

# Chester County Planning Commission Annual Report

*2007*



# Our Mission

The mission of the Chester County Planning Commission is to provide high quality professional planning services to the municipalities, citizens and organizations of the County; to promote orderly growth and development through the dissemination of information, preparation of plans and programs, and provision of technical services that support and promote the vision of Landscapes; to fulfill state mandates; and to implement the policies and directives of the Board of Chester County Commissioners.

Chester County Board of Commissioners

Carol Aichele  
Terence Farrell  
Kathi Cozzone






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 C H E S T E R   C O U N T Y   P L A N N I N G   C O M M I S S I O N
 

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# leadership

## Chairman's message—year in review

### What is the Chester County Planning Commission?

The Chester County Planning Commission is a nine-member advisory board appointed by the County Commissioners. The members represent diverse backgrounds, volunteering to serve four-year terms. The officers are elected annually. All are dedicated to promoting coordinated growth and preservation planning for all of Chester County.

On behalf of the members of the Chester County Planning Commission, I am pleased to present the 2007 Chester County Planning Commission Annual Report. Planning Commission members continued to ratify the many reviews required for subdivisions, zoning ordinances, and comprehensive plans. At the end of the year, the number of proposed new housing units for 2007 did show a slowdown, reflecting a trend that was seen on the national level as well.

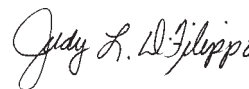
The Planning Commission worked with business leaders and with the TMAs that serve Chester County in updating the County's Transportation Priority Projects list and prepared for the 2007 presentation to the State Transportation Committee. This presentation was the final STC appearance for Lee Whitmore, the Planning Commission's transportation planner for 30 years. Mr. Whitmore was the architect of the County's organized appearances before the STC. His work and dedication to the Planning Commission was sincerely appreciated. Natasha Goguts was named as his replacement in November.

After a series of regional breakfast meetings across the County, the Landscapes2 Steering Committee began to hold monthly meetings to discuss the plan's various components and to determine where the policy focus should be for the future. I thank my Committee Co-Chair, Jason Duckworth, for leading such truly meaningful discussions. As the year concluded, the transportation portion of the Landscapes2 update had been forwarded to the Commissioners for

their endorsement. The public at-large is able to access Landscapes2 information and watch the committee's progress through its website, [www.Landscapes2.com](http://www.Landscapes2.com).

The Planning Commission staff finds ways to use innovative technology in order to provide commission members and the public with visual data—graphs and maps—that aid in the interpretation of development and population trends. Municipalities are encouraged to avail themselves of these available resources.

With the support of this very professional staff, the Planning Commission members are committed to assisting the County Commissioners and the citizens of Chester County to plan and prepare for the future.



Judy L. DiFilippo  
Chairman  
Chester County Planning Commission





**Judy L. DiFilippo  
Chairman**

**Resident:**  
Tredyffrin Township

**Occupation:**  
Public Official

**Affiliations:**  
Chairman, Tredyffrin Township Board of Supervisors; President, Chester County Association of Township Officials; Member, Paoli Intermodal Transit Center Study Committee; Member, Chester County 2020 Board.

**Appointed:**  
June 2002



**Nancy Mohr  
Vice-chairman**

**Resident:**  
Newlin Township

**Occupation:**  
Chester County 2020 Trust, Executive Director; Writer/Consultant

**Affiliations:**  
Founder, former consultant, Brandywine Conservancy's Headwaters Area Conservation Program; Team Member, Pierce Report on the Philadelphia Region; Co-author, Report on the Viability of Agriculture in the Philadelphia Region; Special projects with the Green Space Alliance; Co-author, Sprawl Study under William Penn Foundation Grant.

**Appointed:**  
June 1998



**Ann C.M. Abbott**

**Resident:**  
Highland Township

**Occupation:**  
Commercial horse breeder and farmer

**Affiliations:**  
Highland Township Planning Commission

**Appointed:**  
June 2005



**Mark J. Blair**

**Resident:**  
West Bradford Township

**Occupation:**  
Nurseryman,  
Owner of Hilo Acres Nursery

**Affiliations:**  
Vice-chairman, West Bradford Township Board of Supervisors; Chairman, Agricultural Security District Committee; Executive Board, Chester County Association of Township Officials (CCATO), liaison to the Chester County Planning Commission; Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors, Land Use and Growth Management Committee.

**Appointed:**  
2006



**Robert Hankin**

**Resident:**  
Lafayette Hill

**Occupation:**  
President, The Hankin Group

**Affiliations:**  
President, the Hankin Foundation; Board of Directors, Chester County Development Council; Board of Directors, Chester County Industrial Development Authority; Board of Directors, Meridian Bank.

**Appointed:**  
April 1999

**Resigned:**  
2007



**Kevin Johnson, P.E.**

**Resident:**  
Tredyffrin Township

**Occupation:**  
President, Traffic Planning and Design, Inc.

**Affiliations:**  
Board of Directors, Phoenixville Area YMCA; Member, American Society of Highway Engineers, Delaware Valley Chapter; Member, Institute of Transportation Engineers; Board of Directors, Tri-County Chamber of Commerce; Board of Directors, Victory Bank; Board of Directors, Bucks-Montgomery Homebuilders Association.

**Appointed:**  
December 2003



**Caroline A. Novak**

**Resident:**  
South Coatesville

**Occupation:**  
Senior Consultant, Novak Strategic Advisors

**Affiliations:**  
Consultant to agricultural preservation interests; Former Commissioner, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission.

**Appointed:**  
December 2003



**Joseph J. Tarantino**

**Resident:**  
Tredyffrin Township

**Occupation:**  
President, Continental Realty Co., Inc.

**Affiliations:**  
Chairman, PA State Real Estate Commission; President, National Italian American Political Action Committee; Member, Tredyffrin Republican Committee; Consultant, PA Turnpike Commission; Consultant, Montgomery County Board of Commissioners; Former Chairman, Bridgeport Revitalization Committee; Member, PA Association of Realtors; Members, National Association of Realtors; Member, Urban Land Institute; Member, Lambda Alpha International.

**Appointed:**  
June 2005



**Joseph J. Viscuso, P.E., L.S.**

**Resident:**  
Birmingham Township

**Occupation:**  
Partner, Vollmer Associates LLP

**Affiliations:**  
American Society of Civil Engineers; Chester County Chamber of Business & Industry; Chester County Economic Development Council; Delaware County Community College Educational Foundation Board; Home Builders Association of Chester & Delaware Counties; PA State Association of Township Supervisors; YMCA of the Brandywine Valley Board; Adjunct professor at Widener University; "Engineer of the Year" by the Delaware Valley Engineers Week Council.

