



*Milford Township
Comprehensive
Park & Recreation
Plan*

2003

Milford Township

Bucks County, Pennsylvania

PARK AND RECREATION PLAN

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Adopted by the Milford Township Board of Supervisors on June 3, 2003.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

The plan is focused on how to expand park and recreation opportunities in Milford Township, including how to create a multi-use trail network. Strategies for refining how Milford manages its park, recreation and open space system are also identified. This plan is particularly timely due to the township's growing population and ongoing development pressures.

Existing Park and Recreation Resources

There are over 900 acres of permanently preserved land in Milford. The township owns 23 parcels totaling over 475 acres. Molasses Creek Park (63 acres) and Unami Creek Park (73 acres) are Milford's developed community parks. The balance of township-owned acreage is in undeveloped open space parcels. Permanently preserved land in Milford includes homeowner association property and lands under various types of conservation easements, such as agricultural preservation easements, among others.

Churches, utilities, private recreation sites, and the Quakertown Community School District provide an additional 750 acres of temporarily preserved land. This refers to property unlikely to develop further but not legally restricted from doing so.

Recreation programmers in the area include youth sports organizations, the Upper Bucks YMCA and other private non-profit groups. Demand continues to grow throughout the region for playing fields and other recreation activities and facilities.

The seven-member Milford Township Park Board advises the Board of Supervisors on all park and recreation matters. The township Road Crew performs much of the park maintenance with outside contractors and, on occasion, volunteers performing the remainder of the work.

Milford actively pursues park and recreation-related funding from a variety of sources, including Bucks County grants and State monies. The township Supervisors allocate operating funds for recreation each year. The township has also devoted substantial capital funding to acquiring open space and park improvements.

Needs and Goals

Evaluating park and recreation needs for this plan involved fieldwork, a public survey, key person interviews, task force workshops and public meetings. The results of this evaluation led directly to the following goals:

A Greenway / Trail Network: Create a greenway / trail network in accordance with an overall plan.

Active Recreation Facilities: Establish more conveniently located active recreation facilities as the demand for these facilities develops.

New Recreation Programs: Use more partnerships to expand recreation opportunities for people of both genders and all ages.

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Park, Recreation and Open Space Administration: Continue improving the way that the township manages, funds, and publicizes its park, recreation and open space resources.

Recommendations

The recommendations summarized below are the actions Milford hopes to take to address the needs and help fulfill the goals identified above.

A Greenway / Trail Network

1. Develop off-road trail links, off-road bike trails and roadside bike lanes. (p. 22)
2. Preserve private conservation corridors along local waterways. (p. 22)
3. Apply guidelines and principles for trail maintenance, trail parking, and educational programs about trails. (p. 23)

Active Recreation Facilities

1. Enhance existing township parklands with the following improvements: (p. 25)

Upper Portion of Molasses Creek Park — a band shell

Lower Portion of Molasses Creek Park — a bird blind

Unami Creek Park — further develop internal trails

Peeper Pond — a boardwalk for environmental observation and education

Unami Waterfront Park — continue to acquire properties to complete the park

2. Look for new private and public sector

partners to establish more athletic fields. (p. 25)

3. Evaluate potential sites for a new active-oriented community park in the Milford region. (p. 25)

4. Continue investigating regional approaches to constructing a public swimming pool. (p. 26)

5. Encourage golf courses and golf course communities in the township. (p. 27)

6. Meet neighborhood park needs through mandatory dedication regulations. (p. 27)

7. Require residential developers to dedicate recreation facilities, not just recreation land. (p. 28)

New Recreation Program Opportunities

1. Create more non-sports activities, especially for teens. (p. 28)

2. Offer more special events programming. (p. 30)

3. Consider providing a summer playground program on a trial basis. (p. 30)

Park, Recreation and Open Space Administration

1. Continue with regular safety inspections at township parks. (p. 30)

2. Improve risk management practices. (p. 31)

3. Establish a gifts catalog of recreation items needed. (p. 31)
4. Establish a park endowment fund supported by donations and fundraisers. (p. 31)
5. Prepare and distribute a brochure describing leisure opportunities in the Milford region. (p. 32)
6. Institute a formal orientation for Park Board members. (p. 32)
7. Provide an opportunity for Park Board members to review subdivision and land development plans at an earlier stage. (p. 32)
8. Consider establishing an environmental advisory council. (p. 32)

IMPLEMENTATION

Table 4 on page 38 is a schedule for implementing the recommendations identified above in short range and long range phases. The township will examine a variety of resources and techniques to help defray the cost of park, recreation and open space activities. These techniques include the following:

- Pennsylvania state grants.
- Local funding sources, such as general revenues, fees, bond issues and special fundraisers.
- Township regulations, such as natural resource protection standards and requirements for developers to donate land (or fees in lieu of land) for recreation.

PURPOSE

WHAT IS THIS PLAN ALL ABOUT?

Growth has changed the physical landscape of Milford Township. Municipal officials now recognize Milford will need new recreation opportunities to serve its current and projected population. This plan is a strategy on how to:

- Establish a greenway / trail network,
- Expand active recreation facilities,
- Create new recreation programs, and
- Refine how Milford administers its park, recreation, and open space system.

New parks and improvements to existing parks will create more recreation opportunities in Milford. The township envisions a greenway network that will link parks and other community features with publicly accessible trails. New recreation programs and refining the way the township administers its park and recreation system will also benefit current and future residents. As a related activity, Milford will continue trying to set aside more permanent open space to preserve the community's farmland and other natural amenities.

WHY DO WE NEED A PARK AND RECREATION PLAN?

A Park and Recreation Plan for Milford Township is important and timely for the following three reasons, among others.

- Milford Township is a growing municipality,
- Milford Township is committed to planning for its future, and
- Preserving more land for parks and other types of open space in Milford Township will help hold down taxes.

Please see Reference Section A. Growth and Development for a full description of recent population and land development trends. Reference Section A. also describes the state of land use planning in Milford and the fiscal benefits of creating more parks and other permanent open spaces.

THE EXISTING PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

The parks, recreation and open space system in Milford Township has three main components:

- *Parks and Other Preserved Areas* - parkland owned by Milford Township, plus other property in the township that is permanently or temporarily preserved.
- *Recreation Programs* - publicly accessible recreation activities that local athletic organizations and others provide.
- *Recreation Administration* - the township's system for operating, maintaining and funding its recreation resources.

PARKS AND OTHER PRESERVED AREAS

The following narrative, the Preserved Areas map and the accompanying Preserved Areas table identifies the location and size of Milford's parks and other preserved areas (both permanently preserved and temporarily preserved).

Permanently Preserved Areas (924.06 acres)

Permanently preserved areas are properties that will remain as open space because Milford Township owns them or because there is a conservation easement attached to the property's deed that prohibits further development. Permanently preserved areas in Milford include:

1. Township land
2. Homeowner association land
3. Land under farmland preservation easements
4. Conservancy land
5. Land under conservation easements
6. State land

Township Land (475.08 acres)

Township-owned lands in Milford include the upper portion of Molasses Creek Park, the lower portion of Molasses Creek Park, Unami Creek Park and several smaller open space parcels.

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The upper portion of Molasses Creek Park refers to the site of the Milford Township Municipal Building, a 40.5-acre tract on the western side of Krammes Road. A 0.87-mile trail, with trail-side benches, encircles this property. Two little league baseball fields are being constructed on this property. The township also made available a crushed stone parking area for approximately 60 cars to serve the fields. Quakertown Youth Baseball Association is developing and funding the new ballfields, which should be ready by Fall 2003. By formal agreement with the township, Quakertown Youth Baseball Association has major responsibility for maintaining these fields.

The lower portion of Molasses Creek Park is a 22.5-acre community recreation site situated across from the Milford Township Municipal Building on Krammes Road. The lower portion of Molasses Creek Park contains the following recreation facilities and related amenities:

- 3 basketball courts (total of 7 hoops)
- A paved, lined parking area with 35 spaces
- 1 restroom/storage building
- 1 sand volleyball court
- 1 picnic pavilion
- 1 small playground with swings, a sliding board and spring apparatus
- A climbing wall
- 1 multi-purpose field with soccer goals
- Benches at assorted locations
- 1 handball court
- Grills at pavilion and two other locations
- A 1.24-mile, 10 station fitness/walking track. (This distance includes the trail in the upper portion of Molasses Creek Park)

Unami Creek Park is a 72.8-acre parkland off Allentown Road that is bisected by the Unami Creek. The Park View Drive entrance to the park provides direct access to the following recreation facilities and amenities:

- A sledding hill
- 1 pavilion with adjacent barbeque facilities
- 1 restroom/storage building
- A nature trail
- A paved fitness/walking path that loops from the parking lot to the hockey court
- A informal baseball/softball field
- 1 full-sized and 1 half-sized basketball court
- 1 street hockey court
- A paved, lined parking area
- A playground area with a sandbox and various climbing and riding apparatus

The Mill Road entrance to Unami Creek Park leads to the following:

- 3 picnic tables
- An unpaved, unlined parking area
- 3 benches
- A natural, sunken ice-skating/ice-hockey rink

Unami Waterfront Park is currently under acquisition/development. The park consists of a patchwork of small properties situated on Trumbauersville Road along the Unami Creek in the Finland section of the township. Milford is actively acquiring adjacent properties to complete

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the park. The largest parcel is approximately 2.5 acres. There is a picnic pavilion located on this parcel.

Other Open Space Parcels owned by Milford Township include 333 acres at 16 different locations in the township. Some of these locations include more than one parcel, as shown on the accompanying map. Milford dedicates 2 mills of real estate tax revenues (approximately \$60,000 per year) to a fund that the township uses to acquire open space. Monies from this fund, augmented with outlays from Milford's capital budget, helped pay for many of these parcels.

Another major source the township has used to acquire open space is Bucks County's \$59 million open space bond initiative, which was approved by voters in a 1996 referendum. The first installment of that authorization was a \$36 million bond, from which \$20 million was set aside for grants to the County's 54 municipalities. Milford's allocation was \$535,688, which the township has now depleted. Milford contributed 25% matching funds to secure these County monies. Milford has also been successful in acquiring County open space bond funds set aside to acquire special natural areas. The township contributed a 50% match to secure these funds.

Milford acquired some of its open space parcels using the township's mandatory dedication regulations, which stipulate that residential developers must donate land (or the equivalent in fees) to the township for recreation purposes. The amount of land (or fees) that must be donated is based on the size and physical character of the proposed development, as stipulated in the Milford Township Portion of the Quakertown Area Zoning Ordinance. The township has also been successful in working with developers informally to set aside selected open space areas.

Homeowner Association Land (108.65 acres)

There are seven residential subdivisions in Milford Township that include permanent open space maintained and managed by homeowners associations. Deed restrictions legally prohibit development of these common open space parcels.

Land Under Farmland Preservation Easements (162.00 acres)

Two farm property owners in Milford Township have sold the rights to develop their land to Bucks County. Between 1998 and 2002, Bucks County bought development rights to over 3,000 acres from 32 property owners. The County used proceeds from its open space bond issue and state monies to fund these purchases. When a landowner sells development rights, he or she maintains ownership but gives up the right to develop the land in the future.

You must be enrolled in an agricultural security district to sell the development rights to your farmland to Bucks County. Farmers join agricultural security districts pursuant to State Act 43 of 1981 to protect themselves against certain nuisance complaints and to become eligible to have

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their development rights purchased. Milford Township's agricultural security district currently contains 120 properties (4,328.17 acres). It covers just under one-quarter of the township's total land area and is the largest agricultural security district in Bucks County. While joining an agricultural security district may imply the landowner has a long-term commitment to farming, the landowner is legally allowed to withdraw from the district at anytime without penalty.

Land Under Conservation Easements (140.63 acres)

In addition to the farmland preservation easements noted above, eight other properties in Milford Township are under conservation easements that prohibit future development. These easements, which the township holds, were obtained by Milford Township working in conjunction with developers of residential subdivisions in the community.

Conservancy Land (8.34 acres)

Among other activities, non-profit land conservancies acquire conservation easements or buy land outright to create more permanent open space. Natural Lands Trust, which is a leading land conservancy in the eastern Pennsylvania area, owns an 8.34-acre parcel in Milford Township on Kumry Road north of Route 663.

State Land (29.36 acres)

Milford Township has no state parks, state forests, or state gameland. However, in addition to its right-of-way, the Pennsylvania State Turnpike Commission owns a permanent open space property along the east side of the Turnpike south of Route 663. The Turnpike Commission maintains this property as a wetland to mitigate wetlands filled in during Turnpike road improvements.

Temporarily Preserved Areas (749.32 acres)

Temporarily preserved areas are properties unlikely to develop because of their use. However, they are called temporarily preserved because there is no guarantee they will remain undeveloped in the future. Temporarily preserved areas in Milford Township include the following:

1. Church land
2. Public utility land
3. Private recreation land
4. Quakertown Community School District land

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Church Land (94.72 acres)

There are seven church sites in Milford. These properties include some architecturally interesting structures that are locally significant historic and cultural landmarks.

Public Utility Land (200.71 acres)

Five different public utilities and municipal authorities own parcels in Milford Township. These sites do not have open grounds or recreational facilities for regular public use, but they are open space buffers against existing and future development.

Private Recreation Land (383.63 acres)

A recreational camp, a fish and game club, and a golf course are included in this category. These privately owned sites help meet demand for recreation in Milford. While the township has received no formal proposals to develop any of these sites, there is no guarantee they will remain undeveloped and publicly accessible in the future.

Quakertown Community School District Land (70.26 acres)

Milford is part of the Quakertown Community School District, which also serves Quakertown Borough, Richlandtown Borough, Trumbauersville Borough, Haycock Township, and Richland Township. Three of the School District's elementary schools and one middle school are in the township and available for community use.

