



DAUPHIN

COUNTY



Mike Pries
Chairman



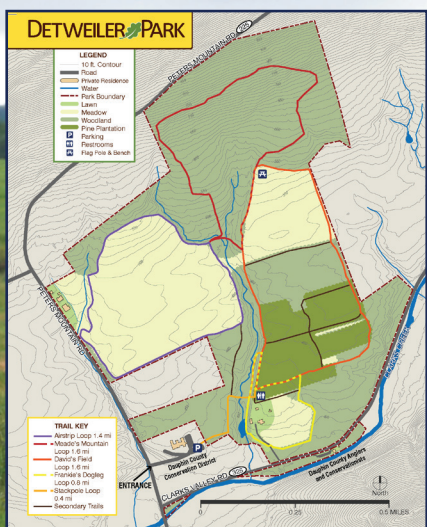
Chad Saylor
Commissioner



George P. Hartwick, III
Commissioner

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COMMISSIONERS EYE FUTURE OF DETWEILER PARK



The Dauphin County Commissioners developed a multi-phase vision for Detweiler Park.

The 411-acre Detweiler Park in Middle Paxton Township provides sprawling meadows accessible by mowed trails. The views offered to those enjoying a walk or jog are among the best in the county.

The park's entrance will soon change under plans to add a driveway off Peters Mountain Road south of the current parking lot. A new entrance will be designed to accommodate people with disabilities, who in the future will find the first handicapped-accessible loop trail in the county.

Dauphin County Commissioners Mike Pries, Chad Saylor and George P. Hartwick III developed a multi-phase vision for the park that includes a pavilion, restrooms and event space. The stone house occupied by the Detweiler and Stackpole families for several generations will become the park office.

The largest of the eight parks owned and managed by the Dauphin County Parks & Recreation Department, Detweiler Park quickly became a beloved component of the parks system when it was acquired in 2016. The planned

preservation and enhancements will ensure it remains viable for generations to come.

The commissioners worked with Rep. Joe Kerwin (R-Dauphin) and Sen. John DiSanto (R-Dauphin) to obtain \$1.2 million in state grant funding for the new entrance to Detweiler Park and loop trail. Conversations are continuing with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation about turning lanes that will be added to the 1400 block of Peters Mountain Road.



GIRL SCOUT BUILDS BEE BOXES FOR DETWEILER PARK

Central Dauphin High School junior Brooke Whisler sought to protect bees from weather and predators as she created bee boxes at Detweiler Park. As Brooke, 16, worked toward her Girl Scout Gold Award, she researched mason bees and the habitats that help to maintain healthy hive activity and improve plant pollination. Brooke designed, built and installed 10 bee boxes in meadows at Detweiler Park. Look for all 10 on your next visit.



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Dauphin County: Best Place to Live in Pennsylvania

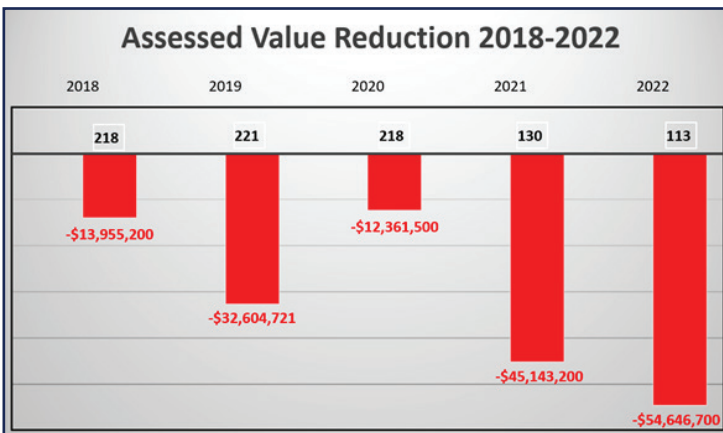
U.S. News & World Report has again recognized the Harrisburg region for offering a strong quality of life. Greater Harrisburg was named the Best Place to Live in Pennsylvania and the 38th Best Place to Live in the United States.

“Those of us who live, work, do business and enjoy recreation in Dauphin County know how special it is.



National recognition now highlights what we know.”
Commissioners Chairman Mike Pries said.

Pandemic ‘Aftershock’: County Faces Tough Budget Challenges



The COVID-19 pandemic may be over, but it has caused a series of financial challenges that continue to ripple from corporate America to Dauphin County.

In early 2020, huge swaths of the workforce – both here and across the nation – stopped going to work at the office and began working from home.

At the same time, the hotel, restaurant and brick-and-mortar retail businesses all saw steep sales declines.

While some industries have since rebounded, others continue to struggle. Larger office buildings and brick-and-mortar retail stores are not likely to return to pre-pandemic levels in the near term. And when businesses struggle financially, that often leads to a drop in tax revenues for the county.

In 2022 alone, the county saw a \$54.6 million reduction in assessed property values as a result of property tax appeals, with the vast majority coming from commercial properties. As property values decline so does the property tax revenue that flows to the county to pay for infrastructure and services.

