

POTTSTOWN METROPOLITAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



POTTSTOWN METROPOLITAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

2020 MEMBERSHIP:

DOUGLASS TOWNSHIP

Edward O. Reitz Jr.
Pete Hiryak
Joshua Stouch

EAST COVENTRY TOWNSHIP

Michael A. Moyer
Walt Woessner
N. Lance Parson (Alternate)

LOWER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP

Thomas Troutman (Vice Chairman)
Ray Lopez

NEW HANOVER TOWNSHIP

D. W Boone Flint
Kurt Zebrowski

NORTH COVENTRY TOWNSHIP

James T. Marks III
Bill Soumis (Chairman)

POTTSTOWN BOROUGH

Daniel D. Weand
Ryan Procsal (Treasurer)

UPPER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP

David Waldt
Greg Churach

WEST POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP

Pete LaRosa

RECORDING SECRETARY

Bonnie Frisco (Non-Voting Member)

CONTENTS

PMRPC Purpose1
Featured Project: High Street Corridor Study1
Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Comprehensive Plan.2
Zoning Ordinance and Map Consistency Reviews2
Future Land Use Plan3
Grant Programs4
2020 Guest Speakers.5

Contact Information:

Danielle Baer, Community Planner, Montgomery County Planning Commission

Tel: 610-278-3751 / Fax: 610-278-3941 / Email: dbaer@montcopa.org

Marley Bice, AICP, Principal Planner II, Montgomery County Planning Commission

Tel: 610-278-3740 / Fax: 610-278-3941 / Email: mbice@montcopa.org

PMRPC Website: <https://pottstownmetroregion.com/>

PMRPC PURPOSE

“The Pottstown Metropolitan Region is positioned directly in the path of growth as it continues to expand outward from Philadelphia and its suburbs. It is a well-balanced region with a richly diverse landscape of historic communities, attractive suburban neighborhoods, industry, commercial centers, rolling farmlands and abundant natural resources. The intersection of US Route 422 and PA Route 100 in the middle of the region provides a gateway for new growth. The region’s communities recognize that they are at a crossroads for directing growth and this is the catalyst for the region’s eight municipalities working together to plan their future. Especially important for the region is directing growth into the region’s older communities and designated growth areas, particularly the Borough of Pottstown, in order to revitalize these older places, maximize the costly public infrastructure of the region, and preserve the region’s rural areas.

Through regional cooperation and planning the Pottstown Metropolitan Region intends to:

- Protect the unique historical, cultural, and natural resources of the region.
- Promote the economic vitality and quality of life of the region’s existing communities.
- Implement growth management techniques to provide for orderly and well-planned new development.
- Preserve open space and agriculture in the region.
- Develop transportation choices for better mobility in and through the region.
- Encourage walkable communities with a mix of uses and a range of housing options where appropriate.
- Promote new economic opportunities and jobs.
- Maintain and improve recreation options.
- Address the specific needs and unique conditions of each municipality.”

Source: Pottstown Metropolitan Region Intergovernmental Cooperative Implementation Agreement for Regional Planning (April 12, 2010)

