



Chester County
Open Space Preservation Department

Where in PA is Chester County?

United States Mid-Atlantic Region

Somethin's Happenin' Here

POPULATION	
1960: Chester County 210,608	PA 11,319,366 (1.86%)
1980: Chester County 316,660 (+50%)	PA 11,863,895 (2.67%)

CHESTER COUNTY OPEN SPACE BENCHMARKS	
1987	County Commissioners' Open Space Task Force recommends \$50 million funding question on 1989 ballot.
1989	81% of voters favor \$50 million County Open Space Bond

Who, What, Where, When, Why, How?

IN THE BEGINNING: 1990

1990	Open Space Task Force develops guidelines for investing open space bond funds:
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- 1) Planning and Plan Implementation Grants for municipal Open Space, Recreation & Environmental Resource Plans
- 2) Municipal Parkland Acquisition, Facilities, and Small Improvements
- 3) Grants to land trusts and conservancies
- 4) Farmland Purchase of Development Rights
- 5) Municipal Spray Irrigation Demonstration Grants
- 6) County Parks Acquisition Funding

THE NEED FOR OPEN SPACE - FACT SHEET

- [illegible]

Chester County – Municipal Open Space Funding: 1992-2007

Municipality	Open Space Funding	Municipality	Open Space Funding
	1992		2001
(1) West Whitehead	\$6 million Open Space Bond	(1) Charleston (1)	20% earned income tax
	1994	(16) N. Nottingham	0.25% earned income tax
(2) East Graham	\$3 million Open Space Bond	(17) Loudounbury	0.25% earned income tax
(3) East Graham	\$3 million Open Space Bond	(18) Lower Oxford	0.50% earned income tax
(4) Transylvania		(19) Portsmouth	0.25% earned income tax
(5) Transylvania		(20) Upper Oxford	0.50% earned income tax
(6) E. Bradford	0.125% increase in earned income tax	(21) West Whitehead	0.125% earned income tax
	1999		2004
(7) E. Marlborough	\$0.02 per \$100 assessed property value	(22) East Nottingham	0.5% earned income tax
(7) Wilkeson	0.125% increase in earned income tax	(23) Highland	0.5% earned income tax
	2009	(24) West Sashbury	0.2% earned income tax
(8) Charleston	\$2.7 million Open Space Bond		2005
(8) Bradford (5)	0.25% increase in the earned income tax	(25) Henry Hook	0.5% earned income tax
(9) London Britain Twp.	\$0.02 per \$100 assessed property value	(26) Keenot	0.25% earned income tax
	2002	(27) New Garden	0.125% earned income tax
(10) E. Brandywine	0.125% earned income tax		2006 - Spring
(11) E. Vineland	0.25% earned income tax	East Vincent Twp. (11)	37.5% earned income tax
(12) Franklin	\$0.04 per \$100 assessed property value	(28) Lower Gironde	0.25% earned income tax
(13) North Country	0.25% earned income tax	(29) North Country	0.25% earned income tax
(14) W. Vineland	\$0.09 per \$100 assessed property value	West Vincent (14)	25% earned income tax
	2002 - Spring		2006 - Fall
(15) Warwick	0.25% earned income tax	(10) Elk Pheasant	0.25% earned income tax
		(11) Elk	50% earned income tax
		(12) Schuldt	25% earned income tax
			2007
		(13) West Pheasant	25% earned income tax



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1999-2004	
1999	\$75 million 1999-2003 [- \$63 million for 1999-2003 for land preservation; -\$12 million for Urban Revitalization].
2001	"Chester County Farmland Challenge Grant Program for Farmland Preservation" New farmland preservation program to match municipal funding in northern Chester County.
2002	Commissioners adopt <i>Linking Landscapes: A Plan for the Protected Open Space Network in Chester County</i> -- <u>adopt 5,000 acre benchmark for annual land preservation.</u>
2003	\$60 million 2003-2007 [\$48 million for land preservation -\$12 million for Urban Revitalization].
2004	Department of Open Space Preservation created.

