

CHAPTER 6

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

This chapter provides special attention to the community facilities and services within Muhlenberg Township including those relating to municipal government, police protection, fire protection, ambulance service, solid waste management, education and libraries. These community facilities are essential to the existing and future residents of Muhlenberg Township and should be carefully planned in an effort to maintain an effective level of service.

A. MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Local government exists for the purposes of providing community services and public facilities to the residents of a municipality in an effort to maintain the public health, safety and general welfare. The following profile provides a description of the municipal facilities, personnel and services that are available to the community.

Municipal Government: Muhlenberg Township operates and functions as a municipality under the First Class Township Code of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Governing Body: The residents of the community elect five (5) persons to serve a term of four (4) years as the Muhlenberg Township Board of Commissioners. Duties include governing and execution of legislative, executive and administrative powers to ensure sound fiscal management and to secure the health, safety and general welfare of all residents within the community.

Municipal Staff: The municipal staff or employees of Muhlenberg Township are divided into several independent departments including: finance and administration; roads and engineering; public works; planning and zoning; parks and recreation; public health; emergency management and police protection. Presently, there are over sixty (60) full time employees within these municipal departments.

Planning Commission: The Board of Commissioners appoints seven (7) residents to serve on the Muhlenberg Township Planning Commission. Duties include the review of all subdivision and land development applications as well as assist with the development of municipal plans and ordinances.

Zoning Hearing Board: The Board of Commissioners appoints four (4) residents to serve on the Muhlenberg Township Zoning Hearing Board. Three (3) of the members are permanent members and one (1) member serves as an alternate member. Duties include the review of all variance and special exception applications submitted under the zoning provisions of Muhlenberg Township.

Municipal Authority: The Board of Commissioners appoints five (5) residents to serve on the Muhlenberg Township Municipal Authority. Duties include the overall administrative operations and maintenance of the municipal sanitary sewer system and municipal water supply system.

Civil Service Board: The Board of Commissioners appoints three (3) residents to serve on the Muhlenberg Township Civil Service Board. Duties include supervision of tests required for the hiring and promoting police officers.

Park and Recreation Board: The Board of Commissioners appoints seven (7) residents to serve on the Muhlenberg Township Park and Recreation Board. Duties include the overall administrative operations, programming and maintenance of all municipal parks, recreation facilities and open space areas within Muhlenberg Township.

Arts Board: The Board of Commissioners appoints six (6) residents to serve on the Muhlenberg Township Arts Board. Duties include sponsoring and coordinating music and art programs.

Health and Sanitation Board: The Board of Commissioners appoint one (1) health officer plus three (3) health inspectors, who are all licensed nurses. Duties include the inspection of all establishments where food is prepared and distributed, including all local schools, restaurants, public establishments and institutional uses. Additional duties also include the inspection of domestic nuisances (odor and noise) that are considered a risk to the health, safety and/or general welfare of the community.

Municipal Consultants: The Board of Commissioners appoints municipal consultants to provide legal, planning, engineering and sewage enforcement services, as well as other special duties that may be required by Muhlenberg Township.

Municipal Office: In 2003, Muhlenberg Township moved into the new municipal building, located at 5401 Leesport Avenue. The new municipal office includes over 14,000 square feet of office space for all departments including finance and administration; roads and engineering; public works; planning and zoning; parks and recreation; public health; emergency management and police protection. In addition to the office space, a main meeting room is available to hold all municipal meetings.

Other Municipal Buildings: In addition to the new Muhlenberg Township Municipal Building, Muhlenberg Township owns four (4) other buildings including:

The old Muhlenberg Township Municipal Building, located at 555 Raymond Street. This building was utilized for most of the municipal services between the years 1978 and 2003. The Board of Commissioners have not officially decided if the old building will be utilized for community services in the future or if it will be sold.

The Muhlenberg Township Park and Recreation Administrative Office, located at 702 Euclid Avenue. This building was utilized for most of the park and recreation administrative services between the years 1999 and 2003. Prior to 1999, this building was the site of the Temple Borough Hall. The Board of Commissioners have not officially decided if this building will be utilized for community services in the future or if it will be sold.

The Muhlenberg Township Parks and Recreation Maintenance Building, located at 3025 River Road is the site of offices and storage facilities for the maintenance department.

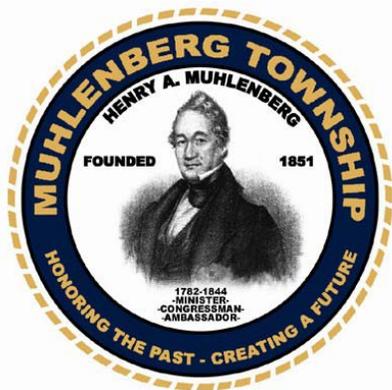
The Muhlenberg Township Road Maintenance Garage, located at 5400 Leesport Avenue is the site of storage facilities and equipment.

B. MUNICIPAL FINANCES AND BUDGET

Fiscal control is vital to maintain effective levels of community facilities and services. Proper management of municipal finances is essential to ensure that the municipal officials meet the needs and expectations of the community. This is generally accomplished through the municipal budget process, which involves estimating revenues and preparing an annual expenditure plan that is essentially the plan for spending money within that period of time. Although the focus of the budget tends to be on receipt and expenditure of revenues, municipal fiscal responsibilities extend beyond this obligation.

The following chart represents the 2003 municipal budget for Muhlenberg Township. Revenues are gained through a variety of means such as taxes, service charges, fees, intergovernmental transfers, interest and other miscellaneous proceeds. The expenditures are categorized by specific categories, which provide an itemized value for spending during the budget year.

MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP BUDGET FOR 2003			
FUND EQUITY AND REVENUES		EXPENDITURES	
Fund Equity	Budget Amount	Itemized Expenditure	Budget Amount
General Fund	\$ 746,900.00	General Government	\$ 457,500.00
State Liquid Fuels Fund	\$ 10,000.00	Public Safety	
Park Development Fund	\$ 740,000.00	Police	\$ 2,075,000.00
Capital Fund	\$ 200,000.00	Fire Relief	\$ 100,000.00
Total Fund Equity	\$ 1,696,900.00	Ambulance	\$ 14,000.00
		Planning and Zoning	\$ 15,000.00
Revenues	Budget Amount	Health and Welfare	\$ 70,000.00
Taxes	\$ 6,104,000.00	Public Works	
Licenses and Permits	\$ 177,000.00	Sanitation	\$ 875,000.00
Fines and Forfeits	\$ 83,000.00	Roads Operations	\$ 1,272,500.00
Interest Income	\$ 50,000.00	Capital Improvement-Roads	\$ 460,000.00
Intergovernmental	\$ 3,029,400.00	Culture and Recreation	
Miscellaneous	\$ 240,000.00	Administration	\$ 177,000.00
Total Revenues	\$ 11,047,000.00	Programs	\$ 183,000.00
		Maintenance	\$ 341,000.00
		Library	\$ 30,000.00
		Dept Service	\$304,000.00
		Misc. Intergovernmental	\$ 2,062,800.00
		Conservation and Development	\$ 2,488,000.00
		Capital Fund	\$ 200,000.00
		Liquid Fuels	\$ 321,600.00
		Fire Department Training	\$ 302,000.00
		New Municipal Building	\$ 201,000.00
		Parks Development	\$ 794,000.00
Total Funds Available	\$12,743,900.00	Total Expenditures	\$ 12,743,900.00



C. POLICE PROTECTION

Police protection is a vital public service that benefits the entire community. The traditional role of the police involves law enforcement, order and community service. Law enforcement involves the application of legal sanctions that have been passed into law by local, county, state and federal levels of government. Order involves the handling and management of disputes that arise from a variety of situations. Community service is variable factor that is dependant upon the size of the department and the needs of the community.

The Muhlenberg Township Police Department was established in 1948. At that time, growth and development within Muhlenberg Township had started to emerge and the need for police coverage became a necessity. Today, the Muhlenberg Township Police Department consists of 27 members, who provide effective law enforcement, order and community service to over 16,305 residents and 1,000 business establishments, 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. The current police staffing and divisions consist of administrative personnel, a criminal investigation division, crime scene processing and evidence technicians, community service division and patrol divisions. The following is a description of the basic divisions of the Muhlenberg Township Police Department:

Administration: This division has the duty of managing the strategic and operational functions of the department. Administration is responsible for the overall activities by planning, assessing and staffing to effectively reduce criminal activity and to improve safety for the residents of the community. This includes preparation and control of the operational budget, recruitment of qualified candidates and conducting on-going analysis of individual officer performance.

Patrol Division: The Patrol Division operates 24 hours per day to protect life and property by responding to calls for immediate police service. Crime prevention is maintained by high visibility and availability of police personnel. Officers are responsible for numerous duties during their work schedule including traffic control, pedestrian traffic, domestic disputes, traffic accidents, assault, robbery and burglary investigations, as well as evidence control. Patrols are conducted in police vehicles, on bicycles, on motorcycles and on foot. The Patrol Division is also responsible for follow-up investigations, accidents, abandoned vehicles, excessive speed prevention, truck inspections and special event planning.

Evidence Technicians: This division is responsible for the collection, preservation, integrity and photographing of crime scenes. The officers have the duty to see that proper evidence rules are adhered to, for proper collection of evidence at crime scenes, so that it can be used as part of the criminal trial. Officers are also trained in courtroom presentation.

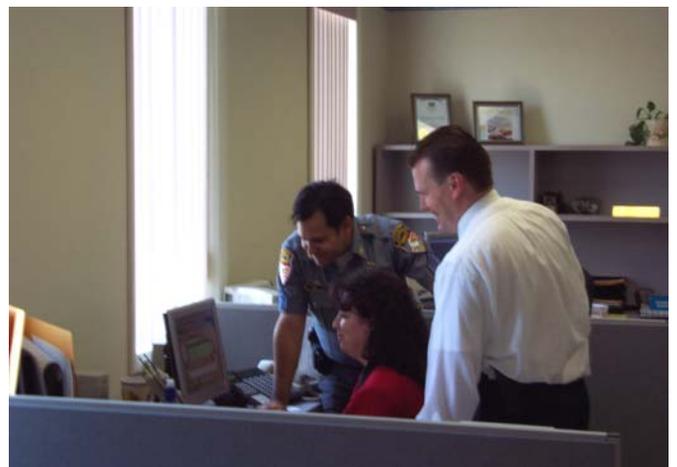
Criminal Investigations: This division conducts follow-up investigations for all major crimes in Muhlenberg Township. Members of the division assist the Patrol Officer with the investigations and make sure that proper steps are taken for prosecutions. The division also works with many outside police agencies including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Pennsylvania State Police, the Pennsylvania Attorney General and the Berks County District Attorney. Criminal Investigations will handle all major crimes, such as murder, robbery, burglary, rape, and arson, and execute search warrants and criminal complaints when needed.

Community Service Division: This division is responsible for educating the residents and children within the community. This enables the residents to have a better understanding of the department’s mission, values, policies and methods. The division initiates, coordinates and participates in a number of programs, including Citizen Police Academy, DARE, neighborhood meetings, school programs, drug awareness programs, crime prevention, youth aid panels, proactive media relations and security surveys. These programs encourage cooperation between the department and residents within the community.

In 2001, the Muhlenberg Township Police Department investigated 20,682 incidents. Although the number of incidents has increased over the years, the basic initiatives of the Muhlenberg Township Police Department has led to a reduction in certain crimes. The following chart provides a partial listing from the Uniform Crime Reports between the years 1998 and 2001.

MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP UNIFORM CRIME REPORTS (1998 – 2001)				
CRIME/OFFENCE	1998	1999	2000	2001
Robbery	16	10	10	20
Aggravated Assault	51	46	45	29
Arson Cases	4	0	2	1
Vandalism Cases	260	165	187	169
Motor Vehicle Thefts	65	43	42	37
Burglary Forced	52	37	36	37
Burglary No-Force	87	60	15	22
Robbery Strong Arm	10	5	12	12
<i>Source: Muhlenberg Township Police Department</i>				

Cooperation among the Muhlenberg Township Police Department and other emergency management services within the regional service area is considered excellent. All communications are tied with the Berks County Communications Center who dispatches the police calls. The Muhlenberg Township Police Department also provides assistance to neighboring municipalities when requested. In addition, the Pennsylvania State Police are available to provide coverage and assistance.



D. FIRE PROTECTION

Fire Protection is a basic public safety service that is essential to any community. There are three (3) volunteer fire companies that have first-call responsibilities within Muhlenberg Township. These fire companies include the Goodwill Fire Company located within Hyde Park, the Temple Fire Company located in Temple, and the Central Fire Company located within Laureldale Borough. The following is a brief description of the two (2) volunteer fire departments within Muhlenberg Township.

GOODWILL FIRE DEPARTMENT

Goodwill Fire Company of Hyde Park operates out of 2 stations and protects over 17,000 people living in an area of 14.5 square miles. The fire company was originally established in 1907. Station #1 is located at 115 Madison Avenue and Station #2 is located at 800 Tuckerton Road. The current fire stations were built in 1955 (Hyde Park) and 1999 (Riverview Park). Goodwill Fire Company is a public department with an ISO rating of 5, whose members operate on a volunteer status. The primary protection areas include College Heights, Hyde Park, Muhlenberg Park, Riverview Park, and Tuckerton. In addition, mutual-aid and assistance is supplied to the City of Reading, the Borough of Laureldale, and other surrounding areas.

The Goodwill Fire Company was the first of only two (2) Berks County fire companies to take part in the "Certification Participation Program". This is a Pennsylvania state program recognizing a company's percentage of fire fighters certified to a minimum of FFI. Goodwill Fire Company has also received a "Bronze" award for 50% participation. Currently, the department has 44 volunteer professionals who are required to complete to the level of Essentials of Firefighting-Mod I, Haz-Mat Operations, CPR, First Aid and Basic Vehicle Rescue. In 2001, the Goodwill Fire Company conducted 440 first response runs. The following apparatus are currently available to the Goodwill Fire Company:

GOODWILL FIRE COMPANY APPARATUS LIST			
YEAR	MANUFACTURER	MODEL	TYPE
1992	Simon-LTI	75 Foot Quint	1,500 gallon/minute; 400 gallons
1997	Simon-Duplex/Saulsbury	Heavy Rescue	
1989	Hahn	Engine	1,500 gallons/minute; 500 gallons
1978	Ford/Hamerly	Engine (4x4)	1,000 gallons/minute; 250 gallons
1976	Dodge/Hamerly	Brush Unit (4x4)	250 gallons/minute; 250 gallons
1984	Ford	Utility/Brush Unit (4x4)	F350 Pick-up
1991	Chevrolet	Chief's Vehicle (4x4)	S-10 Blazer
2003	Wells Cargo	Haz-Mat Ops Unit	14 Foot Trailer
<i>Source: Goodwill Fire Company and Firehouse.com</i>			

The Goodwill Fire Company is actively looking for volunteers to assist them with administrative duties, building and vehicle maintenance, community events, fire prevention, fund raising and of course, answering emergency calls. Any individual 15 years old, or older may join the Goodwill Fire Company. The phone number of the Goodwill Fire Company is 610-921-3393.

TEMPLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Temple Fire Company of Hyde Park operates out of 1 station and protects over 23,000 people living in an area of 22 square miles. The fire company was originally established in 1910 and Station #1 is located at 4963 Kutztown Road. Temple Fire Company is a public department with an ISO rating of 5, whose members operate on a volunteer status. The primary protection areas include Temple, South Temple, Cherokee Ranch, Muhlenberg Park, Riverview Park, and Tuckerton. In addition, mutual-aid and assistance is supplied to the Borough of Laureldale and other surrounding areas.

The Temple Fire Company encourages all volunteer members to take part in the "Certification Participation Program". Currently, the department has 30 volunteer professionals who are required to complete to the level of Essentials of Firefighting-Mod I, Emergency First Response or EMT, Haz-Mat Operations, CPR, First Aid and Basic Vehicle Rescue. In 2001, the Temple Fire Company conducted 557 first response runs. The following apparatus are currently available to the Temple Fire Company:

TEMPLE FIRE COMPANY APPARATUS LIST			
YEAR	MANUFACTURER	MODEL	TYPE
1991	Spartan/Saulsbury	Engine	1,500 gallons/minute; 750 gallons
1981	Mac	Engine	1,250 gallons/minute; 750 gallons
1986	Hahn/Saulsbury	Heavy Duty Rescue	QRS Certified
1986	Chevrolet	Impala	Chief's Vehicle
1995	Ford	Crown Victoria	Chief's Vehicle
<i>Source: Temple Fire Company and Firehouse.com</i>			

The Temple Fire Company is actively looking for volunteers to assist them with administrative duties, building and vehicle maintenance, community events, fire prevention, fund raising and of course, answering emergency calls. Any individual 15 years old, or older may join the Temple Fire Company. The phone number of the Temple Fire Company is 610-929-8050.



