

Chapter 5: Recreational Resources Plan

INTRODUCTION



Recreational resources are plentiful in the Region and they provide active and passive recreational opportunities for the residents of and visitors to the Region. Active pursuits such as boating, cycling, horseback riding, and team sports are accommodated within the Region as well as more casual or passive pursuits such as bird watching, amateur astronomy, and hiking. Further, facilities are in existence and in the planning stages that will provide connection to these resources while

providing an additional opportunity for recreation. The Northern Federation municipalities have begun to take the initiative to provide residents and visitors to the Region with information regarding recreational resources including the provision of linkage to and between these facilities through municipal and regional trail facilities.

This chapter focuses on regional and municipal efforts to expand and/or create parkland and recreational facilities, the connection of recreational facilities, and the coordination of community events and organizations.

Chapter 10: Recreational Resources Inventory provides an inventory of parkland and recreational resources in the Region as well as the legal basis that enables municipalities and regional groups to manage recreational resources for use by residents of the municipality.

ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTER

The Recommendations included in this chapter are organized as follows:

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GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The following goal for recreation guides planning in the Region:

RECREATIONAL RESOURCES GOAL: Maintain and improve the quality of life and environment for residents of the Region through the provision of parkland and recreational facilities

The focus of this Recreational Resources Plan is how to best achieve this goal and implement its related objectives. To help the reader understand how the recommendations in this Plan relate to the goal and objectives, each recommendation is followed by one or more of the following objectives (the assigned number/letter) that corresponds to the recommendation.

OBJECTIVES

- 5-A. Inventory and evaluate existing recreational programs, lands, and facilities available to residents of the Region ranging from organized sports to the arts.
- 5-B. Establish coordination and integration of public and private recreational efforts to take maximum advantage of all land, facility, programming, and funding sources.
- 5-C. Promote opportunities for the use and enjoyment of natural resources on public lands by all user groups (ADA).
- 5-D. Encourage the creation and connection of trails and pathways in order to provide a regional pedestrian circulation system.

RECREATIONAL RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS

PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Based on the inventory of recreational resources (Chapter 10), it is apparent that the vast majority of residents of the Region have access to regional and local parkland and recreational facilities. However, there are a few areas in the Region where deficiencies were identified and those are addressed in the assessment of needs, below.

PARKLAND AND RECREATION FACILITIES ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS

In order to ascertain the status and coverage of parkland and recreational facilities in the Region, this Chapter utilizes the Chester County recreational park standards set forth in Chester County's *Linking Landscapes*. Please see Chapter 10: Recreation Resources Inventory for a complete explanation of these standards. Although it was not possible to illustrate the service radii for Regional (30 miles) or Sub-Regional facilities (7.5 miles) as a result of map size and scale limitations, the service radii for Community and Neighborhood Parks are illustrated on Map 5-1. The discussion and associated recommendations that follow focus on the need for new or expansion of existing facilities in each of the park categories.

**Figure 5-1
Recreational Park Standards**

Type of Recreational Park	Service Radius	Minimum Acreage Standard (per 1000 people)	Maximum Population	Size of Recreational Park
Regional Park	30 miles (1 hour)	20 acres	None	1000 acres +
Sub-Regional Park	7.5 miles (1/4 hour)	8.5 acres	100,000	400 to 999 acres
Community Park	2.5 miles (Equal to a 5 minute drive or a 30 minute walk)	3.0 to 6.0 acres	25,000	20 to 399 acres
Neighborhood Park	.5 miles (Equal to a 15 minute walk)	2.5 to 3.5 acres	5,000	.5 to 19.9 acres
Mini Park	.25 miles (equal to an 8 minute walk)	.25 acres	2,000	.01 to .49 acres

REGIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

There are three regional parks and recreational facilities within the boundaries of the Region and they include French Creek State Park, (in which Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site is located), Marsh Creek State Park, and the State Gamelands. For a complete description and listing of recreational opportunities in the Regional Facilities listed above, please see Chapter 10: Recreational Resources Inventory.

SUB-REGIONAL PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

There are three Sub-Regional Parks and Recreational Facilities located in the Region and they include: The Crow’s Nest Preserve, Springton Manor Farm, and Warwick County Park. For a complete description and listing of recreational opportunities in the Sub-Regional Facilities listed above, please see Chapter 10: Recreational Resources Inventory.

