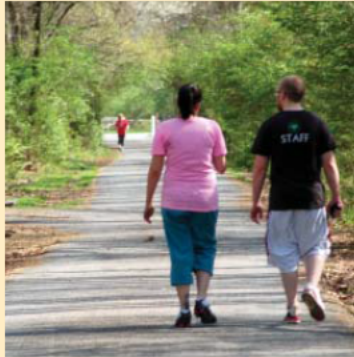
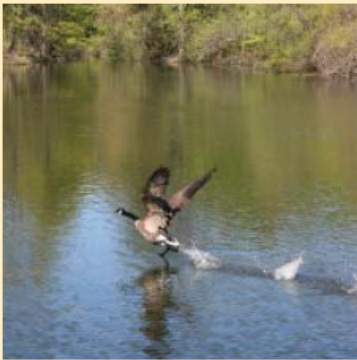


Chester County Planning Commission Annual Report

2010



Our Mission

The Mission of the Chester County Planning Commission is to provide future growth and preservation plans to citizens, so they can enjoy a Chester County that is historic, green, mobile, and prosperous.

Our Strategy

The Planning Commission has evolved into a modern, professionally staffed, planning organization that utilizes specialized knowledge and training, along with the latest techniques and technology, to plan for the future of Chester County. The Planning Commission and its staff work in partnership with federal, state, and regional agencies and municipal governments to fulfill a mission that is devoted to preserving and improving the quality of life for all Chester County residents.



Chester County Board of Commissioners

Terence Farrell

Kathi Cozzone

Ryan Costello



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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Chairman's message— year in review



The 2010 *Chester County Planning Commission Annual Report* has been prepared to review and describe the work of the Planning Commission during the last calendar year. On behalf of my

fellow commission members, I am pleased to share these accomplishments with all of you.

2010 was the year in which all communities across our nation were required to count its populace. From the data collected, counties, municipalities, and school districts have another tool to plan for future needs. We applaud Chester County residents for their outstanding participation.

The Vision Partnership Program was suspended in the early part of last year in order for Planning Commission members and municipal representatives to review the program, discuss its weaknesses and build upon its successes. Commissioner Carol Aichele attended these meetings as well. The revised VPP format will use an updated grant application process. Understanding the restraints of spending public dollars, the 2011 county budget renews its support and shows funding for the Vision Partnership Program, though at a reduced amount. The Planning Commission will work with municipalities to stretch these matching funds. We are grateful to the commissioners for recognizing the importance of this program, for understanding the value of good land use planning, and for supporting the planning efforts of its municipalities.

In 2010, the Planning Commission saw its lowest number of subdivision and land development reviews in 40 years. Though Chester County remains an attractive place to live and work, it is not immune to the global

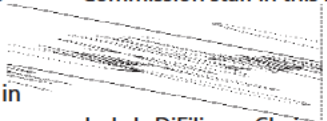
economic factors affecting the world today.

The National Association of Counties recognized Chester County Commissioner Carol Aichele with its 2010 County Courthouse Award for Innovative Governance. She was recognized for her dedication to improving the lives of those in her community. In particular, the management of county growth through the Landscapes2 plan and the process which integrated all stakeholders from across the county.

Landscapes2 subsequently received the 2010 Planning Excellence Award from the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association. That award recognized the public outreach process used to develop our county's comprehensive plan, also; especially the involvement of its residents, land owners, and business leaders in the planning process.

To begin work on one of the important issues highlighted in Landscapes2, a task force was created to address housing options and diversity in Chester County. That task force will work throughout the 2011 calendar year developing recommendations for actions needed to permit a more diverse housing stock in all areas of the county.

Planning Commission members understand that good planning with good government helps us to retain the quality of life that we have worked so hard to achieve. As always, we remain committed to assisting the Chester County Board of Commissioners and the Planning Commission staff in this important work.



Judy L. DiFilippo, Chairman
Chester County Planning Commission

What is the Chester County Planning Commission?

The Chester County Planning Commission is a nine-member advisory board appointed by the Chester County Board of 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.



Judy L. DiFilippo
Chairman

Resident:
Tredyffrin Township

Occupation:
Public official

Affiliations:
Former member, Tredyffrin Township Board of Supervisors; Past 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:
Writer/Consultant

Affiliations:
Founder, former consultant, Brandywine Conservancy's Headwaters Area Conservation Program; Green Space Alliance; Keep Farming First; Master Planner Program; Community Conversations.

Appointed:
June 1998



Ann C.M. Abbott
Resident:

Highland Township
Occupation:
Commercial horse breeder and farmer

Affiliations:
Highland Township Planning Commission

Appointed:
June 2005

Resigned:
December 2010



Mark J. Blair
Resident:

West Bradford Township
Occupation:
Nurseryman, Owner of Hilo Acres Nursery

Affiliations:
Chairman, West Bradford Township Board of Supervisors; Chairman, Agricultural Security District Committee; Executive Board, Chester County Association of Township Officials (CCATO); Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors, Land Use and Growth Management Committee.

Appointed:
2006

Resigned:
December 2010



Dr. Douglas Fasick
Resident:

East Nottingham Township
Occupation:
Chiropractor

Affiliations:
President, Oxford Area Chamber of Commerce; President, Delaware Chiropractic Services Network; Member, Pennsylvania Chiropractic Association; Member, Delaware Chiropractic Society; Member, Oxford Athletic Association; Chiropractor Medical Director, Coventry HealthCare of DE, Inc.; Peer Review Consultant, Alternative Medicine Integration

Appointed:
June 2010



Matthew Hammond, P.E.
Resident:

West Bradford Township
Occupation:
Executive Vice President, Traffic Planning and Design, Inc.

Affiliations:
Chairman, Institute of Transportation Engineers Parking Council; Member, West Bradford Township Planning Commission; Chairman, The Pledging Tree Foundation; Member, Institute of Transportation Engineers; Member, International Council of Shopping Centers; Past President, American Society of Highway Engineers—East Penn Section.

Appointed:
June 2010



Kevin Johnson, P.E.
Resident:

Tredyffrin Township
Occupation:
President, Traffic Planning and Design, Inc.

Affiliations:
Board of Directors, SEPTA; Member, American Society of Highway Engineers, Delaware Valley Chapter; Member, Institute of Transportation Engineers; Board of Directors, Victory Bank.

Appointed:
December 2003

Resigned:
May 2010



Caroline A. Novak
Resident:

South Coatesville Borough
Occupation:
Senior Consultant, Novak Strategic Advisors

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

Appointed:
December 2003

Resigned:
April 2010



Joseph J. Tarantino
Resident:

Tredyffrin Township
Occupation:
President, Continental Realty Co., Inc.

Affiliations:
Member, PA State Real Estate Commission; Vice-chairman, National Italian American Political Action 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.

Appointed:
June 2005



Joseph J. Viscuso, P.E., L.S.
Resident:

East Marlborough Township
Occupation:
Vice-President, Stantec Consulting Services, Inc.

Affiliations:
American Society of Civil Engineers; Chester County Chamber of Business & Industry; Chester County Economic Development Council; Home Builders Association of Chester & Delaware Counties; PA State Association of Township Supervisors; YMCA of the Brandywine Valley Board; Adjunct professor at Widener University.

Appointed:
June 2005



John C. Washington, III
Resident:

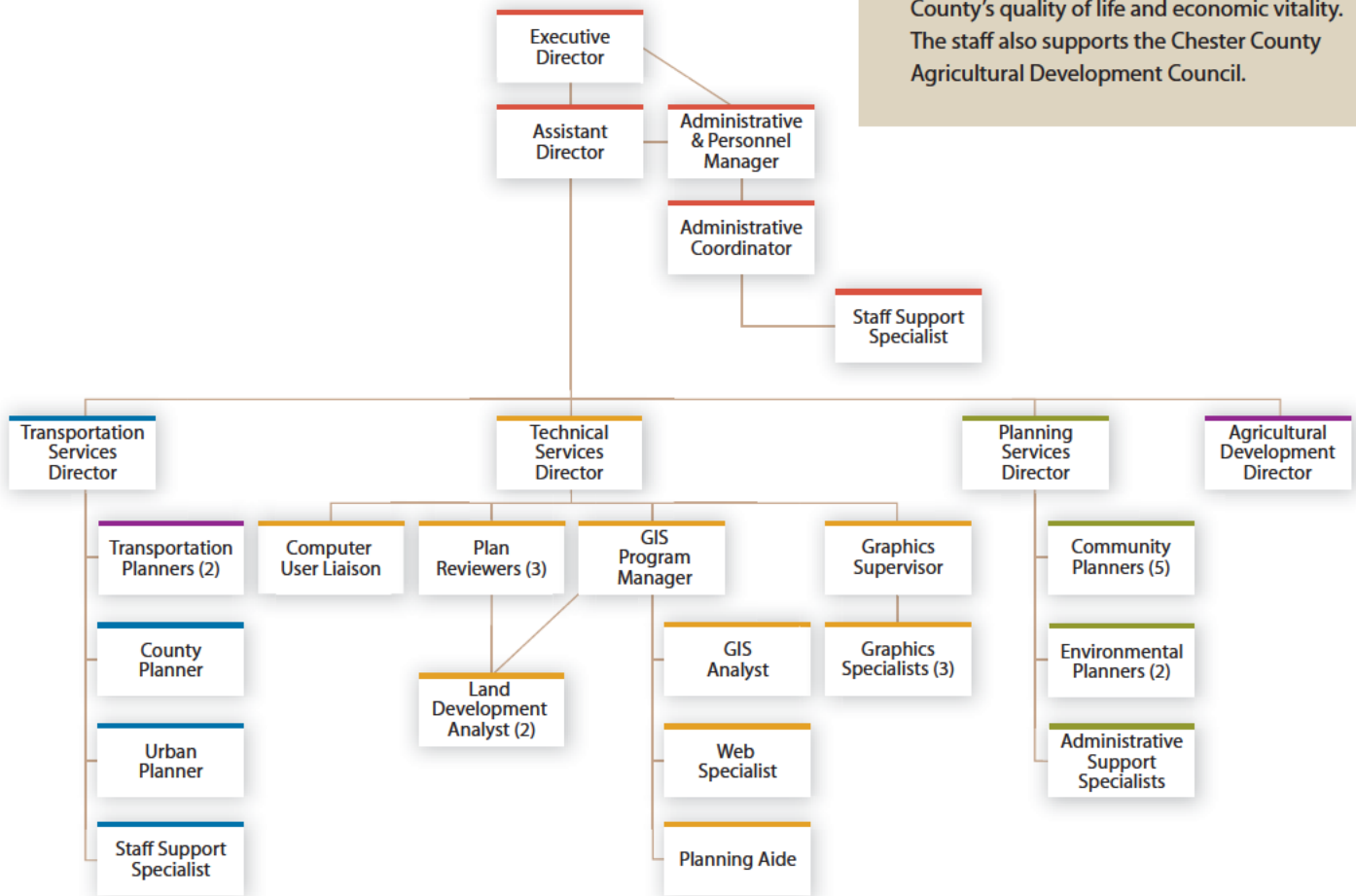
South Coatesville Borough
Occupation:
Instructor for Overhead and Remote Crane Safety, Ladle Crane Operator, ArcelorMittal.

