

## **CHAPTER 20**

### **POPULATION AND HOUSING**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will look at population and housing trends for St. Lawrence Borough, Exeter and Amity Townships, Berks County as a whole, and surrounding municipalities. The focus will be on past population trends and projections and expected population increases.

The tables found in Appendix 2 include:

- Gender
- Land Area and Population Density per Square Mile
- Racial Characteristics
- Average Persons Per Occupied Housing Unit
- Income, Poverty and Education Characteristics
- Persons by Age
- Employment by Industry
- Employment by Occupation
- Housing Occupancy, Tenure and Value
- Housing Type
- Households by Type
- Tenure by Age of Householder
- Place and Means of Transportation to Work

#### **Population and Housing Trends**

Table 1 gives total population for St. Lawrence Borough, Exeter and Amity Townships, and Berks County in 1980, 1990 and 2000.



**TABLE 1****TOTAL POPULATION****ST. LAWRENCE BOROUGH, EXETER TOWNSHIP, AMITY TOWNSHIP,  
BERKS COUNTY**

<b>Year</b>	<b>St. Lawrence Borough</b>			<b>Exeter Township</b>			<b>Amity Township</b>			<b>Berks County</b>		
	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Number Change</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Number Change</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Number Change</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Number Change</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
1980	1,376	-	-	14,419	-	-	5,883	-	-	312,497	-	-
1990	1,542	166	12.0	17,260	2,841	19.7	6,434	551	9.3	336,523	24,014	7.6
2000	<b>1,812</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>21,161</b>	<b>3,901</b>	<b>22.6</b>	<b>8,867</b>	<b>2,433</b>	<b>37.8</b>	<b>373,638</b>	<b>37,115</b>	<b>11.0</b>

Source: U.S. Census

The rates of growth in St. Lawrence Borough and Exeter and Amity Townships were greater than those of Berks County as a whole. From 1980 to 1990, the population of Exeter increased 19.7% and from 1990 to 2000, it increased 22.6%. Amity Township increased 9.3% from 1980 to 1990 and 37.8% from 1990 to 2000. The population also increased in St. Lawrence Borough between 1980 and 1990 and between 1990 and 2000, 12.0% and 17.5 respectively. The Berks County increases were 7.6% from 1980 to 1990 and 11.0% from 1990 to 2000.

Table 2 gives total population in 1980, 1990 and 2000 and the percentage of change from 1990 to 2000 for St. Lawrence Borough, Exeter and Amity Townships, Berks County and adjacent municipalities.

**TABLE 2**  
**TOTAL POPULATION**  
**ST. LAWRENCE BOROUGH, EXETER TOWNSHIP, AMITY TOWNSHIP,**  
**ADJACENT MUNICIPALITIES, AND BERKS COUNTY**

1980-2000

<b>Municipality</b>	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000
Alsace Township	3,456	3,459	3,689	6.6
<b>Amity Township</b>	5,883	6,434	8,867	37.8
Cumru Township	11,474	13,142	13,816	5.1
Douglas Township	3,128	3,570	3,327	-6.8
Earl Township	2,607	3,016	3,050	1.1
<b>Exeter Township</b>	14,419	17,260	21,161	22.6
Lower Alsace	4,906	4,627	4,478	-3.2
Mt. Penn Borough	3,025	2,883	3,016	4.6
Oley Township	3,024	3,362	3,583	6.5
Reading City	78,686	78,380	81,207	3.6
Robeson Township	4,729	5,954	6,869	15.3
<b>St. Lawrence Borough</b>	1,376	1,542	1,812	17.5
Union Township	2,815	3,440	3,453	0.3
<b>Berks County</b>	312,497	336,523	373,638	11.0

Source: U.S. Census

There were no municipalities that grew at faster rates than St. Lawrence Borough and Exeter and Amity Townships from 1990 to 2000. Robeson Township had the closest growth rate at 15.3%.

Table 3 indicates Total Housing Units for St. Lawrence Borough, Exeter and Amity Townships and Berks County in 1990 and 2000 and the Percent Change from 1990 to 2000.

**TABLE 3**  
**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS**  
**ST. LAWRENCE BOROUGH, EXETER TOWNSHIP, AMITY TOWNSHIP,**  
**BERKS COUNTY**

**2000**

	Total Housing Units		Change 1990-2000	
	1990	2000	Number	Percent
<b>St. Lawrence Borough</b>	622	781	159	25.6
<b>Exeter Township</b>	6,780	8,208	1,428	21.1
<b>Amity Township</b>	2,422	3,323	901	37.2
<b>Berks County</b>	134,482	150,222	15,740	11.7

Source: U.S. Census

The total number of housing units increased at a rate either almost equal to or greater than the population. For instance, from 1990 to 2000, the increase in housing units in St. Lawrence Borough was 25.6, while the population increased 17.5%. In Amity Township, the increase in housing units was 37.2%, while the population increase was 37.8%. In Exeter Township, the increase in housing units was 21.1%, while the population increase was 22.6%.

Table 4 provides population projections for St. Lawrence Borough and Exeter and Amity Townships for the years 2010, 2020 and 2030. Two projection techniques have been used to provide a range of possible population outcomes for the region. Due to a number of variables that can affect population projections, a single projection cannot be viewed as the sole source on which to base planning decisions. For this reason a range of population levels calculated to 2030 are

provided. The Low Range projections use the average rate of growth per decade for each municipality from 1980 to 2000. The High Range projections use the average rate of growth per decade for each municipality from 1990 to 2000.

**TABLE 4**

**POPULATION PROJECTIONS 2000-2030 USING  
PAST POPULATION GROWTH RATES**

**ST. LAWRENCE BOROUGH, EXETER TOWNSHIP, AMITY TOWNSHIP**

	2000	2010	2020	2030
<b>St. Lawrence Borough</b>				
Low Range	1,812	2,030	2,250	2,470
High Range	1,812	2,078	2,344	2,610
<b>Exeter Township</b>				
Low Range	21,161	24,530	27,900	31,275
High Range	21,161	25,625	30,090	34,560
<b>Amity Township</b>				
Low Range	8,867	10,360	11,850	13,345
High Range	8,867	10,950	13,040	15,125

Source: U.S. Census, SSM 2001.

The range of projections calculated for municipalities indicate that population has the potential to increase by forty-seven to sixty-four (47-64%) by the year 2030. Exeter Township has a projected population of between 24,530 and 25,625 for 2010 and a projected population between 31,275 and 34,560 for the year 2030. Amity Township has a projected population between 10,360 and 10,950 for 2010 and a projected population for the year 2030 of between 13,345 and 15,125. St. Lawrence Borough is projected to grow to between 2,030 and 2,078 for 2010 and 2,470 and 2,610 by the year 2030.

Table 5 provides residential construction information for St. Lawrence Borough and Exeter and Amity Townships in 2001, 2002 and 2003, as published by the Berks County Data Book.

**TABLE 5**

**ST. LAWRENCE BOROUGH, EXETER TOWNSHIP, AMITY TOWNSHIP,  
BERKS COUNTY**

**RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION SURVEY  
(Based on No. of Units Authorized by Permit)  
2001 and 2002, from Assessment Office 2003**

Municipality	No. of Single Family	No. of Semi-Detached	No. of Town Houses	No. of Apartment Units	No. of Manuf. Homes	No. of Conversions	No. of Apts. Formed	No. of Units De-molished	Net Increase
St. Lawrence Borough 2001	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
St. Lawrence Borough 2002	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
St. Lawrence Borough 2003	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Exeter Township 2001	366	---	---	---	14	---	---	3	377
Exeter Township 2002	154	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	154
Exeter Township 2003	143	---	---	24	14	---	---	---	181
Amity Township 2001	No Information								
Amity Township 2002	240	---	---	---	2	---	---	1	241
Amity Township 2003	214	---	---	---	2	---	---	---	216

Source: U.S. Census

From 2001 to 2003, St. Lawrence Borough saw no new residential development. However, Exeter and Amity Townships continued to experience substantial construction, with Exeter Township having 712 net units permitted/constructed and Amity Township having 457 net units permitted/constructed over 2 years.

### **U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates**

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates 2003 St. Lawrence population as 1791, a slight decrease from 2000. Amity is estimated as 10,371, a 17% increase from 2000. Exeter is estimated as 23,450, a 10.8% increase from 2000. These appear to be reasonable estimates based on permit/construction activity. It also indicates that population projections for the Borough based on past trends are high. A subdivision of about 30 dwelling units is currently before the Borough. Given limited open land available within the Borough, population growth is likely to be below the Low Range number. For Amity Township, the 2010 Low Range projection was already exceeded in 2003, and the High Range projection will be exceeded well before 2010. At the current growth rate, 2010 population would be approximately 13,900.

