



# State of the Township -2020





# 2020 Snapshot



Population: 18,400+ (26,000+ daytime)

Median Household Income: \$111,000

Area Served: Residents primarily in Exton and West Chester, with a small number in the Downingtown and Malvern zip codes

Median Housing Value: \$333,000 per home

Township Real Estate Tax Millage: 0.714 (lowest in West Chester Area School District)

Land Use: 34% residential; 20% open space/recreation; 19% transportation; 14% commercial/industrial; 6% institutional; 6% vacant

Historical Resources: 213 sites, of which 5 were approved for refurbishment in 2020



Open Space and Recreation: 1,800+ acres of protected open space comprised of County and Township parks, homeowners' associations and land trusts

Parks: 11 public parks, including Exton Park (700 acres)

Chester Valley Trail runs through Exton Crossroads and Exton Park, connecting to King of Prussia.



Public Schools: West Chester Area School District

Home of Collegium Charter School: 2,900+ students; 2nd largest brick and mortar charter school in PA



Pedestrian network: 14 miles of trails, 51 miles of sidewalks



94 miles of roads: 67 miles Township roads, 27 miles state roads



Exton Train Station with SEPTA (Paoli-Thorndale) and Amtrak service; Whitford Train Station with SEPTA (Paoli-Thorndale) service

SEPTA/Krapf bus service to West Chester, King of Prussia, Eagleview, Paoli, Downingtown and Coatesville



The Police Department of 27 officers received and responded to 9,958 incidents in 2020 and collected and disposed of 318 pounds of unused medication in their first full year of accreditation.

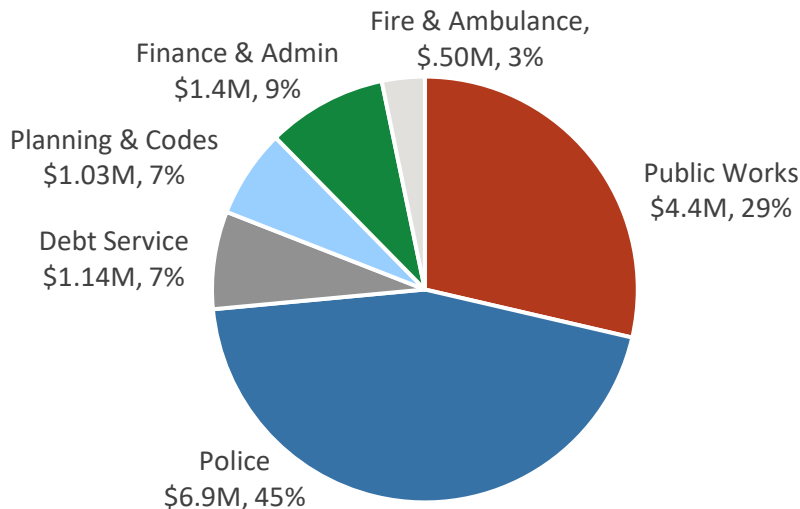


# 2020 Finances

## Operating Budget Snapshot\*

2020	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus / Deficit	Operating Reserves
General Fund – 01	\$11.23 M	\$11.31 M	-\$81 K	\$9.4 M
Sewer Operating – 02	\$3.67 M	\$3.37 M	\$303 K	\$4.2 M
Solid Waste - 12	\$0.79 M	\$0.85 M	-\$56 K	\$0.42 M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15.69 M</b>	<b>\$15.53 M</b>	<b>\$166 K</b>	<b>\$14.02 M</b>

## Expenses by Department\* (\$ millions)



## Rated Aaa by Moody's

West Whiteland Township has a Aaa (Stable Outlook) bond rating. This is Moody's highest possible rating. The Township has maintained this rating since 2016 and the rating was recently renewed with a stable outlook in the summer of 2020.

In determining its rationale for the rating, Moody's pointed to West Whiteland's strong and growing tax base, healthy reserves, sound financial policies and strong management. Conservative budgeting, low debt levels, long-term planning, and a commitment to maintaining strong reserves all contributed to Moody's confidence in West Whiteland's ability to sustain a strong financial position.

\* These are unaudited numbers and may change slightly once the 2020 the independent audit completed. The Covid pandemic impacted the Township's revenues slightly, as reflected in the projected negative year-end balance for the General Fund. The deficit for the Solid Waste Fund was planned and reserves were used to make-up the deficit.



# 2020 Initiatives

## Pandemic Response



- Due to the spread of Covid-19, the Township followed state guidelines and closed the municipal building to walk-in visitors in March 2020. Public meetings became virtual and most non-uniform staff began to work from home.
- **Essential workers continued to provide essential services**, and staff was available by appointment.
  - Police continued working but limited 1:1 contact when possible.
  - Public Works did essential maintenance of roads, sewers and parks.
  - Codes reviewed building permit plans so contractors would be ready to work when restrictions were lifted.
  - Emergency management kept emergency responders and other staff supplied with PPE.
  - Finance paid bills and staff and monitored Township finances.
  - Admin pushed info to the public about COVID and safety measures.

