

V. PUBLIC FACILITIES

A. Schools

A high quality education is a widely-held objective for most of our society. Historically, school districts have forecast short-term future demands for school facilities, enabling them to program additional building expansion, construction, consolidations, and closures to meet forecasted demands. School district planning can have a direct effect on, as well as be affected by, the land use activities within an area. For instance, new or expanded schools may generate increased nearby residential development, and school closures may contribute to the de-population of communities. At the same time, long-range municipal land use planning may designate new growth areas at some distance from existing or planned school facilities. All of these issues underlie the importance of coordinating school district and municipal comprehensive planning processes to assure that existing and future schools and planned community growth occur hand-in-hand.

The Eastern Berks County Region is served by the Brandywine Heights Area School District. School Board members serve 4-year terms. In addition, the Gateway and Lighthouse Christian Schools also serve the Region. ***The Eastern Berks County Region Public Facilities Map*** illustrates the location of the Region's public school sites. The remainder of this section will focus upon conditions at the public schools within the Region.



Brandywine Heights Area School District athletic fields and existing Middle School

Presently, the School District employs the following grade format:

Public School Grade Format	
Kindergarten	Kindergarten
Elementary School	1-4
Intermediate/Middle School*	4-8
High School	9-12
*The Kemp Building houses both the Intermediate School, grades 4 th and 5 th , and the Middle School, grades 6 th through 8 th .	

The following tabulates conditions at each of the School District's five school sites:

Summary of Brandywine Heights Area School District Facilities							
School Name	Year Built	Renovation Dates	Site Size (acres)	Rated Condition	Grades Housed	Rated Capacity	2013-14 Enrollment
Topton Elementary	1960	1980 & 1990	10.3	Good	K-3	473	425
Intermediate Middle School	1955	1968 & 1995	32	Good	4-5 6-8	1190	211 364
High School	2003	NA	42	New	9-12	800	565

Source: School District

The Brandywine Heights Area School District serves the entire Eastern Berks County Region along with Longswamp Township. The Topton Elementary School is located within Topton Borough. The Middle School, also located within Topton Borough, sits across Weiss Street from the Elementary School, on the south side. The High School, which was built in 2003, sits northeast of Topton Borough within Longswamp Township.

One Elementary School serves the entire Region. The Topton Elementary School site has 10.3 acres and a school that was renovated twice, the last of which occurred in 1990. This facility is rated in "good" condition by District officials. This School serves students from Kindergarten through grade 3 from the entire Region and Longswamp Township.

The Longswamp Elementary School and the Rockland Elementary School are closed. The Rockland Elementary school, which was located on the west side of Lyons Road just north of the Village of New Jerusalem and contained 11.2 acres, was sold to a private school.

The Brandywine Heights Area Intermediate and Middle Schools are also located at the intersection of Henningsville Road and Weiss Street East in Topton Borough. The Middle School was built in 1955 and renovated in 1968 and 1995; its condition is described as "good." A new High School was constructed on the east side of Old Topton Road in Longswamp Township a short distance northeast of Topton Borough. This opened in 2003-04.

The following lists the residual capacity in each of the public schools that serve the Eastern Berks County Region:

Residual Capacity of Schools Serving Region			
School	Rated Capacity	2013-14 Enrollment	Residual Capacity
Topton Elementary	473	425	47
Intermediate/Middle School	1190	575	615
High School	800	565	235
Total Residual Capacity			897

In the year 2010, the number of school-aged children within the Region totaled about 1409, or 21.1% of the total population, this does not include Longswamp Township. The planning goals for this Plan suggest that Topton Borough and Rockland Township will bear most of the planned development potential within the Region. The School District prepares a 10-year History of Enrollment and a 10-year Projection. The following tables show this and include Longswamp Township:

Brandywine Heights Area School District Enrollment 10-Year History and 10-Year Projection

