Southmont Borough
Active Transportation Plan

Adopted February **2025**

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Acknowledgements

Special thanks to all of the representatives of Southmont Borough and members of the
Project Steering Committee who participated in preparing this Active Transportation Plan.

Project Steering Committee members were actively involved throughout this planning process. They participated in several Steering Committee meetings, shared their knowledge of local conditions, participated in the Community Engagement Event and provided quality input and guidance as the Plan was being prepared.

The Project Steering Committee is credited with identifying Active Transportation Priorities, reviewing, and discussing those Priorities with residents, and for bringing together and evaluating different types of information and input to help formulate this Active Transportation Plan.

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Doug Beri, Jr – Southmont Borough Council, President
Eugene Kupchella – Southmont Borough Council
Richard Burkert – Southmont Borough Council
Sue Konvolinka – Upper Yoder Borough Council
Thomas Mitchell – Westmont Hilltop School District
Shanna Murphy Sosko – Cambria County Planning Commission
MacKenzie L. Caron – Borough Resident
Tammy Barbin – Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center
Sam McAdams – Southmont Borough Street Commissioner
Lauren Lazzari – Stackhouse Park/Westmont PTO/Resident/United Way
Miller Lazzari – Westmont Hilltop Elementary School Student

The Plan brought together Borough officials, community leaders, civic organizations, and residents to develop a comprehensive approach to active transportation and community development, fostering collaboration among various stakeholders.

PA WalkWorks Program

The Southmont Active Transportation was prepared with assistance from the PA WalkWorks Program. WalkWorks is an initiative between the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Pennsylvania Downtown Center that supports the development and adoption of active transportation plans or related policies. Its mission is to improve public health by increasing access and opportunities for physical activities, such as walking, biking, wheeling, and using public transit to improve public health.

Special thank you to Samantha Pearson, PA Downtown Center, Healthy Communities Program Manager for providing relevant educational resources, and ongoing shepherding of development of this plan, keeping it on task, on time, and focused on the betterment of our communities.

Southmont Borough Active Transportation Plan

Southmont Borough wishes to thank the Planning Consultants for their efforts on this Project.



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Table of Contents

The Southmont Borough Active Transportation Plan consists of five (5) major sections.

1. An ***Introduction*** section provides background on the development of the Plan and summarizes its vision, purpose and goals. Pgs. 1-2

2. An ***Existing Conditions*** section highlights current transportation system and heath related conditions in the Southmont. Pgs. 3-13

3. A ***Community Engagement*** section highlights the public involvement efforts completed, summarizes the input received and identifies community concerns, wants and needs. Pgs. 14-21

4. A ***Recommendations*** section clearly describes the top walking, biking and paddling related priorities. Pgs. 22-32

5. An ***Implementation and Funding Strategy*** section ties the priorities and recommendations with potential timelines, funding sources and potential partners. Pgs. 33-43

Appendix

WalkWorks Metrics – Walking and Biking Improvements – Crosswalks and Intersections, Sidewalks, Infrastructre Improvements, Programs and Policies

INTRODUCTION

SOUTHMONT BOROUGH'S ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION VISION

To maintain Southmont as the most connected community in the West Hills Region by improving walking, bicycling, wheeling and transit connections to favorable destinations and by increasing safe and accessible opportunities so all Southmont residents can be more mobile and physically active.

The Southmont Borough prioritizes the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and individuals with disabilities, and aims to create a more vibrant and connected community for all residents.

About the Plan

The Southmont Active Transportation Plan focuses on promoting non-motorized modes of transportation, such as walking, biking, rolling, riding and other forms of active mobility. The Southmont Borough Active Transportation Plan accomplishes the following:

- Identifies Active Transportation priorities for investment of Southmont's limited resources.
- Enhances Southmont's ability to attract investment in transportation infrastructure.
- Improves the quality of life, safety and active lifestyle opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities.
- Enhances transportation equity by prioritizing the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and individuals using wheelchairs to ensure they can navigate the borough safely and equitably.
- The Southmont Active Transportation Plan will serve as a Community Improvement Plan.

How was the Plan Prepared

This is an implementable Plan, meaning that completion of this document is not the ending point of the planning process but rather the beginning of the 'doing' part of the planning process. The following highlights the planning approach:

- The planning approach relied heavily on public engagement and collaboration to identify issues, assets and achievable solutions for Southmont Borough.
- The approach included fieldwork by the Planning Consultants, a Community Survey, guidance from the Project Steering Committee, input from Borough officials and suggestions from residents.
- Results of the community engagement process were considered to identify core issues, assets and solutions.
- Priorities were refined during in-depth Steering Committee meetings.
- Proposed Actions were defined through collaboration with the Borough Manager and Borough Council.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

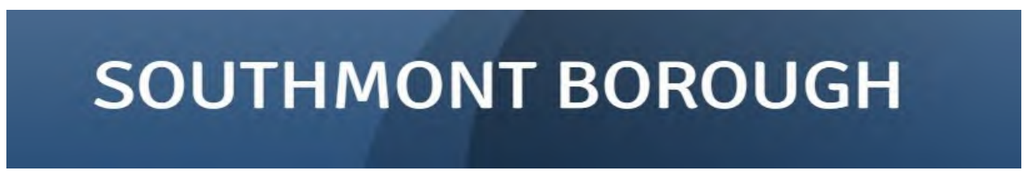
About Southmont

Southmont Borough is a small community located in the West Hills Region of Cambria County, Pennsylvania. Southmont is part of the Westmont Hilltop Schools District. It lies just outside the City of Johnstown and is part of the Johnstown Metropolitan Statistical Area. The Borough is primarily residential, offering a suburban feel while being close to amenities and services.

Southmont Borough, so named because of its geographical location in relation to Johnstown, is one of the later day developments in the city's suburban perimeter. It was not incorporated until June 2, 1919, and most of its expansion as a residential community came after 1929. It had a population of less than 300 people in 1919. Southmont's first settlers were farmers. A number of Borough streets today bear the names of men who tilled the soil there over a half century ago. In 1900 there were approximately 15 farms scattered over the Borough, but by 1920 virtually all of them that were suitable had been turned into building sites. The Borough's proximity to Johnstown and other West Hills communities allows its residents to access commercial and retails areas, employment opportunities, and cultural institutions while enjoying a quieter, more suburban lifestyle.

Southmont is known for its tree-lined streets, well-maintained homes, and community-oriented atmosphere. Its population is relatively small, with most of the housing being single-family homes. The Borough has a mix of long-time residents and newer families attracted to the area's quiet charm.

Southmont Borough has approximately 2,000 residents and 1,000 housing units. The Borough's population consists of a mix of age groups, with a higher concentration of middle-aged and older adults. There are also families with children, though the median age is higher than in some neighboring areas. The Borough is predominantly White, with a small percentage of other racial and ethnic groups represented. Southmont has a mix of households, including families, couples, and some single-person households. The average household size is relatively small, and homeownership rates are high compared to rental properties. Southmont Borough has a middle-class income range. Many residents work in professional, service, and administrative roles in the greater Johnstown area. The Borough has a relatively low poverty rate compared to some nearby communities. The residents of Southmont Borough generally have higher educational attainment than surrounding areas, with many holding college degrees or higher.



The following are important parameters in Southmont:

- Southmont covers approximately 1.052 square miles.
- There are approximately 2,045 people living in Southmont (2020 Decennial Census).
- The median age of Southmont residents is 51.7 years of age. This is higher than what is found in Cambria County (45.7).
- Approximately 30% of Southmont residents are over 65 years of age. This is higher than what is found in Cambria County (23%).
- Approximately 18% of Southmont residents are under 18 years of age. This is slightly lower than what is found in Cambria County (19%).
- The Average Family size in Southmont is 2.96. This is slightly higher than what is found in Cambria County (2.87).
- The median household income in Southmont is $71,563. This is higher than what is found in Cambria County ($54,905)
- Approximately 9.4% of Southmont residents live below the poverty line. This is lower than what is found in Cambria County (17%).
- There are approximately 1,053 housing units in Southmont. Approximately 89% of housing units are occupied. Of those, approximately 79% are owner occupied.
- The median value of owner-occupied housing is $126,800. This is higher than what is found in Cambria County ($114,400).
- The mean travel time to work is approximately 26.91 minutes. This is a higher than what is found in Cambria County (24.6 minutes).
- Over 86% of Southmont residents drive alone or car pool to work. Only 1.1% of residents walk, bike or use public transportation to get to work. Approximately 12.5% of residents work from home.
- Approximately 17% of Southmont residents have some type of disability. Approximately 4.5% report having a hearing disability and 1.9% report a vision disability.

Community Heath Assessment

Cambria County ranks 64 out of 67 counties for health outcomes and factors in Pennsylvania according to the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps report. This means that Cambria County residents are among the least healthy in the commonwealth. For quality of life, Cambria County ranks at 14% for poor health with 3.6 poor physical health days, 5.4 poor mental health days, and 9% low birth rate. These numbers are higher than both Pennsylvania and the United States averages. Cambria County's life expectancy is 75.8 years which is lower than Pennsylvania and the United States and their premature age-adjust mortality is 45, child mortality is 50, and infant mortality is 7. Eleven percent (11%) of the population has been reported as having frequent physical distress with 17% having frequent mental distress. 121 people are reported as having HIV and 9% of the population has diabetes. 24% of people are reported as having physical inactivity, 33% of people are obese, 21% smoke, and 22% are excessive drinkers. On almost every category, residents in Cambria County are experiencing greater health issues than the average Pennsylvanians or U.S. Residents.

Conemaugh Health System's 2022-2025 Community Health Needs Assessment

The Conemaugh Health System participated in a partnership with other community organizations including the 1889 Foundation, 1889 Jefferson Center for Population Health, and United Way of the Laurel Highlands to complete the 2022-2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) Conemaugh Health System's 2022-2025 Community Health Needs Assessment. The CHNA provides a comprehensive review, analysis and working summary of health status indicators, public health, socioeconomic, demographics and other qualitative and quantitative data. The Conemaugh Health System covers Cambria and Somerset Counties and is comprised of the Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center, Conemaugh Meyersdale Medical Center and Conemaugh Miners Medical Center.

Among the goals of the CHNA are to support the existing infrastructure and utilize resources available in the community to instigate health improvement in the community. Similarly, improving the health of Southmont Borough residents and the well-being of the community is a top priority in the Southmont Borough Active Transportation Plan. Among the Key Findings of the CHNA was Obesity/Healthy Living. Improving the existing public infrastructure like the sidewalks and other active transportation facilities and connections encourages residents to actively move through Southmont is a goal of this Project. The active transportation recommendations presented in this Plan will improve access through the community and will provide connections to park/recreation areas, services, and important community destinations which increases the number of opportunities for people to improve their health through physical activity.

The CHNA provides several points of guidance related to the connection between active transportation and community health improvements. The following list highlights these connections.

<u>What are top health issues?</u>

- *Obesity*
- *Physical activity*

<u>What are top community health needs</u>

- Access to social determinant of Health Needs/Healthcare
- *Obesity/Healthy Living*

<u>What solutions are needed to improve health:</u>

- *Increase and improve infrastructure – transportation, sidewalks, parks*
- *Create walking programs in areas of high-risk for multiple co-morbidities*

2023-2028 Pennsylvania State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP)

Emphasizes that physical activity helps to maintain a healthy weight and reduces risk for many chronic diseases; however, the prevalence of obesity and overweight for both adults and children has reached epidemic proportions throughout the nation, as well as in Pennsylvania. In addition, many people suffering from anxiety, depression, and mood swings find walking has a calming effect on mood. Obesity and physical activity are a focus of Chronic Disease Prevention in the 2023-2028 Pennsylvania State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). The SHIP states two out of three adults, and one out of three school-age children, have excess weight.

- 33.3% of adults had obesity in 2021
- 33% of adults were overweight in 2021
- Of adults in Pennsylvania reporting obesity in 2021, 31.5% were White, non-Hispanic, 39.2% were Black, non-Hispanic and 31.2% were Hispanic
- During the 2020-2021 school year, among school-age children in Pennsylvania:
  - 20.3% had obesity; and
  - 16.9% were overweight
- 12.8% of children between 2 and 4 years of age, participating in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), had obesity in 2018

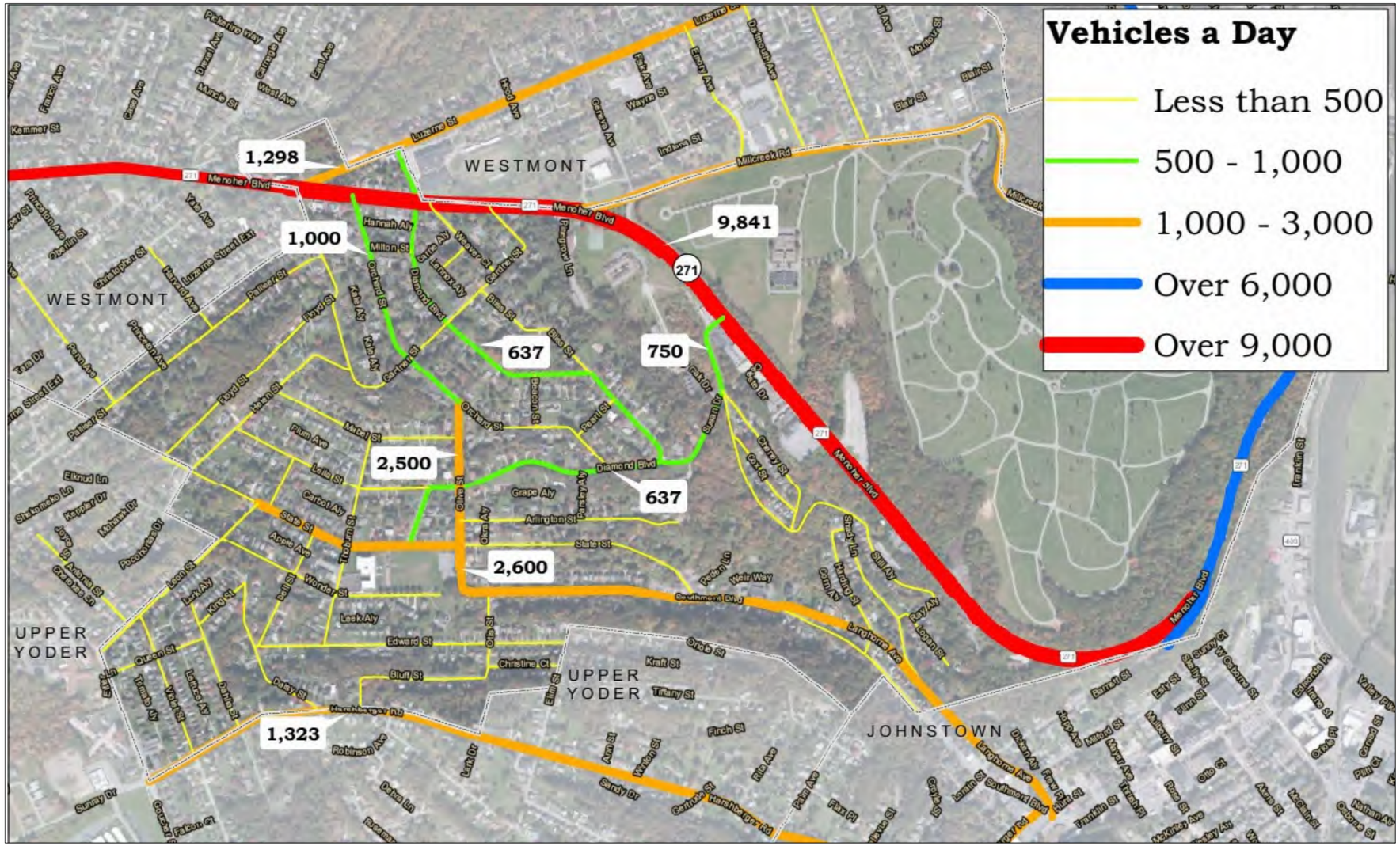
The Southmont Borough Active Transportation Plan recommends approaches for providing better bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to and among community services, recreation areas and other neighborhoods. Implementing the recommendations will increase the number of opportunities for physical activity and will also support public health needs in Southmont.

Sidewalks & Curbs

Many of the low volume local streets having sidewalks with tree lawns providing a buffer for pedestrians from the roadways. Borough Ordinance (#'s 39, 397 and 403) provides that all owners (or agent of owner), with property abutting or fronting upon any street, are required to keep the public walkway immediately abutting their property in good repair. Sidewalks shall be installed one foot from the front boundary line of the property. Sidewalks shall be 5-ft in width and shall be constructed only of 4-inch thick concrete or standard paving brick. Blacktop or other similar materials are not permitted for construction of sidewalks.

