

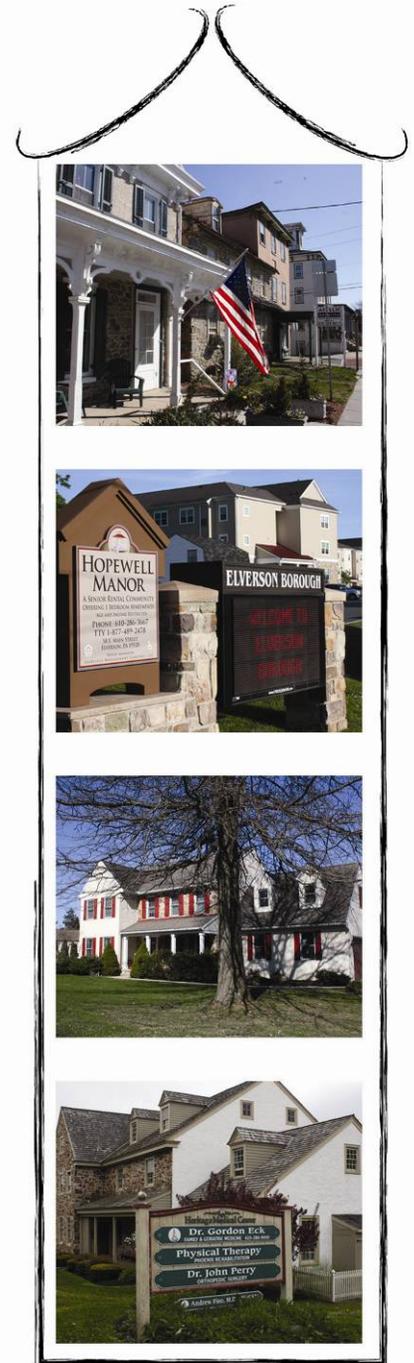
LAND USE AND HOUSING INVENTORY AND PLAN

The future land use plan provides the overall framework for guiding future land use and related policy decisions for the next ten years. Existing land use information, housing data, and policy for other Comprehensive Plan elements together provide the basis for the future land use plan and supporting recommendations.

Housing is closely tied to land use, and the two should be considered together. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) sets forth each municipality’s responsibilities regarding housing, and specifically references housing of different types and densities. The MPC requires that housing needs be addressed in the comprehensive plan and offers examples of strategies that include conservation, rehabilitation, and facilitation of new construction based on projected needs.

The future land use plan and related recommendations are critical pieces in meeting future population growth needs while protecting resources and providing for appropriate community facilities and services. This chapter addresses land use and housing within the following framework:

- Existing Land Use
 - Existing Land Use Patterns
 - Land Development Trends
 - Future Development Potential
 - Redevelopment
 - Developable Lands
 - Zoning Analysis
 - Site Responsive Development District
 - Neighborhood Commercial/Employment District
 - Historic Village Center District
 - Mobile Home Park Overlay District
 - Economic Development
 - Workforce Characteristics
- Housing
 - Housing Units
 - Housing Projections
 - Housing Types
 - Ownership
 - Housing Cost
 - Fair Share
 - First and Second Tiers
 - Third Tier
 - Conclusion



- Housing Accessibility
- Planning Implications
- Future Land Use and Housing Plan
 - Land Use Plan Categories
 - Site Responsive
 - Site Responsive/Recreation
 - Historic Town Center
 - Commerce
 - Agricultural/Institutional
 - Accommodation of Future Growth
 - Residential Uses
 - Non-residential Uses
 - Consistency with Adjacent Land Use Plans
- Recommendations
- Links

Existing Land Use

Existing Land Use Patterns

Elverson Borough is primarily identified as an Urban Landscape in the Chester County Comprehensive Policy Plan, *Landscapes2*. The “urban landscape includes historic population centers that demonstrate an urban development pattern of grid streets and alleys. These places serve as centers for commerce, civic, and cultural activities for the surrounding area. They have a pedestrian-orientation with sidewalk systems.” While the land use pattern of the Borough is consistent with these characteristics, Elverson retains its historic village character. Land uses in the Borough are at a village size and scale with short setbacks and pedestrian orientation. This character belies the Borough’s location at the crossroads of three significant transportation corridors, Routes 23, 82, and 401.



The intersection of Main Street (Route 23) and Chestnut Street (Route 82).

As with much of southeastern Pennsylvania, both commercial and residential development expanded significantly during the 1990s in Elverson. Residential development radiated out from the Borough’s core, and new commercial uses developed along Main Street. Since 2000 there has only been limited residential development, including Parkside and Springfield Village, with a focus on development or expansion of commercial, industrial, and institutional land uses.

Land use refers to the use activity occurring on a parcel of land or within a building situated upon a parcel of land, not ownership or zoning.

An inventory of land use within Elverson was conducted in the fall of 2013 using tax assessment data, aerial photographs, field or windshield surveys, and input from the Comprehensive Plan Taskforce. The land use categories are summarized in Figure 3-1 and Figure 3-2 displays the location and orientation of specific land uses. The existing land use data depicts the land uses in the Borough as of October 2013. Detailed mapping of existing land use is found on Map 3-A within Appendix B.

Figure 3-1: Existing Land Use

Land Use Category	Acres	Percent of Total Acres	# Parcels	Percent of Total Parcels
Residential	226	35.2	566	79.4
<i>Single Family Residential</i>	169	26.3	264	37.0
<i>Two Family Residential</i>	18	2.8	91	12.8
<i>Multifamily Residential</i>	39	6.1	211	29.6
Vacant	111	17.3	47	6.6
Institutional	76	11.8	16	2.3
Open Space/Parks and Recreation	65	10.0	28	3.9
Agriculture	60	9.4	10	1.4
Industrial	42	6.5	7	1.0
Right of Way, etc.	37	5.7	18	2.5
Commercial	21	3.3	20	2.8
Mixed Use	5	0.8	1	0.1
Totals	643	100	713	100

Source: Tax assessment records (September 2013), aerial photographs, field survey, and input from the Taskforce.

Figure 3-2: Existing Land Use

Residential Uses

226 acres, 35.2 percent of the Borough

The Borough contains a variety of residential uses, including single family, two family, and multifamily. Single family is the most common residential land use and accounts for 169 acres or 26.3 percent of the Borough. Two family residential accounts for 2.8 percent of the Borough and includes twins and duplexes. Multifamily residential, which includes any building with three or more dwelling units (quadraplex, townhouse, apartment), accounts for 6.1 percent of the total area of the Borough.

Within the Borough there is a concentration of historic single family uses around the intersection of Main Street and Chestnut Street (Routes 23 and 82). Single family uses on large lots typify the northern triangle of the Borough. The majority of recent residential development activity occurred within Summerfield and Parkside, which are both located to the south of Main Street. Summerfield includes all three categories of residential uses and nearly 40 acres of protected open space, while Parkside consists of singles and twins. Hopewell Manor, a retirement community near the historic train station, adds to the number of multifamily dwellings in the Borough with 71 age-restricted apartments.

Vacant Land

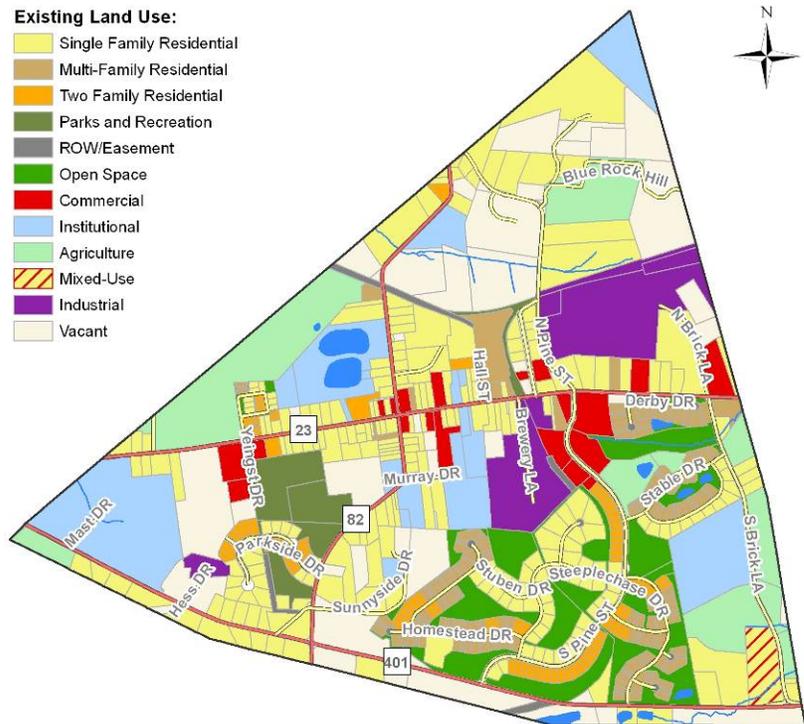
111 acres, 17.3 percent of the Borough

With a total of 111 acres, the Borough’s vacant category accounts for more than 17 percent of the Borough’s land area. While a portion of this land is constrained by 100 year floodplain and hydric soils (see Map 6-A in Appendix B), more than 100 acres of vacant land in a Chester County borough is rare. Vacant parcels in Elverson range in size from less than one acre to almost ten acres with an average size of 2.1 acres. The vacant parcels are located throughout the Borough with a concentration in the northern triangle and along Route 401.