Grade	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
K	123	111	115	110	92	117	112	113	124	84
1	144	126	118	120	116	100	123	110	108	120
2	122	147	130	118	122	119	103	118	114	110
3	137	122	150	134	120	129	120	96	119	111
4	137	142	124	151	135	124	128	119	93	117
5	149	137	147	130	161	137	129	120	117	94
6	171	145	139	145	136	161	142	123	120	117
7	159	167	150	137	148	132	161	132	119	125
8	182	159	173	151	135	154	129	154	127	122
9	182	194	181	191	174	152	159	128	171	145
10	173	167	178	156	170	158	158	151	122	161
11	169	164	164	166	144	169	147	138	142	116
12	147	162	155	148	166	146	165	154	150	143
Total	1,995	1,943	1,924	1,857	1,819	1,798	1,776	1,656	1,626	1,565
% Change		-2.61%	-0.98%	-3.48%	-2.05%	-1.15%	-1.22%	-6.76%	-1.81%	-3.75%
Avg. Grade	153	149	148	143	140	138	137	127	125	120

Grade	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
K	110	110	110	110	111	111	111	112	112	112
1	84	110	110	110	110	111	111	111	112	112
2	120	84	110	110	110	110	111	111	111	112
3	110	120	84	110	110	110	110	111	111	111
4	111	110	120	84	110	110	110	110	111	111
5	117	111	110	120	84	110	110	110	110	111
6	94	117	111	110	120	84	110	110	110	110
7	117	94	117	111	110	120	84	110	110	110
8	125	117	94	117	111	110	120	84	110	110
9	122	125	117	94	117	111	110	120	84	110
10	145	122	125	117	94	117	111	110	120	84
11	161	145	122	125	117	94	117	111	110	120
12	116	161	145	122	125	117	94	117	111	110
Total	1,532	1,526	1,475	1,440	1,429	1,415	1,409	1,427	1,422	1,423
% Change	-2.11%	-0.39%	-3.34%	-2.37%	-0.76%	-0.98%	-0.42%	1.28%	-0.35%	0.07%
Avg. Grade	118	117	113	111	110	109	108	110	109	109

With the both the historical enrollment decreases and the projected continuing enrollment decreases the School District has sufficient capacity for all of the municipalities within the District boundary. ***It is recommended that the Brandywine Heights Area School District closely monitor growth within the Region so as to proactively plan for facility expansion or restoration well in advance of actual demand for space. The School District will benefit from an improved process of residential development review where municipalities are required now to notify School Districts of residential development approvals. By learning of proposed developments early, the District can better prepare for education needs and bus routing. The School District should work closely with the municipalities within its service area so that they can properly respond to such applications and provide meaningful feedback to the municipalities.***

Unsurprisingly, the School District welcomes additional commercial and industrial growth as a means of increasing its tax base. Based upon the planning goals articulated for this Plan, it is unlikely that the Region will encourage new large-scale commercial and industrial expansion. Nonetheless, the Plan will accommodate some local commerce and industry and seek to revitalize existing areas, all of which should add to the tax base.

Finally, the District suggested a willingness to cooperate with the municipalities in the delivery of parks and recreation opportunities, provided student use takes priority during the school year, adequate supervision is provided and other administrative issues can be resolved. Clearly, the School District has already contributed to the availability of parks and facilities within the Region to the benefit of all residents and municipalities. This represents savings in the amount of millions of dollars to local municipalities who would otherwise need to fulfill this need.

To enhance these offerings and “work-out-the-details” it is recommended that the Region and School District explore the creation of a new Regional Recreation Board (RRB). This RRB should include at least two voting members from each municipality/ school district who have demonstrated interest in parks and recreation.

One of the first assignments of the RRB should be to prepare and submit an application to PA DCNR for a peer grant to determine the feasibility of creating a RRB. With all of the municipalities and the school district represented, this plan is likely to be funded. Once the peer study was completed, then the municipalities and School District would review the findings to determine the next steps.

B. POLICE PROTECTION

The Berks Lehigh Regional Police Department served the region at the time of the initial comprehensive planning effort. The department was dissolved on Dec. 31, 2013. The Pennsylvania State Police, Troop L, now provides police protection to the region. Troop L is headquartered at 600 Kenhorst Blvd., Reading, PA 19611 and include:

- criminal investigation section comprised of full-time criminal investigators;
- criminal investigative assessment unit;
- fire marshal unit;
- polygraph unit;
- auto theft unit;
- intelligence unit; and
- vice/narcotics unit.

