

Chapter 13

Open Space and Recreation Plan

New Garden Township has expressed the desire to retain the remaining rural character and open spaces of the community. Prior plans have maintained this objective and provided strategies to retain open space and increase recreational opportunities in the Township. The primary direction for such efforts has been the 1993 *New Garden Township Open Space, Recreation, and Environmental Resources Plan* (Open Space Plan). A number of the recommendations, such as the development of the Township Park, have been completed. Additional tasks such as the development of a protected greenway trail along the White Clay Creek have begun but need further direction and effort.

Protection of open space has become the priority for New Garden Township. Major recommendations in regard to the preservation of both public and private open space and natural resources are discussed in **Chapter 12, Natural Resources Protection Plan** and protection is supported by the goals and objectives in **Chapter 9**. The survey conducted for this Comprehensive Plan revealed that, along with curbing rapid residential development, open space preservation was the most important planning issue in the Township. There have not been significant additions to recreational opportunities for Township residents, aside from the development of the Township Park.

This Chapter provides strategies for the identification and protection of open space and general recommendations for recreational lands within the Township as a supplement to the 1993 Open Space Plan. Many of the goals and objectives and some of the information and recommendations from the 1993 Open Space Plan remain relevant. However, since that time there have been significant changes to the population of the Township and that document focused primarily on the protection of natural resources and planning of recreational facilities in terms of services and numbers of ball fields. While this is important, the purpose of this Plan is to develop strategies for the identification, prioritization, and protection of the remaining open lands within the Township, as well as for potential additional parklands. This Plan is not intended to address specific recreational opportunities such as individual volleyball courts. Several important developments have occurred that make it necessary to update policies and recommendations of the Open Space Plan. The planned adoption of progressive zoning amendments to protect open space and natural resources; the continuance of the agricultural preservation easement program; the adoption of *Landscapes*, the Chester County Comprehensive Plan; the establishment of the County Vision Partnership Program to aid Townships; and the completion of the Chester County Open Space Plan element *Linking Landscapes*; have all had impacts on open space and environmental resources in New Garden Township. Some references, concepts, and data from *Linking Landscapes* have been incorporated into this Chapter, as this information is important in aiding the Township to secure future grants.

Connected Open Space

Open space isolation is a concern in New Garden, because individual open spaces cannot function properly. For example, an open space that is designated as a wildlife preserve promotes the health and well being of the plants and animals that live within it. But if a nature preserve becomes surrounded by development, the animals will become isolated. Such isolation promotes inbreeding, and if a drought or disease should strike, the animals will have no place to flee. Isolation of tracts of open space also contributes to animals, such as deer wandering along roadways and through residential areas due to lack of natural connections between open spaces. For this reason it is necessary for open spaces that promote wildlife to be linked together. Without such links open spaces cannot function optimally.

Open spaces set aside for human recreation are also negatively impacted by isolation. Parks and playgrounds that are isolated are more difficult to access and are less likely to be used. A playground that can only be reached by automobile is less likely to be used during working hours. Playgrounds that can be reached by a walking path that connects it to a residential neighborhood is more likely to attract children, the elderly, or young parents with baby strollers, who can visit the facility all through the day. A playground that is used throughout the day is a more efficient use of public funding. It is also less likely to be vandalized or used for other criminal activity. Linking recreational open spaces through pedestrian trails can therefore improve the safety, quality, and cost effectiveness of public parks.

Viewing Protected Open Space as Public Infrastructure

For many residents the term “public infrastructure” conjures up images of electric high-tension lines, sewage treatment plants, or other man-made structures associated with a utility. “Infrastructure” is not a word people often associate with protecting open spaces, but it is quite appropriate. Unlike utility infrastructure, a protected open space network does not include poles or buildings. Instead it is composed of meadows, forests, stream corridors, parklands, and protected farm fields each of which provides benefits to the community as a whole. The public infrastructure of a protected open space becomes a connected series of naturally occurring resources that contribute to the quality of life for township residents by protecting natural areas and places for recreation.

The Township should begin viewing the open space network as a public infrastructure built up incrementally over time by a variety of independent groups all working with a common goal. Parts of the network, like large parks and wildlife preserves, may be best established by federal, state, or county agencies. The Township can establish recreational parks and local trails, or non-recreational natural resource preserves. Schools, local conservation groups, or neighborhood associations can implement smaller projects and make their facilities available to the public. Even corporations and residents can get involved by creating and managing trails or wildlife corridors in corporate campuses or on private property that link into other nearby facilities.

Benefits of Open Space/Terminology

New Garden should recognize the benefits of open space in three key areas. It improves the overall quality of life, improves the ecology, and provides tangible economic benefits. An important aspect of open space is that there is no one set definition for it. The general term “open space” is defined very broadly as any land that is not covered by buildings or pavement. This definition covers all forms of open space from a multi-acre state game land to a ten-foot wide public walking path around the edge of an industrial park. A variety of terms are used to describe different types of open space. These definitions are important because each of the three sections, open space, recreation, and environmental resources, could all conceivably be covered by the broad title of “open space” because they are all interrelated. Furthermore, it is important that each of these is clearly defined in order to plan for each of these “types” of open spaces appropriately and to reduce confusion during discussion of these topics. For the purposes of discussion in this Plan, the following terms will be used throughout the remainder of this Chapter:

- “Active open space” refers to recreation areas like playgrounds or sports fields.
- “Passive open space” refers to land set aside for natural conservation or wildlife preserves.
- “Public open space” is commonly used to describe areas owned or administered by a government or other public agency.
- “Private open space” denotes private property, which is not available for public use.
- “Quasi-public space” is used when discussing properties such as school campuses or nature centers, which do not fit nicely into either of the other categories.

Methodology

In order to provide a method of discussion, recommendations, and clarification for each of these categories within this Plan, open space will be considered as lands permanently protected by land trusts, cluster developments, and conservation or agricultural easements. Recreation will cover primarily active recreational areas, and environmental resources will refer to resources protected by the Township zoning ordinance such as steep slopes and floodplains. There will be some cross referencing between the categories to help explain the overlap of these resources. Several recommendations in this Chapter are similar to those in **Chapter 12**, however a slightly different viewpoint is expressed to relate these recommendations to the larger open space framework.

