Pottstown Comprehensive Plan

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2014 UPDATE

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A Comprehensive Plan....

- Provides an overall vision for a community along with tools to implement that vision.
- Is a guide for the community's leaders as they make land use policy such as zoning ordinances, subdivision and land development ordinances, capital improvement plans, redevelopment or revitalization programs, parkland development, housing renovation programs, and parking regulations. It also provides a framework for reviewing individual development proposals.

Past Plans and Studies

- Pottstown Borough Comprehensive Plan (1985)
- Pottstown Pennsylvania: An Evaluation of the Economic and Industrial Development Potentials of the Pottstown Area (1976)
- Pottstown, Pennsylvania: An Evaluation of Development Strategies for Pottstown Area Industrial Development, Incorporated (1989)
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- Marketing the Pottstown Region: Strategies for Economic Development and Their Fiscal Impacts (2012)
- Industrial Zone Transportation Access Study (2012)

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Community Profile

Population:

- 2010 Population of 22,377
- Decrease of 12% since 1985 Comprehensive Plan
- Increased 2.4% since 2000
- Future growth (modest) is expected (DVRPC)

Employment

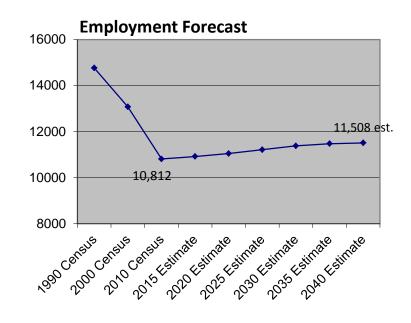
- 10,812 Jobs in Borough in 2010
- 11,508 Jobs expected by 2040 (DVRPC)

Income

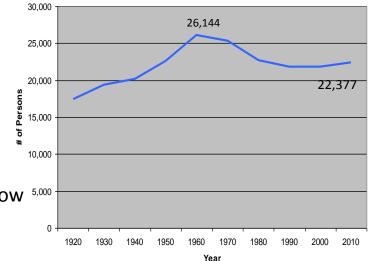
- 2010 Median Income of \$46,066 (County was \$76,381)
- Families Below Poverty Line: 11.3%

Housing

- 5,152 Owner-Occupied Units (55.3% of Total Units)
- 4,169 Renter-Occupied Units (44.7% of Total Units)
- Median Housing Value (Owner-Occupied): \$136,700 (Below 5 County's \$255,000)

