

Borough of Morrisville COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Bucks County, Pennsylvania



2008



BOROUGH OF MORRISVILLE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2008

*Adopted by the
Morrisville Borough Council*

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A comprehensive plan is an official public document that serves as a policy guide to decision making about physical development in a community. It is an explicit statement of a community's future goals and vision for use by the planning commission, council, private stakeholders and regional, state and federal entities.

Morrisville Borough's first comprehensive plan was adopted more than 40 years ago, in 1966, and supplemented in 1970. Major issues of the time included a declining manufacturing base and an increase in multifamily dwellings. In 1982, the borough's most recent comprehensive plan was prepared under a Coastal Zone Management Act grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources. This plan dealt with issues such as population outmigration and a decline in the importance of the borough's downtown shopping area. While the 1982 plan has served the borough well in the intervening years, new challenges demand a re-examination of municipal policy.

The *Comprehensive Plan for the Borough of Morrisville, Pennsylvania*, provides an overview of the current conditions, assets and future challenges to the borough. Morrisville Borough has laid the groundwork for the new comprehensive plan, starting with development of an Open Space plan in 1999, the adoption of the CS-2 Community Service Natural Land Preservation zoning district, the ongoing revision of Morrisville's zoning, subdivision and land development ordinances, creation of redevelopment areas, and participation in regional planning efforts such as the *Lower Delaware River Conservation Plan* and the *Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan*. Each of these efforts has been a public process, inviting citizen comment and participation.

In preparation for the new comprehensive plan, residents were asked to offer their views on Morrisville's priorities and hopes for the borough's future in a community survey. This *Comprehensive Plan for the Borough of Morrisville, Pennsylvania* reflects that input, as well as the input of Morrisville officials and volunteers, including the Morrisville Planning Commission and Morrisville Borough Council.

In 2006, students from the University of Pennsylvania, in cooperation with the Economic Development Corporation of the Borough of Morrisville, developed a revitalization plan for the borough's downtown. The plan recommended physical improvements and policy and programming strategies designed to encourage redevelopment, expand the tax base, and turn Morrisville Borough into an attractive regional destination.

Part I of this plan addresses Existing Conditions and Trends occurring in Morrisville Borough. In compliance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Part I contains plans for land use, housing, government facilities and utilities, natural resources and historic resources. The plan conforms to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development guidelines for comprehensive plans, and is consistent with applicable laws, the county comprehensive plan, and the plans of adjacent communities.

Part II, Revitalization and Planning for the Future, provides recommendations and a framework in which the borough can begin to implement its revitalization and future land use plan. Part II discusses the assets and opportunities that are available for the borough to capitalize on and puts forward a vision of what is possible in Morrisville. This part of the plan also provides a summary of ongoing initiatives and plans to ensure that parallel revitalization efforts are complementary and included in the process. Chapter 17: Capturing the Future details the borough's planning and economic development principles as well as providing a plan for implementation by listing recommended actions and setting priorities for implementation.

Regional Characteristics and General Appearance

Morrisville Borough is located on the eastern border of Bucks County on the Delaware River opposite New Jersey's state capitol, Trenton. Largely developed as a traditional town during the period of 1900 to 1929, the borough has a genuine small town structure and feel, with a varied and predominantly traditional housing stock, historic and healthy green space, and a compact and accessible downtown district. This authentic hometown sensibility is one of Morrisville's strongest assets.

Residential, commercial, and industrial architecture throughout the town visually represents every period of the nation's history, from artifacts of pre-Revolutionary settlements and 18th-century manor houses through 19th-century remnants of the Industrial Revolution and 20th-century suburban residential developments.

Entrances or gateways to the community reflect a microcosm of the country's timeline. From the south and west, transportation corridors support industrial and commercial complexes bordering on quiet, well-kept residential neighborhoods. From the north, northwest and east, river crossings and major thoroughfares usher residents from recreational and business areas into peaceful, tree-lined residential districts.

The downtown business district is experiencing the stirrings of revitalization, with new businesses and commercial buildings as well as a newly-developed heart of the borough at Pennsylvania and Bridge Streets: the Robert Morris Plaza, dedicated during the bicentennial celebration in 2004.

History of the Community and Region

The lands that would eventually become Morrisville Borough and its neighbors, Falls Township and Lower Makefield Township, were home to Lenni Lenape Indians and settled by traders of the Dutch West India Company in 1624.

The Lenape called the spot the "Strong Falls" and settlers called it the "Falls of the Delaware." The falls mark the head of tide for the river, and are the northernmost point of ocean-going navigation. The river, the first of many transportation corridors that deeply affected the character of the town, was later supplemented by roads, bridges, train tracks, trolley tracks and superhighways.

The area was first surveyed by Dutch explorer Peter Lindstrom in 1654, and the first ferry across the Delaware was established in 1665 by order of Dutch Governor Andros at what would become Morrisville Borough. The village was called Crewcorne and was the focus of the first court held in the county in 1680, with a permanent courthouse established in 1684.

In 1686, the first road in the county, the King's Path or King's Highway, was laid out by the provincial council between Philadelphia and Morrisville. The Colvin's Ferry and Kirkbride Ferry were installed in 1693. When Patrick Colvin operated the ferry during the 1700s, the settlement was known as Colvin's Ferry.

In 1687, a storm created Morrisville Island and the stream which ran along its western shore contributed to the town's development by forming an ideal location for a millworks. Adam Hoops was the first to take advantage of this power. The mill area was known as the Delaware Works.

Land that included the area of the borough was granted by King Charles II of England to William Penn in 1681. Early records show a 1684 grant from William Penn to John Wood of 650 acres plus an island in the Delaware River. John's son Joseph inherited the land and divided it among his three sons. Josiah Wood sold 70 acres and the island to wealthy land speculator Adam Hoops in 1764. At the time, Hoops held thousands of acres in the Philadelphia region and western Pennsylvania, as well as two mansions in Philadelphia. Benjamin Wood sold 174 acres to Hoops in 1766.

Hoop's consolidated holdings became Summerseat, a large plantation estate at the Falls of Delaware just north of William Penn's Pennsbury Manor plantation. Summerseat was ideally situated at the head of tide on the Delaware River, a stone's throw off the post road known as the King's Path, which stretched between New York and Philadelphia. The estate boasted meadows, fields, orchards, woodland, barns, stables, a store, a kitchen building and two dwelling houses.

The Summerseat manse still stands today, adjacent to the M.R. Reiter Elementary School on Legion Avenue, and hosted its share of 200th anniversary galas in 2004. The archetype of a colonial estate, Summerseat saw more than its share of early American history, its admirers and owners including George Washington, Robert Morris, George Clymer, Thomas Barclay, General Jean Victor Moreau, the Marquis de Lafayette, and Joseph Bonaparte.

Robert Morris, known simply as “The Financier” to his colleagues in the Continental Congress, and the nation's first Secretary of Finance, and George Clymer, a successful businessman who fought in the revolution and served on the Philadelphia Committee of Safety and Continental Congress, were both owners of Summerseat, giving Summerseat the distinction of being the only home ever owned by two signatories of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. Morris, in fact, was only one of two men who signed all three founding documents: the Declaration, the Articles of Confederation, and the Constitution.

A moment in the town's long history which fires the imagination: forced across the Delaware in retreat from Trenton to Morrisville after being beaten back across New Jersey from New York by the British, George Washington knew he would lose most of his war-weary, ill-equipped troops when their enlistments expired at the end of December 1776.

From December 8th to December 14th, Washington stayed at Summerseat as a guest of Thomas Barclay, planning the daring Christmas morning strike at Hessian troops encamped at the Trenton Barracks, within sight of the Morrisville riverbank. The stunning success of that attack changed the course of war and laid the foundation for American victory when Washington followed the Hessian defeat with a quick succession of battle victories.

During this crucial week, Robert Morris and George Clymer were two of only three members of the Continental Congress to remain in Philadelphia to conduct the infant nation's business while the rest fled advancing British forces. Morris managed to borrow \$10,000 that week to reinforce defenses along the Delaware River.

Morris, who was the one of the wealthiest men in the colonies, used his connections and credit to secure millions in financing for the revolution. His commitment to the revolution followed by losses through land speculation (at one point Morris owned more than 6 million acres of American soil, 2,500 of them in our area) led to his personal ruin and to incarceration in debtor's prison. Summerseat was sold at sheriff's sale to his good friend and colleague George Clymer in 1798. Ironically, Morris had himself acquired Summerseat at his friend Thomas Barclay's financial distress just a decade before.

Washington and other revolutionary notables returned to Summerseat over the years, and Morris nearly succeeded in having the Falls of the Delaware designated as the new nation's capitol. Opposed by Alexander Hamilton, the Falls of the Delaware lost out by just two votes to some undeveloped marshland on the Potomac River.

Among the historic firsts occurring in Morrisville: the start of the first survey of William Penn's lands in Pennsylvania at Graystones, a rock outcropping above the Delaware River near the northern boundary of town, the first post road and ferrycrossing between New York and Philadelphia, and the first bridge to cross the Delaware. Summerseat owner Thomas Barclay became our young nation's first overseas consul, and negotiated our very first treaty, with Morocco, in 1786.

Robert Morris' ship, the *Empress of China*, is believed to be the first American ship to trade with China. George Clymer negotiated treaties with Indian tribes, waded into the Whiskey Rebellion as Pennsylvania's revenue officer, and became the first President of both the Philadelphia National Bank and the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts.

A post office was established in 1794. The borough was incorporated 10 years later, in 1804, the same year Napoleon Bonaparte declared the location a "strategic point" in the new world. French expatriates sought the land: Napoleon's brother Joseph failed in his attempt to purchase Summerseat, settling at Bordentown instead, but royalist General Jean Moreau did buy the estate in 1807.

At the time of its incorporation, the borough was about half its present physical size, with about 200 citizens. It was bounded on the west by a line running roughly along Lafayette Avenue in the north and Robertson Avenue in the south. The northern boundary remains at about the same location, but the original southern boundary ran west from the river between what is now Cleveland Avenue and Bowling Green Avenue. Early development generally occurred south of Palmer Avenue and east of Pennsylvania Avenue.

The industrial history of the borough began in its earliest days with grain mills. The "Delaware Works" on the riverfront gained a succession of mills including a saw mill, snuff factory, slitting mill, sheet rolling tin mill, button factory and a hat factory. In 1806, the first bridge across the Delaware River opened, connecting Morrisville and Trenton.

In 1830, the Delaware Canal opened, offering a safe shipping route for anthracite coal from the Lehigh Valley. The coal had previously been shipped down the Delaware River. The first train line arrived from Bristol in 1833. Within a decade, service was established across the river to New Jersey and down to Philadelphia.

The Calhoun Street bridge was installed in 1861 and replaced with an iron truss structure that still stands today when the wooden structure burned in 1884. Trolley service connected the now bustling suburb to Trenton and Newtown in 1903.

The regional transportation connections ensured a steady population growth during the nineteenth century from approximately 200 in 1800 to slightly less than 1,400 in 1900. With the advent of the industrial age, the town's population surged in less than a century from less than 1,400 in 1900 to more than 11,000 in 1970.

The first rubber works in Morrisville was started in 1873 in the original Robert Morris stables. The Morrisville Rubber Company ran just seven years, and was followed by a succession of rubber companies producing a variety of products. In 1901, the Vulcanized Rubber Company was founded.

The Robertson Art Tile Company was founded in 1890 by Englishman George W. Robertson and grew to dominate the town's industry, producing residential tile for tens of thousands of homes in the Levittown developments in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The company employed hundreds and was known simply as the "Tile Works." It was one of many tile companies in the Delaware Valley at the time.

Both Vulcanized Rubber and the Tile Works produced war materials during both world wars. Vulcanized added injection molded plastics to its repertoire in 1940. At its peak in 1946, Vulcanized employed more than 700 employees. After a long decline during the 1960s and 1970s, the plant closed in 1980.

The mills and ceramic works were soon joined by other heavy industry in the region. Just a few miles south of the borough was the massive Fairless Works Steel Company, founded by U.S. Steel President Benjamin Fairless. Though Fairless Hills was constructed as a company town for the mill, and Levittown arose next to it, many borough citizens became part of the Fairless story.

The decline of manufacturing industries during the late 20th century caused a population decline of more than 10 percent, to slightly less than 10,000 in 1980. The population base stabilized during the next two decades and is now increasing at an incremental rate. The most recent census data puts Morrisville's population at 10,023.

The most intense periods of residential land development in the borough occurred in the early and middle decades of the 20th century in response to this industrial expansion, giving Morrisville its mix of colonial, early suburban and post-war tract housing.

Part I. Existing Conditions and Trends

Population data suggest Morrisville is a mature, older suburb. The borough was a center of settlement even before it was made part of the 1681 land grant to William Penn by King Charles II of England. Since its incorporation in the early 1800s, Morrisville has about doubled in physical size.

During the past 75 years or so, its population also has nearly doubled, growing from 5,368 in 1930 to 10,023 in 2000. The population peaked at 11,309 in 1970 and appears to have stabilized at a level about 10 percent below its high.

The U.S. Census Bureau 2006 population estimate for Morrisville, the most recent available, puts the population at 9,746, for a loss of 2.8 percent from 2000. The borough's population gains over 70 years, by percentage, have been about one-sixth of the county's. Population figures for Morrisville and Bucks County are in Table 1.

Year	Morrisville Borough Change			Bucks County Change		
	Population	No.	Percent	Population	No.	Percent
1930	5,368			96,727		
1940	5,493	125	2.3%	107,715	10,988	11.4%
1950	6,787	1,294	23.6%	144,620	36,905	34.3%
1960	7,790	1,003	14.8%	308,567	163,947	113.4%
1970	11,309	3,519	45.2%	416,728	108,161	35.1%
1980	9,845	-1,464	-12.9%	479,211	62,483	15.0%
1990	9,765	-80	-0.8%	541,224	62,013	12.9%
2000	10,023	258	2.6%	597,635	56,411	10.4%
Change, 1930-2000		4,655	86.7%		500,908	517.9%

Source: U.S. Census. 2000

As an older, "first-tier" suburb, Morrisville registered its fastest growth from 1950 to 1970, with the advent of U.S. Steel's massive Fairless Works in neighboring Falls Township and the surge of other local industry in the years after World War II. The borough lost nearly 13 percent of its population from 1970 to 1980, as the industrial sector contracted. It now exhibits the population stability or loss that often characterizes older, built-up communities.

Because of the small geographic area of the borough and its early start as a population center, the pace of population growth in Morrisville has lagged the County's, except during the industrial boom years from 1960 to 1970. The difference in growth rates has become even greater since 1970, as little vacant land remains in Morrisville and the focus of

countywide growth has shifted from the first-tier suburbs of lower Bucks to greenfield development in central, and now, upper Bucks.

The borough's population is expected to increase by about 2.0 percent, to 10,220, by 2010 and to add 100 people, or 1.0 percent, over the next 10 years, according to population projections by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. The projections are in Table 2.

Table 2. Morrisville Borough Population Projections (2000-2020)						
			Percent Change			Total Change 2000-2020
	2000	2010	2000-2010	2020	2010-2020	No. Percent
Population	10,023	10,220	2.0%	10,320	1.0%	297 3.0%

Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

The borough's population is diverse in age, household type and ethnicity. This is an asset to capitalize on. There are signs that the borough is drawing a growing share of young families.

In line with broad-based trends, the average Morrisville household was smaller in 2000 than it was in 1990. But it was also younger, contrary to trends elsewhere in the region. Population characteristics are in Table 3.

Table 3. Morrisville Borough Population Characteristics (1990-2000)		
Characteristic	1990	2000
Population	9,765	10,023
Median age (years)	39	35.7
Households	3,987	4,154
Family Households	2,568	2,612
Married-couple families	1,876	1,772
Nonfamily households	1,419	1,542
Householders living alone	1,175	1,248
Average household size (persons)	2.45	2.41
Average family size (persons)	3.06	3.01

Source: U.S. Census

¹ A household is an occupied housing unit.

² A family is a household with two or more individuals related by marriage, birth, or adoption.

³ A nonfamily household is a household with a group of unrelated individuals or persons living alone.

The average household size in the borough dropped from 2.45 persons to 2.41 persons during the decade, while the median age dropped from 39 to 35.7 years. By contrast, the corresponding median age in Bucks County rose from 33.7 to 37.7 years in the same time.

The decline in household size is typical. Household size has been declining regionally and locally because of factors that include later marriage and childbearing, higher divorce rates, and longer life spans.

But the borough has bucked the trend toward an aging population. Statewide and regionally, aging of the huge post-war baby boom generation and a high population of elderly have played a role in upping the median age.

The drop of more than three years in median age in the borough, from 39 to 35.7 years, is significant. It suggests that population turnover is occurring, with younger residents replacing older ones, and that the borough is an attractive destination for younger families and singles.

More than one-third of borough households—37.1 percent—were nonfamily households. Of the 1,542 nonfamily households, 1,248 were single-person households, which accounted for 30 percent of all borough households in 2000. The variety of housing types and good availability of rental housing in the borough likely have contributed to diversity of household types.

The planning implications of trends toward a younger, more family-oriented population may include gains in the school-age population, along with greater demand for recreation and cultural facilities and programs, services, and shops geared toward parents and children. At the same time, the diversity of households suggests continuing interest in programs, services and retailing aimed at singles and nontraditional household types.

Changes in the age distribution in the borough from 1990 to 2000 confirm that population turnover is occurring, with younger singles and families moving into the borough. Table 4 details changes in the age distribution from 1990 to 2000.

Table 4. Age Distribution, Morrisville Borough and Bucks County (1990-2000)

Age Group	1990				2000			
	Morrisville Borough		Bucks County		Morrisville Borough		Bucks County	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Under 5	756	8.3%	39,886	7.4%	737	7.4%	38,288	6.4%
5 to 9	608	6.7%	39,574	7.3%	736	7.3%	43,274	7.2%
10 to 14	533	5.8%	37,389	6.9%	649	6.5%	45,635	7.6%
15 to 19	591	6.5%	35,858	6.6%	563	5.6%	39,683	6.6%
20 to 24	665	7.3%	35,338	6.5%	588	5.9%	28,321	4.7%
25 to 34	1,346	14.7%	95,177	17.6%	1,600	16.0%	75,421	12.6%
35 to 44	1,518	16.6%	90,676	16.8%	1,835	18.3%	107,861	18.0%
45 to 54	947	10.4%	59,726	11.0%	1,328	13.2%	89,949	15.1%
55 to 59	373	4.1%	24,320	4.5%	455	4.5%	31,560	5.3%
60 to 64	487	5.3%	24,446	4.5%	328	3.3%	23,519	3.9%
65 to 74	764	8.4%	36,334	6.7%	630	6.3%	39,983	6.7%
75 to 84	400	4.4%	16,994	3.1%	445	4.4%	25,888	4.3%
85 and up	138	1.5%	5,456	1.0%	129	1.3%	8,223	1.4%
Total	9,126	100.0%	541,174	100.0%	10,023	100.0%	597,605	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

The share of pre-school and young elementary school-age children in the borough surpassed that of the county as a whole. But the share of children age 10 to 19 was slightly smaller. There is speculation that families with school-age children may be leaving or avoiding the borough because of concerns about the school system.

The greatest percentage gains in the borough and in the county have been among the leading edge of the baby boomer cohort, those age 45 to 54 in 2000. The 35-to-44 age cohort, which encompasses the younger baby boomers, formed the largest single adult age group in Morrisville in 2000, accounting for 18.3 percent of the population.

But a counterweight to this trend in the borough has been a rise in the number of young adults age 25 to 34. This group, representative of young singles and families in the post-college years who are establishing careers and households, made up 16 percent of the borough's population, compared to 12.6 percent of the county's.

The share of borough residents age 55 and older diminished slightly, also in contrast to broader regional trends. At the same time, the borough's share of the 55-plus populations remains substantial, at about 20 percent, and is poised to grow, particularly if age-restricted housing is built in Morrisville. The walking scale of the borough core is amenable to elderly people and others who do not own or drive cars, but those seeking age-restricted, active-adult housing at present must look outside the borough.

As the baby boom generation ages, the number of elderly residents in the borough and the region will continue to grow. An aging population spurs demand for services that include

health care, special social and recreation activities, transportation, and housing, and support services. At the same time, because of its diversity and the mobility of its population, the borough faces the challenges of providing a range of services, programs and facilities for different ages, interests, ethnicities, cultures, and household configurations, and of balancing sometimes competing needs.

Diversity also figures into the geographic origins and ethnicity of borough residents. The borough’s population is mobile.

About 38 percent of the people who lived in Morrisville in 2000 did not live there five years earlier. Table 5 shows the origins of newcomers to Morrisville Borough.

Table 5. Origins of New Residents of Morrisville Borough (1995-2000)		
Place of Origin	Number	Percent
Bucks County	1,978	51.7%
Elsewhere in Pennsylvania	339	8.9%
Other states	1,233	32.2%
Outside United States	276	7.2%
Total newcomers	3,826	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Of the 3,826 people who moved into the borough between 1995 and 2000, more than half came from elsewhere in Bucks County and nearly one-third came from elsewhere in the United States. Slightly less than 9 percent came from elsewhere in Pennsylvania, with another 7.2 percent from outside the United States. Morrisville’s shares of new residents from outside the state and from outside the county are higher than in many other communities in Bucks County and its share of newcomers from elsewhere in Pennsylvania is lower.

Morrisville’s population is more diverse than that of many other Bucks County municipalities. As of the 2000 census, 76 percent of borough residents were white, 19.1 percent were African-American, 4.8 of the population was Hispanic (of any race), and 1.2 percent was Asian. Ninety percent of the population speaks only English, and 10 percent speaks a language other than English.

The median household income for borough residents in 1999, at \$43,095, fell short of the countywide median of \$59,727 by nearly 28 percent. It was also at the lower end of the range for boroughs in Lower Bucks. Median household income figures are in Table 6.

Table 6. Median Income, Morrisville Borough, Other Lower Bucks Boroughs, and Bucks County

Borough	Median Household Income, 1999
Morrisville	\$43,095
Bristol	\$35,378
Langhorne	\$80,532
Langhorne Manor	\$56,389
Newtown	\$63,571
Penndel	\$36,296
Tullytown	\$45,625
Yardley	\$58,221
Bucks County	\$59,727

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

The educational level of borough residents lags the countywide average, particularly in the share of residents with post-high school degrees. Eighty-six percent of Morrisville residents 25 years of age or older were high school graduates or better as of 2000 and 18.6 percent had bachelor's degrees or higher. The corresponding figures for Bucks County were 88.6 percent high school graduates or better and 31.2 percent with bachelor's degrees or higher.

Data on workplace location and travel time to work suggest that proximity to employment, which may be in a neighboring state, is a feature that draws people to live in Morrisville. Borough residents in 2000 were less likely than county residents in general to work in their home municipality or county and far less likely to work in their home state. Information on place of work is in Table 7.

Table 7. Place of Work for Residents of Morrisville Borough and Bucks County

	Morrisville Borough		Bucks County	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
TOTAL workers*	5,005	100.0%	303,586	100.0%
Worked in...				
municipality of residence	543	10.8%	51,337	16.9%
county of residence	2,319	46.3%	168,090	55.4%
state of residence	2,934	58.6%	260,009	85.6%
outside state of residence	2,071	41.4%	43,577	14.4%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

*Age 16 and older

More than half of employed borough residents worked in-state, and 46.3 percent worked within Bucks County. But more than 41 percent of Morrisville residents worked out of state, a figure no doubt reflecting the borough's location just across the Delaware River from Trenton, the capital of the neighboring State of New Jersey. Slightly less than 11 percent of employed residents worked within the borough itself.

By comparison, 85.6 percent of Bucks County residents worked in their home state and 55.4 percent in their home county. And only 14.4 percent worked in a state other than Pennsylvania. Three bridges connect Morrisville with New Jersey.

Closeness to work is reflected in commuting time for borough residents. They typically spend somewhat less time traveling to work than do other county residents. Table 8 details travel time to work.

Table 8. Travel Time to Work for Residents of Morrisville Borough and Bucks County (2000)				
	Morrisville Borough		Bucks County	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Total =	5,005		303,586	
Did not work at home	4,929	98.5%	292,794	96.4%
Less than 5 minutes	161	3.3%	8,034	2.7%
5 to 9 minutes	618	12.5%	27,990	9.6%
10 to 14 minutes	723	14.7%	40,247	13.7%
15 to 19 minutes	982	19.9%	41,549	14.2%
20 to 24 minutes	727	14.7%	38,526	13.2%
25 to 29 minutes	209	4.2%	17,358	5.9%
30 to 34 minutes	477	9.7%	34,176	11.7%
35 to 39 minutes	138	2.8%	9,429	3.2%
40 to 44 minutes	139	2.8%	12,362	4.2%
45 to 59 minutes	373	7.6%	29,993	10.2%
60 to 89 minutes	258	5.2%	23,241	7.9%
90 or more minutes	124	2.5%	9,889	3.4%
Worked at home	76	1.5%	10,792	3.7%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

For example, the most frequently occurring travel time to work (mode) for both borough residents and county residents was 15 to 19 minutes. But the share of Morrisville residents who reported that travel time was nearly 20 percent, compared to 14.2 percent countywide. Only 1.5 percent of Morrisville residents worked at home, compared to 3.7 percent of Bucks County residents.

Key Morrisville Population Characteristics (2000 Census)

- Population – 10,023
- Population change, 1990-2000 – 2.6 percent
- Median age – 35.7 years
- Households – 4,154
- Average household size – 2.41 persons
- High school graduates – 86 percent
- Race and ethnicity – 76 percent white, 19.1 percent African-American, 4.8 percent Hispanic, 1.2 percent Asian
- Median household income – \$43,095

The state of the housing stock greatly affects all facets of life in the borough, especially those that have to do with the quality of life and economic health. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires all municipalities to provide for a variety of basic housing types in their zoning ordinances. Growing communities are additionally required to show that their zoning will allow a fair share of various housing types as new development occurs.

Morrisville, as a place that is almost fully developed, is not considered a growth community. Population projections for the borough essentially foresee population stability.

New residential construction, other than at designated redevelopment sites, is expected to consist of infill development on small parcels in existing neighborhoods, or rehabilitation or replacement of deteriorated structures. So, this section of the comprehensive plan begins by looking at characteristics of the housing stock, and ways to maintain and supplement it.

The Nature of the Housing Stock

In a resident survey taken for this comprehensive plan update, nearly three-fourths of those who responded said they were satisfied with the quality, location, and quantity of residential development in the borough. Similarly, the affordability and variety of housing ranked high on residents' list of reasons for choosing to live in the borough, and their favorite characteristics of the borough.

The housing stock is varied in terms of unit size, unit type, and tenure type—owner-occupied or rental—although most housing is of older vintage. The balanced housing mix promotes affordability and draws households of diverse ages, composition, and family sizes. Table 9 details the number and types of homes in Morrisville.



Table 9. Housing Units by Type, Morrisville Borough (2000)		
Housing Type	Number	Percent
Single-family detached	2,212	51.2%
Single-family attached (townhouse or condominium)	468	10.8%
Duplexes or twins	353	8.2%
Other multifamily	1,280	29.6%
3 or 4 units	322	7.5%
5 to 9 units	300	6.9%
10 to 19 units	237	5.5%
20 or more units	421	9.7%
Mobile home	6	0.1%
Total	4,319	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Traditional, detached single-family housing is the predominant housing type, accounting for a little more than half of all housing. Townhouses or other forms of attached single-family housing are typically a more recent form of housing. Nearly 11 percent of the Morrisville housing supply is in attached single-family units.

The borough has a plentiful supply of multifamily (apartment) housing. It encompasses buildings of various sizes, ranging from two-unit structures to those of more than 20 units. Types of apartment housing include garden apartments, mid-rise buildings, and rowhouses.

The stock of apartments is fairly evenly dispersed among small, mid-size and larger buildings. Apartment housing of three units or more represents nearly 30 percent of the residential stock and two-unit apartments—twins or duplexes—represent another 8 percent. While larger apartment buildings of 20 units or more account for the greatest single percentage share of multifamily housing, at nearly 10 percent of the total housing stock, smaller apartments of three to nine units, as a group, account for a greater overall share of the borough's multifamily housing – 14 percent.

Housing Age

Much of the housing supply in the borough consists of older homes. Table 10 shows when housing in the borough was built.

Table 10. Housing Age, Morrisville Borough		
Year Built	Number	Percent
1999 to March 2000	0	0.0%
1995 to 1998	109	2.5%
1990 to 1994	22	0.5%
1980 to 1989	217	5.0%
1970 to 1979	459	10.6%
1960 to 1969	543	12.6%
1950 to 1959	1,018	23.6%
1940 to 1949	613	14.2%
1939 or earlier	1,338	31.0%
Total	4,319	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

The bulk of housing in the borough is at least 50 years old. Homes built in 1939 or earlier form the single largest age category of borough housing, encompassing nearly one-third of the housing stock. Another 50 percent was built between 1940 and 1969. Less than 10 percent of the housing was built after 1979.

The borough has historic housing and residential neighborhoods of charm and visual appeal. Most housing is in sound condition. But older housing is often costly to keep up and repair.

Housing Indicators

Statistics on housing characteristics like tenure type (ownership or rental), market value, vacancy rates, and rental costs are factors that can be used to help determine the condition of housing and neighborhoods in a community. When the numbers for neighboring communities are compared, they draw a picture of relative housing conditions.

Housing conditions in Morrisville, as gauged by such indicators, suggest they are comparable to those in boroughs with similar population profiles, with the exception of a homeownership rate that is lower than most. Table 11 presents a regional comparison of housing indicators for Morrisville, six other Lower Bucks boroughs, and the county as a whole.

Table 11. Housing Indicators for Morrisville, Selected Lower Bucks Boroughs, and Bucks County (2000)

Place	Owner-Occupied	Median Value	Rental	Median
	Housing	Owner-Occupied Housing	Housing Vacancy Rate	Monthly Rate
Morrisville	56.5%	\$112,300	3.8%	\$654
Bristol	57.2%	\$90,100	4.8%	\$605
Langhorne	64.9%	\$172,200	6.3%	\$649
Newtown	66.2%	\$232,800	1.3%	\$804
Penndel	72.3%	\$132,900	2.3%	\$654
Tullytown	69.0%	\$111,900	3.5%	\$488
Yardley	71.1%	\$170,100	3.7%	\$781
Bucks County	77.4%	\$163,200	4.2%	\$736

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

The indicators show Morrisville had the lowest rate of homeownership among the group, at 56.5 percent. Nationally, about two-thirds of all households own their homes, and in Bucks County, the rate of homeownership exceeds 75 percent. However, homeownership rates in the County’s first-tier suburbs, which include boroughs and older, densely populated townships, tend to run lower than in newer, growth suburbs where apartment buildings, garden apartments and other forms of concentrated rental housing are scarce.

It is usually more affordable to rent housing than to buy it, so a plentiful stock of rental housing may attract greater shares of young families and singles living independently for the first time, retirees, and other types of lower-income households. This can be a benefit in enabling people to live near where they work, and in ensuring a labor pool for local employers, especially those who need to fill entry-level and service jobs. At the same time, the conditions of rental housing may need to be monitored more carefully, since the owners are likely to live elsewhere and may be less likely than owner-occupants to invest in preventive maintenance.

The median value of Morrisville owner-occupied housing, at \$112,300, was in the middle of the group of five boroughs, but well below the countywide value. Housing values have risen significantly since the 2000 census, although they had begun to soften at the time this plan was being prepared.

There is high demand for rental housing in the borough and the area around it. The rental vacancy rates in Morrisville, other boroughs, and Bucks County were quite low, in most cases not even reaching the 5 percent considered “normal” to allow for market activity.

Median monthly rental costs in Morrisville, at \$654, were near the mid-range for the six boroughs compared, but still much lower than the Bucks County median of \$736. The Morrisville rental vacancy rate of 3.8 percent was also near the average for the group of neighboring boroughs, but below the countywide rate.

Zoning for Housing

The zoning ordinance provides for a wide range of housing types. The variety found in the existing housing stock reflects the diversity fostered by the housing provisions of the borough's zoning ordinance. Table 12 details the types of housing permitted in each zoning district.

Table 12. Permitted Housing Types in Morrisville																	
House Type	R1	R2	R2A	R3	R4	C1	C2	C3	C4	CS1	CS2	LI	I1	I2	NPEH	P1	RN
Single-family detached	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Cluster	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Two-family detached	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y
Duplex or twin	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y
Performance development	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Garden apartment	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Mid-rise apartment	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Senior citizens housing	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N
Rooming house	N	N	N	N	SE	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Dwelling with commercial	N	N	N	N	N	N	SE	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Mobile home	N	N	N	SE	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Bed-and-breakfast	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

Key

Y = yes, N = no, SE = use permitted by special exception

Zoning Districts

R1	Single-family residential	CS1	Community service
R2	Medium-density residential	CS2	Community service/natural lands preservation
R2A	Medium-density residential/nonresidential	LI	Light industrial
R3	Mixed residential/nonresidential	I1	Industrial
R4	Multifamily residential	I2	Industrial/technology
C1	Central commercial	NPEH	Nonprofit elderly housing
C2	Shopping center	P1	Professional
C3	Neighborhood commercial	RN	Riverview neighborhood
C4	Downtown		

The zoning ordinance has recently been reviewed and revised, but does not include provisions for single-family attached housing (townhouses). Since new forms of housing continue to evolve and sections of the borough are undergoing redevelopment, officials should update the zoning ordinance when necessary to incorporate provisions for additional housing types that may be suitable for new infill construction, townhouses, mixed-use, transit-oriented development, and age-restricted or age-targeted housing, aimed at older households without children.

Should establishment of a new SEPTA station in the borough make possible a transit oriented development district around the site now occupied by the Toll Brothers fabrication operations, its I-2 Industrial/Technology zoning may be changed to allow for mixed-use

development, and to incorporate housing. Age-targeted housing is examined in detail in the following section.

Age-Targeted Housing

Housing designed for childless adults age 55 and older, sometimes known as “active adult” or age-restricted housing, is a currently popular form of residential development targeted at the sizable and aging baby boom generation. Active adult communities usually include a clubhouse or other recreation and social amenities and are operated by a homeowners association, to minimize individual maintenance responsibilities.

Most often, this type of housing carries deed restrictions to ensure that at least one occupant of each unit is 55 or older. Morrisville now has no market-rate, age-restricted housing, but a pending redevelopment plan for the 12-plus-acre Cloverleaf site under auspices of the Bucks County Redevelopment Authority proposes up to 75 units of age-targeted housing on a site located in the RN Riverview Neighborhood zoning district. Age-targeted housing is designed for older households, but does not enforce age restrictions on occupancy through legal measures.

The zoning ordinance includes an NPEH Nonprofit Elderly Housing District and a senior citizens housing use, but those design standards are targeted to small-unit apartment housing for lower-income seniors, rather than townhouses, quadraplexes, detached villas, or other common forms of market-rate, owner-occupied housing for older adults. The housing design standards for the recently established RN District should provide enough flexibility in housing type to accommodate age-targeted or age-restricted housing at the desired high intensity of development.

Housing Maintenance and Neighborhood Preservation

The data in this section paint a picture of a small, close-knit community with a supply of older, predominantly sound housing of great diversity and relative affordability. The location of the borough and its housing stock on the Delaware River and served by highway and rail is an asset that should be capitalized on.

There are steps that can be taken to preserve and improve the condition of residential neighborhoods in the borough. Enactment and enforcement of zoning, health, safety and property maintenance code standards for rental and owner-occupied housing alike is a key method of maintaining property values, sound buildings, and attractive neighborhoods.

Most housing in Morrisville is in sound condition. There are scattered units in need of repair, including a few pockets of rental and owner-occupied housing in neighborhoods south of Bridge Street.

The borough's zoning ordinance provides for a variety of housing types. Some of these housing types—small-lot detached singles, twins, duplexes, and garden apartments, for example—are representative of the borough's housing stock as it has evolved over the years.

Size and bulk standards in the zoning ordinance are designed to retain the historic, walkable scale of the borough. Adherence to these standards preserves the appearance and fabric of neighborhoods by preventing “tear downs” and reconstruction of housing at an inappropriately large scale.

The borough should also review its housing, health, and safety code provisions to insure that they address issues such as yard maintenance, rehabilitation of substandard properties, security of vacant structures, and prevention of health and safety hazards like broken windows, vermin, and littered grounds. A comprehensive inspection program is a strong tool for maintaining housing quality and educating owners to perform routine repairs.

Typically, all properties (residential and nonresidential) are inspected for code compliance at the time of sale, and a certificate of occupancy is not granted unless violations are addressed. Point-of-sale inspection may be supplemented by a program of regular annual inspection. The goal of code enforcement is to see housing problems remedied.

The Bucks County Community Development program, the county Redevelopment Authority, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and private lenders are among potential sources of funding for housing rehabilitation or improvements to streets, sewer lines, sidewalks and other neighborhood infrastructure. DCED's Elm Street program is a potential source of resources and guidance for improvements to mixed-use downtown neighborhoods of residential, commercial and historic properties. Nonprofit organizations may be willing to sponsor programs to fix up housing owned by elderly or other lower-income households.

Historic preservation, as detailed in Chapter 9, is another strategy for maintaining sound and attractive neighborhoods. Historic district designation and appropriate zoning ordinance standards, in particular, provide enforceable ways to protect the eye appeal of historic neighborhoods.

Community greening and gardening programs foster not only beautification, but also community pride and quality of life. Pocket parks and street trees should be maintained, or added where possible. The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's “Green City” program, which advocates gateway beautification, street tree planting and the stabilization of lots and open spaces, and the Treevitalize program are potential sources of funding or technical assistance.

Promoting Homeownership

Encouraging homeownership is another way of strengthening neighborhoods. Households with a long-term financial investment in their homes are stakeholders in the future of their neighborhoods.

The borough has set a goal of increasing the rate of homeownership. The zoning ordinance has been reviewed and revised in order to discourage multi-family conversions of single-family housing. It also allows for both detached and attached housing types suitable for owner-occupancy.

As an additional means of promoting owner-occupancy, officials may wish to explore the possibility of creating a program to redirect duplexes or other rental conversions back to owner-occupancy. The redevelopment authority and local financial institutions could be potential partners in such a program, which typically makes use of grants, deferred repayment loans, or other financial incentives for acquisition and rehabilitation.

There are no properties known to be suitable for construction of detached, single-family housing subdivisions of any scale, since the large redevelopment sites in the borough have been designated for nonresidential use or higher-density residential redevelopment. Riverfront redevelopment and potential future mixed-use, transit-oriented development in the business district present an opportunity for developing upscale, attached units targeted to owner-occupancy. If any institutionally zoned properties are vacated by the school district or other institutions, the borough should consider rezoning them R-1 for single-family housing, unless the site serves an existing valuable recreational purpose. In that case, the borough should consider maintaining a community service zoning designation until such time the property could be acquired.

