
PUBLIC TRAIL PLAN

WEST VINCENT TOWNSHIP, CHESTER COUNTY, PA



Adopted September 19, 2022

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Board of Supervisors

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Maps in support of the Public Trail Plan are included at the end of the document.

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

This Public Trail Plan is intended to fulfill the following purposes:

- Identify publicly accessible trails on a map
- Address trail management, maintenance, and security
- Create a plan for trail wayfinding and posting of rules
- Identify needed connections between existing trails and destinations
- Integrate the Township trail system with neighboring municipalities and regional corridors

LOCAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

West Vincent Township is a 17.8 square mile municipality in northern Chester County, with a population of 6,668 in 2020. The Township is largely rural in character, with large farms and swathes of mature woodland punctuated by a number of residential developments along major roadways. Within this bucolic setting is a variety of landscapes: from the higher intensity mixed uses at Ludwigs Corner, to historic Birchrunville village. The Township has a long history of open space preservation and natural heritage protection, which is evident in its system of parks, preserves, and conservation easement lands. The Township has an Open Space Advisory Committee to work on identification and protection of priority open spaces. In addition, the Township has a Park and Recreation Commission that advises on equipping, maintaining, and operating recreation facilities. Prominent park and open space assets in West Vincent are summarized as follows:

- Evans Park is a 12.9-acre facility that includes sports fields, a pavilion, playground, basketball, parking, and an approximately ½-mile paved walking path.
- Cooks Glen Park, a 54-acre wooded piece along French Creek, has hiking and horseback trails, and is used for fishing.
- Schoolhouse Park is a 2-acre natural site on Flowing Springs Road in Birchrunville.
- Wilsons Corner Park is a 1.5-acre wooded park along French Creek at the intersection of Pughtown and French Creek Roads. It is a favored destination for fishing. The Township has purchased an adjacent 2.5-acre parcel (# 25-4-133) that will be added to the park.
- The most substantial Township open space achievement is the recent preservation of the 1,500 acre Bryn Coed Farms in conjunction with Natural Lands and East and West Pikeland Townships. The conservation plan includes 39 large, deed-restricted conservation lots, a 520-acre Natural Lands Preserve, and the 72-acre Opananie Township Park, with a 10.5-mile trail system connecting the park and preserve areas with some of the lots and to trailheads on the perimeter roads.
- Three regional trails – Brandywine Trail, French Creek Trail and Horse-Shoe Trail – cross the Township and provide access to destinations far beyond municipal boundaries. These trails are described in more detail below.

In addition to local resources, trails provide the Township with access to a number of federal, state, and county public parks that provide a broad diversity of outdoor recreational and educational activities:

- French Creek State Park – Over 7,500 forested acres in Warwick and North Coventry Townships in Chester County and Robeson and Union Townships in Berks County; connected to the Township via the Horse-Shoe Trail
- Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site – Nearly 850 acres within French Creek State Park; connected to the Township via the Horse-Shoe Trail
- Marsh Creek State Park – Over 1,700 acres around the Marsh Creek reservoir in Upper Uwchlan Township; connected to the Township via Upper Uwchlan Township’s trail system
- Valley Forge National Historic Park – 3,500 acres in eastern Chester and western Montgomery Counties; connected to the Township via the Horse-Shoe Trail
- Warwick County Park – Over 500 forested acres in Warwick Township, Chester County; connected to the Township via the Horse-Shoe Trail

POLICY

The Township is committed to expanding trail access for residents to enjoy the outdoors and safely walk, bike, and ride throughout West Vincent:

- A *Multi-Modal Transportation Study* was commissioned in 2014 to analyze bicycle, pedestrian, and transit opportunities and recommend improvements to help reinstate automotive alternatives as viable modes of travel. The study proposed trail improvements as part of this strategy to expand multi-modal access.
- The 2021 *Phoenixville Regional Comprehensive Plan* identifies proposed trails that would connect the Township with adjacent municipalities in the Phoenixville Region.

PUBLIC PROCESS

This project was guided by a Township Task Force consisting of area residents and representatives of the Township Parks & Recreation Commission and Planning Commission. The Task Force coordinated with key stakeholders from the community, including non-profits French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust and Natural Lands, to gather information on existing and proposed trails.

On March 7, 2022 the Task Force held a Public Workshop to present the Trail Plan and solicit community feedback. Nearly 40 Township residents attended the workshop and provided feedback on existing trail alignments and identified additional trail easements. The following desired trail connections were identified:

- From Malehorn Road to the Horse-Shoe Trail
- Along Saint Matthews Road
- From Stonecroft Estates to Bryn Coed Preserve
- From Schoolhouse Park to Bryn Coed Preserve
- From Kimberton Road to Bryn Coed Preserve

Participants also requested that the plan address the following:

- Privacy of landowners adjacent to trails
- Provide signage regarding trail etiquette on multi-use trails
- Provide signage with trail rules at trailheads
- Maintain gravel Township roads with ‘horse-friendly’ materials

EXISTING CONDITIONS

REGIONAL TRAILS

There are three regional trails with connections beyond West Vincent’s boundaries:

BRANDYWINE TRAIL

The Brandywine Trail is a hiking/bicycle trail between the Horse-Shoe Trail and Struble Trail. Private trail clubs hike the trail route from Brandywine Creek State Park, Delaware, to Ludwig’s Corner. In West Vincent Township the trail is entirely along the road, and is marked with white blazes. The route follows Saint Andrews Lane from Upper Uwchlan Township into Ludwig’s Corner, and then follows Birchrun Road / Bartlett Lane north of the Wetherill Estates development where it meets the Horse-Shoe Trail. Uncontrolled crossings of Conestoga Road/S.R. 401 and Pottstown Pike/S.R. 100 at Ludwigs Corner as well as the lack of off-road trail facilities create conditions for conflicts between trail users and vehicles. High speed traffic along Birchrun Road presents additional risk.



WHITE BLAZES MARK THE ROUTE OF THE BRANDYWINE TRAIL ALONG BARTLETT LANE

FRENCH CREEK TRAIL

The French Creek Trail is a partially completed unimproved surface trail that ultimately will extend from Phoenixville and the Schuylkill River Trail northwest to Warwick County Park and the Horse-Shoe Trail. The French Creek Trail is part of the Sow Belly-French Creek Regional Recreation Corridor, as identified in Chester County’s *Linking Landscapes* open space plan. The trail accommodates hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians. It enters the northeast corner of West Vincent on French Creek Road, and then follows the road to the intersection with Hollow Road. From there a natural surface trail crosses Birch Run and follows the curve of French Creek through private property toward Sheeder Mill Road. North of Sheeder Mill Road a natural surface trail provides access through Cooks Glen Park. The trail corridor in West Vincent Township is largely complete except for the following areas where access still needs to be acquired by the Township working with French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust:



FRENCH CREEK TRAIL AT SAW MILL ROAD

- A 0.25-mile segment south of Sheeder Mill Road – easement access has been secured for part of this
- An approximately 300-foot segment north of Sheeder Mill Road that would connect two discontinuous parcels of Cooks Glen Park – currently a private equestrian trail passes through a private property to link the two parcels
- A 0.5-mile segment that passes west of Cooks Glen Road to Bertolet School Road and the French Creek – an easement has been secured for the western half of the segment



HORSE-SHOE TRAIL CROSSING AT DAVIS LANE

HORSE-SHOE TRAIL

The Horse-Shoe Trail is a 140-mile-long hiking and equestrian trail extending from Valley Forge Park to the Appalachian Trail in Dauphin County. The Trail is mostly unimproved and crosses over mostly private lands by agreement with the property owners, although some connecting sections are on public roads. It is marked with yellow blazes. The Horse-Shoe Trail enters the Township from West Pikeland Township on Horseshoe Trail Road. The trail is on Horseshoe Trail Road for approximately 1.3 miles, with the exception of a short segment of natural surface trail that parallels the road immediately south of Saint Matthews Road. The trail then follows Hollow Road for approximately 0.25 miles, before proceeding uphill through land conserved by French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust. It continues northwest through private properties to Bartlett Lane, where it meets with the Brandywine Trail. The Horse-Shoe Trail then passes through private lands into East Nantmeal Township. The trail is managed and maintained by volunteer members of the Horse-Shoe Trail Club, who work with landowners and municipal officials to preserve and expand the extent to which it stays off road. The Horse-Shoe Regional Recreation Corridor is recognized by the *Linking Landscapes* plan.

LOCAL TRAILS

West Vincent contains numerous local trails that provide recreation opportunities for hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians. Several of these trails are located on public open space, or else are protected by easements for public access. Trails that have been confirmed as public by West Vincent Land Trust and that have been verified in the field are listed as follows:

- **Weatherstone Community Trail** is a paved trail that passes through Township-owned open space associated with the Weatherstone mixed-use development. The six-foot-wide asphalt trail connects Pinehurst Drive and Linden Avenue in the development.
- **Fellowship Trail** is an eight-foot-wide asphalt trail that runs parallel to Fellowship Road from Weatherstone Community Trail into Upper Uwchlan Township, where it ends at the Vineyard Community Church near the intersection of Fellowship Road and Conestoga Road. This trail was

identified as a potential regional trail by the Phoenixville Regional Planning Committee due to its proximity to planned, multi-use trails in both West Vincent and Upper Uwchlan Townships that, upon completion, would provide bicycle and pedestrian access to regional destinations such as the village of Eagle and Marsh Creek State Park. These trails were identified in West Vincent’s 2014 *Multi-Modal Study* as follows:

- A trail along Conestoga Road from Fellowship Road (Upper Uwchlan Township) to Saint Matthews Road (West Vincent Township). West Vincent Township plans to route the trail away from Conestoga Road, through adjacent properties in order to connect to Andrew Evans Park.
- A trail along Fellowship Road (Upper Uwchlan), which would connect with Upper Uwchlan’s existing multi-use trail network at Eagle Farms Road

Completion of the Fellowship Trail is anticipated in 2023. Additionally, the *Multi-Modal Study* proposes 6-foot-wide paved shoulders and sidewalks along the north side of Conestoga Road between Fellowship Road and Pottstown Pike, which would provide multi-modal connections from Andrew Evans Park to destinations in Ludwigs Corner.

- **Opalanie Park** – A network of natural surface trails forms a circuit around the Township Park, and offers connections to the Natural Lands Bryn Coed Preserve trail network. Trails are wide, well-maintained, and marked with blazes along trail routes, and posts bearing directional arrows at trail junctions. Signs direct which trails are open to hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians. Trailhead parking is provided at a gravel parking lot that can accommodate over 30 vehicles, and a separate lot for horse trailers.
- **Bryn Coed Preserve** – The non-profit Natural Lands owns this private preserve and maintains natural surface trails that are open to the public. Currently, there are 7.5 miles of trails throughout the preserve south of Saint Matthews Road, with future trails proposed north of Saint Matthews Road. Trails are marked with colored blazes, and signs signify that certain routes are hikers-only, while others are open to hikers and equestrians. The preserve has two trailhead parking areas, on Flint Road (capacity 40 vehicles) and on Miller Road (capacity 4 vehicles). A third lot is proposed on Beaver Hill Road.
- **Byers Station** – An 8-foot-wide asphalt trail parallels Eagle Farms Road east from Fellowship Road to West Vincent Township’s boundary with West Pikeland Township. The trail is part of a system of paved multi-use trails, owned by Upper Uwchlan Township, that connect residences in the sprawling Byers Station development and provide multi-modal access to destinations like Eagle Village and Marsh Creek State Park. A narrow, unmarked, natural surface trail enters Byers Station open space from the multi-use path near the West Vincent-West Pikeland Township border, traverses steep terrain uphill from the Byers Station townhouses, and connects to Augusta Drive.



