

The Bristol Borough Comprehensive Plan: **A Handbook of Planning Policy** *July 2006*



Bristol Borough
Bucks County
Pennsylvania

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CHAPTER 1

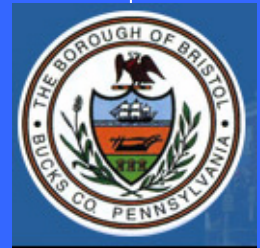
Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This Comprehensive Plan serves as a handbook of planning policy. This document provides borough decision-makers with existing background conditions, recommendations and implementation strategies for a wide range of issues impacting the borough. This Comprehensive Plan sets forth a vision for the future of Bristol Borough over the next ten years. The topics examined by this plan include land use, home-owner occupancy levels, economic development, tourism and history, parks and conservation, vehicular circulation and additional emerging trends. Implementation strategies have been developed for each objective's recommendations. These implementation strategies, or actions, serve as a basis for legislation or protocol change.

The Bristol Borough Comprehensive Plan was prepared to satisfy the legislative mandate that a new comprehensive plan shall be prepared at least once every ten years. This plan has been prepared in accordance with Article III of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act 247 of 1968, as amended. Section 10301 of Article III sets forth the required basic elements of a comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan may have additional elements that are not delineated in the Municipalities Planning Code. This Comprehensive Plan includes an Economic Development Element in addition to the required elements listed below.

- A statement of objectives of the municipality concerning its future development. (Section 1.5)
- A plan for land use. (Chapter 2)
- A plan to meet the housing needs of present and future residents of the municipality. (Chapter 3)
- A plan for movement of people and goods. (Chapter 6)
- A plan for community facilities and utilities. (Chapter 7)
- A statement of the interrelationships among the various plan components. (Chapter 1.6)
- A discussion of short- and long-range plan implementation strategies. (Chapter 8)
- A statement indicating extent to which the existing and proposed development of the municipality is compatible with the existing and proposed development and plans in contiguous portions of neighboring municipalities. (Section 2.1.2)



- A plan for the protection of natural and historic resources to the extent not preempted by federal or state law. (Chapter 4)

1.2 A Brief History of Bristol

Bristol is one of the oldest communities in Pennsylvania with a history spanning over 300 years. Through the centuries, Bristol has been a market town, resort, trade and shipping center, and manufacturing hub.

17th Century

Prior to the establishment of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 1681, European settlers moved to the area which was inhabited by the Lenni-Lenape Indians. These settlers later promoted the Bristol area to be chosen as the capital of Pennsylvania. However, a downriver site which was more suitable for shipping was chosen as the site of the capital, Philadelphia.

By 1697, settlers received permission to lay out a town. Buckingham was chosen as the town's name; however, it was changed to Bristol after 1700. "The King's Highway" was constructed in 1696 to connect Philadelphia and Morrisville. Present day Radcliffe Street follows the route of this first public road in Bucks County.

18th Century

Over the course of the 18th Century, Bristol became a commercial center for the region. Mill Street was the major marketplace, where timber and grist mills processed and shipped the products of surrounding farms. From 1705 to 1725, Bristol was the County Seat of Bucks County. When Bristol was incorporated in 1720, it became the first borough in Bucks County and the third in Pennsylvania.

By 1714, a ferry linked Bristol to Burlington, New Jersey across the Delaware River. A shipyard was built in the rear of Mill Street near Wood Street in 1740. This shipyard operated throughout the 18th and 19th centuries.

From the latter half of the 18th Century through to the first quarter of the 19th Century, Bristol was a popular resort area. Many visitors were attracted by the Delaware River's scenery and cooling breezes. Bristol also offered Bath Springs, a mineral spring with a hotel and racecourse. Bristol was a pleasant break from Philadelphia, then the largest city in North America.

Radcliffe Street attracted affluent residents who constructed elegant homes of various architectural styles. Many were second homes that served as retreats from Philadelphia, the young nation's capital.

19th Century

In 1832, the Delaware Canal was completed. The Delaware Canal was built along the Delaware River extending over 60 miles, from Easton to Bristol. It allowed coal and other products to be transported more easily and cheaply from the coal regions of northern Pennsylvania. The goods were then shipped from Bristol to Philadelphia and New York City. A few years later, one of the nation's earliest major railroad lines was built through Bristol connecting New York City and Philadelphia. Major industrial manufacturers located between the canal and the railroad.

By the mid-1800s, Bristol's prosperity began to decline. When the new railroad began shipping coal and outlet locks were constructed in New Hope, the canal and shipping trade was lost. In reaction the Bristol Improvement Company was founded in 1876 by local citizens. The Bristol Improvement Company built new industrial buildings between Beaver Street and Jefferson Avenue. It then promoted Bristol's attractions to new industries. Some of the factories built by the Improvement Company were sold to private industry, while others were leased. These efforts spurred industrial employment growth in wallpaper, carpets, iron, leather and textiles. The new factories attracted immigrants from Italy, Germany, Ireland, Poland and Czechoslovakia, among others.

20th Century

Bristol played an important role during World War I. Ships were needed to get food, troops and equipment quickly to Europe. The Federal Fleet Emergency Corporation authorized a shipyard and workers' housing to be built just outside of Bristol. The shipyard town, Harriman, was annexed to Bristol Borough in 1923.

During World War II, many Bristol residents were once again employed by wartime manufacturers including Rohm & Haas and the Fleetwings companies. The wartime manufacturing boom continued well into the 1950s. Fleetwings became Kaiser-Fleetwings and at its peak employed over 14,000 workers. U.S. Steel also opened a plant near Bristol.

As the United States' manufacturing sector declined in the later 20th Century, Bristol Borough faced population and employment loss. Bristol turned to its past to find revitalization. Unused industrial areas were rehabilitated to attract new employers and housing development. Remnants of Bristol's manufacturing past, including sections of Delaware Canal, the Lagoon, and the train station, were rehabilitated as historic attractions.

(Compiled from the works of the Bucks County Planning Commission and the Bristol Cultural and Historical Foundation.)

1.3 Recent Development Trends

Bristol has been aggressive in restoring and enhancing both its natural resources and its industrial past. A deep awareness and appreciation of history is reflected in the restoration of Lagoon Park and the renovation of the Dial Soap building, among other undertakings. The development trends, which reflect the constrained land availability in Bristol, rely on adaptive reuse and refurbishment of existing amenities. The following list details the recent development trends since the 1991 Comprehensive Plan.

Parks and Recreation

- Spurline Park – Rails-to-Trails project, 3-mile-long new park.
- Ross-Bragg Play Park – New tot-lot at the end of Spruce Street.
- Delaware Canal Path – Restoration and improvement of park.
- Delaware Canal Lagoon Park – Restoration of lagoon and park facilities.
- Grundy Recreation Center – New facility replacing fire-damaged structure on Beaver Street.

Adaptive Reuse

- Bristol Water Works – Façade renovation with new streetscaping and fountain.
- R&R Bagel Company - Abandoned Bristol train station ticket office has been renovated into a café.
- Jefferson Avenue Condominiums – Former public school was converted into condominiums.
- Canal Works – The Baker and Williamson factory has been renovated into office space.
- Bristol Fire Co. No. 2 – Former firehouse converted into office space.
- Island View Crossing – The Dial Soap building has been transformed into an office complex.

New Construction

- American Hook and Ladder Co. No. 2 – A new station has been built for the company at Farragut Avenue and Green Lane.
- The Villas at Riverview – This approximately 30-acre parcel, which once housed an industrial complex, is now the site of a 56-unit age-restricted community (55+).
- Commerce Park – The former Golf Ranch site is now the location of a small lake and a shopping center fronting onto Route 13. The anchors are a supermarket and a department store.
- Homes at Walnut Hill – The site a former wax factory has been developed with 14 single family homes.

1.4 Assumptions

This Comprehensive Plan's goals and objectives are built upon a foundation of certain assumptions. Planning assumptions represent a basic outline of future expectations and are based upon the borough's existing constraints and opportunities and an analysis of future trends and conditions.

- Bristol Borough will continue to be a desirable place to live, drawing more affluent residents attracted by its historic character, riverside location, close proximity to major means of transportation, and the borough's initiatives.
- Despite its desirability, the borough will not experience the population increase felt generally by Bucks County since it is limited by a lack of developable land. Bristol will experience a steady population level or only modest growth.
- Preservation of Bristol's historic heritage will remain a high priority.
- Demand for light industry will grow following the construction of the Interstate 95/Pennsylvania Turnpike interchange. The interchange will bring increased truck traffic through Bristol Borough, particularly along Route 13.
- The continued adaptive reuse of industrial properties to office use, coupled with the borough's strong light industrial base, will foster job growth and economic diversity in Bristol.
- The improvement of the Delaware River waterfront in conjunction with neighboring municipalities and Bucks County will continue to be high priority for the borough.
- Bristol will promote rehabilitation and homeownership of existing housing stock in the borough. Limited housing development is anticipated due to constrained land availability in Bristol.

1.5 Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives have been developed through discussions with the Comprehensive Plan Committee, research and analysis, a public presentation, and interviews with borough staff and officials, and other interested parties. Goals are general statements of purpose which create a systematic approach to improving Bristol's physical development and quality of life. These goals are clarified through a series of objectives detailing specific actions. Goals and objectives assure that planning decisions will be strategic, focusing resources rather than following undirected development and policy tendencies. Development in Bristol

should be consistent with the goals and objectives set forth below, other than when deviations are necessary to implement the overall thrust of this Comprehensive Plan.

The overriding goal of this Comprehensive Plan is the enhancement of the built environment and maximization of available resources, thus enabling the reemergence of Bristol Borough as a desirable community in which to live, work and visit.

Goals and objectives are summarized by component plan element:

Land Use Goal – Promote the fully productive utilization of land, allowing for appropriate concentrations of well-designed and aesthetically pleasing residential, commercial, industrial and recreation uses.

Objective: Evaluate continued viability of existing zoning.

Objective: Reflect the community character in design and zoning standards.

Objective: Identify future land uses.

Objective: Explore revitalization programs to improve Bristol's land use.

Housing and Demographics Goal – Encourage investment in Bristol's housing stock.

Objective: Promote home ownership.

Objective: Support housing rehabilitation programs.

Objective: Ensure a diversity of housing options for all Bristol residents.

Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources Goal – Enhance and protect the borough's natural, historical and cultural resources.

Objective: Capitalize on opportunities afforded by Delaware River frontage.

Objective: Continue restoration of the Delaware Canal.

Objective: Promote use of the extensive trail and park system.

Objective: Utilize national, state and private preservation funding resources to protect and restore historic resources.

Economic and Community Development Goal – Encourage expansion of economic base.

Objective: Encourage retention and expansion of existing business and new business establishment.

Objective: Improve and adapt commercial districts.

- Objective: Support tourism as an economic generator.
- Objective: Encourage visitors by improving gateway areas.

Circulation and Movement Goal – Improve the safety, attractiveness and efficiency of all modes of transportation as well as the integration of these various modes into a more cohesive transportation network.

- Objective: Ensure uses permitted under the prevailing zoning are compatible with the opportunities and constraints of the borough's roadway system.
- Objective: Ensure that developers and redevelopers appropriately address the traffic-related impacts generated by their projects.
- Objective: Increase opportunities for bicycle transportation.
- Objective: Improve walkability.
- Objective: Promote public transit, and in particular, use of the train station.
- Objective: Provide adequate parking facilities.
- Objective: Establish appropriate levels of service for intersections.
- Objective: Endorse regional planning initiatives with regard to Route 13 improvements.
- Objective: Pursue federal funding opportunities in support of the implementation of this plan's recommendations.

Community Facilities, Utilities and Stormwater Management Goal – Provide sufficient, efficient and dependable levels of service for current and future requirements of the community.

- Objective: Provide a summary inventory of the borough's existing utility and public service infrastructure, facilities and resources to assess any need for expansion or investment.
- Objective: Ensure that stormwater runoff from existing and new development in the borough is appropriately addressed in order to minimize flooding, the pollution of waterways, and other negative impacts on borough residents.

1.6 Statement of Plan Element Interrelationships

The recommendations in this Comprehensive Plan are thoroughly consistent. During the creation of this plan, careful attention was paid that elements should agree and complement each other. This ensures that the plan's recommendations are not contradictory. The Land Use Element, which is the first element presented in the Comprehensive Plan, sets forth the land-based (zoning) recommendations for the following elements.

Similarly, the goals and objectives of all the elements were used as a guide to form the implementation strategies in the Land Use Element. Throughout this document, references are made to other sections where the recommendations and implementation strategies are echoed or explained in further detail.

CHAPTER 2

Land Use Element

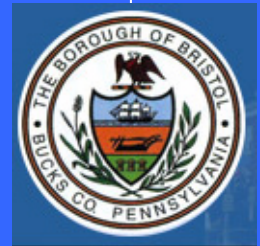
Goal: Promote the fully productive utilization of land, allowing for appropriate concentrations of well-designed and aesthetically pleasing residential, commercial, industrial and recreation uses.

2.1 Background

The Land Use Element is the broadest element in the Comprehensive Plan. It draws upon the recommendations of the other elements to create a set of cohesive development policies. The Land Use Element is based on Bristol's physical layout and makes recommendations that will impact the borough's zoning ordinance. The implementation strategies set forth in this element will help to decide the type, location and intensity of future development. This element will also encompass discussing about the existing layout, built conditions, and land uses, as well as Bristol's zoning ordinance.

Bristol Borough is a densely developed community set along the Delaware River that is surrounded by conventional suburban development. Bristol was first settled in the 17th Century and developed over the centuries as a transportation and manufacturing center in the region. The borough's street layout is a modified grid pattern that developed from the original settlement near present-day Mill and Radcliffe Streets.

Bristol is comprised of several neighborhoods. These neighborhoods reflect the history of its development. The Old Town neighborhood lies approximately from Pond Street to the Delaware River and from Fillmore Street to the Otter Creek. This is the most densely developed area of Bristol and contains Bristol's main retail corridor, Mill Street. The North Side neighborhood lies between the Grundy Mill complex to the east and Route 13 to the west. Much of this neighborhood consists of attached and semi-detached housing, while highway commercial uses line Route 13. The West Side/Gateway area lies mainly northeast of the intersection of Bath and Otter Streets. The core of this residential neighborhood is surrounded by light industrial and heavy commercial uses. The Harriman district was primarily developed in the 1910s and 1920s to house shipyard workers. This area of Bristol is easily identified by its oval shape and is located in the northeast section of the borough. Harriman is the least densely developed of all the neighborhoods in Bristol. Large areas of heavy and light industrial uses are found in the far northeastern area of Bristol.



While Bristol has had few locations remaining for development, the Riverfront North Brownfield Reclamation Area has been improved with new residential and office developments. Overall, however, the possibilities for future development will depend mostly upon in-fill of scattered small vacant parcels and adaptive reuse of existing buildings.

Open space (water, recreation and wooded areas) comprises 21% of the borough. However, if currently vacant but undeveloped areas, such as Maple Beach and the southern end of the Green Lane Light Industrial Area become part of the borough's Conservation Zoning District; the amount of open space would increase while the amount of land categorized as vacant (10% of the borough) would decrease significantly. Nevertheless, even with this change in categorization, over 65% of Bristol Borough remains developed. (Map 2.3)

Residential land uses encompass 31% of the borough and are the most common land use. The majority of the residential uses are categorized as medium density (22% of the total land area), which consists of attached and semi-attached single family units. The other residential categories are low density (detached single family units) and high density (attached single family units, multi-family units & mobile homes), which comprise 7% and 2% of the total land uses respectively. (Table 2.1)

Commercial is the next highest land use category, consisting 13% of the borough. Commercial includes retail establishments, offices and heavy commercial uses such as automotive repair shops. Large concentrations of commercial land uses lie along Route 13, Otter Street, Mill Street, and Farragut Avenue. Another large concentration of commercial is centered around the former Grundy Mill complex and at Island View Crossing. (Map 2.3) Manufacturing or industrial uses comprise 11% of the borough. Only 1% of the total land area is categorized heavy industrial and this use is located at the Rohm & Haas facility.

A large portion, 10%, of the borough is categorized vacant. Some of the vacant areas are currently undeveloped and have environmental constraints such as pollution, marshes and flood plain areas. However, large areas of formally industrial or commercial areas are also included in the calculation. Areas with concentrations of vacancy include Commerce Park, Otter Street, and Riverfront North.

Table 2.1

Land Use	Percent of Borough
<i>Commercial</i>	13%
<i>Community Services</i>	3%
<i>Manufacturing – Heavy Industrial</i>	1%
<i>Manufacturing – Light Industrial</i>	10%
<i>Parking</i>	8%
<i>Recreation</i>	9%
<i>Residential – Low Density</i>	7%
<i>Residential – Medium Density</i>	22%
<i>Residential – High Density</i>	2%
<i>Transportation</i>	2%
<i>Utility</i>	1%
<i>Vacant</i>	10%
<i>Water</i>	9%
<i>Wooded</i>	3%

The land use map and calculations are based upon a 2000 study prepared by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and refined by field observations and consultations with the Comprehensive Plan Committee.

Overall, the zoning reflects the existing land use conditions. (Map 2.4) The percentages of the zones are similarly proportional to the land use calculations. Nearly half, 47%, of the borough is zoned residential. Commercial and industrial zones then comprise the largest areas of Bristol with 22% and 21% of the land respectively. The Conservation District comprises 10%. (Table 2.2) These zoning percentages are larger than their corresponding land use percentages; however, land use was broken into categories such as parking, transportation, utilities, and community services (totaling 13% of the land area), which do not have zoning district equivalents. Additionally, water, which comprises 8% of the borough, is not zoned.

Table 2.2

Zoning Districts	Percent of Borough
<i>R-1 Residential</i>	10%
<i>R-1A Residential</i>	9%
<i>R-2 Residential</i>	27%
<i>R-3 Active Adult Residential</i>	1%
<i>TC Town Center</i>	2%
<i>NC Neighborhood Commercial</i>	2%
<i>HC Highway Commercial</i>	11%
<i>GC General Commercial</i>	3%
<i>LI Light Industrial</i>	14%
<i>HI Heavy Industrial</i>	3%
<i>MI Modified Industrial</i>	1%
<i>MX Mixed Use</i>	4%
<i>C Conservation District</i>	10%
<i>II Intermediate Industrial</i>	3%

2.1.1 Description of the Existing Zones

R-1 Residential – In this district, single-family detached and semi-detached housing units are permitted by right. This is the least dense of all the residential zoning districts in the borough.

R-1A Residential – This zone provides for moderate density residential uses. It allows single-family detached, semi-detached and attached housing.

R-2 Residential – This district provides for moderate density residential uses “with immediate access to convenient commercial uses.” Single-family detached, attached, and semi-detached uses are all permitted as well as low-rise apartments. In addition libraries, home occupations, offices, personal services, retail stores and restaurants are also permitted. This residential zoning district has the highest density.

R-3 Active Adult Residential – This district was created to provide for the housing needs of active adults at a moderate density. It allows

detached, attached, and semi-detached dwelling units. Multiplex dwellings are also allowed. Accessory uses permitted include a clubhouse, recreation facilities, a guard house, and administrative offices. At least one resident of the unit must be 55 or older, and no residents under 18 years of age are permitted to occupy a unit for more than two weeks in the calendar year. The zone is located at the far eastern end of the Riverfront North area along the Delaware River.

TC Town Center – The Town Center district allows for the central location of residential, commercial and service uses. The district is located along Pond Street, Mill Street, and the southern side of Market Street. This zone allows for the densest commercial development.

NC Neighborhood Commercial – This district permits commercial and personal service uses in neighborhoods where there is adequate area for parking, loading and traffic needs associated with these uses. The district is located near the SEPTA train station at Beaver Street and Prospect Street, along the eastern end of Farragut Avenue, and to the west of Beaver Street between 3rd and 6th Avenues. Residential units, including upstairs apartments, are also permitted as special exception uses in this district.

HC Highway Commercial – This zone is designed for commercial businesses along well-traveled highways. It is located along both sides of Route 13 and at the Commerce Park site at the southwest intersection of Route 13 and Bath Street.

GC General Commercial – This district provides areas exclusively for heavy commercial to prevent conflicts with other retail, light commercial and personal services. The majority of these heavy commercial uses are permitted only as special exceptions, such as auto repair, woodworking, and contractor offices and shops. The General Commercial areas are located at the intersection of Radcliffe Street and Fillmore, the intersection of Green Lane and Farragut, and between Otter Street and Railroad Avenue.

LI Light Industrial – This zone provides areas for light industrial, heavy commercial and office uses (e.g., contractor's offices and building suppliers). Light Industrial areas are located off Howell Street, Otter Street, Railroad Avenue, the Green Lane area (west of the train tracks and east of Route 13) and west of Radcliffe Street in the Harriman section (the Simon & Schuster warehouse).

HI Heavy Industrial – This district allows the development of most industrial uses, provided that operations are conducted in a clean and quiet manner. The zone is located in two areas of the borough, one large area to the southeast of the intersection of Route 13 and Beaver Street and another smaller area located north of the intersection of Wilson Avenue and Green Lane.

MI Modified Industrial – This area is subject to the regulations forwarded under the Light Industrial District. However, where abandonment exists in the Modified Industrial zone, the Borough Council will determine whether an industrial usage should be reestablished or whether a change to residential or another usage would be more appropriate. This zone is located around the site of the Grundy Mill Complex.

MX Mixed Use – The purpose of this district is to provide a location for waterfront-related development, including marinas, museums, restaurants, hotels, conference centers, as well as single-family attached dwellings, multi-family dwellings, offices and other uses. This zone is located at the site of the former Dial Soap Factory in Riverfront North.

C Conservation District – The Conservation District allows for the preservation of natural and geographic features such as open space, water supply sources, woodlands, wildlife and other natural areas. The Bristol Marsh, the area surrounding Silver Lake, and portions of the Delaware Canal and Spur Line Parks are part of the district.

II Intermediate Industrial – Allows for moderate industrial uses that are not permitted in the Light Industrial District, but are not as “intrusive and invasive” as the uses permitted in the Heavy Industrial District. The district is located at the westernmost or rear portion of Commerce Park off of Route 13.

2.1.2 Statement of Land Use Compatibility

Bristol Borough is surrounded by Bristol Township to the north, east and west. The Delaware River forms its southern boundary. The existing land use and the land use proposed in this element are compatible with the existing land use of Bristol Township, the only bordering municipality, and the land use proposed by Bristol Township’s 1996 Comprehensive Plan prepared by Direction Associates, Inc. Bristol Township’s Comprehensive Plan did not propose any land use changes along the border with Bristol Borough.

Route 13 and the railroad tracks comprise most of Bristol Borough's northern border, which is primarily zoned light industrial and highway commercial with residential uses near Silver Lake Park. The same zoning and built conditions exist along this corridor in Bristol Township. The eastern boarder along Green Lane has concentrations of light industrial and heavy commercial uses near its intersections with Route 13 and Radcliffe Street and residential uses between. This land use and zoning pattern is reflected on both the township and borough side of Green Lane. The western border is dominated by the Rohm & Haas facility, a heavy industrial use that straddles the township/borough boundary. Currently the far southern end of the border appears to be without zoning in the borough. This plan recommends this area be included in the Conservation District. This zoning recommendation correlates well with the existing conditions and the bordering zoning districts in both the township and the borough.

2.2 Discussion of Objectives

Objective: Evaluate continued viability of existing zoning.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

By having zoning ordinances reflect the existing built conditions, an area can remain true to its origins. This is particularly desirable in historic and residential areas. Yet zoning ordinances can also be powerful tools for redirecting and guiding future development in areas that are experiencing new development or need modification to reflect the community's changing needs.

Generally, the existing zoning districts overlay their corresponding land use patterns well. However, in areas where high levels of commercial and industrial vacancy are an issue, rezoning could promote revitalization by permitting different uses that have a higher market demand.

In addition to comparing the zoning map to the land use map, analysis of the Zoning Board decisions can show areas where the ordinance should be improved. (Table 2.3) There have been a total of 27 decisions rendered since August 2004 by the Zoning Board. Use variances accounted for 15 (six were denied), and 11 appeals were heard for area and bulk variances (one was denied). One application appeared for both use and an area and bulk variances; it was denied.

Of the 27 applications, 19 were located in residential districts. Only one of the nine area and bulk variances sought in the residential districts was denied. On the other hand, half of the ten use variance applications in

residential areas were denied. Most of the applications were minor in nature and do not reveal issues with the boundaries of the residential zoning districts or their regulations.

Table 2.3

Variances			
<i>Date</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Zone</i>	<i>Decision</i>
8/2004	Use	MI	Granted
9/2004	Use	R-2	Granted
9/2004	Use	R-2	Denied
9/2004	Use	NC	Granted
9/2004	Area & Bulk	R-1	Granted
10/2004	Use	R-1A	Denied
12/2004	Area & Bulk	R-1	Denied
12/2004	Use, Area & Bulk	NC	Denied
12/2004	Area & Bulk	R-2	Granted
12/2004	Use	R-1A	Granted
1/2005	Use	MI	Granted
1/2005	Use	R-1A	Granted
2/2005	Use	R-2	Granted
3/2005	Use	R-1A	Denied
3/2005	Area & Bulk	R-1A	Granted
4/2005	Use	R-1A	Denied
4/2005	Use	R-1A	Granted
4/2005	Use	TC	Denied
4/2005	Use	R-2	Denied
5/2005	Area & Bulk	R-1	Granted
5/2005	Area & Bulk	GC	Granted
5/2005	Area & Bulk	II	Granted
5/2005	Area & Bulk	R-1	Granted
6/2005	Area & Bulk	R-1	Granted
6/2005	Use	MI	Granted
6/2005	Area & Bulk	R-1	Granted
6/2005	Area & Bulk	R-1	Granted

Implementation Strategies

Despite Bristol's built-out character, some areas remain where the existing zoning can be refined to reflect the future needs of the community and satisfy its current concerns.

One such area is Riverfront North. With its aesthetically pleasing qualities, and value as a recreational amenity, this waterfront land can be ideal as a place for residential, recreational, and business uses. Recognizing these merits, on March 20, 2006, the borough approved Ordinance No. 1218 that re-zoned three parcels located Riverfront North from PB Planned Business to MX Mixed Use in order to accommodate residential uses in addition to the other permitted uses. Since the rezoning eliminated all parcels zoned as PB, it is recommended that this zoning district be removed from the zoning ordinance and map.