**Chester County Department of
Parks & Recreation**


Municipal Grants
1 Staff

Conservancy & Land Trust Grants
1 Staff

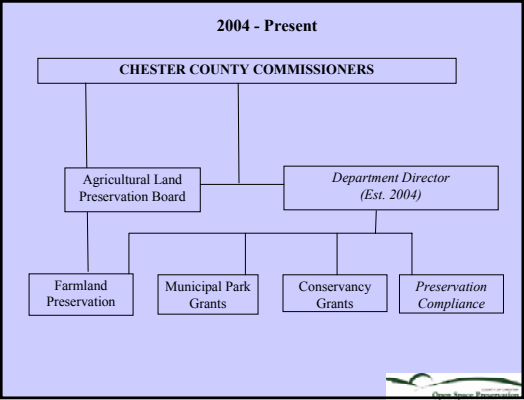
**Chester County Planning
Commission**

Agricultural Land
Preservation Board
3.5 Staff

Compliance Monitor
1 Staff



Source: Chester County Planning Commission



1999 - 2009

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2004	Department of Open Space Preservation created, Commissioners hire first Director
2004	Chester County Farmland Challenge Grant Program For Farmland Preservation expands to include entire County.
2006	Chester County Agricultural Land Preservation Board preserves 20,000 ⁺ acre of farmland in the County.
2007	\$80 million 2007-2011 [\$58 million to preservation -\$20 million to Urban Revitalization & \$2 million to Planning]
2008	Conservancy Grant Program sets record with over 1,000 acres preserved in 2008.
2009	• County Commissioners adopt Strategic Goal to permanently preserve 30% of the County by 2015 • Conservancy Grant Program Partners permanently preserve 5,000 ⁺ acre and Preserve Guide is Updated.

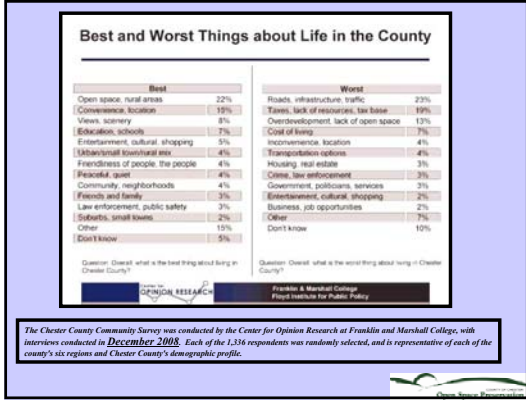
POPULATION

2000: Chester County 433,501 PA 12,281,052 (3.54%)

2008: Chester County 491,489 PA 12,448,279 (3.95%)

2005-2035 increase to 622,498 (31%) change projected by DVRPC. Highest in 5 County Philadelphia (PA) region.

- In 1987, it was estimated that Chester County's 2010 population would be 420,000.
- It exceeded 490,000 in 2008.



VITAL LANDSCAPES OF THE GREATER PHILADELPHIA REGION

SOUTHWEST CHESTER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL REGION

With deep, highly fertile soils, abundant natural rainfall, and a long growing season, the agricultural lands of southwest Chester County are considered to be some of the best non-irrigated farmland in the world, and have been for nearly 300 years.

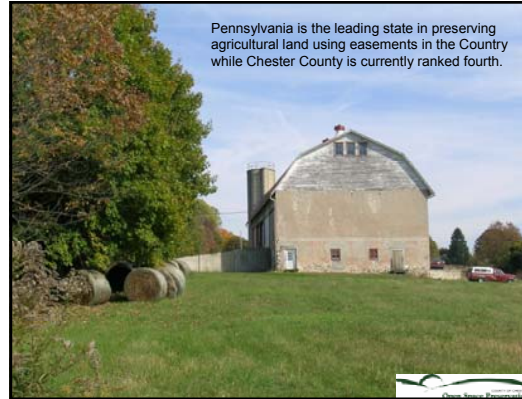
This region of gently rolling piedmont hills is a prime example of the agrarian heritage of Southeastern Pennsylvania, and remains a working landscape farmed by Old Order Amish, Amish Mennonites, and "the English." The region is dotted with villages and crossroad towns and numerous mills and covered bridges serve as a testament to the landscapes of the past.

The region's farmland is fed by numerous streams and rivers, including Octorara Creek, Northeast Creek, Big and Little Elk Creeks, White Clay Creek, and Buck and Doe Runs. Not simply a farming region though, southwest Chester County is also home to unique natural areas including the Laurels Preserve, the Serpentine Barrens of Goat Hill, Nottingham and Chrome, the Big Elk Woods, and Thistle Hill, as well as forest cover in its steep valleys and wet lowlands.

Even though residents have consistently voted to increase taxes in order to preserve the land they love and their way of life, increased development pressures mean more efforts are needed.



Preservation Partnership Program
Chester County Preservation



Pennsylvania is the leading state in preserving agricultural land using easements in the Country while Chester County is currently ranked fourth.

