

Cumru Township, Berks County

***Foundations for the Future:
Preserving Our Assets,
Building Our Tomorrow***

Prepared by Delta Development Group, Inc.



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*Foundations for the Future:
Preserving Our Assets,
Building Our Tomorrow*



Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

Cumru Township stands at a crossroads. While it benefits from a strong location, stable demographics, and resilient market demand, the Township faces a series of interrelated challenges that threaten its ability to grow, attract investment, and sustain a competitive tax base.

The Township's topography, marked by steep slopes and uneven terrain, significantly limits the ability to develop land. Even in areas where land is available, fragmented ownership patterns complicate efforts to assemble sites for meaningful redevelopment. Infrastructure constraints present another major hurdle with many commercially zoned parcels lacking adequate access to water and sewer facilities. The Township's aging retail centers and commercial corridors are struggling to retain tenants and appeal to modern consumers, eroding local economic vitality.

School capacity further constrains growth, as the local district approaches its limits. Meanwhile, the current housing stock does not meet the needs of younger households or aging residents, limiting the Township's ability to attract and retain diverse population groups. Some of the Township's more rural areas lack broadband and basic access routes, and state-owned properties, such as the former bowling alley site, remain underutilized, representing untapped opportunities for redevelopment.

Despite these challenges, Cumru Township is well-positioned for growth. It offers exceptional transportation access, including proximity to highways, airports, and potential rail service. The community boasts a highly educated and financially stable population, with a median household income exceeding \$93,000 and a high resident retention rate. Cumru is also supported by a regional visitor economy, strong consumer demand, and access to a deep talent pipeline from nearby colleges and universities. With over \$318 million in consumer demand and significant market gaps, particularly in retail, services, and housing, the Township has strong fundamentals to build upon.

TO ADDRESS ITS CHALLENGES AND LEVERAGE ITS STRENGTHS, CUMRU TOWNSHIP SHOULD PURSUE FOUR INTERRELATED STRATEGIES:

- 1. Reimagine Lancaster Pike as a Mixed-Use Gateway.** Lancaster Pike has suffered from disinvestment and fragmented development patterns since the construction of Route 222. The Township should lead a visioning process to transform the corridor into a walkable, mixed-use destination that includes residential, retail, office, and public spaces. Strategic infill development, improved streetscape design, consistent branding, and robust public engagement will be essential to restoring Lancaster Pike's role as a thriving gateway and economic engine.
- 2. Rethink and Refresh Existing Commercial Centers.** Cumru's traditional commercial areas are underutilized and car-centric, lacking the walkability and density needed in today's retail environment. The Township should work with property owners and developers to reposition these sites as vibrant town centers, integrating mixed-use development, residential options, public space, and green infrastructure. The Drexeline Town Center in Upper Darby offers a successful model for suburban revitalization through compact design and diverse land use.
- 3. Expand and Diversify Housing Options.** The local housing market is marked by strong demand and limited supply. A two-pronged strategy is recommended: implement a Housing Rehabilitation Program to preserve and improve aging housing stock, especially for seniors and low-income households, while also encouraging new mixed-use residential development in appropriate locations.
- 4. Invest in Outdoor Recreation and Connectivity.** The Township lacks sufficient active recreational spaces and trail connections. Developing a Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space (CRPOS) Plan will help identify opportunities to expand parks, improve universal access, connect neighborhoods, and link residents to key destinations via trails and bike infrastructure. The plan will also support efforts to secure DCNR and other grant funding to build a more livable, connected community.

Cumru Township has vision, leadership, and market fundamentals to overcome its structural challenges. By aligning public investment, planning tools, and strategic partnerships, especially with county, regional, and state agencies, the Township can promote smart growth, reinvest in its commercial base, provide more housing choices, and enhance quality of life for all residents. These initiatives, taken together, will help secure a more resilient, inclusive, and economically competitive future for Cumru Township.



Introduction

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- ♦ Location and Regional Settings
- ♦ Project Steering Committee Members
- ♦ Planning Process
- ♦ Need for Economic Development Strategy

Introduction

Location and Regional Setting

Cumru Township (Cumru or Township) is a historically geographically diverse municipality located in Berks County, southeastern Pennsylvania. Encompassing approximately 20 square miles, Cumru is part of the Reading metropolitan area and is situated just south of the City of Reading. Its location is within convenient reach of major regional centers, including Philadelphia (60 miles southeast), Harrisburg (50 miles west), and Allentown (40 miles northeast).

Strategically positioned at the crossroads of U.S. Route 222 and Interstate 76, Cumru enjoys excellent regional connectivity. The Township's access to Pennsylvania Route 10 and Route 724 provides the community with vital links to surrounding townships, the Schuylkill River corridor, and broader economic hubs in southeastern Pennsylvania. These corridors position Cumru as a gateway community.

The Township's physical setting is defined by its diverse topography, including gently rolling hills, wooded ridges, and scenic stream valleys. The Schuylkill River forms the Township's northern boundary, contributing to its natural beauty and recreational value. Several tributaries and creeks traverse the area, including Angelica Creek and Wyomissing Creek, which offer environmental and open space assets. Cumru is also home to portions of the Neversink Mountain Preserve, which provides protected natural landscapes, hiking trails, and habitat conservation.

The community benefits from proximity to educational institutions, healthcare services, and employment centers, including the Reading Hospital and various business parks throughout the region. Cumru also lies within the Governor Mifflin School District, which serves as a vital educational and civic anchor.

Project Steering Committee Members

The planning process was guided by a steering committee which represented a cross section of community members, school district officials, county officials, township commissioners, and staff. Members included:

- Greg Miller, Cumru Township Commissioner
- Andy Donnell, Cumru Township Commissioner
- Jeanne Johnston, Cumru Township Manager
- Michele Roby, Governor Mifflin School District
- Christina Worley, Governor Mifflin School District
- Dr. Lisa Hess, Governor Mifflin School District
- Pamela Menet, Director of Economic Development, Berks County
- Deb Millman, Executive Director, Greater Reading Chamber Alliance
- Bev Leonti, Cumru Township Planning Commission



Planning Process

Foundations for the Future was completed in separate phases. The first phase included the compilation of market and economic data by the Berks County Planning Department. This data was supplemented by Delta and then analyzed to help the Team understand the current market conditions for Cumru Township.

The next Phase included a broad public outreach process which included:

- A kick-off meeting with Project Steering Committee. The Team shared findings from the market analysis and took the Steering Committee through a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threat (SWOT) session.
- Stakeholder interviews and focus group sessions.
- Community and Business Surveys.
- Two (2) open house meetings.

The final phase of the process took information obtained in the first two phases to develop key recommendations and an action plan to guide the Township toward successful implementation of this Plan.



Need for Economic Development Strategy

Cumru Township faces several interrelated challenges that threaten its ability to grow and sustain a strong tax base. One of the most significant obstacles is its topography. Steep slopes and uneven terrain limit the availability of land for new housing or commercial development. Even where land is developable, it is often balkanized into small parcels with multiple owners, making it difficult to consolidate properties for meaningful projects.

The Township also struggles with infrastructure limitations. Many commercially zoned parcels lack direct access to water and sewer infrastructure. Extending this infrastructure is increasingly expensive, and the rising costs to expand utilities create barriers to development. Further compounding this issue, local water providers are already dealing with strain on existing systems, reducing the capacity to support growth.

Aging retail centers present another challenge. Much of the Township's commercial building stock is outdated, deterring new retailers and investors. Without significant reinvestment, these areas will continue to lose tenants and contribute less to the Township's tax base.

School capacity also poses a constraint. The school district is already at or near its limit, and additional housing development could require costly expansion of facilities. In addition, housing options are not attractive to younger generations, creating a mismatch between available homes and the demographic groups the Township hopes to attract, particularly as passenger rail connections to Philadelphia could otherwise help draw younger residents and commuters.

Finally, certain rural parts of the Township remain isolated and difficult to access, requiring travel through neighboring municipalities. These areas also lack reliable broadband infrastructure, which places them at a disadvantage in today's economy. The presence of state-owned land that is underutilized, (e.g. the former bowling alley site controlled by PennDOT), further illustrates how external constraints can limit the Township's ability to capitalize on redevelopment opportunities.

Taken together, these challenges highlight the importance of strategic investment, partnerships, and creative planning to ensure Cumru Township remains competitive and resilient in the face of economic and demographic pressures.



Market Analysis Overview

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- ◆ Overview of Data and Findings
- ◆ Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile
- ◆ Economic Base Analysis
- ◆ Housing Market Analysis
- ◆ Community Services and Amenities
- ◆ Competitive Potential

Market Analysis Overview

Overview of Data & Findings

Cumru Township benefits from a unique combination of strategic location, strong demographics, and resilient market fundamentals. The Township's location provides unparalleled connectivity, with immediate access to interstate highways, rail service, and 34 airports within a 50-mile radius. This transportation access is complemented by an established healthcare presence and robust regional linkages, positioning the Township as a hub for commerce, services, and innovation.

The community itself is characterized by a highly educated and financially stable population, with nearly half (49.05%) of residents holding advanced degrees and a median household income of \$93,022. With an impressive retention rate of 89.4%, Cumru reflects exceptional stability, signaling strong quality of life and deep resident satisfaction. These attributes are further enhanced by a thriving visitor economy, which attracts over 7.1 million annual visits and supports a diverse array of retail and service offerings.

The Township also benefits from a deep talent pipeline, fueled by graduates in high-demand fields from 69 regional colleges and universities. This complements a balanced population mix of established professionals and emerging households, creating a dynamic environment that supports both economic growth and long-term community vitality. Market fundamentals remain strong, with \$318 million in consumer demand and significant growth opportunities across multiple sectors.

Together, these findings point to a range of opportunities for future investment and growth. There is substantial potential for retail and service sector expansion, with more than \$150 million in identified market gaps.

At the same time, growing professional employment and high household incomes support office and mixed-use development, while evolving household preferences signal demand for innovative housing and lifestyle-focused communities. Cumru's small business ecosystem provides fertile ground for entrepreneurial growth, while its strong visitor base and demographic trends encourage investment in entertainment, recreation, and cultural amenities. All of these factors indicate a sustainable, long-term development trajectory that can transform Cumru Township into a thriving hub of innovation, commerce, and community life.

Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile

Cumru Township exhibits a maturing, well-educated population with strong income levels, marked by a significant senior demographic. The community maintains high homeownership rates and shows stable household patterns, though shifting age distributions and household compositions signal evolving service and housing needs.

As highlighted in the *IMAGINE Berks Strategic Economic Plan*, Cumru Township aligns well with broader county trends. Cumru's median household income of \$93,022 underscores a financially stable community, complementing the county's economic resilience and steady growth. With 49.05% of residents holding at least an associate degree, Cumru also benefits from a highly educated population, aligning with county projections of 8,300 new associate and bachelor's degree graduates over the next decade. Similarly, Cumru's aging population reflects countywide trends of increasing retirements, while its stable household patterns and strong homeownership rates support regional goals for community retention and development.

Total Population



15,857

Median Age



43.78

Median Household
Income



\$93,022

Associates Degree
or Higher



49.05%

Economic Base Analysis

The *IMAGINE Berks Strategic Economic Plan* underscores trends that resonate strongly with Cumru Township’s economic landscape. Berks County’s economy is anchored by manufacturing and healthcare, sectors that collectively drive over 30% of its GDP and workforce—a pattern mirrored in Cumru, where healthcare accounts for 33.4% of local employment. Similarly, the Township’s high concentration of small businesses aligns with the countywide prominence of microenterprises, which make up nearly half of all establishments. Workforce challenges identified in Berks County, particularly in healthcare and manufacturing, present a shared opportunity for Cumru to attract talent and expand its professional and retail sectors, aligning with the county’s focus on fostering high-growth industries.

Housing Market Assessment

Housing demand reflects diverse needs, from growing senior housing requirements to professional workforce preferences. Current housing stock shows strong ownership rates but are trending toward increased rental demand, suggesting need for varied housing options.

Berks County faces similar challenges in aligning its housing stock with evolving demand. The county’s aging housing inventory, with 25% of units built before 1939, reflects a pressing need for redevelopment and modernization. Countywide trends highlight demand for affordable rental housing, with 63% of low-income renter households cost-burdened, alongside opportunities for higher-value owner housing to meet the preferences of the growing professional workforce. Cumru’s shifting rental demand and senior housing needs align with these countywide priorities, emphasizing shared opportunities for targeted housing strategies.



Healthcare

Largest employment sector

Percent of Workforce: 33.4%
Jobs: 1,847
Establishments: 36



Small Businesses

Under 10 Employees

Percent of Workforce: 81.1%
Establishments: 371

Source: Placer. AI, Experian, Reading Chamber of Commerce

Key Housing Metrics (U.S. Census)



\$243,200
Median Home Value



\$1,924
Median Monthly Mortgage



\$1,239
Median Monthly Rent



2.48
Average Household Size (per household)

Housing Market Indicators
U.S. Census, Placer. AI, Experian, Reading Chamber of Commerce

Housing Stability
89.4% same residence after 1 year

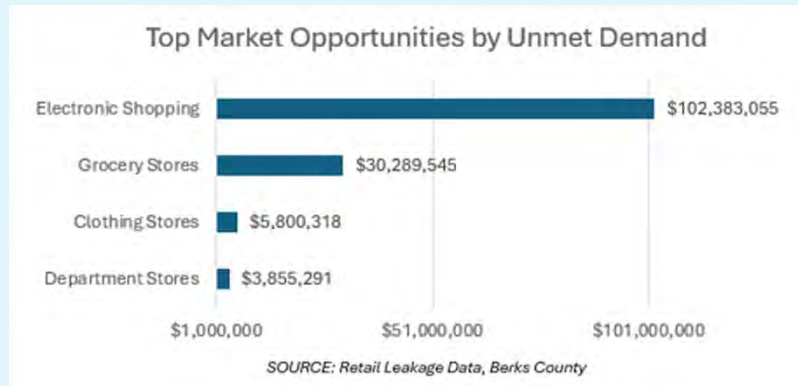
Population Growth
2-5% projected growth through 2029

Senior Population
24.4% aged 65+ (2024)

Community Services and Amenities

The Township's robust retail and service sector, supported by 7.1 million annual visits and \$318 million in consumer demand, shows both current strength and significant growth potential. Market analysis reveals over \$150 million in unmet retail demand across key sectors, while strong household incomes and clear spending patterns indicate substantial opportunity for targeted commercial development.

Cumru's strengths in retail and entertainment align closely with the countywide priorities outlined in the *IMAGINE Berks Strategic Economic Plan*. Addressing unmet market demand, particularly in sectors like grocery and e-commerce, reflects shared opportunities for growth, with Cumru's \$150 million in retail gaps mirroring similar countywide trends. The plan's focus on placemaking—through investments in trails, greenspaces, and revitalized main streets—presents a framework for Cumru to enhance its own public spaces and attract both residents and visitors. By leveraging its strong consumer base and vibrant entertainment offerings, Cumru is well-positioned to support the county's broader goals of tourism growth and community enrichment.



Competitive Potential

Cumru Township's competitive position is anchored by strong socioeconomic fundamentals and strategic advantages. A highly educated workforce (49.05% with associate degree or higher), robust household incomes (\$93,022 median), and strategic location assets support sustained growth potential. These strengths, combined with high residential stability (89.4% retention) and established healthcare sector presence, position the Township favorably for targeted economic development.

Much of Cumru's competitive edge aligns with themes identified in the *IMAGINE Berks Strategic Economic Plan*. Berks County prioritizes leveraging regional talent pipelines and addressing workforce needs, which complements Cumru's access to over 35,000 annual graduates in high-demand fields like business and healthcare. Additionally, the county's focus on e-commerce and advanced manufacturing development mirrors Cumru's \$102 million e-commerce market potential and opportunities for targeted retail growth. While small business dominance and an aging population present challenges countywide, Berks' strategic efforts to foster entrepreneurship and revitalize key sectors offer a roadmap for Cumru to overcome similar barriers. By aligning its growth strategy with these countywide priorities, Cumru is well-positioned to enhance its competitive standing within the region.

Economic Growth Opportunities

- Significant retail market gaps totaling over \$150M in unmet demand
- Strong regional talent pipeline with over 35,000 annual graduates in business and healthcare
- Growing professional services sector potential aligned with workforce education levels
- Healthcare sector expansion potential supported by regional training programs
- E-commerce/digital retail opportunity (\$102M market gap)

Development Challenges

- Business scale limitations with 81.1% of establishments under 10 employees
- Aging demographic (24.4% aged 65+) requiring service adaptations
- Workforce alignment with 73% white-collar concentration
- Small business dominance limiting larger employer attraction
- Shifting housing preferences with trending increase in rental demand

Market Potential

- Primary retail opportunities:
 - Service sector expansion Electronic shopping/E-commerce: \$102.3M gap
 - Grocery sector: \$30.3M gap
 - Clothing retail: \$5.8M gap
 - Department stores: \$3.9M gap
- Market potential is supported by a growing population
- Professional office development opportunity aligned with workforce
- Housing diversification needs driven by demographic shifts



Public Outreach

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- ◆ Overview
- ◆ Steering Committee Meeting #1 – Visioning Session
- ◆ Stakeholder and Focus Group Meetings
- ◆ Public Community Survey
- ◆ Open House #1
- ◆ Steering Committee Meeting #2 – Public Outreach Update
- ◆ Open House #2

Public Outreach

Overview

To ensure the Strategic Plan reflected community values, market realities, and local priorities, a multifaceted stakeholder engagement process was completed. Engagement efforts include a steering committee **Visioning Session**, targeted **Focus Groups** with nonprofit and real estate professionals, individual **Stakeholder Meetings** with developers and business leaders, a **public survey** that garnered almost 250 responses, a **business survey**, and two community **Open Houses** that presented key findings and invited additional feedback. This inclusive process helped identify common themes and divergent perspectives that inform the final plan's direction.



Overview of Data & Findings

Public outreach consistently demonstrated the following themes:

Housing

- Significant lack of new residential product, especially townhomes
- Aging housing stock is not attractive to younger population
- Homes sell quickly in Cumru Township, indicating a strong housing market
- Lack of capacity in Governor Mifflin School District poses a concern for new housing development

Development Challenges

- Lack of infrastructure and shovel ready sites
- Lack of large development sites
- Lancaster Pike – having several property owners and small parcels creates challenge to consolidate properties for redevelopment
- Areas within the flood plain will require additional public investment

Retail

- Lack of retail and dining options
- Commercial buildings have vacancies
- Older retail buildings are unappealing

Outdoor Space

- Active recreational amenities are missing
- Residents desire walkability and recreation amenities, including playgrounds
- Preserving open space is critical

Challenges

- There is currently a **disconnect between existing infrastructure and future infrastructure needs** (water/sewer/stormwater/electric) at sites suitable for development or redevelopment.
- **Some land will need to be acquired** to prepare shovel-ready sites along major commercial corridors.
- **Portions of Lancaster Pike are in Flood Zone A without Base Flood Elevation.** **Zone A** is high risk area with 1% annual change of flooding. Key considerations include elevating lowest floor to or above Base (100-Year) Flood Elevations.

Opportunities

- Market data and resident feedback point to a **desire to construct new housing stock within Cumru Township.** There is also a need to **revitalize existing housing stock.**
- Market data and resident feedback also point to a **desire for more local retail and dining options.** **Mixed-used developments** are viewed positively.
- The former **Titus Station site** provides ample redevelopment opportunities for **light industrial uses.**
- Market data and resident feedback point to a **desire to invest in family-friendly infrastructure,** including playgrounds, trails, and other amenities.



Steering Committee Meeting #1 – Visioning Session

On January 23, 2025, a Visioning Session was held at the Cumru Township Building in Berks County, PA. The public meeting assembled the project’s steering committee from a diverse group of community leaders, economic development professionals, and representatives from local organizations. Steering committee members represented the following entities:

- Cumru Township Board of Commissioners
- Cumru Township staff
- Governor Mifflin School District
- Berks County
- Greater Reading Chamber Alliance
- Cumru Township Planning Commission

The meeting was facilitated by the project team and focused on discussing Cumru Township’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	CHALLENGES
• High household income • Strategic location • Housing stability and quality • Great municipal services (<i>police, fire</i>) • Knowledgeable local leadership • Engaged officials of higher offices • Quality school district • Redevelopment opportunities • Abundant natural resources	• Challenging topography • Fragmented property ownership • Limited infrastructure (<i>water, sewer</i>) for developable land • Falling tax-assessed values • Increasing municipal operating costs • School district capacity • Housing stock unattractive to younger residents • Outdated retail spaces and buildings	• Revitalization of older retail locations • Leverage passenger train station to attract younger residents • Strong resident and official support for smart growth • Higher household incomes to attract new retail • Coalition with Governor Mifflin municipalities • Bipartisan support from three state representatives • Development potential to grow tax base • Abundant state and federal funding opportunities • Developer contributions for infrastructure improvements	• Difficult topography • Fragmented property ownership hinders land assembly • Water entities struggling with existing systems • Older retail stock unattractive to potential retailers • Limited incentives for property owners to sell land • High costs for infrastructure expansion and retail modernization

Stakeholder and Focus Group Meetings

The project team completed Stakeholder and Focus Group Meetings in March and April 2025. Participants in each meeting discussed their respective industries and how they relate to economic development needs in Cumru Township.

Individuals and organizations interviewed in Stakeholder and Focus Group Meetings included the following:

- **John Buccinno** – NAI Keystone
- **Eric Burkey** – Burkey Construction
- **Hamid Chaudhry** – Shillington Farmer's Market
- **Matt Close** – C&B Development
- **Jan Dietrich** – Berks County Intermediate Unit #14 & Grill Fire Company Social Quarters
- **Natasha Donaldson** – Mifflin Community Library
- **Mike Duff** – Penske Logistics
- **Vicki Friedman** – Mohnton-Cumru Lions Club
- **James Lorah** – Louie's Restaurant
- **Mark Mohn** – Reading-Berks Association of Realtors & Smart Growth Alliance
- **Chad Schlanger** – United Real Estate
- **Devin Tuohey** – The Concordia Group
- **Dan Whitney** – Whitney Development
- **Steve Willems** – NAI Keystone
- **Jeremy Zaborowski** – Berks IDA



Focus Group Meetings – Real Estate Professionals

The first focus group meeting focused on real estate professionals who have worked and/or lived in the Cumru Township area. The professionals discussed Cumru Township's strengths and weaknesses regarding real estate and economic development and provided insight into future strategies for growth. The most critical barrier to real estate development in the Township is lack of infrastructure. Other weaknesses include lack of affordable homes, an aging population, and few available sites. To address these concerns and attract real estate development, the focus group suggested adaptive reuse, use of tax abatements such as TIF or LERTA, expanding infrastructure to attract developers, and simplifying the process for developers.

Real Estate Professionals Key Themes

- Severe lack of new residential product, especially townhomes (\$300k – \$350k).
- Infrastructure investment must precede development – “build and they will come.”
- Industrial development should come first, creating jobs that support residential growth.
- Much of Cumru Township's residential-zoned land lacks necessary infrastructure.
- Strong competition from neighboring townships with established retail centers.

Focus Group Meetings – Non-Profit Organizations

The second focus group centered on non-profit organizations operating in Cumru Township. Participants discussed needs in the Township and highlighted what a successful economic development strategy would look like from each organization's unique perspective. All participants talked about the Township's aging population and lack of community engagement and volunteerism.

While Cumru Township is predominantly identified as an affluent community there is still a need for non-profit efforts, and lack of engagement from residents hinders their critical work. Focus group participants highlighted the need to attract young families through recreation and other initiatives. Participants also see a need to better promote non-profits and to create formal collaborations between non-profits, local businesses, and Cumru Township.

Non-Profits Key Themes

- Limited development space.
- An aging volunteer base impacts non-profits organizational sustainability, highlighting the need to attract young and engaged residents.
- Strong interest in formal collaboration between non-profits, local businesses, and Cumru Township.
- Recreation projects can be used to attract young families, boost community involvement, and support economic growth.

Stakeholder Interviews – Local Developers

Delta held stakeholder interviews with multiple local developers. Developers agree that Cumru Township has strong demographics but development is primarily hindered by lack of utility infrastructure. Sites must be pad-ready in order to attract development. If Cumru Township were to be proactive in infrastructure investments, it is likely that developers would be interested. TIF and other tax abatement tools are also instrumental for attracting new development.

Developers Key Themes

- Lack of infrastructure is the primary barrier to development within Cumru Township.
- Spring Township and Wyomissing are more attractive due to infrastructure investment.
- “Shovel-Ready” sites with expedited approval processes are essential.
- Lancaster Pike corridor has potential for commercial and multi-family development.

Stakeholder Interviews – Key Industry Leaders

Interviews with key industry leaders encompassed a range of industries located in Cumru Township. Discussion focused on economic growth and challenges in the Township, how the Township can support local business, and potential economic development strategies. Industry leaders believe that Cumru Township staff are helpful when businesses have zoning and code concerns but processes need to be simplified and streamlined and the Township needs to make a more concerted effort to reach out to small businesses. Tax credits would be helpful in attracting new businesses, but Cumru Township needs to be intentional in their efforts.





Key Industry Leaders Key Themes

- Streamlined, simplified business processes are needed.
- Development should be strategic and intentional, not opportunistic.
- Significant lack of housing affects employee recruitment and retention.
- Multi-municipal cooperation could improve economic development.
- Community trust and buy-in are essential for successful implementation.

Key Themes Across all Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups

**Infrastructure
as the Foundation**

**Strategic
Development Areas**

**Streamlined Approval
Process**

**Housing – Employment
Balance**

**Public-Private
Partnerships
(TIF, LERTA)**

**Community
Engagement and Trust**

Residents identified the following as key **OPPORTUNITIES** for Cumru Township:

- **Revitalizing older retail areas** (Business Route 222 and other shopping plazas)
- Developing a **plan to attract new businesses** to the Township
- Supporting the proposed **passenger train** station in Reading to connect Reading to Philadelphia
- Adding **new retail and dining** options
- Utilizing **state and federal grants** to provide funds for Township improvements
- Expanding **green infrastructure** in the Township (non-motorized trails, outdoor recreation space)
- Improving **local roadways**

While residents identified Cumru Township's significant strengths, they are also aware of Township weaknesses and the need to pursue opportunities to achieve economic growth. The survey asked residents to rate potential economic development opportunities and initiatives. The most popular opportunities and initiatives were:

- Filling **vacant storefronts** with new businesses
- Pursuing **state and federal grants**
- Improving the **selection of businesses**



The least popular potential opportunities and initiatives were:

- Accommodating **new housing** development
- Marketing Cumru Township as a **filming destination**
- Developing **new athletic facilities**

The Economic Development portion of the survey culminated by asking residents if they had additional thoughts on how Cumru Township should advance economic development projects and initiatives. Key themes from these responses include:

- Expand and diversify dining and retail options
- Thoughtful development, including mix-used along Route 222
- Community character must be protected by preserving open space and avoiding sprawl
- Improve water and sewer infrastructure
- Increase connectivity
- Streetscape upgrades, including façade improvements, street trees, and pedestrian lighting
- Expand trails, parks, and sports complexes
- Use targeted tax incentives and redevelopment mandates



Overall, Cumru Township residents are highly supportive of development and redevelopment within their community. Residents recognize the need for economic growth and want to ensure that any future development is thoughtful and aligns with community goals. There is a strong desire for improved retail and dining and want to lower the tax burden on residents. One of the most consistent themes throughout the residents' responses was concern for maintaining Cumru's natural resources and open spaces that are vital to the Township's culture, character, and history.

Demographic Questions

Survey respondents largely reflect the overall demographic makeup of Cumru Township, with most respondents being long-standing Township residents, high earners, and homeowners. Specifically,

- 52.6% of respondents are female and 47.4% are male.
- 44.9% of respondents are aged 65 or over and 24.7% are aged 55 to 64. Only one respondent was between 18 and 24 (0.4%).
- 47.8% of respondents are employed full-time and 40.1% are retired.
- 96.4% of respondents own their own home.
- 32.0% of respondents have lived in Cumru Township for over 30 years while only 1.6% have lived in Cumru Township for less than a year.
- 31.6% of respondents have a graduate or professional degree and 30.4% have a bachelor's degree. 99.6% of respondents have a least a high school diploma or high school equivalent.
- 27.1% of respondents have a household income of \$150,000 or higher. 22.7% declined to respond.

Open House #1

The first public Open House for resident feedback was held at Governor Mifflin Intermediate School on Wednesday April 9, 2025, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Participants were invited to provide insight on the future vision for Cumru Township at seven (7) different stations comprised of different activities, comment cards, and survey sheets.

Key themes resulting from these activities include:

Development Preferences

- Strong opposition to **warehouses** (*mentioned repeatedly*).
- Desire for **small retail businesses, restaurants, dining options, and mixed-use developments** (*residential + commercial*).
- Requests for **affordable family housing and condos**, with some favoring **55+ developments**.
- Support for **reusing existing buildings** instead of new construction.
- Interest in some **industrial development** (*minority view*).

Recreation & Green Space

- Calls for more **parks, playgrounds, sports complexes, and outdoor recreation** (*e.g., skateboard park, boat launch, outdoor concerts*).
- Suggestions for **trails and preserving open space and farmland**.
- Ideas for **joint recreation programs** with neighboring communities.
- Specific mention of **Mohnton Park** as a good example.

Infrastructure & Aesthetics

- Interest in better **sidewalks, lighting, signage, parking, and traffic signal** improvements.
- Emphasis on **pedestrian improvements**, especially near schools.
- Desire for **aesthetically pleasing** developments and murals to enhance community character.
- Interest in developing a **gateway area along Route 222** with mixed uses and trails following historic routes.

Community Needs

- Requests for fun **youth activities** beyond sports (*e.g., game centers, entertainment*).
- Suggestions for **urgent care facilities** and possible **educational expansions** near Flying Hills.
- Call for **transparency** in township decisions, especially regarding large projects like warehouses.

Overall Themes

- No warehouses, more vibrant small businesses and housing, recreational spaces, green/open space preservation, improved infrastructure, and better community engagement.

A full description of the Open House activities and public feedback can be found in the appendices.