**Appointed:**  
June 2005



**John C. Washington, III**

**Resident:**  
South Coatesville

**Occupation:**  
Instructor for Overhead and Remote Crane Safety, Ladle Crane Operator, International Steel Group

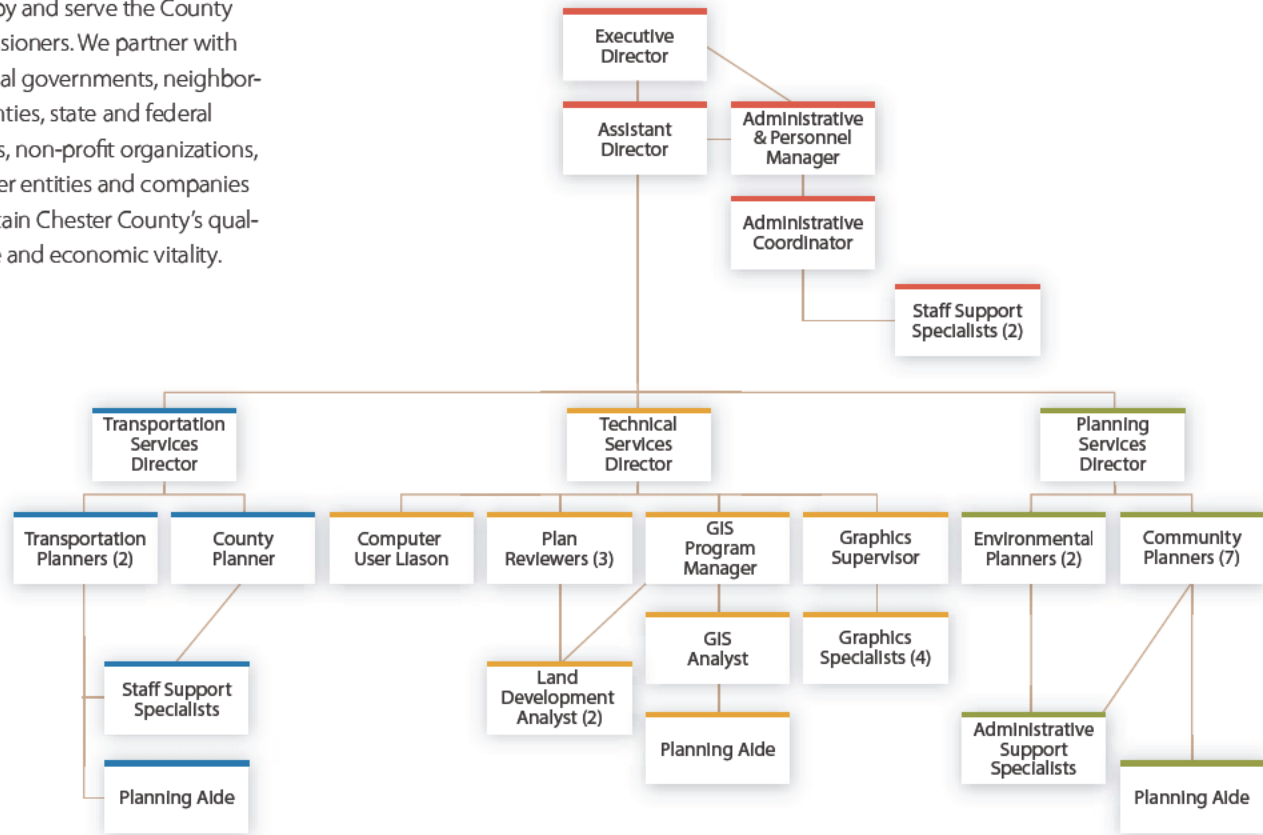
**Affiliations:**  
Vice-President, South Coatesville Borough Council; Past President, South Coatesville Borough Council; Member, South Coatesville Borough Council since 1980; past president of The Association of Boroughs; Chairman, Democratic Party of South Coatesville; Chairman, Borough of South Coatesville Economic Development Committee; Grievance Committeeman, Steelworkers Local 1165 of International Steel Group.

**Appointed:**  
January 2002

# the staff

## Meet the staff

We are a professional staff employed by and serve the County Commissioners. We partner with municipal governments, neighboring counties, state and federal agencies, non-profit organizations, and other entities and companies to maintain Chester County's quality of life and economic vitality.



### ■ Administration Services

- Ronald T. Bailey, AICP  
*Executive Director*
- David D. Ward, AICP  
*Assistant Director*
- Beth A. Cunliffe, *Administrative & Personnel Manager*
- Karen Peed, *Administrative Coordinator*
- Marie Celii, *Information Specialist*
- Lavina Simeone, *Librarian/Archivist Specialist*

### ■ Transportation and Information Services

- Natasha Goguts, AICP  
*Transportation Services Director*
- Matthew Anderson, *Transportation Planner*
- Robert Walker, *County Planner*
- Randy Waltermeyer, *Transportation Planner*
- Patti Mento, *Administrative Support*

### ■ Technical Services

- Thomas P. West  
*Technical Services Director*
- Catherine Sbarbaro, *GIS Program Manager*
- Keary Larson, *GIS Analyst*
- Justin Smiley, *Planning Aide*
- Brian Sweeney, *Computer User Liaison*
- Steven Cummings, *Planning Aide*
- Glenn Bentley, *Plan Reviewer*
- Wes Bruckno, *Plan Reviewer*
- Paul Farkas, *Plan Reviewer*
- Suzanne Desiata, *Land Development Analyst*
- Jenn Kolvereid, *Land Development Analyst*
- Diana Gent, *Graphics Supervisor*
- Christopher Bittle, *Graphics Specialist*
- Polly Chalfant, *Graphics Specialist*
- Elizabeth Kolb, *Graphics Specialist*
- Carolyn Oakley, *Graphics Specialist*

### ■ Planning Services

- Carol J. Stauffer, AICP  
*Planning Services Director*
- Mark Gallant, *Community Planner*
- Hillary Krummrich, Esq., *Community Planner*
- Kathy McCarthy, *Community Planner*
- Kevin Myers, *Community Planner*
- Jeannine Speirs, *Community Planner*
- Reagan Wagner, *Community Planner*
- Yvonne Guthrie, *Administrative Support*
- Carolyn Conwell, *Environmental/Open Space Planner*
- Jake Michael, *Environmental/Open Space Planner*

# refining

## Why are We Updating the Comprehensive Plan?

**The comprehensive plan** is the fundamental instrument we use to guide how growth and preservation occurs in Chester County. Our comprehensive plan "Landscapes" was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in 1996. We are now updating this plan in accordance with the requirements of Pennsylvania state law.



97% of the respondents used the on-line survey.

### The process begins by getting everyone involved

The first phase of updating Landscapes, the County's comprehensive plan, involved the Chester County Planning Commission orchestrating a series of activities designed to obtain public perception of planning issues facing Chester County. The concerns and issues facing individuals, business, and institutions in Chester County will serve as a guide for the plan update effort.

#### Online survey—obtaining public opinion

During the first quarter of 2007, the Chester County Planning Commission performed an online survey, in addition to hard-copy versions, to solicit public feedback. The survey was widely promoted and resulted in the receipt of 8,040 total responses. A majority (97%) of the respondents used the online survey. Managing new growth and development was identified as one of the most important issues. Analysis of the survey results is available at: [www.Landscapes2.org/Survey.html](http://www.Landscapes2.org/Survey.html).

#### Regional meetings—understanding the diversity of Chester County

A series of meetings was held around the County to better understand the diversity of Chester County. Local character, issues, and needs were expressed by municipal officials, school district officials, and legislators. It became quite clear that our County is extremely diverse and that Landscapes2 must be responsive to a variety of local needs.

#### Focus groups—understanding stakeholder needs

The Chester County Planning Commission performed a series of 12 focus group sessions during the first quarter of 2007 to discover planning that should be considered during the update to Landscapes. Focus group sessions included specific interest groups to gain their perspective on planning issues. To view the report that summarizes the findings of the focus group meetings go to <http://www.Landscapes2.org/Participation.html>.

✓ **LANDSCAPES GOAL IMPLEMENTED: Planning and Coordination- Planning Policy**  
Increase public participation in the planning process.

