

**Goal 4: Maintain and enhance the Quality of Life in Lower Saucon Township**

| <i>Objective</i>                                      | <i>Action Item</i>  | <i>Responsible Party</i>                                   | <i>Time Frame</i> |
|---|---|--|-------------------|
| Promote recreational opportunities for the community. | Continue to support the Township’s Parks and Recreation Board to provide programming and expansion of current facilities.                                       | Council, Parks and Rec., Staff, and Planner                | Ongoing           |
|   | Include existing regional facilities such as the Lehigh River and the Saucon Rail Trail in the advertising pieces aimed at relocating or new businesses.        | Council, Staff, NCD CED, LVEDC, and Discover Lehigh Valley | Short-term        |
|   | Work with the universities, NCD CED, and other resources to develop an ecotourism marketing program to take advantage of the abundance of local resources.      | Council, Staff, NCD CED, LVEDC, and Discover Lehigh Valley | Mid-term          |
|   | Research need for tournament facilities and the provision of such a recreational complex in the Township.   | Parks and Rec., Staff, Planner, Lehigh Univ.               | Mid-term          |
|   | Poll current large employers in the Township to determine recreational needs of employees. Work with employers to provide access to programming and facilities. | Council, Staff, and Chamber of Commerce                    | Long-term         |

**List of Abbreviations:**

- PC = Planning Commission
- LVEDC = Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation
- NCD CED = Northampton County Department of Community and Economic Development
- LSA = Lower Saucon Authority
- SVSD = Saucon Valley School District

**Time Frame:**

- On-Going is continued work of the Economic Development Task Force.
- Short-Term tasks are to be completed within the next year.
- Mid-Term tasks are to be completed within the next two to five years.
- Long-Term tasks are to be completed between five and ten years after plan adoption.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

The Lower Saucon Economic Development Task Force was founded on the desire of the Township Council to further economic growth in the Township and take advantage of the global market emerging in the Lehigh Valley. The Task Force developed their visioning statement as, “Lower Saucon Township will support existing businesses and institutions while developing future opportunities through managed growth that reflects the Township’s heritage.” Both entities want to see the Township grow their business base but yet not to lose focus on the Township’s character. The Task Force’s Action Plan outlines specific tasks to accomplish this ultimate aspiration.

As mentioned in this report, the Task Force completed an intensive background study of the economic climate in Lower Saucon. Specifically the group examined current zoning and planning documents as well as an intensive land use study and associated property data. A visual tour of the Township’s key development parcels was a necessary step to firmly grasp the location, aesthetics, and improvements of each locale. The group studied the demographic data of the Township (populations, age, household, education, and income) to gain, understand the economic factors that so strongly shape the Township development.

The Economic Development Task Force developed goals that support the ultimate vision.

- Promote Economic Development Growth
- Explore Potential Uses / Adaptive Reuse for existing Underutilized Parcels within the Township
- Promote and Encourage the Creation of New Ventures that Attract High-Wage, Future-Oriented Businesses
- Maintain and Enhance the Quality of Life in Lower Saucon Township

For each of these goals, the Task Force developed objectives. These objectives are the foundation of the action plan. Each objective was assigned a number of specific tasks, responsible parties, and an anticipated time frame. The Short-term tasks were then assigned a timeline for implementation. The Action Plan has “teeth” and can be used as a tool to assist the Township in their quest for furthering economic growth.

# **APPENDIX A**

## **BACKGROUND DATA**

## BACKGROUND DATA

The information contained on the following pages provided the Task Force with the basic knowledge needed to understand the economic climate in Lower Saucon. The zoning and land use data familiarized the participants with the commercial and industrial uses currently operating in the Township as well as identifying key vacant parcels. It provided them with the picture of future development potential within the confines of current zoning regulations. The demographic data provided insight to the make-up of the community.