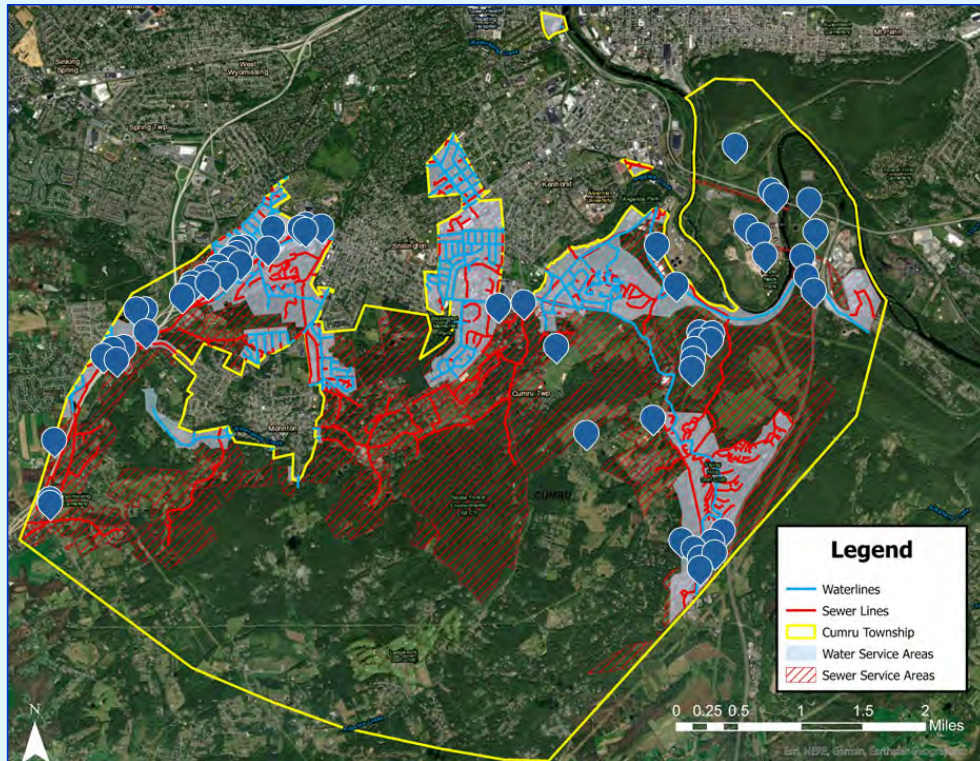
Steering Committee Meeting #2 – Public Outreach Update

A second steering committee meeting was held on June 25, 2025. At this meeting, Delta provided the steering committee and Cumru Township residents with an update on public outreach and presented initial findings and recommendations.

Delta discussed the Visioning Session SWOT analysis, stakeholder and focus group meetings findings, survey results, and community feedback from the Open House.

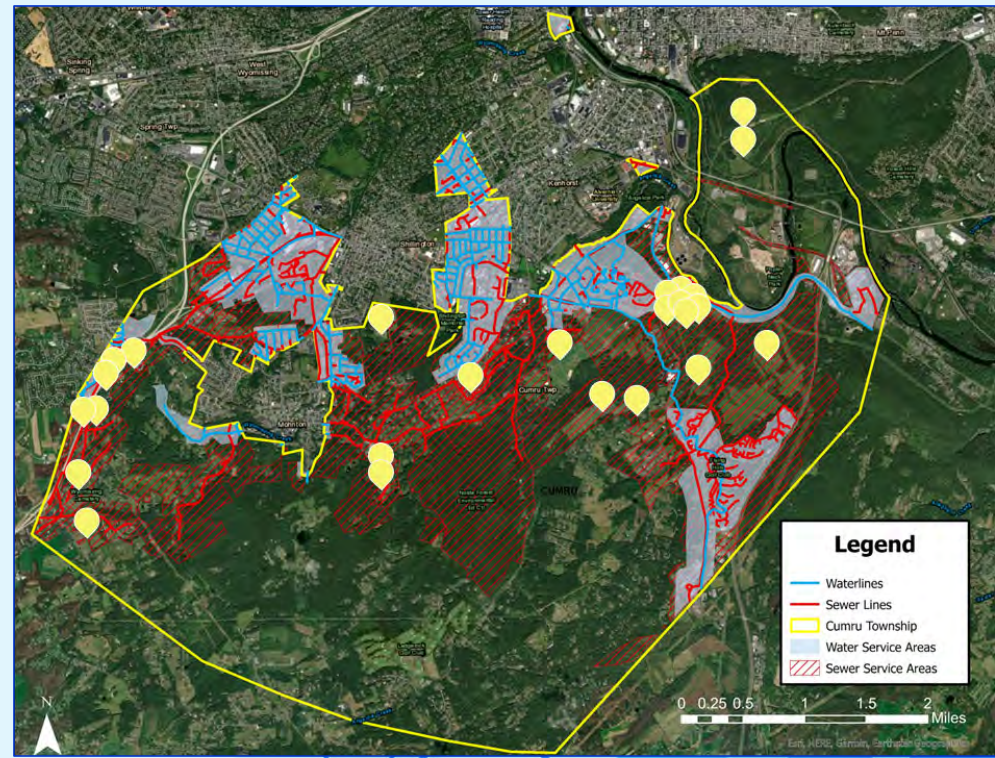
Public outreach revealed concern about the Township's infrastructure. Delta compared the commercial and housing priority areas from Open House Station 2 to existing water and sewer infrastructure in the Township as well as the FEMA Flood Hazard Map for the Lancaster Pike corridor. This analysis revealed that many of the priority areas are not located within water and/or sewer service areas, requiring infrastructure investment for any potential development. A significant portion of Lancaster Pike is located within the FEMA Flood Zone, necessitating additional consideration and planning from future developers.

Priority Commercial Areas (Blue Pins) and Cumru Township Utilities



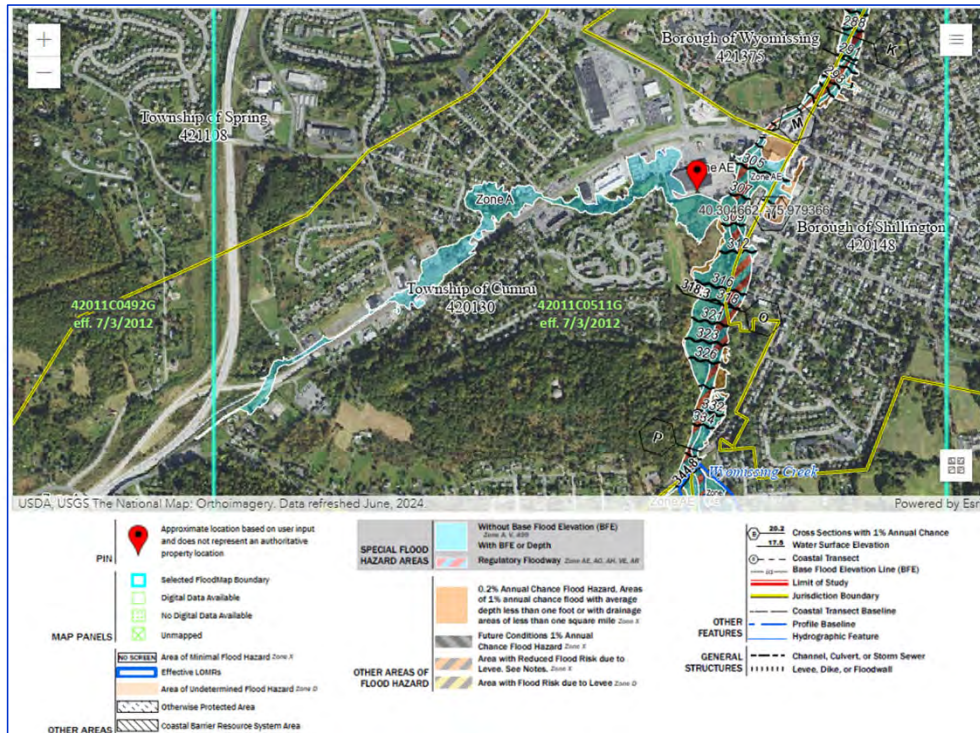
Source: Delta Development Group

Priority Housing Areas (Yellow Pins) and Cumru Township Utilities



Source: Delta Development Group

FEMA Flood Hazard Map for Lancaster Pike (Business Route 222) Corridor



Source: FEMA Flood Map Service Center

Based on community feedback, the four following focus areas were recommended:

- Reinventing Lancaster Pike
- Improving Existing Commercial Areas
- Housing – Preserving and Constructing New
- Active Recreation and Connectivity

The steering committee and public were given the opportunity to provide immediate feedback on prior public outreach and implementation recommendations.

The following concerns were raised:

- Difficulty managing public funding
- Prior lack of collaboration with surrounding municipalities
- Lack of space for new students and school district expansions
- Increasing maintenance and service costs
- High taxes
- Uncertainty of grants
- Development turnaround time

Key themes from the discussion included:

- The possibility of a retail and restaurant corridor along Lancaster Pike.
- The Township needs a coordinated plan for grants.
- Lancaster Pike development hinges on site control.
- New development will bring new families, affecting the school district's capacity.
- Suggestions for small changes such as signage off 422 (e.g., advertising for food and gas).
- Investments from the Township will attract private investors.
- Cumru must engage in strategic, thoughtful development, with a clear vision for the future.

Open House #2

A second public Open House was held at Governor Mifflin High School on Wednesday September 3, 2025, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Delta gave a presentation on public outreach results to date, and then participants were divided into breakout groups to discuss the following topics:

- Rethink and Refresh our Commercial Areas
- Creating a Vision for Lancaster Pike
- A Place to Call Home: Improving and Expanding Housing Together

Key themes from all three groups included:

- Need for better dining and retail
- Development opportunities at Lancaster Pike, Gouglersville, and Shillington Shopping Center
- Improving walkability
- Need to address infrastructure deficiencies

A complete description of each group's comments can be found in Appendix D.





Recommendations

05

- ◆ Lancaster Pike, A New Vision
- ◆ Rethink + Refresh Our Commercial Areas
- ◆ Where Communities Thrive: Preserving and Expanding Housing
- ◆ Move, Play, and Connect: Expanding Outdoor Recreation and Connectivity

Recommendations

1.

Lancaster Pike, A New Vision

With the construction of Route 222, the Lancaster Pike (Pike) has suffered from the lack of economic activity and local identity. Although the Pike serves as the Gateway into the Township, current conditions reveal a landscape of unrealized potential. The hodgepodge of commercial activity disrupts continuity, underused buildings limit productivity, and a lack of cohesive design undermines the Pike's appeal. These issues not only impact the local economy but also diminish community pride and deter new investment. Emerging trends, including shifts in retail, demand for mixed-use environments, and growing interest in walkable, experience-driven places, present a unique opportunity to reshape the Pike into a place that better reflects the needs and aspirations of the Township.

The vision for the Pike should center around transforming it into a dynamic, mixed-use destination that balances commercial activity, housing, public space and walkability. The key goals should include:

- Attracting new businesses and supporting local entrepreneurship by creating flexible spaces
- Encouraging mixed-use development combining residential, retail and office space creating a vibrant 24/7 environment
- Activating vacant parcels through infill development to include public spaces
- Enhance walkability and connectivity through pedestrian-friendly design with improved streetscape and bike infrastructure
- Creating a masterplan for the Pike that establishes a cohesive identity with consistent signage, lighting, landscaping and branding that reinforces the Pike as a destination

The vision for the Pike should be shaped through robust public engagement process ensuring the perspectives of residents, business owners, property owners and other stakeholders are central to the planning effort. The process should include infrastructure assessments and zoning review to ensure the vision is grounded in economic reality and development feasibility. Strategic partnerships with the private sector, Berks County and Pennsylvania's Department of Community and Economic Development will be key to catalyzing investment and implementing infrastructure improvements.

Reimagining the Pike is not just about new buildings or retail offerings; it is about restoring the Pike's role as a center of Township life and economic vitality. Through thoughtful planning and intentional investment, the Township can transform a struggling corridor into a thriving, inclusive place that embraces the opportunities of the future.

2.

Rethink + Refresh Our Commercial Areas

The existing commercial areas are the backbone of Cumru's economic base. Over time, these areas have become underutilized and are lined with sprawling parking lots and low-density buildings. They were designed for a car-centric world and have not kept pace with contemporary needs. It will be critical for the Township to work with property owners to update these spaces to serve the needs of the community while addressing sustainability, economic stagnation and social disconnection.

Located on Cumru's prime real estate, these existing commercial spaces provide poor pedestrian access and offer little consumer appeal. The transformation of these commercial areas is essential to sustain Cumru's tax base and enable the Township to compete for the retail market share of the region. The suggested approach is to reimagine these areas as mixed-use, multi-functional commercial town "centers" that can integrate new housing, connectivity and public space. The underutilized parcels and wide parking lots can become opportunities for infill development, adding residential units, community amenities and green space, while maintaining and improving the retail footprint to serve the daily needs of the community.

A case study presented, and received well, during the second public open house was the revitalization of the Drexeline Shopping Center in Upper Darby Township, PA. The Drexeline Shopping Center is a mid-20th-century retail strip plaza in Upper Darby Township's Drexel Hill neighborhood, undergoing a major transformation. What began as a car-oriented retail center has evolved into a mixed-use town center redevelopment known as the Drexeline Town Center. The project is emblematic of suburban revitalization, integrating walkability, smart growth principles, community needs, and modern infrastructure upgrades. The shopping center is located on approximately 18-acres and started to show signs of age with its design limiting its appeal to consumers. The vehicle-dominated layout didn't align with modern compact design goals, and the Township's comprehensive plan called for infill, walkable centers with diversified land use. The redevelopment transforms Drexeline into a smart growth-oriented, multi-functional center, integrating residential, retail, services, green space, and trail access.

Cumru Township has several commercial areas like Drexeline that can be revitalized and transformed into places where people want to live, work, dine, shop and relax. The Township will need to partner with the property owners to secure funding or offer tax abatement to incentivize property owners to invest in these key economic assets

COMPONENTS OF REDEVELOPMENT

Existing:



Proposed:



- 1) Expand ShopRite to update facility and create destination supermarket for area;
- 2) Create more effective and well situated parking;
- 3) Construct a new office building - bring in new business to area;
- 4) Create better visibility and more usable parking;
- 5) Renovate Anthony's and PNC;
- 6) Self-storage;
- 7) Wawa;
- 8) +/- 140 Market Rate Lifestyle Lofts / Flats;
- 9) Improve access to mass transit and make center walkable;
- 10) Make center more environmentally friendly;
- 11) Centralize location of Police Sub-station.

p.7

3.

Where Communities Thrive: Preserving and Expanding Housing

The community has identified the lack of diverse housing options as one of Cumru's most pressing challenges. This concern is not just anecdotal, market data reinforces it; homes in Cumru are being sold shortly after hitting the market, signaling strong demand and limited supply. The speed at which listings are purchased underscores an urgent need to expand housing opportunities across a variety of price points and types to meet the needs of both current and future residents.

To address the growing demand for diverse and affordable housing options, the Township should pursue a dual strategy that combines the rehabilitation of existing housing stock with the development of new mixed-use projects. This approach not only preserves the character and heritage of established neighborhoods but also promotes vibrant, inclusive, and walkable neighborhoods that meet the evolving needs of current and future residents.

As the population in Cumru continues to age, the Township will begin to face a critical challenge, and opportunity, in addressing the housing needs of its older residents. Whether being able to age in place in a rehabilitated home, or downsizing into a more manageable unit, the Township's seniors will be seeking housing that is safe, accessible and affordable.

Housing Rehabilitation Program

Many of the Township's residential neighborhoods contain aging housing stock that, with targeted investment, can continue to provide safe, affordable homes for families, seniors, and individuals. A focused housing rehabilitation program will extend the lifespan of existing homes while improving health and safety for homeowners. A housing rehabilitation program will also support sustainability through energy-efficient upgrades and weatherization.

A housing rehabilitation program can be funded through the Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement (PHARE) Fund. The PHARE program, administered by the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA), provides funding to support the creation, rehabilitation, and preservation of affordable housing throughout the Commonwealth.

The program prioritizes homeowners and renters whose incomes fall at or below 80% of the area median income (AMI). PHARE supports the rehabilitation of aging homes to improve safety, efficiency, and long-term viability.

The Township should partner with Berk's County Housing Authority who has experience in administering a housing rehabilitation program. The authority can be responsible for outreach/application intake, income verification/eligibility, property inspections/scope of work development, contractor bidding/oversight, final inspection and compliance monitoring.

The program should focus on:

- Roof repairs or replacements
- Electrical, plumbing and HVAC system upgrades
- Lead-based paint and asbestos remediation
- Energy-efficiency improvements (e.g. insulation, windows)
- Accessibility modifications (e.g. ramps, bathroom or kitchen adaptations)
- Code compliance and structural repairs
- The program will prioritize urgent health and safety needs while also supporting improvements that enhance long-term sustainability and affordability.

Mixed-Use Development

At the same time, strategic mixed-use development will help increase the supply of housing to support economic development and smart growth principles. These developments should combine residential, commercial and recreational uses. The developments should offer a range of housing types to include both condos, patio homes, townhomes and single-family homes. The development should encourage social interaction and community vitality through public and recreational spaces, ground-floor retail, and amenities that serve both residents and the broader neighborhood. To ensure sustainable growth, the development of mixed-use neighborhoods must be guided by a collaborative planning process that balances community needs with the school district's valid concerns about enrollment growth and the capacity challenges that may arise from a rapid influx of new families. Zoning overlays should be developed to enable mixed-use development in areas of the Township currently serviced, or in proximity to, water and sewer infrastructure.

4.

Move, Play, and Connect: Expanding Outdoor Recreation and Connectivity

A weakness identified by the community was the lack of active outdoor recreation areas and trails/connectivity. The Township should seek funding to develop a Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan (CRPOS). The CRPOS will enable the Township to provide a system of parks, trails, sports fields, and playgrounds that support a diverse range of recreational opportunities with universal access while incorporating both popular and emerging trends in recreation. The CRPOS will identify ways to connect the community to close-to-home recreational opportunities, trails, parks and green spaces. The Plan will examine existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to determine missing links that enable residents to access recreational areas, as well as the Township's commercial centers, healthcare and educational facilities.

The CRPOS should include the following:

- Develop an overall system of parks, trails, sports fields, and playgrounds that provide a diverse range of recreational opportunities
 - Assess the need for upgrades to existing parks and recreational areas
 - Examine the existing parks system for any potential barriers to universal access.
 - Evaluate existing programming and determine if the recreational needs of the Township's residents are being met; incorporate emerging trends in all future programming
 - Identify underserved neighborhoods and development recommendations for providing recreational assets to meet the needs of these neighborhoods

→ Develop a Connectivity Plan

- Identify ways to connect the City's neighborhoods to recreational areas and open spaces which would include close-to-home township parks, as well as major regional trails systems, greenways, and larger parks (national, state and local);
- Examine existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to determine missing links that enable residents to access recreational areas.

The process for developing the CRPOS should include a survey to be distributed to each resident to better understand the residents' perspectives of outdoor recreation and connectivity.





Implementation

06

- ♦ Zoning
- ♦ Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan
- ♦ Lancaster Pike Master Plan
- ♦ Housing Rehabilitation Plan
- ♦ Tax Incentives
- ♦ The Role of Public-Private Partnerships
- ♦ Comprehensive Safety Action Plan
- ♦ Community Branding

Implementation

Zoning

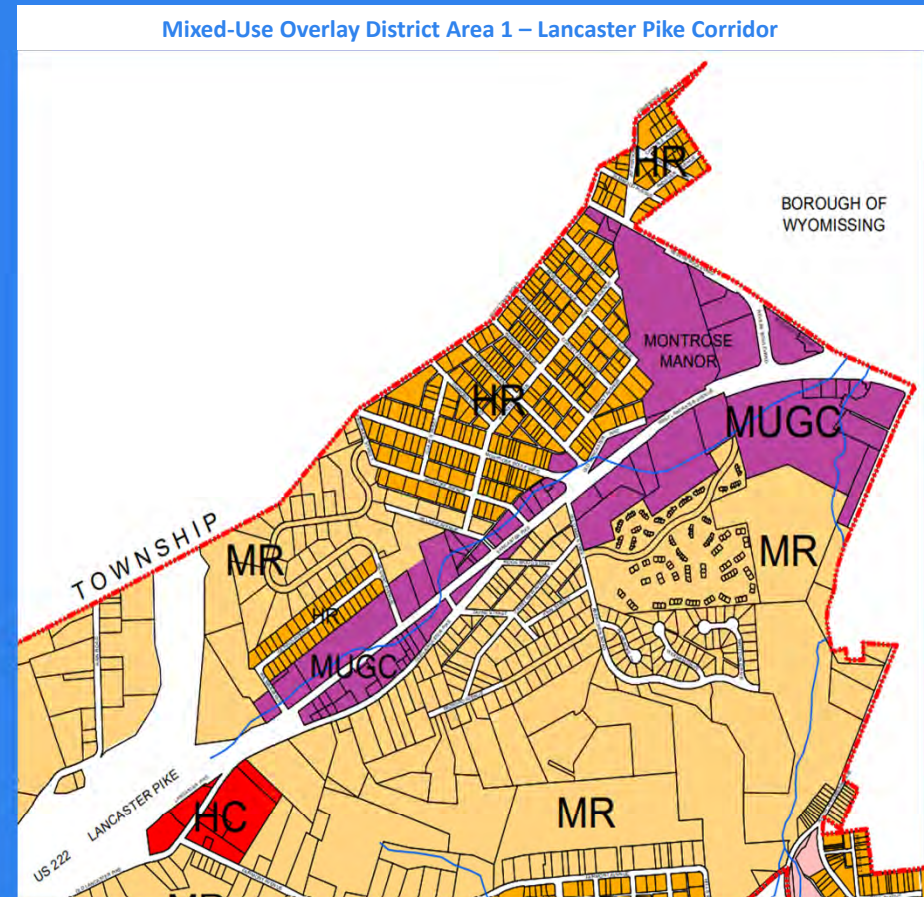
Although modified since its initial adoption, Cumru Township's current Zoning Ordinance (ZO) dates back to 2009. In the decade and a half since the ZO was initially adopted, the national, state, and regional economies have changed substantially. As a result, development patterns have also changed. To be proactive in promoting development that enhances both the local quality-of-life and economy, the Township should consider adding new Overlay Districts to its zoning ordinance that promote new development types. The Township should also consider a comprehensive Zoning Ordinance update.

Although the Township currently has a Mixed-Use/General Commercial (MUGC) Zoning District, it covers only a limited land area within the Township's western edge. In addition, some of the current provisions within the MUGC Zoning District, such as setback requirements, may not result in a desirable form of mixed-use development. Delta recommends that Mixed-Use and Traditional Neighborhood Development Overlay Districts be established and be deployed in suitable areas throughout the Township.

Potential Mixed-Use Overlay Districts

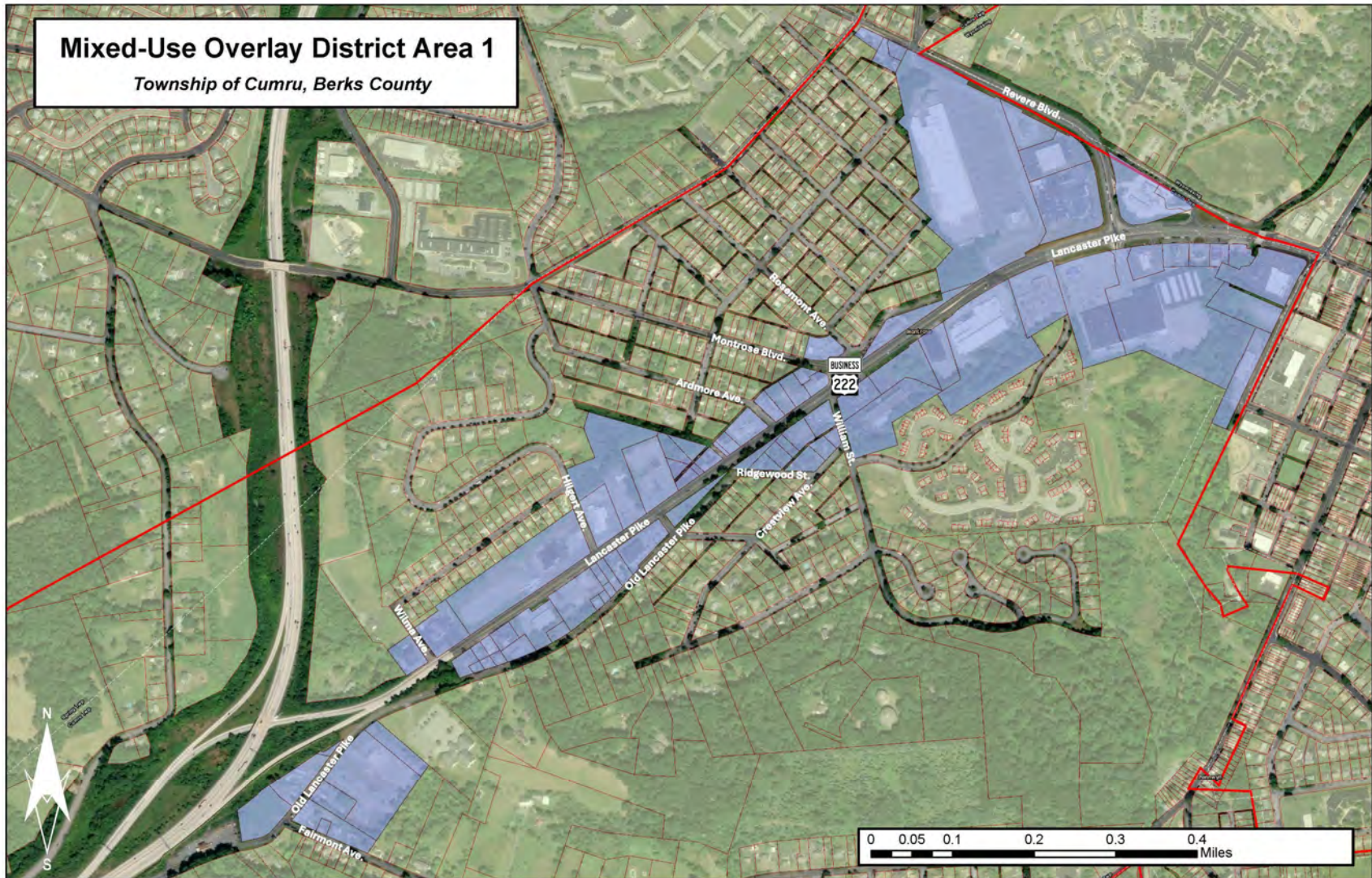
Mixed-Use Overlay District Area #1 Characteristics

- Encompass existing MUGC Zoning District areas (purple).
- Encompass existing Highway Commercial Zoning District area (red) around Old Lancaster Pike/Fairmont Avenue.
- Encompass existing Medium Density Residential parcels (tan) between Lancaster Pike, Williams Street, Crestview Avenue, and Ridgewood Street.



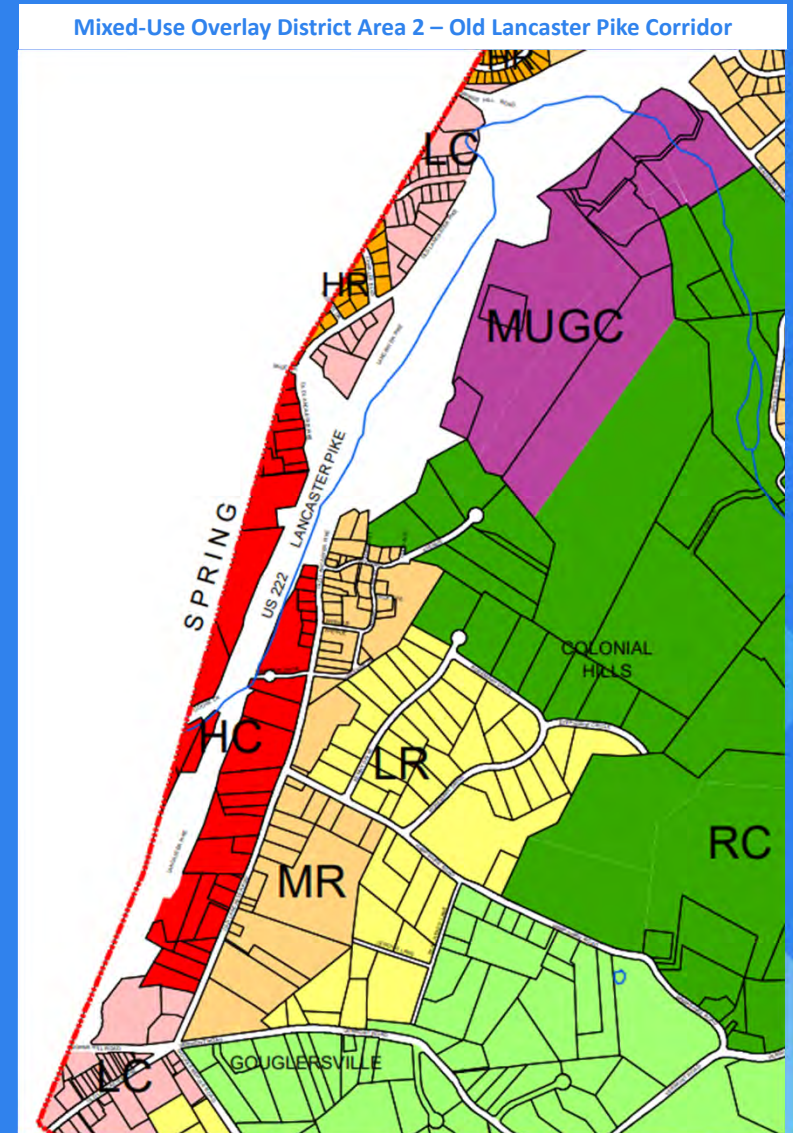
Mixed-Use Overlay District Area 1

Township of Cumru, Berks County



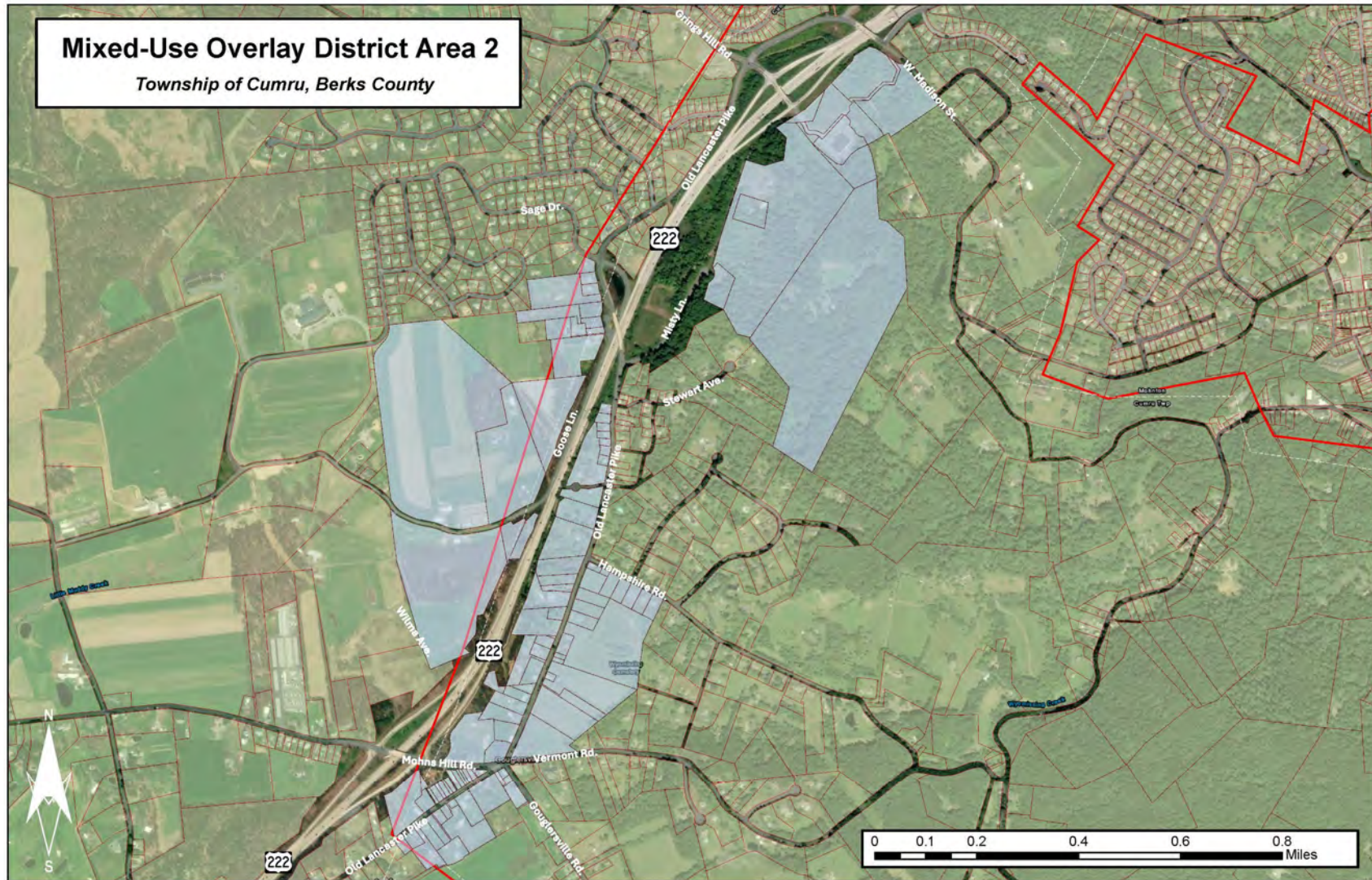
Mixed-Use Overlay District Area #2 Characteristics

- Encompass existing MUGC Zoning District area (purple).
- Encompass existing Highway Commercial Zoning District area (red) along the U.S. Route 322 Corridor.
- Encompass existing Medium Density Residential parcels (tan) between Hampshire Road and Vermont Road along Old Lancaster Pike.
- Encompass Local Commercial parcels (pink) along Mohns Hill Road and Old Lancaster Pike.



