0.43    |                           |
| Brookfield Road Open Space                              | Brookfield Road                                     | 17.00   |                           |
| Carroll Avenue  | Carroll Avenue                                      | 4.13    |                           |
| Cedarbrook Park   | Waverly Road West                                   | 8.70    |                           |
| Charles D. Conklin, Jr. Pool and Recreation Area        | 45 Church Road                                      | 6.56    | Active Recreation         |
| Cheltenham Open Space                                   | Old Soldiers Road                                   | 0.10    |                           |
| Cheltenham Open Space                                   | Old Soldiers Road                                   | 0.66    |                           |
| Desert Storm Park                                       | Laurel Avenue                                       | 0.90    |                           |
| Cheltenham Open Space                                   | Church Road   | 1.41    |                           |
| Cheltenham Township Administration Building and Complex | 8230 Old York Road                                  | 6.75    |                           |
| Church Road   | Church Road   | 2.50    |                           |
| Coventry Avenue Open Space                              | Coventry Avenue                                     | 1.65    |                           |
| Coventry Park   | New Second Street & Coventry Avenue                 | 1.59    | Passive Recreation        |
| Curtis Arboretum  | Church Road near Greenwood Avenue, Wyncote          | 48.04   | Passive Recreation        |
| Edward Hicks  | Glenside Avenue East                                | 5.57    |                           |
| Edward Hicks Parry Bird Sanctuary                       | Cheltenham Hills Drive, Elkins Park                 | 8.79    | Passive Recreation        |
| Fairmount Park  | Cheltenham Avenue                                   | 8.41    |                           |
| George A. Perley Bird Sanctuary                         | Glenside Avenue and Rice's Mill Road, Glenside      | 8.46    | Passive Recreation        |
| Glenside Avenue West                                    | Glenside Avenue West                                | 0.25    |                           |
| Green Valley Road                                       | 7716 Green Valley Road                              | 0.57    |                           |
| Grove Park  | Lynnewood Avenue near Cherry Lane, Glenside         | 2.90    | Passive Recreation        |
| H. Carroll Brooke Park                                  | 620 Brooke Road                                     | 6.81    | Active Recreation         |
| Harry S. Renninger Recreation Area                      | Keswick Avenue and Waverly Road, Glenside           | 10.14   | Active Recreation         |
| High School Park  | High School Road and Montgomery Avenue, Elkins Park | 9.74    | Passive Recreation        |
| John Russell Park                                       | Penrose and Willow Avenues, LaMott                  | 8.34    | Active Recreation         |
| LaMott Community Center                                 | Willow and Sycamore Avenues, LaMott                 | 1.64    | Active Recreation         |
| Lincoln Avenue  | Lincoln Avenue                                      | 0.15    |                           |
| Lismore Avenue  | Lismore Avenue                                      | 0.42    |                           |
| Melrose Park  | 330 Asbury Avenue, Melrose Park                     | 7.90    | Active Recreation         |
| Ogontz Park   | Church and High School Road, Elkins Park            | 10.92   | Active Recreation         |
| Parkview Road Park                                      | Parkview Road                                       | 13.14   | Passive Recreation        |
| Ralph Morgan Park                                       | Glenside Avenue, near Jenkintown Train Station      | 6.06    | Active/Passive Recreation |

| Name   | Location   | Acreage    | Use   |
|--|--|------------|---|
| Rices Mill Road  | Rices Mill Road  | 0.35       |   |
| Robinson Park  | 300 Greenwood Avenue, Wyncote  | 4.36       | Passive Recreation  |
| Rock Lane Open Space   | Rock Lane, Elkins Park   | 17.00      |   |
| Rock Lane Park   | Rock Lane, Elkins Park   | 1.52       | Active Recreation   |
| Rowland Community Center   | Myrtle and Elm Avenues   | 2.48       | Active Recreation   |
| Thomas Williams Park   | North Bent and Hewett Roads, Wyncote   | 9.18       | Active Recreation   |
| Tookany Creek Parkway – Fred Griffin Field<br><br>Tookany Creek Tennis Courts<br><br>Tookany Playground<br><br>Kleinheinz Pond<br><br>Gimbel Field | Tookany Creek Parkway & Central Avenue<br>Tookany Creek Parkway & Central Avenue<br>Tookany Creek Parkway west of Central Avenue<br>Tookany Creek Parkway east of Beryl Road<br>Tookany Creek Parkway & Harrison Avenue<br>600 Church Road, west of York Road, Elkins Park | Total: 132 | Active Recreation<br><br>Active Recreation<br><br>Active Recreation<br><br>Active/Passive Recreation<br><br>Active Recreation |
| Wall Park  | 600 Church Road, west of York Road, Elkins Park  | 14.47      | Active Recreation   |
| Waverly Road West  | Waverly Road West  | 0.72       |   |
| Total  |  | 397.06     |   |

Commission (DVRPC) were used to calculate park acreage needs for municipal open space plans. This publication, however, has been replaced due to the expanded role parks and open space play in local communities.

The newest publication by the National Recreation and Park Association and the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration titled *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines* was produced in 1996.<sup>2</sup> The more recent publication shifted its philosophy to provide guidance only, ultimately allowing the amount of park, recreation, and open space to be defined by individual communities. The 1996 publication emphasizes a systems approach to park, recreation, open space, and greenway planning that focuses on local values and needs rather than strict formulas.

This new systems approach looks at the level of service provided to the users of the facilities rather than the size of the facilities based upon population. This method reflects, in part, the dual function of municipal parkland: providing recreation opportunities (passive and active) and protecting important natural features. Municipal parks often contain a significant amount of environmentally sensitive land that prevents much of the acreage from being utilized for active recreation. Under these guidelines, a 5-acre municipal park that contains few significant natural features and is fully developed may provide the same level of service as a 35-acre park that provides recreation and also protects important woodlands,

<sup>2</sup> National Recreation and Park Association and the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (1996) *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines*

wetlands, and other environmental amenities. The difference hinges upon the individual goals of the municipality and not an arbitrary per capita acreage figure.

With the idea in mind that acreage needs are a general guideline, Cheltenham’s open space needs were recalculated using the standard 10 acres of parks for each 1,000 persons. The acreage includes neighborhood parks, community parks, and large urban parks. School grounds and private lands, such as the Ashbourne and Melrose Country Clubs are excluded. Private grounds, by definition, are not open to the general public and school sites are controlled by the school district rather than the local government. School facilities, while more available to the public than private sites, may also be restricted in use.

Table 30  
Cheltenham’s Open Space Needs

|                            |                      |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| 2025 Population Projection | 10 acres/1000 people |
| 36,730                     | 367 acres needed     |

The current supply of 397 acres of active and passive open space will meet the requirements for its 2025 population forecasts, based on open space standards determined by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC). Although the Township’s current open space holdings should satisfy the 2025 population, the open space plan lists six locations as recommended acquisition sites:

- 15.1 acres at 800 West Waverly Road in Laverock;
- 6.37 acres at 1700 Willow Grove Avenue also in Laverock;
- The Manero Brothers property at Waln Road and Carroll Road in Glenside;
- 6.76 acres at Greenwood and Bent Roads in Wyncote;
- 1511-1513 Cheltenham Avenue in LaMott and;
- 9.73 acres at High School Road in Elkins Park.

Through Montgomery County’s Open Space Acquisition Grant program, which funds municipal acquisition of open space, Cheltenham has purchased and permanently preserved two sites for municipal open space. The Township purchased the High School Road property in early 1995 and High School Park has subsequently been created at the site. Additionally, the 6.76-acre site at Greenwood Avenue and Bent Road was also purchased and permanently preserved as municipal open space. Cheltenham has also been improving its existing recreation facilities such as the newly opened Wall Skate Park. The Township will look for funding for the maintenance and improvement of existing open space areas.

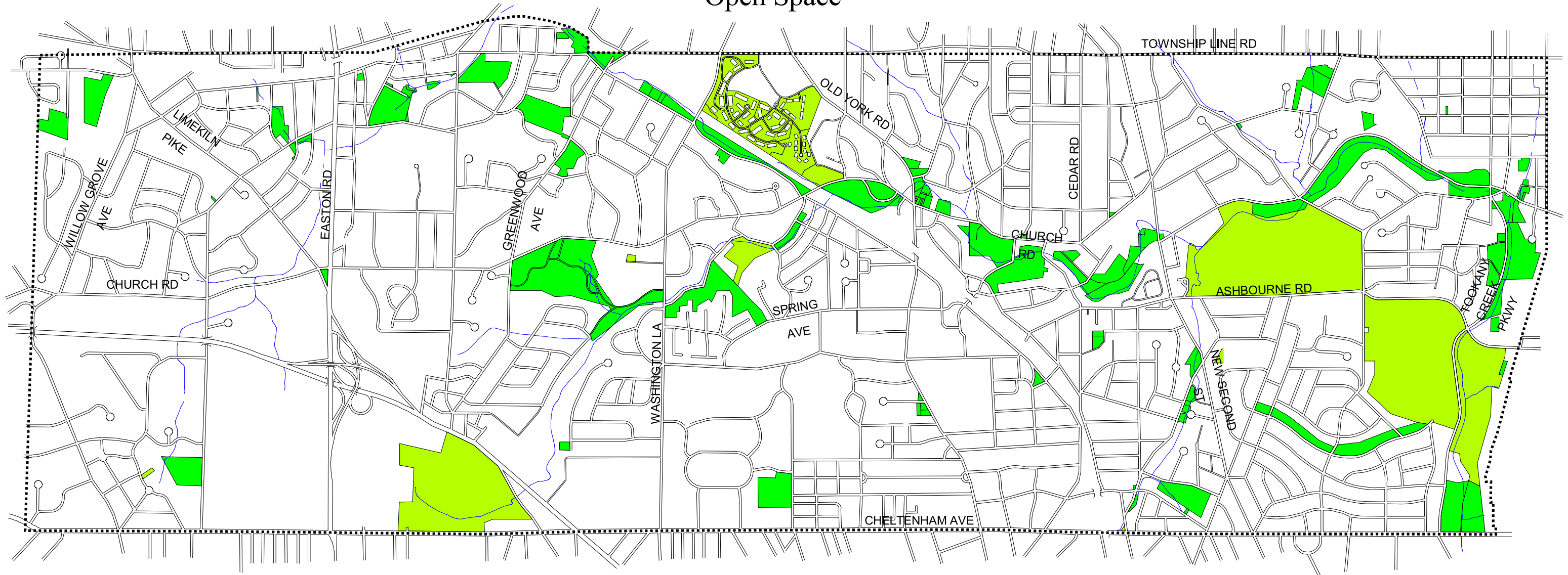
## Trails

Figure 25 indicates existing trails, proposed Montgomery County trails, and possible greenway connections and trails. Connecting Cheltenham’s existing trails to its parks and recreation areas could be accomplished through off-road trails and paths or by ensuring sidewalk connections. The greenway concept follows the recommendations in the Tookany Creek Watershed Management Plan of developing greenways. In order to continue to develop the trail network in Cheltenham, it may involve easements, right of way acquisition, or could be accomplished through sidewalk connections. For existing easements, the Township should try to keep them clear of obstructions. Below is a brief discussion of the proposed trails.

### Creshiem Trail

The proposed county trail of 3.5 miles will run from Philadelphia’s Fairmount Park through the Laverock neighborhood to Route 309 in Springfield Township. The trail would use a former railroad right-of-way, which is now a PECO Energy Utility Corridor.

# Cheltenham Township Open Space



- Public Open Space
- Private Open Space

Figure 24



Base map prepared July 2004

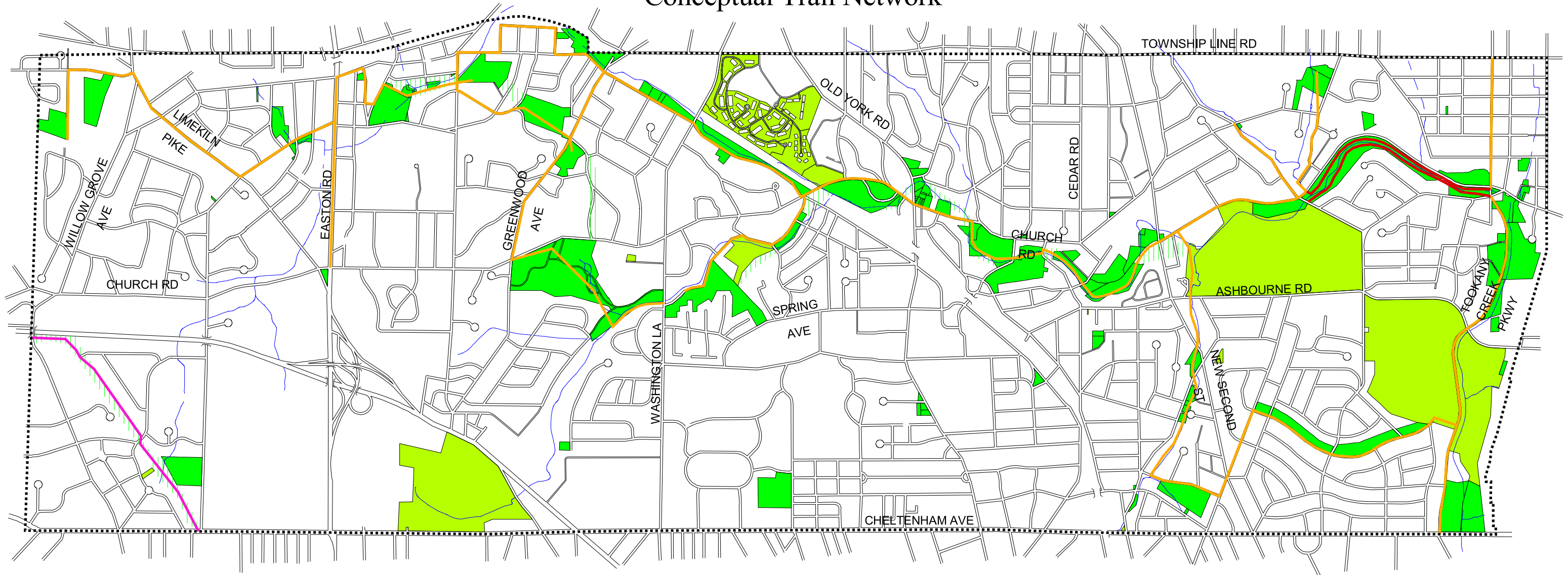


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# Cheltenham Township Conceptual Trail Network



-  Existing Trails
-  Proposed Trails
-  Proposed Montgomery County Trail - Cresheim Trail
-  Potential Greenway
-  Public Open Space
-  Private Open Space

Figure 25



Base map prepared July 2004



**MCPC**

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### **Tookany Creek Parkway**

The Township has an extensive trail system along much of the Tookany Creek. Select improvements could only enhance the overall viability of the trail system. The Township open space plan recommends linkages along Tookany Creek from Ogontz Park to New Second Street to facilitate pedestrian and bicycle movement. The Township currently owns much of the Tookany Creek stream corridor. To create a linear greenway, acquisition of missing corridors along the creek should be explored to enhance the overall system. Trail improvements are recommended in this area to connect the Elkins Park train station/High School Park to the eastern portion of the Township via the Tookany Creek Parkway. Other improvements could include better signage, and bicycle lane marking. Future expansion of this basic trail system could include the extension of the trail from Tookany Park to Fairmont Park and Cheltenham Avenue. The trail could also be expanded westward towards Wyncote and Jenkintown via community parks and railroad right-of-ways.