Preservation Partnership Program
Chester County Preservation

Preservation Partnership Program



- 5,029 acres preserved
- 120 completed grants

Preservation Partnership Program
Chester County Preservation

PPP Public Benefits: Stroud



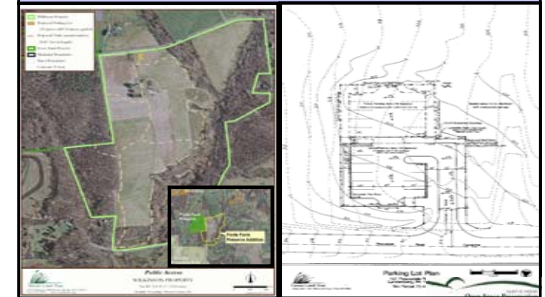
Keys to Sustained Success

- Active and engaged nonprofit community
- County funding for some indirect costs
- Creative & consistent County funding for quality projects
- Availability of Public Matching Funds (Commonwealth & Municipalities)
- Private Support (bargain sales & Foundation Funds) for matching
- Increasing Incorporation of Public Access



Market Opportunities

113 Acres Abuts 60 Acre Preserve 33 Acre Addition in works



Preservation Partnership Program
Farmland Preservation Component

- Funding requests submitted by private nonprofit
- County funds awarded to private nonprofit
- Private nonprofit completes the transaction



Municipal Park Grant Program

335 completed grants

165 Parks created & improved

5,103 acres preserved

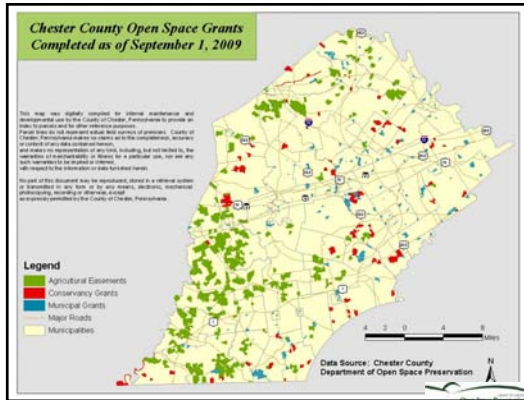


Palmer Park



City of Coatesville











East Branch of the Brandywine: All volunteer



8,000 Trees & Shrubs: Riparian Restoration



Down by the Water's Edge

The creek that flows through and is protected by Crow's Nest Preserve is French Creek, a state-designated Exceptional Value stream and Pennsylvania Scenic River. The waters of the creek originate in seeps and springs in French Creek State Park, then merge with a tributary stream named Pine Creek as they meander through Crow's Nest. French Creek then flows into the Schuylkill River at Phoenixville, which, in turn flows into the Delaware River at Philadelphia, snugging on to the Delaware Bay. Since these interconnected watersheds are a source of

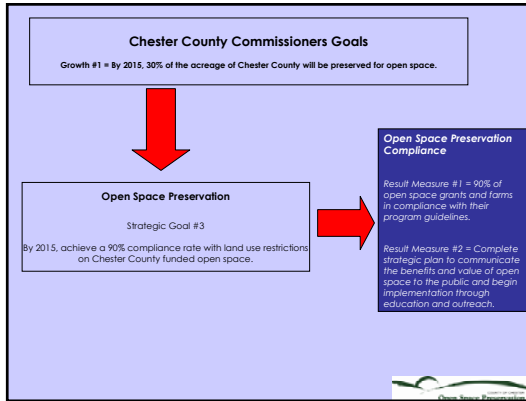
drinking water for nearly 1.5 million people, it is easy to appreciate why the health and cleanliness of French Creek is so important.

One of the ways that we can improve the water quality in the

French Creek—or in any stream, river or lake—is to take better care of the land around it, which is known as the riparian area or riparian buffer. Trees and other plants in this area filter the precipitation as well as the nutrients and sediments in the surface and groundwater that flows into the creek. Native trees also provide shade and food that benefit fish, river otter, and other aquatic species. This is why we have planted trees along this creek and will continue to encourage native plants to grow along its banks.