Exeter Township is also on pace to exceed the 2010 High Range projection, though not by as high a percentage as Amity Township. At the current growth rate, 2010 population would be approximately 28,800.

### **Additional Population and Housing Observations**

No major population, income, or housing problems have been identified in the area.

## **CHAPTER 21**

### **PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Parks, recreation programs and open space areas support the improvement in the quality of life in an area by preserving natural and cultural amenities for the enjoyment of all residents and providing active and passive recreational opportunities. They also provide opportunities for community residents to interact and thereby strengthen the sense of community. Leisure activities and the facilities required to maintain these activities are important components of a sound community.

Open space is important to area residents, as are parks and recreation. Background open space, such as agricultural lands, woodlands and stream valleys, is visible to area residents and perceived as open space by them. It helps establish the character of the community. As development occurs in the area, if the rural character is to be sustained, it is necessary to preserve this perceived open space. Growth must be planned and directed so that the basic open space and rural character is not lost.

Recreational activities are often associated with and can be enhanced by the natural features of a community. Some leisure activities, such as hiking, fishing and boating are directly dependent upon resources such as Neversink Mountain, the Thun Trail, the region's creeks, the Schuylkill River, facilities at the Daniel Boone Homestead and Monocacy Hill.

The cultural features of a community can also enhance recreational activities. For instance, the cultural heritage of the St. Lawrence, Exeter and Amity area is evident in the farmsteads, mills, churches, and numerous other historic resources in the area, which will be discussed later. These natural and cultural features can play an educational role for residents of the area as well as be incorporated into hiking and bicycle trails.

#### **Existing Parks, Recreation and Open Space System**

A number of major recreational facilities are available to serve residents in the St. Lawrence, Exeter and Amity area, in Berks and nearby counties. Some of these recreational facilities include:

Blue Marsh Lake Recreational Area  
French Creek State Park  
Nolde Forest Environmental Education Center  
Tulpehocken Creek Park System

Antietam Lake  
Mount Penn Preserve  
Daniel Boone Homestead  
State Game lands  
The Appalachian Trail  
Kaercher Creek Park  
Kernsville Recreation Area  
Conrad Weiser Park  
County Youth Recreation Facility  
Allegheny Aqueduct  
Horseshoe Trail  
Hawk Mountain Sanctuary  
Neversink Mountain Preserve  
Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area

Recreation resources within the St. Lawrence, Exeter and Amity area include:

Exeter Community Park – St. Lawrence  
Borough Playground – St. Lawrence  
Lorraine Hollow – Exeter Township  
Community Park – Exeter Township  
Mountain Park – Exeter Township  
Farming Ridge Park – Exeter Township  
Stonersville Little League Fields – Exeter Township  
Crestwood Park – Exeter Township  
Amity Community Park – Amity Township  
Old Farm Park – Exeter Township  
Greenbriar Open Space – Amity Township  
Shelbourne Park – Exeter Township  
Amity AC/Pool and Recreation Area – Amity Township  
Amity Gardens Pool – Amity Township  
Hill Road Recreation Area – Amity Township  
Schuylkill River Open Space – Exeter Township  
Cedar Mill Open Space – Amity Township  
Amity Park Road Recreation Area – Amity Township  
Daniel Boone Homestead – Exeter Township  
Pineland Park – Exeter Township  
Woods Edge Open Space – Amity Township  
Stony Creek Athletic Association – Exeter Township  
Hunter’s Run Park – Exeter Township  
Schuylkill River Open Space – Amity Township  
Trout Run Recreation Area – Exeter Township  
River Bend Park – Exeter Township

Wheeler Recreation Area – Amity Township  
Conservancy Land – Exeter Township  
Antietam Valley Recreation and Community Center – Exeter Township  
Crestwood Swim Club – Exeter Township  
Lake Drive Park and Recreation Area – Amity Township  
Locust Grove Recreation Area – Amity Township  
Monocacy Hill Open Space Area – Amity Township  
Amityville Recreation Area – Amity Township  
Thun Trail – the Townships

In addition, recreation is available at the school facilities in the Region, including Exeter School District elementary schools and the High School – Junior High School complex and the Amity Primary and Intermediate Centers.

Golf courses include the Arrowhead Golf Course in Amity Township and Reading Country Club and Exeter Public Golf Course in Exeter Township. The Daniel Boone Rod and Gun Club, University Rifle Club, and South End Gun Club are located in Exeter Township.

### **Types of Recreation Facilities**

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has prepared a classification scheme for use by municipalities in creating and evaluating a park and open space system. It is intended to serve as a planning guide and can be modified to address the recreational needs unique to each municipality. The NRPA classification scheme is divided into two categories: (1) park and open space areas that are considered to be "local" or "close-to-home" due to their smaller size and close proximity and (2) park and open space areas that are considered "regional" due to their larger size and broader service area. Within each category, there are various types of parks and open space areas that can be identified according to their specific characteristics, as described in Table R-1. Overall, the NRPA recommends that municipalities have between 6.25 and 10.5 acres of local parkland and open space per 1,000 residents. This land, considered the "core" of a municipal park and open space system, should be suitable for intense development and used primarily for active recreational purposes. In addition, municipalities should also have available between 15 and 20 acres per 1,000 residents of "regional" park and open space areas that can be used as open space, active or passive recreational areas. Sufficient regional park and open space is provided at the Daniel Boone Homestead and French Creek State Park, Blue Marsh Lake, Nolde Forest, Neversink Mountain-Mount Penn-Antietam Lake, and Tulpehocken Creek Park.

**TABLE 1**

**NRPA PARK; RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATION SCHEME  
LOCAL/CLOSE-TO-HOME SPACE = TOTAL OF 6.25 TO 10.5 ACRES OF  
DEVELOPED OPEN SPACE PER 1,000 PERSONS**

<b>Type of Park</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Desirable Site Size</b>	<b>Acres/1,000 Persons</b>
<p><b><i>Mini-Park</i></b></p> <p>Specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group such as tots or senior citizens.</p>	<p>Less than ¼ -mile radius</p>	<p>1 acre or less</p>	<p>0.25 to 0.5 acres</p>
<p><b><i>Neighborhood Park/Playground</i></b></p> <p>Area for intense recreational activities such as field sports, court games, crafts, playground activities, skating, picnicking, swimming, etc.</p>	<p>¼-mile to ½-mile radius to serve a population up to 5,000 persons (a neighborhood)</p>	<p>15+ acres</p>	<p>1.0 to 2.0 acres</p>
<p><b><i>Community Park</i></b></p> <p>Area of diverse environmental quality. May include areas suited for intense recreational facilities such as athletic complexes and large swimming pools. May be an area of natural quality for outdoor recreation such as walking, viewing, sitting, picnicking. May be any combination of the above, depending upon the site suitability and community needs.</p>	<p>Several neighborhoods. 1 to 2-mile radius</p>	<p>25+ acres</p>	<p>5.0 to 8.0 acres</p>

Source: National Recreation and Park Association - Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines

**TABLE 1- Continued**

**NRPA PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATION SCHEME  
REGIONAL SPACE = TOTAL OF 15.0 TO 20.0 ACRES FOR 1,000 PERSONS**

<b>Type of Park</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Desirable Site Size</b>	<b>Acres/1,000 Persons</b>
<p><b><i>Regional/Metropolitan Park</i></b></p> <p>Area of natural or ornamental quality for outdoor recreation (such as picnicking, boating, fishing, swimming, camping, and trail uses) which may include play areas.</p>	<p>Several communities. 1-hour driving time</p>	<p>200+ acres</p>	<p>5.0 to 10.0 acres</p>
<p><b><i>Regional Park Preserve</i></b></p> <p>Area of natural quality for nature-oriented outdoor recreation (such as viewing/studying nature, wildlife habitat, conservation, swimming, picnicking, hiking, fishing, boating, camping and trail uses) which may include active play areas. Generally, 80% of the land is reserved for conservation and natural resource management, with less than 20% used for recreation development.</p>	<p>Several communities. 1- hour driving time</p>	<p>1,000+ acres or sufficient area to encompass the resource to be preserved and managed.</p>	<p>Variable</p>
<p><b><i>Community Park</i></b></p> <p>Area of diverse environmental quality. May include areas suited for intense recreational facilities such as athletic complexes and/or large swimming pools. May be an area of natural quality for outdoor recreation such as walking, viewing, sitting, picnicking. May be any combination of the above, depending upon the site suitability and community needs.</p>	<p>Several neighborhoods. 1 to 2-mile radius.</p>	<p>25+ acres</p>	<p>5.0 to 8.0 acres</p>

Source: National Recreation and Park Association - Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines

## **Parks, Recreation and Open Space System in the Region**

### **St. Lawrence Borough**

Currently, the Borough has one community park, a municipal playground and schools containing playing fields, a picnic area, tennis courts, basketball courts and a tot lot.

