Main Street Schwenksville Streetscape Plan and Design Guidelines







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SCHWENKSVILLE BOROUGH | MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

MAIN STREET SCHWENKSVILLE REVITALIZATION TASK FORCE

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Main Street Schwenksville Streetscape Plan and Design Guidelines

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*All photos and graphics provided by MCPC or Schwenksville Borough unless otherwise noted

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Introduction

Schwenksville Borough is located in the Central Perkiomen Valley region of Montgomery County, approximately 35 miles northwest of Philadelphia. The Borough is bounded by the Perkiomen Creek to the east, Perkiomen Township to the west, Lower Frederick Township to the north and west, and Upper Salford Township to the northeast. The Borough is located at the approximate mid-point of the Perkiomen Trail and was the first Greenway Community in the state, underlining the value the Borough places on its natural resources, open space and trails. But if the Perkiomen Trail is a "main street" through the Borough—what about Main Street itself? Schwenksville aims to align the strengths of the trail with the opportunities offered by Main Street (PA Route 29/73), while promoting good design that will strengthen the overall aesthetics and economic appeal of Main Street.

Scope

This plan encompasses Schwenksville's Main Street from the Borough line at Route 73/Skippack Pike to Game Farm Road/Park Avenue to the north, a distance of about ³/₄ of a mile. The plan pertains to all properties immediately adjacent to Main Street and extends east to the Perkiomen Trail.

The combined elements of the built environment at street level compose a streetscape. The traffic light obeyed by a driver and the street trees shading the pedestrian are both a part of the streetscape. The elements considered essential for Schwenksville's streetscape have been included in this plan, and were developed at the recommendation of the Schwenksville Revitalization Task Force and in keeping with the Borough's Revitalization Plan. The scope of the Streetscape Plan and Design Guidelines will address the following: Main Street, its adjacent buildings, street furniture, landscaping, pedestrian lighting, sidewalks, public and private signs, curbs, and parking lots. Many of these elements are within the public right of way, and therefore are the responsibility of Borough government. Some elements will be on private property, including signage for businesses, building façades, and sidewalks.

Other Plans

Main Street Schwenksville fulfills, in part, Goal #1 of the 2010 *Schwenksville Community Revitalization Plan,* which is "To maintain the economic viability of Schwenksville while making physical changes that build on its existing small town character." Likewise, this document addresses the following objectives identified in the Revitalization Plan:

- Improve the streetscape along Main Street by promoting attractive and effective lighting, signage, pedestrian facilities, street furniture, plantings, and traffic calming;
- Improve overall pedestrian safety and connectivity...[to] enhance the ability of residents to easily reach the business, cultural, and natural amenities that are some of the



An average of 20,000 cars pass through the borough every day, and it is estimated that nearly 400,000 people use the Perkiomen Trail each year.



Historic homes along Main Street are an asset to the character of Main Street.



The Fire Company in Schwenksville is a strong civic institution for the Borough.



The entrance to this parking lot is undefined and in addition to posing a safety hazard, it detracts from the local character.

Borough's strongest assets;

- Enhance connections to open space from the Main Street commercial corridor;
- Control the speed and volume of traffic moving through Schwenksville;
- To improve signage for businesses and amenities throughout the Borough.

Another plan, the *Central Perkiomen Valley Regional Transportation & Community Character Study,* informs the recommendations and design guidelines contained in this Streetscape Plan, particularly in the importance it places on how roadway design (and, by extension, the streetscape as a whole) impacts community character, as well as recommendations on traffic calming techniques. Since Main Street is classified as a Principal Arterial, attracting higher levels of car-trips than any other street in the Borough, mitigating the negative impacts of traffic is a primary concern which this plan intends to address.

Improvements shown in the *Master Plan for Meadow Park* include an interior walking path, boat launch, multipurpose recreational area, park and trailhead parking, and additional site amenities such as new ornamental lighting and rain gardens.

Challenges

One of the most significant challenges for improvement is the narrow right-of-way along Main Street. Sidewalk widths are variable, and will limit the full array of street furniture, landscaping, or lighting that can be present

RECREATIONAL, CULTURAL, AND RETAIL DESTINATIONS





Historic properties line the length of Main Street.

on any section of sidewalk. Likewise, physical obstacles such as telephone poles, parked cars or other utilities that exist on otherwise passable sidewalks can degrade the safety and quality of walking. In some areas, commercial driveways and parking lots are not differentiated from the pedestrian zone, resulting in hazardous and uninviting spaces. While the Borough has significant leeway to install improvements in its own right-of-way, gaining the buy-in of both state and county agencies with rights-of-way in the subject area, as well as the buy-in of private property owners, can be a challenge. Lastly, as of this writing, the Borough is limited in its staffing capacity, which can limit its ability to maintain an extensive inventory of street furniture. Ultimately, while there are some challenges that the Borough must work within the limits of, many of these challenges can certainly be overcome.

Opportunities

Schwenksville has many opportunities to capitalize on its physical strengths. Main Street showcases local businesses, recreational amenities, and historic buildings and neighborhoods. There are many historic properties along and near Main Street that contribute to the Borough's sense of place. Many of the existing economic and recreational amenities, such as the Perkiomen Creek and Trail, Meadow Park, and the density of the commercial corridor and adjacent neighborhoods, provide destinations and infrastructure that will make streetscape and design investments more effective in creating connections and increasing land value.



Attractive storefronts are an asset to Main Street.



Main Street's proximity to the Perkiomen Trail, only steps away, is a great opportunity to capture new potential customers.

Streetscape Plan: The Vision

Why Streetscapes Are Important

A streetscape is all of the visual and physical elements that one encounters while walking or driving down a street. In combination, these elements provide a visual and sensory experience. A streetscape is seen and experienced at eye level, by pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists, and from within homes and businesses. Well-designed streetscapes function on many levels; they calm traffic, they safely allow pedestrian travel, they accommodate onstreet parking, and they provide moments for people to linger. As a whole, a streetscape should contribute to a town's **sense of place**.

The following five values should be the focus of any streetscape intervention:

Safety – Safety is the first priority that any streetscape improvement should address. Since **Main Street Schwenksville** is already positioned to be a prime pedestrian corridor, the act of walking should be protected at all costs. Sidewalks, crosswalks and driveways should be designed and maintained to allow pedestrians of all ages and abilities to use them safely. Likewise, traffic calming measures like bumpouts slow vehicular traffic, making the street safer for both pedestrians and drivers.

Comfort – Improvements should not only make walking, shopping and doing business on Main

Street safer, but also more comfortable. The Streetscape should be inviting and intimate, encouraging people to stay longer and patronize more businesses, and those with physical disabilities or limitations should feel welcome and accommodated.

Beauty – Broken sidewalks, dilapidated façades, inappropriate sign design, litter, and other conditions detract from the Borough's streetscape, discouraging future investment, shoppers and residents. Ornamental paving, appropriate signs, historically-articulated façade treatments and attractive plantings not only make the environment aesthetically pleasing, but contribute to the "look" of Schwenksville. Residents can and should take pride in a beautiful landscape.

Orientation – The opportunities and amenities present in Schwenksville cannot fully be realized

or utilized unless both residents and visitors have a coherent, obvious path to their destination. A consistently-designed wayfinding program encourages greater and more efficient patronage of businesses and recreational and natural amenities.

Identity – Streetscape improvements should help establish and enhance the identity of Schwenksville, through unique design features which support the Borough's vernacular architecture, history and form.

Sense of Place

This phrase refers to the aspects of a physical place that contribute to the sense that it is special and unique. These aspects include the historical, cultural, visual, and environmental. Design improvements should enhance and pay tribute to all those things that make Schwenksville...*Schwenksville*.



RENDERING OF IMPROVED STREETSCAPE AT SCHWENKSVILLE FIRE COMPANY



Vision Statement

Main Street, from Skippack Pike to East Park Ave, will be a vibrant residential, commercial, and recreation corridor. It will be a pedestrianfriendly primary connection to the Perkiomen Creek, Perkiomen Trail, and other local destinations. Main Street will be enhanced through the celebration of history, culture and the arts, and the enrichment of green and public spaces. A unique and defined sense of place will encourage residents and visitors alike to visit and return to Main Street, Schwenksville.

A special area of historic and cultural importance to receive improvements is an area this plan coins as "the HEART of Schwenksville", composed of the area around Meadow Park, and spanning along Main Street from Centennial Street to Perkiomen Avenue. The acronym H.E.A.R.T. embodies the themes of engaging the past in the present. Schwenksville is Historic, Engaging, Authentic, Recreational, and Timeless. The spirit of this concept is embodied in a Pennsylvania Dutchinspired design by Rose Ellen Behmer, adopted as the Borough's official flag on May 3, 1976. The artist states, "An emblem, to me, is a symbol not only of what is but that which should and can be. Schwenksville abounds in natural beauty... inhabited by persons of many ethnic and cultural backgrounds....proudly holding up the banner of the true values of heart, co-operation and industriousness."