Institutional

76 acres, 11.8 percent of the Borough

Institutional uses include municipal lands, public lands, educational uses, religious uses and cemeteries and account for 75 acres or nearly 12 percent of the Borough. These uses are located throughout the Borough and vary in type, size, and purpose. They include the Warwick Bible Church and cemetery, Borough Hall, the United



Hopewell Manor provides 71 age-restricted apartments in the core of the Borough.

Methodist Church, Elverson Methodist Cemetery, Community Evangelical Free Church, and State Game Lands Number 43. The largest institutional use in the Borough is the Twin Valley Elementary Center, which opened in 2005 and is located to the east of the intersection of Routes 23 and 401 on a 25 acre site. The Elementary Center serves as an educational use to the residents of the Borough and Region as well as a recreational use to residents outside of regular school hours. See Chapter 4: Community Services and Facilities for more information on the Elementary Center.



Twin Valley Elementary Center, the largest institutional use in the Borough, opened its doors to students in the Borough and region in 2005.

Open Space/Parks and Recreation

65 acres, 10.0 percent of the Borough

This category includes protected open space, parks, and recreational uses which, together, account for 65 acres or 10 percent of the Borough. Protected open space is defined as land and water areas that have little or no development; are used for recreation or preserving cultural or natural resources, including agricultural soils; and are protected either permanently or on a long-term basis. There are nearly 40 acres of open space located within Summerfield that provide buffers between uses and areas for recreation by residents. There are 19 acres of parks and recreational uses in the Borough and they include the open space and trail system in Parkside, the Hopewell Spur Trail, and passive and active recreation features in Livingood Park as explained in Chapter 8: Parks, Recreation, and Open Space.



This area of open space between Darby Lane and Stable Drive provides a buffer between uses and a community amenity for residents.

Agriculture

60 acres, 9.4 percent of the Borough

Agricultural uses in the Borough account for 60 acres or nearly 10 percent of the Borough. Historically, agriculture was an important part of the Borough’s identity and local economy. While the acreage of agricultural use in the Borough has declined, the historical significance of agriculture, and remaining importance of agriculture to the broader area, is represented by the nearly 26 acres that are protected by easement on the farm located at the Borough’s western boundary with Berks County.

Industrial

42 acres, 6.5 percent of the Borough

Industrial uses are those that focus on the manufacture, production, preparation, assembly, processing, storage, or packaging of products and materials. Light industrial uses generally have a lower impact on the surrounding community than heavy industrial uses in regard to noise, dust, and odor. The Whitford Corporation is located on the former Graco site and represents the largest industrial use and employer in the Borough. Elverson Supply and Vixen Hill Cedar Products occupy a few large parcels across from the historic train station. West Philadelphia Machine Works is located between the Twin Valley Elementary Center and Parkside.



The Whitford Corporation is the largest industrial use and employer in the Borough.

Right of Way/Easements

37 acres, 5.7 percent of the Borough

This category contains road rights-of-way, the railroad right-of-way, and easements that do not overlap other land use categories. The Borough's road system is made up of local and State-owned and maintained roadways. This category also includes easements of the former rail line which may accommodate the Borough's plans for a trail network in the future as discussed in Chapter 8: Parks, Recreation, and Open Space.



Sunoco utility easement.

Commercial

21 acres, 3.3 percent of the Borough

Commercial uses are located along Main Street in Elverson Borough and include a diverse variety of retail and service opportunities to Borough residents. While Elverson Deli is probably the most recognizable commercial use in the Borough, other uses include urgent and outpatient care, auto sales, and law offices. The size and scale of commercial uses are generally consistent with those of residential and institutional uses in Elverson, preserving a more traditional main street appearance.



Gene's Machines, a commercial use on Main Street to the east of Chestnut Street.

Mixed Use

5 acres, .8 percent of the Borough

Mixed use refers to a parcel that includes more than one type of land use. In Elverson Borough this includes one parcel located on the northeast corner of Route 401 and South Brick Lane (J&J Automotive shares a lot with a single-family use). Historically, there have been other mixed uses in the Borough that have since reverted back to residential uses.



J&J Automotive and a single-family residence share the only mixed use parcel in the Borough.

Land Development Trends

The number, type, and size of subdivisions and land developments proposed in recent years provide one measure to assess growth pressure in the Borough. Figure 3-3 presents the subdivision and land development applications received for review by the County from 2002 to 2012. While not every submitted plan is approved, or necessarily built if approved, these proposed plans provide insight into development trends in the Borough.

In terms of lots and units, most of the development proposed in the Borough over the last decade has been for residential uses, of which 71 percent was multi-family development. The majority of proposed multi-family units (71) were part of the Hopewell Manor development which located on the former Elverson Fire Company site.

In terms of land area, the commercial, industrial, and institutional category created the greatest impact with the Twin Valley Elementary Center accounting for the largest proposal reviewed in any category from 2002-2012. The Center was reviewed in 2002 and included 69,000 square feet of floor area.



As of September 2013, construction was well underway on Springfield Village, which was reviewed in 2007.

The need for the expansion of infrastructure to accommodate new development was limited during this time period, with just ½ mile (2,937 linear feet) of proposed roadways. A significant portion of the new roadway was included in Springfield Village, which is expected to remain private.

Figure 3-3: Subdivision and Land Development Reviews 2002 – 2012

Year Reviewed	Single Family Attached	Agricultural Lots or Units	Attached and Multi-Family	Commercial, Industrial, and Institutional		Total Lots or Units	Total Land Area (Acres)	New Roads (Linear Feet)
				Units	SF			
2002	1	1	-	3	69,000	5	91.09	400
2003	9	-	12	2	1,840	23	27	737
2004	-	-	-	1	11,325	1	2.25	-
2005	20	-	6	3	-	29	58.87	700
2006	2	-	-	-	-	2	.69	-
2007	9	-	20	-	-	29	4.28	1,100
2008	2	-	-	1	9,350	3	3.35	-
2009	-	-	72	-	-	72	6.64	-
2010	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2011	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2012	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	43	1	110	10	91,515	164	194.17	2,937

Source: CCPC – 247 Section (September 2013)

Future Development Potential

Redevelopment

Unlike other urban landscapes in Chester County, Elverson Borough is not built out and has nearly 140 acres of developable land (see Figure 3-4). In addition to developable land, there are also opportunities for redevelopment in the Borough. Hopewell Manor is a quality, income-restricted senior apartment community and a successful example of redevelopment in the community. The site of Hopewell Manor was previously home to the Elverson Fire Company, and the building is constructed around the original fire hall. Today, the former fire hall has a new life as Hopewell Manor’s community center – the Springfield Room. Redevelopment can be accomplished through activities such as infill development, residential conversion, and adaptive reuse.

While there are vacant parcels available to develop as commercial uses in the Borough, new commercial uses along Main Street could also be accomplished through infill or reuse of existing properties. The older buildings along Main and Chestnut Streets add to the character and small town charm of the historic village. Infill or reuse in an urban landscape should be approached carefully, especially within the National Register Historic District (see Map 7-A in Appendix B). Adaptive reuse involves the rehabilitation or renovation of existing buildings or structures for any use other than the present use.