Assessment of Regional and Sub-Regional Facilities: Based on the service radii, for which criteria is set forth in Figure 5-1, the Region is adequately served by Regional and Sub-Regional Parks and Recreational Facilities.

Recommendation for Regional and Sub-Regional Facilities

ACTION 5-1 Continue to provide information to the representatives and residents of the Northern Federation communities pertaining to any changes in programming, facilities, or plans for expansion that may impact municipalities in the Region. This information sharing should be initiated by municipal officials and/or representatives of municipalities in the Region in which Regional and Sub-Regional Facilities are located or immediately adjacent and should take place at regularly scheduled meetings of the Northern Federation as well as documented in the Federation Update Article that is discussed in Chapter 1: Coordination and Implementation Plan.

See ACTION 1-3.

Objective(s) addressed by Actions 5-1: 5-A

COMMUNITY PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

There are nine community facilities within the boundaries of the Region and they include: Connie Batdorf Park, Kenilworth Park, Kimberton Community Park, Park on the Ridge, Towpath Park, Warwick Township Park, Welkinweir, The Wilderness Area, and Woody's Woods. See Map 5-1. For a complete description and listing of recreational opportunities in the facilities listed above, please see Chapter 10: Recreational Resources Inventory.

Assessment of Community Facilities

Based on the 2.5-mile service radii shown on Map 5-1 (green circles), the southern half of both East Nantmeal and West Vincent and the western edge of Wallace townships show a deficiency in community facilities.

- Wallace Township - Residents do have access to three neighborhood facilities and the recreation opportunities at Marsh Creek State Park. Further, Wallace Township is currently in the planning stages of a 60-acre parcel adjacent to their township building. The Wallace Community Park (aka Alice Park), as it is currently named, will provide recreational opportunities and accommodate a service radii that will cover the remaining areas of Wallace that were identified as deficient and a significant part of the southern portion of East Nantmeal.
- East Nantmeal Township – Considering Wallace Community Park in Wallace Township (see above) and municipal plans for a six-acre park (neighborhood facility) this leaves only a small portion of East Nantmeal unserved based on the criteria set forth in Figure 5-1.

Community Facilities outside of the Region – There are several community facilities that provide recreational opportunities to municipalities in the Region. For example Pine Creek Park is located just to the south of Route 113 in West Pikeland Township and West Vincent is located within its service radii.

Public Institutional Facilities - There are ten public institutional recreational facilities located in the Region and they provide recreational opportunities that include courts, fields, and playgrounds that supplement the park and recreation facilities listed above. Please see Map 5-1. For a complete description and listing of recreation opportunities in the Institutional facilities listed above, please see Chapter 10: Recreational Resource Inventory.

Recommendation for Public Institutional Facilities

ACTION 5-2 Continue to communicate with operators of institutional facilities in order to provide up-to-date information to municipal residents as to the availability, condition, and operating hours of these facilities.

ACTION 5-3 Continue to invite representatives of the Owen J. Roberts (OJR) School District to participate in regularly scheduled Northern Federation meetings in order to keep the lines of communication open with the operating authority of institutional facilities.

See ACTION 1-2 AND 1-3

Objective(s) addressed by Actions 5-2 and 5-3: 5-B

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

There are ten neighborhood recreational facilities within the boundaries of the Region and they are located in North Coventry, Wallace, West Vincent townships. These facilities provide spaces and facilities for recreation close to home such as: exercise and sitting areas for adults, play areas for children, and all-purpose fields and court areas. For a complete listing of recreational opportunities in the Neighborhood Facilities listed above, please see Chapter 10: Recreational Resources Inventory.

MINI PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

There are a number of mini recreational facilities located in the Region, primarily near areas of higher density or population. These facilities are small walk-to facilities that primarily serve the daytime recreation needs of senior citizens and pre-school children with supervising adults.

Assessment of Neighborhood and Mini Facilities: Neighborhood and Mini Parks and recreational facilities primarily serve a specific function and supplement larger Regional, Sub-Regional, and Community facilities. As a result these facilities do not serve a regional function, rather the specific needs of a neighborhood, subdivision (homeowners' association), or a limited number of municipal residents. Therefore, the recommendations below specifically address municipal opportunities for these facilities.