Commercial vacancy and residential uses are common in NC Neighborhood Commercial areas throughout the borough. Within the NC District along Farragut Avenue, there are pockets of heavy commercial uses, which are normally allowed in the adjoining GC General Commercial District. It is recommended that portions of the NC District be reduced and be rezoned residential. Vacancy issues also appear in the GC and LI Light Industrial district areas along Otter Street and Farragut Avenue. To allow the borough to have the greater control over the development of areas with large vacant parcels, it is recommended that these areas be rezoned with standards similar to the MI Modified Industrial District.

The borough has been very aggressive in preserving and expanding its natural areas, trails and recreation facilities. The zoning map and ordinance should reflect areas that have been converted into recreation areas, such as the Spur Line Trail and the Delaware Canal Park and Towpath, and should include these parks in the Conservation District. The Conservation District should also be expanded to include two remaining undeveloped and environmentally sensitive areas. The first area is located at the far southern end of the Green Lane Light Industrial Area and abuts the Delaware Canal, Spur Line Trail and Lagoon Park. The second area is the Maple Beach area, which is bordered by Otter Creek, the Delaware River and Bristol Township. This area is adjacent to the Bristol Marsh and the Rohm & Haas facility and would provide a buffer between the heavy industrial use and the very environmentally sensitive marsh. Both areas are further discussed in the Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources Element.

Two parcels south of Otter Creek appear to be without zoning. Areas without zoning are left open to uncontrolled development. Both parcels are part of the borough. The smaller parcel (Bucks County parcel number

4-5-22) is used by the borough as part of their municipal facilities and should be zoned industrial or Conservation District if the borough wishes to restrict any future redevelopment of this parcel. The remainder of the area is part of a large parcel that stretches into neighboring Bristol Township and is owned by Rohm & Haas. The majority of this parcel is located in Bristol Township as the Bucks County parcel number reflects (5-62-01). As recommended above, the entirety of this parcel that lies within the borough should be zoned as Conservation District. The borough may wish to pursue the enlargement of the Bristol Marsh conservation easement agreement with Rohm & Haas to include the Maple Beach area below Maple Beach Road. However, the borough should take into consideration that once a conservation easement is in place, this land cannot be developed. This designation is further discussed in the Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources Element.

Objective: Reflect the community character in design and zoning standards.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

It is important that the design and zoning standards reflect the existing conditions. This ensures that properties are maintained in a compatible manner and that new construction fits with the surrounding community. A strong and clear zoning ordinance also allows municipalities to carefully monitor nonconforming uses. Bristol's ordinance has allowed the borough to accomplish some of these goals as reflected by the analysis of Bristol's zoning map and existing land use map.

There are instances where the borough's design and zoning standards, however, can be revised to further reflect existing conditions, refine permitted principal uses and improve site design.

Implementation Strategies

Since the implementation of the R-3 Active Adult Residential District, the Villas at Riverview have been constructed. The district was created to allow a wide variety of residential development and accessory uses. It is recommended that with the completion of the 56 units that the district standards be revised to reflect the built conditions. By reflecting the built conditions, the Zoning Board will be better equipped to make decisions on use, and area and bulk variance requests.

Ordinance No. 1218 established bulk and area requirements and parking standards in the MX zoning district for residential uses only. This new ordinance also included a requirement for the incorporation of a pedestrian circulation system into the development of all uses. To improve the aesthetics of this zoning district overall, it is recommended that the requirements for non-residential uses in this zoning district be re-evaluated

to ensure that development in this location will be appropriate for the waterfront, attractive, pedestrian-friendly and compatible with waterfront development in adjacent zones.

While the GC General Commercial District allows for some heavy commercial, as special exception uses, there is concern that these heavy uses are dominating the GC districts. Additionally, it appears that these uses are spreading into adjoining NC Neighborhood Commercial zoned areas, particularly along Farragut Avenue. The borough may wish to consider further limiting the permitted and special exception uses in the GC District. These areas should also be closely monitored for non-conforming uses and operations.

The design standards for commercial districts should be strengthened to improve walkability, place greater controls on automobile access to sites, require landscaped buffering from the road and surrounding developments and encourage parking in the rear. Currently, many businesses in the HC and GC districts have little buffering from either the street or neighboring properties. By improving the design standards, the borough will create more attractive and safer environment for both pedestrians and motorists. Landscaped buffers should be required not only between properties, but between commercial and industrial businesses and the street. Standards should also be created for non-residential driveways. These standards would address the location of driveways, their maximum width and minimum distance from other driveways, intersections and streets. Additionally, parking should be encouraged to be located to the side and rear of buildings to create a more attractive streetscape. A floor area ratio (FAR) bonus can be used to promote side and rear parking. Any proposed changes to the design standards that impact the HC district should be in agreement with any future plans for the improvement of Route 13. Design standards for parking lots should apply for all zones that permit parking lots as either a principal, special exception, or accessory use.

The TC Town Center zoning district includes Mill Street, Bristol's main retail street and one of its prime attractions. To promote the development of Mill Street as a shopping and dining destination for residents and visitors, the Town Center District should allow sidewalk dining as a permitted use. Design standards to enhance sidewalk dining should also be adopted.

Objective: Identify future lands uses.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

The existing zoning districts provide not only for current land uses, but also for the majority of future land uses that do not currently exist in the borough. However, the borough may wish to consider additional districts that reflect state programs, increased residential density and changing land uses.

Implementation Strategies

A Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID) is a state program that promotes transit-oriented development. TRIDs are located with a close proximity of transit stations and encourage increased commercial and residential development. TRIDs are created in partnership with transit agencies. If Bristol sought a TRID designation, this district would be located around the Bristol SEPTA train station. The creation of TRID would produce economic development and promote additional use of the train station. TRIDs are further discussed in the Circulation and Movement Element.

The MI Modified Industrial zone was created to permit the flexible redevelopment of a once heavily industrial area while allowing the borough Council strong control over the types of development permitted in this area. This is reflected in Table 2.3, which shows that three use variances have been sought in the MI district. All of the applications were granted. A similar tactic for the redevelopment of the depressed Light Industrial and General Commercial areas along Otter Street and Farragut Avenue is recommended. The borough may wish to consider rezoning these areas MI or creating a new district or districts that more closely reflect the conditions of these areas.

Objective: Explore revitalization programs to improve Bristol's land use.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Revitalization programs can take a variety of forms. They may receive funding from a number of sources and may be organized from a national to a grassroots level. Nevertheless, their goal remains the same: to reinvigorate and improve areas that have become depressed physically and economically.

Some revitalization programs, such as gateway and community beautification programs, do not impact land use or the zoning ordinance. However, initiatives including Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and Transit Revitalization Investment Districts (TRIDs) are examples of revitalization programs that do impact the zoning ordinance.

Implementation Strategies

The Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources Element discusses how historic districts can improve the maintenance of housing stock, preserve historic character, promote tourism and encourage investment. Bristol has four listed National Historic Districts, one of which, the Bristol Historic District, is overseen by a local historic commission (HARB), which ensures that exterior renovations are historically sympathetic to the district's character. The local historic district and HARB were established by an overlay district.

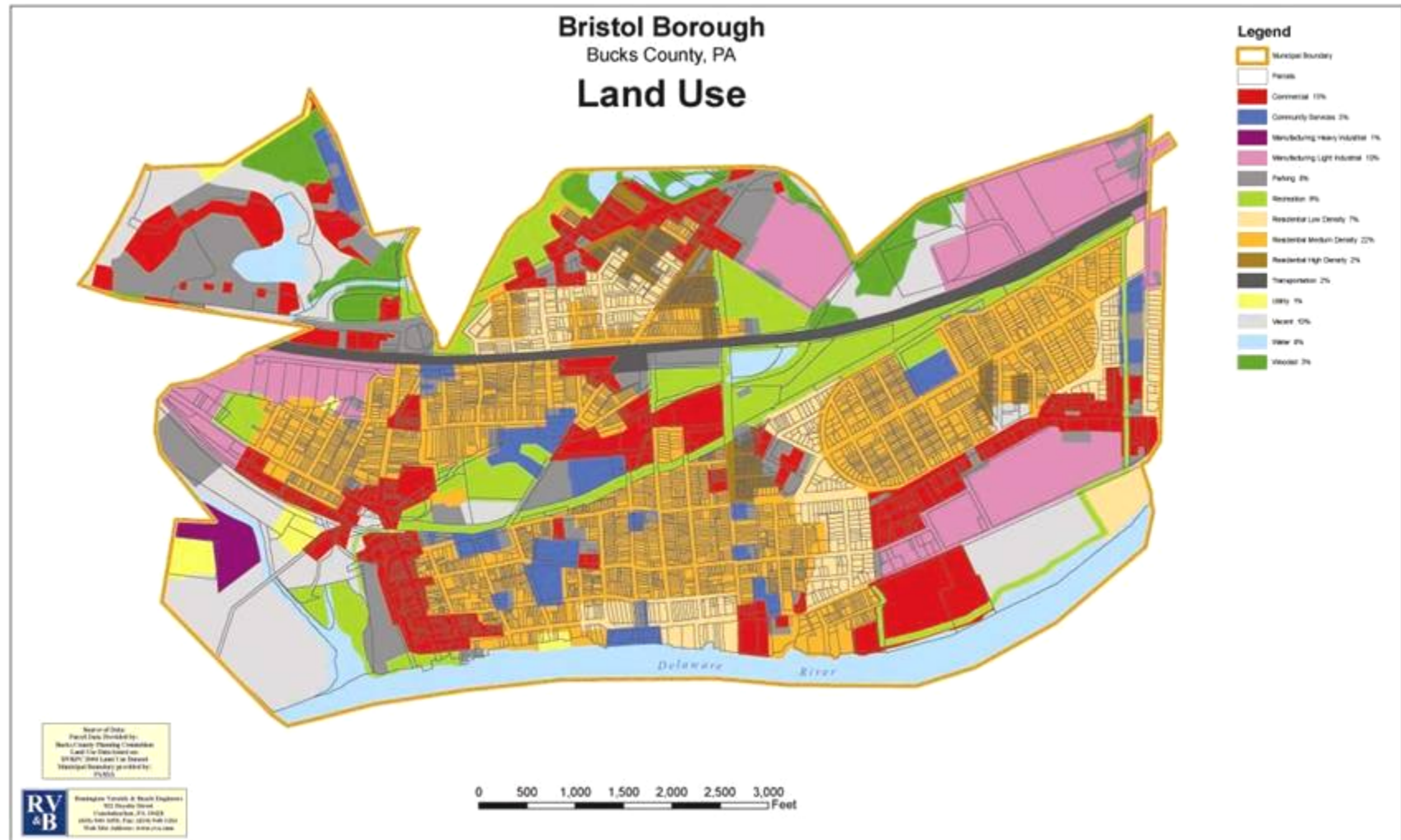
In the Economic Development Element, the creation of a BID is discussed. The BID would be located along Mill and Radcliffe Streets and would be implemented as an overlay district, similar to the way the Historic District was put into place. BIDs are quasi-governmental organizations that aid businesses by providing additional services to their districts, including street cleaning, management of events and promotions. It is recommended that a BID overlay district be created.

Additionally, a TRID is a revitalization program that could create an increase in development around the Bristol train station through the cooperation of the borough with SEPTA. The designation of a TRID is recommended earlier in this element and in the Circulation and Movement Element.

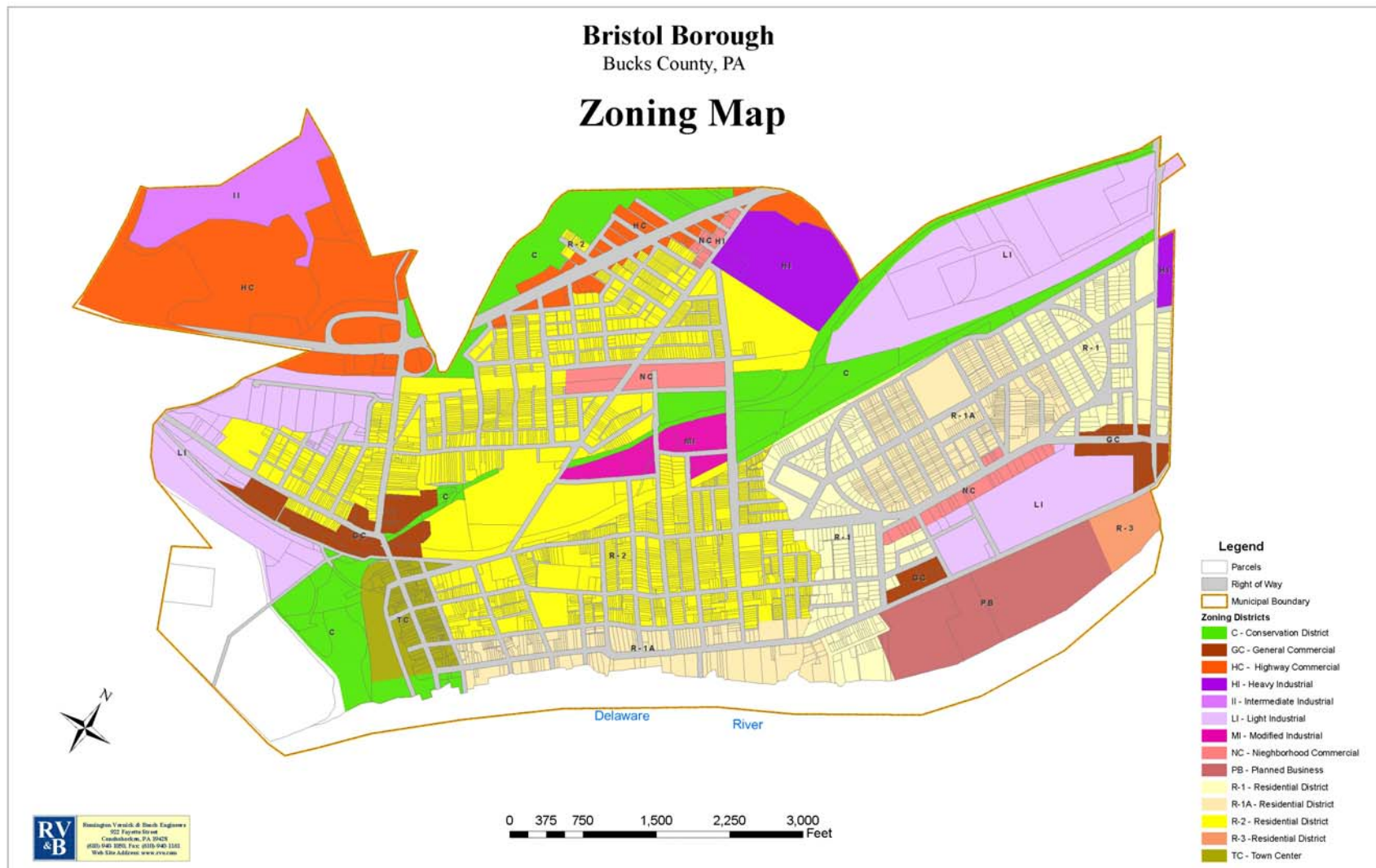
Further, the increased code enforcement program discussed in the Housing and Demographics Element is a targeted revitalization initiative that helps combat illegal housing conversions and absentee landlords.

Finally, the targeted rezoning of portions of the General Commercial, Neighborhood Commercial and Light Industrial areas can also be seen as a revitalization program. By revising the zoning ordinance, the borough can positively affect areas that are experiencing vacancy issues and incompatibility with neighboring uses.

2.3 Land Use Map



2.4 Zoning Districts Map



CHAPTER 3

Housing & Demographics

Element

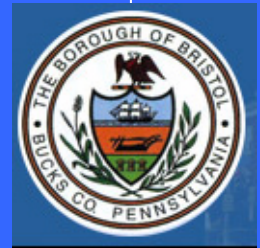
Goal: Encourage investment in Bristol's housing stock

3.1 Background

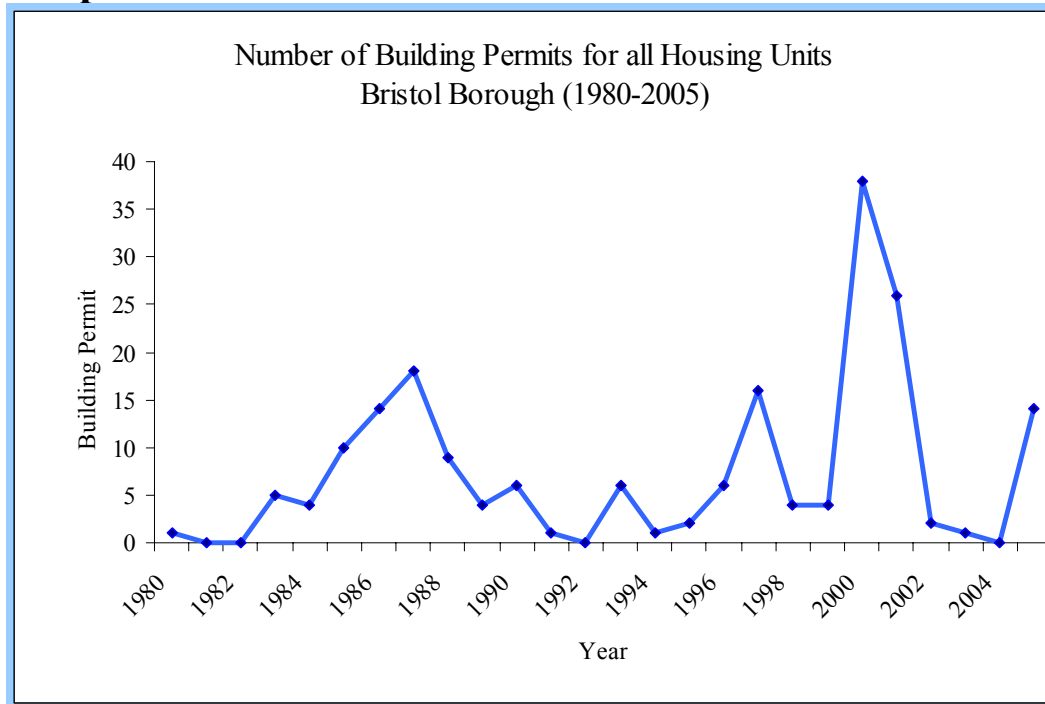
From the historic core of Mill and Radcliffe Streets to the North Side and Harriman, Bristol is characterized by high-quality, often historic, housing stock. Bristol was founded prior to the Revolutionary War and developed over the following centuries into a marketplace, transportation hub and manufacturing center. Bristol experienced the majority of its growth prior to World War II, developing more densely than compared to the surrounding post-war suburban growth. Other communities in Bucks County grew more suburban which was enabled by the growing popularity of the personal automobile.

The architecture and arrangement of the homes on small lots in close proximity are a reflection of Bristol's centuries of development. (Map 3.1, *Population by Census Block Illustrating Density* and Map 3.2, *Total Housing Units by Census Block*) The Housing and Demographics Element addresses the challenges and opportunities presented by Bristol's housing and will focus on strategies that will encourage investment through development and redevelopment of housing.

As an effect of centuries of development, Bristol has been essentially built-out for decades. (Map 3.3, *Percent Housing Units Built Before 1940 by Census Block Group*) Residential building permits and overall housing unit levels reveal this. Aside from occasional spikes, in a typical year Bristol issues few building permits for new housing starts (Graph 3.1). This coincides with Bristol's steady number of housing units as reported by the U.S. Census.



Graph 3.1



Source: DVRPC Data Bulletins 64 and 65 (November 1999 and June 2000), HUD State of the Cities Data Systems (<http://socds.huduser.org/permits/index.html>).

Despite the existing highly constrained land opportunities, developers have turned to adaptive reuse (Jefferson Avenue Condominiums) and brownfields reclamation (Villas at Riverview) to produce new housing units over the past decade. A reclaimed brownfield site adjacent to Island View Crossing and the Villas at Riverview is being considered for 300 to 400 condominiums units. The Grundy Powerhouse is under contract to be converted into 26 upscale condominiums. As few sites remain for adaptive reuse or brownfields redevelopment, future housing projects will have to turn to infill development. Potential sites for residential infill development include the train station parking lot and at scattered sites along Route 13 and Otter Street. The variety of housing types is illustrated in Map 3.4, *Percent Single Family Detached Units by Census Block Group*.

For more than 30 years, Bristol has experienced a steady population decline. In 1970, Bristol had 12,085 residents; by 2000 the population had dropped 17.9% to 9,923. Despite the large population decrease since 1970 (2,162 residents), the total number of housing units and the housing vacancy rate remained relatively steady over the same time period (Table 3.1). This is explained by a decrease in persons per household. (Map 3.5, *Percent Vacant Housing Units by Census Block*.)

Table 3.1

Bristol	1970	1980	1990	2000
<i>Population</i>	12,085	10,867	10,405	9,923
<i>Vacant Units</i>	136	267	185	200
<i>Housing Units</i>	4,015	4,300	4,137	4,207
<i>Percent Vacant</i>	3.4%	6.2%	4.5%	4.7%
<i>Persons per Household</i>	3.01	2.52	2.51	2.35

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

While the overall population has been dropping, minority populations have been increasing. (Table 3.2) Minorities make up 20% of Bristol's population. While minorities live throughout the borough, there are enclaves of higher concentrations. The West Side/Gateway area has the highest concentration of minorities, who constitute half the population in this neighborhood. (Map 3.6, *Percent African American by Census Block*, Map 3.7 *Percent White Population by Census Block*, and Map 3.8 *Percent Hispanic Population by Census Block*) This is a reduced concentration from 1990, when minorities constituted over 65% of the population in the West Side/Gateway area. The black population has increased 11% since 1970. Over the same period of time, the Hispanic¹ population has doubled.

Table 3.2

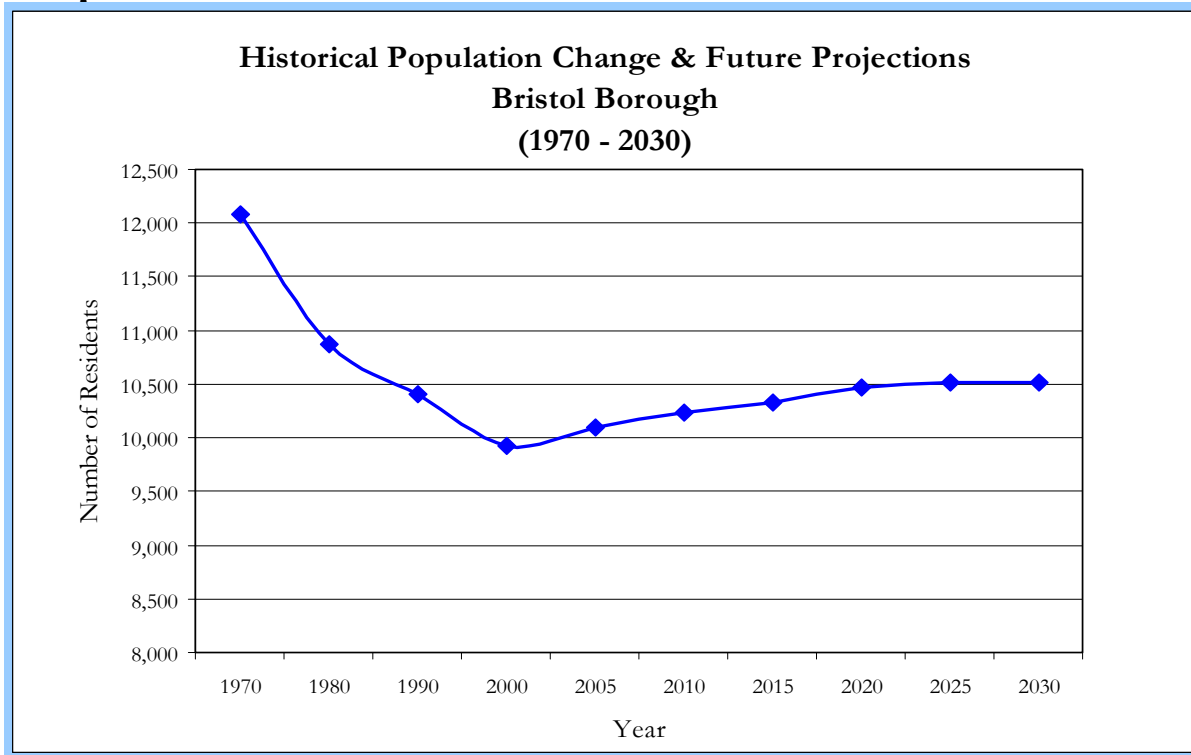
Bristol	Total Population	White Population	Black Population	Hispanic Population
<i>1970</i>	12,085	10,731	785	568
<i>1980</i>	10,867	9,346	652	869
<i>1990</i>	10,405	8,666	774	914
<i>2000</i>	9,923	8,282	872	1,144

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission predicts that Bristol's population will steadily increase over the next 20 years by a total of 6%, 597 person increase (Graph 3.2).

¹ Hispanic and Latino are used interchangeably by the U.S. Census Bureau. However, for consistency, the term Hispanic will be used throughout this document.

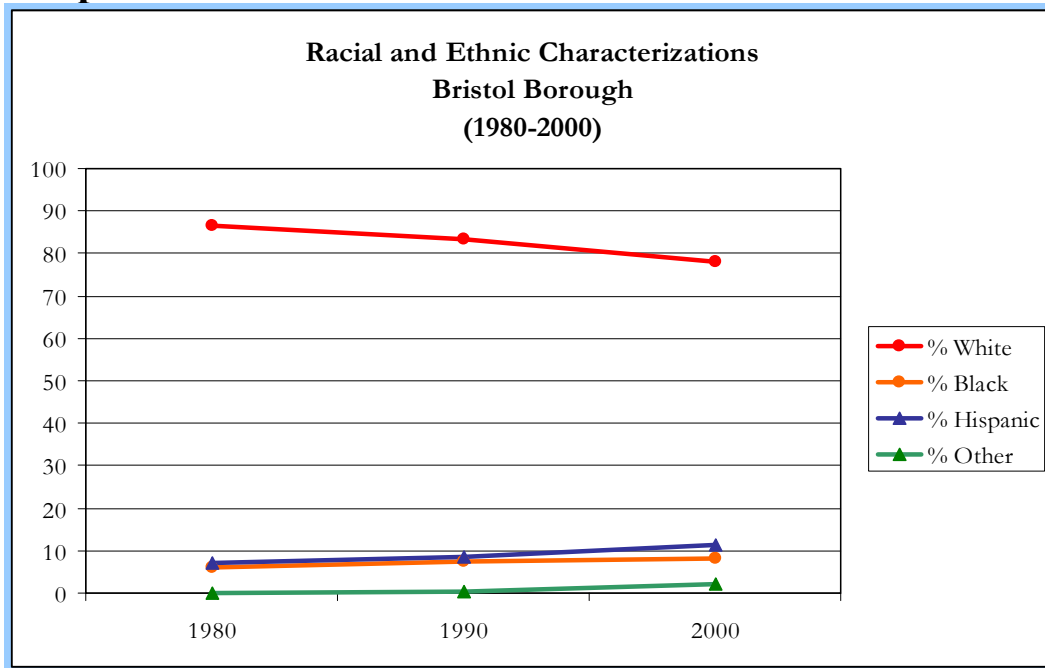
Graph 3.2



Sources: DVRPC Data Bulletin 73 (March 2005) & HUD State of the Cities Data Systems (<http://socds.huduser.org/Census/>).