Conversions can provide the means for a property owner to gain income to maintain a larger and/or historic property. In order to ensure that they are not detrimental to the character of a neighborhood, when considering the conversion of single family



This former residence has been adaptively reused as a law office.

homes into apartments or commercial uses, parking, traffic, and impacts on the Borough’s infrastructure must be taken into account.

Developable Lands

The amount and location of developable land that remain in the Borough are also important to future land use planning. Determining which lands are available for development (developable) is helpful in projecting the amount, type, and location of future growth that could occur in the Borough.

Developable lands were determined by first eliminating lands that are fully developed or protected through easements. The remaining land is the acreage that could potentially be developed. Figure 3-4 provides a summary of the number of acres that are included in each of these categories.

Figure 3-4: Developable Lands Criteria

Primary Category	Included in Category	Total Acres	% of Borough
Protected Lands	parks, easements, utility parcels	103	16%
Developed Lands	existing developments, street rights-of-way, approved subdivisions	400	63%
Developable Lands	remaining lands	137	21%

Source: CCPC, September 2013

After the land unavailable for development (protected and developed land) has been deducted, approximately 21 percent (or 137 acres) of the Borough can be considered developable. That number could increase significantly if partially developable land was taken into consideration. Partially developable land in the Borough consists of those parcels that have been built on but have enough remaining land to accommodate additional development based on the density set forth in the corresponding zoning district. There are 55 acres of partially developable land in the Borough.

Not considered in Figure 3-4 is the impact of environmental constraints and the limitations they impose on the use of the land. There are 87 acres of 100-year floodplain and steep slopes in the Borough (see Maps 6-A and 6-B in Appendix B) that reduce the potential of development. The 100-year floodplain that envelops the East Branch of the Conestoga River near the railroad easement, for example, would severely limit the development potential of the vacant parcels in the northern triangle. While the Borough’s current regulations regarding steep slopes are somewhat limited, the presence of these environmentally sensitive lands would likely impact the density and form of future development.



When calculating developable lands, utility easements are considered protected lands.

Zoning Analysis

The way in which land is developed or redeveloped is highly dependent on local land use regulations in conjunction with natural constraints. In Elverson Borough, the zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances provide the regulatory framework.

The Elverson Borough Zoning Ordinance (1998) identifies four districts in the Borough (in order of largest to smallest land area): Site Responsive Development District (SR), Neighborhood Commercial/Employment District (NC), and the Historic Village Center District (HV). The Mobile Home Park District (MHP) is an overlay district limited to the northern triangle of the Borough that prescribes special regulations to be applied to a site in combination with the underlying or base district.

Site Responsive Development District

71 percent of the Borough (454 acres)

The Site Responsive Development District (SR) allows a mix of primarily residential uses at varying densities based upon the availability of public sewer and in patterns responsive to community environmental resource protection objectives. The SR District is the largest district in the Borough (approximately 454 acres) and includes active farmland and environmental constraints.

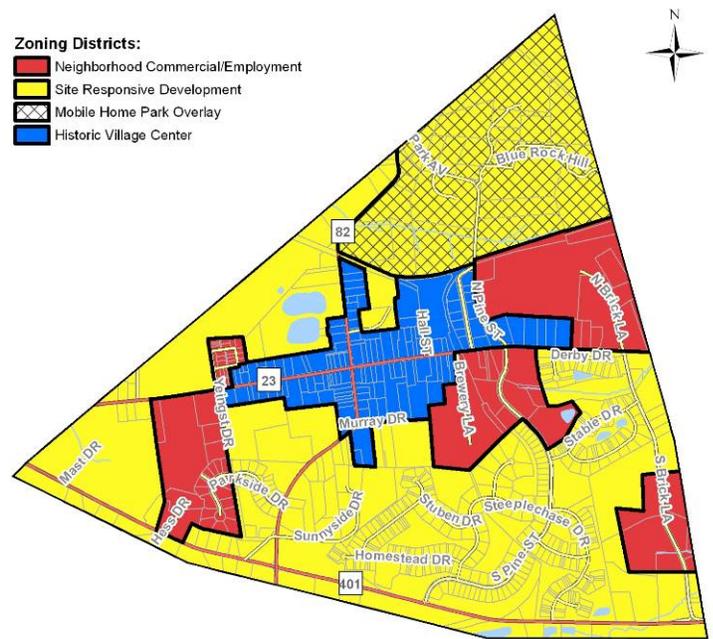
In the SR District, a 60,000 square foot (1.38 acre) lot is required where there is no public sewer and a 30,000 square foot (0.69 acre) lot is required where public sewer is available for a variety of uses. The SR District also provides a flexible design option called the Site Responsive Residential Community Option that provides incentives to promote the preservation of open space while accommodating growth. Summerfield was developed under this option and provides nearly 40 acres of open space. Densities permitted within this district are based on a density calculation that takes into account the type of dwelling (single family, two family, or multifamily) and requires a minimum of 40 percent open space preservation.

Neighborhood Commercial/Employment District

18 percent of the Borough (117 acres)

The Neighborhood Commercial/Employment District (NC) allows a continued mix of commercial, office, limited industrial, and other employment activity as well as new office, commercial, and limited industrial development. The NC District has been located where convenient access to services and infrastructure are available and is intended to provide for larger scale and automobile-oriented uses which may not be compatible with the historic village context within the adjacent HV District. The NC District permits a large variety of commercial, industrial, and residential uses and requires a minimum lot size of 60,000 square feet per use or two acres where more than one use is proposed on a single lot.

Figure 3-5: Elverson Zoning Map



Historic Village Center District

11 percent of the Borough (71 acres)

The Historic Village Center District (HV) is intended to provide for a continued mix of residential and commercial development consistent with the historic village character along Main Street. The boundaries of the HV District generally follow the boundaries of the Elverson Historic District as shown in Chapter 7. The HV District is intended to promote the long-term economic viability of contributing structures within the registered historic district and to provide for new residential, office, and commercial development which is compatible with the historic village context. Figure 3-6 presents the area and bulk regulations set forth in the HV District.

Figure 3-6: HV District Area and Bulk Regulations

Type of Use	Minimum Lot Area	Density/Gross Floor Area
Non-Residential	-	>= 2,500 square feet
Single Family Residential	12,000 square feet	-
Two-Family Residential	7,500 square feet	-
Multi-Family Residential	20,000 square feet	6 du/acre, gross 8 du/acre, net
Other Principal Uses	10,000 square feet	-

Source: Elverson Borough Zoning Ordinance (1998)



Commercial uses on Main Street within the HV District.

Mobile Home Park Overlay District

The Mobile Home Park Overlay District (MHPO) allows mobile home park development. The minimum tract size is ten acres for any mobile home park with a maximum density of four mobile homes per acre. This district encompasses about 104 acres and is located in the northern triangle of the Borough.

Economic Development

This Comprehensive Plan was developed at a time when the nation was slowly recovering from an economic recession. As an example, Figure 3-3 indicates that no subdivision or land development review applications were submitted to the County during 2011 and 2012. Therefore, it is important to focus on the promotion and expansion of the Borough’s economic assets, unique character, and proximity to regional destinations. The Revitalization Plan (2010) included an economic development assessment that characterized the Elverson business district as having “unique character” because it included retail, residential, office, and automotive uses. In addition to the Borough’s unique character, the Revitalization Plan identified the Borough as “a destination, rather than a place to drive by” which is further emphasized by the recent parking and streetscape improvements that invite visitors to slow down and pay a visit.

The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan (Chapter 8) includes a discussion regarding the Borough’s intent to be identified as a heritage and recreation



The historic train station is located near a trailhead where the Hopewell Spur Trail intersects Main Street.

destination. It is important to recognize the need to accommodate commercial land uses, recreational facilities (such as the sidewalk and trail network), and other amenities in the Borough that will promote this concept.

The Revitalization Plan also recognizes the need to continue to communicate with established local businesses, including the Whitford Corporation, Vixen Hill Cedar Products, and Elverson Supply to ensure that the Borough is “aware of and responsive to their changing needs.”



Streetscape Improvements provide safer pedestrian access across Route 23 and on-street parking opportunities.

Workforce Characteristics

The most important resource for local business is a skilled and educated workforce. Chester County, and much of southeastern Pennsylvania, is home to a highly skilled and well-educated population, providing a major incentive for businesses to locate in the County and its municipalities.

