



Housing and Transportation Options

for Southern Chester County



2014

Prepared by the Chester County Planning Commission and
funded by a grant from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission



Chester County Board of Commissioners

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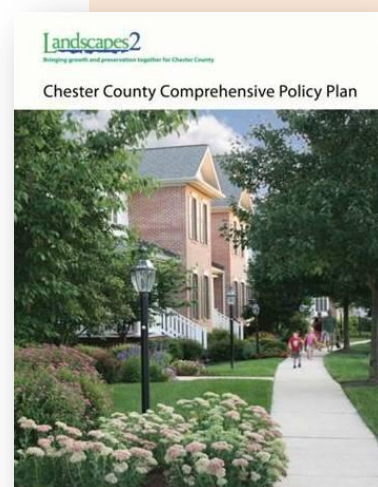


Housing diversity and affordability were identified as major issues for Chester County.

Chapter 1

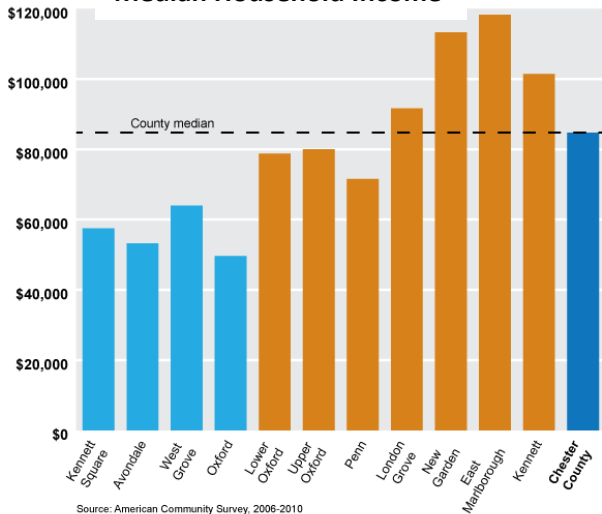
Introduction

Chester County, Pennsylvania adopted an update to its long-range comprehensive plan, titled **Landscapes2**, in November of 2009. Housing diversity and affordability were identified as major issues for Chester County to address in the plan. As part of plan implementation, the Chester County Planning Commission and Department of Community Development partnered with local realtors and homebuilders to form the Housing Options Task Force. This group was charged with identifying barriers to affordable housing throughout the County and making recommendations for steps to take to reduce or eliminate those barriers. One issue of particular concern related to housing access and affordability. Specifically, housing conditions for Latino workers, primarily employed within the mushroom industry, in the southern part of the County.



INTRODUCTION

Median Household Income

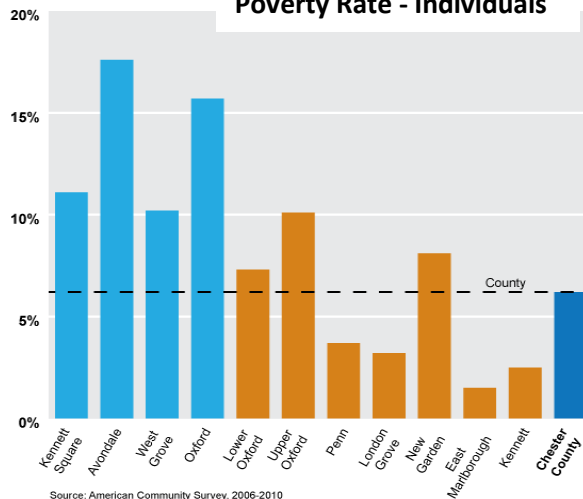


In response to this and other concerns, the Chester County Planning Commission (CCPC) has conducted a study of the housing, transportation, and employment scenario of low-wage Latino workers and fixed-income senior citizens in the southern part of the county. This study was funded by a grant from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), through the Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI).

According to program guidelines, TCDI grants...

“...are intended to support growth or redevelopment in the Core Cities, Developed/Mature Communities, and identified Centers as well as other communities that are socially or economically disadvantaged. Socially or economically disadvantaged areas are identified as census tracts with three or more ‘Degrees of Disadvantage (DOD),’ as compared to the region. Factors analyzed include poverty rates, minority population, Hispanic population, elderly concentration, transit dependency, disabled population, limited English proficiency, and female head of household with children.”

Poverty Rate - Individuals



The *Housing and Transportation Options for Southern Chester County* study addresses population groups that are socially and/or economically disadvantaged and represent individuals and families that are part of the demographic groups featured in the Degrees of Disadvantage analysis. This project involved a cooperative effort between the County, multiple municipalities, and the private and nonprofit sectors to assess the state of affordable housing and transportation for disadvantaged populations in the southern part of Chester County. The study also explored the employment situation for low-income people along the Baltimore Pike / SCCOOT bus transportation corridor. The project investigated the effectiveness of the SCCOOT bus service, and other transportation options, in connecting low-income people to the jobs and social services needed to sustain them.

The study area included 11 municipalities which stretch from Longwood Gardens in East Marlborough Township to, and including, Oxford Borough on the western end. Baltimore Pike, location of the SCCOOT public transit bus route, is the transportation corridor that links these communities together.



They include:

East Marlborough Township

Kennett Township

New Garden Township

Penn Township

London Grove Township

Lower Oxford Township

Kennett Square Borough

Avondale Borough

West Grove Borough

Oxford Borough

Upper Oxford Township



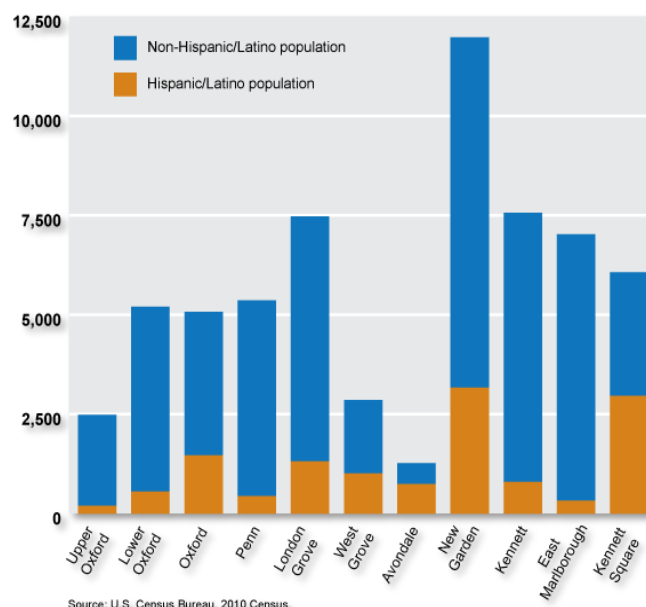
Southern Chester County is a unique geography within the Delaware Valley metropolitan area. The U.S. Route 1/Baltimore Pike corridor is home to more than 12,000 residents of Latino heritage, twenty-one percent of the total corridor population. The majority of these residents (65 percent) are immigrants. Within the study area, the mushroom industry is one of the predominant employers and many of the lower-paying mushroom industry jobs are held by both native and immigrant Latinos. These workers and other low-income Latino residents employed in retail, service, and landscaping sector jobs, represent a significant disadvantaged population in southern Chester County.

Nearly half of the Latino population within the study area is living within one of the four boroughs along this corridor; Kennett Square, Avondale, West Grove, or Oxford. In addition, the elderly (generally those age 65 and above), many living on fixed-incomes and with no private transportation, may have limited choices for quality, affordable housing and few alternatives for transportation to medical appointments, shopping, and other types of critical services. Low-income elderly residents were also identified as a disadvantaged population within the study area.

The CCPC study kicked off in the Spring of 2012 and progressed through a detailed stakeholder input process, data collection and research, field studies, neighborhood meetings, GIS mapping, analysis of findings, and development of an implementation strategy. The final study findings were presented in November of 2013.

Throughout this process, the project was guided by a Study Advisory Committee (SAC), a group of twenty-five stakeholders representing varied backgrounds and perspectives, all committed to addressing the needs of disadvantaged individuals and families that live and work along the Baltimore Pike corridor. This committee consisted of members representing the eleven municipalities in the study area, non-profit organizations, employers, and economic development specialists. The members provided the perspectives of the target populations, housing specialists, mushroom businesses, transportation providers, government officials, and others active in the local community.

Latino Population



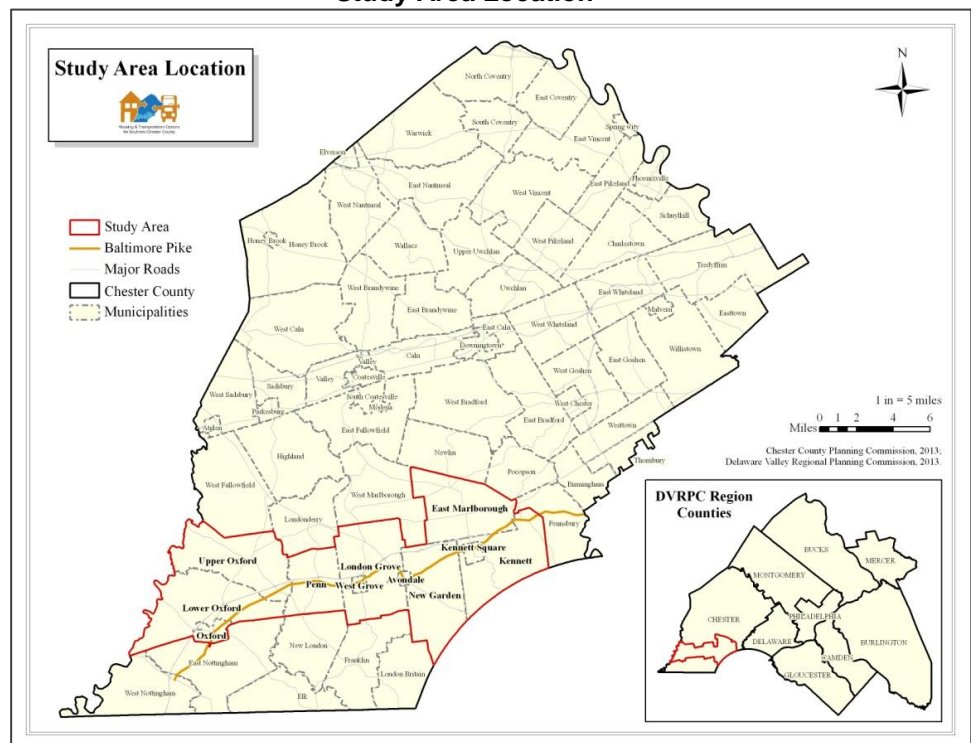
INTRODUCTION



The members of the Study Advisory Committee were critical to identifying the issues to be addressed at the outset of the project. They helped guide the project team through the public participation process and planning field work. The members provided valuable insights into both existing problems and the means to address them. With these insights, an implementation strategy was developed that will draw upon the strengths and resources available to create and maintain affordable housing for low-income individuals and families, and to support efficient transportation connections between housing, jobs, and services. The members of the Study Advisory Committee will continue to play critical roles through implementing the study recommendations. They are local people that can explain the issues and the need for action to the broader community.

Finally, it is important to note that this study is characterized primarily by information collected through a public input process. While some conclusions are directly supported by data and/or field studies, others are dependent, in whole or in part, on anecdotal information from assumed reliable sources.

Figure 1-1
Study Area Location



Map prepared by Chester County Planning Commission. (See Appendix, Map A-1)



The project team conducted six SAC meetings, fourteen face-to-face stakeholder interviews, two telephone interviews, five Strategy Team meetings, and three neighborhood forums.

Chapter 2

Stakeholder Involvement

This study is built on the collection of information from the many stakeholders involved in the issues, including municipal officials, residents, advocates, developers, employers, churches, and other community-based groups. Guided by the Study Advisory Committee (SAC), the project team conducted six SAC meetings, fourteen face-to-face stakeholder interviews, two telephone interviews, five Strategy Team meetings, and three neighborhood forums. The team also conducted multiple field studies, rode on the SCCOOT bus, and attended other community group meetings and presentations. These ideas do not necessarily reflect the policies or opinions of the Chester County Planning Commission or the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. Rather, they are presented as conveyed to the project team by the stakeholders through meetings, phone calls, discussions and interviews.



The lack of quality housing, affordable to low-income (30%-50% of the area median income), and very low-income (0-30% of the area median income) residents in the study area, is the major finding.



In most cases, the thoughts expressed in this chapter were derived from comments received consistently from multiple sources and therefore considered substantially reliable.

The stakeholder discussions resulted in the identification of several major points of consistency. The idea that Latino residents are hard working and important members of the community was disputed by no one. In addition, many Latinos living in substandard housing conditions (conditions which pose a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of the residents) was a common observation. The existence of a significant language barrier for Spanish speakers is generally agreed upon as well. Regarding senior citizens, there appears to be concern across the study area about those who are aging while living in their homes, many living alone, with an increasing need for supportive services.

Overall, the lack of quality housing, affordable to low-income (30%-50% of the area median income), and very low-income (0-30% of the area median income) residents in the study area, is the major finding. Transportation options for low-income workers and senior citizens are also very limited.

The supporting comments gathered through the stakeholder input process are summarized below, organized by the topic areas discussed over the course of the project. The input received through this phase also formed the basis for the data collection effort. The data summary is presented in Chapter 3, Inventory.

Latino Community

Throughout the stakeholder interviews and neighborhood forums conducted for the study, the Latino community has been identified as a significantly disadvantaged population in the study area. Church officials from St. Rocco's Church, a Spanish based parish in New Garden Township, reported that there are more than 5,000 families registered in the parish. This membership is to a large extent made up of Latino households where at least someone in the home speaks Spanish. The parish staff reports that the majority of Latino parishioners live in southern Chester County and a large percentage are employed within the mushroom industry.

Correspondingly, local mushroom growers indicate that the majority of mushroom farm workers are Latino (90 percent +), with the vast majority of them coming from Mexico. Latinos work in all facets of the industry; growing, packaging, cooking, and processing. Many of the growers pay the mushroom pickers based upon the volume each individual produces. As such, many work 50-60 hours per week to earn extra pay. Some Latinos own their own growing operations. Many, however, are paid the lowest wages as mushroom pickers.

Housing for Low-Income Households

Advocates report that the immigration status of Latinos in the study area varies, even within households. In general, it is very difficult for many residents to secure safe and decent housing that is also affordable. In some cases, housing conditions are very poor and landlords refuse to address substandard conditions. Overcrowding is common, where families may be "doubled-up" in a unit in order to share housing



costs. This also occurs with single men, though not as much as in the past. Absentee landlords complicate the rental situation. Municipalities report problems with “illegal” rentals that are not being regulated or inspected. Also, the language barrier can cause communication problems between landlords and Spanish-speaking tenants.

Although most families are renting, there is some demand for homeownership among Latino residents. Many Latino families live in mobile homes, some in single units and some in mobile home parks. The ownership situation in mobile home parks varies. In some cases, the resident owns the home and leases the land. In other cases, the unit is also rented. Local officials and community advocates suggest that the living conditions are inadequate in some of these communities, in particular within the rentals. Owner-occupied units are generally better maintained.

The Latino community and its related housing needs in southern Chester County have changed. There is now more demand for family housing, and less demand to house single men. Some mushroom farms provide a limited amount of housing for workers. Rent for housing on the farm is often less expensive than market rate housing elsewhere, but residents may still need several wage earners in the unit to cover costs. A local social service provider reported that some mushroom industry workers are living in housing that was converted from former mushroom houses, and that some of these units are not in good condition. The general feeling is that, in general, there is not enough quality housing available that is affordable for the lowest wage-earners. Rents continue to be very high relative to income for low-wage workers throughout the study area.

Crowding and lack of cleanliness and maintenance are reported by advocates for low-income renters. Some landlords refuse to address maintenance issues and tenants are left to handle matters themselves. The residents’ monthly incomes may not be sufficient to cover major maintenance or repairs. Reputable management companies typically require a credit check before renting to a particular tenant. A local nonprofit advocate reports that absentee or less reputable landlords may take advantage of the immigrant population and charge very high rents for units that are in poor condition.

According to input from the InterGen Coalition, many Latino families could actually qualify for homeownership. There are USDA mortgage programs available targeted to low and moderate-income households. However, people are reluctant to buy because of the recent decline in home values. This was true despite what had been very low interest rates for mortgages. Also, affordable homes are in very short supply. With fewer families purchasing, rental costs rise as the demand for rental housing increases. In addition, many landlords require three months rent as a security deposit to move in. Utilities are often paid in addition to monthly rents. All of these factors

Housing Affordability is based upon a ratio between the resident’s income and the monthly cost of housing. Housing is considered affordable when a household spends no more than 30 percent of its gross income on housing costs. The households being targeted by this study are earning between zero and 50 percent of the area median income, or up to approximately \$42,000 per year. Many of those households are earning no more than 30 percent of area median income, or approximately \$25,000 per year and below. A household at the 30 percent level can afford to pay no more than \$625 per month on housing, which should also include utilities.



Mobile home community. London Grove Township



Mushroom houses. Kennett Township



combine to produce a situation of greatly unmet housing needs for Latino workers and their families.



Jenner's Pond, Penn Township

Through the public input process of the study, senior citizens were also identified as a disadvantaged population in need of more viable housing and transportation options. For this typically fixed-income population, housing options of varying types exist along the Baltimore Pike corridor. The Luther House community in Penn Township provides quality housing that is HUD supported for low-income seniors. That community maintains a waiting list of applicants. Jenner's Pond in Penn Township is a continuing care retirement community offering everything from independent living cottages to full nursing care. Ware Presbyterian Village in Oxford offers several types of housing along the continuum of care. This housing may not, however, be affordable for low-income seniors. There are many active-adult communities in the study area, also.

There is an emerging need for affordable assisted-living for seniors, and/or greater support for seniors choosing to age in place, needs that will likely grow with the aging of the population in general. According to local senior citizen advocates, Kennett Square has a decided lack of affordable housing options for seniors and has seen a decrease in the last decade in the elderly population, while other areas are seeing marked increases (based upon Census estimates). The InterGen Coalition, a grassroots partnership of concerned citizens, is working toward creating more affordable housing options for seniors in Kennett Square.



Kennett Area Senior Center

Transportation

The stakeholder meetings also involved discussions of transportation options for low-income individuals and families. It is reported that many Latino households in the study area have a least one member that does not drive, or they do not have a vehicle. Those who do own a car sometimes provide a service locally known as the "underground taxi." Some Spanish-speaking car owners offer transportation for payment and are able to set their own fares. Sometimes these drivers take advantage of people in need of transportation to work, appointments, or other destinations.

