

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE: 2022
Middle Smithfield Township - Monroe County, Pennsylvania

B. PARKS & RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Parks and recreational facilities are perhaps the most difficult facilities to estimate in terms of future needs due to the need to balance the types of activities, myriad owners and jurisdictions, and the individual preferences and values embraced by a particular community. Oftentimes a community will undertake a Comprehensive Open Space and Recreation Plan in order to give proper attention to the complexities and needs of this important municipal service.

Open space and recreation in Middle Smithfield Township is provided through an exceptionally wide variety of public and private entities. The Township is especially unique in that it benefits from state and federal open space and recreational opportunities, even though these are oriented beyond Township residents to a regional, and even national, population. Locally, there are opportunities provided by the Township itself, as well as regional entities and private facilities.

Municipal Open Space and Recreation Facilities

At the Township level, the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) recommends the following categories of parks and open space as a way to organize the land resources found within a community¹:

Community Park

- Typically between 30 and 50 acres in size
- Serves residents and other park users within a 6 mile radius
- Meets multiple recreational needs

Neighborhood Park

- Typically between 5 and 10 acres in size
- Serves residents and other park users throughout the Township
- Focus on casual active and passive facilities
- May include parks on school sites

Mini-Park

- Typically less than one acre in size
- Serves a small (1/4 mile or more), secluded area or single neighborhood
- Used to address limited or isolated recreational needs
- May include playground area or tot lot

School Park

- Size and location vary
- Allows for expanding the recreational, social, and educational opportunities in an efficient and cost effective manner

¹ *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines*, National Recreation and Park Association, 1996

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There are five municipal parks within Middle Smithfield Township: Echo Lake Park, Judy Putek Memorial Park, the W. Leroy Lewis Dog Park, and Community Gardens Park. are owned and operated by the Township. Resica Park is owned by the East Stroudsburg Area School District.

In addition, the Township owns and operates two (2) regional parks with Smithfield Township, including: Mt. Nebo Park and River's Edge Bike Park.

Echo Lake Park is 16.8 acres, with a walking trail, and soccer/football field. There is also playground equipment, picnic pavilions and facilities (including grills), and BSA fitness area. In addition, the Park is also the home of the Community & Cultural Center which contains community space, the Library of the Smithfields, and is designated as a Red Cross emergency shelter.... The Park is centrally located along the Route 209 corridor, and thus conveniently located within the greatest concentration of population in the Township.

Resica Park is a 30-acre park owned by the East Stroudsburg Area School District (ESAD), and the Township leases this land from the ESAD, and maintains the park. This park has a playground, and also provides facilities for sand volleyball, horseshoes, bocce ball, a baseball diamond, picnic area, and a walking trail. In addition, there is a public pavilion that can be reserved for special occasions. However, park facilities are only open during non-school hours, from dawn to dusk.

Judy Putek Memorial Park, located at Municipal Drive and Lower Lakeview Drive, is a 12.837 acre park. The Park is primarily undeveloped forest and wetlands with open lawn areas. The Park has passive recreational activities in the form of walking paths and wildlife watching. In addition, the Park is host to a live tree stake nursery, which is implemented and operated by Penn State Extension. The Park is also adjacent to trails on the Pocono Palace property.

The W. Leroy Lewis Dog Park is an approximately 2 acre park, located along Route 209 in the eastern portion of the Township. The Park includes two (2) fenced off-leash dog areas, and includes benches, picnic tables, and a water pump that provides water for the dogs. In addition, a small garden with a flag pole and benches is at the front of the property along Millford Road.

Community Gardens Park, located at 989 Coolbaugh Road, is 47.57 acres with approximately one (1) acre developed so far. The developed area is a community garden with 100 raised garden beds inside deer fencings. The garden area includes a shed, shade structure, water tanks, and compost areas. In addition, there is a playground, parking lot, and apiary located within the developed portion of the Park. The Park offers opportunities for the growing of flowers and vegetables by community members. The remainder of the property is undeveloped forest.

The Resica Boy Scout Camp, along Route 402, has public access areas for Middle Smithfield Township residents to hike and fish. This public access was part of the agreement for the purchase with Open Space Funds.