TRAIL WITH SIGNAGE IN BRYN COED PRESERVE

- **Cooks Glen Park** – Natural surface trails connect the east and west portions of this Township open space area, which also contains a section of the regional French Creek Trail. Local trails in the park consist of a loop in the west portion that encircles a mowed field, and a loop in the east portion that passes through steep, wooded terrain and connects to the French Creek Trail. A spur provides access to the eastern loop from Sheeder Mill Road. Trails are accessed by hikers and equestrians. Trails are marked by signs for the park.



BYERS STATION MULTI-USE TRAIL

- **Andrew Evans Park** – An asphalt trail loop circles the park’s sports fields and garden plantings. Three gravel parking lots – one along Conestoga Road (capacity 40 vehicles) and two off of Malehorn Road near the park playground (total capacity 28 vehicles) – provide trailhead access.
- **Fox Hollow Farms** – A natural surface trail encircles the Fox Hollow Farms residential development. Part of the trail extends along Veronica Drive and forms a loop around a privately owned farm. The trail is marked with wooden posts that are carved with a “T”.
- **French Creek Road/ Beaver Hill Road** – An unmarked, natural surface trail passes through private lands and connects these two roads in the north-central area of the Township.
- **Griffith Farm** – A mowed grass path encircles a large crop field on this Township-owned open space. The trail is accessed by a former farm road off of Birchrun Road that passes through open space owned by the Estates at Ludwigs Corner Community Association. The trail is not marked, and no parking is available.
- **Jaine Lane Trails** – Several eased, natural surface trails pass through private lands along both sides of Jaine Lane, including the Horse-Shoe Trail. North of Jaine Lane’s intersection with Birchrun Road, two trails navigate steep, forested terrain, and end at trailheads on Hilltop Road and Flowing Springs Road. The trail that connects Jaine Lane with Flowing Springs Road has been marked with trailhead signage by the property owner.
- **Malehorn Road to Springlea Lane** – A natural surface trail connects these two roads near Evans Park, and is used by both pedestrians and equestrians. An easement provides for access across Springlea Lane, but there is no evidence of a trail that continues north of the road.
- **Stonecroft Estates** – A system of natural surface trails passes through Stonecroft Homeowners Association open space, with unmarked trailheads on Miller Road and Saint Matthews Road. An easement provides for a third trailhead at Horseshoe Trail Road, with a trail proposed to access Stonecroft open space behind the residences on Pine Drive. However, no trailhead is evident, and trails end at Stonecroft open space boundaries.
- **Westover Lane Open Space** – This Township-owned open space contains wastewater treatment facilities for the adjacent Weatherstone residential development. A series of mown grass paths have been established for access to the spray irrigation equipment by Bucks County Water and Sewer Authority.
- **Wetherill Estates** – The Wetherill Estates development open space contains two natural surface trails with trailheads on either side of Bartlett Lane. The trail west of Bartlett Lane follows the open space perimeter and connects to a number of private trails on neighboring residences. The trail on the east

side of Bartlett Lane enters Wetherill open space through an adjacent residential property and connects to the Horse-Shoe Trail.

FUTURE TRAIL PLAN

West Vincent’s future trail system will consist of integrated networks of paved multi-use trails, unimproved hiking/equestrian trails, and dirt roads. This system is structured around connections between critical destinations including Birchrunville, Ludwigs Corner, and Township parks and open space. In cases where permanent easements on private lands cannot be established, revocable use licenses or other types of access agreement could be pursued, or alternative trail alignments investigated.

Implementation of the Future Trail Plan will occur over time depending on available resources and opportunities to advance specific trail initiatives. The Existing Public Trails map will be subject to periodic updates as progress is made.

Excerpts of the Proposed Trail System Map illustrate proposed trail networks. The following is a legend to the map excerpts presented in this section:

<u>Legend</u>		
Wetlands	Trailhead Parking	Publicly Owned Open Space
Parcel Boundary	Existing	Township Park
5-Foot Contours	Proposed	Township Open Space
Paved Township Road	Proposed Public Trails	Lands of Upper Uwchlan Township
State Road	Natural Surface	Privately Owned Open Space
Gravel Township Road	Natural Surface - within Easement	Nature Preserve
Private Road	Paved Surface	Conservation Easement
Existing Public Trails	On Road	Agricultural Easement
Natural Surface	Brandywine Trail - Proposed Alignment	Destinations
Paved Surface	Public Trails Proposed by Others	Park/Preserve
Existing Trail to be Re-routed	Natural Surface	Village
Regional Trail Route	Paved Surface	Event/ Cultural Destination
		Institution

FRENCH CREEK NETWORK

The French Creek Network establishes a trail route across the Township's northern boundary with East Vincent Township from South Coventry Township to East Pikeland Township. It will complete critical gaps in the regional French Creek Trail (FCT); connect with local trails along Sheeder Road and Beaver Hill Road; and extend a natural surface trail from the French Creek Trail to the West Vincent-East Pikeland Township boundary. The connection to the FCT would provide access to Cooks Glen Park as well as trails and destinations beyond West Vincent. The following is proposed to implement the French Creek Network:

- **Complete the French Creek Trail through West Vincent.**

The Township should work with French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, East Vincent Township, and landowners to secure additional access as needed.

Establish Public Access

Parcel 25-4-136

Coordinate with PennDOT to provide trail in Pughtown Road ROW

Remaining parcels are Township-owned park (Wilson Corner Park)

Parcel 25-4-63.15

Parcel 25-4-62 – *Easement secured for 0.15 trail miles on this property; access required for remaining 0.10 miles to the FCT*

Parcel 25-4-22.1

Parcels 25-3-43.4
25-1-7

Parcel 25-3-57.1C

Easement secured for 0.3 miles of trail on parcel 25-3-39

Parcels 21-3-19, 21-3-20 – *East Vincent Township to implement*

Construct Improvements

Move Pughtown Road guide rail and add 6-foot-wide paved trail along west shoulder between north and south intersections of French Creek Road (0.15 miles)

Trail bridge over Birch Run at Hollow Road and French Creek Road

Natural surface trail from existing French Creek Trail to Sheeder Mill Road (0.25 miles)

Provide a complete trail route through Cooks Glen Park by securing access to an existing informal equestrian trail (0.06 miles).

Establish a trail between Cooks Glen Park and Bertolet School Road using an existing driveway that follows the French Creek. This driveway is currently used as an emergency access route for the Township (0.4 miles).

OR

Establish a natural surface trail west of Cooks Glen Road to Bertolet School Road (0.5 miles).

Establish a trail following Bertolet School Road across the French Creek into East Vincent Township; provide a natural surface trail westward through Camp Sankanac, with trailhead parking at Camp parking lot.

- **Extend a trail from the French Creek Trail to East Pikeland Township.**

Establish Public Access

Parcels 25-5-1
25-5-3.1
25-5-4
25-5-5

Construct Improvements

Natural surface trail along the French Creek from French Creek Road to East Pikeland Township (2.05 miles)

OR

Parcel 25-5-1
Coordinate with PennDOT to provide trail in Pughtown Road ROW
Coordinate with East Pikeland Township to extend trail east along Kimberbrae Road

Natural surface trail along the French Creek from French Creek Road through the Camphill Village property to Ford Road (1.37 miles); wayfinding along Ford Road to Pughtown Road, with paved trail along Pughtown Road and on Kimberbrae Road to East Pikeland Township (1.10 miles)

- **Provide local trail connection to the French Creek Trail.**

Establish Public Access

Parcel 25-4-63.2

Construct Improvements

Natural surface trail from Buttonwood Lane to the French Creek Trail (0.09 miles)

- **Establish trails and trailhead parking at Wilsons Corner Park.**

Establish Public Access

Township-owned park

Construct Improvements

Trailhead parking with access from French Creek Road; natural surface trails to connect park parcels; accessible asphalt trail to French Creek with ADA accessible fishing deck.

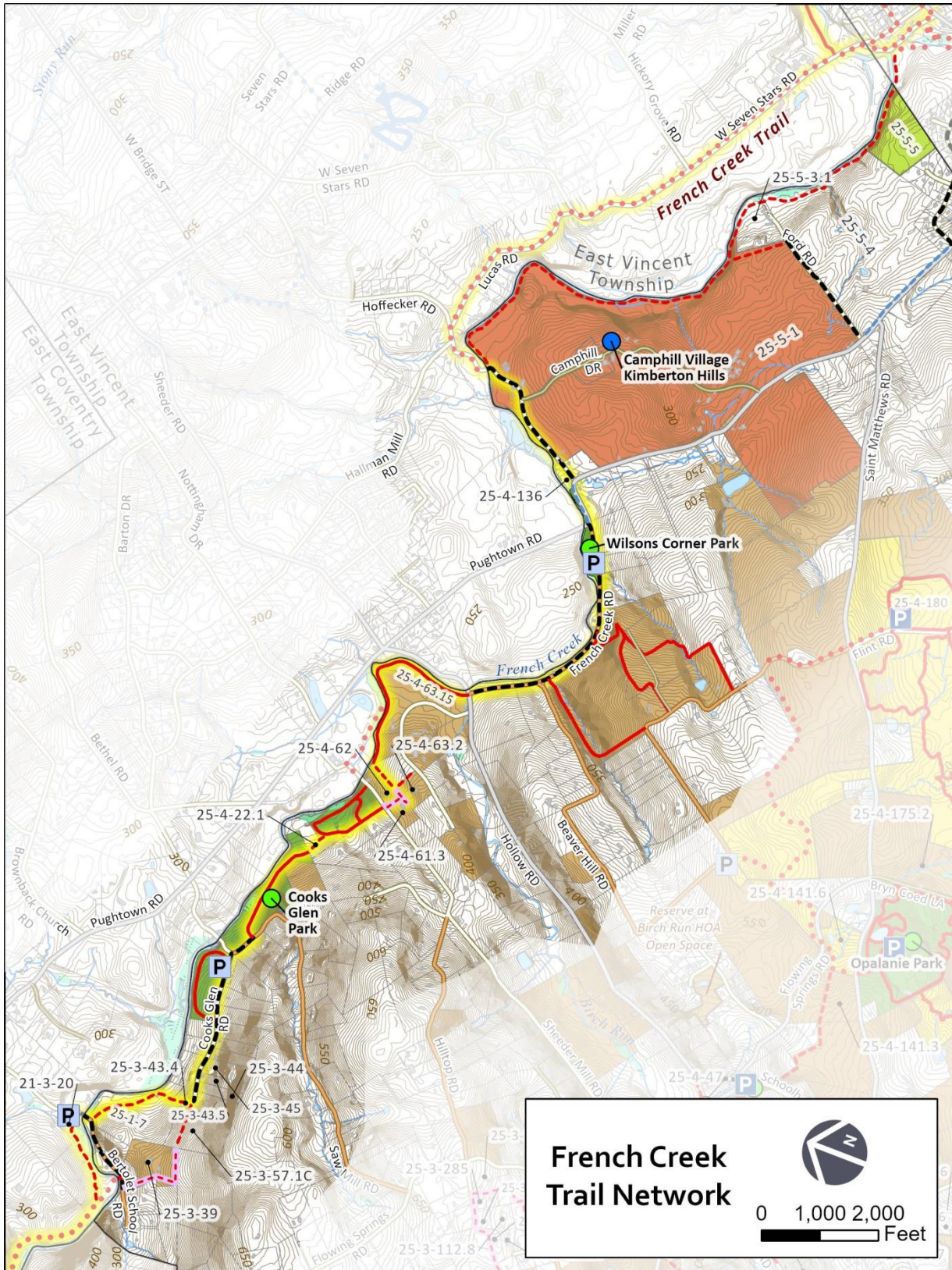
- **Provide trailhead parking at Cooks Glen Park.**

Establish Public Access

Township-owned park

Construct Improvements

Trailhead parking with access from Cooks Glen Road; include horse trailer parking to facilitate trail access for equestrians.