Bristol's general population decline has been associated with a decline in the borough's white population. All other racial and ethnic groups have gained population over the past 20 years (Graph 3.3). The white population has decreased 17% in the past 20 years, driving Bristol's overall population loss of 8.6% over the same time period. Hispanics are the second largest ethnic group in the borough, with 11.5% of the population. Over the past three decades, Bristol has become more diverse ethnically with a high percentage of Hispanics compared to Bucks County (2.3%, according to the 2000 US Census).

Graph 3.3



Source: HUD State of the Cities Data Systems (<http://socds.huduser.org/Census/>).

Over the past three decades, Bristol's median household income has remained steady while home values have fluctuated. (Table 3.3) (Map 3.9, *Median Family Income by Census Block Group*) Median contract rents and home values are comparable between whites and minorities with rents tending to be slightly cheaper, by \$20, for minorities. Homeownership has steadily decreased since 1970. Low levels of homeownership have lead to issues regarding property maintenance and home values. Encouraging investment, property maintenance and historic preservation can counteract these housing trends.

Table 3.3

Bristol	Median Household Income in 1999 Dollars	Median Value for Owner Occupied Housing Units in 1999 Dollars	% Renter Occupied Units
<i>1970</i>	\$39,911	\$44,226	38%
<i>1980</i>	\$41,269	\$65,103	39.3%
<i>1990</i>	\$47,571	\$102,866	40.3%
<i>2000</i>	\$47,536	\$87,170	42.8%

Sources: HUD State of the Cities Data Systems (<http://socds.huduser.org/Census/>), U.S. Census Bureau.

Since 1970, Bristol has had a high level of rental properties. Over the past 30 years, the level of rental units has increased steadily (Table 3.4). In 2000, 42.8% of occupied units were renter occupied. (Map 3.10, *Rental Vacancy Rate by Census Block*) Since the number of building permits issued has been low and the number of total housing and vacant units have remained fairly level, it can be surmised that the increase in rental units is due to the conversion of existing owner occupied units into rental units (Graph 3.4).

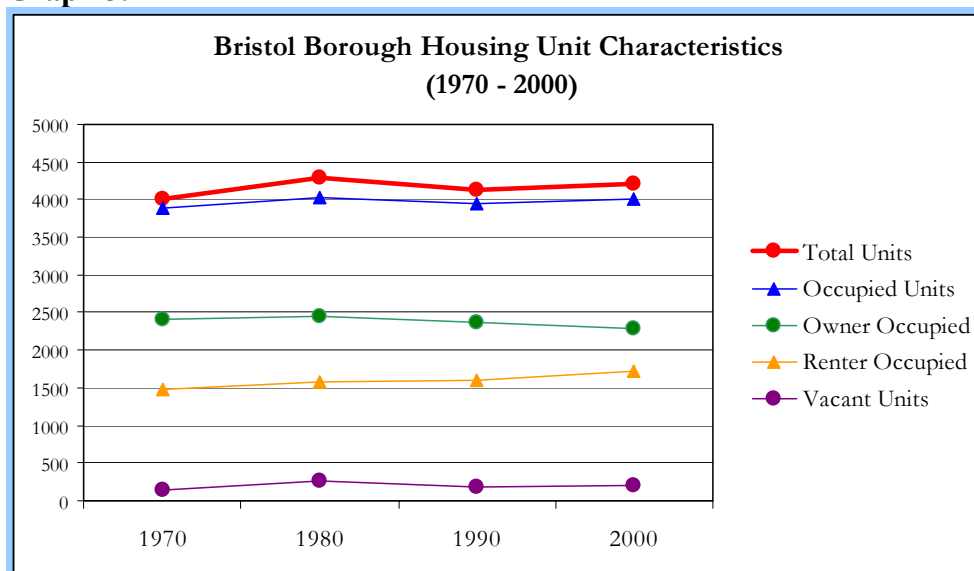
Table 3.4

Bristol	1970	1980	1990	2000
<i>Occupied Units</i>	3,879	4,033	3,952	4,004
<i>Renter-Occupied Units</i>	1,475	1,586	1,593	1,715
<i>Percent Renter Occupied</i>	38%	39.3%	40.3%	42.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Low rates of homeownership are concentrated in the Old Town with a distinct concentration of rental housing (69% rental) in the north central section of the neighborhood near Pond and Dorrance Streets. (Map 3.11, *Rental Occupied Homes by Census Block*) The Old Town area also has the lowest median household income (\$17,019) and contract rents (\$455) in Bristol. The homeownership rate, the median household income and median contract rents may be skewed lower by the location of Grundy Tower, a senior housing facility, in this area. The highest rates of homeownership are in the Harriman neighborhood. (Map 3.12, *Percentage Home-Owner Occupied Units by Census Block*)

Graph 3.4



Source: HUD State of the Cities Data Systems (<http://socds.huduser.org/Census/>).

The neighborhoods with the highest median value of owner-occupied units (above \$94,800) are the Harriman neighborhood and the areas immediately surrounding the train station in the North Side. (Map 3.13, *Median Value of Owner-Occupied Units by Census Block Group*) The highest median contract rents (\$641) are also found nearest to the train station. There appears to be a positive correlation between the level of homeownership and the median values of housing units. The decrease in the value of owner-occupied housing from 1990 to 2000 can in part be explained by a nation-wide decline in property values experienced during the 1990s.

Bristol's profile varies greatly from Bucks County's. Bristol has a lower median income, lower home value, and higher levels of renter occupied units. (Table 3.5) This difference may owe in part to Bristol's older, more densely built environment, as compared to the suburban development that surrounds the borough. Bristol also has a much more diverse populace than Bucks County. Bristol's lower cost of living and higher availability of rental units may make the borough more attractive to families with lower incomes. Table 3.5 also compares Bristol to neighboring and similar communities in Bucks County. All the other municipalities have markedly higher median household incomes and housing values, as well as lower minority populations when compared to Bristol Borough. However, Bensalem Township and Doylestown Borough have comparable homeownership rates to Bristol Borough. Despite Bensalem's and Doylestown's high renter population, these communities have higher median home values than Bristol Borough.

Table 3.5

Place	Housing Units % Owner Occupied (2000)	Population % White (2000)	Median Household Income (2000)	Owner- Occupied Housing Units (2000)
<i>Bristol Borough</i>	57.2	78	\$35,378	\$91,100
<i>Bristol Township</i>	76.3	86.1	\$48,090	\$107,700
<i>Bensalem Township</i>	58.1	82.9	\$49,737	\$127,700
<i>Doylestown Borough</i>	48.3	96	\$46,148	\$179,700
<i>Quakertown Borough</i>	63	94.5	\$41,942	\$113,900
<i>Bucks County</i>	77.3	92.5	\$59,727	\$163,200

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau.

Existing housing conditions and strategies for encouraging investment in Bristol's housing stock will be discussed under the objectives. The Housing and Demographics Element seeks to address the issues of homeownership, property values, property maintenance and quality of life concerns that have been touched upon above.

3.2 Discussion of Objectives

Objective: Promote homeownership.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Bristol offers a tight-knit community with amenities unavailable elsewhere. Despite its historic housing stock, proximity to regional rail and highways and riverfront location, Bristol remains essentially undiscovered by the real estate market. Capitalizing upon these amenities is fundamental to promoting homeownership in Bristol.

Low homeownership levels are an issue in Bristol. Homeownership affects property values, neighborhood stability, property maintenance and civic pride. With homeownership rates decreasing every decade, and now standing at 57.2%, it is crucial that Bristol reverse this trend. New construction of market-rate for-sale housing in Bristol such as the Jefferson Avenue Condominiums and the Villas at Riverview, as well as the proposed Grundy Powerhouse and Island View Crossing developments should positively affect future homeownership rates. However, promoting homeownership of Bristol's existing housing stock is of greater importance. Only by increasing homeownership levels of existing housing can current trends be significantly changed. Strategies for affecting this change are discussed below.

Implementation Strategies

The borough should enact a neighborhood preservation program that combines historic preservation, community greening, code enforcement and homeownership programs. A key component of the neighborhood preservation program should be duplex conversion. A duplex conversion program will result in reducing the number of housing units and increasing homeownership. Collingswood, New Jersey, has had significant success with their duplex conversion program which uses a combination of redevelopment powers and mortgage programs.

Collingswood's duplex conversion program finances the cost of conversion up to the anticipated assessed value of the property as a single-family home, which is often double the assessed value of a duplex. Financing is secured for renovations at two percentage points below the prime rate, and there are no payments for the loan's first year. A mortgage is placed against the property to cover the renovation costs and the first-year loan payments. The new homeowner is required to pay all mortgages when the house is sold or refinanced. To promote the program, lawn signs are posted stating that the renovations to the property were funded by the Collingswood Multi-Family Housing Conversion Program.

For properties where the private market will not intervene through the duplex conversion program, the borough should acquire troubled properties for rehabilitation and conversion. The borough should consider the creation of a community development corporation (CDC) to carry out this program. CDCs are community-based, nonprofit organizations that can provide various services. The Mayfair CDC has implemented a housing acquisition and rehabilitation program to target troubled properties and convert duplexes in a middle-class neighborhood in Philadelphia. After renovations are completed, properties are sold at the market rate. The Mayfair CDC works with other community groups to find qualified home buyers who are currently renters in the neighborhood. CDCs are qualified for sources of funding that are not available to municipalities. A major source of funding is the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Department of Community and Economic Development. Numerous grants are also provided through the federal government and private sources.

Continued code enforcement is key to preventing illegal duplex conversions and other building code violations that reduce homeownership rates. The number of electrical meters per property is the easiest way to determine the number of units without interior inspection.

Educating residents, financial institutions, real estate professionals and contractors about homeownership programs is important to reversing downward homeownership rates. The borough may consider inserts in bills, fliers, advertising, or even a borough newsletter to disseminate information.

To coordinate the borough's efforts, a housing liaison position should be created to handle renter and homeowner questions, disseminate and compile relevant informational materials, and manage the neighborhood preservation program. This person should be part of the Inspections Department and bilingual to handle both the English and Spanish speaking communities' needs.

Objective: Support housing rehabilitation programs.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Housing rehabilitation is closely tied to increasing homeownership. Rehabilitation of dilapidated housing and restoration of multi-unit dwellings to single family homes increases property values, reduces density and increases homeownership. Improvements to the built environment will not only affect Bristol aesthetically, but also foster community pride and aid in changing perception. Bristol's image should project a safe community for investment where families can settle and raise a family. Maintaining community character, especially Bristol's

history, should be a primary concern while improving the physical environment. Closely involving the community in these strategies will encourage cooperation and a promote sense of “ownership” of the programs by residents.

Implementation Strategies

While historic preservation is discussed in detail in the Natural, Historic and Cultural Resources Element, it is also an important factor in housing rehabilitation. Bristol currently has four National Register Historic Districts. National Historic District designation provides limited funding for rehabilitation of income- producing properties. One historic district, the Bristol Historic District, is overseen by HARB, the local historic architecture review board. The borough should consider increasing the historic code enforcement in the existing local historic district and expanding local oversight to the other two residential historic districts, the Jefferson Land Association and Harriman Historic Districts. Historic design and code standards can then be enforced to a greater extent. Standards will affect exterior changes, not interiors, and may include review of exterior paint colors, materials and façade changes. Historic regulations will be consistent across the borough’s historic districts and will vary only by architectural style. As part of the inspections process, historic standards will aid in property maintenance, increasing property values and upholding Bristol’s historic character.

Community greening and gardening programs not only foster beautification, but also increase community pride and quality of life. Bristol can look to the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society’s “Green City Strategy,” which targets beautification of gateways, street tree plantings and the stabilization of lots and open spaces, as a model for its greening program. The Society also provides funding for greening and gardening projects, technical support, and training of tree tenders and urban gardeners. The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society typically offers funding to community-based groups, such as CDCs. The community greening strategies are echoed in the Natural, Historical and Cultural Element.

The neighborhood preservation program and increased code enforcement, which are discussed in further detail under other objectives in this element, are also major strategies for housing rehabilitation.

There are several additional methods of attaining funding to promote housing rehabilitation. These include, but are not limited to, Community Development Block Grant funding for neighborhood preservation, Bucks County Redevelopment Authority funding opportunities, maintain and upgrade housing through financial incentives, and potential private programs that offer financial incentives

Objective: Ensure safe and livable housing for all Bristol residents.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Bristol provides a diversity of housing options including row homes, single family detached houses, condominiums, apartments, historic properties, age-restricted housing and senior living facilities. However, high levels of rental housing, overcrowding, density and property maintenance negatively impact the quality of life for residents in Bristol. Inspection is the primary tool for enforcing safe living conditions by ensuring that all housing units are compliant with borough standards. Enforcement, in addition to the other strategies for homeownership and rehabilitation, not only aid homeowners, but all Bristol residents. Improving the quality of life helps maintain Bristol's diverse and close-knit community. Although changing Bristol's housing market is a central objective, the borough simply through its existing variety of housing, will continue to offer a diversity of housing options.

Implementation Strategies

Zoning, building and historic code enforcement encourages housing maintenance which directly impacts property values, homeownership rates and community pride. Strong use of inspections should be the primary tool for combating housing issues. Bristol's newly implemented rental inspection program enacted under Ordinance 1193 works similar to the borough inspection process of for-sale properties.

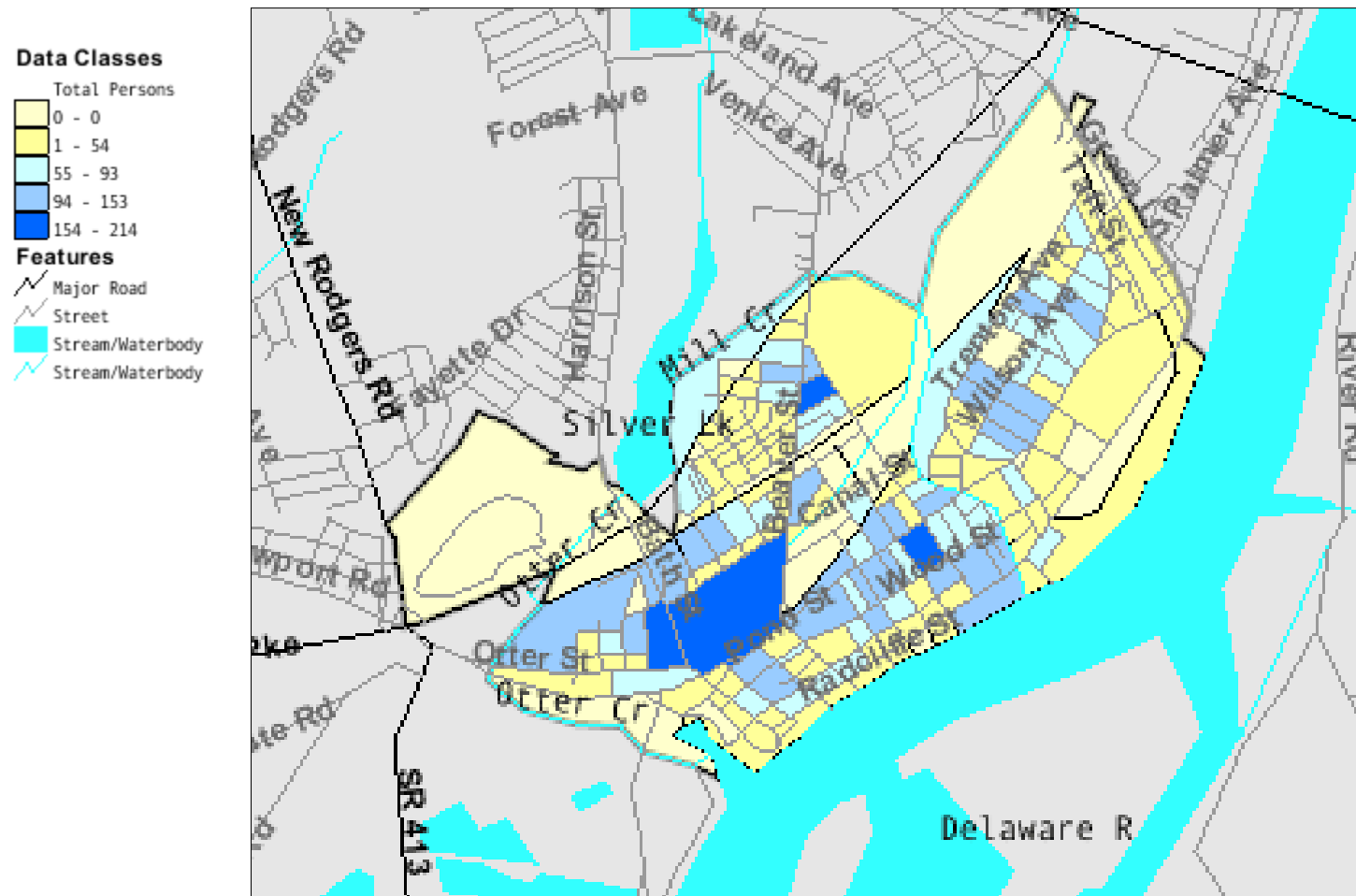
Plainfield, New Jersey has enacted a similar program where all properties, including owner-occupied homes, are inspected when offered for sale. This inspection is internal and external, including sidewalks and curbs, in addition to the condition of the structure itself. Plainfield has found that this program teaches owners to maintain their properties to avoid expensive repair bills when they sell their buildings. Plainfield's inspections team also conducts a yearly visual external inspection of every property in their sector. Plainfield has had success in preventing overcrowding and promoting property upkeep thorough its rental inspection and registration program, which is very similar to Bristol's. The success of Bristol's comprehensive code enforcement program lies with involving the community through education and outreach.

As Bristol steps up its inspections effort, coordination of data is vital to targeting problem areas and preventing allegations of properties being unfairly singled out or ignored. It is recommended that the borough utilize Geographic Information Systems (GIS) parcel-based mapping. This mapping will greatly enhance code enforcement by tracking code violations over time, thus revealing violation trends and clustering.

Ultimately, the proposed strategies, if implemented, will result in increased property values and homeownership rates. In this scenario, the borough may wish to institute an ordinance that addresses property tax rate increases and evaluations for lower-income residents, especially fixed-income seniors.

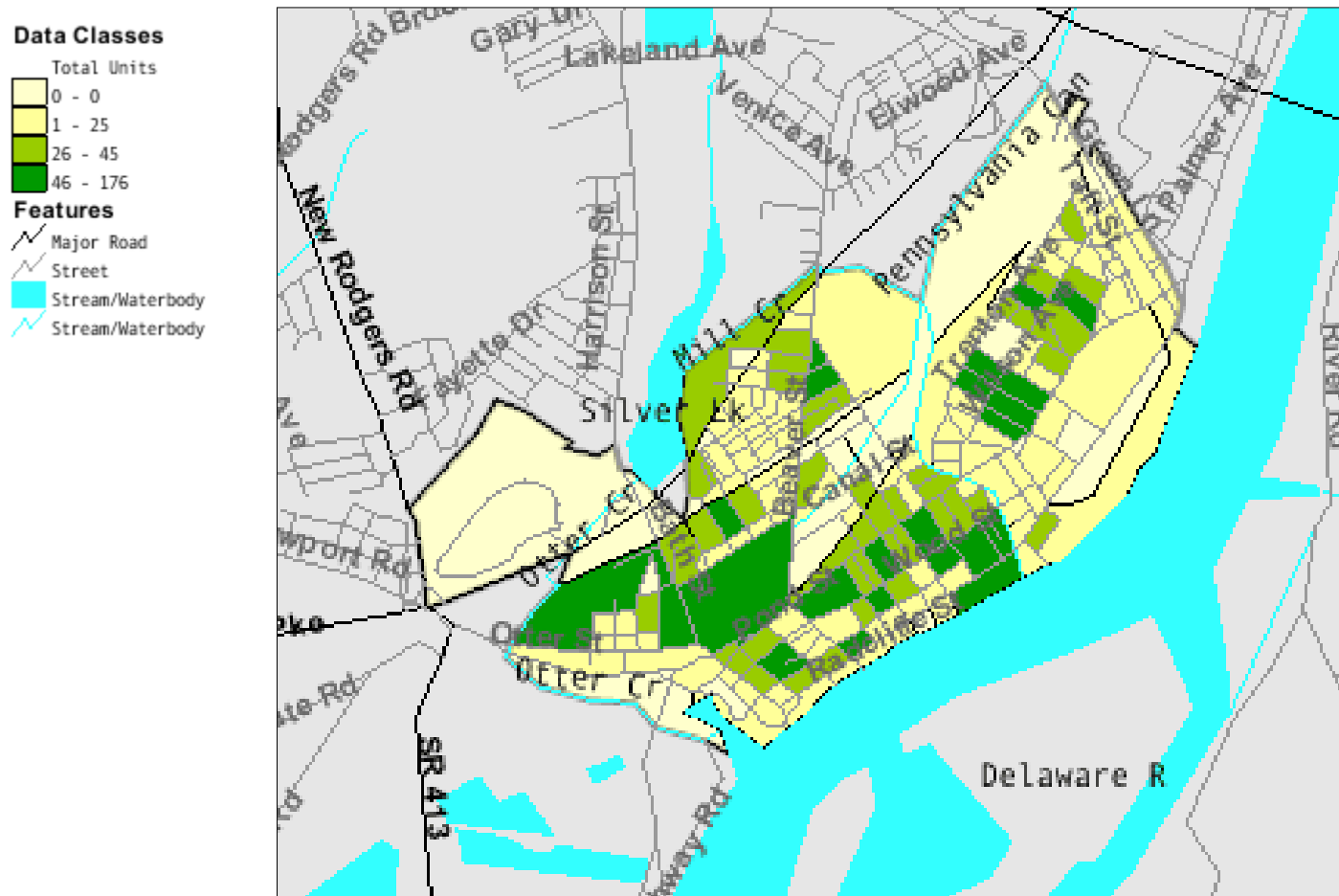
3.3 Demographic Mapping

Map 3.1 Population by Census Block (Illustrating Density)



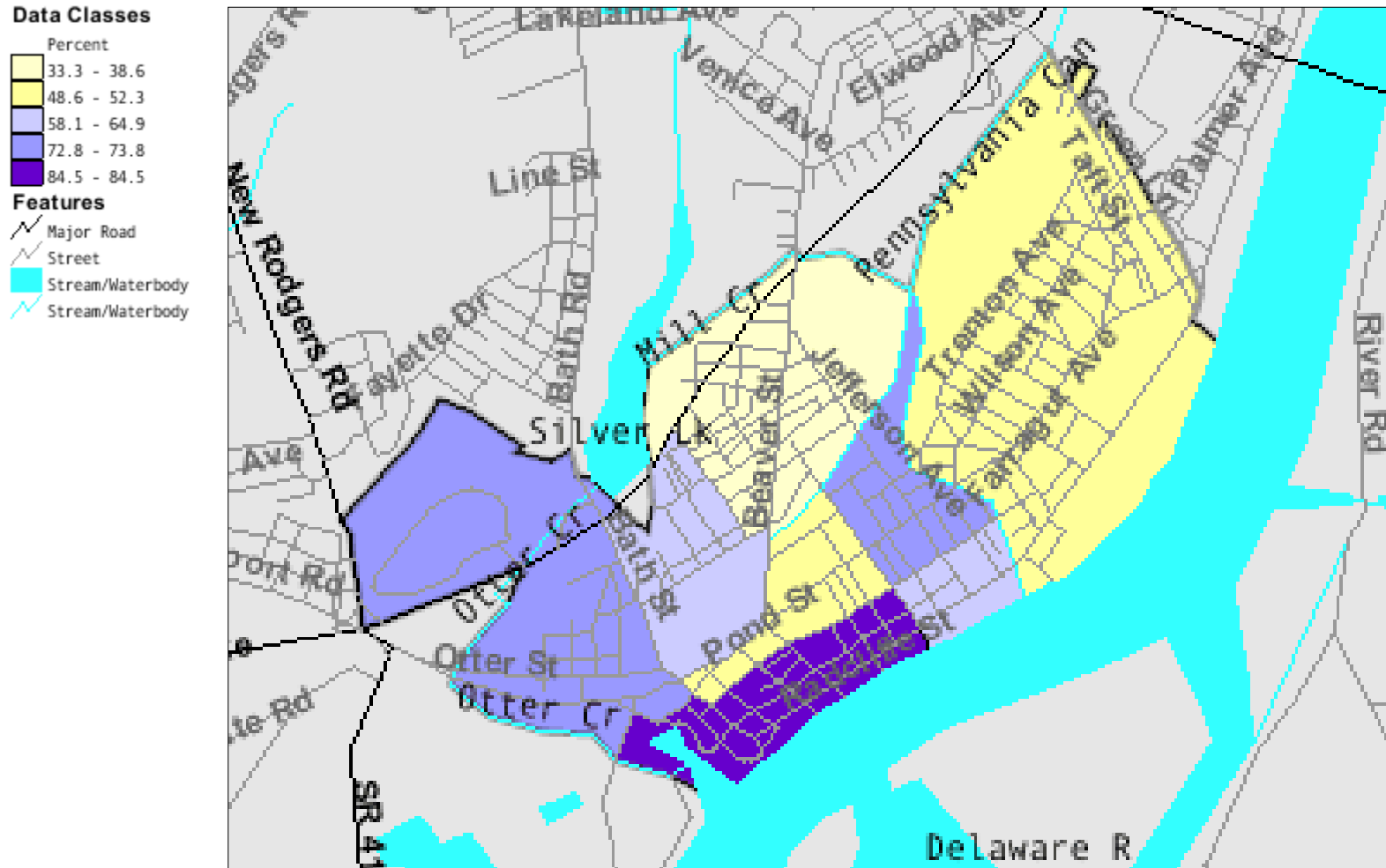
SOURCE: US Census, 2000.

