

# Marshall Township Ordinance Update

## Highlights: What's changing in the Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances?

### Both

- The Township has undertaken the Ordinance Update project to streamline, modernize and align its zoning and land development regulations following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. User friendliness is one important goal across the board, including:
  - Updated definitions of uses, including emerging new land uses
  - Simplifying text with plain language
  - A simpler, more logical structure

### Zoning

- The **Conservation Residential District**, which covers most of Marshall Township's western side, has been in place for more than a decade. The update proposes to add flexibility for development configuration with a goal of **increasing the total percentage of green space** permanently preserved.
  - In addition to the current option, in which homes are clustered to preserve at least 40% of open space, new options would preserve 55% or 70% of space in exchange for the ability to mix in duplexes and/or townhomes and add 0.15 to 0.3 homes per net acre, respectively.
  - Sensitive environmental features are always subtracted out to determine the area of a tract that could be buildable. New buffer requirements will help reinforce views of natural scenery.
- The **Route 910 Overlay** is a new proposal for a limited cluster of parcels near Mingo Road along Wexford Bayne Road. Given aggressive growth in neighboring communities and the pass-through traffic it has added to this area, the Township has long studied the problem of increasing traffic volume and associated safety concerns. The impending reconfiguration of the I-79 Wexford interchange presents a tipping point, as the resulting traffic pattern will exacerbate existing access challenges for driveway users.
  - The overlay would add the option to develop townhomes – *not commercial uses* – provided that development includes traffic improvements, such as a rear access road and/or stoplight connection. Many nearby residents have been involved in discussion about the proposed overlay, and the concept has changed in response to the concerns shared.

## **SALDO**

- New Simplified Bufferyard Types
- New Landscaping Requirements
  - Removed all invasive species from the required planting list
  - Replaced with regional varieties appropriate for Western PA, optimized for climate resiliency, with types well suited for intended purposes (example: salt-resistant plantings for parking lot islands)
  - New successional forest/meadow regrowth buffer typology, designed to support the restoration of natural systems and a green, scenic landscape
- Moved tree protection standards from the Zoning Ordinance to the SALDO to apply uniformly across the Township

# Project Timeline

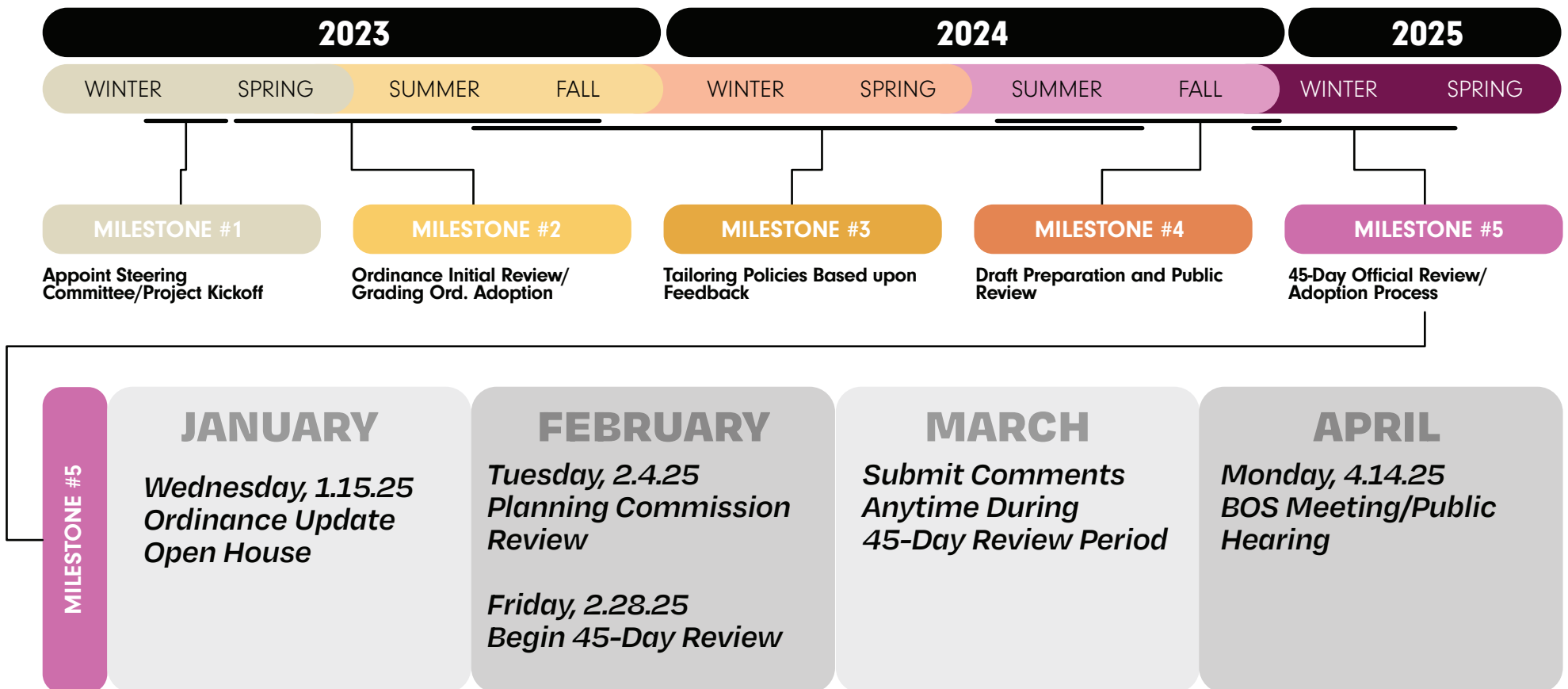
Have more to say about the ordinances? There's still more opportunities to submit feedback! You can scan the QR code to the right to submit comments online or attend any of the following public meetings listed below.

planmarshall  
township



Scan the QR code to find out where we are in the planning process and to learn more!

planmarshall.org





# uses

there are typically two types of uses →

**PRINCIPAL**  
The principal use is the specific primary function for which a parcel is used  
In mixed use situations, there may be more than one specific principal use

**ACCESSORY**  
An accessory use is a smaller, subordinate use supporting the principal use located on the same parcel  
Common examples are sheds and parking



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# purpose

a local ordinance to protect **HEALTH | WELFARE | SAFETY**

The purpose of zoning is to create land use regulations that protect the health, welfare and safety of the people living and working in an area.

Zoning was borne out of the 1920s to separate noxious industrial uses from residences.

Now, zoning continually evolves to reflect community values, react to market forces, and allow for land use controls for new technologies.