The Region is situated at a convergence of several patrol zones, which means that any number of patrol vehicles could be called upon to respond to calls, depending upon which vehicles were the closest. Patrol shifts run around-the-clock with varying hours assigned based upon demand. These patrol assignments are subject to ongoing adjustment, depending upon the number of officers actually available for patrol versus the anticipated demand for coverage based upon previous numbers of calls received. The Reading Station unit works closely with the neighboring State Police Stations in Hamburg (Berks County), Fogelsville (Lehigh County) and Skippack (Montgomery County) to ensure a prompt and professional response to the Eastern Berks County Region.

The Reading station manpower needs are assessed annually by the Pennsylvania State Police, Bureau of Research and Development, using a complex equation that considers demographics, geography, crime patterns, and statistics and other factors. The region has a relatively low crime rate. This is expected to continue in the future.

Future Regional Police Protection

The local officials, who assisted in the preparation of this Plan, specifically listed the maintenance of the “status-quo” as a goal for future police protection. It would seem that other more pressing issues are of greater concern than the need for a regionalized police force at this time. It also suggests an overall satisfaction with the methods and efficiency of the current system of police protection. This Plan respects these current intentions but offers the following forewarning of a likely future.

As a rural area develops, local officials find themselves torn between retaining low levels of taxation, and providing for increasing levels of public facilities and services that are usually expected by the “newcomers.” This often pits long-time residents of the community who want things to remain as they were against new residents who move from more urbanized locations, and are often surprised and disappointed by the relative lack of public services. At some point, the new residents usually outnumber the existing inhabitants and the political winds change. At that time, new officials are elected on platforms of better delivery of more services, and real ill-will within the community develops.

Local officials need to know and understand these pressures if they are to persevere through the transition. The question is not **if** better services and higher taxes result, but **when!** Fortunately, State programs exist to assist municipalities with these difficult studies and decisions and offer

independent expert advice. Some of these programs are free, while others are offered in the form of peer-to-peer grants. In any event, these programs and grants can provide invaluable assistance to the open-minded elected official who is trying to “cut through” all of the local politics and emotion.

C. Fire Protection and Ambulance Service

Fire protection is a basic public safety service that is important to the Region. Obviously, fire protection is intended to minimize the loss of life and property due to fire and related hazards. The level of fire protection a community offers also affects the rate which area residents and business owners must pay for fire insurance. Six separate fire companies have first-call responsibilities within the Eastern Berks County Region and other adjoining municipalities. In addition to being responsible for their primary service areas, these companies provide reciprocal, mutual-aid assistance to each other and to other surrounding fire companies as needed. Mutual-aid assistance enables neighboring fire departments to supplement manpower and equipment, and thereby respond more effectively to multiple or major calls. Ambulance service is an obvious lifesaving benefit. Emergency ambulance service involves the pick-up of patients at the scene of an accident or other medical emergency, and their transport to local medical care facilities for treatment. Ambulance service can also involve routine transport, which is the transport of patients from one medical facility to another, or to their home. Four different ambulance companies serve the Region.

The tables on the following two pages summarize fire protection and ambulance services within the Region, respectively.