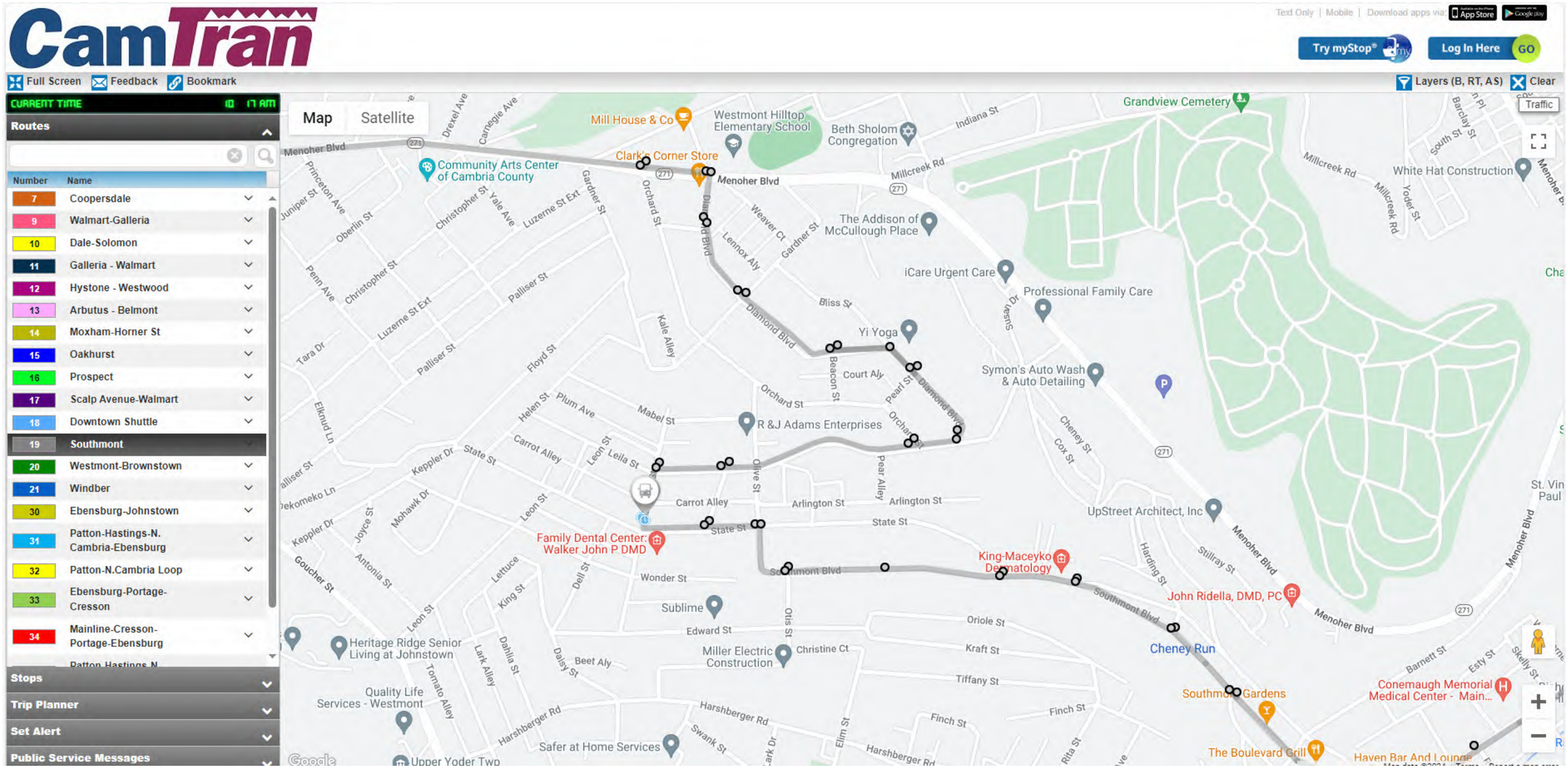
Average Daily Traffic Counts

Menoher Boulevard (Route 271) bisects Southmont Borough and has the highest Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) at just under 10,000 vehicles a day. Most of the local streets in Southmont are low volume roads. Southmont Blvd., Luzerne St., Harshberger Rd., Olive St., and a portion of State St., carry between 1,000 and 3,000 vehicles a day. The remainder of the streets carry less than 1,000, with most of these experiencing less than 500 vehicles per day.

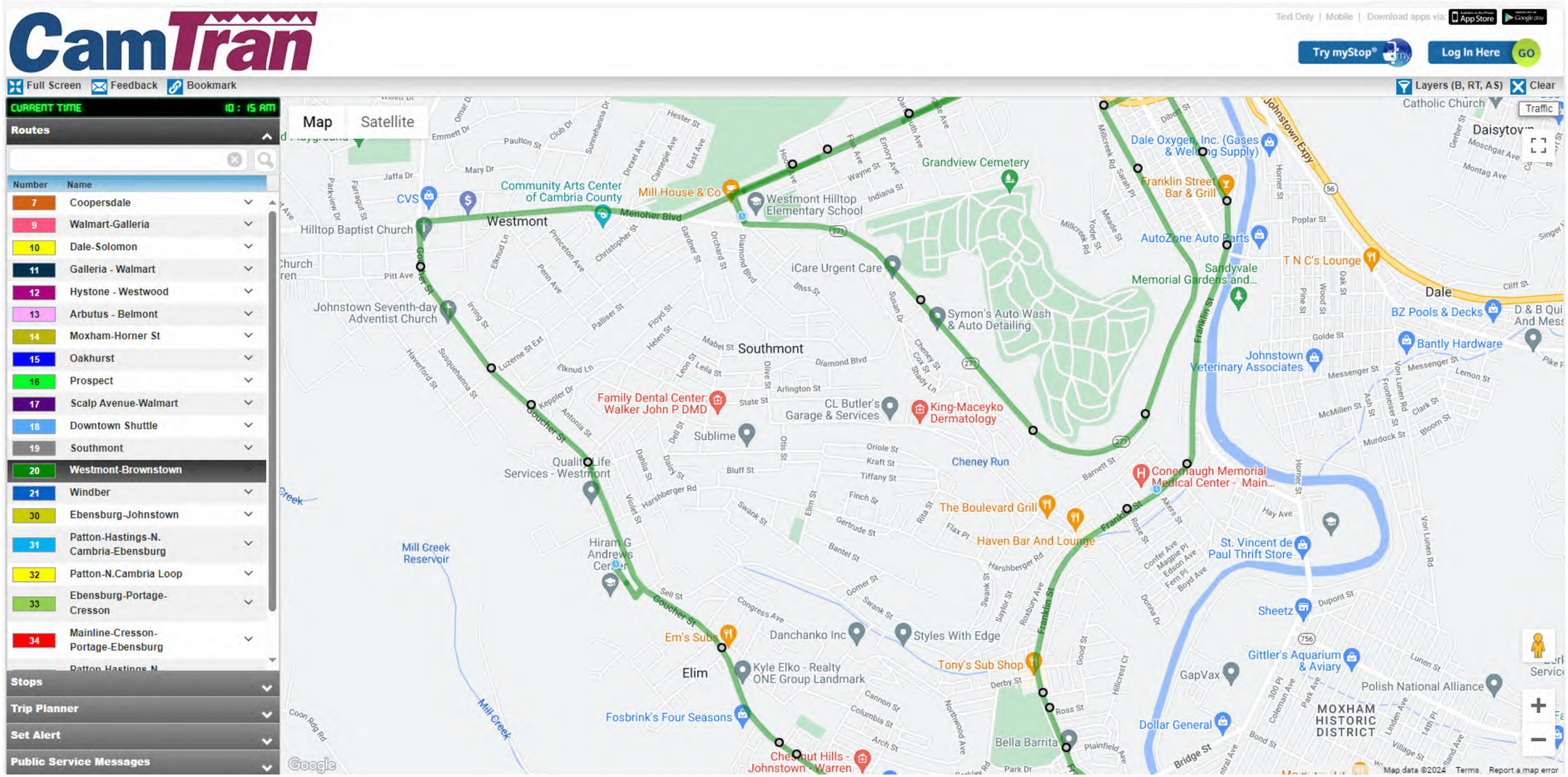

Vehicles a Day
Less than 500
500 - 1,000
1,000 - 3,000
Over 6,000
Over 9,000
1,298
1,000
9,841
637
750
2,500
637
2,600
1,323
WESTMONT
UPPER YODER
JOHNSTOWN
Menoher Blvd
Luzerne St
State St
Millcreek Rd
Diamond Blvd
Southmont Blvd
Harshberger Rd
Olive St
Edward St
Bluff St
Orchard St
Milton St
Hannah Ave
Arlington St
Grape Aly
Leah Aly
Christine Ct
Kraft St
Tiffany St
Ortale St
Franklin St
Main St
Walnut St
Laughlin Ave
Sandy Dr
Firth St
Early St
Burnett St
Mellon Ave
Myers Ave
Mulvey St
Ross St
Oak St
Alcorn St
McKinley Ave
Nathan Ave
Osborne St
Orchard St
Pine Ct
Valley Pike
Stanley St
Osborne St
Kemmer St
Munce St
West Ave
Lenox Ave
Floyd St
Palmer St
Pearl St
Plum Ave
Mertel St
Lelia St
Carbol Aly
Trotburn St
Apple Ave
Wonder St
Leah Aly
King St
Ellis St
Ann St
Watson St
Rita Ave
Palm Ave
Flint Pl
Lark Ln
Sunny Dr
Falcon Ct
Dana Ln
Robinson Ave
Elkmud Ln
Shortcake Ln
Keppler Dr
Mohawk Dr
Pocahontas Dr
Jones Ln
Antonia St
Gabbie Dr
Leon St
Lark Aly
Quinn St
Thumb Aly
Valley St
Kenney Av
Dahlia St
Daisy St
Pitcairn Ave
Oberlin St
Chestnut St
Harold Ave
Luzerne Street Ext
Pine Street Ext
Palmer St
Floyd St
Kyle Aly
Cardinal St
Lenox Aly
Diamond Blvd
Wagner St
Cardinal St
Bliss St
Peacock St
Ordinary St
Pearl St
Olive St
Penn Ave
Parsley Av
Grape Aly
Arlington St
State St
Pecan Ln
Weir Way
Southmont Blvd
Langhorne Ave
Kay Aly
Logan St
Shady Ln
Shady Aly
Cedar Av
Hinkley St
Cedar Ln
Cedar St
Oak Dr
Cherry St
Oak St
Shawnee Dr
Cut Dr
Deer Dr
Fern Ave
Lenox Ave
Wayne St
Indiana St
Garden Av
Rose Av
Dartmouth Ave
Blair St
Morrell St
Blair St
Millcreek Rd
Menoher Blvd
Franklin St
Valley Pike
Stanley St
Osborne St
Burnett St
Early St
Firth St
Mulvey St
Mellon Ave
Myers Ave
Walnut St
Main St
Ross St
Oak St
Alcorn St
McKinley Ave
Nathan Ave
Osborne St
Orchard St
Pine Ct
Laughlin St
Franklin St
Flint Pl
Flint Ct
Southmont Blvd
Laughlin Ave
Dillon Aly
Sandy Dr
Harshberger Rd
Palm Ave
Rita Ave
Watson St
Ann St
Ellis St
Olive St
Ortale St
Kraft St
Tiffany St
Christine Ct
Bluff St
Edward St
Leah Aly
Wonder St
Trotburn St
Apple Ave
State St
Arlington St
Grape Aly
Parsley Av
Diamond Blvd
Pearl St
Ordinary St
Bliss St
Peacock St
Cardinal St
Kyle Aly
Lenox Aly
Diamond Blvd
Wagner St
Cardinal St
Floyd St
Palmer St
Pine Street Ext
Harold Ave
Luzerne Street Ext
Chestnut St
Oberlin St
Pitcairn Ave
Yale Ave
Jean Ave
Munce St
Shand Ave
Curtain Av
Lenox Ave
Kemmer St
Fern Ave
Wayne St
Indiana St
Garden Av
Rose Av
Dartmouth Ave
Blair St
Morrell St
Millcreek Rd
Luzerne St
Menoher Blvd
271
271
271

Public Bus Service

The Cambria County Transit Authority (CamTran) operates several Fixed Routes throughout Southmont and the Greater Johnstown. Bus Route 19 is aligned through Southmont Borough. There are many walkable bus stops along this Route that are accessible to Southmont residents. The following highlights Route 19 route and stop locations in Southmont Borough.



Route 20 Westmont-Brownstown is aligned around Southmont Borough. The following highlights the Route 20 alignment and stop locations in Southmont Borough.



Westmont Hilltop Elementary School Walking Boundary

The Westmont Hilltop School District has a transportation policy that requires students to walk to school if they reside within a designated proximity to their school. The map below shows the Elementary School Walking Boundary for the 2024-2025 school year. The District does not provide bus service to students living within this boundary. Students within the Walking Boundary must either walk to school or be driven to school.



Existing Parks and Walking/Biking Resources

There are outdoor recreation and open space areas accessible to Southmont residents. These include neighborhood playgrounds and a larger regional park, a large public cemetery, play courts/ fields/open space and a nature trail bird sanctuary. The following describes these resources and the map to the right shows their location.

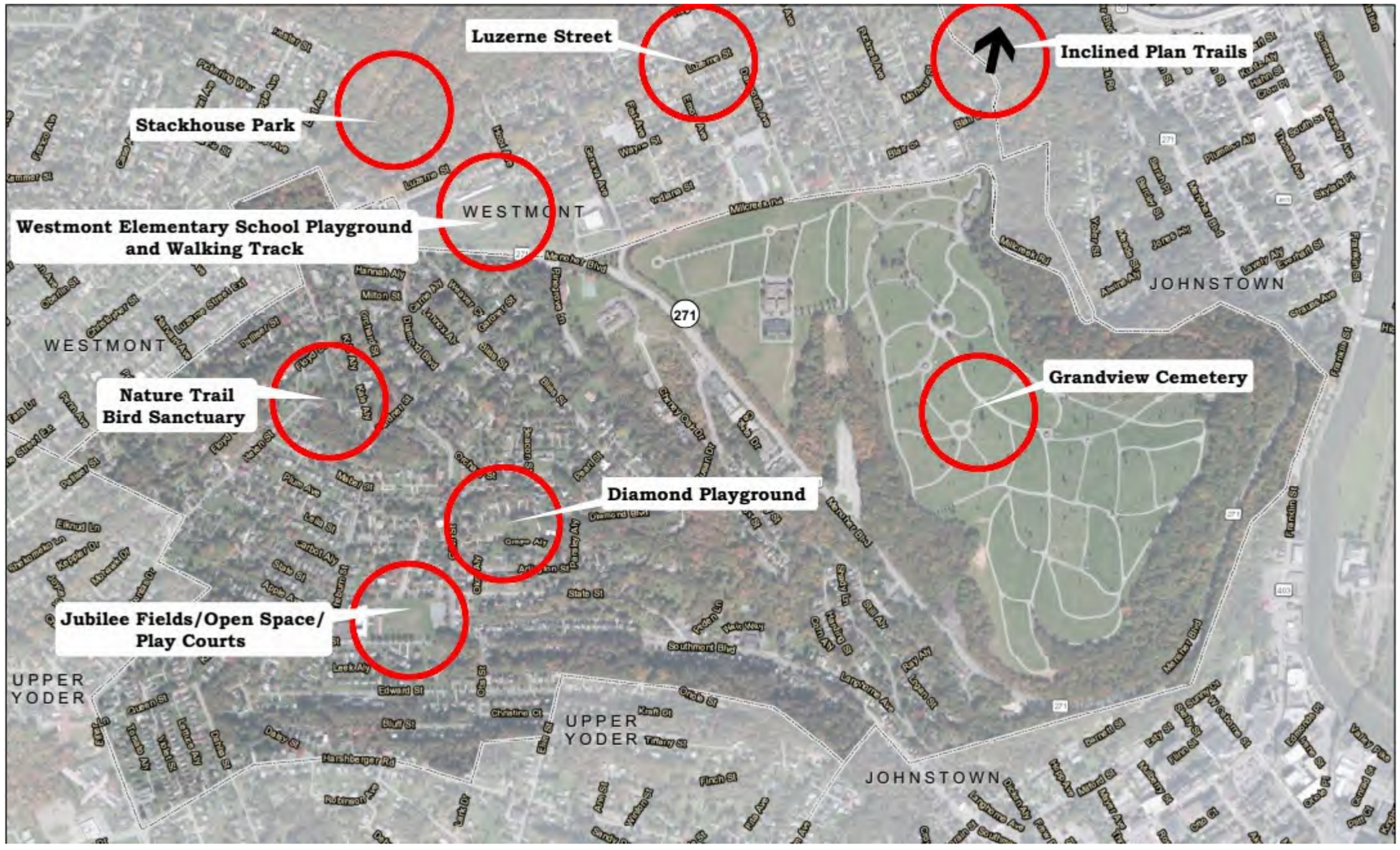
Jubilee Field/Open Space/Courts – located between State and Wonder Streets and bordered by Olive Street. The fields are owned and operated by the Westmont Hilltop School District. The play courts are owned by the Borough and maintained by the School District. An annual Jubilee is held in this location each year as a fundraiser for the Southmont Volunteer Fire Company.

Diamond Playground – located at the corner of Leila and Olive Streets. The playground contains modern playground equipment, benches and bike racks.

Nature Trail Bird Sanctuary – located on both sides of Helen Street at the intersection with Gardner Street.