There are two forms of public transportation serving the southern part of Chester County, but only one, the SCCOOT bus, has a fixed route and schedule. The other, the ROVER bus, is an "on demand" service. The SCCOOT bus generally is targeted to low-income riders who use the bus to commute to work. It is also targeted to Latino workers. Many riders are Spanish-speaking. The project team, through taking trips on the bus, observed that between 50 and 75 percent of riders on those days was Latino. Most spoke only Spanish during their trips. Some, but not all, of SCCOOT drivers are bilingual.

On the day that the project team travelled on the bus, riders traveled to or from Walmart (East Marlborough), Tastykake (Oxford), Burger King (Longwood), Jenner's



Pond (Penn), Lowe's shopping center (London Grove), and the Shoppes at Jenner's Village (Penn) for work. The bus schedule is not convenient for some worker hours and shifts, particularly retail and mushroom farm jobs, where there is a need for workers seven days per week. The bus does not run at all on Sundays and Saturday service is limited. The schedule does not accommodate workers who have late shifts, 3pm-11pm for example. Also, some feel the bus is not affordable enough to use every day. However, most people interviewed were not aware of what it cost to ride the bus, or that they could purchase monthly passes at a discounted rate.

Many employers reported they are not familiar with SCCOOT service. For some businesses there are no convenient bus stop locations. In particular, a large mushroom grower in the region, that employs several hundred people, feels that a stop located closer to the facility would be well utilized by workers. This employer has workers that begin at 5am; the bus does not run that early. However, there are other shifts that begin later that would coordinate well with the bus schedule. More stops throughout the route would also be helpful to expand access for workers during commuting hours.

Stakeholders made a number of suggestions to address the problems with service they had identified. To increase awareness of the SCCOOT bus:

- Post the bus schedule in high volume, public areas.
- Place benches and/or shelters for riders at the bus stops.
- Prominently mark bus stops so riders know where to wait and when buses are expected.
- Install bike racks at the bus stops which might help those who live further from the bus to be able to access the service. For some the bus stops are a long distance from their residence.
- There are also safety concerns with some of the SCCOOT bus stop locations. Better lighting and signage would help to improve safety.

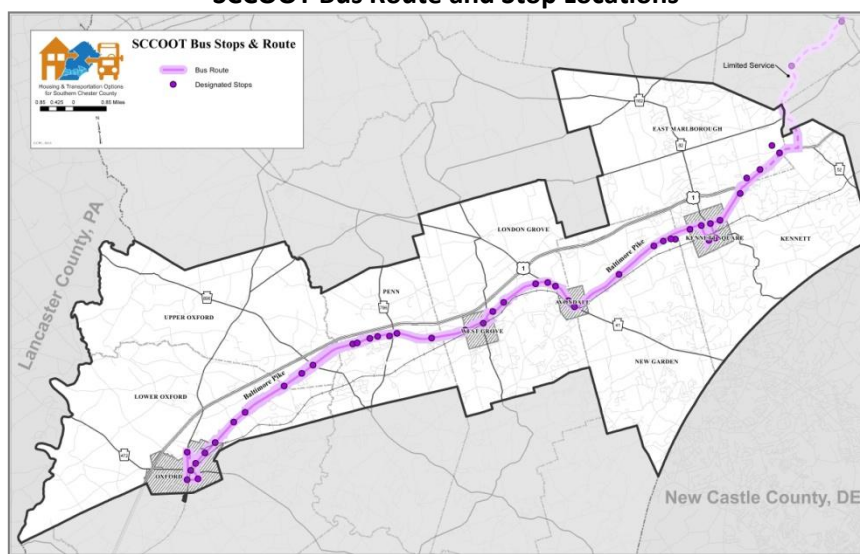
The ROVER bus, a countywide public transportation option, primarily serves those on medical assistance to connect with medical and other services. The majority of riders



SCCOOT stop at Luther House

Most people interviewed were not aware of what it cost to ride the bus, or that they could purchase monthly passes at a discounted rate.

**Figure 2-1
SCCOOT Bus Route and Stop Locations**



Map prepared by Chester County Planning Commission. (See Appendix, Map A-2)



ROVER at the Kennett Area Senior Center



Bilingual workers are greatly valued for their ability to act as interpreters and translators between employees and management.

are income-limited senior citizens. ROVER is demand responsive and provides door-to-door service. Trips must be scheduled in advance. Riders, however, report that it can be difficult to match up schedules and that sometimes the buses arrive late.

Beyond the SCCOOT and ROVER buses, there is another transit concept being explored for southern Chester County. The “Ride for Health” initiative, a TMACC service modeled after an existing taxi-based service operating in the Phoenixville area, would provide transportation for those who do not qualify for ROVER service. This service would be specifically targeted to individuals needing transportation to medical appointments or health-related services. Some stakeholders also suggested exploring employer-sponsored transportation as a viable option.

Employment

Stakeholders generally agreed that the mushroom industry is to a large degree supported by Latino workers. Worker wages depend upon the type of job they hold, and there are a variety of jobs available in the industry. Mushroom picking is the most common, and typically the lowest paid. The mushroom business is year round so many workers are permanent year-round residents. Some of the stakeholders had the impression that many workers living in southern Chester County send money back to their families in Mexico. Mushroom farmers report that over time more and more bilingual workers are being hired. Bilingual workers are greatly valued for their ability to act as interpreters and translators between employees and management.



Walmart Super Store, East Marlborough Township

A local grocery store reported that it employs a small percentage of Latinos, and those workers are typically bilingual. Employment applications for many employers are only available online, and/or only in English. This clearly creates a barrier for Spanish speakers. Also, transportation is a barrier to finding or keeping a job for many Latino households. Those who are working typically drive to work or carpool. A small percentage of the low-wage workforce rides a bike or walks to work.

Many community advocates observed that Latino individuals and families continue to immigrate to southern Chester County from Mexico and other Latin American countries. In general, people are coming here to find work. The mushroom industry is the primary target. However, Latinos are also employed within landscaping, retail, and service businesses throughout the study area.

Conclusion

The overarching theme derived from the public input process is *the significant need for more quality affordable housing in southern Chester County*. While there are several examples of quality housing for low-income families in the study area, including Las Rosas (Kennett Square) and Buena Vista (New Garden) townhomes, and Cedarwoods Apartments (New Garden), much more of this type of housing is needed. This issue is not new. Some argue that living conditions have improved over the years. Others insist that immigrants continue to be marginalized and many are housed in unacceptable conditions in substandard units.



Transportation is also a longstanding issue, particularly for low-income people. There has been some progress made in this area with the establishment of the SCCOOT and ROVER bus service. Significant need, however, remains. Addressing both housing and transportation needs will go a long way in meeting the needs of the Latino community, and low-income seniors, in southern Chester County.

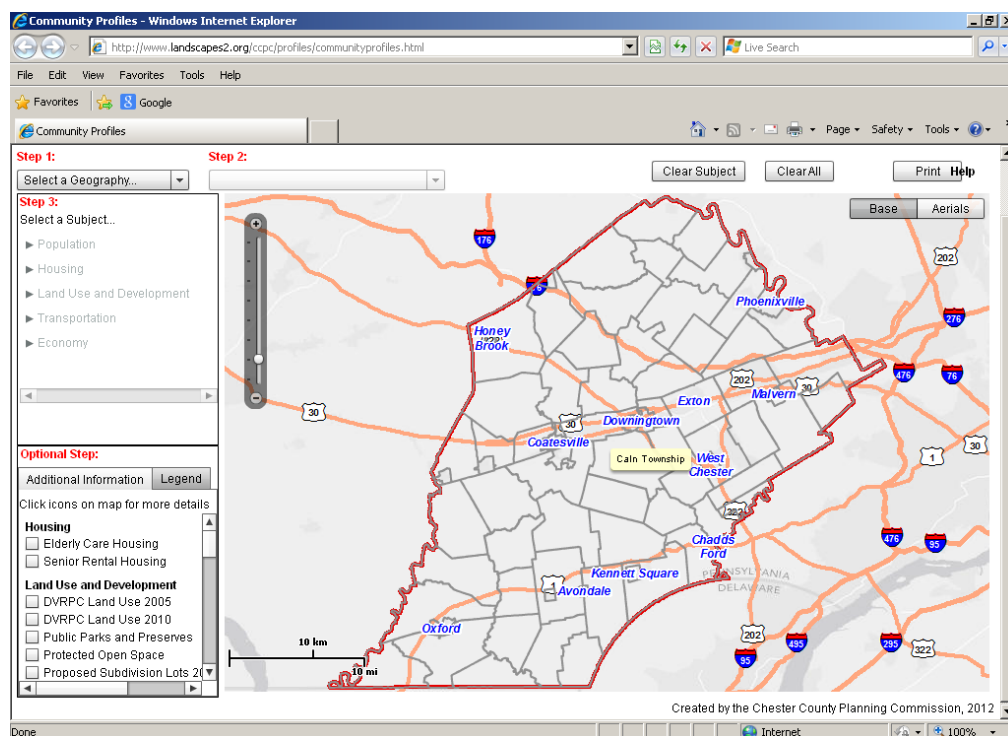


Quality, affordable housing, New Garden Township





In addition to data for the total population, there is an emphasis on the Latino and elderly populations.



Chapter 3

Inventory

This chapter provides an overview of key demographic and housing characteristics for the study area. In addition to data for the total population, there is an emphasis on the Latino and elderly populations. The data clearly demonstrate the concentrations of Latino residents within the study area, and especially within the four boroughs. It is likely, according to community advocates, that the Latino population in the county has been undercounted. Therefore the population in the study area may be even more significant than the data suggest. This chapter also provides information about transportation, employment, and community services. Most of the data is from the U. S. Census Bureau, either the 2010 Decennial Census or the American Community Survey 2006-2010.



The 2010 census is a count of the population at a single point in time, April 1, 2010. It is limited to basic demographic characteristics such as age, sex, race and ethnicity. The American Community Survey (ACS) is a continuous survey that provides socio-economic information such as income, poverty, education, and housing costs. The ACS collects data from a sample of the population over a period of time. The data in this report represents the average characteristics of the population over the time period 2006 to 2010. Additional demographic and housing data are included in the Appendix. Those tables provide the detailed numbers that are illustrated in the charts in this chapter.

**Figure 3-1
Total Population, 2010**

	Total	Latino		Elderly (65+)	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Kennett Square	6,072	2,963	49%	646	11%
Avondale	1,265	746	59%	83	7%
West Grove	2,854	1,005	35%	186	7%
Oxford	5,077	1,464	29%	761	15%
East Marlborough	7,026	326	5%	971	14%
Kennett	7,565	792	10%	1,526	20%
New Garden	11,984	3,165	26%	1,060	9%
London Grove	7,475	1,313	18%	742	10%
Penn	5,364	435	8%	1,541	29%
Lower Oxford	5,200	550	11%	375	7%
Upper Oxford	2,484	194	8%	281	11%
Study Area	62,366	12,953	21%	8,172	13%
Chester County	498,886	32,503	7%	63,875	13%
Pennsylvania	12,702,379	719,660	6%	1,959,307	15%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Demographics

Figure 3-1 illustrates the total population numbers for the study area. There are approximately 62,000 people living within the eleven municipality area. This is about 12 percent of the total county population. Latinos number nearly 13,000 in the study area, which is 40 percent of the total Latino population in the County. In Chester County, seven percent of the total population is self-identified as Latino, but 21 percent of the study area population is self-identified as Latino.

These data strongly support the information collected from stakeholders regarding the concentrations of Latino residents, particularly within the boroughs.

Forty percent of the combined population in the boroughs is Latino. Among the boroughs Kennett Square has the largest Latino population representing 23 percent of all Latinos in the study area. Further, Latinos comprise almost half of the total population in the borough of Kennett Square. These numbers have significant implications regarding planning for housing, transportation, economic development, recreation and cultural events, and public services.

Regarding senior citizens, thirteen percent of the study area population is age 65 or older; the same as for Chester County. The elderly population is more concentrated in some municipalities than in others. In Penn Township 29 percent of the population is age 65 or older and in Kennett Township 20 percent is age 65 or older.



These numbers reflect the many age-restricted, assisted living, and nursing care facilities concentrated in those two townships. Examples include Kendall at Crosslands in Kennett Township, and Jenner's Pond in Penn Township. Penn Township is also the location of many 55+ communities offering varying options for unit type and community amenities. There are also, however, many elderly individuals living alone in their own private homes. Planners refer to this situation as "aging in place," and there is a growing population of seniors opting to stay in their homes. These residents will need community support and various services in order to safely and securely remain at home. Transportation becomes one of their most critical needs when these residents no longer drive.

Latino Place of Origin

The study area is quite divergent from the county regarding the place of origin of Latino residents. Approximately 65 percent of the Latino population in the study area is foreign born with 35 percent native. Countywide, foreign born Latinos are 51 percent and native represent 49 percent of that group. Two-thirds of Latino youth in the study area, but only one in six (16 percent) Latino adults, were born in the United States. The percentage of foreign born Latinos is higher in the study area than in Chester County.

These numbers are consistent with public input indicating that individuals and families continue to immigrate to southern Chester County from Mexico, and other Latin American countries, to find work. According to stakeholders, the path to citizenship is long, complicated, and difficult to maneuver for many Latino immigrants. That is reflected in the fact that only 6 percent of foreign born Latinos in the study area have become naturalized citizens according to the Census Bureau.

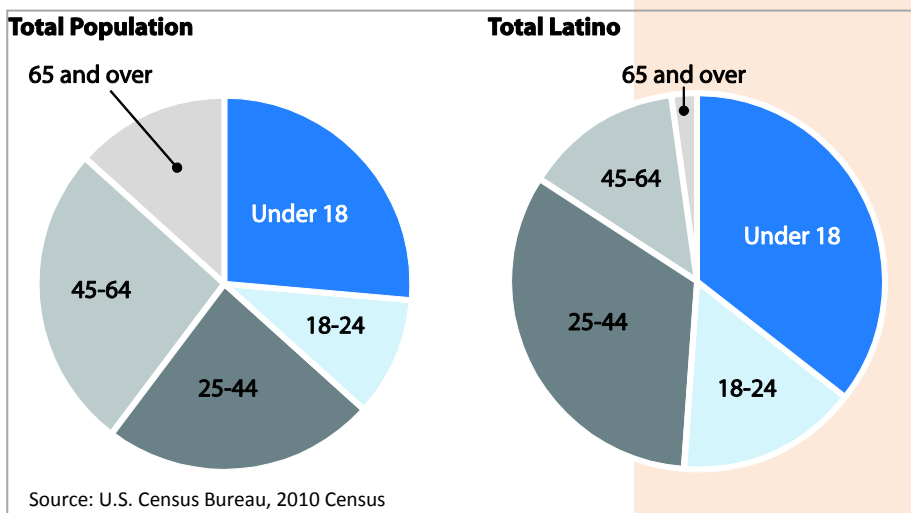
According to stakeholders, the path to citizenship is long, complicated, and difficult to maneuver for many Latino immigrants.

Resident Age

The Latino population is younger and there are a larger proportion of males compared to the total population in the study area. Half (49 percent) of Latinos are between ages 18 to 44, compared to 34 percent of the total population in the study area. Over one-third (36 percent) of Latinos are under age 18, compared to 27 percent of all residents in the study area. Only two percent of Latinos are 65 or over, compared to 13 percent of all residents. These numbers support the assertion that the Latino population is still growing primarily through immigration, with working adults and their children making up the majority of this group.

Of Latinos age 18 and over, 60 percent are male. Of the total study area population 18 and over, 49 percent are male. Although there are more adult Latino males than

Figure 3-2
Age, Study Area, 2010



females, males do not predominate as much as in the past. Initially when mushroom workers came to Chester County from Mexico, it was typically men alone. Often the workers' families remained in Mexico. Now there are many more Latino families who are year-round residents. This has led to interest among Latino residents in more aspects of community life, including the schools, recreational facilities, and social services.

Figure 3-3
Median Household Income, 2006-2010

Study Area Municipalities	All households	Latino households	Householder 65 years and over
Kennett Square	\$57,500	\$52,868	\$36,842
Avondale	\$53,203	\$49,063	\$57,188
West Grove	\$63,988	\$60,417	\$31,087
Oxford	\$49,608	\$27,318	\$33,250
East Marlborough	\$118,295	NA	\$78,333
Kennett	\$101,446	\$77,955	\$75,142
New Garden	\$113,317	\$40,139	\$64,671
London Grove	\$91,667	\$47,622	\$36,932
Penn	\$71,563	NA	\$29,489
Lower Oxford	\$78,799	NA	\$40,481
Upper Oxford	\$80,000	NA	\$61,250
Chester County	\$84,741	\$55,960	\$46,538

N/A – Insufficient number of Latino households

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

households is lower than the median income of all households. The median income of Latino households is significantly less than the median income of all households. In addition, the Latino household median income may be skewed upward due

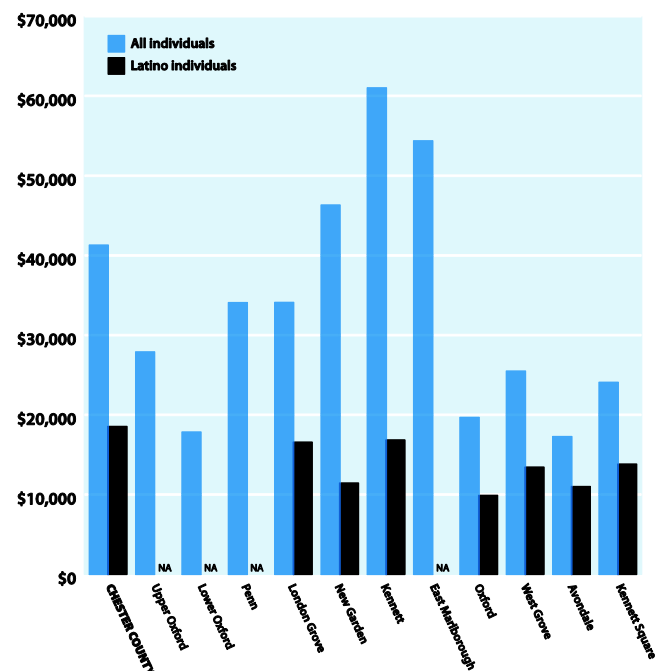
to the fact that many of those households are reportedly occupied by more than one family and/or more than two wage-earning adults. A better basis of comparison is the per capita income figure from the Census, illustrated in Figure 3-4 below.