Mixed-Use Overlay District Area 2

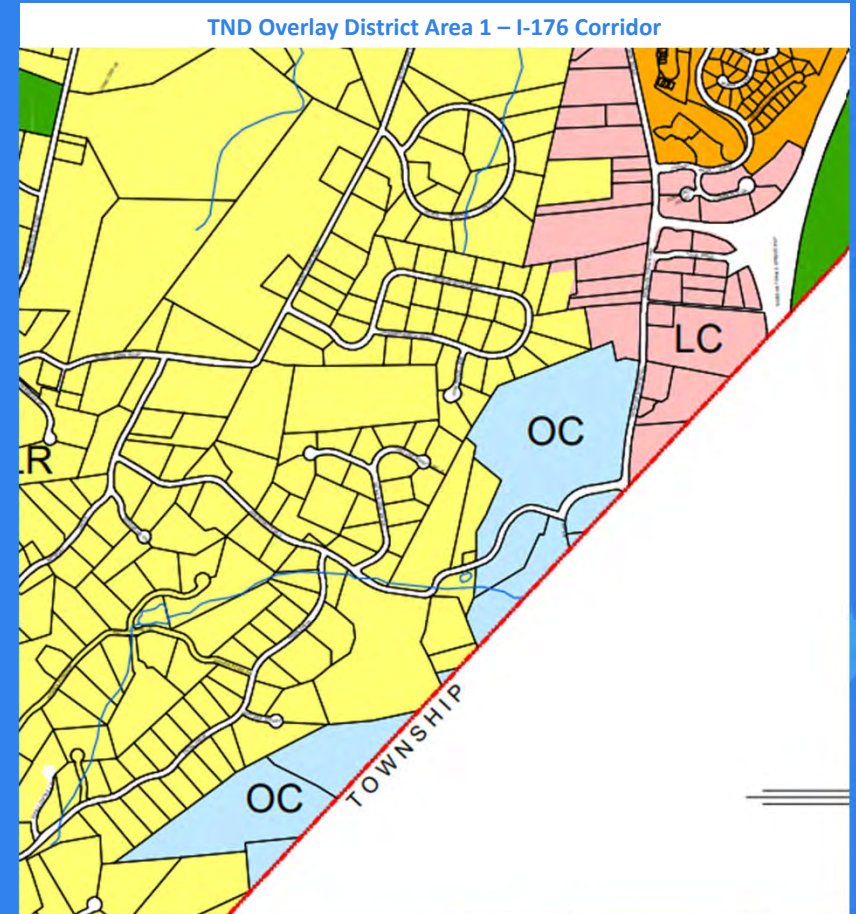
Township of Cumru, Berks County



Potential Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) Overlay Districts

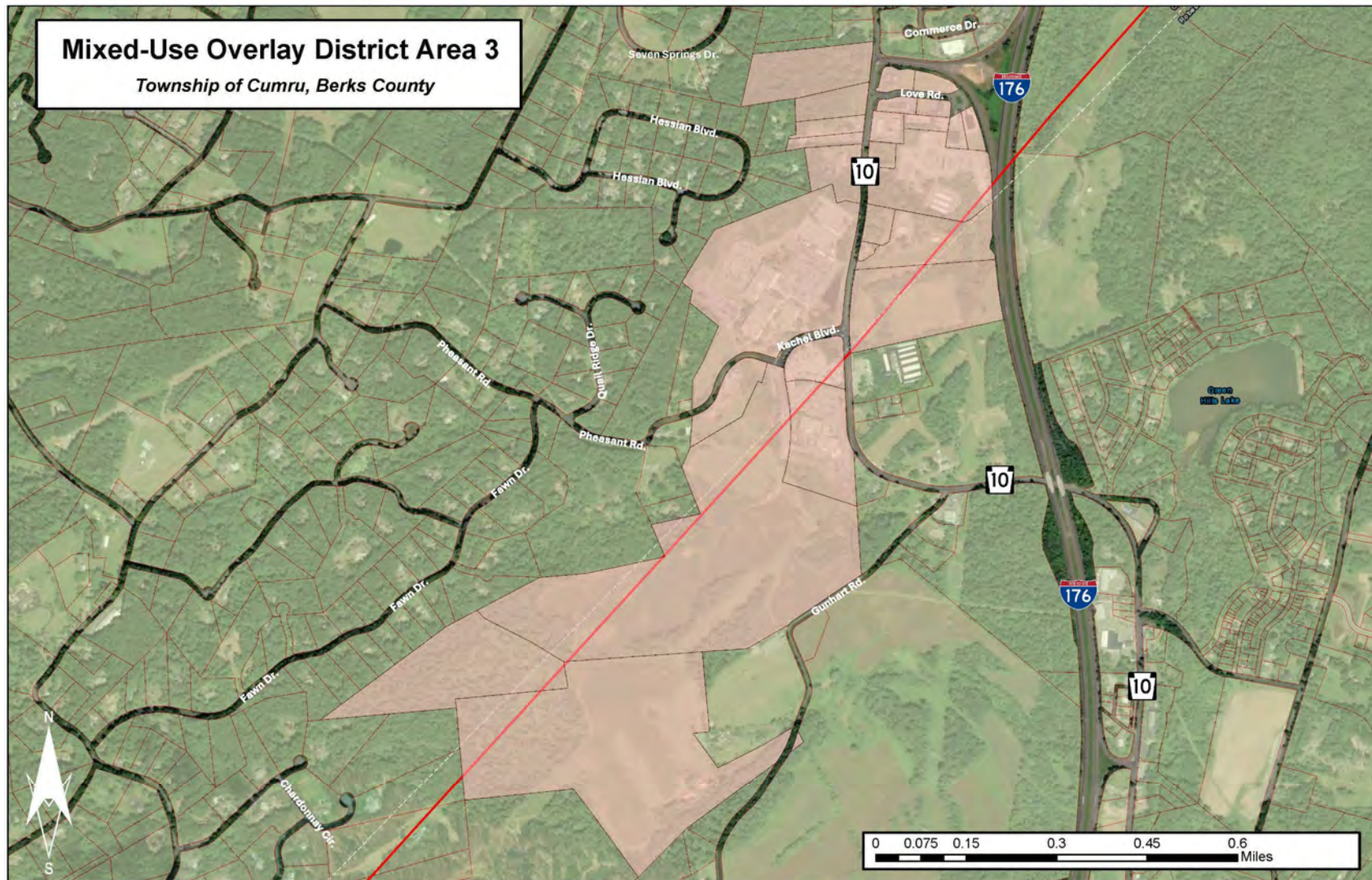
TND Overlay District Area #1 Characteristics

- Encompass existing Office Commercial Zoning District area (light blue).
- Encompass existing Local Commercial Zoning District area (pink) along the PA Route 10 from the Township border to the I-176 interchange.



Mixed-Use Overlay District Area 3

Township of Cumru, Berks County



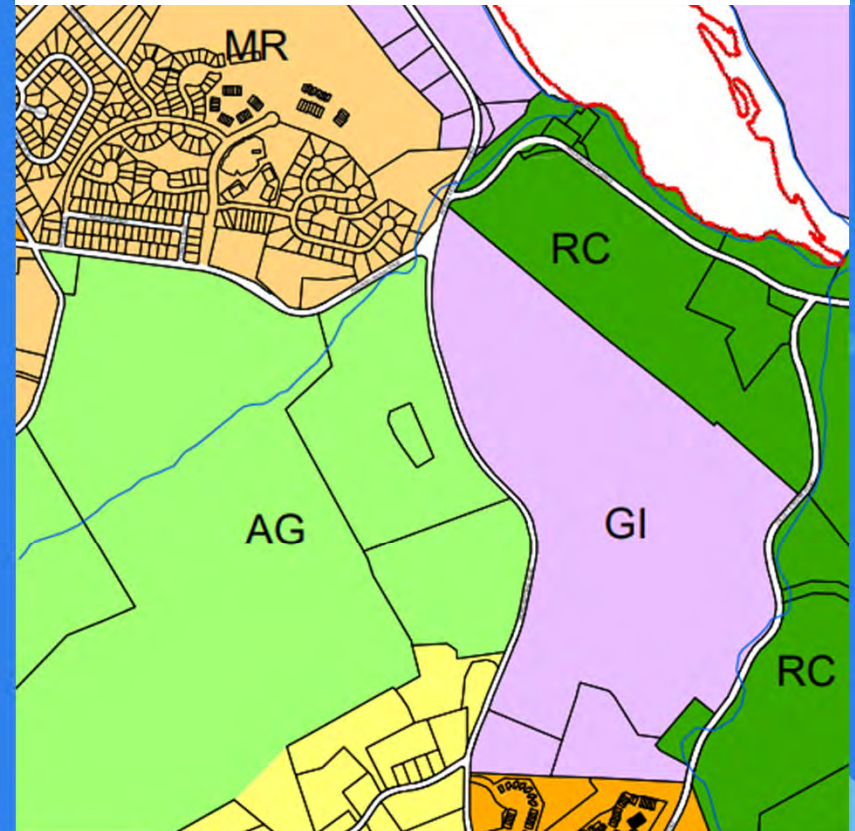
TND Overlay District Area #2 Characteristics

- Encompass existing General Industrial Zoning District area (purple) along PA Route 10 between Flying Hills and PA Route 724.
- Encompass existing Agricultural Zoning District area (light green) along PA Route 10 and PA Route 724.

In preparing the new Overlay Districts, the Township should strive for the following:

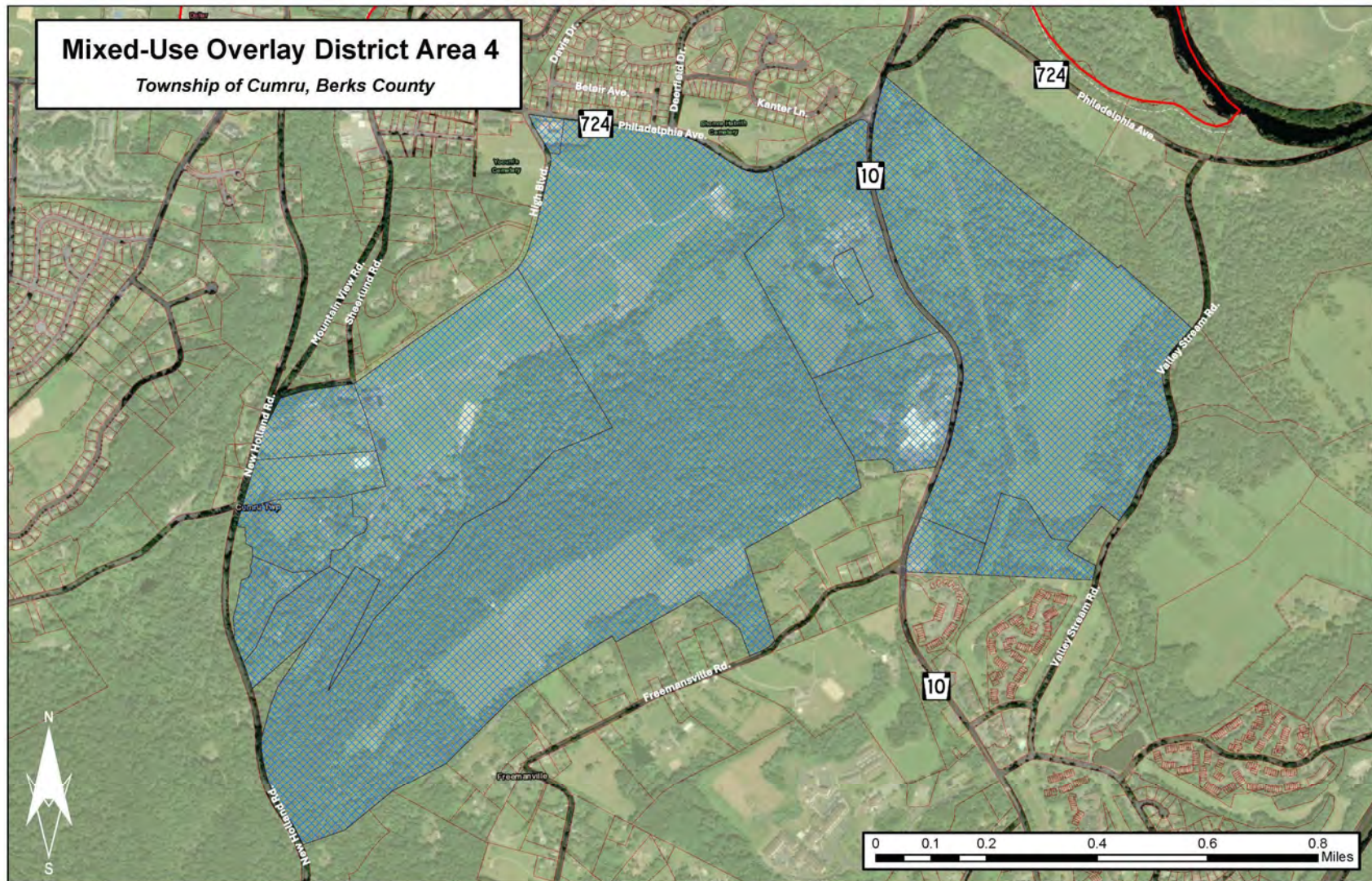
- **Align with Recent Plans:** The Township should strive to align its ZO and SALDO with recent plans, such as *Foundations for the Future: Preserving Our Assets, Building Our Tomorrow, IMAGINE Berks*, and the *Berks County Comprehensive Plan 2030 Update*.
- **Identify Gaps with Current Zoning Ordinance:** The current ZO dates back to 2009, so current market realities may not match the zoning district originally assigned for some portions of the Township. In addition, the Township may have areas of future development emphasis that is not currently zoned for in-demand development types. Groupings of parcels that match with these examples of zoning mis-match are ideal candidates for new Overlay Districts.
- **Ease of Access:** For ease of access by the general public, the Township should have a web-based zoning map, including new Overlay Districts, with a zoom function (hosted by ESRI or a similar provider) that allows residents and prospective developers to easily identify the local of parcels of interest.
- **Focus on Transitions:** The transition from one zoning district to the next should be logical, emphasize complementary uses, and provide deference to the scale and function of existing neighboring uses. In adding new ZO Overlay Districts, the Township should select groupings of parcels where logical transitions can be made between existing zoning districts.

Mixed-Use Overlay District Area 2 – PA Route 10/PA Route 724 Corridor



Mixed-Use Overlay District Area 4

Township of Cumru, Berks County



Smart Growth Principles and Expanding Infrastructure: Building for a More Sustainable Future

The need to balance development with sustainability is critical. The Township should guide infrastructure expansion to support long-term economic resilience, environmental stewardship and enhanced quality of life. The Township should focus on building vibrant, livable neighborhoods through thoughtful land use, compact design and strategic investments in infrastructure. Sprawling and inefficient growth patterns should continue to be discouraged.

The Township's approach to infrastructure expansion should be rooted in smart growth principles including:

- ➔ **Mix Land Uses.** The Township should create zoning language that integrates residential, commercial, civic and recreational uses and provide bike paths and sidewalks when it is feasible to create more dynamic, accessible neighborhoods
- ➔ **Take Advantage of Compact Building Design.** Encourage more dense and efficient development patterns to minimize the footprint of infrastructure and reduce long term maintenance cost while preserving open space
- ➔ **Invest to Create Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices.** The infrastructure investments should support diverse housing types to ensure residents have access to safe and suitable living environments

As the Township prepares to expand infrastructure to support new growth, the effort must be done strategically and sustainably. Infrastructure investment should be coordinated with private investment. The Township should work with utility companies to determine the capacity and condition of existing systems to prioritize upgrades where needed the most. The Township should explore grants and public-private partnerships to ensure the infrastructure expansion is financially sustainable.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan

The Township should seek funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to prepare a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan. The Plan will serve as a blueprint to guide future investments, land conservation, park improvements, trail development, and recreational programming. It will also ensure the Township is eligible for future funding from DCNR.

The key initial steps will include:

- ➔ Form a project steering committee composed of municipal staff, residents and key stakeholders.
- ➔ Define initial goals, expectations and timeline.
- ➔ Secure funding.
- ➔ Hire a qualified consultant through a formal RFP process. DCNR provides guidance on developing an RFP and the required qualifications of the consulting team.



Lancaster Pike Master Plan

A phased approach should be taken to create a new vision for Lancaster Pike. The goal is to engage the community, analyze existing conditions, identify opportunities, and create a shared vision that drives strategic reinvestment and sustainable development. The Township should secure funds to retain an experienced landscape architect or engineering firm with experience in urban planning. The consultant would guide the planning process.

Phase One

Creating a Working Steering Committee

The Township should create a working steering committee/task force with the energy and expertise needed to develop an implementable vision. This Committee would establish the project scope and goals and process; identify other key stakeholders; build public awareness of this initiative; and define the boundaries.

Phase Two

Assess the Pike and Identify Redevelopment Potential

The next phase of the visioning process is to document the current conditions, land use, infrastructure needs and challenges. A land use inventory and property condition survey would be developed to map vacant and underutilized parcels. The consultant would also review zoning, determine the size and capacity of existing water and sewer lines and identify barriers related to access, parcel size and ownership.

Phase Three

Community Vision and Design

This phase would develop a shared vision and future for the Pike and generate ideas that reflect the Township's values and economic realities. A series of design charrettes would provide the community with opportunities to share their vision and ideas for the Pike and to incorporate goals for walkability, housing, small business growth and green space. This phase would develop a preliminary land use concept, design guidelines and several redevelopment scenarios. The scenarios would identify infrastructure required to support the redevelopment and the cost associated with each scenario.

Phase Four

Early Action Projects

The Steering Committee would identify catalyst projects that could quickly implement the vision for Lancaster Pike. These projects could be streetscape projects, infill development, or infrastructure improvements. The implementation would require a partnership with property owners and the Township. Key tools for implementation include:

- Funding for streetscape, infrastructure and public space improvements
- Incentives and/or public funding for private development

Housing Rehabilitation Program

The Housing Rehabilitation Program should be designed to preserve the existing housing stock, enhance living conditions, and prevent displacement of low- and moderate-income (LMI) households. The program will provide financial assistance for eligible homeowners and landlords renting to LMI tenants to complete critical home repairs and improvements that promote health, safety, energy efficiency, and code compliance.

Phase One

Developing Program Guidelines and Determining Need

This phase will include the following key action steps:

- ➔ Define the program objectives, eligible activities and the target population
- ➔ Establish the income eligibility thresholds based on PHFA guidelines
- ➔ Develop the program guidelines, application forms and scoring criteria
- ➔ Create communications and outreach strategy to include outreach materials and FAQs

Deliverable: Program Guidelines, Application and Communication Strategy

Phase Two

Outreach and Application Intake

- ➔ Launch public outreach campaign targeting LMI homeowners and landlords
- ➔ Distribute applications through the library, community centers, schools and online
- ➔ Host information sessions and provide application assistance as needed
- ➔ Accept and log applications and conduct initial eligibility screening (e.g., township residents, proof of income, ownership)

Deliverable: Application Intake Tracking System, Outreach Events/Logs; Verified List of Eligible Applicants

Phase Three

Secure Funding and Initiate the Program

- ➔ Determine number of homes to be completed based on funding secured
- ➔ Conduct on-site inspections of eligible properties
- ➔ Prepare detailed work scope based on inspection finding and program priorities
- ➔ Ensure compliance with lead-based paint, asbestos and other environmental requirements
- ➔ Obtain contractor bids

Deliverable: Inspection Reports/Photos; Final Scopes of Work; Contractor Procurement



Phase Four

Project Approval and Homeowner/ Contractor/Township Agreements

- Review and approve project scopes and budgets
- Develop project schedule
- Hold a pre-construction conference with homeowner and/or landlord
- Execute agreements which outline the terms of funding, work to be performed and compliance requirements

Deliverable: Executed Agreements; Final Project Budgets and Project Schedule

Phase Five

Construction, Final Inspection and Grant Closeout

- Schedule and manage the construction timelines
- Conduct site visits to monitor progress and compliance
- Coordinate change orders and resolve issues as needed
- Provide updates to funding agencies and partners
- Perform final inspections to verify completion of work
- Issue final payments and release of liens

Deliverables: Progress Reports, Change Order Documentation, Contractor Payment Approvals, Final Inspection Reports, Completion Certificates, Post-Rehabilitation Property Files

The Township should evaluate the program performance against goals set (e.g., number of homes rehabbed, average cost per unit) and identify lessons learned and areas for improvements and recommendations for the next phase.

Key Performance Indicators for the program should include:

- Number of applications received and approved
- Number of housing units rehabilitated
- Average cost per unit
- Percent of projects completed on time and on budget
- Reduction in code violations and emergency repair needs within the Township



Tax Incentives

Throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, municipal governments utilize tax incentive programs to spur private-sector investment for development, redevelopment, and the buildout of public infrastructure. To promote development and redevelopment in key areas of interest, the Township should work to establish and deploy a handful of tax incentive tools. Potentially beneficial tax incentive tools include:

Tax Increment Financing (TIF):

- TIF allows municipalities to capture future incremental tax revenues generated by a development to finance public improvements or to secure bonding for project costs. Deploying a TIF entails establishing a formal “TIF District” in which specific parcels of land are targeted due to their status as blighted or underdeveloped. A TIF Project Plan is then developed, outlining improvements like infrastructure, land acquisition, or redevelopment that are intended to stimulate economic development within the district. In most cases, the municipality will issue bonds to finance the (often high) upfront costs of development, redevelopment, infrastructure installation activities. A portion of the increased property tax revenue from the developed or redevelopment area (known as the “tax increment”) is then used to pay off the initial bond issued for TIF Project Plan costs. The municipality continues to receive the original tax revenue generated by the properties before the TIF was established. Once the bonds are repaid, participant entities keep 100% of the increased tax revenue. School districts and county governments may also elect to participate in the TIF process.

Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA):

- LERTA allows local taxing authorities (including municipalities, counties, and school districts) to reduce property taxes to promote development in underdeveloped areas or spur redevelopment in areas of economic development interest. Municipalities often structure LERTAs as a graduated abatement of taxes over a defined period (often 5-10 years). Like TIF, LERTA tax benefits must be within a clearly defined area for entities to qualify for tax relief. LERTA benefits may extend to commercial, industrial, and/or residential properties depending upon the structure of the LERTA program.

Payment-in-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILOT):

- In some municipalities, a substantial portion of their land area are owned by non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and/or governmental structures that reduce the number of tax-generating properties within the municipality. PILOT, through negotiated agreements between the property owner and municipality, can be used as a means of obtaining funds for the municipality to invest in municipal services, infrastructure, and other needs in-lieu-of traditional taxation. PILOT agreements are common in areas where healthcare systems colleges, universities, and other major non-profit organizations have a major landholding presence (e.g., City of Harrisburg, City of Erie, Lower Paxton Township – Dauphin County, etc.).

As a near-term effort to build-out public water infrastructure along the Lancaster Pike Corridor, Delta recommends that the Township work to garner the buy-in of private-sector developers for the establishment of a TIF District along the Lancaster Pike Corridor. Because of its strategic location and access to major transportation routes, it is a desirable area for development and redevelopment of mixed-use structures that incorporate retailers and dining establishments.

There is recent precedent for such a partnership in Berks County. In 2025, the BerksIDA and a private-sector development entity partnered with all three taxing bodies (municipality, county, and school district) to implement a TIF District along U.S. Route 422 in Amity Township¹. This \$5.0 million TIF effort will support the development of a 338-unit age restricted housing development comprised of 148 duplexes and 190 single-family homes. Because of this development, the assessed value of the property (\$395,000) is expected to increase to a market value of \$120 million, which will generate \$2.0 million more in annual property taxes for the benefit of Berks County, Amity Township, and Daniel Boone School District. The tax increment will be used to finance the sewer and water expansion necessary to support the project and surrounding properties. The success of this effort should be used as a model for a TIF District partnership along the Lancaster Pike Corridor in Cumru Township.

¹ <https://www.berksida.com/quarterly-newsletter/berksida-closes-on-5m-tax-increment-financing-tif-in-amity-township-for-338-unit-housing-development/>

The Role of Public-Private Partnerships

The implementation of this Plan will require collaboration, public and private investment and buy-in across all sectors. To turn the vision of the Plan into action the Township will need to actively pursue and cultivate partnerships with the private sector and public agencies. These relationships will bring together the strengths of the Township, private investors, businesses, and institutional stakeholders to drive growth, innovation, and community vitality.

Public-private partnerships can provide a powerful mechanism to maximize resources, share risk, and accelerate implementation of key initiatives outlined in this Plan. The Township can provide regulatory authority and secure funding for infrastructure investment, while the private sector can offer capital, innovation, and a deep understanding of market dynamics. These public-private partnerships can deliver outcomes that are sometimes difficult to achieve alone.

Public-private partnerships are not just a funding strategy; they are a model that has been used in other communities to achieve collaborative economic growth. By working across sectors with transparency and shared accountability, the Township can bring its Economic Development Strategic Plan to life, resulting in a stronger economy, more inclusive opportunities, and a higher quality of life for all residents.

Comprehensive Safety Action Plan

Throughout the public engagement process, community members expressed a desire to have more transportation assets that accommodate non-motorized transportation (such as walking and cycling). Residents view sidewalks, trails, and shared-use pathways as contributing to the quality-of-life within the Township. For new residents, adequate connectivity via sidewalks and trails is an attractive attribute that makes the Township an attractive place to locate. For these reasons, Delta recommends that the Township pursue the development of a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan.

The need for a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan has been, unfortunately, reflected in quantitative data recording incidents of motor vehicle crashes with pedestrians and cyclists. According to PennDOT's Pennsylvania Crash Information Tool² (PCIT), within the past decade, there have been 28 pedestrian-related crashes in the Township. Of these 28 accidents, two (2) were fatal, eight (8) resulted in suspected serious injury, seven (7) resulted in suspected minor injury, five (5) resulted in possible injury, and six (6) were of unknown severity.

During the same period, there were six (6) cyclist-related accidents, of which one (1) was fatal, one (1) resulted in suspected minor injury, one (1) resulted in possible injury, two (2) were of unknown severity, and one (1) was unknown if injured.

To rectify this unfortunate trend of motor vehicle crashes with pedestrians and cyclists, many municipal and county governments throughout the nation develop a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan. The overarching goal of the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan is to develop a strategy to prevent roadway fatalities and serious injuries. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, the seven (7) primary components of a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan are:

- ➔ Leadership commitment and goal setting
- ➔ Planning structure
- ➔ Safety analysis
- ➔ Engagement and collaboration
- ➔ Policy and process changes
- ➔ Strategy and project selections
- ➔ Progress and transparency

By undertaking a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan in coordination with a qualified transportation engineer, the Township will receive a series of detailed projects for future implementation, supported by quantitative safety data, that will reduce the prevalence of motor vehicle crashes with pedestrians and cyclists once implemented.

The Comprehensive Safety Action Plan provides firm justification for future design/engineering and/or construction requests through federal and state funding sources, such as the U.S. Department of Transportation Safe Streets and Roads for All Program, PennDOT Multimodal Transportation Fund, PennDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program, Commonwealth Financing Authority Multimodal Transportation Fund, and many others.

² <https://crashinfo.penndot.pa.gov/PCIT/welcome.html>



Community Branding

As the Township pursues development initiatives, investing in community branding will be critical for community identity. Thoughtful branding, including marketing and signage, will set the Township apart from surrounding municipalities, interest visitors, attract new residents and businesses, and foster Cumru Township pride. As highlighted in public engagement, Cumru Township has much to offer for visitors, residents, and businesses, including Nolde Forest, rural living, and great Township services; Township appeal will continue to grow as investments are made to attract new development. The public engagement process also demonstrated that Cumru residents themselves are not fully aware of Township boundaries and struggle to separate the Township from adjacent communities. Without strong branding, the Township's strong assets will yield little return.