Goals

One of Schwenksville's primary objectives is to create a pedestrian friendly environment. Walking along or trying to cross Main Street may not always feel safe due to the high speeds at which vehicles pass through the Borough. Any future sidewalk designs should address issues of not only safety, but aesthetics and accessibility as well these are elaborated upon in the next section. The following goals and priorities will guide Schwenksville in creating a pedestrian-friendly, vibrant, and attractive Main Street:

- Make walking feel safe. Sidewalks and crosswalks should be free of hazards and have as few conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles as possible. Sidewalk widths should feel comfortable for two people to walk sideby-side and areas used most by pedestrians should be free from obstructions. Sidewalks should also be roomy enough for people to easily pass each other.
- Allow for accessibility. The Americans with Disabilities Act requires local governments to install ADA-compliant curb ramps when a roadway is built or altered, as well as monitor and maintain sidewalk accessibility. The Borough is currently in the beginning stages of installing these curb ramps along Main Street, and it will be important moving forward to create a Main Street that is accessible to people of all ages and all levels of mobility.
- Create spaces that bring people together. Sidewalks and trails are places where neighbors meet. Sidewalks can also be home to outdoor dining, markets, art, banners, historical markers, and other unique aspects that make communities feel like home.
- Provide buffers, when feasible, to serve as a separation between traffic and pedestrians.
 Buffers can be as simple as bollards or plantings, but even parallel parking areas can be enough of a buffer to make pedestrians feel more secure.



Sidewalks are places where people meet, and should be comfortable for all users.



Main Street should provide unobstructed walkways with places to rest.



Bump-outs act as buffers between pedestrians and traffic, and provide locations for benches and planters.



A proposed flag emblem design, based on an original design by Rose Ellen Behmer.

- Provide places for people to rest and refuel. Open areas may be few and far between on Main Street, but areas where people do congregate should be inviting and comfortable. The ease of exiting the Perkiomen Trail throughout Schwenksville also means that the Borough has a captive audience of people looking to take a break from or refresh before getting back on the trail.
- Streetscape elements should be harmonious and contribute to the sense of place. Street furniture, such as benches, waste receptacles, light fixtures, as well as paving materials and signage, should be coordinate in a way that provides unifying visual elements throughout the Borough.

- Blank, underutilized or "wasted" spaces should be used for creative ventures. Murals or landscaping can soften and beautify what is otherwise empty space.
- The maintenance of streetscape improvements may be just as important as installing them in the first place. Street furniture and all other improvements or treatments should be chosen for their longevity, durability, and their relative ease of maintenance. However, whenever maintenance is needed, it should be dealt with as early as possible. Peeling paint, weeds, dead or dying trees, and street furniture showing signs of wear negatively impact the streetscape, and can roll back gains made, and therefore should be replaced or repaired as soon as possible. Broken or damaged planters, lights, or benches should also be quickly fixed or replaced.



Paving, benches, and other site amenities should coordinate and be harmonious with surroundings.



Large, blank walls and facades may be painted creatively to create a sense of place.

Typical Main Street Cross-Section



Wayfinding and Parking Plan



Streetscape Vision



Streetscape Section A



Streetscape Section B



Streetscape Section C



Streetscape Section D



Design Guidelines

How to Use the Guidelines Sidewalk and Pedestrian Crossing Standards Site Wall and Screening Standards Street and Site Furnishing Standards Architectural Standards Signage Standards Planting Standards Parking Standards

How to Use the Guidelines

The following design guidelines in this section provide the tools and the building blocks to implement the Streetscape Plan. Knowing the Vision for **Main Street Schwenksville** is the first step of the effort; the next step is identifying the materials, forms, designs, colors, and arrangement of streetscape elements will best achieve a safe, functional, and attractive Main Street that is specific to Schwenksville.

To more finely delineate specific design guidelines for the Borough, there is a need to specify between different areas of the Borough in their relation to Main Street. As mentioned earlier, Main Street itself and the Perkiomen Trail are the two main thoroughfares of the Borough. Therefore, the two main zones for which design guidelines are provided are the "Main Street Zone" and the "Recreation/Trail Zone," as defined below:

- Main Street Zone: All those properties and sidewalks that have their primary frontage on Main Street, as well as all intersections with and crossings of Main Street.
- Recreation/Trail Zone: Those properties and rights-of-way that constitute the Perkiomen Trail, Meadow Park, and any future parkland or open space.

Code References

Developers and property owners who'll need to refer to these guidelines and recommendations will also need to adhere to current Borough development regulations, which are found in the Zoning Code, Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO), Sidewalk Ordinance, and other ordinances. For ease of explanation on how certain guidelines and recommendations interact with or reflect Borough regulations, references to relevant sections of the Borough Code are provided in the margins. However, these may not be the only ordinances applicable to your project. These guidelines will provide a cohesive design palette for each area or zone. If there is a need to identify a specification for another section of the Borough, that area is indicated later.

When a particular product or item is specified for a streetscape element, the element ultimately chosen for a streetscape or Borough revitalization project should be that model or its closest equivalent.

This document is intended not only for Borough staff and officials, but also for Borough residents, property owners and developers, since this document presents a vision for what the Borough hopes to encourage in both private and public development. Homeowners will find guidance and advice on how to keep that "village feel" in the Borough while maintaining their homes and sidewalk areas. Commercial property owners



and developers who will need to meet Borough regulations for physical improvements to their lots during the land development process or during business operations, will find this guide useful as well.

Schwenksville's Color and Materials Palette

The visual character of Schwenksville is exemplified by warm and earth-tone colors and authentic materials, among its other amenities.

Authentic, historic materials such as brick, stone and wood compose much of the Borough's built environment.

Any future land development or streetscape improvements should preserve the visual integrity of the Borough. However, personal expression is encouraged by using harmonizing building materials, colors, and architectural styles illustrated on the right for inspiration as a start.

Schwenksville circa 1970.

SCHWENKSVILLE'S EXISTING MATERIALS AND CHARACTER

























Sidewalk and Pedestrian Crossing Standards

Design Intent

Schwenksville's paved areas cover a large extent of Main Street and are one of the most visible streetscape elements. Sidewalks, trails and pathways are the canvas upon which other improvements are elaborated on. They guide pedestrians and vehicles through the Borough, to its shops, homes, and its trail system. Paving patterns and materials should have consistency and work together to provide continuity throughout the streetscape.

Sidewalk Guidelines

The Borough's current ordinance provisions require a sidewalk width of at least four (4) feet. However, to maximize walkability, sidewalks along Main Street should be at least six feet to eight feet wide. A wider sidewalk will easily accommodate two adults walking side-by-side at a comfortable distance from both store façades and the nearby street. Given the space constraints that are already in place, wider sidewalks may not always be feasible. Design attempts should be made to accommodate the minimum spatial recommendations shown. Ideally, any future construction along Main Street should account for Schwenksville's generally narrow sidewalk and set back new buildings enough to provide usable sidewalk area.

In the illustration on the right, the sidewalk area is broken down into the building zone, the pedestrian zone, and the curb zone.

A TYPICAL STREET-SIDEWALK TRANSECT





A wide, newly-paved sidewalk in the Borough.

§147-39.C. LANDSCAPING REQUIREMENTS: STREET TREES.

§147-30.E. SIDEWALK WIDTH.

§143-9. MINIMUM WIDTH OF SIDEWALKS.

§176-105.Q.1.C. SANDWICH BOARD REGULATIONS.



This stretch of sidewalk is a good width, where two people can walk abreast easily, but could be improved by adding planters in the Building Zone or buffers from the parking lots.

BUILDING ZONE

The area closest to the building, beyond the right-of-way, is known as the Building Zone. Depending on the setback of existing buildings, this zone's width will vary significantly. This zone is appropriate for placement of benches or café seating, planters or even trees. Technically, since this area is beyond the right-of-way, and within the property line of parcels abutting Main Street, the Borough would need to work more closely with and rely more on the property owner for the provision of amenities in this space. A long-term strategy to assure adequate sidewalk width or other streetscape amenities could include adjusting setback requirements for districts abutting Main Street to require enough room for those amenities, while making sure they are close enough to the street to encourage pedestrian activity.



Larger setbacks should be densely planted with colorful shrubs and perennials.

PEDESTRIAN ZONE

This zone, which is the main travelway by which pedestrians make their way down the sidewalk, obviously be clear of any obstacles that could impede safe passage. It is here that sidewalk maintenance is the most important, not only for aesthetic reasons but also for pedestrian safety. Here, a minimum of four (4) feet wide should be required. This width shall not be diminished or obstructed by outdoor seating, sandwich board signs, or any other objects.

CURB ZONE

Also known as the "verge," the curb zone is the area between the street and the pedestrian travelway, and provides a buffer between the "sidewalk life" and passing traffic. In many towns, this area might contain street lighting, street trees, or other street furniture. However, due to the existing narrowness of Schwenksville's Main Street sidewalks overall, it has been determined that adding these sorts of amenities to this zone could unnecessarily clutter the streetscape. The provision of on-street parking on much of Main Street, however, already provides a spatial and protective buffer from pedestrians, creating a safer and more comfortable environment. Instead, where space permits, this area shall be the location of decorative pavers. This zone should be a minimum of two (2) feet in width.

PAVING MATERIALS

A common approach to installing a decorative sidewalk pattern is to create a mix of basic concrete sidewalk, typically made of Portland cement concrete, and decorative pavers. The decorative pavers will be limited to the area



The above schematic illustrates the stacked modified bond pattern in which the decorative pavers shall be placed in the curb zone on Main Street in the Borough.