The recommendations of this Chapter are organized into the following major headings:

- Protected Open Space Resources
- Recreation/Trails
- Environmental Resources
- General Recommendations

Protected Open Space Resources

New Garden began efforts to further the protection of open space by creating the the Township Open Space Task Force to generate preservation strategies. Additionally, the Township continues to work with organizations, such as Chester County, land trusts, and consultants, to protect additional lands. The protection of open space through cluster developments is a strategy that the Township continues to perfect. The Township has an agriculture security area and there are two farms that have been protected by agricultural easements. There are several utilities that traverse the Township that provide the opportunity for additional open space protection and connections. The open spaces discussed in this section are considered “protected” open spaces primarily due to either the ownership or easement of these parcels or portions of parcels. These open spaces are not recreational in nature, and in most cases are not intended for public access. The parks covered in the recreation section, are a form of public open space that address the overall recreation and public access goals of this Plan.

The concept of “greenways” is an additional strategy for preserving and connecting open space resources in New Garden. A greenway is loosely defined as any linear open space. In June 2001, *Pennsylvania Greenways: An Action Plan for Creating Connections*, was published by the Pennsylvania Greenways Partnership Commission, and is chaired by the secretaries of the Pennsylvania DCNR and the Department of Transportation. In this document, “greenways” were defined as narrow to wide corridors used for recreational or environmental protection. The Action Plan called for the establishment of a network of greenways on public and private properties that connect “Pennsylvania’s open space, natural landscape features, scenic, cultural, historic and recreation sites, and urban and rural communities.” The Action Plan also recommends that all of the Commonwealth’s 67 counties complete and adopt a Greenway Plan by 2007. *Linking Landscapes* serves as Chester County’s Greenway Plan.

The following recommendations address the preservation of open space, as defined for this Chapter, and in conjunction with the resource protection recommendations in **Chapter 12**:

- **Develop a strategic plan for evaluating and making determinations on the preservation of available open space parcels.**

The first step in creating a protected open space network is identifying those areas that may be included in the network. These areas would include both concentrated areas of open space, such as parks or future park areas and nature preserves, and the corridors that might be used to link the larger

open space areas. Not all of the open spaces will serve the same purpose or should be located near each other. For example, active recreational uses, such as a playground, should not be located next to a sanctuary for migratory birds. In some cases the links might be wildlife corridors, where minimal or no disturbance is desirable and, in other cases, the links might be part of a trail network.

The Township should develop a strategic plan to guide decisions on the preservation of open space parcels. The strategy should be developed by a task force made up of representatives of the Planning Commission, Supervisors, Parks and Recreation Board, Open Space Task Force, and other groups as applicable. The criteria developed in the strategic plan should help to prioritize the lands within the Township so that funding for open space may be targeted to provide the greatest overall benefit. The strategies can also provide guidance to the Township in evaluating lands that may be proposed for development where the Township may be interested in purchasing all or a portion of the property. In order to create a strategic plan for open space that considers all of the ramifications and potential methods of preservation, the Township should consider retaining a consultant who has extensive experience in recreation, natural resource conservation, and trail planning.

The strategic plan should examine potential open space parcels within the network and recommend how they could best be preserved and whether they should be publicly accessible, used for active or passive recreation, or set aside for wildlife preservation with little or no public access permitted. The Township should be able to answer key questions before seeking to preserve a property, such as:

- For what purpose will the open space be used?
- Will its use be compatible with that of adjacent properties?
- What kinds of activities will be permitted, limited, or forbidden on the protected open space?
- How will it link to other protected open spaces?
- What type of funding is available?
- How will the protected open space be managed in perpetuity, and how will that management be funded?

In addition to the fee simple purchase of open space or easement of a parcel, the Township's resource protection standards will also help to preserve the open space network. The floodplain standards help to preserve the land immediately along the streams. Other protection standards, including wetlands, steep slopes, riparian buffers, and woodlands, are critical to protect open space. The Township may want to encourage developers to donate this land to the Township to further the creation of the protected open space network. For key pieces of land, the Township may decide it is worthwhile to purchase the land. Parcels targeted for eventual Township acquisition can be included on the Township Official Map.

- **Continue to develop and modify Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance regulations that further protect natural resources and open space.**

New Garden has limited regulations protecting natural resources. Specific recommendations to address additional protection standards are discussed in detail in **Chapter 12** of this Comprehensive Plan. However, it is important to note that protecting natural resources through ordinance regulations is also an important aspect of protecting open space. The selection of a parcel for protection may be due to the initial protection through ordinance standards either directly or indirectly. Protection of a riparian buffer by zoning and further protection by a conservation easement is one example of this progression. The further development of ordinance standards provides for greater amounts of land to be protected in this "initial step", before additional protection of larger parcels by easements or fee-simple purchase.

- **Consider an open space referendum to create specific Township funding for open space.**

New Garden should evaluate the potential for passing an open space tax referendum to create a specific fund in the budget for open space preservation. In preparation for a referendum, it is important that residents are informed about the process, what the money will be used for, and how much it will cost each household. Public meetings before the referendum may be critical to the outcome. It is important to ensure that the referendum has a high potential to pass before instituting a vote due to time and effort that is necessary to undertake this process. The cost of preserving open space as opposed to the overall cost of services should be communicated to residents in the presentation of the referendum. Essentially, residential housing creates an overall loss in terms of revenue to the Township. The taxes gained by new housing is less than the cost of services necessary to accommodate those units. The net loss over time may exceed the cost of simply purchasing the land for open space preservation and result in a low cost and overall reduction in costs for Township residents. See the recommendation below for additional discussion.

Having a Township source of money for open space is important for several reasons. The funding can be used to aid in funding applications for easements, as “seed” money to leverage greater sums from other county, state, or other source, and finally for direct purchase by the Township if necessary.

- **Evaluate the cost of development as opposed to the cost of purchasing open space when considering the purchase and funding of open space.**

Several studies consider the long term loss of revenue due to the failure of residential development to “pay for itself” in terms of taxes as justification for the purchase of open space, in that the open space voids the purchased acreage from potential residential development and in effect “pays for itself” in the long term. The Township should continue to evaluate these studies and consider how they may be useful to the Township strategy for protecting open space. The potential for passing an open space referendum to fund open space preservation is one opportunity that may benefit from the positive justification these studies offer.

- **Coordinate with land trusts in efforts to protect open space in conjunction with the priorities of the Township.**

New Garden should communicate with local land trusts in order to promote the protection of open spaces within the Township. When asked where more Township funding should be allocated to, in the Survey completed for this Comprehensive Plan, some of the highest responses from residents were to acquire conservation easements. Therefore, the Township should investigate the possibility of using Township funds to protect open spaces, possibility through coordination with local land trusts. It is essential that the goals and recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan be communicated to land trusts to facilitate the objectives of the Township because land trusts are not directly controlled by the Township. Priorities and lands identified by the mapping through this Comprehensive Plan process should be clearly conveyed to provide guidance on which lands should be secured along with the necessary justification and identification for establishing additional easements. Under the guidance of this Comprehensive Plan and the additional direction of *Linking Landscapes*, the Township and land trusts have access to a great amount of information and potential additional funding sources.