August 15, 2022

BIRCHRUNVILLE-BRYN COED NETWORK

This network connects the village of Birchrunville, Schoolhouse Park, Opalanie Park, and Bryn Coed Preserve, thus improving safe multi-modal access to the Township’s most significant historic and open space landmarks. Through Bryn Coed Preserve trail extensions and adjacent low-volume roads, the Birchrunville-Bryn Coed Network also provides access to the regional French Creek and Horse-Shoe Trails.

- **Provide trail connections from Horse-Shoe Trail to Birchrunville**

- **Jaine Lane-Hollow Road** Dirt roads and unimproved surface trails from Horse-Shoe Trail to Birchrunville

Establish Public Access

Township road

Parcels 25-3-112.11
25-3-112.9

Easement secured

Parcels 25-3-112.9
25-3-112.10
25-3-112.7
25-3-112.8
25-3-285
25-3-112.5A

Parcels 25-4-43
25-4-44.1

Parcels 25-4-44.1
25-4-45
25-4-46

Coordinate with PennDOT to provide trail in Hollow Road ROW

Construct Improvements

Wayfinding along Jaine Lane from Horse-Shoe Trail to existing trail at the intersection of Jaine Lane and Birchrun Road (0.63 miles)

Natural surface trail from existing Jaine Lane trail to Hilltop Road (0.19 miles)

Natural surface trail from Hilltop Road to Jaine Lane (0.42 miles)

Wayfinding along existing Jaine Lane trails

Natural surface trail from existing trail on Cook property to Hollow Road, with trail crossing of Birch Run at FPCCT property (0.29 miles)

Natural surface trail along north shoulder of Hollow Road to Flowing Springs Road (0.14 miles)

- **Pipeline ROW** – Utilize an existing pipeline right-of-way from Horseshoe Trail Road to Flowing Springs Road.

Establish Public Access

Parcels 25-7-40.2
25-7-40.2A, 25-7-40, 25-3-141, 25-3-132.1
25-3-142
25-3-133.1, 25-3-135, 25-3-117
25-4-43

Coordinate with PennDOT for trail crossing of Birchrun Road

Construct Improvements

Wayfinding along existing private trails in pipeline ROW from Horse-Shoe Trail to Harrington, with trail crossings of Birch Run and Birchrun Road (0.82 miles)

- **Horse-Shoe Trail to Bryn Coed** – Implement a trail route from the Horse-Shoe Trail through Stonecroft open space to Miller Road. From there, Natural Lands proposes a 0.33 mile-long trail from Miller Road to the existing Bryn Coed Preserve connector trail.

Establish Public Access

Township road

Parcels 25-8-63.1
25-8-63

Construct Improvements

Wayfinding along Pine Drive from Horse-Shoe Trail to Stonecroft open space (0.3 miles)

Re-route existing trail along existing stone driveway on Bucks County Water and Sewer Authority property (0.24 miles)

- **Stonecroft Open Space** – Construct an eased trail through open space at Stonecroft.

Establish Public Access

Parcel 25-8-63
Easements secured

Construct Improvements

Natural surface trail in Stonecroft open space (0.28 miles)
Crossing of Miller Road

- **Trailhead parking for Horse-Shoe Trail**

Parking is proposed on Township open space off of Horseshoe Trail Road, south of Barrington Lane. Access available via driveway to adjacent Bucks County Water and Sewer Authority (BCWSA) property.

Establish Public Access

Township-owned property

Construct Improvements

Gravel or asphalt parking lot, 5-10 spaces

- **Birchrunville to Bryn Coed Preserve**

Any trail that traverses property under easement with Natural Lands would be governed by the same use policies as the Bryn Coed Preserve.

Establish Public Access

Parcels 25-4-75
25-4-76
25-4-67.2

Alt. on-road trail along Flowing Springs Road;
PennDOT coordination required

Construct Improvements

Natural surface trail from Birchrun Road to Schoolhouse Park, with pedestrian crossing of Birch Run tributary (0.17 miles)

OR

Parcels 25-4-47
25-4-50

Coordinate with PennDOT to provide trail crossing of Flowing Springs and Hollow Roads

Natural surface/on-road trail along Hollow Road, 0.12 miles, from Flowing Springs Road to Schoolhouse Lane, with wayfinding along Schoolhouse Lane to Schoolhouse Park, 0.15 miles, and crossing of Flowing Springs Road

Parcels 25-4-141.2
25-4-141.3
25-4-141.6

Natural surface trail from Schoolhouse Park to Bryn Coed Preserve, with crossing of Schoolhouse Lane and connections to proposed trail in Bryn Coed Preserve (0.5 miles)

- **Opalanie Park to Bryn Coed Preserve**

The Opalanie Park trails are mostly complete, except for two offsite trail connections that Natural Lands proposes between the park and the adjacent Bryn Coed Preserve. One trail is proposed to cross Saint Matthews Road at the park driveway entrance, and another is proposed to cross Bryn Coed Lane before connecting with the trail along the park’s east boundary. A third offsite connection from the Preserve to Miller Road with trailhead parking is in place.

Establish Public Access

Coordinate with PennDOT to provide trail crossing of Saint Matthews Road

Township open space

Township open space

Construct Improvements

Trail crossing of Saint Matthews Road (*Township to implement with Natural Lands*)

Natural surface connector trail (less than 100 feet) from Township park trail to meet Natural Lands trail across Bryn Coed Lane (*Township to implement*)

Replace existing, temporary park wayfinding with permanent trail signage

- **Bryn Coed Preserve to Kimberton Road**

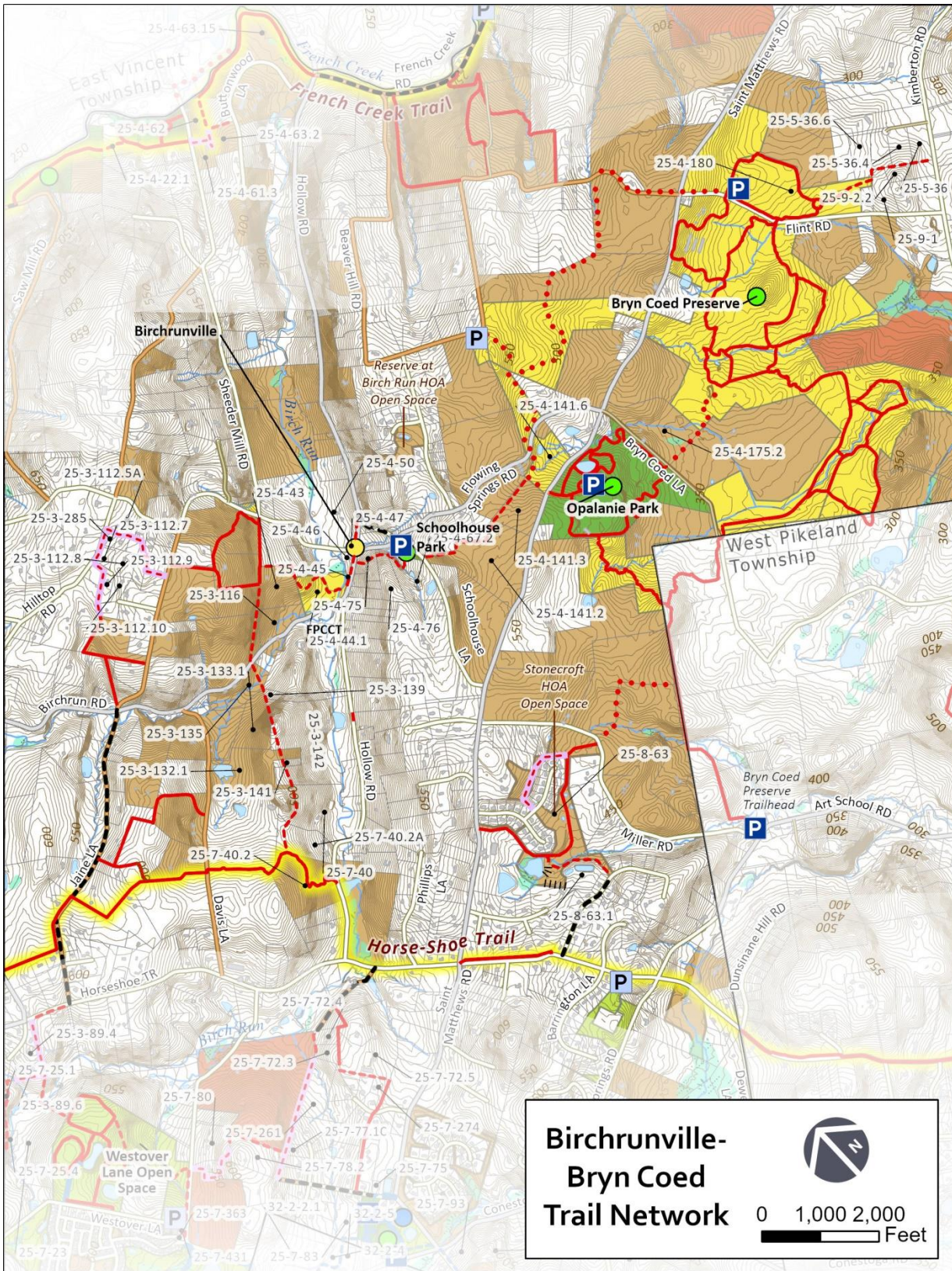
A trail connection is needed to address safety concerns of existing pedestrian traffic along Flint Road. Coordination with Natural Lands and owners of adjacent properties is required to secure trail access and to facilitate connections to the Preserve’s trail network. Because it would connect to Bryn Coed Preserve, this trail should be governed by the use policies of Natural Lands.

Establish Public Access

Parcels 25-5-36, 25-5-36.4, 25-5-36.5, 25-5-36.6
25-4-180

Construct Improvements

Natural surface trail from Kimberton Road to existing trail in Bryn Coed Preserve (0.42 miles)



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BRANDYWINE-LUDWIGS CORNER NETWORK

This network will establish a continuous, off-road trail route between Ludwigs Corner, the Horse-Shoe Trail, and Evans Park/Township Office. This project would complete the northern end of the Brandywine Trail, thereby helping to establish a regional trail corridor between the HST and the Struble Trail in Marsh Creek State Park. This would also expand the County’s regional Circuit Trail network.

- **Off-road trail route for the Brandywine Trail from Ludwigs Corner to Bartlett Lane**
 - Crossings at the intersection of 401 and 100 and of Route 100 at Lexington Blvd should be coordinated with future development of the Weatherstone Commercial parcels.

