





current neighborhood conditions

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.¹

62% bachelor degree
(or higher degree)

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

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.⁴

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.⁴

In the Fall of 2013 the enrollment at the University Park Campus of Penn State² 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.³

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.¹

**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.¹



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.⁵

305 student homes

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

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.⁴

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.⁶



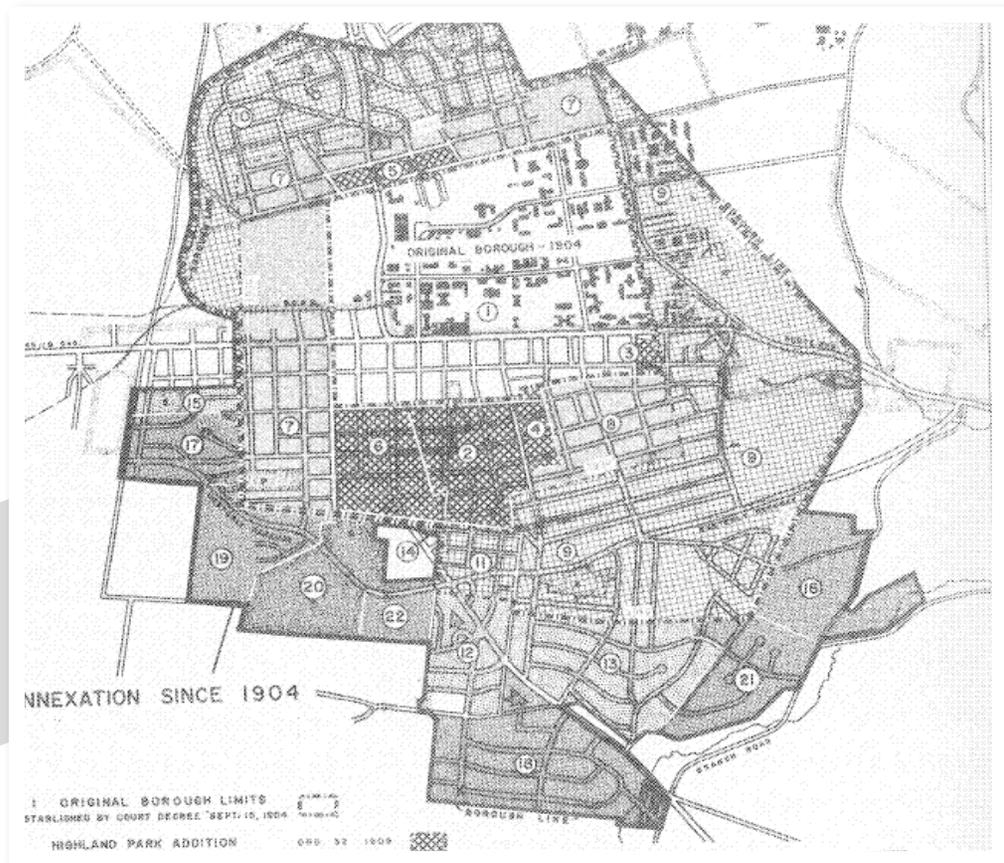
Additionally, the 2010 Census reported that 37% of residents walk to work, and the 2012 National Citizens Survey reported that 79% of residents polled had ridden a CATA Bus.^{4,6}

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.

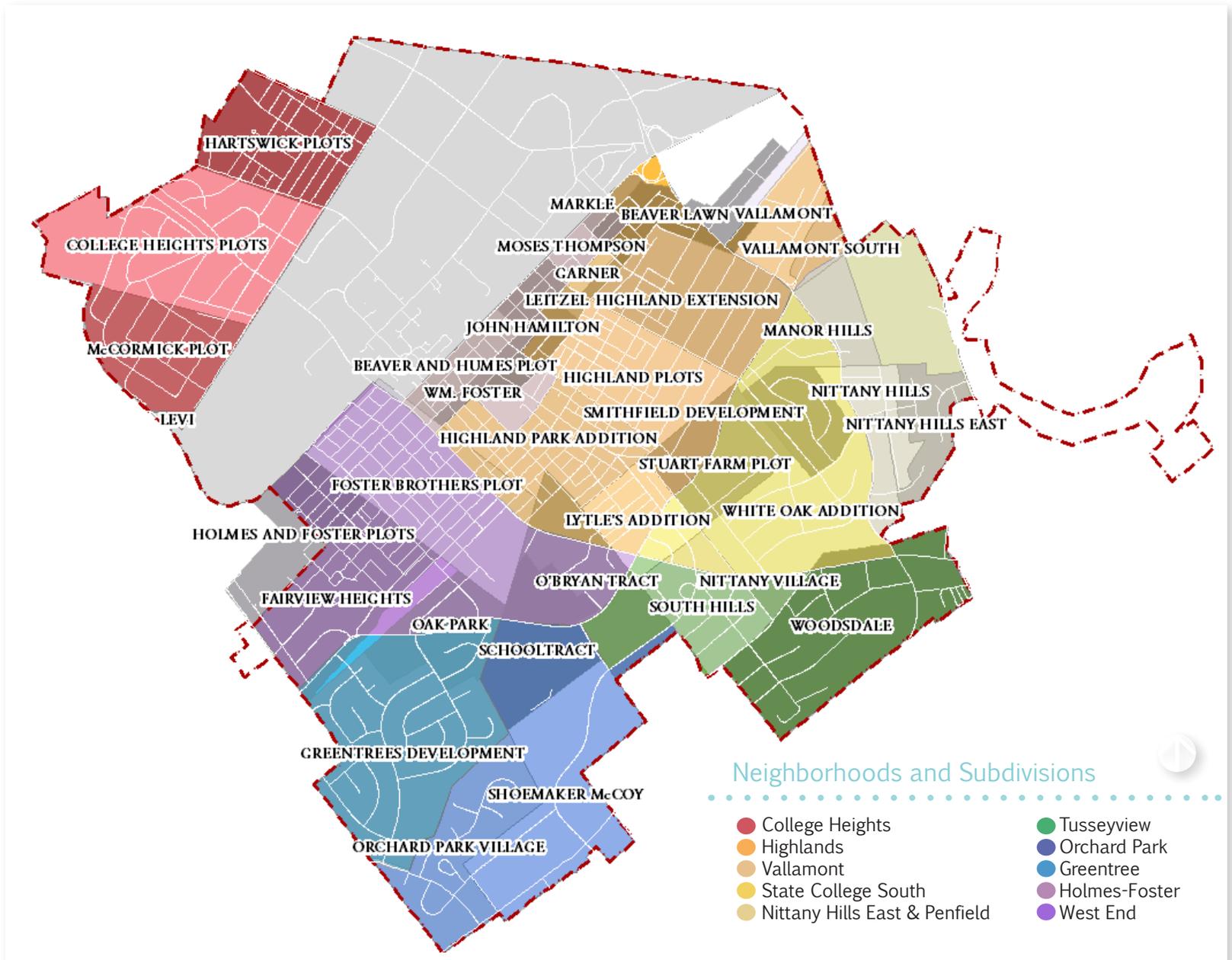
Additional annexations in the 1920s and 1930s officially brought most of the area of the College Heights, Holmes-Foster, Highlands and Vallamont neighborhoods and the northern portion of State College South into the Borough. Those annexations that took place through the 1950s included areas of the Borough 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.

