

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### CORRIDOR-WIDE AND PRIORITY AREA IDENTIFICATION

The recommendations of the Old York Road Corridor Improvement Plan consist of those recommendations for the corridor as a whole and those for each of four priority areas identified along the corridor.

In general, the corridor-wide recommendations are intended to provide improved conditions for pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, and motorists as they travel into, along, and across the corridor (Figure 4.1). Functional improvements to the systems for movement have been identified. In addition, a set of streetscape conditions, relative to parking, wayfinding, lighting, sidewalks, crosswalks, and street trees are proposed in support of the functional systems for movement and to provide a visual identity for the corridor as a whole. When implemented, the common physical elements of the streetscape will provide visual unity for the entire two-and-a-half-mile-long corridor and make it a more comfortable place for all modes of travel.

The four priority areas have been recognized as important settings along the corridor, ones that can serve as catalyst sites for targeted improvements (Figure 4.2). As these areas are improved, spontaneous investments will spread further along the corridor. These areas are *Noble Fairway*, *Susquehanna*, *London Center*, and *Roy Rubicam*. These areas offer the best conditions for development and redevelopment and are characterized by one or more of the following attributes:

- Available underutilized and vacant properties;
- High visibility and ease of access;
- Proximity to public transportation;
- Adjacent and nearby commercial activity, stable residential neighborhoods, and/or community assets;
- Positive parcel physical conditions (size, shape) and servicing (water, sewer); and,
- Public and/or private interest in development and/or redevelopment.

This approach to the study area recommendations is consistent with the concurrent DVRPC *Routes 611 and 263 Corridor Study* Phase 1 Report. In DVRPC's study, both corridor-wide and priority area recommendations are identified as well. DVRPC's corridor-wide recommendations relate mostly to issues of mobility such as improving transit service and access and improving conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists along the corridor. Four of DVRPC's thirteen priority areas are within the Old York Road Corridor Improvement study area, including the area around the Noble train station, the Abington Hospital area, Route 611 at Roy Avenue, and a Redevelopment Area around Old Welsh Road. The DVRPC report includes transportation and land use recommendations that are similar to the Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study recommendations for the Noble Fairway, London Center and Roy Rubicam priority areas.

Priority area plans have been generated that portray the way in which each area could develop over the next five-to-twenty-five years. Each plan presents a distinct concept for the function, features, and general character of the specific priority area. In addition, each plan offers an accompanying development program for residential, commercial, institutional, open space, and parking use at each location.

All of the plans are Smart Growth-oriented, in particular focusing on the following principles:

- Mixing of Land Uses
- Revitalizing Commercial Areas
- Providing a Variety of Transportation Options
- Creating Walkable and Bikable Communities
- Expanding Housing Opportunities
- Establishing Permanent and Usable Open Space
- Fostering Distinctive, Attractive Settings with a Strong Sense of Place

The plans have been developed with the existing circumstances and known prospects in mind, including data obtained through site visits, documentation of land use and right-of-way

physical features, discussions with focus groups and with property developers, and Steering Committee and community input.

Recommendations for each priority area – *Noble Fairway*, *Susquehanna*, *London Center*, and *Roy Rubicam* – are described in this chapter. For each priority area, illustrative site plans accompany the narrative. Chapter Five contains an implementation strategy to realize the priority area plans.

## CORRIDOR-WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

### INTENT

The corridor-wide recommendations for Old York Road are intended to transform it into an active and attractive corridor that can efficiently move traffic while acting as a front door to the shopping areas and community institutions along the corridor and the neighborhoods close to it. New amenities will make nonvehicular modes of travel, like walking and biking, safer and more comfortable by providing generous and continuous sidewalks, pedestrian-scaled lighting, wayfinding, and landscape elements. A mix of land uses in pedestrian-friendly settings



will encourage people to shop, live, work, and recreate along the corridor.

### STREETScape

#### ■ Sidewalks

A number of streetscape improvements are recommended to improve the environment along Old York Road. For pedestrian safety and mobility, sidewalks should be continuous along both sides of Old York Road and be in good condition. Areas where sidewalks are currently under four feet wide should be widened to a minimum of five feet of unobstructed width. In a number of places along the corridor, utilities, light fixtures, and signs have been placed within the sidewalk area, effectively reducing the width of the sidewalk. These obstacles should be removed or relocated outside of the sidewalk. Where sidewalks are in disrepair, they should be fixed.

Sidewalks should provide direct access into buildings fronting the corridor, connect to sidewalks on intersecting roadways, and safely direct pedestrians to crosswalk areas. Mid-block conditions where pedestrian and vehicular traffic may conflict, such as at driveways, should provide for the material, texture, color, and pattern of the sidewalk area to be continuous, and to visually and functionally prevail over the vehicular travel surface. Sidewalks should be a minimum of five feet wide in non-priority areas and, where feasible, detached from the roadway by means of a separate verge or buffer area lined with trees (Figure 4.3).

#### ■ Pedestrian Crossings

Pedestrian crossings at intersections should be located at the block corner with an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-acceptable ramp set ninety degrees to the cartway (Figure 4.4). Crosswalks should be a minimum of ten feet wide, delineated with a seventy-five percent



contrasting color from the roadway paving, and located at least six feet away from a vehicular stop bar (Figure 4.4).

## ■ Landscaping

Landscaping should take the form of grass and street trees planted in the verge (the space between the curb and the sidewalk), and street trees, perennial plants, and grasses planted in the median. While some areas of the corridor currently have street trees and plantings in the median, care should be given to supplement these so that visual consistency is provided along the length of the corridor. Street tree plantings are encouraged the length of the corridor to provide color and textural interest, areas of shade, and a setting that supports pedestrian activity. Trees should be deciduous, and drought and urban setting-tolerant. Typical tree spacing should be thirty feet on-center.

## ■ Lighting

Ambient street lighting should be provided through pedestrian-scaled light fixtures. The style of the fixture should be sufficiently bold so that it contributes to the overall environment of the corridor. To accomplish this, the existing historic replica black poles might be replaced with a more contemporary pole and fixture that complements the context of the corridor. Pole height for the fixtures should be between 10 and 15 feet.

## ■ Overhead Utility Lines

North of the crossing of Edgehill Road, overhead utility lines are visually intrusive. While removal of above-ground utilities represent an enormous cost and might therefore be cost-prohibitive, their removal could help to provide an open, uncluttered streetscape and a more attractive character for pedestrians and motorists. Abington Township should consider the “undergrounding” of utilities as part of prospective streetscape projects and as land development occurs along the corridor.

## ■ Wayfinding and Signage

Ways in which people orient themselves along Old York Road should be considered as part of the streetscape improvements along the corridor (Figures 4.5 and 4.6). Gateways can convey a message to travelers that they are entering Abington Township and provide a means to relay a message about Abington’s character and unique features. Key aspects of gateway design include such elements as wayfinding and “branding” text, interpretive signs referencing the history or environment of the community, specialty lighting, art displays, water features, seating areas, landscape, walls, and/or fencing.

Signage along the corridor should clearly direct vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic. Custom-designed signs for Old York Road would help establish the corridor as a distinct entity. Signage should be designed to provide wayfinding for drivers and be able to be read from a distance and at speeds between 25 and 40 mph. Pedestrian-oriented and -scaled signs within designated priority areas should provide more detailed wayfinding, including vicinity maps, public transportation schedules, and community events listings.

Street signs should be located at every intersection and match the predominant existing style of street signs along the corridor in scale, color, and font. Street signs should be visible at night and should be free from obstruction from landscape materials or commercial signs.

Abington Township is strongly encouraged to reduce the number of commercial signs along the corridor by preparing revisions to its sign ordinance, perhaps in conjunction with corridor overlay zoning district regulations.

## CIRCULATION

Potential improvements to vehicular mobility along Old York Road must be balanced against



the need to adhere to the goals associated with development and redevelopment along the corridor, specifically the desire to enhance the corridor for non-vehicular users and provide access to new and existing uses. Additionally, recommendations include enhancements that maximize the potential utilization of transit services. Consistent with these goals, the mobility recommendations focus on efficiency and maximizing the ability of existing infrastructure to serve vehicular movement.

The Old York Road right-of-way should exhibit a cross section that is more inclusive of multiple modes. In the immediate future, Abington Township should prioritize improvements to the sidewalk area and also encourage motorists to share the road with bicyclists. Longer term, PennDOT, utility providers, and private developers who may jointly be involved in roadway and streetscape projects along Old York Road, together with Abington Township,

should work to adapt the physical cross section to accommodate new mobility opportunities.

The future cross section for the corridor right-of-way should include: one twelve-foot outside through-lane in each direction, one eleven-foot through lane in each direction, ten foot wide center turn lanes, and fifteen-foot wide sidewalks consisting of five feet of verge area, eight feet for pedestrian passage, and two feet of buffer zone between the pedestrian passage area and building frontages. This future vision would require a fifty-six-foot-wide cartway (with one center turn lane) and an eighty-six-foot-wide right-of-way at intersections. Buildings along the Old York Road corridor should have a zero setback from the right-of-way.

#### ■ Vehicular

Among the highest priority projects are changes to improve the physical configuration of the Old York Road and Susquehanna Road intersection and providing a traffic signal at the Old York Road and Roy Avenue intersection. Both locations were noted by Focus Groups, Steering Committee members, and other stakeholders as being in need of safety improvements.

At the Susquehanna Road intersection, this roadway has an offset between its eastern and western approaches to Old York Road. Trucks have hit the building on the northwest corner of the intersection as they attempt to negotiate a turn from southbound Old York Road to westbound Susquehanna Road. Sidewalks on the northwest and southeast corners of the intersection are less than 4 feet wide and have a number of obstacles to pedestrians. The northwest corner sidewalk along Old York Road has a sidewalk less than 2 foot in width. Figure 4.3 shows how, by removing buildings on the northwest corner of the intersection as well as front appendages to three buildings along the western side of Old York Road, Susquehanna Road's center line on both sides of Old York Road could be aligned and adequate-width sidewalks could provide safe pedestrian access along the west side of Old York Road.



The area north of Edghill Road, near Roy Avenue and Rubicam Avenue, lacks opportunities for pedestrians to cross Old York Road and vehicles here travel at higher speeds than elsewhere in the corridor. Abington Township has tried to have a traffic signal installed at Roy Avenue but the cross street traffic counts were insufficient to meet PennDOT's warrants. This Corridor Plan recommends a traffic signal at this location, to be obtained via a safety or redevelopment warrant. The combination of signal and a realignment of Roy Avenue so that it meets Old York Road at a perpendicular angle would provide for safe pedestrian crossing and allow some control of vehicular movement along Old York Road.

With a new traffic signal, most vehicular movement on and off Old York Road in this vicinity would occur at Roy Avenue. This role for Roy Avenue would allow Rubicam Avenue to become primarily pedestrian- and bicycle-only on the three-block stretch between Old York Road and the Crestmont train station, with vehicular access allowed for the three residences whose primary access is Rubicam Avenue.

Other recommendations include the upgrading of the traffic signal control equipment to allow for coordinated operations. It must be emphasized that the proposed signal coordination is intended to increase operational efficiency by reducing vehicular delays, not by increasing travel speeds.

In order to maintain the reductions in delays along corridors, Abington Township should also undertake a regular program to verify the signal timings on a regular basis, preferably semi-annually. Recent national studies have shown that a significant portion of traffic delays are the result of poorly timed and maintained traffic signals. The implementation of a regular program to maintain the operational efficiency of the signal system will assist in maximizing the ability of the corridor to serve vehicular mobility without extensive physical improvements.

## ■ Bicycle


In order to accommodate the use of bicycles along Old York Road, the outside vehicular travel lane is recommended to be restriped/reconfigured to be 12 feet wide. This width would accommodate a vehicle and a bicycle such that the length of the corridor could be designated as "Share the Road." Abington Township should review the Federal Highway Administration's *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* on the appropriateness of signing the Old York Road corridor as a roadway that is shared by bicyclists and pedestrians. Abington Township should seek approval from PennDOT to post "Shared Lane," "Bicyclist May Use Full Lane," and/or combined bicycle/pedestrian warning signs along the corridor.

## ■ Van Shuttle Service

Multiple shuttle services exist within Abington Township, including one operated by the Township and known as The Link. The service is operated in conjunction with Cheltenham Township. Another shuttle is run by the Penn State Abington Campus. Several institutions and businesses located along or just off the corridor have some degree of need for coordinated, accessible transportation, including Abington Memorial Hospital, Sunrise Assisted Living, the YMCA, and a number of schools. Abington Township should work with public and private partners to combine funding, maintenance, and staff resources to provide a joint venture shuttle bus that is more cost-efficient, better-advertised, more user-friendly, and has more convenient service than the current systems in operation. The shuttle should connect each of the priority areas, Regional Rail stations, and other important locations in Abington Township.

## ■ SEPTA

New development or redevelopment along the corridor should incorporate transit access and otherwise help to increase transit use. Transit-supportive elements include improved bus stops



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and support for rail station access, amenities, and service. Abington Township and private developers should, in cooperation with SEPTA, supplement bus stops and transit stations with shelters, canopies, signage, and seating areas.

The Noble and Crestmont train stations should offer information kiosks to service transit riders. These kiosks, part of designated priority areas of the corridor, would provide information on transit services and the stations' relationship to adjacent and neighboring areas.

## LAND USE

A mix of land uses is recommended all along the Old York Road corridor. Land uses should include residential, retail, office, institutional, civic, open space, and live-work. The arrangement of these land uses should be close and mutually-supporting, with at least two different land uses located on any given block.

### ■ Buildings

Buildings fronting the corridor define the space of the streetscape and contribute significantly to the experience of being in that space. Recommendations for Old York Road include both improving existing buildings and defining future buildings along the corridor. With regard to the former, routine maintenance and focused refurbishing of existing building façades along the corridor are encouraged to improve the ambiance of the street. Future development should contribute to the pedestrian-friendly character proposed for the corridor. Buildings should be sited up to sidewalks.

Building heights should provide a 1:1 relationship with the width of the street in front of the building, e.g.: if the street is sixty feet wide in front of the building, the building should be approximately sixty feet, or five stories, tall. Building widths fronting the corridor should be no more than twice building heights. Front façades of buildings should utilize awnings, columns, offset

rooflines, cornices, and transoms to articulate architectural styles and provide an articulated first story and entryway. Building façades should include windows and glazed doors to provide a minimum of 60% transparency on the ground floor façade. Window displays for retail stores are encouraged. The maximum signage area should be no more than 5% of the total façade area. A minimum of two feet in front of the entrance and apart from the effective sidewalk area (pedestrian thoroughway) should be free of obstacles to provide adequate space for entering and exiting the building. Where buildings are situated adjacent to transit stops, measures should be taken to provide a comfortable waiting area for transit riders, including providing a bench, newspaper bins, and canopy.

### ■ Access

Primary building access should be from Old York Road, while off-street parking and service requirements are met behind buildings, off the corridor frontage.

### ■ Open Space

Small "pocket-parks" are recommended along the corridor. Pocket parks should be associated with shopping areas or other multiple destination areas and afford places for people to rest, picnic, or gather. These parks may be programmed for community use by Abington Township or community groups. Pocket parks may also be thought of as extensions of the sidewalk pedestrian space by being accessible to the public and providing café-style accommodations, landscaping, and/or seating areas.

## SUSTAINABILITY

The Smart Growth-based recommendations for Old York Road include mixing of land uses, increasing the intensity of uses, improving the pedestrian and bicyclist environments, and siting development close to transit. These support the future sustainability of the study area. The Old



York Road Corridor's mixed-use character and multi-modal access should result in increased walking and biking, helping to reduce auto-dependency and to promote healthier lifestyles and environmental stewardship.

In addition to these design principles, other steps should be taken towards improving the sustainability of Old York Road and Abington Township at-large. These steps are described below.

### ■ Reducing Emissions

Abington Township should consider joining the ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, an association of local governments committed to achieving more sustainable communities. ICLEI provides a number of services, including programs and training that assist local governments in playing a part to reduce a region's total greenhouse gas emissions. ICLEI's software, Clean Air Climate Protection (CACP), can inventory a community's emissions, quantify the effect of existing and proposed emission reduction measures, predict future emission levels, and track progress in meeting strategies to both reduce greenhouse gases and air pollution emissions.

### ■ Sustainable Building

Sites along the corridor should be developed with environmentally-sustainable designs, including provisions to capitalize on building orientation, minimize stormwater runoff, harvest solar and/or wind power, adapt and reuse existing materials, improve existing infrastructure, and minimize atmospheric pollutants. The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification, developed by the US Green Building Council (USGBC), provides a list of standards for environmentally-sustainable construction. Developers of proposed development sites along the corridor should be encouraged to seek LEED certification through a Green Building Rating System offered by the USGBC. According to the USGBC, LEED emphasizes the creation of compact, walkable, vibrant, mixed-use neighborhoods with good connections to nearby communities.

### ■ Stormwater Management

Water quality, air quality, noise, and energy efficiency should be considerations in all development/redevelopment projects. Development should include innovative approaches to capturing and treating stormwater runoff, as well as measures to decrease the amount of stormwater runoff. Stormwater Management Best Management Practices (BMPs) is a manual created by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Bureau of Watershed Management that sets guidelines to control the volume, rate, and water quality of stormwater runoff. BMPs for the Old York Road corridor might include the use of green roofs, rainwater harvesting, permeable paving, detention cisterns, landscaped stormwater planters, rain gardens, and bioretention recharge basins.



# LEGEND

-  PLANT STREET TREES
-  ADD ADDITIONAL/NEW LANDSCAPING
-  CREATE GATEWAY
-  CONSOLIDATE ACCESS POINTS
-  CLOSE ABANDONED ACCESS, PATCH CURB & VERGE AREA
-  RECONFIGURE INTERSECTION
-  IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT AT INTERSECTION
-  REPAIR CURB
-  INSTALL 5' MIN. CONCRETE SIDEWALK
-  UNDERGROUND UTILITIES (MAY BE COST PROHIBITIVE)
-  PRIORITY AREA (SEE PRIORITY AREA SITE PLANS)
-  ENHANCE COMFORT & VISIBILITY OF TRANSIT STOP
-  1/8- AND 1/4- MILE FROM TRAIN STATION
-  PROMOTE STRONG PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS



IN ADDITION TO THE SITE SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS IDENTIFIED ON THIS PLAN, IMPROVEMENTS TO THE OLD YORK ROAD CORRIDOR SHOULD ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING:

## REMOVE OBSTRUCTIONS FROM SIDEWALKS

OLD YORK ROAD CORRIDOR SIDEWALKS HAVE A NUMBER OF PHYSICAL OBSTRUCTIONS INTERFERING WITH PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT, PARTICULARLY NORTH OF EDGEHILL ROAD. LIGHT POLES, SIGNS, UTILITIES AND MONUMENTS ARE SITUATED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SIDEWALK.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE (RE)DEVELOPMENT SHOULD ALSO INCLUDE THE RELOCATION OF THESE ELEMENTS TO ALLOW FOR 5-FOOT WIDE SIDEWALKS (ROOM FOR 2 PEOPLE TO COMFORTABLY WALK SIDE BY SIDE).



## REPLACE PEDESTRIAN LIGHT FIXTURES

EXISTING BLACK, HISTORIC REPLICA LIGHT FIXTURES ALONG THE CORRIDOR ARE UNREMARKABLE AND DO NOT REFLECT OR CONTRIBUTE TO THE CONTEXT. THE ADD-ON VARIABLE BANNERS ARE TOO SMALL TO READ FROM A VEHICLE, AND LACK A CONTINUOUS THEME TO MAKE A VISUAL IMPACT.

NEW LIGHT FIXTURE STANDARDS SHOULD BE BOLD AND CONSISTENT ALONG THE CORRIDOR. LIGHT FIXTURES SHOULD BE COLORFUL AND/OR CONTEMPORARY. APPURTENANCES SHOULD BE LIVING, SEASONAL PLANT MATERIAL AND/OR KINETIC, COLORFUL, LARGE BANNERS.




## ADDRESS SIGNING ALONG THE CORRIDOR

THE OLD YORK ROAD CORRIDOR HAS AN ABUNDANCE OF REGULATORY SIGNS AND ADVERTISING SIGNS THAT DOMINATE THE VIEW. AT THE SAME TIME, WAYFINDING OR DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE FOR ABINGTON TOWNSHIP DESTINATIONS IS DEFICIENT.

ABINGTON TOWNSHIP SHOULD ASSESS THE EXISTING SIGNS AND SIGN ORDINANCES. REDUNDANT REGULATORY SIGNS SHOULD BE REMOVED, AND A NEW SIGN ORDINANCE SHOULD GUIDE SIGNAGE LOCATIONS, SIZE AND CHARACTER. A WAYFINDING PROGRAM SHOULD IDENTIFY LOCATIONS AND BRANDING FOR DIRECTIONAL SIGNS TO LOCAL DESTINATIONS.

# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study Abington Township Corridor-Wide Streetscape Recommendations

-  Old York Road
-  Streams
-  Railroad
-  Municipal Boundary





**IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT AT THE EDGEHILL RD BRIDGE**

INSTALL 5-FOOT WIDE SIDEWALKS ON BOTH SIDES OF OLD YORK RD. PROVIDE ADA RAMP FROM EDGEHILL RD AND OLD YORK RD. IMPROVE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT. REROUTE DRAINPIPES AWAY FROM SIDEWALK SURFACES. INSTALL BOLLARDS BETWEEN SIDEWALK AND TRAVEL LANES. INSTALL ADDITIONAL LIGHTING. RAISE HISTORIC MILE MARKER PROFILE WITH LANDSCAPING/SEATING. INSTALL WAYFINDING SIGNS.

**RECONFIGURE ROY AVE & OLD YORK RD INTERSECTION**

ADJUST ROY AVE-WEST ALIGNMENT TO ALIGN WITH ROY AVE-EAST. INSTALL NEW TRAFFIC LIGHT WITH PEDESTRIAN PHASE. CONTRAST COLOR CENTER OF INTERSECTION. CONTRAST COLORED AND TEXTURED CROSSWALKS.

London Center Priority Area

Roy/Rubicam Priority Area

UPPER MORELAND

**COORDINATE LOCAL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SHUTTLES**

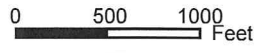


MULTIPLE SHUTTLE SERVICES OPERATE THROUGHOUT THE OLD YORK ROAD CORRIDOR, INCLUDING: THE ABINGTON TOWNSHIP BUS, THE LINK (SHARED WITH CHELTENHAM TOWNSHIP), AND PENN STATE ABINGTON. EXISTING SERVICE ON BOTH IS REPORTEDLY UNDERPUBLICIZED AND INEFFICIENT.

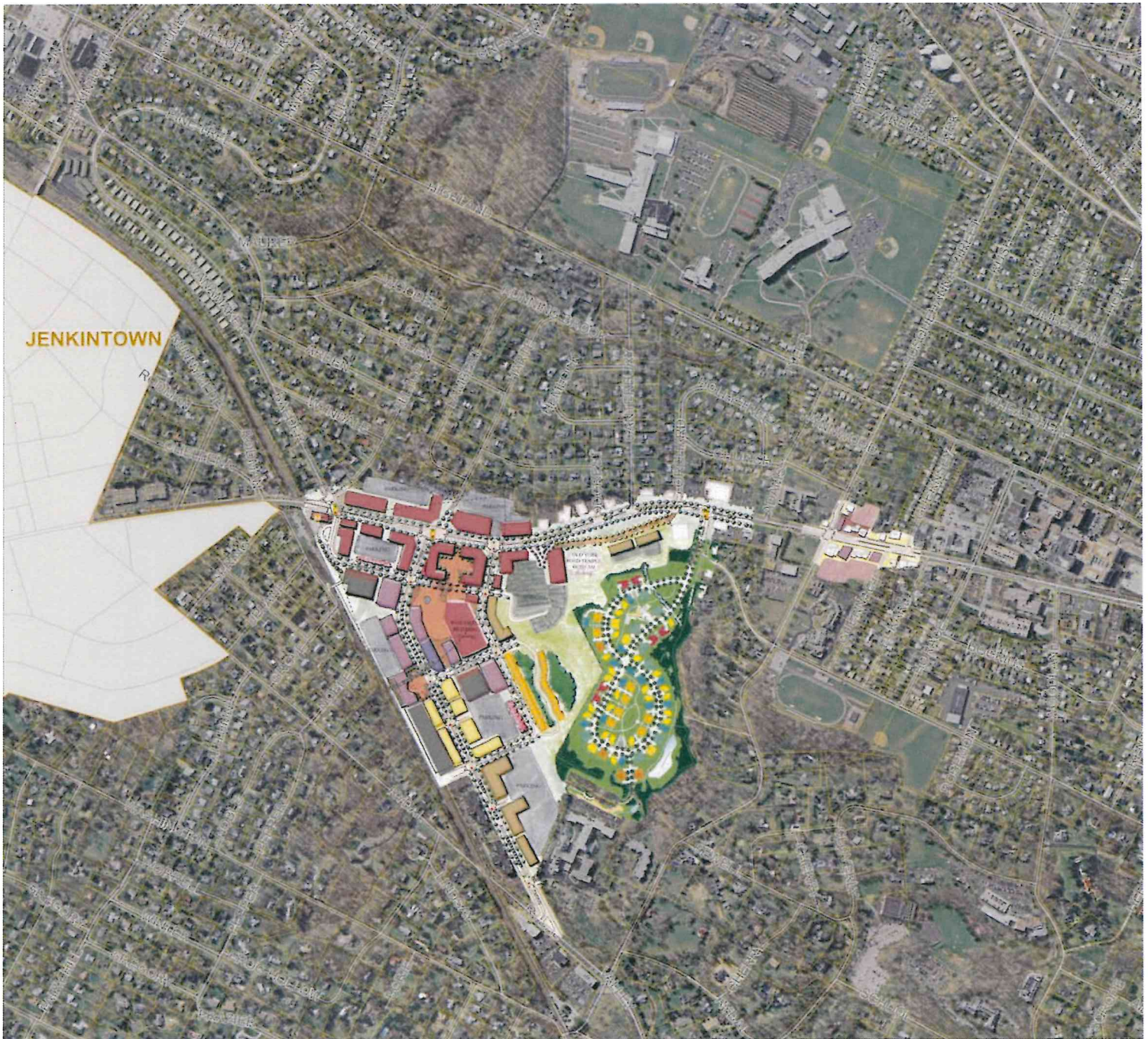
ABINGTON TOWNSHIP SHOULD SEEK OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTNER WITH PENN STATE ABINGTON, AND OTHER POTENTIAL PARTNERS INCLUDING: ABINGTON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, SUNRISE ASSISTED LIVING, THE SCHOOL DISTRICT AND THE YMCA, TO CREATE A JOINT VENTURE SHUTTLE BUS THAT IS MORE COST EFFICIENT, BETTER ADVERTISED, MORE USER-FRIENDLY, AND OFFERS MORE CONVENIENT SERVICE. SHUTTLE SERVICE SHOULD CONNECT PRIORITY AREAS AND REGIONAL RAIL STATIONS AND TO ADJACENT COMMUNITIES.



Figure 4.1







# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

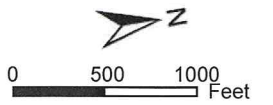
## *Priority Area Illustrative Plans*







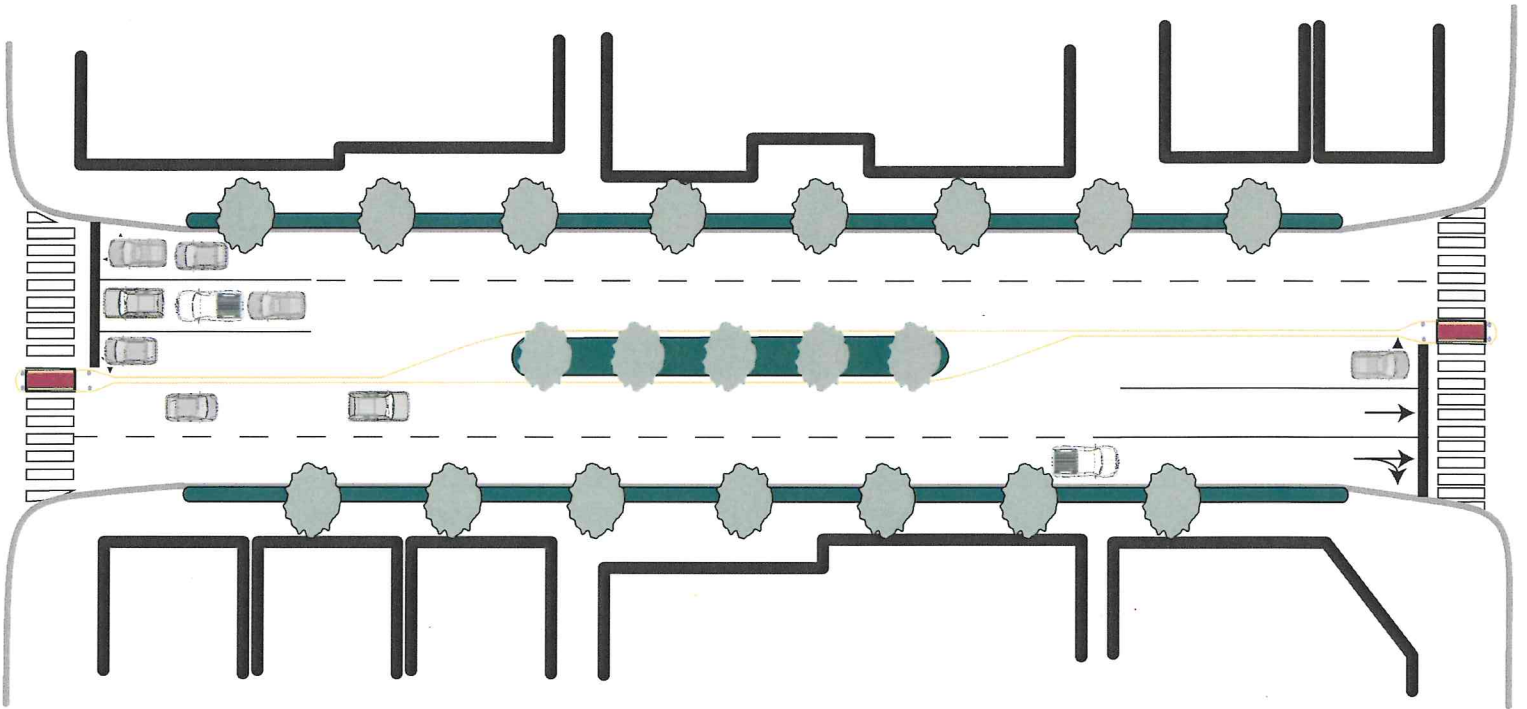
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Figure 4.2