Current trends indicate a countywide shift from traditional agriculture and manufacturing enterprises to higher technology and more specialized processes and products and growth in services, which is a national trend. As the Borough grows, it may see the growth of more specialized industries that will require a higher level of education and specialized training for its workforce.

Education

Analyzing the level of education attained by Borough residents helps to predict employment demand and directly relates to the economic prosperity of residents in the Borough. Figure 3-7 presents the educational levels of Borough and Chester County residents age 25 years and older.

Figure 3-7: Highest Educational Attainment by Percent 2000 and 2007–2011 Average

Educational Attainment	Elverson		Chester County	
	2000	2007-2011 Average	2000	2007-2011 Average
Less Than High School	13.1%	4.4%	10.7%	7.4%
High School	30.2%	33.9%	26.0%	23.8%
Some College or Associate Degree	19.6%	30.1%	20.9%	20.7%
Bachelor’s Degree	23.2%	18.2%	26.6%	29.3%
Graduate or Professional Degree	13.8%	13.4%	15.9%	18.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey 2007 - 2011¹

The highest percentage of residents in the Borough earned a high school diploma as the highest education level (33.9 percent). Nearly half (48.3 percent) of the Borough’s residents 25 years or older attended college, earned an associate’s degree, or earned a bachelor’s degree and more than 13 percent received a graduate or professional degree. Overall, the Borough has a slightly lower education level than Chester County as a whole. The County’s levels rank among the highest in the state.

¹ The American Community Survey is an ongoing effort of the U.S. Census Bureau, a statistical survey that samples a small percentage of the population every year. Data from the American Community Survey are estimates based upon annual sampling of the population. The decennial census no longer provides detailed population and housing data as it did in the past. American Community Survey data is averaged over a five year period to account for the limited sample size in smaller areas such as Elverson Borough.

Employment

Employment characteristics provide an overview of the types of businesses in which Borough residents are employed. Figure 3-8 presents the percentage of Borough residents who work in the identified industry. For example, 32 percent of Borough residents worked within a service industry (business, health, education, and other) in the year 2000. Figure 3-9 identifies the top five industries by employment within the Borough, which accounts for 410 jobs.

Figure 3-8: Employment Characteristics by Industry

Percent of Residents Working in Selected Industry (2000 and 2007-2011 Average)						
Industry	Elverson Borough			Chester County		
	2000	2007-2011 Average	Percent Change	2000	2007-2011 Average	Percent Change
Agriculture	1.8	1.8	0.	2.0	2.1	0.1
Construction	10.6	9.3	-1.3	5.6	5.6	0.0
Manufacturing	17.5	14.5	-3.0	14.8	12.6	-2.2
Transportation/Utilities	5.3	5.0	-0.3	4.1	3.8	-0.3
Information	2.4	1.3	-1.1	3.0	2.2	-0.8
Wholesale Trade	2.7	1.1	-1.6	4.0	3.3	-0.7
Retail Trade	15.0	16.5	1.5	11.2	10.9	-0.3
F,I,R,E*	12.2	8.1	-4.1	10.0	9.9	-0.1
Services**	32.0	42.7	10.7	43.1	47.3	4.2
Public Administration	0.4	0.0	-0.4	2.3	2.1	-0.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey 2007 - 2011

*F,I,R,E includes Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate; **Services include business, personal, health, educational and other services.

Figure 3-9: Top Five Industries by Employment 2005 and 2010

Industry	Elverson Borough				
	2005	Percent of Total	2010	Percent of Total	Percent Change
Manufacturing	47	14.5%	182	44.4%	287.2%
Educational Services	0	0.0%	66	16.1%	-
Other Services	22	6.8%	43	10.5%	95.5%
Construction	44	13.5%	32	7.8%	-27.3%
Professional, Scientific & Tech. Services	3	0.9%	31	7.6%	933.3%
Total Number of Jobs	325		410		26.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

Figure 3-8 shows that Manufacturing and the Wholesale Trade employment declined from 2000 to 2007/2011 for Borough residents as well as County residents. While the County lost less than one percent of jobs in the Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate industry, the Borough lost more than four percent of jobs in this category. Elverson showed a 10.5 percent gain in service industry jobs, more than double the County's increase.

Looking at Figure 3-9, the top five industries represent about 86 percent of all employment in the Borough in 2010. There have been significant increases in both Manufacturing and Educational Services. There has been a nearly 300 percent increase in manufacturing jobs (135 new jobs) since 2005, which can be attributed to the opening of the Whitford Corporation campus. There are 66 new jobs in the educational industry, which can be attributed to the opening of the Twin Valley Elementary Center. Overall the Borough gained 85 jobs from 2005 to 2010, an increase of 26 percent.



The Whitford Corporation accounted for the nearly 300 percent increase in manufacturing jobs since 2005.

Housing

Local governments must monitor housing issues as part of their overall responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of residents. Housing is closely tied to land use, and the two should be considered together. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) sets forth each municipality’s responsibilities regarding housing, and specifically references housing of different types and densities. The MPC requires that housing needs be addressed in the comprehensive plan and offers examples of strategies that include conservation, rehabilitation, and facilitation of new construction based on projected needs.

Housing Units

This housing unit analysis looks at trends in housing development in the Borough over time, which is useful for understanding growth patterns and projecting housing demand for the future. Elverson’s population saw little to no growth between 1970 and 1990, but then experienced 104 percent growth between 1990 and 2000 (from 470 to 959 residents) and 28 percent growth between 2000 and 2010 (from 959 to 1,225 residents). Additional detail on historic and regional population growth is provided in Appendix A.

Figure 3-10 presents the number of housing units in the Borough and surrounding communities for 1990, 2000, and 2010 based upon the U.S. Census. During the decade of 1990 – 2000 Elverson Borough added 280 new dwelling units, an increase of 115.5 percent. The increase in the following decade (2000 – 2010) was far lower at only 25.2 percent or 116 dwelling units, both increases generally correspond to the population increases. Relative to adjacent municipalities, Elverson had significantly more growth between 1990 and 2000 and relatively similar growth during the decade between 2000 and 2010.

Figure 3-10: Number of Housing Units 1990, 2000, and 2010

	1990	2000	2010	Change 1990-2000		Change 2000-2010	
				Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Elverson	180	460	576	280	115.5%	116	25.2%
Honey Brook Boro.	486	500	700	14	2.9%	200	40.0%
Honey Brook Twp.	1,802	2,134	2,756	332	18.4%	622	29.1%
West Nantmeal	659	745	858	86	13.0%	113	15.2%
Chester County	139,597	163,773	192,462	24,176	17.3%	28,689	17.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Housing Projections

Population projections can be used to determine future housing needs. The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, in coordination with the Chester County Planning Commission, prepared population estimates and projections for Chester

County and for all individual communities including Elverson Borough. Figure 3-11 identifies population projections based upon historic population growth trends and year 2010 U.S. Census data. Figure 3-11 also presents projections for other Chester County municipalities adjacent to Elverson for comparison. The population projection for Elverson Borough for the years 2010 to 2030 are for an additional 640 residents or a 52.2 percent increase in population, more than double the increase for Elverson's neighbors.

Figure 3-11: Population Projections 2010 - 2040

	2010 Actual	Projected Population		Estimated Increase 2010-2030		Estimated Increase 2010-2040	
		2030 Projection	2040 Projection	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Elverson	1,225	1,865	2,101	640	52.2%	876	71.5%
Honey Brook Boro.	1,713	2,079	2,214	366	21.3%	501	29.2%
Honey Brook Twp.	7,647	9,145	9,696	1,498	19.5%	2,049	26.8%
West Nantmeal Twp.	2,170	2,564	2,709	394	18.1%	539	24.8%
Chester County	498,886	607,407	647,330	108,521	21.7%	148,444	29.7%

Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission Forecasts, 2012; U.S. Census Bureau.

In order to accommodate this projected population and accurately plan for new housing units, the average persons per household has to be taken into consideration. Based on the 2010 U.S. Census, Elverson's average household size is 2.20 persons, which is lower than the County average of 2.65. An increasing population of empty nesters partially accounts for this smaller household size, which is also reflected in the median age in Elverson (56.7).

As Figure 3-12 indicates, the total projected need for additional housing in the Borough is 272 units through 2030, which is a growth rate of 47.2 percent. As with the population growth, Elverson Borough has the highest projection of the four municipalities analyzed.