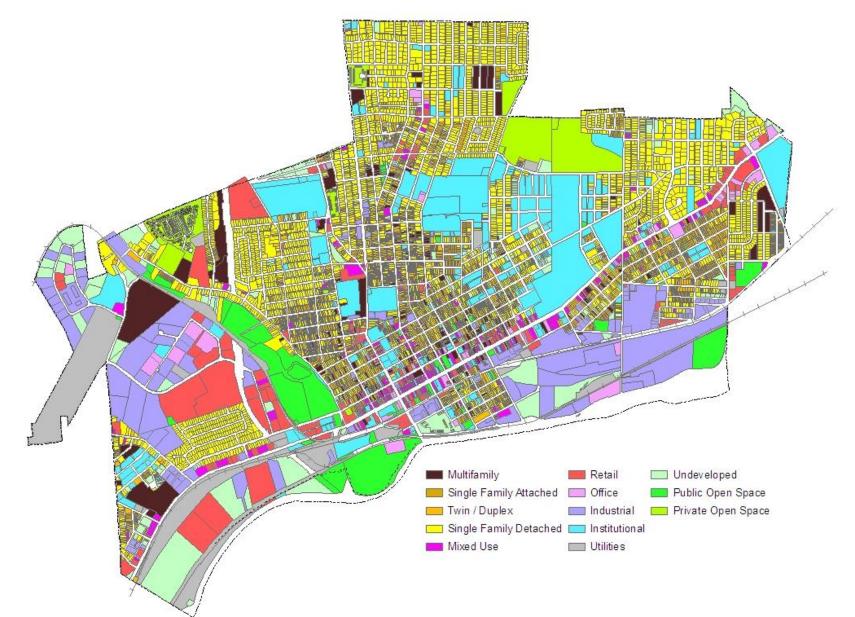




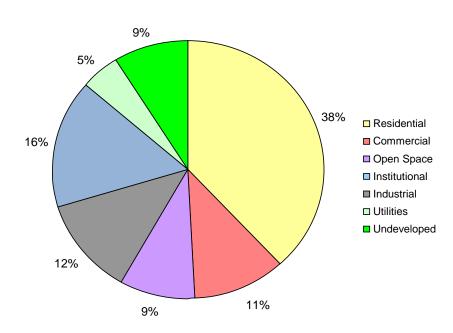


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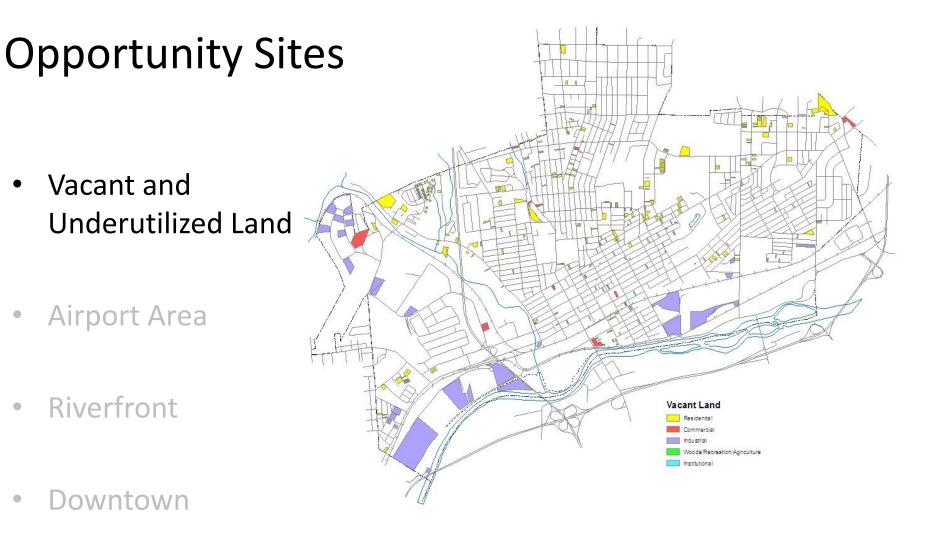
Existing Land Use



Existing Land Use



Land Use	Approximate Number of Properties	Area	
		Acres	% of Land
Single Family Detached	3,599	607	24.4%
Twin / Duplex	2,327	183	7.3%
Single Family Attached	779	47	1.9%
Multi Family	541	112	4.5%
Total Residential	7,246	949	38.1%
Retail	243	187	7.5%
Office	64	39	1.6%
Mixed Use	347	51	2.0%
Total Commercial	654	277	11.1%
Public Open Space	89	141	5.7%
Private Open Space	15	77	3.1%
Agriculture	5	1	0.0%
Total Open Space	109	219	8.8%
Industrial	184	305	12.2%
Institutional	249	401	16.1%
Utilities	47	121	4.8%
Undeveloped	464	220	8.8%
TOTAL AREA	8,953	2,491†	100%



- 65% decrease from 1985-2010 in vacant/undeveloped land.
- 156 acres remain vacant/undeveloped as of 2010.
- Not all 156 are developable (i.e. located in floodplain, etc.)
- Undeveloped land should be prioritized for redevelopment including possible pocket parks, community gardens, parking, and industrial development.

Opportunity Sites

- Vacant and Underutilized Land
- Airport Area
- Riverfront
- Downtown



- Attract commercial and industrial uses to existing vacant land in the Circle of Progress Business Park
- Consider airport facility enhancements including additional hangers and services such as a restaurant to contribute to the growth of Pottstown's commercial and industrial sectors.

Opportunity Sites

- Vacant and Underutilized Land
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- Downtown