Income and Poverty

Chester County has an affluent population as indicated by the high median household income of \$84,741, one of the highest in Pennsylvania. The study area is also affluent, but there are differences among areas and households. The boroughs in the study area have lower median household incomes than the townships, which are either above or near the county median.

The income of elderly

Figure 3-4
Per Capita Income, 2006-2010



N/A – Insufficient number of Latino households

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates



The per capita income of Latinos is approximately half of the per capita income of the total population of the study area. Some of these numbers are strikingly different depending on the municipality. In New Garden Township, a Latino individual has only 25 percent of the income of the average person of the general population. This suggests that supporting a Latino family in this part of the county is a struggle, at best.

Figure 3-5 shows the percentage of the people whose income is below the poverty level, by municipality. Poverty rates are generally higher in the boroughs than the townships. A higher percentage of Latinos appear to be below the poverty level; the difference may not be statistically significant due to sampling. The poverty rates generally support the conclusion of the per capita income data above.

Figure 3-5
Poverty Level, 2006-2010

	All individuals	Latino individuals
Kennett Square	11.1%	16.4%
Avondale	17.6%	26.7%
West Grove	10.2%	21.4%
Oxford	15.7%	24.8%
East Marlborough	1.5%	NA
Kennett	2.5%	13.0%
New Garden	8.1%	27.5%
London Grove	3.2%	12.8%
Penn	3.7%	NA
Lower Oxford	7.3%	NA
Upper Oxford	10.1%	NA
Chester County	6.2%	17.7%

NA – Not available

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

In New Garden Township, a Latino individual has only 25 percent of the income of the average person of the general population.

Housing

Households

One of every eight households in the study area is a Latino household. This is a much higher concentration than in the county overall. The boroughs have higher percentages of Latino households than the townships. New Garden has the highest percentage of Latino households among the townships. It also has the highest concentration of mushroom farms and related industry.



Mobile home community, London Grove Township



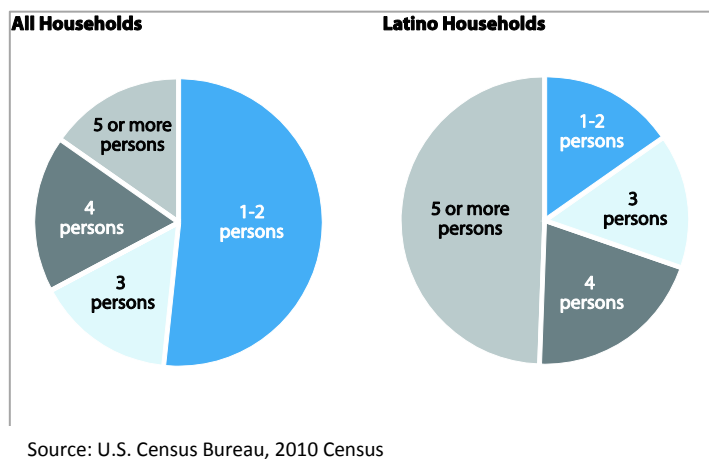
One of every four households in the study area has a householder 65 years or older. Penn (nearly one-half) and Kennett (one-third) townships have the highest percentages of elderly households. This, again, is a reflection of the concentrations of active adult communities, and independent living, assisted living, and nursing care facilities in those two townships. Many of the age-restricted communities do not, however, offer housing that would be considered affordable to low-income or fixed-income seniors. The exception is the Luther House community in Penn Township which is a federally-funded, income controlled project of 257 apartments for low-income seniors.

Figure 3-6
Total Households, 2010

	Total Households	Latino Households	Percent Latino	Elderly Households	Percent Elderly
Kennett Square	1,982	602	30.4%	415	20.9%
Avondale	329	136	41.3%	47	14.3%
West Grove	898	196	21.8%	119	13.3%
Oxford	1,831	349	19.1%	455	24.8%
East Marlborough	2,546	61	2.4%	566	22.2%
Kennett	2,986	167	5.6%	985	33.0%
New Garden	3,694	596	16.1%	604	16.4%
London Grove	2,315	242	10.4%	396	17.1%
Penn	2,194	98	4.5%	1,051	47.9%
Lower Oxford	1,107	99	8.9%	223	20.1%
Upper Oxford	820	37	4.5%	167	20.4%
Study Area	20,702	2,583	12.5%	5,028	24.3%
Chester County	182,900	7,243	4.1%	39,438	21.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Figure 3-7
Household Size, Study Area, 2010



Household Type and Size

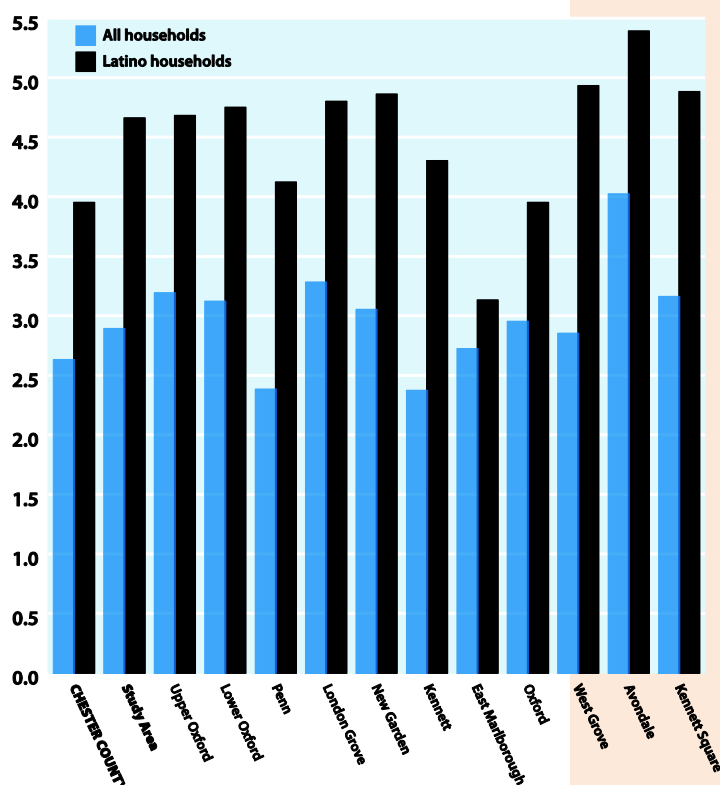
Compared to all households in the study area, Latino households have a higher percentage of family households. That is, Latino householders are more likely to live with relatives than with only nonrelatives. Very few Latinos live alone. This data supports the assertion by stakeholders that most Latino residents have immigrated with their families, and that often a Latino household includes multiple generations and/or other extended family. (see Appendix for household type data)

Reflecting cultural traditions and norms, and a strong tradition of multi-generational households, Latino households are large compared to all the households in the study area. Half of the Latino households have five or more persons compared to only 15 percent of all households. Half of all households in the study area have one or two persons, but only 15 percent of Latino households are that small.

The average household size of Latino households is 4.66 persons while the average household size for all households in the study area is 2.89. Latino households are larger than other households in every municipality in the study area. Again, this directly supports the information from stakeholders that Latinos in the study area are sometimes “doubled-up” or in other ways sharing housing, such that it becomes manageable to pay the rent and meet other basic living expenses.

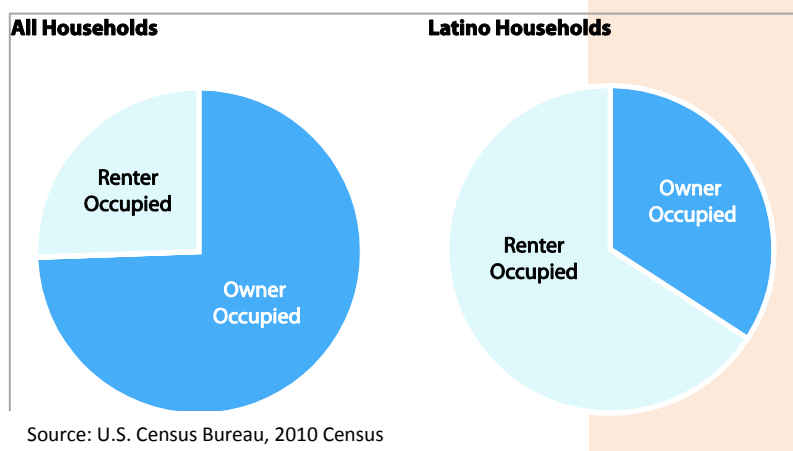
As illustrated in Figure 3-9, three-quarters of all households in the study area own their home. This is consistent with the countywide homeownership rate of 76.2 percent. Among Latino households, renting is more prevalent in the study area, with only one-third owning their home. These findings support stakeholder input that most Latino families are

Figure 3-8
Average Household Size, 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Figure 3-9
Housing Tenure, Study Area, 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census

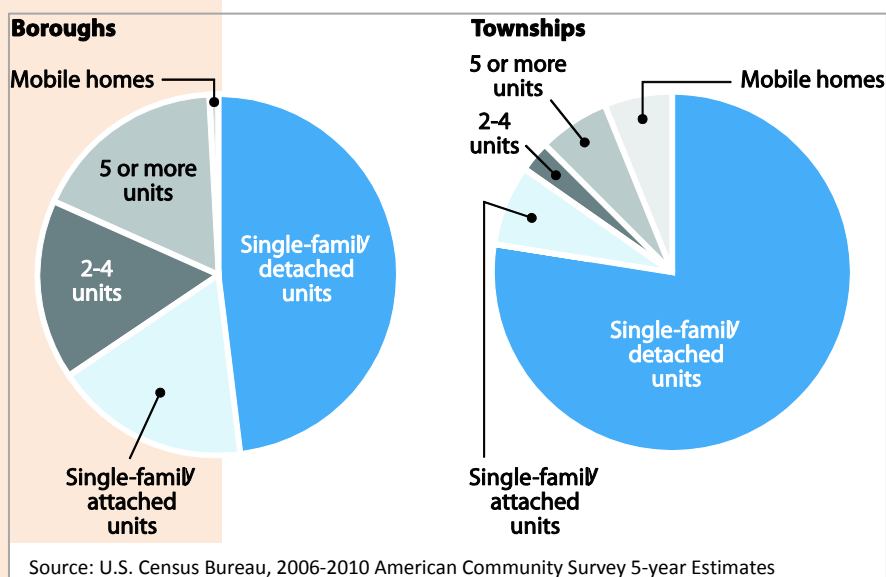


renting. It is possible, however, that the number and percent of Latino renters is actually higher than what has been reported to the census.

Housing Unit Types

The majority of housing in the study area is single-family detached units. However, there are large differences between the housing in the boroughs and the housing in the townships. In the boroughs, half of the housing units are attached units (twins, townhouses) or in multi-family structures. In the townships, only 17 percent of housing units are attached or multi-family. Mobile homes account for five percent of the total housing supply in the study area; most are in the townships, especially New Garden, London Grove, and Penn.

Figure 3-10
Housing Unit Types, 2010



Rents and Housing Value

Multi-family units, including apartment units or buildings, and mobile homes can often be a more affordable housing option than single-family homes. However, rental housing costs are high. In the study area, only 22 percent of the rental units have rents below \$750 per month.

The housing values are highest in the townships, especially in the eastern portion of the study area where they exceed the county median value. Values are lowest in the boroughs.

Figure 3-11
Gross Monthly Rent, 2006- 2010

	Units paying rent	Less than \$500 (percent)	\$500 to \$749 (percent)	\$750 to \$999 (percent)	\$1,000 or more (percent)
Study area	4,838	7%	15%	33%	44%
Boroughs	2,309	4%	22%	37%	38%
Townships	2,529	11%	9%	30%	50%
Chester County	39,464	7%	11%	25%	57%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates



Existing Housing

There is a small supply of quality affordable units in the study area. The affordability and condition of many the mobile homes is not currently known. Some mobile home units appear in poor condition from the exterior. Other housing developments shown in Figure 3-12, however, have been in some way supported by public funding that guarantees long term affordability for low-and moderate income households. The units are generally in good repair. Publically supported rental units are inspected annually. Las Rosas and Buena Vista townhouses are all owner-occupied units and are reportedly very well kept and maintained. These two communities provide homes primarily for Latino families.

Most of the affordable rental communities in the study area maintain waiting lists. The Granite Ridge development in Kennett Township is under construction and the management company has received many more applications than they will have apartments available.

Beyond these options, there are some scattered single units, both homeownership and rental, available at an affordable monthly cost for low and moderate income households.

An analysis of HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy Data reveals that approximately 1,000 Latino households are experiencing a housing problem. A housing problem is defined as a cost-burdened condition, an overcrowded unit, or a substandard unit.

Figure 3-12
Moderately Priced Housing Options, Study Area

Ownership		
Las Rosas Townhouses	Kennett Square	16 units
Buena Vista Townhouses	New Garden	24 units
Rental		
Cedar Woods Apartments	New Garden	76 units
Luther House	Penn	256 units
The Oxford Hotel	Oxford	16 one-bedroom/ 6 two-bedroom
Oxford Terrace	Oxford	26 efficiency/ 22 one-bedroom
Oxford Village Apartments	Oxford	25 two-bedroom/ 25 three-bedroom
Mobile Homes largest communities		
Oxford Village MHP	Penn	215 units
Avon Grove Trailer Park	London Grove	45 units
Avonwheel Estates MHP	London Grove	100 units
Oxford MH Community	Oxford/East Nottingham	35 units
Proposed Ownership		
Habitat for Humanity	West Grove	40 units
Pathstone - ABH	Oxford	14 units
Proposed Rental		
Granite Ridge	Kennett	112 units



Whitehall Apartments, Oxford Borough



The majority of roadways are narrow with limited shoulders and few accommodations for bicyclists or pedestrians.

Transportation

Baltimore Pike is the central focus of the study. It extends through the center of the study area from Oxford Borough to East Marlborough and Kennett Townships. The road is classified as a minor arterial for the majority of the study area. Baltimore Pike intersects Route 41 (major arterial) at Avondale and merges with Route 1 (expressway) east of Kennett Square (see Appendix, Map A-3). Otherwise Baltimore Pike is intersected primarily by local and minor collector roadways. Route 1 carries a large share of the traffic within the study area. The expressway generally parallels Baltimore Pike from Oxford Borough to Kennett Township.

Roadways

Roadways in the study area have been designed to serve the traditional land uses, characterized primarily by agriculture outside the boroughs. There are compact roads with sidewalks within the boroughs and winding country roads and highways in between. The majority of roadways are narrow with limited shoulders and few accommodations for bicyclists or pedestrians. Many roadways were designed exclusively around the use of the car. This is especially true along the major corridors, Baltimore Pike and Route 41. Poor access management, characterized by numerous and often offset access points along these two roadways, can create dangerous situations for bicyclists and pedestrians. Therefore, many people rely on the automobile for travel throughout the study area.



Baltimore Pike, facing east, Kennett Township



Baltimore Pike, facing west, Kennett Township

Public Transportation

The Southern Chester County Organization on Transportation (SCCOOT) bus serves the study area from Oxford Borough to Longwood Gardens with additional limited service to West Chester. From West Chester, the SCCOOT bus connects to SEPTA bus routes 92 and 104 and Krapf's Coaches 'A' bus route. The SCCOOT route generally follows Baltimore Pike, and it passes through each of the eleven municipalities included in the study area. The service is provided by the Transportation Management Association of Chester County (TMACC) through a



Figure 3-13
Transportation Inventory

partnership with SCCOOT. The service is available Monday through Friday, with limited service on Saturday.

The SCCOOT bus stops in the boroughs attract the highest number of riders. The West Grove Library, Oxford Borough Hall and Broad & Cypress Streets in Kennett Square see the most riders. This should be expected because increased population density tends to lead to increased demand for and use of public transportation. However, in the study area, employment centers are generally located in the townships. Mushroom industry sites, though occurring in clusters, are not generally found in the boroughs. It should be noted that, according to TMACC, funding for the SCCOOT bus from DVRPC may be reduced or possibly even eliminated. This funding is supported by the state budget and its continued availability is uncertain.

ROVER has been serving Chester County since 1984. This on-demand bus service was created to provide reliable and flexible transportation for the residents of Chester County. ROVER services are targeted to those who no longer drive, or have no other means of transportation. Services are provided door to door and advanced reservations are required. Rover is suited to residents who need special assistance to travel, especially the elderly and individuals with disabilities.

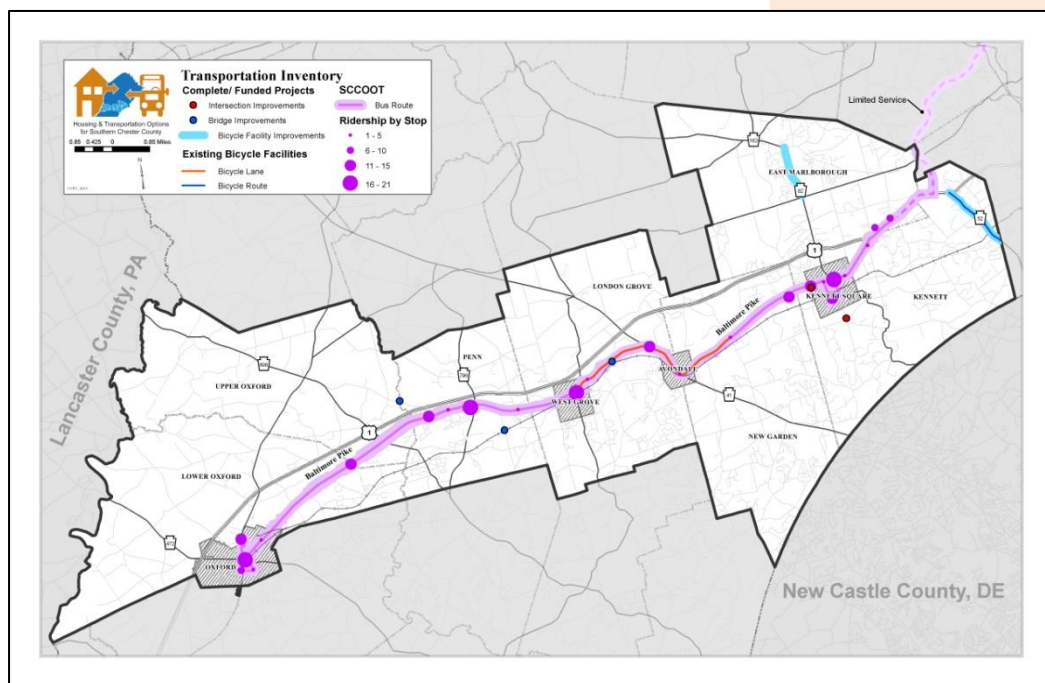
(Ride Guide: <http://www.chescorideguide.org/paratransit.cfm>)

The “Ride for Health” program, a TMACC initiative described in Chapter 2, is newly operational within the corridor. TMACC is working with local nonprofit organizations to help make this program more accessible to, and better utilized by, Spanish speaking individuals.