A municipality's brand reflects its community values and identity, creating critical impressions for residents, businesses, and visitors. The Township should strive to develop a brand and messaging that highlights the Township's values, history, assets, and future vision. The branding initiative should capitalize on the Cumru Dragon, which is a recognizable logo for the Township, and emphasize Nolde Forest and other Township assets. To strengthen Cumru Township's unique identity, the Township should pursue the following initiatives:

Develop a Marketing Strategy

Having a clear strategy for branding Cumru is critical for uniform messaging. The Township should host a round table event to discuss how Cumru should be marketed to residents, businesses, and visitors.

The strategy should include how the Township should be portrayed, which assets the Township should emphasize, and a consistent color palette, typography, and voice to use in materials

Modernize Website

Municipal websites create vital first impressions for potential new businesses and residents. Quality websites are also vital for transparent communication. The Township's existing website is outdated and is not intuitive to navigate. The Township should invest in modernizing its website to make it appealing and easy to use, reflecting the Township's larger revitalization efforts. Businesses should be able to easily navigate the permitting process, and residents should be able to find resources with ease. As discussed in public engagement, the website should include a comprehensive list of community partners, including all non-profit organizations within the Township.

Create a Social Media Presence

Social media is an excellent tool for increasing participation in local government initiatives, fostering a sense of community, and informing residents and visitors of upcoming events. The Township currently has little to no social media presence, hindering efficient communication and limiting community participation. The Township should consider partnership with Alvernia University students from the Header School of Business to create a social media strategy. Alvernia Marketing students are required to complete experiential learning, with a past precedent for projects with community organizations. A partnership between Cumru Township and Alvernia students would be mutually beneficial. Social media posts should alert residents to community events, Township meetings, crisis events, community partners, local businesses, and ways that residents can engage their community.

Add Signage and Gateway Infrastructure

Consistent, recognizable signage will promote the Township and bolster community identity. As the Township pursues development initiatives, projects should use consistent, appealing signage, including street signs and wayfinding signage that advertises key locations. New and revitalized commercial centers should include gateway features, such as columns and signs with Cumru's logo. Artwork featuring local attractions and history, such as murals and installations, should be added.



Implementation Matrices

07

- ◆ Zoning – Adding Mixed-Use Overlay Districts
- ◆ Create Tax Incentives and Establish LERTA and TIF Districts
- ◆ Recommendation 1. Lancaster Pike, A New Vision
- ◆ Recommendation 2. Rethink + Refresh Our Commercial Areas
- ◆ Recommendation 3. Where Communities Thrive: Preserving and Expanding Housing
- ◆ Recommendation 4. Move, Play and Connect: Expanding Outdoor Recreation and Connectivity
- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Community Branding

Implementation Matrices

IMPLEMENTATION 1A. ZONING – ADDING MIXED-USE OVERLAY DISTRICTS				
ACTION ITEMS AND STEPS	LEAD PARTNER	KEY STAKEHOLDERS	FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES	TIMEFRAME
1. Identify the specific goals or issues the overlay districts will address	Cumru Township			Immediate – Year One
2. Assess how the overlay districts will complement or supplement existing base zoning.	Cumru Township			Immediate – Year One
3. Examine overlays used in similar Pennsylvania municipalities.	Cumru Township			Immediate – Year One
4. Draft the Overlay District Regulations – Geographic boundaries of the overlay – Permitted, conditional, special exception, or prohibited uses within the overlay. – Additional standards (e.g., design, density, signage, stormwater). – Relationship between base zoning and overlay. – Prepare draft text and map amendments to the zoning ordinance and zoning map.	Cumru Township, Township Solicitor			Immediate – Year One
5. Hold Public Meeting to obtain input on the proposed zoning amendments.	Cumru Township, Township Solicitor			Immediate – Year One
6. Submit draft ordinance to Planning Commission for review and comment. Discuss recommended changes and edit ordinance if necessary.	Planning Commission			Immediate – Year One
7. Notify Berks County Planning Commission. Send copy of proposed ordinance for 45-day review period.	Cumru Township			Immediate – Year One
8. Hold Public Hearing and proceed with adoption according to Municipal Planning Code.	Cumru Township			Immediate – Year One

Implementation Matrices

IMPLEMENTATION 1B. ZONING – ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE				
ACTION ITEMS AND STEPS	LEAD PARTNER	KEY STAKEHOLDERS	FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES	TIMEFRAME
1. Request planning assistance from DCED Office of Community Planning*	Cumru Township		DCED	Immediate – Year One
2. Identify the specific goals or issues the update will address	Cumru Township			Immediate – Year One
3. Assess how the update will change or supplement existing base zoning.	Cumru Township			Immediate – Year One
4. Draft the updated Zoning Regulations – Geographic boundaries of the zoning districts. – Permitted, conditional, special exception, or prohibited uses within zoning districts. – Additional standards (e.g., design, density, signage, stormwater). – Prepare draft text and map amendments to the zoning ordinance and zoning map.	Cumru Township, Township Solicitor			Immediate – Year One
5. Hold Public Meeting to obtain input on the proposed zoning amendments.	Cumru Township, Township Solicitor			Immediate – Year One
6. Submit draft ordinance to Planning Commission for review and comment. Discuss recommended changes and edit ordinance if necessary.	Planning Commission			Immediate – Year One
7. Notify Berks County Planning Commission. Send copy of proposed ordinance for 45-day review period.	Cumru Township			Immediate – Year One
8. Hold Public Hearing and proceed with adoption according to Municipal Planning Code.	Cumru Township			Immediate – Year One

* DCED provides up to 400 hours of technical assistance with an emphasis on achieving measurable results. [Community Planning - PA Department of Community & Economic Development](#)

IMPLEMENTATION 2. CREATE TAX INCENTIVES AND ESTABLISH LERTA AND TIF DISTRICTS				
ACTION ITEMS AND STEPS	LEAD PARTNER	KEY STAKEHOLDERS	FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES	TIMEFRAME
1. Create Financial Incentive Task Force	Cumru Township	Property Owners; Berks County; Governor Mifflin School District; Residents		Immediate – Year One
2. Identify areas to be designated as LERTA or TIF Districts	Cumru Township	Berks County; Governor Mifflin School District		Immediate – Year One
3. Develop a Cumru Township LERTA Program Strategy. Program guidelines should include the geographic description and boundary lines, percentage of taxes to be abated, apportionment per taxing body, duration, any requested stipulations, etc.	Cumru Township	Berks County; Governor Mifflin School District		Immediate – Year One
4. Develop a Cumru TIF Program. Program guidelines should include the geographic description and boundary lines, improvements to be financed through the TIF, diversion rate, duration, any requested stipulations, etc.	Cumru Township	Berks County; Governor Mifflin School District		Immediate – Year One
5. Develop authorizing ordinances for the revised LERTA Program to be adopted by Cumru Township, as well as resolutions for the County and School District. Based on future development, adopt TIF Ordinances as required.	Cumru Township	Berks County; Governor Mifflin School District		Immediate – Year One
6. Develop a marketing brochure that promotes the LERTA and TIF Programs.	Cumru Township			Immediate – Year One
7. Host a Developers Summit to promote Cumru, LERTA/TIF Zones, Goals and Financial Incentives Being Offered	Cumru Township			Immediate – Year One

IMPLEMENTATION 3. LANCASTER PIKE, A NEW VISION				
ACTION ITEMS AND STEPS	LEAD PARTNER	KEY STAKEHOLDERS	FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES	TIMEFRAME
1. Secure funding for Master Plan	Cumru Township		LSA Statewide; DCED Municipal Assistance Program	Year One
2. Create a working Steering Committee	Cumru Township	Property Owners, Business Owners, Residents		Year Two
3. Develop and issue RFP for consultant – Landscape Architect/Urban Planner	Cumru Township			Year Two
4. Select consultant	Cumru Township	Task Force Members		Year Two
5. Assess the Pike and identify redevelopment potential	Cumru Township	Task Force Members		Year Two and Three
6. Develop a vision	Cumru Township	Task Force Members		
7. Identify early action projects	Cumru Township	Task Force Members		
8. Secure funding for early action projects	Cumru Township	Berks County, Legislators, Commonwealth Agencies	LSA Statewide, Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program, CFA and PennDOT Multimodal Programs	Year Three - Ongoing

IMPLEMENTATION 4. RETHINK + REFRESH OUR COMMERCIAL AREAS

ACTION ITEMS AND STEPS	LEAD PARTNER	KEY STAKEHOLDERS	FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES	TIMEFRAME
1. Meet with property owners to discuss goals and objectives from the Economic Development Strategic Plan	Cumru Township			Year Two
2. Work with interested Property Owners to develop concepts that align with vision. Develop cost estimates for public and private improvements	Cumru Township			Year Two
3. If necessary, secure funding for master site plan development	Cumru Township		LSA Statewide	Year Three
4. Secure funding to assist with the construction of public improvements to be owned by the Township or Utility Companies. Secure RACP funding to assist with private sector costs.	Cumru Township		LSA Statewide; Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program; CFA and PennDOT Multimodal Programs	Year Three

IMPLEMENTATION 5. WHERE COMMUNITIES THRIVE: PRESERVING AND EXPANDING HOUSING

ACTION ITEMS AND STEPS	LEAD PARTNER	KEY STAKEHOLDERS	FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES	TIMEFRAME
1. Work with Berks County Redevelopment Authority to develop guidelines for a Township Housing Rehabilitation Program	Cumru Township	Berks County Redevelopment Authority		Year Three
2. Conduct and outreach and intake effort	Cumru Township	Berks County Redevelopment Authority		Year Three
3. Submit request for PHARE and/or CDBG funding to implement program	Cumru Township	Berks County Redevelopment Authority	PHARE; CDBG	Year Three
4. Implement program based on funding received.	Berks County Redevelopment Authority	Cumru Township		Year Three
5. Identify an area conducive to mixed-use development.	Cumru Township	Property Owners;; Real Estate Developer		Year Three
6. Develop Public-Private Partnership to advance development.	Cumru Township	Property Owners; Real Estate Developer		Year Three
7. Secure funding to assist with the construction of public improvements to be owned by the Township or Utility Companies. Secure RACP funding to assist with private sector costs.	Cumru Township	Berks County; Legislators; Commonwealth Agencies	LSA Statewide; Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program; CFA and PennDOT Multimodal Programs	Year Three

IMPLEMENTATION 6. MOVE, PLAY AND CONNECT: EXPANDING OUTDOOR RECREATION AND CONNECTIVITY

ACTION ITEMS AND STEPS	LEAD PARTNER	KEY STAKEHOLDERS	FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES	TIMEFRAME
1. Secure funding from DCNR to prepare a Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan (CRPOS)	Cumru Township	DCNR; DCED	DCNR C2P2; DCED Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP)	Year One
2. Create Steering Committee	Cumru Township			Year One
3. Issue RFP and select consultant to prepare plan	Cumru Township	Steering Committee		Year Two
4. Develop and adopt plan	Cumru Township	Consultant; Steering Committee; Community; Business Leaders		Year Two and Three
5. Secure funding for improvements identified within the CRPOS	Cumru Township	DCNR; DCED	DCNR C2P2; DCED Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP); LSA Statewide; Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program	Three and Ongoing

Note: Cumru Township could also seek funding to hire a legal or engineering firm with experience in drafting zoning amendment language to help guide this process.

IMPLEMENTATION 7. TRANSPORTATION

ACTION ITEMS AND STEPS	LEAD PARTNER	KEY STAKEHOLDERS	FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES	TIMEFRAME
1. Seek funding to hire a design/engineering team to create a Transportation Safety Action Plan to include Complete Streets and Vision Zero Plan. The guidelines and policy recommendations should provide direction in the decision making and design processes to ensure that all users are considered during the planning, design, construction, funding, and operations of the local transportation network.	Cumru Township	MPO; Community; Business Leaders; Berks County	Federal Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A); DCED Municipal Assistance Planning Grant	Year One

IMPLEMENTATION 8. COMMUNITY BRANDING

ACTION ITEMS AND STEPS	LEAD PARTNER	KEY STAKEHOLDERS	FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES	TIMEFRAME
1. Work with community leaders and local businesses to develop a clear marketing strategy.	Cumru Township	Local business owners; Community leaders; Alvernia University Marketing students		Year Four
2. Create brand guidelines that specify goals, a color palette, typography, and voice for marketing materials.	Cumru Township	Local business owners; Community leaders; Alvernia University Marketing students		Year Four
3. Update Township website to improve accessibility and meet modern visual expectations. The updated website should follow the Township's new brand guidelines.	Cumru Township			Year Four
4. Create social media accounts for Cumru Township (LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, and X).	Cumru Township	Alvernia University Marketing students		Year Four
5. Regularly post on social media accounts to engage community members. Posts should include Township meeting reminders, notifications about community events, profiles highlighting local businesses and community partners, emergency alerts, and Cumru Township fun facts and highlights.	Cumru Township	Alvernia University Marketing students		Year Four
6. Communicate community branding guidelines to developers.	Cumru Township	Developers		Year Four
7. Add signage and gateway features to new and revitalized commercial centers.	Cumru Township	Developers	LSA Statewide; Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program; CFA and PennDOT Multimodal Programs	Year Five
8. Invest in artwork highlighting Cumru Township attractions.	Cumru Township	Local artists; Developers	LSA Statewide; Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program; CFA and PennDOT Multimodal Programs	Year Five - Ongoing



Appendices

08

- ◆ Appendix I: Market Analysis Assessment
- ◆ Appendix II: Community Survey Results
- ◆ Appendix III: Open House #1 Data
- ◆ Appendix IV: Open House #2 Data

Appendix I: Market Assessment

Market Assessment

Overview

Market Assessment provides a data-driven foundation for Cumru Township's Strategic Plan by analyzing key demographic, economic, housing, and retail trends. The analysis incorporates current conditions, future projections, and comparisons to the broader Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) and Berks County.

Key Topics

- **Population & Age Trends.** Modest growth, aging population
- **Income & Employment Patterns:** Above-average household incomes, especially among working-age groups
- **Household Composition.** Predominantly smaller households without children
- **Housing Market & Conditions.** Aging housing stock, moderate values, strong owner occupancy
- **Retail Conditions.** Leakage in key categories, potential for local retail and dining growth

Combined, these trends reveal both opportunities and constraints that will shape strategy development in the next phase of planning.



Market Assessment

Population Analysis

Steady Growth, Aging Demographics

- Cumru Township's population is projected to grow modestly in the next five-years, from 15,623 in 2024 to 15,792 in 2029 – an increase of just over 1%. The Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) and Berks County are also expected to see minimal growth, maintaining regional stability.
- Cumru Township has a notably older population than examined reference geographies, with a median age of ~47, compared to ~41 for the MPA and Berks County.
- Older adults (ages 55+) make up a larger share of Cumru Township's population than in the region or county, reinforcing the importance of planning for aging-in-place and senior-friendly infrastructure.

Implications

- Future housing, recreation, and mobility strategies should account for an aging population.

+1.08%

Population Growth
2024-2029

169

New Residents
by 2029

~47

Median Age
Cumru Township

26%

Residents
Ages 65+

Age Distribution Comparison



Aging Population Impact

47

Cumru
Median Age

>

41

Regional
Average

Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Market Assessment

Income Analysis

Above Average Household Earnings

- Median Household Income in Cumru Township (2024): \$94,896, outpacing both the MPA (\$84,053) and Berks County (\$85,226).
- Cumru Township's income advantage is consistent across most age cohorts, especially among prime working-age groups (35–64).
- Despite an older population, Cumru Township households tend to remain financially stable through retirement age, with only moderate decline among residents 65+.

Age-Based Income Trends

- Income peaks between ages 45–54, followed closely by 35–44 and 55–64.
- Across all age brackets, Cumru Township consistently performs slightly above or in line with regional averages.

Implications

- Higher incomes may support targeted retail development and housing upgrades.
- Income stability among seniors strengthens the case for age-in-place strategies and mid-market housing options.

Above-Average Earnings

Consistent Income Advantage Across Age Groups

\$94,896

Cumru Township
2024 Median

\$84,053

MPA
2024 Median

\$85,226

Berks County
2024 Median

Income by Age: Cumru Advantage



Peak Earning Years

35-44

High

45-54

Peak

55-64

Strong

Senior Financial Stability

Moderate decline in 65+ income supports aging-in-place

\$10K+

Income advantage
vs region

Market Opportunities

Retail Development: Higher incomes support targeted commercial growth • Housing Upgrades: Mid-market housing options align with income stability

Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Market Assessment

Household Analysis

Smaller, Aging Households Dominate

- Total households in Cumru are projected to grow slightly from 6,764 (2024) to 6,980 (2029) – an increase of 3.2%.
- The average household size is 2.19, indicating a mix of aging adults, singles, and couples without children.
- Over 58% of households are married couples without children, while just 24.6% include children. The remaining 17% represent other arrangements (e.g., individuals, roommates, multigenerational households).

Implications

- Limited household growth suggests stable demand, with an emphasis on maintaining existing neighborhoods.
- Smaller household sizes reinforce the need for housing options that accommodate seniors, empty nesters, and individuals living alone.

Household Profile

Smaller, Aging Households Dominate

6,764

Current Households
(2024)

+3.2%

Household Growth
by 2029

2.19

Average Household Size

Household Growth Trajectory



58%

Married Couples
No Children

24.6%

Households
with Children

17%

Other
Arrangements

Empty Nesters & Singles

Aging adults, couples without children, and individuals living alone drive smaller household sizes

Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Market Assessment

Housing Analysis

Home Value and Age

- Median Home Value in Cumru is \$325,506 and is expected to grow to \$374,306 by 2029.
- The median year homes were built in Cumru is 1975, which is more recent than the median for the MPA (1960) and Berks County (1968).

Vacancy and Ownership

- Residential vacancy in Cumru is 8.6%, which is higher than the MPA (6.3%) and Berks County (5.6%).
- Homeownership in Cumru (68%) is consistent with Berks County but higher than the MPA.

Implications

- Cumru Township has strong homeownership rates and a health median owner-occupied home value.
- Although Cumru Township has a more recent median home-built year than the MPA and Berks County, new housing stock is still desired.



Housing Market Profile

Aging Stock, High Ownership, Moderate Values

\$325,506

Median Home Value
2024



\$374,306

Projected Value
2029

68%

Homeownership
Rate

8.6%

Vacancy Rate
(Above Regional)

\$1,239

Median Monthly
Rent

1975

Median Year
Built

Homeownership vs Vacancy Comparison



Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Market Assessment

Industry Analysis

Historic Economic Transformation

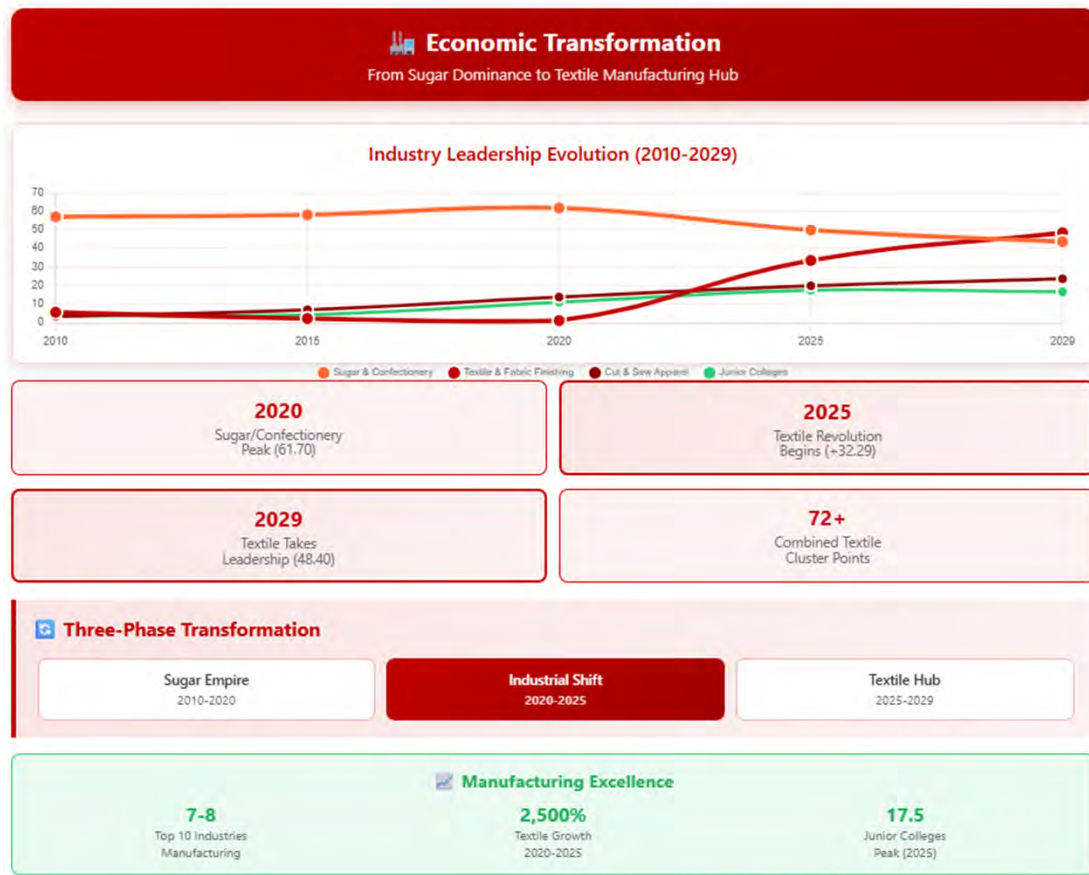
- Sugar/Confectionery Manufacturing dominated through 2020, peaking at 61.70
- Textile Growth: Fabric Finishing exploded 1.26 → 33.55 (+2,500% growth) 2020-2025
- Leadership Change: Textile Manufacturing (48.40) overtakes Sugar/Confectionery Manufacturing (43.62) by 2029

Textile/Apparel Manufacturing Hub

- Combined textile cluster reaches 72+ concentration points by 2029
- Cut & Sew Apparel steady growth: 3.46 (2010) → 23.65 (2029)
- Manufacturing dominance: 7-8 of top 10 industries consistently manufacturing

Workforce Development

- Junior Colleges major growth: 3.91 (2010) → 17.51 (2025)
- Educational infrastructure aligned with industrial transformation
- Diversified Manufacturing Base
- Electrical Equipment: Strong 12-19 concentration range
- Foundries, Concrete, Medical Equipment: Stable secondary strengths
- Waste Management: Consistently strong (8-10 concentration)



Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Market Assessment

Retail Analysis

Demand Outpaces Local Supply in Key Categories

- Cumru's two primary population centers — West Concentration (Lancaster Pike Area) and East Concentration (Flying Hills Area) — serve a trade area of over 200,000 people within a 15-minute drive. Both population centers are visualized on the following page.
- Retail demand is strong, especially for:
 - Apparel & Services
 - Entertainment & Recreation
 - Food Away From Home (e.g., dining)

Market Potential Index (MPI) Insights

- Most MPI scores hover around 100, indicating residents behave similarly to the national average — yet spending levels reveal opportunity gaps:
 - East Concentration (Flying Hills Area) shows above average demand for apparel (MPI 101) and dining (MPI 99-100).
 - West Concentration (Lancaster Pike Area) shows strong spending despite neutral MPI, suggesting demand exceeds local supply.

2024 vs 2029 Spending Growth

- Apparel spending across both trade areas is projected to increase by ~15%.
- Dining and entertainment spending is also expected to climb significantly, reinforcing the need for experiential and service-oriented retail.
- Combined, the 15-minute trade areas are projected to generate over \$1 billion in consumer spending by 2029 across just these three categories.



Retail Market Opportunity

Demand Outpaces Local Supply

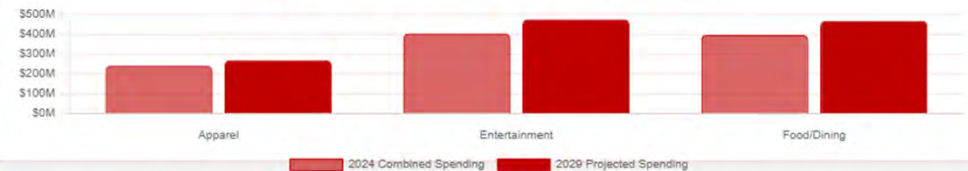
200K+

People in
15-min Trade Area

2

Primary Retail
Corridors

2024 vs 2029 Spending Growth by Category



Market Potential Index (MPI)

101

Apparel
Flying Hills

~100

Entertainment
Both Areas

~100

Dining
Both Areas

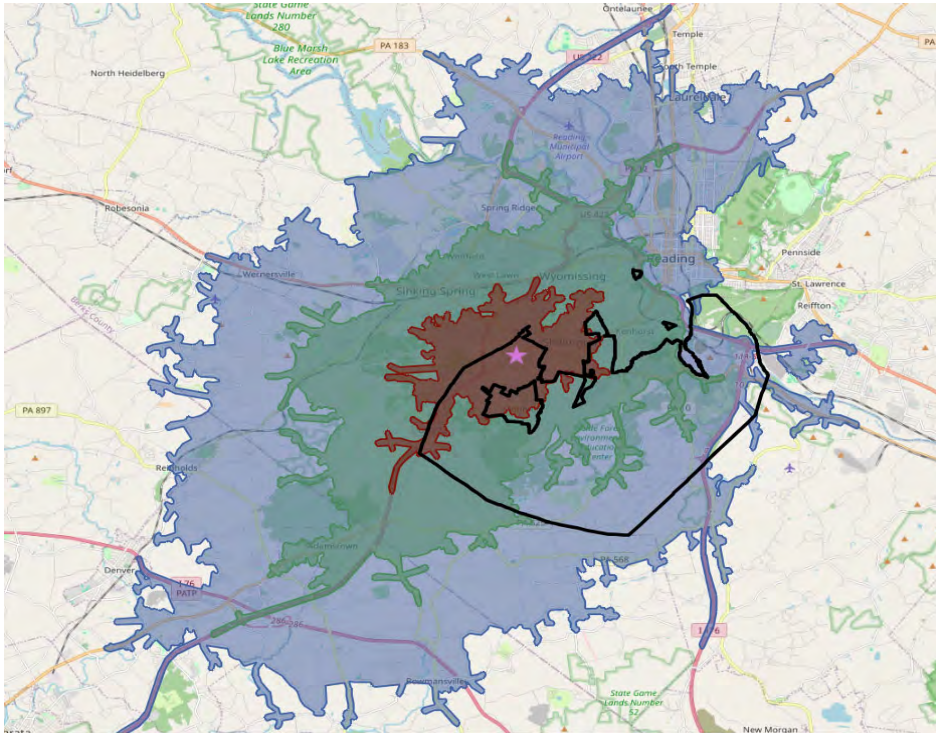
Strong spending despite neutral MPI = Local supply gaps

Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Market Assessment

Retail Analysis Population Centers

WEST CONCENTRATION (LANCASTER PIKE AREA)



Source: ESRI Business Analyst



5-Minute Drive Time

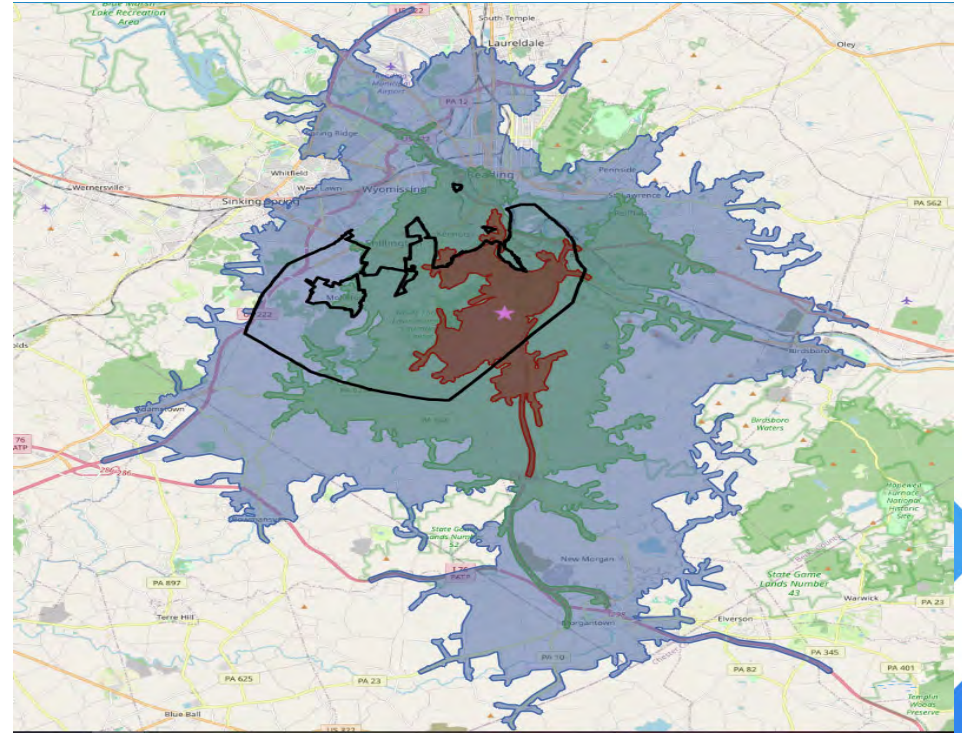


10-Minute Drive Time



15-Minute Drive Time

EAST CONCENTRATION (FLYING HILLS AREA)



Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Appendix II: Community Survey Results

Community Survey Results

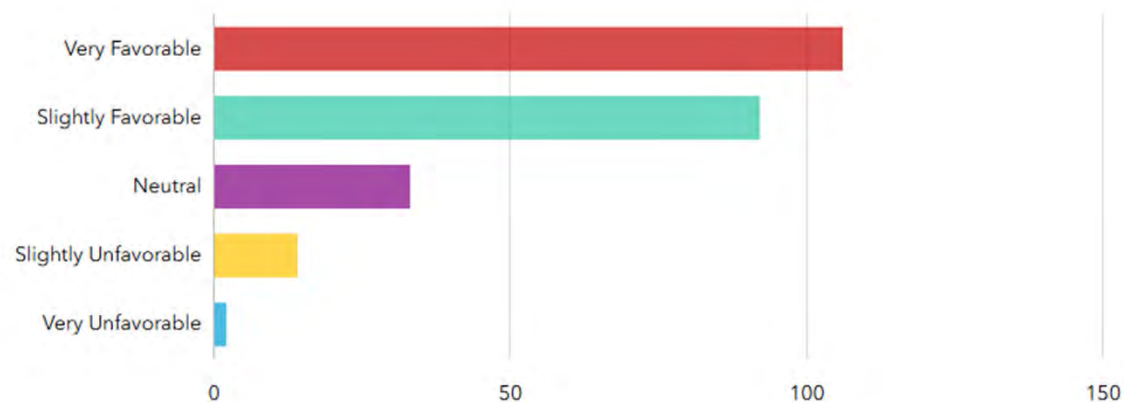
Question 1

What is your overall impression of Cumru Township as a place to live?