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Preserved Areas

Permanently Preserved Areas

- Township Land**
1. Milford Township Municipal Building
 2. Moses Creek Park
 3. Usami Creek Park
 4. Lands along Barre Falls Creek
 5. Spill Kill Area
 6. Milford Square Estates / Mill Valley
 7. Cedarfield
 8. Wake Siddons
 9. Park View Estates
 10. Rosebush / Siddons
 11. Harry Terry Siddons
 12. Wheeler Siddons
 13. Steple Siddons
 14. Peepers Pond
 15. McKay
 16. Franklin
 17. Field
 18. Milford Industrial Commons
 19. Soka
 20. Walnutbank Siddons

- Homeowner Association Land**
21. Oak Hill
 22. Franklin Acres
 23. Willow Stream Condo
 24. Willow Stream
 25. Milford Oaks
 26. Tollgate Landing
 27. Woodlands Creation

- Land Under Farmland Preservation Easements**
28. Mood
 29. Nickel

- Land Under Conservation Easements**
30. Inkeeper
 31. Cook
 32. Sutton
 33. Henley
 34. Campbell
 35. Williams
 36. Butter

- Conservancy Land**
37. National Lands Trust

- State Land**
38. Pennsylvania State Park Commission

Temporarily Preserved Areas

- Church Land**
39. Swamp Church
 40. West Swamp Church
 41. East Swamp Church
 42. Quakerborn United Methodist
 43. Field Methodist Church
 44. Quakerborn Presbyterian Church
 45. St. John's Lutheran Church

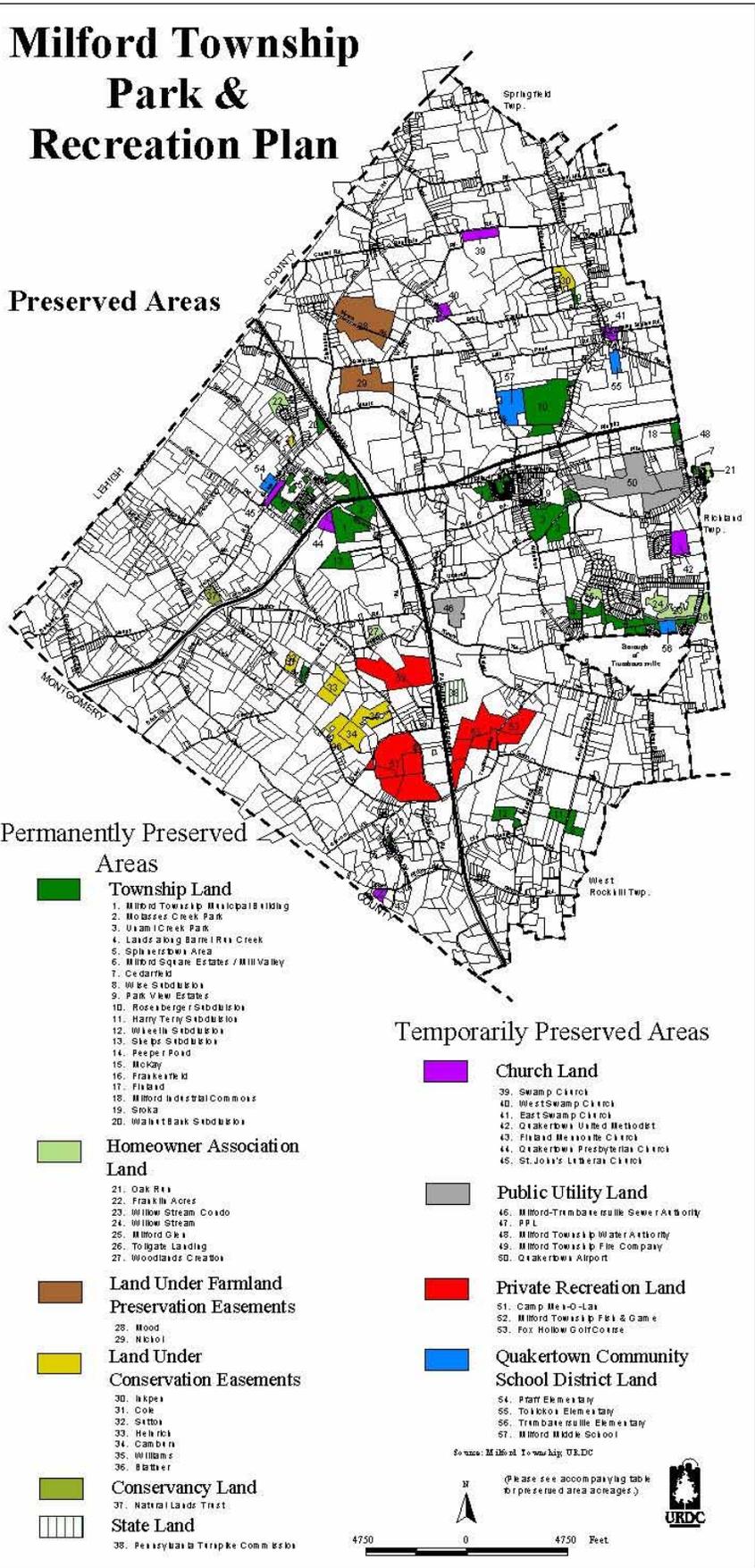
- Public Utility Land**
46. Milford-Tribbwater Sewer Authority
 47. PPL
 48. Milford Township Water Authority
 49. Milford Township Fire Company
 50. Quakerborn Airport

- Private Recreation Land**
51. Camp Meis-O-Lan
 52. Milford Township Fish & Game
 53. Fox Hollow Golf Course

- Quakertown Community School District Land**
54. Pratt Elementary
 55. Tollock Elementary
 56. Tribbwater Elementary
 57. Milford Middle School

Sources: Milford Township, URDC

(Please see accompanying table for preserved area acreages.)



Milford Township Park and Recreation Plan

**Table 1
Preserved Areas
Milford Township
2002**

SITES	SIZE (acres)
PERMANENTLY PRESERVED AREAS	
TOWNSHIP LAND	
Molasses Creek Park - upper portion	40.51
Molasses Creek Park - lower portion	22.47
Unami Creek Park	72.77
Unami Waterfront Park	5.85
Lands along Barrel Run Creek	50.91
Spinnerstown Area	47.84
Milford Square Estates / Mill Valley	12.31
Cedarfield	2.65
Wise Subdivision	14.95
Park View Estates	2.58
Rosenberger Subdivision	95.68
Harry Terry Subdivision	20.00
Wheelin Subdivision	15.65
Shelps Subdivision	26.81
Peeper Pond	5.05
Milford Industrial Commons	8.25
Sroka	2.70
Walnut Bank Subdivision	5.29
Coakley	1.28
Carson	21.53
TOTAL	475.08
HOMEOWNER ASSOCIATION LAND	
Oak Run	5.65
Franklin Acres	13.64
Willow Stream Condo	38.68
Willow Stream	18.64

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SITES	SIZE (acres)
Milford Glen	8.92
Tollgate Landing	13.85
Woodlands Creation	9.27
TOTAL	108.65
LAND UNDER FARMLAND PRESERVATION EASEMENTS	
Mood	110.00
Nichol	52.00
TOTAL	162.00
LAND UNDER CONSERVATION EASEMENTS	
Inkpen	16.01
Cole	4.77
Sutton	9.56
Heinrich	31.11
Camburn	22.65
Williams	32.31
Blattner	24.22
TOTAL	140.63
CONSERVANCY LAND	
Natural Lands Trust	8.34
TOTAL	8.34
STATE LAND	
Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission	29.36
TOTAL	29.36
PERMANENTLY PRESERVED AREAS TOTAL ACREAGE = 924.06	
TEMPORARILY PRESERVED AREAS	
CHURCH LAND	
Swamp Church	15.00
West Swamp Church	11.00
East Swamp Church	12.11
Quakertown United Methodist	20.41

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SITES	SIZE (acres)
Finland Mennonite Church	5.73
Quakertown Presbyterian Church	11.75
St. John's Lutheran Church	18.72
TOTAL	94.72
PUBLIC UTILITY LAND	
Milford-Trumbauersville Area Sewer Auth.	32.85
PP&L	9.61
Milford Township Water Authority	0.08
Milford Township Fire Company	4.42
Quakertown Airport	153.75
TOTAL	200.71
PRIVATE RECREATION LAND	
Camp Men-O-Lan	156.18
Milford Township Fish & Game	91.45
Fox Hollow Golf Course	136.00
TOTAL	383.63
QUAKERTOWN COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT LAND	
Pfaff Elementary	9.56
Tohickon Elementary	10.39
Trumbauersville Elementary	11.44
Milford Middle School	38.87
TOTAL	70.26
TEMPORARILY PRESERVED AREAS TOTAL ACREAGE = 749.32	
PERMANENTLY PRESERVED PLUS TEMPORARILY PRESERVED AREAS TOTAL ACREAGE = 1,673.38	

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RECREATION PROGRAMS

Milford residents, especially young people, can participate in many different recreation programs, including sports, private camps, summer playground programs, and the YMCA, among others. Major recreation providers include the following entities. Please see Reference Section C. Recreation Programs for details about specific programs available, attendance trends and where the programs are held.

- Quakertown Midget Football
- Quakertown Youth Baseball Association
- Quakertown Midget Wrestling
- Connie Mack Baseball
- Quakertown Youth Basketball
- Upper Bucks YMCA
- Quakertown Soccer Club
- American Legion Baseball
- Milford Ball Hockey League
- Camp Men-O-Lan
- The Blazers
- “Kids Involved Doing Something”
(Quakertown Summer Youth Program)

RECREATION ADMINISTRATION

Recreation Management

The Board of Supervisors appoints the seven-member Milford Township Park Board, which oversees all park and recreation services that Milford Township provides. The Park Board and the Board of Supervisors communicate regularly. Two township staff members attend all of the Park Board’s monthly meetings: the Zoning Officer and the Administrative Assistant, who takes meeting minutes. The Park Board sends all its meeting minutes to the Board of Supervisors. The Park Board Chairperson presents an oral report at each Board of Supervisors meeting. In his absence, the township Manager gives this report.

As part of its duties, the Park Board reviews the open space aspects of selected subdivision and land development proposals the township receives. The Park Board also provides advice to the Board of Supervisors on acquiring open space parcels. Among his other duties, the township Manager participates extensively in the research and negotiations that must be completed before open space can be officially preserved. For the present, the township appears to have enough staff to meet its current parks, recreation and open space responsibilities.

Recreation Maintenance and Security

Milford retains private contractors to mow grass and clean the restrooms at township-owned parkland and open space parcels. The township road crew performs all other maintenance at

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these areas under the direction of the township Road Master. The road crew consists of four full-time employees plus part-time help that the township uses on an as-needed basis.

The Quakertown Youth Baseball Association (QYBA) will assume major maintenance responsibilities for the new ballfields at the upper portion of Molasses Creek Park. A formal agreement between Milford Township and the Quakertown Youth Baseball Association outlines this new maintenance partnership:

- QYBA is responsible for constructing the fields, including all grading, seeding, sodding and fencing.
- QYBA may seek future approval of the Board of Supervisors to construct dugouts, batting cages, bleachers, restrooms, a snack stand and scoreboards.
- The township is extending electric, water, and sewer service to the site. QYBA may arrange for connecting to these services at its own expense.
- Within a buffer area of approximately 50' surrounding the fields, QYBA will perform all grass cutting, fertilizing, weed control, and fence maintenance.
- QYBA will have exclusive use of the ballfields from April 1 through July 31 each year.
- QYBA will have use of an existing crushed stone parking area on-site that accommodates approximately 60 cars.
- The township will remain owner of the site but QYBA can use it free of charge, subject to the conditions identified above.

The Pennsylvania State Police provides all public security in Milford Township, including security at township-owned parks and open spaces. The township has received no reports about significant public safety concerns at its parks. Vandalism at township parks has been minor.

Recreation Funding

Operating

The township Board of Supervisors allocates general fund revenues each year to maintain Milford's existing parks. Milford pays for the maintenance of its open space parcels from an endowment fund, to which developers contribute when they dedicate land to the township. The following table shows both of these expenditure categories for the last five years.

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**Table 2
Park and Open Space Maintenance Expenditures
Milford Township
1998-2002**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Park Maintenance (Funded from general revenues)	\$19,547	\$11,671	\$21,231	\$21,607	\$24,288
Open Space Maintenance (Funded from the endowment)	\$4,489	\$9,475	\$9,025	\$5,790	\$3,580

NOTE: Amounts contributed to the endowment fund:

1998	\$ 7,092
1999	147,603
2000	58,699
2001	42,118
2002	20,285

Source: *Milford Township*

Capital

The Milford Township Board of Supervisors has very actively pursued opportunities to preserve open space using a variety of techniques and funding sources. As described earlier in the section on township-owned lands, the following are the primary funding sources Milford has used to acquire conservation easements and buy land outright for preservation purposes. In some cases, the lands (or conservation easements) were dedicated to the township and no funding was required.

- The two mills of general fund revenues that Milford dedicates for open space acquisition
- Allocations from Milford's annual capital budget
- Bucks County's open space bond revenues
- Milford's mandatory dedication regulations

In addition to preserving new open space, Milford allocates significant funding to improving recreation facilities at existing township parks. Completing enhancements planned for the lower portion of Molasses Creek Park and support facilities for the new Quakertown Youth Baseball Association ballfields have been recent priorities. The Park Board participates in formulating Milford's longer-term capital improvement program. The Park Board prioritizes improvements needed at the parks and requests capital funding each year from the Milford Township Board of Supervisors. The Supervisors make final funding decisions based on revenues available and other township spending needs.

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Table 3
Park and Open Space Capital Expenditures
Milford Township
1998-2002

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Open Space Acquisition	0	0	\$180,482	\$18,639	\$838,733
Capital Improvements to Existing Parks	\$5,329	\$38,815	\$57,002	\$74,200	\$67,382

NOTE: Revenues received towards open space acquisition:

1998	\$ 47,037
1999	51,315
2000	86,165
2001	165,250
2002	490,438

Source: Milford Township

The Steering Committee for this plan, plus members of the Board of Supervisors, the Park Board, and township staff contacted in preparing this plan all report they are pleased with the amount of capital and operating funding Milford has been able to devote to date to parks, recreation and open space.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The best way to evaluate parks, recreation and open space needs is to use a combination of techniques. One technique is to refer to population-based guidelines that were developed by the National Recreation and Parks Association. Surveying the opinions of residents who use the system is another valid approach. A third method is to interview municipal administrators, local athletic organizations and others who plan and implement local recreation programs. Milford used all three of these techniques as part of preparing this plan.

NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION GUIDELINES

How much parkland is enough? The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) has traditionally recommended that municipalities provide up to 10.5 acres of active recreation land per 1,000 residents. “Active recreation land” as it applies to these guidelines means parks with athletic facilities and/or playground equipment, as opposed to land preserved primarily for its environmental amenities. That calculation seems to work fine in boroughs and towns with a higher density of dwellings, ample and safe pedestrian ways and centralized park facilities. However, in rural communities such as Milford, the NRPA guideline is problematic.

Milford currently has 145.77 acres of dedicated parkland when factoring in the QYBA baseball fields and upper Molasses Creek Park walking path behind the township building. However, only about 20 acres are active recreation land as defined above.

Under the NRPA guidelines, Milford, with a 2000 population of 8,810, should have 92.5 acres of “active parkland.” The 145 acres of township-owned parkland compares favorably with the NRPA guideline. But in reality the 20 acres of active recreation land falls far short. With a projected population of 11,090 by 2010, Milford could be lacking.

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THE PUBLIC SURVEY

To obtain direct public input into the Park and Recreation Plan, Milford mailed 2,953 surveys to township residents. A total of 579 surveys were completed and returned, for a response rate of 20%. While not every respondent answered every question, the following are the tabulations and highlights of the survey returns. Responses are ordered from highest to lowest.

1. How long have you lived in Milford Township?

- Less than 5 years 130 (22.5%)
- 5-9 years 93 (16.1%)
- 10-14 years 74 (12.8%)
- 15-19 years 46 (8%)
- 20 years or more 234 (40.6%)

People who have lived in Milford Township for over 20 years accounted for over 40% of the surveys returned. Residents of less than 5 years comprised over 22%, and those residing in the township for between 5 and 9 years accounted for another 16.1%. This is very typical for public surveys. Long-term residents nearly always account for the most survey returns.

2. Do you believe Milford Township needs more public parkland? If yes, what type?

- Expand existing parks 189 (35.3%)
- Smaller, neighborhood-oriented parks 144 (26.9%)
- No 103 (19.3%)
- Larger, centrally located parks 99 (18.5%)

Milford Township residents seem most interested in expanding current parks and least interested in new community-wide parks. More than one-third of the survey respondents believe that existing parks should be expanded. More residents (26.9%) favored establishing smaller parks rather than larger ones (18.5%). Slightly more than 19% of survey respondents think the township does not need more parkland.

Comments varied about the types of public parkland people favor most. A few individuals thought natural area parks were needed. The need for additional State Game Lands was mentioned as well. Additional parkland within proximity to existing development was identified as a need. Linear parks were suggested in conjunction with a trails network.

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3. Check the three types of additional recreation facilities that you feel are most needed in Milford Township.