# how

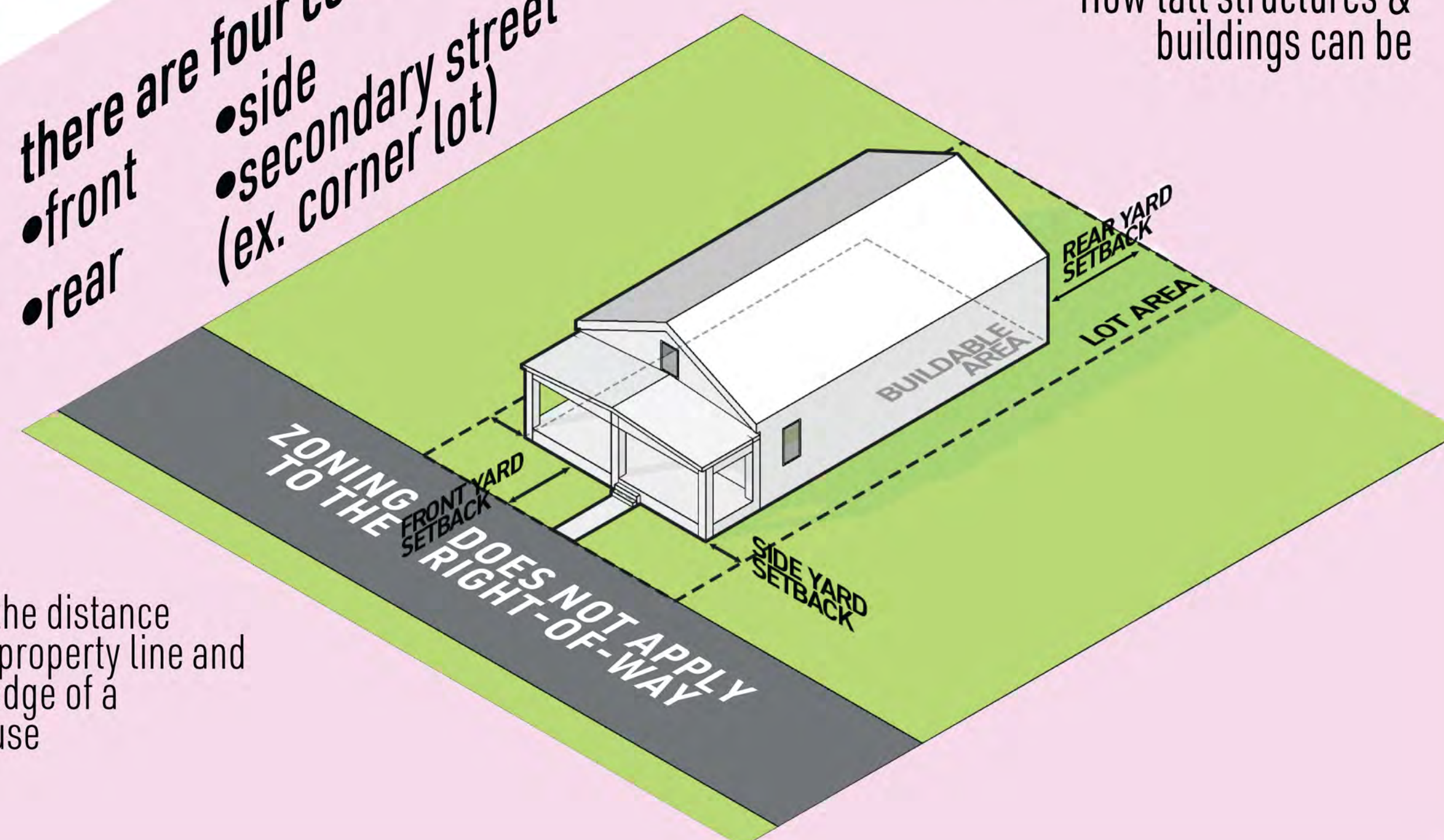
# works



## regulations determine:

Where structures, buildings, & uses can be placed on a site  
How tall structures & buildings can be

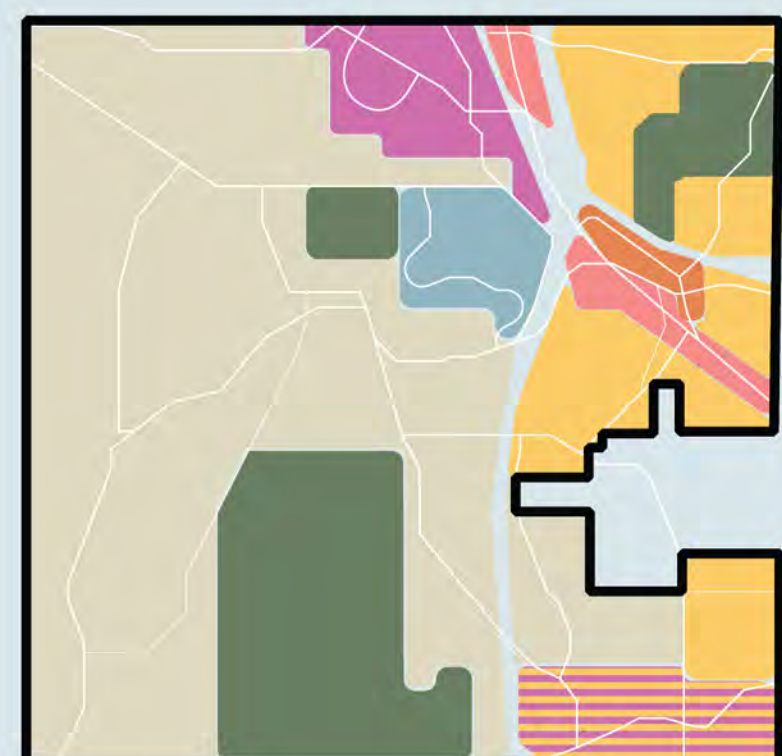
there are four common types:  
• front  
• rear  
• side  
• secondary street (ex. corner lot)



density regulation based on spacing

# setbacks

A setback is the distance between the property line and the exterior edge of a structure or use



Districts divide the township into areas with similar characteristics  
Each district has its own standards for each of the zoning regulations

# districts



# goals of a SALDO

A SALDO...

- **Ensures a decent quality of life** for citizens by promoting healthy walkability, preventing stormwater damage, protecting from excesses of noise, lighting, or other pollution, and ensuring accessibility for fire and police services.
- **Protects sensitive environmental features** like wetlands or streams from being disturbed during development.
- **Protects the municipality from problems** and costs it may have to inherit later from unplanned and poorly designed development.
- **Helps contain municipal costs** by having developers pay for public improvements necessitated by the development, and by requiring development design that is efficiently supported by municipal services
- **Helps a municipality attract investment** in homes and businesses which are seeking out great places with a quality built and natural environment.

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where we are in the planning  
process and to learn more!

# what is a SALDO?

SALDO is an acronym that stands for: **Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance**. The SALDO acts as the "blueprint" for building a well-organized and livable community. **Subdivision** is the creation of new lots or property lines. **Land Development** is the construction of buildings and other improvements such as roads and utilities.

# how the

# works

**Engineers** will rely on the SALDO to understand construction standards for roads and public infrastructure. **Planners** will use the SALDO to apply landscaping requirements or parking lot layout. **Surveyors** will use it to layout new lots for homes or commercial buildings.

# who uses a SALDO?

The subdivision and land development ordinance is the most commonly used development control mechanism in Pennsylvania.

**Over 90 percent of the municipalities** have subdivision and land development regulations in effect, either by their own ordinance or by a county ordinance.

# who has a SALDO?

A subdivision and land development ordinance **differs** from a zoning ordinance.

A subdivision and land development ordinance **does not control use of land or buildings**. It does not define zones or districts in the municipality in which certain uses are permitted and others not, and in which there are different standards for density or intensity of development.

A subdivision and land development ordinance's design **standards apply uniformly** throughout a municipality.

# how is this different from zoning?



# Conservation Residential District

## intent

Marshall Township's Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2022, affirmed a strong public interest in preserving green space and natural resources. The plan benchmarked the Township's existing Conservation Residential (CR) zoning district against best practices and similar ordinances elsewhere and determined that it is largely accomplishing its aim: While the Township must allow for property owners to develop, it can require that development to be situated on a site in a way that permanently preserves large percentages of green space.