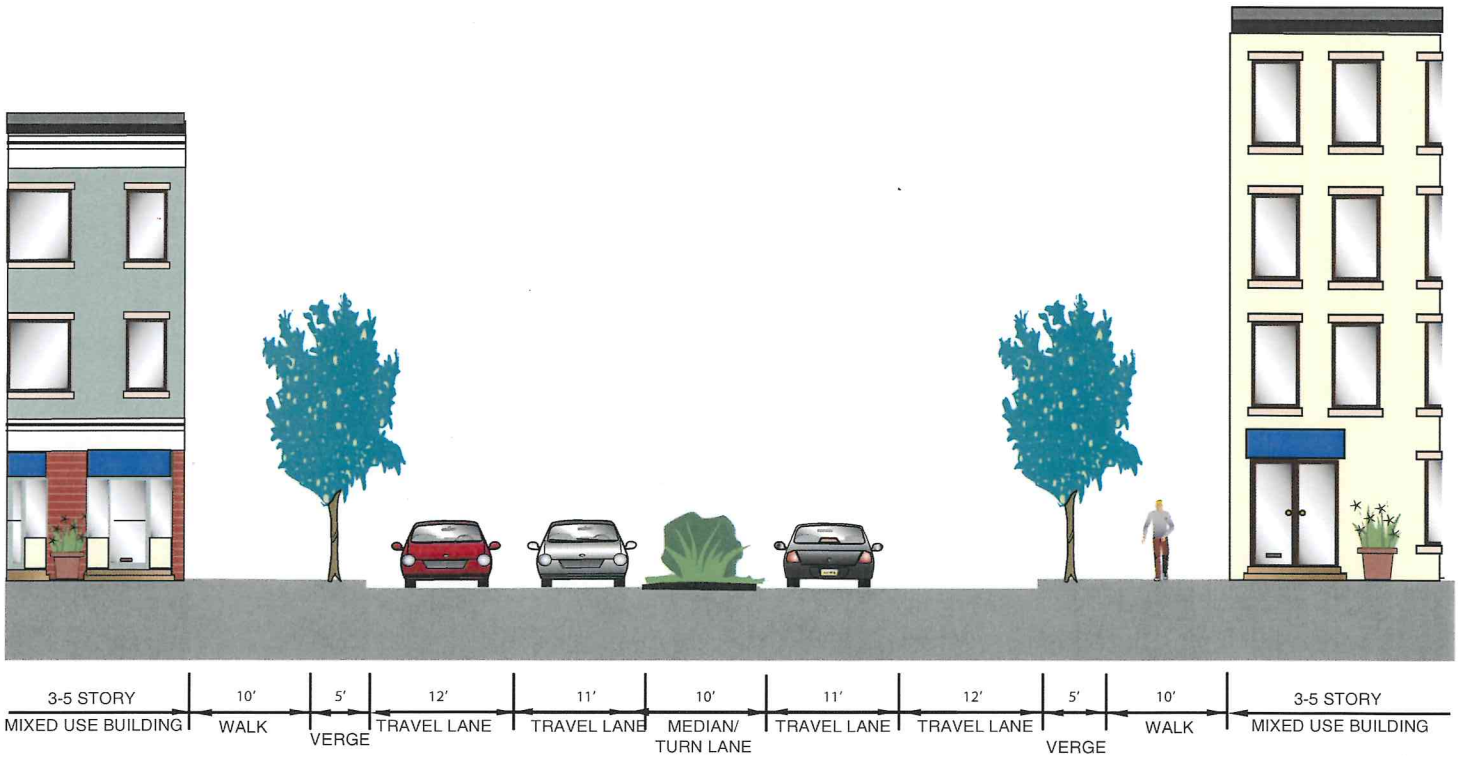


# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study Abington Township

## FUTURE OLD YORK ROAD CROSS SECTION



PLAN



SECTION

Figure 4.3



# Improving the Pedestrian Environment along Old York Road

# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study Abington Township

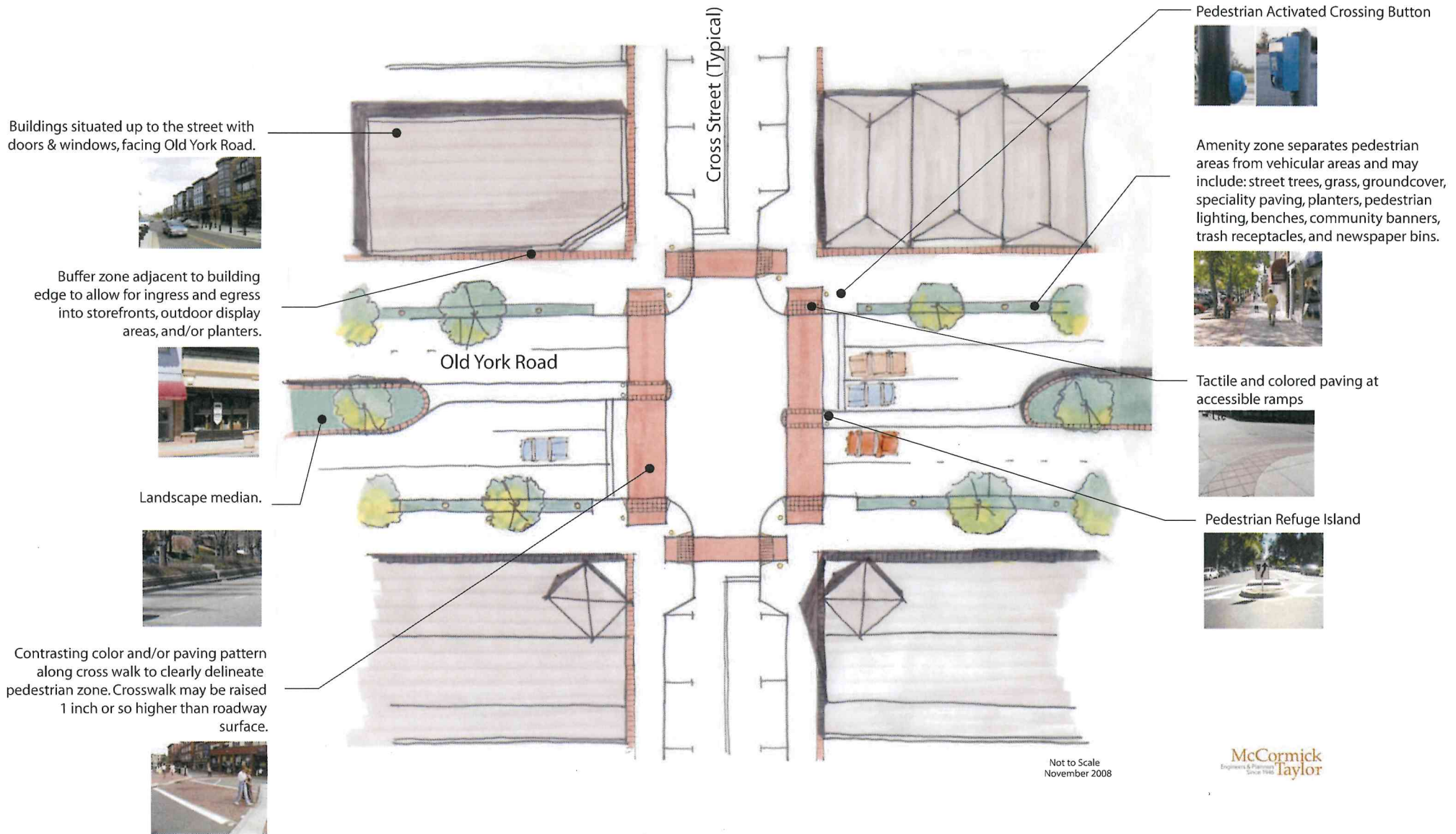
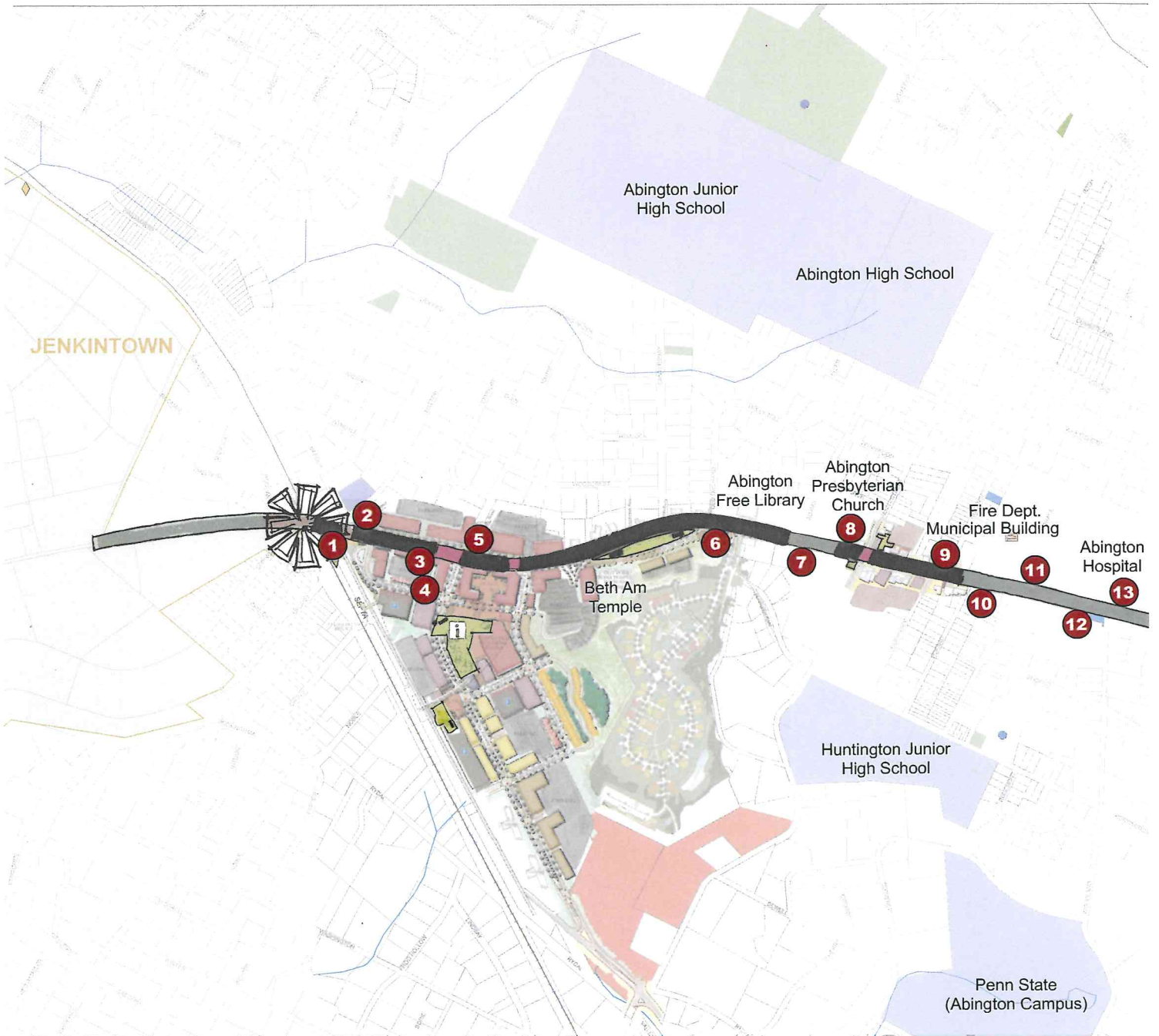




Figure 4.4





# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study Abington Township WAYFINDING SYSTEM

-  Gateway
-  Public Green Space
-  Visitor's Information Center
-  Priority Area Intersection
-  Priority Area Streetscape
-  Corridor-Wide Streetscape
- 1** Welcome to Abington Township  
Noble Station  
Noble/Fairway Shopping
- 2** Noble/Fairway Shopping  
Baederwood Park  
Noble Station  
Jenkintown

- 3** Noble/Fairway Shopping  
Noble Station  
Visitor's Center Information
- 4** Noble Station  
Jenkintown  
Pennsylvania Turnpike  
Temple Beth Am
- 5** Noble Station  
Noble/Fairway Shopping
- 6** Abington Free Library  
Susquehanna Historic Shopping Area
- 7** Susquehanna Historic Shopping Area  
Abington Township Building  
Abington Memorial Hospital  
Baederwood Park  
Briar Bush Nature Center  
Glenside

- 8** Abington High School  
Abington Junior High School
- 9** Susquehanna Historic Shopping  
Abington Presbyterian Church  
Baederwood Park  
Glenside
- 10** Abington Township Building  
London Center  
Abington Memorial Hospital  
PSU Abington Campus
- 11** Abington Township Building  
Susquehanna Historic Shopping
- 12** PSU Abington Campus  
London Center



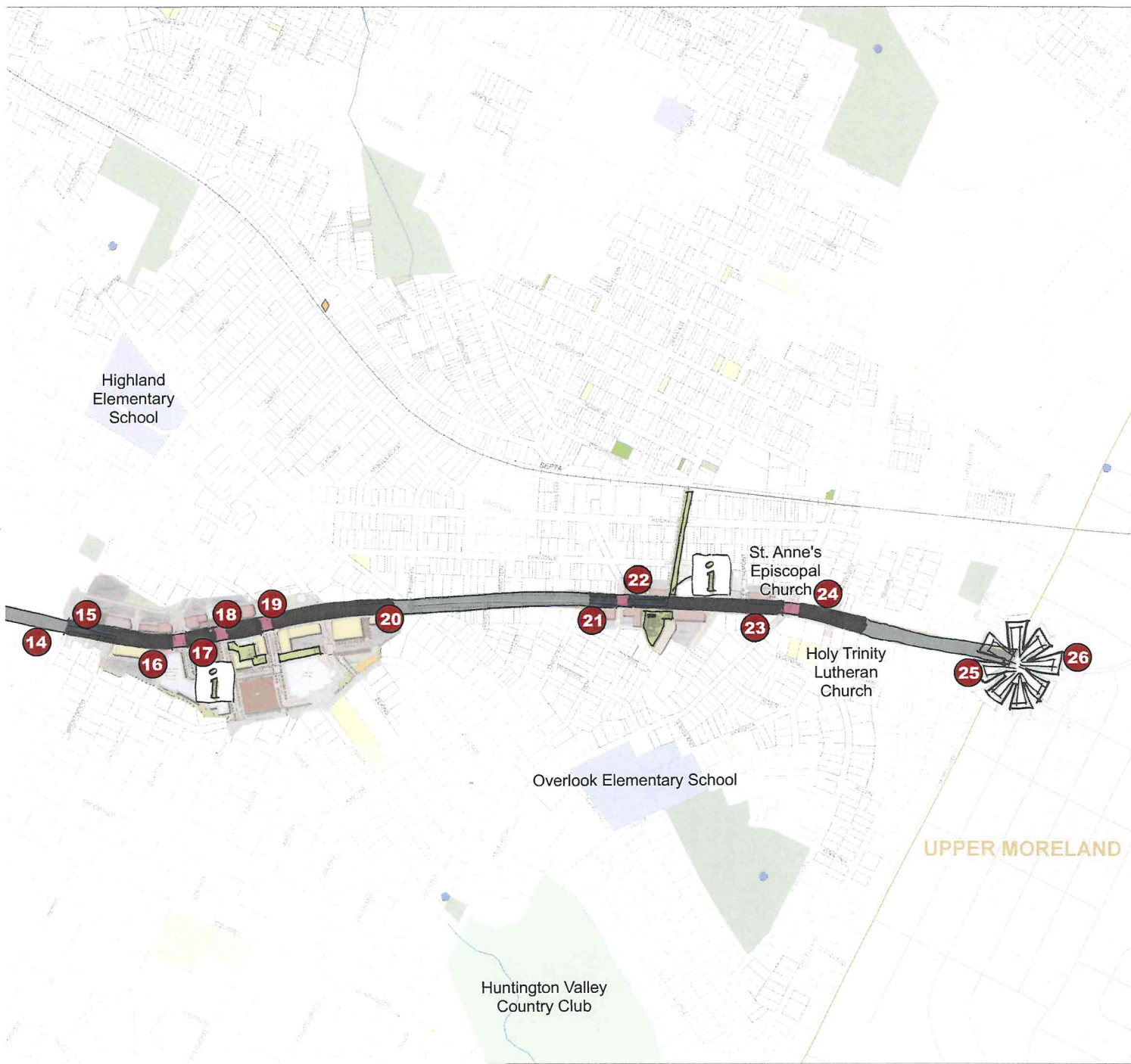
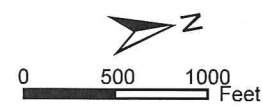


Figure 4.5

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13 Abington Memorial Hospital<br/>Abington Township Building<br/>PSU Abington Campus<br/>Susquehanna Historic Shopping Area</li> <li>14 Highland Elementary School<br/>London Center</li> <li>15 Highland Elementary School<br/>PSU Abington Campus<br/>Abington Post Office<br/>Susquehanna Historic Shopping Area</li> <li>16 London Center</li> <li>17 London Center<br/>Visitor's Information Center</li> <li>18 London Center<br/>Visitor's Information Center</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19 London Center</li> <li>20 PA Turnpike<br/>Roy/Rubicam Village</li> <li>22 Overlook Elementary School<br/>Village Park<br/>Roy/Rubicam Village</li> <li>21 Visitor's Information Center<br/>Highland Elementary School<br/>Village Park<br/>Roy/Rubicam Village<br/>Crestmont Station</li> <li>23 Willow Grove Mall<br/>Pennsylvania Turnpike<br/>Roy Chester Park<br/>Crestmont Station</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>24 Willow Grove Mall<br/>Roy/Rubicam Village<br/>Roy Chester Park<br/>Crestmont Station</li> <li>25 Willow Grove Mall<br/>PA Turnpike<br/>Roy Chester Park</li> <li>26 Pennsylvania Turnpike</li> </ul> |
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# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

## WAYFINDING CONCEPTS FOR OLD YORK ROAD

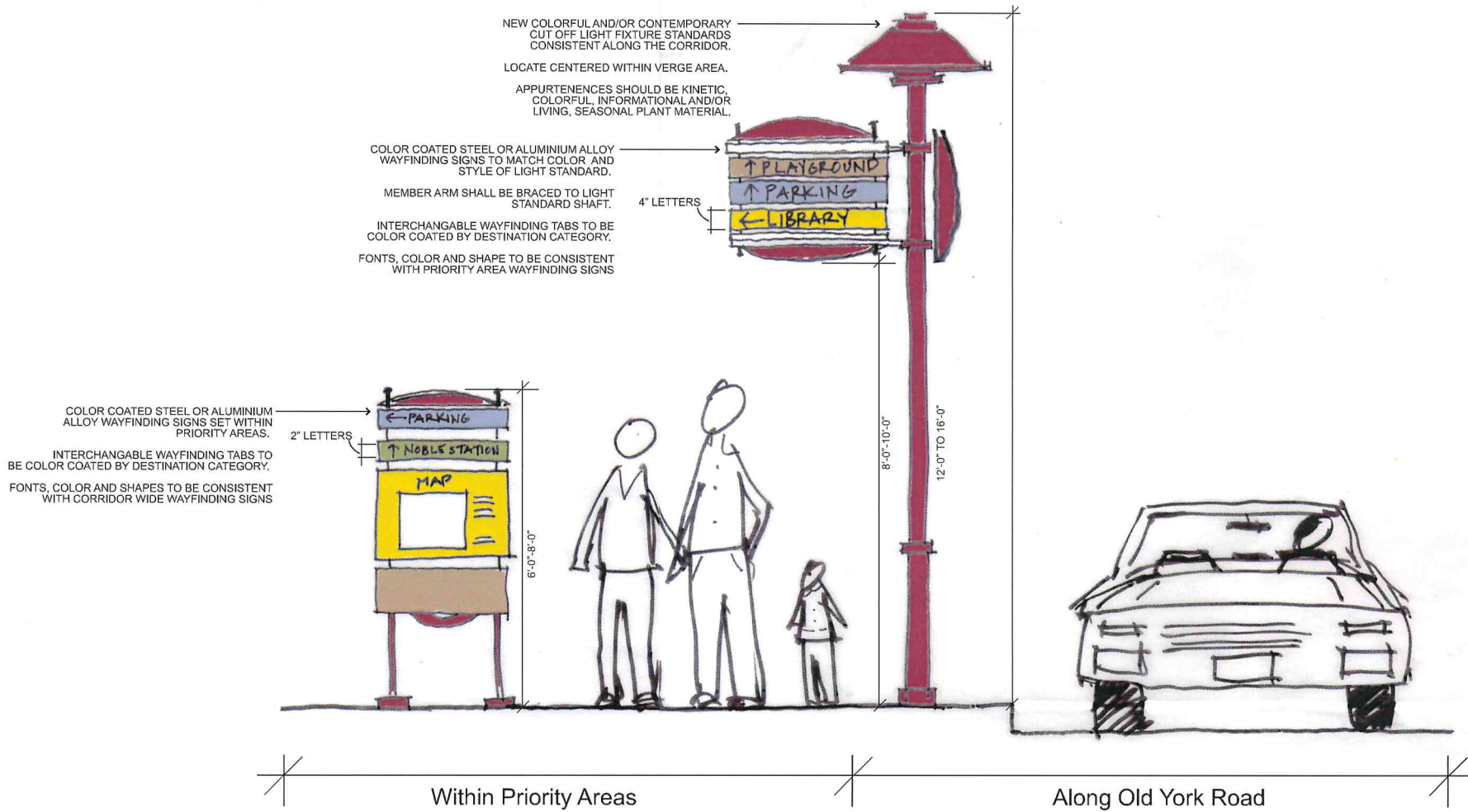


Figure 4.6



## PRIORITY AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

### INTENT

Four priority areas have been identified to act as catalyst sites for improving the Old York Road corridor's economic viability and character. These areas will utilize the Smart Growth strategies of mixing land uses, providing a variety of transportation options, expanding housing options, and preserving settings with a distinct and attractive sense of place. By concentrating resources in these four priority areas, private sector interest may be piqued and public-private partnerships may be forged to effectuate positive change in the corridor. Success at these priority areas will prompt interest, investment, and spontaneous transformation along the remaining parts of the corridor in the years to come.

The following text describes the characteristics common to all priority areas. Descriptions of each individual priority area then ensue.

### STREETSCAPE

Streetscape furnishings within priority areas should enhance the pedestrian environment of these locations along the Old York Road corridor. Priority areas should provide the quality of pedestrian space to encourage residents, shoppers, and employees of priority areas to enter into these settings and spend time on their sidewalks and in their civic spaces. Streetscape furnishings are defined below.

#### ■ Sidewalks

Existing and proposed streets within priority areas should have a minimum of fifteen feet of width on either side devoted to pedestrian and ancillary use. The fifteen feet includes five feet back from the curb to accommodate streetscape amenities such as trees, tree grates, lighting, benches, trash receptacles, and newspaper

corrals, two feet clear adjacent to building facades to provide space for entering and exiting the building, and eight feet of effective pedestrian passage. The sidewalk area should extend the width of the parking lane at intersections to provide a "bulb out" area. Bulb outs provide safer pedestrian crossings by reducing the crossing length and providing increased visibility to and from vehicular travel lanes.

Priority area streetscape designs should use specialty paving on sidewalks to define high volume pedestrian spaces. Sidewalks should provide direct access into buildings fronting the corridor, make connections to intersecting roadway sidewalks, and safely direct pedestrians to crosswalk areas. Where pedestrian and vehicular traffic cross, such as where driveways cross sidewalks, the elevation, material, texture, color, and pattern of the sidewalk area should be continuous, prevailing over the vehicular surface.


#### ■ Crosswalks

Pedestrian crossings should be located at intersections with an ADA-compliant ramp set ninety degrees to the cartway. Crosswalks should be a minimum of ten feet wide, delineated with unit pavers that contrast in color and texture from the roadway paving, and located six feet back from the vehicular stop bar.

#### ■ Landscaping

Street trees should be planted within the recommended five foot verge area between the back of curb and sidewalk area. Trees should be ornamental, deciduous, drought resistant, tolerant of an urban setting, and require little maintenance. Typical tree spacing should be twenty five to thirty feet on center and located on both sides of the streets. A minimum of two species should be used within each priority area to provide resistance to disease. The surface of the verge area may be landscaped or hardscape and should have the ability to slow, capture, and/or filter stormwater.





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Additional areas for landscape may include surface parking lots, green roofs, public and private plazas, and stormwater management facilities. Plantings within these areas should be selected and installed in accordance with best management practices.

Street tree plantings in a priority area should differentiate themselves from those in the rest of the corridor. A dramatic change in color, form, and/or spacing will assist in providing identity for priority areas. Fall color and/or spring blooms should celebrate the distinct season and individual priority area.

### ■ Lighting

Multiple light sources should illuminate priority areas. Photometric levels from priority areas should not contribute to light pollution of adjacent neighborhoods and should be consistent with dark sky principles and lighting ordinances.

Overhead street lighting along Old York Road should be provided in accordance with PennDOT standards; priority areas should also provide pedestrian-oriented light fixtures along Old York Road and the areas' streets. Pedestrian-oriented lighting, in this instance, is defined as fixtures less than fifteen feet in height, with a pole having decorative color and/or form and providing sufficient foot-candles (incident illumination at a specific point) for safe pedestrian passage at night.

Poles should have an arm (or two arms) on which to hang banners and/or flower pots. Luminaires, or lamp heads, should be to scale with the pole fixture. Lights should be located within the five-foot amenity area adjacent to the curb on the sidewalk and placed so as not to interfere with overhead utilities or tree branching and so as not to impede the movement of pedestrians along the sidewalk.

Light from advertising signage and through windows in building facades should be

nonreflective, limit glare, and provide ambient light within the priority area.

### ■ Utilities

Relocation of above-ground utilities to underground pipes, vaults, or cables would help to provide an open, uncluttered streetscape, ultimately resulting in a visually more appealing streetscape, easier passage for pedestrians and vehicles, and reduced maintenance costs. Abington Township should encourage the "undergrounding" of utilities as part of prospective streetscape projects and as land development occurs along the corridor.

### ■ Wayfinding

Wayfinding recommendations include those for orienting visitors and residents to and through priority areas. Wayfinding techniques include gateway designs, "branding," interpretive signs referencing the history or environment of the community, directional signage, a pattern and aesthetic of streetscape furnishings, the architectural quality of a priority area, art displays, and landscape. Each of these wayfinding measures should be addressed within each priority area.

Interpretive and directional signage within priority areas should be oriented toward pedestrian traffic, since a major feature of these areas is support for visitors and residents to walk to destinations rather than drive. Custom designed signs for priority areas would help establish each area as a distinct district. Pedestrian-scaled signs should provide detailed wayfinding information such as vicinity maps, public transportation schedules, and community event listings.

Street signs should be located at every intersection and match the predominant existing style of street signs along the corridor in scale, color, and font. Street signs should be visible at



night and should be free from obstruction from landscape materials or commercial signs.

Abington Township should revise its sign ordinance so as to more tightly control the number and size of commercial signs along the Old York Road corridor.

## **CIRCULATION**

Circulation within priority areas should emphasize mobility by all modes. Visitors, employees, and residents of these areas should be afforded a variety of options in accessing and moving through each area.

Roadways within priority areas should be focused on pedestrian-friendly qualities. The Old York Road right-of-way within priority areas should evolve to become more supportive of pedestrian movement, as described previously in the corridor-wide recommendations section of this chapter. Proposed roads within each of the priority areas should incorporate a Main Street-like cross section when possible. The cross section for these new roadways should include one eleven-foot through-lane in each direction, eight feet on either side for on-street parallel parking, and fifteen-foot wide sidewalks consisting of five feet of verge area, eight feet on either side for pedestrian passage, and two feet of buffer zone between the pedestrian passage area and the building frontage. This cross section requires a thirty-eight-foot-wide cartway and an sixty-eight-foot-wide right-of-way. Buildings fronting new streets should have a zero-foot setback from the right-of-way. At intersections, the sidewalk should widen, or bulb-out, the width of the parking lane to shorten the distance for pedestrians to cross the cartway and to narrow the cartway to encourage motorists to slow down through intersections. Share the road signing should be incorporated that informs motorists that lanes along priority area roads are a multi-modal.

## **■ Vehicular**

Recommendations for each of the four priority areas include changes to existing vehicular circulation. Recommendations include new signalized intersections along Old York Road, new streets, intersection reconfigurations, and modifications to existing cross sections. New signals, such as the one proposed at Roy Avenue, and modifications to the existing Old York Road cross section are recommended in order to better accommodate pedestrians along the Old York Road corridor and in adjacent priority areas.


Intersection reconfigurations, such as the one recommended at Old York Road and Susquehanna Road, are intended to mitigate an undesirable and unsafe situation where buildings are located so close to the moving lane of traffic that a dangerous situation is presented to motorists and pedestrians. The recommended reconfiguration will resolve these existing problems. In the case of new streets, recommendations are intended to increase the circulation network so that no one street is required to carry the bulk of all vehicular trips. By splitting up potential trips among different streets, traffic may be dispersed and congestion may be minimized.

Design and posted speed limits within priority areas should be no greater than twenty-five miles per hour. This speed allows for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists to safely share the road.

## **Roadway Access Points**

Limiting the number of roadway access points (driveways) on Old York Road is a key safety recommendation. Numerous access driveways produce a high number of conflict points between vehicles traveling through and turning vehicles, which increases the likelihood of vehicular crashes. High numbers of access points can also negatively affect roadway capacity and overall projects a confusing, uninviting





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atmosphere. In the locations that currently do have driveways, many of them are in a state of disrepair, further degrading the appeal and function of the roadway for motorists and pedestrians alike. In many locations along Old York Road, driveways can be consolidated or removed altogether. In doing so, safety for motorists and pedestrians is enhanced as well as improving the overall character of the area.

### **Vehicular Traffic Volumes**

With the addition of all of the proposed Noble Fairway, Roy Rubicam, London Center and Susquehanna developments, which include shopping, office, and residential uses, an additional 17,500 vehicle trips per day could be added to the area. These trips would be dispersed throughout the existing and modified roadway network; however, it is expected that a significant portion would use Old York Road. In consideration of the prevailing travel patterns and the dispersion of the new traffic, it is expected that this new development would not result in more than a 5,000 vehicle increase (approximately 15% of the current average daily traffic volume of 33,600 vehicles) at any point along Old York Road. It should be noted that this growth is expected to be gradual and each phase of development would be expected to have a detailed analysis of the specific traffic impacts through the municipal land development and PennDOT permit approval processes. During these reviews, additional, project specific improvements would be identified to mitigate traffic congestion within the vicinity of the development.

### **Bicycle**

Outside travel lanes along Old York Road are recommended to be restriped/reconfigured to be 12 feet wide so that a vehicle and a bicycle can “Share the Road.” Within priority areas, posted speed limits, streetscape design, and site design should create an environment in which bicyclists can comfortably ride within the cartway.

Abington Township should review the Federal Highway Administration’s *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* on the appropriateness of signing the Old York Road corridor as a roadway that is shared by motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Abington Township should gain approval from PennDOT to post “Shared Lane,” “Bicyclist May Use Full Lane,” and/or combined bicycle/pedestrian warning signs along the corridor.

### **Van Shuttle Service**

As stated in the corridor-wide recommendations, Abington Township should work with public and private partners to combine funding, maintenance, and staff resources and provide a joint venture shuttle service that is more cost-efficient, better-advertised, more user-friendly, and offers more convenient service than the current multiple-provider shuttle service. The shuttle should connect each of the priority areas, Regional Rail stations, and other origins and destinations in Abington Township.

### **SEPTA**

New development or redevelopment should make transit access easier, encouraging increased transit use. Abington Township and their planning and development partners should do everything they can to provide for safe, convenient, and attractive access to transit. Supporting access to transit may include improving existing bus stops or train stations so that they are easily recognized and comfortable by partnering with SEPTA to offer shelter, seating, newspapers, trash receptacles, and lighting. Public art can play a role in creating valued transit stops with high amenities.

Site design should take into account accessibility of stations and stops within priority areas. When possible, publicly-accessible drives or walkways (either open air or through buildings) should be constructed to support direct pedestrian access to transit and signed so that commuters



are directed to them. For example, access to the Crestmont train station in the Roy Rubicam priority area should mean the allocation of the Rubicam Avenue right-of-way to pedestrians and bicyclists connecting from the train station to the mixed-use area along Old York Road.

The Noble Fairway and Roy Rubicam priority areas, offering direct access to the Noble and Crestmont train stations respectively, should provide information kiosks for transit riders within a central public plaza or gathering space. Information kiosks should include train schedules, a listing of fares, service updates, and tips on connecting to other transportation modes such as bus and shuttle services.

## LAND USE

Priority areas should be primarily mixed-use. Land uses should include residential, retail, office, institutional, civic, open space, and live-work. Mixing of land uses affords the greatest potential for internal walking trips and mutual support among uses for commercial viability. Mixed land uses also increase the safety and activity level of areas because they draw patrons during the day and evening hours. Land uses should be mixed together to the maximum degree, with two or more different land uses located on any given block.

Whenever possible, mixed-uses should occur in individual buildings (“vertical mixing”).

## ■ Buildings

Buildings should be sited up to sidewalks. Building heights should provide a 1:1 relationship with the width of the street in front of the building, e.g.: if the street is sixty feet wide in front of the building, the building should be approximately sixty feet, or five stories, tall. Building widths fronting the corridor should be no more than

twice building heights. Front façades of buildings should utilize awnings, columns, offset rooflines, cornices, and transoms to articulate architectural styles and provide an articulated first story and entryway. Building façades should include windows and glazed doors to provide a minimum of 75% transparency on the ground floor façade, and 40% on upper floors. Window displays for retail stores are encouraged. The maximum signage area should be 5 % of the total façade area. A minimum of two feet in front of the entrance and apart from the effective sidewalk area (pedestrian throughway) should be free of obstacles to provide adequate space for entering and exiting the building (Figure 4.7, *Architectural Design Guidelines*).

## ■ Access


Primary building access should be from the street or public right-of-way. Off-street parking and service requirements should be met behind buildings.

## ■ Open Space

Small, centralized “pocket-parks” should be considered within priority areas. Pocket parks should afford places for people to rest, picnic, or gather. These parks may be programmed for community use by Abington Township, community groups, or local businesses. Pocket parks may also be thought of as extensions of the sidewalk pedestrian space by being accessible to the public and providing café-style seating, landscaping, and/or seating areas.

## SUSTAINABILITY

As a built up commercial corridor with no dominant natural features, future development is not bound by geographic limitations. Development along the corridor may be as intense or as sparse as Abington Township deems appropriate.



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As was noted in Chapter 2, Old York Road is part of a regional transportation system, connecting Center City Philadelphia to the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Traffic engineers predict that, on average, each year regional traffic increases one to two percent. A 1½% annual rate of increase over a twenty year planning horizon could produce “background” traffic, with volume increases of 35% on Old York Road, and no desirable uses from actions taken by Abington Township. Land use recommendations associated with the Corridor Improvement Plan are predicted to add an extra 5,000 trips per intersection, or approximately a 15% increase in traffic volume, much less than the effect of the background traffic growth. Of course, the Corridor Improvement Plan recommends a revised model for development along the corridor, one that supports mobility by transit and on foot. The compact, mixed-use development model allows pedestrian, bicyclist, shuttle, and SEPTA trips to potentially replace single occupancy vehicle trips in the future.