## Community Infrastructure



- Completed several projects to improve **pedestrian and roadside safety**, as well as enhance neighborhood aesthetics.
  - In coordination with Chester County, completed the bike/ped path connecting the Chester Valley Trail and Exton Train Station, as well as traffic signal modifications to facilitate pedestrian crossings at Rte 100 and Commerce Dr.
  - Coordinated with PennDOT for the implementation of two Green Light Go grants funding upgrades to the traffic signal at Ship and Swedesford Rds. and adding backup connections to signals for use during power outages.
  - Coordinated with Aqua for paving of 3 Township roads (Hunter, Gary, E. Belvidere)
  - Refreshed pavement markings, such as crosswalks and stop bars, at 13 heavily traveled intersections
- Performed maintenance to **stormwater management** facilities to ensure proper functioning, including clearing significant storm debris and accumulated material partially obstructing 2 bridges and 3 culverts
- Progressed planning for two projects to increase mobility:
  - Additional northbound lane on Whitford Road between Lincoln Highway and Waterloo Blvd
  - Awarded \$940,000 state grant for construction of the north leg of the “Ship Road Couplet” road and trail project; construction is expected in 2022 in conjunction with the construction of the south leg by a developer
- Awarded \$1.5M RACP grant for a new Public Works Facility; begin architectural and engineering design



# 2020 Initiatives

## Development

Followed principles established in "[Development by Design](#)" to discuss possible new projects. The most significant of these included the Exton Square Mall site, the undeveloped portion of the Valley Creek Corporate Center and the former Weston Solutions campus on King Rd.



- Implemented recommendations in the "Act 209" **transportation capital improvement plan**
  - The Ship Rd. Couplet is currently in design phase and is being reviewed as part the Ship Run and 690 E. Lincoln Hwy. development projects. Conditional use approval is anticipated in Feb. 2021, with land development review ending in the third quarter of 2021. If approved, construction on the new road and trail improvement would start in Spring 2022.
  - Traffic Signal Improvements to Springdale Dr. & Lincoln Hwy. as part of the Exton Knoll Development
  - Right turn lane along Whitford Rd., between Lincoln Hwy. & Waterloo Blvd., and traffic signal modifications as part of the Primrose Daycare Development
- Contracted with the Urban Land Institute (ULI) to gather information, interview community stakeholders and produce specific recommendations regarding the **future of the Exton Crossroads area**. The findings will be presented in the first quarter of 2021.
- Approved development projects which, in total for 2020, allowed for the preservation of an additional 19.8 acres of **open space** and recreational areas; payment of approximately \$24,000 in fees in lieu of dedication of open space; and the preservation and continued use of three **historic structures**



## Sustainability

- Adopted a resolution supporting a **100% renewable energy future** (Ready for 100) in August 2020
- Participated in the Clean Energy Future Steering Committee – the West Chester Area Council of Governments (WCACOG) initiative towards the [plan to transition to renewable energy](#).
- Installed an **electric vehicle (EV) charging station** in the municipal building parking lot
- Conducted an HVAC audit and performed the PECO Energy Audit for the municipal building



# 2020 Initiatives

## Public Safety



- Re-instituted a full-time traffic unit consisting of two officers
- Welcomed a **new chief of police**, Lee Benson, following the retirement of Chief Joe Catov after 42 years of service
- Implemented CRIMEWATCH to help provide transparency and keep our citizens informed
- Maintained annual proofs of compliance required for police department accreditation

## Communications



- Conducted focus groups with residents and businesses, which will guide new efforts to **inform constituents** about Township priorities and seek feedback
- Completed **website redesign** with an updated look and easy access to pertinent information

## Finance



- Initiated and completed the 2020 bond issuance process to fund the new public works facility, Exton Park development and municipal building capital improvements and to save money by refinancing a 2007 note
- **Reaffirmed Aaa rating** (highest available) from Moody's during the 2020 analyst's review of the bond issuance

## Recreation



- Worked with Exton Little League to secure new ballfields at Boot Road Park North (to be dedicated as Joe Catov Park), funded and built by Michels and Energy Transfer to replace fields at Meadowbrook Manor Park that remain temporarily closed due to pipeline construction
- Installed portable roofs for shade on the dugouts at Boot Road Park to protect players from UV rays, with help from the sunshade grant.
- Kicked off a **holiday lights contest** that was embraced by the community, especially after the cancellation of many regular events due to Covid-19.