*“The Chester County Planning Commission has reached out to every region in the County as we work to develop the goals for Landscapes2... While there are many similar issues, each region has its own unique character.”*

Judy DiFilippo  
Chairman  
Chester County  
Planning Commission



View survey results and analysis on the web :  
[www.Landscapes2.org/Survey.html](http://www.Landscapes2.org/Survey.html)



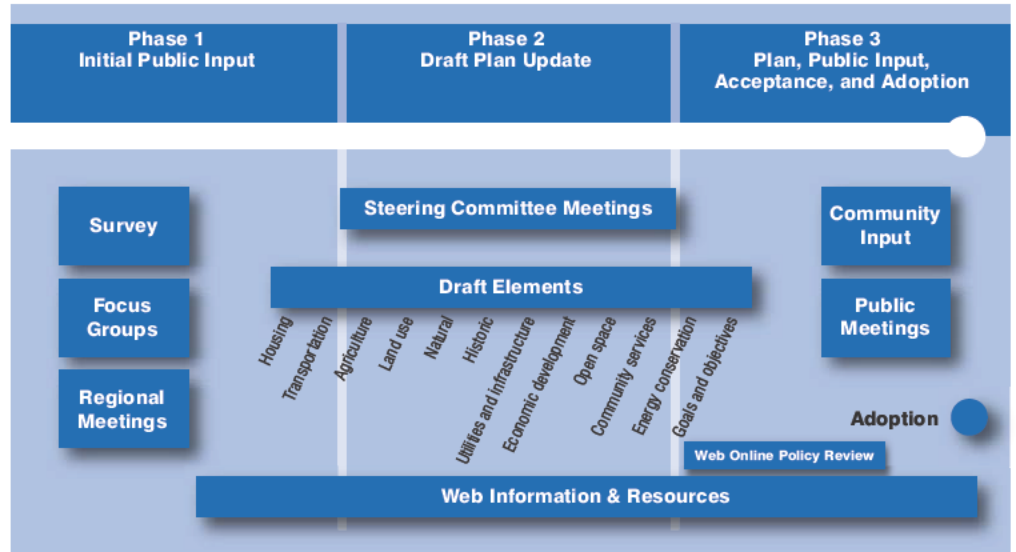
### Steering committee—refining the issues

The Landscapes2 Steering Committee was formed to identify the planning issues facing Chester County and serve as a sounding board for ideas and solutions. The committee consists of the nine members of the Chester County Planning Commission, and individuals from around the County representing many different interests, expertise, and points of view. Meetings were held at different times and in different locations to ensure a greater familiarity with the diversity and uniqueness of Chester County. It is anticipated that it will take the steering committee approximately a year to complete its work. View the list of steering committee members at [www.Landscapes2.org](http://www.Landscapes2.org).

### The next step

For Landscapes2 to be a meaningful plan, Chester Countians need to stay involved. Public participation is critical if managing our future is to be achieved. To make participation easy, residents will be able to access and comment on draft plan materials on the web. This collaborative process will allow residents to not only make comments as the plan is drafted, but see what fellow citizens are thinking as well. This service should become available in late spring of 2008.

### Landscapes2 progress line



The staff of the Chester County Planning Commission presented comprehensive plan draft element topics to the Landscapes2 Steering Committee in a series of meetings.



# changing

## Understanding Change Within the County

**Chester County** is undergoing significant changes. The attractiveness and location of the County have made us the focus of development in the state. Understanding these trends help us to better plan for the future of the County.



### Why do we collect data?

The Planning Commission collects and maintains information and data that describe, measure, and analyze conditions and trends about Chester County. This information is available to the public and is often used by municipalities, organizations, businesses, students, and residents. It is also used internally by planning staff and other County government departments. The information covers subjects such as population, housing, land use, economics, transportation, and community facilities and services. This information is crucial for developing solutions to problems and for managing change.

### Noteworthy trends

Chester County has experienced the following trends (2006 American Community Survey):

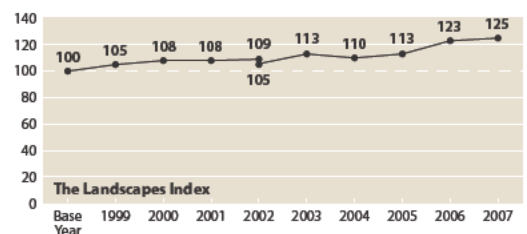
- The County remains number one in population growth in Pennsylvania – an increase of 48,611 people from 2000 to 2006.
- \$77,570 – The median household annual income in the County, the highest in the state.
- 87% of residents lived in the same residence one year earlier, 6% had moved within the County, 3% moved from elsewhere in Pennsylvania, 3% moved from another state, and 1% from abroad.
- 80% of workers drove to work alone.
- 78% of housing units were owner-occupied.
- 62% of housing units were single-unit detached structures.

- 60% of households were married-couple families, but less than half of these families had children under 18 years old.
- 45% of people 25 years or older had a college degree.
- 24% of the population are now under 18 years of age.
- 12% of the County population is 65 and over.
- 7% of people were in poverty.

### How do we measure progress?

The Chester County Planning Commission provides an annual report card on the progress we are making towards achieving the long-term goals of Landscapes. The Landscapes Index uses a series of variables to monitor trends in subjects important to plan implementation, including land consumption, traffic, and housing. A numeric index over 100 indicates we are achieving the goals of the plan. In 2007, the Index was 125, the highest value in ten years. The individual indices show how conditions are changing and what subjects need greater attention. For more information go to:

[www.chesco.org/planning](http://www.chesco.org/planning).



## Activities that measure trends

**Preparing for the 2010 Census:** The County is assisting the Census Bureau to prepare for the census in 2010. This work is critical to ensure that every person in Chester County is counted and that every household receives a questionnaire. The Chester County Planning Commission sponsored several workshops for the Census Bureau to explain the program to municipalities and obtain their help in updating the address list. This is especially important because of all the new housing construction throughout the County.



**Forecasting future population:** The Planning Commission staff assisted in the preparation of population and employment forecasts. These forecasts are essential for regional and county planning, including transportation and infrastructure projects.



**Understanding housing costs trends:** The Planning Commission monitors housing sales activity and costs for the County and municipalities. Housing sales activity slowed down with 1,000 fewer homes sold in 2006 than in 2005. Median price went over \$300,000, but the increase was the lowest since 1998.



**Measuring new residential units:** The Planning Commission records the number of new housing units constructed each year and which municipality they are located in. The number of new units, 3,415 in 2006, was down from the previous two years, but within the general range of new units added annually since 1999. This data helps us understand housing demand and future service needs.



**Estimating traffic volume:** The Chester County Planning Commission updated the countywide table of traffic volume estimates in 2007 by analyzing over 1,000 road segments. The most recent traffic counts are used as a basis and other factors, such as population and employment growth, are taken into account. The estimates are used by developers, business owners, municipalities, and the general public in planning growth and infrastructure projects.



## Land planning activity

Pennsylvania mandates that municipalities refer all plans for subdivision and land development to the Chester County Planning Commission for review prior to municipal action. Services include reviews of all submissions from our municipalities, including:

- Comprehensive plan updates
- Ordinance updates and amendments
- Subdivision and land development proposals
- Official map updates

### Development review service

Review activity in 2007 was significantly less than that experienced in calendar year 2006. The Chester County Planning Commission received 361 plans for review in 2007 compared to 478 plans in 2006. The 2007 submissions proposed only 3,854 lots or units, and represents a 55 percent decrease in the number of units proposed from the previous year. These plan applications involved 9,225 acres of land and 22.1 miles of new roads.

### Proposed development in 2007

The following trends in development applications were witnessed in 2007:

- 55% decrease in the number of units/lots proposed during 2007 over the previous year.
- 23% decrease in the number of sewage planning applications reviewed in 2007 over the previous year.
- 9225 acres of land proposed for development in 2007.
- 3,854 lots/units proposed in 2007.
- 22.1 miles of new road proposed for development.
- 2.02 acres The average area of a proposed lot in 2007.
- 620,000 The number of people forecasted to live in Chester County in 2035, including over 335,000 jobs.

*Of the 361 plans submitted for review, 90 percent were consistent with Landscapes.*



*55% decrease in the number of units/lots proposed during 2007 over the previous year.*



## Tracking development patterns—coordinating planning programs

Development in the County can be tracked through several of the planning services performed by the Chester County Planning Commission. These services strive to achieve consistency between municipal planning with County planning programs, through the management of growth and infrastructure within the County.

