

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

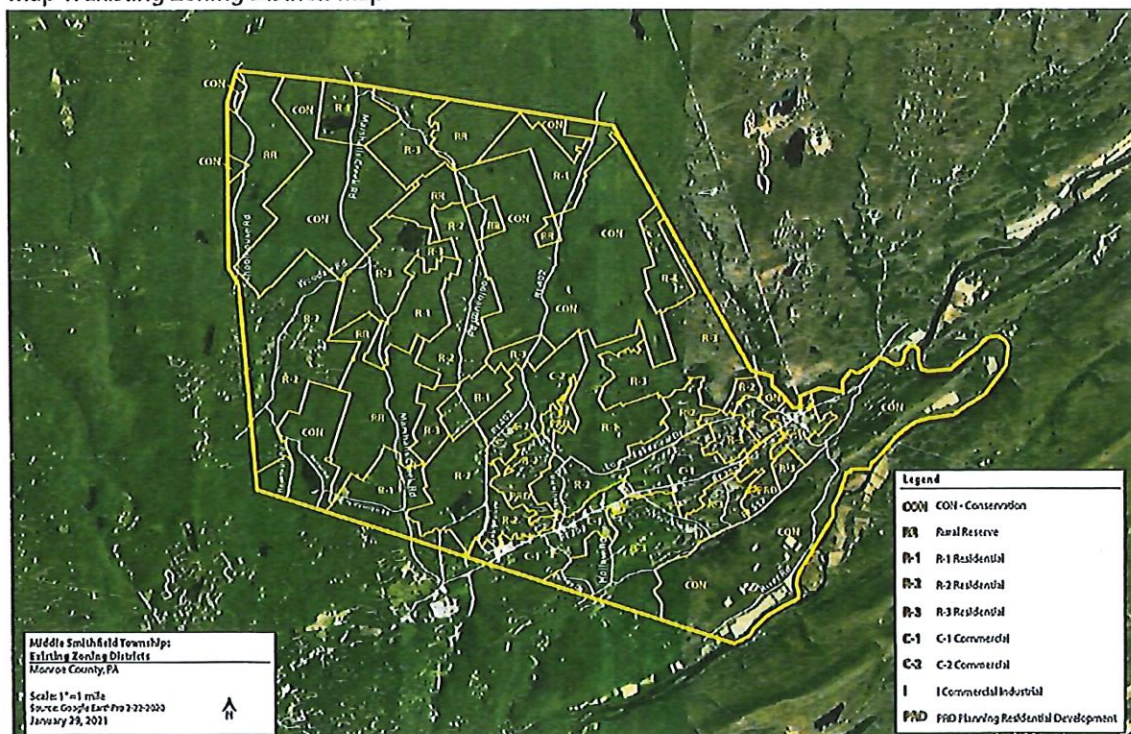
This Comprehensive Plan Update 2022 (#2) provides an additional focus for Middle Smithfield Township over the next 10 years. The Comprehensive Plan adopted in February 2008 assumed that there might be considerable growth through 2022. However, there were two significant interruptions to growth:

- the 2008/2009 national recession triggered a 10 year economic downturn in the US; and
- the 2020/2021 COVID-19 Pandemic triggered a 2 year reset of priorities.

What will the next 10 years look like from a planning, land use, and land development perspective? Although we are not certain when we might experience long term economic stability, we do know that it is important to have the tools in place to effectively manage growth as it begins to increase in Middle Smithfield Township. However, the Middle Smithfield Township is in the process of updating the Zoning Ordinance in order to better guide development and promulgate growth controls. In addition, the Middle Smithfield Township Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance provides guidance for preferred land development outcomes. However, the character of future development could be more effectively prescribed and specified. Therefore, the "Tool Box" in Chapter 3 provides a more specific outline of preferred outcomes from a policy perspective that could be folded into future Amendments to the Zoning and the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

This Comprehensive Plan Update began with a review of the existing Zoning Map in order to better understand existing Zoning Districts. Map 1 illustrates each of the nine (9) Existing Zoning Districts on a Google Earth Aerial base.