Establish Public Access

Construct Improvements

Parcels 25-6-27

Alt: 25-6-31

25-6-30.1

25-6-62

Coordinate with PennDOT to provide trail crossing of Route 401/100 intersection and trail in Route 100 ROW

Ten foot (10’) wide paved multi-use trail from Saint Andrews Lane south through St. Andrews Church, Ludwigs Village Shoppes, and crossing Routes 100 and 401 (0.25 miles)

Pedestrian signalization.

Parcels 25-6-5

25-6-59.2

25-6-1.1

Coordinate with PennDOT to provide trail crossing of Route 100 at Lexington Blvd/ Nantmeal Rd

10-foot-wide paved multi-use trail connection from Lexington Boulevard to Ludwigs Corner Horse Show Grounds, with trail crossing of Route 100 (0.1 miles)

Pedestrian signalization.

Parcels 25-6-5

25-6-25

Township should coordinate with landowners to implement a shared parking agreement for existing parking areas.

Trailhead parking at existing parking lots at St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church and at Ludwigs Corner Horse Show Grounds

Parcels 25-6-61, 25-7-318

25-6-59.2, 25-6-60.1, 25-6-60.2

Coordinate with PennDOT to provide trail crossing of Birchrun Road

Widen existing 6-foot paved trail to 8-10 feet as space permits along Route 100 and Birchrun Road and extended west along Lexington Boulevard, with crossing of Birchrun Road at Lexington Blvd (0.94 miles)

North of Lexington Boulevard, the Brandywine Trail is an unimproved surface trail to Horse-Shoe Trail. The Township should coordinate with the Wilmington Trail Club to remove blazes along the existing Brandywine Trail route to be extinguished.

Establish Public Access

Construct Improvements

Parcel 25-6-59.2

Natural surface trail from Lexington Boulevard to Griffith Farm (0.25 miles) Coordinate temp access prior to development.

Parcels 25-3-86, 25-3-20
25-3-227

Natural surface trail from Griffith Farm through BCWSA to Wetherill Estates trail, with crossings of Horseshoe Trail Road and Bartlett Lane (0.3 miles)

Establish Public Access (cont'd)

Parcels 25-3-226
25-3-96

Easement secured for 0.35 miles of trail through Wetherill Estates open space; easement required for remaining 0.48 miles.

Construct Improvements (cont'd)

Natural surface trail from Bartlett Lane through Wetherill Estates open space to the HST (0.83 miles)

- **Conestoga Road/Route 401 from Ludwigs Corner to Evans Park**

Of the 1.34 miles of proposed trail, 0.41 miles will require coordination with Upper Uwchlan Township (UUT).

Establish Public Access

Parcels 25-7-317, 25-7-318

25-7-7

25-7-7.1

25-7-7.2

25-7-7.3

32-2-1.1A (UUT)

32-2-2.1 (UUT)

0.33 trail miles are in Township open space

Construct Improvements

8-foot-wide asphalt multi-use trail in the Route 401 ROW, with connection to existing trail on Vineyard Church property (1.0 mile)

Trail crossings of roads at Lexington Blvd., Pinehurst Dr., and Fellowship Road

Fellowship Trail in progress.

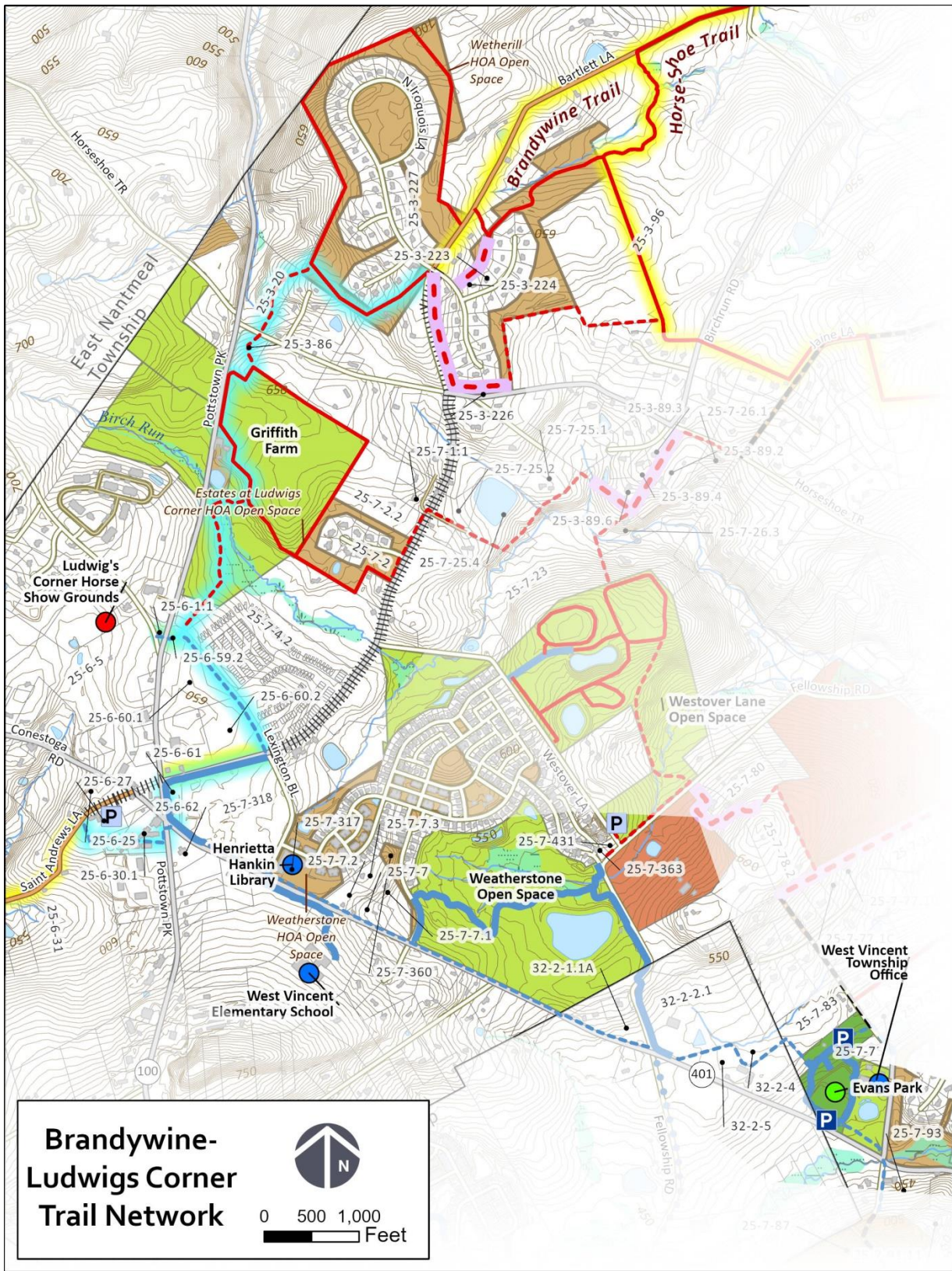
Parcels 32-2-2.1 (UUT)

32-2-5 (UUT)

32-2-4, 25-7-83

75 feet is in Township open space

8-foot-wide multi-use trail from Fellowship Trail to Evans Park (0.34 miles)



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BYERS STATION TO HORSE-SHOE TRAIL NETWORK

This network will create a north-south trail route between the Township’s southern corner and the Horse-Shoe Trail, with connections to Upper Uwchlan’s trail network and to West Vincent open space at Evans Park, Westover Lane, and Weatherstone.

- **Byers Station Trails**

Implement eased natural surface trails within Byers Station development open space in accordance with the Byers Station subdivision plan.

Establish Public Access

Parcels 25-10-6
25-10-393
25-10-398

Easements secured

Parcels 25-10-182
25-10-181
25-10-183
25-10-80
25-10-1.21

Easements secured for 0.61 trail miles in Byers Station and Upper Uwchlan open space; easement required for remaining 310 feet on Lee parcel

Construct Improvements

Natural surface trail loop from southeast end of Byers Station development to Eagle Farms Road (1.15 miles), with crossing of Sunderland Avenue/ Rainer Road and three stream crossings

Natural surface trail from Eagle Farms Road through Byers Station HOA and Upper Uwchlan open space to Fox Hollow Farms HOA, with connections to existing paved Eagle Farms Road and unpaved Fox Hollow Farms trails (0.67 miles)

- **Eagle Farms Road to Evans Park**

The proposed route would include existing trails and the unpaved section of Saint Matthews. This would also include re-routing an existing trail at Fox Hollow Farms to circumvent steep slopes in HOA open space.

Establish Public Access

Parcels 25-10-9
25-10-11

Easements secured for 0.41 trail miles in Byers Station and Bennett Farm; easement required for remaining 0.16 miles in Byers Station

Parcels 25-10-1.21
25-10-1.1
25-7-117
Alt: 25-7-87 (existing easement)

Parcels 25-7-91.11
25-7-93
Coordinate with PennDOT for trail crossing of Route 401

Township open space

Construct Improvements

Natural surface trail from Eagle Farms Road to Fox Hollow Farms (0.57 miles), with crossing of South Chester Springs Road

Remove overly steep existing natural surface trail between Veronica Drive and northeast tract boundary (0.17 miles)

Natural surface trail from Fox Hollow Farms HOA open space to Veronica Drive (0.24 miles), with connections to existing Fox Hollow Farms trail and the unpaved part of St. Matthews Road

6-foot trail along east Saint Matthews Road shoulder to Route 401, paved section (0.13 miles)
Trail crossing at intersection of 401 and Saint Matthews Road

6-foot trail from intersection 401/ Saint Matthews to Evans Park trail, including boardwalk crossing of wetland (0.11 miles)

- **Matthews Meadows to Evans Park**

An existing three-foot-wide asphalt path along Malehorn Road will be widened and extended to reach the park.

Establish Public Access

Township open space

Parcels 25-7-74
25-7-75

Parcels 25-7-274
25-7-72.5

Construct Improvements

6-foot paved trail along Evans Park driveway from existing park trails to Malehorn Road (0.08 miles)

Widen existing 3-foot paved trail along Malehorn Road to 6 feet and extend to opposite of Evans Park driveway (0.05 miles)

Trail crossing of Malehorn Road

Natural surface trail from existing trail east of Springlea Lane to existing trail that connects Malehorn and Mill Roads (0.18 miles)

- **Evans Park to Westover Lane Open Space**

Expanded trails are proposed from Evans Park to Westover Lane Open Space and at Westover Lane Open Space. An existing gravel lot in the open space is currently utilized for community gardens. There is additional space to accommodate a trailhead parking lot.

Additionally, a proposed spur trail is proposed between Malehorn Road and the Horse-Shoe Trail which will utilize an existing easement within the Fox Run Hollow development. There is an existing gravel carriage path that borders the Fox Run Hollow development. The Township should determine whether the carriage path coincides with the trail easement, in which case no new trail need be constructed.

Establish Public Access

Parcels 25-7-78.2
25-7-77.1C
25-7-77.1D
25-7-261
25-7-72.3
25-7-72.4

Easements secured for 0.41 trail miles in Fox Run Hollow development; easement required for remaining 505 feet on Liversidge properties.

Parcel 25-7-78.2
Trail segment from Wendelgass to Fellowship Road (0.23 miles) is on Township open space.

Township open space

Construct Improvements

If existing path is located within existing trail easement, provide wayfinding along trail between Malehorn Road and Mill Road. Otherwise, construct natural surface trail from Malehorn Road to Mill Road (0.51 miles).