The Heritage Conservancy prepared the Tookany Creek Trail Master Plan in December of 1999. This trail master plan was developed for the 2.2-mile segment of the Tookany Creek Parkway from High School Park to Central Avenue. Currently, the Township is working on the Tookany Creek trail and stream bank project, in which banks will be stabilized and trail improvements will be made for safety. The first phase of improvements between Central Avenue and Jenkintown Road has been completed. The Township is also looking at the Tookany Creek Watershed with the Tookany Creek Watershed Management Plan in cooperation with surrounding communities of Abington, Jenkintown, and Rockledge.

### **Other Multi Purpose Trails/Greenway Connections**

Although the Tookany Creek Trail will be the main trail within the Township, there are other possibilities for smaller trail systems. These trails could be linked to the primary and secondary bicycle system and the sidewalk system. Another possible location for extending the trail system could connect the neighborhood parks through the Glenside area from Bishop McDevitt High School to the George A. Perley Bird Sanctuary. The Tookany Creek Watershed Management Plan discusses partnering with the Audubon Society, PECO Environmental department, and SEPTA to re-green the Edward Hicks Parry Bird Sanctuary and making it a part of the Township greenway trail. Where feasible, the Township could create connections with Philadelphia, Abington, and Jenkintown with trail connections or greenways. Figure 25 presents a conceptual trail network map for future connections.

### **Parks and Recreation Program**

Cheltenham's Parks and Recreation Department coordinates a number of recreation programs. Classes are offered at the LaMott Community Center and the Rowland Community Center. These community centers are discussed further in the Community Facilities Chapter. In addition there are a number of camps available for kids including the Kiddie Camp and the Summer Teen Camp during the summer. Athletic organizations and Township events are listed below.

#### **Athletic Organizations**

- Cheltenham Jayvees
- The Glenside Youth Athletic Club
- Cheltenham Aquatic Club
- Cheltenham Athletic Association
- Hunter Soccer Club
- Old York Road Little League
- Kehillah of Old York Road
- Chung Yong & Paradise Soccer Association

**Events**

Cheltenham has a wealth of recreational events. Some of these include:

- Annual kite flying contest at Curtis Arboretum
- The fishing derby at Kleinheinz Pond in Tookany Park
- Sundays in the Park—Tookany Creek Parkway
- Concerts in the Park (On Sundays at Curtis Arboretum)
- Glenside Street Fair
- Community Harvest Festival

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

### **GOAL: MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE TOWNSHIP'S PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS AND ENCOURAGE THE CONNECTION OF OPEN SPACE.**

#### ***Objective 1: Connect the Tookany Creek greenway.***

Connecting the Tookany Creek greenway as an open space link is consistent with watershed planning efforts. In order to accomplish this task, it would necessitate coordination with the Tookany-Tacony/Frankford Watershed Partnership and the Fairmount Park Commission.

##### *Policy 1.1 - Implement the Tookany Creek Master Plan.*

The Tookany Creek Master Plan, written by the Heritage Conservancy, was written in December 1999. The trail master plan is for a 2.2-mile segment of the Tookany Creek Parkway from High School Park to Central Avenue. As stated earlier, the first phase of the Tookany Creek Trail and stream bank program is beginning. The Township will continue to implement the plans for a connected Tookany Creek greenway.

#### ***Objective 2: Coordinate with area Park Commissions and "Friends Groups."***

##### *Policy 2.1 - Coordinate with the Fairmount Park Commission.*

The Tookany Creek greenway could be extended as a greenway link. This greenway could be used for heritage tourism and also promotes Cheltenham Township as a walkable community.

##### *Policy 2.2 - Coordinate with the Various Park "Friends" groups.*

"Friends" groups act as first responders to park conditions, help with clean-up, hold community events, and add landscaping to Cheltenham's parks. Cheltenham will continue to coordinate with "Friends" groups and will encourage more neighborhood groups to adopt other parks.

#### ***Objective 3: Expand the existing trail network through acquisition or the purchase of easements.***

The Township will expand the trail network through sidewalks or using existing access easements and if there are significant larger parcels that will link with the system the Township will explore further access easements.

#### ***Objective 4: Update the municipal Open Space Plan.***

The Cheltenham Township Municipal Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Plan was written in 1995 by Carter van Dyke Associates. Given that parks and open space needs may have changed since the plan was written (especially the focus on the Tookany Creek Trail), an update of the plan is recommended as needed to meet funding programs (such as state and county programs). The recommendations from this chapter should be utilized in an update of the municipal open space plan. The municipal open space plan update will meet the goals and objectives of the Montgomery County Open Space Program guidelines.

#### ***Objective 5: The Township will preserve existing open space and will continue to make improvements in existing parks as well as consider the long term implications in future acquisitions of open space.***



The Township will evaluate its existing open space areas in order to assess what is needed for improvement. When evaluating future acquisitions, the Township will consider the long term implications of acquiring additional open space.

***Objective 6: Eradicate invasive species in open space areas.***

*Policy 6.1 – Remove non-native and invasive species and reintroduce native plantings in parks and riparian corridors.*

Invasive plants, such as Japanese Knotweed, Japanese honeysuckle, and monaflorarose, are prevalent along the banks of the Tookany Creek. The Township has made attempts to remove these invasive species. The Township will continue to remove these plants especially along riparian corridors and parks and reintroduce native plantings. This removal process can serve as an educational tool where students can learn about native plantings and could help with removal of invasive species and in the planting of appropriate native materials.

## Chapter 9 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

As noted earlier in this document, residential land uses dominate the Township. Because it is largely built out as a residential suburban bedroom community, the Township depends on its office and retail uses to lessen the residential tax burden. Therefore, it is imperative to address economic development as an important aspect of future development. In an effort to enhance quality of life, the Township seeks to enact policies that will enhance its economic development. In Cheltenham, this equates to the redevelopment of existing neighborhood commercial districts and other adaptive reuse strategies. This chapter sets forth goals, objectives, and policies to strengthen and retain the unique qualities of Cheltenham's commercial areas.

### Existing Conditions

Various types of commercial uses are permitted throughout the Township. Small home businesses are allowed in all zoning districts as accessory uses. The RO Residential Office, the M-3 Multiple Dwelling and Office District, G Manufacturing District and the C-1, C-2, C-3, and C-4 Commercial Districts specifically permit office buildings and retail stores. This equates to approximately 535 acres zoned for office or retail use. In terms of existing land use, 177.2 acres, or 3.3% of the Township's total land use is commercial in nature. Within the commercial category, retail uses dominate at 166.6 acres, while only 10.6 acres contain office uses. In addition, mixed use, which is a combination of residential and commercial uses, accounts for 100.5 acres or 1.8% of the Township's total land use.

Some of the largest employers in the Township are large institutions, such as Arcadia University and Safeway, Inc. (Table 31). Most of the office uses in the Township are small professional offices. Therefore, the Township has come to rely on its retail sector as a source of non-residential tax revenue.

Table 31  
Largest Employers in Cheltenham Township\*

| Employer                          | Business/Service              | Approx. Employees |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Arcadia University                | Education                     | 1,324             |
| Safeway, Inc.                     | Retail Distribution           | 1,096             |
| Cheltenham School District        | Education                     | 831               |
| Pennsylvania College of Optometry | Education                     | 430               |
| Township of Cheltenham            | Government                    | 372               |
| Temple University                 | Education                     | 330               |
| Albert Einstein Medical Center    | Healthcare                    | 200               |
| Glasgow, Inc.                     | Contractor Materials Producer | 162               |
| Wordsworth Academy                | Education                     | 154               |
| Foxchase Cancer Center            | Healthcare                    | 147               |

Source: Township Officials  
\*As of May 21, 2004

Most of the Township's largest retail uses are located along Cheltenham Avenue. These include Cheltenham Square Mall, Cedarbrook Plaza, and the Melrose Shopping Center. Supplementing these centers are various neighborhood shopping centers throughout the Township, the largest of which are in Glenside, Elkins Park, and Cheltenham Village. Many of these districts developed around train stations

and are pedestrian-oriented. They contain small retail stores and some professional offices and form the cornerstones for their respective neighborhoods.

Table 32  
Shopping Centers

| Shopping Center         | Location          | Gross Floor Area (square feet) |
|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Cedarbrook Mall         | Cheltenham Avenue | 590,000                        |
| Cheltenham Square Mall  | Cheltenham Avenue | 890,703                        |
| Elkins Park Square      | York Road         | 57,827                         |
| Melrose Shopping Center | Cheltenham Avenue | 72,400                         |

Source: Cheltenham Township

The Township has already taken the initiative in redeveloping its commercial districts. In 1998, Cheltenham became part of Pennsylvania’s Main Street Program, which is administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Economic and Community Development. At the same time, the Economic Development Task Force (EDTF) was created to implement and oversee the initiatives of the Program. The first step the EDTF took was to secure a consultant to develop a vision plan for economic development in its commercial districts.

In 2000, the Township officially adopted the plan known as the Commercial District Enhancement Plan (CDEP). The CDEP has identified five commercial districts for improvement. They are:

- Glenside
- Elkins Park West
- Elkins Park East
- East Cheltenham Avenue
- Cheltenham Village

Figure 26 indicates the boundaries of the Commercial Enhancement Districts. The boundaries of these districts are flexible depending upon various initiatives and additional commercial districts could be added as necessary. The CDEP has established a framework to improve existing conditions and make these commercial destinations viable. This chapter summarizes and builds upon the recommendations of the CDEP.

# Cheltenham Township Commercial Enhancement Districts

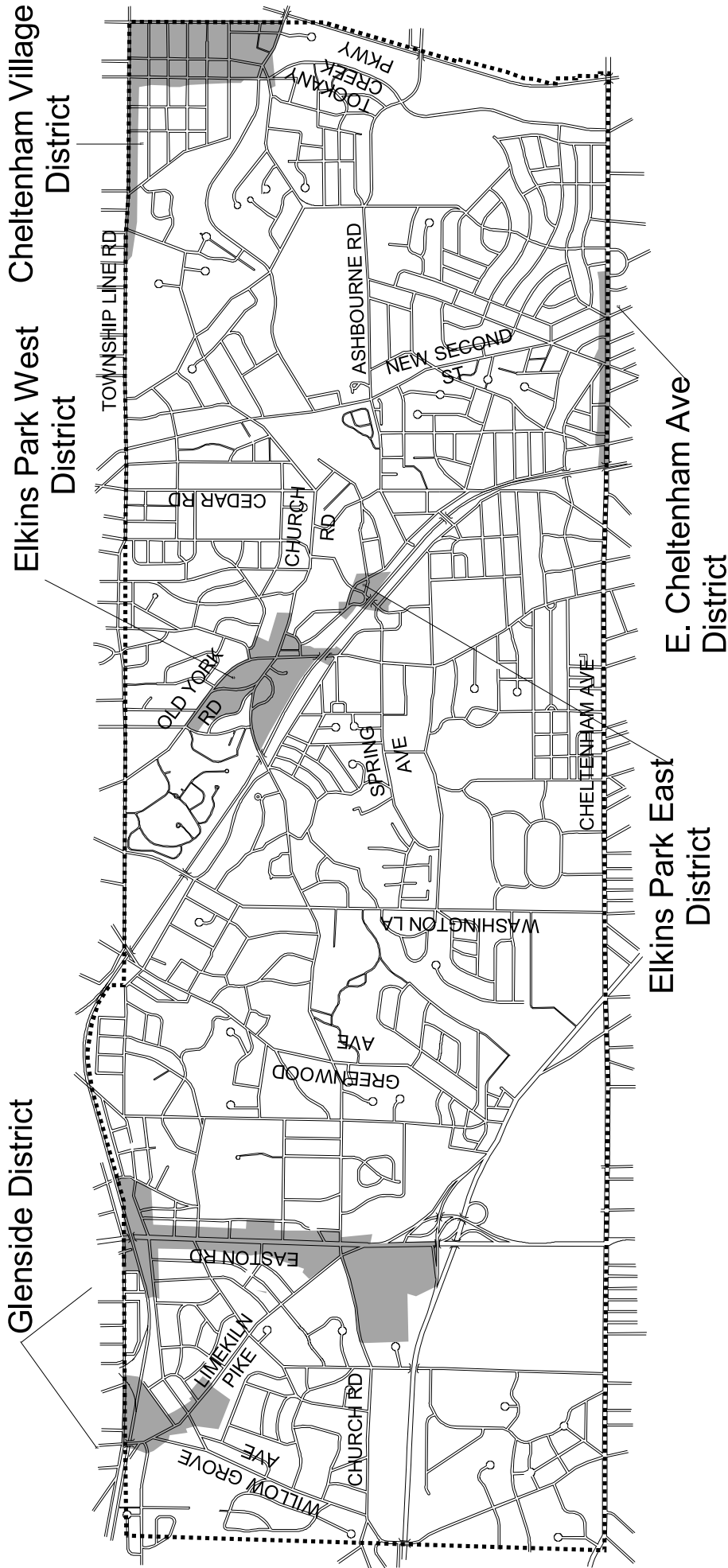


Figure 26



Base map prepared July, 2004



**MCPC**  
 Montgomery  
 County  
 Planning  
 Commission  
 Montgomery County Courthouse - Planning Commission  
 PO Box 311 - Norristown PA 19404-0311  
 (p) 610 278-3722 (f) 610 278-3941  
 www.montcopa.org/plancom