Map 3.2 Total Housing Units by Census Block



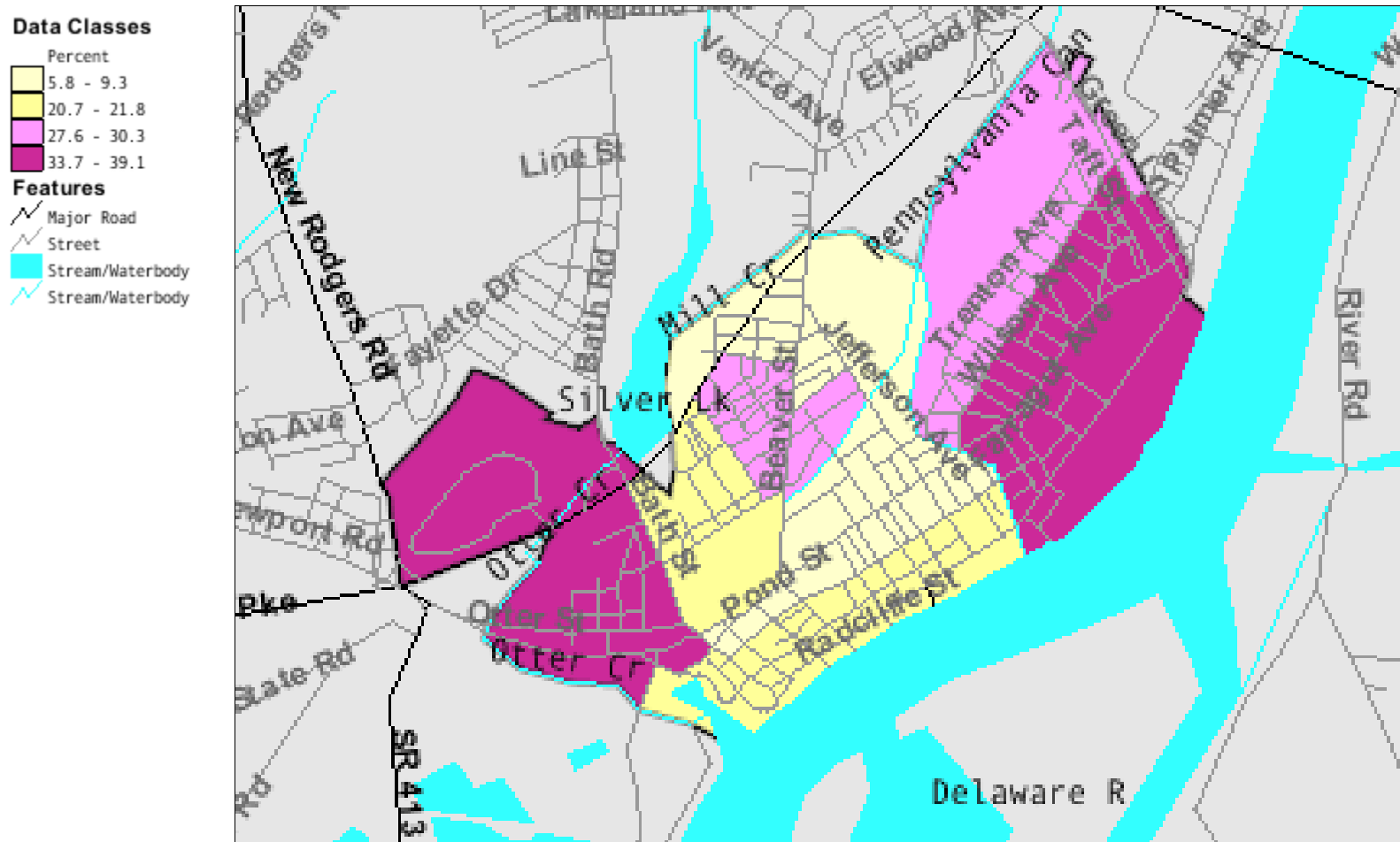
SOURCE: US Census, 2000

Map 3.3 Percent Housing Units Built before 1940 by Census Block Group



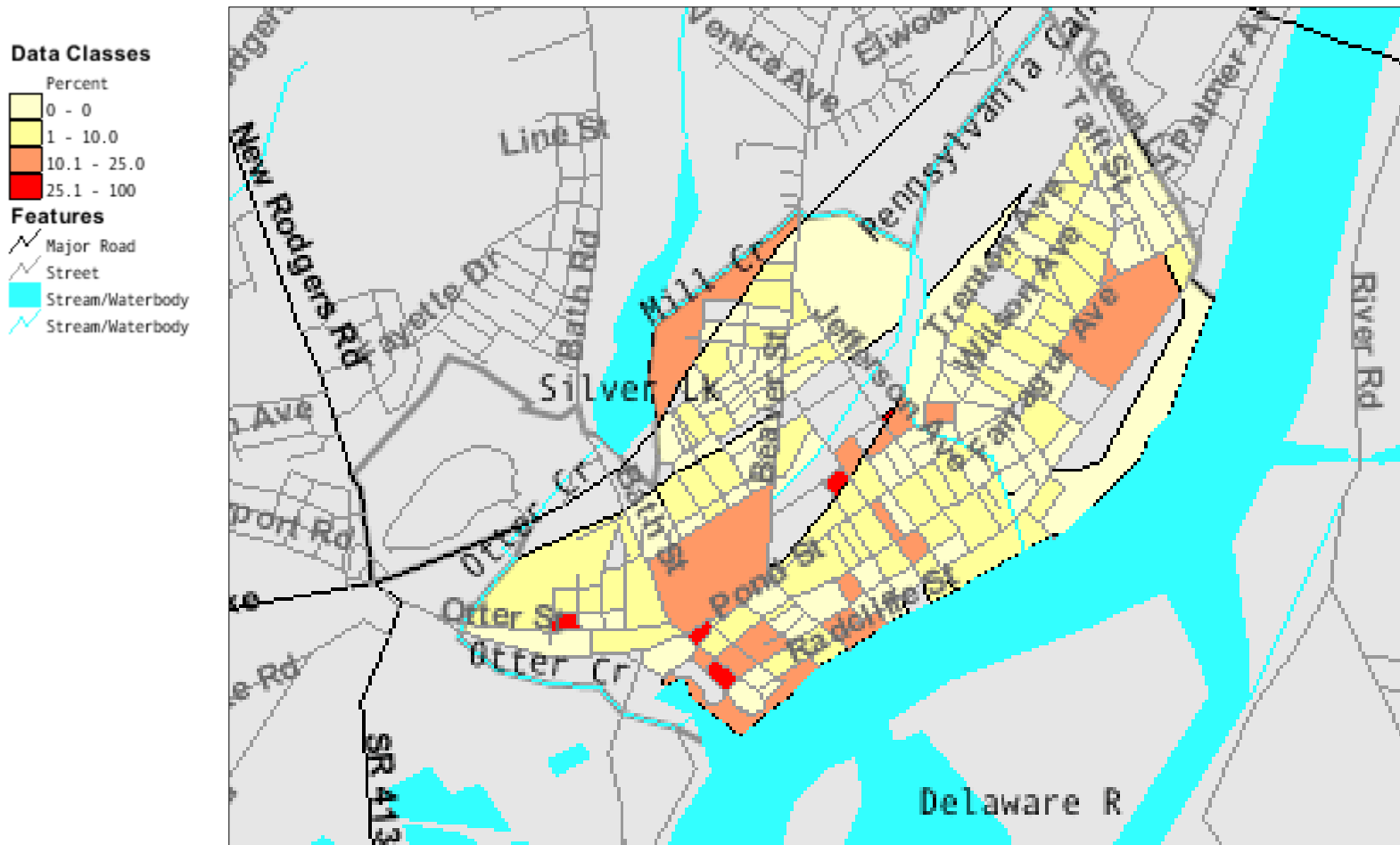
SOURCE: US Census 2000.

Map 3.4 Percent Single Family Detached Units by Census Block Group



SOURCE: U.S. Census, 2000.

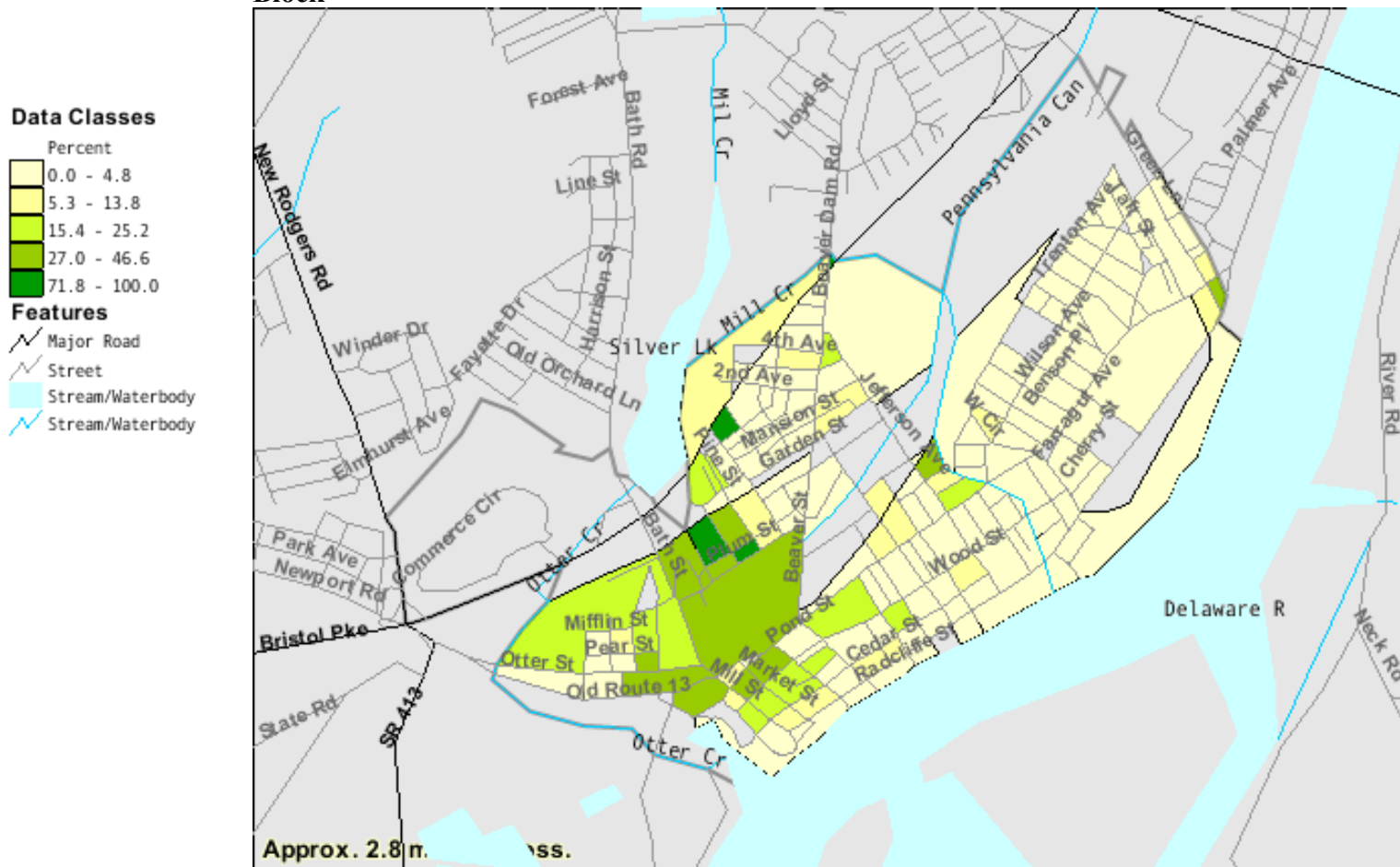
Map 3.5 Percent Vacant Housing Units by Census Block



SOURCE: US Census, 2000.

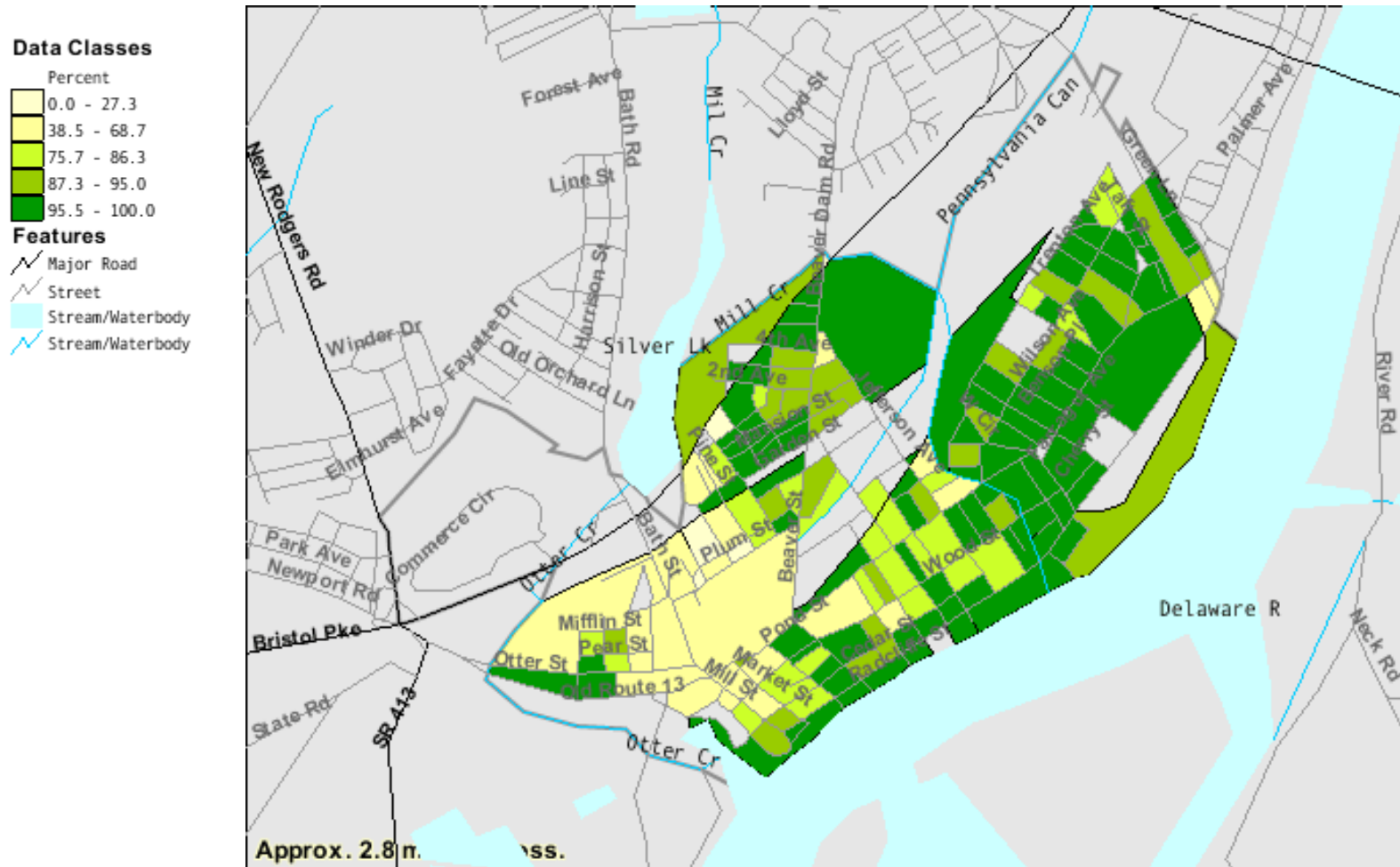
Note: Gray census block areas within the borough have less than 4 housing units.

Map 3.6 Percent African American Population by Census Block



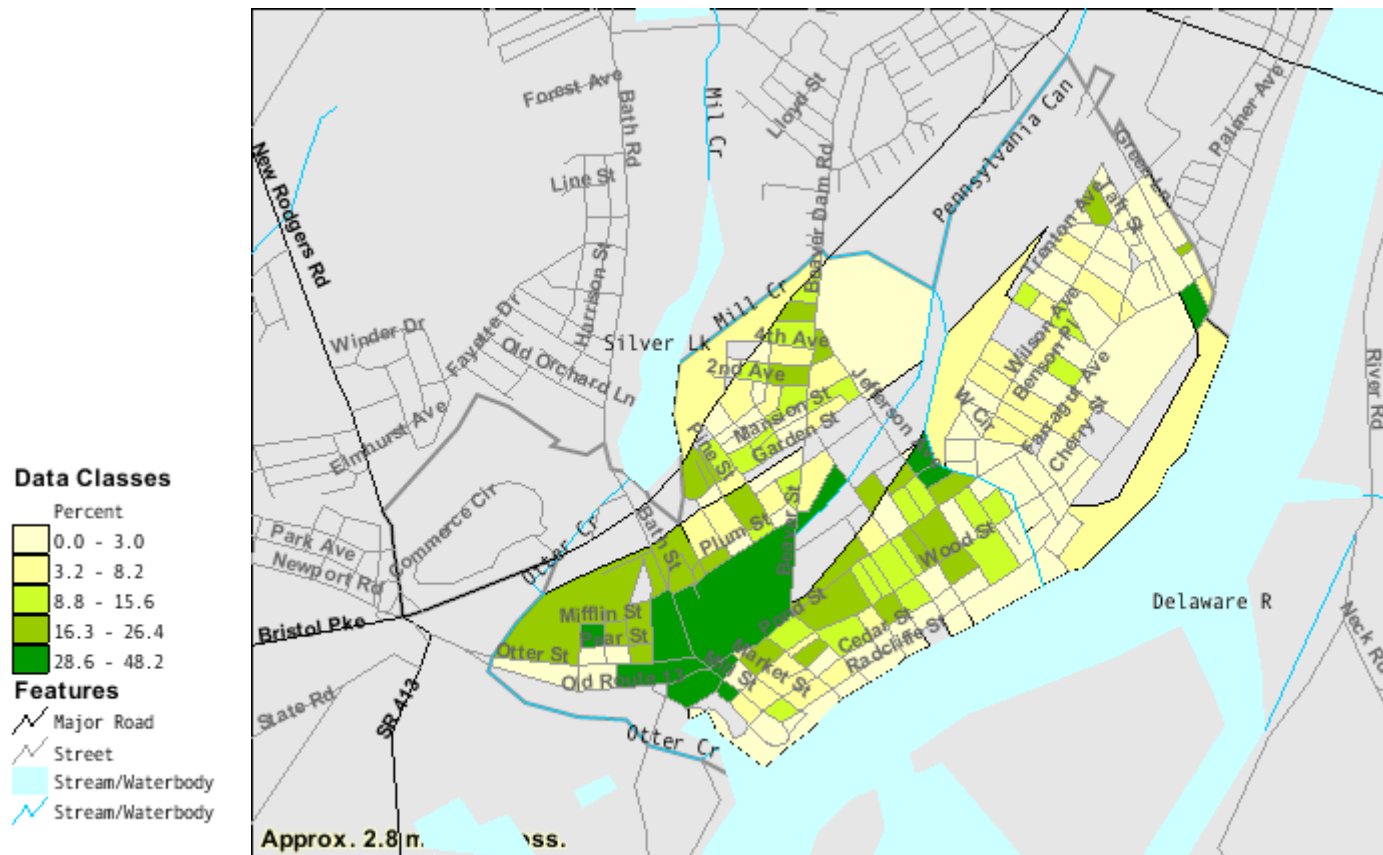
SOURCE: U.S. Census, 2000.

Map 3.7 Percent White Population by Census Block



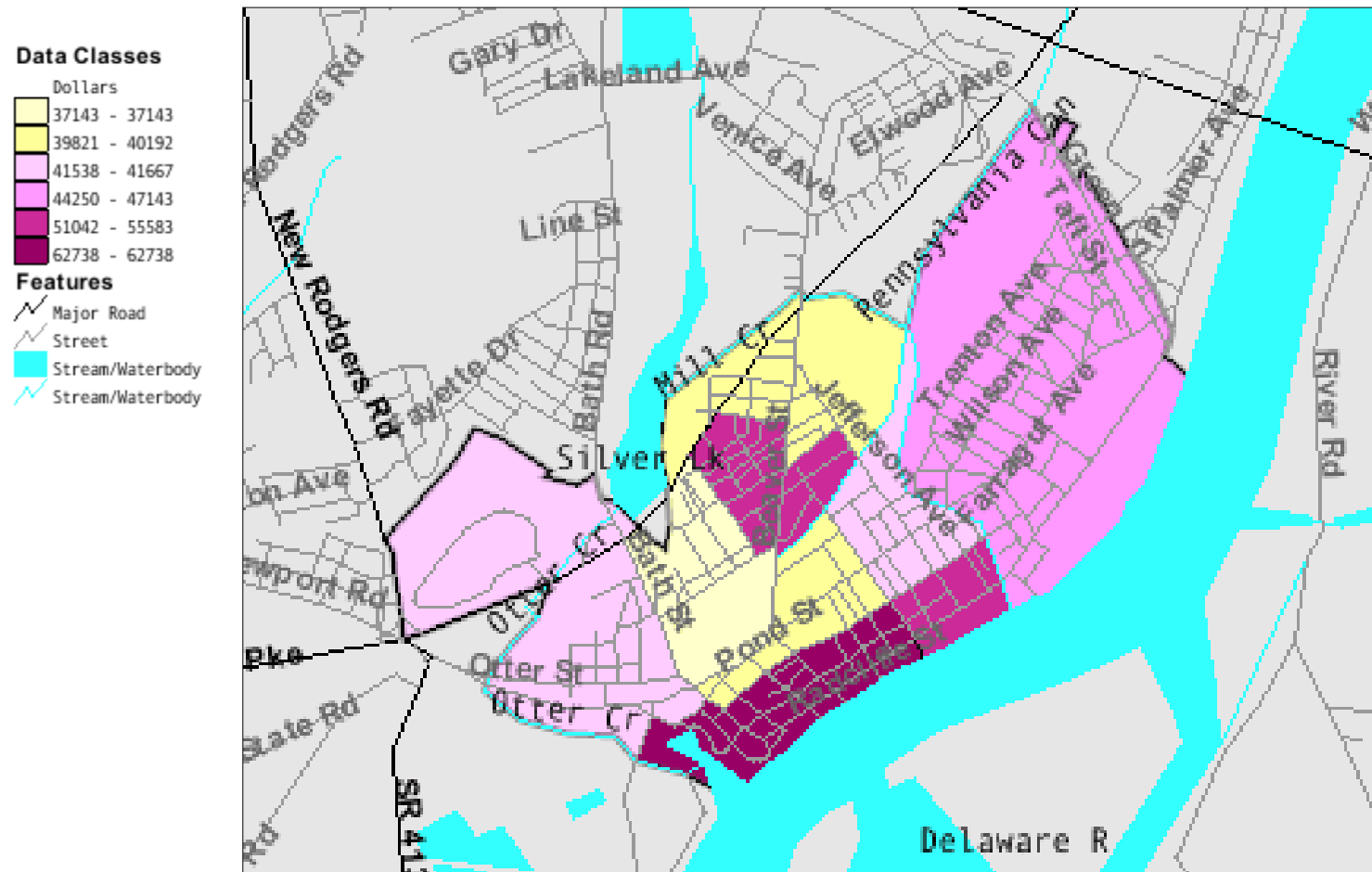
SOURCE: U.S. Census, 2000.

Map 3.8 Percent Hispanic Population by Census Block



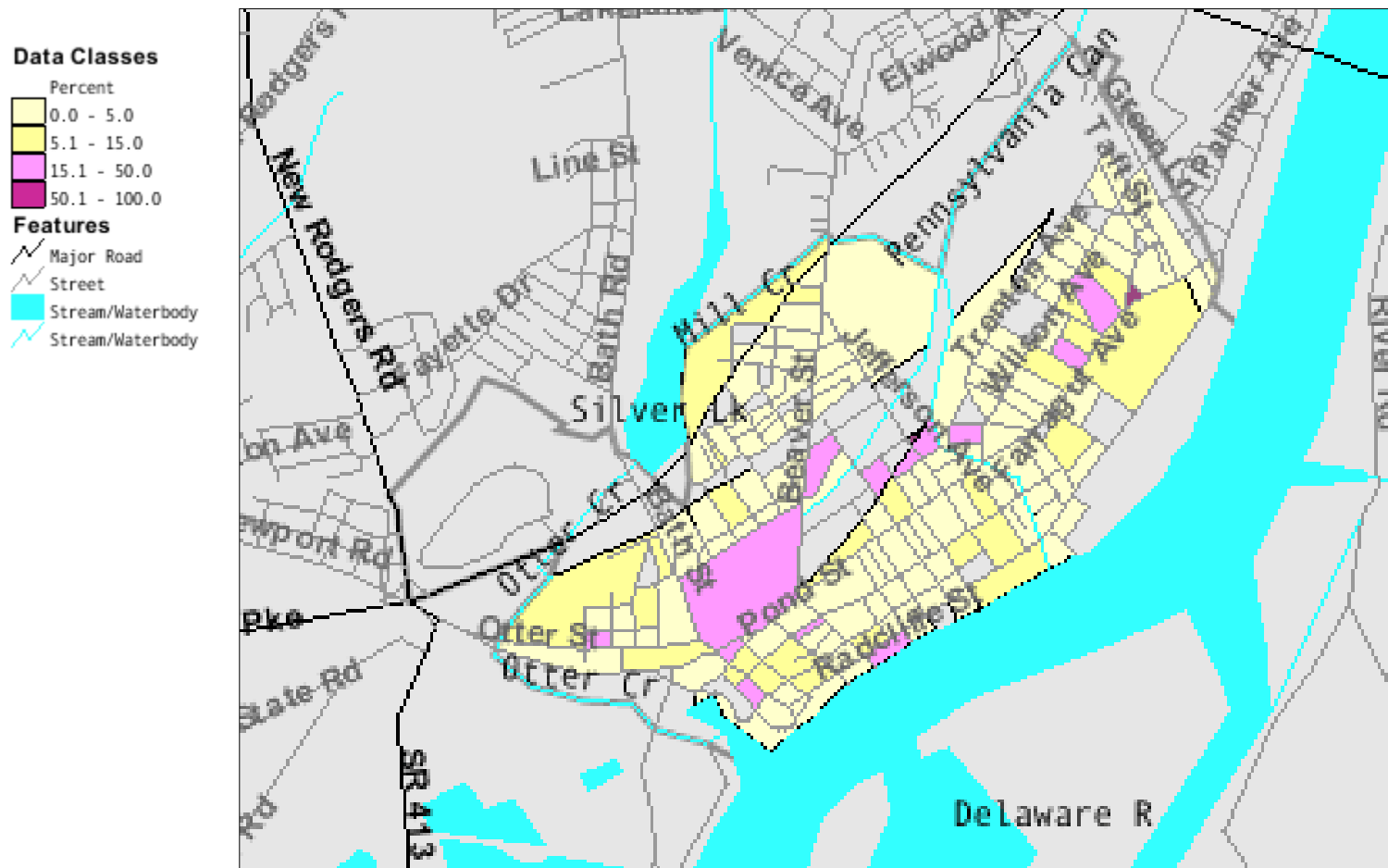
SOURCE: U.S. Census, 2000.