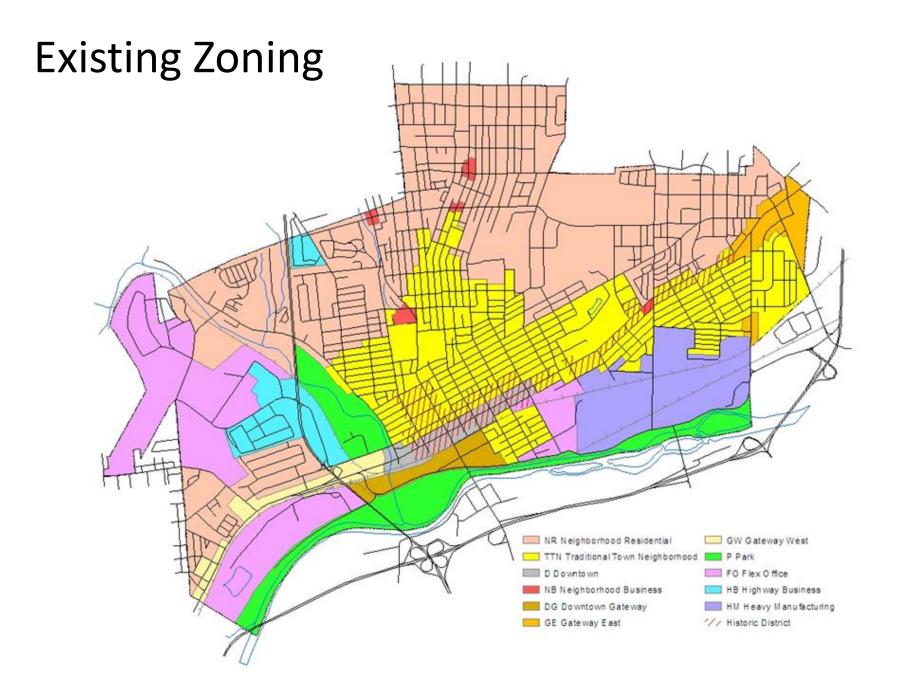
- Extend Keystone Boulevard to connect with South Grossman Road and pursue commercial/industrial development in the area.
- Attract additional heavy industrial and manufacturing businesses to the Bethlehem Steel Site/Pottstown Industrial Center.
- Use the Pottstown Carousel and miniature golf site as a way to improve access between Riverfront Park, Memorial Park, and the Pottsgrove Manor.

Opportunity Sites

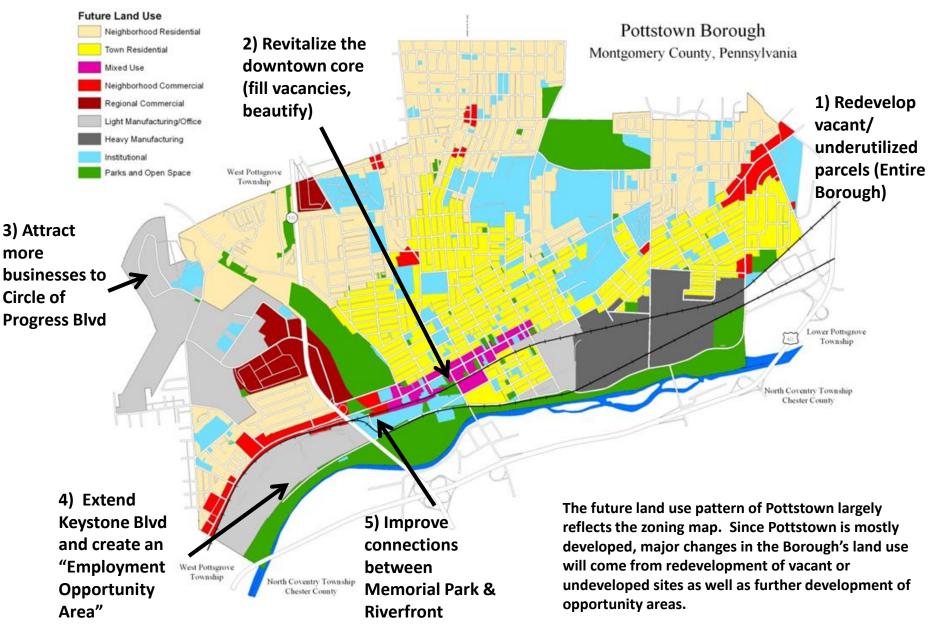
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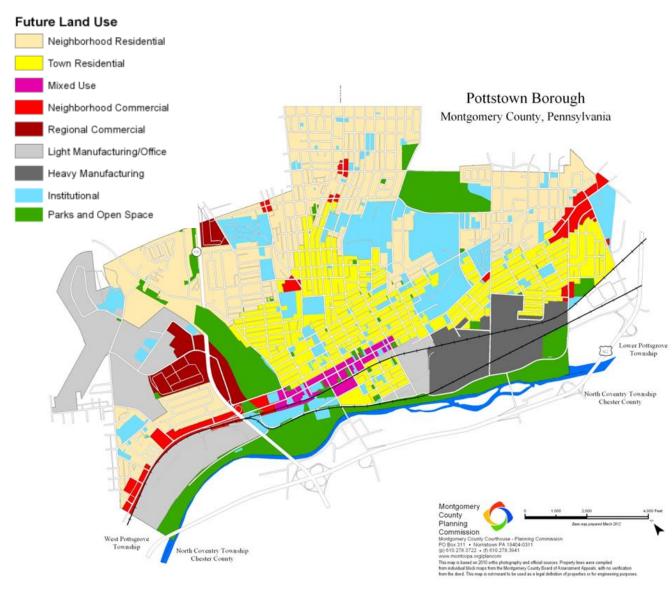
- Continue efforts to revitalize the Main Street commercial district along High Street, focusing on the 300, 400, and 500 blocks of High Street.
- Undertake a "Downtown Focus Study" that will collect and analyze data, including information about the Borough's industries, vacant and available properties, parking inventory, and traffic patterns to create a policy and design document. The Study will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan when complete.