The development program represented for each priority area plan relates directly to the market analysis described in Chapter 3. These uses will be able to be absorbed within the study area over the next approximately 20 years, providing a vibrant economy for the township, a level of tax rates to support a high level of services, and an appealing lifestyle for its residents.

The Smart Growth-based recommendations for each of the Old York Road priority areas include mixing of land uses, increasing the intensity of uses, improving the pedestrian and bicyclist environments, and siting development close to transit. In addition to these design principles, other steps should be taken toward improving sustainability within priority areas.

### ■ Reducing Emissions

Site design within priority areas can help reduce emissions by reducing the potential number of vehicle trips to, from, and within priority areas.

Sidewalks along rights-of-way, design speeds that accommodate cyclists on the cartway, direct public access to transit, and vertical use-mix and a variety and intensity of land uses within walking distance are all measures that can reduce vehicle trips.

### ■ Sustainable Building

Buildings within priority areas should be developed with environmentally-sustainable designs, including provisions to capitalize on building orientation, minimize stormwater runoff, harvest solar and/or wind power, adapt and reuse existing materials, and minimize atmospheric pollutants. The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification, developed by the US Green Building Council (USGBC), provides a list of standards for environmentally-sustainable construction. Developers of sites within priority areas should be encouraged to seek LEED certification, a Green Building Rating System offered by the USGBC, or to adhere to similar “green” building techniques. According to the USGBC, LEED emphasizes the creation of compact, walkable, vibrant, mixed-use neighborhoods with good connections to nearby communities. The Old York Road Corridor priority areas’ mixed-use environment and multi-modal access will provide strong support for increased walking and biking, which help to reduce auto-dependency and promote healthier lifestyles and environmental stewardship.

### ■ Stormwater Management

Water quality, air quality, noise quality, and energy efficiency should be included in all development/redevelopment projects. Development should include innovative approaches to capturing and treating stormwater runoff, as well as measures to decrease the amount of stormwater runoff. Stormwater Management Best Management Practices (BMPs) is a manual created by the Department of Environmental Protection’s Bureau of



Watershed Management that sets guidelines to control the volume, rate, and water quality of stormwater runoff. BMPs for priority areas might include the use of green roofs, rainwater harvesting, permeable paving, detention cisterns, landscaped stormwater planters, rain gardens, and bioretention recharge basins.

## Noble/Fairway

**Theme:**

*Mid 20th Century Commerce*



**Height**

*3-5 Stories*

**Characteristics**

*Punched window on the 2nd floor and above  
Oversized windows on the ground floor  
Upper stories step back from street edge  
Canvas storefront awnings  
Horizontal or vertical plane emphasized*

**Suggested Materials**

*Natural Stone  
Stucco  
Concrete  
Brick*

## Susquehanna

**Theme:**

*Colonial Village*



**Height**

*1-3 Stories*

**Characteristics**

*Punched window on the 2nd floor and above  
Display windows on the ground floor  
Shutters  
Predominant Chimney  
Canvas storefront awnings  
Steep roof*

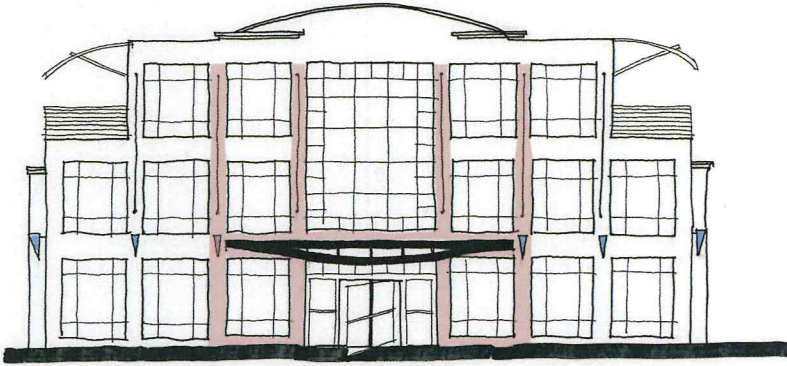
**Suggested Materials**

*Natural Stone  
Stucco  
Concrete  
Brick*



## London Center

Theme:  
Contemporary Lifestyle & Entertainment Center



Height  
2-5 Stories

### Characteristics

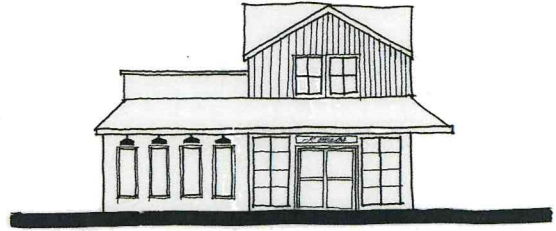
Oversized industrial-style windows  
Walls on different planes  
Curvilinear, offset, or angular shapes of walls, overhangs and/or windows  
Decorative appendages such as: banners, spires, and lighting  
LED or neon architectural and/or branding lighting  
Use of color in building articulation  
Balconies and roof decks

### Suggested Materials

Natural or manmade stone	Brick
Stucco	Steel
Transparent or translucent materials	Wood
Manmade or recycled materials	Concrete

## Roy/Rubicam

Theme:  
Contemporary General Store



Height  
1-3 Stories

### Characteristics

Punched window on the 2nd floor and above  
Display windows on the ground floor  
Multiple eaves and overhangs

### Suggested Materials

Wood  
Natural or manmade stone  
Stucco

Figure 4.7



0 500 1000 Feet



**McCormick Taylor**  
Engineers & Planners  
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January 2009

## NOBLE FAIRWAY

### INTENT

The most compelling asset of the Noble Fairway priority area is its proximity to SEPTA's R-3 Regional Rail line and its Noble Station. The presence of the transit station increases access to the area, creates the market for a number of land uses, and reduces the potential amount of vehicular trips. Nationally, areas around transit stations are being redeveloped or developed into Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), a modern version of an older method of development in which retail, office, and residential uses are developed in a compact, mixed-use form within walking distance of rail stations. The Transit Cooperative Research Project (TCRP), in its *R-102 Transit-Oriented Development in the United States: Experiences, Challenges, and Prospects* publication, cites that the benefits of TOD are social, environmental, and fiscal.

In addition to being close to the Noble train station, the Noble Fairway area is already a successful commercial area, and includes the Noble Town Center, Noble Square, and Baederwood Shopping Centers and several auto dealerships. While the Noble Fairway area's existing development is a core asset, there is additional revitalization potential with the vacant and underutilized land located primarily on the east side of Old York Road and north of the R-3 rail line. Most of the existing commercial uses are located near the intersection of Old York Road and The Fairway, and along The Fairway. Although The Fairway is a local shopping destination, the existing development does not lend itself to supporting sustainable pedestrian activity. To achieve this character, recommendations for the Noble Fairway area include creating a Main Street-like atmosphere along The Fairway with mixed-use buildings located up to the street edge, outdoor cafes and restaurants, and civic plazas for outdoor community events and gatherings (Figure 4.8).



### CIRCULATION

New streets in the Noble Fairway priority area are proposed to increase the walkability of the area, and to provide “redundancy,” or alternative routes, for local vehicular trips. New streets should include one lane of through traffic in each direction, on-street parking on both sides of the street, a five-foot landscaped verge area, eight-foot-wide sidewalks, and two feet of clear space adjacent to building frontages. The following points describe the proposed streets for the Noble Fairway priority area (Figure 4.9, *Noble Fairway Illustrative Plan*):

- A new street approximately four hundred feet north of The Fairway, running east-west and paralleling The Fairway, and intersecting with Old York Road. This new street provides alternative access to The Fairway along Old York Road as well as frontage for new mixed-use buildings. The proposed road parallels The Fairway for three blocks and then makes a ninety degree turn south to tie into The Fairway.
- A proposed north-south street connecting the Noble train station with The Fairway and points north of the Fairway. The street would



# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

## NOBLE FAIRWAY AREA VISIONING

(the Noble Train Station and near the intersection of Old York Road and the Fairway)

### Key Aspects:

- Transform the area into a walkable town center with a mix of uses, in proximity to Regional Rail service.
- Emphasize the Noble Train Station's importance in the future of Abington Township by improving pedestrian and vehicular access to the station, providing a mix of transit-oriented uses within walking distance of the station, and structured parking, and integrating the station and its access with the surrounding area.
- Reconfigure the area's auto sales facilities to be more compact and consider vertical auto storage and/or jointly-operated sales facilities.
- Complement and build upon the existing Fairway streetscape with additional street trees, specialty paving, wayfinding and street furniture.
- Incorporate condo/apartment and townhouse dwelling units within walking distance of Abington's new center and the Noble Train Station.
- Create a destination for recreation, including fields, playgrounds, open space, trails and an indoor facility.
- Enliven Old Old York Road by designing the cartway to function like a plaza space, infilling mixed-use buildings along the eastern side of the road, and providing trails from the neighborhood into the area.



Figure 4.8



# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

## NOBLE FAIRWAY ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

(the Noble Train Station and near the intersection of Old York Road and the Fairway)

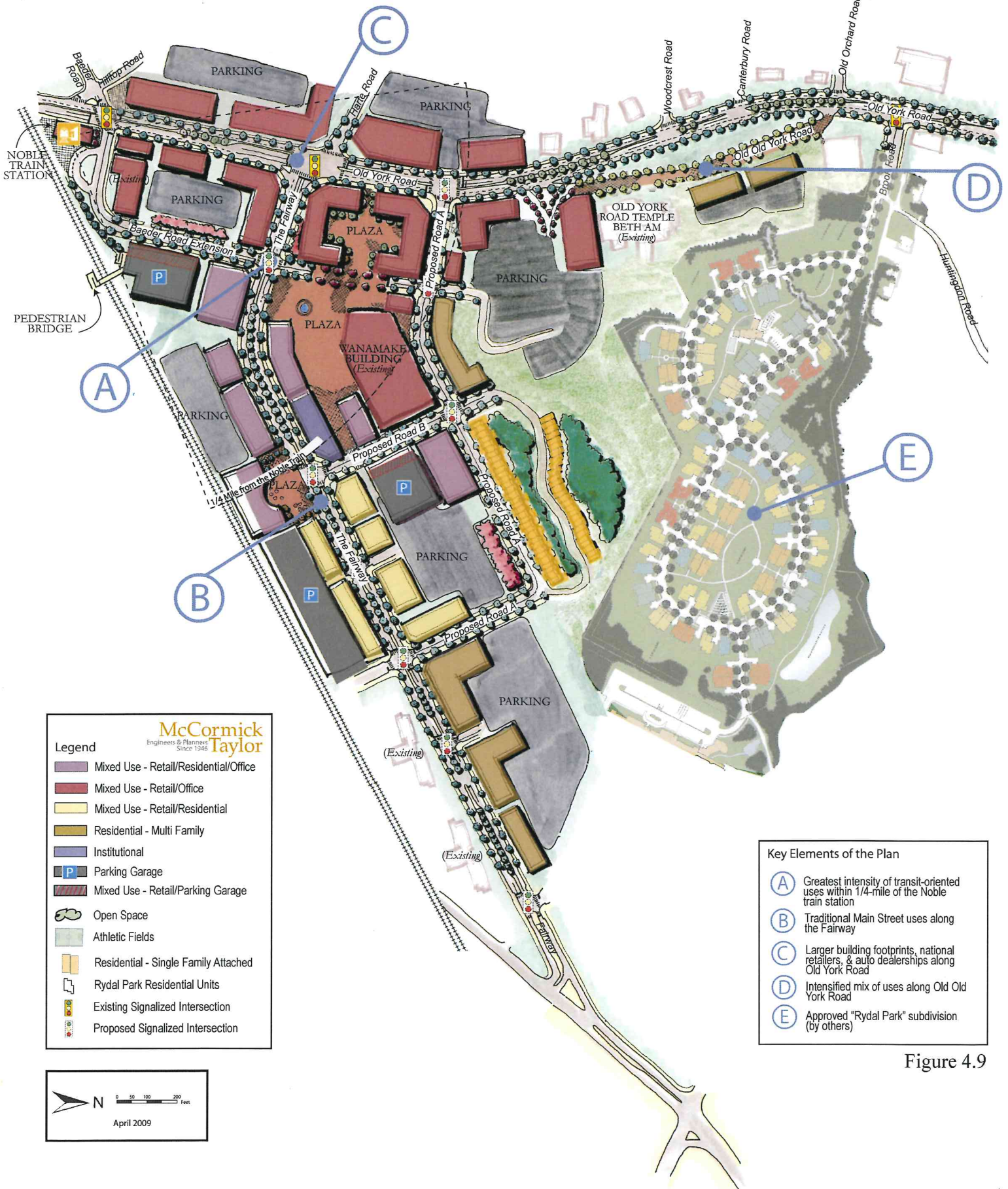


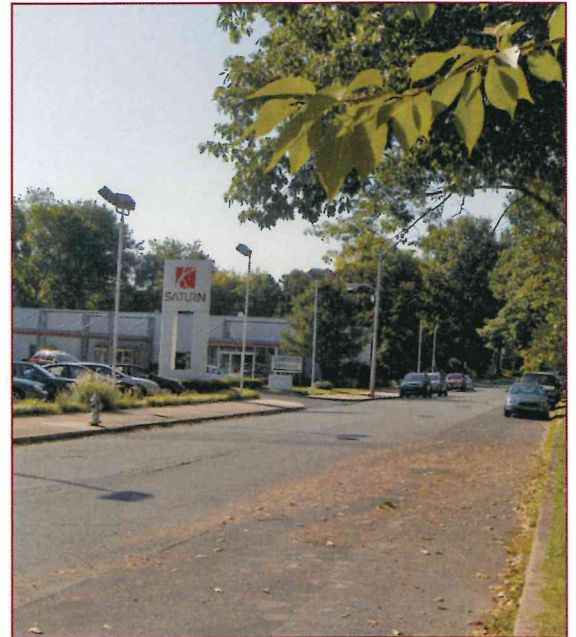
Figure 4.9



provide direct access to the Noble Station drop off area from a signalized intersection at Old York Road and Baeder Road and turn ninety degrees north to intersect perpendicularly with The Fairway. North of The Fairway, the proposed road would take on a different character, with a unit paver surface and a narrow width as it bisects a civic plaza. The proposed road would also provide a driveway access to a new parking area located in the northern part of the priority area that would serve uses located along Old York Road and Old Old York Road.

- A proposed north-south street connecting the heart of The Fairway shopping area with the proposed new east-west road and the residential uses on the northern part of the priority area. The proposed road would provide frontage for new mixed-use buildings, access to a parking garage, and would form a T-intersection with The Fairway where a new civic plaza would be located.

Within the Noble Fairway priority area is a quarter-mile stretch of the former Old York Road alignment, called herein, "Old Old York Road." Currently Old Old York Road is wide enough to support, in places, one side of angled parking, one side of parallel parking, two through lanes (northbound only) and sidewalks on both sides of the street. The street is asphalt, the sidewalks concrete, and there are no street trees. Recommendations for the Old Old York Road segment are to create a street where pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists share the cartway. The right-of-way would be transformed to have a narrower cartway with angled parking on the west side only and one lane of through traffic with this fourteen-foot through lane accommodating all modes mixed together. The street surface would be unit pavers and street trees and specialty lighting would line the outside edge of the cartway. New land uses, described in the next section, would transform the activity along this portion of Old Old York Road.



A number of pedestrian walkways (pedestrian-only paths connected to, but not located along, street sidewalks) are proposed to be located to provide pedestrians with direct access to important destinations. One such pedestrian connection is a pedestrian bridge over the R-3 rail tracks to allow residents of the Noble community direct access to the Noble station and Noble Fairway priority area. Another connection provides pedestrian access to the War Memorial Park between Old York Road and Old Old York Road. More generally, pedestrian walkways are recommended between surface parking areas in the rear of buildings to their public entrances along the street right-of-way and as shortcuts between buildings.

Bicycle use should be encouraged throughout the Noble Fairway priority area. All new roads should be "Share the Road" facilities in which a twenty-five mile-per-hour speed limit makes it possible for bicyclists to ride in the same lanes as motorists. Bike racks and/or lockers should be installed on every block. Noble Station

should include both bike racks and lockers and a new station building should include a shower/ changing station available for cyclists' use.

## TRAFFIC

Traffic improvements to the Noble Fairway area include the addition of a signal at the Proposed Road & Old York Road. There are three signalized intersections in the immediate area located at the intersections of Baeder Road, The Fairway, and Brooks Road with Old York Road. It is proposed to provide an additional signal at this location to promote an even distribution of vehicular traffic throughout the site; however the approval of such a signal will be subject to PennDOT concurrence. If approved, the signal would need to be coordinated with the other signals along Old York Road to maximize the progression of traffic.

## Transit

In addition to the traffic changes recommended, there are also a number of proposed transit improvements. Currently, sixty-one (61) parking spaces are available at the Noble Station. As part of the mixed-use development, a parking garage is proposed for commuters and traffic destined for the Noble Fairway area generally. The frequency of trains is also proposed to be increased, with the combination of increased parking capacity and more frequent trains expected to result in an increase of usage of this station.

## LAND USE

Recommendations for the Noble Fairway priority area involve expanding on the existing mix of uses in the area to support Transit-Oriented Development in a more Main Street-like form. The area currently has offices, restaurants, shops, auto sales, and medical offices in a relatively low-density setting. To fully take advantage of access to the Noble station,

Transit-Oriented Development, and making a walkable area, the number of uses and their intensity should increase. Residential uses, institutional uses, and recreational uses should be added to the mix of uses here, with the highest intensity of office and retail use closest to the station. Approximately one-quarter-mile away from the transit station, the proportion of uses should change such that there is increasingly more residential, institutional, and recreational uses, relatively the same amount of retail use, and less office use.



Subtleties in the mix of uses shown in the figure take into account existing uses in the area and transforming it to be Transit-Oriented Development. The following sub-areas offer distinct land use opportunities:

- Land uses along Old York Road accommodate larger building footprints and would therefore be most suitable for national retailers and auto dealerships, both of whom can adopt more contemporary, pedestrian-friendly building models suitable to this area. This approach includes siting the building up to the street, placing primary entrances along Old York Road, and providing for 75% transparency and architectural articulation along the ground floor. For the auto



dealerships, this may require innovative solutions for storing autos, including vertical auto stacking and/or multi-dealership jointly-operated sales and auto storage facilities.

- The area within one-eighth of a mile northeast of the Noble train station is recommended for the greatest intensity, with offices, retail, and residential uses in mixed-use, multi-story buildings, and structured parking.
- Ground floor uses along The Fairway include those most often associated with traditional Main Streets, such as: independently-owned retail shops, department stores, pharmacies, food markets, shoe stores, and other community-supported businesses. One or more of Abington Township’s community resources (e.g.: Public Library, YMCA, Township offices) should also be considered for relocation along The Fairway. Upper floors along The Fairway should include offices (primarily within one-quarter mile of the Noble train station) and residential units.
- Residential uses are proposed throughout the area. Generally, residential uses should take the form of apartment-style units within one quarter of a mile of the train station and apartments and townhouses further away from the station.
- The Old Old York Road section should be included in the mixed-use, walkable environment of the rest of the priority area. To accomplish this, retail, residential, restaurants, and office uses should occur in this section and include outdoor eating/cafes along sidewalks.
- Abington Township is currently in the process of approving ninety seven attached and single family residential units on the “Rydal Park” property between The Fairway and Brook Road.

Off-street parking is proposed to be centralized and to serve multiple destinations. Surface parking lots are located behind buildings and a number of structured parking garages, with retail use on the ground floors, are located throughout the priority area. A structured parking garage is sited close to the Noble train station to be shared by commuters and other users.

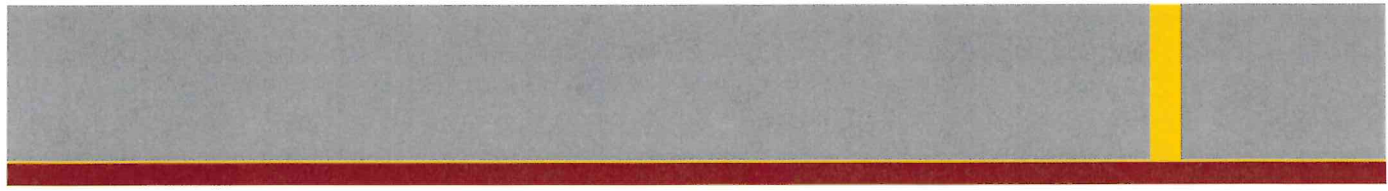
Open space takes the form of streetscape improvements along Old York Road and proposed roadways, and civic plazas at a number of locations. Civic plazas are proposed at a variety of sizes. Smaller plazas, for example, can support café seating, retail merchandise displays, and public art. Larger plazas can support community flea markets and farmers’ markets, as well as art displays. Specialty paving, pedestrian lighting, fountains and landscaping are potential features that can distinguish these public plazas.

The development program, broken down by major land use categories, for the Noble Fairway priority area includes the following new floor area totals:

■ Retail 160,000 sf	■ Office 236,000 sf
■ Residential 855 units	■ Institutional 105,000 sf

## SUSTAINABILITY

In addition to the general sustainability recommendations for priority areas, the Noble Fairway priority area should include special provisions to reduce auto dependency and greenhouse gas emissions and to improve the overall air quality of the region. Providing a mix and intensity of uses to encourage transit use is critical. Services within walking distance of the station, direct access to the station, and making the area easy to negotiate as a pedestrian, all improve the likelihood that people will utilize transit.



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The illustrative site plan for the Noble Fairway priority area shows a number of civic plazas. These plazas should be built with pilot demonstration stormwater management techniques. Examples of innovative stormwater management approaches include the use of raingarden plantings within the right of way, harvesting rainwater for interpretive, artistic displays, and using permeable paving.

The preservation of open space and vegetation is important to filtering air and ground water. The northern half of the Noble Fairway priority site includes an area that is steeply sloped and highly vegetated with old growth trees. Development should respond sensitively to the topography of this area and its potential effects on downstream water quality. Erosion control measures should be put in place during and after construction of the site. Development should also minimize the amount of trees cut down to accommodate building construction.

## PHASING

Transformation of the Noble Fairway area into a walkable town center is recommended to occur over five phases (Figure 4.10). The initial phase, Phase 1, consists of improving access, circulation, and parking conditions near the Noble train station. Actions taken during this phase include: construction of a new shared-use parking structure; erection of a grade-separated pedestrian crossing over the railroad tracks; an extension of Baeder Road east of Old York Road and tying into The Fairway, incorporating a drop-off area for the Noble station; installation of a gateway feature; development of the vacant former Pontiac dealership site just north of Baeder Road; and installation of streetscape and pedestrian crossing improvements to Old York Road from the bridge over the railroad tracks to just north of the intersection with Harte Road.

The second phase of implementation (Figure 4.11) would include the transition of The Fairway into a mixed-use, walkable Main Street-like environment with civic gathering places and structured parking and creation of a street network north of The Fairway. Phase 3 is a continuation of The Fairway's transition to a Main Street-like environment with the conversion of the existing auto dealership and Baederwood Shopping Center into a mixed-use, walkable area with buildings sited up to the street, parking behind, and a new residential enclave located just north of The Fairway (Figure 4.12). Redevelopment of selected properties and the streetscape along Old Old York Road constitutes Phase 4 (Figure 4.13). Finally, once new activity is generated by the Noble train station area improvements and by the mixed-use environment along The Fairway, the transition of the auto dealerships along Old York Road and the redevelopment of the Raymour and Flanagan and Trader Joe's sites and other areas on the east side of Old York Road north and south of the Fairway would be the final phase of implementation (Figure 4.14).



## NOBLE FAIRWAY PHASING

## PHASE 1

(the Noble Train Station and near the intersection of Old York Road and the Fairway)

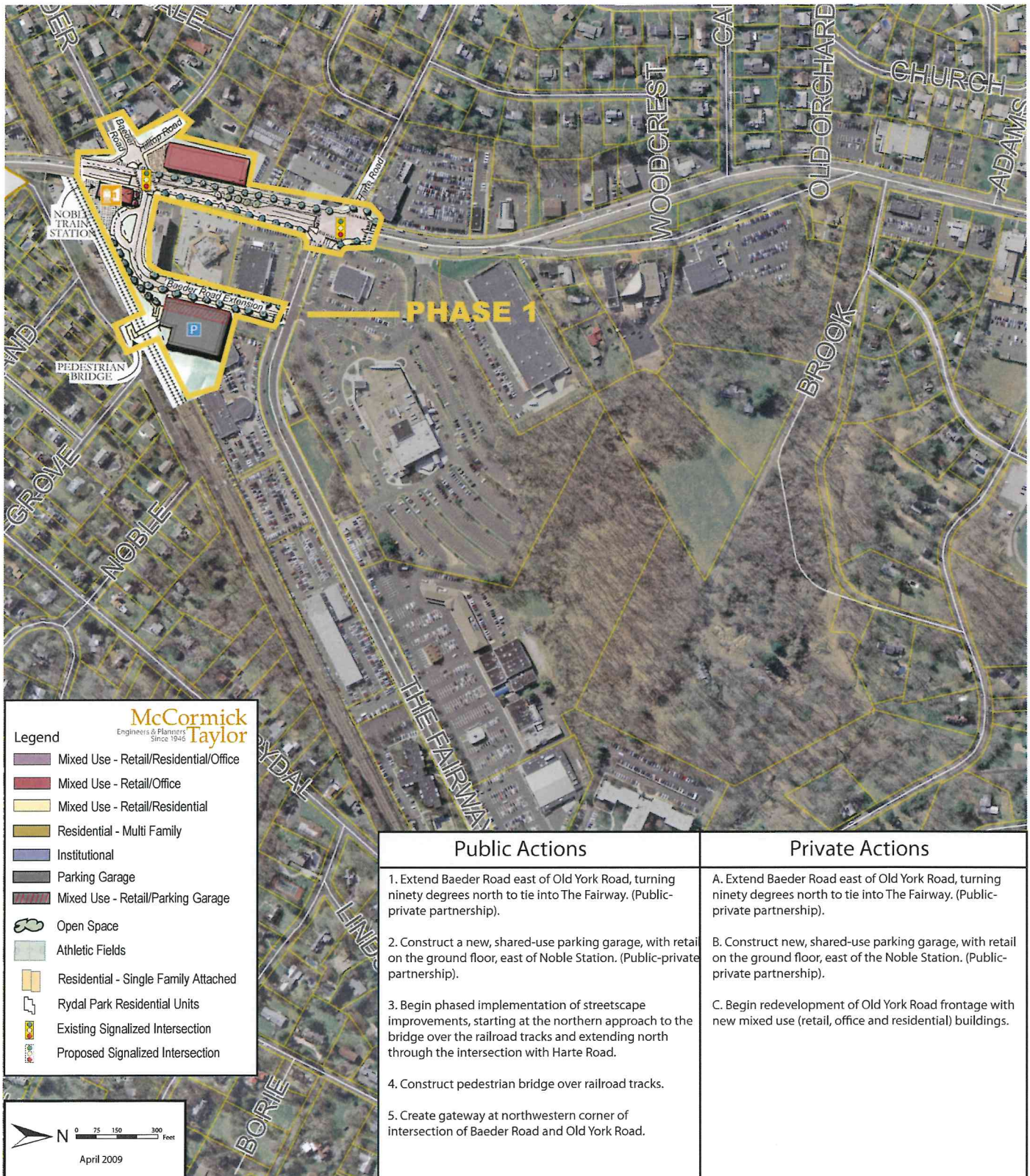


Figure 4.10

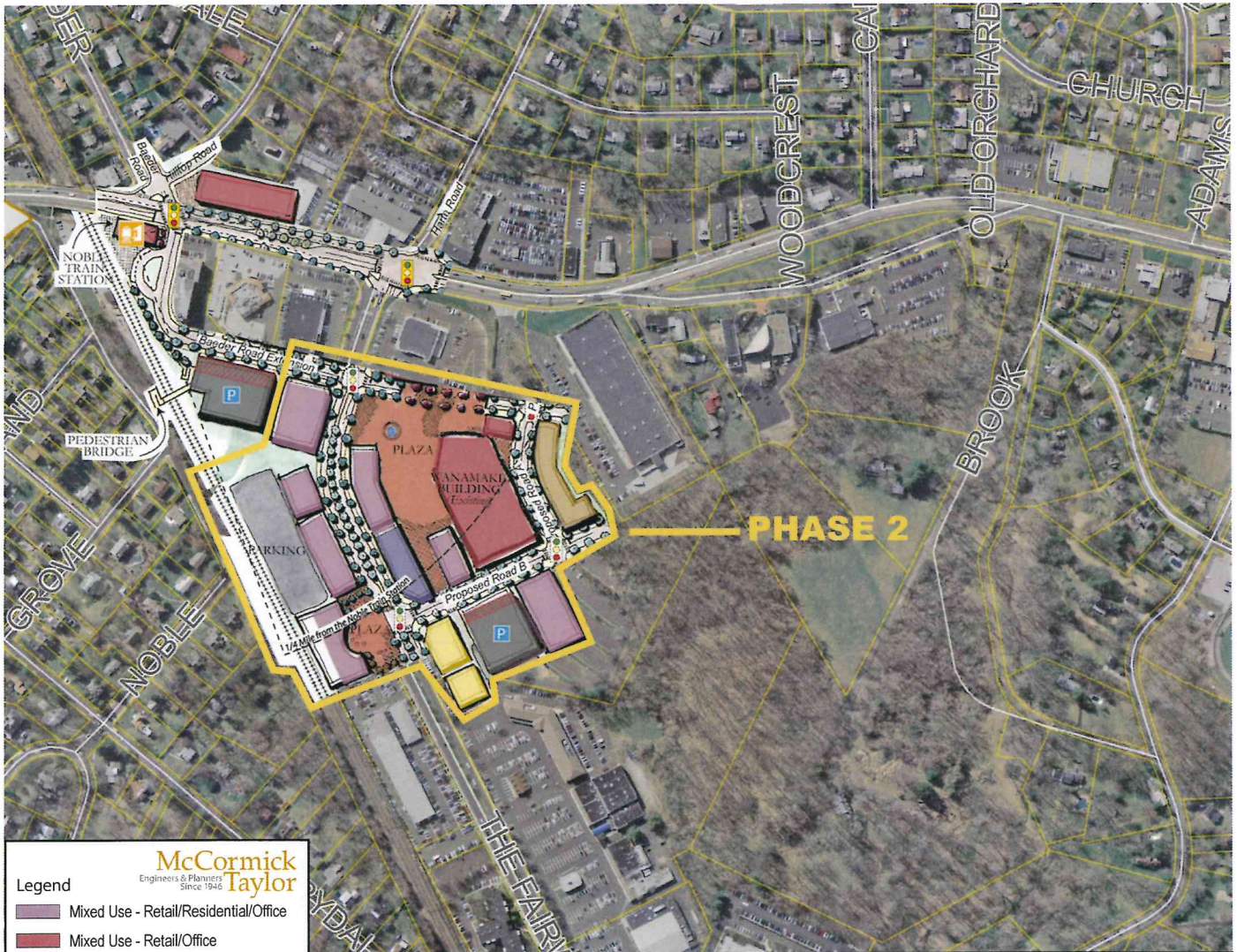


# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

## NOBLE FAIRWAY PHASING

## PHASE 2

(the Noble Train Station and near the intersection of Old York Road and the Fairway)



**McCormick Taylor**  
Engineers & Planners  
Since 1946

**Legend**

- Mixed Use - Retail/Residential/Office
- Mixed Use - Retail/Office
- Mixed Use - Retail/Residential
- Residential - Multi Family
- Institutional
- Parking Garage
- Mixed Use - Retail/Parking Garage
- Open Space
- Athletic Fields
- Residential - Single Family Attached
- Rydal Park Residential Units
- Existing Signalized Intersection
- Proposed Signalized Intersection



Public Actions	Private Actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to extend Baeder Road through the intersection with The Fairway and north through new mixed-use development. (Public-private partnership).</li> <li>2. Begin implementation of streetscape improvements along The Fairway, starting at the intersection with Baeder Road extension and extending east past the intersection with Proposed Road B.</li> <li>3. Locate Township use along The Fairway, such as: Abington Free Library, Township offices, or Post Office.</li> <li>4. Construct a public plaza space northeast of the intersection of The Fairway and the Baeder Road Extension (in front of the former Wanamaker Building). (Public-private partnership).</li> <li>5. Construct a public plaza along The Fairway, near the intersection of The Fairway and Proposed Road B.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Continue to extend Baeder Road through the intersection with The Fairway and north through new mixed-use development. (Public-private partnership).</li> <li>B. Construct a public plaza space northeast of the intersection of The Fairway and the Baeder Road Extension (in front of the former Wanamaker Building). (Public-private partnership).</li> <li>C. Construct and dedicate Proposed Road B from The Fairway north through area for new mixed use development.</li> <li>D. Develop frontage along The Fairway and Proposed Road B with new mixed use (retail, office and residential) buildings.</li> <li>E. Construct and dedicate first phase of Proposed Road A between the Baeder Road extension and Proposed Road B.</li> <li>F. Construct parking structure with ground floor retail along, or within, 200' of The Fairway.</li> </ol>