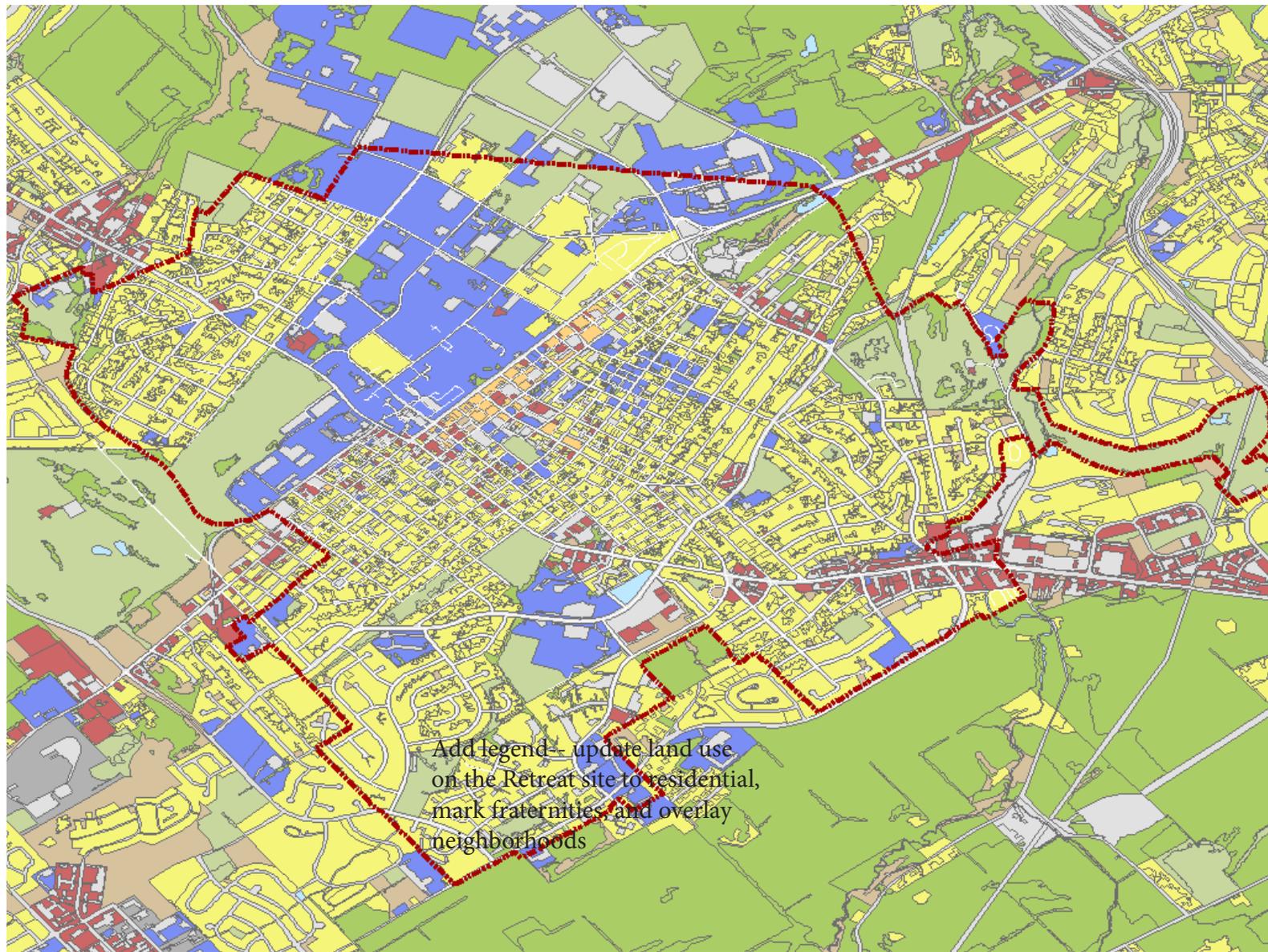
The Borough accounts for less than 5% of the Centre Region's land area, but is home to approximately half of the Region's population. Due to this population density, the location of core Penn State Academic buildings, cultural attractions, and the region's public high school all within the Borough, State 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.



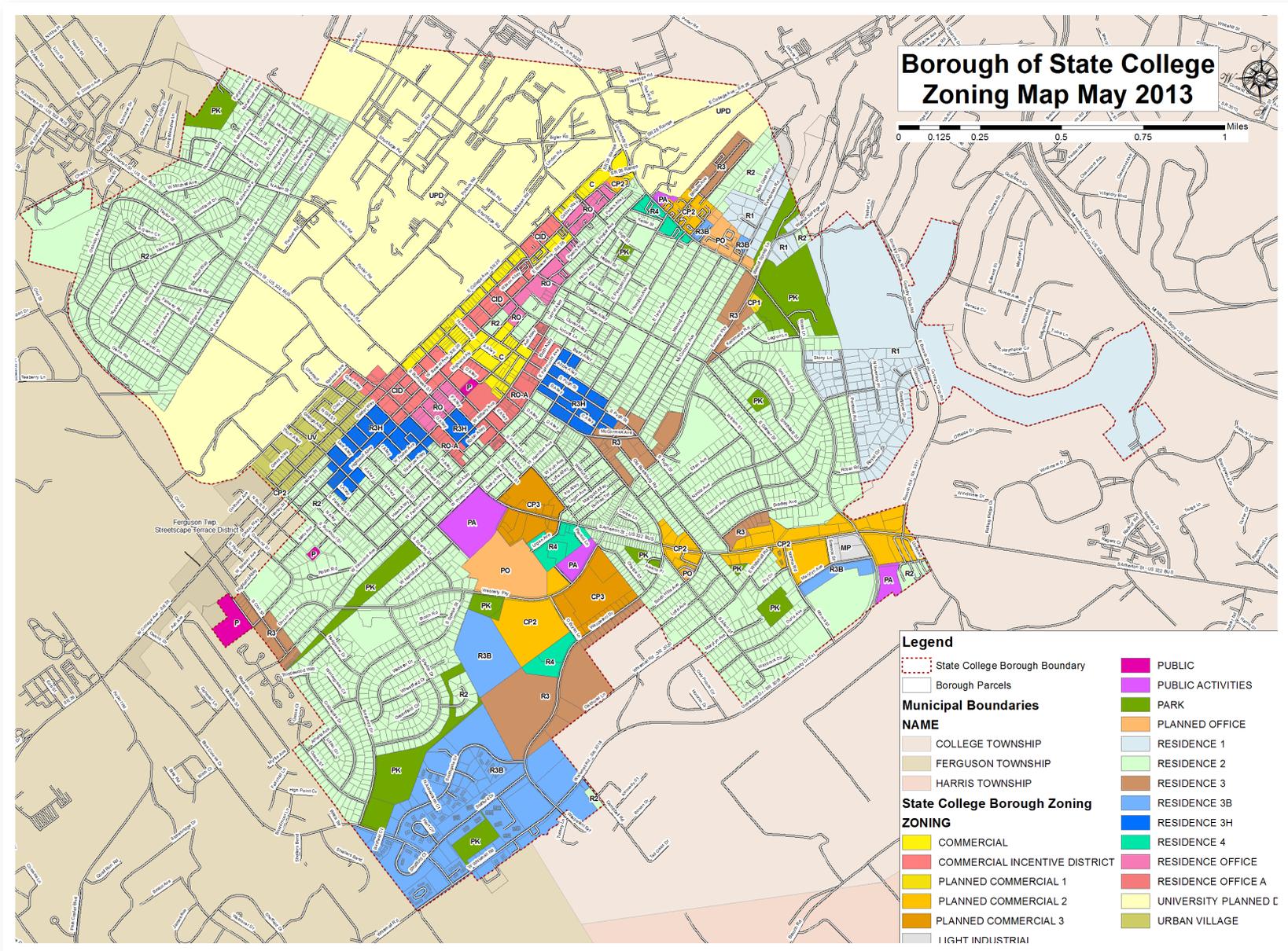
The Borough's oldest neighborhoods are National Register Historic Districts.



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

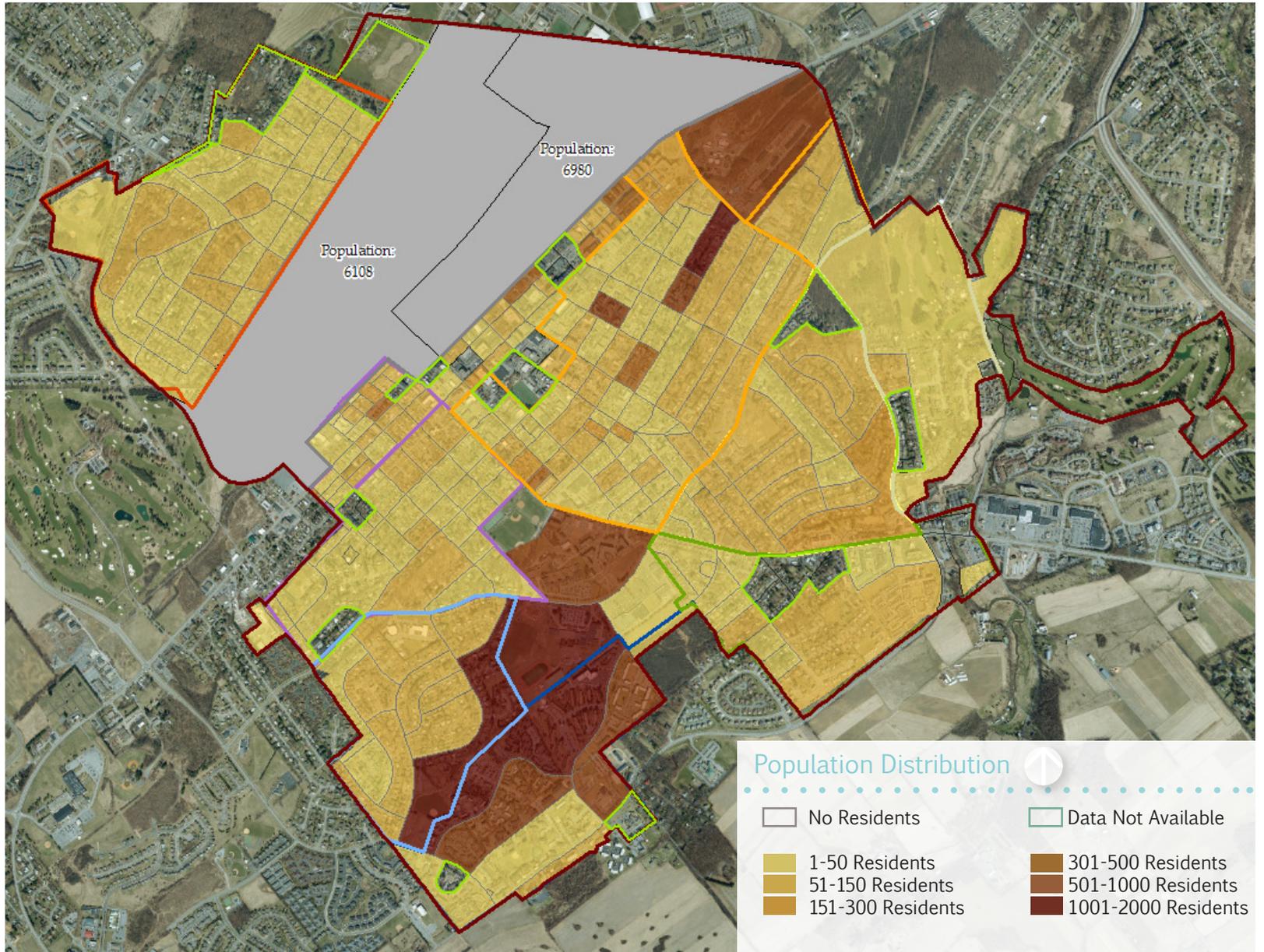
Borough Population (2010)	42,034
College Heights	1,839
Highlands	9,726
Vallamont	124
Nittany Hills East & Penfield	353
State College South	1,313
Tusseyview	995
Orchard Park	4,000
Greentree	923
Holmes-Foster	1,597
West End	2,324
Downtown	4,417
Penn State Campus	13,088
Other areas*	1,335