Map 3.9 Median Family Income by Census Block Group



SOURCE: U.S. Census, 2000.

Map 3.10 Rental Vacancy Rate by Census Block Group

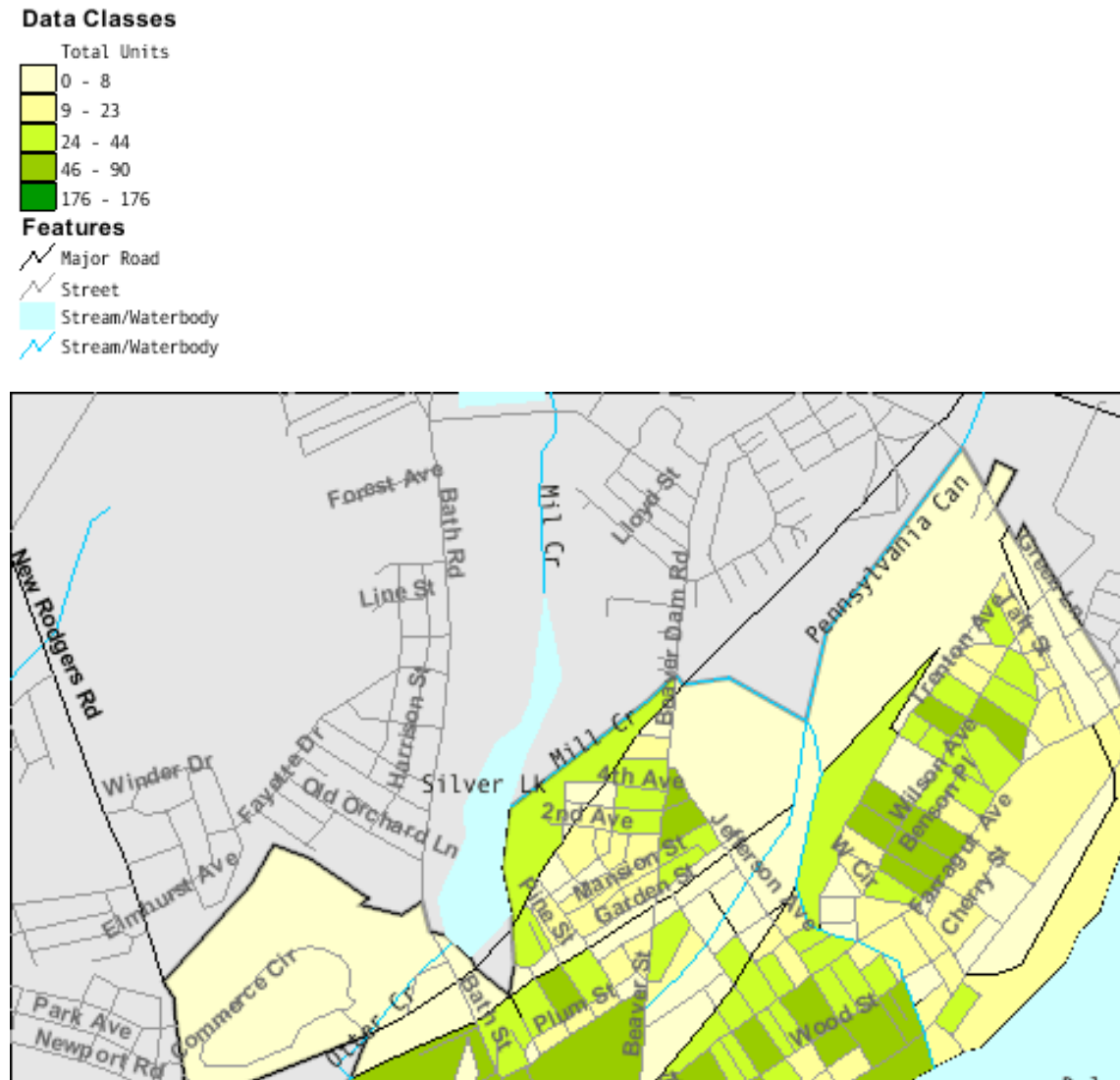


SOURCE: U.S. Census, 2000.

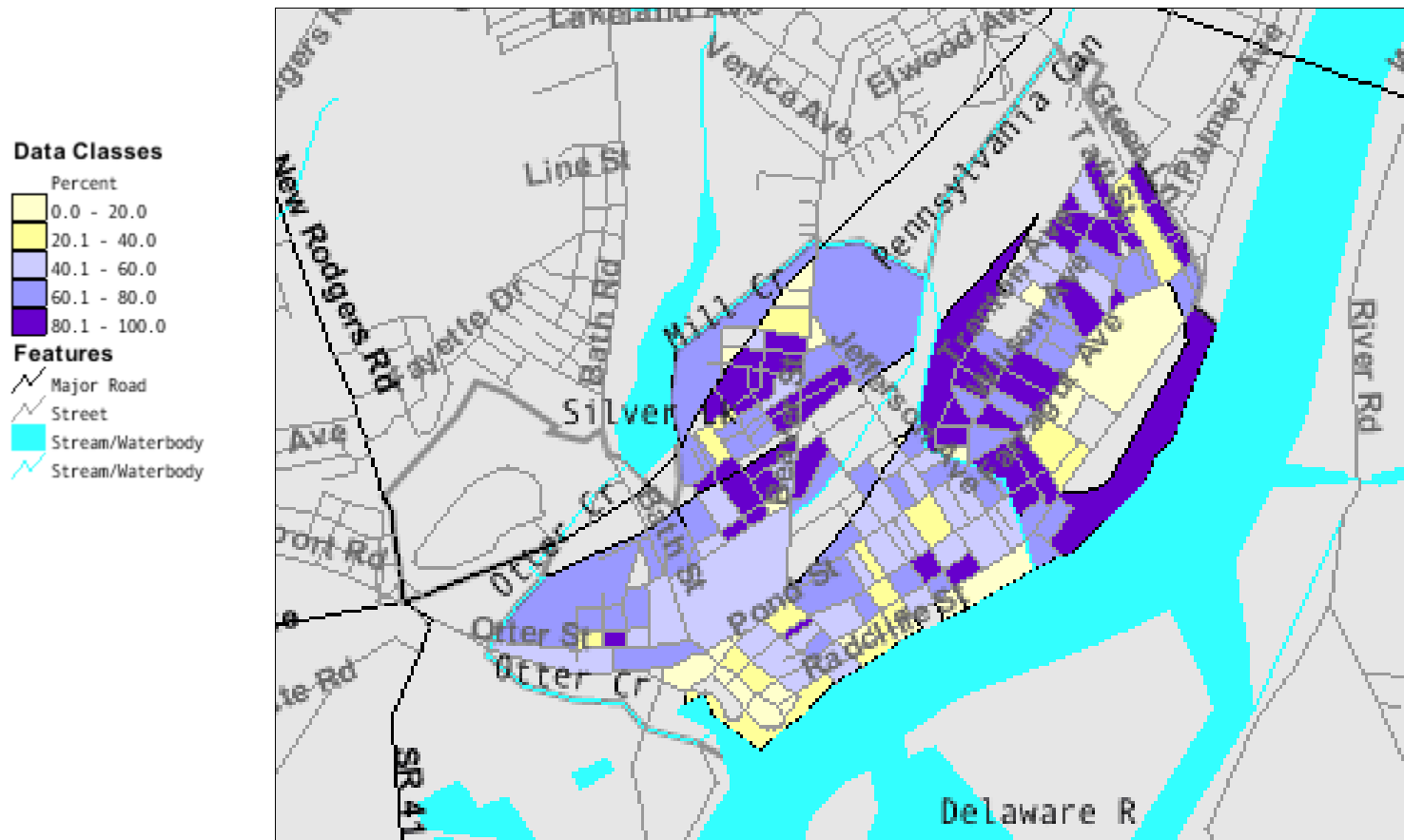
Note: Gray census block areas within the borough have no rental housing units.

Map 3.11 Percent Renter Occupied Homes by Census Block Group

SOURCE: U.S. Census, 2000.



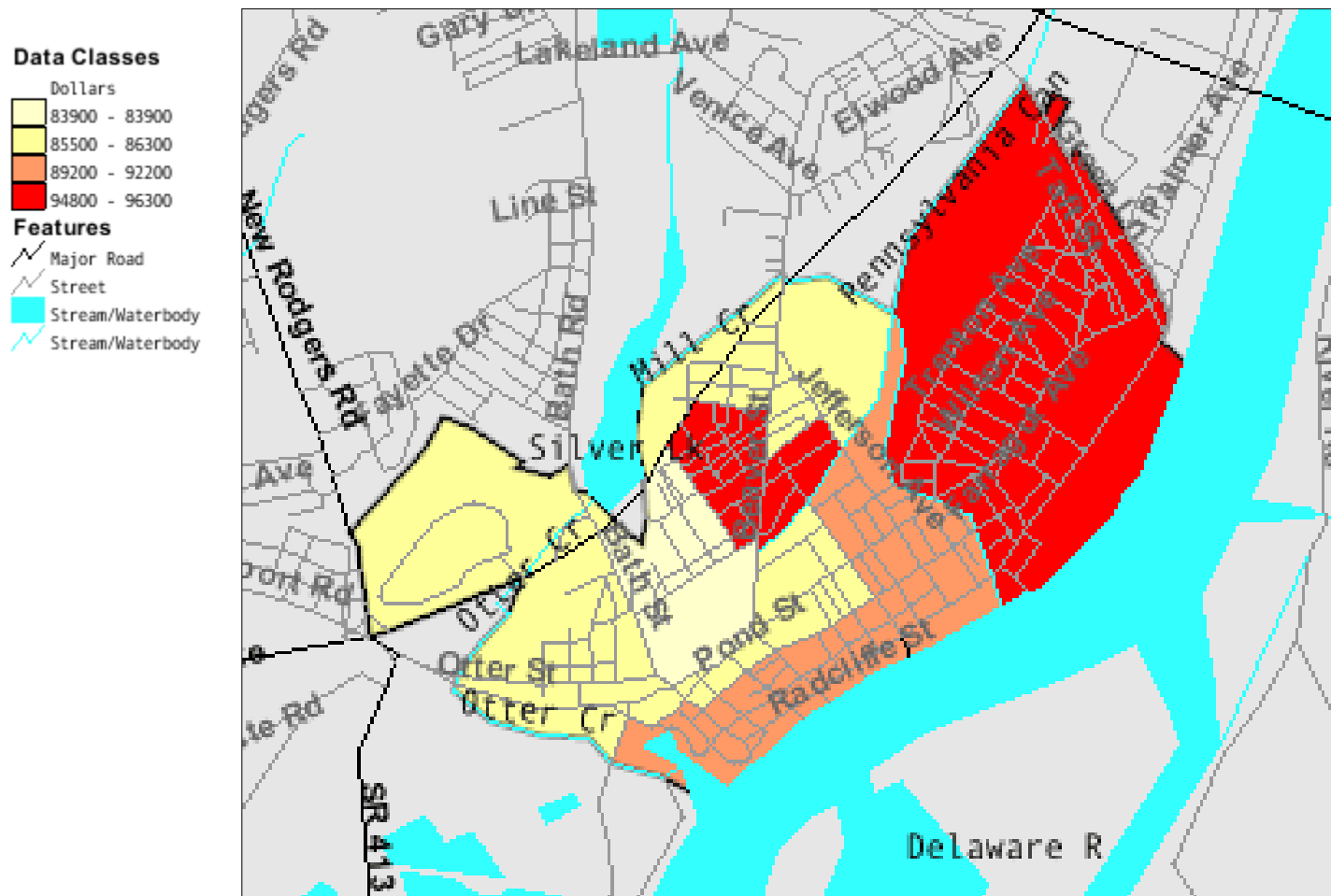
Map 3.12 **Percentage Home Owner Occupied Units by Census Block Group**



SOURCE: U.S. Census, 2000.

Note: Gray census block areas within the borough have no housing units.

Map 3.13 Median Value of Owner-Occupied Units by Census Block Group



SOURCE: U.S. Census, 2000.

CHAPTER 4

Natural, Historical & Cultural Resources Element

Goal: Enhance and protect the Borough's natural, historical and cultural resources.

4.1 Background

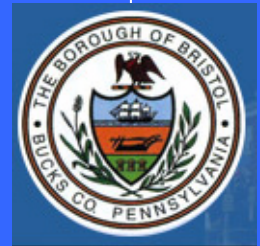
Bristol has a wealth of natural, historic and cultural resources. These resources make the borough an attractive community to live in, invest in, and visit. Since the last Comprehensive Plan, the borough has been aggressive in expanding and improving its parks and preserving its cultural and historic resources. Bristol Borough has nearly 500 buildings included in its four National Register Historic Districts. The borough oversaw the adaptive reuse and preservation of many of the mill buildings in the Bristol Industrial Historic District. Major parks located in Bristol include Bristol Marsh, Silver Lake Nature Center, Lions Park, the Delaware Canal State Park and the Spurline Trail. The Bristol Marsh has new observation decks and interpretive signage. Lions Park now has a sculpture collection that reflects the borough's diversity. The Delaware Canal locks and crane are memorialized and the Lagoon has been restored. The Spurline Trail has recently been completed. Increasing use and awareness of Bristol's natural, historic and cultural resources is key to continued success.

4.2 Discussion of Objectives

Objective: Capitalize on opportunities afforded by Delaware River frontage.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Bristol Borough's Delaware River waterfront access is limited because the majority of the riverside is privately owned. The riverbank is lined with the backyards of single family homes. There are three major areas where the River can be viewed by the public: Lions Park, the grounds of the Margaret Grundy Museum and Library, and a portion of the Spurline Trail at Riverfront North. The only undeveloped area that runs along the river



is Maple Beach, a former dredge site located south of the Bristol Marsh and owned by Rohm & Haas.

Lions Park is the most visible park in Bristol and provides the most public access to the River. The focal point of Lions Park is the small covered pier, Lions Wharf, which juts out over the River. Lions Wharf is the visual terminus of Mill Street; leading the eye down to the Delaware River and the park. Fishing is common off the wharf and at the river terminus of Market Street. Numerous community events are held here every year including the annual car show, the Barbeque on the River and the summer concert series. Lions Park is also evolving into a sculpture garden that displays abstract artwork, monuments and figurative statues. Monuments celebrate the Irish and Latino communities, Christopher Columbus, Harriet Tubman and the Delaware Canal.



Lions Park

The grounds of the Margaret Gundy Museum and Library are accessible from Radcliffe Street. The grounds are well maintained and landscaped. Seating is available throughout the grounds. Fishing is limited in the park to a specific area. The entrances to the grounds are often locked and tend to correspond to the hours of the Margaret Grundy Museum, a house museum displaying Victorian furnishings and exhibits. Access to the grounds is also permitted from the lower level of the library.

The Bristol Spurline Trail, a Rails-to-Trails project, is a three-mile asphalt path that runs along the waterfront at Riverfront North and continues west towards the existing railroad tracts and then south following the former canal towpath and eventually ends at the Bristol Marsh. It is a residential trail that connects natural features, such as the Marsh and the River, to neighborhood parks, schools and recreational fields.

Maple Beach also affords access to the waterfront. This site was identified in the *Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County, Pennsylvania* (1999) as a priority 4 area. Priority 4 areas are the lowest priority areas included in the *Inventory* having only biological or ecological resources important at the local level. Often small remnant populations of state-listed rare species or rare natural communities located at these areas can provide the nucleus for future restoration efforts. Maple Beach is a former dredge spoil site that contains a tidal riverbank, Silver Maple floodplain forest, a successional coastal plain forest and small population of Willow Oak, a state-listed rare species. The site is directly south of the Bristol Marsh, a highly sensitive and unusual natural area. Due to the Maple Beach's location in a floodplain and as a former dredge spoil site it is unlikely that the site, currently owned by Rohm & Haas, will be developed for industrial, commercial, or residential uses making a conservation easement easier to attain.

Enhancing these waterfront access areas would bring more visitors and investment to Bristol by emphasizing the community's connection to the Delaware River. As far as boat access to the borough, there is a private marina, the Anchor Yacht Club, and a floating dock recently installed at Lions Park.

Implementation Strategies

The *Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan* recommended that the borough emphasize its gateway areas along Route 13 to inform visitors of the borough's attractions and waterfront. The gateways could be enhanced by planting street trees, improving the appearance of railroad bridges, screening industrial areas and parking areas and installing new signage.

The Delaware River is the eastern boundary of Lions Park. To the south lies the Bristol Marsh. The park is surrounded to the west by parking lots and the rears of buildings. Overall the park is attractive and well-used. However, additional landscape buffering from the parking areas could provide a more garden-like setting. Also, building owners should be encouraged to improve the appearance of the rear facades of their buildings and allow access from the waterfront to their businesses. The floating dock that was recently installed at Lions Park will provide another access point for tourists, and opens up the opportunity for such activities

as river cruises. It is recommended that the floating dock eventually be converted into a permanent dock.

The grounds of the Grundy Museum and Library are also attractive and well-maintained. Yet, there is limited access to the grounds. The borough should work with the Museum and Library to ensure that access to the waterfront grounds is open from the street level whenever the Library and not just the Museum is open. More welcoming signage, stating the park's hours and rules, would let the public know that this is area of the waterfront is accessible to the public.

In the Land Use Element, it was recommended that the Conservation Zoning District be expanded to include the Maple Beach area. Maple Beach could be acquired from Rohm & Haas, who are unlikely to develop the site due to its environmental constraints, through a conservation easement. The neighboring Bristol Marsh was also obtained from Rohm & Haas through a conservation easement. The Nature Conservancy protects and maintains the Bristol Marsh and a similar partnership could be achieved for Maple Beach. *The Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan* recommends that a recreation trail extend around the Bristol Marsh to Maple Beach and then continue along the Delaware waterfront into Bristol Township and eventually Bensalem Township. The borough may also wish to consider purchasing the property and developing a portion of the site as a public marina. All Construction and conservation in the area of the Otter Creek watershed should take into consideration the recommendations of *The Otter Creek Stormwater Management and Flood Control Study* prepared by the Bucks County Planning Commission in 1999.

Riverfront North is an area in which future development is anticipated. In order to continue efforts to enhance public access to the Delaware River, it is recommended that the borough require future development in this area to reserve land for public access along the entire length of the river.

Objective: Continue the restoration of the Delaware Canal.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

The Delaware Canal was constructed in the 19th Century as way to transport goods, especially coal, from the Lehigh Valley and points north to the Delaware River where the goods could be quickly shipped. The canal starts in Easton and continues for 60 miles to Bristol Borough, its terminus. The canal was closed in 1931. Portions of the canal have been restored. Mule-drawn canal boat rides and the Lock Tender's House Visitor Center are located in New Hope. However, the final portion of the canal and its first few locks, which are located in Bristol Borough, have

been filled or left dry. The locations of the final locks are recognized by markers and special pavers. The unloading crane is memorialized by “The Circle,” a monument at the former site of the crane now located in Lions Park. A portion of the canal adjacent to the Grundy Mill and the Canal Lagoon have been restored by the borough. Water is fed into this portion of the canal by wells. Trails run along the former path of the canal through Bristol. However, from Carpenter Street to the Delaware River, the canal and its locks have been filled. The canal bed from the Lagoon north to the border with Bristol Township is dry.

Delaware Canal State Park was founded in the 1930s. Later the canal was recognized as a National Historic Landmark and the towpath was declared a National Recreation Trail. The canal and its adjacent lands have also been recognized by the National Park Service as the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor. In 1993, the Delaware Canal was placed on the “Pennsylvania at Risk” list and currently remains there. This list was created by Preservation Pennsylvania, a private historic preservation organization, to highlight endangered historic properties. The Delaware Canal was placed on the list due to its deteriorated condition caused by neglect, lack of funding and damage from flooding storms.

The Historic Delaware Canal Improvement Corporation, a 501(c)(3), was founded in 2000 to head a capital campaign to establish an endowment for canal restoration and maintenance work.

Implementation Strategies

Recent improvements to the Delaware Canal in Bristol include restoration of the Lagoon and construction of the Spurline Trail which follows the old towpath to some extent. *The Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan* recommends that the portions of the canal that have been filled in should be restored as well as the locks. The Delaware Canal played a large part in Bristol’s economic development as a transportation and commerce center. For the most part, the canal’s role has been forgotten as large portions of the existing canal are not accessible and the final two miles have been filled. As the *Waterfront Revitalization Plan* states, “Restoration of the canal and locks would reinforce Bristol’s historic role in the Delaware Canal. The restoration can be a catalyst for redevelopment of lands adjacent to the canal and locks. Restoration of the canal and reuse of historic buildings can also contribute to the borough’s historically-oriented tourism economy.” Other communities along the canal have used the canal to boost tourism, including New Hope and Easton. In addition to considering restoring the canal and locks, trails and signage along the canal should be installed and improved. The borough should pursue restoration of the dry bed of the canal first, since this will require less funding and infrastructure improvements. Returning water to this portion

of the canal should be implemented in conjunction with other municipalities upriver.



Delaware Canal Crane Marker in Lions Park

In fall 2005, the Delaware Canal was granted funding by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for canal and tow-path restoration for areas of the park damaged by storms, such as Hurricane Floyd. Previous funding for Delaware Canal restoration programs have come from the Historic Delaware Canal Improvement Corporation, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Growing Greener program, and federal and state transportation funds. Another possible source of funding would be the Pennsylvania Heritage Park Program. This program promotes the development of public-private partnerships in addition to providing financial and technical assistance. This program's primary objective is to protect and promote heritage areas by showcasing the historic, scenic and recreational resources unique to these areas to spur economic development.

Challenge Cost Share Grants are available from the National Park Service. Grants are available as a 50% matching fund program. This program provides project funding to preserve or improve natural, cultural and recreational resources including National Historic Landmarks. Funding awards range from \$3,000 to \$30,000. Most awards have been in the range of \$10,000 to \$15,000.

Another funding source from the National Park Service, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, is the Save America's Treasures Program which addresses the urgent preservation needs of the nation's most significant historic sites and collections.

Objective: Promote use of the extensive trail and park system.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Bristol has a number of parks that allow passive and active recreation with a variety of landscaped and natural areas. The borough's parks reflect its natural, historic and cultural resources. Bristol has over three miles of trails as part of the Spurline Trail, which leads from the Delaware River waterfront to the Delaware Canal and eventually through the neighborhoods to the Bristol Marsh.

As discussed in the Land Use Element, there is a parcel of land located at the far southern end of the Green Lane Light Industrial Area that abuts the Delaware Canal, the Spurline Trail and Lagoon Park. This area was identified by the *Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County, Pennsylvania* (1999) as a Priority 3 site. Priority 3 sites have county-wide or local significance with small or degraded populations of state-listed rare species. This site is 15 to 20 acres and includes old fields, coastal plain forest and emergent wetland habitats. It contains populations of four rare plants: forked rush, Maryland meadow beauty, round-leaved eupatorium and southern red oak. The site is somewhat degraded, but provides a buffer between existing natural and recreation areas (the Delaware Canal, Lagoon Park, the Spurline Trail and recreation fields) and the Green Lane Light Industrial Park.

The Bristol Marsh, located at the mouth of Mill Creek adjacent to Lions Park, is another well-known natural area in Bristol Borough. The marsh was acquired through a conservation easement from Rohm & Haas and Bristol Borough. The 18-acre marsh is protected and maintained by the Nature Conservancy, which runs educational programs at the marsh from the Silver Lake Nature Center in Bristol Township. Viewing platforms and a nature trail with interpretive signs have been installed. The Bristol Marsh is a rare natural community type, a freshwater tidal marsh. The marsh ecosystem functions as a nursery, pollution filter and water purifier for the Delaware River. Bristol Marsh is the best remaining example of this vanishing natural community in Pennsylvania.



Bristol Marsh from a Viewing Platform

Bristol Marsh was categorized as a Priority 2 site by the *Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County, Pennsylvania*. Priority 2 sites have county-wide and in some cases state-wide significance due to their overall quality and diversity, and importance of the resources they contain. The marsh provides a habitat for six state-listed rare plants and a variety of birds.

A portion of Silver Lake Nature Center is also located in Bristol Borough. The 235-acre park is located west of Route 13 on Bath Road and contains Silver Lake, a dammed portion of Mill Creek that has extensive wetlands in the upper regions. The park links to Black Ditch Park and Delhass Woods from a continuous strip of coastal plain habitat along Mill Creek and its tributary, Black Ditch Creek. Silver Lake was once a popular area for medicinal bathing in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Now it provides a habitat for endangered and rare species including Redbelly Turtles, Southern Leopard Frogs and the Maryland Meadow Beauty flowers. The Nature Center amenities include a visitor interpretation center, extensive trails and picnic areas. The Nature Center is run by the Bucks County Department of Parks and Recreation. Silver Lake is categorized as a Priority 2 site in the *Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County, Pennsylvania*.

The borough also offers recreation facilities including baseball fields, basketball courts, soccer fields and tennis courts. The Grundy Recreation Center on Beaver Street is an indoor skating rink that also provides a game and a community meeting room.