Affiliations:
President, South Coatesville Borough Council; Member, South Coatesville Borough Council since 1980; Past President of The Association of Boroughs; Democratic Party of South Coatesville; Chairman, Borough of South Coatesville Economic Development Committee; Vice-president, Western Chester County Regional VCC Appeals Board.

Appointed:
January 2002

the staff

The staff of the Chester County Planning Commission are employees of Chester County who are assigned to provide all professional and support services to the Planning Commission and its programs. The staff works in partnership 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. The staff also supports the Chester County Agricultural Development Council.



■ 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 Celli, *Information Specialist*

■ Transportation and Information Services

- Natasha Manbeck, AICP, EIT
Transportation Services Director
- Matthew Anderson, *Transportation Planner*
- Justin Smiley, *Urban Planner*
- Robert Walker, *County Planner*
- Randy Waltermeyer, *Transportation Planner*
- Patti Strauber, *Administrative Support*

■ Technical Services

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

■ Planning Services

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

■ Agricultural Development

- Hillary Krummrich, Esq.
Agricultural Development Director

*No longer with CCPC

refining

Establishing Measures for Achieving the Plan

Chester County adopted a strategic plan in 2010 that establishes priorities for the future and increases accountability, transparency and performance in Chester County Government. This plan is consistent with the principles of Landscapes2, the county's long-range policy plan.

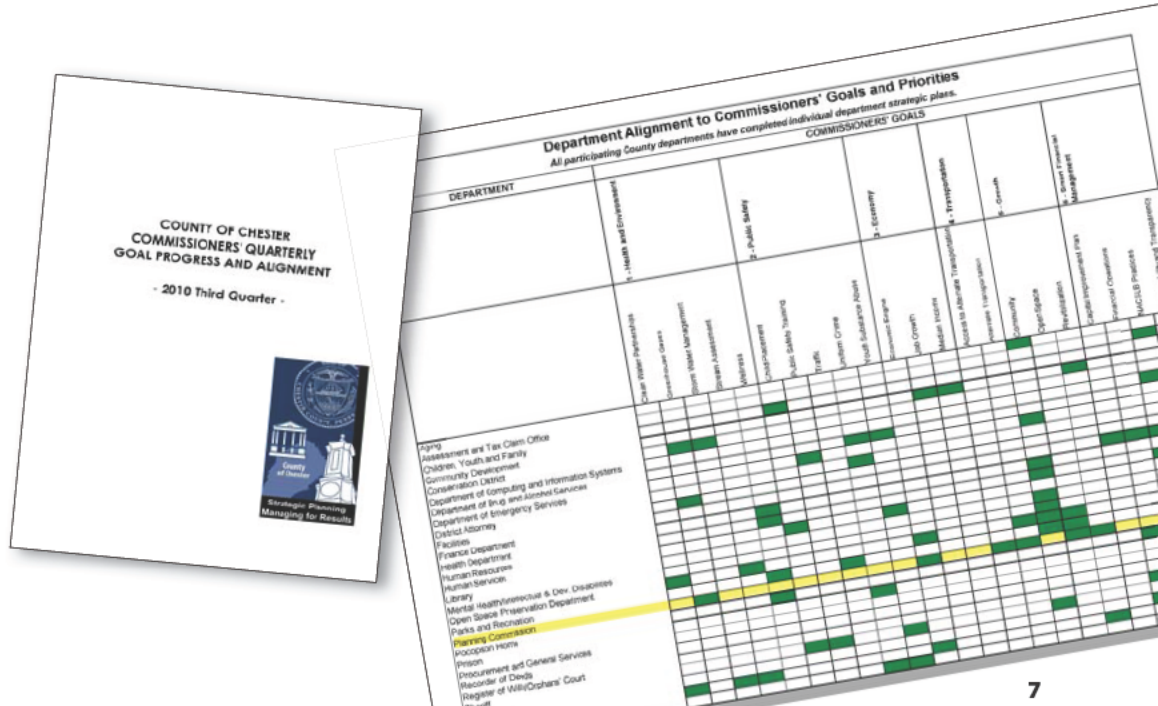


Strategic business plan adopted

The Planning Commission developed a departmental strategic business plan that is aligned with the county's strategic plan, and based on the following priorities established by the Chester County Board of Commissioners:

1. Promote and protect the public health environment of the community.
2. Ensure safe and secure communities.
3. Support the growth and development of a strong and vibrant economy for all residents.
4. Enhance access to, and use of transportation systems to reduce traffic congestion.
5. Continue to exercise smart financial management and maintain the county's financial strength while minimizing the property tax burden.
6. Manage growth and land use to preserve and optimize the quality of life in the community.

The department's strategic business plan includes performance and evaluation measurements. The department's activity will be monitored and evaluated against its performance and evaluation criteria.



Landscapes2

The Chester County Board of Commissioners received the 2010 Planning Excellence Award for Public Outreach by the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA-PA). The awards committee said the county's efforts to involve residents and landowners in the planning process exemplified the "best and brightest in Pennsylvania for 2010."



Award Winner

2010 Planning Excellence Award for Public Outreach

Landscapes2—Chester County Comprehensive Policy Plan

The Chester County Board of Commissioners received the 2010 Planning Excellence Award for Public Outreach by the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA-PA). The awards committee said the county's efforts to involve residents and landowners in the planning process exemplified the "best and brightest in Pennsylvania for 2010."

Focus groups

A series of Focus Group meetings were held to help define contemporary concerns, issues, and perspectives of the citizens of Chester County.

Community involvement

The Landscapes2 plan involved an interactive, cooperative process, including a public opinion survey, an opportunity to offer comments, and the availability of online resources.

Online technical tools

Online 3D modeling was used to promote awareness of planning solutions and serves as an effective educational tool.

Plan Steering Committee

A Plan Steering Committee was formed by the Board of Commissioners to serve as a sounding board for solutions to the challenges facing Chester County.

Electronic book format

Landscapes2 is presented on the website www.Landscapes2.org as an electronic book with pages that turn and a prominent table of contents for simplifying searches.

Innovative interactive mapping

An online interactive map, entitled Livable Landscapes, allows interested parties to explore the plan visually and has become quite popular as a planning tool.

Landscapes2 is a web-based plan

Landscapes2 is a web-based plan providing the viewer with a variety of resources, links, and interactive mapping to aid in better understanding of planning issues.

Landscapes2 initiatives for change

Landscapes2 advances three initiatives for change that serve to distill the various actions recommended by the plan.

Plan adoption

Landscapes2 was unanimously adopted by the Chester County Board of Commissioners at a well attended public hearing.

Landscapes Index 2010

The Landscapes Index, a type of report card, measures the progress made toward achieving the goals of the plan on an annual basis.

The Chester County Board of Commissioners received the 2010 Planning Excellence Award for Public Outreach for Landscapes2 from the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association. Left to right: Commissioners Kathi Cozzone, Terence Farrell, and Carol Aichele; and Judy DiFilippo, Planning Commission Chair.

www.Landscapes2.org

8 www.Landscapes2.org

managing

Assisting Municipalities to Manage Change

Successful growth management requires cooperative planning between the state, county, and local municipalities. The Planning Commission seeks to achieve consistency between these jurisdictions to promote a sound and effective planning program.



Providing planning assistance to municipalities

The Planning Commission provides professional planning assistance through three activities:

Community planning assistance provides planning consulting and technical assistance services directly to municipalities, regional groups, governmental and non-profit agencies, and the public to assist them in the implementation of sound planning that is consistent with Landscapes2 and with the Municipalities Planning Code.

Vision Partnership grant administration provides grant review, recommendations, and monitoring services to Chester County and its municipalities so they have the funding and resources to develop plans and ordinances to implement Landscapes2.

Environmental planning provides open space protection, environmental infrastructure, and natural resources consultation services to individuals, permit applicants, and governmental and non-governmental agencies so they have the information needed to protect, improve, and maintain environmental resources and locate sewer and water infrastructure appropriately.

Vision Partnership Program (VPP) ▶

The Planning Commission implements the principles of Landscapes2 through assistance to municipalities in refining their local planning programs. This assistance is primarily accomplished through VPP grants and community planning staff that directly assist municipalities on planning projects. 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 VPP, municipalities receive professional planning services and financial assistance to help update their planning programs for consistency with Landscapes2 as well as to achieve municipal planning goals. Municipalities may use VPP cash grants to retain the services of a professional planning consultant. In-kind grants may be used to retain Planning Commission staff for professional planning assistance.

In mid-2009, the VPP grant program was placed on hold while Landscapes2 was being finalized and adopted. Following the adoption of Landscapes2, Planning Commission staff undertook an extensive review and update of the VPP grant program to better promote the implementation of both the goals of Landscapes2 and the county commissioners' strategic plan. After numerous meetings and discussions with municipal officials, planning consultants, the Planning Commission, and input from the commissioners, a revised grant program was presented to the Chester County



Strategic Business Plan

Activity: Vision Partnership Program Grant Administration

Purpose: The purpose of the Vision Partnership Program Grant Administration Activity is to provide grant review, recommendation, and monitoring services to Chester County and its municipalities so they can have the funding and resource allocation to revise plans and ordinances to implement Landscapes.

Board of Commissioners and approved by them at their August 2010 meeting. Following the formal approval to the changes in the grant program, the VPP grant manual was revised to reflect the approved changes to the program.

Due to significant constraints on the county budget in 2010, new grant awards were very limited during the year. The VPP grant program will be resumed in 2011.

Providing grants to municipalities

Because the VPP grant was placed on hold in mid-2009, only two new grants were awarded in 2010. These two grants had been in progress prior to the grant program being frozen.

