

# 6

## LOOKING AHEAD



# Future Land Use

## GOAL

Responsibly guide future land use by balancing contemporary needs while respecting established land use patterns and the natural environment. Future development should complement these patterns, provide appropriately scaled commercial/industrial development, provide housing options, and enhance recreational and cultural opportunities for residents.



## Objectives

- a.** Direct growth and development to areas with adequate infrastructure while protecting open space, environmentally sensitive areas, and prime agricultural soils in the Township.
- b.** Encourage commercial, industrial, and agricultural growth that promotes economic opportunities and convenient services for Township residents.
- c.** Enhance and improve commercial development along the Route 30 corridor and industrial development along Lower Valley Road.
- d.** Protect and enhance existing residential areas by ensuring appropriate buffers between different land uses, while allowing flexibility for homeowners to maintain or upgrade their properties.
- e.** Support options for diverse housing types to ensure equal access to housing.
- f.** Support regional planning initiatives to encourage compatible land use patterns in adjoining areas, coordination of infrastructure, and continuation of resource protection.

## Developable Lands

The amount and location of developable lands that exist in the Township are important to future land use planning. Determining which lands are available for development (developable) is helpful in projecting the amount, type, and location of future growth that could occur in West Sadsbury.

Developable lands are determined by first eliminating lands that are fully developed or protected (such as conservation easements, parkland, deed restricted lands, etc.). The next step is to consider natural resource constraints and the limitations they impose on use of the land. Resources/constraints that were taken into consideration for the purposes of this analysis include streams and lakes, steep slopes (15-25%) and very steep slopes (25%+), wetlands, floodplains, woodlands, and a 100 foot riparian buffer on both sides of stream corridors. These resources reflect the Significant Natural Landscapes Overlay on Chester County's Landscapes Map and resources regulated through the Township's zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances. Natural resources may be further protected through state and federal regulations (such as wetlands and floodplains). This analysis determined that approximately seven percent (464.3 acres) of the Township are classified within this overlay and are considered "undevelopable" as part of this analysis. The acreage of the developed, protected, and constrained lands categories was combined (assuring there was no overlap) and about two percent (139.8 acres) of developable lands were identified in West Sadsbury. Developable lands were identified as any land identified as vacant on the Existing Land Use Map, which does not include agricultural operations, or lots improved with an existing structure.

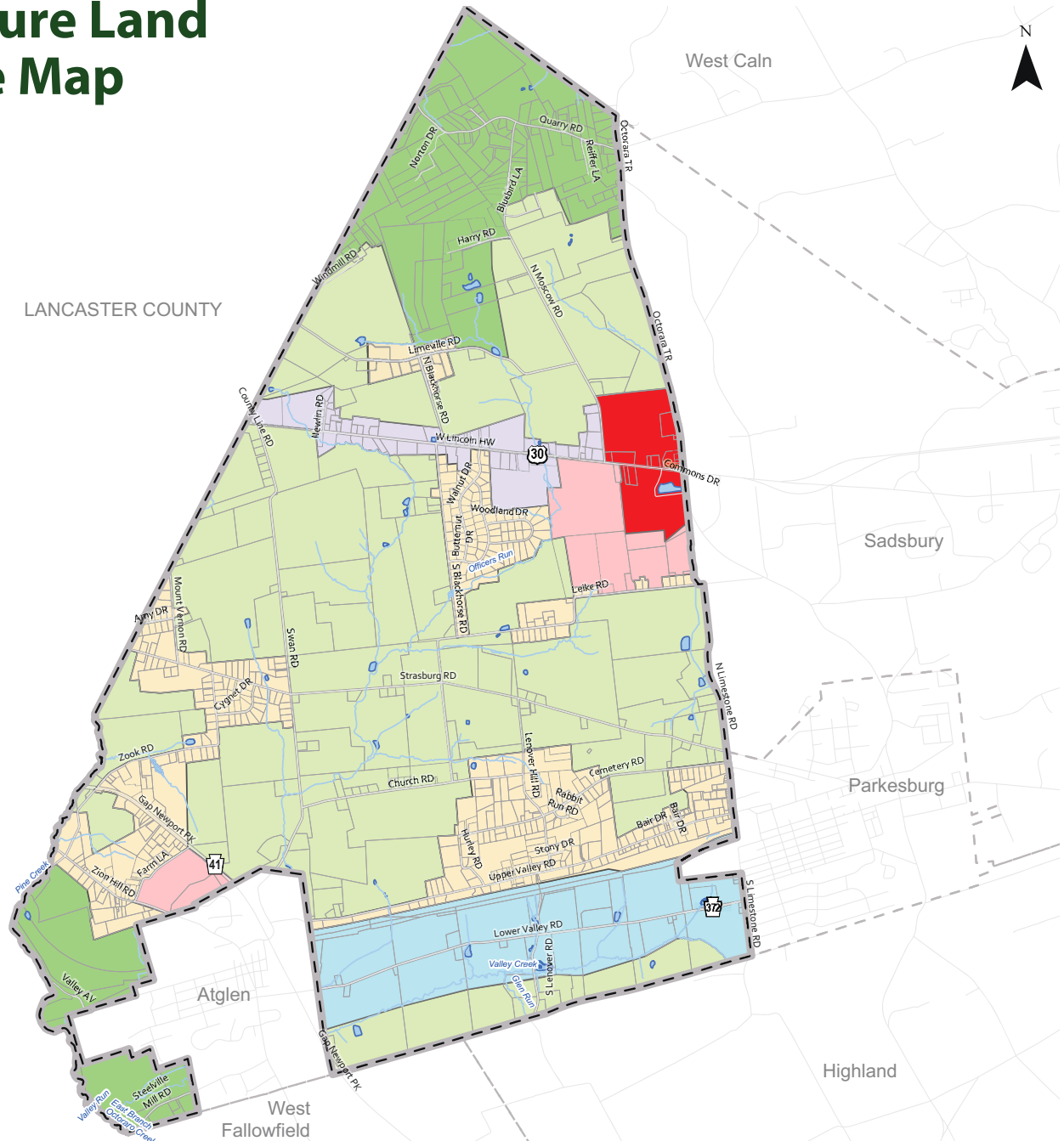
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## Future Land Use