Summary Characteristics of Fire Companies Serving Eastern Berks County Region								
Fire Company	Eastern Berks Fire Company	Lyons Fire Co.	Oley Fire Co.**	Ruscombmanor Fire Co.**	Seisholtzville Fire Co.**	Topton Volunteer Fire Co. # 1**		
First Call Service Areas Within the Region (see Public Facilities Map)	<i>District, Rockland</i> Bally, Bechtelsville, Lyons Boro. & Washington, Pike, Maxatawny Twp.	<i>Rockland,</i> Lyons & Maxatawny	<i>District, Rockland,</i> Oley & Pike Townships	<i>Rockland &</i> Ruscombmanor Townships	<i>District,</i> Hereford, Longswamp Twp.	<i>Rockland Township, Tipton Borough &</i> Longswamp Twp.		
Mutual-Aid Service Areas Within the Region	Berks, Montgomery & Lehigh Counties	<i>Topton, District,</i> Longswamp/Kutztown Fleetwood./Richmond Ruscombmanor/Pike	<i>Rockland,</i> Alsace, Birdsboro/Earl/Exeter Lower Alsace/Mt. Penn/Ruscombmanor	Alsace, Lower Alsace, Oley, Richmond, Pike, Muhlenberg, Fleetwood Reading, Maxatawny	As dispatched	<i>Rockland, District,</i> Lyons, Maxatawny, Kutztown, Hereford, Upper Macungie, Lower Macungie, Alburtis		
Station Locations Within the Region (Public Facilities Map)	Station 1 – Barto Station 2 – Bally Station 3 – Bechtelsville	P.O. Box 5 Lyon Station , PA 19505	477A Main St. Oley, PA 19547	3721 Pricetown Rd. Fleetwood, PA 19522	PO Box 132 Hereford, PA 18056	<i>PO Box 8</i> <i>Topton, PA 19562</i>		
Avg. No. of Volunteers	60 full-time	N/A	30 full-time 4 fire police	7 full-time, 3 part-time 2 fire police	20 full-time	30 full-time 8 fire police		
1st Due Calls	2011	300 avg.	N	100 avg.	2012 Total Calls–21 2013 Total Calls-39	145		
	2012	300 avg.	N	100 avg.		201		
	2011-2013	300avg.	2012 Total Calls – 54 2013 Total Calls - 69	N		100 avg.	207	
	2011	35 avg.		N		100 avg.	22	
	Mutual-Aid Calls	2012	35 avg.			NA	100 avg.	64
	2011-2013	2013	35 avg.			NA	100 avg.	62
Avg. Emergency Response Time*	10 mins. or less	5 – 8 mins.	4 mins.	4-5 mins.	> 5 mins.	3 mins.		
Major Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hurst Rescue Tools & Air Bags 5" hose Class A & B Foam 3 Engines 1500 gpm 3 Tankers 2000 gal. 3 Brush Trucks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brush truck Engine Rescue Truck Tanker Utility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 02 Pierce Heavy Rescue 97 E-one Pumper 90 E-one Pumper 63 Ford Brush 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 91 Pierce Lance Pumper 1250 GPM 750 gal water tank 86 Pierce Dash Rescue Truck w/full Holmatro Hydraulic Rescue tools, 4 bottle 6000 PSI cascade system to refill SCBA cylinders 00 F-550 KME mini-pumper 500 GPM Pump w/250 gal water tank & 30 gal class A/B Foam tank w/200 ft booster & assorted 1-3/4" attack lines 01 F-450 brush truck w/450 GPM pump, 175 gal water tank w/200' booster lines & other brush fire hand lines & related brush fire fighting equip. 05 Int'l. Chassis KME Tanker w/2000 gal water tank & 1250 GPM pump. Assorted 1-3/4 & 2-1/2" attack lines & 2500 gal porta-tank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 pumpers 2 tankers brush truck 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 71 Mack Pumper** 93 KME Pumper 92 Heavy Rescue 89 Tanker (6000 g) 01 Brush Truck 89 Jeep Utility 		

*Time that it takes the vehicle to leave the station.

**Information provided by Berks County Department of Emergency Services

Summary Characteristics of Ambulance Companies Serving Eastern Berks County Region

Ambulance Company		Bally Community**	Fleetwood		Oley**		Topton	
Service Area		<i>District Township</i> , Douglass, Hereford, Longswamp, New Hanover, Pike & Washington Twps.; Bally, Bechtelsville Boro's.	<i>Rockland Township</i> (portion), Fleetwood Boro., Portions of Oley & Pike Twps. Richmond, & Ruscombmanor Twps.		<i>District, Rockland Twps.</i> , Alsace, Amity, Earl, Oley, Pike & Ruscombmanor Twps.		<i>Parts of District and Rockland Townships</i> , Lyons & Topton Boro., Longswamp Twp. & parts of Maxatawny Twp.	
Station Locations Within the Region (see Public Facilities Map)		537 Chestnut St. Bally, PA 19503	16 North Chestnut St. Fleetwood, PA 19522		477A Main Street Oley, PA 19547		205 Home Road, Mertztown, PA 19539-9044	
Average No. of Volunteers/Paid Staff		3 full-time staff 9 part-time staff 13 part-time volunteers	9 full-time staff 25 part-time staff 7 volunteers		15 full-time volunteers 10 part-time volunteers		9 full-time staff 13 part-time staff 15 volunteers	
Coverage Periods		24/7 with occasional callouts	24/7		24/7		24/7	
No. of Ambulance Responses (2011-2013)	Type of Response	Total Emergency / Non-Emergency	Emergency	Non-Emergency	Emergency	Non-Emergency	Emergency	Non-Emergency
	2011	NA	2083	N	NA	NA	1039	13
	2012	27	2105	N	NA	NA	960	13
	2013	80	2024	N	NA	NA	839	19
Average Emergency Response		2 mins.	2 mins.		10 mins. to scene		3 mins.	
Major Equipment		• 4 EMS Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2001 Chevrolet Tahoe ALS Squad Vehicle - 2003 Ford E-450 Ambulance - 2007 Ford E-450 Ambulance - 2009 Ford E-450 Ambulance 		• 4 EMS Units		2006 Ford Ambulance 2010 Ford Ambulance	