Recommendations for Neighborhood and Mini Facilities

The actions that follow are in sequential order:

ACTION 5-4 Update individual municipal open space, recreation, and environmental resources plans as part of municipal comprehensive plans in order to provide a clear vision of the need for future facilities based on municipal impacts such as increased population. This will enable municipal leaders to investigate the potential need for additional neighborhood and mini recreational facilities based on population, land use density, and status of current facilities on a municipal basis.

ACTION 5-5 Encourage recreation boards and commissions to fiscally plan for the development and management of future recreational facilities through the use of a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) or similar program. The funding of such recreational facilities may be simplified if the municipalities establish a joint municipal or regional recreation commission. See ACTIONS 5-6 and 5-7, respectively.

Objective(s) addressed by Actions 5-4 & 5-5: 5-A, 5-B, 5-C, and 5-D

PARK AND RECREATION BOARD ACTIVITIES

A recreation board or commission makes it possible for a municipality, multi-municipal group, or a region to focus planning and funding towards parkland and recreation facilities. East Coventry, East Pikeland, East Vincent, and North Coventry townships have park and/or recreation boards or commissions.

In 1989, East Pikeland Township established a joint recreation board with Phoenixville Borough in order to provide recreational programs for the residents of East Pikeland. Although it is currently inactive, the joint board represented the only one of its type in the Northern Federation. See Chapter 10 for a complete description.

Regional Recreation Organizations:

The establishment of a regional recreation commission would enable municipal officials to address recreation needs from a regional perspective. A coordinated strategy for land acquisition for municipalities in the Region would provide the greatest overall benefit to residents. For example, Municipalities located in the Octorara Region, who just recently completed and adopted a regional comprehensive plan, provide support for the Octorara Community Recreation Commission (OCRC). The OCRC was established in 1999 and oversees several programs including before and after school, pre-school, aerobics, community initiatives, and mentoring programs.

Wallace Township is a member of the Downingtown Area Recreation Consortium (DARC). DARC is a non-profit organization that was developed in August of 1992 by the eight municipalities that make up the Downingtown Area School District. DARC offers child, teen, and adult classes as well as adult leagues, trips, and special events. Residents who live in the Downingtown Area School District may participate in all programs at a flat rate. People living outside the district pay an additional fee. Pre-school soccer, Mommy & Me Dance Class, Kindermusik, cooking, body sculpting exercise, yoga, reupholstery, photography, computer instruction, and indoor golf lessons are examples of some of the programs being offered. DARC also offers discount ski tickets and amusement park tickets.

Available Funding: Funding for regional recreation planning is available through the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Circuit Rider Program. A four-year grant is available to multi-municipal groups of two or more municipalities. As of 2005, there were 26 regional recreation commissions funded through this program.

Recommendation regarding Parks and Recreation Board Activities.

ACTION 5-6 Consider the establishment of joint recreation boards in order to address recreation needs, associated capital expenditures, programming, and management of recreational facilities on a regional basis. This type of venture may be most appropriate for municipalities that are located adjacent to boroughs.

ACTION 5-7 Consider the establishment of a Regional Recreation Commission for the Northern Federation municipalities in order to address recreation needs, associated capital expenditures, programming, and management of recreational facilities on a regional basis.

Objective(s) addressed by Actions 5-6 thru 5-7: 5-B and 5-C

COMMERCIAL/PRIVATE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

In addition to public parks and recreational facilities discussed above, there are several commercial recreational facilities in the Region that provide supplemental recreational opportunities. These include six golf courses and five private camp facilities that are primarily located in the northern tier of the Region (north of French Creek). See Map 10-1: Recreational Resources.

Recommendation regarding Commercial/Private Recreation Facilities

ACTION 5-8 Continue to communicate with operators of commercial facilities in order to provide up-to-date information to municipal residents as to the availability, condition, associated fees, and operating hours of these facilities.

Objective(s) addressed by Action 5-8: 5-B

ENVIRONMENTAL FACILITIES

Environmental and conservation groups such as the Green Valleys Association (GVA), the French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, and the Natural Lands Trust (NLT) have become an integral member of the regional community. In addition to substantial conservation land holdings in the Region, these groups can acquire parcels and transfer them to parkland. They provide educational programs to residents of the Region to further the cause of resource protection.

Recommendation regarding Environmental Facilities

ACTION 5-9 Continue to involve environmental groups in the activities of the Region and provide facilities for presentations pertaining to new techniques in environmental protection and resource preservation.