### Current Zoning

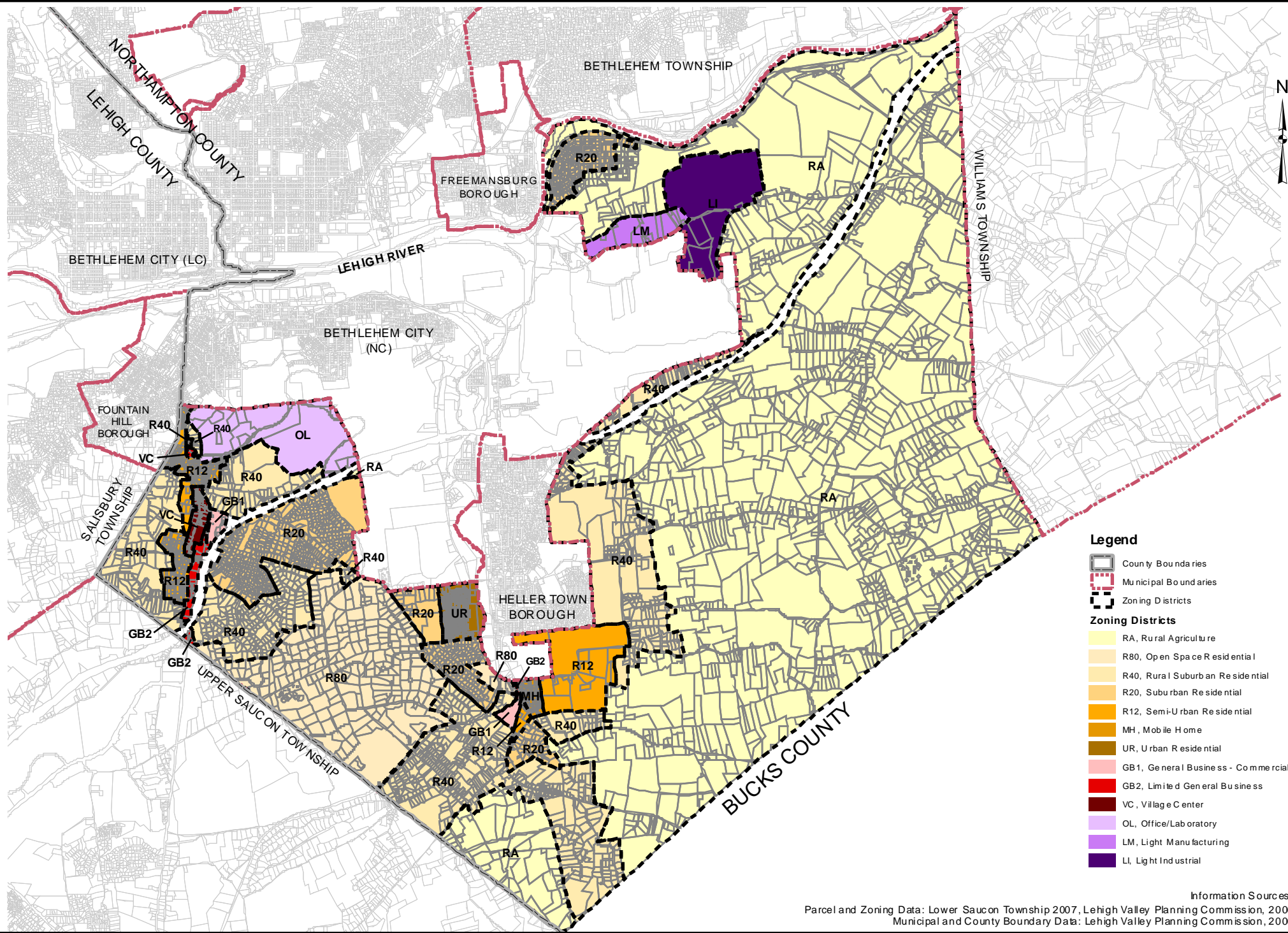
The current Zoning Map, included on Page 2 of this report, has helped shape the community of Lower Saucon. The following is a brief description of the zoning districts found in the Township.

