





current neighborhood conditions

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## quality of life in State College

Despite its small geographic size, State College is a lively university community situated at the center of a beautiful region with many urban, suburban and rural amenities. The Borough's population is just over 42,000 residents, most of whom are highly educated, engaged in the community and have much pride for both the achievements of the municipality and the University. The Borough also boasts a series of historic and well-established neighborhoods in which long-time homeowners and student neighbors live among each other.

According to the National Citizen's Survey (NCS) in 2012, residents of the Borough are quite satisfied with the quality of the community and the availability of services. The National Citizen's Survey polls residents about their feelings of inclusiveness in the community, their satisfaction with its quality of life, level of service for public services among other things. Borough residents have consistently reported 'above average' satisfaction with these qualities of the community

when compared to the responses from peer communities. In the 2012 NCS, 85% of residents surveyed rated the quality of life in the Borough as 'excellent' or 'good.' In this survey, residents reported that three of the most favorable qualities about the Borough are the educational opportunities, the ease of walking, and the quality of the natural environment. The survey reported that citizens are engaged with their neighbors, as 95% provided help to friends or neighbors and a majority volunteered their time with a local group or activity. Additionally, residents gave favorable ratings to almost all local government services, rated the quality of roads and other public facilities very high and a majority indicated that they agreed with the overall direction being taken by the Borough.

While there are many community characteristics that receive high ratings, the survey indicated that State College's residents continue to report that there is room to improve shopping opportunities, the amount of public parking and



*Many of the Borough's neighborhoods are very walkable and bikeable.*



*The Borough's neighborhoods feature a mix of housing types and styles.*

the availability of quality affordable housing. Many of these strengths and opportunities were reinforced in conversations with individual neighborhoods throughout this planning process.

Despite the economic recession of the 2000's, State College's population has continued to grow steadily over time and residents in this area remained fairly well-insulated from cuts in employment and housing foreclosures associated with the last decade. With Penn State University, the healthcare system and local government as the largest employers in the Centre Region, residents of State College did not feel the impacts of the recession as intensely as other communities in Pennsylvania. Additionally, residents have continued to showcase their loyalty to State College and to maintaining its high quality of life as controversial situations have impacted both the University and the community.

The Borough is the most densely populated of the six

municipalities that comprise the Centre Region. Additionally, it is the only municipality that does not have any active farming or agricultural operations and, with few exceptions, land in the Borough is essentially built out. There are sites within the Borough's downtown, commercial areas, and higher-density residential areas that could be suitable for redevelopment activity.

In addition to this neighborhood plan, there are several other guides that will be consulted to help direct the future and growth of the Borough. In the fall of 2013, the Downtown Master Plan was adopted, which lays out a 20 year plan for Downtown State College. The successful implementation of these recommendations could result in the growth of the economy or employment that could help stabilize the Borough's neighborhoods and protect them from housing issues. The Borough also participates in the State College Land Area Plan and the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan, which illustrate how growth among the Centre Region



*Residents enjoy high quality services provided by the Borough of State College.*



*There are 115 acres of park space within the Borough of State College.*

abstract of  
people

In 2010 the population of State College was

**42,034 residents**

and 57.2% of these residents live in one of the Borough's neighborhoods.<sup>1</sup>

**62% bachelor degree**  
(or higher degree)

The 2011 estimated percent of residents that have achieved a degree in higher education.<sup>4</sup>

abstract of  
graduation  
cap

chart of age breakdown

Age of Residents (2010)

Under 18	5%
18-24	70.6%
25-34	9.5%
35-44	3.7%
45-64	6.5%
65 & up	4.7%

abstract of  
learning

**76% enrolled in  
school**

The 2011 estimated percent of residents currently enrolled in school. Of those, 210 were in Pre-K and Kindergarten, 1,300 in elementary or high school and 30,000 in undergraduate or graduate degrees.<sup>4</sup>

chart of employment characteristics

% of labor force employed in industries

- Education, healthcare, social services 38.7%
- Arts, entertainment, hotel, retail 33.2%
- Professional, Science, Management & Other Services 13.8%
- Ag, Construction, Manufacture, etc 7.9%
- IT, Real Estate, Public Admin 6.5%

Social Security & Retirement Income 16.6%  
of households

The majority of State College residents are employed in education, healthcare, and retail and hospitality.<sup>4</sup>

In the Fall of 2013 the enrollment at the University Park Campus of Penn State<sup>2</sup> was

**46,184 students**

Off-campus living has been increasing. In the Fall of 2012, approximately 32% of the enrolled student body lived in on-campus housing.<sup>3</sup>

**68% live off campus**

abstract of  
old main  
tower

abstract of  
little houses

## 12,610 occupied housing units

The 2010 Census reported 97% of the Borough's units were occupied and 3%, or 397 units, were vacant.<sup>1</sup>

*\*According to the 2010 Census Bureau, vacant units include year-round vacancies, seasonal homes or homes that are occupied on an intermittent basis. The Borough's Planning office has not verified the status of each of these units.*



Of the Borough's occupied housing units, 20% are owner-occupied and 80% are renter-occupied.<sup>1</sup>



In December of 2013, there were 305 single-family homes or duplexes that were registered as a student home in R-1 and R-2 Zoning Districts.<sup>5</sup>

## 305 student homes

Of the 13,000 total housing units, roughly 27% of these were single-unit structures and 73% were multi-unit structures.<sup>4</sup>

abstract  
of a  
house

abstract  
of an  
apart-

Housing is considered affordable when the sum of mortgage or rent, insurance and utilities does not exceed 30% of household income. In 2011 it was estimated that 26.2% of owners with a mortgage, 23% of owners without a mortgage, and 73% of renters were paying more than 30% of their household income on housing.<sup>4</sup>

The 2011 estimated median monthly housing costs for residents of State College Borough were:

\$1,852 own with mortgage

\$563 own free & clear

\$864 rent

In the 2012 National Citizen's Survey, residents were asked about ease of travel in State College. These represent the 'excellent' or 'good' responses.<sup>6</sup>



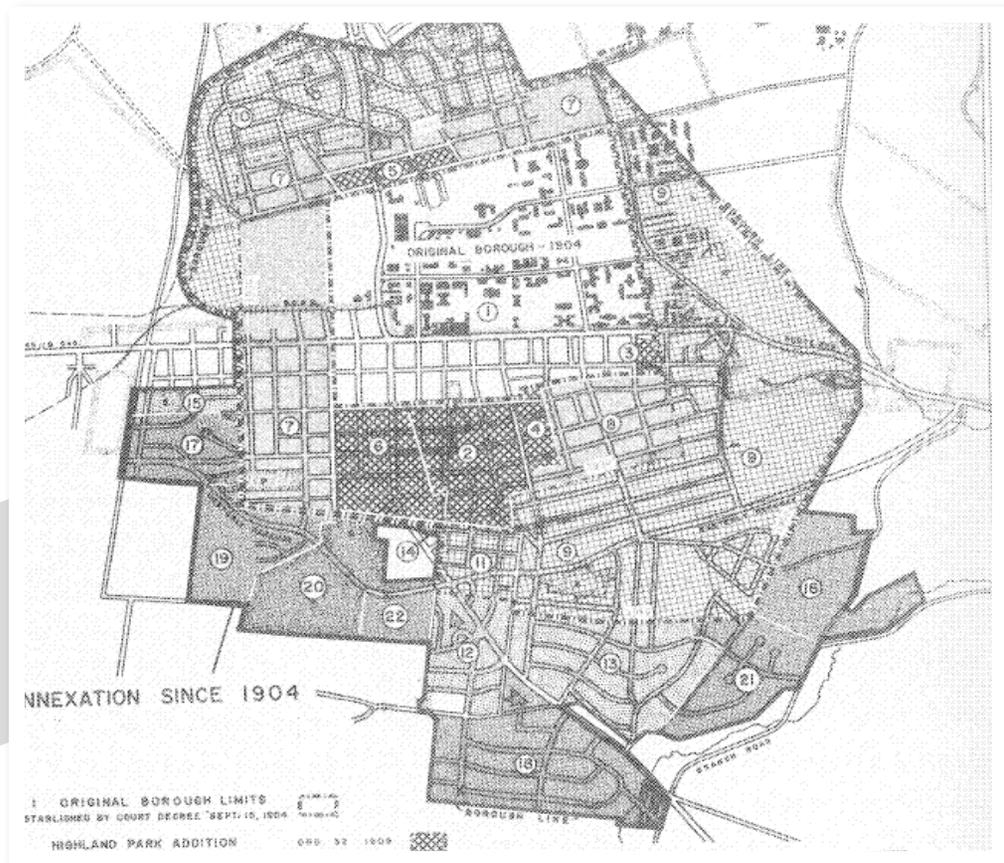
Additionally, the 2010 Census reported that 37% of residents walk to work, and the 2012 National Citizens Survey reported that 79% of residents polled had ridden a CATA Bus.<sup>4,6</sup>

## neighborhood development

Although the Borough was incorporated in 1896, the first official Borough boundary was established by court decree in September of 1904. It originally included the area that now makes up the core of main campus, the blocks along College and Beaver Avenues between Gill Street and Hetzel Street. The first annexations that brought land into the Borough took place between 1909 and 1917. These included the areas of the Holmes-Foster and Highlands neighborhoods between Gill and Garner Streets and the beginnings of College Heights along Park Avenue near Atherton Street.

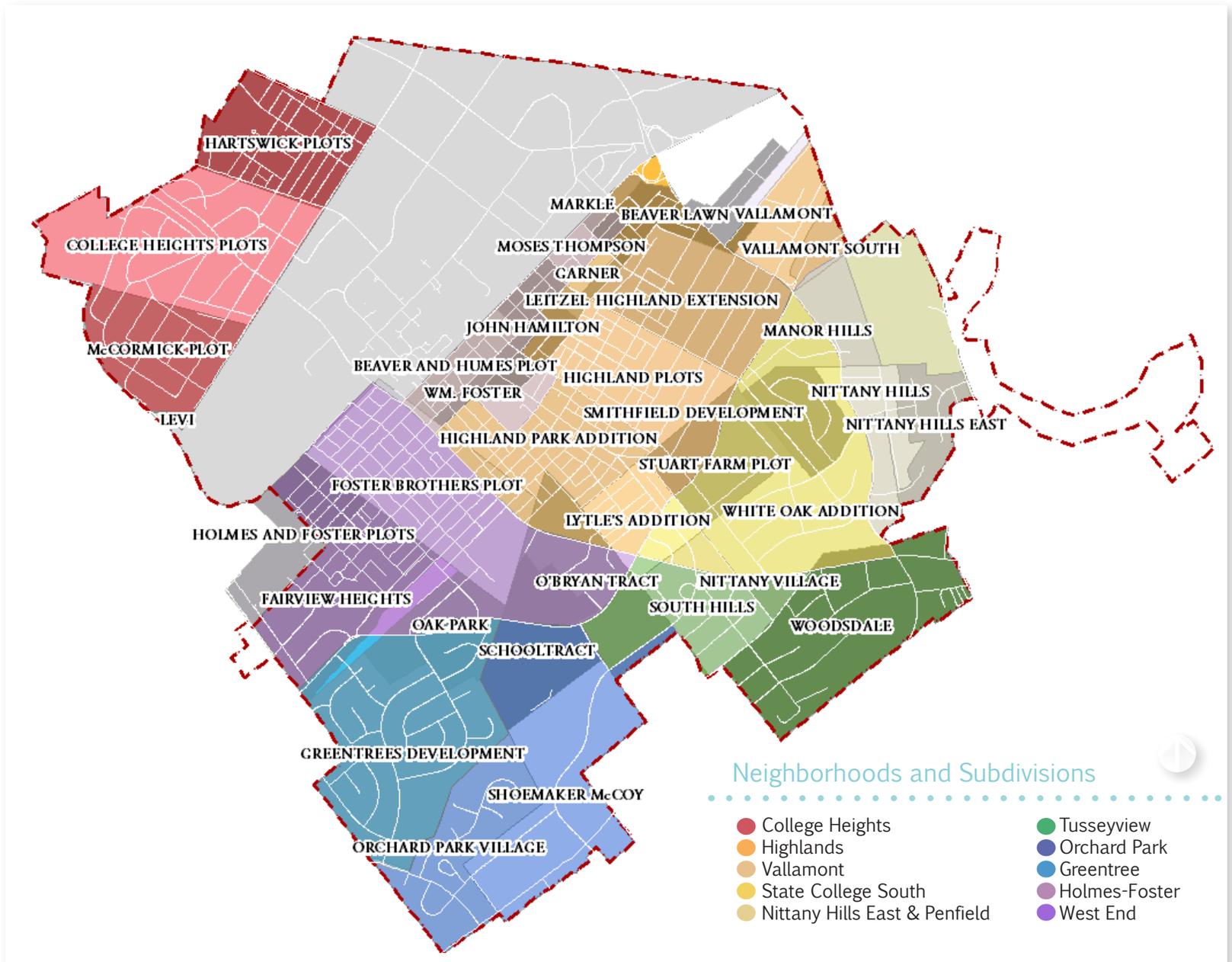
Additional annexations in the 1920s and 1930s officially brought most of the area of the College Heights, Holmes-Foster, Highlands and Vallamont neighborhoods and the northern portion of State College South into the Borough. Those annexations that took place through the 1950s included areas of the Borough that are today Nittany Hills East, Penfield, Tusseyview, and the State College High School properties. The illustration to the right was adapted from a historical document showing annexations through the end of the 1950s. Eight more annexations took place after this map was prepared, which included the land that is now the Greentree neighborhood, Orchard Park Subdivision and the Centre Hills Golf Course in 1969. Annexations in Pennsylvania virtually ended in the 1970s due to a change in the state constitution and a court case that determined how water and sewer service connections could be approved or denied.

Much of the Borough's housing development took place leading up to the years after World War II. Some of the last areas of the Borough to be built out include the Greentree neighborhood and the Nittany Hills East/Penfield area. According to the US Census Bureau, 66% of the Borough's housing stock was built before 1980, another 25% was built between 1980 and 2000, and only 9% has been built in the last 13 years.



*This illustration depicts annexations of land into State College Borough between 1904 and 1958. This illustration is adapted from a map of Borough Annexations in "Story of the Century" by Jo Chesworth.*

These maps help identify the Borough's historic growth pattern. Other resources, such as historic State College Area School District census and the US Census Bureau's Census Tracts help define how neighborhoods have grown and population has shifted. Today's neighborhood boundaries typically follow major roads, natural features, historic boundaries of subdivisions or boundaries named in neighborhood association charters and are characterized by their individual development patterns, age of housing stock, or other physical or social characteristics.



The varying shades of color on this map represent each subdivision in the Borough. Using the colors above to represent each neighborhood's boundaries, this map helps illustrate how State College's neighborhoods' have been shaped by subdivisions of land. For example, the varying shades of red within the boundaries of the College Heights neighborhood show that it was formed by the McCormick, College Heights and Hartswick subdivisions. One shade of blue within the Greentree neighborhood boundaries shows that the neighborhood was established by the Greentrees Development.

## land use

State College Borough includes a mix of residential, commercial, public, institutional, and recreational land uses. These land uses frequently appear as areas of mixed-use, or are well-integrated with each other in transitional areas of the Borough. As the [State College Land Use map on page 32](#) indicates, the land use of the Borough is different from that of the surrounding municipalities in several ways. The first is that the Borough contains many small lots rather than large tracts of land, and the uses of these lots within the Borough are much more mixed than in neighboring municipalities. Additionally, there are no longer any agricultural, manufacturing or industrial land uses within the Borough boundaries. Many farms and other agricultural operations are immediately adjacent to the Borough's northeast and southern edges.

The three land uses that account for the largest amount of land area in the Borough are residential, public/institutional

and recreational. As the Borough's residential density is near 10,000 persons per square mile, and much of the Borough's development took off as a result of the growth of Penn State University, it is not surprising that these land uses are so predominant. Penn State's University Park campus is located near the geographic center of the Borough and occupies a significant land area. Immediately adjacent to the southeast of campus is a successful mix of uses. This area, Downtown State College, includes high and medium density residential uses, retail and commercial uses, government buildings, libraries and educational uses, churches and even small recreational and park uses.

Moving away from the campus and downtown, into the Borough's neighborhoods, land use tends to become predominantly residential. There are a number of public and private schools, churches and public buildings scattered throughout the Borough's neighborhoods. Additionally,

photo of PSU academic building



*The Pennsylvania State University Campus is located in the center of the Borough.*

*Surrounding campus and downtown are many multi-family residences.*

small neighborhood parks, public open spaces, and regional recreational facilities are located within, or immediately adjacent to, each of the Borough's neighborhoods.

The least represented land use in the Borough is commercial. The [State College Land Use map on page 32](#) indicates that much of the commercial uses within the Borough are concentrated in Downtown and along South Atherton Street and University Drive. Small, local retailers, restaurants, offices and medical offices are situated in mixed use buildings Downtown. While stand alone commercial centers do exist in the Borough, they are relatively small and serve more of a neighborhood-based clientele, such as the Hamilton Avenue and Westerly Parkway Shopping Centers. Large, regional shopping centers, office parks, medical parks and other commercial uses are located just outside of the Borough in neighboring townships along North and South Atherton and along East and West College Avenue.

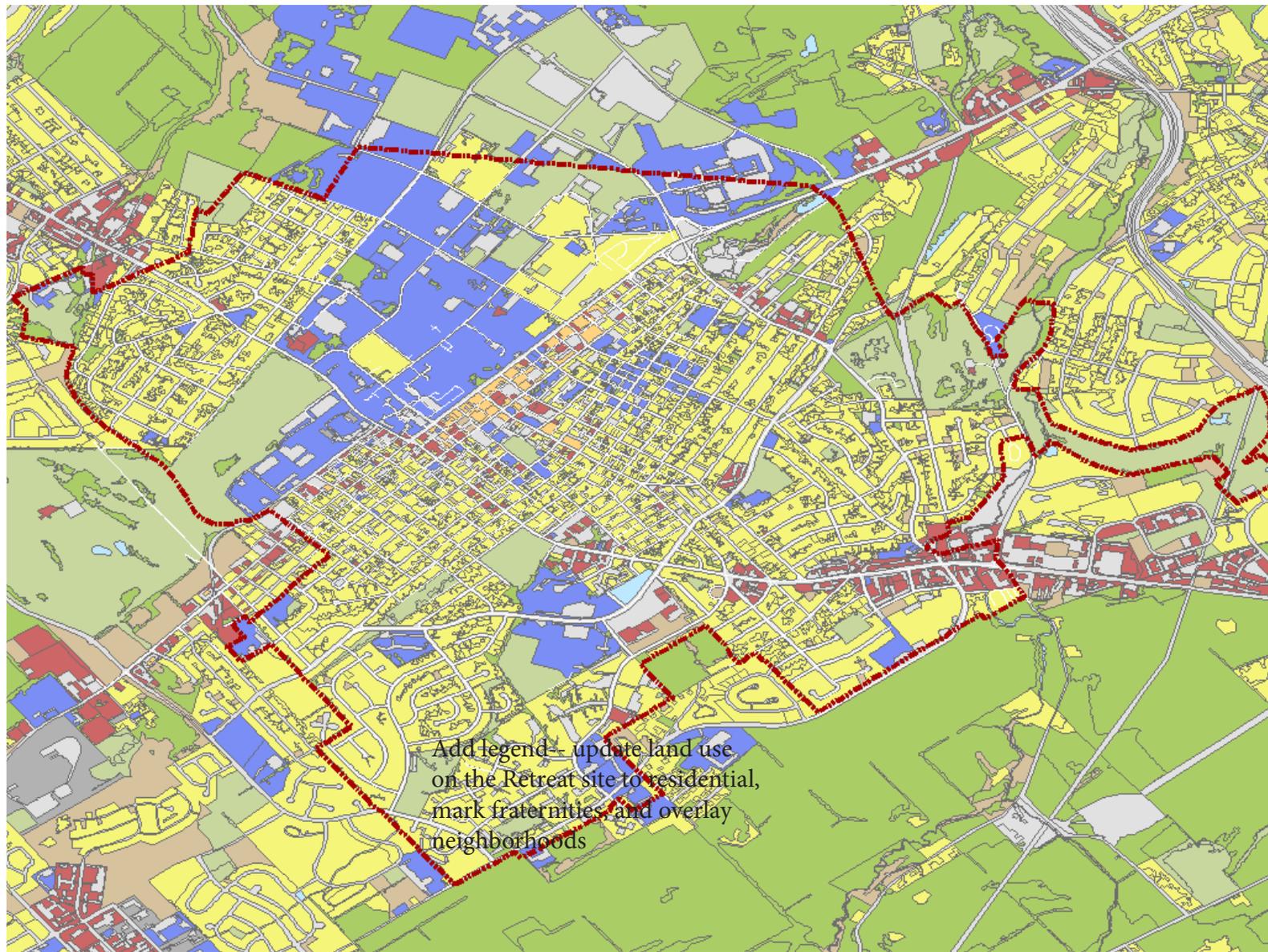
The Borough accounts for less than 5% of the Centre Region's land area, but is home to approximately half of the Region's population. Due to this population density, the location of core Penn State Academic buildings, cultural attractions, and the region's public high school all within the Borough, State College functions as the urbanized core of the Centre Region municipalities. Because the Borough and its neighboring municipalities are not only geographically linked, but also functionally and economically connected, it is important for each municipality to be aware of potential impacts to the region as a result of significant development or changes to land use patterns. As the [State College Land Use map on page 32](#) illustrates, the existing land uses near the Borough's boundaries are similar to those uses in adjacent municipalities. Because there is little change in the character of these land uses, it can be difficult to distinguish the location of these boundaries when traveling in and around the area.



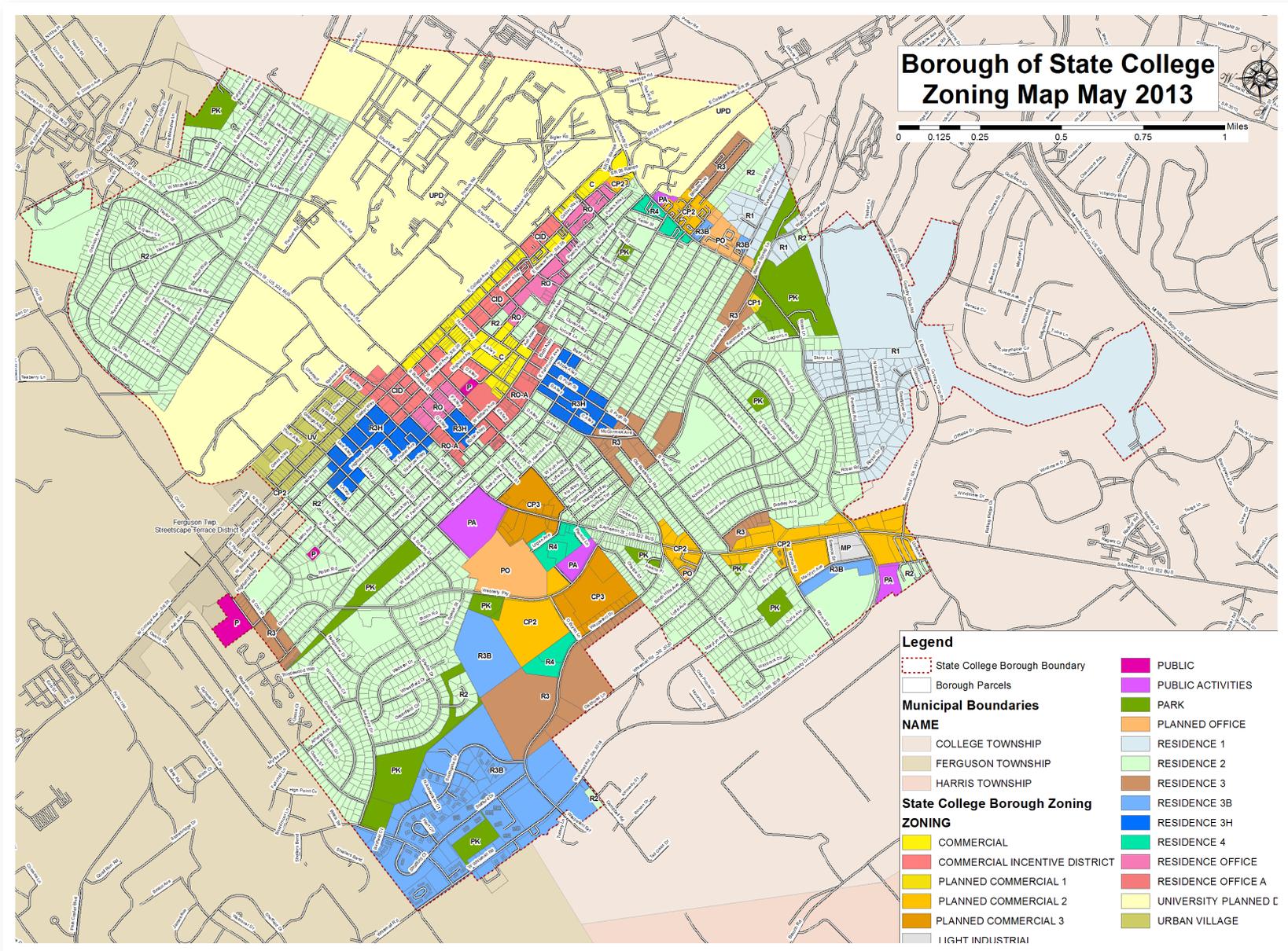
*The Borough's oldest neighborhoods are National Register Historic Districts.*



*Several small commercial centers are located in or near Borough neighborhoods.*



*This map shows the land use pattern of the Borough and its surrounding areas. Much of the Borough's land use is residential, with other major areas used for University and other school purposes as well as parks, recreation and open space. There are some small areas of commercial and mixed use development, but the most intense of these uses are located outside of the Borough.*



The map shows the locations of the Borough's Zoning Districts. A description of these districts can be found on page XX.

## zoning

State College Borough includes a mix of residential, commercial and mixed use and recreational zoning districts organized with the intention of upholding a safe, efficient and functional land use pattern for the Borough.

As depicted in the [State College Zoning map on page 33](#) the Borough's neighborhoods areas are primarily zoned for single family residences. These zoning districts provide some flexibility in the ability for single-family homes and structures to be converted to duplexes or apartments. However, for the most part, the character of a single-family structure is preserved in these zoning districts. Aside from the University Planned District, single-family residential zoning districts are the most common zoning designations in the Borough.

Several multi-family districts and transitional housing districts are located in the areas that border downtown, provide a transition in density within the Holmes-Foster and Highlands neighborhoods, and primarily make up the Orchard Park neighborhood area.

Most of the zoning districts which permit stand-alone commercial uses are located along arterial roadways such as Atherton Street, University Drive and Westerly Parkway. Other districts which permit commercial uses include those mixed-use districts located in neighborhood commercial centers and downtown.

Park and public area districts are scattered throughout the Borough. These districts help provide for open spaces for recreation and gathering, and are sometimes used as buffers between neighborhood boundaries or in areas where natural communities should be preserved.

A discussion of zoning typically results in an analysis of permitted uses, required yard depths, building heights and

other site design criteria and the Borough's zoning districts are typically referred to by their abbreviation. In order to help provide some clarity as to the general purpose of each of the Borough's Zoning Districts, and the types of uses permitted within them, a simple description of each is below. [The map of where these zoning districts are applied throughout the Borough is located on page 33.](#)

### Residential Districts

R-1

R-2

R-1 and R-2 districts are typically referred to as the "single family" districts and primarily permit one and two family homes with a majority of the lot area dedicated to open space.

R-3

R-3B

R-4

R-3, R-3B, and R-4 districts are multi-family housing districts in which residential dwellings with 2 or more units are typically located. This could include row homes, town homes, single-family conversions to apartments, rooming houses, and small or large apartment buildings.

R-3H

R-3H district is in areas in which historic housing is sometimes converted to rooming houses or apartment houses. This district includes additional provisions for building size and other requirements.

R-O

R-OA

R-O and RO-A are districts in which a mix of uses and dwelling types are permitted and are generally located in transitional areas where downtown transitions into a more traditional

neighborhood character. One of the characteristics of these zoning districts is that they permit a variety of office uses in addition to residential uses.

#### UV

UV is a district designed to promote the preservation of the mixed-use neighborhood character in a transitional area of town on the edge of downtown and campus. This district also includes standards for building size, orientation and facade character which are included in the Design Guidelines for Historic Properties and districts for new construction.

### Commercial Districts

#### C

#### CID

The C and CID districts are two areas in which nearly any land use is permitted in the Borough, and relatively high density, mixed-use developments are permitted. These districts also include incentives for exceptional building design and performance in exchange for increases in permitted density and other features. These districts are located within the core of the downtown area in order to promote density and mixed uses in this area.

#### CP-1

#### CP-2

#### CP-3

#### PO

The CP-1, CP-2, CP-3 and PO districts are planned commercial districts, usually in the form of shopping centers, small office buildings and mixed-use buildings. These districts permit varying degrees of commercial space, primarily along arterial streets. The CP-3 district is a newly created district with the goal to promote neighborhood-scale, mixed-use shopping centers in areas that are easily accessible by more populated neighborhoods.

### Other Districts

#### UPD

UPD, which stands for University Planned District, is the zoning district for The Pennsylvania State University campus. This district includes a series of Subdistricts that permit various campus functions and provide provisions for open space, parking and other requirements on a campus-wide basis. This district is applied in such a way that it crosses Borough Boundaries, and the ordinance provisions have also been adopted by neighboring College Township.

#### P

#### PA

#### PK

P, PA and PK are districts for parks, open spaces and public facilities. These districts primarily apply to parks, playing fields and other public open spaces, Borough-owned maintenance facilities, drainage fields and ambulance headquarters.

#### MP

MP is the Borough's Light Industrial Zone. This district permits operations such as warehousing and limited production activities. The application of this district, however, is not utilized to its full potential, and currently restaurants and commercial offices are located at this space.

## population in neighborhoods

The population in State College Borough according to the 2010 US Census is 42,034, with a residential density of just under 10,000 people per square mile. Residents living in the Borough’s neighborhoods account for just over 50% of this total population. The other half of the population resides on the Penn State University campus and in the downtown area.

The US Census Bureau uses several geographic areas to measure and display data about communities. The smallest of these areas are called census blocks. The Population Distribution map on page 37 depicts the allocation of population in the Borough’s neighborhoods based on these Census Blocks. As the map indicates, the Borough’s population tends to be most concentrated in Downtown State College, in the residential areas of the Penn State Campus, and in areas of the Borough’s neighborhoods immediately adjacent to downtown and campus.

### State College Population by Area

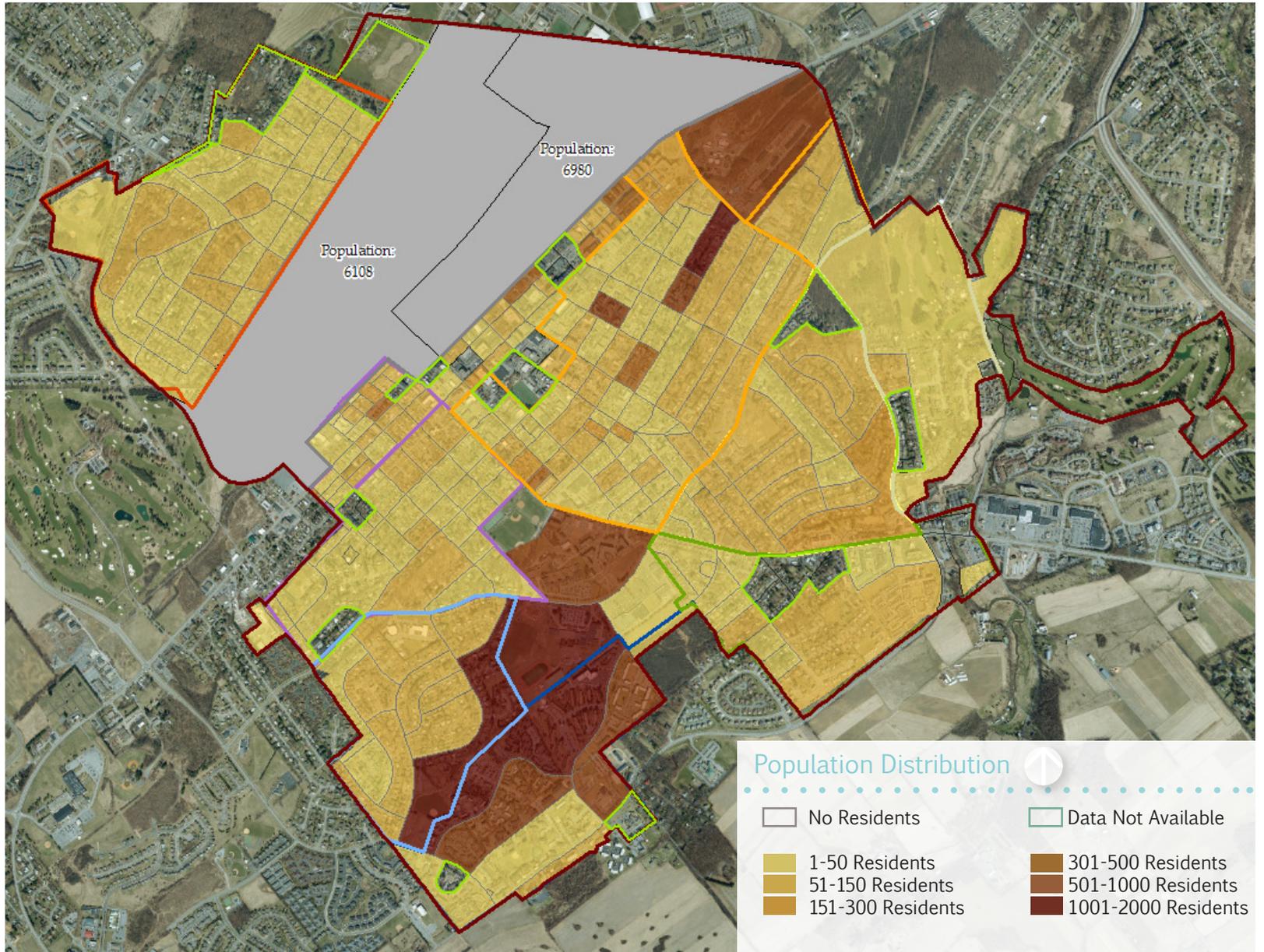
Borough Population (2010)	42,034
College Heights	1,839
Highlands	9,726
Vallamont	124
Nittany Hills East & Penfield	353
State College South	1,313
Tusseyview	995
Orchard Park	4,000
Greentree	923
Holmes-Foster	1,597
West End	2,324
Downtown	4,417
Penn State Campus	13,088
Other areas*	1,335

*\*This includes areas that are not located within neighborhood boundaries, such as apartment complexes on Bellaire Avenue and Plaza Drive.*

The Highlands neighborhood is the most populated of the Borough’s neighborhoods. This neighborhood is immediately adjacent to downtown and campus, and includes a diverse mix of apartments and rental houses, as well as single-family owner-occupied homes. Together, the Holmes-Foster and West End neighborhoods represent the second most populated neighborhood. Fewer large apartment buildings are located in the Holmes-Foster/West End area, but the northern part of this area does include a diverse mix of renter and owner-occupied housing units. Other areas that are home to a large percentage of the Borough’s population are not immediately adjacent to campus. For example, the Orchard Park neighborhood, made up almost exclusively of multi-family residences, and the area along University Drive where the University Terrace apartments are located both have fairly high resident populations.

When compared with the Borough’s [Land Use and Zoning maps on pages 32 and 33](#), the relationship between various types of land uses and the resulting residential density becomes clear. The same areas of the Borough in which there are dense residential populations, are typically the same areas in which zoning districts permit high-density, multi-family housing and a diverse mix of uses. Conversely, areas of the Borough in which population density is low are typically zoned for single-family residences, parks and other commercial or non-residential uses.

There is a relationship between areas of high population and the location of community services. High-density residential areas are located near the Borough’s commercial centers, both downtown and neighborhood commercial areas such as the Westerly Parkway Shopping Center. Additionally, many of the CATA bus routes provide frequent service access areas of the Borough in which there are large populations of residents.



*This map illustrates the population density of the Borough based on the US Census Bureau's system of blocks. These are the smallest geographic units used by the Census to record information. With the exception of campus, blocks with dark red colors are the most dense blocks, and the light yellow are the least dense. Those blocks with no color and no green outline are areas where there are not any residential units.*

## housing tenure

The US Census Bureau uses housing tenure to describe the owner-occupied or renter-occupied characteristic of the residential housing stock in the Borough. Additionally, the Borough's housing stock varies widely in terms of the type of housing units. According to the US Census Bureau, an individual housing unit can include a single-family home, one part of a duplex, a town home, mobile home, apartment unit, condominium, or an individual room that is occupied separate from other living spaces within a structure.

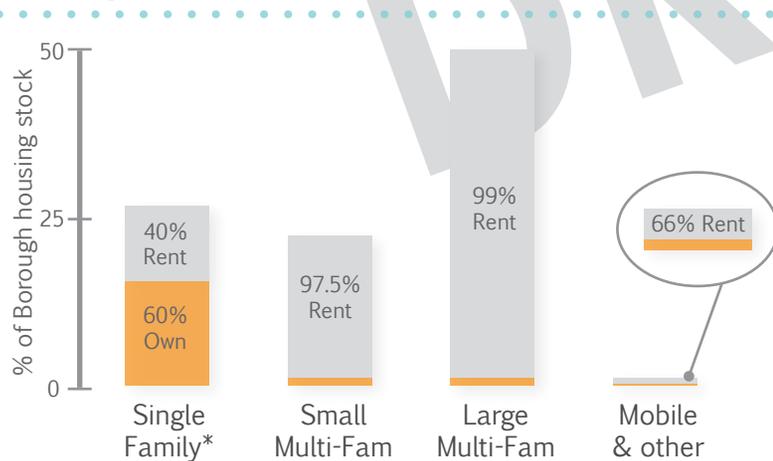
The Borough contains roughly 13,000 housing units. The chart below indicates that of these housing units, 27% are single-family homes or town homes, and roughly 72% are units in multi-family structures. The Borough experiences very few vacancies in the housing stock. In 2013, of the 13,000 housing units in the Borough, 97% are occupied. The three percent of the housing stock that is vacant includes

those homes that are only occupied part of the year, such as seasonal homes, tourist homes, or second homes.

Of the Borough's 12,610 occupied housing units, roughly 20% are owner-occupied, while the remaining 80% are renter-occupied. The housing characteristics of the Borough's neighborhoods vary widely in terms of their individual housing tenure and predominance of unit type. For example, some neighborhoods maintain nearly 95% of the housing stock as owner-occupied housing while others have nearly 90% renter-occupied housing units. Similarly, some neighborhoods are almost exclusively single-family housing, while others are primarily multi-family housing.

According to the US Census Bureau, approximately 94% of the Borough's housing units in which the owner lives, are single-family homes or town homes. Only 6% of the units in which an owner lives are multi-family units, such as condos. The type of housing units in which renters live are much more diverse. Of the renter-occupied units, it is estimated that 13% of the units are single-family homes, 25% are small apartment buildings, and the remaining 62% are mid-size to large apartment buildings. Less than 1% of the Borough's housing stock includes mobile homes and other unit types, and two-thirds of these housing types are renter-occupied.

Housing Tenure by Unit Type



\*Of the Borough's 13,000 housing units, 27% are single-family (attached or detached) or town homes, 21% are in small multi-family buildings, 51% are in large multi-family buildings, and less than 1% are in mobile homes and other types. For each unit type, the orange bar represents the percent owner-occupied and the grey bar percent renter-occupied.

The Rental Housing Characteristics map on page 40 indicates parcels for which the Centre Region Code Administration had a rental housing permit on file in November of 2013. Similar to the housing types for the Census Bureau, the Centre Region records the type of unit for which a permit is issued. This map illustrates the rental housing patterns across the Borough. Within downtown and in the neighborhood areas immediately surrounding the downtown and campus areas, the predominant rental housing type includes large and small apartment buildings. With the exception of the Orchard Park area and along University Drive, the rental characteristics

of the neighborhoods further from campus transition to smaller apartment buildings, rooming houses, single-family homes and individual apartments or rooms within an owner-occupied home.

The proximity to community amenities, historic architecture of many Borough neighborhoods, and the limited land area in which the Borough can grow all contribute to the high value of the residential housing stock in the Borough. The 2011 estimates by the US Census Bureau indicate that 74.3% of owner-occupied housing in the Borough is valued over \$200,000, with the median home value being \$268,600.

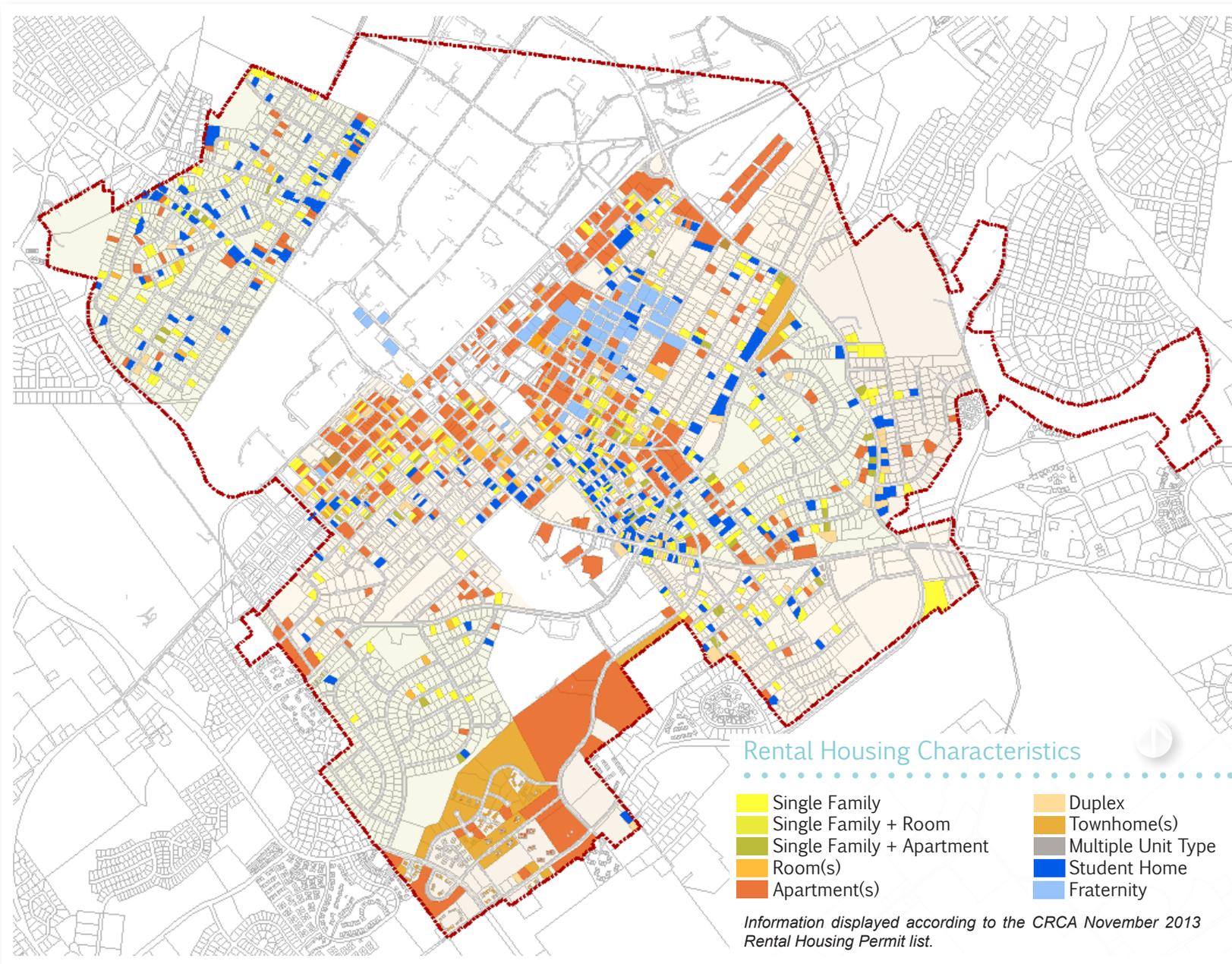
Over time, as the Borough's housing stock has aged and the amenities of these aging homes have become less desirable due to the required maintenance, the Borough has experienced an increase in single-family homes being converted to rental units. The income-generating character of these new single-family rental homes further increases their value, while the upgrades to their amenities do not necessarily improve at the same rate.

These characteristics have made homeownership, and the affordability rentals, difficult in some of the Borough's neighborhoods. As noted in the fact sheet on page 27, 26.2% of homeowners with a mortgage, 23% of homeowners without a mortgage, and 73% of renters were paying more than 30% of their household income on housing costs.

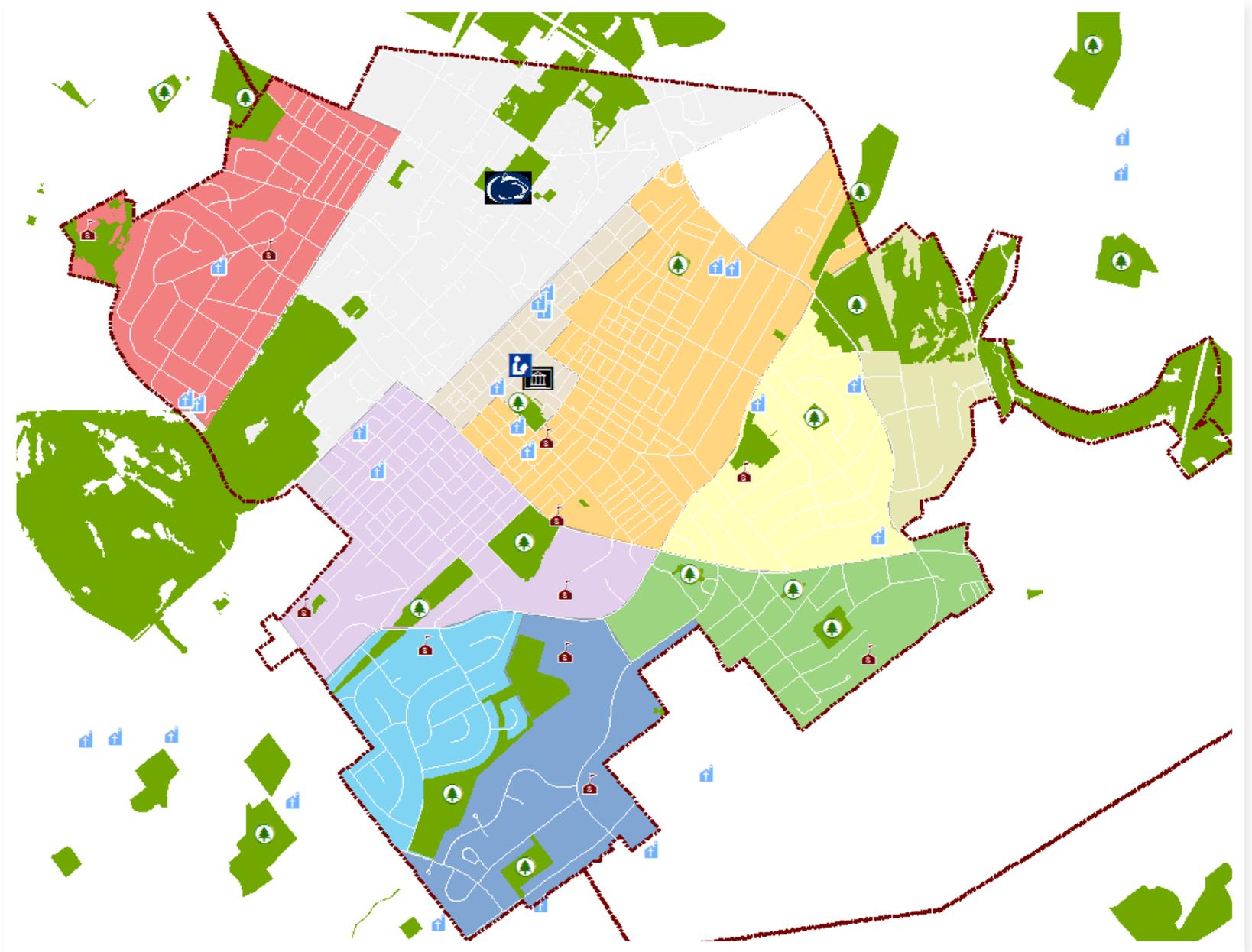
In response to threats to quality of life and home values observed following the conversion of a number of single-family homes in the Borough to rental housing for students, the Borough established the Student Home Ordinance. This ordinance is part of the Zoning Ordinance and establishes a Student Home as a land use which is permitted in residential districts. Student Homes can be owner-occupied (student-owned) or renter-occupied (rented to three or more students).

However, in R-1 and R-2 Zoning Districts, this use requires a separation between new registered Student Homes. In R-1 districts, new Student Homes are not permitted within 720 feet of another student home, and in R-2 districts, 675 feet. Student Homes that are currently registered with the Borough of State College are indicated on the [Rental Housing Characteristics map on page 40](#).

Several programs and community organizations have been established with the goal of assisting homeowners and renters in attaining housing that is more affordable. Organizations such as the State College Community Land Trust, Centre County Community Land Trust, and Temporary Housing Foundation assist homeowners in purchasing homes, and the Borough of State College administers programs utilizing federal funding towards the purchase and rehabilitation of homes for first-time buyers. In 2014, the Borough will capitalize a new program, the Homestead Investment Program, with the goal of improving neighborhood quality of life. This program will allow the Borough to purchase homes that are currently rental homes, or are likely to become rentals, and resell them as owner-occupied homes and non-student rentals.



*This map illustrates parcels in the Borough which have active rental permits and those 1 and 2 family dwellings that have been registered as a Student Home. As the legend above indicates, there are many types of rental units scattered throughout the Borough, but many are concentrated immediately adjacent to campus and downtown as well as in the Orchard Park area.*



*This map shows the locations of parks, churches, schools and other community facilities such as the Schlow Library and the Borough Municipal Building. All of the Borough's neighborhoods either contain a park or are immediately adjacent to a recreational area. Additionally, most of the Borough's neighborhoods contain active school uses. (Update map to reflect new neighborhood boundaries.)*

## community facilities

Residents of the Borough's neighborhoods have access to many high quality park and recreational areas, schools and churches and other community amenities that contribute to the quality of life in State College. Some of these amenities are located within the Borough, while others are easily accessible in the surrounding townships.

### Parks and Recreation

According to the Centre Region Parks and Recreation, the Borough has 13 parks within its boundaries, which add up to a total of 115 acres of park space. These range in size from very small parklets, such as the Sidney Friedman Parklet in downtown, to large parks such as Sunset and Lederer Parks and contain amenities ranging from playgrounds, athletic fields and pavilions to nature areas with walking trails. In addition to the 13 State College Borough Parks, Centre Region Parks & Recreation operates the Welch Pool, Radio Park Elementary Ball Fields and the Senior Recreation Center in downtown State College. The costs of maintenance for the pool, ball fields and senior center are shared by five of the Centre Region municipalities. Several public schools also maintain park and recreation amenities for residents to enjoy, such as the Easterly Parkway Elementary School playground, Community Field and Memorial Field. The Friend's School has a community garden at their worship center in the Highlands neighborhood and there is an Education Center at the newly reconstructed Westerly Parkway Wetland.

Additionally, many of the Borough's neighborhoods either have access to or are situated against the backdrop of other recreational amenities. These include the Penn State's Blue and White Golf Courses, the Arboretum and Centre Hills Country Club, as well as views of the surrounding Mt. Nittany, Rothrock State Forest and Scotia Game Lands.

The Borough is home to one of the branches of the Centre County YMCA. In addition to providing a space for exercise and recreation for its members, the YMCA hosts a series of family, youth and community programs throughout the year, including camps, day care, sports teams, lessons and charity events. Several other private gyms are located on campus and throughout the community, many of which are within walking distance of the Borough's neighborhoods.

### Public Facilities

The Schlow Centre Region library is located in downtown State College and the Penn State libraries on campus are accessible by residents that register for a Friends of Penn State account. The State College Municipal Building has rooms that can be used by community groups for meetings or events. Many churches have community rooms or social



*Memorial Field, the football stadium for SCASD State High, is located in the heart of downtown and is an iconic structure for the community.*

halls that can be used by their congregation and members of the larger community. For several weeks throughout the year, the 100 block of Allen Street and various other downtown streets function as temporary plazas to host festivals and other community events.

## Churches and Schools

Scattered throughout the Borough's neighborhoods are churches of all denominations. Several of these churches have close relationships with their neighbors, offering spaces to host community meetings and events.

There are also a number of schools throughout the Borough. These include SCASD Schools such as Radio Park, Corl Street and Easterly Parkway Elementary schools, State High and the Delta Program. The School District also maintains the



*The State College Area School District High School campus was the subject of study in 2013 for renovation or relocation.*

building of the former College Heights Elementary. Other schools include Our Lady of Victory Catholic School, which includes day care and preschool through 8th grade, the Friends School and the South Hills Business School.

In 2013, the State College Area School District began a process to evaluate the State High campus, athletic facilities and other accessory structures. The process included a detailed analysis of the Centre Region's demographic characteristics to estimate future enrollment for the School District, an analysis of existing programs which would be in need of space in a new or reconstructed facility, and land available in the Region which could be suitable for locating the high school. With the help of the community's input, based on a survey and countless public meetings, the School District determined that the best location for State High would remain at its existing location on Westerly Parkway. Throughout the later half of 2013, the School District worked to develop a site design which would be suitable for the future needs of the high school and address the constraints that the school's location presents. It is anticipated that the design concepts for the renovated school will be finalized early in 2014 at which time the community will be asked to vote on a referendum to impose a tax to fund the construction.

Schools within this area are regarded as providing a high quality education for children of the Centre Region. With access to continuing education and skills courses through Penn State University, South Hills Business School, and the State College Area School Districts, adult residents are also afforded with many opportunities for learning and professional development.

## transportation systems

According to residents' responses to the 2012 National Citizen's Survey, the Borough's neighborhoods and destinations are easily accessible through a variety of transportation choices including vehicular, bus, bike and pedestrian. This survey reported that ease of travel in State College was excellent or good for 63% of residents traveling by car, 76% of those riding the bus, 69% of those commuting by bike and 89% of residents traveling on foot. In fact, in 2013, State College earned the distinction as one of the three most transit-intensive small communities in the United States by the Federal Transit Authority.

### Vehicular Transportation

Roads in State College are given one of five street classifications: arterial, major collector, minor collector, major local and minor local. Arterial streets are those that accommodate the greatest number of vehicle trips in a 24 hour period. In State College, these arterial streets include College and Beaver Avenues, Park Avenue, Atherton Street, University Drive, and Easterly and Westerly Parkways. Additionally, several of these arterial roads are maintained by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, and carry much of the traffic that travels into and out of the Borough and throughout the Centre Region's municipalities. Other major roads, which typically carry heavy traffic volumes are major collectors. Because these roads are heavily trafficked and are the primary vehicular routes to local destinations, traffic can become fairly congested. And because these roads are designed primarily for the movement of vehicles, conditions can become less safe for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Neighborhood Streets, on the other hand are typically classified as minor collectors and local roads. This means that the average daily traffic volumes are much lower, and

their purpose is to accommodate local traffic rather than through traffic. The Borough's neighborhoods are largely free from high volumes of traffic and vehicular safety issues. Occasional problems with congestion, speeding or cut-through traffic are experienced in neighborhoods. Several neighborhoods have received neighborhood traffic calming improvements to help prevent cut-through traffic and speeding problems such as the diverters in College Heights and speed humps in the Highlands.

The Borough Public Works Department regularly conducts traffic counts to monitor vehicular volumes and speeds on Borough Streets. The Borough's traffic engineering consultants also conduct crash analyses at all of the Borough's intersections and provide recommendations for safety improvements. Borough engineers consult the Neighborhood Traffic Mitigation Guidebook as a tool for addressing resident or staff identified traffic issues on local streets. Additionally, the Public Works Department maintains a list of upcoming street resurfacing and reconstruction projects, which help to improve the quality and life cycle of roadways.

### Car Service

In the Fall of 2013, Zipcar began a small operation in downtown State College. Zipcar provides flexible hourly and day-long rental car options for use by residents for short trips. Residents can easily reserve, pick up, and drop off these rental cars from various parking lots in downtown. This service provides an opportunity for vehicular travel for residents that do not own a car or have limited access to one to make short trips and run errands.

There are several taxi service companies in the area,

providing both pick-up and on-demand services to State College residents. These services provide an essential link to amenities such as the University Park Airport, and have contracted with agencies such as CATA to provide on-demand services for carshare and guaranteed ride home programs.

## Bus Service

The Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA), which provides bus service to the Borough, Campus and the Centre Region, is the third largest transportation agency in Pennsylvania based on ridership, behind only the Pittsburgh and Philadelphia transit authorities. CATA operates 22 Community Routes, 4 fare-free Campus Routes and special shuttles for football traffic. Over the last year, CATA accommodated approximately 7.25 million rider trips. Some bus routes run nearly 24 hours a day and the system connects residents to downtown and campus as well as shopping centers and residential complexes in neighboring municipalities, and other community amenities such as the Tussey Mountain Recreation area.

Most of the Borough's neighborhoods have access to CATABus routes either within or on the perimeter of the neighborhood. CATA also provides CATARide, an on-demand service for seniors and disabled, and CATACommute, which provides carpool and van pool services to employees of the Centre Region and beyond. CATACommute is not available to residents of the Borough due to the close proximity of the neighborhoods to downtown and campus. Centre County Transportation Services also provides on-demand ride share to clients of Centre County Government services and other social service agencies.

Additionally, State College is served by a number of regional

coach bus companies that provide regular through service to Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, New York and Washington D.C.

## Bike Routes

State College Borough and the Centre Region have received a Bronze-Level Bicycle Friendly Community status from the League of American Cyclists. Trails and bike paths have increased in the Borough's neighborhoods and the Borough continues to work with the Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization's Bike and Pedestrian coordinator to identify new opportunities for adding bicycle facilities or improving their safety. [The Transportation Facilities map, on page XX](#), identifies existing bicycle routes as well as proposed routes from the Centre Region Bicycle Facilities map and the State College Downtown Master Plan. Advocacy groups such as the Centre Region Bicycle Coalition, the Borough of State College and Centre Region COG work to enact programs and activities to make the Centre Region more safe and bicycle friendly. For example, in 2014 the COG will implement new shared use path signage and a comprehensive website featuring safe cycling information.

## Pedestrian Facilities

In the 2012 National Citizen's Survey, 89% of residents reported ease of access by walking within State College. With many amenities located on campus and in or near downtown, many residents are able to walk for leisure as well as daily errands. With few exceptions, the Borough's neighborhoods are safe, accessible and walkable. Similar to the study that is conducted for vehicular safety at intersections, the Borough's traffic engineering consultants also study and rate each intersection in the Borough for its level of

pedestrian safety. The Borough's Public Works Department evaluates intersections of concern and implements projects to help reduce pedestrian conflicts and increase safety and efficiency for pedestrian routes.

## Parking

The Borough's Parking Department operates several public parking garages, on-street paid parking spaces in the downtown, and maintains zones for on-street parking throughout the Borough's neighborhoods. These on-street parking districts in the neighborhoods have been arranged in such a way to efficiently move vehicular traffic, provide short- and long-term parking options for residents, and prevent the "warehousing" of cars in areas where little parking is available to tenants of apartment buildings or other multi-family structures.

There are several streets, particularly major vehicular thoroughfares, on which parking is not permitted anytime. These include streets such as Park Avenue, Atherton Street, University Drive, most of Easterly and Westerly Parkway, and Waupelani Drive. There are also neighborhood streets on which parking is not permitted anytime. For example, nearly all of the streets in the eastern side of the College Heights neighborhood, and some of those in the western side, do not permit parking. This is due to the fact that many University commuters would park on these neighborhood streets, rather than obtaining permits to park on campus or in downtown.

Other streets, such as many of the streets in the State College South neighborhood, prohibit parking between 2 AM and 6 AM, in order to keep cars from being stored on the streets for several days without being moved. Some streets in near-

downtown neighborhoods permit Commuter Parking with the appropriate permit. Still other areas, such as Southgate and Stratford Drives in the Orchard Park neighborhood allow on-street parking but utilize a rotating parking schedule. This allows cars to be parked on one side of the street during certain days of the week, and on the opposite side of the street the remaining days of the week. The reason for this is to maintain on-street parking while also accommodating municipal services such as trash and leaf collection or snow removal. There are a few streets in the Greentrees, Tusseyview and Nittany Hills/Penfield neighborhoods that have no parking restrictions whatsoever.

There are many times during the year that parking demand in State College either meets or exceeds the available parking supply. These include such events as home football games, the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts and other major events throughout the year. During these times, many of the parking restrictions are relaxed in order to accommodate the parking needs of the visitors to our community.

Many areas of the Borough have adequate on-site parking to meet the demand for resident or customer parking. In order to maintain attractive, well-designed off-street parking areas that do not pose safety or aesthetic concerns to the surrounding neighborhood, the Borough's Zoning Ordinance includes a number of provisions for parking design. This Ordinance discusses the required number of parking spaces, their location on site, dimensions and access drives, as well as interior parking lot landscaping and screening from surrounding uses.

Transportation Systems: map still under development.

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## environmental characteristics

### Tree Canopy & Vegetation

State College has been designated as a Tree City by the National Arbor Day Foundation since 1984 because of the commitment by the Borough's citizens and elected officials to managing a quality urban forest. Much of this commitment is reflected in the Municipal Tree Plan, which provides guidance for the maintenance of the Borough's street and public trees as well as trees located on private property. Dutch Elm Disease, and occasional infestations of Oak Wilt, Emerald Ash Borer and Gypsy Moth, have impacted many mature trees in the Borough, which has prompted the Borough to consider alternative species for public tree plantings. The Borough now plants over 150 different varieties of trees.

A report by the Department of Natural Resources' Bureau of Forestry indicated that 43% of the total land area of the Borough is covered by tree canopy. It also indicated that through careful management and increased plantings, an additional 40% of the Borough's land area could support tree canopy. Tree canopy is important for many characteristics of the community, including aesthetics, air quality, water run off and reduction of urban heat islands. A healthy tree canopy can also increase property values, offer educational opportunities and provide wildlife habitat. State College residents frequently cite the mature vegetation in the Borough as a strength of the community.

In addition to the mature tree canopy, other flora and fauna are of significant importance to the overall environmental health of the Borough and the surrounding area. The Centre County Natural Heritage Inventory indicates that many areas immediately surrounding the Borough's neighborhoods are "significant" natural areas, which undoubtedly contribute to the quality of life in State College. However, because of their close proximity to the Borough, actions by residents can also

impact the quality of these natural areas, including the threat to endangered plant species and the predominance of exotic and invasive species.

While the predominance of vegetation in State College is regarded as a strength and benefit most of the time, it does present some challenges with the viability of certain types of alternative energy sources, such as solar, and their application on homes and businesses in the Borough's neighborhoods.

### Water Resources

The Borough is served primarily by the University Area Joint Authority (UAJA) for its wastewater treatment and by the State College Borough Water Authority for its drinking water. Penn State also operates its own water and sewer systems that service campus. Until 2017, a portion of



*State College Borough has been named a Tree City by the Arbor Day Foundation. Many neighborhoods have dense, mature tree canopies.*

the Borough's wastewater from downtown will be treated by Penn State. Water quality and the capacity to treat wastewater resources continue to be of concern as the Region grows and urbanizes. Urban environments expose stormwater runoff to contaminants which can impair the quality of Spring Creek; development presents an increased risk for sinkhole formation; and the capacity of the treatment facility to provide wastewater service to a growing community becomes more costly.

The Spring Creek Watershed Association maintains a Water Resources Monitoring Project to benchmark levels of contamination, temperature and discharge rates for surface water, and the levels of ground water sources. The 2010 State of the Water Resources Report indicated that, in all, the quality and availability of surface and groundwater resources within the Centre Region were generally consistent with historic levels, except for some minor depletion of



*Westerly Parkway Wetlands and Walnut Springs Park are natural drainage areas for stormwater runoff and provide educational opportunities.*

ground water resources. The report also indicated that the monitoring at wells in the Borough and adjacent areas reveal that the biggest water management issue for the Borough is the impact on stormwater quality from urbanization.

The Borough has taken recent actions to reduce its stormwater runoff impacts. This includes the construction of rain gardens in downtown and the West End and upgrades to the Westerly Parkway Wetlands drainage basin and Walnut Springs Park. These upgrades help treat surface runoff before it is discharged into the storm sewer system. Additionally, several recent zoning amendments have incentivized the use of green roofs, pervious paving and other stormwater best management practices on-site for new development and redevelopment.

The Borough conducted an Inflow and Infiltration assessment of its sanitary sewer infrastructure in 2013. The purpose of this assessment was to locate and mitigate any points at which additional water flow was entering the sanitary sewer system.

In order to address temperature and wastewater discharge capacity, the UAJA operates a Beneficial Reuse program to recapture wastewater and recycle it through our local watershed. This program treats and reuses the filtered water for non-potable water needs in businesses throughout the community. Some businesses that take advantage of this water include cleaners, car washes and golf courses. Additional water that is not used by the program's clients will soon be discharged in the Kissinger Meadows and the Centre Hills Golf Course, a wetland area which is adjacent to the Nittany Hills and Penfield neighborhoods.

## Flooding

Certain areas of the Borough, such as downtown and other low-lying areas, experience some localized flooding issues during major rain and snow melt events. Most of the time, water is efficiently funneled into the Borough's storm sewers within a short period of time following a rain event. Some of these areas that have posed frequent flooding problems have been addressed through upgrades to the Borough's storm sewer systems, capacity increasing projects for drainage basins, and changes to on-site mitigation ordinances for private properties.

Some areas that experience high levels of storm runoff during peak periods are historic drainage basins. These include: Big Hollow Run, which comprises the border between West College Heights and Teaberry Ridge development and continues through the Penn State Arboretum; Thompson

Run which runs between East College Avenue and Bellaire Avenue to the east of University Drive; Slab Cabin Run which roughly follows Branch Road around the border of the Nittany Hills & Penfield area; the intersection of University Drive and Easterly Parkway; and a small area in Ferguson Township near Corl Street Elementary and the Borough's Service Building.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Flood Insurance Rating Maps, all of the land in the Borough, except for very small areas within the aforementioned drainage basins, is located in Flood Zone X, which indicates that there is only a 0.2% chance of annual flooding.

## Air Quality

In July 2013, the Environmental Protection Agency implemented new Ozone Standards for monitoring air quality. These new standards brought Centre County into compliance as an Attainment Community. Because there is little manufacturing and industrial activity in the Centre Region, the greatest threat to air quality from the Borough includes emissions from transportation related activities. It has been the goal of the Borough to implement traffic calming and traffic signal enhancements not only to improve traffic flow on Borough streets but also to reduce idling. Additionally, the CATA Bus fleet utilizes Compressed Natural Gas vehicles, which help to reduce emissions from public transportation.

## Soils & Geology

Many of the Borough's soil types are consistent with those found in valleys and in areas with shallow, gently rolling slopes. These soils have historically been excellent for



*The CATA Bus Fleet runs on Compressed Natural Gas, which helps reduce the air quality hazards posed by the State College transportation system.*

cultivation of crops, which is representative of the historic use of the area prior to development. These soil characteristics typically have good runoff rates, which help control flooding issues. However, the porous nature of these soils can create issues with groundwater source contamination if exposed to surface contaminants and have a moderate likelihood for sinkhole formation. Additionally, many of these soils have a very shallow depth to bedrock, which results in the need for extensive excavation for development projects utilizing subsurface area.

Much of the Borough sits atop a bedrock primarily made up of limestone. This rock creates some challenges for the community in terms of development and safe provision of services. One of the biggest challenges is the opportunity for sinkhole formation, which must be considered when building new structures and operating water and sewer lines. Additionally, these characteristics can lead to more expensive construction costs for developments with subsurface structures.

### Site Contamination

Because the Borough's historic land use patterns did not include heavy manufacturing, industrial uses, or modern commercial farming, the need for site clean up activities have been limited. With the exception of minor site contamination concerns related to dry cleaning activity in downtown, site remediation activities in the Borough are related to the removal or filling of oil and gas tanks for former gas stations or for heating oil on private properties.

### Solid Waste Management

Borough residents experience a high level of service for solid waste collection in the Borough. All Borough residences are serviced by the State College Borough's refuse collection. In Resolution 944, which established State College as a Climate Protection Community and laid out criteria for sustainability efforts, it was noted that the Borough established a goal to reduce the amount of material sent to the landfill to only 35% of the total waste stream by 2013. In order to do so, the Borough utilizes the Centre County Refuse and Recycling Authority to collect municipal recyclables from commercial and residential areas. In 2013, the Borough launched a residential curb side compost collection system, which accepts all food scraps, yard waste and soiled paper and cardboard. The EPA has recognized State College as the first community east of the Mississippi to establish a curb side collection program for organics and food scraps.



*In 2013, State College began collecting organic material and food scraps from residences using curb side bins.*

## Energy Sources

According to the US Census's American Community Survey, it is estimated that about 31% of homes use gas as their heating source, 56% use electricity, 11% use oil, less than 1% use other fuel sources such as wood, and approximately 1% do not use any fuel for heat. A relatively small number of households have installed geothermal systems and at present the Borough is not aware of any homes that are powered through solar or wind systems.

Natural gas and other fossil-fuel based energy sources continue to be controversial in the State College community. As indicated by a community-led referendum to amend the Borough's Home Rule charter, known as the Community Bill of Rights, there is some desire to phase out the distribution of fossil fuels within the community. This was reinforced during 2013 when a community-led effort resulted in the

relocation a new natural gas pipeline for the conversion of the Penn State West Campus Steam Plant. This line was relocated from a route that would run through the Highlands neighborhood, to one that runs along Park Avenue and the University Park Campus.

However, other residents have expressed interest in gas service in the Borough's neighborhoods where it does not currently exist. Several neighborhoods on the periphery of the Borough indicated that the expansion of natural gas service for heating in residential units was an opportunity for the future.

While there are not currently any wind or solar systems operating in the Borough, there is a desire on the part of some Borough residents to incorporate these technologies into the community. This includes using solar or wind technology to power public infrastructure, such as street lights and trash compactors. There has also been some desire expressed for the Borough to consider ways to increase efficiency and use of alternative energy sources at a neighborhood-scale. This includes the desire to investigate model solar and wind ordinances and consider updates to the Borough's Zoning Ordinance to include these structures as permitted uses in residential areas.

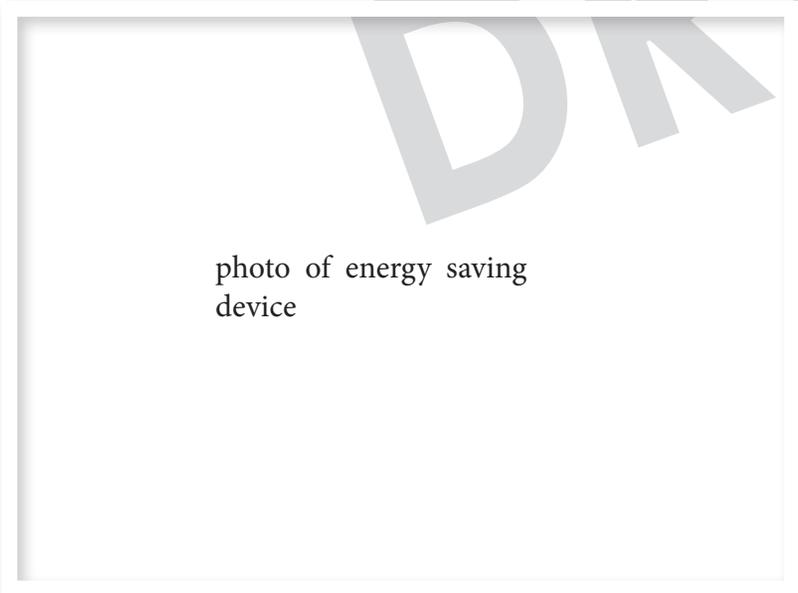


photo of energy saving  
device

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Environmental Characteristics Map: map still under development

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## special districts

### National Register Historic Districts

The Borough has two districts that have been designated by the National Parks Service Register of Historic Places. These districts are the College Heights Historic District and the Holmes-Foster and Highlands Historic District. These districts are marked throughout the Borough with special street signs, which name the historic district. Within these two historic districts, there are 1,005 contributing structures representing the quality architecture that was constructed in the Borough between the 1850s and 1950s. Many of these contributing structures include the homes that were built for fraternities in the early 20th century and other mansions that were constructed for the early pioneers of the community.

While these districts are not regulatory in the ability to prevent demolition or redevelopment, local policies are in place to help protect these structures and ensure that their modernization is in keeping with the character of the districts in which they are located. For example, the Borough's Historic Resources Commission maintains Design Guidelines for Historic Properties, reviews demolition and renovation plans for historic properties, and encourages residents to enroll in the historic plaque program.

Historic neighborhood walking tour guidebooks have been created which allow residents and visitors to explore the historic resources of College Heights, Highlands and Holmes-Foster. Using these self-guided tours, residents can learn about the architecture and influences that shaped the Borough's early neighborhoods. Additionally, several residents in the Highlands neighborhood organize an annual winter home tour to showcase some of the most notable historic homes in the neighborhood and to raise funds to benefit a local elementary school program.

### Neighborhood Associations

Many of the Borough's neighborhoods have established homeowner and resident associations, though many do not have formally defined boundaries. These associations were formed to represent residents' interests when communicating with Borough officials and in some cases provide services, educational opportunities and other benefits to their members. Some of the neighborhood associations meet regularly and host special events for their members. [To see more information about individual neighborhood associations, see Appendix X.](#)

### Certified Redevelopment Areas

The goal of designating Certified Redevelopment Areas (CRAs) is to foster redevelopment in areas of town where significant opportunities exist. Several areas were designated as areas for potential future redevelopment through a joint meeting of the Borough Council, Planning Commission and the Redevelopment Authority in 2006. These areas are shown on the [Special Districts Map on page XX](#). These areas were identified as areas to be analyzed in greater detail by the Planning Commission for certification, redevelopment plans and other activities.

There are two important advantages for a community in creating CRAs. The first is that a community recognizes that an area is not currently developed in such a way that is advantageous to the residents or businesses within the area. Designation of a CRA lays out a framework for how the community believes the area should develop using tools such as a comprehensive plan for guidance. The other is that CRAs allow the Redevelopment Authority to participate in implementing redevelopment plans and engage the public and private sectors in doing so in an adequate way.

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This page will include a map of the Borough’s “special districts” such as the historic neighborhood districts, the Downtown improvement district, and the Redevelopment Authority’s improvement districts.

*The varying shades of color on this map represent each subdivision in the Borough. Using the colors above to represent each neighborhood's boundaries, this map helps illustrate how State College's neighborhoods' have been shaped by subdivisions of land. For example, the varying shades of red within the boundaries of the College Heights neighborhood show that it was formed by the McCormick, College Heights and Hartswick subdivisions. One shade of blue within the Greentree neighborhood boundaries shows that the neighborhood was established by the Greentrees Development.*

# future development

## Planning Documents

In addition to this Neighborhood Plan, there are many documents that have been prepared for the Borough to help guide its future growth and development. For example, the West End Revitalization Plan outlines a vision for the West End that includes a redeveloped, mixed-use neighborhood with a clear identity and aesthetics that promote it as an important gateway into and out of the Borough. In 2013, two other documents were adopted-- the Downtown Master Plan and the 2013 Centre Region Comprehensive Plan Update.

The Downtown Master Plan is a visionary document that includes recommendations for improving several major areas of downtown, including roadway and transportation network improvements as well as redevelopment concepts for the downtown and West End areas. The Centre Region Comprehensive Plan helps to outline unified goals for the six municipalities in the Centre Region, and includes recommendations on region-wide issues such as housing, economic development, natural resource management and recreation. These plans are relevant to the Borough's neighborhoods because, as they are implemented, they can improve or impact the quality of life for residents elsewhere in the regional.

## Local Improvements

There are several redevelopment and community facility improvements that are expected to take place in the short-term within the Borough. Many of these include redevelopment activities in the Borough's downtown, such as the long awaited Fraser Center, the redevelopment of the former Arby's site at College Avenue and Atherton Street, and other mixed-use development along East College and East Beaver Avenues. Some guiding documents, such as

the Downtown Master Plan support additional development in the downtown, particularly for student housing, noting that it is a suitable location for dense, multi-family housing and can help relieve the pressure on the housing stock in the Borough's neighborhoods from converting to rental housing. Additionally, recent renovations and improvements have been made to some of the commercial buildings in the Westerly Parkway Plaza Shopping Center.

Other upcoming redevelopment activities include the renovation of the State College Area School District's (SCASD) high school campus on [Westerly Parkway as discussed on page XX](#). The SCASD Master Plan also discusses future renovations of the Corl Street and Radio Park Elementary Schools and future locations for the District's Central Office which is currently located on Nittany Avenue next to Memorial Field.

The Borough has plans to advance several improvement projects to enhance transportation facilities. These include improvements throughout downtown, to improve intersection safety and aesthetics such as a fencing project for South Atherton Street to prevent jaywalking. The Borough has also begun studying the intersection of Park Avenue and McKee Street to evaluate potential solutions for improving the safety and efficiency of bike and pedestrian crossings.

In 2013, the Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA) conducted an extensive study on the system's ridership rates, cost-benefit analysis of various routes, opportunities for changes to the fare structure, and potential growth of service. This study provided CATA and local transportation planners with several options to consider for the future of bus service in the Centre Region. Several planning exercises, such as this neighborhood planning effort and the Downtown Master Plan process, revealed that some residents in the community would like to see CATA service expanded to

include routes that were not downtown- and campus-centric, providing greater accessibility to community resources.

Several Borough parks have plans for upgrades and additions. A master plan for Holmes-Foster Park was developed by a class at the Pennsylvania State University with the help of Borough staff and residents of the Holmes-Foster neighborhood. This master plan will help guide improvements to the Park that will be funded through a grant that the Borough obtained in 2013. A walking trail has also been designed for High Point Park in the Orchard Park area. This trail, which is planned to be constructed in 2014, will provide additional recreational amenities for this park and will also be funded through a grant that was obtained by the Borough. Finally, the Borough is working with Centre Region Parks and Recreation and a group of local residents to prioritize parks that could be the future home of an Action Sports Park, which could include facilities for skating and skateboarding.

## Regional Impact

Although the Centre Region's municipalities each have independent local governments, the Region, particularly the urbanized core surrounding the Borough, is intricately connected in its residential, commercial, tourism and economic activities. What happens in one municipality can have either real or perceived impacts on surrounding municipalities; those impacts can be either positive or negative. It is important to have an understanding of the activities that are taking place throughout the Centre Region in order to anticipate potential impacts on the Borough.

In 2013, the Centre Region experienced a student housing boom. Just under 3,000 new beds were available for rent for the first time in the Fall of 2013 in downtown, on Waupelani Drive, and outside the Borough in areas such as

Blue Course Drive, Dreibelbis Road, Waddle Road and in Toftrees. Additional new student housing units are expected over the next several years as developments, both large and small, such as the Toll Brothers site on Whitehall Road, the renovation of the Penn State University dorms, and the Metropolitan in downtown are completed.

In 2013, the Centre Region developed signage and promotional materials to educate pedestrians and cyclists about the proper use of the Region's shared-use paths to increase safety and usership on the trails. It is anticipated that this signage will be installed in 2014. Site work is anticipated to begin for the Whitehall Road Regional Park in 2014 in order for the park to be open to the community in 2016. The master plan for this park includes several baseball and softball fields, rectangular sports fields, a basketball court, playground, walking trail, dog park, community gardens, picnic areas, concession stands and a regional parks service facility. A partnership between Centre Region Parks and Recreation, Pennsylvania State University, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and Clearwater Conservancy is working to build the Musser Gap Trail. This trail will begin at the new Whitehall Road Park and extend across Slab Cabin Run and State Route 45 and enter the Rothrock State Forest at Musser Gap.

Ferguson Township has developed a Terraced Streetscape District and Corridor Streetscape Plan for the area of West College Avenue from the Borough boundary to Blue Course Drive. This zoning district permits the development of mixed use buildings with densities that would be similar to those that exist today in downtown State College. Patton Township is preparing to review amendments to the western portion of the Toftrees Master Plan, originally developed in 1987, which depicts significant residential and commercial development capacity. College Township is working to rezone an area along College Avenue, formerly the location of the Hilltop

Mobile Home Park, for future residential development.

In order to provide more flexibility for development and redevelopment in the Centre Region, the CRPA modified the processes for Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) studies and expansions to the Regional Growth Boundary. The two major elements of these updates were that the threshold for the size of projects within the growth boundary that trigger a DRI process was eliminated. This essentially makes any scale development within the Growth Boundary permissible as long as it meets a local zoning ordinance. The second major change is that in a period of five years, each municipality with land outside of the Regional Growth Boundary is permitted to develop projects up to 50 Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDUs) or twelve acres outside of the boundary without regional approval.

It will be important for the Centre Region to evaluate the impacts that this development has on the price, location and availability of housing and other community facilities such as roads, bus service, sewer service and municipal tax revenues.

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