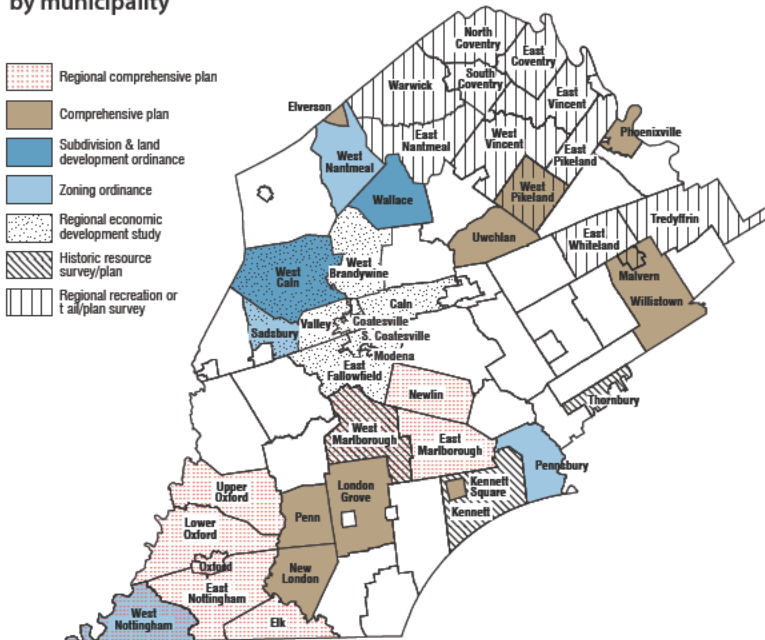
2010 VPP grant awards	
Cash grant awards	\$26,505*
In-kind grant awards	\$33,000
Total	\$59,505

*Used as a match for a \$60,000 DVRPC grant.

Active grant projects in 2010

A total of 24 VPP grants were active in 2010. Several of these grants (including the 2010 cash grant) were for multi-municipal projects for a total of 43 municipalities involved in VPP funded planning activities. For a complete listing of municipalities and regions actively planning in 2010 with the use of VPP grants, see the chart on right.

2010 VPP grant projects by municipality



Vision Partnership Program (VPP) Active projects in 2010				
Municipality	Comprehensive Plan	Zoning ordinance	Subdivision ordinance	Special project
Elverson	■ ^b			
Kennett Township	● ^d			■ ^e
Kennett Square	●			
London Grove	■			
Malvern	●			
New London	■			
Penn	●			
Pennsbury		●		
Phoenixville	■ ^c			
Sadsbury		■		
Thornbury	■ ^d			■ ^e
Uwchlan	■			
Wallace		■	■	
West Caln			■	
West Marlborough	■ ^d			■ ^e
West Nantmeal		■		
West Nottingham		●		
West Pikeland	■			
Willistown	■			
Multi-Municipal Planning¹				
Patriots Path/ Eastern Great Valley (3 municipalities)	■ ^f			
Northern Federation (9 municipalities)	■ ^a			
Oxford Region (6 municipalities)	●			
Unionville Area (3 municipalities)	■			
Western Chester County Region (9 municipalities)				■ ^g

■ Cash grant award
 ● In-kind grant
 a Open Space, Recreation, and Environmental Resources Plan
 b Urban Center Revitalization Plan Update
 c Neighborhood Study and Zoning Analysis
 d Historic Resource Plan Update
 e Historic Resource Survey
 f Multi-Municipal Trail Plan or Study
 g Economic Development Study
 1 See "Multi-Municipal Planning Highlights" for a full description of these projects.



Phoenixville Borough task force defined fifteen neighborhoods, each having unique characteristics and have recommended future development parameters for either infill or growth to occur within them.

Municipal planning highlights

Funding provided through the Vision Partnership Program (VPP) supports municipal planning projects that champion the principles of Landscapes2 and implement local planning goals. The following projects were either adopted or in progress in 2010.

Urban landscape planning and revitalization

The urban landscape represents diverse areas of economic activity, institutional and community uses, residential neighborhoods, and historic resources. Urban centers are vital to maintaining the character of Chester County and providing a focus for future growth opportunities. The projects below focused on preserving and revitalizing the urban landscape.

- Elverson Borough Revitalization Plan update
- Kennett Square Comprehensive Plan update
- Malvern Borough Comprehensive Plan update
- Phoenixville Borough Neighborhood Study and Zoning Analysis
- Oxford Region Multi-Municipal Plan—supporting economic development for Oxford Borough
- Western Chester County Region Economic Development Study

Highlight – Phoenixville Borough Neighborhood Study and Zoning Analysis:

As part of implementing the Phoenixville Regional Comprehensive Plan recommendations, Phoenixville Borough undertook a neighborhood characteristics analysis involving form-based codes. The borough task force defined fifteen neighborhoods, each having unique characteristics and have recommended future development parameters for either infill or growth to occur within them. This study serves as Phoenixville's comprehensive plan update and will evaluate the feasibility of developing a new form-based zoning ordinance using recommendations from the study. While most of the neighborhood analysis and zoning study work was completed in 2010, the study will be finalized and adopted mid-2011.

Supporting development and redevelopment in urban centers

Redevelopment involves a strong partnership between the Planning Commission and the Department of Community Development (DCD). DCD offered funding through the Community Revitalization Program (CRP) to the 15 boroughs and the City of Coatesville to support development and redevelopment in the county's urban centers. In order to qualify for funding, municipalities must have an adopted urban revitalization plan that has been approved by the Planning Commission and DCD. The Planning Commission staff assisted with the development and review of updates to revitalization plans and action plan lists for several urban centers, including Atglen, Elverson, and Modena. Planning Commission staff also reviewed twelve CRP applications and provided input in the grant selection process. The Planning Commission and DCD involvement in this program led to over \$3.3 million in grant funding awards for eight revitalization projects in 2010.

County staff assisted the urban centers with writing grant applications for various smart transportation projects that involve both land use and transportation elements. The staff was involved with urban/transit related projects which include: Atglen Train Station Feasibility Study, Caln Township Mobility and Connectivity Study, and Coatesville Train Station Feasibility Study. The county also received funding through PennDOT's Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative (PCTI) to develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan connecting two urban centers, Downingtown and West Chester Boroughs, and Exton by promoting walking, biking, improved safety, and connecting existing transportation networks and services.



The Patriots Path will be linked to the Paoli Massacre site in Malvern Borough.

Suburban landscape planning

The suburban landscape is dominated by the built environment and is largely served by public water and sewer systems and an auto-dominated transportation network. It is typically characterized by residential subdivisions and the largest employment centers in the county. The suburban landscape is a component of the growth area as designated in Landscapes2. The following projects contain significant areas of the suburban landscapes:

- Eastern Great Valley Region–Patriots Path Multi-Municipal Trail Plan
- New London Township Comprehensive Plan update
- Penn Township Comprehensive Plan update
- Uwchlan Township Comprehensive Plan update

Highlight–Patriots Path Plan–Eastern Great Valley Multi-Municipal Trail Plan:

This multi-municipal trail plan was undertaken by Tredyffrin Township, East Whiteland Township, and Malvern Borough. With the exception the urban center of Malvern Borough, the trail plan is located within the suburban landscape and will be accessible to a large number of nearby county residents. The concept of the Patriots Path was first fully documented in the Planning Commission report *An Evaluation of Patriots Path Trail Opportunities in the Eastern Great Valley* (2007). The trail network, when completed, will link Valley Forge National Historic Park in Tredyffrin, the Paoli Massacre site in Malvern Borough, and the Battle of the Clouds Park in East Whiteland. The network includes a section of the recently opened Chester Valley Trail, further expanding its accessibility to other regional trail systems.

Natural landscape planning

The natural landscape overlay encompasses Chester County’s natural resource network of stream corridors, steep slopes, and woodlands. Major areas of natural resources should be protected and subject to only limited development. The following projects include plans and protection measures for natural resources.

- Pennsbury Township Zoning Ordinance update
- Wallace Township–Stormwater Management and updated “Conservation by Design” Standards
- West Caln Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance update
- West Nantmeal Township Zoning Ordinance
- West Nottingham Township Zoning Ordinance update
- West Pikeland Comprehensive Plan update

Highlight–Willistown Township Comprehensive Plan:

The Willistown Township plan update will be an excellent example of how to provide a solid policy basis for the municipal protection of natural resources. Willistown Township has shown a long-standing dedication to the protection of its resources as exemplified through their environmental protection ordinance originally adopted in 1995. The comprehensive plan update inventories existing natural resource conditions, describes the basis for protection policies, describes current resource protection regulations, and then lists specific recommendations for improving and implementing policies and regulations. This approach to resource protection not only provides clear policy support for existing regulations, but gives guidance on how to further refine and improve resource protection through municipal actions.



Willistown Township’s updated comprehensive plan will include a solid policy basis for the municipal protection of natural resources.

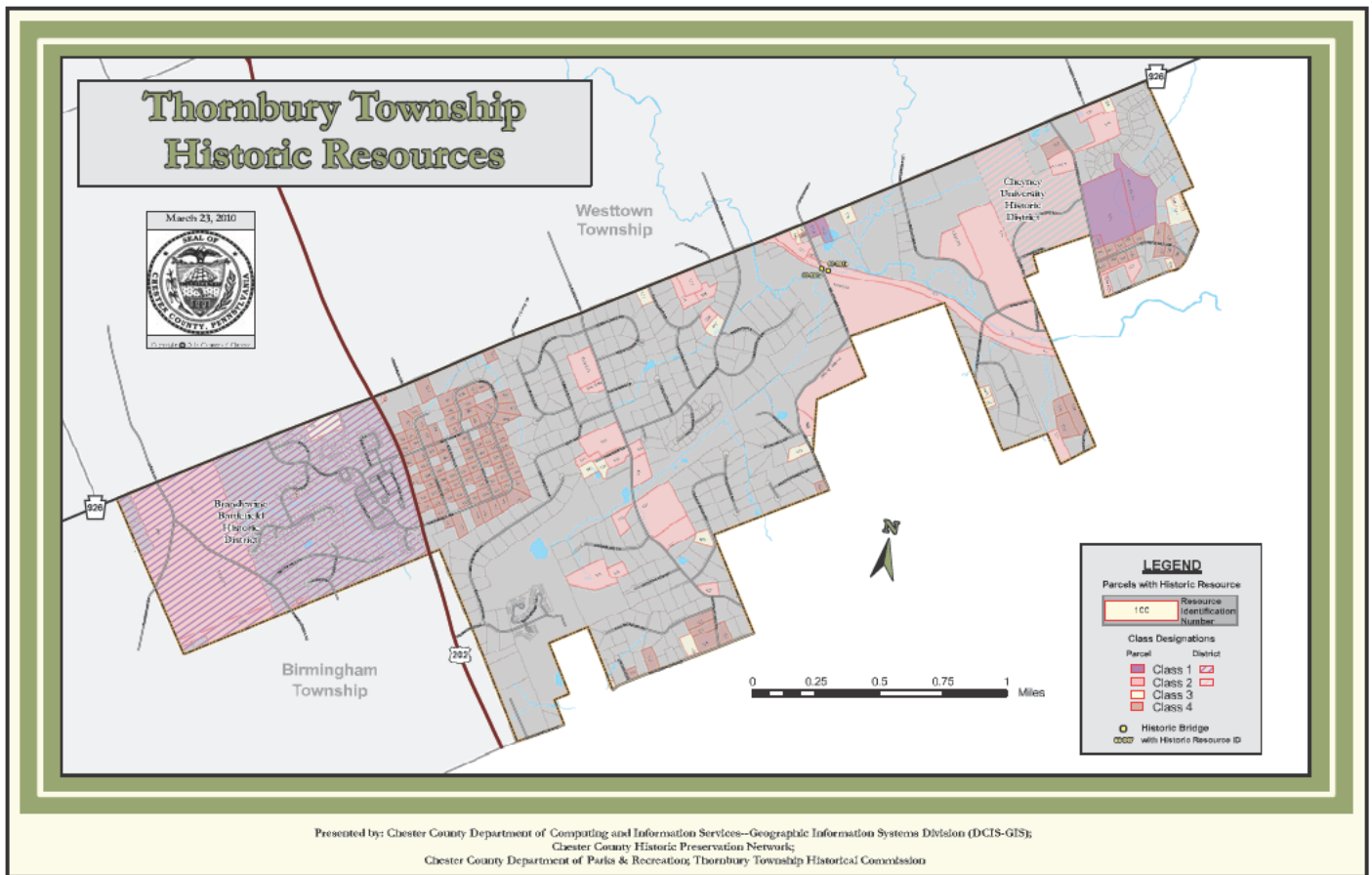
Historic resource planning and protection