The proposed update to the CR district aims to build on this, preserving even higher percentages of green space in future development. It accomplishes this by adding two new configuration options: Permanently preserve more green space in exchange for more housing type options and a slightly higher yield. The proposed update also strengthens landscaping and buffer requirements, which will help tuck future developments into the forest landscape of Marshall's western side.

## how it works

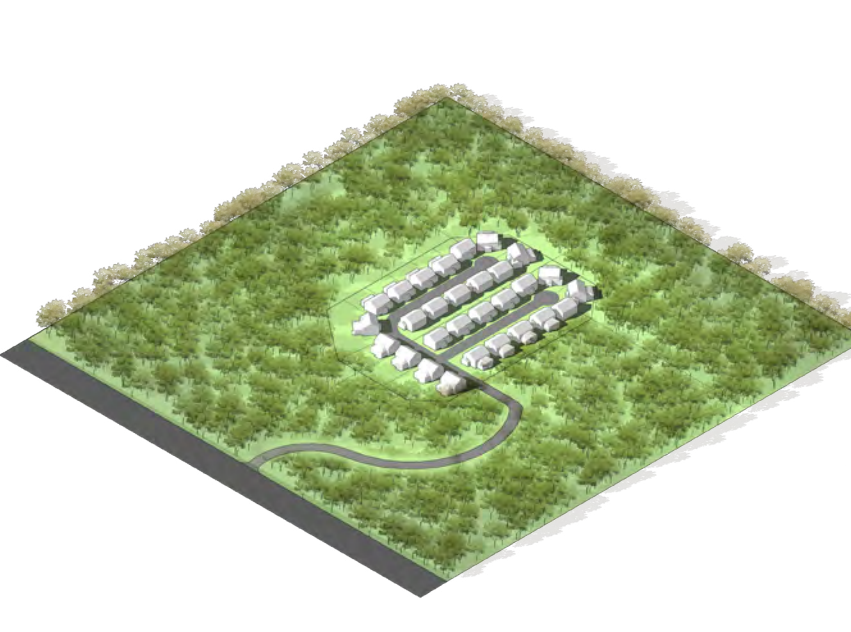
The Conservation Subdivision Design approach, or cluster development, is the prevailing best practice for reducing the impact of housing development on green space. It limits the footprint of development, requiring the permanent preservation of key natural features as well as a minimum percentage of undeveloped space.



Conservation Subdivision Design  
Plan View



Traditional Subdivision Design  
Plan View



Conservation Subdivision Design  
Perspective



Traditional Subdivision Design  
Perspective

## options

### 1 Existing: Single-Family

Developers can now build single-family detached homes in a cluster option at a density factor of 1.0 homes/net acre, after subtracting out constrained areas (natural features). This requires preserving **at least 40%** of the tract as permanently protected greenway.

### 2 New: Mixed Cluster

Developers that agree to carve out **at least 55%** of the tract as permanently protected greenway can mix in some duplexes (up to 25% of all homes) and/or townhouses (up to 40%). To make this market-feasible, the option allows for an additional 0.15 homes/net acre.

### 3 New: Housing Variety

Developers that agree to carve out **at least 70%** of the tract as permanently protected greenway can mix in more duplexes (up to 30% of all homes) and/or townhouses (up to 70%). To make this market-feasible, the option allows for an additional 0.3 homes/net acre.

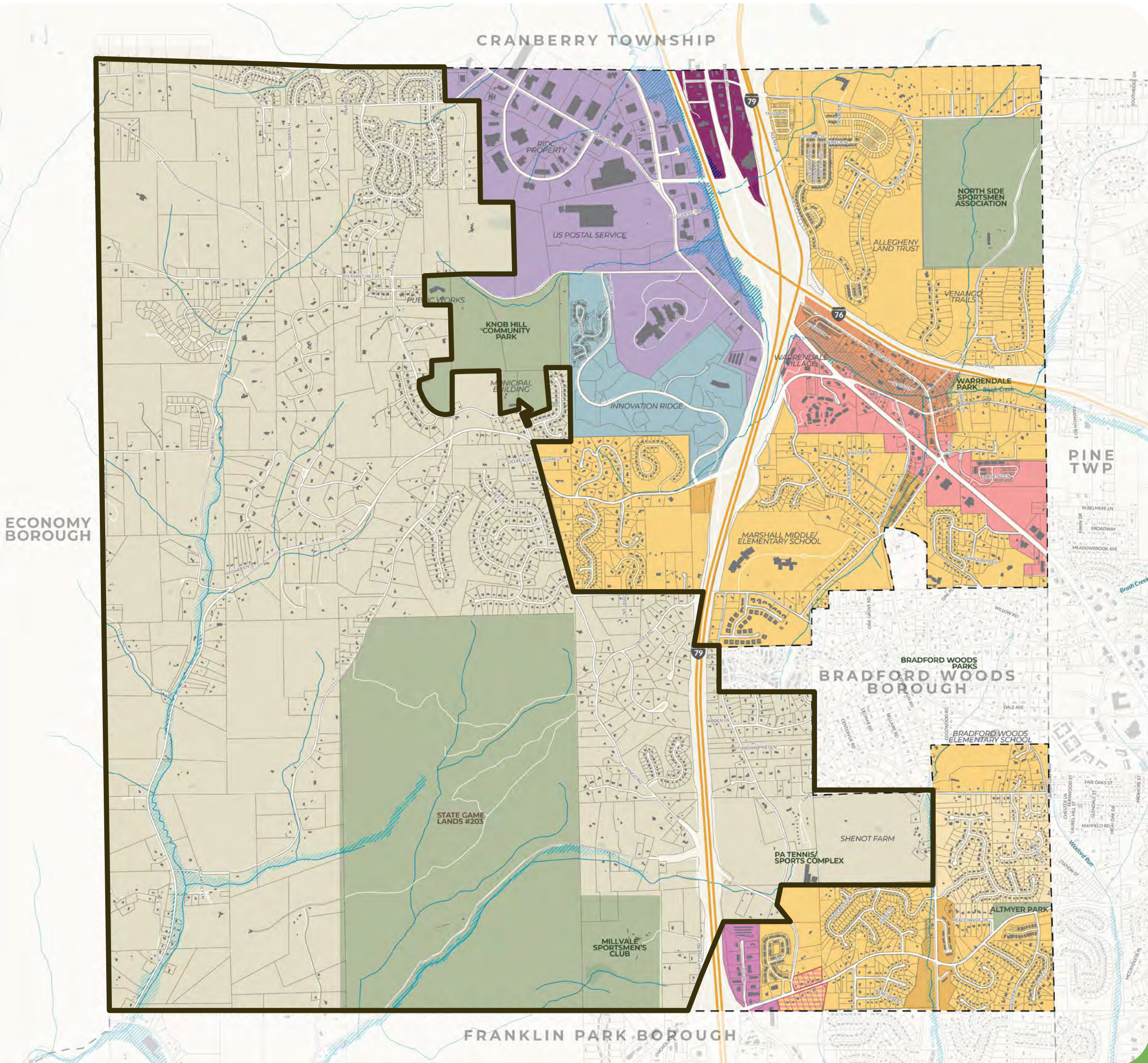
## planmarshall township

### CURRENT ZONING DISTRICTS

- HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL
- ROUTE 19 BOULEVARD
- TOWN CENTER
- MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL
- CONSERVATION RESIDENTIAL
- OPEN SPACE, PUBLIC AND CONSERVATION
- RESIDENTIAL RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY PARK
- PLANNED OFFICE, RESEARCH AND BUSINESS PARK
- PLANNED INDUSTRIAL PARK
- FLOODPLAIN OVERLAY