Figure 4.11



## NOBLE FAIRWAY PHASING

## PHASE 3

(the Noble Train Station and near the intersection of Old York Road and the Fairway)

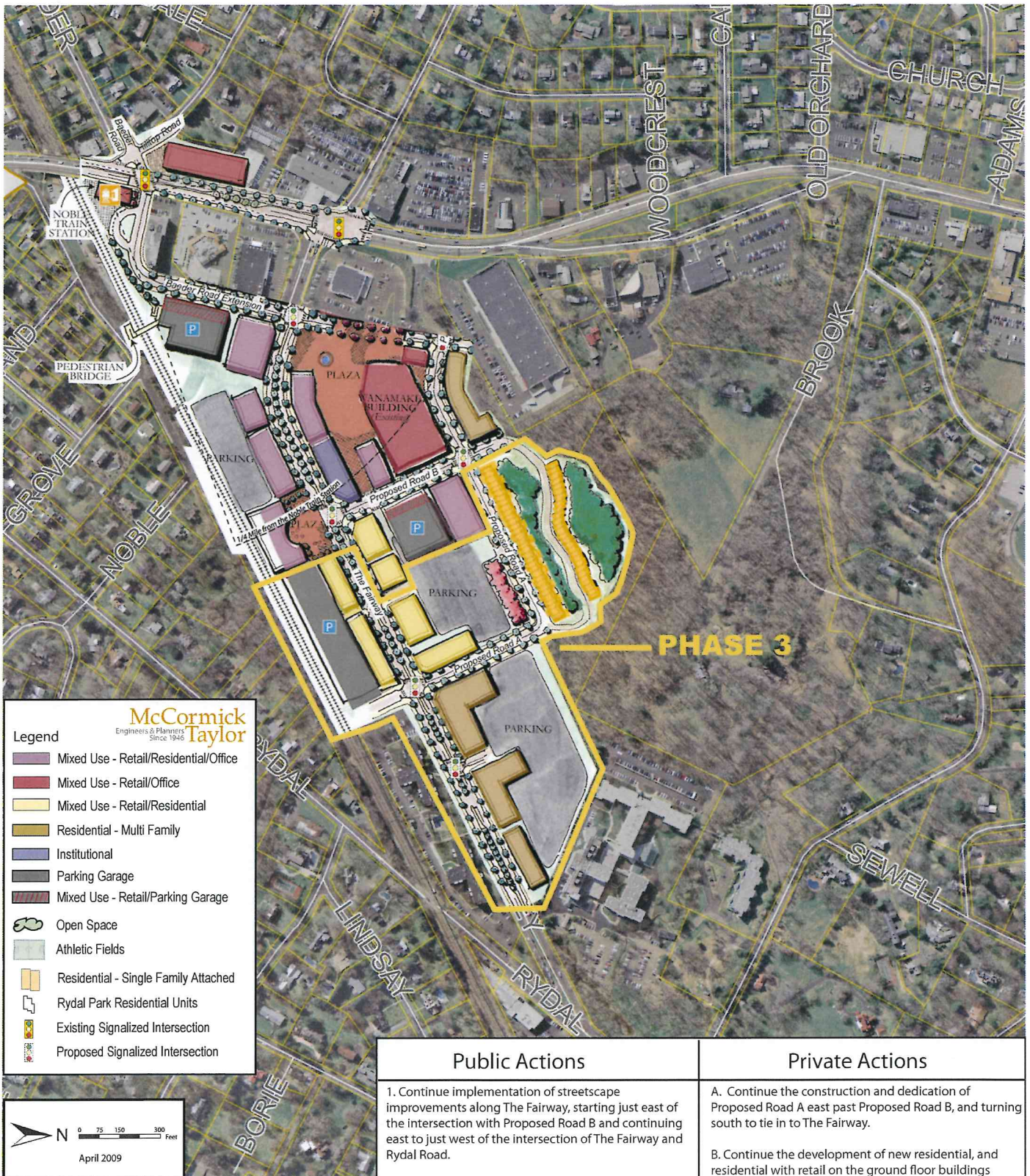


Figure 4.12



# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

## NOBLE FAIRWAY PHASING

## PHASE 4

(the Noble Train Station and near the intersection of Old York Road and the Fairway)

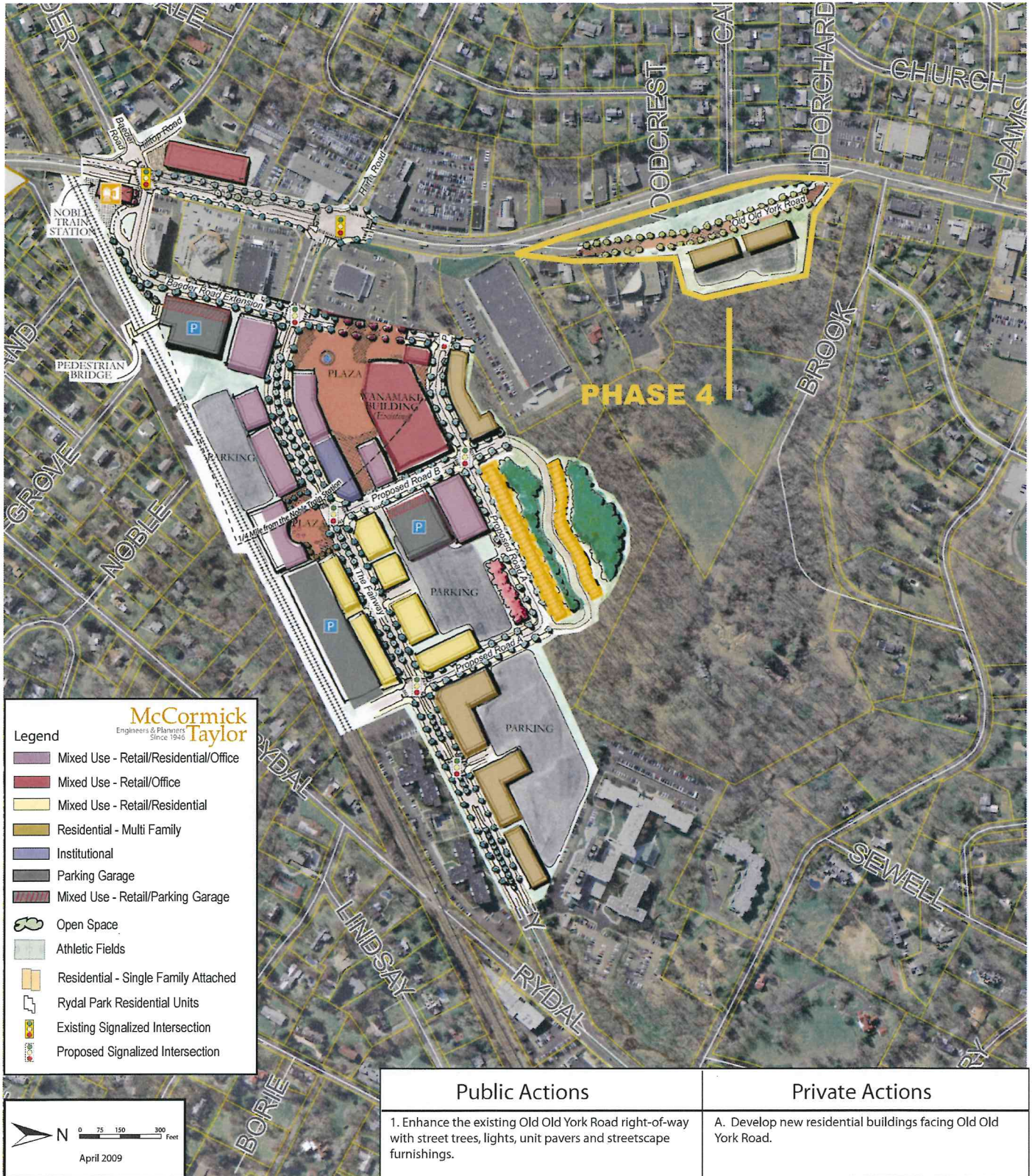


Figure 4.13



# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

## NOBLE FAIRWAY PHASING

## PHASE 5

(the Noble Train Station and near the intersection of Old York Road and the Fairway)

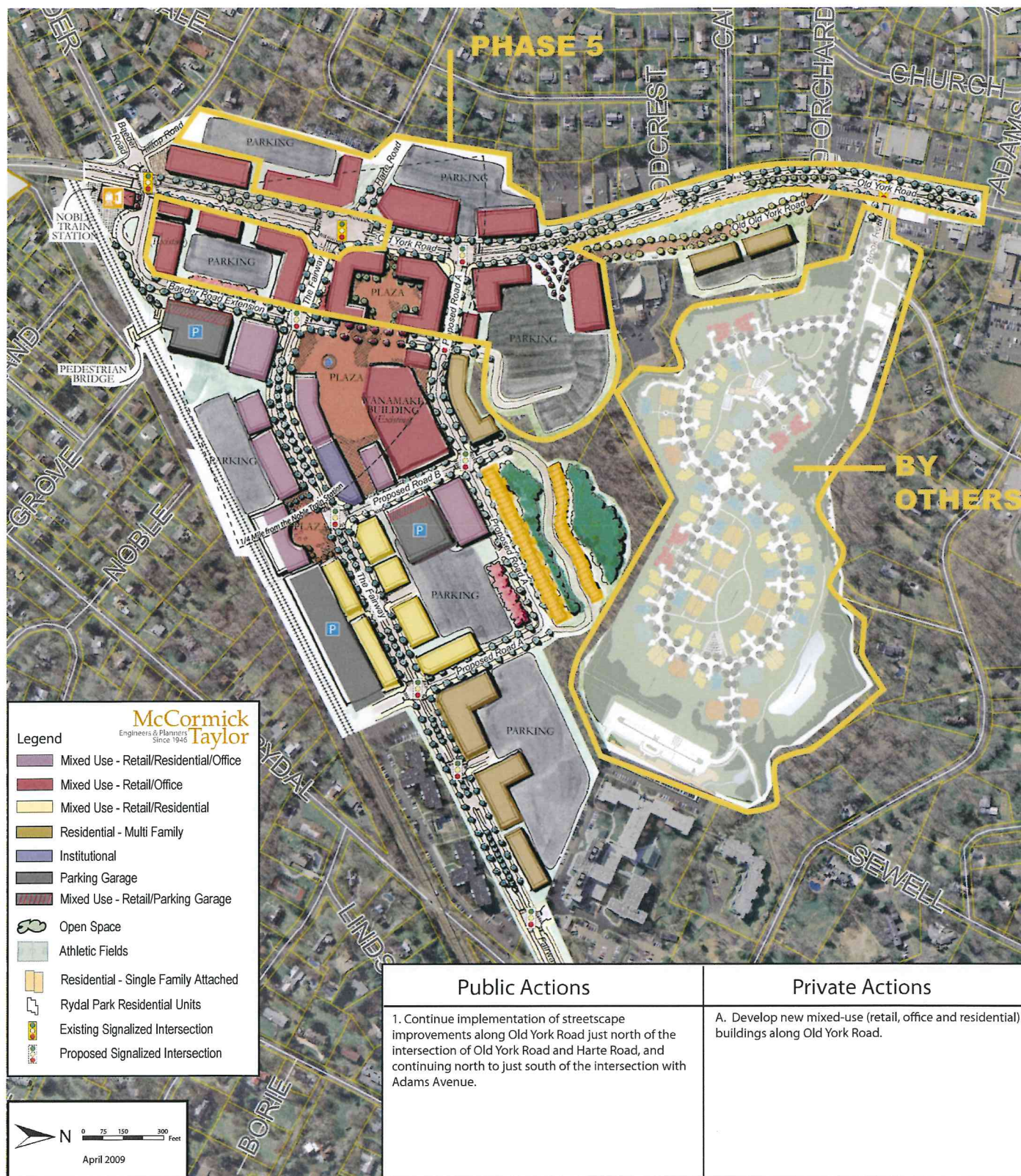


Figure 4.14



## SUSQUEHANNA

### INTENT

The intersection of Old York Road and Susquehanna Road is the historic business and community center of Abington Township. In the area are a number of historic buildings, including the Abington Presbyterian Church, a war veteran cemetery, and the old Abington Township high school building. Today, a number of businesses operate along Old York Road north of the intersection and on Susquehanna Road west of the intersection. Some of the businesses, however, are jammed up to the street with little to no sidewalk. Previous widenings of Old York Road and the construction of additions to building facades have, in places, reduced the sidewalk width to only two feet. In addition, unsympathetic additions onto the fronts of structures have contributed to diluting the historic character of the area. Small parcel sizes, the limited floor area of historic structures, and set adjacent residential land uses limit the area's ability to accommodate a contemporary shopping, eating and drinking, and working destination. Recommendations for this area therefore involve adaptations to the physical environment that will improve safety for motorists and pedestrians and the ability of businesses to attract and serve customers.

To improve mobility and economic viability within the Susquehanna priority area, a number of changes should be made to roadways and properties. Road changes in this area should focus on the substandard geometry of the Old York Road and Susquehanna Road intersection. Adjustments made here would improve the flow of traffic through the intersection and allow for a greater area of sidewalk. Proposed intersection improvements would require using portions of four properties at the northwest corner, as well as parts of two adjacent properties on the north side of Susquehanna Road just west of Old York Road. Mixed-use buildings are proposed on the resultant new parcel to be formed from

these various properties and on the vacant and underutilized properties along Old York Road. Façade additions to the buildings on the west side of Old York Road should be removed to reveal the original historic structures and to provide for additional sidewalk width. The result will be an enhanced pedestrian environment containing a mix of existing and new retailers in a local shopping destination at an historic crossroads (Figure 4.15).



### CIRCULATION

The intersection of Old York Road and Susquehanna Road should be reconfigured to allow for proper sight lines, turning radii, and queuing distances for motorists and adequate sidewalk widths and crossing areas for pedestrians. The existing Susquehanna Road alignment is offset on either side of Old York Road. In order to rectify the substandard geometry without affecting the historic properties on the southeast, southwest, and northeast corners of the intersection, Susquehanna Road, west of Old York Road, should be relocated approximately ten to twelve feet north (Figure 4.16). This shift requires using portions of four properties at the northwest corner of the intersection and two adjacent properties on the north side of Susquehanna Road just west of Old York Road. On Old York Road,



## SUSQUEHANNA AREA VISIONING

(the intersection of Old York Road and Susquehanna Road)

### Key Aspects:

- Revise the physical configuration of the intersection by aligning the east and west sides of Susquehanna Road and widening the sidewalks along Old York Road.
- Reshape the building edge on the northwest corner of the intersection.
- Complement and build upon the existing community-oriented retail with new mixed-use infill on vacant and/or underutilized land.
- Enhance the pedestrian environment with wider sidewalks, street trees, specialty paving and street furniture.

## Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township



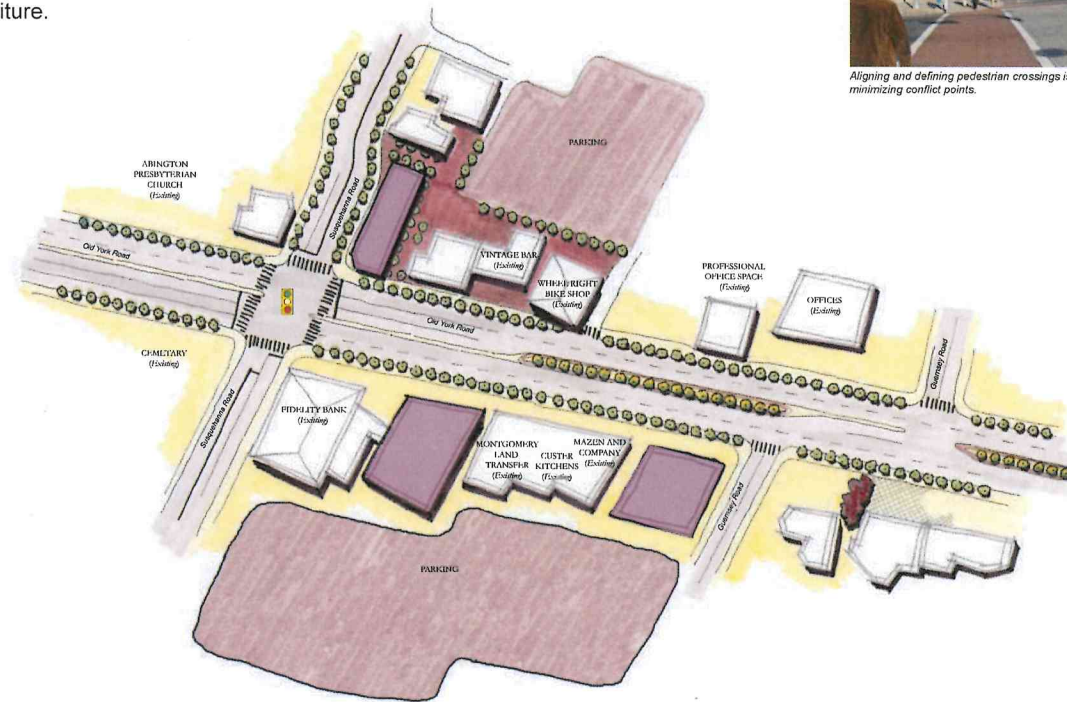
Aligning and defining pedestrian crossings is important in minimizing conflict points.



Small properties with varied uses support a walkable, community-oriented retail area.



A generous sidewalk width, specialty paving, street trees, pedestrian-scale lights, and a strong building edge help to encourage walking to multiple destinations.



A mixed-use area could be along both Old York Road and Susquehanna Road.

### Legend

- Mixed Use - Retail/Office/Residential
- Existing Signalized Intersection

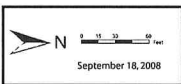


Figure 4.15



# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

## SUSQUEHANNA AREA ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

(the intersection of Old York Road and Susquehanna Road)

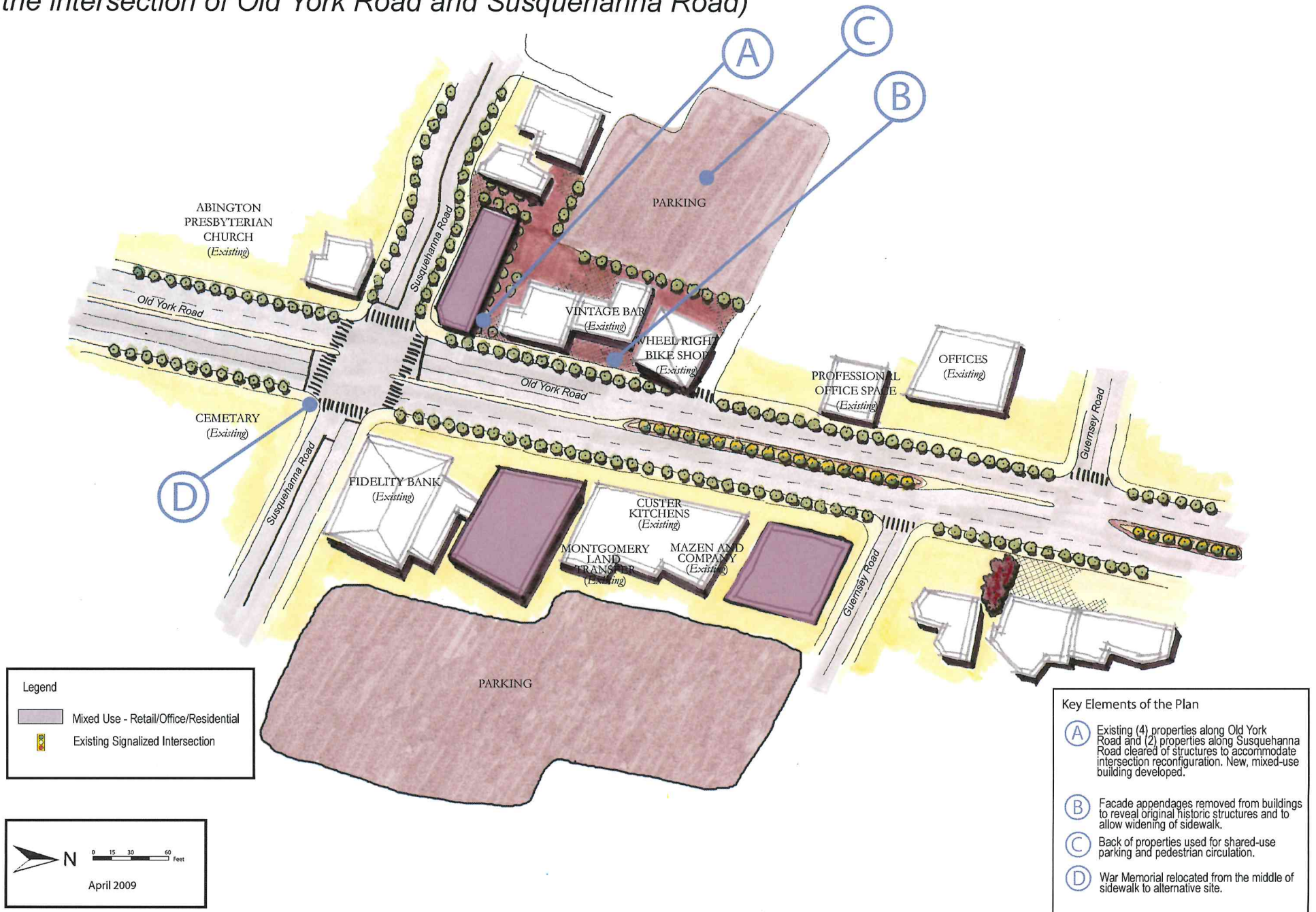


Figure 4.16



the number of through and turning lanes is proposed to remain as they are today, but lane widths will be adjusted (see the corridor-wide recommendations section of this chapter) so that the existing sixty-foot curb-to-curb width of Old York Road will become fifty-eight feet, including a 3-foot pedestrian refuge median.

The remaining two feet of former cartway width, the existing sidewalk width, and the additional space garnered from removing the additions to building facades, allow for a new ten-foot sidewalk on either side of Old York Road. The sidewalk should be lined with street trees spaced thirty feet on center planted within steel tree grates. Ten-foot-wide crosswalks, contrasting color and texture unit pavers, are also proposed for this intersection.

Abington Township should seek opportunities to relocate the existing War Memorial associated with the cemetery on the southeast corner of the intersection. In a five-foot-wide sidewalk area, the corner presently has a 2½ x 3½-foot War Memorial, a utility pole, a traffic signal pole, and a pedestrian light pole. These obstacles make it difficult for pedestrians to pass one another and impossible for someone with a wheelchair or stroller to pass without going into the street.

This priority area has the potential to attract shoppers who can walk, not drive, to the location. Particular sensitivity should be demonstrated to provide ADA compliance with respect to sidewalks, crosswalks, and building entrances for the neighboring seniors at Sunrise Assisted Living who may patronize shops in this priority area.

## TRAFFIC

Traffic improvements proposed for the Susquehanna Road area are focused on the realignment of Susquehanna Road. Currently, the intersection of Old York Road and Susquehanna Road operates with concurrent phasing on the side street even though the

intersection is slightly skewed. The intersection is aligned so that the through movements can not proceed straight through the intersection. Due to the close proximity of buildings adjacent to the travel lanes, vehicle speeds and sight distances are impaired and there is a narrow sidewalk that does not meet current ADA standards. The level-of-service (LOS) at this intersection is a “D” in the PM peak hour according to the “Draft Route 611 & Route 263 Corridor Study” produced by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC). At a LOS “D”, the influence of congestion, oftentimes in the form of longer delays, becomes more noticeable. This intersection also has experienced a high crash rate, with a total of 70 crashes from 2003 to 2005.

Once the intersection has been realigned, the safety and efficiency of the intersection is expected to improve. Vehicles traveling on the side street will no longer have to slow down to transverse the intersection, so the side street will require less green time. Less green time required for the side street will allow more green time on the Old York Road approach thus resulting in greater throughput on both the side street and Old York Road approaches. In addition, safety will be enhanced with improved sight distances and a straight travel path. Pedestrian facilities will also be improved at the intersection through the addition of wider sidewalks and providing a grassy separation from the adjacent street traffic.

## LAND USE

Recommendations for the Susquehanna priority area are focused on making the setting for vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle mobility safer and more supportive of businesses in the area. The mix of retail, office, and residential uses are proposed to be “infilled” with similar uses. A new building is proposed to be erected on the northwest corner of the intersection where the anticipated roadway reconfiguration will result in the demolition of some existing buildings.



With the addition of retail uses, seniors may be expected to walk to the area from the Sunrise Assisted Living, students may walk from school to the area or through the area to get to the YMCA, and patrons of the Abington Township Building and Abington Free Library may add stops at the Susquehanna area to their trips. Abington Township should keep this clientele in mind when planning streetscape projects or for new uses within the Susquehanna area to ensure that pedestrian mobility is possible for physically-challenged people and that uses would be attractive to seniors and/or students. Possible new uses may include cafes, restaurants, gift shops, hobby shops, and after-school or adult education facilities.

In order to promote connectivity between adjacent land uses, the rear of properties on the northwest and northeast corners of the intersection are proposed to be combined to form parking areas. Such parking areas would make it easy for motorists to locate parking and make it more likely that shoppers will be able to park once and walk to multiple destinations. Pedestrian passageways and common open plaza space should be defined with unit pavers, landscaping, pedestrian-scaled light fixtures, and wayfinding elements.

The development program, broken down by major land use categories for the Susquehanna priority area, includes the following new floor area totals:

- Retail  
7,800 sf
- Office  
15,500 sf
- Residential  
19 units

## SUSTAINABILITY

The ability to adapt the Susquehanna priority area to meet the contemporary demands of a community destination is rooted in using existing

infrastructure and building stock to accommodate a mixed-use, walkable center. Rather than widespread demolition, the program for the Susquehanna priority area seeks to build upon and improve the existing assets that this area possesses.

Streetscape, plaza and parking surface materials should include BMPs to capture and treat stormwater.

## PHASING

Improvements to public rights-of-way and changes to properties in order to construct the improvements make up the first phase of three phases of the implementation of the Susquehanna priority area's recommendations. (Figures 4.17 – 4.19). The first phase would include the reconfiguration of the Susquehanna Road and Old York Road intersection (including the use of portions of properties on the northwest corner of the intersection), and the removal of the front appendages of three buildings on the west side of Old York Road. A new mixed-use building would be constructed at the northwest corner of the intersection, following the intersection reconfiguration, that could accommodate existing businesses at this corner as well as new ones. Additionally, the first phase would include the installation of streetscape elements and an improved pedestrian crossing at the intersection as well as the planting of street trees within the verge and median areas of Old York Road. Phase 2 would include the "infill" of new mixed-use buildings on vacant and/or underutilized properties northwest of the intersection and the conversion of the rear of the properties on the west side of Old York Road into a joint, shared-use parking lot. Phase 3 would include the "infill" of new mixed-use buildings on the northeast side of the intersection. Separate parking lots for businesses on the east side of Old York Road should be converted to one, shared-use parking lot.

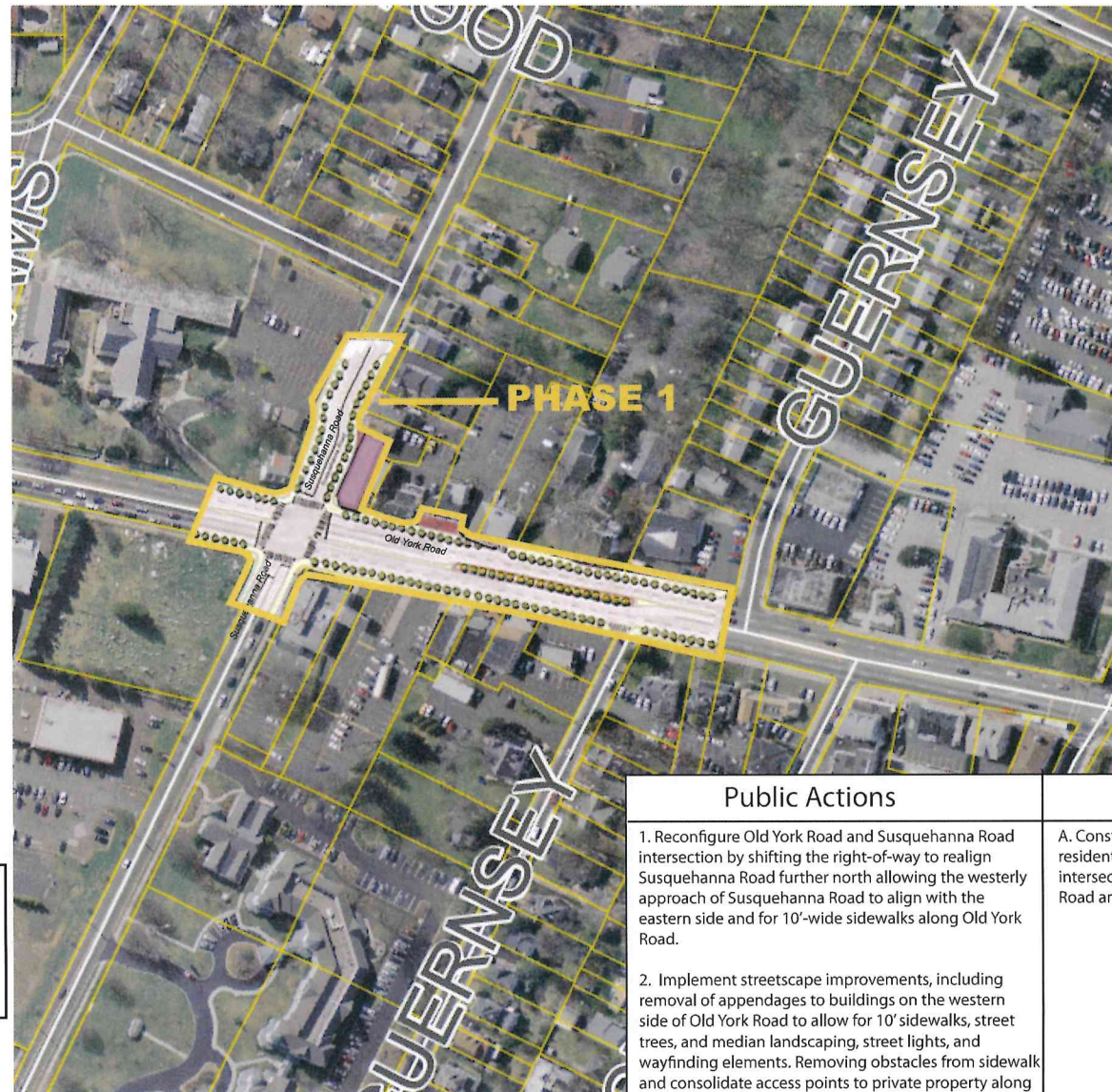


# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

## SUSQUEHANNA AREA PHASING

## PHASE 1

(the intersection of Old York Road and Susquehanna Road)



Public Actions	Private Actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reconfigure Old York Road and Susquehanna Road intersection by shifting the right-of-way to realign Susquehanna Road further north allowing the westerly approach of Susquehanna Road to align with the eastern side and for 10'-wide sidewalks along Old York Road.</li> <li>2. Implement streetscape improvements, including removal of appendages to buildings on the western side of Old York Road to allow for 10' sidewalks, street trees, and median landscaping, street lights, and wayfinding elements. Removing obstacles from sidewalk and consolidate access points to private property along Old York Road from Susquehanna Road to Guernsey Road.</li> </ol>	<p>A. Construct a new mixed-use (retail, office and residential) building on the northwestern corner of the intersection, utilizing the four parcels along Old York Road and the two parcels along Susquehanna Road.</p>

Figure 4.17

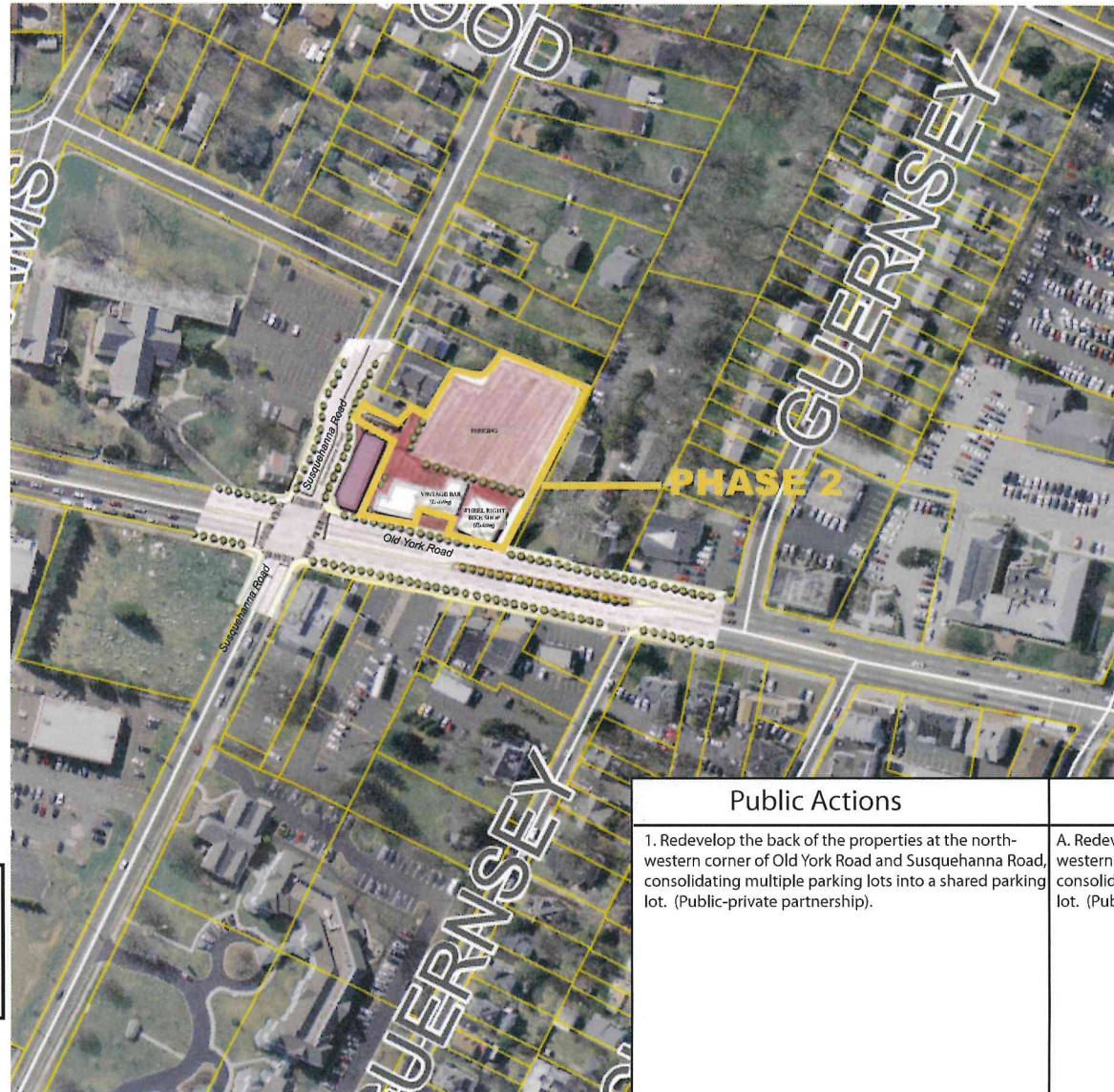


# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

## SUSQUEHANNA AREA PHASING

## PHASE 2

(the intersection of Old York Road and Susquehanna Road)



Public Actions	Private Actions
<p>1. Redevelop the back of the properties at the north-western corner of Old York Road and Susquehanna Road, consolidating multiple parking lots into a shared parking lot. (Public-private partnership).</p>	<p>A. Redevelop the back of the properties at the north-western corner of Old York Road and Susquehanna Road, consolidating multiple parking lots into a shared parking lot. (Public-private partnership).</p>

Legend

- Mixed Use - Retail/Office/Residential
- Existing Signalized Intersection



 N  
 0 35 70 140 Feet  
 April 2009

Figure 4.18



# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

## SUSQUEHANNA AREA PHASING

## PHASE 3

(the intersection of Old York Road and Susquehanna Road)



Legend

- Mixed Use - Retail/Office/Residential
- Existing Signalized Intersection

N

0 35 70 140 Feet

April 2009

Figure 4.19



---

## LONDON CENTER

### INTENT

The area along Old York Road between Brentwood Road and Edge Hill Road offers the opportunity to intensify and diversify land uses in an existing shopping destination so that it can better serve the Abington Township community. Currently, the Abington Towne Center, the Abington Shopping Center, and locally-owned businesses such as the Abington Pharmacy and the Kitchen Bar attract a considerable number of shoppers to the area. The availability of vacant and underutilized properties, the generous amount of surface parking, and the size of parcels in this portion of Old York Road offer the possibility of infilling this area with additional uses to make it a sustainable, walkable destination for shopping, eating, entertainment, recreating, working, and living (Figure 4.20).