**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.

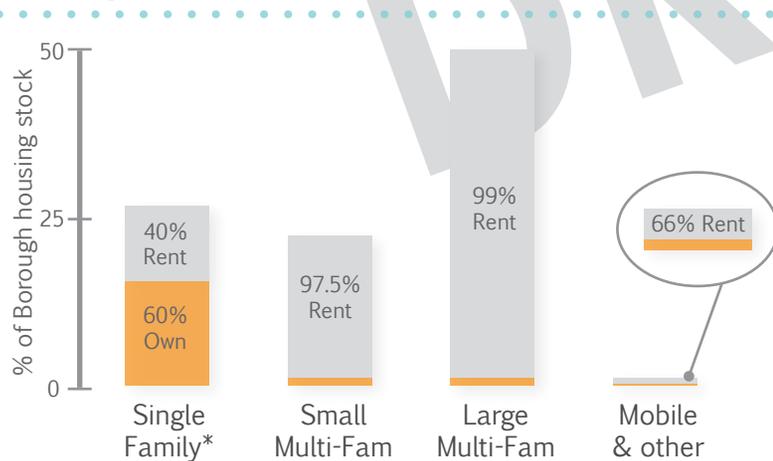
The Borough contains roughly 13,000 housing units. The chart below indicates that of these housing units, 27% are single-family homes or town homes, and roughly 72% are units in multi-family structures. The Borough experiences very few vacancies in the housing stock. In 2013, of the 13,000 housing units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

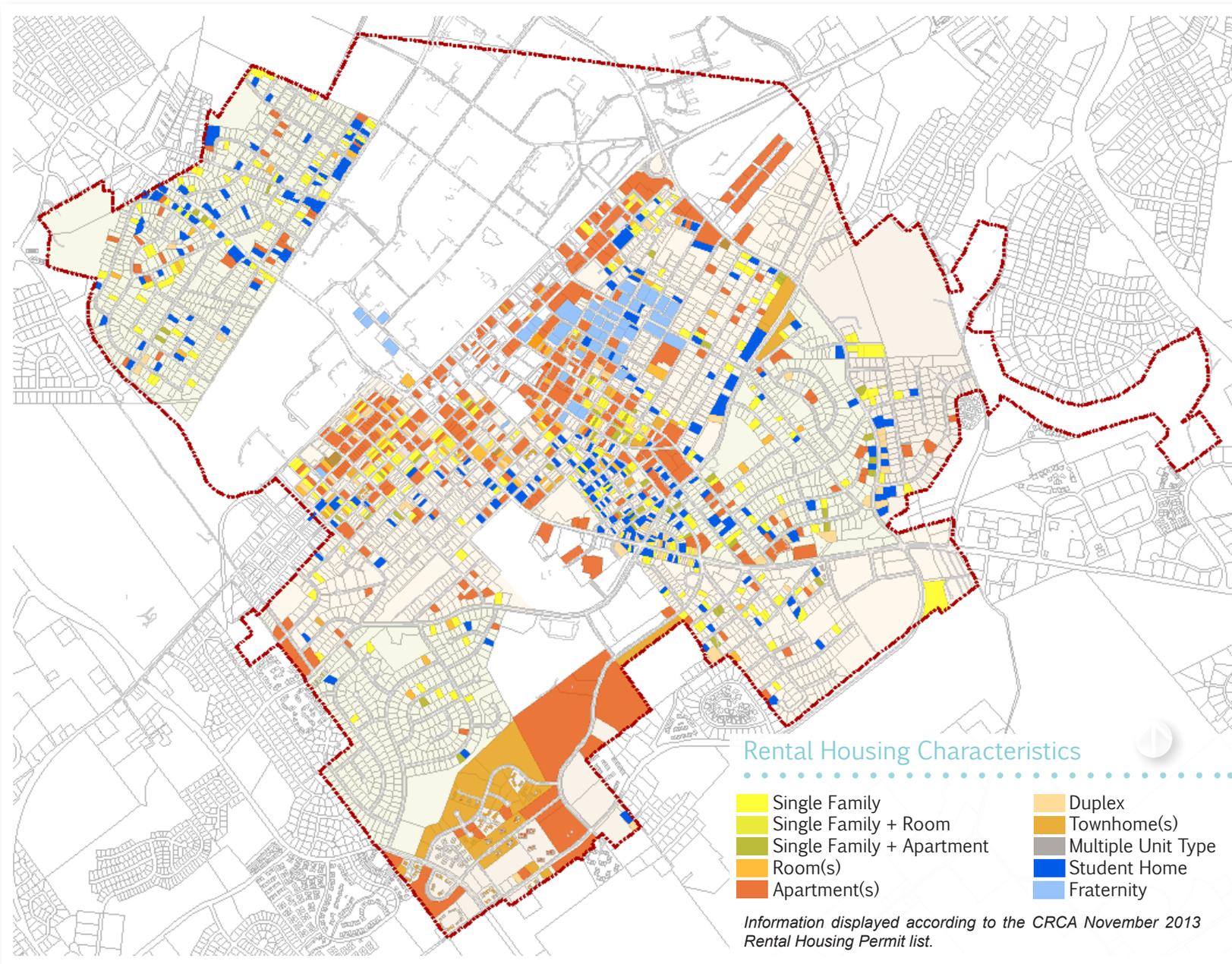
Over time, as the Borough's housing stock has aged and the amenities of these aging homes have become less desirable due to the required maintenance, the Borough has experienced an increase in single-family homes being converted to rental units. The income-generating character of these new single-family 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.

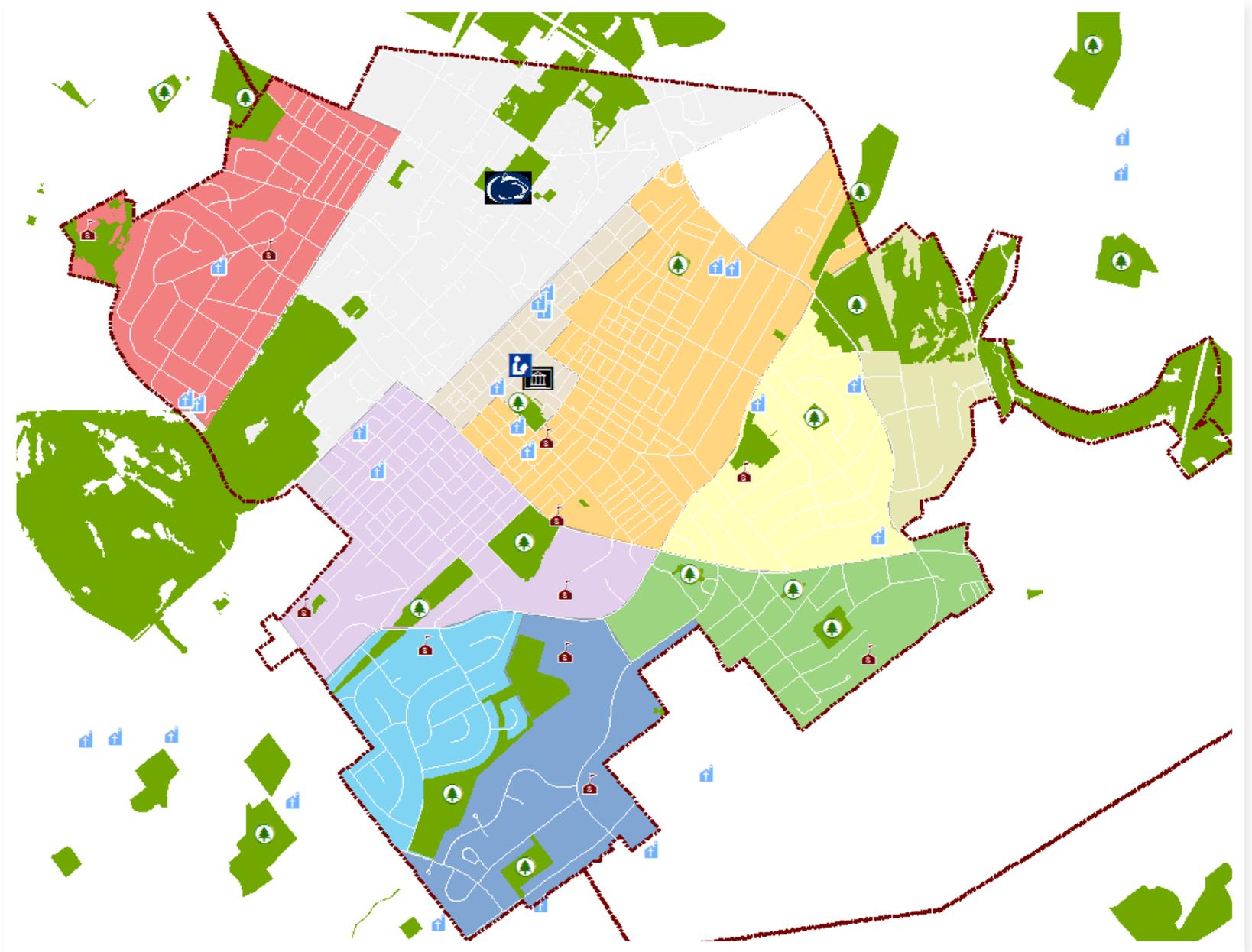
In response to threats to quality of life and home values observed following the conversion of a number of single-family homes in the Borough to rental housing for students, the Borough established the Student Home Ordinance. This ordinance is part of the Zoning Ordinance and establishes a Student Home 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.