Figure 3-12: Housing Unit Projections 2030 and 2040

	2010 Actual	Projections		Change 2010 - 2030		Change 2030 - 2040	
		2030	2040	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Elverson	576	848	955	272	47.2%	107	12.6%
Honey Brook Boro.	700	793	845	93	13.3%	52	6.6%
Honey Brook Twp.	2,756	3,243	3,438	487	17.7%	195	6.0%
West Nantmeal	858	971	1,026	113	13.2%	55	5.7%
Chester County	196,426	229,210	244,275	32,784	16.7%	15,065	6.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Chester County Planning Commission, DVRPC.

Housing Types

A review of local land use records and aerial photos, a series of field checks, and input from the Comprehensive Plan Taskforce in 2013 identified a total of 640 residential dwelling units in Elverson. Of the 640 total units, 259 were identified as single family and 95 as two family dwellings. For purposes of the fair share analysis, multifamily is defined as housing with three or more dwelling units (twins are specifically excluded). Under this definition, a total of 286 multifamily units were identified in

Elverson. The multi-family dwelling units are located in Summerfield, Hopewell Manor, and other small apartment buildings or residential conversions. The Summerfield units are townhouses (with three, four, or five units per structure), while those in Hopewell Manor are age-restricted apartments. There may be additional units in small apartment complexes around the Borough. Multifamily accounts for 45 percent of the total dwelling units in Elverson, nearly three times the County’s average of 13.3 percent.

Considering the actual housing unit count for the 2010 U.S. Census (576 total dwelling units), an additional 74 dwelling units were created since 2010. For the most part, this can be attributed to the opening of Hopewell Manor (with 71 units) in 2011.



Review of the existing housing stock in October 2013 revealed that 259 of the 640 dwelling units in Elverson are single-family, like this home in Parkside.

Ownership

The percentage of residents who either rent or own their homes generally corresponds to the types of housing available in a particular community. The higher the number of single-family detached homes, the higher the percentage of homeowners versus renters. Based on 2010 U.S. Census data, Elverson Borough’s percentage of owner-occupied units is 82.8 percent, which is similar to the County’s percentage (76.2).

Housing Cost

As indicated in Figure 3-13, the current median housing value in the Borough is moderately below that of the County overall. Rent in the Borough is also below that of the County overall.

Figure 3-13: Median Housing Value and Rent 1990, 2000, and 2007—2011 Average

	Value			Rent			Percent Change 1990 to 2000		Percent Change 2000 to 2007-2011 Average	
	1990	2000	2007-2011 Average	1990	2000	2007-2011 Average	Value	Rent	Value	Rent
Elverson	\$100,500	\$184,200	\$280,100	\$386	\$722	\$827	83.3	87.0	52.1	14.5
Chester County	\$155,900	\$182,500	\$333,400	\$496	\$754	\$1,122	17.1	52.0	82.7	48.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey 2007 – 2011

Figure 3-14 presents the annual median sales price of homes sold in Elverson Borough and the County, from 2000 – 2011. This is a different data set than that presented in Figure 3-13. Housing value is reported by the homeowner to the U.S. Census Bureau, while median home sales price is obtained from the Chester County Assessment Office. In Elverson, annual median price rose through 2006. The impact of the economic recession is evident in lower and inconsistent prices since 2006. Compared to the County median price, Elverson prices have ranged from near to well below the County in recent years.

Figure 3-14: Annual Median Sales Price 2000-2011

Year	# of Elverson Sales	Elverson Median Price	# of County Sales	County Median Price
2000	17	\$186,900	9,241	\$188,000
2001	44	\$203,400	9,083	\$200,000
2002	40	\$201,055	9,212	\$224,900
2003	17	\$208,000	10,240	\$245,000
2004	31	\$250,000	9,492	\$265,000
2005	30	\$249,900	9,333	\$295,000
2006	36	\$304,500	8,336	\$302,000
2007	22	\$295,000	7,335	\$312,000
2008	16	\$248,500	5,911	\$300,000
2009	17	\$265,000	5,413	\$276,700
2010	22	\$249,000	5,188	\$295,000
2011	26	\$230,000	4,952	\$290,000

Source: Chester County Planning Commission, *Housing Costs Profile*, 2000-2011.

Households at every income level are in need of quality, affordable housing. As indicated in Figure 3-15, Median household income in Elverson has lagged below the County's. Poverty levels, however, have been lower in Elverson.

Housing is generally considered affordable if the household spends 30 percent or less of its gross monthly income on housing costs. Any household that is paying more than 30 percent of income on housing is considered to be cost burdened and therefore at risk of experiencing a housing crisis. Based on the 2007 – 2011 American Community Survey (ACS) estimate, approximately 26 percent of households (whether owners or renters) within Elverson Borough are cost burdened by housing costs. ACS estimates for Chester County indicate that approximately one-third of county households are cost burdened. Cost burden specifically for renters in Elverson Borough is difficult to accurately determine due to the limited number of rental units in the Borough and the sampling methodology of the ACS but it appears that more renters than owners are cost-burdened. Cost burden among renters throughout Chester County is approximately 40 percent.



Small apartment buildings and residential conversions provide affordable housing opportunities in the Borough.

Figure 3-15: Median Household Income 2000 and 2007 – 2011 Average

	2000	2007-2011 Average	Percent Change
Elverson	\$57,813	\$60,294	4.3
Chester County	\$65,295	\$86,264	32.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey 2007 - 2011

Figure 3-16: Percent of Persons below Poverty Level 2000 and 2007-2011 Average

	2000		2007-2011 Average		Percent Change
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Elverson	17	1.8	34	2.5	100
Chester County	22,032	5.2	29,320	6.1	33.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey 2007 - 2011

Fair Share

In Pennsylvania, “fair share” refers to the need to allow for a variety of housing types within a municipality. In particular, a reasonable amount of multifamily housing is required to fulfill the Borough’s fair share obligations. In 1977, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court decided the landmark case, *Surrick v. Zoning Hearing Board of Upper Providence Township* 776 Pa. 182, 382 A.2d 105, which laid out an analytical “fair share” test or methodology to help determine if a municipality is allowing for an adequate amount of multifamily housing. A fair share analysis attempts to assess whether a municipality is providing for its fair share of all housing types, particularly multifamily housing, and whether the municipality is attempting to meet its obligation to accommodate future growth. For fair share analysis in Pennsylvania, both apartment and townhouses/row homes are considered as multi-family dwelling types. Twins and duplexes are not considered multifamily dwelling units.

First and Second Tiers

The fair share analysis consists of a three-tiered test, as established by the *Surrick* case. The first tier of the test examines whether a community is a logical area for development and population growth, or “in the path of growth.” While it could be argued that Elverson is not in the path of growth, it is more conservative to assume it is and move into the second tier. The second tier of the *Surrick* test involves looking at the present level of development within the municipality. While development has been limited in the last few years (see Figure 3-3), as previously discussed, there remains nearly 140 acres of developable land in the Borough (see Figure 3-4).

Third Tier

The third tier of the fair share analysis is to determine the extent, if any, of the exclusion of multifamily housing. Based on a review of local land use and trends and aerials, field views, and the input of the Comprehensive Plan Taskforce, there is a minimum of 286 multifamily units of the total 640 units in Elverson (as of October 2013). Therefore, a minimum of 45 percent of the Borough’s units are multi-family (three or more dwelling units in a structure: quadraplex, townhouse, apartment).



Townhouses in Summerfield count towards the 286 multifamily units in the Borough.

Conclusion

Considering the number (286) and percentage (45 percent) of existing multi-family dwelling units in the Borough and the number of developable acres (137 acres), the Borough exceeds the recommended allowance of 15–20 percent of all dwelling units to be multifamily. In regard to future development or the accommodation of additional multifamily development, the build-out statistics in Figure 3-18 (Accommodation of Future Growth) indicate that the Borough can accommodate additional multi-family development that would support the conclusion that the Borough does and will continue to meet or exceed the 15-20 percent guideline for multifamily housing.

Housing Accessibility

Housing accessibility can be hampered in a variety of ways, from fear of discriminatory treatment to physical and regulatory barriers that prevent people from being able to live as independently as possible. The Federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discriminatory treatment with regard to housing opportunities toward any group or individual based upon race, color, national origin, gender, religion, disability, or familial status (presence of children under 18). A request to provide housing that would serve members of the protected classes cannot be denied on the basis of discrimination against members of those groups who are expected to occupy that housing.

