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INTRODUCTION



Study Purpose

Woolwich Township has seen rapid population growth over the last decade and planning projections predict that the population could double over the next 25 years. Woolwich Township has commissioned this Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan to more accurately and effectively plan for park, open space, trails and other recreational facilities in Woolwich Township and in the Borough of Swedesboro. The Borough is surrounded by Woolwich Township and most recreational facilities and parks are shared by residents of both municipalities. This plan is intended to serve as a blueprint for the community for the next 10 to 20 years to plan for park and open space acquisition, park facility development and trail and greenway development, including water trails.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Purpose and Goals

The goals of the Woolwich Township and Borough of Swedesboro Open Space and Recreation plan are to:

- Plan active recreational facilities to accommodate current and anticipated future needs. These active facilities consist primarily of sports fields and courts but may also include other specialized facilities such as skate parks, Frisbee golf, swimming, and trails for walking, running and biking;
- Plan for the acquisition and protection of environmentally sensitive lands that can serve as passive recreational facilities for walking and hiking while they protect habitat and ensure ground water quality in the area.
- Plan for and identify routes and locations for a system of interconnected trails and greenways that will provide multi-modal transportation opportunities to residents while also providing safe facilities for exercise and the enjoyment of the outdoors. These trail routes will include both on-road trails and off-road trails that also offer connections to existing or planned trails in adjoin municipalities.

- Survey area residents via telephone and internet to determine current perceptions and needs regarding recreation and open space facilities in the Township and Borough;
- Conduct public meetings throughout the planning process to gather information and comments from residents, local organizations, and municipal representatives;
- Produce an inventory of current recreational and leisure-time facilities, open space, trails, schools and other important recreation destinations within the Township and Borough;
- Compare the existing inventory of park facilities with other similarly sized communities and analyze current active recreational facility use;
- Developed a conceptual Township wide trail network;
- Explore potential uses and develop concept plans for various Township owned lands and lands for possible future acquisition to meet the recreational needs of the Township and Borough;
- Develop a phased implementation plan for the future development of trails and recreational facilities.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Objectives

The objectives of the Woolwich Township and Borough of Swedesboro Open Space and Recreation Plan are to:

Municipal Background

Woolwich Township and the Borough of Swedesboro are located in Gloucester County, New Jersey, approximately 25 miles southeast of downtown Philadelphia and approximately 20 miles from Camden, NJ.

Woolwich Township has an area of 21.2 square miles with 0.32 (1.5%) of the Township's area being comprised



of water. The Township is governed by a five member Township Committee who are elected to three-year staggered terms of office. The Mayor is appointed to an annual term by the members of the Township Committee.

The Borough of Swedesboro has a total area of 0.76 square miles. The Borough government consists of one mayor and six council members. The mayor serves a four year term while council members serve staggered three year terms.

Demographics

According to the 2010 census, Woolwich Township has a population of 10,200 which is an increase of 7,168 (+236.4%) from the 2000 census. The Township has a population density of 487.8 inhabitants per square mile. In 2010, there were 3,141 households with an average household size of 3.21 and an average family size of 3.46. The median age in the Township was 35.7 years and the median income per household was \$109,360

The Borough of Swedesboro has a population of 2,584 (2010 census) reflecting an increase of 529 (+25.7%) from the 2000 census. Swedesboro has a population density of 3,568.4 per square mile. In 2010 there were 938 households in the Borough with an average household size of 2.75 and an average family size of 3.27. The median age in the Borough is 36 years old and the median household income was \$49,268.