FEATURED PROJECT: HIGH STREET CORRIDOR STUDY

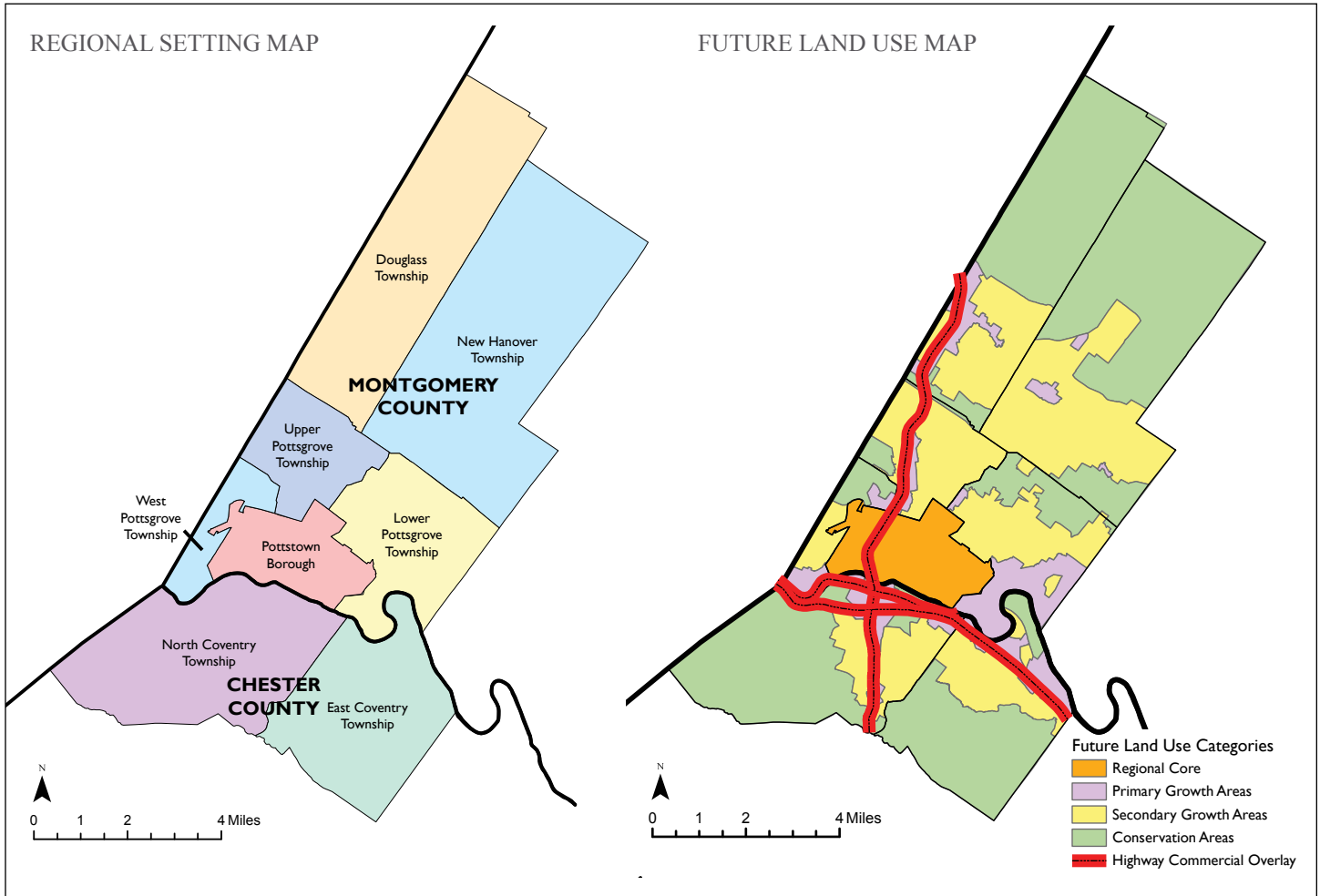
PMRPC partnered with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) to conduct a study on the High Street Corridor to identify multimodal design improvements for High Street, through West Pottsgrove Township, Pottstown Borough, and Lower Pottsgrove Township. This project will provide recommendations for pedestrian and motorist safety, beautification, wayfinding signage and placemaking, and street cross sections for High Street between Quarry Road and Rupert Road. The two-year study launched in July 2019 and is set to conclude in June 2021.



Study area for the High Street Corridor Study highlighting the five subcorridors: Stowe, Downtown, Hobart’s Run, Pottstown Hospital, and Sanatoga.



This shows the existing conditions of High Street in the Downtown subcorridor. Existing features to note include reverse angled parking, bike lane infrastructure, and sidewalks.



POTTSTOWN METROPOLITAN REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2015 as an update to the first regional comprehensive Plan adopted in 2005. The 2015 Regional Comprehensive Plan lays out goals and objectives for the region related to economic development, housing, parks and recreation, open space, natural resource protection, agriculture, transportation, and community facilities.

No amendments to the regional comprehensive plan were reviewed or adopted by the Committee during 2020.