Please select one option.

- ☐ Very Favorable
- ☐ Slightly Favorable
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Slightly Unfavorable
- ☐ Very Unfavorable

Question 1 Results



Community Survey Results

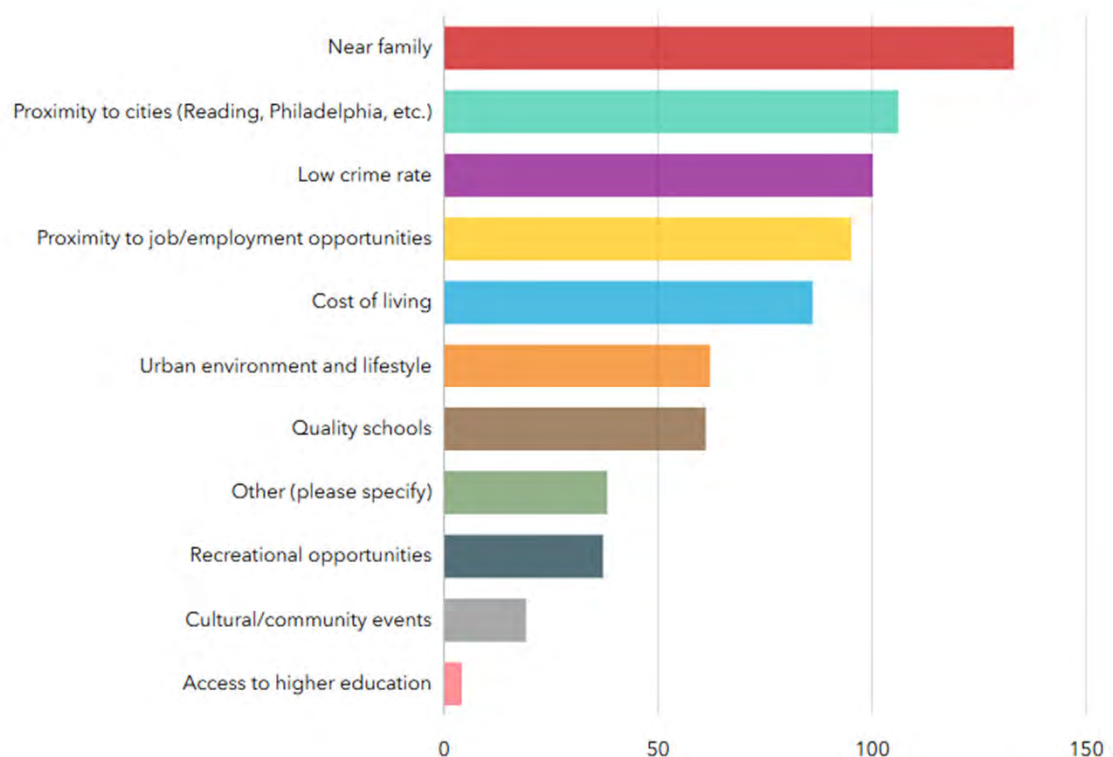
Question 2

From the following list, mark three most important reasons you and your family chose to live/continue to live in Cumru Township.

Please select three options.

- ☐ Proximity to cities (Reading, Philadelphia, etc.)
- ☐ Cost of living
- ☐ Cultural/community events
- ☐ Quality schools
- ☐ Recreational opportunities
- ☐ Urban environment and lifestyle
- ☐ Proximity to job/employment opportunities
- ☐ Access to higher education
- ☐ Low crime rate
- ☐ Near family
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Question 2 Results



Community Survey Results

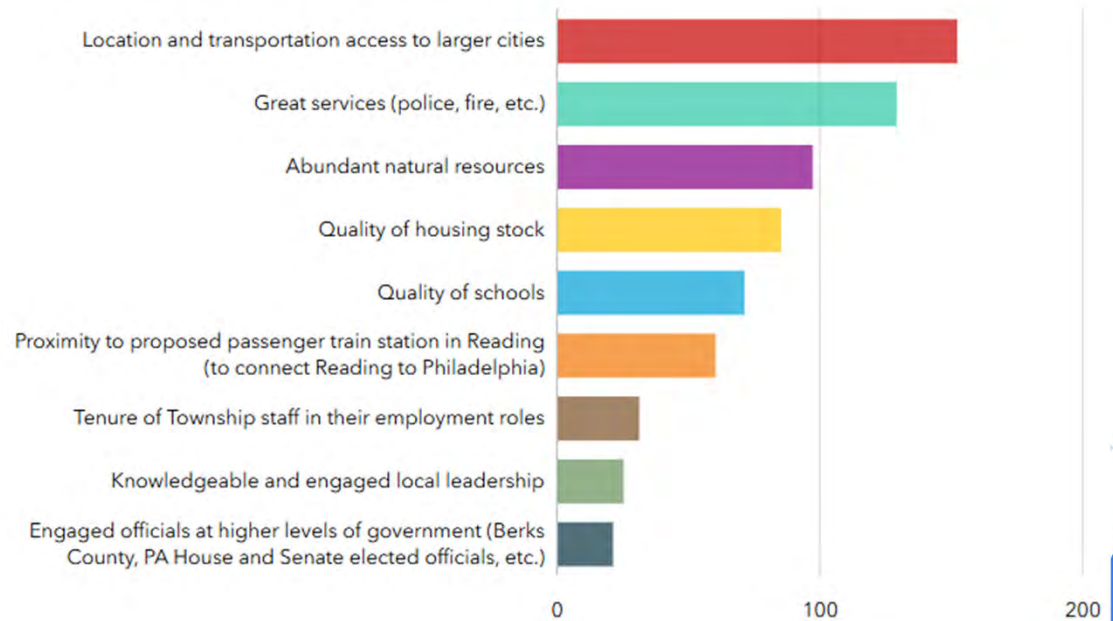
Question 3

Of the following selections, what would you identify as STRENGTHS of Cumru Township?

Please select all options with which you agree.

- ☐ Location and transportation access to larger cities
- ☐ Proximity to proposed passenger train station in Reading (to connect Reading to Philadelphia)
- ☐ Quality of housing stock
- ☐ Great services (police, fire, etc.)
- ☐ Knowledgeable and engaged local leadership
- ☐ Engaged officials at higher levels of government (Berks County, PA House and Senate elected officials, etc.)
- ☐ Tenure of Township staff in their employment roles
- ☐ Quality of schools
- ☐ Abundant natural resources

Question 3 Results



Community Survey Results

Question 4

Can you identify any additional STRENGTHS of Cumru Township?

If so, what are these STRENGTHS?



Strengths

Question 4 Results

Strengths identified by residents include the following:

- Convenient proximity to cities, including Allentown, Lancaster, Philadelphia, and Reading
- Easy access to Route 222
- Offering rural living with urban access
- Environmental assets, especially Nolde Forest
- Safe and peaceful living with low traffic congestion, low population density, and friendly neighbors
- Well-maintained roads, sidewalks, and parks
- Good township staff, police, and fire department
- Strong public works, including snow, leaf, and trash removal
- Good school district
- Diverse housing stock, with urban and rural neighborhoods and a variety of densities and prices

Community Survey Results

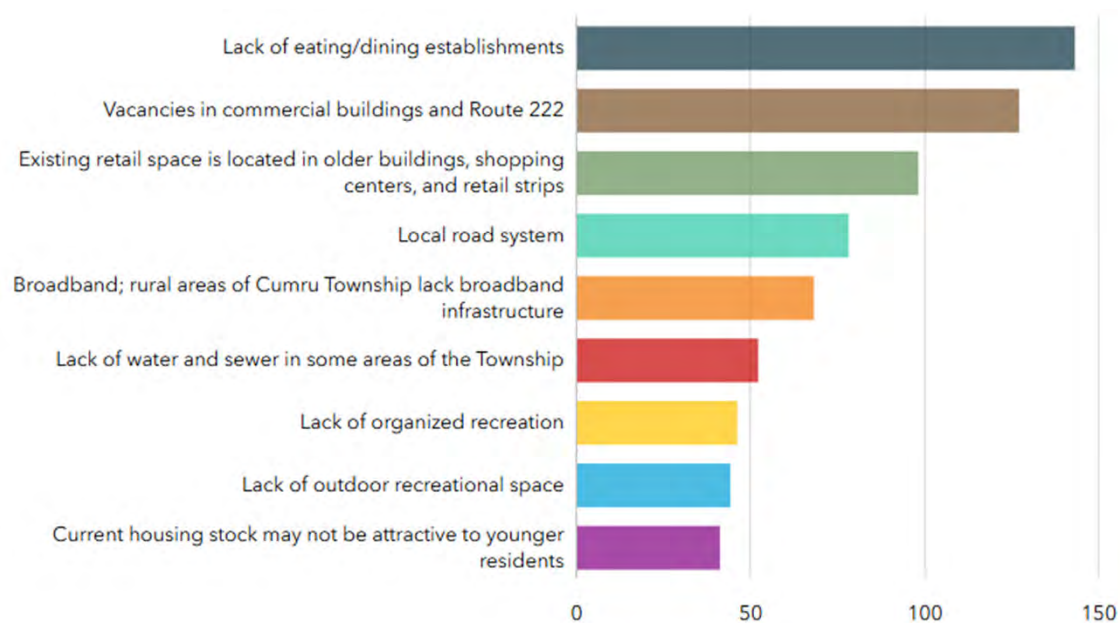
Question 5

Of the following selections, what would you identify as WEAKNESSES of Cumru Township?

Please select all options with which you agree.

- ☐ Lack of water and sewer in some areas of the Township
- ☐ Local road system
- ☐ Current housing stock may not be attractive to younger residents
- ☐ Lack of organized recreation
- ☐ Lack of outdoor recreational space
- ☐ Broadband; rural areas of Cumru Township lack broadband infrastructure
- ☐ Vacancies in commercial buildings and Route 222
- ☐ Existing retail space is located in older buildings, shopping centers, and retail strips
- ☐ Lack of eating/dining establishments

Question 5 Results



Community Survey Results

Question 6

Can you identify any additional WEAKNESSES of Cumru Township?

If so, what are these WEAKNESSES?



Weaknesses

Question 6 Results

Weaknesses identified by residents include the following:

- Lack of diverse tax revenue burdens residents
- Lack of job opportunities and few local employers
- Vacant and unattractive buildings and commercial spaces
- Rising costs of water, sewer, and trash
- Outdated or inadequate infrastructure, including roads and water
- Lack of online services
- Warehouse development
- Declining school quality
- Insufficient dining, retail, and recreation options
- Lack of town center and identity
- Outdated website and poor access to information
- Encroachment on open space and green areas
- Noise pollution from highways and truck traffic
- Lack of recreation, including bike lanes, walkability, and small neighborhood parks
- Limited or poor broadband access
- Low civic engagement
- Concerns about public safety

Community Survey Results

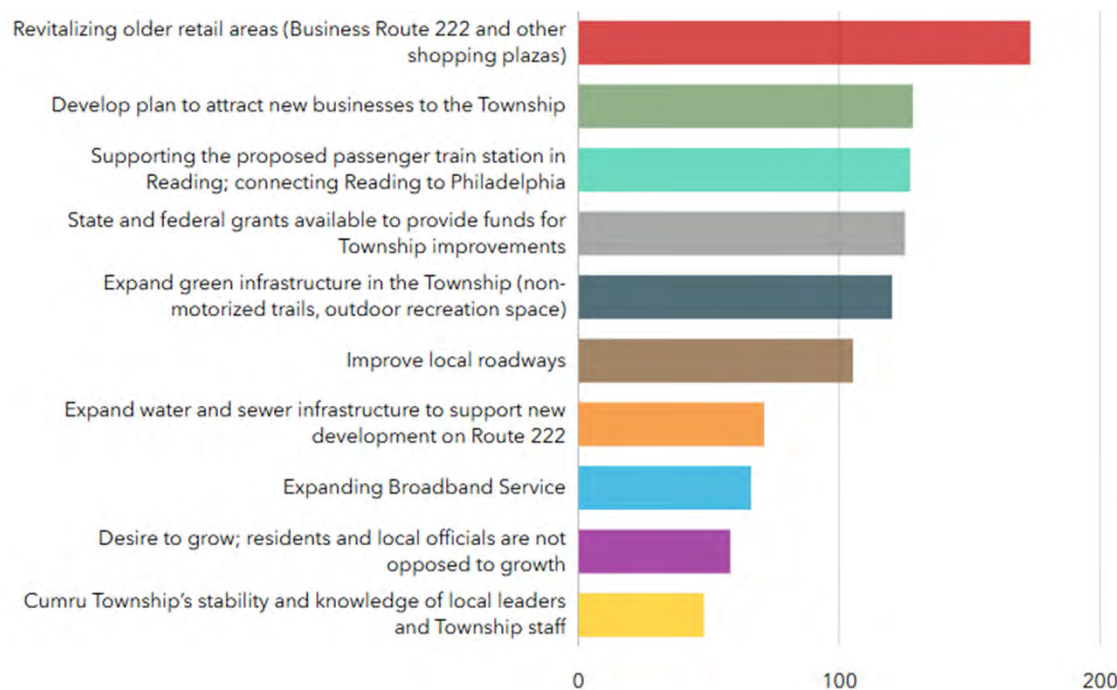
Question 7

Of the following options, what would you identify as OPPORTUNITIES for Cumru Township?

Please select all options with which you agree.

- ☐ Revitalizing older retail areas (Business Route 222 and other shopping plazas)
- ☐ Supporting the proposed passenger train station in Reading; connecting Reading to Philadelphia
- ☐ Desire to grow; residents and local officials are not opposed to growth
- ☐ Cumru Township's stability and knowledge of local leaders and Township staff
- ☐ Expanding Broadband Service
- ☐ Expand water and sewer infrastructure to support new development on Route 222
- ☐ Improve local roadways
- ☐ Develop plan to attract new businesses to the Township
- ☐ Expand green infrastructure in the Township (non-motorized trails, outdoor recreation space)
- ☐ State and federal grants available to provide funds for Township improvements

Question 7 Results



Community Survey Results

Question 8

Can you identify any additional OPPORTUNITIES for Cumru Township?

If so, what are these OPPORTUNITIES?

Opportunities →

Question 8 Results

Opportunities identified by residents include the following:

- More restaurants and retail
- Mixed-use and main street revitalization in underutilized areas such as Route 10 and Route 222
- Support for small businesses
- Residential expansion to attract new residents, including young families
- Light industrial and warehousing
- Recruiting large employers
- Lowering costs to reduce taxes
- Proactively seeking state and federal funding for infrastructure and community improvements
- More playgrounds and outdoor recreation areas, including walking and biking trails
- Improve roads and traffic flow along busy corridors such as Route 10 and Route 222
- Broadband and water expansion
- Preserve open spaces
- Better communication and resident input

Community Survey Results

Question 9

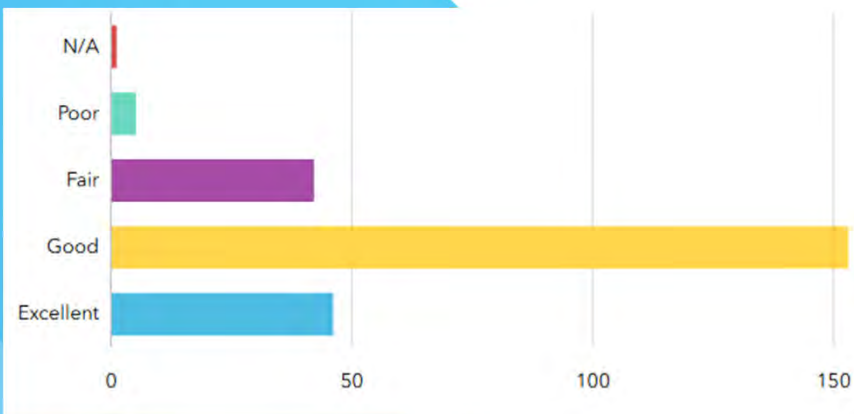
Please rate Cumru Township on each of the following attributes. Please select one rating for each attribute (Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, NA)

- Cumru Township as an overall place to live
- General quality of K-12 education
- Overall economic conditions
- Quality of existing retail stores in Cumru Township
- Selection of existing retail stores in Cumru Township
- Quality of existing restaurants in Cumru Township
- Selection of existing restaurants in Cumru Township
- Proximity to employment opportunities
- Availability of quality employment opportunities
- Availability of housing stock
- Quality of housing stock
- Quality of roads
- Quality of sidewalks and pedestrian infrastructure
- Quality of public parks and recreational facilities
- Quality of cultural facilities
- Quality of healthcare
- Accessibility of healthcare

Community Survey Results

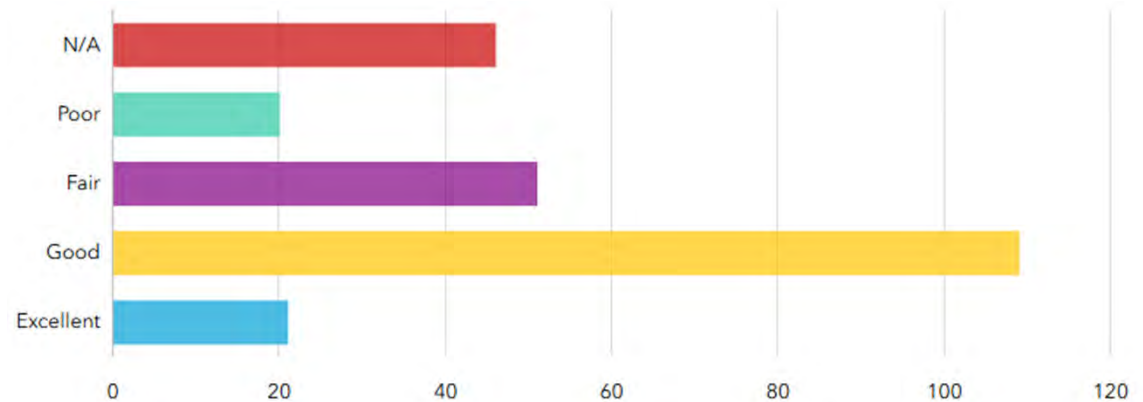
Question 9 Results

Cumru Township as an Overall Place to Live



*Live.
Work.
Play.*

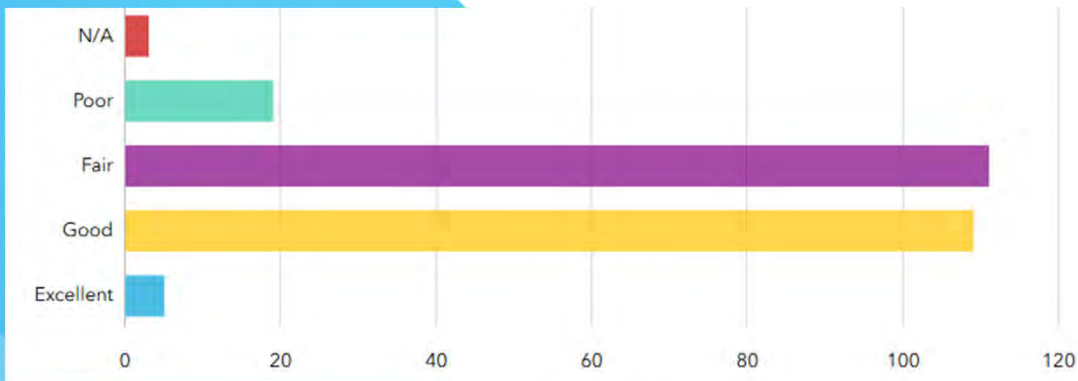
General Quality of K-12 Education



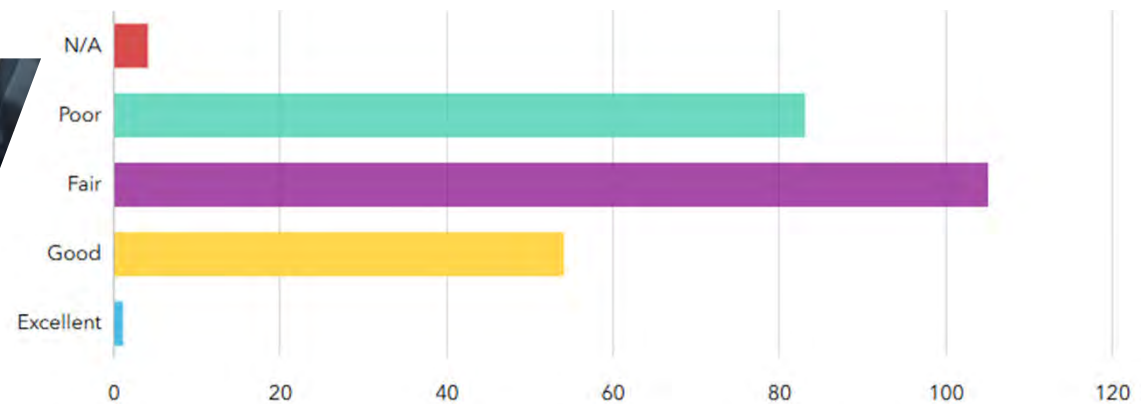
Community Survey Results

Question 9 Results

Overall Economic Conditions



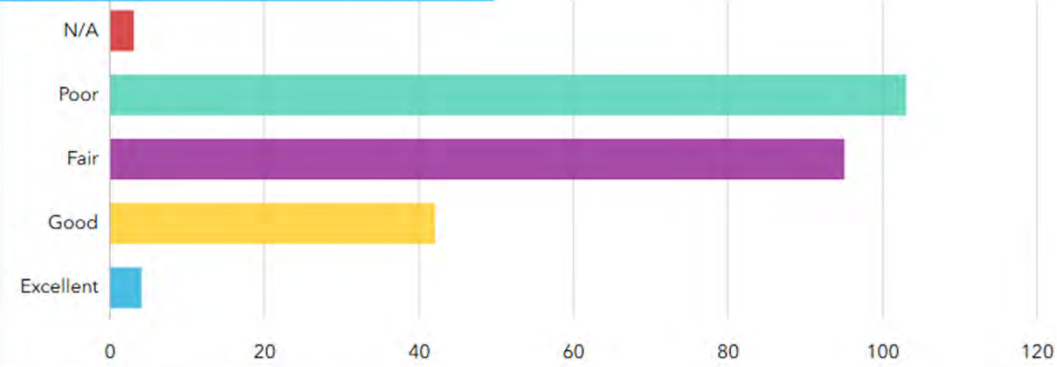
Quality of Existing Retail Stores in Cumru Township



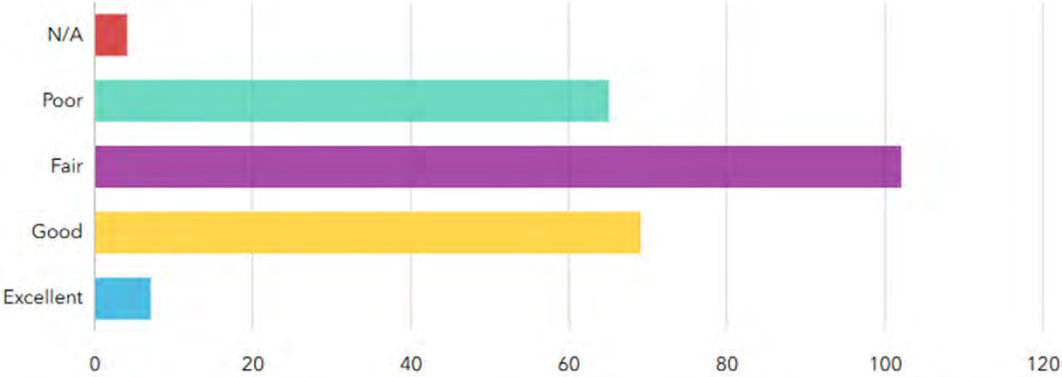
Community Survey Results

Question 9 Results

Selection of Existing Retail Stores in Cumru Township



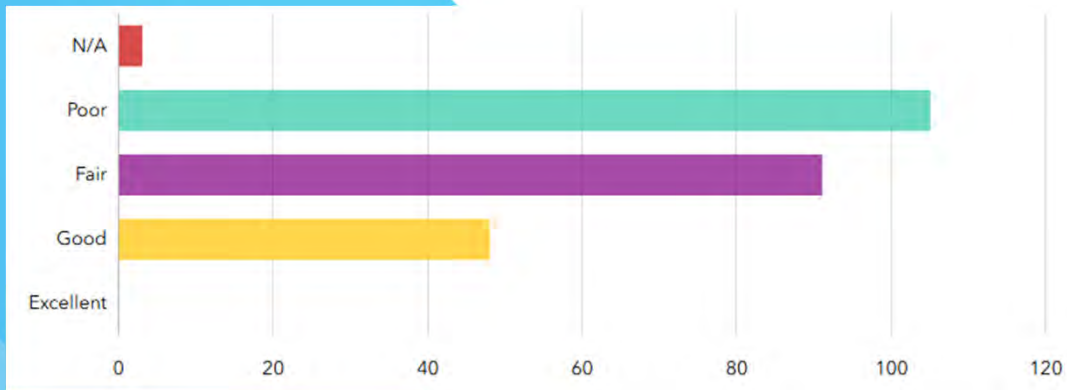
Quality of Existing Restaurants in Cumru Township