An important element of Chester County's character is its many historic resources and landscapes. The county has many historic resources that have retained their historic integrity. In fact, Chester County is second only to Philadelphia in the number of listings on the National Register of Historic Place in Pennsylvania. Recognizing the importance of these resources to the county, it is a goal of Landscapes2 to protect and maintain the county's historic resources and cultural landscapes. The following projects served to protect those resources:

- Kennett Township–Historic Resource Survey and Plan
- Thornbury Township–Historic Resource Survey and Plan
- West Marlborough Township–Historic Resource Survey and Plan
- Historic Preservation Plan chapters of VPP funded Comprehensive Plan updates (West Pikeland, Willistown, Oxford Region, Malvern, and Kennett Square)

Highlight–Thornbury Historic Resources Survey and Plan Update:

The Thornbury Township Board of Supervisors adopted revisions to the historic preservation sections of the township comprehensive plan in April. This plan amendment was based largely on the updated and expanded township historic resource survey (2010), including Pennsylvania historic resources survey forms for identified resources and detailed property research reports. Both the survey and plan were funded under the VPP program. As part of the VPP requirements, the survey was coordinated with the related Chester County Historic Resources Atlas for Thornbury Township, an update to the Chester County Historic Sites Survey (1979–1982), and the plan update took into account the Planning Commission publication *Preserving Our Places: Historic Preservation Manual for Chester County Communities*. Using the methodology promulgated by the county-wide Chester County Historic Resources Atlas, surveyed historic resources were classified based on their type and local or national significance. Having updated surveys and plans in place provide the foundation for future local historic preservation efforts.



A historic resources map was created for the recently revised historic preservation sections of the Thornbury Township Comprehensive Plan.

Multi-municipal planning highlights

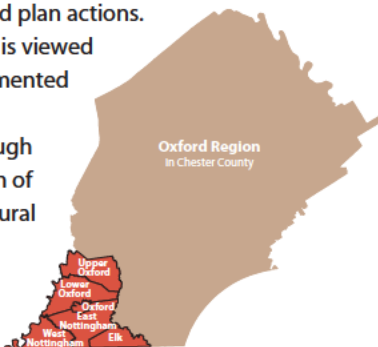
The promotion of cooperative planning among municipalities remains an important goal of the Vision Partnership Program. There were four active regional projects in 2010, involving a total of 30 municipalities. The following are highlights of multi-municipal planning efforts in Chester County in 2010.



Oxford Region participated in meetings to discuss the future of the region and to draft a comprehensive plan.

Oxford Region Comprehensive Plan

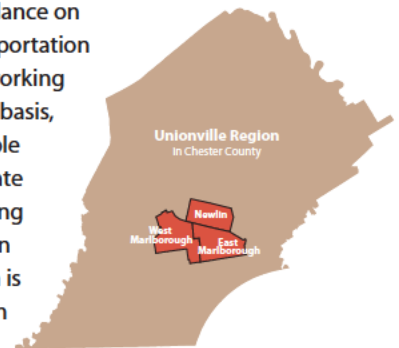
The Oxford Region includes Oxford Borough and the townships of East Nottingham, Elk, Lower Oxford, Upper Oxford, and West Nottingham. The region is also contiguous with the Oxford Area School District. Work on the Oxford Region Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan neared completion in 2010. The municipal members of the Oxford Region Planning Committee were active participants in the planning process and provided detailed input on the draft recommendations and implementation actions presented by Planning Commission staff throughout 2010. Once adopted, implementation of the plan will enable the region's six municipalities to address planning issues that transcend municipal boundaries. Consistent resource protection measures for the region's land, water, and biotic resources will result from the recommended plan actions. By directing growth where it is viewed as most desirable, the implemented plan can support both the revitalization of Oxford Borough and the continued protection of the region's agriculture and rural resources.



Unionville Area Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan

The townships of East Marlborough, West Marlborough, and Newlin completed the majority of a multi-municipal plan in 2010. The future land use plan designated rural resources areas intended for the protection of agriculture, open space, natural resources, and historic villages. The designated growth areas included areas suitable for mixed use and suburban development.

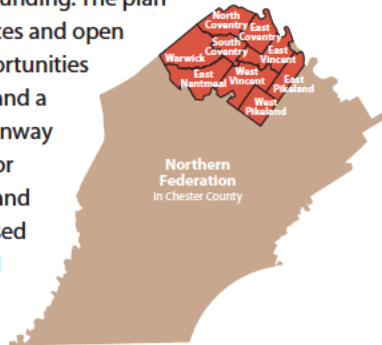
The plan also provided guidance on regional strategies for transportation and facilities planning. By working cooperatively on a regional basis, the municipalities will be able to more effectively coordinate and implement their planning goals for resource protection and future growth. The plan is anticipated to be adopted in spring of 2011.



A major attraction in East Marlborough Township is Longwood Gardens which attracts a large number of visitors every year.

Federation of Northern Chester County Communities Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan

The Northern Federation continued work on the creation of a multi-municipal parks, recreation, and open space plan for the nine municipalities of East Vincent, West Vincent, East Coventry, North Coventry, South Coventry, Warwick, East Pikeland, West Pikeland, and East Nantmeal. One of the primary objectives of the project is to create a regional park and recreation system that will efficiently channel resources to high priority goals and maximize public and private park and recreation funding. The plan will conserve natural resources and open space while expanding opportunities for regional and local parks and a regional recreation and greenway system. Realistic strategies for implementation, financing, and maintenance will be addressed by the plan. Completion and adoption of the plan is anticipated for the fall of 2011.



When the Patriots Path is completed, it will link to Valley Forge National Park in Tredyffrin Township and Montgomery County.



North Coventry has many acres of woodlands that will be conserved through the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan.

Patriots Path Plan

This multi-municipal trail plan was undertaken by Tredyffrin Township, East Whiteland Township, and Malvern Borough and was adopted by the three participants in early 2010. The trail network, when fully completed, will link Valley Forge National Historic Park in Tredyffrin, the Paoli Massacre site in Malvern Borough, and the Battle of the Clouds Park in East Whiteland. It included a section of the recently opened Chester Valley Trail, further expanding its accessibility to other regional trails. (See "Municipal planning highlights-suburban landscape planning" on page 12 for more information on this project.)

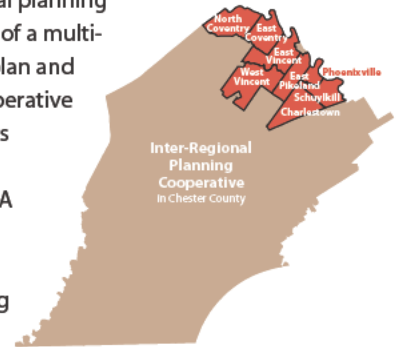




North and East Coventry Townships participated in the Inter-Regional Planning Cooperative to discuss issues relevant to regional planning in the northern part of the county and parts of Montgomery County.

Inter-Regional Planning Cooperative

The Planning Commission participated in the Inter-Regional Planning Cooperative (IRPC). The IRPC consists of representatives from five planning regions in Montgomery County and Chester County. Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) and Planning Commission staff members meet on a regular basis to discuss issues relevant to regional planning. The two regions in the IRPC that include Chester County municipalities are the Phoenixville Region and the Pottstown Metropolitan Region (East Coventry and North Coventry are members). The IRPC meets bimonthly to share information, identify areas of mutual cooperation and support, and promote the cause of regional planning. In 2010, the IRPC, with the assistance of the MCPC, completed *The Regional Planning Handbook*. *The Regional Planning Handbook* serves as a primer for new members of regional planning organizations as well as a refresher course for current regional planners. This handbook provided practical information on the mechanics of regional planning including the development of a multi-municipal comprehensive plan and the intergovernmental cooperative implementation agreements required to enable land use sharing on a regional basis. A link to the MCPC handbook is available in the regional planning section of Planning Commission publications.



Strategic Business Plan

Activity: Community Planning Assistance

Purpose: The purpose of the Community Planning Assistance Activity is to provide planning consulting, technical assistance, and facilitation services to municipalities, governmental and nonprofit agencies, and the public, so they can implement sound local planning consistent with Landscapes and meet the requirements of Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

preserving

Dedication to the Environment

The successful implementation of the Landscapes2 vision requires the preservation of the county's unique character, including open space, natural, and historic resources. These efforts, in conjunction with greenhouse gas reduction, are at the core of making Landscapes2 preservation principles a reality.



Improving the environment

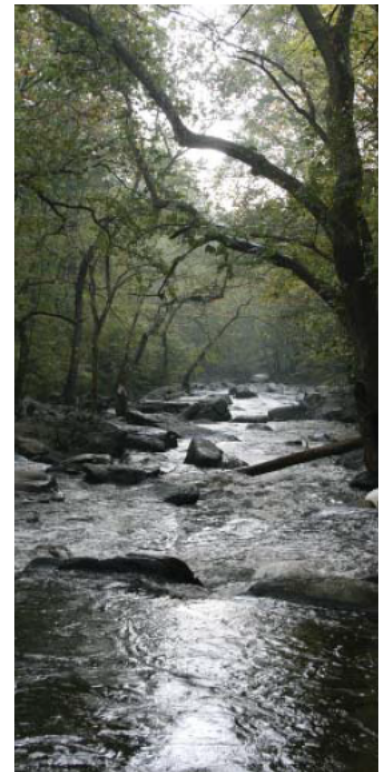
The Planning Commission plays a role in the protection and conservation of natural resources, which are essential to the health, safety, and welfare of Chester County residents. The Planning Commission examines and lessens the negative impacts of land use and land development on natural resource systems through the review of proposed development activities. Environmental planning activities are linked with both the land development plan review process and the Vision Partnership Program.