The parcels identified on **Map 13-1** developed as a part of this Comprehensive Plan and *Linking Landscapes* provide one means of identifying priority lands for conservation easements. These parcels comprise the remaining undeveloped parcels within the Township, and are important because larger parcels are those that are typically targeted for and funded by open space preservation efforts.

- **Consider the development of a New Garden Township Land Trust in efforts to protect open space in conjunction with the priorities of the Township.**

The Township should consider the development of a New Garden Township Land Trust, and should support the Trust as the primary means of procuring easements within New Garden Township. Because the Land Trust would be a single and separate entity with no direct control by the Township, it is essential that the goals and recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan be communicated to the Trust to facilitate the objectives of the Township. The priorities and lands identified by the mapping through this Comprehensive Plan process should be conveyed to the Trust to provide guidance on which lands should be secured, along with the necessary justification and identification for establishing additional easements. Under the guidance of this Comprehensive Plan and the additional direction provided by *Linking Landscapes*, the Trust has access to a great amount of information and potential additional funding sources. There are additional funding sources available for the development of a land trust.

- **Encourage owners of agricultural properties to consider easing their land.**

The Township should provide the owners of the remaining agricultural parcels in the Township with information on agricultural easement programs to ensure that the land owners are aware of the program and encourage them to participate. While agricultural easements do not provide open space useable by the public, and are essentially used to protect the use or “industry” of agriculture, in many cases agriculture easements protect large parcels that aid in the preservation of scenic viewsheds and character of the township. The Chester County Agricultural Land Preservation Board should be contacted for more information.

The Township should consider assisting farmers with the application process. Providing aid in the form of funding applications or assistance filling out forms and communications between farmers and the agency administering the easement program are several ways the Township may increase the potential for additional properties to participate in the agricultural easement programs.

- **Consider utility easements and corridors for open space protection and greenway connectors.**

The general location of three utility easements are identified on **Map 13-1**. These easements provide the opportunity for open space connections throughout the Township and furthermore as regional open space connections. The Township should investigate the potential for additional preservation and development of these corridors for connectivity of greenways or recreation corridors. (see discussion of connectivity under the Introduction). The Township should encourage utility companies to purchase the easement corridors, particularly when properties containing easements or rights-of-way are sold.

The Township should investigate possible ordinance revisions that may encourage this process, such as providing smaller setbacks for properties where easements are sold as fee-simple parcels to utility companies. Lastly, the utility easements should be considered as potential municipal and regional trail opportunities for hiking and pedestrian activity. This is discussed further under Recreation. Altogether, it is important for the Township to understand and communicate the value of these easements and their potential for providing additional open space, recreation, and environmental resource uses.

- **Establish a greenway network throughout the Township.**

A greenway can be a linear open space for walking, hiking, jogging, and biking. Greenways are also established to preserve natural areas such as stream corridors. Connecting residential neighborhoods with various parts of a community is another function of greenways. There are numerous ways to control the necessary property for a greenway short of paying for fee-simple acquisition. Additional methods to create greenways include the following: donation, easement, mandatory dedication,

reserved life estate, purchase-leaseback, and land cooperatives. The Township should consider adding the recognition of, and consideration for, donation of lands within the designated greenway network on **Map 13-1** into both the Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and Official Map. Developers should be made aware of the Township policy to secure these areas at the beginning of the subdivision process so that developments may incorporate greenways during the beginning of the process. Addressing acquisition early in the development process is essential to both ensuring the protection of the greenways and that this protection occurs in a consecutive manner to protect entire linear greenway corridors. The Township should include the protection of greenways as a priority for the open space required in conservation subdivisions. The Township may want to investigate additional incentives to developers to encourage them to preserve greenways as a part of new subdivisions. The Township should adopt riparian buffer standards into the Township Zoning Ordinance as a primary method of establishing a greenway network along streams. More information on this topic is available in **Chapter 12**.

A primary opportunity for a greenway within the Township is along the White Clay Creek. Due to the topography and limited development along the creek, this is one of the greatest opportunities in the Township to establish a greenway. The further potential for a trail corridor linking from London Grove Township to the White Clay Preserve should be investigated. Local recreation and trail groups, the Chester County Planning Commission, and local land trusts should be contacted to begin the process.

Donation of land or an access easement for public open space can be tax deductible as a charitable contribution. Property tax incentives for keeping land as open space generated the greatest response from residents in the Survey completed for this Comprehensive Plan, when asked where more funds should be allocated. The Township should make landowners along greenway corridors aware of this option and investigate additional incentives it could offer to encourage the donation or easement of land for greenway corridors.

- **Refer to *Linking Landscapes* for the protection of open spaces and greenways as well as for documentation and funding sources.**

The Township should review the materials in *Linking Landscapes* and use the information in that document in the identification, planning, and funding of open spaces and greenways. In some cases, large documents such as this Plan for Chester County, seem overwhelming and not relevant to individual municipalities. However, *Linking Landscapes* has a wide variety of information, maps, references, and tasks for both the County and the Township, some of which are important for securing grants. The Township Supervisors, Planning Commission, and Open Space Task Force members should all make efforts to be familiar with *Linking Landscapes* to aid in the further protection of open space in the Township.

- **Review and revise open space design option standards.**

Despite the best efforts of the cluster, open space, or conservation design methods, in some cases the resulting open space may not result in meaningful open space for the residents. The Township should continue to revise its open space design option in the zoning ordinance so that the resultant open spaces are “meaningful” for residents. The open space resulting from developments should accomplish some means, either providing large areas for recreation, an adequate buffer including mature vegetation as a buffer against adjacent uses, or to protect some natural or historic feature. Open space such as scattered “strips” of open space surrounding the periphery of developments, or spots of “open space” around the entrance to the development should be avoided. Open spaces within developments should be of sufficient size or location to provide a sufficient buffer or be large enough to be useful to community residents. Furthermore, the Township should encourage the placement of open space within developments to be contiguous to adjacent existing open space or to open spaces or

greenways identified by this Plan. The Cluster Design Guide, 2003, by the Chester County Planning Commission, should be referenced for further information.