This map is based on 2000 ortho photography and official sources. Property lines were compiled from individual block maps from the Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, with no verification from the deed. This map is not meant to be used as a legal definition of properties or for engineering purposes.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

**GOAL: ENHANCE THE TOWNSHIP'S ECONOMIC ASSETS BY INCREASING THE TAX BASE AND CONTINUING THE REVITALIZATION AND REDEVELOPMENT OF BOTH THE COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS.**

**Objective 1: The Township will pursue the vision outlined for its commercial districts as outlined in the Commercial District Enhancement Plan.**

The vision for the five districts identified in the CDEP is to establish them as successful “places for people.” The Township will work toward this goal by addressing zoning, parking standards, street design standards, streetscape enhancements, bicycle routes, buffering and screening standards, and architectural design guidelines for buildings and signage. Some of this work has already begun, but the Township will work until the vision in the CDEP comes to fruition.

*Policy 1.1 - The Township will promote a sense of place in its five commercial districts.*

One of the key ways of creating a sense of place is to physically mark it as such. Signs identifying arrival into and departure from the Township and its commercial districts will identify the area for visitors and reinforce an identity for both residents and travelers not familiar with the area.

The Township will consider the identification of architectural themes for the commercial districts that are appropriate with the surrounding architecture. Additionally, stylistic elements will be developed that will work in the commercial districts and can also be utilized throughout the Township. The Township will supplement these themes through gateway signage and streetscape improvements. The Township is currently developing a gateway design program which includes gateway signs and landscaping for the Township's commercial districts.

Facade improvements are currently being encouraged using state funding available through the Pennsylvania Main Street Program. Applicants are able to receive funding for facade enhancements that will benefit their individual business and in turn, benefit the district as a whole. To be eligible for funding the applicant must conform to architectural design guidelines, which were established by the Economic Development Task Force (EDTF), to offer direction and maintain certain architectural standards.

*Policy 1.2 - The Township will develop zoning standards specifically catered to the type of pedestrian-friendly environment that is envisioned in the Commercial District Enhancement Plan.*

The Township will seek to establish zoning and subdivision regulations that are responsive to the special needs of these districts as a means to create and sustain an environment that is conducive to economic development. Any changes to the existing zoning in these districts will establish a congruous relationship between buildings, parking, retail and office uses, streets, and pedestrians. The CDEP recommends the creation of four new overlay zoning districts:

- Elkins Park - Town Center Commercial District
- Glenside - Main Street Commercial District
- Cheltenham Village - Village Commercial District
- East Cheltenham Avenue - Mixed Use Commercial District

Within each of the districts, certain aesthetic issues will be addressed. Signs, landscaping, and lighting are important factors in shaping the atmosphere of an area. In addition to improving aesthetics, these can also improve the perception of safety by pedestrians. The Township has recently revised its sign

ordinance to address these aesthetic issues and modernize the ordinance. The Township has devised design guidelines for the Commercial Enhancement Districts, which could be used as the basis of any future zoning work. Broad goals common to each of these proposed zoning districts are:

Signs:

- Use of natural materials
- Neighborhood pedestrian-scale signs
- No internal illuminated sign boxes

Lighting:

- Uniform lighting fixtures
- Enhance safety

Uses:

- Mix of residential, retail and office uses within each district
- First floor commercial use with emphasis on retail and/or office space with above floors used for residential or service uses such as accountants, attorneys, doctors, etc.

Landscaping:

- Buffer residential and commercial uses
- Improve aesthetics
- Reduce amount of impervious coverage

Walkability:

- Pedestrian-scaled areas
- Sidewalks and pavers
- Bicycle routes
- Balance of pedestrian and vehicular needs
- Crosswalks and traffic calming

Building Design:

- Architectural character of buildings
- Encourage original façades to be revealed
- Economic Development Task Force Design Committee to oversee improvements

The Economic Development Task Force has written a series of design guidelines for each of the five districts. These guidelines will be utilized in any zoning ordinance revisions.

*Policy 1.3 - The Township will supplement regulatory tools in its commercial districts with other incentive programs and funding mechanisms.*



In addition to zoning controls in commercial districts, the Township will promote and encourage other incentives for physical improvements in the district. Through the Pennsylvania Main Street Program, the Township has begun to award matching funding for façade enhancements. In an effort to raise public awareness, the Township will also establish marketing promotions and fundraising activities, and will partner with other community-based groups such as local chambers of commerce and local institutional entities. The Township will also seek to initiate or sponsor design competitions in its commercial districts for physical features such as signs, to promote an aesthetically pleasing atmosphere.

The Township will also consider expanding upon its façade programs beyond the Commercial Enhancement Districts to areas such as Cedarbrook Plaza to encourage façade improvements throughout the Township.



**Objective 2:** *The Township will encourage vehicular circulation and parking that does not hinder walkability within the Commercial Districts as outlined in the Commercial District Enhancement Plan.*

Vehicular traffic is another important aspect to the economic development of Cheltenham’s commercial districts. Because it is impractical to expect that everyone will walk to the commercial districts, it is the goal of the Township to pursue policies that will create a harmonious coexistence between pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

*Policy 2.1 - The Township will seek to balance vehicular and pedestrian needs in its commercial districts.*

While walking is encouraged in these districts, it is not the goal of the Township to discourage or lessen the volume of vehicular traffic that passes through these main streets. Vehicular traffic is as important to the viability of these districts as foot traffic. It is important to make drivers aware that they are in a special place and make them want to stop or return. To this end, the Township will seek to employ traffic calming measures in its commercial districts. The goal of traffic calming is to make traffic move more slowly and improve driver awareness of the surroundings. Traffic calming techniques have been utilized in areas throughout the country with successful results.

*Policy 2.2 – The Township will encourage off-site and shared parking in commercial districts.*

The Township will also evaluate current parking regulations to ensure that they are amenable to the needs of businesses and residences in these districts. Off-site parking is the only option for many of these businesses and provisions should be available in the zoning ordinance. The types of buildings found in these districts cannot accommodate parking requirements that were typically written for larger scale, post-World War II development. Flexible parking requirements and shared parking agreements are options that the Township will seek to incorporate into its zoning ordinance. In addition to on-street parking, off-site shared parking should be encouraged. Because of the mix of uses in these districts, the peak hours of operation for the businesses vary. Shared parking will decrease the amount of required parking spaces. As recommended in the CDEP, the Township will identify and evaluate the potential for shared parking resources in these districts.

**Objective 3:** *The Township will increase the commercial and industrial tax base by encouraging development of commercial and office uses in appropriate locations.*

The Township has little undeveloped area to accommodate new commercial or office development. Therefore, the Township will target appropriate parcels for reuse opportunities.

*Policy 3.1 - The Township will adopt incentives to encourage certain commercial and office uses that will reduce residential tax burden.*

The Township will seek to attract more large-scale professional offices that will create an economic benefit for Cheltenham and its residents. The Township will promote the “highest and best” use of existing commercial properties in commercial zoned areas. The “highest and best” use will be determined by economic analysis and market studies. Information technology services, health care offices, restaurants, and hotels are some examples of the types of enterprises that the Township would like to see

locate within its borders. These types of businesses will decrease residential tax burden, provide employment opportunities, and enhance the quality of life for residents.

*Policy 3.2 – The Township will encourage new large-scale commercial uses near major transportation arteries and reduce the negative impact on surrounding residential properties.*

While the Township would like to add non-residential uses specified above, it must also balance any non-residential development with the needs of surrounding residential communities. New development or redevelopment will be directed to areas where it will create a minimal impact on surrounding residential areas. The Township will evaluate its zoning to ensure that any new development will have to provide adequate on-site parking, landscaping, and buffering from residential properties. In an effort to attract businesses, the Township will also support appropriate infrastructure developments that will assist with this type of development.

***Objective 4: The Township will utilize innovative techniques to encourage improvements on commercial properties.***

*Policy 4.1 – The Township will utilize the tax abatement ordinance to encourage improvements of commercial properties and will consider adopting a commercial property maintenance code.*

The Township, in conjunction with the Cheltenham School District, adopted a tax abatement ordinance to encourage businesses to locate within the Commercial Enhancement Districts. The ordinance allows a deteriorating commercial property to receive tax abatement for 5 years on an increase property value for improvements. In addition, the Township will consider implementing a commercial property maintenance code.

***Objective 5: The Township will encourage public and private partnerships that will work cooperatively to enhance economic development throughout all of Cheltenham.***

The Township cannot solely implement the above recommendations, nor can they be implemented solely by private businesses. It is the goal of the Township to encourage partnerships between multiple sources to raise funding and public awareness to the benefit of the commercial districts.

*Policy 5.1 – The Township will seek to foster public-private partnerships within each of the districts.*

The Township will seek to develop partnerships that will strengthen community ties. Possible partners between the Township and business community include local institutions, chambers of commerce, and local community groups. It is hoped that a working cooperative relationship will be fostered between the groups and that they will be able to sponsor community outreach and fundraising activities.

*Policy 5.2 – The Township will coordinate with adjacent municipalities to establish special services districts and/or neighborhood improvement districts.*



Commercial districts do not always follow municipal borders. An example of this type of situation is the Glenside commercial district, which is located partially in Cheltenham Township and partially in Abington Township. In an effort to establish mutually beneficial improvements, the Township will seek to establish a special services or neighborhood improvement districts. A governing body, municipal businesses, or residents can form a district. Funding can be put toward streetscape improvements, street fairs, tree planting, or any other project agreed upon by members of the district. The establishment of a special services or neighborhood improvement district need not be restricted to multi-municipal commercial districts such as Glenside. The Township will evaluate the possibilities of creating districts in other commercial districts as well. The Township may also consider establishing a special services district along Cheltenham Avenue with the City of Philadelphia like the City Avenue Special Services District between Lower Merion Township and Philadelphia.

*Policy 5.3 – The Township will create an Economic Development Corporation/Community Development Corporation to pursue outside funding for commercial development in Cheltenham’s CDEP commercial districts*

Pennsylvania’s Main Street Program is a seed program. That means that State funding is gradually decreased as the Township assumes the duties and responsibilities of the program. Therefore, the Township will need to identify outside funding for the continuation of these programs. The CDEP has identified the creation of an Economic Development Corporation/Community Development Corporation as a goal of the Township. An Economic Development Corporation/Community Development Corporation would be a non-profit organization that would pursue outside funding for Cheltenham’s commercial districts. There are many opportunities for state and federal program funding, such as the Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority, the Pennsylvania Empowerment Zone Program, the Keystone Opportunity Zone Program, the Pennsylvania Elm Street Program for residential areas adjacent to Main Street areas, and the Montgomery County Revitalization Program. The EDC/CDC would also pursue funding from local private sources, such as local institutions and businesses. The Township recently completed its Community Revitalization Plan for the Glenside, Lynnewood Gardens, and LaMott and Melrose Park areas to secure funding from the Montgomery County Revitalization Program.

## **Chapter 10**

### **LAND USE**

Of all the elements in a comprehensive plan, the Land Use Chapter is the most frequently utilized. It is also the most indicative of the community's direction and goals with regard to growth and redevelopment. There are numerous factors that influence and impact the location as well as the intensity of land use within a municipality. Over time, economic factors, development trends, cultural attitudes, and physical features contribute to existing land use patterns and set the stage for future growth.

This chapter is divided into two sections: existing land use and future land use. The existing land use section will discuss past growth patterns as well as inventory existing land use categories. The future land use section will include an analysis of the goals and objectives for future development and redevelopment initiatives within Cheltenham Township. This section will also include specific policies designed as to how the Township will strive to achieve its goals for future land use.

The Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) requires that the comprehensive plan include a plan for land use that "may include provisions for the amount, intensity, character and timing of land use proposed for residence, industry, business, agriculture, major traffic and transit facilities, utilities, community facilities, public grounds, parks and recreation, preservation of prime agricultural lands, floodplains, and other areas of special hazards and other similar uses" (Municipal Planning Code Section 301(a)(2)). This chapter is designed to meet this obligation.