The area currently has a supermarket, Target, and pharmacy. Expanding on these shopping goods and intensifying the uses so that multiple destinations can be reached without requiring additional vehicle trips would benefit local residents and maximize the use of this area. Additional eating and drinking establishments would increase the level of convenience of shopping here, and afford more opportunities for Abington Township residents to dine locally.

Plans for the London Center priority area also include the addition of new residential uses. Abington Township's population increasingly includes empty nesters, Penn State Abington students, and young professionals. Longtime residents, in particular, who want to stay in Abington Township, are frequently looking for alternatives to a large, older, single family house. This population is seeking apartments and condo-style living that is convenient to shopping and eating and drinking destinations. By including these residential uses in the London Center, the priority area will meet a market demand for residential uses, and create a mixed-

use, walkable destination in what is today a single-use, automobile-oriented shopping center.



### CIRCULATION

Critical to making the London Center a walkable destination is creating a network of streets that accommodate a mix of modes and afford multiple routing options on and east of Old York Road. To do this, a new street network is proposed to be overlaid on the existing shopping center sites (Figure 4.21). This new street network will form three-to-four-hundred-foot blocks – a distance comfortable to pedestrians in a walkable, Main Street-like setting. The network takes advantage of the existing traffic signals, egress points, and circulation routes associated with the existing shopping centers to locate proposed roads.

The London Center street system is similar to that of a traditional Main Street. Proposed streets have one through travel lane in each direction, on-street parking on both sides of the street, and fifteen-foot-wide sidewalks that include five feet of verge area for street trees, parking meters, and street furniture, and ten feet clear for pedestrians. The verge area should include techniques and plantings to capture and treat stormwater. Streetscape and parking lot paving should include the use of permeable



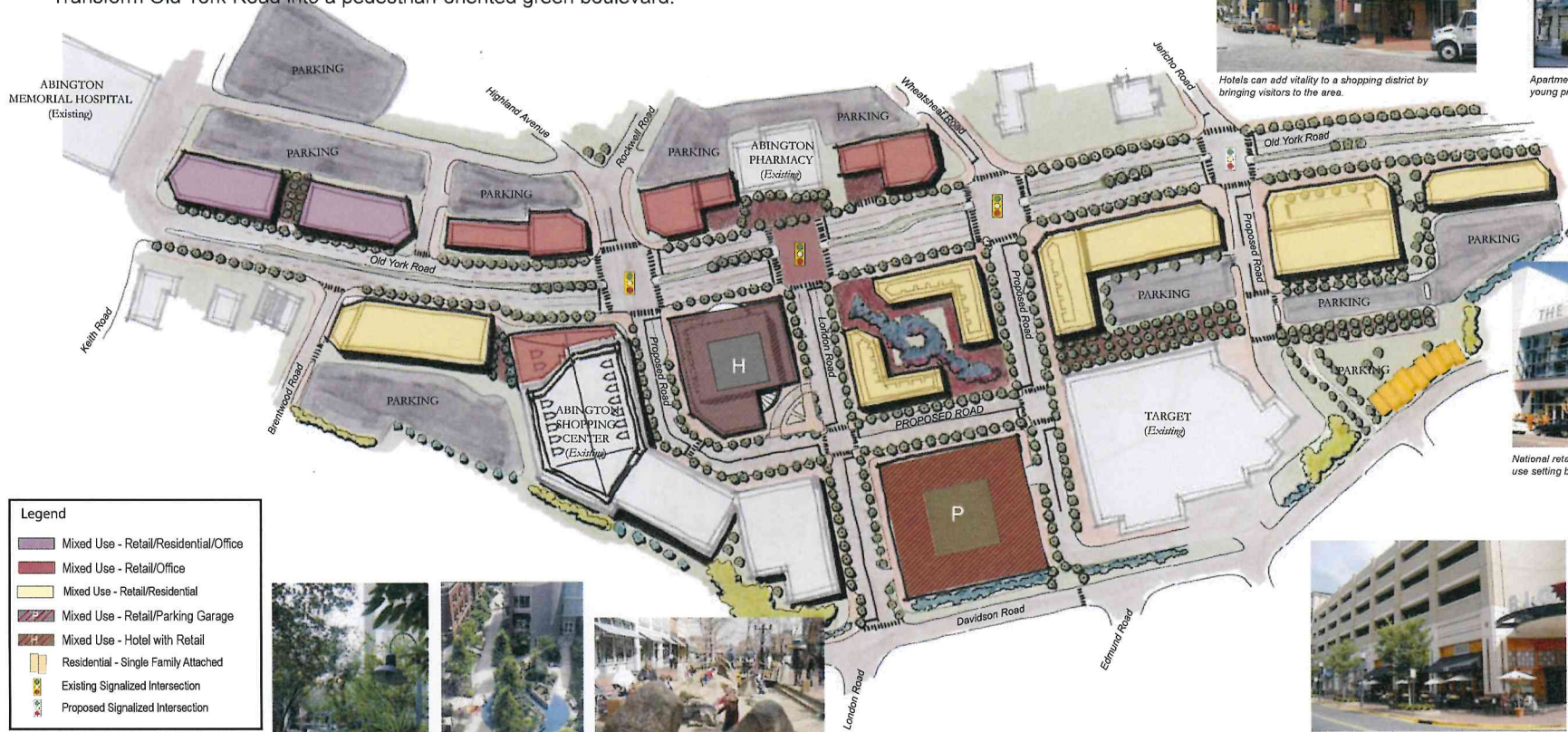
# LONDON CENTER AREA VISIONING

(near the intersection of Old York Road and London Road)

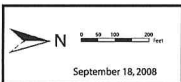
## Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

### Key Aspects:

- Complement and build upon the existing, community-oriented retail with new mixed-use infill.
- Create a walkable destination for shopping, eating, entertainment, recreating, working and living.
- Offer overnight accommodations for visitors at a hotel situated along Old York Road.
- Incorporate condo/apartment units above first floor retail, in multi-storied buildings.
- Include shared, structured parking that supports concentrated development and promotes walkability.
- Transform Old York Road into a pedestrian-oriented green boulevard.



Legend	
	Mixed Use - Retail/Residential/Office
	Mixed Use - Retail/Office
	Mixed Use - Retail/Residential
	Mixed Use - Retail/Parking Garage
	Mixed Use - Hotel with Retail
	Residential - Single Family Attached
	Existing Signalized Intersection
	Proposed Signalized Intersection



Pathways between buildings or through parking areas offer opportunities for landscaping, outdoor seating, fountains, children's play areas, and staging community events.



Hotels can add vitality to a shopping district by bringing visitors to the area.



Apartments and condo units provide dwellings for young professionals and "empty nesters".



National retailers can adapt to a more walkable, mixed use setting building format.



Shared, structured parking can add to the street life and aesthetic of a shopping district.



Compact, mixed use development promotes parking once and then walking to multiple destinations.

Figure 4.20



# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

## LONDON CENTER ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

(near the intersection of Old York Road and London Road)

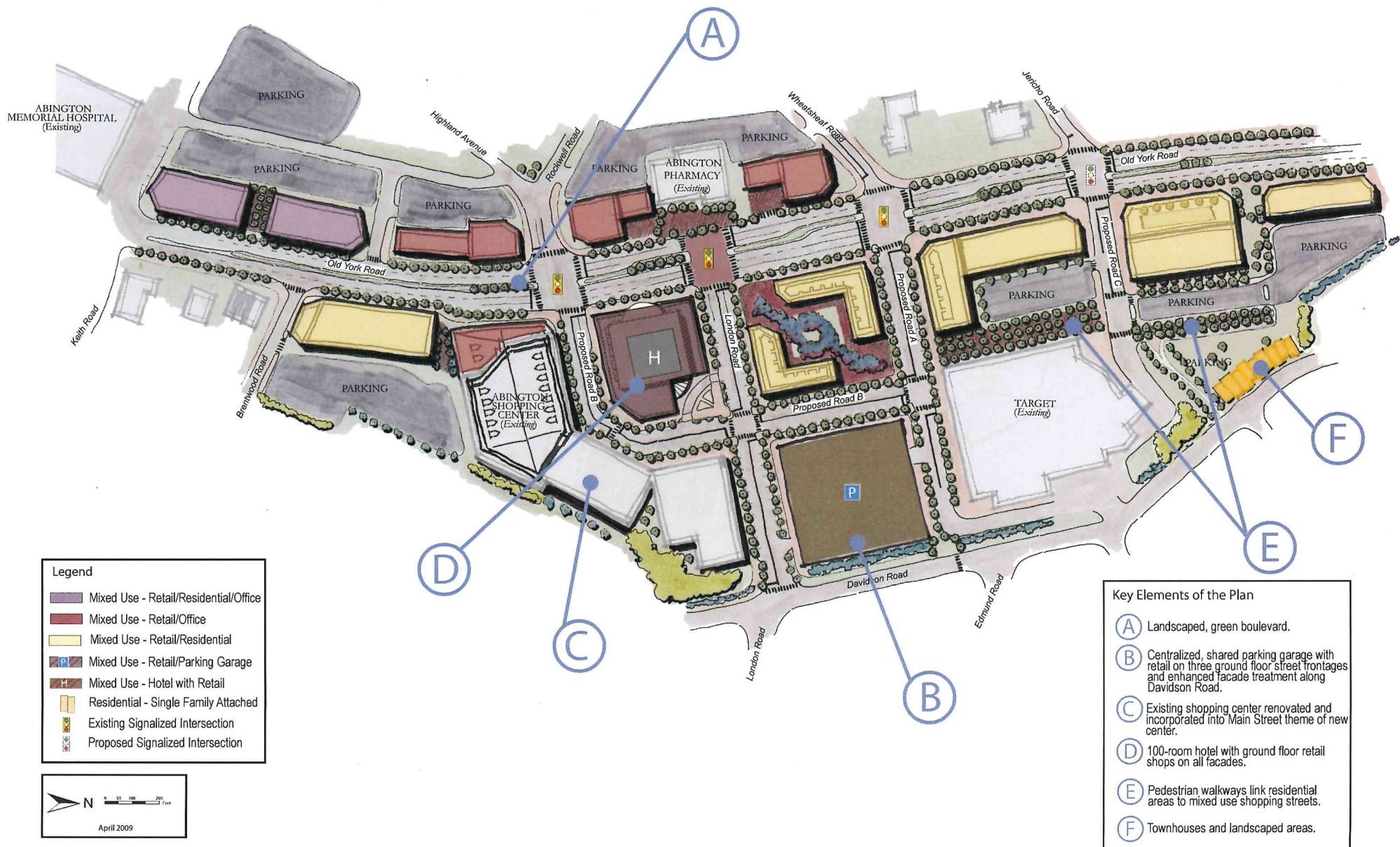


Figure 4.21



pavers to capture and treat stormwater as well. Crosswalks are proposed to be provided at intersections and at selected mid-block locations and are defined with sidewalk bump outs and contrasting color and textured unit pavers set in the road. The existing shopping center buildings and new infill buildings are located up to the sidewalk edge.

A number of pedestrian passageways are to provide direct access to and through the site. Pathways would link the residential neighborhoods adjacent to this area to London Center. Walkways would provide direct access from parking lots located behind buildings to building entrances located along the street edge and pedestrian passages within the priority area would also provide convenient alternatives to walking along Old York Road. Walkways should include landscaping to reduce the heat island effect, capture stormwater, and enhance visual character.

## TRAFFIC

Three signalized intersections exist in the vicinity of the intersection of Jericho Road and Old York Road. The addition of a fourth signal to this coordinated system is proposed at the intersection of Jericho Road and Old York Road. The installation of this signal will require PennDOT concurrence. If approved, operation of this signal would need to be coordinated with the other signals along Old York Road.

## LAND USE

Proposed land uses for the London Center priority area generally include intensifying existing uses and incorporating them into mixed-use structures as well as the addition of residential uses. New mixed-use, multi-story buildings are proposed on the blocks between Brentwood Road and Edge Hill Road and along Old York Road east to Davidson Road. Mixed-

use structures would contain retail shops on the ground floor with retail, office, or residences above. Access to these buildings would occur from the street facade. A number of retail and residential buildings are situated along Old York Road, just outside of the heart of the London Center, at the intersection of London Road and the new proposed road.

Several buildings are proposed to remain in their present form, including the Target and Giant stores and the Abington Shopping Center strip. Keeping the existing buildings provides a baseline of retail activity in the London Center as development occurs. As the intensity increases, these buildings may be replaced, or expanded to accommodate more uses. Ancillary buildings that do little to contribute to the street frontage or architectural character are recommended to be replaced.

At London Road, between the proposed road and Davidson Road, a new parking structure is proposed. The centralized, shared parking facility provides spaces for retail patrons, employees, clients, and residents. The ground floor should be occupied with retail and/or small office space. The Davidson Road side of the building should be treated architecturally so as to minimize any negative visual impacts on the existing residential community to the east. Architectural treatments may include stepping back the building façade for floors higher than two stories, providing a planted or “living” wall along the façade, and/or incorporating enhanced architectural materials and detailing.

The London Center priority area is recommended to include a hotel. The market analysis confirmed an immediate market for a one hundred-room hotel. The London Center’s location provides easy access to the Pennsylvania Turnpike, is centrally located within Abington Township, and is in close proximity to institutions that may draw hotel guests such as Abington Memorial Hospital and the Penn State Abington campus. A hotel should be located near the hub of the London Center at London



Road and the proposed north-south road. The building siting and ground floor uses should contribute to the street level activity of the priority area by meeting the street, incorporating uses that will draw clients and customers who are not staying at the hotel, and/or providing outdoor seating for cafes or restaurants.

A number of townhouses and planting areas are located along Davidson Road to help provide an appropriate transition from the Center to the existing residential neighborhood to the east.

The development program, broken down by major land use categories for the London Center priority area, includes the following new floor area totals:

■ Retail 128,000 sf	■ Office 44,000 sf
■ Residential 230 units	■ Hotel 100 rooms

## SUSTAINABILITY

The London Center priority area is inherently sustainable by virtue of its compact, neighborhood center design. Existing buildings are retained so as to minimize waste. “Infill” properties increase land use intensities on existing underutilized impervious surfaces. An increased intensity and variety of land uses and the addition of a walkable street network increase the likelihood that patrons of the area will park once and walk to multiple destinations rather than making several vehicular trips to each destination, thereby reducing carbon emissions.

The creation of a new street network provides opportunities to incorporate innovative stormwater management techniques as an integral part of the construction. The street network should include street trees spaced thirty feet on center to provide shade. Street trees and living walls can reduce the heat island effect. Rain gardens and other water infiltration techniques can help to reduce and filter stormwater before it permeates the water table.

## PHASING

The first phase of the four-phase implementation process for the London Center priority area recommendations is focused on generating new uses on the large area of surface parking in front of the Abington Towne Plaza and the Abington Shopping Center (Figures 4.22 – 4.25). Included is a structured parking facility with retail use on the ground floor, an approximately 100-room hotel, and mixed-use buildings along Old York Road. Installation of a new circulation system of streets through the site and accompanying streetscape improvements along Old York Road complete Phase One. Phase 2 consists of redeveloping the parcels along Old York Road between Keith Road and Highland Avenue to maximize their use and the improvement of the pedestrian environment along Old York Road, with buildings located up to the street edge, parking in the rear, a new streetscape, and additional landscaping. Phase 3 includes the addition of new mixed-use, largely residential, buildings between Wheatsheaf Road and Edgehill Road, with a vehicular and pedestrian circulation system that integrates the newest development zone with the Old York Road environment, the new mixed-use activities along London Road, and the existing neighborhood to the east. The fourth and final phase includes renovation and/or expansion of existing viable businesses in the area, including Giant, to complement the intensity and character of the new London Center area.

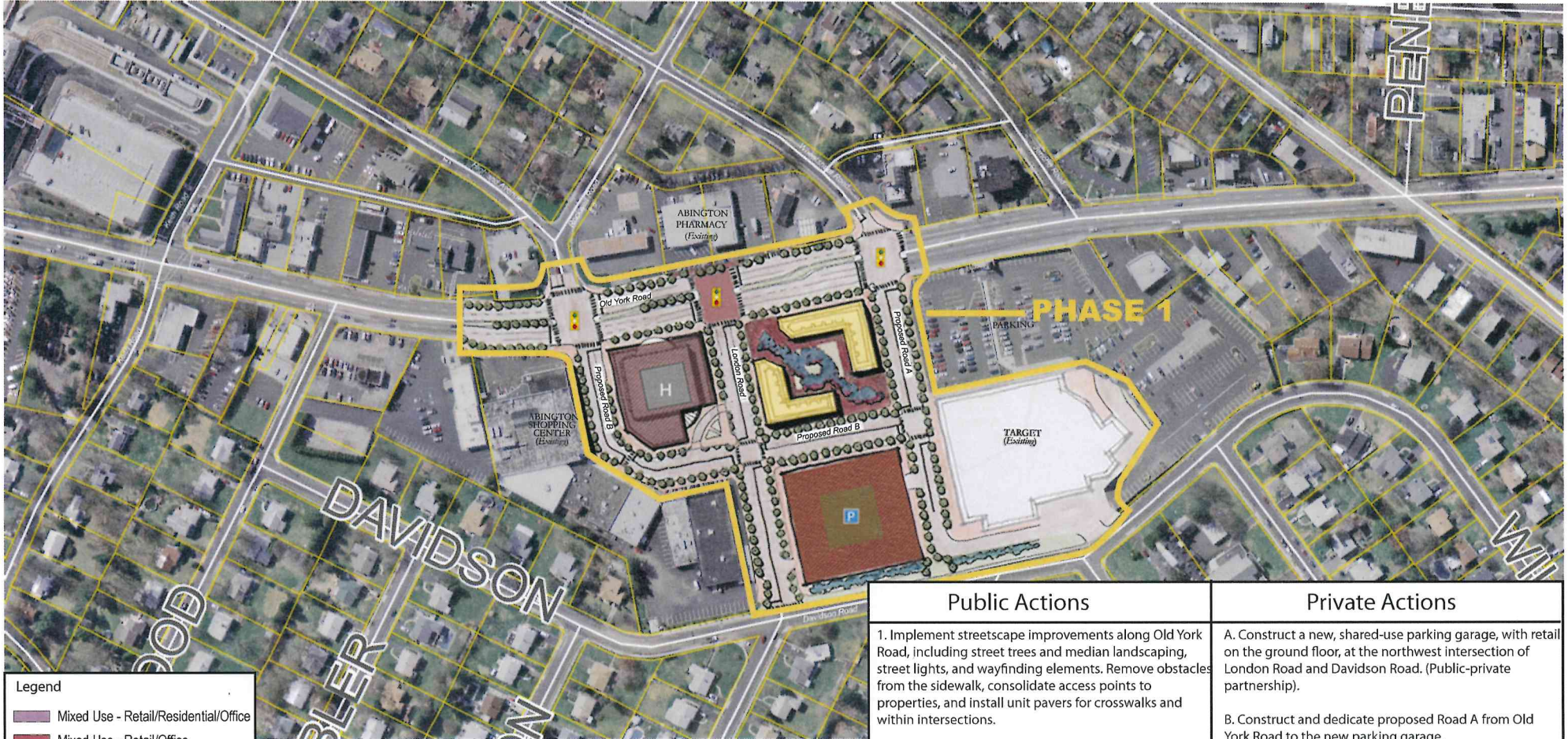


# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

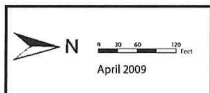
## LONDON CENTER PHASING

## PHASE 1

(near the intersection of Old York Road and London Road)



Legend	
	Mixed Use - Retail/Residential/Office
	Mixed Use - Retail/Office
	Mixed Use - Retail/Residential
	Mixed Use - Retail/Parking Garage
	Mixed Use - Hotel with Retail
	Residential - Single Family Attached
	Existing Signalized Intersection
	Proposed Signalized Intersection



Public Actions	Private Actions
<p>1. Implement streetscape improvements along Old York Road, including street trees and median landscaping, street lights, and wayfinding elements. Remove obstacles from the sidewalk, consolidate access points to properties, and install unit pavers for crosswalks and within intersections.</p> <p>2. Construct a new, shared-use parking garage, with retail on the ground floor, at the northwest intersection of London Road and Davidson Road. (Public-private partnership).</p>	<p>A. Construct a new, shared-use parking garage, with retail on the ground floor, at the northwest intersection of London Road and Davidson Road. (Public-private partnership).</p> <p>B. Construct and dedicate proposed Road A from Old York Road to the new parking garage.</p> <p>C. Configure London Road to accommodate on-street parking and sidewalks and implement streetscape improvements along London Road between Old York Road and Davidson Road.</p> <p>D. Construct new mixed-use (retail and residential) buildings on the east side of Old York Road between London Road and Proposed Road A.</p> <p>E. Construct a new 100-room hotel, with retail uses on the ground floor on the east side of Old York Road, south of London Road.</p> <p>F. Configure and dedicate Proposed Road B from Old York Road to Proposed Road A to accommodate on-street parking and sidewalks and implement streetscape improvements.</p>

Figure 4.22

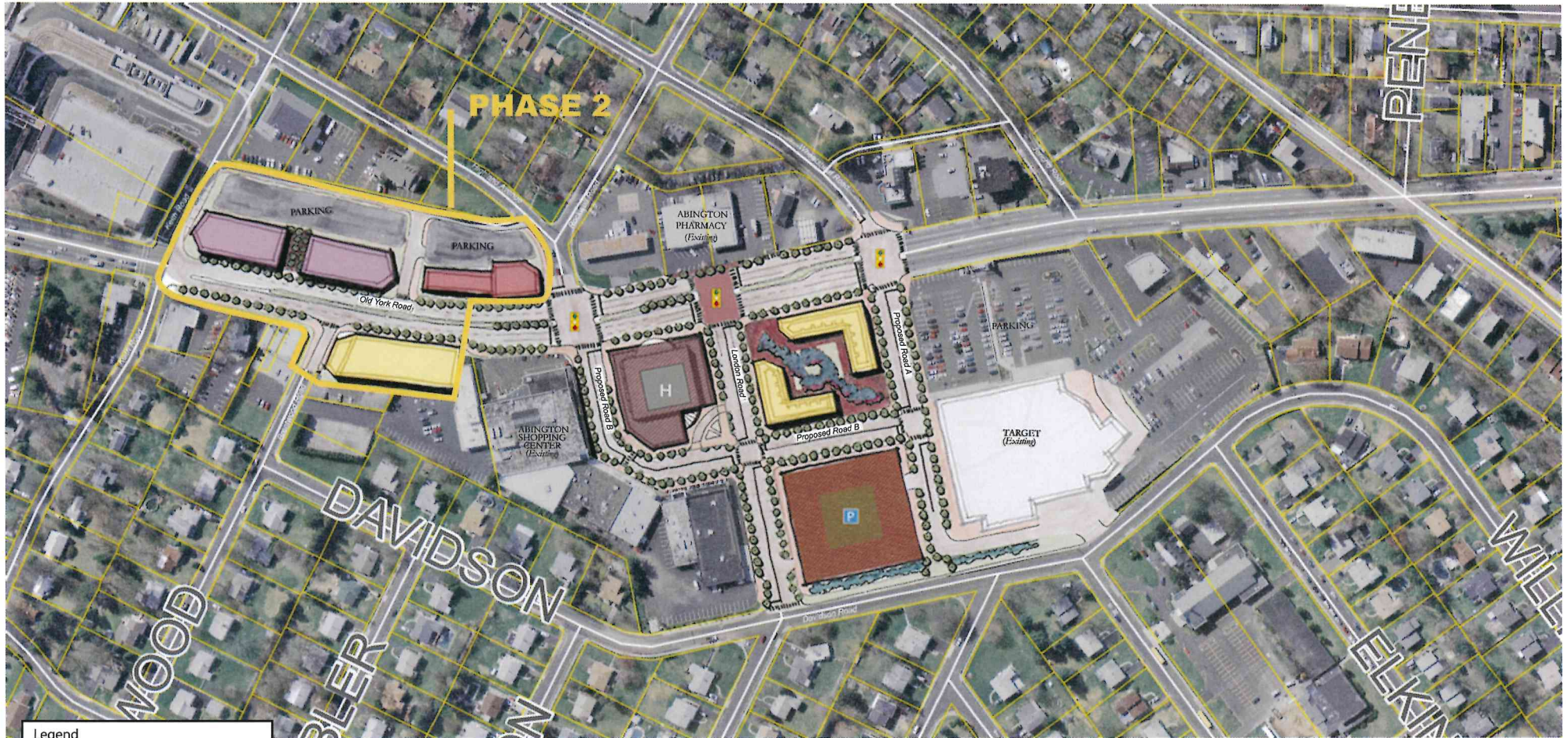


# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

## LONDON CENTER PHASING

## PHASE 2

(near the intersection of Old York Road and London Road)



Legend	
	Mixed Use - Retail/Residential/Office
	Mixed Use - Retail/Office
	Mixed Use - Retail/Residential
	Mixed Use - Retail/Parking Garage
	Mixed Use - Hotel with Retail
	Residential - Single Family Attached
	Existing Signalized Intersection
	Proposed Signalized Intersection

Public Actions	Private Actions
1. Continue to implement streetscape improvements along Old York Road, in this phase adding them between Keith Road and Highland Avenue.	A. Construct new mixed-use (retail, office and residential) buildings on both sides of Old York Road between Keith Road and Highland Avenue.