Brick pavers should be used to pave special areas of sidewalk, such as where pathways meet, small plazas, or expanded seating areas as seen in Royersford.

between the curb and the walkway—the Curb Zone. As the streetscape evolves, the Borough and Property Owners should look for ways to add interest to the sidewalk areas such as adding additional brick elements to bump-outs and Building Zone areas, in addition to the Curb Zone. Although the extent to which this decorative Curb Zone paver detail shall apply is limited to wider sidewalks in the center of town, the pavers may be used as an accent anywhere.

Pavers refer to any type of solid block installation where a large number of hard blocks are laid into the ground forming a continuous surface with a distinct pattern. While brick is probably the most popular type of sidewalk paver, other materials that could be used include stone, granite, or precast concrete. Other materials may be used subject to the approval of Borough Council, provided that the standard brick paver is installed in the curbline where required.

Stamped concrete has been used elsewhere as an alternative to pavers; however, the cost of repairing areas paved with stamped concrete can be prohibitive and at this time, its use is not recommended in the Borough.

Pavers for the Recreation/Trail Zone have also been specified, particularly to coordinate with the decorative paving already installed at the Trailhead at the southern gateway to the Borough.

Paving materials and colors should be verified before final selection to ensure color and texture compatibility before any final selection. All other sidewalk areas may be paved with concrete.

Brick Paver

MAIN STREET ZONE:

Item Specified: Brickstone Autumn Blend by EP Henry.

Placement Guidelines: Placed in modified stacked bond pattern pictured herein, along sidewalks on Main Street, from the driveway cut at 96 S. Main Street to just before the Mine Run Bridge on North Main Street, as is indicated on the Overall Plan.

RECREATION/TRAIL ZONE:

Item Specified: Colonial Stone Harvest Blend by EP Henry.

§143-15. OWNERS RESPONSIBILITY FOR EXPENSE.



SIDEWALK MEDALLIONS

To add some artistic flair, while also keeping to the historic color and materials palette of the Borough, sidewalk medallions are a good addition to the sidewalk. These medallions, also known as pavement markers, are large, ornamental emblems which can be either set or stamped into the sidewalk. To match the historic materials of the Borough, and for durability, a cast bronze or other forged metal that develops an attractive patina should be used. Setting the medallion in a brick sidewalk surround would help to accent it. These medallions should represent an artistic vision inspired by the Borough's history, culture, natural or wildlife features, or local organizations. One example of a potential medallion design could be the Borough's Flag Emblem on page 8.

Local institutions or organizations, such as Schwenksville Elementary School, the local Patriotic Order Sons of America, and local churches, could be tapped to design or donate medallions that can celebrate local Schwenksville life. While individual designs will be initiated by residents, property owners, or local organizations or institutions, final designs are to be approved by Borough Council in the interests of appropriateness and consistency. Business names and advertisements are not permitted or at least should be discouraged.

HISTORICAL MARKERS

Historical markers can be paired with a proposed Historic Walking Tour, marking designated



Source: www.allisonwalkssf.com.





§143-13. SIDEWALK, CURB, & RAMP MATERIALS AND SPECIFICATIONS.



Example of a bump-out, Bridgeport, PA.

historic properties with a special, standardized plaque or marker. To match the color and materials palette of the Borough, these markers should be composed of a forged metal such as bronze, and may be placed in the sidewalk, providing consistent placement, where they can easily be found. While these particular properties might not necessarily need to be certified or listed on either state or national historical property registers, these sites should be finalized and certified by the Borough.

CURBING AND BUMP-OUTS

Sidewalk bump-outs—which are expanded areas of sidewalk on one or both ends of an intersection, often but not always at a crosswalk—create a smaller and safer width for pedestrians to traverse when crossing the street. These structures also contribute to traffic calming, both by constricting the roadway enough so that drivers take notice and slow down and by making those pedestrians preparing to cross more visible to drivers. Any bump-outs will need to comply with regulations set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act and PennDOT.

Additional elements that increase safety and convenience should be used when possible. In addition to bump-outs, potential tools include:

- Mid-block crosswalks on longer blocks
- Paving strips that emphasize the pedestrian crosswalk and also provide an audible warning to drivers
- Low-lying planting areas that bring attention to pedestrian crossing areas

Bump-out Guidelines

- Shall be carefully located for the protection of pedestrians and vehicles. Consult Borough Engineer to ensure the necessary turning radius is provided.
- Shall not extend the eight-foot depth of standard parking space.
- Brick paver detail shall rim sidewalk and bump-outs at curbline where indicated on streetscape plans.
- Bump-outs in areas where brick is not used should be considered as locations of sidewalk medallions, set in brick, to bring attention to projection.
- Although landscaped bumpouts are an option, they are not recommended due to the small scale of the bump-outs, heavy snow accumulation and high maintenance required.



Example of a bumpout in Collegeville, PA with landscaping.

Trench Drain Grates MAIN STREET ZONE:

Item Specified: OT Title-24, Cast Iron trench drain grate, by Urban Accessories.

Size: 6″ x 18″.



OT Title-24, Cast Iron trench drain grate, by Urban Accessories.

• Bollards or planters that provide a buffer between pedestrian areas and the roadway.

CAST IRON ACCENTS

To add some of the traditional "old-world" charm to otherwise functional appurtenances of the streetscape, decorative, cast iron drain grates can be used, such as the drain grate and the tree grate shown on this page.

Pedestrian Crossing Guidelines

Highly visible crosswalks should be established or enhanced at the key intersections along Main Street that receive, or are anticipated to receive, the most pedestrian traffic. Priority intersections include:

- Main Street and Perkiomen Avenue, to accommodate the Schwenksville Elementary School
- Main Street and Maple Avenue
- Main Street at Church Street
- Main Street and Centennial Street
- Main Street near Walnut
 Street
- Main Street at Game Farm/ Park Avenue



Tree grate in Phoenixville, PA.

Traditional ladder striping should be used for the crosswalks. Crosswalks along Main Street, a road that is maintained by PennDOT, are limited to two asphalt treatments as an alternative to striping—inlaid thermoplastic and stamped asphalt. Generally, such asphalt treatments are more appropriate for lower-volume streets, as it can wear away more quickly with heavy traffic, such as that on Main Street. Therefore, until stamped asphalt or other treatments improve in performance, the traditional ladder stripping will be used, and shall conform to all of PennDOT's standards.

Crosswalk painting and installation across Main Street must be coordinated with PennDOT road improvements and installation should coincide with any major road resurfacing. These road treatments would be on the receiving end of more wear and tear but may also be damaged if road maintenance takes place after installation.

These areas should remain clear and open at their respective intersections, so as to have clear sightlines to pedestrians while making pedestrians more visible to oncoming vehicle traffic. Fixtures, such as street signs and street lights, can generally be accommodated at these intersections. Planters and other decorative elements may also be used, and can aid in bringing attention to crossing pedestrians by motorists, but should be set back from the curb's edge for safety reasons. Pairing crosswalks with bump-outs (explained below) can increase pedestrian visibility and safety.



A bump out at this crosswalk could reduce the time and distance needed to cross the safely.

§143-30.I. SIDEWALKS—CONFORM TO ADA.

§143-13.F. GRADE SEPARATION FACILITIES (I.E. RAMPS).

ADA Accessibility Guidelines

Street crossings shall also have barrier-free but detectable ramps built in compliance with the standards contained within the American Disability Act (ADA), as well with state and PennDOT regulations.

For those crossings at intersections with Main Street (the Main Street Zone), and all other parts of the Borough, polymer tactile plates shall be used.

In addition to street intersection locations, accessible ramps may be required at all access drives, alleys, and any other locations of sufficient width where sidewalks intersect with vehicular zones and where existing grades require the use of ramps to maintain accessible routes. Ramps at intersections are to be aligned with existing or future opposing ramp locations on adjacent blocks. Driveway cuts should be designed to assure that there is a continuous route of travel with a cross grade not exceeding the maximum slope allowed: this can include widening the sidewalk behind the driveway cut (into the Building Zone) or widening the whole sidewalk.

Tactile Plates

MAIN STREET ZONE:

Item Specified: Polymer Tactile Plate in Brick Red – Federal Color No. 20109, by ADA Solution, Inc.



Polymer Tactile Plate in Brick Red, by ADA Solutions, Inc.
Site Wall and Screening Standards

§176.95.2.B.(4).(E). STEEP SLOPES, GRADING (RETAINING WALL MATERIALS).

Retaining Wall Materials

- Existing retaining walls should be repaired or replaced in kind and in the manner in which they were constructed and in materials used.
- To keep the historic character and maintain the color and material palette of the Borough, mortared masonry walls are the recommended but not required choice for new or entirely-replaced retaining walls.
- The stones used in construction should be consistent in size and color to existing walls in the area.
- When mortared masonry walls are not used, either in new construction or while repairing or upgrading existing walls, or in lieu of cut stone, using split-face concrete blocks or using stone veneers is recommended.
- Notwithstanding the above, using garden or railroad ties, or any other similar type of wood timbers, in the construction of retaining walls is prohibited in the Main Street Zone, wherever visible from a public street.

