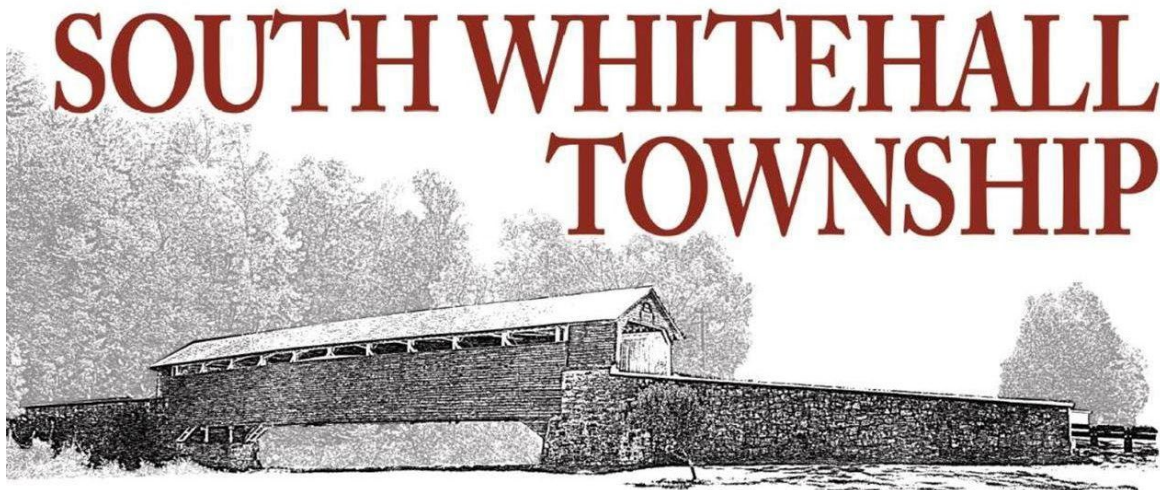


South Whitehall Landscapes

An Open Space, Historic,
Agricultural, & Natural Resource
Preservation Plan

Landscapes Workbook #1



Public Engagement Workbook
South Whitehall Township
South Whitehall Landscapes

Landscapes Workbook #1

Timeline

Landscape Preservation Plan Kick-off Meeting. (Why? & Where?)
Tuesday, June 27, 2023. 6:00-8:00PM

Agricultural Resources Subject Matter Meeting. (What? & Who?)
Tuesday, August 15, 2023. 6:00-8:00PM

Natural Resources Subject Matter Meeting. (What? & Who?)
Tuesday, August 22, 2023. 6:00-8:00PM

Historic Resources Subject Matter Meeting. (What? & Who?)
Tuesday, August 29, 2023. 6:00-8:00PM

Landscape Preservation Plan Wrap-Up Meeting. (How? & When?)
Tuesday, October 10, 2023. 6:00-8:00PM (Tentative)

Landscapes Workbook #1

Project Management Team



Christopher Strohler
Long-Range Planner
South Whitehall Township
strohlerc@southwhitehall.com

Chris has been involved in land preservation and open space planning for close to a decade. Prior to his position with South Whitehall, Chris was the Senior Conservation Planner with Wildlands Conservancy, a local land trust in the Lehigh Valley. In this role he was directly involved with the protection of hundreds of acres throughout Eastern PA, from small 1-acre inholding parcels to 500+ acre headwater lands. Chris understands the value of partnerships and identifying the bigger picture when it comes to large-scale conservation and preservation efforts.



David Manhardt, AICP
Director of Community Development
South Whitehall Township
manhardtd@southwhitehall.com

Dave brings 20 years of experience in community and regional planning. Previously, Dave worked as a Chief Geographic Information Systems Planner at the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission and as the Director of Planning for Sparta Township, New Jersey. Dave has also held adjunct professor roles with Temple University, Muhlenberg College, and Rowan University. Dave holds a BA in Geography from the University of Delaware and a Master's in City and Regional Planning from Temple University.



Jeffrey L. Marshall
Open Spaces & Historic Places

Jeff has been involved in land conservation and historic preservation for almost 50 years. Until his retirement in 2021 he served as President of Heritage Conservancy, a regional non-profit historic preservation and land conservation organization. A strong advocate of community outreach and engagement, he was awarded Pennsylvania's most prestigious historic preservation award in 2021. Preservation Pennsylvania's F. Otto Haas Award is presented to recognize contributions and consistent achievement above the standards of the profession.

Landscapes Workbook #1

Introduction

The 2023 Comprehensive Plan was adopted on March 15, 2023. Now the implementation phase can begin. The Comprehensive Plan identifies several implementation items related to the Resource Protection chapter including the following:

- Agricultural Preservation (A3)
- Historic Preservation (H2)
- Landscape Preservation (L1)
- Open Space Preservation (O1)
- Resource Protection Ordinances (R3)
- *(See appendix for Implementation Pages)*

Staff compiled significant information and data during the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, including baseline identification of resources (Agricultural, Historic, and Natural). The introductory page of the Resource Protection chapter displays a map of overlapping resources (*following page*). Staff has identified that many of the resources which the Comprehensive Plan encourages protection of are located in close proximity to each other. This led staff to consider analyzing and evaluating these resources together instead of individually.

A landscape can be described as multiple integrated features within a geographic extent. Looking at South Whitehall through this lens, we can identify areas of the Township that contain multiple resources that could potentially be preserved holistically as a “Landscape”. Embarking on a Landscape Preservation Plan will allow staff, elected officials, and the public to further evaluate the resources identified in the Comprehensive Plan, establish a process to appropriately protect resources, and outline specific mechanisms to preserve important landscapes in the Township while fulfilling the five implementation goals outlined above.

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South Whitehall Yesterday

The history of South Whitehall is a complex story of boundary disputes, settlement, and growth. This region and most of eastern Pennsylvania was first home to the native Lenni Lenape tribes, also referred to as the Minsi Delaware. The Native Americans who occupied South Whitehall inhabited the areas along rivers and creeks, taking advantage of the region's fertile soils for crops, reliable water supply, and steep ridges for protection.

Pennsylvania became a colony of England in 1681 when King Charles II granted the land to William Penn. Historically, Penn was praised for his fair treatment of Native Americans, attempting to peacefully offer fair payment for land purchases. In the late 1680s Penn had made a deal with the Lenni Lenape to purchase a large portion of land surrounding the Lehigh and Delaware Rivers, but the deal was never consummated during his lifetime. Years later, Penn's sons revived this deal with the Lenape but did not honor the terms of the agreement, causing tension with the Lenape. This deal was famously known as "The Walking Purchase of 1737" and expanded European settlement in the Lehigh Valley.

Early Settlements

The first European settlers to the area were primarily German emigrants from the Oley Valley in the early 1700s. The first organized settlement was established by Nicholas Kern in 1735 between what would later be called Guthsville and Guth's Station. More villages and settlements continued to pop up over a twenty-year period while the region remained predominantly agrarian for the next fifty years. The Township was originally just known as "Whitehall" and encompassed

what we now identify as Coplay Borough, Whitehall Township, South Whitehall Township, and North Whitehall Township. Historians argue whether the name Whitehall was derived from another settlement in England like other village names in the area, or if it was inspired by Lynford Lardner's Grouse Hall a large white hunting lodge located near the Jordan Creek.

Township Independence

In the early 1800s, most of the Lehigh Valley was considered part of Northampton County, including the larger area of Whitehall. In November of 1810, a petition was filed with the Northampton County Court to divide Whitehall into Townships, but South Whitehall was still considered part of Northampton County. It wasn't until two years later in March of 1812 that the area west of the Lehigh River was divided from Northampton County to form a new county. This act established South Whitehall Township as an independent Township in the center of the newly established Lehigh County.

Industrial Age

Leading into the early 20th Century, small villages and communities developed slowly around agriculture and growing industries including the mining of iron ore and stone or slate quarries. Many settlements were built around the Catasauqua and Fogelsville Railroad which served these industries from the 1850s through the 1940s. Industry and agriculture shaped the development of South Whitehall, concentrated around crossroad villages and access to the railroad. Family-run feed mills were also prominent in the Township and played a major role in the economics of the agricultural community.