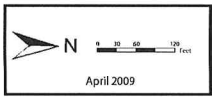


Figure 4.23

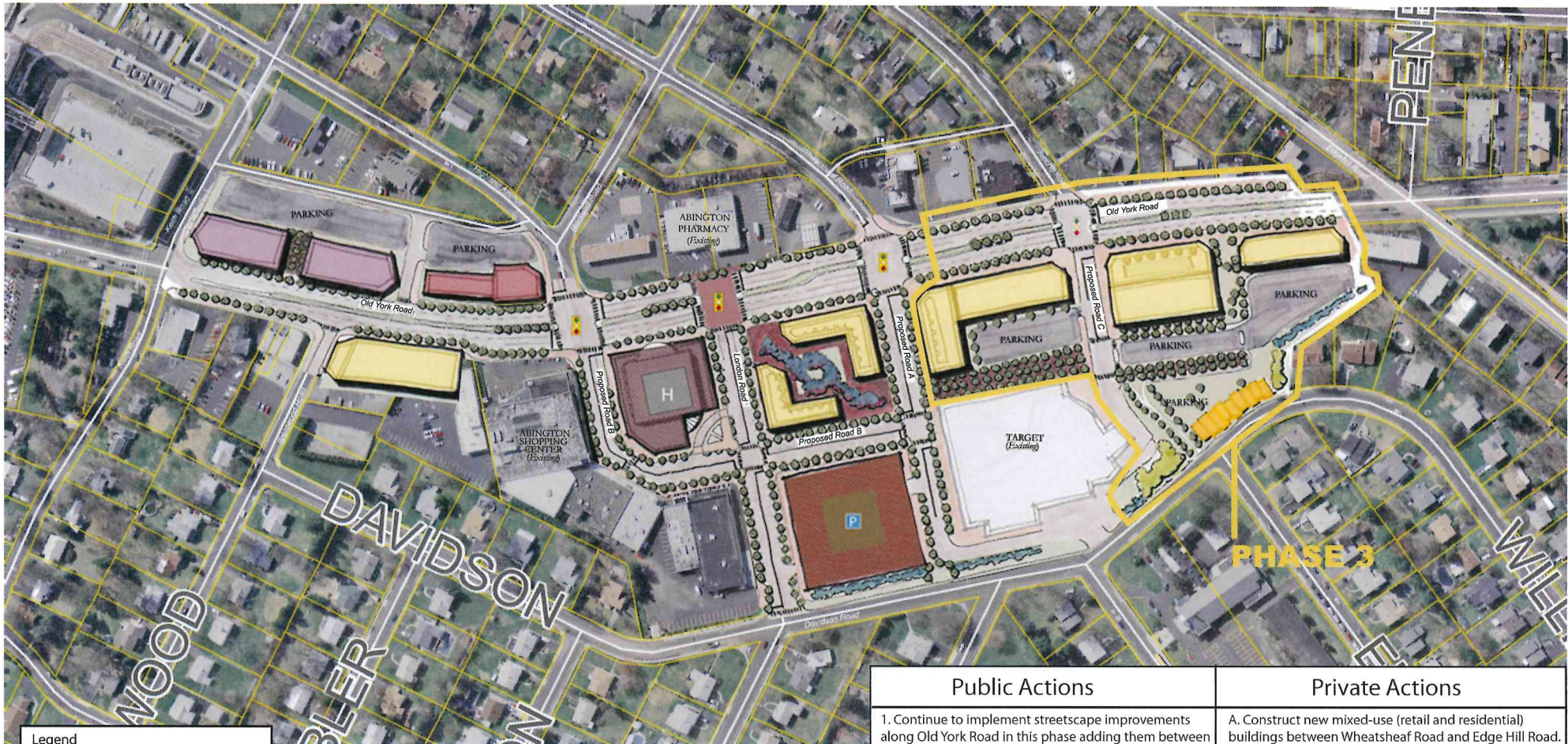


# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

## LONDON CENTER PHASING

## PHASE 3

(near the intersection of Old York Road and London Road)



Legend	
	Mixed Use - Retail/Residential/Office
	Mixed Use - Retail/Office
	Mixed Use - Retail/Residential
	Mixed Use - Retail/Parking Garage
	Mixed Use - Hotel with Retail
	Residential - Single Family Attached
	Existing Signalized Intersection
	Proposed Signalized Intersection

Public Actions	Private Actions
<p>1. Continue to implement streetscape improvements along Old York Road in this phase adding them between Wheatsheaf Road and Edge Hill Road.</p>	<p>A. Construct new mixed-use (retail and residential) buildings between Wheatsheaf Road and Edge Hill Road.</p> <p>B. Construct Proposed Road C from Old York Road to the service and loading area behind Target.</p> <p>C. Construct landscaped area and pedestrian paths linking the northeast portion of the area to its center.</p> <p>D. Construct single family attached (townhouse) residential units along Davidson Road.</p>



Figure 4.24

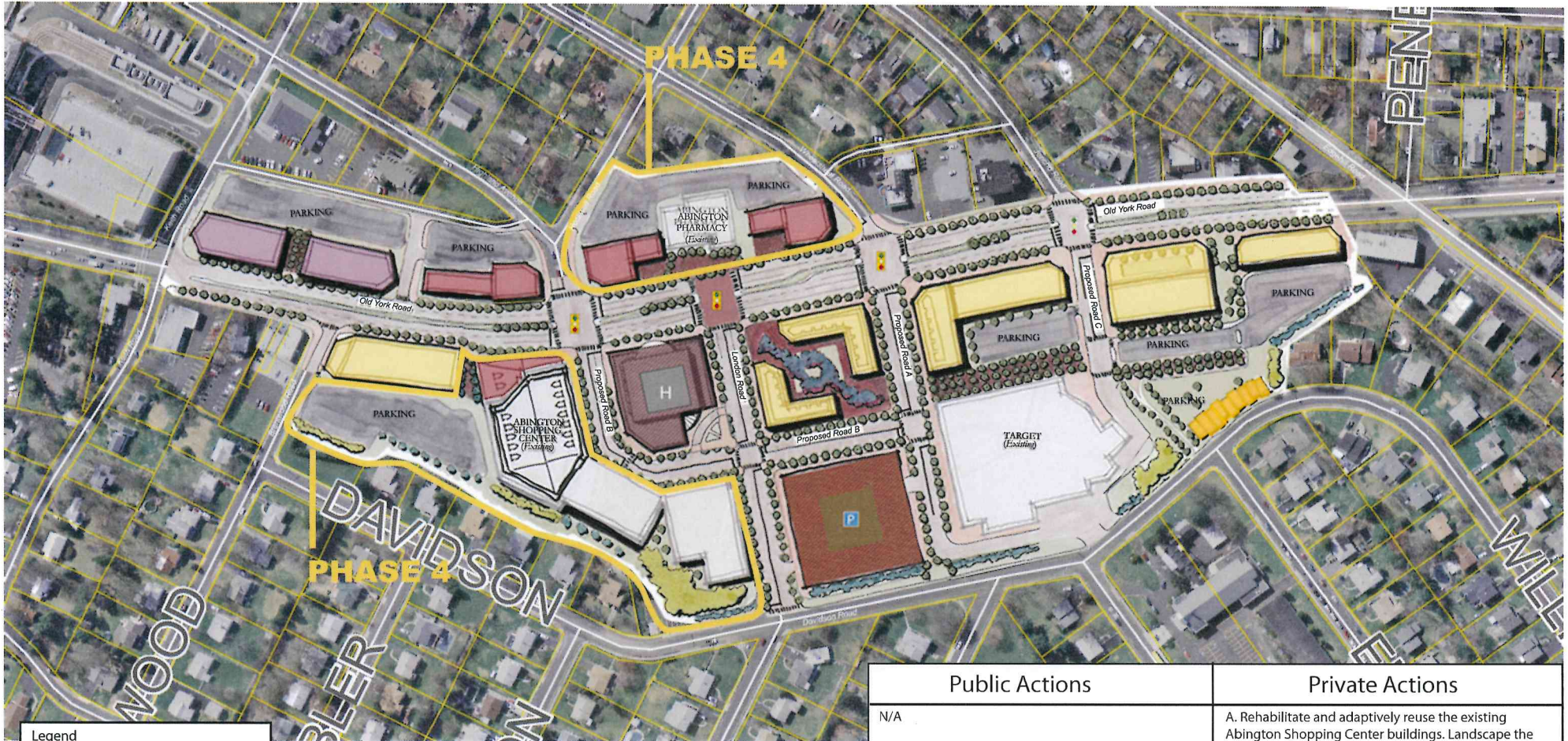


# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

## LONDON CENTER PHASING

## PHASE 4

(near the intersection of Old York Road and London Road)



Legend	
	Mixed Use - Retail/Residential/Office
	Mixed Use - Retail/Office
	Mixed Use - Retail/Residential
	Mixed Use - Retail/Parking Garage
	Mixed Use - Hotel with Retail
	Residential - Single Family Attached
	Existing Signalized Intersection
	Proposed Signalized Intersection

Public Actions	Private Actions
N/A	<p>A. Rehabilitate and adaptively reuse the existing Abington Shopping Center buildings. Landscape the area in back of the buildings and reorganize rear parking areas into centralized, shared-use parking.</p> <p>B. Infill mixed use (retail, office and residential) buildings between Highland Avenue and Wheatshaeaf Road on the west side of Old York Road.</p>

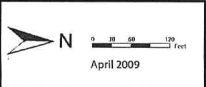


Figure 4.25



## ROY RUBICAM

### INTENT

The goal for the area along Old York Road between Chester Avenue and Welsh Road is to put in place principles of place-making so that the area fully realizes its economic and livability potential. The area has existing challenges that will need to be overcome, including speeding vehicles, land uses that are disaggregated, businesses that provide few services to adjacent residents, and a streetscape that does not support pedestrian activity. Recommendations involve a better mix of land uses, pedestrian mobility, safety, open space, and acknowledging the proximity of the Regional Rail station. (Figure 4.26).

Roy Rubicam's position near a rail station and adjacent to a residential neighborhood makes the area an appropriate setting in which to create a mixed-use, walkable, convenient center and one accessible by rail, bus, auto, bike, and walking. The area has the unique condition of being within an eighth of a mile from SEPTA's R-3 Regional Rail line and its Crestmont train station. Recommendations include converting

Rubicam Avenue into a bike and pedestrian path to provide access to the Crestmont station, while allowing for vehicular access for the residences along Rubicam Avenue.

Recommendations for this area also include installing a traffic signal at the Roy Avenue intersection with Old York Road so that pedestrians have a safe opportunity to cross Old York Road. To accommodate a signal here, Roy Avenue west of Old York Road would be realigned so that both sides of the street are lined up at Old York Road.

The intensity and variety of uses are proposed to be expanded and new buildings are to be sited up to the street edge. The area is to include additional convenience retail and eating and drinking establishments, office space, medium density residential, urban agriculture, and open space uses. A small pocket park on the east side of Old York Road between Roy Avenue and Rubicam Avenue will provide some relief from the traffic along Old York Road and its high degree of impermeable surfaces.

### CIRCULATION

Changes to existing infrastructure are recommended to improve the circulation within the Roy Rubicam priority area. As mentioned above, speeding traffic and a lack of traffic signals make pedestrian crossing of Old York Road difficult. Business owners and residents have worked with Abington Township in the past to try to get a signal at Roy Avenue but have been told by PennDOT that the intersection does not warrant a signal under traditional guidelines. Abington Township and community members should continue to work with PennDOT toward installing a traffic signal at Roy Avenue whether by traditional or non-traditional warrants. A signal at Roy Avenue would allow pedestrians to safely cross Old York Road, slow automobile traffic, and help to establish a pedestrian-friendly streetscape in the Roy Rubicam area (Figure 4.27).





## ROY RUBICAM AREA VISIONING

(between Roy Avenue and Old Welsh Road on Old York Road)

### Key Aspects:

- Create a walkable, village-like environment along Old York Road, between Roy Avenue and Old Welsh Rd.
- Install a traffic light at Roy Avenue with pedestrian-activated crossings and clearly marked crosswalks.
- Provide bike and pedestrian access between Old York Road and Crestmont Station.
- "Daylight" the existing storm pipe and provide permanent open space along Old York Rd.

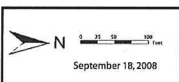


Small parcel sizes and the proximity to existing neighborhoods provide opportunities for small-scale entrepreneurial ventures and "Buy Local" shopping.

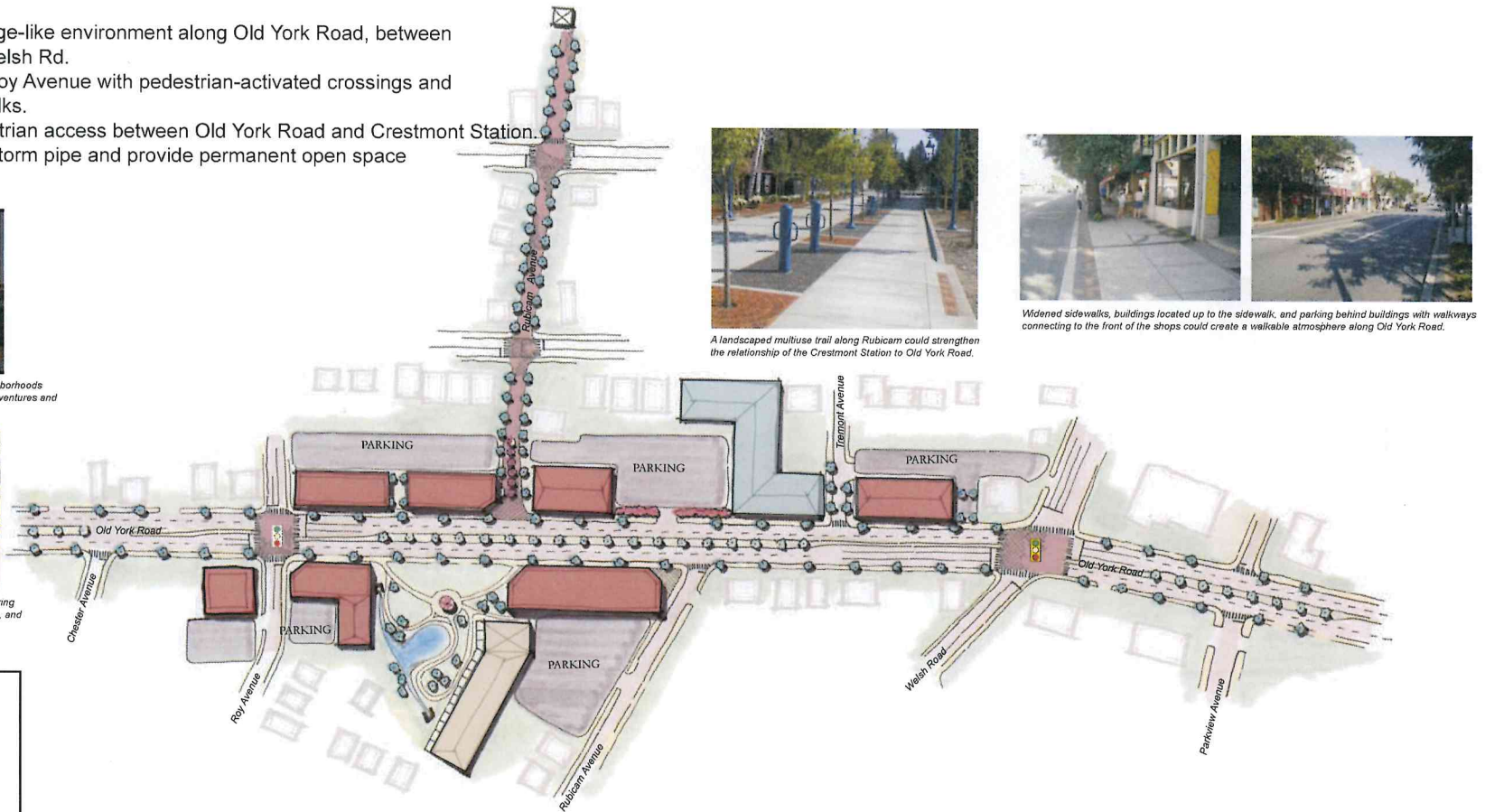


Open space in this portion of Old York Road would bring some "breathing room" in this area of smaller parcels, and provide a relief from the prevalence of paved areas.

Legend	
	Mixed Use - Retail/Office
	Work/Live
	Greenhouse
	Open Space
	Existing Signalized Intersection
	Proposed Signalized Intersection



## Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township



A landscaped multiuse trail along Rubicam could strengthen the relationship of the Crestmont Station to Old York Road.



Widened sidewalks, buildings located up to the sidewalk, and parking behind buildings with walkways connecting to the front of the shops could create a walkable atmosphere along Old York Road.

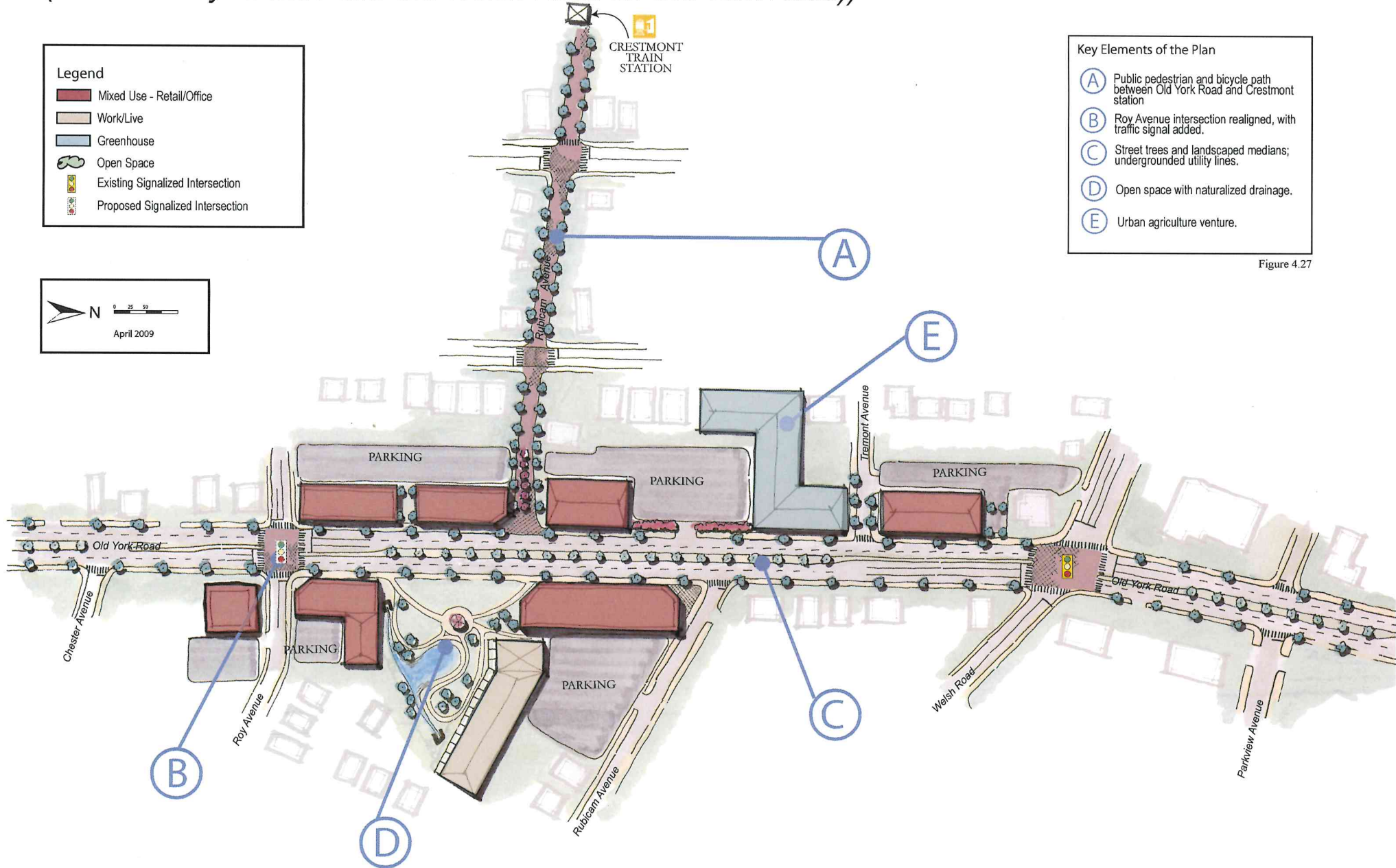
Figure 4.26



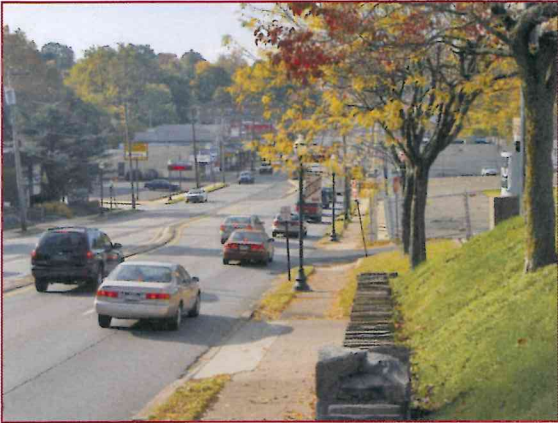
# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

## ROY RUBICAM ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

(between Roy Avenue and Old Welsh Road on Old York Road)







As part of the installation of a new traffic signal at Roy Avenue, Abington Township should work with PennDOT and property owners to allow for the alignment of both sides of Roy Avenue. Aligning this intersection would make the reconfigured parcels adjacent to the existing offset western side of Roy Avenue better shaped and more buildable.

Connectivity to the Crestmont station should be emphasized. A bicycle and pedestrian accessway is proposed along Rubicam Avenue between the new Roy Rubicam priority area and the Crestmont train station. Public use of this route should be encouraged by widening the path at entrance points, situating wayfinding information at the entrances, and using attractive, permeable paving, street furnishings, and landscaping. Wayfinding information, including train schedules, should be posted within the prime shopping area along Old York Road.

Additional landscape materials should be incorporated into the Old York Road streetscape. Street trees should be planted approximately thirty feet on center in the verge area. The existing concrete median should be converted to a landscape median with a mountable curb. Landscaping within the median may include the use of hardy, salt tolerant groundcovers, and street trees.

Streetscape work along Old York Road should include the “undergrounding” of above-ground utilities. Utility providers will often work with municipalities and developers who are excavating as part of streetscape and/or land development projects and to underground utility lines as part of such projects.

### **TRAFFIC**

Traffic improvements recommended for the Roy Rubicam area include converting Rubicam Avenue to a bike-pedestrian path, realigning the intersection of Roy Avenue, and installing a traffic signal at Roy Avenue. Realigning Roy Avenue and converting Rubicam Avenue to a bike-pedestrian path is expected to change traffic patterns in the area. An in-depth traffic analysis of this area is recommend to determine the effects of the roadway improvements to the surrounding area and specifically to determine if a signal is warranted currently or under future conditions at the intersection of Roy Avenue and Old York Road.

### **LAND USE**

Proposed land uses for the Roy Rubicam priority area generally include intensifying and varying land uses. New mixed-use, multi-story buildings are proposed on the blocks between Chester Avenue and Welsh Road. The Township should facilitate discussions among property owners and interested developers on the consolidation of properties in order to increase parcel sizes, as contemporary buildings typically require larger building footprints than may be afforded by the existing parcels. Mixed-use structures should contain retail uses on the ground floor with retail, office, or residences above. Patron access to these buildings should occur from the street side.

There are significant open space recommendations for the Roy Rubicam priority area. This portion of the Old York Road corridor



is currently very impermeable. Incorporating open space here allows penetratable area for stormwater and provides visual relief while making an open space area available for local use. The existing underground drainageway between Old York Road and Tucker Avenue, just north of Roy Avenue, should be opened up to allow for more natural drainage patterns and should be incorporated as an amenity as part of the open space.

Properties adjacent to the existing residential neighborhood to the east and fronting Old York Road represent opportunities to add residential uses to help form a more village-like setting. Residential buildings may have live/work units in which live-in residents also conduct businesses, with these units typically supporting one live-in owner/operator and perhaps one or two employees. (Live/work units may also draw periodic clientele to the space.) These units would overlook the proposed open space and provide a transition between the emerging mixed-use character of properties fronting Old York Road and the existing neighborhoods. New residential and live/work units would be within walking distance of shopping and transit.

The Roy Rubicam priority area is recommended to include small-scale, locally-sourced commercial enterprises, particularly local craftspeople and entrepreneurial efforts and services provided by Abington Township residents. Farmers' markets and community sustainable agriculture (CSA) success in the region points to urban agriculture as a potentially marketable trade in Abington Township. Consideration should be given to providing a year-round urban agricultural center for growing and selling produce.

The development program, broken down by land use for the Roy Rubicam priority area, includes the following new floor area totals:

■ Retail 38,000 sf	■ Office 97,000 sf
■ Residential 35 units	■ Urban Agriculture .53 acres

## SUSTAINABILITY

The recommendations for the Roy Rubicam area are based upon principles of Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), in which relatively intense, mixed-uses are situated in close proximity to transit stations. These principles are sustainable in that they encourage increased use of transit, bikes, and walking – alternatives to vehicular, carbon-emitting trips. Compact TOD neighborhood centers are designed to reduce emissions by reducing vehicle trips and building efficient structures.

Land uses in this priority area may be able to support activity and individuals likely to be sympathetic to the idea of “buying local.” This is a principle whereby consumers make a conscious decision to purchase from local farmers, craftspeople, service providers, and builders in an effort to reduce the costs and environmental impacts of transporting goods over long distances. By supporting local business owners and local products to locate and be sold in this area, Abington Township would support the Buy Local principle.

The addition of open space and street landscaping provides opportunities to increase stormwater permeability and mitigate the “heat island” effect of most urban type development. The Roy Rubicam priority area provides open space, street landscaping, permeable paving opportunities, and the opening of a natural drainageway to encourage natural processes.





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## PHASING

The implementation of recommendations for the Roy Rubicam area is carried out in essentially two phases (Figures 4.28 and 4.29). The first phase consists of improvements to the public realm and includes aligning the east and west sides of Roy Avenue to a new, signalized intersection with Old York Road, conversion of the Rubicam right-of-way into a bike and pedestrian path connecting Old York Road to the Crestmont train station, and new streetscape and pedestrian crossing elements as part of the Old York Road right-of-way. With this public investment in place, private sector investors would redevelop several of the vacant and/or underutilized properties along Old York Road from approximately Chester Avenue to Welsh Road (Phase 2) to form a mixed-use area, with buildings set up to the street edge and parking in the back of properties.

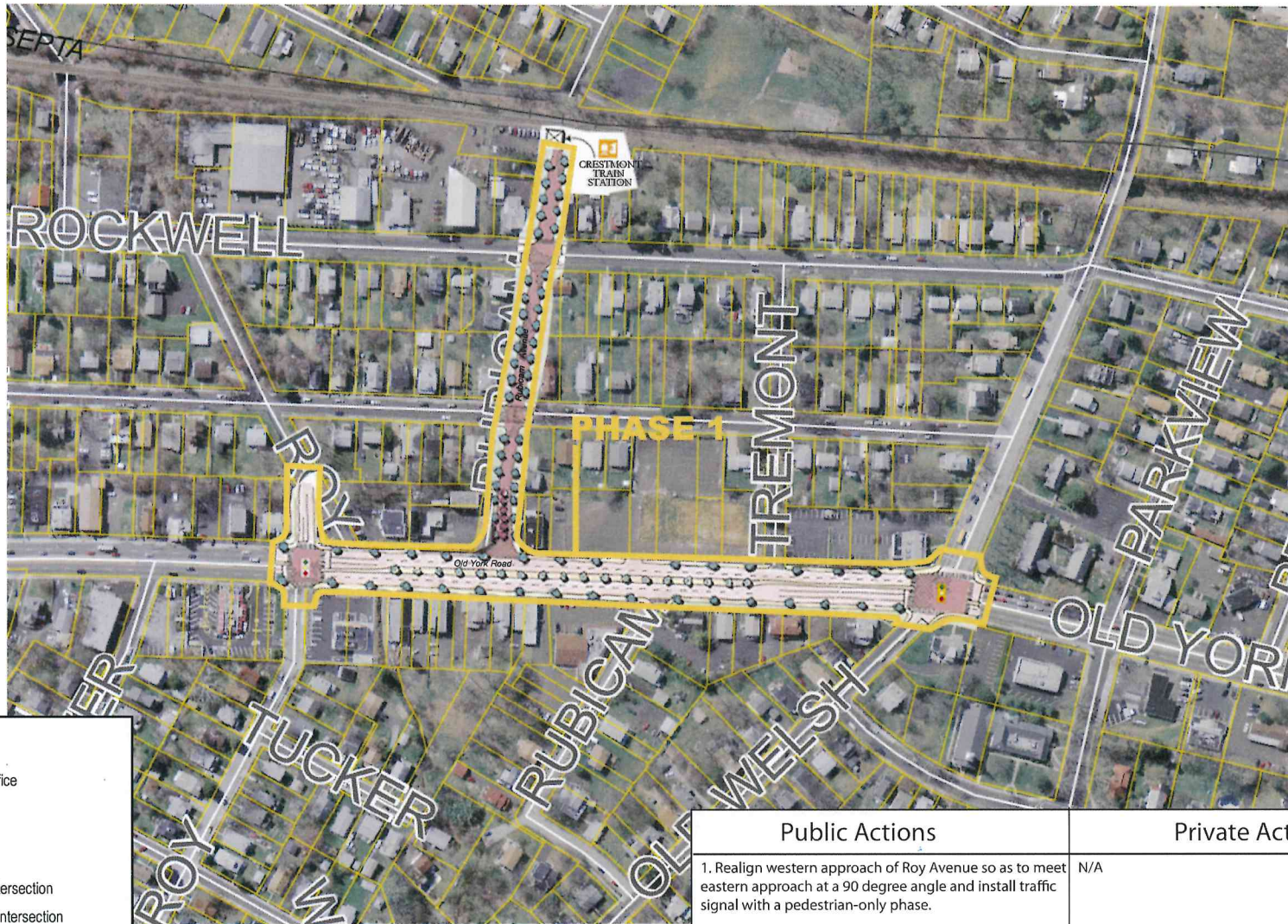


# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

## ROY RUBICAM PHASING

## PHASE 1

(between Roy Avenue and Old Welsh Road on Old York Road)



**Legend**

- Mixed Use - Retail/Office
- Work/Live
- Greenhouse
- Open Space
- Existing Signalized Intersection
- Proposed Signalized Intersection

Public Actions	Private Actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Realign western approach of Roy Avenue so as to meet eastern approach at a 90 degree angle and install traffic signal with a pedestrian-only phase.</li> <li>2. Implement streetscape improvements to Old York Road from Roy Avenue to Old Welsh Road.</li> <li>3. Convert Rubicam Avenue to a pedestrian- and bicycle-only right-of-way between Old York Road and the Crestmont Train Station.</li> </ol>	<p>N/A</p>

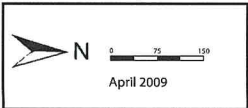


Figure 4.28

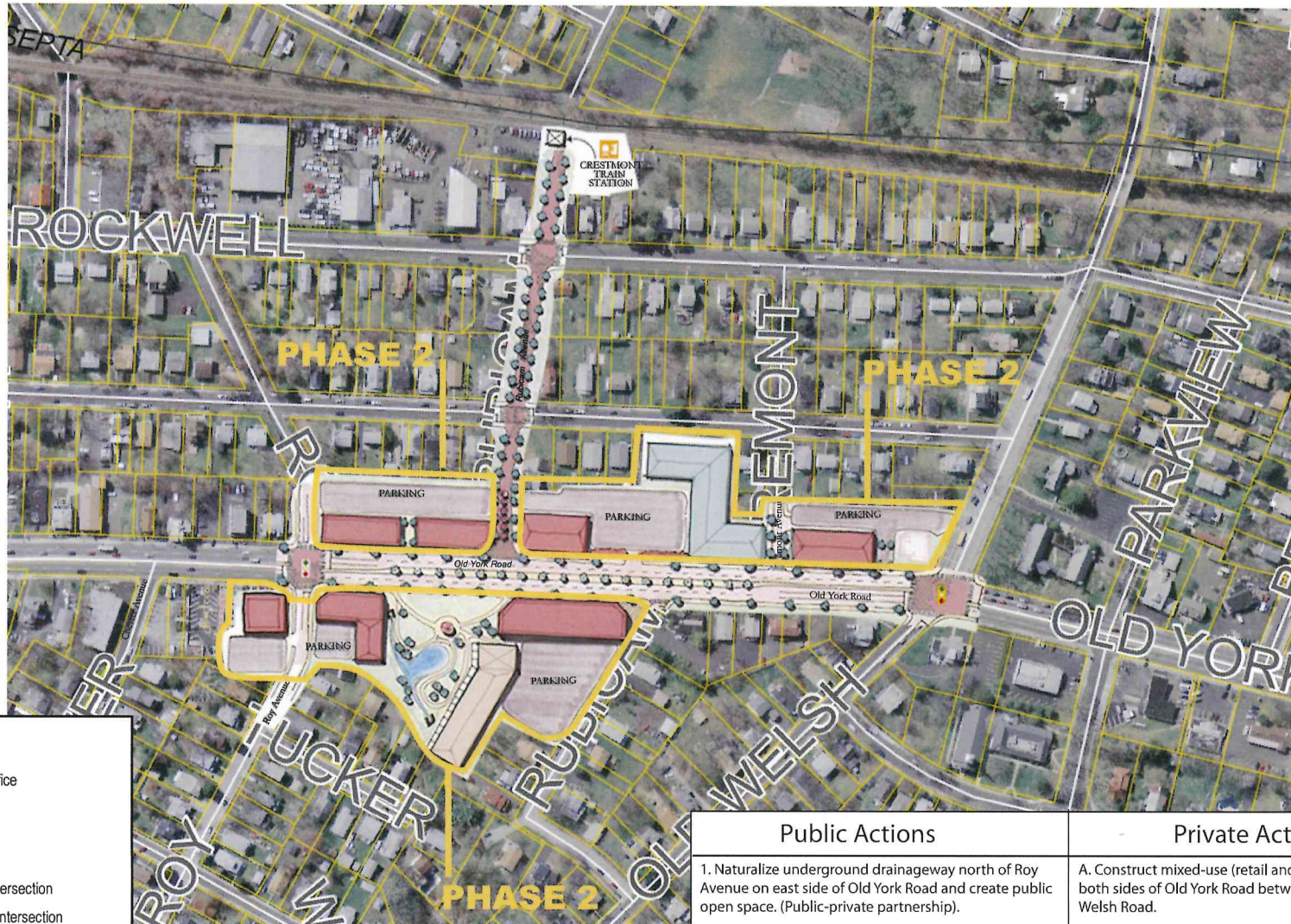


# Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township

## ROY RUBICAM PHASING

## PHASE 2

(between Roy Avenue and Old Welsh Road on Old York Road)



**Legend**

- Mixed Use - Retail/Office
- Work/Live
- Greenhouse
- Open Space
- Existing Signalized Intersection
- Proposed Signalized Intersection

**North Arrow**

0 75 150

April 2009

Public Actions	Private Actions
<p>1. Naturalize underground drainageway north of Roy Avenue on east side of Old York Road and create public open space. (Public-private partnership).</p>	<p>A. Construct mixed-use (retail and office) buildings along both sides of Old York Road between Roy Avenue and Old Welsh Road.</p> <p>B. Construct greenhouse or other urban agriculture facility along west side of Old York Road, south of Tremont Avenue.</p> <p>C. Construct work/live building fronting open space along east side Old York Road.</p>

Figure 4.29



## MARKET EVALUATION

### FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The market analysis prepared at the end of 2007 identified opportunities for expanding development in several types of land use and generally established guidelines for how much new development could be feasibly accommodated in the Old York Road study area. The evaluation of market feasibility covers a timeframe that extends from 2015 to 2025, largely based on a similar timeframe used by DVRPC to project population and household growth and employment in Montgomery County and Abington Township.

The residential market analysis determined that a minimum of 400 residential units could be built in the Old York Road study area in the short term, and more generally that there was an opportunity for additional residential development if Abington Township merely kept pace with the population growth projected for Montgomery County. In addition, interviews with institutional stakeholders, including representatives of Penn State Abington and Abington Memorial Hospital, suggested that students and hospital employees living beyond a reasonable commuting distance would increasingly exert demand for housing within the study area as fuel prices, traffic congestion, and travel times increase. An analysis of population characteristics also identified a growing demand for age-restricted housing among residents of Abington Township and the surrounding municipalities. Lastly, demand for housing in the Old York Road study area is likely to get a boost from the availability of transit at the SEPTA Noble station.

In terms of the feasibility of retail development in the study area, the timeframe from 2015 and 2025 is again used to evaluate the development programs, since future retail demand is based in part on household growth in the trade area.