Community Survey Results

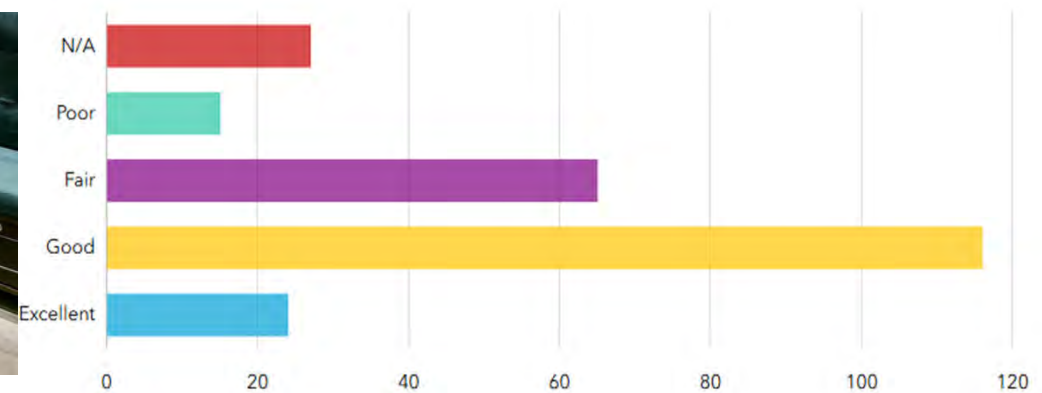
Question 9 Results

Selection of Existing Restaurants in Cumru Township



Join
our
Team

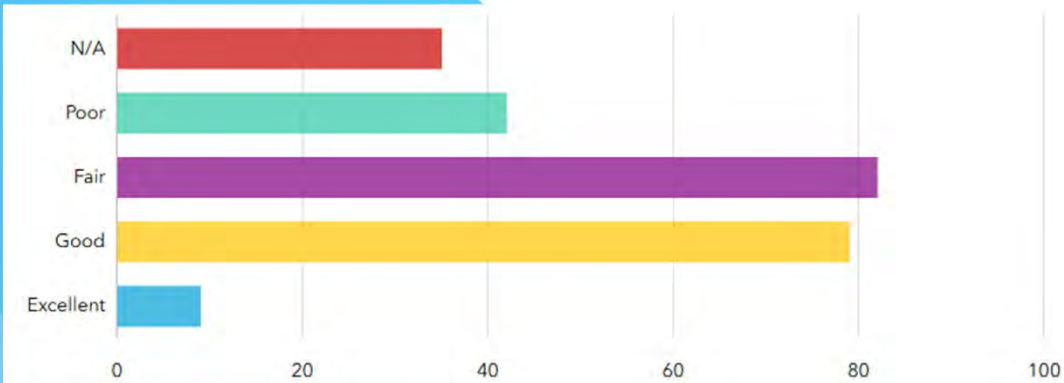
Proximity to Employment Opportunities



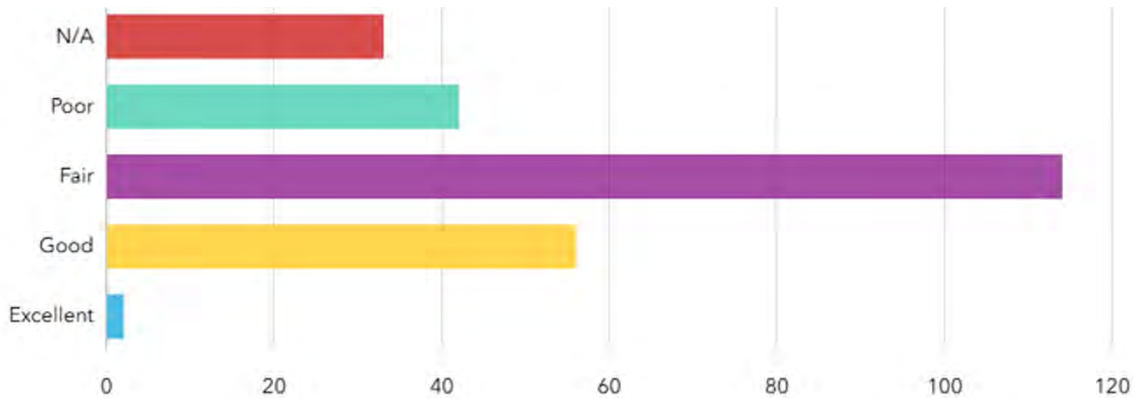
Community Survey Results

Question 9 Results

Availability of Quality Employment Opportunities



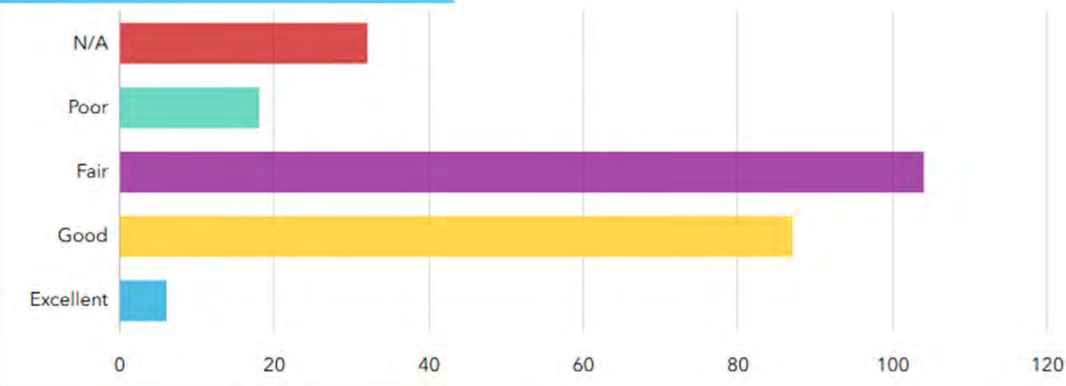
Availability of Housing Stock



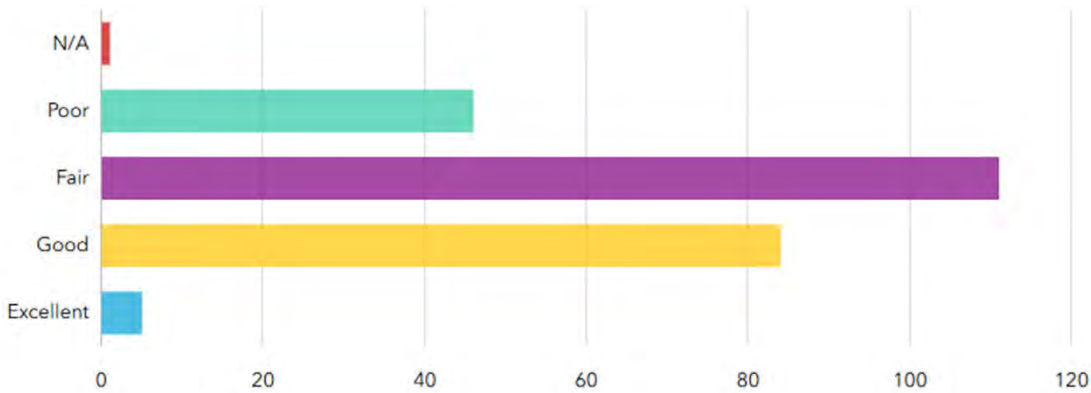
Community Survey Results

Question 9 Results

Quality of Housing Stock



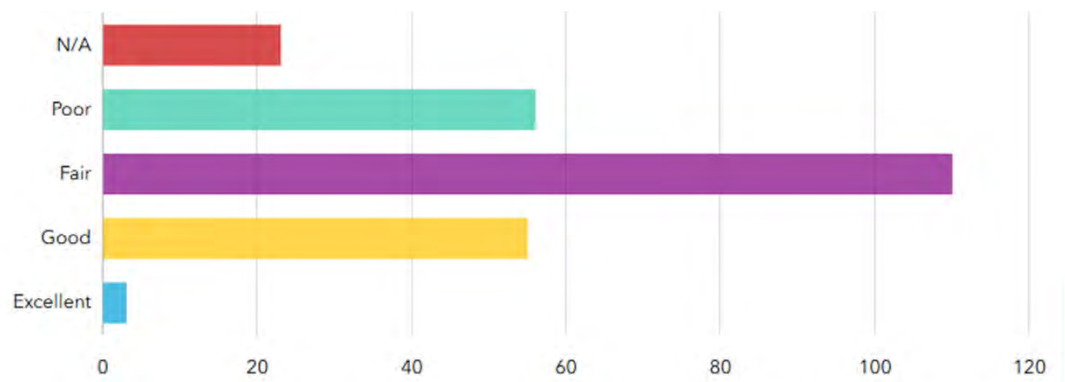
Quality of Roads



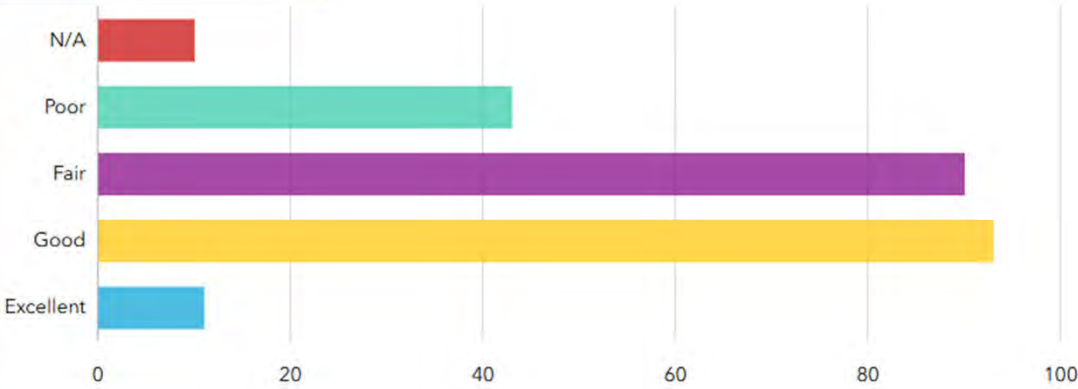
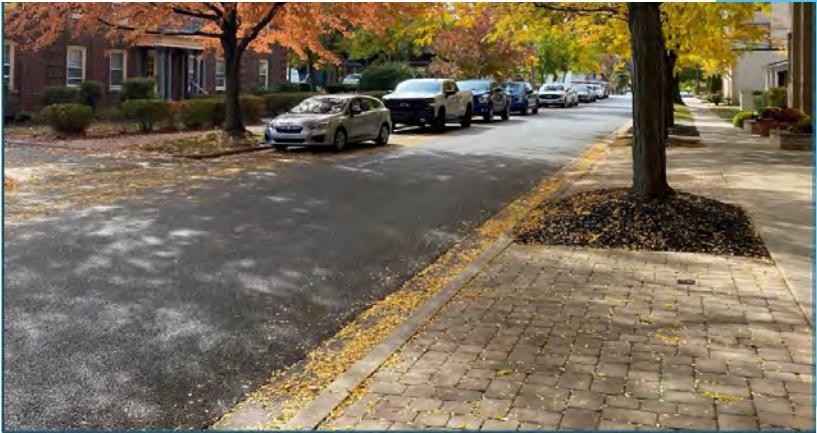
Community Survey Results

Question 9 Results

Quality of Sidewalks and Pedestrian Infrastructure



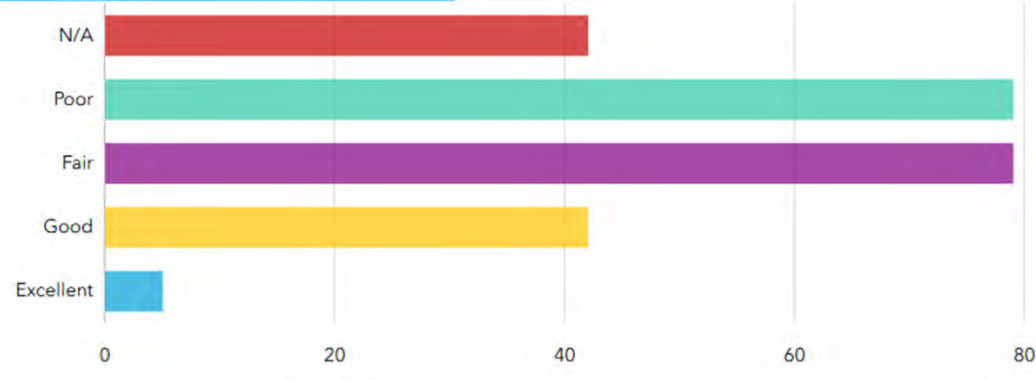
Quality of Public Parks and Recreational Facilities



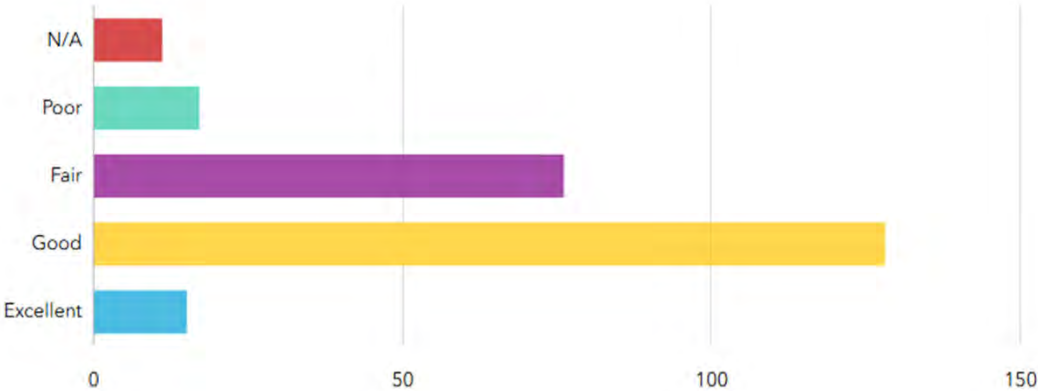
Community Survey Results

Question 9 Results

Quality of Cultural Facilities



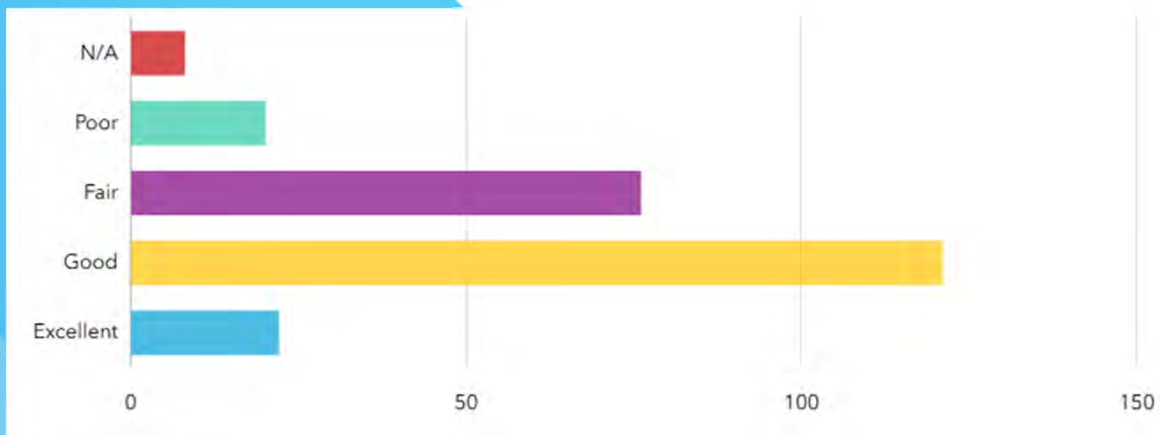
Quality of Healthcare



Community Survey Results

Question 9 Results

Accessibility of Healthcare



Community Survey Results

Question 10

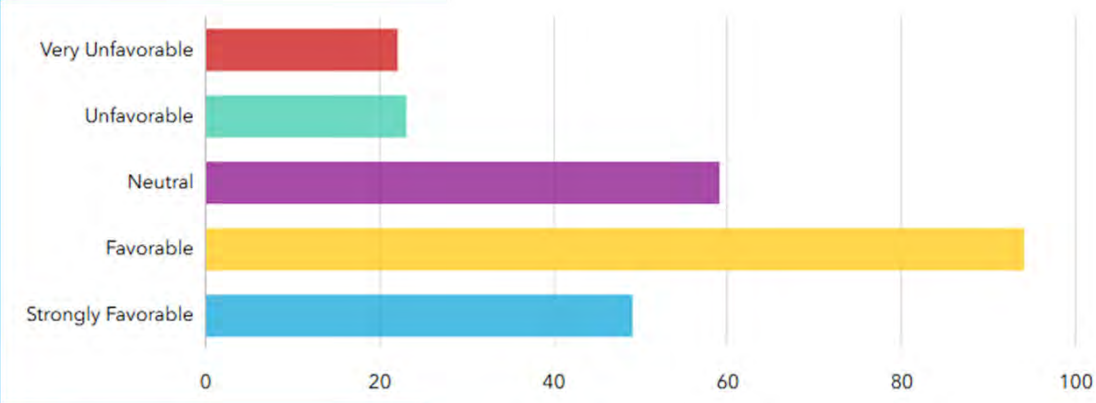
What is your opinion regarding the following future economic development opportunities and initiatives for Cumru Township in the future? Please select one rating for each economic development opportunity and initiative (Very Favorable, Slightly Favorable, Neutral, Slightly Unfavorable, Very Unfavorable)

- Recruit new business and industry
- Diversify business types in the community
- Improve the selection of retail stores
- Improve the selection of restaurants
- Accommodate new housing development
- Expand water and wastewater infrastructure to spur new development
- Improve the appearance of existing commercial buildings and corridors through redevelopment efforts
- Fill vacant storefronts with new businesses
- Redevelop existing industrial areas
- Promote mixed-use development that is comprised of a mix of residential, retail, office, and other commercial uses
- Improve the condition and functionality of transportation infrastructure (i.e., roads, sidewalks, trails, etc.)
- Partner with private developers to improve and expand water and sewer infrastructure
- Partner with private developers to improve transportation infrastructure
- Improve outdoor recreation opportunities
- Develop new athletic facilities
- Market Cumru Township's proximity to the proposed Reading-Philadelphia Train Line
- Market Cumru Township as a filming destination
- Expand broadband internet infrastructure
- Pursue state and federal grants and loans to assist with development and redevelopment efforts

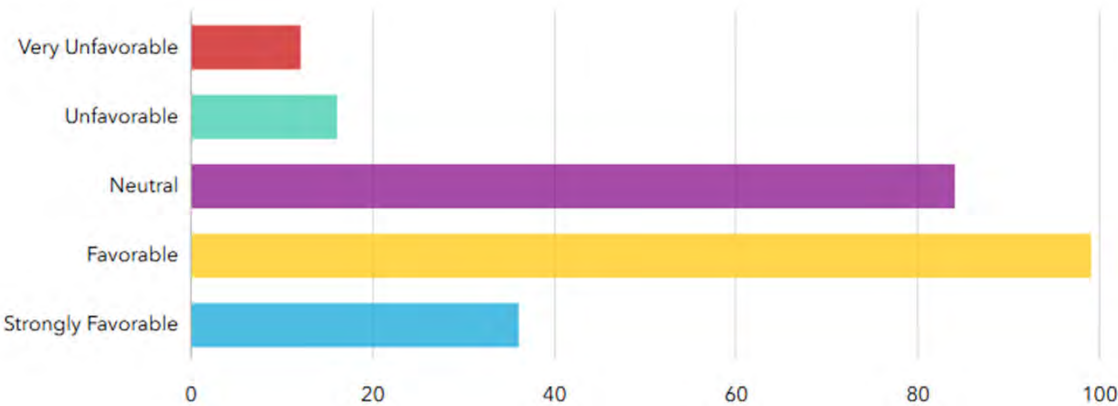
Community Survey Results

Question 10 Results

Recruit New Business and Industry



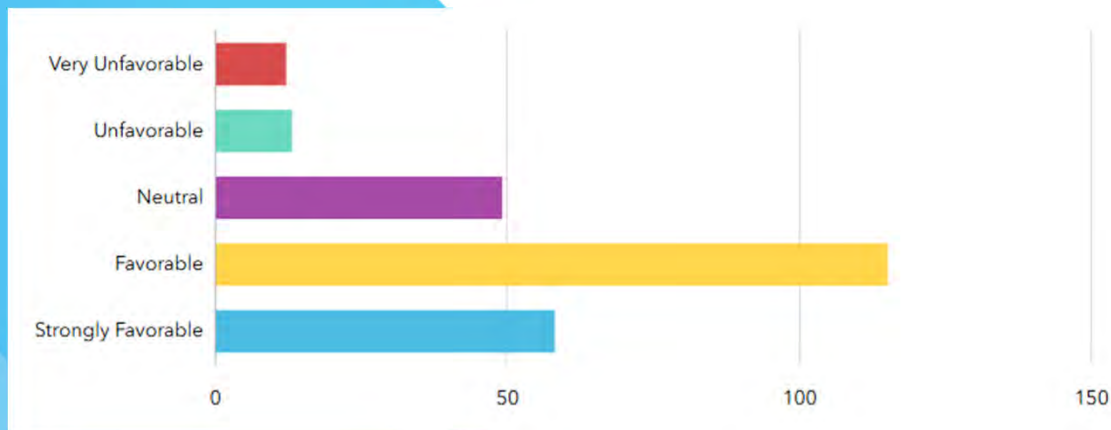
Diversify Business Types in the Community



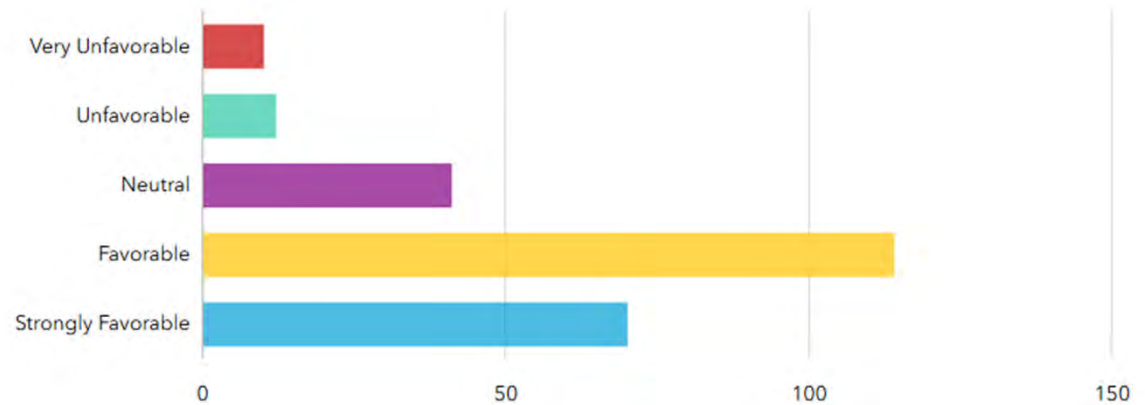
Community Survey Results

Question 10 Results

Improve the Selection of Retail Stores



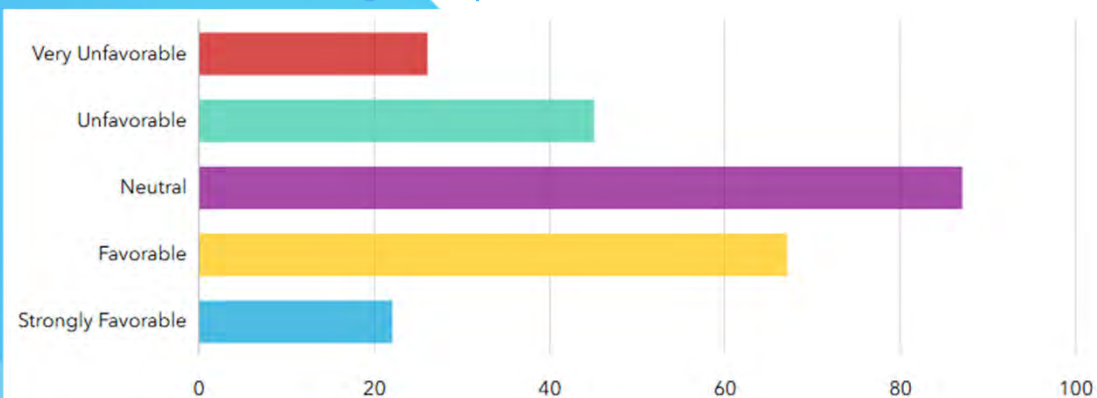
Improve the Selection of Restaurants



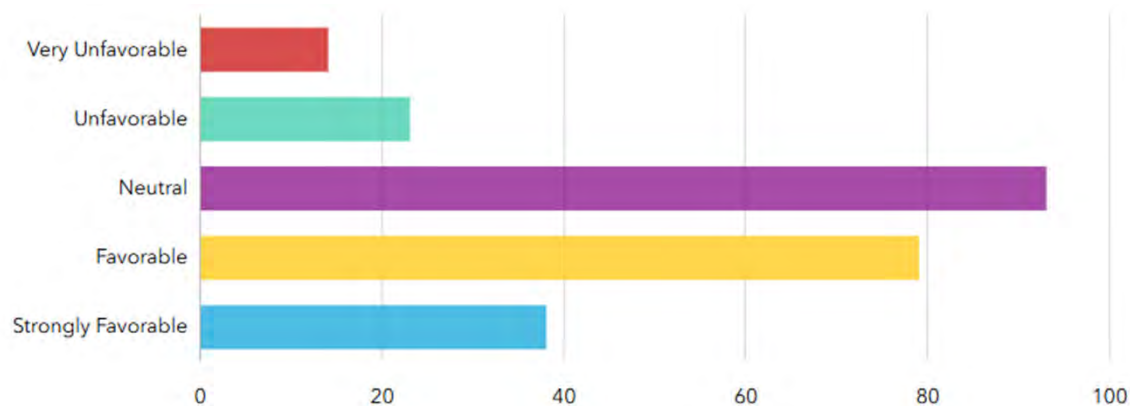
Community Survey Results

Question 10 Results

Accommodate New Housing Development



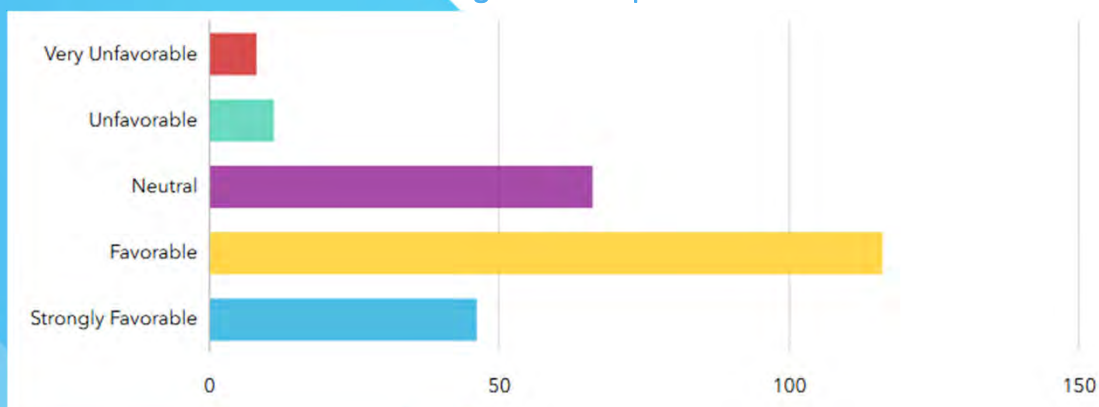
Expand Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Development to Spur New Development



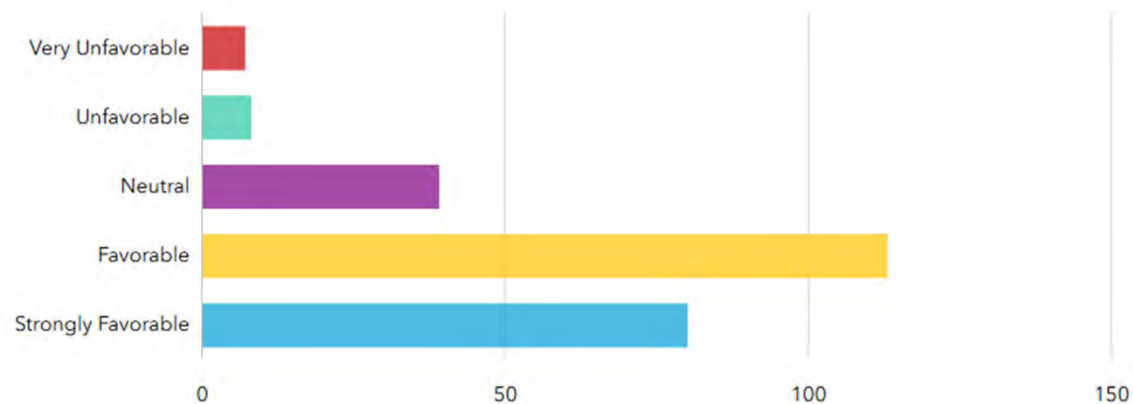
Community Survey Results

Question 10 Results

Improve the Appearance of Existing Commercial Buildings
and Corridors through Redevelopment Efforts



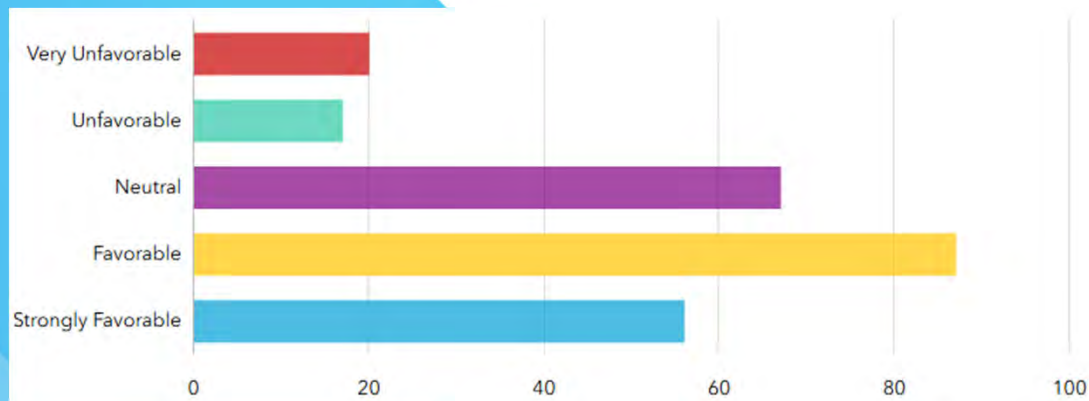
Fill Vacant Storefronts with New Businesses



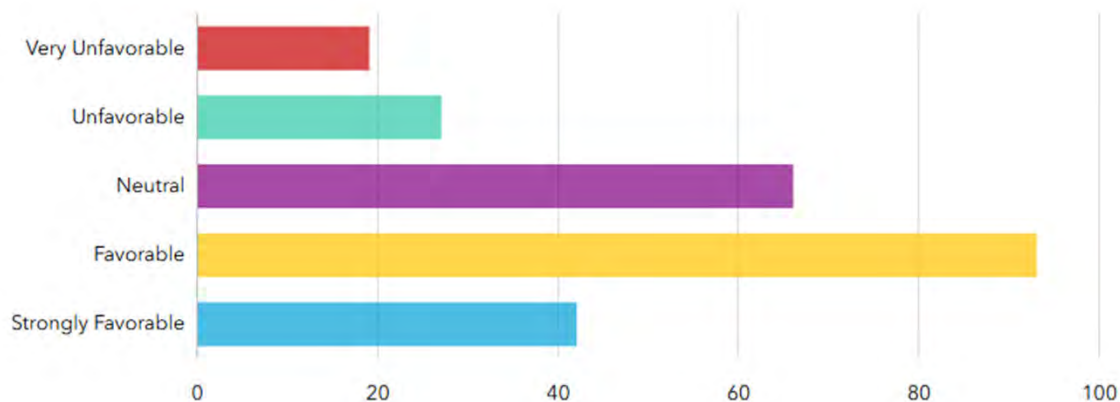
Community Survey Results

Question 10 Results

Redevelop Existing Industrial Areas



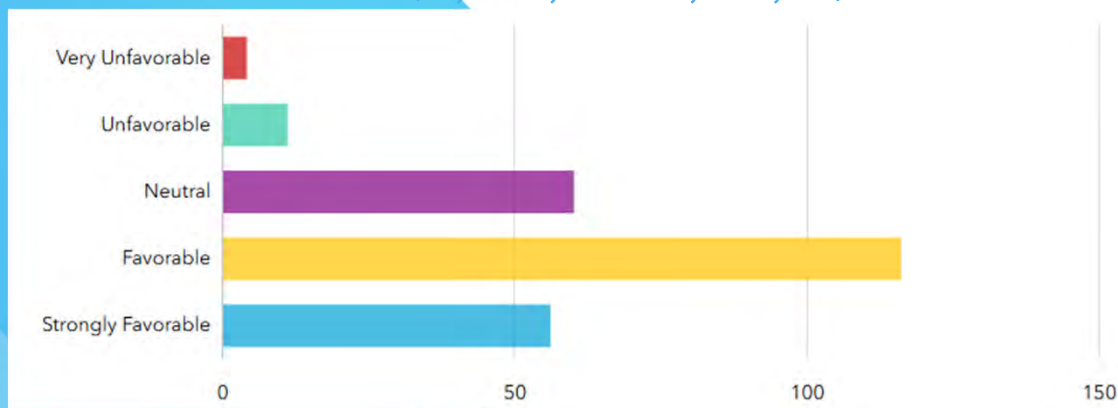
Promote Mixed-Use Development that is Comprised of a Mix of Residential, Retail, Office, and Other Commercial Uses



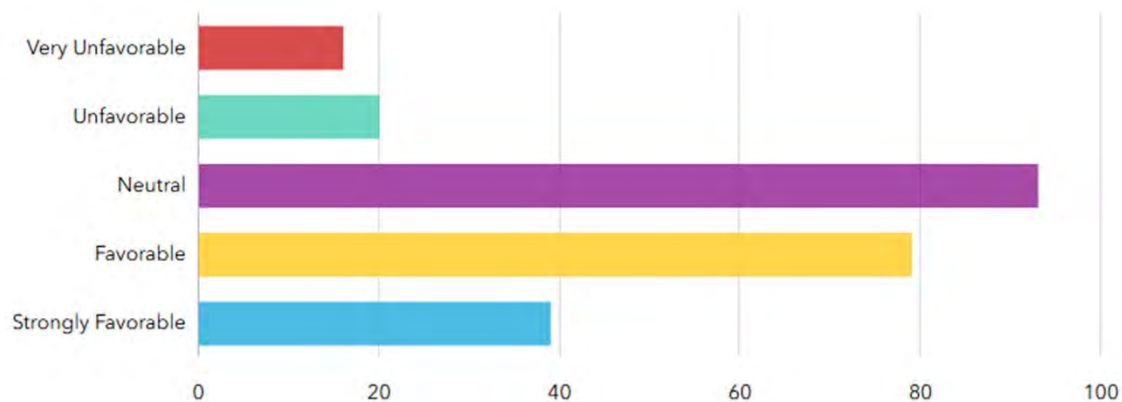
Community Survey Results

Question 10 Results

Improve the Condition and Functionality of Transportation Infrastructure (i.e., Roads, Sidewalks, Trails, etc.)