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Hidden Lake Park is also in Middle Smithfield Township. The Park is along the Delaware River, and is part of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

Federal, State, Regional and Private Facilities

In addition to its own facilities, Middle Smithfield is fortunate to have several alternative opportunities for outdoor recreation offered within its boundaries, including proximity to both a national recreation area and state forestlands. There are more than 2,300 acres of the Delaware State Forest and 3,600 acres of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. The State Forest provides a variety of recreational opportunities including hunting, fishing, hiking, educational services, and camping. The National Recreation Area also provides these opportunities plus water activities such as swimming and paddling.

Mt. Nebo Park, preserved through regional open space bond funds, and Rivers Edge Bike Park are additional regional parklands in Middle Smithfield Township. Mount Nebo Park and Rivers Edge Bike Park are both located in Smithfield Township, but managed jointly by Smithfield and Middle Smithfield Townships.

There are also private lands that add to the recreational assets available within the Township. The Resica Falls Boy Scout Reservation is comprised of over 4,000 acres of pristine natural lands. There are 4,200 acres preserved through conservation easements, with the goal of preserving the entire property through a multi-year partnership between the Pennsylvania DCNR, Monroe County, and the Township. Also, the Stony Acres is a 119-acre wildlife area owned by the students of East Stroudsburg University. Hiking, camping, orienteering, educational services are among the activities available at the facility. Primarily oriented to the University population, public use can be arranged through the University. All of these additional opportunities should be taken into account when planning for the recreational and open space needs of the Township as these facilities and assets should enhance and complement each other, and not duplicate resources or target populations.

Recreational Planning

Middle Smithfield Township does not have a Comprehensive Open Space and Recreation Plan to analyze the complex recreational demands, existing and future, placed on the Township's facilities.

The Eastern Monroe Regional Park Commission and Monroe County have each completed Open Space Plans that focus on regional park and trail networks. Recreational facilities also include the Township's existing and planned network of trails and pathways. The benefits of trails are important to residents and visitors alike. The Township has an opportunity to cooperate and coordinate with the County and others to build a network of green infrastructure and be a part of a County that is "Forever Green". This network can form the spine to which local trails connect providing greater access and enjoyment of the facilities offered throughout the region.

Summary of Existing Recreational Opportunities

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Middle Smithfield is endowed with a wide variety of park and recreation facilities that enhance the quality of life of its residents. The key is to ensure that these facilities offer the right combination of active and passive activities as demanded by the Township's residents and visitors, regardless of age or ability. In addition to the park classifications, the NRPA also recommends level of service (LOS) standards for different activities. These standards are a ratio of acreage of different types of parkland and/or recreational activity per 1,000 persons in order to provide a recommended minimum amount of space needed for recreation services desired by residents. These are only advisory, but can provide a starting point for a more in depth conversation and planning effort by the Township.

In terms of location, open space and recreational opportunities are dispersed across the Township, but more heavily concentrated along the Route 209 Corridor, where the larger Township, regional and even state community is well served by the number and diversity of activities provided. For Township residents specifically, there are three facilities located in this area, while Community Gardens Park and Resica Park are located to further north along Route 402. These existing facilities are located in the areas with the greatest proposed concentrations of growth.

= All of these facilities fall into the community park category and require a vehicle for the vast majority of visitors and residents. Access to these parks presents a challenge to residents desiring recreation and open space opportunities close to home and within walking distance. These needs can be fulfilled by the mini-park and neighborhood park categories or through private open space developed as part of a development plan and owned and maintained by a home-owners association. However, many of the older communities, particularly those developed as vacation areas and/or without maintenance associations are more in need of such facilities as they are converted to year round use.

As new developments are proposed that meet the need for new housing, the Township will need to look for opportunities to retrofit existing neighborhoods looking for such opportunities and ensure that such local amenities are provided close to home.

Goal for Parks and Recreational Facilities

In specific regards to Parks and Recreational Facilities, the Township's goal is to **create adequate recreational opportunities to serve the diverse needs and desires of Township residents and visitors.**

This goal is supported by the following five objectives:

1. Maintain and enhance existing municipally owned park and recreational facilities.
2. Expand recreational programs and opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities.
3. Cooperate with other organizations and agencies to encourage full use of existing recreational facilities.