### PROPOSED ZONING OVERLAY

- ROUTE 910 TRANSITIONAL OVERLAY





# How this idea has evolved throughout the planning process



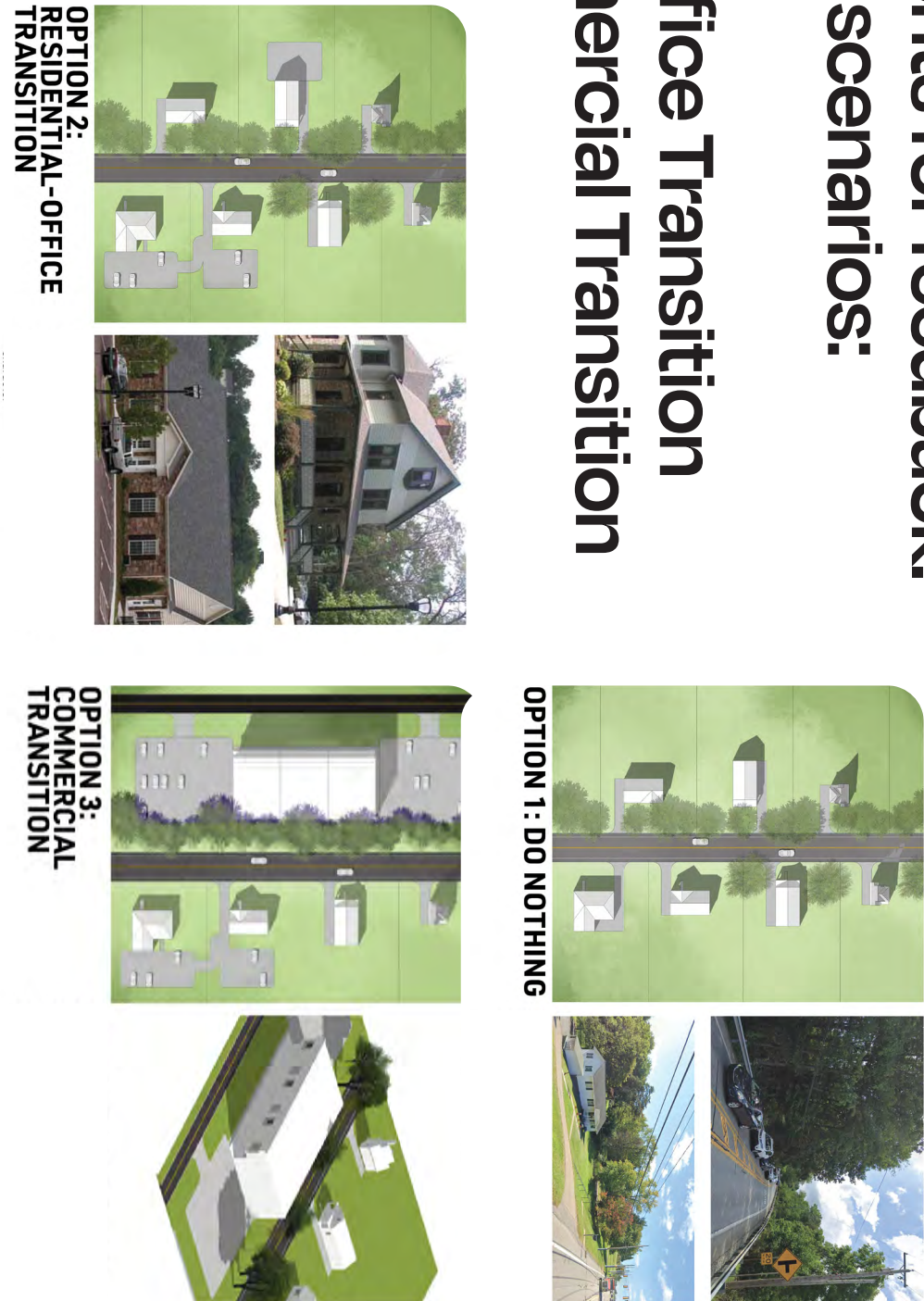
2022 PLAN MARSHALL TOWNSHIP: IMPLEMENTABLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2022

JULY 2022: The Comprehensive Plan identifies traffic and land use along Route 910 as a key issue. The plan's recommendation is to establish a zoning overlay to respond to land use demands associated with the anticipated impacts of the I-79 interchange.

The project team presents the initial concepts from the comp plan to the steering committee for direction. An online visual preference survey was sent out to residents for feedback. There were three scenarios:

- 1. Do nothing.
- 2. Residential-Office Transition
- 3. Limited Commercial Transition



2023

THE ORDINANCE UPDATE PROJECT TESTS OVERLAY CONCEPTS WITH THE STEERING COMMITTEE AND PUBLIC



PROPERTY OWNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS ALONG 910 GATHER WITH PROJECT TEAM TO WORKSHOP CONCEPTS AND GIVE FEEDBACK

2024

THE PROJECT TEAM REFINES THE DRAFT AND PRESENTS NEW ITERATION TO STEERING COMMITTEE

THE TOWNSHIP HOLDS ANOTHER MEETING TO ELICIT FEEDBACK ON THE CURRENT ITERATION OF THE DRAFT



2025

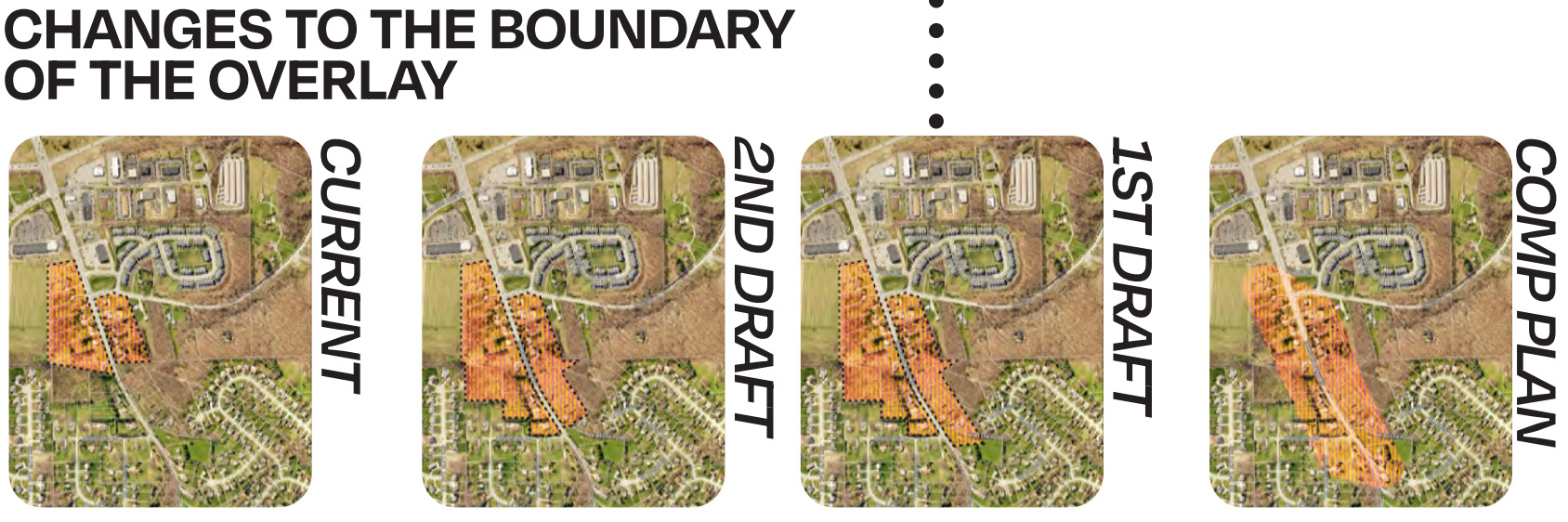
PROJECT TEAM DRAFTS CURRENT DRAFT ITERATION, SOLICITOR REVIEWS ORDINANCE, TEAM PRESENTS CURRENT ITERATION AT OPEN HOUSE FOR FEEDBACK

Property owners and stakeholders meet at Altmyer Barn to discuss the three above scenarios, safety of the corridor, changes along Rte. 910, and the future vision for the area.