ZONING ORDINANCE AND MAP CONSISTENCY REVIEWS

All proposed zoning text or zoning map amendments that change the standards regulating use, residential density, or non-residential intensity within a member municipality are sent to the Committee for review and comment. The Committee reviews the proposed amendment to determine whether it is generally consistent with the stated goals, objectives, and policies of the adopted Regional Comprehensive Plan.

- **KEEP Overlay District—Pottstown Borough** – At the May meeting, PMRPC reviewed a proposed zoning map amendment for the KEEP Overlay District. This amendment proposed to create a new overlay district, in accordance with the KEEP Specific Plan. The overlay district permits Cellulose-based solid waste (CSW) Gasification Facilities. The committee determined the zoning map amendment to be generally consistent with the Regional Comprehensive Plan.
- **R-4 Residential District Zoning Text Amendment—Douglass Township** – At the July meeting, PMRPC reviewed a proposed zoning text amendment for the R-4 Residential District of Douglass Township. This amendment proposed to increase the permitted residential density from five (5) dwelling units per acre to eleven (11) dwelling units per acre. No issues of regional significance were identified and PMRPC determined the zoning text amendment to be generally consistent with the Regional Comprehensive Plan.
- **Route 100 Corridor Master Plan Overlay District Zoning Text Amendment—Douglass Township** – At the July meeting, PMRPC reviewed a proposed zoning text amendment for the Route 100 Corridor Master Plan Overlay District of Douglass Township. This amendment proposed to increase the allowable height of buildings from 45 feet to 65 feet. PMRPC determined the zoning text amendment to be generally consistent with the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Future Land Use Plan for the Pottstown Metropolitan Region as outlined in the 2015 Regional Comprehensive Plan includes policies and maps intended to guide future growth in the Region for the next 20 years (see the Future Land Use Map on page 2).

SUBDIVISIONS AND LAND DEVELOPMENTS OF REGIONAL IMPACT

Any subdivision or land development proposal within the Region which meets the definition of a “subdivision or land development of regional impact” is reviewed by the Committee. The Committee reviews and provides advisory comments to the individual municipality where the proposal is located as it relates to the stated goals, objectives, and policies of the adopted Regional Comprehensive Plan.

This year, no subdivision or land development proposals in the region qualified as regionally significant developments.

GRANT PROGRAMS

MINI-GRANTS PROGRAM

The Pottstown Parks and Recreation Improvement Mini-Grant Program is a local grant program jointly-administered by PMRPC and the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation (PAHWF) with grant funding from DCNR which is matched 50:50 locally by PAHWF. Mini-grants are available to all eight of the municipalities within the Region. The program is designed to fund park improvements to increase park usage and improve the health of area residents.

Previous Mini-Grants Rounds #1-3: 2013-2021



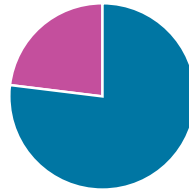
31

Projects



8

Municipalities



77%

Park development projects & **23%** park planning projects



\$570,575

Total grant funds spent



East Coventry Township received a \$25,000 grant for the Ellis Woods Park Pickleball Court project. Two pickleball courts were developed to complement the existing court and accommodate the increased demand for court space.



Improving parks. Connecting communities.