Providing municipal review assistance and coordinating sewage facilities planning

In Pennsylvania, municipalities are required to develop, adopt, and implement sewage facilities plans as a means of ensuring that wastewater is properly treated and disposed. Municipalities use these plans to regulate how new sewage facilities are established and where they are appropriate. These plans address failing on-lot systems, new land developments, public sewer systems, infill, and redevelopment projects. Staff provides reviews of sewage facilities plans to determine their completeness and consistency with the principles of Landscapes2 as a part of the overall approval system for sewage facilities planning.

Planning for sewage facilities

This year the Planning Commission saw a decrease in the number of municipalities updating their sewage facilities master plans (Act 537 plans). Work continued to progress with the Oxford Area Sewer Authority Regional Plan, as they resubmitted their regional plan for review to both the county and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP). This plan includes four municipalities: Oxford Borough, East Nottingham Township, Lower Oxford Township, and West Nottingham Township.



The Planning Commission plays a role in the protection and conservation of natural resources for Chester County residents.



Fly fishing on Valley Creek in Tredyffrin Township.

The Planning Commission conducted plan update reviews for the following municipalities in 2010:

- East Brandywine Township
- Honey Brook Township
- Tredyffrin Township
- West Pikeland Township

The Planning Commission reviews sewage facility planning modules associated with most land development proposals and redevelopment projects. In 2010, 53 applications were reviewed, which was a slight increase over the total number reviewed in 2009 (45 reviews). The percentage of applications that were consistent with Landscapes2 was 87 percent. The remaining applications were either generally consistent or inconsistent with the goals, objectives and policies of Landscapes2. The applications in 2010 were located evenly throughout the county, and primarily were smaller-scaled in nature. Planning proposals are mapped monthly, and information is also available for the year to date. These maps can be found on the Planning Commission web page in the map gallery.

Managing stormwater

Valley Creek watershed

The Chester County Water Resources Authority completed their work on the Valley Creek Stormwater Management Plan. The Valley Creek watershed includes six Chester County municipalities: Charlestown, East Whiteland, Tredyffrin, and Schuylkill Townships, and the Borough of Malvern. The environmental section continued to offer support in land use information, data gathering, and reviewing draft information. The Plan was adopted by the Chester County Commissioners, and is currently at PA DEP for review and approval. Once this step occurs, municipalities within the watershed will have six months to update their ordinance information to meet the minimum standards set forth in the Plan.

Crum Creek watershed

Chester and Delaware Counties continued work toward the completion of the Crum Creek Stormwater Management Plan. Delaware County serves as the lead agency for this project which includes four municipalities in eastern Chester County (Tredyffrin Township, Easttown Township, Malvern Borough and Willistown Township) and 14 municipalities in western Delaware County. This plan will ultimately make recommendations for the control of stormwater runoff from new developments taking place within the watershed from its headwaters in Chester County to the Delaware River.

County-wide stormwater management planning

Because not every municipality in Chester County has a stormwater plan in place, the Chester County Water Resources Authority has been leading an effort to develop a County-wide Stormwater Management Plan under PA Act 167. This Act 167 plan would cover all watersheds in Chester County that currently do not already have an approved Act 167 plan in place, that was adopted after 2005. This plan will help reduce future flooding impacts, as well as improving and protecting water quality.

The first phase of the county-wide planning effort, completed June 30, 2010, consisted of municipalities providing feedback on an initial draft set of stormwater ordinance provisions proposed by the county. The draft ordinance provisions and model ordinance will be further developed and finalized in a future second phase, as state funding is available.



Strategic Business Plan
Activity: Environmental Planning
Purpose: The purpose of the Environmental Planning Activity is to provide open space protection, environmental infrastructure and natural resources consultation services to individuals, permit applicants and governmental and non-profit agencies so they can have the information they need to protect, improve, and maintain open space and environmental resources and locate sewer and water infrastructure appropriately.



An equestrian rides the trails in the Kirkwood Preserve in Willistown Township.

Preserving open space

Open space preservation continues to be a core objective of the Chester County Board of Commissioners. The Planning Commission serves as a facilitator in the protection of open space resources in the county. Open space planning efforts support work being carried out in our local municipalities and with non-profit organizations, other county departments and state and federal agencies. Through partnerships, key open space resources are being protected and managed throughout the county.

Coordinating open space preservation

The major open space initiative undertaken in 2010 was the development of the Protected Open Space Tracking (POST) mapping system. The POST system is a computer generated map of all types of protected open space in Chester County. The POST system integrates with the county web site, so that land trusts and municipalities can add information on protected land via the Internet. The goal of this system is to improve the accuracy of the open space mapping and ensure that it is compatible with land use mapping already in use by various county departments. This is one of the largest computer-based efforts ever undertaken by the Planning Commission.

The process of developing the POST system began in the spring of 2010, and involved staff from the Planning Commission and the Department of Computers and Information Services. Meetings were also held with the Department of Open Space Preservation including the Agricultural Land Preservation Board, along with representatives of the county's non-profit land trusts. As of December 2010, a draft web page and database had been constructed for POST, and over 6,000 data records were reformatted and back checked. Further testing is scheduled through the winter of 2011, with an anticipated completion date in spring 2011.

Partnering to preserve open space

The Planning Commission participated in the protection of open space through the following partnerships:

- Dissemination of open space data—Protected open space land annual inventory and GIS mapping in coordination with 13 land trusts and 73 municipal partners.
- Management of nationally significant resources—White Clay Creek National Wild and Scenic River Management Committee assistance in their work in Chester County and New Castle County, DE.
- Retention of municipal Agricultural Security Areas—Review of applications as mandated by PA Act 43.
- Regional resource planning—Highlands Coalition multi-county planning assistance and Hopewell Big Woods Coalition assistance.
- Schuylkill Action Network preservation assistance.

Providing municipal coordination

Open space planning services to local municipalities is an effective way to manage open space resources. Open space networks and corridors can then emerge. Staff assisted municipalities with the preparation of plans and ordinances that promote the management and protection of open space and recreation facilities:

- Battle Path Trail Network preliminary concept for the Brandywine Battlefield Task Force
- Federation of Northern Chester County Communities Regional Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan.
- Malvern Borough Comprehensive Plan Trails Appendix (The Patriots Path South), Malvern Borough, East Whiteland Township and Willistown Township.

Realizing pedestrian/trail successes

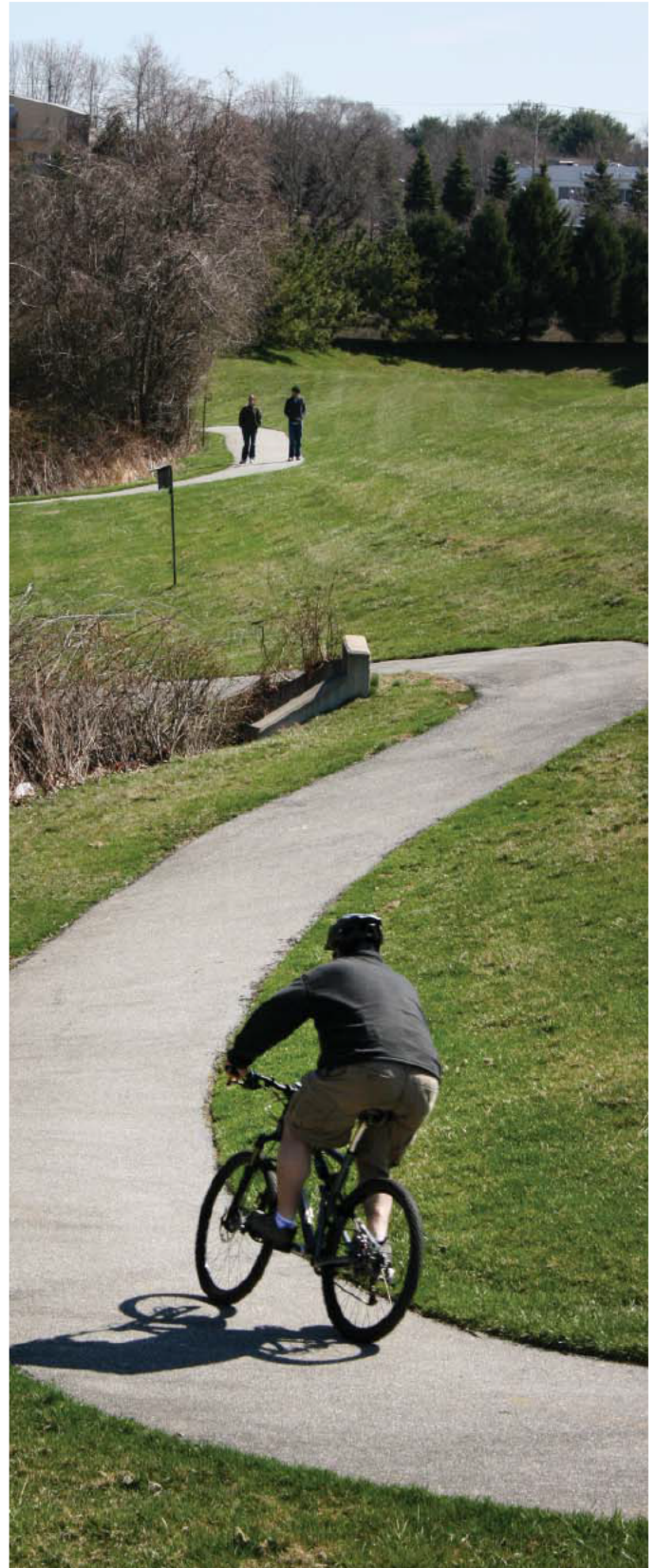
Throughout 2010, Planning Commission staff continued work on regional trail and pedestrian initiatives. Staff tracked trail projects on a Geographic Information System (GIS)-based trail inventory, which include proposed and existing surfaced trails (Existing Surfaced Trails Map link). The inventory now includes 280 miles of existing surfaced trails in 53 municipalities. This total represents 20 more miles of trails since 2009 due to the construction of multiple trail projects, including the newly completed sections of the East Branch Brandywine Trail and the Chester Valley Trail. This tracking system was featured in a presentation at the 2010 conference of the American Planning Association Pennsylvania Chapter in Lancaster, PA.

Staff also completed a trail memorandum for the Brandywine Battlefield Task Force, of which the Planning Commission is a member, in order to help them to determine the feasibility of the "Battle Path." This memo served as the basis for three grant application to state and federal agencies.