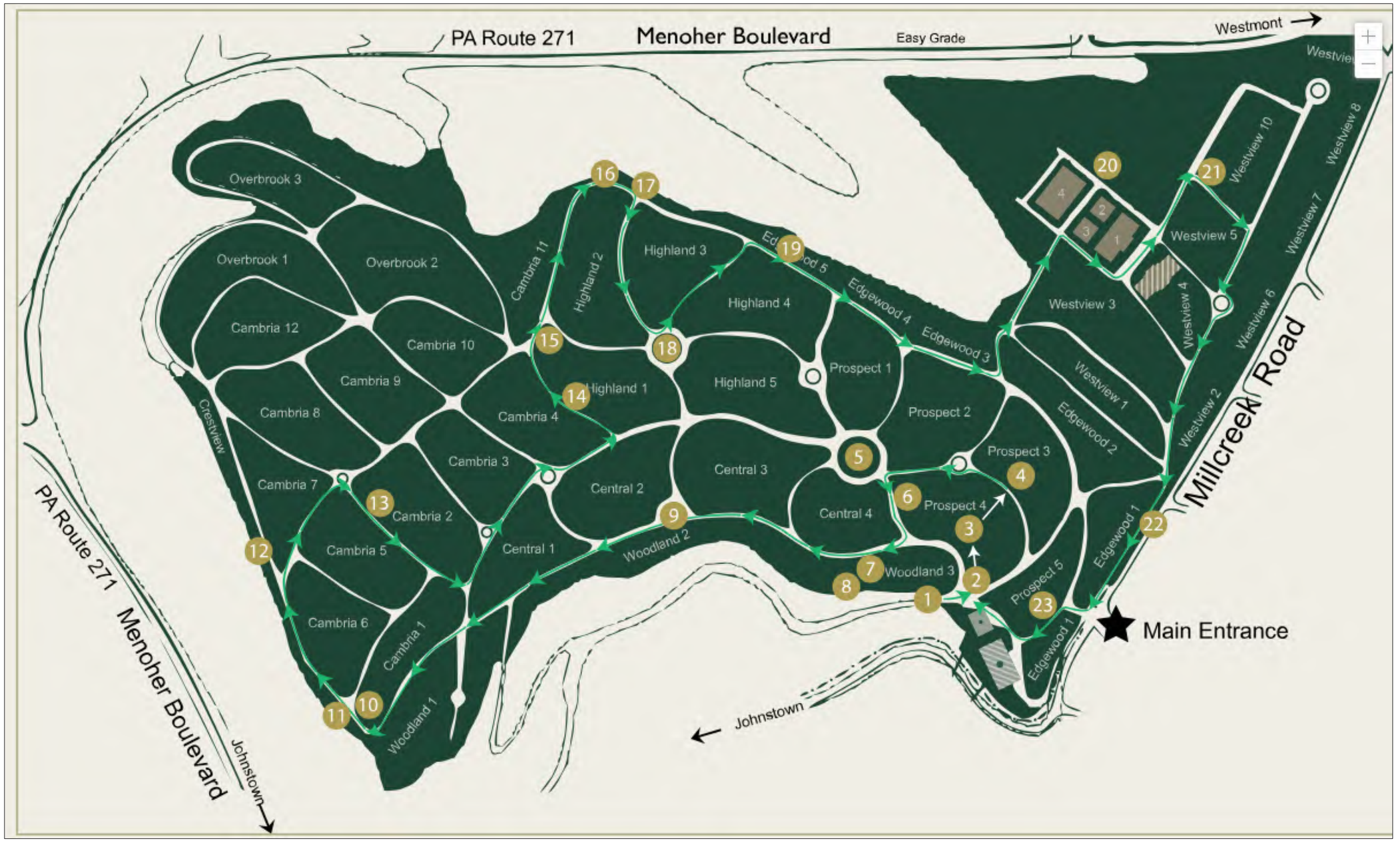
Luzerne Street – Luzerne Street holds the Guinness Record for the longest stretch (195) of American Elms in the country. With recently refurbished sidewalks, a walk or bike ride down Luzerne Street is an enjoyable experience.

Inclined Plan Mountain Biking Trails – The entrance to the trails is on Edgehill Drive which is less than a mile from Southmont Borough. The Inclined Plane boasts a unique Mountain Biking Trail for expert riders.

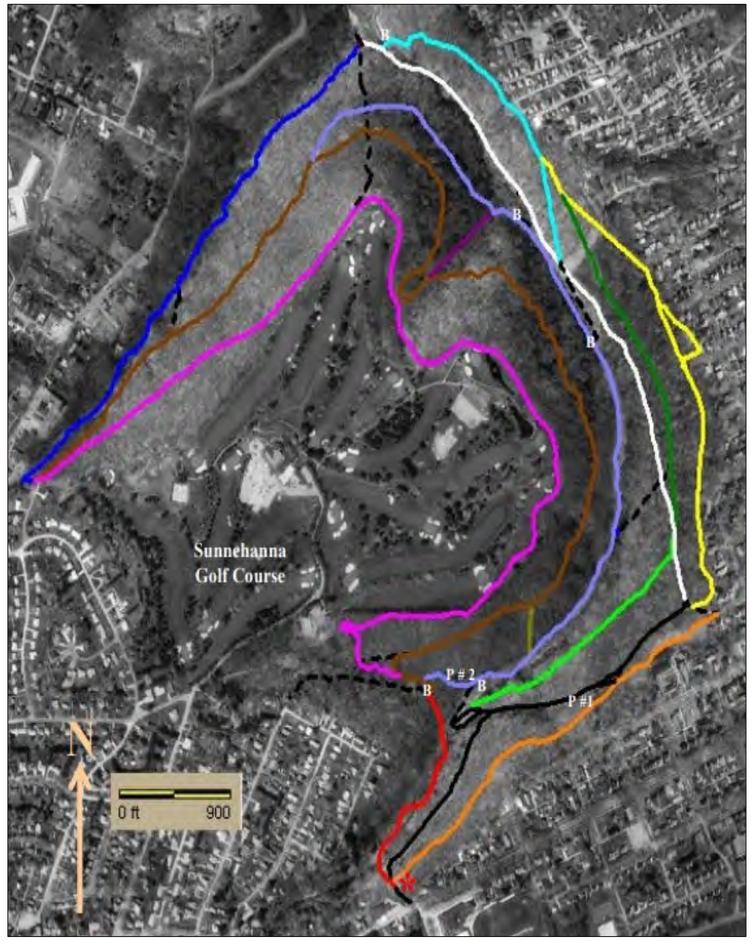


Westmont Hilltop Elementary School Playground and Walking Track - the School maintains two (2) playground areas and a walking track around the Price field sports complex and football field. The playgrounds and walking track are open to the public outside during non-school hours.

Grandview Cemetery – Grandview Cemetery encompasses approximately 235 acres in Southmont Borough. The Cemetery contains nearly twelve miles of walkable roads. The Cemetery is positioned on elevated ground that offers a tranquil place for reflection and remembrance and picturesque views of Southmont and the surrounding area. The Cemetery also promotes Walking Tour consisting of 20 historic landmarks. The self-guided tour will lead you through the historic cemetery, showcasing notable figures, beautiful monuments, and significant events tied to the area. As you walk through the serene landscape, you'll encounter markers that highlight local history, heritage, and memorials to individuals who shaped the community. The map below highlights stops along the Walking Tour.



Stackhouse Park – the 250+ Nature Park has an access point along Luzerne Street near the Westmont Hilltop Elementary School. The Park is accessible to multiple municipalities including Southmont, City of Johnstown, Lower Yoder Township, Westmont, and Brownstown. The Park features over 7-miles of hiking trails and a Story Walk feature. Trails and paths in Stackhouse Park include: Bridle Path; Brownstown Trail; Crystal Trail; Caddy Trail; Ecology Trail; Julia Path; Norton Path; Old Log Trail; Salt Lick Trail; Tioga Path; Whispering Trail. The images below show the location of the Stackhouse Trails, the Stackhouse Storywalk, and the annual Stackhouse First Day Hike -Park programming includes many guided walks and outdoor programs.





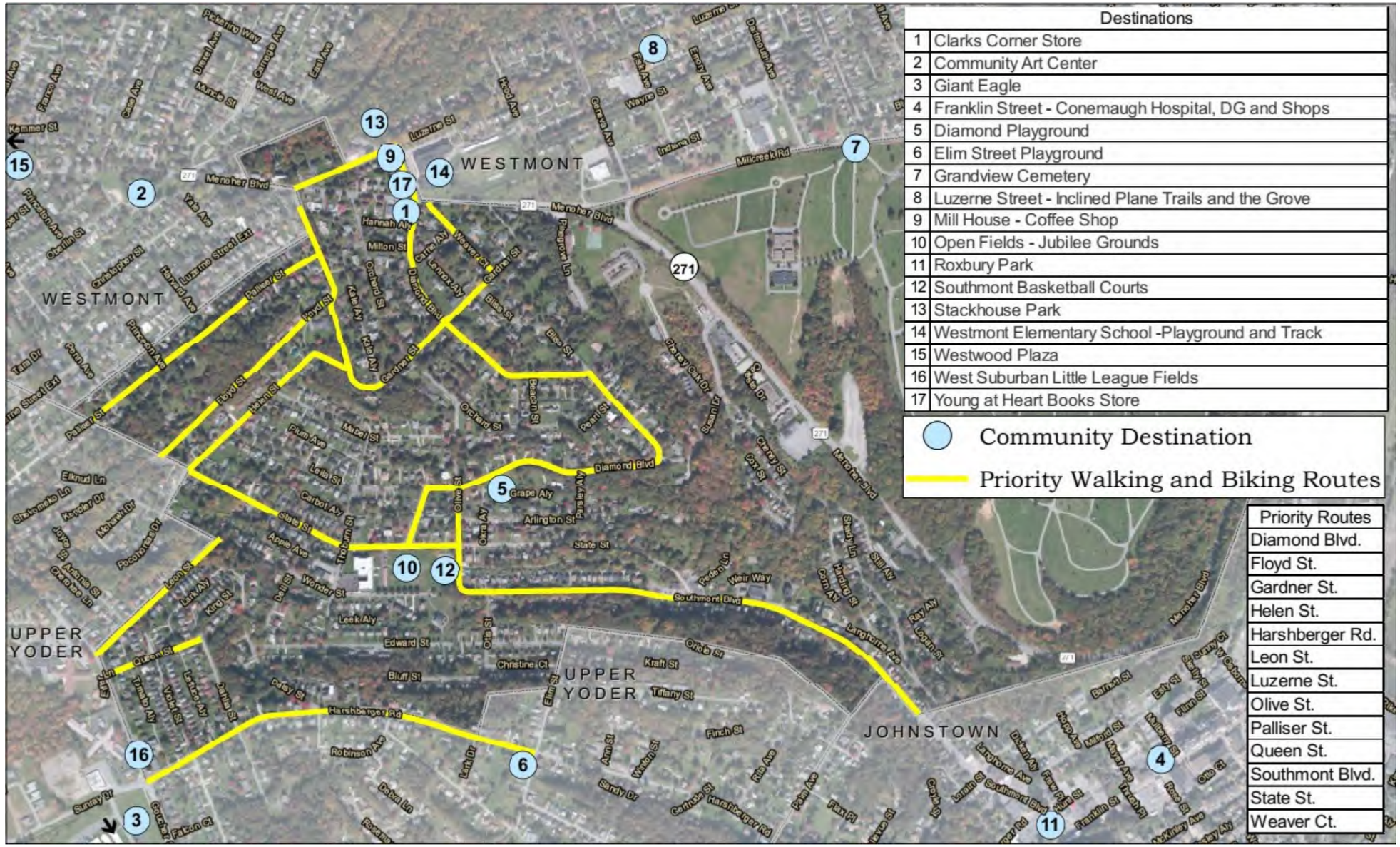


Community Destinations and Priority Routes:

The map to the right shows the location of important community destinations. These destinations are the locations frequented by residents and are opportunities to attract nearby community residents into Southmont for services and events.

Also shown are identified priority walking and biking routes that connect to the community destinations. These routes are known to be frequently used by residents for walking and biking. These routes can be expanded to the larger geography to include locations like the Hospital, Westwood Plaza, West Suburban Little League Fields, Giant Eagle, and Community Arts Center.

Connecting to these wider locations can attract potential residents who work or recreate or frequent these areas. Conversations and engagement events with nearby communities can help to determine the possibility of these connections and the how favored these are in other communities.



Destinations	
1	Clarks Corner Store
2	Community Art Center
3	Giant Eagle
4	Franklin Street - Conemaugh Hospital, DG and Shops
5	Diamond Playground
6	Elim Street Playground
7	Grandview Cemetery
8	Luzerne Street - Inclined Plane Trails and the Grove
9	Mill House - Coffee Shop
10	Open Fields - Jubilee Grounds
11	Roxbury Park
12	Southmont Basketball Courts
13	Stackhouse Park
14	Westmont Elementary School -Playground and Track
15	Westwood Plaza
16	West Suburban Little League Fields
17	Young at Heart Books Store

Priority Routes
Diamond Blvd.
Floyd St.
Gardner St.
Helen St.
Harshberger Rd.
Leon St.
Luzerne St.
Olive St.
Palliser St.
Queen St.
Southmont Blvd.
State St.
Weaver Ct.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Community Engagement process provided Southmont Borough residents an opportunity to help guide and shape the future of active transportation in their community. Residents, organizations, elected officials, and other stakeholders were given multiple opportunities and options to participate and to provide input. Information obtained during the process was used to develop an inventory of Active Transportation Priorities and action items. The following section describes the Community Engagement process and highlights the results.

Project Steering Committee Meetings

Steering Committee members were strategically selected to provide input and to educate/communicate with others about the Plan's development. Each Committee member's identity, occupation and/or areas of expertise were among the deciding factors asking them serve on the Committee. Committee members also assisted with critical sharing of information directly related to connections to adjacent municipalities and assisted with developing the list of Priorities included in the Plan. Six (6) in person Steering Committee meetings (with an on-line option) were held. Agendas for the Project Steering Committee meetings are provided in the Appendix.

- Meeting 1 January 30, 2024
- Meeting 2 February 27, 2024
- Meeting 3 March 26, 2024
- Meeting 4 April 30, 2024
- Meeting 5 June 4, 2024
- Meeting 6 June 25, 2024

Mapping, data summaries, draft plan sections and other related items were distributed to the Committee members prior to each meeting for their review. All members were individually called upon and given an opportunity to speak and to add their input at each meeting. This approach resulted in highly productive meetings.

Community Engagement Event

A Community Engagement Event was held in the Borough's conference room on April 30, 2024. The Event included various stations to engage the public – mapping activity, survey, comment cards, walkability/bikeability assessment forms, and a student area to engage the younger visitors. The Engagement Event was promoted using direct invitations, public advertising, poster displays and posting via social media. The Event attracted nearly 50 participants including residents, business owners, county commissioner, and council persons. The event was successfully covered by the news media – WJAC and the Tribune-Democrat providing stories about the event. Cambria County Commissioner, Thomas Chernisky, attended and posted images from the event on his social media channels.


The Tribune-Democrat

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MAY 1, 2024 WEDNESDAY $2.00 NEWSSTAND

Bill aims to 'level the playing field'

State legislator seeks separate playoff for 'non-boundary' schools

Blachly, JSO agree to 2-year extension

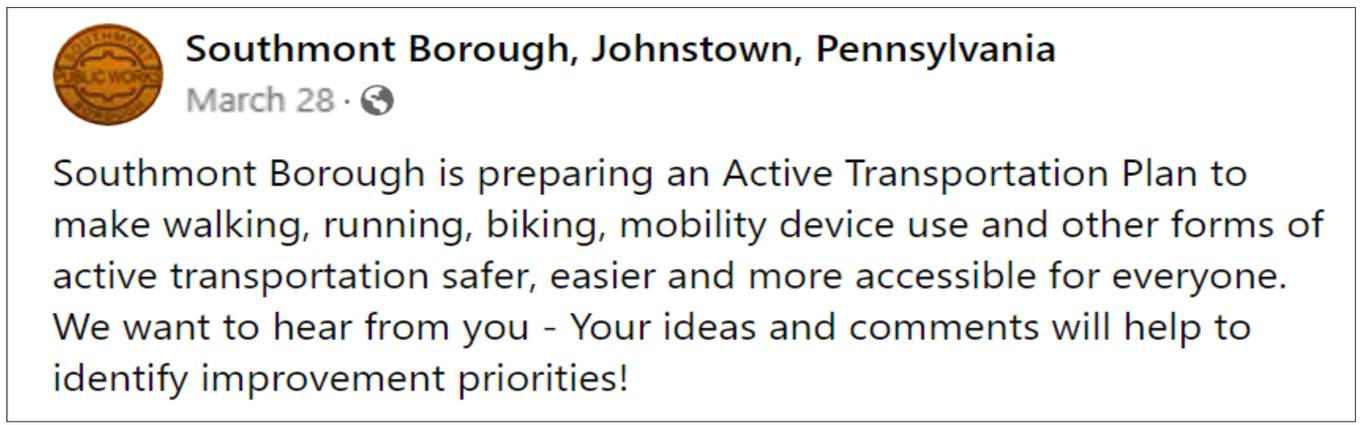
Music director to wield baton through 2026

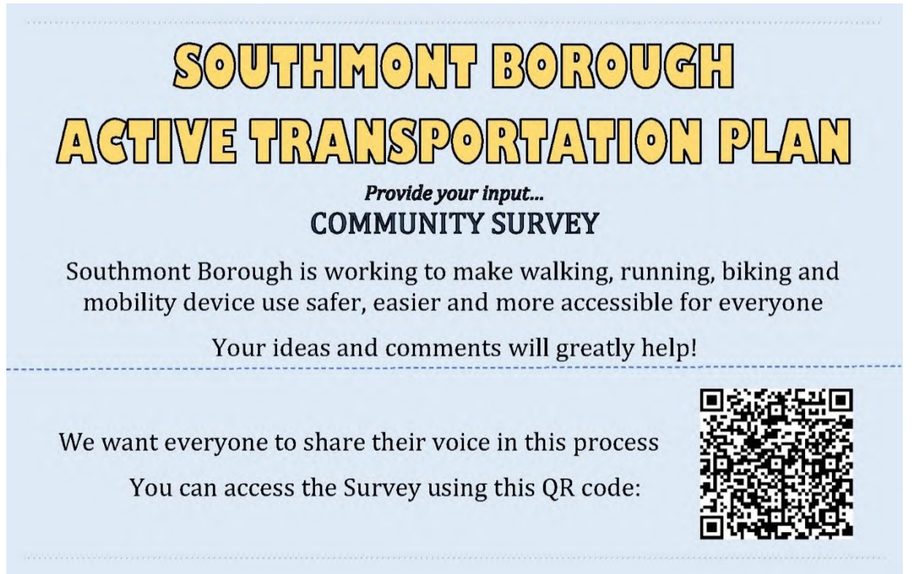
'SHE CREATED A LEGACY'

Girls Night Out: Fun for great cause

Southmont residents' transport ideas aired

Improvements to roads, sidewalks among suggestions





SOUTHMONT BOROUGH
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Provide your input...