Item	Number (%)	Item	Number (%)
Preserved Natural Areas	312 (53.9%)	Baseball/Softball Fields	68 (11.7%)
Paved Jogging/Walking/In-line Skating/Bike Trails	248 (42.8%)	Horse Riding Trails	61 (10.5%)
An Unpaved, Inter-connected Trail System	214 (37%)	Golf Course/Driving Range	0 (10.4%)
Children's Playground	110 (19%)	Performing Arts Space	57 (9.8%)
Teen Center	99 (17.1%)	Football/Soccer Fields	52 (9%)
Picnic Area & Pavilions	95 (16.4%)	Outdoor Basketball	32 (5.5%)
In-line Skating/Skateboard Facilities	80 (13.8%)	Street Hockey Area	25 (4.3%)
An Ice Skating Facility	71 (12.3%)	Volleyball Courts	16 (2.8%)
		Other	* See Comments

Preserving nature and establishing a trail network should be the township's highest priorities, according to the results of this survey. More than half of the survey respondents (53.9%) chose preserved natural areas as being needed for additional recreation. Both paved and unpaved trails had high response rates of 42.8% and 37% respectively. A teen center, picnic area, and an in-line/ skateboard facility all scored relatively high as well. In addition to the standard checkmark responses, 73 survey respondents added written comments here. The most prevalent suggestion was to add tennis courts to the park system. This was followed by a desire for designated fishing and hunting areas, and thirdly, the addition of a public swimming pool. Other common write-in responses called for a designated area for all-terrain vehicles, dirtbikes and snowmobiles, as well as a park for skateboards, in-line skates and BMX bikes.

4. Do you think Milford Township should establish a summer playground/ recreation program for local youth?

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Not sure</u>
302 (53.5%)	96 (17%)	166 (29.4%)

A slight majority of respondents (53%) believe that a summer playground/ recreation program should be established, while 17% believe this type of program is not needed. Almost 30% were unsure.

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5. What group(s) in Milford Township do you believe **most** need(s) more recreation opportunities?

Group	Number (%)	Group	Number (%)
Teens (15-19)	254 (43.9%)	Adults	104 (18%)
Young Teens (13-14)	249 (43.1%)	Preschoolers	52 (9%)
Children (6-12)	182 (31.4%)	Disabled Persons	36 (6.2%)
Seniors (55+)	115 (19.9%)	Others	* See Comments

The groups most in need of additional recreation opportunities, according to township residents, are young teens and teens. Each group was cited by over 43% of survey respondents. Children, ages 6-12, are seen as the group most in need of additional recreation opportunities after teens.

6. What is the single most important improvement that could be made to our township’s parks, recreation facilities or recreation program offerings?

Three hundred and twenty-three (323) respondents wrote comments here. The following are the responses that occurred most frequently.

- *Longer paved/unpaved walking/biking paths*
- *Monitor and maintain recreation areas; decrease vandalism*
- *Summer recreation programs*
- *Continued acquisition of land for public park/open space*
- *Preserve natural areas/habitat*
- *Community pool*
- *Interconnected trail system*
- *Better advertisement of existing park locations and facilities*
- *A pavilion or stage area at parks; amphitheater*
- *Community recreation building*
- *Lights installed in park areas*

7. Please check the column that best describes how you feel about the following statements.

a) More farmland should continue to be preserved.

Agree: 520 (90.1%) Disagree: 23 (4%) Not Sure: 34 (5.9%)

b) More open space should continue to be preserved to protect natural areas and wildlife.

Agree: 532 (93%) Disagree: 20 (3.5%) Not Sure: 20 (3.5%)

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c) I would like to see schools and other organizations offer more environmental education.

Agree: 452 (80.1%) Disagree: 31 (5.5%) Not Sure: 81 (14.4%)

Overall, each choice was very well received by survey respondents. Open space preservation for the protection of natural areas and wildlife had the highest positive response rate of 93%. This was followed closely by farmland preservation (90.1%), and environmental education in schools and other organizations (80.1%). These results are consistent with the replies to Question 3. Preservation of the natural environment seems to be the highest park/recreation/open space priority among Milford Township residents.

8. What cultural activities do we need more of in our community?

Activity	Number (%)	Activity	Number (%)
Music	212 (36%)	Fine Arts (i.e. Painting, Sculpture)	115 (19.9%)
Adult Education	159 (27.5%)	Dance	92 (15.9%)
Arts & Crafts	136 (23.5%)	Drama	84 (14.5%)
None	129 (22.3%)	Other	36 (6.2%)

The cultural activity seen as most deficient in Milford Township is music. Over 36% of respondents thought this was the case. Adult education ranked as the next highest need at 27.5%, followed closely by arts and crafts at 23.5%. Over 22% of respondents thought that no additional cultural activities were needed in the community.

KEY PERSON INTERVIEWS

The consultant Milford retained to assist in preparing this plan conducted interviews with key people that plan, provide and administer the recreation programs available to local residents. The following is a summary, by topic, of the major common issues, concerns and opinions these interview subjects expressed.

Recreation Lands and Facilities

- There continues to be a demand for new athletic fields, including baseball, soccer and football fields. However, the township should be careful to coordinate construction of new fields with adjacent municipalities (especially Quakertown Borough) to avoid duplication.
- There is strong support for an unpaved greenway trail network, including preservation of stream corridors.
- In addition to athletic fields, there are needs for other recreation facilities, such as horseback riding trails, field lighting and other amenities.

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- Some of these recreation facility needs can be met at existing parks and some at new parks in the future.

Recreation Programs

- The area's athletic associations offer a comprehensive assortment of opportunities to participate in major team sports.
- There is a mix of opinions about the need for a township-sponsored summer recreation/playground program.

Recreation Administration

- Good communications exist between the Milford Township Park Board and the Milford Township Board of Supervisors.
- Coordination exists between the township and organized athletic groups. But the potential exists to extend these partnerships and create new ones.
- The Park Board could contribute more to the review of proposed subdivisions.
- Communications could be enhanced between the Park Board and the general public.
- The Park Board's budget is adequate for now but will probably need to increase in the future.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

NRPA guidelines, the public survey and the key person interviews described in the previous section were important in identifying the recreation-related issues and concerns most on the minds of township residents and officials. Information learned from these three needs assessment techniques, plus our Steering Committee workshop meetings and the consultant's field reconnaissance are the basis for the following goals. These goals describe the township's ambitions for:

Establish a greenway/trail network.

- Create a greenway/trail network, in accordance with an overall long-term plan.

Expand active recreation facilities.

- Establish more conveniently located active recreation facilities as the demand for these facilities develops.

Create new recreation programs.

- Use more partnerships to expand recreational opportunities for people of both genders and all ages.

Refine how Milford administers its park, recreation and open space system.

- Continue improving the way that the township manages, maintains, funds, and publicizes its park, recreation and open space resources.

NOTE: The public survey conducted for this Plan showed overwhelming support for preserving more open space in Milford. While open space preservation is not the prime focus of this Park and Recreation Plan, Reference Section D. Land Preservation Criteria and Techniques is devoted to regulatory strategies and other policies Milford should pursue to help maintain the community's farmland and other environmental amenities.

A Greenway / Trail Network

The proposed greenway / trail network is a system with two parts. The first part would be publicly accessible, non-motorized trails for walking, hiking, horseback riding, in-line skating, biking, and jogging. The second part would be conservation corridors on private land along stream corridors. No public access is envisioned on these private lands. The Greenway Concept map on the next page shows the route of a proposed greenway / trail network. The proposed route is based on the following principles:

- The greenway should link various nodes, such as parks, passive open spaces, neighborhoods, and schools.
- The greenway should incorporate or connect with the proposed Quakertown Area Linked Open Space Plan greenway, where practical.
- Publicly accessible, multi-use trails (some paved, some not paved) would be the preferred goal throughout the greenway system.
- Right-of-way for the publicly accessible trails would be secured through mandatory dedication, acquisition, conservation easements, and access easements.
- Those waterway corridors to which no public access is being sought should be designated as conservation corridors and preserved by enacting the stream setback regulations recommended earlier.
- In addition to developing its own greenway, Milford should work with adjacent Marlborough Township to determine how Milford's greenway network could link up with the Perkiomen Trail, which will run from Marlborough to Collegeville parallel to the Perkiomen Creek in Montgomery County.

1. Develop off-road trail links and roadside bikeways.

The greenway / trail network can be established in Milford incrementally as time, opportunities and resources permit. Major techniques for securing the necessary right of way would include buying land, gaining access by easement, and acquiring property through the township's regulations on mandatory dedication of recreation land. Trails could also be established as bike lanes along wide shoulders of suitable roadways. The objective is to preserve trail segments that could gradually be linked to form an overall network. The accompanying Greenway Concept map shows a recommended trail network route.

2. Preserve private conservation corridors along local waterways.

As shown on the Greenway Concept map, publicly accessible trails are proposed along portions of some waterway corridors. There is other waterway corridor land in the township for which no public access is envisioned. Land in this latter category should also be viewed as part of Milford's greenway network even though no trails are proposed there. These private

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lands should be designated as “conservation corridors”—streamside buffers that should remain undisturbed to help protect water quality and conserve natural habitats. Conservation corridors can be preserved in Milford by enacting and enforcing a 50-foot stream setback (riparian buffer) regulation along the Unami East Branch, Unami West Branch, Hazelbach, Butter, Schmoutz, Molasses and Licking creeks.

3. Apply the following trail development guidelines and principles.

a. Trail Maintenance.

It may be possible to get volunteer groups to help maintain public trails. This system is used very successfully to maintain the Appalachian Trail. A group, such as a hiking club or Boy/Girl Scout troop or a “Friends of the Trail” organization could accept responsibility for walking the trail twice a year to clear obstructions, clean up trash and perform other light maintenance.

b. Trail Parking.

To avoid nuisances for neighbors and traffic hazards along roads, parking areas along any future greenway should be provided at key locations along trails. These parking areas work best when they are available at a park or an existing public facility where there is some oversight. The parking areas should be in locations that are visible from a road so they are less likely to be used improperly. In some cases, a local business may be willing to allow part of its parking lot to be used by trail users, particularly if peak demand for parking is a time when they do not need their full parking area.

c. Educational Programs About Trails.

A public education program is important to gain public support for trails, particularly among people who own property adjacent to a proposed trail. Residents may oppose a trail because they fear increased crime, noise, litter and trespassing on their property. Extensive written materials are available from the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and others about experiences in other communities, where many feared problems did not arise. For example, concerns about dumping might be reduced if there is a commitment by volunteer groups to regularly clean the trail, or if the township road crew is available to promptly clean up designated dumpsites along a trail.

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Greenway Concept

Note: Waterway corridors not proposed for trail use should be considered conservation corridors.



Active Recreation Facilities

Among active recreation facilities, the most frequently cited needs in Milford's public survey were for playgrounds, skating/skateboard facilities and baseball/softball fields. The following recommendations suggest how Milford could help meet these and other active recreation needs in the township.

1. Enhance existing township parklands with the following improvements.

- Erect a band shell at the upper portion of Molasses Creek Park
- Pave walking track at lower Molasses Creek Park for use by inline skaters
- Expand playground facilities and build a bird blind at the lower portion of Molasses Creek Park
- Improve and develop the internal trails at Unami Creek Park
- Build a boardwalk extending over wetland areas for environmental observation and education at the Peeper Pond (a 5-acre, township-owned open space at Klines Mill and Fennel roads)

2. Look for new private and public sector partners to establish more athletic fields.

As described earlier, Milford Township and the Quakertown Youth Baseball Association are cooperating to build two baseball fields on township property. Milford should continue to monitor the demand for other new sports fields in the township. The new baseball fields are addressing the immediate need for baseball facilities. However, both the Quakertown Soccer Club and the Quakertown Midget Football program report the need for more practice and game fields. The township should reach out to these groups to explore their interest in partnerships similar to Milford's arrangement with Quakertown Youth Baseball Association. Under this deal, the township supplied the land and Quakertown Youth Baseball Association agreed to fund, build, and maintain the new fields.

Milford should also evaluate possibilities to construct regional athletic fields in cooperation with adjacent municipalities. Local sports clubs are all regional; none provide athletic programming to only one municipality. Secondly, the Pennsylvania DCNR gives much higher priority for grant funding to regional projects than single-municipal initiatives. Thirdly, inter-municipal cooperation makes sense in the Quakertown area to avoid duplication of effort among local municipalities.

3. Evaluate potential sites for a new active-oriented community park in the Milford region.

When the appropriate partnerships are developed to create new athletic fields, Milford can use the following guidelines to evaluate potential sites for a regionally-serving active recreation park. Various criteria will take on more or less importance, depending on the particular site being

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considered and other circumstances. For this reason, no weights are assigned to individual criterion. These guidelines are designed to help guide public policy decisions and should be applied with flexibility. Accordingly, the guidelines should not be viewed as the final word on any particular site.

Suggested criteria:

- Size and configuration of the site are suitable for the recreation facilities envisioned.
- Location is convenient to population centers.
- Site is adjacent to a school or public parkland.
- Site is accessible to a suitable road.
- Surrounding uses are compatible.
- Topography will accommodate athletic fields without extensive grading.
- Soils are well drained with no streams or wetlands in projected primary use areas.
- No extensive clearing of woodlands is required.
- Site is convenient to public water and public sewer facilities.
- Owner may donate the site.
- Owner is a willing seller.
- Asking price is reasonable.
- Site is likely to attract development if not preserved.
- There is potential to link this site to other publicly accessible lands via a greenway/trail network.
- Preserving this land will protect natural features on the portion of the site not envisioned for active recreational use.

4. Continue investigating regional approaches to constructing a public swimming pool.

Milford Township is participating in exploratory discussions about a new public swimming pool with Quakertown Borough, Richland Township, Haycock Township, the Quakertown Community School District and the Upper Bucks County YMCA. A regional approach is being evaluated because: a) there is demand throughout the region; and b) the cost of building, operating and insuring a public pool is very high. There are two public pools in the region and both are used heavily. These include an outdoor pool in Quakertown Borough and an indoor pool at the Upper Bucks YMCA. However, Quakertown Borough's public pool reportedly requires extensive filtration system repairs. Recently, the School District declined for cost reasons to include a pool in the design of a new middle school. The Upper Bucks YMCA decided for similar reasons to forego a pool as part of its upcoming expansion. In conjunction with the entities named above, Milford Township should continue exploring options for a constructing a regional pool.

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5. Encourage golf courses and golf course communities in the township.

Milford's zoning ordinance permits golf courses in several zoning districts. However, special exception approval by the Milford Township Zoning Hearing Board is required in each case. Nowhere in the municipality are golf courses permitted by right. Golf courses provide active recreational facilities and preserve open space, which are both township goals. The Milford's Planning Commission should examine the question of permitting golf courses by right in appropriate areas of the township.

The township's zoning ordinance does not recognize golf course communities, which are mixed use developments where homes are built around a golf course. Golf course communities are an increasingly popular option for buyers who want maximize their convenience to golf facilities. They also attract non-golfers who like the idea of living next to well maintained open space. The residential component of golf course communities can be all single-family homes or a mix of singles, two-family homes, duplexes, and other housing styles. Milford's Planning Commission should examine the possibility of permitting golf course communities in the township. Under one scenario, golf course communities could be permitted in several different zoning districts. Lower density golf course developments with only single-family detached housing could be allowed in rural-oriented zoning districts. Higher density golf course communities with a mix of housing types could be directed towards zoning districts where public sewage facilities and other municipal infrastructure are available or planned.

6. Meet neighborhood park needs through mandatory dedication regulations.

The analysis on NRPA parkland guidelines presented in the Needs Assessment section of this plan considers total parkland acreage relative to the township's population, both current and projected. NRPA guidelines also provide specific standards for neighborhood parkland acreage. However, Milford should not emphasize these standards in planning for neighborhood parks, for the following reasons:

- Milford is still very much a rural community where existing development is widely dispersed. There is not a strong demand for neighborhood-level recreation services in the township.
- There are recreation facilities at the four public schools in Milford to augment the recreation facilities available at the township's three community-serving recreation sites. In the hierarchy of parks envisioned by NRPA, these schools can be viewed as serving different sub-municipal sections of the township.
- As noted above, Milford's Zoning Ordinance requires developers of new residential neighborhoods to provide publicly accessible, active recreation areas. The previous recommendation calls for the township to augment these regulations by requiring developers to also provide specific recreation facilities based on the number of homes being built.