Projecting the appropriate amount, type, and location of future potential growth helps to provide a framework for the future based upon where various land uses can be accommodated.

The future land use plan recommends an overall land use pattern for the Township. Areas to preserve and areas to promote growth are designated based upon where growth can be accommodated or where the current development pattern may be continued.

# Future Land Use Map



-  Estimated tax parcels
-  Roads
-  Water bodies
-  Streams
-  Township boundary
-  Adjacent municipal boundaries
-  Agricultural
-  Commercial Center
-  Office Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Neighborhood Commercial
-  Neighborhood Preservation
-  Rural



**Rural (R)** 1,037.49 acres

The Rural designation encompasses the Jim Landis Woodland Preserve and wooded properties, primarily located in the northern portion of the Township in the vicinity of Quarry Road and Moscow Road. These areas are generally the most environmentally constrained areas of the Township, and intended for low density residential uses, agriculture, recreation uses, and open space.

**Strategy:** The Rural designation protects unique natural features and discourages higher intensity growth. Open space preservation and low density residential development is appropriate in this area. Tools to complement the Rural designation include: large lot residential zoning, enhancing the Jim Landis Woodland Preserve, and establishing a regional transferable development rights program (as discussed in Recommendation 2.3.C) in which development rights would be sent from the Rural area, to receiving areas with infrastructure more appropriate for development. The existing zoning is the Rural District and is consistent with the Future Land Use plan.



Much of the northern portion of the Township contains forested and rural residential properties.

## **Agriculture (A)** 3,519.44 acres

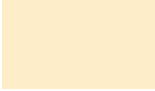
The Agriculture designation encompasses significant areas of the Township in the vicinity of Limeville, Blackhorse, Moscow, Harry, Swan, Mt. Vernon, and Strasburg Roads. These areas contain significant amounts of prime agricultural soils in which agricultural activities are practiced. The Agricultural designation is intended primarily for agriculture and secondary farm uses and low density residential uses when located on non-prime agricultural soils.

**Strategy:** The Agriculture designation protects prime agricultural soils, and promotes the continuation of farming operations in the Township. Low density residential uses limited to areas without prime agricultural soils are appropriate in this area. Tools to compliment the Agriculture designation include: large lot zoning, permitting cluster development in non-prime areas, and establishing a regional transferable development rights program (as discussed in Recommendation 2.3.C). The existing zoning is the Agricultural District and is consistent with the Future Land Use plan.



Agriculture constitutes West Sadsbury's largest future land use category by area.





**Neighborhood Preservation (NP) 1,064.84 acres**

The Neighborhood Preservation designation comprises a variety of single-family residences, generally on lots ranging from one to three acres, including residences in the vicinity of Limeville, Leike, Zook, and Mount Vernon Roads. Also included in this designation are the residential uses along Gap Newport Pike and Upper Valley Road, and the residential subdivisions Woodland View Estates, Swan Acres, and Mount Vernon Acres. The Neighborhood Preservation designation is intended primarily for residential uses with a scale and density that compliments existing development patterns.