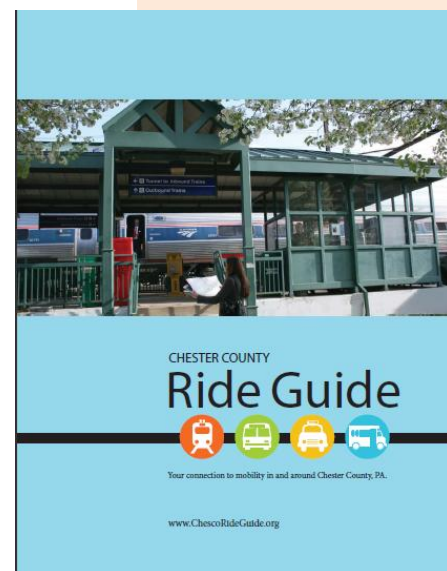
Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation

The study area roadways are generally auto-oriented and can be characterized as limited for accommodating bicycling. The major routes in this region are generally not appropriate for bicycling. Some roads in the area, for the most part minor collector and local distributors, are suitable for bicycling by intermediate to advanced skill riders.

However, there has been progress in improving the conditions for bicycling in this region in recent years. There are some existing bicycle lanes on Baltimore Pike



Map prepared by Chester County Planning Commission (See Appendix, Map A-3)



*Currently,
there are
no major
trail
corridors in
the study
area.*

roughly between West Grove Borough and Toughkenamon. The Kennett Pike Bikeway project currently underway is intended to provide safe shoulder widths for bicyclists on PA 52 from Baltimore Pike to the Delaware State line (where bicycle facilities already exist). The bikeway passes through Kennett Township in the study area. East Marlborough is currently engineering plans for the Route 82 bikeway. This route would extend north from Route 926, past the Unionville-Chadds Ford middle and high school campus, nearly to the village of Unionville. It would provide a dedicated facility for bicyclists.

Within the boroughs in the study area, there is generally good sidewalk coverage. However, pedestrian links between the boroughs and other desired destinations are lacking. As stated above, many employment, service, and shopping destinations lie outside of the boroughs. This increases the challenge for individuals to travel to their destinations, and leads to potentially unsafe situations where people are forced to walk along the shoulders of busy roadways unprotected from passing traffic. Currently, there are no major trail corridors in the study area. There are a few recreational trails, but those do not link residential locations to common destinations.

CHESTER COUNTY 2013 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS INVENTORY

CHESTER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION



June 2013

Programming

The Transportation Improvements Inventory (TII) is a list of identified improvement needs, prepared by the Chester County Planning Commission, for the transportation network throughout the County. This list is updated every two years to reflect current needs. It contains potential projects that have been recommended by local municipalities. According to the 2013 TII, six projects have been completed or funded in the study area since 2011:

- The PA 52 bikeway in Kennett Township
- The Pusey Mill Bridge and Sunnyside Bridge in Penn Township
- The Lake Road Bridge in London Grove Township
- Intersection improvements at Kaolin, Hillendale, and Old Kennett Roads in Kennett Township
- Intersection improvements at Cypress Street and Mill Lane in Kennett Square Borough

A total of 72 projects have been identified for the study municipalities in the 2013 TII. All of these compete with each other and with



other projects in the DVRPC region for limited federal and state funding. Of those, only a small portion has received full or partial funding for implementation. Those projects range from major road construction to bicycle/pedestrian projects and bridge improvements (See Appendix, Map A-3).

Employment

Jobs

There are 24,600 jobs located in the study area. Latino workers hold 4,000 (16 percent) of these jobs. Agriculture is the largest employment sector with 4,550 jobs, 19 percent of the total. This sector includes jobs at mushroom farms. Of particular significance is the comparison of the agriculture sector between the study area and the County. A full 83 percent of agriculture jobs in the county are located within the study area. This strongly supports the dominance of the mushroom industry in Chester County's agricultural economy.

Other mushroom related jobs, such as processing, packing, or selling are included in other job sectors, including manufacturing, retail and wholesale trade. The health care and social service sector, including Jennersville Regional Hospital, and educational services including Lincoln University, are the next largest sectors. Each accounts for about 12 percent of the jobs in the area.

Figure 3-14
Jobs, Study Area, 2010

Jobs in Study Area, Top 5 Sectors, 2010		
Total All Jobs	24,619	100.0%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	4,551	18.5%
Health Care and Social Assistance	3,059	12.4%
Educational Services	2,877	11.7%
Retail Trade	1,772	7.2%
Accommodation and Food Services	1,490	6.1%
Jobs in County, Top 5 Sectors, 2010		
Total All Jobs	237,587	100.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	29,353	12.4%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	27,684	11.7%
Retail Trade	24,278	10.2%
Educational Services	21,936	9.2%
Manufacturing	20,852	8.8%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	5,478	2.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics

Figure 3-15
Jobs by Earnings, Study Area, 2010

	Number	Percent
\$1,250 per month or less	6,430	26.1%
\$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	10,132	41.2%
More than \$3,333 per month	8,057	32.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics

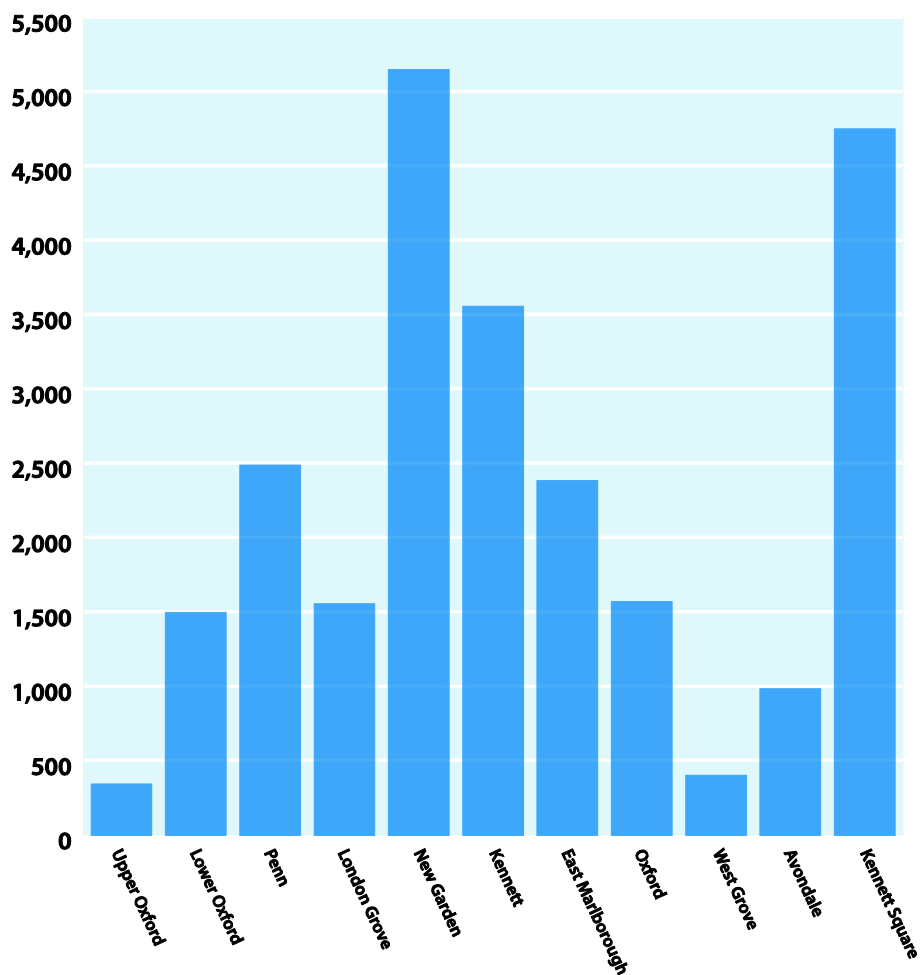
Forty percent of the total jobs in the study area provide earnings between \$15,000 and \$40,000 annually (\$1,250-\$3,333 per month). One-quarter of the jobs provide earnings of \$1,250 or less per month. This is less than \$15,000 annually. These lower earnings numbers reflect the predominance of agriculture, retail, and other service jobs in the study area. Considering the per capita income of Latinos in the



study area (discussed in the Demographics Section), it is likely that Latino workers represent a significant number of those with jobs paying \$15,000 per year or below.

Figure 3-16, below, shows the breakdown of jobs by municipality. More than half of the jobs (14,439) are located in three municipalities: New Garden Township, Kennett Square Borough, and Kennett Township. This illustrates the concentration of employment in the eastern part of the study area.

Figure 3-16
Location of Jobs, Study Area, 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics



Employer, mushroom composting



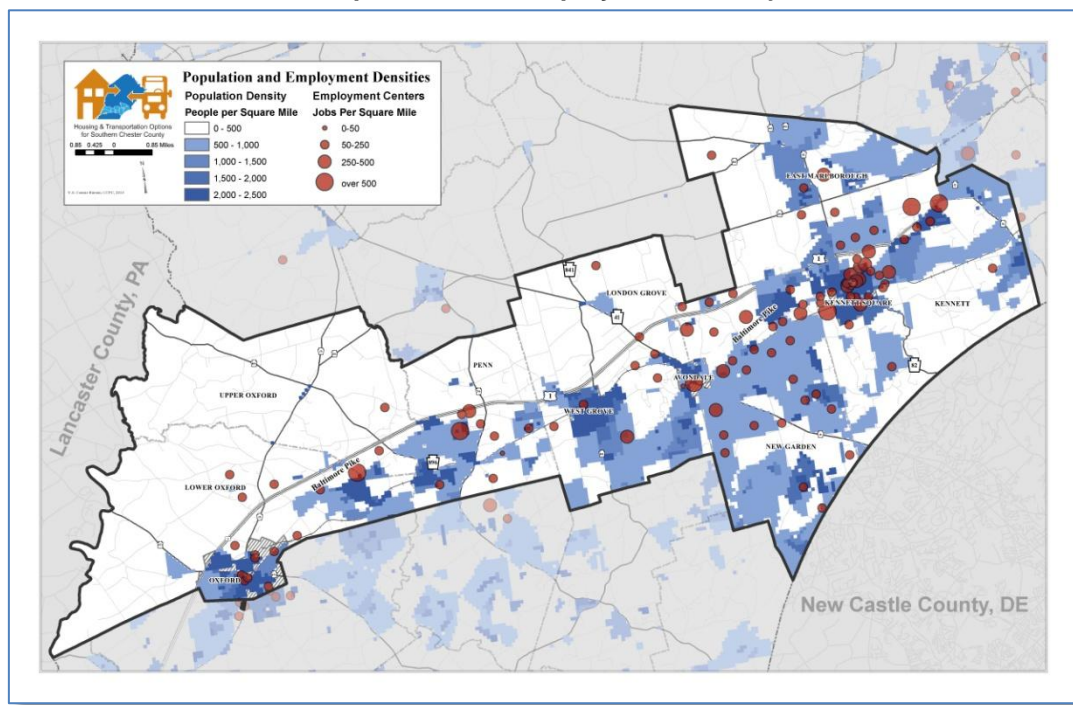
Employer, retail and service

The largest numbers of agricultural jobs are in New Garden (2,110) and Kennett (1,030) townships. Together these townships account for nearly 70 percent of the agricultural jobs in the study area. This is not surprising because these townships have the largest concentrations of mushroom operations. Also, agriculture is very important to the economy of Avondale and West Grove boroughs. One-third of the combined jobs located in these two boroughs are within the agricultural sector.



Figure 3-17, Population and Employment Density, included below (and Map A-4, located in the Appendix,) shows the relationship between the location of jobs and residential concentrations in the study area. The general pattern on the map shows that jobs and homes are concentrated in many of the same areas. This indicates a potential for good access to work. However, commuting patterns indicate that people living in an area are not necessarily the same people working at the jobs in that area. A diverse housing supply is needed to serve the work force needs of local employers.

Figure 3-17
Population and Employment Density



Map prepared by Chester County Planning Commission (See Appendix, Map A-4)

Commute Patterns

Of the 24,600 jobs in the study area, 31 percent of the workers are also residents of the area and 69 percent commute from outside the study area. These percentages are not unusual for small employment areas.

New Garden Township and Kennett Square are home to 11 percent of study area workers (5.5 percent each). London Grove Township is home to four percent of the workers. East Nottingham and New London townships, just outside the study area, provide six percent of the workers. Twelve percent of the workers live in New Castle County, Delaware.

Overall, commuting numbers support the assertion by stakeholders that, due to high housing costs, a large percentage of low-wage workers are forced to seek housing outside the area, many in Delaware. Housing costs are generally lower in the western part of the study area and some workers commute from west to east, where the concentration of jobs is located.



Community Services



Chester County, in general, has a very strong and diverse nonprofit human services network. The agencies provide a broad array of services to qualified individuals and families. There are particular concentrations of nonprofit services in West Chester Borough and the City of Coatesville. Southern Chester County, however, is also very well served. The following agencies, among others, provide services to disadvantaged populations in the municipalities that make up the study area. Many have a focus on the low-income Latino population; others serve primarily senior citizens.

Neighbors in Action – an initiative of the InterGen Coalition, is an intergenerational program designed by the Kennett Area Senior Center, in partnership with the Chester County Department of Aging, to address the needs of the elderly population as well as people of any age. This model not only serves older adults, but others in need of services, regardless of socioeconomic status, based on a nominal sliding fee membership that reflects one's ability to pay.



Photo by E.W. Harpham/
Equidigital.com

La Comunidad Hispana (LCH) - improves the quality of life, health and well being of low-income Latinos and other under-served people through advocacy and bilingual programs in health care, education, and social services.

Maternal and Child Health Consortium (MCHC) - provides home visiting to disadvantaged pregnant women. Funding through the federal Healthy Start program supports programs to reduce disparities in birth outcomes for Latino infants in the community. Healthy Start links MCHC to over 100 Healthy Start programs around the country, assisting MCHC to learn "best practices" in outreach, home visiting, and delivery of maternal and child health services.

Kennett Area Community Services/Kennett Area Food Cupboard - provides temporary assistance for families who need food, clothing, lodging, heat or rent in the Kennett, Avon Grove, and Unionville/Chadds Ford school districts.

Saint Rocco's Church – located off Route 41 in Avondale, provides food and clothing to needy people free of charge. The church also provides assistance with tasks like completing applications for public assistance, obtaining food

stamps and it provides legal assistance for issues including immigration or child support.

United Way of Southern Chester County - provides funding for programs that distribute basic needs assistance, strengthen families, help kids succeed, prevent crime and violence and promote health and independence among the elderly.

PathStone Corporation– is a national nonprofit with a local office in East Marlborough Township. The agency provides emergency food and shelter, financial education, Head Start for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers, and home buyer pre- and post-purchase counseling.



Photo by E.W. Harpham/
Equidigital.com



Head Start for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers – operated by PathStone Corporation, provides quality child care addressing education, training, disability services, family literacy, nutritious meals and advocacy services to establish sound development for children from birth to 5 years.

The Garage Community and Youth Center- with locations in Kennett Square and West Grove, the Garage is a place where students come to find support and guidance through tutoring, mentoring and recreation.

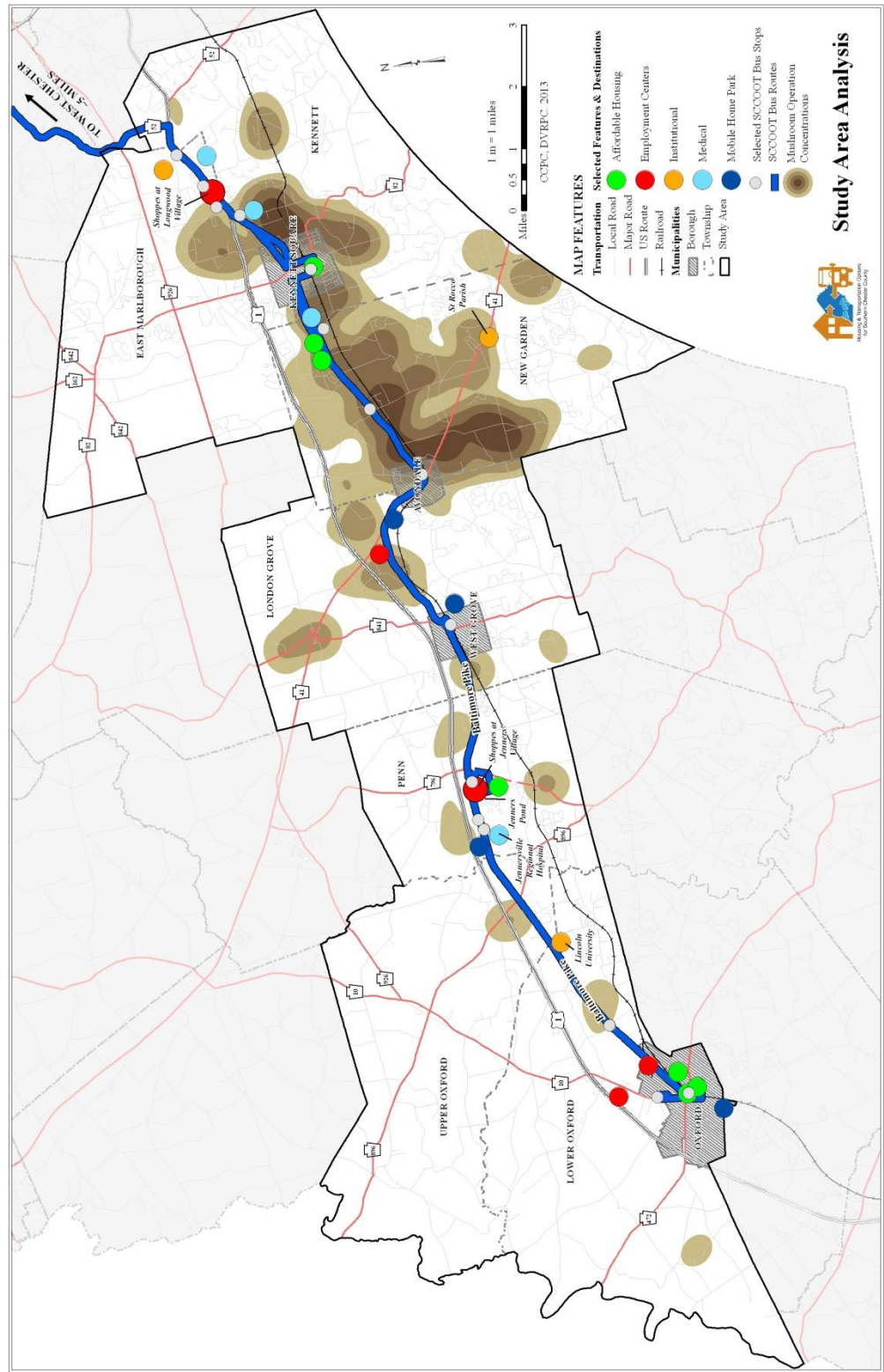
Other service providers include the Kennett Area and Oxford Area Senior Centers, the Visiting Nurses, Chester County Migrant Ministry, the Senior Circle, and other neighborhood-based and community groups.