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- Milford owns open space properties within or near several residential areas. If conditions change in the future, the township can consider converting suitable open space properties to active recreation sites.

For the foreseeable future, township policy should be to continue working closely with residential developers to ensure recreation areas and facilities that are provided in accordance with Milford’s zoning ordinance properly address neighborhood park needs.

7. Require residential developers to dedicate recreation facilities, not just recreation land.

Section 501.c of Milford’s zoning ordinance stipulates that a specific percentage of the open space required in a new development must be land suitable for recreation. Section 532.c.3 states that the developer must improve the land so it is “useable for the intended activity, including necessary facilities and equipment.” To strengthen this language, Milford should amend its subdivision and land development ordinance to require specific recreation facilities based on the number of homes proposed. For instance, Milford could require the developer to furnish playground equipment in a small development, and a baseball field or soccer field in a larger development. These regulations should also give the developer the option to dedicate fees in lieu of recreation facilities if the township agrees.

New Recreation Program Opportunities

1. Create more non-sports activities, especially for teens.

Milford residents would benefit from a greater diversity of recreation programs. Opportunities should be available for males and females of all ages and a variety of interests, especially teens. The following program categories should be expanded in the region to place more emphasis on “TLC” activities, those that involve thinking, learning and creativity.

- Arts & Crafts
- Social Recreation
- Special Events
- Clubs, Hobbies, and Collecting
- Dance
- Service Activities
- Mental and Language Arts
- Drama
- Camping, Nature
- Music

The following are examples of specific program activities for consideration by local recreation programmers. These activities focus on non-sports recreation since local sports clubs already offer well-organized sports programming.

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Physical Recreation

Frisbee golf
Field Hockey
Volleyball
Exercise for Seniors
Outdoor Ice Skating
Sledding
Outdoor Racquetball
Hiking
Horseshoes for Seniors
Fitness Program
Sand Volleyball

The Arts (music, dance, drama, arts & crafts)

Music
Storytelling
Art Appreciation
Quilting
Knitting, Crocheting
Needlework
Ethnic Art
Painting

Nature, Outing, Camping, Interpretation

Nature Study
Fishing
Birdwatching
Animal Tracking

Mental and Linguistic Activities

Bridge
Chess
Reading
Discussion Groups
Lecture Series
Genealogy for Seniors
Nutrition

Hobbies, Clubs, Collecting, Special Interest Groups

Juggling
Miniature Golf
Landscaping, Gardening
Furniture Refinishing
Auto Mechanics
Woodworking
Toy Making
Flower Arranging
Dog Obedience
Recipe Swapping

Service Activities

Babysitting Classes
Adopt-a-Grandparent
Cleanup Day at Parks
Arbor Day

Service Recreation

Hay Rides
Garden Walks
Picnicking

Special Events

Scavenger Hunt
Jump Rope Contest
Talent Show
Puppet Show
Travel/Tours
Holiday Activities

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2. Offer more special events programming.

Milford currently sponsors a Community Day and a bike rodeo. The Milford Township Fire Company sponsors the Easter egg hunt that is held in Molasses Creek Park. The township should consider providing one or more of the following special events to supplement existing recreation program offerings:

Trips and tours	Golf Outings	5-K Run
Township Triathlon	Bike Treasure Hunt	Christmas Party
Halloween Party/Haunted House		

3. Consider providing a summer playground program on a trial basis.

As described earlier, Quakertown Borough has operated a summer youth program for 30 years. Milford may wish to consider establishing a summer playground program to provide a summer recreation opportunity closer to home. A college student who is majoring in recreation, elementary education, or a related discipline could head the program. An assistant to this person could also be retained, as needed. Alternatively, Milford could explore the possibility of contracting with the YMCA to run the program, as has been done by other municipalities. Milford could establish its summer playground program on a trial basis for one summer to see how much interest develops.

Park, Recreation and Open Space Administration

1. Continue with regular safety inspections at township parks.

Milford formally inspects its parks on a regular basis to ensure the safety of the parks and the recreation facilities on-site. The purpose of these inspections is to determine the following:

- Needed grounds work (e.g., regrading, clearing of overgrown vegetation),
- Needed structural repairs,
- Current condition of recreation facilities,
- Grounds/repair work which will be needed in the near future, and
- Other safety and security concerns.

Designated inspection days are intended to insure parks and recreation facilities are thoroughly inspected in a formal, structured manner. Ongoing informal inspections should continue between formal inspections. Such safety inspections should be conducted frequently

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to detect and repair faulty facilities. A designated person on Milford's municipal staff is familiar with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Handbook for Public Playground Safety. This person should remain part of all future park inspections.

2. Improve risk management practices.

Risk management is the best insurance. In addition to regular safety inspections, Milford should consider four administrative procedures for improving its park risk management practices:

- Establish a written policy on visitor safety to guide risk management decisions about identifying and abating hazards, prohibiting unsafe actions, setting standards for maintenance and upkeep, and providing for emergency services. This policy should be strictly enforced.
- Have municipal employees and visitors report potential hazards in municipal parks.
- Establish written emergency procedures.
- Develop standardized accident report forms.

These risk management techniques will improve safety standards in park areas. In addition to reducing the chances of potential legal actions, effective risk management actively and visibly promotes owner competence to park users. Once these practices are in place, coverage/policy terms can be re-evaluated for possible reduction of the insurance premium.

3. Establish a gifts catalog of recreation items needed.

Milford can make its commitment to parks, recreation and open space preservation more visible and enlist the support of the community by inaugurating a gift catalog. A gift catalog describes a wish list of needed recreation equipment and facilities. Prices are listed with the idea that people can donate the money for a specific item(s) as a gift to the municipality. Both businesses and individuals have responded to this type of appeal in many other communities. Milford currently has a "buy a brick" program, through which people can donate money for recreation in the township in exchange for getting their name cast on a brick that is part of a special donors wall at the lower portion of Unami Park.

4. Establish a park endowment fund supported by donations and fundraisers.

This is a companion recommendation to the gifts catalog. The municipality establishes a fund to finance future recreation improvements. Proceeds are accumulated from fundraisers, donations and bequests.

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5. Prepare and distribute a brochure describing leisure opportunities in the Milford region.

Milford can prepare a brochure that lists recreation opportunities currently available from public, quasi-public and private recreation providers in and around the township. The brochure should be comprehensive, including information on things such as area parks, recreation programs, facilities for specific activities, museums, libraries or historic sites. It should be general in nature, giving basic information and a phone number or web address for more specific information. The brochure can be updated periodically to reflect changes in the basic information it contains. The brochure can be made available at the Milford Township Municipal Building, among other locations.

6. Institute a formal orientation for park board members.

The idea of this recommendation is to ensure all park board members are familiar on a first-hand basis with the township's parks, recreation and open space system. This orientation should include visits to all municipal recreation and open space properties. It should also include ongoing briefings about maintenance, programming and public relations topics. This orientation should be repeated every year.

7. Provide the opportunity for Park Board members to review subdivision and land development plans at an early stage.

The Milford Township Park Board reviews and comments on proposed subdivisions and land developments that potentially involve recreation land or facilities. While this is a sound policy, it has worked best in other communities when park and recreation board members can comment early in the development process. At the sketch plan stage, developers are much more amenable to changes than they are after they have invested in costly site engineering. This change can be formally implemented in Milford by amending the plan submission and review requirements contained in the subdivision and land development ordinance. Only one copy of the plans needs to be submitted to the Park Board. A complete set of plans is not needed. Only those one or two drawings that provide an overview of wetlands and other natural features, plus proposed site boundaries, lot lines, open space and street lines should be required.

8. Consider establishing an environmental advisory council.

An environmental advisory council (EAC) is a group that the local governing body appoints to advise on conserving, managing, promoting, and using natural resources within the municipality. Municipalities are authorized to establish EACs through PA Act 177 of 1996 (originally Act 148 of 1973).

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Milford Township has an Open Space Committee that was established to advise the Board of Supervisors on where and how to acquire open space with Bucks County bond funds. Since Milford has used up its allocation under that County program, the Open Space Committee's mission is complete. An EAC established to succeed the Open Space Committee could assume the following duties:

- Conduct an inventory and analysis of environmentally sensitive plant and animal habitat in the township
- Identify special trees worth preserving within road rights of way and elsewhere
- Promote riparian buffers
- Advise on preservation of open areas
- Help carry out the recommendations of the Unami Watershed Protection Plan
- Promote environmental education through projects such as the proposed boardwalk at the Peeper Pond

The township Board of Supervisors should consider creating an EAC in Milford. Additional information about EACs is available from the Pennsylvania DCNR, or on the web at http://www.greenworks.tv/eac/est_eac.htm

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IMPLEMENTATION

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The following table summarizes each recommendation described in detail elsewhere in this plan. Suggested phasing and who should be primarily responsible for overseeing the implementation of each recommendation are suggested. Potential partners and funding sources are listed as appropriate.

**Table 4
Milford Township
Park and Recreation Plan
Action Program**

	SHORT-RANGE 1 ST THROUGH 2 ND YEAR	LONGER RANGE 3 RD YEAR & BEYOND	ONGOING	RESPONSIBILITY (In addition to Board of Supervisors and Township Manager)	POTENTIAL PARTNERS/ FUNDING SOURCES
A GREENWAY / TRAIL NETWORK					
1. Develop off-road trail links and roadside bikeways. (p. 22)	X	X		Township Park Board	PennDOT Enhancement Grants
2. Preserve private conservation corridors along local waterways. (p. 22)	X	X		Township Park Board, Proposed Environmental Advisory Council	DCNR Grants
3. Apply the following trail development guidelines and principles.					
a. Trail maintenance. (p. 23)			X	Township Park Board	-
b. Trail parking. (p. 23)			X	Township Park Board	-
c. Educational programs about trails. (p. 23)			X	Township Park Board	-
ACTIVE RECREATION FACILITIES					
1. Enhance existing township parklands with the following improvements: (p. 25) – The upper portion of Molasses Creek Park • a band shell – The lower portion of Molasses Creek Park • expanded playground facilities • a bird blind	X	X		Township Park Board	DCNR grants

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	SHORT-RANGE 1 ST THROUGH 2 ND YEAR	LONGER RANGE 3 RD YEAR & BEYOND	ONGOING	RESPONSIBILITY (In addition to Board of Supervisors and Township Manager)	POTENTIAL PARTNERS/ FUNDING SOURCES
<p>1. (Cont.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unami Creek Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • further development of on-site internal trails - Peeper Pond (a 5-acre, township -owned open space at Klines Mill and Fennel roads) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A boardwalk extending over wetland areas for environmental observation and education — Unami Waterfront Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to acquire properties to complete the park 					
2. Look for new private and public sector partners to establish more athletic fields. (p. 25)			X	Township Park Board	Local athletic associations, neighboring municipalities, DCNR grants
3. Evaluate potential sites for a new active-oriented community park in the Milford region. (p. 25)			X	Township Park Board	Local athletic associations, neighboring municipalities, DCNR grants
4. Continue investigating regional approaches to constructing a public swimming pool. (p. 26)			X	Township Park Board	School District, neighboring municipalities
5. Encourage golf courses and golf course communities in the township. (p. 27)			X	Township Planning Commission, Township Park Board	Private developers
6. Meet neighborhood park needs through mandatory dedication regulations. (p. 27)			X	Township Planning Commission, Township Park Board	Private developers
7. Require residential developers to dedicate recreation facilities, not just recreation land. (p. 28)			X	Township Planning Commission, Township Park Board	Private developers
NEW RECREATION PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES					
1. Create more non-sports activities, especially for teens. (p. 28)	X	X		Township Park Board	YMCA
2. Offer more special events programming. (p. 30)	X	X		Township Park Board	-

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	SHORT-RANGE 1 ST THROUGH 2 ND YEAR	LONGER RANGE 3 RD YEAR & BEYOND	ONGOING	RESPONSIBILITY (In addition to Board of Supervisors and Township Manager)	POTENTIAL PARTNERS/ FUNDING SOURCES
3. Consider providing a summer playground program on a trial basis. (p. 30)	X			Township Park Board	YMCA

PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ADMINISTRATION					
1. Continue with regular safety inspections at township parks. (p. 30)			X	Township Park Board	-
2. Improve risk management practices. (p. 31)	X			Township Park Board	-
3. Establish a gifts catalog of recreation items needed. (p. 31)	X			Township Park Board	-
4. Establish a park endowment fund supported by donations and fundraisers. (p. 31)	X			Township Park Board	local fundraising
5. Prepare and distribute a brochure describing leisure opportunities in the Milford region. (p. 32)	X			Township Park Board	-
6. Institute a formal orientation for park board members. (p. 32)	X			Township Park Board	-
7. Provide an opportunity for Park Board members to review subdivision and land development plans at an earlier stage. (p. 32)	X			Township Planning Commission	-
8. Consider establishing an environmental advisory council. (p. 32)	X			Township Planning Commission	--

RESOURCES AND TECHNIQUES

There are a variety of effective techniques for defraying the typical costs of park, recreation and open space activities. In the following section, these techniques are grouped into three main categories:

- ‘ State Grants for Parks, Recreation, Greenways and Open Space Conservation
- ‘ Local Funding Sources
- ‘ Ways to Preserve Open Space

State Grants for Parks, Recreation, Greenways and Open Space Conservation

1. ***Community Conservation Partnership Grant Program*** - This program is the primary source of State aid for parks, recreation and open space initiatives in Pennsylvania. Applications are accepted once per year for 50/50 matching grants through the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). It is a highly competitive program and total funds available are subject to year-to-year changes in the State's budgetary outlook. Major funding categories are as follows:

Planning and Technical Assistance

- **Planning Projects**
 - Comprehensive Recreation, Park and Open Space Plans
 - Conservation Plans
 - County Natural Area Inventories
 - Feasibility Studies
 - Greenways and Trails Plans
 - Rails-to-Trails Plans
 - Master Site Plans
 - Rivers Conservation Plans
- **Technical Assistance Projects**
 - Education and Training
 - Circuit Rider
 - Peer-to-Peer

Acquisition Projects

- Park and Recreation Areas
- Greenways, Trails and Rivers Conservation
- Rails-to-Trails
- Natural and Critical Habitat Areas

Development Projects

- Park and Recreation Areas
- Greenways and Trails
- Rails-to-Trails
- Rivers Conservation

Federally Funded Projects

- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Projects
- Pennsylvania Recreational Trails

2. ***Growing Greener – Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Portion***
- Growing Greener refers to grant funds distributed through four Pennsylvania State agencies:

- The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture for assistance to Pennsylvania farmers, and farmland preservation
- The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for state park maintenance projects

Milford Township Park and Recreation Plan

- The Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority for water and sewer system upgrades
- The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection for watershed restoration/protection, abandoned mine reclamation, and plugging of abandoned oil and gas wells

Growing Greener was enacted in 1999. In 2002, it was re-authorized and extended through 2012 with the permanent dedication of a new \$4/ton municipal waste disposal fee to the program. The total dollar commitment to Growing Greener is \$1.3 billion. DEP's portion is 547.7 million over the life of the Growing Greener program.

Watershed Grants

DEP Watershed grants are available for watershed assessments, watershed restoration/protection plans, and implementation of watershed projects involving storm water management, wetland protection, riparian buffers, stream bank restoration and agricultural best management practices. Other eligible activities include construction of mine drainage remediation systems, reclamation of previously mined lands, and demonstration/outreach projects. Grants are available to counties, authorities, municipalities, conservation districts, watershed organizations and other entities involved in environmental protection and restoration.

Technical Assistance Grants

DEP offers technical assistance to help watershed organizations achieve their watershed protection goals. Among the eligible activities are legal assistance, engineering, data management, program management, and scientific mentoring.