It is also recommended that representatives of the Landmark Towns program and its economic development agency consult with local realtors to coordinate efforts to publicize the borough's historic nature, affordability, charm, walkable scale, and highway access as marketing incentives for owner-occupied housing. Local officials may also wish to explore ways to coordinate efforts with community-based first-time homebuyers programs operated by the Bucks County Housing Group, the Consumer Credit Center, financial institutions, or others.

Morrisville Borough contains over 1.4 square miles of land. Land use can be described as the purpose for which land or buildings are used. Table 13 provides a snapshot of land use acreages within the borough in 2007 and Map 1 shows 2007 parcel-by-parcel land use.¹

Table 13. Land Use Characteristics (2007)		
Land Use	Acreage	Percentage*
Single-family residential	442.6	48.2%
Multifamily residential	58.2	6.3%
Mining and manufacturing	55.2	6.0%
Commercial	85.8	9.4%
Transportation and utilities	64.9	7.1%
Government and institutional	63.4	6.9%
Parks, recreation, open space	56.3	6.1%
Vacant	91.2	9.9%
Total	917.6	100%

Source: Bucks County Planning Commission

*Total does not equal 100 percent due to rounding

Almost half of the borough is dedicated to single-family residential land use. Single-family residential uses are located throughout the borough, with the majority located north of the Route 1 corridor. Multifamily land use comprises about 6.3 percent of the total borough acreage; most of this acreage is located in the Plaza Boulevard and Melvin Avenue area, along West Trenton Avenue, and interspersed in individual buildings along Bridge Street and downtown. Mining and manufacturing land use comprises 6.0 percent of the borough and is located at the Staley property (tax map parcel #24-11-31) in the southeast along the Delaware River, at the Toll Brothers site along South Pennsylvania Avenue, and along Nolan Avenue. Commercial land use, which makes up 9.4 percent of the borough’s land use, is focused along Bridge Street, Philadelphia Avenue, Pennsylvania Avenue (near its intersections with Bridge Street and Philadelphia Avenue), the west end of West Trenton Avenue, and East Trenton Avenue. Transportation and utilities land use has about 64.9 acres, government and institution has about 63.4 acres, and park and recreation land use has about 56.3 acres. Transportation and utilities land use are located throughout the borough, the vast majority within rights-of-way. Government and institutional land use generally consist of municipal buildings, churches, the Morrisville Cemetery, Morrisville Middle and High School, Grandview Elementary School, and M. R. Reiter Elementary School. Park and recreation land use consists of the Delaware Canal, Graystones, Manor

¹ For 2007 land use mapping and statistics, subdivision and land development proposals that had received a building permit at the time of plan production was considered constructed or subdivided and the parcel and its respective acreage was included in the appropriate land use category.

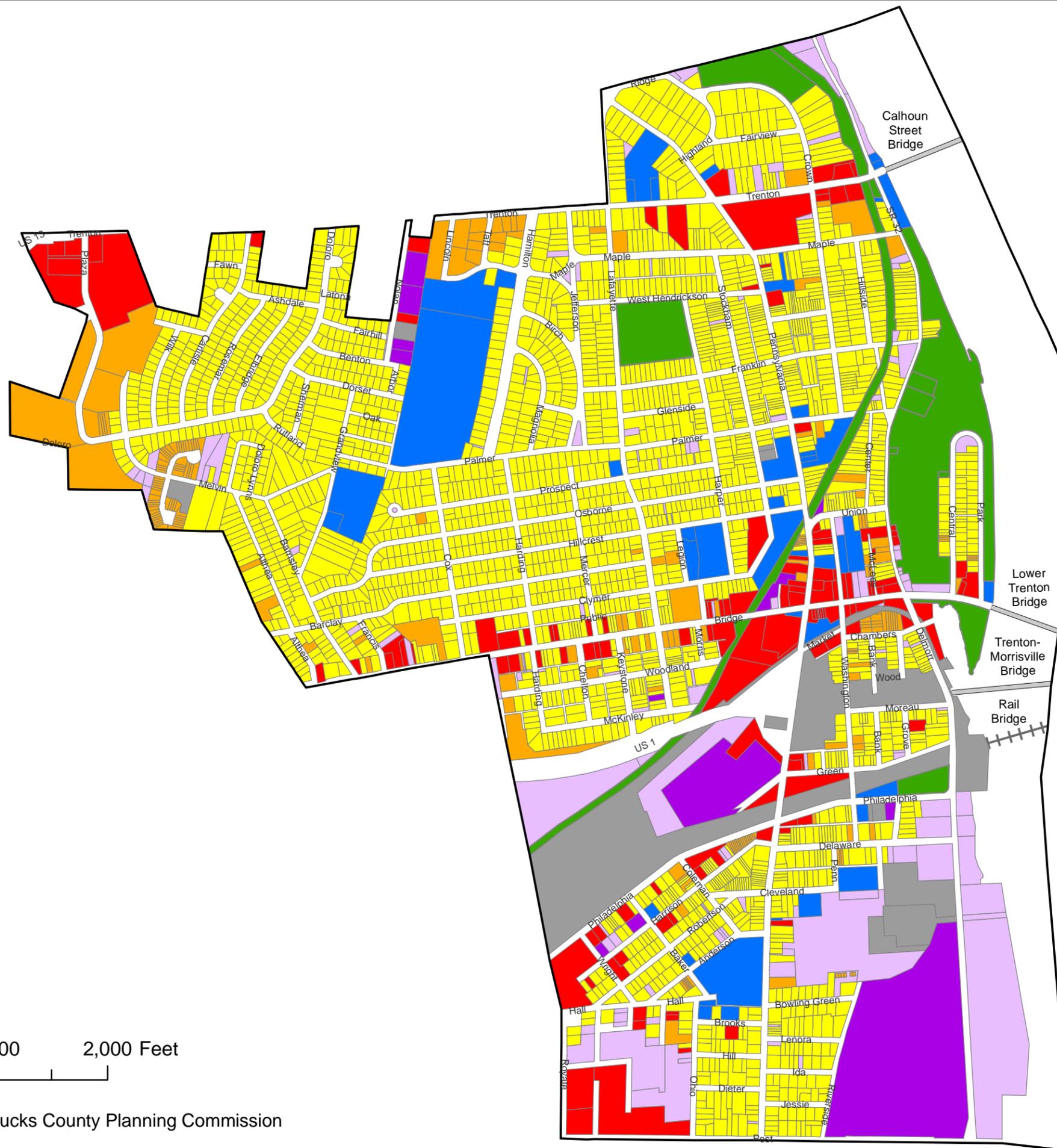
Park Playground, and Williamson Park. Vacant land uses consist of small parcels throughout the borough, Morrisville Lake, and several larger parcels adjacent to the Toll and Staley sites. The borough contains no agricultural land use.

Future Development

Development and redevelopment of several vacant and underutilized² parcels remains a distinct possibility in the coming years. Larger vacant and underutilized parcels are located in south and east part of the borough. The remaining vacant land is located in residentially zoned areas spread throughout the borough. Industrially zoned land may be less likely to undergo development as residentially zoned land, due to the continued demand for new housing and the decline in the manufacturing sector of the economy. Changes in zoning from industrial to a residential district would encourage the development of larger vacant and underutilized parcels, if the sites are generally clean of contamination or other restrictions and the redevelopment of the property makes economic sense. The recently rezoned Staley property will be redeveloped in the future, given a minimum amount of contamination issues and natural resource restrictions. Infill residential development will occur on vacant properties within residential zones. A few vacant parcels have resource restrictions that may limit their development potential. For example, there are several properties along the Delaware River that are steeply sloping or located within the floodplain. These and properties with similar restrictions are not as likely to be developed.

² Partially vacant property or property which is not being used at full capacity.

Map 1 Existing Land Use



- Single Family Residential
- Multifamily Residential
- Commercial
- Government and Institutional
- Industrial
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
- Vacant
- Transportation and Utilities



0 1,000 2,000 Feet

Prepared by: Bucks County Planning Commission

Morrisville Borough
Bucks County, Pennsylvania

Natural resources serve not only to help maintain the character of a place and enhance the quality of life, but understanding their importance also is crucial for helping guide land use planning and future development. This chapter provides an inventory of the existing important natural resources in the borough that should be protected and regulated including wetlands, floodplains, trees, as well as other topics of environmental concern for an urbanized municipality such as air quality and water quality.

Significant Natural Areas

Bucks County contains a diversity of unique natural features. These natural features harbor flora and fauna, some of which are not found anywhere else in the Commonwealth. In 1999, an inventory was performed to identify and rank the most significant natural areas remaining in the county, including those in Morrisville Borough. This survey, titled *Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County, Pennsylvania (1999)* was conducted by the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania (Ann F. Rhoads and Timothy A. Block) for the Bucks County Commissioners, and is intended to provide guidance for implementation of natural areas protection component of the Bucks County Open Space Initiative.

Specifically, the inventory analyzed sites based on thirteen criteria which address various aspects of biology, ecology, hydrology, and geology. Based on the evaluation of these sites against various criteria, sites were categorized based on their significance and uniqueness ranging from the highest ranked Priority 1 sites, which include sites of state-wide and county-wide significance based on the uniqueness or exceptionally high-quality of the natural features they encompass, through the lowest ranked Priority 4 sites, which are characterized as sites with biological or ecological importance at the local level. In Morrisville Borough two Priority 3 sites were identified: Graystones and the Head of the Delaware Estuary / Tidal Shores at Welcome Park. These two sites are also mentioned in the *Natural Bucks County: Guide to Public Natural Areas*. The guide describes the location and amenities of this area, highlighting rare plants and animals and unique geological features. In addition to Graystones and Welcome Park, this guide also identifies the Delaware River Levee along Williamson Park as an additional natural area.

Graystones, an outcrop of Chickies Quartzite, marks the intersection of the Fall Line with the Delaware River. This site also has historical significance as the starting point of the survey of the initial purchase that William Penn made from the Native Americans in 1682. As mentioned in the *Morrisville Borough Open Space Plan (2000)*, this site, in addition to its historical significance, also contains a seven-acre remnant stand of mature Red oak – mixed hardwood forest. As cited in the *Lower Delaware River Conservation Plan (1999)*, a river conservation plan prepared as an outgrowth of the *Lower Delaware River Management Plan* in

conjunction with the *Lower Delaware National Wild and Scenic River Study*, this is one of only two remaining old growth woods in Bucks County.

The Tidal Shores at Welcome Park natural area provides access to the upper end of the Delaware Estuary and marks the upstream limit of the tide in the river. The riverbank, including areas south of Bridge Street to the south border of Morrisville, consists of a freshwater intertidal zone which is alternately inundated and exposed as the tide rises and falls twice daily. The *Morrisville Borough Open Space Plan (2000)* identifies several specialized plants in this habitat including many-flowered mud-plantain (*Heteranthera multiflora*), swamp beggar ticks (*Bidens bidentoides*), and water-hemp ragweed (*Amaranthus cannabinus*), all critically imperiled in the state and identified as endangered and threatened plants in Pennsylvania.

The Delaware River Levee at Williamson Park provides a vantage point from which to view the rocky portion of the river bed resulting from erosion where the river crosses the Fall line rock formation. As noted in the *Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County*, the tidal portion of the Delaware River provides habitat for several rare animals including Atlantic and Shortnosed sturgeon, nesting Osprey and Peregrine falcons, and Redbelly turtles. Fresh water tidal marshes harbor 13 rare plant species and also serve as nursery areas for fish.

The role of these significant natural areas, specifically their contribution to open space, and the opportunities they provide for recreational opportunities, will be discussed in additional detail in other chapters of this plan.

Geologic and Groundwater Resources

The geology of an area, although seldom seen except for surface outcrops, is the foundation of the natural features of a community and influences development choices. The underlying bedrock of an area has an influence on the type of soil formed, and in conjunction with the hydrologic cycle, is responsible for the changes in elevation, steep slopes, locations of streams, and orientation.

Morrisville Borough lies within a geologic area called the Fall Zone. The Fall Line, representing the inner boundary of the Atlantic Coastal Plain, defines the point where the tide stops due to a change in geology resulting in a rise in the land surface. Within the Fall Zone, areas to the south and east of the Fall Line are the loose sands and gravels characteristic of the Atlantic Coastal Plain, while the areas to the north tend to be characterized by the metamorphic and sedimentary rocks of the Piedmont. However, due to erosion in certain areas of surface deposits that extend beyond the Fall Line and the Atlantic Coastal Plain, the true line has been blurred, hence resulting in the term Fall Zone. The geologic formations underlying Morrisville Borough are described below.

Morrisville Borough has five major geologic formations: Chickies Quartzite, Felsic Gneiss, Mafic Gneiss, Wisconsin Pleistocene, and Pre Wisconsin Pleistocene. Groundwater supplies largely depend upon geology, surface characteristics, water use, and seasonal precipitation. The capacity of aquifers to transmit and store water is directly related to the specific physical and chemical properties of the geologic formations which underlie the borough. The descriptions and water bearing characteristics of the borough's geologic formations are described below:

Chickies Quartzite – Quartzite is a metamorphic rock formed when sandstone is exposed to extreme heat and pressure. It is hard, dense rock that weathers slowly and forms prominent narrow hills and ridges. It contains poor groundwater supplies.

Felsic Gneiss – Fine-grained granite gneiss is a metamorphic rock that is resistant to weathering but shows good surface drainage, and median groundwater yields are below 20 gallons/minute.

Mafic Gneiss – Medium to fine-grained gneiss is a metamorphic rock that is highly resistant to weathering but shows good surface drainage.

Wisconsin and Pre-Wisconsin Pleistocene – Unconsolidated sands and gravels that generally yield good to excellent supplies of groundwater. The highly porous nature of this aquifer also poses a high risk of contamination due to rapid percolation of septic systems and sources of pollution.

Soils

Soils are one of the most important natural features to consider when making planning decisions because the type of soil influences the vegetative land cover, which in turn affects the quality and quantity of groundwater, wildlife diversity, erosion rates, and the overall aesthetic nature of the landscape.

A total of eight different soil types are located throughout Morrisville Borough. Of this total, three different soil types represent the majority of all soils. The most prevalent soil types are the Urban Land-Matapeake Complex (0 to 8 percent slopes), Urban Land-Occasionally Flooded, and Urban Land (0 to 8 percent slopes) with Urban Land-Matapeake Complex being the predominant soil type in the borough.

Urban Land soil types are pervasive throughout Morrisville Borough. The soils and foundation materials are highly variable. Urban structures and works cover so much of this land that identification of the soils is not practical. Most areas have been smoothed and the original soil material has been disturbed, filled over, or otherwise destroyed prior to construction.

Urban Land-Matapeake Complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes, is composed of about 65 percent urban land, 25 percent Matapeake soil and similar inclusions and 10 percent contrasting inclusions. Urban Land is land covered by streets, parking lots, buildings and other structures that obscure the soils. Matapeake soils are yellowish brown silt loams underlain by gravelly loamy to coarse sands that are dark yellowish brown. Urban Land has rapid runoff rates due to highly impermeable surfaces and low levels of erosion. Matapeake soils are well drained with a seasonal high water table greater than 72 inches. Runoff from these soils is moderate and the potential for erosion is moderate. In those areas where slopes exceed 4 percent, the erosion potential is considered high (USDA 1996).

Other soil types represented in Morrisville Borough include Urban Land-Chester Complex (0 to 8 percent slopes), Urban Land-Chester Complex (8 to 25 percent slopes), Udorthents-gravelly, Nanticoke-Hatboro silt loams, and Delaware loam (0 to 3 percent slopes).

Hydric Soils

Hydric soils are poorly drained, seasonal wet soils that are found in stream valleys, forested wetlands, and other low-lying areas and depressions. They are formed under anaerobic conditions, and because of their ability to support wetland vegetation, are often used as initial indicators of wetlands. Hydric soils are highly sensitive to land disturbances and unsuitable for most development purposes as they are not generally suitable for supporting structures. Of the soil types within Morrisville Borough, and as identified in the *Morrisville Borough Open Space Plan (2000)*, the Nanticoke-Hatboro silt loams located along the Delaware River are classified as hydric soils. According to the *Lower Delaware River Conservation Plan*, there are 34 acres of hydric soils in the borough, representing 3 percent of the total acreage in the borough. The subdivision and land development ordinance lists hydric soils as one of three defining parameters of wetlands, which are described in more detail later in this chapter.

Floodplain Soils

Floodplain soils are alluvial soils found in low lying areas that are subject to periodic flooding. These soils closely correspond to existing creeks, tributaries, and drainage ways. These soils are considered unsuitable for most development purposes because of the flooding potential. In some cases, well-drained floodplain soils may be suitable for agricultural, recreational, park, or open space uses. For the purpose of the zoning ordinance, the areas considered to be within the floodplain are those areas identified as the 100-year floodplain from the Federal Flood Insurance Study or those areas containing floodplain soils, whichever is greater. Floodplains are discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

Surface Water Resources

The borough's surface water resources include the Delaware River, the Delaware Canal, Mill Pond, Morrisville Lake, and a variety of unnamed streams. All of these water resources are important because they provide significant environmental, recreational, and economical benefits to the borough and lower Bucks region. These resources accommodate stormwater runoff, provide for groundwater recharge and wildlife habitat, and contribute to the array of scenic resources.

The Delaware River is the borough's most valuable natural resource for many reasons including recreational, scenic qualities, and wildlife habitation. Because of this, it is important to protect this resource from residential and commercial expansion which, if left unrestricted, could threaten the environmental stability and beauty of the river. As mentioned above, the *Natural Bucks County: Guide to Public Natural Areas* and the *Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County, Pennsylvania* both speak to the significance of the river. Additionally, as cited in the *Lower Delaware National Wild and Scenic Study Report*, the Delaware River Shore area in Morrisville is a critical habitat area, primarily due to the vegetation along the river providing valuable habitat for birds and other animals, and shade for fish in the river.

The river and its banks function not only as natural resources worthy of continued protection, but also serve as recreational resources, providing for a variety of recreational opportunities. The incorporation of riverfront activities, trails, and other recreational opportunities is consistent with the objectives of the *Delaware River Heritage Trail Study (2003)*, as well as the *Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan*. As noted in the *Morrisville Borough Open Space Plan*, the borough is unique in terms of the large amount of riverfront land that is in public ownership which results in greater public access opportunities relative to other waterfront communities.



Delaware River

The Delaware Canal, constructed between 1827 and 1832 to transport coal from the Upper Lehigh Valley to Philadelphia, New York, and other eastern seaboard destinations, is a scenic, recreational, and historic resource. Delaware Canal State Park, which stretches between Easton and Bristol, is heavily used and is valued for its scenic character. The towpath of the canal is used as a hiking and bicycle trail and has been designated a National Heritage Hiking Trail. The proposed East Coast Greenway Project, which would include the Morrisville stretch of the Delaware Canal towpath, seeks to develop the nation's first long-distance, city-to-city, multi-modal transportation corridor for cyclists, hikers, and other non-motorized users. Additionally, the entire Delaware Canal is a registered National Historic Landmark.

Mill Pond, located along Bridge Street, adjacent to the Holiday Inn and 7-Eleven, is a remnant of the old rubber mill. The pond appears to be an underutilized resource in the community. Due to its central location and the access it provides to the adjacent Delaware Canal, Mill Pond is a key site that should be capitalized on through acquisition and restoration.

The other water body in the borough is the Morrisville Lake, located in the southwest corner of the borough. This lake is on the site of an old quarry pit, and as identified in the *Morrisville Borough Open Space Plan*, has the potential to become a recreational facility for the borough. However, given the industrial history of the property and adjacent sites, an environmental assessment would need to be conducted, and appropriate action undertaken, prior to allowing public access to the site.

The zoning ordinance has established restrictions relative to open waterways and prohibits development or filling of open waterways unless approval is obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

Watersheds/Streams

A watershed consists of all the land and waterways that drain into the same main body of water. Smaller watersheds join with other watersheds to drain into larger watersheds; hundreds of watersheds, including those that cover Morrisville Borough, ultimately drain into the Delaware River. The drainage of water resources through a watershed includes groundwater as well as surface water.

The entirety of Morrisville Borough is within the Delaware River (South) watershed. The borough also contains a small tributary to the Rock Run basin, located in Falls Township, in the northwest portion of the borough. Additionally, the borough contains a variety of unnamed streams. At the borough line with Lower Makefield Township, an unnamed stream empties into the Delaware River. As cited in the *Lower Delaware River Conservation Plan*, a number of small seeps and drains empty into the Delaware River along the

riverfront south of Bridge Street and continuing to the borough boundary with Falls Township. Similarly, a tidal wetland area occurs between Bridge Street and the Route 1 expressway and has a small stream flowing into it. Additionally, other small streams may have been directed into culverts and buried as the borough developed. When these streams do surface, such as may be the case with some of the streams identified, they are often channelized with stone walls to prevent destruction to adjacent properties, resulting in the streams losing their natural character, and few areas of native riparian vegetation remain.

To address the threats to the various streams, the zoning ordinance has established restrictions that no open waterways shall be developed or filled without the approval of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. Guidelines for the protection of the Delaware River (South) watershed is provided for via the *Lower Delaware River Conservation Plan*, the *Lower Delaware River Management Plan*, the *Delaware River Basin Commission Comprehensive Plan*, the *Water Resources Plan for the Delaware River Basin*, as well as the activities of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network and the Morrisville Borough Environmental Advisory Council. These various plans were developed to aid in the protection of the watershed and mitigate potential impacts from development.

Chapter 93 of the Pennsylvania Code establishes surface water quality standards. These standards require that all named surface water bodies be classified based upon use and water quality. The anti-degradation aspect of Chapter 93 specifies that, once classified, existing water uses and the level of water quality necessary to protect the existing uses shall be maintained and protected. These criteria are used to establish waste discharge permit limits. The Delaware River is classified as a Warm Water Fishery (WWF) and Migratory Fishery (MF). The Warm Water Fishery designation means it is a water body that supports fish, plants and animals that thrive and prefer warmer temperatures (above 70 degrees F) such as bass and sunfish. Warm water fishes such as bass, perch, white suckers and many other species are abundant year-round; and the fish community is supplemented annually by major migrations of American Shad, American Eel, and River Herring. Owing to its free-flowing character and good water quality, the Delaware River is a major sport-fishing draw for anglers who seek these migratory species. The Migratory Fishery designation Migratory fishery (MF) means that fish use this “designated” waterway to travel to and from the ocean to reproduce. Any discharges to the Delaware River are required to comply with the standards and limits established as part of the Pennsylvania Code specific to Warm Water and Migratory Fisheries.

Riparian Corridors

Development and activities that remove vegetation from riverbanks and streambanks create a variety of negative consequences on watercourses. Without the vegetative buffer, runoff from adjacent areas more quickly enters the watercourse, exacerbating erosion, increasing floodwaters during the flood cycle, and destroying nature habitats. In addition, pesticides

and herbicides used in lawn care, sediment from construction activities, and oils, salts and other contaminants from streets are able to flow directly into the watercourse when it rains.

An effective zoning technique for reducing these impacts is to establish riparian buffer zones. A riparian buffer zone is the normally vegetated or wooded area occurring along a watercourse, which is protected by ordinance in 100 percent open space. Generally, the larger the buffer, the more it is able to protect the watercourse and species that depend on it. Morrisville Borough currently has no standards for riparian buffer zones.

Wetlands and Floodplain Resources

Wetlands

Typically, wetlands occur as marshes, swamps, bogs, or seasonal vernal ponds. Often they are undrained, saturated soils that support wetland vegetation where the water table is at or near the surface or where shallow water covers the area due to permanent or seasonal inundation of surface or groundwater. Some wetlands are easily identified because the presence of water is obvious. However, other wetlands such as vernal ponds are subject to seasonal flooding resulting in surface water not being present year-round.

The protection of wetlands is important for several reasons. Wetlands play a key role in maintaining and improving water quality by filtering out chemical and organic wastes. Wetlands store water during storms and floods, thereby reducing hazards to life and property; provide groundwater recharge; and are important habitats for many threatened or endangered plants and animals. The National Wetlands Inventory indicates wetlands along the Delaware Canal State Park at the Lower Makefield Township line; along the Delaware River between the Lower Trenton Free Bridge and the Route 1 Bridge (inlet area); and in the area of Morrisville Lake. However, the inventory maps identify only very large wetland areas, and there are certainly other areas of the borough that are wetlands but which do not appear on the large-scale inventory maps. According to the *Lower Delaware River Conservation Plan*, there are 143 acres of wetlands areas in the borough.

The Morrisville Borough zoning ordinance requires that marshes and wetlands be left intact and that no development, diverting, filling, or piping shall be permitted. In addition to local protection standards, wetlands are regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection under the aegis of the Federal Clean Water Act and various state laws. The Corps requires a permit to disturb wetlands greater than one acre in size. State and/or federal agencies that permit wetlands disturbance may require that the loss of wetlands be mitigated by the creation of wetland areas elsewhere. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection also regulates wetlands under Chapter 105 Rules and Regulations administered by the Bureau of Dams and Waterways Management. Although the borough zoning ordinance prohibits the development, filling, piping or diverting of wetlands and marshes, there are currently no

provisions limiting the extent to which wetlands margins can be disturbed. Consideration should be given to implementing ordinance provisions to define wetland margins, specify those uses allowed in the wetlands areas, and specify the extent to which other uses may disturb the wetlands margins. Wetland margin areas are often defined as an area that extends 100 feet from the wetland boundary or to the limit of hydric soils, whichever is less (in no case shall the margin be less than 50 feet). The extent to which other uses may disturb wetlands margins is often defined as a maximum of 20 percent disturbance.

Given the strict regulations in place prohibiting the development and destruction of wetlands, threats to wetlands come primarily from the secondary impacts of development. Grading and development near wetlands causes these resources to suffer the loss of hydrologic function and critical wildlife species. The destruction of adjacent vegetation and the construction of impervious surfaces increase the amount of stormwater runoff and decrease the natural capacity of the wetland to handle water volumes, runoff speed, and pollutants.

Additionally, changing the topography of the site surrounding the wetland affects the direction of stormwater runoff and can lead to either increased or decreased amounts of water reaching the wetland. An increase in stormwater runoff may overburden the ability of the wetland to deal with floodwater and pollutants by continually inundating it. Conversely, reduced stormwater runoff may affect the hydrologic functions of a wetland and threaten its continued existence. Even if the topography of surrounding sites remains unaltered, a wetland may still have its hydrologic functions affected by the increased impervious surfaces and stormwater channeling.

Floodplains

Floodplains are relatively flat or low-lying areas adjacent to surface waters where flooding has occurred in the past and will likely occur in the future. During periods of heavy rains and high stream flow, floodplains provide temporary storage for floodwaters, reducing flooding threats to adjacent areas and providing a slower, more consistent flow of water. The *Bucks County Natural Resources Plan* notes that floodplains that support natural vegetation help trap sediment from upland surface runoff, stabilize stream banks for erosion control, and provide shelter for wildlife and proper stream conditions for aquatic life.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood maps for Morrisville Borough identify specific floodplains in the borough. The areas identified include the following:

- North of the Calhoun Street Bridge, the area between the Delaware Canal State Park and Delaware River
- South of the Calhoun Street Bridge, the river side of the levee

- South of Bridge Street and north of East Philadelphia Avenue, the area up to and just across Delmorr Avenue
- South of East Philadelphia Avenue, the area extending back to Riverview Avenue and Riverside Drive, including all of the Staley property

The Pennsylvania Floodplain Management Act (Act 166 of 1978) requires municipalities identified by the Flood Insurance Administration (FIA) as having flood prone areas to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Under the administration of the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), flood prone municipalities are required to adopt ordinances that meet NFIP standards for regulating development in the floodplain. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mapped 100-year floodplain areas in the borough and identified these in the Flood Insurance Study dated April 4, 2004. Those areas identified by this study are considered to be floodplain within the borough. According to the *Lower Delaware River Conservation Plan*, there are 203 acres in the floodplain area in the borough, representing 16 percent of the total acreage in the borough.

Disturbance of floodplains for development purposes increases the dangers of floods, destroys vegetation, reduces the opportunity for groundwater recharge, disrupts wildlife habitats, and adversely impacts other environmental benefits of this natural resource. In recognition of this, the borough has incorporated provisions into the zoning ordinance to ensure the protection of floodplains. Specifically, the zoning ordinance delineates areas within the floodplain to include the Floodway, defined as the area of a floodplain designed to carry and discharge flood waters of a flood of the one-hundred-year magnitude, and the Flood Fringe, defined as the portion of the floodplain which can be regarded as suitable to accommodate limited building construction without significant effect upon one-hundred-year flood elevations. The ordinance specifies that encroachments, including fill, new construction, substantial improvements, and other development within the Floodway Zone that would result in any increase in flood levels during the one-hundred year flood are prohibited. The zoning ordinance also specifically prohibits the placement of mobile homes in the Floodway zone.

Floodplain limitations do not preclude all development. These areas may be ideal for passive or low impact recreational uses, such as wildlife and nature preserves, trails, and picnic grounds. Allowing for these types of uses in floodplain areas is consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the *Morrisville Borough Open Space Plan* (2000) that identified Morrisville's waterfront as a resource to provide recreational opportunities, providing that wildlife habitats are still protected. Providing for a greenway and trail system for recreational purposes along the Delaware River is also consistent with the objectives of the *Delaware River Heritage Trail Study* (2003); the recommendations of the

Bucks County Open Space Task Force (2007) which proposed designating a portion of the county's Municipal Open Space funding be designated to riverfront municipalities for the purpose of acquiring land or conservation easements for recreation and natural resources purposes; and the *Bucks County Waterfront Redevelopment Plan (2005)* which recommended a continuous public riverwalk be created along the Delaware River; increased riverfront gateways and corridors; and additional open space and active recreation opportunities be provided at river's edge.

Moderate and Steep Slopes Resources

The majority of Morrisville Borough is characterized by a diversity of topography ranging from nearly level along floodplain areas adjacent to the river, to moderately sloping topography along much of the Fall Zone, to more steeply sloping areas in the Graystones area. Topography can have a profound influence on development capacity, stormwater runoff, and site erodibility. The grade and soils present on moderate and steep slopes are a result of the vegetation, underlying geology, and precipitation levels. Maintaining the right balance through proper vegetative cover and minimizing development reduces the danger to public health and safety posed by unstable hillsides.

Development on steep slopes accelerates erosion by removing or disturbing the established groundcover and topsoil. Removal of the vegetation destroys the groundcover that absorbs rainwater, anchors soil, and buffers or dissipates the impact of rainfall on topsoil. Erosion produces sediment that pollutes surface water. Over time, accumulated sediments narrow stream channels and fill ponds. This process restricts the capacity of waterways to handle flood flows and increases the incidence and severity of flooding. The majority of the steeply sloping areas in Morrisville Borough are located in the Graystones area which is dominated by soil type Urban land, Chester Complex (8 to 25 percent slopes).

Generally, slopes of 0 to 8 percent are suitable for most types of development. Residential development is also possible, though less desirable, for 8 to 15 percent slopes. If development is permitted to occur on 15 to 25 percent slopes, it should allow for dwellings and other structures to be placed away from steep slope areas. Any slope above 25 percent should be restricted to parks, forests, or open space. The zoning ordinance restricts the development of areas with slopes of 8 percent or greater as shown in the table below:

Table 14. Steep Slope Regulations	
Slope	Allowable Disturbance
8 to 15 percent	No more than 50 percent
15 to 25 percent	No more than 30 percent
25 percent or steeper	No more than 15 percent

Woodlands

The trees and woodlands that exist in Morrisville Borough add to the visual attractiveness of the borough and provide a habitat for wildlife. In addition to the visual benefits that trees and woodland areas provide, they also play an important role in the ecological balance and well-being of the environment by reducing erosion from runoff, stabilizing stream banks, providing wildlife habitats, creating buffers between the built environment, providing recreational opportunities, reducing pollution by absorbing carbon dioxide, and aesthetically enhancing the environment. Vegetative cover also enhances groundwater recharge by reducing the volume and rate of runoff. When woodlands are located in environmentally sensitive areas, such as steep slope areas, along tributaries and wetlands, even minor disturbances can lead to serious environmental degradation.

While Morrisville is a developed borough, it has several wooded areas that serve functional and aesthetic purposes. The original vegetation in Morrisville Borough consisted of a variety of hardwood species. A seven-acre remnant stand of this type of hardwood forest remains today around Graystones which includes oaks, tulip tree, beech, white ash, and other hardwoods. In addition to the hardwood forest near Graystones, Morrisville has wooded areas along the Delaware River; along the Delaware Canal; residential wooded areas concentrated in the northeast portion of the borough; a wooded area to the west of the borough sewage facility plant; and a wooded buffer area along the Route 1 corridor. Both the residential and larger wooded areas in Morrisville contribute to the scenic quality of the borough as they provide natural enclaves in the midst of an otherwise developed area.



London Planetree

The wooded areas along the Delaware River, being somewhat denser and more extensive than the residential woodlands, provide a natural buffer and slow erosion of the banks of the river. Given the unique setting of the borough on the border between the Atlantic Coastal Plain and the Piedmont Regions, the area contains a diversity of trees and shrubs both within the River Birch Swamp Maple forest found along the Delaware River, and the Sweet Gum-Willow Oak forest community occurring along the Atlantic Coastal Plain. The River Birch-Swamp Maple forest usually occurs on low-lying tracts and on the floodplains of streams, and predominantly comprises hardwoods. Some of the species associated with the River Birch-Swamp Maple forest community include silver maple, red maple, box elder, white oak, swamp white oak, sycamore, river birch, white ash, black walnut, red osier, and a variety of willow. Characteristic species found in the Sweet Gum-Willow Oak forest

community include willow oak, sweet gum, laurel magnolia, common highbush blueberry, coast pepperbush, and red chokeberry.

In addition to these wooded areas, the borough benefits greatly from the wide diversity of trees contained throughout the borough. To aid in the preservation and ongoing maintenance of these trees, the borough contracted with Temple University to conduct an inventory and assess the current conditions of trees in selected areas in the summer of 2007. The *Street Tree Inventory Report: Morrisville, PA* revealed the following information relative to the 1,075 trees surveyed:

- The tree population is dominated by London planetree (15 percent), Pin oak (15 percent), Norway maple (14 percent), and Eastern White Pine (6 percent).
- The 1,075 trees were distributed among 36 genus and 59 tree species

While this inventory suggests that Morrisville Borough has a relatively diverse tree population, it also revealed the following issues that need to be addressed:

- Almost 45 percent of the trees were classified as being either dead, or in poor to fair condition indicating that despite regular tree maintenance by the borough, a significant percentage of trees have structural defects, damage from disease, and crown thinning or imbalance. Unfortunately, those classified as poor (12 percent) or dead (1 percent) will be cost prohibitive to restore and will ultimately be lost.
- Despite a diversity of trees, two genus, *Acer* sp. (maple), and *Quercus* sp. (oak) are each more than 20 percent of the total population. As cited by Frank Santamour of the U.S. National Arboretum Agricultural Research Service, in his study entitled *Trees for Urban Planting: Diversity, Uniformity, and Common Sense (1990)*, to guard against the possibility of large-scale devastation by both native and introduced insect and disease pests, no single species should account for more than 10 percent of total tree population.

The borough's zoning ordinance and tree protection ordinance standards in the subdivision and land development ordinance are currently the two tools used to provide for the protection of woodlands. Specifically, the zoning ordinance stipulates that areas of forest or mature stands of trees are to be left intact where possible and that if trees are to be removed, that no more that 40 percent of such areas may be developed and/or cleared. The tree protection standards contained in the subdivision and land development ordinance requires that prior to construction, a tree protection zone be delineated and clearly marked and protected by a forty-eight inch high wooden snow fence. These standards also regulate the types of activities that can occur within and/or near the tree protection zone.

Additional measures that should be considered for the purpose of providing greater protection of woodlands and trees and helping establish a greener Morrisville include:

- Establish a Shade Tree Commission for the purpose of creating and maintaining optimum tree cover and species diversity. Although the Environmental Advisory Council may be able to fulfill a similar role, it is important that the focus be maintained on the preservation of this community resource, particularly if waterfront development activities begin to occur. Additionally, a separate committee may provide more leverage in obtaining grant funding and in overseeing the maintenance of trees throughout the borough.
- Establish more stringent regulations relative to the protection of forests in environmentally sensitive areas such as floodplains, steep slopes, wetlands, and wetlands margins. A lower level of disturbance / clearance is critical in these areas.
- Amend the subdivision and land development ordinance to require all new development to incorporate the planting of street trees. Although street trees are required as part of the requirements for use A15 – Riverview Neighborhood (RN), the borough should require the planting of street trees for all new development.
- Adopt the recommendations contained in the *Street Tree Inventory Report*, relative to updating the tree protection ordinance; training; increasing community involvement; increased species diversity; and implementing a formal planting program to ensure that new trees are planted each year to replace those that are removed or lost; and establishing a pruning program to help address deferred maintenance issues with the existing tree inventory.

