



DELAWARE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
OPEN SPACE, RECREATION, AND GREENWAY PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS



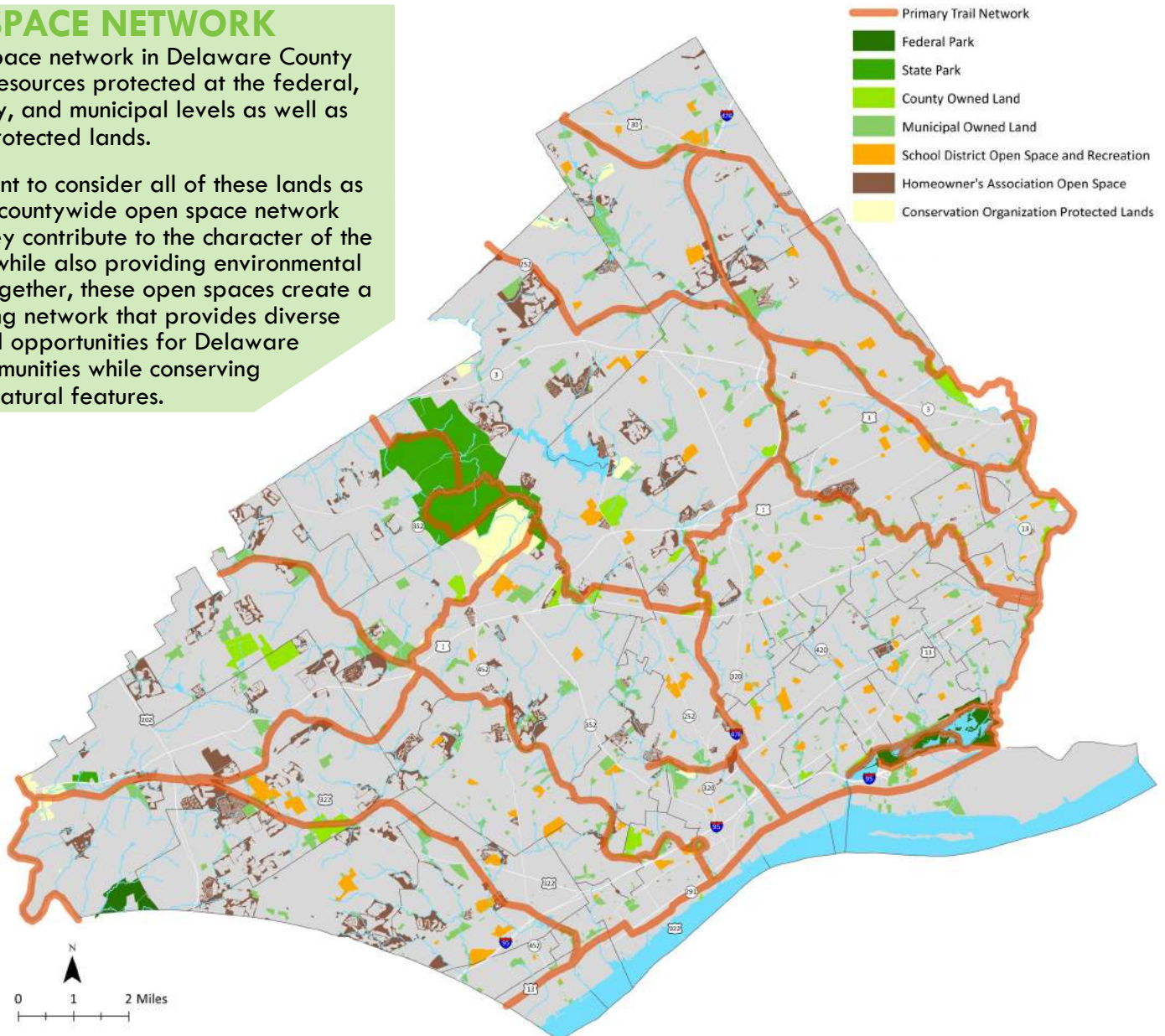
Since Delaware County adopted the County Open Space, Recreation, and Greenway Plan in April 2015, it has served as a guide and resource for countywide, multi-municipal, and municipal planning efforts for open space and recreation. This report highlights some of the work the County has undertaken to address the main goals of the plan, which are to **Conserve** open space and natural features; **Enhance** their environmental and recreational uses; and **Connect** communities, cultural/historic resources, and natural features.