New or Innovative Technology Grants

As part of Growing Greener, DEP provides grants for improving existing drinking water and sewage treatment facilities through the use of new or innovative technology. DEP encourages technological advances that will improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and reliability of existing facilities. Of particular interest are technologies that go beyond what is needed to maintain regulatory compliance.

3. ***Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Enhancement Projects*** - The Federal Inter-Modal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) allocated approximately \$4.7 million per year for six years to Pennsylvania for use in Enhancement Projects. Enhancement Projects involve transportation-related activities outside of the traditional highway construction and mass transit projects. In 1998, Congress extended this program for another

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six years and substantially increased the total funding available by enacting the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21).

The program is administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) under a cooperative agreement with the Federal Highway Administration. Construction phases are eligible for 100% grant funding. 80% funding is offered for planning, design and acquisition. There are twelve funding categories for projects that “enhance the transportation experience”:

- Facilities for pedestrians and bicycles
- Safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Acquisition of scenic easements of historic sites related to transportation
- Scenic or historic programs, including tourist and welcome center facilities
- Landscaping or other scenic beautification
- Historic preservation
- Rehabilitation or operation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities (including historic railroad facilities and canals)
- Preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion and use thereof for pedestrian or bicycle trails)
- Control and removal of outdoor advertising
- Archaeological planning and research
- Mitigation of water pollution due to highway runoff or reduction of vehicle-caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity
- Enhancement of transportation museums

- 4. *Pennsylvania Legislative Initiative Program*** - This program provides wide discretion to many State legislators to award limited amounts of State funds for worthy projects in their home district. However, because the money can be used for such a wide variety of community-oriented uses, it cannot be counted upon as a regular source for park, recreation and open space funds. There are no specific guidelines regarding what types of projects can be funded, who may apply or the maximum amount that can be provided. The application process varies from district to district. State legislators can seek the grants annually. Traditionally, the best time to submit a request has been between January and June when the annual Pennsylvania State budget is being formulated.

Local Funding Sources

- 1. *General Revenue Funds*** - Milford will continue to use general revenue funds for acquiring open space. A targeted portion of the township’s overall tax revenue will continue to be earmarked for open space annually.

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2. ***User Fees*** - User fees are revenues collected directly from the people who use a program or facility. Certain offerings, such as adult fitness programs, can be run in a business-like fashion for greater efficiency and a fair distribution of costs. Care is needed to make sure that lower income families are not excluded because they cannot afford high fees. User fees should not be charged if it would be too costly or administratively burdensome to collect. Milford is not in a position to benefit from user fees because the township does not now sponsor any regular recreation programs.
3. ***Bond Issues*** - Bond funds are monies borrowed to implement a pre-approved list of capital improvements. Bonds can either be general obligation bonds, which are paid back from general revenues, or they can be revenue bonds, which are retired from revenues generated by specific improvements. A bond issue can be appropriate to fund projects with a long life expectancy. Payments are spread over the many years during which project benefits will be enjoyed. The total cost of a project funded through a bond is higher, however, because of interest charges. The key is to time a bond issue when interest rates are lowest. Milford has taken advantage of bond funding available under Bucks County's Open Space Bond Program, as noted in the text. However, the township is not currently considering any bond issue of its own.
4. ***Special Fundraisers*** - Fundraisers are special purpose campaigns designed to solicit money from local households and businesses. Contributions are collected in tandem with a publicity campaign that focuses on the need and the public benefit associated with a particular improvement such as a new community park. Walk-a-thons, bake sales and other special events can be used to generate interest. Appeals to civic duty and the chance for businesses to get good publicity should also be emphasized. This technique could be applied in Milford, particularly with regard to raising funds for equipment and recreation facilities to improve existing park properties.

Ways to Preserve Open Space

1. ***Fee Simple Acquisition*** - The most direct means of obtaining land for parks or greenways is through fee simple purchase. The main advantage of this procedure is that an entire parcel of land belongs to the organization purchasing the land. In many situations, fee simple acquisition is the most appropriate manner by which to preserve land. However, the expense of fee simple purchase can sometimes exceed available funding sources. Milford has used fee simple acquisition to set aside open space and may continue doing so in the future.
2. ***Condemnation*** - Acquisition can occur by exercising the right of eminent domain where the public purpose is well defined, where fee simple acquisition is desired but not possible at a fair price and where the owner is reluctant to sell. It is prudent to view condemnation as a last resort when acquiring land for parks and/or greenways. Milford has not used condemnation and has no plans to in the foreseeable future.

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- 3. *Purchase and Lease-Back or Resale*** - In certain cases, it is appropriate for a municipality to purchase land in fee simple, place restrictions on the deed prohibiting certain uses (e.g., residential development) and lease it back to interested parties. One advantage of this method is that the municipality can purchase land for future use (before the price increases, perhaps prohibitively so) and, through leasing, recoup some or all of the purchase price. In this way, land is maintained in open space and can be developed as a park when future demand warrants. Resale of some or all of the land (after placement of deed restrictions) would maintain open space while also relieving the municipality of maintenance obligations and returning the land to the tax rolls. This is a technique Milford has not used to date.
- 4. *Conservation Easements*** - Conservation easements are used to preserve land at a relatively low cost without acquiring it. With a conservation easement, the land remains privately-owned. The easement involves the property owner voluntarily agreeing to donate or sell the right to develop his or her land. The property owner agrees to place a restriction in the deed of the property, which then becomes binding on all future owners of the land. The easement can be written in many different ways to restrict or not restrict certain types of activities. Most conservation easements prohibit the construction of new buildings and cutting down woods. Often, the granting of a conservation easement can result in federal income tax and local property tax advantages to the property owner. There are open space lands in Milford that were preserved with conservation easements, including farmlands conserved by Bucks County and properties under conservation easements held by Milford Township.
- 5. *Pedestrian Easements*** - A conservation easement can also be combined with a “pedestrian easement” to allow the public the right to walk, hike and ride bicycles along a specific area, provided users follow pre-established rules. These easements can be particularly useful in connecting two or more greenway segments. Pedestrian easements may be useful in establishing the greenway/trail concept described in this Park and Recreation Plan.
- 6. *Mandatory Dedication*** - The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (Act 247, as amended) enables municipalities to require that residential developers dedicate land, or fees in lieu of land, for public recreation. Municipalities must have an adopted recreation plan and an adopted ordinance relating to mandatory dedication before land or fees can be accepted. The amount of land required must be related to the demand for recreation land typically created by new development. The required fee should reflect the fair market value of the amount of land for which the fee is being substituted. Milford requires a certain portion of mandatory open space be suitable for recreation. Beyond this, a recommendation is included in this plan suggesting that the township require developers to dedicate recreation facilities, as also allowed under the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

Milford Township Park and Recreation Plan

7. ***Donations*** - Land sometimes is acquired through donations from private owners, organizations and corporations. Local governments should encourage land donations by pointing out benefits of such actions, such as public relations values and federal income tax benefits. Prior to accepting a donation, a municipality should consider two things: first, it should analyze the location of the parcel and the anticipated development and maintenance costs. If the location is poor and/or projected costs will be excessive, the municipality should strongly consider accepting a fee rather than the land. Second, if the land is found to be suitable, the municipality should encourage the donor to provide an endowment fund along with the land to assist with development and/or maintenance costs.

8. ***Natural Resource Protection Standards*** - Resources such as trees, flood-prone land, steep slopes, woodlands and other amenities can be conserved by provisions in municipal zoning and subdivision regulations that regulate development and soil disturbance in these areas. Milford Township's performance zoning regulations contain strong natural resource protection standards.

REFERENCE SECTIONS

- A. Growth and Development**
- B. Natural Features**
- C. Recreation Programs**
- D. Land Preservation Criteria and
Techniques**
- E. Facility Use Policies and Procedures**

REFERENCE SECTION A
Growth and Development

A. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

This Reference Section describes why the Milford Township Park and Recreation Plan is important for the following three primary reasons:

- Milford is a growing municipality.
- Milford is committed to planning for its future.
- Preserving more parkland and open space in Milford Township will hold down taxes.

Milford Township is a Growing Municipality

Milford's growth rate significantly exceeded the Bucks County average in each of the last three decades, as shown on Table 5. Milford's growth since 1970 does not mirror the explosive development that some central Bucks municipalities have seen. Yet, Milford's population increases show that the township has steadily attracted new homeowners.

Table 5
Total Population
Milford Township and Bucks County
1960 - 2000

YEAR	MILFORD TOWNSHIP			BUCKS COUNTY		
	Persons	Number Change	Percent Change	Persons	Number Change	Percent Change
1960	3,524	-	-	308,567	-	-
1970	4,812	1,288	36.5	416,728	108,161	35.1
1980	6,053	1,241	25.8	479,180	62,452	15.0
1990	7,360	1,307	21.6	541,174	61,994	12.9
2000	8,810	1,450	19.7	597,635	56,461	10.4

Source: U.S. Census

Projections suggest Milford will continue to grow faster than Bucks County overall. The Bucks County Planning Commission forecasts that total population in Milford Township will increase by over 25% between 2000 and 2010, as compared to only 11% for Bucks County.

Milford Township Park and Recreation Plan

**Table 6
Population Projections
Milford Township and Bucks County
2010**

AREA	PROJECTED 2010 POPULATION	CHANGE, 2000-2010	
		NUMBER	PERCENT
Milford Township	11,090	2,280	25.9
Bucks County	665,800	68,165	11.4

Source: Bucks County Planning Commission (mid-range projection) & U.S. Census

At the close of 2002, the Milford Township Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors were reviewing residential subdivision proposals that could add a total of 385 new homes to Milford. As shown below, these subdivisions could bring up to 1,078 new residents.

**Table 7
Proposed Residential Subdivisions
Milford Township
July 2002**

SUBDIVISION NAME	STATUS OF TOWNSHIP APPROVAL	TYPE OF UNITS	# OF UNITS TO BE CONSTRUCTED	AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE*	# OF NEW RESIDENTS PROJECTED
Wassmer	preliminary plan before PC	Single Family Detached	11	2.8	31
Devos	awaiting re-submission	Single Family Detached	? (Plan is being revised)	2.8	?
Howland, Eckert, and Sell	Final plan before BOS	Single Family Detached	76	2.8	213
Rush, Clymer, and Landis	preliminary plan before BOS	Single Family Detached	88	2.8	246
JMS	Final plan before BOS	Single Family Detached	11	2.8	31
Marzano	preliminary plan before PC	Single Family Detached	4	2.8	11
Soliday/ Kriebel	preliminary plan before PC	Single Family Detached	6	2.8	17
Eastern Equities	sketch plan before PC	Single Family Detached	189	2.8	529
TOTALS			385	2.8	1,078

Source: Milford Township and URDC. * Average household size in Milford Township was 2.8 in 2000, according to the U.S. Census.

Milford Township Park and Recreation Plan

NOTE: The accompanying Existing and Proposed Development map shows locations for the proposed residential subdivisions identified above. The map also indicates developed areas. The portions of the township not designated as either proposed development or existing development are undeveloped.

Milford Township is Committed to Planning For Its Future

Milford is determined to direct the location and intensity of future growth, not just react to it. This is a second reason why this Park and Recreation Plan is important to the township. In 1992, the Milford Township Board of Supervisors adopted the Quakertown Area Comprehensive Plan Update, which describes future land use, transportation and infrastructure policies for the six municipalities in the Quakertown Community School District.

The 1999 Milford Township Open Space Plan is a strategy for protecting the natural environment, preserving historic/cultural resources and creating a greenway and open space network in the township. The Open Space Plan is Milford's local complement to the 1981 Quakertown Area Linked Open Space Plan. The Linked Open Space Plan proposed a regional open space network, including trails along the Unami Creek, Butter Creek and other local waterways. In addition to a Park and Recreation Plan, Milford is currently working with neighboring municipalities on two regional planning initiatives: the Unami Creek Watershed Protection Plan, and the Upper Perkiomen Creek Watershed Protection Plan.

The Milford Township Portion of the Quakertown Area Zoning Ordinance and the Milford Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance help provide legal enforcement for the planning principles contained in the township's comprehensive plan and open space plan. The zoning ordinance was adopted in 1995 and last amended in 2002. Milford adopted its subdivision and land development ordinance in 1979 and last updated it in 2002. In addition to regulations that conserve natural features and require open space in new subdivisions, the township's zoning ordinance distinguishes reserved areas from development areas. Reserved areas are the zoning districts dedicated to conserving Milford's natural environment and rural character. Development areas are the zoning districts to which Milford will direct future growth.

Preserving More Parkland and Other Open Space in Milford Township Will Help Hold Down Taxes

Selling land for development generates income for people—often older people, whose main financial asset for retirement is their real estate. However, too much new development will change the character of Milford by gradually, but steadily, displacing the farmland and other open spaces for which the township is noted.

Milford Township Park and Recreation Plan

The flat topography and well-drained soils of productive farmland happen to also be well suited to development. The monetary value of local farmland for new homes and the difficult economics of family farming have combined to threaten agriculture throughout the Delaware Valley. While small farms may face a challenging future, carrying out this Park and Recreation Plan will help preserve at least part of the area's rural heritage.

People commonly misperceive that residential development pays for itself by expanding the local tax base. In reality, most new housing creates a demand for schools and other public services that exceeds the tax revenues these new homes generate. Public school expenses are the main cause of this negative fiscal impact. Because they create positive fiscal impacts, farmland and open space help offset the budget shortfall that new homes create. In the words of the American Farmland Trust, open space saves money (and avoids tax increases) because "cows don't go to school".

In 2001, the American Farmland Trust reported results from 83 separate studies in 18 different states. In all 83 cases, including 11 from Pennsylvania, residential development cost more than the taxes it generated—an average of \$1.15 in costs per \$1.00 of local and school tax revenues. Conversely, open space paid back more than it required in expenditures—an average of \$0.36 in service costs was needed for each \$1.00 in tax revenues generated.

In 1997, a Pennsylvania State University analysis found that residential development in Bedminster township, Bucks County costs an average of \$1.12 in services annually for every \$1.00 it produces in municipal and school tax revenues. The same study found new homes in Buckingham township, Bucks County cost \$1.04 in services for every tax dollar returned. A similar negative impact reportedly occurred in all eight municipalities across the State that this study examined.

In Opportunity Knocks - Open Space as a Community Investment, Michael Frank of the Heritage Conservancy goes even further and argues that, amortized over a small number of years, the cost of purchasing development rights to preserve open land can actually be less than the annual school cost deficit that would be created by allowing 85 new homes to be built on a hypothetical 100-acre tract in the Central Bucks School District.