### Major application highlights

The following development proposals demonstrate consistency with Landscapes:

- Commonwealth Real Estate proposed eleven commercial buildings totaling 223,950 square feet sited on the north side of Baltimore Pike in New Garden Township.
- West Chester University proposed a 170,342 square foot, four story parking structure in West Chester Borough.
- Chester County Hospital proposed a four-story, 164,352 square foot addition to the existing hospital complex located in West Chester Borough and in West Goshen Township.
- Two projects were proposed in the City of Coatesville, which include an 80,000 square foot four-story office building and a 76,000 square feet hotel and restaurant complex both sited at Route 82 and the Coatesville-Downingtown Bypass.
- A 231 unit apartment building with structured parking was proposed along Route 202 in West Goshen Township.
- West Chester University, which proposed the demolition of existing residence halls and the construction of two seven-story student housing buildings totaling 378,034 square feet as the first phase of the University's Housing Renewal Initiative.

*Several projects have demonstrated reinvestment in the City of Coatesville.*



*Existing residence halls will be demolished to make way for new energy efficient housing at West Chester University.*

# connecting

## Effects of Growth on Transportation

**Chester County** has experienced unprecedented increases in population and employment growth. The result of these changes is a significant strain on the County's transportation system across all transportation modes.

### A system-wide approach to transportation

The Chester County Planning Commission serves as the County's voice in planning transportation projects and improvements.

The County's dramatic growth directed the development of a policy paper on transportation. The most noteworthy enhancement to the original transportation policies was the introduction of a system-wide planning approach. The new direction includes a focus on the connections between roadways, transit service, bike lanes, trails, and sidewalks. This system-wide approach not only addresses transportation issues, but also considers quality of life, land use, economic development, and environmental stewardship.

The Landscapes2 Transportation Policy Paper was endorsed by the County Commissioners in December 2007 and will serve as guidance in the preparation of the action plan and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Chester County.

- ✓ **LANDSCAPES GOAL IMPLEMENTED: Transportation Goal**  
Provide an intermodal transportation system which optimizes mobility, strengthens the economy, protects the environment, and supports the vision for Chester County.

### New bus routes introduced

The Chester County Planning Commission participated in efforts to reduce traffic congestion during construction projects on Route 202. These bus routes aim to provide an alternative to driving along the Route 202 corridor. These include service between the Paoli train station to Great Valley, and the 306 service, which serves the Concord, Delaware, Delaware County, and West Chester areas. The Bee-line was introduced between Coatesville, Downingtown, and Great Valley.



SEPTA 205 bus service operates between Paoli Train Station and Great Valley in an effort to help ease congestion along Route 202 during bridge construction.



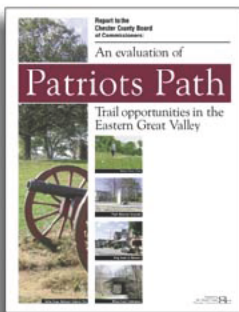
## Pedestrian/trail successes

Alternative forms of transportation are needed for a healthy community. Pedestrian facilities planning included the following activities that promote both transportation policies and the recommendations of *Linking Landscapes*, the County's open space plan:

- ✓ **LANDSCAPES GOAL IMPLEMENTED: Transportation Objective- Non-motorized Travel**  
Promote alternative means of travel to reduce automotive dependency, increase accessibility, and improve air quality.

### Patriots Path Report—connecting historic resources

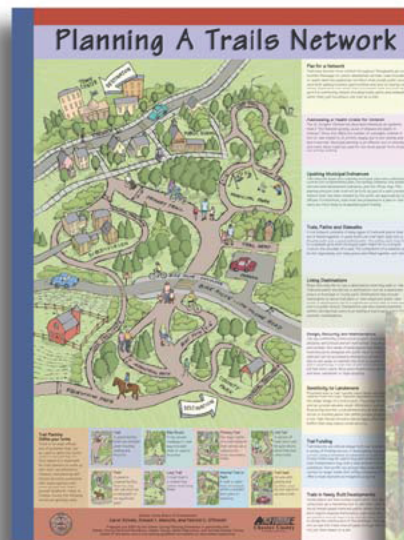
This report published by the Chester County Planning Commission identifies opportunities for trail development in eastern Chester



County. The report outlines a strategy for linking Valley Forge National Historic Park with both the Paoli Massacre and Battle of the Clouds sites. The path consists of a series of new and existing trails, sidewalks, and new links. Implementation of the path will require a multi-municipal cooperative effort. This report was recommended in *Linking Landscapes*, the open space element of the County's policy plan.

### Chester Valley Trail—a regional hiking trail opportunity

The Chester County Planning Commission assisted the Parks and Recreation and Facilities departments in the planning of the County's Chester Valley Trail. When completed, this multi-purpose trail will link communities from Downingtown to King of Prussia. The trail will ultimately connect with the Schuylkill Valley Trail in Upper Merion Township, forming a regional trail system for our residents.



### Trail and Path Guide and Poster—a means of promoting a healthier lifestyle

This guidebook and poster present ways that municipalities can address trail and path planning in their comprehensive plan, official map, zoning ordinance, and subdivision and land development ordinance. It can also be used by individuals who wish to learn more about how public trails and paths are planned and constructed by local governments. This publication is the second in a series that have been designed to implement the policies of Chester County's open space plan, *Linking Landscapes*. *Linking Landscapes* has also been designated as Chester County's Greenways Plan by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

*Trail & Path Planning, published by the Chester County Planning Commission, was presented to the Commissioners in celebration of partnerships between Activate Chester County and other agencies to promote healthy lifestyles. (L to R) Commissioner Mancini; Margaret Rivello, Executive Director of Chester County Health Department; Jodi Giardina of Activate Chester County; Commissioner Aichele; and Commissioner O'Donnell.*



*The condition of bridges received notable attention in 2007 after the Minneapolis bridge collapse.*



## Coordination with local and public stakeholders

The Chester County Planning Commission staff provided assistance to numerous technical requests from municipalities, legislators, and the public. Of particular interest in 2007 was the status of many bridges due to the Minneapolis bridge collapse that occurred in August. The planning commission collaborated with PennDOT to make information on bridges more accessible to municipal, legislative, and public inquires. Information on SEPTA's fare increase, potential leasing of the Turnpike, new transportation funding from Act 44, and the status of various major projects were other frequent inquires.

## Highway planning update

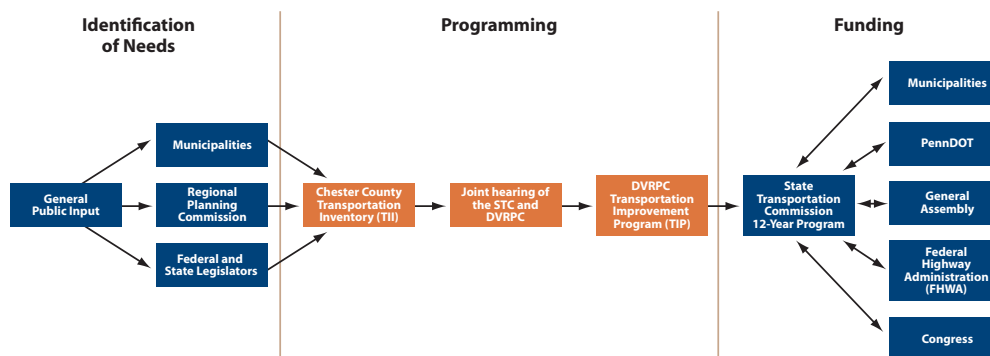
The Planning Commission leads the County's transportation planning process for identifying and prioritizing transportation projects. The planning process begins by identifying transportation needs throughout the County. In 2007, the Planning Commission updated Chester County's Transportation Improvements Inventory (TII). The inventory is based on input from municipalities, regional planning commissions, elected officials, and the general public. It includes proposed highway, bridge, rail, trail, and transit projects. The TII identified 503 projects with a total cost of \$5.7 billion and was mapped using GIS for the first time in 2007. The TII helps with regional and state transportation programming and funding.

Using the TII, the Planning Commission worked with municipalities and elected officials to prioritize the projects for a presentation to the State Transportation Commission (STC) and Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC). In 2007, the STC package was endorsed by all of the state congressional representatives, which demonstrates the consensus for moving forward with the high priority projects.

