

Hamilton, Stroud, Pocono, Stroudsburg

Comprehensive Plan Update



FINAL DRAFT July 31, 2022

The HSPS Regional Comprehensive Plan

[Adoption Date, 2022]

FINAL DRAFT July 31, 2022

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1 Introduction

Plan Purpose

This regional comprehensive plan was prepared for Hamilton Township, Stroud Township, Pocono Township, and Stroudsburg Borough to renew its regional land use framework established in 2005.

A Comprehensive Plan is a policy for guiding community and economic development in a municipality or multi-municipal region. A comprehensive plan demonstrates that elected officials, in consultation with the public, have considered the current and future needs of its community and agreed upon the direction and scale of development and resource conservation for the foreseeable 10 years.

The Plan provides a blueprint for municipal decision-making. It establishes a desirable land use pattern and recommends the use of various tools to accomplish and serve this pattern. These tools include zoning and subdivision and land development regulations, capital improvements to transportation and infrastructure systems, and adjustments to municipal programs and services. The plan's purpose in considering these topics

simultaneously is to ensure that decisions are coordinated and complementary.

The Comprehensive Plan does not change municipal regulations, practices, or budget allocations. The Plan may recommend changes in these areas, but such change is put into effect through a separate process.

Municipal Use of Planning Tools

All four municipalities have been managing land use through planning tools since at least the 1980s. See Figure 1. Each has established a Planning Commission to review development proposals for compliance with local development polices and standards. Each has a local subdivision and land development ordinance and a local zoning ordinance. None of the municipalities have a formal capital improvement plan (i.e., list of planned projects and funding) for local infrastructure and facilities, though some have identified priority projects. Only Stroud Township has an Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) and only Stroudsburg Borough has a certified historic district and Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB).

Authorization for Municipal Land Use Planning

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), Act 247 of 1968, as reenacted and amended, authorizes municipalities, individually or jointly, to plan for the future. It authorizes the use of several planning tools including the municipal planning commission, the comprehensive plan, the official map for planned municipal facilities and infrastructure, the subdivision and land development ordinance, the capital improvement program, the zoning ordinance and map, and the zoning hearing board.

Additionally, Act 148 of 1973, as amended, authorizes the establishment of Environmental Advisory Councils.

Finally, Pennsylvania's Historic District Act of 1961 authorizes local governments to regulate changes to buildings and structures in a certified historic district and mandates the appointment of an advisory Historical Architectural Review Board to review proposed changes that can be seen from the public right-of-way.

Figure 1. Authorized Municipal Planning Tools in Use in the HSPS Region

Planning Tools	Hamilton Township	Stroud Township	Pocono Township	Stroudsburg Borough
Planning Commission	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Comprehensive Plan	2005 Joint Plan			
Official Map	-			
Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance	2000	2003	1997	1984
Capital Improvement Plan	-	-	-	-
Zoning Ordinance & Map	1985	1998	1989	1983
Zoning Hearing Board	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Environmental Advisory Council	-	Yes	-	-
Historical Architectural Review Board	-	-	-	Yes

Source: Monroe County; Pennsylvania e-Library.

Plan Preparation

Local Leadership

The municipalities each appointed local representatives to a Regional Task Force to lead the plan development process. The Regional Task Force initially worked with the county to conduct a 2019 public survey. In 2020, the Regional Task Force worked with a consultant planning team to discuss findings from the survey, review existing conditions and establish planning priorities, conduct stakeholder focus groups, and develop goals, objectives, and recommendations. See Figure 2.

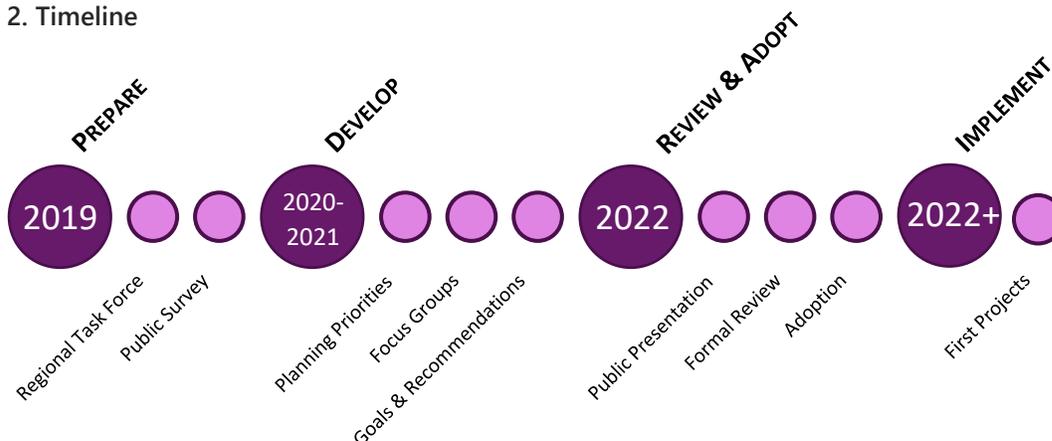
The COVID-19 pandemic delayed the planning process in Spring 2020. The Regional Task Force was able to resume in-person meetings in Summer 2020 following public health guidance.

Technical Preparation

The planning team reviewed available data from U.S. Census Bureau, municipal and county records, and other plans and studies to analyze trends and issues in the region. Maps from recent plans and studies were cross-referenced and new maps were prepared using geographic information systems (GIS) technology.

The planning team shared its findings with the Regional Task Force and facilitated discussion of municipal and regional needs and priorities, a renewed vision of intermunicipal coordination, and direction and potential recommendations.

Figure 2. Timeline



Consistency, Compatibility, & Interrelationships

Consistency

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) requires local comprehensive plans to be generally consistent with—not contrary to—the county comprehensive plan for the county in which the municipality is located. In the spirit of the MPC, plans should also be consistent with other county and regional plans.

Additionally, the Monroe County Planning Commission attended the Regional Task Force meetings. Through these efforts, the HSPS Comprehensive Plan was prepared to be general consistent with Monroe County’s planning policies.

County and Regional Planning Documents Reviewed

- Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance Long-Range Transportation Plan 2045 (2020)
- Eastern Monroe Active Transportation Plan (2020)
- Monroe County Affordable Housing Plan (2018)
- Monroe County Comprehensive Plan (Update, 2014)
- Monroe County Open Space, Greenway, & Recreation Plan (Update, 2014)
- Monroe County Economic Development Implementation Plan (2014)
- Monroe County Natural Heritage Inventory (1999)

Compatibility

Per the MPC, comprehensive plans must also strive to accomplish compatible land use patterns within a municipal or multi-municipal planning area and along its borders with other municipalities.

Compatible patterns are those that have few to no conflicts between adjacent land use designations. Compatibility is achieved by graduating land use intensities or by using setbacks, screening, and other measures to physically and visually separate adjacent land uses and activities.

This Plan has identified no incompatible land use patterns in its existing conditions and recommends no incompatible land use pattern within the region or along its borders.

Interrelationships

Throughout the planning process, interrelationships among land use, transportation, water and sewer infrastructure, and other aspects of community and economic development were kept in mind. For example, the Plan recognizes that intensive land uses will require more intensive infrastructure systems and adequate infrastructure to serve existing and planned development should be in place before additional development occurs, and that additional development will generate more demand for public safety, public health, and other services, which may require expansion of service areas, additional facilities, etc.

2 Snapshot

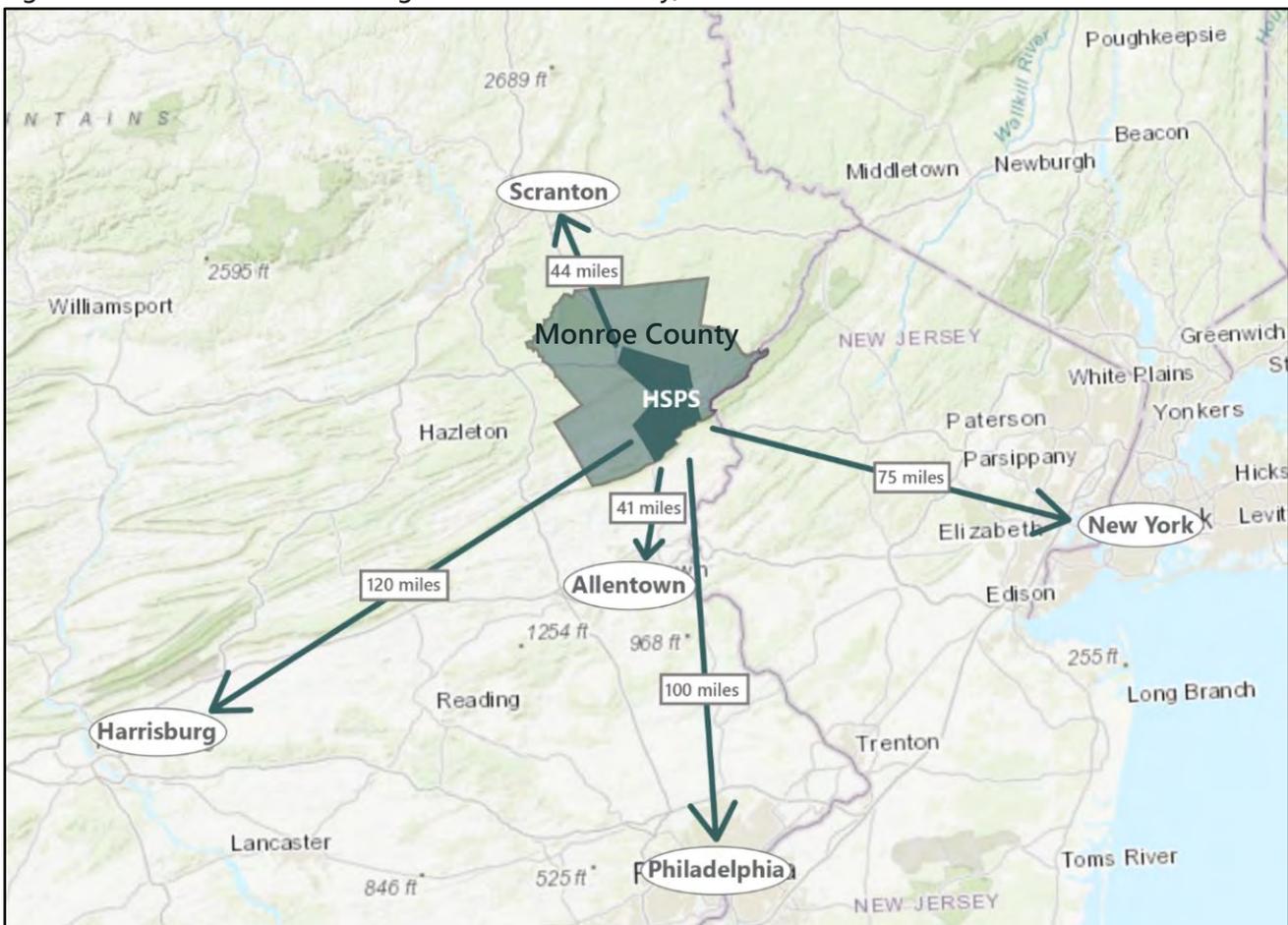
Geographical Location & Context

Monroe County lies along the eastern border of Pennsylvania in the Pocono Mountains. The HSPS region stretches from the I-80/I-380 interchange near Mount Pocono south to Saylorsburg and east to the Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge and the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area along the Delaware River. The region spans the glaciated Appalachian Plateau in the north and the Appalachian Mountain section of

the Ridge and Valley province in the south. Brodhead Creek, and its major tributaries, Pocono Creek and McMichael Creek, drain most of the region into the Delaware River. Cherry Creek drains the southernmost valley through Hamilton and Stroud townships and converges with the Delaware River at Delaware Water Gap Borough.

The region receives an average of 51 inches of rainfall and another 42 inches of snowfall each year. Average high temperatures range from 35 degrees in January to 84 degrees in July.

Figure 3. Location of the HSPS Region in Monroe County, PA.



Source: Gannett Fleming, Inc.

Population

The 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2014-2018) was the most recent population data set available at the time of preparation. The 2020 Decennial Census Redistricting Data was released on August 21, 2021 and was inserted as Table 3. Detailed demographic and housing characteristics are tentatively scheduled for release in 2022 with further detailed data and analysis to follow.

Counts and Projections

In 2018, the HSPS region was home to approximately 44,000 residents, or 26 percent of Monroe County. The region experienced population growth in the early 2000s, as urban dwellers from the New York metropolitan area relocated to areas along connecting interstates. The 2018 population estimates indicate a small decline since 2010 but an overall a net increase of 6,587 residents (18 percent) since 2000. Over the same period, Monroe County grew slightly faster by 21 percent.

Population projections prepared by the PA State Data Center in 2014 (after the Great Recession and before the COVID-19 pandemic) indicate that Monroe County’s population was projected to climb through 2030 then fall slightly by 2040. If the distribution of additional county residents from 2010 to 2018 were to mirror the distribution of growth from 2000 to 2010, the HSPS population in 2020 would be estimated at 47,000—an increase of 2,048 or 5 percent since 2010. Distributing the projected county increase further suggests that the region would gain nearly 2,000 more residents by 2030 before settling back by about 1,000 residents to a total population around 48,000—a net increase of about 1,000 residents from 2020.

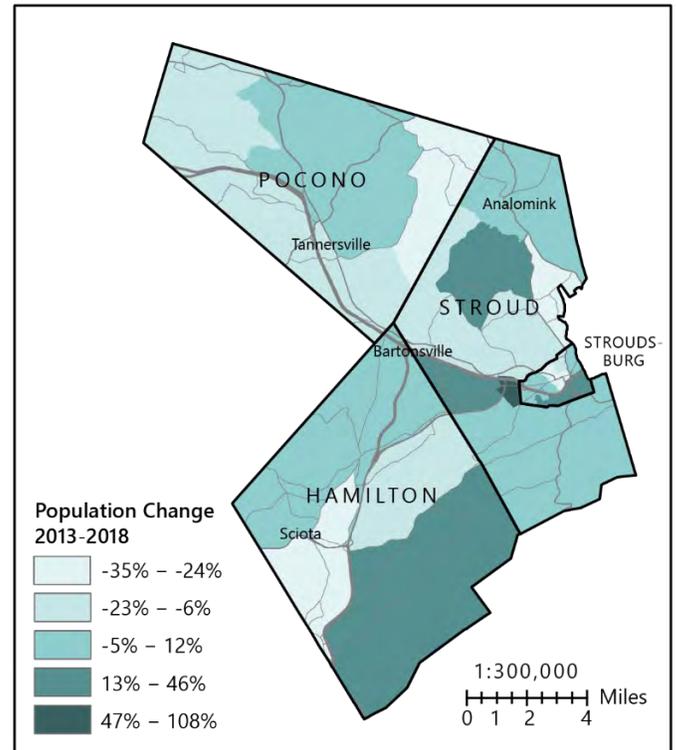
Comparing the 2010 and 2020 population counts shows that the overall population in the HSPS region has grown slightly (314 residents, less than one percent) while the county population

decreased by 1,515 (just under one percent) over the past decade. Population changes within the region were uneven; increases occurred in Stroud (3.2 percent) and Stroudsburg (6.5 percent) while decreases occurred in Hamilton (-5.4 percent) and Pocono (-1.6 percent). Given the relatively small percentages, these figures have a negligible impact on the population projections above.

A Closer Look at Population Change

Population growth has not been even across the HSPS region, as shown in Figure 4. Portions of Hamilton, Stroud, and Stroudsburg grew in population by at least 13 percent. These include census blocks south of I-80 in Stroud and Stroudsburg, in north central Stroud, and much of eastern Hamilton. Census blocks near the I-80/US 209 split in Stroud Township experienced even higher residency or occupancy increases. Portions of all four municipalities may have lost population, by as much as 35 percent.

Figure 4. Population Change, 2013-2018.



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2013 (2009-2013) and 2018 (2014-2018).

Table 1. Population, 2000, 2010, and 2018 (estimated)

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	HSPS	Monroe County
2000 Count	8,235	13,978	9,607	5,756	37,576	138,687
2010 Count	9,083	19,213	11,065	5,567	44,928	169,842
2018 Estimate	8,864	18,952	10,846	5,501	44,163	167,586
<i>Change 2000-2018</i>	+629	+4,974	+1,239	-255	+6,587	+28,899
<i>% Change 2000-2018</i>	8%	36%	13%	-4%	18%	21%

Source: U.S. Decennial Census, 2000 and 2010; American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018; Gannett Fleming calculations.

Table 2. Population Projection, 2020-2040

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	HSPS	Monroe County
2010 Count	9,083	19,213	11,065	5,567	44,928	169,842
<i>% of 2000-2010 County Increase</i>	2.8%	36.2%	4.8%	-0.6%		30,305
<i>Change 2010-2020: Numeric Increase based on the above % applied to Projected 2010-2020 County Increase</i>	133	1717	228	-30	2,048	4,740
2020 Projection	9,216	20,930	11,293	5,537	46,976	174,721
<i>Change 2020-2030: Numeric Increase based on the above % applied to Projected 2020-2030 County Increase</i>	+128	+1,663	+221	-29	+1,984	+4,591
2030 Projection	9,344	22,593	11,514	5,509	48,960	179,312
<i>Change 2030-2040: Numeric Increase based on the above % applied to Projected 2030-2040 County Increase</i>	-65	-838	-111	+14	-999	-2,312
2040 Projection	9,279	21,756	11,403	5,523	47,961	177,000

Source: PA State Data Center (2014) for Monroe County; Gannett Fleming calculations.

Table 3. 2010 and 2020 Population Counts

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	HSPS	Monroe County
2010 Count	9,083	19,213	11,065	5,567	44,928	169,842
2020 Count	8,597	19,834	10,884	5,927	45,242	168,327
<i>Change 2010-2020</i>	-486	621	-181	360	314	-1,515
<i>% Change 2010-2020</i>	-5.4%	3.2%	-1.6%	6.5%	0.7%	-0.9%

Source: U.S. Decennial Census, 2010 and 2020; Gannett Fleming calculations.

Age

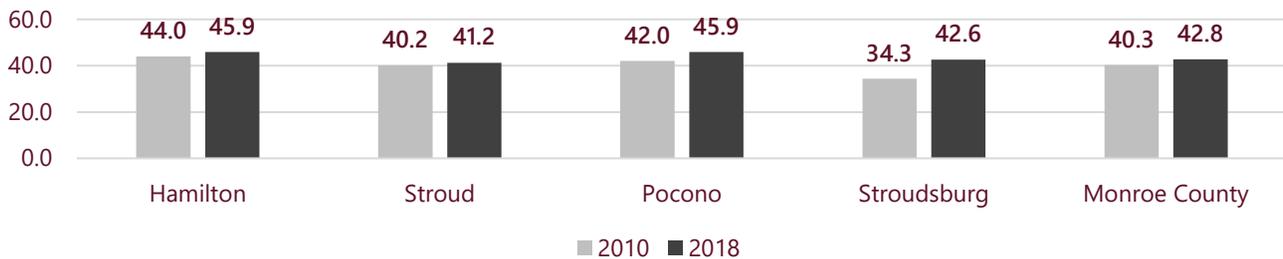
The median age of residents across the HSPS region is 41-46 years and rose in all four municipalities since 2010. With median ages of 45.9 years, residents of Hamilton and Pocono townships are on average about three years older than Stroudsburg residents and four-and-a-half years older Stroud Township residents. The county’s median age of 42.8 years lies in the middle of these municipal median ages.

Since 2010, the median age in Stroudsburg increased by more than eight years, while in Stroud Township it increased by only year. Where median age is steady, new residents by birth and in-migration replace residents who leave by death or out-migration. Where median age changes, incoming and departing residents are imbalanced, potentially impacting housing and community service demands and the current and future workforce.

There is additional evidence of the aging population in age cohort trends. According to the American Community Survey, the senior population increased from 2010 to 2018 while the youth population declined – each by 1,400 to 1,500 residents. The youth population was still larger in 2018 but the trend suggests fewer residents under the age of 18 in the future, which could have ramifications for the school districts, and more senior residents, which suggests alternative housing and health care needs.

The 2020 Census data release of detailed data and analysis will confirm or revise these trends and implications.

Figure 5. Median Age



Source: U.S. Decennial Census, 2010; American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

Table 4. Age Cohorts

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	HSPS		Monroe County	
					#	%	#	%
Youth								
Under 18 years	1,626	4,142	2,236	1,157	9,161	21%	33,787	20%
Change 2010-2018	-17.7%	-16.4%	-12.0%	+4.8%	-1,411	-	-18.7%	-
Adult								
18-64 years	5,589	11,778	6,625	3,420	27,412	62%	106,482	64%
Senior								
65 and older	1,648.70	3,032.32	1,984.82	924.17	7,590	17%	27,317	16%
Change 2010-2018	+17.2%	+20.2%	+42.8%	+18.8%	+1,493	-	+25.6%	-

Source: U.S. Decennial Census, 2010; American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

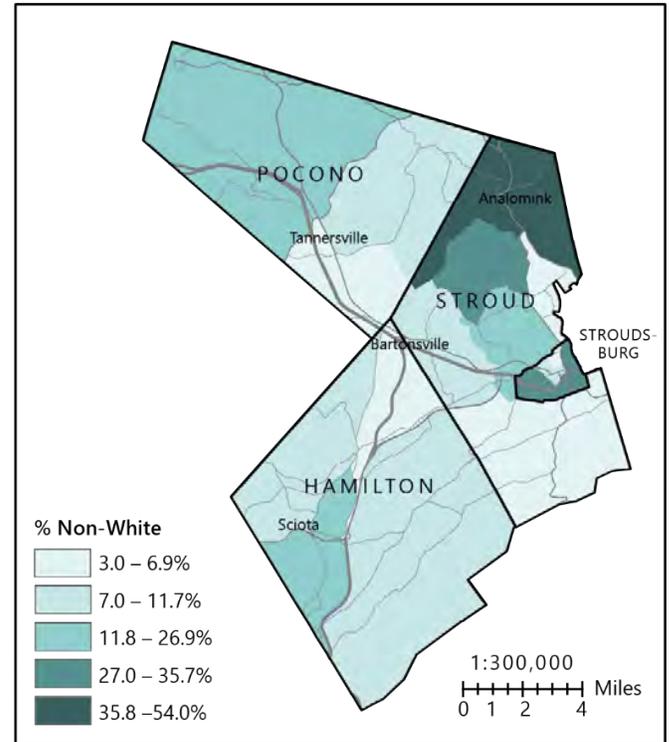
Race and Ethnicity

The population of the HSPS region includes whites, blacks, and other races, as well as residents who identify as Hispanic or Latino, regardless of race. Residents of minority race comprise 16 percent of the HSPS population. Residents of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity comprise 11 percent. Overall, the region had a smaller proportion of Blacks or African Americans than the county and a slightly higher proportion of Asian, multi-race, and other races. Residents of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity were present in each municipality. Hamilton and Pocono Townships had notable increases in their Hispanic and Latino populations from 2010 to 2018.

A Closer Look at Race and Ethnicity

In 2018, residents of any racial minority were more likely to live in the census blocks of northern Stroud Township or Stroudsburg.

Figure 6. Population Non-White.



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

Table 5. Race & Ethnicity

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	HSPS	Monroe County
Race						
White alone	90.6%	70.3%	86.5%	75.2%	79.0%	76.6%
Black or African American alone	4.9%	16.3%	8.0%	13.4%	11.6%	16.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0.1%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%
Asian alone	0.7%	6.2%	0.2%	3.5%	3.3%	2.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some other race alone	1.7%	3.1%	2.3%	2.9%	2.6%	2.7%
Two or more races	2.0%	3.7%	2.8%	4.7%	3.2%	3.1%
Ethnicity						
Hispanic or Latino	6.9%	16.9%	16.4%	13.7%	14.4%	15.4%
<i>Change 2010-2018</i>	+22.6%	+9.9%	+40.8%	-5.4%	+15.9%	+15.9%

Source: U.S. Decennial Census, 2010; American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment influences employment options for workers in the short-term and earnings potential in the long-term. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, workers with only a high school diploma earned \$730 a week in 2018, while those with a bachelor’s degree earned \$1,200, and those with a master’s degree, \$1,400 a week. Additionally, it shapes economic investment as businesses consider the skills of the workforce in regions where they plan to expand operations.

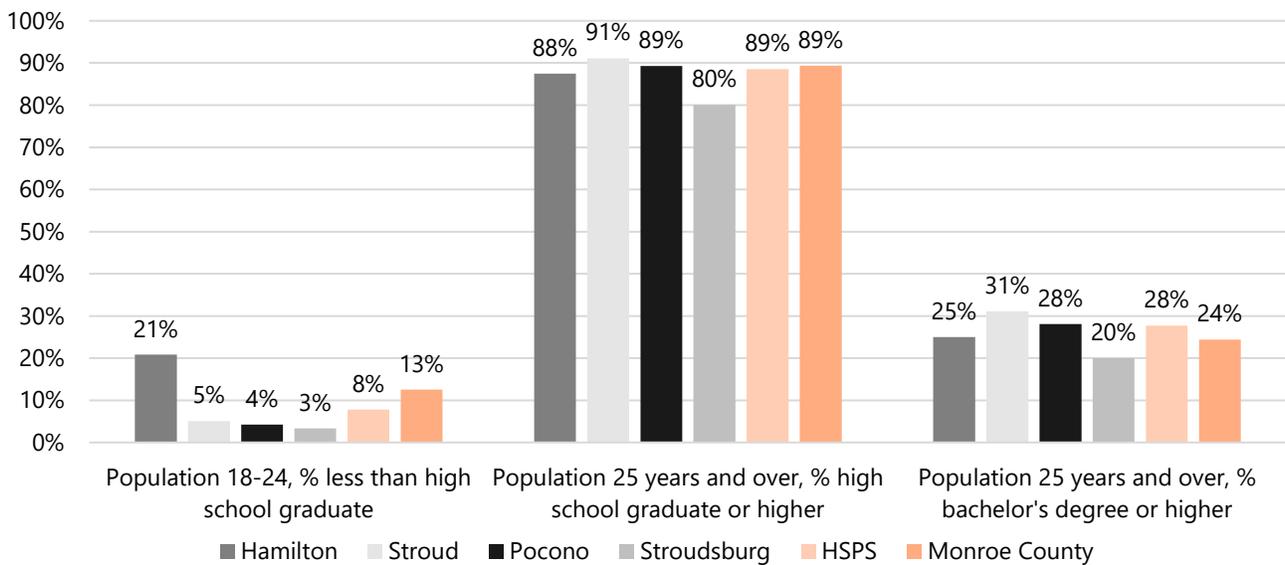
A low percentage of very young adults, ages 18 to 24, living in the HSPS region have not completed high school. Hamilton’s percentage of very young adults without a high school diploma (21 percent) contrasts with very low percentages (<5 percent) in

the rest of the region. This may be due to the presence of the Monroe County Correctional Facility in Hamilton.

Nearly 90 percent of adults 25 years and older in the region have achieved a high school diploma or its equivalent. The townships’ high school completion rates lie within two percentages points of the county 89 percent average. Stroudsburg’s rate is lower at 80 percent.

At 28 percent, far fewer have had at least some post-secondary education. There is a similar pattern among residents with at least some post-secondary education, though Stroud and Pocono were four to seven percentage points higher than the county’s 24 percent average. Stroudsburg’s population with post-secondary experience trails the townships at 20 percent.

Figure 7. Educational Attainment.



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

Households

Overall household counts across the HSPS region have increased alongside population growth from 2010 to 2018. Household increases in Stroud and Pocono offset household losses in Hamilton and Stroudsburg for a net rise of 1,531 or 11 percent. Average household size is 2.9 persons across the townships, and matches the county average, and is a smaller 2.3 persons in Stroudsburg.

Family households (i.e., married couples with or without children under 18 as well as single householders with children) dominate the region overall, however non-family households (i.e., single

person households or two or more unrelated individuals living in the same housing unit) comprise at least 25 percent of households in each municipality. In Stroudsburg, family and non-family households are nearly equal in number.

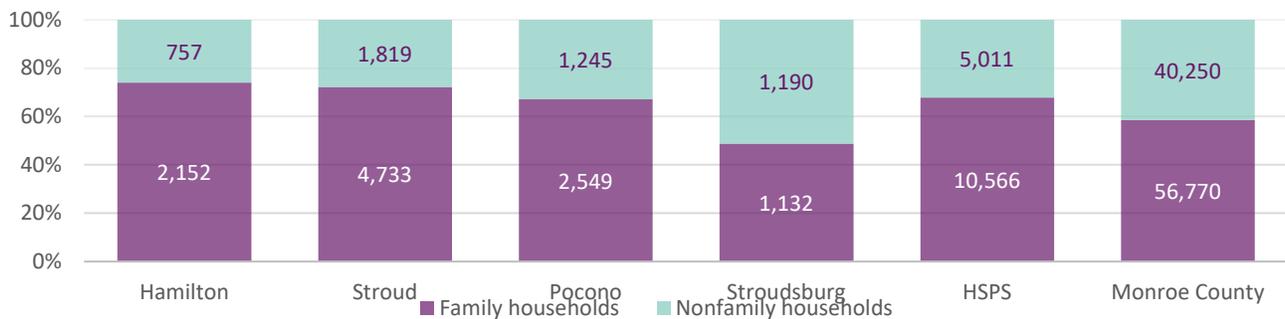
Married couples comprise a clear majority (76.5 percent) of all family households, and a slight majority (51.9 percent) of total households, while single parent households make up the remaining 23.5 percent of family households and 16.3 percent of total households. Single mothers are more than twice as common as single fathers across the region; Hamilton has more single father households.

Table 6. Households

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	HSPS #	% of County
2000	2,947	5,174	3,503	2,422	14,046	28.4%
2010	3,274	6,829	4,088	2,385	16,576	27.1%
2018	2,909	6,552	3,794	2,322	15,577	26.7%
<i>Change 2000-2018</i>	-38	+1,378	+291	-100	+1,531	+10.9%
<i>% HH Change, 2000-2018</i>	-1.2%	26.6%	8.3%	-4.1%	10.9%	
<i>Average Household Size</i>	2.85	2.89	2.86	2.34	n/a	n/a
<i>% Avg HH Size Change, 2000-2018</i>	+0.21	+0.2	+0.13	+0.04	n/a	n/a

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

Figure 8. Household Type.



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

Table 7. Family Household Characteristics

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	HSPS #	% of Total HH
Married couple	1,776	3,683	1,976	641	8,078	51.9%
Single householder	376	1,095	573	491	2,535	16.3%
Male; no wife present	210	405	75	81	771	5.0%
Female; no husband present	166	690	498	410	1,764	11.3%

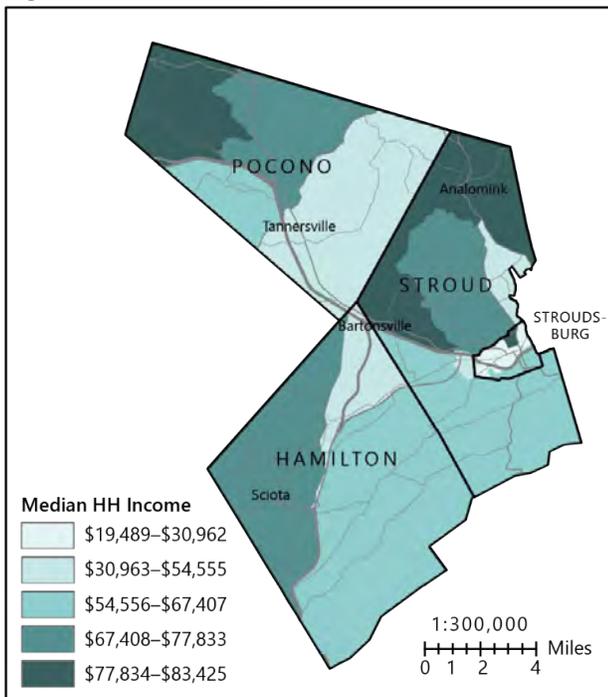
Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

Income & Poverty

Household median income across Monroe County in 2018 was estimated at \$64,170. Median income figures in Hamilton and Stroud were higher than the county, while figures in Pocono and Stroudsburg were lower.

Median income varies widely by household type based on the number of workers within the household. Married couple (family) households had the highest incomes and reflected the smallest disparity between values in Stroudsburg and the county. Nonfamily households (singles and unrelated co-habitants) had the lowest incomes.

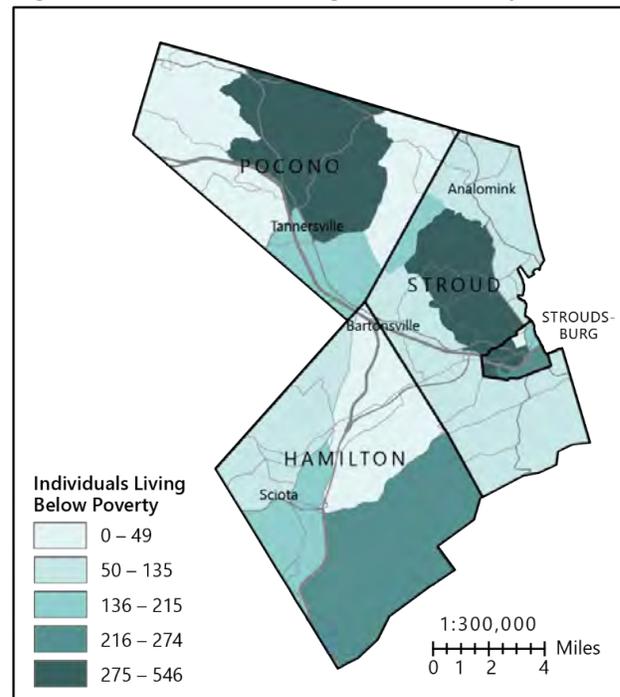
Figure 9. Median Household Income.



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

In 2018, there were individuals and families estimated to be living in poverty in each of the HSPS region municipalities. Individuals were estimated at 4,690, or 10.8 percent of the total population—lower than the county’s 12.3 percent—and concentrated in the north central portions of Stroud and Pocono, western and southern portions of the Stroudsburg, and eastern Hamilton. Four hundred seventy (470) families, or 4.4 percent of families, were estimated to be living in poverty in 2018.

Figure 10. Individuals Living Below Poverty.



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

Table 8. Median Income

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	Monroe County
Households	\$69,592	\$71,276	\$61,607	\$30,926	\$64,170
<i>Median HH Income Change, 2000-2018 after accounting for inflation</i>	-\$1,741	-\$9,253	-\$7,887	-\$17,922	-\$5,550
Family Households	\$81,500	\$79,718	\$77,819	\$61,483	\$77,939
Married-couple Households	\$89,310	\$94,971	\$86,901	\$77,986	\$86,256
Nonfamily Households	\$31,114	\$41,646	\$36,929	\$23,004	\$35,845

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

Table 9. Poverty

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	HSPS		% of County
					#	%	
Persons in poverty	7.3%	8.4%	11.2%	23.3%	4,690	10.8%	12.3%
Families below poverty level	5.1%	3.1%	3.9%	10.0%	470	4.4%	10.1%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

Housing

Housing Stock

In 2018, there were nearly 19,000 housing units in the HSPS region—an increase of 2,809 units since 2010—and comprised 23 percent of all units in Monroe County. The region’s share of countywide housing units has slowly fallen since 2010.

Occupancy and Tenure

Vacancy among owner-occupied units is low, indicating a tight housing market. In the Pocono region, one would expect this vacant owner-occupied units to include seasonal cabins and other unit types that would reflect a higher vacant unit count. Even these appear to be largely consumed by the market in 2018. Renter vacancy demonstrates

more reasonable availability of units overall and particularly in Hamilton township.

Anecdotally, market conditions have tightened further since 2018 as urban dwellers from the NY/NJ metro area have sought housing in relatively less dense communities along transportation corridors that help them maintain access to in-person employment when needed.

Among occupied units across the region, about 3 in 4 are owner-occupied. Municipally, the rental market ranges from 19 percent in Hamilton township, to 21 and 22 percent in Stroud and Pocono townships, respectively, to 49 percent in Stroudsburg.

Table 10. Housing Units.

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	HSPS	% of Monroe County
					#	
2000	3,299	5,935	4,250	2,630	16,114	23.9%
2010	3,832	7,730	5,154	2,299	19,015	23.7%
2018	3,407	7,884	4,967	2,665	18,923	23.2%
Change 2000-2018	+108	+1,949	+717	+35	+2,809	

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

Table 11. Housing Tenure

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	HSPS	
					#	%
Total Housing Units	3,407	7,884	4,967	2,665	18,923	
Occupied Housing Units	2,909	6,552	3,794	2,322	15,577	82.3%
Owner-occupied	2,369	5,207	2,970	910	11,456	73.5%
Renter-occupied	540	1,345	824	1,142	4,121	26.5%
Vacant Housing Units	498	1,332	1,173	343	3,346	17.7%
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	3.6%	4.1%	1.9%	1.6%	-	-
Renter Vacancy Rate	12.2%	4.8%	4.8%	8.5%	-	-

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

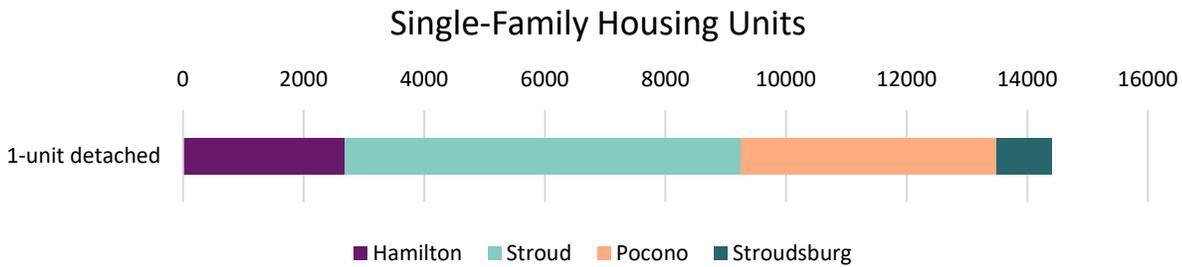
Unit Types

Of the nearly 19,000 housing units in the region, more than 14,400 units (76 percent) are single-family detached homes. These are predominantly located in the townships.