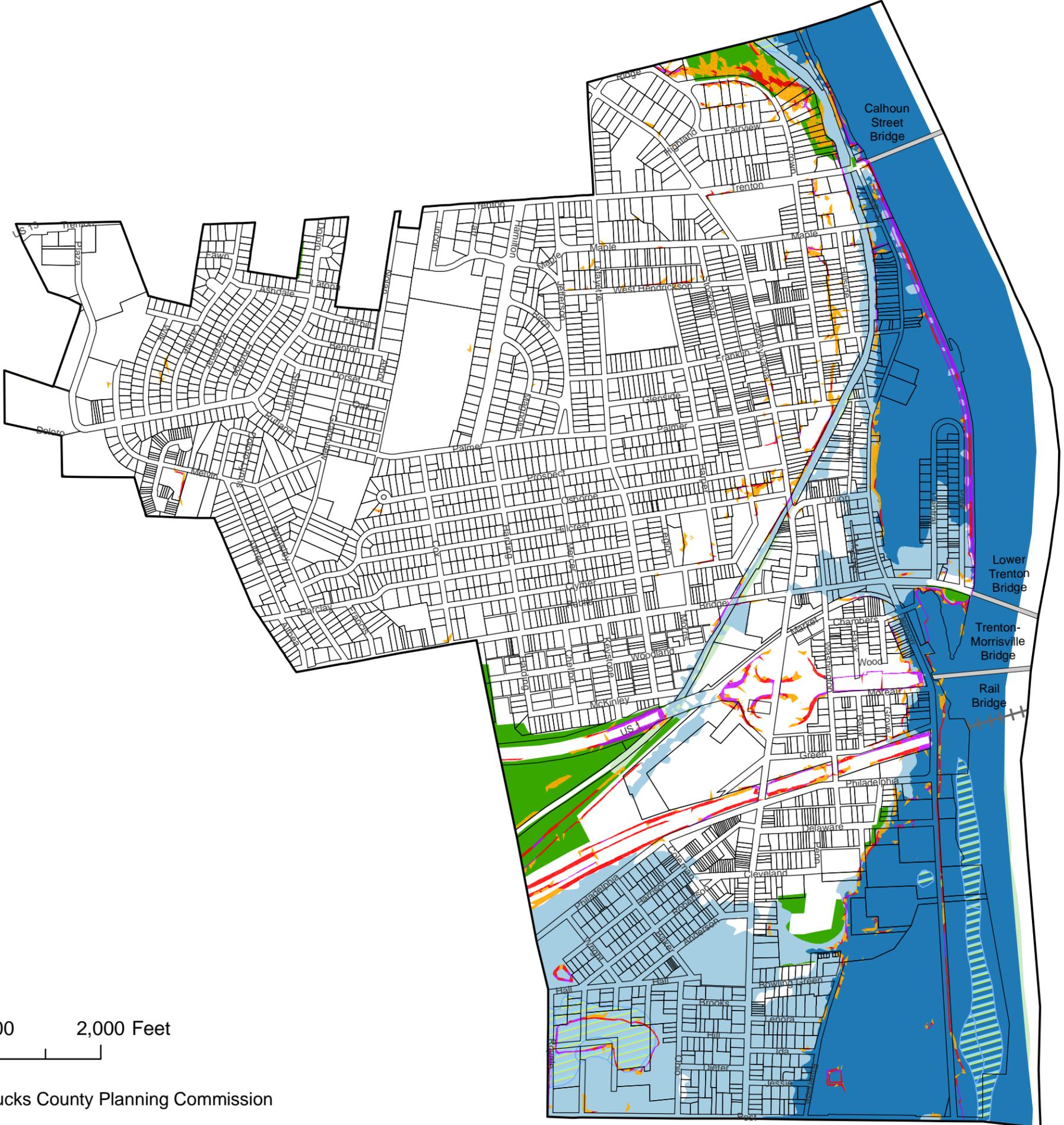
Resource Protection Strategies

Green Infrastructure

Although a variety of natural resources have been identified in this chapter, and protection standards highlighted, these resources taken in isolation are just disparate elements. To leverage and capitalize on the diversity of these resources, consideration should be given to the development of a green infrastructure. Green infrastructure is an interconnected system of public and private natural areas, parks, greenways, and open space that protect ecosystems, provide recreational opportunities, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources, and contributes to the health and quality of life for both plant and animal species.

As outlined in Heritage Conservancy's, *Growing with Green Infrastructure*, green infrastructure consists of a combination of hubs and links. Hubs are those areas that provide an origin or destination for both humans and wildlife and range from areas with

Map 2 Natural Resources



-  Wetlands
-  Area of 100 Year Flood
-  Area of 500 Year Flood
-  Floodplain Soils
-  Woodland Area
- Slope
-  8 to 15 Percent
-  15 to 25 Percent
-  25 Percent and Greater



0 1,000 2,000 Feet

Prepared by: Bucks County Planning Commission

Morrisville Borough
Bucks County, Pennsylvania

less human interaction such as wildlife areas and reserves, to areas with more human interaction such as parks and open spaces. Locally, example of hubs would include Graystones and Williamson Park. Links serve to interconnect the hubs and facilitate the flow of ecological processes. Similar to hubs, links include areas with less human interaction such as conservation corridors that function primarily as conduits for wildlife, while also providing recreational opportunities, to links with more human interaction that are often in the form of open spaces and/or recreational trail corridors that connect wildlife reserves and parks, similar to the role of the Delaware Canal, shoreline areas of the Delaware River, and the various wooded areas and significant tree cover throughout the borough.

The first step in creating a green infrastructure is to identify the hubs. With the inventory of natural, historic, and open space resources contained throughout this plan, many of these hubs have been identified. Once all of these various resources / hubs have been identified, the next step involves mapping these various resources to provide a visualization of the resources and their proximity to each other. This step is critical to help facilitate the next step, that of identifying ways to connect the various hubs, in essence the links. Once the hubs and links have been identified, a plan is developed for the purpose of identifying specific tactics and actions to be utilized for building the green infrastructure focusing on areas such as land acquisition, establishing buffer requirements around sensitive natural areas, environmental remediation of sites, and street tree plantings.

The anticipated outcomes from building a green infrastructure include the enhancement of biodiversity via the protection of habitats and their associated physical, chemical, and biological processes; the preservation of wildlife relying on these habitats; the enhancement of air and water quality stemming from the protection of animal and plant species, linkage of open space areas, and the provision for active and passive recreational opportunities.

Given that the borough is a largely built-out community, but with several natural resource areas, the identification and creation of a green infrastructure will assist the borough in its efforts to conserve these resources for the purpose of supporting native species, maintaining natural ecological processes, sustaining air and water resources, and contributing to the health and quality of life for the community.

Low Impact Development

Although the zoning ordinance requires that proposed development comply with natural resource protection standards, additional tools and techniques can enhance resource protection on an individual site. Low Impact Development or LID, is an overarching approach to land development that uses various planning and design practices and technologies to conserve and protect environmental resources. The concept stresses minimizing impacts and site disturbances such as grading and tree removal and favors the

preservation and utilization of a site's natural drainage system. Site fingerprinting and minimum disturbance are two development techniques that can greatly reduce the impacts of grading. Incorporating LID techniques into the ordinances would strengthen and complement existing preservation provisions. Given the potential for future development in the southern portion of the borough, consideration should be given to incorporating these provisions into ordinances to provide added protection for natural resources.

Resource Protection Overlay District

A resource protection overlay district can direct development away from sensitive or environmentally important lands. Overlay districts are commonly used to increase protection of specific stream, scenic, watershed, or other sensitive lands by establishing a set of regulations that are in addition to the base zoning district and applied to specific locations within a community. Open space development design and other standards protecting resources can be incorporated into an overlay district. Techniques such as buffer strips, and numerous performance standards are usually included in overlay regulations.

Although the borough currently has a degree of natural resource protection via natural resource protection standards in the zoning ordinance, the *Morrisville Borough Open Space Plan*, *The Lower Delaware River Conservation Plan*, *The Lower Delaware River Management Plan*, and the *Morrisville Borough Tree Ordinance*, the establishment of a Resource Protection Overlay District should be further considered. This district could be divided into two categories, the primary features, which is composed of all natural features and resources on which development is constrained by ordinance and secondary features, which contain natural features such as scenic roads and vistas, not protected by ordinance, that the borough wants to preserve.

As with other overlay districts, a resource protection overlay district would allow development at the underlying zoning density of the tract, but would require the preservation of the primary natural features, and also try to preserve many of the secondary features. Depending upon the extent and quality of the site's secondary features, some of these secondary features may be lost during the development process.

This chapter analyzes commercial and industrial activity in Morrisville Borough as well as the employment characteristics of borough residents. Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the borough's nonresidential³ land use base is important for making policy decisions as they relate to zoning and infrastructure. This information is intended to serve as a guide to help maximize future economic development opportunities. Part II of this comprehensive plan will further explore specific physical improvements and policy methods of economic revitalization.

Nonresidential Land Use Characteristics

Morrisville contains several commercial shopping districts. These areas include the West Trenton Avenue commercial corridor, the Bridge Street commercial corridor and downtown area, the Morrisville Shopping Center, the Village Crossing shopping center (Giant supermarket), and the Morrisville portion of the Pennsbury Plaza shopping center.

Office development in the borough is limited to a few small storefront offices in the downtown and a few small office buildings. Due to a decline in the importance of manufacturing in the US economy, the borough is no longer an important center of industrial activity. Industrial development is limited to Lehigh Rubber on Bridge Street, the Toll Brothers site on Pennsylvania Avenue, the Staley site, and small manufacturers and shops throughout the borough. The borough does not have any industrial or office parks.

Zoning

The borough zoning ordinance has several different commercial districts. These are the C-1 Central Commercial district, the C-2 Shopping Center district, the C-3 Neighborhood Commercial district, and the C-4 Downtown district.

The C-1 district encompasses the downtown area of Bridge Street, Pennsylvania Avenue, Delmorr Avenue, and an area at the intersection of Park Avenue, Central Avenue, and Bridge Street. Uses permitted by right in the C-1 district include shopping centers, retail shops, personal services, financial establishments, restaurants (including "fast service"), repair shops, upholsterer and cabinet maker, mortuaries, motels and hotels, theaters, and automobile accessory sales. No off-street parking is required for the C-1 district. If an applicant provides off-street parking, the applicant must meet the off-street parking requirements of the ordinance.

³ For the purposes of this plan, nonresidential development includes all uses that do not have a residential, public, or religious component and do not have a significant employment base. Uses such as churches, and municipal buildings and facilities will be covered in Chapter 7 Community Services and Facilities.

The C-2 district encompasses the Village Crossing shopping center, the Morrisville portion of the Pennsbury Plaza shopping center, the Morrisville Shopping center, an area on West Philadelphia Avenue, and an area on East Philadelphia Avenue. The uses permitted in the C-2 district are virtually the same as permitted in the C-1 district, except that the C-2 district permits drive-in restaurants.

The C-3 district encompasses a stretch of East Trenton Avenue between Crown Street and North Delmorr Avenue, along Bridge Street as vehicles enter and exit the borough, and a small stretch of West Philadelphia Avenue. The C-3 district permits all the uses permitted by the C-1 district, but does not permit shopping centers, fast service eating restaurants, and drive-in restaurants.

The C-4 district is located at the south corner of Bridge Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. The C-4 district permits all the uses permitted by the C-1 district, but does not permit upholsterer and cabinet maker, mortuary, and automobile accessory sales.

C-1, C-2, and C-3 districts permit commercial land uses on a minimum lot area of 5,000 square feet. The C-4 district permits commercial uses on a minimum lot area of 10,000 square feet.

Another district that permits limited commercial uses is the borough's Riverview Neighborhood district (RN). Located between South Pennsylvania Avenue and the Delaware River, the RN district was established to foster the redevelopment of underutilized lands along the Delaware River into comprehensively planned, pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods. The district permits a variety of residential uses, including live-work units, office uses, and retail shops, financial establishments, and restaurants of less than 3,000 square feet per leasehold or use. Careful consideration of how commercial uses will integrate with the existing neighborhoods will be of primary importance when redevelopment occurs in this zoning district.

All of the C districts permit office uses, craftsman's shop, and printing, publishing, and binding uses. The C-1 district also permits wholesale businesses. Craftsman's shop, printing, publishing, and binding, and wholesale businesses should be limited to the L-1 Light Industrial, I Industrial, or I-2 Industrial/Technology districts. Such uses are not dependent on a location within a shopping district. They also can create negative impacts on adjacent retail uses, such as truck traffic and noise.

The borough should consider revising the C-1 district regulations to prohibit uses that may not be appropriate to the downtown setting. For example, shopping centers (especially strip centers) and automobile accessory sales, which are permitted in the C-1 district, are two such inappropriate uses because they cater specifically to vehicular traffic at the expense of

pedestrian traffic. Traditional suburban shopping centers are characterized by large parking lots, usually located in the front of the buildings, and add little architectural value to a community. Although off-street parking is not a requirement of the C-1 district, it still may be provided by a developer of a shopping center use. An automobile accessory sales use is aimed specifically at customers that lease or own motor vehicles and are likely to use their vehicles to get to and from this type of store. Successful downtowns function because of their innate walkability and compactness; the uses and dimensional requirements in Morrisville's downtown should reflect these positive features.



The borough contains three industrial districts: the L-1 Light Industrial district, which is located on Nolan Avenue and at the corner of West Post Road and Royale Avenue; the I Industrial district, which is located between the Delaware Canal and Route 1 expressway; and the newly designated I-2 Industrial/Technology district, which is located at the Toll site.

The L-1 Industrial district permits fire stations, bus stations, wholesalers, warehouses, general manufacturers, bulk storage (by special exception), research laboratories (by special exception), contractor's offices, craftsman's shops, and printing, publishing, and binding uses; the minimum lot size required for the district is 10,000 square feet. The uses and dimensional requirements for the L-1 district are appropriate.

The I-1 Industrial district permits every use permitted in the L-1 Light Industrial district, but also permits electrical substations, hazardous fuel substations (by special exception), truck depots and rail terminals (by special exception), adult entertainment establishments, and fireworks sales; the minimum lot size required for the district is 15,000 square feet. The uses and dimensional requirements for the Industrial district are appropriate.

The purpose of the I-2 district is to accommodate a mix of offices, flex space, parking, transit access, and fabricating/assembly space for technology and biotechnology businesses and offices. The district requirements are intended to implement the Certification of Redevelopment Area plan, which will be further discussed in Part II of this comprehensive plan. The district permits business offices, financial establishments, day nurseries, utilities, fire stations, bus and rail stations, manufacturing, research laboratory (by special exception), contractor's offices, printing publishing, and binding (including electronic), travel trailer and boatyard storage, and flex space. The minimum lot size required for the district is 1 acre. Parking areas for buildings are restricted to 100 vehicles and the useable space of any building shall not exceed 60,000 square feet. The uses and dimensional requirements for the I-2 district are appropriate.

Use Requirements

The borough's zoning ordinance was adopted in 1993. Many of the use regulations have not been updated since the ordinance's adoption and should be revised to meet today's land use challenges and reflect the overall land use vision of the borough. For example, large chain drug stores with drive-thrus can particularly harm the rhythm and feel of downtown locations, due to the size of the stores and their reliance on vehicular traffic. Many communities place limits on the size of retail stores (usually around 2,500 square feet per leasehold in a downtown or village setting) in order to limit the impacts of these uses. Larger stores (those with leaseholds over 2,500 square feet) are a separate use permitted in locations other than the downtown area. Communities may also place design standards on large retail stores to limit the impacts of big box store design. The borough should consider providing standards for drive-thrus for both fast food restaurants and other uses that make use of drive-thrus (e.g., dry cleaners, banks, and drug-stores) to coordinate parking, vehicular circulation, and pedestrian access.

Form-based zoning is another method of controlling design in specified areas of the borough. Form-based codes create a predictable public realm by controlling physical form primarily—with a lesser focus on land use—through local regulations. Form-based zoning addresses the relationship between building facades and the public realm, the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, and the scale and types of streets and blocks. Appendix B of this plan will address form-based zoning as a method of improving land use outcomes in further detail.



A number of permitted uses are reinforcing a negative image of the borough: used car lots (E4, vehicle sales), nail salons (D3, personal service business), smoke shops (D2, retail shop), check cashing establishments (D4, financial establishment), and automotive repair shops (E4, vehicle repair). Over 65 percent of residents surveyed as part of this comprehensive plan were not satisfied with the quality, location, and quantity of commercial development and retail services within the borough. Many resident comments also focused on the undesirability of these types of businesses and the need for higher quality commercial development.

Check cashing establishments are often associated with declining neighborhoods and can be an eyesore because they lack high-quality landscaping, make use of iron bars and chains to secure the building, and have obtrusive signage and lighting. Used car lots are often established on lots that appear to be otherwise vacant—except for the cars themselves and a temporary trailer that is used for an office. Little to no landscaping is provided for used car lots and, besides a low-quality appearance, used car lots convey a sense of transition and impermanency. Automotive repair shops destroy the rhythm of the street because they require a large parking area to store vehicles and also offer little in the way of landscaping. Smoke shops are another auto-dominated use. Residents of New Jersey make the trip across state lines to purchase cigarettes because taxes on tobacco products in Pennsylvania are not as high. Unfortunately, drivers come to Morrisville for cigarettes only; they don't come to stay and patronize other businesses. This creates additional vehicular traffic without any real positive economic impacts.

Check cashing establishments could be supplemented by limiting the hours of operation of such businesses, by prohibiting the use of bars, chains, or similar security devices that are visible from a public street or sidewalk, and by requiring additional landscape, signage, lighting, and design controls. Used car lots could be provided with further standards to control lighting impacts, provide an additional setback from the right-of-way for the display and storage of vehicles and landscaping, and require a permanent building of a minimum square footage for offices, show rooms, and display. Such standards would help reduce visual impacts and establish a sense of permanency to newly proposed used car lots, as well as requiring that the owner fully invest in the property's potential.

The borough should consider creating a new use specifically for smoke shops. This would allow the borough to place the use in specific districts and apply specific standards to minimize impacts on residential and adjacent commercial districts. Standards could include requirements for landscaping, parking, signage, hours of operation, and architectural treatments. Nail salons could also become a specific use that would be limited to specific districts to minimize impacts. Standards, such as signage requirements and architectural treatments, could be provided with this use.

The use requirements for the industrial districts need to be updated as well. Several uses, such as bulk storage yards, truck depots and rail terminals, and general manufacturing (which could encompass many different industrial uses), are intense for a borough of Morrisville’s size and specific standards for landscaping, storage, buffer yards, and industrial operations need to be provided to minimize impacts on adjacent neighborhoods.

Employment

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 69.0 percent of the borough’s population, age 16 years or older, participates in the labor force.⁴ The Census data indicate that 2.4 percent of borough residents were unemployed in 2000. In comparison, the County labor force had a 69.4 percent participation rate and a 2.4 percent unemployment rate in 2000.

Table 15. Employment, Morrisville Borough and Bucks County (2000)					
	Population, 16 Years and Older	Civilian Labor Force	Not in Labor Force	Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate
Morrisville Borough	7,700	5,314	2,381	69.0%	2.4%
Bucks County	461,356	320,110	141,246	69.4%	2.4%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

The following tables detail Morrisville Borough residents by their occupation and by the industry they work in. The first table tells you how borough residents are employed by *occupation* or what they do for a living regardless of industry. For example, a truck driver who delivers produce is classified as Production, Transportation, Material Moving Occupations. The second table tells you how residents are employed by *industry*. So that same truck driver is classified in the second table under Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining. Many times the resident’s occupation and industry will be the same (e.g., a construction worker).

The highest percentage of residents are employed in management and professional occupations (e.g., engineers, physicians and executives) followed closely by sales and office occupations (e.g., cashiers, travel agents, and secretaries). Together these two categories of

⁴ Labor force is defined as those persons age 16 years and over who are employed and actively seeking employment.

occupations make up more than 60 percent of the borough's work force. Production, transportation, and material moving occupations (e.g., machinists, drivers, and welders) account for 14.6 percent, construction, extraction, and maintenance (e.g., electricians and mechanics) occupations for 9.8 percent and service occupations (e.g., firefighters, home health aides, and child care workers) for nearly 14.1 percent of all resident occupations.

Table 16. Resident Occupation (2000)		
Occupation	Number	Percentage
Management, professional, and related occupations	1,588	31.0%
Service	725	14.1%
Sales and office	1,563	30.5%
Farming, fishing, and forestry		
Construction, extraction, and maintenance	503	9.8%
Production, transportation, and material moving	750	14.6%
Total	5,129	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

The following table shows the types of industries borough residents are employed in.

Table 17. Resident Employment by Industry (2000)		
Industry	Number	Percentage
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	16	0.3%
Construction	311	6.1%
Manufacturing	728	14.2%
Wholesale trade	129	2.5%
Retail trade	580	11.3%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	383	7.5%
Information	134	2.6%
Fire, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	351	6.8%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	560	10.9%
Educational, health and social services	1,024	20.0%
Arts, entertainment, recreation,	253	4.9%
Accommodation, and food services		
Other services	283	5.5%
Public administration	377	7.4%
Totals	5,129	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

The main employment strengths in the borough are educational and health services, manufacturing, and retail trade. Another strong employment base in the borough is manufacturing. Although the Census does not detail how many residents are employed in

borough-based manufacturing businesses, over 14 percent of the residents are employed in this economic segment.

Commercial Corridor Conditions

The main commercial corridors of the borough, Bridge Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, lack a sense of visual organizational structure that reflects poorly on the image of the community. At the entrances to the borough, there is no clear demarcation that drivers are entering Morrisville. The uncoordinated signage is unappealing, with signs competing with one another for attention. While the borough already has some pedestrian-scale lighting in its downtown area, many lampposts appear to be in disrepair and of low quality. Corridors that are poorly maintained and designed leave visitors and residents with the impression that the community does not value its appearance.



Stockham-Hartz Building

Vacant and Underutilized Nonresidential Land Uses

The borough contains a number of nonresidential properties that are either vacant or underutilized. The Stockham-Hartz building is for sale at the corner of Bridge Street and Pennsylvania Avenue across from the Robert Morris Plaza; most of the first-floor retail space and upper-level office space remains unleased. The Staley Property, the subject of a redevelopment plan, is located at the southeast corner of the borough, adjacent to the Delaware River. Operations at the former fructose production plant have been limited to bulk handling and transfer since it closed in 1987. Other properties throughout the borough and adjacent townships are vacant, including a gas station along West Trenton Avenue in Falls Township, a gas station along East Trenton Avenue, just before the Calhoun Street Bridge, and retail space in the Morrisville Shopping Center.



Staley Property

Although not technically vacant, some properties are noticeably underutilized or contain struggling businesses that have not taken the time or expense to improve the look or function of their buildings and properties. For example, the area just south of Bridge Street along Pennsylvania Avenue appears to be vacant but contains existing uses, such as a restaurant, hotel, and fireworks store. This area is a significant “no man’s land” that discourages pedestrian traffic because the uses are so far apart and the area lacks

pedestrian-friendly street infrastructure. Nevertheless, infill development could still occur in this area that would serve as a logical extension of the Bridge Street downtown. Other businesses do little to improve or maintain the look of their buildings. Although there has been recent investment in the downtown, much of this area and other commercial areas in the borough are deteriorated and there is little incentive to invest in improvements that would help the look and feel of these commercial districts.

Community facilities and services are necessary to maintain the public health, safety, and welfare and help provide for the quality of life expected in Morrisville Borough. These facilities are characterized as follows:

- Police protection
- Fire protection
- Ambulance services
- Schools
- Health care
- Borough administration
- Public works
- Telecommunications

Morrisville Borough is almost fully developed and future growth will focus on infill development and revitalization. Population increases will be minimal.

Services are generally adequate for residents, but space issues must be addressed to ensure continued efficient delivery of services. In the past, as the borough grew the need for services grew. But the buildings housing the service providers were not expanded or could not be expanded.

Planning for these facilities and services should be coordinated, interrelated, and consistent with land use planning in the comprehensive plan. If the borough or specific organizations intend to expand or extend a facility or service, a comprehensive study of the facilities or services is recommended. Community Facilities and Services are shown in Map 3: Community Facilities and Historic Resources.

Police Protection

The borough police department has offices in the borough administration building. A chief, one lieutenant, one corporal, 14 part-time and full-time patrol officers, and two civilian personnel staff the department.

The department cooperates with other police departments in the Critical Emergency Response Team, which responds to incidents and situations that call for assistance in the 16-municipality lower Bucks region, and Major Incident Response Teams, which responds to incidents and situations that call for assistance countywide. The department has no detectives and must rely on the Bucks County District Attorney's office for technical

assistance. The borough coordinates with the New Jersey and Pennsylvania state police on issues regarding the three Delaware River bridges.

The current challenges facing the department include building safety, training and equipment. The police offices have no separate entrance so persons under arrest must be brought in the front entrance of the borough administration building. Training of officers requires that additional officers be brought in to provide coverage, which necessitates overtime pay. Modernization of equipment is necessary to maximize effectiveness.

The borough is a gateway between two states. It is linked to Trenton, the New Jersey state capital, by three bridges. The borough's crossroads location, within walking distance of an economically distressed, much larger city, serves to increase the incidence of crime, particularly vagrancy and drug-related offenses, beyond what might be expected in a borough of Morrisville's population and size. The Morrisville Police Department participates in training and conferences directed at combating criminal gang activity.

The Delaware River Toll Bridge Commission plans to install security cameras on the three bridges as part of a homeland security initiative, at the completion of construction work in 2010. The cameras, operated by bridge personnel, will help the borough police identify persons and vehicles crossing the bridges.

Future Needs

Departmental needs for the future include modernization of equipment, more staff to accommodate training needs, additional storage space and better security accommodations.

Recommendations for Action—Police Protection

- Determine adequate staffing to allow for sufficient training.
- Assess space and security needs for the borough police department and evaluate need for expansion or relocation and redesign.

Fire Protection

The Morrisville Fire Company provides primary fire protection service for the borough and assists Falls and Lower Makefield townships. It has a volunteer staff of 45 members.

The company's original building at 528 North Pennsylvania Avenue is 98 years old and will be razed to make room for a new building when adequate funding is obtained. A building once owned by the Union Fire Company in the Manor Park neighborhood will be sold to help finance the cost of the new building. A small portion of the borough property tax is dedicated for fire protection.

Future Needs

The company has adequate equipment and staff to meet its current responsibilities, but the fire station building is too small and is deteriorating. The fire company is having difficulty raising enough funds for the new building.

Recommendations for Action—Fire Protection

- The fire company should identify potential funding sources for a new fire station, which may include grants and donations from public and private sources. Local legislators may be able to secure or identify state sources of capital funding. The Morrisville Economic Development Corporation and prospective developers or redevelopers also may be sources of direct contributions or may be able to help coordinate fundraising activities.
- The fire company and the ambulance service should explore the possibility of joint administrative operations
- The fire company and borough officials should evaluate the impact and prospective benefits of levying the Local Services Tax (the former EMST tax) to help finance the fire company building.

Ambulance Service

The Morrisville Ambulance Squad, based at 139 North Washington Street, is a nonprofit corporation that provides transport and emergency care for Morrisville Borough and the U.S. Steel Keystone Industrial Port Complex (KIPC) in Falls Township. The squad provides basic and advanced life support. The facility is staffed during the week by fulltime paramedics and by volunteers most nights and on weekends.

The squad is in need of a new ambulance but other equipment needs are being met adequately at this time. The squad is considering additional space for classrooms and storage. Additional part-time volunteer staff is also needed to provide adequate coverage. The borough levies a 1.5-mill tax for ambulance services, but because of expenses and the fact that many borough residents do not have health insurance, additional funding is necessary. Falls Township provides limited funds to the squad. An increase in the ambulance tax would require a referendum.

Future Needs

The ambulance squad needs to locate additional funding.

Recommendations for Action—Ambulance Service

- The ambulance squad and the fire company should explore consider the possibility of joint administrative operations.

- Approach U.S. Steel and other KIPC-based business firms for funding assistance.
- Evaluate space needs for ambulance facilities. Consider incorporating space for the ambulance squad into any major development or redevelopment project.
- Borough officials and members of the ambulance squad should evaluate the impact and prospective benefits of increasing the ambulance service tax and of levying a local services tax to assist the ambulance squad.

Schools

The Morrisville School District, which serves the borough, has two elementary schools and a middle/high school.

The three district schools have a total capacity of approximately 1,600 students. The 2006–2007 enrollment, however, was approximately 917 students. At that time, the elementary school enrollment was 416 (Grades K–5) and the middle school/high school enrollment was 501 (Grades 6–12). The district has closed two elementary schools: Manor Park in 1994 and Capitol View in 1981.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education projects district enrollment to decline to 766 students by the 2011–2012 school year and to 688 students by the 2016–2017 school year, for a total enrollment loss of 25 percent within a decade. Student loss during that time is projected to be nearly proportional at the elementary level (26.4 percent) and at the middle school/high school level (23.8 percent).

The school district administrative offices are located in the middle/high school building. A cooperative relationship exists between the school district and borough, enabling residents to use school district educational and athletic facilities when usage is coordinated through the school principal.

The major issue facing the district is the age and condition of the schools. The schools have been maintained, but the buildings and their systems are older and the heating systems have never been updated. Space is also an issue because one of the elementary schools uses two portable classrooms.



MR Reiter Elementary

Issues affecting the school system have been identified as one of the most important challenges facing the borough in the public survey taken for this comprehensive plan update. Plans for accomplishing needed improvements in the school buildings were in flux as this plan was being prepared. A study is being undertaken to evaluate the condition of the school buildings.

Private education is provided for area residents at one Roman Catholic school, Holy Trinity Elementary, which had 250-plus students, pre-kindergarten to 8th grade. Bucks County Head Start, which offers health and education services for pre-school children, is located at the former Manor Park Elementary School.

Future Needs

The school district's buildings are in need of renovation and enrollments are below capacity. Building conditions, enrollments, and building capacity indicate that the district is in need of a new or updated long range plan to evaluate the future need for facilities. One effective way for the borough to assist the school district is to encourage new development and redevelopment to raise the borough tax base.

Recommendations for Action—Schools

- Encourage the school district to prepare a new long range plan or update the existing plan.
- Maintain and enhance a cooperative relationship between the borough and school district.
- Increase borough tax base by attracting additional non-residential development.

Library Services

The Morrisville Free Library is an independent library founded in 1904. The library is located at 300 North Pennsylvania Ave. in a former church building housing 6,153 square feet. It is funded by borough taxes, grants, book sales, and state funds.

The library offers children's and adults programs and has approximately 29,000 items, which exceeds the standard of 1.5 volumes per person applied by the American Library Association and the State Library of Pennsylvania.

The library is funded by borough taxes, grants, book sales, and state funds. Although the Morrisville library is not a participant in the Bucks County Free Public Library system, the county library system supports the Morrisville library through various levels of administrative and funding support, interlibrary loan, cataloging, purchasing services, program support, reference resources and professional training. However, library administration reports that more funding and space is needed to more effectively serve the population.

Future Needs

The library has an adequate collection to meet its current responsibilities, but the building is too small to meet current needs.

Recommendations for Action–Library

- Encourage the library to meet needs for additional space by rearranging materials and reconfiguring or adding usable interior space to the extent possible.
- Support community fundraising for the library.
- Explore the possibility of integrating the library into the county library system.

Health Care

Hospitals most often used by Morrisville residents include Saint Francis Hospital and the Capital Health Systems Fuld and Mercer campuses in nearby Trenton, Lower Bucks Hospital in Bristol Township, and St. Mary Medical Center in Middletown Township and Bucks Frankford Hospital in Falls Township. The number of persons age 65 and older will continue to increase during the coming years. The borough should stay aware of the needs for health care for all borough residents and encourage the addition of health care facilities or services within the borough, if needed.

The local YWCA offers a summer health fair and other organizations sponsor recreation programs that promote public health. The Bucks County Department of Health runs school programs on nutrition and obesity. The Area Agency on Aging offers a variety of services

such as in-home personal care and support services, family caregiver support, home-delivered meals and adult day care. Bucks County Transport offers transportation services for the elderly getting to and from senior centers, medical facilities, human service agencies, libraries and stores for shopping.

Recommendations for Action—Health Care

- Monitor population trends and anticipate needs of aging baby boomers and seniors.
- Support provision of programs to enhance public health.

Borough Administration

The borough administration supervises the daily operations of borough government. The administration building is located at 35 Union Street and was dedicated in 1966.

The department employs a manager, code inspector, office administrator, and two clerical staff members. The borough expects to add a part-time park and recreation coordinator in 2008 to manage programming and park scheduling. (Parks, recreation, and open space are discussed in Chapter 8.)

Through use of computers and streamlining office procedures, the staff has been able to accommodate a greater workload. Borough administration has adequate staff but insufficient space for storage.

Space has been reorganized to provide sufficient storage and future expansion of the second floor of the municipal building, above the police station, has been proposed.

Future Needs

Additional space is needed in the administration building to meet needs for storage. With new staff to undertake park programming an opportunity exists to evaluate current programs and develop new programs.

Recommendations for Action—Borough Administration

- Examine current and future administration building space needs.
- Ensure that borough website is updated with events, meeting dates and other current information.
- Evaluate park and recreation programming needs and develop programs to meet needs of borough residents.
- Evaluate greater use of technology for more efficient delivery of services.

Financing Borough Services and Facilities

Decisions about how funds are spent reflect the borough's priorities, making it essential to link what the borough wishes to do with the available funds. How future growth occurs and what services are provided will affect the municipal budget as well as the residents' tax burden.

Providing services and facilities in a fiscally responsible manner requires planning and capital programming. The borough has a capital improvement fund that finances road improvements and other ongoing projects. However the borough does not rank facilities requests from department heads. No feasibility studies are submitted and there is no long-term list of projects.

Because the borough has limited financial resources to meet the public service needs of a mature community, little is left for major capital improvements. A method is needed for coordinating and planning required capital expenditures. An effective method of coordinating and planning expenditures is through capital improvements programming, which would also facilitate implementation of the comprehensive plan.

A capital improvement program is the multi-year scheduling of public physical improvements. The scheduling is predicated on the availability of fiscal resources and the selection of specific improvements to be constructed over a span of five to six years into the future. These improvements should only include those expenditures for physical facilities that are permanent and have relatively long-term usefulness, such as roads, parks, equipment, and facilities.

Public expenditures called for in the capital improvement program play an important role in the implementation of the comprehensive plan. Borough expenditures for capital improvements can encourage or discourage growth in different parts of the borough at different times. Coordination of sewer and water facilities, road improvements, and borough facilities is essential to ensure the viability of this growth management plan. Improvements in neighborhoods such as renovating parks and repaving streets can improve property values. Borough investments in infrastructure such as water and sewer and roads can encourage economic development.

Recommendations for Action—Capital Improvement Program

- Develop and ultimately adopt a capital improvement program, which will aid implementation of comprehensive plan update objectives.
- Rank actions recommended in the comprehensive plan update.

Public Works

The Public Works Department shares a site with the Morrisville Municipal Authority (MMA) wastewater treatment plant on Riverview Avenue. The department employs 10 people and is responsible for maintaining roads, stormwater management facilities, street trees, borough buildings, and parks. The department also assists the MMA with maintenance of water and sewer lines through a cooperative agreement. Utility and other water issues, such as stormwater management and sewage treatment, are discussed in Chapter 11.

The borough administers 59 miles of roadway. A new maintenance garage has recently been completed at the Public Works Department.

Future Needs

Appropriate levels of funding for infrastructure, maintenance, and equipment are necessary.

Recommendations for Action—Public Works

- Determine appropriate levels of funding and staffing for the maintenance and repair of the aging physical plant of the borough: roads, stormwater facilities, parks, etc.

Telecommunications

Telecommunications is the transmission of voice, video, or data between two points and has become a significant part of our information-based economy and culture. Growth of the telecommunications industry has been driven by increasing advancement of technology and has resulted in greater business and consumer demand. Verizon will be installing fiber optic cable in the borough in 2008 to meet demand.

Telecommunications will be an integral part of the municipal infrastructure. Planning for telecommunications allows for control of the right-of-way, control of public property, universal service, and economic development.

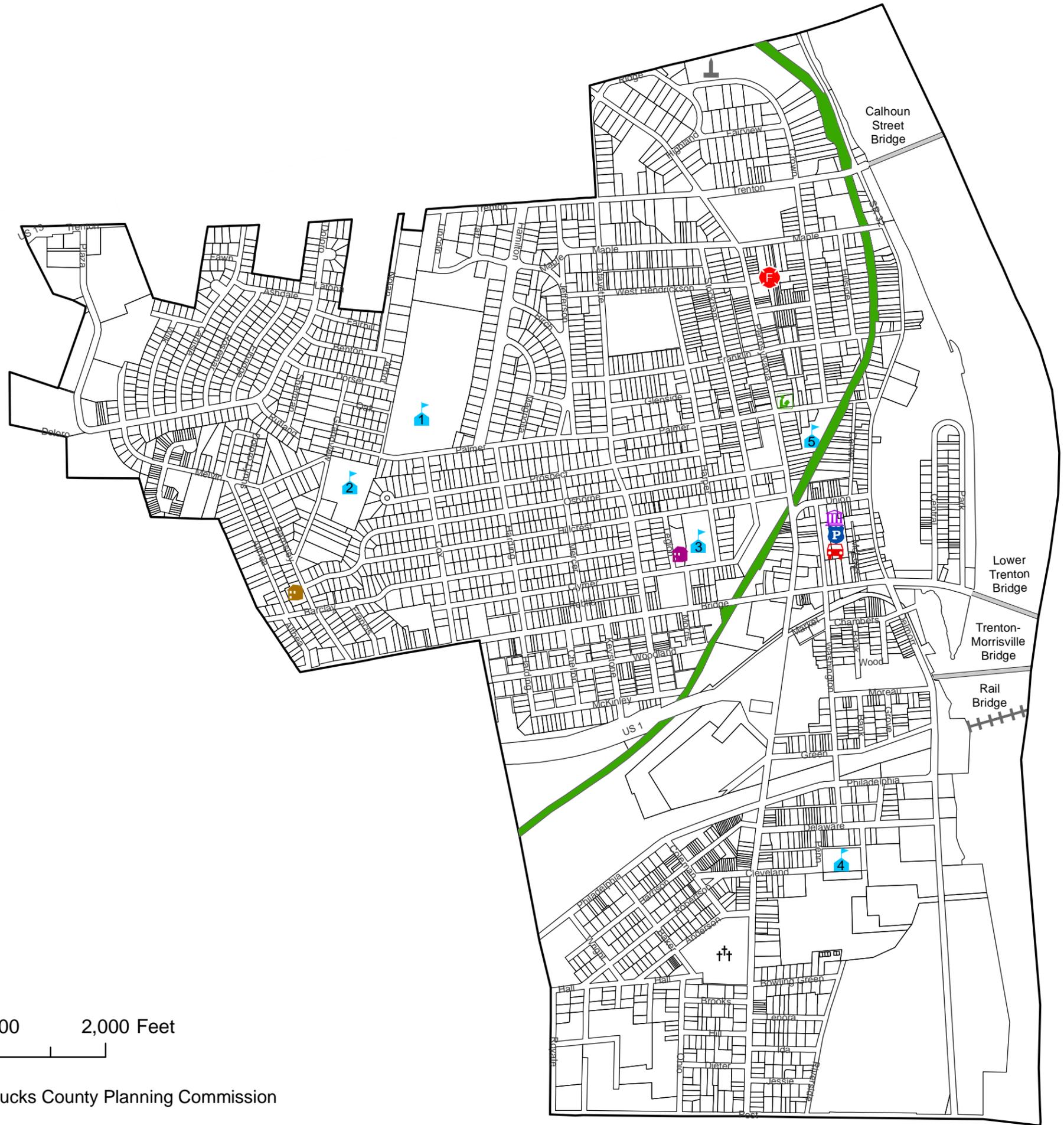
Future Needs

Because the borough is almost fully developed, a buildout plan for telecommunications should be prepared. For instance, instead of one or two tall cellular telephone towers, more antennae can be placed at more frequent lower locations to eliminate visual blight. Underground cables should be installed in a manner which provides the most effective service for all residents and businesses and minimizes trench excavation.

Recommendations for Action

- Work with telecommunication providers to provide coverage where desired in a manner that presents the least disruption to the community and provides the greatest benefits to all residents.