Adding to the financial pressure, an estimated \$4.5 billion in non-taxable government and nonprofit property is located in the county. Dauphin County has far more property exempted from the property tax than any of its neighboring counties.

“We may have gotten through the worst of COVID-19, but now we’re facing the aftershock with our county budget,” Commissioner Chad Saylor said. “We have worked hard to keep Dauphin County on the move and open for business through the pandemic, and we’ve done without a tax increase. But we know difficult choices lie ahead.”

Demand Overwhelms Whole Home Repairs Program

Although applications poured in for new home repair grant program, future of state and federal funding remains uncertain.

Using federal American Rescue Plan funding passed through the state, the Dauphin County Commissioners adopted an innovative grant program known as the Whole Home Repairs Program to help low- to moderate-income families

Homeowners could apply for up to \$50,000 to make renovations that address general habitability, energy efficiency, handicapped accessibility needs and more.

The work will then be done by a contractor selected through a competitive process. Dauphin County, through a partnership with SCPa Works!, will also invest in residential construction training for individuals who want to learn a trade for future employment.

Applications were accepted starting Aug. 1, and the application process is now closed. The Dauphin County Community & Economic Development received significant interest in the program.

“We heard from so many people who want to make desperately needed home repairs. This really shines a light on the financial barriers homeowners are facing when trying to make properties more livable,” Commissioner George P. Hartwick III said.

The commissioners hope to continue offering this program in the future. When the Pennsylvania General Assembly crafted the 2023-24 state budget, it did so without the federal money for the Whole Home Repairs Program. Lawmakers invested \$50 million of state funding into the project, which is only 40% of what was available the previous year.

Dauphin County Preserves 20,000th Acre of Farmland

In July, Dauphin County crossed a milestone when Merry Chase Farm entered farmland preservation, bringing the overall total of acres preserved to 20,000 since 1992. The county has preserved 209 farms in 15 municipalities.

Matthew and Jessica Schnupp are planning an agribusiness at South Hanover Township's Merry Chase Farm, which they are purchasing from longtime owner Elizabeth Gault. The farm traces its origins to 1875.

Farmland preservation places an agriculture easement on land to ensure it is not submitted for future residential or commercial development. With the easement's proceeds as part of the sales agreement, the Schnupps were able to buy the farm at a lower purchase price from the Gaults.

Having a farm viable and preserved for generations to come ensures people will continue to discover links to how food is produced right here in Dauphin County.



To learn more about farmland preservation, and how to submit an application, call the Dauphin County Conservation District at 717-921-8100.

AROUND THE COMMUNITY



JOIN THE TEAM

Want to "Be the One" and work with Latesha and Amanda, who are featured on new bus ads in and around Harrisburg? Visit dauphincounty.gov and click on "opportunities" to learn about job openings. Latesha and Amanda work for Dauphin County Social Services for Children and Youth, which helps children and families experiencing instability. Dauphin County is hiring for a number of roles in CYs, the prison and other departments.

Learn more about how your talents can be put to good use within Dauphin County government. Apply online today or call 717-780-6230.



Congratulations to Commissioner George P. Hartwick III on being named Commissioner of the Year by the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) in August!



The Dauphin County Commissioners engaged in a friendly wager with their counterparts in California's Coachella Valley regarding the outcome of the Calder Cup Championships won by the Hershey Bears.

DAUPHIN COUNTY NOW

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Harrisburg, PA 17101-1295

717-780-6300

DauphinCounty.gov

NOT PAID FOR WITH COUNTY TAX DOLLARS



Upcoming Events

CELEBRATE WILDWOOD

Saturday, Sept. 23, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at
Wildwood Park

VETERANS BREAKFAST

Tuesday, Oct. 10, from 8 to 10 a.m.
at VFW Post 5750, Halifax

RSVPs are required by Sept. 29.

Email tcureau@dauphincounty.gov
or call 717-780-6356.

FORT HUNTER INTERACTIVE TOUR FOR CHILDREN

Saturday, Oct. 14, at 11 a.m. at Fort Hunter Mansion
\$5 per person

NIGHT AT THE NATURE CENTER

Saturday, Oct. 21, from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at
Wildwood Park
\$8 per person

Need to make connections?

988 - Dial 988 anywhere in the United States for mental health crisis and suicide prevention services.

717-232-7511 - People who live within Dauphin County can call 717-232-7511 for the local Crisis Intervention Program. Trained staff can support an individual or family in crisis, serve as a liaison to law enforcement or medical providers, and provide information and referrals. Note: Those who call 988 may be transferred to this number if someone is recommended for a higher level of care assessment.

211 - 211 PA (available by dialing 211, visiting pa211.org or texting your ZIP Code to 898-211) is a starting point to find resources in your community, whether you need help with a utility bill, an after-school program for children, housing assistance or more.

Northern Dauphin County - Live in northern Dauphin County and want to give back to your community? In need of help yourself? In conjunction with community partners, including Knights of Columbus Council 2486, the Northern Dauphin Human Services Center is planning a children's coat giveaway Saturday, Oct. 7, and a collection of nonperishable food, cleaning supplies and paper products from Nov. 12 to 30. Call 717-905-2700 to be added to a list to receive additional information.



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