Staff also worked with the White Clay Creek Wild and Scenic River Committee and the State of Delaware Planning Commission staff to identify viable trail corridors that could one day link the Avondale/ West Grove area to the White Clay Creek Bi-State Preserve. Staff also initiated an effort in which a regional trails appendix will be added to the Kennett Square Borough Comprehensive Plan that will cover the borough and its surrounding municipalities.



The Chester Valley Trail was officially opened in 2010. County commissioners, other local dignitaries and citizens were in attendance. From left to right: Supervisor John Mott, Commissioners Kathi Cozzone and Carol Aichele, Supervisors Bill Holmes and Virginia McMichael, and Commissioner Terence Farrell.



Walkers, joggers and bicyclists utilize the many trails found in Chester County.

communicating

Making Information Easily Accessible

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 Planning Commission prides itself on its ability to stay on top of technology in order to communicate planning issues more effectively.



Providing information on the web

A core service of the Planning Commission is the dissemination of information. To reach the broadest audience and to provide easy access to information and data, many of the department's publications are now available in a number of electronic formats. Readers will now view publications in an electronic-book format which offers several user-friendly features including a table of contents for easy searching, and eReader format for download to your eReader device. Publications are now accessed on the web at www.chesco.org/planning/publications.

These electronic formats provide additional advantages to readers, information can be shared quickly, making news more relevant and contemporary.

Geographic Information System (GIS) service

The Planning Commission relied on GIS technology across all services provided in 2010, including map production, spatial analysis, and for presentations. To support these activities, the technical services division assisted planners by maintaining digital GIS data, providing necessary tools and custom applications, and by providing technical assistance. The benefits of GIS, especially as an enabling technology for improved efficiency and effectiveness, has been realized through the services provided by the Planning Commission. Historical aerial imagery from 1965 to 2008 is now available at the front counter kiosk. The number of custom maps available to the public on the Planning Commission's [map gallery](#) was also expanded. The map gallery offers a wide selection of maps to the public free of charge and the display maps can be printed directly at the front counter.



Strategic Business Plan

Activity: Planning Information Systems

Purpose: The purpose of the Planning Information Systems Activity is to provide specialized planning data and technology services to department personnel, other Chester County departments, outside agencies and the public so they can access the planning data they need to make an informed decision or perform analysis in a timely manner.

Using web-based technology

The dissemination of planning information using the web has provided easy and quick access to Chester County residents. The Landscapes2 website provided the plan and support information to the public using contemporary technology throughout 2010.

Connecting through the Internet

The Planning Commission shifted from print to web-based publications and services, resulting in increased access and efficiency, decreased expense and a more eco-friendly sustainable way to serve the public. This made it possible for anyone to receive updates and to engage the community in new meaningful ways making it possible to participate at their convenience. A variety of web systems enabled the Planning Commission to create what may be called virtual planning studio in 2010.

There was an increase in accessing web-based data provided by the Planning Commission over the previous year:

Planning Commission

www.chesco.org/planning (96,240 visits)

Landscapes2

www.Landscapes2.org (54,914 visits)

Agriculture Development Council

www.chesco.org/agdev (30,365 visits)

Oxford Region

www.chesco.org/planning/oxfordregion

The Planning Commission was contracted by the municipalities of the Oxford Region through the county Vision Partnership Program to create a website dedicated to the planning process and to assist in providing and distributing information to the 6 municipalities within the Oxford Region assisting the region in updating its 1968 Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan. The website also contains an image gallery of the Oxford Region to further illustrate the reasons why the Oxford Region should work together to guide future growth in their community. Additionally the website contains a message board to provide an additional means of communications between borough residents, officials and Planning Commission staff. The website is available to the general public at www.chesco.org/planning/oxfordregion.

Subscription services

The Planning Commission established several forms of subscriber services for receiving planning-related information on a monthly basis. This allows the subscriber to remain informed on relevant planning-topics facing Chester County.

eNewsletter: Some of these web systems include email list services subscription that allow the Planning Commission to email updates of our comprehensive plan, our Landscapes2 eNewsletter designed to inform the public about planning issues related to Landscapes2, as well articles and links to related topics.



ePublications: The Planning Commission created ePublications—an email list service subscription to notify readers when publications were available online. ePublications highlighted new releases, special features, cover images, brief descriptions, and links to the online publications. You can sign up for these [eSubscriptions](#) on the Landscapes2 website.

Social networking

A key objective for 2010 was to broaden the audience that the Planning Commission serves. Broadcasting planning-related information and data electronically allows easier access to the Planning Commission. The following social networking services were employed by the Planning Commission during the year:

Facebook: The Planning Commission uses social networking as another way of engaging and staying connected with the community. Reaching out to the community has made it possible for the Planning Commission to increasingly reach more members of the community. Join the more than 200 other fans of the Planning Commission Facebook page by clicking on the icon to the right. www.facebook.com/ccplanning.



Twitter: The Planning Commission also has a Twitter page with over 175 followers. You can follow the Planning Commission at ChescoPlanning on Twitter. www.twitter.com/ChescoPlanning.



Flickr: The Planning Commission began using Flickr for hosting its photography inventory. This web site allows anyone to access photography related to Chester County. Photographs taken in 2010 and future photography taken will be hosted on the Planning Commission's Flickr site. Archive albums will be hosted when resources permit. www.flickr.com/ccpcphotography



measuring

Understanding Change Within the County

Chester County is undergoing significant change. The attractiveness and location of the county had made us the focus of development in the state, yet, the recession has deterred growth and investment. Understanding these trends help us to better plan for the future of the county.



Planning information reporting

The Planning Commission provides information and data to describe, measure, and analyze conditions and trends about Chester County. The information covers subjects such as population, housing, land use, economics, transportation, and community facilities and services. This information is crucial to identifying problems and developing solutions to achieve positive benefits.

Noteworthy characteristics and trends

\$330,900 — the median housing value of owner-occupied units in the county, the highest in the state and more than double the state median (\$164,700). Although housing values have decreased recently, they have remained substantially higher in the county than in 2000 when the median was \$182,500.

178,800 — the number of occupied housing units in the county; 77% were owner-occupied and 23% were renter-occupied.

\$81,500 — the median household income in the county, the highest in the state. The median household income in the county was \$65,295 in 2000.

\$2,140 — the median monthly housing costs for homeowners with a mortgage; compared to \$1,500 in 2000. Median monthly housing costs for renters were \$1,050 compared to \$750 in 2000.

86% of employed people were private sector wage and salary workers, 8% were government workers, and 6% were self-employed.

82% of workers drove to work alone, 7% carpoled, 3% took public transportation, 3% used other means, and 5% worked at home. These percentages are nearly identical to those in 2000.

28 minutes — the average time it took workers to get to work, nearly the same as it took in 2000.

47% of county residents 25 years and older held a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 43% in 2000. This was the highest percentage in the state.

92% of people living in Chester County were U.S. natives, including 64% who were born in Pennsylvania. 8% of people living in Chester County were foreign born, of whom 62% entered the U.S. before 2000.

4% of all families in Chester County were in poverty, but 23% of families with a female householder with children under 18 years of age had incomes below the poverty level.



Farm in East Bradford Township.

Estimating population growth

Chester County remains number one in population growth among all 67 counties in Pennsylvania. The county experienced an increase of 5,600 people from 2008 to 2009 and 65,000 people from 2000 to 2009. This growth has raised the population of Chester County to 500,000 people.

Landscapes Index and proposed Landscapes2 Index

With the adoption of Landscapes2, the Planning Commission calculated the final [Landscapes Index](#) measuring the progress of the original plan. The index finished with a record high value of 130, six points higher than the previous year and 30 points above the beginning value of 100. This shows an overall improvement in conditions important in Landscapes. Thirteen of the eighteen indicators had positive trends since Landscapes was adopted in 1996, two indicators, housing affordability and travel time, had negative trends, and three remained neutral.

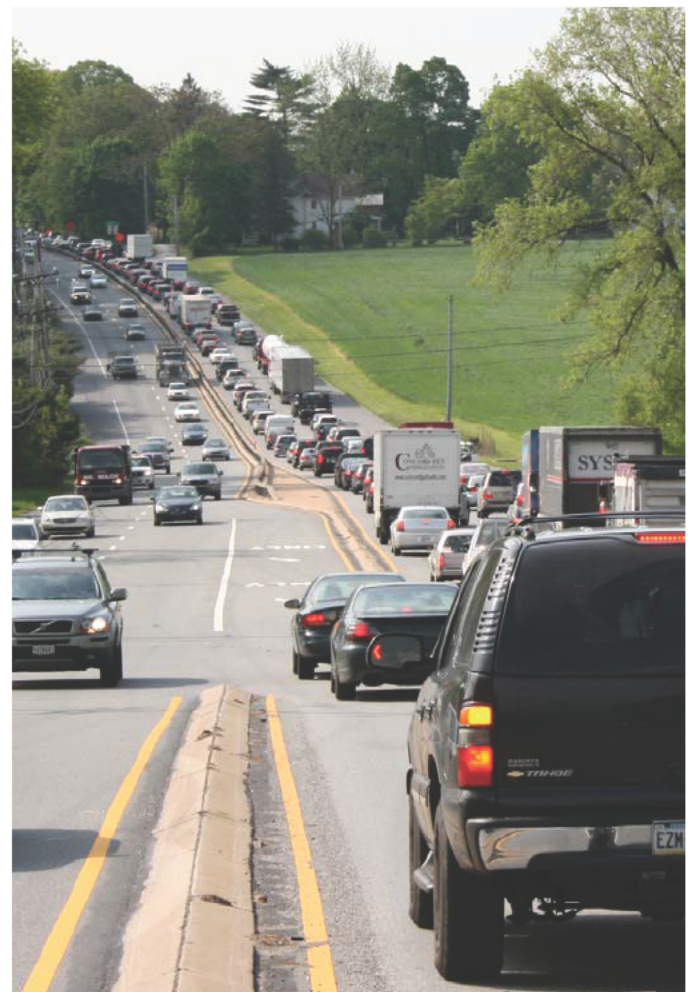
The Planning Commission developed measures for a new Landscapes2 Index to more closely reflect Landscapes2. The Landscapes2 Index will consist of sixteen measures within seven categories related to the three initiatives for change and the goals of Landscapes2. Data collection began for these measures. The new index monitoring Landscapes2 will be reported for the first time next year.

Agricultural Census Data Sheet

The Planning Commission produced a [Census of Agriculture—2007 Data Sheet](#) summarizing the status of agriculture in Chester County and changes since 2002. This census is conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture every five years and includes all counties in the nation. The census reaffirmed that Chester County is one of the top 50 counties in the nation in agricultural production. Despite all the population growth and development in the county, the number of acres in farms declined by just 1% from 2002 to 2007. Mushrooms are the leading cash crop. Dairy farms are also very important in Chester County. A special niche is horses with the county ranked 9th nationally in the value of sales.