Natural surface trail from proposed path trail to Westover Lane Open Space, with crossing of Fellowship Road (0.47 miles)

Natural surface trail from proposed trailhead, along Fellowship Road, and through open space to existing trails (0.58 miles), with trail crossings of Fellowship Road and Birch Run

Trailhead signage at existing gravel lot; expanded gravel lot may be necessary to increase capacity

- **Evans Park to Horse-Shoe Trail**

Establish Public Access

Township roads

Construct Improvements

Wayfinding along Malehorn Road from Evans Park to proposed trail (0.29 miles) and Mill Road from proposed trail to Horse-Shoe Trail (0.27 miles)

- **Westover Lane Open Space to Griffith Farm**

A natural surface trail is proposed from Westover Lane Open Space to Birchrun Circle, where it would then follow Birchrun Road to connect to an existing trail in Estates at Ludwigs Corner HOA open space that leads to Griffith Farm. The proposed trail route must navigate steep slopes, and includes three stream crossings as well as a crossing of Birchrun Road. The Township should confirm whether additional easements exist for proposed trail sections near Birchrun Circle.

Establish Public Access

Parcels 25-3-89.6
25-7-23
25-7-25.4
25-7-25.2
25-7-25.3
25-7-1.1
25-7-2.2
25-7-2

Easement secured for 0.1 miles of trail south of Brighton Way

Coordinate with PennDOT for trail crossing of Birchrun Road at Birchrun Circle

Construct Improvements

Natural surface trail south of Brighton Way to Birchrun Road via Birchrun Circle, with two stream crossings of Birch Run tributaries and a crossing of Birchrun Road (0.52 miles)
Natural surface trail along Birchrun Road from Birchrun Circle to existing trail in Estates at Ludwigs Corner open space, with crossing of Marigold Court (0.15 miles)

- **Westover Lane Open Space to Horse-Shoe Trail**

A natural surface trail is proposed between Westover Lane Open Space and the regional Horse-Shoe Trail (HST). One of the trails will extend from Westover Lane Open Space north to Horseshoe Trail Road, with a trail crossing proposed at Jaine Lane. Trail users could then access the HST via the unpaved road. The proposed trail route must navigate steep slopes, and includes a crossing of Horseshoe Trail Road. An access easement is secured for a section of the trail route near Brighton Way.

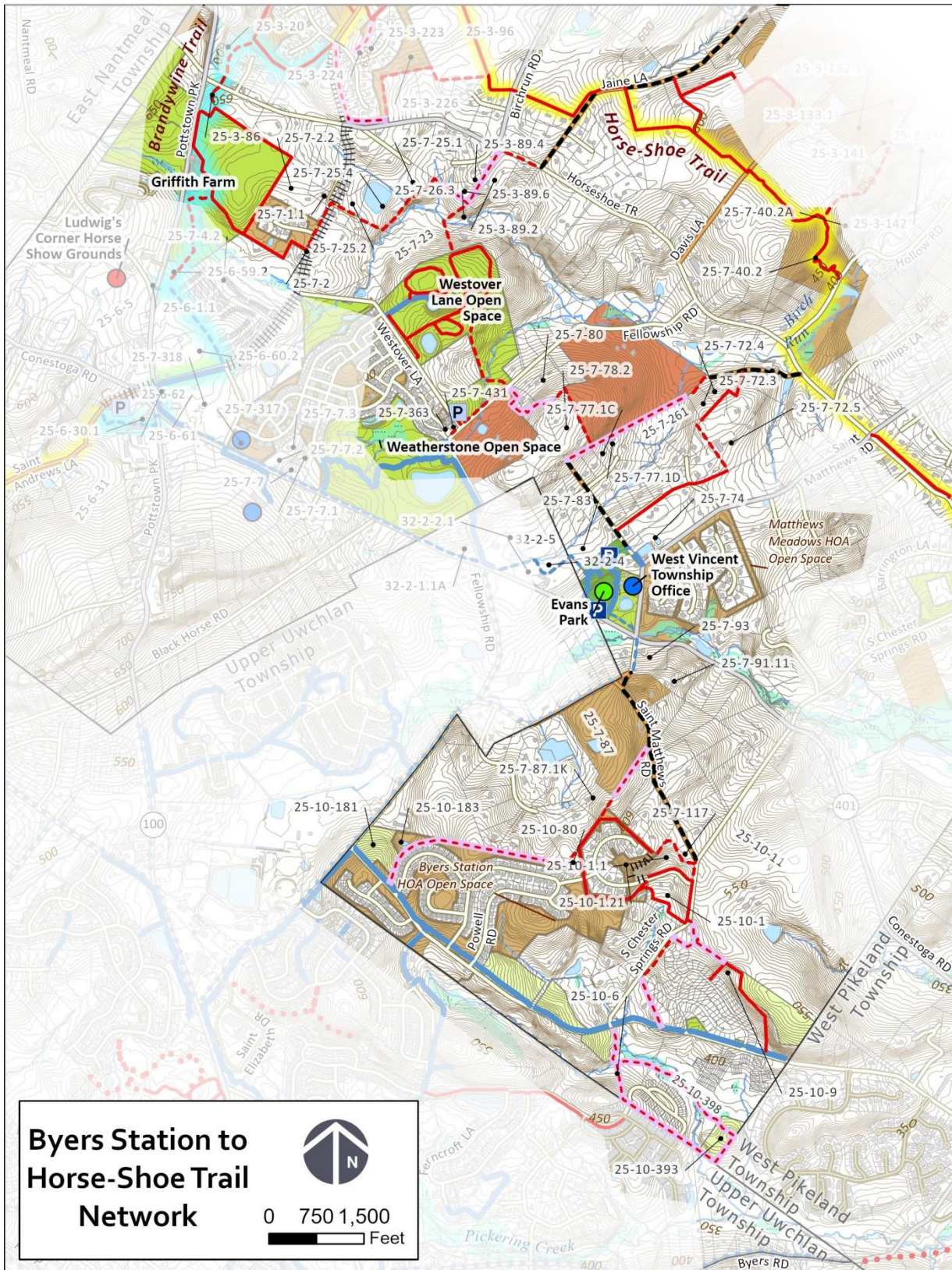
Establish Public Access

Parcels 25-7-23
25-3-89.6
25-3-89.4
25-3-89.3
25-3-89.2
25-7-26.1
25-7-26.3

Easement secured for 0.19 miles of trail east of Brighton Way

Construct Improvements

Natural surface trail from Westover Lane Open Space to Horseshoe Trail Road, with crossing of Birch Run (0.38 miles)
Natural surface trail along Horseshoe Trail Road to Jaine Lane, with crossing Horseshoe Trail Road (0.13 miles)



August 15, 2022

IMPLEMENTATION

TRAIL PRIORITIZATION

Proposed trail networks are listed by relative priority below. Specific order of implementation may change as opportunities and obstacles are presented. Clearing and constructing trails on lands currently owned or eased by the Township is an obvious first step.

1. **French Creek Trail:** This network would complete critical sections of a regionally important trail and provide multi-modal access to Township open spaces.
2. **Birchrunville-Bryn Coed Trail Network:** This network creates a comprehensive trail system in the center of the Township, with opportunities to connect to the Brandywine-Ludwigs Corner and Byers Station-Horse-Shoe Trail networks.
3. **Brandywine-Ludwigs Corner Trail Network:** This trail network would create an off-road route for the majority of the Brandywine Trail in the Township, and connect a Circuit Trail with the Horse-Shoe Trail. It would also create trail access between Ludwigs Corner and multiple Township open space destinations.
4. **Byers Station to Horse-Shoe Trail Network:** This network would connect residents in the southern portion of West Vincent with Township open space, Evans Park, and the Horse-Shoe Trail.

RESPONSIBLE AGENTS

The following entities will be responsible for trail implementation:

- **Board of Supervisors:** Authorize steps in the implementation process, establish or reset priorities, and facilitate/ fund easements and improvements.
- **Township Administration:** Manage steps in the implementation process, including pursue/administer grant funding, coordinate construction and maintenance activities by Township staff and volunteers, and communicate with landowners and trail easement holders.
- **Township Public Works:** Construct and maintain Township-owned and eased trails, as well as improvements on Township-owned open space.
- **Township Parks & Recreation Commission:** Help establish or reset trail priorities, advise on trail construction and maintenance, organize volunteers for trail construction and maintenance activities.
- **Township Environmental Advisory Council:** Advise on vegetative management practices and organize volunteers for trail maintenance activities in collaboration with the Parks & Recreation Commission.
- **Township Planning Commission:** Advise on trails to be implemented as part of land developments.
- **Easement Holders:** Include French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, Natural Lands, North American Land Trust, Wilmington Trail Club, and the Horse-Shoe Trail Club. Responsible for implementing and maintaining trails within their easements.
- **Homeowners Associations (HOAs):** Implement and maintain trails on HOA open space.
- **Township Consultants:** Advise on trail priorities, construction, monitoring, and maintenance; identify funding sources, assist with grant applications.
- **Volunteers:** Include trail clubs. Help Township staff and easement holders to monitor and maintain trails.

TRAIL DESIGN STANDARDS

New trails and improvements/modifications of existing trails shall be designed in accordance with the guidelines of *Pennsylvania Trail Design & Development Principles* published by Pennsylvania DCNR; the U.S. Forest Service's *Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Trails*; and the U.S. Forest Service's *Wetland Trail Design and Construction* (most recent edition).

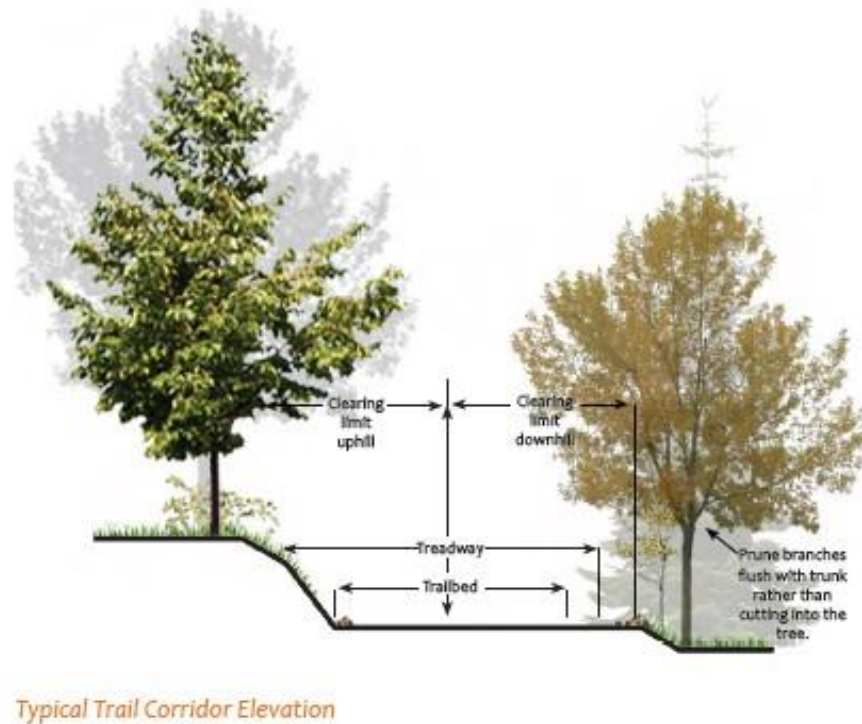


FIGURE 1 - TYPICAL TRAIL ELEVATION (DCNR PENNSYLVANIA TRAIL DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES)

All trails should be designed with the following:

- Align trails with the grade ("contour trails") wherever feasible.
- Ensure minimum 8 feet of overhead clearance from tree limbs or similar obstacles. Trails that will be utilized by bicyclists and equestrians in addition to pedestrians shall have minimum 10-foot vertical clearance.
- Trails along roads should have a 5-foot-wide lawn buffer strip between the trail and the road.