Detailed analysis and conclusions of the data presented in this chapter are discussed in Chapter 4. The implementation strategies to address identified issues are presented in Chapter 5.



Study Area Analysis



Map prepared by Chester County Planning Commission (See Appendix, Map A-4)





There is a great deal of crossover between the topics and the interrelationships are important to consider.

Chapter 4

Analysis and Conclusions

The public participation process for the study, combined with demographic, housing, transportation, and employment data, create the basis for development of a series of conclusions. These conclusions are identified as most related to either Housing or Transportation. They are not, however, mutually exclusive. There is a great deal of crossover between the topics and the interrelationships are important to consider. This chapter lays the groundwork for the Implementation Strategy that follows.



Rent for a one bedroom apartment in the Kennett Square area can run above \$900 per month, not including utilities.



Worker housing, Penn Township

Housing

1. Housing Affordability

More quality, affordable housing is needed for...

a) Latino families

Housing choice within the study area is limited for low-wage mushroom workers and their families. One mushroom farmer that provides onsite housing reports that typically more than one person or family must share a unit in order to meet the rent and utility costs. The same situation is found with off-farm housing. Rent for a one bedroom apartment in the Kennett Square area can run above \$900 per month, not including utilities. Latino households are larger than non-Latino households within the study area and may need larger units that have higher monthly rents.

b) Latino single men (immigrants/migrants)

Although the demand for housing for single men has lessened in recent years, there is still a shortage of units appropriate for this demographic group. Unaccompanied men are arriving in the Study Area from Latin America in order to find work in the mushroom industry and at other low paying jobs. These men often have families in their native country, and many send a portion of their pay back to help support their wives, children and parents. With limited resources remaining, these men often resort to living in overcrowded and substandard housing units. The units may not be legally registered with the municipality and therefore are not subject to annual inspections. When these situations go unaddressed, conflicts may arise with neighbors. Those conflicts are not easily resolved.

c) The aging population

The senior population within the study area is growing. Housing options that are accessible and affordable for low-income seniors are very limited, particularly in the eastern half of the study area. Because many seniors are dependent upon fixed incomes, increasing housing costs can create stresses in trying to remain in the area. Among the few options for low-income seniors, Luther House in Penn Township offers 256 income-restricted units and the community maintains a waiting list. There is also Oxford Hotel (low-income seniors) and Oxford Terrace Apartments (public housing for seniors and disabled individuals) in Oxford Borough. Oxford, however, is geographically distant from many medical and other services that are located in Jennersville and Kennett Square.

2. Housing Location

More housing options are needed in proximity to...

a) Mushroom farms and related industry facilities

Currently, quality affordable housing opportunities are limited within the area of concentration of mushroom operations within Kennett, New Garden, and London Grove townships, as compared with the corresponding concentration of workers. In terms of existing housing that may be affordable to low-income workers, the Avon



Grove and Avonwheel mobile home parks provide approximately 145 units total; Cedar Woods Apartments, 76 units; Buena Vista Townhouses, 24 units, and Las Rosas Townhouses, 16 units. (261 total units) A few of the larger farms by themselves employ several hundred people at each company. On-farm housing is very limited. More quality, affordable housing is needed in this area of concentration for individuals and families connected to the mushroom industry.

b) East Marlborough and Kennett Township employment centers

The Longwood Village and Marlborough Square shopping centers feature numerous tenants that offer minimum wage/lower-wage retail and service sector jobs. The East Marlborough Township Walmart is in the process of completing a significant expansion and is hiring new lower-wage workers for the store. Management has indicated that transportation from home to work from long distances is an issue for hiring. Longwood Gardens, another large employer nearby, does not employ a significant number of Latinos.



Beiler-Campbell Center, East Marlborough

c) London Grove and Jennersville

The Shoppes at Jenner's Village Center features a Giant supermarket, a CVS Pharmacy, and many other retail and service businesses. It is a scheduled stop for the SCCOOT route, as is the London Grove Village shopping Center, which features Lowes and an Acme supermarket. Locally there are several mobile home parks providing moderately-priced housing opportunities for lower-wage workers. Some of the mobile home communities are occupied primarily by Latino individuals and families. Not all of these homes, however, might be considered quality housing. West Grove Borough has reported that there may be units in town that are rented illegally and therefore not registered or subject to inspection. In those cases, there may be instances where housing units are not meeting code in some respects. The 2010 Census reports that 35 percent of people living in the Borough are self-identified as Latino. Workers at local businesses from Avondale to Jennersville would benefit from improved options for moderately priced housing near or adjacent to employment hubs.



Jenner's Village, Penn Township

3. Housing Quality

Latino residents are often hesitant to report poor housing conditions because of the risk of...

a) Being evicted

Municipal officials and advocates for the low-income population report that illegal rental units are a problem for both the municipality and the tenant. Some landlords with illegal units charge high rents and yet do not keep up with maintenance and repair of the units. Latinos often do not report problems to either the landlord or the municipality for fear of retaliation by the landlord. If evicted, many individuals and families feel they have no options for housing.



Mobile homes, London Grove Township

b) Being reported to authorities

Although employers have become stricter in recent years about not hiring undocumented workers, advocates claim that some landlords threaten to report



tenants to immigration officials if the tenants complain about problems with their unit. In many cases this leads to deteriorated housing and unsafe living conditions.

c) Being separated from family members

Many Latino households in the study area consist of multiple generations of the family, or extended families sharing one unit. Some members of the household might be documented while others may not be. Again, some landlords have been known to exploit the tenants' situation and refuse to make repairs needed to meet the most basic needs, including roof leaks, non-functioning heating systems, sewage back-ups, electrical problems, and pest infestations.



Kennett Area Senior Center



Accessibility ramp, Oxford Borough

4. Housing Supports

More supportive services are needed for...

a) Seniors who are aging-in-place

Much of the senior citizen population in the study area is living in age restricted, active adult communities. Many others, however, are remaining in their own single family homes and choosing to "age-in-place." This can be a viable option for the elderly if a support system is put in place to help meet their changing needs as they age and become frailer over time. Aging seniors may need assistance with activities of daily living like driving, shopping, housework, and laundry.

b) Individuals with disabilities

There is a community of disabled individuals residing at Oxford Terrace apartments in Oxford Borough. Some of these residents are required to travel to Philadelphia to access benefits and services. Many do not drive and are dependent on public transportation. These residents would benefit from services provided locally or shuttle service connections to West Chester for access to connecting buses to the city.

5. Volunteer Services

Community volunteers are needed to...

a) Visit seniors

The program *Neighbors in Action*, affiliated with the Kennett Area Senior Center, is a members-based program where volunteers provide assistance to residents with tasks including grocery shopping, light housekeeping, providing meals, and companionship. The needs within the community are great, especially with regard to senior citizens who are "aging in place." The *Neighbors in Action* program relies to a great extent on volunteer services.



b) Repair homes

There is a significant need in southern Chester County for home maintenance and repair services among low-income resident homeowners. Good Neighbors Home Repair Ministry works with low-income homeowners within the study area to make their homes warm, safe, and dry. The program works primarily on the services of volunteers. Skilled volunteers in areas such as electric, HVAC, plumbing, etc. are a particular need.

c) Provide transportation

A particular challenge for low-income residents in the study area is finding transportation for medical, and/or social service appointments. Services like ROVER will provide transportation for a single adult and one child passenger if needed. That's not a viable option for families with more than one child that have no other childcare options. Funding sources for human services transportation have been cut back considerably in recent years.

Transportation**1) SCCOOT and ROVER**

Low-income senior citizens depend heavily on SCCOOT and ROVER for access to...

a) Medical appointments

Access to medical services is likely the most critical connection for the study area's more than 8,000 senior citizens age 65 and older. Both ROVER and SCCOOT provide connections to Jennersville Regional Hospital and other satellite medical offices in Jennersville and Kennett Square. Continuation of these vital services, especially for low-income seniors, is important for the health and well-being of the senior community.

b) Senior centers

Many health and wellness services, and a variety of other activities, are provided at the Kennett Area and Oxford Area Senior Centers. ROVER, a countywide bus service, will stop at each of the senior centers daily and is an indispensable transportation resource for senior citizens. Trips on ROVER must be scheduled in advance. According to current policy, ROVER will transport riders to a senior center which is within 20 miles of the rider's home. Staff at the centers can assist members to schedule trips on ROVER. ROVER service is subsidized through Medical Assistance. At this time SCCOOT does not provide bus stops at the senior centers.



ROVER at Jennersville Regional Hospital



c) Shopping and other needs

Seniors regularly need to make trips to grocery stores, the pharmacy, and other retail and service destinations.

Communities like Jenner's Pond in Penn Township provide their residents with shuttle service to various local destinations. For low-income seniors, the SCCOOT bus makes stops at the Giant supermarkets in New Garden and Jennersville, and at the Superfresh market in the

Longwood Village shopping center. The Walmart in East Marlborough is a frequent destination for seniors riding SCCOOT.



Employment Center, East Marlborough Township

2) Workforce Commute

There is a need for enhancement of existing, and provision of additional, transportation connections for workers traveling to...

a) Penn Township/Jennersville

With several large employers, including the Jennersville Regional Hospital, Jennersville is a destination for many workers within and outside the study area. The project team observed workers riding SCCOOT coming and going from their jobs to Oxford Borough. Housing is somewhat more affordable in Oxford than elsewhere in the study area and lower-income workers may find more housing options there. Other employment destinations in the Jennersville area include the YMCA, Dansko, and the Shoppes at Jenner's Village. The SCCOOT bus stops at the hospital and the shopping center.

b) New Garden

New Garden Township is the location of a concentration of mushroom industry facilities. A field survey, combined with demographic data from the census, indicates that the vast majority of Latino mushroom workers are living within the four boroughs. Those that are residents of Oxford have the farthest to travel to get to work. Very few of those working at the farms use the SCCOOT bus. No other coordinated system of



Mushroom houses, New Garden Township

transportation is currently in place to support these workers. Instead, informal carpool and "taxi" systems form with family, friends, co-workers or other members of the community.



c) Kennett Square

The largest employment center in the study area is just outside of Kennett Square Borough in Kennett and East Marlborough townships. This is a center of retail, restaurant and service employers. Walmart, Superfresh, and Giant are the anchors. Walmart employs many workers from the Latino community in low-wage positions. Longwood Gardens, also located in this area, does not. The SCCOOT bus serves as a vital connection between Oxford and businesses in the Kennett Square area.

3. Outreach

Spanish-speaking adults are not well informed about the SCCOOT bus...

a) Schedules

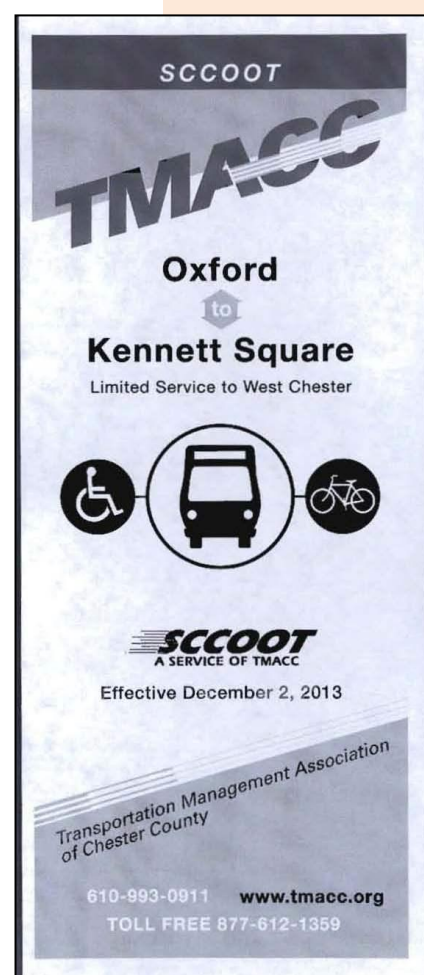
SCCOOT bus schedules are available online but not readily available throughout the study area. There are schedules posted on each of the buses, however the drivers do not carry extra copies. There are some schedules that are printed in Spanish and some of those have been distributed to nonprofit agencies in the area. More outreach is needed to connect potential riders to the bus.

b) Stops

TMACC, as of July 2013, has established SCCOOT bus stops within each of the boroughs, generally where there are concentrations of Latino households. Many of the bus stops are not clearly marked, however, and do not offer any passenger amenities like shelters or benches, to make the locations more recognizable. There are also bus stops along Baltimore Pike in the townships adjoining the boroughs. Some of those stops are in locations that may be unsafe places to stand and wait. Some, but not every, bus stop features a posted schedule or map. More outreach is needed to orient potential passengers to using the system and location of bus stops.

c) Fares

On July 1st 2013, TMACC raised its fares for rides on the SCCOOT bus. Multi-ride or monthly passes are available and offer per-ride discounts. Standard fare to travel within the Baltimore Pike corridor (Zone 1) is \$3.25 one way (up from \$3.00). One person riding daily to and from work, within Zone 1, will pay \$89.60 for a monthly pass. For individuals earning a poverty level salary, that cost may not be manageable, when considering other basic needs expenses. The fare increase notice, a one page flyer, did feature a Spanish-language translation as an effort to outreach to the Latino population. Further efforts are needed to inform passengers about the fare increase and alternative payment options.



4. Bike and Pedestrian Travel

Travel by bicycle and/or walking is limited because of...



Bike lane, London Grove Township

a) Limited shoulders and high posted speed limits

Baltimore Pike is the primary travel route for access to businesses between Kennett Square and Oxford. There are limited lengths of bike lanes along the route and in many places the shoulders are narrow or non-existent. Automobile traffic travels in the range of 35-45 mph over most stretches of the roadway, which poses a serious threat to bicycles and pedestrians moving along the route. Outside of the boroughs, many side roads are narrow, winding, and hilly, frequently with no reasonable shoulder.

b) Limited bike/pedestrian amenities

For individuals to be motivated to ride a bicycle to and from work, certain amenities should be in place to make the experience manageable. Dedicated bike lanes are critical for safety but not yet available on the full length of Baltimore Pike. Sidewalks are also very limited within the corridor, typically found only within the four boroughs. The boroughs, on average are very walkable. Within Kennett Square, for instance, many Latino employees at Kaolin Mushrooms are able to walk to work from nearby Scarlet Manor. Mushroom workers who are employed outside of the boroughs, however, have fewer options for safe walking or biking to work.

5. Enhanced Public Transit

Workers at mushroom operations, clustered primarily within Kennett, New Garden, and London Grove Townships, would benefit from public transit that...

a) Served the townships beyond Baltimore Pike

Although some mushroom growing facilities are located near enough to the boroughs that employees living in town can walk there, many are not in walking distance of population centers. The SCCOOT bus has some stops that are close to mushroom facilities but the stops are generally limited to those located along Baltimore Pike. The larger concentrations of those

businesses, particularly in Kennett and New Garden townships are located along side streets south of Baltimore Pike.

b) Is at least in part employer-sponsored

Riding the bus daily can be a significant expense for low-income workers. Monthly passes are available for a small discount off the daily rate. Lincoln University provides an annual subsidy to TMACC to support the SCCOOT service for students. Commuting for jobs is not currently subsidized by any employers in the study area.

c) Ran early on weekdays *and* on weekends

Mushroom farms are operated seven days per week therefore many employees need to work on weekends. SCCOOT offers limited Saturday and no Sunday service. In



SCCOOT bus stop, East Marlborough Township



addition, workers traveling from Oxford to the numerous mushroom industry businesses in the Kennett Square area would benefit from earlier or later bus runs that better align with their shifts.

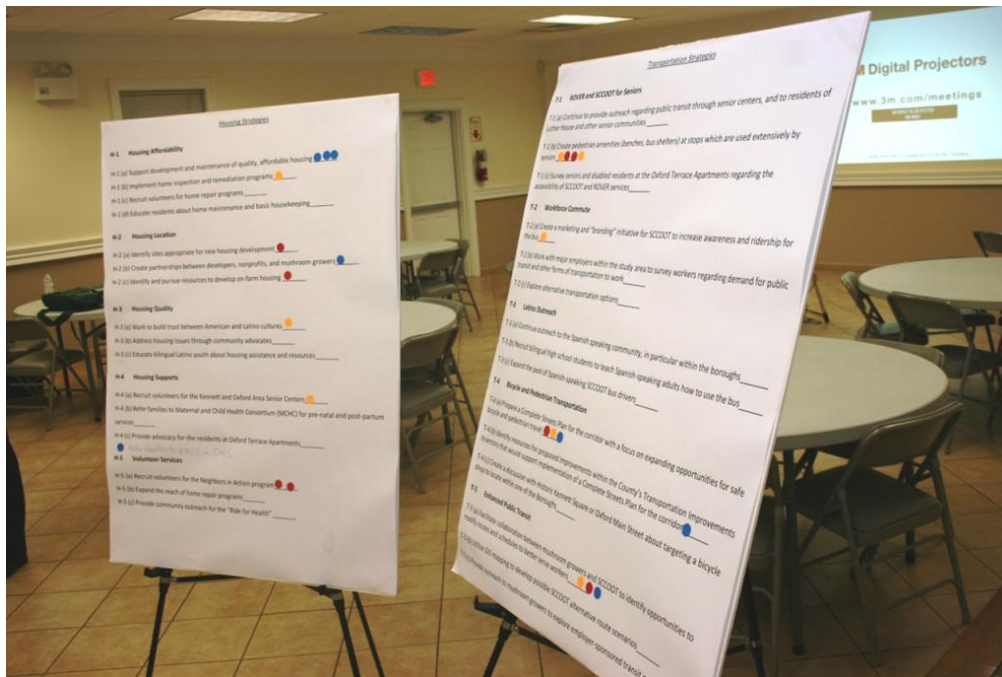
Summary

The overriding theme that came from the information gathering phase of this study is the plight of Latino individuals and families with regard to securing safe, decent, affordable housing. Adequate housing for the lowest paid mushroom industry workers is in very short supply. As indicated in the study inventory, there are more than 2,500 Latino households within the study area and approximately 1,000 households are experiencing a housing problem. Those 1,000 households are in need of access to better housing situations. In addition, transportation is an ongoing struggle as many low-income households have either one vehicle or none at all. A comprehensive approach to transportation is needed for the Route 1/Baltimore Pike corridor.