Using the various sources of feedback, the project team writes the first draft of the zoning overlay policy with specifics for access management, screening requirements, conditional uses (limited commercial and townhomes), and greenspace requirements.

The draft was presented at a meeting at the Township building. More than 100 people attended the meeting to share opinions of the draft and give suggestions. The project team made adjustments to the draft after listening to concerns.

The current draft shrinks the boundary of the overlay to the parcels closest to Mingo Rd. This provides more of a buffer for existing neighborhoods. Conditional commercial land uses are removed. Development within the overlay must provide access at Mingo Rd. signal.





# Route 910 Corridor Existing Conditions

## Existing Conditions:

### Population Growth

Marshall Township and the surrounding North Hills communities were some of the fastest growing areas in the County over the last decade. Cranberry grew by 5,000 people from 2010 to 2020. Marshall and Pine Townships grew by ~3,000 each in that timeframe. Franklin Park grew by 2,000.

### Traffic Increases

PennDOT traffic counts show a steady increase of daily trips within this corridor. The graph below shows snapshot traffic counts over the last 30 years. According to PennDOT data, the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) for the corridor is around 19,000 trips per day.

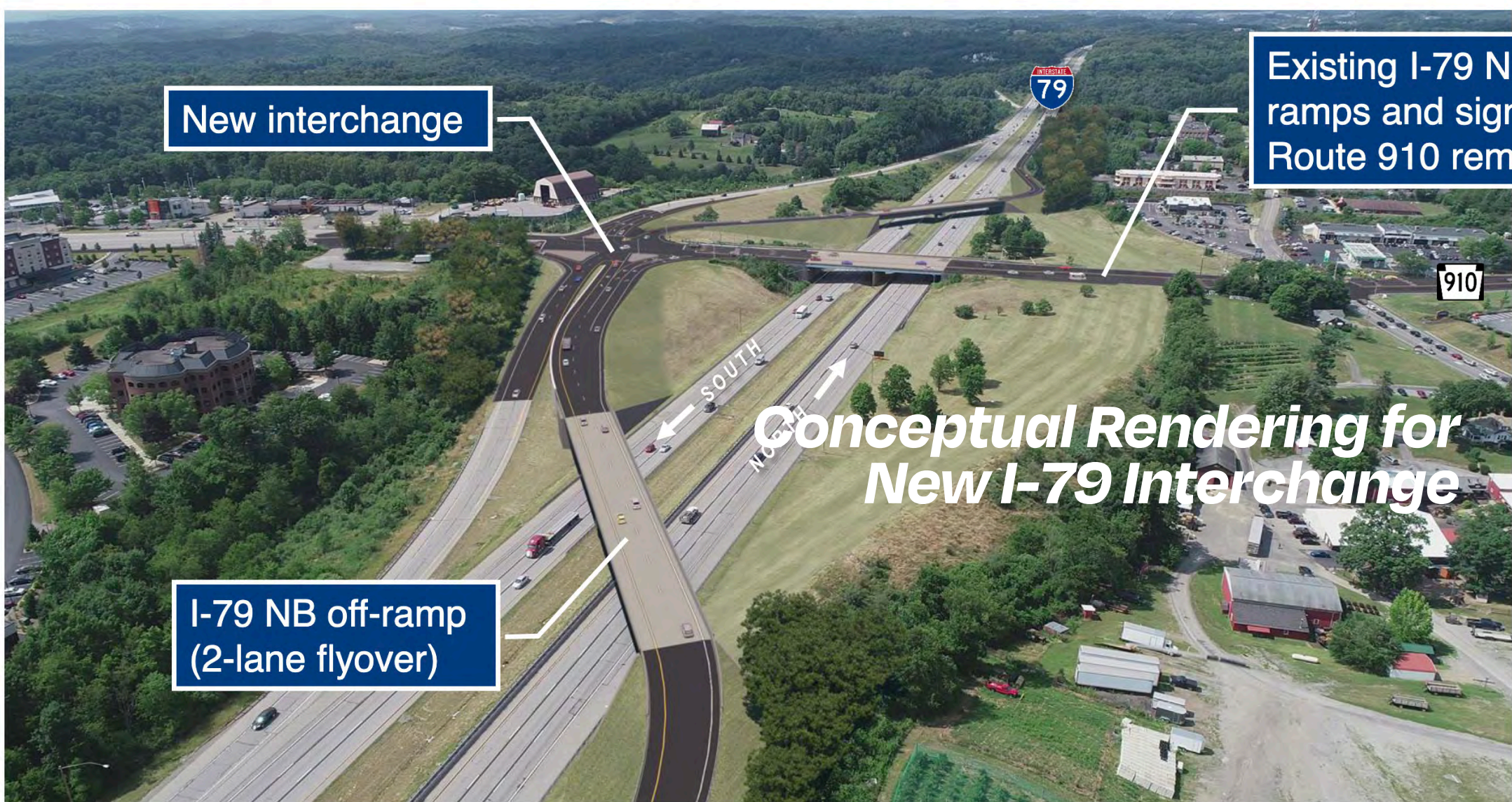
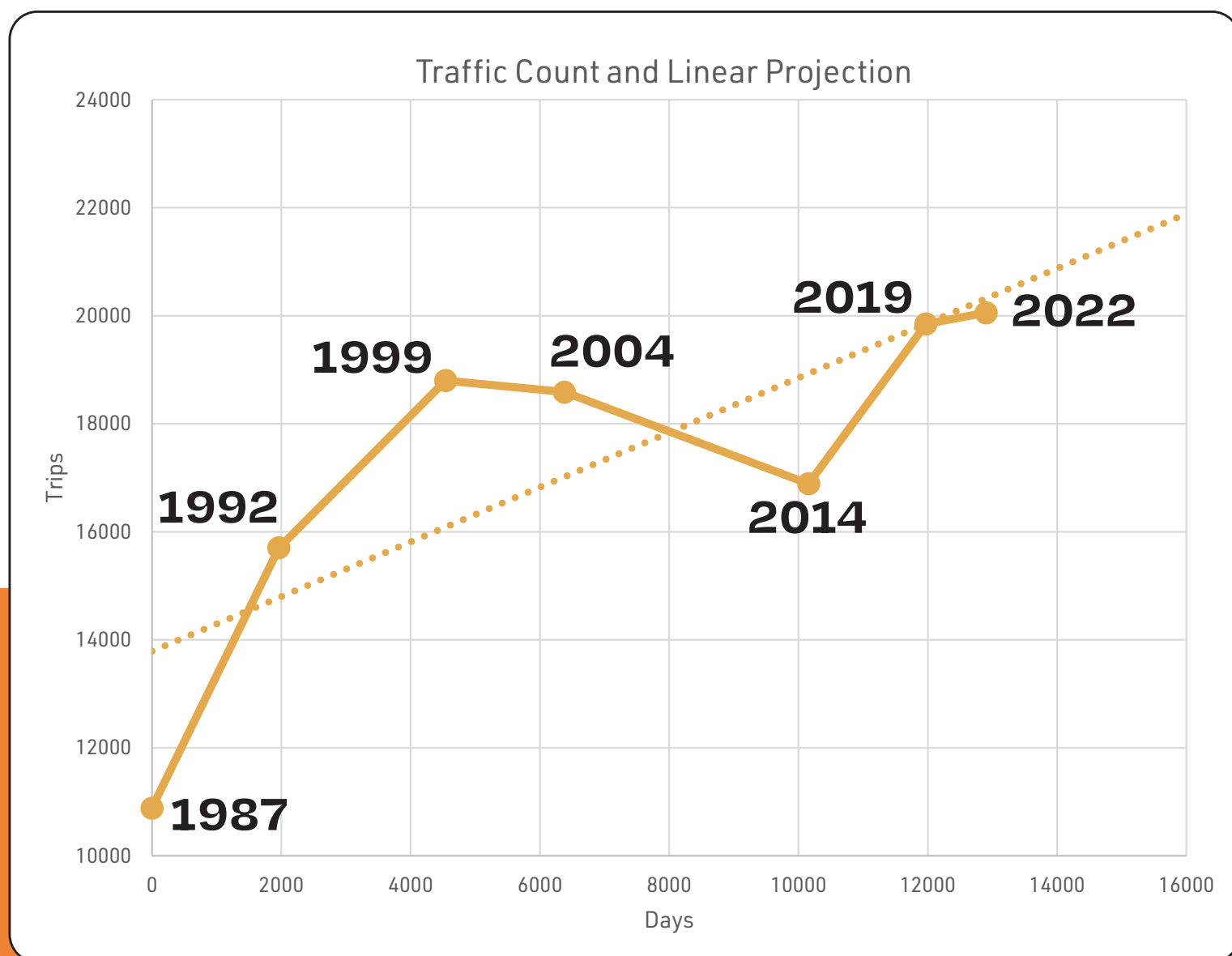
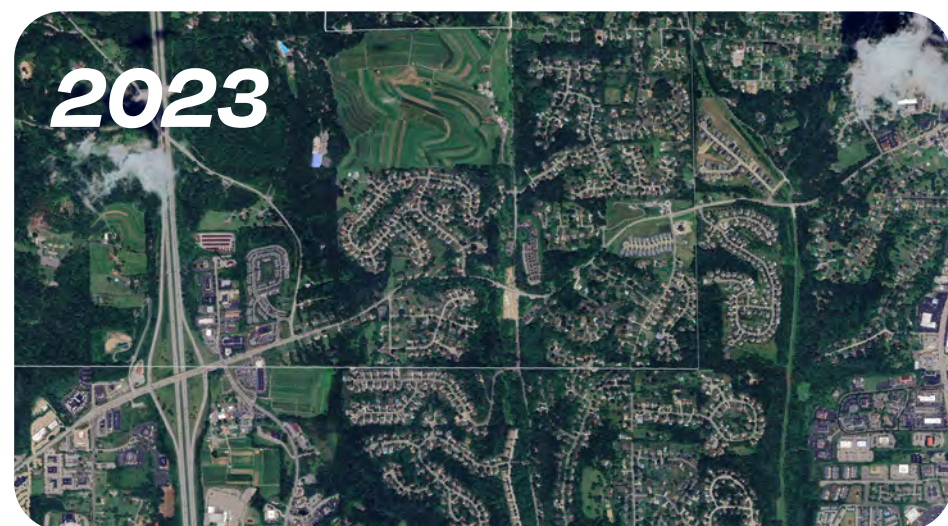
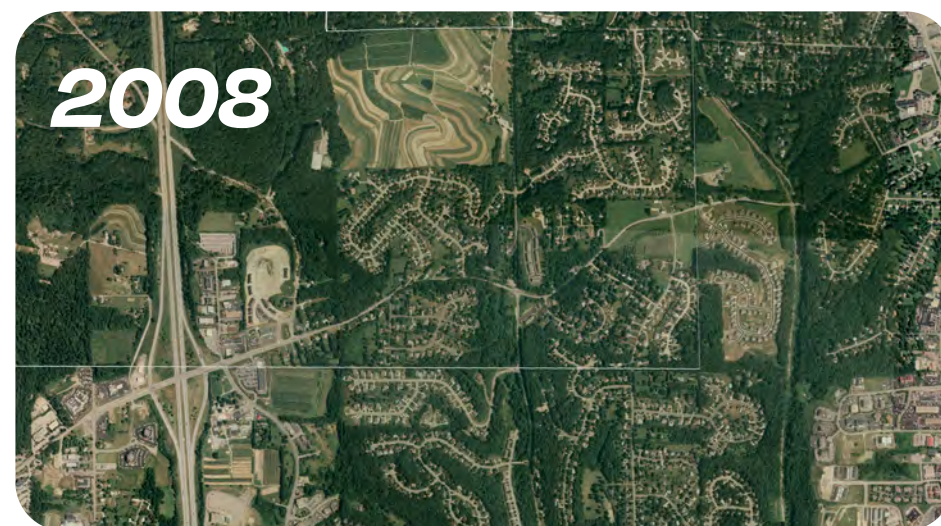
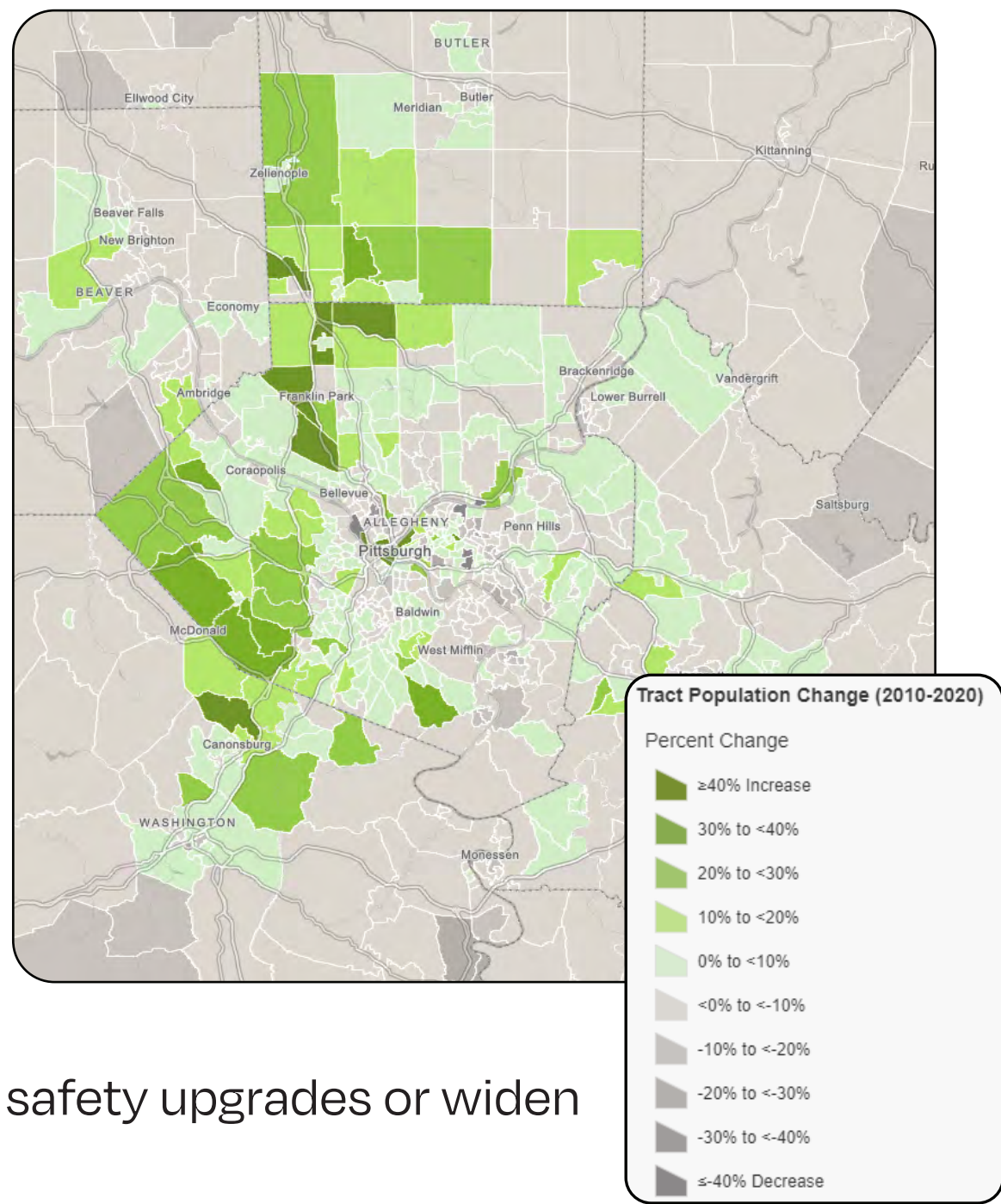
### PennDOT Repaves Route 910 w/No Safety Upgrades and Plans to Reconfigure the Wexford Interchange