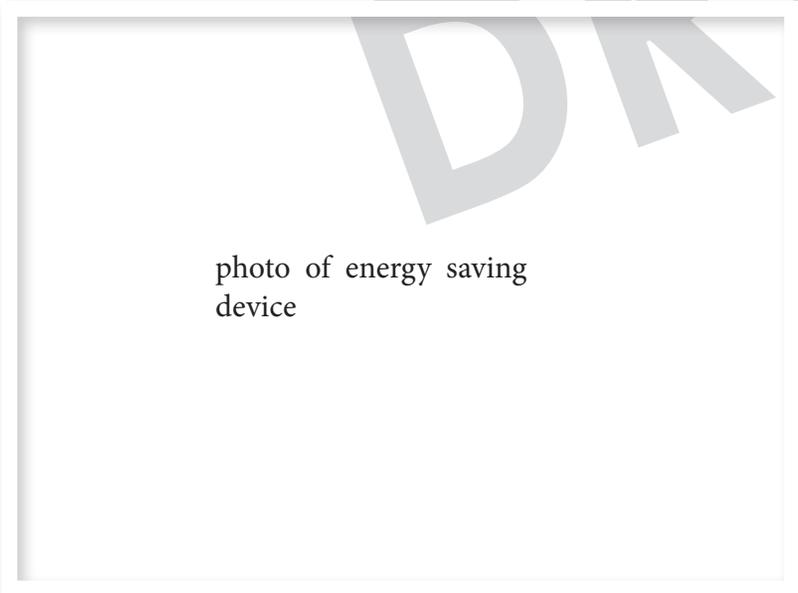


photo of energy saving device

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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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College Heights

College Heights is the only State College Borough neighborhood situated north of the Penn State Campus. The neighborhood is comprised of West College Heights and East College Heights and is a vision of high-quality architecture, tree-lined streets, and early 20th century and mid-century modern neighborhood development. West College Heights is located between Atherton Street, Penn State Blue & White Golf Course, and Radio Park Elementary School. East College Heights is situated between Atherton Street, Penn State University Park Campus, the Penn State Arboretum and Sunset Park.

The neighborhood is among the oldest of the Borough's neighborhoods and a substantial portion of the neighborhood a registered National Historic District. Annexations of land that make up the area of the College Heights neighborhood took place from about 1915 to 1931. This land was then

subdivided as the Hartswick, McCormick and College Heights Plots. Given its proximity to campus, the neighborhood has always been attractive to people associated with Penn State University. Much of the historic housing was built between the Borough's incorporation in 1896 and the beginning of World War II in the early 1940s.

The College Heights Association was formed in 1924. According to the College Heights Historic District Walking Tour, the Association described the neighborhood in this way: "Apart from its altitude, it borders the college woods and the golf links, giving to this section a beautiful setting which at the same time is healthful. The Association feels that here is a section that promises to be the garden spot of State College."

The Association has a history of being an active group of residents dedicated to their neighborhood's quality of life. For example, Sunset Park was made possible through the efforts of College Heights residents. The College Heights Association planted the idea of a neighborhood park in 1941. College Heights residents contributed time and money to allow the park to be used temporarily until a door-to-door effort to raise money to purchase the park took place in 1982. Additionally, the Association volunteered to do the landscaping for the developing College Heights School in the early 1930s.

The neighborhood remains today as one of the few Borough neighborhoods that is zoned completely for single-family residences and open space. The neighborhood condition has stayed true to its history as a neighborhood that is attractive to both single-family homes as well as rental properties and has a distinct "garden feel" with the mature trees and well-maintained landscaping.



Neighborhood Characteristics

The population of College Heights according to the 2010 Census was 1,839. This represents 4.4% of the total population of the Borough and a 5% decrease in the neighborhood's population since 1990.

The age of College Heights residents is well-balanced, with each significant age group making up roughly an equal part of the neighborhood's population. The largest percentage of residents fall within the 45-64 age group, with 25.8% of residents. Within 20% of the neighborhood's housing units reside families with children.

Of the neighborhood's 787 Occupied Housing Units, 70% are owner-occupied and 30% are renter-occupied. College Heights is one of few Borough neighborhoods in which more than half of the housing in the neighborhood is maintained as owner-occupied. According to the Borough's Registered Student Home list in December of 2013, there were 78

single-family homes or duplexes with student home permits in the neighborhood. This represents roughly 10% of the occupied housing units in the neighborhood.

Land use has been and is still predominantly single-family, owner-occupied housing with some rentals scattered throughout. Many of these rentals are concentrated in the southeast area of the neighborhood near Park Avenue and along the Atherton Street corridor. However, over time these have become somewhat more scattered through the east and west sides of the neighborhood. Despite a slight decrease in population over the past 20 years, occupied housing units have actually increased by 2% since 1995. (See the Land Use map on page 31 and the Housing Tenure

College Heights by the Numbers

Population (2010)	1,839
% of Borough	4.4%
Age of Residents (2010)	
Under 18	14.1%
18-24	18.4%
25-34	12.9%
35-44	11.6%
45-64	25.8%
65 & up	17.2%
Occupied Housing Units (2010)	787
Owner-Occupied	70%
Renter-Occupied	30%
Increase in Units since 1995	2%
Registered Student Homes (2012)	78



map on page 37.)

According to the Centre Region Planning Agency's Growth Forecast Map for 2009-2040 the neighborhood is essentially built out; only a few opportunities for the construction of new single-family homes on vacant lots were identified. The map also identified an opportunity for the development of a public or institutional use along Park Avenue, which is now home to the Pasquerella Catholic Student Center. Current reuse opportunities include the reuse of the former College Heights School along Atherton Street.

In addition to the Catholic Student Center, there are also a number of churches and buildings used for religious meetings. These are located along Hillcrest Avenue, Ridge Avenue and Glenn Road.

Along Atherton Street, there is a small gas/service station,

the Exxon Station, which has been in operation since 1935, and the former SCASD College Heights School, which was built in 1930. The neighborhood is surrounded by Radio Park Elementary, Penn State University open spaces, including the Blue and White Golf Course and the Arboretum, and Sunset Park which is now operated by the Centre Region parks system. In keeping with its historic roots as the "garden spot of State College," the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources indicated that the neighborhood has the greatest percentage of tree canopy of any of the Borough's neighborhoods. Just over 60% of the neighborhood has mature tree coverage. (See the Community Facilities map on page 41.)

Traffic and transportation have historically had significant impacts on the neighborhood. In the mid-1990's a traffic diverter was installed at the intersection of Hillcrest Avenue and Woodland Drive in East College Heights. For



Neighborhood SWOT Analysis

the most part, this diverter has helped resolve traffic issues within the neighborhood. However, Atherton Street and Park Avenue, which are Pennsylvania Department of Transportation roadways carrying heavy daily traffic volumes, continue to present concerns for residents. These roadways impact the neighborhood in terms of their impacts on neighborhood continuity, safety, and accessibility of bus, bike and pedestrian routes. Parking issues are minimal in the neighborhood. Many streets in East College Heights have been designated as 'No Parking Anytime' zones. In West College Heights, there are some areas that permit 2 Hour parking or Residential Permit parking. (See the [Transportation Systems map on page 39.](#))

Atherton Street and Park Avenue carry heavy volumes of CATA bus traffic. These routes provide connections to campus, downtown, and the commercial and residential areas along North Atherton in Ferguson and Patton Townships. While these routes pass through the neighborhood frequently, there are only a few access points for College Heights residents wishing to use the buses. These are located on Atherton Street at Hillcrest Avenue and on Park Avenue at the Nittany Lion Inn or at the Penn State Childcare Center on North Allen Street.

Several bike routes run through or around the perimeter of the College Heights neighborhood connecting it to Borough amenities as well as recreational bike routes throughout the Centre Region. Bike routes run along Park Avenue connecting to Teaberry Ridge and the Blue Course Drive Bike Path and along McKee Street connecting to campus, downtown and the bike path behind the Penn State Arboretum.