See ACTION 1-2

Objective(s) addressed by Action 5-9: 5-B

FACILITIES BROCHURE

The Region offers an extensive array of recreational opportunities to municipal residents and the rest of northern Chester County (See Chapter 10: Recreation Resources Inventory). Facilities are available for residents to participate in both active and passive recreation. A comprehensive living inventory of these facilities and associated operating information would be a valuable resource for residents of the Region and beyond.

The Chester County Parks and Recreation Department makes brochures available for Regional and Sub-Regional Parks and recreation facilities published by organizations such as the DCNR. However, a comprehensive guide to the resources available to visitors of the Region is not available. A guide that would provide information to user groups including, but not limited to hikers, bird-watchers, equestrian enthusiasts, cyclists, amateur astronomers, campers, and boaters would promote the use of these facilities. In addition, it could provide economic benefits to business owners within the Region in providing related services to said users such as refreshment and the sales/rentals of related equipment.

Recommendation for the development of a Facilities Brochure

ACTION 5-10 Consider the development of a recreational facilities brochure to document the public parkland and recreational facilities and opportunities available to residents of and visitors to the Region. A brochure of this type should be updated on a regular basis as recreational facilities are expanded and/or established often.

Objective(s) addressed by Action 5-9: 5-C

OPEN SPACE

In response to the growth that has occurred in the Region, municipalities, private organizations, and state and county governments have established areas of protected open space such as parks, easements, and nature preserves that can provide areas for both passive and active recreation.

OPEN SPACE FUNDING

Chester County Landscapes 21st Century Fund

The Chester County Department of Open Space Preservation administers some of the open space grant programs of the Chester County Landscapes 21st Century Fund. The goals of these Chester County Landscapes 21st Century Fund Grant Programs are to provide financial assistance to enable local governments to meet their responsibilities for providing public park lands for the recreation and open space needs of their residents. Objectives of the program are to assist with the installation of facilities, protect natural and scenic resources, preserve historically significant cultural landscapes, promote intergovernmental cooperation, and retain open space. See the Chester County Department of Open Space Preservation's web site for more information: www.chesco.org/openspace.

Four of these grants are available for the seventy-three municipalities within the county's borders:

1. Park Land and Open Space Acquisition Grant reimburses a maximum of 50% of the approved cost up to \$350,000 for fee simple property acquisition projects, with additional incentives available to municipalities meeting criteria exceeding the standard application.
2. Park Facilities Grant reimburses park facility improvements up to a maximum of 50% of a project's cost to a maximum of \$250,000 with additional incentives available to municipalities meeting criteria exceeding the standard application.
3. The Trails Grant reimburses a maximum of 50% of the approved cost up to \$250,000 for trail corridor acquisition, development of new trails, or rehabilitation of an existing trail, with additional incentives available to applicants meeting criteria exceeding the standard application.
4. The Greenways Grant reimburses a maximum of 50% of the approved cost up to \$250,000 for greenway corridor acquisition and natural resource management projects within established greenways, with additional incentives available to applicants meeting criteria exceeding the standard application.

Program manuals or technical assistance for the programs described above are available from the Chester County Department of Open Space Preservation. [Chesco.org/open space](http://Chesco.org/open_space).

Recommendation for the Chester County Landscapes 21st Century Fund

ACTION 5-11 Consider participating in the Chester County Landscapes 21st Century Fund in order to meet municipal responsibilities for providing public parklands for the recreational and open space needs of their residents.

Objective(s) addressed by Action 5-11: 5-A

Recommendation for the Preservation Partnership Program:

See ACTION 6-7 in Chapter 6: Agricultural Resources Plan

PROVIDING CONNECTION – TRAILS, BIKEWAYS, AND GREENWAYS

The need and desire to provide connection to, from, and between the recreational facilities listed in Chapter 10: Recreational Resources Inventory was a key objective under the Recreational Resources Goal: Encourage the connection of pedestrian trail and sidewalk facilities in order to reduce dependence on motor vehicles and provide a regional pedestrian circulation system (Objective 5-D). Further, Chester County's *Linking Landscapes* identifies the importance of connection: Vision 19.4 – Recreational parks should connect to any other recreational park, borough, city, or major population center within five miles via a trail.