The balance of the housing stock, 4,520 units, are attached units or mobile units of some type. More than 1,900 units are paired in two-unit structures,

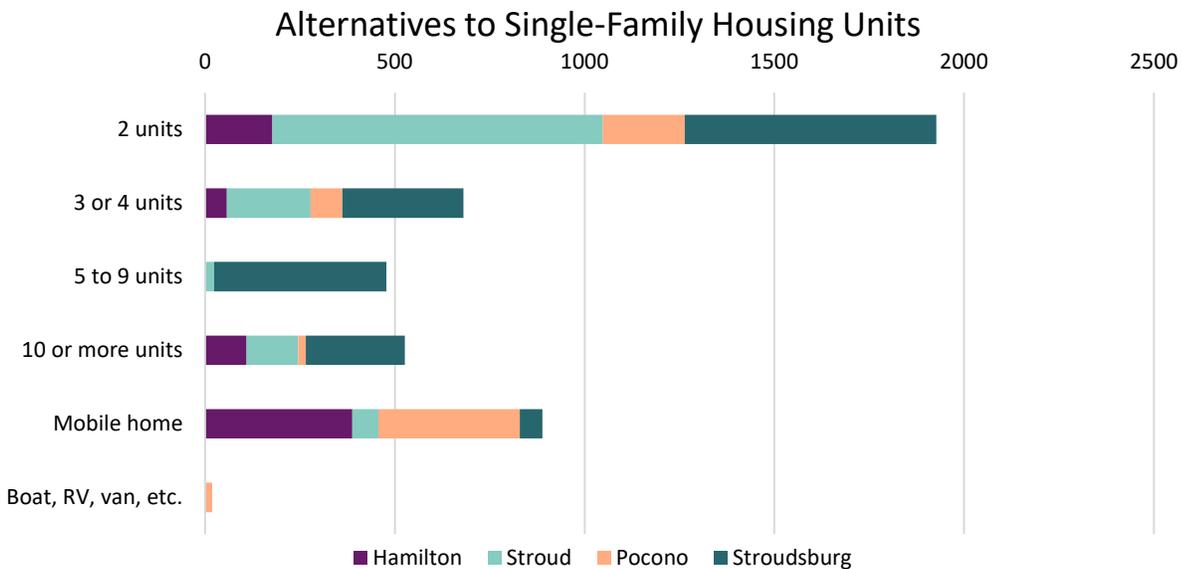
and nearly 700 units are clustered in 3- and 4-unit structures— with some portion of these units in each municipality. Moderately sized, multi-unit structures of 5 to 9 units are found mainly in Stroudsburg, with a few in Stroud. Each municipality has at least one larger structure of 10 units or more and several mobile homes. Only Pocono has other mobile housing units.

Figure 11. Single-Family Housing Units.



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

Figure 12. Alternatives to Single-Family Housing Units.



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

Economy

Jobs

The HSPS region is home to numerous businesses and industries that provide employment for local and non-local workers. Businesses in the region reported 23,488 total jobs in 2017, an increase of nearly 1,800 or 8.3 percent since 2010. Pocono hosts the largest portion of all jobs at 11,114. Jobs (47 percent); Hamilton hosts the smallest at 1,778 jobs.

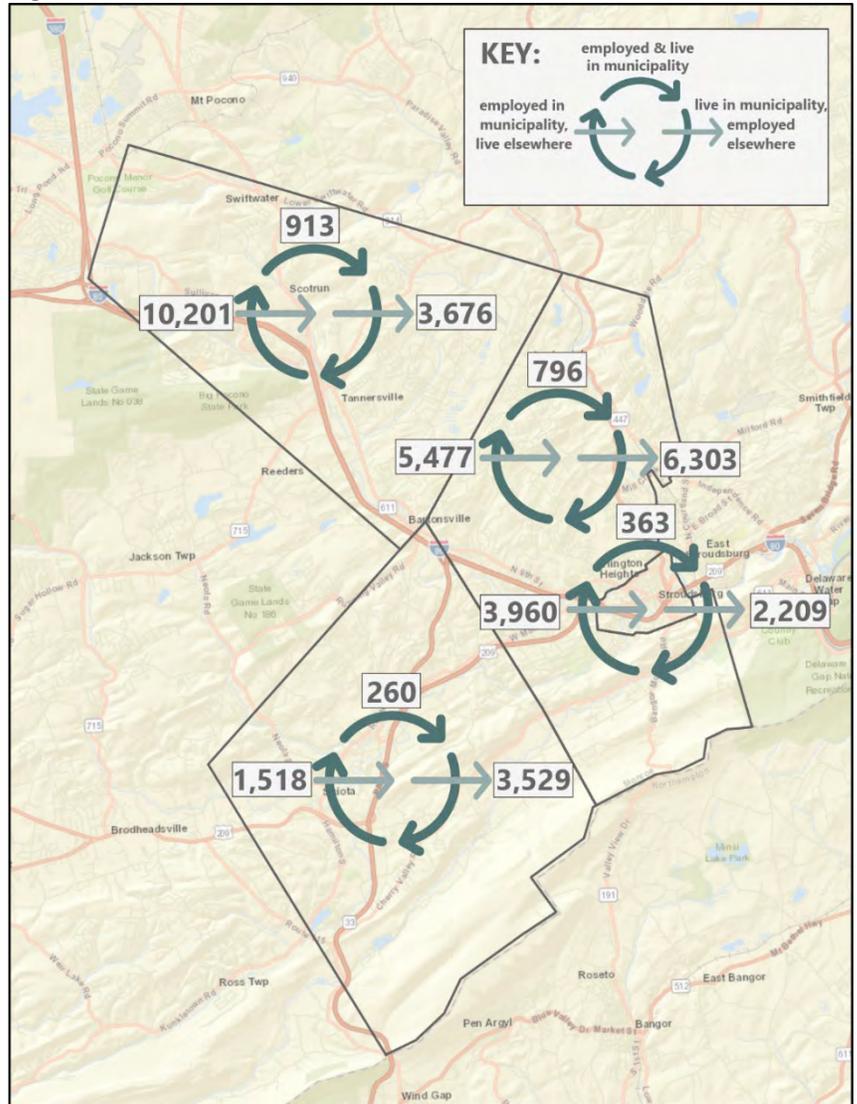
Retail, Accommodation/Food Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance consistently appear in the top employment industries for each municipality in the region.

Workplace Location

Jobs in the region are held by local and non-local workers. Relatively few resident workers live and work in the same municipality—a total of 2,232 or just 12 percent.

More than 15,700 resident workers leave their home municipality to reach their workplace, and more than 21,100 workers travel into an HSPS municipality—from within the region or from places beyond—to reach their workplaces. This commuter travel represents a significant portion of traffic volumes on state and local roads. See Figure 13.

Figure 13. Worker Inflow & Outflow.



Source: OnTheMap

Land Use

Land Use Distribution

In 2020, open spaces visually dominate much of the HSPS region in areas used for public and private recreation, resource conservation, and agriculture. Moderate to higher intensity uses are concentrated in Stroudsburg and Stroud and located along the major state highway corridors—PA 611, PA 447, PA 33, and US 209—throughout the region.

Land Use Pattern

Hamilton is primarily covered by agricultural and forested land. Protected lands include the Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge in the south and several preserved farms in the Cherry Valley itself. A large quarry operation represents industrial use in the center of the township. The villages of Saylorsburg, Sciota, and Snydersville have subtle concentrations of commercial uses. Low density residential uses are found throughout the township.

In Stroud, lands adjacent to Stroudsburg and along PA 611 are intensively used while lands at the northern and southern extremes are more rural and open in character. Areas adjacent to the borough

are urban to suburban in character with smaller lots and a gridded or loosely gridded street network. To the north and south uses include agriculture, forests, parks and recreation, such as the Appalachian Trail that runs near the township’s southern border, and low-density housing.

Most of Pocono is largely characterized as a mix of low-density residential and open space, consisting of forests, parks, and natural areas. The township’s commercial uses, including several year-round resorts and lodges, such as Pocono Manor and Camelback Mountain Resort, are generally located along PA 611. The township is also home to several private camps.

As the urban core of the HSPS region, lands in Stroudsburg are the most intensively used lands in the region. Commercial activity is concentrated along the PA 611/Main Street corridor. Residential areas exist north and south of this corridor and are more densely concentrated in the eastern half of the borough, between Route 611 and 191 and south of 1-80.

Figure 14 summarizes the Generalized Land Use Distribution. Figure 15 illustrates the Generalized Land Use Pattern.

Figure 14. Generalized Land Use Distribution.



Municipal Zoning

Each of the HSPS municipalities uses a zoning ordinance and map to manage changes in land use.

Figure 16 shows the municipal zoning patterns. A review of zoning patterns, particularly along the municipal borders, shows that most designations are generally compatible. For example, the PA 611 corridor is consistently zoned for commercial uses and the Cherry Valley is consistently zoned for conservation and agriculture in Hamilton and conservation in Stroud.

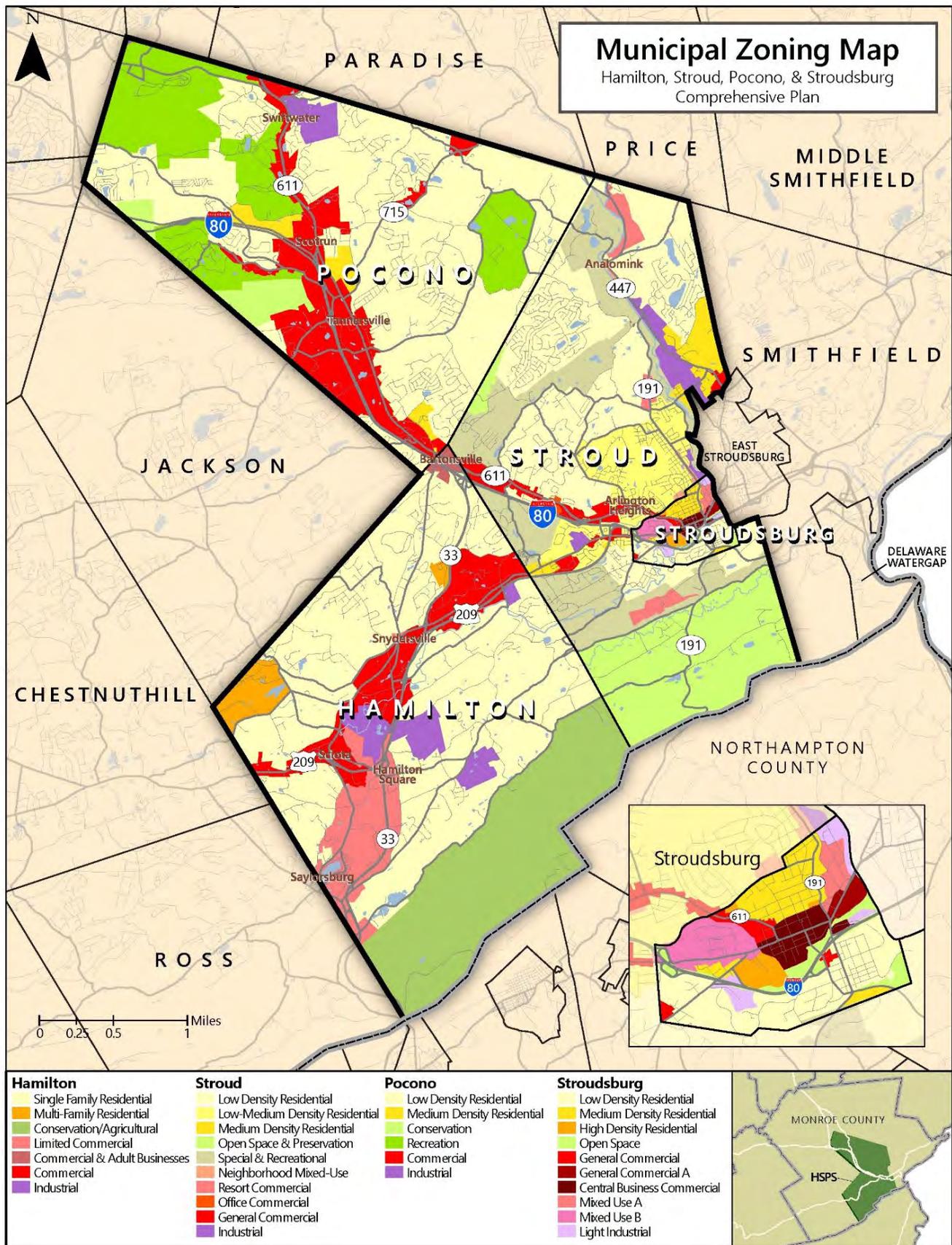
Areas of differing designations along a border or corridor within the region include:

- Along US 209 - the commercial district in Hamilton abutting the medium density residential district and special and recreational district in Stroud.
- South of the Tannersville Cranberry Bog - the open space and preservation district in Stroud and the single-family residential district in Pocono.
- Along Reish Road – the commercial district in Stroudsburg and low-density residential district in Stroud.
- Along Foxtown Hill Road – the medium density residential and open space districts in Stroudsburg and the low-density residential district in Stroud.

Areas of differing designations along a border or corridor at the edge of the region include:

- Along Neola Road and Greenview Drive – the multi-family residential district in Hamilton, the rural residential in adjacent Chestnuthill, and the residential district in adjacent Jackson.
- Along Brodhead Creek – the industrial districts in Stroud and Stroudsburg and the residential district in East Stroudsburg; the creek provides a buffer.
- Along PA 715 – the commercial district in Pocono and the low-density residential district in Paradise.
- Along PA 715 – the low-density residential district in Pocono and the industrial district in Jackson
- Along Stadden Road - the commercial district in Pocono and the low-density residential district in Jackson.

Figure 16. Municipal Zoning.



Source: Monroe County Planning Commission; PennDOT Open Data. Created by Gannett Fleming 2020.

Infrastructure

Transportation System

The transportation network in the HSPS region includes state and local roads and bridges, local and intercity bus service, PA Bike Route V, and a limited bicycle and pedestrian network, as illustrated in Figure 17. In addition, the Pocono Mountains Municipal Airport lies just north of Mount Pocono (<5 miles) and the Lehigh Valley International Airport and Wilkes-Barre Scranton International Airport are within an hour’s drive (<55 miles). Rail freight service is available from the Delaware-Lackawanna Railroad in Stroud.

State Roads & Bridges

There are 162 miles of state roads and 145 state-owned bridges in the HSPS region. Major highways are characterized by their in-region length, daily traffic volumes, and municipal locations in Table 12.

Municipal Roads & Bridges

There are 260.5 miles of locally owned roadways as well as 9 county bridges and 12 municipal bridges over 20 feet in length in the HSPS region.

Household Vehicle Availability

While nearly all residents rely on the road and bridge network in some fashion for travel, the ACS estimates that in 2018 there were more than 1,100 households in HSPS region that had no access to a personal vehicle. While Stroudsburg has the largest number (461), more than half of all no-vehicle households were located in the townships.

Table 12. Major Highways

State Highways	Length (miles)	Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)	Passage through the HSPS Region
I-80	26.5	42,000-71,000	Hamilton, Stroud, Pocono, Stroudsburg
PA 611	18.39	3,575-25,660	Hamilton, Stroud, Pocono, Stroudsburg
PA 33	14.33	8,580-18,703	Hamilton, Stroud
Business US 209	12.58	9,080-21,766	Hamilton, Stroud
US 209	3.98	6,051-12,166	Hamilton, Stroud, Stroudsburg
PA 191	11.57	3,139-17,712	Stroud, Pocono, Stroudsburg
PA 715	5.5	2,323-14,735	Pocono
PA 314	4.63	1,398-4,785	Pocono
PA 447	2.33	3,073-16,418	Stroud
Other routes	62.36	Variable	Hamilton, Stroud, Pocono, Stroudsburg

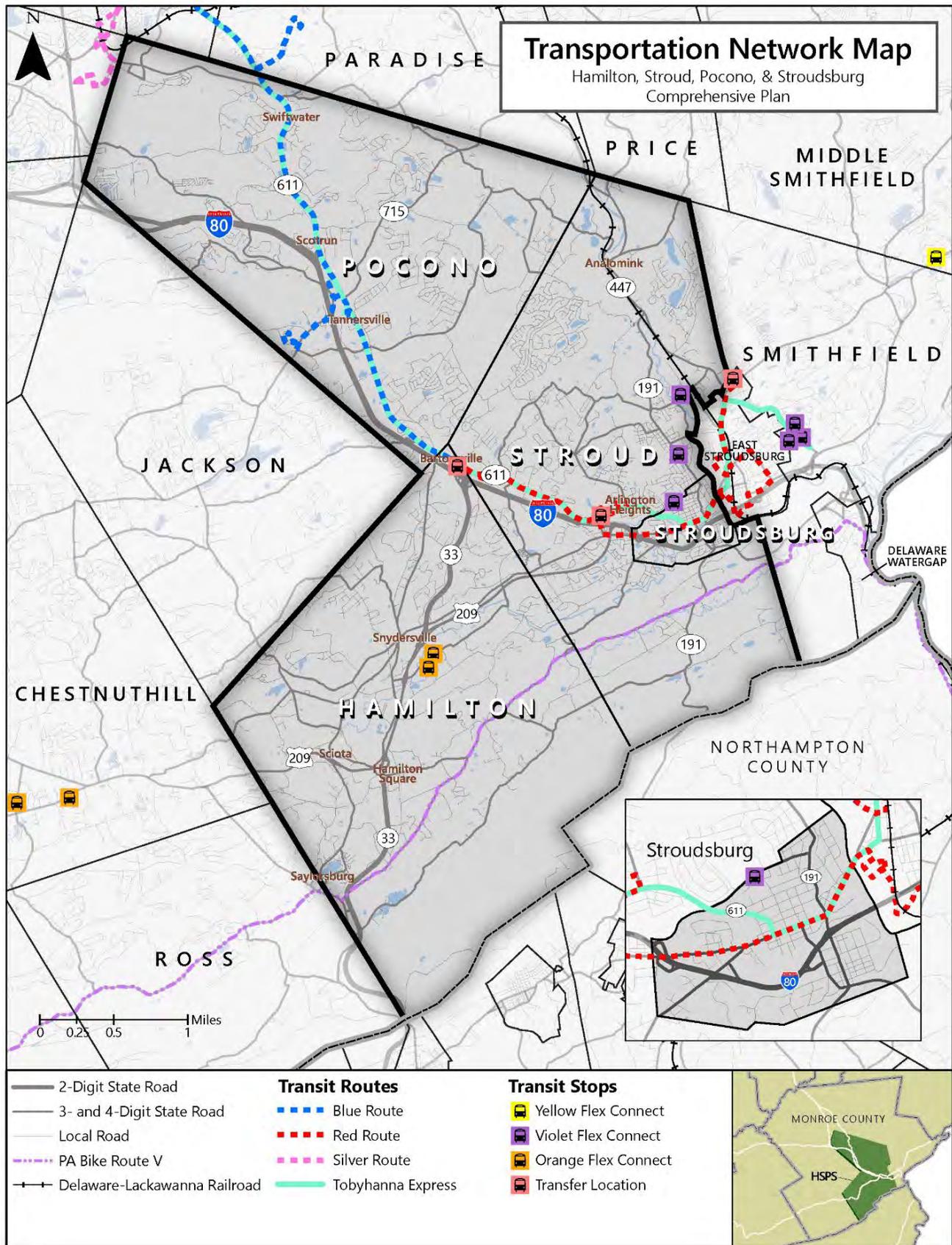
Source: PennDOT.

Table 13. Vehicle Availability

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	HSPS	
					#	%
Total Households	2,909	6,552	3,794	2,322	15,577	
Vehicles						
None	93	267	292	461	1,113	7.1%
One	949	2,039	1,126	984	5,098	32.7%
Two	1,151	2,797	1,298	615	5,861	37.6%
Three or more	716	1,449	1,078	262	3,505	22.5%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

Figure 17. Transportation Network.



Source: Monroe County Planning Commission; PennDOT Open Data. Created by Gannett Fleming 2020.

Intercity Bus Service

Several bus companies, including Fullington Trailways, Greyhound Bus Lines, and Martz Bus Company, provide intercity service from the Stroudsburg bus station at 1082 Foxtown Hill Road and other nearby locations. Popular destinations include Philadelphia, New York City (Penn Station), Newark, NJ, and other cities along the eastern seaboard.

Local Transit Service

The Monroe County Transit Authority, also known as the Pocono Pony, provides transit and transportation services to the residents of the region. Three of MCTA's fixed routes run through the HSPS region.

Although no fixed routes run through Hamilton, the Orange Flex service allows riders to connect to the Red and Blue Routes in Bartonsville from an Orange Flex Stop. The two Orange Flex stops in Hamilton are near the PennDOT DMV and Burnley Employment & Rehab Services on Manor Drive in Hamilton.

MCTA offers shared-ride services to the public, with discounts given to seniors, veterans, and the disabled.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities

PA Bike Route V is an east-west route, roughly parallel to the Interstate 80 corridor from the Ohio border west of Bessemer, Lawrence County east to the New Jersey border at the Delaware River in Portland, Northampton County. It follows SR 2004/Cherry Valley Road in Hamilton and Stroud for 13.6 of its 355 miles. The route is suitable only for confident bicyclists, who are experienced in riding in the travel lane with motorized traffic.

Sidewalks have been inventoried in most of Stroudsburg and portions of Stroud, as shown in Figure 18. Other isolated locations may have sidewalk segments but lack a significant size or network.

Additionally, three off-road trails provide interstate, regional, and site-based routes for walking, hiking, and biking in the region – the Appalachian Trail, the Levee Loop Trail, and trails at Big Pocono State Park.

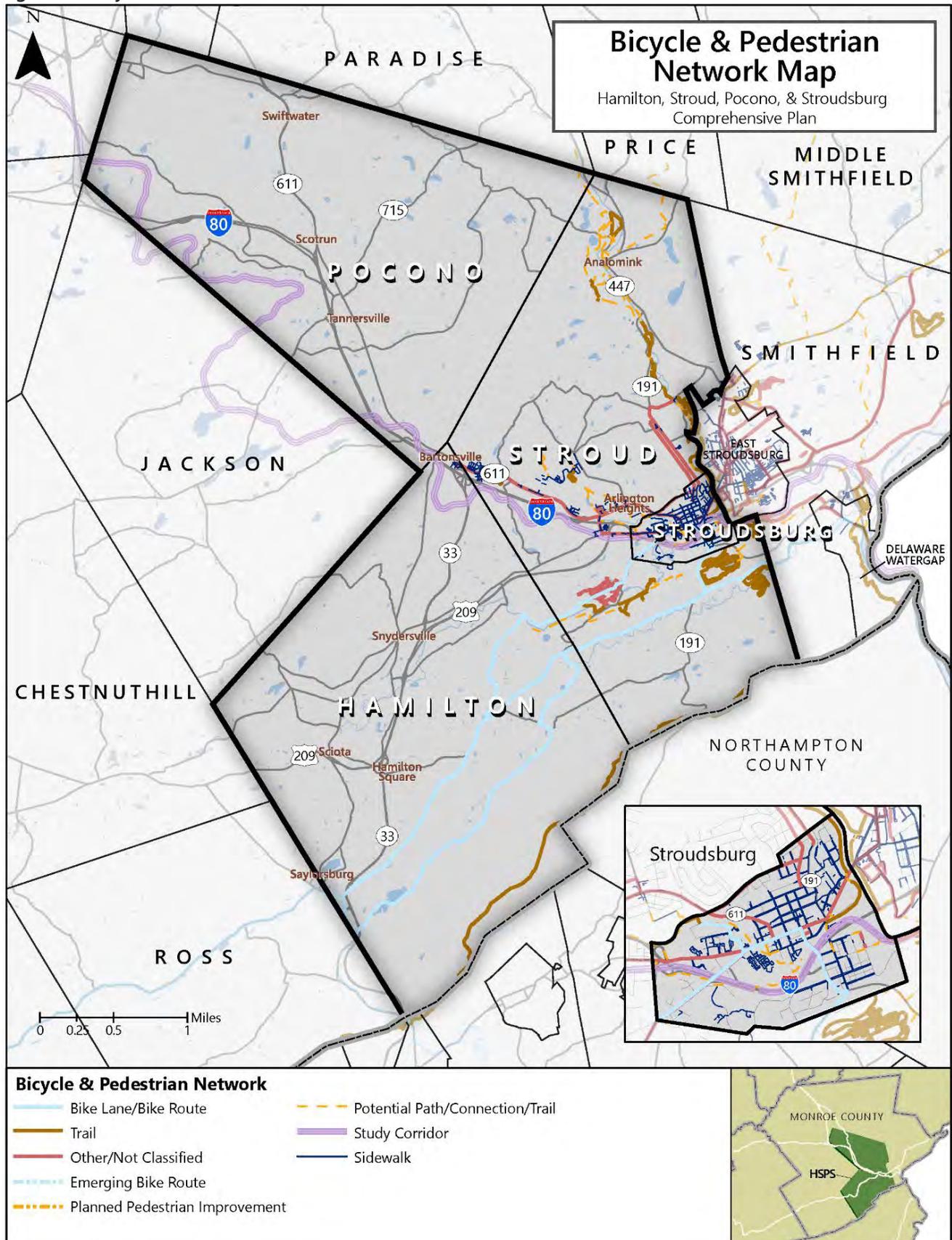
Water Supply & Sewerage Disposal

A relatively small portion of the region—9,935 acres or about 15 percent—has public water service. An even smaller portion—6,590 acres or 10 percent—has public sewer service. Both service areas are shown on Figure 19. Properties outside of these public service areas rely on on-lot groundwater wells for their water supply and on-lot septic systems for their sewage disposal.

Private Utility & Telecommunications Services

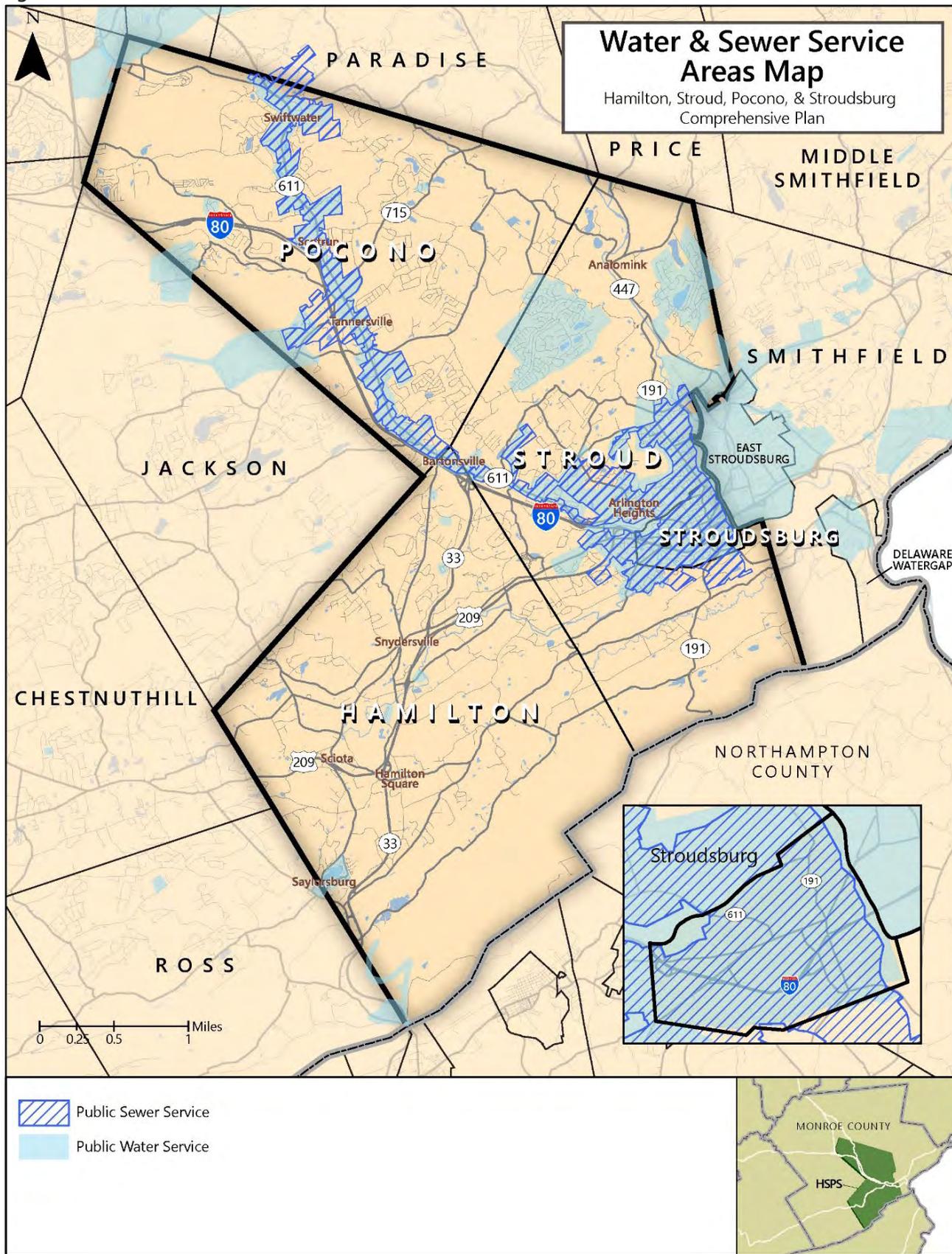
Private electricity and telephone services cover the region and natural gas is available in select areas. Internet access and cellular services have fall short of complete coverage and reliable high-speed service.

Figure 18. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities.



Source: Monroe County Planning Commission; PennDOT Open Data. Created by Gannett Fleming 2020.

Figure 19. Water and Sewer Service Areas.



Source: Monroe County Planning Commission; PennDOT Open Data. Created by Gannett Fleming 2020.

Community Facilities & Services

Public Safety

The HSPS region relies on state and local departments and community organizations for public safety services. Facilities are concentrated along the I-80/Route 611 and Route 209 corridors. Monroe County Emergency Management dispatches services to locations of need.

Health Care

The Lehigh Valley Health Network and St. Luke’s Hospital-Monroe Campus are the notable health care providers in the region. Facilities are concentrated in in Tannersville, Bartonsville, and Stroudsburg.

Education

Residents of the region are served by the Pocono Mountain School District and the Stroudsburg Area School District as shown in Figure 20. The Monroe Career and Technical Institute (MCTI) provides vocational educational progress for about 1,000 students in ninth through twelfth grades from surrounding school districts, as well as adult education programs.

Post-secondary schools in the region and nearby include:

- Northampton Community College-Monroe Campus in Tannersville
- CDE Career Institute - PA Campus in Tannersville
- East Stroudsburg University.

Parks, Trails, & Recreation

Parks and recreation areas in the HSPS region include 26 municipal parks, four county/public-use sites, Big Pocono State Park, and the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. They offer sports facilities for individual and team sports, nature activities, and picnic and comfort facilities.

The Stroud Region and Open Space Commission provides recreational programming and activities at various parks in Stroud and Stroudsburg. Youth sports leagues operate at a multi-municipal to regional scale in Monroe County. The Pocono Family YMCA offers year-round programs for all ages.

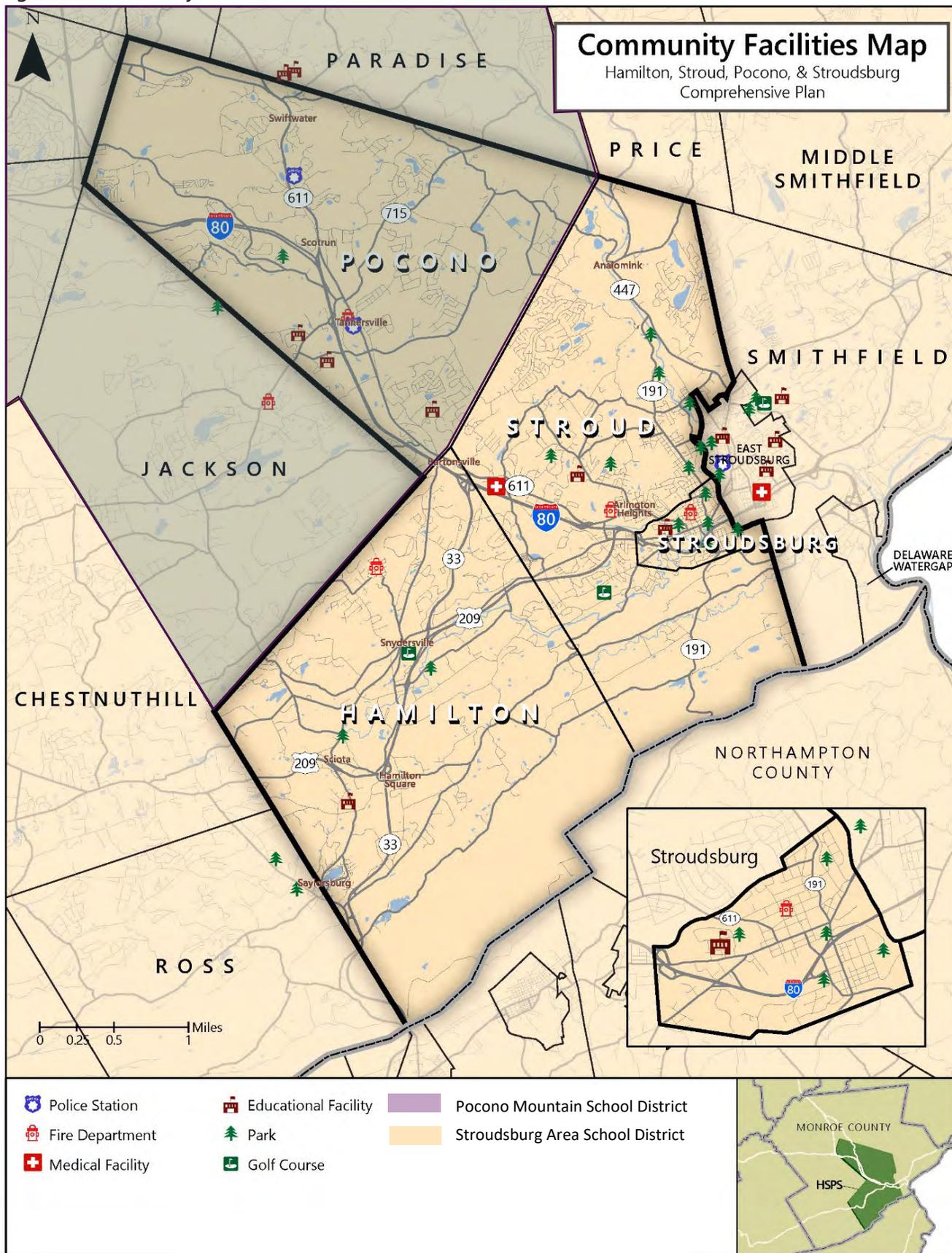
Three off-road trails provide routes for walking, hiking, and biking in the HSPS region, as previously noted.

Table 14. Parks and Recreation Facilities.

	Sports Facilities								Nature Activities				Facilities & Friends					
Size (acres)	Baseball	Soccer	Basketball	Golf / Disc Golf	Ice skating	Swimming Pool	X-Country skiing	Fishing	Gardens	Scenic	Trails	Parking	Pavilion	Picnic Tables	Playground	Restrooms	Dog-friendly	
All Municipal Parks	671	5	5	2	2	3	1	7	11	2	13	12	9	6	7	6	11	13

Source: SROSRC website; Monroe County GIS (Public GIS Search).

Figure 20. Community Facilities.



Source: Monroe County Planning Commission; PennDOT Open Data. Created by Gannett Fleming 2020.

Natural Resources

The topography, drainage pattern, and forest cover of the HSPS region historically constrained community and economic development and conserved natural resources. Today, federal and state regulations and designations formalize protections. Municipal ordinances and other measures require or encourage further resource conservation.

Surface Waters and Water Quality

Water quality in the HSPS region is high. All but four waterways in the HSPS region are designated HQ Waters. Indian Run and Swiftwater Creek in northern Pocono are designated EV Waters. The lowest segment of McMichael Creek and an adjacent tributary to Brodhead Creek in Stroudsburg are designated Trout Stocking Waters (or Fisheries). See Figure 21.

Floodplains and Wetlands

Because waterways are common in the region, floodplains and wetlands are common, too. Both are important to surface water filtration and groundwater recharge. Because flooding of developed areas poses a hazard to human life and property and a potential cost to emergency service providers, land use and development in floodplains should be carefully managed. Because wetlands are ecologically important to groundwater recharge and wildlife habitat, they are federally protected; the National Wetland Inventory identifies potential wetlands, but they must be delineated in the field.

Sixty-five acres of federally designated floodplain along the Brodhead Creek are owned and maintained by Stroud, Stroudsburg, or Monroe County as flood protection areas; portions are available for passive recreational use.

Soils and Steep Slopes

Soil conditions and quality in the region are not high for agriculture, forestry, or development. Weathering has made soils thin. Poor drainage and acidic conditions are further limitations. Disturbance of steep slopes (25 percent slope or more) causes erosion of the soils that remain, leading to sedimentation in nearby surface waters, as well as slope instability or collapse. Areas of steep slopes in the HSPS region are shown in Figure 22.

While valley lands in the Hamilton and Stroud portions of the region were historically farmed to provide fresh produce, dairy, and poultry for local markets, only small patches of active farmland remain today.

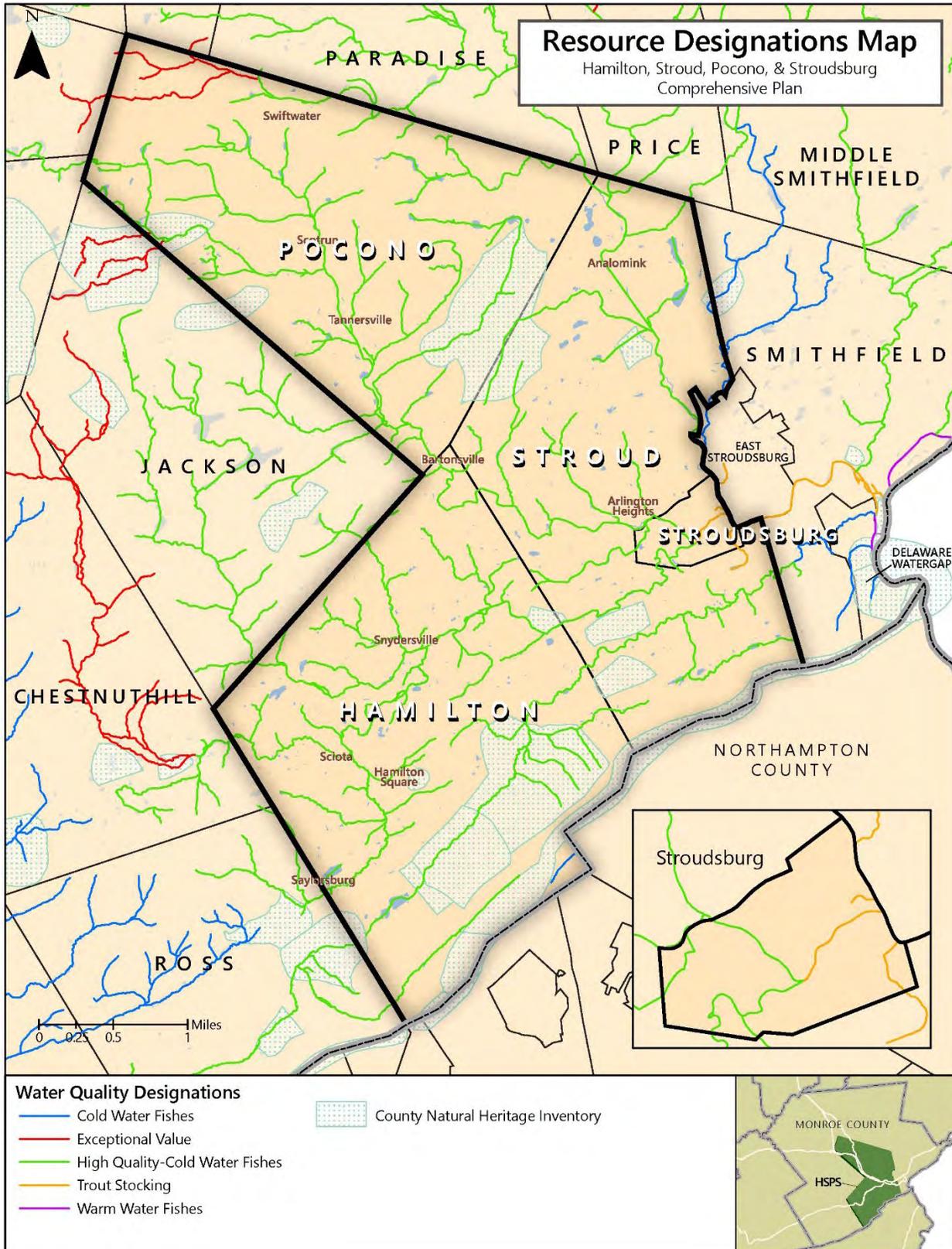
Sensitive Ecological Communities

The Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program inventories and reports on the critical biological resources at a county level throughout Pennsylvania. The resulting County Natural Heritage Inventory (CNHI) are snapshots of the known biological information at the time of the inventory. More importantly, they provide guidance for the continued conservation of these sites. All county natural heritage inventory reports can be found here:

<https://www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us/inventories.aspx>.