Map 3 Community Facilities and Historic Resources



-  Borough Hall
-  Police Department
-  Fire Department
-  Ambulance
-  Library
-  Cemetery
-  School
 - 1 Morrisville Middle/Senior High
 - 2 Grandview Elementary
 - 3 M.R. Reiter Elementary
 - 4 Bucks County Head Start
 - 5 Holy Trinity Elementary (Private)
-  Gershom Craft House
-  Summerseat
-  Graystones
-  Pennsylvania Railroad Bridge
-  Delaware Canal

Morrisville Borough
Bucks County, Pennsylvania

0 1,000 2,000 Feet

Prepared by: Bucks County Planning Commission

Park, recreation, and open space resources are an important part of a community's identity and overall quality of life. Open space contributes to the borough's small town character, preserves the natural ecosystems upon which we depend, and provides an attractive setting in which to live and work. Park and recreation facilities provide an avenue for residents to interact and recreate and help create a sense of community. Park and recreation resources are an underlying strength of Morrisville and should be a key component of future revitalization efforts.

Park and open space resources can be classified into three categories: permanently protected lands, temporarily protected lands, and unprotected lands. Permanently protected lands include areas that are more likely to be preserved due to its ownership, such as publicly owned lands (e.g., parks or vacant tracts), lands owned by nonprofit conservation organizations, and other similar lands (e.g., cemeteries). Temporarily protected lands are areas that are in open space use or partial open space use in conjunction with existing recreational facilities. However, the owner reserves the right to develop the land in the future under the parameters of the underlying zoning. These include private recreational lands, such as golf courses, camps and campgrounds, and nature preserves, and school facilities. Unprotected lands include any vulnerable resources that do not have an inherent mechanism in place that would discourage or prevent the land from being developed or being impacted from development in the future. Table 18 provides an overview of park and open space resources by resource type. Map 4: Parks and Open Space provides a visual summary.

Permanently Protected Lands⁵

The following provides a brief description of all permanently protected open space lands. Approximately 73.6 acres of protected lands exist within Morrisville Borough.

State-Owned Parks and Open Space

Delaware Canal State Park extends from Easton to Bristol Borough, cutting through Morrisville along the way. The canal and towpath encompasses 16.4 acres of land in Morrisville, stretching from the Lower Makefield border, just west of Delmorr Avenue, down through the center of the borough to the Falls Township border between Route 1 and

⁵ This chapter attempts to identify and classify open space and park resources into several subcategories to provide an overview of what resources are protected and how well those resources are protected. The acreage totals provided by this chapter will not match Park, Recreation, and Open Space land use totals found in Chapter 4: Land Use. For example, permanently protected land includes cemeteries, which are classified as Government and Institutional land use in Chapter 4.

the Pennsylvania Railroad. Delaware Canal State Park received State Heritage Park designation in 1993.

Table 18. Protected Land				
	Location	Ownership	Size (acres)	Facilities
Park				
Manor Park Playground	E. Cleveland Avenue	Borough	1.2	Recreation: basketball, picnic areas, play areas
Williamson Park	Delmorr Avenue	Borough	40.8	Recreation: basketball, picnic areas, basketball, play equipment, scenic walking trail
Delaware Canal State Park		State	16.4	Towpath and canal
Schools				
A-Field/Capitol View Elementary School	W. Hendrickson Avenue	School District	7.7	School/Recreation: playfield, football field, track, hockey, and softball field
Grandview Elementary School	Grandview Avenue	School District	4.9	Playground
Morrisville High School	West Palmer Street/Cox Avenue	School District	20.1	Softball, baseball, and football fields
M.R. Reiter Elementary School	Hillcrest Avenue	School District	2.8	Baseball field and playground
Manor Park Elementary School	E. Cleveland Avenue/Penn Avenue	School District		Playground
Open Space				
Graystones	Crown Street	Borough	6.1	Open space: significant historic and natural resource
Delmorr Avenue	Delmorr and Philadelphia Avenues	Borough	2.1	Planned park and recreation area
Morrisville Cemetery	Pennsylvania Avenue	Private	7	Cemetery

Municipal Parks and Open Space

The borough contains two municipally-owned parks: Williamson Park and Manor Park Playground. Williamson Park is a 40+-acre multi-use park along the Delaware River; park

facilities include ballfields, tennis courts, basketball courts, a playground, and a swimming pool. Manor Park Playground is located along East Cleveland Avenue and its 1.2 acres contain a hockey rink and picnic and play areas.



Williamson Park

The borough owns two open space properties. The Graystones open space parcel is located north of Crown Street, adjacent to the borough's border with Lower Makefield Township. This 6.1-acre parcel was preserved through the Bucks County Municipal Open Space program in 1997. This property will remain open space.

The other property, a 2.1-acre parcel located at the intersection of South Delmorr Avenue and Philadelphia Avenue, was also acquired through the Municipal Open Space Program. The borough intends to develop this property into a park.

Other Permanently Protected Lands

When considering other potential lands that are effectively acting as permanent open space, cemeteries also qualify. Cemeteries not only function as burial grounds, but can serve as a passive open space in a park-like setting. Many cemeteries contain the graves of many of the original settlers and may also be considered historically significant. Morrisville Borough has one cemetery, Morrisville Cemetery, which occupies about 7 acres.



Morrisville Cemetery

Temporarily Protected Lands

The following provides a brief description of all temporarily protected open space lands. There are approximately 77.4 acres of temporarily protected lands within Morrisville Borough.

Public and Private Schools

There are three public schools and a private school located within the borough totaling approximately 35.5 acres. Grandview Elementary School, which is 4.9 acres, is located off Grandview Avenue and contains a playground. M.R. Reiter Elementary School property is 2.8 acres and is located off Hillcrest Avenue, and contains a baseball field and playground. Morrisville High School, located at the intersection of West Palmer Street and Cox Avenue, is a little over 20 acres and has a softball, baseball, and football field. The former Capitol View Elementary School, which is now a private day school, is located at the corner of West Hendrickson Avenue and Harper Avenue. The adjacent public recreational land ("A" Field), owned by the school district, contains 7.7 acres. The Morrisville School District is considering selling a small portion of the land to the daycare. The "A" Field consists of playfields, a football field, track, hockey rink, and softball field.

Private Recreational Areas

There are no private recreational facilities within the borough.

Other Temporarily Protected Lands

Some parcels owned by government or quasi-government agencies also qualify as temporarily protected. The following parcels, which include vacant land owned by the borough or land owned by quasi-governmental agencies, are unlikely to change in the near future:

Table 19. Other Temporarily Protected Lands		
TMP#	Owner	Acreage
24-8-50	Delaware River Joint Toll Commission	0.15
24-8-51	Delaware River Joint Toll Commission	0.16
24-9-226	Delaware River Joint Toll Commission	3.56
24-9-271	Delaware River Joint Toll Commission	0.42
24-9-393	Delaware River Joint Toll Commission	2.77
24-12-79	Municipal Authority of Morrisville	2.35
24-12-79.1	Municipal Authority of Morrisville	0.72
24-12-89	Pennsylvania Railroad Co.	4.58
24-7-60	Morrisville Borough	1.03
24-8-49	Morrisville Borough	0.58
24-8-570	Morrisville Borough	0.8
24-10-237-2	Morrisville Borough	0.05
24-10-274-1	Morrisville Borough	6.53
24-10-275-3	Morrisville Borough	1.15
24-12-67	Morrisville Borough	1.32
24-12-81	Morrisville Borough	13.0
24-12-83	Morrisville Borough	1.6
24-12-83-1	Morrisville Borough	1.2
24-12-84	Morrisville Borough	2.3
Total		41.9

Various utility easements traverse Morrisville Borough, including easements for gas lines, telephone cable, electric power lines, oil pipelines, and water and sewer lines. These linear land areas are typically not owned in fee-simple ownership, but rather consist of easements placed over private property. Therefore, the total acreage for these easements is not included in the totals provided in this chapter.

Planning for Open Space and Park and Recreation

Morrisville Borough has a wealth of park and recreation and open space resources for a community of its size, with almost 74 acres of permanently preserved land and more than 77 acres of temporarily preserved land. Stunning views of the Delaware River can be taken in from the top of the levee along the edge of the 40-acre Williamson Park. Walkers, bicyclists, and horseback riders can travel the towpath of the historic Delaware Canal over the entire length of the borough. The Graystones property contains a 6-acre remnant stand of mature red oak. The four schools and Manor Park contain a variety of recreational facilities, including ballfields, playground equipment, and basketball courts. All of these resources are accessible by way of walking from adjacent neighborhoods.



Levee Trail

When residents were asked in the comprehensive plan survey about the characteristics of Morrisville Borough that they liked best, two of the top seven choices (out of 24 choices) were its walkways and trails and its parks and open space. (See Appendix C for survey results).

Planning for these open space and parks and incorporating their functions within a revitalization strategy is a critical component of this comprehensive plan. Park and recreation facilities, open space, and an abundance of green infrastructure (e.g., street trees, gardens, ponds, rivers, and wetlands) can help position Morrisville Borough's reputation as a green and active community. In past years, various regional and local initiatives and plans have been put forth to capitalize on the borough's recreational and open space assets, including the Delaware River Heritage Trail, Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan, the Morrisville Borough Open Space Plan, and the Morrisville Riverview Redevelopment Area Plan. But how do these efforts fit together and, more importantly, what can they add to the borough's ongoing revitalization efforts? The following summarizes these efforts as they relate to Morrisville:

Delaware River Heritage Trail

The Delaware River Heritage Trail initiative was started in 1996 by the National Park Service to unite the New Jersey and Pennsylvania sides of the Delaware River through a trail loop that would extend from Morrisville-Trenton in the north to Palmyra-Philadelphia to the south. The Heritage Trail will focus on interpreting the natural and cultural resources along its path. In Morrisville, the trail will begin at the Calhoun Street Bridge and will make use of the Delaware Canal towpath through the borough and continue south into Falls Township. The East Coast Greenway will also use the Morrisville section of the towpath; this project, which will use the Pennsylvania side of the Heritage Trail, seeks to develop the nation's first long-distance, city-to-city, multi-modal transportation corridor for cyclists, hikers, and other non-motorized users.

Morrisville Borough Open Space Plan

In November, 2007, Bucks County voters renewed the Bucks County Open Space program by committing to an \$87 million plan for preserving open space. As with previous funding, the new round of funding will have a municipal open space component, a farmland preservation component, a county park and recreation component, and Bucks County natural area component. However, a new component to the program will be of particular benefit to Morrisville. Funding will be provided for open space projects along the Delaware River. The \$7 million Delaware River component is a competitive grant program available to all Delaware River communities to acquire easements for natural resource, recreation, and farmland conservation purposes.

While the newly authorized Bucks County Open Space program may require the borough to provide an update to the borough's open space plan, many of the priorities identified in the 1999 *Morrisville Borough Open Space Plan* are still relevant. Unrealized opportunities identified in this plan include:

- Protecting the riverfront by acquiring conservation easements in natural resource areas;
- Protecting the "A" Field at the former Capitol View Elementary School permanently;
- Enhancing Morrisville Lake by evaluating conditions and opportunities
- Providing public space at Mill Pond; and
- Enhancing the trail-towpath system, including supporting efforts to establish the Heritage Trail through Morrisville.

The borough should continue to pursue these worthy priorities for protection through the County's program and other funding opportunities.

Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan

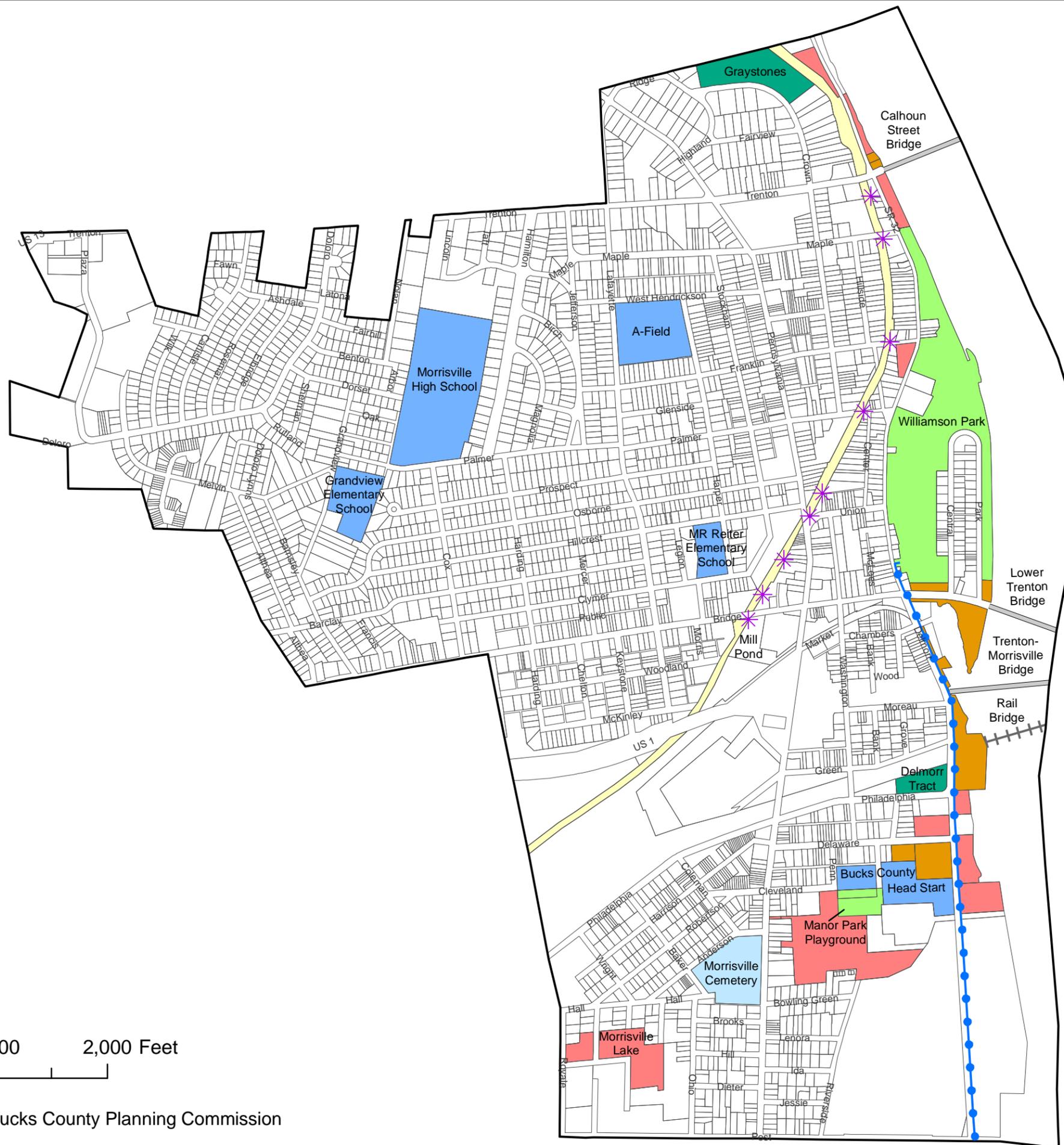
The purpose of the *Bucks County Delaware River Waterfront Revitalization Plan* is to articulate a community-based vision that will guide future revitalization efforts along the lower Delaware River waterfront in the townships of Bensalem, Bristol, and Falls, and the boroughs of Bristol, Tullytown, and Morrisville.

The *Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan* devises specific recommendations to improve the overall study area and make it more attractive to residents, businesses, and visitors. Six themes, including park and natural resource themes, organize these recommendations and serve as goals for the plan:

- Enliven the river's edge by improving waterfront access
- Incorporate design with development to improve the attractiveness of the area and foster its renaissance.
- Enhance the economy by fostering redevelopment of underutilized lands and buildings.
- Expand mobility and accessibility to and within the study area.
- Foster environmental sustainability of the Delaware River and its tributaries.
- Reinforce sense of place and identity.

The study also provides more detailed concept plans for key areas in the study area that are considered priority redevelopment and enhancement projects in each study area municipality. Each "opportunity area" provides a potential vision of what might be. In Morrisville, the plan envisions several park and recreation and open space opportunities. The plan shows a trail along the Delaware River from Williamson Park to the borough's southern border. Open space and public access to the water are identified at the Staley property. Bridge Street and Pennsylvania Avenue are shown as bicycle routes, connecting Morrisville to the adjacent communities of Trenton, Lower Makefield, and Falls. Morrisville Lake is identified as a potential new park.

Map 4 Parks and Open Space



- Borough Owned Land
- Parks
- Schools
- Open Space
- Cemetery
- Other Temporarily Protected Land
- Delaware Canal State Park
- * Delaware Canal Access Points
- Potential Trail Link



0 1,000 2,000 Feet

Prepared by: Bucks County Planning Commission

Morrisville Borough
Bucks County, Pennsylvania

Redevelopment Area

In 2004, Morrisville began a collaboration with the Bucks County Redevelopment Authority to certify certain areas of the borough as “blighted” and establish redevelopment areas in accordance with the Pennsylvania Redevelopment Law. A redevelopment plan was developed for “Morrisville Riverview,” using the *Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan* for ideas and guidance. The Morrisville Riverview plan is focused on the borough’s south waterfront and areas inward, including the Staley site, from East Philadelphia Avenue down to East Post Road.

An illustrative site plan and zoning ordinance amendment were developed as part of this plan. The site plan details a potential street and building layout for the Staley property portion of the site. Parks and open space encompass a significant portion of the illustrative site plan, with dedicated land shown along Lenora Avenue and the entirety of the waterfront.

The zoning ordinance amendment, known as the Riverview Neighborhood District (RN), encompasses much of the redevelopment plan’s study area and contains development standards aimed at emulating the borough’s traditional town character, with small lots, short setbacks, narrow streets, and a mix of uses. The ordinance contains several park and open space requirements, including:

- A requirement that 20 percent of the site area be dedicated to green spaces (open space and park and recreation land).
- A requirement that 7.5 percent of the site take the form of public squares, parks, greens, and playgrounds.
- Proposals fronting the Delaware River must have an average setback of 300 feet from the river and only 25 percent of such areas would count towards the total 20 percent site requirement.
- Public access is required for all permitted water-related uses.

The RN district amendment was adopted in 2005.

Potential Linkages

Another important aspect to planning for future open space and park and recreation opportunities is to provide pedestrian linkages to these resources. Morrisville Borough is a walkable community: the borough is laid out in a grid pattern, sidewalks are located along most streets, traffic speeds are relatively slow, and cars are permitted to park on-street, providing pedestrians with a protective barrier against traffic. The existing sidewalks and

street network are great resources to be used to link resources (See Chapter 10: Transportation and Circulation for further discussion of the borough’s pedestrian and bicycle system). Nevertheless, more can be done to link borough’s residential neighborhoods to key resources located in and adjacent to Morrisville.

The Delaware Canal, in particular, could serve as a “spine” from which pathways and routes could be developed to other park and recreation resources. Signage could direct persons coming from the canal to other areas of the borough, including the downtown and Delaware River. Unfortunately, present signage is poor or non-existent and it can be difficult to locate access points to the canal. The canal and towpath are in good condition, having received funding for maintenance and a new surface for the towpath. However, a key area south of the borough remains blocked by Tyburn Road. Should this condition remain, future linkages with Falls Township will be either along the Delaware River or by way of local roads.

The Delaware River waterfront is another linkage opportunity. While Williamson Park serves as a great link along the Delaware River between the Calhoun Street Bridge and Trenton Makes bridges, areas south of the park contain undeveloped waterfront property—as well as the unopened South Delmorr paper street and adjacent private rail spur—that could potentially serve as a link south along the river to Falls Township. This linkage opportunity is identified in the *Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan* as part of the goal of creating a continuous public riverwalk along the Delaware in the plan’s six study area communities. However, the *Morrisville Borough Open Space Plan* recommends that riverfront areas be protected by acquiring natural resource conservation easements. Should the borough pursue a riverwalk along the Delaware River, its design, construction, and purpose should be of a low-impact, environmentally sensitive nature. This would be consistent with both plans, which recommend the protection and restoration of floodplain and streambank areas.

The buildings and structures in Morrisville reflect the era in which they were constructed and give the borough a unique and valuable heritage. Morrisville's heritage is also found in its natural landscapes, such as the Delaware River, and its cultural landscapes, such as the Morrisville Cemetery and Delaware Canal. Both buildings and landscapes provide the borough with a sense of place and heritage that should be preserved.

In planning for the future, the borough needs to plan for the management of its historic, cultural, and natural resources. Management of this heritage can be done with preservation of historic structures, natural resource protection, and promotion of heritage through cultural events. Effective heritage management enhances quality of life and environmental sustainability and will ensure that the borough is a good place to live and work for present and future residents.

This chapter primarily addresses historic preservation of buildings and landscapes. The promotion of heritage through cultural events is also briefly discussed. Management of natural resources is addressed more fully in the natural resources protection chapter of this plan.

Historic Preservation

Historic preservation is the process of preserving historically significant parts of a community, from individual buildings to whole neighborhoods. It involves identifying and celebrating a community's history to provide a better understanding of its past and a context for future decision-making.

Historic resources are defined by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission as objects or sites eligible for listing or listed in the National Register of Historic Places, as well as those identified as historic by the community on the basis of age or local importance. While Morrisville contains structures representing just about every period in our nation's history, a borough-wide survey of historic buildings has never been undertaken.

However, several historic resources have been identified and listed on the National Register of Historic Places due to their national significance. National Register resources include the Gershom Craft House (105 Barnsley Ave.), Pennsylvania Railroad Bridge and the Calhoun Street Bridge. The Pennsylvania Railroad Bridge is also listed on the Historic American Engineering Record, which was established in 1969 by the National Park Service, the American Society of Civil Engineers, and the Library of Congress to document historic sites and structures related to engineering and industry.

The National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is part of a nationwide program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Properties listed are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. Nominations for listing are administered through the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

National Register-listed properties are protected from alterations stemming from any federally funded, assisted, or licensed project. The listing, however, places no restrictions on the actions of private landowners or developers, but has the effect of alerting them to the significance of a resource. Listing may provide eligibility for certain funding opportunities or tax relief, but buildings that are listed on the National Register may still be altered beyond recognition or demolished.



Summerseat

Summerseat and the Delaware Canal are designated National Historic Landmarks. This list includes nationally significant historic places designated by the Secretary of the Interior because they possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. The canal towpath has also been classified by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior as a National Recreation Trail, which is a designation given to existing trails that contribute to health conservation, and recreation goals in the United States.

These and other undocumented historic resources in Morrisville have value for a number of reasons. They give the borough a special physical and cultural character. Older buildings are frequently better built, with craftsmanship and materials that are rarely duplicated today. Each historic building represents a past investment for future generations. Maintenance and rehabilitation of historic buildings and neighborhoods also represent a savings in terms of energy and materials. Well-kept historic buildings contribute to the vitality of a community and strengthen property values. Neglect or loss of historic buildings and structures would pose a significant threat to the identity of the borough.

Although historic resources are valuable, they are often taken for granted until they are endangered. Preservation planning can lessen the threat. However, sound preservation planning must occur before historic elements are imperiled. Last-minute preservation responses are rarely effective in the long term.

The historic preservation process fosters civic pride and appreciation for historic values. Appropriate preservation and restoration projects can even enhance and improve surrounding non-historic property values.

In terms of economic development, historic preservation generates tourism, construction, and rehabilitation activity that creates jobs and income. Therefore, the need for continued protection of historic resources is a crucial concern for the borough.

If historic resources are to be retained, it is essential to develop an effective local historic preservation program. Local historic resources, most of which are privately owned and maintained, are at risk unless residents are properly educated about the historic importance of their properties, and are encouraged to cooperate with the borough's preservation agenda. Community-wide events that emphasize preservation and cultural and heritage protection are instrumental to inform the public about the issues.

Natural Resources

In addition to historic buildings, the borough has natural resources that give it character. Graystones, at the intersection of Crown Street and Highland Avenue, is an outcropping of large gray boulders that is believed to be the starting point of the survey of the first purchase of land from the Indians by William Penn in 1682. It is therefore a historic site as well as a natural resource. The site has been preserved as open space by the borough.

The borough has many large mature street trees that provide shade, cooling, and a pleasant character to the neighborhoods. These trees should be managed to prevent unnecessary removal, treated to prevent disease and have provisions made for eventual replacement.



Graystone Monument

Historic Preservation Plan

A historic preservation plan is a program for conserving historic resources. The plan contains a historic resources survey, an assessment of constraints and threats to preservation of those resources, a goal and objectives, and implementation strategies. Implementation techniques include adoption of an historic ordinance, zoning techniques, financial incentives, and other tools. The plan may be a chapter in the community's comprehensive plan, or a separate document. The plan can be developed by an existing organization like the planning commission or by a historic commission or society.

This chapter does not serve as an historic preservation plan but describes the components of such a plan. The first step in preparing a plan is to determine what resources exist through completing a historic resources survey.

Historic Resources Survey

The foundation of any historic preservation plan is a historic resources survey. A historic resources survey is more than a listing of historic buildings and places. It is a process of identifying and gathering data on historic resources.

An historic resources survey involves examining photographs, archives and documents to generate data about the age, construction, architectural style and significance of historic buildings and structures. In order to ensure survival of historic resources and make effective use of them, it is necessary to inventory these resources. While volunteer historians or local historic societies may be able to document resources and otherwise assist in preparing a survey, it is desirable to have such surveys done by a qualified professional, when possible.

The survey may locate resources eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or resources that are locally, but not nationally, significant. The survey should be periodically updated, because as time passes more buildings become eligible for inclusion.

Assessment of Threats and Constraints

The assessment of threats and constraints involves an evaluation of the negative influences that impact historic resources. These factors include air pollution and vibration from traffic, zoning that permits uses in historic structures that may detract from their integrity, and inability of property owners to fund maintenance and improvements.

Goals and Policies

Goals and policies are necessary to guide and provide a focus for a preservation program. These goals and policies should reflect the wishes of the community. It is also wise to consult with the owners of historic properties because their participation in the

preservation program is important. The borough comprehensive plan should incorporate a preservation policy as well.

The Comprehensive Plan

The comprehensive plan is also an important element in the program for historic preservation. The comprehensive plan should bring preservation concerns to the forefront because it establishes policy for all the activities of a community. Section 301(a)(1) of the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) requires the comprehensive plan to include a statement of objectives concerning the future development of the municipality.

Identifying historic preservation planning as an objective of a municipal comprehensive plan reflects the desire to preserve buildings and structures with historic value. A historic preservation chapter and objective also provides a historical context for future planning and land use policies in the zoning ordinance.

Implementation Tools

Implementation tools must be developed to make the preservation plan work. These tools take the form of historic district ordinances, zoning provisions, design guidelines and others. In most cases the primary responsibility for protecting historic resources falls to the property owner. However, communities can enact regulations and laws to preserve historic resources.

Historic Districts and Review Board

To protect historic resources in the borough, council may adopt a historic preservation ordinance in accordance with the Historic District Act. A local historic district ordinance designates an area containing historic structures and protects by limiting the type of alterations that may be made to existing buildings, reviewing proposed demolitions, and ensuring compatible design of new construction.

Historic districts created under the authority of the enabling legislation, Act 167, are not zoning districts; the review process is a procedure separate from zoning concerns. All areas proposed for a historic district must be certified as having historic character by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Act 167 also requires the appointment of a historical architecture review board (HARB), which reviews and advises the governing body about any alterations within the district. The governing body then decides whether to approve or deny the proposal.

The first step in establishing a historic district is to conduct a survey of local historic resources. The next steps would involve applying for historic district status through the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and appointing a historical architecture review board.

A historic district would allow much greater control over the design choices of individuals wishing to modify their buildings or construct new buildings. Some residents, however, may feel that a historic district allows too much control over the decisions of property owners. The borough can gear historic district requirements to fit local objectives.

Zoning

Section 603(b)(7) of the MPC allows local zoning ordinances to contain provisions that promote and preserve areas of historic significance. But local zoning regulations often permit greater densities and types of uses that do not blend with the existing character of older areas. New construction may introduce density or uses that may conflict with the character of an existing neighborhood.

Zoning regulations should be reviewed and adjusted so they support the existing neighborhood density and prohibit uses that would detract from its character. For example, height, setback, density and other zoning standards can be used to discourage “teardowns” that would replace small historic homes with those of inappropriate scale.

Another method of preserving historic scale and uses is to expand the use opportunities for identified historic buildings, a device known as adaptive reuse. Typical uses are bed-and-breakfasts, antique shops, cultural centers, or even low-impact offices. Condominium conversion or other residential reuse of very large historic structures should be an option.

Zoning Overlay Districts

A historic overlay district is a zoning technique that places special restrictions on development in addition to those of the base zoning district to enhance preservation efforts. It is best suited to protection of historic resources that are too geographically dispersed to form a historic district or districts.

Act 167 permits regulation of historic districts but does not provide for the designation or regulation of individual historic resources not in a historic district. Overlay district provisions address alterations, additions, and uses that would potentially alter the character of an individual resource, without affecting the underlying zoning.

Examples of historic overlay district provisions are as follows:

- Permitting additional uses within historic structures, with a condition of use being that any alterations meet design guidelines such as parking lot location.
- Buffering next to historic properties.
- Review of proposed subdivisions and land developments by a historic commission.

- Requiring a minimum setback from the Delaware Canal.

Demolition Regulations

The regulation of demolition is an important part of a community's effort to preserve historic resources. Demolition by neglect is the destruction of a building through abandonment or lack of maintenance. Property owners may use this kind of long-term neglect to circumvent historic preservation demolition regulations. The borough should enforce laws that require buildings to be secure from vandalism and vagrancy, prevent blight and that prohibit demolition unless the building presents an immediate threat to the safety and welfare of the general public.

A demolition delay ordinance requires a waiting period after the submission of a request for a demolition permit. Many ordinances require a delay for structures of more than 500 square feet and older than 50 years. The delay provides time for research about the architectural or historical significance of the property and time to develop alternatives for preservation, or to document the property if demolition cannot be averted.

Design Guidelines

Design guidelines are another tool for preserving the appearance of historic buildings and neighborhoods. They consist of recommended design options for alteration or rehabilitation of existing buildings and construction of new buildings, encompassing features like material, architectural style, and signs.

A design guideline usually consists of a one- or two-sentence statement that describes a preferential treatment of one aspect of the design of a building or site. For instance, a design guideline might address entryways: "Solid or residential-type doors with small areas of glass should be avoided. Openings containing double-entry doors should be retained."

Such guidelines, especially when illustrated, can help maintain the character of the community. Design guidelines are also useful when coordinated with the requirements of a historic district. Residents recognize what is encouraged and what is discouraged when making design choices, avoiding conflict with the Historical and Architectural Review Board.

Adherence to guidelines ensures that buildings fit within the context of the existing architecture of an area. Although guidelines are not binding, they make a strong statement about the importance of preservation to a community.

Financial Incentives and Grant Programs

Local preservation ordinances and guidelines can be effective; however they do not address the financial pressures that face owners of historic properties. To be more effective, preservation efforts should also address pressures that may conflict with historic preservation planning. Financial incentives and grant programs are ways local government and local financial institutions can encourage historic preservation.

The provision of financial incentives encourages private property owners to become involved in preservation efforts and invest in historic properties. These incentives are intended to eliminate many of the financial advantages of new construction compared with restoration or preservation projects. Financial incentives primarily take the form of low-interest loan programs and tax incentives from governmental bodies. Revolving loans administered by a local bank or the borough may also assist with the cost of preservation. Banks get involved in preservation loans because of the positive community relations and profit potential. Local governments may offer tax incentives such as property tax abatement freezes or credits. The availability of particular incentives depends on state enabling legislation.

Various grant programs administered by the state and federal governments as well as private foundations may be available for local preservation projects. For example, Morrisville may be eligible for a Historic Preservation Grant from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. This grant program may fund cultural resource surveys, national register nominations, and planning and development assistance projects. The State Historic Preservation Officer at the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (www.phmc.state.pa.us), the regional office of the National Park Service (www.nps.gov), and the National Trust for Historic Preservation (www.nationaltrust.org) can provide information regarding available funding to eligible parties.

Historic Commission or Society

The borough has an organization devoted to preservation of the borough's history. The Historic Morrisville Society seeks to preserve the heritage of the area through exhibits of local history. The society operates Summerseat and presents exhibits and hosts events through the year.

A historic society, such as the Historic Morrisville Society, or an appointed historic commission could be charged with implementing the historic preservation program in the borough. An historic commission advises planning commissions and elected officials concerning protection of historic resources throughout the community and comments on development proposals, conducts research and maintains a historic resources inventory and map.

The borough planning commission also has an important role. As the group that develops and assists in the implementation of the comprehensive plan, it should work to implement the historic preservation program. The objectives of the program should also be considered during the routine activities such as subdivision and land development plan review. For instance, in the review of proposals that impact historic resources, the planning commission should seek the opinion of the historic preservation organization. The historic preservation organization can discuss alternatives with the planning commission and applicant.

Heritage Signage

Historic landscapes and other features can be noted by plaques, street markers, or storyboards. This signage may describe the features itself and the reason it is significant. Historic trees can be noted with tree plaques.

Cultural Heritage

The borough's historic buildings and other features provide a visible link to the past. The borough also has a heritage based on traditions and a way of life passed down through generations of residents that should be preserved. The traditions of a walk along the Delaware Canal, shopping downtown, attending the Morrisville schools and churches and other organizations link residents with each other and their forebears. These links are important and should be maintained. This heritage can be celebrated and shared with others to strengthen ties amongst each other and the past. Interpretations of history at Summerseat and borough celebrations, such as parades and fairs, transfer local cultural heritage onto new generations. There are two specific issues that the borough may address to preserve cultural heritage, the Landmark Towns project and preservation of the Morrisville Cemetery.

Landmark Towns

The borough is participating in the Landmark Towns project which is a revitalization initiative of Delaware Canal towns of New Hope, Yardley, Morrisville and Bristol, that have traditional downtown business districts. The project is designed to help these small towns rejuvenate their business districts, as well as preserve and enhance their shared industrial and cultural heritage. Local funds are matched with matching funds from the Delaware and Lehigh federal partnership funds (\$20,000) and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. The National Trust for Historic Preservation's "Main Street" revitalization approach—promotion, organization, economic development and design—are used in the Landmark Towns project.

The Landmark Towns project will define the region, assess its economy, and identify unifying regional themes. It also will identify borough downtowns and focus areas; review existing downtown plans and organizational capacity; identify potential for stand-alone

revitalization programs; establish a downtown coordinating structure, and develop community sub-plans and a regional support plan.

Cemetery Preservation

The private cemetery in the southern half of the borough was established in 1849 and contains numerous veterans' graves including at least one from the Civil War. The cemetery forms a significant part of the borough heritage, particularly for Memorial Day events.

The cemetery faces threats from vandalism and trespassing. Vandals have significantly damaged the old section of the cemetery and local residents walk dogs on the property. Signage is necessary to remind neighbors that the cemetery is private land. Additional police patrols would deter loitering and vandalism.

Recommendations

- Conduct a historic survey to identify historic resources to be protected.
- Coordinate efforts with DCNR to provide interpretative resources for the Delaware Canal.
- Designate one or more historic districts. A HARB would be appointed to review development applications in the district(s). Alternatively, or in addition, adopt historic preservation overlay zoning addressing provisions for designated historic resources in the borough.
- Review the zoning ordinance to ensure that existing standards promote historic preservation. Add or amend provisions for adaptive re-use and delay of demolition, if necessary.
- Adopt design guidelines for downtown and designated historic areas.
- Promote the history of the borough through tourism and signage.
- Coordinate efforts to preserve Morrisville Cemetery.
- Support community events which strengthen cultural heritage.

The function of the transportation system is to provide for the movement of people and goods between places. The adequacy of this system is influenced by the type and size of population growth and land development that occurs along the network.

Proper land use planning is critical to prevent adverse effects to the transportation network due to improper development. Conversely, when transportation improvements are designed, addressing the needs of the general public, individual property owners and neighborhoods are important. Where appropriate, transportation improvements should be designed as multiple-use facilities that provide for pedestrians, bicycles, public transit, and automobiles.

The continued development and redevelopment of the borough depends on the advantages that a well-functioning transportation system provides. Maintaining and enhancing the quality and efficiency of streets, highways, and railroads in the borough will support economic development. This chapter examines the existing transportation system in the borough and provides analysis and recommendations for the various modes of transportation that serve it.

Public Transportation

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) provides public transportation to borough residents.

Morrisville Borough is served by one SEPTA bus route, Route 127. The 127 bus route provides service to several shopping centers along West Trenton Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue before continuing to Trenton, New Jersey. The Route 127 bus begins at the Philadelphia Park Casino in Bensalem Township and ends at the Trenton station. As the bus travels from Bensalem to Morrisville, it stops at the Neshaminy Mall and the Oxford Valley Mall. Connections to other SEPTA bus routes can be made at both malls.

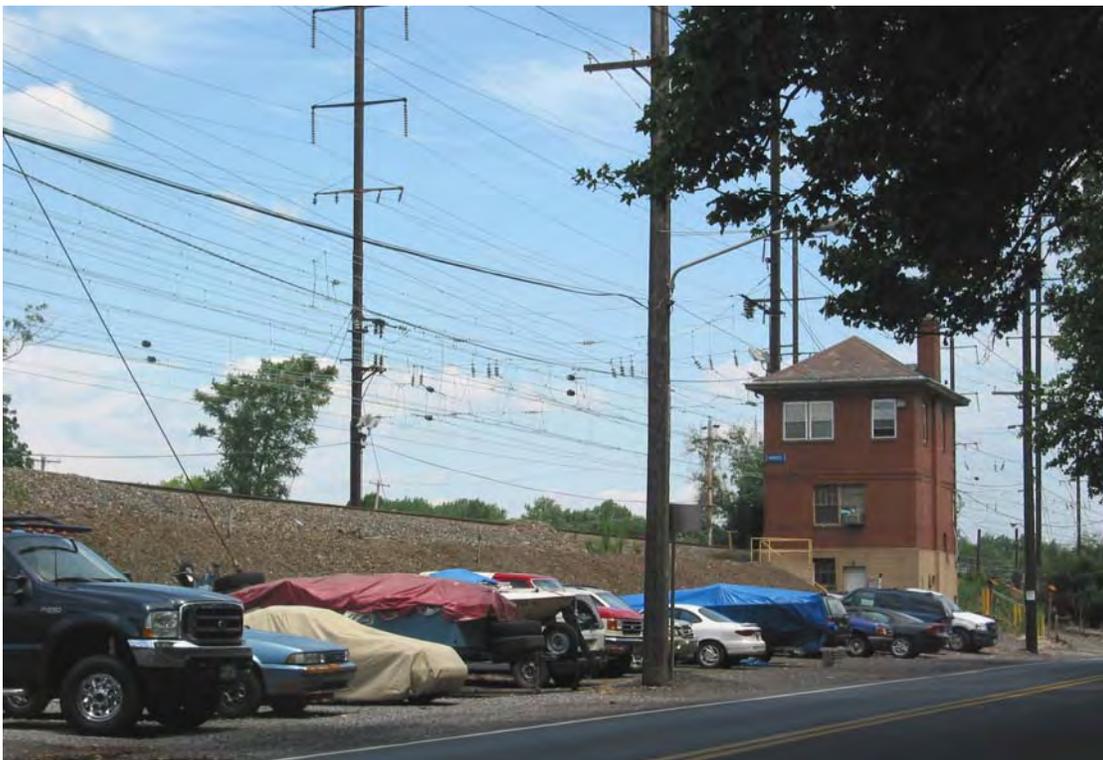
SEPTA rail service provides access to Philadelphia and Trenton. Morrisville residents are close to SEPTA's Levittown rail station, located in Tullytown Borough. The Levittown station is a stop on SEPTA's R-7 regional rail line, which runs between Philadelphia and Trenton, connecting with NJ Transit rail lines in Trenton, to provide service to New York City. (The SEPTA station in Yardley Borough, served by the R-3 West Trenton regional rail line to Philadelphia, is also within commuting distance for Morrisville residents.)