Map 1. Existing Zoning Districts Map

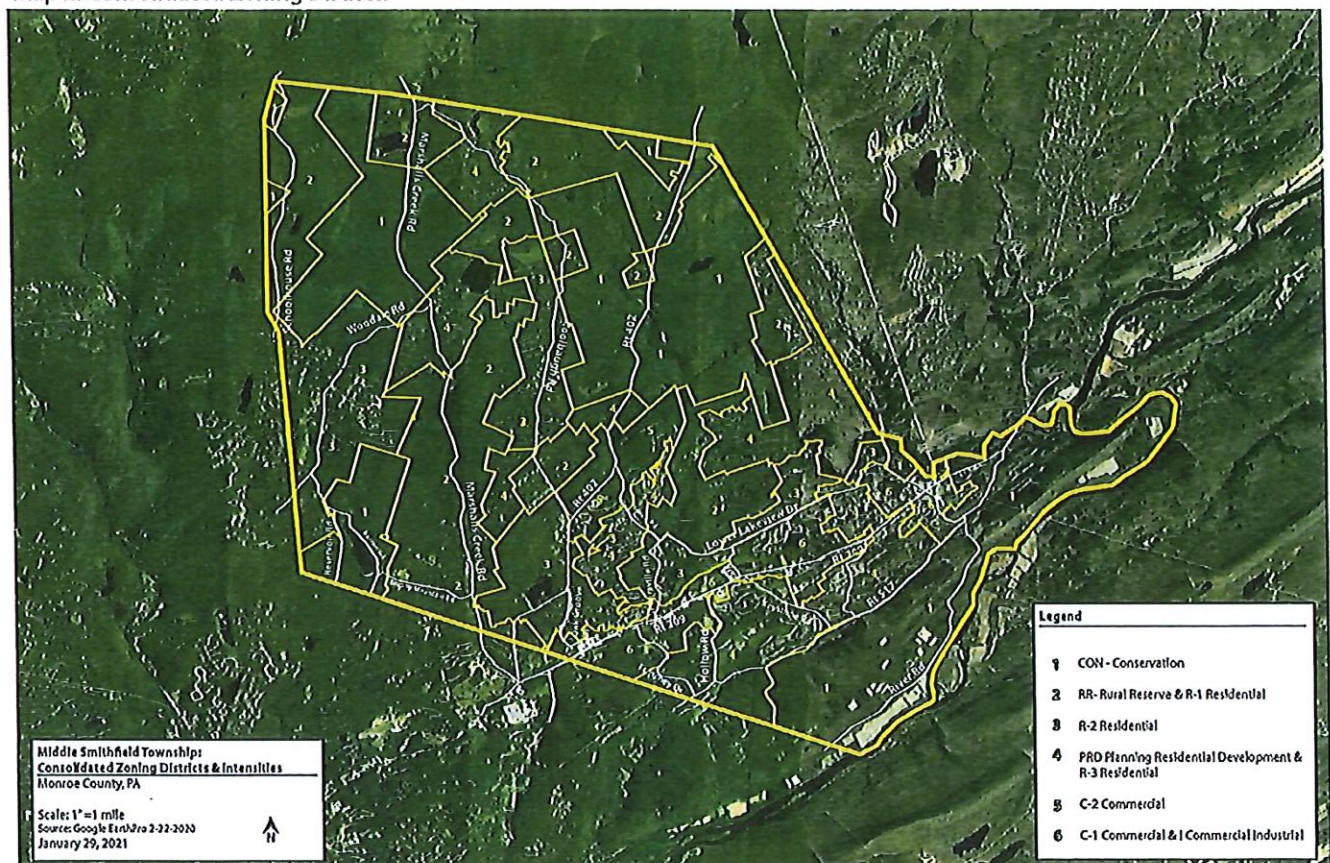




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Opportunities to consolidate existing Zoning Districts were then considered, based upon the intensity of the districts. Map 2. illustrates six (6) consolidated Zoning Districts & Intensities. This consolidation provides a more simplified version of the existing Zoning Districts.