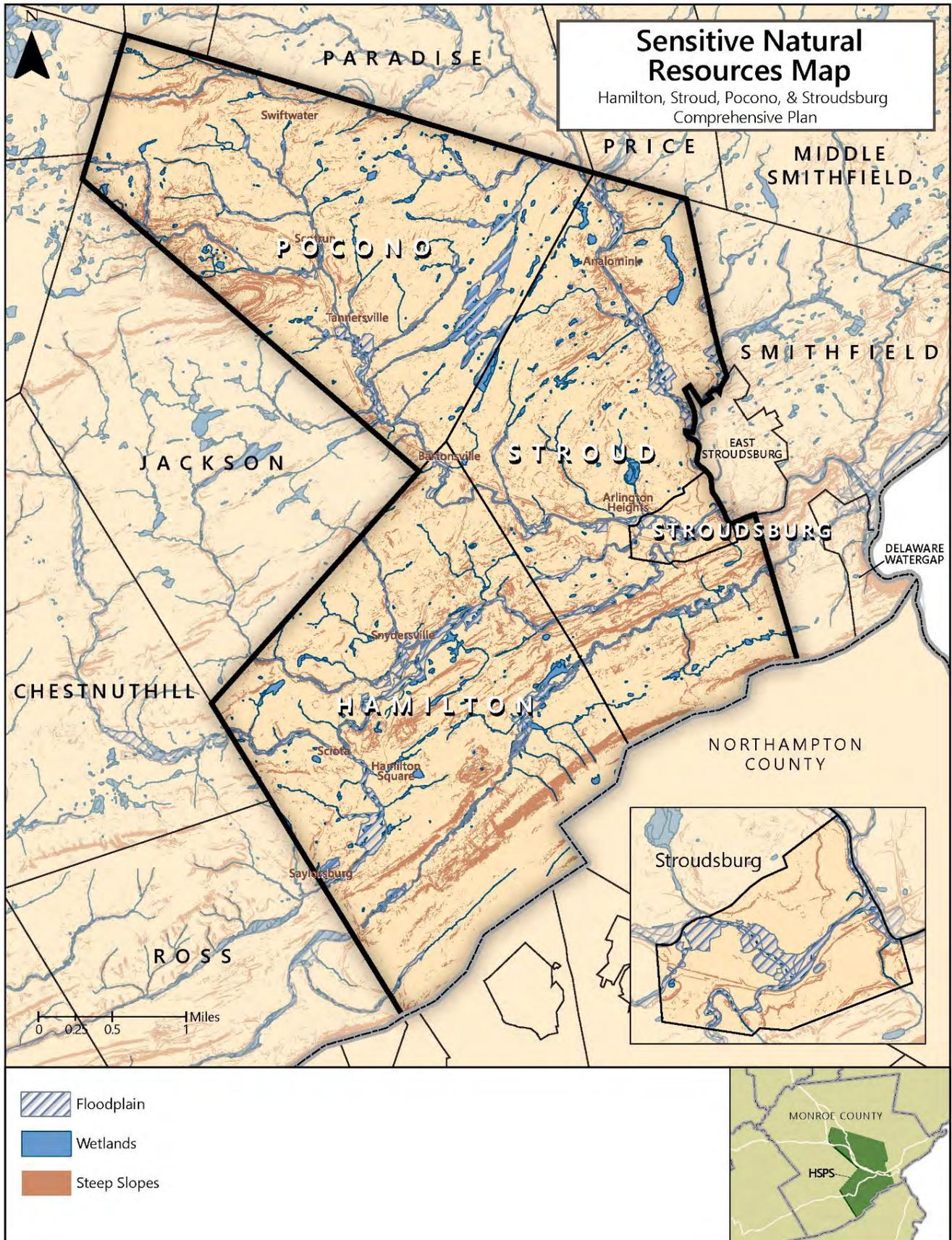
According to the Monroe County 1999 Natural Heritage Inventory (CHNI), three of the county's top six priority conservation areas are located in the HSPS region: Tannersville Cranberry Bog, Cherry Creek Fen, and Big Offset Barren. Other sites of significance in the region include Camelback Mountain (Pocono), Centerfield Coral Reef (Stroud), Pinemere Hardwood Conifer Swamp (Saylorsburg), Green Ridge Marsh (Saylorsburg), and the Appalachian Trail (Stroud and Hamilton). Conservation and careful management of these lands is recommended by the CHNI.

Figure 21. Water Resource Designations.



Source: Monroe County Planning Commission; PennDOT Open Data; PA DEP Open Data. Created by Gannett Fleming 2020.

Figure 22. Sensitive Natural Resources.



Source: Monroe County Planning Commission; PennDOT Open Data. Created by Gannett Fleming 2020.

Open Space Protection (aka Land Conservation)

Waters, floodplains, agriculturally productive soils, and ecological communities and the lands they occupy have been protected from development through various public and private open space protection or land conservation programs. These protected lands total 11,211 acres, or about 25 percent of the region and are shown in Figure 24.

Natural Resource Conservation

Twenty-four agricultural easements, totaling 1,760 acres in the region, are held by county, state, or joint easement owners. All easements are in Hamilton or Stroud with only one exception located in Pocono.

The Brodhead Creek Regional Authority owns the BCRA Field and Trail Area (107 acres) in Stroud Township for water supply and water quality protection.

Monroe County owns the Kettle Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, in Hamilton, and the Godfrey Ridge Greenway, in Stroud.

The Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) occupies 3,141 acres in Hamilton and Stroud.

Active and Passive Recreation Lands

Municipal and county parklands total 2,285 acres in the region.

Big Pocono State Park is located in Pocono and Jackson Townships. The park is about 1,300 acres in total with about 540 acres in Pocono.

State Game Lands Number 38 borders Big Pocono State Park and spans Chestnuthill, Jackson, Tunkhannock, and Pocono Townships. The portion in Pocono Township is about 130 acres.

The Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area spans both sides of the Delaware River in Pennsylvania and New Jersey across 70,000 acres. Ninety acres is located in Stroud along its eastern border with Smithfield Township.

Private Land Conservation

Additionally, various private organizations, such as the Pocono Heritage Land Trust, the Appalachian Trail, and The Nature Conservancy, own or hold conservation easements for lands in the HSPS region.

Figure 23. Acres of Conservation by Type

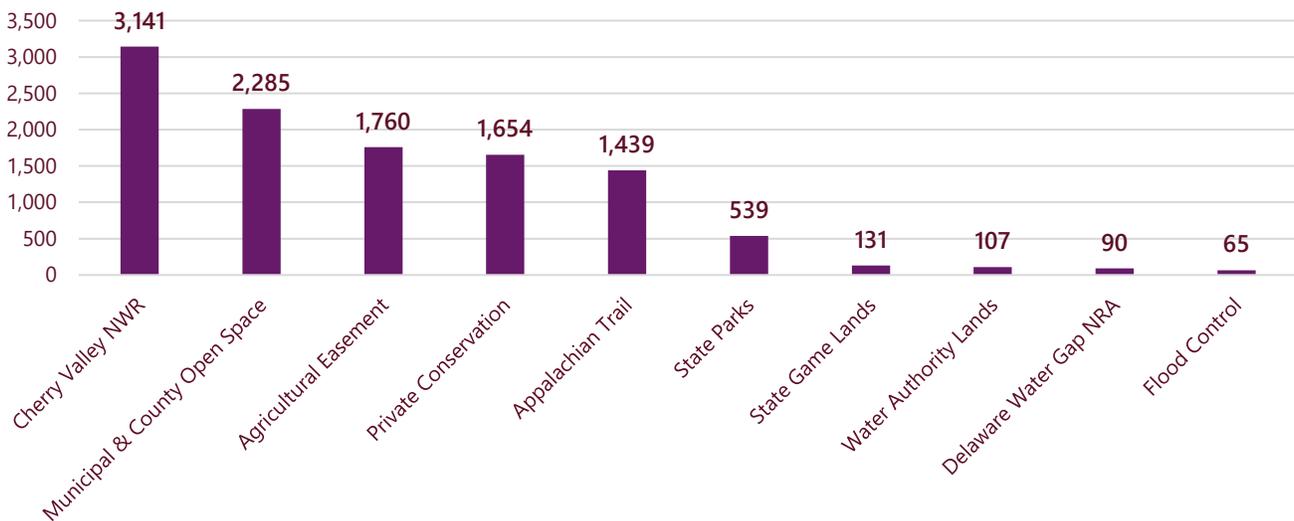
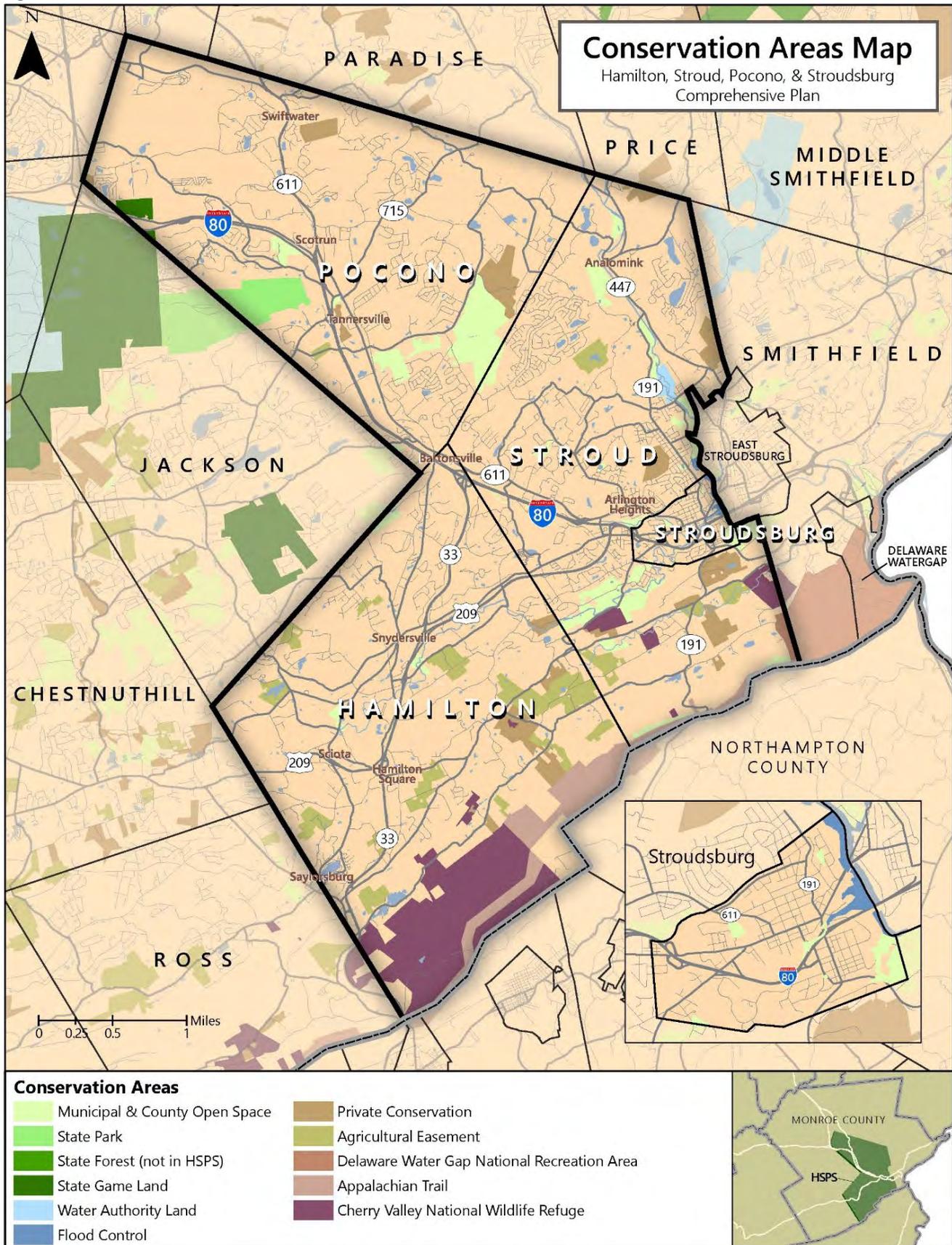


Figure 24. Conservation Areas.



Source: Monroe County Planning Commission; PennDOT Open Data. Created by Gannett Fleming 2020.

Cultural & Historic Resources

Cultural and historic resources encompass the physical structures and locations that represent people and events in history at the local, state, or national level.

State-Reviewed Historic Resources

Eight sites in the HSPS region have been evaluated by the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (PA SHPO) and deemed significant to local or national history. As a result, they have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), which affords them a basic level of protection from publicly funded projects, shown in Table 15. Another 18 resources have been evaluated and deemed eligible for listing upon their last review.

Locally Identified Historic Resources

Twenty-seven additional historical resources have been mapped by the Monroe County Historical Association (MCHA), Hamilton Township, and others as the County’s Historic Registry.

Historic Resource Recognition

The MCHA highlights historic sites in Stroudsburg with a self-guided walking tour; a printable brochure is available [here](#).

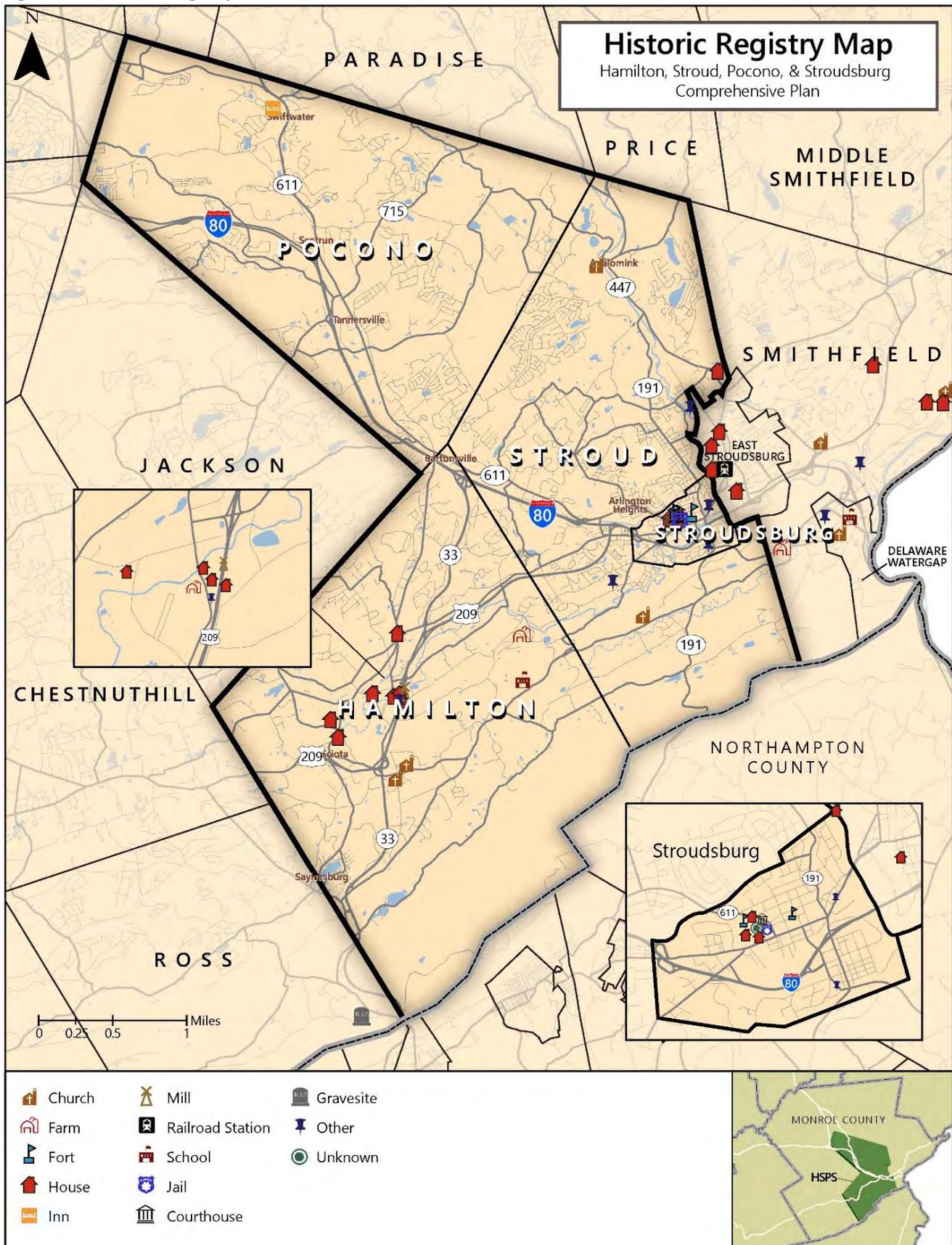
MCHA also recognizes private property owners, commercial establishments and nonprofit organizations who have restored or maintained historic structures in Monroe County by presenting its Preserve, Enhance, Promote (PEP) Awards. Structures must be 50 years old or older and must have maintained their original street view and facade: windows, doorways, trim, etc. In 2015, historic sites were made eligible for recognition. Since 2006, MCHA has recognized 51 structures and sites.

Table 15. National Register Listed Resources

Property Name	Location	Significance	Description
Quiet Valley Farm	Hamilton	National	72-acre, 18 th -19 th century homestead preserved as a living museum
Christ Hamilton United Lutheran Church and Cemetery	Unincorporated Village of Hamilton Square, Hamilton	Local	Cemetery was laid out in 1775; burials date from 1793 to 1875. Church was built in 1829
Fenner-Snyder Mill, aka Old Mill or Brinker’s Mill	Hamilton	Local	A historic grist mill located on McMichael's Creek
Academy Hill Historic District	Stroudsburg	Local	42-acre residential district consistently representing four architectural styles of the 19 th and 20 th centuries
Kitson Woolen Mill	Stroudsburg	Local	Four major buildings comprising Monroe County’s oldest and largest textile mills; built between 1893 and 1904
Monroe County Courthouse	Stroudsburg	Local	Original section built in 1890; identical addition built in 1934
Stroud Mansion	Stroudsburg	Local	Built circa 1795 by Stroudsburg's founder Jacob Stroud for his son John; houses the Monroe County Historical Association

Source: Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, 2021.

Figure 25. Historic Registry.



Source: Monroe County Planning Commission; PennDOT Open Data. Created by Gannett Fleming 2020.

Hazards and Mitigation

The most common natural hazard in the HSPS region is flooding. All four municipalities have adopted floodplain regulations to minimize new development in the floodplain. Stroud and Stroudsburg are located downstream of the Brodhead Creek levee and the Stroudsburg Sewer Treatment Plant levee. Portions of these municipalities may be affected flooding caused by a levee failure.

Other county-identified hazards include:

- Strong winds that can topple trees, threatening nearby structures and aboveground power supply lines. Mobile homes, which are higher risk structures, are found in all four municipalities.
- Droughts that can reduce or eliminate private water supply from domestic wells and increase the risk of wildfires in forested and agricultural areas.
- Transportation incidents that congest or close roadways, delay and detour traffic, and/or involve hazardous materials spills; these are a higher risk for Stroud, Pocono, and Stroudsburg.
- Hazardous materials spills during field facility operations.
- Utility interruptions to electricity, natural gas, telecommunications, and water services.
- Nuclear power station incidents, i.e., release of or exposure to radioactive material such as from the Susquehanna Steam Electric Station in Luzerne County.
- Terrorism.
- The risk of these hazards emphasizes the need for proactive land use management, effective emergency management and communications, and a resilient transportation system for potential evacuation.

At-Risk Historical Resources

In August 2017, the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Coalition (PHMC) piloted the Disaster Planning for Historic Properties Initiative in four counties in Pennsylvania, including Monroe County.

Phase I involved surveying 895 resources (buildings, structures, objects, and historic districts) over 45 years old and within the 100-year floodplain; of those, 89 are either listed on the NRHP, eligible to be listed on the NRHP, recommended to be listed on the NRHP, or recommended to be locally recognized as a “community landmark” for inclusion on the County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Phase II assessed flood vulnerability and recommended hazard mitigation strategies for the resources surveyed in Phase I. A representative sample of 36 properties was selected based on four criteria:

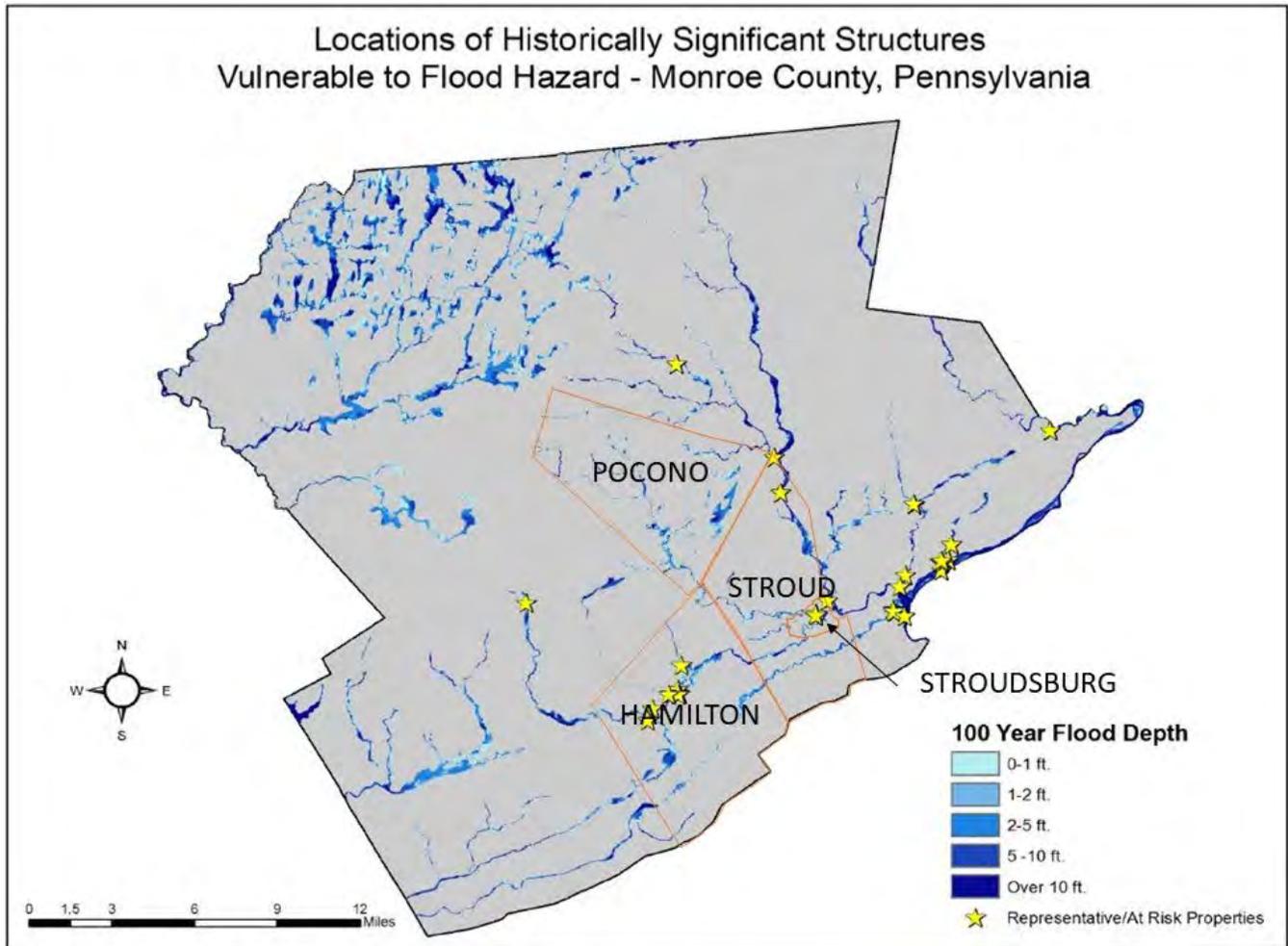
1. Location vulnerability
2. Properties represent an important theme in the county’s historic context
3. Specific building components and characteristics identified as vulnerable to damage from wind, water, and/or flooding.
4. Properties located in Historic Districts or represent collections of individual resources.

Countywide, the 36 properties represent eight general categories:

- Domestic: Single Dwelling; Multiple Dwelling
- Commercial: Office; Retail
- Hospitality/Recreation: Hotel/Inn; Resort Hotel; Camp
- Industrial: Processing Facility; Mill; Warehouse
- Transportation: Railroad Station
- Religious: Church; Cemetery
- Civic: Post Office; Library; School; Theatre

Locations of these properties are shown in Figure 26. Fourteen of these are in the HSPS region and listed below the map figure.

Figure 26. Locations of Historically Significant Structures Vulnerable to Flood Hazard in Monroe County.



Source: Historic Resources Survey - Phase II, 2018.

Figure 27. Representative At-Risk Historic Resources in the HSPS Region

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Monroe County Library | 8. Fenner-Snyder Mill |
| 2. Snydersville Post Office | 9. Stroudsburg Engine Works* |
| 3. Kellersville Hotel | 10. St. John's Lutheran Church |
| 4. Red Cross Building | 11. Spragueville Methodist Episcopal Church |
| 5. Broadhead Forest and Stream Association* | 12. George Tillotson House |
| 6. Andrew Keller House | 13. Duke House |
| 7. Sciota Inn* | 14. Kellersville Mill. |

*Flood inundation illustrations for these sites are available from the Monroe County Planning Commission.

Monroe County Hazard Mitigation Strategy Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Protect each community's historic character, local landmarks, and economic vitality from flooding impacts by minimizing loss to historic structures and buildings, cost to stakeholders, impact on the economy.

- Identify and apply for mitigation funding for projects that will reduce risk for privately and publicly owned historic properties and community landmarks.
- Identify and create an inventory of community landmarks and historic and cultural resources, and assess their vulnerability to hazards.

Goal 2: Ensure flood mitigation goals for historic properties are consistent with other Monroe County plans by encouraging integration between local hazard mitigation plans and the historic and cultural resources component plans.

- Incorporate Historic Preservation considerations into countywide plans and ordinances.
- Encourage townships and boroughs to incorporate Historic Preservation considerations into local plans and ordinances.

Goal 3: Encourage Monroe County and its communities to become more proactive and less reactive regarding the preservation of historic resources in hazard areas.

- Promote and encourage property maintenance and rehabilitation to enhance the ability of historic properties to withstand the impacts of hazards and reduce risk.
- Provide hazard mitigation education and training to local historical organizations and preservation professionals, and vice versa.

Goal 4: Recommend that the historic properties are prioritized for hazard mitigation/risk reduction due to their historic significance and the contributions they make to their selected communities.

- Nominate historically significant properties to be listed in the NRHP in cooperation with the PA SHPO to make such properties eligible for a variety of federal and state grants that may facilitate rehabilitation and mitigation measures to reduce risk.

Goal 5: Enhance the ability of vulnerable historic properties and cultural resources to withstand the impact of hazards by identifying risk reduction measures, yet preserve the character and integrity of the buildings.

- Identify effective alternatives to acquisition and demolition to reduce risk for repetitive loss (RL) and severe repetitive loss (SRL) properties that may be historically significant or contribute to community character.
- Retrofit important community landmarks and historically significant buildings or structures to reduce risk, in a way that minimizes changes to their character and integrity and does not preclude their historical designation.

Phase II's Table 6.1 presents a master list of 53 preservation-based hazard reduction and mitigation actions. Specific actions recommended for individual representative buildings are documented on the "representative property sheets", compiled in the *Monroe County Historic Properties Annex*.

Table 6.2 presents 27 hazard mitigation actions applicable to any established/future designated historic district(s), as well as the resources located within it. Applicable funding sources are presented in Appendix F.

The review of Monroe County's Floodplain Management Ordinance resulted in seven recommendations to enhance resource protection and hazard mitigation:

1. Regarding where any excavation or grading is proposed, limit any new excavations next to historic foundations to avoid undermining the structural stability of the building or adjacent historic buildings. The area next to the building foundation should be investigated first to ascertain potential damage to site features or archeological resources.
2. Regarding existing structures in the floodplain area, for any changes to historic/cultural properties, ensure that any changes are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Historic Preservation Guidelines, and changes are compatible with the historic character of the building, its site, and setting.
3. Regarding any building permitted by variance, by which the building shall be elevated to the regulatory flood elevation, ensure that any changes are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Historic Preservation Guidelines.
4. Same for new construction, or substantial improvement.
5. Regarding where fill is used, Development should be discouraged in high hazard infill areas throughout the County. If fill is used

for historic/cultural resources, ensure that it is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Historic Preservation Guidelines, and is compatible with the historic character of the building, its site, and setting.

6. Regarding changes to floors, walls, or ceilings, ensure that changes are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Historic Preservation Guidelines, and changes are "in kind" where possible and compatible with the historic character of the building, its site, and setting.
7. Same for changes to paints and adhesives.

For municipalities interested in preparing a local hazard mitigation strategy for historic resources, the county plan recommends this five-step process:

Step 1: Perform Engagement and Outreach Efforts.

Step 2: Understand the County Historic Context (in relation to natural hazards).

Step 3: Perform Flood Risk Analysis.

Step 4: Perform Building Survey/Architectural Analysis (representative property selections).

Step 5: Develop Preservation-based Hazard Mitigation Actions.

3 Priorities for 2030

A vision, or vision statement, in a comprehensive plan describes the community and economic development conditions or outcomes that a community or region aims to achieve. These conditions or outcomes are the intended result of the policies, decisions, and actions the community or region makes over time. They can be conditions or outcomes easily within reach or those that will require significant and concerted efforts.

A Vision for 2030

In 2030, the HSPS region comprises complementary small town, suburban, and rural landscapes woven together by intentional green and open spaces that support active lifestyles and tourism. New development in the region has a small footprint, guided by policies to reinvest in properties where infrastructure already exists to support it. Government and private citizens selectively preserve land to protect the natural beauty and historic sites as a legacy for future residents and visitors to the region.

Housing options are affordable for all households from singles to large families, from young professionals to retirees and seniors, which helps to retain and attract a balanced workforce. Business sites are re-used and creatively re-developed to serve local and tourism markets and to fit the character of the local neighborhood or district.

Alongside regional transportation planners, local officials and staff identify transportation system needs across all transportation modes, making travel safer, reducing delays, and increasing travel choices. They maintain local water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure in a state of good repair and make strategic improvements to address problems, enhance efficiency, and expand service areas and capacity, as needed.

Community services for public safety and public health are delivered by municipal departments or intermunicipal partnerships and supported by committed volunteers. Community facilities, including municipal parks, are updated to deliver programs and services accessible and responsive to citizens' needs. Strong relationships among municipalities, school districts, the county, and private industry shape educational programs that prepare students for job options in the region and beyond.

Current Assessment of 2030 Outcomes

The HSPS Regional Comprehensive Plan aims to address those conditions that are most important to the region. The following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats were identified as issues or conditions to be considered. Items marked with a solid star (★) were deemed priority issues that must be addressed in the regional plan.

Strengths

- ✦ **The region's ratio of open space to development is good.** Forest, farmland, parks, cemeteries, and other open space lands retain the natural topography and maintain a vegetated cover condition that is essential to the character of the Pocono Mountain region.
- ✦ **Downtown Stroudsburg is a destination.** Downtown's Main Street is occupied by unique shops and restaurants, as well as professional service offices and public and non-profit agencies.
- ✦ **Resorts offer regional economic benefits.** Residents have employment opportunities in the hospitality industry. Municipalities gain property tax revenue. Local businesses benefit from spillover spending.
- ✦ **Health care and pharmaceutical industries are steady, regional employers.** Hospitals and health care facilities in the Lehigh Valley Health Network and St. Luke's systems as well as Sanofi provide many well-paying jobs.
- ✦ **Schools and higher education institutions offer a solid foundation for future employment.** Local and regional institutions provide excellent education and job training in the region.

Weaknesses

- ✦ **There is a lack of affordable housing and unit choice.** Younger people have difficulty finding available and affordable rental units and first-time homes. Older residents lack options to downsize from their family homes.
- ✦ **Traffic congestion, especially along Route 611, slows emergency response and inconveniences travelers of all types.** Additional development within the region and throughout the larger Pocono region is likely to generate more traffic.
- ✦ **A lack of walking/biking facilities and transit options limits travel choice, compounds congestion and parking issues, and increases safety risks.** Travel options are incomplete for people who can't afford or choose not to own a car.
- ✦ **There are few jobs in fields such as construction, manufacturing, and utilities.** While highway access is very good, much of the regional terrain limits business to small-scale operations.
- ✦ **A lack of broadband limits residents' full engagement with today's highly digitalized world.** Monroe County is working to assess and address this need countywide.
- ✦ **Road quality is poor.** The local climate causes pavement to deteriorate and topography makes new network connections difficult.

Opportunities

- ✦ Intermunicipal coordination can enhance the delivery and administration of local government services.
- ✦ Available properties are opportunities for a prosperous economy—places for re-investment to serve the market and expand employment and the tax base.
- ✦ Parks and Recreation are a point of pride in the region. Survey results indicated support for increased spending on park facilities and recreational programs.

Threats

- ✦ Some older commercial development appears neglected and may discourage reinvestment. Some properties have not been maintained and will require more significant rehabilitation.
- ✦ The region's high cost of living is due in part to high housing and transportation costs.
- ✦ Closure of local schools can disrupt neighborhoods. Local schools provide a point of neighborhood gathering and identity. Closures may result from declining enrollment, possibly associated with housing affordability for young families. Note: This item may look very different as the region and the school districts emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ✦ Lack of volunteerism further threatens the low cost of living. If community services now provided by volunteers and supported by social organizations must be contracted to vendors in the future, local taxes will have to increase.

Priority Goals

The goals for the region's priorities can be accomplished or significantly advanced by 2030.

Land Use

The HSPS region works cooperatively to plan for future community and economic development and to maintain and enhance community infrastructure and services to adequately serve residents and businesses.

Housing Choice

The HSPS region offers a range of housing unit types and owner and renter options, that make living in the region attainable for all who work here.

A Prosperous Economy

The HSPS region has diversified, stable employment opportunities, supported by designated lands for economic activity and reliable infrastructure, and an effective workforce development system.

Transportation & Travel Options

The HSPS region has a transportation network that supports local, regional, and long-distance travel and good movement.

Community Infrastructure & Services

The HSPS region works cooperatively to maintain and enhance community infrastructure and services to adequately serve residents and businesses.

Parks & Recreation

The HSPS region offers parks and recreational programs to meet the recreational needs of citizens.

Open Space & Historic Legacy

The HSPS region natural and cultural heritage is conserved in its open space network.

4 Land Use

Detailed Inventory

Land Use Distribution

Figure 26 shows the Generalized Land Use Pattern. Residential uses total more than 37,000 acres (32.2 percent of the region) and occupy a significant amount of land in each municipality. The largest clusters of residential use are found in Stroud, as Penn Estates (1,730 units), and Pocono, as Pocono Laurel Lake (about 250 units). Many smaller residential subdivisions of 10-75 units are found throughout the townships. Additionally, single large lots and very small clusters of up to 10 lots comprise the most rural residential uses. On average, residential lot sizes are smallest and residential use is most intensive in Stroudsburg. Notably, nearly all residential uses include some greenspace or tree cover or can “borrow” greenspace of adjacent agricultural or forest lands.

Forest as a primary land cover totals nearly 13,600 acres (21.2 percent of the region) and is found in all three townships in nearly equal amounts. On average, parcels classified as forest use in Hamilton are generally the smallest. Forest uses in Stroud include two large clusters. The northern cluster includes the Analomink Rod and Gun Club’s property and other conservation lands. The southern cluster includes Camp Dina, a private Jewish camp property.

Parks and recreational uses total more than 7,600 acres (11.9 percent of the region) and are found in each municipality. Hamilton has the largest total parks and recreational use acreage, followed by Stroud, Pocono, and Stroudsburg. The largest parks and recreation use areas are along Blue Mountain in Hamilton and the Tannersville Cranberry Bog and Big Pocono State Park in Pocono. Other significant

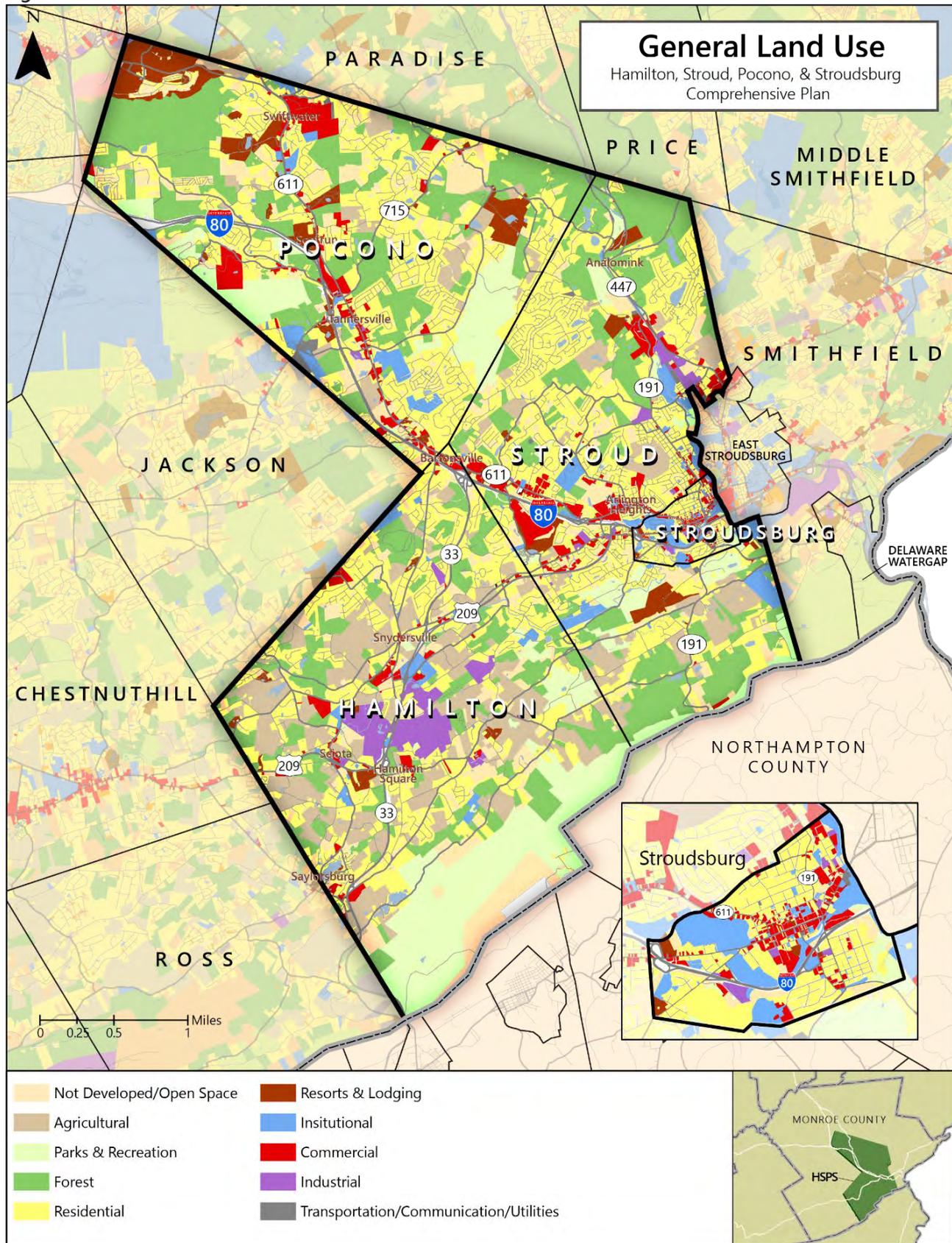
park and recreation use areas include the Glen Brook Golf Club, Glen Run Nature Preserve, and Godfrey Ridge—all in Stroud.