The same time period is used to evaluate the feasibility of the office development program, also because DVRPC uses these years to project employment in the region, which obviously would affect demand for office space.

Development programs are presented for the four priority areas: (1) Fairway/Old York Road; (2) London Center; (3) Susquehanna around the intersection with Old York Road; and (4) the Roy Rubicam area extending along Old York Road from Roy Avenue to Old Welsh Road. The development programs for these areas primarily include a mix of residential, retail, and office development, with opportunities for hotel lodging, institutional facilities, parking, and open space/recreation also identified. In total, the development programs recommend the following increments to existing development in the study area:


- 1,083 residential units in a mix of multi-family units, as well as single family attached and detached units;
- 333,655 square feet of retail space;
- 419,450 square feet of office space.

### RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The market analysis indicated that population growth in Abington Township has not kept pace with population growth in Montgomery County as a whole. There are several conditions that have led to the township's slower growth rate, including the relatively limited production of new housing units. For example, Montgomery County expanded its overall residential supply by 11.9 percent between 1990 and 2007, compared to a 1.1 percent increase in the township's residential inventory during the same period. Key objectives of the redevelopment of Old York Road would be to encourage housing production and to attract some of the growth that is occurring in the county.

Looking forward, the county's population is projected to increase by 2.6 percent between





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2010 and 2015 and by a healthy 7.3 percent between 2010 and 2025. Abington Township currently makes up about 5.5 percent of the county's population, and if it held that same percentage through 2015, there would be a demand for an additional 465 residential units in the township, assuming no change in the average household size of about 2.4 persons per household. If Abington Township continued to account for 5.5 percent of the county's population through 2025, there would be a demand for an additional 841 residential units. Overall, between 2010 and 2025, the township would have to create about 1,307 residential units simply to maintain its current proportion of the county's population. The residential development program recommends the construction of 1,083 units, well within the number of units that could be feasibly developed in the study area.

Why is this range of residential development feasible and who would be the likely residents? Abington Township is generally acknowledged to have a high quality of life, in part due to its attractive housing stock. When considering the potential to compete with other municipalities in the county for the projected population growth, Abington Township has at least one distinct advantage – the availability of mass transit at the Noble and Rydal SEPTA stations. Transit-oriented development opportunities will become increasingly important to the economic health of urban municipalities. A recent report published by the Federal Transit Administration entitled “Hidden in Plain Site”<sup>1</sup> indicated that the number of households living within a ½ mile of a transit station in the Philadelphia metropolitan area will increase by 65 percent by 2025. This translates into a demand for TOD housing by nearly 821,000 households. In addition, the overall impact of the recommended development programs for Old York Road would create an atmosphere of a new town along Old York Road with a pedestrian-friendly environment and the neighborhood-oriented retail that was highlighted in focus groups as one of the assets of living in Abington Township. The new open space and recreation facilities would also add to the

attractiveness of the study area. In all, adding about 1,100 residential units to the Old York Road study area seems quite feasible.

The current distribution of housing tenure in the township is 80 percent owner-occupied and 20 percent renter-occupied. By comparison, there is 75-25 split in ownership vs. renter occupancy in the county. Despite the current difficulty in getting mortgage financing, the ownership market should remain dominant in Abington Township. To accommodate this demand, the development program recommends a total of 122 new single family homes, including 78 in traditional single-family detached units and 44 in townhouse-style single family attached units. The remaining 961 units would be primarily distributed in mixed-use developments, either as part of retail or office projects. These mixed-use units could be developed as condominium owner-occupied units or renter-occupied units.

New residents are likely to include professional couples and small professional families that want to take advantage of a small town location with an attractive housing stock, a pedestrian-friendly environment, open space amenities, and convenient access to transit. Other segments of the market are likely to include active seniors and students, each of whom would have limited impacts on the local school system. And finally, the feasibility of new residential development is further supported by Abington Township's quality of life, as evidenced by Money Magazine's recent ranking of the township as the 21st most desirable small community in the country, which is also likely to sustain a higher ratio of owners to renters.

<sup>1</sup> *Hidden in Plain Site: Capturing the Demand for Housing Near Transit*, Center for Transit-Oriented Development and the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, September 2004.



### RETAIL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Current conditions in the retail market form the basis of evaluating the feasibility of the proposed retail development program. Simply put, what would be the future of retail development along Old York Road if there was no change in the township's population? The market analysis indicated relatively high capture rates among shoppers' goods stores in the study area, and super-high capture rates among convenience goods stores, i.e. over 100 percent, which is largely driven by the presence of Whole Foods and Traders Joe's. In evaluating the feasibility of the retail development program, it was assumed that making the recommended commercial, institutional, open space, urban design, and traffic improvements in the study area could raise the shoppers' goods capture rate from its current 70 percent to 80 percent. That is a 14 percent increase, but given what focus groups reported about the retail environment along Old York Road, i.e., residents like shopping locally rather than at the big regional malls, the projected increase in the shoppers' goods capture rate is a real possibility. The presence of national brand name stores among the retail inventory, together with unique local stores and a concentration of auto dealerships, will continue to attract retailers to Old York Road. Similarly, improvement of the shopping environment could potentially increase restaurant sales by keeping more of the local expenditures for dining-out within the study area, particularly if the selection of restaurants (fast food, family, white tablecloth), menu offerings (more ethnic foods), and mix of price points was expanded. In this scenario, the currently low 43 percent capture rate among local restaurants could increase to 50 percent, or 16 percent increase in restaurant sales. Both of these projected capture rates (shoppers' goods and eating-and-drinking) are well within the range of a downtown area that is operating at a high level.

This type of analysis is more difficult when capture rates exceed 100 percent, as in this case where the capture rate for convenience goods stores is about 150 percent and 248 percent for automobile dealers. To project demand for

additional space in the convenience goods category (primarily food-at-home, pharmacies, and alcoholic beverages) and in the auto category, the expenditure potential for these types of goods were analyzed within the context of the county as a whole. It is clear from the extraordinarily high capture rates in these two categories that existing convenience goods stores and auto dealers are drawing a large part of their market from a reasonable driving distance that reaches beyond Montgomery County into Bucks County and Philadelphia County. However, for this analysis Montgomery County alone is conservatively used as a surrogate for potential spending in a larger differently configured trade area. Essentially, the analysis assumes that county's capture rate for convenience goods would increase modestly from 96 percent to 97 percent, and for automobiles from the current 92 percent to 94 percent. The modest increment in the capture rate is channeled entirely to stores and dealerships in Abington Township, given the strength of the existing inventory in both categories, due in large part to the nationally known brand names and loyal customer base.

The result of this analysis is demand for an additional 217,300 square feet of retail space in the study area, including about 159,000 square feet in convenience goods stores and 58,300 square feet in auto dealerships. As indicated in the market analysis, the auto dealerships along Old York Road attract customers from outside the area, who represent a potential customer base for other retailers in the study area. In general, the feasibility of expanding the retail inventory in the Old York Road study area depends in part on retaining the high profile of auto dealerships in Abington Township and providing a way for them to expand if necessary.

Following the analysis of a potential shift in spending to Old York Road, the feasibility analysis considered the impact of projected household growth in Abington Township and Montgomery County on demand for retail space. As noted above, projected population growth in the township and the county would



add as many as 1,300 new housing units (and therefore households) to the study area. These new residents in the study area would bring with them additional spending power for retail goods. Added to the likely increase in demand for retail space under existing conditions in the retail trade area, the market could support a total increment of 258,100 square feet of retail space by 2015 (or approximately 189,300 square feet in retail stores and 68,800 square feet in auto dealerships). By 2025, the projected population increase in Abington could support a total of about 358,800 square feet of retail space (or approximately 260,200 square feet in retail stores and 98,600 square feet in auto dealerships). Essentially this would be equivalent to adding a community-size shopping center to the downtown retail inventory – which would be substantial by most measurements. To put this in perspective, the Abington Towne Center (Target, TJ Maxx, etc.) is about 216,000 square feet.

The development program indicates that about 333,655 square feet of retail space could be accommodated in the four key visioning areas. Based on modest shifts in consumer spending by residents of the Old York Road trade area and the larger countywide area, it appears feasible that the recommended retail program could be developed in the visioning areas by 2025. The mix of stores that might constitute this additional retail space would likely be focused on neighborhood retail establishments, i.e., smaller, unique, independent retailers that would draw support from local residents. As noted above, there was a consensus in the focus groups that local residents preferred shopping in local stores and smaller shopping environments compared to large regional shopping centers like the Willow Grove Park Mall. Even the Target Department Store, defined by any retail industry source as a big box store, was described by focus group participants as having a “neighborhood” feel, i.e., a place where task of shopping is easier than in a regional mall and where shoppers often meet friends and people they know. Thus, it would not be unreasonable to consider that one of the stores among the 260,200 square feet of new

retail space would be a big box store, which might anchor mixed-use development in one of the larger priority areas, such as London Center or perhaps Fairway/Old York Road.

### OFFICE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Trends in office vacancy provide a basis for predicting demand for office space in the future. The vacancy rate in the Suburban Philadelphia submarket<sup>2</sup> topped out 17.6 percent in the 1st quarter of 2004, when the country was coming out of the economic downturn caused by the tragic events of September 11, 2001. From that point vacancy rates declined each quarter to the 3rd quarter of 2007, falling to a low of 12.8 percent. By the end of the 1st quarter 2008, trends in office vacancy in Suburban Philadelphia submarket reversed, jumping to 14.7 percent, almost exactly where it had been about two years earlier. Throughout this four-year period of declining and then rising vacancy rates, office buildings continued to be built even though vacancy rates were substantially higher than what is typically required to support speculative office construction. On average, nine office buildings were built in the Suburban Philadelphia submarket per quarter in each of the 16 quarters observed. The average size of the office buildings was 29,100 square feet (slightly larger than the office building that opened earlier this year on Old York Road near the entrance to the Rydal Waters site).

<sup>2</sup> Suburban Philadelphia submarket includes: Bala Cynwyd/Narberth, Conshohocken, Delaware County, Exton/Whitelands, Ft. Washington/Spring House, Horsham/Willow Grove, King of Prussia/Wayne, Lower Bucks County, Main Line, Norristown/Valley Forge, Outer Chester County, Plymouth Meeting/Blue Bell, Upper Bucks County, Upper Main Line, West Chester, and West Montgomery County.



The Horsham/Willow Grove subarea (including Abington Township) contains about 4.6 percent of the overall office inventory in the Suburban Philadelphia submarket. The vacancy rate in the Horsham/Willow Grove subarea was 12.3 percent in the 3rd quarter of 2007, which was slightly lower than the Suburban Philadelphia submarket as a whole. The vacancy in Class A buildings was a healthy 11.9 percent. But conditions have changed more recently, and by the end of the 1st quarter 2008 the vacancy rate in Horsham/Willow Grove rose to 16.1 percent, reflecting the loss of a single major tenant in the subarea. All of these data demonstrate how quickly the office market can fluctuate and how unreliable short-term trends can be in forecasting demand for office space.

To help determine future demand for office space and to test the feasibility of the office development program for the Old York Road visioning areas, DVRPC's employment projections were analyzed, specifically projections for Montgomery County and Abington Township. In 2000 there were approximately 492,700 employees in Montgomery County. About 25,600 jobs were located in Abington Township, representing about 5.2 percent of the county's total employment. The Old York Road study area contained about 18,000 of these jobs, or about 70 percent of all the jobs in the township. DVRPC projected employment in its 9-county area in 5-year intervals from 2000 to 2035. In the period from 2005 to 2015 the county's employment is projected to increase by 5.9 percent, and then again by 4.9 percent between 2015 and 2025. At the same time employment in Abington Township is projected to stagnate, with growth rates of less than 0.5 percent.

However, Abington Township is and will continue to be the home of two prominent employers in the county, i.e., Abington Memorial Hospital and Penn State Abington. Approximately 70 percent of the township's employment is found in office-related jobs, led by the education, health and social services, as well as finance,

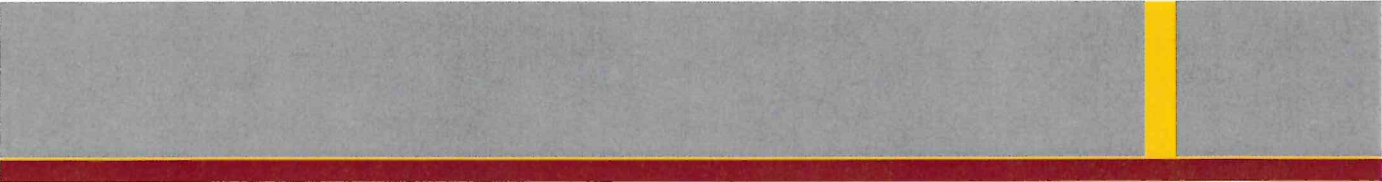
insurance and real estate, information industries, professional and scientific management, administrative, public administration, and other services. With the anticipated changes in economic activity that would be created by the recommended development program, including TOD opportunities, it is possible that Abington Township could maintain its current percentage of total employment in the county, i.e. 5.2 percent. Under this scenario Abington Township's employment would grow to approximately 27,800 by 2015 and to about 29,200 by 2025.

This incremental employment in the township would generate about 1,450 office-related jobs by 2015 and an additional 2,400 office-related jobs by 2025. On average, office workers occupy about 250 square feet per employee. By 2015 the incremental office-related employment within the Old York Road study area would require approximately 254,000 square feet of office space and an additional 420,500 square feet by 2025. The office development program for the four key visioning areas in the Old York Road study area calls for the development of 419,450 square feet office space. Given the continued prominence of major employers in the study area, such as the hospital and the university, together with the potential boost in employment that could come from proximity to mass transit, it is very possible that the recommended office development program would be feasible by 2025. Obviously a substantial portion of this space should be developed within the TOD parameter of ½ mile from the Noble Station.


## **HOTEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

The market study determined that approximately 100 new hotel rooms could be developed in Abington Township at the earliest possible time. As improvements are made to Old York Road, such as new residential, commercial, and institutional development, hotel demand is likely to increase. Most limited-service hotels develop a module of about 100 rooms to start,





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while some of the more deluxe hotels build in range of 180 to 200 rooms. Regardless of the level of service or brand of hotel that decides to develop in Abington Township, hotel feasibility appears strong under existing conditions and in the future. 



## IMPLEMENTATION

### IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

Support from all levels of the Abington Township community and from its public and private planning partners is required now and will need to be sustained in order to achieve all of the goals of the Plan. This chapter outlines implementation strategies for the key recommendations of the Plan and an Action Plan to get the implementation process rolling.

It should be understood that the implementation of these recommendations is dependent upon an entity that can serve as a champion of the improvement of the corridor. To that end, a Priority Area Task Force should be established by Abington Township's Board of Commissioners. The Priority Area Task Force should work on overseeing that the recommendations of this Plan until they have been achieved. The Priority Area Task Force should be actively engaged in seeking opportunities for Abington Township to implement the recommendations of the Plan and to attract investors and partners that can assist the Township in the implementation of the Plan. This Plan should function as a virtual To-Do List for corridor improvement, and should be referred to frequently by the Priority Area Task Force and other actors involved in Plan implementation.

The Action Plan, Table 5.2, identifies key

steps to be taken by Abington Township that will facilitate the implementation of this Plan's recommendations and also identifies the responsible parties to oversee each step. The Action Plan includes critical timeframes for implementation to help the Township and its planning partners set priorities. The timeframe included in the Action Plan is a guideline only; market circumstances, developer interests, and other factors relevant to improvements may vary over time. The Township should be able to respond to these opportunities as they arise while continuing to support the goals of the Plan.

Abington Township may elect to pursue funding and technical assistance from Federal and State programs such as the Elm Street, Main Street, and Transportation Revitalization Investment District (TRID) programs and planning assistance from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and the State. Possible funding sources are identified at the end of this chapter.



**TABLE 5.1 IMPLEMENTATION TABLE**

RECOMMENDATION	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	ACTORS
<p>A. Develop designated priority areas as mixed-use tracts, with retail, residential, office, institutional/community and open space components.</p>	<p>1. Create a Priority Area Task Force consisting of: 3 Abington Township Commissioners, 2 Abington Township staff members, 3 Economic Development Committee members, 1 Penn State Abington Campus representative, 1 Abington Memorial Hospital representative, 1 Planning Commission member and 2 Abington Township citizens-at-large, or consider fully engaging the Economic Dev. Committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Board of Commissioners</li> </ul>
	<p>2. Create an Economic Development Corporation for Old York Road.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Board of Commissioners</li> <li>- Economic Development Committee</li> </ul>
	<p>3. Produce and distribute marketing brochures for priority areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> <li>• Eastern Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>
	<p>4. Devise focused master/urban design plans for each priority area, incorporating Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID) initiatives, as appropriate. Adopt them as amendments to the Abington Township Comprehensive Plan (2007).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Board of Commissioners</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Economic Development Committee</li> </ul>
	<p>5. Devise and adopt new CMX Community Mixed-Use zoning district regulations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Board of Commissioners</li> <li>• Abington Township Planning Commission</li> <li>• Director of Planning and Code Enforcement</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> </ul>
	<p>6. Revise existing AO Apartment/ Office and TC Town Commercial zoning district regulations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Board of Commissioners</li> <li>• Abington Township Planning Commission</li> <li>• Director of Planning and Code Enforcement</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> </ul>



TABLE 5.1 IMPLEMENTATION TABLE (Cont.)

RECOMMENDATION	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	ACTORS
	7. Revise Abington Township Zoning Map.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Board of Commissioners</li> <li>• Abington Township Planning Commission</li> <li>• Director of Planning and Code Enforcement</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> </ul>
	8. Develop tax credits and tax abatement initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Board of Commissioners</li> <li>• Director of Economic Development</li> <li>• Priority Areas Task Force</li> <li>• Economic Development Corporation</li> </ul>
	9. Consider participation as part of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's Main Street Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Board of Commissioners</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Abington Township Director of Economic Development</li> <li>• Eastern Montgomery County of Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>
	10. Solicit developers to construct mixed-use complexes at priority areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of Economic Development</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Economic Development Corporation</li> </ul>
	11. Review and approve land development plans for priority areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Board of Commissioners</li> <li>• Abington Township Planning Commission</li> </ul>
	12. Obtain grants to develop plans and infrastructure to support implementation of the Study. Commence with a PCTI grant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Township Manager</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> </ul>



TABLE 5.1 IMPLEMENTATION TABLE (Cont.)

RECOMMENDATION	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	ACTORS
<p>B. Establish an Old York Road streetscape that supports pedestrians, bicycles, automobiles, shuttles, buses and passenger trains.</p>	<p>1. Design and construct access improvements to the Noble Station including an easterly extension of Baeder Road connecting Old York Road with The Fairway, erecting a commuter parking garage and building a pedestrian bridge across the railroad tracks east of the Noble Station.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Board of Commissioners</li> <li>• Abington Township Department of Engineering</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> <li>• Abington Township Department of Public Works</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• PennDOT</li> <li>• SEPTA</li> </ul>
	<p>2. Design and construct intersection project at Old York Road and Susquehanna Road.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Board of Commissioners</li> <li>• Abington Township Department of Engineering</li> <li>• Economic Development Director</li> <li>• Abington Township Department of Public Works</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• PennDOT</li> </ul>
	<p>3. Advocate PennDOT to install a signal at Old York Road and Roy Avenue. Design and construct new intersection, including a realignment of Roy Avenue on the west side of Old York Road.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Board of Commissioners</li> <li>• Abington Township Department of Public Works</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• PennDOT</li> </ul>
	<p>4. Construct streetscape improvements in conjunction with transportation safety and congestion relief projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> <li>• Abington Township Department of Public Works</li> <li>• Abington Township Engineer</li> <li>• PennDOT</li> </ul>
	<p>5. Establish a designated Share-the-Road route along the corridor with route identification signs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development Committee</li> <li>• Abington Township Engineer</li> <li>• PennDOT</li> <li>• Abington Township Planning Commission</li> </ul>



TABLE 5.1 IMPLEMENTATION TABLE (Cont.)

RECOMMENDATION	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	ACTORS
	<p>6. Install bike racks along the corridor and at the Noble and Crestmont train stations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Parks and Recreation Dept</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> <li>• Abington Township Engineer</li> <li>• SEPTA</li> </ul>
	<p>7. Construct access and visibility improvements for Regional Rail stations including: increased vehicular and bicycle parking, safety improvements to sidewalks and crosswalks leading to stations, increased wayfinding to stations, and commuter furnishings at stations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Department of Public Works</li> <li>• Abington Township Engineer</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• SEPTA</li> <li>• Developers</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> </ul>
	<p>8. Install shelters/canopies at bus stops along Old York Road.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Department of Engineering</li> <li>• SEPTA</li> <li>• Developers</li> <li>• Community Businesses</li> </ul>
	<p>9. Partner with local institutions to operate a local circulator that links priority areas with train stations and other Abington Township destinations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Manager</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Penn State Abington Campus</li> <li>• Abington Memorial Hospital</li> <li>• SEPTA</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> </ul>



TABLE 5.1 IMPLEMENTATION TABLE (Cont.)

RECOMMENDATION	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	ACTORS
C. Enhance the visual image and experience of being in and traveling through the corridor.	1. Produce and distribute a marketing brochure for the corridor that promotes the corridor as a place to live, shop, work, play, and invest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> <li>• Eastern Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>
	2. Apply for Federal, State, and foundation/private funding to design and construct streetscape and façade improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Department of Public Works</li> <li>• PennDOT</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> </ul>
	3. Develop and support an Old York Road Business Association.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Abington Township Director of Economic Development</li> <li>• Eastern Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>
	4. Develop a Business Improvement District.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development Committee</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Economic Development Corporation</li> </ul>
	5. Construct gateways and demonstration area streetscape improvements as identified on the Corridor-wide Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Department of Public Works</li> <li>• Abington Township Engineer</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> </ul>
	6. Support businesses in their initiative for corridor-wide cultural events, markets, and fairs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Abington Township Director of Economic Development</li> <li>• Eastern Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Business Association</li> </ul>



TABLE 5.1 IMPLEMENTATION TABLE (Cont.)

RECOMMENDATION	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	ACTORS
	7. Acquire/conservе open space, greenways and/or civic spaces along the corridor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Board of Commissioners</li> <li>• Abington Township Bureau of Parks and Recreation</li> <li>• Abington Township Director of Economic Development</li> </ul>
	8. Construct streetscape improvements in conjunction with priority area development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developers</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• PennDOT</li> <li>• Abington Township Department of Public Works</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> </ul>
	9. Solicit developers to construct new buildings and renovate suitable existing structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development Corporation</li> <li>• Abington Township Economic Development Committee</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> </ul>



**TABLE 5.2 OLD YORK ROAD ACTION PLAN**

ACTION	TIMING	PRIMARY RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
Produce and distribute an Old York Road Marketing brochure targeting private developers and business owners.	Within 6 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Abington Township Director of Economic Development</li> <li>• Eastern Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>
Solicit developer interest through developer fairs, one-on-one meetings, and acting as a liaison between lenders and developers.	Within 9 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> <li>• Abington Township Economic Development Committee</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Eastern Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Economic Development Corporation</li> </ul>
Apply for Federal, State, and foundation/private funding to design and construct streetscape and façade improvements.	Within 1 Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Board of Commissioners</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> </ul>
Revise and adopt Overlay Zoning.	Within 18 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Board of Commissioners</li> <li>• Abington Township Planning Commission</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Montgomery County Planning Commission</li> <li>• Director of Planning and Code Enforcement</li> </ul>
Support Abington Township community cultural events (music, theater, markets, festivals, children's themes) along the Old York Road Corridor.	Within 2 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> <li>• Eastern Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Civic Associations</li> </ul>
Construct demonstration priority area streetscape improvements.	Within 2 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Abington Township Engineer</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> <li>• Abington Township Department of Public Works</li> </ul>

TABLE 5.2 OLD YORK ROAD ACTION PLAN (Cont.)

ACTION	TIMING	PRIMARY RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
Design and construct access improvements to the Noble Station.	Within 2 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Department of Public Works</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Abington Township Engineer</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> </ul>
Conduct detailed planning, designing and detailed analysis of the intersection of Old York Road and Susquehanna Avenue intersection reconfiguration.	Within 3 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Department of Public Works</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Abington Township Engineer</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> </ul>
Work with PennDOT on intersection and streetscape projects related to priority areas, starting with the intersections near Noble Station, Susquehanna Road and Roy Avenue.	Within 3 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Department of Public Works</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Abington Township Engineer</li> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> </ul>
Establish Old York Road joint venture shuttle service.	Within 5 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development Office</li> <li>• Abington Township Manager</li> <li>• Penn State Abington Campus</li> <li>• Abington Memorial Hospital</li> <li>• SEPTA</li> </ul>
Construct mixed-use complexes in priority areas.	Within 5-10 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developers</li> <li>• Abington Township Board of Commissioners</li> <li>• Abington Township Planning Commission</li> <li>• Director of Planning and Code Enforcement</li> <li>• Priority Area Task Force</li> <li>• Economic Development Corporation</li> </ul>
Advocate SEPTA for increased services and amenities at the Noble Station and Crestmont Station.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abington Township Director of Economic Development</li> <li>• Developers</li> <li>• Economic Development Corporation</li> </ul>



## FUNDING SOURCES

### FEDERAL

#### n Community Development Block Grant

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds can be used for housing and economic development projects for historic buildings.

#### n Safe Routes to School

Federally-available funding for a wide variety of programs and projects, from building safer street crossings to establishing programs that encourage children and their parents to walk and bicycle safely to school.

#### n Transportation Enhancement Projects

Federal funding to support projects that are designed to foster more livable communities, preserve and protect environmental and cultural resources, and to promote alternative modes of transportation. Funds are available for design, right of way acquisition, and construction.

#### n Tax Credits

n **Low Income Housing Tax Credit** – Credit provided where projects meet rehabilitation guidelines.

n **Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit** – Credit provided where projects meet rehabilitation guidelines.

## PENNSYLVANIA

n Department of Community & Economic Development ([www.newpa.com](http://www.newpa.com))

Identifying resources and strategies for business and community growth in the State. Some of the programs that may benefit the Old York Road corridor include:

n The Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP) provides grants to local governments for land use planning activities.

n The DCED New Communities Program assists communities in integrating the revitalization of downtowns with that of industrial/manufacturing areas.

n DCED's Community Revitalization Program provides grants for community revitalization and improvement projects.

n The Community Action Team (CAT) creates priority "impact" projects within a community and provides "team" that assists with all stages of a project and acts as single point of contact, enhancing communication between agencies and departments so that attention and resources are focused on the most deserving projects.

n Keystone Innovation Zones (KIZs) are designated zones that may be established in communities that host institutions of higher education – colleges, universities, and associate degree technical schools. These zones are designed to foster innovation and create entrepreneurial opportunities. They do this by gathering and aligning the combined resources of educational institutions, private businesses, business support organizations, commercial lending institutions, venture capital networks (including angel investors), and foundations (KIZ partners).

## n Downtown Center ([padowntown.org](http://padowntown.org))

Training and technical assistance offered in five year grant cycles.

**nMain Street** – Developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1980, the program outlines four key components for community-based revitalization: design, promotion, organization, and economic restructuring. If program criteria are met, a Main Street community receives State technical assistance and grants for commercial revitalization projects. Different program levels can provide full or partial funding for economic development, preservation, and promotion activities. Main Street communities can also develop additional tools, such as Business Improvement Districts in conjunction with the state program.

**nElm Street** – The State has recently passed the Elm Street Bill, which provides similar assistance to residential districts adjacent to Main Street communities. The program is intended to strengthen older communities by a “five-step” approach: Clean, Safe & Green; Neighbors and Economy; Design, Image, and Identity; and Sustainable Organization.

## n Association for New Urbanism in Pennsylvania ([anupa.org](http://anupa.org))

Educating and supporting New Urbanist principles and residential infill development.

## n Transportation and Community Development Initiative

Supporting local planning efforts to reverse the trends of disinvestment and decline in the Philadelphia region. Funding available for planning grants through the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission.

## n Transit Revitalization Investment Districts (TRID)

Enabling legislation offering state support for planning and implementing transit-oriented development. This program is administered by the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and PennDOT.

## n Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority (PIDA)

PIDA provides low-interest loans for eligible commercial projects, including research and development, computer/operations centers, multi-tenant projects, as well as traditional manufacturing and industrial projects. PIDA’s First Industries Fund provides low interest financing for agriculture and tourism-related businesses, including farmers’ markets.

## MUNICIPAL AND PRIVATE

### n Business Improvement District

A BID can assess collections from a group of property owners and/or business owners, for the purpose of economic development. Different policing powers and legal implications are implied with the formation of a Special Service District or a Neighborhood Improvement District.

### n Joint Purchasing (Service Sharing)

Multiple municipalities can join together with the purpose of reducing the costs of purchases and/or services.

### n Community Development Block Grants

Some local governments qualify to receive CDBG funding directly from the Federal government. Local governments that may be ineligible for Federal funding directly from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development are eligible for funding through Montgomery County’s Department of Housing and Community Development.





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n Pennsylvania Small Business First Fund (SBFF) and the MicroLoan Fund (<http://montcoworks.montcopa.org/montcoworks/cwp/view,A,1513,Q,54006,montcoworksNav,|35454|.asp>)

Administered by the Montgomery County Development Corporation, these funds provide low-interest rate financing for various types of County companies and non-profit organizations. Funding is used for real estate acquisition and renovation, equipment and working capital.

n Commonwealth's Local Economic Development Assistance Fund (<http://montcoworks.montcopa.org/montcoworks/cwp/view,A,1513,Q,54006,montcoworksNav,|35454|.asp>)

Administered by the Montgomery County Development Corporation, the grant provides funds to market and promote the County's business resources. Several promotional materials were produced using this funding, including this Web site. 2

## Steering Committee Conclusions and Vision Qualification

(This Chapter was prepared by Township staff subsequent to the final town meeting)

### Public Participation


It was the intent of the Steering Committee and the Township to provide a grass roots effort and highly public process for development of the key concepts and components comprising the foundation of this study and ultimately its final course and completion. This was first evidenced by our early involvement of the focus group process during October 2007, when interested members of the Abington community were invited to participate in the determining the project approach and corridor analysis. The initial draft study outline was developed directly from this input.

Before an actual working draft document was produced that would guide the in fill process of the planning concepts, a well-advertised, open town meeting was conducted in March 2008 in order to obtain initial reaction to the planning direction and content focus. Over one thousand notices were distributed by mail to property owners within one and half blocks of Old York Road on both sides of the corridor. In addition, over one thousand flyers were hand-delivered to other parts of the town, and meeting notices were made available at major activity centers such as the town Library and the YMCA. Approximately two hundred and fifty residents participated in the first session, and it is safe reflection to make that there was no significant objection to the planning approach. Both the Steering Committee and the consultants were applauded for the depth of considerations, and a clear message was obtained to proceed with the project approach and direction.

A second town meeting was conducted near the midpoint of the project in July 2008 as the draft study neared completion. More definitive visioning drawings were available for this presentation, including details on the four major nodal areas proposed for concentrated planning. Following the general presentation, breakout sessions were conducted to provide even greater discussion clarity on the nodal areas, and to solicit specific community feedback offered through more careful observation of the detailed drawings. The session concluded with a central wrap up of concepts, and again, no significant negative feedback was received. Approximately four hundred residents and stakeholders participated in the second session with an overwhelming approval to proceed to final plan design.

Following the second town meeting, the Steering Committee met to outline a number of refinements and alterations to be made as a result of the feedback and positive criticism received at the town meetings. That process took nearly six months for the consultant to complete given the depth of the clarifications. Ultimately, the document was revised to the Committee's satisfaction.






A third public town meeting, advertised to same degree as before, was then conducted in November of 2009 to highlight the plan's interim revisions and to seek final citizen approval before a recommendation to forward the document to the Township Commissioners. A general presentation was made to approximately two hundred attendees followed by a public comment session. Several attendees expressed criticism with the public process, high development density provisions, and alteration of the corridor's character. When weighed by the positive feedback expressed regarding the plan, the Steering Committee felt that a rather balanced message was received to proceed with conclusion and adoption of the study. The Steering Committee then met in December, to consider reaction and public input at the final town meeting. The committee agreed on some final document revisions intended to either address or provide clarity to both positive and negative feedback received at the final town meeting process. This chapter, written by township staff, represents the Steering Committee's concluding remarks and is intended to qualify implementation of the Vision for Abington Township.

## Study Findings and Vision Qualification

The Steering Committee's closing comments are cited and described below, and are to be incorporated into the Study as an addendum to the document, and utilized wherever they serve to clarify related content expressed throughout the study. The comments and findings are as follows:

1. That the public process was extensive and exemplary in incorporating both residents and stakeholders directly into the planning process as elaborated in this closing chapter above.
2. That the purpose of the Study and its contents is primarily to provide a visionary framework for guiding the future development and enhancement of the corridor. As such, no graphic representation, specific depiction, or study finding relating to the vision is to be interpreted as a development mandate. The Vision is rather a suggestive representation of how the planning elements and concepts might materialize if the Study's recommendations are accepted and applied over a period of time and under ideal development circumstances.
3. The Vision expressed in the document is conceptual and is part of an evolutionary process that will unfold over a significant period of time, and that no sweeping community change is mandated or imminent from adoption of the study or immediate application of its planning principles.
4. That adoption of the Study implies no absolute or unregulated growth beyond the tolerance of newer smart growth development strategies or sound traditional planning practices. Further, growth and development as outlined in the Study can only proceed with adequate controls afforded through the township's Zoning Ordinance, land development approval process, and other regulatory controls and guidance.