Design Intent

When they front and directly abut the sidewalk along Main Street, retaining walls and fences are the dominant streetscape feature, and so should be kept and maintained to the highest standards. Additionally, fences and other screening techniques should be used artfully to block otherwise unsightly or utility uses from view from Main Street or from the Perkiomen Trail.

Retaining Walls

Many of the retaining walls in the Borough are historic, mortared masonry walls, and are beginning to show their age, by way of missing or deteriorating joint filler, weed growth in the gaps, and loosening or lost stones, among other conditions.

Typically retaining walls are constructed from timbers, mortared masonry, poured concrete, and interlocking, split-faced concrete blocks.

Retaining walls should be maintained to prevent the integrity of the wall from being compromised, all while keeping the wall's appearance neat and clean. All missing joint filler between stones should be repointed, random weeds should be promptly removed, and the use of salt deicers in the vicinity of the wall should be avoided, as it can



Historic mortared masonry retaining walls in the Borough such as these will need to be maintained to ensure they last well into the future.



New homes in Lower Moreland which used mortared masonry retaining walls.

§121-2.Z. MODIFICATIONS TO IPMC: RETAINING WALLS, STAIRS AND OTHER SIMILAR STRUCTURES.

§147-39.D. LANDSCAPING REQUIREMENTS: BUFFERING PLANTINGS.

accelerate the freeze-thaw cycle which can cause surface damage and reduce the integrity of the wall. Minor cracks should be repaired, but cracks more than one-quarter (¼) inches wide and more than two (2) feet long could indicate greater structural damage, and should be inspected by an engineering professional. Any sagging or bulging in the wall should also be tended to by an engineering professional as soon as it is identified.

Plants that either climb up or hang down can be used to mask or invigorate an otherwise blank wall, such as:

- Juniperus procumbens
- Hydrangea petiolaris
- Parthenocissus quinquefolia
- Lonicera sempervirens
- Cotoneaster horizontalis
- Phlox subulata
- Delosperma cooperi



Native vines screen a series of retaining walls at the Colorcon World Headquarters in Harleysville.

Fence and Wall Height

- Fences within the front yard area of a property shall not exceed four feet, as measured from finished grade.
- When a fence is required to be open, and not opaque or solid, the percentage of open area to solid area of the fence should be at least 50%.
- All dumpsters should be screened with a closed-faced, opaque, neutralcolored wall or fence enclosure at least six (6) feet high but no more than eight (8) feet high.
- Refuse areas intended for trash and recycling toters or other such containers should be screened with such a fence of four (4) feet to six (6) feet in height.

§176-143	HEIGHT LIMITATION OF FENCES AND WALLS.
§176-49	VC-1 CONDITIONAL USE REQUIREMENTS.
§176-56	VC-2 DESIGN STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS.
§176-56.1	VC-2 CONDITIONAL USE REQUIREMENTS.
§176-42.G.8	C-DISTRICT AREA REGULATIONS.
8176-143	HEIGHT LIMITATION OF FENCES

§176-143 HEIGHT LIMITATION OF FENCES AND WALLS.

Screening with Fences, Walls, and Landscape

The impression of driving or walking by a parking lot, dumpster, or other prominent visual feature can affect the character of Schwenksville. These necessary features of a busy Main Street should be integrated into the community. Fences, walls, and landscape plantings should be used to improve the streetscape and screen undesirable views along Main Street and the Perkiomen Trail. Some streetscape furnishings, like seating areas, should be partially enclosed or screened from adjacent areas that may detract from their comfort, such as parking lots and driveways. Screening should be upright and vertical to make efficient use of available space, and should observe the Borough's fence and wall height guidelines.

Materials along Main Street should reflect the character of the surrounding properties, and include the following types of construction: brick or stone walls or pillars, solid board, shadow box, basket weave and lattice, crossed, wrought iron, spaced picket fence, or other similar decorative material as approved by the Borough.



Tall fences over five feet in height should be enhanced with landscaping at visible locations.



Dumpsters should not be located next to the Perkiomen Trail.



Dumpsters should be screened with a 6' tall fence that matches the character of the surrounding area.

Materials along the Perkiomen Trail may be more informal than those along Main Street, and include wood stockade, split-rail fence, and spaced picket, and imitation vinyl. Chain link fences should not be used.

Fences and walls may also be used in combination to achieve the desired screening or shielding effect, and should be accompanied by landscape plantings where space allows. Landscape plants selected for screening should have narrow, upright growth habits that will thrive within the narrow, heavily-trafficked spaces along Main Street. When trees and shrubs are used as a linear screen, it is more visually appealing to plant several in a row.

Landscape Buffers

- Buffers (except trees) abutting a public sidewalk in the front yard area shall be no higher than four (4) feet.
- Buffers on all other sides of a property may exceed four (4) feet.
- All relevant landscaping requirements in the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) shall apply.

§147-39.D. BUFFERING PLANTINGS. §147-39.E. PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING.



Benches should be screened to encourage their use and to provide shade and safety.

Evergreen and deciduous shrubs and trees may be used in combination to establish buffers that range from transparent to opaque. Many properties abutting the Perkiomen Trail have steep slopes, and screening should be comprised of native plant species. It is important that property owners replant their slopes with hardy, native plant species after installing any new fences or walls, or otherwise disturbing the ground. A selection of recommended upright tree species may be found in Appendix A.

The following are features that should be screened:

Off-Street Parking: Parking lots form the entry space or gateway through which visitors, employees, and residents must pass, and should be visually appealing from the street. Off-street parking should be screened from the sidewalk to provide a visual and physical barrier for both vehicles and pedestrians without blocking the visibility of buildings or facilities serviced by the parking lot. A mixture of trees and shrubs, or plantings in combination with a low wall or fence, can be used to define the public edges of a parking lot.

Dumpsters: All businesses located on Main Street should properly screen their dumpsters and other refuse areas with an opaque wall or fence. Where possible, dumpsters should not be located adjacent to Main Street or the Perkiomen Trail.

Utilities: Storage areas, service and loading docks, storage tanks and mechanical equipment should be screened and shielded from view from a public street and from the Perkiomen Trail.

Seating Areas: Benches and chairs should be screened with a low fence or wall to provide safety and enclosure. For example, a street bench or outdoor dining area should be screened from a parking lot.



This Rite Aid provides a parking lot buffer as well as building materials matching those in the area.



Fastigiate European Hornbeams take on an oval form as they age.

Street and Site Furnishing Standards

Design Intent

The street furniture along Main Street should help to support and enhance the Borough's downtown. The furniture should have an authentic feel, and to that end, plastic materials (including benches and planters) should be discouraged whenever possible. In keeping with its desire to celebrate and honor its historic architecture, the Borough wishes to adhere to more traditional materials and design, as illustrated by the color and materials palette above, although creativity, whimsy, and artistic expression are also welcome. This common motif will provide consistency along the length of Main Street.

Benches should be located outside of storefronts. Businesses or civic associations may wish to sponsor a bench, such as this one in Royersford.

Benches

The primary purpose of a bench should be convenience and comfort, though this is frequently lost when benches are uncomfortable or are located in places where they are underutilized. Benches have been chosen to reflect authentic, "historic" materials and quality.

Some of the best places for benches are outside of stores and offices, Main Street Residential, near restaurants, and within public parks. The bench styles shown reflect a historic feel in both style and quality. Benches placed along Main Street should have a black finish, with optional wood or woodinspired elements; benches along the trail should have a bottle green finish—each should be about 72" long. However, those benches which are desired



As properties along Main Street redevelop, opportunities for outdoor dining may arise.



C-138 Bench, by Victor Stanley. Source: Victor Stanley.



CBF-138 Bench, by Victor Stanley. Source: Victor Stanley.



Existing Sierra Bench (Model 955-W6), by Ultra Site, in the Borough

in the building zones of certain areas will need to be negotiated with the applicable property owner of those particular sections of sidewalk in question. Although wood seating is the most comfortable and is resilient, metal benches are frequently found throughout the county. Some examples of benches that would fit the specifications of the Borough are shown on the left.

Benches

MAIN STREET ZONE (OPTION 1):

Item Specified: Classic Collection Bench (Model C-138) by Victor Stanley. Type: Cast ductile iron frame with wood or recycled plastic slat seating. Size: 72" length. Color/Finish: Black powder coated frame. Placement: Benches ideally should be every 600 feet of road frontage or every 250 feet of storefronts, or as practicable.

MAIN STREET ZONE (OPTION 2):

Item Specified: Classic Collection Bench (Model CBF-138) by Victor Stanley.

Type: Cast ductile iron frame bench.

Size: 72" length.

Color/Finish: Black powder coated frame.

Placement: Outside stores, offices, Main Street Residential, and pubic gathering places as practicable.

RECREATION/TRAIL ZONE:

Item Specified: Sierra Bench (Model 955-W6) by UltraSite.

Size: 72" length.

Type: Die formed stainless steel frame bench.

Color/Finish: Green thermoplastic finish with powder coated frame.

Placement: Outside stores, offices, Main Street Residential, and pubic gathering places as practicable.