Agricultural uses total more than 7,500 acres (11.7 percent of the region) and are found in each township. Hamilton has the most agricultural land by total area, followed by Stroud, then Pocono. The largest cluster of contiguous agricultural lands is in the Snydersville area of Hamilton and totals about 500 acres, or about 7 percent of all agricultural land in the region. The largest cluster of protected farmland lies in the eastern area of Hamilton between Cherry Valley Road and Poplar Valley Road and is of similar size. Much smaller pockets of farmland are found mixed with forest and rural residential uses throughout much of Hamilton and southern Stroud.

Commercial uses total nearly 2,600 acres (4.0 percent of the region) and include retail, services, and lands designated for commercial use and designated by a state tax credit program (KOZ or KOEZ). Commercial services are found in each municipality with the largest areas in Stroud and Pocono along State Route 611. More than half of the corridor is fronted on at least one side by commercial uses. Large commercial properties include the Stroud Mall, Pocono Commons, St. Luke’s Monroe Campus, the Crossroads (shopping center), and The Crossings Premium Outlets. Great Wolf Lodge and Sanofi Pasteur are also classified as commercial, though they could also be classified as resorts and industrial uses, respectively.

As the historic commercial center of the region, commercial uses are concentrated in Stroudsburg, and specifically downtown along Main Street and North 9th Street, both designated as State Route 611. Commercial uses in Hamilton area occupy only single properties or very small clusters.

Figure 28. Generalized Land Use Pattern.



Sources: Monroe County Planning Commission; PennDOT Open Data. Created by Gannett Fleming, 2020.

Table 16. Land Use/Land Cover

Land Use/Land Cover	Parcels	Acres	% of Category	% of HSPS
Open Space, Parks/Recreation & Forest				
Parks/Recreation	154	7,612.6	27.6%	11.9%
Open Space	2,969	6,392.3	23.2%	10.0%
Forest	435	13,597	49.3%	21.2%
<i>Total Open Space & Recreation</i>	<i>3,558</i>	<i>27,602</i>		<i>43.0%</i>
Agricultural				
Agricultural Use	126	4,456.9	40.8%	4.8%
Agricultural Reserve	101	3,067.3	59.2%	6.9%
<i>Total Agricultural</i>	<i>227</i>	<i>7,524.1</i>		<i>11.7%</i>
Residential				
Single Family Residential	14,636	18,354.6	88.7%	28.6%
Mobile Homes	331	487	2.4%	0.8%
Housing Development	619	1,512.2	7.3%	2.4%
Multi-Family Residential	804	337.3	1.6%	0.5%
<i>Total Residential</i>	<i>16,390</i>	<i>20,691.1</i>		<i>32.3%</i>
Resorts & Lodging				
Time Share/Quarter Shares	37	68.1	2.9%	0.1%
Transient Lodging	40	470	19.9%	0.7%
Resorts & Group Camps	35	1,825.2	77.2%	2.8%
<i>Total Resorts & Lodging</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>2,363.4</i>		<i>3.7%</i>
Industrial				
Production & Manufacturing	53	1,099.8	91.1%	1.7%
Wholesale Trade	13	61.5	5.1%	0.1%
Scrapyards	7	45.5	3.8%	0.1%
<i>Total Industrial</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>1,206.8</i>		<i>1.9%</i>
Transportation/Communication/Utilities				
Transportation	44	139	54.6%	0.2%
Communication	8	19.6	8.0%	0.0%
Utilities	27	87.7	35.6%	0.1%
<i>Total</i>	<i>79</i>	<i>246.2</i>		<i>0.4%</i>
<i>Transportation/Communication/Utilities</i>				
Commercial				
Retail Trade	404	892.2	34.7%	1.4%
Commercial Services	385	1,194.3	46.5%	1.9%
KOZ/KOEZ	4	482.4	18.8%	0.8%
<i>Total Commercial</i>	<i>793</i>	<i>2,568.9</i>		<i>4.0%</i>
Institutional				
Government	157	1,212.4	62.2%	1.9%
Education	50	555.7	28.5%	0.9%
Other	105	182	9.3%	0.3%
<i>Total Institutional</i>	<i>312</i>	<i>1,950</i>		<i>3.0%</i>

Source: Monroe County GIS; Gannett Fleming tabulations.

Resorts and lodging uses total more than 2,300 acres (3.7 percent of the region) and are found in each municipality. Pocono has the largest total acreage of this use, including the Pocono Manor Resort and Camelback Resort grounds. Woodsgate is the largest resort by acreage in Stroud. Smaller properties classified as resorts and lodging include a variety of hotels, motels, and campgrounds.

Institutional uses total more than 1,950 acres (3.0 percent of the region). Facilities operated by all levels of government, including public schools and utilities, and private educational facilities comprise institutional uses in the region.

Industrial uses total just over 1,200 acres (1.9 percent of the region). Industrial use lands are found in each municipality, but Hamilton has the largest amount of industrial land. These lands are in the center of the township along both side of US Route 209 and State Route 33, and most are owned by the Eureka Stone Quarry. Industrial uses in Stroud are concentrated along the State Route 447 corridor and include EVS Metal, Hayward Laboratories, Royal Chemical, and Virgin International. Driscoll Foods is located nearby along State Route 191.

Rights-of-way and major facilities for transportation, communications, and utilities total 246 acres (0.4 percent of the region).

Development Activity

Monroe County Planning Commission’s Annual Reports for 2016 through 2020 were reviewed for subdivision and land development interest by municipality. Table 17 shows activity data for the municipalities in the HSPS region.

Residential Development

There was little residential subdivision activity in the county during the 2016-2020 period. About 50 minor subdivision plans were submitted to create or modify lots—some in anticipation of future land development plans.

Land development plans in the region for the 2016-2020 period totaled 69 and comprised about 45 percent of countywide development activity. Activity dipped from 18 plans in 2016 to a low of 7 in 2018 and climbed to 21 in 2020. These figures include plans submitted for minor or administrative revisions.

Stroud and Pocono had notably more activity with 32 and 22 submitted plans, respectively. Among the plans submitted to Stroud, only one was for a multi-family residential development; all other plans were for single-family units. Hamilton received nine. Stroudsburg received six.

Building permit activity for the period peaked at 112 permits in 2017, and dipped to 37 in 2018 and rose to the mid 40s in 2019 and 2020. More than 300 permits (about 33 percent of all permits countywide) were issued from 2016 to 2020. Stroud issued 60 percent of all permits in the region—many for the Mountain Hollow Estates townhouse development, followed by Pocono (87), Hamilton (37), and Stroudsburg (7).

Table 17. Residential Development Activity, 2016-2020.

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	HSPS	% of County*
Land Development Plans						
2016	2	7	8	1	18	
2017	3	4	4	0	11	
2018	0	2	5	0	7	
2019	2	5	3	2	12	
2020	2	14	2	3	21	
2016-2020	9	32	22	6	69	~45%
<i>% of HSPS</i>	3%	37%	32%	9%	100%	
Building Permits for New Dwelling Units						
2016	7	62	22	0	91	
2017	8	71	30	3	112	
2018	7	21	9	0	37	
2019	9	24	10	2	45	
2020	6	22	16	2	46	
2016-2020	37	200	87	7	331	~33%
<i>% of HSPS</i>	11%	60%	26%	2%	100%	

Note: Due to differences between local and county activity counts, the HS region's percentage of county activity can only be estimated.
 Source: Monroe County GIS; Stroud Township; Pocono Township; Gannett Fleming tabulations.

Non-Residential Development

Stroud was the only municipality in the region to receive a major subdivision plan in the 2016-2020 period; the plan was for a commercial/industrial subdivision.

Land development plan activity largely reflects an expansion of existing development, such as building additions or structural or impervious coverage expansions, not new, large-scale construction. Some plans proposed new structures and others amended existing plans and required municipal approval. Land development plan activity also includes plans that expired before approval and those that were withdrawn. Both represent development interest that did not result in municipal approval for construction.

From 2016 to 2020, 25 of 51 non-residential land development plan submissions were for commercial or mixed-use development. Eleven of the commercial development locations were in Pocono.

Submissions for industrial/communications uses were fewer, 13. Eight of 13 were located in Pocono and six were Sanofi Pasteur projects.

Submissions for institutional/recreational uses totaled 12. Five were located in Stroud and three of these were plans for medical or related uses.

Table 18 shows non-residential land development activity by use for the 2016-2020 period. Pocono clearly had the most non-residential activity (22 plans; 44 percent of regionwide activity), followed by Stroud (15 plans; 30 percent of regionwide activity).

Table 18. Non-Residential Development Plan Submissions by Use, 2016-2020.

Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg
Commercial/Mixed Use Land Development Plans: 24, 2016-2020			
Calvary Chapel Parking Expansion, 2017	Aldi Expansion, 2016	Camelback "Lot 13" Hotel, 2016	Rite-Aid, 2016
Lock Tyte Self Storage Expansion, 2017	Lidl US Operations, LLC, 2016 (expired; not counted)	Crossings: Storage Building, 2016	Shanti House, LLC, 2019
The Shoppes at Turtle Walk, 2019	Sparkle Car Wash Expansion, 2016	Motorcycle Dealership, 2016	
Frangelli Property, 2019	Stroudsmoor Country Inn Pavilion Addition, 2016	Weis Gas Pumps, 2016	
DJ Holdings II, LLC, 2020	Aldi, Inc. (Revision), 2017	Homes of the Poconos, LLC, 2017	
	Panera Bread Restaurant, 2017	Poconos Hospitality, 2017	
		Running Lane LLC (hotel), 2017	
		Camelback Mountain Lodge, 2018	
		Pocono Logistics, 2018	
		Tannersville Point Apartments, 2018	
		Turkey Hill Mini Market, 2018	
Industrial/Communications Use Land Development Plans: 14, 2016-2020			
852 Greenview Drive Tree Farm, 2020	Verizon Wireless Communications Tower, 2016	Sanofi Pasteur: Discover Drive Widening, 2017	Alpha Recycling, 2020
	Hayward Laboratories, 2020 (withdrawn; not counted)	Sanofi: Parking Deck, 2017	
	Major Hyundai, 2019	Sanofi Turning Lane, 2017	
	Hayward Laboratories Addition, 2020	Ardent Mills Grain Silos, 2018	
	BioSpectra Addition, 2020	Sanofi Pasteur, 2019	
	Dielectric, 2020 (pending)	Sanofi Pasteur Security Upgrades, 2019	
		Sanofi B-85 Building, 2020	
Institutional/Recreational Use Land Development Plans: 13, 2016-2020			
Hamilton Elementary Building, 2016	St. Luke's Modified Phase I, 2016	Summit Health Campus, 2016	Monroe County Courthouse, 2020
Calvary Chapel Parking Expansion, 2017	Creekview Park: Turf Fields, 2017	Daystar Bible Holiness Church, 2017	Stroud Mansion Expansion, 2020
	Suburban Realty Medical Office Building Parking Expansion, 2018	Brodhead Creek Regional Authority, 2019	
	Stroud Real Estate Medical Office Building, 2018	Camp Lindenmere Expansion, 2020	
	SASD Middle School Parking Expansion, 2019		
Total	8	15	5
% of Region	16%	30%	10%

Source: Monroe County Planning Commission Annual Reports, 2016-2020.

Municipal Zoning

Each of the HSPS municipalities uses a zoning ordinance and map to manage land use. Figure 27 shows the municipal zoning patterns by generalized use. Use permissions and standards vary among the municipal ordinances.

Land Use Policy Inconsistencies

A review of zoning patterns, particularly along the municipal borders, shows that most designations are generally compatible. For example, the PA 611 corridor is consistently zoned for commercial uses and the Cherry Valley is consistently zoned for conservation and agriculture in Hamilton and conservation in Stroud.

There are areas of differing designations (districts) along municipal borders within the region.

Differences in primary permitted uses:

- Primarily along the north side of US 209 between the commercial district (C) in Hamilton and the medium density residential district (R-3) and special and recreational district (S-1) in Stroud with another commercial district—a general and limited commercial district (C-2)—to the east. Labeled A1 on Figure 27 and Figure 28.
- Along Dreher Avenue/Reish Road between the general commercial district (C-1) in Stroudsburg and medium-density residential district (R-3) in Stroud. Labeled A2 on Figure 27 and Figure 28.

Differences in residential density:

- South of the Tannersville Cranberry Bog; the open space and preservation district (O-1) in Stroud and the single-family residential district (R-1) in Pocono. Labeled A3 on Figure 27.
- Along Foxtown Hill Road between the medium density residential district (R-2) and open space

district (O-1) in Stroudsburg and the low-density residential district (R-1) in Stroud. Labeled A4 on Figure 27 and Figure 28.

There are also areas of differing designations (districts) along municipal borders at the edge of the region.

Differences in primary permitted uses:

- Along Brodhead Creek between the manufacturing district (M-1) in Stroud and industrial district (I-1) Stroudsburg and the residential district (R-2) in East Stroudsburg; the levee and creek provide a buffer. Labeled B1 on Figure 27 and Figure 28.
- Along PA 715 between the commercial district (C) in Pocono and the low-density residential district (R-1) in Paradise. Labeled B2 on Figure 27.
- Along PA 715 between the low-density residential district (R-1) in Pocono and the industrial district (I) in Jackson. Labeled B3 on Figure 27.
- Along Stadden Road - the commercial district (C) in Pocono and the residential district (R) in Jackson. Labeled B4 on Figure 27.

Differences in residential density:

- Along Neola Road and Greenview Drive between the multi-family residential district (B) in Hamilton, the rural residential (RR) in adjacent Chestnuthill, and the residential district (R-1) in adjacent Jackson. Labeled B5 on Figure 27.

While zoning designations in these areas are different, the uses within these districts are similar or consecutive in land use intensity. They have not resulted in significant conflicts between existing uses or landowner activities and are generally compatible.

Figure 29. Generalized Zoning with Floodplain.

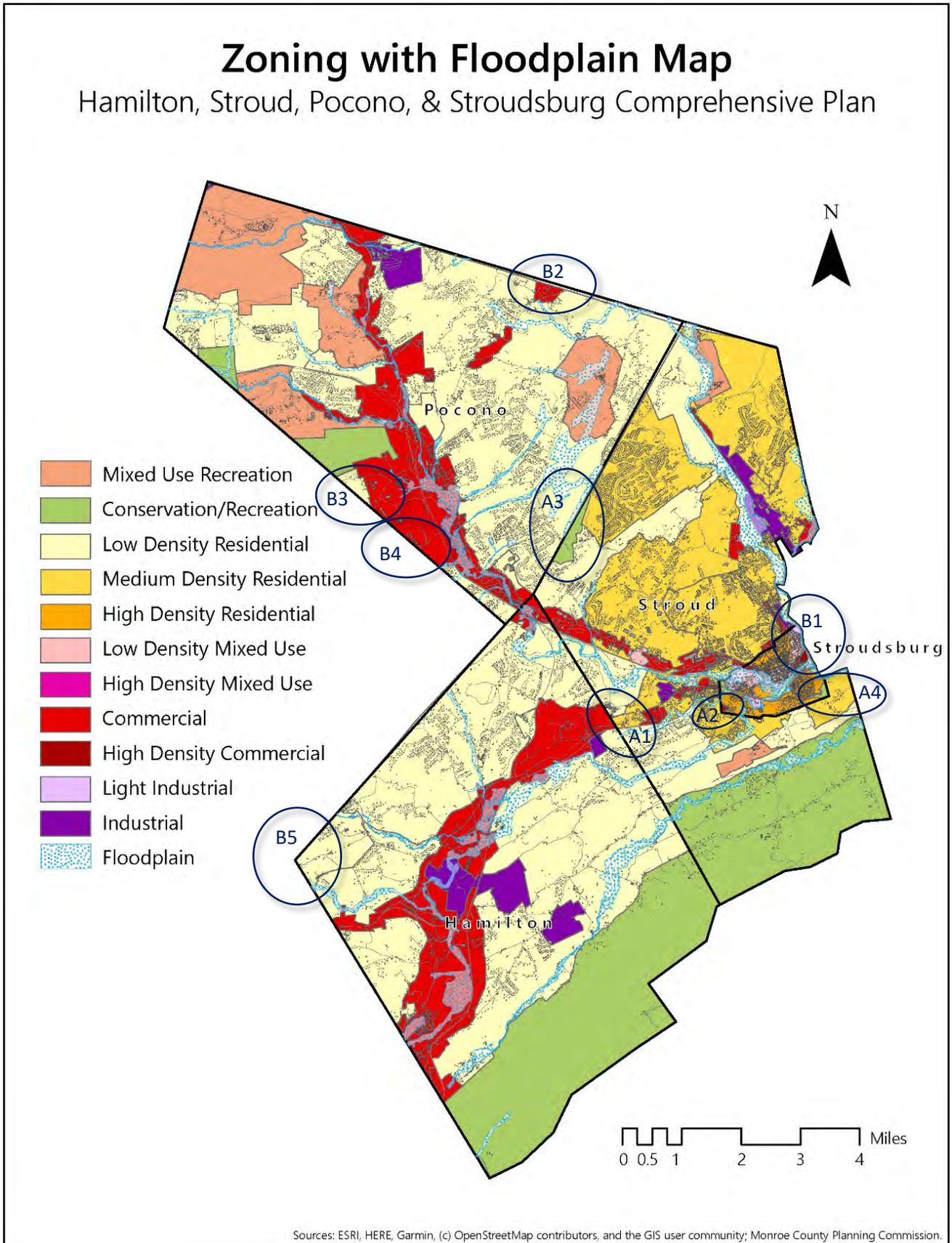
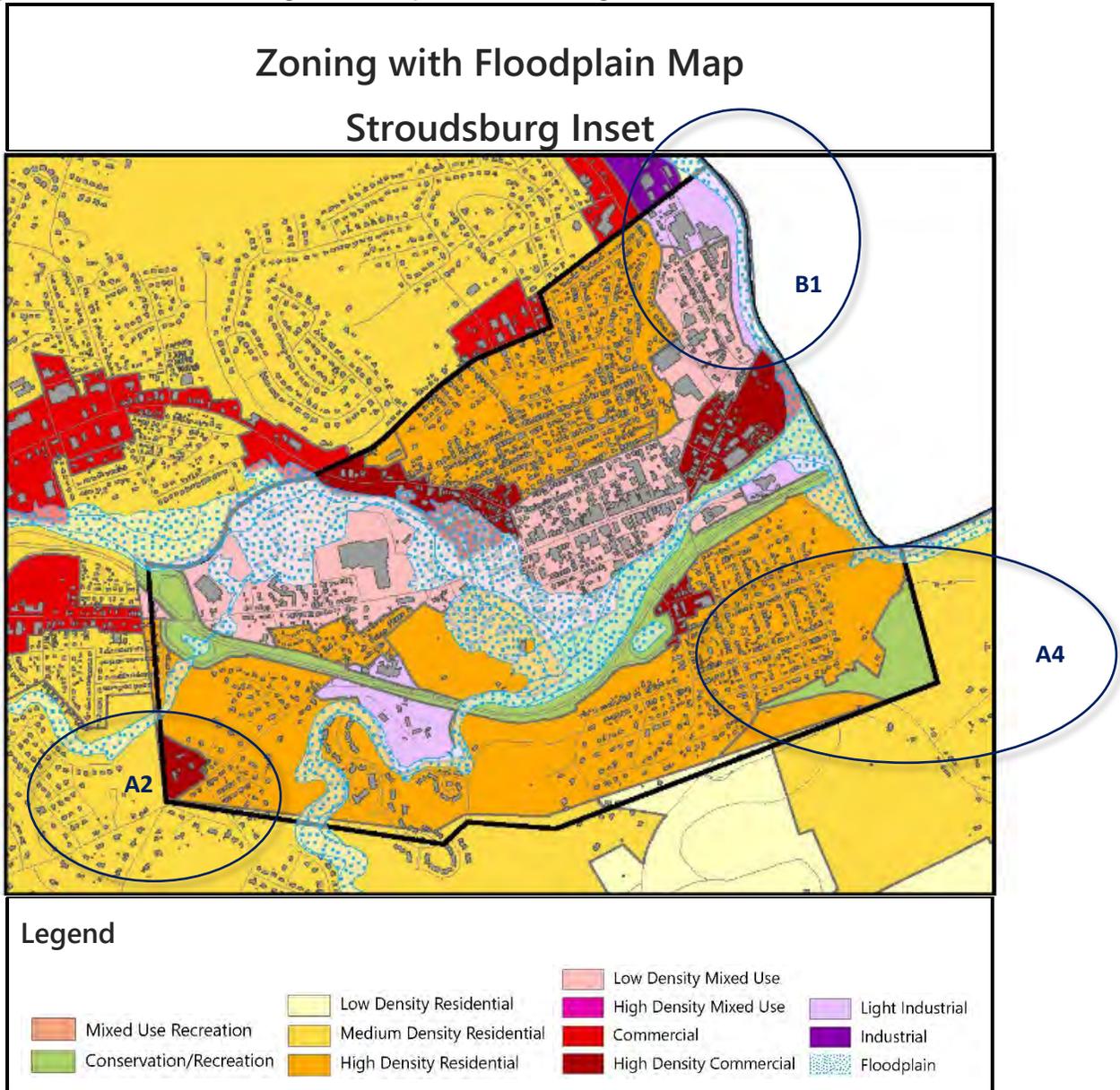


Figure 30. Generalized Zoning and Floodplain, Stroudsburg.



Development Capacity

Comparing the footprint of developed and conserved lands to municipal zoning designations can estimate the capacity for additional development by use.

Methodology to Estimate Development Capacity

1. Undeveloped lands (including the following primary uses/covers agriculture use, agriculture reserve, forest reserve, undeveloped, recreational activities, parks, common areas/amenities, and other recreational) were aggregated within each generalized municipal zoning district.
2. Developed lands (including all other primary uses) were aggregated within each generalized municipal zoning district.
3. Lands classified as “non-percolation” were excluded, presuming these would not meet minimum land development standards.
4. Lands classified as “conservation extents” were excluded.
5. Lands identified in steps 2-4 were removed from the undeveloped lands layer.

Result: Undeveloped land development capacity by zoning district.

Table 19 shows the development capacity acreages for generalized residential, commercial, and industrial uses. Figure 29 illustrates the locations of generalized residential development capacity. Similarly, Figure 30 and Figure 31 illustrate the locations of generalized commercial and industrial development, respectively.

This analysis shows that more than 15,000 acres (24 percent of the region) are zoned for future development. Residentially zoned lands comprise the largest portion of this capacity (nearly 12,500 acres), and industrial uses compromise the smallest portion (211 acres).

This analysis suggests that there is a lot of development capacity in the HSPS region. However, the presence of floodplains and steep slopes limits this capacity as municipal regulations are in place to protect and manage resource presence and quality and in the interest of public safety. Furthermore, state and federal permitting of development in areas of high-quality waters, wetlands, and other resources, like the Poconos, is very stringent, making the approval process time-consuming and thus costly. Reuse and redevelopment of previously developed properties still entails environmental review, however where impacts are similar in nature and scale to impacts from previous uses, permitting and approvals are more easily achieved. Thus, the current zoning footprint for intensive uses should be maintained, and reuse and redevelopment and should be encouraged over development of new or greenfield sites.

Table 19. Development Potential Within Current Zoning.

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	HSPS
Residential Development Capacity	5,729	2,334	4,321	68	12,452
Commercial Development Capacity	1,308	103	967	6	2,384
Industrial Development Capacity	131	70	0	10	211
Total Capacity for Future Development	7,168	2,507	5,288	84	15,047
% of Total Land Area					24%

Source: Monroe County GIS; Gannett Fleming tabulations.

Figure 31. Developed and Undeveloped Land in Residential Zones.

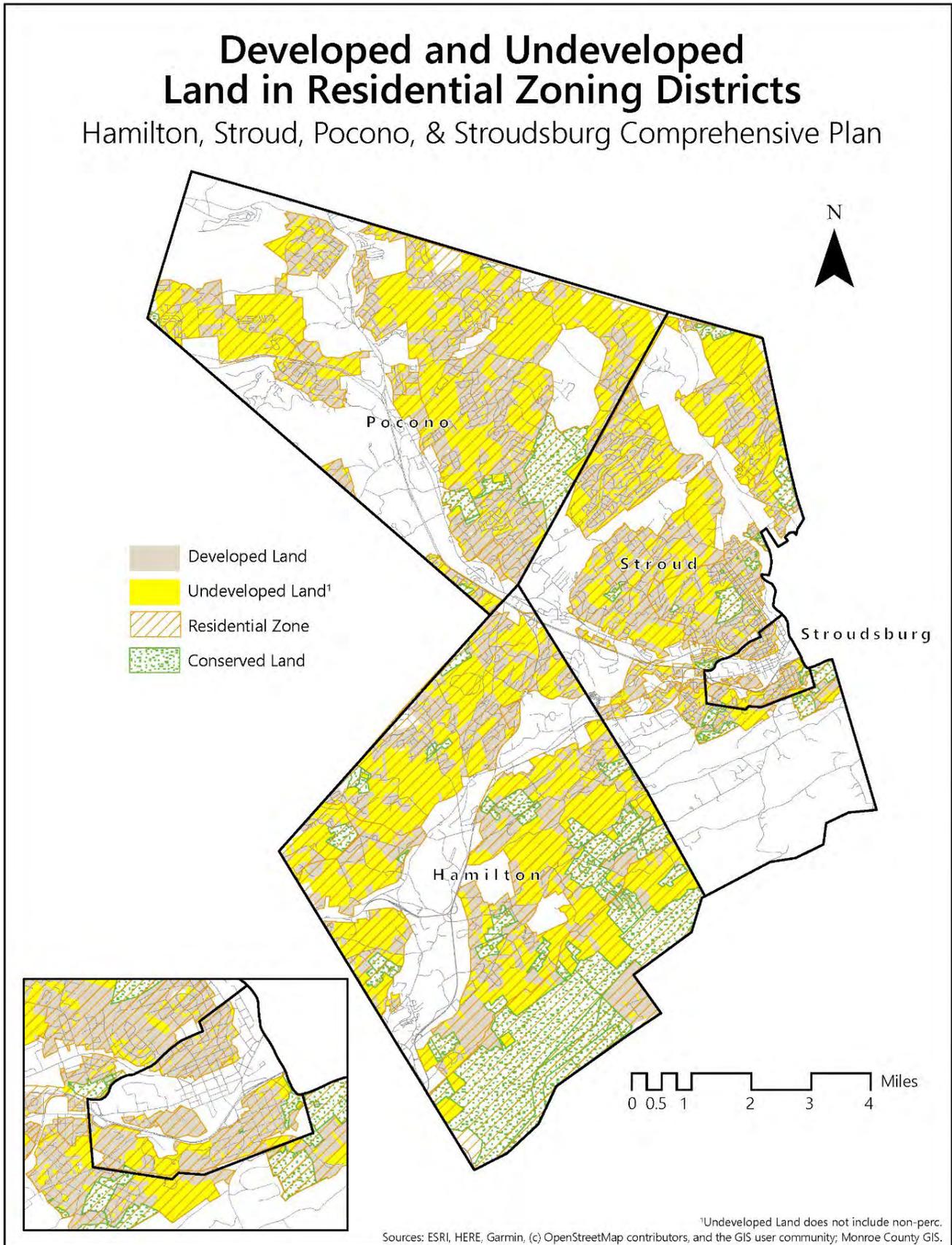


Figure 32. Developed and Undeveloped Land in Commercial Zones.

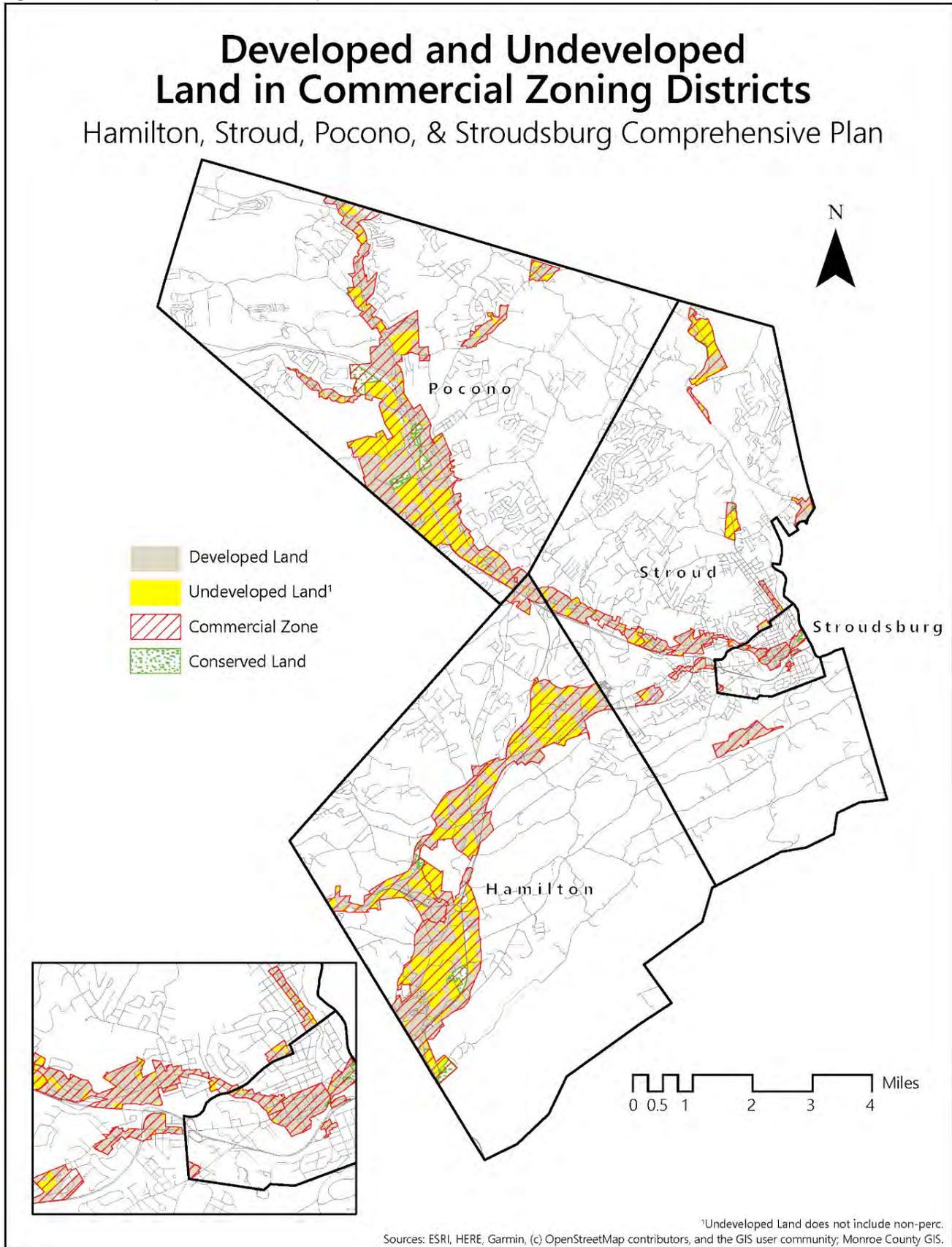
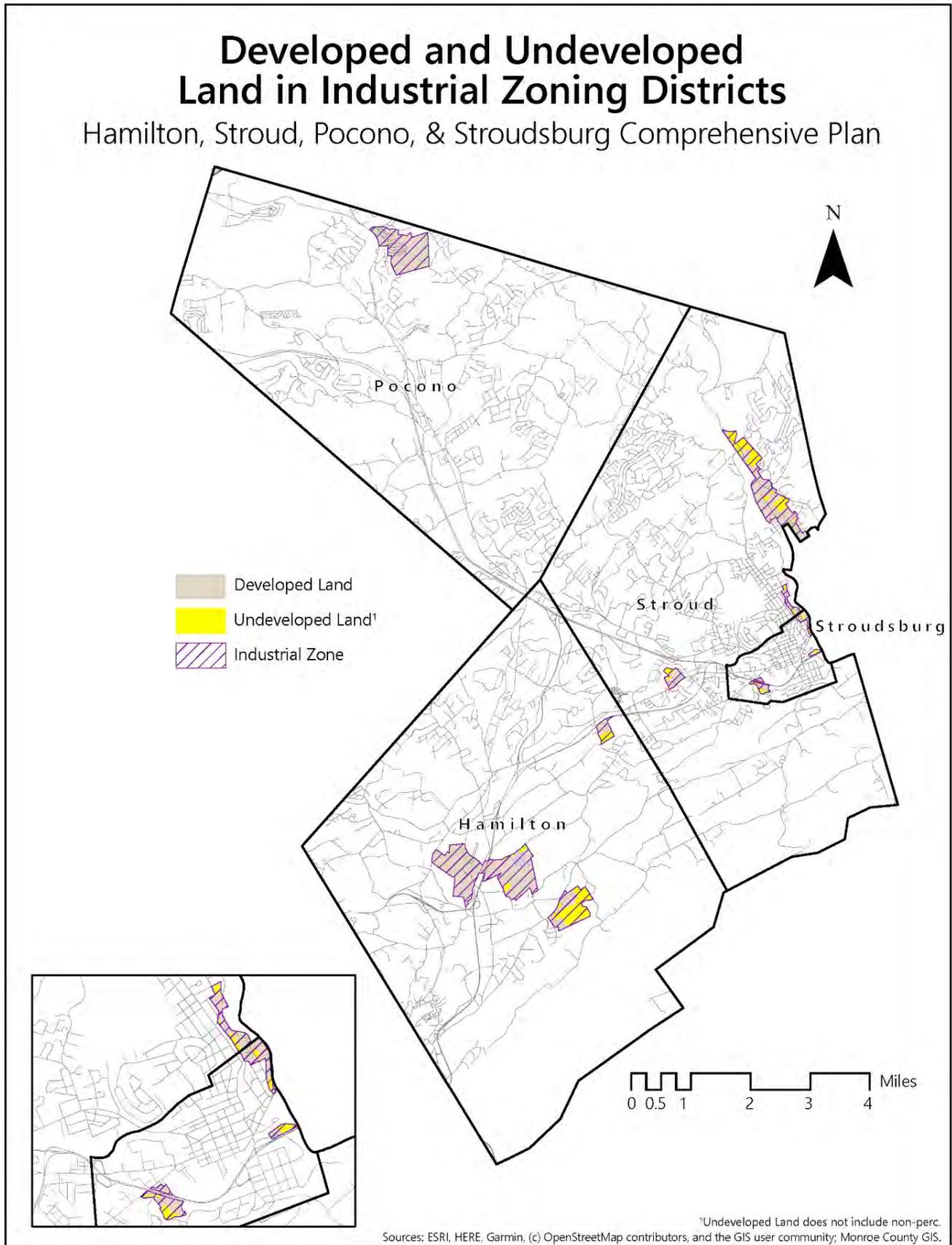


Figure 33. Developed and Undeveloped Land in Industrial Zones.



Opportunities for Intermunicipal Cooperation

Zoning for New Uses and Zoning

The broad categories of land use – residential, commercial, industrial, resource production (agriculture, forestry), and resource preservation – change minimally from one decade to the next. However, specific uses do evolve, particularly as society integrates digital technologies into communications and operations into social, business and industry, and government activities. Recent examples include cell towers in the 2000s and natural gas extraction and transmission facilities in the late 2000s and early 2010s.

This evolution requires local governments to review and update their land use management approaches—to regulate broadly with room for local interpretation or to regulate specifically and in detail—and the associated ordinance definitions, provisions, and standards.

Regulating new and emerging uses is challenging. Some impacts are known, some are anticipated but unclear, and others will emerge over time. Municipalities should lean into their own experience but also consult neighboring local municipalities and counties and recent case law for additional experience or expectations on where and how the new use might locate, the impacts that may occur, and how the new use should be managed. The Monroe County Planning Commission, and other county planning commissions, are a good source for general consultation and model ordinance or provisions.

New and emerging uses at the time of this plan’s writing include the following; see Chapter 5, Economy and Chapter 5, Housing for discussion.

Commercial uses, specifically retail- and restaurant-like uses, include:

- E-commerce distribution “store” hub.
- Urban winery.

- Café in combination with a specialty theme, e.g., pet adoption.
- Outdoor dining as a permanent or multi-seasonal accessory use to restaurants.
- (Increase in) Marijuana dispensaries if the state were to legalize recreational marijuana.

Industrial uses include

- Vertical (multistory) warehousing.

Residential uses include:

- Private housing complexes, whether for off-campus students or the general public.
- Short-term rentals, advertised online as Airbnb or vacation rental by owner (VRBO), emerged about 10 years ago as an alternative to hotels, motels, and bed and breakfast establishments in both urban and rural settings.

Open Space uses include:

- Agritainment.
- Solar farms.
- Agrivoltaics.

Recommendation

- Compare management approaches, as well as definitions, provisions, and standards, applicable to new and emerging uses. Regionally, share municipal experiences and anticipated zoning permit applications for new and emerging uses in different locations and contexts. Then, individually, consider revisions and refinements to each municipal ordinance.

Land Use Sharing

The PA MPC allows municipalities to share their responsibility for providing opportunity for all land uses through a zoning partnership. This provision enables one municipality to fulfill the responsibility for any municipality in the zoning partnership. This approach can help municipalities avoid challenges to zoning exclusion, particularly for uses that

already exist in one municipality and effectively serve or are accessible to all municipalities. The zoning partnership can be implemented through a single multi-municipal zoning ordinance or through separate, coordinated municipal zoning ordinances.