The Borough also has watershed lands in Exeter Township that contain un-improved trails that could be improved and linked to a regional trail network.

### **Exeter Township**

The Township currently has a number of community parks, the Exeter High School – Junior High School Complex and the elementary schools. Activities available include picnic areas, playgrounds, basketball courts, tennis courts, shuffleboard court, tot lot, and playing fields.

### **Amity Township**

The Township contains a number of community parks. The facilities provide areas for hiking, picnics, playgrounds, playfields, basketball court, hunting, nature study, and tot lots.

### **Recreation Acreage Needs Analysis**

The following table presents recreation acreage needs analysis for the region.

**ST. LAWRENCE, EXETER, AMITY**

**RECREATION ACREAGE NEEDS ANALYSIS**

	Projected Population			Local Recreation Requirements Applying NRPA Standards of 6.25 to 10.5 Acres per 1000 Population			Public Acreage 2000	Projected Public Acreage 2020	2000 Deficit in Acres	Projected 2020 Deficit in Acres
	2000	2010	2020	2000	2010	2020				
St. Lawrence	1,812	2,078	2,344	11.3 to 19.0	12.9 to 21.8	14.6 to 24.6	53.7 <sup>1</sup>	53.7	0	0
Exeter	21,161	25,625	30,090	132.2 to 222.1	160.1 to 269.0	188.0 to 315.9	931.0 <sup>2</sup>	931.0	0	0
Amity	8,867	10,950	13,040	55.4 to 93.1	68.4 to 114.9	81.5 to 136.9	667.9 <sup>3</sup>	667.9	0	0

<sup>1</sup>Includes Exeter Community Park, Municipal Playground, Borough Open Space, Lausch Elementary School.

<sup>2</sup>Includes Lorane Hollow Park, Community Park, Mt. Park, Daniel Boone Homestead, Farming Ridge Park, Pineland Park, Exeter Twp. Jr. & Sr. High School, Hunter's Run Park, Lorane Elementary School, Old Farm Park, Trout Run Recreation Area, River Bend Park, Little League Fields, Butter Lane Park, Exeter Library/Dunn Community Center.

<sup>3</sup>Includes Lake Drive Park & Recreation Area, Locust Grove Park, Monocacy Hill Open Space Area, Amityville Park Road Recreation Area, Amity Primary Center, Hill Road Recreation Area, Myron S. Wheeler Recreation Area, Old Airport Road Open Space, Locust Grove Open Space, Cider Mill Open Space, Greenbriar Open Space, Open Space Adjacent to Sewage Treatment Plant, Open Space Along Schuylkill River, Amity Community Park.

Although no acreage deficit is indicated, an issue for the region will be the continued demand for additional recreation facilities as the population in the area increases. Some of the demands could be for additional playing fields, specifically soccer fields. Recreation Committees will continue to work to provide recreation opportunities within their respective municipalities and monitor available sites for recreation. A regional trail network could link existing and future recreational opportunities.

## **CHAPTER 22**

### **HISTORIC RESOURCES**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The collection of resources used to compile information on the history of the region include: Amity Township 2001 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan; articles and photographs from the "Reading Weekly Eagle"; St. Lawrence 1965 Comprehensive Plan Part Two: Development Proposals; National Register Listed & Eligible Properties (Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission, Bureau for Historic Preservation); Exeter Township Comprehensive Plan Part One: Development Patterns (1965); Amity Township 1990 Comprehensive Plan; Exeter...the forgotten corner 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (collection of historic articles and accounts); and Amity First in Berks 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 1719-1969 (collection of historic articles and accounts).

#### **EXETER TOWNSHIP**

One of the first European settlements in Berks County was made in the rich Oley Valley in the early 1700's because of the good soils, plentiful streams, and abundance of lumber. Most of these early settlers in the area were French Huguenots, Germans and English. In 1741, when the boundaries of Oley Township were established, it was discovered that over 50 families had been excluded. Many of these families grouped together and petitioned that they be able to establish their own Township. On December 7, 1741, this petition was approved, and the Township of Exeter was established.

Several famous people were born or had a homestead in the Township. There were several Boone families, however, the most well known Boone was Daniel Boone. Daniel Boone was born in the Township in 1734 and later became a famous pioneer. His homestead is now the property of the State.

Exeter is also the home of Abraham Lincoln's great-great-grandfather, Mordecai Lincoln. He had a homestead built in 1733, which is still standing on Heister's Creek.

The Manatawny section of Berks County, in which Exeter is located, was for many years active in iron production, but in the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century this industry died out almost completely. The change can be attributed to the trend in the late 1800's to localize iron industries at relatively few points near the source of raw materials.

Education and religion were closely connected in early Berks County history. A Quaker Meeting House was built in Exeter in 1725, but the denominations most prevalent were the Lutheran and Reformed churches, established by the Germans. The two German religions were very similar; in many cases a community built one church building which

both shared. These were called Union Churches. In Exeter, the Schwartzwald's Union Church was built 1747, and the Baumstown, Lorane, St. Lawrence and Stonersville Chapels were located in Stonetown, Neversink and Reiffon, respectively.

The German churches were supporters of education, which is why most of the original church schools were taught using the German language. They were semi-private schools; each pupil was required to pay a few cents per day tuition. This system continued long after the 1834 Common School Law was passed. However, because Exeter had a larger Friends population than many of the other Berks County communities, it was one of the first to establish English schools.

After 1900, Exeter's population has steadily increased. Between 1900 and 1960 the population increased from 2,503 to 8,488 persons. This growth can be attributed to suburban growth from Reading rather than local industries or agriculture. Reiffon, one of the first suburban communities, was developed shortly before and after the first World War. The town was named for the Reiff family, prominent in Berks County at the time. Suburban growth was at first limited to public transportation; however, the use of the automobile changed that trend. Its use for commuting purposes has led to further residential development. In 1927 the borough of St. Lawrence was incorporated from the western section of Exeter.

The village of Lorane was first established on land first purchased in 1835 by Isaac Kass from the Lincolns, who in those days owned a large portion of the Township. Seidel's Forge, a well-known landmark in the area, and was first owned and operated by H.C. Seidel, of Gibraltar, in 1870.

In the early days of the P. & R. Railway, patrons could board a train to go to Reading or Birdsboro, and in 1860 the railroad company built a station. The station was first known as Exeter Station. Petitions began to circulate proposing to change the name on account of a place in Luzerne County by the name of Exeter. Freight and mail were often sent to the wrong place. In 1900 both the post office and the railroad station was changed to Lorane, after Alsace-Lorraine in Europe, from which section a number of Exeter's early settlers came.

There were many successful industries that helped to shape the growth in the area. These included: Washington Kissinger's store, hotel in 1860, and first distillery; H.B. Levan opened a creamery in 1881, and a grove for a picnic area in 1892; James Toole operated a broom factory; in 1883 Henry Graeff built a dwelling and large poultry plant on Neversink street; in 1892, John H. Close and A.H. Kretz (operated by the name of Kretz & Close) built a distillery and a warehouse No. 1 having a capacity of 12,000 barrels, and in 1893, warehouse No. 2 having a capacity of 25,000 barrels (in 1894 the name was changed to Neversink Distilling Co., Ltd).

**Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission:**  
**Bureau for Historic Preservation**  
*National Register Listed Properties*  
*Exeter Township, Berks County*

Historic Resource Site	Listed	Status Date	Address	Historic Importance
 <p>Daniel Boone Homestead Site &amp; Bertolet Cabin</p>	Listed	03/24/1972	2 mile North of Birdsboro	Famous pioneer and hunter Daniel Boone's homestead. Daniel Boone pioneered from Berks County to Missouri
 <p>John Bishop House</p>	Listed	06/27/1985	L.R. 06110 & T-434	Georgian Style single dwelling home; played a significant role in Commerce

**Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission:  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
National Register Listed Properties  
Exeter Township, Berks County Continued...**

Historic Resource Site	Listed	Status Date	Address	Historic Importance
 Boonecrafter	Listed	07/26/1982	Oley Line Road. On (T-465)	George Boone Log house site; Erected 1720; Father of Daniel Boone the-Kentucky Pioneer-this Colonial Stone house built 1733.
 Mordacai Lincoln House	Listed	11/30/1988	Lincoln Rd.	This House is a rare example of a stone settler's cabin as a primitive stone dwelling of the settlement period. One of the oldest houses in Berks County (built in 1733).
 Mill Tract Farm	Listed	09/22/1977	 Mill Rd. T-461, South of Limekiln Rd., Northeast Corner of Stonerville	This is an excellent example of an 18 <sup>th</sup> cn. farm-mill complex. The great majority of the buildings date from the mid or late 18 <sup>th</sup> cn. with a gristmill built in 1728; the Georgian section of the farmhouse was built by his son James who was uncle of Daniel Boone and remained in the Boone family until 1790.
 Snyder Mill	Listed	11/08/1990	Oley Line Rd. at Monocacy Circle.	This mill is significant for its association with the county grist milling industry as it is representative of eighteen century custom mills

**Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission:  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
National Register Eligible Properties  
Exeter Township, Berks County**

Historic Resource Site	Eligible	Status Date	Address/ Location
Bishop-Tyson House	Eligible	06/14/1989	Rte. 422, Opposite Reading Country Club
Oley Line Hotel	Eligible	07/07/2000	800 Limekiln Rd.
Exeter Friends Meetinghouse	Eligible	04/14/1982	Boone Rd. T-465

**Historical Marker's  
PHMC Historical Marker Program**

**Marker Name:** Daniel Boone  
**County:** Berks  
**Date Dedicated:** 1957  
**Marker Type:** Roadside  
**Location:** US 422, 2 miles SE of Baumstown  
**Category:** Misc.

**Marker Text:** Greatest of American pioneers and wilderness scouts. Born on Nov. 2, 1734. Spent the first 16 years of his life on the Boone Homestead three miles to the north. This property is a State historical shrine and is dedicated to American youth.

**Marker Name:** Daniel Boone  
**County:** Berks  
**Date Dedicated:** 1947/4/1  
**Marker Type:** Roadside  
**Location:** US 422 westbound at SR 2041 just E of Baumstown; US 422 eastbound at Baumstown Union Sunday School  
**Category:** Misc.

**Marker Text:** Greatest American pioneer and wilderness scout. Born Nov. 2, 1734. Spent the first 16 years of his life on the Boone Homestead a few miles north. Now a State historical shrine dedicated to American youth.

**Marker Name:** Daniel Boone Homestead  
**County:** Berks  
**Date Dedicated:** 1948  
**Marker Type:** Roadside  
**Location:** SR 2041 N of Baumstown  
**Category:** Misc.

**Marker Text:** Here on Nov. 2, 1734, Daniel Boone was born and lived until 1750.

**Marker Name:** Exeter Friends Meeting  
**County:** Berks  
**Date Dedicated:** 1979/5/7  
**Marker Type:** Roadside  
**Location:** Meetinghouse Road, .5 mile S of PA 562 & 2 mile W of Yellow House  
**Category:** Religious

**Marker Text:** Established 1725 as Oley; name changed to Exeter, 1742. Present stone meeting house built 1759 near site of two previous log structures. Buried here are members of the Boone, Ellis, Hughes, Lee, and Lincoln families. Meetings discontinued 1899; building reopened for worship in 1949.

**Marker Name:** Hopewell Village  
**County:** Berks  
**Date Dedicated:** 1947/3/29  
**Marker Type:** Roadside  
**Location:** US 422 east & westbound at PA 82, Baumstown  
**Category:** Business & Industry

**Marker Text:** Hopewell Forge, 1744, and Furnace, 1770, were seven miles south. The furnace and the remains of an ironmaking community of the era are administered by the National Park Service, with recreation areas.

**Marker Name:** Lincoln Homestead  
**County:** Berks  
**Date Dedicated:** 1947/3/29  
**Marker Type:** Roadside  
**Location:** US 422 at twp. Road E of Mount Penn  
**Category:**

**Marker Text:** Abraham Lincoln once wrote, "My ancestors were Quakers from Berks County, Pennsylvania." The stone house built in 1733 by his great-great grandfather is just south of here. It is still standing.

## ST. LAWRENCE BOROUGH



Black Bear Inn, Rte. 42 2(Perkiomen Ave.) and Oley Turnpike Rd, in St. Lawrence/Exeter (established in the late 1700's); one of the best -known hotels in the county, rebuilt by F.P. Esterly in the late 1880's. This was made famous when the Thomas Edison film Company made a motion picture around "Black Bear Hill". The movie stars made the Inn their headquarters. In addition to a huge dance hall, it once had a picnic grove and a small zoo.. During the late 1930's, it was a night club that featured the liked of Jackie Gleason.

According to Mr. Elmer H. Adams's historical collections and accounts, written in August, 1994, St. Lawrence was a small village, first called "Esterly" (named after a predominant land owner), which straddles the 1870 Oley Turnpike Road.

Bordered by forest, field and stream, it was a self-sustaining village of tightly-knit families. Here stores like the Charles H. Adams' General Store, located next to the 1898 two-story, four room, brick schoolhouse, thrived because, prior to the automobile, the only available public transportation to the City of Reading was by the Reading to Birdsboro trolley line boarded at the Black Bear Inn, or by the Reading to Boyertown trolley of the Oley Valley Railway Company. The daily social life of the village revolved around the centrally located combination of schoolhouse and store.

St. Lawrence differed from neighboring villages because of the employment opportunities and the scope of personal services offered. St. Lawrence began around the location of the largest employers, which were the two woolen mills (the A.J. Brumbach Woolen Mill and the Esterly Woolen Mill), both established well before 1900. They were followed by the St. Lawrence Dairy, founded in 1888, which also employed many, the John F. Lutz Furniture and Undertaking business, founded 1884, and maintained a steady work force. The Behm Butcher Shop and the Adams Store employed local help as well, and all these companies had their employees located near their jobs. In the village, one could find the services of a family doctor, a veterinarian, a painter, a cabinetmaker, a plumber, and carpenters. A shoe repairman and a blacksmith were nearby at Jacksonwald.

From these beginnings followed the residential development of St. Lawrence. By the middle of 1890's, after the success of a popular brand of woolen goods manufactured at the mill, known as "St. Lawrence" woolens, villagers petitioned for a post office to be named "St. Lawrence." However, since there was an existing Post Office named "St. Lawrence" in Pennsylvania, the name "Esterly"



Charles H. Adams' General Merchandise store, 3550 Lawrence Ave. (Rte. 562), St. Lawrence Borough as it appeared in 1910. Erected in 1900 by William H. Adams

was assigned. St. Lawrence was incorporated as a borough in 1927, being separated from Exeter Township. In this manner, necessary improvements could be provided, including recreational facilities through acquisition of vacant land when the Oley Valley Railway Company discontinued service.

**Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission:  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
National Register Listed Properties  
St. Lawrence Borough, Berks County**

Historic Resource Site	Listed	Status Date	Address	Historic Importance
 LeVan Farm	Listed	12/19/1978	Pa 562	The LeVan Family was an old French family who has owned this land for 246. The collection of farm structures helps to make the LeVan farm a good example of a working, self-sufficient farm; built 1837.
 Furniture Co. & Funerary	Listed	02/16/1996	3559 and 3561 St. Lawrence Ave.	This property contains three contributing 19 <sup>th</sup> century resources: a combination house/shop, a warehouse/showroom, and a carriage house. It contains three buildings tightly arranged on a T-shaped, hillside lot. Historic functions: Domestic, single family dwelling; Industry/Manufacturing; Commerce/Trade; Specialty Store; Funerary

**AMITY TOWNSHIP**

Amity Township is the oldest incorporated Township in Berks County. The oldest structure, the Mouns Jones House is located in the Township. St. Gabriel’s Church was the first congregation to be organized in Berks County.

The location of the Township influenced its history and development in various respects. Its location along the Schuylkill River made access possible, by both water and roads, to the eastern portion of William Penn’s new colony. The accessibility to a great extent explains the settling of various nationalities in Amity Township.

The Swedes were the first people to settle within the present boundaries of Amity Township. In 1701 William Penn granted land for the settlement, known as the “Swedes Tract”. This settlement, at Douglassville, called Morlatton by the early inhabitants of the region, is unique in the history of the County. It was not an extension of the frontier, cabin by cabin, as was the case in much of the westward movement in our Country. This

settlement was made by a group of Swedish people who had formerly resided along the Delaware River. A young Swedish pastor, Reverend Andrew Rudman, was the leader of this band of settlers. William Penn offered this tract to the Reverend.

By 1719, the settlement had progressed to the point that a need for the establishment of a local government was felt. According to the application that was presented to the court in Philadelphia, a request to form a Township to be called "Amity," from the Swedes Tract, which had an area of 10,500 areas, was officially presented. There was an actively functioning government in Amity Township during the period between its incorporation in 1719 and the validation of this action by the Court of Philadelphia County. Furthermore, the new municipality of Amity was recognized by the inhabitants of surrounding areas and by the officials of Philadelphia County. In addition to the Swedes, the English, Irish and Germans migrated into Amity Township. The fertility of the soils made Amity an attractive place for settlement. The population of Amity Township increased steadily during the eighteenth century.