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENT

Tuesday, April 30 – 4-6pm – Southmont Borough Building

We want everyone to share their voice in this process
All members of the community are encouraged to attend

Interactive opportunities to provide ideas and comments will be provided

Southmont Borough is working to make walking, running, biking and mobility device use safer, easier and more accessible for everyone



WalkWorks Program Grant

Southmont Borough has received grant funding through the WalkWorks Program to develop an Active Transportation Plan over the next year. WalkWorks is a collaboration between the Pennsylvania Downtown Center and the PA Department of Health. The funding is provided by the State Physical Activity and Nutrition Grant and the Preventative Health and Health Services Block Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

'Critical opportunity': Southmont seeks public feedback in making active transportation plan

By Russ O'Reilly
roreilly@tribdem.com Apr 17, 2024

FOX 8 NEWS WEATHER PROGRAM SCHEDULE LOC

Southmont Transportation Plan Meeting

May 1, 2024 8:31 am



The Tribune-Democrat, Johnstown, Pa.

'Critical opportunity': Southmont seeks public feedback in making active transportation plan

Russ O Reilly, The Tribune-Democrat, Johnstown, Pa.

April 17, 2024 · 2 min read



People filter in at the start of a Southmont Borough community engagement event Tuesday, April 30, 2024, at the borough building, 148 Wonder St.

By Russ O'Reilly
roreilly@tribdem.com

Cambria County Planning Commission
April 1 ·

Southmont Borough is preparing an Active Transportation Plan to make walking, running, biking, mobility device use and other forms of active transportation safer, easier and more accessible for everyone. We want to hear from you - Your ideas and comments will help to identify improvement priorities!

The Survey will only take a few minutes to complete. We would like responses by May 1.

Active Transportation refers to any non-motorized, self-propelled or human-powered mode of transportation, such as walking, bicycling, e-bikes, scooters, wheelchairs, mobility devices, etc.

You can access the Survey using the following link. Hard copies of the Survey are also available in the Borough Office.

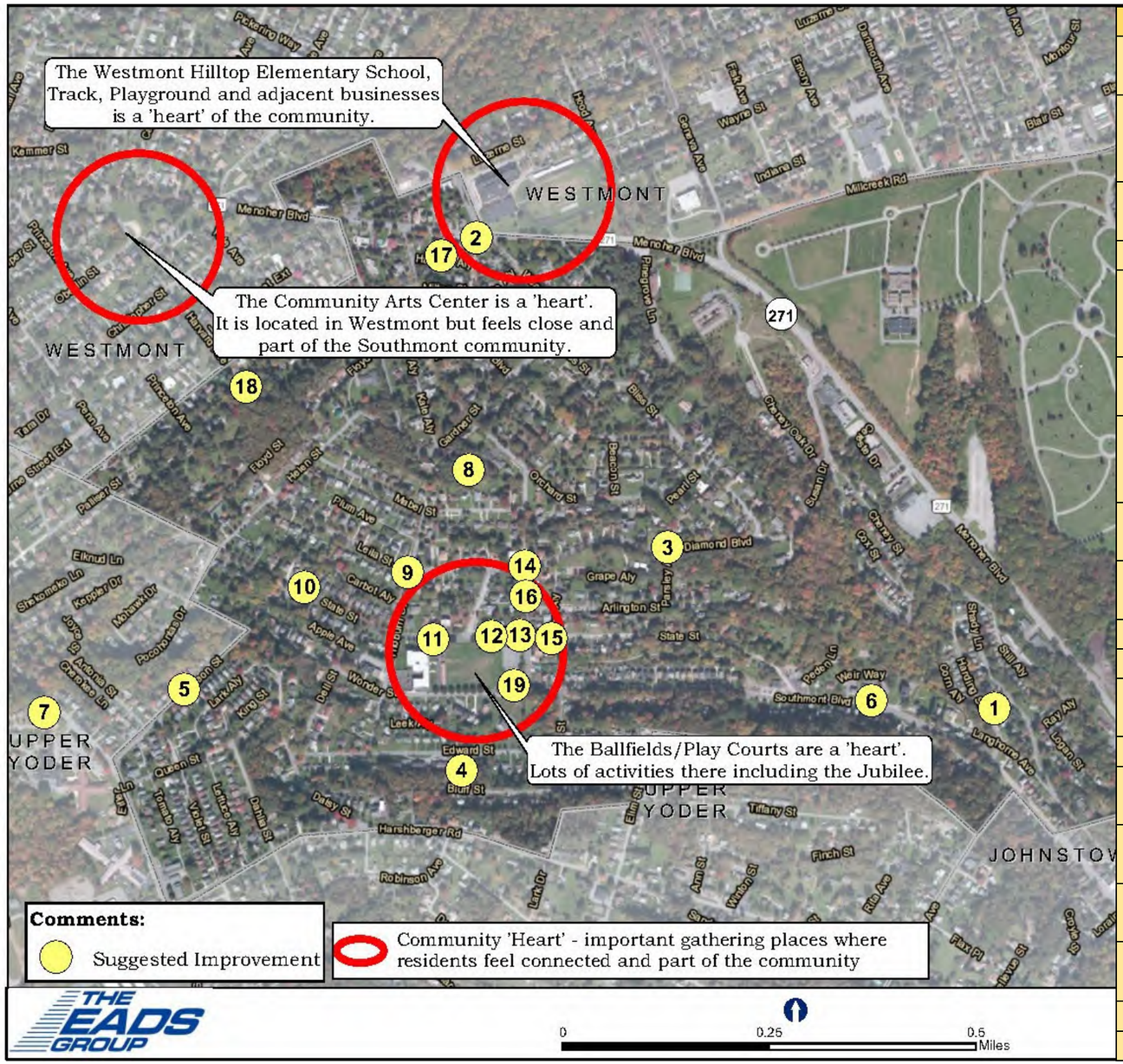
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Southmont-WalkWorks

Community Engagement opportunities are being planned so stay connected by checking the Active Transportation section on Southmont's website for additional information.

WALKWORKS GRANT | smtboro (southmontborough.com)

Public Comments – Suggested Improvements

The map below and graphic to the right summarizes comments focused on suggested improvements received during the community engagement event.



NUMBER	COMMENT
1	Streets & sidewalks in this area need improvement. Grass growing in sidewalks worn out. Deteriorated almost beyond repair.
2	Need Stop light at Diamond and Menoher to/from get to the Elementary School and Stackhouse Park. Only crosswalks now. Issue with crossing guards.
3	Diamond St. trees are lifting up the sidewalk, difficult to use sidewalk but don't want to lose the trees.
4	Sidewalks bad because of Stormwater or run off.
5	Leon Street is narrow and difficult to pass. Who owns this street, poor condition because of gas line work. Poor biking in area. Lots of pedestrian and bus stops - school and transit. Needs Crosswalk.
6	Traffic calming is needed on Southmont Boulevard. People drive too fast.
7	Goucher Street improvements, work with Upper Yoder Twp to improve bike/ped connections to services. Benefits Southmont connectivity to services down Goucher. Add bike lanes?
8	The 'Chicken' path short cut to walking in the borough. (Informal path between houses)
9	Tree roots bumping up sidewalks on Leila and Thoburn. Loves the trees so don't want to lose them.
10	400 block of State Street. The sidewalks need improvement.
11	State Street sidewalks could use improvement.
12	Add Stairway from State Street onto the ballfield. No way to get there now without driving.
13	4-way stop at Olive and State Streets. See #19.
14	Turn left from Diamond onto Olive needs 4-way stop or at stop signs at Olive and State Streets to make area safer.
15	Lots of cars turning right from State Street onto Olive without stopping.
16	Olive Street from State Street to Diamond sidewalks in bad condition from trees.
17	Street Trees need to be planted. Older trees stumped after being taken down. Dangerous.
18	Stop signs on Palliser to slow traffic.
19	Tennis courts need to be repaired.

Community Survey

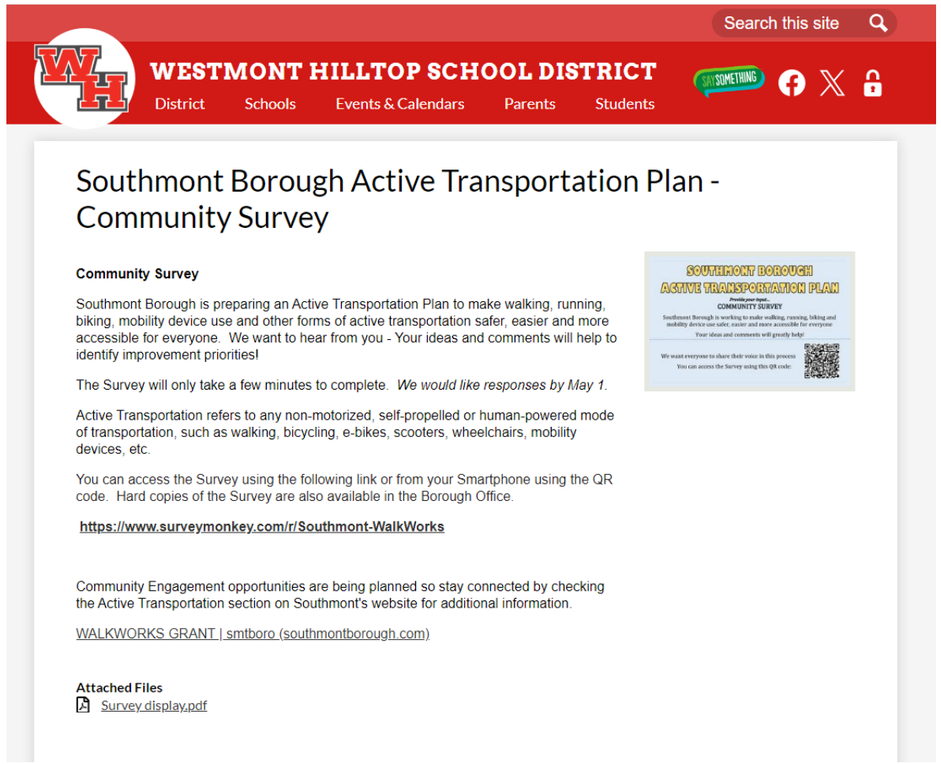
The following section highlights results of the Active Transportation Plan Community Survey. The results provide insights on Walking/Running, Bicycling/Scooter and Wheelchair/Mobility Device Improvements wanted in Southmont Borough.

The Southmont Borough Community Survey was open from March to June 2024. The Survey was made available on-line at *https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Southmont-WalkWorks*, and using hard copy forms. There were 150 total responses to the Survey. 106 (71%) of the responders were from Southmont Borough residents, 20 (13%) were from Westmont Borough residents and 11 (7%) were from Upper Yoder Township residents. The remaining 13 responders were from another Cambria County community. Considering the average household size of responders, the results represent approximately 450 individuals. Nearly half of the responders are in the Adult (30-54) age category and 35% of the responders are in the Adult (55+) age category.

Approximately 75% of the responders primarily walk or run in Southmont. Approximately 15% of the responders primarily use a bicycle or scooter in Southmont. Two (2) responses were from individuals who use a wheelchair or mobility device.

On average, responders walk or run approximately 4.5 days a week and bike approximately 2.5 days a week.

86% of responders said they own their own bike. The most popular type of bike owned is a Mountain Biking, followed by On-Road Touring Bikes and Gravel Bikes.


Search this site

WESTMONT HILLTOP SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Schools Events & Calendars Parents Students

Say Something

Southmont Borough Active Transportation Plan - Community Survey

Community Survey

Southmont Borough is preparing an Active Transportation Plan to make walking, running, biking, mobility device use and other forms of active transportation safer, easier and more accessible for everyone. We want to hear from you - Your ideas and comments will help to identify improvement priorities!

The Survey will only take a few minutes to complete. *We would like responses by May 1.*

Active Transportation refers to any non-motorized, self-propelled or human-powered mode of transportation, such as walking, bicycling, e-bikes, scooters, wheelchairs, mobility devices, etc.

You can access the Survey using the following link or from your Smartphone using the QR code. Hard copies of the Survey are also available in the Borough Office.

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Community Engagement opportunities are being planned so stay connected by checking the Active Transportation section on Southmont's website for additional information.

WALKWORKS GRANT | smtboro (southmontborough.com)

Attached Files

Survey display.pdf

Underline What Southmont Residents Want

Southmont Residents want to actively walk, run and bike in the Borough. Residents want the Borough to address impediments and barriers to walking and biking, including the lack of safe and connected routes, the lack of walking and biking facilities and amenities and the lack of community awareness of walkers and bikers. Residents also want the Borough to improve their ability to walk and bike with their children to existing recreation and outdoor areas, notably, the Borough Diamond Street Playground, Stackhouse Park and the playground areas at the Westmont Hilltop Elementary School.

The following highlights important input and guidance received from the Community Survey.

What Walking/Running Connections are Wanted - in order of importance:

1. Better walking/running connections within the Borough - in general
2. Better walking/running connections to Westmont Hilltop Elementary School
3. Better walking/running connections to a surrounding community
4. Better walking/running connections to Stackhouse Park
5. Better walking/running connections to/along Southmont Blvd.
6. Better walking/running connections to Commercial/Business areas

What Biking Connections are Wanted - in order of importance:

1. Better biking connections within Southmont - in general
2. Better biking connections to a surrounding community
3. Better biking connections to Westmont Hilltop Elementary School
4. Better biking connections to Stackhouse Park
5. Better biking connections to Commercial/Business areas
6. Better biking connections to/along Southmont Blvd.

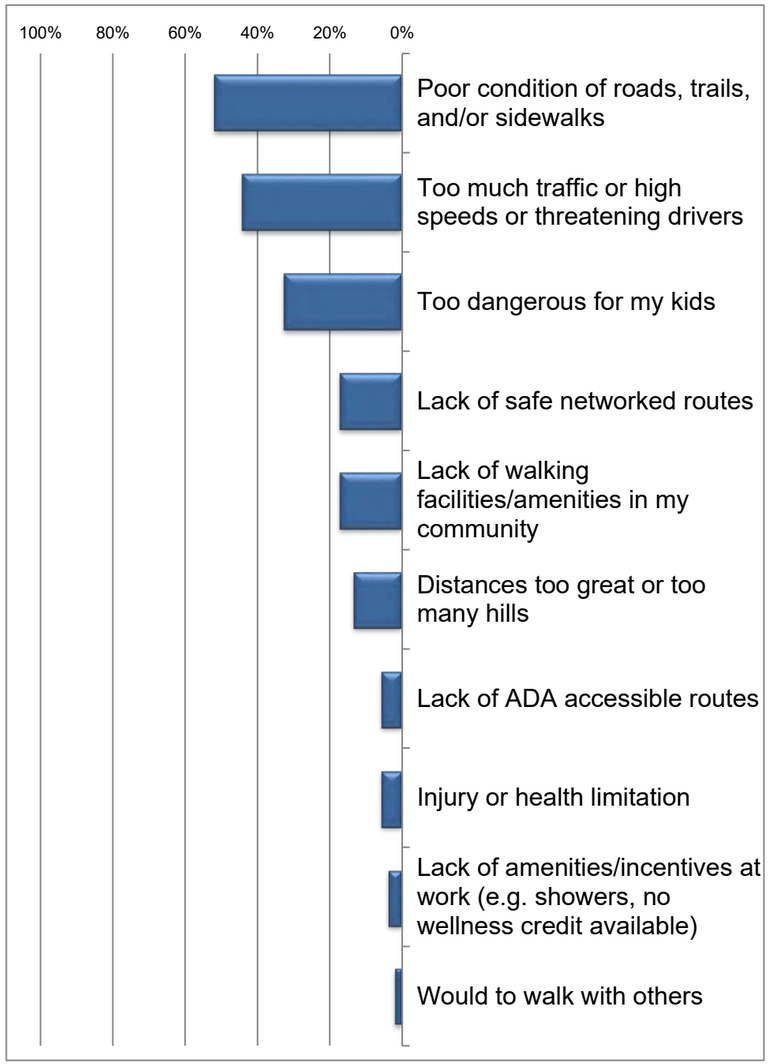
Reasons for Walking or Running:

1. Exercise/recreation
2. Improve my health
3. General walking - not to any specific destination
4. Walking a dog/other pet
5. Get to a park or playground



Barriers/Impediments that Keep Residents From Walking or Running More Often:

1. Poor condition of roads, trails, and/or sidewalks
2. Too much traffic or high speeds or threatening drivers
3. Too dangerous for my kids
4. Lack of safe networked routes
5. Lack of facilities/amenities



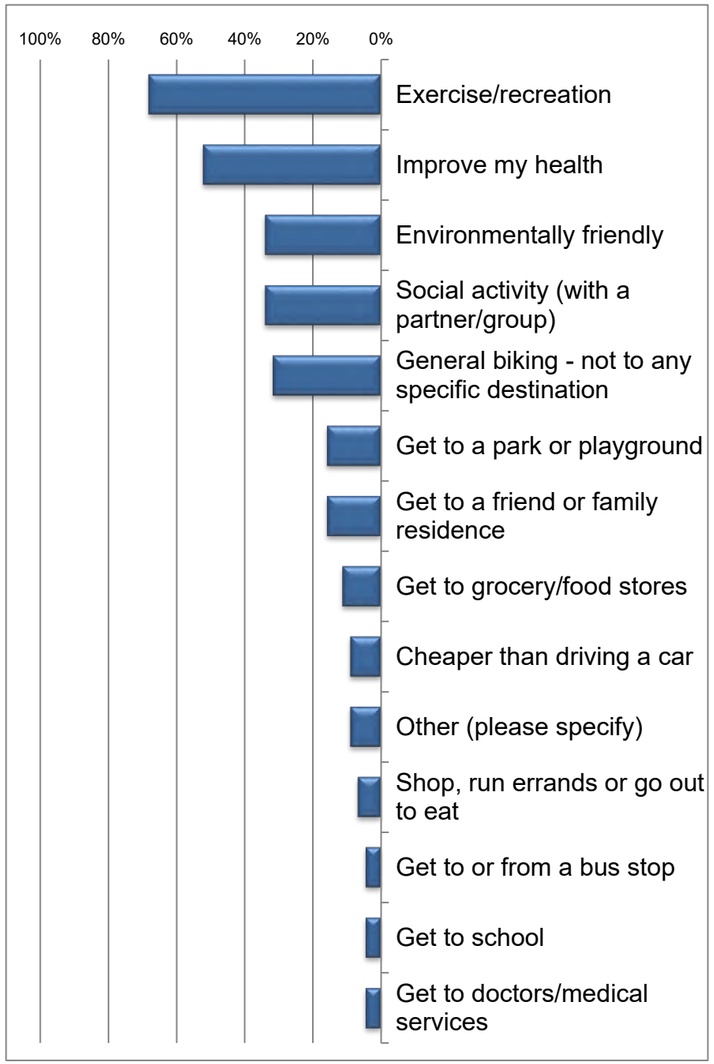
What Types of Walking/Running Facility/Amenity Improvements are Wanted:

1. Sidewalks where none exist
2. Sidewalk repairs
3. Safer Menoher Blvd. crossing points
4. Improved lighting
5. Lanes on Southmont Blvd.