E. AMBULANCE SERVICE AND HEALTH CARE

The Muhlenberg Area Ambulance Association was established in September of 1963 by members of the Muhlenberg Township Lion's Club. At that time, the Lions Club recognized the need to provide emergency medical services to the residents of Muhlenberg, Laureldale and Temple. During the first year of service, the volunteer staff answered approximately 190 calls utilizing a Cadillac style ambulance. Today, the Muhlenberg Area Ambulance Association is located at 835 Bellevue Avenue and is composed of 30 staff members (21 professionals and 9 volunteers) who respond to approximately 2,250 calls per year by utilizing four (4) emergency units and a special off-road unit. The equipment and vehicles are fairly new and are considered to be in good condition. The paid and volunteer staff members continue to provide effective emergency medical services to Muhlenberg Township, Laureldale Borough and parts of Alsace Township. The subscription for ambulance service is currently the second lowest within Berks County (\$20 per individual and \$35 per family).

The Muhlenberg Area Ambulance Association is an integral part of the community and is a leader in the promotion of training and education programs within Berks County. In conjunction with various organizations such as the American Heart Association, the Muhlenberg Area Ambulance Association teaches numerous CPR and other emergency medical classes at its training facility and on-site at many businesses within the community. All residents within Muhlenberg Township are encouraged to contact the Muhlenberg Area Ambulance Association at 610-929-5774 to learn more about these classes.



Muhlenberg Township is not a direct provider for health care services. Within Berks County, these services are primarily provided by the following major medical facilities:

Reading Hospital and Medical Center, located in West Reading Borough

St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center, currently located within the City of Reading

St. Joseph's Community Hospital and Medical Center, located within the City of Reading

Healthsouth Reading Rehabilitation Hospital, located within Cumru Township

Muhlenberg Township does recognize and provide opportunities for health care and medical services at any scale, as part of the Muhlenberg Township Zoning Ordinance.

F. SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Solid waste management includes the collection, disposal and/or recycling of household waste, hazardous waste, sewage sludge, agricultural waste and/or industrial waste. In addition, the reclamation of contaminated areas, such as Superfund sites or Brownfield sites, are vital issues that must be addressed as part of a solid waste management plan. Although certain issues are typically addressed at the federal, state or county levels, Muhlenberg Township must properly plan for the collection, storage, transport and disposal of solid waste.

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

The Pennsylvania Municipal Waste Planning, Recycling and Waste Reduction Act (PA Act 101), enacted by the Pennsylvania State Legislature in 1988, placed greater emphasis upon county-wide solid waste management plans versus municipal solid waste management plans. In September of 1990, the County of Berks completed the Act 101 Berks County Solid Waste Management Plan and forwarded it to municipalities for ratification.

There are no solid waste disposal facilities (landfills, resource recovery facilities or transfer stations) within Muhlenberg Township. However, there are numerous solid waste disposal facilities located within a twenty-five (25) mile radius, including the Conestoga Landfill (New Morgan Borough), Western Berks Landfill (Cumru Township), Pioneer Landfill (Exeter Township), Pottstown Landfill (West Pottsgrove Township) and Lanchester Landfill (Caernarvon Township, Lancaster County). Each of these facilities has sufficient capacity to accommodate municipal waste from Muhlenberg Township.

Muhlenberg Township has evaluated the economic feasibility and cost-benefit ratio of establishing a municipal solid waste collection program. Based upon this evaluation, Muhlenberg Township contracts solid waste collection and disposal on a municipal basis with a qualified hauler. Collection is conducted twice per week and the residents are billed for the service by Muhlenberg Township. By reviewing the economies of scale and the need for a systematic method for municipal solid waste collection program within Muhlenberg Township, this solid waste collection and disposal method should continue.

RECYCLING

The Pennsylvania Municipal Waste Planning, Recycling and Waste Reduction Act (PA Act 101), established certain goals and objectives for recycling including: reduce the amount of municipal waste generated within the Commonwealth; recycle at least 25% of waste generated; procure and use recycled and recyclable materials in state governmental agencies; and educate the public as to the benefits of recycling and waste reduction. The benefits of recycling and waste reduction include reduced pollution risks; conservation of natural resources, energy and landfill space; and reduced disposal costs.

PA Act 101 requires municipalities with populations of at least 10,000 residents or municipalities with populations between 5,000 and 10,000 residents and more than 300 persons per square mile to implement a mandatory curbside recycling program. Mandated municipalities must collect at last 3 of the following materials: clear glass; colored glass; plastics; aluminum; steel and bimetallic cans; high grade office paper; corrugated paper and newsprint. Commercial, municipal and institutional establishments within a mandated municipality are required to recycle aluminum, high-grade office paper and corrugated paper in addition to other materials chosen by the municipality. Planning grants are available to all municipalities to establish a mandatory recycling program.

Muhlenberg Township has a population of 16,305 residents (2000 Census) with a residential density of 1,354.2 persons per square mile. As a result, Muhlenberg Township has established a recycling program that includes curbside collection of 5 materials (paper, glass, aluminum cans, steel cans and plastic). The recyclable items are collected every two weeks by the licensed hauler as part of the solid waste disposal contract. In addition, there are also three (3) designated drop-off centers for aluminum cans. Based upon recent estimates, Muhlenberg Township recycles 20 percent of its municipal waste.

Muhlenberg Township also provides a municipal composting area for limited biodegradable materials (grass, brush and yard waste) plus a fall clean-up program. Muhlenberg Township should continue its efforts to establish a municipal recycling program.

SUPERFUND SITES

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), commonly known as “Superfund”, was enacted by the United States Congress on December 11, 1980. This law created a tax on the chemical and petroleum industries and provided broad federal authority to respond directly to releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances that may endanger public health or the environment. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administers the Superfund program in cooperation with individual state governments. The office that oversees management of the program is the Office of Emergency and Remedial Response (OERR).