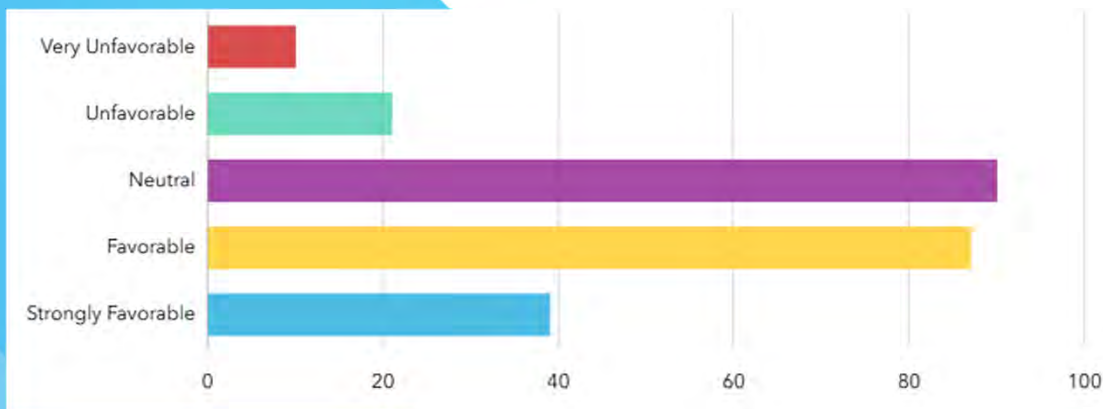
Partner with Private Developers to Improve and Expand Water and Sewer Infrastructure



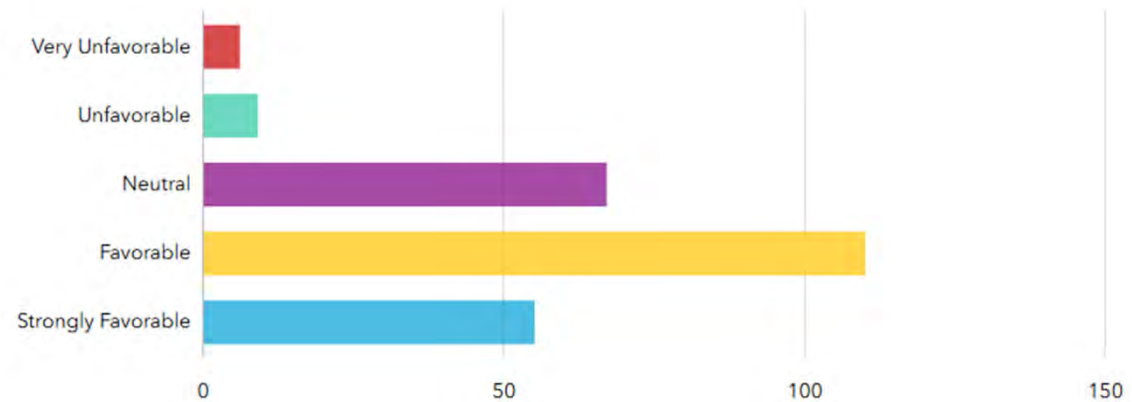
Community Survey Results

Question 10 Results

Partner with Private Developers to Improve Transportation Infrastructure



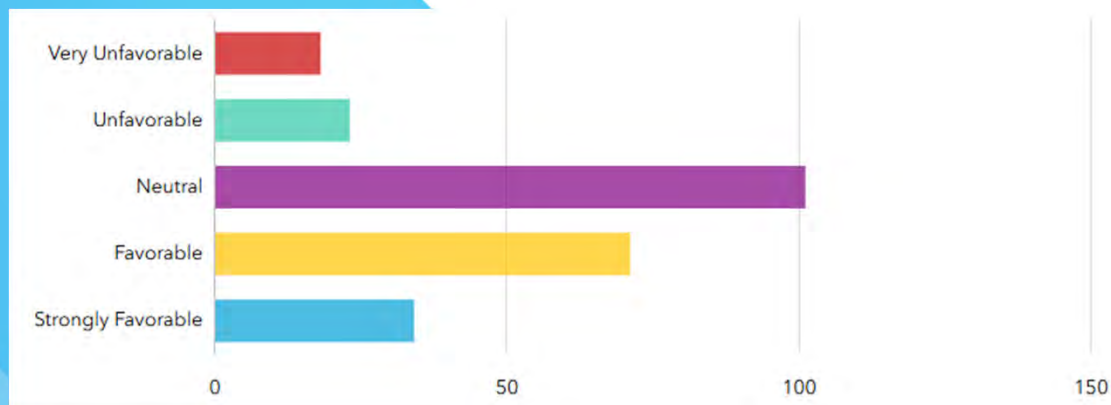
Improve Outdoor Recreation Opportunities



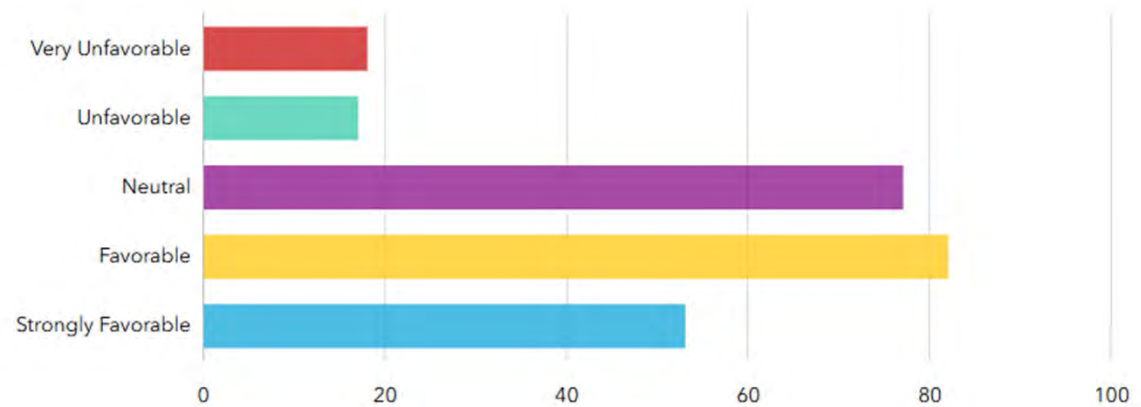
Community Survey Results

Question 10 Results

Develop New Athletic Facilities



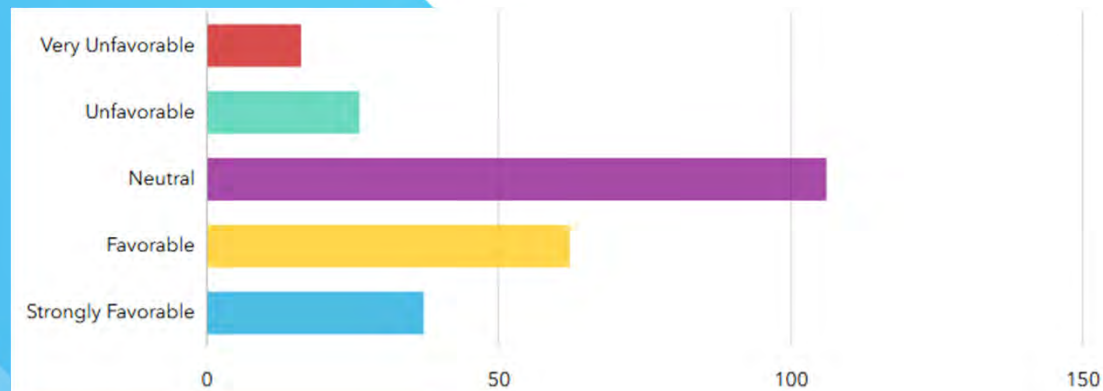
Market Cumru Township's Proximity to the Proposed Reading-Philadelphia Train Line



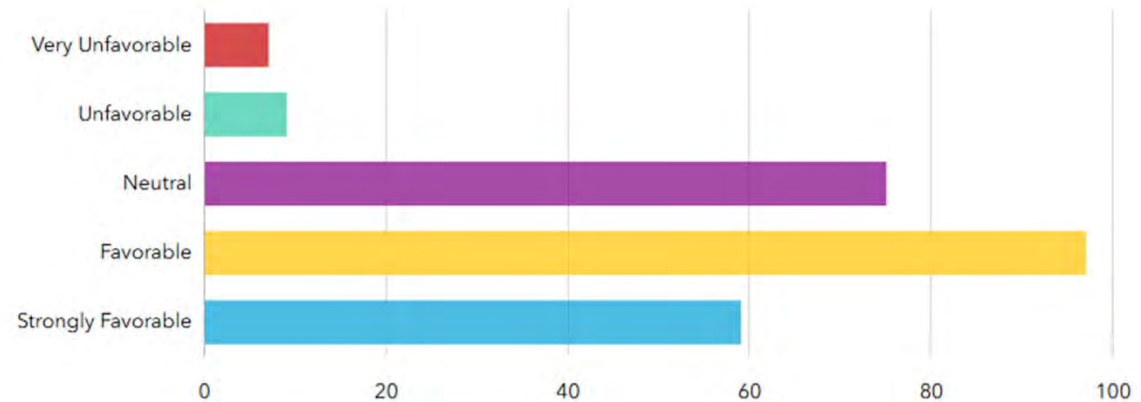
Community Survey Results

Question 10 Results

Market Cumru Township as a Filming Destination



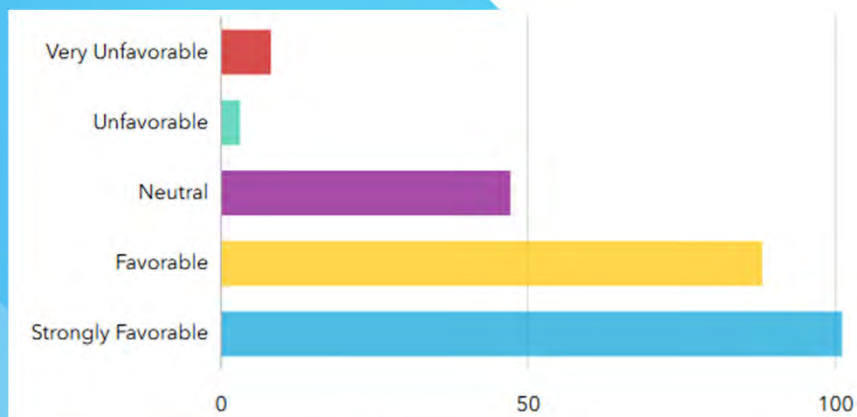
Expand Broadband Internet Infrastructure



Community Survey Results

Question 10 Results

Pursue State and Federal Grants and Loans to Assist with Development and Redevelopment Efforts



Community Survey Results

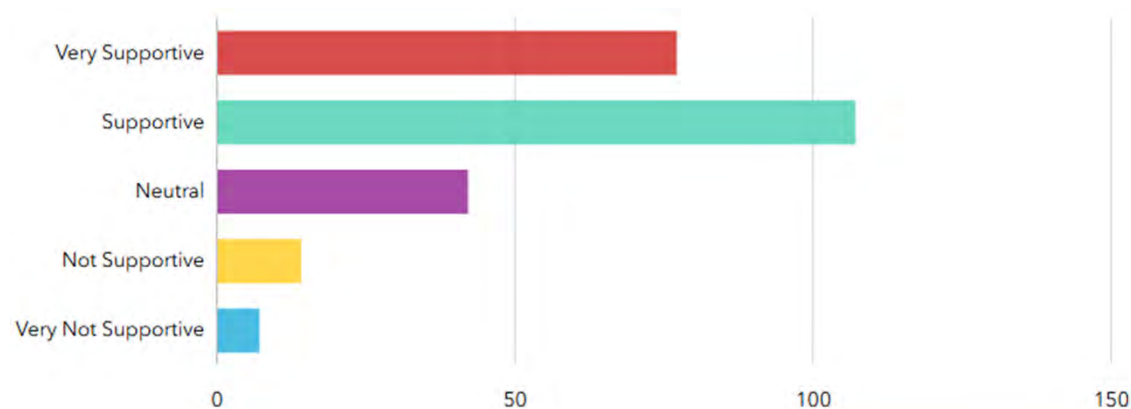
Question 11

In general, how supportive are you of growth in Cumru Township?

Please select one option.

- ☐ Very Supportive
- ☐ Supportive
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Not Supportive
- ☐ Very Not Supportive

Question 11 Results



Community Survey Results

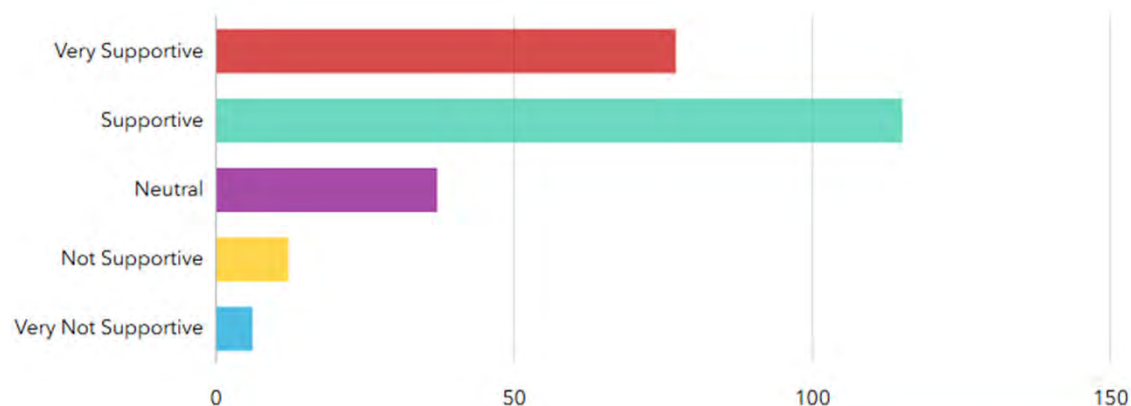
Question 12

In general, how supportive are you of redevelopment in Cumru Township?

Please select one option.

- ☐ Very Supportive
- ☐ Supportive
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Not Supportive
- ☐ Very Not Supportive

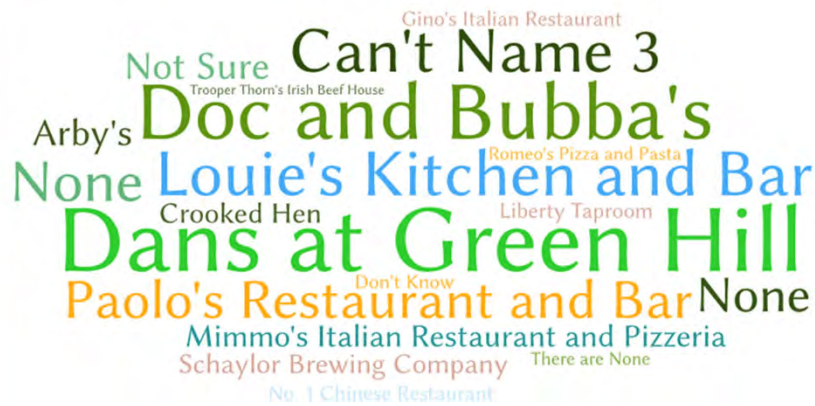
Question 12 Results



Community Survey Results

Question 13

What are the three best dining locations in Cumru Township?



Question 13 Results

- Dans at Green Hills – 66 responses
- Louie's Kitchen and Bar – 55 responses
- Doc and Bubba's* – 37 responses
- Paolo's Restaurant and Bar – 33 responses
- Mimmo's Italian Restaurant & Pizzeria* – 21 responses
- Schaylor Brewing Company – 20 responses
- Crooked Hen – 16 responses
- Liberty Taproom* – 16 responses
- Gino's Italian Restaurant* – 12 responses
- No.1 Chinese Restaurant* – 8 responses
- Trooper Thorn's Irish Beef House* – 7 responses
- Arby's – 7 responses
- Romeo's Pizza & Pasta* – 5 responses
- Over 50 responses stated "None", "Not Sure", "There are None", or "Can't Name 3"

**Not located in Cumru Township*

Community Survey Results

Question 14

Where, and at what store(s), do you normally do your grocery shopping?

Grocery Outlet
Walmart **GIANT** Boyers
Redner's Markets
Weis Markets
Instacart **Aldi** Amazon
Shillington Farmer's Market

Question 14 Results

- Redner's Markets– 90 responses
- GIANT – 85 responses
- Aldi – 60 responses
- Weis Markets – 30 responses
- Grocery Outlet – 10 responses
- Walmart – 8 responses
- Shillington Farmer's Market – 6 responses

Question 15

[illegible]

Question 15 Results

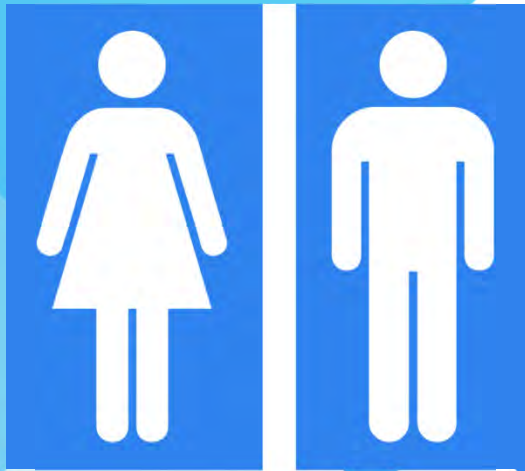
- Expand and diversify dining and retail options
- Thoughtful development, including mix-used along Route 222
- Community character must be protected by preserving open space and avoiding sprawl
- Improve water and sewer infrastructure
- Increase connectivity
- Streetscape upgrades, including façade improvements, street trees, and pedestrian lighting
- Expand trails, parks, and sports complexes
- Use targeted tax incentives and redevelopment mandates

Community Survey Results

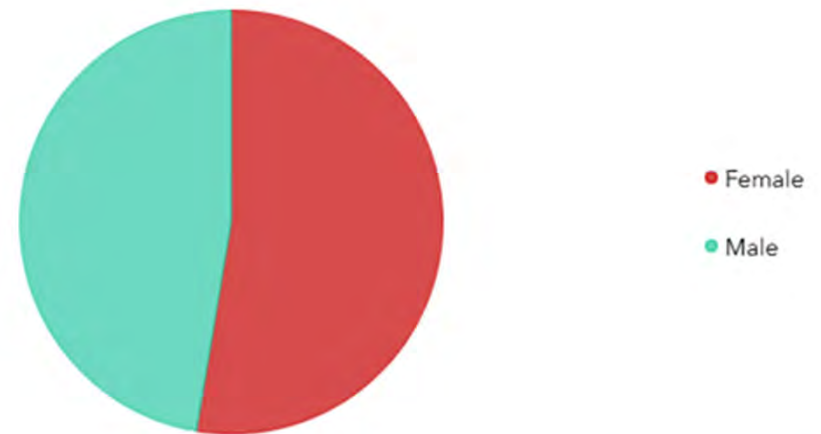
Question 16

Gender (Please Select One Option)

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female



Question 16 Results



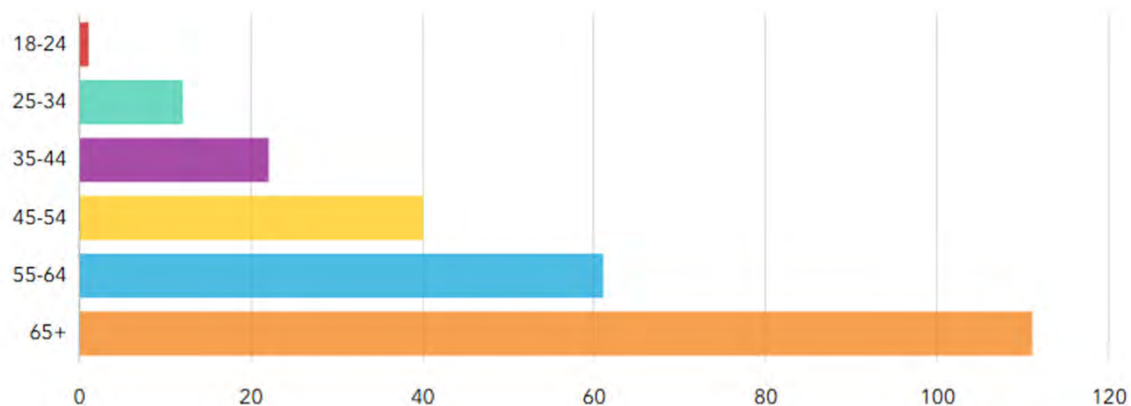
Community Survey Results

Question 17

Age (Please Select One Option)

- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55-64
- ☐ 65+

Question 17 Results



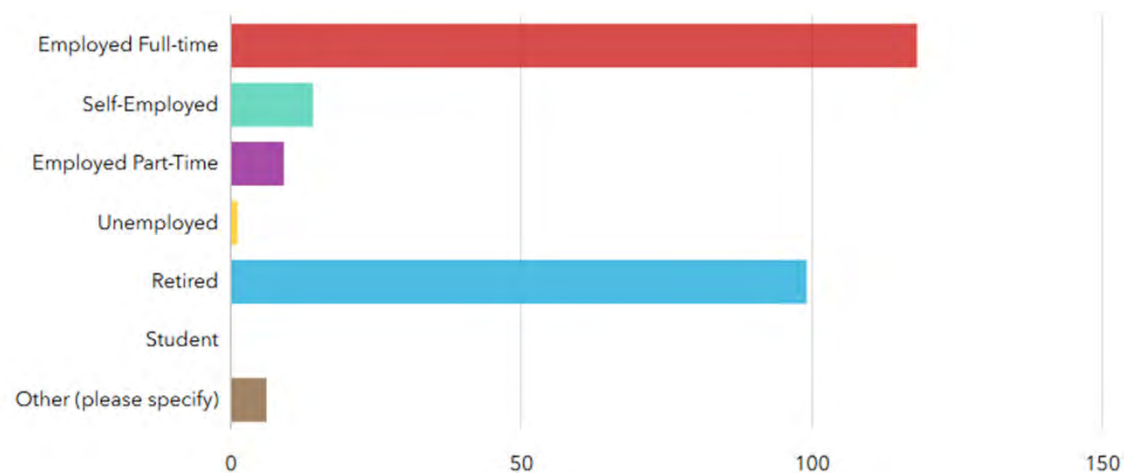
Community Survey Results

Question 18

Employment Status (Please Select One Option)

- ☐ Employed Full-Time
- ☐ Self-Employed
- ☐ Employed Part-Time
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Question 18 Results



Community Survey Results

Question 19

Which describes your residential status in Cumru Township? (Please Select One Option)

- ☐ I own my home
- ☐ I rent my home
- ☐ I live with family
- ☐ I live with friends
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Question 19 Results



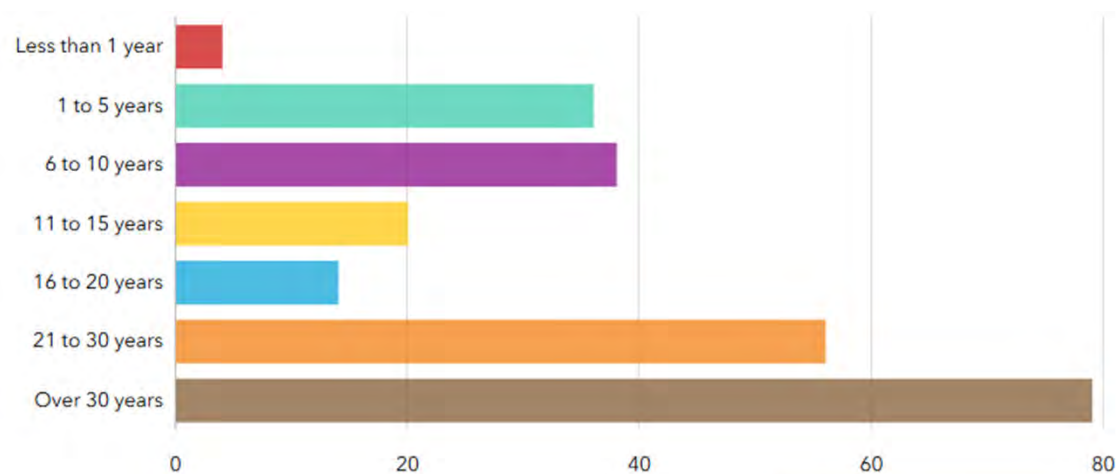
Community Survey Results

Question 20

How long have you lived in Cumru Township (Please Select One Option)

- ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ 1 to 5 years
- ☐ 6 to 10 years
- ☐ 11 to 15 years
- ☐ 16 to 20 years
- ☐ 21 to 30 years
- ☐ Over 30 years

Question 20 Results



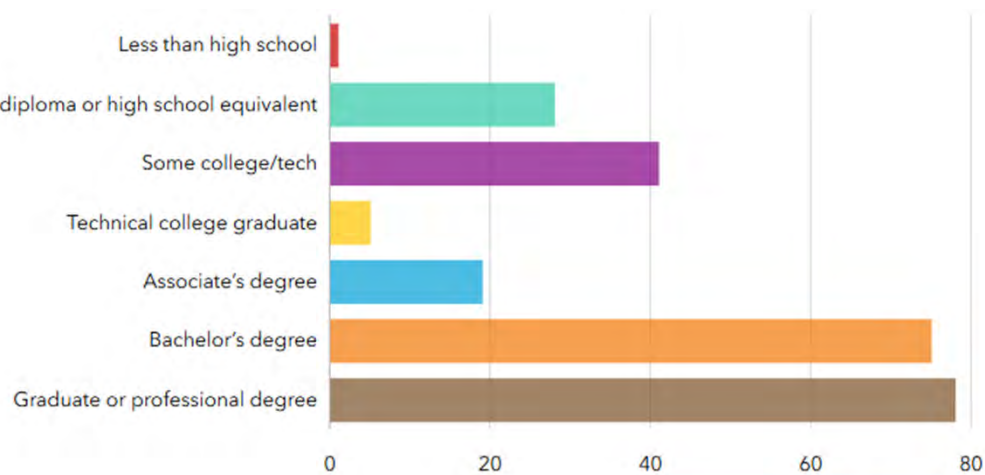
Community Survey Results

Question 21

Highest level of education (Please Select One Option)

- ☐ Less than high school
- ☐ High school diploma or high school equivalent
- ☐ Some college/tech
- ☐ Technical college graduate
- ☐ Associate's degree
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Graduate or professional degree

Question 21 Results



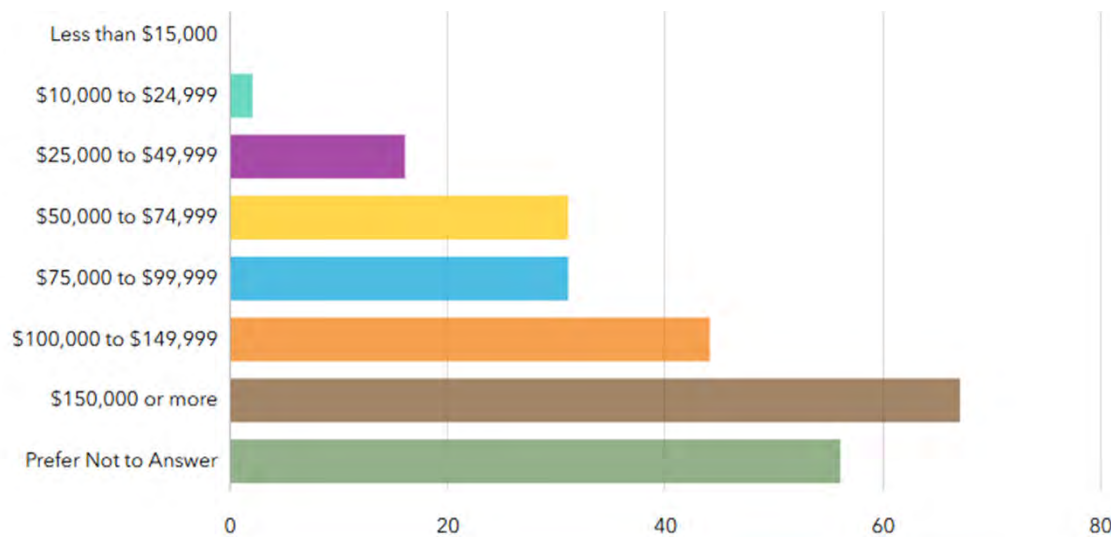
Community Survey Results

Question 22

Household Income Range (Please Select One Option)

- ☐ Less than \$15,000
- ☐ \$10,000 to \$24,999
- ☐ \$25,000 to \$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 to \$74,999
- ☐ \$75,000 to \$99,999
- ☐ \$100,000 to \$149,999
- ☐ \$150,000 or more
- ☐ Prefer Not to Answer

Question 22 Results

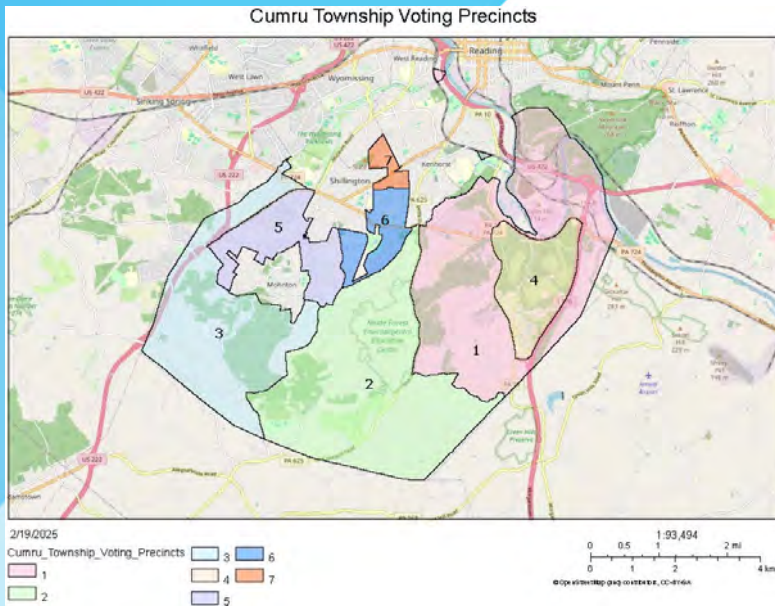


Community Survey Results

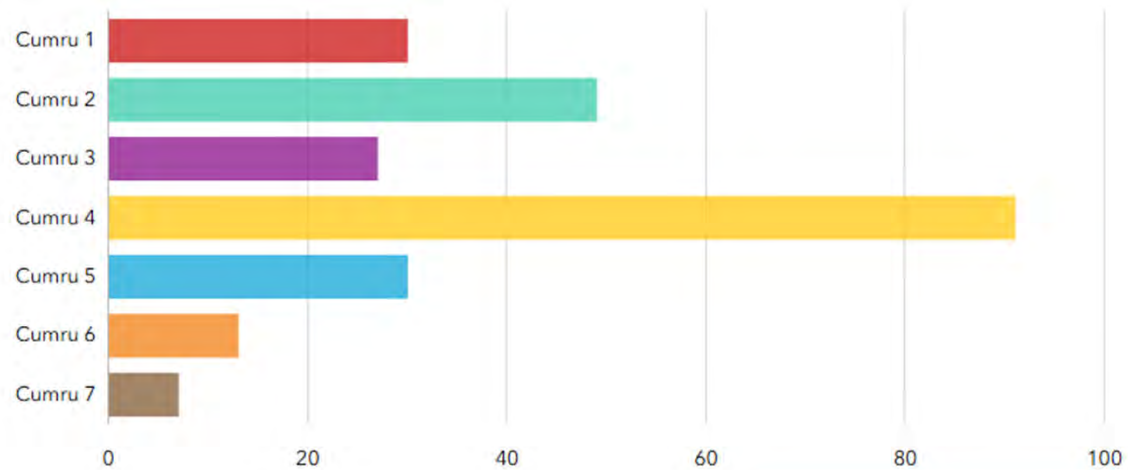
Question 23

Below is a map of voting precincts within Cumru Township. Please indicate the voting precinct in which you reside.