- **Ensure a regular maintenance program for parks and open spaces.**

The Township should consider regular inspections of existing parks and active open spaces, including the open spaces within residential subdivisions. These facilities should be thoroughly inspected on a regular basis. A formal checklist could be developed so that the inspections and records are consistent and thorough to cover the following:

- Immediate need for grounds work (regrading, clearing of overgrown vegetation, trash pickup)
- Structural repairs
- Condition of recreation facilities
- Identify improvements that may be needed in the near future
- Other safety and security concerns

Such inspections should be conducted to detect and repair faulty facilities and ensure the safety and enjoyment for Township residents. In the case of homeowners association property it is to the Township's benefit to inspect these areas due the provision that the Township will undertake management of such facilities in the case maintenance by the homeowners association is neglected.

- **Revisit the standards for the maintenance and inspection of open space within residential developments.**

The Township should review the standards within the Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances that regulate how open spaces within residential developments are permitted, maintained, and inspected. It may be necessary to modify the regulations to be more specific about maintenance requirements or to give the Township additional flexibility to inspect and enforce the maintenance of these open spaces.

Recreation

For the purposes of this Chapter, recreation involves park facilities and recreational programs. Parks are a form of open space, with a primary purpose of providing lands open to the public for active and/or passive recreation. In some cases, parks exist in areas that are protected by regulations specifically to conserve natural resources such as floodplains, because a park is one land use that coincides with the protection of such resources in terms of limited buildings, impervious surfaces, and impacts. Therefore, areas where there are many restrictions due to natural resources may be primary locations for park facilities. The open spaces referred to in the previous section that are protected by land trusts and other forms of easements, are typically to provide protection of wildlife habitats, particular woodlands, historic structures or sites, or agricultural uses, none of which are suitable to uses as recreational facilities for the general public, but are more specific to simple preservation. This does not mean that land trusts cannot acquire property for either primary or secondary recreational purposes, and in fact, should be encouraged to do so. The purpose of this section is to evaluate the parks within New Garden Township and plan for future parks and recreational facilities to serve the community. The Survey conducted for this Comprehensive Plan revealed that residents would like to see additional Township funds be allocated towards the expansion of parks and recreation facilities and programming and for the construction of public trails and recreation facilities. Provision of parks and recreational facilities is important for the quality of life within the Township and will become an increasing issue as the population, particularly children, continues to increase. The Township Parks and Recreation Board should take a progressive role in furthering parks and recreation throughout the Township.

Map 13-2 displays the parks and recreational areas in the Township and surrounding region. The only park within New Garden is the 29 acre Township Park northwest of the intersection of Route 41 and Newark Road. The park is owned and operated by the Township. The park contains both active and passive recreational opportunities with items such as volleyball courts, ballfields, and picnic areas.

The Township owns additional areas that may provide potential parkland. These include several smaller undeveloped wooded parcels, as well as spray fields that may hold potential for recreational opportunities.

Previous recreational planning efforts, mainly in the Township Open Space Plan, evaluated existing park facilities using National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines to project park needs into the future. At one time these “guidelines” from NRPA were held as “standards,” however, during the development of the Open Space Plan they were considered as “guidelines.” In 2004 it has been determined that these “guidelines” may still be used for rough estimations but, because of their initial attempt at providing nation-wide regulations for park standards, it is recognized that this was an incorrect assumption and such standards or guidelines have essentially been abandoned except as references for facilities planning. *Linking Landscapes* provides an updated philosophy and guidelines for future parkland needs particular to Chester County communities to supplement the previous NRPA guidelines. The guidelines established by *Linking Landscapes* will be used within this document because they were uniquely developed to suit the needs of Chester County municipalities.

Figure 13-1: Chester County Recreational Park Standards

Type of Recreational Park	Service Radius	Minimum Acreage Standard	Maximum Population	Size of Recreational Park
Regional Park	30 Miles (Equal to a 60 minute drive)	20 acres per 1,000 people	None	1,000 acres or more
Sub-regional Park	7.5 miles (Equal to a 15 minute drive)	8.5 acres per 1,000 people	100,000	400 acres to 999 acres
Community Park	2.5 miles (Equal to a 5 minute drive or a 30 minute walk)	3.0 to 6.0 acres per 1,000 people	25,000	20 acres to 399 acres
Neighborhood Park	0.5 miles (Equal to a 15 minute walk)	2.5 to 3.5 acres per 1,000 people	5,000	0.5 acres to 19.9 acres
Mini Park	0.25 miles (Equal to an 8 minute walk)	0.25 acres per 1,000 people	2,000	0.01 acre to 0.49 acres

Source: Linking Landscapes, Table 4.1

Linking Landscapes created the 2002 Chester County Recreation Park Standards listed in **Figure 13-1** that divides recreational parks into five categories from regional parks to mini-parks. A discussion of the federal, state, and county parks in the area follows and, most importantly, *Linking Landscapes* divides each municipality into density classifications and provides the amount of parkland in each community in 2002, as well as recreational park needs projected to 2020. Using these standards and the population projections from **Chapter 2, Demographics**, the projected parkland needs for New Garden can be calculated. See **Figure 13-2**.

Figure 13-2: Projected Parkland Needs

Type of Park	2000	2010	2020
Community Park	(9,083 population/1,000) x 4.5acres= 41 acres	(11,560 population/1,000) x 4.5acres= 52 acres	(13,710 population/1,000) x 4.5acres= 62 acres
Neighborhood Park	(9,083 population/1,000) x 3.5acres= 32 acres	(11,560 population/1,000) x 3.5acres= 40 acres	(13,710 population/1,000) x 3.5acres= 48 acres
Total	73 acres	92 acres	110 acres

Source: *Linking Landscapes*, Table 4.1, 4.13; Chapter 1, New Garden Demographics, Figure 2-2.

New Garden is listed as a municipality of medium density needing one community park and several neighborhood parks totaling approximately 73 acres in 2000. The same analysis carried out to 2020 projects the Township as a medium density municipality needing one community park and several neighborhood parks totaling approximately 110 acres. Based solely on this analysis and the existing facilities, it is evident that the Township needs to develop additional parkland over the next 20 years.

One important factor is that the Township should not rely on passive recreation facilities or facilities built by other municipalities to meet the active recreation needs of their residents. As recommended in *Linking Landscapes*, “A municipality should fulfill the active recreation needs of its residents with recreational parks fully or partially owned and operated by the municipality, and not rely on federal, state, or county parks, or parks wholly owned and operated by another municipality” (Vision 19.1, p. 19.7). To fully meet the recreational needs of its residents, the Township should attempt to provide as many options for both passive and active recreation as is practical.