**Strategy:** The Neighborhood Preservation designation reflects existing residential development patterns in the Township. Low to medium density residential uses in scale with existing development are appropriate in this area. The existing zoning is the Low Density Residential and Medium Density Residential Districts and is consistent with the Future Land Use plan.



The neighborhood preservation designation includes existing single-family residential subdivisions

### Neighborhood Commercial (NC) 215.93 acres

The Neighborhood Commercial designation encompasses properties along Route 30, generally west of Moscow Road. The Neighborhood Commercial designation is intended to provide commercial services at a community scale.

**Strategy:** The Neighborhood Commercial designation reflects existing, small-scale commercial developments. Responsibly scaled commercial establishments are appropriate in this area. Any redevelopment in this area should integrate design elements discussed in Recommendation 5-4. The existing zoning is the Community Service District and is consistent with the Future Land Use plan.



Many properties along the western segment of Route 30 are designated as neighborhood commercial.



**Commercial Center (CC)** 149.96 acres

The Commercial Center encompasses properties at the Route 30 and Route 10 interchange, generally east of Moscow Road. Existing development in this area includes the West Sadsbury Commons shopping center, Wawa, and other national commercial retailers. The Commercial Center designation is intended to provide commercial services at a regional scale.

**Strategy:** The Commercial Center designation reflects existing commercial establishments and adjacent properties which may be suitable for larger scale commercial development. Tools to complement the Commercial Center designation include establishing a regional transferable development rights program (as discussed in Recommendation 2.3.C). Any development or redevelopment in this area should integrate design elements discussed in Recommendation 5.1. The existing zoning is the General Commercial District and is consistent with the Future Land Use plan.



The West Sadsbury Commons shopping center is designated as a commercial center.

## Office Commercial (OC) 231.52 acres

The Office Commercial designation encompasses properties north of Leike Road in the vicinity of Route 30 and Route 10, generally south and west of West Sadsbury Commons. Office Commercial is also located at the Township border with Atglen Borough, between Gap Newport Pike and Zion Hill Road and south of Farm Lane. Existing development in this area includes a building materials contractor and roller derby equipment manufacturer near Atglen Borough, and generally undeveloped parcels in the vicinity of West Sadsbury Commons. The Office Commercial designation is intended to provide professional offices at a regional scale.

**Strategy:** The Office Commercial designation reflects properties that are zoned as Office Commercial under the existing zoning ordinance. Any development or redevelopment in these areas should provide buffering between new office and commercial uses and adjacent Neighborhood Conservation uses. The existing zoning is the Office Commercial District and is consistent with the Future Land Use plan.



While the Office Commercial designation is relatively undeveloped, establishments exist in the vicinity of Zion Hill Road and Gap Newport Pike.



**Industrial (I)** 593.82 acres

The Industrial designation encompasses industrial properties along Lower Valley Road. Existing development in this area includes: International Paper, Victory Brewing Company, portions of A. Duie Pyle, and the railroad right-of-way south of Upper Valley Road. The Industrial designation is intended to provide industrial opportunities in the Township.

**Strategy:** The Industrial designation reflects existing industrial establishments and adjacent properties which may be suitable for industrial expansion. Any development or redevelopment in this area should provide buffering between new industrial uses and adjacent Neighborhood Conservation or Agriculture uses. The existing zoning is the Industrial District and is consistent with the Future Land Use plan.



There are numerous industrial establishments in West Sadsbury along Lower Valley Road.

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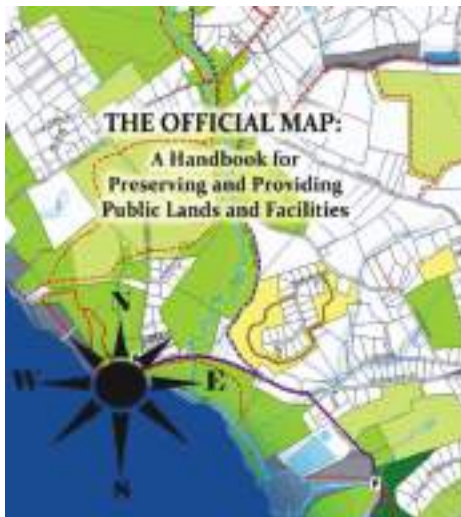
# Recommendations

**RECOMMENDATION 6.1**

**Official Map.** Consider adopting an official map to advance municipal planning goals.

An official map is a combined map and ordinance designed to proactively plan for future growth by stating interest in land for public uses (such as roads, trails, parks, or stormwater management areas). An official map provides notification to property owners and land developers about the location of potential future public improvements based on analysis and planning. By identifying improvements on the official map, municipalities are provided a one-year time period in which to acquire, ease, or discuss the mapped improvement area once the property owner has provided written notification to the municipality of the intent to subdivide or build on the mapped lands.