*Time that it takes the vehicle to leave the station.

**Information provided by Berks Department of Emergency Services

Future Volunteer Manpower

There is always a concern over declining numbers of volunteers. This is particularly true of next generation of emergency service providers. However, given the projected growth within the Region, future demands will rise and more manpower will be needed. Nationally, volunteerism is declining. The National Volunteer Fire Council reported that the number of volunteer firefighters dropped 12% since its record high in 1983. Despite President Bush's call to public service after "9/11", the downward trend continues. This often forces mutual-aid responses from distant companies; this strategy may work in the short term, but will eventually overburden volunteers who will get frustrated and quit. The more you demand of a volunteer, the less you are likely to receive! Declining manpower response is most problematic during the day when many volunteers work outside of their first response area.

Presently, 6 separate fire companies serve the Eastern Berks County Region with 147 full-time volunteers, 3 part-time volunteers and 10 volunteer fire police. The increase in traffic, certain types of crimes and fears of increased terror attacks many experts argue that capacity to respond to local emergency crises needs to be expanded. Fortunately, many citizens within our society have begun to acknowledge the important and life-saving roles volunteer firefighters, EMTs and local police officers provide.

To enlist more volunteer firefighters/EMTs, particularly during the daytime, it is recommended that the Region create a new Emergency Services Alliance of local officials (say, one from each municipality), the fire chiefs from each fire company and the ambulance chiefs from each ambulance company. The Alliance should seek to ensure that the following possible sources of daytime and other volunteers are put in place:

- 1. Recruit firefighters/EMTs who live within the Region and work for businesses located here;***
- 2. Recruit firefighters/EMTs that live outside of the Region, but work for businesses located here;***
- 3. Establish policies with local governments and businesses that enable their employees to respond to daytime emergencies;***
- 4. Identify local volunteer firefighters/EMTs that may work for Berks County, and establish policies for their release from work duties to respond to daytime emergencies within the Region;***
- 5. Design ongoing recruitment strategies for new resident volunteers and retention strategies for existing volunteers; and,***
- 6. Explore the offering of a “junior” firefighting curriculum within the Public School Districts as a means of developing interest and expertise among potential future volunteers.***

Prior to actual recruiting, the Alliance should complete the following evaluation process:

- 1. Determine the need by local fire/ambulance chiefs for more volunteers from any of the preceding sources within their respective companies;***
- 2. Establish policies within the Region’s fire and ambulance companies that allow for nonresidents to become members of their respective companies;***
- 3. Identify those local and nonresident volunteers who work for companies within the Region who could potentially respond to daytime emergency calls;***
- 4. Determine the level of competence of potential volunteers and/or training needed to “run” with local companies;***
- 5. Establish ongoing working agreements with local businesses for the release of volunteer firefighters/EMTs during daytime emergencies;***
- 6. Require the potential “daytime” employee volunteer firefighter/EMTs to become an official member of the respective fire/ambulance company, so that they can be covered by the municipality’s workmen’s compensation insurance policy; and,***
- 7. Establish an ongoing mechanism that periodically reinitializes the recruitment process.***