Recently, PennDOT repaved Route 910 from I-79 to Gibsonia for a total of \$8.4 Million. This indicates that PennDOT does not plan to make safety upgrades or widen lanes to this corridor any time soon.

A new I-79 Wexford interchange will intensify traffic issues along Route 910 exacerbating noise and congestion. As single-family homes along this corridor become less tenable between Mingo and Wexford Run Roads, can the Township do anything to increase safety and help homeowners retain property values?

### The Situation for Homeowners

These worsening traffic conditions are posing safety risks to the families who live directly on Wexford-Bayne Road. Residents report many close calls turning in and out of driveways.





# Route 910 Overlay (RTO District)

Because Wexford-Bayne Road is a PennDOT owned road, the Township only has so much control over what it can do to increase safety in the area. One idea is to allow for redevelopment to occur under strict regulations to ensure driveway access is consolidated at traffic-signal intersections and safety features are implemented. In this case, the most direct way the Township can bring about needed intersection improvements is by enabling compatible redevelopment.

## ***What We're Exploring:***

### ***Potential Zoning Overlay***

An overlay district is applied over one or more base districts to establish additional or stricter standards and criteria.

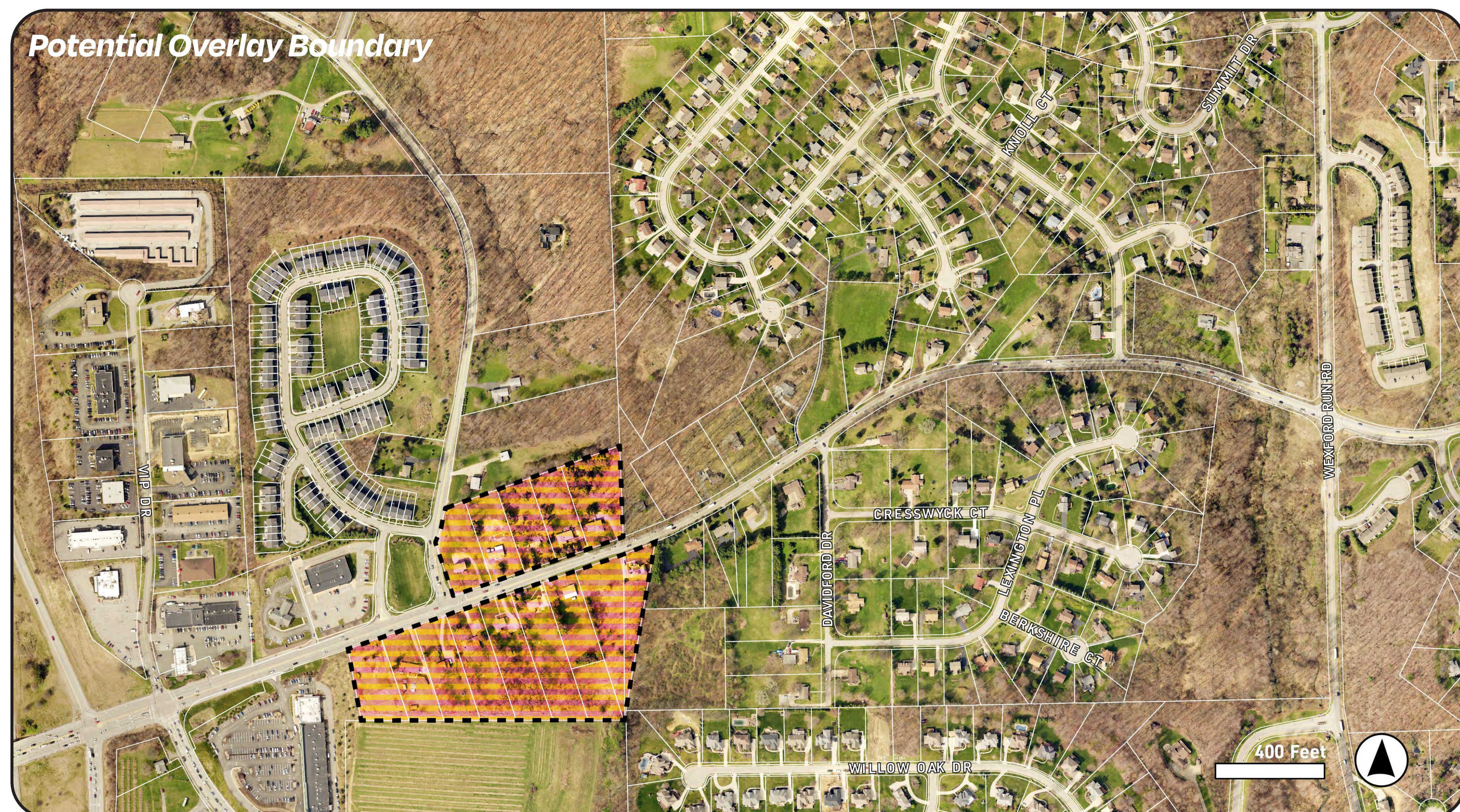
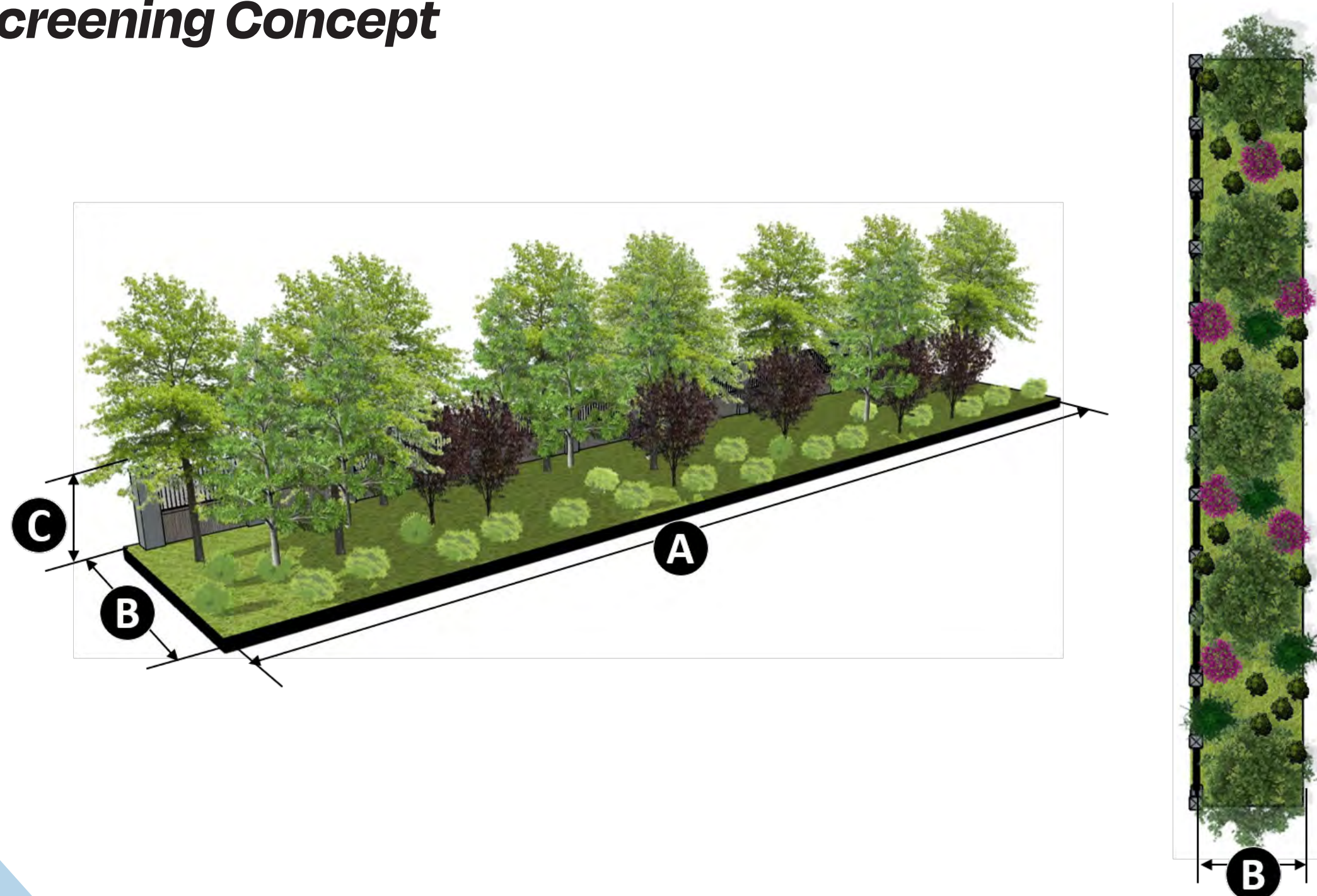
### ***Strict Design Guidelines for Screening, Walkability, and Access Management***