Morrisville residents can access AMTRAK's Northeast Corridor Service at the station at Cornwells Heights in Bensalem Township or at the station in Trenton. AMTRAK's Northeast Corridor rail line provides access to New York, Boston, and Washington, D.C.

As development and redevelopment takes place, borough officials should examine how the use of public transportation will be affected. The borough should maintain a dialogue with SEPTA to ensure that needs of its residents are being met.

Morrisville Borough Train Station

According to the *Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan (2005)*, the area between the Delaware Canal, the SEPTA R7 rail line, and South Pennsylvania Avenue is identified as an "opportunity area" with the potential for the construction of a new rail station and transit-oriented development. Transit-oriented development (TOD) is a residential area with a mix of commercial and office uses designed to maximize access to and promote public transportation. A TOD neighborhood typically consists of a train station at its center with residential areas within one-half mile from a transit stop, since this is considered to be within reasonable walking distance for pedestrians.



The key aspect of developing the opportunity area into a TOD is the establishment of a new SEPTA station at the site. As of the development of this comprehensive plan, SEPTA had no plans to construct a new station in Morrisville Borough. Therefore, the borough should

work with SEPTA and Bucks County to determine the feasibility of a new station in this area of the borough.

Since the development of this plan, the borough has engaged with the Bucks County Redevelopment Authority to develop a Redevelopment Area Plan of the area known as the Morrisville Town Center, in accordance with the Pennsylvania redevelopment law. This redevelopment area broadly encompasses the same area identified as a potential TOD in the *Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan*.

A new zoning district, the I-2 Industrial District, was subsequently adopted for the area. This district permits rail stations, offices, and a variety of industrial land uses. The site is envisioned as a planned industrial park for research and technology.

Although residential areas would be within walking distance of the rail station—if a station were developed at this site—the district is not a transit-oriented development district, as residential uses are not permitted in the I-2 District. If the possibility of a Morrisville rail station moves closer to reality, review and revision of zoning in the I-2 and surrounding districts should take place, to allow for TOD encompassing residential uses and possibly to realign industrial and other land uses accordingly.

Street Hierarchy

Street hierarchy or road classification is the method by which streets and highways are categorized into classes, or systems, according to the type of service they provide. Policy guidelines regarding uniform road classification are especially important in light of the reality that funding levels for roads, which are the backbone of the transportation system, have not kept pace with the proliferation of motor vehicles, housing, and businesses.

The backlog of needed road maintenance and construction projects has grown. Due to the reduction in funds available for highway capital improvement projects throughout Bucks County and the Commonwealth, it is essential that municipalities re-evaluate existing roadways and institute policies and regulatory measures to ensure that they continue to function as efficiently as possible.

The road classification system recommended for Morrisville Borough is based upon five classes: expressway, arterial, collector, primary, and secondary. These roadway types are defined in the borough subdivision and land development ordinance. Roadway dimensional requirements are listed in the borough subdivision and land development ordinance. The following provides the classification for each street in the borough as shown in the Morrisville Borough Highway Classification Map.

Expressways are designed to provide the highest level of mobility for large, high-speed traffic volumes. Expressways are limited-access facilities that provide access to regional business and employment centers. U.S. Route 1 is the only expressway in the borough.

Arterial streets are designed to carry large traffic volumes and high-speed traffic with controlled access to abutting properties. Access onto arterial streets should be strictly controlled because the proliferation of turning movements at individual driveways to properties will degrade the function of an arterial street. New access points should be minimized and well-spaced so that speeds on the arterial road can be maintained at appropriate levels. According to the borough's Highway Classification Map, there are no arterial streets in Morrisville Borough.

Collector streets are designed to convey moderate volumes of traffic to and from arterial streets and to other collector streets. They also provide access to business, industry, and public buildings. Access to collector streets from abutting properties should be carefully controlled, just as for arterial streets. Collector streets include East and West Trenton Avenues, East and West Bridge Streets, North and South Pennsylvania Avenues, East and West Philadelphia Avenues and North and South Delmorr Avenues.

Primary streets are designed to carry a moderate volume of traffic, to intercept secondary residential streets and driveways of high-density residential uses, industrial parks and other high traffic-generating uses. They also provide routes to collector streets and community facilities. The only streets identified as primary on the Highway Functional Classification Map are East and West Post roads.

Secondary streets are designed to provide access to abutting properties and a route to access primary streets. All streets not classified as expressway, arterial, collector or primary are considered secondary streets.

According to Section 390-22.C of the subdivision and land development ordinance, the "Morrisville Borough Street Plan" contains the arrangement of streets in the borough. However, this plan does not appear to exist. Furthermore, while the zoning ordinance refers to the Highway Classification Map, the categories defined in the subdivision and land development ordinance do not match the categories found on the Highway Classification Map. Therefore, the borough should take steps to correct these inconsistencies and update the street classifications where deemed necessary.

Southerly Crossings Corridor Study

Several studies prepared for the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission over the past 30 years have identified the need to expand bridge capacity over the Delaware River. The primary transportation problem within Morrisville Borough has been and continues to be traffic congestion during peak hours.



Lower Trenton Bridge

The three bridges in the Morrisville area operated by the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission are currently operating at or near capacity conditions. Using a 2025 planning horizon, traffic volumes are expected to grow by 25 percent, and traffic congestion is expected to worsen, as population and employment continue to grow in the region.

The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission, working in conjunction with an Interagency Advisory Committee of bi-state transportation, planning, and environmental agencies, completed the Southerly Crossings Corridor Study in 2002. The study, a multi-modal transportation needs assessment, evaluated highway, transit, and congestion management strategies for relieving traffic delays.

A major step in the evaluation was the performance of a sensitivity analysis of traffic volumes on the bridges to capacity increases at other bridges in the corridor and to the

construction of a new bridge connecting Falls Township with Hamilton Township, New Jersey. The major findings of the study include:

- Without improvements, all bridges in the corridor will experience capacity failure (congested flow) at peak hour in the peak direction in 2025. The duration of this congestion can be expected to spread to well beyond the peak hour;
- The addition of NJ Transit passenger rail service at the Morrisville Yard in Falls Township and express bus service linking the Oxford Valley Mall in Langhorne with the Quakerbridge Mall in Lawrenceville, New Jersey, are estimated to have a modest effect on bridge traffic volumes and merit further consideration. It should be noted that there are no current plans to develop a passenger rail station in Morrisville Yard;
- Extending NJ Transit's southern New Jersey River Line light rail service from downtown Trenton to the SEPTA R3 West Trenton Station in New Jersey was shown to have minimal effect on bridge traffic;
- Investments in mass transportation, while needed, will not reduce traffic volumes, congestion and delays on the bridges to acceptable levels;
- There is a need at the Calhoun Street Bridge to provide two lanes for peak period-peak direction travel (eastbound in the morning. period and westbound in the afternoon peak period) to achieve acceptable traffic flow conditions.
- Options to accomplish this necessity include bridge replacement, constructing a new adjacent span, implementing reversible lanes, or operating the Calhoun Street Bridge as a one-way pair with the Lower Trenton Bridge. These options will require further study;
- The U.S. Route 1 Bridge will continue to operate at unacceptable traffic flow conditions even with improvements at Calhoun Street and Scudder Falls unless either a third northbound lane (an auxiliary lane) is added to the bridge and transitioned to an exit-only lane at the Route 29 interchange, or a new four-lane bridge is constructed at Falls-Hamilton;
- The construction of a Falls-Hamilton Bridge is not justified based on the fact that it would require a sizeable financial investment as the highest-cost option, yet would not yield an acceptable level of service.

The Southerly Crossings Corridor Study has identified the transportation deficiencies associated with traffic crossing the Delaware River. Based upon the recommendations of the study, an improvement project is underway for the U.S. Route 1 Bridge, which is discussed below. But this project does not address the existing deficiencies identified in the plan for the Calhoun Street and the Lower Trenton bridges. Therefore, the borough should continue to work with the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission to ensure that appropriate improvements are made to these two structures to correct the problems identified in the study.

Trenton-Morrisville Toll Bridge Rehabilitation

The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission is currently undertaking a major rehabilitation of the Trenton-Morrisville Toll Bridge, the U.S. Route 1 roadway, and their respective approach structures. The bridge carries U.S. Route 1 over the Delaware River between Trenton, New Jersey and Morrisville. The bridge totals 1,325 feet in length. The improvements begin just south of the viaduct over the Delaware Canal and Conrail tracks in Morrisville and end just north of the South Broad Street overpass in Trenton.

The project includes the following: rehabilitating the main river bridge and widening to accommodate a northbound auxiliary lane; providing a deceleration lane on the viaduct over the Delaware Canal and Conrail; modifying the interchange at South Pennsylvania Avenue; installing a new traffic signal and resurfacing the pavement on South Pennsylvania Avenue; constructing noise walls adjacent to northbound U.S. Route 1 in Pennsylvania; constructing a new toll plaza; realigning the New Jersey Route 29 ramp; constructing a new bridge over Route 29 to allow for improved access, as well as other associated improvements along the corridor. Construction began in 2007 and is expected to be completed by the end of 2009.

As construction occurs on the project, the borough should work with the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission to ensure that traffic delays associated with construction can be minimized.

Transportation Improvement Program

The Bucks County Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is an inventory of transportation-related improvements requested by municipalities, concerned citizens, transportation studies, and other sources. In order to develop the county TIP, an appeal is made to all the municipalities to put forward projects for the program update. Once this list is completed, the Bucks County Planning Commission board approves it. Then it is forwarded to the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) for consideration as candidate projects for the regional TIP.

The regional TIP is updated every two years, in coordination with PennDOT's 12-year plan. The regional TIP lists all projects that intend to use federal and/or state funds for their engineering, right-of-way, and/or construction costs.

The TIP update includes re-evaluating project schedules and costs. Once the schedules and costs have been updated for each existing project, some new projects (candidate projects) may be added to the TIP. Since this list must be financially constrained per the requirements of the federal *Safe, Accountable, Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users*, the addition of candidate projects depends on national allocations of transportation funding.

The DVRPC, in conjunction with the member governments of the region, ranks and selects projects from the candidate project lists (i.e., county TIPs) submitted by the member governments to compile the regional TIP. The regional TIP is then submitted to the DVRPC board for approval. Once approved, the regional TIP is then submitted to PennDOT to be included in the state TIP.

As of the 2007–2010 regional TIP, there were no projects programmed for funding in Morrisville Borough. (Since the Delaware Joint Toll Bridge Commission is funding rehabilitation of the Route 1 bridge, that project does not appear on the DVRPC's regional TIP).

Morrisville Borough should work with the Bucks County Planning Commission to develop a list of transportation improvements needed within the borough. These improvements should be ranked and submitted to the county for consideration for future regional TIPs.

Context-Sensitive Solutions

Context-sensitive solutions are a proactive approach to transportation planning, design and implementation that looks at the extensive role the transportation network plays in enhancing communities and natural environments, be they urban, suburban or rural, scenic or historic. The concept involves asking questions first about the need and purpose of the transportation project, and then using such information to address safety, mobility, and the preservation of scenic, aesthetic, historic, environmental, and other community values.

Context-sensitive solutions involve a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach in which citizens are part of the design team. Support from stakeholders is received at the beginning of a project, rather than negotiated as the project nears completion.

Context sensitivity emphasizes the broad nature of solutions to transportation needs by focusing on enhancing the quality of life for transportation users, communities, and the

surrounding environment. The borough should use a context-sensitive solutions approach as roadways and bridges in the borough are being considered for reconstruction.

Access Management

Controlling the number of access points allows roads to perform their intended function. When access is not controlled, the number of conflict points where roadway traffic merges increase. This places serious demands on the roadway capacity, as well as making conditions unsafe for vehicles entering or exiting the highway. The conflict between safe and efficient movement of traffic and access to abutting properties has long been recognized as a limiting constraint in traffic operations and transportation systems management.

The basic approach to access management is to minimize the number of conflict points along roads while providing safe and efficient access to properties fronting roads. A conflict point is a place where two vehicles come together or their paths cross and one or both drivers must take evasive action to avoid collision.

Access management is both a land use and traffic issue. It includes such techniques as shared driveways, access to secondary roadways, driveway spacing, planted median strips, protected left-turn lanes, and any other appropriate access control measures. It also calls for land use controls and incentives that are keyed to the development policies of the community and the capabilities of the transportation system.

The planning challenge of access management is not merely how to provide driveways or how to design roadways, storage areas, or parking. The challenge is how to not limit new development in order to expedite traffic flow. Therefore, the borough must take into account the access requirements of businesses that may relocate into the area, as well as those of vehicles traveling through the area.

Morrisville Borough should develop an access management plan. This plan should include an analysis of current and projected land uses and their associated traffic conditions, as well as an implementation plan that establishes priorities and the responsible agencies for completing the roadway improvements or municipal ordinance amendments.

PennDOT has recently completed developing model ordinance language for access management. PennDOT's Center for Program Development should be consulted during development of the plan. This plan should be adopted by the borough and included in the subdivision and land development review process.

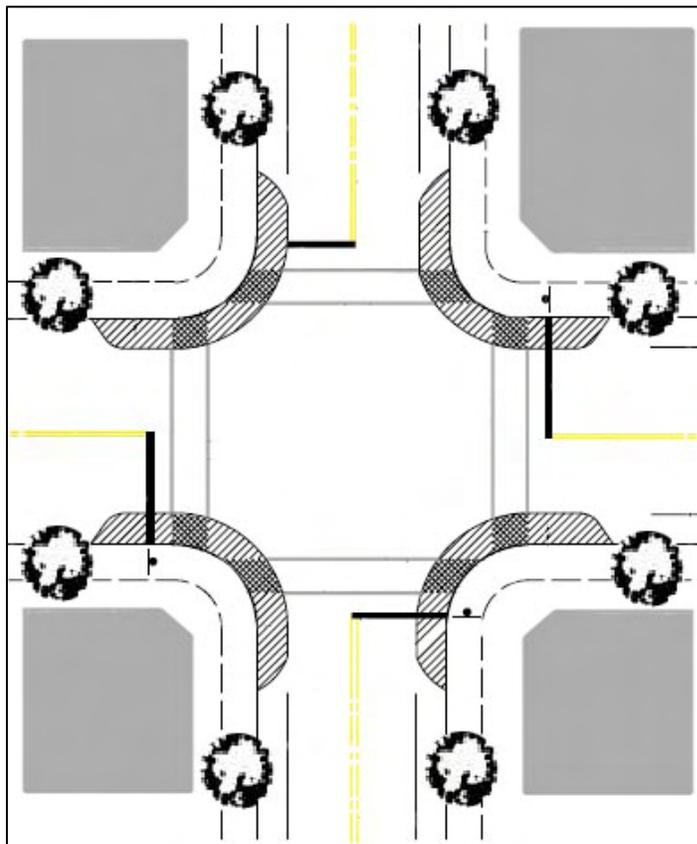
The preparation and adoption of an official map indicating future right-of-way, new public roads, and driveway access points is also a very effective means of implementing major

components of the access management plan. Common access for several parcels of land can be included as a part of the map, thus reducing traffic congestion and improvement the free flow of traffic.

Traffic Calming

Traffic calming measures are mainly used to address speeding and high cut-through traffic volumes on neighborhood streets. These issues can create an atmosphere in which nonmotorists are intimidated or even endangered by motorized traffic. By addressing high speeds and cut-through volumes, traffic calming can increase both the real and perceived safety of pedestrians and bicyclists and improve the quality of life within the neighborhood.

The role of physical measures in traffic calming is usually emphasized because these measures are self-policing. In other words, by utilizing speed humps and/or traffic roundabouts, motorized vehicles will slow down in absence of a police presence. Some potential traffic calming measures include: speed humps, speed tables, chicanes, planted medians, roundabouts, and curb extensions.



Intersection with Bulb-outs

Several areas in the borough may be appropriate for traffic calming initiatives. The area of Bridge Street near the Lower Trenton (Trenton Makes) Bridge could be improved through the use of landscaping, raised crosswalks, and intersection bulb-outs. The Bridge Street commercial area could also benefit by the addition of traffic calming techniques such as landscaping, bulb-outs, and street trees.

These and other traffic calming techniques could make the Bridge Street section of the central business district more pedestrian-friendly, which would complement revitalization and economic development activities. Therefore, appropriate traffic calming techniques for these areas should be investigated.

In order to initiate traffic calming, Morrisville Borough should develop specific traffic calming goals and policies. Residents of any neighborhood that could be affected by the addition of traffic calming measures should participate in the development of these goals and policies.

Some of the goals of a traffic calming program should include the following:

- Achieving safe, slow speeds for all vehicles;
- Improving the safety and the perception of safety for nonmotorized users of local roads;
- Increasing roadway safety by reducing crash frequency and severity;
- Increasing the compatibility of all modes of transportation, specifically with pedestrians and bicyclists;
- Reducing cut-through vehicle traffic on local roads; and
- Reducing the need for violation enforcement on local roads.

Traffic Calming Techniques



Center planted medians encourage drivers to slow down.
Breaks in roadway provide safer crossings for pedestrians.

Traffic calming techniques should affect driver behavior and improve the safety of the street for all roadway users, including pedestrians and bicyclists. The techniques must be designed so they do not impede emergency access by police, fire, ambulance, or rescue personnel. Finally, allowing for public participation during the designing of traffic calming facilities will help to ensure acceptance of these facilities.

Pedestrians and Bicyclists

The opportunity to travel by foot and bicycle is important for both recreational purposes and for members of the community who do not drive. These modes of transportation also provide an alternative to the automobile.

Providing a walkable environment is essential to efficient transportation. Every trip begins and ends with walking. Walking remains the cheapest form of transportation for all people, and the construction of a walkable community provides the most affordable transportation system any community can plan, design, construct, and maintain.

Walkable communities put urban environments back on a scale for sustainability of resources (both natural and economic) and lead to more social interaction, physical fitness, and diminished crime and other social problems. Walkable communities are typically more livable communities and can contribute to a better quality of life for the people who live in them.

Through the provisions of the subdivision and land development ordinance, the borough is able to ensure new developments, both residential and nonresidential, are provided with sidewalks. Sidewalks will provide alternative methods to make certain needed trips, in addition to their use for exercise and recreation.

It is important that sidewalks be provided in the higher-density residential zoning districts and in nonresidential areas where walking should be encouraged as an alternative to the use of the automobile. Section 390-45 of the subdivision and land development ordinance requires sidewalks to be placed on both sides of the street. There should be compelling reasons for the waiver of the sidewalk standards of the ordinance.

The borough should also consider construction of sidewalks on streets where no sidewalks exist or where sidewalks are in disrepair. Streets with missing sidewalks include the Manor Park section and areas along Bridge Street. The borough should study this issue further and consider improving informal walking paths with sidewalks, shade trees, pedestrian lighting and street furniture. This will improve pedestrian accessibility and safety. Morrisville should also consider improving streets with missing curbing or where curbing is in disrepair.

In many communities, bicycle systems are important and much appreciated facilities. The subdivision and land development ordinance could be revised to include requirements for bicycle improvements in addition to or in place of sidewalks in appropriate areas. A bicycle plan should be prepared to determine the best routes to connect existing and anticipated developments with schools, shopping areas, parks and playgrounds, employment centers, and other key community locations. The bicycle system would be used and enjoyed by all

the borough residents, as well as people who work, shop, or visit Morrisville Borough. More information on trail linkages, which may include pedestrian and bicycle paths, can be found in the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space chapter of this plan.

Summary of Recommended Actions

- Work with SEPTA to ensure that the public transportation needs of its residents are being met.
- Work with the Bucks County Planning Commission to develop a list of transportation improvements needed within the borough. These improvements should be ranked and submitted to the county for consideration for consideration for future regional TIPs.
- Utilize a context-sensitive solutions approach as roadways and bridges in the borough are reconstructed.
- Develop specific policies regarding traffic calming, including the participation of residents from any neighborhood that could be affected by traffic calming measures.
- Prepare a bicycle plan to determine the best routes to connect existing and anticipated developments with key community locations.
- Develop an access management plan to be included in the subdivision and land development review process.
- Work with the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission to implement solutions to congestion problems identified in the *Southerly Crossings Corridor Study, 2002*, and coordinate with the commission during construction of improvements so that traffic delays are minimized.
- Develop a Morrisville Borough Street Plan that would identify the arrangement of streets and provide functional classifications consistent with those found in the borough subdivision and land development ordinance.

Water resources for purposes of this comprehensive plan are divided into three main areas: water supply, wastewater collection/treatment/disposal, and stormwater management. The following discussion addresses the specific concerns and considerations of each.

Integrated Resource Plan

The coordination of water resources, wastewater facilities and land use planning is a vital component to the comprehensive plan and each is a part of the borough's interrelated water system. Water and wastewater facilities are key factors in determining the location, nature, and density of future development. Periodic assessment of water resources, wastewater disposal methods, and service areas is necessary to ensure that adequate facilities can be provided to satisfy future development needs. Effective stormwater management practices can ensure that water quality is protected, peak stormwater flows are controlled, and groundwater recharge is enhanced.

Pennsylvania Water Resources Planning Act (Act 220)

The State Water Plan, enabled by Pennsylvania Act 220 of 2002, requires registration and reporting of water withdrawals from public water suppliers, utility companies, agriculture, industry, and commercial enterprises. The reporting requirement is an important component in assessing and projecting existing and future water needs and to identify where demands exceed available resources. Users of over 10,000 gallons of water per day (on average in any 30-day period) must register their water sources. Registration is not required if the user's only source of water is through a public water supply because public water suppliers are already required to be registered. Public water suppliers are required to register their sources regardless of what amount of water is used. Users are also required to periodically report their water use to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Identification of Critical Water Planning Areas

The State Water Plan, when adopted, will identify areas where the demand for water exceeds, or is projected to exceed available supplies. These areas would be designated as Critical Water Planning Areas and would be identified on a multi-municipal watershed basis. Once established, Critical Water Planning Areas would serve as the planning boundary for the creation of a more detailed Critical Area Resource Plan that would include a water budget for that area. Critical Area Resource Plans will be submitted for review and comment for consistency to the official planning agency and governing body of each municipality in the identified area prior to final recommendation. The plans will include a water availability evaluation, an assessment of water quality and water quantity issues, and identification of existing and potential adverse impacts on water resources uses.

Water Supply

Many Bucks County communities are concerned with water supply issues related to the safe yield of groundwater withdrawal and the potential reduction in groundwater recharge to local aquifers. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (Act 247) directs municipalities to consider water facilities in municipal comprehensive planning, zoning, and the development review process. Section 301(b), a revision to the code that became effective on January 2001, states that the comprehensive plan shall include a plan for the reliable supply of water which considers current and future water resource availability, uses and limitations, including provisions adequate to protect water supply sources. Any such plan should be generally consistent with the State Water Plan and any applicable water resources plan adopted by the Delaware River Basin Commission.

Sources of water supply throughout Bucks County include both surface water and groundwater. Morrisville Borough's sole source of water supply is the Delaware River. A source water assessment for the Delaware River was completed in 2002 by the DEP. The assessment found that overall, the Delaware River was found to have a moderate risk of significant contamination.

The Morrisville Waterworks is owned by the Morrisville Municipal Authority and leased to the borough. The system currently draws all of its water from the Delaware River. The filtration plant on River Road near Ferry Road is a six million gallon per day "rapid filtration" plant. Two water storage tanks located off West Trenton Avenue, north of the borough, and off Riverview Avenue in the south part of the borough, complement the system. The system serves all of Morrisville as well as portions of Lower Makefield Township and Falls Township.

It is not likely that the Municipal Authority will expand service farther into Lower Makefield because the Pennsylvania American Water Company (PAWC) supplies water and holds service rights to the remainder of the Township. The borough maintains an interconnection with the Lower Makefield systems and has the capacity to supply 800,000 gallons per day, if needed. For example, during 1996, PAWC purchased 2.938 million gallons from Morrisville Borough over 63 days, for an average of 46,635 gallons per day (gpd).

Summary of Recommended Actions for Water Supply

- Continue to monitor the progress of the State Water Plan and its implications regarding critical water planning areas.
- Continue to comply with State Water Plan registration requirements.

- Continue to comply with federal and state Safe Drinking Water Acts and Bucks County Department of Health regulations for water supply systems.
- Continue to maintain interconnection with the Lower Makefield’s water supply system.
- Continue planning and working relationships with adjacent municipalities with regard to water supply issues.
- Continue to maintain the highest quality water treatment and distribution facilities possible while keeping user rates as reasonable as possible.

Wastewater Collection/Treatment/Disposal

The Morrisville Municipal Authority owns and operates the wastewater treatment plant located on the Riverview Avenue extension just off Delmorr Avenue. The facility has been upgraded and expanded several times over the past four decades. It currently employs activated sludge and pure oxygen (Unox) systems along with tertiary sand filtration. Treated effluent is discharged to the Delaware River. The facility is designed to process an average flow of 7.1 million gallons per day (mgd). Actual flows are on average 5.5 mgd with a maximum of 6.8 mgd. Sludge processed at the facility is disposed at the GROWS landfill. Morrisville Municipal Authority has an inactive pre-treatment program, which they intend to reactivate for a leachate pilot study. Morrisville and Yardley Boroughs and Lower Makefield and Falls Townships have adopted pretreatment ordinances in compliance with new PaDEP regulations. As is typical, the collection and conveyance system is experiencing some inflow/infiltration problems, which are under investigation.

The facility treats wastewater from all of Morrisville Borough, Yardley Borough, and from portions of Lower Makefield Township and Falls Township. The following is an approximate breakdown of the population and equivalent dwelling units served in each municipality:

- Morrisville Borough — population of 10,000 served; 900,000 equivalent dwelling units (EDUs⁶) served.
- Yardley Borough — population of 4,000 served; 360,000 equivalent dwelling units (EDUs) served.

⁶ An Equivalent Dwelling Unit (EDU) is a planning term used for determining flow capacity in a wastewater collection, conveyance, and treatment system. An EDU is equal to 400 gallons per day of wastewater flow from an individual residence. Wastewater flows from commercial uses also are planned for using EDUs. For example, if a commercial establishment will generate 4,000 gallons of wastewater per day, then it would be using 10 EDUs of capacity in the wastewater system.

- Lower Makefield Township — population of 15,000 served; 1,350,000 equivalent dwelling units (EDUs) served.
- Falls Township — population of 2,000 served; 180,000 equivalent dwelling units (EDUs) served.

The total population served is 31,000 and the total EDUs served is 2,790,000.

Wastewater Facilities Planning

The Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act (Act 537 of 1966) was enacted to eliminate existing and prevent new environmental health problems and pollution through comprehensive sewage facilities planning. A major provision of Act 537 requires that every municipality in the Commonwealth develop and maintain an up-to-date Sewage Facilities Plan. The Act establishes requirements for the plan and allows reimbursement of up to one-half the eligible costs incurred in preparing the plan.

The purpose of a municipality's Sewage Facilities Plan is to:

- Protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens living in the municipality by correcting malfunctioning on-lot septic systems, overloaded treatment plants or sewer lines, and wildcat sewers.
- Prevent future sewage disposal problems from occurring.
- Provide protection for both the groundwater and surface waters of the Commonwealth through coordinating planning for the sanitary disposal of sewage with a comprehensive program of water quality management.

During the period 1960 to 1970, the Morrisville Sewage Treatment Plant was expanded and began accepting sewage from portions of Lower Makefield Township and Yardley Borough. The *Bucks County Sewerage Facilities Plan* (1970) proposed that the expanded plant serve, among others, additional areas in Lower Makefield Township, by 1980. After 1980, the plan intended that the plant would serve the remaining portions of the Township within the watersheds draining to the Delaware River which are tributary to the plant.

During the period 1970 to 1975, significant sewer expansion took place in Lower Makefield Township as a result of development activity. Consistent with the 1970 County Plan, the Core Creek Branch of the Neshaminy Interceptor was completed and Morrisville Borough expanded and upgraded its treatment facility. Contrary to the 1970 County Plan, the Lower Neshaminy Treatment Plant was not constructed and flows were diverted to the City of Philadelphia, Northeast Wastewater Treatment Facility via the Neshaminy Interceptor. In

1975, Lower Makefield Township completed the *Lower Makefield Township Sewerage Facilities Plan* as its official wastewater facilities plan and it currently remains as such. That plan recommended that wastewater from portions of Dyers Creek, Buck Creek and Brock Creek Drainage Basins be conveyed to the Morrisville Sewage Treatment Plant and that future flows from the Silver Lake and Black Rock Basins in Lower Makefield also be conveyed to Morrisville Borough.

After the adoption of the Township's Sewerage Facilities Plan in 1975, development in Lower Makefield Township had accelerated beyond expectations and, as a result, the Morrisville Sewage Treatment Plant was reaching its hydraulic capacity. Until the Morrisville Sewage Treatment Plant was expanded, as proposed by the Township's 1975 Plan, the Heacock Road Sewage Pumping Station was constructed to temporarily pump wastewater from the lower portion of the Brock Creek Basin to the Bucks County Water and Sewer Authority, Core Creek Interceptor system. Once the Morrisville Sewage Treatment Plant was expanded, it was anticipated that the flows would be redirected back to the Morrisville Sewage Treatment Plant, consistent with the Township's 1975 Plan.

In 1990, as completion of the Morrisville Sewage Treatment Plant expansion neared, Lower Makefield Township adopted the *Lower Makefield Township Sewerage Facilities Plan Revisions* that called for the elimination of the temporary Heacock Road Sewage Pumping Station and the implementation of the original recommendations set forth in the Township's 1975 Plan. This plan revision was based upon a re-rating of the Morrisville Sewage Treatment plant from 7.1 million gallons per day (mgd) to 8.7 mgd and a proposed expansion and redirection of the flow from the Heacock Road Sewage Pumping Station to the Morrisville Sewage Treatment Plant.

The future needs and recommendations for sewage facilities stated in the 1992 *Comprehensive Master Plan Update of the Township of Lower Makefield* included the elimination of failing septic systems with proposed sewerage system extension(s) to be made in connection with the upgrading of the Morrisville Sewage Treatment Plant.

Existing Morrisville Borough Sewerage Facilities Servicing Lower Makefield Township

Lower Makefield Township owns and maintains a sanitary sewer collection/conveyance system which extends throughout nearly the entire Township. Treatment and disposal of the wastewater collected by this system is provided by the Morrisville Municipal Authority's wastewater treatment plant and the City of Philadelphia, Northeast Wastewater Treatment Plant. Lower Makefield utilizes the conveyance facilities of other municipalities or authorities to transport its wastewater to these plants for treatment. These conveyance systems include the Boroughs of Morrisville and Yardley, the Bucks County Water and Sewer Authority, Middletown Township and the Township of Falls Authority. The

Morrisville Borough Service Area in Lower Makefield includes collection/conveyance sewers ranging in size from 6 to 30 inches in diameter, force mains ranging from 6 to 12 inches, and several metering and pumping stations. The sewage generated in that Morrisville Borough Service Area is treated at the Morrisville’s wastewater treatment plant. Lower Makefield is allocated an average daily flow capacity of 3.097 mgd in the Morrisville plant. While currently at a design average flow of 7.1 mgd, the Morrisville plant has hydraulic capabilities to expand ultimately to 8.7 mgd. Such expansions were initiated to address growth within the municipalities contributing to the plant, including Lower Makefield.

Future Wastewater Planning

Planning for the future wastewater facility needs of the borough should be done in conjunction with Yardley, Lower Makefield, and Falls. Currently, municipal allocations served by the Morrisville Municipal Authority are:

- Morrisville Borough — allocated capacity of 3.103 mgd and an average existing flow of 2.567 mgd. The remaining capacity is 0.536.
- Yardley Borough — allocated capacity of 0.900 mgd and an average existing flow of 0.414 mgd. The remaining capacity is 0.486 mgd.
- Lower Makefield Township — allocated capacity of 3.097 mgd and an average existing flow of 2.53 mgd. The remaining capacity is 0.567 mgd.
- Falls Township — average existing flow of 0.230 mgd.

It is recommended that the four municipalities consider preparing a joint Act 537 Plan Update that would address all aspects of wastewater facilities needs in the area consistent with each of the municipalities’ comprehensive plans.

Summary of Recommended Actions for Wastewater

- Continue to comply with federal, state, and Bucks County Department of Health regulations regarding wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal.
- Continue planning with adjacent municipalities of Lower Makefield, Yardley, and Falls to address future wastewater facility needs of the area.
- Continue to maintain the highest quality wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal facilities possible while protecting the public health and environment and keeping user rates as reasonable as possible.

- Prepare a joint Act 537 Plan in conjunction with Lower Makefield, Yardley, and Falls to be consistent with each municipality's comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance.

Stormwater Management

Stormwater runoff is the rainwater that moves over the ground during and immediately following a rainfall event. Stormwater runoff will move through a specific drainage area referred to as a watershed. In a watershed undergoing land development and urban expansion, the amount of stormwater runoff from a rainfall event can increase dramatically. This is due to the reduction of natural grassy or wooded areas and an increase in the amount of impervious land (i.e., pavement, rooftops, or buildings).

It is the increased amount (volume) and speed (rate) of runoff that is responsible for some of the localized flooding and drainage problems associated with stormwater runoff. As development and impervious surfaces increase within the watershed, so too does the problem of dealing with greater quantities of stormwater runoff. Failure to properly manage this runoff can result in more flooding, greater stream channel erosion, siltation and sedimentation, and a reduction in groundwater recharge. It is important to recognize the watershedwide scope of stormwater management problems and potential solutions.

Act 167, the Pennsylvania Stormwater Management Act of 1978, was enacted to address the growing negative impacts of stormwater runoff. Act 167 requires DEP to designate watersheds and establish guidelines for the preparation of stormwater management plans for these watersheds. Counties are responsible for preparing the plans and developing ordinance language that municipalities must adopt to manage the volume and rate of stormwater runoff and the impact on water quality.

Morrisville Borough is located in the Delaware River South DEP-designated watershed. The *Delaware River South Stormwater Management Plan* was prepared in 2004. The plan requires adequate storage and treatment facilities necessary to capture and treat stormwater runoff specifically for water quality purposes. In addition, a portion of the runoff volume must be infiltrated for groundwater recharge where feasible. There must be an attempt to maximize the capabilities of a development site to meet infiltration criteria. The plan also contains a design criterion to control the runoff release rates to prevent downstream flooding and streambank erosion. Low impact design and conservation development techniques must be considered for development sites, and design sequencing must be followed to avoid sensitive areas on a site (e.g., areas suitable for infiltration), minimize site disturbance, and minimize increases in runoff and impacts to water quality. The plan also contains provisions for ensuring proper long-term operation and maintenance.

In 2006, the borough adopted an amendment to Section 610 of the subdivision and land development ordinance to implement NPDES Phase II Regulations (see discussion below) and the Delaware River South watershed stormwater management ordinance requirements.

Flooding Issues

Flooding during and after major storm events typically occurs along the Delaware Canal and not the Delaware River, although flooding can occur along southern shoreline areas. Areas in the borough most prone to this flooding are Williamson Park and adjacent neighborhoods. Although the levee along the northern shoreline protects the borough from river flooding, when the canal floods the levee has the effect of keeping floodwaters from flowing back into the river.

Canal flooding happens from upstream breaches of the canal and downstream blockages. To solve the upstream problem, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has plans to construct an overflow for the canal a few hundred feet north of Trenton Avenue; the overflow would redirect canal floodwaters back into the Delaware River. However, there currently is no funding for the project. About one mile south of Route 1, a DCNR project to open a culvert under a railroad is planned to allow both canal waters and pedestrians to pass under.

NPDES II Regulations

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) is a two-phased federal program that seeks to establish local regulations resulting in a nationwide reduction of the pollutants in waterways. It includes stormwater discharge regulations. The municipal NPDES program must be correlated with the community's Act 167 stormwater management plan.

Phase 1 of NPDES targeted medium and large communities, as well as major and industrial facilities and development projects. Phase 2 of NPDES, aimed at smaller communities and construction activities on sites of 1 to 5 acres, requires municipalities to develop a stormwater management program that meets state permit requirements and includes six minimum control measures: public education and outreach, public participation, illicit discharge detection and elimination, and construction site and post-construction runoff control and pollution prevention. Over an 8-year period, communities must fully establish a program to satisfy these requirements and evaluate its effectiveness. Annual reports must be submitted to DEP to signify how the municipality is meeting incremental elements of the program.

Thus far, Morrisville Borough has submitted the requisite annual reports in accordance with NPDES 2 program. The borough is engaged in public education and outreach, providing educational materials to borough residents. Other required control measures,

such as illicit discharge detection and elimination and the operation, maintenance, and inspection of municipally-owned stormwater facilities, are not the major issues that are typical in a large township, as there are few stormwater management facilities in the borough. Nevertheless, facilities and infrastructure will be inspected on an ongoing basis and the borough will continue to comply with program requirements.

Bucks County is helping municipalities meet NPDES requirements by advising on methods and ordinance language. That assistance is provided in accordance with Act 167 guidelines and goals to merge critical stormwater management issues, including groundwater recharge, under the umbrella of water resources protection.

Summary of Recommended Actions for Stormwater

- Continue to enforce the recommendations of the *Delaware River South Stormwater Management Plan*.
- Continue to ensure compliance with the NPDES program and file program reports.
- Review ordinances to ensure the borough is implementing state-of-the-art stormwater BMPs.
- Identify flood-prone areas at the municipal level and determine if remediation measures are feasible.
- Establish regular maintenance programs for stormwater management facilities.
- Evaluate alternative best management practices (BMPs) for maintaining and retrofitting existing substandard stormwater management basins.
- Educate residents on how they can reduce their contribution of nonpoint source pollutants such as fertilizers and pesticides that enter watercourses via stormwater runoff.

Solid waste management may be described as the process of providing an economically and environmentally sound means of storing, collecting, transporting, processing, and disposing of waste and recyclable materials. In Pennsylvania, Act 101, the Municipal Waste Planning, Recycling, and Waste Reduction Act of 1988, requires that mandated municipalities (municipalities with populations greater than 10,000 and smaller municipalities with a population of 5,000 to 10,000 residents and a population density of more than 300 residents per square mile) establish a program to source-separate and collect a minimum of three types of recyclables, plus yard waste, and to adopt resolutions, ordinances, regulations, and standards to carry out the responsibilities of solid waste management. These responsibilities may be accomplished through municipal programs or through the regulation of private firms that collect and haul municipal waste.