Travel Time Data Sheet

The [Travel Time Surveys, 2000–2009 Data Sheet](#) presents a summary of travel time in Chester County over the last decade. The data are based on a biannual survey of seven major roadways conducted every year since 1998. The county-wide average travel speed decreased by 3.5 miles per hour between 2000 and 2009. This means it is taking longer to go the same distance than ten years ago. The data sheet presents travel information for each of the seven roadways. It highlights travel time trends for road segments in different areas of the county and compares morning and evening peak time periods.



According to recent data, drive time has increased for the same distance from ten years ago.



Strategic Business Plan

Activity: Planning Information Reporting

Purpose: The purpose of the Planning Information Reporting Activity is to provide publications and information products to the public and municipal governments so they can understand the changes occurring to Chester County.

Housing Costs Profile ▶

The Planning Commission monitors housing sales activity and costs for the county and municipalities. These data provide an indication, in part, of the economic condition of the county. Housing sales activity declined with 500 fewer homes sold in 2009 than in 2008, and over 1,900 fewer homes sold than in 2007. This is a 26% decline in housing sales over two years since the nationwide housing credit market collapsed. The median sales price in 2009 is \$276,700, a decrease of 8% from \$300,000 in 2008, and 11% from the peak of \$312,500 in 2007. Despite this decline in housing sales and prices, the housing market in Chester County remains stronger than in much of the United States.

New Housing Units Data Sheet ▶

The Planning Commission records the number and location of new housing units constructed each year. There were a total of 1,748 new housing units added to the housing supply in Chester County in 2009. This was 24% fewer new units than in 2008, and this was the lowest number since the Planning Commission began collecting the data in 2000. These data help us understand housing demand and future service needs.

Census Bureau resources ▶

The Planning commission worked in partnership with the Census Bureau to promote the dissemination of demographic data for planning needs:

2010 census decennial population and housing count. The county created awareness of the census through its web site, speaking at meetings, and by providing space for training temporary local Census Bureau employees and for questionnaire assistance centers. All county residents were encouraged to complete the census form they received in the mail. By achieving an 80% participation rate the county saved the Census Bureau \$8 million in data collection costs by reducing the number of follow-up visits to non-responding households. A complete count assures full representation in Congress and state government, receipt of federal funds, and an accurate data base for planning future facilities and services.

American Community Survey (ACS). The county received detailed data from the American Community Survey (ACS) for all municipalities. This is the first updated census data for municipalities since the 2000 census. The ACS is an ongoing survey of households to collect data that replaces the long-form sample questions that were formerly a part of each decennial census. This program will provide more frequently updated data for municipalities. The Planning Commission will use the data to determine municipal trends and update local planning.



There were a total of 1,748 new housing units added to the housing supply in Chester County in 2009.

Municipal plan review

Monitoring land planning activity

The Planning Commission provides review services to municipalities as a means of coordinating planning and achieving consistency between local and county planning efforts. Services include reviews of all submissions from our municipalities, including:

- Comprehensive plan updates and amendments,
- Ordinance updates and amendments,
- Subdivision and land development proposals
- Official maps and amendments.

Providing development review service ▶

Review activity in 2010 was notably less than that experienced in 2009. The Planning Commission received 206 plans for review in 2010 compared to 229 plans in 2009. The 2010 submissions proposed 2,178 lots or units, which represents a 36 % decrease in the number of lots/units proposed from the previous year. These plan applications involved 7,267 acres of land and 14 miles of new roads.

Reflecting on proposed development in 2010

As can be expected from a depressed economy, there was a significant reduction in development activity occurred in 2010. The following trends in development applications were identified in 2010:

- 2,178 lots/units** proposed in 2010.
- 35.58 %** decrease in number of lots/units proposed during 2010 over the previous year.
- 98 %** in the number of sewage planning applications received in 2009 over the previous year.
- 7,267 acres** of land proposed for development in 2010.
- 14 miles** of new road proposed for development.
- 2.23 acres** — the average area of proposed lot in 2009. Of the 206 plans submitted for review, 97 percent were consistent with Landscapes2.

Tracking proposed development trends

There was a significant reduction in development activity in 2010. The following trends in development applications were identified in 2010:

- 2,178 lots/units proposed in 2010.
- 35.58% decrease in number of lots/units proposed during 2010 over the previous year.
- 18% increase in the number of sewage facilities reviews in 2010 over the previous year.
- 7,267 acres of land proposed for development in 2010.
- 14 miles of new road proposed for development.
- 97 percent of the 206 plans submitted for review were consistent with Landscapes2.

The following development proposals demonstrated consistency with Landscapes2:

Woodlands at Greystone is sited at the historic Jerrehian Estate in West Goshen Township. The plan proposes the phased construction of 440 single-family residences, 158 townhouses that will occupy the bulk of the block (434.17 acres) bounded by the Route 322 by-pass, Route 100, Phoenixville Pike and Green Hill Road. A percentage of the townhouse units will be age-restricted.

Senior Housing at Eagleview in Uwchlan Township. The plan proposed two residential buildings containing 210 apartments and 80 condominium units sited on the east side of Rice Boulevard and the south side of Pennsylvania Drive. A 7,500 square foot community center to serve the residents will be sited close to the residential units.

Honeycroft Village plan in Londonderry Township is sited on the south side of Route 41, south of Cochranville. The original plan called for 317 townhouses, whereas the revised plan proposes a total of 264 units and includes townhouses, twins and single family detached dwellings.

Coordinating municipal land review

Tracking and sharing land records

In order to process applications efficiently and effectively, land records need to be coordinated between county departments. The Planning Commission worked together with other land-related departments to implement a new approach for tracking proposed land development applications in Chester County. A new automated records system was unveiled in 2010 that links subdivision, permitting, and inspection records from the Conservation District and Health Department giving the Planning Commission a more efficient method to process and track proposed development. The new system eliminated duplicative efforts and increases efficiencies by enabling staff in the three county departments that review development proposals to coordinate reviews and key off of the same applicant information. The new system, known as EnerGov is designed to answer the question "how much of the county is developed, is under development, or is proposed to be developed." This software brought the county one step closer to answering these kinds of questions more accurately and more efficiently. Future enhancements will allow the public the ability to log in and view and submit subdivision and land development proposals. It is anticipated that applicants will also be able to submit information digitally, supporting a green, streamlined workflow. Ultimately, the integration with the county's Geographic Information System (GIS)/land records programs will create full automation of the land development process from subdivision proposal review to assessment recordation. It is envisioned that municipalities would be able to link into the new plan review system and access county plan reviews.



Planners review submitted plans to insure the developers or townships are considering the suggested zoning guidelines that are presented in Landscapes2.



Strategic Business Plan
Activity: Municipal Plan Review
Purpose: The purpose of the Municipal Plan Review Activity is to provide state-mandated professional planning review services to municipalities, permit applicants, real estate and industry researchers and the general public so they can have timely information they need to make planning decisions that are consistent with Landscapes and other adopted plans and ordinances.

connecting

Balancing Transportation Needs and Resources

Chester County experienced an unprecedented down turn in the economy as well as public funds continued in 2010. The result has been a significant strain on the ability to fund needed transportation improvements.


Transportation programming services


Monitoring progress on transportation priority projects

The growing list of transportation projects in the county must be balanced against the limited amount of resources available. To effectively monitor this demand, the Planning Commission continues to maintain the Transportation Improvement Inventory (TII) to assist in setting priorities on where to focus transportation improvements. The TII is a comprehensive list of 450 transportation needs in the county with an estimated cost of \$5.4 billion. In 2010, construction commenced for 21 projects listed on the TII.

Planning Commission staff worked closely with project partners on the planning and design work necessary to implement the County's transportation priority projects. The Planning Commission joined project sponsors and partners in celebrating the following significant milestones for several priority projects in 2010:

- Opening bids for construction US 202–Section 320 to widen and reconstruction US 202 from North Valley Road to Mill Lane
- Opening bids for construction of the PA Turnpike slip ramps at PA 29
- Beginning construction of the Malvern train station parking improvements/pedestrian tunnel
- Beginning construction of the PA 52 relocation near Longwood Gardens
- Beginning construction of the Schuylkill River Trail–Phase 1 from Township Line Rd. to Parker's Ford
- Completion of Chester Valley Trail–Phase 1 from Valley Creek Boulevard to PA 29



 **Strategic Business Plan**
Activity: Transportation Programming Services
Purpose: The purpose of the Transportation Programming and Funding Activity is to provide transportation needs evaluation and project prioritization services to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission) so they can have timely and complete information to make investment decisions.



The Rudolph and Arthur Covered Bridge in New London and Elk townships, respectively, was selected for the FY 2009 National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Program .

FY11–FY14 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The Planning Commission played an integral role in updating the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) by collaborating with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), PennDOT, SEPTA, and neighboring counties. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the regionally agreed-upon list of priority transportation projects. The TIP shows estimated costs and schedule by project phase and is financially constrained based on the amount of federal, state, and local funds that will be available for transportation projects in the region. During the public input period, the Planning Commission encouraged stakeholders to submit comments and composed responses to comments received.

The FY11–FY14 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the five Pennsylvania counties in the DVRPC region includes almost 400 projects totaling over \$2.9 billion for the next four years. There are 60 projects in Chester County programmed with over \$390 million for the next four years. Throughout the TIP update process, the Planning Commission advocated for the appropriate funding levels and implementation schedules to address Chester County's transportation priorities. The Planning Commission continues to monitor amendments to the TIP on a monthly basis and submits recommendations.

Grant awards for transportation

Staff participated in the regional review and ranking of several transportation related federal and state grant programs, including Jobs Access Reverse Commute (JARC), New Freedom, Transportation and Community Development (TCDD) Program, and Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative (PCTI). Planning Commission staff reviewed 70 applications and provided input in the grant selection process. Planning Commission involvement in these programs led to \$3 million in grant funding awards for ten transportation plans, infrastructure projects, and transit services in Chester County.

The Planning Commission submitted the following applications for two grant programs for projects to implement the vision and goals of Landscapes2:

- The National Scenic Byways Discretionary Grants program to complete a Corridor Management Plan to specify actions and strategies to maintain the scenic, natural, and historic qualities along the 5.5-mile Exton Bypass Scenic Byway Corridor in the heart of Chester County.
- PennDOT's Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative (PCTI) grant program to complete a bicycle and pedestrian circulation plan for central Chester County. The application was strongly supported by several project partners, including six municipalities, West Chester University, Chester County Cycling Coalition, and Activate Chester County. The project was selected by PennDOT to receive \$85,000 and the Planning Commission will initiate the planning process in 2011.