REGIONAL TRAILS and RELATED FACILITIES

There are four regional trail corridors in or immediately adjacent to the Region. They include the Horse-Shoe Trail, the Pickering Creek Trail, the French Creek (Sow Belly) Trail, and the Schuylkill River Trail. For a complete discussion of each of these regional facilities please see Chapter 10: Recreational Resources Inventory. The Schuylkill River Trail (Valley Forge to Philadelphia) is the most formal of these facilities providing a public right-of-way and 8-10 foot wide asphalt cartway designed to accommodate most user groups: hikers, cyclists, in-line skaters, etc. This facility was designed for recreation and pedestrian commuting and is patrolled regularly by state rangers.¹ For the most part, the other regional trails are informal trails that are used by hikers, equestrians, and cyclists. They are primarily “social trails” that are beaten paths located on private land and, therefore, do not have assigned right-of-ways. Maintenance and patrolling of these facilities is the responsibility of said user groups and private landowners on which these trails are located.

LOCAL TRAILS and RELATED FACILITIES

Local trail facilities are located throughout the Region on an informal basis. Examples are the Boar's Back and Buzzard's Trails in Warwick Township. In addition there are sidewalks and trail systems within residential developments designed specifically for interior circulation and connection. Recognizing the need and importance of trail facilities and their connection can help to accommodate funding of these community assets.

¹ The Schuylkill River Trail will eventually provide a link from Pottstown to the City of Philadelphia along the Schuylkill River providing access to the facility from the townships of North Coventry, East Coventry, East Vincent, and Spring City Borough.

In addition to trail facilities within the Region, adjacent municipalities are involved in efforts to promote linkage of local trail facilities and access to local and regional recreational and institutional amenities. Upper Uwchlan Township, for example, proposes to link its trail network with adjacent municipalities in the southern area of the Region. See the Uwchlan Township *Trails Network Master Plan*. In order to provide the most effective and efficient network of trails to serve the Region's residents as well as its neighbors, the efforts and input of adjacent municipalities must be taken into consideration

Recommendation regarding local and regional trail facilities

ACTION 5-12 Consider the inclusion of existing and future public trail facilities on municipal Official Maps (and ordinances). Further, municipal officials should consider the development of a trail master plan that focuses on connection and circulation as they relate to trail/sidewalk facilities within and beyond municipal borders.

ACTION 5-13 Consider the development of a regional public trail system master plan. This plan should identify the location of trail corridors and provide a plan for connection or the linking of these facilities to other similar uses within and beyond the boundaries of the Region.

See Actions 2-12 and 2-13

Objective(s) addressed by Action 5-12 and 5-13: 5-C and 5-D

Trail Clubs/User Groups

There are several trail user groups that make use of recreation facilities in the Region. Trail user groups can provide a necessary element in the development, patrol, and maintenance of trails facilities: volunteerism. Currently, the regional trail facilities such as the French Creek Trail and Horse-Shoe Trail are utilized by individual users as well as trail clubs. The following is a partial list of trail clubs/user groups and their current contact information:

Appalachian Mountain Club	http://outdoors.org
Batona Hiking Club	members.aol.com/batona
Chester County Trail Club	www.cctrailclub.org
Philadelphia Trail Club	http://m.zanger.tripod.com/index.htm
Wilmington Trail Club	www.wilmingtontrailclub.org
Wallace Trail Preservation Association	www.Wallacetwp.org/WTPAmain.aspx

Trail Advocacy Groups

Another ally in the development, maintenance, and funding of trail facilities are trail advocacy groups. Trail advocacy groups, such as the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA), work to keep trail facilities open to all applicable user groups and provide education to trail users on trail etiquette and maintenance. IMBA's mission is to promote mountain bicycling that is environmentally sound and socially responsible. A number of trail advocacy groups, such as IMBA, also provide educational seminars to trail users on how to appropriately maintain and patrol trail facilities.

The Wallace Trail Preservation Association (WTPA) is a local trail advocacy group whose mission statement is "*to preserve, protect and enhance local trails for non-motorized recreational use.*" See Figure 5-2 for a list of their published Code of Conduct for trail users.