- RA, Rural Agriculture. This district provides a rural, low-density living environment. The areas is extensive and without development-related public facilities, such as sewer and water. The district is established to encourage agricultural and related activities, as well as to conserve unique natural features, such as flood prone and sloping areas, forests, and wildlife habits and to help protect watershed areas.
- R80, Open Space Residential. This district is intended to maintain the low-density residential district that preserves natural features and encourages non-husbandry agricultural uses. Public sewer facilities may or may not be present, and the street system is not developed. Public water is available in some areas. The district is also intended to maintain low-density residential development in an area of the Township that is environmentally sensitive because of carbonate geology.
- R40, Rural Suburban Residential. The Rural Suburban District is generally located between the rural and more urban residential districts. Public water and sewer facilities are or may be available. The road system is not highly developed.
- R20, Suburban Residential. The Suburban Residential District is proximate to more urban areas and is or may be served by public water and sewer facilities. The road system serving the district is not highly developed.
- R12, Semi-Urban Residential. This district provides for higher densities and a wide array of residential uses and supportive amenities and institutions. It is proximate to other areas of existing development, and public water and sewer facilities are or may be generally available. Street and highway facilities are generally more developed.
- MH, Mobile Home. The Mobile Home District provides an area for the development of mobile home parks where public water and sewer facilities are or may be available and good road access is nearby. The density of this district is consistent with the availability of public facilities.

## SET INTO MOTION

### The Plan of the Lower Saucon Economic Development Task Force

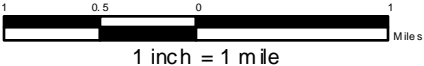
- UR, Urban Residential. This district has the highest density and widest array of any residential district within the Township. The areas are generally proximate to the Borough of Hellertown. Public water and sewer are or may be available and transportation facilities well developed.
- VC, Village Center. The Village Center District comprises and is intended to maintain the character of the area known as "Seidersville." It is a moderately dense and compact district, much like a village. It offers a wide array of residential uses. The district is or may be accessible to public water and sewer facilities and served by collector roads.
- GB1, General Business 1. The areas designated "General Business" are found along Township major arterial roads. Attention shall be focused on general design, traffic circulation planning and coordination of individual projects. The district is intended to provide locations for highway-oriented uses subject to the design concerns previously enumerated in this section.
- GB2, Limited General Business 2. The areas designated "Limited General Business" are found along Township major arterial roads. This district contains lots of less than five acres in size. The district is therefore limited in the size and type of business use allowed. Attention shall be focused on general design, traffic circulation planning and coordination of individual projects. The district is intended to provide locations for highway-oriented uses subject to the design concerns previously enumerated in this section.
- OL, Office / Laboratory. The purpose of this District is to recognize the unique and special characteristics of the mountaintop area of the Township. This District acknowledges the benefits of both the preservation of open space and a woodland environment and the appropriate expansion of uses which are compatible with the existing development in adjoining municipalities. This District allows the more intensive development of certain designated areas of the mountaintop but only under circumstances which would further protect and enhance remaining open space and woodlands.
- LM, Light Manufacturing. This district is located along Applebutter Road and abuts an industrial zoning district in the City of Bethlehem and a Light Industrial Zoning District in the Township. Rural residential and agricultural uses were established in this area early in the Township's history. Public water and public sewer is or may be available. State road access is available to this area. Proximity to an existing solid waste landfill to the east and industrial development south of Applebutter Road in this area has put pressure on this area to become nonresidential in character.
- LI, Light Industrial. The Light Industrial District includes, but is not limited to, the Bethlehem Area Solid Waste Landfill and other land used for industrial purposes in the past by Bethlehem Steel Corporation. Public water and public sewer is or may be available. State road access to this area is available.