People with disabilities face some of the greatest challenges compared with other demographic groups with regard to securing safe, affordable, and accessible housing. Physically accessible units are in very short supply across the County. Also, regulatory restrictions on uses such as group homes and/or negative stereotypes of residents may have the impact of restricting housing choices available to individuals with disabilities. Aging seniors remaining at home can benefit greatly from supportive services that are offered by a variety of non-profit and government programs.

Planning Implications

Existing Borough Character

Elverson Borough has a small town, village character with a variety of land uses and an inviting pedestrian scale. The intent of the Borough is to allow growth to occur in a manner consistent with that character.

Heritage and Recreation Destination Concept

The Borough intends to embrace a heritage and recreation destination concept, requiring that growth in the Borough be managed to ensure that it promotes, supports, and does not detract from the realization of that vision.

Commercial and Industrial Development

The business community plays a vital role in Elverson. Working with current and potential local, regional, national, and international business owners while respecting and emulating the character of the Borough that defines its unique identity is critical.

Agriculture

While the agricultural industry is no longer a primary use in the Borough, Elverson recognizes the role of agriculture in the local and regional economy and Borough's evolution. The Borough has expressed a desire to work with local farmers to ensure they can continue to utilize agricultural practices and avoid conflicts with new development.



Elverson recognizes the role of agriculture in the Borough's evolution.

Housing Supply, Diversity, and Fair Share

Elverson Borough’s population and housing stock grew substantially in the past three decades. Housing options became more diverse since 1990 with the development of Summerfield, Parkside, Springfield Village, and Hopewell Manor. Demographic and market changes are likely to continue a push for diverse housing options, as residents seek a lifestyle that is more affordable and offers a lower maintenance commitment than more traditional single family detached dwellings. The fair share analysis found that the Borough allows for a reasonable mix of housing types.

Housing Affordability and Accessibility

Approximately 26 percent of households in the Borough, including rental units, are cost burdened. This situation reinforces the importance of encouraging housing affordability. Elverson Borough should be aware of its obligation under the Fair Housing Act to permit housing opportunities for all people, including members of the protected classes. Those classes include race, color, national origin, gender, religion, disability, and familial status (the presence of children under 18 in the household).

Future Land Use and Housing Plan

This section recommends an overall land use pattern for the Borough for the next ten years and provides recommendations for how to best achieve that pattern. The future land use plan (and map) designates the future land use or reuse of land in the Borough and therefore, serves as a **guide** for official decisions regarding the distribution and intensity of growth, location of recreational facilities, and resource and/or open space preservation.

In addition to the land use goal and objectives outlined in Chapter 2 and the existing land use analysis, the issues examined in the other plan chapters are factored into the land use plan recommendations. The land use plan, in turn, provides guidance for other plan elements regarding where improvements to infrastructure and community facilities should be focused and, conversely, where preservation and conservation policies are most appropriate.

Land Use Plan Categories

Figure 3-17 designates five land use planning categories for the Borough. The overall intent for the Land Use Plan is to focus growth in those areas where it can best be accommodated and to limit development in areas where growth is least appropriate, with respect to the Borough’s character, infrastructure, sensitive natural resources, and focus on heritage resources and recreational infrastructure. The vision and recommendations for each land use category should be considered carefully based on the amount of developable acres that remain in each. The developable acres included for each category are approximate. An overall strategy for connection and expansion of the Borough’s network of sidewalks and trails is part of the vision for

each of the land use categories. Detailed mapping of Future Land Use is found on Map 3-B within Appendix B.

Site Responsive

211.4 acres, 32.9 percent of the Borough

The Site Responsive (SR) designation represents the areas of the Borough that were developed in a more traditional suburban pattern during the last few decades. Summerfield and Parkside were both developed under the Site Responsive Residential Community Option (see Zoning Analysis) and feature extensive areas of preserved open space that provide recreational opportunities and buffer areas between the residential uses that include single family, two family, and multifamily dwellings. Also included in this category are the developed (primarily with single family residential uses) and vacant parcels to the south of Route 401 and the parcels that are accessed by Sunnyside Drive.

- Future Land Use Categories:**
- Agricultural/Institutional (A/I)
 - Commerce (C)
 - Historic Town Center (HTC)
 - Site Responsive (SR)
 - Site Responsive/Recreation (SRR)

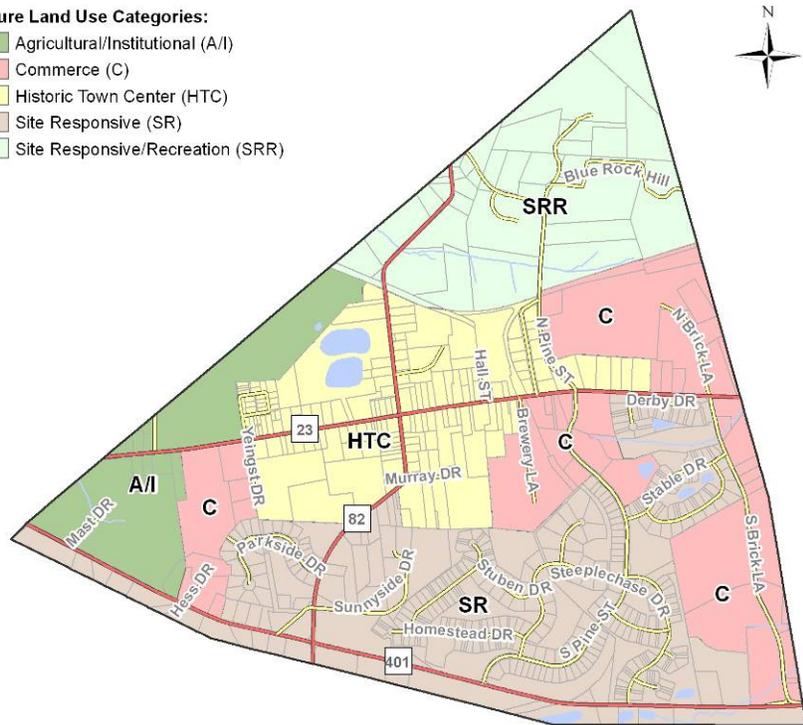


Figure 3-17: Future Land Use

Vision

34 developable acres

Future development in the SR land use category should continue to balance growth with the preservation of open space and natural resources. Use of the Site Responsive Residential Community Option should continue to be promoted to achieve this balance. Another priority is to work with local landowners and developers to continue to expand the network of sidewalks and trails in the Borough in accordance with Chapter 8, including the Summerfield Spur and Proposed Pedestrian Connections shown on Map 8-2: Recreation and Open Space Plan.



Opportunities to connect into the Borough's network of sidewalks and trails, as was done with Parkside, should be prioritized.

Site Responsive/Recreation

117.8 acres, 18.3 percent of the Borough

The Site Responsive/Recreation (SRR) designation is located in the northern triangle of the Borough with the rail easements creating its southern boundary. Development in this area consists primarily of single family dwellings on large wooded lots. There

are also conservation uses in this area that include State Game Lands Number 43 and the area of preserved wetlands along North Chestnut Street. Currently, North Chestnut Street accommodates access to French Creek State Park and the Game Lands via Hopewell Road from the south and west. Resources/constraints in this area include the Conestoga River, steep slopes, and the largest area of unbroken woodland in the Borough (see Maps 6-A, 6-B, and 6-C).

Vision

55 developable acres

Future development in the SRR land use category will be limited by the extent of floodplain and hydric soils surrounding the tributary of the Conestoga River. Further to the north, where development is not restricted by floodplain, it is limited by large areas of steep slope and woodlands. As such, the Site Responsive Residential Community Option should be promoted here with a priority for use of the preserved open space to include trail links to provide access to French Creek State Park and the State Game Lands.

Historic Town Center

117.3 Acres, 18.2 percent of the Borough

The Historic Town Center (HTC) category surrounds the intersection of Chestnut Street and Main Street and includes a variety of commercial, residential, and institutional uses as well as the Elverson Historic District (see Map 7-A). The HTC is the heart of the Borough and the architectural style, size and scale, and pedestrian scale define the Borough’s character. Single family dwellings are the primary residential use and the commercial uses are at a size and scale that fit the Borough’s character.