Figure 5-2
WTPA Code of Conduct – Trail Etiquette

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 1) | Trails may be used for non-motorized use only |
| 2) | Stay on the trail |
| 3) | Respect property owners and other trail users |
| 4) | Preserve and protect wildlife and other natural resources |
| 5) | Carry trash out – Do not litter |
| 6) | Don't smoke or drink alcohol |
| 7) | Use personal electronics with headphones only |
| 8) | No hunting or trapping |
| 9) | No firearms or other weapons |
| 10) | No loitering |
| 11) | Never cut corners or cross planted fields or lawns |
| 12) | Keep dogs under control |
| 13) | Use caution and go slowly when passing fenced animals |
| 14) | Report unsafe conditions and suspicious activities |
| 15) | Never tread on soft sod |
| 16) | Leave gates and trails as you find them |
| 17) | Remember, trail use is a privilege – Be courteous |

The following is a partial list of advocacy groups operating within Chester County and the greater Delaware Valley Region: Chester County Cycling Committee, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, and Wallace Trail Preservation Association.

- Recommendation regarding cooperation with local and regional Trail Groups

ACTION 5-14 Consider requesting the input of representatives of trail clubs/groups and trail advocacy groups when implementing Actions 5-12 and 5-13. These groups have an intimate knowledge of these trail facilities and a passion for the environment and providing access to it.

See ACTION 1-2

Objective(s) addressed by Action 5-14: 5-C and 5-D

BIKEWAY NETWORK

As of the 1990 census, only 312 County residents (.02%) used a bicycle to commute to work. Despite the advantages Chester County offers to the bicyclist, the rate of bicycle use in the County is surprisingly low. A year 2000 household travel survey conducted by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) indicates that a mere .01% of all trips in Chester County are made by bicycle. This is significantly lower than any other county in the Delaware Valley – the next lowest county (Bucks) was three times higher and, for the region as a whole, .06% of all trips were made by bicycle.

The advantages of commuting by bicycle are fairly obvious: recreation, exercise, and a reduction in congestion and associated pollution. So why hasn't the number of active bicycle

commuters in Chester County risen? According to a public survey of transportation problems in Chester County, conducted by the Chester County Planning Commission, three of the top four concerns voiced by Chester County residents regarding bicycle transportation are that Chester County roads 1) are too narrow to be conducive to cycling, 2) lack bicycle specific facilities between towns, and 3) are unsafe at major road crossings. Based on these concerns, making our roads safer to bicycle on and constructing cycling specific facilities where appropriate would likely combine with other societal trends (such as increasing traffic congestion, increasing fuel costs, and increasing development densities) to make cycling a more attractive travel option for a greater percentage of county residents.

When developing the framework for recommendations that address safety concerns on public roadways, the Chester County Planning Commission considered the policy of state, federal, and regional organizations including PennDOT, the DVRPC, the Federal Highway Administration (FHA), and county policy regarding bicycle facilities. The research identified the Schuylkill River Trail as a start toward making suburban portions of Chester County more accessible to bicyclists. The proposed continuation of the Schuylkill River Trail will extend along the Schuylkill River corridor from the western end of the existing Schuylkill River Trail at Valley Forge through Phoenixville Borough, and into North Coventry Township near Pottstown. This portion of the Schuylkill River Trail will provide access to residents and employees in the northeastern portion of Chester County (and the southern portion of Montgomery County) to the entire regional trail network, with connections at Valley Forge to the Perkiomen Trail, the Chester Valley Trail, and the eastern portion of the Schuylkill River Trail, connecting to Philadelphia.

In addition to the cycling facilities that are either in place or in the planning stages, as noted above, there are numerous other corridors in Chester County where cycling facilities are needed but not currently available. These corridors link key areas of population density, employment areas, commercial areas, and recreational areas. In each case, there is a potential and/or existing demand for bicycle access to these corridors that is currently unmet. Key corridors in need of bicycle facilities are Routes 100 and Route 23. However, roads designated in the Region are not limited to Routes 100 and 23 – See Chapter 10: Recreational Resources Inventory for a complete list of designated roadways.

Recommendations to improve these facilities include:

Wide Curb Lanes and Dedicated Bicycle Lanes Probably the two most common types of bicycle facilities are wide curb lanes and dedicated bicycle lanes. These two solutions share almost identical dimensional requirements and can be used interchangeably in nearly all circumstances. There is a policy difference between the two, however, that must be considered and that is discussed in the technical memorandum. In any case, the dedicated bike lane is identified as the preferred choice in terms of design and interpretation.