Act 101 also authorizes counties to prepare and periodically update a 10-year plan to guide the management of municipal solid waste. The *Bucks County Municipal Waste Management Plan Revision* (a revision to the Bucks County Municipal Waste Management Plan of 1991) was approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) in January of 2006, and adopted by the Bucks County Commissioners in May of 2006. It was recently submitted to the municipalities, by the County of Bucks, for their adoption. By ordinance dated July 16, 2007 the plan revision was adopted by the Morrisville Borough Council. The revised plan provides continued guidance for solid waste management throughout the county to the year 2014.

The management of residential municipal waste collection and recycling is provided by Morrisville Borough to its residents through a municipal contract with a private hauler. The program addresses an extensive list of recyclable materials including; aluminum and steel cans, three colors of glass food and beverage containers, #1 and #2 plastic bottles, newspaper, magazines, catalogs, and junk mail, as well as yard waste (which includes leaves, garden residue, shrubbery, tree trimmings and similar material). Residents are provided curbside collection of leaf waste during four weeks in the fall, whereby they may place the leaves in rigid containers or paper bags for pickup. In addition, the borough picks up Christmas Trees for a period after the holidays.

Business owners in Morrisville Borough contract directly with private haulers for solid waste collection, disposal and recycling services. Haulers deliver the collected waste for disposal at a nearby landfill or waste-to-energy facility while the recyclable components are delivered to recycling facilities in the region. The borough also participates in the S.E. Pennsylvania Regional Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program, which it has done for over fifteen years. This program provides the opportunity for residents to properly

dispose of the hazardous component of the residential waste stream that should not be disposed in local landfills or waste-to-energy facilities.

The figures noted in the table below, reported as part of the borough’s annual municipal recycling report for 2006, show the results of the efforts of the residents and businesses of Morrisville Borough. Over 2,352 tons of recyclable materials were diverted from the waste stream by the residents of the borough, along with an additional 543 tons of material from township businesses. A residential recycling rate approaching 34 percent of the waste stream is notable and demonstrates the effectiveness of an aggressive recycling effort in the borough.

Table 20. Morrisville Borough Recycling Program Year 2006					
Residential Waste Generation (tons)	Residential Recycling (tons)	Residential Recycling Rate (percent)	Commercial Recycling (tons)	Total Report Recycled (tons)	Total Recycling Rate (percent)
8,620	2,352	25	543	2,895	33

Source: Municipal Annual Recycling Report

Recycling efforts on the part of residents and businesses in Morrisville Borough will continue to conserve limited landfill space and contribute to the long-term sustainability of the environment.

Future Needs

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania set a goal in 1997 to recycle 35 percent of the municipal waste stream by 2003. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the County of Bucks both reportedly reached this goal in 2002. Although this goal has been attained, continued effort on the part of each community is important in order to continue this success and possibly even increase these rates. It is suggested that efforts to maintain the involvement of residents continue, and even expand communication with businesses in the borough to assure that they have recycling programs in place, and to provide assistance where necessary, to assist them in the review of their waste management programs. A program to institute a commercial recycling enforcement program could benefit businesses by reducing their waste stream while at the same time increase the rate and volume of recycling in the borough.

These continued efforts will further increase the diversion of materials from the waste stream and these tonnages may be included on the municipal Act 101 Recycling Performance Grant application resulting in greater grant funding being available to the borough.

Summary of Recommended Actions—Solid Waste Management

- Establish a program to obtain information from businesses operating in the borough to assure they have a recycling program in place.
- Establish a yard waste and leaf pickup and compost operation and program for the benefit of borough residents.
- Provide a program to offer assistance to businesses and institutions in the borough to review their waste management programs and to assist them in their efforts to divert greater amounts of material from the waste stream.
- Establish an enforcement program that might entail an annual review/inspection of each business within the community.
- Sponsor a program, facilitate a program or support an organization to address illegal dumping and/or littering problems in the borough.

Compatibility with Adjacent Existing and Proposed Development

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) requires that comprehensive plans take into account planning in surrounding areas, the county, and the region. Development impacts do not stop at municipal boundary lines, but rather transcend a region. The purpose of the following discussion is to ensure that policies developed for Morrisville do not create conflicts with adjoining lands but encourage a regional approach to address planning problems and issues.

Morrisville Borough sits adjacent to three municipal entities, two in Bucks County, and the other across the Delaware River, in New Jersey. In Bucks County, Falls Township surrounds much of the borough, encompassing land to the northwest, west, and south. Lower Makefield Township borders a portion of the borough to the north. Across the three bridges to the east is the city of Trenton, New Jersey. Each of these bordering municipalities has development, land use plans, and zoning controls that must be examined to ensure the compatibility of this comprehensive plan.

Falls Township

Falls Township adopted a new comprehensive plan in 2004. As part of this plan, a future land use map was incorporated to guide future land use policy decisions, including zoning.

In general, the land use policy and existing development of Falls Township is compatible with the policies and land use of Morrisville Borough. The future land use map of the Falls Township Comprehensive Plan shows industrial land use to the south and southwest, commercial land use to the west between Route 1 and Bridge Street, recreational land use to the west, and low-intensity commercial and single-family residential land use to the north.

The only area of incompatibility shown by the Falls Township plan would be the industrial land use shown along the Delaware River to the south of Morrisville's Staley property. The Staley property is zoned RND (Riverview Neighborhood District), which permits a mix of uses in a traditional neighborhood setting.

However, Falls Township has recently adopted a mixed-use riverfront zoning district along the Delaware that would wholly complement the borough's RND district. The Falls Township district seeks to implement the *Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan* by permitting a mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses and requiring applicants to meet a set of design standards. The rezoning of this area is a policy change that is not reflected in the Falls Township comprehensive plan.

Lower Makefield Township

Lower Makefield Township adopted a new comprehensive plan in 2003. This plan also included a future land use map to help guide future land use policy decisions.

The map identifies areas adjacent to Morrisville's north border as "medium-density residential" and "low-density residential and resource protection." This is compatible with the existing protected open space (the Graystones property) and the existing medium density residential land use in Morrisville. This *Comprehensive Plan of Morrisville Borough* recommends no changes in land use policy along this border.

Trenton, New Jersey

While the city of Trenton sits over 1,000 feet across the Delaware River from the borough, planning and land use occurring in the city has a large effect on the quality of life in the borough.

Trenton is the state capital of New Jersey and in recent years has worked to revitalize its neighborhoods and underutilized and abandoned industrial sites. During the morning and early evening hours, commuters, including state workers and users of the Trenton train station, travel through Morrisville on their way to and from jobs in Trenton and New York City. Trenton also has a number of entertainment options, including a sporting arena, minor league baseball stadium, theater, and nightclubs, all of which increase traffic volumes in the borough during off-peak hours. In addition to traffic impacts, noise from the stadium and nightclubs on the waterfront can be an annoyance to borough residents and decrease quality of life.

The borough does receive some secondary economic benefits from these uses, as some Trenton customers will also patronize Morrisville businesses and some Morrisville residents are employed at these businesses. However, these economic benefits are probably small, especially in comparison with the larger negative impacts these uses present to borough residents. Thus, the borough should coordinate with the city to ensure that waterfront users remain in compliance with local noise ordinances and continue to look for traffic management solutions that would reduce traffic volumes (See Chapter 10: Transportation and Circulation).

Regional

Bucks County Comprehensive Plan

The *Bucks County Comprehensive Plan* (1993) sets forth the county's land use and planning policy for Bucks County. The plan recommends five development strategies for urban areas such as Morrisville Borough: infill development (development of vacant parcels); redevelopment (site clearance and development); downtown revitalization; neighborhood improvement and planning; and adaptive reuse (adapting old uses to new purposes). The

Comprehensive Plan of Morrisville Borough seeks to implement each of these strategies, where appropriate. The borough's plan is consistent with the county's plan.

Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan

The Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan shows concept plans for key areas in the study area that are considered priority redevelopment and enhancement projects in each study area municipality. Each "opportunity area" provides a potential vision of what might be.

In Morrisville, the plan envisions waterfront gateways at the Lower Trenton Bridge and Trenton-Morrisville Toll Bridge, a transit-oriented development and train station at the Toll site, and a senior housing complex at the Cloverleaf site. The plan also shows a trail along the Delaware River from Williamson Park to the borough's southern border. Open space and public access to the water are identified at the Staley property. Bridge Street and Pennsylvania Avenue are shown as bicycle routes, connecting Morrisville to the adjacent communities of Trenton, Lower Makefield, and Falls. Morrisville Lake is identified as a potential new park.

The Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan is consistent with goals and land use policies of this comprehensive plan.

DVRPC: Destination 2030

In 2005, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) developed *Destination 2030* (revised May 2007) following a three-year planning process. The purpose of the plan is to carry out DVRPC's defined mission, which is "to plan for the orderly growth and development of the region."

The 2030 Land Use Plan identifies Morrisville Borough as an Existing Development area, but does not identify the borough as a Revitalizing Development Center as it does the other municipalities along the lower Delaware River waterfront. The lack of this designation is inconsistent with the borough's existing conditions and strategy of revitalization.

The Delaware Canal State Park corridor and Delaware River waterfront area are designated as Greenspace Networks. However, the plan shows a greenspace network linkage (Map: 2030 Greenspace Network) that is inconsistent with this comprehensive plan. Shown as the "Cross County Corridor", the DVRPC plan shows a linkage from the west that cuts through the Morrisville Lake area, along Post Road, and ending at the Delaware River. The Morrisville Borough Open Space Plan and this comprehensive plan have no policy that would recommend that these areas be developed as linkages. During the next DVRPC land use plan update, the borough should further investigate the details of this proposed linkage and determine whether it warrants any action on the borough's part.

Part II. Revitalization and Planning for the Future

A comprehensive plan outlines a vision of the municipality's future and recommends strategies for making that vision a reality. The result of a public process, a comprehensive plan focuses on specific, achievable activities aimed at improving the physical, social, and economic environment.

At the core of a comprehensive plan are common goals and objectives. The goals and objectives of this comprehensive plan have been selected and refined through a continuing public process that has taken place over several years. Elements of the process include a resident survey conducted as a part of this plan, and continuing public consideration of issues at meetings of the Planning Commission and the Borough Council, along with guidance from the general public and from special-purpose agencies and advisory groups.

Also contributing to the visioning and goal-setting process have been the results of specialized planning studies done within the past few years. These include the countywide waterfront revitalization plan, the borough's open space plan, trail and management plans for the Delaware River area, a street tree inventory and management plan, the Landmark Towns regional revitalization program for riverfront boroughs, and a downtown plan authored by University of Pennsylvania graduate students.

In preparation for the new comprehensive plan, residents were asked to offer their views on Morrisville's priorities and hopes for the borough's future in a community survey. Three themes running throughout survey responses were: (1) the need for increased economic and community revitalization; (2) the impact of high property taxes; and (3) the effect of the negative perception of the Morrisville Borough School District.

Many of those surveyed desired limits on businesses that are perceived negatively, such as cigarette outlets and nail salons. Most favored the attraction of higher quality businesses, such as restaurants, shops, and professional services. Respondents also advocated development of tourism, particularly historical tourism, in the borough. Survey responses also emphasized that open space recreational areas, such as the riverfront and Williamson Park, and natural lands such as Graystones, should be preserved and enhanced.

As for residential development, most respondents preferred the prevailing type of housing in the long-established community: single-family, owner-occupied housing. Retirement or senior living developments, as well as townhouses, also were viewed favorably.

Residents found community services and utilities largely satisfactory, with the exception of educational programs and facilities, and street lighting and roads.

Community Vision

The following articulates a community vision statement that describes the collective vision of the future of Morrisville Borough. A community vision statement is an expression of the ideal community of Morrisville as seen in its present state.

***Community Vision Statement** – Morrisville Borough is a historic riverfront town known for its hardworking and diverse population. It is a community of close-knit neighborhoods and small town values, where both old and young work together to ensure a better future for all.*

Morrisville residents value recreation and the environment, with a deep understanding of their intrinsic relationship with the Delaware River. Widely known for its parks and system of trails as well as festivals and community events, the borough has an abundance of recreational and cultural opportunities. Its historical resources, including Graystones and Summerseat, convey the story of Morrisville and establish it as an authentic community with a real sense of place and history.

Walkable streets, convenient public transit, and easy access to the cities of Trenton, Philadelphia, and New York offer residents numerous travel options. Public services are delivered in a professional and cost-effective manner. Residents are technologically connected and have access to an affordable education.

Morrisville's thriving downtown and diverse economic base offer both local employment and a healthy tax base. Attractive, quality businesses line the commercial corridors of the borough and the streets have a friendly and active atmosphere.

Goals and Objectives

To achieve this community vision statement eight goals for the borough are listed with objectives to implement the goals over the next 10 years. Goals establish the general overriding course toward which the borough aspires. Objectives state an approach on standards and procedures that guide decision-making in pursuing these goals. The numbering does not indicate priority status.

Goal 1 – Preserve and enhance our traditional town character.

- Objective 1 – Encourage development compatible with existing classic residential walking neighborhoods of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
- Objective 2 – Encourage continued rehabilitation and development of single family owner-occupied housing stock.
- Objective 3 – Use improvements in community amenities, the downtown shopping district, and recreational opportunities to enhance quality of life for residents.
- Objective 4 – Maintain and enhance street infrastructure, such as lighting, benches, and signage.
- Objective 5 – Protect, enhance, and celebrate historic and cultural resources to establish a sense of place and enhance investment in the community.

Goal 2 – Develop a vibrant, stable, and sustainable economy.

- Objective 1 – Revitalize the downtown shopping district to create a lively and inviting marketplace and destination for both residents and visitors alike.
- Objective 2 – Leverage redevelopment opportunities to attract high-quality and complementary retail and service businesses to the borough.
- Objective 3 – Enhance opportunities for businesses to create jobs which are within walking distance of residential neighborhoods.
- Objective 4 – Use the borough’s historical and cultural resources to develop tourism opportunities.

Goal 3 – Preserve and enhance green infrastructure.⁷

- Objective 1 – Ensure that all properties acquired under the Morrisville Borough Open Space Plan are protected and acquire additional listed properties.
- Objective 2 – Develop the borough's green infrastructure to enhance residents' quality of life and tie together recreational areas with residential and shopping districts.
- Objective 3 – Reconnect the Delaware riverfront and Delaware Canal with other borough amenities including the downtown shopping district.
- Objective 4 – Restore the natural environment in key areas, including Mill Pond and the tidal shores of the Delaware River.

Goal 4 – Create exceptional recreational opportunities.

- Objective 1 – Renovate and maintain existing recreational facilities including Williamson Park and Manor Park.
- Objective 2 – Reconnect recreational space to the riverfront by developing a system of pedestrian paths and trail connections.
- Objective 3 – Ensure that all residential areas have easy access to recreational space.

Goal 5 – Work toward easy, affordable, and safe access to transportation.

- Objective 1 – Develop transportation management strategies to address residents' concerns about traffic volumes and speeds.
- Objective 2 – Support expansion of existing public transportation options.
- Objective 3 – Advocate downtown access to regional rail service.
- Objective 4 – Promote safe and convenient circulation and access for pedestrians and cyclists.

Goal 6 – Offer excellent lifelong educational opportunities.

- Objective 1 – Significantly improve the quality of educational opportunities for Morrisville's children.
- Objective 2 – Support and expand adult education opportunities through community organizations.

⁷ Green infrastructure are the ecological processes, both natural and engineered, that act as the natural infrastructure. It includes streams, rivers, wetlands, parks, open space, trees, green roofs, gardens, working lands, aquifers and watersheds that supply drinking water.

Goal 7 – Enhance community services and utilities.

- Objective 1 – Ensure that all borough residents and businesses have full and easy access to all relevant community services and utilities.
- Objective 2 – Maintain and improve the current high standard of excellence for all borough services and utilities.

Goal 8 – Nurture strong mutually-supportive ties with neighboring communities.

- Objective 1 – Work directly and regularly with Falls Township, Lower Makefield Township and the City of Trenton to find areas of mutual interest and efficiencies of scale.
- Objective 2 – Leverage Federal, State and County opportunities to create and enhance local and regional partnerships to provide community services and amenities.

Summary of Assets and Opportunities

Morrisville is blessed with many outstanding attributes and numerous opportunities of which the borough can take advantage. The previous chapter has already incorporated many of these resources into its vision of the community. Below is a summary of these assets and opportunities and why they are important to future revitalization and planning activities. Future efforts should be mindful of these resources to ensure they are included and used to their full advantage.

Delaware River

The Delaware River is the borough's most valuable natural resource. It is a source of recreation, scenic qualities, and wildlife habitation. The Delaware River Shore area in Morrisville is a critical habitat area, primarily due to the vegetation along the river providing valuable habitat for birds and other animals, and shade for fish in the river.



Delaware River

The borough is unique in terms of the large amount of riverfront land that is in public ownership which results in greater public access opportunities relative to other waterfront communities.

Many riverfront communities throughout the U.S. use their riverfront location as the driving theme in their economic development efforts. These communities have worked to restore the natural functions of their river systems while redeveloping riverfront sites using environmentally responsible design and construction practices. Both activities can attract tourists and new residents who are seeking to enjoy the great amenities that rivers such as the Delaware offer.

Delaware Canal

The Delaware Canal is a scenic, recreational, and historic resource. The towpath of the canal is used as a hiking and bicycle trail and has been designated a National Heritage Hiking Trail. The Delaware Canal will also serve as a section of both the Delaware River Heritage Trail and East Coast Greenway. The entire Delaware Canal is a registered National Historic Landmark.

Recreation Opportunities

Morrisville is blessed with a wealth of recreational resources, including the 40-acre Williamson Park and levee walking path, school fields, Delaware Canal State Park and towpath, and Graystones open space. Stunning views of the Delaware River can be taken in from the top of the levee along the edge of Williamson Park. Williamson Park contains a diversity of recreation opportunities, including trails, playfields, play equipment, and a public pool.

Mill Pond

Mill Pond, located along Bridge Street, adjacent to the Holiday Inn and 7-Eleven, is a remnant of the old rubber mill. The man-made pond is an underutilized resource in the community. Due to its central location and the access it provides to the adjacent Delaware Canal, Mill Pond is a key site that should be capitalized on through acquisition and restoration.



Mill Pond

Morrisville Lake

Morrisville Lake, located in the southwest corner of the borough, is on the site of an old quarry pit and identified in the *Morrisville Borough Open Space Plan* as having the potential to become a recreational facility for the borough.

Mature Street Trees

The *Street Tree Inventory Report: Morrisville, PA*, identified over 1,000 street trees in the borough, with over 59 species represented. In addition to their aesthetic value, street trees provide a sense of enclosure and protection. Mature trees filter air pollution and, during hot summer days, provide shade and reduce the “heat island” effect.

Downtown Commercial Area

The borough maintains a traditional commercial core along Bridge Street at the heart of the community, with mixed-use buildings and storefronts at the edge of sidewalks. Street infrastructure, including street lights, street trees, and sidewalks line the corridor, and parking is generally available. The basic physical elements of a successful traditional central business district are already present. New uses and enhancement, such as the Bridge Street renovation project must be implemented to capture greater economic benefits.



Traditional Pattern of Development/ Closeness of Diverse Resources

Morrisville's traditional layout, small lots, and grid-like pattern fosters a closeness of diverse resources that are convenient to access from many other locations from within and without the borough. The town's traditional street pattern, along with its numerous sidewalks, makes it easy to get around by foot.

Morrisville is also a community of close-knit neighborhoods, reflective of the town's traditional street layouts and small lot sizes. Many residents have lived in Morrisville all their lives.

History

Residential, commercial, and industrial architecture throughout the town visually represents every period of the nation's history, from artifacts of pre-Revolutionary settlements and 18th-century manor houses through 19th-century remnants of the Industrial Revolution and 20th-century suburban residential developments. Morrisville was the site of important figures and events in our nation's history. This background can serve as a terrific foundation for tourism opportunities, celebrations, and sense of community pride.

Underutilized Areas/ Infill Opportunities

There are sites within walking distance of the downtown that could serve as potential extensions of the downtown. Other areas, including the Staley site at the southern border of the borough and the Toll site between Route 1 and the rail line, have been the subject of redevelopment plans. Such areas should be redeveloped into pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use developments.

Location

Key among all factors for the revitalization of Morrisville is its location along the banks of the Delaware River across from the state capitol of New Jersey. A central location adjacent to these resources is critical for the borough's economic future.

A Youthful and Diverse Population

Morrisville residents tend to be younger and more diverse than the average Bucks County resident. Median age in Morrisville is 35.7 years, a full two years younger than the median age in Bucks County. As of the 2000 census, 76 percent of borough residents was white, 19.1 percent was African-American, 4.8 of the population was Hispanic (of any race), and 1.2 percent was Asian.

Access to the cultural amenities that come with a diverse population will be important to the educated workforce of the 21st Century. The borough's youthfulness will provide the necessary energy and optimism to complete the revitalization process.

Affordable and Attractive Housing Stock

Home values and rental rates are below county medians, making Morrisville one of the most affordable communities in Bucks County to live. Much of the single-family housing stock is in good condition, despite being 50 years or older.



Transit Availability

Morrisville residents have both fixed-route bus service and regionally-accessible rail service available to them. Connections can be made to Philadelphia, Trenton, and New York City. The area between the Delaware Canal, the SEPTA R7 rail line, and South Pennsylvania Avenue has been identified by both the *Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan* and the Bucks County Redevelopment Authority as an area with the potential for the construction of a new rail station and transit-oriented development. Convenient access to a variety of transportation options will be an important consideration to future business owners, workers, and residents.

Common Sense of Opportunity

There is the sense among many Morrisville residents that the community is capable of being not just a nice place, but a great place to live. Given Morrisville's resources, its history, its culture, and its people, the opportunity for becoming such a community is within its grasp.

This chapter summarizes major revitalization initiatives and plans that have been completed since the last comprehensive plan was issued in 1982. The summary is intended to serve as a backdrop to this comprehensive plan's implementation strategy, by outlining key provisions of the studies and the interrelationships among them, and by noting progress toward completion. It also describes the makeup and function of the Morrisville Economic Development Corporation, which plays a prime role in coordinating many of the economic and redevelopment projects envisioned in the plans.

The plans have a redevelopment and natural and cultural heritage orientation. Some of them overlap, and differ in the fine points of their recommended strategies, techniques, or site-specific proposals. But they substantially agree on the need for revitalization of the central business district, the waterfront, and certain residential neighborhoods, and the need for the borough to capitalize on its historic heritage and its many amenities. The *Comprehensive Plan of Morrisville, Pennsylvania* supports the goals and objectives of each of these plans and initiatives.

Morrisville Economic Development Corporation

The Morrisville Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) is a seven-member nonprofit corporation formed in 1991 to recruit, promote, and retain business enterprises. The members are appointed by the Borough Council.

The MEDC can buy, sell, or develop property, issue bonds, make loan guarantees, coordinate projects, and administer funds, among other powers. Its flexibility and range of functions allow it to carry out projects by itself or partner with other private or public entities. It also sponsors or co-sponsors special events that showcase the borough.

The MEDC developed the Heritage Center performing arts center on the site of the former municipal garage, and is in the process of developing the 0.8 parcel near the foot of the Lower Trenton Bridge. Another planned project is redevelopment of the former borough water filtration plant on North Delmorr Avenue into a waterfront restaurant with an outdoor dining area.

While an independent organization, the MEDC works in collaboration with Borough Council. The MEDC initiates and packages new projects, but it is up to council to approve and act on them. Where appropriate, the vision put forward by this comprehensive plan, as well as its recommended strategies for implementation, should be coordinated with the activities of the MEDC.

Borough Activities

Morrisville Borough has received a \$1.5 million grant from the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission for streetscape improvements along Bridge Street. Planned improvements include a sign welcoming drivers to Morrisville, a landscaped median between the Lower Trenton Bridge and Delmorr Avenue, new street lights along Bridge Street, new traffic lights and striping at the intersections of Bridge Street and Delmorr Avenue and Bridge Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, and new sidewalks and curbing along Bridge Street from Pennsylvania Avenue to Cox Avenue.

The borough is also partnering with the Bucks County Redevelopment Authority (BCRDA) in residential redevelopment of the Cloverleaf site off East Cleveland Avenue.

Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan

The purpose of the *Bucks County Delaware River Waterfront Revitalization Plan* is to articulate a community-based vision that will guide future revitalization efforts along the lower Delaware River waterfront in the townships of Bensalem, Bristol, and Falls, and the boroughs of Bristol, Tullytown, and Morrisville.

The *Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan* devises specific recommendations to improve the study area and make it more attractive to residents, businesses, and visitors. Six themes organize these recommendations and serve as goals for the plan:

- Enliven the river's edge by improving waterfront access.
- Incorporate design with development to improve the attractiveness of the area and foster its renaissance.
- Support the economy by fostering redevelopment of underused lands and buildings.
- Expand mobility and accessibility to and within the study area.
- Foster environmental sustainability of the Delaware River and its tributaries.
- Reinforce a sense of place and identity.

The study also provides more detailed concept plans for key portions of the study area that are considered priority projects in each study area municipality. Each "opportunity area" provides a potential vision of what might be.

In Morrisville, the concept plan envisions waterfront gateways at the Lower Trenton Bridge and Trenton-Morrisville Toll Bridge, a transit-oriented development and SEPTA train

station at the site of what is now a Toll Brothers assembly operation, mixed-use development around the Staley industrial site at the southeast corner of the borough, and an age-targeted housing complex at the Cloverleaf site off of East Cleveland Avenue.

The plan also envisions several park and recreation and open space opportunities. The plan shows a trail along the Delaware River from Williamson Park to the borough's southern border and into Falls Township. Open space and public access to the water are identified at the Staley property. Bridge Street and Pennsylvania Avenue are shown as bicycle routes, connecting Morrisville to the adjacent communities of Trenton, Lower Makefield, and Falls. The Morrisville Lake area is identified as a potential new park.

The opportunity area plan for Morrisville recommends that the borough create a mixed-use district that includes residential and commercial uses with some of the newer development types that incorporate features like lot size mix, mixed-use buildings, walkability, and architectural design controls. In 2005, the borough designated the Staley site as the Riverview redevelopment area (see the discussion of redevelopment area plans in the following section) and adopted a new mixed-use district geared toward carrying out the recommendations of the countywide waterfront plan there. The district, known as the Riverview Neighborhood District, contains development standards aimed at emulating the borough's traditional town character, with small lots, shallow setbacks, narrow streets, and a mix of uses.

With each new redevelopment opportunity or initiative, the borough should consult the *Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan* to ensure consistency with the themes, recommendations, and vision put forward by the plan. In addition, several recommendations, which are not specifically being championed by any entity, should be further explored by the borough. These include the proposed bicycle routes, the trail identified along the Delaware River, and the gateway shown at the west end of Bridge Street.

Redevelopment Area Plans

The borough has designated most of its waterfront, central business district, industrial core, and parts of nearby residential neighborhoods as a certified redevelopment area, under the provisions of Pennsylvania urban redevelopment law. The aims of this redevelopment planning include reducing incompatible land uses, leveraging private investment, and enhancing the quality of community life.

Working with the Bucks County Redevelopment Authority, the borough has adopted two redevelopment area plans, each covering a segment of the entire certified area. One is the Riverview Redevelopment Area Plan and the other is the Town Center Redevelopment

Area Plan. The two plans provide for redevelopment of tracts now dominated by two industrial firms, in the event of a transition in use.

The Riverview Redevelopment Plan made use of the *Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan* for ideas and guidance. It focuses on the borough's south waterfront and areas inward, including the Staley industrial site, from East Philadelphia Avenue to East Post Road.

The Staley property is located at the southeast corner of the borough adjoining the Delaware River. Operations at the former corn syrup production plant have been limited to bulk handling and transfer since it closed in 1987.

The plan recommends zoning changes intended to implement provisions of the county waterfront plan within Morrisville. The zoning changes promote mixed use, traditional design elements, adaptive reuse of existing buildings, green space, compact and walkable layout, and opening access to the Delaware River. Such zoning changes have been incorporated into the Riverview Neighborhood Zoning District, which covers the Staley site at the southeastern border of the Riverview Redevelopment Area.

Since the adoption of the Riverview district, no redevelopment proposals for the site have been submitted. The Bucks County Redevelopment Authority continues to work with the property's owner and market the site to potential developers.

The other redevelopment area plan adopted by the borough is the Town Center plan. The designated Town Center area is bounded roughly by the Delaware Canal, Falls Township, Pennsylvania Avenue, and Philadelphia Avenue.

The plan proposes zoning changes that were enacted by ordinance in 2006 to provide for light industrial, flex space, technology, research and development, or other newer types of nonresidential uses in districts that were zoned for more conventional heavy industrial use. The rezoned area encompasses a Toll Brothers plant for assembly of housing frames.

The zoning changes would also allow commuter rail and bus stations. But in order to truly accommodate transit-oriented development, as has been envisioned for the area if a SEPTA rail station is built there, the zoning would have to be further refined to permit a residential component.

No negotiations have begun between the BCRDA and Toll Bros. for the acquisition or development of the site. However, Toll Bros. does have contingency plans for the site's redevelopment should the company decide this course of action would be in their best interest.

Enterprise Zone

The Bucks County Enterprise Zone provides grants, job training, tax credits, and minority business development offered by the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority.

The Enterprise Zone Program is designed to increase the quantity and quality of the available job opportunities within an Enterprise Zone area. Enterprise Zone areas in Morrisville Borough include the Toll Brothers site, the Staley property, and an area between Royale and Ohio avenues (Post Road Area). Designated Enterprise Zones are given priority consideration to facilitate business investment and job creation.

A primary mission of the Enterprise Zone is to provide the coordination and communication between the business community and the public sector. The Enterprise Zone of Bucks County coordinates business needs (financial or technical) with the correct public sector agency and providing the business community with access to existing and new resources (financial and technical) available for business growth and expansion.

The Enterprise Zone Program places a priority on assistance to businesses involved in industrial, manufacturing and export services. However, the Staley property is currently zoned RND Riverview Neighborhood District; this district permits a mix of uses, including residential, retail commercial, and office. Commercial uses in this district would not be able to participate in many of the incentive programs offered through the Enterprise Zone because participants must use the benefits for manufacturing purposes. However, there are enough incentive programs available that do not have such requirements and could be used for the purpose of developing retail commercial, office, or office/research uses.

Revitalizing Morrisville: Rethinking the Triangle

Revitalizing Morrisville: Rethinking the Triangle is a long-term master plan for revitalization of the core central business district and surrounding area that envisions the borough's transformation into a regional destination. Completed in 2007, the plan was formulated as a workshop project of graduate students in urban planning at the University of Pennsylvania, undertaken at the invitation of the Morrisville Economic Development Corporation. This plan has not been officially acted upon by the borough, but is favorably viewed as a catalyst to action and a source of background information and creative ideas that may be incorporated into other redevelopment activities and planning.

The plan area encompasses a triangular swath of the borough roughly bounded by four defining natural or built features: the Calhoun Street Bridge on the north, the Delaware River on the east, the Delaware Canal on the west and the Trenton Makes Bridge on the south.

The plan targets six nodes within the triangle, and outlines policy and design prescriptions to help realize their potential through measures that include: aiding pedestrian circulation; calming traffic; installing better wayfinding signage; and implementing a coordinated program of redevelopment and other physical improvements.

The nodes are:

- The Morrisville town center, within the downtown area bounded by Washington Avenue, the Renaissance Building, Union Street and Bridge Street
- The area around the Calhoun Street Bridge gateway to the borough
- Williamson Park
- The area around the Trenton Makes Bridge gateway
- The Bridge Street commercial corridor
- The proposed redevelopment into the Robert Morris Business Center of Bridge Street between Pennsylvania Avenue and the Delaware Canal.

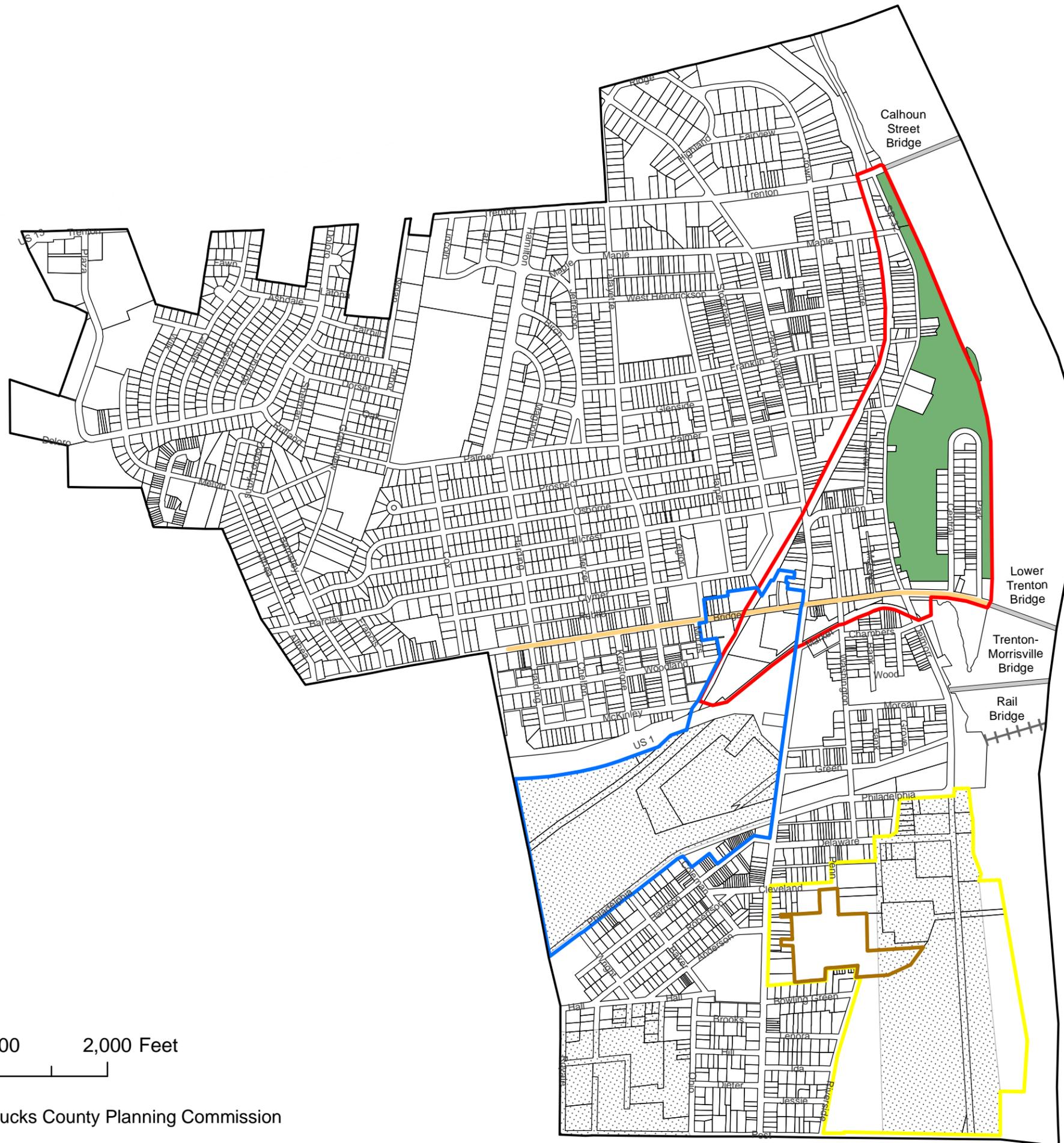
Some of the possible implementation activities outlined in the plan involve forming a commercial corridor action team to coordinate public participation in redevelopment planning, applying tax incentive programs to redevelopment activities, forming a community development corporation to execute the revitalization plan, and enacting form-based zoning provisions.

This comprehensive plan agrees with the analysis and policy and design prescriptions identified by *Rethinking the Triangle*. The implementation activities presented could serve as a pathway to accomplishing the revitalization goals of the plan. However, any revitalization activity that is to take place should be coordinated with the Landmark Towns Project (see below) to ensure consistency and avoid duplication of activities.

Landmark Towns Project

The Landmark Towns Project is a regional revitalization initiative of lower Bucks County communities along the Delaware Canal that have traditional downtown business districts. Morrisville, Bristol Borough, New Hope and Yardley are the member municipalities. Landmark Towns combines the marketing, design, organization and economic development tools of the successful “Main Street” downtown renewal program, with the state’s Heritage Park approach to promoting industrial heritage tourism.

Map 5 Overview of Revitalization Plans and Initiatives



-  Bridge St. Streetscape Improvements
-  Williamson Park
-  Cloverleaf Site
-  Riverview Redevelopment Area
-  Town Center Redevelopment Area
-  Rethinking the Triangle Study Area
-  Enterprise Zone



Prepared by: Bucks County Planning Commission

Morrisville Borough
Bucks County, Pennsylvania

The Landmark Towns Project has a twofold approach, targeting both economic development and cultural resources. It is coordinated through the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor (D&L) and funded by the D&L and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

The project seeks to define the region, assess the economy, identify unifying regional themes, and promote the member municipalities as tourist destinations. Representatives of the municipalities are preparing a regional downtown revitalization plan. A full-time coordinator has recently been hired to help undertake activities identified in the plan, along with those necessary for a Main Street program tailored to each participating community.

In Morrisville, initial plans are to pursue initiatives designed to draw people using the riverwalk into the commercial district, provide safe pedestrian access to the canal and create a walking route that loops back to the river walk, and create a development plan for borough-owned areas adjacent to the Calhoun Street Bridge.

Landmark Towns will help the borough position itself as an up and coming community with a rich cultural history. Downtown revitalization will be critical to the ability of the borough to capture the full benefit of this program. Already the borough and the MEDC have begun this process with the Bridge Street streetscape improvements and the downtown master plan, *Rethinking the Triangle*. Coordination between the MEDC and Landmark Towns will be vital to the success of this process.

The main purpose of a comprehensive plan is to set out a vision of the future of a community and provide a physical plan for realizing this vision. The vision set forth by this plan is focused on revitalizing the downtown, preserving and enhancing natural, historical, and cultural resources, and maintaining the borough's traditional town character.

With limited vacant land available in Morrisville, future development will primarily be in the form of infill or redevelopment. Morrisville Borough must carefully tailor land use policy and regulation to both foster economic development and fulfill the vision of the community. This chapter will provide a policy framework that will assist the borough in implementing the recommendations of this plan. The policy framework will include principles of planning and economic development and a future land use discussion and map.