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5. That development at density levels expressed in the Study, particularly with respect to residential use provisions and mixed use development scenarios, will be tempered or clarified from earlier draft statements ranging unconditionally from 25 to 40 dwellings units per acre, to a range of 15 to 25 DU/A, or as future zoning ordinance amendments may provide, with an understanding that the higher ranges will only be permitted under incentive zoning provisions that ensure adequate infrastructure improvements, supplemental transit facilities, and that other township amenities are provide in conjunction with density increases.

6. That clarification is herewith offered to developers for promoting the understanding that the study is suggestive of a new corridor environment, one that is intended to operate in unison and cohesiveness with all neighboring properties in the improvement area. Further, the potential of any one given site cannot be fully realized until its planning and development elements are wholly considered and integrated into the synergy of the surrounding properties so that singular development choices correlate with the global or comprehensive development corridor schema expressed in the Study.

7. That comprehensive or global corridor planning elements should be reviewed and applied in all site development applications. Developers are encouraged to consider how their singular development proposal can contribute to the net total improvement area of the node or corridor section they embody, and how their treatment of the following elements contributes to that goal and brings value-added improvement in correlation with increased density and abutting or neighboring site conditions:

- a. Provision for or direct connection to shared public parking facilities in either surface or structured configurations.
- b. Provision for or direct connectivity to new or planned roadways necessary for improved global access and circulation, and provision or connectivity with ingress and egress on adjoining sites.
- c. Provision for new or facilitated access to bus stations, train station transit, or other transit amenities including existing walkways, shelters, facilities and systems that support or encourage the pedestrian and alternative transit modes.
- d. Provision for additional or coordinated signage throughout the corridor district that improves resource identification or increases the user experience of new or existing transit facilities.
- e. Provision, by mutual agreement with the Township, that increases the performance of the corridor and nodal infrastructure beyond the impact of the development or at the development site, and increases the level of service performance to key transit intersects along the corridor or node.
- f. Provision that development potential should be regulated by phasing plans designed to permit maximum potential development only when the referenced global corridor or nodal amenities are provided and implemented to a degree that correlates with the development increase.





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## Commencement of the Vision

In the context of all that has been done in a highly transparent process, and with qualifications to the density and character impact described above the Steering Committee finds no reason to delay the vision commencement.

While Chapter 5 describes the overall course of action to be considered for successful commencement of a new corridor vision, developments following the completion of this study are noteworthy to reference here in order to provide further guidance for advancing implementation following adoption of the study by the Board of Commissioners:

1. The Township recently obtained a \$275,000 Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative (PCTI) grant to assist with implementation of Transit-Oriented-Development (TOD) planning around the Noble Train Station area. Application of these grant funds fit comfortably in developing a Small Area Plan to coordinate the details of the TOD and related infrastructure improvement suggested in the corridor study. The township should proceed to develop an RFP consistent with the grant application requirements and study's recommendations for the Noble/Fairway node.
2. The Township should coordinate the TOD planning and PCTI RFP directly with SEPTA officials, and establish new partnerships that advance mutual interests.
3. The Township should coordinate the TOD planning and PCTI RFP directly with PennDOT which is currently entering final design of the Route 611 Noble Bridge Reconstruction Project. The 611 bridge referenced crosses directly over the Noble Train Station. There is an opportunity for partnership with Penn DOT on bridge and pedestrian improvements that will complement the transit and mixed use vision of the corridor plan.
4. The Priority Area Task Force should give careful consideration to leveraging the ten million dollar RCAP grant reserved by the State for advancing corridor vision implementation with the above implementation steps, or apply it to an initial high-impact project prior to the grant's expiration.

Reference to the conclusions contained in this chapter has been incorporated into the Executive Summary.

With the closing comments and clarifications identified herein, the Old York Road Steering Committee recommends that the Abington Township Board of Commissioners adopt the document as the new, long-term Vision for the Old York Road Corridor, and commence advancement strategies identified herein.



# APPENDIX

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Thursday, September 25, 2008

**Draft Zoning Ordinance Considerations  
related to the recommendations for  
Old York Road Priority Areas**

The Draft Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study Plan will include an Implementation Chapter that will identify a number of critical steps, and the key players related to carrying out these steps, in order for the recommendations in the Plan to be realized. One of the most important steps will be for Abington Township to set in place zoning regulations that are supportive of the priority area recommendations.

Abington Township has asked McCormick Taylor to make some preliminary recommendations about the zoning districts and their characteristics. This information will be used as Abington Township, together with Montgomery County, rewrite the township's zoning ordinance.

McCormick Taylor suggests that the following zoning districts apply to each priority area (see the accompanying *Draft Zoning Districts for Priority Areas Map* for locations):

**Noble/Fairway**

Community Mixed Use – CMX (New District)

Apartment/Office – AO (Existing District with Revised Standards)

**Susquehanna**

Town Commercial – TC (Existing District with Revised Standards)

**London Center**

Community Mixed Use – CMX (New District)

**Roy/Rubicam**

Town Commercial – TC (Existing District with Revised Standards)

Recreation/Conservation – RC (Existing District with Revised Standards)

**Community Mixed Use – CMX (New District)**

Intent: The intent of the Community Mixed Use district is to provide for the combining of offices, stores and shops, multi-family residential uses, and civic, public, and semi-public uses in a closely-knit walking precinct. It is the purpose of these regulations to encourage a diversification of uses in each Community Mixed Use district and to promote close interrelationships among different uses; high-quality, visually-attractive, and environmentally responsible site design and buildings; efficient circulation systems; conservation of land and energy resources; reduced rates of auto-trip generation; and increased opportunities for pedestrian circulation. In addition, the specific intent of the district is to:

- A) Encourage the development of land and buildings within the district for a variety of uses, either individually or together within the same building, for compatible mixed-use developments;



- B) Permit the development of functionally-related land uses in a manner that is supportive of transit usage;
  
- D) Minimize auto-trip generation through maximizing opportunities for pedestrian mobility to public transportation, pedestrian movement and patronage of multiple facilities in a district by emphasizing the interrelationship of uses and structures, and for connecting adjacent communities to the district by means of walking or biking;
  
- E) Establish a framework for development that anticipates and encourages the necessary conditions for a high level of transit utilization and pedestrian circulation;
  
- F) Provide for civic, public, and semi-public uses, including exterior common use areas, convenient to office and commercial concentrations, so as to function for the general benefit of the community as places for relaxation, recreation, and social activity;
  
- G) Enhance the functional values of natural and landscaped areas for developed areas, including groundwater recharge, runoff control, and microclimate moderation.

*Regulations may include provisions for:*

- Permitted Uses
- Use Mixes
- Street and Parcel Layout
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Orientation
- Transit Stations
- Bulk
  - 1.0 – 2.0 FAR
  - 25 - 40 Units per Acre
  - 0 Setbacks
  - 65 ft Max Height
  - Max. 300 ft dimension
  - Min. Distance between Structures = 10 ft unless connected by common roof
  -
- Orientation of Buildings & Pedestrian Frontages

**Town Commercial – TC** (Existing District with Revised Standards)

*Regulations may adjust existing provisions for:*

Bulk, including:

- Reduce Setbacks (currently 15 ft)
- Increase Residential Max. Height (currently 35 ft)

Uses, including:

- Eliminate Recycling Drop-Off Center

*Regulations may add provisions for:*

- o Mix of Uses: Less emphasis on office (unless live/work)
- o Street and Parcel Layout
- o Pedestrian and Bicycle Orientation
- o Transit Stations
- o Orientation of Buildings & Pedestrian Frontages
- o

**Apartment/Office District – AO** (Existing District with Revised Standards)

*Regulations may adjust existing provisions for:*

Bulk, including:

- Reduce Minimum Yard Dimension (currently Front = 20 ft for residential types, rear = 25 ft)
- Increase Residential Max. Height (currently 35 ft for residential, 40 ft for Apartment Building)

Uses, including:

- Eliminate Conditional Use Hearings for Office Campus
- De-emphasize office use

*Regulations may add provisions for:*

- o Mix of Uses: Less emphasis on office (unless live/work)
- o Street and Parcel Layout
- o Pedestrian and Bicycle Orientation
- o Transit Stations
- o Orientation of Buildings & Pedestrian Frontages

**Recreation/Conservation District – RC** (Existing District)

*Regulations may expand on opportunities for the township to partner with private entities for the purpose of preserving open space.*



## **Other Similar Existing Districts**

### **Mixed Use– MX**

- Permitted Uses are inconsistent with the vision for the priority areas (Automotive Service/Repair, Wholesale Facility, Warehouse Facility, Storage).
- Changes to zoning would affect Easton Road in Glenside.

### **Special Commercial– SC**

- Permitted Uses are inconsistent with the vision for the priority areas (Automotive Sales, Building Materials, Drive-In Facility, Shopping Center, Assembly Plant, Distribution Center, Lumber Yard, Wholesale Facility, Warehouse Facility, Storage).
- Dimensional Regulations are inconsistent with the vision for the priority areas (10,000 sq ft. min. lot area, 15 ft/50 ft min. yard, 35 ft max. height).
- Changes to zoning would affect Easton Road and Old York Road north of Edgehill Road.

### **Planned Business– PB**

*While Section 402.4 Special Design and Development Regulations regulates the interconnectivity and outdoor civic open space in a way that is supportive of the recommendations for the priority areas, a number of other aspects of the district differ from the recommended priority areas including:*

- Purpose is for “large scale commercial activity” – emphasis primarily on retail uses, not on the mix of uses.
- Uses include Conditional Use for Shopping Mall and Amusement Park.
- Dimensional Regulations are inconsistent with the vision for the priority areas (15,000 sq ft. min. lot area, 20 ft/60 ft min. yard, 35 ft max. height, 30 ft min. building separation).
- Changes to zoning would affect the Willow Grove Mall.

### **Community Service – CS**

*Uses by Right include Cemetery, Places of Worship, Schools, and Conservation/Recreation Preserve. There is an inadequate mix of retail, residential and office space to regulate the recommended priority areas.*



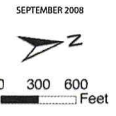


## Old York Road Corridor Improvement Study, Abington Township Draft Zoning Districts for Priority Sites



- CMX** Community Mixed Use (New District)
- AO\*** Apartment/Office (Existing District with Revised Standards)
- TC** Town Commercial (Existing District with Revised Standards)
- RC** Recreation/Conservation (Existing District)

\* Existing Abington Township Zoning District with Assumed Revised Standards)





# CMX

## MAIN STREETS

Noble Fairway Priority Area = Old York Road, The Fairway, Baeder Road extension  
 London Center Priority Area = Old York Road, London Road, Proposed Road A

## NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS

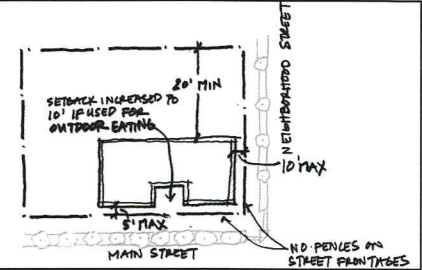
Noble Fairway Priority Area = Old Old York Road, Proposed Roads excluding Baeder Road extension  
 London Center Priority Area = Proposed Road B, Proposed Road C, Davidson Road

## DIAGRAM

SETBACK

FRONT = 5' MAX.  
 SETBACKS MAY BE INCREASED TO 10' MAX IF USED FOR OUTDOOR EATING  
 PUBLICLY-ACCESSIBLE COURTYARDS EXCEPTED  
 NO FENCES  
 SIDE = 10' MAX.  
 REAR = 20' MIN.

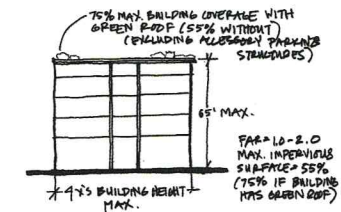
FRONT = 10' MAX.  
 PUBLICLY-ACCESSIBLE COURTYARDS EXCEPTED  
 NO FENCES  
 SIDE = 15' MAX.  
 REAR = 20' MIN.



AREA & BULK

FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR) = 1.0 - 2.0  
 MAX. BUILDING COVERAGE = 55%; 75% IF BUILDING HAS A GREEN ROOF (A PARTIALLY, OR COMPLETELY COVERED ROOF EXTENDED WITH A WATERPROOFING MEMBRANE, GROWING MEDIUM AND VEGETATION) (EXCLUDING ACCESSORY PARKING STRUCTURES)  
 MAX. IMPERVIOUS SURFACE = 55%; 75% IF BUILDING INCLUDES A GREEN ROOF  
 HEIGHT - 25' MIN.-65' MAX.; 2 TO 5 STORIES  
 WIDTH = 4 X BUILDING HEIGHT MAX.

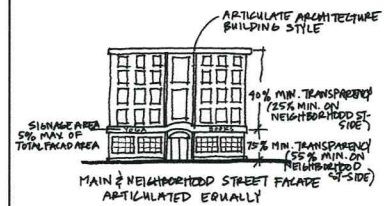
FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR) = 1.0 - 2.0  
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 MAX. IMPERVIOUS SURFACE = 55%; 75% IF BUILDING INCLUDES A GREEN ROOF  
 HEIGHT - 25' MIN.-65' MAX., 2 TO 5 STORIES  
 WIDTH = 4 X BUILDING HEIGHT MAX.



FACADE

GROUND FLOOR MIN. TRANSPARENCY = 75%  
 UPPER FLOORS MIN. TRANSPARENCY = 40%  
 SIGNAGE AREA = 5% MAX. OF TOTAL FACADE AREA  
 CORNER PROPERTIES TO EQUALLY ARTICULATE MAIN ST. & NEIGHBORHOOD STREET SIDES.  
 ARTICULATE ARCHITECTURAL BUILDING STYLE WITH BUILDING BASE, ROOFLINES, AWNINGS, & CORNICES.

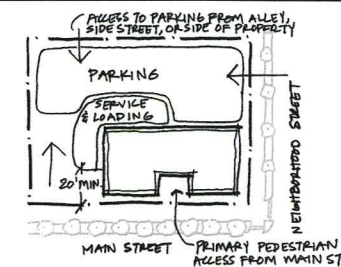
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 ARTICULATE ARCHITECTURAL BUILDING STYLE WITH BUILDING BASE, ROOFLINES, AWNINGS, & CORNICES.



ACCESS, PARKING & LOADING

PRIMARY PEDESTRIAN ACCESS FROM MAIN STREET  
 PARKING IN REAR, ACCESSED PREFERABLY FROM SIDE STREET, ALLEY, OR SIDE OF PROPERTY  
 STRUCTURED PARKING ACCESSED PREFERABLY FROM SIDE STREET, ALLEY, OR SIDE OF PROPERTY  
 SERVICE & LOADING FROM REAR, OR SIDEYARD IF 20' MIN. FROM FRONT PROPERTY LINE

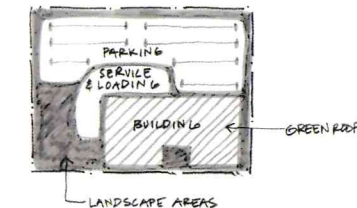
PRIMARY PEDESTRIAN ACCESS FROM NEIGHBORHOOD STREET  
 PARKING ACCESSED PREFERABLY FROM SIDE STREET, ALLEY, OR SIDE OF PROPERTY  
 STRUCTURED PARKING ACCESSED PREFERABLY FROM SIDE STREET, ALLEY, OR SIDE OF PROPERTY  
 SERVICE & LOADING FROM REAR, OR SIDEYARD IF 20' MIN. FROM FRONT PROPERTY LINE



LANDSCAPE

PERVIOUS AREAS TO BE LANDSCAPED & MAINTAINED  
 COURTYARDS ARE ENCOURAGED  
 GREEN ROOFS ARE ENCOURAGED

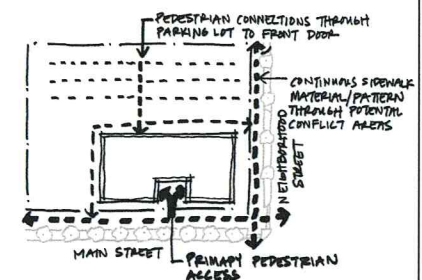
PERVIOUS AREAS TO BE LANDSCAPED & MAINTAINED  
 COURTYARDS ARE ENCOURAGED  
 PLANTERS, POTS, CLIMBING VINES, & WINDOW BOXES ARE ENCOURAGED ALONG MAIN & NEIGHBORHOOD STREET SIDES  
 GREEN ROOFS ARE ENCOURAGED



CIRCULATION

PRIMARY PEDESTRIAN ACCESS ALONG MAIN STREET SIDEWALK  
 PEDESTRIAN PATHWAYS THROUGH PKG. LOT & FROM LOT TO FRONT DOOR, WITH SIDEWALK MATERIAL & PATTERN TO BE CONTINUOUS.  
 NOBLE FAIRWAY PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE SHORT-CUTS BETWEEN BUILDINGS & PLAZAS AND DIRECT ACCESS TO NOBLE STATION

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 NOBLE FAIRWAY PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE SHORT-CUTS BETWEEN BUILDINGS & PLAZAS AND DIRECT ACCESS TO NOBLE STATION



## MAIN STREETS

Susquehanna Priority Area = Old York Road, Susquehanna Road  
 Roy Rubicam Priority Area = Old York Road

## NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS

Susquehanna Priority Area - Guernsey Road  
 Roy Rubicam Priority Area - Roy Avenue, Rubicam Avenue, Tremont Avenue

## DIAGRAM

SETBACK

FRONT = 5' MIN/10' MAX,  
 PUBLICLY-ACCESSIBLE COURTYARDS EXCEPTED  
 NO FENCES

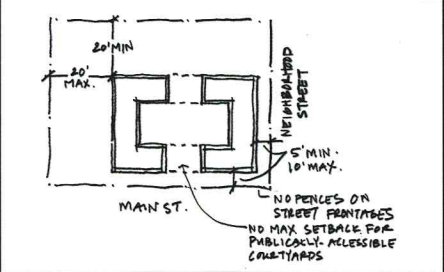
SIDE = 5' MIN., 20' MAX.

REAR = 20' MIN.

FRONT = 5' MIN/10' MAX,  
 NO FENCES

SIDE = 5' MIN., 20' MAX.

REAR = 20' MIN.



AREA & BULK

FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR) = 0.6 - 1.0

MAX. BUILDING COVERAGE = 55%; 75% IF BUILDING HAS A GREEN ROOF (EXCLUDING ACCESSORY PARKING STRUCTURES)

MAX. IMPERVIOUS SURFACE = 55%; 75% IF BUILDING HAS A GREEN ROOF

HEIGHT - 40' MAX., 1 TO 3 STORIES

WIDTH = 4 X BUILDING HEIGHT MAX.

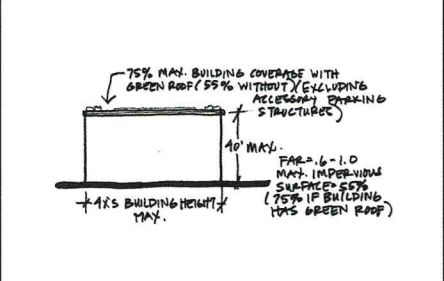
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FACADE

GROUND FLOOR MIN. TRANSPARENCY = 75%  
 UPPER FLOORS MIN. TRANSPARENCY = 40%

SIGNAGE AREA = 5% MAX. OF TOTAL FACADE AREA

CORNER PROPERTIES TO EQUALLY ARTICULATE MAIN ST. & NEIGHBORHOOD STREET SIDES

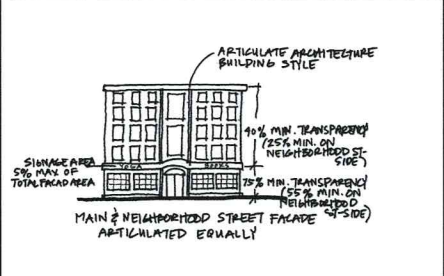
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ARTICULATE ARCHITECTURAL BUILDING STYLE WITH BUILDING BASE, ROOFLINES, AWNINGS, & CORNICES



ACCESS, PARKING & LOADING

PRIMARY PEDESTRIAN ACCESS FROM MAIN STREET

PARKING IN REAR, ACCESSED PREFERABLY FROM SIDE STREET, ALLEY, OR SIDE OF PROPERTY

STRUCTURED PARKING ACCESSED PREFERABLY FROM SIDE STREET, ALLEY, OR SIDE OF PROPERTY

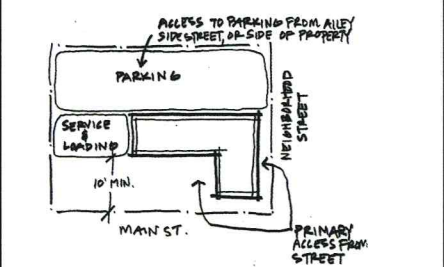
SERVICE AND LOADING FROM REAR, OR SIDEYARD IF 10' MIN. FROM FRONT PROPERTY LINE

PRIMARY PEDESTRIAN ACCESS FROM NEIGHBORHOOD STREET

PARKING IN REAR, ACCESSED PREFERABLY FROM SIDE STREET, ALLEY, OR SIDE OF PROPERTY

STRUCTURED PARKING ACCESSED PREFERABLY FROM SIDE STREET, ALLEY, OR SIDE OF PROPERTY

SERVICE AND LOADING FROM REAR, OR SIDEYARD IF 10' MIN. FROM FRONT PROPERTY LINE



LANDSCAPE

PERVIOUS AREAS TO BE LANDSCAPED & MAINTAINED

COURTYARDS ARE ENCOURAGED

PLANTERS, POTS, CLIMBING VINES, & WINDOW BOXES ARE ENCOURAGED ALONG MAIN & NEIGHBORHOOD STREET SIDES

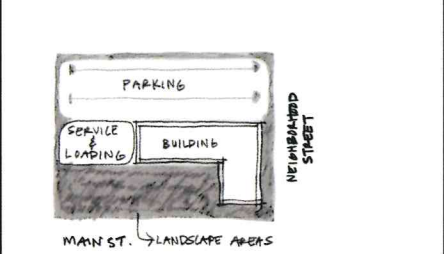
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CIRCULATION

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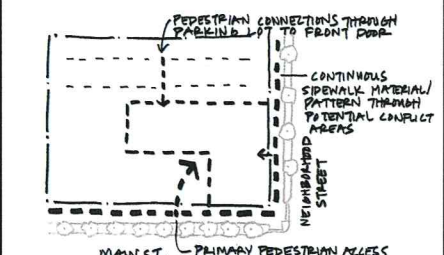
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ROY/RUBICAM PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE SHORT-CUTS BETWEEN BUILDINGS & PLAZAS & DIRECT ACCESS TO CRESTMONT STATION

PRIMARY PEDESTRIAN ACCESS ALONG NEIGHBORHOOD STREET SIDEWALK

PEDESTRIAN PATHWAYS THROUGH PRG. LOT & FROM LOT TO FRONT DOOR MADE VISIBLE BY MEANS OF CONTINUOUS MATERIAL AND PATTERN

ROY/RUBICAM PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE SHORT-CUTS BETWEEN BUILDINGS & PLAZAS & DIRECT ACCESS TO CRESTMONT STATION







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April 1, 2009

Joseph A. Bucovetsky  
McCormick Taylor Inc.  
Two Commerce Square  
2001 Market Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Re: Confirmation of Market Support for Old York Road Corridor Improvement Plan

Dear Joe:

This letter will confirm that I have reviewed the draft Old York Road Improvement Plan in the context of AKRF's previous market findings and that I concur with the vision as presented by McCormick Taylor in the plans. Our market feasibility study indicated that there was support for developing additional residential, retail, office and hotel space in the Old York Road study area, based on regional growth in population and employment projected by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) through 2025, as well as other pertinent economic and physical factors, such as projected population and employment growth, the strength of the retail and hotel markets, and the location of two SEPTA stations in the study area, as well as major employers including Abington Memorial Hospital and Penn State Abington.

To summarize briefly, AKRF estimated that there would be demand for additional development in the study area by 2025 as indicated below:

- 1,300 residential units
- 358,800 square feet of retail space
- 420,500 square feet of office space
- 100 hotel rooms.

The recommended development as documented and graphically displayed in the draft Old York Road Improvement Plan is well within the market findings made by AKRF in both our initial market study and in a later market evaluation of the draft plan.<sup>1</sup> In fact, AKRF and McCormick Taylor worked closely in the preparation of the draft site plans to make sure that the recommendations for residential, retail, office and hotel development did not exceed AKRF's market findings.

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<sup>1</sup> The initial Old York Road Corridor Improvement Plan Market Study was completed in December, 2007 and a market evaluation of initial versions of the draft plan was completed in September, 2008, with certain economic factors updated through the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2008.

Obviously the demand for additional residential units and commercial facilities will develop over time, and our market evaluation of the draft plans estimated the amount of development that could be occur in two phases, i.e., by 2015, and then by 2025. Although these projections were made prior to the deepening of the national economic recession the key factors influencing the findings are still pertinent. Let me review some of those factors as they pertain to specific types of recommended development.

### *Residential Development*

Montgomery County continues to be a desirable location to live and its population will continue to grow, as projected by DVRPC. The assumption that Abington Township would retain its fair share of the county's population is based on several factors that are unlikely to change as a result of the current economic downturn. Most importantly there is a growing demand for residential units in close proximity to mass transit, i.e. transit-oriented development. As noted in the September 2008 market evaluation, about 65 percent of the population in the Philadelphia metropolitan area is expected to live within a ½ mile of a transit station by 2025.<sup>2</sup> Fortunately, the Old York Road study area contains two SEPTA stations: Noble Avenue on the R-3 line in the Noble/Fairway priority area and Crestmont Avenue on the R-2 line in the Roy/Rubicam priority area. Current SEPTA schedules provide reasonable travel times to Center City from each station, i.e., slightly less than 30 minutes from the Noble Station and slightly more than 30 minutes from the Crestmont Station. In addition, the market study indicated that demand for age-restricted housing is likely to grow as the senior population increases in Abington and nearby municipalities. At the same time, there is existing demand for student housing related to Penn State Abington that is likely to increase as students look for higher education alternatives closer to home in an attempt to reduce costs such as tuition, travel and room and board associated with education in private and public colleges outside the Philadelphia metropolitan area. Finally, the housing stock in Abington is attractive and will continue to draw interest as a place where the quality of life is high, as demonstrated by Money Magazine's recent ranking of the township as the 21st most desirable small community in the country.

Thus, the development of about 1,100 residential units within the four priority areas is feasible and will continue to be feasible in the future. Perhaps one slight shift in the market will occur in the distribution of demand for owner-occupied vs. renter-occupied units. Currently the distribution within Abington Township is about 80 percent owner occupied and 20 percent renter-occupied. If any long-term change in attitude about home ownership comes out of the current economic crisis, there may be a slight shift to renter-occupied units in Abington that would more closely resemble the distribution of owner-occupied and renter occupied units in Montgomery County as a whole, which is 75:25.

### *Retail Development*

The market findings regarding future retail development in the Old York Road corridor are based in part on the currently strong attraction of Abington's retail core, as indicated by the extraordinarily high capture rates for convenience goods (primarily food stores), shoppers goods (primarily department store type merchandise) and automobile dealerships, as well as the preference of many Abington residents to shop locally, as expressed by participants in commercial focus groups. There is not likely to be a significant change in the strength of the Abington's retail concentration as a result of the current economic crisis, except perhaps in the viability of some automobile dealerships.

Aside from the uncertainty about the future of the U.S. automobile industry in general, several of the corridor's major retailers are holding their own in today's economic climate, including Target, Whole Foods, and Trader Joe's. Since the beginning of 2009, Target's stock value has stabilized at

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<sup>2</sup> *Hidden in Plain Site: Capturing the Demand for Housing Near Transit*, Center for Transit-Oriented Development and the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, September 2004.



about \$34.00 per share, while the value of Whole Foods' stock has increased to just under \$17 per share from just under \$10 per share. Trader Joe's is a privately held firm, but the specialty food retailer is perceived as offering good value to its customers. Thus, industry-wide trends suggest that the principal retail anchors in the Old York Road corridor are stable, and although retail spending may decline in the short run, the attraction of corridor as a retail destination is likely to continue in the long term.

Projected population growth in Abington Township and the broader trade area would increase demand for retail goods, and even minor increases in the already high capture rates for convenience goods and shoppers goods would support the development of 260,200 square feet of new retail space in the Old York Road corridor by 2025. As noted in the previous market evaluation, the projected retail development is roughly equivalent to building a new community-size shopping center in Abington, i.e., slightly larger than the existing Abington Towne Center. The emphasis on mixed use (residential/office over retail stores) and a high quality pedestrian environment, together with the preference of Abington residents to shop locally will encourage the development of small shops in each of the four priority areas. At the same time, the success of Target will likely result in the attraction of a similar large scale value retailer in either the Noble/Fairway area or the London Center area, supporting the concentration of retail shown in the site plans.

The remaining 98,600 square feet of retail development recommended in the market evaluation was allocated to the sales and service of new and used automobiles. While the status of the U.S. auto industry is uncertain, there is no doubt that Americans will continue to demand automobiles as their preferred mode of personal transportation. The size of these future vehicles, their fuel source, and primary manufacturers are yet to be determined. Given the history of Old York Road as a key destination in the region for auto sales and service, it is likely that the corridor will maintain its leadership in offering the latest in automobile products to buyers in a broad trade area encompassing Montgomery, Bucks and Philadelphia counties. In the meantime, those dealerships offering highly desirable hybrid and other fuel efficient cars will continue to support Old York Road as a destination for auto sales in the short term. Furthermore, the draft Old York Road Improvement Plan suggests a reconfiguration of auto dealerships into a vertical format for showrooms, sales, service and storage, a concept that is clearly in keeping with the trend in automobile efficiency that is emerging from the current economic crisis, no matter what form the U.S. auto industry may take.

#### *Office Development*

DVRPC has projected that employment in Montgomery County will grow by 5.9 percent between 2005 and 2015, and then by an additional 4.9 percent between 2015 and 2025. Employees in Abington Township accounted for about 5.2 percent of the jobs in Montgomery County in 2000, and if Abington simply maintained the same proportion of future employment in the county, there would be approximately 29,200 employees in the township by 2025.

About 70 percent of the current employment in Abington Township is office-related, including jobs in health care, education, professional and scientific management, information services, finance, insurance, real estate and public administration. Abington is fortunate to have two of the major employers in Montgomery County, i.e., Abington Memorial Hospital and Penn State Abington. Both of these key employers bring a measure of stability to the direct and indirect labor market in the township and the county, and will continue to do so in the future.

As indicated in the September 2008 market evaluation, Abington Township could have approximately 1,000 new office-related jobs by 2015 and a cumulative total of about 1,700 new office-related jobs by 2025. The arithmetic is simple. At office occupancy standards of 250 square feet per employee, the projected office-related employment in Abington Township would require about 254,000 square feet of additional office space by 2015 and a cumulative demand for about 420,000 square feet of office space by 2025. These projections consider that office vacancy in the future time frames resembles what was observed in recent periods of economic downturn, i.e. 17.6 percent vacancy in the suburban Philadelphia market area in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2004, dropping to 12.8 percent in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2007 (the vacancy rate in the Horsham/Willow Grove subarea was 12.3

percent in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2007, which was slightly lower the Suburban Philadelphia submarket as a whole).

Abington Township is likely to stay ahead of the ebb and flow of office vacancies in the suburban market the future because of its distinct advantage of having potential office development sites in close proximity to both the Noble and Crestmont stations. As with the residential market, the office market in Abington is likely to benefit substantially from the possibility of transit oriented development. This is clearly reflected in the recommended plans which indicate that the Noble/Fairway and Roy/Rubicam priority areas would receive approximately 77 percent of the total office space recommended in the Old York Road Improvement Plan as a result of their proximity to SEPTA's Noble Avenue and Crestmont Avenue stations.

#### *Hotel Development*

The findings related to the hotel market in Abington in December 2007 indicated that a minimum of 100 new hotel rooms could be built in the township. AKRF stands by this recommendation even under current economic conditions. Our findings focused on the demand for a limited-service hotel, given the inventory and daily occupancy trends observed over a 5-year period. In an economic climate that strives for cost savings by both business and leisure travelers, a limited service hotel would provide a product that meets both short-term and long-term demand for transient lodging in Abington, given the current conditions and projected growth in population and employment.

So I can affirm that AKRF has reviewed the Old York Road Corridor Improvement Plan in the context of our previous market findings and current economic conditions, and we affirm that the findings support the vision as presented in the plans recommended in McCormick Taylor's draft report.

Sincerely,

Dennis R. Mincieli  
Vice President

cc: J. Torio