There has been one (1) recognized Superfund site within Muhlenberg Township. This site is located on the property of NGK Metals Corporation or at 150 Tuckerton Road. This 60 acre industrial site was utilized for the manufacturing and processing of beryllium copper products. Based upon industrial disposal practices by previous owners, the site was recognized as a Superfund site. NGK Metals continues to conduct the prescribed method for groundwater treatment, clean-up and reclamation, as ordered by the EPA as part of a consent decree.

BROWNFIELDS

The United States Department of Environmental Protection (EPA) has defined a “Brownfield site” as an area or portion thereof, which has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. The EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and reuse brownfields. The Land Recycling Program within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is helping to transform vacant brownfields into bustling job-producing sites, while still protecting our environment. Through the enactment of federal and state legislation, the opportunities to recycle abandoned buildings and land areas into productive properties, that not only strengthen the economic viability of a community, but also implements goals associated with conservation planning and watershed restoration.

Based upon the potential for abandoned and/or deteriorating industrial buildings within Muhlenberg Township, these programs may provide assistance for the adaptive reuse and economic redevelopment efforts prescribed under Chapter 8 (The Local Economy) of this Plan.

G. EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Educational facilities and services are indirectly related to municipal planning efforts since the projected growth and development of a municipality will have eventual impact on the local school district. Therefore, it is imperative to coordinate future planning efforts between Muhlenberg Township and the Muhlenberg School District. As part of this planning process, the Strategic Plan (2001-2007) developed for the Muhlenberg School District was utilized for background analysis.

MUHLENBERG SCHOOL DISTRICT

In 1830, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania enacted a law requiring all municipalities to have separate school districts. In 1851, Muhlenberg Township is officially established as a municipality within Berks County. Consequently, the Muhlenberg School District was officially established with a one-room school (Schlottman School) located on Kutztown Road. Today, the Muhlenberg School District has an enrollment of 3,012 students from Muhlenberg Township and Laureldale Borough. The faculty and staffing has reach a total of 403 professionals and several volunteers, who perform their respective duties out of three (3) school sites, one (1) administrative building and one (1) intermediate unit center.

The Muhlenberg School District is dedicated to preparing students for a changing world through educational excellence while supporting the diverse needs of each learner and respecting the human dignity of all. The beliefs of Muhlenberg School Board are as follows:

- All people can learn.
- People learn best with support and encouragement.
- Education prepares people for lifelong learning.
- The school and community benefit from working together.
- Higher expectations yield higher achievement.
- Feeling good about oneself encourages success.
- The home and school working together build a positive learning environment

All the buildings, including a separate administrative office built in 1990, are on one convenient campus bounded by the Fifth Street Highway, Sharp Avenue, Kutztown Road, and Bellevue Avenue. The existing educational facilities are depicted on Figure 8. The following chart provides a tabulation of student enrollment and conditions at each of the school sites.

MUHLENBERG SCHOOL DISTRICT FACILITIES					
School Name	Year Built	Additions/ Renovations	Grades Served	Rated Capacity	2002 –2003 Enrollment
Muhlenberg Elementary School	1999	1996; 1998	K – 5	1,614	1,285
Muhlenberg Middle School	1991	2001	6 – 8	1,100	732
Muhlenberg Senior High School	1970	2002	9 – 12	1,365	985
C.E Cole Intermediate Unit	1956	1985	Building is leased to the BCIU		
<i>Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education and Muhlenberg School District</i>					

The old building (the former Muhlenberg Township High School) served from 1972 through 1981 as an eighth and ninth grade junior high, then became a middle school accommodating at various times and levels, fifth through ninth grades. In 1991, the oldest section was demolished and replaced by a modern, air conditioned facility, which continues to serve as the middle school. Construction of an elementary center was launched in the summer of 1996 while major renovations were made to the high school. In September of 1998 kindergarten through fifth began occupying a brand new elementary center, six through eighth are now in the middle school, while ninth through twelfth remain at the high school.



The following chart provides the historical and projected student enrollment for the Muhlenberg School District between 1997-1998 school year and 2007-2008 school year.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS					
School Year	Count	Grades: K - 5	Grades: 6 - 8	Grades: 9 - 12	Total Students
1997 - 1998	Actual	1,276	680	819	2,775
1998 - 1999	Actual	1,288	670	839	2,879
1999 - 2000	Actual	1,294	688	908	2,890
2000 - 2001	Actual	1,306	709	920	2,935
2001 - 2002	Actual	1,320	741	913	2,974
2002 - 2003	Actual	1,285	732	985	3,002
2003 - 2004	Projected	1,341	741	989	3,071
2004 - 2005	Projected	1,386	729	1,002	3,117
2005 - 2006	Projected	1,372	750	1,040	3,162
2006 - 2007	Projected	1,377	756	1,016	3,149
2007 - 2008	Projected	1,377	805	1,010	3,192

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education and Muhlenberg School District

Based upon the projected student enrollments, it would appear that the Muhlenberg Elementary School, Middle School and Senior High School will have sufficient capacities to accommodate the next surge in student population, which is projected between 2004 and 2008. It should also be noted that the rate of growth for the student population (8.76 % increase between 2000 and 2008) is slightly more the total population projected for all of Muhlenberg Township (6.05 % between 2000 and 2010). This slight difference could be attributed to the number of younger families who have recently moved into the community over the past 20 years.

A cooperative agreement for parks, recreation, education and cultural activities has existed between Muhlenberg Township and the Muhlenberg School District. The purpose of this agreement was to provide recreation programs and facilities through the joint efforts of both groups. Under the terms of the agreement, the Muhlenberg Township Parks and Recreation Department may schedule activities on the property of the Muhlenberg School District, provided they are not in use or other conflicting activities are planned.