Demographic information is an additional factor when considering the development of recreational facilities. **Figure 2-3 in Chapter 2** displays population data for the Township broken down by age groups. It is evident that, while not the largest age groups, the under 5 and 5-17 age groups are the fastest growing groups in New Garden, particularly since 1990. Because these groups include school age children, many of which are involved in sports, or typically need areas for such activities, this data further supports the need for the Township to develop parks for active recreation to accommodate for the needs of this growing segment of the Township population.

The development of recreational facilities is a process that takes considerable planning, time, and funding and thus the Township should begin this process immediately to ensure that adequate facilities are available for the future population. A variety of assistance and funding is available for the development of parkland. The last recommendation on page 18 offers more information on funding sources.

Additional insight can be attributed from the Public Opinion Survey conducted for this Comprehensive Plan. When asked about the adequacy of services in regards to parks and recreation, 20 percent stated that these services were “inadequate”. Similarly, when residents were asked whether they would be willing to pay additional charges or fees for additional parks and recreation areas and programs, 36 percent answered “yes”. While this does not account for a majority, it was the highest response for all of the services in question.

For these reasons the Township should initiate the process of creating additional passive and particularly active recreational facilities to supplement the existing Township Park.

The following recommendations address parks and recreational needs for the Township:

- **Conduct a Township-wide study to more specifically identify recreational needs and how they can be addressed.**

In addition to the data, information, and recommendations in this Section, the Township should conduct a more refined study to accurately identify the recreational needs of Township residents. The Survey for this Comprehensive Plan identified the top three recreational facilities residents are interested in as hiking trails, passive open space, and playing fields (soccer, football, baseball). This may involve a survey of Township residents, community groups, public meetings, a questionnaire on the Township website, or hiring a recreation consultant to study the needs and accommodation of active recreation within the Township. The study should identify particular types of active recreation and potential locations for these activities, such as the village of Toughkenamon. Traffic, safety, and noise are all considerations that should be taken into account for the location of active recreational uses within the Township. It is important for the Township to directly assess the needs of its residents as this Plan is not meant to provide specifics in terms of individual recreational activities.

- **Consider the development of parkland on Township owned parcels.**

Township owned parcels in four areas in 2004 including the location of the Township building and park near the intersection of Route 41 and Newark Road and several undeveloped parcels that total approximately 45 acres. These areas should be evaluated for the potential for both active and passive parkland to increase the distribution of parklands within the Township. Because these parcels are owned by the Township, they present a more immediate opportunity to broaden the amount and location of recreational facilities for Township residents. The Township should identify the potential use of each of these parcels and develop a master plan for them. The Township should also consider the sale or exchange of existing, undeveloped parcels in order to obtain larger or more desirable parcels for parkland.

- **Develop active recreation facilities within existing and future parks/Township properties.**

The Township should begin the development of additional active recreation facilities. It is clear in the Public Opinion Survey that residents would like to see the Township plan more recreation and open space uses. Typically, the areas needed for field sports such as soccer cannot be accommodated in residents back yards and schools do not typically leave goals out and sometimes do not allow games due to wear and tear on school property. The Township should initiate additional efforts to make facilities for field sports available to residents. Trails and walking paths area additional considerations for active recreation that were identified by residents in the Township survey. Considerations for safety of both motorists and pedestrians should be a priority when determining the potential for future facilities.

- **Continue to identify and prioritize parcels for their potential as future parks.**

The Township should identify those parcels that have the greatest potential for future Township parks, including larger undeveloped parcels, and existing parcels owned by the Township. (See: **Map 13-1**) Larger undeveloped parcels, that do not have significant changes in topography or little value in terms of wildlife habitat or historic value, would be prime candidates for potential active recreation sites. A majority of these parcels exist in the northern section of the Township where there is less topography and greater concentrations of development. The Parks and Recreation Board should be the primary facilitator of this effort in conjunction with the other data and mapping efforts the Open Space Task Force has undertaken for natural and historic resources. Once parcels have been identified, the Township should prioritize them and initiate efforts to secure parcels for future development as parkland.

- **Pursue the acquisition of land for future parks.**

The Township should pursue the acquisition of land for future parks for both active and passive recreation identified through the prioritization process described above. These parcels should be identified on the Township Official Map as a preliminary step to facilitate the following strategies. There are a variety of methods to accomplish this. Fee-simple acquisition by the Township is one option. The Township should communicate with the various land trusts on coordinating acquisition of land for parks either by fee-simple purchase or easement through land trusts.

Parkland dedication negotiated as a part of a cluster subdivision or other type of development is an additional method for gaining parklands. The Township should inform developers of targeted parkland identified as a part of the prioritization process so that negotiations may begin early in the subdivision process. The dedication of parkland, or location of open space in cluster subdivisions within adjacent developments, may result in substantial parkland as development within the Township continues. The Township should consider adding top priorities for potential parkland and trails to the Township Official Map. The Township should include requirements for dedication of parkland, trails, and location of open space in cluster subdivisions to be adjacent to those lands established in prior developments. The acquisition of lands for future parkland should be a priority over the development of parks in the short term due the diminishing number of large parcels available within the Township. While the acquisition process may take time, even more time is required for the completion of the planning, funding, and development of parkland once the land has been secured. In order to have recreational facilities in place to adequately serve future needs, securing lands for future parkland should begin immediately.

- **Carefully consider design aspects of parks.**

It is anticipated that any parks developed by the Township will be patrolled primarily by New Garden Township Police. The police, fire departments, and Township Parks and Recreation Board should all be included in the development of any parkland. Evaluating the appropriateness of a parcel for playfields, lighting, placement of parking and access points, buffers, and consideration of adjacent uses, among others, should all be considered during the development of a parcel for a future park facility. The Township should adopt parking standards specifically for parks, to allow appropriate parking facilities while minimizing maintenance by incorporating permeable paving such as gravel or other means. Additionally, facilities and access for handicapped persons should be considered in the development of parks.

- **Continue to support the development and management of Township Park.**

The Township is actively engaged in the continued development of Township Park. The Township should promote further addition of land to the Park on adjacent parcels through assistance with grants and other funding sources. Further enlargement of the Park and additional facilities, with active recreation in particular, should be a priority to the Township. The Township should continue to follow the master plan developed for the Park and consider any revisions that may be appropriate.

- **Encourage public accessibility to quasi-public open space areas.**

While such areas as those surrounding the two schools are not included in the Township calculated open space as discussed above, the Township should ensure that these areas continue to be available to the public for both passive and active recreational purposes. The Township should continue to communicate with the Kennett Consolidated School District on the availability and use of the school grounds to residents when they are not being used for official school purposes. The Township should communicate with organizations that have potential areas for public recreation and investigate the eventual use by residents. There may be additional areas within the Township that may result in additional opportunities for recreational opportunities for Township residents.