Implementation Strategies

With a wealth of parks and natural areas, the borough should work to further connect these parks, increase usership and awareness, and continue to upgrade the parks. Connectivity can be improved by continuing bike lanes and pedestrian crosswalks over roadways and by providing directional signage. Directional signage would show the trail user's location on the trail and show points of interest and their distances from the user. Trails should also connect to the Silver Lake Nature Center and to Maple Beach. *The Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan* advances the idea of a waterfront trail that crosses municipal lines. The *Waterfront Revitalization Plan* also recommends that Silver Lake be connected to the Delaware River and Canal using natural stream corridors. The *Plan* further recommends that directional signs should be coordinated along the waterfront trails, which would include the Spurline Trail.

By providing directional signage, the trails would increase intra-borough and inter-municipal usage. Larger and clearer identification signage will also improve awareness of the borough's parks. Additional interpretive signage should be located along the trails not only to highlight the park history, but also the history of Bristol. Some of the existing interpretive signage, especially at the Bristol Marsh, is damaged. Maintaining signage will encourage more park usership. Additional benches, bike racks, trash cans, lighting and landscaping should also be provided along the trails. The borough should also relocate an old beehive kiln now in a wooded area behind the Green Lane Light Industrial Park to the Spurline Trail as monument to Bristol's industrial history.



Beehive Kiln

As recommended by the Land Use Element, the Conservation Zoning District should also be expanded to include the environmentally sensitive area at the far southern end of the Green Lane Light Industrial Area. By preserving this area, the borough not only retains an environmentally sensitive area, but a buffer between light industrial uses and recreational uses.

An Open Space and Recreation Plan should be developed. This plan would inventory all existing recreation facilities and programs, parks and open space in the borough. Current and future needs would be evaluated

and prioritized recommendations would help guide the borough's acquisition, maintenance and recreation programming over a ten year period.

In addition to improving and expanding formal parks, the borough should invest in neighborhood greening projects as initially discussed in the Housing and Demographics Element. Community greening projects increase community involvement and property upkeep. Community greening projects often include park and street clean-ups, planters and street trees. The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society provides training and technical assistance for community greening projects and leaders. TreeVitalize, a grant program run by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, promotes urban tree coverage by increasing the number of street trees and urban park plantings. The borough should pursue funding from this grant program. The borough Shade Tree Commission should be renewed to handle tree planting priorities and maintenance. The Morris Arboretum has been commissioned by the Commonwealth to provide technical assistance to municipalities under the TreeVitalize program.

Objective: Utilize national, state and private preservation funding resources to protect and restore historic resources.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

One of Bristol Borough's great resources is its history. Bristol has a number of individual properties and districts on the National Register. Bristol has four National Register Historic Districts all of which were placed on the register in 1987: the Bristol Historic District, Bristol Industrial Historic District, Jefferson Land Association Historic District and the Harriman Historic District. (Map 4.1) Only one of the historic districts, the Bristol Historic District, is overseen by a Historical Architectural Review Board. A Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB) can be established by local ordinance once the district has been included on the National Register and a certified resolution from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission has been received. HARB ensures that exterior changes (except paint colors) to properties in the Bristol Historic District are historically sympathetic. HARB meets once a month and typically has two applications per month.

The Bristol Historic District contains the oldest collection of buildings compared to the other historic districts. The Bristol Historic District radiates out from the intersection of Mill and Radcliffe Streets, Bristol's downtown commercial corridor. The district is 28 acres and contains approximately 350 buildings. Primarily, these buildings date from the 18th

Century and the first half of the 19th Century. The majority of the buildings in this district are residential.

The Bristol Industrial Historic District includes a number of former mill buildings including the Grundy Mill complex dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. There are a total of 37 buildings and seven structures in the nearly 14-acre district. The most notable feature of the district is the Grundy Mill Clock Tower. The majority of the former mill buildings have been rehabilitated for adaptive reuse as office buildings.

Developed in 1917 and 1918 to meet demand for worker's housing, the Jefferson Land Association built five blocks of distinctive attached (rowhouse style) housing. The Jefferson Land Association Historic District recognizes this private housing development for wartime workers.

The Harriman Historic District, a planned residential community, was constructed by the United States Shipping Boards Emergency Fleet Corporation primarily in 1918. There are over 100 residential buildings in the district. The houses were built in the Tudor and Colonial Revival styles. Attached housing was designed to give the appearance of being one larger residence. As part of the project a public school was also constructed. The Harriman neighborhood is known for its unusual elliptical layout.

Implementation Strategies

Preserving historic architecture and buildings increases property values, promotes tourism and encourages investment. Bristol Borough should continue to promote the protection of its historic resources. Burlington City, New Jersey, located directly across the Delaware River, has a similar development history as Bristol. Through aggressive preservation of its historic buildings and districts by enforcement of historic design regulations and funding sources, Burlington City has sparked investment and increased tourism.

Currently only the Bristol Historic District is overseen by a Historic Architectural Review Board. Applications to the Board are at the discretion of the property owner. Neither board members, borough inspections staff, nor the general public report violations of the historic regulations. The Bristol Industrial Historic District retains more of its original character than the other historic districts. There have been major changes to the properties in the Jefferson Land Association and Harriman Historic Districts that now obscure their historic character. To prevent future unsympathetic changes and encourage restoration, the borough should consider expanding the jurisdiction of HARB to the other National Register Historic Districts. A set of historic guidelines would have to be developed for each of the districts. The *Historic Bristol Design Guide*

should be updated to include these new design guidelines, along with an explanation of the HARB application process and information regarding possible funding and material sources. This information would be distributed to property owners in the historic district. Enforcement is crucial to historic preservation and restoration. There should be increased oversight and penalties for unapproved exterior changes in the Bristol Historic District. This enforcement could be handled by borough inspectors. Even if historic oversight committees are not formed for the other residential districts, resources such as historic design standards should be available to all community members from HARB.

Jefferson Land Association Historic District



Historically Sympathetic Restoration



Historically Unsympathetic Restoration

There are a number of possible funding sources for updating the design guidelines and expanding the role of HARB. The Preservation Services Fund provides nonprofit organizations and public agencies with matching grants from \$500 to \$5,000 (typically from \$1,000 to \$1,500) for preservation planning and education efforts. Funds may be used to obtain professional expertise in areas such as architecture, preservation planning, land-use planning, fundraising, organizational development and preservation education activities to educate the public.

The Johanna Favrot Fund for Historic Preservation provides nonprofit organizations and public agencies grants (ranging from \$2,500 to \$10,000) for projects that contribute to the preservation or the recapture of an

authentic sense of place. Funds may be used for professional advice, conferences, workshops and education programs.

Monies from Cynthia Woods Mitchell Fund for Historic Interiors may be used for professional expertise, print and video communications materials and education programs. The fund provides nonprofit organizations and public agencies grants ranging from \$2,500 to \$10,000 to assist in the preservation, restoration and interpretation of historic interiors.



Historically Sympathetic Restoration



Historically Unsympathetic Restoration

Local Initiative grants support local nonprofit preservation organizations that are hiring their first full-time staff member. A Technical Assistance grant of up to \$2,500 is available for strengthening organizational capacity and developing the resources necessary to hire and effectively use professional staff.

The Collaborative Pilot grant looks for creative partnership projects that advance the preservation mission and build the preservation movement at the local level. A Technical Assistance grant of up to \$2,500 is available for project planning in the following areas: architecture, preservation, land-use, organizational development and public policy.

Many of the buildings along Mill Street at the core of the Bristol Historic District have not retained their original architecture and no longer reflect their historic origins. There are a number of Main Street funding programs that will aid in the preservation of Mill Street.

The Pennsylvania Downtown Center promotes and supports the vitality of Pennsylvania's downtowns and traditional neighborhood business districts. The Center provides local groups with the techniques and strategies to revitalize their downtowns.

The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development operates a Main Street Program designed to help a community's downtown economic development effort through the establishment of a local organization dedicated to downtown revitalization, the management of downtown revitalization efforts by hiring a full-time professional downtown coordinator, and design/façade improvement grants to private property owners. There is also a National Main Street Center run by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The National Main Street Center has been working with communities across the nation to revitalize their historic or traditional commercial areas. Based in historic preservation, the program was developed to save historic commercial architecture but has become a powerful economic development tool as well.

Additionally, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission reviews architectural plans and specifications and provides comments on historic building projects for state and federal compliance. They also assist in code-related issues and accessibility programs in the form of letters of support for variances to historic buildings. The Commission also administers the federal Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit (RITC) program in partnership with the National Park Service. The tax credit program is one of the most successful and cost-effective programs that encourage private investment in rehabilitating income-producing historic properties, such as office buildings, rental housing, hotels and retail stores.

This tax credit would be useful not only for rehabilitating Mill Street's commercial properties, but also the numerous historic properties in Bristol that are rental units. The tax credits are available to owners and certain long-term leasers of income-producing properties.

The Inner-City Ventures Fund also finances the rehabilitation of historic buildings that serve the economic and community development needs of low, moderate, or mixed-income developments through loans.

Bristol Historic District (Mill Street)



Historically Sympathetic Restoration



Historically Unsympathetic Restoration

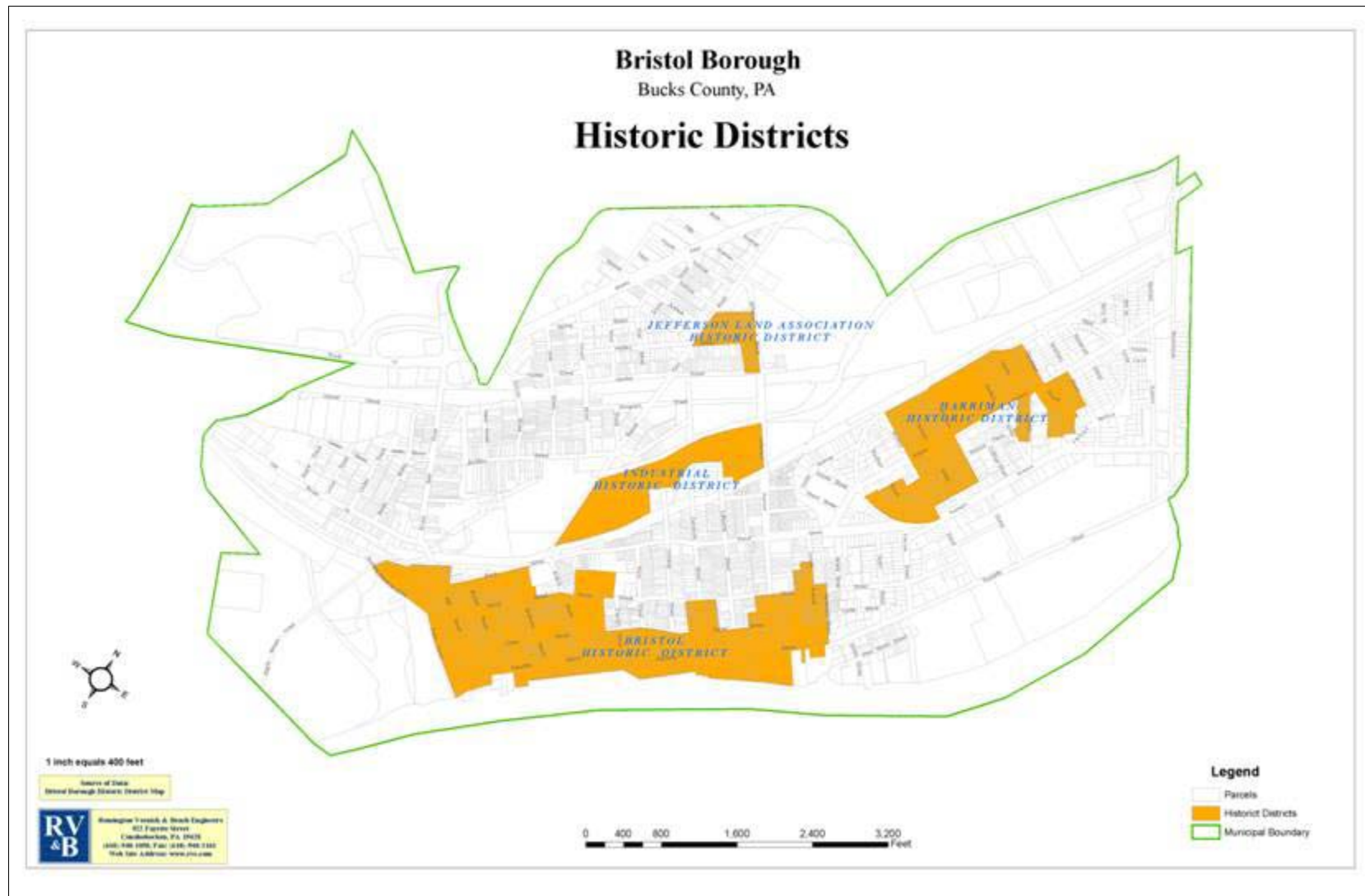
National Register Eligible Properties

Name	Location	Date
<i>Frank Bell House</i>	824 Radcliffe Street	10/30/1985
<i>Bristol Railroad Station</i>	Southeast Corner Washington Street	10/09/1986
<i>Bristol U.S. Post Office</i>	Prospect and Beaver Streets	06/16/1983
<i>Green Lane Railroad Viaduct</i>	Green Lane spans	04/16/1999
<i>Southampton Train Station</i>	East of 2 nd Street Pike	07/11/1986

National Register Listed Properties

Name	Location	Date
<i>Dorrance Mansion</i>	300 Radcliffe Street	10/16/1986
<i>General Stores & Mold Loft Building</i>	1414 Radcliffe Street	07/31/2003
<i>Grundy Mill Complex</i>	Jefferson Avenue and Canal Street	01/09/1986
<i>Jefferson Avenue School</i>	Jefferson Avenue and Pond Street	07/18/1985

4.3 Historic Districts Maps



CHAPTER 5

Economic Development Element

Goal: Encourage expansion of economic base.

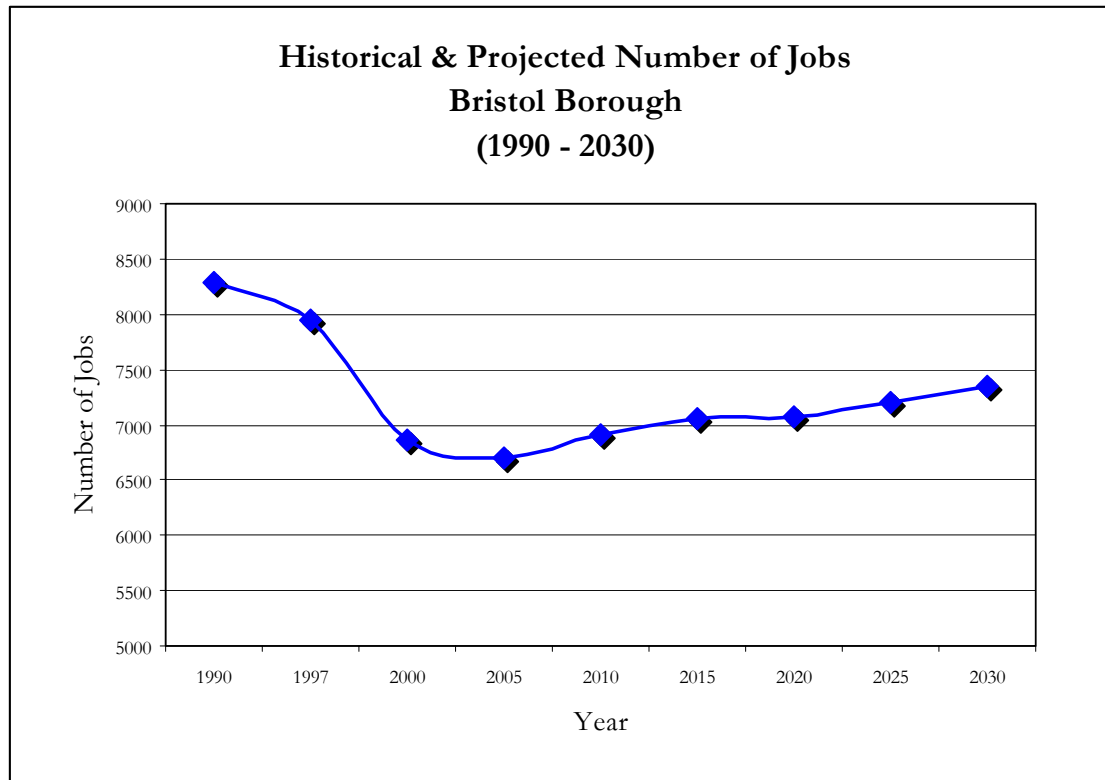
5.1 Background

The Economic Development Element examines the borough's changing economic base. For centuries, Bristol has been a hub for Lower Bucks County as a trade, transportation and manufacturing center. The focus of Bristol's economy has reflected the predominant national economic trends for the past three centuries. As Bristol enters the 21st Century, its economic base must shift focus again. While the manufacturing that supported Bristol for the past century and a half remains a viable employment and fiscal sector, its prominence continues to wane. According to the 2000 Decennial Census, approximately seventy-six percent (76%) of the borough's residents work outside of the borough. This indicates that the borough is not providing employment for most of its citizens. In order to build its economic base, Bristol must find ways to increase its service industries, especially healthcare, social services, retail market and tourism services.

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission projects that the number of jobs in Bristol will continue to decrease until 2010 when the borough will experience a slight increase. However, jobs are projected to level out in 2020 before rising again in 2025. The projected overall gain from 2000 to 2030 is 479 jobs, or an increase of 7%. (Graph 5.1)

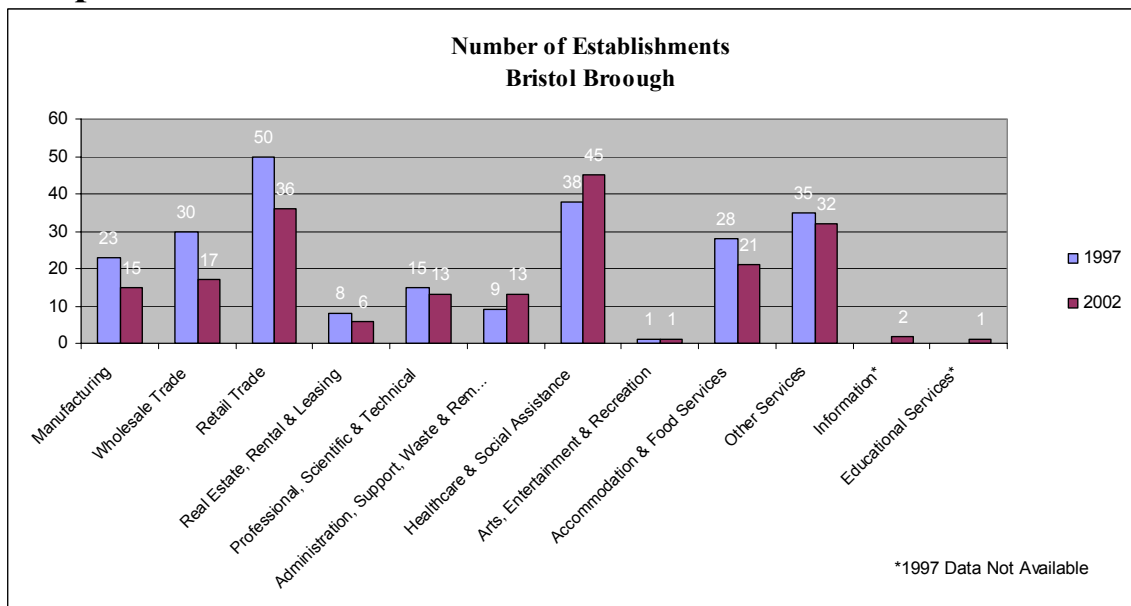
The U.S. Economic Census is conducted every five years. A comparison of the last two Economic Censuses is used below to reveal current trends in the borough. The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) was developed in 2002 to provide standardized economic sector categories for the United States, Canada and Mexico. The NAICS is used as the standard categories for both the 1997 and 2002 data presented.

Graph 5.1



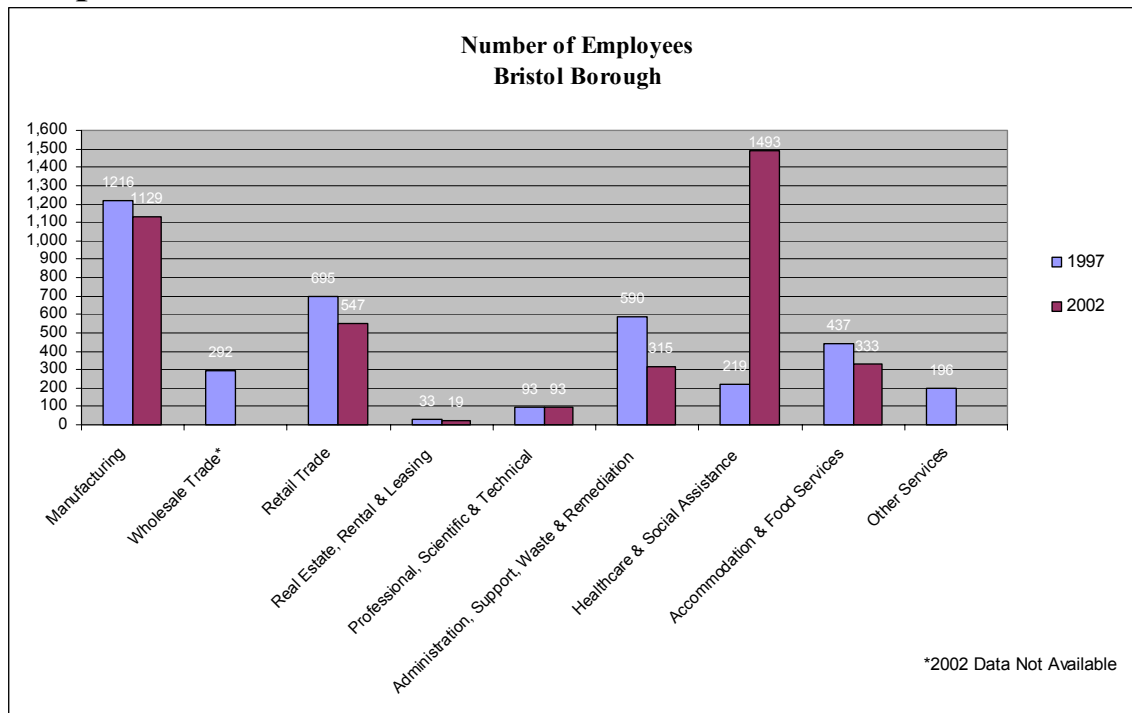
Source: DVRPC Data Bulletin 73 (March 2005)

Graph 5.2



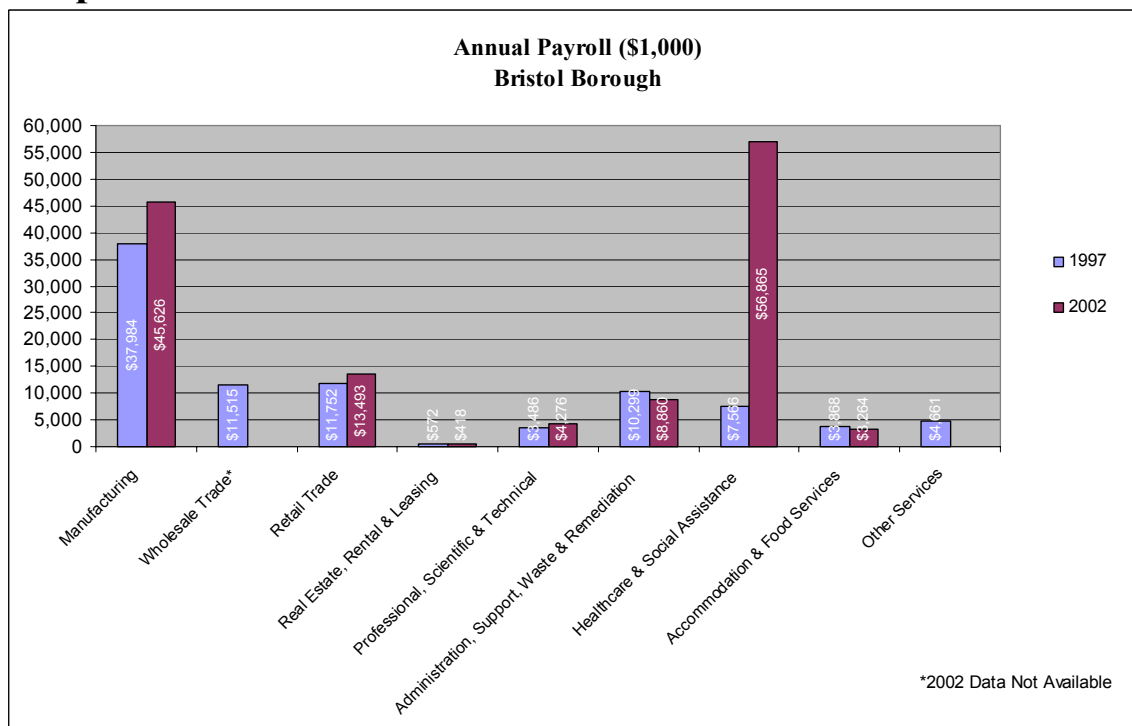
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1997 & 2002 Economic Censuses.

Graph 5.3



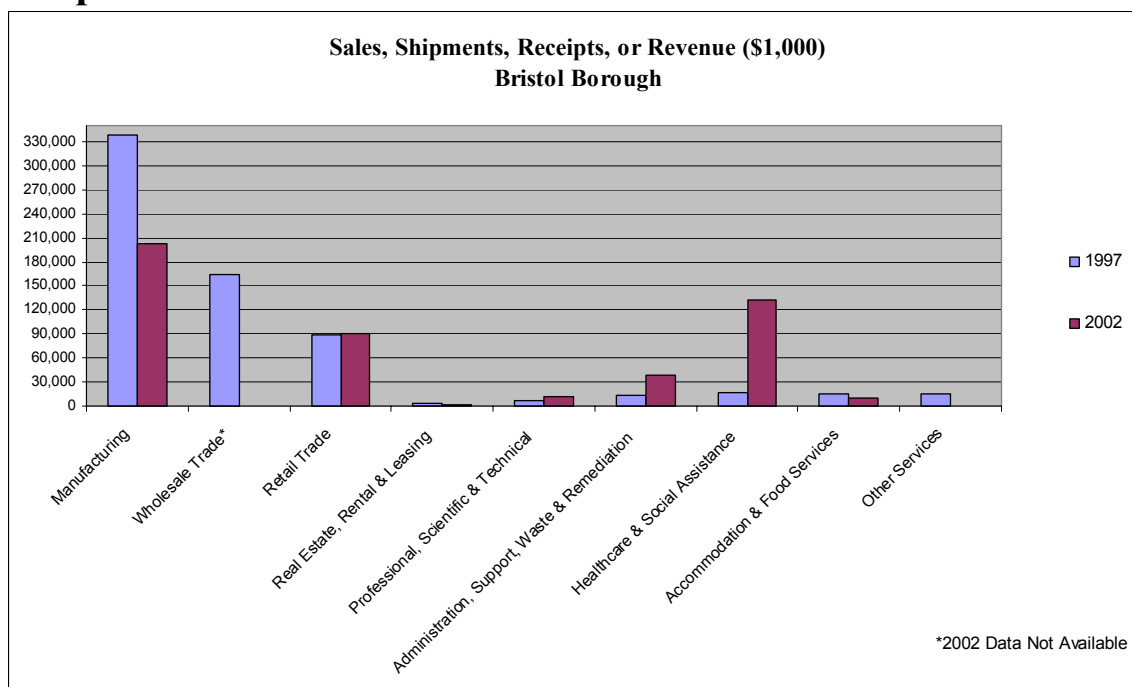
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1997 & 2002 Economic Censuses.