## **HISTORIC SITES**

There are many visible reminders in Amity of the Township's rich history. Homes of historic vintage, Pennsylvania Dutch bank barns, old churches and other structures are living evidence of Amity's formative social, agricultural and commercial development. The National Register of Historic Places includes five structures located in Amity Township and six eligible properties. Below are the tables that identify these resources.

**Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission: Bureau for Historic Preservation**  
***National Register Listed Properties***  
***Amity Township, Berks County***

Historic Resource Site	Listed	Status Date	Address	Historic Importance
 <p>Griesemer/Brown Mill Complex</p>	Listed	11/08/1990	 <p>Browns Mill Rd. T-465, 2250ft. West of Limekiln Rd.</p>	<p>This complex is important for its association with the county gristmill industry, as it is representative of a pattern of mills that were part of family farms. Architecturally, this mill is a good representative of a country custom mill of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century.</p>
 <p>Old Swede's/ Mouns Jones House</p>	Listed	01/21/1974	Old Philadelphia Pike	<p>Small 2-1/2 story, stone house built in 1716 by one of the early settlers and is the oldest surviving house in Berks County. Mouns Jones, who, in 1701, along with fourteen other Swedes, took up 10,000 acres in what is now Amity Township, built the house. Mouns Jones had an excellent rapport with the local Indians and would serve as an agent from them in their dealings with the provincial government.</p>

**Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission: Bureau for Historic Preservation**  
***National Register Listed Properties***  
***Amity Township, Berks County Continued...***

	<p>Old Saint Gabriel's Episcopal Church</p>	<p>Listed</p>	<p>03/08/1978</p>	<p>Intersection of Rte. 422 &amp; L.R. 06180</p>	<p>In 1801, Old St. Gabriel's was built to accommodate a parish that is believed to have been the first church in the county. The founding of St. Gabriel's was in 1720 in the first log church.</p>
	<p>Weidner Mill</p>	<p>Listed</p>	<p>11/08/1990</p>	 <p>Blacksmith Rd. at Manatawny</p>	<p>Built in 1885, Two hundred years ago the waterpower at this site was first developed and as a result the resources on this property have been associated with milling in Berks County for Two centuries. Architecturally, this mill is a fine example of Berks County Victorian Style mill architecture.</p>
	<p>White Horse Tavern</p>	<p>Listed</p>	<p>04/21/1975</p>	<p>509 Old Philadelphia Pk.</p>	<p>2-1/2 story red sandstone structure in the Georgina style, originally constructed in 1765 located in present day Douglassville. This was the first permanent settlement within the bounds of what is now Berks County. It was a mustering and training site for Revolutionary War soldiers.</p>

**Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission: Bureau for Historic Preservation**  
**National Eligible Listed Properties**  
**Amity Township, Berks County**

<i>Eligible Historic Resource Site</i>	<b>Status Date</b>	<b>Address</b>
Ben Franklin Inn	05/26/1992	Rte. 422 at Monocacy Creek Rd.
George Douglass House	05/18/2000	Old Philadelphia Pk.
Irey Mansion	05/18/1998	Rte. 422 (North side), 1000ft. West of Old Swede Rd.
Moyer's School	05/08/1990	Monocacy Creek Rd. L.R. 06179 at Junction with Rte. 422.
T.B. Charles Property	05/18/1991	Junction Rte. 562 & Rte. 662, Southeast Corner
Perkiomen Turnpike Milestone	05/08/1990	North Side of Rte. 422

**Marker Name:** De Benneville House

**County:** Berks

**Date Dedicated:** 1948/12/4

**Marker Type:** Roadside

**Location:** PA 622, 1.5 miles N of Yellow House

**Category:** Religious

**Marker Text:**

**Built 1745 by Dr. George de Benneville, preacher in this area 1743-55, and founder of Universalism in America. He died in Philadelphia in 1793. The house is 2.25 miles away on a side road.**

**Marker Name:** Fisher House

**County:** Berks

**Date Dedicated:** 1948/8/28

**Marker Type:** Roadside

**Location:** PA 622, 1.4 miles N of Yellow House

**Category:** Misc.

**Marker Text:**

**This home, built 1801 by Henry Fisher, is a fine example of late Georgian architecture. Brought from the British Isles, this style is reflected in old homes of eastern and southern Pennsylvania.**

**Exeter, Amity, and St. Lawrence Joint Comprehensive Plan:  
Identification of Historic Resources**

**Exeter Township List of Historic Resources**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Historic Resource</b>
1	Hill Mill; Wanner's Mill
2	Schofer Sawmill
3	Breiner Paper Mill; Rifle Boring
4	Moyer Tilt-Hammer; Seidel
5	Boyertown Trolley Bridge
6	Carsonia Park Area
7	Carsonia Inn
19	Trolley Bridge
23	Bechtel Grist Mill
24	Keim Clover Mill & Forge
25	Moyer & Yocum Forges; Althouse; Feed Mill; Police Home; Ice House
26	Exeter Tilt Hammer
27	Troxel Property
28	Dam & Race to Bishop Mill
29	Bishop Grist Mill; Wamsher's Mill
30	Bishop Mansion
31	Blacksmith Shop
32	Lincoln Sawmill
33	Seidel Steam Forge
34	#3 Furnace of E & G Brooke Iron Co. Limekiln-Toll Gate #2, Oley Turnpike Road; Creamery; Eight-Cornered School;
35	P.O.S. of A. Hall; Snyder General Store; Post Office; Oley Line Hotel
36	Gehr Fulling Mill
37	Snyder Grist Mill
38	George Boone, Sr. Log Cabin 1720
39	George Boone, Sr. Stone House and Tannery 1733
40	Judah Boone Tilt-Hammer Forge 1824
41	James Boone Mine
42	Moses Boone Wheelwright Shop
43	George Boone, Jr. Grist Mill; 1st Mill in Town
44	Judah Boone Grist Mill; Bechtel Mill
45	James Boone Sawmill
46	Friends Meeting House, School and Cemetery
47	Christian Link Pottery
48	Mahlon Guldin Pottery
49	Daniel Boone Homestead
50	Toll Gate #1, Oley Turnpike
51	Jacksonwald Hotel
52	Hans Martin Gerische House 1741
53	Schwarzwald Lutheran Church
54	Schwarzwald U.C.C. Church; Stone School; Cemetery
55	Ritter Tavern

## Exeter Township List of Historic Resources Continued

Number	Historic Resource
56	Capt. Gechter's Washington Hotel; Bertie's Inn
57	Stonersville Hotel; Post Office
58	Stonersville Sunday School
59	Pet Cemetery
60	Jung-Young Private Cemetery
61	Ritter Private Cemetery
62	Heckler-Esterly Private Cemetery
63	DeTurck Private Cemetery
64	Monocacy U.B. Church
65	Perkiomen Turnpike Milestone
66	Old Baumstown Store; Post Office
67	Perkiomen Turnpike Toll House
68	Baumstown Sunday School; Former Cemetery
69	Dr. Baum's Hospital; "Strawberry Mansion"
70	Perkiomen Turnpike Milestone
71	King George Inn; Red Lion Inn
72	Exeter Bible Church
73	First Baptist Church
74	Greater First Baptist Church
75	Birdsboro Depot; Covered Bridge
76	Mordecai Lincoln House 1733
77	Yeich Family Cemetery
78	Perkiomen Turnpike Milestone
79	Lorane Distillery
80	Exeter Station' Lorane Station; Store; Post Office; Hotel
81	Lorane Chapel
82	Forest Hills memorial Park
83	Klappertal Pavilion; Neversink mountain Gravity Railroad; Klappertal Station
84	Perkiomen Turnpike 1/50 Milestone
85	Reformation Lutheran Church
90	Fairview Chapel Sunday School
92	Jacksonwald Building
93	Messerschmidt Private Cemetery
100	Baumstown One-Room Brick School
101	Fairview One-Room Brick School
102	2nd Fairview Brick School
103	Baumstown School; Flag Factory
104	Jacksonwald Stone School
105	Jacksonwald One-Room Brick School
106	Friends One-Room Brick School
107	Stonersville One-Room Brick School
108	Snydersville Stone School
109	Snydersville One-Room Brick School
110	Hill One-Room Brick School
111	Antietam One-Room Brick School
113	Allsort or Neversink One-Room Brick School; Neversink Sunday School

### **Exeter Township List of Historic Resources Continued**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Historic Resource</b>
114	Neversink 2-Room School; Bully Lyons Restaurant
115	Greentree or Suckertown One-Room Brick School
116	Centre or Stonetown One-Room Brick School; Stonetown Sunday School
117	Buttertown or Woodville One-Room Brick School
118	Lorane One-Room Brick School
119	Lorane Elementary School
120	Reiffon Elementary School' School Administration Building
122	Jacksonwald Elementary School
123	Exeter Junior High School
124	Exeter Senior High School
125	Exeter Township Building
126	Exeter Ambulance Association
127	Reiffon Fire Company
129	Stonersville Fire Company

### **St. Lawrence Borough List of Historic Resources**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Historic Resource</b>
8	Ideal Camp
9	Custer Fulling Mill
10	Brumbach Woolen Mill
11	Keller Paper Mill
12	Brumbach Oil Mill
13	DeHart Hat Factory
14	Breiner Oil Mill
15	Johnson Foundry; Griesemer Grist
16	Guldin Carding Mill; Hat Factory
17	LeVan Glue Factory, Ahrens Fertilizer Factory
18	Brumbach Woolen Mill; Esterly Woolen Mill
20	A.J. Brumbach St. Lawrence Woolen Mill
21	P.O.S. of A. Hall & Boarding House
22	LeVan Sawmill & Homestead
86	Black Bear Inn
87	Lutz Furniture Store
88	St. Lawrence Chapel; Community Hall
89	St. Lawrence Community U.C.C. Church
91	Esterly Post Office
112	Brumbach Stone School and St. Lawrence Brick School
121	St. Lawrence Elementary School
128	Lausch Elementary School

### **Amity Township Historic Resources**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Historic Resource</b>
130	Weidner Gristmill
131	Griesmer-Brown Mill Complex
132	St. Gabriel's Church & Chapel
133	White Horse Inn
134	George Douglass Mansion
135	Mouns Jones House
136	Covered-Bridge Keeper's House

## **CHAPTER 23**

### **MAJOR ISSUES FACING THE REGION**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The following issues to be addressed in the Comprehensive Planning process were identified from responses to the planning questionnaire, interviews with community leaders identified by the Joint Municipal Planning Committee members, analysis of background maps and data, and discussion at Joint Municipal Planning Committee meetings.

#### **ISSUES**

##### **Agricultural Preservation**

- Exeter Township has an effective agricultural preservation program in place. Should preservation efforts be implemented in Amity Township?
- In the phone interviews conducted as part of the comprehensive planning process, many of the people surveyed like the rural character of the Region. The presence of agriculture and rural settings were mentioned frequently. Most of the people were in favor of preserving agriculture. Also, most of the people were in favor of saving remaining rural character of the area.

##### **River and Watershed Conservation**

- The floodplain areas of the Schuylkill River and its tributaries should be protected as important natural resources and are important recreational resources.

##### **Preserving Rural Character**

- The Region still contains areas with significant rural character that is valued by its residents. Many people believe that the rural character should be preserved.

## **Bikeways, Trails, and Recreation Areas**

- The Region contains a number of recreational opportunities, but additional trails could facilitate access to those opportunities.
- There are many options to link community facilities to each other through establishing a Region-wide biking/hiking trail system to provide travel alternatives for residents and visitors. These trails can be used to link residents to parks, work, home and other destinations instead of traveling via automobile. These trails would provide links to existing resources within the Region such as parks, historic sites, and provide recreation opportunities.

## **Implications of the Route 422 Corridor**

- The corridor provides economic opportunities to both Exeter and Amity Townships. Commercial and industrial development will create more jobs for local residents and residents in nearby areas. However, with more commercial and industrial development, there will be more commuter, delivery, and visitor traffic into an already strained road system.
- Commercial corridors can have many problems associated with them if not properly planned and if appearance, signage, access management, traffic calming, and design to ensure a proper flow of traffic are not addressed.

## **Revitalization in St. Lawrence Borough**

- People interviewed felt that the Borough of St. Lawrence was an important urban center and the need to enhance and maintain the Borough was of high importance. Finding a use for vacant buildings was also very important. The need to rejuvenate a hometown feeling was also an issue raised by people.
- Main Street Programs improve downtown streetscapes, attract, retain and support businesses, attract customers, and create a momentum for business owners to participate in the revitalization process by adding such amenities as shade trees, pedestrian circulation enhancements, sidewalk improvements, increased parking opportunities, benches, decorative lighting, and building façade appearance.

## **Future Employment Opportunities**

- The Region's municipalities will need to determine what types of commercial and industrial uses should be accommodated in the Region, and where. Allowing for the appropriate types of development, and planning land use and infrastructure,

can aid in economic development which is a plus to the Region, rather than a negative.

- Within the region, there are a number of vacant industrial buildings, which have had an economic impact on the area. When asked, “Where new industry should locate?” respondents to the Planning Questionnaire had the following recommendations: In areas where industry currently exists and within industrial parks.
- Communities should work with the County and Economic Development Organizations to identify a strategy for marketing available industrial sites and land within the region.

### **Sewer and Water Availability**

- Extensions into areas designated for preservation would work at cross-purposes to this Plan.
- Infill and development where public sewer and water capacity are available can reduce sprawl and inefficient development patterns, but other infrastructure should be in place to support such development. Service areas should be those determined by the municipalities and consistent with the future land use plan.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **Public Transportation Needs**

- Public transportation can relieve some of the traffic issues development may pose on the Region. A circulator shuttle to link a multi-modal transit station and expanded BARTA routes have been discussed. Other discussion includes the development of a trail system as an alternative to convention transportation to connect people to and from possible employment centers and public transit.
- Additional opportunities within the Region should be addressed, including connections within the Region and to destinations outside the Region.

### **Residential Growth Patterns**

- As residential development occurs in the Region, it impacts the Region’s roads. There are already access management and traffic flow concerns on roads in the study area. If more people move into this area, there will be additional traffic concerns, which must be managed.

- Population growth has resulted in the building, expansion, and planning of new school facilities. As growth continues, there will be continued demand for additional school facilities.

### **Access Management and Circulation Issues on State Routes (Route 422 and Route 662)**

- Traffic volumes have increased on roads not intended for the volumes experienced or the function performed. Substantial through traffic moves through the area on Route 422 and Route 662.
- Areas along Route 422 and Route 662 will require corridor management, especially as additional commercial and industrial development occurs.

### **Historic Resources**

- There are a number of historic resources in the Region. It must be determined whether land that is developed near historic resources must be developed in such a way to mitigate the impacts on historic resources. Prior to development of land on which historic resources remain, should developers be required to prepare a plan for the preservation of historic resources and their context?
- Should trail systems link historic sites and should informative displays be erected near the historic sites in the Region?

## **CHAPTER 24**

### **TRAFFIC CIRCULATION**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Land use and traffic circulation are ultimately linked. The efficient use of land as well as the local quality of life is highly dependent on an effective circulation network. In order for the network to adequately serve the land uses, it must be continually reevaluated as new development occurs. Different types of land uses require different road characteristics, and meeting future transportation needs is dependent on understanding the current network.

When programming road improvements, existing and proposed development areas should be considered. In turn, future development should not result in patterns which will adversely affect the circulation system. It is necessary to follow appropriate design standards, improve existing roads and manage access so the road network will be capable of performing its intended function. Municipal and individual land use decisions are strongly influenced by existing or proposed circulation systems, while at the same time these same land use decisions affect the circulation systems and the functions which the roads are expected to perform.

The circulation system within a community has an important influence on the type and location of development, which occurs. The location of residential, commercial, and industrial uses can influence the function or classification of roads, their design and their condition. In addition to influencing the character of a community by influencing land uses, the character of a community is influenced by the circulation system itself. A municipality with relatively narrow winding roads abutting agricultural and wooded areas will often be perceived as having a rural character. However, a municipality with a circulation system of three and four lane highways abutting intensive development will be perceived as having an urban or suburban character. In areas where development has occurred which does not respect the limitations of the circulation system, the perception can be one of poor planning and frustration.

In the chapter on Regional Influences, some of the factors affecting circulation in the area were discussed, including improvements to the Route 422 Corridor, which could result in increased land use pressure and traffic volumes in both Exeter and Amity Townships; the improvement of the Route 724 and I-176 interchange project in Cumru, which will affect traffic volumes in western Exeter Township; and the use of side roads within the area to carry thru traffic trying to avoid Route 422.

Traffic has increased in the area because of a number of developments locating within the three municipalities and will further increase as additional developments in Exeter and Amity Townships are built. Exeter Township has planned for intersection improvements at 36<sup>th</sup> Street and Perkiomen Avenue, Perkiomen Avenue and 37<sup>th</sup> Street, US 422 and West 47<sup>th</sup> Street, US 422 and Gibraltar Road, US 422 and Lorane Road, US 422 and Shelbourne Road, US 422 and Lincoln Road, East Neversink Road and Circle Avenue, Shelbourne and Gibraltar Roads, Shelbourne and Route 562 and Schoffers Road and Route 562. Amity Township has prepared a Land Use Assumptions Report, Roadway Sufficiency Analysis and Transportation Capital Improvements Plan to enable it to receive traffic impact fees from developers. The Transportation Capital Improvements Plan proposed improvements along Limekiln Road and Route 562, Amity Park Road and Weavertown Road, Weavertown Lane and 662, Geiger Road at Weavertown, Monocacy Hill and Hill Roads, Old Airport Road at Route 562, Route 662, Weavertown, Hill and Morlatton Roads, Blacksmith Road and Routes 562 and 662, Route 662 and Pine Forge and Morlatton Roads, and Nicholson Avenue and Toll Gate Road. Some of those improvements have been completed.

### **Composition of the Circulation Network**

Exeter Township has the highest total of road mileage in Berks County. Amity Township also had one of the higher totals of road mileage in the County and was tenth overall. St. Lawrence Borough had a total of 7.8 miles of roads. In Berks County, roads are owned and maintained by the State or by the municipality. The circulation system in the St. Lawrence, Exeter and Amity area consists of a variety of roads, from the high volume Route 422, to minor arterials such as Routes 82, 562 and 662, to residential streets in the Borough and Township subdivisions, to township roads that tend to be narrow and winding. Because each municipality's needs have been different over time, major improvements have been varied in the past. All of the roads, with the exception of Route 422 which transverses the central portion of the region, are two-lane, serving mainly local traffic. Road mileage is indicated below.

**TABLE 1**

**HIGHEST NUMBER OF ROAD MILES**

**ST. LAWRENCE BOROUGH, EXETER TOWNSHIP, AMITY TOWNSHIP,  
BERKS COUNTY**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>State Miles</b>	<b>Municipal Miles</b>	<b>Total</b>
Exeter Township	37.35	94.83	132.18
Greenwich Township	34.09	79.63	113.72
Muhlenberg Township	31.17	72.09	103.26
Spring Township	17.70	82.93	100.81
Bethel Township	48.15	50.86	99.01
Cumru Township	33.76	60.82	94.58
Robeson Township	35.13	57.09	92.24
Maxatawny Township	26.91	48.74	75.65
Richmond Township	28.20	44.10	72.30
Amity Township	32.16	40.13	72.29

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Roadway Inventory Summary, 2000.

*East-West Transportation Corridors*

The highest volume road passing through the area is of course US 422. This four lane semi-divided highway is part of a system that traverses the entire County and is the primary east-west transportation corridor in the region. Since the completion of the West Shore and Pottstown Bypasses, US 422 functions as a limited access highway in many areas, providing uninterrupted travel from Lebanon in the west to the outskirts of Philadelphia in the east. Since this road bisects the area, its influence is quite significant because it allows easy access to employment centers, which will likely influence new housing construction in the area.

Although US 422 has a major effect on the area, another important road in terms of travel in the area is Route 562. It links local residents with Route 662 in the east and US 422 in the west, traversing the area in a slight southeasterly-northwesterly fashion and running roughly parallel to US 422.

Other roads carrying east-west traffic include: Jacksonwald Avenue, Parkview Road, Oley Turnpike Road, Painted Sky Road, Lincoln Drive, Weavertown Road, Monocacy Hill Road and Pine Forge Road.

### *North-South Transportation Corridors*

Because most of the travel through Berks County has been historically east-west oriented, the number of north-south routes is more limited. This phenomenon is particularly evident within the St. Lawrence, Exeter and Amity region. Routes 82 and 662 are major north-south routes in this part of the County. Route 662, which transverses eastern Amity Township facilitates inter-county travel linking Route 78 to the north with US 422 to the South. Route 662 intersects with Route 562 in the Village of Yellow House near the Amity and Oley Township line.

Church Lane/Wegman Road, Ritters Lane/Wegman Road, Oley Line/Old Tulpehocken Road, Limekiln Road, Gibraltar Road, Old Airport Road and Blacksmith Road extend through the area and are locally-oriented north-south routes. They primarily serve intra-municipal travel.

### **Existing Roadway Classification**

The definitions of the road classifications are as follows, developed from the classification in the Berks County Comprehensive Plan Revision:

Arterial Street – Arterials provide for the movement of large volumes of traffic over longer distances; however, these highways generally operate at lower speeds than arterial expressways due to the presence of traffic control devices and access points.

Collector Street – Collector streets serve moderate traffic volumes and act to move traffic from local areas to the arterials. Collectors, too, can be subdivided into subcategories. Major Collectors provide for a higher level of movement between neighborhoods within a larger area. Minor Collectors serve to collect traffic within an identifiable area and serve primarily short distance travel.

Local Street – Local streets are, by far, the most numerous of the various highway types. These streets provide access to individual properties and serve short distance, low speed trips.

The Berks County Comprehensive Plan Revision also contains the following recommended design features for the various highway functional classifications:

**HIGHWAY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS AND  
RECOMMENDED DESIGN FEATURES**

<u>Classification</u>	<u>General Provisions</u>	<u>Right-of-Way Width (ft.)</u>	<u>Cartway Width</u>
Expressway	55+ MPH Limited Access No Parking Noise Barrier/Buffer (where required)	Minimum 120; however, may be wider based on local conditions and design	Minimum four 12' wide travel lanes with 10' wide shoulders capable of supporting heavy vehicles
Arterial	35-55 MPH Some access controls to and from adjacent development. Encourage use of reverse and side street frontage and parallel access road. No Parking	80	48-52 feet; 12' wide travel lanes with shoulders in rural area and curbing in urban areas
Collector	25-35 MPH Some access controls to and from adjacent development. Parking permitted on one or both sides.	60	34-40 feet; 12' wide travel lanes with stabilized shoulders or curbing; 8' wide lanes provided for parking.
Local	15-35 MPH No access control to and from adjacent development. Parking permitted on one or both sides.	53	28-34 feet with stabilized shoulders or curbing; cartway widths can be reduced based on interior traffic patterns.

Roads are classified on the existing Traffic Circulation Conditions map. The following is the list of each type of functional road:

**Expressway/Principal Arterials include:** U.S. Route 422

**Minor Arterials include:** Route 82, Gibraltar Road (from Route 422 to the southern boundary of Exeter Township), East Neversink Road (from the West Shore Bypass to Route 422), Old Swede Road (Route 662), Boyertown Road (Route 562), and Shelbourne Road.

**Major Collectors include:** Butter Lane, Bingaman Street, Five Points Road, Limekiln Road, Oley Turnpike Road, Shelborne Road, Gibraltar Road (from Shelbourne Road to Route 422), East Neversink Road (from the West Shore Bypass to Painted Sky Road, Painted Sky Road, Lorane Road, Lincoln Road, West Neversink Road (from Route 422 to East Neversink Road), River Bridge Road, Main Street (Amity Township), Old Airport Road, Monocacy Creek Road, Blacksmith Road, Weavertown Road and Pine Forge Road.

**Minor Collectors include:** Wegman Road, Dautrich Road, Church Lane, Schoffers Road, Rugby Road, Stonetown Road, Pineland Road, Daniel Boone Road, Old Tulpehocken Road, Red Lane, Fairview Chapel Road, Weavertown Lane, Monocacy Road, Tollgate Road, Monocacy Hill Road, Valley Road, Hill Road, Amity Park Road, Russel Avenue and Morlatton Road.

**Local Access Roads include:** all other roads.

## **Scenic Roads**

Scenic roads are generally found in agricultural and wooded areas and near stream corridors. Scenic roads will be discussed in the chapter on Scenic Resources.

## **Traffic Volumes**

Traffic volumes are determined through traffic counts taken at specific locations within a transportation corridor. The volume is usually portrayed in terms of average annual daily traffic (AADT). This represents the average count for a 24 hour period, factoring in any fluctuations due to the day of the week or month of the year. The AADT is an important factor that, in conjunction with the previous factors outlined, helps in determining the functional classification of a road.

Information available on traffic volumes is important in determining the potential for capacity problems. Roads that are not used for the purpose for which they are intended can experience capacity problems. This particularly evident in areas experiencing a significant amount of new development without concurrent upgrades to the transportation corridors. Capacity problems become particularly evident when the number of lanes are reduced and traffic is funneled from a roadway with a higher number of lanes to one with a lower number of lanes.

Although, the St. Lawrence, Exeter and Amity area is highly populated, capacity on the area roads is influenced by traffic originating outside the area. Roads most likely to experience capacity problems are US 422, Routes 562, 662 and 82, Shelbourne Road and East Neversink Road. All of these roads are carrying local as well as regional traffic, and

increasingly higher volumes. Traffic volumes are beginning to increase on other roads as well.

## **Road Corridor Concerns**

### *Access Management*

Access management problems are situations where conflicts between mobility and access are, or will be, intense and result in congestion and safety problems. Access management problems typically occur on roads serving high volumes, high speed traffic, and abutting intense trip generating uses, such as Route 422. An example of an access management problem would be where commercial development occurs on a road and the mobility of traffic is adversely affected by the increase in driveways from adjacent land to the road on which the land fronts. As the number of driveways increases, the safety and efficiency of the road can decrease. Access management will be an increasing concern on the roads in the area in the future.

### *Corridor Segments*

Corridor segment problems are usually found in more densely developed areas when congestion, access and safety issues are all present. Corridor segment problems can include those roads that may possess maintenance issues or exhibit structural problems. Because of a number of access and safety problems, US 422, Route 562, Route 662, and Shelbourne Road are key corridors requiring attention.

### *Route 422 Issues*

Route 422 has had a major influence on the development of eastern Berks County since the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. It has always been the major traffic route in the area, and the route along which most of the commercial development and much residential development has taken place. As the Route 422 Corridor continues to develop, it becomes more congested and more difficult to travel. As drivers seek alternative routes to 422, and development occurs outside the 422 Corridor, other roads in the area receive increasing traffic volumes. Roads, which once wound through agricultural areas, woodlands, and areas of open space, have become lined with residential subdivisions and experience increased traffic volumes from those subdivisions. It will be necessary to balance maintaining the rural nature of portions of the circulation system where possible with the need to insure that a circulation system evolves which is safe, well maintained and capable of meeting the demands placed on it.

Discussion has occurred regarding a bypass to the current Route 422 through both Exeter and Amity Townships. All municipalities involved in this joint comprehensive planning effort support the eventual construction of a bypass to the existing Route 422 corridor.

However, the exact location and design of such a bypass is outside the purview of this Plan. The Berks County Planning Commission has stressed general improvements to the corridor as a means by which immediate and short-term issues involving safety and congestion can be addressed.

### **Alternative Forms of Transportation**

A separate chapter has been provided on pedestrian circulation, and the focus of this background chapter will be on vehicular traffic. In the plan for circulation, though, it will be necessary to address multi-modal facilities such as bicycle-pedestrian, transit-pedestrian, and bicycle-transit.

#### *Bus Service*

Barta provides bus service to St. Lawrence Borough and Exeter Township via St. Lawrence Avenue (Route 562) Butter Lane, Perkiomen Avenue and Route 422. Stops include Boscov's East/Reading Mall, Shelbourne Square, Wal Mart and Weis Markets. Capitol Trailways provides daily and weekend service between Reading, Lebanon and Harrisburg. Capitol Trailways utilizes the inter-city bus terminal at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Penn Streets in Reading.

#### *Rail Service*

Freight service is provided on the Norfolk-Southern line, paralleling Route 422. This line frequently experiences freight travel on a daily basis. A study is also underway to explore the development of a 62-mile passenger rail service between Reading and Philadelphia. Schuylkill Valley Metro stops have been initially planned for Exeter and Amity Townships. With the potential for future development of passenger rail service in the St. Lawrence, Exeter and Amity area, planning for land uses that are conducive and supportive of this type of transportation is important.

## **CHAPTER 25**

### **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Community facilities are considered to be public buildings and structures that house programs and activities essential to municipal government operations and provide necessary services to residents of the area. Public services include activities ranging from police and fire protection to libraries and recreation programs. The extent to which facilities and services are available in any one municipality is dependent on many factors including population, tax base, the circulation system and regional location.

Facilities and public services can be provided in any number of ways depending on the needs of the population, the philosophy of municipal officials, financial resources available, and whether these are offered regionally. Financing for such facilities and services can be provided through available funding or through contracts with private or quasi-public entities, thereby tailoring activities and expenditures for specific needs. Ultimately, a joint approach to providing such facilities and services allows for several municipalities to share in the cost of these facilities and services.

The community facilities which have been mapped include, among others, the St. Lawrence Borough Building on St. Lawrence Avenue, the Exeter Township Building just off Route 422 and the Amity Township Building on Weavertown Road. The Exeter Community Library is located on Prestwick Drive in the Township. Post offices are located along Old Swede Road (Route 662) in Douglasville and St. Lawrence Avenue in St. Lawrence.

M. Luther Lausch Elementary Center is located on Elm Street in St. Lawrence Borough. Lorane and Jacksonwald Elementary Schools are located in Exeter Township along Rittenhouse Drive and Church Lane, respectively. The Exeter Senior and Junior High School educational complex is located between 37<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> Streets in Exeter Township. Reiffon Elementary School has been built east of those schools. The Amity Primary Center and Amity Intermediate Center are located off Weavertown and Old Airport Roads in Amity. The Monocacy Kindergarten Center is located on East Main Street in Douglasville.

The Exeter Township garage is located adjacent to the Township building in the central portion of the Township. Amity Township also maintains a garage adjacent to its municipal building in Weavertown.

The Reiffton Fire Company is located on Business Route 422 in Exeter Township. The Stonersville Fire Company is located in Stonersville in Exeter Township and the Amity Fire Company is located on Pine Forge Road in Amity Township. The Monarch Fire Company is located on Route 422 in Amity Township. The Mt. Penn Fire Company is located at the St. Lawrence/Mt. Penn boundary on Butter Lane.

Religious resources available in the municipalities include the St Catherine's Roman Catholic Church, Schwarzwald Lutheran Church, Schwarzwald United Church of Christ, Reformation Lutheran Church, Grace Baptist Church, Exeter Friends Meeting House, Lorane Chapel, Love Faith Chapel Christian Assembly, Exeter Bible Church, Daniel Boone Bible Baptist Church, and First Baptist Church in Exeter Township. The St. Paul's United Church of Christ, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Hope Church, and St. Gabriel's Episcopal Church and Chapel are located in Amity Township. The Community UCC is located in St. Lawrence.

### **School Districts**

St. Lawrence Borough and Exeter Township comprise the Exeter School District, while Amity Township is part of the Daniel Boone School District. The Exeter School District has four elementary schools and two secondary schools, a Senior and Junior High School. 2003-04 enrollment in the school district was 4,076, compared to 1999-00 enrollment of 3,751.

The Daniel Boone School District is comprised of Amity and Union Townships and the Borough of Birdsboro. The school district has a kindergarten center, two elementary schools, and intermediate center. The High School and Middle School are both located near Birdsboro. 2003-04 enrollment in the school district was 3,503, compared to 2,842 in 1999-00.

Some concerns facing the school districts include a lack of classroom space, increased enrollment at the elementary level, and projected building maintenance and improvement projects. The need for additional facilities will be directly related to the rate of growth in the Borough and the Townships. Consideration is being given to feasibility of construction of additional school facilities at the Laush site in St. Lawrence. The Exeter Senior High School is undergoing additions and renovations. A new middle school is being constructed along Weavertown Road in Amity Township. A new elementary school is proposed to be constructed along Monocacy Creek Road in Amity Township because of the continued population growth in the school district.

## **Police Protection**

Exeter Township and Amity Township both have their own police forces, headquartered in their respective municipal buildings. Exeter Township provides police service to the Borough of St. Lawrence.

## **Ambulance Service**

Ambulance service to the Townships and the Borough is provided by Exeter Township Ambulance Association, which has a station adjacent to the Exeter Township Building. Birdsboro, Pottstown and Oley Ambulance Associations also provide additional ambulance coverage to areas in Amity Township based on location.

## **Library Service**

The only library in St. Lawrence, Exeter and Amity Area is the Exeter Community Library, which is open to people with a Berks County library card. However, libraries are available in nearby Birdsboro and on Perkiomen Avenue in Reading.

## **Fire Protection**

Two fire companies are located in each Township, the Reiffon and Stonersville Volunteer Fire Companies in Exeter Township and the Amity and Monarch Volunteer Fire Companies in Amity Township. The Mt. Penn Fire Company is located in the Borough. These fire companies are volunteer companies, and a continuing concern of volunteer companies is sufficient number of volunteers to allow them to provide adequate fire protection. Fire companies provide mutual assistance to each other in fire emergencies, but it may be necessary for the fire companies and municipalities to work more closely together in the future to assure continued adequate fire protection.