Future Land Use



Future Land Use



Future Land Use Categories

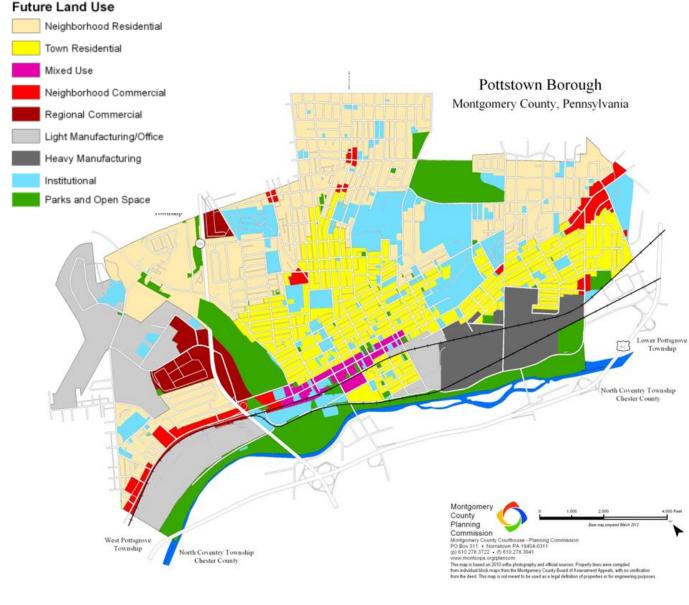
Neighborhood Residential: The borough intends to maintain and enhance these areas as <u>primarily single-family or semi-detached</u> <u>housing</u> with few non-residential uses mixed in. The borough intends to encourage infill development in these areas and emphasize compatible housing types on smaller lot sizes.

Town Residential: This area will be preserved as predominantly <u>residential with</u> <u>a small number of stores and offices mixed</u> <u>in.</u> All types of housing, including multifamily, should be encouraged in these areas.

Mixed Use: <u>A mix of uses</u>, including a wide range of retail, business, professional, governmental, and higher-density residential uses should be encouraged in this area. An emphasis should be placed on development that maintains and enhances this area's existing historic architecture and character.

Neighborhood Commercial: A mix of neighborhood-serving commercial and office uses should be encouraged in these areas, including small (less than 3,000 square feet) retail and office establishments, sit-down restaurants, and other direct service providers. Importance should be placed on development that improves the appearance of these areas through appropriate design, building orientation, and materials that are consistent with the character of the area.

Future Land Use



Continued...

Regional Commercial: A variety of large (minimum 30,000 SF lots) and <u>auto-oriented businesses</u> should be encouraged in these areas to serve the commercial needs of the greater Pottstown region.

Light Manufacturing/Office: These areas will be primarily used for office and light manufacturing industries that provide a wide variety of <u>employment</u> <u>opportunities</u> in the borough.

Heavy Manufacturing: This area will be preserved for necessary <u>heavy</u> <u>industrial activity and related uses</u> of such a nature that they require isolation from many other kinds of land uses. Some commercial uses that can be appropriately located near industrial activity may also be found in this area of the borough.

Institutional: This area, which includes the land occupied by the Hill School and Montgomery County Community College, among other uses, is intended to be <u>reserved for the borough's</u> <u>institutional uses, including schools,</u> <u>medical facilities, government offices,</u> <u>religious institutions, and other similar</u> <u>land uses.</u>

Parks and Open Space: All existing parks and open space are intended to be maintained as lands for recreational and open space use.