Graph 5.4



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1997 & 2002 Economic Censuses.

Graph 5.5



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1997 & 2002 Economic Censuses.

Manufacturing continues to dominate Bristol's economy; although it declined in three out of the four categories (with an increase only in annual payroll) between 1997 and 2002. Manufacturing ranks second among all the sectors in number of employees and annual payroll and first in sales, shipments, receipts or revenue. However, the healthcare and social assistance sector and the administration and support, waste management and remediation services sector are emergent industries in the borough's economy.

The healthcare and social assistance sector was the fastest growing sector in the number of employees, annual payroll and sales, shipment, receipts or revenue categories, increasing by 582%, 652% and 713%, respectively. The number of healthcare and social assistance establishments grew by 18%. This sector is comprised of healthcare provider offices, day care and family services organizations. The borough's location near the Lower Bucks County Hospital and major transportation route makes Bristol an excellent location for this sector's establishments.

The number of establishments in the administrative, support, waste management and remediation services sector grew at a rate of 44%, the highest rate in of all the industries in the borough. This sector ranked second highest in the rate of growth of its receipts and revenue, increasing by 172%.

In 1997, the retail sector had the highest number of establishments in the borough. However in a five-year time period, Bristol's retail sector declined by 14 establishments, or 28%. Subsequently the number of employees in the retail sector also declined. The highest number of establishments is now provided by the healthcare and social assistance category.

Two sectors declined in all four categories. Real estate, rental and leasing sector declined in all four categories; 25% in number of establishments, 42% in number of employees, 27% in payroll and 16% in sales, shipments, receipts or revenue. Accommodation and food services sector declined by 25% in number of establishments, 24% in number of employees, 16% in annual payroll and 25% in sales, shipments, receipts or revenue.

5.2 Discussion of Objectives

Objective: Encourage retention and expansion of existing business and new business establishment.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

As discussed above, the borough's historic and current, though declining, economic base is manufacturing. Bristol has two major manufacturers, Rohm & Haas and Keystone Lighting Corporation. They are both categorized as heavy industry. Bristol also has many smaller manufacturing, warehouse and wholesale companies located in its three light industrial and one modified industrial district. The Green Lane Light Industrial Park and Howell Street industrial area house a number of small-to medium-sized businesses. The light industrial area along Radcliffe Street is primarily the location of the Simon & Schuster warehouse. All of these light industrial areas are experiencing issues with vacancy, especially the area along Otter Street.

The borough has been successful in transforming former industrial areas, such as the Grundy Mill Complex and Riverfront North. However, finding office tenants for these refurbished properties has been difficult at times despite the fact that the healthcare, social assistance and administrative and support sectors have been growing in the borough.

Additionally, as discussed in the Land Use Element, the town center, neighborhood, general and highway commercial districts are experiencing issues with vacancy, inappropriate uses and an increasing number of residential primary uses. This is reflected in the decreasing number of establishments located in these districts including retail, food services and

professional services. Even so, new industrial/commercial construction has been proposed for the area around Bristol Commerce Park. This development will bring increased revenue to the borough.

Implementation Strategies

Retaining, expanding and attracting new businesses will require the collaboration of the borough's business leaders, citizens and government officials. This will ensure that economic development initiatives are coordinated and meet the needs of both the residents and organizations in Bristol. The primary tools for ensuring the expansion of Bristol's economic base are the Economic Development Committee, the revision of the zoning ordinance per the Land Use Element's implementation strategies and the strict enforcement of building and design codes.

The Economic Development Committee should focus on funding, marketing and design issues to promote business development. The committee should include representatives from the business community, residents and borough officials. Funding sources for spurring economic development include state and federal funding programs, non-profit foundations and major area employers. In particular, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development offers many funding programs including the Enterprise Zone Program and the Main and Elm Street programs that are discussed later in this element. In addition, the Bucks County Office of Business and Community Development provides technical assistance, referrals, grants and revolving loan funds for small business development. Furthermore, the county's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program also provides aid that may be helpful for economic development initiatives.

A Bucks County Community College branch has recently opened in the Bucks County Business Center in Bristol Township, not far from the borough. The Economic Development Committee can set up a mechanism to refer entrepreneurs or existing businesses to the business center as a source for training, technical assistance or other educational resources for maintaining viable commercial or industrial establishments.

The borough's website should include information regarding business establishment processes and opportunities in Bristol. The committee should maintain a list of all the businesses that operate in the borough and track locations of vacancy. This will also allow the borough to evaluate the type and location of businesses that are succeeding or failing. GIS, Geographic Information Systems, could be useful in tracking these trends as recommended in the Housing and Demographics Element. Working with real estate professionals to determine when leases will expire can help the borough target retention efforts on businesses that are considering

relocating and allow the borough to market locations to potential new or existing expanding businesses.

The borough should hire a consulting firm to conduct a market study. A market study will determine the demand for various market sectors throughout the borough, preferred locations for the sectors and business development strategies. The creation of a Business Improvement District (BID) and Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID) designation (both discussed in the Land Use Element), as well as the creation of a Community Development Corporation (CDC) (recommended in the Housing and Demographics Element) will also benefit from a market study.

Objective: Improve and adapt commercial districts.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

There are several commercial districts in the borough. (Map 2.4) The Town Center District, which runs primarily along Mill Street from Pond Street to Radcliffe Street, is Bristol's "Main Street." It lies at the heart of Bristol's historic and natural landmarks. Mill Street is dominated by professional and medical offices, personal services and financial institutions. There are not enough retail stores and restaurants to make Mill Street a shopping destination. Vacancy is common and often the historic facades have been obscured by modern renovations. There is plentiful free parking provided in the rear of Mill Street along the Bristol Marsh. Parking meters have been installed along Mill Street to prevent patrons and office workers from parking on the street all day. Although Mill Street is an ailing retail corridor, it has numerous assets that make economic and physical revitalization possible. These assets include its natural setting near the Delaware River, proximity to major transportation modes, historic charm, plentiful free rear parking and large local population base.

There are three NC Neighborhood Commercial Districts in the borough. They are located along Farragut Avenue, around the SEPTA train station and in the North Side neighborhood along Beaver Street. The NC Districts along Beaver Street and at the SEPTA station have many instances of residences as principle uses and vacancy. The NC District along Farragut Avenue is experiencing similar issues as the other NC Districts; however, this area also appears to have non-conforming heavy commercial typical of the neighboring GC General Commercial District. This is further discussed in the Land Use Element.

Two of the three GC General Commercial Districts are experiencing major vacancy issues. The first of these two GC Districts is located along Otter

Street at Bath Road; the second is along Radcliffe Street between Monroe and Harrison Streets. The third GC District at Green Lane and Farragut Avenue appears to be well occupied.

The HC Highway Commercial District is located along Route 13. Bristol Commerce Park is included in the HC District. Overall occupancy is high along Route 13; however, there are vacancy issues in Commerce Park.

Implementation Strategies

The Mill Street commercial corridor is failing to attract enough patrons to be viable as a shopping and dining destination. The borough will need to implement strategies to promote the establishment of varied retail shops and restaurants and attract people from both within and outside the borough to visit this corridor.

Office uses, such as physicians' offices and personal services, are prevalent along Mill Street. These uses do not promote a lively 'Main Street', shopping corridor. Though these businesses are valuable revenue sources and provide needed services for residents, the borough should make efforts to lure these uses away from Mill Street to numerous other commercially zoned areas in the borough. The NC and GC Districts, which are experiencing issues with vacancy, would be more suitable for professional and medical offices. As recommended in the Land Use Element, in order to enliven Mill Street as a dining destination, the ordinance should be revised to specifically permit outdoor seating for dining as a permitted use in the TC District and establish design guidelines for outdoor seating and dining.

As recommended initially in the Land Use Element, a Business Improvement District (BID) program (as enabled under the Neighborhood Improvement District Act enacted in 2000) should be established by the borough. A BID is a district defined by specific boundaries within which all properties, except tax-exempt properties, are assessed a fee that is used to provide a variety of services to the district. Assessment revenues are generally collected by the municipality and then directed to the BID's management. A BID provides economic development services such as streetscape maintenance, security, marketing, beautification efforts and special events coordination. If a BID is established, it should work closely with the Economic Development Committee to coordinate overlapping concerns including business attraction, community services, event coordination and marketing.

The BID can also advise and coordinate programs such as façade, streetscape and gateway improvements for the borough. A façade improvement program could help restore and maintain historic buildings along the Mill Street corridor. The façade improvement program could

work by having either the BID or the borough underwrite a portion of a loan to a property owner wishing to improve their building's façade. With the support of the borough and/or BID, a lending institution would agree to offer a lower interest rate on the loan. This subcommittee should also promote volunteerism to promote its goals. Of course, the façade improvements in the Bristol Historic District must receive the approval of HARB.

To establish the BID, the borough should hire a consultant to work with the governing body, businesses and residents to determine the BID's boundaries, powers, services and funding source. The Pennsylvania Downtown Center is one source for such consulting services. Also, the type of organization that will run the BID would need to be determined. Under the Neighborhood Improvement District Act, the managing organization can be an existing nonprofit corporation, a community development corporation or a municipal authority. A municipal authority is the only one of these types of organizations that can bill and collect directly from property owners. The borough should then adopt legislation to establish the district boundaries and authorize the BID's management organization. The Pennsylvania Main Street program offers matching grants for administrative services to BIDs. The borough should seek funding through this program simultaneously with its efforts to establish a BID.

As mentioned previously in this element, a market study should be implemented to evaluate the level of demand and the types of commercial establishments that are in demand. This market study should be undertaken in conjunction with the BID consulting services by the same firm. The market study should include all commercial areas of the borough, not just the Mill Street corridor. However, the BID would be restricted to the Mill Street corridor.

Funding from the Pennsylvania Department's Elm Street Program should be pursued for commercial and residential districts adjacent to the TC District. The Elm Street Program is designed to aid mixed-use neighborhood areas in a coordinated manner with the adjacent central business district development.

Additionally, the creation of a Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID), as recommended in the Circulation and Movement Element, could foster the redevelopment of the NC District surrounding the train station.

Objective: Support tourism as an economic generator.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

The borough can draw on numerous resources to attract visitors. Among these are its Delaware River waterfront, especially Lions Park, the Delaware Canal and Spurline Trails and four National Register Historic Districts. These resources attract visitors interested in historic and natural attractions. Currently, the borough supports a number of events held at Lions Park throughout the year, including the summer concert series, car show and barbeque festival. In addition, several events in the borough are organized by local civic associations such as the Lions Club and the Bristol Cultural and Historical Society.

Implementation Strategies

Bristol should build upon its existing amenities and successes to attract more visitors. Unlike many communities in Bucks County, Bristol's core is located on and oriented towards the Delaware River. The waterfront presents Bristol with an attractive and unique setting that should be used to the borough's advantage. Lions Park is well maintained and is transforming into a sculpture garden, as discussed in the Natural, Historical and Cultural Element. Any future changes to the park's design should take into consideration the type and level of events held there. Additionally, the borough should consider using the boat dock at Lions Park for possible river cruise tours that could connect to other Bucks County communities, Burlington Island and/or Burlington City, New Jersey.

Burlington City has a similar history and development pattern to Bristol. Burlington has been very successful in reinvigorating its downtown by capitalizing on its historic architecture, Delaware riverfront and dining and shopping attractions. Bristol should look to Burlington as a model of what can be accomplished in the borough, especially along Mill and Radcliffe Streets. In addition to using Burlington as a model, Bristol should team with Burlington tourism initiatives, including cross-promotions, websites, brochures and historical tours.

Physical and economic improvement of the Mill Street corridor is essential to encouraging visitors to Bristol. Retail shops and restaurants are integral to any tourism infrastructure. Increasing visitors is key to the economic development of Mill Street and will be a primary function of the proposed BID.

The borough should continue to support the community festivals and initiatives of local nonprofit organizations and encourage new events. This can be accomplished by providing funding, advertising and community services. Also, the proposed BID can coordinate event promotions,

logistics and community services such as trash collection, parking and security.

Additionally, the borough's natural resources provide visitors and residents with active recreation opportunities. As recommended in the Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources Element, the borough's extensive trail network should be expanded further to connect the borough with neighboring municipalities and especially Silver Lake Nature Center. Greater use of the trails system can be encouraged by providing a coordinated trails wayfinding sign system and more trail amenities such as interpretive signage, lighting, benches, bike racks and water fountains.

Objective: Encourage visitors by improving gateway areas.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Bristol Borough's four major gateway areas are located along Route 13 at the intersections of Route 13 and Route 413 (New Rodgers Road), Bath Street, Beaver Street and Green Lane. Two of these intersections lie primarily within the borough at Bath Street and Beaver Street, and two lie entirely within Bristol Township at Route 413 and Green Lane. All of these intersections are targeted for improvements under the *Bucks County Route 13 Revitalization Study* as discussed in further detail by the Circulation and Movement Element.

Implementation Strategies

The borough should pursue not only traffic circulation improvements to these four intersections, but also their enhancement as gateways to the borough. This will require corporation with Bristol Township, Bucks County and the state and federal Departments of Transportation.

All four gateways should have a unified and welcoming design that is clear, clean and informative. The borough may wish to use the "Welcome Friend" created for General Lafayette's visit to the borough in 1824 as model for its gateway signage. A firm should be hired to create a professional look for the gateway areas that includes signage, banners, lighting and streetscape improvements.

Objective: Continue adaptive reuse and redevelopment of industrial sites.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

The Grundy Mill complex, Canal Works and Island View Crossing are all architecturally significant industrial buildings within the borough. The Canal Works has been renovated and now houses a wide variety of establishments. The Grundy Mill complex also houses a wide variety of uses, including wholesale and office uses. Island View Crossing, the former Dial Soap Building, has been converted into 180,000 square feet of Class A office space. At the Green Lane Industrial Area, a developer currently plans to renovate some of the vacant industrial buildings into flex space. Flex space allows for flexibility between office and other uses such as manufacturing, laboratory and warehousing. There are also plans to demolish some of the remaining vacant buildings on this site.

All of these developments lie in the Pennsylvania Enterprise Zone of Bucks County, a zone that includes Riverfront North, the Green Lane Industrial Area and Grundy Mill complex areas. The Enterprise Zone Program is designed to increase the quantity and quality of available job opportunities. The Bucks County Redevelopment Authority administers the Enterprise Zone Program by providing low-interest loans and grants, technical assistance for small and start-up businesses, brownfield remediation assistance and business attraction marketing.

Implementation Strategies

Though the Enterprise Zone of Bucks County exited the Enterprise Zone Program in 2004, certain funding sources will be available through this program as late as 2009, and the revolving loan fund is designed to carry out initiatives after Bucks County has exited the program. Despite the benefits offered by the Enterprise Zone Program, significant vacancy exists among these buildings. The borough should consider this when deciding whether to approve and initiate plans for commercial development within its Enterprise Zone areas. The borough may wish to encourage residential uses within its Enterprise areas, such as the plans to convert the Grundy Powerhouse into condominiums and possible new condominium construction at Riverfront North.

However, despite high vacancy in industrially zoned areas, the borough should continue to retain manufacturing and wholesale trade business due to its skilled workforce and excellent transportation connections. Industrial businesses should be particularly encouraged at the Green Lane Light Industrial Area due to its isolation from other incompatible uses (especially residential uses) and its proximity to a freight rail line and the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

The Green Lane Industrial Area requires improvements to the access roads to the site. Recommendations for these improvements are in the Circulation and Movement Element. In addition business owners in this district may consider forming an Industrial Improvement District (IID), as authorized under the Pennsylvania Neighborhood Improvement District Act (P.L. 949, No. 130). The IID would require a tax on businesses in these areas that would be used to fund roadway improvements and district maintenance, among other possible services.

CHAPTER 6

Circulation & Movement Element

Goal: Improve the safety, attractiveness and efficiency of all modes of transportation and the integration of these various modes into a more cohesive transportation network.

6.1 Background

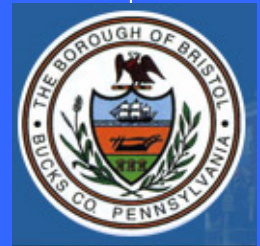
Bristol Borough is well integrated into the regional transportation network, having convenient access to major regional highways and rail routes, an extensive pedestrian and bicycle trail network within the borough, as well as river access. This multi-modal transportation system represents a significant asset for the borough relative to numerous other communities in Bucks County and the surrounding region. Accordingly, a central theme of this Circulation and Movement Element is the forwarding of policies and actions that encourage efficient utilization of all available modes of transport.

Specifically, projected employment growth within the borough can be expected to create increasing pressure on the borough's existing roadways. In addition to suggesting specific roadway improvements to help accommodate this additional load, this element articulates strategies and policies to enhance use of the borough's regional rail station, with each additional rail trip potentially representing one fewer automobile trip.

Table 6.1 indicates the classifications of Bristol's roadways, as well as those roadways with state jurisdiction, as specified under previous borough plans. As a matter of general policy, higher-intensity traffic (such as truck traffic or through traffic) should be directed onto higher-classification roadways.

Table 6.1

Classifications of Bristol's Roadways	
Expressways	
Pennsylvania Turnpike (Toll Road)*	Interstate 95*
Arterials	
U.S. Route 13*	PA Route 413*
Collectors	
Bath Road*	Old Route 13



Classifications of Bristol's Roadways	
Beaver Street	Otter Street
Green Lane Road*	Pond Street
Jefferson Avenue	Radcliffe Street*
Market Street	Wilson Avenue
Mill Street*	
Local Streets	
All Other Roadways	

*State Jurisdiction.

6.2 Discussion of Objectives

Objective: Ensure uses permitted under the prevailing zoning are compatible with the opportunities and constraints of the borough's roadway system.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

For the most part, Bristol's zoning districts and roadway classifications are compatible, with industrial and intensive commercial classifications abutting the borough's arterial roadways (Route 13 and 413), and collector roadways running throughout the borough, providing access to these arterials.

However, there is one instance in particular where a local street appears to be insufficiently improved for the volume and type of traffic it carries. Hunter Road, which provides access for the Green Lane Industrial Area (which has a light industrial zoning classification) does not have a signalized or otherwise well-defined access point, and is generally insufficiently improved for the volume of truck traffic it presently carries. Additionally, the borough presently does not have a designated truck route, meaning that truck thru-traffic is free to use any of the borough's existing roadways, regardless of roadway design or character.

Implementation Strategies

To spur increased development activity in Green Lane Industrial Area, Hunter Road should be fully improved in order to enhance the area's value to the borough as an economic activity generator. This is especially important given the anticipated increased demand for light industrial lands due to the I-95 / PA-Turnpike interchange project. The borough should pursue funding for a full improvement of the Green Lane Industrial Area access road, including acquisition of any additional rights-of-way as necessary. As an alternative, the borough may explore the potential for a

public/private partnership which may involve the privatization of portions of Hunter Road. Individual building owners may consider forming a Business or Industrial Improvement District (BID / IID), as authorized under the Pennsylvania Neighborhood Improvement District Act (P.L. 949, No. 130). Under such a program, businesses within the district would pay a special services tax to fund enhanced roadway improvements and higher-than-typical levels of maintenance within the industrial area.

In addition, the borough should enact an ordinance designating Route 13 and Green Lane as truck routes and prohibiting truck traffic (except for local deliveries) from using other borough roadways.

***Objective:* Ensure that developers and redevelopers appropriately address the traffic-related impacts generated by their projects.**

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Bristol's land development regulations presently do not require applicants to address potential impacts of their projects on the borough's roadway network and parking capacity. Given the concerns expressed by residents and others regarding the availability of parking in the borough, as well as impacts to the borough's roadway and intersection Levels of Service (LOS) that may be anticipated from new development, this element recommends that development regulations require applicants to address impacts generated by their projects.

Implementation Strategies

The borough's development regulations should be revised to require (unless waived by the planning commission) that all applicants for site plan or subdivision approval submit a study assessing any off-site impacts that the proposed development may have on area roadways and intersections. Unless a finding of no significant impact can be demonstrated, the development regulations should further specify that applicants contribute a proportional share toward the cost of any roadway or intersection improvements necessary to maintain the pre-development (or 'no build') LOS and act to improve roadways as necessary. Additionally, given the limited opportunity for roadway capacity expansion within the core of the borough, creative means of addressing traffic impacts should also be addressed with the traffic study submission. Such Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures might include staggered workday start and end times, or the encouragement of ridesharing or public transit, for example.

In addition, this plan recommends that the borough consider instituting a fixed development fee, comprised of a small percentage of the assessed

value of new construction, contributing to a newly established dedicated fund for transportation enhancements (including selected borough acquisition of lands for additional public off-street parking). Under Article V-5 of the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), said fee cannot be collected unless a transportation study is performed which would include establishment of growth areas, calculation of future land development activity and capacity, an assessment of the impact of existing and projected future traffic on the roadway network, and capital improvements planning.

Objective: Increase opportunities for bicycle transportation.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

While Bristol has undertaken substantial improvements in recent years to enhance the pedestrian experience, no specific strategies have been undertaken to enhance the experience of residents or visitors who wish to travel by bicycle. The *Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan* encouraged the provision of bicycle lanes along specific roadways in Bristol, including Mill and Radcliffe Streets, as part of both a local and regional bicycle network.

Implementation Strategies

A bicycle lane should be provided along all collector roadways. In instances where a narrow road with parallel parking is to be shared by cars and bicycles, the use of a shared lane pavement marking (or sharrow) can be an effective and safe alternative to traditional bicycle lanes. Such a marking indicates the general path a bicycle should take on a roadway in order to avoid conflicts with opening driver-side doors from parked cars, and also informs drivers that they should look out for bicyclists. An illustration of one sharrow design as it might be implemented along Radcliffe Street is presented below. The borough should also work with appropriate agencies in providing dedicated bicycle paths along arterial roadways (separated from vehicle traffic) as part of a regional effort to provide such improvements along Routes 13 and/or 413.



Objective: Improve walkability.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Bristol Borough has an extensive pedestrian walkway and trail network, and has additionally undertaken streetscape improvements along a number of significant roadways, including Mill and Radcliffe Streets. These actions, combined with Bristol's well-connected grid street system, help to create a pedestrian-friendly environment. However, Bristol also exhibits a conspicuous lack of crosswalks where recreational paths and sidewalks meet the street.

Implementation Strategies

A borough-wide program of crosswalk improvements should be undertaken, with priority given to streets that have already undergone streetscape improvements, such as Mill and Radcliffe Streets, and also where pedestrian trails 'cross' streets. Ideally, the use of brick or stone pavers should be employed along historic streets to complement other streetscape

improvements and to act as a traffic-calming mechanism. An illustration of the visual impact crosswalks with brick pavers in the vicinity of Mill and Radcliffe Streets is presented below.



The borough should pursue grants as may be available for the provision of appropriate traffic calming measures to include speed humps, speed tables, chicanes, planted medians, curb extensions and crosswalks at as many intersections as possible, with special emphasis on crossings where pedestrian traffic is already encouraged by streetscape improvements or dedicated pedestrian trails. Funding should also be sought for a program of signage improvements to enhance pedestrian safety and also to encourage use of the borough's extensive pedestrian trail network.

It should be noted that under the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code (Title 75, Chapter 35, Section 3542[a]), vehicles are required to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks where no signalization is present. Accordingly, as part of the recommended program of crosswalk improvements, this plan encourages the installation of new signage within the cartway. This signage would be where crosswalks are to be provided mid-block (such as where pedestrian walkways meet the street), which would instruct traffic to yield to pedestrians. This type of signage may also be installed at signalized intersections where high levels of pedestrian traffic occur, and the potential for vehicle/pedestrian conflicts is greatest. An example of the sort of signage envisioned is presented below.



Additional signage should also be installed to alert pedestrians of trail locations and destinations. The provision of signs or monuments depicting mapping of borough or neighborhood-wide trail networks (and alerting the pedestrian of their current location within these networks) is specifically recommended.

Also there should be rigorous enforcement of traffic laws along Radcliffe Street to improve pedestrian safety. Observance of posted speed limits and other traffic regulations along Radcliffe Street should be made a priority. If necessary for this purpose, the borough should consider assuming jurisdiction over Radcliffe Street from PennDOT through a Highway

Transfer (or ‘Turn-Back’) agreement. Under such an agreement, Radcliffe Street would become a local street within the borough, with PennDOT paying the borough an annual fee (on a ‘per mile’ basis) to assist in maintenance and upkeep.

Objective: Promote public transit, and in particular, use of the train station.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

As noted previously, Bristol is well served by public transit. Two SEPTA bus routes traverse the borough: Route 128 runs along Green Lane, Radcliffe Street, Monroe Street, Farragut Avenue, Jefferson Street, Market Street, Pond Street, Mill Street and Bath Street. Route 129 runs along Beaver Street, Pond Street, Bath Street, Route 13 and includes a stop at Commerce Park Shopping Center. In addition, the Bucks County Transportation Management Association (BCTMA) operates the service known as Bristol RUSH which provides peak hour service from the Bristol Train Station to the Canal Works, Island View Crossing, Acme Uniform Company and Rohm & Haas. The borough’s rail station is centrally located (at Garden and Beaver Streets), with roughly half of the borough’s land area being within a one-half mile walking distance of the station (or roughly a ten-minute walk). This plan promotes strategies to increase use of these public transit resources to allow for a relative reduction in the number of automobile trips that would stress the borough’s roadway network.