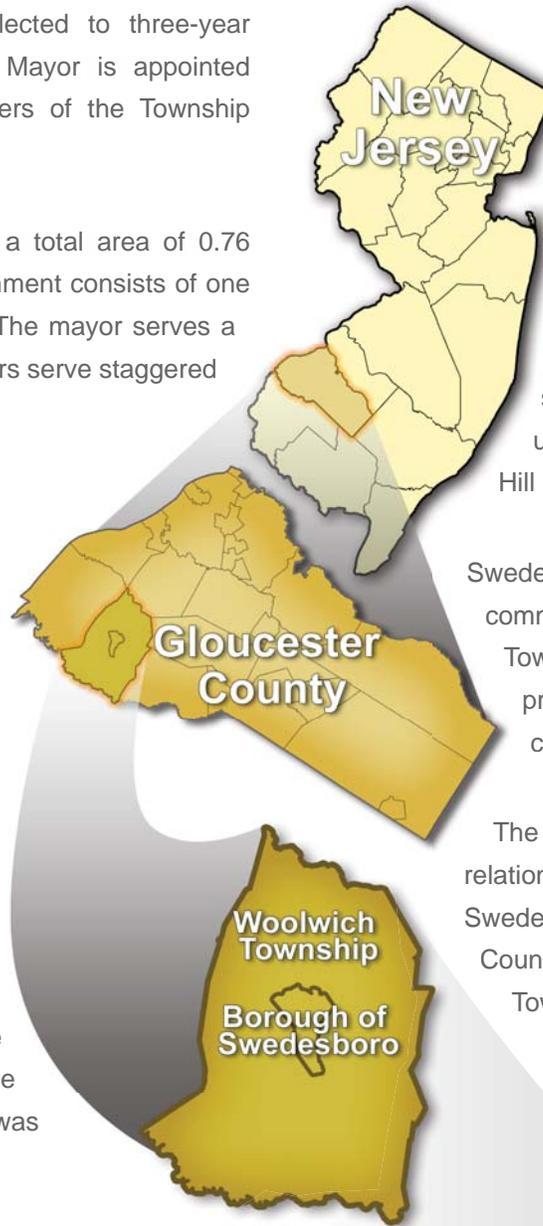
Regional Context

Woolwich Township is heavily agricultural with expanding residential development throughout the Township. The most densely populated region in the Township is the area of the Weatherby development in the western part of the Township. The Township has small areas of commercial and industrial uses located around Locke Avenue, High Hill Road, Auburn Road, and Route 322.

Swedesboro is a small densely populated community surrounded entirely by Woolwich Township. Swedesboro is comprised of primarily residential neighborhoods and a commercial corridor on Auburn Road.

The regional context map shows the relationship between the Borough of Swedesboro, Woolwich Township, Gloucester County and the State of New Jersey. Woolwich Township is bordered by Logan Township to the northwest, Greenwich Township to the north, East Greenwich Township to the northeast, Harrison Township to the east, South Harrison Township to the southeast,

Pilesgrove Township to the south, and Oldmans Township to the west. The Township is bisected by the New Jersey Turnpike which connects the Township to Wilmington, Delaware to the south and Runnemede, NJ to the north. Route 322 is the main east/west arterial





through the Township. Route 322 connects the Township to Mullica Hill and Glassboro to the east and Chester, PA to the west. Route 322 is anticipated to be the primary corridor through the proposed Woolwich Regional center.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and Woolwich Township

In 2004, the State Transfer of Development Rights Act was signed into law, and Woolwich Township became one of a handful of municipalities to develop a TDR program. Today, the results of that planning are being realized through a township-wide plan that is based on the TDR concept.

TDR is a growth management tool. It is not designed to limit the amount of growth that can occur locally. Instead, it gives municipalities greater control over how and where growth occurs.

One of the principal benefits of TDR is the ability to preserve large contiguous areas of farmland and open space and to do so without imposing land costs on the taxpayers. The municipality determines where it wants to direct growth and where it wants to preserve land. Developers then purchase development rights from property owners in the designated preservation areas—called “sending zones” - and transfer them into the targeted growth areas—called “receiving zones.”