Designated Bicycle Route on Smaller Parallel Roads – When a major suburban road cannot be reasonably configured safely for cycling, sometimes the best alternative is to avoid that road entirely and create a bicycle route within the same corridor on a lower functioning parallel road or series of roads. This approach puts the cyclist in a more comfortable cycling environment while still allowing them to navigate the high-demand corridor in question.

Dedicated Off-Road Bicycle Trail/Path – In some circumstances, an expressway or arterial road might not be conducive to cycling and a right-of-way nearby allows for development of a separate facility for bicyclists. A good example of such a facility is the Schuylkill River Trail,

which parallels the Schuylkill Expressway from the King of Prussia area to Philadelphia. Similarly, the Chester Valley Trail, once completed, will provide a cycling facility in the same corridor as the PA 30 Bypass / US 202 corridor between Exton/Downingtown and the King of Prussia area. These types of facilities are generally built on abandoned rail right-of-ways, although sometimes can be built within a road right-of-way in more sparsely developed areas.

Road Dieting – The concept of road “dieting” refers to reducing the number of travel lanes and on a multi-lane road and adding turn lanes, bicycle lanes, and on-street parking. Counter-intuitively, by reducing the number of conflicts on the road and bringing travel speeds down to more efficient levels, the capacity of the roadway can actually increase, while increasing access to non-motorized travelers such as bicyclists. This approach is generally most effective in urban areas but can also be used in suburban areas that are attempting to transition away from automobile-dominated streetscapes to more pedestrian friendly shopping districts. Examples of this approach in the Chester County area are downtown Pottstown and Coatesville. Examples of suburban areas where such an approach could potentially be effective include the Thorndale and Paoli areas on Business Route 30.

Recommendation for Implementation of Bikeway Network Strategies

The actions that follow are in sequential order:

- ACTION 5-15 Investigate the creation of appropriate bicycle facilities on state and local roadways. They could occur as:
- PennDOT considers improvements to the road, even as minor an improvement as resurfacing.
 - As part of a municipal plan element while considering transportation facilities and future improvements or update or development of an official map and ordinance.
- ACTION 5-16 Continue to work with PennDOT’s Chester County maintenance unit to assure that routine road maintenance is conducted on a regular basis, particularly on designated cycling routes. Although this is a County initiative, municipal officials should provide input specific to their communities. A regular and effective road maintenance program, at both the state and local levels, should be a part of any effort to improve cycling conditions in Chester County.
- ACTION 5-17 Consider providing a concerted educational effort for both adults and school age children in order to reduce the amount of unsafe riding and to change common misperceptions on the part of both cyclists and motorists regarding how to safely ride a bicycle in traffic and how motorists can safely interact with cyclists in traffic. Chester County, PennDOT, and the Northern Federation as a whole should support continued and increased funding for educational efforts run by various advocacy groups, schools, and other organizations.

Objective(s) addressed by Actions 5-15 thru 5-17: 5-C and 5-D

GREENWAYS

See Chapter 2: Natural Resources Plan.

- Recommendation for the Preservation Partnership Program:

See ACTION 2-12 & 2-13 in Chapter 2: Natural Resources Plan.

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Along with the extensive recreational opportunities discussed above, residents of the Region can take advantage of several annual local and regional community events. Regional community events include the Kimberton Farm Fair, Ludwig's Corner Horse Show, and annual Elverson Garden Club Flower Show held at the Warwick Township Building. Local festivities include 4th of July celebrations, Halloween costume contests, Easter Egg Hunts, and tree-lighting ceremonies. These events are held all over the Region and present opportunities for recreation, community-building, and mutli-municipal cooperation. See Chapter 10.

- Recommendation for Community Events and Organizations

ACTION 5-18 Consider the inclusion of community event announcements in the Federation Update Article.

See ACTION 1-3

Objective(s) addressed by Action 5-18: 5-C

CONCLUSION

There are opportunities available to the Northern Federation for improving the provision, cooperation, use, and connection of recreation resources. A complete summary of recreational resources recommendations is located in Chapter 1: Coordination and Implementation Plan. The numbers next to each recommendation above correspond to those in the Implementation Plan.

Figure Sources

Figure 5-1: *A Plan for the Protected Open Space Network in Chester County, Pennsylvania.*
Chester County Planning Commission, 2002.

Figure 5-2: WTPA website: www.Wallacetwp.org/WTPAMain.aspx

Photograph Sources

Page 5-1: Chester County Planning Commission.