#### **Existing Land Use**

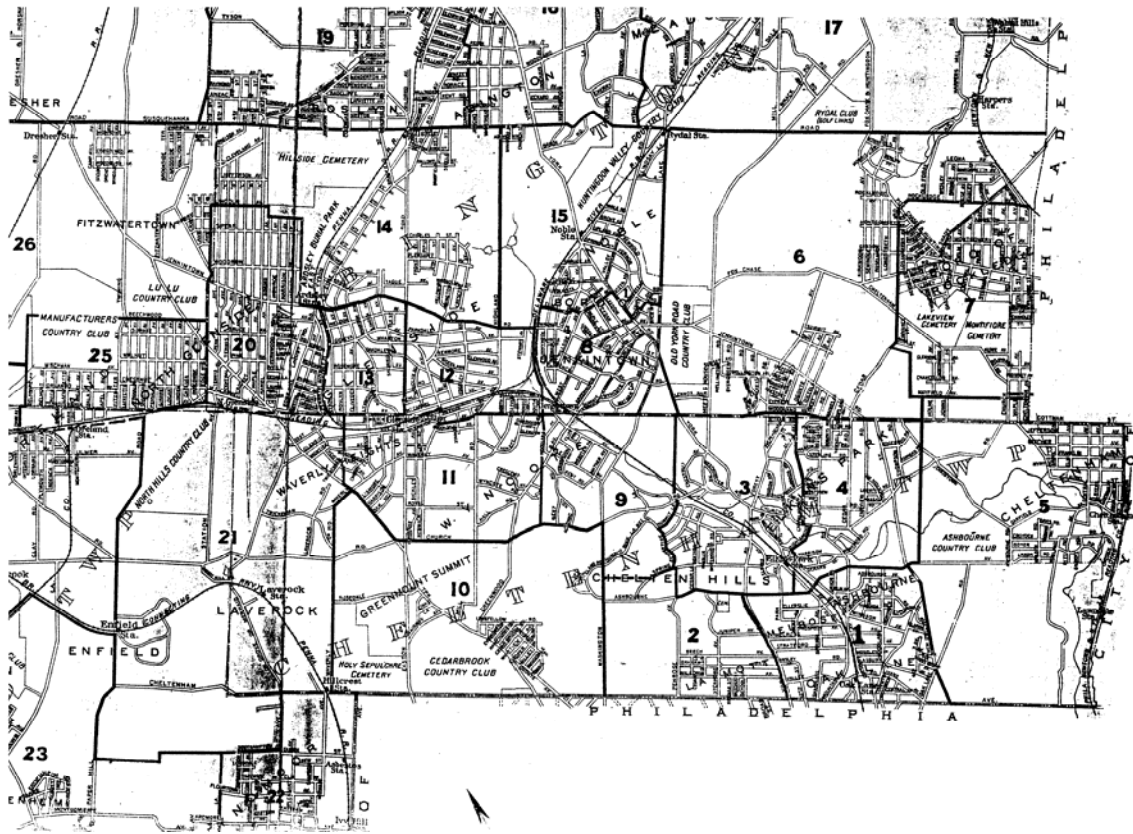
##### **History of Development and Past Growth Patterns**

Cheltenham has undergone an evolution of land uses since William Penn granted the area to several Quakers c.1681. At the Township's inception, large farms were the norm. Soon after, mills and industry formed along the Tookany Creek. Radial roads in the form of turnpikes leading to and from the city were the main avenues of travel in the area. The main thoroughfares were Old York Road, Limekiln Road, Willow Grove Road, Church Road, and Germantown Plank Road (now Easton Road). Eventually, as the city of Philadelphia became increasingly polluted and overcrowded, wealthy, large business owners sought to develop large estates in the outlying regions of the city. Cheltenham was a popular destination for these men of means whose summer "country inns" soon became full time residences. Estates of note in Cheltenham include those once owned by John Wanamaker, William L. Elkins, Henry W. Breyer, Jay Cooke and P.A.B. Widener, Cyrus H.K. Curtis, John B. Stetson, George Horace Lorimer, William W. Harrison, Abraham and Wharton Barker.

The advent of technology made Cheltenham more accessible. The North Penn Railroad and the Fort Washington branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad, in conjunction with trolley lines along Old York Road and those that ran through Glenside and Wyncote, made the area physically and financially accessible to a larger segment of the population. Trolley lines made travel to the countryside affordable for the masses, and the surge in the U.S. economy of the 1920s made the "new wealth" a target for land and transportation developers.

Cheltenham was an early pioneer of transportation-based development. Trolley line owners, particularly William Elkins together with his partner P.A. B. Widener, bought up Township land adjacent to trolley and railroad lines and used the inexpensive fares as a sort of marketing tactic. At the end of the circuitous and scenic journey through the countryside, was an amusement park where passengers were entertained by the music of John Philip Sousa and his band. The trolley riders soon became interested in becoming landowners and Elkins and Widener set about subdividing the countryside. They hired builder William Roberts, to build homes along these routes and added amenities including sewers, streets, sidewalks, and gas and electric lines. Elkins' home building efforts were so vast that over 3,000 units are attributed to

his work. Perhaps the most notable of these is the Ogontz Park area that was built around the architecturally significant Elkins Park Station. By the end of the 1920s, the residential and road patterns had been largely established. Their complimentary nature formed walkable communities that would become a key factor in the Township's growth.



Source: Reading Main Line Atlas compiled by Frank H.M. Klinge, Volume I, 1927.



In the aftermath of the depression, many of the large estates were broken up to form some of the nation's first suburban developments. Township officials recognized the implications of large amounts of growth and accordingly, Cheltenham's first zoning ordinance was adopted in 1929 to effectively manage and plan for the new growth. Also in response to the rapid development, insightful Township officials began the systematic acquisition of parkland. Just as Cheltenham was a pioneer in creating communities that centered around transportation access, it was also a pioneer of trail and park development. The first acquisition was a 9-acre tract that became the Glenside War Memorial Park at

Keswick Avenue and Waverly Road in 1926. Since then, Cheltenham's 397-acre park system has established itself as one of the finest and most comprehensive in the Delaware Valley region. During the 1930s, a large number of parks and open spaces areas were acquired. Among the parcels acquired and developed were Wall Park, including the National Register listed Richard Wall House, c. 1682; H. Carroll Brooke Park, named in memory of a former president of the Board of Commissioners; Cheltenham Hills Bird Sanctuary, along the Reading Company right-of-way adjacent to Cheltenham Hills Drive; and the Curtis Arboretum. One of the most notable park acquisitions is Tookany Drive Park, more commonly referred to today as Tookany Creek Parkway. As the mills that once lined the Tookany Creek became obsolete,

the Township seized the opportunity to enhance its open space. Tookany Creek Drive was constructed during the Great Depression as a Federal Public Works Administration project and was dedicated in 1946. Cheltenham Township would like to recognize it as a scenic drive.

The post-World War II economy created a boom for suburban communities such as Cheltenham. The railroad and trolley car lines had originally made Cheltenham accessible, but the automobile increased that accessibility to a previously unheard of scale. Federal policies such as new Federal Housing Authority (FHA) mortgage policies and the GI Bill made suburban living a realistic choice for many families. Supporting land uses soon followed suit. Business looking to expand their operations or follow their employee base also moved out to the suburbs. Shopping centers materialized on large arterial roads to meet the retail needs of the increasingly mobile population. Cheltenham Square Mall opened in 1960 followed by Cedarbrook Plaza in 1963. Commercial areas also began to strip along Easton Road and Glenside Avenue. Further subdivision of land created a greater mix of housing stock and provided housing options for a more diverse population. Apartment buildings became more common in the 1950's. Lynnewood Gardens, originally called Widener Village Apartments, is Cheltenham's largest garden apartment complex and was built in 1948. There are also a number of mid-rise and hi-rise apartment buildings such as Cedarbrook Hill Apartments, Wyncote House, and Melrose Court apartments.



Today, few developable parcels remain and therefore, the possibilities for large-scale developments are limited in this largely built-out Township. Current planning efforts now revolve around infill developments and community revitalization efforts.

### **Existing Land Use Categories**

This section of the Land Use Chapter looks at existing land use patterns of Cheltenham Township. The uses of land have been divided into nine categories. These categories, with the amount of acreage existing within each category, are shown in Figure 26. This information was obtained from the Montgomery County Board of Assessment (BOA), which assigns specific uses a more general category for taxing purposes.

### **Residential Land Uses**

Residential land uses of various types are found throughout Cheltenham and comprise the single largest land use within the Township. They account for 54 percent of the total land area. This category includes only those lots that have been developed strictly for residential uses. Lots that contain residential as well as nonresidential uses are addressed in the mixed-use category. Table 31 indicates the various types of residential land use that exist within Cheltenham Township.

The percentage of land dedicated to residential uses has remained relatively stable for the last forty years. The range of housing types and styles has allowed for a wide range of people to settle in Cheltenham. The Township will continue to provide various housing types that meet the current, as well as the future housing needs of its continually diversifying population.

- Single-Family Detached. Structures that fall within this category are those that have been designed for and occupied by only one family. Said structures are not attached to any other building or dwelling unit. Single-family detached residences represent the most extensive residential land use. They occupy 85 percent of the land occupied by residential land uses.

A subset of the single-family detached land use in Cheltenham is country residences. These are residential lands that occupy five or more acres. These account for 35.9 acres, or approximately 1 percent of the residential land use.

- ***Single-Family Attached.*** This type of residential land use includes single-family dwellings such as townhouses, row houses, and twins. Row houses and townhouses may be defined as dwelling units that are attached to two or more single-family dwellings by a common vertical wall with no other units located directly above or below it. Twins and duplexes are units that include two dwelling units contained within one structure and are not attached to any other buildings. Twins have two dwelling units placed side by side, joined by a vertical party wall. Duplexes typically have one unit placed above the other and share a common horizontal partition. Triplexes consist of three apartments, floors, or divisions. Examples of single-family attached housing developments include the recent townhouses on Paxson Avenue consisting of 6 units, the Breyer Court townhouse development of 38 units, and the 198 unit townhouse development called the Fairways at Cedarbrook. All together, the various types of single-family attached dwellings comprise almost 7 percent of the residential land use, but almost 12 percent of the total number of dwelling units. By both standards, single-family attached housing is the smallest residential use in the Township.
- ***Multifamily.*** Multifamily units are typically defined as structures containing three or more dwelling units, including units that are located one over the other. There are a variety of apartment building types in Cheltenham. Lynnewood Gardens, a large garden-apartment community developed in 1948, is the largest multi-family use, with 1,789 units. Other large apartment complexes with 200 or more units include Trilogy (Cedarbrook Hills) (990 units), Wyncote House (304 units), Elkins Park House (260 units), Oak Summit (225 units), and Brookview Apartments (216 units). Additional smaller apartment complexes are scattered at various locations throughout the Township. In addition to traditional apartment complex structures, single-family units that have been converted to accommodate more than one family are included in this category. Multifamily units comprise 266 acres, or 9 percent of the total residential land use, and are the second largest residential land use. While multifamily accounts for 9 percent of the residential land use, it makes up 37 percent of the total dwelling units.



### **Commercial Land Use**

Commercial land use encompasses a variety of activities that are predominately connected with the sale, rental, and distribution goods and services. Commercial uses are distributed throughout the Township with the majority of these uses occurring along major transportation corridors. Commercial land makes up 177.2 acres, or 3.3 percent, of the total existing land use in Cheltenham Township.

The redevelopment of commercial districts, for both retail and office uses, has become a priority in many older suburban communities. Cheltenham is among the communities that are actively seeking to redevelop and rejuvenate older and historic commercial areas in the community. The Main Street Program, which began in the Township in 1998 under the auspice of the National Main Street Program with guidelines administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Economic and Community Development, is actively addressing the commercial districts of Glenside, Elkins Park East and West, Cheltenham Village, and East Cheltenham Avenue. Future land use initiatives will have to consider this focus on redevelopment in the forms of adaptive reuses and the retrofitting of both historic and non-historic buildings. Further discussion of these initiatives can be found below.