NATURAL SURFACE TRAILS

Trails shall be minimum 5 feet wide firm and stable footing. Obstacles such as roots and loose rocks should be avoided or removed as possible. If native soils do not facilitate adequate footing, the trail surface shall be stabilized, elevated crossings installed, or the trail re-routed. Trails in steeply sloped areas shall be designed with switchbacks, climbing turns, or similar grade changes.



TRAILHEAD KIOSK EXAMPLES: BRYN COED PRESERVE (LEFT); FRENCH CREEK TRAIL IN EAST PIKELAND TOWNSHIP (MIDDLE, RIGHT)

PAVED TRAILS (PEDESTRIAN)

Paved trails for pedestrian use shall be 6 feet wide. Asphalt is recommended as it requires less maintenance than compacted granular surfaces.

PAVED TRAILS (MULTI-USE)

Paved multi-use trails shall be 10 feet wide and paved in asphalt. Where available width is limited, they shall be at least 8 feet wide.

TRAILHEAD PARKING AREAS

Information kiosks and trash receptacles should be provided at all trailhead parking areas. Proposed parking shall be asphalt, gravel, or stabilized turf. Parking for different users, including ADA and horse trailers, should be clearly marked with signage. Trails shall be restricted from motor vehicle use with signs and bollards, gates, and/or fencing. Kiosks should be provided for wayfinding, rules posting, and interpretive signage.

TRAIL CROSSINGS

Streams

The U.S. Forest Service provides standards for the following trail stream crossings (figures 2 and 3):

- Fords
- Culverts
- Bridges

Fords are shallow stream crossings constructed of stone. They shall be maximum 24 inches deep, constructed of gravel and rock to provide solid, level footing across the stream. Fords shall be located in wide, shallow, straight stream

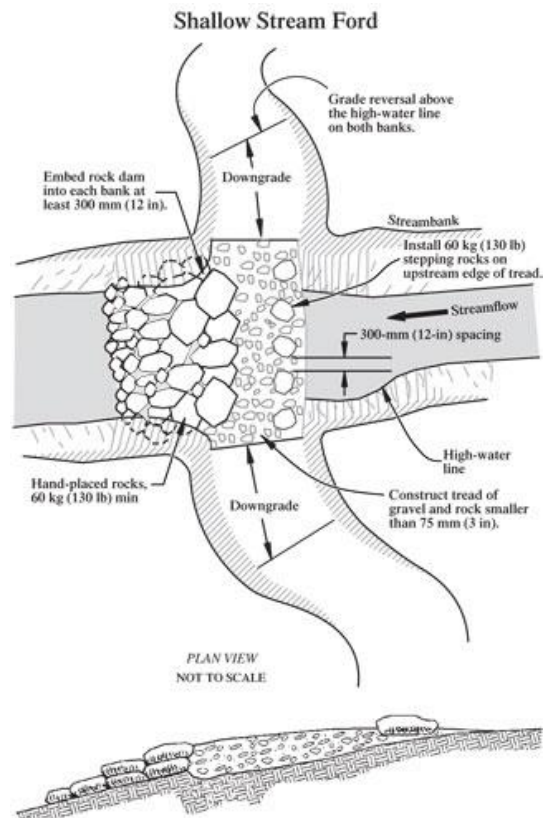


FIGURE 2 - EXAMPLE OF USFS CONSTRUCTION DETAIL FOR STREAM FORDS

sections to prevent scouring. Trail approaches to a ford should climb a short distance above the typical high water line to prevent water channeling. Stepping stones may be placed upstream of the ford to slow water flow and provide users with a dry crossing option. Fords shall be designed so as to not obstruct aquatic wildlife.

Culverts are metal, plastic, concrete, wood, or stone structures that channel water under the trail. They are recommended for small streams or stormwater runoff. Culverts shall be sized to handle the maximum anticipated storm runoff and to facilitate debris clearing. The USFS recommends that culverts be at least 9 inches in diameter to allow cleaning with shovels. At least six inches of fill shall be placed over the culvert.

Bridges shall be constructed with curbs and handrails. Pedestrian trails that cross small streams may be designed with timber bridges. The U.S. Forest Service provides details for different styles of crossings, including puncheon, step-and-run, and culverts¹. Pre-fabricated steel bridges may be necessary for stream crossings, such as at Birch Run at Hollow Road. These bridges can be designed to carry pedestrian, cyclist, and equestrian users.

The USFS recommends that stream crossings be chosen for the “least long-term impact while still meeting management objectives”. Thus, shallow stream fords or culverts may be preferable in terms of cost, construction impacts, and maintenance needs to bridges in some areas.

Boardwalks

Sections of trail through wetlands or other sensitive environments shall have raised boardwalks with decking that has an appropriate non-slip surface. The U.S. Forest Service recommends that boardwalks be 6 feet wide and have a minimum ground clearance of 8 inches.

Roads

Trail road crossings shall include traffic signs and crosswalk pavement markings to alert motorists. Where paved trails cross roads, curb ramps with detectable warning strips shall be provided.

Road crossings for shared use trails should also include traffic barriers to prevent motor vehicle access. Bollards should be designed to permit emergency vehicle access.

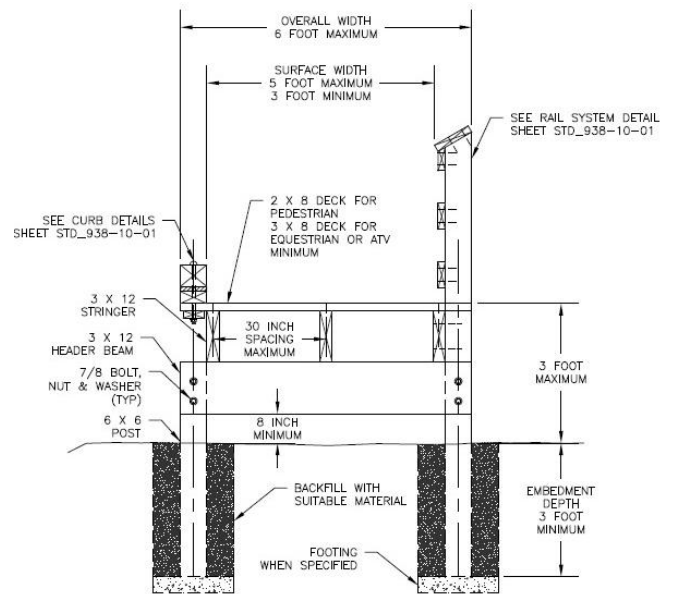
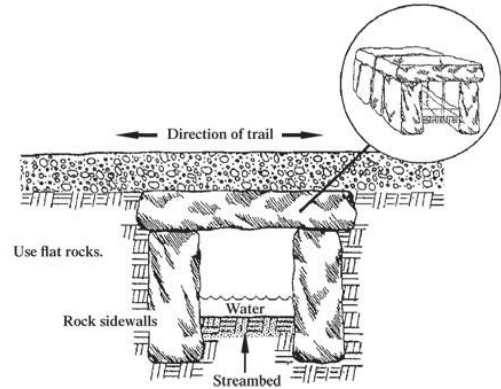


FIGURE 3 - EXAMPLE OF USFS CONSTRUCTION DETAILS FOR ROCK CULVERTS (TOP) AND BOARDWALKS (ABOVE)

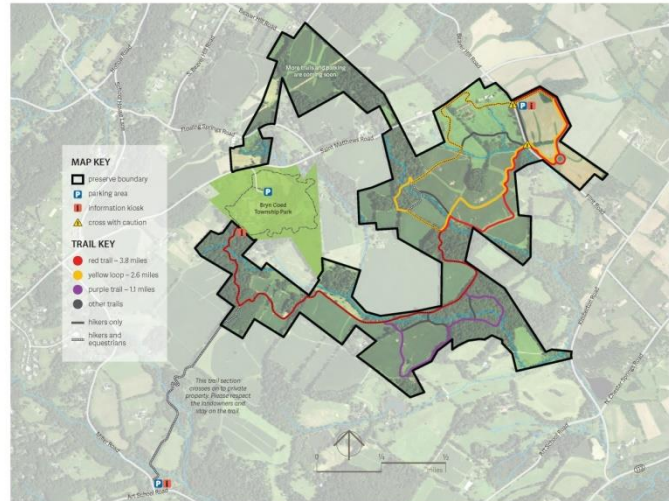
¹ <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/trails/trail-management-tools/trailplans>

TRAIL SIGNAGE

WAYFINDING

TRAIL MAPS

The Township’s Existing Trails Map, included in this plan, should be updated as necessary and posted on the Township website and at trailheads. The Township may also consider additional maps that illustrate trails in public open spaces, such as at Opalanie Park, in greater detail. These maps could include information on trail length, stream/wetland crossings, scenic vistas, cultural landmarks, and more.



NATURAL LANDS’ TRAIL MAP FOR BRYN COED PRESERVE. THE TRAIL COLORS ON THE MAP COINCIDE WITH TRAIL MARKINGS IN THE PRESERVE.

TRAIL MARKERS

Regional Trails

Wayfinding for regional trails is implemented by the following entities. The Township should coordinate with these organizations to ensure that trail markers are maintained.

- **Horse-Shoe Trail** – The Horse-Shoe Trail Club maintains wayfinding along the HST. Yellow blazes mark the trail route, and posts with the trail name are installed at road crossings.

- **Brandywine Trail** – The Wilmington Trail Club marks the Brandywine Trail route with white blazes. The Township should coordinate with the trail club to mark the proposed trail route from Saint Andrews Lane to the Horse-Shoe Trail, and to remove markings from the existing alignment to be discontinued.



- **French Creek Trail** – The French Creek Trail does not have a unified wayfinding system. As a regional trail, it should be marked with distinctive and consistent wayfinding along its entire route. The French &

EXISTING TRAIL MARKERS: ORANGE BLAZES AT OPALANIE PARK (LEFT); WOODEN POST WITH CARVED “T” AT FOX HOLLOW FARMS (RIGHT)

Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust (FPCCT) has worked to establish this trail corridor across a number of municipalities, and so should determine the design of trail markers. The Township should work with FPCCT to implement designated wayfinding along the trail route within West Vincent.

Local Trails

Most local trails in the Township are unmarked, and trails that are marked have differing wayfinding signage. The following are examples of existing trail signage in the Township:

- Opalanie Park trails are marked with orange blazes and with directional arrow markers
- Fox Hollow Farms HOA trails are marked with wooden posts that are carved with a “T”
- Bryn Coed Preserve trails are marked with colored blazes and directional arrow markers that signify different trail routes

The Township should devise consistent wayfinding to distinguish its public trail network and simplify maintenance. Trails are typically marked with blazes, affixed markers, or combinations of the two.

Blazes

Blazes are vertical, 2”x6” painted markings on trees, rocks, or posts. They are used and recognized nationally as trail markers, and are cost effective to implement and to maintain. ***For these reasons, it is recommended that the Township utilize them to mark the public trail system.***

The Township should choose blaze colors that are distinct from those already in use for regional trails and by Natural Lands. The following blaze colors are already utilized for trails in the Township: yellow (HST), white (Brandywine), and orange and red (Natural Lands). Purple blazes are utilized by landowners as an alternative to “No Trespassing” signs, and so are not recommended to mark trails. A light blue blaze (Fig. 4) is distinct from existing trail markings in the Township and would be easily seen in the landscape year-round.