Land Use Goals

- 1. Strengthen Pottstown as a center for business and employment.
- 2. Identify other uses for vacant land that are not development.
- 3. Eliminate vacant and blighted buildings.
- 4. Protect valuable environmental resources.
- 5. Continue to implement the *Reconnections* plan.
- 6. Develop and implement strategic plans for opportunity sites (previously discussed)
- 7. Update and streamline zoning ordinance as needed to help facilitate quality development in the Borough.

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Economic Development Opportunities



Business & Industrial Infrastructure

Downtown



High Street, downtown Pottstown

Riverfront & Recreational Tourism



Arts and Culture



Schuylkill River Trail in Pottstown

Economic Development Opportunities

Education



Transportation



Pottstown Municipal Airport

Marketing



PDIDA Log

Gateways and Signage



Sign for Riverfront Park

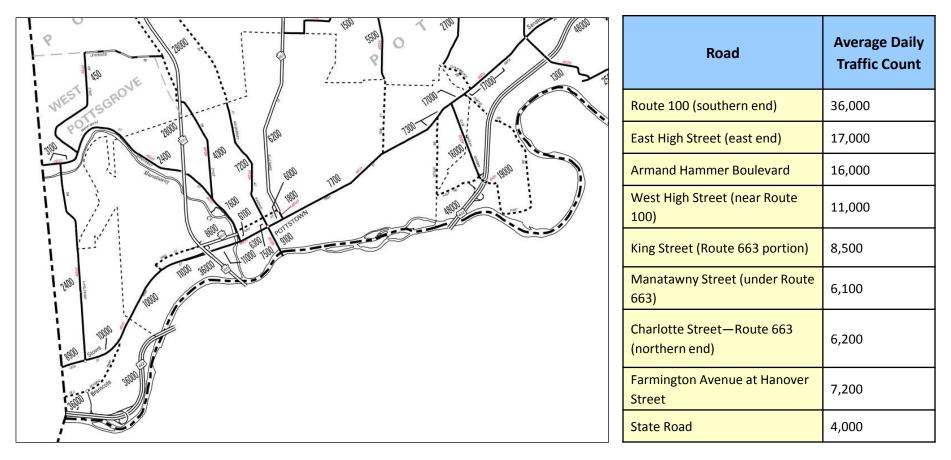
Economic Development Goals

- 1. **G**row business and employment in the Borough.
- 2. Enhance Pottstown's identity as the urban hub of the Region.
- 3. Utilize the riverfront plan established in the ULI Transformation Strategies Plan for reuse of key parcels.
- 4. Encourage and accommodate a vibrant downtown.
- 5. Encourage high-value employment.
- 6. Build on existing arts and culture activities as an economic development tool to bring more visitors into town.
- 7. Expand Pottstown's heritage tourism infrastructure and attractions.
- 8. Include Pottstown's urban advantages and assets in Marketing for economic development
- 9. Increase economic activity related to heritage tourism in Pottstown for the benefit of taxpayers, partners, and the general public.

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Mobility and Circulation – Existing Infrastructure

Roadways



Mobility and Circulation – Existing Infrastructure

Public Transportation



PART Bus

Air Service and Airports



Pottstown Municipal Airport

Rail and Freight Service



Sidewalks, Trails, and Bicycle Linkages



Trail connection from SRT to downtown

Mobility and Circulation Goals

- 1. Make improvements to the transportation network to promote the safe and efficient movement of people, vehicles, and goods within and through the borough.
- 2. Expand and enhance the Pottstown Borough Municipal Airport.
- 3. Continue to support, expand, and upgrade public transit access and facilities in the borough.
- 4. Capitalize on the borough's existing rail infrastructure.
- 5. Increase access and safety by improving the design of intersections and prioritizing projects that increase connections in the borough.
- 6. Ensure safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle access in the borough.
- 7. Improve access to and awareness of parking facilities

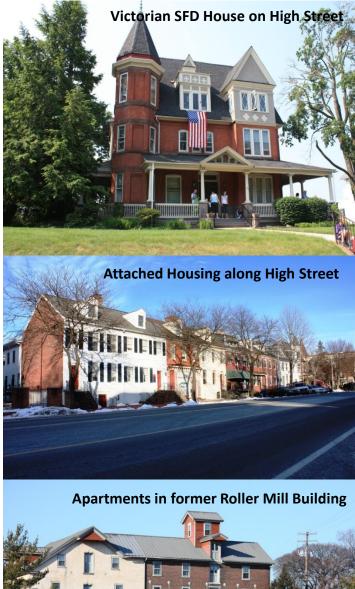
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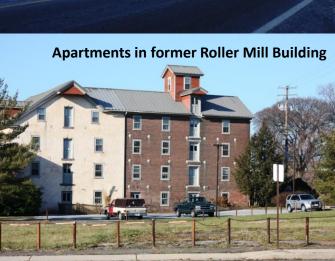
Housing – Existing Conditions

Housing Inventory - There were 10,579 housing units in Pottstown Borough in 2010, an increase of nearly 6% from 2000. Higher growth among single-family attached and multi-family housing and 7.5% decrease in the number of single-family detached homes.