Potential applications of land use sharing in the HSPS region include:

- Adult-oriented establishments. Two of these establishments already exist in Hamilton along Route 611. The Route 611 corridor is a reasonably accessible corridor for all HSPS municipalities.
- Mineral Extraction, particularly surface quarrying. Quarrying is permitted and active in Hamilton’s industrial district where surface geology is suitable. It is not a practical use in Stroudsburg; it could be compatible with rural uses in Stroud and Pocono with significant buffers but would likely require the significant removal of tree cover and could impact water resources.
- Multi-family housing and senior living are other uses discussed as regional needs and potential shared uses. These are not resource-dependent, like mineral extraction, but are often water-and sewer-dependent to be profitable and should be transit-served to make the cost of living affordable for residents.

Recommendation

- Compare municipal lists of uses willing to be shared (both to and from each municipality). Discuss management approaches and specifics to guide the hosting municipality. Adopt ordinance updates to establish the shared-use provision

Joint Reviews of Developments of Regional Impact and Other

Certain uses, by their nature or size, have the potential to impact not only the host municipality but also adjoining municipalities. County review of such development proposals may comment on these regional impacts, however the municipality may or may not require the developer to address county comments with revisions. The PA Municipalities Planning Code recognizes the potential for such impacts and provides for counties to define development of regional impact or DRIs by criteria applicable to their context and to establish review procedures for potentially affected municipalities to comment on the development proposal.

The likelihood of new, large-scale developments of regional impact in the HSPS region are low, given the region’s topography and more importantly, the stringency of state permitting. However, size is not the only factor. Traffic generation, specifically truck traffic, may be a hazard or safety concern. Furthermore, smaller-scale developments nearby a municipal border can also raise concerns.

The 2005 HSPS comprehensive plan recommended a regional planning commission but was not implemented. The recommendation remains valid. Such a body need not review minor development proposals but could be used as forum for candid multi-municipal review of DRI proposals and others that warrant regional discussion per to-be-established HSPS regional criteria.

Recommendation

- Consider establishing an HSPS regional planning commission or similar advisory body to review development proposals that meet the county’s DRI criteria and additional criteria deemed applicable by the municipalities. Additional criteria may include the potential for positive impacts as well as negative ones.

Broader Regional Information Sharing

The Monroe County COG was established years ago to secure competitive pricing for municipal public works projects and supplies. This objective is now served by the CoSTARs program. The COG continues to assist in some bidding efforts outside the CoSTARs program but have repurposed itself as a forum to for municipal education and discuss of countywide issues. Monthly meetings feature guest speakers—state and federal officials as well as industry representatives—and offer extensive opportunities for questions and discussion.

Recommendation

- Participate in the Monroe County COG to enhance awareness and understanding of countywide issues and emerging topics of regional interest.

Land Use-Related Ordinances & Code Enforcement Consistency

This is one area for continued intermunicipal communication, engaging one in another as peers, to strengthen municipal policy and practices and, where beneficial, to coordinate and align approaches.

Nuisance Regulations

Nuisance regulations vary from one municipality to the next, which can make enforcement challenging for regional police who provide enforcement when municipal staff is not on duty. Consistency among nuisance ordinances in municipalities served by regional police would make enforcement easier.

Recommendation

- Compare nuisance regulations – both nuisance ordinances as well as similar regulations related to use activities, operations, and behaviors in rental and short-term rental regulations and provisions.

Access Management

Access management is a regulatory tool that controls how and where properties access, or are connected to, the public road network in the interest of roadway safety and travel time reliability. By limiting the number, spacing, and location of driveways and encouraging travel connections between adjacent parcels, via driveways, alleys and secondary streets, traffic flow is steadier, reducing congestion and delay, and vehicle turning movements are more predictable, reducing crashes.

Access management provisions are best established before development occurs, thus congestion and crashes are avoided or minimized from the start. If provisions are enacted after development occurs, they are applied as redevelopment is constructed. Stroud and Pocono each have some access management provisions in their ordinances. Stroud addresses driveways along arterial and collector streets in its subdivision and land development regulations; see § 22-302.5. Pocono addresses driveways in its streets and sidewalks regulations; see § 375-17.

Recommendation

- Prepare a consistent and coordinated access management approach across the HSPS region, particularly along Route 611, Route 191, and Route 209, to achieve basic consistency with potentially more intensive management in select areas.
Review PennDOT guidance in PUB 547, Access Management: Model Ordinances for Pennsylvania Municipalities Handbook, available at <https://www.dot.state.pa.us/public/PubsForms/Publications/PUB%20574.pdf>.

Plan for Land Use

Goal: The HSPS region works cooperatively to plan for future community and economic development and to maintain and enhance community infrastructure and services to adequately serve residents and businesses.

Objective LU-1: Manage land use regionally.

Recommendations:

1. Maintain the current footprint of zoning for intensive uses.
2. Share specialized or resource-dependent economic uses. Compare municipal lists of uses willing to be shared (both to and from each municipality). Discuss management approaches and specifics to guide the hosting municipality. Adopt ordinance updates to establish the shared-use provision.
3. Establish an HSPS regional planning commission or similar advisory body to review development proposals that meet the county's DRI criteria and additional criteria deemed applicable by the municipalities. Additional criteria may include the potential for positive impacts as well as negative ones.
4. Participate in the Monroe County COG to enhance awareness and understanding of countywide issues and emerging topics of regional interest.

Objective LU-2: Promote residential infill and redevelopment of varied types and densities in developed areas.

Recommendations:

1. See Chapter 6 for specific uses and locations.

Objective LU-3: Promote economic reinvestment in developed areas and local economic development resources.

Recommendations:

2. See Chapter 5 for specific uses and locations.

Continued

Plan for Land Use continued

Objective LU-4: Coordinate codes for consistency in provision, application, and enforcement.

Recommendations:

1. Following county plan updates, review plans for necessary municipal actions and update associated regulations for consistency:
 - a. County Stormwater Management Plan.
 - b. County Hazard Mitigation Plan.
2. Update zoning to address potential new land uses; see page # for list of uses.
 - a. Compare management approaches, as well as definitions, provisions, and standards, applicable to new and emerging uses. Regionally, share municipal experiences and anticipated zoning permit applications for new and emerging uses in different locations and contexts. Then, individually, consider revisions and refinements to each municipal ordinance.
 - b. Consult guidance from Monroe County, other PA county planning offices, PA DCED, and/or PSATS/PSAB through their technical assistance and training programs.
3. Compare nuisance regulations – both nuisance ordinances as well as similar regulations related to use activities, operations, and behaviors in rental and short-term rental regulations and provisions.
4. Prepare a consistent and coordinated access management approach across the HSPS region, particularly along Route 611, Route 191, and Route 209, to achieve basic consistency with potentially more intensive management in select areas.

5 Economy

A prosperous economy generates growth in employment, creates community wealth through business profits and personal income, and attracts further investment. This prosperity must respect the region’s values for the natural, built, and social environments—preserving elements that the region wishes to maintain, while making necessary adjustments to ensure a sustainable future. Further complicating this balance, the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted several economic sectors at the global, national, and local levels. In some cases, these impacts are temporary and should right themselves once the pandemic passes, while others are permanent, requiring equally permanent mitigation measures. In either case, the HSPS region will require resiliency and adaptation to continue its economic progress.

Detailed Employment Data

As noted in Chapter 2, the region is home to numerous businesses and industries that provided about 24,000 full- and part-time jobs in 2017. Tables 16-20 show employment data by industry by municipality.

Leading Industries

Five industries are particularly strong in terms of both employment numbers and recent job growth in the HSPS region. These industries are health care, retail, accommodation, education, and manufacturing. Each municipality contributes to the strength of these five industries. And notably, total employment across all industries grew in each municipality since 2010.

The industry sector with the most jobs and highest growth in the HSPS region is “Accommodation and Food Services”, which includes hotels, resorts, and

restaurants. The almost 5,500 jobs as of 2018 increased by 64% since 2010. This strength and growth are reflected in the region’s tourism economy, fueled by such major visitor attractions as Camelback Mountain Resort, Kalahari Resort, and Great Wolf Lodge, among many other recreational and leisure amenities. Lodging and dining establishments in downtown, along Route 611, and in outlying villages significantly contribute to the strength of this industry.

“Retail Trade” employs the second-highest number of people in the HSPS region. The 4,200 jobs in this industry only grew by 4% since 2010, but retail remains an important component of the region’s tourism economy while also serving its local residents. These jobs are supported not only by larger shopping centers such as the Crossings Premium Outlets, Crossroads Mall, and Pocono Commons along Route 611, but also by individual small business such as those in downtown Stroudsburg contributing to the Borough’s vibrancy.

“Manufacturing” is also a top industry in the HSPS region providing 2,700 jobs in 2018, though this sector experienced a slight decline since 2010. Much of this employment can be attributed to the Sanofi Pasteur pharmaceutical company facility in Pocono Township, among other manufacturing companies.

“Health Care and Social Assistance” employs more than 2,500 people in the region. These jobs, associated with the region’s hospitals, clinics, and outpatient medical facilities, have grown by 41% since 2010. This expansion is occurring to provide general and specialized services to serve young people who are relatively healthy and may lack insurance, seniors who face more health conditions as they age, as well as the population at large. The largest employer in this category is St. Luke’s Hospital – Monroe Campus.

Table 20. Jobs in Hamilton Township

Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector									
	2017		2015		2012		2010		2010-2017
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	
Health Care and Social Assistance	356	20.0%	399	24.6%	413	16.3%	375	27.5%	-5.1%
Accommodation and Food Services	263	14.8%	178	11.0%	285	11.3%	143	10.5%	83.9%
Wholesale Trade	243	13.7%	287	17.7%	95	3.8%	89	6.5%	173.0%
Construction	201	11.3%	101	6.2%	90	3.6%	55	4.0%	265.5%
Retail Trade	194	10.9%	193	11.9%	302	11.9%	124	9.1%	56.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	79	4.4%	10	0.6%	92	3.6%	87	6.4%	-9.2%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	79	4.4%	42	2.6%	40	1.6%	55	4.0%	43.6%
Administration/Support, Waste Mgmt and Remediation	64	3.6%	122	7.5%	81	3.2%	27	2.0%	137.0%
Public Administration	52	2.9%	39	2.4%	804	31.8%	60	4.4%	-13.3%
Manufacturing	47	2.6%	32	2.0%	125	4.9%	132	9.7%	-64.4%
Educational Services	37	2.1%	52	3.2%	0	0.0%	96	7.0%	-61.5%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	33	1.9%	37	2.3%	32	1.3%	6	0.4%	450.0%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	33	1.9%	31	1.9%	89	3.5%	42	3.1%	-21.4%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	31	1.7%	23	1.4%	18	0.7%	5	0.4%	520.0%
Finance and Insurance	29	1.6%	38	2.3%	31	1.2%	24	1.8%	20.8%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	29	1.6%	28	1.7%	18	0.7%	19	1.4%	52.6%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	8	0.4%	11	0.7%	11	0.4%	4	0.3%	100.0%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-
Utilities	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-
Information	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	0.2%	23	1.7%	-
Total	1,778		1,623		2,530		1,366		

Source: OnTheMap, accessed at <https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>.

Table 21. Jobs in Stroud Township

Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector									
	2017		2015		2012		2010		2010-2017
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	
Retail Trade	1,780	28.4%	1,834	28.5%	1,873	31.8%	1,908	27.1%	-6.7%
Accommodation and Food Services	974	15.5%	889	13.8%	792	13.4%	946	13.4%	3.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	864	13.8%	926	14.4%	869	14.7%	823	11.7%	5.0%
Manufacturing	715	11.4%	622	9.6%	561	9.5%	446	6.3%	60.3%
Educational Services	507	8.1%	522	8.1%	59	1.0%	552	7.8%	-8.2%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	252	4.0%	238	3.7%	330	5.6%	239	3.4%	5.4%
Administration/Support, Waste Mgmt and Remediation	154	2.5%	132	2.0%	189	3.2%	155	2.2%	-0.6%
Construction	152	2.4%	283	4.4%	211	3.6%	275	3.9%	-44.7%
Wholesale Trade	129	2.1%	137	2.1%	298	5.1%	306	4.3%	-57.8%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	125	2.0%	155	2.4%	136	2.3%	175	2.5%	-28.6%
Information	119	1.9%	92	1.4%	29	0.5%	28	0.4%	325.0%
Finance and Insurance	107	1.7%	225	3.5%	205	3.5%	127	1.8%	-15.7%
Public Administration	97	1.5%	79	1.2%	91	1.5%	861	12.2%	-88.7%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	92	1.5%	64	1.0%	82	1.4%	33	0.5%	178.8%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	91	1.5%	68	1.1%	66	1.1%	45	0.6%	102.2%
Transportation and Warehousing	72	1.1%	148	2.3%	66	1.1%	71	1.0%	1.4%
Utilities	35	0.6%	28	0.4%	32	0.5%	27	0.4%	29.6%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	8	0.1%	4	0.1%	6	0.1%	5	0.1%	60.0%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	17	0.2%	-
Total	6,273		6,446		5,895		7,039		

Source: OnTheMap, accessed at <https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>.

Table 22. Jobs in Pocono Township

Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector									
	2017		2015		2012		2010		2010-2017
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	
Accommodation and Food Services	3,274	29.5%	1,960	20.9%	1,985	21.6%	1,766	18.3%	85.4%
Manufacturing	2,048	18.4%	2,019	21.5%	2,135	23.2%	2,267	23.5%	-9.7%
Retail Trade	1,853	16.7%	1,711	18.3%	1,812	19.7%	1,680	17.4%	10.3%
Educational Services	1,439	12.9%	1,479	15.8%	1,798	19.5%	1,857	19.3%	-22.5%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	579	5.2%	469	5.0%	76	0.8%	422	4.4%	37.2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	480	4.3%	556	5.9%	213	2.3%	159	1.6%	201.9%
Administration/Support, Waste Mgmt and Remediation	388	3.5%	296	3.2%	316	3.4%	697	7.2%	-44.3%
Wholesale Trade	233	2.1%	202	2.2%	186	2.0%	110	1.1%	111.8%
Construction	214	1.9%	155	1.7%	181	2.0%	187	1.9%	14.4%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	122	1.1%	83	0.9%	111	1.2%	107	1.1%	14.0%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	122	1.1%	159	1.7%	110	1.2%	172	1.8%	-29.1%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	103	0.9%	66	0.7%	30	0.3%	3	0.0%	3333.3%
Finance and Insurance	78	0.7%	86	0.9%	98	1.1%	87	0.9%	-10.3%
Transportation and Warehousing	65	0.6%	42	0.4%	40	0.4%	21	0.2%	209.5%
Public Administration	43	0.4%	6	0.1%	13	0.1%	15	0.2%	186.7%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	33	0.3%	47	0.5%	71	0.8%	85	0.9%	-61.2%
Utilities	32	0.3%	32	0.3%	3	0.0%	2	0.0%	1500.0%
Information	8	0.1%	3	0.0%	11	0.1%	4	0.0%	100.0%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	0	0.0%	3	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	10	0.1%	0	0.0%	-
Total	11,114		9,374		9,199		9,641		

Source: OnTheMap, accessed at <https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>.

Table 23. Jobs in Stroudsburg Borough

Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector									
	2017		2015		2012		2010		2010-2017
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	
Public Administration	819	18.9%	827	19.4%	52	1.8%	49	1.3%	1571.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	498	11.5%	531	12.5%	482	16.5%	472	12.9%	5.5%
Retail Trade	475	11.0%	526	12.3%	302	10.3%	352	9.6%	34.9%
Health Care and Social Assistance	453	10.5%	525	12.3%	556	19.1%	444	12.2%	2.0%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	376	8.7%	432	10.1%	351	12.0%	339	9.3%	10.9%
Finance and Insurance	315	7.3%	164	3.8%	149	5.1%	238	6.5%	32.4%
Educational Services	311	7.2%	323	7.6%	27	0.9%	509	13.9%	-38.9%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	302	7.0%	307	7.2%	291	10.0%	332	9.1%	-9.0%
Administration/Support, Waste Mgmt and Remediation	217	5.0%	131	3.1%	91	3.1%	155	4.2%	40.0%
Manufacturing	124	2.9%	131	3.1%	133	4.6%	122	3.3%	1.6%
Construction	103	2.4%	83	1.9%	86	2.9%	183	5.0%	-43.7%
Information	81	1.9%	35	0.8%	166	5.7%	187	5.1%	-56.7%
Transportation and Warehousing	68	1.6%	71	1.7%	6	0.2%	81	2.2%	-16.0%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	60	1.4%	58	1.4%	31	1.1%	20	0.5%	200.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	46	1.1%	58	1.4%	50	1.7%	37	1.0%	24.3%
Wholesale Trade	45	1.0%	46	1.1%	130	4.5%	118	3.2%	-61.9%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	19	0.4%	0	0.0%	1	0.0%	2	0.1%	850.0%
Utilities	11	0.3%	14	0.3%	14	0.5%	9	0.2%	22.2%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	-
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.1%	-
Total	4,323		4,262		2,918		3,651		

Source: OnTheMap, accessed at <https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>.

Rounding out the top five largest industries in the HSPS region is “Educational Services”, which includes the faculty and staff of schools, colleges, universities, and training centers. While the number of jobs in the region dropped by 24% since 2010, the education industry still contained more than 1,800 jobs as of 2018. The largest educational employers are Northampton Community College and the public school districts in the region including Pocono Mountain, Pleasant Valley, and Stroudsburg Area.

Pandemic Impact and Recovery

The COVID-19 pandemic, however, threatens to challenge the region’s growth and prosperity, at least temporarily. As of early 2021, unemployment in Monroe County remains several percentage points higher than the year prior and higher than the state overall. Some businesses struggle to stay open such as hotels, with travel down significantly. As of late 2021, hotel business is picking up, however, with COVID safety protocols in place and guests increasingly becoming more comfortable with lodging. Some businesses have been forced to close, particularly those that rely on larger indoor gatherings to generate revenue such as restaurants, gyms, and theaters. Others yet have remained relatively unscathed due to the nature of their work. Those whose employees can continue working efficiently from home have fared quite well as have essential services that require in-person work but can ensure adequate social distancing. Retailers of essential goods, such as grocers and home improvement stores, have even exceeded sales over a year ago.

Behaviors have also changed during the pandemic. Commuting for office workers has been significantly reduced with the ability to work from home, altering rush hour traffic volumes and patterns. Work-related travel, such as for meetings, has also been reduced with the use of virtual meetings. As a result, the need for office space in its current format remains a question. Some cities have seen

downtown office occupancy rates as low as 10% during the last year. While it is believed that some form of returning to the office will occur post-pandemic, industry experts think it will be permanently reduced compared to pre-2020, potentially creating a glut of vacant traditional office space.

The recovery outlook for the region’s leading industries is generally positive.

Tourism, otherwise known as Accommodation and Food Services, is expected to make a full recovery and may see a spike as the virus comes under control. The region’s proximity to large metro areas by car (i.e., people don’t need to fly) should aid in this recovery. Hotel visitation will likely start increasing even if air travel takes much longer. Visitors can still come and recreate now even while social distancing is still required.

Brick and mortar retail, which was on the decline in many categories even prior to the pandemic, will likely become a much narrower industry, as consumers continue to purchase certain items online. Walkable downtowns, like Stroudsburg, have weathered this trend pre-pandemic due to their unique experiential settings and boutique shops. Outlet malls seem to still be doing well because of their name brands and an open-air design, perfect for a pandemic. On the other hand, traditional malls and shopping centers have experienced significant vacancies. Some space is being reinvented as warehouse, health care service, faith-based activity, and even housing. Leisure and entertainment space, such as theaters, will remain constrained as the pandemic continues, though use of these venues will likely return to normal eventually as people seek experiential activities once again.

Health Care and Social Assistance will continue to grow to serve the aging population in the region, the county, and beyond.

Manufacturing and warehousing are expanding in the region as well as across the county.

Colleges and universities were seeing a general decline in enrollment pre-pandemic, which is typical. When the economy is good and jobs are plentiful, education tends to take a backseat; in a recession, enrollment tends to rise. Therefore, enrollment will pick up again. Some coursework can continue online but others will resume in-person, either on campus or at satellite locations.

As a result of these market conditions—resulting both from pre-pandemic trends as well as those caused by the pandemic itself—the HSPS region should prepare to adapt to changes in the built environment that will ensure economic resiliency. This could include permitting building designs that facilitate the take-out restaurant culture, modify parking requirements and street regulations to allow curbside delivery and expanded outdoor dining, and modifying zoning regulations to allow new uses such as residential and mixed-use in former retail and office areas.

Growing Industries

Growing industries are those with small employment but high growth. The following industries had growth rates of 150 percent or more and were not offset by job losses in other HSPS municipalities, pre-pandemic from 2010 to 2018:

- Management of Companies and Enterprises: 3 to 100 jobs (3800%) in Pocono; 2 to 19 jobs (850%) in Stroudsburg
- Transportation and Warehousing: 21 to 109 jobs (419%) in Pocono
- Construction: 55 to 280 jobs (409%) in Hamilton
- Administration/Support, Waste Management & Remediation: 27 to 75 jobs (178%) in Hamilton
- Real Estate and Rental and Leasing: 5 to 31 jobs (520%) in Hamilton; 45 to 121 jobs (169%) in Stroud
- Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation: 20 to 50 jobs (200%) in Stroudsburg and growth in all three townships

These industries are ones to watch. If growth rates of 150 percent or more continue and are not the result of a business relocation across a municipal border, these industries may help to provide resiliency to future economic disruptions.

Emerging Economic Uses

As markets and public policy evolve, new, distinctive land uses emerge. The following uses are not yet present in significant quantity or concentration in the HSPS region but could emerge or increase in number over the coming years. These uses might look and function like land uses the municipalities already regulate. In this case, only minor amendments to list uses and definitions may be needed. In other cases, new supplemental regulations specific to the use may be needed.

Commercial Uses:

- E-commerce distribution “store” hub for local product delivery by truck and pickup by consumer. This use might be similar to a store but could also appear as a freestanding “neighborhood locker” unit.
- Urban winery. This use looks and functions similar to a downtown craft brewery with on-site consumption and take-home sales. It may include an in-house entertainment venue.
- Café in combination with a specialty theme, e.g., pet adoption. Both are somewhat retail in nature.
- Outdoor dining as a permanent or multi-seasonal accessory use to restaurants. During the pandemic, restaurant-goers enjoyed outdoor dining whether on the sidewalk, in the parking lot, in a nearby park or greenspace, or on a temporary street or parking closure. Traditional restaurant use regulations may need to be updated for outdoor dining as well as permanent take-out/curbside delivery service and associated parking.
- (Increase in) Marijuana dispensaries if the state were to legalize recreational marijuana.

Industrial Use

- Vertical (multistory) warehousing. Warehousing isn't a new use, however automation of the internal operations has streamlined costs, enabling developers to "build up" where land costs are high. This use is currently pressing in on the Lehigh Valley and could appear along the I-80 corridor.

Residential Use

- Private housing complexes, whether for off-campus students or the general public. In some communities, higher education institutions or their affiliates have worked with private developers to build off-campus student housing to accommodate (or enable) student population growth.

Open Space Uses

- Agritainment. This use includes a variety of farm-based commercial uses, such as pick-your-own produce, corn mazes, and weekend-at-the-farm tourism experiences. It also includes farms used as event venues, which has raised concern for safety of large group gatherings in structures, i.e., barns, without adequate sanitation facilities, fire suppression systems and other public safety protocols, as well as potential challenges for parking, hours of operation, traffic, noise, and lighting.
- Solar farms. Farmland located within a few miles of an electric substation is attractive for solar farms that aim to generate electricity and move it quickly to the national grid.
- Agrivoltaics. This use co-locates one or more traditional farm activities with solar uses—think of goats grazing under solar panels and reducing the need for mowing.

Locational Factors in Economic Development

Several factors drive economic development in the HSPS region and foster its job growth.

Convenient Highway Access to Metro Areas: The HSPS region is traversed by Interstate 80, a major national east/west thoroughfare with direct connection to New York City – just 90 miles to the east. It is also served by Interstate 380 with a connection to Scranton and areas to the north, as well as Route 33 with a connection to the Lehigh Valley and points south, including Philadelphia. This highway access provides the HSPS region with a link to a large employment base with the ability to commute. It also facilitates the transport of goods and supplies to area businesses. Furthermore, a good transportation network offers easy access to the region's tourist destinations.

Vacant or Underutilized Sites: The HSPS region offers numerous locations for business growth that support community revitalization and sustainability. Throughout the area are key vacant or underutilized sites that could be repurposed for new commercial or mixed uses. They are mostly in easily accessible locations, providing good visibility for new prospective businesses. Stroudsburg Borough also offers various infill opportunities along Main Street for emerging small businesses.

Local Workforce Training Facilities: Two local institutions offer workforce education and training to residents and the potential for customized programs to serve local employers. Northampton Community College is one such entity as well as the Monroe Career and Technical Institute. Both are workforce pipelines that can prepare residents for jobs in industries with growth potential.

Quality of Life: The quality of life offered in the HSPS region is one of its biggest assets from an economic development standpoint. The region provides area employees beautiful scenery, outdoor recreational opportunities, small town charm, easily accessible shopping and healthcare, and a relatively low cost of living. These are all major selling points for businesses. A shortage of housing options was noted by employers and economic development agencies as a key limiting factor for economic growth.

Regional Economic Development Services: Also key to the success of business development are entities that offer resources to local businesses in the form of recruitment assistance, technical assistance, and funding. The HSPS region is fortunate to have several agencies that work cooperatively to provide necessary services to prospective and existing businesses, including the Pocono Mountains Economic Development Corporation, the Monroe County Industrial Development Authority, the Pocono Chamber of Commerce, the Pocono Visitors Bureau, and several business-related associations including the realtors' association, builders' association, and Downtown Stroudsburg Business Association.

Local Entrepreneurial Resources: Nearby at East Stroudsburg University's Innovation Center, the division of Economic Development & Entrepreneurship devotes resources to support innovation, entrepreneurship, research, and workforce training. Here early-stage businesses can find working space and gain access to thought leaders at ESU and beyond.

Municipal Tools to Support Economic Growth

While the HSPS region's attributes are a driving force for business attraction, businesses face varying site constraints and needs depending on their specific industries. The region's municipal partners should ensure that these needs are continually met so existing businesses will thrive and expand, and new ones will be attracted to the area.

Zoning Potential Sites for Re-Use or Redevelopment

Several sites within the HSPS region are attractive for development or redevelopment due to their size, location, and/or financial incentive potential. Municipal partners should ensure that these prime sites for business growth are zoned for desired and suitable economic activities. See Table 24.

Predictable Development Process

Business growth and expansion can be discouraged and frustrated by a lengthy and complicated development review process. HSPS municipal partners should make the process more navigable for existing businesses interested in expanding or new businesses interested in moving to the region. This could take the form of a development checklist that outlines the development application requirements, tips for making complete submissions, and a minimum timeline for the municipal review process. Additionally, making staff available to answer questions and help guide developers through the process can aid in streamlining application processing time.

Development/Tax Incentives

Some businesses will need financial assistance to successfully start up or relocate. The HSPS region could help facilitate business development interest through incentives. The region already offers incentives to businesses locating in its existing KIZ, which includes Stroudsburg Borough and portions of Stroud Township, but others exist to supplement this.

The region can incentivize private development by using local programs and by promoting the availability of state programs. Local tax incentive programs include LERTA (Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance) and TIF (Tax Increment Financing). A LERTA authorizes a municipality to provide tax abatements to owners of a development or owners making improvements to existing properties over a defined time period. A TIF allows a municipality to use tax revenue to help pay for the development.

Municipalities and private sector developers, business owners, and entrepreneurs are also eligible for a variety of state incentive programs available through the PA Department of Community and Economic Development. These include Business in Our Sites Grants/Loans, Business Opportunities Fund, Keystone Communities Program, PA Capital Access Program, and Building PA.

Table 24. Key Sites for Re-Use or Redevelopment

Sites and Locations	General Suitability & Constraints
Hamilton Township	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bartonsville Ave/Rim Rock Road corridor 	Nearby water and sewer service Nearby HQ streams; floodplain
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PA 33 and US 209 interchanges and east toward Stroudsburg in Hamilton 	Lacks water and/or sewer service Nearby HQ streams; floodplains, wetlands
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business 209 in Sciota 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Middle Easton Belmont Pike 	
Stroud Township	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stroud Mall 	Within the existing water and sewer service areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-use/Redevelopment of the former Colonial Lanes bowling alley site 	Nearby HQ streams
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> former Ray Price and Halterman auto dealership sites at the intersection of PA 447 and Fawn Road 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New development and re-use/redevelopment along Route 611 	
Pocono Township	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scotrun area of Route 611 	Within the existing water and sewer service areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bartonsville Ave/Rim Rock Road 	Nearby HQ streams; floodplains, wetlands
Stroudsburg Borough	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main Street (infill) 	Within the existing water and sewer service areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Side streets 	Within the existing water and sewer service areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-use/Redevelopment of the former ShopRite site on North 3rd Street 	Within the existing water and sewer service areas

Source: Gannett Fleming

Infrastructure – Roadways, Utilities, and Broadband

Businesses need solid infrastructure to succeed, whether that be the transportation network, utilities, or digital connections. The consortium should ensure that the roadway network is adequately maintained and upgraded, utilities are modernized, and Wi-Fi is widely available.

Housing

Currently there is a mismatch in the HSPS region between available housing and housing need. Successful businesses require an adequate housing variety for its workforce that is not being met. The consortium must seek to provide new housing options—particularly affordable multi-family rental housing—to attract and retain workers in the region (see Housing chapter).

Compatible Workforce

Businesses require a variety of workforce skills, from medical to manufacturing and management. While the HSPS region has key workforce

development institutions through NCC and MCTI, those institutions must ensure that the offered programming and training aligns with the workforce needs of the region's industry leaders and emerging businesses to retain employees locally.

Plan for Economy

Goal: The HSPS region has diversified, stable employment opportunities, supported by designated lands for economic activity and reliable infrastructure, and an effective workforce development system.

Objective E-1: Manage land use regionally.

Recommendations:

1. Share specialized or resource-dependent economic uses. Compare municipal lists of uses willing to be shared (both to and from each municipality).
2. Update zoning to address emerging land uses, listed on pages 59 and 60.
3. Rezone targeted areas to direct development to specific infill/redevelopment locations and permit new uses, such as mixed-use, residential, and non-retail commercial.
 - a. Along Route 611 at major (signalized) intersections.
- Vacant or underutilized properties throughout the region as listed in Table 24.
4. Consider code provisions that formalize modified use regulations during pandemic conditions.
5. Outline the land development process (milestones, timeline, common hurdles) for prospective developers and businesses anticipating expansion.

Continued

Plan for Economy continued

Objective E-2: Promote economic reinvestment in developed areas and local economic development resources.

Recommendation:

1. Identify and promote key vacant and underutilized sites in the region.
2. Consider offering financial incentives to encourage desired business development and expansion.
 - a. Request sustainable examples of LERTA and/or TIF incentives from the regional PA DCED representative.
3. Promote regional economic development agencies that can provide technical assistance and services to small businesses (e.g., loan packaging, business planning, legal assistance, etc.).
4. Support coordination among employers and education and workforce training providers to ensure training matches business needs.

Objective E-3: Improve utility infrastructure for business.

Recommendation:

1. Support the Monroe Gigabit Project and its efforts to attract broadband installation.
2. Continue to document connectivity gaps and other issues as evidence of local need for improved infrastructure and service.
3. Establish zoning and development/design standards for wireless technology facilities.

Objective E-4: Improve travel options to education, workforce training, and employment hubs.

Recommendation:

1. Work with MCTA to extend transit service to Monroe Career & Technical Institute.

Objective E-5: Support the exchange of information to inform a relevant workforce development pipeline and land use/zoning updates.

Recommendation:

1. Invite business and industry leaders to share performance trends with school districts and educational institutions, e.g., NCC-Monroe Campus and MCTI, to ensure that available programs and training align with the workforce needs of the region's industry leaders and emerging businesses.

6 Housing

A key to a thriving region is a housing stock that serves the diverse needs of its residents. These needs evolve as empty nesters look to downsize, growing families seek larger homes, young professionals desire smaller units in communal environments with high-end amenities, and basic and affordable housing is sought by a significant portion of the workforce. If any of those elements are missing, prospective residents seeking them will choose to live elsewhere.

The term “affordable” used in conjunction with housing has become synonymous with subsidized or non-market rate housing, perceived by many to attract lower income households. Planners have begun using the term “attainable” to emphasize the need for market rate housing that is affordable due to its size, amenities, and other factors, not subsidies.

The COVID-19 pandemic adds complexity to the housing market, providing some disruption, but not to the degree of commercial markets. Some of these impacts may permanently alter the market, initiating modifications to existing housing and altering the design of new housing. Even beyond the pandemic, it will be critical for housing supply to evolve in step with residents’ demand.

Detailed Housing Data

Housing Cost & Affordability

According to the ACS 5-year estimates through 2018, Hamilton represents the high end of owner-occupied median housing values, followed by Pocono and Stroud—each higher than the county median by at least 4.2 percent. Stroudsburg’s median value is 4.6 percent lower than the county median. See **Error! Reference source not found.**

Pocono represents the high end of the renter-occupied, followed by Stroud—both higher than the county median by at least 15 percent. Stroudsburg’s median value is 8.7 percent lower than the county median.

Housing cost burden is one relatively simple measure of housing affordability. A cost-burdened unit (or household) is an occupied unit paying 35 percent or more of household income on monthly owner costs or rent; extreme burden is defined as paying 50 percent or more on the same. Monthly owner costs include mortgage payments (where applicable), utility bills, real estate taxes, property insurance, and any required condominium or mobile home fees.

The U.S. Census Bureau calculates cost burden for owner-occupied housing units (same as households) for units with and without a mortgage as well as for

Table 25. Housing Unit Value & Monthly Owner Costs

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	Monroe County
Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Unit (HU)	\$208,000	\$180,800	\$184,600	\$165,500	\$173,500
Median Monthly Owner HU Costs					
With a mortgage	\$1,960	\$2,010	\$1,759	\$1,733	\$1,536
Without a mortgage	\$577	\$755	\$595	\$675	\$663
Median Rent of Renter-Occupied Housing Units	\$991	\$1,172	\$1,247	\$930	\$1,019

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

rental units. Across the HSPS region, about 23 percent of all households are cost-burdened. Rates vary by housing unit type and mortgage status. See Table 26.

Pocono has the most cost-burdened households, influenced by high numbers of units with a mortgage and rentals. Stroud has the most cost-burdened owner households without a mortgage, i.e., households still pay 35 percent of household income toward associated housing costs. Stroudsburg has the most cost-burdened rental households.

On the other side of cost-burdened calculations is the remaining household income available for other expenses, such as food, clothing, transportation, etc. This remaining income may cover necessary and optional expenses for a high-income household but not for lower-income households, forcing households to choose which needs to meet and which to do without.

For example, access to a vehicle is nearly a practical necessity for households living and working outside a walkable community. Where households have limited access to a vehicle, including households with multiple workers employed in different locations and on different shifts, access to alternative transportation modes, such as public transportation, is critical. One might think transportation options are a factor when selecting housing location, yet employment conditions can

change rapidly (as seen in the recent pandemic) putting workers in search of new housing and new employment.

Housing Market Assessment Strengths

Population growth

The HSPS region’s population is projected to grow, at least through 2030. This growth should sustain the demand for housing for the next decade.

High home ownership rate

As a region, the home ownership rate is relatively high at about 74 percent. High rates of ownership are good for community stability and investment.

Vacancy is low

Just 18 percent of the region’s housing stock is vacant, some of which is turnover between owners or renters.

Weaknesses

Lack of affordability

The Monroe County Affordable Housing Plan demonstrated a major need for affordable housing in Monroe County due to high housing costs. Renter and homeowner households earning up to the County’s median household income face a shortage of around 60 affordable and

Table 26. Cost-burdened Units (Households)

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	HSPS	
					#	%
Total Occupied Units	3,407	7,884	4,967	2,665	18,923	-
Owner-occupied	2,369	5,207	2,970	910	11,456	
Renter-occupied	540	1,345	824	1,142	4,121	
Total Cost-Burdened Units	708	1,111	1,652	833	4,304	22.7%
Owner-occupied Units with a Mortgage	400	459	1,145	194	2,198	19.2%
Owner-occupied Units without a Mortgage	116	320	197	45	678	5.9%
Rental Units	192	332	310	594	1,428	7.6%
% of Total Units	20.8%	14.1%	33.3%	31.3%	-	-

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018.

available units per 100 households. The biggest factor affecting housing affordability is the high property tax rate. Monroe County's median property tax is the fifth highest in Pennsylvania. Within the HSPS region, almost 29% of all households are cost-burdened, paying 35% or more of household income on monthly owner costs or rent. While unaffordable to many, the region's housing is at the same time more affordable to others who live there and commute to the New York City area for work.

Lack of variety

Housing in the HSPS region is predominantly single-family, comprising almost 84% of the region's total housing units, 76% of which are detached. These tend to be developed on larger lots and carry higher real estate taxes. However, a growing segment of the region's population—namely seniors and younger professionals—are seeking something different: much smaller housing units, maintenance-free housing, high-end amenities, and housing for rent versus to purchase. Some limited multi-family housing exists in the region, but demand is high and vacancy rates are very low.

Lack of suitable sites and zoning

Housing developers are reportedly aware of the need and demand for multi-family rental housing but cannot find appropriate sites to develop. Furthermore, few areas in the region are zoned to permit multi-family housing.

Constraints/Needs

As a result of pre-pandemic trends as well as those caused by the pandemic itself, the HSPS region will need more housing in a different format than it currently exists to accommodate the shifting demand. This should include more:

- Affordable housing
- Senior-friendly housing
- Multi-family rental housing with amenities such as pool, fitness center, and pet accommodations
- Smaller for-sale housing in the form of townhomes and condominiums

Pandemic Impacts

The COVID-19 pandemic could impact the region's housing market as well. At the onset of the pandemic, an urban exodus trend developed, where city dwellers who could work remotely left cities for more rural areas out of fear of contracting the disease more easily by being in a denser setting. For those escaping New York City, the Pocono region was an attractive destination. Some moved permanently and others signed long-term leases. The result of this induced demand was a rather sudden reduction in housing availability and inflated prices and rents.

Behaviors related to housing have also changed as a result of the pandemic. Working from home has become a favorable concept for many, and most companies expect some form of telecommuting to continue beyond the pandemic. This may alter the type of desired housing people are seeking—there may be an increased preference for larger homes or at least more space to work within the home.

Countywide Concern for Affordable and Workforce Housing

The Monroe County Planning Commission examined and compared several countywide indicators to assess recent housing market activity.

- New residential construction activity, 2017-2021, specifically building permits issued for single-family dwelling units per year, increased by 108 permits or 47 percent. At 337 permits per year in 2021, activity was comparable to mid-2000s prior to the housing market crash of 2008.
- New residential building values, 2017-2021 increased from \$239,858 to \$300,567; and increase of \$60,709 or 25 percent.
- Residential Property Transfers (existing home sales), 2019 to 2021, increased from 3,507 to 5,813; an increase of 2,306 or 66 percent.