Creative and flexible development standards and support from municipal officials will be the keys to developing successful housing that is a good fit for the residents and the community.



Chapter 5

Implementation Strategies

Housing

H-1 Housing Affordability

Conclusion

More quality, affordable housing is needed for: (i) Latino families; (ii) Latino single men (immigrants/migrants); (iii) The aging population

H-1 (a) Support development and maintenance of quality, affordable housing

Municipalities must be proactive in the effort to increase safe, decent, and affordable housing options for low-income people. Housing can be rehabilitated or constructed new for mushroom farm workers and their families. Both homeownership and rental units are viable alternatives. Creative and flexible development standards and support from municipal officials will be the keys to developing successful housing that is a good fit for the residents and the community. There are opportunities, particularly within the townships, to identify parcels suitable for such a project. Local farm worker and housing advocates can provide outreach to residents about the benefits of providing adequate housing for all members of the community.





Photo courtesy of Good Neighbors Home Repair



Photo courtesy of Good Neighbors Home Repair



Photo courtesy of Good Neighbors Home Repair

H-1 (b) Implement home inspection and remediation programs

Municipalities could significantly improve housing conditions for low income individuals and families by implementing comprehensive and effective rental housing inspection programs based upon housing codes. Annual inspections are critical to identifying and remediating substandard units. Municipalities with established programs and experienced code officials could assist others to create a program. Improvements to substandard units will result in multiple benefits including better maintenance of rental housing stock and possibly improved health and education outcomes for low-income children.

H-1 (c) Recruit volunteers for home repair programs

Several Chester County nonprofit organizations offer home repair and maintenance services for low-income homeowners. Some programs are delivered primarily by volunteers. The need for these services will be growing as the population ages and many people will, based on varying reasons, choose to “age in place.” Home maintenance services will become a critical component to preserving housing stock that is affordable, in particular for seniors. Municipalities can share information about these services at their offices and on their websites. Codes officials can work closely with nonprofit agencies to coordinate necessary permits and approvals. Nonprofit agencies should consider working with the Chambers of Commerce in the study area to solicit donations of time, funds, and materials from larger businesses in the area.

H-1 (d) Educate residents about home maintenance and basic housekeeping

There are some major cultural differences between the general population and the Latino community in the study area. Although the living conditions for low-income Latinos can be very poor, these residents may very well be in a better situation than the one they came from before immigrating to the United States. It appears that some landlords take advantage of tenants who do not understand that there is a different housing standard expected here. The Chester County Health Department can provide educational materials, in English and Spanish, as well as at-home instruction regarding home maintenance and housekeeping habits which support a healthy living environment.

The Chester County Health Department hopes to secure funding to continue its *Healthy Homes* initiative. The program involves a home inspection by a qualified Health Department official. The findings are kept confidential, as is the identity of the tenants. The inspector is able to make recommendations addressing concerns about



air quality/ventilation, pest infestations and insecticides, household chemicals, safe appliance use, lead paint hazards and others. Municipalities can incorporate an education piece into their rental unit inspection programs. Kennett Square Borough already does this. In some cases, the tenant could be referred for volunteer repair services or donations of major appliances that are not provided or are not functional.

H-2 Housing Location

Conclusion

More affordable housing options are needed in proximity to: (i) Mushroom farms and related industry facilities; (ii) East Marlborough and Kennett Township employment centers; (iii) London Grove and Jennersville

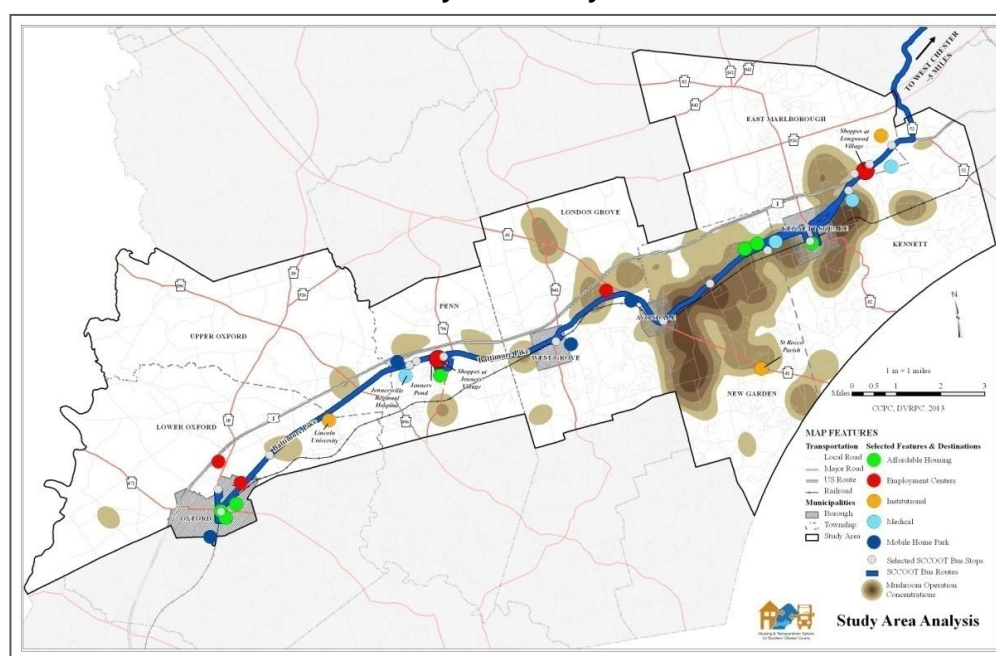
Strategies

H-2 (a) Identify sites appropriate for new housing development

County staff should conduct a review of zoning maps and ordinances for the eleven municipalities within the study area. Through this review, and consultation with municipal officials, CCPC may identify appropriate sites for the possible development of new moderately-priced, or mixed-income, housing. The analysis should consider multiple factors, including community context, the proximity to concentrations of mushroom facilities and other employment centers, and access to transportation routes. Specific targets should include abandoned or underutilized commercial and industrial properties, current brownfield sites, infill opportunities, and vacant land in appropriate locations. Both borough and township parcels must be considered.

CCPC may identify appropriate sites for the possible development of new moderately-priced, or mixed-income, housing.

**Figure 5-1
Study Area Analysis**



Map prepared by Chester County Planning Commission (See Appendix, Map A-5)





Mushroom grower, Kennett Township

H-2 (b) Create partnerships between developers, nonprofits, and mushroom growers

The County will encourage dialogue between private, public, and nonprofit partners in an effort to improve housing options for low-income people in the study area. There are opportunities for collaborative efforts that will result in new or rehabilitated housing to serve mushroom workers. One strategy is to acquire land through donation and then form a partnership to handle development and management of new housing. Another strategy will be to use the inventory compiled as described in H-2 (a) above to identify suitable sites. Municipal support for the development of quality housing to serve farmworkers and their families will be critical. Officials will need to communicate to residents the value of low-income workers to the local economy and the need to provide safe and decent housing for workers in proximity to their jobs. The Granite Ridge community, being developed by The Delaware Valley Development Company in Kennett Township, can serve as a model for development in other locations.



Mushroom Festival, Kennett Square Borough

H-2 (c) Identify and pursue resources to develop housing for single men

The County Planning Commission, Department of Community Development, and the Agricultural Development Council should host a forum on farm worker housing to share information with property owners, employers and civic leaders about resources available to support development or rehabilitation of housing for men who are in the study area to work, without the presence of their families. The goal of the forum will be to identify resources and assistance available for development of housing that is appropriate for single men, and to explore possible development partnerships. Ideally participants will come away with specific projects to pursue that will provide safe and decent housing for low-income farmworkers

H-3 Housing Quality

Conclusion

Latinos are often hesitant to report poor housing conditions because of the risk of: (i) Being evicted; (ii) Being reported to authorities; (iii) Being separated from family members

Strategies

H-3 (a) Work to build trust between American and Latino cultures

Municipalities should continue and expand outreach to the Spanish speaking community. The annual Landlord Forum conducted by the Department of Community



Oxford Memorial Park, Oxford Borough



Development would be an opportunity to share information about the housing needs of the Latino community and to create connections between Landlords and prospective tenants. A tenant education program should also be established to be administered by a local not-for-profit organization. The program will train Spanish speaking renters about housing choices and the risks associated with living in substandard units.

When rental inspection programs are implemented municipal officials should speak to tenants (through an interpreter) about what to expect from rental inspection programs. They should include what kind of information should be shared with officials in order to keep apartment units in good condition and minimize risks to the tenants. The four boroughs; Kennett Square, Avondale, West Grove, and Oxford; and New Garden Township, will be encouraged to make Spanish-speaking staff available in the front office and over the telephone to respond to inquiries from Spanish-speaking residents. Whenever possible, public notices will be posted on site in both English and Spanish.

H-3 (b) Address housing issues through community advocates

The Chester County Health Department (CCHD) and local community advocates should identify sources of funding for the *Healthy Homes* Initiative [see H-1 (d)]. This funding would allow the program to continue providing inspection and remediation services to low-income households. Remediation services include a Healthy Homes Toolkit that includes mattress covers, cleaning supplies, and pest control items. The CCHD receives referrals from Visiting Nurses and other nonprofit agencies. The program has provided services to many Latino residents within the study area, but additional assistance is needed. Other community advocates will be asked to assist with referrals to the program.



Twin homes, West Grove Borough

H-3 (c) Educate bilingual Latino youth about housing assistance and resources

Latino youth in the study area are likely to learn English in school and speak the language better than their parents. In that way, youth can be a link for other family members to the English speaking community. On a cooperative basis appropriate County and nonprofit agencies in the area should provide housing education and training, through local youth centers. Training will be targeted to high school-age youth. Topics may include home maintenance and repair, pest management, housekeeping, home safety, and home inspections and code violations. The Latino youth will receive education materials to share with the members of their households.



Youth Center, West Grove Borough



Ongoing outreach to senior citizens will be important to inform them about programs and services available through the senior centers.

H-4 Housing Supports

Conclusion

More supportive services are needed for: (i) Seniors who are aging-in-place; (ii) Young Latino families who need safe housing, and (iii) Seniors with disabilities

Strategies

H-4 (a) Recruit volunteers for the Kennett and Oxford Area Senior Centers

The Kennett Area and Oxford Area Senior Centers should continue to offer services that support senior citizens, in particular those who are aging in place. The senior centers could recruit volunteers

through the InterGen Coalition and its members, local government, and other community-based partners. They could also engage local youth centers and scouting troops to offer volunteer time. It will be important to continue outreach to senior citizens in the community to inform them about programs and services available through the senior centers. Over time there may also be a need to outreach to Spanish-speaking seniors as the resident Latino population ages.



Oxford Area Senior Center, Oxford Borough

H-4 (b) Identify housing inspection and remediation needs

Maternal and Child Health Consortium provides prenatal and postpartum case management services to eligible low-income clients. Approximately 90 percent of MCHC clients in southern Chester County are Latino. Currently, visiting MCHC case managers make notes about housing conditions and encourage clients to find other accommodations if their housing situation is not adequate. MCHC could work with the Chester County Health Department to refer clients for inspection and remediation steps to take to improve the housing conditions that could be putting the health of infants and young children at risk.

H-4 (c) Provide advocacy for the residents at Oxford Terrace Apartments

Oxford Terrace Apartments residents have many challenges that they face daily. Residents are low-income and either elderly, disabled, or both. Accessibility features are of critical importance in their surroundings. The Housing Authority of the County of Chester (HACC) owns and manages Oxford Terrace



Photo courtesy of Housing Authority of Chester County



Apartments. County staff will work with HACC to address residents' needs and concerns. There is a particular need in this location for Spanish-language interpretation and translation services to facilitate communication between management and Spanish-speaking residents. The residents association will continue to meet and provide mutual support and to relay resident concerns to management.



Kennett Area Senior Center

H-5 Volunteer Services

Conclusion

Community volunteers are needed to: (i) Visit seniors; (ii) Repair homes; (iii) Provide transportation

Strategies

H-5 (a) Recruit volunteers for the Neighbors in Action program

The Kennett Area Senior Center will continue to recruit volunteers for its Neighbors in Action program. These services support seniors and other vulnerable populations who choose to remain living in their individual homes as opposed to a congregate living situation.

To continue serving these individuals, and possibly expand services to reach other homebound individuals who may need assistance, Neighbors in Action will need to recruit volunteers from the broader community. Program staff will also build partnerships with other community-based agencies to ensure that services are complementary and not duplicative. The program should also consider recruiting bilingual staff that can assist with outreach to the Latino community.



Single home, London Grove Township

H-5 (b) Expand the reach of home repair programs

Good Neighbors Home Repair, a faith-based home repair ministry, and similar organizations should be encouraged to provide services to homeowners who do not have the resources to make necessary repairs to their homes. Many of Good Neighbors clients are senior citizens and are living alone. The program also serves Latino households, many of whom are referred through local nonprofit agencies. The Neighbors in Action Program (discussed above) also provides minor home repair

services for a nominal fee. That program will look to local professionals to assist with home maintenance and repair needs. As a supplement, Neighbors in Action can partner with the Housing Partnership of Chester County (HPCC) and its Senior



Citizen Home Maintenance Program (HMP). The HMP provides grants to low-income senior homeowners for maintenance and repair work to their homes.

Transportation

T-1 ROVER and SCCOOT for Seniors

Conclusion

Low-income senior citizens depend heavily on ROVER and SCCOOT for access to: (i) medical appointments; (ii) senior centers; (iii) shopping and other needs

Strategies

T-1 (a) Continue to provide outreach regarding public transit through senior centers, and to residents of Luther House and other senior communities

ROVER and SCCOOT administrators will provide schedules and service announcements to the Kennett Area and Oxford Area Senior Centers. Hard copy information will be made available to seniors who may not have access to the internet. Management at Luther House, an income-restricted senior rental community in Jennersville, will be encouraged to ensure that residents are notified about these transit services and to make schedules available within public areas of the facility.

T-1 (b) Create pedestrian amenities (benches, bus shelters) at stops which are used extensively by seniors

Transportation

Management Association of Chester County (TMACC) will identify stops on the SCCOOT bus service line (Longwood to Oxford) where senior citizens board on a regular basis. Amenities at these stops would greatly improve the transit riding experience for older and mobility-impaired individuals. Particular emphasis will be on the stops located near Luther House and Jenner's Pond in Jennersville. In addition, TMACC will explore the feasibility of adding pedestrian amenities at bus stops where seniors frequently access medical services, including Jennersville Hospital and the



Chester County Hospital Kennett Medical Campus. TMACC will also investigate options for funding these amenities.

T-1 (c) Survey seniors and disabled residents at the Oxford Terrace Apartments regarding the accessibility of SCCOOT and ROVER services

The residents of Oxford Terrace Apartments to a great degree depend on others for their transportation needs. There are several SCCOOT bus stops in the center of town near the apartment building. However, handicapped access may not be accommodated from the building to the bus stops. The Housing Authority of the County of Chester, which owns and manages the building, could survey the residents regarding their public transportation needs and how well those needs are being met. Handicapped accessibility concerns should be addressed within the building, at entrances and exits, and through the property for access to the nearest SCCOOT stop.



T-2 Workforce Commute

Conclusion

There is a need for enhancement of existing, and provision of additional, transportation connections, in particular for workers traveling to: (i) Jennersville; (ii) New Garden; and (iii) Kennett Square areas.

Strategies

T-2 (a) Create a marketing and “branding” initiative for SCCOOT to increase awareness and ridership for the bus

TMACC will continue work on developing a “branding” and outreach effort that will help to make the SCCOOT bus and service recognizable throughout the study area. Possible measures include distributing flyers to municipal offices and businesses, placing advertisements in local newspapers and/or on local radio, and conducting workshops with local nonprofit groups to spread the word about SCCOOT service, stops, and schedules. It is expected that this branding initiative will ultimately benefit ridership across the study area.

T-2 (b) Work with major employers within the study area to survey workers regarding demand for public transit and other forms of transportation to work

County staff will utilize data from the survey conducted by the Economic Development Partners Initiative through CCEDC to identify large employers in the study area where workers might benefit from increased access to the SCCOOT bus or other forms of transportation to work.

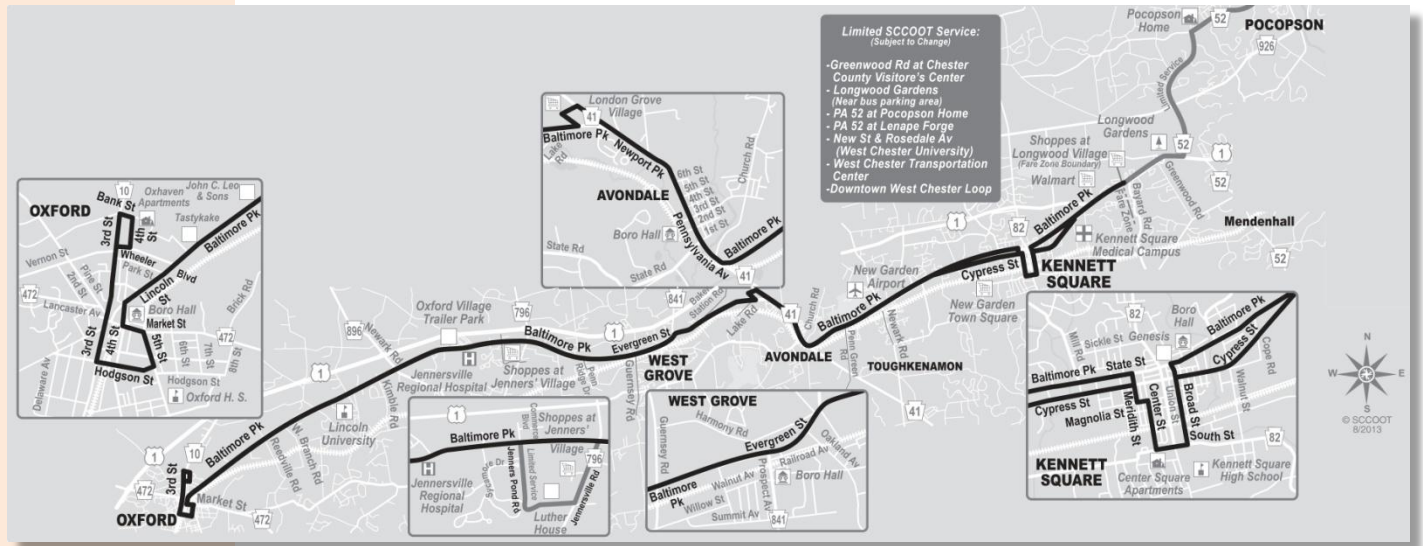
T-2 (c) Explore alternative transportation options

Alternative forms of transportation, including taxi service, van pools, car pools, and employer shuttles, would better serve the whole region. Those services could coordinate with SCCOOT to provide a link between residential areas and SCCOOT bus stops along Baltimore Pike.