Housing Value - Pottstown's median housing value was \$136,000 in 2010, less than half the median value for the County as a whole (reflective of size/age). The median rents for the borough were also significantly lower than the County value.

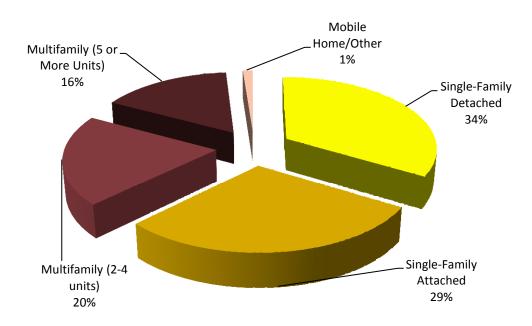
Age of Housing - Nearly 60% of Pottstown's housing was built prior to 1950. The borough's housing stock, although attractive for many with its historic architecture and urban-style design, is comparatively much older than housing stock in surrounding communities.





Housing – Existing Conditions

Types of Housing





Housing Goals

- 1. Expand market choice for new housing and revitalize existing housing.
- 2. Improve the quality of life in Pottstown and its neighborhoods.
- 3. Encourage the development of properly located multifamily apartment complexes, attached townhouses, and the adaptive reuse of quality older structures for dwellings.
- 4. Promote the creation of new market-rate housing in neighborhoods which can support this type of construction and that is compatible with Pottstown's existing character.
- 5. Promote the transition of multi-family housing in single-family residences back to its intended use, where appropriate.
- 6. Support the transition of existing rental housing units into owner-occupied housing, where appropriate.
- 7. Provide incentives to encourage infill housing construction that is appropriate for Pottstown's existing character.
- 8. Look to promote downtown housing by encouraging the renovation of the second- and thirdstories above downtown retail spaces.

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Historic and Cultural Resources

Listed (2) and Eligible (8) Historic Districts

- Old Pottstown National Historic District
- High Street National Historic District
- Glasgow Village
- Fourth Street
- Charlotte Street
- Lincoln Avenue
- South Side
- The Hill School Campus
- Iron Works
- East End

Historic Landmarks

- Pottsgrove Manor
- Reading Railroad Pottstown Station
- Roller Mill
- Grubb Mansion
- Jefferson Elementary School

Historic Preservation Ordinances

- HARB District
- Conservation District



Historic and Cultural Resources

Festivals and Events

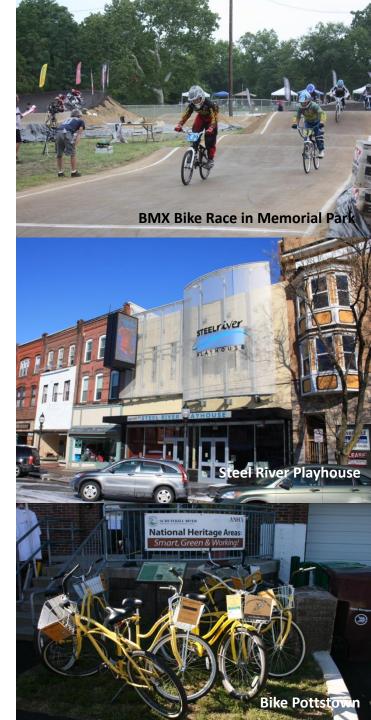
- Polar Bear Plunge
- BMX National Event
- Classic Car Shows
- Schuylkill River Sojourn
- Soap Box Derby
- Schuylkill River Festival
- Halloween Parade
- Volleyball Rumble
- Historic Home Tours

Arts and Entertainment

- ArtFusion 19464
- Steel River Playhouse
- Center for the Arts at the Hill School
- High Street Music
- North Hall at MCCC
- Boyer Gallery at the Hill School
- Emmanuel Lutheran Concert Series

Heritage Tourism Businesses

- Bike Pottstown at the Heritage Center
- Tri-County Bicycles
- Hidden River Outfitters
- Sly Fox Brewery