- ☐ Cumru 1
- ☐ Cumru 2
- ☐ Cumru 3
- ☐ Cumru 4
- ☐ Cumru 5
- ☐ Cumru 6
- ☐ Cumru 7



Question 23 Results

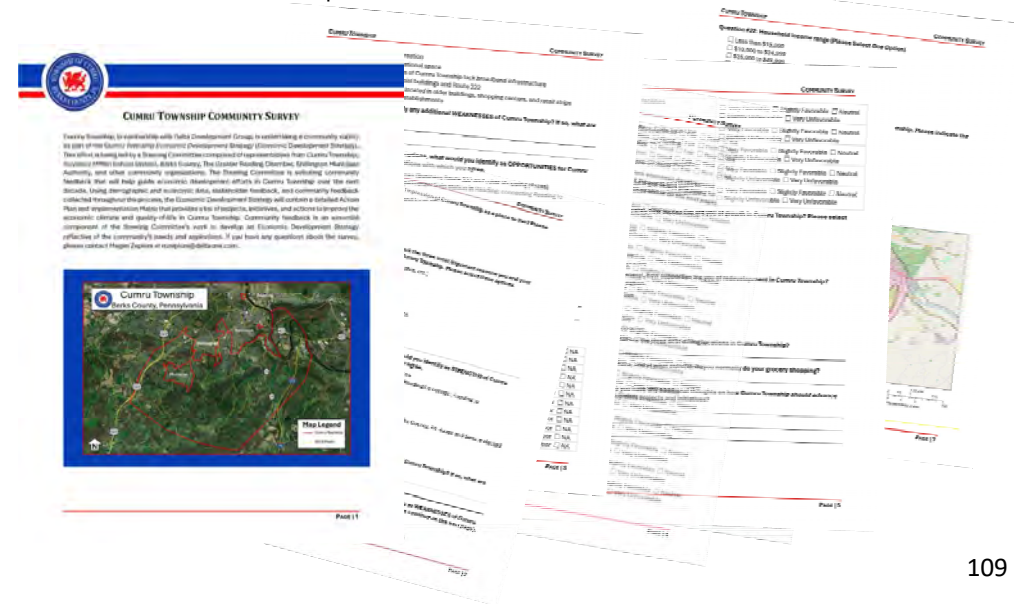


Community Survey Results

Summary

- Overall, Cumru Township residents view the Township positively.
- The Township's greatest strengths are location and transportation access to larger cities, great services, and natural resources.
- The Township's greatest weaknesses are lack of dining establishments, vacancies in commercial buildings and Route 222, lack of communication and transparency from the Township, older retail space, and rising taxes and costs.
- The Township's greatest opportunities are revitalizing older areas, developing a plan to attract new businesses, supporting the proposed passenger train, and adding new retail and dining.
- Residents view Cumru Township as an overall place to live, proximity to employment opportunities, and quality and accessibility of healthcare most positively.
- Residents view the quality and selection of existing retail, the quality and selection of existing restaurants, and the quality of cultural facilities most negatively.
- Filling vacant storefronts with new businesses, pursuing state and federal grants, and improving the selection of restaurants are the most popular potential opportunities and initiatives.
- Accommodating new housing development, marketing the Township as a filming destination, and developing new athletic facilities are the least popular potential opportunities and initiatives.
- Residents are very concerned with maintaining natural resources and open spaces.

- 52.6% of respondents are female and 47.4% are male.
- 44.9% (111 individuals) of respondents are aged 65 or over.
- 47.8% of respondents are employed full-time and 40.1% are retired.
- 96.4% of respondents own their own home.
- 32.0% of respondents have lived in Cumru Township for over 30 years while 1.6% have lived in the Township for less than a year.
- 31.6% of respondents have a graduate or professional degree and 30.4% have a bachelor's degree.
- 27.1% of respondents have a household income of \$150,000 or higher. 22.7% declined to respond.



Appendix III: Open House #1

Open House #1 Data

The first public Open House for resident feedback was held at Governor Mifflin Intermediate School on Wednesday April 9, 2025, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Participants were invited to provide insight on the future vision for Cumru Township at seven (7) different stations comprised of different activities, comment cards, and survey sheets.

Station 1

Public Outreach

The first station provided residents with an update on public outreach. Residents had the opportunity to read about stakeholder interviews, focus groups, community survey results, and the steering committee SWOT analysis. The station also had copies of the survey and comment cards for residents to fill out.

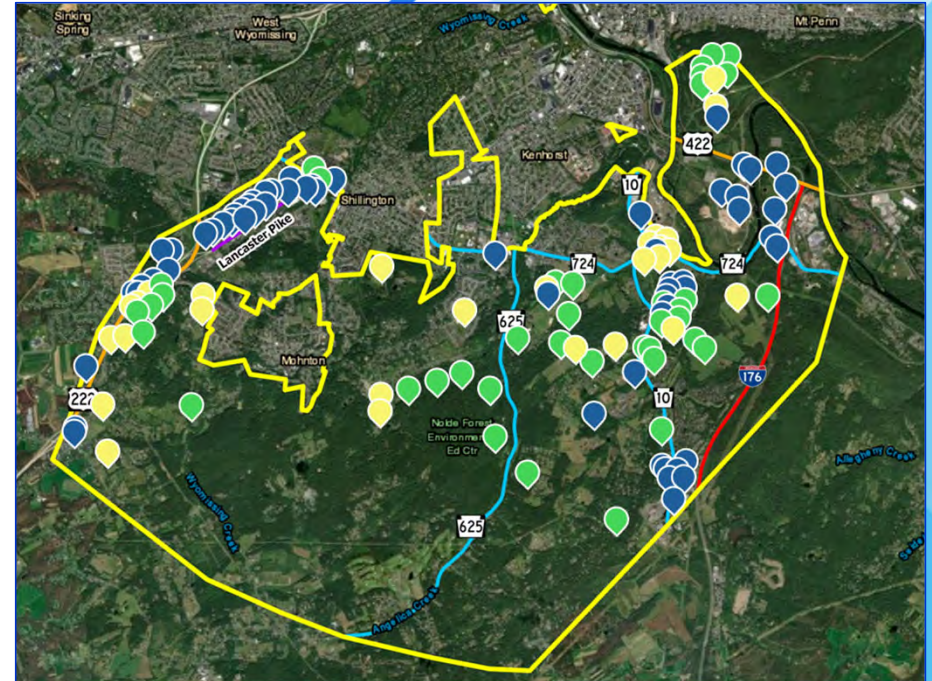
Station 2

Priority Areas

The second station had a “Pin Your Thoughts” activity. Participants were presented maps of Cumru Township, split into east and west, and asked to pin areas they considered to be priorities for a variety of economic development strategies.

- - Open Space
- - Commercial Areas
- - Housing

Priority Area Pin Results



Source: Delta Development Group

Residents placed a total of 128 pins: 41 for open space, 60 for commercial areas, and 27 for housing.

- Open space pins were predominantly clustered in **existing green spaces** (e.g., Nalde Forest), **undeveloped land** in east Cumru Township, and the proposed **warehouse sites**.
- Commercial priority areas included **Lancaster Pike**, the proposed **warehouse sites**, land adjacent to Route 222 at **Gouglersville**, **Titus Station**, and land adjacent to **Route 10 near Penske Headquarters**.
- Housing priority pins were scattered around the Township, with clusters at the **southern portion of Route 222** and the **intersection of Routes 10 and 724**.

Station 3

Share Your Vision

At the third station, residents were given post-it notes and asked to share their vision for Cumru Township's future. Residents' responses revealed a number of key themes:

Development Preferences

- Strong opposition to **warehouses** (mentioned repeatedly).
- Desire for **small retail businesses, restaurants, dining options, and mixed-use developments** (residential + commercial).
- Requests for **affordable family housing and condos**, with some favoring **55+ developments**.
- Support for **reusing existing buildings** instead of new construction.
- Interest in some **industrial development** (minority view).

Recreation & Green Space

- Calls for more **parks, playgrounds, sports complexes, and outdoor recreation** (e.g., skateboard park, boat launch, outdoor concerts).
- Suggestions for **trails and preserving open space and farmland**.
- Ideas for **joint recreation programs** with neighboring communities.
- Specific mention of **Mohnton Park** as a good example.

Infrastructure & Aesthetics

- Interest in **better sidewalks, lighting, signage, parking, and traffic signal improvements**.
- Emphasis on **pedestrian improvements**, especially near schools.
- Desire for **aesthetically pleasing developments and murals** to enhance community character.
- Interest in developing a **gateway area** along Route 222 with mixed uses and trails following historic routes.



Community Needs

- Requests for **fun youth activities** beyond sports (e.g., game centers, entertainment).
- Suggestions for **urgent care facilities** and possible **educational expansions** near Flying Hills.
- Call for **transparency** in township decisions, especially regarding large projects like warehouses.

Residents consistently demonstrate opposition to warehouses within the Township and would like to see more vibrant small businesses and housing, recreational spaces, preservation of green and open space, improved infrastructure, and better community engagement.

Station 4

Transportation and Mobility

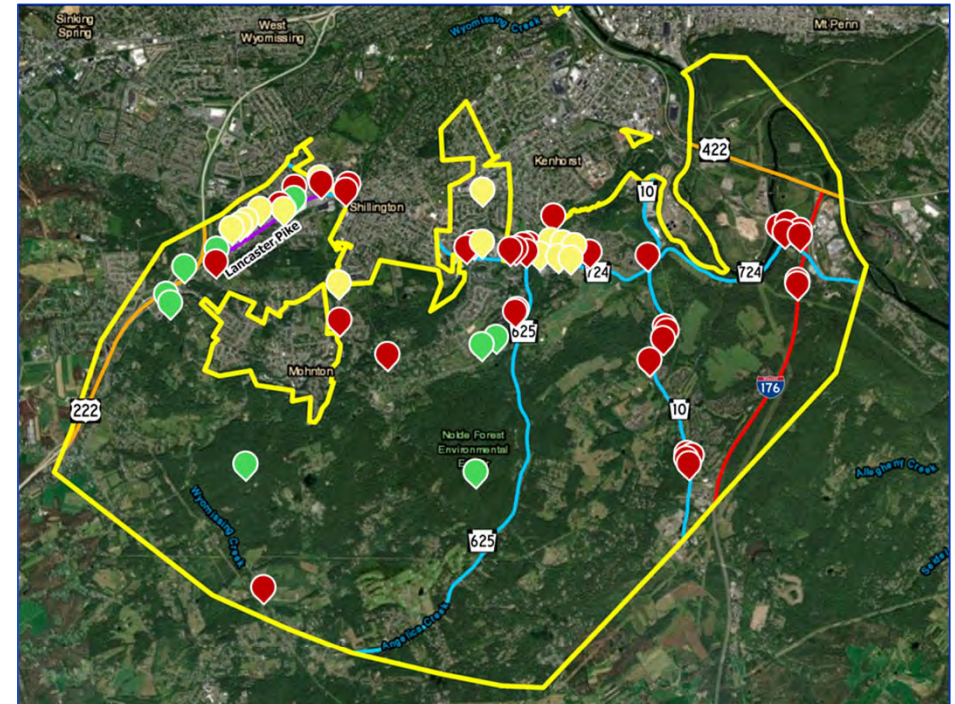
The fourth station had a “Pin Your Thoughts” activity. Participants were presented with maps of east and west Cumru Township and asked to pin areas they considered to be priorities for a variety of transportation and mobility improvements. trails following historic routes.

- - Bike Paths
- - Traffic Improvements
- - Streetscape/Pedestrian Improvements

Residents placed a total of 62 pins: 10 for bike paths, 36 for transportation improvements, and 16 for streetscape and pedestrian improvements.

- Bike paths were exclusively suggested in western Cumru Township, predominantly along the **Route 222 corridor** with a few in existing green spaces (e.g., Nolde Forest).
- Most traffic improvements were located along major roads, including Route 222, Route 10, and Route 724. Frequently suggested areas included the **intersection of Routes 625 and 724**, **Route 724** at the future apartment complex, and Route 10 at the proposed warehouse and Penske Headquarters.
- Streetscape and pedestrian improvements were centered along **Lancaster Pike** and **residential developments on Route 724**.

Priority Area Pin Results



Station 5

Land Use

The fifth station entailed an assessment of land use options for future development in Cumru Township, including commercial infill development, mixed-use/master planned development, and light industrial. Visual exhibits showing the before and after photos of developed sites were displayed, and participants were encouraged to fill out a questionnaire sheet outlining their likes and dislikes of each land use/development concept.

STATION 5 – LAND USE – INFILL PROJECT EXAMPLES

BELLEFONTE BOROUGH (CENTRE COUNTY)



Source: Toron Group



Source: Toron Group

CHOCOLATE AVENUE (DERRY TOWNSHIP DAUPHIN COUNTY)



Source: Google Maps



Source: TONO Group

LOWER ALLEN COMMONS (LOWER ALLEN TOWNSHIP CUMBERLAND COUNTY)



Source: Google Earth



Source: Google Earth

MASHPEE COMMONS (MASHPEE, MASSACHUSETTS)



Source: Imagine Amherst



Source: Imagine Amherst

STATION 5 – LAND USE – LIGHT INDUSTRIAL PROJECT EXAMPLES

GLASSBORO GREEN CLARION BOROUGH (CLARION COUNTY)



Source: Miles Brothers LLC



Source: Miles Brothers LLC

HAZLEWOOD GREEN CITY OF PITTSBURGH (ALLEGHENY COUNTY)



Source: HazlewoodGreen.com



Source: HazlewoodGreen.com

SUNBURY GENERATION POWER PLANT SITE SHAMOKIN DAM BOROUGH (SNYDER COUNTY)



Source: DCED.pa.gov



Source: DCED.pa.gov

STATION 5 – LAND USE – MIXED-USE/MASTER PLANNED PROJECT EXAMPLES

LOWER ALLEN TOWNSHIP (CUMBERLAND COUNTY)



Source: Google Earth

**EASTSIDE FLATS
MALVERN BOROUGH
(CHESTER COUNTY)**



Source: Google Maps

**SHOPPES AT BELMONT
MANHEIM TOWNSHIP
(LANCASTER COUNTY)**



Source: LancasterOnline.com



Source: Google Earth



Source: Trulia.com



Source: Loopnet.com



Source: Ames Construction, Inc.



Source: RentCafe.com

Initial Thoughts about Development Types

Participants were tasked with providing their initial overall thoughts about the land use type and development. Overall, the **Bellefonte Waterfront (Infill Development)** and **Mixed-Use/Master Planned Development** options received the highest cumulative positive percentage (Very Positive + Somewhat Positive).

WHAT ARE YOUR INITIAL THOUGHTS ABOUT THIS TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT?								
Infill Development					Light Industrial			Master Plan
Rating	Bellefonte Waterfront	Chocolate Avenue	Lower Allen Commons	Mashpee Commons	Glassworks Business Park	Hazelwood Green	Sunbury Generation Plant	Mixed-Use Development
Very Positive	47.6%	50.0%	10.0%	66.7%	10.0%	52.4%	50.0%	33.3%
Somewhat Positive	38.1%	25.0%	40.0%	14.3%	35.0%	28.6%	22.2%	50.0%
Neutral	0.0%	0.0%	15.0%	4.8%	35.0%	14.3%	16.7%	11.1%
Somewhat Negative	9.5%	10.0%	15.0%	4.8%	10.0%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
Very Negative	4.8%	5.0%	5.0%	0.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Unsure	0.0%	10.0%	15.0%	9.5%	5.0%	4.8%	0.0%	5.6%
Positive Percentage	85.7%	75.0%	50.0%	81.0%	45.0%	81.0%	72.2%	83.3%

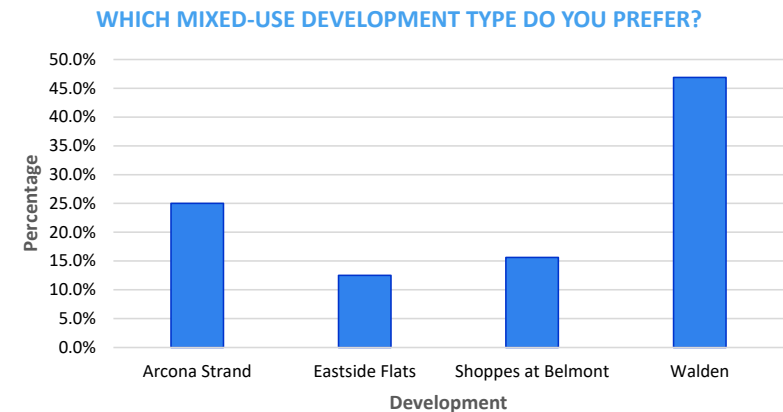
Source: Delta Development Group

Preferred Mixed-Use Development Type

To assess the preferences of participants for mixed-use developments, each participant was asked which presented mixed-use development example they preferred from a list of four options. The plurality (46.9%) of participants **preferred Walden – a mixed-use development that integrates a mix of residential housing types (single-family, townhomes, and condos), ground-level, street-facing retail at the entrance of the community, and recreational space.** Participants did not prefer the options that integrated big-box retail (Shoppes at Belmont) or a five-story structure (Eastside Flats).

WHICH MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT TYPE DO YOU PREFER?	
Site	Preference
Arcona Strand	25.0%
Eastside Flats	12.5%
Shoppes at Belmont	15.6%
Walden	46.9%

Source: Delta Development Group



Source: Delta Development Group

Fit Within the Township

Participants were then tasked with providing insight on whether they thought that the land use and development type was a good fit for Cumru Township. **The Bellefonte Waterfront and Mixed-Use Development options received the highest percentages of “Excellent or Good” selections.** Lower Allen Commons (representative of a standard commercial reuse) and Glassworks Business Park (representative of a standard light industrial reuse) received the lowest “Excellent or Good” selection percentages.

HOW DOES THIS DEVELOPMENT TYPE FIT WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP?								
Infill Development					Light Industrial			Master Plan
	Bellefonte Waterfront	Chocolate Avenue	Lower Allen Commons	Mashpee Commons	Glassworks Business Park	Hazelwood Green	Sunbury Generation Plant	Mixed-Use Development
Excellent Fit	19.0%	30.0%	10.5%	42.9%	0.0%	35.0%	33.3%	28.6%
Good Fit	52.4%	35.0%	26.3%	19.0%	35.0%	30.0%	33.3%	47.6%
Neutral	4.8%	10.0%	31.6%	14.3%	40.0%	20.0%	16.7%	19.0%
Poor Fit	9.5%	10.0%	15.8%	14.3%	20.0%	5.0%	11.1%	0.0%
Not a Fit at All	0.0%	0.0%	10.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Unsure	14.3%	15.0%	5.3%	9.5%	5.0%	10.0%	5.6%	4.8%
Excellent or Good Percentage	71.4%	65.0%	36.8%	61.9%	35.0%	65.0%	66.7%	76.2%

Source: Delta Development Group

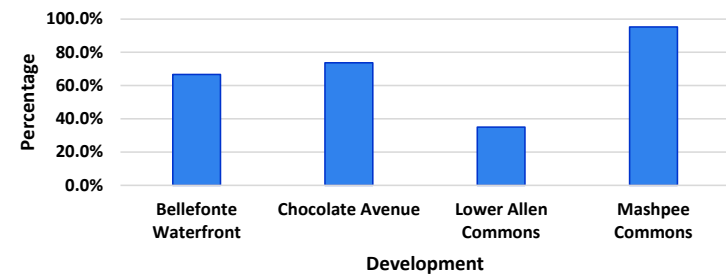
Appeal of Architectural Style

To assess architectural style preferences, participants were asked to provide their thoughts on the appeal of the architectural style for the identified infill developments. **Mashpee Commons, constructed in a neo-traditional architectural style, received the highest percentage of “Very or Somewhat Appealing” responses.** Lower Allen Commons, constructed in a common modern commercial style, received the smallest percentage of “Very or Somewhat Appealing” responses.

HOW APPEALING IS THIS ARCHITECTURAL STYLE?				
Infill Development				
Rating	Bellefonte Waterfront	Chocolate Avenue	Lower Allen Commons	Mashpee Commons
Very Appealing	42.9%	42.1%	10.0%	71.4%
Somewhat Appealing	23.8%	31.6%	25.0%	23.8%
Neutral	19.0%	21.1%	45.0%	4.8%
Not Appealing	14.3%	5.3%	20.0%	0.0%
Very or Somewhat Appealing Percentage	66.7%	73.7%	35.0%	95.2%

Source: Delta Development Group

VERY OR SOMEWHAT APPEALING RESPONSE PERCENTAGE



Source: Delta Development Group

Impacts to Township

Participants were asked to provide insights on potential impacts of the land use/development type on Cumru Township, including Improve Quality of Life, Increase Tax Base, Provide a Better Mix of Housing, Accommodate Tourism in the Region, Create Congestion Issues, Not Needed in Township, and Unsure. In general, participants believed that developments incorporating a mix of uses enhance the quality of life, industrial developments enhance the tax base, and that traditional big-box commercial development is not needed in Cumru Township.

HOW DO YOU THINK THIS TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS THE TOWNSHIP?								
Infill Development					Light Industrial			Master Plan
Impacts	Bellefonte Waterfront	Chocolate Avenue	Lower Allen Commons	Mashpee Commons	Glassworks Business Park	Hazelwood Green	Sunbury Generation Plant	Mixed-Use Development
Improve Quality of Life	12.9%	31.4%	22.7%	34.4%	12.0%	29.0%	23.1%	31.6%
Increase Tax Base	38.7%	34.3%	36.4%	34.4%	48.0%	41.9%	50.0%	31.6%
Provide a Better Mix of Housing*	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	34.2%
Accommodate Tourism in Region*	32.3%	17.1%	9.1%	21.9%	4.0%	16.1%	11.5%	0.0%
Create Congestion Issues	12.9%	8.6%	9.1%	6.3%	8.0%	0.0%	3.8%	0.0%
Not Needed in Township	0.0%	5.7%	13.6%	3.1%	8.0%	3.2%	7.7%	0.0%
Unsure	3.2%	2.9%	9.1%	0.0%	20.0%	9.7%	3.8%	2.6%

Source: Delta Development Group

Suitable Areas within Township

Participants were asked to provide insights on where the land use/development type may be suitable within Cumru Township. In general, participants identified **Lancaster Pike/U.S. Business Route 222 and PA Route 10** as most suitable for infill development, the **Poplar Neck/Titus Station Area** as most suitable for light industrial development, and **Lancaster Pike/U.S. Business Route 222, PA Route 10, and U.S. Route 222/Mohnton Area** as most suitable for mixed-use/master planned development.

WHAT AREAS OF CUMRU TOWNSHIP ARE SUITABLE FOR THIS TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT?								
Infill Development					Light Industrial			Master Plan
	Bellefonte Waterfront	Chocolate Avenue	Lower Allen Commons	Mashpee Commons	Glassworks Business Park	Hazelwood Green	Sunbury Generation Plant	Mixed-Use Development
1	Lancaster Pike/U.S. Business Route 222	Lancaster Pike/U.S. Business Route 222	Lancaster Pike/U.S. Business Route 222	Lancaster Pike/U.S. Business Route 222	Poplar Neck/Titus Station Area	Poplar Neck/Titus Station Area	Poplar Neck/Titus Station Area	Lancaster Pike/U.S. Business Route 222
2	PA Route 10	PA Route 10	PA Route 10		PA Route 174/Philadelphia Avenue	PA Route 10		PA Route 10
3	Poplar Neck/Titus Station Area				Near I-76	Near I-76		U.S. Route 222/Mohnton Area
4					Gouglersville Area			

Source: Delta Development Group

Key Themes from Station 5

- ➔ Mixed-use development is preferred to single use commercial, industrial, or residential development.
- ➔ Participants preferred land use and development options with lower building heights (1-3 stories) and smaller-scale commercial components.
- ➔ For mixed-use and infill development, a neo-traditional architectural style is preferred (i.e., combination of historic architectural elements on buildings of modern size and amenities).
- ➔ Participants viewed mixed-use/master planned developments as enhancing the local quality of life.
- ➔ Participants viewed industrial development, where appropriately situated, as increasing the local tax base.
- ➔ Opportunities for development and redevelopment exist around Lancaster Pike/U.S. Business Route 222, PA Route 10 (Flying Hills Area), and exits along U.S. Route 222.



Station 6

Vote for Investments

At the sixth station, participants were given six coins of incremental value and presented with jars representing potential investments in Cumru Township. Participants then voted using the coins based on the perceived desirability of each investment.

Potential Investments



Residents believe that Cumru Township's investment priorities should be water and sewer infrastructure and incentives for new development. The least popular potential investment was outdoor recreation space.

1. Water and Sewer Infrastructure: \$22.49
2. Incentives for New Development: \$21.55
3. Greenways/Trails: \$13.51
4. Streetscape/Pedestrian Improvements in Commercial Areas: \$10.40
5. Road Improvements: \$9.87
6. Outdoor Recreation Space: \$9.13



Station 7

Final Comments

At the seventh and final station, participants were given comment cards so they could provide any final comments and feedback on the Open House.

Comments included the following:

Positive Feedback on Engagement

- Several attendees **appreciated the event format**, especially interactive activities **like push pins and coins in jars**.
- General **praise for the event** and acknowledgment of the effort put into it.
- Suggestions for **more publicity** for future events, especially via **social media** (e.g., Facebook), noting **Cumru Township's lack of online presence**.

Development Preferences

- Strong opposition to **warehouses** and **high-density development** due to traffic and community impact.
- Preference for **redevelopment of already developed/vacant land** rather than building new shopping centers that might later fail.
- Support for **housing, green spaces, parks, playgrounds, and fine arts/commercial areas** with walkability.

Township Property & Infrastructure

- Suggestion to sell unused Township buildings (e.g., old firehouse, buildings on Welsh Road).
- Idea to use Warren Rec Center for community programs like exercise or dance classes.
- Concern about expense to prepare sites at difficult redevelopment areas like Route 222 due to infrastructure challenges.
- Support for revitalizing existing buildings and increasing public works funding.
- Opposition to more apartments, with a preference for 55+ communities and revitalization.

Residents overall appreciated the community input events but stated there was need for better publicity. There was strong preference for the Township focus on redevelopment, housing, parks, and existing infrastructure and avoid warehouses and dense developments. Residents also desire more community programing and responsible growth.

Comments



Appendix IV: Open House #2

Open House #2 Data

A second public Open House was held at Governor Mifflin High School on Wednesday September 3, 2025, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Delta gave a presentation on public outreach results to date. Participants were then divided into breakout groups to discuss the following topics:

- Rethink and Refresh our Commercial Areas
- Creating a Vision for Lancaster Pike
- A Place to Call Home: Improving and Expanding Housing Together

Breakout 1

Rethink and Refresh Our Commercial Areas

Participants would like to see more of the following business types in Cumru Township's commercial areas.

- Theater
- Greenspace
- Restaurants (especially with unique architectural features, such as Vintner's Table)
- Shops
- Housing where possible
- Playgrounds

The commercial area breakout group also identified the following Cumru shopping centers/strip centers as a high priority for investment.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| → Shillington Plaza | → Areas along Route 724 |
| → Ollie's plaza | → Gouglersville exit |
| → Shillington Shopping Center | → Tower Health Gateway/Mohton Exit |
| → Stabon Pond | → PennDOT property |
| → Old Titus Station | → Montrose Manor Playground |

Station 2

Creating a Vision for Lancaster Pike

The Lancaster Pike breakout group expressed that the existing Lancaster Pike has choppy with poor retail, old and vacant buildings, high traffic, and suboptimal building uses. In contrast, participants envisioned the future Lancaster Pike as walkable, resilient with low turnover, and a destination to visit. They want the Pike to be supported by the local demographic base and strong infrastructure.

Participants identified the following places that Lancaster Pike could look or feel like:

- Lititz
- Mequon
- Wyomissing
- King of Prussia
- West Reading

To achieve this look and feel, the group expressed they would like to see development along Lancaster Pike that meets the needs of the Cumru community and provides employment opportunities for Cumru residents. In particular, participants want mixed-use development and healthcare. The Township should aid this development by addressing infrastructure deficiencies and incentivizing consolidation to improve ISO ratings.



Breakout 3

A Place to Call Home: Improving and Expanding Housing Together



Participants in the housing breakout group discussed mixed-use development in Cumru Township and starting a housing rehabilitation program.

The group expressed a positive view of mixed-use developments as they would create walkable communities with a combination of housing and shops. They identified the following benefits:

- Walkability
- Access to amenities
- Safety
- Building a sense of community
- Larger tax base

The group also expressed the following concerns about mixed-use development in Cumru Township:

- Lack of school district space to accommodate new families
 - No land to building more school district buildings
- Lack of parking for residents
- Infrastructure deficiencies
- Flood plane concerns
- HOA fees burdening residents
- Road maintenance fees

The following locations throughout the Township were identified as possible sites for mixed-use development:

- Gouglersville near the fire station
- Lancaster Pike
- Shillington Shopping Center – existing buildings could be built up
- Route 10 near Sunoco

Overall, participants viewed mixed-use developments positively due to their walkability and potential to increase a sense of community, but they also had trepidations about cost, infrastructure, and the burden on the school district.

The group then discussed the formation of a housing rehabilitation program in Cumru Township. Participants expressed support for such a program due to significant need for housing repair in aged housing stock. Currently, the following home repairs are needed throughout the Township:

- Yard maintenance
- Pipes
- Utilities
- Tree maintenance
- Impact of trees on housing (falling branches, woodpecker damage)
- Sidewalks
- Radon
- Energy efficiency
- Wells and septic systems
- Bringing houses up to code

Cumru residents face the following challenges when trying to fix or maintain their homes:

- Cost
- Unknown issues (compounded by lack of home inspections before sale)
- Aging population on a fixed income
- Communication with utility providers
- Physical ability and know-how
- Difficulty with neighbors



Group participants suggested that for the future housing rehabilitation program, the Township could partner with local students who need graduation projects (including technical schools and Alvernia University), churches, and foundations. The Township should advertise the program on the Township website with links to resources, with targeted low-cost mailings, and via email. Advertisements should include both a QR code and a phone number to ensure that the program is accessible for all generations.

Participants were asked to share one action that they would most want to see to improve housing in their neighborhood. The following were suggested:

- Improving Lancaster Avenue so it is not a drag strip
- Adding a grocery store and home improvement store near Flying Hills
- Not allowing private lanes due to maintenance difficulties – roads should be dedicated or have a maintenance agreement
- Find money through grants
- Residents' needs must be correctly assessed
- Water and road improvements