The Planning Commission plays an integral role in developing the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) by collaborating with DVRPC, PennDOT, SEPTA, and neighboring counties. The TIP is a federally mandated program that identifies the transportation projects that will utilize federal and state funds during a four year period. The TIP will be updated in 2008 to reflect the current projects and priorities across the Delaware Valley region. The Planning Commission advocates for the appropriate funding levels and implementation schedules to address Chester County's transportation needs.



*We are Chester County's voice for transportation improvements. The transportation services division presented transportation priorities and funding needs at the State Transportation Commission hearing in Harrisburg.*



*The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) involves a multi-step process involving all levels of government.*

# preserving

## Dedication to the Environment

**The successful implementation** of the Landscapes vision requires the preservation of our unique character, including open space, natural and historic resources. These efforts, in conjunction with growth management efforts, are at the core of making Landscapes principles a reality.



### Open space planning initiatives

The Chester County Planning Commission serves as a facilitator in preservation. Open space planning involves a variety of initiatives and services. These efforts support work being carried out in our local municipalities, non-profit organizations, as well as other County departments.

#### Activities

The Planning Commission has participated in the following activities to promote open space preservation:

- Prepared annual inventory of protected lands.
- Assisted the White Clay Creek National Wild and Scenic Management Committee.
- Assisted Highland Coalition.
- Reviewed Agricultural Security Areas.

✓ **LANDSCAPES GOAL IMPLEMENTED: Resources Goal**  
Sustain and enhance natural, scenic, and historic resources for the benefit of current and future generations while accommodating planned growth.

*Open space planning services include trail planning and assistance to White Clay Creek National Wild and Scenic Committee.*





**Municipal coordination**

Staff assisted municipalities with the preparation of plans and ordinances that promote the management and protection of open space and natural resources:

- East Bradford Open Space, Recreation, and Environmental Resources Plan update.
- Upper Uwchlan Open Space, Recreation, and Environmental Resources Plan update.
- Highland Township and South Coventry Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance updates both with an emphasis on innovative stormwater management standards.
- Pocopson Township Natural Resource Protection Standards, Greenways, and Trail Plan.
- Wallace Township Natural Resource Protection Standards.



*A significant amount of staff time is devoted to reviewing public sewer projects.*

**Environmental planning services**

Environmental planning focuses on examining and mitigating the effects of land use, land development, and infill development on natural resources and other systems. The protection and conservation of natural resources is essential to the health, safety, and welfare of Chester County. These planning activities are closely linked with the land development plan review process (Act 247) and the Vision Partnership Planning Program.

**Municipal review assistance**

A significant commitment of staff time is spent reviewing plans for public sewer infrastructure projects to assure that they are consistent with Landscapes land use and environmental protection policies. Reviews of sewer and water applications submitted to the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission, the Delaware River Basin Commission, and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) serving the County are also an important step in insuring that the environmental concerns and the program goals and objectives of the Chester County Planning Commission are expressed and coordinated with other agencies.

✓ **LANDSCAPES GOAL IMPLEMENTED: Natural Resources Objective**

Achieve and sustain a high-quality natural resource system to protect public health and safety, and support and protect a diversity of ecosystems.



*Staff monitored the Upper Uwchlan Township Open Space, Recreation, and Environmental Resources Plan update.*



## Sewage facilities planning activity

Pennsylvania law requires all local municipalities to adopt and implement sewage facilities plans as a means of insuring that wastewater is properly treated and disposed. Municipalities use these plans to develop and enact policies regulating how new sewage facilities will be established and managed. They also utilize these plans as a means of analyzing and delineating areas that are in need of centralized, or public, treatment and disposal systems. These plans address public health needs, such as failing on-lot systems, new land developments, infill, and redevelopment.

### Assisting municipalities

The Planning Commission reviews sewage facility planning modules associated with most land development proposals and redevelopment projects. In general, the Planning Commission is required to review all land development proposals, with the exception of those proposing 10 units or less and that are planning to utilize on-lot disposal systems, where nitrates are not an issue.

In 2007, while the number of planning modules reviewed began to plateau (97 reviews), the number of projects proposed on less than 10 acres has been increasing steadily over the past three years. This indicates that infill development and re-development are now on the rise, as opposed to years past, due to such things as land prices, urban revitalization, and access to utilities, among others. Additionally, the Planning Commission has started to track proposals, in which the primary parcel involved in the application is selected and then displayed on a map with all other proposals for that month as well as the year to date. This map can be found on the Planning Commission web page in the Map Gallery at [www.chesco.org/planning](http://www.chesco.org/planning).

### Plans and plan updates

Pennsylvania law requires sewage facility plans and plan updates to be reviewed by the Planning Commission before they are sent to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for their review and decision. The Planning Commission conducted update reviews for:

#### Municipal reviews

- Valley Township
- East Goshen Township
- West Sadsbury Township
- Tredyffrin Township

#### Regional reviews

- Valley Forge Sewer Authority
- Oxford Area Sewer Authority



*Chester County Planning Commission staff coordinates sewage and land development planning.*

# managing

## Assisting Municipalities Managing Change

**Successful growth management** requires cooperative planning between the state, county, and our local municipalities. Our goal is to achieve consistency between these jurisdictions to promote a sound and effective planning program.



### Celebrating partnerships—VPP highlights

The Chester County Planning Commission provides assistance to municipalities in the form of technical and financial resources under the Vision Partnership Program (VPP).

Municipalities have access to community planning services from the County, primarily accomplished through Vision Partnership Program grants. These grants take the form of cash or technical in-kind service. The VPP grant program strives to develop planning partnerships between local governments and the County to implement sound growth management and coordinated planning programs.

Through the Vision Partnership Program, municipalities receive professional planning services and financial assistance to help update their planning programs for consistency with Landscapes as well as to achieve municipal planning goals. Municipalities may use VPP grants to retain the services of a professional planning consultant. In-kind grants may be used to retain the Chester County Planning Commission for professional planning assistance.

- ✓ **LANDSCAPES GOAL IMPLEMENTED: Planning and Coordination Policy**  
Promote cooperation among municipalities to provide high levels of services.

#### Increased funding levels for multi-municipal planning

In the fall of 2007, the Vision Partnership Program was revised to increase the level of grant funding available to municipalities who work together on multi-municipal or regional planning projects.

Funding for comprehensive plans and ordinances undertaken by two municipalities was increased from \$75,000 to \$80,000. More importantly, for projects involving three or more municipalities the base amount can be increased at the discretion of the County depending on the type of project and the number of participating municipalities. Similarly, funding for special projects undertaken by two municipalities was increased from \$25,000 to \$30,000. For special projects involving three or more municipalities, the base amount may be increased at the discretion of the County depending on the scope of the project.

With a matching grant requirement of only 10 percent for multi-municipal comprehensive plans and ordinances and the increased grant levels, the Vision Partnership Program provides significant incentives for municipalities to work together regionally. (See the VPP Grant Manual online at [www.chesco.org/planning](http://www.chesco.org/planning) for full details.)

- ✓ **LANDSCAPES GOAL IMPLEMENTED: Planning and Coordination Policy**  
Establish and enhance sub-county regional planning in all sections of Chester County as a model of regional cooperation.

## Promoting cooperative planning

The promotion of cooperative planning among municipalities remains a primary goal of the Chester County Planning Commission. Many planning issues, including transportation, resource protection, and the provision of community services and facilities, can be better addressed at a multi-municipal level. The following are highlights of multi-municipal planning efforts in Chester County in 2007.

### Phoenixville Area Regional Planning Commission (PARPC)

PARPC consists of the Borough of Phoenixville and the surrounding municipalities of East Pikeland, East Vincent, West Vincent, Charlestown and Schuylkill. The group continued to refine their draft multi-municipal comprehensive plan through 2007 with the assistance of their consultant, Kise, Straw, & Kolodner. All six municipalities have adopted the comprehensive plan. The plan promotes a regional approach to land use, transportation, and resource management. Under the provisions of the Municipal Planning Code (MPC), the adoption of a multi-municipal comprehensive plan will allow the region to take the next steps towards sharing land uses on a regional basis. Each municipality is now pursuing adoption of an intergovernmental cooperative implementation agreement as the year came to an end.