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4. Establish an interconnected system of parks, facilities, and trails that link historic, scenic, and cultural assets to each other and the Township's neighborhoods and centers.
5. Provide incentives for dedication of open space to the Township.

Recommendations for Park and Recreational Facilities

1. The Township should consider initiating a Comprehensive Open Space and Recreation Plan that not only assesses recreational and open space facilities, services and conditions, but also analyzes future demand in terms of the land area and activities, and proposes an interconnected system of park and other facilities that coincides and builds on the efforts of Monroe County.

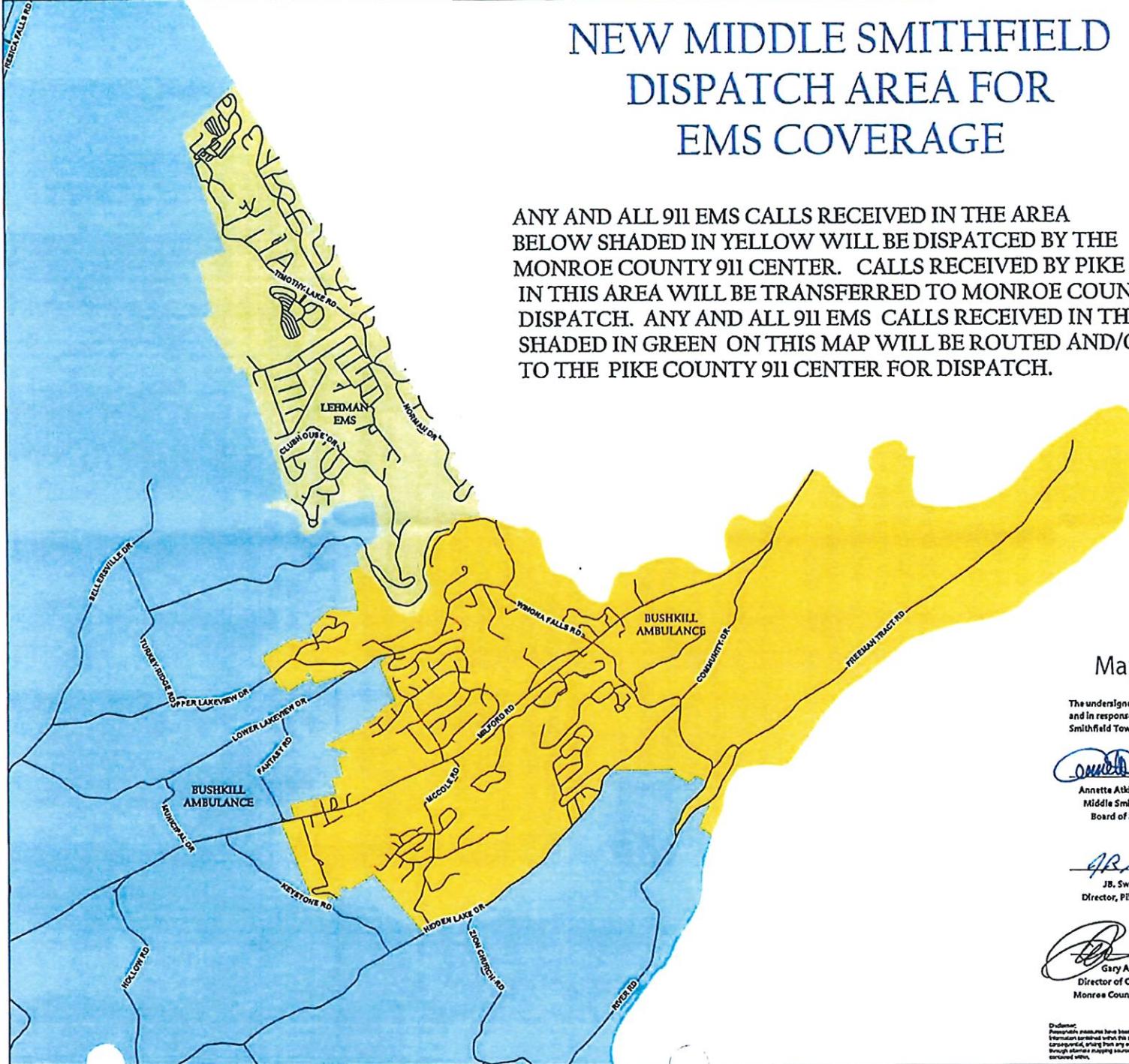
The purpose of this plan should be to establish a both a "wish list" and acceptable level of service standards will guide the Township as it grows to ensure that adequate facilities are in place or can be budgeted. This plan should also provide the basis for a recreational component of the capital improvements program so that the Township can acquire additional lands and/or provide and expand needed facilities, over time.