Table 33  
Multifamily Development (10 or more units)

| Property Name                         | Location              | Number of Units |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1600 Church Road Condominiums         | 1600 Church Road      | 165             |
| Beaver Manor Apartments               | 777 Limekiln Pike     | 21              |
| Breyer Woods Condominiums             | 100 Breyer Drive      | 68              |
| Breyer Estates Condominiums           | 261 Old York Road     | 69              |
| Briar House Condominiums              | 8302 Old York Road    | 91              |
| Brookside Terrace                     | 534 E. Church Road    | 10              |
| Brookview Apartments                  | Ashbourne Road        | 216             |
| Chelbourne Plaza Condominiums         | 46 Township Line Road | 47              |
| Coventry House Apartments             | 7326 Coventry Avenue  | 12              |
| Elkins Park Gardens                   | 8000 High School Road | 50              |
| Elkins Park Apartments                | 415 Church Road       | 19              |
| Elkins Park House                     | Old York Road         | 260             |
| Elkins Park Plaza Apartments          | 515 Stahr Road        | 14              |
| Glenside House Apartments             | 40 Mt. Carmel Avenue  | 26              |
| Hillbrooke Apartments                 | 651 Brooke Road       | 60              |
| Lakeside Apartments                   | Cheltenham Avenue     | 132             |
| Lynnewood Gardens                     | 2047 Mather Way       | 1,798           |
| Melrose Court Apartments              | 7340 York Road        | 84              |
| Melrose Station Apartments            | 902 Valley Road       | 137             |
| Oak Summit                            | 310 S. Easton Road    | 225             |
| Park Spring Manor                     | 7876 Spring Avenue    | 34              |
| Regina Rose Apartments                | 515 Stahr Road        | 12              |
| Rolling Hill Apartments               | 26 Township Line Road | 47              |
| Trilogy (Cedarbrook Hills Apartments) | 8450 Limekiln Pike    | 990             |
| Township Manor Apartments             | 22 Township Line Road | 32              |
| Wyncote House                         | 25 Washington Lane    | 304             |

Source: Cheltenham Township Staff, 2004

Table 34  
Existing Residential Acreage

| Residential Land Use   | Acreage | Percentage of Total |
|------------------------|---------|---------------------|
| Single-Family Detached | 2493    | 84.5%               |
| Single-Family Attached | 192     | 6.5%                |
| Multifamily            | 266     | 9.0%                |
| Total Acreage          | 2951    | 100.0%              |

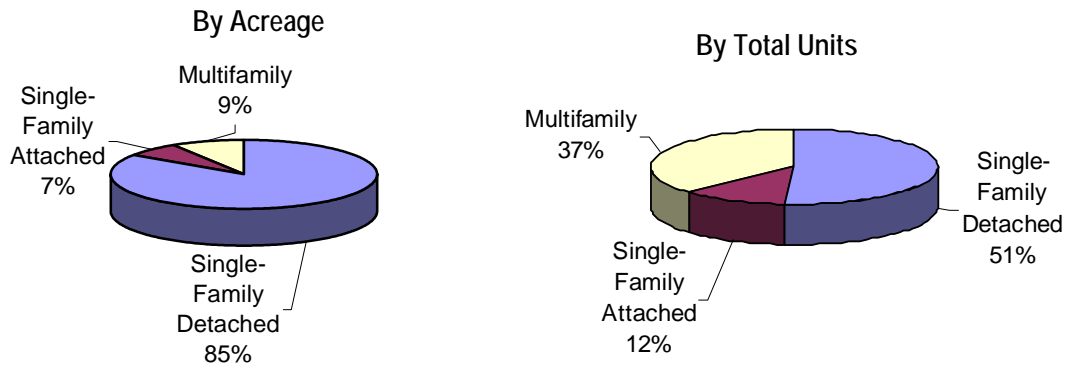
Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment, 2000

Table 35  
Existing Residential Units

|            | Single-Family Detached | Single-Family Attached | Multifamily | Mobile Home / Other |
|------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| Cheltenham | 51.1%                  | 11.9%                  | 36.9%       | 0.1%                |

Source: U.S. Census

Figure 27  
Comparison of Residential Land Uses



- Retail and Personal Services.*** Retail uses range from single building stores to shopping centers to big box retail, which includes stores such as Home Depot, ShopRite, Pathmark, and Wal-Mart. The largest complexes are located along Cheltenham Avenue and include the Cheltenham Square Mall (66 acres), the Cedarbrook Plaza Inc. (38 acres) and the Melrose Shopping Center (6.5 acres). The combined area of these complexes is 104 acres, which constitutes 59 percent of the total commercial land use in the Township. The remaining commercial development occurs in neighborhood business districts and transportation nodes, such as the Glenside Commercial District, the East Cheltenham Avenue District, the Elkins Park East Commercial District, Elkins Park West Commercial District, and the Cheltenham Village District.
- Office Uses.*** Office land use is factored into the commercial component of the land use inventory. It constitutes less than 1 percent of the Township's land use. This percentage includes small professional or medical offices as well as the larger employers in the Township. All included Township businesses were estimated to employ 13,200 in 2000. The Township is host to many different types and sizes of employers. Larger office buildings can be found along the intersections of major roads in the Township such as those at the intersection of Church and Old York Roads. Two large complexes include the Einstein/ Moss Rehab Center and the Genesis Office Complex on Church Road and Washington Lane. Meanwhile small professional offices can be found in many of the commercial districts described above. Small businesses are also accommodated through the home occupation ordinance. The ordinance contains provisions that allow small businesses to operate out of a dwelling without creating a nuisance situation for neighboring property owners. It is intended to accommodate small retail or service enterprises as well as new business trends, such as telecommuting. Through this ordinance as well as its commercial zoning districts, the Township seeks to provide employers with the necessary flexibility to take advantage of new technological advances that no longer require employees to be in a traditional office setting on a regular basis. This flexibility not only benefits employers and employees, but also reduces the amount of vehicles on Township roads at peak travel times.

**Mixed Use**

This category is defined by properties that contain more than one type of land use. Properties that fall within this category often contain a combination of residential, office, and/or retail uses to varying degrees. These are most commonly found in older neighborhood commercial districts and contain small businesses that support the retail and service needs of the local population. The Township contains 100.5 acres of land designated mixed use, which is approximately 2 percent of the total existing land use within Cheltenham.

## **Industrial Use**

Industrial land use comprises 1.1 percent of the existing land use in the Township. The majority of industrial uses are found in the Edgehill and Glenside neighborhoods. The Township's industrial uses were cultivated along the railroad tracks that once served as the hub of these industrial districts. Other areas, such as Cheltenham Village and Melrose Park contain a few small parcels that are utilized for industrial uses. A decreased demand for industrial land is projected in and consequently the Township will have to focus on adaptive reuse of industrial land into other acceptable uses.



## **Institutional**

Institutional land use includes lands that are owned, leased, or operated by a governmental, school, religious or non-profit organizations. Common examples of institutional land use include cemeteries, churches, clubs, colleges and universities, community centers, country clubs, government administration buildings, hospitals, libraries, lodge halls, nursing homes, post offices, police and fire stations, post offices, museums, art centers, public and private schools, and public buildings and courts. Institutional land is 13.6 percent of the existing land use in the Township. This makes it the second largest land use category after residential.

## **Transportation**

An extensive transportation network has been established in the Township. The existing street pattern was almost completely laid out by the late 1920s and consumes a large part of the Township's land use. Arterials in the Township include Tookany Creek Parkway, Oak Lane Road, Ashbourne Road, New Second Street, Cedar Road, Old York Road, Washington Lane, Greenwood Avenue, Limekiln Pike, Willow Grove Avenue, Glenside Avenue, Township Line Road, Church Road, and Cheltenham Avenue. Route 309 (The Fort Washington Expressway) is the only expressway within the Township. The SEPTA Regional Rail Lines and five local stations (Cheltenham, Elkins Park, Glenside, Melrose Park, and Wyncote-Jenkintown) are also large portions of the transportation land use.

## **Utilities**

Public utilities do not occupy a significantly large portion of the Township, however there are many uses that have influenced the development of specific areas of the Township. For example, the high-tension line for the Philadelphia Electric Company cuts diagonally across the southwestern corner of the Township near Laverock, thus dividing the neighborhood. Other major utility uses include the substations in the Elkins Park area and the Transcontinental Pipeline that runs near the Tookany Creek and within the Parkway. Combined, utilities and transportation land uses comprise approximately 13.8 percent of the existing land use in the Township.

## **Open Space and Recreation**

Recreation and Open Space land use comprises 11 percent of the total land use, making it the fourth largest land use in Cheltenham. This land use category consists of public parks and recreation facilities as well as privately owned and operated golf courses and country clubs. Of the open space in Cheltenham, approximately 48 percent is privately owned and approximately 52 percent is publicly owned. Tookany Creek Park is the largest of Cheltenham's parks at 132 acres, followed by the Curtis Arboretum at 46 acres.

The Tookany Creek Parkway serves as the cornerstone of the Township's vast park and open space system. The parkway, which totals more than 130 acres, is a linear park straddling the Tookany Creek. The creek's headwaters begin in the upper reaches of Abington Township, and flow into the Cheltenham in almost a north-to-south direction, thus bisecting the Township. The creek then flows out of the Township, draining into Fairmount Park in the City of Philadelphia. It is the main tributary of the Tookany Creek subwatershed, a 14.0-square mile drainage area in Montgomery County that discharges



into the Lower Delaware River Drainage Basin. Part of the Delaware River Watershed, the creek drains into the Delaware River near the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge.

In an effort to strategically plan for the recreational and open space needs of residents, the Cheltenham Township Plan for Municipal Parks, Open Space and Recreation was adopted in 1995 in conjunction with the Montgomery County Open Space Program. Some recent acquisitions under this program include the 10-acre High School Park and the 5-acre Robinson Park.

**Undeveloped Land**

Undeveloped land is considered to be land that has not been developed but is suitable for development. Cheltenham has 58 acres of undeveloped land. This represents approximately 1 percent of the total existing land use acreage. The Township will explore how to best to develop this land in a manner that is consistent with, as well as, complimentary to, existing land development patterns.

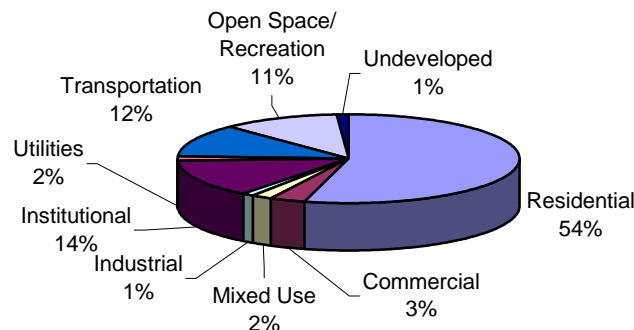
**Summary of Existing Land Use**

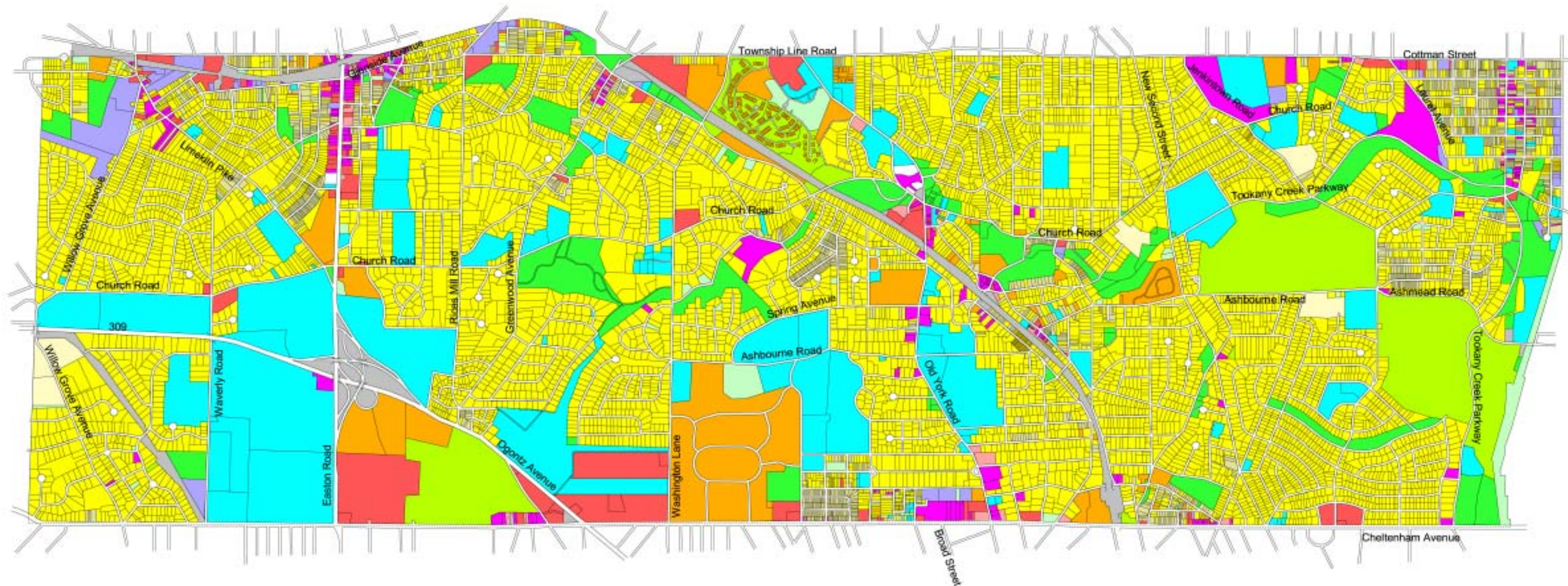
The Existing Land Use Map (Figure 29) graphically represents the distribution of the aforementioned types of land use throughout the Township.

Table 36  
Existing Land Use Acreage

| Existing Land Use     | Acreage | Percentage of Total |
|-----------------------|---------|---------------------|
| Residential           | 2,951.3 | 54.2%               |
| Commercial            | 177.2   | 3.3%                |
| Office                | 10.6    | 0.2%                |
| Retail                | 166.6   | 3.1%                |
| Mixed Use             | 100.5   | 1.8%                |
| Industrial            | 62.5    | 1.1%                |
| Institutional         | 737.5   | 13.6%               |
| Utilities             | 99.0    | 1.8%                |
| Transportation        | 651.7   | 12.0%               |
| Open Space/Recreation | 603.8   | 11.1%               |
| Undeveloped           | 57.9    | 1.1%                |
| Total Acreage         | 5441.3  |                     |

Figure 28.  
Percentage of All Land Uses by Acreage





### Cheltenham Township Land Use

- Multifamily
- Single-family Attached
- Twin/Duplex
- Single-family Detached
- Country Residence
- Mixed Use
- Retail
- Office
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Utilities
- Undeveloped
- Public Open Space
- Private Open Space



Base map prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Commission July 2003

This map is based on 2003 aerial photographs, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals tax maps, Township Officials, and field surveys conducted by the County Planning Commission. All attempts were made to maintain relative accuracy; however, this map should not be used for engineering purposes.