PSO-4 Trash Receptacle, by Victor Stanley. *Source: Victor Stanley.*



Existing Model W-32 Wave Pattern Receptacle, by Ultra Site, in Borough.

Trash and Recycling Receptacles

The provision of trash and recycling receptacles in the Borough should ultimately be conditioned on staffing levels and the Borough's capacity to maintain and empty refuse from said receptacles on a regular basis. Considering this, and the fact that sidewalk space is at a premium in the Borough, providing for trash and recycling receptacles on Main Street will most likely be minimal for the time being. Nonetheless, they still might be used at other priority locations in the Borough, such as in front of Borough Hall, the Library, or the Post Office, among other places. In addition, the Borough might want to prioritize the provision of receptacles in the Recreation/ Trail Zone, in those public areas where no private landlord groundskeeping effort exists.

Trash and recycling containers should appear visually compatible with the rest of the Borough's Main Street Zone street furniture, with a black finish, while those in Recreation areas shall have a green finish. Receptacles should have 32 or 36 gallon capacities with removable liners; black trash bags should be utilized within these removable liners. All receptacles must be permanently mounted to sidewalk pavement as per the receptacle manufacturers' specifications.

Trash and Recycling Receptacles

MAIN STREET ZONE:

Item Specified: Protone Collection Litter Receptacle (Model PSA-32) by Victor Stanley.

Type: Recycled solid steel bar receptacle with tapered form lid.

Size: 36-gallon, 26-3/4" diameter x 37" high.

Color/Finish: Powder coated black.

Placement: Receptacles placed as needed.

RECREATION/TRAIL ZONE:

Item Specified: Wave Pattern Receptacle (Model W-32) by UltraSite.

Size: 32-gallon, 23-1/4″ diameter x 30″ high.

Type: Wave, 3/4″ #9 die formed expanded steel receptacle.

Color/Finish: Green thermoplastic finish with powder coated frame.

Placement: Receptacles placed as needed in Meadow Park and Trail Gateway.

Bike Racks

With the Borough's proximity to the Perkiomen Trail, bicycles are a common sight around town. Bicycle racks send the message that "bikes are welcome". Place bike racks in strategic locations and paint them to match other street furniture. Bike racks should be located in visually prominent areas while not interfering with pedestrian flow. Schwenksville could consider using a bike rack that is customproduced for the Borough or an



"art" rack (custom designed by local artists) to increase their appeal. Another possibility is one modeled after a hitching post.

A creatively-designed bike rack like this one in Hilton Head, SC, could double as public art in the Borough, which might make a great addition to Meadow Park.

Bollards

Bollards should exhibit a historic, authentic style and color. They can be installed as unlit guides to define a roadway or lit up as guides to pedestrian paths. They serve as visual and physical barriers for institutional, civic, and corporate environments, and protect private access ways. Bollards should match the other street furniture, and are generally available in aluminum and cast iron, and in a variety of styles.

The chosen style of bollard should be decorative in nature to be utilized within public areas. Existing bollards on Main Street have been



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elsewhere in the Borough.

Any additional bollards to be placed on Main Street should match the aesthetic of these existing bollards on South Main Street. Bollard covers such as these can retrofit existing but perhaps unattractive steel utility bollards capped with an inexpensive decorative cover (see photo), and should be used in the future when a cover is necessary. A similar traditional style could be substituted elsewhere in the Borough. However, bollards along Main Street must have a black finish; bollards along the trail must have a yellow finish if placed directly in or along the trailway to prevent vehicles from entering. Both must be spaced at least two (2) feet on center in areas where traffic separation and additional security are desired, but where optional chains connecting individual bollards are not provided. Where chains are utilized between bollards, recommended spacing may be increased up to 4' on center. All bollards must be anchored and installed per bollard manufacturers' specifications.

A less expensive bollard option for service areas (and one which may only be used in areas not directly visible from a public rightof-way) is a hollow steel pipe (.280 wall thickness) filled with concrete and topped with a matching steel cap. Steel must be painted with a durable, black and yellow enamel finish. All intended applications of this bollard alternative must be approved by the Borough.

Bollards

MAIN STREET ZONE (OPTION 1):

Item Specified: 6" Metro style adjustable bollard cover, Black-METRO-BLACK-06-52-S, by Idealshield.

MAIN STREET ZONE (OPTION 2):

Item Specified: 37 ⁷/₈" Northampton style cast aluminum alloy and ductile iron bollard, black, by Spring City Electrical Manufacturing Company.

MAIN STREET ZONE (OPTION 3):

Item Specified: 10" Pawn Style decorative bumper post cover, #00052161000F, black, by Diebold Direct.







Hanging baskets provide seasonal color and texture to the streetscape.

Planters

Property owners are greatly encouraged to provide and maintain plants along their street frontage, which can easily be done with planters. Planters should be located along the curb or closer to storefronts, as long as they do not infringe upon the pedestrian right-of-way. Containers for planting must be large enough to accommodate sufficient soil volume to prevent soil from drying too quickly. Ideally, container plantings should be 3' to 4' in diameter where space permits. Containers must have drainage holes in their bottoms, and these holes must be covered with fine wire mesh (or fabric cover supplied by the container manufacturer) before planting mix is added. In areas where sidewalks are narrow, other methods of greening—like hanging baskets or window boxes-should be used so as not to clutter the sidewalks. Hanging baskets and window boxes can be placed on building façades, fences, and other private structures, but mounting on decorative street lights is not planned due to maintenance concerns.

Generally, round planters of wood, durable concrete, ceramic, or cast iron would be suitable for downtown Schwenksville. All overwintered dead plants should be cut, unless grass plantings are used (to remain intact and cut back in spring), or removed (annuals), at which



Planters can both freshen up a dull sidewalk or building entrance as well as provide some separation from the busy street.



time all planters should be weeded and a two (2) inch layer of mulch should be placed over the soils. Weeding should occur at least twice each spring, summer, and fall, and once prior to applying a wintertime layer of mulch.

Planted edging around street trees is not recommended given the demand for space along the curb, unless the sidewalk width is in excess of six (6) feet. Some protective measures, such as pavers surrounding tree pits or tree grates, may be necessary to protect street trees from pedestrian and vehicle traffic.

If seasonal color is not desired, containers may be planted with more permanent installations of evergreen materials with proven root hardiness and an ability to survive in containers through the winter.

Lighting Overview

The lighting along Main Street should help create a safe, friendly, pedestrian-scaled environment. Attractions along Main Street and the increasinglypopular Perkiomen Trail are amenities that residents and visitors want to reach on foot (or by bicycle), and the right kind of lighting can encourage people to stay longer in Schwenksville's downtown. Additional lighting may be needed to illuminate wayfinding or trail signage, public gathering areas, or greening areas along Main Street. Care should be taken to not accidentally



Planters in a pedestrian alley in Jenkintown.

§176-112 THROUGH §176-120. EXTERIOR LIGHTING.



Source: Spring City Electrical Manufacturing Company.

Street Lighting

MAIN STREET ZONE:

Item Specified: William and Mary medium luminaire, with Northampton lamp post, by Spring City Electrical Manufacturing.

Type: Cast Aluminum alloy luminaire, 80 watt LED, 3000k color temp; Cast ductile iron tapered post with base; fitted to permit small banners and fullsize flags.

Size: 2'-10" x 1'-4 5/8" octagonal luminaire; 13'-0" H post, 20" diameter base.

Color/Finish: Powder coat black.

Placement: Main Street and other adjacent streets where street lights are desired, including Perkiomen Avenue and 4th Street.

RECREATION/TRAIL ZONE:

Item Specified: BE21 Era Bell LED with PicoEmitter, by Kim Lighting.

Type: full cut-off LED luminaire, fitted to mount large banners.

Size: 21" diameter luminaire.

Color/Finish: Powder coat green finish.

Placement: See Overall Plan for placement.

illuminate adjacent residences, but some uplighting may be necessary to eliminate tripping hazards or create a heightened sense of safety. Damage to light posts, whether from flags and banner or from a vehicular accident, should be repaired in a timely manner.

Main Street Lighting Guidelines

Decorative streetlights, due to the narrow width of sidewalks and required widths for pedestrian travelways, will most likely need to be placed beyond the ultimate right-of-way, at the far edge of the sidewalk away from the street. Otherwise, PennDOT requirements for the 24" clearance at the curb line and the 20" diameter of the fixture would create an obstruction. When sufficiently wide sidewalks or plazas exist, additional lights may be located closer to buildings as long as a clear pedestrian pathway is maintained. Lights can, and should, be located mid-block and at intersections to limit darkened areas or gaps at night. Due to retaining walls, steep banks, and close proximity of buildings to the street, there are many areas that cannot accommodate streetlights even behind the sidewalk, which could limit the consistency at which the street and sidewalks can be lit.

Currently the Borough is seeking to replace its existing "cobra head" roadway lighting with LED



The proposed new streetlights for Main Street are intended to match and pay homage to these original, historic streetlights in front of the Univest building.

cobra head fixtures, which will significantly boost light output and help to adequately light the street for vehicles, but may not ultimately provide adequate lighting for consistent pedestrian activity, or the charm of decorative streetlights. However, the cobra-head style is a much more cost effective solution, with a broader light range.