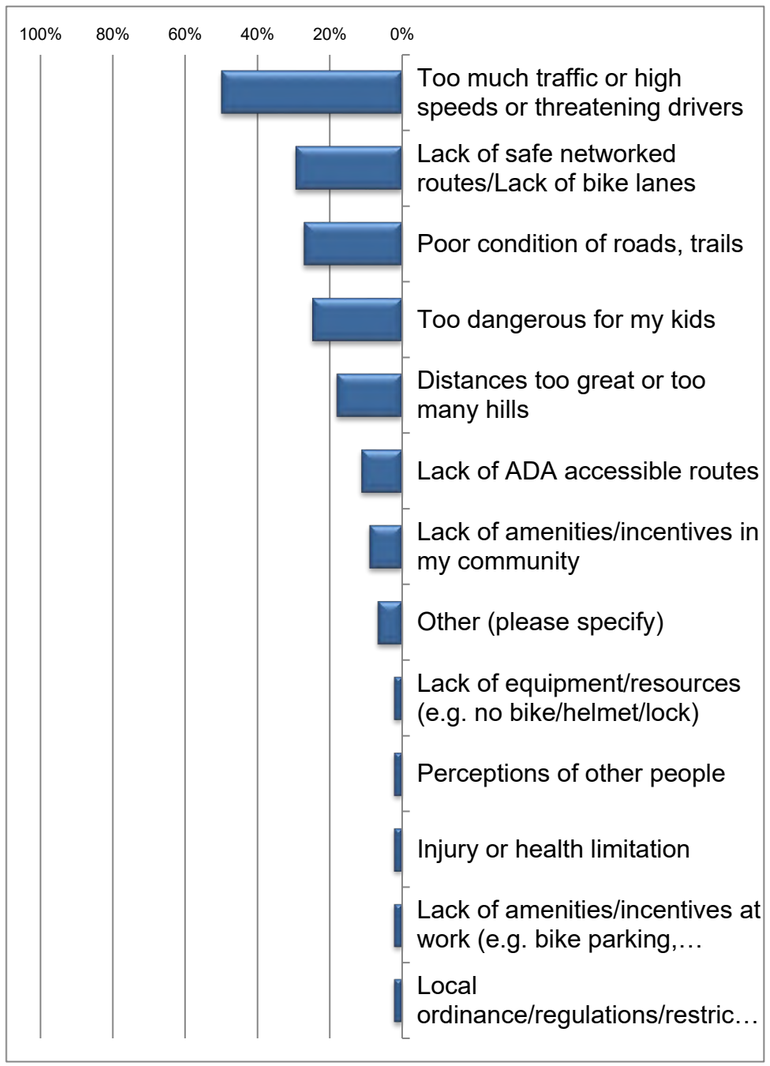
Reasons for Biking:

1. Exercise/recreation
2. Improve my health
3. Environmentally friendly
4. Social activity (with a partner/group)
5. General biking - not to any specific destination



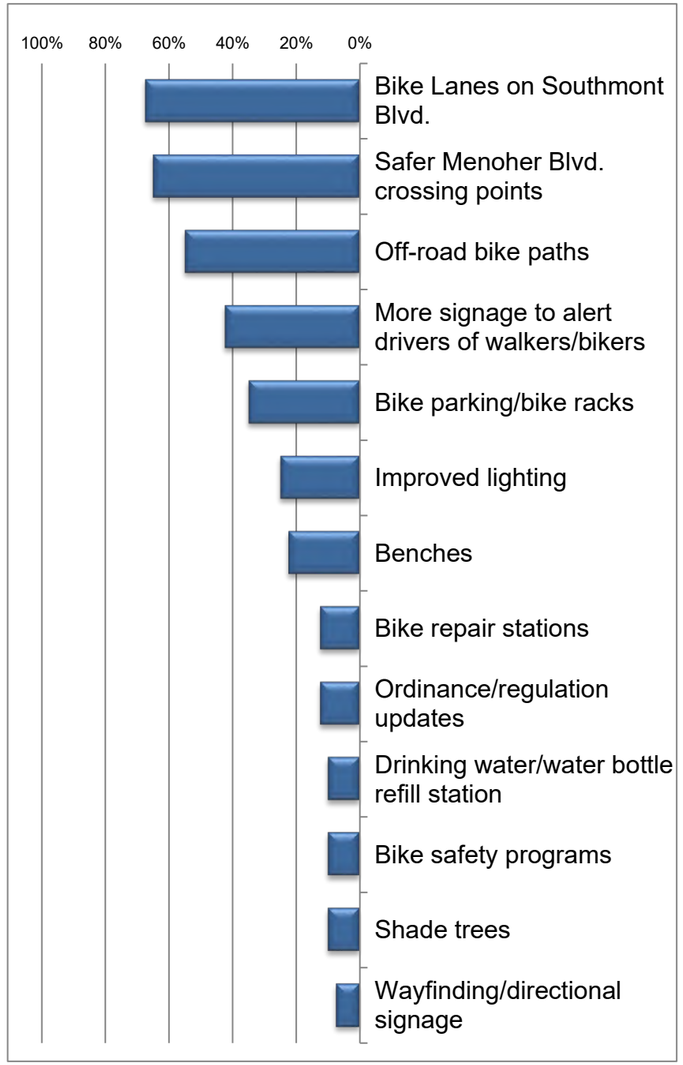
Barriers/Impediments that Keep Residents From Biking More Often:

1. Too much traffic or high speeds or threatening drivers
2. Lack of safe networked routes/Lack of bike lanes
3. Poor condition of roads, trails
4. Too dangerous for my kids
5. Lack of time
6. Poor condition of roads, trails, and/or sidewalks
7. Too much traffic or high speeds or threatening drivers
8. Too dangerous for my kids
9. Lack of safe networked routes
10. Lack of facilities/amenities



What Types of Biking Facility/Amenity Improvements are Wanted:

1. Bike Lanes on Southmont Blvd.
2. Safer Menoher Blvd. crossing points
3. Off-road bike paths
4. More signage to alert drivers of walkers/bikers
5. Bike parking/bike racks



RECOMMENDATIONS

The input provided during the planning process came from residents of all ages. This input was evaluated by the Active Transportation Steering Committee to identify Active Transportation improvements needs in Southmont. The Planning Team and the Active Transportation Steering Committee collaborated during monthly Steering Committee Meetings to identify several potential Active Transportation improvement projects. Existing conditions and trends in the Borough, other local planning efforts, known local and state funding opportunities and potential partnerships were considered to evolve the project ideas into a set of Active Transportation Recommendations. Residents, Steering Committee members and the Planning Team together helped to define 'what we want to do'; 'what we will do'; and 'how we will do it' in terms of improving active transportation in Southmont Borough.

A set of nine (9) real world Recommendations that both fit the goals of Active Transportation Planning and that resonated with the Active Transportation Steering Committee, residents and Borough officials were identified. Each Recommendation will improve walking, biking and wheeling conditions for all ages and abilities in Southmont. The Recommendations are not listed in an order of priority. Although a prioritization is not suggested by the numbering, the first four (4) Recommendations are noted as Early Actions of the Plan. The first four (4) Recommendations are categorized accordingly as a Top Borough Policy Project, a Top Community Program, a Quick Action Project, and a Top Project needing Grant Funding,

Project 1 – Sidewalk Ordinance and Repair Assistance Program – Top Borough Policy Project

Project 2 – Crosswalk Painting Program – Top Quick Action Project

Project 3 – Walking and Biking Education and Safety Program – Top Community Program

Project 4 – Establish the Southmont Connection Corridor - Top Project Needing Grant Funding

Project 5 – Street Tree Management Program

Project 6 – Menoher Boulevard Crossing to Westmont Hilltop Elementary School

Project 7 – Site Specific Improvements Recommendation

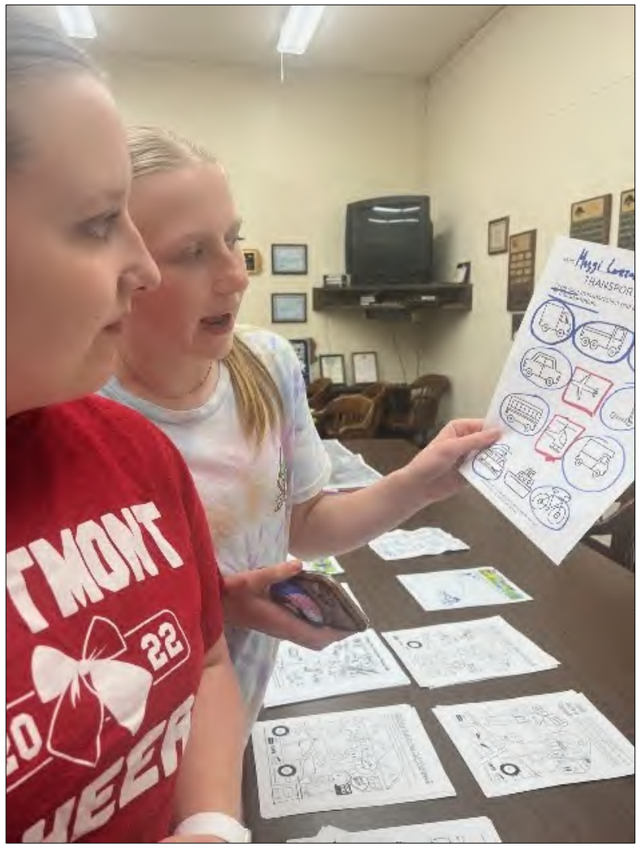
Project 8 – Continuing Action Program

Project 9 – Communication Plan

The following section further highlights and describes the Active Transportation Recommendations.











Project 1 - Sidewalk Ordinance and Repair Assistance Program - Top Borough Policy Project



Southmont Borough should consider updating their Sidewalk Ordinance to support the creation of a sidewalk repair cost sharing program that incentivizes and assists property owners to repair/replace their damaged sidewalks.

The Southmont Sidewalk Repair Assistance Program could be a financial program that helps residents repair hazardous sidewalks throughout the Borough. The Program would be designed to ensure safe, accessible sidewalks for pedestrians while alleviating some of the financial burden on property owners. Southmont can offer financial assistance to help property owners pay the repair cost. An example would be for the Borough to offer property owners grants of $1.50 per square foot to offset the cost of replacing sidewalks.

Development of the Repair Program could be supported by an updated Sidewalk Ordinance to clarify sidewalk repair responsibilities, to strengthen their municipal sidewalk inspection approach and to establish procedures for sidewalk inspections. The updated Ordinance would establish standards for sidewalks including required materials and minimum depths and widths.

Key Features - Southmont Borough should consider the following when developing their Sidewalk Repair Assistance Program:

- Criteria: The Program can prioritize applications for properties located along designated corridors and priority walking routes. The Borough could also decide to select applications on a simple first-come, first-serve basis.
- Application Process: Southmont can develop an Application form and processing procedure. Applications may require proof of property ownership, photos of the sidewalk damage, or documentation of other site-specific requirements. A basic agreement with the property owner would be required.
- Types of Repairs Covered: Assistance usually applies to common issues like cracks, upheaval, sunken sections, or tree root damage. The Program can also cover installing ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliance modifications.
- Contractor Assistance: Southmont can help streamline the repair process by recommending or providing lists of approved contractors.

Funding Sources – Southmont Borough should pursue funding from the following sources to start the Program:

- Statewide Local Share Account (LSA) funds Local Share Account - Statewide. Funding is available to design and build sidewalks that are for public use. Communities can use funding to improve existing sidewalks that are in poor conditions and are located on private property. Funding amounts range from $25,000 to 1 million. No matching funds are required. Applications are accepted annually in the fall (September 1 to November 30).
- Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission (SAP&DC) Regional greenways Mini-Grant Program - The Mini-Grant Program is a reimbursement program administered by the SAP&DC. Grant requests range from a minimum of $3,000 and cannot exceed $30,000. A 50% local match is required.
- Community Foundation of the Alleghenies (CFA) – The CFA offers grants to support various projects that enhance the quality of life in Cambria, Bedford, Indiana, and Somerset counties. Grant applications are accepted annually in the spring and fall. Award amounts range between $500 to $10,000 for individual projects. Awards in specific fields like youth, health, and environmental sustainability can range from $1,000 to $20,000. The available funding is typically tied to the funds allocated by donors for that specific area of interest.
- PennDOT and DCED Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF) – these programs cover costs for projects that enhance transportation alternatives, including sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, and public transit. Typical grants range from $100,000 – $3,000,000. A local match is required.
- DCED Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program (GTRP) - This program supports the development and improvement of greenways, trails, and recreation infrastructure, including sidewalks. Grants may cover up to $250,000 for construction, planning, or rehabilitation of pedestrian pathways. A local match is required.



Additional Resources – Southmont Borough can contact Indiana Borough, PA and Union City Borough, PA to learn about their Sidewalk Repair Assistance Programs.

Project 2 - Crosswalk Painting Program – Top Quick Action Project

Artistically Paint Existing Crosswalks Along Priority Walking and Biking Routes





The Crosswalk Painting Program is an initiative designed to improve pedestrian safety and enhance the visibility of crosswalks in key corridors in the Borough. The photos to the right show two (2) identified priority crosswalk areas - located along Southmont Boulevard and Diamond Boulevard. The Program would enhance the crosswalks and draw attention to pedestrian areas and promote safe crossings. Having eye-catching crosswalks can slow down vehicles and make it safer for people walking to cross the street. The Program is a low-cost, high-impact way to enhance pedestrian safety and community aesthetics.
The Southmont Borough Street Department is responsible for painting the crosswalks.

Key Components of the Southmont Crosswalk Painting Program:

- **Enhanced Safety and Visibility -** Crosswalk painting makes pedestrian crossings more visible to drivers.
- **Creative Designs and Community Involvement –** The Program could invite community involvement which would foster a sense of ownership and pride in pedestrian spaces. Westmont Hilltop School District student groups, local artists, or neighborhood groups may partner in designing crosswalk painting styles that reflect the Southmont's culture or values, creating a more engaging pedestrian experience. Blue and yellow colors have been suggested to reflect current Borough theming.
- **Durable and Reflective Materials** - High-quality, durable, and reflective paints or thermoplastic stencils are typically used to ensure longevity and improve visibility in all lighting conditions.
- **Community Awareness and Education** – The Program may include an educational campaign to promote pedestrian safety and highlight the painted crosswalks. Events, flyers, or public meetings can raise awareness about the importance of crosswalk safety and encourage residents to use designated crossings.

Many communities have added 'zebra striping' to crosswalks to help with visibility for vehicles instead of the typical two lines that many communities use. Other communities add color and designs to the crosswalks to add distinction and more awareness for pedestrian crossings. For instance, near a school the crosswalk can use illustrations of book spines for the zebra stripe bars or student handprints to help slow down vehicles and raise awareness of the proximity to a school. Also designs of crosswalks near a park could include images of leaves or pollinators. Below are some design examples:









Project 3 – Walking and Biking Education and Safety Program – Top Community Program

Host biking and walking events and activities and education and safety trainings, events and activities aimed at improving the safety for walkers, bikers, wheelers and riders.

Southmont's Walking and Biking Education and Safety Program is conceived to educate Borough residents, especially school aged children, about safe walking and biking practices and to promote safer and more active transportation options.

The following highlights suggested activities and events that Southmont can include in their Walking and Biking Education and Safety Program:

- **Safety Training and Skills Development**:
  - **Walking Safety Skills**: Teaching students safe walking techniques, including looking both ways, using crosswalks, and understanding pedestrian signals.
  - **Biking Safety Skills**: Educating participants on essential biking skills, such as signaling, checking blind spots, and obeying traffic signs and signals.
  - **Helmet and Gear Use**: Emphasizing the importance of helmets and other safety gear. Programs often include helmet giveaways or demonstrations.
  - **Safe Driver Course:** The curriculum is designed to educate drivers about how and why bicyclists use the road and maneuver in certain ways.

- **Bicycle Handling Courses and Hands-on Practice**:
  - **Biking Rodeos and Skill Courses**: participants can practice biking in a controlled environment. These courses teach balance, braking, turning, and navigating simulated traffic situations in conjunction with the Westmont Hilltop Elementary School.
  - **Walking Tours for Pedestrian Skills**: Organizing guided walking tours allows participants to practice real-world pedestrian skills with supervision.