SEPTA data indicates that there are just over 200 inbound boardings on a typical weekday at the Bristol rail station. Additionally, data from SEPTA also indicates that the parking lot at the train station is typically only 50% full on a normal weekday, which is the lowest level of utilization among the five R-7 rail line stations nearest to the Bristol station (Levittown, Bristol, Croydon, Eddington, and Cornwell Heights stations). This plan therefore seeks to promote utilization of the train station to improve the efficiency of the overall multimodal transport network.

Implementation Strategies

One strategy that may be employed is the integration of train station wayfinding measures into the enhanced pedestrian signage program proposed above. Individual signs might indicate the direction and distance to the train station, for example.

The borough should participate in the Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID) program (as enabled under the Pennsylvania Transit Revitalization Investment District Act; Act 238 of 2004). Under this program, the borough would cooperate with SEPTA in delineating a

specific TRID planning area around the rail station. Within this area, the borough would be eligible for assistance in planning projects, improvements, or maintenance activities which would promote economic development and ridership. The creation of a TRID in the vicinity of the Bristol rail station may be useful in funding the station-oriented signage and pedestrian improvements described above. In addition, given the relative underutilization of the station's park-and-ride lot, the borough should consider development over a portion of the existing parking lot (as part of the TRID initiative).

Objective: Provide adequate parking facilities.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Due to Bristol's historically dense development pattern that predates automobile transportation, many neighborhoods experience difficulty with adequate on-street parking. In the past, Bristol Borough provided additional public parking by acquiring developed parcels and demolishing existing structures, to be replaced by surface parking areas. The borough anticipates that additional parking may be provided with funds collected through a transportation impact fee.

However, while certain portions of the borough presently exhibit parking shortages, other areas include excess capacity, particularly during off-peak times such as at Island View Crossing and behind Mill Street.

Implementation Strategies

Additional public parking can be provided both by construction of new facilities (to be funded in part by the development fee referenced previously) and by more efficient use of existing parking.

The borough should consider a strategy of providing more dispersed, smaller-scale public parking areas rather than larger expanses of parking. Such a strategy is evident along Trenton Avenue in the vicinity of the Junior/Senior High School, where sets of fewer than ten stalls are provided perpendicular to the roadway. Providing stalls through strategies such as this can potentially maximize cost-efficiency while making stalls easily accessible over a wider geographical area.

The cost-effectiveness of various strategies for providing additional parking should be carefully considered prior to the spending of any such funds. Given the cost of acquiring developed parcels and demolishing existing structures, it may prove more cost-effective to construct some amount of structured or garage parking on parcels already owned by the borough.

The borough should investigate the possibility of partnering with private entities to encourage more efficient use of these excess capacity parking areas during off-peak time frames. During special events and on weekends, for example, signage in the downtown area might direct cars to areas of excess capacity. Where such areas are not within convenient walking distance of the downtown (as in the case of the Island View Crossing parking lot), a free shuttle service might be provided in cooperation with local businesses to connect remote parking areas with the downtown core and waterfront.

Where new parking is to be provided, it should be provided in a manner consistent with Bristol's historical character. Where possible, it should be screened from the street and located to the rear of buildings or planted buffers. Should structured parking be provided, any such structures should include architectural elements that mimic the character of surrounding buildings. As recommended in the Land Use Element, the borough's zoning ordinance should be revised to include enhanced landscaping and screening standards for off-street parking areas and to specifically encourage off-street parking areas to be located to the rear of the primary structure on a lot.

Objective: Establish appropriate levels of service for intersections.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Level of Service (LOS) standards assign letter grades to describe the relative congestion or ease of traffic flow along roadways or at intersections. Conditions are ranked from an LOS of A (describing free flowing conditions) to an LOS of F (describing excessive delays or gridlock). Several intersections along U.S. Route 13 have comparatively poor levels of service and negatively impact traffic conditions in the borough. These specific intersections are as follows:

1. New Rodgers Road/Route 413 (Bristol Township): A reconstructed interchange for this intersection has been planned for by PennDOT; Bristol Borough endorses this project.
2. Bath Road: Recommended for reconfiguration/improvement in the *Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan*.
3. Beaver Street: This intersection was identified in the U.S. Route 13 revitalization plan as having a.m. and p.m. peak levels of service of E and F, respectively. This intersection should be improved to include the provision of a pedestrian crosswalk, creating a continuous greenway between Silver Lake Park and the Delaware Canal trail

system (as identified in the *Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plan*). The Bristol Police Department identified this intersection as being the most problematic in the borough.

4. Green Lane (Bristol Township): This intersection has been described as problematic by local stakeholders and heavily impacts Bristol Borough. In addition, it can be expected to experience additional stresses due to the planned Interstate 95 / PA Turnpike interchange.

Intersections along Route 13 Targeted for Improvement



There are two other borough intersections that are also proposed for improvement:

1. Mill Street at Old Route 13: Traffic lights at this intersection should be re-timed to improve pedestrian safety.
2. Old Route 13 at Market Street: The installation of new traffic lights at this intersection is recommended.

Recommended Intersections for Traffic Light Improvement



Implementation Strategies

In the cases where the borough has roadway jurisdiction, the proposed improvements should be planned for in the borough capital improvement program. Where PennDOT has jurisdiction, the borough should make its endorsement of the proposed improvements known. In addition, if the fixed development fee referenced previously (for the purpose of funding transportation improvements) is enacted, priority should be given to the funding of improvements for the above intersections.

***Objective:* Endorse regional planning initiatives with regard to Route 13 improvements.**

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

The regional U.S. Route 13 and Bucks County Waterfront Revitalization Plans incorporate a host of recommendations relating to U.S. Route 13 improvements (in addition to several of the specific intersection improvements cited above). These include the provision of a continuous network of sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and other streetscape improvements along Route 13, as well as the provision of consistent signage where select river access corridors intersect Route 13. This plan endorses these recommended improvements.

Implementation Strategies

Participate in forthcoming regional and multi-municipal efforts to implement the above-referenced regional plan recommendations.

Objective: Pursue federal funding opportunities in support of the implementation of this plan's recommendations.

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Since 1998 federal funding for transportation projects has been provided through a yearly re-authorization of the 1998 Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (or TEA-21) legislation. Building on this legislation, on August 10, 2005, the federal government signed into law the Safe, Accountable, Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). This funding source awards grants on a competitive basis for transportation-related improvements, and particularly those that incorporate some multi-modal aspect. This avenue of funding may be appropriate for certain of the improvements proposed by this element, including bicycle and pedestrian amenity improvements.

Implementation Strategies

Pursue the possibility of applying for federal transportation enhancement funding to implement one or more of the improvement programs recommended under this element.

CHAPTER 7

Community Facilities, Utilities & Stormwater Management Element

Goal: Provide sufficient, efficient and dependable levels of service for the current and future requirements of the community.

7.1 Background

Bristol Borough is a substantially built-out community with limited opportunities for new development. Due largely to this constrained nature of the community, the borough is also expected to experience only limited population growth in the coming decades.

Accordingly, the central purpose of this Community Facilities, Utilities and Stormwater Management Element of the Comprehensive Plan, rather than pursuing avenues for a substantial expansion of service, is to ensure that the borough's existing facilities, infrastructure, and services continue to meet the needs of existing residents and are well-equipped from a technical standpoint to serve the borough over the next ten years and beyond.

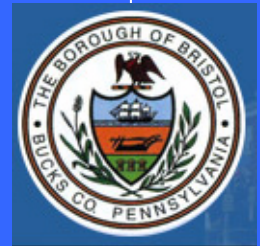
7.2 Discussion of Objectives

Objective: Provide a summary inventory of the borough's existing utility and public service infrastructure, facilities and resources to assess any need for expansion or investment.

Fire Protection

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Bristol Borough is presently served by five volunteer fire companies, operating out of four borough locations (a location on Green Lane is shared by American Hose & Ladder Fire Company Number 2 and Bristol Volunteer Fire Company Number 6). Each of these five companies is



staffed by volunteer firefighters, and overall fire protection among the five companies is coordinated by a central Fire Chief.

Table 7.1

Fire Company	Station Location
American Hose & Ladder Fire Company No. 2	Farragut Avenue & Green Lane
Bristol Consolidated Fire Company	Space leased in Borough Hall
Bristol Fire Company No. 1	Wood & Market Streets
Bristol Fire Company No. 6	Farragut Avenue & Green Lane
Goodwill Hose Fire Company No. 3	Swain Street & Mifflin Street

The overall fire protection apparatus and infrastructure in the borough are presently undergoing a formal needs assessment analysis, conducted through a grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This analysis is anticipated to yield recommendations for funding priorities to upgrade service and capability in the coming years.

Implementation Strategies

Address anticipated fire protection need in the capital improvement program as recommended by the needs assessment analysis presently being conducted.

Police Service

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

The borough police department operates out of the Borough Hall, located at 250 Pond Street. The department's space presently encompasses roughly half of the building's first-floor area. Department staffing is comprised of 13 full-time officers and 7 part-time officers. The present police vehicle fleet is comprised of 8 police cruisers (6 marked and 2 unmarked).

In recent years, the department has tended to hire part-time officers, with each full-time officer who leaves being replaced by 2 part-time officers. The Chief of Police indicates that the department plans to adjust its hiring strategies in the future to emphasize the hiring of full-time officers and thereby enhance force stability.

The borough is presently being assisted by an architect with regard to space utilization in the Borough Hall as part of an ongoing renovation process. Generally, the police department finds its current space inadequate, and anticipates – as part of these ongoing renovations – expansion into other areas of the building, as well as the provision of modern security systems and a locker room for officers, among other improvements.

With regard to overall crime prevention in the borough, the police department is supplemented by a volunteer borough-wide town watch, which patrols on Friday and Saturday nights. One of the borough's police officers serves as a liaison to this town watch group, which also assists with protection as requested by the police department during special events. The Police Chief indicates that the town watch is overall less active now than it once was.

Implementation Strategies

The police department should aim to increase the proportion of full-time officers in its force. The police department's facilities in the Borough Hall should be expanded and enhanced. Additionally, department vehicles should be continually replaced as maintenance for older vehicles becomes a burden.

In addition, to enhance the level of interest in the town watch program and increase the feeling of local ownership by participants, the borough should investigate converting the existing program. Together with borough leaders, the borough could create a series of designated neighborhood watches that would operate under the town watch umbrella.

Rescue/Ambulance Service

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Ambulance service in the borough is presently provided by the Bucks County Rescue Squad (BCRS; Bucks County Squad 143), located at 143 King Street in Bristol Township.

Implementation Strategies

Continue to liaison with the BCRS so that any future problems relating to emergency/rescue service in the borough can be addressed as they appear.

Wastewater Treatment

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Bristol Borough's wastewater is processed by the borough sewage treatment plant, located on the western side of Maple Beach Road adjacent to the Rohm & Haas facility. This facility continues to have ample treatment capacity available to accommodate future growth in the borough. The maximum treatment capacity is 2.7 Millions of Gallons per Day (MGD), whereas recent borough usage has been roughly 1.6 - 1.9 MGD.

Implementation Strategies

Sewer infrastructure throughout the borough should continue to be monitored on a periodic basis to assess any needs for upgrades or improvement. The borough Engineer has recommended a series of improvements to the wastewater treatment system. Should the borough

agree that the recommended improvements are necessary and should an amended Act 537 Sewage System Official Plan be required in advance of any actual improvements, the borough should a 50% reimbursement from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) for the cost of preparing a new Act 537 plan or plan amendment under the Act 537 Sewage Facilities Planning Grant program.

Solid Waste Management and Recycling

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Under the terms of the Pennsylvania Municipal Waste Planning, Recycling and Waste Reduction Act (Act 101 of 1988), responsibilities for solid waste management planning occur under county jurisdiction. Municipalities are responsible for managing local trash collection and a local recycling program.

The borough has contracted with a private firm, JP Mascaro & Sons, Inc., to manage municipal garbage collection and recycling operations, with the present contract expiring on December 31, 2009. No landfills, incinerators, or recycling facilities are located within the borough; all solid waste is removed by the contractor to approved facilities outside the borough.

Bristol Borough presently has a recycling ordinance which requires recyclable materials to be separated from the general waste stream. Under the borough's curbside recycling program, plastics, newspapers, glass, tin or aluminum cans, magazines, phone books and office paper are regularly collected.

The Municipal Waste Planning, Recycling, and Waste Reduction Act of 1988 requires the separation of "leaf waste" from municipal waste. Pursuant to this requirement, the borough has established a leaf waste collection program whereby residents may place their leaves at the curb (in either leaf bags or 30-gallon rigid containers) during six weeks in the fall. The collected leaves are taken to a nearby composting site. To promote better compliance with the 1988 act, the borough may wish to consider expanding its leaf collection program to a year-round or three-season "leaf waste" collection program.

Under Section 904 of Act 101, the Pennsylvania DEP rewards municipalities for the volume of their recycling activities by awarding annual Section 904 Performance Grants based on the tonnage of material recycled (through both residential and commercial collection) as well as the proportion of the general waste stream which is recycled (by weight), known as the recycling rate. The table below indicates the relevant data for calendar years 2001-2003 (grant years 2002-2004):

Table 7.2

Calendar Year	Total Tons Recycled	Recycling Rate	Grant Award
2001	2,298.4	25.0 %	\$62,559
2002	2,809.2	24.4 %	\$65,644
2003	3,562.8	14.4%	\$46,380

Despite an increase in the raw amount of materials recycled during 2003, a lower recycling rate resulted in a significantly lower performance grant award for that year.

Implementation Strategies

With regard to waste collection, the borough should continue to evaluate the service provided by the contracted firm to assess any modifications to service that may be appropriate at the expiration of the current contract.

The borough should increase efforts to promote participation in the municipal recycling program. Recycling is important for the borough not only from an environmental standpoint, but also a monetary aspect, to increase the size of the performance grant award. Presently, the borough does not have an active educational program explaining the details of the municipal recycling program to residents. Such a program should be instituted. The PA DEP has a Recycling Technical Assistance Program which awards grants of up to \$7,500 to municipalities in order to enhance local recycling efforts. The borough should pursue such funding opportunities to promote Bristol's program among residents.

The borough should also consider a special materials drop off location, perhaps at the Maple Beach Road public works yard. Such a location could accept materials such as tires, oil and appliances for recycling by a third-party collector. Any such activity would serve to further enhance the borough's level of recycling activity and consequently its annual performance grant.

Schools

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Bristol Borough is wholly located within the borough's own school district, comprised of one elementary school (Snyder-Girotti Elementary: grades K-6; constructed in 1954) and one combined junior/senior high school (Bristol Middle School: grades 7-8, and Bristol High School: grades 9-12; constructed in 1959). Total enrollment for the 2003-04 school year, according to Pennsylvania Department of Education data, was 1,362.

Given the limited population growth that is expected to occur in the borough, it is anticipated that no additional schools will be required over the next decade. However, the existing elementary school is considered inadequate for the number of enrolled students. Mobile units providing additional classroom space have been in place for at least 15 years and exhibit some degree of exterior deterioration. Additionally, the elementary school presently has inadequate technological provisions, limited gymnasium space and no auditorium. Given that the school is more than 50 years old, its basic physical condition is limited relative to a modern facility.

Two Catholic elementary schools are located within the borough: Saint Ann's, located at 418 Jefferson Avenue and constructed in 1967, and Saint Mark's, located at 1024 Radcliffe Street and constructed in 1970. An exterior visual inspection yielded no evidence of deterioration or structural inadequacies.

Implementation Strategies

A recent facilities analysis has indicated that the cost to rehabilitate the present elementary school building would exceed the cost of construction for a new facility.

Because of the assessed need and costs for an upgraded facility the Bristol Borough School District plans to construct a new, larger elementary school to accommodate grades K-8. The new school would allow for a more balanced distribution of students across the borough's two school sites and would address inadequacies of the present school, including security and surveillance provisions, better technical equipment, larger gymnasium space and an auditorium. It will also allow the school district to meet all state and federal facility requirements. The specific location of the new school is yet to be determined. The school district should carefully consider the location of a new structure as well as the timing of any construction such that the impact on students can be minimized. Since the elementary school was constructed over a portion of the Delaware Canal, if the borough determines that demolition of the elementary school is prudent, it is recommended that the Delaware Canal at this location be restored. This would contribute to the Delaware Canal restoration efforts recommended in the Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources Element.

In addition, the borough and school district should consider whether any reuse of the existing school building, or portions thereof, would be appropriate. The adaptive reuse of the former Bristol High School (at Wood and Mulberry Streets) as the Lower Bucks Senior Activity Center is an example of the sorts of reuse strategies that may be appropriate.

Libraries and Community Spaces

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

The Grundy Memorial Library is a public library located at 680 Radcliffe Street, associated with the Grundy Museum. The library's facilities are in excellent condition, having re-opened in the spring of 2005 after extensive renovations. The Grundy Library also includes an indoor community gathering space, used for the meetings of various local organizations and other functions.

This library community room (available for general use) is supplemented in the borough by a number of private/fraternal or club structures, including a Moose Lodge, Masonic Lodge, Lions Club, and ethnic organizations such as the Italian Mutual Aid Association, which includes a group swimming pool and recreation area in addition to activity space. Such fraternal organizations are instrumental in facilitating a sense of neighborhood pride and community. Consequently, they are among the borough's chief assets.

In addition, the Lower Bucks Senior Activity Center, located at the corner of Wood and Mulberry Streets (in the former Bristol High School), holds regular events for the benefit of the borough (and regional) senior population.

Implementation Strategies

The borough should be receptive to any concerns of its many civic groups that might be addressed by borough action to ensure the continued viability of this important borough resource.

Water Supply

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

The Bristol Water Works, located along Radcliffe Street on the Delaware River, has been in continuous operation for more than a century, having been incorporated in 1874. The facility and associated systems were owned by the municipality until 1996, when it was privatized. All operations and maintenance relating to the treatment plant, which services roughly 77,000 customers in Bristol Borough, Bristol Township and Bensalem Township, are currently managed by Aqua Pennsylvania.

The Delaware River is the source of water treated by the plant and transmitted through its associated infrastructure. Overall, as indicated by its multi-municipal service area, the plant presently has more capacity available than is required to service the borough's immediate or future needs. Additionally, according to a 2002 Source Water Assessment report prepared by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP), drinking water quality meets or exceeds all state and federal requirements.

Additionally, Aqua Pennsylvania received a subsidized loan of nearly \$6 million from the PA DEP in 1999 to fund substantial system improvements to fully modernize the treatment plant from a structural and treatment standpoint. The effect of these improvements will, in part, eliminate any possibility of chemicals from the treatment process contaminating the drinking water supply as a result of structural or system degradation.

The physical character of the recently renovated Water Works facility has been designed so as not to negatively affect the surrounding area. The Radcliffe Street façade is brick and built to the sidewalk edge. The lone element that would detract from the pedestrian-friendly streetscape in this area is the facility's loading ramp, which is at least partially mitigated by a fountain element at the sidewalk edge.

Implementation Strategies

The borough should ensure that any future utility uses follow the model presented by the Water Works and be similarly sensitive to the character of surrounding development in terms of aesthetics.

***Objective:* Ensure that stormwater runoff from existing and new development in the borough is appropriately addressed in order to minimize flooding, the pollution of waterways and other negative impacts on borough residents.**

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

Bristol Borough is located within the Delaware River (South) watershed for regional stormwater management planning purposes. After a series of watershed management meetings, the Bucks County Planning Commission adopted a new Stormwater Management Plan under the provisions of the Pennsylvania Stormwater Management Act (Act 167) on May 10, 2004. This plan was approved by the PA DEP on August 11, 2004. Per DEP regulations, the borough is required to adopt this plan in the form of an ordinance.

The borough engineer, solicitor and borough officials are presently in the process of discussing with the PA DEP the extent to which the borough may be exempt from portions of the Stormwater Management Plan, and the extent to which the ordinance, when adopted, may deviate from this plan.

In terms of compliance with federal regulations, the borough has created a committee that is actively bringing the borough into compliance with

current National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) II regulations.

Bristol Borough will ensure that the eventual Stormwater Management Ordinance will sufficiently protect borough residents in terms of the minimization of flooding and protection of environmental resources, while at the same time not unreasonably burdening existing borough residents and property owners.

Implementation Strategies

Following discussions between borough officials and professionals and appropriate Bucks County and PA DEP officials, the borough should adopt the required Stormwater Management Ordinance tailored, as may be permitted, to best address stormwater management within the borough.

CHAPTER 8

Short & Long Range Plan Implementation Strategies

For the ease of those who would like to use this comprehensive plan as a guide for implementing planning activities in the Borough, the below chart provides a list of action items, a corresponding responsible party and a timeframe for completing the action. A reference is also made to the page in the plan where the item is recommended.

Action	Responsibility	Implementation Timeline	Page #
Revise the zoning map and ordinance per the Land Use Element's implementation strategies.	Governing body	Year 1	p. 15
Refine design standards for commercially zoned districts.	Governing Body	Year 1	pp. 17-18
Expand the Conservation Zoning District to include all natural and park areas in the borough.	Governing Body	Year 1	pp. 17-18
Require traffic impact studies for land development applications.	Governing Body	Year 1	p. 81
Implement a development impact fee.	Governing Body	Year 1	p. 81
Designate specific truck routes in the borough.	Governing Body	Year 1	p. 80
Include information regarding business establishment processes and opportunities on the borough's website.	Economic Development Committee	Year 1	p. 71
Enact a Neighborhood Preservation Program by creating a "Housing Liaison" position in the Inspections Department.	Inspections Department	Year 1-2	pp. 31-32



Action	Responsibility	Implementation Timeline	Page #
Foster Community Greening Programs.	Public Works	Year 1-2	p. 33
Invest in GIS, Geographic Information Systems, to aid in enforcing building and design codes and tracking violations.	Inspections and Zoning	Year 1-2	p. 34
Implement the recommendations from the fire protection needs assessment analysis.	Public Works	Year 1-2	pp. 91-92
Expand and enhance the police department's facilities.	Police Department / Borough Management	Year 1-2	pp. 92-93
Seek TRID, Transit Revitalization Investment District, designation.	Governing Body	Year 1-2	p. 20
Hire a firm to prepare an Open Space Plan.	Governing Body/ Borough Management	Year 1-3	pp. 57-58
Hire a firm to conduct a market study.	Governing Body/ Borough Management	Year 1-3	p.72
Continue to seek economic development funding from various funding sources .	Economic Development Committee	Year 1-3	p. 71
Assume jurisdiction of Radcliffe Street from the state.	Governing Body/ Borough Engineer	Year 1-3	pp. 84-85
Seek funding from the PA DEP for preparing a new or amended Act 537 Sewage System Official Plan.	Borough Engineer	Year 1-3	p. 94
Adopt a stormwater management ordinance per Act 167.	Governing Body	Year 1-3	p. 98
Increase code enforcement especially for rental units, for-sale properties and in the Bristol Historic District.	Inspections/ HARB.	Year 1-10	p. 32

Action	Responsibility	Implementation Timeline	Page #
Closely monitor non-conforming uses and activities.	Zoning and Inspections	Year 1-10	p. 21
Enforce historic design standards, inspections and penalties.	Inspections/ HARB	Year 1-10	p. 33
Increase accessibility to the grounds of the Margaret Grundy Museum and Library.	Borough Management	Year 1-10	p. 50
Continue to beautify Lions Park.	Public Works	Year 1-10	p. 50
Provide dispersed, small-scale parking areas throughout the borough's neighborhoods.	Public Works/ Borough Management	Year 1-10	p. 86
Work with properties that have excess capacity for special events parking.	Borough Management	Year 1-10	p. 87
Increase efforts to generate greater participation in the borough's recycling program.	Public Works	Year 1-10	p. 95
Increase the number of full-time officers on the police force.	Police Department	Year 1-10	p. 93
Work with the Bristol Borough school district on any future development of the school district's facilities.	Borough Management/ Planning Board	Year 1-10	p. 96
Encourage greater participation in the existing neighborhood watch program.	Police Department	Year 1-10	p. 93
Establish a BID, Business Improvement Districts.	Governing Body	Year 2-3	pp. 73-74
Begin homeownership education programs.	Housing Liaison	Year 2-3	pp. 31-32

Action	Responsibility	Implementation Timeline	Page #
Organize a duplex conversion program.	Housing Liaison	Year 2-3	p. 32
Expand the role of HARB, Historic Architecture Review Board.	Governing Body	Year 2-3	p. 33
Apply for a grant from TreeVitalize.	Public Works/ Borough Management	Year 2-3	p. 58
Establish an IID, Industrial Improvement District.	Governing Body	Year 2-3	p. 78
Create a special material drop-off area for hazardous and large household waste.	Public Works	Year 2-3	p. 95
Create a façade improvement program.	Economic Development Committee/ BID	Year 2-4	pp. 73-74
Create a CDC, Community Development Corporation.	Governing Body	Year 2-4	p. 32
Fully improve Hunter Road.	Borough Engineer/ IID	Year 2-4	pp. 80-81
Apply for transportation improvement funding under the SAFETEA-LU programs.	Borough Engineer/ IID	Year 2-4	p. 90
Pursue grants for funding HARB.	HARB	Year 2-5	p. 33
Provide bicycle lanes or sharrows along borough roads.	Borough Engineer	Year 2-5	p. 82
Implement a borough-wide crosswalk improvement program.	Borough Engineer	Year 2-5	p. 83
Improve trails with signage, landscaping and other amenities.	Public Works	Year 2-6	pp. 76, 84

Action	Responsibility	Implementation Timeline	Page #
Work with Penn DOT and Bristol Township on proposed improvements to Route 13.	Borough Engineer	Year 2-7	pp. 85, 89
Improve intersections with low Levels of Service (LOS).	Borough Engineer	Year 2- 7	pp. 81, 87-89
Improve the circulation and aesthetic design of gateway areas.	Borough Engineer	Year 2-7	pp. 33, 51, 73, 75-76
Work with Burlington City, New Jersey on tourism cross-promotions.	Borough Management/ BID	Year 2-10	p. 75
Participate in the PA Department of Community and Economic Development's Main Street and Elm Street programs.	Borough Management/ BID / CDC	Year 2-10	p. 74
Extend a recreation trail from Bristol Marsh to Maple Beach.	Public Works	Year 3-6	p. 52