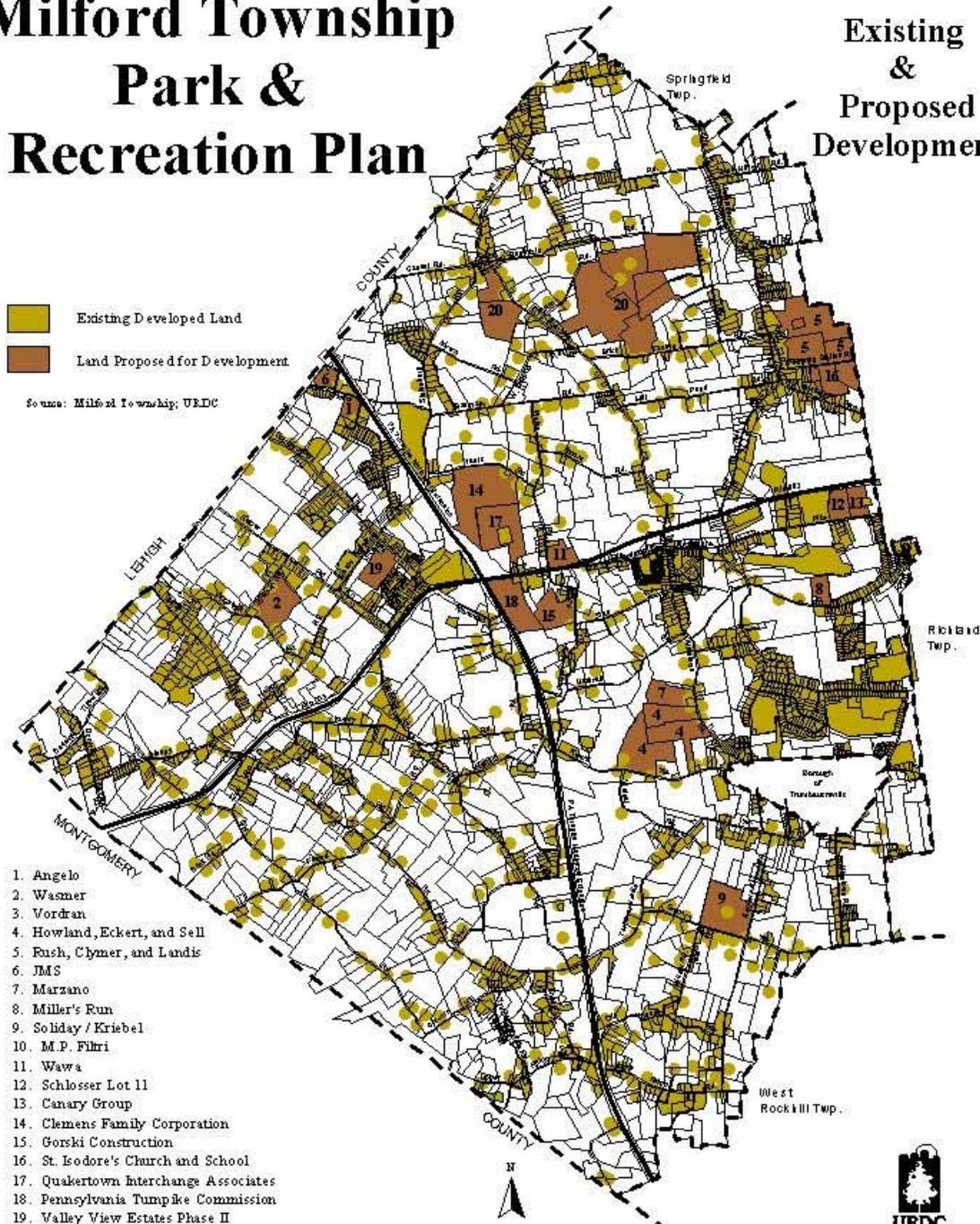
Milford will continue to add population and new businesses. Most residents recognize some development is inevitable and the sign of a prosperous area. Implementing this Park and Recreation Plan will give the township more opportunity to manage the pace and direction of local growth. In the process, valuable farms, woods, hillsides and creek valleys will be saved while still leaving enough land for new households who want to become part of the Milford Township community.

Milford Township Park & Recreation Plan

Existing
&
Proposed
Development

-  Existing Developed Land
-  Land Proposed for Development

Source: Milford Township, URDC



1. Angelo
2. Wasmer
3. Vordran
4. Howland, Eckert, and Sell
5. Rush, Clymer, and Landis
6. JMS
7. Marzano
8. Miller's Run
9. Soliday / Kriebel
10. M.P. Filtri
11. Wawa
12. Schlosser Lot 11
13. Canary Group
14. Clemens Family Corporation
15. Gorski Construction
16. St. Isidore's Church and School
17. Quakertown Interchange Associates
18. Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission
19. Valley View Estates Phase II
20. Eastern Equities

5000 0 5000 Feet



REFERENCE SECTION B
Natural Features

B. NATURAL FEATURES

This Reference Section describes the natural environment that is the setting for future parkland and open space preservation efforts in Milford Township. Natural features in Milford include woodlands, steep slopes, unique natural areas, waterways, floodplains and wetlands. The following is a summary of these natural features in text and map form. Much more detail is available about these natural features in Milford's comprehensive plan, the Milford Township Open Space Plan, and the watershed protection plans for the Unami Creek and the Upper Perkiomen Creek.

Woodlands

Woodlands are wildlife habitats that, if destroyed, take decades to replace. The root systems of trees and other vegetation stabilize the soil against erosion, particularly in steep areas. Woodlands are also a scenic resource that provides visual relief from the built environment. Recreational uses of woodlands include hiking, hunting, birdwatching, and environmental education.

The heaviest concentration of wooded area in Milford exists in the southern portion of the township, specifically south of Route 663, and east and west of the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Outside this area, woods are much more scattered because of the land in Milford that has been cleared for farming, roadways and development.

Steep Slopes

The Woodlands, Steep Slopes and Unique Natural Areas map depicts slopes in Milford Township with a grade of 15% and greater. It is important to know where these steep slopes are because steep slopes can quickly erode when their soil and vegetation are disturbed. Steep slopes can add significantly to the cost of constructing and maintaining roads and buildings. Steep slopes also limit where people can safely place on-site sewage systems.

Most of Milford is flat to gently rolling land. The most prominent slopes are in the southern portion of the township in wooded areas. The southwestern portion of the township has the heaviest concentration of slopes, especially in the area of the Hazelbach Creek. There are also many slopes in the area of Upper Ridge Road, both east and west of the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Another significant sloped area follows the Unami Creek, and parallels a portion of Mill Hill Road north of Route 663.

Milford Township Park and Recreation Plan

Unique Natural Areas

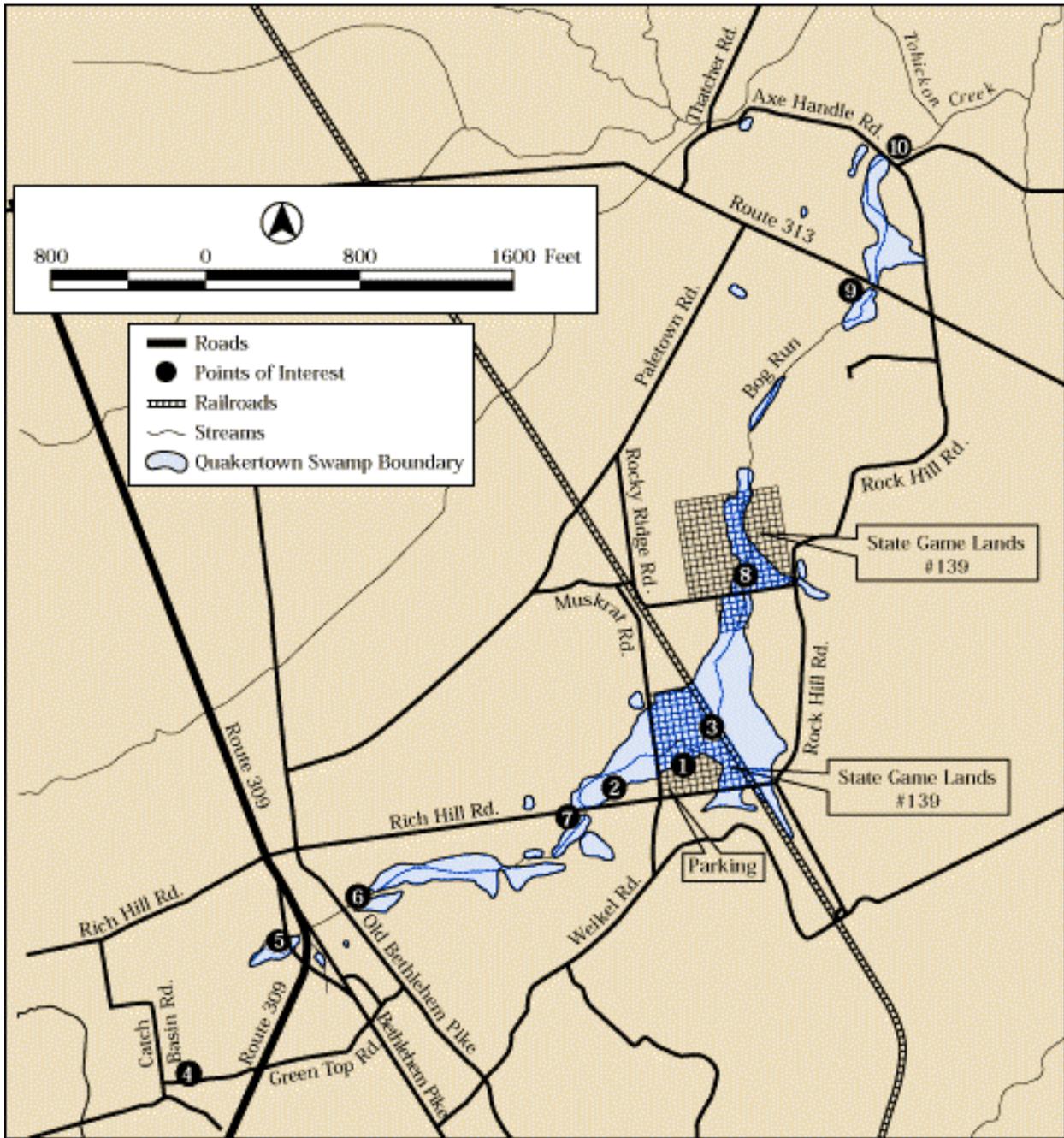
The Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County was prepared in 1999 by the Morris Arboretum and the University of Pennsylvania. The inventory lists and maps known plants, animals and natural habitats in Bucks County considered rare, threatened or endangered. The inventory also includes additional sites considered high quality natural communities. The Natural Areas Inventory contains both sites of local importance, and sites of statewide significance as listed on the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI). Habitat sites in Milford, as prioritized in the Natural Areas Inventory, include Ridge Valley Creek, Butter Creek, Unami Creek from Upper Ridge Road to the Montgomery County Line, Hazelbach Creek, and Unami Creek in the vicinity of Allentown Road.

While it is not located within township boundaries, the Quakertown Swamp is another important natural area that Milford is concerned with preserving. The Quakertown Swamp is situated near Milford Township between Route 309 and Route 313 in Richland, East Rockhill, and West Rockhill townships. It is a 518-acre wetland area that is home to the largest blue heron rookery in eastern Pennsylvania. The Quakertown Swamp also provides habitat for 91 other bird species, including selected rare species. Milford Township is part of the Quakertown Swamp Partnership, which also features the following entities:

- Bucks County Audubon Society
- Bucks County Open Space Program
- Habitat By Design
- Paletown Rod and Gun Club
- Heritage Conservancy
- East Rockhill Township
- Richland Township
- Bucks County Conservation District
- Bucks County Parks and Recreation
 - Nockamixon State Park
- Pennsylvania Game Commission
- Wildlands Conservancy
- Milford Township
- West Rockhill Township

In March 2002, 81 acres of the Quakertown Swamp became permanently preserved when the Heritage Conservancy acquired 69 acres and Richland Township acquired 12 acres.

Milford Township Park and Recreation Plan



Quakertown Swamp

Source: Heritage Conservancy, Doylestown, PA

Waterways

Several waterways traverse Milford. The most significant is the Unami Creek, which flows south across much of the Township and into Montgomery County. There are several tributaries of the Unami within Milford, including Molasses Creek in the Spinnerstown area, and Schmoutz Creek, and Hazelbach Creek in the west-central portion of the Township. These waterways flow in an easterly direction before joining the main trunk of the Unami Creek in the south-central portion of the Township.

Floodplains

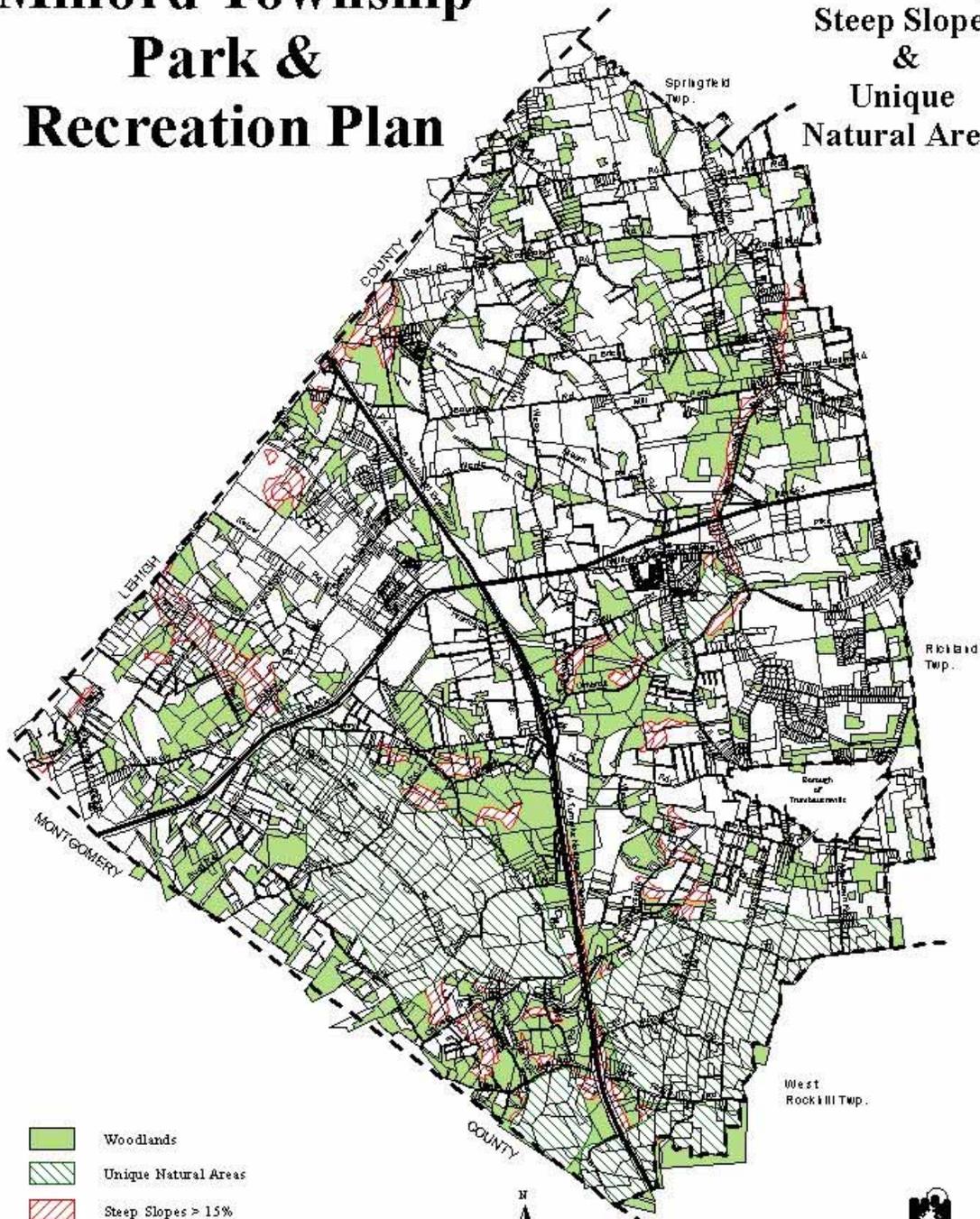
The Waterways, 100-Year Floodplain and Wetlands map shows the 100-year floodplains in Milford Township that are associated with Unami Creek, Molasses Creek, Schmoutz Creek, Hazelbach Creek, and several unnamed tributaries. 100-year floodplains are areas that, on average, have a one in one hundred chance of flooding in any given year, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Besides providing natural habitat, floodplains carry floodwaters and help moderate flood heights.