- **Classroom and Community Education**:
  - **Interactive Classroom Lessons**: Lessons cover topics like traffic laws, road signs, and hazard awareness, often using engaging materials like videos, quizzes, and interactive games.
  - **Parent and Caregiver Involvement**: Programs often include resources or sessions for parents, teaching them about pedestrian and cycling safety for kids so they can reinforce good habits at home.

- **Public Awareness and Community Engagement**:
  - **Awareness Campaigns**: These programs frequently include community campaigns, such as social media, posters, and local media, emphasizing pedestrian and cyclist safety messages like "Share the Road" and "Be Seen."
  - **Walk and Bike to School Days**: Hosting events like Walk or Bike to School Day raises awareness and encourages participation, often with activities, safety checks, and incentives for participants.

- **Partnerships with Schools, Law Enforcement, and Community Organizations**:
  - **Law Enforcement Participation**: Police officers can assist with reinforcing the importance of following laws for walkers, cyclists, and drivers.
  - **Local Business and Nonprofit Support**: Local bike shops, nonprofits, or advocacy groups can provide equipment, volunteers and resources.

How to Start the Program -
Southmont Borough can collaborate with the Westmont Hilltop School District, Conemaugh Health System, West Hills Regional Police, the PA WalkWorks Program, Cambria County Planning Commission (CCPC), Cambria County Conservation and Recreation Authority (CCCRA) Stackhouse Park and other local shareholders to obtain education resources and to complete events that highlight the benefits of safe and accessible walking, biking, transit and all forms of active mobility. Collaborating with local healthcare providers is also a great way to promote the benefits of walking and biking. The Borough should also consider the League of American Bicyclists' and their program on becoming a certified League Cycling Instructor. It would be great for a Southmont representative to become a local safety educator. The Borough can also review the resources offered through BikePgh to become more educated on e-bikes.



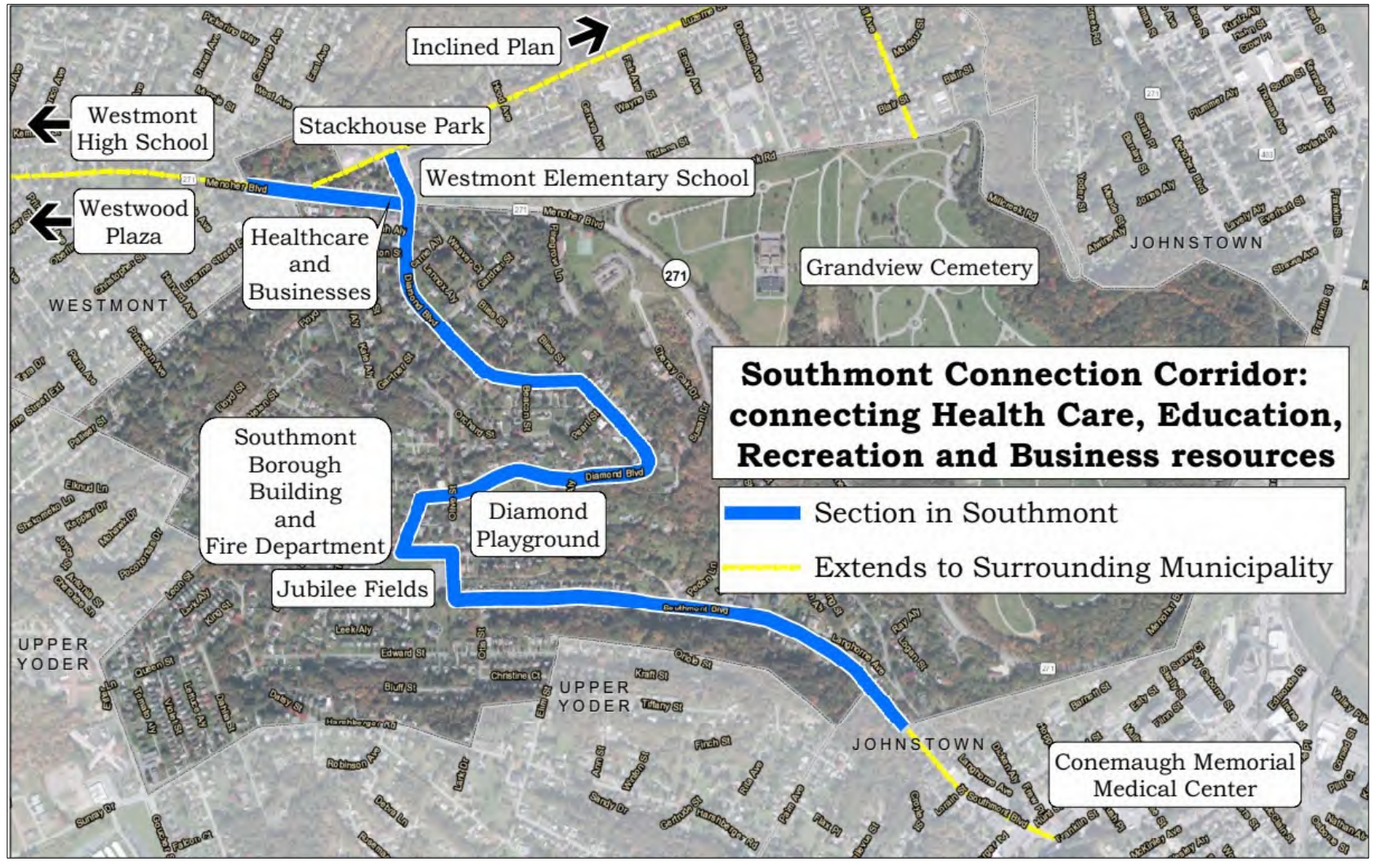
Project 4 – Establish the Southmont Connection Corridor – Top Project Needing Grant Funding

Designate Southmont Boulevard, Diamond Boulevard and Portions of State Street and Menoher Boulevard as the 'Southmont Connection Corridor'.

Members of the Steering Committee referred to Southmont Borough as the 'keystone' community in the West Hills Region. The Committee noted the Borough serves as a natural 'active transportation spine' in the West Hills Region by connecting the Borough and other West Hills residents with health care, education, recreation and business resources.

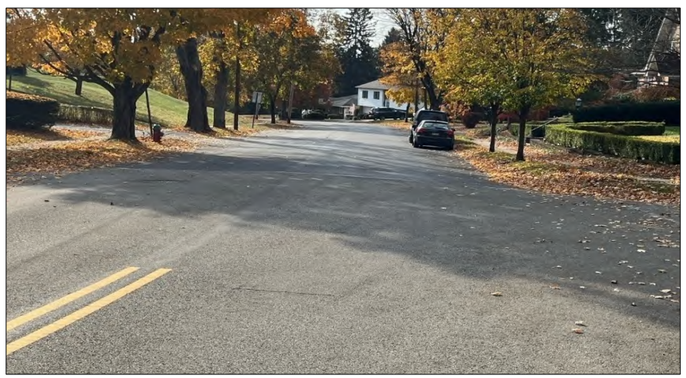
Designating the Southmont Connection Corridor further establishes Southmont Borough as a connection community. The proposed Connection Corridor Route is shown on the map to the right. Sections of the Route are also shown in the photos below. As shown on the map, most of the route follows Southmont Boulevard and Diamond Boulevard between Stackhouse Park and the Westmont Hilltop Elementary School and the Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center. Steering Committee member Richard Burkert noted that the proposed Connection Corridor aligns well with the historic streetcar route that served the Southmont area.

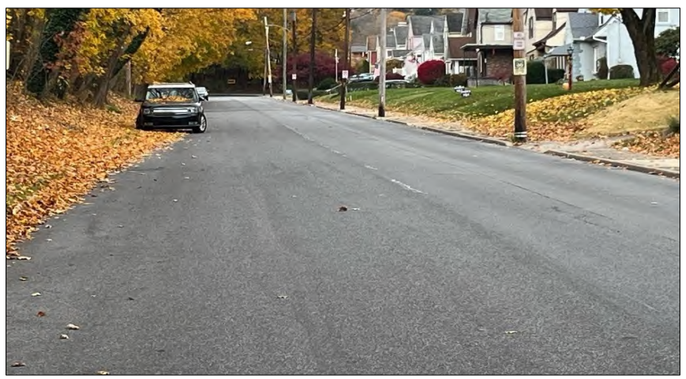
The map also shows other connections made along the Route. These include the Southmont Borough Building and Fire Department, Jubilee Field and adjacent play courts, Diamond Playground and local healthcare offices and commercial businesses. Future connections can also be made to the Westwood Plaza, Westmont Hilltop Jr./Sr High School, Grandview Cemetery and the Inclined Plane.



Action Items:

Designating this Corridor can involve adding green pavement markings, installing identifying signage, placing "Share the Road" signs along the route, and promoting the Corridor through the Borough's website and social media platforms. Additionally recommended improvements include installing buffered or travel lane adjacent Bike Lanes, replacing existing stormwater grates with bicycle-safe grates, installing 'Welcome to Southmont' Gateway signage, planting more street trees, and completing sidewalk and crosswalk enhancements throughout the Corridor. Improving street lighting is also essential. This can be achieved by adding streetlights in poorly lit areas, upgrading existing lighting with higher wattage fixtures or LEDs, and/or replacing the top lighting elements and extension arms on current light posts along the Corridor.







Project 5 – Street Tree Management Program

Actively manage street trees and the impacts street trees have on sidewalks.

Trees are one of the Borough's greatest assets though over time some tree's roots can uplift or damage sidewalks in the Borough. Borough residents often mentioned street trees impacting the sidewalks and raising them up or making them difficult to navigate. The Southmont Street Tree Management Program helps to manage the impacts of street trees on sidewalks. The Program's focus is on safe pedestrian pathways while preserving the tree canopy in the Borough.

The Southmont Street Tree Management Program includes the following four (4) initiatives.

1. **Community and Property Owner Education:** Educating property owners on the importance of tree preservation and the best practices for maintaining sidewalks helps everyone. The Borough can incorporate street tree management information on their website and in their newsletters. The Borough can also offer guides or workshops on tree-friendly sidewalk management.

2. **Tree Species Selection/Location Guide**: The following list of trees are known to work well for urban streets. Selecting from this list of trees when directly planting new trees in the Borough will help reduce conflicts. Other compatible trees can be considered.

   Small Trees – choose when planting trees near sidewalks and overhead wires:
   - Amelanchier laevis – Serviceberry
   - Maackia amurensis – Amur Maackia
   - Malus 'Harvest Gold' – Harvest Gold Crabapple
   - Prunus sargentii 'Columnaris' – Columnar Sargent Cherry
   - Sorbus x hybrida – Oak-leaf Mountain Ash
   - Syringa reticulata 'Ivory Silk' – Ivory Silk Japanese Tree Lilac

   Medium Trees – choose when planting trees near sidewalks without overhead wires:
   - Aesculus x 'Autumn Splendor' – Autumn Splendor Horsechestnut
   - Celtis occidentalis – Common Hackberry
   - Cladrastis kentuckea – American Yellowwood – sensitive to salt
   - Ulmus americana 'Valley Forge' – Valley Forge American Elm

   Large Trees – choose when planting trees not near sidewalks or overhead wires:
   - Acer var – Maple – use sparingly - can lift sidewalks
   - Gledistia 'Shademaster' – Shademaster Honeylocust
   - Gledistia 'Skyline' – Skyline Honeylocust
   - Gymnocladus dioica – Kentucky coffeetree (male variety)
   - Liriodendron tulipifera – Tulip Tree - sparingly
   - Platanus acerifolia 'Exclamation' – Exclamation London Planetree
   - Quercus bicolor – Swamp White Oak (acorns may be an issue)
   - Quercus palustris – Pin Oak (acorns may be an issue) - individually
   - Quercus rubra – Red Oak (acorns may be an issue) - individually
   - Tilia americana – American Linden

3. **Tree and Sidewalk Repair Options**: The Program promotes solutions that allow trees and sidewalks to coexist. Techniques might include root pruning, sidewalk grinding, or installing flexible paving materials that minimize damage to both roots and sidewalk surfaces. Other Tree-Friendly Sidewalk Solutions include:
   - Raised Sidewalks or Ramps: Homeowner can add concrete patches to help the transitions on uplifted sidewalks.
   - Tree Planting Space and Root Barriers: Ensuring tree planting spaces are a minimum of 3'x10' and in some areas using root barriers can reduce sidewalk cracking by guiding roots downward or away from the sidewalk.
   - Sidewalk Grinding: For minor uplifts, sidewalk grinding can level out slight elevation changes caused by roots, creating a smoother surface without major repairs.
   - Install Small Ramps or Bridges Over Roots: If roots are already close to the surface, raised sidewalks or ramps over the roots can avoid the need for root cutting and maintain sidewalk accessibility.
   - Structural Soil can be used for planting in the Tree Planting Space providing more space for tree roots so they are less likely to lift the sidewalks.

4. **Conduct a Street Tree Inventory:** There are grant opportunities through the DCNR Community and Watershed Forestry Grant program to fund a comprehensive Tree Inventory in the Borough. The inventory will locate, identify and evaluate each tree in the Borough. After gathering this information, an action strategy can be made and implemented for how to care for each of the trees and if replacements are needed in areas without trees.

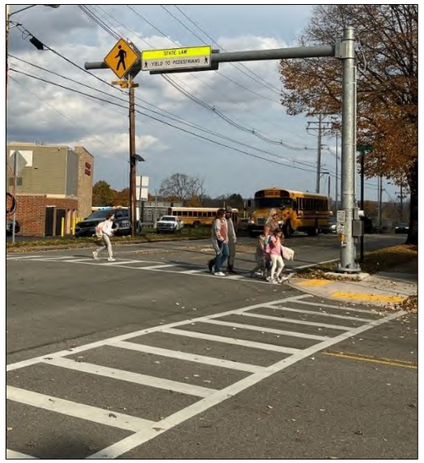




Project 6 - Menoher Boulevard Crossing to Westmont Hilltop Elementary School

Use the input received during completion of this Active Transportation Plan to advocate for additional safety upgrades to the Menoher Boulevard crossing to the Westmont Hilltop Elementary School.

Southmont Borough residents and members of the Steering Committee agree that the Menoher Boulevard crossing to the Westmont Hilltop Elementary School is a top safety issue in the Borough. Menoher Boulevard is State Route 271. Southmont Borough does not have control over the Menoher Boulevard crossing since it is a State Route. PennDOT is responsible for making safety improvements, The photos below show the crossing area and the overhead signalizing facilities currently in place at the intersection. The facebook post below, made by the West Hills Regional Police Department, summarizes the conditions at the crossing. The intersection warrants a comprehensive safety review that takes into account pedestrian facilities, turning lanes and alignment, speed reduction measures, and overall traffic management.







West Hills Regional Police Department
August 14, 2023 ·

Safety Information! As some of you may have noticed, and for those that did not... With the recent redo of Menoher Blvd, PennDOT has installed an overhead LED flashing Pedestrian Crossing Signal at the intersection of Menoher Blvd and Diamond Blvd. This is the main crossing to get across to the Westmont Hilltop Elementary School. And with the start of the upcoming school year, as pedestrians, you should step up to either corner, push the button and the lights will begin to flash for aprrox 20-25 seconds. By pushing the button, it does not mean driver's must come to a stop, but drivers must yield the right-of-way to anyone within the crosswalks. Driver's should be prepared to stop if need be. Pedestrians should use good judgement when first stepping up to the corner and activating the signal and still look both ways before crossing - entering the roadway. Morning and afternoon drivers should be more aware of this change and the possibility that adults or children may be crossing. Please be safe.

The number of times residents mentioned the Menoher Boulevard crossing to the Westmont Hilltop Elementary School during the community outreach process is noteworthy. Input from the Community Survey and from the community engagement event highlighted residents continued concern about safety conditions at the Menoher crossing to/from the Westmont Hilltop Elementary School.

- Residents want a better walking, running and biking connection to the Westmont Hilltop Elementary School.
- Residents want more effective Facility and Amenity Improvements at the crossing to create Safer walking and biking conditions.
- Residents need better awareness to help pedestrians and bicyclists, in particular school aged children, cross Menoher Boulevard.

Members of the Steering Committee repeatedly said that the recently installed crossing signalization facilities are not effectively providing a safe crossing. Steering Committee member, Miller Lazzari, a 6th grade student at the Westmont Hilltop Elementary School, provided a firsthand accounting of the difficult conditions he faces as he walks to and from the School. He often told us during Steering Committee meetings that cars do not stop when the overhead flashing lights are activated. He also told us about the number of times that both he, and the school crossing guard, were almost struck by cars while they were in the crosswalk. Miller also discussed the difficulty he has making the crossing during non-school hours. In fact, during a committee meeting, Miller drew us a depiction showing a time during the summer when a car did not stop while he was in the crosswalk.

Action Items:

- Southmont Borough, on behalf of their residents, will reach out to PennDOT, Cambria County Planning Commission, County elected officials and to their State representative to share the concerns brought to the Plan by residents and elementary school families.
- The Borough should meet with PennDOT through their PennDOT CONNECTS/LTAP Assistance programs to discuss the input received. It is Southmont Borough's goal to work with PennDOT, County officials, the Westmont Hilltop School District, local law enforcement and state representatives to identify a better solution for this community safety concern. Additionally, the Borough will work with the Cambria County Planning Commission to request that PennDOT conduct a road safety audit, evaluate speed limits, and assess the length of the school zone serving Westmont Hilltop Elementary School as part of this process.
- Talk with Cambra County Commissioners, the State Senator and Representative, and other elected officials to get action, if needed.

Project 7 - Site Specific Improvements Recommendation

Southmont Borough should consider use the information and guidance learned through this Active Transportation Plan to continually make site specific improvements to remove barriers and impediments for safe walking, biking and wheeling.