Property lines are compilation of individual block maps from the Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, with no verification from the deed. This map is not meant to be used as a legal definition of properties.

Figure 29

## Future Land Use

The land use in Cheltenham Township has remained relatively stable over the past forty years. The Township continues to be dominated by single-family land uses with commercial development occurring along major roadway corridors. However, the population of the Township is a dynamic element that needs to be factored in when discussing land use. As the demographics of the population change, so do its needs. The question then, is how to adapt a well-established land use pattern to provide for the changing physical, cultural, and material needs of the population while maintaining the character of the community. Flexible development, reuse and redevelopment policies must support the changing needs of the population.

The Township has become focused on developing strategies that promote community revitalization, enhancement, reuse and redevelopment, while simultaneously maintaining the appropriate development controls necessary to buffer and protect surrounding land uses. Future land use initiatives must be undertaken to preserve existing historic resources, buffer sensitive uses, and otherwise ensure that redevelopment fits with regard to existing land uses and characteristics of the built environment of Cheltenham Township.

## Strategic Plan

The strategic plan highlights a number of areas throughout the Township that are particularly important to Cheltenham's future development pattern. While many of these areas may remain in their current use, the Township should consider their potential impact should there be development, redevelopment, or reuse. In some cases, changes in zoning are suggested. The numbers below correspond to the numbers on Figure 30.

- Cluster development will be encouraged through a revised Preservation Overlay District where large estates and open space areas will be maintained. The future of the golf courses needs to be addressed with appropriate zoning.
  1. *Cedarbrook Hills Country Club* – A land development has been approved for townhouses and a hotel conference center and a 9-hole golf course for the Cedarbrook Hills Country Club.
  2. *Ashbourne Country Club* – A proposal for townhouses clustered around the golf course is being discussed.
  3. *Melrose Country Club* – This golf course also would be appropriate for a golf course community perhaps with neighborhood commercial located on the site.
- The Township will consider creating institutional zoning for its institutional uses. For those institutional uses that are facing change, the Township may want to consider revising the zoning to encourage alternative uses.
  4. *Arcadia University* – Arcadia University is currently undergoing a master planning process. The Township will consider creating a High Density Institutional Zoning District for the campus environs, which would allow more intense development, which could include hi-rise dormitories.
  5. *Dominican Retreat* – Located on Ashbourne Road, this institution is a significant property. Should this area develop, the Township would like to see a mix of office and residential in tandem with the preservation of existing buildings as well as the preservation of open space.



# Cheltenham Township Strategic Plan

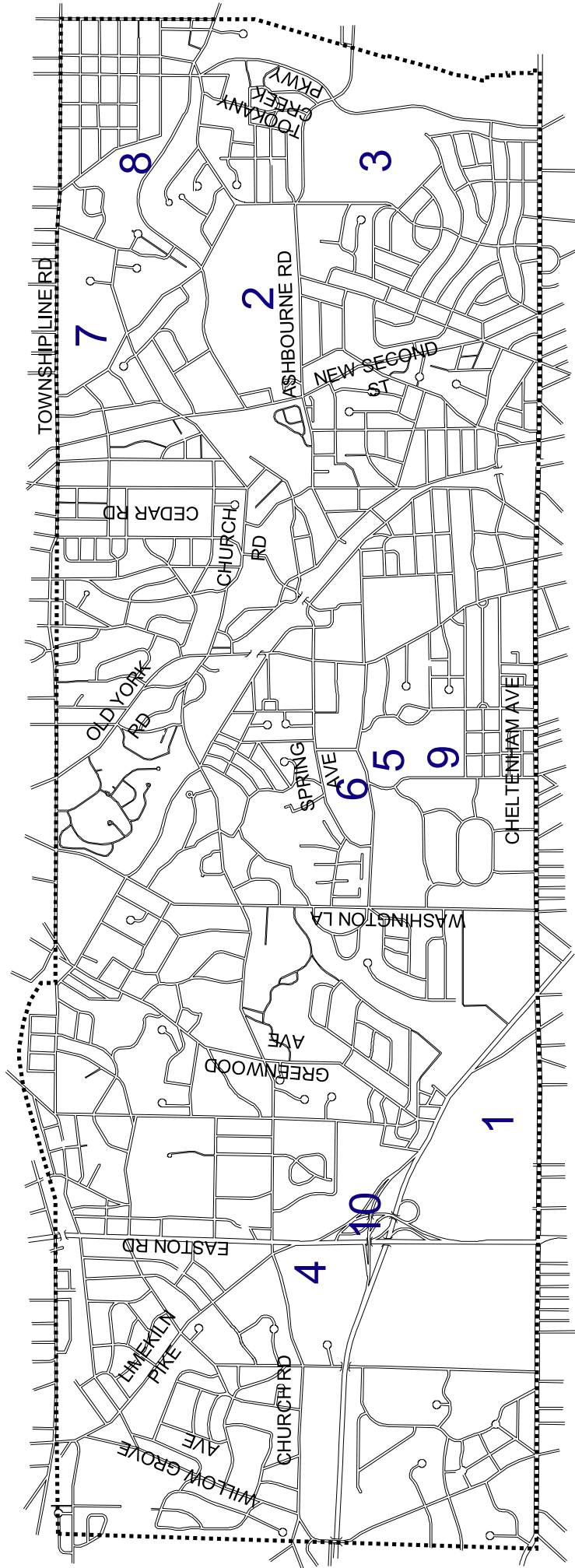


Figure 30



Base map prepared July 2004



**MCP**  
 Montgomery  
 County  
 Planning  
 Commission

Montgomery County Courthouse - Planning Commission  
 PO Box 311 Norristown PA 19404-0311  
 (P) 610 278-3722 (F) 610 278-3941  
[www.montcopa.org/plancom](http://www.montcopa.org/plancom)





This map is based on 2000 ortho photography and official sources. Property lines were compiled from individual block maps from the Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, with no verification from the deed. This map is not meant to be used as a legal definition of properties or for engineering purposes.

6. *Lynnewood Hall (Widener Estate)* – Also located on Ashbourne Road, this significant property could also be considered for a mix of office, government, and residential uses while preserving the existing building and open space.
  7. *Einstein/Moss Rehab Center* – Now that Einstein owns the former Elkins Park hospital, the property is not being fully utilized as a hospital. An office park that caters to the medical profession would be an appropriate use for the site.
  8. *Fox Chase on Church Road* – While it is expected this use will remain; the area would be an appropriate area for a life-care facility.
  9. *Tyler School of Art, Temple University* – With the sale of the Tyler School of Art pending, an alternative use for the campus would mixed use development. The zoning should be changed to reflect this concept.
- New development may be possible with the reconstruction of PA 309.
10. *PA 309 Intersection* – With the reconstruction of PA 309 and Ogontz, there may be some reorganization of the current parcels. Some form of commercial zoning may be appropriate.

## Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan reflects the existing built environment and strategic land use proposals (Figure 31).

### Future Land Use Plan Classifications

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  Single-family Detached/ Attached Residential |  Greenway                   |
|  Multifamily Residential                      |  Golf Course Community      |
|  Regional Commercial                          |  Open Space                 |
|  Office                                       |  Industrial                 |
|  Professional Office                          |  Institutional              |
|  Mixed Use                                    |  High Density Institutional |

### Residential

Cheltenham Township would like to retain its existing residential neighborhoods. The residential categories on the Future Land Use Map are broken down into two categories: single-family detached/attached residential and multifamily residential.

- *Single-Family Detached/Attached Residential* - This category primarily reflects existing single-family detached dwellings, twins, duplexes, row houses, and townhouses with some areas of expansion particularly on Waverly Road at the underutilized site owned by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.
- *Multifamily Residential* - This category primarily reflects existing and proposed apartments and condominiums.

### Commercial and Mixed Use

The commercial uses are comprised of two categories: regional commercial and mixed use. The regional commercial category represents existing larger-scale commercial areas. These mixed use areas include existing commercial areas and expansions of areas along arterial or collector roads.

- *Regional Commercial* - The malls and other larger-scale commercial areas along Cheltenham Avenue are indicated as regional commercial.
- *Mixed Use* - The mixed use designation contains existing neighborhood-scale commercial areas such as Glenside, Elkins Park, Cheltenham Village, and Cheltenham Avenue. These areas contain primarily retail/office uses as well as residential uses. The mixed use designation is intended to include neighborhood shops and services such as café, antique shop, bank, barbershop, real estate broker, etc. Specific regulations would be determined through zoning. The map indicates Limekiln Pike, Easton Road, Glenside Avenue, part of Church Road, the 309 interchange, Cheltenham Avenue, and the Cheltenham Village area with expanded areas of mixed use. The Cheltenham Public Works facility area is indicated as mixed use, which includes the Elkins Park Library area. Dominican Retreat, Faith Theological Seminary, Tyler School of Art, and Lynnewood Gardens properties are indicated as a mixed use category comprised of multifamily residential and office.

### **Office**

The office uses are comprised of two categories: office and professional office.

- *Office* - The existing office uses are indicated on the map. The Einstein/Moss Rehab Center is also indicated as office.
- *Professional Office* - The map indicates professional office along Old York Road. It is intended that that professional office use category may include a number of small-scale professional services such as accountant, architect, dentist, insurance agent, realtor, etc. Should small-scale professional office be developed, it is intended these uses preserve and retain the existing buildings' integrity.

### **Golf Course Communities**

Cedarbrook Golf Course, Ashbourne Golf Course, and Melrose Golf Course are indicated as golf course communities that may include townhouses and/or multifamily development clustered around the golf courses.

### **Industrial**

The industrial uses occur along existing industrial areas and also include utilities such as the railroad corridor.

### **Institutional**

The existing and institutional uses such as schools, religious institutions, and Township buildings are indicated.

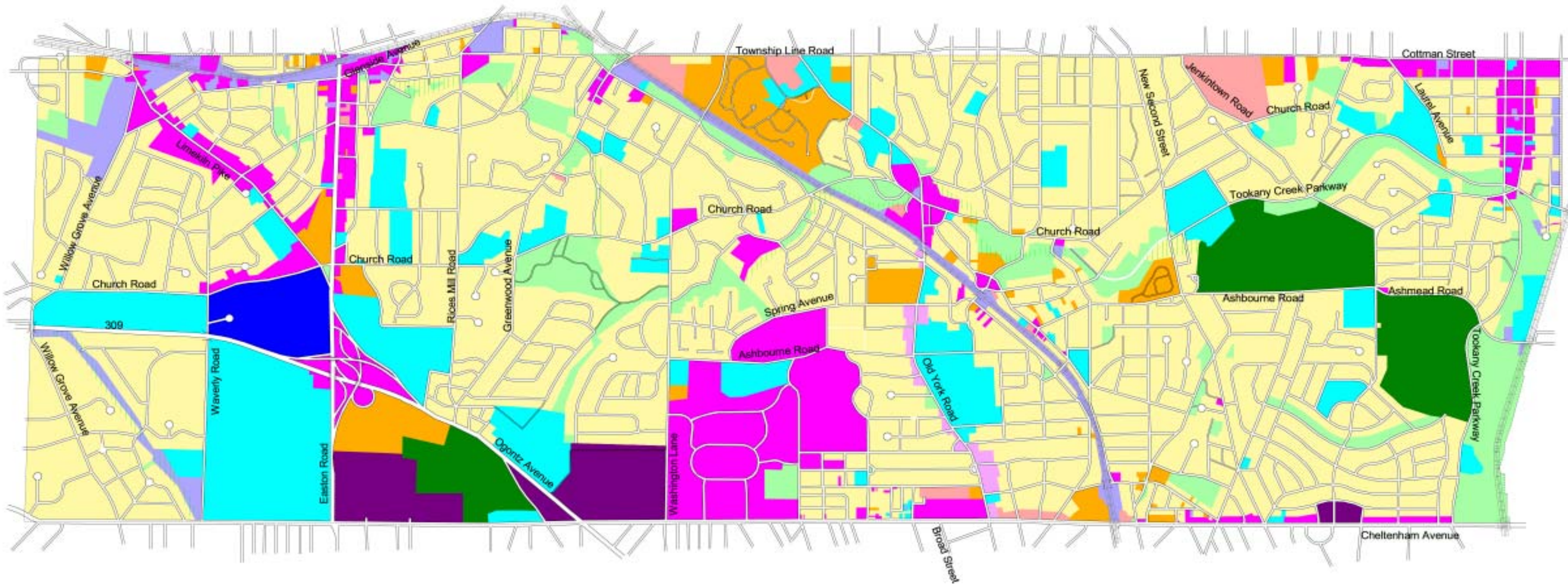
- *High Density Institutional* - The area of Arcadia University is indicated as high density institutional that would allow more intense development on the present campus.

### **Open Space**

The future land use plan includes existing parks and private recreation facilities as open space. Some additional future open space areas are indicated on the map. The Township also encourages greenway connections between existing parks as indicated on the map.

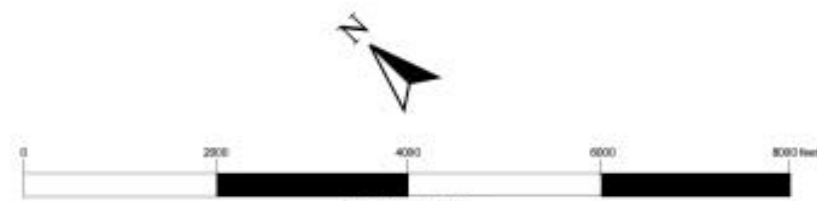
### **Greenway**

Greenway connections, also indicated in the Open Space Chapter, are indicated on this map in addition.