Wetlands

The Waterways, 100-Year Floodplain and Wetlands map also illustrates wetland areas in the Township. These wetlands were located by identifying and mapping soils indicative of wetland areas. Wetlands are areas that have vegetation and soil characteristics of a permanently or frequently saturated environment, including swamps, marshes, bogs, high water table soils, and similar areas. Wetlands are important groundwater recharge areas that support wildlife, fish, and other aquatic life. Wetlands also reduce flooding by detaining stormwater discharge, thereby helping to filter impurities that contribute to surface water and groundwater pollution.

Milford Township Park & Recreation Plan

Woodlands,
Steep Slopes
&
Unique
Natural Areas

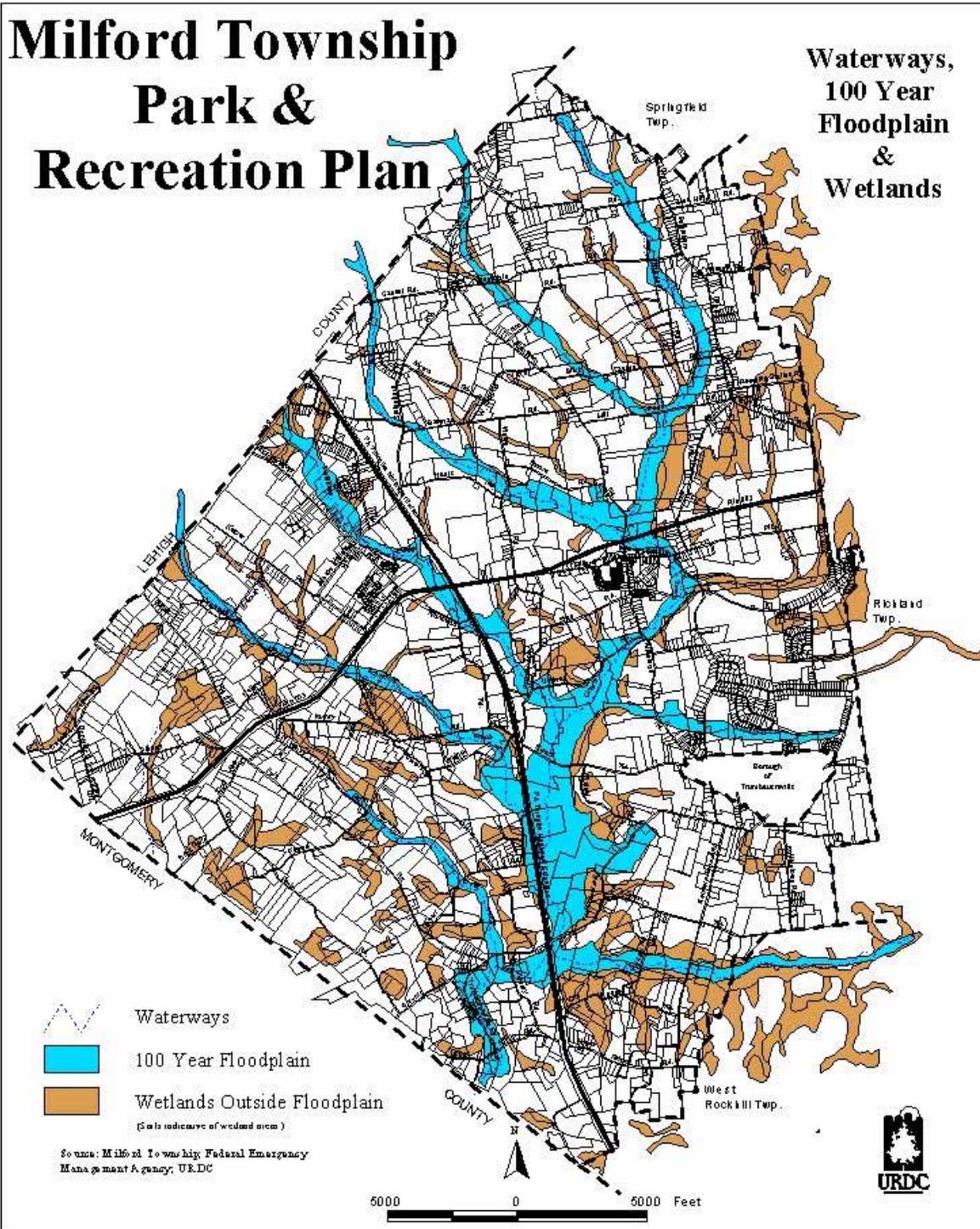


- Woodlands
- Unique Natural Areas
- Steep Slopes > 15%

Source: Milford Township, Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County, Pennsylvania

5000 0 5000 Feet





REFERENCE SECTION C
Recreation Programs

C. RECREATION PROGRAMS

This Reference Section describes the primary providers of recreation programming to the residents of Milford Township.

Quakertown Midget Football

Participants in Quakertown Midget Football league live throughout the region, from Quakertown to the Pennsburg area. The program is for both boys and girls (girls are involved in cheerleading) ages 5 through 16 years. In 2001, approximately 350 boys and 200 girls participated.

Quakertown Midget Football runs each year from August to Thanksgiving. At present, there are up to 35 players per team, which is approaching the program's capacity given current field space. The league reports the need for more fields. However, its current location in Richland Township cannot accommodate additional facilities and its practice fields are also overused.

Quakertown Soccer Club

The Quakertown Soccer Club offers two programs to area youth: an intramural league, and a travel league for boys and girls. The intramural league is for boys and girls ages 5-19, while the travel league is for ages 7-19. Intramural fields are located at Memorial Park in Quakertown Borough. The travel team plays throughout the traveled area. There are approximately 1,200 participants in the intramural league and between 250 and 300 in the travel league. Program durations vary depending on age and program class. However, activities generally run from May through November. Participation is increasing for the Quakertown Soccer Club, especially in the travel league. The Quakertown Soccer Club reports the need for additional fields to help better schedule practice times and permit larger tournaments.

Quakertown Youth Baseball Association

In 2001, the Quakertown Youth Baseball Association had between 350 and 400 participants, including boys and girls ages 7-12. The program runs from April through June and is held at the Little League Complex adjacent to the community pool in Quakertown Borough. While enrollment has decreased somewhat in recent years, the league expects participation to increase again in the near-term future. The new fields being constructed at the upper portion of Molasses Park are expected to adequately address current demand.

Quakertown Midget Wrestling

Quakertown Midget Wrestling typically has 90-120 participants per year. Most program activities take place between November and March. Both boys and girls in kindergarten through

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8th grade are eligible to participate. Both practices and matches are held at the Quakertown High School, which is reportedly adequate, although additional space would permit easier and more convenient scheduling.

American Legion Baseball

Quakertown American Legion Baseball is a boy's summer league that starts around Memorial Day. The program features two teams: the Junior Legion team for ages 13-15, and the Senior Legion team for ages 16-18. The Junior Legion team carries 20 players, and the Senior Legion carries 18, the maximum number permitted by national rules. The program is experiencing pressure to grow and league officials are considering establishing a team for 13 year olds. Games and most practices are at Memorial Park Stadium in Quakertown Borough; practices are also held at Quakertown High School. The league is generally satisfied with these facilities.

Connie Mack Baseball

Connie Mack Baseball serves boys 13-22. There are two seasons in the league: a summer season that runs from June to August, and a fall season from September through October. In 2001, the summer league had approximately 170 participants, while the fall league had around 80. Games and most practices are held at Memorial Park in Quakertown Borough; practices are also held at area schools. While existing facilities are sufficient, league officials report that another field for games and 2-3 more fields for practices will soon be needed.

Quakertown Youth Basketball

In the 2000-2001 season, the Quakertown Youth Basketball league served 310 boys and girls on 31 teams. There are several age groups and staggered seasons. Boys 7th and 8th grade season is October through December. January 1st starts the next season for boys 4th through 6th grade, girls 4th through 6th grade, and girls 7th and 8th grade. The program is growing and the limited gym facilities at area schools do not adequately meet demand.

Milford Ball Hockey League

The Milford Ball Hockey League is for adults age 18 and over. In its most recent season, the league accommodated 160 players on 11 teams. The program is held at Unami Creek Park, the only ball hockey court in the region. There are two components to the league: one from March through June, and one from August through November. The program has experienced significant growth, doubling its membership in the past two years. The existing facilities are sufficient, although the league reports that lights would be useful for night games, thereby allowing more teams to form.

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Camp Men-O-Lan

Camp Men-O-Lan is a private business open year-round. Facilities include a pool, a small lake, a water slide, paddle boats, canoes, a 60 foot baseball diamond, a climbing tower, a ropes course, hiking trails, a gymnasium, a lighted sand volleyball court, horseshoes and quoits. The camp is open to anyone who registers and it serves approximately 10,000 guests each year. Approximately 60-75% use the camp's recreational facilities. There are special summer camps offered at Camp Men-O-Lan, with programs usually one week in length. Overall attendance at the camp has recently increased by approximately 3-5% per year.

The Blazers

The Blazers is a men's baseball team for college students that holds its home games at Memorial Park in Quakertown Borough. The playing season extends from June into August. It is a very competitive program. Typically, 20 players are chosen from approximately 70 who try out each year.

"Kids Involved Doing Something" (Quakertown Summer Youth Program)

In 2002, Quakertown's summer youth program, called "Kids Involved Doing Something", is celebrating its 30th anniversary. This six-week program runs from late June through early August. In 2001, over 150 children ages 6 through 13 years participated. The program is open officially to Quakertown Community School District residents, but reportedly no one has ever been turned away. Program participants are separated into two groups by age, and meet Mondays and Wednesdays or Tuesdays and Thursdays. Evening recreation takes place on Tuesday and Thursday nights. Fridays are "special days" that feature assorted group activities.

Upper Bucks YMCA

The Upper Bucks County YMCA in Richland Township serves Milford Township. The YMCA sponsors a wide variety of programs and activities for all ages and genders. Spring 2002 offerings included the following:

Aerobics/Fitness	Hockey	Pennridge Center Classes	Swim Lessons (youth)
Babysitting	Home School Program	Play Groups	Swimming
Baseball	Indoor Cycling	Racquetball	T-Ball
Basketball	Jujitsu	Rentals	Teen Programs
Cheerleading	Lifeguarding	Scouts	Tennis
Child Care	Nursery School Program	Scuba	Volleyball
First Aid/CPR	Parent/Tot Program	Snorkeling	Walking Club
Golf	Parent/Tot Swim	Special Pop. Swim	Wallyball
Gymnastics	Parenting Center	Swim Lessons (adult)	Yoga

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The Upper Bucks YMCA also offers a variety of summer day camps for youths. Activities include several different team sports, individual sports, performance arts, and crafts, among others.

REFERENCE SECTION D
Land Preservation Criteria
and Techniques

D. LAND PRESERVATION CRITERIA AND TECHNIQUES

This Reference Section identifies actions Milford can take to help preserve more of the township's natural environment, including farmland and other unique natural areas. Conservation of scenic roadways and historic properties is addressed too because of the way these resources also contribute to Milford's rural character and setting.

1. Use the Composite Analysis map to identify the areas in the township most vulnerable to development.

The Composite Analysis map on the next page shows the following areas in Milford:

- a. Existing and proposed development - land in the township that is "already spoken for".
- b. Preserved land - all of the permanent and temporarily preserved properties identified earlier.
- c. Waterways, steep slopes, and 100-year floodplains - land where future development is prohibited and/or physically impractical.
- d. The Development District - the zoning districts in Milford to which the township intends to direct most future development.

The white area on the Composite Analysis map shows the land in Milford that could be developed in the future. The township anticipates, and has planned for, appropriate development in the Development District. Outside the Development District, the white areas on the map indicate farmland and other open space vulnerable to being displaced by growth. The township's zoning ordinance permits low levels of carefully regulated development outside the Development District. However, the stated intention for the Development District, according to the zoning ordinance is:

"..to accommodate the anticipated growth....for a specific period of time. The zoning districts of the development areas provide areas for residential, commercial, industrial and other non-residential uses. Within this area, development is encouraged to promote the efficient use of land and a well balanced community.

Milford should continue to require attractively planned open space as part of new development within the Development District. However, the township should focus its efforts to acquire or otherwise preserve open space on the vulnerable areas outside the Development District (as shown in white on the Composite Analysis map).

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2. Intensify efforts to preserve farmland.

Five specific actions Milford can take to preserve more farmland are described below.

a. Continue encouraging Bucks County to buy the development rights to more Milford Township farms.

Milford should continue trying to get development rights for township farmland acquired under Bucks County's agricultural preservation program. By law, property owners must be part of an agricultural security district to be eligible. The township should strive to raise the priority at the County level for Milford property owners who wish to participate. Milford already has the largest agricultural security area in Bucks County. Nonetheless, efforts should also continue to enroll more property owners. This would: a) expand the pool of property owners who are eligible to sell development rights to Bucks County; and b) offer legal protection that will help sustain the viability of farming operations in Milford. There is a waiting list for the limited Bucks County funds available. While waiting, a landowner is vulnerable to pressure to sell for development. Priority areas for preserving farmland should be the properties within the existing agricultural security area and other parts of the township zoned Rural Agricultural (RA).

Within RA zoning districts, there are many areas where land could be preserved within or near concentrations of active farms. Some of these areas have no preserved properties at present. Others offer opportunities to preserve land in the immediate vicinity of farms already protected. Two prime examples of large areas where Milford could intensify efforts to preserve agricultural land are identified below:

- Most of the northernmost segment of Milford is zoned RA and much of it is in farming. Yet no preserved areas of any kind exist there.
- Immediately south of this area, between Rosedale Road and the Wentz Road/Bleam Road vicinity, Bucks County has acquired the development rights to two farms. Establishing farmland conservation easements on other nearby farms could lead to a solid belt of preserved land in the heart of Milford's agricultural area.

b. Allocate part of Milford's 2-mill open space preservation fund to buy farmland development rights.

To date, Milford has used its open space preservation fund to acquire fee-simple title to lands with environmental amenities. The township may wish to use part of this revenue in the future to buy farmland development rights in the same way Bucks County now does. The township would be able to respond quicker than the County to the threat of

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imminent sale for development. In addition, the township does not have to be bound by the County's minimum size and soil productivity criterion in selecting farmland to preserve. Buying development rights rather than fee-simple titles will allow the township to preserve more land per dollar spent, without interfering with: a) current agricultural operations on-site; and b) the ability to resell the land.

c. Be flexible regarding farm-based businesses in the Rural Agricultural zoning district.

Many farmers need second jobs to supplement what they earn from farming. To encourage continued farming, the township's zoning ordinance should offer more flexibility to farmers on larger tracts to have small businesses. These could include small engine repair, sharpening services, wood crafting, farm equipment repair, sale of seeds and fertilizers, and similar activities. The number of employees and the sizes of the businesses could be carefully controlled.

Some of these uses may qualify as "accessory home crafts" or "accessory home trades" which are permitted by right in Milford's RA zoning district. Others could be viewed as "accessory repair services or other home occupations" or "agricultural retail," both of which require approval by the Milford Township Zoning Hearing Board. The township needs to be flexible in its interpretation of these uses because they are prohibited in the RA zoning district unless they are classified as accessory uses, home occupations or agricultural retail. Further flexibility is also needed to ensure the need for zoning hearing board approval does not act as a disincentive.

d. Strengthen setback and buffer requirements for homes built adjacent to farms.

Milford Township's zoning ordinance requires certain minimum front, side and rear yard setbacks according to zoning district. The Milford Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance mandates landscaped buffers between certain different uses. Both of these requirements could be strengthened to reduce potential conflicts between farm operations and residential areas. The size of the minimum setback could be increased where an individual residential lot borders farmland, especially where a barn, shed or other farm building is nearby. The buffer requirements between active farms and residential subdivisions could be enhanced in two ways. First, the township could increase the minimum size of the buffer beyond the 25' now required. Secondly, buffer requirements could be applied to "general farming." Right now, Milford only requires buffers between residential subdivisions and "intensive agriculture."