With this situation in mind, to maintain safe and desirable lighting levels along Main Street for both vehicles and pedestrians, the Borough is considering the option of placing a number of these streetlights just behind the sidewalk line within the front yard areas of residences, particularly on the east side of Main Street. The Borough would need to commit to seeking placement and maintenance easements on the applicable properties. Although typical street light locations are shown on the plan, these are for illustration only and do not necessarily represent final locations.

Virtually all of the cobra-head fixtures are currently mounted on telephone poles on the west side of the street, and therefore the most feasible option both practically and financially may be to leave these in place on the west side. A similar approach has been taken in neighboring Skippack.

Cast iron light poles offer superior performance and durability compared to aluminum poles.

§176-112 THROUGH §176-120. EXTERIOR LIGHTING.



Existing light fixture at South Main Street Trail Gateway.

However, the maintenance of iron poles is more critical as uncoated iron surfaces will show rust, which is removable if the surface is sanded and repainted. Aluminum won't rust, but can corrode and is more susceptible to structural damage.

The streetlight specification for this zone is based on those historic streetlights that exist at the old National Bank of Schwenksville building (currently the location of a Univest Bank branch). The Borough, naturally, reserves the right to expand the coverage of this lighting type to adjacent areas in the future. Any future placement of new lights shall conform to the intervals that currently exist. The existing streetlights on Perkiomen Avenue and 4th Street are currently being converted to match those in the Main Street Zone.

Recreation/Trail Lighting

The specifications for lights in this zone will reflect those that already exist on the Trail Gateway plaza at Main Street and Skippack Pike at the Borough's southern border. Additional lampposts are planned around Meadow Park, which should strive to match this specification.

Spacing and placement of these lights will adhere less to a strict rule, as there will be fewer sites to locate these lights.



Existing light fixture in the Perkiomen/4th Street Corridor.

Traffic Signals

- Traffic signal devices, and the poles on which they are mounted, should be of the same design aesthetic as the proposed street lights for Main Street.
- At minimum, all traffic signal poles shall be powder-coated black.
- Decorative Base covers could be used, where space permits, on otherwise utilitarian aluminum poles to keep the historical sense of place that the Main Street streetlights would evoke without necessarily incurring the additional expense of fully-designed, decorative-cast poles.

Traffic Signal Device Standards LOCATION

Currently only two signalized intersections along Main Street lie entirely in the Borough: at Perkiomen Avenue and at Game Farm Road/ Park Avenue; another signalized intersection exists at Main Street/Gravel Pike and Skippack Pike, although only a portion of it lies in the Borough. It is proposed that one more signalized intersection be added at Centennial and Main Streets if warranted by traffic in the future. Currently, northbound traffic tends to stack when a vehicle wants to turn left up Centennial Street, and there is no existing left-turn lane. In order for this intersection be the most effective, the existing driveway on the east side of Main Street should be realigned so as to directly align with Centennial Street. The feasibility of the one bumpout proposed adjacent to this intersection (on the west side of Main Street) will, therefore, ultimately be determined by the signalization and potential realignment plans for this intersection.



Snap-on decorative bases like this one from Valmont Structures for traffic signal poles can give the distinctive, old-fashioned effect without the expense of decorative cast metal.

Source: Valmont Structures, www.valmontstructures.com.

Architectural Standards





To support the Borough's goals of retaining the visual character and architectural scale of Main Street, architectural standards have been provided, both for existing as well as new infill buildings. Buildings on Main Street contribute significantly to the pedestrian experience and the character and quality of the streetscape, so providing guidelines on the built environment in this regard is essential.

Existing Structures

Many of the existing structures on Main Street easily date back 100 years or more. In that time many buildings have changed uses, added features or altered or removed features. These might have been done out of necessity, trends or fashion of the times, but sometimes may have produced less than ideal results. This subset of architectural standards focuses on both maintaining the existing character of Main Street buildings as well as recommendations for improvements or restorations of these façades.

STOREFRONTS AND DOORS

Storefronts and doors should be retained if they are historic or original to the building, or from a sensitive remodel or renovation. Any active commercial storefront, whether it is a retail use or a client-based office use, should be welcoming with maximally-transparent doors and windows. Storefront windows shouldn't be fully enclosed with displays, but should allow a potential customer to peer into the store.



While the "storefront" addition may not have been original to this building on Main Street, the proportions of these windows should be retained when it becomes occupied, as it exemplifies a desirable storefront façade.



Shutters should be proportional to the window opening. If historically-sensitive shutters can't be repaired, then try to replace with like materials.

WINDOWS

Whenever maintaining or replacing windows, the original shape and composition should be preserved as much as possible, especially for windows which are unusual or are in unique historic styles. Walling off former window spaces or altering the space of the original window to fit a smaller window which doesn't fit the scale of the building or opening should be avoided, especially in commercial buildings. Traditional storefronts had been composed almost entirely of transparent windows, so diminishing the window area of a commercial façade in general is largely discouraged. Shutters should be the same size and shape of the windows to which they are attached; they should also be able to cover or close on the window completely, if operable.

CORNICES AND OVERHANGS

Cornices are the horizontal decorative molding or articulation that lines the roofline of a building. While there are some original, more ornate cornices remaining on buildings which are particularly stunning, many other properties having simpler but significant cornices which remain in the Borough. Property owners should strive to repair rather than replace these elements if at all possible. Replacement of these elements, if unavoidable, should be done in kind.

REARS OF BUILDINGS

The rears of many commercial buildings along the east side of Main Street abut the Perkiomen Trail. While it is not necessary to maintain the rear of buildings as the "second front," it is recommended that if a rear is accessible by a parking lot or pedestrians, then it should be welcoming. Potential improvements can include installing lights for customer and store safety, visual buffering of utilities, and landscaping.



This house on Main Street is a great example of how to maintain historical, ornate cornices and windows with decorative lintels.



Services entrances can often morph into secondary entrances, so sensitivity to the rear of buildings can improve the customer experience.

MATERIALS

When completing renovations, materials which are being removed should, in most cases, be replaced in kind, especially if those materials are the original or at least resemble the original materials used. Repairs should strive to not cover up original façade materials which remain.

While the ground floor of this building had historically been composed of garage doors for the Fire Company, there had been a unity of composition with proportional window areas as well as with the doors. Later remodels of the building have altered the window composition, making them smaller and non-transparent, as well as bricking up other window openings on the side elevations of this building (not shown). A sensitive restoration could include returning balance to the window openings, potentially adding a storefront similar to other facades on Main Street, as well as restoration of the cornices and roof materials.



Historic former Fire Company.



Same building today.

New/Infill Construction

It should not be the intent of the Borough to mandate replicas or duplicates of historic forms in new Main Street buildings. However, new development which is out of scale or visually clashes with the rest of Main Street could detract from the sense of place, looking awkward or out of place. Developing contemporary infill construction which also looks appropriate and compatible with the neighborhood is a particular challenge, but one that can be overcome by paying special attention to the concepts below, and how they are manifest in the Borough.

MASSING

While the maximum height of a proposed building should not exceed the height allowed in the zoning district (unless otherwise allowed by the Zoning Code), buildings should generally have a height of at least two stories, which maintains an ideal "downtown" density and consistent street-wall.

Likewise, buildings should have a similarly consistent width at the street. Currently, parcels on Main Street can vary widely in size and width, but larger infill buildings could be subdivided or scaled in a manner that resemble the widths of buildings on either side of the lot in question.

RELATIONSHIP TO STREET

The front setback of a new building should conform to the average of the two buildings on either side of the lot in question. If there are no reference buildings nearby, the building should be built to the street with a minimum of a sixto eight-foot sidewalk or a 10-20 foot setback

 §176-43 THROUGH §176-51
 VC-1 DISTRICT.

 §176-52 THROUGH §176-58
 VC-2 DISTRICT.

for the purposes of a plaza, square, courtyard, recessed entrance, or outdoor dining. The main public entrance to new buildings should be from the front façade.

The roof pitches shown here (measured in feet) should be the minimum and maximum pitches used in buildings on Main Street; many existing roofs in the Borough are at 12:6 (or 2:1).



ROOF FORMS

The roofs, especially the pitches thereof and the rooflines, should be similar or complementary to those of adjacent buildings. Many of the building along Main Street contain roofs which pitch at two (2) horizontal feet for every one (1) vertical foot, with the exception of buildings with flat, mansard roofs. Either type of roof would suffice on a block with a mix of both.

COMPOSITION AND RHYTHM

Rhythms in architectural features that carry throughout Main Street, such as the window placement, storefront and door placement, as well floor spacing, roof treatments and materials, should reflect the dominant trend on the street in the vicinity of the proposed building. Since the compositions of residential and commercial buildings are different, such as in terms of window placement and size, new residential buildings should match existing residential in this regard,



New infill development should not only maintain the existing, historical rhythm of architectural features, but should continue the floor spacing and proportions of a building's top, middle and base found elsewhere on Main Street.

and likewise new commercial development should match existing commercial buildings, unless the historic placement of architectural features such as windows have been altered.