As a result of an application prepared by the Planning Commission and Facilities Department, the Rudolph and Arthur Covered Bridge was selected for the FY 2009 National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Program and awarded \$1.6 million in federal funds for design and rehabilitation of the bridge. The funding will help to maintain an important historic resource in Elk and New London Townships. The project was added to the FY11–FY14 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) with 80% federal funding and 20% state funding.

Links to the FY11–FY14 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and information about several of the grant programs are available on the Planning Commission's website at www.chesco.org/planning/transportation.

Transportation planning and coordination

Beyond our borders

Coordination on a regional level is an essential element of planning, particularly transportation planning. The Planning Commission staff coordinated regularly with the general public, municipalities, legislators, and agencies on many transportation projects, studies, and initiatives throughout Chester County and the Delaware Valley region.

The Planning Commission participated in many planning committees, studies, and other regional planning initiatives hosted by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC). CCPC staff served as Chair of the Regional Technical Committee (RTC), which reviews and makes recommendations on the management of the region’s highway and transit capital programs. Staff also regularly attended regional forums on goods movement, safety, and transportation operations.

The Planning Commission provided technical feedback and comments on many local and regional transportation studies. In 2010, these studies included the Baltimore Pike Corridor Study, Malin Road Extension Feasibility Study, Caln Township Mobility and Connectivity Study, and Business 30 Access Management Study. Planning Commission staff was also actively involved in presenting the US 422 Corridor Master Plan to eight municipalities along the Schuylkill River. The presentations provided a brief overview of the master plan and highlight ten recommended sustainable planning strategies related to both land use and transportation. As a follow-up to the presentations, five Chester County municipalities formally adopted resolutions endorsing the US 422 Corridor Master Plan.


Coordination with transportation partners—PennDOT, SEPTA, and TMAs

Planning Commission staff worked cooperatively with other agencies on safety concerns, roadway maintenance concerns, and improvements to existing public transit services. Staff provided input and feedback to SEPTA for the development of their capital budget and Annual Service Plan update. Staff worked closely with SEPTA and the County’s two Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) to conduct bus rider surveys on the SCCOOT, Coatesville Link, Cruiseline, and SEPTA’s Routes 92, 204, 205, 306, and 314. The results of the ridership surveys were used to analyze transit demand and adjust several bus routes and schedules.

Focus on Keystone Corridor/ Paoli–Thorndale Rail Stations

The Planning Commission received a grant through DVRPC’s FY11 Work Program to provide technical assistance for station planning along the Amtrak Keystone Corridor/SEPTA Paoli–Thorndale rail line. The grant of \$35,200 in federal funds will be matched with \$8,800 of in-kind services provided by planning commission staff.

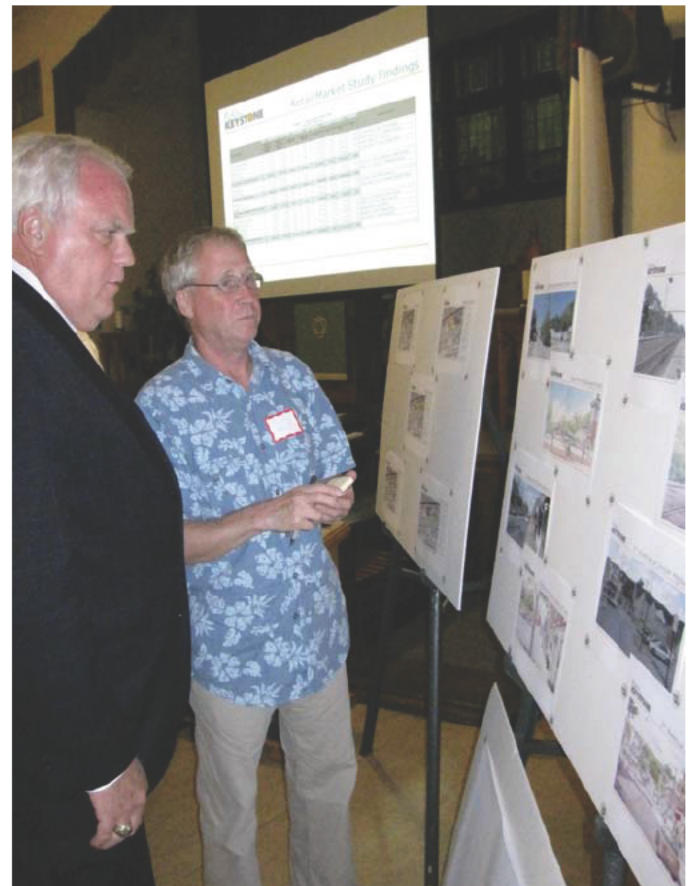
Technical assistance provided by staff focused on stations with active projects and programmed funding, including Paoli, Exton, and stations along the proposed Paoli–Thorndale regional rail extension. In 2010, Planning Commission staff worked closely with City of Coatesville and PennDOT representatives to conduct an interactive community planning workshop for the Coatesville train station and surrounding area. The workshop is part of a larger PennDOT planning effort called “Plan the Keystone,” to involve the community to help enhance transit service and strengthen the communities served by the Keystone Line. As a result of the community workshop, PennDOT programmed \$15 million in federal funds to improve the accessibility, safety, and parking for a Coatesville train station.



Strategic Business Plan

Activity: Transportation Planning and Coordination

Purpose: The purpose of the Transportation Planning and Coordination Activity is to provide consultation, information, and logistical support services to state, county, and local governments, agencies and the general public so they can have an improved transportation system.



State Representative Tim Hennessey and other citizens convened in Coatesville to discuss the PennDOT planning effort called “Plan the Keystone,” to involve the community to help enhance transit service and strengthen the communities served by the Keystone Line.

about us

Oversight and coordination


The Planning Commission faced a challenging year by balancing the work program with an overall decrease in resources. Planning Commission's general fund budget for 2010 was \$2,992,147, representing a 10% decrease from the 2009 budget. Expenditures for 2010 were \$2,910,689, representing a decrease of 12% from 2009.

This decrease is primarily contributed to an accounting adjustment involving the Vision Partnership Program expenditures of about \$250,000 being shifted from the general fund into the capital reserve fund; the elimination of two full-time positions; and the materials and services budget was cut by \$35,831. Subsequently, the revenue for subdivision fees was \$45,732 less than expected. This challenge was met by identifying new funding opportunities and managing expenditures. As a result of carefully executing the budget, the Planning Commission came in under budget by \$37,296 representing -1% from the original budget.

Information services		
	2009	2010
Telephone requests	12,328	6,920
Visitors	346	249
Maps & publications	1,141	699
Major mailings	4	1
Major emailings	3	5
Website visits	119,880	96,240

Budget		
	2009	2010
Budgeted	\$3,283,883	\$2,992,147
Expended	\$3,257,269	\$2,910,689
Revenues	\$293,196	\$287,234
Net expended	\$2,964,073	\$2,623,455

Revenues		
	2009	2010
Federal	\$148,685	\$178,904
State	\$0	\$0
Local	\$14,899	\$24,414
Publications	\$1,936	\$1,972
Subdivision fees	\$127,676	\$81,944
Total revenue	\$293,196	\$287,234



Strategic Business Plan

Activity: Oversight and Coordination

Purpose: The purpose of the Oversight and Coordination Activity is to provide services to the County Board of Commissioners in conjunction with the Planning Commission, Agricultural Development Council, municipalities, and planning partners so they can meet obligations of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, fulfill other statutory requirements, and undertake enduring departmental functions.



Annual reports are produced by many different types of companies, organizations and agencies. Some non-profit

organizations use annual reports as part of their fund-raising grant applications. Some companies use annual reports to advertise new products or services. Some agencies use annual reports to simply brag about accomplishments.

This annual report has a different purpose.

This annual report is intended to inform and educate on the many ways that the Chester County Planning Commission is implementing Landscapes2, the comprehensive plan for Chester County that has been adopted by the Chester County Board of Commissioners.

Landscapes2, which can be viewed at www.Landscapes2.org, is a vision for the future of Chester County that has been combined with strategies for ensuring that ongoing change will create greater prosperity and an enhanced quality of life.

As you read in the pages of this annual report, achieving the goals and objectives of Landscapes2 is not solely the work of the Planning Commission. Implementing Landscapes2 is a task for everyone in Chester County. Recognizing this mutual challenge, the Planning Commission is all about partnership.

Almost everything that the Planning Commission undertakes is in the form of a partnership. For example:

- Through the appropriately titled "Vision Partnership Program" the Planning Commission works with municipal governments to create capacity for better planning and land use regulation.
- The Planning Commission serves as an advisor to municipalities on development of new plans and ordinances and review of subdivisions and land developments.
- The Planning Commission partners with local, regional, state and federal governments to identify the critical transportation needs of the county and to program funding for transportation enhancements.
- The Planning Commission works with municipalities, state agencies, other county departments, foundations,

and private conservancies and land trusts to plan for open space and natural land preservation and to link preserved lands with a coordinated system of trails and public access.

- The Planning Commission coordinates with state agencies, other county departments, municipalities, non-profit development councils, chambers of commerce, and businesses to integrate land use and infrastructure planning with economic development and urban revitalization.
- The Planning Commission advises federal and state agencies and other county departments, while communicating with businesses, conservation agencies and environmental organizations, on ways to promote air, land and water quality.
- The Planning Commission protects the public safety by partnering with federal and state agencies, other county departments, and municipal governments to prevent encroachment in flood hazard areas, to identify geologic hazards, to regulate hazard encroachment into airport landing and departure surfaces, to identify and program funds to correct road safety hazards.
- The Planning Commission works with state agencies, other county departments, municipalities, agricultural business and organizations, and private land trusts to preserve agricultural land while keeping the farming industry viable in Chester County.

(continued on page 32)

Ronald T. Bailey, AICP
Executive Director



- The Planning Commission seeks to preserve the history of the county by focusing the planning and preservation efforts of federal and state agencies, historical societies and preservation organizations, municipalities, foundations, land conservancies and trusts, and regional and multi-county task forces to preserve select landscapes of national historical significance and historic structures and sits throughout the county.
- The Planning Commission provides educational programs and presentations, information, publications, and web resources in conjunction with colleges and universities and non-profit educational organizations to teach residents of the county about governance, planning law, history and technique, and best management practices.
- The Planning Commission facilitates planning for greater housing choice and diversity through task forces and partnerships that involve a wide range of agencies, organizations, associations, and housing providers.

In all of these efforts, and many more, the Chester County Planning Commission seeks to implement Landscapes2 in a cooperative, cost-effective, and collegial manner. In many respects, it is a different way of doing business, but it is the hallmark of the work of the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission does not dictate to others, but seeks to persuade and assist.

All of the programs and all of the initiatives that are discussed in this Annual Report involve partnerships. And those partnerships, not just the achievements of a single government agency, are the key to an ever-greater future for Chester County.



Ronald T. Bailey, AICP
Executive Director
Chester County Planning Commission



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