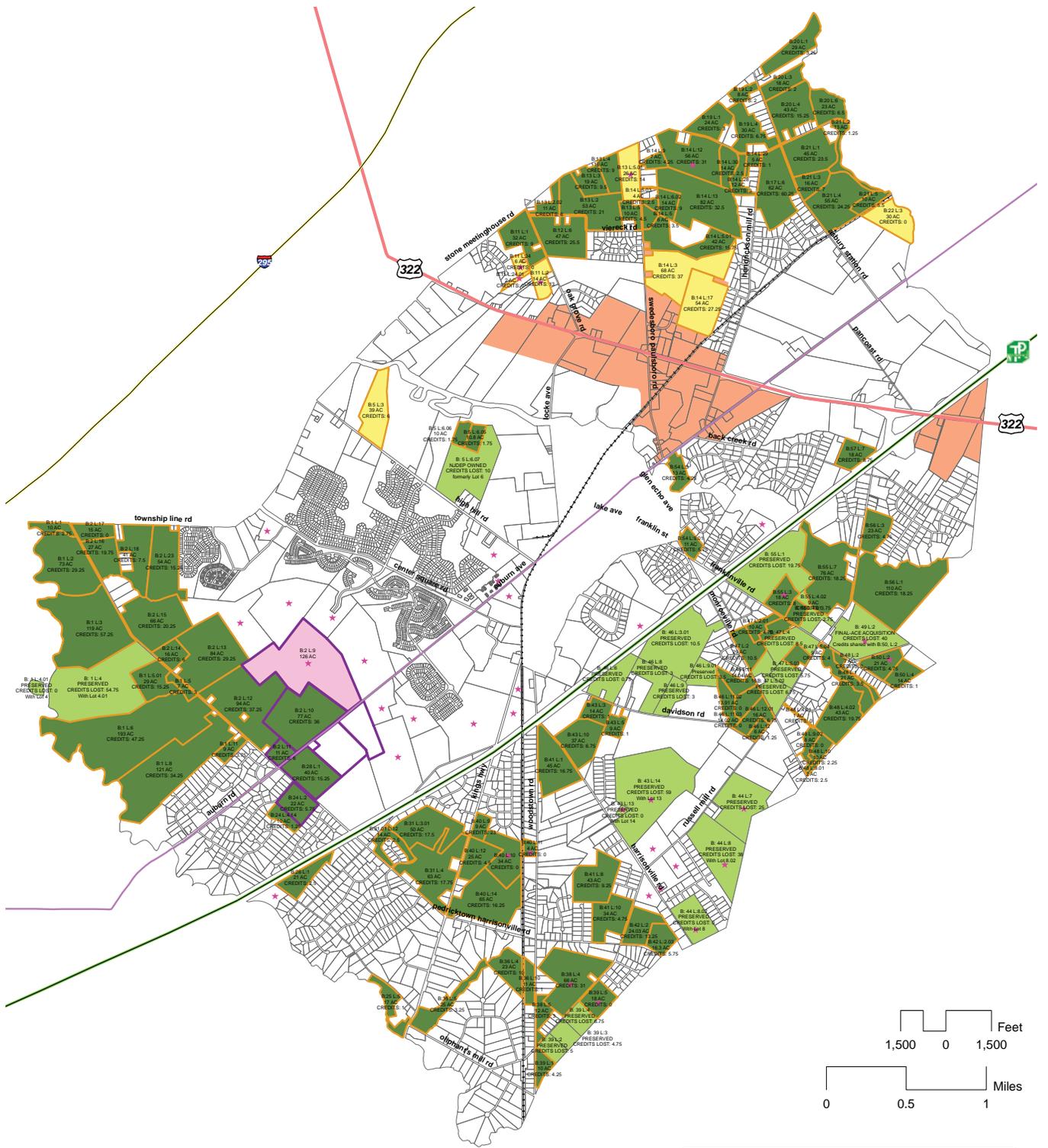
Therefore, preservation occurs through private market transactions.

Another important benefit of TDR is the win-win situation it creates for both the sending and receiving zone property owners. The sending zone landowners are paid for the development potential of their property. The receiving zone property owners may build not only uses equivalent to what is allowed by right according to the zoning ordinance, but also the additional development rights purchased from the sending zone. TDR is particularly beneficial to rural communities, like Woolwich Township, that are experiencing intense development pressures. Lacking an adequate tax base, these communities may not have the resources to purchase all of the targeted farmland.

At the same time, recent residential growth may have placed a strain on the municipal budget with the demand for new schools, public services, and infrastructure that it brings. Absent sufficient commercial ratables to offset these costs, residents suffer the financial burden of rising property taxes. Likewise, they lack a central place in which to shop, work, socialize and recreate because new development is almost entirely housing and it tends to “leapfrog” from one remote place to another, fragmenting the landscape. TDR enables these communities to protect their agricultural land base and farmers’ equity. It also responds to the needs of existing and future residents by creating a destination with homes, shops, businesses and public spaces—in essence, their own unique downtown.

Just as TDR can help to protect and preserve farmlands that are in the sending areas, open space for environmental protection or parks can be likewise set aside for use by current and future residents. Many if not all of the parcels of interest (as parks or preserved open space) noted in this plan are in the TDR sending areas. Accordingly, if the Township does acquire these sites, their sale value to the Township can be deduced after these property owners sell their development credits via the TDR development credit mechanism ¹

1 Source: Woolwich Township TDR Report



Revised Sending Areas 5-Year TDR Review

woolwich township
gloucester county, new jersey

- Legend**
- ★ Approvals
 - ▭ Auburn Road GDP
 - ▭ Sending Area Parcels (as revised Sept. 2013)
 - ▭ Parcels Added to Sending Area (2013)
 - ▭ Parcels to be Removed from Sending Area
 - ▭ Auburn Road Village Receiving Area
 - ▭ Parcels-2010
 - ▭ Route 322 Receiving Area (2008)

--Parcel lines from 2010 GIS data made publicly available by the County of Gloucester
 --Parcels to be removed based on preserved lots from SADC GIS data, preserved lots from Gloucester County lists, and acquisition of a lot by AC Electric.
 --Sending area parcels from 2007 TDR and modified per 5-year review.
 --Receiving areas from 2007 TDR.

TDR 5-Year Review
 Project No.: WWP13005
 Date: October 8, 2013
 Drawn By: MSY
 Source: This map was developed using NJDEP and Gloucester County Planning Department GIS data, but this secondary product has not been verified nor authorized by either agency.
 File Name: M:\GIS PROJECTS\woolwich\TDR 5-Year Review\Sending Area after revs.mxd