**Legend**

- County Boundaries
  - Municipal Boundaries
  - Zoning Districts
- Zoning Districts**
- RA, Rural Agriculture
  - R80, Open Space Residential
  - R40, Rural Suburban Residential
  - R20, Suburban Residential
  - R12, Semi-Urban Residential
  - MH, Mobile Home
  - UR, Urban Residential
  - GB1, General Business - Commercial
  - GB2, Limited General Business
  - VC, Village Center
  - OL, Office/Laboratory
  - LM, Light Manufacturing
  - LI, Light Industrial

Information Sources:  
 Parcel and Zoning Data: Lower Saucon Township 2007, Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, 2006  
 Municipal and County Boundary Data: Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, 2006





## Land Use Inventory and Analysis

The Land Use Inventory and Analysis was a critical step in the planning process for the Task Force. The Land Use Inventory was intentionally focused on the non-residential areas of the Township to determine existing conditions and potential expansions of both commercial and industrial uses.

The Land Use Inventory was broken into four study areas. Section A included the GB1 and GB2 Zoning Districts along Leithsville Road, just south of the Hellertown border. Section B was the largest study area in terms of the number of parcels. This area consisted of commercial and industrial properties along the Route 378 Corridor as well as the VC zoned parcels along Old Philadelphia Pike. Section C included GB2 and OL zoned properties on or near Kohler Drive, Route 378, and Mountain Drive. Section D included the LI and LM zoned parcels along Applebutter Road.

Parcel mapping and parcel tables were created and a windshield survey was used to verify the land uses listed in the tax records. The parcel information, was cross-referenced to section-specific mapping. Pictures of the significant uses were also included. The following provides a brief overview of each of the sections. The full land use inventory parcel list and mapping can be found in the appendix of this report.

- Section A

As mentioned previously, Section A consisted of the GB1 and GB2 zoned properties along the Route 412 / Leithsville Road corridor. The primary land uses found

in this area are commercial. The largest property is the Giant shopping center which currently houses the Giant grocery store, a UPS store, Subway, a Dry Cleaner, AT&T Store, LV Nail Salon, Holiday Hair, Dollar Tree, Wine and Spirits, Feasta Pizza, China Moon, and at least two vacant storefronts. A Family Thrift Shoppe is the other commercial use. There are three single-family residential uses as well as one multi-family / apartment use.

- Section B

Section B covered the GB1 and GB2 zoned areas area along the Route 378 border from the Township boundary with Upper Saucon to Raders Lane and the VC zoned area along Old Philadelphia Pike from Black River Road to Seidersville Road. The properties located along Route 378, zoned GB1 and GB2, are primarily commercial. Saucon Valley Auto Spa and Embassy Bank are the first commercial uses along Route 378 as one enters the Township from the south. Interstate Route 78 is elevated and breaks the corridor. Saucon Valley Square provides the largest commercial area and includes Revolutions, a bowling and entertainment venue. Black River Plaza also provides a number of retail uses in a “strip” commercial center. The Se-Wy-Co Fire Department (institutional use) is located in the area as well as some automobile-related industrial uses. A small number of residential properties are located in the area, although the majority

## SET INTO MOTION

### The Plan of the Lower Saucon Economic Development Task Force

appear to have been converted to commercial uses even where the residential structure remains.

There are significant properties and commercial spaces that are vacant in this corridor. The largest of these being the old Acme grocery store building. The vacant and sometimes, dilapidated buildings are ripe for development and were discussed by the Task Force.

The Village Center properties provided a greater mix of uses, although the majority are residential. The Township building and Lower Saucon Authority are institutional uses. A number of commercial uses, including Yianni Taverna, Birk's Garage, and Saucon Collision, are sprinkled throughout the VC zone.

Typical to both areas in Section B, with the exception of the Saucon Valley Square are small lot sizes and reduced setbacks. Many of the properties provide parking to the rear and side to accommodate the existing structures. Sidewalk in the area is sporadic, making walkability difficult. Further there are a significant number of curb cuts to accommodate the large number of small lots.