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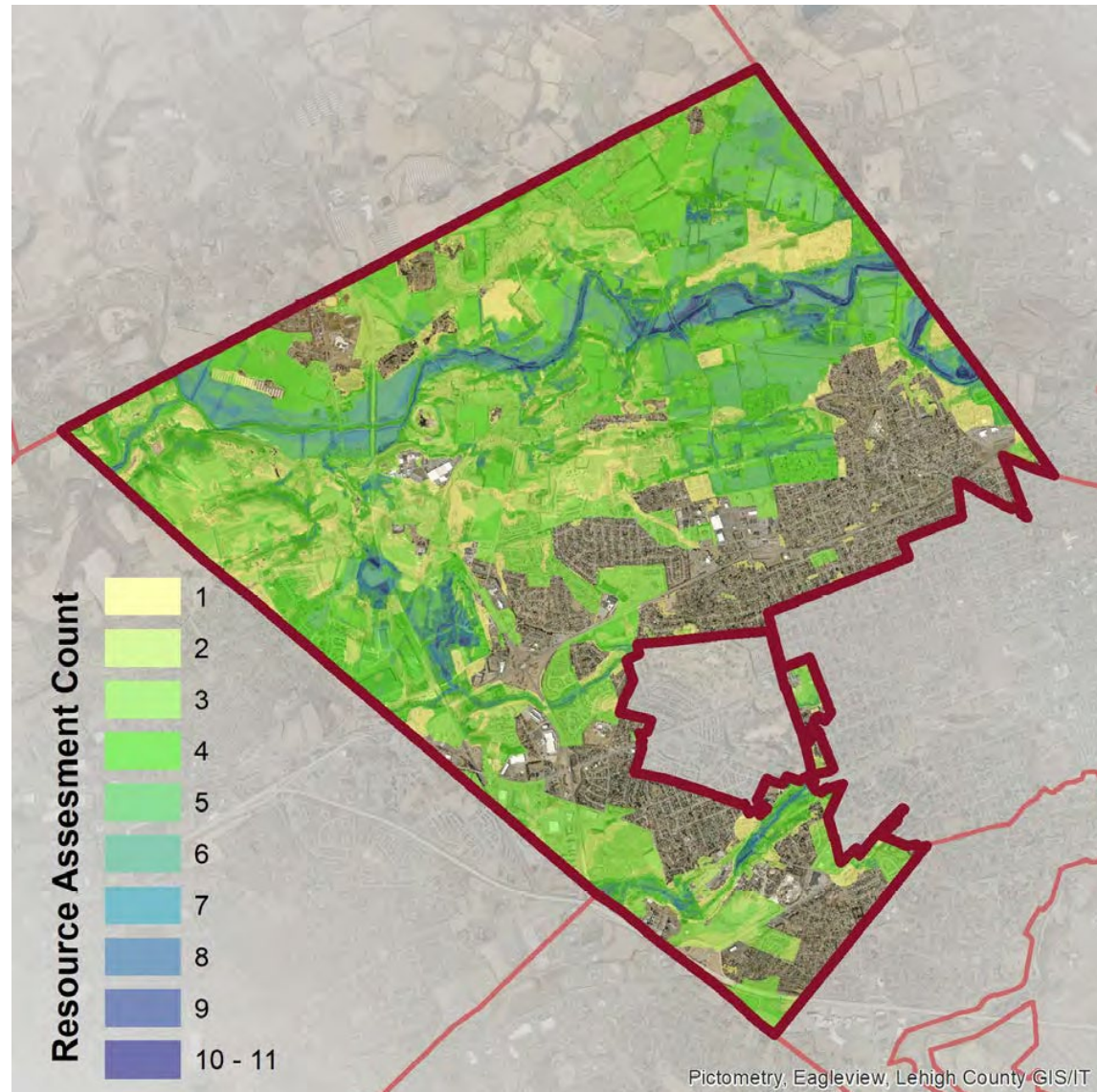
Resource Protection

MPC: A plan for the protection of natural and historic resources to the extent not preempted by federal or state law. This clause includes, but is not limited to, wetlands and aquifer recharge zones, woodlands, steep slopes, prime agricultural land, flood plains, unique natural areas, and historic sites.

Introduction

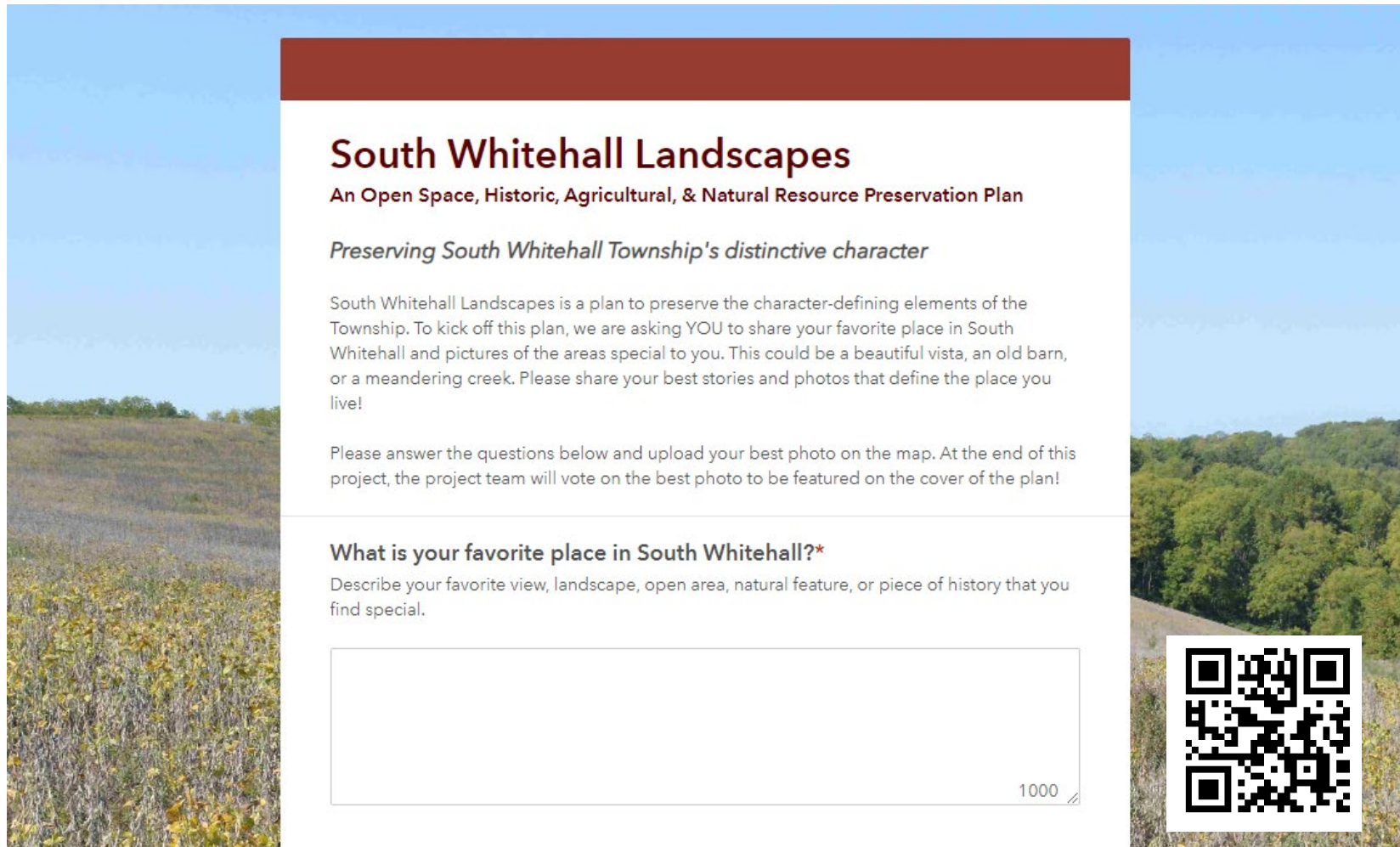
South Whitehall is blessed with a variety of natural and historic resources throughout the Township. These include agricultural lands important for farming and preserving the Township's rural character, natural resources including vegetation and waterways, historic buildings and structures, and scenic landscapes or viewsheds.

This map displays areas in the Township where the most resources are present. The color gradient darkens where more resources are present, whether they be natural, agricultural, or historic. Stream corridors and wetlands are the darkest colors due to importance of the presence of water. (2023 Comprehensive Plan)



Landscapes Workbook #1

Online Survey



South Whitehall Landscapes
An Open Space, Historic, Agricultural, & Natural Resource Preservation Plan


Preserving South Whitehall Township's distinctive character

South Whitehall Landscapes is a plan to preserve the character-defining elements of the Township. To kick off this plan, we are asking YOU to share your favorite place in South Whitehall and pictures of the areas special to you. This could be a beautiful vista, an old barn, or a meandering creek. Please share your best stories and photos that define the place you live!

Please answer the questions below and upload your best photo on the map. At the end of this project, the project team will vote on the best photo to be featured on the cover of the plan!

What is your favorite place in South Whitehall?*
Describe your favorite view, landscape, open area, natural feature, or piece of history that you find special.