- **Support recreation programs.**

New Garden should identify and initiate communications with public and private recreational providers within the Township. The Township should help publicize the events, facilities, and programs of these organizations so that residents are aware of the recreational opportunities. The Township should consider initiating a meeting of the areas recreational providers, possibly on a regular basis such as bi-annually, at either a Township Supervisor work session or possibility at the Kennett Area Regional Planning Commission (KARPC) level to encourage communication, development of programs, interaction between municipalities and recreation providers, and between recreation providers themselves. There is a need to assess existing programs and promote new programs to meet the growing population and to correctly match the types of programs that residents are interested in.

The KARPC has initiated an effort to inventory recreation uses, programs, and parks within the Region and develop a strategy for recreational uses on a regional basis. The Township should actively participate in this effort to increase recreational opportunities.

- **Use a variety of media to publicize recreation opportunities.**

The Township newsletter, website, events, and other means should be used to provide information on recreational opportunities available to Township residents.

Trails

Trails are a subset of the recreational category. In the Survey conducted for this Comprehensive Plan, hiking trails were chosen as the most desirable type of recreation facility by Township residents. In general, trails can be considered passive recreation and should be used to promote connectivity between existing park facilities and open spaces. Trails exist on parkland, though easements, through private property where allowed, or in places along low volume or scenic roadways. Generally a variety of these access options are used to provide a continuous segment. The Appalachian Trail is a good example of this, and more locally, the Horse-Shoe Trail across the northern part of Chester County. The Mason-Dixon Trail is a lesser known “traditional hiking route” that passes along the southern boundary of New Garden Township. The Township has been interested in establishing both a greenway and trail system along the White Clay Creek. In the Borough of Kennett Square, a trail system is already underway through participation with the Kennett Area Park Authority (Township Park), the Borough, and Kennett Township. Similarly, Kennett Township is actively engaged in the creation of a greenway and trail along the west bank of the Red Clay Creek, which crosses the northeastern most corner of New Garden. *Linking Landscapes* provides additional potential trail alignments and justification along with identification of several trail networks connecting to New Garden Township in the state of Delaware to the south. There are a variety of funding sources available for the purchase of land for the creation of trail corridors and the planning and construction of trails. See the recommendation on page 18 for more information on funding.

The following recommendations address the development of trails within the Township and connectivity to the surrounding region:

- **Identify potential trail corridors throughout the Township for passive recreation and connections between open spaces and parklands.**

The Township should continue to identify and map existing and potential trails both within the Township and the surrounding area to maximize connectivity and coordination. **Map 13-2** displays a variety of potential trail corridors within New Garden Township and the surrounding region. The Open Space Task Force should be the primary procurator and distributor of mapping for this effort. *Linking Landscapes* suggests that the Township identify and consider all trail links within one mile

of its border in order to develop linkages with these existing corridors and coordination with the appropriate entity in charge of such trails. In particular, the Township should coordinate with both Kennett and London Britain Township to coordinate efforts to establish a trail system.

The Township should also consider accommodations for bicycles discussed in **Chapter 14**. Bicycling is a popular recreational activity as well as an alternative means for residents to travel throughout the Township. New Garden's scenic roads should be considered along with the Chester County Planning Commission's *Recommended Bikeway Network for Chester County Map* for potential bike trails within the Township. Additional signage such as "share the road" or reduced speeds along such roads may be appropriate along with widened or improved shoulders to accommodate bike safety along priority roads. (See **Map 13-2** for the Recommended Bikeway Network for Chester County.) The State of Delaware should be contacted for coordination on bike routes and trails between New Garden Township and Delaware to maximize the potential of these facilities.

- **Pursue the development of trails along the utility easements and Octorara Railroad.**

Because of their potential for connecting potential parklands, the Township should investigate the potential for trails to be established along utility corridors. The need to investigate the legality of trails along utility easements should be investigated and communication with the utility providers should be initiated. The development may initially be simply more frequent mowing of a continuous strip thorough the utility corridors and posting signs along roadways announcing the permission of the utilities for public access. The Township solicitor should determine whether or not utility companies would be willing, legally, to allow for public use of their easement corridors.

The Octorara Railroad is used on a limited basis as a freight railroad. If the railroad becomes inactive, the Township should take steps to ensure the corridor continues to be protected by some means, possibly as an easement or purchase by the Township or some organization. Additionally, if the railroad ceases to function, the Township should initiate efforts for the railway to be developed as a rails-to-trails facility.

- **Pursue the development of trails along stream corridors, particularly the White Clay Creek.**

The Township should evaluate each parcel along each of the stream corridors and a detailed inventory of property owners, pictures, aerial photography, mapping, and other resources should be compiled. Information on each parcel should be gathered to identify at least the following data:

- Whether or not the parcel is developed,
- What the land use is (residential, commercial),
- Who the owner of the parcel is,
- What condition the stream corridor is in (wooded, eroded banks, structures near the stream bank, meadow),
- Potential for improvement, and
- Potential for inclusion of a trail (steep slopes, sensitive vegetation, flat, meadow).

The Township's Open Space Task Force, a consultant, or a newly formed committee should begin this compilation of data and formulate a preliminary strategy for the trail system. Meetings with property owners, land trusts, the Township, adjacent municipalities, and Chester County agencies, individually or as a whole, will be essential to progressing with this concept. Planning for these trails is essential to realizing the full potential of the trail corridors as well as increasing potential funding sources. Policies outlined in *Linking Landscapes* on page 12.40 encourage municipalities to plan for trails in a multi-municipal basis through offering additional funding, giving priority to grants that are multi-municipal projects, and offering additional services to facilitate multi-municipal efforts.

The White Clay Creek is identified as a portion of an undeveloped regional recreation corridor delineated as the Oxford-Avondale Regional Recreation Corridor by *Linking Landscapes*. This corridor links with additional corridors to form a potential trail loop in southeastern Chester County and connects the White Clay Creek Preserve with the Nottingham County Park. Chapter 12 of *Linking Landscapes*, and particularly page 12.18, should be examined for more information on this corridor. London Grove Township has implemented measures to create a trail system creating a loop linking Avondale and West Grove. There is a feasible connection to this initiative to the White Clay Creek Preserve through New Garden Township through the White Clay Creek corridor. The Township should initiate efforts to begin efforts to establish a protected corridor and trail system through easement, donation, or other means, with the potential to utilize the abandoned railroad as a primary alignment.

Smaller tributaries should also be considered for their potential. Egypt Run and Broad Run, for example, have particular potential as trail corridors due to the undeveloped nature of the properties through which they run, as well as protected parcels and municipally owned lands.