Foster improved traffic circulation and safety for all users through access control. Maintain a high level of scenic and aesthetic quality along the Route 910 corridor.

### ***Allowing Townhouses If Safety and Access Conditions are Met***

Enable transition to multifamily uses. Limit the impact of development on residences through controlling the scale and orientation of buildings and parking lots and requiring buffer landscaping, rear access road, and a signal-controlled ingress/egress.

## ***Screening Concept***





# The Ordinance Opts for Native Species

## Protecting Our Environment Together

**What's New?** Our Township has updated its planting ordinance to eliminate invasive species from the required planting list. This means that future plantings will feature native, locally resilient species.

### Why This Matters:

- **Preserve Local Ecosystems:** Native plants support local wildlife and maintain the natural balance.
- **Reduce Maintenance:** Native species are well-adapted to our climate, requiring less water and care.
- **Combat Invasive Species:** Prevent the spread of plants that can harm our environment and outcompete native flora.

## Shrubs

- |                                   |                                |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Bottlebrush Buckeye             | • Gray Dogwood                 |
| • Running Serviceberry            | • Red Twig Dogwood             |
| • Red Chokeberry                  | • Isanti Red Twig Dogwood      |
| • Black Chokeberry                | • Arctic Fire Red Twig Dogwood |
| • Lowscape Mound Black Chokeberry | • Yellow Twig Dogwood          |
| • Ground Hog Black Chokeberry     | • Northern Bush Honeysuckle    |
| • American Beautyberry            | • Fothergilla                  |
| • Carolina Allspice/Sweetshrub    | • Blue Mist Fothergilla        |
| • Summersweet                     | • Blue Shadow Fothergilla      |
| • Crystalina Summersweet          | • Mt. Airy Fothergilla         |
| • Hummingbird Summersweet         | • Ozark Witchhazel             |
| • Ruby Spice Summersweet          | • Common Witchhazel            |
| • Silky Dogwood                   | • Smooth Hydrangea             |
|                                   | • Incrediball Smooth Hydrangea |



## Trees

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| • Red Maple              | • Eastern Redbud       |
| • Silver Maple           | • White Fringetree     |
| • Sugar Maple            | • Yellowwood           |
| • Freeman Maple          | • Flowering Dogwood    |
| • Allegheny Serviceberry | • Thornless Hawthorn   |
| • Eastern Serviceberry   | • Honeylocust          |
| • Apple Serviceberry     | • Kentucky Coffeetree  |
| • Gray Birch             | • Carolina Silverbell  |
| • River Birch            | • American Holly       |
| • American Hornbeam      | • Eastern Red Cedar    |
| • Pignut Hickory         | • American Sweetgum    |
| • Shagbark Hickory       | • Tulip Tree           |
| • Mockernut Hickory      | • Cucumbertree         |
| • Hackberry              | • Sweetbay Magnolia    |
|                          | • Blackgum             |
|                          | • American Hophornbeam |



## Groundcovers

- |                               |                       |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Rozanne Cranesbill Geranium | • Pennsylvania Sedge  |
| • Blue Ice Blue Star          | • Snow in Summer      |
| • Mountain Rockcress          | • Plumbago            |
| • Butterfly Weed              | • Goldenstar          |
| • Blue Gramma                 | • Lanceleaf Coreopsis |
| • Blue Green Sedge            | • Hay-scented Fern    |
|                               | • Tufted Hair Grass   |





# New Buffer Standards

## ***Protecting Our Views and Our Rural Feel***

Marshall Township is considering a new zoning change that enhances our commitment to protecting the environment and the beauty of our rural landscapes and feel.

### ***What's New?***

#### ***Increased Buffer Depths***

We're expanding buffer zones to better protect our natural resources.

#### ***Prioritizing Successional Forest Growth***

Fostering the natural progression of our forests to ensure long-term ecological health.

#### ***Planting Native Tree and Shrub Species***

Enhancing biodiversity by planting species that are native to our region.

#### ***Protecting Rural Viewsheds***

Preserving the scenic beauty of our countryside for future generations.



***Buffer After Planting***



***Buffer After Growth***