Strengths

College Heights residents expressed much pride in the quality of life in their neighborhood. They felt that the general ambiance and maintenance of the neighborhood make it feel very safe and attracts a diversity of residents. Residents are glad to see many families, elderly that can remain in their homes, and active and involved neighborhood association members. Residents enjoy the close proximity to campus, downtown and other daily amenities. The neighborhood's designation as a National Register Historic District, and the stability of home ownership in the west side were also noted as strengths. Residents indicated that the traffic control measures that have been made have helped to contribute to a decrease in through traffic issues, particularly on the east side of the neighborhood. Residents felt that amenities like the former College Heights School, the Radio Park School, and the historic Exxon Mobile station are positive assets. Other amenities included the trails, bike paths, Sunset Park and the Penn State Golf Course, and the mature trees either in or immediately adjacent to the neighborhood. Due to many natural uses in and around the neighborhood, and limited street lights, the neighborhood does not experience much light pollution.

Weaknesses

College Heights residents indicated that N. Atherton Street can be a barrier, dividing the neighborhood in two and creating problems with pedestrian connectivity, noise and traffic. There were also concerns with the level of traffic and the connectivity across Park Avenue to campus and from Taylor Street to Atherton. Other traffic problems included speeding on Atherton Street, Park, Ridge and Hillcrest Avenues and Martin Terrace and the CATA VE and NE Routes bypassing the neighborhood without providing service to

residents. Residents were concerned about the presence and regulation of student homes and football rentals in terms of the impact on surrounding properties and overall neighborhood cohesion. Residents felt that not knowing where rental units were located and not seeing consistency in zoning and ordinance enforcement were weaknesses experienced in the neighborhood. Other maintenance concerns included maintenance of bicycle paths and ownership of alleys. While proximity to campus was also a strength, it was noted as sometimes being a weakness particularly when it results in petty crimes along N. Allen Street. Areas such as Martin Terrace and Sunset Avenue are not well lit, and overhead power lines create the potential for outages during storms. Finally, the lack of a playground or park space on the west side of the neighborhood and the impact of surrounding development in Ferguson Township were shared as weaknesses.

Opportunities

College Heights residents felt that there were many opportunities for improving the neighborhood. Residents felt that there should be better management of rental housing and football homes, and incentives provided for individuals to “rent-to-own” and to encourage home ownership. Similarly, residents felt that there was an opportunity to look at zoning and development regulations in order to ensure that new homes in the neighborhood are context sensitive. Neighbors felt that there was an opportunity to assess areas where trees conflict with utilities, where sick trees can be replaced more quickly and where additional lighting could be added to make the neighborhood more safe and walkable at night. Some felt that there was an opportunity to work with Penn State on traffic management issues on Park Avenue and the potential use of the PSU Golf Course as a year-round space for public recreation. Preserving recreational amenities



and encouraging the use of the Radio Park Elementary for recreation during non-school hours were noted as opportunities. Other opportunities included looking at the on-street parking regulations and the redevelopment of the College Heights school.

Threats

While some residents expressed the concern that there needs to be more management and regulations of neighborhood conditions, others cautioned that too much regulation could threaten the quality of life in the neighborhood. In general, residents felt that the growing enrollment at Penn State could be a threat as the number of homes being converted to rentals could increase, as well as maintenance and behavior issues if more students moved in to the neighborhood. Some neighbors were concerned with the potential impacts of regional developments, such as Penn State converting the golf course to additional buildings, more developments along North Atherton in Ferguson and Patton Townships, and the future land uses along North Atherton Street once suggested by the State College Land Area Plan. Further threats stated by residents included the traffic volumes and behavior of drivers on Park Avenue and Atherton Street, the secondary impacts of Atherton Street as a state highway, and sign pollution along major roads. Finally, residents felt that any use other than an education use for the former College Heights School could bring negative impacts to the neighborhood.

SWOT at a Glance

- + Ambiance, maintenance, safety, mature trees
- + Proximity to downtown, campus, other amenities
- + Historic district, College Heights School, Exxon, Radio Park
- + Trails, bike paths, Sunset Park, PSU golf course
- + Stability in homeownership, active association members
- Traffic, speeding and connectivity across major roads
- Regulation of student rentals and football homes
- Enforcement of zoning and ordinances
- Proximity to campus results in petty crimes
- Lighting and overhead power lines
- Management of rental and football homes
- Incentives for ownership & context sensitive construction
- Park facilities in West College Heights (or better access)
- College Heights School as educational/neighborhood use
- Lighting, tree and traffic management strategies
- ✗ More conversion of rental properties, maintenance of rentals
- ✗ Appropriate balance of regulations and enforcement
- ✗ Future development on West Campus, Ferguson & Patton Twps
- ✗ Non-educational/neighborhood uses for College Heights School
- ✗ Traffic impacts of North Atherton & Park Avenue

Highlands

The Highlands neighborhood is situated immediately south and east of the Penn State University campus and the Downtown core. It is bounded on the north by the Downtown Improvement District boundary, roughly following Highland Alley, Easterly Parkway to the south, Atherton Street to the west and University Drive to the east. The highest point in the neighborhood stands at an elevation of 1,200 feet; the Fairmount Avenue ridge line creates a sort of dividing line between the northern and southern parts of the neighborhood. The Highlands neighborhood is one of the few Borough neighborhoods that is not immediately adjacent to a neighboring municipality.

The northern area of the Highlands is among the oldest of the Borough's neighborhoods and a substantial portion of it is included as a registered National Historic District with 379 contributing historic structures. Annexations of

land that make up the area of the Highlands neighborhood took place from about 1909 to 1932. This land was then subdivided into plots for development. Some of these plots included Henzey-Lederer, Highland Park Addition, Highlands Plot, Highlands Extension, Lytle's Addition and Beaver Lawn.

At the time of the development of the Highlands, it was boasted that this area offered "the most desirable lots of Foster, Fairmount, Prospect and Hamilton, all within one-half mile of the post office" and with the promise of becoming "the most beautiful fraternity section in the country." Between 1925 and 1933, more than twenty mansions were built in the neighborhood for national fraternity organizations. At the same time, smaller houses were being built by residents including housing designed by architects, chosen from pattern books and selected from mail-order catalogs.



Neighborhood Characteristics

As late as 1946, the Highlands neighborhood terminated at Irvin Avenue, where farms and forest existed immediately to the south. After World War II, a housing shortage resulted in the rapid development of forty duplex houses along Atherton Street and the construction of Easterly Parkway and Centre Lane. Much of the land moving east from these duplexes, however, was still farmland.

The Highlands Civic Association was incorporated in 1983. Since its formation, the Association has been an active organization with many residents serving on Borough ABC's, participating in volunteer and community organizations throughout the Region, taking an active role in government initiatives, and organizing community building activities like the Neighbor-to-Neighbor program. More information about the Highlands Civic Association can be found in Appendix X.

Today, the Highlands is the most populated of the Borough's neighborhoods and includes the greatest number of housing units. The neighborhood is representative of the diversity of housing and residents within the Borough. It includes a range of housing types, from large apartment structures and fraternity mansions, to modestly-sized single family homes. It is also home to a mix of residents including families, long-term Borough residents, faculty and staff of the University and Penn State undergraduates and graduates. It is a walkable neighborhood, with areas of mixed use, and commercial amenities, and is in close proximity to civic amenities such as churches and schools. Some residents have referred to the Highlands as the Borough's true "town-gown" neighborhood.

The population of the Highlands according to the 2010 Census was 9,276. This represents 23% of the total population of the Borough and a 5% decrease in the neighborhood's population since 1990. The Highlands has the greatest population of the Borough's neighborhoods, with only campus and downtown exceeding its population.

The vast majority of the neighborhood's residents are of college age between 18 and 24. All other age groups represent 23% of the neighborhood. Within the Highlands, 5.6% of the neighborhoods households include families with children. The Highlands is one of few neighborhoods in which more of those households with children live in rental

Highlands by the Numbers

Population (2010)	9,726
% of Borough	23%
Age of Residents (2010)	
Under 18	5%
18-24	77%
25-34	8%
35-44	2%
45-64	5%
65 & up	3%
Occupied Housing Units (2010)	3,506
Owner-Occupied	88%
Renter-Occupied	12%
Increase in Units since 1994	5.6%
Registered Student Homes (2013)	94

housing than in owner-occupied housing. In the Highlands, 63% of households with school-aged children lived in rental housing, while only 37% lived in owner-occupied housing.

Of the neighborhood's 3,506 Occupied Housing Units, 12% are owner-occupied and 88% are renter-occupied. The Highlands is one of the Borough's neighborhoods with the highest proportions of renter-occupied housing, behind only the Orchard Park area with 89% renter-occupied housing. According to the Borough's Registered Student Home list in 2013, there were **94 single-family homes or duplexes registered with the Borough as Student Homes** in the Highlands neighborhood. This represents roughly 2.7% of the occupied housing units in the neighborhood. Finally, the neighborhood experiences only a 3% vacancy rate in its overall housing stock. Despite a very small decrease in population over the past 20 years, occupied housing units

have actually increased by 5.6% since 1994.