We can see each growth with respect from the heights of its Binky Lee Preserve and location of French Creek. Photo: Binky Lee

Binky Lee Preserve: 200+ Trees & interpretive signs



Monitoring

- Mail inspection reports
- Review project file
 - Conservation plans
 - Baseline documentation
 - Past monitoring reports
 - Maps
 - Landowner information

Department Microfiche Records

#004 Mast, David L. & Janei E. 1

Cedar Hollow Preserve



Encroachment: Before

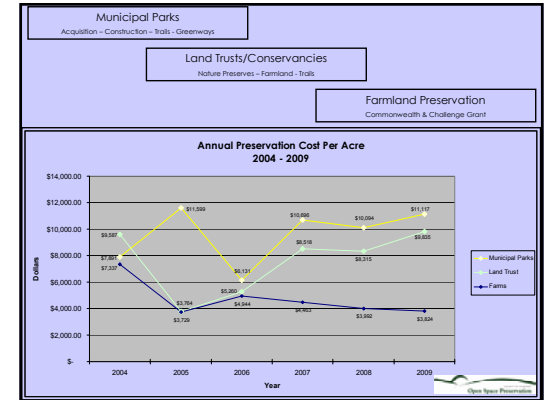


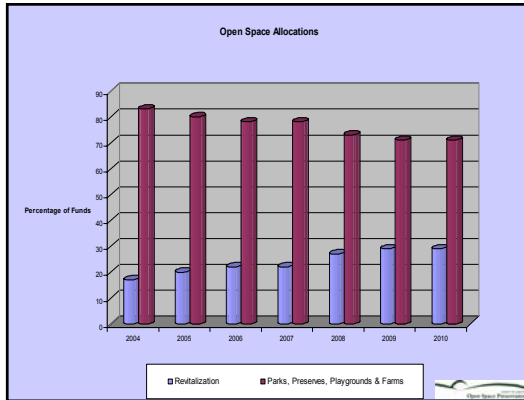
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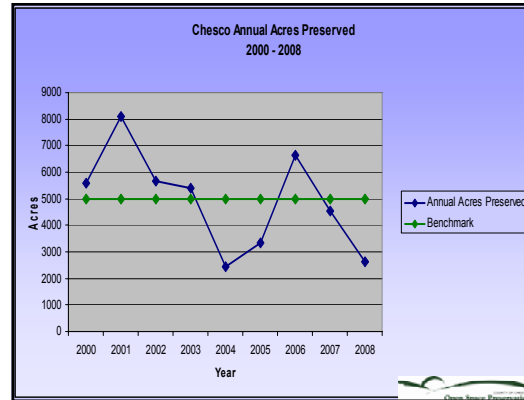
Encroachment: After
– Site restored



–Surveyed property markers
entered as GPS points










Phoenixville – Bridge Street

Spring City – Main Street

66%+ increase in Open Space funds committed to Urban Revitalization 2007-2011





DAILY POST-NEWS
Serving Chester County Published: **Thursday, October 1, 2009**
Construction begins on Chester Valley Trail By MICHAEL P. RELLAHAN, Staff Writer

EAST WHITELAND — Construction has begun on the long-awaited Chester Valley Trail, the hiking and biking recreational trail that will eventually connect central Chester County with Philadelphia. Construction and engineering crews began work on the trail last week. Brush and trees are being cleared to make way for the replacement of a century-old culvert that must be replaced before the trail is opened.

On Wednesday, the three county commissioners met with construction managers for the project at a portion of the trail near the East Whiteland Municipal Building. They got a quick rundown of the work that was proceeding and a glimpse of what the trail will look like in the future.

"This is another step on the way to getting Chester County listed as the number one county in America," Chairman Terence Farrell said as he walked the trail south of Route 401. Part of the county's strategic plan for open space and recreation, the trail "helps create a wonderful environment that makes people want to live here. It's part of the charm of Chester County," Farrell said.

The Chester Valley Trail, which runs from Exton to the Trodaffin border with Montgomery County, has been 13 years in the making, according to information provided by the county. It stretches 12.2 miles along the former rail bed of the Chester Valley Railroad, which long ago abandoned it.

Getting the project started is a stunning achievement, said Commissioner Carol Achels, who has championed it in her two terms in office. "This has been many years in the making," she said Wednesday. "It is always so difficult to get a government project like this started, much more than people realize. I'm happy with this. Every now and then you win one." The benefits of the trail would be widespread, she said. In addition to providing recreational opportunities, she said she expects that commuters will use it during fair weather to get to work. "It'll be faster to get from Exton to King of Prussia than driving your car on (Route) 202," she said semi-jokingly.

Commissioner Kathi Cozzone, who said she had walked part of the trail earlier this summer, likened its creation, in its own small way, to the establishment of the U.S. National Park System. "In addition to the obvious transportation and recreation issues (that the trail addresses), it's also an opportunity for people to connect with the outdoor world. It's very powerful and almost spiritual in a way."