OTHER EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES

In addition to the facilities owned and maintained by the Muhlenberg School District, the following public, quasi-public and private educational facilities are located within Muhlenberg Township:

Reading-Muhlenberg Vocational and Technical School: This public educational center located at Spring Valley Road and Warren Road provides vocational, technical and alternative educational programs to high school students. There are 1,100 students enrolled at this facility with a total staff of 80 professionals and support personnel.

Holy Guardian Angels Regional School: This private school located at 3125 Kutztown Road provides parochial educational opportunities for pre-school children and regular classes for kindergarten through 8th grade students. There are 54 pre-school children and 404 students enrolled at this facility with a total staff of 45 professionals and volunteers.



Calvary Christian Pre-School: This private school located at 1009 Elizabeth Avenue in Laureldale Borough provides pre-school opportunities to 65 children with a total staff of 4 professionals.

Circle of Learning: This private school located at 704 Hay Road provides pre-school opportunities to approximately 100 children with a total staff of 27 professionals and volunteers.

Kidspace Center for Kids in Crisis: This quasi-public facility located at 8th Avenue and Hay Road provides multi-level educational and counseling opportunities for approximately 100 children of all school grades who have special needs. The total staff includes 26 professionals.

Little Angels Academy: This private school located at 2727 Old Pricetown Road provides pre-school and day-care opportunities to approximately 65 children with a staff of 10 professionals.

Mulberry Child Care and Preschool: This quasi-public school located at 3060 Kutztown Road provides educational opportunities to 422 pre-school to kindergarten age children. This facility is licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and has a staff of 20 professionals.

Riverview Christian School: This private school located at 3301 Stoudts Ferry Bridge Road provides pre-school and day-care opportunities to approximately 150 children with a staff of 30 professionals.

Victory Christian Academy: This private school located at 2727 Old Pricetown Road provides religious and parochial educational opportunities for kindergarten through 12th grade students. There are a total of 60 students enrolled at this facility with a total staff of 7 professionals.

Berks County Intermediate Unit: BCIU provides programs and services to public school districts, nonpublic schools, and other human service organizations of Berks County. The headquarters for BCIU is located at 1111 Commons Boulevard. The BCIU is also a liaison agent between the public schools and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The Berks County Intermediate Unit offers a wide range of diverse services, including alternative and special education, early intervention, child care, services to at-risk students and students with disabilities, as well as curriculum, instruction, and professional staff development. BCIU also provides business and information management services, instructional media services, public relations services, pupil transportation, and other services.



H. LIBRARIES

The Muhlenberg Community Library is located at 3612 Kutztown Road in Laureldale, next to the Muhlenberg Elementary School. The library, which is part of the Berks County Library System, is a private, non-profit organization overseen by a voluntary Board of Trustees (9 members) and a professional staff (6 members). Financial support for operations come from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Berks County, Muhlenberg Township, the Laureldale Borough, Alsace Township, private citizens, corporations, and civic groups. Funds from the state and the county are calculated from a formula that considers "Local Effort" fundraising and patron use.

The Muhlenberg Community Library has over 29,000 holdings consisting of books, magazines, videos, tapes and CD's. In addition, the library has computers with internet access and various software programs such as Word, Excel and PowerPoint. There are also computers in the children's area with a variety of educational games. In 2002, the total circulation exceeded 86,000. Support for the library services can be accomplished through a variety of programs including:

Adopt a Book: This program enables individuals to honor someone special and help to build the Muhlenberg Community Library collection, by adopting a book, a video, a magazine subscription, or some compact discs. The tax-deductible donation will be used to purchase items for the library. A bookplate showing your name will be placed in each item. The individual may choose to dedicate the items to the memory of, or in the honor of someone special to you. This name will be shown on the bookplate as well. If you are a member of a club or organization, adopting a book could be a group project, perhaps continuing from month-to-month or year-to-year.

Redner's Receipts: This new system has been developed by Redner's Markets by which a card will be issued for donation purposes at check out. This card will automatically calculate and print a total of non-excluded items. The participants of this program may drop the Redner's receipt off at Muhlenberg Community Library who in turn will receive a donation of 1 percent from Redner's markets for the total value of the receipt.

Friend's Club: This group consists of volunteers who support library functions and fund-raising. Some of the projects the Friends have worked on include a float for the Muhlenberg Township Halloween Parade, Coffee in the Library, and book sales.

Become a Trustee: The Board of Trustees consists of volunteers from the community. Terms of office are one year. For more information call 610-929-0589.



I. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES MAP

The following chart provides a summary of the community facilities and services identified in this Chapter of the Plan. The locations of these community facility sites are depicted on Figure 8. In addition, the historical features and resource identified in Chapter 4, the limits of the census tract boundaries described in Chapter 5, and the parks, recreation and open space facilities identified in Chapter 7 are also depicted on Figure 8.