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- e. Keep public sewage facilities out of agricultural areas.*

Milford's Act 537 Plan clearly indicates it is not township policy to extend public sewage lines into the agricultural security area or the Rural Agricultural (RA) zoning district. The township should continue to enforce this policy.

3. Continue using township funds to preserve natural areas.

There are over 900 acres of permanently preserved open space in Milford. In conjunction with actions by other entities, the township's aggressive approach to preserving land has made Milford a leader among local municipalities in conserving the natural environment. The following strategies should guide Milford's ongoing effort to preserve more of the township's vulnerable undeveloped land.

- a. Where to preserve.*

One way to narrow down priorities for open space acquisition is to compare where unprotected natural features exist with the distribution of lands already preserved. The preceding narrative on agricultural preservation points out the need for more protected properties in farmland areas. A similar comparison outside of farming vicinities shows other undeveloped sectors of the township where no preserved areas are yet established. There are also opportunities to preserve land in the vicinity of some properties already protected. Concentrating preserved land can sometimes have more impact than scattering protected sites across the community. The following are examples of large areas in the township where Milford could look to preserve more open space for the sake of protecting environmental amenities.

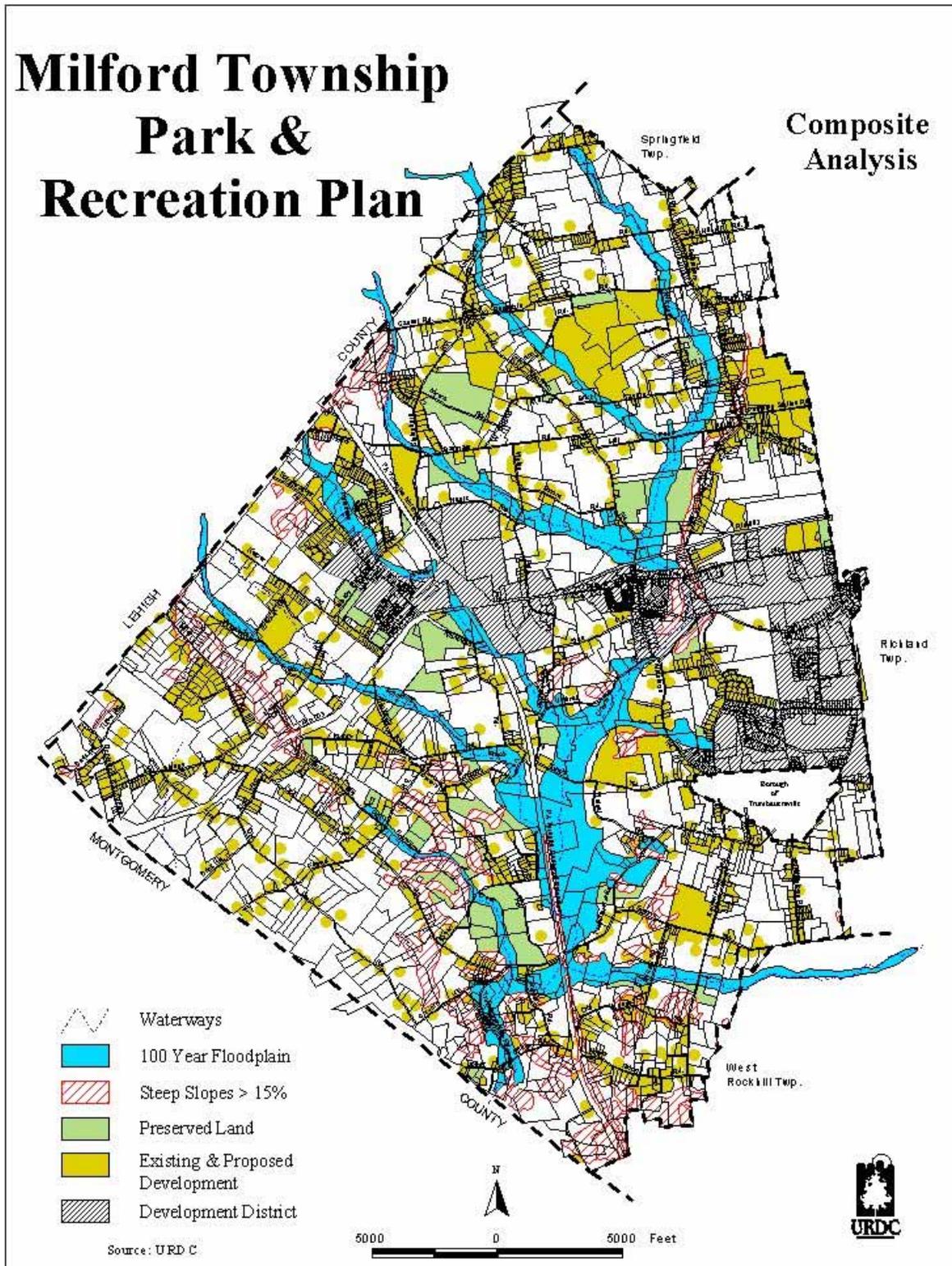
- There are no preserved properties in the southern portion of the township along Milford's border with Montgomery County. This area is part of the larger Unami forest, which extends from western Montgomery County across northern Bucks County to New Jersey.
- The Bucks County Department of Parks and Recreation is planning a regional park in southern portion of Milford Township along the Butter Creek near its confluence with Unami Creek. The County is proposing a 750 to 1,000-acre linear park that would focus on preserving floodplains and steep slopes. The park may also include trails and picnic areas. According to the Department of Parks and Recreation, Bucks County hopes to conclude negotiations on acquiring land with area property owners in 2003. There is potential for Milford to augment the County's plans for very significant land preservation activities in this area of the township.

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- The Natural Areas Inventory identifies four areas in Milford with known habitat for plants and animals considered rare, threatened, or endangered. The Bucks County regional park initiative described above focuses on some of this property along the Butter Creek. Milford Township could help preserve some of the areas most sensitive plant and animal populations by acquiring or otherwise protecting land in these vicinities. The four areas cited in the Natural Areas Inventory are:
 - Unami Creek from Upper Ridge Road to the Montgomery County line
 - Butter Creek corridor from West Rockhill township to Unami Creek
 - Unami Creek corridor between Upper Ridge Road and Allentown Road
 - Hazlebach Creek corridor, which extends from Unami Creek to Kumry Road

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Composite
Analysis



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In addition to these two large areas, Milford should consider the following smaller areas as future land preservation targets, among others:

- Property adjacent or near to existing township holdings in the vicinity of Milford's municipal building. This area now includes a concentration of township-owned open space.
- The undeveloped portions of the area between Keiper Road, Sleepy Hollow Road, Spinnerstown Road and Lehigh County.

Both the larger and smaller areas identified above are prominent examples of areas that warrant preservation in Milford. This does not ignore the likelihood that opportunities to protect worthy land will materialize in many other locations. Sometimes these opportunities will arise without prior notice and the township must respond to them quickly. Planning is important but flexibility should remain the watchword in all matters concerning real estate.

b. What to preserve.

One purpose of preserving open space is to protect natural features not physically suited for development. For this reason, the township should target its preservation funds towards steep slopes, woodlands and flood-prone areas. However, Milford should ensure it doesn't pay money to protect land that is defacto preserved under the natural features protection regulations in the township's zoning ordinance. If public access to these areas is desired, the township will need to buy the property. Otherwise, the township can rely on its zoning regulations that require 100% protection of floodplains, wetlands, lakes, ponds and watercourses.

The township's zoning ordinance affords somewhat lower levels of protection for steep slopes, and woodlands. Unique habitats are not protected at all. Efforts to preserve land for resource protection should focus first on woodlands, steep slopes and unique habitat.

As shown overleaf, the 1999 Milford Township Open Space Plan contains a ranking system for comparing the relative benefits of preserving various types of open space. This ranking system considers a wider range of purposes than just protecting environmental features. However, several of the specific criteria used can also be employed in evaluating the merits of preserving different natural open space sites.

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Linked Open Space - Maximum 100 points

Does land conform to the linked open space plan?

Trails - Maximum 100 points

Does land conform to the trail plan?

Recreational Opportunity - Maximum 80 points

Is there enhancement of recreational opportunity?

Growth Objectives - Maximum 80 points

Would acquisition stop infrastructure from intruding into reserve and resource areas?

Sale Price/Matching Funds - Maximum 80 points

Is the price below market value or are additional funds available?

Proximity to Protected Lands - Maximum 80 points

Is the land close to other protected lands?

Rural Ambiance - Maximum 70 points

Would development significantly degrade the rural ambiance?

Resource Value - Maximum 70 points

Would acquisition protect resources?

Educational Value - Maximum 70 points

Are there opportunities to use the land for environmental education?

Willing Seller - Maximum 70 points

Is the owner willing to sell and provide favorable terms?

Scenic Qualities - Maximum 70 points

Does the property contain scenic vistas or areas?

Appropriate Access - Maximum 50 points

Is access available consistent with open space objective?

Inter-Municipal Cooperation - Maximum 50 points

Is the land a common interest with other municipalities?

Historic Significance - Maximum 40 points

Does the land contain significant historical resources?

4. Continue using performance standards to preserve open space.

The performance standards in Milford's zoning ordinance directly protect open space through resource protection regulations and minimum open space ratios requirements. The resource protection regulations stipulate that natural resources in a new development must be protected (left undisturbed) to the extent identified below:

- Steep slopes - 60 to 80%, depending on the severity of the grade
- Woodlands - 80%
- Wetlands - 100%, 80% in wetland margins (25 feet from the wetland boundary)

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- 100-year floodplains - 100%
- Lakes, ponds and watercourses - 100%
- Lake shorelines (300 feet from the lake) - 70%
- Pond shorelines (100 feet from the pond) - 80%

The minimum open space ratio is the proportion of the entire tract that must remain in open space. The ratio varies depending on zoning district and the use proposed. The township requires open space to be held in common ownership and freely accessible to residents of the development. However, private land protected under the resource protection regulations can be counted towards the open space ratio. The developer can dedicate the open space to condominium organizations, homeowners associations, the township, or approved conservation groups. The township may, if it desires, accept an easement to all or part of the open space.

By continuing to enforce both the resource protection and minimum open space regulations, Milford will continue to add to the amount of protected land in the township.

5. Amend the zoning ordinance to establish minimum riparian buffers.

Milford Township has a floodplain ordinance designed to limit property damage from flooding. However, floodplain ordinances typically regulate construction, not paving and other soil disturbances. A more effective technique for stream preservation is to adopt zoning amendments to prohibit construction, soil disturbance or removal of natural vegetation within 50 feet of all waterways except for the purpose of constructing low-impact trails. It is now widely recognized that streamside vegetation has important ecological functions, including the following:

- Reduces water pollution because vegetation helps filter impurities from surface runoff.
- Controls the total volume of sediment that reaches streams.
- Provides shade that moderates water temperatures to better accommodate cold water fishes.
- Protects terrestrial wildlife habitat.

If the township enacts it, a 50-foot stream setback requirement (also known as a riparian buffer) will complement the regulations Milford already has in place that mandate buffer zones around wetlands, lakes, and ponds. The 50-foot stream setback should apply to the following creeks: Unami East Branch, Unami West Branch, Hazlebach, Butter, Schmoutz, Molasses and Licking.

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6. Encourage developers to use the four-step Growing Greener approach to better subdivision design.

Although steep slopes, floodplains and wetlands are usually noted on the site plans, little consideration is sometimes given to other elements like a grand oak tree, a wildflower meadow or an old apple orchard, features that can be preserved to help maintain rural character. By conducting a more intensive analysis of the site, developers should be able to achieve adequate densities without sacrificing these environmental amenities. The following four steps are a sequential approach towards more conservation-oriented design now being promoted and encouraged by the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

a. Identify Primary and Secondary Conservation Areas.

First, identify primary conservation areas such as sensitive natural areas: steep slopes over 25%, 100-year floodplains, streams and their buffers, and habitats of rare, threatened and endangered species. Other conservation areas may include scenic views, locally important vegetation, unique geologic features and wet soils among other areas.

b. Identify Locations for Development.

Next, locate potential development areas that include the remaining land left over after the primary and secondary conservation areas are identified. Carefully consider siting new homes with views of the open space areas. Reduce the lot sizes to accommodate for the number of homes that would have been originally provided under conventional development.

c. Layout Roads and Trails.

Show a road alignment that would most efficiently access all new homes. Also consider developing trails that could link residents with each other and with the open space areas.

d. Delineate Lot Lines.

The final step involves delineating the boundaries of each lot, a step often done first in traditional design.

7. Adopt zoning regulations to protect scenic roads.

Scenic roads regulations protect rural character by preserving views of significant natural and man-made landscapes. Scenic roads include roadways that offer picturesque views of the surrounding countryside. Other roads are scenic in themselves because they are narrow,

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winding, nearly covered by a tree canopy or lined by an attractive stone wall. There is a map on page 29 of the Milford Township Open Space Plan that shows “Scenic Vistas” in Milford. The township should use this map as the basis for prioritizing scenic road segments for inclusion in a scenic roads overlay district. Within the scenic road overlay district, the township would:

- Increase setback requirements from the scenic road right-of-way,
- Require the preservation of vegetation along the scenic road,
- Allow flag lots so development lots can be created behind roadside natural features,
- Allow narrower lot widths where lots are created a significant distance behind the minimum setback line,
- Limit access points on to the scenic road by requiring shared driveways, where feasible,
- Create incentives to encourage conservation subdivisions with roadside open space instead of traditional subdivision design,
- Require that parking be behind structures or heavily screened with a landscaped buffer,
- Prohibit billboards and strictly limit other signs,
- Avoid road widening, realignment, complete repaving, speed limit increases or other improvements that will make the road an attractive shortcut for through traffic, and
- Ensure road maintenance and roadside tree trimming are carried out in a manner appropriate to the scenic road.

8. Adopt historic overlay zoning.

Page 28 of the Milford Township Open Space Plan contains a map of “Historic Priorities,” the many structures with historic merit located throughout the township. Milford should consider adopting special historic overlay zoning regulations that provide additional protection for these properties and any others designated by the township. Historic overlay regulations can require enhanced review procedures and a delay before demolition of an historic building can be mandated. Additional uses (such as offices or bed and breakfasts in a residential district) could also be allowed within historic buildings to provide sufficient cash flow to fund restoration or ongoing upkeep. This Plan does not recommend a full-scale historic district ordinance that would regulate exterior alterations of buildings within a specific historic area. However, measures short of an historic district, such as those described above, will help prolong the life of specific sites that are important remnants of the region’s 18th, 19th and early 20th century heritage

REFERENCE SECTION E
Facility Use Policies and Procedures

E. FACILITY USE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This Reference Section describes the policies and procedures that govern community use of local public school facilities. A “Primer” is also provided that describes the facts, figures and design considerations related to planning and constructing a public skatepark. Lastly, a policy is suggested as to how Milford should approach the subject of establishing a regional swimming pool.

Community Use of Local Public Schools

There is a concept in recreation planning known as the “school-park.” This is the idea that a tax-supported public school property should serve as a mini-community center, not just a classroom and play area for that school’s students. In accordance with its written policy, the Quakertown Community School District makes both its indoor and outdoor facilities available for community use. The School District rents its indoor recreation facilities to youth soccer, wrestling and basketball organizations. An “Application for the Use of School Facilities” must be completed and signed by the user group. Non-profits use the facilities for free. For-profit groups pay a fee for custodial services. Use is on a first-come, first-served basis and is arranged by contacting the office of the Director of Business Affairs. The School District Athletic Director coordinates all requests and presents them to the Board of Education for final approval. Similar arrangements govern community use of outdoor athletic fields on School District property.