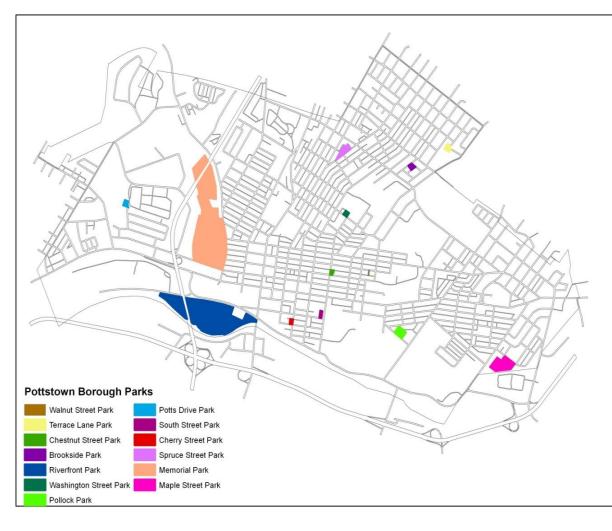
Historic and Cultural Preservation Goals

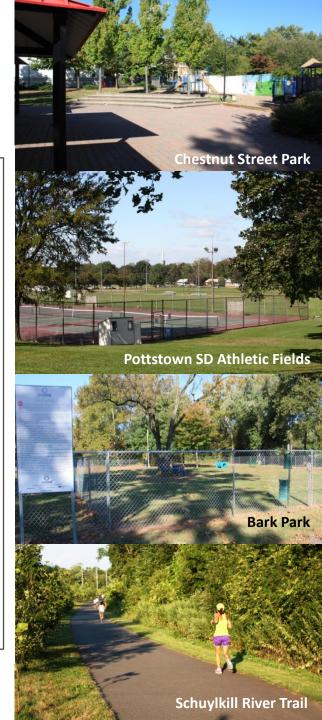
- 1. Preserve the historical as well as architectural qualities of Pottstown's built environment through the creation of a comprehensive preservation program.
- 2. Maintain an inventory of potential site landmarks and districts for identification of additional desired sites for preservation.
- 3. Work with owners of historic properties to educate them as to the value of their properties. Ensure that private owners of historic properties receive appropriate technical assistance and financial incentive information from government sources.
- 4. Remain informed concerning current trends and best practices through associations at local, state, and national government and organization levels on an ongoing basis.
- 5. Provide incentives for private-sector reinvestment and restoration of historic properties.
- 6. Establish a management structure and oversight for Pottstown's Heritage Action Program.
- 7. Build effective partnerships for heritage initiatives in Pottstown to ensure long-term management and economic sustainability.
- 8. Develop marketing and outreach for coordinated promotion of Pottstown's heritage resources and offerings.
- 9. Take advantage of local, regional, and national marketing organizations to promote Pottstown's heritage offerings. Remain informed concerning current trends and best practices through associations at local, state, and national government and organization levels on an ongoing basis.
- 10. Increase opportunities for Heritage Tourism in the borough by connecting the Schuylkill River Trail to High Street.

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Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Pottstown Borough Parks





Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Recreation Opportunities

- Volleyball Rumble Four day volleyball tournament; attracted more than 2,000 athletes in 2012.
- PPOA Fishing Derby Event for kids 12 and under
- Nostalgia Nights Held the first Saturday of the Month, May through September, this event showcases vintage and classic cars along High Street.
- Summer in the Park This event provides free concerts at the Bandstand in Memorial Park.
- Annual Pottstown Pet Fair An opportunity for residents to showcase their pets. Located in Memorial Park
- *Carousel of Flavor* Festival featuring food from local restaurants and caterers, live bands, crafters, and other entertainment.



Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Goals

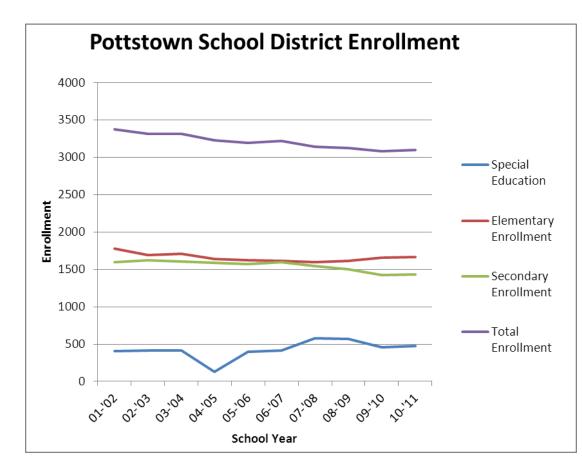
- 1. Support regional park coordination and cooperation.
- 2. Improve access to the Riverfront.
- 3. Continue to develop recreational facilities and programs that benefit borough residents and attract people regionally.
- 4. Promote the borough's parks and recreation facilities and events and to residents and the surrounding communities.
- 1. Implement the goals and recommendations of the borough's Open Space Plan.
- 2. Encourage the completion of the Schuylkill River Trail through the borough.