The first section runs from the Church Farm School on Swedesford Road in West Whiteland to where the rail bed crosses Route 29 in East Whiteland near the Route 202 interchange. About half of the 2-mile stretch is being constructed by the Whiteland Village senior housing development, in exchange for allowing a sanitary sewer line to run underneath the first two miles of the trail. The second section runs through East Whiteland and Trodaffin, past the Tropicant Industries corporate campus, and connects with the Montgomery County trail system that links with the Schuylkill River Trail that ends at the Philadelphia Art Museum.

Achels said that the commissioners had kept the project alive over the years despite the obstacles at the waging of a number of groups, most notably the Chester County Cycling Coalition. Mary LaSota, head of the coalition, said her group was encouraged by the start of construction. "It is going to provide a lot of opportunities for commuters and recreational cyclists," she said. "I know the cycling community as a whole has been waiting for this for a long time. We will be keeping an eye on the construction."

Trails are important to county residents for recreation purposes because of the lack of walkable sidewalks, Achels said. "Roads where people used to walk are no longer safe because of the increase in traffic," Achels said. "These trails are what people want." She said that over the years, the county had lagged behind other suburban counties in construction of walking and biking trails. "This is a step forward for Chester County," Cozzone agreed. "This has been in the works a long time, but I think there has been a real desire to get it done," she said. "This trail, and all the other trails (in the county), are a real draw for people to move here. "It's a good opportunity to take a walk on a Sunday afternoon with your family," she said.



Construction begins on Chester Valley Trail

Chester County Commissioner Terence Farrell, Chairman

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- "Part of the county's strategic plan for open space and recreation, the trail "helps create a wonderful environment that makes people want to live here. It's part of the charm of Chester County."

Growth #2 – By 2012 Chester County will be recognized as the #1 community in the nation to raise a family *(as determined by Forbes magazine criteria)*

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Keys to Success

Overall

- Leadership of County Commissioners & Elected Officials
- Culture of Conservation (Support from private organizations, voters, people of influence, landowners)
- Support of County Planning Commission & Parks and Recreation Department
- Accountability & Transparency
- Adaptability, Flexibility, Support

PPP/Land Trust/Conservancies:


- 3 Year Program Areas
- County appraisals
- Indirect Costs
- Funding "Mosaic Landscapes"
- Trails


Municipal Parks

- Critical to have Local Planning Foundation
- Specificity in DOCCR
- Most critical for inspections
- Complimentary of County Parks

Farmland Preservation

- Outreach and Support by Agricultural Land Preservation Board
- Early support from Agricultural Development Council
- Strong support from Commonwealth
- Diversity Partners (Municipalities)
- PPP Farmland Element






PENNSYLVANIA
LAND TRUST
ASSOCIATION
www.conserveland.org

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West Chester, PA 19380-0747
Phone 610 Chubbins

Congratulatory! On behalf of the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association (PLTA) we are pleased to inform you that Chester County has been chosen to receive the 2007 Pennsylvania Land Conservation Leadership Award, which recognizes the county's outstanding leadership in land conservation and its commitment to the preservation of natural areas and landscapes.

The award will be presented at the meeting of Susquehanna State College on May 12th at the 1207

State & National Awards
Increasing Scrutiny



Five counties awarded for leadership in conservation

By [Name] Staff Writer

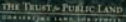
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*The County of Chester
Office of the Controller
Internal Audit Department*


*Management Letter
Open Space Green Program
2 of 2 letters in audit*



THE TRUST & PUBLIC LAND
CONSERVATION PROGRAM

LESSONS LEARNED

- Importance of communicating results
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Create an environment conducive to the conservation business
- Be responsive
- Choose your battles wisely
- All partners have limitations – know and respect them
- Find the opportunities in the challenges
- Give credit to partners whenever possible
- Embrace the spirit of competition
- Seize opportunities to leverage resources of others (trails, farms, parks)
- Be positive and candid – mission for optimists



Challenges

1) Increased Funding Challenges and Complexity of Acquisitions

2) Continued Contributions Across County Departments

3) Sustaining Public Support in Challenging Economy and After 20 Successful Years

4) Monitoring and Enforcement

5) Communicating Public Benefits of Land Preservation and Stewardship

6) Information Management and Reporting



Data Provided by Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

Chester County 2035 Population Forecasts



Year	Population Forecast (K)
1990	376.4K
2000	433.51K
2005	473.88K
2010	505.1K
2015	531.97K
2020	557.62K
2025	582.05K
2030	605.27K
2035	622.5K



COUNTY OF CHESTER

Open Space Preservation

Questions or Comments?

Chester County Department of Open Space Preservation

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