Field investigations conducted during the planning process identified several site-specific barriers including sidewalks sections lacking transitional curb ramps, sidewalk sections needing repair, areas needing crosswalks and pathways and other related improvements. An inventory of improvements can be updated through field investigations conducted as part of on-going Street Department maintenance activities.

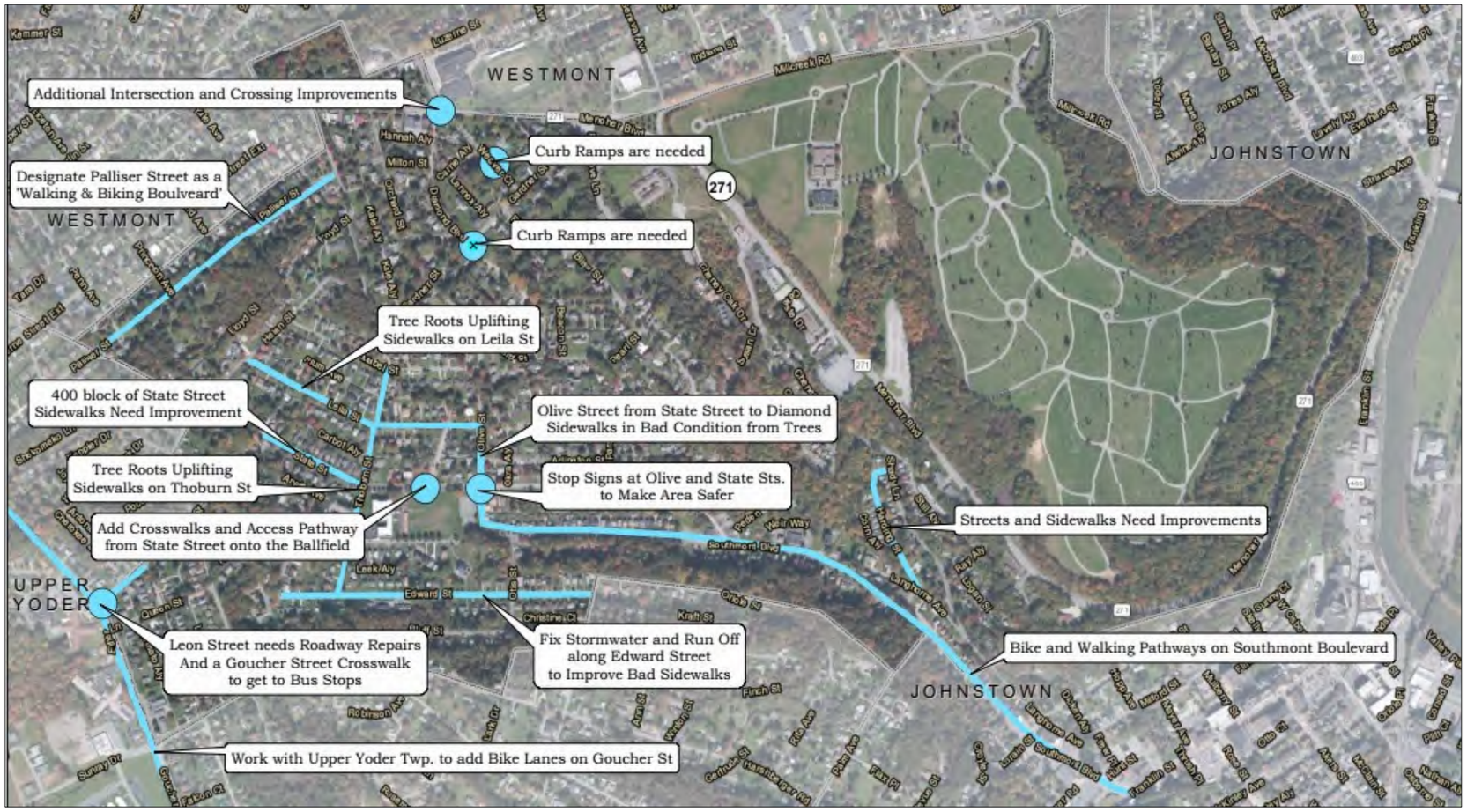
A key improvement involves designating Palliser St. as a 'Walking & Biking Boulevard' to prioritize pedestrian and bicycle travel. Proposed enhancements may include signage for walking and biking, pavement markings, stop signs, physical traffic calming measures, and visibility improvements at cross streets.

The images to the right show areas along Weaver Ct. and Diamond Blvd. where transitioning curb ramps are needed. The map below shows other areas of improvement. Southmont should prioritize improvements along the Southmont Connection Corridor, State St. and Palliser St.









Project 8 - Continuing Action Program

Southmont Borough should consider facilitating on-going Active Transportation data gathering and community actions

It was clear from the Community Engagement Event that the residents of Southmont LOVE living here. Community residents can be great participants in assisting the Borough to assess existing conditions, identify needed improvements and initiate events.

Complete Assessments – Southmont Borough residents expressed an interest in completing Walkability and Bikeability assessments in their own respective neighborhoods. Parents also commented they could complete assessments with their children during the summary months. Below is an example of an assessment form for sidewalks. Additional types of form can be found using this link: https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/aarp-walk-audit-worksheets-english

AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit Worksheet

Sidewalks

Community Name: _____

Location/Street Name(s): _____

Audit date: _____ **Start time:** _____ **AM | PM** **End time:** _____ **AM | PM**

If more than one lane: Does the roadway have ☐ a median and/or ☐ a pedestrian island?

The street has:

☐ no sidewalk
☐ no sidewalk but needs one
☐ no sidewalk but needs two
☐ partial sidewalks
☐ a sidewalk on one side of the street
☐ sidewalks on both sides of the street

YES | NO | OTHER **Skip any statements that don't apply**

THE SIDEWALK:

☐ ☐ ☐ 1. Is separated from the street by a barrier or buffer (a curb, grass, landscaping)
☐ ☐ ☐ 2. Is surfaced with a material that is smooth and consistent (concrete or asphalt rather than bricks)
☐ ☐ ☐ 3. Is in good condition, without cracks or raised blocks
☐ ☐ ☐ 4. Is free of obstacles (hydrants, utility poles, overgrown landscaping, trash receptacles)
☐ ☐ ☐ 5. Is free of interruptions from driveways (such as to/from homes, parking lots, etc.)
☐ ☐ ☐ 6. Is continuous (no segments are missing) and complete (it doesn't randomly end)
☐ ☐ ☐ 7. Is wide enough (at least 5 feet) for two people to walk side by side or pass one another
☐ ☐ ☐ 8. Has tactile ground surface indicators so pedestrians with vision impairment will know when the path is ending
☐ ☐ ☐ 9. Has a curb cut ramp (for use by wheelchairs, baby strollers, etc.) wherever the sidewalk is interrupted by a street

Walkability of the area, based on the findings above:

☐ **Great** ☐ **Acceptable** ☐ **Mixed** ☐ **Poor**

Form a Southmont Walking Club - Residents also expressed enthusiasm for forming a Southmont Borough Walking Club and for creating a competition or event that would incentivize residents to walk more in the Borough. The PA WalkWorks program has resources and ideas for how to initiate a weekly walking group or a challenge. The Borough can also follow examples like the Indiana County Decathlon program to develop a series of walking events. The following steps can also be used to help start a walking club:

Step 1: IDENTIFY A LOCAL PARTNER
Talk with community-based organizations to see if they would be interested in joining forces to help you start a walking group.

Step 2: "CALLING ALL WALKERS"
Promote your group to family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors. Post fliers at the Borough Building, Clark's corner store, health provider offices, and ask the Westmont Hilltop School PTO for distribution assistance. Create a group Facebook page to post and share events.

Step 3: KICK IT OFF
A kick-off meeting is a great way to get the group together so everyone can meet. At the kick-off, decide when and where the group meets, how many days a week and how long they walk.

Step 4: SET GOALS
Encourage members to set goals for themselves and for the team. Maybe suggest increasing the amount of time you walk each week or changing routes to include more difficult terrain.

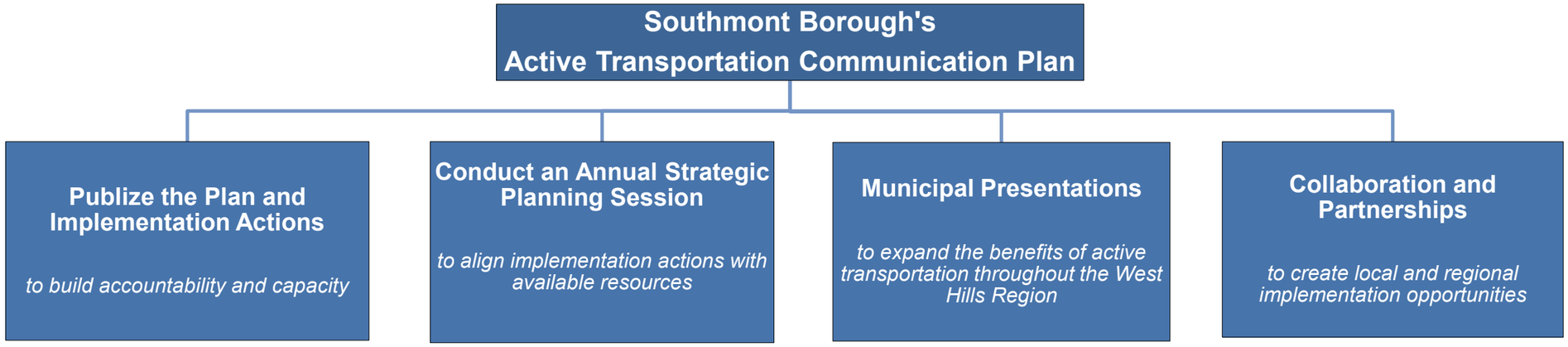
Step 5: START WALKING
Develop an approach for communicating with team members - by phone, text, e-mail, or social media.

Step 6: CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESS!
When your team meets its goals, celebrate by doing something special. And be sure to thank your team members for participating and encourage them to bring a friend next time.

Forming a Walking Club or Program and completing Walkability/Bikeability assessments can provide the Borough with details on areas that need enhancements like new paint on a crosswalk, needed curb cuts or a new sidewalk that could be added or slower roadways to accommodate bikes. These details can be provided by interested residents who assess areas then provide the reports to the Borough for consideration. These are places to begin.

Project 9 - Communication Plan

Southmont Borough should consider Implementing a Communication Plan to Build Momentum for Plan Implementation.



Once the Southmont Borough Active Transportation Plan is adopted, the Borough will build upon the successful adoption of the Plan. Implementing these steps builds momentum for Plan implementation to ensure compatibility with existing and proposed development plans within the Borough and with neighboring municipalities.

1. **Publicize the Plan and Implementation Actions**
   Plan implementation updates can be shared at Borough Council meetings and on the Borough's website and social media pages. Plan implementation successes publicized will highlight the Borough's progress toward improving walking and biking conditions in the Borough. A description of implementation actions published on the Borough's website and social media pages will keep the public informed of the progress. This approach makes Southmont Borough accountable to implement the Plan and ensures the Borough is realistic about its capacity to implement the Plan.

2. **Conduct an Annual Strategic Planning Session**
   Conducting an annual strategic planning session in conjunction with the Borough's budget development process will help decide on the actions the Borough wishes to accomplish in the following year. The Borough will balance what they want to accomplish with what they can accomplish. This prevents over-commitment of capacity and resources in any given year. This logical implementation approach helps to organize efforts, helps to measure outcomes year by year, and helps to create a manageable implementation 'to-do' list. It allows the Borough to manage implementation efforts based on available resources, capacity, and opportunities.

3. **Municipal Presentations**
   An Early Action Item of the Plan is to present the Plan at the municipal level to gain implementation support. Southmont Borough is the "Keystone" community in the West Hills Region. The West Hills Region includes Westmont Borough, Lower Yoder Township, Upper Yoder Township and Brownstown Borough. Southmont is also bordered by City of Johnstown. It is important that Southmont sets an example of how a community can improve its walking and biking conditions. Scheduled meetings with the neighboring communities allows for conversations to discuss Plan implementation that needs to be coordinated. It is also important for Southmont to collaborate with its neighboring communities to expand the benefits of active transportation throughout the West Hills Region.

4. **Collaboration and Partnerships**
   Implementing the recommendations presented in the Plan and successfully improving walking and biking conditions will require multiple partners and layers of implementation responsibilities. Southmont Borough cannot complete every project or lead every action item. Cooperation is needed from the local shareholders and residents.

   - **Local Partnerships**: establish partnerships with the Westmont Hilltop School District, Stackhouse Park, Community Foundation for the Alleghenies (CFA), Commonwealth Technical Institute (CTI) at the Hiram G. Andrews Center, Conemaugh Hospital and other local organizations to review Plan recommendations and to discuss ways each can support plan implementation.
   - **County Cooperation**: meet with the Cambria County Planning Commission to identify ways the Planning Commission can support the Borough's implementation efforts.
   - **Community Engagement**: involve residents and community leaders in implementation planning and decision-making to ensure local ownership of the process.

FUNDING AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The recommendations included in this Plan are oriented towards developing and maintaining safe, accessible streets, sidewalks and other transportation facilities that support all modes of transportation, all potential users including vulnerable and underserved populations, low-income residents, people of color, children, persons with disabilities and older adults. The recommendations are also oriented towards improving Southmont's livability and attractiveness for residents of all ages and abilities, families, visitors, and business owners. Developing this Active Transportation Plan shows Southmont's commitment to improve the health and quality of life of their residents and their commitment to facilitate ongoing and proposed walking and biking enhancement projects within the Borough and surrounding communities.

Municipal Support

Council persons and other representatives from Southmont were a critical part of this active transportation planning process. Successfully implementing active transportation improvements involves many different participants and steps and relies on obtaining public, private and local funding and various forms of support. In some cases, the Borough may need to execute maintenance agreements or need to provide documentation of their acknowledgement and support of the projects completed by non-Borough entities and agencies. Continuing support by Borough Council, organizations and residents will be necessary for implementation efforts to be successful. It is strongly advised that Southmont Borough also be prepared to support neighboring municipalities and partner organizations' implementation efforts by providing Letters of Support for grant applications, committing to have regular discussions regarding active transportation efforts, and by jointly advocating for transportation improvement projects within the West Hills Region.

Other Implementation Partners

Southmont Borough's elected officials and staff will not be able to implement the priorities alone. Many local partners and community organizations, local businesses and residents will need to take ownership of projects and will need to carry the momentum forward towards implementation. In addition, state and county agencies, including the Cambria County Planning Commission (CCPC); nearby municipalities; PennDOT; the Cambria County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO), and others must also have a significant role in implementing the priorities. In addition, favorable grant funding consideration from the DCED; DCNR; USDA/Rural Development; HUD; Pennsylvania Downtown Center, Private Foundations; PennDOT; Regional Tourism Promotion entities, and others will be vital to successful implementation. Penn State Extension has additional training resources to improve the capacity of local leaders to acquire grants, hone leadership skills, engage and enhance community resources, and otherwise grow volunteers' and staff capabilities.

The Plan Development Team Consultants who prepared this Active Transportation Plan and members of the Project Steering Committee will work with Southmont Borough to support, facilitate and coordinate implementation efforts.

Local Match Sources

Common among many funding sources is the requirement of providing a local cash or in-kind service match. Ultimately a local source of funding or contribution of services should be documented prior to submitting grant applications. The responsibility for providing local match funding most often falls to Southmont Borough, if other sources are not readily available. Local organizations and groups must be prepared to contribute financially and/or with services to cover match requirements. The creativity of Borough leaders and their local partners will be needed to identify, secure, and document sources of local match funding. Each grant source may have different match requirements and allowances. Southmont leaders will carefully interpret requirements and, when appropriate, coordinate multiple grant applications and document matching funds to take advantage of opportunities where one grant can be matched with the award of another. As noted, in-kind services can also be used as part of the matching funds. Southmont Borough and others capable of providing this level of support must be aware that documentation and tracking of the services provided will need to be kept current as the project progresses to claim in-kind services as match. Appropriate documentation is typically submitted to the granting agency for their approval. As suggested earlier, Southmont Borough leaders can call upon the Planning Development Team Consultants, the Cambria County Planning Commission and other members of the Project Action team to help support, facilitate and coordinate project funding efforts.

Implementation Summary

The following section summarizes the Recommendations and their implementation timeframes, suggested costs, partnerships and applicable funding sources. Implementation of the recommendations will be an ongoing process. The Plan provides flexibility, meaning that the Plan does give a level of guidance and direction on how to move forward, but in most cases, numerous task specific requirements or directives are not provided. This allows those involved with implementation to maintain a level of control over the implementation process. Some projects will naturally take longer to get started, while others have already begun to be implemented. As an example, a council member has begun preparations for a grant application to conduct street tree inventory/assessments.

Project Funding - Potential funding options for each recommendation are provided. Options generally include direct grant funding from State and Federal sources, foundations, direct municipal funding including in-kind services, and local donors providing financial contributions and volunteer support. More in-depth projects may need to be funded in based on funding available. Due to ever changing grant funding requirements, availability of funding and the variety of funding levels, it is difficult to predict with certainty or to describe an exact funding path for each project. Southmont Borough, or other to-be identified project sponsors, must relentlessly seek funding from multiple sources/options to creatively combine and match multiple types of funding awards with multiple priorities.

State Funding Sources- The following summarizes state-level funding sources applicable to the recommendations included in this Plan.