While new residential development has been limited in the HTC, Springfield Village is a recently completed development that successfully imitates the Borough’s character with a mix of residential uses on a grid pattern with a size and scale reminiscent of the historic uses. In addition to new development, redevelopment has also been successful in the HTC with the adaptive reuse of the Elverson Fire Company into the Hopewell Manor Retirement Home. The HTC is also the core of the Borough’s burgeoning network of sidewalks and trails that include the Hopewell Spur Trail that initiates near the historic train station on Main Street.

Vision

9 developable acres

Future development in the HTC will be limited to a few vacant parcels and any parcels available for redevelopment through infill, adaptive reuse, or conversion. The list of recreational opportunities in French Creek State Park and the State Game Lands are extensive and provide opportunities for existing and potential business owners to capitalize on. Therefore, the focus in the HTC should be to promote commercial uses that will attract visitors to the Borough on their own merit or as part of the Borough’s heritage and recreation destination concept. This may include museums, bike rental and repair shops, kayak sales and rentals, coffee shops, and other similar uses. While promoting the expansion of commercial opportunities, the retention of the Borough’s character should be prioritized.



The Hopewell Spur Trail should be extended to the Berks County line along the southern edge of the SRR.



The historic freight station may be the perfect location for a bike rental/repair shop at the Hopewell Spur trailhead.

Commerce (C)

106.1 Acres, 16.5 percent of the Borough

The Commerce (C) category includes local, regional, national, and international companies such as the Whitford Corporation and Vixen Hill Cedar Products (which represent two of the largest employers in the Borough). While some local businesses are located in the HTC, the commercial and industrial uses in the Commerce category utilize off-street parking and access and do not, therefore, adhere to the HTC's village character.

Vision

21 developable acres

The Borough should continue to work with local, regional, national, and international companies to ensure that employment is available to residents of the Borough and the greater region. Priority should also be given to accommodate local small businesses that benefit the local economy and provide the opportunity for infill and adaptive reuse. This area should also provide flexibility for larger-scale uses (such as institutional and multifamily) not appropriate for the HTC.



Please Wash Me Car Wash is a local commercial use in the Commerce area.

Agricultural/Institutional (A/I)

90.4 Acres, 14.1 percent of the Borough

The Agricultural/Institutional (A/I) category is located along the border with Berks County to the west and West Nantmeal to the east. As the name implies, this category includes the vast majority of remaining agricultural uses in the Borough, including the 26-acre agricultural easement located to the north of Main Street along the border with Berks County. The primary institutional use in this category is the Twin Valley Elementary Center.

Vision

18 developable acres

While some of the agricultural uses are expected to change use in the future, there are no vacant parcels in this category and development potential is therefore limited. As such, priority should be given to preserving the remaining agriculture uses that are still in operation and connecting the Twin Valley Elementary Center to the Borough's network of sidewalks and trails as shown on Map 8-B: Recreation and Open Space Plan. Where future residential development is proposed, use of the Site Responsive Residential Community Option should be promoted.

Accommodation of Future Growth

Residential Uses

Based on review of future population and housing trends (see Figures 3-11 and 3-12), Elverson Borough can anticipate accommodating an additional 272 dwelling units by

the year 2030. The range of potential build-out under existing zoning provisions does allow for that number of units, although the flexible nature of the regulations could also result in a much lower yield.

A majority of the land available for residential development in Elverson is in the SR and SRR land use categories (34 acres and 55 acres, respectively). Figure 3-18 charts approximate build-out potential for residential development by land use category. Additional development potential is based on current zoning densities and provisions (which are not anticipated to change substantially to accommodate the future land use plan) and an assumption that, on average, tracts might be developed to roughly 75 percent of their theoretical maximum, allowing for constraints of tract configuration, environmental resources, infrastructure, stormwater management, etc.

Figure 3-18: Future Residential Build-out Potential by Land Use Category

Land Use Category	Total Developable Acres	Current Zoning District	Residential Development Range
Site-Responsive (SR)	34	SR	18 to 83 dwelling units (SRR)
Site-Responsive/Recreation (SRR)	55	SR	30 to 133 dwelling units (SRR)
Historic Town Center (HTC)	9	HV	14 to 54 dwelling units
Commerce (C)	21	NC	11 to 51 dwelling units
Agricultural/Institutional (A/I)	18	SR	10 to 44 dwelling units
Total under Current Zoning Regulations			83 to 365

Source: Elverson Borough Zoning Ordinance and Developable Lands Analysis (herein)
 Note: SRR is the yield based on the use of the Site Responsive Residential Community Option.

The build-out summarized in Figure 3-18 was completed with only those acres that were identified as developable in Figure 3-4. Not taken into consideration were the 55 acres of partially developable acres and parcels currently in agricultural use that may be developed in the future. Therefore, the build out of up to 365 dwelling units for Elverson Borough as presented in Figure 3-18 should be considered conservative. These units would address the Borough’s need for an additional 272 units by 2030.

Non-Residential Uses

As the population of the Borough continues to grow, residents are likely to continue to rely on larger scale commercial and employment opportunities beyond the borders of Elverson itself. The population of Elverson alone will not support regional shopping facilities. With that said locally-oriented commercial uses and uses that promote, support, and enhance the Borough’s heritage and recreation destination concept should be permitted by right and include flexible design and parking requirements. Flexibility for employment growth also should continue to be provided, along with opportunities for additional community institutional development.

Interest in home occupations is also likely to increase as strategies for sustainability continue to be implemented throughout the Commonwealth, and as opportunities increase in support of the heritage and recreation destination concept (bike repair, trail tours, etc). Relevant zoning provisions should be evaluated periodically to ensure that they are easily administered, not unduly restrictive, and sufficiently protective of neighborhood, village, and resource conservation objectives.



The historic bank building could house a kayak and/or bike rental facility to support the heritage and recreation destination concept.

Consistency with Adjacent Land Use Plans

In order to eliminate, reduce, or at a minimum, identify potential land use conflicts with adjacent municipalities, it is necessary to compare the Borough's land use categories with those of its neighbors. West Nantmeal Township, Chester County is Elverson's neighbor to the south and east. Caernarvon Township is Elverson's Berks County neighbor and shares the Borough's western boundary.

West Nantmeal last updated their Comprehensive Plan in 2007. Three land use categories that abut Elverson Borough are: Commercial, Suburban Residential, and Government and Institutional. Overall, the land use categories in the municipalities that share a border with Elverson Borough are generally consistent in regard to permitted uses and densities, as summarized in Figure 3-19. The border that Elverson shares with Caernarvon Township, Berks County, is almost entirely identified as agricultural preservation, which is consistent with the Borough's SR, AI, and SRR land use categories. The only potential inconsistency is West Nantmeal's Suburban Residential land use category, which permits marginally higher density residential uses (maximums of 12 apartment units per acre as compared to 8 units per acre in Elverson's Site Responsive Community Development Option).

Figure 3-19: Land Use Category Comparison: Elverson and West Nantmeal

Elverson Land Use	West Nantmeal Land Use	Compatible	Potential Inconsistency
Site Responsive/Recreation	Government and Institutional	✓	-
	Suburban Residential		WN - Higher Density Residential
Commerce	Suburban Residential	✓	-
	Government and Institutional	✓	-
Agricultural/Institutional	Government and Institutional	✓	-
	Commercial	✓	
	Suburban Residential		WN - Higher Density Residential
Site Responsive	Suburban Residential		WN - Higher Density Residential
	Government and Institutional	✓	-
Elverson Land Use	Caernarvon	Compatible	Potential Inconsistency
Agricultural/Institutional	Agricultural Preservation (EAP)	✓	-
Site Responsive/Recreation	Agricultural Preservation (EAP)	✓	-
	Rural Residential (R-2)	✓	-

Source: West Nantmeal (2007) and Caernarvon Township Comprehensive Plans.

Development along the municipal boundary should be coordinated between the two municipalities to eliminate or mitigate any potential conflicts, with use of open space to create buffer areas where appropriate. Coordination regarding new development should also focus on linking sidewalks and trails. Creation of a regional pedestrian connection would be highly beneficial, especially near the Twin Valley Elementary Center and commercial services.