Comparing December 2020 and December 2021 sales data, existing homes spent 6 fewer days on the market (sold 13 percent faster) and sold for an additional up \$53,659 or 23 percent on average.

These indicators represent significant expansion and investment in countywide housing stock. However, US Census Bureau and school district data show that the county population and school enrollments have declined.

- Monroe County's population declined from 169,842 in 2010 to 168,327 in 2020; a decrease of 1,515 or just less than one percent. The county notes that there were population increases in the eastern municipalities and decreases in western municipalities.
- Total school district enrollments declined from 26,390 students in the 2017-2018 school year to 24,756 in the 2021-2022 school year; a decrease of 1,634 or 6 percent. The East Stroudsburg School District experienced turned this trend toward growth in the 2021-2022 school year.

The Planning Commission suspected this large investment in residential property was a further expansion of the short-term rental market and looked to the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau for evidence of increased hotel tax certificates and hotel tax revenue. The Monroe County Hotel Tax is a 3% tax to each and every rental of a room with a bed. The Planning Commission noted that some certificate owners are indeed hotel owners but the majority are short-term rental owners; also that not all short-term rental owners comply with the hotel tax certification process and short-term rental activity is likely more widespread.

- Hotel tax certificates increased from 647 in January 2019 to 3,531 in January 2022; an increase of 2,884 or 445 percent.
- Hotel tax revenue in Q3 of 2021 was \$3,425,457.

From this review, the Monroe County Planning Commission has concluded:

1. Short-term rental investment has applied pressure to the county's housing marketing, expanding single-family housing stock and raising average home values (prices) and associated renter costs. There is no projection for short-term rental saturation in the market.
2. Much of the local workforce is employed in the tourism and hospitality industry. Most jobs in this industry do not support homeownership or housing unit rental in a rapidly growing market of single-family homes.
3. There is a real need for additional housing that is affordable to the local workforce.
4. Municipalities should strengthen ordinances to address impacts of short-term rentals on the housing market, where permitted.
5. Municipalities should update zoning ordinances to allow for a greater variety of housing types resulting in the expansion of housing options affordable to the local workforce.

Municipal Tools for Housing

The region's residential demand will involve similar site constraints and needs for all types of new housing considered. The regional consortium should ensure that these needs are met to facilitate the development.

Zoning

New housing will require land to develop or redevelop, or existing vacant or underutilized buildings. The region has numerous sustainable redevelopment opportunities for new housing that should be promoted and incentivized. The consortium should ensure that adequate parcels are available for each type of housing, address their unique infrastructure requirements, and assist developers with acquiring the land.

In some cases, an ideal site for new housing will have a zoning designation that does not permit the new development by-right, requiring a variance or

special exception. The consortium should ensure that prime sites for desired housing are properly zoned as such in advance of any development application, and regulatory changes to permit these types of housing where they are currently not allowed, including underutilized commercial areas.

Predictable Development Process

Housing development can be constrained by a lengthy and complicated development review process. The HSPS municipal partners should make the process more navigable for developers seeking to construct new housing in the HSPS region. This could take the form of a standard development checklist outlining all requirements for the approval process that could be available to all applicants looking to develop or redevelop.

Sufficient Infrastructure

New housing will need solid infrastructure, whether that be the transportation network (including transit access), utilities, or digital connections. The HSPS municipal partners should ensure that the roadway network is adequately maintained and upgraded, utilities are modernized, and Wi-Fi is widely available.

Development Incentives

Some developers will need financial assistance to make new residential development work economically. The HSPS municipal partners could help facilitate developer interest through such incentives. A common residential incentive is a tax abatement program that relieves the developer of paying real estate taxes for a determined number of years. This would require approval from individual municipalities and school districts within the region.

Also under state legislative consideration is House Bill 581, which would authorize local taxing authorities to provide for tax exemptions for improvements to deteriorated areas and dwellings to incentivize the creation and improvement of affordable housing units. HB 581 passed the House in June 2021 and was referred to the Urban Affairs and Housing Committee in the Senate in July 2021.

Potential Sites

Several sites exist within the HSPS region that are particularly attractive for new housing based on their favorable access, proximity to amenities, and development/redevelopment potential. Possible sites are located in each of the region's municipalities.

Hamilton Township

Village centers of Sciota, Snydersville and possibly Saylorsburg

- Commercial zoning could be modified as mixed-use to allow for commercial and moderate to higher density housing; however, public water and/or sewer service would be required for such higher intensity development and are not available in the area (at least one mile way). Alternatively, limited portions of the residential district in these village areas could be designated for smaller, village-scale lots for single family or up to 4-family units. This would expand housing options and keep development in scale with the rural character of Hamilton.

Stroud Township

Stroud Mall area

- Lands behind the mall to the north are undeveloped and zoned low density residential. Also shown for active transportation connections between 611 and Stroudsburg Junior High School.
- Stroud Mall is one of the older shopping malls in the region. If retail occupancy were to decline, other uses may be proposed. Housing may not be the first alternative use proposed but higher density housing can be compatible in a mixed-use setting. In other locations, local governments have permitted the redevelopment parking and out-parcels for complimentary uses, such as housing.

West Main Street

- Opportunity for moderate density housing infill in commercial and residential districts.

Pocono Township

Scotrun

- An area along Babbling Brook Road is zoned medium density residential. Parcels may be hindered by steep slopes. Water and sewer utilities are available nearby.
- A small portion of the medium density residential zoning district (near the intersection of Route 611 and Route 715) is to be developed for condominiums and a larger adjacent portion has been rezoned/approved for retail. The retail portion will consume lands previously designated for medium density residential uses. A replacement designation should be made, in the same vicinity if possible.

Lower Tannersville

- The Monroe Career & Technical Institute (MCTI) occupies land in the medium density residential district, effectively reducing the area of the district for residential use. Adjacent undeveloped lands at 195 Laurel Lake Road provide an opportunity for district expansion; the property is owned by the Monroe County Area Agency on Aging.

Stroudsburg Borough

Individual parcels or small clusters

- Main Street - upper floor uses for a mixed-use structure occupying all or portions of 759-761 Main Street and 10 S 8th Street (3 parcels)
- 100 N 9th Street (former gas station) and adjacent undeveloped parcel (commercial district)
- SE corner of Scott and Stone Streets (medium density residential district)
- Parcels along west side of 3rd Street including the former ShopRite site for multi-story mixed-use structures and parcels along the east side of 3rd Street for smaller mixed-use or housing only structures. (These are already in the borough's Mixed Use A district).
- A few undeveloped parcels in the borough south of I-80. While most housing in this neighborhood is single-family, there are handful of two-family structures. Infill development for up to 2-unit, possibly up to 4-unit, structures could be compatible in the portion of the neighborhood with gridded streets.

Plan for Housing continued

1. Rezone targeted areas along the Route 611 corridor to direct development to specific residential and mixed-use infill/redevelopment locations. Recommended zoning changes include:

In Hamilton, rezone a portion of the commercial district to a mixed-use in villages or add a medium/village-scale residential district, including 1- and 2-unit structures;

In Stroud, change low density to moderate density north of the Stroud Mall toward Chipperfield Drive; and

In Pocono, between the Route 611 commercial corridor and Beehler north of Bartonville Road, add a mixed use or medium density residential designation.

Objective H-2: Promote residential infill and redevelopment of varied types and densities in developed areas.

Recommendations:

1. Coordinate with regional economic development entities in promoting key vacant and underutilized sites for re-use or redevelopment.
2. Outline the land development process (milestones, timeline, common hurdles) for prospective developers and businesses anticipating expansion.

Objective H-3: Strengthen property maintenance and blight intervention.

Recommendations:

1. Compare and revise to strengthen property maintenance ordinances.
2. Develop a Guide to Housing Maintenance in partnership with the Housing Coalition. Include resources such as home improvement assistance programs, financial and other counseling services, and the Monroe County Land Bank.
3. Monitor blighted housing units; maintain a list of blighted properties; distribute the Guide (above) to owners of blighted properties, and/or periodically to the public.
4. Refer blighted properties to the Monroe County Land Bank, i.e., the Redevelopment Authority.

7 Mobility

The population and economy of the HSPS region rely heavily on the streets, road, and highway network for daily transportation. Transit and bike-ped networks are limited, offering low-cost transportation options to only those moving between “networked” origins and destinations.

Data and Analysis of the Roadway Network

Local Streets and Roads

According to PennDOT’s municipal map series, the HSPS municipalities own and maintain the majority of street and road mileage (more than 265 miles) in the region as shown in Table 27. This total includes 5.79 miles of former state roads in Hamilton and Stroud that have been “turned back” to local jurisdictions through the Act 32 Turnback Program.

State Highways

State highways provide transportation routes for inbound and outbound commuters as well as for freight. Interstate 80 is the most heavily used route in the region, carrying between 40,000 and 72,000

vehicles per day. State Route 611, the parallel route and designated relief route for I-80 closures, carries an average of 25,000 vehicles per day. Other state routes with significant traffic volumes include SR 209, Business 209, SR 191, and SR 715. Table 28 describes the major network.

Overall, the state highway network in the region is sparse. Rugged topography and local climate in much of the region make road alignment more complicated and roadway maintenance more challenging than in other parts of the state.

Following a short summary of bridges in the region, near-term highway and bridge improvement projects are listed in Table 30. Long-term interstate and state highway and bridge needs are listed in Table 31 and Table 32. These project and needs reflect a snapshot in time. Several stakeholders expressed that state efforts have consistently leaned toward maintenance over improvement in the past, resulting in a roadway network that hasn’t evolved to meet modern travel demand in the region. Improvements at the intersection of Route 611 and Route 715, which are currently in development, are a recent exception.

Table 27. Roadway Mileage

Municipality	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	HSPS Total	Percent of Total
Local Road Mileage	81.1	86.76	77.93	14.69	260.48	62%
ACT 32 Turnback Mileage	2.24	3.55	-	-	5.79	1%
State Roads Mileage	58.93	48.8	46.45	7.99	162.17	38%
Total Mileage	140.03	135.56	124.38	22.68	422.65	100%

Source: PennDOT Municipal Maps.

Table 28. Major State Highways in HSPS.

Highway	Length (miles)	AADT	Description
Interstate 80	26.5	Min/Max: 43,000/72,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highest through Stroudsburg 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> East/West through Pocono, Hamilton, Stroud, and Stroudsburg
PA 611	18.39	Average: 12,064 Min/Max: 3,575/25,660 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highest north of Scotrun in Pocono (~26,000) and near Arlington Heights in Stroud (20,000 AADT); relatively high in Bartonsville (~18,000 AADT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal Arterial, Minor Arterial East/West through Stroud and Stroudsburg and North/South through Pocono; partially runs through Hamilton's northern tip
US 209	3.98	Average: 7,670 Min/Max: 6,051/12,166 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highest toward Hamilton's western border 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal Arterial East/West through Hamilton
Business US 209	12.58	Average: 13,888 Min/Max: 9,080/21,766 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highest in Hamilton along the shared US 209 and PA 33 corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal Arterial North/South through Hamilton and East/West in Stroud
PA 33	14.33	Average: 15,264 Min/Max: 8,580/18,703 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highest in the southern portion of Hamilton (below the US 209 Interchange) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal Arterial North/South through Hamilton
PA 191	11.57	Average: 6,501 Min/Max: 3,139/17,712 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highest on North 5th Street in Stroudsburg; relatively high on 5th Street in Stroud (~10,000 AADT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal Arterial, Minor Arterial North/South through Stroud and Stroudsburg
PA 715	5.5	Average: 6,222 Min/Max: 2,323/14,735 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highest between I-80 and PA 611 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major Collector, Minor Collector East/West in Pocono
PA 314	4.63	Average: 3,017 Min/Max: 1,398/4,785 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No distinctive AADT patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major Collector East/West in Pocono, near its northern border
PA 447	2.33	Average: 8,112 Min/Max: 3,073/16,418 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highest between Milford Road and Mill Creek Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor Arterial, Major Collector North/South in Stroud

Source: PennDOT RMS.

Bridges

According to PennDOT, there are more than 430 bridges in the HSPS region as counted in Table 29.

The region contains 155 bridges state-owned bridges. Of 18 state bridges in poor condition, 11 are open and have no restrictions, and seven are posted for load limits.

Of the nine county bridges, the Foundry Road (T-221) bridge over Appenzell Creek and T-211 over

McMichael Creek are the only two bridges rated as poor. Both have annual average daily traffic (AADT) volumes over 2,000; both are in Hamilton. The Foundry Road bridge is programmed for replacement.

Of the 13 local bridges, seven are in poor condition. Three are open and have no restrictions. The remaining four are posted with load limits. Local traffic volumes are unknown.

Table 29. Bridge Conditions for State Bridges greater than 8 feet in length and County/Local Bridges greater than 20 feet in length

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono*	Stroudsburg	HSPS	Monroe County
State Bridges	49	44	52	10	155	366
Good Condition	11	8	10	1	30	84
Fair Condition	28	23	38	8	97	226
Poor Condition	10	3	4	1	18	56
County Bridges	7	1	1	0	9	23
Good Condition	1	-	-	-	1	3
Fair Condition	4	1	1	-	6	16
Poor Condition	2	-	-	-	2	4
Local Bridges	5	4	4	0	13	41
Good Condition	1	2	2	-	5	13
Fair Condition	1	-	-	-	1	12
Poor Condition	3	2	2	-	7	16
Railroad Bridges	-	-	-	-	-	2
Total Bridges	61	49	57	10	177	432

* The PennDOT Bridge Conditions Report identifies no bridges in Pocono Township and 57 bridges without a specific municipal location. Some or all of these bridges may be located in Pocono Township.

Source: PennDOT Bridge Conditions Report as of June 27, 2021.

Planned Highway and Bridge Improvements (2019-2022 TIP List)

Table 30. 2019-2022 TIP Projects

MPMS#	Project Name	Description	Status
76357	I-80 Reconstruction-Monroe	Interstate 80 Full Roadway Reconstruction west of the Exit 303 interchange to east of Exit 307 interchange Stroud Township, Stroudsburg Borough and East Stroudsburg Borough Monroe County.	In Development
87649	I-80 - I-380 to Tannersville	Mill and overlay of I-80 mainline and shoulders from I-380 interchange to Bartonsville Interchange including resurface Scotrun and Tannersville Ramps. Scope addition for bridge preservation activities on nine structures within these limits.	Under Construction
112351	I 80 Phase 2 - Reconstruction	I-80 mainline reconstruction from west of SR 4012 (Warner Rd Bridge) to east of the SR 33 interchange including the SR 33 interchange in Pocono, Hamilton, and Stroud Townships in Monroe County.	In Development

MPMS#	Project Name	Description	Status
115384	Interstate Guide Rail Upgrade	Upgrade existing guiderail and end treatments on Statewide Interstate System based on Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware (MASH) criteria on Interstates 80, 380 and 81 in Carbon, Monroe, and Schuylkill counties in District 5.	In Development
11817	SR 611 Scotrun - Swiftwater	Various intersection safety improvements.	Under Construction
74979	SR 611/SR 715 Improvements	I-80 Exit 298, SR 611 and Exit 299, SR 715 Congestion reduction.	In Development
79473	SR 715/SR 611 Intersection	Realign SR 715 to create a 4-way intersection with SR 611.	In Development
110456	PA 33 Median Barrier US 209	From US 209 to SR 611 Hamilton and Stroud Townships Monroe County.	Future Development
113863	PA 33 Resurfacing	From 0011/0000 (Northampton County line) to 0051/0000 (Saylorsburg Exit) Hamilton Township.	In Development
104432	US 209 - Schafer School House Intersection	Close median and remove traffic signal.	In Development
79163	SR 715 over Pocono Creek	Bridge Replacement	Active
85882	US 209 Bus over Kettle Creek	Bridge Replacement	In Development
109964	US 209 & SR 33 NB over Appenzell Creek	Bridge Replacement	In Development
95574	US 209 Hamilton West Resurface -Sciota	From approximately 500 feet east of Lesh Road to PA 33 Hamilton Township Monroe County.	Active
107653	SR 209 Betterment Project	From SR 33 to I-80. Guide rail, inlet, bridge latex overlay, crack, and seal.	Under Construction
105952	NEPA Bridge Preserve and Repair	Various bridges Carbon, Monroe, and Schuylkill Counties. Consultant design and construction of bridge repairs and preservation.	Active
114327	NEPA AWPM 2021	Install and maintain all-weather pavement markings (AWPM). Various Locations throughout Carbon, Monroe, and Schuylkill counties.	Under Construction
115922	SR 3017 - Dept. Force Preservation	Base Repair on SR 3017 from SR 2002 (Cherry Valley Road) to SR 209 in Ross and Hamilton Townships, Monroe County by County Department Maintenance Forces.	Active
11728	County Bridge #8	Foundry Road (T-231) over Appenzell Creek	In Development
93634	Kellersville Historic Structure	Bridge and stone masonry arch culvert rehabilitations or replacements along SR 3023 (Middle Easton Belmont Pike) over McMichaels Creek in the historic district of Kellersville	In Development

Source: NEPA MPO 2019-2022 TIP.

Table 31. Interstate Management Program Projects.

Interstate Management Program Projects	I-80 Advance Traffic Study & Analysis
	I-80 WB from I-380 to SR 115
	I-80/Exit 308 Realignment
	I-80 Reconstruction
	I-380 from I-80 to SR 940
	SR 380 Tobyhanna Ramps and I/C

Source: NEPA MPO 2045 LRTP

Table 32. Long Range Transportation Plan Carryover Projects.

Category	Project Name	Municipality
Final Prioritized List	Route 611 Corridor Improvements	Stroud
Final Prioritized List	I-80/SR 611/SR 33 Interchange	Hamilton; Stroudsburg
Final Prioritized List	Camelback Road Widening	Pocono; Jackson
Final Prioritized List	SR 191/Chipperfield Drive/Mill Creek Road Signalization and Intersection Alignment	Stroud
Final Prioritized List	SR 447/Mill Creek Road Turning Lanes	Stroud
Local Bridges	Lessig Lane Bridge Replacement	Stroud
Local Bridges	Croasdale Road Bridge Replacement	Stroud
Local Bridges	Fetherman Road Bridge Replacement	Hamilton
Local Bridges	Blakeslee Road Bridge Repairs	Hamilton
Local Bridges	Terrace Drive Bridge Repairs	Hamilton
District	SR 447 (LR 497) over Sambo Creek	Stroud
District	SR 2009 (LR 45050) over Pocono Creek	Stroud
District	SR 3023 (LR 949) over Kettle Creek	Hamilton
Roadway Corridor	SR 611/Rim Rock Drive Intersection Improvements	Pocono
Roadway Corridor	Scotrun-Swiftwater	Pocono
Roadway Corridor	SR 611/SR 715 Improvements	Pocono
Public Outreach	SR 2004 Shoulder Widening; heavy pedestrian traffic	Hamilton; Stroud; Stroudsburg
Public Outreach	Phillips Street and 5 th Street Bike/Ped Improvements; high-speed roads with little to no shoulder	Stroudsburg
Public Outreach	Desired trail along McMichaels Creek	Stroud; Stroudsburg
Public Outreach	Main Street and 8 th Street Intersection; congestion at light	Stroudsburg
Public Outreach	US 209 and PA 191 Intersection Improvement	Stroudsburg
Public Outreach	PA 611 Widening and Visibility Improvements; capacity issues, exit/entrance ramps are short, sight distance issues	HSPS
Public Outreach	Additional Road from PA 611/9 th Street to US 209; heavy congestion along the surrounding routes through town	Stroud; Stroudsburg
Public Outreach	Wallace Street; congestion	Stroudsburg
Public Outreach	SR 2020 dangerous dip in the road	Stroud
Public Outreach	PA 61 Dreher Avenue Access; heavy traffic	Stroud; Stroudsburg
Public Outreach	Need for parking along Main Street/SR 2012	Stroudsburg
Public Outreach	Overpass from US 209; overpass from US 209 to Cherry Valley area would reduce travel time	Hamilton; Stroud; Stroudsburg
Public Outreach	SR 209 and US 33 Safety Improvements; entrance ramps make it difficult to merge, poor sight distance	Hamilton
Public Outreach	SR 2020 Safety Improvement; elevation creates dangerous speeds	Stroud
Public Outreach	SR 2011 Safety Improvement; sharp curve and heavy traffic	Stroud

Source: NEPA MPO 2045 LRTP

Roadway Safety

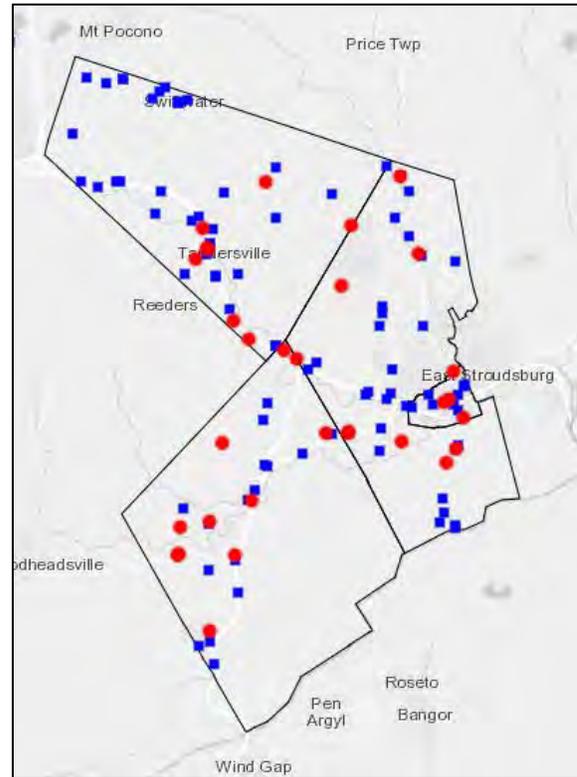
From 2009 to 2018, there were 271 crashes resulting a fatality or suspected serious injury in the region. In 2009, there were 40 crashes of this severity, making it the highest in the ten-year period. 2011 and 2016 were also years with high numbers of crashes resulting a fatality or suspected serious injury, with 35 crashes in each year. See Figure 33.

Over the ten-year period, Pocono had the most crashes resulting in a fatality or suspected serious injury, totaling at 103. Total crashes of this severity in Hamilton and Stroud were less, at 72 and 75 respectively. Stroudsburg had the fewest crashes from 2009-2018, though its crash trend appears to be rising.

All three townships saw a decrease in crashes resulting in a fatality or suspected serious injury over the ten-year period.

Crashes resulting in either a fatality or serious injury in the past five years (2014-2018) occurred primarily on major highways. More specifically, many of these crashes occurred at intersections or interchanges where traffic merges. See Figure 32.

Figure 34. Crashes Resulting in a Fatality or Suspected Serious Injury, 2014-2018.

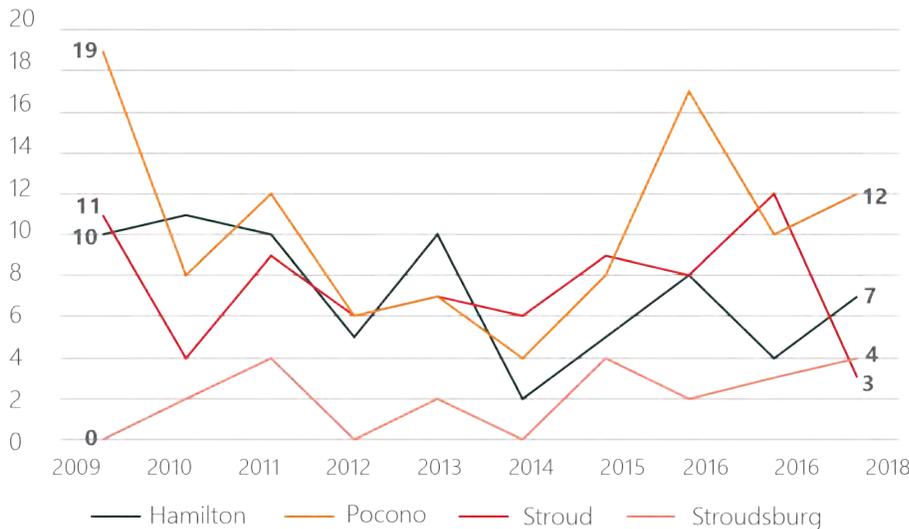


Legend

- Crash resulting in suspected serious injury
- Crash resulting in fatality

Source: PennDOT Crash Information Tool.

Figure 35. Number of Crashes Resulting in a Fatality or Suspected Serious Injury, HSPS Region, 2009-2018.



Source: PennDOT Crash Information Tool.

For instance, the PA 715 and I-80 Interchange in Pocono resulted in five suspected serious injuries and two fatalities in the past five years alone. Although most crashes in Pocono occurred on I-80, multiple incidents also occurred on PA 314, particularly at the PA 611 intersection in Swiftwater.

In Hamilton, most crashes occurred on either US 209 or PA 33 with fewer crashes occurred on SR 2012/Hamilton East Road.

Common crash locations in Stroud include the PA 191 and PA 447 corridors. Crashes along Bangor Mountain Road/PA 191 are relatively spread out, with the exception of the intersection with Cherry Valley Road. Other crashes on PA 191 are seen after merging with PA 447 near Analomink. Fewer crashes occurred on US 209, I-80, and PA 611 in Stroud as well.

In Stroudsburg, crashes were concentrated along Business Route 209/Main Street. Between 2014 and 2018, six suspected serious injuries and two fatalities occurred along this corridor. All other crashes in Stroudsburg occurred on either PA 611 or PA 191.

Evolving Technology, Emerging Needs

Electric Vehicles and Charging Stations

Electric vehicles (EVs) have begun to enter the vehicle market. Unlike hybrid vehicles that produce their own electric “fuel” while the engine is running, electric vehicles rely fully on electricity for startup and operation. EV owners typically charge their vehicles at home for short trips and may require charging stations along longer trip routes.

The HSPS municipalities should implement policies to ensure charging stations are available in the region. One policy should address the provision of charging stations at existing and future public facilities. Another should address standards for the private development of charging stations.

Car Share and Transportation Network Companies

In urban areas where most daily destinations are within walking or biking distance, residents may choose not to own a personal vehicle. While taxis and transit may be available to provide longer distance transportation services, other options are available today.

Mobile communications technology has enabled travelers to call for or schedule transportation services. Car share is essentially a car rental service whereby customers reserve a vehicle for a pickup location and duration online. Vehicle “storage” between reservations is often dispersed in small pockets throughout the urban area for customer convenience. This modern use may need to be incorporated into municipal zoning ordinance.

Uber and Lyft are examples of transportation network companies or TNCs, also known as ride sharing companies. These companies connect travelers with available drivers and transfer payment online. Where the use of TNCs is high, demand for mid- to long-term parking may be reduced. However, the need for very short-term parking and pickup and drop-off spaces may increase. Thus, zoning standards may need to be updated to address such changes in parking use.

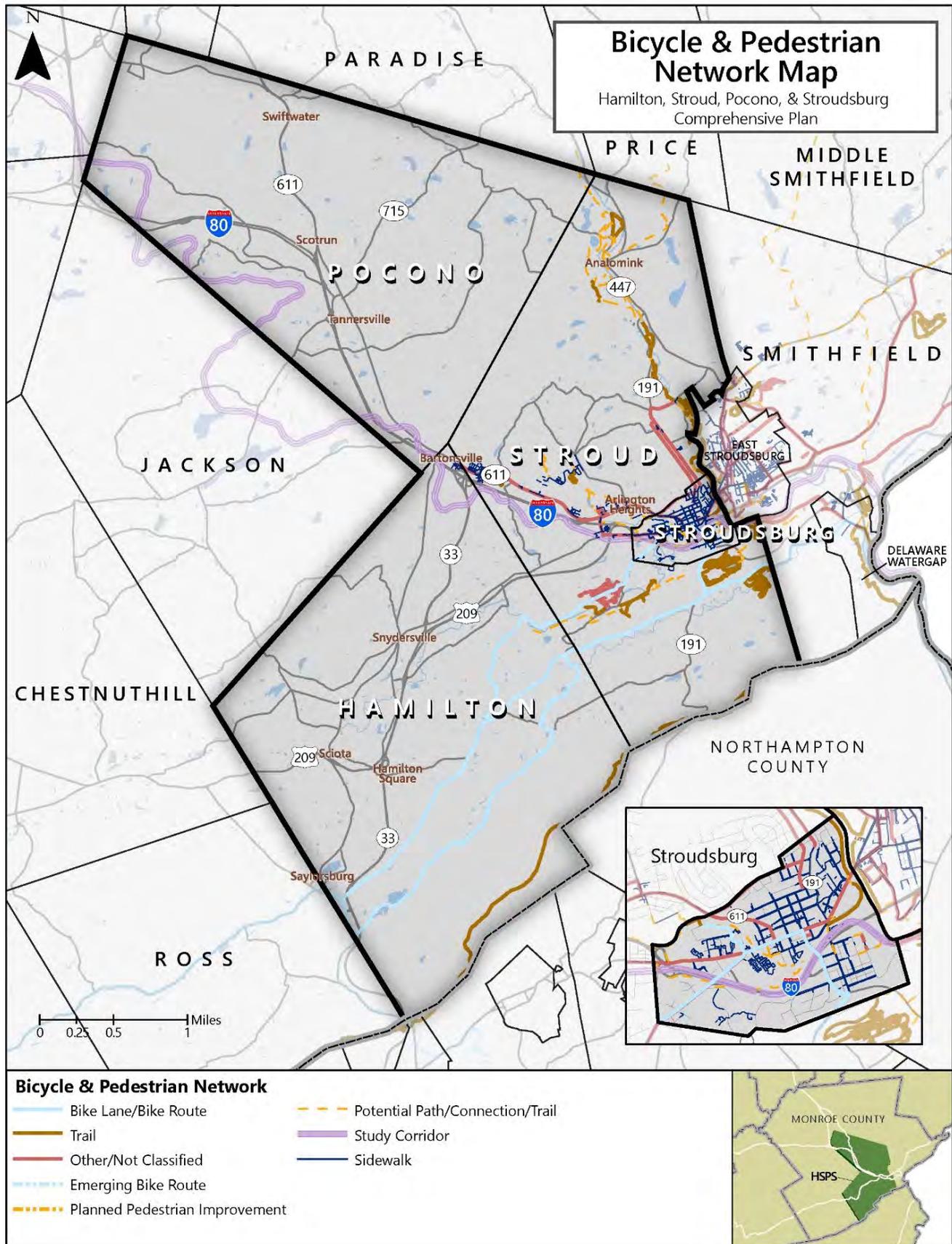
Multimodal Networks

Bicycle and Pedestrian Networks

State Bicycle Route

Pennsylvania bicycle routes are a select series of cross-state highways. Designated in the 2000s, the routes feature the state’s varied landscapes. PA Bike Route V is an east-west route, roughly parallel to the Interstate 80 corridor from the Ohio border west of Bessemer, Lawrence County east to the New Jersey border at the Delaware River in Portland, Northampton County. It follows SR 2004/Cherry Valley Road in Hamilton and Stroud for 13.6 of its 355 miles. The route is suitable only for confident bicyclists, who are experienced in riding in the travel lane with motorized traffic.

Figure 36. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities.



Source: Monroe County Planning Commission; PennDOT Open Data. Created by Gannett Fleming 2020.

Sidewalks

Sidewalks have been inventoried in most of Stroudsburg and portions of Stroud, as shown in Figure 34. Other isolated locations may have sidewalk segments but lack a significant size or network.

Off-road Trails

Three off-road trails provide interstate, regional, and site-based routes for walking, hiking, and biking in the region, as noted in Table 33.

Table 33. Trails

Trail	Length (mi)
Appalachian Trail - off-road hiking trail along the southern borders of Hamilton and Stroud	Total: 2,200 HSPS: 10
Levee Loop Trail - on and off-road trail loop around Brodhead Creek in Stroud, Stroudsburg, and East Stroudsburg with connections to public parks and schools	Total: 4.3 HSPS: 3.8
Big Pocono State Park Trails - hiking trails within Big Pocono State Park (located west of I-80, just below Camelback Mountain Resort)	Total: 6.8 HSPS: 6.8

Source: Gannett Fleming.

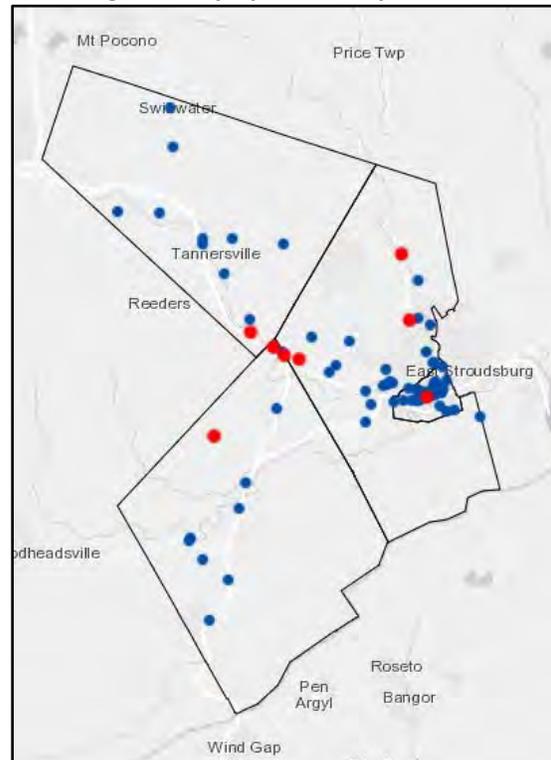
Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

PennDOT’s Crash Information Tool allows users to filter crash data by the modes of travelers involved in the crash. Locations of crashes involving a pedestrian and resulting in an injury or fatality for the period 20014 to 2018 are shown in Figure 35.. Similarly, locations of crashes involving a bicyclist and resulting in an injury or fatality for the same period are shown in Figure 36. These figures demonstrate that pedestrian and bicycle crashes are concentrated in Stroudsburg and nearby areas, as one might expect, but also that pedestrian and bicycle activity occurs across the region—even in rural areas.

Legend for Figure 35 and Figure 36

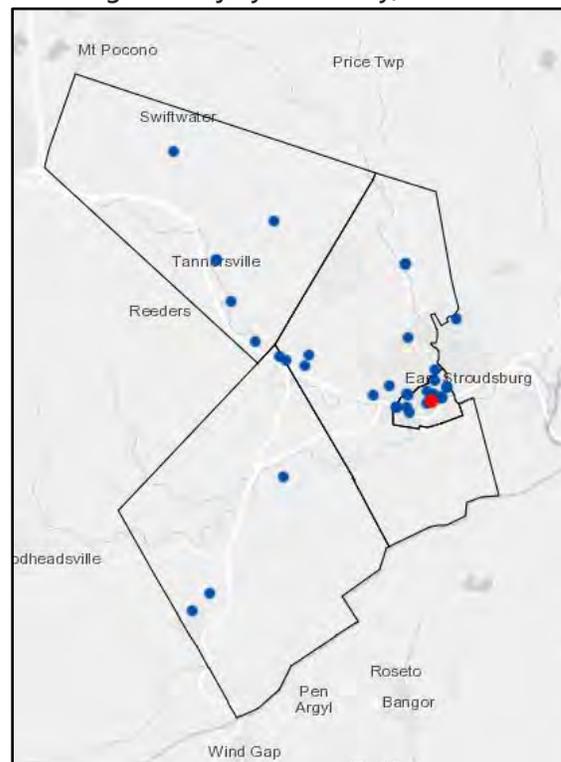
- Crash resulting in suspected serious injury
- Crash resulting in fatality

Figure 37. Crashes Involving a Pedestrian and Resulting in an Injury or Fatality, 2014-2018.



Source: PennDOT Crash Information Tool.

Figure 38. Crashes Involving a Bicyclist and Resulting in an Injury or Fatality, 2014-2018.



Source: PennDOT Crash Information Tool.

Planned Bike-Ped Facilities

The East Monroe Active Transportation Plan (2020) aimed to improve walk, bike, and transit opportunities in the Boroughs of Delaware Water Gap, Stroudsburg, and East Stroudsburg as well as Smithfield and Stroud Township. The plan’s eight

goals emphasized improving safety and accessibility, sidewalk, and trail gap closure, expanding transit service, infrastructure improvement, wayfinding, and enhancing partnerships. Twenty-two planned projects from the East Monroe Active Transportation Plan are listed in Table 34 and shown in Figure 34.

Table 34. East Monroe Active Transportation Plan Proposed Projects

Project Name/Location	Description	Priority
Stroudsburg		
Broad Street-Levee Loop Trail: South	Pedestrian trailhead	High
Broad Street	Bicycle lanes	High
Huston Ave and Colbert St-Connection to Glen Park	Sidewalks and advisory shoulders	High
Philips Street	Sidewalks	High
Veterans Memorial Bridge Crossing and Levee Loop Trail – South Connection	Pedestrian connections and crossings	Medium
Ann Street and 10 th Street	Sidewalks	Medium
ESSA Trail	Natural path	Medium
Stroud		
Stokes Mill Road/Route 2013	Striped shoulder	High
Wallace Street	Bicycle boulevard	High
Route 191-Brodhead Greenway Connection	Striped shoulder and safety improvement	High
Route 611	Sidewalks	High
West Main Street and Bridge Street	Sidewalks	High
Levee Loop Trail: North-Off-road Connections	Natural path or improved path	High
Knights Park-Route 611	Advisory shoulder	High
McMichael Creek-Glen Run	Natural path and advisory shoulder	High
Stroudsburg Area School District, Chipperfield Campus	Infill sidewalks	Medium
Route 611-SASD Chipperfield Campus	Improved path	Medium
Glen Run-Godfrey’s Ridge	Improved trail crossing and on-road facilities	Medium
Fable Flats Road-Levee Loop Trail: North	Advisory shoulder	Medium
McMichael Creek Greenway	Natural path	Medium
5 th Street and Mill Creek Road	Bicycle lanes/shared lanes	Long Term
ForeverGreen Nature Preserve Connection	Natural path/hiking trails	Long Term

Source: East Monroe Active Transportation Plan.

Transit Services

The HSPS region is served by the Monroe County Transit Authority, also known as the Pocono Pony. MCTA’s Urban & Rural System serves a total area of approximately 417 square miles – more than half of Monroe County – with a population of 141,292.

During the 2017-2018 fiscal year, MCTA served a total of 248,457 passengers with a fleet of 54 vehicles, including motor buses and paratransit vehicles. Performance metrics for ridership and revenue vehicle miles were lower than the previous two years, though revenue vehicle hours driven were higher.

Three of MCTA’s fixed routes serve the region: the Red Route, the Blue Route, and the Tobyhanna Express Route. The Blue Route travels from Bartonsville to Mt. Pocono Monday-Saturday with stops at Northampton Community College, The Crossings Premium Outlets, Mt. Airy Resort & Casino, and other destinations along Route 611. The Red Route offers service from East Stroudsburg to Bartonsville and follows Business Route 209 until continuing along Route 611 after the Stroud Mall stop. The Red Route also runs Monday-Saturday. The Tobyhanna Express Route travels from East Stroudsburg to Tobyhanna, making it the region’s longest route; however, the number of trips and stops is very limited. Although no fixed routes run through Hamilton, the Orange Flex service allows riders to connect to the Red and Blue Routes in Bartonsville from an Orange Flex Stop, upon request. The two Orange Flex stops in Hamilton are at the DMV and Burnley Employment & Rehab Services.

MCTA also offers shared-route services in a larger service area of 607 square miles. Shared-ride services are available to the public, however, discounts for seniors, veterans, and the disabled incentivize their use of the service. Of the 81,086 shared-ride trips taken in the 2017-2018 fiscal year, 40,026 of those trips were by persons 65 and older, 14,676 were PwD (Rural Transportation Program for Persons with Disabilities), and the remaining 26,384 trips were classified as “other”.

In addition to fixed and shared route services, Greyhound offers inner-city bus route service from Philadelphia to Scranton, with stops in Mt. Pocono and Stroudsburg.

Rail for Passengers and Freight

The Pennsylvania Northeast Regional RR Authority owns the rail line that passes through Stroud. The Delaware-Lackawanna Railroad Company, Inc. operates freight service along the line between Slateford Junction and Scranton.

With the passage and signing of the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Amtrak is poised to receive federal funding to connect Scranton and other eastern cities with New York City with daily passenger service along this same line. After many years of discussion, the Act provides funding to lay new track, improve river crossings, and implement service. It is split into three phases, starting in New Jersey from Port Morris to Andover. The second and third phases will include connecting to Pennsylvania and finally terminating in Scranton.

Seasonally, passenger excursions are run from Steamtown, USA—a national historic site in Scranton—to East Stroudsburg and to the Delaware Water Gap.

Air for Passengers and Freight

There are four public-use airports in Monroe County – the Flying Dollar, Rocky Hill, Stroudsburg-Pocono, and Pocono Mountains Municipal airports—none of which are within the region. Wilkes-Barre Scranton and Lehigh Valley are the nearest international airports.

Table 35. Monroe County Transit Authority

	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	% Change	
				2015-16 to 2016-17	2016-17 to 2017-18
Passenger Trips (including senior citizens)	253,538	255,859	248,457	0.9%	-2.9%
Revenue Vehicle Miles	539,950	579,610	570,972	7.3%	-1.5%
Revenue Vehicle Hours	30,505	33,454	34,688	9.7%	3.7%

Source: PennDOT Transit Performance Report.

Plan for Mobility

Goal: The HSPS region has a transportation network that supports local, regional, and long-distance travel and freight movement.

Objective T-1: Advocate for state-owned road and bridge improvement that serves local circulation and through travel.

Recommendations:

1. Participate in planning and improvement of Route 611, with consideration for detour routing during interstate closures.
 - a. Review PennDOT-prepared studies and provide comments.
 - b. Advocate for additional corridor planning as needed. Contribute local funds as needed to leverage other public funds and to determine an acceptable alternative.
 - c. Evaluate the feasibility of access management along PA Route 611.
2. Identify and submit capital and operational transportation needs for the state-owned road and bridge system.
3. Cooperate with PennDOT and NEPA in disseminating timely project information (planning, design, and construction status and schedules) to the public and to municipal public works and road maintenance departments.

Objective T-2: Maintain the local street and highway network, including bridges, in a state of good repair.

Recommendation:

1. Continue cooperation in maintaining or improving the local street and roadway network, particularly as streets and roads cross municipal borders.
2. Cooperate in planning and funding wayfinding signage.
3. Consider an HSPS municipal partnership for local bridge maintenance and repair.
 - a. Compare bridge maintenance and replacement needs.
 - b. Explore bundling bridges with similar needs into a single service contract.
4. Update development provisions or standards for emerging transportation facilities, e.g., electric charging stations and car-share designated areas.
5. Establish parking standards and fees, including provisions for curbside services (i.e., short-term parking for ride-share services such as Uber and Lyft).

Continued

Plan for Mobility continued

Objective T-3: Enhance the local street and highway network for non-motorized travel.

Recommendations:

1. Adopt a Complete Streets Policy that requires consideration for all modes in local street/road and bridge maintenance and improvement.
2. Implement the Active Transportation Plan, and as opportunities emerge, extend the active transportation network to additional community destinations in nearby areas.
3. Consider guidance or regulation of e-scooters, e-bikes, and other new technology, as needed, to minimize nuisances.

Objective T-4: Improve and advocate for expanded local, regional, and intercity travel options.

Recommendation:

1. Assist MCTA in promoting vanpools, carpools, and other public transportation assistance services. Use of such services helps to reduce traffic congestion and parking demand. Services are generally organized around common destinations, such as major employers and nodes of employment, and therefore education and solicitation of interest begins at these points.
2. Coordinate with MCTA and PennDOT in requesting transit route changes or service expansion and establishing related development design standards.
 - a. Request transit service extension to Monroe Career & Technical Institute.
3. Adopt development standards or provide guidance for pull-offs, stops, and shelters as well as pedestrian access to the stops and shelters applicable to development proposals located along planned transit service corridors or anticipating a request for transit service.
4. Participate in Monroe County-led advocacy for long-range intercity passenger rail service from Scranton to New York City.

8 Infrastructure & Services

Service Inventory

The community facilities and services element of a comprehensive plan traditionally encompasses public and community-supported programs in the areas of public safety, health, education, and recreation.

Table 36 shows an inventory of service providers and their major facilities and service areas in the HSPS region.

Table 36. Inventory of Providers, Major Facilities, and Service Areas

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg	Monroe County
Safety Services					
Police					
Stroud Area Regional Police		◆		◆	
Pocono Township Police			◆		
PA State Police-Troop N	◆				
Fire Protection					
Stroudsburg Fire Department - Station 38				◆	
Blue Ridge Hook & Ladder Company	◆			◆	
Stroud Twp Volunteer Fire Department		◆			
Pocono Twp Volunteer Fire Company			◆		
Emergency Medical Services					
Regional EMS & Critical Care				◆	
Suburban EMS		◆			
St. Luke's Emergency & Transport Services			◆		
West End Community Ambulance	◆				
Major Medical Facilities					
Lehigh Valley Health Network - Hospital					◆
St. Luke's Hospital-Monroe Campus			◆		
Education Providers & Libraries					
Stroudsburg Area School District	◆	◆		◆	
Pocono Mountain School District			◆		
Monroe Career and Technical Institute			◆		
CDE Career Institute - PA Campus, Tannersville			◆		
Northampton Community College-Monroe Campus, Tannersville			◆		
East Stroudsburg University					◆
Eastern Monroe Public Library		◆			
Water and Sewer Utilities					
Brodhead Creek Regional Authority		◆			

Legend ◆ Major Facility or Facilities □ Service Area

Resident and Stakeholder Perspectives

Results of the 2019 survey showed that most residents are satisfied or very satisfied with community facilities and services, local schools, and the quality of public water. Most respondents rated higher education and public sewer as satisfied to neutral/undecided with dissatisfied residents still less than 1 in 6 (17 percent). Satisfaction with telecommunications rated the lowest, likely reflecting the lack of high-speed internet access via broadband.

Regional stakeholders discussed community facilities and services from the standpoints of intermunicipal cooperation and coordination with the economy. Stakeholders acknowledged the Stroud Area Regional Police Department as a successful intermunicipal service department for

Stroud, Stroudsburg, and East Stroudsburg. Consistency of ordinances, such as public nuisance ordinances for fireworks, noise-related issues, etc., was noted as a contributing factor. Additionally, stakeholders commented on the effective shared maintenance of the Levee Loop Greenway and on vocational programs, such as Monroe Career and Technical Institute and Monroe Career Pathways Coalition, as players in an effective workforce pipeline.

Stakeholders also had suggestions for regional improvements through cooperation. Fire protection was the public service that stakeholders suggested could be improved through service sharing, cooperation, or coordination. They also noted that local officials and school district officials should each enhance their understanding of how land use patterns and the economy impact school district funding and local school taxes.

Table 37. Resident Satisfaction with Community Services, Education and Utilities

Aspect	Very Satisfied / Satisfied	Neutral / Undecided	Unsatisfied / Very Unsatisfied
Community Services & Amenities			
Fire service	72%	24%	4%
Ambulance/EMS	67%	25%	7%
Recreational opportunities	64%	18%	18%
Police service	61%	26%	12%
Education			
Schools	55%	26%	19%
Higher education	49%	38%	13%
Utilities			
Quality of water	62%	24%	14%
Public sewer	32%	51%	16%
Telecommunications	27%	23%	50%
Alternative energy support	9%	48%	43%

Source: 2019 Resident Survey Report

Public Safety Services

Local Law Enforcement

While residents are generally satisfied with fire protection and EMS services, satisfaction rating for police were somewhat lower. The survey data does not contain sufficient detail to determine if this level of satisfaction is even across all municipalities or if it is concentrated in one or more of municipalities. What can be said is that Stroud, Pocono, and Stroudsburg have greater control over their police departments while Hamilton relies on PA State Police – Troop N for law enforcement. Troop N is headquartered in Hazleton with a local unit based at 2730 Rimrock Road in in Hamilton. It also serves other communities of Monroe County and nearby areas.

The PA State Police is a statewide public service organization and is currently funded by a combination of state general funds and the PA Motor License Fund. Many smaller and rural municipalities rely solely on the PA State Police for law enforcement and local emergency response, which has been viewed by some as inequitable cost-sharing, particularly as agency costs have risen.

Alternative funding of the PA State Police has been a topic of statewide discussion for several years. In recent annual budget proposals, the Governor has proposed that reliance on the Motor License Fund Table 38 shows the estimated cost of PA State Police service for each municipality in the HSPS region per the 2021 State Budget proposal. This proposal was not accepted. It does, however, illustrate the potential for a financial impact.

Alternative funding for the PA State Police has already been under review for several years. The COVID-19 pandemic deferred attention to this issue in the near term. If and when discussion of alternative funding resumes and a decision is reached, implementation of a municipal fee (or other funding mechanism) is likely to be scheduled to allow time for municipalities, especially those without any local police service, like Hamilton, to explore options. Feasible local options may include

be phased out and that municipalities pay for PA State Police service with a fee. What began as a proposal for a flat fee per municipality evolved into formula that incorporates local barracks costs, population served, median income of the region served, and level of service (full-time, part-time, or occasional). Alternative funding for the PA State Police has already been under review for several years. The COVID-19 pandemic deferred attention to this issue in the near term. If and when discussion of alternative funding resumes and a decision is reached, implementation of a municipal fee (or other funding mechanism) is likely to be scheduled to allow time for municipalities, especially those without any local police service, like Hamilton, to explore options. Feasible local options may include establishment of a local police department, contracting of police services, or participation in a regional police department.

Recommendation

As opportunities for community discussion and survey arise, Hamilton officials should talk with residents about potential police service options, including level of service appropriate for the township, cost, and other factors or concerns. Discussions and informal comments should be documented so that township officials have a record of issues and opportunities to inform a future decision or feasibility study.

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Table 38. Estimated Cost of PSP Service Fee per 2021 State Budget Proposal

	Hamilton	Stroud	Pocono	Stroudsburg
Service Level	Full-time	Only serious incidents / emergencies		
Annual cost	\$545,697	\$291,9901	\$167,861	\$50,366
Cost per person	\$61.55	\$15.39	\$15.39	\$9.16
2018 Municipal Expenditures	\$2,228,739	\$11,222,151	\$18,448,952	\$7,805,898
% Increase over 2018 Expenditures	24.5%	2.6%	0.9%	0.6%
2018 Police Expenditure	\$0	\$3,556,771	\$2,954,770	\$1,483,232

Source: PA State Police

Fire Protection Services

Fire protection services in the HSPS region received the highest satisfaction rating of any community service. Here, and across much of Pennsylvania, fire protection is re provided on a volunteer basis. Funds for equipment are raised locally, training is provided regionally, and in many instances, insurance is provided by the host municipality. Mutual-aid has a been hallmark of fire protection and other public safety services, such that if the nearest emergency responder is not able to provide a complete response, other nearby responders are willing to assist in protecting life and property. This results in a strong sense of “we take care of our own and our neighbors” and strong civic pride.

However, community volunteerism has been on the decline due to the time commitment needed for training and fundraising, fewer local workers who are able to leave their jobs at a moment’s notice, and other factors. No one wants to consider the possibility of gaps in fire protection services and the associated risk to human life and property, yet paid fire protection services would entail a significant increase in municipal budgets.

Recommendation

- Work with the fire departments and companies to educate residents on the cost of fire protection and the opportunities to support continued volunteer-based services.
- Work with the fire departments and companies to explore opportunities for administrative or other efficiencies.

Hazard Mitigation and Emergency Management

The HSPS municipalities recently participated in the planning process to update the Monroe County Hazard Mitigation Plan. The 2021 update remains focused on hazard prevention, preparedness, impact mitigation, and response and resiliency. Flooding remains the county’s highest hazard risk, followed by:

- Emergency Services Shortage
- Utility Interruptions
- Winter Storms
- Pandemic & Infectious Disease
- Transportation Accidents
- Hazardous Materials - Transportation
- Invasive Species
- Wildfire
- Opioid/Substance Abuse

Objectives of the 2021 update are similar to those in the 2016 plan with a greater emphasis on broadband and cellular services, public awareness of hazards, available funding for hazard impact reduction, high-hazard potential dams. While the plan is owned and maintained by Monroe County, both the county and local governments have responsibility to implement it. A total of 42 actions are listed for countywide municipal action in the four mitigation technique categories: local plans and regulations; structural and infrastructure; natural systems protection; and education and awareness. These actions are listed in Table 101 of 2021 Plan with municipal applicability listed in Table 102.

Water and Sewer Utilities

Public Water

The Brodhead Creek Regional Authority (BCRA) provides public water to portions of Hamilton, Stroud, Pocono, and Stroudsburg, as well as Smithfield Township and Tobyhanna Township serving 30,000 people.

BDRA draws surface water from the Brodhead Creek and owns two on-site groundwater wells (well #1 and well #2). A third groundwater well has been constructed along the McMichael Creek and is currently undergoing testing and modifications (per the April 2021 newsletter).

BCRA's water filtration plant is located at 410 Mill Creek Road. BCRA does not fluoridate the water. Annual water quality reports from 2016 to 2020 demonstrate compliance with water quality testing requirements.

The distribution system covers over 100 miles of water lines across the six municipalities served. In recent years, BCRA has taken proactive steps to implement a leak detection program, develop a new source (well #3), add water storage tanks and a pump station, protect underground aquifers, establish a wellhead protection program.

Public Sewer

The Brodhead Creek Regional Authority (BCRA) independently operates the regional wastewater treatment plant. This facility is capable of treating 4.5 million gallons of sewage per day.

BCRA is only responsible for the operation of wastewater treatment plant. It bills the municipalities it serves for the actual cost of the operation of the treatment plant.

The municipalities served by BCRA sewer service own and operate the collection systems; in the case of Stroud Township this is done through the Stroud Township Sewer Authority. The municipalities set sewer rates and bill their customers.

Telecommunications

High-speed internet access and reliable cell phone service is extremely limited in Monroe County. Where it is available, service costs are reportedly out of reach for many. The 2017 Monroe County Gigabit Project resulted in an initial investment in high-speed teledata infrastructure—primarily directed at commercial customers. Over 2018 and 2019, Monroe County led efforts to characterize customer demand as a demonstration of the potential economic opportunity for service providers. The response was strong but subjective and anecdotal—not sufficient to quantify demand and demonstrate clear needs. In 2019, the County and partners retooled efforts to gather specific demand data and to focus on:

- (1) reducing broadband costs by 50%;
- (2) increasing Gigabit connectivity;
- (3) eliminating the number of cell service dead-spots with no service;
- (4) helping organizations and resorts offer Wi-Fi hotspots where cell coverage is weak or obstructed, and,
- (5) positioning the County to get 5G wireless.

Municipalities are potential customers for both cellular and internet services. They should participate to the County's effort to estimate demand for service and promote the same for their residents. They may wish to participate or at least follow the progress of the 2019 Monroe County 5G-Gigabit Project as a sign of support for modern telecommunications infrastructure. Municipalities should also prepare regulations for 5G wireless facility development if not already in place.

Alternative Energy Support

Few residents were satisfied or very satisfied with alternative energy support as it existed in Fall 2019, and most respondents rated it neutral or undecided. Presumably this topic was meant to solicit public opinion on the availability or reasonable municipal requirements for constructing

alternative power generation facilities, such as wind and solar, for home or small business. However, with the rise in electric vehicle production and use, survey responses may also reflect the availability of

electric charging stations. Due to a lack of clear interpretation and direction, this topic was not explored further.

Plan for Infrastructure & Services

Goal: The HSPS region works cooperatively to maintain and enhance community infrastructure and services to adequately serve residents and businesses.

Objective IS-1: Explore cooperative public safety services (police, fire protection) where feasible.

Recommendations:

1. Explore local police service options and resident concerns and preferences for local service in Hamilton.
2. Work with the fire departments and companies to educate residents on the cost of fire protection and the opportunities to support continued volunteer-based services.
3. Work with the fire departments and companies to explore opportunities for administrative or other efficiencies.

Objective IS-2: Maintain consistency with county planning for stormwater management and hazard mitigation.

Recommendation:

1. Implement municipal hazard mitigation actions adopted in the 2021 Monroe County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update and the forthcoming Stormwater Management Plan Update.

Objective IS-3: Maintain water, sewer, and other local utilities in a state of good repair.

Recommendation:

1. Continue to work with the Brodhead Creek Watershed Association to proactively monitor water quality and the efficiency of water, sewer, and other local utilities.

Objective IS-4: Advocate for broadband and wireless telecommunications infrastructure.

Recommendations:

1. Continue to participate in, promote, and support the Monroe County 5G Gigabit Project.
2. Continue to document connectivity gaps and other issues as evidence of local need for improved infrastructure and service.
3. Establish zoning and development/design standards for wireless technology facilities.

9 Open Space

Parks & Trails

Public parks and trails are important places for health and wellness in a community or region. They provide places to exercise individually or in small groups, to play sports, and to enjoy nature. They also support social culture and environmental stewardship.

Park Inventory

There are 26 municipal parks in the HSPS region. There are at least two municipal parks in each municipality and more in Stroud and Stroudsburg, including a network of municipal and other parks along Brodhead Creek. See Table 39.

Municipal parkland totals 670 acres. These parks range in size from 0.15 acres at Amhurst Park in Stroudsburg to the 224-acre Glen Brook Golf Club in Stroud. There are neighborhood and pocket parks, as well as larger community parks and sports fields. Because these lands are held in fee simple ownership or by easement, they are considered protected from future development for non-recreational uses.

County and other local parks total approximately 29 acres of land usable for sports. Monroe County owns lands along Manor Drive in Hamilton associated with the county correctional facility. About 14 acres of this tract has been developed for two soccer fields, a softball field, and parking area. The fields are used by the Keystone Athletic Soccer League. The Burnley Workshop of the Poconos, a public agency that assists and oversees persons with disabilities working in the private sector, allows use of about 11 acres of its land on the south side of Manor Drive for football, soccer, and practice fields. Grass parking is provided. The

Brodhead Creek Regional Authority allows use of about 4 acres of its lands along Mill Creek Road to be used as sports fields. Parking is available in Brodhead Creek Park.

Additionally, there are county, state, and federal lands, preliminary for passive recreation, in the region. The county owns about 130 acres in Stroud and Smithfield townships for the Godfrey Ridge Greenway. Big Pocono State Park is located in Pocono and Jackson Townships. The park is about 1,300 acres in total with about 540 acres in Pocono. State Game Lands Number 38 borders Big Pocono State Park and spans Chestnuthill, Jackson, Tunkhannock, and Pocono Townships. The portion in Pocono Township is about 130 acres. The 70,000-acre Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area spans both sides of the Delaware River in Pennsylvania and New Jersey; 90 acres is located in Stroud along its eastern border with Smithfield Township.

Facilities, Activities, and Amenities

As shown in Table 39, nature-based recreation activities are the most common type of activities supported by municipal parks in the region. Eleven or more parks are noted for fishing, scenic views, and trails. These parks support individual and small group recreation.

Several municipal and other parks in Stroud and Stroudsburg are noted for their sports fields or other active recreation facilities. There are none of these types of facilities in Hamilton or Pocono, where the resident population is smaller. However, in 2021 Hamilton purchased a 95⁺-acre tract of land; its future use and development are not yet planned.

Table 39. Municipal Parks and Recreation Facilities.

Park Name	Size (acres)	Active Recreation Facilities						Nature & Heritage Activities				Support Facilities & Friends						
		Baseball	Soccer	Basketball	Golf / Disc Golf	Ice skating	Swimming Pool	X-Country skiing	Fishing	Herbaceous Gardens	Scenic Views	Trails	Parking	Pavilion	Picnic Tables	Playground	Restrooms	Dog-friendly
Hamilton																		
Old Mill Park	3.3									●								
Saylorsburg Playground (Ross Township portion of Saylorsburg)	14.2														●			
Stroud																		
Big Pines Park	25	●	●							●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
Brodhead Creek Park	34							●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
Creekview Park	35	●	●					●	●	●	●	●					●	
Glen Brook Golf Club	224				●					●		●				●		
Hickory Valley Park	100							●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	
Jay Albertson Park	5.3					●			●	●			●		●	●	●	
Katz Park	7.2					●			●	●	●						●	
Kovarick Park Lands	13								●	●	●						●	
Laural Street Pond	1.5					●			●	●								
Moore Park	0.5							●							●			
Pinebrook Park	60							●	●	●	●			●		●	●	
Red's Park	1.3													●				
Totts Gap Trailhead	32									●	●							
Yetter Park	40				●				●	●	●	●					●	
Pocono																		
Mountain View Park	1.6	●	●	●							●		●	●	●	●		
Veterans Memorial Park	0.1																	
Stroudsburg																		
Ann Street Park	0.35																●	
Bryant Park	0.25								●				●			●	●	
Glen ark	9.8	●	●						●	●	●	●					●	
Amhurst Park	1.5			●											●	●		
Rotary Creek Park	1.25							●	●	●	●	●					●	
Stroudsburg Borough Park and Pool	59.3	●	●			●	●	●	●			●	●	●	●	●	●	
Westgate Park	0.15																●	
Total Acres and Parks with Facilities/Activities	670.6	5	5	2	2	3	1	7	11	2	13	12	9	6	7	6	11	13

Source: SROSRC website; Monroe County GIS (Public GIS Search).

Several specialized and distinctive parks and recreation facilities are worth noting. They include:

1. Albertson Park, also known as the Duck Pond; the park is home to the region’s Concert in the Park series.
2. Four large parks along the Brodhead Creek: Brodhead Creek Park, Yetter Park, Creekview Park, and Glen Park.
3. The former Evergreen Park Golf Course in Analomink (Stroud) has been restored to a natural state as the ForEvergreen Nature Preserve.
4. The Stroud Region portion of the Monroe County Forever Green Geocaching Challenge, which includes clues hidden at Gregory’s Pond Park; Godfrey Ridge Greenway; Hickory Valley Park/Glen Brook Golf Club, revealing the coordinates for the Stroud Region Mystery Bonus Cache.

Park Usage and Maintenance

Public parks in the region are available for use by residents and visitors. On summer weekends from Memorial Day to Labor Day in 2020, there is a parking fee of \$20 for non-Monroe-County residents at Pinebrook Park, Brodhead Creek Park.

Many parks experienced heavier than normal usage by residents and visitors on weekends and mid-week during the COVID-19 pandemic. Stroud noted a significant increase in out-of-state day-trip visitors evidenced by its parking fee records for the waterfront parks along Brodhead Creek.

Municipalities are responsible for municipal park maintenance services and costs. As a result of increased use, the parks required or still need additional maintenance. Since a portion of park usage is due to tourism, park maintenance should also be supported, in part, by tourism revenue that the county receives through the hotel tax.

From the 2019 survey results, residents value parks and are willing to pay more for parks and recreation.

Trails

The 4.3-mile Levee Loop Trail connects Creekview Park, Stokes Mill Carps, and Yetter Park in the HSPS region as well as Dansbury Park and the East Stroudsburg High South School campus across the creek in East Stroudsburg. The Appalachian Trail passes through Stroud and the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. The Totts Gap Trail Head provides parking within approximately 1,000 feet of the trail. There are 6.8 miles of trails within the Big Pocono State Park, which spans Pocono and Jackson Townships. These trails are shown on Figure 34 in the transportation section.

Recreation Programs and Services

The Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation Commission (SROSRC) provides recreational programming and activities at various parks in Stroud and Stroudsburg, as well as East Stroudsburg. The commission offers a wide variety of programs in arts and crafts, and fitness and wellness, as well as swimming lessons, camps, and events. Where program fees apply, residents of these communities pay a resident rate. Residents of Hamilton, Pocono, and other municipalities must pay a non-resident rate to participate in programs.

SROSRC has a strong reputation for quality programs and services. It operates with a small paid staff and many, many volunteers.

The Monroe County Conservation District also provides environmental education through summer day camps for youth ages 7 to 13 and older youth ages 14 to 18, including same-year high school graduates. An overnight conservation camp is operated at the student-owned East Stroudsburg University Stony Acres Recreational Facility in Marshalls Creek.

Youth sports leagues operate at a multi-municipal to regional scale in Monroe County.

- Pocono Mountain East Little League offers baseball, softball, and t-ball to children (ages 4-16) attending Pocono Mountain East (Swiftwater Campus), Evergreen Community Schools as well as residing in Barrett, Jackson, Paradise, and Pocono Townships and Mt. Pocono Borough.
- The Monroe Youth Football Association and Cheerleading Program offers Varsity, Junior Varsity, Competitive and Non-Competitive Flag football to boys and girls ages 4-12 as part of the Colonial Youth Football League and four levels of cheerleading to children ages 4-13: Varsity, Junior Varsity (JV), Pee-Wee, and Mini Cheerleading. Competition Cheerleading is open to children ages 6-13.
- Pocono Mountain Youth Soccer League (PMYSL) and FC Pocono offer soccer instruction and league play.

The Pocono Family YMCA is located in Stroudsburg. The Y offers programs in recreational and competitive aquatics, youth sports (basketball, fencing, karate, and soccer), personal fitness, and health skills certification, as well as camps, and special events. Classes are available for youth, adults, and seniors, and child care is available onsite.

Opportunities in Parks and Recreation

As noted in the 2019 citizen survey, parks and recreation are a point of civic pride in the region. Indeed, there are parks of varied size, supporting active and passive recreational activities, and they are generally located near the region's denser population nodes.

The 2019 survey also demonstrated a winningness by citizens to pay more for parks and recreation.

Where or how additional funds would be directed was not defined. A few key questions should guide municipal and multi-municipal discussion about the need, source, and allocation of future funding.

Consider the following:

- Do residents need more or different information about existing parks as places to recreate outdoors?
 - Is information available online and through social media accurate?
 - Are parks (or their entrances) clearly signed for awareness of their location, hours, and rules for use?
- Are more parks or specific kinds of parks and recreation facilities requested by residents or needed based on heavy use?
 - Stroud has a long-term goal of providing parks at the neighborhood level. Is a park needed in the Arlington Heights area and/or along the west end of Philips Street?
 - For Hamilton and Pocono, where resident populations are smaller and less concentrated, consider a local survey to ask about residents' recreational needs and interests.
- Are there public lands that could be used for passive recreation with a nominal investment in trail development?
 - Are the Brodhead Creek Regional Authority lands on the east side of Route 715 in Pocono open to public use for passive recreational use?
 - Could walking trails be integrated into the MCTI site or NHCC campus?
- Given the heavy use of certain parks by out-of-county visitors, would the county consider an allocation of the county hotel tax revenue to support municipal park maintenance?

Plan for Parks and Recreation

Goal: The HSPS region offers parks and recreational programs to meet the recreational needs of citizens.

Objective OS-1: Manage parks and recreation regionally—for consistency and cost-effective management.

Recommendations:

1. Cooperate in the provision, management, and maintenance of recreation parks and facilities.
 - a. Provide a mix of active recreation and sports fields in proximity to population centers to reduce travel and passive recreation spaces throughout the region.
 - b. Standardize municipal park rules and hours.
 - c. Establish standards for municipal park maintenance.
 - d. Share specialized park maintenance equipment.
2. Conduct a resident survey to define community needs and priorities for parks and recreation. Partner with SROSRC to 1) develop questions about existing and desired park locations, facilities and amenities, and programs; 2) promote a robust survey response; and 3) report survey findings and priority municipal actions.
3. Plan and implement improvements to existing municipal parks and their facilities; evaluate the efficiency of preparing a regional master plan with specific facility plans for new parks.
 - Prepare a master plan for Hamilton lands to be used for recreation.
 - Upgrade facilities, including trails, at Brodhead Park to reduce maintenance efforts.
 - Expand parking and upgrade playground at Creekview Park.
 - Develop the Pocono TLC park.
 - Assess the need for enhanced and/or additional neighborhood-serving parks in Stroudsburg.
4. Explore opportunities for additional parks to provide a mix of active and passive recreation facilities in proximity to the resident population.

Open Space & Heritage Conservation

Pocono Mountain Character

The Pocono region evokes images of small communities nestled along streams in the forested mountains of eastern Pennsylvania. Indeed, the HSPS region reflects this image and character from historic Stroudsburg to the green and wooded suburban neighborhoods and countryside landscapes. Stroudsburg’s historic character been conserved by designation and supporting regulations of the historic district and numerous buildings, structures, and sites, including churches, farmsteads, and the Old Mill, have had few to no structural modifications.

Municipal, state, and federal agencies have protected vast rural landscapes—Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge, nearby state park, forest, and game lands—to protect water quality, mitigate flooding, and conserve wildlife habitat. Passive recreational use allows the public to continue to experience nature and cultivate environmental values.

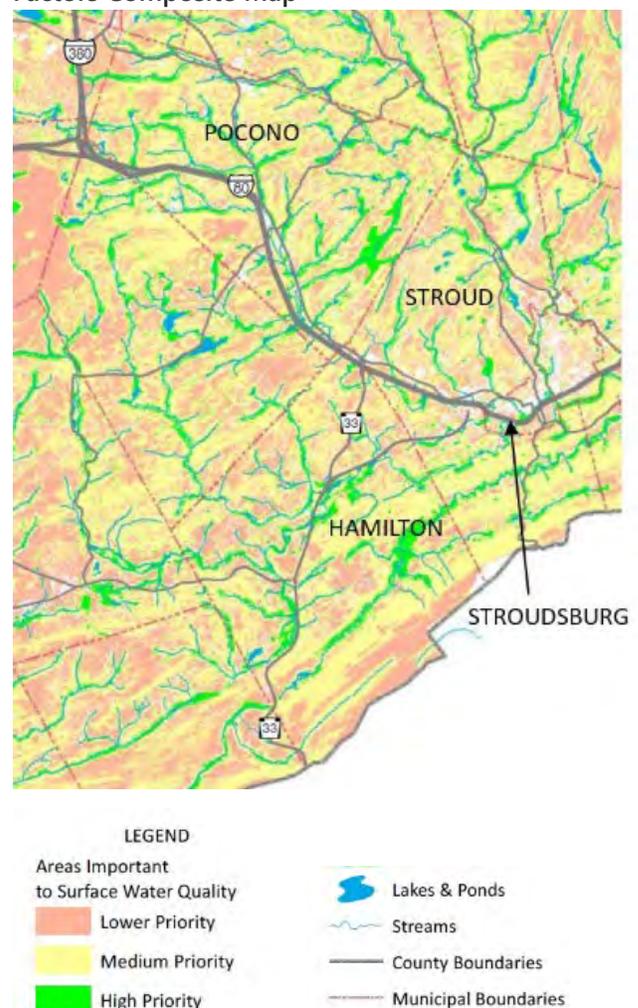
Most recently, the former Evergreen Park Golf Course in Stroud, once owned by the historic Penn Hills Resort of the Poconos, which has been restored to a natural state as the ForEvergreen Nature Preserve in Analomink. The Nature Preserve is now a diverse habitat for wildlife, a source of protection for land and water quality, and a favorite place for fishing, birding, or enjoying a peaceful walk along the paths. The former clubhouse has been converted to the Brodhead Creek Heritage Center. The project was completed through a public-private partnership of the Brodhead Watershed Association, Pocono Heritage Land Trust, and Stroud Township.

Furthermore, individual and organized private stakeholders (e.g., Pocono Heritage Land Trust) that have protected open space lands through easement or ownership.

Water Quality

The Brodhead Watershed Association prepared a *Plan for Clean Water (P4CW), Monroe County, Pennsylvania: A Municipal Guide to Protecting Land That Protects Water* in 2018. The plan addresses both surface and groundwater quality protection, advocating for land conservation that retains pervious land cover on priority lands with features or characteristics that promote filtration as waters flow over land toward streams or infiltration to aquifer recharge areas. Detailed maps of priority lands for surface water quality protection and priority lands for aquifer recharge potential are included in the [P4CW SUMMARY REPORT](#). Excerpts are shown below.

Figure 39. Map Excerpt from Surface Water Quality Factors Composite Map



Lands important to surface water quality and ranked as a high priority for protection in the HSPS region generally encompass floodplains and wetland areas.

Lands important to aquifer recharge potential are dispersed throughout upland areas based on glacial deposit thickness, slope, hydrologic soil group and depth to groundwater factors.

Figure 40. Map Excerpt from Aquifer Recharge Potential Factors Composite Map



LEGEND	
Areas Important to Aquifer Recharge Potential	Lakes & Ponds
Lower Priority	Streams
Medium Priority	County Boundaries
High Priority	Municipal Boundaries

These maps are a valuable reference for the municipalities' land conservation efforts.

Farmland

Hamilton and the southern portion of Stroud have the gentlest topography in the region. Overall, this landscape is largely covered by woodlands, however some valley lands have been cleared of the native

forest and used for agriculture, mineral extraction, and rural living for decades or longer.

Agriculture is by no means a leading industry of employment in the region, however, land availability for food production—whether for grains, produce or protein—is an important factor in terms of community food security. Agricultural land preservation policies and programs, which permanently secure land from non-agricultural development, should apply to this area. (Policies and programs that project water and wildlife resources may apply here as well as in other parts of the region.) Where feasible, future agricultural easements should strive to create contiguous protected farmland because contiguous farmland has fewer land use conflicts than farms interspersed with non-farm uses. More than 1,750 acres of farmland, primarily in the southern portion of the region, have already been conserved through agricultural easements, particularly in the Cherry Valley.

Opportunities for Conservation

Large open spaces, whether publicly protected or stewarded through private ownership, are a hallmark of the Pocono Mountains, including the HSPS region. Municipal government can play an active role in shaping the network of conserved lands and structures and in promoting conservation by the private sector. As policies and methods for land and resource conservation are advanced, the municipalities of the HSPS region should consider the following:

- Are there specific farmlands that should be prioritized for agricultural land preservation due to their productivity, historical significance, or proximity to already protected lands?
- Are there historic or cultural sites that may be threatened by development or by neglect and should be considered for acquisition or other protection methods?
- Are there unprotected flood hazard areas that should be protected as open space for natural flood mitigation?

Plan for Open Space & Heritage Conservation

Goal: The HSPS region natural and cultural heritage is conserved in its open space network.

Objective OS-2: Continue to identify significant cultural resources in cooperation with landowners.

Recommendations:

1. Meet with the Monroe County Historical Society to improve understanding of its mission and services and to explore opportunities for partnered history and heritage conservation, i.e., keeping history alive and meaningful for present generations.
2. Identify and evaluate cultural/historic resources for their local significance; assess threats to these resources, including hazards such as flooding.
3. Determine and implement reasonable and appropriate protections for significant resources.
4. Encourage private stewardship of natural and historic resources.

Objective OS-3: Protect, manage, and interpret open space and significant historical sites.

Recommendations:

1. Identify open spaces that are significant for their natural resource functions (soil productivity, flood water retention, groundwater recharge) or character value; assess threats to these lands; and prioritize lands for protection.
2. Determine and implement reasonable and appropriate protections for significant resources. Promote farmland conservation, particularly in Hamilton Township.
3. Support expansion and infill acquisition of the Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge per the designated acquisition boundary as parcels become available.
4. Educate citizens about the locations of and amenities offered at open space/historic sites.
5. Manage protected open space with regular or dedicated municipal funding for open space (with priority for enhancements and maintenance).
6. Assess historic resources in high-risk locations, e.g., floodplain and the Route 611 corridor; preserve their historic significance through physical preservation or proper documentation of the resource and its significance.

10 Implementable Action Plan

This comprehensive plan recommends a wide array of improvements to community and economic development activities. These include physical infrastructure projects but also regulatory revisions, resource planning, and educational and partnership initiatives, among others.

The responsibility for implementing the regional comprehensive plan lies with the governing bodies of the participating municipalities. Elected officials implement of the comprehensive plan as they make daily decisions, approve plans, delegate tasks and initiatives to municipal staff and volunteers, and approve municipal budgets. Zoning updates are generally the first recommendations to be implemented, followed by other ordinance updates, capital improvement planning, and public education efforts.

Table 40 through 6 compile the recommendations presented in the previous chapters and designates a priority and timing for each recommendation. Properties of high, medium, and low are intended to distribute the demand for staff, funding, and other resources over the typical 10-year plan horizon. These time periods allow for any recommendation to be acted upon where leadership, participation, and funding are available, or where there is an immediate need in the interest of public health, safety, and welfare.

These tables can also be used as a guide to the annual planning of implementation activities and review of accomplishments by the governing bodies, assisted by their municipal planning commissions, independently or in multi-municipal partnership.

Table 40. Action Plan for Intermunicipal & Land Use Cooperation

Objectives & Recommendations	Priority/Timing
LU-1 Manage land use regionally.	
1. Maintain the current zoning footprint for infrastructure- and service-intensive uses.	High/Ongoing
2. Establish an Intermunicipal Task Force or regional planning commission for the HSPS region.	High/Year 1 (2022)
3. Participate in the Monroe County COG for awareness of larger regional and countywide issues and opportunities for regional/countywide approaches.	Medium/Ongoing
LU-1 + E-1 Manage land use regionally.	
1. Share specialized or resource-dependent economic uses. Compare municipal lists of uses willing to be shared (both to and from each municipality).	High/Year 1-3 (2022-2025)
2. Update zoning to address emerging land uses, listed on pages 59 and 60.	High/Year 1-3 (2022-2025)

Objectives & Recommendations	Priority/Timing
<p>3. Rezone targeted areas along the Route 611 corridor to direct development to specific infill/redevelopment locations and permit new uses, such as mixed-use, residential, and non-retail commercial.</p>	<p>High/Year 1-3 (2022-2025)</p>
<p>4. Consider code provisions that formalize modified use regulations, such as restaurant capacity and outdoor dining, during designated conditions, e.g., public health pandemic.</p>	<p>High/Year 1-3 (2022-2025)</p>
<p>5. Outline the land development process (milestones, timeline, common hurdles in the HSPS region) for prospective developers and businesses anticipating expansion.</p>	<p>Medium/Year 4-6</p>
<p>LU-1 + H-1 Manage land use regionally.</p>	
<p>6. Coordinate land use policy to accommodate all residential uses in reasonable locations. Accomplish this through a joint zoning ordinance or coordinated, independent ordinances.</p> <p>a. Share uses that have specific land or resource locational requirements through a joint zoning ordinance or coordinated, independent ordinances.</p> <p>b. Standardize a set of residential districts so that districts of the same name carry the same density, setback, building height, and other district provisions.</p> <p>c. Develop consistent standards for specialized residential uses, e.g., independent senior living, continuous care facilities, mixed-use residential and commercial centers, multi-family.</p>	<p>High/Year 1-3 (2022-2025)</p>
<p>7. Update zoning to address potential land uses, such as:</p> <p>a. Private housing complexes, whether for off-campus students or the general public. In some communities, higher education institutions or their affiliates have worked with private developers to build off-campus student housing.</p> <p>b. Affordable and attainable housing, i.e., available area, appropriate location in walk-, bike-, and/or transit-proximity to employment and/or services, unnecessary regulations/restrictions or processing timelines, and reasonable construction standards that ensure quality at a lower price point. Consider the need for public education about the value and benefits of affordable and attainable housing in advance of (or integrated with) public review of proposed ordinance amendments on the topic.</p>	<p>High/Year 1-3 (2022-2025)</p>
<p>8. Rezone targeted areas to direct development to specific residential and mixed-use infill/redevelopment locations. Basic criteria include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major intersections, which allow for property access via side streets. • Vacant or underutilized properties 	<p>High/Year 1-3 (2022-2025)</p>

Objectives & Recommendations	Priority/Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older retail complexes, where occupancy is anticipated to trend downward and new uses may be proposed. These also represent existing development locations with water and sewer service. 	
<p>9. Continue to monitor trends in the short-term rental market: location and volume of rental activity, compliance with current regulations, and evolving case law; update local regulations as appropriate.</p>	Medium/Ongoing
<p>LU-2 + H-2: Promote residential infill and redevelopment of varied types and densities in developed areas.</p>	
<p>1. Coordinate with regional economic development entities in promoting key vacant and underutilized sites for residential re-use or redevelopment.</p>	Medium/Ongoing
<p>2. Outline the land development process (milestones, timeline, common hurdles in the HSPS region) for prospective developers and businesses anticipating expansion.</p>	Medium/Year 4-6
<p>LU-4: Coordinate codes for consistency in provision, application, and enforcement.</p>	
<p>1. Following county plan updates, review plans for necessary municipal actions and update associated regulations for consistency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. County Stormwater Management Plan. b. County Hazard Mitigation Plan. 	High/Ongoing
<p>2. Update zoning to address potential new land uses; see page # for list of uses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Compare management approaches, as well as definitions, provisions, and standards, applicable to new and emerging uses. Regionally, share municipal experiences and anticipated zoning permit applications for new and emerging uses in different locations and contexts. Then, individually, consider revisions and refinements to each municipal ordinance. b. Consult guidance from Monroe County, other PA county planning offices, PA DCED, and/or PSATS/PSAB through their technical assistance and training programs. 	High/Year 1-3 (2022-2025)
<p>3. Compare nuisance regulations – both nuisance ordinances as well as similar regulations related to use activities, operations, and behaviors in rental and short-term rental regulations and provisions.</p>	High/Year 1-3 (2022-2025)
<p>4. Prepare a consistent and coordinated access management approach across the HSPS region, particularly along Route 611, Route 191, and Route 209, to achieve basic consistency with potentially more intensive management in select areas.</p>	High/Year 1-3 (2022-2025)

Table 41. Action Plan for Economic Development

Objectives & Recommendations	Priority/Timing
E-2 Promote economic reinvestment in developed areas and local economic development resources.	
1. Identify and promote key vacant and underutilized sites in the region.	Medium/Ongoing
2. Consider offering financial incentives to encourage desired business development and expansion.	Medium/Ongoing
3. Promote the Pocono Mountain Economic Development Corporation to small businesses as a source of technical assistance and services (e.g., loan packaging, business planning, legal assistance, etc.).	Medium/Ongoing
4. Support coordination among employers and education and workforce training providers to ensure training matches business needs.	Medium/Ongoing
E-3 Improve utility infrastructure for business.	
1. Support the Monroe Gigabit Project and its efforts to attract broadband installation.	Medium/Ongoing
2. Continue to document connectivity gaps and other issues as evidence of local need for improved infrastructure and service.	Medium/Ongoing
3. Establish zoning and development/design standards for wireless technology facilities.	Medium/Ongoing
E-4 Improve travel options to education, workforce training, and employment hubs.	
1. Work with MCTA to extend transit service to Monroe Career & Technical Institute.	Low/Year 6+
E-5 Support the exchange of information to inform a relevant workforce development pipeline and land use/zoning update.	
1. Invite business and industry leaders to share performance trends with school districts, educational institutions, e.g., NCC-Monroe Campus and MCTI, and municipalities to ensure that available programs and training align with the workforce needs of the region’s industry leaders and emerging businesses and that municipal land use policies are updated, as needed.	Medium/Ongoing

Table 42. Action Plan for Housing

Objectives & Recommendations	Priority/Timing
Objective H-3: Strengthen property maintenance and blight intervention.	
1. Compare and revise to strengthen municipal property maintenance ordinances.	Medium/Ongoing
2. Develop a Guide to Housing Maintenance in partnership with the Housing Coalition. Include resources such as home improvement assistance programs, financial and other counseling services, and the Monroe County Land Bank.	Medium/Ongoing
3. Monitor blighted housing units; maintain a list of blighted properties; distribute the Guide (above) to owners of blighted properties, and/or periodically to the public.	Medium/Ongoing
4. Refer blighted properties to the Monroe County Land Bank, i.e., the Redevelopment Authority.	Medium/Ongoing

Table 43. Action Plan for Mobility

Objectives & Recommendations	Priority/Timing
T-1 Improve state-owned road network for local circulation and through travel.	
1. Participate in planning and improvement of Route 611, with consideration for detour routing during interstate closures.	High/Ongoing
2. Identify and submit capital and operational transportation needs for the state-owned road and bridge system.	High/Ongoing
3. Cooperate with PennDOT and NEPA in disseminating timely project information (planning, design, and construction status and schedules) to the public and to municipal public works and road maintenance departments.	High/Ongoing
T-2 Improve the locally owned road network.	
1. Continue cooperation in maintaining or improving the local street and roadway network, particularly as streets and roads cross municipal borders.	High/Ongoing
2. Cooperate in planning and funding wayfinding signage.	Medium/Year 4-6
3. Consider an HSPS municipal partnership for local bridge maintenance and repair.	Medium/Year 4-6
4. Update development provisions or standards for emerging transportation facilities, e.g., electric charging stations; and car-share.	High/Year 1-3 (2022-2025)
5. Establish parking standards and fees, including provisions for curbside services (i.e., short-term parking for ride-share services such as Uber and Lyft).	High/Year 1-3 (2022-2025)

Objectives & Recommendations	Priority/Timing
T-3 Enhance the local street and highway network for non-motorized travel.	
6. Adopt a Complete Streets Policy that requires consideration for all modes in local street/road and bridge maintenance and improvement.	Medium/Year 4-6
1. Implement the Active Transportation Plan. As opportunities emerge, extend the active transportation network to additional community destinations in nearby areas.	High/Ongoing
2. Consider guidance or regulation of e-scooters, e-bikes, and other new technology, as needed, to minimize nuisances.	Low/Ongoing
T-4 Expand local, regional, and intercity travel options.	
1. Assist MCTA in promoting vanpools, carpools, and other public transportation assistance services. Use of such services helps to reduce traffic congestion and parking demand. Services are generally organized around common destinations, such as major employers and nodes of employment, and therefore education and solicitation of interest begins at these points.	High/Ongoing
2. Coordinate with MCTA and PennDOT in requesting transit route changes or service expansion and establishing related development design standards.	High/Ongoing
3. Adopt development standards or provide guidance for pull-offs, stops, and shelters as well as pedestrian access to the stops and shelters applicable to development proposals located along planned transit service corridors or anticipating a request for transit service.	High/Year 1-3 (2022-2025)
4. Participate in Monroe County-led advocacy for long-range intercity passenger rail service from Scranton to New York City.	As led by others/Ongoing
E-4 + T-4 Improve travel options to education, workforce training, and employment hubs.	
1. Work with MCTA to extend transit service to Monroe Career & Technical Institute.	Medium/Year 4-6

Table 44. Action Plan for Community Infrastructure & Services

Objectives & Recommendations	Priority/Timing
IS-1: Explore cooperative public safety services (e.g., police and fire protection).	
1. Explore local police service options for Hamilton.	Low/Ongoing
2. Work with the fire departments and companies to educate residents on the cost of fire protection and the opportunities to support continued volunteer-based services.	Medium/Ongoing
3. Work with the fire departments and companies to explore opportunities for administrative or other efficiencies.	Medium/Ongoing
IS-2: Maintain consistency with county planning for stormwater management and hazard mitigation.	
<p>1. Implement municipal hazard mitigation actions adopted in the 2021 Monroe County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update and the forthcoming Stormwater Management Plan Update. Actions may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a hazard mitigation workgroup that includes utility providers to investigate ways to decrease utility outages. • Identify emergency generator capabilities for critical facilities. • Complete the activities to secure and maintain “Storm Ready” designation. • Conduct community outreach and public education materials for all hazards. • Continue environmental education center programs for school students. • Integrate municipal public notification systems with the County system. 	Medium/Ongoing
IS-3: Maintain water, sewer, and other local utilities in a state of good repair.	
2. Continue to with the Brodhead Creek Watershed Association to proactively monitor water quality and the efficiency of water, sewer, and other local utilities	High/Ongoing
3. Continue to work to monitor and address water quality issues.	High/Ongoing
IS-4: Advocate for broadband and wireless telecommunications infrastructure.	
1. Support the Monroe Gigabit Project and its efforts to attract broadband installation.	High/Ongoing
2. Continue to document connectivity gaps and other issues as evidence of local need for improved infrastructure and service.	Medium/Ongoing
3. Establish zoning and development/design standards for wireless technology facilities.	Medium/Year 4-6

Table 45. Action Plan for Open Space

Objectives & Recommendations	Priority/Timing
OS-1 Manage parks and recreation regionally—for consistency and cost-effective management.	
1. Cooperate in the operation and maintenance of specialized recreation parks and facilities. For example, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a mix of active recreation and sports fields in proximity to population centers to reduce travel and passive recreation spaces throughout the region. • Standardize municipal park rules and hours. • Establish standards for municipal park maintenance. • Share specialized park maintenance equipment. 	Medium/Ongoing
2. Conduct a resident survey to define community needs and priorities for parks and recreation. Partner with SROSRC to 1) develop questions about existing and desired park locations, facilities and amenities, and programs; 2) promote a robust survey response; and 3) report survey findings and priority municipal actions.	Medium/Ongoing
3. Plan and implement improvements to existing municipal parks and their facilities; evaluate the efficiency of preparing a regional master plan with specific facility plans for new parks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a master plan for Hamilton lands to be used for recreation. • Upgrade facilities, including trails, at Brodhead Park to reduce maintenance efforts. • Expand parking and upgrade playground at Creekview Park. • Develop the Pocono TLC park. • Assess the need for enhanced and/or additional neighborhood-serving parks in Stroudsburg. 	Medium/Year 4-6
4. Explore opportunities for additional parks to provide a mix of active and passive recreation facilities in proximity to the resident population.	Low or as opportunities arise
OS- 2: Continue to identify significant cultural resources in cooperation with landowners.	
1. Improve understanding of the mission and services of the Monroe County Historical Society and explore opportunities for partnered history and heritage conservation, i.e., keeping history alive and meaningful for present generations.	High/Year 1 (2022)
2. Identify and evaluate cultural/historic resources for their local significance; assess threats to these resources, including hazards such as flooding.	Medium/Ongoing
3. Determine and implement reasonable and appropriate protection for significant resources.	Medium/Ongoing
4. Encourage private stewardship of natural and historic resources.	Medium/Ongoing

Objectives & Recommendations	Priority/Timing
OS-3: Protect, manage, and interpret open space and significant historical sites.	
1. Identify open spaces that are significant for their natural resource functions (soil productivity, flood water retention, groundwater recharge) or character value; assess threats to these lands; and prioritize lands for protection.	Medium/Ongoing
2. Determine and implement reasonable and appropriate protections for significant resources. Promote farmland conservation, particularly in Hamilton Township.	Medium/Ongoing
3. Support expansion and infill acquisition of the Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge per the designated acquisition boundary as parcels become available.	High/Ongoing
4. Educate citizens about the locations of and amenities offered at open space/historic sites.	High/Ongoing
5. Manage protected open space with regular or dedicated municipal funding for open space (with priority for enhancements and maintenance).	Medium/Year 4-6
6. Assess historic resources in high-risk locations, e.g., floodplain and the Route 611 corridor; preserve their historic significance through physical preservation or proper documentation of the resource and its significance.	Medium/Year 4-6
7. Coordinate with protected landowners/managers regarding improved public access and signage by road or off-road trail.	Medium/Year 4-6

Appendices

2019 Citizen Survey Report

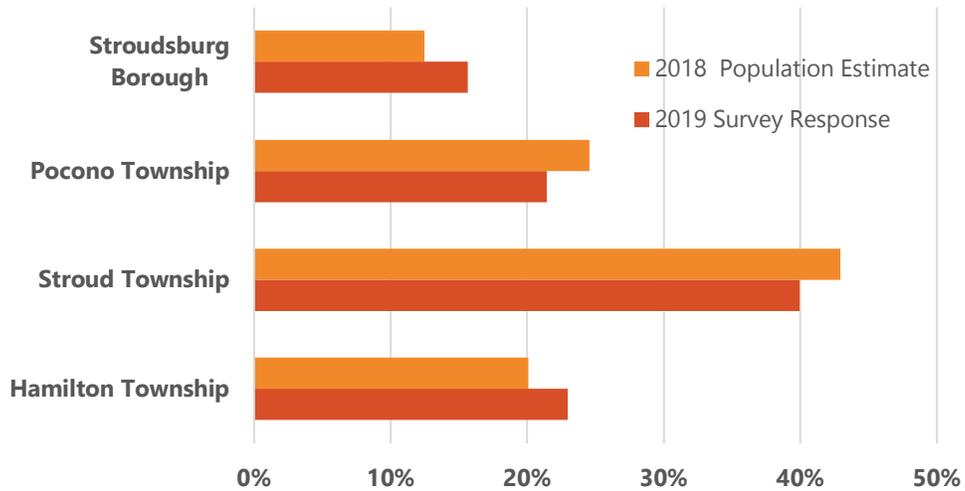
2020 Stakeholder Focus Group Workshops Report

2019 Resident Survey

In the summer of 2019, Hamilton, Pocono, and Stroud Townships and Stroudsburg Borough (HSPS) offered a fifteen-question survey about community conditions and topics for the upcoming regional plan update. Four-hundred fifty-five (455) residents responded. A summary of results is provided below.

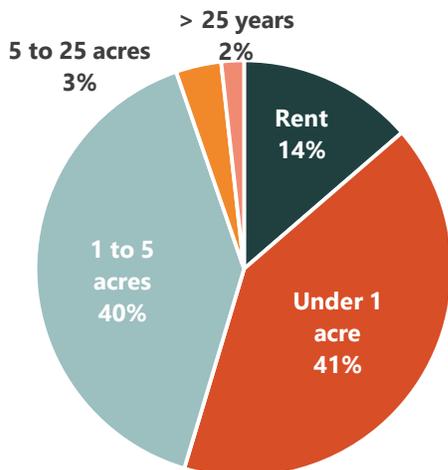
1. Which municipality do you live in?

The survey response reasonably corresponds to the municipal population. In the survey response, Stroudsburg and Hamilton Township slightly overrepresent their estimated portion of the region while Pocono and Stroud Townships slightly underrepresent their populations.



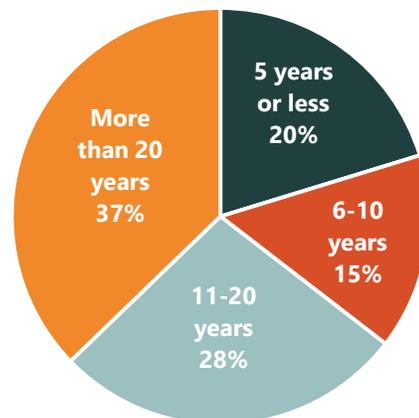
2. How much land do you own in your municipality?

Most respondents own relatively small amounts of land. More than 80 percent of respondents own either under one acre (40.97%) or between one and five acres (40.97%) of land.



3. How long have you lived in your municipality?

Most respondents are long-term residents. Most respondents (64.53%) have lived in their municipality for more than 10 years while approximately 35.46 percent of respondents have lived in the municipality 10 years or less.



4. What is your age?

Respondents spanned all age groups but strongly favored residents age 45-64. Half of respondents are 45-64 years old, which also corresponds with the region’s median age of 43.9.



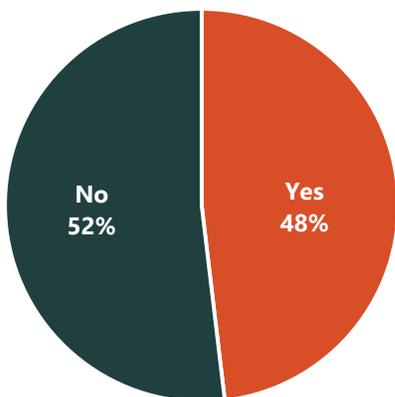
5. What one reason most influenced your original decision to live in the region?

Social ties and affordable housing are common reasons for residency. The highest percentage of respondents (27.53%) choose to live in the HSPS region because of being born or raised there. Far fewer respondents live in the region because of low taxes (6.39%) or job transfer (3.74%).

Reason	Response
Born or raised here	27.5%
Affordable housing costs	15.9%
Close to family and relatives	13.7%
Natural environment	11.5%
Close to work	10.4%
Low taxes	6.4%
Quality of schools	6.4%
Other (please specify)	5.9%
Job Transfer	3.7%

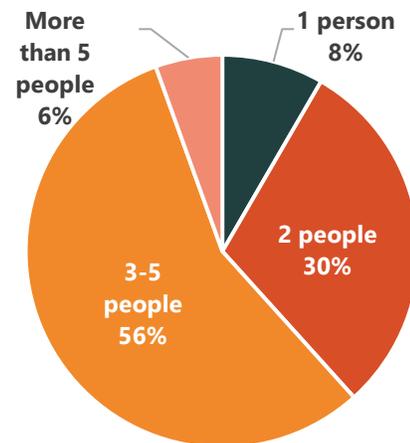
6. Are there school age children in your home?

Respondent households with and without school age children are about equal.



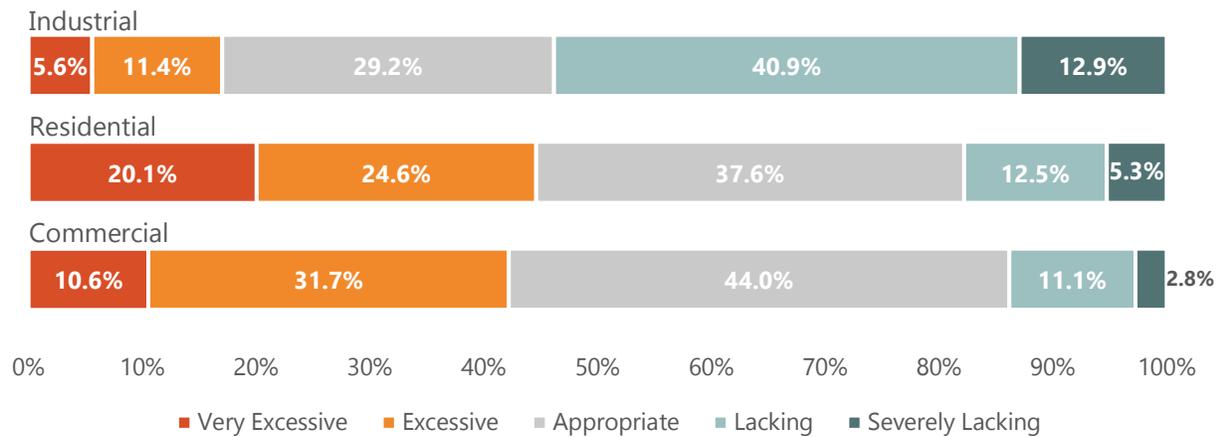
7. How many people are in your household?

Households typically have two to five people. Few live in one-person or more than 5-people households.



8. Do you believe the amount of increase in residential, commercial, and industrial development in the region over the last ten years was...?

Most respondents view the amount of residential and commercial development in recent years as appropriate or excessive but consider industrial development to have lagged. Most respondents think that the increase in residential development over the last ten years has been either appropriate (43.97%) or excessive/very excessive (41.90%). A similar trend exists for commercial development, although fewer respondents think development has been appropriate (37.59%) versus excessive/very excessive (44.39%). Contrastingly, a majority of respondents (52.87%) think that the increase in industrial development has been lacking/severely lacking.



9. Please indicate whether you are satisfied or unsatisfied with the following aspects of the region.

Respondents are most satisfied with community services and institutions and least satisfied with transportation and local governance aspects of the region.

Aspect	Very Satisfied/Satisfied	Neutral/Undecided	Unsatisfied/Very Unsatisfied
	Highest rating per aspect shown in bold		
Environment & Culture			
Environmental quality	58%	21%	20%
Rural atmosphere	47%	27%	25%
Quality of life	52%	23%	25%
Social opportunities	50%	30%	20%
Economy			
Access to shopping	76%	13%	11%
Cost of living	24%	20%	55%
Job opportunities	15%	17%	68%
Housing			
Residential communities/neighborhoods	46%	32%	22%
Housing availability	41%	34%	24%
Housing cost	31%	24%	45%
Community Services & Amenities			
Fire service	72%	24%	4%
Ambulance/EMS	67%	25%	7%
Recreational opportunities	64%	18%	18%
Police service	61%	26%	12%
Transportation			
Quality of roads	10%	8%	82%
Traffic volumes	8%	10%	82%
Education			
Schools	55%	26%	19%
Higher education	49%	38%	13%
Utilities			
Quality of water	62%	24%	14%
Public sewer	32%	51%	16%
Telecommunications	27%	23%	50%
Alternative energy support	9%	48%	43%
Local Governance			
Local government assistance/cooperation	26%	44%	29%
School tax rate	11%	18%	71%

10. Do you agree or disagree that the following are important planning issues facing the region in the next 10 years?

Many varied community issues concern most respondents. The five issues with the highest percentage of respondents that agree or strongly agree are the most important planning issues to address in the next ten years are: road improvements, water quality protection, job creation/retention, traffic congestion, and natural resource protection.

Planning Issues Ranked by Strongly Agree/Agree	Strongly Agree or Agree Responses	
Road improvements	95.4%	90-100%
Water quality protection	90.2%	
Job creation/job retention	88.3%	80-90%
Traffic congestion	88.0%	
Natural resource protection/preserving environmentally sensitive areas	84.2%	
Growth management	83.9%	
Open space preservation	83.4%	
Vitality of town centers	82.3%	
School tax rate	81.2%	
Forestland preservation	80.9%	
Police protection	80.4%	
Drinking water supply	78.5%	
Economic development	77.9%	
Historic preservation	77.4%	
Emergency services	76.6%	
Recreational opportunities	76.0%	
Telecommunications services	74.4%	
Education opportunities	74.1%	
Appearance of commercial development	71.9%	
Housing affordability	71.4%	
Social and cultural opportunities	70.0%	
Sewage disposal	69.8%	60-70%
Pedestrian walkways/bikeways	65.9%	
Out-migration of young adults/young professionals	62.7%	
Public transportation improvements	62.1%	
Hospital	61.9%	
Impacts from regional passenger rail service	59.9%	50-60%
Zoning	56.7%	
Tourism	45.2%	40-50%
Short term rentals (Airbnb)	34.6%	30-40%
Billboards	30.2%	

11. Would you agree or disagree with a reasonable increase of public funding to support the following?

A majority of respondents agree with a reasonable increase in public funding for nearly all of the listed potential investments. Road improvements, parks and recreation, and increased police/public safety are supported by two-thirds of respondents.

Potential Investments Highest response by rating shown in bold Ranked by Strongly Agree/Agree	Strongly Agree/Agree	Neutral/Undecided	Disagree/Strongly Disagree
Road improvements	77.0%	12.0%	10.4%
Parks and recreation	67.5%	21.2%	11.0%
Increased police/public safety	66.6%	24.6%	8.6%
Protection of environmental resources	62.3%	22.8%	14.7%
Biking, hiking, & walking opportunities	60.1%	22.5%	16.9%
Activities and facilities for seniors	56.7%	30.8%	12.3%
Public sewer and water improvements	52.5%	30.3%	16.9%
Promoting economic development	52.5%	29.9%	17.5%
Improving village business districts	49.1%	33.3%	17.2%
Preservation of historic resources	48.8%	30.6%	19.9%
Public transportation improvements	48.5%	30.8%	20.6%
Regionalized curbside pick-up	47.5%	33.2%	19.0%

12. In your opinion, are more of these land uses desirable in the region?

A majority of respondents agree that more community services and commercial services are desirable. Uses that are typically larger in scale received mixed ratings.

Land Use Highest response by rating shown in bold Ranked by Strongly Agree/Agree	Strongly Agree/Agree	Neutral/Undecided	Disagree/Strongly Disagree
Recreation/community services	70.9%	24.2%	4.9%
Professional and business services	59.9%	27.5%	12.5%
Small scale retail	58.1%	21.2%	20.5%
Personal services	55.0%	37.0%	8.0%
Healthcare services	55.0%	28.1%	16.8%
Restaurants	49.8%	28.0%	21.7%
Manufacturing	45.9%	26.0%	28.1%
Corporate/business parks	41.3%	26.6%	32.1%
Warehousing/distribution	29.1%	28.7%	42.2%
Large scale retail	25.7%	23.3%	50.8%
Automotive	25.4%	45.4%	29.1%

13. Do you agree or disagree that the following are serious transportation issues in the region?

A majority of respondents believe that many aspects of transportation – from road and traffic conditions to sidewalks and bikeways to mobility services – are serious issues in the region. More than 90 percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that the Route 611 Corridor and road maintenance are serious transportation issues in the region.

Transportation Issue Highest response by rating shown in bold Ranked by Strongly Agree/Agree	Strongly Agree/Agree	Neutral/Undecided	Disagree/Strongly Disagree
Route 611 corridor	91.7%	6.1%	1.9%
Road maintenance	91.1%	6.5%	1.3%
Interstate 80 corridor	86.6%	5.4%	7.6%
Keeping scenic roads scenic	83.8%	11.9%	3.8%
Traffic volumes on other township roads	74.8%	20.8%	3.8%
Route 33 corridor	72.3%	14.5%	12.4%
Route 209 corridor	67.2%	23.6%	8.9%
Mobility for senior citizens	65.9%	26.6%	7.0%
Business route 209 corridor	64.0%	25.6%	9.9%
Parking in Stroudsburg	63.7%	24.0%	11.8%
Additional sidewalks	57.3%	24.9%	17.5%
Route 715 corridor	52.2%	34.6%	12.7%
Additional bikeways	50.6%	29.7%	19.4%

14. Do you agree or disagree that the following are serious housing issues in the region?

Nearly two-thirds of respondents believe that housing availability for seniors and housing affordability are the most serious housing issues. Availability of retirement communities and availability of housing for first-time buyers were other serious housing issues for a majority of respondents.

Housing Issue Highest response by rating shown in bold Ranked by Strongly Agree/Agree	Strongly Agree/Agree	Neutral/Undecided	Disagree/Strongly Disagree
Availability for housing for seniors	65.9%	28.4%	5.4%
Housing affordability	65.9%	24.6%	9.2%
Availability of retirement communities	59.2%	32.0%	8.6%
Availability for housing for first-time buyers	55.1%	28.1%	16.6%
Availability for rental housing	47.5%	35.1%	17.2%
Alternatives to single-family housing	43.9%	41.1%	15.0%

15. Would you agree or disagree that there should be more cooperation among municipalities in the HSPS region in the following areas?

Respondents are in favor of increased cooperation among municipalities. More than 50 percent of respondents either agree or strongly agree that there should be more cooperation among HSPS municipalities in all eight listed areas. Cooperation in solving transportation problems was most agree upon, at 80.89 percent.

Issue or Service Highest response by rating shown in bold Ranked by Strongly Agree/Agree	Strongly Agree/Agree	Neutral/Undecided	Disagree/Strongly Disagree
Solving transportation problems	80.9%	15.97%	2.9%
Emergency medical service	72.0%	23.15%	4.1%
Regional police protection	66.9%	22.93%	10.2%
Regional fire protection	66.2%	23.08%	10.2%
Joint zoning ordinances	57.3%	32.69%	9.6%
Curbside garbage pick-up	56.7%	27.56%	15.3%
Public sewer service	53.8%	33.65%	12.1%
Public water service	52.2%	35.14%	12.4%

2020 HSPS Focus Group Workshops

In August 2020, the planning team for the HSPS regional comprehensive plan conducted four workshops inviting community and economic stakeholders to the Hamilton, Stroud, Pocono, and Stroudsburg to give input to the region's six **Planning Priorities**.

1. **Intermunicipal Coordination**
2. **A Prosperous Economy**
3. **Housing Variety & Affordability**
4. **Traffic & Travel Options**
5. **Parks and Recreation,**
6. **Open Space**

For each of the priorities, stakeholders were asked to share examples of success and progress, followed by suggestions for improvement. These notes reflect the comments made during the workshops by the approximately 20 persons who participated and were shared with the Regional Task Force to help shape the regional comprehensive plan.

#1 Intermunicipal Coordination

1. What examples of intermunicipal coordination are working well in the HSPS region?

- Stroud Township helps Stroudsburg with street maintenance.
- Municipalities share public works equipment.
- Regional sewer/water is beneficial for Hamilton.
- The annual infrastructure planning meeting with gas companies, PennDOT, etc. helps to coordinate projects.
- Regional police. Having consistent public nuisance ordinances helps police enforcement, e.g. fireworks, noise-related issues, etc.
- Monroe County's model ordinance for short-term rentals has been adopted by Stroud and Stroudsburg.
- Municipalities assist Pocono Heritage Land Trust in providing and promoting public access to protected open space properties by using Monroe County mini-grants.
- Levee Loop Greenway, connecting Stroudsburg and East Stroudsburg, benefits from shared maintenance.

2. What community conditions could be better through shared services or coordinated policies?

- Shared land use policy throughout the region and perhaps the county, e.g., senior housing, esp. independent living units.
- Consistencies:
 - In land use/development vision; this may be hard to achieve as some want growth, some do not.
 - In park-related ordinances (e.g. permitted activities and hours)
 - In development regulations and process. Regulations and process have deterred business investment. Developers "don't feel welcome here".
 - In regulations, e.g., on short-term rentals

2020 HSPS Focus Group Workshops

- Fire protection services (fire companies)
 - Communication with the transit provider service about transportation and utility projects that interrupt their routes and services; involvement in the annual infrastructure planning meeting could help.
 - Increased cellular/broadband, especially with more people working from home.
3. **Are there municipal services or policies that municipal officials or staff would like to know more about, i.e., a shared education/training opportunity?**
- A refresher course for local officials and staff to review duties/responsibilities.
 - More education regarding the local and regional economy and the key economic sectors in the region.
 - School district economics – how local funding relates to local taxes.

#2 A Prosperous Economy

1. **What's working well in the regional economy/employment? Which industry sectors are growing, and where?**
- **Top industries, countrywide:** tourism, healthcare, education, and manufacturing; rankings vary based on measurement by sales, jobs, etc.
 - **Tourism** includes resorts, nearby state/federal parklands, and the Pocono Raceway.
 - Is year-round; numbers of tourists are pretty even across all seasons.
 - Congestion on I-80 indicates heavy flow of visitors/tourists.
 - Resorts will likely take a hit from COVID-19.
 - **Healthcare** includes Lehigh Valley Health Network and St. Luke's.
 - Continues to grow with increasing population of baby boomers.
 - The LVHN has facilities in Bartonsville, East Stroudsburg, Smithfield, etc.
 - LVHN employs approx. 2,000 people/jobs in Monroe County.
 - LVHN has increased ambulatory (walk-in/outpatient) service in Stroudsburg. This services shift from in-hospital to ambulatory services has occurred due to:
 - Close-to-home for convenience.
 - young people don't always have health insurance and have less desire to develop a relationship with a primary care physician.
 - **Education** – school districts, ESU, Northampton Community College,
 - The Monroe Career and Technical Institute (and Monroe Career Pathways Coalition) is a workforce pipeline:
 - Offers internships pairing high school students with local employers.
 - Offers adult training.
 - Is CareerLink's largest training facility.
 - Most popular programs include welding, healthcare, automotive, culinary, and tourism.

2020 HSPS Focus Group Workshops

- Emerging demand for manufacturing and machinery programs
 - LVHN Foundation offers scholarships, invests in non-profits, and partners with schools.
- Manufacturing – e.g., Biospectra, Sanofi, and Tobyhanna Army Depot. Also, Monadock Non Wovens, Summit Aerospace, Megaphase, and Toledo Furniture.
 - Makes up about 60% of the county's gross product.
 - About 13% of jobs (2019) are high end/advanced tech.
 - 23k workers commute into the county's high-end jobs.
 - Since early 2020, (COVID impact), 6-8 new pharmaceutical businesses looking in Monroe.
 - Currently 3M sf under development in manufacturing and distribution.
- Distribution is another notable industry – Walmart, Johnson & Johnson, new distribution/manufacturing center in Blakeslee
- 2015 was the most recent best economic year; 2,900 new jobs.
- The team of Planning, Economic Development, Conservation District & Career Link are an asset.

2. What economic/employment conditions could be better?

- Quality and capacity of infrastructure.
 - Maintenance and expansion of the road network have not kept pace with traffic growth
 - Litter and trash pickup.
 - Limited sewer/water, esp. on west end (e.g., Hamilton Twp).
 - Broadband/cellular – esp. with more people working from home.
- Development process. The Pocono Chamber established a Collaboration Committee to help businesses navigate the process (as much as 10 years) and locate in Monroe County. Pocono Mountains Relators Association assists developers with large housing projects.
- Workforce retention/attraction. We offer job training in Monroe County but then people move elsewhere, e.g., Allentown/Bethlehem.
 - Monroe County doesn't offer the housing, lifestyles services and amenities (bars, restaurants, entertainment, etc.), that young people look for in their hometown.
 - Businesses have to pay more, e.g., \$4k more/year, to attract "high-quality" professionals.
- Stroudsburg struggles to entice a mix of businesses. It has restaurants, bars, salons, and offices but not much retail.

3. What municipal policies, policy administration, or services are needed to spur economic growth? What infrastructure improvements are needed?

- Economic tax incentives, e.g. LERTA.
- Limited public transit options.
- More parking is needed on Main St, which would also generate more foot traffic downtown.

#3 Housing Variety & Affordability

- 1. What municipal policies are in place to address housing affordability and variety? What's working well? What policies, if any, are relatively new and untested?**
 - Developers are interested; it's a matter of finding suitable properties/proper zoning for what they want to build for the market (e.g., for mixed use)
 - Monroe County Affordable Housing Plan completed in 2018.
- 2. Where are improved policies needed? Are there specific locations that would be well-suited to two-family, multi-family, and rental units – e.g., redevelopment sites, greenfield sites.**
 - There's a stigma associated with multifamily (apartments and condominiums), as well as affordable or low-income housing. There are only two condominium complexes and both are at full capacity.
 - East Stroudsburg has recently updated zoning to address the need.
 - High-end, smaller-unit housing (i.e., multifamily, for rent/lease, with modern amenities and low maintenance effort) is key to attracting young professionals and their families.
 - Big need for single rental units in Stroudsburg (for young professionals or seniors wanting to downsize). There aren't many buildable lots. Zoning/SALDO may need to be amended.
 - Outside of the borough, multifamily housing is not permitted in many areas where it could work; policies are very stringent.
 - Senior housing is needed in Hamilton Twp – e.g., Sciota, Snydersville, and Saylorburg – for residents to age in their home community.
- 3. Are there other housing issues, such as property maintenance, that the HSPS region should address?**
 - People from the NY/NJ metro area are moving to Monroe for lower density/non-urban living, and affordability; then telecommuting for work). This occurred after 9/11 and increased this spring as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Some blighted properties. The average age of housing stock is old but it's not a major issue.
 - Short-term rentals were growing dramatically pre-COVID. In 2019, Monroe County came in at number two in the state for Airbnb revenues.

#4 Traffic & Travel Options

- 1. What are a few specific traffic problems or locations? Times of day? Problem for whom - cars, trucks, bikes/peds, bus?**
 - The closest transit stop to MCTI is a mile and a half away.
 - I-80 to serve through traffic and for access to other metro areas. Construction will impact traffic and transit service on SR 611.
 - SR 715 at SR 611 - Final design expected by end of year. Construction to follow.

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- Route 33 backs up with tourists. One third of the traffic on Route 33 (between Wind Gap and Saylorsburg) exits at Saylorsburg. Most of this is commuter traffic.
 - Highway occupancy permit costs are very high – due to special protections, stormwater, etc. This is largely driven by state/federal permits.
 - There is public opposition to making transportation improvements, which is related to need for a regional vision/plan.
2. **Are there other transportation related issues that the HSPS region should address?**
- Transportation infrastructure hasn't changed much in 30 years while tourism has increased. The Marshalls Creek Bypass is an exception.
 - Traffic circles (roundabouts) are needed.
 - Transit ridership was a challenge pre-COVID and has worsened.
 - Paratransit is available in rural areas but requires more scheduling and coordination.
 - Walking/biking accessibility; streets aren't safe, i.e., people walk and bike out of necessity but there may not be sidewalks and shoulders/bike lanes for them.
 - Density/mixed-use development should be promoted in select areas.
 - Driveway numbers and locations seem to be unmanaged.
3. **Are there planned developments that could cause increased congestion? This could be a large commercial or industrial complex, a planned residential development, or even renovations.**
- None in the HSPS region
 - Smithfield Gateway in Smithfield Township

#5 Parks and Recreation / #6 Open Space

1. **What specific parks and recreation changes or improvements are needed in the region? Where are there gaps in facilities?**
- Maintenance.
 - More cooperation/coordination between parks/recreation and open space organizations.
 - Seniors and minority populations would benefit from enhanced programs and accessibility (i.e. getting to the facility as well as at the facility).
 - The YMCA building is an aging structure with minimal parking. There has been some discussion about relocating. The current downtown location has benefits – e.g. along a transit route and easily serviced by paratransit.
2. **How can civic and service orgs work with municipalities to help achieve such improvements?**
- Pocono Heritage Land Trust can help municipalities:
 - With open space referendums that provide a local funding stream for land/easement acquisition and maintenance.
 - Paradise Township and Stroud Township have a local tax that funds open space/recreation; maximum of 25 percent can go towards maintenance.

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- Smithfield Township has a voter authorized \$2M bond; once the \$2M is spend, another bond would be needed.
- With board/committee training, e.g., how to rate properties for future protection effectively.
- Public infrastructure projects can have open space protection elements
 - A sewer system project included easement of an open space on an adjacent property.