*A SCCOOT
branding
initiative will
ultimately
benefit
ridership
across the
study area.*



**Figure 5-2
SCCOOT Route Map – December 2013**



Map courtesy of Transportation Management Association of Chester County



T-3 Latino Outreach

Conclusion

Spanish-speaking adults are not well informed about the SCCOOT bus: (i) schedules; (ii) stops; and (iii) fares

Strategies

T-3 (a) Continue outreach to the Spanish speaking community, in particular within the boroughs

Nearly half of Spanish-speaking households in the study area are living within the four boroughs (Kennett Square, Avondale, West Grove, and Oxford). TMACC should target outreach to those areas. They could consider advertising the SCCOOT service in local Spanish-speaking establishments like grocery stores and restaurants, and investigate the possibility of placing ads on local Spanish-speaking radio, television stations, or on appropriate websites. Also, mushroom farmers could be provided with copies of SCCOOT schedules to do a one-time distribution in employee pay stubs.

T-3 (b) Recruit bilingual high school students to teach Spanish-speaking adults how to use the bus

The local high schools may provide opportunities for sharing information about bus schedules and other forms of transit with the Latino community. Approximately thirty-five percent of students enrolled in the Kennett Consolidated school district are Hispanic, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics. Many school-age Hispanic students are bilingual and speak English well. Bus schedules or flyers could be distributed through Driver's Education or other classes for students to share with parents and other Spanish-speaking adults. TMACC could also schedule a visit



to the youth centers in the study area; The Garage community and youth centers in Kennett Square and in West Grove, and the Light House Youth Center in Oxford.

T-3 (c) Expand the pool of Spanish-speaking SCCOOT bus drivers

When filling openings for drivers of the SCCOOT route, TMACC and its contractor should consider recruiting bilingual (English/Spanish) individuals. The ability to speak to a bus driver in a native language can serve as an encouragement to riders who do not speak English. A bilingual driver can explain fares, stops, and routes and be sure the rider gets where he/she needs to go.



Bike lane, Baltimore Pike,
London Grove Township

T-4 Bicycle and pedestrian transportation

Conclusion

Travel by bicycle and/or walking is limited because of: (i) limited shoulders and high posted speed limits; (ii) limited bike/pedestrian amenities; and (iii) lack of a local bike shop

Strategies

T-4 (a) Prepare a Complete Streets Plan for the corridor with a focus on expanding opportunities for safe bicycle and pedestrian travel

The County Planning Commission could seek funding to prepare a "Complete Streets" plan for the Baltimore Pike corridor. A Complete Streets plan would include facilities for all possible users;

pedestrians, cyclists, transit, and automobiles. The plan would establish design guidelines to ensure that improvements made in the corridor would accommodate, wherever possible, all users.

T-4 (b) Identify resources for proposed improvements within the County's Transportation Improvements Inventory that would support implementation of a Complete Streets Plan for the corridor

The Chester County 2013 Transportation Improvements Inventory identifies eight bicycle or pedestrian projects proposed within the study area. Three of those projects are located along the Baltimore Pike corridor. In New Garden Township, a bikeway lane is planned along Baltimore Pike from Mill Road to the Newark Road intersection. Further west on Baltimore Pike, London Grove Township proposes to construct sidewalks between Route 41 and the eastern boundary of West Grove Borough. Another bikeway is proposed for State Road in London Grove Township from PA Route 41 to PA Route 841. In a related project, the Borough of Kennett Square is investigating funding sources and feasibility for a proposed sidewalk along Cypress Street from the Magnolia Place development east into the Borough. Chester County Planning Commission staff will work with municipalities to identify additional funding

The ability to speak to a bus driver in a native language can serve as an encouragement to riders who do not speak English.



opportunities for these and other connectivity projects proposed within the study area.

T-4 (c) Create a discussion with Historic Kennett Square or Oxford Main Street about targeting a bicycle shop to locate within one of the Boroughs

There are currently no bicycle shops along the Baltimore Pike corridor. Bicycle shops provide professional services that are not typically available at big-box retail or department stores. The County will investigate the possibility of the Chester County Cycling Coalition creating a “Neighborhood Bikes Works” (NBW) for the corridor, modeled on the existing program in Coatesville. The NBW would provide a facility where individuals can learn basic maintenance and repair of bicycles and share local knowledge of cycling safety within the region. In addition, a League Cycling Instructor (LCI), certified by the League of American Bicyclists, could be an asset in the community. Commuters would learn safe riding skills and practices. Providing an instructor that is bilingual in English/Spanish should be a priority.



T-5 Enhanced Public Transit

Conclusion

Workers at mushroom operations, clustered within Kennett, New Garden, and London Grove townships, would benefit from public transit that: (i) served the townships beyond Baltimore Pike; (ii) is at least in part employer-sponsored; and (iii) ran early on weekdays *and* on weekends

Strategies

T-5 (a) Facilitate collaboration between mushroom growers and SCCOOT to identify opportunities to modify routes and schedules to better serve workers

The County will arrange a meeting between mushroom industry employers and TMACC officials to discuss coordination of schedules and bus stops with employer locations and work shifts. A deviated fixed-route might be considered. There is no expectation that the SCCOOT bus can meet the transportation needs



of all mushroom workers. However, the goal of increased ridership is reasonable and could provide a needed service, especially for female employees who do not drive, and members of carless households.

T-5 (b) Utilize GIS mapping to develop possible SCCOOT alternative route scenarios

The County has developed mapping of the study area that shows concentrations of mushroom industry operations in relationship to the Baltimore Pike corridor. TMACC could utilize this mapping to pinpoint locations for possible new SCCOOT bus stops that would serve the mushroom farms specifically. It may only be practical to run one or two routes per day (if any) that divert from the Baltimore Pike corridor.

T-5 (c) Provide outreach to mushroom growers to explore employer-sponsored transit opportunities

The Granite Ridge apartment community, once completed at Hillendale and McFarlan Roads in Kennett Township, is expected to provide housing for a significant number of mushroom workers and their families. Mushroom growers in and near Kennett Township could explore the possibility of providing shuttle service to and from this community. Another approach would be for the mushroom growers to offer a subsidy to TMACC to run the SCCOOT bus to Granite Ridge, to match up with the start and end times of one of the regular shifts.







Photo by E.W. Harpham/Equidigital.com

Mushroom workers, most of them immigrants of Latino heritage, add cultural diversity and vitality to their workplaces, schools, and neighborhoods.

Chapter 6

Summary and Next Steps

Throughout the process of public input, research and analysis, and development of conclusions and strategies for this study, the project team and Study Advisory Committee learned about hard working people who hold tremendous value for the local and countywide agricultural, and industry-wide, economy. Mushroom farming and related industry operations rely heavily on low-wage workers. These people, most of them immigrants of Latino heritage, add cultural diversity and vitality to their workplaces, schools, and neighborhoods. The children attend school, learn to speak English, and aspire to higher education and upward economic mobility. Many of these families attempt to achieve integration into the local community while still maintaining the cultural heritage and customs of their families and homeland.



Photo by Carol Moore 2012



Photo by Carol Moore 2012



There is much that is misunderstood, however, between Latinos in southern Chester County and their non-Latino neighbors. Cultural and language barriers prevent, to some degree, a full connection between these communities. Many Latinos continue to live in fear of those in authority, or perceived authority, attempting to remain “invisible” and in many cases living in substandard and unhealthy conditions. Those who are fearful may not take steps toward learning the English language, therefore increasing their isolation. In addition, during the public input process, the project team encountered some non-Latino individuals who were not supportive of the project or efforts to address the needs of low-income Latino residents. Racial and ethnic prejudices continue to stand in the way of achieving full community integration.



However, the project team also encountered scores of employers, individuals, and organizations that are working hard to provide support and services to disadvantaged Latinos in southern Chester County. Many second generation immigrant Latinos are now young adults, are bilingual, and are providing assistance and service coordination for older Spanish-speaking residents. Numerous small nonprofit agencies work with limited resources to ensure that housing, hunger, clothing, and other basic needs are met. Several municipalities are making great progress with reducing barriers and forging meaningful connections with the Spanish-speaking community. There is, however, more to be done.

At the direction of the Study Advisory Community, the project team also investigated the challenges facing low-income elderly and other disabled individuals who are in some cases very isolated and vulnerable. These residents are important to the fabric of the community and they should be provided opportunities to interact with neighbors of all ages and walks of life. Many seniors are living alone and are in need of some level of supportive services. Housing conditions often deteriorate as senior homeowners age. Physical limitations may prevent seniors from leaving their homes to do things like shopping or going to medical appointments. Lack of an automobile is also very limiting. As the local population ages, the needs within the community will increase.



However, study area residents are fortunate to have both the Kennett Area (Kennett Square) and Oxford Area (Oxford Borough) Senior Centers to call on for programs and services. The staff and volunteers at each of these facilities are committed and compassionate in their service

delivery. The ROVER bus can provide transportation for seniors from home to the senior center and then to home again. Home visits can be arranged through volunteers. Home repair services are available to qualified homeowners from nonprofit housing organizations. Moving forward, it will be important to support and expand these services provided to low-income seniors, especially those “aging in place.”

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There are simple, immediate steps that can be taken by stakeholders to initiate the implementation of the study strategies.

What Chester County can do:

- Reconvene the Housing Options Task Force and identify common actions and implementation strategies with which to move forward.
- Identify funding options for the continued implementation of the Healthy Homes Initiative, with a specific focus on southern Chester County.
- Coordinate with municipalities to initiate a “Complete Streets” plan for the Baltimore Pike corridor.
- Continue to provide grant funding to home repair programs that serve low-income households in southern Chester County.
- Participate in the discussions of the InterGen Coalition to keep informed about the needs of seniors and other disadvantaged residents in the community.



What local officials can do:

- Through annual inspection programs, hold landlords accountable for correcting identified building violations.
- Consider bicycle and pedestrian facilities needs when applying for infrastructure or streetscapes funding.
- Provide municipal announcements or other community information in both English and Spanish.
- Provide outreach to residents and neighborhoods to identify individuals that may be in need of some support.
- Support plans for expansion or relocation of senior center programs or facilities.



What the community can do:

- Participate in local Latino cultural celebrations and include Latino neighbors in other community events.
- Volunteer with programs like English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, to create a better connection between English-speakers and Spanish-speakers.
- Donate food, clothing and household goods to benefit low-income households.
- Volunteer with the Neighbors in Action program through the Kennett Area Senior Center.
- Visit with elderly neighbors and determine if they need any type of assistance.

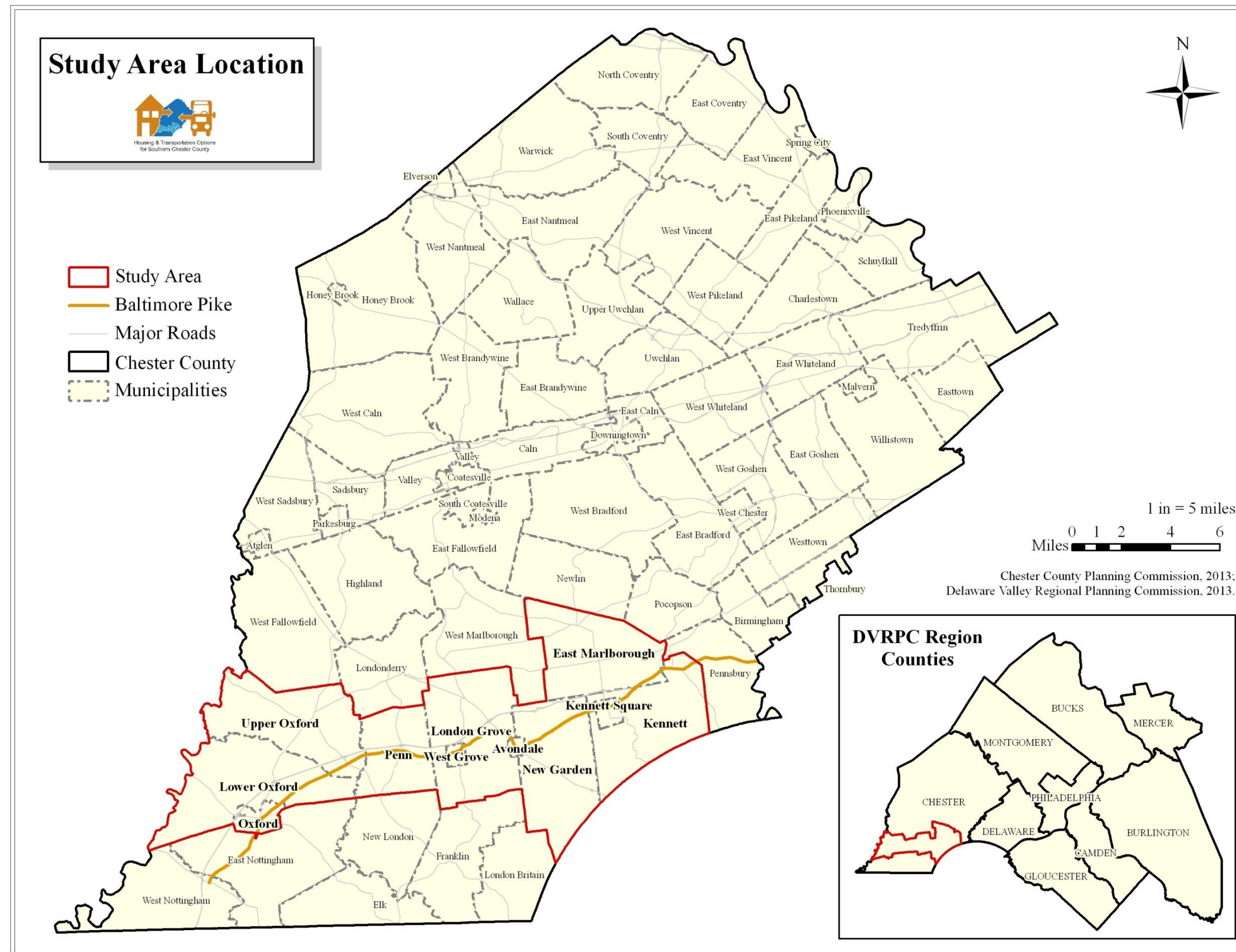


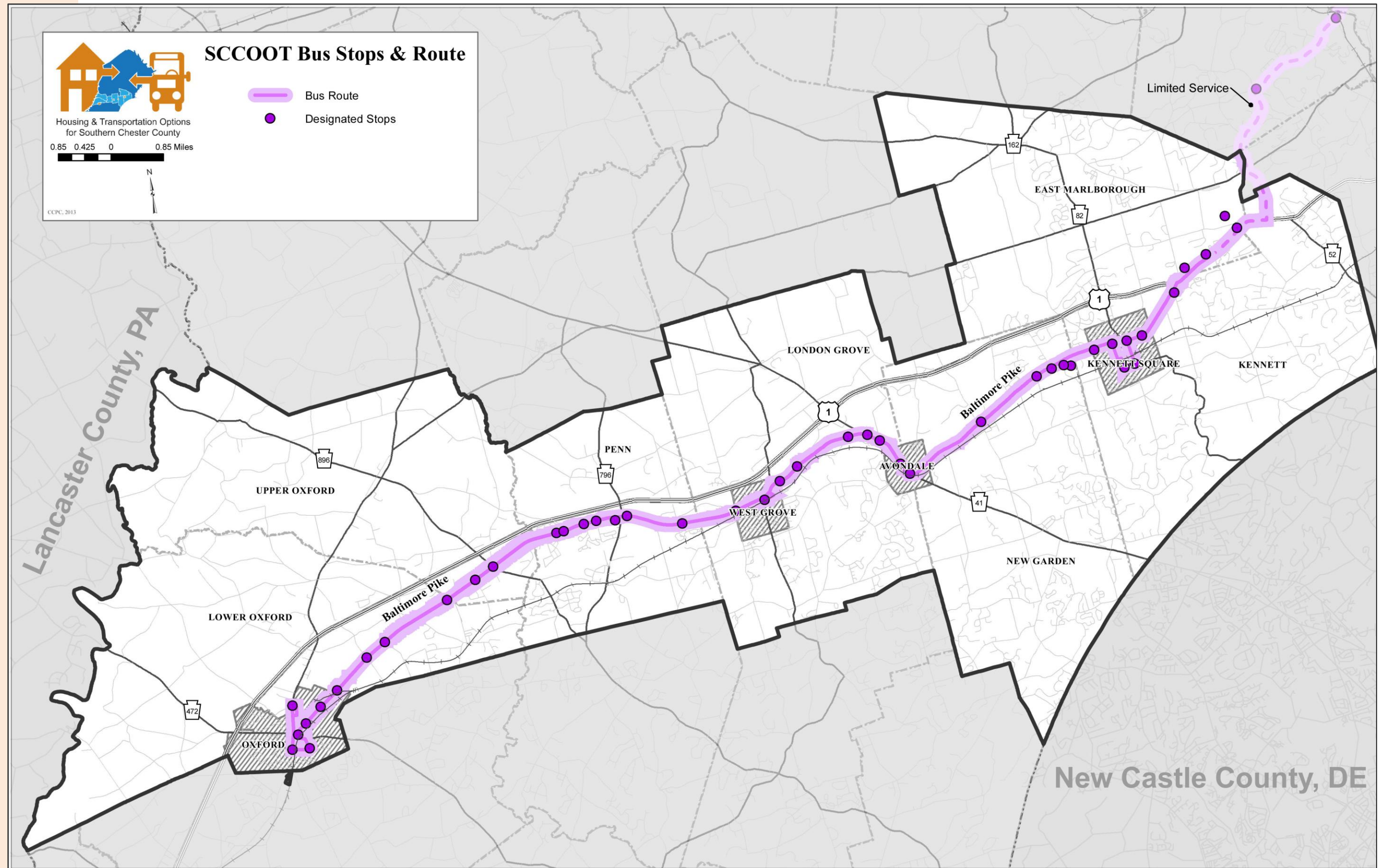
Addressing these issues that impact low-income, disadvantaged individuals and families will not be a simple process. To look the other way, however, should not be an acceptable response. Housing conditions need to be improved and this will involve hard work. Public transit is very limited therefore, it should be planned and operated strategically. Hard working individuals who contribute to local economies should be respected and accepted as part of the community. Some prejudices must be overcome. Senior citizens and the disabled should be valued as an integral part of their community. Each stakeholder involved in this study has the potential to effect positive change, in particular when working in partnership with others. Some partnerships have already formed and others are ready to develop. In the end it is these partnerships that will be critical to realizing meaningful quality-of-life improvement for the disadvantaged in southern Chester County.