Map 2. Consolidated Zoning Districts

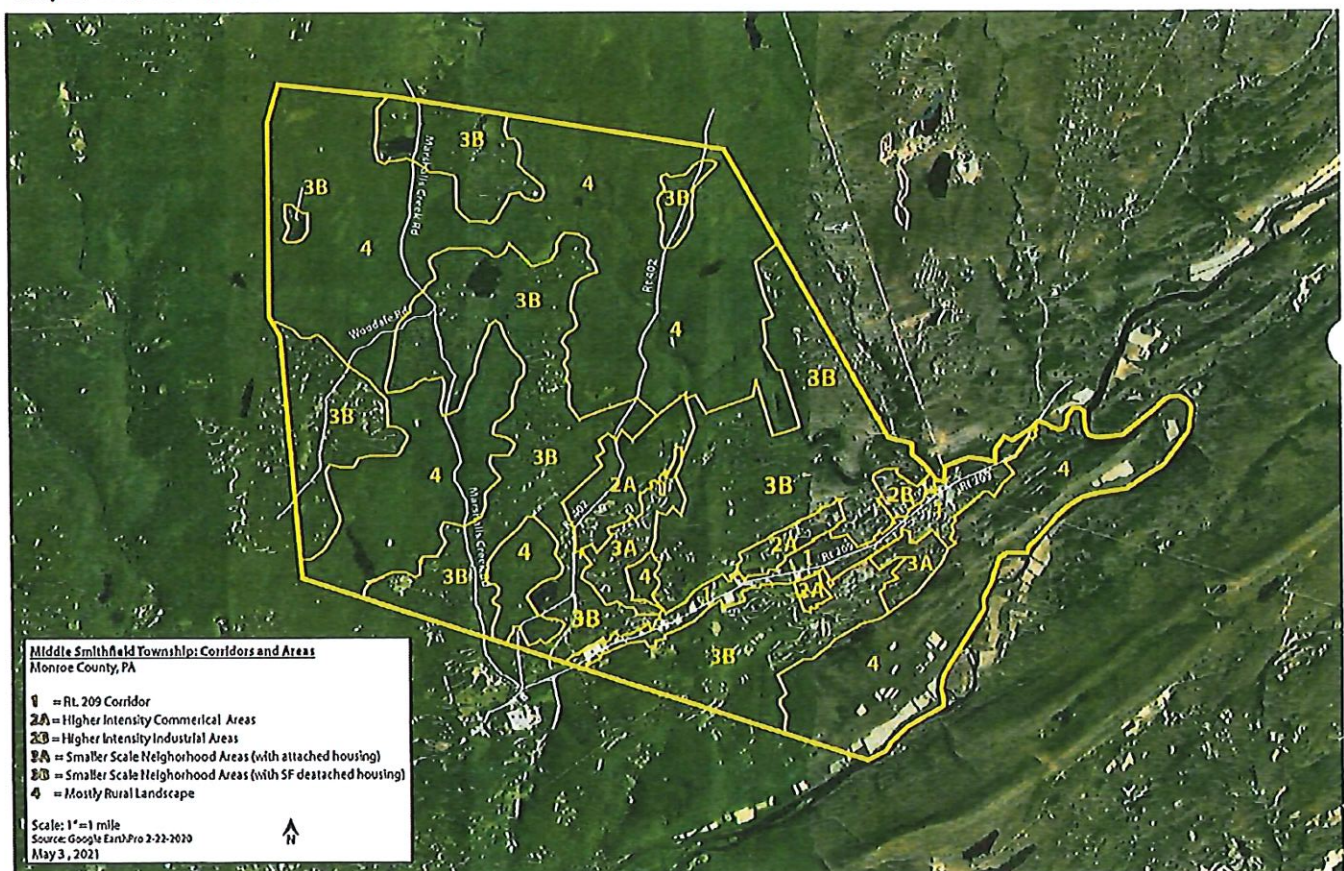




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The Zoning Districts were then further distinguished based upon their land cover characteristics. This is described as "Corridors and Areas", as it was determined that there are six (6) distinct place types in Middle Smithfield Township (Map 3), from a big picture perspective.

Map 3. Corridors and Areas



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The six (6) distinct place types that are analyzed in this Comprehensive Plan Update are summarized below, and described in Chapter 3 from the perspective of "Considerations for Future Land Use & Development Practices".

<u>Corridors &amp; Area</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Predominant Zoning District</u>	<u>Goal/Vision and related Notes</u>
1	Route 209 Corridor	C-1 District	Main Street Environment, as a place to dine, shop, work, live, learn and play
2A	Moderate Intensity Commercial Areas	C-2 District (and C-1 not abutting Rt 209)	Transitional zone between "Main Street" and small scale neighborhoods
2B	Higher Intensity Industrial Areas	Industrial District	Zone for industrial activity
3A	Smaller Scale Neighborhood Areas (with mixed housing)	PRD Districts	Compact groups of attached dwellings
3B	Larger Scale Neighborhood Areas (single family attached & detached)	R-3 and R-2 Districts	Rural neighborhoods and recreational areas
4	Mostly Rural Landscape	CON and RR Districts	Preserve heritage, natural resources, and rural character



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As the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee began to analyze the six (6) distinct place types, preferences were voiced relative to what is most important from a future land use perspective, and from a future development practices perspective. The Steering Committee identified the 18 most important topics outlined below:

1. Building/Development Types
2. Housing Opportunities
3. Accessory Structures
4. Coverages
5. Heights
6. Setbacks
7. Road Characteristic & Aesthetics
8. Road Widths
9. Utilities
10. Stormwater Management & Green Infrastructure
11. Alternative Energy Opportunities
12. Environmental
13. Historic and Natural Resource Protection
14. Parks, Recreational Opportunities & Community Amenities
15. General Design Elements
16. Architectural Design Elements
17. Landscape Design Elements
18. Signage Design Elements

Each of these 18 topics are addressed in Chapter 3 in order to equip the "Tool Box" with polices to address:

- + future land development plan submissions
- + requests for zoning ordinance amendments
- + redevelopment plans
- + revitalization plans
- + streetscape plans

The Considerations described and depicted in Chapter 3 are then profiled in Chapter 4 as a series of action items for the next 10 years