Grant funding and technical assistance through the Chester County Planning Commission can be leveraged to assist with the development and adoption of an official map.



Although official maps are often considered tools for preserving transportation infrastructure, they can be used successfully for open space preservation. See this handbook for more information: [www.dot.state.pa.us/public/PubsForms/Publications/PUB%20703.pdf](http://www.dot.state.pa.us/public/PubsForms/Publications/PUB%20703.pdf)



About 1/3 of all municipalities in Chester County have adopted an Official Map. Example official maps can be found on the County Planning Commission's website.

## RECOMMENDATION 6.2

**Sustainable building techniques.** Encourage “green” building and development practices to improve the sustainability of housing and development within West Sadsbury.

Sustainable buildings are more affordable to the owner over the long term. Incorporating green methods and materials, such as water conserving fixtures, energy star appliances, high efficiency lighting, renewable energy sources (including photovoltaic and geothermal) and green roofs reduces energy costs, making utility costs more manageable.

Consideration should be given to adding general provisions to encourage energy conservation and building features that promote sustainability. These types of practices are particularly important to consider as it relates to any large-scale development in the vicinity of the Route 30 and Route 10. Specific considerations can include:

### ACTIONS

#### 6.2.A Consider zoning amendments for alternative energy systems.

Consider amending the zoning ordinance to include provisions allowing for a wide range of alternative energy systems as discussed in Recommendation 1.4.E.

#### 6.2.B Consider subdivision amendments to promote sustainability.

Consider amending the subdivision and land development ordinance to incorporate provisions that encourage green building techniques and/or requirements for new buildings and parking areas.

#### 6.2.C Ensure Township regulatory restrictions do not inadvertently discourage energy efficiency and educate developers and the public to discourage their use in homeowner association covenants.

Restrictions, such as prohibiting alternative energy or forbidding seasonal mowing of low-use lawn areas (such as meadows), can discourage energy conservation. These efforts may include coordination with homeowner associations and developers to create sustainable homeowners association provisions.



The zoning ordinance can be reviewed to ensure that small scale alternative energy systems are permitted on residential properties.



**RECOMMENDATION  
6.3**

**Housing choices.** Continue to provide opportunities for a variety of housing options in developable areas of the Township.

An important element of all diverse and vibrant communities is having a variety of housing options. Various housing options can support persons and families of all incomes and abilities that call West Sadsbury home. Evolving housing needs may include housing for young professionals, families, empty nesters, and senior citizens. The Township zoning ordinance should be regularly reviewed to ensure it addresses community needs. It is important to revisit the ordinance periodically to ensure it still is effective in providing for housing options as housing is a dynamic issue that changes over time.

Consideration could be given to permitting more of the missing middle housing typologies throughout the Township. These typologies include a variety of multi-family options, constructed at a scale consistent with traditional residential neighborhoods. Regulations for these typologies should incorporate appropriate design standards and lot/bulk standards that respect established development patterns. Examples of uses permitted in the Township include duplexes, multiplexes, townhouses, and garden apartments. Additional typologies to consider can include, but are not limited to: triplexes, fourplexes, and residential conversions.



The most predominant type of housing in the Township are single family detached dwellings.

**RECOMMENDATION 6.4 Evaluate the zoning ordinance.** Consider modifications to the zoning ordinance to support adjustments for the Future Land Use plan.

The Township's zoning ordinance was last updated in 2018. It should be periodically reevaluated to ensure it continues to serve as a critical tool in implementation of the overall land use vision for West Sadsbury. Although West Sadsbury does not anticipate large scale growth, targeted amendments to the zoning ordinance can help further desired Township development and land use goals.

The following should be considered during any future zoning ordinance update:

**ACTIONS**

- 6.4.A** Update regulations for the general commercial zoning districts to integrate uses that provide a more diverse mixture as discussed in Recommendation 5.1.C.
- 6.4.B** Update regulations for the medium density residential zoning districts to integrate more housing choices.
- 6.4.C** Update regulations to allow for conservation/cluster residential design as discussed in Recommendation 2.3.C.
- 6.4.D** Implement a regional transferable development rights program as discussed in Recommendation 2.3.C.
- 6.4.E** Ensure that regulations require adequate buffering between differing land uses, such as between residential and commercial uses.