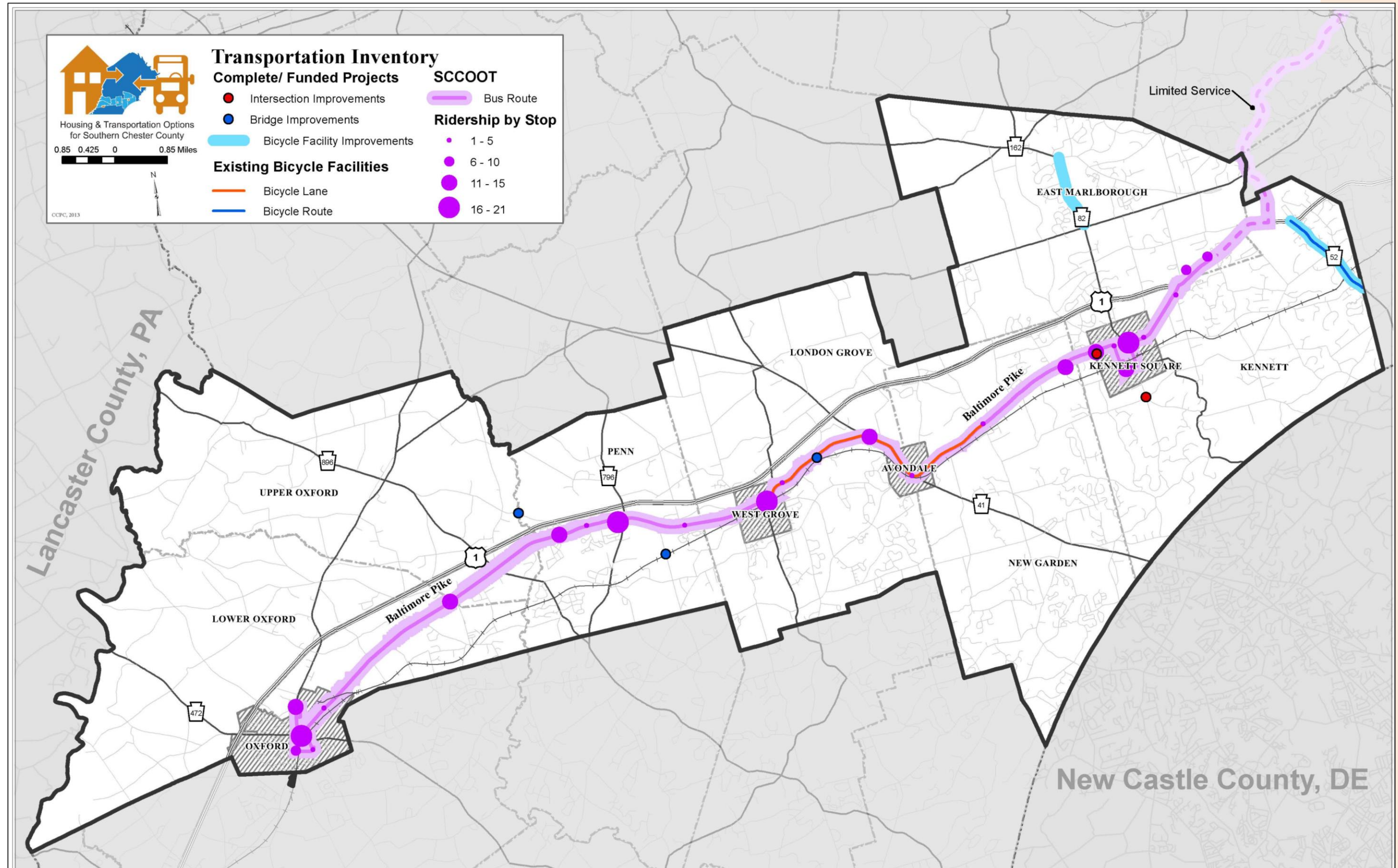


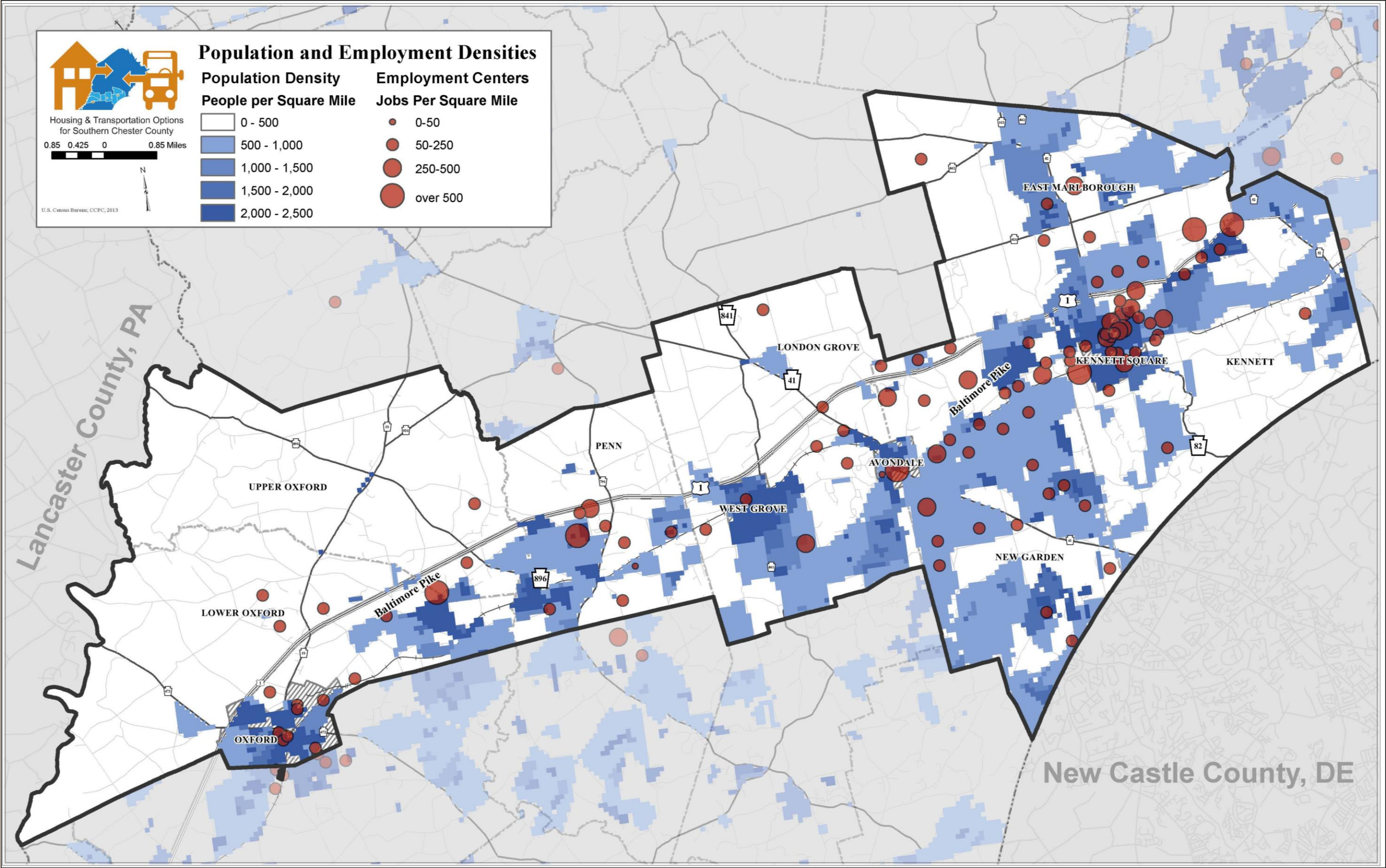
Photo by Carol Moore 2012

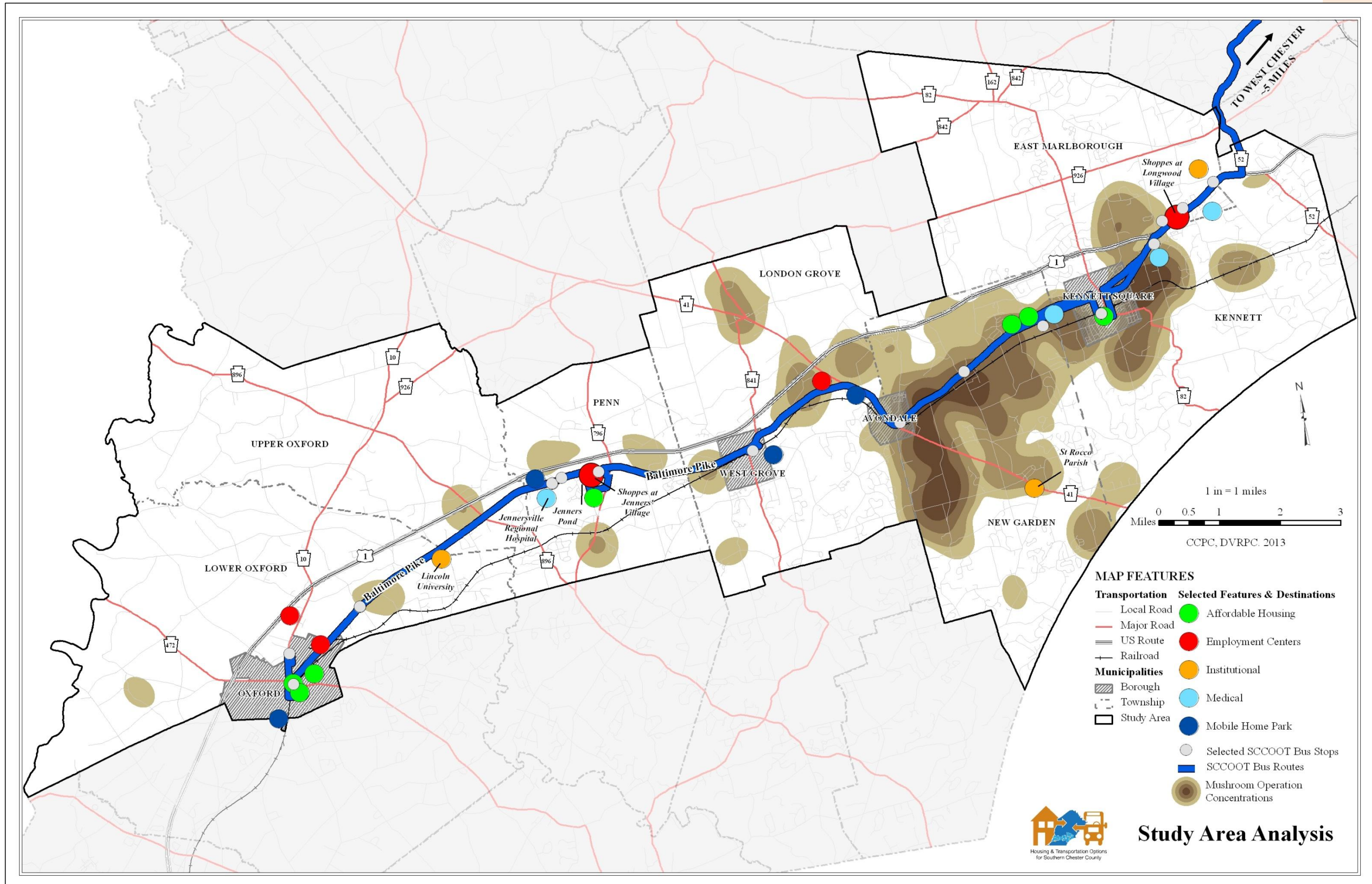














Appendix

Detailed Tables

Figure A-1
Age and Sex, 2010, Study Area

	Total Population			Total Latino		
	Total	Total Male	Total Female	Total	Total Male	Total Female
Total	62,366	31,090	31,276	12,953	7,498	5,455
Under 18	16,551	8,528	8,023	4,617	2,473	2,144
18 to 24	6,443	3,363	3,080	2,033	1,303	730
25 to 44	14,623	7,429	7,194	4,253	2,512	1,741
45 to 64	16,577	8,249	8,328	1,794	1,066	728
65 and over	8,172	3,521	4,651	256	144	112

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Figure A-2
Per Capita Income, 2006-2010

Study Area Municipalities	All individuals	Latino individuals	Latino income as % of all individuals
Kennett Square	\$24,057	\$13,778	57%
Avondale	\$17,253	\$10,976	63%
West Grove	\$25,463	\$13,411	52%
Oxford	\$19,663	\$9,870	50%
East Marlborough	\$54,340	NA	NA
Kennett	\$60,971	\$16,812	27%
New Garden	\$46,281	\$11,400	25%
London Grove	\$34,088	\$16,555	48%
Penn	\$34,063	NA	NA
Lower Oxford	\$17,816	NA	NA
Upper Oxford	\$27,873	NA	NA
Chester County	\$41,251	\$18,509	45%

NA - Insufficient number of Latino households

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-year estimates



Figure A-3
Household Type, 2010, Study Area

	Total households	Total households percent	Latino households	Latino percent
Total households	20,702	100%	2,583	100%
Family households:	15,652	76%	2,262	88%
Husband-wife family	13,019	63%	1,648	64%
Other family:	2,633	13%	614	24%
Male householder, no wife present	858	4%	301	12%
Female householder, no husband present	1,775	9%	313	12%
Nonfamily households:	5,050	24%	321	12%
Householder living alone	4,168	20%	148	6%
Householder not living alone	882	4%	173	7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Figure A-4
Household Size, 2010, Study Area

	All Households		Latino Households	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Total households	20,702	100.0%	2,583	100.0%
1-person household	4,168	20.1%	148	5.7%
2-person household	6,584	31.8%	253	9.8%
3-person household	3,201	15.5%	388	15.0%
4-person household	3,604	17.4%	523	20.2%
5-person household	1,782	8.6%	531	20.6%
6-person household	718	3.5%	306	11.8%
7-or-more-person household	645	3.1%	434	16.8%
Average household size				
Total households	2.89		4.66	
Owner occupied	2.91		4.91	
Renter occupied	2.84		4.53	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census



Figure A-5
Average Household Size, 2010

	All Households	Latino Households
Kennett Square	3.16	4.88
Avondale	4.02	5.39
West Grove	2.85	4.93
Oxford	2.95	3.95
East Marlborough	2.72	3.13
Kennett	2.37	4.30
New Garden	3.05	4.86
London Grove	3.28	4.80
Penn	2.38	4.12
Lower Oxford	3.12	4.75
Upper Oxford	3.19	4.68
Study Area	2.89	4.66
Chester County	2.63	3.95

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

Figure A-6
Housing Type, 2006-2010

	Total housing units	Single-family, detached units	Single-family, attached units	2 to 4 units	5 or more units	Mobile homes
Kennett Square	2,122	999	446	359	318	0
Avondale	427	318	11	29	69	0
West Grove	1,022	581	233	68	121	19
Oxford	1,717	651	240	396	408	22
East Marlborough	2,607	2,158	293	124	32	0
Kennett	3,031	2,187	340	142	307	55
New Garden	3,999	3,113	106	127	365	288
London Grove	2,177	1,794	128	36	0	219
Penn	2,102	1,310	229	0	290	273
Lower Oxford	1,055	925	20	30	0	80
Upper Oxford	843	774	33	8	0	28
Study area	21,102	14,810	2,079	1,319	1,910	984
Boroughs	5,288	2,549	930	852	916	41
Townships	15,814	12,261	1,149	467	994	943
Chester County	189,259	116,828	32,377	9,469	25,400	5,156



Figure A-7
Median Value of Owner-occupied Housing Units, 2006-2010

	Owner-occupied units	Median value (dollars)
Kennett Square	1,110	\$221,900
Avondale	217	\$215,800
West Grove	753	\$198,200
Oxford	708	\$216,800
East Marlborough	2,231	\$443,600
Kennett	2,353	\$464,000
New Garden	2,770	\$435,000
London Grove	1,803	\$340,900
Penn	1,559	\$316,600
Lower Oxford	799	\$264,500
Upper Oxford	702	\$293,600
Chester County	139,743	\$334,300

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

Figure A-8
Location of Jobs

	Number	Share
Total All Jobs	24,619	100.0%
New Garden	5,144	20.9%
Kennett Square	4,744	19.3%
Kennett	3,551	14.4%
Penn	2,482	10.1%
East Marlborough	2,378	9.7%
Oxford	1,565	6.4%
London Grove	1,551	6.3%
Lower Oxford	1,491	6.1%
Avondale	979	4.0%
West Grove	396	1.6%
Upper Oxford	338	1.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics



Figure A-9
Commuting to Jobs in Study Area, 2010

	Number	Share
Employed in the study area	24,619	100.0%
Employed and living in the study area	7,681	31.2%
Employed in the study area but living outside of it	16,938	68.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics





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Good Neighbors Home Repair

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Kennett Township	Avondale Borough
New Garden Township	West Grove Borough
London Grove Township	Oxford Borough
Penn Township	Lower Oxford Township
Upper Oxford Township	

American Mushroom Institute
Catholic Social Services
Chester County Economic Development Council
Chester County Health Department
Dansko
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Department of Community Development
Giant Supermarket
Good Neighbors Home Repair
Habitat for Humanity of Chester County
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