- **Pursue the further development of the Mason Dixon Trail.**

The Mason-Dixon trail is more accurately described as a traditional hiking route. It does not have constructed facilities and does not have a permanent alignment. The alignment of the hiking route is facilitated primarily by hiking clubs and is not dedicated as a public facility. The trail traverses along roadways and through private property via “hand-shake” agreements with property owners. The primary purpose of this corridor is to provide New Garden Township and other southeastern Chester County communities with access to the White Clay Creek State Park Preserve and Fair Hill Natural Resource Areas. It is identified in *Linking Landscapes* as the Delaware Arc Regional Recreation Corridor. This corridor has the potential to be linked to the corridor along the White Clay Creek mentioned above. The Township should investigate the potential for the development of this trail. It is crucial that the hiking clubs involved with the trail and property owners along the trail are involved from the beginning. Development may eventually be as simple as posted signs or as complex as a regional walking trail linking from the Brandywine Battlefield to the White Clay Creek Preserve. *Linking Landscapes* Chapter 12, and specifically page 12.47, should be referenced for more information.

- **Coordinate with other trail development efforts in the Kennett Region.**

The Township should coordinate with the larger Kennett Region as a part of the Kennett Area Regional Planning Commission on the planning and development of trails to maximize the corridor length, connectivity, and funding for trails throughout the Region.

Environmental Resources

New Garden Township has a variety of natural resources that should be protected. The Township has adopted limited ordinance regulations to protect environmental resources. Recommendations for the further protection of these resources are included in **Chapter 12, Natural Resource Protection Plan**. As discussed within the previous sections, environmental resources are considered a type of open space that typically overlaps with the other types of open space identified above.

The following recommendations address environmental resources with respect to open space:

- **Modify Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance regulations that protect natural resources, water quality, native vegetation, biodiversity, and wildlife habitat.**

Aside from protecting natural resources, such as floodplains, to reduce the potential negative impacts on the health, safety, and welfare of Township residents, the protection of these resources contributes to biodiversity and wildlife habitat. These are important effects of regulations in addition to the financial implications of protecting environmental resources. The Township should continue to enhance and add regulations that either directly or indirectly protect environmental resources due to the wide range of benefits, including open space, recreation, and quality of life associated with a healthy environment.

- **Gather further information on and consider prioritizing the protection of biological resources within identified wildlife biodiversity corridors.**

There are a variety of protected open spaces within New Garden such as municipal parks, home owners association open spaces, and the White Clay State Preserve. What are less common are linear wildlife corridors along which animals can travel. In Chapter 13 of *Linking Landscapes*, wildlife biodiversity corridors are identified and encouraged to be protected. At risk habitats such as PNDI sites, large woodlands, and water resources are all considered as part of wildlife biodiversity corridors. Although the term “wildlife biodiversity corridor” may sound similar to the “regional recreation corridors” discussed under trails in the Recreation section above, the two terms refer to very different land uses. A wildlife biodiversity corridor is specifically set aside for wildlife to move from one habitat to another without being extensively exposed to contact with humans. As a result, the public is often discouraged from using wildlife biodiversity corridors for active recreation. However, active public recreation is strongly encouraged within regional recreation corridors, which only promote wildlife as a secondary use. The Township should consider the benefit of an protection for wildlife recreation corridors by adopting additional resource protection initiatives and open space protection measures. Wildlife biodiversity corridors are displayed on **Map 13-2**.

It is apparent that a number of protected open space areas, such as within the developments of Broad Run and Somerset Lakes, along with a few undeveloped parcels exist within the primary biodiversity corridor. Furthermore, a considerable portion of this corridor remains undeveloped, including several larger parcels that may be prime candidates for easements or other protection measures. Because of the relatively undeveloped nature of the biodiversity corridors, the Township should incorporate parcels within these corridors into the prioritization for protected open space. The mapping and information within this section should be referenced for grant writing and justification for the protection of such parcels. The Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Index (PNDI) sites registered by the state are within the secondary biodiversity corridors and are fortunately on undeveloped parcels. The Township should begin measures to protect these parcels. *Linking Landscapes* Chapter 13 can also be consulted for more information.

General Recommendations

In addition to the recommendations above for the three “categories” of open space, general recommendations are given to cover concepts such as strategies for identification of open space parcels and regional coordination. The following recommendations address additional issues relating to open space:

- **Continue to maintain a Township organization for the development of open space initiatives.**

The Township should continue to maintain a task force or committee to be a primary source for collecting and maintaining data, as well as providing a means of mapping and developing priorities for areas, parcels, greenways and trails, to create an open space network with input from the Township Planning Commission and Supervisors. This body should continue to identify, prioritize, and recommend open space strategies, parcels for protection, and recreational needs. Communication with

the Park and Recreation Board, the Planning Commission, the Supervisors, and residents should be a priority for effective implementation.

- **Review Land Developments for open space planning.**

The Township should retain a qualified professional open space planner to review development submissions. There are two methods to implement this. The Township may amend the SLDO provisions to require the review of development plans by the Township's open space planner at the sketch plan level or the Board of Supervisors may retain an open space planner by resolution, with costs incurred through plan submission fees. It is important that the review process refers to the Township Open Space Plan and this Comprehensive Plan as the policy document for open space planning in the review of development plans in regard to open space. Requiring a well developed open space management plan for open spaces created by new developments is essential.

- **Educate residents on the importance of open space preservation and methods of preservation.**

The Township should develop a brochure that could be placed in the newsletter, on the website, or mailed out individually to residents. Information on the importance of open space and methods such as agricultural easements, donations (tax-exempt), easements, and other means, should be included. Current Township initiatives and organizations that deal with open space protection and planning should be mentioned. Appropriate Township contacts and meetings should be listed.

- **Support the KARPC to implement regionally consistent resource protection standards.**

A current effort being undertaken by the KARPC is to implement consistent protection standards for environmentally sensitive features including wetlands, woodlands, riparian buffers, steep slopes, and floodplains. An evaluation of each of the participating municipal ordinances was undertaken and recommendations made for improving and expanding their current protection standards. In particular, the need for specific, measurable limitations on disturbance of resources was emphasized in the evaluation. Expansion and improvement of protection standards currently under consideration will make the Township's ordinances more comprehensive. New Garden Township's regional representatives should continue to communicate with member municipalities to ensure cooperation and coordination in terms of equal and appropriate regulation of natural resources throughout the Region.