1000



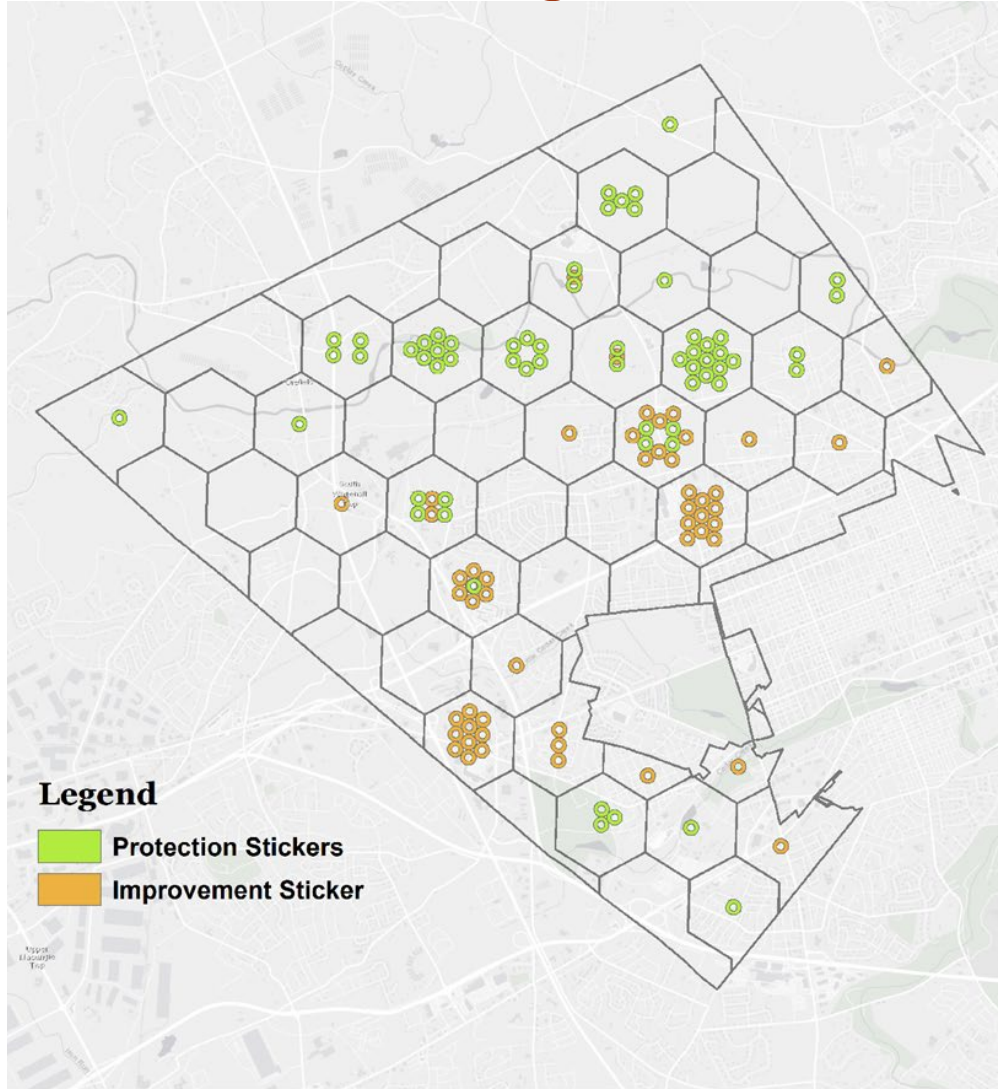
Access Survey: <https://arcg.is/9zj5z>

Why Landscape Planning?

Presentation by Jeff Marshall, Open Spaces & Historic Places



“Where should we grow?”



WHERE SHOULD WE GROW?

This map presents results of the “Where should we grow?” build out exercises conducted throughout South Whitehall Township. These included four public engagement meetings, two focus group meeting and a joint meeting between the Board of Commissioners and the Planning Commission. Participants were asked to accommodate future growth in population and jobs. This was accomplished by participants placing stickers on a map of South Whitehall Township divided into hexagons. Thus, answering the question “Where should we grow?”.

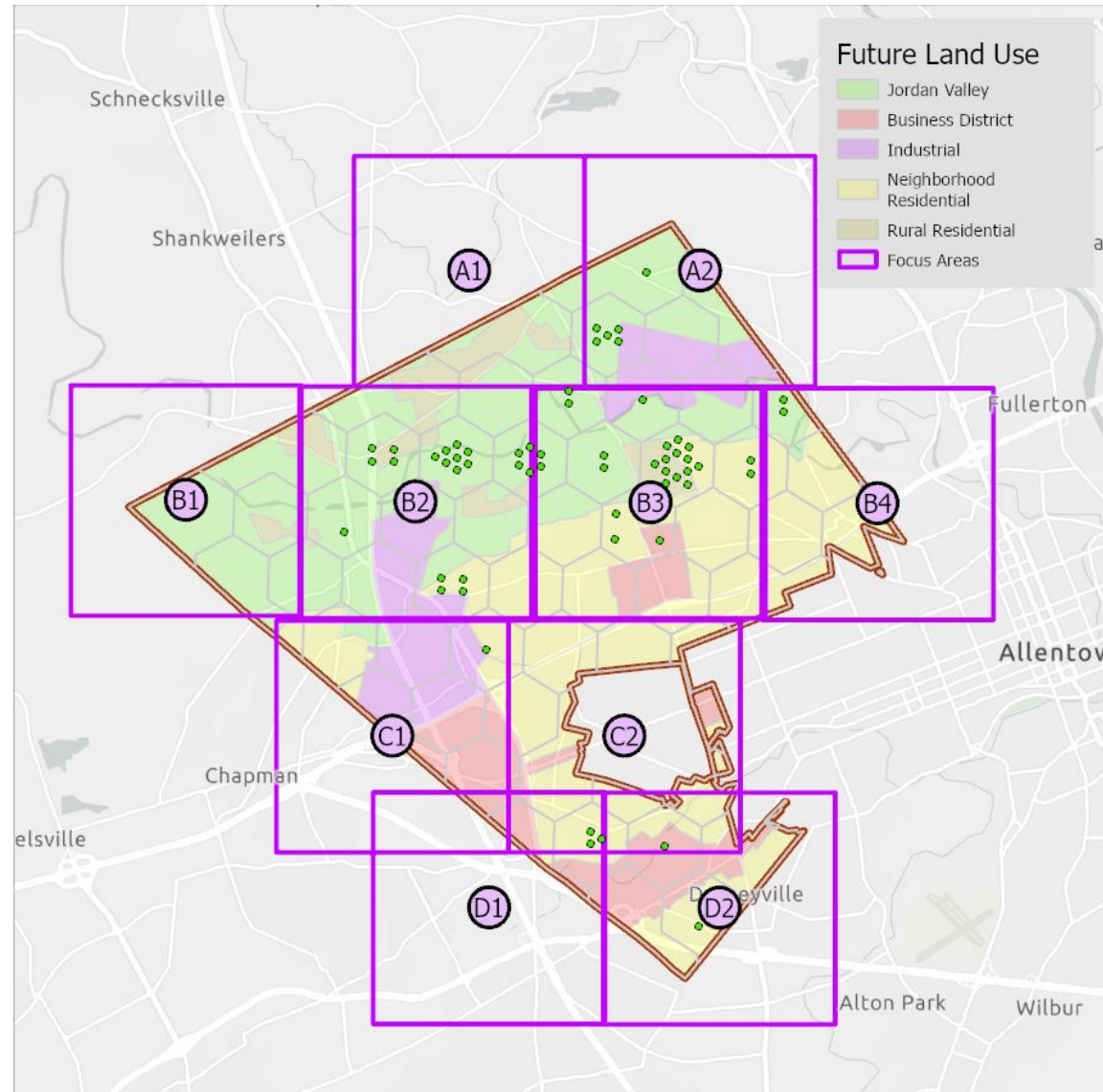
In addition to placing future population and jobs, participants were asked to indicate areas to protect and areas to improve. Each group was provided two green stickers (*protect*) and two orange stickers (*improve*). These were purposely limited to two each to encourage discussion and thoughtful placement among the groups.

This map of the South Whitehall Township is divided into hexagons. Each hexagon depicts an area of the township. These areas have been used to classify existing development. These hexagons were then used to determine where future development should occur.

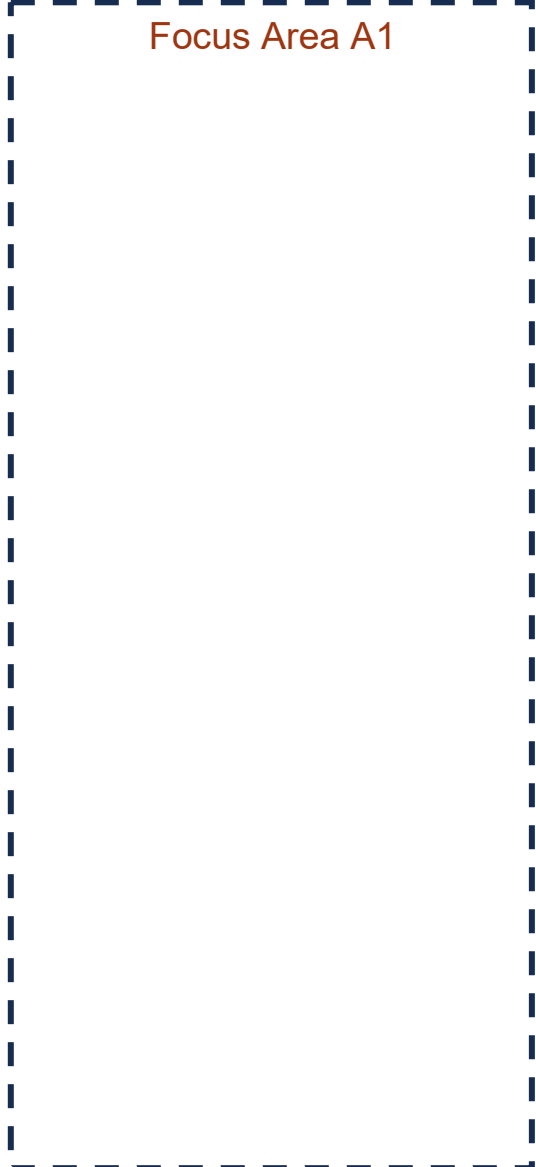
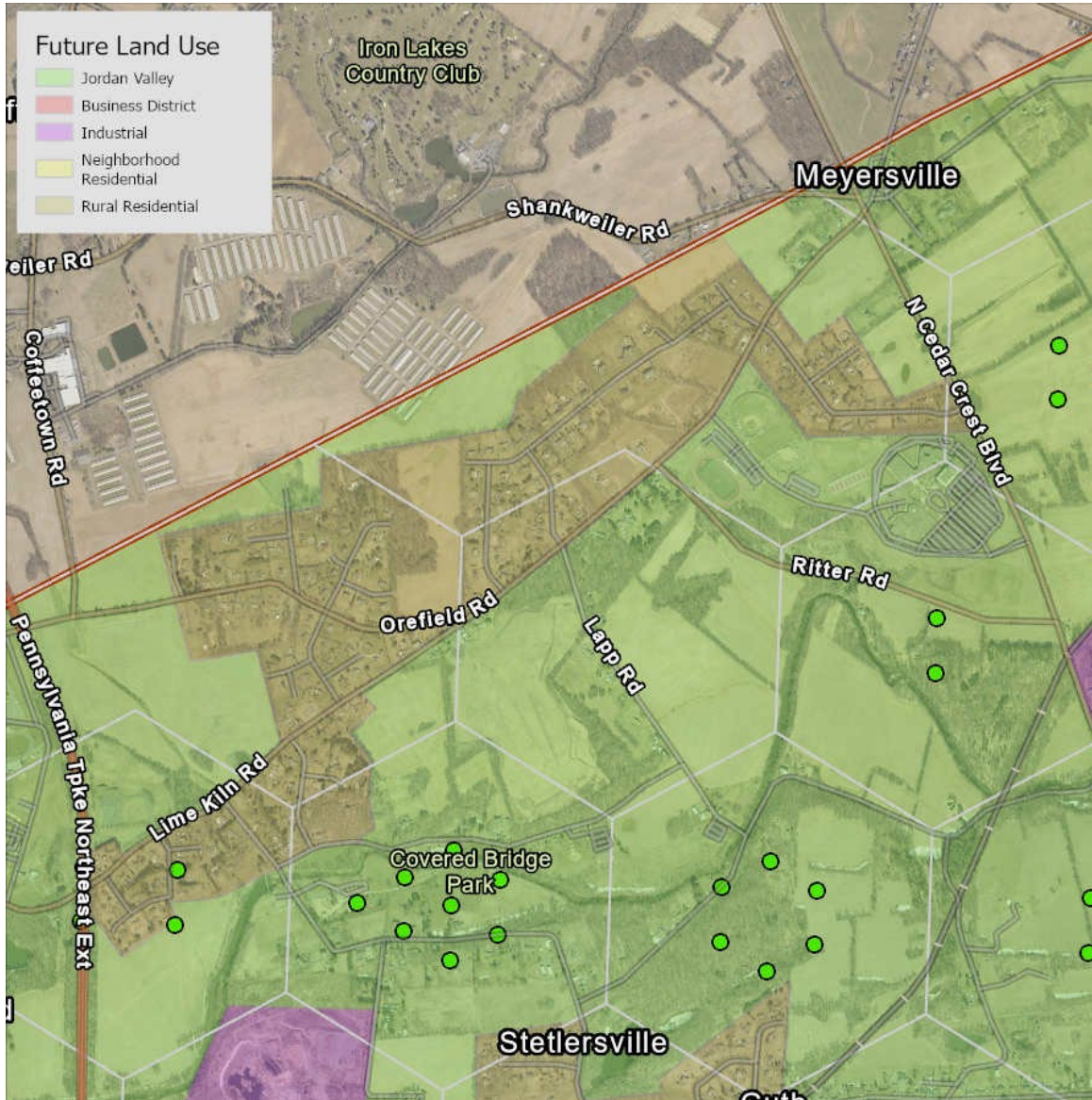
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Where should we focus now?

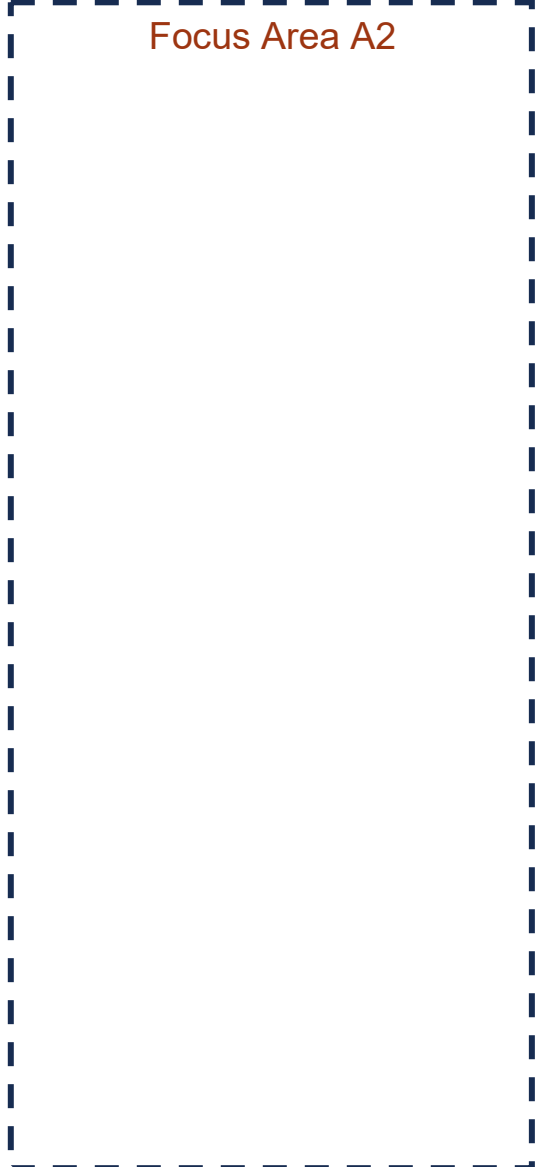
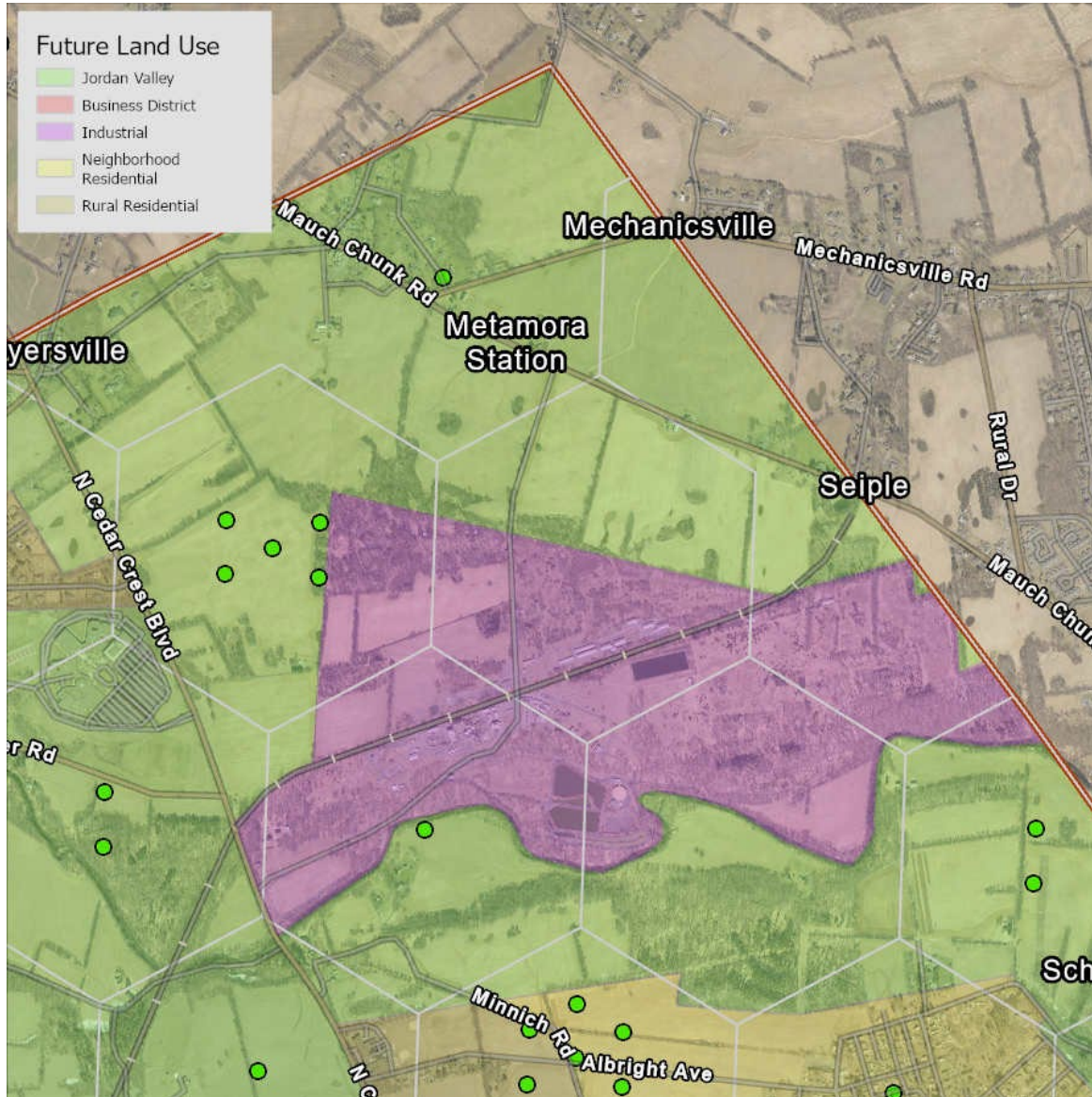
The next ten pages cover ten areas of the Townships to focus on in more detail. Use the blank space on the following pages to make notes about what features are important to preserve in this area, what does this area mean to you, or what words and/or phrases does this area convey. The information compiled from this exercise will be used to help identify landscapes of similar character or preservation needs.



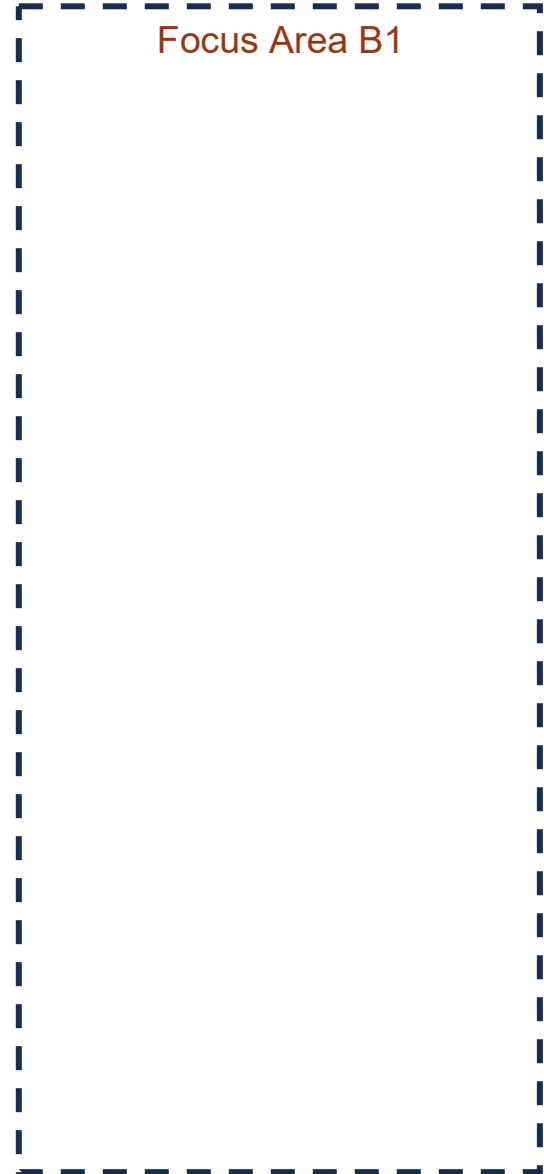
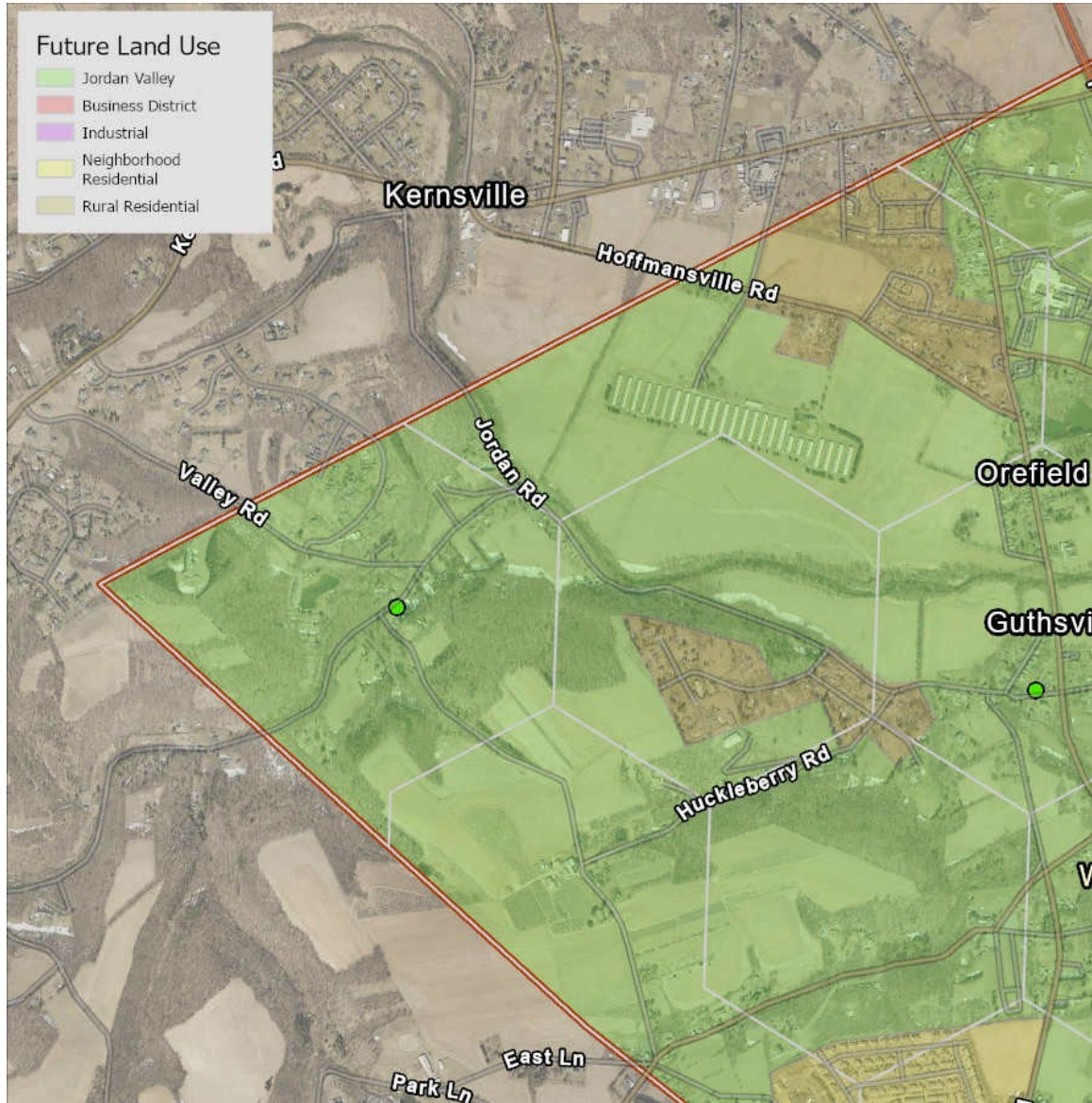
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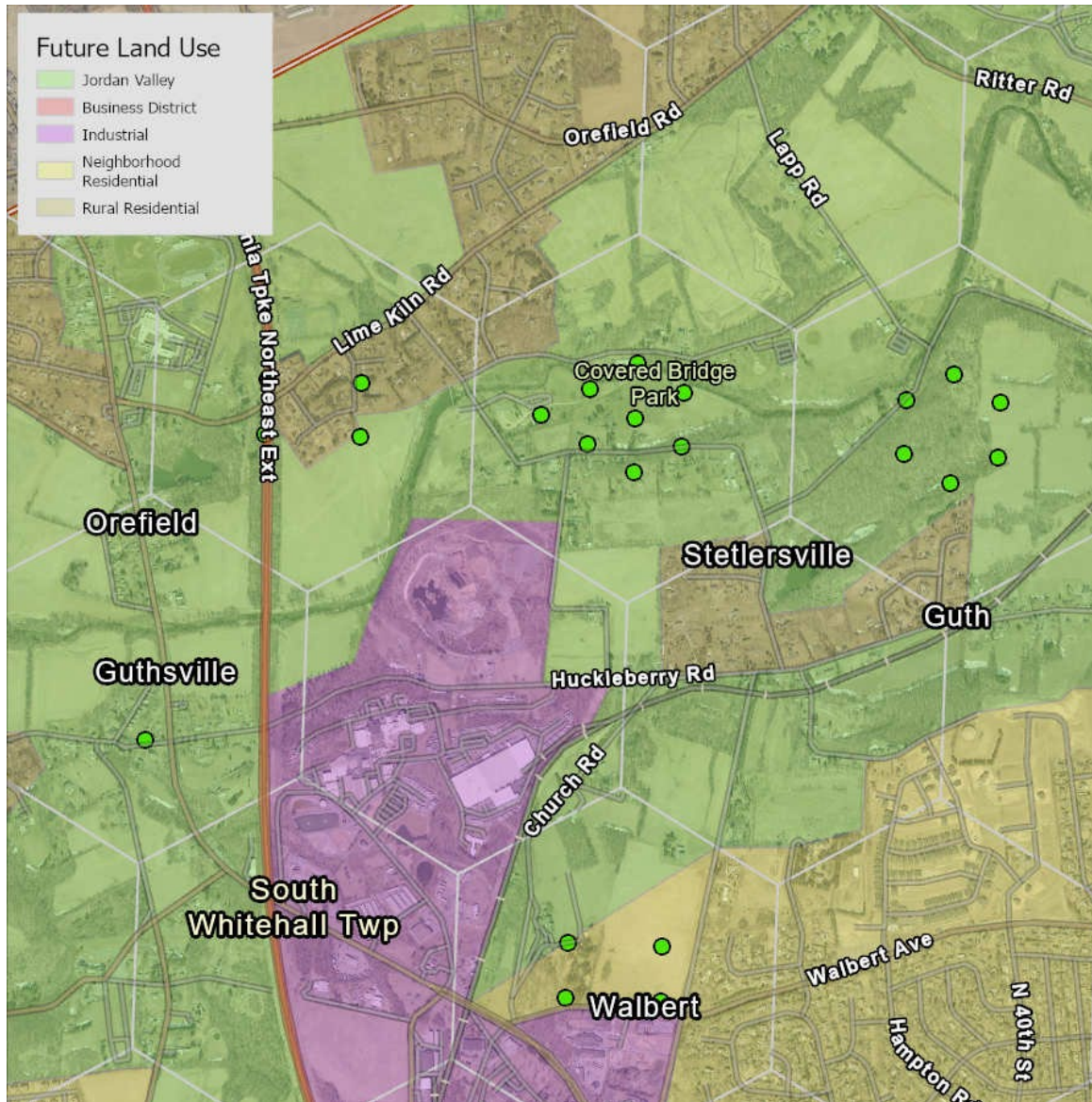
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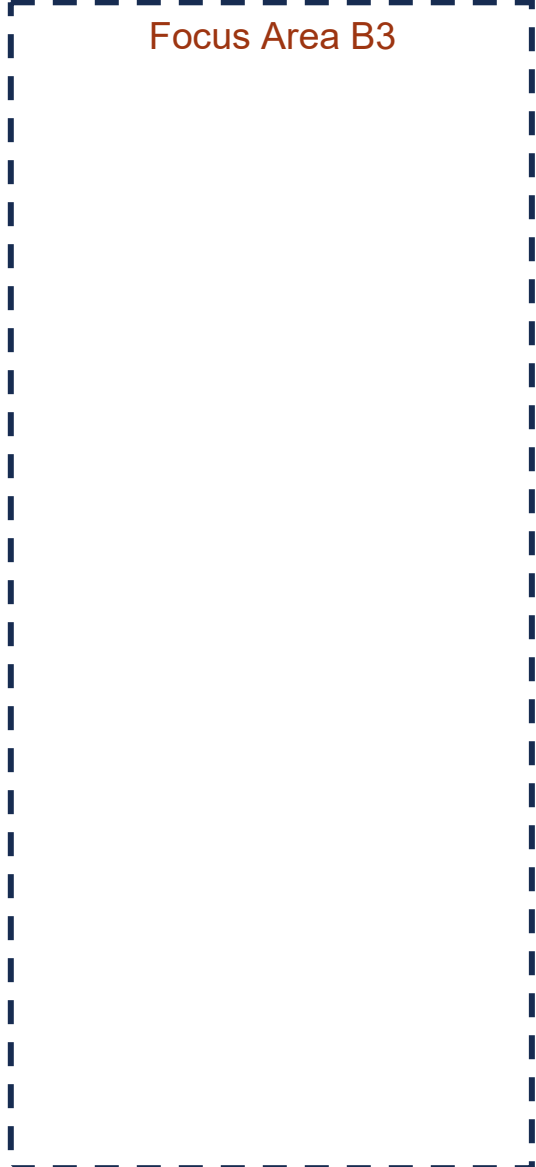
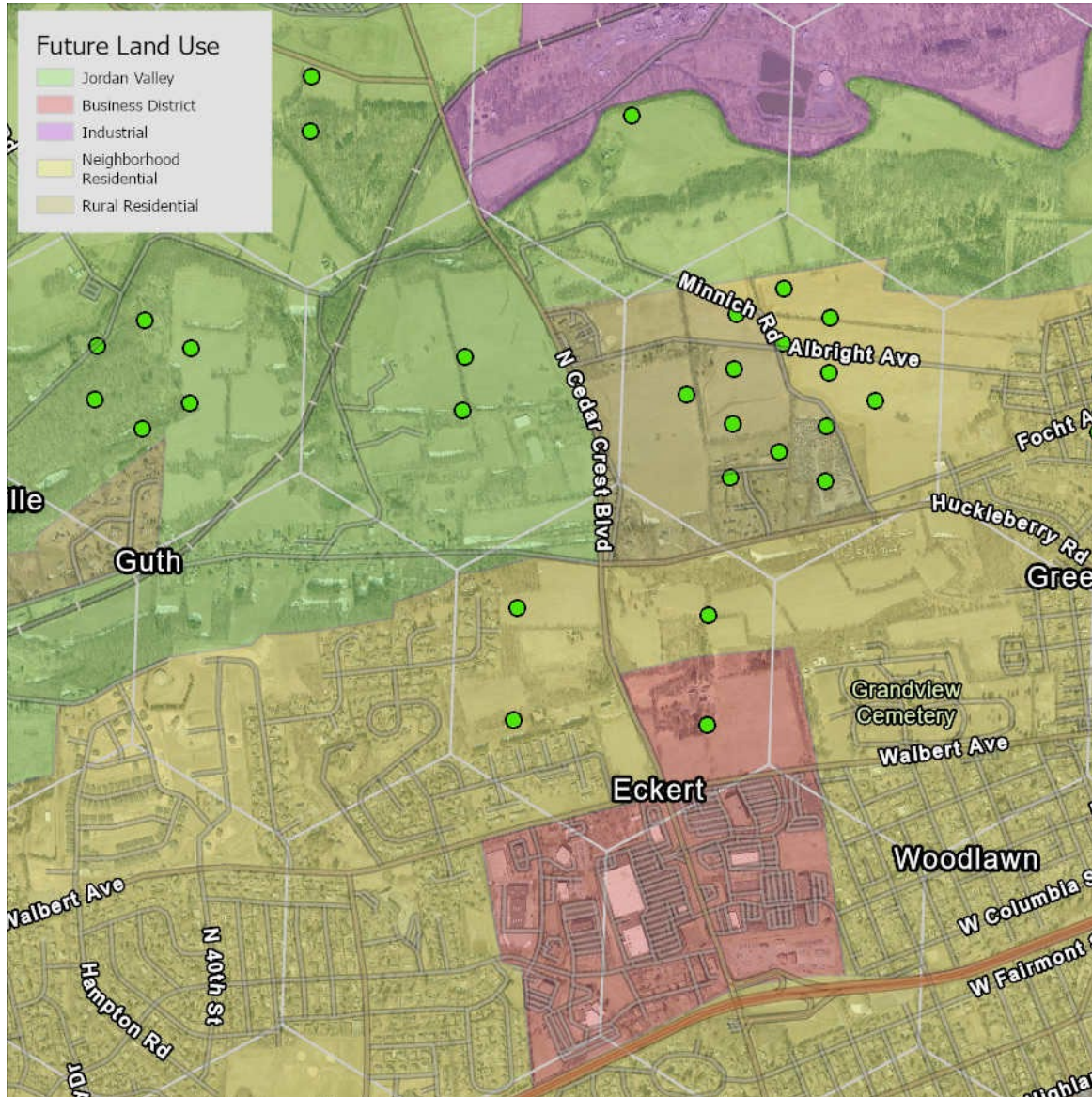


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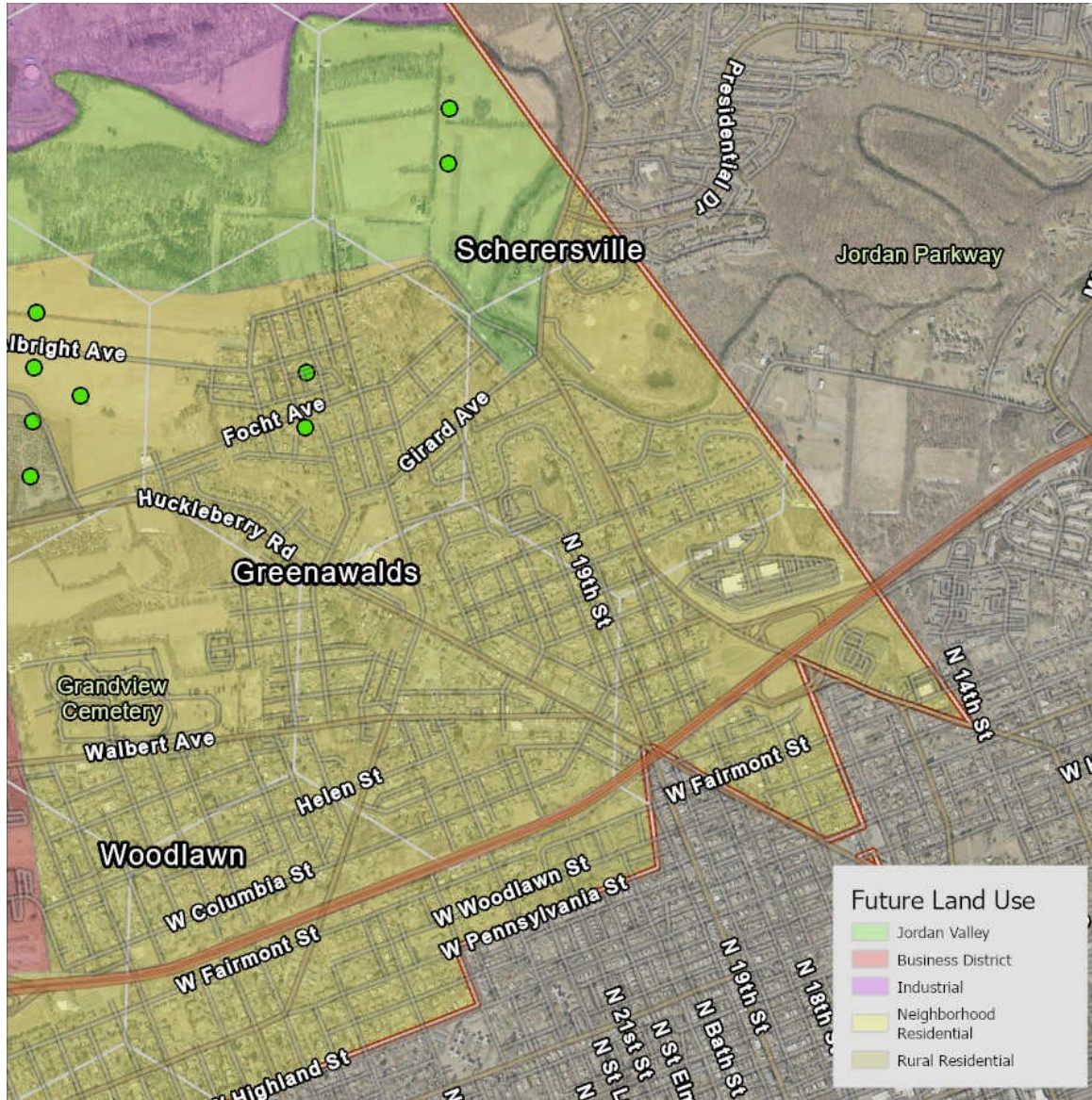


Focus Area B2

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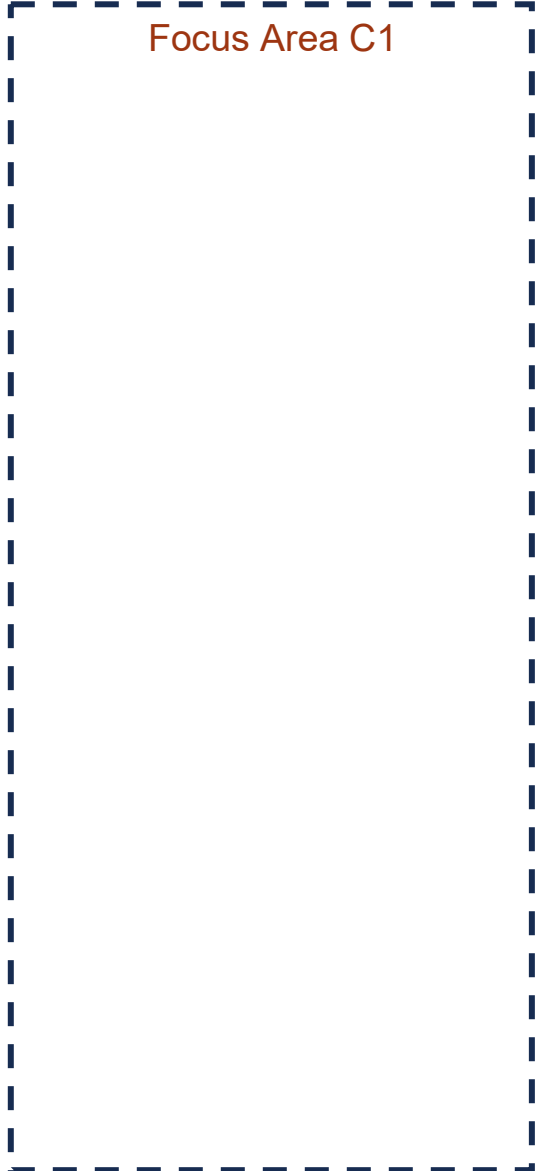
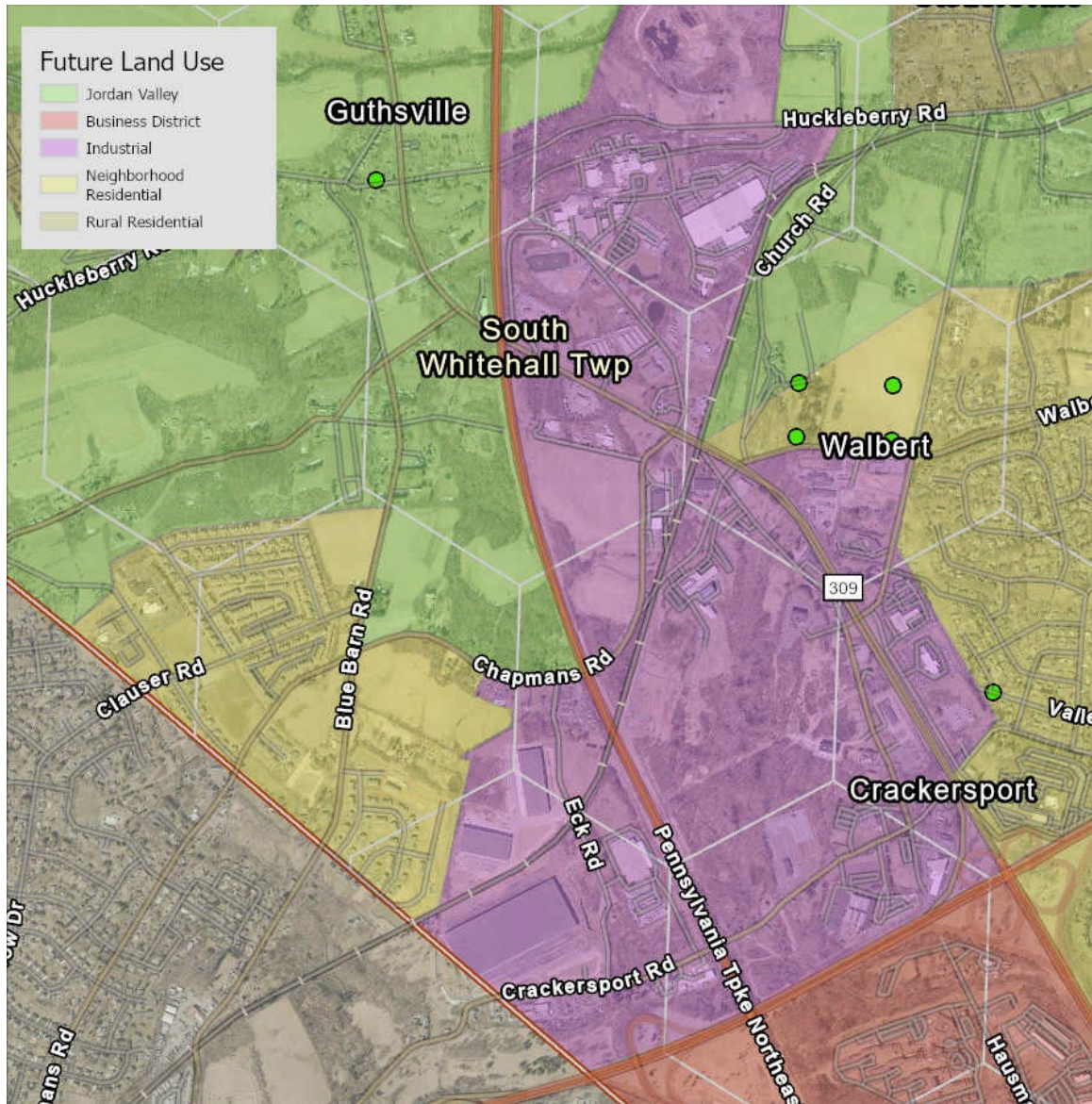


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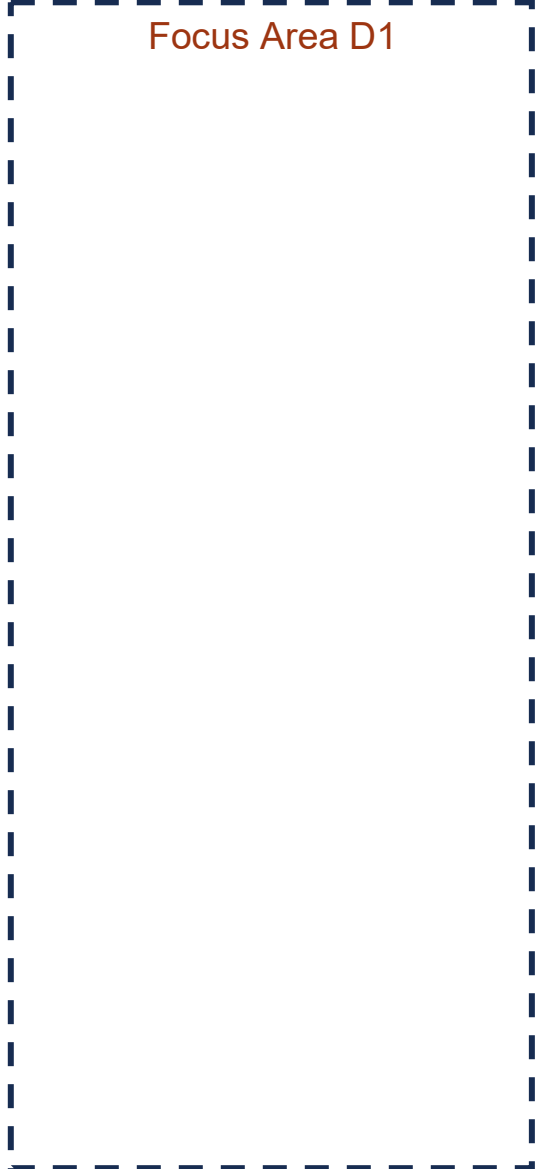
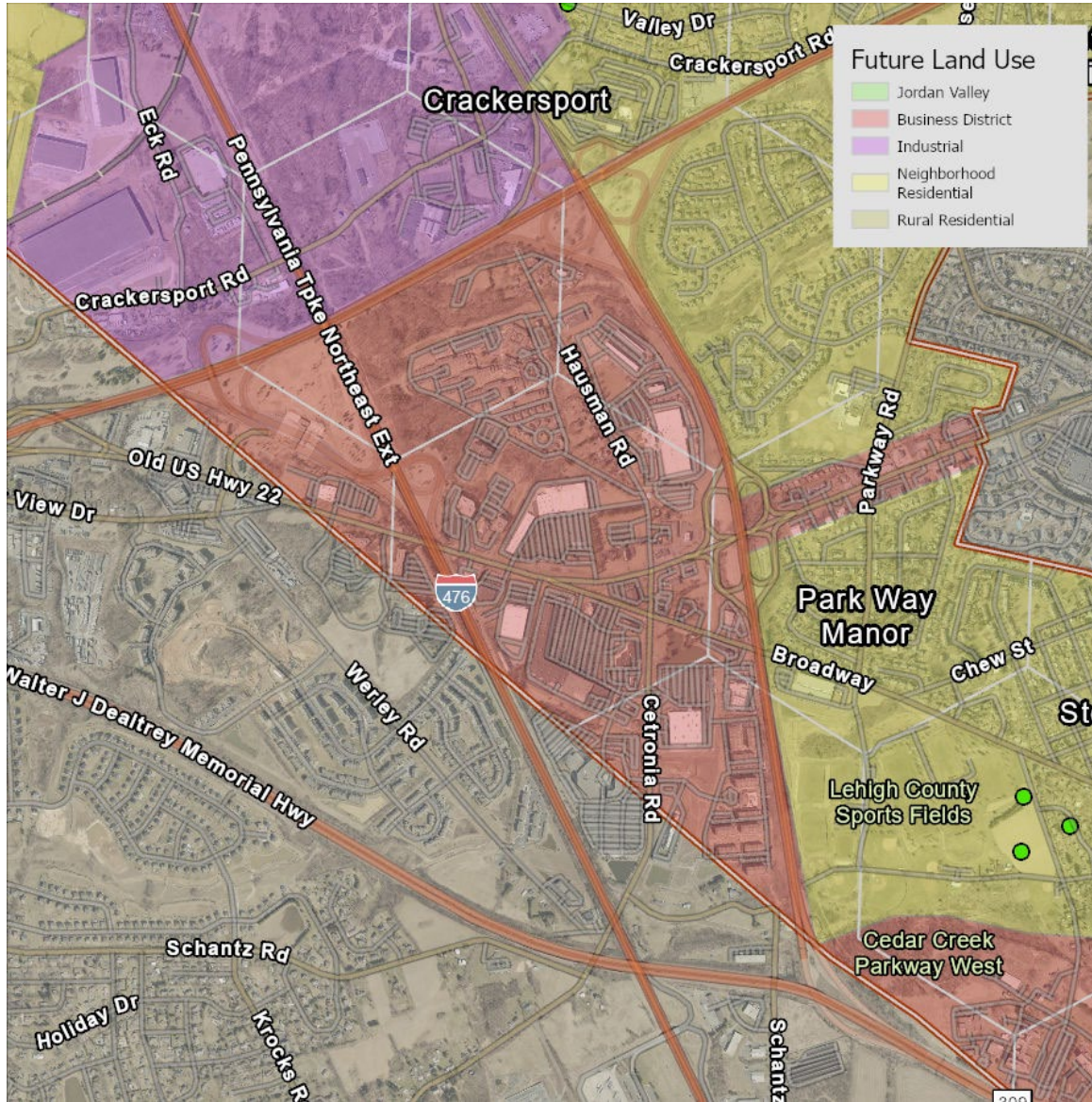


Focus Area B4

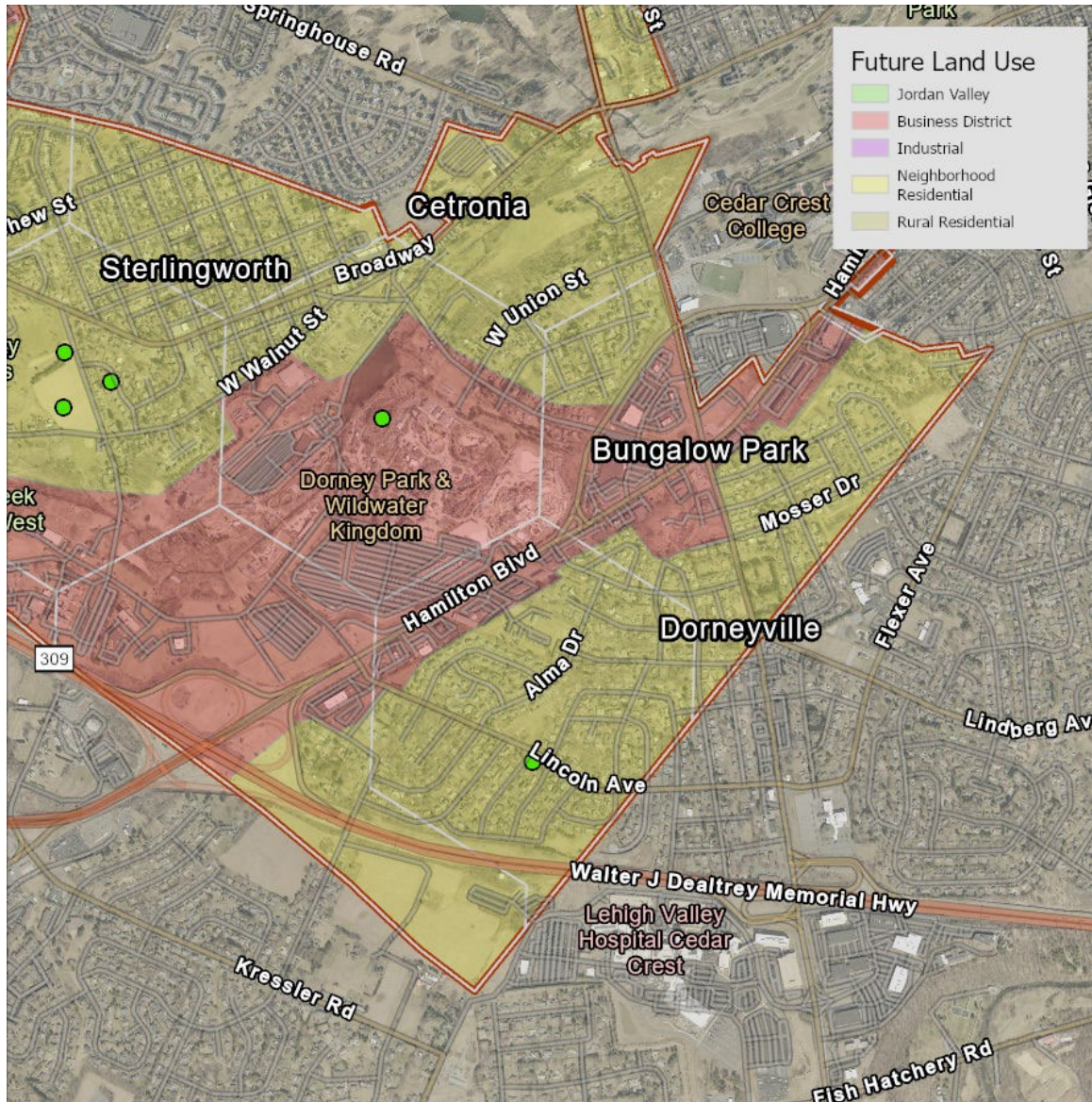
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Landscapes Workbook #1



Landscapes Workbook #1



Landscapes Workbook #1

What's next?

Compile Input from Kick-Off meeting.

Data from this meeting will be compiled and analyzed in a search for patterns and common themes. These “findings” will be shared on the website and included in subsequent meetings.

Key Stakeholder Meetings

Key Stakeholders for this project are people who have a significant interest or influence on this plan. This may include large landowners, potential implementation partners, and residents who have historical knowledge and/or long-standing ties to the community. The Project Team will interview these stakeholders to learn more about the resources identified and gain insight into the concepts identified in the plan.

Research and Analysis

Additional research will be conducted to enhance and validate existing data sources to be shared during the specific subject matter meetings (What? and Who?)

Landscapes Workbook #1

Appendix: Implementation Sheets



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WORKBOOK



www.southwhitehall.com/landscapes