SUMMARY TABLE OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES		
Map #	Inventory of Community Facilities and Services	Street Address
M-1	New Muhlenberg Township Municipal Building (2003)	5401 Leesport Avenue
M-2	Old Muhlenberg Township Municipal Building (1978-2003)	555 Raymond Street
M-3	Muhlenberg Township Maintenance Building and Garage	5400 Leesport Avenue
E-1	Muhlenberg Township Police Department	5401 Leesport Avenue
E-2	Goodwill Fire Company #1 (Hyde Park)	115 Madison Avenue
E-3	Goodwill Fire Company #2 (Tuckerton)	800 Tuckerton Road
E-4	Temple Fire Company #1	4963 Kutztown Road
E-5	Central Fire Company	1409 Park Place
E-6	Muhlenberg Area Ambulance Association	835 Bellevue Avenue
ED-1	Muhlenberg School District Administrative Building	801 Bellevue Avenue
ED-2	Muhlenberg School District Elementary School	Kutztown Road and Sharp Ave.
ED-3	Muhlenberg School District Middle School	801 Bellevue Avenue
ED-4	Muhlenberg School District Senior High School	Sharp Ave. and Francis Street
ED-5	C.E. Cole Intermediate Unit (BCIU-Muhlenberg)	Kutztown Road and Sharp Ave.
ED-6	Reading-Muhlenberg Vocational and Technical School	Spring Valley and Warren Rds.
ED-7	Holy Guardian Angels Regional School	3125 Kutztown Road
ED-8	Calvary Christian Pre-School	1009 Elizabeth Avenue
ED-9	Circle of Learning Pre-School	704 Hay Road
ED-10	Kidspace Center for Kids in Crisis	8 th Avenue and Hay Road
ED-11	Little Angels Academy	2727 Old Pricetown Road
ED-12	Mulberry Child Care and Pre-School	3060 Kutztown Road
ED-13	Riverview Christian School	3301 Stoudt's Ferry Bridge Rd.
ED-14	Victory Christian Academy	2727 Old Pricetown Road
ED-15	Berks County Intermediate Unit Administrative Offices	1111 Commerce Boulevard
ED-16	Muhlenberg Community Library	3612 Kutztown Road
<p>Note 1: The historically significant sites and areas listed within Chapter 4, Page 55 are depicted on Figure 8.</p> <p>Note 2: The boundaries of the census tracts described within Chapter 5, Page 59 are depicted on Figure 8.</p> <p>Note 3: The park, recreation and open space facilities described within Chapter 7 are depicted on Figure 8.</p>		
<p><i>Source: Muhlenberg Township and Hawk Valley Associates, P.C.</i></p>		

J. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES PLAN

In order to implement the community planning goals, objectives and policies for community facilities and services established in Chapter 2, the following strategies are recommended:

Municipal Government, Finances and Budget

1. Continue to effectively provide community facilities and services, which meet the needs of the community while staying within a reasonable fiscal budget for Muhlenberg Township.
2. Find a new occupant for the previous Muhlenberg Township Municipal Building, located at 555 Raymond Street. The property is currently zoned R-4, which primarily permits residential uses by right. As part of this planning effort and future zoning amendments, consideration should be provided to allow more land use flexibility within this neighborhood. The building and the site characteristics would be suited for a community center, commercial use and/or professional office space. In the interim period of vacancy and occupancy, the nonconformity status of the building should be protected by Muhlenberg Township.
3. Find a new occupant for the former Temple Borough Hall (last occupied by the Muhlenberg Township Park and Recreation Office) located at 702 Euclid Avenue. This property was previously zoned as R-1 by the former Temple Borough. As part of this planning effort and future zoning amendments, consideration should be provided to allow more land use flexibility within this neighborhood. The building and the site characteristics would be suited for a community center and/or professional office space. In the interim period of vacancy and occupancy, the nonconformity status of the building should be protected.
4. Monitor population, age, household and social trends to plan for future facilities and services. Although there is limited room for new growth and development, Muhlenberg Township should experience certain social changes within the next 10 to 20 years. With an average age of 43.3 years, older residents who helped shape Muhlenberg Township as a vibrant community could be replaced by younger families within the next 20 years.
5. Monitor economic growth and employment composition of the business community. In the past, Muhlenberg Township has had been fortunate to experience a strong economic base. However, as certain industrial centers continue to either downsize or terminate their operations, redevelopment and revitalization efforts must be viewed as a priority within Muhlenberg Township over the next 20 years.
6. Develop a municipal website to provide residents with information concerning meetings, announcements, codes, maps, police, refuse collection, services and other vital news. As society becomes more familiar and dependant upon internet communications, the municipal website could serve as community tool for providing information to the residents.
7. Improve communications between municipal officials and residents within the community. As part of this effort, Muhlenberg Township could prepare a summary report of all municipal meetings and publish the summary report on the municipal website. This information will increase public awareness of issues within the community.

8. Continue to evaluate all administrative staff levels and needs in order to provide a high level of service to the residents within the community. The department heads should coordinate efforts with the Board of Commissioners to prioritize administrative needs on an annual basis.
9. Encourage volunteerism to develop a sense of community, increase public awareness, and to utilize the diverse skills, knowledge and ideas of the local residents. The department heads should maintain a list of volunteers who could assist their respective departments.

10. Implement a capital improvements program to anticipate and plan for future financial needs including buildings, vehicles, computers, roads, storm sewers, equipment, parks, and other facility or infrastructure improvements. The capital improvements program should be utilized as a framework for financing needed capital improvements incurred each year over a specified period of time, usually 5 to 10 years. The department heads should coordinate efforts with the Board of Commissioners to prioritize community needs on an annual basis.



11. Explore the use of cooperative agreements with other municipalities for the purchase of materials and the provision of services in an effort to be more efficient and cost effective. This task should be considered as an on-going process, which is typically dependant upon the circumstances.
12. Continue to discuss the feasibility of joint or regional projects with Laureldale Borough, the Muhlenberg School District and other adjacent municipalities. As part of this process, explore grants or other funding sources that can assist the community with the implementation of projects.
13. Discuss the alternatives of a municipal merger involving Laureldale Borough. As was the case for the former Temple Borough, providing efficient municipal services within an area with limited growth and economic base could lead to a high municipal tax structure. The economic vitality of any municipality is essential for the overall good of the community. By continuing to develop a positive relationship with the officials of Laureldale Borough, a municipal merger is a possibility and a good working relationship will be essential during the transition period.