- **Communicate with the KARPC efforts to implement open space protection strategies on a regional basis.**

Current efforts, such as the greenways and trails along the White Clay Creek and both branches of the Red Clay Creek, should be continued and additional identification of potential protection efforts, trail corridors, and developments should be initiated. Cooperation with surrounding townships and the larger Region is essential to greenway corridors, wildlife corridors, protection of natural resources, and trails. Without protection or cooperation on a regional basis, the result of such efforts is stunted when efforts are localized to a single municipality. Trail networks need to be established and continued on a regional basis and connected to existing efforts in other municipalities and across state boundaries to be successful. The Township should share the methods it has used to identify potential parcels for open space potential with the remainder of the Region and encourage each municipality to begin such a process. The Region should attempt to achieve consistent methodology with this process to ensure that lands within the Region are evaluated on a similar basis as well as allowing the potential for pursuing regional funding for open space preservation. The KARPC should pursue a Region-wide open space study or plan for developing parks, greenways, and a trail network. Furthermore, New Garden will need to communicate with neighbor municipalities outside the KARPC, namely Avondale and London Grove, to continue these strategies along all borders.

- **Communicate with the State of Delaware with open space, greenway corridor, trail network, and bike route strategies.**

The State of Delaware has a progressive strategy for developing an open space network including greenway corridors, trail networks and bikeways. These are displayed on **Map 13-2**. The Township and Region should coordinate with the State of Delaware to ensure that efforts for potential greenways, trails, and bike routes in Pennsylvania connect with the Delaware efforts.

- **Investigate, compile, and pursue a variety of funding sources for the acquisition of open space and greenways.**

There are a variety of funding sources available for the acquisition of parks, open space, and greenways as well as the planning, development, and construction of trails. The Township should begin developing a file for these various programs so that adequate information is available as different opportunities arise. Grants are available for the Township individually, but in the case of greenways and trails, as well as coordinated efforts by the KARPC, larger grants may be available when sought on a multi-municipal basis. Grants may be used directly for open space preservation or to leverage additional money.

Funding is available from federal, state, county, and private sources. A major source of funding in the past was the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) which provided approximately \$155 billion for highway, safety, and mass transportation projects including recreational trails from 1991 to 1997. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) continued and expanded programs established by ISTEA. See *Linking Landscapes* Chapter 16, for more information on funding opportunities. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) should be contacted as the administrators for current federal funding and programs. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has established a number of programs for open space and recreation, such as the Recreational Trails Program and the Pennsylvania Heritage Park Funds. Grant manuals, current programs, and funding levels are available by contacting the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR) Bureau of Recreation and Conservation. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) are two other sources of funding for parks, recreation, and natural resources planning and protection. Chester County has provided a variety of funding sources for planning, open space acquisition, and construction of open space, parks, and recreational facilities.

- **Develop a strategy that incorporates the mushroom industry with the preservation of open space within the Township.**

The mushroom industry is the largest economic contributor and employer in the Township and a predominate land use. Despite the large acreage owned by the industry, much of the land devoted to this use is open, primarily used to spread used compost after the growing process is continued. The industry needs significant amounts of land in order to facilitate this portion of their operations. In the past there was adequate land for this, however, there is decreasing lands available. Because of this, some operations must pile compost instead of spread it out. Inadequate spreading of compost is the primary reason for the increased odor that is a persistent issue within the region. Some mushroom facility owners have purchased land in Lancaster County in order to have adequate land to spread compost. The Township should begin efforts to discuss this issue with the mushroom growers for a joint benefit. There may be a possibility for the permanent protection of portions of mushroom properties that would amount to protected open space for the Township and some financial or operational benefit for the mushroom growers. The goal of this strategy would be to increase the amount of protected lands within the Township in conjunction with maintaining the health of the environment and the Townships most important industry.

- **Consult Linking Landscapes for additional recreation and open space information including potential funding sources.**

The Township has copies of this document and should reference it for further information on open space and recreation concepts, data, contacts, and funding sources. Funding by Chester County is available and applications for funding from the County should be thorough, use information from *Linking Landscapes*, and be consistent with that document in order to increase the amount and successfulness of grants being awarded. The Chester County Planning Commission should be consulted for additional information, funding, and recommendations.

The following Chapters of *Linking Landscapes* are directly applicable to this Chapter:

- Chapter 1 - Introduction - Discusses the open space network as a “new infrastructure,” defines the many types of open space, and provides an overview of how *Linking Landscapes* can be used by municipalities.
- Chapter 4 - Recreational Parks - Inventories, evaluates, and provides visions and actions for national, state, county, municipal, and multi-municipal parks.
- Chapter 6 - Open Space Protected by Non-Profit Land Trusts - Inventories, evaluates, and provides visions and actions for open space protected by regional and local land trusts. Also includes an inventory and evaluation of parcels with easement potential.
- Chapter 9 - Protected Farmlands - Includes a discussion of farmland as open space and agricultural preservation options available in Chester County.
- Chapter 10 - Open Space Restoration Opportunities - Discusses opportunities for restoring large open spaces located on already developed properties such as industrial parks, golf courses, college campuses, and hospital grounds and their potential use for the extension of trails and wildlife corridors.
- Chapter 12 - Regional Recreation Corridors - Defines and identifies regional recreation corridors, covering such topics as undeveloped and informally used corridors, partially developed corridors, bicycle routes, potential trail loops, and a vision for the Chester County Trail Network.
- Chapter 13 - Wildlife Biodiversity Corridors - Discusses the importance of identifying and protecting these corridors. New Garden Township has already taken a major step in achieving the recommendations of this chapter through their mapping of Woodland and Stream Corridors.
- Chapter 14 - Recycling Lands and Infrastructure for Open Space - Inventories and evaluates the potential use of rail corridors, major utility corridors, and brownfields. Scenic byways are also inventoried and discussed in this chapter.
- Chapter 15 - Open Space Preservation Techniques - Describes some of the techniques discussed in other sections of this chapter including open space/cluster zoning, TDRs, and conservation easements.
- Chapter 16 - Open Space Funding Programs - Describes a multitude of funding opportunities that can be used to promote open space preservation.
- Chapter 18 - Extending the Open Space Network into the Built Environment - Discusses improving existing developments, and rehabilitating riparian buffers and wildlife habitat.

- Chapter 19 - Planning a Protected Open Space Network - Discusses open space planning, recreational parks, trail links between recreational parks, distinguishing trails from wildlife corridors, and limiting development in naturally sensitive areas. (See discussion under first recommendation.)
- Chapter 20 - Establishing the Protected Open Space Network - This chapter establishes the initial actions needed to be taken by County departments to establish the open space network, including actions to assist to municipalities with municipal parks and open space programs.