Criteria	DCNR – C2P2	DCNR - PRT	DCED CFA - GTRP	PennDOT – TA-Set Aside	PennDOT – MTF	CFA– MTF
Grant Award Amounts	varies	varies	Up to $250,000	$50,000 – $1,000,000	$100,000 – $3,000,000	$100,000 – $3,000,000
Funding Level	single source	supplemental	supplemental	supplemental	single source	single source
Local Match Requirement	50%	20%	15%	Pre-Construction Activities	30%	30% (may be waived)
Typical Submission Cycle	Annually - April	Annually - April	Annually - May	2-yr cycle	Annually - Fall	Annually - Spring

PennDOT - Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
DCNR - Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
DCED - Department of Community and Economic Development

CFA - Commonwealth Financing Agency
C2P2 - DCNR's Community Conservation Partnerships Program
PRT – DCNR's Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program

TA-Set Aside – PennDOT's Transportation Alternatives Program / Safe Routes to Schools
GTRP – CFA's Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program
MTF – Multimodal Transportation Fund

The PennDOT – TA Set Aside program includes funding for Safe Routes to School projects. State funding sources also include Statewide Local Share Account (LSA) funds: DCED - Local Share Account - Statewide. Funding in this program is available to support projects in the public interest.

- Federal Funding - A summary of various US Department of Transportation funding programs for Pedestrian and Bicycle safety and infrastructure projects: Transit Highway and Safety funding opportunities – Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program. is provided in the Appendix.

- Foundations – The Community Foundation of the Alleghenies (CFA) and other several smaller funding sources like the AARP Livable Communities Challenge (up to $25,000 for intergenerational projects to be accomplished in a given year, between May and November), and the AmericaWalks Community Vision Grants, (up to $2,000), and similar levels of funds are available on occasion from the American Heart Association. The Community Foundation for the Alleghenies provides funding to worthy community initiatives.

Timeframes - Implementation timeframes are noted in the following manner in the summary matrices. Implementation timeframes are difficult to categorize and may change over time.

- Short-term: 1 - 2 years - these action items are critical as small "wins" to build momentum, establish culture, and provide successes that medium and long-term priorities can reference and build on. These projects can be considered "low hanging fruit" that have either already begun or will soon begin.
- Mid-term: are achievable within 3-5 years and typically require higher funding levels to complete.
- Long-term - These typically require more than 5 years to be completed and tend to require multiple partnerships and grant sources.

Project Costs - Costs to implement a priority are illustrated as an order of magnitude using the $ symbol in the summary matrices.

Partners – The summary also highlights some of the local partners and community organizations that should be called upon to support implementation efforts.

Project 1 – Sidewalk Ordinance and Repair Assistance Program – Top Borough Policy Project

Action Items	Implementation	Costs	Partners with Borough	Funding Source
Update ordinance about sidewalk replacement ◦ Write standards for sidewalk depth/width ◦ Inspect for consistency in all replacements	Short Term	$	• Southern Alleghenies Plan and municipalities involved • Residents	• None required
Initiate a Sidewalk Replacement Program	Mid Term	$$	• Residents • Southern Alleghenies Plan and municipalities involved • Indiana Borough and Union City Borough (for additional information)	• LSA Funds • SAP&DC Regional Greenways Mini-Grant • Community Foundation for the Alleghenies • DCED/MTF Grant • PennDOT/MTF • GTRP • Local donations

Project 2 – Crosswalk Painting Program – Top Quick Action Project

Install artistically designed crosswalks along priority corridors	Short Term	$	• PennDOT • Community Groups/Leaders • School District Art Teachers • School District Student Groups • Local Artists • Vision 2025	• DCED – Appalachian Regional Commission • PennDOT – TA Set-Aside • PEC - Mini Grants

Project 3 – Walking and Biking Education and Safety Program – Top Community Program

Action Items	Implementation	Costs	Partners with Borough	Funding Source
Safety Training and Skills Development	Short/Mid Term/ ongoing	$	• Local School District • Local Police • CCCRA • PennDOT • Cambria County Planning Commission	• PennDOT/DCED (CFA) – Multimodal Transportation Fund • PennDOT – TA Set-Aside • PEC • Community Foundation for the Alleghenies
Bicycle Handling Courses and Hands-on Practice	Short Term/ ongoing	$	• Local School District • Local Police • CCCRA • Community Organizations • PennDOT • Cambria County Planning Commission	• PennDOT/DCED (CFA) – Multimodal Transportation Fund • PennDOT – TA Set-Aside • PEC • Community Foundation for the Alleghenies
Classroom and Community Education	Short Term/ ongoing	$	• Local School District • Local Police • PennDOT • CCCRA	• PennDOT/DCED (CFA) – Multimodal Transportation Fund • PennDOT – TA Set-Aside • PEC • Community Foundation for the Alleghenies
Institute a public awareness campaign and community engagement demonstrating the benefits of bicycling and walking. Collaborate with Neighboring municipalities and healthcare providers/Hospital. This can include educational materials, short videos or radio spots.	Mid Term/Long Term	$$	• Local Hospital • Healthcare Providers • Insurance Companies • Cambria County Visitors Bureau • Local municipalities in the West Hills • Regional Trails and parks organizations (CCCRA) • DCNR • League of American Bicyclists • Sheriff's office	• PennDOT/DCED (CFA) – Multimodal Transportation Fund • PennDOT – TA Set-Aside • DCED – GTRP • PEC • Community Foundation for the Alleghenies

			• Fire company • PennDOT • AARP • School District • United Way • AAA • Pennsylvania Downtown Center • Local TV/Radio • Social Media Networks	
Partnerships with Schools, Law Enforcement, and Community Organizations - Seek training for law enforcement officials in bicycle and pedestrian education and regulations (especially for vehicles whose speeds increase at curves in the road).	Mid Term/Long Term	$$	• PennDOT • Police/Fire Department • Local Businesses • Local Non-Profits • CCCRA • Community Organizations	• PennDOT/DCED (CFA) – Multimodal Transportation Fund • PennDOT – TA Set-Aside • DCED – GTRP • PEC • Community Foundation for the Alleghenies
Identify and support residents to become League Certified Bicycle Instructors	Short Term/Mid Term	$	• PennDOT • League of American Bicyclists • CCCRA • School District	• PennDOT/DCED (CFA) – Multimodal Transportation Fund • League of American Bicyclists • PEC

Project 4 – Establish the Southmont Connection Corridor

Action Items	Implementation	Costs	Partners with Borough	Funding Source
Formally designate the Southmont Connection Corridor	Short Term	$	• School District • Biking Groups • PennDOT	• None required
Add Share the Road Signs and green pavement markings along Connection Route	Short Term	$	• PennDOT • School District • Biking Groups	• PennDOT / DCED (CFA) – Multimodal Transportation Fund • PennDOT – TA Set-Aside • DCED – GTRP
Advertising of new route • article in Borough newsletter • article in the Tribune Democrat • information on the Borough Website • bike ride planned along the route	Short Term	$	• PennDOT • Local business/property owners along route • School District • Local newspaper	• None required
Events Along the Route to Raise Awareness	Short/Mid Term	$	• PennDOT • Local business/property owners along route • School District • Local Walking/Biking Group	• None Required
Streetscape Improvements: Streetlights, bike friendly storm grates, additional street trees, updated sidewalks and crosswalks	Mid Term	$$	• PennDOT	• PennDOT/DCED (CFA) – Multimodal Transportation Fund • PennDOT – TA Set-Aside • DCED – GTRP
Gateway entrance at the beginning of the route at Southmont and Diamond Boulevard	Long Term	$$$	• PennDOT • Local property owners • Local Art Teachers/Students • School District • Arbor Day Foundation	• PennDOT/DCED (CFA) – Multimodal Transportation Fund • PennDOT – TA Set-Aside • DCED – GTRP • Arbor Day Foundation

Project 5 – Street Tree Management Program

Action Items	Implementation	Costs	Partners with Borough	Funding Source
Community and property owner education on tree care and sidewalk maintenance	Short Term	$	• Shade Tree Advisory Board and Committee • Tree Tenders • Local Resident Volunteers • Bartlett Tree Experts and other tree service organizations • Homeowners responsible for sidewalks	• Penn State Extension Tree Tenders Program
Tree species selection/location guide and use of structural soil	Mid Term	$	• Shade Tree Advisory Board and Committee • Homeowners responsible for sidewalks • Brad Clemenson WPC trees	• Borough – General Fund • Arbor Day Foundation • Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC)
Tree Inventory • Create a record of each of the trees in the borough and the care needed or replacement needed • Recruit residents to become Tree Tenders to assist with Inventory and Tree Care.	Mid Term	$$	• Shade Tree Advisory Board and Committee • Tree Tenders • Local Resident Volunteers • Bartlett Tree Experts and other tree service organizations	• DCNR Community & Watershed Forestry Grants • Penn State Extension Tree Tenders Program
Street Tree Funding • Sustainability program to fund replacement trees and updates to tree inventory as work is completed	Long Term	$$	• Shade Tree Advisory Board and Committee • Tree Tenders • Local Resident Volunteers • Bartlett Tree Experts and other tree service organizations • Arbor Day Foundation	• DCNR Community & Watershed Forestry Grants • Penn State Extension Tree Tenders Program • Arbor Day Foundation

Project 6 – Menoher Boulevard Crossing to Westmont Hilltop Elementary School

Action Items	Implementation	Costs	Partners with Borough	Funding Source
Outreach to share concerns brought to the plan by residents and elementary school families of the crossing of Menoher Boulevard to the Westmont Hilltop Elementary School	Short Term	None	• PennDOT • County elected officials • State representative • School District • Local businesses in the area	
PennDOT CONNECTS/LTAP meeting • notify PennDOT of the feedback about this crossing received during the ATP planning process, request a safety audit, evaluate speed and length of school zone	Short Term	$	• PennDOT • School District • Cambria County Planning Commission	• PennDOT LTAP Assistance • PennDOT/DCED (CFA) – Multimodal Transportation Fund • PennDOT – TA Set-Aside • DCED – GTRP • Community Foundation for the Alleghenies
Follow up with others if needed to improve this important community crossing	Mid Term	$	• Commissioners • Senator • Other Elected Officials • School District	• None needed

Project 7 – Site Specific Improvements Recommendation

Action Items	Implementation	Costs	Partners with Borough	Funding Source
Recommended locations of curb cuts and crosswalks • Prioritize improvements along the Southmont Connection Corridor (see map in Section 4.0 page 8)	Short/Mid Term	$$	• Residents • PennDOT • Neighboring municipalities	• PennDOT/DCED (CFA) – Multimodal Transportation Fund • PennDOT – TA Set-Aside • DCED – GTRP

Project 8 – Continuing Action Program

Action Items	Implementation	Costs	Partners with Borough	Funding Source
Create a Borough Active Transportation Group/ Committee • Gather information about Active Transportation – Walkability/Bikeability Assessments • Assist with Street Tree Care • Organize walking/biking events	Short Term	$	• Residents • Local municipalities in the West Hills • Regional Trails and parks organizations (CCCRA) • League of American Bicyclists • PennDOT • AARP • School District • Penn State Tree Tenders	• PennDOT/DCED (CFA) – Multimodal Transportation Fund • PennDOT – TA Set-Aside • DCED – GTRP • Penn State Extension Tree Tenders Program
Create Southmont Walking Club or other event • Locate local leader/s to arrange the event/s	Short Term/Mid Term	$	• Residents • School District • WalkWorks • Indiana County Decathlon program	• WalkWorks

Project 9 – Communication Plan

Action Items	Implementation	Costs	Partners with Borough	Funding Source
Publicize the plan and implementation actions	Short Term	$	• Local municipalities in the West Hills	• None needed
Conduct an annual strategic planning session to review the plan and implementation steps	Mid/Long Term	$	• Local municipalities in the West Hills	• None needed
Communicate the plan with neighboring municipalities:	Short Term	$	• Local municipalities in the West Hills – Westmont Borough, Lower Yoder Twp, Upper Yoder Twp, Brownstown Borough • City of Johnstown	• None needed
Collaboration and partnerships at the local, county and community level	Short/Mid Term	$	• Westmont Hilltop School District • Stackhouse Park • Community Foundation for the Alleghenies (CFA) • Commonwealth Technical Institute (CTI) • Conemaugh Hospital • Cambria County Planning Commission • Local Residents • Community leaders	• None needed

APPENDIX

WalkWorks Metrics

Walking and Biking Improvements – Crosswalks and Intersections, Sidewalks, Infrastructre Improvements, Programs and Policies

Adopted February **2025**

This plan was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program and Keystone Fund under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

Funding was also provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health through the State Physical Activity and Nutrition Grant and Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Active Transportation Plan Implementation Metrics - **Crosswalks and Intersections**

Map or Page No.: Indicate the map or page number on which each priority is reflected in your plan.

Priority: Indicate the ranking of each priority (e.g., by number or "high, medium, low").

Project: Describe project location and what improvements are being made.

Connected destinations: Name the destinations that will be connected with implementation of each project.

Map or Page No.	Priority	Project Description	Connected Destinations
22	2	Crosswalk Painting Program; upgrade crosswalks along key corridors to high visibility markings with added artwork to engage the community	Parks and neighborhoods (Southmont Blvd and Diamond Blvd)
26	6	Menoher Boulevard Crossing - to Westmont Elementary School; work with PennDOT to further enhance safety at this high speed, low visibility crossing	Crossing to Westmont Hilltop Elementary School, Stackhouse Park, playgrounds, walking track and neighborhoods
27	7	Stop Signs on Paliser; calm traffic at up to 3 intersections	Neighborhood, school
27	7	Crosswalk and path from State Street to ballfield	Neighborhood and recreation park
27	7	Stop Sign at Olive and State	Neighborhood, parks and community connector route
27	7	Leon and Goucher crosswalk	Bus stops to neighborhood
27	7	Southmont Blvd crosswalks; highlight/reconfigure crossings at intersections near church	Neighborhoods, businesses, route to city

Active Transportation Plan Implementation Metrics - **Sidewalks**

Map or Page No.: Indicate the map or page number on which each priority is reflected in your plan.

Priority: Indicate the ranking of each priority (e.g., by number or "high, medium, low").

Potential linear miles: Linear miles of proposed sidewalks, rounded to the nearest tenth of a mile.

Connected destinations: Name the destinations that will be connected with implementation of each project.

Map or Page No.	Priority	Project Description	Potential Linear Miles	Connected Destinations
24	4	Southmont Boulevard, Diamond Boulevard and Portions of State Street and Menoher Boulevard	3.5	Health Care, Education, Recreation and Business Resources
25	5	Borough-Wide	0.5	Residential Areas
27	7	Leila Street	0.3	Neighborhood street, connecting to Active Transportation Connector and from there to parks
27	7	Thoburn Street	0.3	Neighborhood street, connecting to Active Transportation Connector and from there to parks
27	7	400 block of State Street	0.1	Neighborhood street, connecting to Active Transportation Connector and from there to parks
27	7	Olive Street from State to Diamond	0.1	Neighborhood street, connecting to Active Transportation Connector and from there to parks
27	7	Edward Street SWM	0.4	Neighborhood street, connecting to Active Transportation Connector and from there to parks
27	7	Harding Street	0.2	Neighborhood street, connecting to Active Transportation Connector and from there to parks

Active Transportation Plan Implementation Metrics - **Bicycle Infrastructure Improvements**

Map or Page No.: Indicate the map or page number on which each priority is reflected in your plan.

Priority: Indicate the ranking of each priority (e.g., by number or "high, medium, low").

Project Description: Describe project location and what improvements are being made. *Examples: low-speed shared streets, bicycle boulevards, buffered bicycle lanes, conventional bicycle lanes, protected bicycle lanes, and signed bicycle routes, bicycle racks, bike share stations, etc.*

Potential linear miles: Linear miles of proposed bicycle lanes, bicycle boulevards, and low-speed shared streets (if applicable), rounded to the nearest tenth of a mile.

Connected destinations: Name the destinations that will be connected with implementation of each project.

Map or Page No.	Priority	Project Description	Potential Linear Miles	Connected Destinations
23	3	Education and Safety Program	-	Borough-Wide
24	4	Southmont Connection Corridor; bike lanes, buffered bike lanes, and shared use lanes	2.1	Neighborhood connections to parks, playgrounds, school, healthcare, and businesses
26	6	Menoher Boulevard Crossing to Westmont Hilltop Elementary School	0.10	Westmont Hilltop Elementary School
27	7	Stop Signs on Paliser		Neighborhood, school
27	7	Work with Upper Yoder to add bike lanes on Goucher St		Neighborhoods, adjacent municipality, businesses

Active Transportation Plan Implementation Metrics - **Programmatic and Policy Improvements**

Plan/Policy/Project: Project, policy or plan development or improvements. *Examples: Development of a Complete Streets Policy; Amendment to Ordinance; Evaluation of progress/status of implementation of Active Transportation Plan; Development of a Vision Zero Action Plan or a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan.*

Policy/Project	Description
Sidewalk Ordinance and Repair Assistance Program – Top Borough Policy Project	Update Sidewalk Ordinance to support creation of a sidewalk repair cost sharing program to incentivize repair and replacement of damaged sidewalks
Street Tree Management Program	Borough will actively manage street trees and their impacts on sidewalks
Communication Plan	Once the Southmont Borough Active Transportation Plan is adopted, the Borough will build upon the successful adoption of the Plan. Implementing these steps builds momentum for Plan implementation to ensure compatibility with existing and proposed development plans within the Borough and with neighboring municipalities.

Active Transportation Plan Implementation Metrics - **Programmatic and Policy Improvements**

Program/Education/Encouragement: Programming introduced to educate and encourage community members. *Examples: Open Streets events, ongoing Active Transportation Committee meetings, Walk to School Day, Bicycle-Friendly Driver Trainings.*

Program	Description
Walking and Biking Education and Safety Program – Top Community Program	Host biking and walking events and activities, and safety trainings, aimed at improving safety for walkers, bikers, wheelers and riders
Continuing Action Program	On-going Active Transportation data gathering and community actions like walk audits
Walking Club	Engage public and highlight health and walkability
Communication Plan	Build momentum for implementation with publicity, annual strategic planning, presentations, and building partnerships