### Cheltenham Township Future Land Use

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Single-family Detached/ Attached Residential | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: lightgreen; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Greenway                 |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: orange; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Multifamily Residential                      | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: darkgreen; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Golf Course Community     |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: purple; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Regional Commercial                          | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: lightgreen; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Open Space               |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: pink; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Office   | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: bluepurple; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Industrial               |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: lightpink; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Professional Office                       | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: cyan; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Institutional                  |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: magenta; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Mixed Use                                   | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: darkblue; border: 1px solid black;"></span> High Density Institutional |



Base map prepared by the  
Montgomery County Planning Commission  
July 2004

This map is based on 2000 aerial photographs, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals tax maps, Township Officials, and field surveys conducted by the County Planning Commission. All attempts were made to maintain relative accuracy, however, this map should not be used for engineering purposes.

Figure 31

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

**GOAL: THE PATTERN OF FUTURE LAND USE IN CHELTENHAM TOWNSHIP WILL BE ORDERLY AND REASONABLE IN DISTRIBUTION AND INTENSITY, CONSERVE NATURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES, BE IN THE OVERALL PUBLIC INTEREST, EFFECTIVELY SERVE THE COMMUNITY, AND ADDRESS THE ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS OF THE POPULATION.**

**Objective 1: Community Character – The Township will preserve the existing community character.**

Cheltenham Township is a mature community with many distinguishing characteristics. It was developed as “Philadelphia’s first suburb,” and this is reflected in the architecture and streetscape of the community. Mature trees, sidewalks, and pedestrian-scale retail centers make the Township unique among its suburban counterparts. It is important to preserve these characteristics as development and redevelopment occurs within the community.

*Policy 1.1 - The Township will provide for the health and maintenance of the urban canopy.*

The abundance of mature trees is a defining characteristic for many of Cheltenham’s neighborhoods. The Township has had the foresight to preserve many of its trees and, in the process, has created an “urban forest.” This forest is a defining feature for residential areas and is an amenity that is often lacking in other suburban communities. Cheltenham was designated a Tree City USA in 1998 in recognition of its efforts to maintain trees. The funding associated with this designation has been used to maintain and expand its urban canopy. Ultimately, as part of this funding, the Township should seek to hire a certified arborist as part of the Public Works Department, to maintain tree health. The Township may also consider pursuing a tree memorial program.

Regulatory tools are also in place to ensure that new development or redevelopment is mindful of the natural environment. Currently, the Shade Tree Commission reviews land developments to protect the natural environment from haphazard development. Subdivision and land development and zoning regulations lawfully require applicants to provide a specific number of shade and street trees on each lot and replace any existing shade trees that are removed from the site. The Township will seek to extend the shade tree replacement requirement to street trees as well. It will also seek to partner with corporations, such as the Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO), to solicit contributions from such corporations that regularly remove or damage trees in their line of work.

*Policy 1.2 – The Township will encourage the enhancement and rehabilitation of existing commercial land uses through the consistent implementation of the Main Street Program and economic revitalization plans.*

To compete with larger shopping mall developments, smaller commercial centers need to establish and promote a niche. The Township will continue to explore ways to meet the commercial needs of its residents while also highlighting safety and aesthetics in any commercial development or redevelopment. To accomplish this, it will seek to attract restaurants and specialty shops, improve façades and signage, and create a consistent architectural theme within each of its commercial districts. Cheltenham also continues to encourage and support local neighborhood planning efforts to revitalize commercial areas by actively seeking county, state, and federal money to revitalize aging commercial districts through its economic revitalization plan. For example, the Township is currently pursuing a Design Challenge Grant that will give seed money to local business to improve their façades. In addition, the Township appointed the Economic Development Task Force to oversee the Commercial District Enhancement Plan in the improvement of the commercial districts in Cheltenham.

*Policy 1.3 – The Township will continue to promote its Historic Districts and encourage the creation of new historic districts and/or conservation districts where appropriate.*



In an effort to promote Cheltenham's historic nature, the completed a Cultural Resources Survey developed by the Preservation Design Partnership in September 1999. The survey is an inventory of historic buildings recognized at the national, state, or local level, as well as those that have the potential to be recognized as such. The Board of Commissioners should consider adopting the survey. The Township will seek to utilize this information to augment the existing H-D Historical District that applies to the LaMott and Wyncote historical districts. It will also seek to create new historical districts, overlay districts, or conservation districts in other areas in an effort to promote adaptive reuse and the retrofitting of buildings.

In the H-D Historical District, as it currently exists, the Boards of Historical Architectural Review (BHAR) serve as an advisory committee on matters of new construction, alterations and demolition of buildings in the district. The BHARs would play an instrumental role in any expansion of the H-D District or in the creation of new overlay districts. In conjunction with the H-D Historic District Ordinance, the Township will seek to adopt a list of "Visual Compatibility Standards" (see Chapter 5) that would guide efforts to promote redevelopment and reuse that is compatible with existing development.

***Objective 2: Residential - Cheltenham Township will ensure that all residential development or redevelopment initiatives are consistent with the safety, environmental, and aesthetic needs of the Township.***

The major use of land in Cheltenham is expected to continue to be residential. As stated earlier, approximately 54 percent of the land in the Township has been developed as residential use. The existing residential pattern within the Township is well defined and future residential land uses are expected to continue along the existing pattern. Accordingly, future residential land use initiatives will have to focus upon maintaining existing neighborhood characteristics and perpetuating the unique sense of place that exists within the individual neighborhoods of Cheltenham.

*Policy 2.1 - The Township will continue to review all applications for residential development and redevelopment in order to ensure that the proposed use is consistent with the characteristics of the surrounding area.*

Neighborhoods in Cheltenham are well established and each has unique built characteristics. Redevelopment and infill development should compliment existing uses and design. The review process is a means to ensure that these characteristics are perpetuated in any new development or redevelopment. This tool should be used effectively and efficiently to promote consistency in residential uses and building types that are already strong in the established growth pattern.

Consistent application of the zoning ordinance is one way to achieve infill residential development that is consistent with existing development patterns. Lot dimensions, density, height and building mass often contribute to established development patterns within a neighborhood. Therefore, the use of zoning requirements can help retain the unique architectural character of the neighborhood. However, zoning relief is available to property owners in situations where unusual circumstances exist, or where zoning regulations may in fact detract from the existing character of a neighborhood. Accordingly, the Township will continue to thoroughly review all applications in an efficient and user-friendly process, to ensure that the resulting development will maintain and enhance the character of the neighborhood. In a developed community, such as Cheltenham, it is important to ensure that any infill development created under current zoning regulations will compliment and fit with the existing development pattern. The Township will also continue to review zoning ordinances on an ongoing basis to ensure that existing regulations are consistent with the Township's infill development objectives.

*Policy 2.2 - The Township will continue to provide residential land uses at a variety of densities and intensities to meet the needs of the current population and protect the excellent quality of these properties for future generations.*

Households have become significantly more fragmented since their counterparts of the 1950's dominated the suburban housing market. Households are growing at a faster rate than the population as divorce rates rise, people live longer, and people wait longer to get married and start families. Single professionals and "empty nesters," (whose children have grown up and since moved out) are growing elements of the housing market. They seek smaller, more manageable housing to better suit their lifestyle needs. A diverse housing stock, such as Cheltenham's, is an asset in the effort to retain and attract residents at various points in the housing cycle.

Current zoning categories vary greatly and allow for flexibility within each housing type. Residential, multifamily, and mixed use districts allow for a variety of densities of all types of housing units. The Township will continue to evaluate its housing stock in comparison to the needs of its residents in order to be proactive in providing housing options for many household types.

As the Township's housing stock continues to age, upkeep of the properties will become an issue. The existing housing stock is an asset and should be maintained. While the vast majority of properties are kept in excellent condition, one neglected property can have an adverse impact on the entire neighborhood. To ensure quality housing for existing and potential residents, the Township will seek to enact a property maintenance ordinance. This will establish minimum standards for properties within the Township.

*Policy 2.3 – The Township will encourage new residential land use that is compatible with surrounding properties, and consistent with transportation and open space objectives through the application of innovative land development regulations.*

New residential land uses in the Township will take advantage of new development practices to simultaneously provide housing options and improve the quality of life while keeping with the overall character of the Township. Flexibility in zoning practices is necessary to allow for new techniques that incorporate different needs of residents, such as transportation and recreation, into residential land developments. These techniques could include cluster development, which clusters housing on smaller lots to minimize impervious surface while maximizing open space; or traditional neighborhood development, which offers a variety of housing types and densities and a mix of uses in a pedestrian-friendly environment.

The Township should revise the Preservation Overlay District or create a new ordinance that would address cluster development and would maximize open space while retaining and preserving historically significant features. Zoning can also be created that follows the traditional neighborhood development standards in Article VII-A of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. Such development would encourage a pedestrian-scale environment through standards for the scale of buildings, setbacks, and design guidelines for the area and would provide community open space areas.

***Objective 3: Commercial – Cheltenham Township will permit commercial land uses in a manner that will maintain the economic vitality of the Township and meet the retail and service needs of the population while minimizing negative impacts upon surrounding properties.***

The Township has a variety of commercial types. Large shopping centers include Cedarbrook Plaza and Cheltenham Square Mall. In addition, a few small, local shopping districts are located in Glenside, Elkins Park, and Melrose Park and along Cheltenham Avenue. These centers are aging and are forced to compete with larger shopping centers on the urban periphery. To maintain and revive commercial uses, the Township will encourage appropriate commercial redevelopment that is complimentary to surrounding land uses. Commercial uses and policies are more thoroughly discussed in the Economic Development chapter of this document.

*Policy 3.1 – The Township will continue to encourage commercial land uses at the intersections of arterial or collector streets in such a way as to minimize the intrusion of off-site impacts into residential neighborhoods.*

There are two types of commercial uses within the Township. First, there are small neighborhood centers that attract local population and meet local everyday needs. Along these main streets, the Township will encourage a mix of uses and pedestrian links to reduce the vehicular impact on these areas. Parking facilities are a necessity to provide adequate capacity for consumers so that the parking supply for local residents is not compromised. The Township will support alternative parking design solutions through the creation of regulations and incentives that encourage shared parking facilities as well as parking that is placed behind or to the side of buildings.

The second type of commercial area are those that have a more regional attraction. These would include shopping centers such as Cheltenham Square Mall and Cedarbrook Plaza. These generate much larger amounts of traffic. In an effort to lessen the impact on surrounding properties, regional retail will be accessible by multiple means of transportation. Bike lanes, sidewalks, and public transit reduce vehicular traffic and benefit the local population that may not be able or willing to travel long distances. Buffering and landscaping requirements are other tools that will be enforced, so as to soften the impact of commercial uses on adjacent residential uses.

*Policy 3.2 - The Township will develop an Economic Development Corporation/Community Development Corporation that will nurture a cooperative environment among the Township and local businesses.*

Cheltenham will seek to form an Economic Development Corporation/Community Development Corporation that will primarily pursue outside funding for local businesses. This would be a cooperative effort that would require the Township to partner with the Greater Glenside and Eastern Montgomery County Chambers of Commerce and local businesses. The Economic Development Corporation/Community Development Corporation would, as its main function, seek grants and funding to be made available and marketed to local businesses for physical and business improvements. It would also serve as a conduit for information regarding demographics, zoning policies and such, for businesses that may be considering locating in Cheltenham. The corporation would assist office uses as well as retail and personal service enterprises.

***Objective 4: Office - The Township will encourage office development that can provide employment opportunities and contribute to the Township's economic base while maintaining the existing character of the Township.***

Office sector employment opportunities are important for the Township because of the tax money that they generate. Cheltenham has many qualities including educational attainment, accessibility and quality of life that make it ideal for office development. It also forms a gateway to the suburbs and is a key location for prospective employers. The Township will encourage office complexes at transportation nodes so as to minimize traffic impacts on residential neighborhoods and maximize access for commuters. The five SEPTA Regional Rail stations are ideal transportation nodes around which office development can form or expand.

*Policy 4.1 - The Township will encourage innovative office developments, which keep with the needs of the changing marketplace, along transportation nodes.*

As part of the Township's efforts, it will seek to encourage corporate office campus developments. One step in encouraging this type of development is to create a mixed-use overlay zoning district that will provide incentives to development that incorporates both office and residential development. This would expand employment opportunities while simultaneously creating opportunities for innovative development. This will allow for office or commercial development at these sites. Mixed-use

office/retail overlay zoning could then be placed over the identified parcels to offer incentives for innovative corporate office campus designs for the sites.

**Objective 5:** *Industrial - The Township will continue to ensure that the siting and operation of industrial land use does not create adverse off-site impacts with specific attention to existing residential areas.*

Approximately 1.1 percent of the existing land use in Cheltenham is utilized for industrial purposes. This type of land use in Cheltenham can be classified as light and medium industry located along the rail corridors. While industrial land use is not anticipated to increase in the future, the existing sites have the potential for redevelopment.

*Policy 5.1 - The Township will seek to reuse older industrial land and/or buildings to enhance the vitality of its industrial districts through the Pennsylvania Land Recycling Program and the Montgomery County Brownfields.*

Cheltenham's industrial uses formed along the Reading Railroad corridor (now used by SEPTA) that bisects the Township. Since the time of the Reading Railroad's dominance, the demand for industrial land has continually declined along that corridor. Some of these sites are currently underutilized and are ripe for adaptive reuse. However, developers may be wary of using these former industrial sites, known as brownfields, for new development. A brownfield is defined as any site, industrial or otherwise, that is abandoned or underutilized because the land may be contaminated. Brownfield sites are often overlooked by developers because of the complexity of cleaning up the sites. Often developers are wary about the legal responsibility and liability issues associated with brownfields.