2. Future demand for parkland and recreational opportunities can be addressed in several ways. First, the Township may seek to further develop partnerships with the State and the National Park Service to locate certain activities within the DWGNRA and share the costs of construction and maintenance. Other partnerships should continue to include the East Stroudsburg Area School District (as with Resica Park), and nonprofit entities, such as the YMCA and sports leagues.
3. The Township should participate in an ongoing dialogue with Smithfield Township and Monroe County in order to jointly plan and provide for open space and trails that benefit not only the County, but also the region. The Township can also participate in the marketing of "Forever Green", participate on the County Open Space Advisory Board, and promote the County's Open Space Acquisition Program as well as consider a partnership program of its own. This type of cooperative outreach and marketing can result in broader support for the park system as a whole, but can also assist the Township in gaining technical assistance, grant funding, and support in forming non-profit or volunteer groups willing to assist in the maintenance of area parks and trails.
4. Another tool is to require developers to dedicate open space to the Township for use as a public park or to pay a recreational fee-in-lieu whenever development is proposed. This supports the Township's future costs to acquire and maintain recreational facilities, as well as trails and pathways, or to assist in retrofitting older neighborhoods with increased recreational facilities and/or open space as needed.

NEW MIDDLE SMITHFIELD DISPATCH AREA FOR EMS COVERAGE



ANY AND ALL 911 EMS CALLS RECEIVED IN THE AREA BELOW SHADED IN YELLOW WILL BE DISPATCHED BY THE MONROE COUNTY 911 CENTER. CALLS RECEIVED BY PIKE COUNTY 911 IN THIS AREA WILL BE TRANSFERRED TO MONROE COUNTY 911 FOR DISPATCH. ANY AND ALL 911 EMS CALLS RECEIVED IN THE AREA BELOW SHADED IN GREEN ON THIS MAP WILL BE ROUTED AND/OR TRANSFERRED TO THE PIKE COUNTY 911 CENTER FOR DISPATCH.



Map 6-1: EMS Coverage

The undersigned parties agree to follow the dispatch maps as presented and in response to the municipal designations as ordered by the Middle Smithfield Township Board of Supervisors:

Annette Atkinson
Middle Smithfield Township
Board of Supervisors

3/25/2022
Date

JB. Swartwood
Director, Pike County 9-1-1

3/25/2022
Date

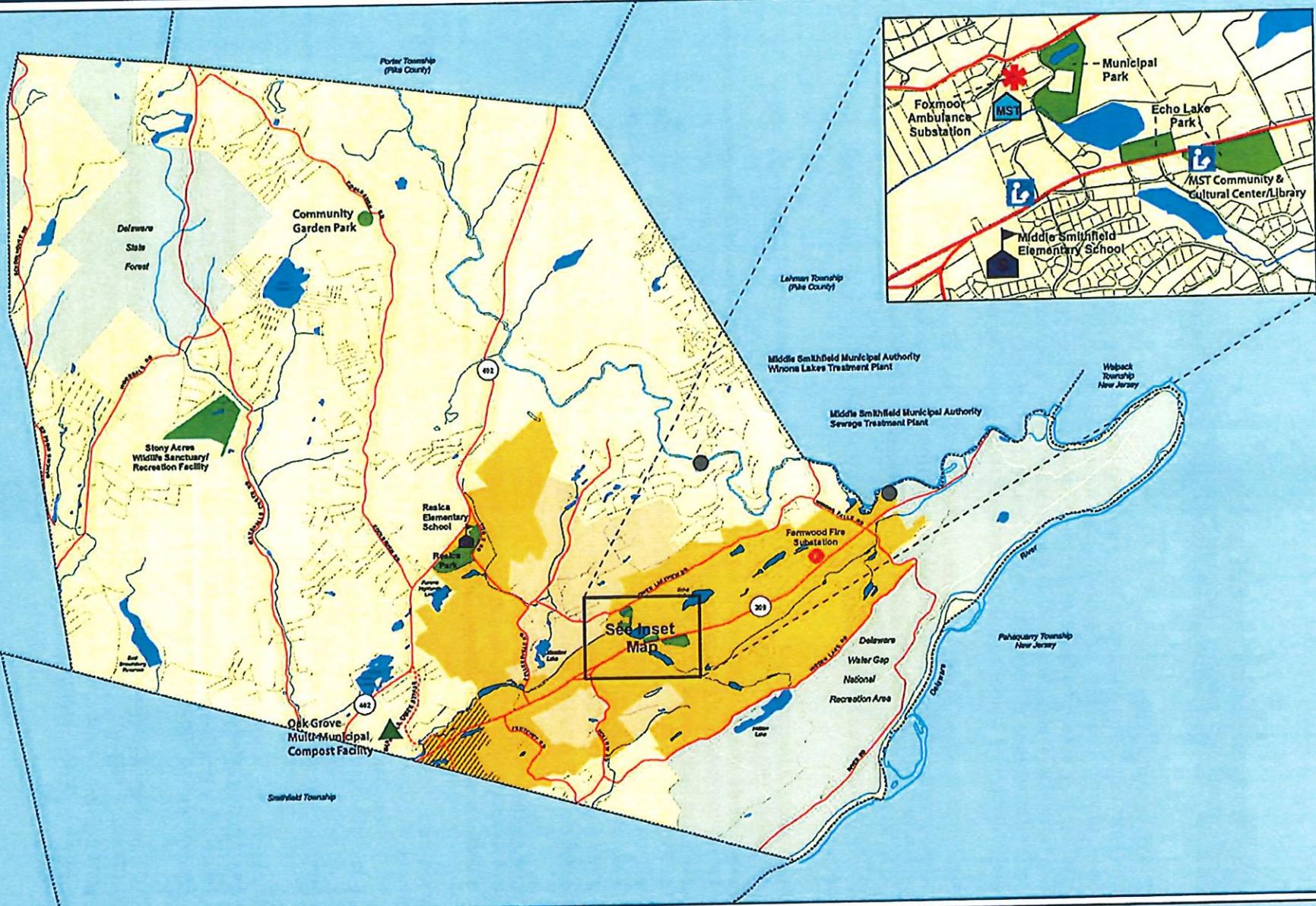
Gary A. Hoffman
Director of Communications
Monroe County Control Center

3/25/2022
Date

Disclaimer:
Reasonable measures have been taken to ensure the accuracy and completeness of all the information contained within this map but no liability is assumed for damages, direct or consequential, arising from any errors or omissions. This map is advised to use any information through alternate mapping sources or through actual on-site visits, prior to using the data contained within.

Created by the
Monroe County Control Center
on March 17, 2022.
Scale= 124,000

Map 7-1: Community Facilities & Utilities



Middle Smithfield Township
Comprehensive Plan
Update

Monroe County, Pennsylvania



Data Sources:
Base Features - Monroe County
Planning Commission, September 2006
Community Facilities - Consultant's
Analysis, 2007

Prepared By:
Thomas Comitta Associates, Inc.
Town Planners & Landscape Architects
18 West Chestnut Street
West Chester, Pennsylvania 19380
Adopted: February 14, 2008
Updated: June 9, 2022

Legend

- ★ Ambulance Substation
- F Fire Substation
- Sewage Treatment Plant
- Areas Removed from Sewer Service Area
- Sewer Service Area
- 2007 Sewer Extension
- Municipal Building
- School
- Public Library
- Park