Police, Fire and Ambulance Services

14. Monitor local and regional police coverage needs. Muhlenberg Township has experience a significant amount of growth and development since the 1950's. Periodic manpower studies should be conducted to determine if the Muhlenberg Township Police Department is sufficiently staffed to provide effective protection, service and response to the community.
15. Evaluate the feasibility of establishing a regional police department to serve Muhlenberg Township and Laureldale Borough. Based upon the geographic proximity of Laureldale Borough, overlapping coverage is unavoidable and the duplication of services for patrol, response and administration, which ultimately results into higher operational costs for both police departments. The Muhlenberg Township Police Department has the facilities, size, resources, equipment and organization to provide effective and efficient police coverage to Laureldale Borough. Both municipalities should request the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development to undertake a feasibility study to determine if a regional police department would benefit Muhlenberg Township and Laureldale Borough.
16. Continue to support the Muhlenberg Township Police Department by equipping and training the officers in accordance with municipal needs and adding personnel as may be required in order to provide an optimal level of service. The Muhlenberg Township Police Department maintains a high level of professional training for its officers, which is ultimately passed onto the residents within the community. The Chief of Police in conjunction with the Board of Commissioners should continue to review the needs of the Police Department.
17. Develop a website for the Muhlenberg Township Police Department. This website could contain categorical information, including the mission statement of the police department, how to contact the police department, community programs, seasonal information, an organizational chart and a link to view the Year End Report. As part of this effort, a direct link should be provided between the websites of Muhlenberg Township and Police Department.
18. Continue to support the local fire departments and emergency response agencies providing services to Muhlenberg Township, particularly the Goodwill Volunteer Fire Company and the Temple Fire Company. Muhlenberg Township is one of a few communities within Berks County that provides financial support to the local fire departments through the municipal budget and tax structure. As part of the municipal budget for expenditures, Muhlenberg Township has separate line items for fire relief, fire department training and capital expenditures, which are disbursed to the local fire departments.
19. Assist the Goodwill Fire Company and the Temple Fire Company with enhancing their respective websites. Currently, both fire departments have developed a basic website through a national website organization for firefighters (Firehouse.com), which provides information concerning response reports, personnel, stations, apparatus and general news. As part of this effort, a direct link between the web sites of Muhlenberg Township and the local fire departments servicing the community should be established.
20. Publicize the efforts and accomplishments of the Muhlenberg Township Police Department, Goodwill Fire Department, Temple Fire Company, Goodwill Fire Company and the Muhlenberg Area Ambulance Association. A positive image for the emergency management personnel is vital when the respective departments conduct fundraisers or when they perform other duties.

21. Conduct periodic tours of commercial and industrial facilities with select emergency management personnel. This should provide vital background information for police, fire and ambulance personnel to respond to an emergency at these facilities.
22. Notify police, fire and ambulance personnel of proposed subdivision and land development plans. Input from the emergency management personnel concerning response issues is vital during the planning phase.



23. Continue to support the Muhlenberg Area Ambulance Association. Muhlenberg Township is a leader in providing financial support to the local emergency management and response units, including the Muhlenberg Area Ambulance Association. Currently, Muhlenberg Township provides financial support to the Muhlenberg Area Ambulance Association through the municipal budget and tax structure, including a separate line item for ambulance service. In order to maintain its leadership role, Muhlenberg Township should consider donating at least one dollar for every resident within the community.
24. Assist the Muhlenberg Area Ambulance Association with the development of a website for the purposes of promotion, emergency response and community information. This website could contain categorical information, including a mission statement, how to purchase a subscription for ambulance service, how to contact personnel, community programs, seasonal information, and an organizational chart. As part of this effort, a direct link should be provided between the websites of Muhlenberg Township and Muhlenberg Area Ambulance Association.
25. Continue to update and amend the Muhlenberg Township Emergency Operations Plan. As part of this planning effort, Muhlenberg township has prepared an interim update of the Emergency Management Plan, which was last updated in 1998. The Muhlenberg Township Emergency Management Coordinator should continue to complete comprehensive updates to the Emergency Operations Plan every five (5) years.
26. Maintain contact with the Berks County Emergency Management Agency in an effort to notify emergency response services of new roads, road names and street addresses. As part of this effort, a base map showing all roads within Muhlenberg Township should be updated on an annual basis. The updated base maps should be forwarded to the Berks County Emergency Management Agency, Muhlenberg Police Department, Goodwill Fire Company, Temple Fire Company, Central Fire Company and Muhlenberg Area Ambulance Association.

Educational Facilities and Services

27. Continue to maintain a cooperative relationship with the Muhlenberg School District, Berks County Intermediate Unit, Reading-Muhlenberg Vocational-Technical School, Holy Guardian Angels School, and other educational facilities within the community. Muhlenberg Township has established a positive relationship with the educational centers within the community, which has provided benefits to the residents within the community.
28. Encourage the development of advanced communication technology to enhance educational opportunities and accessibility among businesses, government, schools, libraries and the residents within the community. The Muhlenberg School District does provide opportunities and programs to benefit the residents of the community. The municipal website for Muhlenberg Township should identify these opportunities and programs.
29. Continue to support the Muhlenberg Community Library. Muhlenberg Township is a leader in providing financial support to the Muhlenberg Community Library by providing financial support through the municipal budget and tax structure, including a separate line item for the library. In order to maintain its leadership role, Muhlenberg township should consider donating at least two dollars for every resident within the community

Solid Waste Management

30. Continue to provide an effective, efficient and affordable method of solid waste disposal to the residents and businesses within Muhlenberg Township.
31. Continue to provide an effective, efficient and affordable method of recycling collection to the residents and businesses within Muhlenberg Township.
32. Monitor former and potential “Superfund sites” within Muhlenberg Township to ensure that commercial and industrial operations are environmentally compliant. Notify the appropriate state or federal agencies of suspected violations, which may contaminate the environment.
33. Evaluate the planning and economic benefits of areas of Muhlenberg Township that could be considered as “Brownfield site”. Based upon the potential for abandoned and/or deteriorating industrial buildings within Muhlenberg Township, these programs may provide assistance for the adaptive reuse and economic redevelopment efforts.