Recommendations

The recommendations below focus on how to best achieve the Future Land Use and Housing Plan and best implement the related goals and objectives (as detailed in Chapter 2). Priorities for the implementation of these recommendations are established in Chapter 9, Implementation Strategies. Implementation of the recommendations identified below will help Elverson achieve its land use and housing goals to:

Provide for orderly growth that encourages economic vitality and quality of life while promoting a balance between existing businesses, growth, and resource protection.

Encourage a variety of housing options in the Borough to address population needs while maintaining the quality and diversity of the existing housing stock.

3-1 Review and amend the Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development ordinances for consistency with the Land Use Plan and map.

This action would include review of permitted uses, densities, resource protection measures, and the provision of recreational facilities to promote consistency with the land use plan. Further, the Borough should review the boundaries and regulations for the mobile home park overlay district and determine if the overlay district is necessary or if that use can be accommodated elsewhere.

3-2 Review and amend the Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development ordinances to permit commercial uses and potentially other amenities that would promote and support the heritage and recreation destination concept.

While the existing Borough Ordinances do not specifically restrict commercial uses that would support the heritage and recreation destination concept, regulations that would promote this concept should be considered. This may include the provision of incentives for commercial development including bike shops, recreational equipment rental, museums, coffee shops, etc. This may also include revised or additional requirements for the provision of sidewalks, trails, bike racks, lighting, and other recreation-related amenities through the development process.

3-3 Coordinate with adjacent municipalities to ensure that land use and associated development is consistent across shared boundaries.

Elverson is in a unique situation as it lies adjacent to only one Chester County municipality, West Nantmeal. West Nantmeal surrounds Elverson on two of its three sides and completed an update to their Comprehensive Plan in 2007. Given

the density of development that is permitted in West Nantmeal directly adjacent to Elverson, it is important that the municipalities coordinate on any development proposal to minimize potential issues. These strategies may include utilizing areas of open space required during development to provide buffers to reduce or eliminate potential conflicts. Further, opportunities can be discussed to provide pedestrian connections across municipal borders such as a trail connection to the Twin Valley Elementary Center.

3-4 Encourage the establishment and continuation of businesses and employment opportunities.

Regular coordination and communication with the business community is important to ensure the needs of the businesses and their patrons are being met. Periodically hosting a business owners breakfast or similar event would allow for discussion of multiple topics, including Borough events and the annual budget. The Borough should also be responsive to issues raised by the business community such as concerns with parking and circulation. Another method to support the business community would be encouraging the creation of a business association specific to Elverson-based businesses. Such an association could work on issues such as parking and marketing of services.

The recent streetscape improvements are an example of the Borough's commitment to address the needs and concerns of the business community. The Borough should continue to take advantage of funding opportunities to attract visitors to businesses along Main Street (Route 23). In addition, the Borough should ensure that their zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances promote the expansion and continuation of local and regional commercial uses and, more importantly, reduce or remove unnecessary restrictions.

3-5 Ensure that regulations continue to permit appropriate residential densities and diverse housing choices.

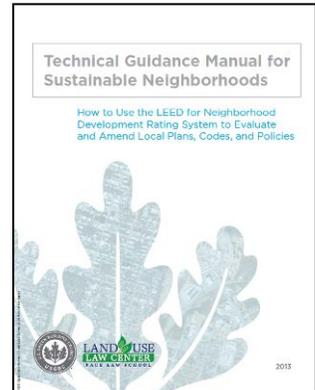
Although the median sales price in Elverson is one of the lowest in Chester County, the U.S. Census Bureau data indicate that approximately 26 percent of households in Elverson are cost burdened. The Borough could work with developers and local nonprofits to plan for mixed-income developments where the more moderately-priced units (affordable to households earning 80% of the area median or less) are indistinguishable from market rate units in the same development. Hopewell Manor is an example of income restricted housing.

3-6 Encourage the development and redevelopment of housing that meets Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), Energy Star, or other "Green" building standards.

For some homeowners and renters, housing becomes unaffordable with the additional cost of heat and other utilities. Incorporating green methods and materials reduces energy costs, making utility costs more manageable. Features such as water conserving fixtures, energy star appliances, high efficiency lighting, renewable energy sources (including photovoltaic and geothermal), and green roofs all contribute to reducing energy usage and therefore lowering the

long term costs for the resident. Elverson Borough does not currently address green building practices within the Zoning Ordinance.

There are multiple resources available from the U.S. Green Building Council on how to incorporate sustainability into development that could help the Township to broaden its support of green building and development practices (www.usgbc.org/neighborhoods). Two specific resources of note include *A Local Government Guide: to LEED for Neighborhood Development* and the *Technical Guidance Manual for Sustainable Neighborhoods*. The zoning ordinance could provide a density bonus for achieving a green threshold or standard, as is currently done with open space. Chester County's website for sustainable development, www.chescopagreen.org, is another resource to utilize.



3-7 Review procedures for inspection of rental properties and other properties related to health, safety, and welfare concerns.

The Borough should consider regulations for rental property inspections to occur at the time of change in occupancy. Such regulations should focus on the health, safety, and welfare of residents, and the necessary enforcement capabilities should be addressed during the annual budget process. Rental properties are an important part of providing a diversity of housing options for residents, and the Borough should be supportive of rental units and residents who choose this form of housing.

3-8 Inform homeowners about available resources to assist with home repair and maintenance needs through local and countywide home repair programs.

The Housing Partnership of Chester County provides assistance to low-income and senior households through its Housing Rehabilitation Program and Home Maintenance Program. More information can be obtained at www.housingpartnershipcc.com. Other local resources may also be available through faith-based or other non-profits. Often, low- or moderate-income residents in need of home repair services are not aware that these programs exist and continue to live in substandard conditions when help may be available. The Borough newsletter and website should be used to inform residents about the Housing Partnership of Chester County and similar programs.

3-9 Assist in educational efforts that focus on the need for affordable housing to reduce opposition to moderately priced development.

Most local opposition to affordable housing is based on a lack of understanding and misconceptions about persons who may occupy what is considered to be “low-income housing.” The County and numerous local and countywide non-profit advocacy groups can provide information and educational materials aimed at addressing incorrect assumptions about affordable housing. Elverson Borough should take a leadership role in supporting such programs and participate in efforts dealing with the affordability issue. Making existing educational materials available at Borough Hall and using the website and newsletter would be appropriate methods to inform residents about this issue.

3-10 Review Borough ordinances, and update as needed, to allow for housing opportunities for all members of the classes protected under the federal Fair Housing Act.

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discriminatory treatment with regard to housing opportunities toward any group or individual based upon race, color, national origin, gender, religion, disability, or familial status (presence of children under 18). A request to provide housing that would serve members of the protected classes cannot be denied on the basis of discrimination against members of those groups who are expected to occupy that housing.

3-11 Review zoning regulations to ensure that they support opportunities for congregate living situations for people with special needs.

People with disabilities face some of the greatest challenges compared with other demographic groups with regard to securing safe, affordable, and accessible housing. Physically accessible units are in very short supply across the County. Also, regulatory restrictions on uses such as group homes and/or negative stereotypes of residents may have the impact of restricting housing choices available to individuals with disabilities.

3-12 Continue to grant “reasonable accommodations,” that may include regulatory variances and waivers, to permit development or redevelopment of housing situations for individuals with disabilities.

The federal Fair Housing Act requires that a request for relief from zoning, subdivision and land development, or other local code requirements be granted if the request is reasonable and the relief creates an opportunity for the disabled to access housing of their choice within the local community. The request may be denied if it would create an undue burden on the municipality or result in a fundamental change to the character of the neighborhood. Based on the law, a congregate living situation for people with disabilities should be treated like any other residential use with like requirements and restrictions.

3-13 Support programs offered through community agencies that provide supportive services to senior citizens desiring to “age-in-place” and remain living in their own homes.

Aging seniors remaining at home will eventually need some level of supportive services. Elverson Borough should publicize any programs that provide quality of life enhancements to senior residents. Information on available programs could be provided on existing outreach methods, including the website and newsletter. Programs in the area include Meals on Wheels, Rover, and the adult day care program at Tel Hai.

Links

Discover the Future

www.chescopagreen.org

Fair Housing Rights Center in Southeastern Pennsylvania

www.fairhousingrights.org

Housing Partnership of Chester County

www.housingpartnershipcc.com

Landscapes2

www.landscapes2.org

U.S. Green Building Council (LEED and LEED-ND)

www.usgbc.org/neighborhoods

THIS PAGE LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK