

Enhancing Local Mobility in Collegeville



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Executive Summary

Enhancing Local Mobility in Collegeville is a Fiscal Year 2011 DVRPC project with two primary purposes:

1. Enhance bicycle and pedestrian access to parks, multi-use trails, Ursinus College, and the town's Main Street shopping district.
2. Improve bicycle and pedestrian access to and through Collegeville and throughout the greater Collegeville area.

This report summarizes data relevant to bicycle and pedestrian safety and accommodations, including previous reports that have touched on these topics. A public outreach process was conducted to establish local priorities and key points of interest. This process and the resulting comments are summarized with recommendations to improve the bicycle and pedestrian environment in the extended study area. Some of these recommendations are:

- ◆ Close sidewalk gaps throughout the study area
- ◆ Improve Perkiomen Trail crossings at Main Street and Route 29
- ◆ Establish Main Street as the primary on-road bicycle facility in the Collegeville area
- ◆ Improve access to the Perkiomen Trail
- ◆ Work with adjacent municipalities to establish on-road bicycle facilities with consistent signage

By combining the recommendations made in this report with others made in Montgomery County's *Collegeville Open Space Plan* and *Collegeville Revitalization Plan*, a template for improving the bike/ped environment in the Collegeville area and how to fit that into greater initiatives will emerge.

Introduction

Project Description

Enhancing Local Mobility in Collegeville is a Fiscal Year 2011 DVRPC project with two primary purposes:

1. Enhance bicycle and pedestrian access to parks, multi-use trails, Ursinus College, and the Main Street shopping district.
2. Improve bicycle and pedestrian access to and through Collegeville and throughout the greater Collegeville area.

To accomplish these tasks, the project consists of several components. These are:

- ◆ A review of previous work completed in the study area that relates to bicycle and pedestrian safety and accommodations
- ◆ The collection and analysis of relevant data such as automated bicycle and pedestrian counts, Level-of-Service (LOS) studies, and crash analysis
- ◆ Visits to the study area to document existing conditions
- ◆ Consultation with Collegeville's Pedestrian Safety Task Force and other stakeholders for assistance with data collection, testing the public website, and reviewing memos and drafts
- ◆ A project website that allows site visitors to comment on a variety of issues related to walkability and bikeability

Chapter 1 summarizes some of the previous work that informed this project and defines the project study area.

Chapter 2 reviews relevant data collected for this project. This includes bicycle and pedestrian crash information, automated counts of non-motorized users, and a bicycle and pedestrian LOS analysis on Collegeville road segments.

Chapter 3 summarizes the online public outreach process and reviews comments made by site visitors to the *Enhancing Local Mobility in Collegeville* project website.

Chapter 4 provides recommendations geared toward improving bicycle and pedestrian safety and accommodations in and around Collegeville. These recommendations are based on previous work that has been done in the study area, the existing conditions and relevant data, as well as public input.

The **Appendix** contains information about funding sources available for bicycle and pedestrian related projects.

Previous/Ongoing Work

The *Collegetown Open Space Plan* and the *Collegetown Revitalization Plan* both make recommendations to improve safety and accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians in Collegetown. These reports informed some of the recommendations made here.

The *Collegetown Open Space Plan* deals more explicitly with increased access to open space, while the *Collegetown Revitalization Plan* provides suggestions to invigorate the Main Street commercial district and other commercial locations throughout the borough. Combined recommendations include:

- ◆ Develop gateways along the Perkiomen Trail and other destinations to make them more attractive
- ◆ Develop plazas and small pocket parks in and around Main Street
- ◆ Improve overall pedestrian connectivity by closing gaps in the sidewalk network and enhancing sidewalk facilities
- ◆ Enhance connections to Main Street and other shopping areas by using signage and improved sidewalks
- ◆ Calm traffic on appropriate streets (Main Street, Route 29, Gravel Pike)

Along with these plans, two ongoing projects have the potential to impact the bicycle and pedestrian environment in Collegetown.

The Collegetown Main Street Revitalization project seeks to enhance the pedestrian experience on Main Street by completing curb, sidewalk, landscape, and lighting improvements between 1st Avenue and 4th Avenue. This project is currently in the construction phase.

Simultaneously, the Office of Transportation Operations Management at DVRPC is currently undertaking the retiming of traffic signals along Ridge Pike. The intersection of Ridge Pike and Route 29 is a key focal point. Crossing times at the intersection will be increased to enhance pedestrian safety, but there will not be a pedestrian-only crossing phase.

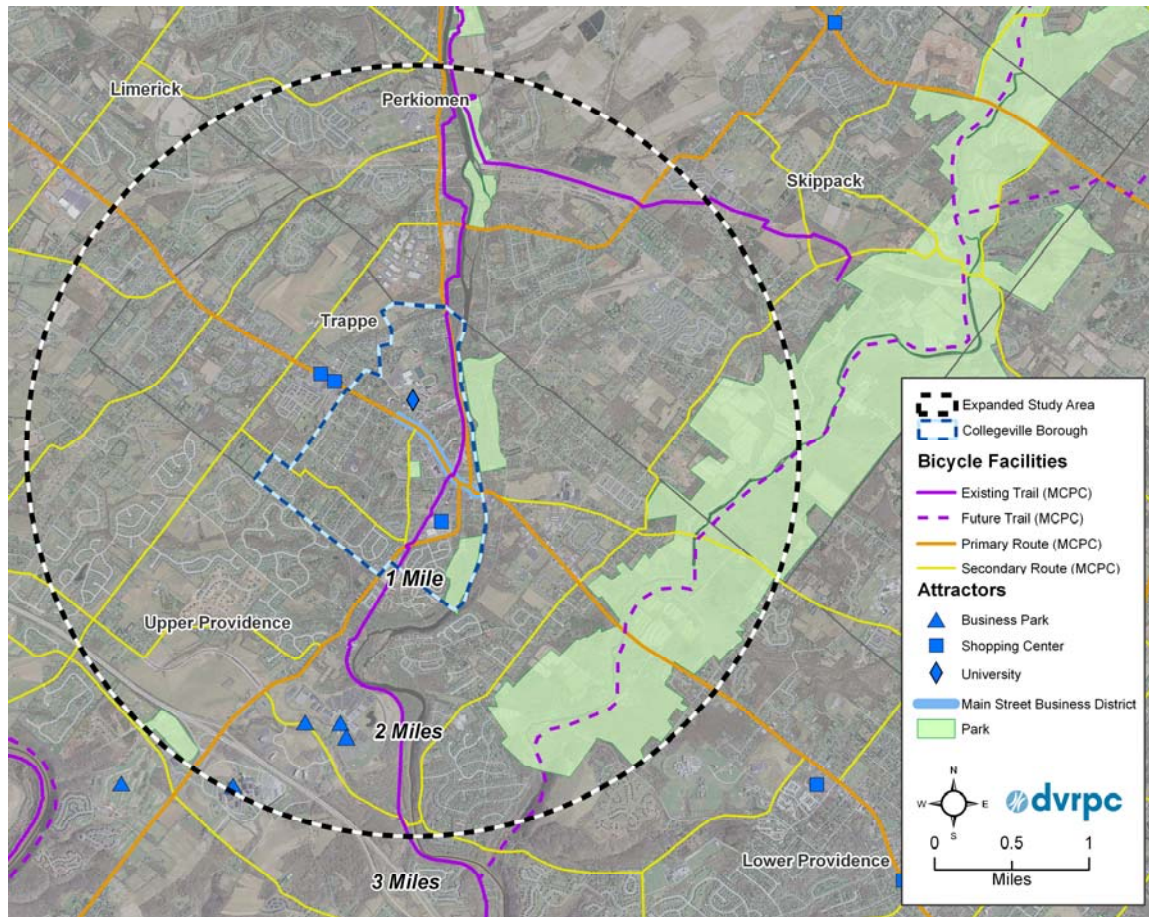
These projects speak to the need (and desire) for increased activity, revitalization, and improved bicycle and pedestrian access in Collegetown. Several of the recommendations made in this report echo those made in these earlier documents.

Defining the Study Area

Initially, the project study area was limited to Collegeville Borough. After several field visits and discussions with the stakeholder group, the study area was expanded to include neighboring municipalities in order to better evaluate non-motorized use in a larger context.

Figure 1 depicts Collegeville Borough and the expanded study area. Also included are bicycle facilities (multi-use trails and on-road bicycle routes designated in the Montgomery County Transportation Plan) as well as attractions in the Collegeville area.

Figure 1: Project Study Area



Source: DVRPC, 2011

The expanded study area incorporates some of the major attractions in the region, including Evansburg State Park, the Skippack Trail, Providence Town Center, and the Pfizer campus. This necessitated adding portions of several neighboring municipalities, including Trappe Borough, Upper and Lower Providence townships, and Perkiomen and Skippack townships. Representatives from these municipalities were added to the stakeholder group to assist in reviewing memos and other documents and testing the project website prior to its launch.

Summary Points

- ◆ *Enhancing Local Mobility in Collegeville* is a DVPRC project whose purpose is to develop recommendations for improving the bicycle and pedestrian environment in the Collegeville area. The project includes data analysis and public outreach.
- ◆ Previous work includes the *Collegeville Open Space Plan* and the *Collegeville Revitalization Plan*, both done by the Montgomery County Planning Commission. Both of these reports recommend ways to improve non-motorized safety and access in the borough.
- ◆ Construction and signal timing projects that will impact pedestrian safety are currently underway in the borough.
- ◆ The study area is centered on Collegeville Borough and the Main Street commercial district but includes adjacent municipalities in the Perkiomen Valley.

Data Collection

For this project, three different types of data were collected and evaluated:

1. Automated bicycle and pedestrian counts on select Collegeville roadways, sidewalks, and on the Perkiomen Trail
2. Bicycle and pedestrian level of service grades on select Collegeville roadways
3. Bicycle and pedestrian crash volumes and location information in the expanded study area

Additionally, there were two field visits in which existing conditions were documented and road geometries were verified.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Counts

In cooperation with DVRPC’s Travel Monitoring unit, several locations in the borough were selected for automated bicycle and pedestrian counts. Bicycle counts were conducted with pneumatic tubes, similar to those used for vehicular counts. Pedestrian counts were conducted with infrared counters, which detect heat emitted by pedestrians.

Tables 1 and 2 list the locations and volumes of cyclists and pedestrians counted over the course of a week, as well as the dates the counts were conducted. *The count numbers represent the total number of users in the entire week-long counting period.* Figure 2 depicts the locations and volumes on a map of the borough.

Table 1: Bicycle Volumes at Select Locations

Location	From	To	Count Dates	Bicycle Count (both directions)
Perkiomen Trail	Route 29	Main Street	11/30 –12/7	70
Main Street	3rd Avenue	4th Avenue	11/17–11/23	40
Main Street	4th Avenue	5th Avenue	11/17–11/23	30
8th Avenue	Clayhor Street	Main Street	11/30 –12/7	8

Source: DVRPC, 2011

Table 1 lists the total volume of cyclists counted over week-long time periods in November and December, 2010. The number of cyclists on the Perkiomen Trail (70, both directions) exceeds users on the borough’s streets. Main Street saw 40 cyclists between 3rd and 4th Avenues and 30 between 4th and 5th Avenues, while 8th Avenue saw a low number of cyclists (eight). These are very low numbers, although that may be explained by weather conditions. Table 2 lists the locations and volumes of the pedestrian counts conducted for this project.

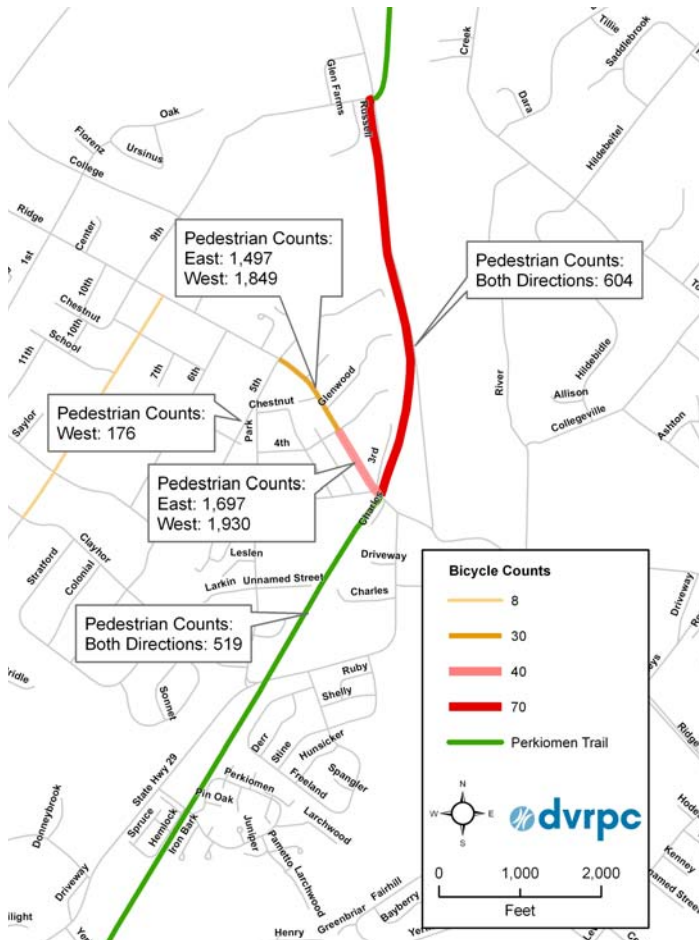
Table 2: Pedestrian Volumes at Select Locations

Location	Side (if applicable)	From	To	Count Dates	Pedestrian Count
Main Street	West Sidewalk	3rd	4th	11/15 – 11/22	1,930
Main Street	West Sidewalk	4th	5th	11/15 – 11/22	1,849
Main Street	East Sidewalk	3rd	4th	11/15 – 11/22	1,697
Main Street	East Sidewalk	4th	5th	11/15 – 11/22	1,497
Perkiomen Trail	N/A	Main	1st	11/30 – 12/7	604
Perkiomen Trail	N/A	2nd	Main	11/30 – 12/7	519
5th Avenue	West Sidewalk	Clayhor	Main	11/30 – 12/7	176

Source: DVRPC, 2011

The west sidewalk of Main Street saw the highest volumes of pedestrians, 1,930 for the week (approximately 275 per day), while the east sidewalk of Main Street saw slightly less pedestrian activity (240 pedestrians per day). The Perkiomen Trail saw around 85 pedestrians daily (both directions, north of Main Street) and 75 daily pedestrians in both directions south of Main Street. Fifth Avenue saw the lowest volume, with only 25 pedestrians per day for the week.

Figure 2: Locations of Bike/Ped Counts



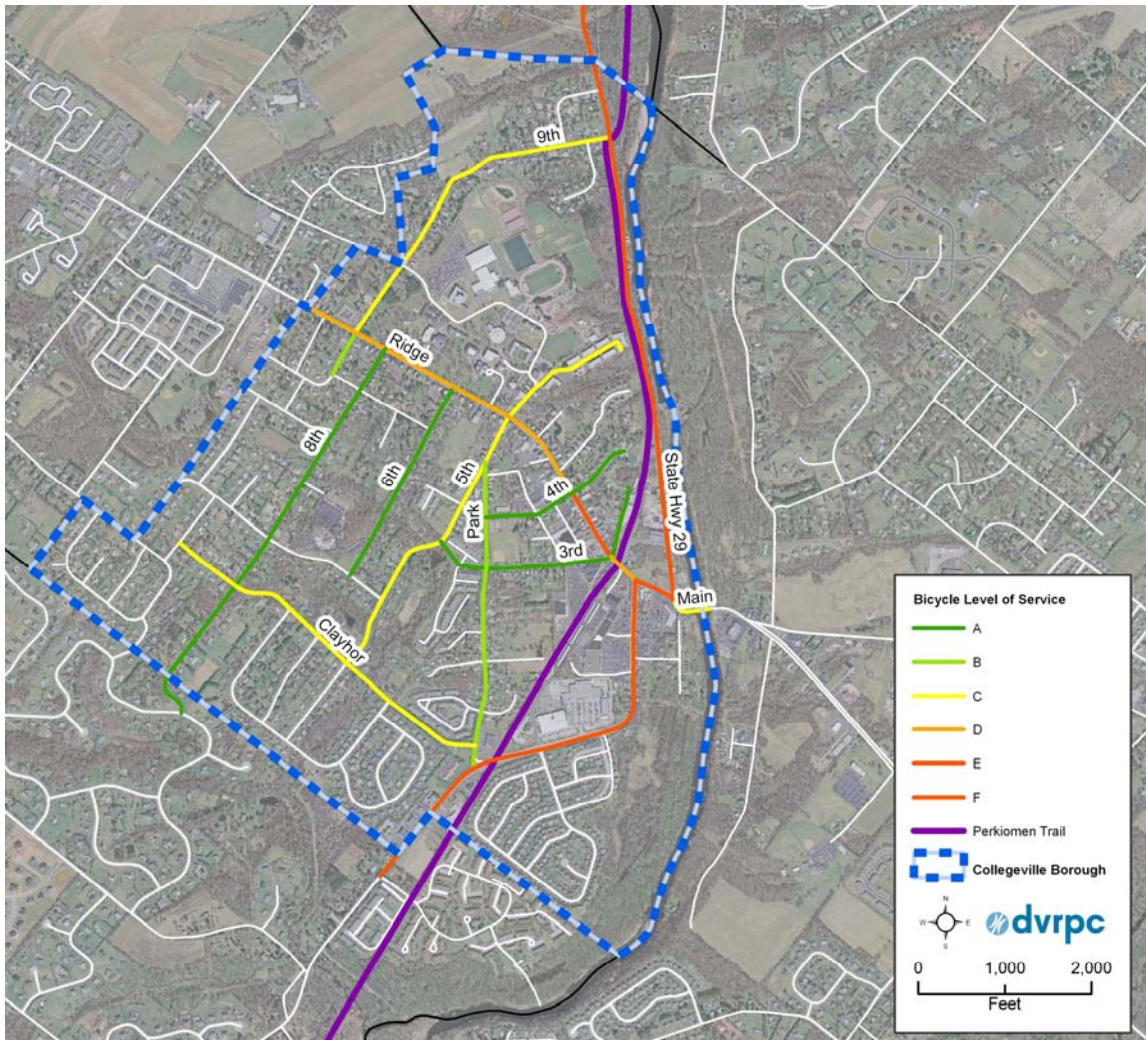
Source: DVRPC, 2011

Level of Service

Unlike automobile level-of-service, which evaluates the efficiency of throughput on roads, Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) and Pedestrian Level of Service (PLOS) use factors such as roadway geometry, speed, and traffic volume to score roads on how comfortable they are for bicyclists or pedestrians. BLOS and PLOS use similar inputs, but these inputs can be weighed differently. For example, on-street parking is considered beneficial for pedestrians because it provides an added buffer from moving traffic. For bicyclists, however, the presence of on-street parking presents a potentially dangerous condition, with cars pulling out of parking spots and “dooring” (when a cyclist is hit by a stopped car opening a door) as potential hazards for bicyclists.

Figures 3 and 4 on the following pages depict streets in Collegeville Borough where BLOS and PLOS scores were developed. Scores were only generated for roadways in Collegeville, not for neighboring municipalities.

Figure 3: Bicycle Level of Service on Select Roads

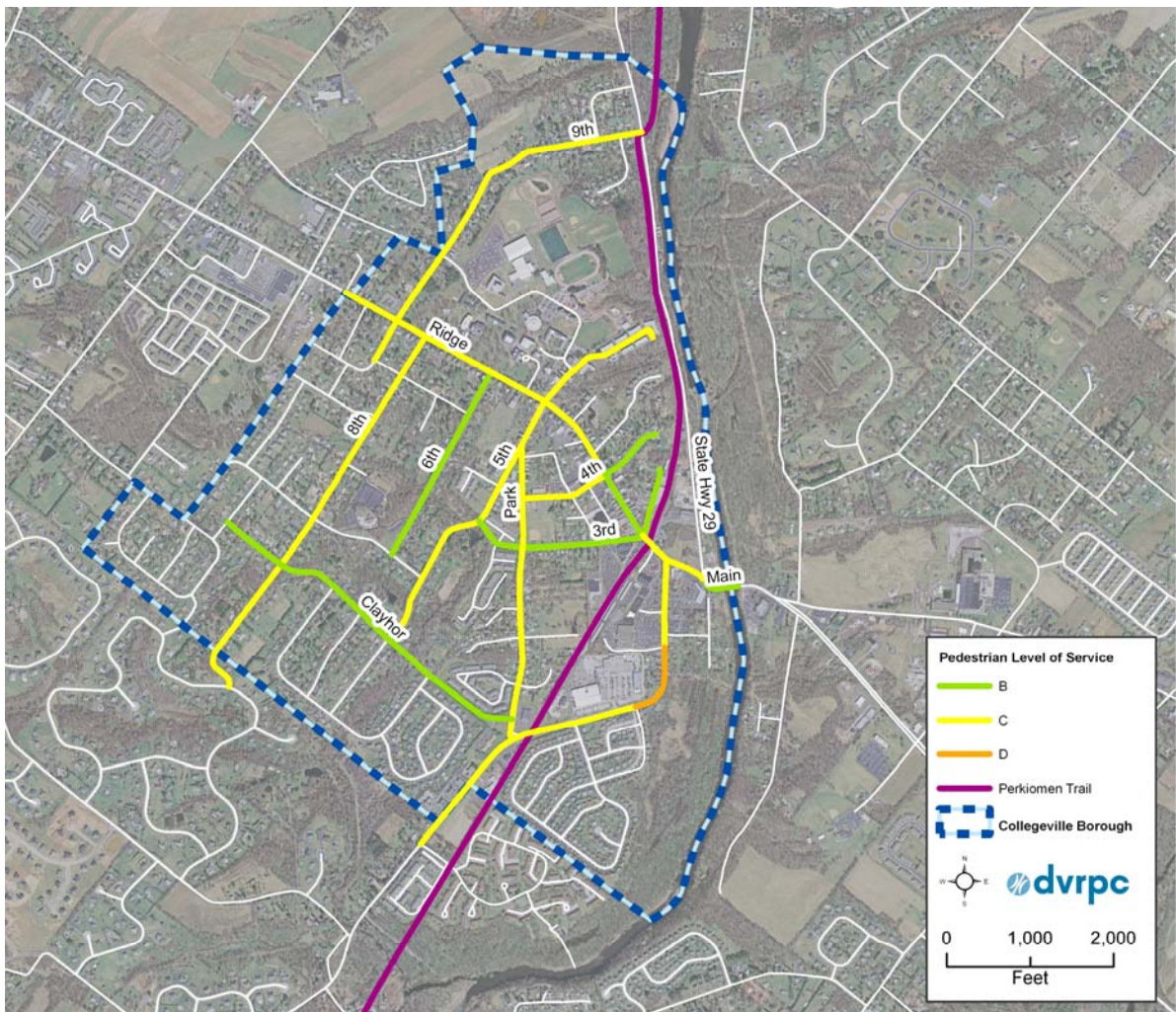


Source: DVRPC, 2011

Figure 3 depicts BLOS grades on major streets in Collegeville Borough. BLOS scores were generally favorable, particularly on 6th and 8th Avenues. These streets feature wider cartways with relatively low speeds and traffic volumes, translating into more comfortable environments for bicyclists.

Park Avenue, which has a low speed limit but higher traffic volumes, received a score of B. Clayhor Road, 5th Avenue, and 9th Avenue all received a grade of C, largely due to higher traffic volumes. Main Street and Route 29 received grades of D or below, due to higher speeds and traffic volumes.

Figure 4: Pedestrian Level of Service on Select Roads



Source: DVRPC, 2011

Figure 4 depicts PLOS grades on major streets in Collegeville. Several borough streets received a B grade, including Clayhor Street and 3rd and 6th Avenues. Most streets in the borough received a grade of C, including most of Main Street, 8th Avenue, and parts of Route 29. A small segment of Route 29 received a D. Route 29 north of Main Street was not graded because it lacks sidewalks, a requirement for pedestrian level of service grades.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Crash Data

Staff reviewed PennDOT crash data between 2005 and 2009 to determine the volume of crashes between motor vehicles and bicycles or pedestrians that took place in Collegeville and the expanded study area. Table 3 lists the number of crashes that took place in Collegeville Borough and the expanded study area. It should be noted that there is a tendency to underreport crashes, particularly bicycle- and pedestrian-related incidents.

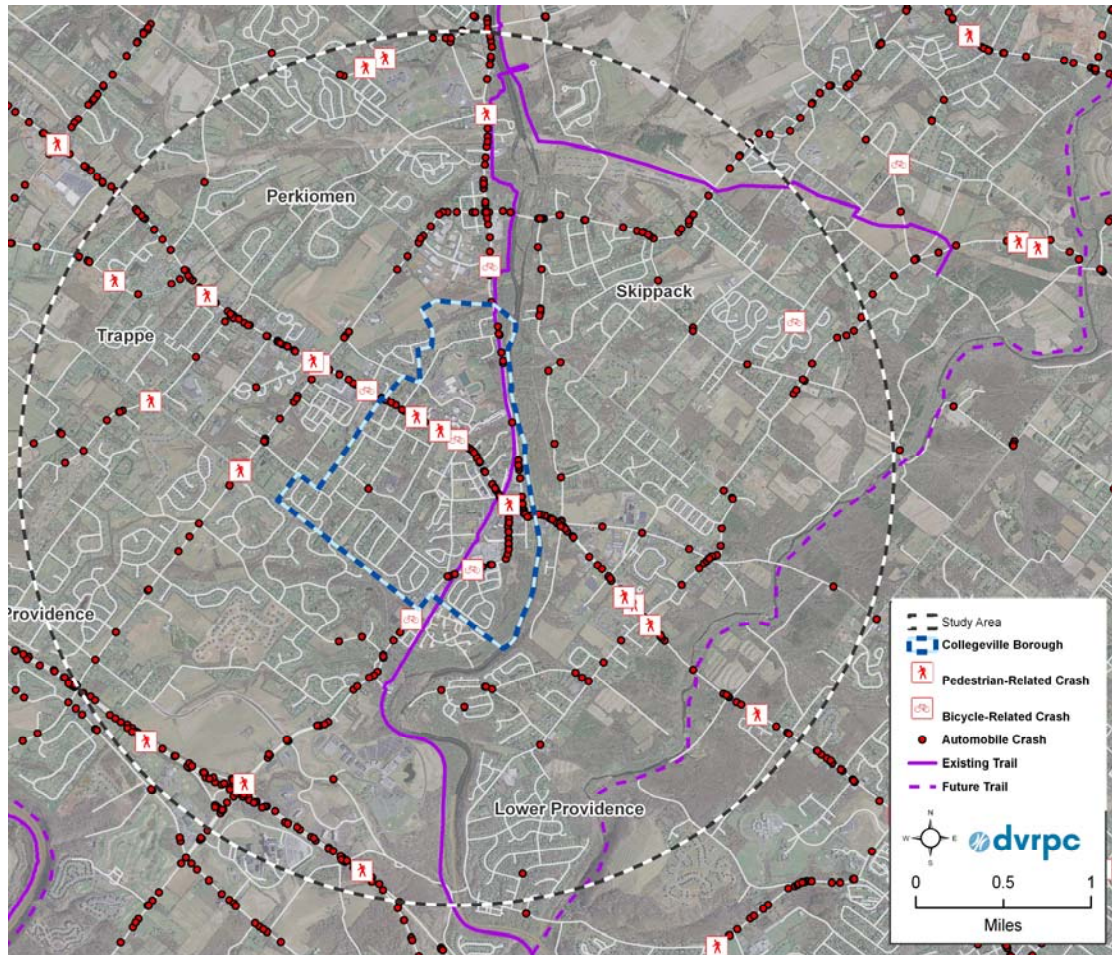
Table 3: Study Area Bike/Ped Crashes

	Pedestrian-Related	Bicycle-Related	Total
Collegeville Borough	3	2	5
Expanded Study Area	17	4	21
Total	20	6	26

Source: PennDOT, 2011

There were five bicycle or pedestrian related crashes reported in Collegeville Borough between 2005 and 2009, three pedestrian and two bicycle incidents, all of which took place on Main Street or on Route 29. In the expanded study area there were 21 reported bicycle and pedestrian related crashes, with significantly fewer bicycle crashes. Figure 5 on the following page depicts the distribution of vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian crashes that took place in the entire study area.

Figure 5: Bike/Ped Crashes in the Collegeville Study Area (2005 – 2009)



Source: PennDOT, 2011

In the study area, the majority of bicycle- and pedestrian-related crashes took place along Ridge Pike/Main Street in both Collegeville and surrounding municipalities. Table 4 lists the locations of all the bicycle- and pedestrian-related crashes and the number of incidents that took place there.

Table 4: Bicycle and Pedestrian Crash Locations

Pedestrian Crashes		Bicycle Crashes	
Main Street/Ridge Pike	10	Main Street/Ridge Pike	3
Pottstown Bypass	2	Route 29	2
Wartman Road	2	Daniel Drive	1
Gravel Pike/Route 29	2		
Route 113	2		
Lewis Road	1		
Linfield Trappe Road	1		
Total	20		6

Source: PennDOT, 2011

Of the 26 total bicycle and pedestrian crashes, almost half took place along Main Street/Ridge Pike. One crash occurred at the intersection of Main Street and Route 29. Four crashes took place along Route 29. There were several other locations that had more than one bike or pedestrian crash. These included PA 113, where two incidents occurred adjacent to the intersection with Borough Line Road (between Trappe and Upper Providence). The Pottstown Bypass in Upper Providence saw two bicycle crashes, and Wartman Street in Perkiomen Township saw one bicycle- and one pedestrian-related crash between 2005 and 2009.

Summary Points

The fieldwork and data collection for this project yielded several conclusions:

- ◆ The bicycle and pedestrian counts conducted in November and December of 2010 indicate fairly low volumes of cyclists on the Perkiomen Trail as well as in Collegeville Borough. Pedestrian activity was significantly higher, particularly along Main Street at midday and late night/early morning hours.
- ◆ BLOS and PLOS evaluations indicate that borough streets, with the exception of Main Street and Route 29, are generally hospitable to pedestrians and bicyclists. There are some sidewalk gaps, however, on Ninth and Eighth Avenues, and parts of Park Avenue and Third Avenue, which make the network incomplete.
- ◆ The Ridge Pike/Main Street corridor had crash volumes significantly higher than any other roadways in the study area. Four of the five incidents in Collegeville and half of all incidents in the expanded study area took place somewhere along Ridge Pike.

It should be noted that counts conducted during more hospitable weather conditions would likely yield significantly higher numbers of cyclists and pedestrians. During the two field visits, which were conducted on warm, sunny days, morning and midday activity on the trail was significant.

The Public Outreach Effort

The *Enhancing Local Mobility in Collegeville* website was created to solicit public ideas to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and accommodations in and around Collegeville Borough. The site was modeled after previous successful DVRPC outreach initiatives in Mercer County, New Jersey, and along the Route 30 corridor in Delaware and Montgomery counties and the City of Philadelphia.

The purpose of this website was to have local residents comment on locations that are deficient or need improvement in bicycle and pedestrian safety and accessibility. Users were also asked to comment on locations that are attractive for walking and bicycling. Visitors could 'like' or 'dislike' comments to see which recommendations rated highest among local residents.

To ensure that the site received significant traffic, DVRPC staff and project stakeholders initiated a promotional campaign that included Internet and print media. Several local papers carried articles about the project, including the *Pottstown Mercury*, the *Spring-Ford Register*, and *The Phoenix*.

Summary of User Comments

Visitors to the project website could comment on the bikeability and walkability of locations in and around the borough. They could also rate comments left by other users, using a 'like' or 'dislike' function expressing agreement or disagreement. This function was intended to prevent excessive redundancy in comments and to build a set of recommendations that had larger consensus within the community. Overall, there were 80 unique comments made on the site, with 235 'likes' and only one 'dislike' in reference to those comments.

Even with the like/dislike functionality, some comments were redundant. Similar user recommendations were combined to develop a better sense of locations and improvements that may have more support in the community. Table 5 lists the recommendations that had the most 'likes' among all user comments.

Table 5: Highest-Rated User Comments

User Comment	'Likes'
Provide sidewalks on 3rd Avenue south of Main Street	28
Improve intersection of Main Street and the Perkiomen Trail	25
Install bicycle facilities along Main Street	15
Create alternative access points to the Perkiomen Trail	12
Improve creek access south of Main Street	10
Improve the Perkiomen Trail crossing over Route 29 (north of Main Street)	8

Source: DVRPC, 2011

The highest-rated comment was the recommendation to provide sidewalks along 3rd Avenue south of Main Street. This is a small segment of sidewalk, but it connects Main Street to Collegeville Park, a crucial pedestrian link. The next highest-rated comment recommends improving the intersection of Main Street and the Perkiomen Trail. This is a difficult, poorly marked location, but the upcoming plaza project, which will add parking and improve the trailhead north of Main Street, should mitigate some user concerns at this intersection.

The suggestion of adding bicycle facilities to Main Street and Ridge Pike was also highly rated, although bicycle lanes, 'share the road' markings, and a multi-use path for both cyclists and pedestrians in place of the sidewalk were all mentioned as possible improvements. The concept of creating additional trail access points was also highly rated, although different locations were cited as possibilities. The idea of creating access from the Perkiomen Trail to the Perkiomen Creek and improving the trail's crossing over Route 29 north of Main Street were also rated highly by site users.

It is also informative to look at specific locations where there was a concentration of user comments. Three locations and their corresponding comments stand out.

1. Around the intersection of Main Street and the Perkiomen Trail

- Improve bicycle and pedestrian signals and signage at the intersection
- Install wayfinding signage about Collegeville attractions
- Enhance trailhead information north and south of Main Street
- Improve landscaping around the trail as it approaches Main Street
- Develop a pocket park east of the trailhead on Main Street

2. Main Street between 3rd and 5th Avenues

- Traffic calming is necessary to reduce speeding, improve compliance, and enhance non-motorized user safety
- Bicycle facilities should be installed along Main Street/Ridge Pike (this comment was made throughout the corridor)
- Improve pedestrian access to Collegeville Park via 3rd and 4th Avenues

3. The intersection of the Perkiomen Trail and Route 29 north of Main Street

- Enhance pedestrian crossing at Route 29 and the Perkiomen Trail via improved signalization or other means
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian access along 9th Avenue
- Improve access and wayfinding signage to Hunsberger's Woods along Route 29

Of the 80 comments made on the outreach website, almost half made some mention of Main Street/Ridge Pike. This indicates the importance of this corridor throughout the study area and confirms what was established during the data collection phase of this report, that Main Street is the most used and most problematic location for pedestrians and cyclists.

Summary Points

- ◆ There were 80 unique comments made and 235 'likes' on the *Enhancing Local Mobility in Collegeville* website.
- ◆ The most-liked comment recommended putting sidewalks on 3rd Avenue south of Main Street connecting to Collegeville Park, while the second most-liked comment recommended improving the Main Street/Perkiomen Trail crossing.
- ◆ The intersection of the Main Street/Perkiomen Trail crossing had several comments in close proximity to each other. These dealt with improving signalization and signage as well as beautifying the location, among other things.
- ◆ Of the 80 comments made on the website, approximately half made some reference to conditions on Main Street/Ridge Pike.

Recommended Improvements

This section provides recommendations on ways to improve the bicycle and pedestrian environment in the Collegeville area. These recommendations fall into three categories:

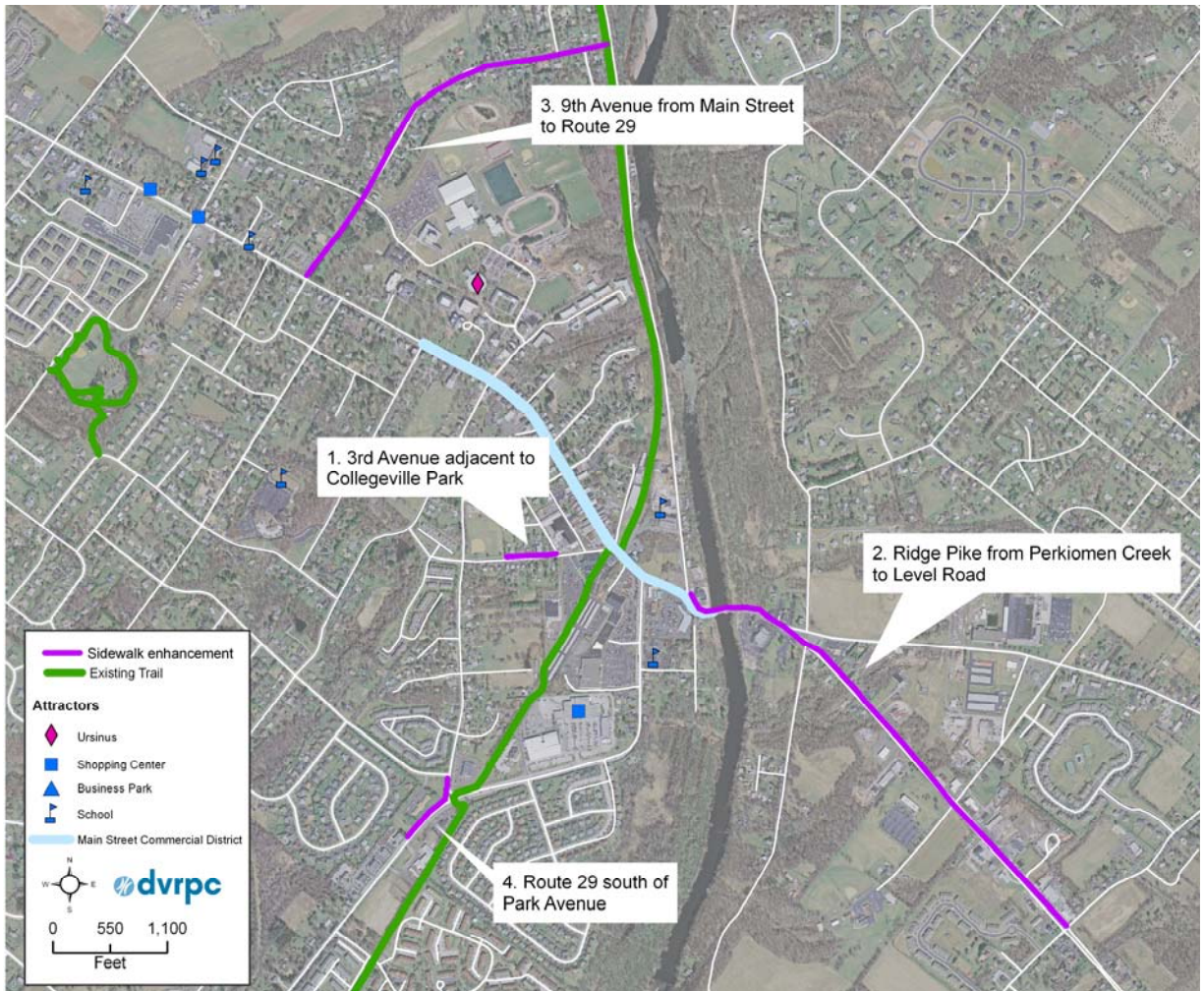
1. Sidewalk network improvements
2. Perkiomen Trail improvements
 - Improve trail crossings with key intersections
 - Establish alternative access points to the trail throughout the study area
3. On-road bicycle network recommendations
 - Establish designated on-road facilities enabling cyclists access to local attractions
 - Establish connector segments where signage will direct cyclists to on-road facilities, attractions, and open space

The recommendations made in this section reflect previous work that has been done in the study area, fieldwork conducted by DVRPC staff, analysis of relevant data, and user comments from the public outreach portion of this project.

Sidewalk Network Improvements

Figure 6 (on the following page) depicts the locations in the study area that were cited by visitors to the outreach website to be missing links in the sidewalk network. Visits to the project study area verified that these are significant gaps and should be considered priorities.

Figure 6: Recommended Sidewalk Enhancements



Source: DVRPC, 2011

1. 3rd Avenue adjacent to Collegeville Park

As noted in Chapter 3, this comment received the most ‘likes’ on the public outreach website. Building sidewalks at this location would connect Main Street to Collegeville Park, a crucial link that is currently nonexistent. This location was also cited in the *Collegeville Open Space Plan* as a major gap in the sidewalk network.

2. Ridge Pike, east of the Perkiomen Creek to Level Road

The Main Street/Ridge Pike Bridge has a sidewalk on its north side but the walkway terminates just a few yards beyond the creek. Sidewalks, particularly on the north side of Ridge Pike, are needed to connect communities on the east side of the Perkiomen Creek to the Main Street commercial district. Crossings at Level Road, Cross Keys Road, and Pechins Mill Road should be improved to allow people coming from south of Ridge Pike access to the sidewalk and the bridge.

3. 9th Avenue from Main Street to Route 29

This is an attractive street that would benefit greatly from sidewalks, allowing pedestrians to walk from Main Street to the Perkiomen Trail, and creating an alternative access point. There is limited roadway capacity on this segment so it may only be possible to add sidewalks to one side of the roadway, but it would close an important gap in the borough's sidewalk network.

4. Route 29, south of Park Avenue

The Perkiomen Trail's crossing over Route 29 in this location is problematic, and the location is made more difficult by the lack of sidewalks south of Park Avenue. Adding sidewalks would improve trail access from neighborhoods in this area and begin to make Route 29 more pedestrian-friendly.

Perkiomen Trail Crossing Improvements

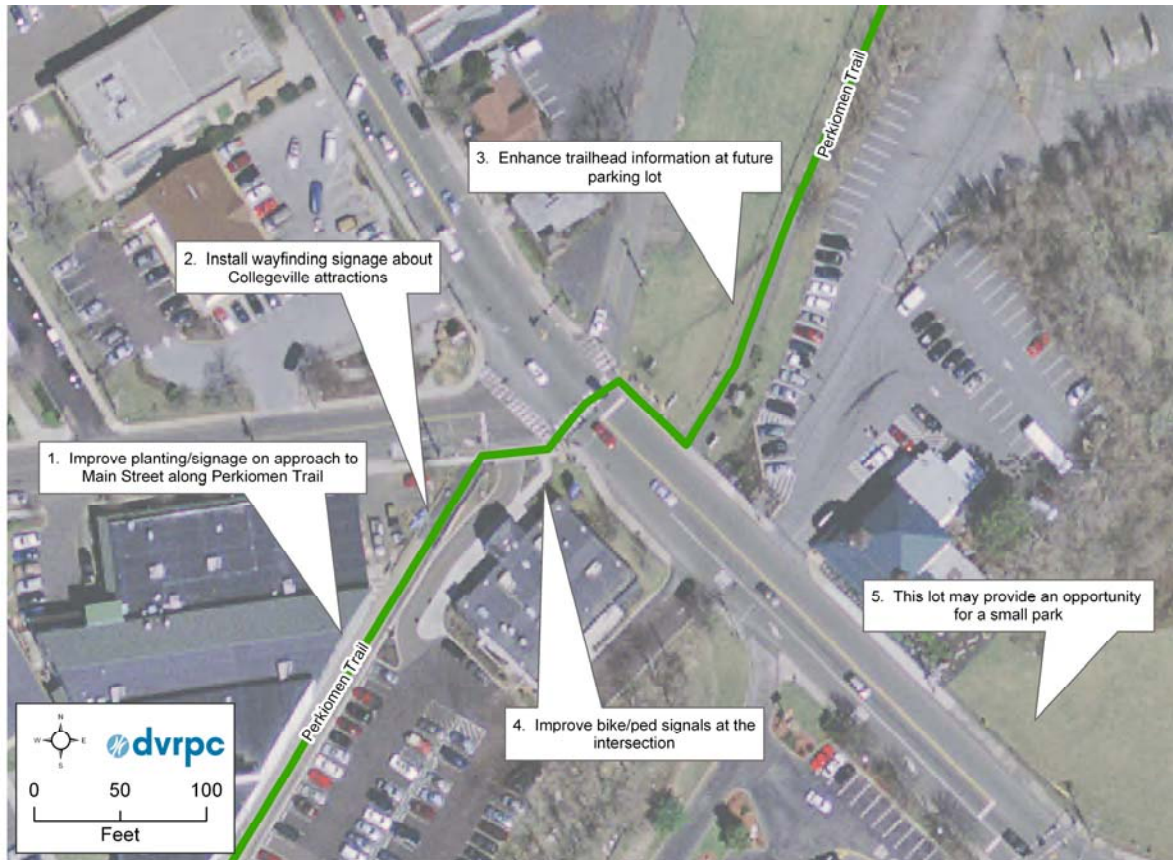
The Perkiomen Trail is the most significant bike/ped facility in Collegeville and the Perkiomen Valley. The trail itself is pleasant and provides good access to the surrounding area, but there are several locations, specifically crossings with major arterials, which are problematic for trail users and could be improved.

These crossings are important because they serve as gateways into the borough, and trail users coming upon one of them may choose to turn around rather than enter the borough because of perceived safety risks. This section provides aerial photos of each location annotated with recommendations meant to improve connections between the trail and streets.

The intersection of the Perkiomen Trail and Main Street

The location that users on the *Enhancing Local Mobility in Collegeville* outreach website consider most problematic is the Perkiomen Trail's crossing over Main Street. While there were no reported bicycle- or pedestrian-related crashes at this location between 2005 and 2009, site users indicated that the location is hazardous for pedestrians and cyclists. Fieldwork also highlighted the difficulty in crossing this intersection due to poor signalization and unclear signage. Site visitors pointed out a few other issues related to this location. A map of the intersection and recommended improvements are located in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Recommended Perkiomen Trail/Main Street Enhancements



Source: DVRPC, 2011

Figure 7 depicts the Perkiomen Trail's crossing over Main Street in Collegeville. Users commented on several aspects of this intersection, most notably the signalization at the crossing and the lack of wayfinding signage along the trail approaching the intersection. Some potential improvements are listed below and refer to Figure 7.

1. Beautify the trail's approach to Collegeville from south of Main Street; perhaps institute an 'adopt-a-trail' program to work with local businesses to clean and maintain portions of the trail
2. Install signage at the southern intersection of the Perkiomen Trail and Main Street
3. Install wayfinding signage at the trailhead that will be constructed in the lot on the north side of Main Street
4. Install pedestrian countdown timers at the intersection
5. Turn the lot east of the intersection into a small pocket park to enhance this gateway into the borough

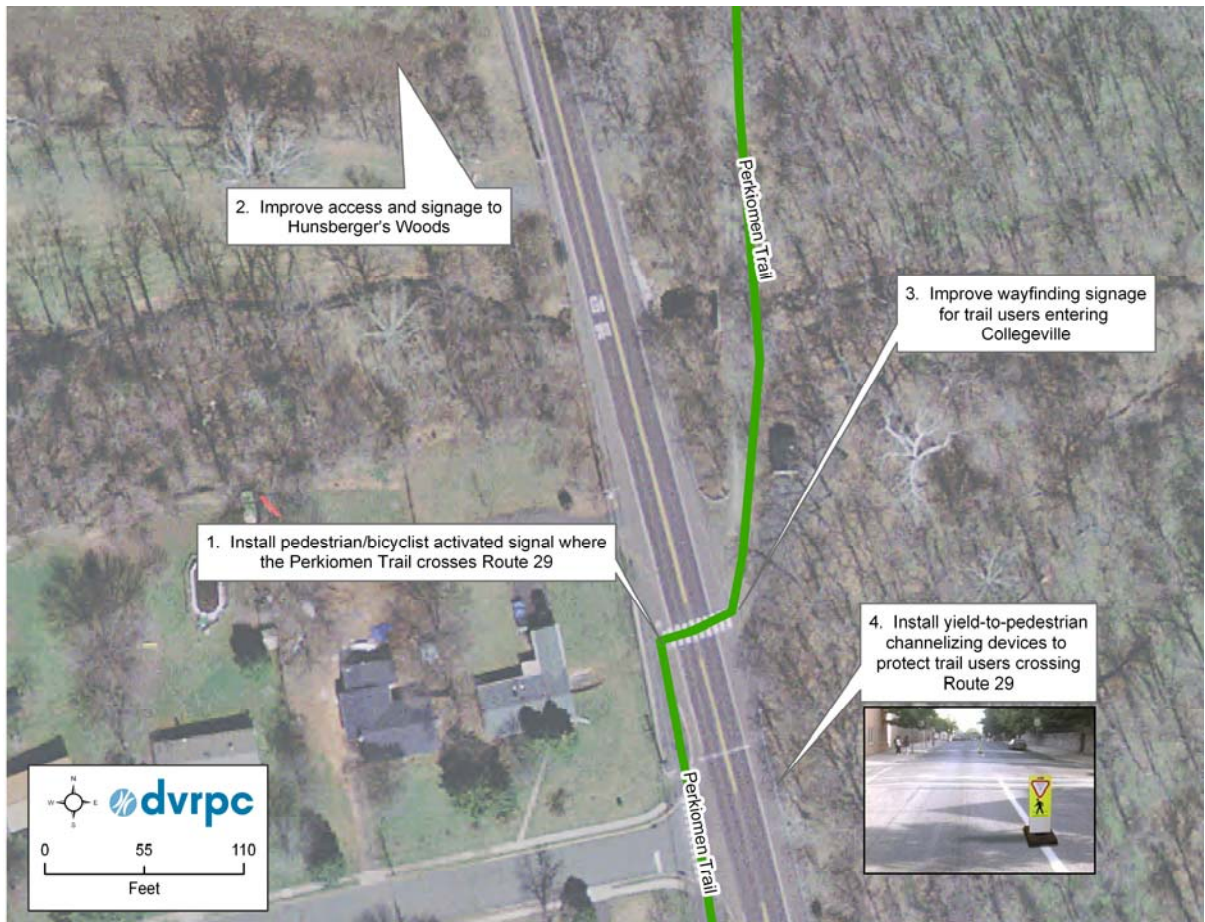
Because of its location and function as a gateway into the borough, on the trail and on Main Street, improvements at this location should be prioritized. The enhanced trailhead and new signalization due to the Ridge Pike Signal Improvement Project may improve conditions somewhat, but there are other opportunities to improve the safety of this intersection and enhance the visibility of Main Street to trail users.

The Perkiomen Trail's crossing over Route 29 north of Main Street

The Perkiomen's crossing over Route 29 north of Main Street is also problematic for trail users. Because this is a location where southbound trail users may turn around rather than enter Collegeville, it is important to consider some potential improvements.

Figure 8 depicts the Perkiomen Trail's current crossing over Route 29. Currently, the location is served by a mid-block crossing and 'ped xing' painted onto the road notifying drivers that there may be pedestrians crossing ahead. Some recommended improvements are annotated in Figure 8 and described below.

Figure 8: Recommended Perkiomen Trail/Route 29 (north) Enhancements



Source: DVRPC, 2011

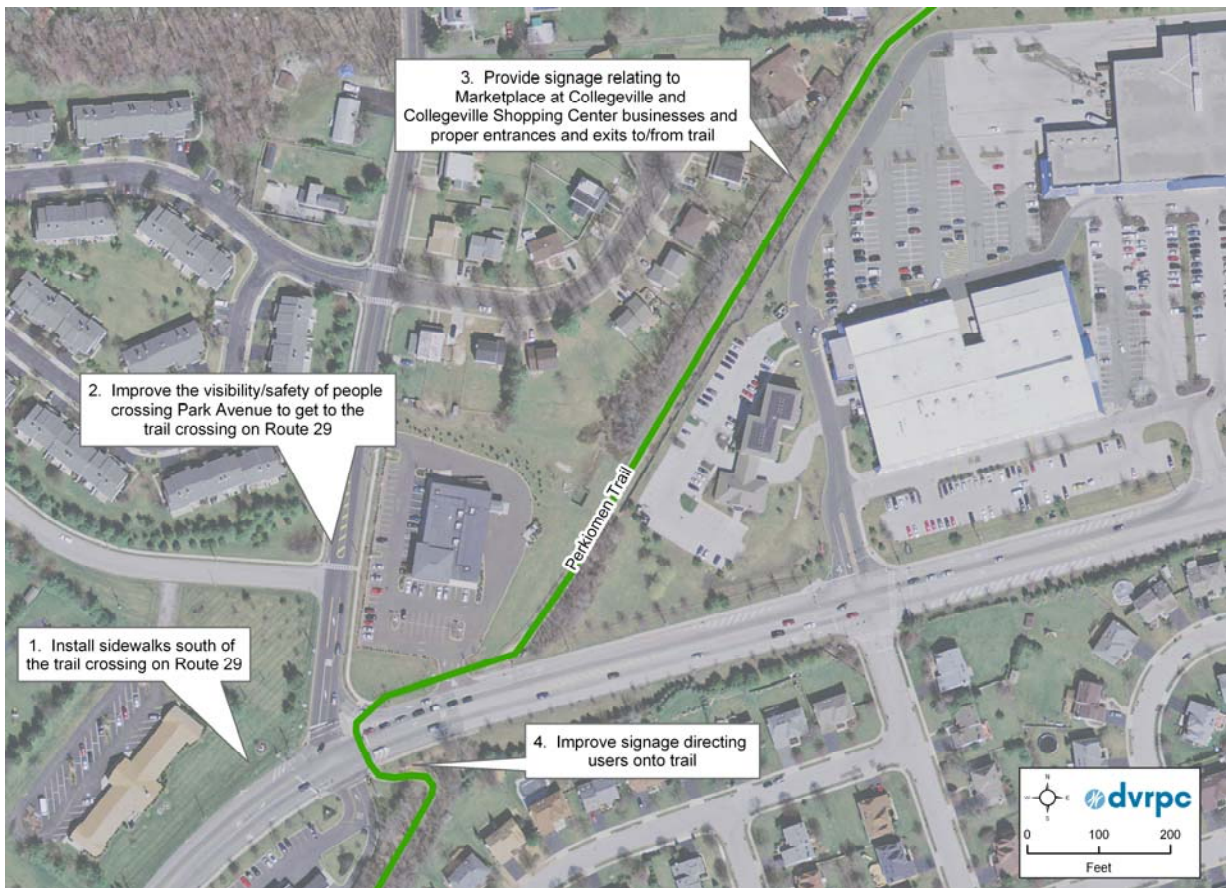
1. Install a push-button activated signal at the location of the current crosswalk — this would only stop traffic on Route 29 when activated by a trail user attempting to cross
2. Enhance access and signage to Hunsberger's Woods, north of the crossing, either along Route 29 or through a more clearly defined (and protected) path
3. Provide wayfinding signage on the north side of the trail for users coming into the borough
4. Install yield-to-pedestrian channelizing devices on Route 29 to make yield responsibilities clear to drivers

This is another location which should serve as a gateway into and out of the borough. Improving the perception of safety of the crossing is crucial to enable trail users to more easily enter Collegetown on the Perkiomen Trail.

The Perkiomen Trail's crossing over Route 29 south of Main Street

The Perkiomen Trail's crossing on Route 29 south of Main Street is also problematic for trail users. The location serves as the southern gateway into the borough. While the volume of user comments adjacent to this location was not as high as some other locations, fieldwork indicated that this location is difficult to navigate. Figure 9 depicts this location and recommendations are described below.

Figure 9: Recommended Perkiomen Trail/Route 29 (south) Enhancements



Source: DVRPC, 2011

Currently, a traffic light allows users to cross Route 29 and then proceed along Route 29 for about 200 feet before resuming travel on the trail. While there are not many options for improving the crossing itself, there are other ways to improve this location. Some potential enhancements are:

1. Install sidewalks along Route 29 south of the trail
2. Improve the Clayhor Road crossing over Park Avenue for cyclists and pedestrians who want to get to the trail
3. Improve trail access points to the shopping centers along Route 29 and bicycle accommodations in those shopping centers
4. Provide clearer signage directing northbound trail users to attractions in Collegeville Borough

The recommended improvements at this location are incremental, but will help improve amenities on the trail as well as access to Collegeville from the Perkiomen Trail.

Establish Alternative Access Points to the Perkiomen Trail

The Perkiomen Trail serves as the main spine for non-motorized travel through the Collegeville area, but at times it is not very well integrated into the surrounding area. The priority enhancements cited above improve trail access and links between the trail and borough, but there are additional opportunities to better link the trail to Collegeville and its environs. Figure 10 depicts these connections.

The additional access points recommended in Figure 10 are as follows:

1. Link to residential developments in Perkiomen Township

The first recommended improvement to Perkiomen Trail access is north of Collegeville in Perkiomen Township. Aerial imagery indicates that there is a well-worn path adjacent to a creek running through several housing developments. This link would provide residents of these developments with more direct, off-road access to the trail. The feasibility of this connection would have to be studied, given the potentially sensitive environment surrounding the creek, but there is some flexibility in designing the alignment. This trail connector, if desirable, could even be extended to Trappe Road to further enhance access.

2. Connection to current paper street that links to 5th Avenue in Collegeville Borough

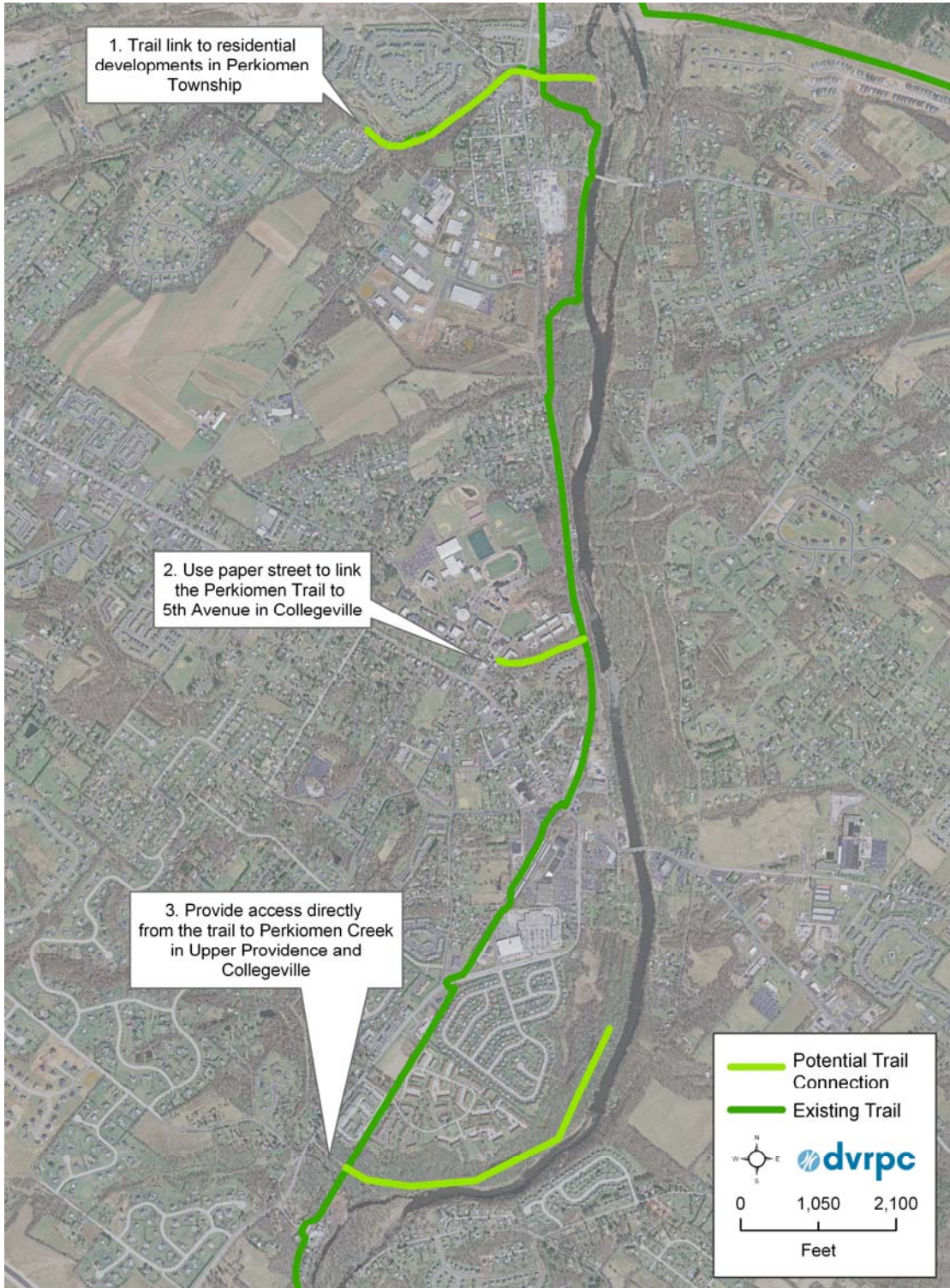
There is a paper street which cuts through a wooded area connecting the trail to 5th Avenue, adjacent to (but not actually on) the Ursinus campus. During two visits to the trail, staff found that the paper street, while covered in broken rock and not currently traversable by bike, is frequently used by walkers seeking alternative access to the trail. Improved surface material, trail lighting, and proper signage could create a formal link between Collegeville and the trail. This connection was mentioned in the *Collegeville Open Space Plan* as a potential connection to the Perkiomen Trail.

3. Creek access in Upper Providence Township and Collegeville Borough

One of the more 'liked' comments on the website recommended creating a trail link to the Perkiomen Creek, south of Main Street in Collegeville Borough. The access point would have to come toward the southern part of the study area before the trail moves west of Route 29, making the connection difficult. The feasibility of this trail link would have to be studied, but aerial imagery again indicates that there are some informal pathways in this area and some clearings that may be far enough from the creek to install a path. The *Collegeville Open Space Plan* made

a similar recommendation by suggesting a set of pathways along the creek. Providing more direct creek access could stimulate trail use.

Figure 10: Potential Trail Connections



Source: DVRPC, 2011

Establish an On-Road Bicycle Network

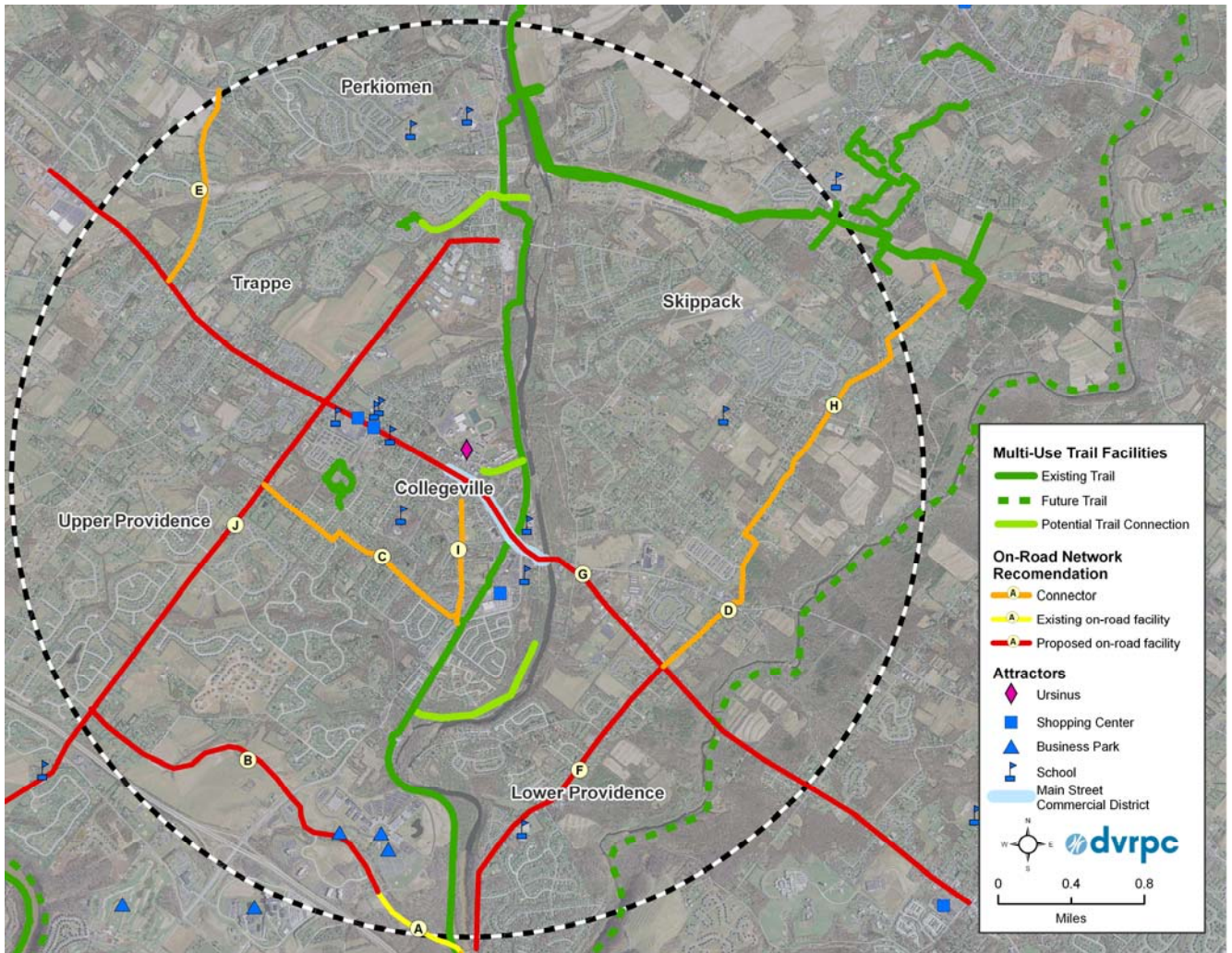
While the Perkiomen Trail is the main non-motorized facility through the study area, the lack of on-road bicycle facilities and accompanying signage prevent trail users from exploring the neighborhoods beyond the trail. According to Pennsylvania law (Title 75, Chapter 35, Section 3501), any roadway where bicycle use is not expressly forbidden (such as a highway) is suitable for bicycle usage. However, selecting preferred facilities and marking them accordingly is important to promote safer cycling and allow drivers to know where they may be more likely to encounter bicyclists. The following recommendations for the development of a designated on-road network will complement the multi-use trail network already in place.

Two different types of on-road bicycle facilities are recommended:

1. Proposed on-road facilities —these are roadways where designated on-road facilities are preferable to facilitate bicycle travel on roads that may otherwise be unsuitable for cyclists. Determining the appropriate facility type may require further study of road geometry, traffic volumes, and other factors.
2. Proposed connectors — these are smaller, more bicycle-friendly roads that connect designated facilities or attractions where appropriate signage is recommended to guide cyclists to destinations. Bicycle-specific striping is not necessary.

Figure 11 on the following page illustrates the recommended on-road bicycle network, connections to the regional trail system, and the sidewalk enhancements recommended earlier in this chapter. Fieldwork, road geometries, and previous studies in the region informed these choices. Local attractions such as schools, shopping centers, and business parks are also included on the map, as these locations play a part in determining key roadways.

Figure 11: Recommended On-Road Bicycle Network



Source: DVRPC, 2011

In addition to the on-road facilities proposed here, there is an existing bicycle lane on a ½ mile segment of Arcola Road extending from the Perkiomen Trail west to the Pfizer campus.

Table 6 displays each of the roadways selected for the on-road network, the type of proposed facility, as well as the limits and length of the segment.

Table 6: On-Road Bicycle Facilities

Map ID	Name	Facility Type	Limits	Length (miles)
A	Arcola Road	Existing facility	Cider Mill Road to Campus Drive	0.57
B	Arcola Road (proposed)	Proposed facility	Campus Drive to Trappe Road	2.10
C	Clayhor Road	Connector	West 3rd Avenue to Park Avenue	1.34
D	Evansburg Road	Connector	Ridge Pike to Germantown Pike	0.50
E	Glenwood Avenue	Connector	Wartman Road to Ridge Pike	1.11
F	Level Road	Proposed facility	Arcola Road to Ridge Pike	1.94
G	Main Street/Ridge Pike	Proposed facility	Eagleville Road to Township Line Road	6.52
H	Mill Road/Collegeville Road	Connector	Evansburg Road to Skippack Trail	3.22
I	Park Avenue	Connector	5th Avenue to Clayhor Road	0.63
J	Route 113	Proposed facility	Route 29 to 2nd Avenue	4.77
			Connectors	6.80
			Proposed facilities	15.33
			Total mileage	22.13

Source: DVRPC, 2011

As evidenced in Table 6, there are approximately 22 miles of proposed segments in the recommended bicycle network. For the 10 miles of connectors (C, E, H, and I on Figure 11) only proper signage is recommended. The connectors were selected for their ability to connect different parts of the area. For example, the Mill Road/Collegeville Road connector joins Evansburg State Park to Skippack Village via the Skippack Trail, while Clayhor Road connects the recommended facility on Trappe Road to the Perkiomen Trail. Figure 12 depicts the Bicycle May Use Full Lane sign, approved for use in the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). This sign is preferable to the more typical Share the Road sign because it more clearly elucidates the rights of cyclists to travel in the road.

Figure 12: Bicyclists May Use Full Lane Sign



Source, MUTCD, 2009

For the four road segments (roughly 15 miles) that are proposed as designated bicycle facilities, more enhanced treatments should be considered.

Arcola Road

On Arcola Road, there are already bicycle lanes connecting the Perkiomen Trail to the Pfizer campus located on Troutman Drive (the bike lane is shown in Figure 13). These lanes could be extended west from their current end point to Providence Town Center. This would enable trail users to use protected lanes to visit the shops there, which will become an even more important destination with future expansion.

Figure 13: Bicycle Lanes on Arcola Road



Source: Google Maps, 2011

The current roadway configuration west of the Pfizer campus has sufficient width to allow for bicycle lanes, although some special consideration must be given to the intersection of Arcola Road and Route 29, which could prove hazardous without proper signage and signalization. Countdown timers and a leading bicycle phase that allows cyclists to cross Route 29 ahead of vehicular traffic may mitigate the dangers at this intersection. In conjunction with installation of these lanes, it is important to ensure that there is adequate bicycle parking at Providence Town Center, and that bicycle and pedestrian circulation within the development is an ongoing consideration

Level Road/Evansburg Road

For the segment of Level Road extending from Arcola Road to Ridge Pike, shared lane markings, or sharrows accompanied by the Bicyclists May Use Full Lane sign in Figure 12 are appropriate. Figure 14 depicts a shared lane marking.

Figure 14: Shared Lane Marking



Source: www.pedbikeimages.com, 2011

Level Road is not wide enough to accommodate bicycle lanes in this segment, but the relatively high vehicle counts (over 5,000 vehicles per day in both directions) necessitate some type of designated facility.

Providing sharrows and designating Level Road a bicycle route (via signs similar to the one shown in Figure 12) would improve access to Evansburg State Park and to Main Street/Ridge Pike. This would connect to Evansburg Road (a proposed connector) and improve access through Evansburg State Park, Skippack Village, and the Skippack Trail.

Main Street/Ridge Pike

As evidenced by the volume of user comments about this corridor on the public outreach website, crash statistics, and fieldwork in the study area, Main Street/Ridge Pike appears to be the most difficult location for cyclists to navigate. Through the borough, Main Street is generally one 13-foot lane in each direction with a two-way left turn lane, except for the segment between 3rd and 4th Avenues, where there is a small stretch of on-street parking and no turning median.

The *Collegetown Revitalization Plan* proposed a bike-only path extending from the Perkiomen Trail west along Walnut Street as an alternative to providing facilities along Main Street. While this mitigates the concerns of mixing bicycles with traffic along Main Street, it does not provide direct access to Main Street, and acquiring the necessary easements could be a lengthy and expensive process.

Since Main Street has a couple of different configurations, different treatments are needed. For the segment of Main Street between the Perkiomen Trail and 4th Avenues, the presence of on-street parking along Main Street precludes bicycle lanes. Sharrows, accompanied by signage that indicates that cyclists may use the full lane, however, may be used in this segment.

For Main Street west of 4th Avenue, the roadway can be reconfigured to include two 5-foot bicycle lanes. This could be done by narrowing travel lanes to 10 feet and keeping the 10-foot

two-way left turn lane, or narrowing (or eliminating) the center turning lane and widening the travel lanes. Figure 15 illustrates the first potential configuration.

Figure 15: Proposed Roadway Configuration for Main Street



Source: VDOT, 2010

The implementation of bicycle lanes may be coordinated with other traffic-calming measures. The borough has improved pedestrian crossing conditions further east along Main Street by providing bump-outs at key intersections. While it may be attractive to repeat these treatments between 4th and 9th Avenues, curb extensions can hinder bicycle travel along Main Street and will be significantly more expensive than a bicycle lane. Simply narrowing the traffic lanes and reducing the speed limit may have greater impact. Removing the two-way left turn lane (but installing turning bays) and installing a narrow planted median in its place would also be possible and better complement bicycle lanes. If curb extensions are preferable, then it is necessary to ensure that they would not encroach upon a bicycle lane. The road is wide in this stretch, however, and it may be possible to use both curb extensions and a bicycle lane if the two-way left turn lane was significantly reduced or eliminated.

Outside of the Main Street district in Collegeville, the width and configuration of this corridor vary. To the east, the roadway widens to 60 feet toward the intersection with Route 29 and then narrows on the bridge crossing over the Perkiomen Creek and remains approximately 40-foot throughout the rest of the eastern portion of the study area, and the roadway continues as a four lane-arterial to the east.

West of Collegeville, Ridge Pike remains approximately 40 feet wide with one lane in each direction and different turning lane configurations; sometimes the lane is in the middle, sometimes there is a right turning lane. Both east and west of the Main Street shopping district, there appears to be the space necessary to adopt the configuration depicted in Figure 15. This does require, however, removing one lane of traffic and the impacts of this would need to be evaluated.

Route 113

Route 113 is a two-lane road with significant traffic volumes. According to DVRPC traffic counts, some segments of this road have annual average daily traffic (AADT) counts above 10,000 vehicles per day. Parts of the southern portion of this segment (south of Mennonite Road) have 5-foot shoulders, although that is not consistent along the segment.

As currently configured, cartway width on Route 113 does not allow for bicycle lanes and sharrows may not be sufficient, considering present traffic volumes. Purchasing additional right-of-way may prove unduly expensive; however, providing on-road facilities in this corridor would directly connect residents in the study area to Phoenixville Borough (and vice versa).

One alternative is to utilize Trappe Road/7th Avenue, roughly half a mile west of Route 113, as a connector route. This is a narrower road (around 20 feet in most places) but has lower traffic volumes and a more attractive cycling atmosphere. It provides a connection to Phoenixville Borough, similar to that offered by Route 113.

Summary

- ◆ Improvements to Perkiomen Trail crossings with Main Street and Route 29 are pivotal to improving the perception of safety along the trail and in Collegeville Borough.
- ◆ Creating alternative access points could stimulate trail usage and add open space opportunities.
- ◆ Establishing on-road facilities to complement the trail network and provide enhanced connections to local attractions is a priority; inter-municipal cooperation is necessary to coordinate signage and maintenance.

Conclusion

Enhancing Local Mobility in Collegeville is a Fiscal Year 2011 DVRPC project recommending ways to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and accommodations in Collegeville Borough and adjacent municipalities in the Perkiomen Valley.

The recommendations made in this report fall into three general categories; sidewalk improvements, improvements to Perkiomen Trail crossings and access, and establishing on-road facilities to complement existing trails and local attractions. While all of the recommendations in the chapter are intended to improve safety and accommodations for pedestrians and cyclists, some key priorities are:

Complete sidewalk gaps

Completing the sidewalk gaps listed in Chapter 4 (3rd Street adjacent to Collegeville Park, along Ridge Pike west of the Perkiomen Creek, along 9th Avenue between Main Street and Route 29, and along Route 29 south of Park Avenue) are crucial to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility. Improving access to open space opportunities such as Collegeville Park and the Perkiomen Trail will make walking a more attractive option for community residents.

Improve trail crossings — most notably at Main Street and at Route 29 north of Main Street

These locations should be gateways into and out of the borough. While improvements are planned for the Main Street crossing, improving the northern Route 29 crossing is a priority; installing a push-button activated signal and in-ground channelizing device would help cyclists, pedestrians, and drivers alike.

Establish Main Street as a bicycle facility

As Collegeville's main thoroughfare develops, the need to establish a seamless connection between the Perkiomen Trail and Main Street grows. Establishing a bicycle lane on Main Street would calm traffic and give cyclists on the trail a safe way to visit Collegeville's growing roster of businesses.

Improve access the Perkiomen Trail

The Perkiomen Trail is a key spine for bicycle and pedestrian travel in the area. Creating new access points would allow more people in the area the opportunity to use it.

Work with adjacent municipalities to establish regional bicycle facilities

The facilities proposed in this report cross municipal boundaries and require multi-municipal cooperation to come to fruition. Numerous resources are already shared between these municipalities, and this cooperation can extend to develop on-road facilities to help cyclists move

more safely through the area. While establishing more dedicated facilities (such as bike lanes) may prove difficult, working to develop a local wayfinding system so that users can more easily access attractions would make cycling a more attractive mode. Figure 16 depicts one example of a simple sign that can be used locally to direct cyclists and pedestrians to various attractions. Simultaneously, municipalities should work together to improve bicycle parking in the area.

Figure 16: Example of Bicycle Wayfinding Signage



Source: City of Gresham, Oregon, 2011

Collegeville Borough and the Perkiomen Valley are unique places, with remarkable recreational opportunities in Evansburg State Park and the Perkiomen and Skippack Trails. With an environment that is already favorable to non-motorized users, simple investments in consistent signage combined with more pronounced efforts, like bicycle lanes on Main Street and improvements in key trail crossings, will make bicycling and walking in the area easier and more attractive.

APPENDIX A



Funding Sources

The following are federal, state, and local funding sources and programs that can be used for the planning and construction of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. Several of the sources listed can assist in local business development and open space initiatives as well.

Bikes Belong

Eligibility: Federal, state, regional, county, and municipal agencies, nonprofits, organizations whose mission is expressly related to bicycle advocacy

Purpose: To fund bicycle facilities and paths that encourage facility, education, and capacity building

Terms: \$10,000 or less

Deadline: Quarterly

Contact: Bikes Belong Coalition

Phone: 617-734-2111

website: www.bikesbelong.org

Business in Our Sites

Eligibility: Pennsylvania municipalities, municipal authorities, redevelopment/industrial development agencies, private developers

Purpose: To empower communities to attract businesses by helping them build an inventory of ready sites

Terms: Grants may not exceed 50 percent of the total amount of financing provided or \$5 million (whichever is less). Site must be previously utilized property or undeveloped property that is planned and zoned for development. Private developers are only eligible for loans, not grants

Deadline: Continual

Contact: Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development Customer Service Center

Phone: 800-379-7448

website: www.newpa.com

Certified Local Governments Grant Program (CLG)

Eligibility: Limited to Certified Local Governments

Purpose: To promote and protect historic properties and planning for historic districts

Terms: Grants up to 60 percent of project costs

Deadline: Annually

Contact: Pennsylvania Bureau of Historic Preservation

Phone: 717-787-0771

website: www.artsnet.org

Claneil Foundation

Eligibility: Southeastern Pennsylvania local governments, nonprofits

Purpose: Grants for building arts, education, environment and community development

Terms: Grants range from \$1,000 to \$290,000 for building renovation, conferences, consulting, land acquisition and development; must submit letter of intent

Deadline: Continual

Contact: Chanel Foundation Inc.

Phone: 610-941-1143

Community Transportation Development Fund (CTDF)

Eligibility: Nonprofit transit providers, public agencies, local and state governments and community organizations

Purpose: To promote better transportation options

Terms: Low-interest loans of up to \$150,000 per recipient and 75 percent of the total project cost; there are several funding options that require a one-time service fee

Deadline: Varies

Contact: Community Transportation Association of America

Phone: 202-661-0210

website: www.ctaa.org

Competitive Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Program (CMAQ)

Eligibility: Public agencies, incorporated private firms, nonprofits, local and county governments

Purpose: For projects that contribute to the attainment of the Clean Air Act standards by reducing emissions from highway resources

Terms: 80 percent of costs

Deadline: Varies

Contact: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

Phone: 215-592-1800

website: www.dvrpc.org

Conservation/Sound Land Use Grants

Eligibility: Pennsylvania local governments

Purpose: To encourage conservation planning and sound land use practices

Terms: Grant funding for 50 percent of project cost

Deadline: Varies

Contact: Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development

Phone: 866-466-3972

website: www.newpa.com

Elm Street Program

Eligibility: Pennsylvania local governments, redevelopment authorities, nonprofit economic development organizations, other nonprofits, BIDs, neighborhood improvement districts

Purpose: Provides grants for planning, technical assistance, and physical improvements to residential and mixed-use areas in proximity to central business districts

Terms: Maximum \$50,000 for administrative grants; maximum \$250,000 for development projects and loans

Deadline: Varies

Contact: Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development

Phone: 866-GO-NEWPA (866-466-3972)

website: www.newpa.com

Home Town Streets /Safe Routes to School (HTS/SRS)

Eligibility: Federal or state agencies, Pennsylvania county or local governments, school districts, nonprofits

Purpose: To encourage the reinvestment in and redevelopment of downtowns and establish safe walking routes for children commuting to school

Terms: 80 percent of total costs

Deadline: Varies

Contact: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

Phone: 215-592-1800

website: www.dvrpc.org

Liquid Fuels Tax Program

Eligibility: Pennsylvania local governments

Purpose: Provides funds for any road-related activity

Terms: Vary

Deadline: Annually

Contact: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, District 6-0

Phone: 610-205-6539

website: www.dot.state.pa.us

Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank

Eligibility: Pennsylvania local governments and contractors

Purpose: To provide low-cost financing to municipalities and contractors for eligible transportation improvements

Terms: Low-interest loans from \$50,000 to \$3.9 million through a revolving loan fund for implementation

Deadline: Continual

Contact: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT)

Phone: 717-772-1772

website: www.dot.state.pa.us

Kodak American Greenways Grants

Eligibility: Local, regional, or statewide nonprofits, public agencies and community organizations

Purpose: Provides grants to stimulate planning and the design of greenways in communities

Terms: Maximum grant amount is \$2,500

Deadline: Annually

Contact: The Conservation Fund

Phone: 703-525-6300

website: www.conservationfund.com

Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP)

Eligibility: Pennsylvania cities, boroughs, townships, counties or multi-municipal entities

Purpose: For the purpose of developing and strengthening community planning and management capabilities

Terms: 50 percent of total costs; \$100,000 maximum per fiscal year

Deadline: Continual

Contact: Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, Southeast Regional Office

Phone: 215-560-2256

website: www.landuseinpa.com

Local Government Academy Multi-Municipal Planning Grants

Eligibility: Two or more Pennsylvania local governments

Purpose: Encourages the development of multi-municipal plans as authorized by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code

Terms: Grants up to \$7,500

Deadline: Bi-annually

Contact: Local Government Academy

Phone: 412-422-7877

website: www.newpa.com

Montgomery County Community Revitalization Program

Eligibility: Targeted areas in Montgomery County

Purpose: To invest and stabilize older boroughs and townships in Montgomery County

Terms: Required match between 10 and 25 percent; revitalization plans must be completed prior

Deadline: Annually

Contact: Montgomery County Planning Commission

Phone: 610-278-3728

website: www.montcopa.org

PECO Green Regions

Eligibility: Municipalities in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties

Purpose: To protect, acquire, and enhance open space

Terms: Grants of up to \$10,000

Deadline: Bi-annually

Contact: Natural Lands Trust

Phone: 610-353-5597

website: www.natlands.org

Recreational Trails Program

Eligibility: Pennsylvania county and municipal governments, state and federal agencies, private organizations

Purpose: Provide grants for developing and maintaining recreational trails and trail-related facilities

Terms: Required 50 percent match

Deadline: Annually

Contact: Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Phone: 1-888 PA-PARKS (1-888-727-2757)

website: www.dcnr.state.pa.us

Surface Transportation Program (STP)

Eligibility: State and local governments

Purpose: Provide funding that can be used on any federal-aid highways, bridge projects, public roads, transit capital projects, and intra- and inter-city bus terminals

Terms: Vary

Deadline: Varies

Contact: County Planning Transportation Department

Transit Research & Demonstration Program

Eligibility: Pennsylvania local governments, transit operators, universities, and transit organizations

Purpose: To fund innovative projects that improve the attractiveness of public transit

Terms: Grants for 80 percent of funding with a 20 percent local match

Deadline: Continual

Contact: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Transit Research and Demonstration Program

Phone: 717-705-1493

website: www.dot.state.pa.us

Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI)

Eligibility: Eligible municipalities

Purpose: Support local planning projects to improve transportation and encourage redevelopment

Terms: Grants up to \$100,000 for single projects and \$125,000 for multi-municipal projects; 20 percent local match required

Deadline: Every two years

Contact: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

Phone: 215-592-1800

website: www.dvrpc.org/planning/tcdi.htm

Transportation Enhancements Program (TE)

Eligibility: Pennsylvania local governments, counties, state or federal agencies, nonprofits

Purpose: For the funding of nontraditional projects designed to enhance the transportation experience, to mitigate the impacts of transportation facilities on communities and the environment, and to enhance community character through transportation-related improvements

Terms: 80 to 90 percent of costs can be funded

Deadline: Varies

Contact: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)



Phone: 215-592-1800

website: www.dvrpc.org/transportation/capital/te.htm

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Key Words: bicycle, pedestrian, bike lane, trail, sidewalks, crosswalks

Abstract: This report recommends ways to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and accommodations in the Collegeville area.

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