Today, emergency services often involve specialized equipment and training. The Region’s fire and ambulance companies already have an informal means of efficiently using the specialized skills and expertise of existing volunteers across the Region. ***The Emergency Services Alliance should also formalize a program to deliver specialized training to ensure a wide and uniform coverage of specialized skills and expertise throughout the Region.*** In addition, the PA DCED’s Shared Municipal Services Program may offer matching grants for any two or more municipalities who jointly perform local government functions. Such grants have been awarded to

fund paid administrators to oversee the preceding recruitment and training activities. ***The Eastern Berks County Region could benefit from the same type of position to carry out these same duties, as discussed in this section of the Plan.***

Future Fund Raising

Like a lack of manpower, local volunteer fire and ambulance companies are plagued by rising costs associated with the need to purchase equipment and supplies. A 2001 study conducted by the Pennsylvania Fire and Emergency Services Institute provided information about the costs saved by the Commonwealth's volunteer fire companies. Essentially, they assumed that, in the absence of volunteer fire companies, paid companies would be required.

Local officials and volunteers are aware of the difficulties faced. Yet, in many cases, an area's long-time residents usually financially support local fire and ambulance companies at an appropriate level. They have been historically educated about the value of local volunteer efforts. However, as the Region has grown and will continue to do so, many new residents have moved here from other, more urban, locations where paid firefighting and ambulance services are normal. These new residents are unaware of their reliance upon, and the plight of, local volunteer companies. Therefore, ***the Region must cultivate awareness among the newly-arrived residents of the need for their financial and manpower support to sustain volunteer firefighting and ambulance services.***

To accomplish this awareness, the local fire and ambulance chiefs must work with local municipalities on a regular and ongoing basis to mount an educational and media campaign. Such campaign must exceed the traditional general campaign that merely includes statements like the following:

- *"Local volunteer fire and ambulance campaigns depend entirely upon your donations";*
- *"Not a single tax dollar is used by local volunteer fire and ambulance companies."*

The new campaign should be more of an "in-your-face" effort that presents specific findings and presents hard, "credible" facts about the cost of delivering these services and the foreseeable equipment needs of the various companies. It should explain the benefits of new equipment and what it can mean to the Region. It should also portray the competent plans of the local companies in their attempts to ensure an adequate level of protection in the near and long-range future. Schedules for equipment replacements and upgrades should be accompanied with target financial goals to which the public can respond. Citizens should gain an understanding that local companies really need this equipment, and that they are not just "after" the newest and shiniest truck on the market.

To demonstrate these facts, the Region should (through the above-described Alliance) apply to the PA DCED for the preparation of a technical review, as part of its Shared Municipal Service Program, at no cost to the Region. This will require the preparation of a "Single Application for Assistance," a copy of which can be found online at www.esa.dced.state.pa.us. The PA DCED will examine the adequacy of the Region's equipment to provide adequate service. Then, the results of these impartial and objective analyses should be used to program needed equipment purchases, and justify funding requests and pledge drives in the ongoing media and educational campaign. In addition, the results of the analysis can be used as justification for additional application to the PA DCED for 50/50 matching grants for other equipment needs, like communications and dry-hydrant programs.

Other related facts that should be emphasized to the public include:

- Local volunteer fire and ambulance companies are responding to ever-increasing numbers of calls based upon the Region's growth with actual figures presented; and,
- Local volunteer fire and ambulance companies are responding to a wider variety of types of calls and that the amount of time spent per incident is also increasing.

As a byproduct of this campaign, the municipalities should annually, publicly present the names of those businesses and individuals who contribute to the various companies. This will publicly recognize those who offered support, and potentially impose peer pressure to others who have not contributed to these important efforts. In addition, some volunteer ambulance companies have begun to affix advertising logos on the sides of their vehicles for private sponsors who contribute substantial sums each year. Even though local volunteer firefighters are described as strong-willed, determined and fiercely independent, most agree that difficult times lie ahead. Therefore, as a long-term strategy, local volunteer fire companies and municipal officials should begin to explore the partial and gradual use of other funding mechanisms (e.g., billing for responses, fire tax, etc.), so that these measures can be phased-in, in support of local volunteer efforts, rather than allowing for complete failure of the volunteer system which would then be replaced by a completely-paid force.