- Section C

The areas of Lehigh University located within the Township can be found in Section C. This area includes the Office and Laboratory zoning district properties along Mountain Drive on the Lehigh campus as well as a small portion of GB2 and VC zoned properties along Route 378 and Kohler Drive.

Due to the terrain and steep slopes of the area, the majority of acreage of the O/L land in area C is current vacant / wooded. There are public institutional land parcels owned by the Bethlehem Authority and as well as a few single-family residential properties in the O/L district. The GB2 properties consist of the Lehigh Gas office building as well as the number of the buildings occupied by Lou's Marine. The VC properties are mostly single-family although two of the larger parcels are occupied by mufti-family residential units.

- Section D

Section D contains the only industrial zoned parcels in the Township. The LI and LM zoning districts can be found along the Applebutter Road corridor. The major industrial uses in this area are the IESI Landfill (including the BRE facility), the electrical substation, and a self-storage facility. Although access is not provided from Applebutter Road, one of parcels zoned LI is a portion of the Majestic Bethlehem Industrial Center.

A number of the smaller LM zoned parcels have been purchased by the landfill and are occupied by vacant single-family units. The remainder of the LI zone is single-family and agricultural uses.

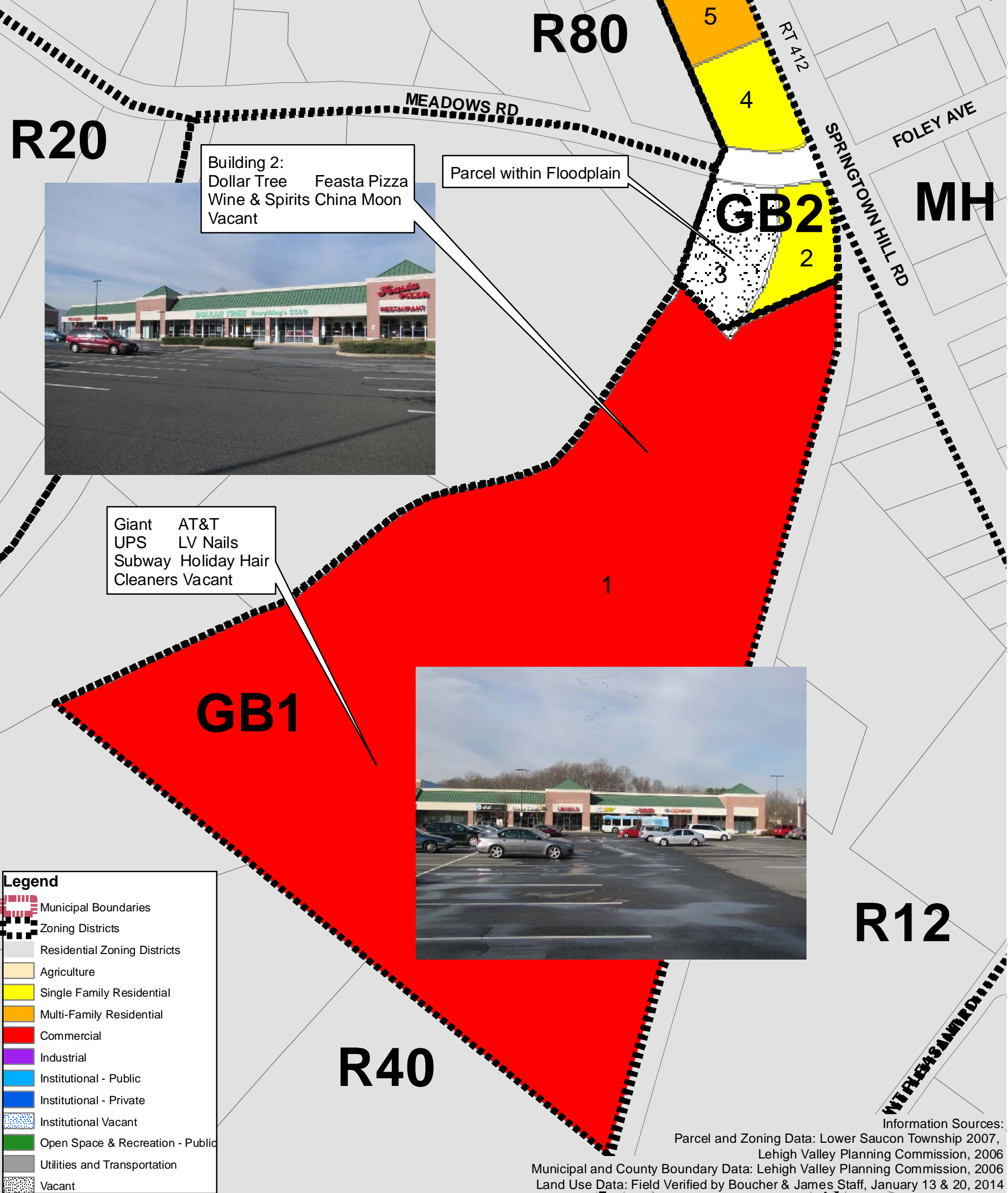




Family Thrift Shoppe



Apartment Units



Building 2:  
Dollar Tree Feasta Pizza  
Wine & Spirits China Moon  
Vacant



Parcel within Floodplain

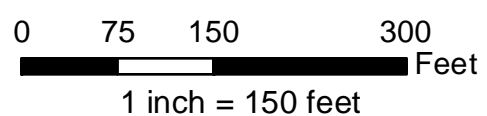
Giant AT&T  
UPS LV Nails  
Subway Holiday Hair  
Cleaners Vacant



**Legend**

- Municipal Boundaries
- Zoning Districts
- Residential Zoning Districts
- Agriculture
- Single Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Institutional - Public
