

THE PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

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This section of the Joint Comprehensive Plan begins with the goals and objectives that describe the three municipalities' visions for the future of their region. In accordance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, statements are included about the interrelationship of the Plan's various topics and the likely timing of development in the Boyertown-Colebrookdale-Pike region. Next, recommendations in each of the following subject areas are described:

- Future Land Use and Housing
- Environmental Conservation
- Agricultural Preservation
- Historic Preservation
- Borough Revitalization
- Transportation
- Community Services and Facilities
- Energy Conservation

Goals and Objectives

Future Land Use Goal: Maximize the preservation of farming and undeveloped areas in rural vicinities while providing land for development in selected, appropriate growth areas.

Objectives:

- Implement land use policies that are open space and conservation-oriented.
- Encourage residential developers to use neighborhood design that reflects the best features of older communities and permanently preserve open space within their development tracts.
- Direct new homes towards existing developed areas to minimize sprawl.
- Discourage high rates of residential development to avoid overwhelming local schools and other municipal services.
- Direct business development to Boyertown's core and other designated areas within the three communities that do not encroach upon residential areas.

Housing Goal: Continue providing opportunities for a variety of affordable housing types.

Objectives:

- Provide for a variety of detached and attached housing types using environmentally sensitive layouts and designs.
- Concentrate housing in those areas most suitable from a physical perspective.

- Encourage preservation and rehabilitation of the concentrations of older housing in and around Boyertown Borough.

Environmental Conservation Goal: Protect the sensitive natural features that characterize so much of the region’s landscape.

Objectives:

- Direct growth away from areas with environmental resources poorly suited to development .
- Strengthen zoning and subdivision regulations that conserve steep slopes, wooded areas, stream buffers, floodprone lands, and other natural features.
- Try to maximize preservation of permanent natural areas within residential developments.

Agricultural Preservation Goal: Keep agricultural areas in agricultural use.

Objectives:

- Preserve farming by continuing to promote agricultural zoning, agricultural security areas, purchase of agricultural easements and preferential assessments.
- Minimize non-farm activities near agricultural areas to reduce the potential for conflicts with normal farming operations.
- Keep public water and sewer line extensions out of prime agricultural areas.
- Provide for a range of appropriate supplemental income opportunities in agricultural areas.

Historic Preservation Goal: To preserve and enhance the area’s historic resources.

Objectives:

- Protect the character of the region’s older building stock with appropriate zoning strategies.
- Encourage voluntary use of design guidelines to preserve historic architecture and village design patterns.
- Support the efforts of local and county historic preservation groups to continue identifying and protecting historic resources.

Borough Revitalization Goal: To retain and attract responsible businesses in designated business areas, with special emphasis on downtown Boyertown.

Objectives:

- Provide for the adaptive reuse of vacant and underutilized business properties.
- Make sure local ordinances and codes do not discourage responsible businesses from locating in designated business areas.
- Work with the State, local non-profit groups and area businesses to help revitalize the downtown commercial core in Boyertown Borough.

Transportation Goal: To provide for the safe, efficient movement of people and goods on area roadways.

Objectives:

- Work with PennDOT and local developers to ensure local roads and intersections remain safe and able to accommodate current and projected traffic volumes.
- Encourage business developments to share controlled ingress and egress to adjacent major roads such as Route 73, Route 562, and Route 100.

Community Facilities and Services Goal: Continue to provide adequate municipal services in coordination with future land use planning.

Objectives:

- Ensure adequate park and recreation opportunities exist to serve the region’s growing population.
- Work with the Boyertown School District and the Oley Valley School District to ensure adequate facilities exist to meet current and projected enrollments.
- Be sure expansions of public water and sewer facilities follow land use planning and do not contribute to sprawl.
- Look for appropriate solutions where areas exist with a concentration of failing septic systems.
- Periodically review the adequacy of municipal contributions to private community service providers including fire and rescue groups and recreation organizations, among others.

Energy Conservation Goal: Cut energy use to reduce dependence on foreign oil producers and help safeguard the natural environment.

Objectives:

- Use energy conserving building and site design techniques.
- Conserve energy used in municipal government operations.

Plan Interrelationships

The comprehensive plan addresses the following major topics:

- Future Land Use and Housing
- Environmental Conservation
- Agricultural Preservation
- Historic Preservation
- Borough Revitalization

- Transportation
- Community Services and Facilities
- Energy Conservation

These topics are interrelated. Planning and capital programming actions municipalities take in any one of these areas are likely to affect one or more of the other areas. For instance, land use decisions often affect circulation patterns and community services, such as public utilities and recreation needs.

Timing

The timing of development in the Boyertown-Colebrookdale-Pike region will largely depend upon the private real estate market. This Joint Comprehensive Plan addresses major development and conservation patterns for approximately the next 10 years. After that time, the three municipalities should revise it. From here on, Boyertown, Colebrookdale, and Pike should only make zoning changes after assessing how the proposed changes conform with the spirit of this Joint Comprehensive Plan.

Future Land Use and Housing

This Future Land Use and Housing section of the Joint Comprehensive Plan describes the most appropriate types and densities of land uses that should be accommodated in the Boyertown-Colebrookdale-Pike region. Included are both a map and descriptive text that should serve as the rationale for future zoning revisions in the three municipalities—zoning revisions that will provide the regulatory force for implementing the vision, goals, objectives and recommendations identified in this Plan.

Basis for Future Land Use Recommendations

The Future Land Use recommendations identified below are based on the following factors in the three municipalities:

- The pattern of developed and undeveloped land and preserved open space that exists today in the three municipalities;
- The path of growth in the region surrounding the three municipalities;
- Environmental conditions, including surface waters, soil and geologic characteristics, and the distribution of sensitive natural features, such as steep slopes, floodprone areas, and woodlands;
- The existing zoning of land within and adjacent to the three municipalities;

- Local and regional roadway and traffic considerations;
- Existing community facilities and services, especially public water and sewage infrastructure; and
- The visions of the Berks County Planning Commission, municipal officials, Committee members, and other residents about how they would like to see the three municipalities conserved, developed and revitalized in the next 10-year period.

Future Land Use Planning Areas

Future Land Use recommendations include the planning areas described below. These planning areas should be the guiding basis for establishing new zoning districts in the three municipalities. Purposes for each planning area are stated, and recommendations are presented that identify the most appropriate land uses and densities that should be permitted in each planning area. Recommendations are also made on which planning areas should be served by public water and sewer facilities. The accompanying Future Land Use map illustrates recommended locations for each planning area within the Boyertown-Colebrookdale-Pike region.

RP - Rural Preservation

Purposes:

- Preserve agriculture and the rural environment in Pike Township and in Colebrookdale Township. (No land is proposed for this planning area in Boyertown Borough.)
- Protect sensitive natural features, including high-quality waterways, steep slopes, and large woodland blocs.
- Accommodate only very low density, single-family detached home development with significant preserved open space, preferably not in mowed lawn.

Primary Permitted Uses/Densities:

- Agriculture.
- Intensive Agriculture on minimum 10-acre lots with extra large setbacks adjacent to residential districts, and special exception approval that requires specific protections for ground water and surface waters.
- Single-family detached homes on minimum 3-acre lots, or minimum 1.5 to 2.0-acre lots where an open space subdivision (clustering) is proposed with preserved open space equal to at least 40% of gross tract size.
- Note: Forestry must be permitted by right, according to State law. However, acceptable regulations include prohibiting clear cutting on steep slopes and close to surface waters.

Public Water and Sewer Service: No

Potentially Applicable Conservation Tools:

- Agricultural easements (Purchase of development rights).
- Conservation easements.
- Agricultural security areas.
- Optional open space subdivisions (clustering).
- Mandatory open space subdivisions (clustering).
- Mandatory dedication of land or fees for recreation.

LDR - Low Density Residential

Purposes:

- Provide for low density, single-family residential development with significant preserved open space.
- Provide a transition area between the Rural Preservation planning area and more developed parts of the region.

Primary Permitted Uses/Densities:

- In Pike Township and Colebrookdale Township: single-family detached homes on minimum 2-acre lots, or minimum 1-acre lots where an open space subdivision (clustering) is proposed with preserved open space equal to at least 40% of gross tract size.
- In Boyertown Borough: single-family detached homes on minimum 20,000 s.f. lots, or 10,000 s.f. lots where an open space subdivision (clustering) is proposed with preserved open space equal to at least 40% of gross tract size.

Public Water and Sewer: In Boyertown Borough: Yes. In Pike Township and Colebrookdale Township: No.

Potentially Applicable Conservation Tools:

- Optional open space subdivisions (clustering).
- Mandatory open space subdivisions (clustering).
- Traditional neighborhood development (neighborhood and housing designs that emulates the best features of older neighborhoods).
- Mandatory dedication of land or fees for recreation.

MDR - Medium Density Residential

Purposes:

- Provide for medium density, single-family detached and twin home development with significant open space.
- Provide a transition area between lower density residential areas and more urbanized parts of the region. (No land is proposed for this planning area in Pike Township.)

Primary Permitted Uses/Densities:

- In Colebrookdale Township: single-family detached homes or side-by-side twin homes on minimum 20,000 s.f. lots (per unit), or minimum 10,000 s.f. lots (per unit) where an open space subdivision (clustering) is proposed with preserved open space equal to at least 40% of gross tract size.

- In Boyertown Borough: single-family detached homes or side-by-side twin homes on minimum 12,000 s.f. lots (per unit), or minimum 6,000 s.f. lots (per unit) where an open space subdivision (clustering) is proposed with preserved open space equal to at least 40% of gross tract size.

Public Water and Sewer: Yes

Potentially Applicable Conservation Tools:

- Optional open space subdivisions (clustering).
- Mandatory open space subdivisions (clustering).
- Traditional neighborhood development.
- Mandatory dedication of land or fees for recreation.

GR - General Residential

Purposes:

- Provide planned areas for a variety of housing types in Boyertown Borough and Colebrookdale Township, including developments of mixed housing types. (No land is proposed for this planning area in Pike Township.)

Primary Permitted Uses/Densities:

- All residential uses, including developments of mixed housing types, at densities not exceeding 6 units per acre in Colebrookdale Township and 8 units per acre in Boyertown Borough, with preserved open space equal to at least 30% of gross tract size in either case. Note: Conversion of single-family homes into two or more dwelling units should be permitted only in very large homes (3,000 s.f. or more). Financial assistance for deconversions may also be beneficial.

Public Water and Sewer: Yes

Potentially Applicable Conservation Tools:

- Optional open space subdivisions (clustering).
- Mandatory open space subdivisions (clustering).
- Traditional neighborhood development.
- Mandatory dedication of land or fees for recreation.

VC - Village Commercial

Purposes:

- Provide for continuation of traditional, pedestrian-friendly, mixed use villages in Pike Township and Colebrookdale Township. (No land is proposed for this planning area in Boyertown Borough.)

Primary Permitted Uses and Densities:

- Selected commercial uses, such as small offices, services, appropriate hospitality uses, and small, neighborhood-oriented retail uses (no-drive throughs, gas stations, or highway-oriented commercial uses, like auto dealers, lumber yards, home centers, etc.).
- All residential uses—preferably located as part of a mixed use structure with a commercial use.

Public Water and Sewer: In Pike Township: No. In Colebrookdale Township: Yes

Applicable Conservation Tools:

- Village zoning techniques that encourage a compact development pattern.
- Pedestrian-friendly streetscape design elements.
- Traffic calming measures.
- Special sign controls.

TC - Town Center

Purposes:

- Recognize downtown Boyertown as the prime central business district in the three-community region. (No land is proposed for this planning area in Colebrookdale Township or Pike Township.)
- Encourage the adaptive reuse of vacant and under-utilized building space in downtown Boyertown.
- Promote the on-going revitalization of downtown Boyertown, including both private sector business investment and public sector infrastructure improvements.

Primary Permitted Uses and Densities:

- All residential types, preferably located as part of a mixed use structure with a commercial use, but specifically confined to upper floors where the property fronts on Philadelphia Avenue (Route 73) or Reading Avenue (Route 562).
- Most commercial uses, such as offices, services and retail uses but excluding drive throughs, gas stations, or highway-oriented commercial uses, like auto dealers, lumber yards, home centers, etc.

Public Water and Sewer: Yes

Potentially Applicable Conservation Tools:

- Village zoning techniques that encourage a compact development pattern.
- Pedestrian-friendly streetscape design elements.
- Traffic calming measures.
- Special sign controls.

GC - General Commercial

Purposes:

- Provide for a wide range of commercial uses in areas within Colebrookdale Township and Boyertown Borough that are easily accessible by auto. (No land is proposed for this planning area in Pike Township.)
- Attract tax revenues for the Boyertown School District to help offset the net tax loss to the School District created by most new residential development.

Primary Permitted Uses and Densities:

- Retail, office, service, and other commercial uses, including shopping plazas.
- Attract tax revenues for the school district to help offset the net tax loss to the school district created by most new residential development.

Public Water and Sewer: Yes

Potentially Applicable Conservation Tools:

- Common access ways.
- Shared parking.
- Landscape buffering.
- Mandatory dedication of land or fees for recreation.

PBD - Planned Business Development

Purposes:

- Provide for campus-style, planned business developments in Colebrookdale Township and Boyertown Borough. (No land is proposed for this planning area in Pike Township.)
- Attract tax revenues for the Boyertown School District to help offset the net tax loss to the School District created by most new residential development.

Primary Permitted Uses and Densities:

- Office/light industrial/flex space business parks (or free-standing buildings with similar uses) constructed under unified design with significant open space and landscape buffers.

Public Water and Sewer: Yes

Potentially Applicable Conservation Tools:

- Common access ways.
- Shared parking.
- Landscape buffering.
- Mandatory dedication of land or fees for recreation.
- Additional setbacks from any adjacent residential zoning districts.

I - Industrial

Purposes:

- Provide selected areas for a variety of environmentally-responsible industrial uses.
- Attract tax revenues for the Boyertown School District and the Oley Valley School District to help offset the net tax loss to these school districts created by most new residential development.

Primary Permitted Uses and Densities:

- A full range of industrial uses.

Public Water and Sewer: In Pike Township: No. In Boyertown Borough and Colebrookdale Township: Yes.

Potentially Applicable Conservation Tools:

- A special overlay district within the I-Industrial area for quarries, landfills, trash transfer stations, chemical plants, asphalt plants, and other high impact industrial uses. This special overlay district would require a special exception permit (zoning hearing board approval) or a conditional use permit (governing body approval) plus a 15-acre minimum tract size and additional setbacks.
- Reliance on State and federal regulations that apply to these high impact uses in addition to local regulations.

NOTE: The accompanying Future Land Use maps on the next pages show recommended locations for each Future Land Use Planning Area described. A table summarizing the Future Land Use Planning Areas follows the maps.

Map: Future Land Use

**Map: Draft Future Land Use Plan
Boyertown Enlargement**

Table 18
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED FUTURE
LAND USE PLANNING AREAS

Future Land Use Planning Area	Major Permitted Uses (in addition to agriculture)	Maximum Density/ Minimum Lot Size	Public Water & Sewer Service	Locations
RP - Rural Preservation	Single-family detached homes	3-acre minimum lot size or 1.5 to 2.0-acre minimum lot size with 40% open space	No	Pike, Colebrookdale
LDR - Low Density Residential	Single-family detached homes	In Pike and Colebrookdale: 2-acre minimum lot size or 1-acre minimum lot size with 40% open space. In Boyertown: minimum 20,000 s.f. lots or minimum 10,000 s.f. lots with 40% open space.	In Pike: No In Colebrookdale: No In Boyertown: Yes	Pike, Colebrookdale, Boyertown
MDR - Medium Density Residential	Single-family detached homes and side-by-side twin homes	In Colebrookdale: minimum 20,000 s.f. lots (per unit) or minimum 10,000 s.f. lots per unit with 40% open space. In Boyertown: minimum 12,000 s.f. lots or minimum 6,000 s.f. lots with 40% open space.	Yes	Colebrookdale, Boyertown
GR - General Residential	All residential uses, including developments of mixed housing types	In Colebrookdale: densities not exceeding 6 units per acre and mandatory 30% open space. In Boyertown: densities not exceeding 8 units per acre and mandatory 30% open space.	Yes	Colebrookdale, Boyertown
VC - Village Commercial	Small offices, small services, small neighborhood-oriented retail and all residential uses, preferably as part of a mixed use structure with a commercial use	–	In Pike: No In Colebrookdale: Yes	Pike, Colebrookdale
TC - Town Center	Offices, services and retail, excluding drive-throughs, gas stations and other highway-oriented uses. All residential uses.	–	Yes	Boyertown
GC - General Commercial	Retail, offices, services and other commercial uses, including shopping plazas	–	Yes	Colebrookdale, Boyertown

Future Land Use Planning Area	Major Permitted Uses (in addition to agriculture)	Maximum Density/ Minimum Lot Size	Public Water & Sewer Service	Locations
PBD - Planned Business Development	Planned office/light industry/flex space campus-style business parks or free-standing buildings with similar uses	–	Yes	Colebrookdale, Boyertown
I - Industrial	Full range of industrial uses with special approval required for specific high-impact uses.	15-acre minimum lot size for specific high-impact uses.	In Pike: No In Colebrookdale: Yes In Boyertown: Yes	Pike, Colebrookdale, Boyertown

Important Tools

The following important planning and zoning techniques will help carry out the conservation-oriented future land use recommendations described in this Joint Comprehensive Plan.

- Open Space Subdivisions
- Traditional Neighborhood Development
- Village Zoning

Open Space Subdivisions (Clustering)

“Open Space Subdivisions”, “Clustering” and “Growing Greener Design” are various names for related design techniques that conserve permanent open space within residential subdivisions. Many Pennsylvania municipalities have adopted variations of open space design zoning regulations to help create common open space within subdivisions and protect sensitive natural features like steep slopes, woodlands, wetlands and stream corridors. In comparison, conventional subdivision design usually results in little or no preserved open space because the entire tract is subdivided into building lots and roads. Often most of the building lots in a conventional subdivision are virtually the same size and shape—hence the nickname “cookie cutter subdivisions”.

The goal of Open Space Subdivisions is to place homes on the most suitable portions of a tract, with substantial natural areas being permanently preserved. This option allows developers more flexibility in site layout. For example, developers can make better use of site topography and avoid soils that are not suitable for septic systems. Open Space Subdivision design also permits the developer to group building lots together, thereby reducing road lengths, grading and utility extensions—each of which saves on construction costs. As an incentive to choose open space design over conventional design, zoning ordinances should permit developers to net a few additional homes in exchange for preserving substantial open space within the subdivision.

Several alternatives exist for long term maintenance of the preserved open space, including ownership by a homeowners association, the municipality, or a land conservancy. Alternatively, the open space can be distributed among private lots so that the open space portion of each of these lots is legally deed restricted for permanent conservation.

Some important advantages of Open Space Subdivision design:

- Important natural features such as mature woodlands can be preserved in large blocks.
- Avoids the mono-culture of an environment that features mainly mowed grass.
- More natural stormwater filtration.
- More scenic views can be preserved.
- Developers benefit from less grading, shorter road lengths, and shorter utility extensions.
- Developers may get premium prices for lots next to permanent open space.

Traditional Neighborhood Development

Traditional Neighborhood Development, (also known as Neotraditional Design) is an alternative to large lot subdivisions that depend too much on cars and foster suburban sprawl. Traditional Neighborhood Development design brings back the best features of old style, pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods. In these neo-traditional neighborhoods, homes occupy smaller lots on streets with trees and sidewalks. Homes have front porches, garages are in the rear off an alley and housing types vary in style and price. Street grids replace isolated cul-de-sacs to heighten the neighborhood's ties with the community and make commercial areas more accessible by foot. Traditional Neighborhood Development would be very appropriate for future residential development throughout the Boyertown-Colebrookdale-Pike region.

Village Zoning

Village zoning encourages development that complements, rather than detracts from, the existing character of a village area. Compact development, mixed uses and historic signs are encouraged instead of large front yard setbacks, wide lots and extensive parking requirements. Village uses are often close to adjacent roads, particularly crossroads intersections. Village zoning allows selected, appropriate retail and service uses but does not permit highway-oriented businesses such as gas stations, drive-in restaurants, convenience stores and car washes.

Graphic: Open Space vs. Conventional Subdivision Design

Graphic: Suburban vs. Neotraditional Design

Photos: Traditional Neighborhood Development

Environmental Conservation

The Boyertown-Colebrookdale-Pike area is situated in the Pennsylvania Highlands, a greenbelt of over one million mountainous and forested acres in eastern Pennsylvania that provides important public resources, such as:

- S Clean groundwater for over 350,000 residents,
- S Critical habitat for many forest-dwelling animals, and
- S Hiking, biking, hunting, fishing, and camping opportunities near several of eastern Pennsylvania metropolitan areas.

Under federal legislation, the Pennsylvania Highlands are a Forest Legacy Area, providing potential opportunities for new federal matching grants to protect open space. The Pennsylvania Highlands are also part of a two million acre region, stretching into New Jersey, New York and Connecticut, that is the focus of the Highlands Coalition, a group of more than 110 conservation organizations.

Closer to home, people who live in or near the less developed portions of the Boyertown-Colebrookdale-Pike area also identify with the area's open lands, wooded hillsides, creek valleys and country roads. Approximately 90% of the people who responded to the public survey conducted for this Joint Comprehensive Plan agreed there is a strong need to preserve more natural and scenic resources in the region. The boundaries of the Pennsylvania Highlands area are shown on the accompanying map.

Map: The Pennsylvania Highlands

The following recommendations identify ways for the three municipalities to be pro-active in preserving the region’s environmental character. These recommendations also focus on ways to minimize the environmental impact of future development.

- Encourage only development that respects the property’s natural features.

Land varies greatly in the amount of development it can physically support. Floodplains and very steep slopes should remain in open space. Other lands are suited for moderate or intense development. The following guidelines should be used when reviewing subdivision and land development applications.

Table 19
GUIDELINES FOR PROTECTING IMPORTANT NATURAL FEATURES

Natural Features (Type & Description)	Potential Problems If Not Protected	Strategies For Protection
<p>Steep Slopes - Steep slopes of 15% have 15 feet of vertical change for every 100 feet of horizontal distance. Very steep slopes of 25% rise vertically 25 feet for every 100 feet. Steep slopes are sometimes wooded and found along creeks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty of maintaining and snow-plowing steep roads. • Higher costs of buildings. • High rate of septic system failures. • Increased erosion and runoff. • Winter driving hazards from steep roads and driveways. • Disturbance of scenic areas. • Increased costs to extend public water and sewer lines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site houses on the most suitable land, while keeping steep slopes in open space. • Keep natural vegetation intact. • Strengthen municipal regulations that protect steep slopes. • Require larger lot sizes in steep areas. • Limit building on steep slopes of 15% to 25% and prohibit building on very steep slopes of 25% and above.
<p>Groundwater - Groundwater is stored underground after entering through the soil or seeping from creeks. Maintaining the quality of this water is important because both private wells and public water systems are dependent upon groundwater.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polluted groundwater. • Dry wells. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to control the percentage of lots covered by buildings and paving. • Ensure remaining septic systems are designed and operated properly. • Monitor underground storage tanks for leaks. • Avoid polluted storm water runoff. • Avoid high volume withdrawals of groundwater. • Identify areas most feasible for future public water and sewer. • Design sites so stormwater remains on-site and slowly recharges groundwater.
<p>Floodplains - Areas that are prone to flooding include both legally designated floodplains and land along drainage channels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased flooding in other areas. • Loss of potential public recreation area. • Threats to important wildlife and bird habitats. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibit construction of new structures within the 100-year floodway (which is the actual main flood channel) and along the adjacent 100-year flood-fringe. Prohibit construction within 50 to 100 feet of the centerline of a stream (depending on stream size). • Seek to preserve buffers of natural vegetation immediately adjacent to creeks and drainageways. • Seek to preserve more land along local streams and drainageways.

Natural Features (Type & Description)	Potential Problems If Not Protected	Strategies For Protection
<p>Wooded Areas - Concentrated areas of mature tree growth are found throughout the region's steeply sloped lands noted above and in other scattered locations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased surface temperatures. • Loss of important bird and wildlife habitats. • Loss of hunting areas. • Loss of air purification. • Increased erosion and runoff. • Loss of scenic resources. • Noise and incompatible development may become more noticeable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict cutting of trees during building to the building envelope and immediately adjacent areas. • Seek to preserve tree stands in public or private open space. • Seek replanting of trees that must be cut down.
<p>Shallow Depth to Bedrock - Areas with shallow soils and bedrock close to the surface are frequently found in steeply sloped locations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher construction costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid building in these areas.
<p>Waterways - Protecting waterways from pollutants involves controlling direct discharges and maintaining vegetative stream buffers, also known as "riparian buffers."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of potential public recreation areas. • Threats to important bird, fish and wildlife habitats. • Increased erosion due to flooding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent soil erosion to avoid sedimentation of creeks and drainageways. • Work with soil conservation authorities and farmers to keep animals out of streams. • Consider areas along creeks and drainageways for public greenways. • Minimize runoff of pesticides, grease and industrial wastes. • Minimize direct runoff from parking lots. • Require buildings and paving to be setback from creek banks and significant drainageways. • Control the peak rates of storm water runoff from development to avoid increased flooding.
<p>Hydric Soils - Hydric soils, often located in wetland areas, have a shallow depth to the seasonally high water table.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flooded basements. • Disturbance of natural drainage and groundwater recharge. • Poor foundation stability. • Failed on-lot septic systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to enforce local, state and federal wetland regulations. • Place on-lot septic systems and buildings outside these areas. • Waterproof basements of existing buildings. • Carefully design all facilities.
<p>Wetlands - Areas delineated as wetlands due to soils, depth to bedrock, and presence of certain plant life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flooding. • Loss of wildlife habitat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory setbacks from wetland boundaries.

- Amend subdivision ordinances in Pike and Colebrookdale townships to require developers to follow the four-step DCNR Growing Greener approach to subdivision design.

Steep slopes, floodplains and wetlands are usually noted on the site plans. But little consideration is usually given to other elements like a grand oak tree, a wildflower meadow, an old apple orchard, and other features that can be preserved to help maintain rural character. By conducting a more intensive analysis of the site, developers should be able to achieve adequate

densities without sacrificing these environmental amenities. The following four steps are a sequential approach towards more conservation-oriented design based on concepts originated by the Natural Lands Trust and endorsed under the Pennsylvania DCNR's Growing Greener initiative.

- a) *Identify Primary and Secondary Conservation Areas* - First, identify primary conservation areas such as sensitive natural areas: steep slopes over 15%, 100-year floodplains, hydric soils, streams and their buffers, and habitats of rare, threatened and endangered species. Other conservation areas may include scenic views, locally important vegetation, unique geologic features and wet soils, among other areas.
 - b) *Identify Locations for Development* - Next, locate potential development areas which include the remaining land left over after the primary and secondary conservation areas are identified. Carefully consider siting new homes with views of the open space areas. Reduce the lot sizes to accommodate for the number of homes that would have been originally provided under conventional development.
 - c) *Layout Roads and Trails* - Show a road alignment that would most efficiently access all new homes. Also consider developing trails that could link residents with each other and with the open space areas.
 - d) *Delineate Lot Lines* - The final step involves delineating the boundaries of each lot, a step often done first in traditional design.
- Establish stream corridor buffer zoning regulations that mandate stricter setbacks from perennial streams designated by the PA DEP as "Exceptional Value" or "High Quality".

Floodplain ordinances are designed to limit property damage from flooding. However, floodplain ordinances typically regulate construction, not paving and other soil disturbances. Zoning amendments should be adopted to prohibit construction, soil disturbance or removal of natural vegetation (except as part of crop farming) within 75 feet to 100 feet of the top bank of a perennial waterway designated High Quality. Exceptional Value waterways would warrant a setback of 100 feet to 125 feet . A variation is identified to allow the municipalities to adopt different regulations for different waterways within the region.

It is now widely recognized that stream side vegetation:

- Reduces water pollution from surface runoff.
- Controls the volume of sediment that reaches streams.
- Provides shade to help moderate water temperatures.
- Protects wildlife habitats.

In addition to regulations that require the maintenance of existing vegetation, the municipalities should encourage the planting of vegetative buffers along local waterways where none exist now. The County Conservation District and the Penn State Cooperative Extension Service are two sources of information on how to properly plant and maintain these buffers.

- Adopt wetland buffer zoning regulations.

State and Federal regulations provide mandatory protection for wetlands. To augment these regulations, the municipalities should prohibit paving or structures within 50 feet of delineated wetlands. If desired, municipalities can establish a minimum size wetland area, below which wetland buffer requirements will not apply or simply regulate all wetlands regardless of their size.

- Strengthen steep slope protection.

The three municipalities should amend their zoning regulations to:

- prohibiting new structures on slopes above 25%.
- increasing minimum lot size by 50% where principal buildings are proposed on slopes between 15% and 25%.
- restricting disturbance in these areas.

- Encourage farmers to use best management practices that help protect the natural environment, such as contour plowing, streamside fencing and others.

Best management practices are conservation measures farmers can use voluntarily to help protect the natural environment. Some of these techniques relate to manure management. A sampling of others include contour farming to reduce soil erosion and stream fencing to protect stream banks and stream waters from animals. Grants and loans are available to help implement best management practices. Municipal officials should work in coordination with conservation agencies to ensure farmers are fully aware of the need for these conservation measures.

- Restrict tree cutting during construction and require replanting of mature trees cut down to accommodate development.

The municipalities can save more trees by adopting zoning amendments that require developers to replant a tree each time a mature tree is cut down or severely damaged during construction. Tree cutting can also be minimized by restricting the cutting of trees during construction to those that are:

- Within 25 feet of an approved structure.
- Within 10 feet of a vehicular cartway.
- Within 10 feet of an approved storm water detention basin, paved area, driveway or on-lot sewage system.

- Within a utility right-of-way.
- Dead or posing a clear danger to a structure, utility or public improvement.
- An obstruction to vehicular site distance.

While none of these regulations would apply to forestry operations, the municipalities can prohibit clear cutting of more than one acre and prohibit it on very steep slopes and along waterways.

- Adopt zoning regulations to protect designated scenic road corridors.

Scenic roads regulations protect community character by preserving views of significant natural and man-made landscapes for the benefit of both tourists and residents. Scenic roads include roadways that offer picturesque views of the surrounding countryside. Other roads are scenic in themselves because they are narrow, winding, nearly covered by a tree canopy or lined by an attractive stone wall. Boyertown, Colebrookdale and Pike should consider preparing a Scenic Roads map that prioritizes scenic road segments for inclusion in a scenic roads overlay zoning district. Within the scenic road overlay district, the municipalities would:

- Increase setback requirements from the scenic road right of way.
- Require preservation of vegetation along the scenic road.
- Allow flag lots so development lots can be created behind roadside natural features.
- Allow narrower lot widths where lots are created a significant distance behind the minimum setback line.
- Limit access points on to the scenic road by encouraging shared driveways, where feasible.
- Create incentives to encourage conservation subdivisions with roadside open space instead of traditional subdivision design.
- Require parking to be behind structures or heavily screened with a landscaped buffer.
- Prohibit billboards and strictly limit other signs.
- Limit road widening, realignment, complete repaving, speed limit increases or other improvements that will make the road an attractive shortcut for through traffic.
- Ensure road maintenance and roadside tree trimming are carried out in a manner appropriate to the scenic road.

Agricultural Preservation

Continued new home construction in the Pike-Colebrookdale-Boyertown region reflects the community’s attractiveness as a place to live. Selling land for development also provides revenue for people – often older people, whose main financial asset for retirement is their real estate. However, as land is lost to development, there is a danger that growth will change the area by slowly but steadily displacing its rural character.

People often think residential development pays for itself by expanding the tax base. In reality, all but the most expensive homes typically create a demand for schools and other public services that exceeds the tax revenues these new homes generate. Public school expenses are the main cause of this negative fiscal impact. Because they result in positive fiscal impacts, farmland and other open spaces help offset the budget shortfalls that new homes create. In the words of the American Farmland Trust, farms save money because “cows don’t go to school”.

Productive farmland is usually physically well-suited to development. The monetary value of local farmland for new homes and the difficult economics of family farming continue to reduce agriculture throughout Berks County. As a counter to these trends, the following recommendations identify ways to preserve more farmland and sustain the viability of agriculture in Colebrookdale and Pike townships.

- Encourage more landowners to permanently preserve their farmland.

Using County and State funds, Berks County has preserved development rights to over 300 farms encompassing in excess of 36,300 acres of farmland since the Pennsylvania Farmland Preservation Program began in 1989. Within the Boyertown-Colebrookdale-Pike area, Berks County has acquired development rights to only two properties, and the Berks Conservancy to only five additional properties. Legally binding easements that run with the land are the single most effective way of keeping farmland in permanent open space. Pike and Colebrookdale townships need to focus on providing more information to local landowners on the benefits of farmland preservation easements.

- Establish an Agricultural Security Area in Pike Township.

The Pike Township Board of Supervisors should establish an agricultural security area, as Colebrookdale Township has done. Berks County will acquire farmland development rights only if the land owner is part of an agricultural security area. Pike landowners now part of agricultural security areas are actually part of agricultural security areas established in nearby townships. Establishing its own agricultural security area will allow Pike landowners not adjacent to a neighboring municipality to also become eligible for the County’s farmland protection program.

- Keep public water and sewer service out of agricultural areas.

Farmland in this region is concentrated in Pike Township and the areas of Colebrookdale Township designated on the Future Land Use map as Rural Preservation and Low Density Residential. Every effort should be made to keep public water and public sewer service out of these vicinities to ensure they do not become suburbanized. Public water and sewer service in desirable communities like Pike and Colebrookdale opens up the potential for development densities totally out of character with rural areas.

- Ensure zoning regulations allow adequate opportunities for farm-based businesses.

Colebrookdale and Pike should ensure their zoning regulations permit farmers a variety of opportunities to earn supplemental income. Uses such as custom furniture construction, farm equipment repair, tool sharpening and others may be appropriate provided they are restricted to five non-resident employees. Corn mazes, pick your own pumpkins, horseback riding, bed & breakfast uses and roadside produce stands are other examples, provided regulations are in place to properly limit the magnitude of the activity.

- Consider the feasibility of transfer of development rights (TDR) in Colebrookdale Township.

Several Maryland counties and a growing number of eastern Pennsylvania municipalities have used transfer of development rights (TDR) to preserve farmland and environmentally sensitive areas. TDR involves the right to develop a certain number of additional homes beyond that permitted by the underlying zoning if development rights are purchased from a landowner in a “sending area” (usually a farming or conservation area). TDR compensates landowners who sells some or all of their development rights to a landowner in a “receiving area”, an area with sufficient water and sewer service to accommodate growth.

TDR and any variation of TDR requires an extensive administrative structure to set up program rules and monitor and record transactions. An understanding of the local real estate market and promotional effort to ensure local residents understand and support a TDR program are other prerequisites for success. Some municipalities that have adopted TDR have been unsuccessful in implementing it.

The question is whether TDR is desirable in the Boyertown-Colebrookdale-Pike region. If in the future, each of the three municipalities retains its own separate zoning ordinance, TDR would only be feasible within Colebrookdale Township. This is because: a) Pike Township does not have the public sewers needed to accommodate additional densities in a receiving area; and b) TDR across municipal lines typically (such as between Pike and Colebrookdale) adds another layer of complexity unless both municipalities are cooperating under a joint zoning ordinance. If the three municipalities decide in the future to establish a joint zoning ordinance that facilitates TDR across municipal lines, a fundamental inequity still exists in the Boyertown-Colebrookdale-Pike area. Pike is in a separate school district from Colebrookdale and Boyertown. Thus preserving more open space through a transfer of density from Pike to Colebrookdale or Boyertown would create a fiscal benefit for the Oley Valley School District at the expense of the Boyertown School District, which would have to assume the fiscal burden of increased densities.

Under either its own zoning ordinance or as part of a joint zoning ordinance, Colebrookdale may wish to explore the possibility of TDR strictly within its own municipality. Colebrookdale would be a natural fit for TDR because the Township has rural areas that deserve protection and more urbanized segments that can accommodate additional densities. But as an area-wide

approach to preserving open space by transferring densities across the region, TDR does not seem viable in the Pike-Colebrookdale-Boyertown region as a whole.

- Strengthen zoning setbacks between agricultural and residential zoning districts.

For new homes built in agricultural areas, Pike and Colebrookdale could require a notice to the purchaser that he or she is buying a home in an agricultural district and should expect some nuisances from nearby routine farm operations. However, the two townships should strive to separate new residential subdivisions from farms by requiring additional setbacks for residential subdivisions constructed in an area that borders a zoning district where farming is well established.

- Consider the feasibility of Pike Township and Colebrookdale Township buying agricultural preservation easements in addition to those that Berks County buys.

Many eastern Pennsylvania municipalities, especially in Bucks, Chester and Montgomery counties, have created special funds to acquire conservation easements on farmland and other open spaces. In the future, Colebrookdale and Pike may wish to set aside municipal tax revenues and/or revenues from a bond issue to buy farmland development rights in the same way Berks County does. Buying development rights rather than acquiring fee-simple title to the property will allow the two townships to preserve more land per dollar spent, without interfering with: a) current agricultural operations on-site; and b) the ability of the landowners to resell the land.

The two townships would be able to respond quicker than Berks County now does to the threat of imminent sale for development. In addition, Pike and Colebrookdale would not have to be bound by the County's minimum site size and soil productivity criteria in selecting farmland to preserve. Berks County has a waiting list of farm owners wanting to participate in the County's easement purchase program because the funds available do not meet demand. Companion easement purchase programs in Pike and/or Colebrookdale would allow more farmland to be permanently protected.

Historic Preservation

Historic preservation is important in the Boyertown-Colebrookdale-Pike area. Within the three municipalities, there are eleven properties on or deemed eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Many other historic resources are not officially recognized statewide but have local significance. The following are ways to conserve the area's historic resources short of creating formal historic zoning districts, which usually require historic architectural review boards to approve most types of exterior building changes.

- Identify a local organization in the region that may be interested in working with the Berks County Conservancy to seek formal recognition of more historic properties in the three municipalities.

- Promote the donation of historic facade easements (and associated tax advantages) to preserve key historic structures in the same way as agricultural easements are sold.
- Expand local participation in the Pennsylvania Blue Markers Program. (The Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission will fund Blue Markers for sites of statewide significance. Blue Markers for locally significant sites must be funded locally.)
- Install historically appropriate welcome signs at key gateways to Pike, Colebrookdale and Boyertown, plus villages like Pikeville and Lobachville.
- Work with the Berks Conservancy and/or others to prepare a design guidelines pamphlet identifying the essential do's and don'ts of proper historic rehabilitation.
- Reflect the historic qualities of the area in any future improvements to sidewalks, lighting and other public improvements in Boyertown Borough.
- Strengthen sign regulations in village areas and countryside areas to distinguish between signs permitted there and those permitted in highway commercial areas.
- Prohibit internally illuminated freestanding signs, review billboard regulations to ensure maximum size and setback standards are appropriate, and establish specific regulations for portable signs.
- Adopt delay of demolition regulations and require zoning hearing board approval for demolition of historic structures (as designated as historic on the Berks Conservancy's inventory or some refinement of that list).
- Allow certain uses within historic properties that would otherwise be prohibited in residential areas (e.g. bed and breakfast, small crafts sales, small office use).

Borough Revitalization

While municipal officials welcome environmentally responsible business, Pike Township is more focused on retaining its rural environment than on creating the road and utility infrastructure needed to lure substantial business investment. As a more developed municipality, Colebrookdale has significant highway frontage along Route 100, Route 73, and Route 562. Properties along these roads provide many desirable locations for commerce and industry. Colebrookdale's major challenge in this regard is to manage the growth of its business sector to prevent unplanned strip development.

As a small urbanized center with an active revitalization movement, Boyertown is the focus of economic development efforts in the region today. Like many older Pennsylvania boroughs, Boyertown's role as a regional business center has declined in the face of the malls, small shopping

centers and office parks that have come with post-World War II suburbanization. Within the past year, the newly-formed Building a Better Boyertown (BBB) group (in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Downtown Center) has led local residents and business persons in formulating a vision plan leading to specific revitalization projects that form the organization’s agenda for action.

A healthy business district in the Borough should be viewed as critical to the general Boyertown region. The Pennsylvania Downtown Center has listed the following benefits from a thriving downtown:

- Spurs business development
- Creates jobs
- Increases occupancy rates
- Draws investors
- Reflects history
- Utilizes existing infrastructure
- Reaffirms commitment by local leaders
- Increases the local tax base
- Stimulates housing
- Fights sprawl
- Rehabilitates empty buildings
- Promotes civic pride
- Increases community involvement
- Benefits adjacent neighborhoods

The following recommendations are designed to support BBB and identify ways the Borough government and others can assist in implementing vital revitalization actions.

- Work with Building a Better Boyertown and the Borough’s new part-time Main Street Manager to establish a State-designated Main Street district based on an action agenda that incorporates the following elements:
 - Enhance fundraising for BBB by establishing strong partnerships with Borough Council and key local stakeholders.
 - Create a logo and a marketable image for BBB and Boyertown’s revitalization.
 - Sponsor promotional/community events to raise money for BBB.
 - Develop an inventory and mapping data base of properties in the downtown.
 - Conduct a parking survey and analysis to understand this component in-depth.
 - Establish recruitment targets that will fit the Borough’s commercial niche and not try to compete directly with Wal-Mart.
 - Establish a business incentive package that will aid in targeted recruitment.
- Try to qualify Boyertown Borough for the new State Elm Street program, which is designed to fund revitalization improvements in neighborhoods adjacent to a community’s commercial core.
- Seek Main Street program and Elm Street program grant monies to help fund commercial facade rehabilitation and housing rehabilitation.
- Use the Route 73 and Route 562 intersection as the core area for improving crosswalks, sidewalks, curbs, street lights, street trees, and related streetscape/traffic calming improvements. (See illustrative examples on the following pages.)

- Target the recruitment of office uses to existing and future vacancies because of their ripple effect on the local economy and high proportion of employees to floor space.
- Prohibit first floor residential uses on properties that front on Route 73 and Route 562 in downtown Boyertown so that potential business investment is not squeezed out of prime commercial space.
- Enhance the appearance of the pedestrian walkways in and out of the Inner Core public parking lot to strengthen the connection between that parking area and downtown.
- To promote a walkable downtown, incorporate a dedicated four-way, “pedestrian only” cycle into the traffic signal at Route 73 and Route 562.

Graphic: Streetscape Improvement Concept - Route 73 Looking West

Graphic: Streetscape Improvement Concept - Route 562 Looking North

Transportation

Transportation in the Boyertown-Colebrookdale-Pike region refers mainly to vehicular circulation since the area does not have regular bus services or a passenger rail line. Municipal and regional officials need to coordinate road improvements with planning for future land uses. This is the best way to ensure the area's road system continues to move people and goods efficiently between centers of activity. Road and intersection improvements made without considering future land uses can attract unwanted traffic and lead to unplanned sprawl. The following recommendations focus on maintaining traffic safety and improving vehicular circulation. Ideas are also included to enhance pedestrian and bicycle circulation.

- Control the design of new access points onto Route 73, Route 562 and Route 100.

As Boyertown revitalizes and Colebrookdale continues to grow, more planning will be needed to minimize traffic congestion and maintain traffic safety on Route 73, Route 562 and Route 100. Because these thoroughfares are State Roads, PennDOT controls all applications for new curb cuts. Through zoning and subdivision regulations, the municipalities' roles are to regulate the uses permitted along these roads and regulate the way properties are subdivided and developed. The following are guidelines for managing traffic access onto major roads:

- Require rear or side driveways where practical to reduce the number of mid-block turning movements on to major roads. This is particularly effective where traffic from roadside development can be funneled onto side roads that intersect the main road at a signalized intersection.
 - Encourage adjacent non-residential uses to share interconnected parking area and utilize common driveways. This will reduce curb cuts and allow people to visit more than one location without re-entering the main road.
- Implement more road and intersection improvements in Colebrookdale with the help of revenues from traffic impact fees.

Colebrookdale Township developed a traffic impact fee ordinance that requires developers to fund the cost of roadway improvements based upon the number of trips that the proposed development is expected to generate to offset the costs of increasing traffic on Township roadways. The Township has initiated an update to its Roadway Sufficiency Analysis (as part of the Act 209 of 1990 Legislation regarding Traffic Impact Fees) to determine what improvements are required based upon future traffic conditions. The Capital Improvement Plan for which Colebrookdale Township can utilize traffic impact fees includes traffic signals at the following intersections:

- North Reading Avenue and Montgomery Avenue
- Route 562 and Water Street
- Route 73 and Funk Road
- Route 73 and Ironstone Road

The update to the Roadway Sufficiency Analysis will identify roadway and intersection improvement needs comprehensively throughout Colebrookdale Township, including both state roads and municipally-owned roads. The Township will then have a full Capital Improvements Plan from which a new impact fee will be calculated.

- Pursue only those road and bridge improvements in Pike needed for safety reasons.

Pike’s policy is to continue maintaining its paved roads, including widening and otherwise improving those that need it. Current plans call for repaving portions of Hay Road and Keim Road, and repaving all of Bechtel Road. The Township also plans to continue paving selected trouble spots on currently unpaved roads, particularly narrow and steep areas. Examples in 2004 include sections of Hartline Road and Old State Road. Pike Township owns bridges on the following five roads:

- Mill Road
- Heiligs School Road
- Carl Road
- Marburger Road
- Hartline Road

The Mill Road Bridge has been closed for over ten years and will remain closed because a nearby convenient alternate route handles traffic conveniently. The Township is now repairing the Heiligs School Road Bridge, which has been closed since Fall 2003. Pike’s other three bridges are in good shape. As noted in the Background Reports, approximately one-third of the roadway miles in Pike are unpaved and remain that way by design in an attempt to preserve rural character. The challenge for the Township will be to maintain Pike’s countryside setting without compromising safe road conditions. While unpaved roads contribute to the Township’s rural environment, they can also create erosion and wash-out problems, particularly on steeper grades.

- Emphasize the north side of the Borough in Boyertown’s on-going repaving program.

Boyertown has no immediate plans to widen or realign any streets within the Borough. While the turning radii and sight distances at certain intersections could be better, it would be impractical to undertake these improvements given existing land use patterns. The only bridge in the Borough is in very good condition and will not require any repairs in the foreseeable future. Consequently, Boyertown focuses its street maintenance resources on repaving streets and alleys to maintain acceptable conditions. The focus of these efforts over the next several years will be on the north side of the Borough, where the Borough Engineer is now reviewing several street improvement and stormwater management projects.

- Continue monitoring the need for additional public parking in downtown Boyertown.

Motorists make extensive use of the Inner Core Lot, the public parking area in downtown Boyertown with approximately 120 spaces. In combination with on-street parking, this lot appears to be accommodating most of the demand for short-term parking downtown. However, the Inner Core Lot will suffice indefinitely as the Borough continues to revitalize and the downtown begins attracting more traffic. There are at least two options for Boyertown to consider to address this eventuality:

- Boyertown may wish to explore potential locations for a longer term parking lot to serve the downtown. Employees and others who envision being in town all or most of the day would park somewhat further away, thereby freeing up the prime downtown parking capacity for shoppers and other patrons who require only a short term stay. For instance, pending its future availability, the old railroad yard on the west side of South Washington Avenue could be ideally located for this purpose.
 - Alternatively, the Borough may wish to identify an underutilized parcel closer to the heart of the downtown. In the future, Boyertown could buy this site, demolish any existing structures and pave it over for downtown parking to augment the parking capacity available at the Inner Core Lot.
- Incorporate the following highway design guidelines, as contained in the Berks County Comprehensive Plan, into each of the three municipalities’ subdivision and land development ordinance.

Table 20
HIGHWAY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS AND RECOMMENDED DESIGN FEATURES

Classification	General Provisions	Right-of-Way Width (Feet)	Cartway Width
Arterial	S 35-55 MPH	80	S 48-52 feet
	S Some access controls to and from adjacent development		S 12' wide travel lanes with shoulders in rural area and curbing in urban areas
	S Encourage use of reverse and side street frontage and parallel access roads		
	S No parking		
Collector	S 25-35 MPH	60	S 34-40 feet
	S Some access controls to and from adjacent development		S 12' wide travel lanes with stabilized shoulders or curbing
	S Parking permitted on one or both sides		S 8' wide lanes provided for parking
Local	S 15-35 MPH	50	S 28-34 feet with stabilized shoulders or curbing
	S No access control to and from adjacent development		S Cartway widths can be reduced based on interior traffic patterns
	S Parking permitted on one or both sides		

Community Facilities and Services

In addition to municipal administration, Boyertown, Colebrookdale, and Pike each provide, or assist in providing, a variety of community services to their residents. Changing needs and rising costs affect the provision of all these services. The following policies will help coordinate the continued efficient delivery of service related to emergency management (police, fire and ambulance), public water and sewer, education, and parks and recreation.

Police, Fire and Rescue

- Continue the following practices that support police, fire and rescue operations in the three municipalities:
 - S Sustain municipal support for the police departments in Boyertown Borough and Colebrookdale Township, and continue working with the Pennsylvania State Police to maintain adequate coverage in Pike Township.
 - S Periodically re-assess the desirability of forming a regional police force in the greater Boyertown area.
 - S Maintain municipal contributions to the area's volunteer fire companies and continue the mutual assistance agreements in effect among neighboring fire companies.
 - S Continue to support the Boyertown Lion's Club Ambulance Service (which serves Boyertown Borough, Colebrookdale Township and elsewhere), the Bally Community Ambulance Service (which serves Colebrookdale Township), and the ambulance services connected with the fire companies in Oley Township and Earl Township (which serve Pike Township).

Public Water and Sewer Service

- Coordinate public sewer and water facilities planning with the Future Land Use Plan that is the heart of this Joint Comprehensive Plan.

To help prevent sprawl and assist in conserving rural areas, do not extend public water and sewer services beyond the growth area implicit in the Future Land Use Plan. This growth area includes the locations encompassed within the following Future Land Use categories:

- S LDR - Low Density Residential
- S MDR - Medium Density Residential

- S GR - General Residential
- S VC - Village Commercial
- S TC - Town Center
- S GC - General Commercial
- S PBD - Planned Business Development
- S I - Industrial

The following Future Land Use categories are outside of the growth area:

- S LDR - Low Density Residential
- S RP - Rural Preservation

All of Boyertown Borough is within the recommended growth area and all of Pike Township is outside of it. As shown on the Future Land Use Plan (page 85), the boundary between the growth area and locations outside of the growth area runs through Colebrookdale Township. The Berks-Montgomery Municipal Authority should not extend sewage lines out beyond this boundary. Colebrookdale should revise its Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan to reflect this boundary. Then the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will have an updated plan to consult in evaluating future requests for new sewage capacity. In similar fashion, the Boyertown Water Authority should not extend its public water service out beyond the recommended growth area.

- Try to make sure on-lot septic systems are adequate in rural areas.

All of Pike and much of Colebrookdale rely upon on-lot septic systems. Public education is important to ensure residents understand how to properly care for these systems. Most property owners should pump these systems at least once every three years or their drain field may need to be replaced. Some municipalities with severe problems have adopted ordinances requiring septic tank owners to show proof that they have pumped out their systems in the last three years. Pike and/or Colebrookdale may wish to consider this approach.

Education

- Factor school district impacts into land use decisions.

People often mistakenly believe that residential development provides a net revenue gain to their local school district. Study after study has shown the opposite is true for all but the most expensive, high-end homes. The average annual cost of educating the public school children that result from a new home almost always exceeds by far the school tax revenue generated by that new home. That is why conserving land in open space saves school district expenses (“cows don’t go to school”) and why commercial and industrial development help the school district balance its budget (non-residential growth produces school taxes but no school students).

Parks and Recreation

- Help determine the viability of the proposed Old Dutchman Trail.

As described in the Background Reports, the Old Dutchman Trail is a 3.8-mile rail-to-trail project proposed on the former Colebrookdale Branch between the Boyertown-Colebrookdale municipal boundary and Washington Township via Bechtelsville Borough. A feasibility study completed in 1996 for this project recommended the following action steps to begin implementing this proposed trail:

- Form an organization to administer development and maintenance of the trail.
- Negotiate right-of-way agreements with the railroad and adjacent property owners.
- Seek funding through grants, donations, corporate sponsors and municipal contributions.
- Develop a design scheme and a phasing plan for construction.
- Proceed to phased construction.

Because development has encroached on portions of the this trail's right-of-way, trail enthusiasts in the greater Boyertown-Colebrookdale area should closely assess on the status of this project. Alternative layouts could be examined to bypass areas where right-of-way issues cannot be resolved. The 1996 feasibility study concluded that "...the Old Dutchman Trail has the potential to become a well used and highly appreciated recreation facility." The project could be an exciting opportunity to create a multi-purpose walking-biking trail in municipalities where no such facility now exists.

- Continue community use of recreation facilities owned by the Boyertown Area School District and the Oley Valley School District.

Youth sports leagues that serve the residents of Boyertown Borough and Colebrookdale Township rely heavily on the indoor and outdoor recreation facilities available at various Boyertown Area School District buildings. To a lesser extent, Oley Valley School District buildings offer these same uses to residents of Pike Township and the other municipalities in that school district. These practices are consistent with the "school-park concept", the idea that schools are a tax-funded community resource that should be open for use beyond the normal school day.

- Establish a community park in Colebrookdale Township.

The Background Reports note that the Boyertown-Colebrookdale-Pike region as a whole has less than half of the public active recreation area recommended by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA). For a region of nearly 11,000 people, the parkland deficit relative to NRPA guidelines is 67 acres. Boyertown Borough owns and operates the only municipally-owned controlled active recreation site in the three-community region. Pike residents are fortunate to be located near Oley Township's well-developed parkland. Given its growing population and absence of Township parkland, it is time for Colebrookdale to begin focusing

on acquiring and developing land for a multi-use community park. The school-park concept does not relieve municipalities of their obligation to help meet their own recreation needs. This is especially true in areas where community use of school facilities is creating scheduling conflicts for scholastic teams and leading to overuse of field turf.

Energy Conservation

Americans need to conserve energy to reduce our dependence on foreign oil and help maintain clean air. At the municipal level, heating buildings, lighting streets, and operating vehicles are major energy costs. The following are recommendations on how local governments can help address these concerns.

- Try to reduce energy consumption as part of municipal operations.
 - Examine ways to conserve energy in each municipally-owned building.
 - Use energy-efficient street lighting.
 - Where possible, use reflective devices instead of street lights to identify hazards to motorists.
- Encourage land developers to use energy saving site design techniques.
 - Orient building to take maximum advantage of a southern exposure.
 - Use evergreen landscaping where practical on the northern side of a building to protect against Winter winds.
 - Emphasize deciduous landscaping on the southern side of a building to allow the sun to provide warmth in Winter, while providing shade in Summer.
- Heighten public awareness and education about energy conservation.
 - Provide tips on low-cost energy conservation and water conservation methods in any municipal newsletter.
 - Encourage lower income residents to take advantage of federal and State grant programs to weatherize their homes and to reduce the use of heating fuel.
 - Promote bicycling and walking, especially in urbanized areas like Boyertown.