### Oxford Region

The Oxford Region encompasses the municipalities of the Oxford School District including Oxford Borough and the surrounding townships of East Nottingham, Elk, Lower Oxford, Upper Oxford, and West Nottingham. In the spring of 2007, the Planning Commission staff met with representatives of the region's six municipalities to discuss the benefits and challenges of developing a multi-municipal comprehensive plan. Municipal officials continued to meet through the summer and fall, ultimately deciding to pursue the development of a multi-municipal plan with the assistance of the Chester County Planning Commission. The region embarks on this major planning effort in 2008. Some of the significant challenges facing the region are responding to increasing development pressures from the south and east, loss of farmland, and the continued revitalization of Oxford Borough.



*Ronald Bailey, executive director of the Chester County Planning Commission, leads representatives of the Oxford Region in a discussion about planning issues that will be addressed in the multi-municipal comprehensive plan.*



## Helping municipal partners

Funding provided through the Vision Partnership Program supports municipal planning projects that champion the principles of Landscapes and implement local planning goals. The following projects promote the goals of Landscapes.

### Urban Center planning

- Parkesburg Borough Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance update
- Phoenixville Borough Historic District Design Guide
- Tredyffrin-Willistown Townships Paoli Center Zoning Project
- Phoenixville Region Comprehensive Plan focusing growth in Phoenixville Borough
- Modena Borough Zoning Ordinance update

**Highlight Modena Borough use of 3D modeling:** *The Modena Borough Zoning Ordinance update is using two computer programs, SketchUp and ArcScene, to better illustrate land use in the borough's town center, as well as to visualize proposed development that would be possible under their updated zoning ordinance. These tools will be useful in public presentations and hearings to allow residents to better understand the implications of ordinance changes proposed by their local government.*



### Suburban Landscape planning

- East Whiteland Township Zoning Ordinance update
- Tredyffrin Township Comprehensive Plan
- Thornbury Township Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Plan

**Highlight Township-wide trail network:** *The Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Plan addresses Thornbury Township's priority for the development of a township-wide trail network. The trail network is designed to provide access throughout the township through a series of "neighborhood paths." The plan includes a detailed implementation plan that outlines priorities, estimated costs, and potential funding sources in order to provide a logical implementation of the trail network.*



### Rural Landscape planning

- Franklin Township Zoning Ordinance update
- Londonderry Township Comprehensive Plan update
- London Grove Township Comprehensive Plan update
- West Nantmeal Township Comprehensive Plan update
- Phoenixville Region Comprehensive Plan preserving rural landscapes around Phoenixville Borough
- London Britain Township Comprehensive Plan update

**Highlight Protection of important resources addressed:** *Key elements of the London Britain Township Comprehensive Plan update include growth management, protection of the rural character and natural resources, open land preservation, and the creation of a trail network. The trail network will connect township residents to the White Clay Creek State Preserve, White Clay Creek State Park in Delaware, and Fair Hill Natural Resources Management Area in Maryland.*



### Rural Center and Village planning

- East Brandywine Township Guthriesville Village Master Plan
- New London Township New London Village Zoning and Design Guide
- Sadsbury Township standards for the Village of Sadsburyville
- Honey Brook Township Rocklyn Station Traditional Neighborhood Development Overlay

**Highlight Rocklyn Station:** *Honey Brook Township, in conjunction with the Brandywine Conservancy, is drafting a Traditional Neighborhood Development overlay zoning district for the Rocklyn Station Strategic Development Area. The district will provide for a mix of residential, retail, office, and service uses, a variety of permitted densities, and will create incentives for pedestrian-oriented development. All development that occurs within the overlay district will require the receipt of transferable development rights (TDRs) through the township's established TDR program.*



## Providing service to our municipalities

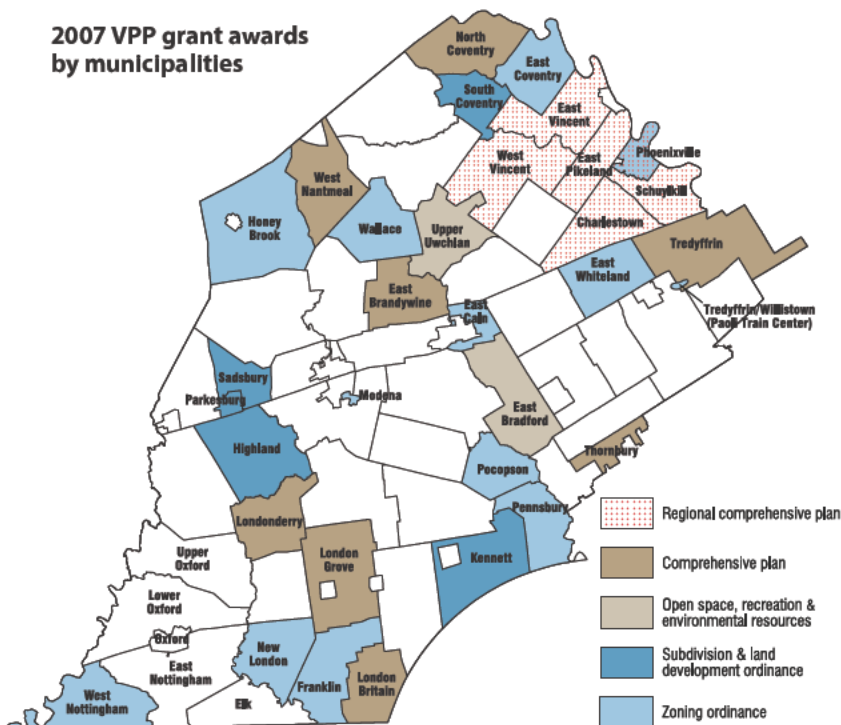
During 2007, a total of 26 individual Chester County municipalities were actively working on planning projects funded under the Vision Partnership Program. An additional eight municipalities were involved in multi-municipal planning projects. Each of these projects supports and promotes the policies of Landscapes.

### 2007 VPP grant awards

The Vision Partnership Program continues to be a popular municipal program for funding innovative planning projects throughout the County. In 2007, the Chester County Planning Commission reviewed nine grant applications for planning projects ranging from village master plans and historic resource surveys to a major multi-municipal comprehensive plan effort. VPP grants for calendar year 2007 totaled \$298,789, an eight percent increase over grants awarded in 2006.

VPP grant awards	
2007 cash grant awards	\$185,389
2007 in-kind grant awards	\$113,400
Total	\$298,789

### 2007 VPP grant awards by municipalities



### Vision Partnership Program Active contracts during 2007

Municipality	Comprehensive Plan Update	Zoning Update	Subdivision Update	Special Project
East Bradford	■ a*			
East Brandywine	■			
East Caln		■		
East Coventry		■		
East Whiteland		■		
Franklin		■		
Highland			■	
Honey Brook Twp.		■		■ d*
Kennett Township			●	
London Britain	●			
Londonderry	■			
London Grove	■			
Modena		●		
New London		■		
North Coventry	■ b*			
Parkesburg			■	
Pennsbury		●		
Phoenixville		■		■ e*
Pocopson		■		
Sadsbury			■	
South Coventry			■	
Thornbury	■ c*			
Tredyffrin	■			
Upper Uwchlan	■ a*			
Wallace		■	■	
West Nantmeal	■			
West Nottingham		●		
<b>Multi-Municipal Planning</b>				
Tredyffrin-Willistown		■		
Phoenixville Region	■			

■ Cash grant award  
● In-kind grant

a\* Update of *Open Space, Recreation, and Environmental Resources Plan*  
 b\* Addendum to comprehensive plan—*Northern Gateway Master Plan for Route 100*  
 c\* Addendum to comprehensive plan—*Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility plan.*  
 d\* *Official Map*  
 e\* *Historic District Design Guide*

## Ways in which Landscapes has been implemented

Several positive trends have occurred within the County since the inception of the Vision Partnership Program. Many municipalities have completed updates to their planning programs to achieve consistency with Landscapes. The following are examples of innovative projects that have been funded under the VPP grant program:

### Natural resource protection on a regional basis

Several municipalities that participate in regional planning groups have adopted regionally consistent protection standards for such resources as woodlands, wetlands, riparian buffers, and steep slopes. The Federation of Northern Chester County Communities (Northern Federation) adopted a Regional Resource Protection Plan in 2006 and seven of the nine participating municipalities have adopted or are in the process of developing regionally consistent protection standards. Similarly, three of the five municipalities that participated in the Kennett Area Region Comprehensive Plan (2000) have regionally consistent standards. This represents a significant step in protecting resources consistently on a county-wide basis. The Chester County Planning Commission will encourage other regional groups to continue this important trend.