FIGURE 4 - EXAMPLE OF A TRAIL MARKED WITH LIGHT BLUE BLAZES (SOURCE: TOURISMOHIO)

Blazes should be painted at eye height, in areas that will not be obscured by brush, and facing both directions along the trail. Where trails pass through areas without trees to mark, metal, wood, or fiberglass posts should be installed and marked with trail blazes. Pennsylvania DCNR recommends that blazes be re-painted every two years.

Single blazes mark the trail route. Double blazes oriented vertically one to two inches apart should be used to alert trail users to potential hazards, such as road or stream crossings (Fig. 5). Intersections of trails should be marked with two vertical blazes denoting the main trail route, with the intersecting trail’s color is placed to the left and/or right, depending on which side of the trail the intersection occurs.

DCNR recommends that blazing frequency be consistent with changes in trail terrain, forest cover, or trail clarity. Where the trail route is conspicuous, blazes should be spaced 800-1,000 feet apart, or about one blaze for every five minutes of hiking time. More frequent blazing is necessary where vegetation,

topography, or crossings make the trail harder to follow. Blazes should be painted immediately on either side of trail junctions and crossings, and again 50 to 100 feet beyond².

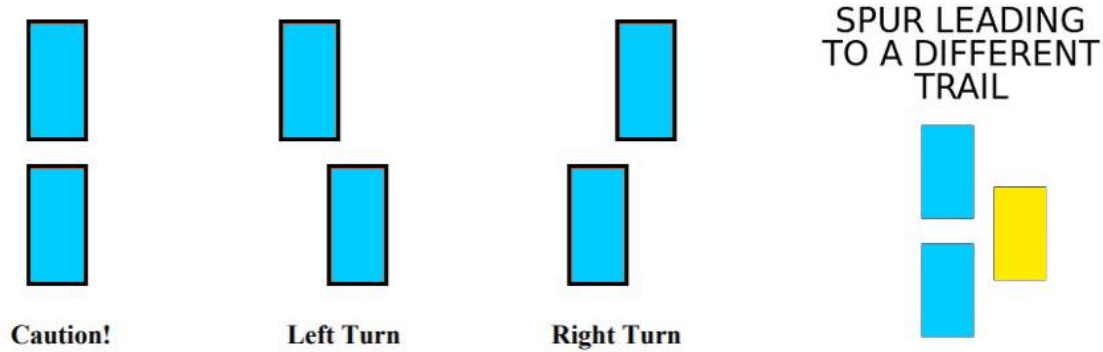


FIGURE 5, LEFT – DOUBLE BLAZE PATTERNS (SOURCE: PA DCNR). RIGHT – TRIPLE BLAZE PATTERN DENOTING A TRAIL JUNCTION (SOURCE: AMERICAN FORESTS).

Markers

Markers are small (around 2 or 3 inches) plastic or metal signs that are attached with glue or screws to trees, posts, or other surfaces to delineate the trail route. Trail markers with directional arrows are used in Bryn Coed Preserve and at Opalanie Park (photo at right). Compared with painted blazes, markers are expensive (\$2-\$3 each, plus glue/screws), subject to theft, and require replacement when damaged.



Signs

Trail signs can be used in tandem with blazes to mark the start and end points of trails. Trailhead signage should include trail rules and funding acknowledgement if grant funding was used. The Township should select signage that is durable, cost effective, and easy to install. Trail signs can be made of aluminum, plastic, or composite materials. Generic trail signs are available, as are custom printed signs. They should be mounted on metal or timber posts instead of trees to avoid damage. Primary concerns with these signs include damage, graffiti, and theft by vandals. Graffiti can be cleaned, but damage or theft would require replacement signs and/or posts.

Figure 6, following, shows a conceptual trailhead sign that would be used in conjunction with blaze markers for public trails in the Township. The sign indicates permitted trail uses, rules, and Township trail blaze color.

² (PA DCNR Guidelines for Marking Recreational Trails, 2008)



FIGURE 6 – CONCEPTUAL TRAILHEAD SIGNAGE FOR WEST VINCENT TOWNSHIP PUBLIC TRAIL

TRAILHEAD SIGNAGE

Trailhead parking areas offer opportunities for the Township to provide wayfinding, rules, and educational signage. These can be posted at kiosks or message boards near trail entrances. Examples of trailhead signage include:

- Trail maps
- Trail rules
- Trail length
- Funding acknowledgement
- Volunteer acknowledgement
- Interpretive signs
- Safety notices (ticks, hunting regulations, trail conditions, etc.)
- Township bulletins

REGULATORY SIGNS

Trail Rules

Rules signage should include the following:

- Hours of access
- Permitted access (walking, biking, riding, cross-country skiing, etc.)
- Prohibition on motorized traffic
- No trespassing on adjacent private lands
- No littering
- Dog leash laws
- “Share the Trail” guidelines to avoid conflicts on shared use trails
- “Leave No Trace” guidelines to encourage protection of adjacent natural areas

Traffic Signs

Traffic signs should be installed at road crossings to alert motorists to potential trail traffic. The Township should coordinate with PennDOT to install signage where trails cross the following state roads:

- Conestoga Road (S.R. 401)
- Pottstown Pike (S.R. 100)
- Saint Matthews Road
- Birch Run Road
- Hollow Road
- Pughtown Road
- Horseshoe Trail Road
- Flowing Springs Road

Trespass Controls

In addition to stating the prohibition of trespassing on the trailhead rules signs, the following measures could be undertaken:

Where public trails are crossed by private trails, landowners could post “No Trespassing” signs or purple blazes adjacent to public trails.

Fencing and/or vegetative screening could be provided where necessary.



EXAMPLES OF “SHARE THE TRAIL” AND “LEAVE NO TRACE” TRAILHEAD SIGNAGE (WEB SOURCE IMAGES)



LEFT TO RIGHT: TRAFFIC SIGN AT TRAIL CROSSING OF FLINT ROAD IN BRYN COED PRESERVE; RULES SIGNAGE AT COOKS GLEN PRESERVE; SIGN ALERTING TRAIL USERS AGAINST TRESPASSING AT OPALANIE PARK

OTHER SIGNAGE

Interpretive Signs

Interpretive signage could be installed near historic/cultural landmarks and special habitats to educate trail users of the Township’s rich environmental and cultural heritage. Locations for interpretive signage include:

- Exceptional Value streams, wetlands, and outstanding environmental features
- Historic ruins such as the stone Vault along Bertolet School Road
- Historic farms and homesteads
- Areas associated with Native American heritage
- Underground Railroad sites
- Township Park signs with local history, significance

Acknowledgement Signage

The Township should consider signage that recognizes significant trail funding sources. Certain grant programs, such as DCNR’s Community Conservation Partnerships Program, require signage acknowledging the grantor’s contribution. Additionally, if the Township implements an “Adopt a Trail” program, signage that advertises volunteer efforts could be considered.



SIGNAGE RECOGNIZING BUSINESSES THAT HELP MAINTAIN THE SCHUYLKILL RIVER TRAIL (SOURCE: SCHUYLKILL RIVER GREENWAYS NHA)

TRAIL MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE PLAN

MONITORING

At minimum, trails should be inspected twice yearly, to evaluate conditions and assess maintenance issues, including the following:

- Erosion or mucky conditions on natural surface trails
- Pavement damage to paved trails, and flooding
- Trail obstructions
- Trail marker/ signage condition
- Integrity of boardwalks and trail bridges
- Dumping, trash, other apparent issues
- Assessment of condition of trail amenities, additional needs

To facilitate maintenance, trail inspections should be documented in reports to the Township including photographs and maps of areas of concern. Paved trails, bridges, and trails on Township property should be inspected by Township staff. The Township Parks & Recreation Commission could monitor natural trails on private lands, or the work could be coordinated with volunteers. Inspection reports that document erosion, flooding, or structural integrity concerns should be provided to the Township Engineer to propose solutions.

MAINTENANCE

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

Grass trails need to be maintained at lawn height throughout the growing season. Brush, weeds, and overhanging tree limbs should be cut yearly at least to prevent crowding of the trail. Obstructions like tree limbs should be cut and removed from trails as needed.

WAYFINDING MAINTENANCE

Blaze markings should be re-painted every two years. Damaged or missing signage should be repaired or replaced, and graffiti should be cleaned from signs as needed.

TRAIL SURFACE REPAIR

Asphalt trails should be repaved when the surface becomes unacceptably degraded. Pavement that has been damaged from frost heaving, tree roots, or stormflow should be repaired as needed. Eroded natural surface trails should be repaired with water bars or flow diverters; severely eroded trails should be re-routed. Natural surface trails that are seasonally wet should be re-routed to dry ground, or retrofitted with causeways, puncheons, or boardwalks³.

LITTER REMOVAL

Trails should be kept clean of litter and dumping.

³ See the U.S. Forest Service's *Wetland Trail Design and Construction (2007 edition)* for details on these features of trails in wetland areas.

MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY

The Township Public Works Department should maintain trails in Township open space and in road rights-of-way. Public trails on private and HOA lands may be the responsibility of the owner/HOA, or could be maintained by Township personnel or volunteers depending on circumstance.

To offset some of the Township's maintenance costs, the following programs could be considered:

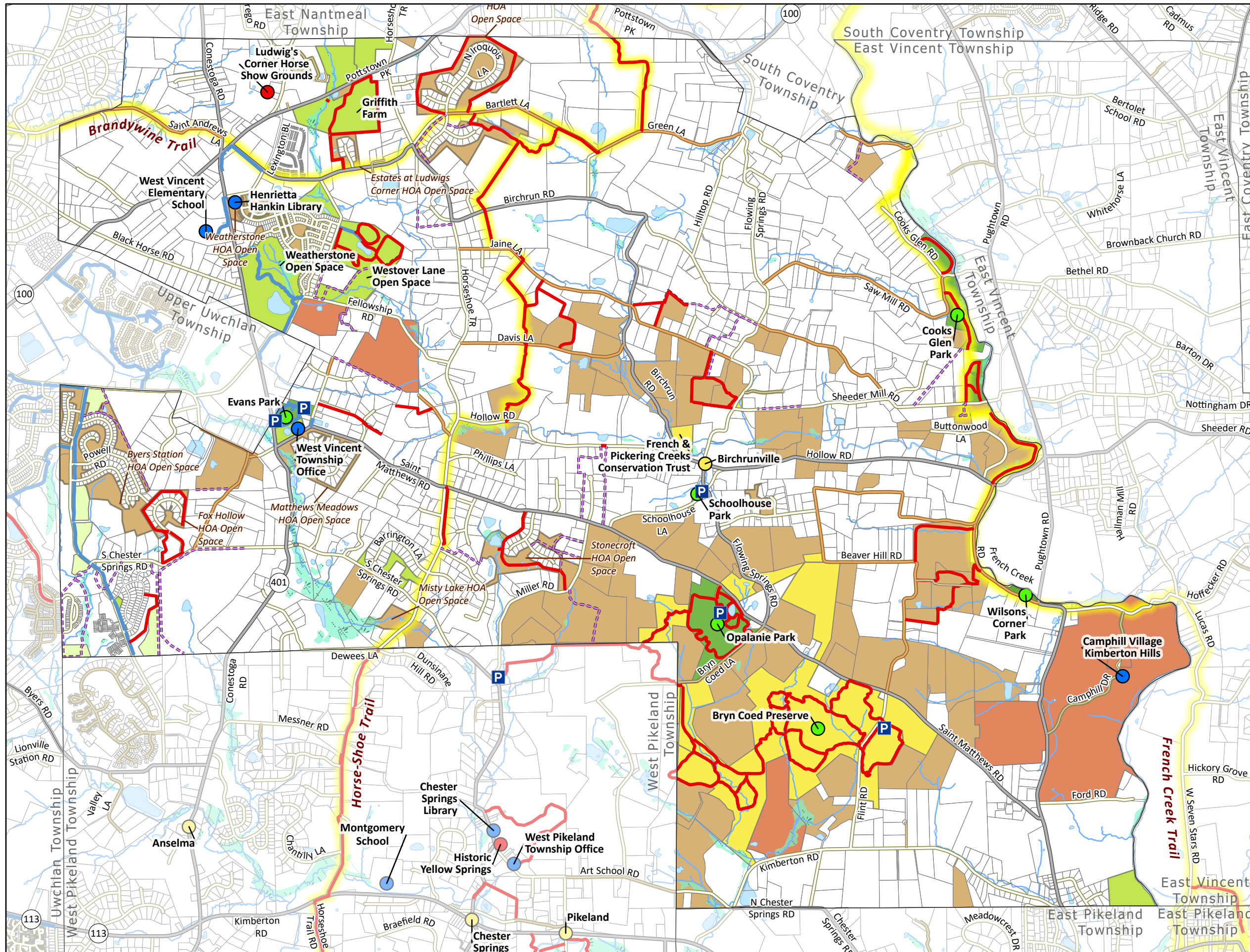
- Community trail work days – The Parks & Recreation Commission could organize annual events for volunteers to clean litter, repair trail markings, and clear brush
- “Adopt a Trail” Program – Trail clubs and local, state, and federal agencies recruit volunteers to “adopt” trails or sections of trails. These volunteers may be individuals, businesses, or community groups, and commit to regular trail monitoring and maintenance. Long-term volunteers may be recognized with trail signage that highlights their contribution. Trail adoption programs usually include the following components:
 - Volunteer application
 - Site selection process
 - Work coordination
 - Training and/or equipment lending
 - Signed agreement with work commitment and waiver of liability
 - Reporting requirement

APPENDIX A: TRAIL RESOURCES – FUNDING AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

The following organizations and agencies offer resources for implementation and maintenance of public trails:

- **AARP Community Challenge Grant (aarp.org/CommunityChallenge)** – Small grants program for a variety of community improvements including open space, walkability, and recreation.
- **Chester County**
 - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
 - Preservation Partnership Program – Grants for land preservation and/or park and trail improvements
- **Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)**
 - Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI) (dvrpc.org/TCDI) – Grant funding for smart growth initiatives including expansion and enhancement of multi-modal transportation options
 - Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program (dvrpc.org/cmaq) – Reimbursement program for projects that demonstrably reduce emissions and traffic congestion, including multi-modal transportation projects.
 - Regional Trails Program (dvrpc.org/trails/regionaltrailsprogram) – funding for trail planning, design, and construction projects that implement the Circuit
- **French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust (FPCCT):** French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust has worked for decades to conserve land and facilitate trail access to open space in the Township, especially the regional French Creek Trail.
- **Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful (keepbeautiful.org)** - Provides small grants for recreation improvement initiatives as well as coordinates free supplies for annual clean-up events
- **Landowners/Developers:** The Township should coordinate with landowners and developers to obtain easements and to construct public trails.
- **National Park Service:** Technical assistance on trail installation
- **Natural Lands**
 - Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape Mini-Grant Program (schuylkillhighlands.org) - Small grants program for conservation, education, and outdoor recreation projects within the Schuylkill Highlands
 - PECO Green Region Open Space Program (natlands.org) – Grant funding for open space preservation and improvement projects in southeast Pennsylvania.
- **PA Dept. of Community and Economic Development (DCED) (dced.pa.gov)**
 - Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP) – Grant funding for planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation and repair of greenways, recreational trails, open space, parks and beautification projects.
 - Multimodal Transportation Fund – Grant funding for development, rehabilitation, and enhancement of transportation assets, including pedestrian and bicycle safety and access
- **PA Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) (dcnr.pa.gov)**
 - Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) – Grant funding for park, trail, conservation, and outdoor recreation planning, acquisition, and development projects.

- Trail design standards publication: *Pennsylvania Trail Design & Development Principles – Guidelines for Sustainable, Non-motorized Trails* (2013). <https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Communities/TrailDevelopment/Pages/default.aspx>
- Trail marking standards publication: *Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Guidelines for Marking Recreational Trails* (July 2008). https://www.allentownhikingclub.org/user/1233/downloads/u071229_1840_dcnr_marking_trails.pdf
- **WeConservePA (formerly PA Land Trust Association)**
 - Conservation Easement Assistance Program (conservationtools.org/ceap) – Reimbursement grant program for conservation/ recreation access easements
- **Regional Trail Clubs**
 - Horse-Shoe Trail Club maintains the Horse-Shoe Trail
 - Wilmington Trail Club maintains the Brandywine Trail
- **PennDOT (penndot.gov/ProjectAndPrograms)**
 - Multimodal Transportation Fund – Grant funding for projects including bicycle and pedestrian improvements; separate from the DCED Multimodal Transportation Fund
 - Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) – Funding for projects that expand automobile-alternative transportation, including trails and safe routes to school projects.
- **U.S. Forest Service (USFS):**
 - Standard trail construction drawings: “Standard Trail Plans and Specifications”, <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/trails/trail-management-tools/trailplans>
 - Wetland trail design publication: *Wetland Trail Design and Construction* (2007 Edition), <https://www.fs.fed.us/t-d/pubs/htmlpubs/htm07232804/toc.htm>



LEGEND

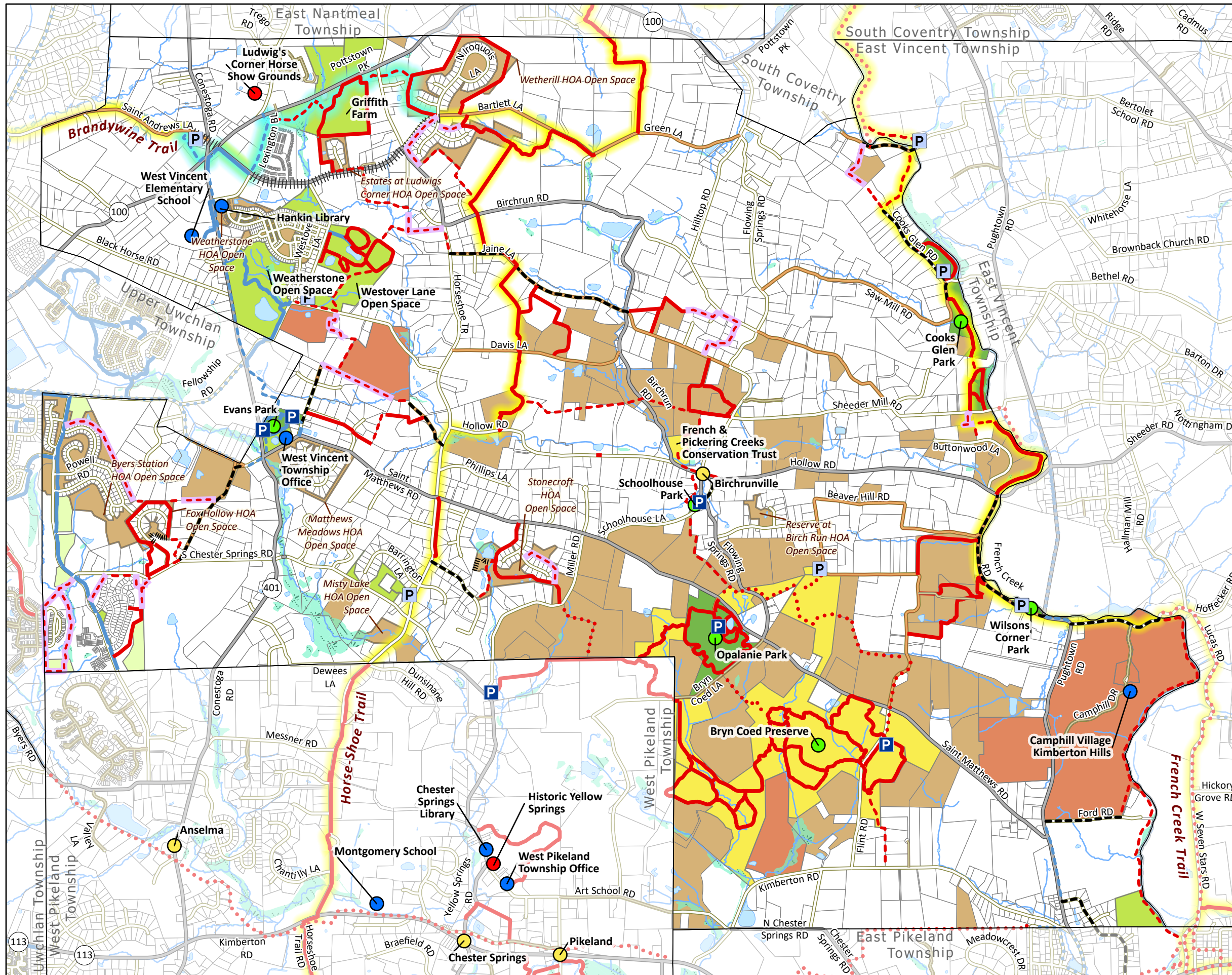
- Wetlands
- State Road
- Paved Township Road
- Gravel Township Road
- Private Road
- Existing Public Trails**
 - Natural Surface
 - Paved Surface
 - Regional Trail Route
 - Easement/ No Existing Trail
- Trailhead Parking
- Publicly Owned Open Space**
 - Township Park
 - Township Open Space
 - Lands of Upper Uwchlan Township
- Privately Owned Open Space**
 - Nature Preserve
 - Conservation Easement
 - Agricultural Easement
- Destinations**
 - Event/ Cultural Destination
 - Institution
 - Village
 - Park/Preserve

Existing Public Trails Township Trail Plan

August 15, 2022

Theurkauf
DESIGN & PLANNING
1350 Elbow Lane
Chester Springs,
Pennsylvania

Sources: Chester County GIS Department, Chester County Planning Commission, Consultant analysis, French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, LTL Consultants, Ltd., Natural Lands



LEGEND

- Wetlands
- State Road
- Paved Township Road
- Gravel Township Road
- Private Road
- Existing Public Trails**
 - Natural Surface
 - Paved Surface
 - Regional Trail Route
 - Existing Trail to be Re-routed
- Proposed Public Trails**
 - Natural Surface
 - Natural Surface - within Easement
 - Paved Surface
 - On Road
 - Brandywine Trail - Proposed Alignment
- Public Trails Proposed by Others**
 - Natural Surface
 - Paved Surface
- Trailhead Parking**
 - Existing
 - Proposed
- Destinations**
 - Institution
 - Event/ Cultural Destination
 - Village
 - Park/Preserve
- Publicly Owned Open Space**
 - Township Park
 - Township Open Space
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Proposed Trail System
Township Trail Plan

August 15, 2022

Theurkauf
 DESIGN & PLANNING
 1350 Elbow Lane
 Chester Springs, Pennsylvania

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