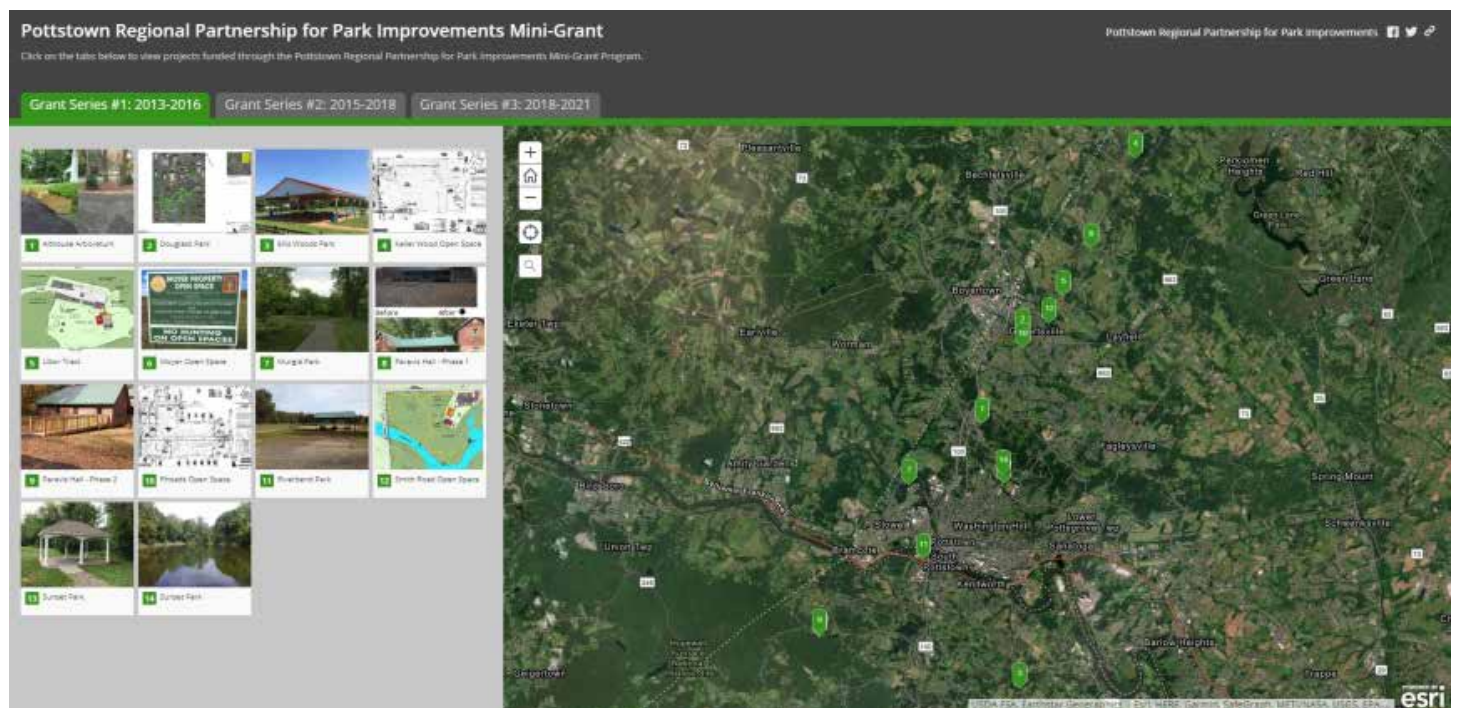
Pottstown Borough received an \$18,000 grant to complete a five-year strategic plan to guide the Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee (PARRC). The strategic plan addresses strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats from the past five years of the program and provides objectives, strategies, and recommendations for the next five years.

MINI-GRANTS ROUND #4: 2021-2024

In 2020, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) granted PMRPC an additional \$75,000 award to continue the Pottstown Regional Park Improvement Mini-Grant Program for a fourth round, in continued partnership with the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation. The Mini-Grants Round #4: 2021-2024 is tentatively scheduled to begin in Fall 2021.

2020 GUEST SPEAKERS

- **January** – Daniel Farina, MCPC Planner II (Suburban Homestead: A Primer on Best Practices and Management)
- **June** – Pattie Guttenplan, RLA, AICP, MCPC Section Chief – Design Planning & Graphic Design and Tamar Nativ, MCPC Planner II (Keim Street Gateway Plan: A Vision and Master Plan for the Keim Street Gateway)
- **October** – Donna Fabry, MCPC Senior Open Space Planner (Trail Access, Diversity & Awareness Study)
- **December** – Michael Lowrey, MCPC Community Planner II (Collegeville Business and Dining Interactive Map)



An online, interactive map has been created to summarize facts about each of the active and completed mini-grants projects: <https://pottstownmetroregion.com/current-and-completed-mini-grants-project-map/>