#### ✓ LANDSCAPES GOAL IMPLEMENTED: Natural Resources

Achieve and sustain a high-quality natural resource system to protect public health and safety, and support and protect a diversity of ecosystems.

### Historic resource surveys

Municipalities are taking advantage a Vision Partnership Program provision that allows grants to be used for historic resource surveys. Previously, historic resource surveys conducted in accordance with Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) standards were not eligible for VPP funding. Municipalities now have a choice of undertaking such surveys as a special study or as part of a historic preservation plan completed as an update to the municipal comprehensive plan. A condition for the funding of historic resource surveys is coordination of the municipal effort with the GIS Historic Atlas project of the Chester County Parks Department. This coordination allows the municipalities to take advantage of GIS mapping resources and the assistance of the Parks Department while allowing the County to better incorporate the municipal survey information into its county-wide data base.

#### ✓ LANDSCAPES GOAL IMPLEMENTED: Community Facilities- Cultural Policy

Preserve, restore, and utilize historic resources to help to protect and promote the cultural heritage of Chester County.

### Housing planning

The housing element of Landscapes2 was advanced in 2007. This topic was identified as a critical element during the public input stage. The policies outlined in this paper consist of a goal and a series of objectives policies that will guide the development of an action plan for implementing Landscapes2.

The result was the housing policy paper that was accepted by the Landscapes2 Steering Committee and the Planning Commission, and was forwarded to the Commissioners for ratification. These policies will guide the County program for housing planning. For more information visit [www.Landscapes2.org](http://www.Landscapes2.org).



*Top photo: Resource protection is now managed on a multi-municipal basis in northern Chester County.  
Middle photo: The Houston Manor in Coatesville is an example of an important historic resource being included in the GIS Historic Atlas.  
Bottom photo: Cambria in South Coatesville Borough is an example of an affordable neighborhood project.*

# communicating

## Sharing Information

**A key to successful planning** is communications. The complex issues associated with planning require information to be presented in a fashion that is clear to our constituents. The Chester County Planning Commission prides itself on its ability to stay on top of technology in order to communicate planning issues more effectively.



### Innovative advances

As an information-based department, it is imperative that the Chester County Planning Commission stay abreast of technology. How we communicate is equally as important as the information we are sharing. The Planning Commission constantly strives to improve access to planning-related information.

In 2007, the Planning Commission made significant strides in advancing the methods used to share data and information, including:

#### Website

To better communicate planning topics and resources associated with Landscapes, the Planning Commission created a new website: [www.Landscapes2.org](http://www.Landscapes2.org). This site, dedicated to the planning process, provides a wealth of information concerning the issues facing Chester County and how the plan update process is addressing these issues. The site is updated frequently and includes information on planning-related events, conferences, and training opportunities.

#### Electronic mail service

The Planning Commission established an e-mail service to inform the public on planning issues facing the County. This monthly service provides news stories, planning successes from around the country, and links to planning resources. The service also provides updates on the Landscapes update effort. Residents can sign up for this service by visiting our website.

#### Wireless Internet connection

The Planning Commission installed wireless fidelity (Wifi) service within its office in 2007. The Planning Commission connection serves as a pilot program for the County. This service makes internet connection and access to the County's data base easier for the public and Planning Commission staff.

- ✓ **LANDSCAPES GOAL IMPLEMENTED: Utilities- Energy and Communications Policy**  
Encourage the development of and access to advanced communications and computer technology for government, schools, business, and residents.





## Improving services

Recent technological advances have enhanced how the policies of Landscapes are communicated by graphically depicting planning-related information and illustrating design concepts.

The following technologies have been incorporated into the Planning Commission's program:

### **Geographic Information System (GIS) service**

Staff at the Planning Commission use GIS in almost all operations including map production, data analysis, and presentation. To support these valuable services, the technical services division assists planners by maintaining digital data resources, providing necessary tools, and applications, and technical assistance. During 2007, staff collaborated with their colleagues in other County departments to coordinate implementing a County GIS Enterprise that can centrally store, maintain, and distribute shared spatial data sets and applications.

Staff also participated in activities designed to coordinate the development and use of GIS applications, the on-going maintenance of data and the provision of hardware, software, and necessary education and training. These activities will continue through 2008 as Enterprise-wide policies continue to be refined to make the technology operate efficiently to meet the departmental needs, so they can better serve the public.

The Planning Commission staff continued to use GIS to expand the mapping available to the public via the Internet on the Planning Commission Map Gallery at <http://www.chesco.org/planning/mapgallery>. The Map Gallery offers a wide selection of maps to the public free of charge. It is accessible from a typical home computer.

### **Land use cover available**

Staff have been working together to construct a new data layer for land-use and land cover using the Anderson USGS LU/LC classification system. This layer will allow planners to explore four classifications of both land-use and land cover throughout the County. The LU/LC layer will further assist in the analysis and decision making process for future land-use planning. The Planning Commission staff usage of GIS applications and tools continues to grow. Several applications used by staff have been reformatted during 2007 to function in new software platforms and to conform to County Enterprise standards.

On-going support of GIS by the Planning Commission staff for various projects is documented in other sections of this report. Support in terms of providing training, customized tools, data processing support and mapping is an essential component of GIS staff workload that augments the many products and services provided by the Planning Commission.

### **Introducing new technologies to planning**

During 2007, staff used GIS technology to help evaluate planning issues such as development patterns, build-out scenarios, and the visual impact of proposals in an existing landscape. GIS enables efficient use of spatial data to perform alternative land-use scenarios and illustrate the impact to local conditions and services. These tools allow planners to explore scenarios using GIS technology which produces reports, maps, and 3D scenes that significantly assist in the visual impact and the analysis and decision making process for future land-use planning. MultiVision high-resolution oblique imagery (angled view from multiple directions) is now used by staff to integrate aerial photography into planning. This enables the measurement of buildings, roads and other structures, as well as the creation of 3D building models from photo images. Staff also makes use of Google SketchUp, a 3D drawing program used to create buildings for 3D GIS.



Computer software is used to illustrate potential development patterns in Modena Borough.

# partnerships

## Collaborating For Our Future

**Partnerships** are an essential element of planning. The multitude of agencies that have different jurisdiction and resources makes coordination between agencies a fundamental part of planning. The Chester County Planning Commission facilitates the building of partnerships to achieve the goals of Landscapes.

### Building partnerships

The Planning Commission staff coordinates regularly with the general public, municipalities, legislators, regional, state and federal agencies on many planning projects, studies, and initiatives throughout Chester County and the Delaware Valley region. In that coordination role the Planning Commission serves as a member of several agencies.

#### Coordination throughout the Philadelphia Region

The Chester County Planning Commission regularly participated in many planning committees, studies, and other regional planning initiatives hosted by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC). The Chester County Planning Commission staff continued their involvement in the Regional Technical Committee (RTC), which reviews and makes recommendations on the management of the region's highway and transit capital programs. These capital programs provide funding for major transportation improvements within Chester County, including the widening of Route 202 in Great Valley, infrastructure improvements to the SEPTA's R5 regional rail line, and many small-scale projects such as bridge improvements and streetscapes.