1,116 acres of County parks and conservation areas and **17,000 acres** of protected open space in the County

OPEN SPACE NETWORK

The open space network in Delaware County consists of resources protected at the federal, state, county, and municipal levels as well as privately protected lands.

It is important to consider all of these lands as part of the countywide open space network because they contribute to the character of the community while also providing environmental benefits. Together, these open spaces create a wide ranging network that provides diverse recreational opportunities for Delaware County communities while conserving significant natural features.



LITTLE FLOWER MANOR ACQUISITION



Little Flower Manor Site

In June 2016, the County finalized acquisition of approximately **37 acres** of land adjacent to Little Flower Manor in Darby Borough and Upper Darby Township. The site was the location of a proposed development until Delaware County Council worked with other elected officials, including then State Representative Nicholas Micozzie, to acquire and preserve the land. **The park will be the largest County park in eastern Delaware County.**

The acquisition of this property creates an additional hub on the Darby Creek Trail, which will provide access to the Little Flower Manor site from other parks and communities of eastern Delaware County.

Municipalities across the County are using this Plan to help guide local open space and recreation planning efforts.

CONCORD TOWNSHIP GREENWAYS AND OPEN SPACE PLAN

In February 2016, Concord Township adopted a greenways and open space plan that examined several segments of the County Primary Trail Network in more detail and identified additional potential connections.

OCTORARO TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY

Concord Township and Chester Heights Borough are working together to study the feasibility of a segment of the Octoraro Trail, which is a part of the County Primary Trail Network.

FORGE TO REFUGE TRAIL

Radnor Township coordinated this multi-municipal effort that examined extending the Radnor trail south through Haverford Township, City of Philadelphia, and Millbourne Borough. This is an important stretch in connecting Valley Forge National Park to the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge.

HAVERFORD TOWNSHIP TRAILS

Haverford Township completed construction on the 1.2-mile Pennsy Trail in spring 2016. The Pennsy Trail is an important segment of the Newtown Square Branch Rail Trail on the County trail network.

EAST COAST GREENWAY

Tinicum Township started construction on the East Coast Greenway from Darby Creek to Wannamaker Avenue.

In 2010, the County preserved approximately **47 acres** of land along Ridley Creek in Middletown Township. Mineral Hill is a scenic, wooded property on Baltimore Pike that is famous among rock collectors around the world for its wealth of stone specimens and crystals. **When combined with adjacent municipal park properties, the Mineral Hill Area is a combined 123 acres.**

The County subsequently led an effort with Middletown and Upper Providence Townships to develop a master plan for the newly expanded park. The Mineral Hill Area Master Plan was completed and adopted by Council in 2014.

MINERAL HILL ACQUISITION



Mineral Hill Area

CHESTER CREEK TRAIL - PHASE I CONSTRUCTION



Chester Creek Trail Construction

Photo Credit: Friends of Chester Creek Trail

Years of planning, oversight, and coordination culminated in May 2015 when the County began construction of Phase 1 of the Chester Creek Trail. Phase 1 covers **2.8 miles** of the 6.5 mile rail trail along Chester Creek from Lenni Road to Chester Creek Road in Middletown and Aston Townships.

In addition to several road crossings and trailheads with parking, years of inactivity led to the need for reconstruction or major rehabilitation of four bridges, construction of multiple culverts, and comprehensive streambank stabilization along the length of the trail. **The \$6.6 million construction project is expected to be completed in fall 2016.**

The County is leading the development of a segment of the Darby Creek Trail in Upper Darby from Kent County Park to the historic Swedish Cabin. The engineering team is finalizing design plans with construction expected to begin in late summer 2016. The \$700,000 construction project is funded by County and federal sources and will last approximately eight months.