Other issues raised by local fire and ambulance companies that could improve emergency service to the Region include:

Driveway Design and Addressing - As a means of improving emergency access and response, each municipality within the Region should adopt minimum driveway design standards that facilitate adequate emergency access and resist efforts to waive or vary from these safety-related standards. Such standards should require:

- A minimum 10 foot-wide improved (paved or stone surface) cartway for single-use driveways and 16 feet for joint-use driveways;
- A paved apron connection with the public or private street that extends at least 25 feet off-of the road cartway and has a slope of no more than 8 percent;
- A minimum 12-foot high clear vertical path along the driveway between the road and all structures that is free of vegetation and other obstruction;
- A maximum driveway length of 600 feet for single-use driveways and 1000 feet for joint-use driveways; and,
- Posting of reflective road address number signs at all driveway entrances or turn-outs along joint-use driveways. On paved driveways reflective paint can be used upon the driveway apron to portray the street address number as an alternative to reflective sign posting.

In addition, the County's improving GIS mapping database can provide each fire and ambulance company with emergency response mapping that clearly depicts every property and its address. As this database continues to evolve in the coming years, such maps can depict actual driveway and structure locations and aerial photographs. This can greatly assist in emergency response in rural areas that are difficult to negotiate at street level.

Dry Hydrant Installation – Several of the Fire Chiefs expressed the need for better sources of water for firefighting within the rural areas of the Region. Dry hydrants are permanently mounted pipes that are located at local sources of water (ponds and streams) that firefighters can readily access during times of emergency. Typically these hydrants are located alongside an improved from the cartway. They appear as 5" PVC pipes extending out of the ground with suitable tap fittings. From here the pipes travel underground into the watersource where strainers are used to keep them clear of debris and silt. Installation of these hydrants costs about \$750 to \$1000 and can be less if volunteer or Township

excavating can be used. Easements from private property owners need to be negotiated and recorded so that future conveyances of the property preserve the water access. Prior to installation, permits are required from the Berks County Conservation District but no fees are charged. The installation of these hydrants can affect a reduction in homeowner insurance rates.

D. Municipal Government

This section provides a description of local government structure and function in the Region's three municipalities. The role of local officials, boards, commissions, authorities, committees, and staff are set forth to provide an understanding of the hierarchy of local decision-making, input into these decisions, and the role of citizen involvement.

TOPTON BOROUGH



Office Address: 205 South Callowhill Street, Tipton, PA 19562

Office Phone Number - (610) 682-2541

Office Fax Number - (610) 682-1636

Office Hours: Monday–Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Description of Office and Facilities: Current municipal building was constructed in 1967, with improvements made in 1995. The building contains 475 square feet with offices and a council room and is ADA compliant. The water treatment plant was constructed in 1996. The sewage treatment plant was built in 1963 and upgraded in 2000.

Municipal Staff: Staff currently consists of six full-time employees including a Borough Secretary, Office Assistant, Coordinator of Maintenance & Utilities, Water Treatment Operator, Sewage Treatment Operator and a laborer.

Mayor: The Mayor is an elected 4-year position who has a seat at the Council table and provides valuable input into the functions reviewed by the Council.

Borough Council: Borough Council is the elected governing body of the Borough. The 7-member Council meets on the 2nd & 4th Mondays of the month, in the Borough Hall. They serve 4-year terms, review issues involved in operating the municipality, address resident concerns and set future policy standards that are implemented by Borough staff.

Planning Commission: Members are appointed by Borough Council for 4-year terms. The five member board meets in the Borough Hall on an as needed basis. The Planning Commission is an advisory body.

Zoning Hearing Board: Members are appointed by Borough Council for 4-year terms. The five members meet in the Borough Hall on an as needed basis (when an application is submitted for a zoning hearing). The Board reviews and acts upon requests for zoning variances or special exceptions from property owners who want to build or use their properties, which do not follow the Zoning Ordinance.

Municipal Authority: The Municipal Authority oversees the Borough's water and sewer plants. Members are appointed for 4-year terms. The five members meet on an as needed basis.

Recreation Board: Yes

DISTRICT TOWNSHIP



Office Address: 202 Weil Road, Boyertown, PA 19512

Office Phone Number - (610) 845-7595

Office Fax Number - (610) 845-7596

Office Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Description of Office and Facilities: Current municipal building was first occupied by the Township in the summer of 1979. It contains 4,964 square feet with three offices and a meeting room with a seating capacity of 80 people.