The neighborhood's land use continues to be a mix of residential, commercial and civic uses. While the predominant land use for the neighborhood remains residential, there is a diverse mix of housing types including high density housing, single-family home conversions, large fraternity houses and owner-occupied dwellings. There is a large district within the neighborhoods in which most of the Penn State Fraternity organizations have houses and a cooperative living space for young professionals and entrepreneurial students called the co.space. The Highlands has been a popular neighborhood for investment through the State College Community Land Trust and other first-time home buyer programs.

The neighborhood also abuts Downtown State College and the mix of commercial uses that exist in that district. Additionally, commercial uses border the southwest corner of the neighborhood along Atherton Street and the Hamilton Avenue Shopping Center.

In the State College Land Area Plan, much of the central part of the Highlands neighborhood is described as a transitional area. This means that this portion of the neighborhood functions as an area where land uses, housing type and density, and type of residents transition for more dense, intensive uses to less dense, less intense uses. (See the [Land Use map on page 31](#) and the [Housing Tenure map on page 37](#).)

According to the Centre Region Planning Agency's Growth Forecast Map for 2009-2040 the neighborhood is essentially built out; only a few opportunities for the construction of new single-family homes on vacant lots were identified. Additionally, the study identified some opportunity for the Easterly Parkway Office Park to be intensified to include



additional commercial office space and services. The State College Area School District's district-wide master plan indicates that as school facilities are constructed, there is an opportunity for the district's administrative and Delta Program functions located in buildings on Nittany Avenue to be relocated to other facilities. This could provide the opportunity for these buildings to be reused by the district for other functions or to be redeveloped.

There are a number of churches and buildings used for religious meetings adjacent to the neighborhood along the perimeter of downtown and contains the Friends Meeting House. The neighborhood is home to the Delta Program and the SCASD headquarters, is adjacent to Easterly Parkway Elementary and is within walking distance to State High and Penn State University. There are many human service agencies the neighborhood as well, including the Women's Resource Center, Housing Transitions, Centre House, and the Youth Service Bureau.

Many residents report that a strong quality of the Highlands neighborhood is the mature tree canopy that exists throughout the neighborhood. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources the neighborhood has approximately 50% coverage by mature tree canopy. This coverage helps with stormwater, air quality and urban heat island impacts in the neighborhood. (See the [Community Facilities map on page 41.](#))

Due to its close proximity to downtown, the University and several major vehicular routes, traffic and parking has historically been a significant concern to residents of the neighborhood. Recent traffic calming strategies such as speed tables and barricades preventing left turns in and out of certain neighborhood streets have helped to reduce some of the impacts of these traffic conditions. Additionally, changes to on-street parking regulations have helped reduce the number of inconveniences caused by residents

from illegal or non-resident parking. Traffic on University Drive, Atherton Street and Beaver Avenue continues to be a concern to the neighborhood in terms of their impacts on neighborhood continuity, safety, and accessibility of bus, bike and pedestrian routes. (See the [Transportation Systems map on page 39.](#))

Atherton Street carries heavy volumes of CATA bus traffic and Pugh Street and University Drive also accommodate bus routes. These routes provide connections to campus, downtown, and the commercial and residential areas along North Atherton in Ferguson and Patton Townships. While these routes pass through the neighborhood frequently, there are only a few access points for Highlands residents wishing to use the buses. However, residents do not seem to be concerned at the lack of bus service due to the close proximity to many amenities.



Neighborhood SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Highlands residents generally felt the diversity of the neighborhood was a strength. They indicated that neighborhood diversity includes residents of varying ages, income levels, educational backgrounds, and local affiliations. Many felt that they had good student neighbors most of the time, that the neighborhood is a great place for families to live, and that their neighbors are very engaged and resilient to the ever-changing nature of the neighborhood. Residents felt that the physical appearance of the neighborhood, with well-preserved architecture, mature landscaping and great public services should be protected. Finally, residents felt that the ease of travel in the neighborhood by walking and biking, and the close proximity to downtown, campus and other civic and cultural amenities made it a desirable place to live.



Weaknesses

Due to the high concentration of renter-occupied housing in the neighborhood, new residents don't often have a chance to get assimilated to living in the neighborhood before a school year changes and new neighbors move in. Because of lifestyle conflicts, neighbors feel that the quality of their neighborhood has changed over time, and they feel that noise and safety concerns are becoming more pressing. Residents feel that rental housing management by both the Borough and by the landlords is an issue that needs to be addressed in order encourage more homeowners to move into the neighborhood and to retain the long-term, residents that currently live in the neighborhood. Additionally, due to the type of rental housing available, there are not many opportunities for young professional housing or affordable housing in the Highlands. Some residents felt that there are not enough opportunities for reuse of properties in transitional areas of the neighborhood, and that individuals that do not live in the neighborhood or the Borough can have a significant influence on the neighborhood's conditions. Finally, some residents felt that there was not enough information provided to policy-makers, which was negatively impacting conditions in the neighborhood.

Opportunities

Residents felt that the Highlands neighborhood had the opportunity to become a good example of positive town-gown relations through community-building activities that appeal to not only permanent residents and families, but also to student neighbors. Student representatives felt that perhaps a mentor program could help teach new student-residents about appropriate behavior in the neighborhood and improve communications. Other opportunities identified by residents included implementing programs in the neighborhood that

could help with encouraging homeownership and matching Penn State faculty with available housing in the neighborhood. Another opportunity is to expand the Earned-Income Tax revenues by expanding the number of non-student residents in the neighborhood. Some residents felt that increasing the availability of neighborhood data, clearly explaining the causes of the trends, promoting better ties with Borough officials and more consensus on Borough-wide issues would help improve the conditions of the neighborhood. Adopting the State College Land Area Plan, investigating new zoning strategies, and increased enforcement of existing zoning and rental permit regulations provide opportunities for protecting and promoting a successful mix of uses in the neighborhood. Some residents feel that there needs to be more flexibility in the allowed reuse of existing structures in order to promote continued investment in the neighborhood. Finally, residents felt that an opportunity for the neighborhood included recognizing good fraternity neighbors and better marketing the benefits of living in the Borough to potential residents.

Threats

Residents feel that the increasing enrollment at Penn State, without the addition of on-campus student housing, is threatening the neighborhood's stability because the demand for student housing is shifted to the neighborhoods. The increasing availability of renter-occupied units in the neighborhood is dwindling the Earned Income Tax revenue and property values, and driving up the cost of public services. Neighborhood residents commented that the conversion of single-family homes to rental housing is impacting the desire of families to live in the neighborhood. Some residents felt that the population increase, traffic in the neighborhood and increasing crime were major threats to the neighborhood's quality of life. Some felt that oversight in rental housing enforcement and zoning that considers the

good of one property rather than the entire neighborhood were threats to the stability of the neighborhood's uses. Other neighborhood threats included the slow addition of multi-family structures, single-family conversions, lack of moderately priced housing, and families moving outside of the Borough.

SWOT at a Glance

- + Diversity of residents (age, income, education)
- + Good student neighbors most of the time
- + Great place for families; active, resilient residents
- + Architecture, mature trees, quality public services
- + Ease of travel; proximity to downtown, campus, other amenities
- Lifestyle conflicts, particularly noise, safety, petty crime
- Rental housing management, enforcement of ordinances
- Few opportunities for housing for young professionals and workforce housing
- Few opportunities for reuse/redevelopment
- Limited information to policy-makers on impacts of decisions
- Positive example of town-gown relations
- Encourage ownership and workforce housing
- More readily available data/communications on Borough issues
- New/updated tools for managing zoning and rentals
- Market neighborhoods as a great place to live
- ✗ Growth of PSU without additional on-campus housing
- ✗ Rental housing impacts on EIT, property values, infrastructure
- ✗ Housing conditions discourage ownership in Borough
- ✗ Oversight of rental housing and zoning issues
- ✗ Increasing population, traffic and crime
- ✗ Proposed Penn State natural gas line

Vallamont

Vallamont is the Borough's smallest and most scenic neighborhood. Situated just off of University Drive, Vallamont is a quiet, natural area tucked between the Thompson Wood area and Walnut Springs Park. This area of the Borough was annexed in the mid-1930s and the neighborhood features a range of architectural styles, many of which fit in with their surrounding natural context. Many of the homes that abut Walnut Springs Park are situated along a ridge line, affording them views of the preservation area, wildlife and other surrounding natural areas.

Despite its close proximity to downtown and campus, this neighborhood has been insulated from dense residential and commercial development. While there is a series of professional offices located along University Drive near McCormick Avenue, the neighborhood's singular entry point, and some multi-family housing located just to the north of

the neighborhood, significant vegetative buffers separate those uses from the peaceful, quiet character of this small residential area.

The Vallamont Neighborhood Association represents homeowners both in the portion of the neighborhood located in the Borough, as well as those few homes that are located in College Township. Because some of the neighborhood's infrastructure is private, the Neighborhood Association is tasked with collecting fees and contracting maintenance services for items such as parking, plowing and street maintenance.

photo of neighborhood



Neighborhood Characteristics

The population of Vallamont according to the 2010 Census was XXX. This represents XX% of the total population of the Borough and a X% decrease in the neighborhood's population since 1990. The age of Vallamont residents is well-balanced, with each significant age group making up roughly an equal part of the neighborhood's population. The largest percentage of residents fall within the XX age group, with XX% of residents. Within XX% of the neighborhood's housing units reside families with children. Of the neighborhood's XX Occupied Housing Units, XX% are owner-occupied and XX% are renter-occupied.