PROPORTION OF OPENINGS

The actual size or proportion of windows and door openings to the solid wall space of a proposed building should strive to remain similar to what currently exists on Main Street. However, windows should dominate ground-floor, storefront façades for commercial buildings with at least 60% window area and consist of transparent glass, with no smoked, reflective or black glass permitted. The



This building on Main Street maintains the historical symmetry and rhythm of its window and door openings typical of the period. The proportion of window and door openings to solid wall on this façade is 25%.

lowest edge of ground-floor storefront windows should be located a maximum of 12 to 36 inches above the sidewalk. Storefront doors should also be composed of transparent glass.

MATERIALS

Any new building should be constructed of natural materials typically found along Main Street. Natural materials include such materials as stone, brick, wood siding, shingles, slate, etc. Industrial or artificial materials such as raw concrete finish, anodized or galvanized metal, tinted glass, plastics, vinyls, etc. are prohibited unless such materials are used in such a way as to resemble historic characteristics. For example, vertical siding might be used to imitate barn siding. The Color and Materials Palette presented at the beginning of this chapter has collected samples of the texture and composition of building materials in the Borough.

COLORS

Colors chosen for exterior elements of a building should ideally complement its neighbors—the Color and Materials Palette presented at the beginning of this chapter has collected samples of the dominant color patterns present in the Borough (many of which derive from building materials used, such as brick, wood and stone).

Signage Standards

§176-102 THROUGH §176-112. SIGNS.

Design Intent

Both public and private signs serve as cues to pedestrian and motorist that they have arrived in Schwenksville. Signs need to both communicate essential and important information while contributing positively to the Borough's visual and cultural identity. Signs of all sorts tend to clutter and confuse with widely different styles and materials, and the Borough could greatly benefit from signage guidelines that aid in comprehension, branding, and aesthetic appeal.

Wayfinding Signage

Wayfinding signage helps to serve as visual cues to visitors as well as aids in navigating downtown and traveling to nearby destinations. Signs need to be simple and accurate, but also need to be placed and designed in a way that limits clutter or confusion while also providing a coordinated design scheme honoring Schwenksville's heritage. A coordinated effort to welcome, direct, and inform residents, shoppers and visitors will go a long way to bolstering the Borough's image and improve its capture of business and tourism activity.

Categories of wayfinding signage in Schwenksville would include:

- Gateway
- Directional
- Informational
- Identification
- Interpretive



Example of Directional Signage.



Example of Business Signage.



Example of Gateway Signage.



Existing business signs in Schwenksville which are scaled for pedestrians and composed of quality materials.

Potential signage locations are indicated on the map. Generally, most signage should be located along the curb, if possible, which should feature more prominently or sufficiently far from the sidewalk so as not to block pedestrians though still visible to them. An exception to this is the placement of Gateway signs, which will feature more prominently as "monument" or freestanding signs and will require easements to place in yard areas. It is advised that locations for curb-side signage be consolidated, as much as practicable, on lampposts or free-standing support poles dedicated to such signage, to prevent the physical and visual cluttering of the streetscape. The consistency and efficiency in which wayfinding programs impart their message is an essential part of their effectiveness.

GATEWAY SIGNS

Gateway signs announce and enhance the entrance (or exit) of the Borough. The Wayfinding Plan notes that these should be placed at least two locations: one at the Trail Gateway on South Main Street, and at least one on the approach to the intersection of Game Farm Road/Park Avenue and Main Street. Two other "secondary," less prominent gateway signs could be located on secondary entrances into the Borough, at Perkiomen Avenue on the western municipal border and Park Avenue on the east.

LOCAL DIRECTIONAL SIGNS

These types of signs guide drivers and pedestrians to specific locations within the Borough. These

locations should include local civic, institutional, nonprofit, municipal or governmental buildings or organizations. Organizations have been identified on the Wayfinding Plan, as well as proposed locations for such directional signs. Due to the size of the Borough and the relatively limited space for curbside signage, such signs should attempt to be both pedestrian scale as well as adequately sized and scaled to be legible to vehicles.

REGIONAL DIRECTIONAL SIGNS

In addition to local destinations, signs can direct to nearby regional destinations as well. Attractions just beyond the Borough's borders include Pennypacker Mills, the Spring Mount Ski Area, the site for the Philadelphia Folk Festival, Rolling Turf Golf Course, the Central Perkiomen ballfield, and the Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy. Since destinations are largely out of walking distance from the Borough, these signs shall be more oriented to vehicular traffic.

IDENTIFICATION SIGNS

Identification signage typically is used to identify districts, public facilities, or shopping destinations. The Borough might see the use of signs which uniformly identify municipal or civic buildings and uses, such as Borough Hall and Meadow Park, and other public facilities like public parking.

INFORMATIONAL SIGNS

Informational signs or kiosks can contain maps and a directory of local destinations. Visitor Gateway/Pedestrian/Vehicular Directional Signs



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Existing Perkiomen trailhead kiosk at Perkiomen Avenue intersection.



New interpretive kiosk on Pennypack Trail designed to resemble an old train station which details the history of the area.

information signage should be designed to include display maps, information on local events, programs or services, and brochures. These signs are appropriate near parking locations, along the Perkiomen Trail, and focal points along the streetscape. One Borough kiosk location has already been identified on the Wayfinding Plan, located at a central point along the Trail at Meadow Park, to display business locations and information on Borough events.

INTERPRETIVE SIGNS

These types of signs will provide background information on some of Schwenksville's important cultural or historical sites (both those still standing and those that remain only in memory). Interpretive signage will reflect the Borough's historic and cultural identity, providing visual as well as textual depictions of places and events, and could include exhibits or sites for "mini-museums".

A special area of historic and cultural importance to receive these sorts of improvements is identified in this Plan as the "HEART of Schwenksville". These types of signage and interpretive improvements enhance the experience of visitors, while encouraging them to linger in the area. Historical subjects of interest for which to develop signage exhibits in the future include: a train car museum (in the vicinity of the old rail station), the ice industry (at the old ice house foundation), an old post office museum, as well as signage for the fire company museum.



Example of informational kiosk in Collegeville, PA.



A conceptual/informational kiosk based on the local architecture of Schwenksville.

Banners

Banners should complement other signage designs that are adopted for the Borough and should be placed in strategic locations along Main Street. Due to the pedestrian scale of the streetlights along Main Street, only small banners should be attached to streetlights, while larger banners can be attached elsewhere to freestanding poles.

Public Art Design Guidelines

Public art such as murals can contribute to Schwenksville's unique character while bringing attention to its overlooked assets.

While blank, windowless walls or fences are to be generally discouraged and avoided in development in the Borough, large unarticulated walls which do exist are ripe for murals and other public art. Murals could also be tied into larger countywide initiatives, such as the County's Art on Our Trails project.

The owner of record of the building on which a proposed mural is to be placed shall, in writing, consent to the placement of the mural on the property, agree to maintain the mural, to include the removal of graffiti or other vandalism impacting the mural, and consent to restore the wall or façade upon which the mural is placed to its prior existing condition if the mural is not properly maintained. Upon removal or failure to maintain a mural, the owner shall paint the entire surface with quality





A proposed Borough banner design.

exterior paint guaranteed by the manufacturer to last a period of at least 10 years.

Any mural should tastefully depict a scene with historical, cultural, or natural relevance or significance to Schwenksville. The themes and colors should be compatible with the color and material types of the surrounding area. The Borough flag could also be a hidden item which

§176-102 THROUGH §176-112. SIGNS.



Local artist Teresa Haag created a gateway mural in Phoenixville.



This historically-themed mural in Royersford illustrates how a blank wall in Schwenksville could be utilized to celebrate the Borough's heritage and culture.

visitors could look for, embedded in the design of every mural. Loud, discordant colors, lewd, pornographic or religious themes, abstract designs or business advertisements are prohibited.

Themes of murals to encourage could include:

- The historical Perkiomen Railroad and the region's agricultural past
- Active use of the trail and other natural amenities
- Scenes of nearby events, including the Folk Festival
- Other historical scenes, such as the resort at Spring Mountain, past Schwenksville industries such as ice harvesting or milling, and others.



Neglected or hidden facades of buildings can often be a target for graffiti. However, focusing on these types of walls as places for public art can otherwise ward off negative attention.



This building wall is a good location for a mural.

While individual designs may be initiated by residents or property owners of walls or fences proposed for improvement, final designs shall be approved by Borough Council in the interests of appropriateness and consistency. Business names and advertisements are not permitted, except if the mural was sponsored by local businesses or individuals, in which case a small-print mention is permitted adjacent to and in the same manner as the artist's credit. The artist's credit and all attendant sponsors' names, if applicable, shall not exceed two square feet. A smaller mural may function as a sign, if it conforms to the Borough's sign regulations.

LOCATIONS

Murals are recommended on a few specific locations that have buildings with blank walls, as well as building façades that face the Perkiomen Trail. The rear façade of 596 Main Street, shown above, is a prime location for a mural due to its size and proximity to the trail. A mural could discourage further graffiti. The locations of murals shall not pose a significant traffic or public safety hazard where placed.

Planting Standards

Street Trees

There are currently no street trees on Main Street. However, street trees can be of great value, and the Borough would like to encourage tree plantings. Trees are typically planted 4-8 feet from the curbline. Due to Schwenksville's narrow sidewalks, this would mean that trees would need to be placed on private property.