Principles of Development

Planning

The overarching planning principle that guides this Plan is "Smart Growth." The principles of this land use planning strategy are discussed throughout the Comprehensive Plan and endorsed by many county and state governments, including Bucks County and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Smart growth promotes a concentration of development and diversity of uses. This approach is meant to guide development to reduce sprawl, preserve farmland and open space, conserve natural environments, utilize existing infrastructure, revitalize growth centers and older communities, and encourage alternative means of transit such as walking and biking.

Principles of Smart Growth⁸ include:

- **Create Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices** – An integral component of any smart growth strategy is to provide quality housing for people of all income levels.
- **Create Walkable Neighborhoods** – Walkable communities are desirable places to live, work, learn, worship and play, and therefore a key component of smart growth.

⁸ Smart Growth Network; www.smartgrowth.org

- **Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration** – Growth can create great places to live, work and play—if it responds to a community’s own sense of how and where it wants to grow.
- **Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place** – Smart growth encourages communities to craft a vision and set standards for development and construction which respond to community values of architectural beauty and distinctiveness, as well as expanded choices in housing and transportation.
- **Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair and Cost Effective** – For a community to be successful in implementing smart growth, it must be embraced by the private sector.
- **Mix Land Uses** – Smart growth supports the integration of mixed land uses (i.e., different compatible land uses such as residential and commercial development) into communities as a critical component of achieving better places to live.
- **Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas** – Open space preservation supports smart growth goals by bolstering local economies, preserving critical environmental areas, improving our communities’ quality of life, and guiding new growth into existing communities.
- **Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices** – Providing people with more choices in housing, shopping, communities, and transportation is a key aim of smart growth.
- **Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities** – Smart growth directs development towards existing communities already served by infrastructure, seeking to utilize the resources that existing neighborhoods offer, and conserve open space and irreplaceable natural resources on the urban fringe.
- **Take Advantage of Compact Building Design** – Smart growth provides a means for communities to incorporate more compact building design and more efficient use of land as an alternative to conventional, land consumptive development.

Many of the principles and strategies of smart growth are already being used by Morrisville Borough. For example, the new Riverview Neighborhood zoning district is designed to revitalize an older industrial area into a compact, walkable neighborhood that has a mix of residential and commercial land uses and a real sense of place. The borough also adopted a zoning amendment that would permit commuter rail or bus transit station uses within the zoning district that encompasses the Town Center redevelopment area. The borough’s open

space preservation and park and recreation development efforts help protect critical natural resources and provide additional amenities to both residents and visitors.

The borough should also incorporate the land use planning principles of plans such as the *Lower Delaware River Conservation Plan* and the *Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan*. The borough should ensure that the resource protection and development strategies and principles found in these plans are fostered in current revitalization efforts and incorporated into future endeavors.

Economic Development

Morrisville's best economic period came in the time of the old manufacturing economy, which was based on processing of raw materials, proximity to transportation, and blue collar labor. Economic development efforts in the old economy were based on attracting industry by providing cheap land, cheap energy, a plentiful labor force, and low taxes. There has been widespread recognition that the manufacturing economy has changed and economic development efforts must change as well.

Indeed, when residents were asked in the comprehensive plan survey what they thought were among the major problems or needs facing the borough, the categories of taxes, job opportunities/economic development, and the business district were among the top five. Clearly, borough residents recognize the economic development challenges that must be addressed in moving forward.

The "Knowledge Economy" involves applying knowledge and doing business in new and creative ways to a wide range of products and services from agriculture to software. The Knowledge Economy focuses on speed, quality, flexibility, knowledge, and networks which have become the new sources of competitive advantage faced by all industries. The Knowledge Economy requires provision of a high quality of life for an educated workforce and ability to learn and adapt to new technology and business conditions.

In the past creating new jobs was the means to success in economic development. Today existing jobs must be enhanced by raising wages and quality of life, which can both be accomplished by boosting the skills of the workforce. A skilled workforce is provided by high quality education in the schools and ongoing vocational training opportunities.

The borough should create a collaborative environment among government and business, and provide a customer-oriented and responsive government. The permitting process should give businesses the needed flexibility to redevelop old facilities and build new ones to enhance economic development.

There are a number of changes to the physical environment that can be made to enhance economic development in the Knowledge Economy. Infrastructure investments in telecommunication and internet access are necessary for new business. Amenities such as cultural facilities, open space and natural resources, and public safety can be enhanced. Traffic mobility can be improved by road improvements, transit-oriented development, and greater transit availability. Investments such as these not only support the enhancement of the Knowledge Economy, but also support the principles of Smart Growth.

The borough's neighborhoods can promote interaction, accessibility, and creativity required by the Knowledge Economy. These areas may also provide for live-work environments to facilitate the energy necessary for creativity. Creativity is encouraged by work and living environments that allow for interaction among people. Chance encounters in public meeting areas, restaurants, neighborhoods, and conferences lead to new partnerships and solutions to common challenges.

The new raw material for business is knowledge and creativity—to find better ways to do things and create new products. Creative people desire to be where the action is and they like distinctive places. Rather than focusing on being a cheaper place to do business the borough should focus on becoming a better place where an educated, well-paid workforce wants to live and provide the infrastructure this workforce needs to succeed.

The borough, as part of its process of planning for the transition and redevelopment of heavy industrial and other underused sites, has designated and rezoned two broad redevelopment areas. They are the Riverview redevelopment area along the Delaware, slated for mixed-use development, and the Town Center redevelopment area, intended largely for light industry, flex space, research and development, and other technology-oriented uses. The redevelopment of these areas in line with current plans will create fertile ground for growing the Knowledge Economy in Morrisville.

Another potential and complementary component of a strategy to redefine the local economy is to consider a sectoral approach to economic development, particularly within the central business district or within an office or light-industrial park. This approach focuses on attracting a certain type or types of business to an area, to create a concentration of related or complementary enterprises. The choice of sector should be based on factors such as existing businesses, the nature of the transportation network, the labor force and the educational infrastructure, and other unique local assets.

The resulting synergies boost employment, spending, and business location and expansion. One typical example would be a health care sector comprising a hospital, outpatient clinics, doctors, other health professionals, pharmacies, a medical equipment store, restaurants to serve workers and patients, employee housing near workplaces, etc.

A possible scenario for Morrisville might be to build on existing design, furnishing, and home improvement businesses, through recruitment, a targeted marketing campaign, and word of mouth: “Morrisville. Design the Future with Us.” Other sectoral approaches may be devised.

Such a strategy could enlist the borough, the Morrisville Economic Development Corporation, local Realtors, the Morrisville Business Association, and others. But a sectoral economic strategy should not be exclusionary or overconcentrated to the point it results in a single-industry economic base.

The Land Use Plan

Land use planning and policy development in Morrisville Borough will focus on the revitalization of the central business district, infill development, protection and restoration of natural areas, and the maintenance of existing residential neighborhoods. The Land Use Plan comprises a map showing generalized land use categories, which are based on the purpose statements of the borough’s zoning districts. The future land use categories are as follows:

- Low Density Residential – The purpose and intent of this district is to retain the character of existing single-family residential areas and to maintain the existing low residential density by providing appropriate standards. Additional purposes for the establishment of this district are to exclude activities incompatible with residential development.
- Medium Density Residential – The purpose and intent of this district is to retain the character of existing medium residential density areas where little developable land exists. The district also is intended to promote standards that will permit the continuation of existing, new, and other compatible land uses.
- High Density Residential – The purpose and intent of this district is to provide appropriate areas for multi-family development in order to broaden the borough’s housing base and, therefore, serve a greater variety of housing needs. Reasonable standards should be provided to prevent overcrowding of land, to regulate the density of population, to avoid undue congestion in the streets and to allow for the harmonious development of apartments, townhouses and other uses which are compatible with higher density residential development.
- Mixed Riverfront – The purpose of this district is to foster the redevelopment of underutilized lands along the Delaware River into comprehensively planned, pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods. This is to be accomplished by promoting a variety of land uses, housing types, and density, and by requiring skillful

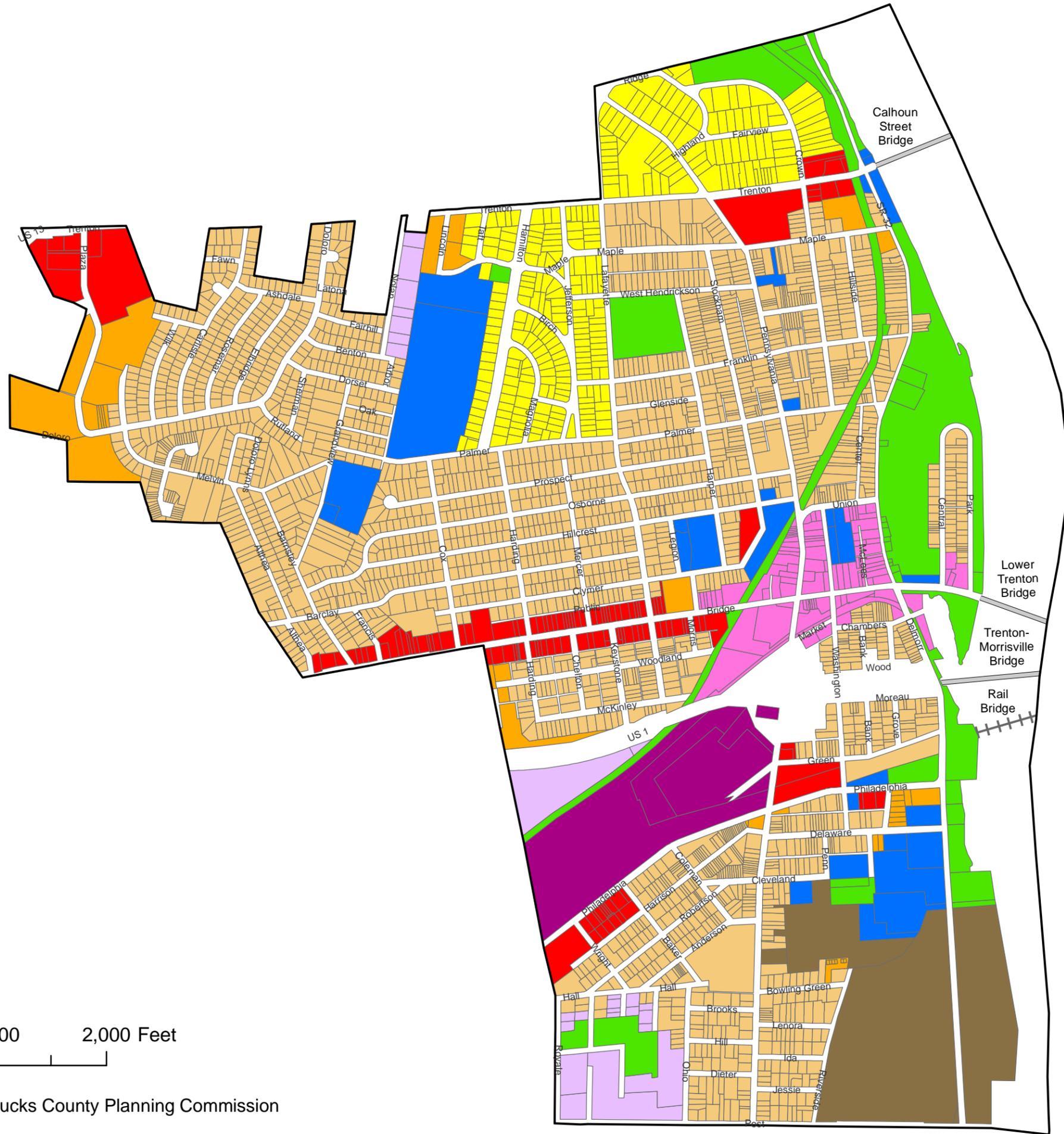
architectural and landscape design in creating buildings and green spaces. This district is also created to avoid the negative impacts of suburban sprawl by minimizing infrastructure costs, traffic congestion, and environmental degradation.

- Commercial – The purpose and intent of this district is to provide areas for free-standing commercial activities and shopping centers, to promote standards which allow the orderly conversion of land uses, and to protect adjacent residential areas through the application of buffer yards.
- Central Business District – The purpose and intent of this district is to provide attractive, compact areas for retail, office and service activities, to protect commercial areas from the intrusion of uses which would be incompatible with retail and service uses, to protect adjacent residential areas through buffer requirements, and to prevent the overcrowding of the land through the application of minimum area and yard requirements.
- Light Industrial – The purpose and intent of this district is to permit and encourage light industrial development that will be so located as to constitute an appropriate part of the physical development of the borough, to provide minimum standards for the development and operation of light industry, and to prohibit uses which would be incompatible with the uses permitted in the district.
- Technology and Research – The purpose of this district is to accommodate a mix of offices, flex space, parking, transit access, and fabricating/assembly space for technology and biotechnology businesses and related offices. Size and use limits should preclude large warehouse or storage facilities. No retail uses or warehousing uses would be permitted.
- Institutional/Government – The purpose of this district is to provide for the orderly growth of community services within the borough and to provide reasonable standards for development.
- Park and Recreation/Open Space – The purpose of this district is to provide for the protection and preservation of natural lands and the development of park and recreational resources for the benefit of all residents.

Land Use Policy Implementation

Zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances are the regulatory teeth authorized by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code to support a municipality's land use policy. The implementation of this plan for land use will require adjustments in zoning districts and requirements, including changes in district requirements

Map 6 Future Land Use



- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Riverfront
- Commercial
- Central Business District
- Light Industrial
- Technology & Research
- Institutional/Government
- Park, Recreation, & Open Space



0 1,000 2,000 Feet

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Morrisville Borough
Bucks County, Pennsylvania

recommended in Part I of this plan (See *Plan Implementation* for these recommendations). This plan does not recommend major policy changes in zoning boundaries, but does identify some areas of the borough that may require boundary and classification adjustments to create a more consistent policy treatment of the borough's land use. These areas are as follows:

- A few parcels in the C-3 Neighborhood Commercial district along West Bridge Street are split-zoned between C-3 and R-2 zoning. We recommend that these be changed to C-3.
- Parcels containing mini-warehouses along South Delmorr Avenue are zoned R-2A; they should be designated commercial.
- Parcels containing townhouses along Chambers Street are zoned C-1 Central Commercial; they should be changed to a multifamily zoning classification, such as R-4. As noted in Chapter 3: Housing in Part I, townhouses as a permitted house type should be added to the permitted uses in the R-4 district.
- The Delmorr open space tract is zoned R-4. This should be zoned a government designation such as CS-1 Community Service.
- Borough-owned property at the end of Delaware Avenue toward the river (tax parcels 24-12-79 and -79.1) is zoned R-4 and CS-1. The borough should designate both parcels as CS-1, as they are borough-owned and are adjacent to CS-1 zoning. The borough should also consider rezoning a borough-owned parcel in the RN Riverview Neighborhood district to CS-1. Tax parcel 24-12-84 is adjacent to the CS-1 district and is located along the Delaware River.
- Parcel 24-10-241 on Bowling Green Avenue contains condominiums. The parcel is split-zoned between CS-1 and R-2. We recommend the parcel be zoned to R-4, which would allow this type of multifamily use.
- A repair shop is located on Green Street. It is zoned R-3, but should be zoned commercial.
- The borough owns parcels that comprise Morrisville Lake in the Industrial district. The borough should consider rezoning these to CS-1.
- A parcel owned by the Morrisville School District at Grandview Elementary is zoned R-2. This should be changed to CS-1.

- Parcels located along the south side of West Trenton Avenue either comprise commercial uses or are likely to turn over to commercial uses, particularly between Lafayette Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. The borough should consider rezoning these areas to districts permitting small commercial or office uses, such as a Professional/Office district or Neighborhood Conservation district. This district would also permit single-family detached uses either alone or in combination with the office or commercial uses in order to maintain the existing residential structures.
- North of Trenton Avenue’s intersection with the Delaware River (at the Calhoun Street Bridge), the Delaware Joint Toll Bridge Commission owns two parcels zoned C-3. These should be zoned CS-1. Diagonally across Trenton Avenue from these parcels are a parcel owned by the borough, currently zoned C-3, that should also be rezoned to CS-1.

Implementation Priorities

One of the biggest difficulties with implementing most comprehensive plans is that it is hard to decide where to begin. Once the plan is completed the many recommendations presented can be easy to ignore because the plan is no longer on the minds of local officials and residents until it becomes time to develop a new plan. New initiatives, which could make a real difference, are essentially wasted.

The Plan Implementation section at the end of this chapter contains an exhaustive list of activities that are recommended to realize the vision of this plan. What follows is a list of activities that are most critical to this plan’s success, taking advantage of existing borough assets and representing a starting point at which the community can gain momentum for putting the remainder of the plan into action.

1. **Adopt Form-Based Zoning** – A common theme throughout this plan is the need to revitalize the borough’s downtown and make it a focus of future economic development efforts. However, development that has occurred in the borough’s central business district has not always been of the quality and type that is appropriate to a downtown setting. For example, uses such as an automobile repair shop or a convenience store are automotive-oriented and are a detriment the rhythm of the street.

Form-based zoning can control design outcomes in the downtown. Form-based codes create a predictable public realm by controlling physical form primarily—with a lesser focus on land use—through local regulations. Form-based zoning addresses the relationship between building facades and the public realm, the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, and the scale and types of streets and blocks. (See Appendix B for further details on how form-based zoning could work in Morrisville).

Form-based zoning puts into practice several principles of smart growth, including creating walkable neighborhoods, fostering distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place, mixing land uses, and directing development toward existing communities. An attractive, functional downtown that more readily responds to market conditions will help attract the educated and creative workforce that the borough needs to compete in the 21st Century.

The development of a form-based code for the commercial core is recommended by this plan as well as the University of Pennsylvania graduate student plan, *Rethinking the Triangle*.

2. **Continue Bridge Street Revitalization Efforts** – In concert with the development of a form-based zoning code, the borough should continue its Bridge Street revitalization efforts. Streetscape improvements, such as new pedestrian crossings, streetlights, and curbs and sidewalks, will address the public’s experience of the borough’s commercial core. Further policy changes, such as new sign regulations aimed at controlling sign clutter and requirements for the planting of appropriate street trees, are necessary to complete physical and design-oriented improvements along this critical commercial corridor.
3. **Initiate a Comprehensive Property Maintenance Program** – The Housing Chapter of this plan recommends that the borough review housing, health, and safety code provisions to insure that they address issues such as yard maintenance, rehabilitation of substandard properties, security of vacant structures, and prevention of health and safety hazards like broken windows, vermin, and littered grounds. The chapter also recommends that the borough inspects rental properties for code compliance at the time of sale and grant certificate of occupancy when violations are addressed and that this should be supplemented with a program of regular annual inspection. All of these activities should be folded into a comprehensive property maintenance program aimed at raising the standards for residential property maintenance in the borough.
4. **Restore and Enhance the Riverfront** – Morrisville’s most important characteristic is its riverfront location. Many riverfront communities throughout the U.S. use their riverfront location as the driving theme in their economic development efforts. These communities have worked to restore the natural functions of their river systems while redeveloping riverfront sites using environmentally responsible design and construction practices.

Williamson Park is strategically located north of Bridge Street between the downtown and the banks of the Delaware. It is a large community park whose levee walking path capitalizes on stunning views of the river and the City of Trenton. To the south of

Bridge Street the borough has wisely purchased a number of riverfront properties that have significant natural characteristics. The borough needs to further protect and enhance these resources as well as promote a riverfront identity. Along the north riverfront area the borough could hold a festival at the park celebrating the borough's riverfront heritage. Signage guiding visitors to and from the park and other resources could be placed at key locations in and around the park. Along the south riverfront area the borough should consider riverbank restoration projects and the development of a continuous walking trail. All of these activities would assist in raising the public's awareness of the borough's relationship to the river and help position the borough as both a green and active community.

In order to keep this plan relevant the borough should periodically distribute a report detailing the plan's progress and tasks that yet need to be completed. This report will keep the plan on the minds of both decision makers and residents, publicize the accomplishments of the plan, and provide the necessary adjustments that need to be made to carry out the remaining tasks.

Recommendations

Successful implementation of this plan requires that specific measures, actions, programs, or techniques be taken in a timely and cost-effective manner. The following pages are a compilation of specific tasks recommended by this plan to be completed in order to carry out the plan's vision. Each action may be the responsibility of one or more entity and should be implemented in a given time frame.

Time frames are ongoing, short-term, medium-term, and long-term. Ongoing efforts are those currently being undertaken and that should continue into the future. A short-term effort should continue soon after plan adoption (within the first 3 years). Medium-term efforts should start 3–5 years after plan adoption. Groundwork laid by short- and medium-term efforts must take place before many of the long-term efforts can be implemented 5–10 years after plan adoption.

It is noted that issues may arise that may change the priority of the time-line. The time frame should be used as a guide and provide some flexibility, depending on local circumstances.

Recommendations are organized by planning topic. Each topic includes the entity or entities responsible for completing the task, suggested time frame for action, and the potential for technical assistance funding. The record of action column is intended for officials to check off when the implementation action is completed. Appendix A lists potential funding sources and technical assistance.

Housing and Residential Development

Recommended Action		Entity Responsible	Time Frame				Record of Action
			S	M	L	O	
1.	Update the zoning ordinance to incorporate provisions for additional housing types that may be suitable for new infill construction, such as townhouses, mixed-use, transit-oriented development, and age-restricted or age-targeted housing.	BC, PC				x	
2.	Should establishment of a new SEPTA station make possible a transit-oriented development, amend the I-2 zoning district requirements to allow for mixed-use development incorporating housing.	BC, PC		x			
3.	Enact and enforce zoning, health, safety and property maintenance code standards for rental and owner-occupied housing to maintain property values, sound buildings, and attractive neighborhoods.	BC, Zoning Office				x	
4.	Adhere to zoning standards to preserve the appearance and fabric of neighborhoods by preventing "tear downs" and reconstruction of housing at an inappropriately large scale.	BC, PC, ZBA	x				
5.	Review housing, health, and safety code provisions to insure that they address issues such as yard maintenance, rehabilitation of substandard properties, security of vacant structures, and prevention of health and safety hazards like broken windows, vermin, and littered grounds.	BC, PC, Zoning Office				x	
6.	Inspect rental properties for code compliance at the time of sale and grant certificate of occupancy when violations are addressed. Supplement with a program of regular annual inspection.	BC, Zoning Office				x	
7.	Explore potential sources of funding for housing rehabilitation or improvements to streets, sewer lines, sidewalks and other neighborhood infrastructure.	BC, Private and Public Agencies				x	
8.	Develop community greening and gardening programs. Maintain pocket parks and plant street and shade trees where possible.	BC, EAC, STC				x	
9.	Explore the possibility of creating a program to redirect duplexes or other rental conversions back to owner-occupancy.	BC, PC	x				
10.	Consider rezoning vacated institutional properties to R-1 for single-family housing.	BC, PC		x	x		

Recommended Action		Entity Responsible	Time Frame				Record of Action
			S	M	L	O	
11.	Coordinate efforts to publicize the borough's historic nature, affordability, charm, walkable scale, and highway access as marketing incentives for owner-occupied housing. Coordinate efforts with community-based first-time homebuyers programs operated by the Bucks County Housing Group, the Consumer Credit Center, financial institutions, or others.	BC, private and public agencies				x	

KEY

- BC=Morrisville Borough Council
- EAC=Environmental Advisory Council
- PC=Morrisville Planning Commission
- STC=Shade Tree Commission
- ZBA=Zoning Board of Adjustment

Nonresidential Activity							
Recommended Action		Entity Responsible	Time Frame				Record of Action
			S	M	L	O	
1.	Ensure the uses and dimensional requirements in Morrisville's downtown reflect its innate walkability and compactness.	BC, PC, MEDC, BCRDA				x	
2.	Update and revise the use regulations to reflect the land use vision of the borough.	BC, PC	x				
3.	Place limits on the size of retail stores in order to limit the impacts of these uses. Place design standards on large retail stores to limit the impacts of big box store design. Consider providing standards for drive-thrus for both fast food restaurants and other uses that make use of drive-thrus to coordinate parking, vehicular circulation, and pedestrian access.	BC, PC	x				
4.	Investigate form-based zoning as a method of controlling design and physical form in specified areas of the borough.	BC, PC	x				
5.	Establish a check cashing use that could be supplemented by limiting the hours of operation and requiring additional design controls. Provide further standards for used car lots to control impacts.	BC, PC	x				
6.	Consider creating new uses specifically for smoke shops and nail salons; place the uses in specific districts and apply specific standards to minimize impacts on residential and adjacent commercial districts.	BC, PC	x				
7.	Update and revise industrial use regulations by applying specific standards for landscaping, storage, buffer yards, and industrial operations to minimize impacts on adjacent neighborhoods.	BC, PC	x				
8.	Coordinate signage and establish a gateway along West Bridge Street. Maintain and improve street infrastructure such as sidewalks and curbs and street lighting.	BC, PC, MEDC, DRJTBC	x				
9.	Encourage infill development to occur in the area south of Bridge Street between Pennsylvania Avenue and the Delaware Canal to serve as a logical extension of the downtown.	BC, PC, MEDC, BCRDA				x	

KEY

BC=Morrisville Borough Council
 BCRDA=Bucks County Redevelopment Authority
 DJRTBC=Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission
 MEDC=Morrisville Economic Development Corporation
 PC=Morrisville Planning Commission

Natural Resources							
Recommended Action		Entity Responsible	Time Frame				Record of Action
			S	M	L	O	
1.	Establish riparian buffer zones along watercourses to be protected by ordinance in 100 percent open space.	BC, PC, EAC	x				
2.	Establish a Shade Tree Commission for the purpose of creating and maintaining optimum tree cover and species diversity.	BC	x				
3.	Establish more stringent regulations relative to the protection of forests in environmentally sensitive areas such as floodplains, steep slopes, wetlands, and wetlands margins.	BC, PC, EAC	x				
4.	Amend the subdivision and land development ordinance to require all new development to incorporate the planting of street trees.	BC,PC	x				
5.	Adopt the recommendations contained in the <i>Morrisville Tree Management Plan</i> relative to updating the tree protection ordinance; training; increasing community involvement; increased species diversity; implementing a formal planting program; and establishing a pruning program to help address deferred maintenance issues with the existing tree inventory.	BC, PC, EAC STC	x				
6.	Identify and create green infrastructure to assist the borough in its efforts to conserve these resources for the purpose of supporting native species, maintaining natural ecological processes, sustaining air and water resources, and contributing to the health and quality of life for the community.			x			
7.	Incorporate low-impact development techniques into the ordinances to strengthen and complement existing preservation provisions.	BC, PC, EAC		x			
8.	Consider the establishment of a Resource Protection Overlay District, which could be divided into two categories: primary features, composed of all natural features and resources on which development is constrained by ordinance; and secondary features containing natural features not protected by ordinance, such as scenic roads and vistas, which the borough wants to preserve.	BC, PC, EAC		x			

KEY

BC=Morrisville Borough Council
EAC=Environmental Advisory Council
PC=Morrisville Planning Commission
STC=Shade Tree Commission

Historical and Cultural Heritage							
Recommended Action		Entity Responsible	Time Frame				Record of Action
			S	M	L	O	
1.	Conduct a historic survey to identify historic resources to be protected.	BC, PC	x				
2.	Coordinate efforts with DCNR to provide interpretative resources for the Delaware Canal.	BC, PC				x	
3.	Designate one or more historic districts. A Historical and Architectural Review Board (HARB) would be appointed to review development applications in the district(s). Alternatively, or in addition, adopt historic preservation overlay zoning addressing provisions for designated historic resources in the borough.	BC, PC		x			
4.	Review the zoning ordinance to ensure that existing standards promote historic preservation. Add or amend provisions for adaptive re-use and delay of demolition, if necessary.	BC, PC	x				
5.	Adopt design guidelines for downtown and designated historic areas.	BC, PC, HARB		x			
6.	Promote the history of the borough through tourism and signage.	BC, PC, MEDC				x	
7.	Coordinate efforts to preserve Morrisville Cemetery.	BC, Private/Public				x	
8.	Support community events which strengthen cultural heritage.	BC, Private/Public				x	

KEY

BC=Morrisville Borough Council

HARB=Historic Architectural Review Board

MEDC=Morrisville Economic Development Corporation

PC=Morrisville Planning Commission

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space							
Recommended Action		Entity Responsible	Time Frame				Record of Action
			S	M	L	O	
1.	Capitalize on Mill Pond as a key site through acquisition and restoration.	BC, EAC	x				
2.	Update the 1999 Morrisville Borough Open Space Plan.	BC, PC, EAC				x	
3.	Continue to pursue Open Space Plan priorities for protection through the county's program and other funding sources.	BC				x	
4.	Prepare a Park and Recreation Plan.	BC, PC, RAB, EAC		x			
5.	Protect the riverfront by acquiring conservation easements in natural resource areas.	BC, PC, EAC				x	
6.	Permanently protect the "A" Field at the former Capitol View Elementary School.	BC	x				
7.	Enhance Morrisville Lake by evaluating conditions and opportunities.	BC, PC, EAC, RAB	x				
8.	Provide public space at Mill Pond.	BC	x				
9.	Enhance the trail-towpath system, including supporting efforts to establish the Heritage Trail through Morrisville.	BC, PC, EAC				x	
10.	Work with DCNR to develop signage directing persons to and from the Delaware Canal. Support efforts to unblock areas of the canal south of the borough.	BC, PC, EAC				x	
11.	Develop a continuous public riverwalk along the Delaware River, using a low-impact design, that would link the borough with Falls Township.	BC, PC, EAC		x			
12.	Provide additional open space and active recreation opportunities at river's edge.	BC, PC, EAC, RAB				x	

KEY

BC=Morrisville Borough Council
EAC=Environmental Advisory Council
PC=Morrisville Planning Commission
RAB=Recreation Advisory Board

Community Facilities							
Recommended Action		Entity Responsible	Time Frame				Record of Action
			S	M	L	O	
1.	Determine adequate police staffing to allow for sufficient training.	MPD	x				
2.	Assess space and security needs for the borough police department and evaluate need for expansion or relocation and redesign.	BC, MPD		x			
3.	Identify potential funding sources for a new fire station, which may include grants and donations from public and private sources.	Fire Company	x				
4.	The fire company and the ambulance squad should explore the possibility of joint administrative operations.	Fire Company/ Ambulance Squad		x			
5.	Evaluate the impact and prospective benefits of levying the local services tax to help finance the fire company building.	BC, Fire Company	x				
6.	Approach U.S. Steel and other business firms based in the Keystone Industrial Port Complex for funding assistance for ambulance services.	BC, Ambulance Squad	x				
7.	Evaluate space needs for ambulance facilities. Consider incorporating space for the ambulance squad into any major development or redevelopment project.	Ambulance Squad, BC, PC, MEDC		x			
8.	Evaluate the impact and prospective benefits of increasing the ambulance service tax and of levying a local services tax to assist the ambulance squad.	BC, Ambulance Squad	x				
9.	Encourage the school district to prepare a new long-range plan or to update the existing plan.	BC, MSD	x				
10.	Maintain and enhance a cooperative relationship between the borough and school district.	BC, MSD				x	
11.	Increase the borough tax base by attracting additional non-residential development.	BC, MEDC				x	
12.	Encourage the library to meet needs for additional space by rearranging materials and reconfiguring or adding usable interior space to the extent possible.	Library		x			
13.	Support community fundraising for the library.	BC, Library				x	
14.	Explore the possibility of integrating the library into the county library system.	BC, Library			x		
15.	Monitor population trends and anticipate needs of aging baby boomers and seniors.	BC, PC, Private and Public Agencies				x	
16.	Support provision of programs to enhance public health.	BC, Private and Public Agencies				x	
17.	Examine current and future administration building space needs.	BC		x			

Recommended Action		Entity Responsible	Time Frame				Record of Action
			S	M	L	O	
18.	Ensure that borough website is updated with events, meeting dates and other current information.	BC				x	
19.	Evaluate park and recreation programming needs and develop programs to meet needs of borough residents.	BC, RAB				x	
20.	Evaluate greater use of technology for more efficient delivery of services.	BC, Borough				x	
21.	Determine appropriate levels of funding and staffing for the maintenance and repair of the aging physical plant of the borough: roads, stormwater facilities, parks, etc.	BC, PWD				x	
22.	Work with telecommunication providers to provide coverage where desired in a manner that presents the least disruption to the community and provides the greatest benefits to all residents.	BC, Borough Administration				x	
23.	Develop and ultimately adopt a capital improvement program, which will aid implementation of comprehensive plan update objectives.	BC, Borough Administration	x				

KEY

BC=Morrisville Borough Council
 MEDC=Morrisville Economic Development Corporation
 MPD=Morrisville Police Department
 PC=Morrisville Planning Commission
 PWD=Morrisville Public Works Department
 MSD=Morrisville School District
 RAB=Recreation Advisory Board

Transportation and Circulation

Recommended Action		Entity Responsible	Time Frame				Record of Action
			S	M	L	O	
1.	Work with SEPTA to ensure that the public transportation needs of its residents are being met.	BC, PC				x	
2.	Work with the Bucks County Planning Commission to develop a list of transportation improvements needed within the borough. These improvements should be ranked and submitted to the county for consideration for future regional Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPS).	BC, PC, BCPC	x				
3.	Utilize a context-sensitive solutions approach as roadways and bridges in the borough are reconstructed.	BC, PC				x	
4.	Develop specific policies regarding traffic calming, including the participation of residents from any neighborhood that could be affected by traffic calming measures.	BC, PC	x				
5.	Prepare a bicycle plan to determine the best routes to connect existing and anticipated developments with key community locations.	BC, PC		x			
6.	Develop an access management plan to be included in the subdivision and land development review process.	BC, PC		x			
7.	Work with the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission to implement solutions to congestion problems identified in the <i>Southerly Crossings Corridor Study, 2002</i> , and coordinate with the commission during construction of improvements so that traffic delays are minimized.	BC, PC				x	
8.	Develop a Morrisville Borough Street Plan that would identify the arrangement of streets and provide functional classifications consistent with those found in the borough subdivision and land development ordinance.	BC, PC		x			

KEY

BC=Morrisville Borough Council
 BCPC=Bucks County Planning Commission
 PC=Morrisville Planning Commission

Water Resources and Solid Waste							
Recommended Action		Entity Responsible	Time Frame				Record of Action
			S	M	L	O	
1.	Continue to monitor the progress of the State Water Plan and its implications regarding critical water planning areas.	BC, PC, EAC, MMA				x	
2.	Continue to comply with State Water Plan registration requirements.	BC, MMA				x	
3.	Continue to maintain interconnection with the Lower Makefield water supply system.	MMA				x	
4.	Continue planning and working relationships with adjacent municipalities with regard to water supply issues.	BC, PC, MMA				x	
5.	Continue to maintain the highest quality water treatment and distribution facilities possible while keeping user rates as reasonable as possible.	MMA				x	
6.	Continue to comply with federal, state, and Bucks County Department of Health regulations regarding wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal.	BC, MMA				x	
7.	Continue planning with adjacent municipalities of Lower Makefield, Yardley, and Falls to address future wastewater facility needs of the area.	BC, PC, MBA				x	
8.	Continue to maintain the highest quality wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal facilities possible while protecting the public health and environment and keeping user rates as reasonable as possible.	MBA				x	
9.	Prepare a joint Act 537 Plan in conjunction with Lower Makefield, Yardley, and Falls, to be consistent with each municipality's comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance.	BC, PC, MBA, Borough			x		
10.	Continue to enforce the recommendations of the <i>Delaware River South Stormwater Management Plan</i> .	BC, PC, ZHB				x	
11.	Continue to ensure compliance with the NPDES program and file program reports.	BC, PC, EAC				x	
12.	Review ordinances to ensure the borough is implementing state-of-the-art stormwater BMPs.	BC, PC, EAC	x				
13.	Identify flood-prone areas at the municipal level and determine if remediation measures are feasible.	BC, PC, EAC	x				
14.	Establish a program to obtain information from businesses operating in the borough to assure they have a recycling program in place.	BC, PWD, Private Haulers	x				
15.	Establish a yard waste and leaf pickup and compost operation and program for the benefit of borough residents.	BC, PWD, Private Haulers	x				
16.	Provide a program to offer assistance to businesses and institutions in the borough to review their waste management programs and to assist them in their efforts to divert greater amounts of material from the waste stream.	BC, PWD, Private Haulers	x				

Recommended Action		Entity Responsible	Time Frame				Record of Action
			S	M	L	O	
17.	Establish an enforcement program that might entail an annual review/inspection of each business within the community.	BC, Borough Administration		x			

KEY

- BC=Morrisville Borough Council
- EAC=Environmental Advisory Council
- MBA=Morrisville Borough Authority
- MMA=Morrisville Municipal Authority
- PC=Morrisville Planning Commission
- PWD=Morrisville Public Works Department
- ZHB = Zoning Hearing Board

Plan Compatibility							
Recommended Action		Entity Responsible	Time Frame				Record of Action
			S	M	L	O	
1.	Coordinate with the City of Trenton to ensure that its waterfront users remain in compliance with local noise ordinances and continue to look for traffic management solutions that would reduce traffic volumes.	BC				x	
2.	Further investigate the details of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's land use plan during its next update to ensure proposed greenway linkages are consistent with borough plans.	BC, PC,		x			

KEY

BC=Morrisville Borough Council

PC=Morrisville Planning Commission

Appendix A. Funding and Technical Assistance Summary

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Accessible Housing Program, PA	Provides grants to local entities to carry out home modification programs for lower-income people with disabilities.	PA DCED
Alternative Fuels Incentive Grants (AFIG)	Encouraging the transfer and commercialization of innovative energy technologies and the use of indigenous fuels.	PA DEP
Assessment and Watershed Protection Program Grants (AWPPGs)	Supports a watershed approach to better address water quality problems in the US and building the capacity of all levels of government to develop and implement effective, comprehensive programs for watershed protection, restoration, and management to protect human health, support economic and recreational activities, and provide healthy habitat for fish, plants, and wildlife.	EPA Watershed Program Non-point Source Program
Business in our Sites Program	Provides grants and loans for business site preparation.	PADCED
Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program	CZM provides technical and financial assistance to local governments and state agencies to control development in coastal hazard areas, improve public access, protect natural resources, expand strategies to improve local economies, promote proper planning, conserve coastal and wetland resources, and control coastal non-point source pollution.	DEP Office for River Basin Cooperation Trust
Communities of Opportunity	Provides grants to municipalities, redevelopment authorities and housing authorities for community revitalization, economic development, and lower-income housing development and rehabilitation.	PA DCED
Community Conservation Partnership Grant Program	<p>Funds a wide variety of recreation, greenway, rivers conservation and open space preservation activities with 50% matching grants. Four main categories of grants are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Planning and Technical Assistance b. Acquisition Projects c. Development Projects d. Federally Funded Projects <p>This is a restructuring and combination of separate grant programs including the former Keystone, Rails-to-Trails, River Conservation and other programs.</p>	PA DCNR
Community Development Bank, PA.	Provides capital and capacity building grants to "Community Development Financial Institutions" (CDFIs). The CDFIs are then allowed to assist with small scale business expansions, new business starts, non-profit facilities and very small businesses.	PA DCED