Vallamont is the only Borough neighborhood in which all of the housing in the neighborhood is maintained as owner-occupied. According to the Borough's Registered Student Home list in December of 2013, there were no single-family homes or duplexes with student home permits in the neighborhood. Land use for this area was historically wooded

and natural; despite the neighborhood's use as a single-family, owner-occupied neighborhood, it still maintains much of its natural features. In fact, a report from the Pennsylvania State Department of Conservation and Natural Resource's Forestry Division indicated that the neighborhood is part of the Highlands tree management area, which maintains approximately 50% of its land area with mature tree cover.

Immediately to the north and west is a mix of multi-family residential housing and commercial uses, and immediately to the south is a natural preservation area. Housing units have increased by only X since 1990. According to the Centre Region Planning Agency's Growth Forecast Map for 2009-2040 the neighborhood is essentially built out; only a

Vallamont by the Numbers

Population (2010)	XX
% of Borough	XX%
Age of Residents (2010)	
Under 18	X%
18-24	XX%
25-34	X%
35-44	X%
45-64	X%
65 & up	X%
Occupied Housing Units (2010)	XXX
Owner-Occupied	X%
Renter-Occupied	X%
Increase in Units since 1994	X%
Registered Student Homes (2013)	0



few opportunities for the construction of new single-family homes on vacant lots were identified.

The neighborhood is located within the State College Area School District and is within walking distance of the Easterly Parkway Elementary School. It is also in close proximity to many other community amenities such as Walnut Springs and Lederer Parks, downtown and the Penn State Campus. Traffic and transportation impacts, such as illegal parking and speeding, on the neighborhood are limited due to the lack of any through streets and the fact that many of the neighborhood's streets are private. There are some congestion issues experienced by residents traveling into or out of the neighborhood at peak times of day when traffic is heavy on University Drive. Due to the limited connectivity of the neighborhood to other areas of the Borough, there are no bus or bike routes that run through the neighborhood. Residents do have access CATA bus

routes that utilize University Drive and the nearest bike route connecting to downtown and campus runs north and south along Garner Street.

Neighborhood SWOT Analysis

Residents of the Vallamont neighborhood participated in a SWOT Analysis along with residents of the Nittany Hills East and Penfield neighborhoods. Many of the characteristics of these neighborhoods as identified by residents were similar. This analysis does include those comments that were unique to Vallamont residents.

Strengths

Residents of these neighborhood areas feel that they live in a quiet and orderly place with beautiful views of the surrounding natural areas. Residents enjoy a close proximity to both SCASD public schools as well as Penn State's campus. They feel that the numerous parks in the area are strengths and appreciate their rustic, natural quality as compared to other Borough parks. Finally, residents feel it is a strength that they have access to a bus route on University Drive.

Weaknesses

Many of the weakness identified by the neighborhood residents were centered around University Drive. Some residents feel that University Drive is an important gateway in our community, connecting the University athletic facilities with other parts of State College, and its aesthetic appeal does not reflect its importance or the same level of design that other community gateways do. Additionally, where there are street lights, some trees and vegetation block the view. Special event traffic, rush hour, and changes to traffic



patterns during construction make it difficult to exit onto University Drive from the neighborhood. Some residents feel that it is a weakness that the neighborhood is not served by natural gas. Others experience problems with deer from Thompson Woods destroying neighborhood vegetation and walking across University Drive.

Opportunities

Residents from these neighborhoods felt that there was an opportunity to enhance University Drive as a gateway in State College by adding plantings, signage, and lighting that will make the corridor safer and more aesthetically pleasing. Additional improvements suggested for University Drive included: addressing traffic issues during construction and special events to make access to the neighborhood less problematic; addressing pedestrian safety issues at the College Avenue interchange by adding crosswalks or pedestrian refuges; and installing traffic mirrors at intersections with University Drive where visibility is limited for cars turning out of the neighborhood.

Threats

Residents of these areas felt that there were several threats that could impact quality of life in the neighborhood. Some residents felt that neighborhood boundaries should be clearer as to exclude the University Terrace apartments from their neighborhood boundaries. Residents also felt that recent or future developments in College Township could threaten neighborhood quality of life. For example, lights from banks and gas stations on South Atherton cause light pollution in the neighborhood. Additionally, the neighborhood is surrounded by Thompson Woods, the Centre Hills Golf Course and the proposed educational center for the Kissinger Meadows. Residents feel that it would be a threat if any of these areas were sold and developed for uses

other than nature and recreation. Finally, neighbors feel that the deer in the neighborhood are a threat to personal property maintenance, for traffic when they cross University Drive and have the potential of exposing residents to Lyme disease.

SWOT at a Glance

- + Quiet, orderly
- + Proximity to campus, schools, parks, access to bus routes
- Traffic on University Drive impacts exiting neighborhood
- No natural gas service
- Deer from Thompson Woods
- Address traffic, pedestrian crossings on University Drive
- ✗ Potential new developments in College Township
- ✗ Neighborhood boundary not to include University Terrace Apartments
- ✗ Deer impacting vegetation and crossing University Drive

Nittany Hills & Penfield

The Nittany Hills and Penfield neighborhoods make up the southeastern edge of the Borough. Residents of this area describe their neighborhood as quiet and orderly. These neighborhood areas feature a mix of small, single-family homes, duplexes, and larger homes in residential subdivisions characteristic of 1990s and 2000s residential development. Situated high upon a hill overlooking the commercial development along South Atherton, Centre Hills Golf Course and views of Mount Nittany, this neighborhood is at one of the highest elevations in the Borough. These areas are somewhat quiet and tucked away; there are no through streets and access is limited to a few intersections with University Drive and Branch Road in College Township.

These neighborhood areas were studied in conjunction with the State College South neighborhood plan from the mid-1990s. However, these areas are not currently represented

by a neighborhood or homeowners association.



Neighborhood Characteristics

The population of this area according to the 2010 Census was 353 residents. This represents 0.8% of the total population of the Borough. The age of residents is well-balanced, with each significant age group making up roughly an equal part of the neighborhood's population. 30% of the neighborhood's population is between 25-44 and another 32% is between 45-64. Within 39 of the neighborhood's housing units reside families with children that are of school age. Of the neighborhood's 151 Occupied Housing Units, 68% are owner-occupied and 32% are renter-occupied.

The Nittany Hills/Penfield area is the one of only a few Borough neighborhoods in which a majority of the housing stock in the neighborhood is maintained as owner-occupied. According to the Borough's Registered Student Home list in December of 2013, there were just **XX single-family homes or duplexes with student home permits in the neighborhood, which represents only X% of the neighborhood's housing**



stock. Housing units have increased by only X since 1990.

Land use for this area was historically wooded; despite the neighborhood's use as a single-family, owner-occupied neighborhood, it still maintains much of its natural features. In fact, a report from the Pennsylvania State Department of Conservation and Natural Resource's Forestry Division indicated that the neighborhood is part of the State College Southeast tree management area, which maintains approximately 50% of its land area with mature tree cover.

These neighborhood areas are surrounded by the most land use types of any of the Borough's neighborhoods.

Nittany Hills & Penfield by the Numbers

Population (2010)	353
% of Borough	0.8%
Age of Residents (2010)	
Under 18	15.6%
18-24	8%
25-34	17%
35-44	13.3%
45-64	32%
65 & up	16.1%
Occupied Housing Units (2010)	151
Owner-Occupied	68.2%
Renter-Occupied	31.8%
Increase in Units since 1994	X%
Registered Student Homes (2013)	X

Neighborhood SWOT Analysis

Further north along University Drive are Lederer and Walnut Springs Parks, which are forested preservation areas with hiking paths and other recreational amenities. Additionally, these areas are bordered by the Centre Hills Country Club golf courses, Slab Cabin Run drainage areas and the Kissinger Meadows wetland. Across University Drive is a well-established single-family neighborhood. To the southwest along University Drive are a series of churches and other commercial uses, and along South Atherton Street is a dense mix of commercial activities. According to the Centre Region Planning Agency's Growth Forecast Map for 2009-2040 the neighborhood is essentially built out; only a few opportunities for the construction of new single-family homes on vacant lots were identified.

Traffic and transportation impacts, such as illegal parking and speeding, in the neighborhood are limited due to the lack of any through streets and overnight parking restrictions. There are some congestion issues experienced by residents traveling into or out of the neighborhood at peak times of day when traffic is heavy on University Drive. Due to the limited connectivity of the neighborhood to other areas of the Borough, there are no bus or bike routes that run through the neighborhood. Residents do have access CATA bus routes that utilize University Drive and the nearby bike route connect to downtown and campus runs north along Garner Street and to the neighboring commercial amenities along South Atherton.

Residents of the Nittany Hills and Penfield neighborhoods participated in a SWOT Analysis along with residents of the Vallamont Neighborhood. Many of the characteristics of these neighborhoods as identified by residents were similar. This analysis does include those comments that were unique to Nittany Hills and Penfield residents.