The Pennsylvania Land Recycling Program, established in 1995, sets legal standards that reduce the risk to developers of these sites by establishing cleanup standards and liability limits. Through participation in programs such as the Pennsylvania Land Recycling Program and the Montgomery County Brownfields Program, the Township will encourage the reuse of older industrial properties for appropriate development that is compatible with the existing neighborhood character and that will also benefit the community by bringing in tax dollars and providing employment.

**Objective 6:** *Institutional – Public institutions, such as hospitals, schools, intermediate care units, utility facilities, and government facilities will be provided with sufficient land area to accommodate identified public needs.*

Public services such as schools and hospitals are important qualities that attract and retain residents. Institutional uses are the second biggest land use in the Township at just over 900 acres of the total land use. This is a direct result of the need for services for the large and diverse residential population.

*Policy 6.1 - The Township will continue to provide accessible and diverse uses that will balance with the changing needs of population.*

The Township will continue to ensure that institutional uses are responsive to the needs of the population. For example, as the population ages, facilities will be needed for the aging and elderly. Current zoning allows this type of facility in the LC Life Care District. These needs will continuously be evaluated as the needs of the population changes. The Township will seek to minimize the impacts of institutional uses on residential areas and create a reasonable balance of institutional uses with other non-residential uses.

**Objective 7:** *Recreation and Open Space – The Township will continue to improve linkages from residential land uses to existing open space and continue to preserve said open space consistent with the Township's Municipal Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Plan.*

In an area like Cheltenham that is 98 percent developed, it is important to incorporate open space and parks to break up the monotony of development. Natural resources, such as the Tookany Creek, improve the quality of life for residents. The Tookany Creek is host to historic structures, pedestrian footbridges, village sites and cultural resources recognized for local, state, and national historic designation. Its tranquil setting gives rise to many species of plants and animals. The park offers a variety of active and passive recreational uses for residents. Active uses include playground facilities, baseball and soccer fields, and basketball and tennis courts. Passive recreational uses include the Kleinheinz Memorial Nature Pond, scenic vistas and, along the shorelines of the Tookany Creek within the parkway itself, a six-mile long pedestrian trail system. This trail provides a continuous greenway corridor linking several neighborhoods of Glenside and Jenkintown Borough, in the northeast half of the Township, to a section of Fairmount Park in North Philadelphia at the southeastern end of Cheltenham.

*Policy 7.1 - Township will enforce plans to preserve and enhance natural features of the Township through a variety of recreational and open space facilities that add to the overall livability and aesthetics of Township.*

The Municipal Parks, Open Space and Recreation Plan discuss the distribution and type of recreational facilities available to its residents. The Township will examine ways of implementing both passive and active green space equitably throughout the Township. Facilities such as hiking and biking trails, playgrounds and vest pocket parks will be established as best compliments the need in each community. In conjunction with its Municipal Parks, Open Space and Recreation Plan, the Township will create and maintain green space and greenways to compliment the impervious surface area in the area. In conjunction with greenspace, open space linkages are another important feature of the Township's Plan because they incorporate open space into residential areas, thus creating a network that improves accessibility for those living in and around the Township.

There are no permanently protected properties along the Tookany Creek; however, both the Ashborne and Melrose Country Clubs function as temporarily protected open space under Act 515. Act 515 status makes a property eligible for certain tax breaks when a property owner agrees to maintain the property as open space for a designated amount of time. Both of these clubs are adjacent to the Tookany Creek Parkway and account for nearly 125 acres of open space. As a matter of policy, the Township will encourage eligible properties to apply for Act 515 status from the County.

*Policy 7.2 - The Township will support efforts by public and private entities that seek to establish or improve recreational or open space facilities.*

The acquisition of open space is usually a one-time expense; however, maintenance is an ongoing expenditure for the Township. Financial support and physical maintenance of recreational facilities and open space could not be provided without the help from private interests. Cheltenham's four athletic organizations, Cheltenham Jay Vees, the Glenside Youth Athletic Club, CAA and OYRLL, as well as "Friends of" groups such as the Friends of High School Park, the Friends of Ralph Morgan Park, and the Friends of Robinson Park are all instrumental parts of the Township's open space network. The Township will continue to support and partner with these invaluable agencies and support the formation of new athletic organizations and "Friends of" groups whenever possible to promote active and passive recreational facilities.

*Policy 7.3 - The Township will create a new zoning category for open space.*

Presently the Township's open space areas are zoned residential. The Township should revise its zoning ordinance to reflect the actual land use of the Township's parks and open space through creating an open space zoning district.

## **Chapter 11**

# **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

This concluding chapter illustrates how the Township intends to implement the policies recommended in this plan and describes how the plan relates to comprehensive plans and other relevant documents and policies of adjacent communities.

### **Implementation**

This section is divided into six sections: land use, economic development, transportation, open space and natural resources, housing, and historic preservation.

#### **Land Use**

In order to implement the policies outlined in this plan, the Township should consider the following actions or policies.

##### *Enhance and Preserve the Township's Community Character*

- Hire a certified arborist, pursue a tree memorial program, require tree replacement, and remove damaged trees to preserve the urban canopy.
- Consistently implement the Main Street Program and economic revitalization plans.

##### *Residential*

- Ensure new residential development is in character with existing neighborhoods.
- Pursue innovative land development regulations such as a revised Preservation Overlay District and traditional neighborhood development (TND) principles.

##### *Commercial*

- Encourage commercial land uses to be at the intersections of arterials or collector streets in order to minimize impacts on residential neighborhoods

##### *Office*

- Establish a mixed use office overlay district.

##### *Industrial*

- Encourage the reuse of older industrial land and/or buildings.
- Participate in the Pennsylvania Land Recycling Program and the Montgomery County Brownfields Program.

##### *Institutional*

- Ensure that as the population changes, the institutional needs of the Township are met.
- Consider adopting an institutional district for the Township's institutional uses.

#### **Economic Development**

In order to implement the policies outlined in this plan, the Township should consider the following actions or policies.

##### *Utilizing the Commercial District Enhancement Plan*

- Create a sense of place in the commercial districts.
- Create four new overlay districts: town center commercial district, main street commercial district, village commercial district, and a mixed use commercial district.
- The Township will promote and encourage other incentives for physical improvement.

### *Commercial Districts*

- Balance vehicular and pedestrian needs.
- Encourage off-site and shared parking.
- Adopt incentives to encourage certain commercial and office uses into the Township.
- Encourage new large-scale commercial uses near major transportation arteries.
- Utilize the tax abatement ordinance to encourage improvements of commercial properties and consider adopting a commercial property maintenance code.
- Foster public/private partnerships within each of the districts.
- Coordinate with adjacent municipalities to establish special services districts and/or neighborhood improvement districts.
- Create an Economic Development Corporation/Community Development Corporation.

### **Transportation**

In order to implement the policies outlined in this plan, the Township should consider the following actions or policies.

- Evaluate the right of way widths of its roads.
- Utilize the design guidelines for its commercial districts to create pedestrian-friendly environments.
- Continue to participate in the Montgomery County Consortium of Communities.
- Continue to enhance driving safety.
- Coordinate with SEPTA to maintain and improve transit service and develop rehabilitate existing stations.
- Create transit-oriented design guidelines.
- Create transit revitalization investment district (TRID) concepts.
- Evaluate the existing sidewalk network and establish a program to implement sidewalk improvements.
- Prioritize which roads within the commercial areas should allow on-street parking.
- Re-stripe on-street parking areas and off-street municipally owned lots to maximize the amount of parking.
- Study the existing street conditions to determine where traffic calming measures are appropriate.

### **Community Facilities**

In order to implement the policies outlined in this plan, the Township should consider the following actions or policies.

- Investigate updating the Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan.
- Plan and continue compliance with the six elements of the Stormwater Phase II Final Rule.
- Provide outstanding municipal services as well as an outstanding public and private education system.
- Develop a plan for consolidating and/or relocating certain Township facilities to allow for potential reuse of commercially developable sites.
- Consider revising the connection/taping fee.
- Continue the Infiltrative and Inflow Abatement program.
- Revise the zoning ordinance to update regulations for telecommunications.
- Encourage cables subject to regular damage to be placed underground.

### **Open Space and Natural Resources**

In order to implement the policies outlined in this plan, the Township should consider the following actions or policies.

- Participate in the Stream ReLeaf program.
- Enhance and protect the Tookany Creek Watershed.
- Coordinate with neighboring municipalities to form a regional Environmental Advisory Council.
- Adopt a stormwater ordinance.
- Adopt a riparian corridor ordinance.
- Review the steep slope ordinance.
- Adopt a landscape ordinance.
- Employ Best Management Practices (BMPs) to ensure water quality.
- Develop green area standards and open space requirements for new development or redevelopment.
- Consider zoning regulations for protection of the Township’s scenic resources.
- Consider applying to the National Scenic Byways Program.
- Implement the Tookany Creek Master Plan.
- Coordinate with the Fairmount Park Commission and “Friends” groups.
- Expand the Township’s trail network.
- Update the municipal open space plan.
- Encourage private open space areas to enroll in the Act 515/319 program.
- Remove invasive plant species along riparian corridors and reintroduce native plantings in parks.
- Preserve existing open space and make improvements in existing parks.
- Consider the long-term implications in future acquisitions of open space.
- Create a new zoning category for open space areas.

### **Housing**

In order to implement the policies outlined in this plan, the Township should consider the following actions or policies.

- Provide a variety of housing types at varying densities, consistent with fair share requirements.
- Provide new housing units consistent with projected population needs.
- Develop property maintenance standards and upgrade the Township’s real estate registration process.
- Provide information to residents regarding assistance options for the rehabilitation of existing residential units.
- Encourage age-defined and retirement housing by allowing these uses within multifamily or office zoning districts.
- Continue to implement the home business ordinance.
- Continue to permit residential conversions that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.
- Continue to work with the residents to establish neighborhood demographics and related mapping tools for use in future planning initiatives.
- Support collaborative neighborhood planning initiatives.
- Ensure that infill development and redevelopment initiatives are consistent with the existing character of the neighborhood through consistent application of the zoning ordinance.
- Develop neighborhood conservation plans to ensure compatible infill development.

### **Historic Preservation**

In order to implement the policies outlined in this plan, the Township should consider the following actions or policies.



### *Historic Districts*

- Protect its historic districts through the fair and efficient application of legal guidelines and incentives.
- Promote and showcase its historic districts through education, public awareness and community involvement.
- Reevaluate the role of the Board of Historic Architecture Review and consider establishing one BHAR.
- Adopt the Cultural Resources Survey.
- Create new H-D Historical Zoning Districts that are complementary to the Enhancement Districts from the CDEP.
- Adopt “Visual Compatibility Standards” for the historic districts.
- Establish design guidelines for the historic districts that are complementary to the CDEP districts.
- Continue to participate in the state’s Certified Local Government Program.
- Register specific landmarks to the National Register of Historic Places.

## **Correlation**

This section examines the comprehensive plans and other documents or policies of adjacent communities in regard to their impact on Cheltenham.

### **Abington**

Abington most recent comprehensive plan was adopted in 1992, which followed their 1977 comprehensive plan. Abington’s Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plan was adopted in 1995. Abington’s proposed land use map has a number of land uses along its southern border with Cheltenham. Land uses include mostly high density residential, some commercial, and a few apartments. Abington is also participating in the Tookany Creek Watershed Management Plan with Cheltenham and surrounding communities. Cheltenham and Abington’s Economic Development committees are currently coordinating in addition.

### **Jenkintown**

Jenkintown’s comprehensive plan was adopted in 1962. The Open Space Plan for Jenkintown Borough is from 1996. Jenkintown is primarily a residential community with a concentration of commercial along Old York Road. Jenkintown recently adopted a Community Revitalization Plan. Jenkintown is also participating in the Tookany Creek Watershed Management Plan with Cheltenham and surrounding communities. In addition, Cheltenham and Jenkintown are involved in a feasibility study for a parking garage at the Wyncote-Jenkintown station.

### **Springfield**

Springfield adopted their more recent comprehensive plan in 1998, which updated their earlier plans in 1958 and 1968. Springfield’s Open Space and Environmental Resource Protection Plan was adopted in 1996. This plan also discusses the PECO corridor as proposed trail connection. Along the Cheltenham border, there is low and medium density residential development.

### **City of Philadelphia**

Cheltenham borders the City of Philadelphia’s Cedarbrook and Olney-Oak Lane neighborhoods to the south and the Near Northeast to the east.

Philadelphia’s 1960 Comprehensive Plan was updated in 1988. Currently the City is embarking on the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative and as part of that process plans to write neighborhood plans for the entire city. It is anticipated that the Olney and Lawncrest/Crestenville neighborhood plans will be written during the first year of the NTI program.

In terms of adjacent land uses with Cheltenham Township, both the Near Northeast and Cedarbrook and Olney-Oak Lane neighborhoods have a variety of land uses both residential and commercial. The Wadsworth commercial area in the Cedarbrook neighborhood across from Cedarbrook Mall will be undergoing some façade enhancements. There is also a proposal for the Temple Stadium area, in Cedarbrook, for a youth golf training camp.

**Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan**

Currently, Montgomery County is updating its comprehensive plan. The last plan was adopted in 1979. The adopted Vision plan for the county comprehensive plan update discusses revitalizing main streets, enhancement of older developed areas, greenway connections, the protection of existing residential neighborhoods, the reuse of underutilized shopping centers, and other policies that are consistent with Cheltenham’s policies.