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	Offers grants for a wide variety of activities, provided the applicant proves by survey or census that the project will benefit 51% low and moderate income persons or handicapped persons or eliminate "blighted" conditions in officially designated areas. For example, funds can be used for water and sewage improvements, storm drainage, handicapped accessibility, housing rehabilitation, parks and recreation, street and sidewalk improvements, code enforcement, community planning, and historic rehabilitation.	Bucks County Office of Community and Economic Development
Community Revitalization Program	Very broad grant program. Officially intended to promote community stability, increase tax bases and improve quality of life. Applications may be made by municipalities, authorities, economic development organizations and non-profit corporations. Public/non-profit/profit partnerships are encouraged. Generally can be used for infrastructure, community revitalization, building rehabilitation, demolition of blighted structures, public safety, and crime prevention.	PA DCED & Governor's Office
Compact Authorization Investment Program	Provides grants for local transportation projects in communities that host a Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission bridge. Eligible projects include those that will improve safety and traffic flow.	Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission
Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)	This program funds transportation projects that reduce congestion and improve air quality. Eligible projects include transit improvements, shared-ride services, traffic flow improvements, demand management strategies, pedestrian and bicycle facilities and programs, inspection and maintenance programs, and alternative fuel projects.	Federal Highway Administration (Philadelphia Office)
Conservation Corps, PA.	Provides funding for work crews for community projects, such as trail improvements.	PA DCNR
Core Communities Housing Program	Core Communities Housing Program – Provides grants for affordable housing activities, including construction and rehabilitation, on previously developed sites.	PA DCED
Customized Job Training	Provides grants to businesses (other than retail) to train new employees, and retrain and upgrade existing employees. Up to 100% of eligible costs may be paid for new job creations, and up to 70% for other eligible training.	PA DCED Businesses apply through a State-licensed Education Agency
DEP & Environmental Systems Research Institute Inc.	GIS Software Grants	PA DEP

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Downtown Pennsylvania Program	<p>Offers full-time management to organize and implement a Business District Authority, that provides financing for additional services in a commercial area.</p> <p>The Commercial Revitalization program funds physical improvement projects that are consistent with an action plan. Projects may include site improvements, façade renovations and adaptive reuse of downtown buildings.</p>	PA DCED
Early Intervention Program	Provides matching grants to assist municipalities experiencing fiscal difficulties to develop comprehensive multi-year financial plans.	PA DCED
Economic Development Administration Economic Adjustment Grants	Provides grants to design and implement strategies to adjust to serious job losses to a local economy, such as natural disasters and defense spending reductions.	U.S. EDA Philadelphia Office
Economic Development Administration Loan Guarantees	Guarantees business loans made through private lenders. Available for up to 80% of project cost. Primarily intended for manufacturers, but commercial businesses may qualify. A equity contribution is required by business. Must show job creation.	U.S. EDA Philadelphia Office
Economic Development Administration Public Works Grants	Offers grants to distressed municipalities to assist in attracting new industries and encourage business expansion. Projects typically involve water and sewage improvements primarily serving industries, industrial access roads, and business incubators. A 50% local match is typically required.	U.S. EDA Philadelphia Office
Elm Street	Provides grants for planning, technical assistance and improvements to residential and mixed use areas near central business districts.	PA DCED
Emergency Responders Resources and Training Program	Provides funds for emergency responder improvement projects.	PA DCED
Emergency Services Loan Program	Provides low-interest loans to fire and ambulance companies to acquire vehicles, or to renovate or acquire buildings to house vehicles.	PA Emergency Management Agency
Energy Harvest Grant	Energy projects that address air quality and watershed protection.	PA DEP

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Enterprise Zone Program, PA	Encourages investment in "enterprise zones" that are distressed areas designated by the State. The main benefits include: low-interest loan pools (mainly for building acquisition, construction, renovation and machinery), local technical assistance in connecting with financing and technical resources, and preferences in certain State grant and loan programs. A priority is placed upon assistance to industrial businesses. Grants are also available for the initial planning of proposed enterprise zones, and for program administration. See also "E.Z. Tax Credits" below. (This program is completely separate from the Federal Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community program.)	PA DCED
Enterprise Zone Tax Credits	Provides State tax credits to businesses located within State-designated Enterprise Zones for new building construction and rehabilitation of existing buildings.	PA DCED
Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Program	Grants for a very limited number of pilot demonstration projects for cleanup of contaminated underused industrial sites.	U.S. EPA Philadelphia Office
EPA Section 319 Non-point Source Pollution Prevention Program	Provides money for projects that help control non-point source pollution and protect water quality.	Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Inc. (PACD)
Flood Control - Army Corps and NRCS Watershed Programs	Various types of projects to manage flooding. Typically, the Army Corps is involved in larger watersheds, while NRCS has primary responsibility for smaller watersheds.	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service
Flood Hazard Mitigation Grant Program	Provides 75% funding to relieve imminent hazards from flooding, such as voluntary buy-outs and demolitions of highly flood-prone properties.	Federal Emergency Management Agency
Flood Protection Program, PA	Offers design and construction of flood protection projects. The project must be deemed economically justifiable under the state capital budget process.	PA DEP Bureau of Waterways Engineering
Growing Greener Program	Aids in the preservation of farmland and open space, clean up of abandoned mines, restoration of watersheds, and providing new and upgraded water and sewer systems.	PA DEP

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Growing Greener II	Main Street and downtown redevelopment grants to municipalities and nonprofits, focusing on improving downtown sites and buildings. Eligible projects may include approaches that assist in business development or public improvements.	PA DCED
Heritage Parks Program	Provides grants up to 75% of costs for projects within State-designated "Heritage Parks" to preserve and interpret the significant contribution that certain areas made upon the industrial heritage of the state and nation. Funds may be used for four types of projects: Feasibility studies, a Management Action Plan, Special purpose studies, and Implementation projects. Projects are intended to conserve natural, historic and recreational resources relating to industrial heritage to stimulate regional tourism.	PA DCNR
Historic Preservation - Certified Local Government Grants	Provides modest-sized matching grants to provide technical assistance to municipalities that have official historic districts and meet other criteria to be "certified."	Federal, administered by PA Historical and Museum Commission
Historic Preservation Survey and Planning Grants	Matching grants for historic surveys, historic preservation planning and National Register nominations. Available to municipalities and non-profit organizations. Cannot be used for construction.	Federal, administered by PA Historical and Museum Commission
Historic Preservation Tax Credits	Offers Federal income tax credits for a percentage of the qualified capital costs to rehabilitate a certified historic buildings, provided the exterior is restored. The program is generally limited to income-producing properties.	National Park Service
Home Ownership Choice Program	Provides financing assistance for new, single-family homes in designated blighted areas.	PA HFA
Housing and Redevelopment Assistance	Provides state-funded grants for community revitalization and economic development activities at the local level. Assists the community in becoming competitive for business retention, expansion, and attraction.	PA DCED
Industrial Sites Reuse Program	Provides grants and low-interest loans for environmental site assessment and remediation at former industrial sites.	PA DCED
Infrastructure Development Program, PA.	Provides grants and low interest loans for public and private infrastructure improvements needed for a business to locate or expand at a specific site. Financing is also available for infrastructure to redevelop industrial sites that have been idle more than 6 months, such as acquisition and demolition. Primarily available for industries, research facilities, company headquarters and business park developments.	PA DCED

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Intermunicipal Projects Grants	Promotes cooperation between neighboring municipalities so as to foster increased efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of municipal services at the local level.	PA DCED
Job Creation Tax Credits, PA	Provides State tax credits to businesses that commit to create new jobs in PA within the next 3 years. Must create 25 new jobs or 20% of the existing work force. The jobs must pay over a certain minimum income. The business must explain how it exhibits leadership in technological applications.	PA DCED
Keystone Historic Preservation Funds	Provides 50% matching grants to fund analysis, acquisition or rehabilitation of historic sites. The site must be on the National Register of Historic Places, or officially determined to be eligible for listing. The site must be accessible to the public after funding. The grants can be made to public agencies or non-profit organizations.	PA Historical and Museum Commission
Keystone Opportunity Zones	Provides state and local tax abatement to businesses located in a designated zone.	PA DCED
Keystone Rec., Park & Cons. Fund – Library Program	Provides grants to improve the physical facilities of public libraries.	PA DCED
Keystone Rec., Park & Cons. Program - Land Trust Grants	Grants to well-established non-profit land trusts and conservancies to plan for and acquire critical natural areas. Land that is acquired must be open to the public.	PA DCNR
Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP)	Assists local governments and counties to prepare comprehensive plans, downtown plans, special community development studies and development regulations.	PA DCED
Local Government Capital Project Loan Program	Provides low-interest loans to local government for equipment and facilities needs.	PA DCED
Low Income Housing Tax Credit, Federal	Offers Federal income tax credits to non-profit and for-profit developers of housing for low-income persons. Non-profits can then sell their credits to investors.	PA Housing Finance Agency
Machinery and Equipment Loan Fund	Provides low-interest loans to acquire or upgrade machinery and equipment and related engineering and installation for industrial, agricultural, processing and mining businesses. The business must agree to create or preserve jobs as a condition of the financing.	PA DCED

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Main Street Program	Provides grants to municipalities to coordinate downtown revitalization.	PA DCED
Minority Business Development Authority, PA	Provides low-interest loans for businesses owned and operated by minorities. Can generally be used for industrial, international trade, franchise, retail and commercial uses. Can be used for site acquisition, building construction and renovation, machinery and working capital.	PA Minority Business Development Authority & PA DCED
Municipal Open Space Program	Provides assistance with local land preservation efforts and open space planning. Aids in the acquisition of land for agricultural preservation, natural resource protection, and/or recreation.	BCPC
Municipalities Financial Recovery Act, PA	Provides technical advice and grants for special purposes (such as studies to improve service efficiency) within municipalities that have been officially designated as financially distressed. After application and designation, the municipality must follow a Financial Recovery Plan.	PA DCED
National Tree Trust	Supports the work of local nonprofit urban forestry organizations around the country.	online information available soon
Neighborhood Assistance Tax Credit Program	Authorizes state corporate income tax credits to private companies for investment in distressed areas, support of neighborhood revitalization planning, and development activities in designated Enterprise Zones.	PA DCED
On-Lot Septic System Program	Offers low-interest loans to limited income households to repair failing on-lot septic systems.	PennVest and PA Housing Finance Agency
Opportunity Grant Program (replaced Sunny Day Fund)	Offers grants to create or preserve very substantial numbers of jobs. May be used for job training, infrastructure, land and building improvements, machinery and equipment, working capital, or environmental assessment and cleanup.	Can only be applied for through the Governors Action Team
PA Industrial Development Authority Financing (PIDA)	Provides low interest loans for construction, renovation and site preparation of buildings for new employers. Primarily funds industrial projects.	PIDA and PA DCED
PEDFA Financing	Provides low-interest rate financing of business growth. Projects that can be funded with bonds that are exempt from Federal income tax have a lower interest rate than other types of projects. The lower rate financing is limited to activities such as site acquisition, building construction and rehabilitation and new equipment - for manufacturing and certain transportation and utility uses. The higher rate is available to a broader range of businesses and a much wider variety of expenditures.	PA Economic Financing Authority-- Applications are made through a local Industrial Development Corp. or Authority

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
PennCAP	Provides a guarantee of loans to businesses made by participating banks.	DCED Apply through a participating bank
PENNVEST	Offers low interest loans for construction and improvement of drinking water and wastewater systems. Outright grants may be available for highly distressed communities. Mainly intended for public systems, but some private systems may be approved. Water projects are funded through the Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund. Sewage projects are funded through the Clean Water Revolving Fund. In addition, PennVest is authorized to provide loans for projects to control existing stormwater problems, such as separating stormwater from sanitary sewage. The "Advance Funding Program" provides low-interest loans for feasibility studies and engineering of systems if the utility cannot fund such work itself.	PA Infrastructure Investment Authority and PA DEP Bureau of Water Supply Management-- Involves both U.S. EPA and State funds
Recreational Trails Program	Projects such as maintenance and restoration of existing trails, development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages, purchase and lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment, construction of new recreational trails, and acquisition of easements or property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors.	DCNR
Recycling Grants	Grants for up to 90% of municipal costs to develop and implement recycling programs, such as the purchase of recycling bins and composting equipment. Grants are also available to counties for a recycling coordinator, waste management plans and pollution prevention education.	PA DEP Bureau of Land Recycling and Waste Management (under Act 101 of 1988)
Recycling Market Development Loan Fund	Provides low-interest loans to businesses to purchase recycling source-separating equipment.	PA DEP Bureau of Land Recycling and Waste Management
SBA Financing	Offers low-interest financing for smaller businesses, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - micro-loans and micro-enterprise grants - Section 7(a) Guaranteed Business Loans - Section 504 Loans to allow certified development organizations to make long-term loans for real estate and other fixed assets 	U.S. Small Business Administration
Sewage Facility Planning Grants	Grants to pay up to 50% of the costs to prepare new sewage facilities plan or update an existing plan, under State Act 537 of 1966.	PA DEP
Shared Municipal Services	Provides modest-sized 50/50 matching grants to promote cooperation among municipalities, in order to increase the efficiency of public services. Two or more municipalities may apply, or a council of governments.	PA DCED

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Small Business First	Provides low-interest loans for projects by businesses that generally have less than 100 employees. Generally, funding can be used for site acquisition, building construction, machinery, working capital, environmental compliance, defense-cutback impacts, recycling, technology, export and computer activities. This is also one of the few funding sources that can be used for restaurants, hotels and motels. The recipient must agree to create or preserve jobs.	PA DCED An application can be made through an "Area Loan Organization"
Small Business Incubator Program	Provides loans and grants for facilities in which a number of new businesses operate under one roof with affordable rents, sharing services and equipment and having equal access to a wide range of professional, technical, and financial programs.	PA DCED
Small Communities Planning Assistance Program (SCPAP)	Provides grants up to 100% of the costs to eligible municipalities to prepare comprehensive plans, development regulations and special strategies for development. Generally, 51% of the municipality's residents must be low or moderate income, according to the census or a survey.	Federal CDBG administered by PA DCED
Small Water System Regionalization Grants	Provides grants for feasibility studies concerning the merger of small drinking water systems.	PA DEP Bureau of Water Supply
Smart Growth Leadership Institute	Smart Growth Technical Assistance.	Leadership Institute
Solid Waste Facility Programs	Programs provide grants for municipalities to review proposed solid waste facilities within their borders. Programs also provide funding for municipal inspectors of facilities and for host fees from operators.	PA DEP Bureau Land Recycling and Waste Management
Stormwater Management Grants (Under State Act 167 of 1978)	Grants for cooperative efforts at the watershed level among municipalities for stormwater planning and ordinances. Grants are typically made to counties, but may be made to municipalities.	PA DEP Bureau of Watershed Conservation
Stream Improvement Program	Provides design and construction assistance to eliminate imminent threats to flooding and stream-bank erosion.	PA DEP Bureau of Waterways Engineering

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
TEA 21 Transportation Enhancements Program (Part of Federal Transportation Efficiency Act)	Provides grants for: facilities for pedestrians and bicycles, acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites, development of scenic or historic route programs, landscaping and other scenic beautification along highways, historic preservation, restoration of historic transportation facilities (such as canals), preservation of rail corridors (particularly for bicycle/walking routes), control and removal of outdoor advertising, archeological research, and mitigation of water pollution due to highway runoff. All projects must have a direct relationship to transportation.	U.S. DOT funds administered by PennDOT
The Environmental Challenge Fund	To support restoration, natural resource enhancement, and wildlife habitat improvement projects, that are concrete in nature and for which the planning has already been completed. Awards are made on the basis of direct environmental benefits; certain educational aspects and recreational features that are essential to the overall success of the project may also be considered for funding. If the proposed project will spawn new ideas/approaches or lead to additional activities or projects this information should also be reflected in your responses.	online information
Tire Pile Cleanup Grant	Grants to municipalities to provide reimbursement for costs of cleaning up large piles of used tires.	PA DEP Bureau of Land Recycling & Waste Management
TreeVitalize Program	Incentive grants are being offered to encourage municipalities to cross boundaries and work together to include tree cover in their planning and budgeting. Applications are welcomed from local governments or business improvement districts in the four counties listed above. Priority consideration will be given to applications supporting multi-municipal forestry management projects.	PA DCNR TreeVitalize
Urban Forestry Grants	Provides grants for tree planting projects. Is also a Federal "America the Beautiful" grant program for tree planting.	PA DCNR
Watershed Resources Educational Network (WREN)	Funds community based educational projects that protect and improve either the drinking water source waters for the community's public drinking water system or the community's watershed.	PA DEP
Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)	Provides both technical assistance and cost-share assistance to establish and improve fish and wildlife habitat. Projects may include riparian buffer restoration, stream fencing in agricultural areas, wetland enhancement, and fish habitat restoration.	USDA

Source: Publications and internet sites of various agencies, in addition to [Pennsylvanian](#) magazine. 📌

Key

- PA DCED = Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development
- PA DCNR = Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
- PA DEP = Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
- PA HFA = Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency

<p><u>www.inventpa.com</u></p>	<p>The Governor's Center for Local Government Services oversees a range of financial and strategic support programs. Whether you need help in developing intergovernmental cooperation ventures or need assistance with financial recovery, the Center's local government experts can help. You can find out more about each of these programs on the Community Resource Directory.</p>
<p><u>www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/</u></p>	<p>The Federal Register is the official daily publication for Rules, Proposed Rules, and Notices of Federal agencies and organizations, as well as Executive Orders and other Presidential Documents.</p>
<p><u>www.pueblo.gsa.gov/call/</u></p>	<p>This site provides useful information about Federal programs and benefits. The Federal Citizen Information Center has gathered contact information and resources to help you get in touch with the appropriate official for each program.</p>
<p><u>www.firstgov.gov</u></p>	<p>FirstGov offers an extensive collection of online information, services and resources. You can link to web pages from federal and state government agencies.</p>
<p><u>www.statelocalgov.net</u></p>	<p>State and Local government on the Net is a frequently updated directory of links to government sponsored and controlled resources on the Internet.</p>
<p><u>www.governmentguide.com</u></p>	<p>Government Guide has federal, state and local resources personalized for you. Enter your location, then explore the features.</p>
<p><u>www.fdncenter.org</u></p>	<p>The Foundation Finder is a free look-up tool that provides basic profiles of 65,000 private and community foundations.</p>

Source: Top 7 Grant Websites, January 2003
by Shannon Jankowski,, PSAB Grants/Research Analyst

Appendix B. Form-Based Zoning

Form-Based Zoning

THE PRINCIPAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FORM-BASED AND TRADITIONAL ZONING

Prescriptive, Contextual Standards. Traditional zoning *proscribes* minimum setbacks, permitting building placement anywhere within the allowable zone. Form-based zoning *prescribes* build-to lines, specifically defining desired development patterns. Based on ideal urban forms or contextual cues, form-based zoning ensures that new development will be appropriate to community vision or existing character.

Encouraging Mixed Use. By rigidly focusing on land use, traditional zoning makes mixed-use development difficult, if not impossible. Form-based zoning de-emphasizes land-use regulation, allowing the market to determine the use. For example, form-based regulation would prescribe large windows and entrances oriented toward the street to promote ground-floor retail. Form-based zoning encourages a healthy mix of retail and residential uses, and aims to curb sprawl and reduce car dependence by removing elements of the zoning code that encourage exclusionary housing practices and density restrictions.

Adapting to the Market. By prescribing use, traditional zoning attempts to predict demand. Uses that are no longer threats to public health are still segregated (e.g., office and light industrial from residential uses). Residential zoning regulations adopted when household size was on the rise cannot adapt to modern needs of empty nesters and young, childless professionals without extensive revision. Form-based zoning restores use determination to the market, allowing the use to automatically adapt to demographic and market shifts. Some designers of form-based codes find that, in the early stages of adoption, prescribing a mix of uses may be necessary to wean developers from the ingrained practice of segregating uses. Freeing the real estate market to respond to changes in demand has been shown to increase property values. Regionally, improving the quality of life through form-based zoning may lead to a competitive advantage in attracting a talented labor force.

PAS

QuickNotes

PAS QuickNotes No. 1

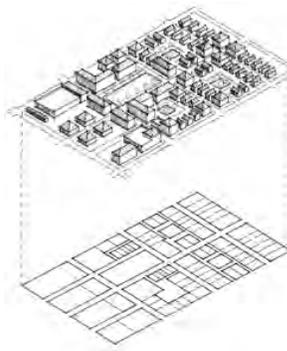


COMPONENTS OF THE FORM-BASED APPROACH

The Regulating Plan. The regulating plan illustrates where form-based codes apply and guides developers to implement them properly. It classifies sites according to street, block, and district characteristics and includes easy-to-follow illustrations of build-to lines, projected building footprints, location of public spaces, and allowable building types specific for each site. Developers and planners view the site as part of a larger, unified design. Unlike traditional zoning maps, which provide little information about vacant land, regulating plans provide a vision of future development.



Overlay: The Bixby Company; Photo: Stephen Lantton



Mark Tucker

Building Envelope Standards. Building envelope standards ensure that development fits the desired character of the zone, regulating building height, placement, and orientation. The standards prescribe the ideal. For example, height parameters define the minimum height needed to define the street edge and a maximum height allowable to fit the context. In addition, the standards prescribe the ideal number of stories to prevent developers from minimizing floor-to-ceiling heights to fit more floors within the height parameters.

Architectural Standards. Architectural standards are used to achieve a community's aesthetic vision. They are highly subjective and are best determined through public participation techniques (e.g., design charrettes). In designated historic districts, architectural standards can be

(Continued on back.)

Cross sections help define the desired character of the street. The regulating plan (right) illustrates a three-dimensional vision, more detailed than a simple lot-based zoning map.

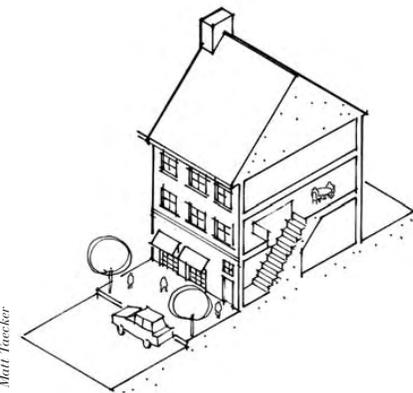
highly regulatory, governing building scale, architectural features, building materials (e.g., siding for housing) and even construction techniques. They are *not a requirement* in form-based codes.

Street Standards. Street standards share the same objective as architectural standards, but instead apply to hardscape and landscape materials, including tree species and paving type. They are key to developing a coherent streetscape and a connection to public space. Although street standards vary in specificity, they are more prescriptive than architectural standards and are an essential component of form-based codes.

APPLICATION OF FORM-BASED ZONING

Form-Based Coding. This technique provides detailed prescriptions of physical form in a well-illustrated, clear plan. The clarity and prescriptive nature of the plan allows developers to avoid the long, unpredictable review processes common to traditional zoning. Form-based coding often is implemented through a “parallel” approach where new codes

are applied as an option to existing codes. Incentives for using the form-based option, including expedited permitting processes and tax breaks, can enhance its appeal to developers and lead to implementation. Developers and architects praise the clarity of a form-based code and the more predictable, streamlined review process. Also, citizens value the opportunity to shape their communities through public design charrettes. Still, adoption and implementation of form-based codes requires considerable political will to overcome skepticism among politicians and creditors.



The live-work unit is a popular housing alternative for home-based entrepreneurs.

Form District Zoning. This technique defines districts according to distinguishable development patterns or desired formal characteristics, such as building form and orientation, street grid, and streetscape. This approach can apply to an entire region or specific districts within a city or region with common characteristics (e.g., architectural style or proximity to transit stations). Current applications of form district zoning use a two-tiered approach to incorporate

existing zoning regulation. The form districts regulate physical form and design while existing zoning districts regulate use.

Form district zoning respects and adheres to the diversity of existing patterns while providing developers a more flexible and predictable development process. Developers praise its ability to promote context-sensitive design while not being overly restrictive. The two-tiered approach is a politically feasible way to rezone an entire region. As form district zoning becomes more established, it may merge with elements of use-based zoning, creating a hybrid option. *Franz Heitzer* ■



The diversity of paving and plantings create a vibrant pedestrian experience.

Examples of Form-Based Codes

Arlington, Virginia, Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District Form-Based Code, www.co.arlington.va.us/forums/columbia/current

Austin, Texas, Traditional Neighborhood District Ordinance, www.ci.austin.tx.us/development/ldc1.htm

Columbus, Ohio, Traditional Neighborhood Development Article, www.columbusinfobase.org/eleclib/elechome.htm

Gainesville, Florida, Land Development Code, Traditional City Neighborhood Development, comdev.cityofgainesville.org

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Appendix C. Morrisville Borough Resident Survey Results

1. What ward do you live in?

Ward 1	27	13.1%	Ward 3	76	36.9%	Not Answered	46
Ward 2	50	24.3%	Ward 4	53	25.7%	Total	206

2. How long have you lived in Morrisville?

Less than one year	2	0.8%	11 - 15 years	24	9.5%	Not Answered	0
1 - 5 years	43	17.1%	16 - 20 years	19	7.5%	Total	252
6 - 10 years	34	13.5%	More than 20 years	130	51.6%		

3. Why did you choose to live in the borough? *(Residents were asked to rank three choices, 1 to 3)*

Not Answered 0

	1		2		3		Answers not rated	Totals	
Raised here from	31	17.0%	5	3.3%	2	1.3%	19	57	8.3%
Convenient to work	33	18.1%	41	27.2%	12	8.0%	32	118	17.1%
Reasonably priced homes	49	26.9%	20	13.2%	18	12.0%	35	122	17.7%
Low taxes	0	0.0%	8	5.3%	7	4.7%	8	23	3.3%
School system	0	0.0%	2	1.3%	3	2.0%	6	11	1.6%
Close-knit, small-town	17	9.3%	14	9.3%	28	18.7%	31	90	13.0%
Near friends and family	26	14.3%	31	20.5%	17	11.3%	32	105	15.2%
Good place to raise children	3	1.6%	8	5.3%	7	4.7%	16	34	4.9%
General quality of life	4	2.2%	10	6.6%	30	20.0%	12	56	8.1%
Historic character	5	2.7%	10	6.6%	19	12.7%	13	47	6.8%
Most of the above	0	0.0%	1	0.7%	2	1.3%	3	6	0.9%
Other	14	7.7%	1	0.7%	5	3.3%	-	20	2.9%
Totals	182		151		150		207	690	

4. Do you own or rent your home? Not Answered 4

Own	221	89.1%
Rent	27	10.9%
Total	248	

5. Where are members of your household employed?

Not Answered 5

	Self		Spouse		Other household members	
Morrisville Borough	24	9.8%	13	8.0%	7	15.2%
Elsewhere in Bucks County	49	20.1%	33	20.4%	6	13.0%
Trenton	44	18.0%	23	14.2%	12	26.1%
Elsewhere in New Jersey	35	14.3%	29	17.9%	7	15.2%
New York	1	0.4%	2	1.2%	0	0.0%
Philadelphia	8	3.3%	10	6.2%	0	0.0%
Montgomery County	2	0.8%	1	0.6%	3	6.5%
Other	8	3.3%	4	2.5%	3	6.5%
Work at home	11	4.5%	8	4.9%	1	2.2%
Retired	62	25.4%	39	24.1%	7	15.2%
Total	244		162		46	

6. Please circle the number of household members that fit the following age categories:

Not Answered 3

	1	2	3	4	5 or more	Total	
a. Preschool-age children	21	11	1	0	0	46	7.4%
b. Children grades 1-8	28	16	1	0	0	63	10.2%
c. Children grades 9-12	32	4	0	0	0	40	6.5%
d. Age 18-22	25	3	0	0	0	31	5.0%
e. Age 23-55	34	87	8	2	1	245	39.6%
f. Age 56-70	37	44	0	0	0	125	20.2%
h. Age 70 +	28	20	0	0	0	68	11.0%
						618	

7. Tell us what characteristics of the borough you like best. These should be aspects of the community that are important to you. (Residents were asked to rank 5 choices, 1 to 5)

Not Answered 23

	1		2		3		4		5		Answers not ranked	Totals	
Walkways/trails	17	9.1%	12	6.7%	9	5.2%	17	10.4%	17	10.6%	15	87	8.0%
Traffic Control	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.6%	1	0.6%	6	9	0.8%
Public Transportation	2	1.1%	1	0.6%	1	0.6%	5	3.1%	2	1.3%	5	87	8.0%
Infrastructure maintenance	3	1.6%	0	0.0%	4	2.3%	1	0.6%	4	2.5%	3	15	1.4%
Taxes	3	1.6%	4	2.2%	4	2.3%	4	2.5%	3	1.9%	7	25	2.3%
Business district	0	0.0%	2	1.1%	2	1.2%	2	1.2%	5	3.1%	4	15	1.4%
Historic preservation	7	3.8%	13	7.3%	16	9.3%	25	15.3%	8	5.0%	18	87	8.0%
Public water and sewer	6	3.2%	8	4.5%	10	5.8%	4	2.5%	13	8.1%	13	54	5.0%
Growth management	1	0.5%	1	0.6%	1	0.6%	1	0.6%	3	1.9%	4	11	1.0%
Neighborhood preservation	20	10.8%	6	3.4%	10	5.8%	11	6.7%	13	8.1%	6	66	6.1%
Parks and open space	16	8.6%	25	14.0%	14	8.1%	14	8.6%	12	1.4%	16	97	8.9%
Natural resource preservation	2	1.1%	10	5.6%	7	4.1%	9	5.5%	6	3.8%	8	42	3.9%
School system	7	3.8%	6	3.4%	2	1.2%	3	1.8%	3	1.9%	6	27	2.5%
Water quality and supply	6	3.2%	10	5.6%	5	2.9%	7	4.3%	8	5.0%	13	49	4.5%
Cultural opportunities	1	0.5%	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	4	2.5%	0	0.0%	2	8	0.7%
Housing variety/affordability	41	22.0%	15	8.4%	15	8.7%	9	5.5%	6	3.8%	13	99	9.1%
Recreational opportunities	1	0.5%	4	2.2%	5	2.9%	5	3.1%	14	8.8%	6	35	3.2%
Senior citizens activities	5	2.7%	2	1.1%	3	1.7%	7	4.3%	6	3.8%	13	36	3.3%
Job opportunities/economic development	0	0.0%	1	0.6%	2	1.2%	3	1.8%	2	1.3%	5	13	1.2%
Flooding/stormwater controls	2	1.1%	2	1.1%	4	2.3%	3	1.8%	3	1.9%	3	17	1.6%
Police protection	21	11.3%	14	7.9%	18	10.5%	8	4.9%	8	5.0%	22	91	8.4%
Fire protection	9	4.8%	23	12.9%	16	9.3%	14	8.6%	11	6.9%	20	93	8.6%
Ambulance service	5	2.7%	9	5.1%	19	11.0%	3	1.8%	7	4.4%	17	60	5.5%
Other	10	5.4%	9	5.1%	5	2.9%	3	1.8%	5	3.1%	32		3.0%
Totals	186		178		172		163		160		225	1084	

8. Tell us what you believe are the major problems or needs facing the borough.

Not Answered 5

	1	2	3	4	5	Answers not ranked		Totals	
Walkways/trails	1 0.5%	2 1.0%	5 2.6%	2 1.1%	3 1.9%	6	19	1.8%	
Traffic Control	10 4.8%	11 5.5%	11 5.8%	11 6.3%	11 6.8%	15	69	6.4%	
Public Transportation	2 1.0%	1 0.5%	5 2.6%	5 2.8%	5 3.1%	4	22	2.0%	
Infrastructure maintenance	0 0.0%	1 0.5%	9 4.7%	10 5.7%	8 4.9%	7	35	3.2%	
Taxes	87 41.6%	42 21.0%	10 5.2%	9 5.1%	7 4.3%	26	181	16.7%	
Business district	3 1.4%	25 12.5%	35 18.3%	16 9.1%	17 10.5%	8	104	9.6%	
Historic preservation	1 0.5%	0 0.0%	4 2.1%	5 2.8%	3 1.9%	3	16	1.5%	
Public water and sewer	0 0.0%	1 0.5%	1 0.5%	0 0.0%	2 1.2%	5	9	0.8%	
Growth management	3 1.4%	5 2.5%	7 3.7%	8 4.5%	14 8.6%	2	39	3.6%	
Neighborhood preservation	2 1.0%	2 1.0%	9 4.7%	17 9.7%	10 6.2%	7	47	4.3%	
Parks and open space	1 0.5%	4 2.0%	1 0.5%	5 2.8%	8 4.9%	4	23	2.1%	
Natural resource preservation	3 1.4%	1 0.5%	1 0.5%	4 2.3%	6 3.7%	3	18	1.7%	
School system	71 34.0%	57 28.5%	21 11.0%	8 4.5%	7 4.3%	22	186	17.2%	
Water quality and supply	2 1.0%	1 0.5%	3 1.6%	2 1.1%	4 2.5%	1	13	1.2%	
Cultural opportunities	1 0.5%	2 1.0%	7 3.7%	4 2.3%	4 2.5%	1	19	1.8%	
Housing variety/affordability	0 0.0%	4 2.0%	6 3.1%	8 4.5%	6 3.7%	2	26	2.4%	
Recreational opportunities	0 0.0%	2 1.0%	1 0.5%	6 3.4%	2 1.2%	5	16	1.5%	
Senior citizens activities	0 0.0%	2 1.0%	0 0.0%	1 0.6%	3 1.9%	1	7	0.6%	
Job opportunities/economic development	5 2.4%	16 8.0%	25 13.1%	23 13.1%	10 6.2%	7	86	7.9%	
Flooding/stormwater controls	2 1.0%	7 3.5%	10 5.2%	13 7.4%	11 6.8%	7	50	4.6%	
Police protection	8 3.8%	5 2.5%	16 8.4%	10 5.7%	9 5.6%	6	54	5.0%	
Fire protection	1 0.5%	1 0.5%	1 0.5%	2 1.1%	2 1.2%	1	8	0.7%	
Ambulance service	0 0.0%	1 0.5%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 1.2%	2	5	0.5%	
Other	6 2.9%	7 3.5%	3 1.6%	7 4.0%	8 4.9%	31		2.9%	
Total	209	200	191	176	162	145	1083		

9. How would you describe the quality of life in the borough? Not answered 4

Excellent	5	2.0%	Fair	44	17.7%	Total response	248
Very Good	62	25.0%	Poor	7	2.8%		
Good	130	52.4%					

10. What one thing would improve the quality of life in the borough? Not answered 47

Comments 205

11. Of these three choices, which one would you Not answered 24

Lower taxes with reduced level of municipal services.	53	23.2%	Total response	228
Same taxes with about the same level of municipal services.	152	66.7%		
Higher taxes with improved municipal services.	23	10.1%		

12. Are you satisfied with the quality, location and quantity of residential development within the borough?

Yes	166	72.8%	No	62	27.2%	Total response	228
Comments	79		Not answered	24			

13. Are you satisfied with the quality, location and quantity of commercial development and retail services within the borough?

Yes	81	34.9%	No	151	65.1%	Total response	232
Comments	152		Not answered	20			

14. In which locations do you purchase the majority of the following goods and services?

Not answered 2

	Morrisville Borough		Neighboring Township		Oxford Valley		Other		Total Answers
Groceries	149	53.6%	114	41.0%	4	1.4%	11	4.0%	278
Prescriptions	169	67.1%	56	22.2%	4	1.6%	23	9.1%	252
Shoes	2	0.7%	52	19.0%	146	53.5%	73	26.7%	273
Sporting goods	3	1.3%	44	19.4%	133	58.6%	47	20.7%	227
Movies/entertainment	19	7.5%	47	18.5%	126	49.6%	62	24.4%	254
Health care	51	18.1%	117	41.6%	41	14.6%	72	25.6%	281
Furniture	4	1.7%	50	21.0%	99	41.6%	85	35.7%	238
Appliance	64	24.2%	48	18.2%	88	33.3%	64	24.2%	264
Automobiles	6	2.6%	65	28.4%	53	23.1%	105	45.9%	229
Gasoline	50	18.7%	117	43.8%	16	6.0%	84	31.5%	267
Auto repair	127	48.7%	56	21.5%	26	10.0%	52	19.9%	261
Banking/financial	185	65.4%	54	19.1%	13	4.6%	31	11.0%	283
Hardware/home improvement	142	45.5%	64	20.5%	70	22.4%	36	11.5%	312
Gifts	13	21.0%	13	21.0%	13	21.0%	23	37.1%	62

RESOLUTION NO. 847

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE BOROUGH OF MORRISVILLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PREPARED BY THE BUCKS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION AS AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT TO SERVE AS A POLICY GUIDE FOR DECISION MAKING ABOUT THE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT IN MORRISVILLE BOROUGH.

WHEREAS, the Bucks County Planning Commission prepared a Comprehensive Plan draft in July of 2008; and,

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan is required under the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code to be prepared and acted upon by the Borough of Morrisville; and,

WHEREAS, said Comprehensive Plan is to serve as an official public document to be a policy guide for decision making about the physical development in a community and it is to be an explicit statement of the community's future goals and vision for use by planning commissions, council, private stake holders and, regional, state and federal entities; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Bucks Planning Commission has conducted, pursuant to the Municipalities Planning Code, a public meeting concerning the Borough of Morrisville's Comprehensive Plan; and,

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission of the Borough of Morrisville has conducted a public meeting as required by the Municipalities Planning Code; and,

WHEREAS, the Borough of Morrisville, on September 9, 2008, after proper advertising, conducted a public hearing pursuant to Public Notice concerning the Municipalities Planning Code; and,

WHEREAS, during the course of the public hearing, the public, along with members of Morrisville Borough Council, made certain and particular corrections for the Comprehensive Plan to a representative of the Bucks County Planning Commission along with submissions by the Borough of Morrisville Planning Commission in their letter of August 25, 2008.

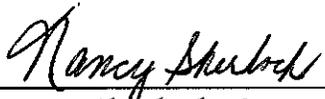
NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the Municipal Planning Code of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and all prerequisite conditions having been completed, the Borough of Morrisville resolves to accept the Comprehensive Plan for the Borough of Morrisville, Pennsylvania, as corrected and amended.

APPROVED on the 15th day of September, 2008 by a vote of Borough Council.

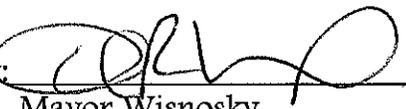
ATTEST:

MORRISVILLE BOROUGH


George R. Mount, III, Secretary

By: 
Nancy Sherlock, Council President

DULY APPROVED this 17th day of September, 2008.

By: 
Mayor Wisnosky