When selecting new street trees for Main Street or for adjacent properties, consideration should be given to the following guidelines for correct tree species selection, size, placement, and planting practices:

PLACEMENT

- Group trees in tree pits set back from the sidewalk to shade Main Street while also leaving open areas to maintain and frame views of historic buildings and façades, and maximizing pedestrian space along the sidewalks.
- Residential side streets are a more appropriate place to plant denser rows of street trees for shade and aesthetics.
- When planting trees, visibility of traffic signals and wayfinding signage (both vehicular and pedestrian forms) must always be maintained.

Street Tree

Any tree or part of a tree, including the canopy or root system, that lies on or over public property or in the public right-of-way.



Small-to-medium sized trees could be grouped between buildings and where space allows along Main Street.

§147-39.C. LANDSCAPING REQUIREMENTS: STREET TREES.§147-30.E. SIDEWALK WIDTH.



TREE SELECTION

- Small to medium trees, with airy growth forms and characteristics, should be selected appropriately according to site conditions.
- Tree species should vary from property to property to prevent a future loss of species due to pests and/ or disease. An appropriate selection for urban conditions and an ability to grow within confined areas (overhead utilities, nearby building façades, limited root zones) will be important.
- Tree species to avoid include those which may naturally produce large surface roots that damage pavement alignment, trees with dense canopies that block storefront landmarks, and trees with excessive fruit, branches, and large leaves that are shed over the course of a year. Recommended tree species are listed in the Appendix of this document.



Due to Schwenksville's narrow right-of-way, trees should be planted along or behind property lines. Trees planted here will still contribute to the streetscape while benefiting each property.

PLANTING

- The ideal tree planting area should provide 1,000 cubic feet of soil volume per shade tree.
- 30 inches of good quality loam soil should be added to the topsoil before planting.

Parking Standards

Parking lots should be designed and located so that they fit seamlessly into the existing community by incorporating aesthetic, environmental, and social considerations. As properties are developed, two parking-related goals should be addressed by the Borough and property owners: buffering parking areas from Main Street and formalizing shared parking and access arrangements. A discussion of buffering techniques is discussed in Site Wall and Screening Standards, page 33. Connecting underutilized parking lots through shared parking and access drives is encouraged, to maximize parking opportunities and reduce the number of entrance points to the street. This is indicated on the Wayfinding and Parking Plan, page 10. Shared parking and access must be established through easements and written agreements.

The following are parking lot design objectives for Schwenksville:

Maximize Greening. Landscaping and shade trees make parking lots more aesthetically pleasing while improving adjacent property values, enhancing air quality, and reducing stormwater runoff. Greening can be achieved by planting landscape buffers along Main Street and all public frontage (see page 34), or by incorporating parking lot islands. Every plant chosen should be appropriate for the particularly harsh conditions found in most lots. A list of recommended parking



Bioswales planted with native vegetation offer seasonal color changes.



Parking lot bioswales collect and convey stormwater. Plant in large swaths to avoid confusion when weeding.



lot plants is included in Montgomery County's 'Sustainable Green Parking Lots Guide.'

Improve Stormwater Management. The stormwater management system should provide sufficient moisture to tree and shrub roots. This can be achieved by designing curbs and parking lot islands with cut-outs to allow rainwater to flow into the planting bed. Bioswales or rain gardens should also be planted with appropriate trees, shrubs, and grasses, and perennials to slow stormwater flow and improve water quality.

Consider Permeable Paving. Using permeable pavement systems instead of traditional asphalt reduces stormwater runoff while dramatically improving stormwater quality and groundwater recharge. Permeable parking could mitigate runoff that is currently affecting the Perkiomen Trail and Perkiomen Creek. Permeable pavement systems could be considered for use on walkways and other types of hardscape material within the parking lot.

Appendix A: Recommended Tree Species

The plants listed here are mostly native to the mid-Atlantic region and Eastern North America. There is variation as to their tolerance and adaptability to soil moisture (wet to dry), maintenance, and spacing. Some of the species have greater tolerance for prolonged periods of drought, others a greater tolerance for road salt. Consideration should be paid to site-specific factors such as building proximities, overhead wire interference, and the distance to the nearest travel lane, before selecting a tree that will best suit the conditions that surround it.

Note: Trees should be a minimum of 2.5" caliper at the time of planting. Larger caliber trees will require more water and maintenance.

SMALL-MEDIUM TREES (UP TO 40 FT. HEIGHT)

SCIENTIFIC NAME (COMMON NAME)

- Acer buergeranum (Trident Maple)
- Acer campestre (*Hedge Maple*)
- Carpinus betulus fastigiata (*Pyramidal European Hornbeam*)
- Cercis canadensis (*Eastern Redbud*)
- Chionanthus virginicus (Fringe Tree)
- Cornus mas cv. Spring Glow (Spring Glow Cornelian Cherry Dogwood)
- Crataegus viridis cv. Winter King (*Winter King Hawthorn*)
- Malus spp. Centurion[®], Centsam (*Flowering Crabapple*)
- Parrotia persica (Persian Parrotia)
- * Columnar trees with narrow canopy for tight situations between buildings and roadways

 Prunus serrulata 'Kwanzan' (Kwanzan Asian Cherry)

- Syringa reticulata* (*Japanese Tree Lilac*)
- Amelanchier Canadensis (Serviceberry)
- Acer rubrum 'Armstrong'* (Armstrong Red Maple)
- Ilex x meserveae 'Dragon Lady'* (Dragon Lady Holly)
- Juniperus virginiana 'Greenspire'* (*Greenspire Eastern Red Cedar*)
- Liquidambar styraciflua 'Slender Silhouette'* (Slender Silhouette Sweetgum)
- Magnolia virginiana 'Henry Hicks' (Sweetbay Magnolia)



Winter King Hawthorn provides a stunning winter display.

MEDIUM-LARGE TREES (30 FT. TO MORE THAN 50 FT. HEIGHT)

SCIENTIFIC NAME (COMMON NAME)

- Betula nigra* (River Birch)
- Ginkgo biloba* (Ginkgo (male cultivar))
- Ginkgo biloba 'Princeton Sentry'* (Princeton Sentry Ginkgo (columnar male form))
- Gleditsia triacanthos var. inermis (*Thornless Honeylocust*)
- Platanus X acerifolia 'Bloodgood' (London Planetree)
- Prunus X yedoensis* (Yoshino Cherry)
- Quercus acutissima* (Sawtooth Oak)
- Quercus phellos* (*Willow Oak*)
- Quercus rubra (*Northern Red Oak*)
- Sophora (*Styphnolobium*) japonica (*um*) 'Regent'* (*Japanese Pagoda Tree; Scholar Tree*)
- Ulmus parvifolia (*Chinese Elm*)
- Zelkova serrata* Green Vase; Village Green (*Japanese Zelkova*)
- * Tree species best situated to survive with limited root growth areas.



Princeton Sentry Ginkgo has a space-saving and attractive columnar form.

Appendix B: Suppliers of Streetscape Furnishings

This is a general list of suppliers for streetscape furnishings that could suit the present and future needs of the Borough. This should not be construed as an endorsement of any particular company.

FOR BENCHES, TABLES, CHAIRS, LIGHTING, BIKE RACKS, BOLLARDS, ETC:

EJ Solutions (Delaware Branch) 401 Industrial Road PO Box 510 Middleton DE 19709 customersupport@ejco.com http://americas.ejco.com 302-378-1100

Landscape Forms, Inc.

431 Lawndale Avenue Kalamazoo, MI 49048 www.landscapeforms.com specify@landscapeforms.com 800-430-6209

Local representative:

Melanie Tantillo (p) 800-430-6206, ext. 1330 (f) 269-337-1380 melaniet@landscapeforms.com MadRax Bicycle Parking 1080 Uniek Drive Waunakee, WI 53597 www.madrax.com sales@madrax.com 608-849-1080

Spring City Electrical

Manufacturing Company Hall & Main Streets Spring City, PA 19475 www.springcity.com 610-948-4000

Sentry Lighting

185 Buffalo Avenue Freeport, NY 11520 www.sentrylighting.com 516-379-4660 Thomas Steele 1080 Uniek Drive Waunakee, WI 53597 www.thomas-steele.com 800-241-2505

Ultra Site

1675 Locust Street Red Bud, IL 62278 www.ultra-site.com 800-458-5872

Victor Stanley

PO Drawer 330 Dunkirk, MD 20754 USA www.victorstanley.com 301-855-8300

Sold locally by: Recreation Resource

425 McFarlan Rd #100 Kennett Square, PA 19348 www.recreation-resource.com 610-444-4402

FOR FENCING:

Jerith

14400 McNulty Road Philadelphia, PA 19154 www.jerith.com 800-344-2242

Master Halco

225 Lincoln Highway Fairless Hills, PA 19030 www.masterhalco.com 215-269-8400

FOR BRICK PAVERS:

Glen-Gery Brick

200 Hartman Road Reading, PA 19605 www.glengerybrick.com 610-939-1721

FOR PLANTERS:

Architectural Pottery 15161 Van Buren Street Midway City, CA 92655 Archpot.com 714-895-3359





SCHWENKSVILLE BOROUGH

140 Main Street Schwenksville, PA 19473 www.schwenksville-pa.org/ 610-287-7442