Municipal Staff: All staff positions are currently part-time and include one secretary/treasurer, one Roadmaster, three road crewmembers, one groundskeeper and one housekeeper.

Board of Supervisors: Board of Supervisors is the elected governing body of the Township. The 3-member Board meets in the Municipal Building on the 3rd Thursday of the month, at 7:00 p.m.

Planning Commission: Members are appointed for 4-year terms. The five members meet in the Municipal Building on the 1st Thursday of the month, at 7:00 p.m.

Zoning Hearing Board: The three members are appointed for 3-year terms and meet as needed.

Recreation Board: This three member board meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Municipal Building to advise local officials on matters dealing with parks and recreation.

Environmental Advisory Council: This five member board meets the 1st Monday of each month at the Municipal Building at 6:30 p.m. to advise local officials on matters of environmental consequence.

Crime Watch: Meet quarterly at 7:00 p.m. at the Municipal Building

ROCKLAND TOWNSHIP



Office Address: 41 Deysher Road, Fleetwood, PA 19522

Office Phone: (610) 682-6311

Office Fax: (610) 682-4717

Office Email Address: rocktwp1@ptd.net

Office Hours: Monday–Friday; 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Closed 12:00 – 1:00)

Description of Office and Facilities: The Township’s original garage was built in 1979 with 5,000 square feet. A building expansion in 2001 provided an additional 1,764 square feet for a meeting room and two offices.

Municipal Staff: Staff currently consists of a full-time Secretary/ Treasurer, who directs all day-to-day office operations. A full-time Roadmaster, two full-time and one part-time road crew are responsible for the maintenance/repair of Township roads.

Board of Supervisors: Board of Supervisors is the elected governing body of the Township. Members are elected for 6-year terms. The three member Board meets at the Township Office on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Duties include governing and execution of legislative, executive and administrative powers to ensure sound fiscal management and to secure the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the Township.

Planning Commission: Members are appointed for 4-year terms. The five members meet at the Township Office on the last Tuesday of every month. Duties include review of submitted subdivision and land development plans.

Zoning Hearing Board: The Board consists of three regular members, appointed to 3-year terms. The Board meets at the Township Office on an as-needed basis, to review hear requests for special exceptions and variances.

Recreation Board: Inactive

BRANDYWINE COMMUNITY LIBRARY



Location: 60 Tower Drive, Topton, PA 19562

(On the campus of the Lutheran Home) See the **Public Facilities Map**, for a graphic illustration of this location.

Phone: (610) 682-7115

Fax: (610) 682-7385

Website: www.berks.lib.pa.us/sbr

Primary Service Areas & Population assigned by the Berks County Public Libraries:

Topton Borough
District Township Longswamp Township
Rockland Township
Outreach program to Lutheran Home at Topton
Population – 12,863

Hours of Operation – Mon. – Wed., 10 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Thurs. – Fri., 12 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (July & Aug. 9 am to 2 p.m.)

Personnel – Library Director, Children’s Librarian, Head of Circulation, 2 Circulation Clerks

Facilities Inventory – 7 rooms, 8 computers, 33,040 collection size & DVDs, digital magazines, music CDs, video games, audio books, children’s early literacy workstation, newspapers, magazines, Public Wireless Network, Fax service, copy and print services

Major Complications – Staff are not provided benefits, lack of space limits range of services, lack of funding limits hours.

Funding and Budget – Local municipalities have pledged their support as follows: Topton Borough \$5.00 per capita, Longswamp Township \$2.00 per capita, District Township \$1.31 per capita and Rockland Township’s 2014 donation of \$4,500.

Operating Income (2013)		% of Total
State of Pennsylvania	\$25,779	17.3%
Berks County	\$58,473	39.1%
Local Municipalities	\$26,886	18.0%
Other Local Sources	\$38,300	25.6%
TOTAL	\$149,438	

Operating Expenses (2013)		% of Total
Salaries and Benefits	\$81,320	65.4%
Collection Expenses	\$15,480	12.4%
Operating Expenses	\$27,542	22.2%
TOTAL	\$124,342	