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Community Facilities and Services

Schools

- Pottstown Public Schools: 3,062 students (2012)
- Non-Public Schools (Private & Religious): 229 students (2012)
- Charter Schools: 158 students (2012)





Community Facilities and Services

Water Supply

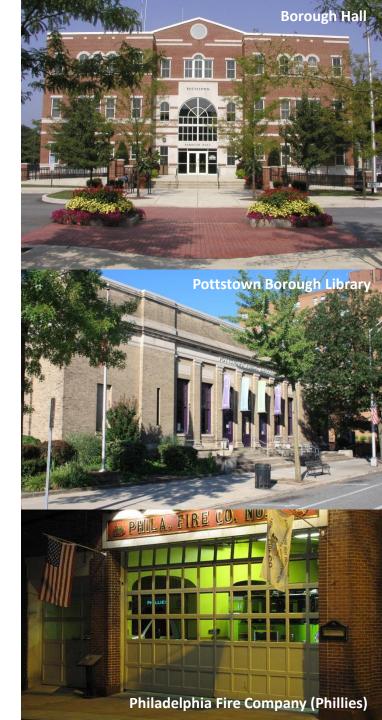
- Pottstown Borough Water Authority serves 11,500 customers in Borough and three Pottsgrove municipalities
- Treats average of 4.5 million gallons of water per day
- Has excess capacity (ability to treat 8 million gallons per day)

Sewage Facilities

- Borough-owned treatment plant
- Treats 6-7 million gallons per day from 15,000 area homes, businesses, industrial sites.
- Capacity of 15.6 million gallons per days sufficient capacity.

Emergency Services and Police

- 4 volunteer fire companies: Goodwill, Phillies, Empire, North End
- Police Department: Patrol division includes 20 uniformed officers, 4 corporals, and 4 sergeants.
 - Also has detective division, community response unit (CRU), and records division.



Community Facilities and Services Goals

Education

- Continue to meet or exceed adequate yearly progress (AYP).
- Continue to maintain all active public schools and administrative office facilities to meet enrollment needs.
- Enhance and improve school facility sites with landscaping and redesigned play areas.
- Where practical, provide additional land for passive recreation at elementary school sites.
- Improve the visual appearance and safety of parking areas by providing visual separation from other functions and public sidewalks, and by providing well-designed, easy-to-maintain landscaping.
- Reorient some facilities and programs to better serve the adult population.
- Support the MCCC and specifically the College's efforts to provide a curriculum that suits the job training needs of the Region.

Water and Sewer

- Continue good maintenance of all systems, especially catch basins, storm water lines and the sanitary sewer system.
- Participate in inter-municipal planning efforts to control surface water runoff and to protect natural and man-made water channels.
- With Upper Pottsgrove and regional agencies, examine and analyze the potential water run-off and the storm sewer capacity of the drainage way that parallels Farmington Avenue.
- Continue to educate residents regarding storm water.
- Repair and improve the Borough's underground arch system

Community Facilities and Services Goals, cont.

Solid Waste

• Participate in inter-municipal and regional efforts to provide safe and acceptable means to dispose of solid waste.

Emergency Services

- Consider consolidation and/or merger of some or all of the fire stations if significant public cost increases arise for capital improvements or operations.
- Modernize the borough's firefighting facilities to keep up with technological improvements.

Library

- Expand and upgrade existing library facilities as well as current library services consider relocation to a site nearer to the center of Downtown.
- The library should make an effort to meet the needs of an aging and changing population.
- Work with the Montgomery County District Library Center to determine the extent of responsibilities and financial support for providing library services to the Tri-County area.

Governmental Facilities

Landscape and screen any garage or parking area and provide well-defined, controlled access.

Senior Center

• Implement the goals of the 2010-2012 Strategic Plan, which includes increasing its membership and volunteer base.

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