- Institutional - Private
- Institutional Vacant
- Open Space & Recreation - Public
- Utilities and Transportation
- Vacant

Information Sources:  
 Parcel and Zoning Data: Lower Saucon Township 2007,  
 Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, 2006  
 Municipal and County Boundary Data: Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, 2006  
 Land Use Data: Field Verified by Boucher & James Staff, January 13 & 20, 2014



**Property Information for Land Use Inventory**

**SECTION A**

|   | <b>Tax Parcel ID</b> | <b>Address</b>        | <b>Owner</b>                        | <b>Acreage</b> | <b>Zoning</b> | <b>Land Use</b> | <b>Description</b>    |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | R7 10 3 0719         | 1880 Leithsville Road | ARP Hellertown LLC                  | 15.62          | GB1           | Commercial      | Giant Shopping Center |
| 2 | R7NW2 7 2 0719       | 1822 Leithsville Road | Palik, Albert and Evelyn            | 0.36           | GB2           | SF Residential  |                       |
| 3 | R7NW2 7 1 0719       | Meadows Road          | Murry, Patricia                     | 1.03           | GB2           | Vacant          | Floodplain / Wooded   |
| 4 | R7NW2 2 4 0719       | 1816 Leithsville Road | Holum, Pauline                      | 0.45           | GB2           | SF Residential  |                       |
| 5 | R7NW2 2 3 0719       | 1812 Leithsville Road | Hill, Edward                        | 0.33           | GB2           | MF Residential  |                       |
| 6 | R7NW2 2 2 0719       | 1810 Leithsville Road | Elane, Daniel                       | 0.33           | GB2           | SF Residential  |                       |
| 7 | R7NW2 2 1 0719       | 1804 Leithsville Road | American Family Services Foundation | 1.23           | GB2           | Commercial      | Family Thrift Shoppe  |

Source: Northampton County Tax Database, January 2014