This trail segment contributes to the development of the larger Darby Creek Trail which, when completed, will connect through Upper Darby to the Haverford Reserve and Radnor Trail to the north and to the Gateway Trail (Lansdowne) and Cobbs Creek Trail to the south.

DARBY CREEK TRAIL DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION



Site of Future Darby Creek Trail

DATA COLLECTION

The County Planning Department is working with communities to gather information and more accurately map existing trails. This information will help municipalities plan more efficiently and effectively. It also has the potential to be used in an online mapping system that will allow users to interact with the data and plan visits to trails and open space across the County.

TRAIL CONNECTIVITY RANKING

Due to the extensive nature of the County's Primary Trail Network, the County is also developing a tool that helps communities identify planned trails that provide the most connections. Trails are assigned a "Connectivity Ranking" based on proximity to people, schools, shopping, jobs, transit, and other criteria. This tool will help communities decide the most effective and impactful trail segments to pursue.

TRAIL CONNECTIONS TO WAWA TRAIN STATION

Delaware County worked with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) to study the feasibility of extending the Chester Creek Trail north to the planned Wawa train station. This plan identified potential alignments and associated costs and was completed with 100% DVRPC funds.

THE CIRCUIT

Delaware County is a proud member of the Circuit Coalition, a collaboration of nearly 65 non-profit organizations, foundations, and agencies working to advance completion of a connected network of multi-use trails.

The Circuit is a multi-use trail network connecting people to jobs, communities, parks, and waterways in the greater Philadelphia region. It is composed of 300 miles of completed trails with a vision of completing 750 miles of trails across the nine-county region in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

WHAT'S NEXT?

It will take the combined efforts of many governmental agencies, organizations, officials, stakeholders, and motivated citizens to implement all of the ideas and actions presented in this plan. Delaware County is committed to its role of leadership through coordination for the protection of open space and natural resources and the development of trails.

Little Flower Manor Park Master Plan

The County is beginning to develop a long-range master plan for the newest addition to the County Park system, as it did for all other major County parks over the last several years. The planning process will allow the community to have input into what types of amenities are desired at this site. The final plan will provide the County the opportunity to develop the park in phases that build to a larger vision. The plan is funded by a \$52,000 grant from DCNR and \$52,000 in matching funds from the County.

County Parks Signage Design

Delaware County is pursuing the development of a signage manual and logo design for the Delaware County Parks System that will serve as a guide to unify the County parks and increase awareness of the recreational opportunities and services provided. This was a priority project identified in the County's Open Space Plan, which showed that many residents did not differentiate county parks from municipal parks. This project is funded by a \$41,600 grant from DCNR and \$41,600 in matching funds from the County.

Chester Creek Trail - Phase II Engineering

Phase II will run approximately 1.5 miles south from the terminus of Phase I at Creek Road to Bridgewater Road in Aston. In spring 2016 the County applied for, and was awarded, \$208,000 from DVRPC's Regional Trails Program for engineering of Phase II. The County also applied to DCNR for an additional \$208,000 for engineering of this phase.

Clayton County Park Trail Connections

The County, in a joint effort with Concord Township, applied for a grant to study feasibility of trail connections to Clayton County Park, as designated in the park's long-range master plan. If awarded, this grant will help determine routes to increase trail access to and within the 148-acre park.

East Coast Greenway

The County, working with municipalities along the Delaware River, applied for a grant to research development and management methods for the East Coast Greenway. The East Coast Greenway is a nearly 3,000-mile trail that travels along the eastern seaboard of the United States, from Maine to Florida. The Delaware County portion of this trail is also a key component of the September 11th National Memorial Trail, which aims to link the memorial sites for the World Trade Center, Pentagon, and Flight 93.



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