The Chester County Planning Commission provides technical feedback and comments on many studies that are conducted on an annual basis by DVRPC staff. In 2007, these studies included the Route 100 Safety Study, Route 202/Route 322 Interchange Study, a regional analysis on roundabouts, and the R5 Extension Study, which studied the potential of extending SEPTA's R5 rail service to Coatesville, Parkesburg, and Atglen. The Chester County Planning Commission continues to coordinate implementation strategies with the municipalities, legislators, PennDOT, SEPTA, and the counties two TMA's on each of these DVRPC studies.

In 2007, the Chester County Planning Commission staff served on DVRPC's Information Resources Exchange Group (IREG). This planning committee collaborates on using information technology, forecasting, and aerial imagery for planning applications.



*Funding for streetscape and signal improvements in Coatesville and Downingtown (shown) were provided through two DVRPC funding programs.*



The Planning Commission offers a variety of planning programs to municipal leaders.

*“It is extremely important that our municipal officials and planners know the basic tools for planning their community.”*

Nancy Mohr  
Vice-chairman  
Chester County  
Planning Commission

**Municipal planning education program—learning the basics of planning**

In order for local municipal officials and planning commissioners to best serve their municipalities, a basic understanding of planning in Pennsylvania is needed. There is an increasing need for local officials to have access to planning information upon their election or appointments. Effective planning starts at the local municipal level with well informed participants.

To meet this training need, the Planning Commission in cooperation with Chester County 2020 and the West Chester University provides a series of training opportunities. These courses are planned and presented by the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute (PMPEI). A Master Planning Program is now available to municipal leaders. The program consists of three courses:

- The course in community planning explores the Municipalities Planning Code (Act 247) and the municipal comprehensive plan.
- The course in zoning explores the basic elements of the municipal zoning ordinance and options available to municipalities for effectively implementing their comprehensive plan.
- The course in subdivision and land development covers the basic aspects of how development is regulated and the process by which development is reviewed by the municipality.

✓ **LANDSCAPES GOAL IMPLEMENTED: Planning and Coordination-Planning Policy**  
Promote cooperation among municipalities to provide high levels of service.

**Coordination with transportation partners—PennDOT, SEPTA, and TMA’s**

In addition to the coordination of major transportation improvements with PennDOT and SEPTA, the Chester County Planning Commission staff worked cooperatively with these agencies on smaller-scale projects such as responding to safety concerns, roadway maintenance concerns, and improvements to existing public transit services. Staff also was engaged in projects organized by the County’s two Transportation Management Agencies, including a TMACC-initiated study of prioritizing transit service on SEPTA’s 104 route along PA Route 3 and a coalition of stakeholders on the Route 422 corridor organized by GVFTMA.



Nancy Mohr



# about us



DVRPC's IREG committee coordinates the use and distribution of color aerial imagery. The Chester County Planning Commission fulfills numerous requests for this imagery in map formats.

## Planning information services

The Planning Commission distributes information and responds to requests from the public. The Planning Commission maintains aerial photos, maps, data files, and a reference library containing approximately 4,000 volumes.

The table on this page presents the level of information requests and related activity experienced primarily by the Planning Commission's receptionists in 2006 and 2007. Increasing use of the Planning Commission's websites ([www.chesco.org/planning](http://www.chesco.org/planning) and [www.Landscapes2.org](http://www.Landscapes2.org)) has reduced the number of office visits over the past several years.

Aerial photography is a popular product provided by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission, through its participation as a member of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) obtains updated aerial photography of the entire County every five years. Beginning with the 2000 aerials, DVRPC converted to digital-ortho aerial photo production. This technology offers an accurate scale to the entire photograph. In an effort to offer increased product options to the public, planning staff created a computer application offering options on the photo products. The Planning Commission is also a repository for aerial photography of most of the County since 1965.

To make the products available from the Planning Commission more widely known to the public, our document, *Maps & Publications*, is updated annually and distributed to municipalities, organizations, and libraries. It has also been placed on the Planning Commission's web page.

## 2007 budget

The budget for the Planning Commission is part of the overall County budget process adopted by the Board of County Commissioners. The Planning Commission general fund budget for 2007 was \$3,078,885, a slight decrease over the 2006 budget. Expenditures for 2007 were \$2,789,017, an increase of fewer than four percent from 2006. Additional expenditures were devoted to improving technology and filling staff vacancies. Conversely, revenues increased nineteen percent over 2006. This is attributed in a large part to federal pass-through funds associated with transportation projects.

Information services		
	2006	2007
Telephone requests	11,209	11,289
Visitors	688	638
Maps & publications	1,410	1,792
Major mailings	10	12
Major e-mailings	0	1
Website visits	40,467	59,083

Budget		
	2006	2007
Budgeted	\$3,088,753	\$3,078,885
Expended	\$2,684,385	\$2,789,017
Revenues	\$363,852	\$376,984
Net expended	\$2,320,533	\$2,412,033

Revenues		
	2006	2007
Federal	\$62,588	\$154,500
State	\$0	\$0
Local	\$17,650	\$14,300
Publications	\$8,155	\$6,859
Subdivision fees	\$275,460	\$201,325
Total revenue	\$363,853	\$376,984

## Director's message—the challenge ahead of us



Chester County is changing. Everyone can see change all about them wherever they travel around the County. And this change is rapid in fact one township in Chester County is changing so quickly that it is distinguished as the fastest-growing municipality in the entire State of Pennsylvania!

At the same time Chester County is characterized by open forests and fields, active and economically viable farmland, a distinctive historic rural character, nationally-significant landscapes, architecturally-rich urban places, outstanding colleges and universities, vital and expanding employment centers, and pleasant suburban communities.

Planning is about managing change. Change can either be random, altering the good and the bad, or it can be directed in ways that balance change with preservation and conservation for the greatest good.

Since 1996, Chester County has been managing change by implementing its award-winning comprehensive plan, Landscapes.

Landscapes sets a vision for the future of Chester County and lots of good things are happening to make that vision a reality. Examples include:

- The cleanup of environmentally contaminated sites and the reuse of those sites for new productive uses.
- The preservation of more and more acres as permanent open space.
- The protection of high-quality farmland.
- The protection and development of water resources to minimize flooding and to ensure adequate supplies for all uses.
- The revitalization and improvement of our older communities.
- The development of new regulations that better protect resources during development and which encourage creation of more sustainable communities.
- The programming of funding to rebuild bridges, improve intersections, and reconstruct highways.
- The improvement of transit and passenger rail services.
- The protection and adaptive reuse of historic buildings and properties.
- The development and application of new communication technologies to better enable residents of the County to participate in planning our County's future.

This report focuses on our many successful projects and programs to implement Landscapes. It also presents information on the progress of our effort to update Landscapes and to ensure that it is a dynamic plan for the 21st Century.

The Chester County Planning Commission has undertaken a thorough review of Landscapes. The Commission and its staff have met with municipal officials and community leaders. We have conducted an on-line public opinion poll. We have held focused discussions with experts. We have researched data. And now, we are seeking your ideas and comments.

As drafts of Landscapes2 which is what we call the plan update are prepared they are being published on the web at a website that is completely devoted to this effort. At [www.Landscapes2.org](http://www.Landscapes2.org) you can not only read drafts of the plan as they are released, but you can comment on the drafts and help us revise them so that Landscapes2 becomes the most effective county comprehensive plan possible. In addition at [www.Landscapes2.org](http://www.Landscapes2.org) you can find a wealth of information about all of the issues that are covered in the plan. You can also sign up to receive a periodic email that will tell you about new developments in the plan and important resources and events.

Landscapes2 will contain the goals for Chester County's future. Moreover, it will contain the public policies that will shape Chester County's development, redevelopment and preservation.

I invite you to take an active part in this exciting process in 2008.

Ronald T. Bailey, AICP  
Executive Director







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