Strengths

Residents of these neighborhood areas feel that they live in a quiet and orderly place with beautiful views of the surrounding natural areas. Residents enjoy a close proximity to both SCASD public schools as well as Penn State's campus. They feel that the numerous parks in the area are strengths and appreciate their rustic, natural quality of Lederer Park as compared to other Borough parks.

Weaknesses

Many of the weakness identified by the neighborhood residents were centered around University Drive. Some residents feel that University Drive is an important gateway in our community, connecting the University athletic facilities with other parts of State College, and its aesthetic appeal does not reflect its importance or the same level of design that other community gateways do. Additionally, where there are street lights, some trees and vegetation block the view. Special event traffic, rush hour, and changes to traffic patterns during construction make it difficult to exit onto University Drive from some of the neighborhoods' streets. Some residents feel that the rentals on University Drive and Royal Circle have problems with over-occupancy. Some residents feel that it is a weakness that the neighborhood is not served by natural gas.

Opportunities

Residents from these neighborhoods felt that there was an opportunity to enhance University Drive as a gateway in State College by adding plantings, signage, and lighting that will make the corridor more safe and aesthetically pleasing. Additional improvements suggested for University Drive included: addressing traffic issues during construction and special events to make access to the neighborhood less problematic and installing traffic mirrors at intersections with University Drive where visibility is limited for cars turning out of the neighborhood.

Threats

Residents of these areas felt that there were several threats that could impact quality of life in the neighborhood.



One threat dealt with the conversion of homes to rental properties, poor maintenance of those rental properties, and absentee landlords that do not oversee conditions of and behavior within the rentals. Residents also felt that recent or future developments in College Township could threaten neighborhood quality of life. For example, lights from banks and gas stations on South Atherton cause light pollution in the neighborhood. Additionally the neighborhood is surrounded by the Centre Hills Golf Course and the proposed educational center for the Kissinger Meadows. Residents feel that it would be a threat if any of these areas were sold and developed for uses other than nature and recreation.

SWOT at a Glance

- + Quiet, orderly, beautiful views of surrounding areas
- + Proximity to campus, schools, parks, access to bus routes
- Traffic on University Drive impacts exiting neighborhood
- No natural gas service
- Rental management on University Drive and Royal Court
- Address traffic, pedestrian crossings on University Drive
- Make University Drive look like an important gateway
- ✗ Existing or new developments in College Township
- ✗ Loss of Centre Hills Golf Course or Kissinger Meadows
- ✗ More rentals with absentee landlords

State College South

State College South is an attractive, stable neighborhood made up primarily of single-family residences. The neighborhood was formulated from several annexations and subdivisions that took place primarily after World War II. For several years, this neighborhood was the most southerly portion of the Borough. The architecture of the neighborhood is characteristic of mid to late 20th century residential construction. Many residents in the neighborhood that own their homes have lived in State College South for a period of time and reside in small households of one or two people. Today, the neighborhood has a roughly triangular shape, and is bounded by University Drive, Easterly Parkway and South Atherton Street.

Annexations of land that make up the area of the State College South neighborhood took place from 1930 to 1947. This land was then subdivided as the Stuart Farm, Smithfield,

South Hills, and Nittany Hills plots and Lytle's and White Oak Additions. A catalyst for the development of the neighborhood, and thus, the expansion of the Borough to the south and east, was the development of "forty duplexes on South Atherton Street to ease the postwar housing shortage." According to the Story of the Century, by Jo Chesworth, this development brought into existence Easterly Parkway and Centre Lane. From there, residential development in this area seemed to spring up overnight, forming the State College South neighborhood.

The neighborhood remains primarily as a single-family residential neighborhood and is zoned almost exclusively for those uses. The neighborhood is bounded by a series of commercial and civic uses along its edges on Easterly Parkway and South Atherton Street. While the proportion of residences in the neighborhood that are rented has increased since the preparation of the 1999 neighborhood plan, the neighborhood has maintained its single-family character. The neighborhood is home to a series of apartments that are maintained as a mix of affordable and market rate units through a partnership of the Borough and the Community Land Trust.

The State College South Neighborhood Association represents the residents of the neighborhood. At the time of this writing, neighborhood leadership was focusing efforts on improving communications with the Association's residents and reaching out to new residents that had not previously been involved. Additionally, because the neighborhood's housing stock and conditions are conducive to residents staying in their homes for a long time, the Association was hosting education sessions about services and programs that can help seniors stay in their homes.



Neighborhood Characteristics

The population of State College South according to the 2010 Census was 1,313. This represents 3.1% of the total population of the Borough and a 6% decrease in the neighborhood's population since 1995.

The age of College Heights residents is fairly well-balanced, with each significant age group making up roughly an equal part of the neighborhood's population. Consistent with the neighborhood's character as a neighborhood that residents can live in for a long time, approximately 40% of the neighborhood's population is over 45. Within 17.4% of the neighborhood's housing units reside families with children.

Of the neighborhood's 620 Occupied Housing Units, 53.4% are owner-occupied and 46.6% are renter-occupied. Therefore, the mix of owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing units is almost evenly balanced. According to the Borough's Registered Student Home list in December of 2013,



there were **41 single-family homes or duplexes with student home permits** in the neighborhood. This represents roughly 7% of the occupied housing units in the neighborhood.

Land use has been and is still predominantly single-family, owner-occupied housing with rental homes scattered throughout. Many of these rentals are concentrated in the western portion of the neighborhood along Pugh and Allen Streets, Old Boalsburg, and the Atherton Street and University Drive corridors. The number of occupied units has grown since 1995, most likely as undeveloped lots were developed and as single-family homes grew to accommodate small apartments and rooms for let. (See the Land Use map on page 31 and the Housing Tenure Map on page X.)

State College South by the Numbers

Population (2010)	1,313
% of Borough	3.1%
Increase since 1995	6%
Age of Residents (2010)	
Under 18	13%
18-24	18%
25-34	17.6%
35-44	10.6%
45-64	24.6%
65 & up	16.2%
Occupied Housing Units (2010)	620
Owner-Occupied	53.4%
Renter-Occupied	46.6%
Increase in Units since 1995	11.7%
Registered Student Homes (2013)	41

According to the Centre Region Planning Agency's Growth Forecast Map for 2009-2040 the neighborhood is essentially built out; only a few opportunities for the construction of new single-family homes on vacant lots were identified. The map also identified some opportunities for redevelopment of existing commercial lots along South Atherton Street near the intersection with University Drive.

Along the perimeter of the neighborhood are a number of public uses, schools and churches. The neighborhood is situated just west of the Centre Hills Golf Course, Lederer Park and Walnut Springs Park. Smithfield Park and the recreational equipment at Easterly Parkway Elementary school are also located within the neighborhood. These natural areas help contribute to the quality tree canopy within this area of the Borough. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources indicated that the neighborhood has a good amount of tree canopy, especially

when compared to other Borough neighborhoods. Just about 50% of the neighborhood has mature tree coverage. (See the Community Facilities map on page 41.)

Several churches make their home in the neighborhood along Easterly Parkway and University Drive. Along Atherton Street, there are a number of commercial uses, including several restaurants, clothing stores, professional offices and banks, and hotels.

Traffic and transportation have historically been of concern to the neighborhood's residents. Atherton Street is a Pennsylvania Department of Transportation roadway carrying heavy daily traffic volumes and connecting the north and south parts of the Borough. At times, particularly on football game weekends, traffic along Atherton Street and University Drive can get rather busy. Residents sometimes experience problems with cut through traffic and speeding



on Pugh, Allen and Garner Streets. These roadways impact the neighborhood in terms of their impacts on neighborhood continuity, safety, and accessibility of bus, bike and pedestrian routes. Parking issues are minimal in the neighborhood due to on-street parking restrictions. While the intent of these parking restrictions is to prevent the “warehousing” of cars in the neighborhood, this sometimes poses an inconvenience to neighborhood residents wishing to have guests. (See the [Transportation Systems map on page 39.](#))

Atherton Street, Pugh Street and University Drive carry several daily routes for CATA bus service. These routes provide connections to campus, downtown, and the commercial areas along South Atherton and even such amenities as Tussey Mountain Recreation area. While these routes pass through the neighborhood frequently, there are only a few access points for neighborhood residents wishing to use the buses.

Several bike routes run through and around the perimeter of the State College South neighborhood connecting it to Borough amenities as well as recreational bike routes throughout the Centre Region. Bike routes run along South Atherton connecting to the neighborhood, and along South Garner and South Allen Streets connecting to downtown and campus. The neighborhood is also in close proximity to nearby walking and hiking trails in Lederer Park and Walnut Springs Park.



Neighborhood SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Residents of State College South felt that a major strength of their neighborhood is that it is well-established with a strong mix of new and longer term neighbors. Generally, residents felt that getting around the neighborhood and reaching nearby destinations was easy because of the bike paths, sidewalks and close proximity to a bus route and major transportation routes. Residents also felt that Easterly Parkway Elementary and the SCASD High School, Welch Pool and Weis grocery were within walking distance.

Weaknesses

Many of the weaknesses residents observed were related to traffic and parking. Residents noted that occasionally there are issues with people using Pugh Street

as a cut through street to avoid South Atherton. Additionally, recent parking changes and parking on the street by non-residents make it difficult to utilize street parking, particularly for having guests. Some neighborhood streets, such as those leading to Easterly Parkway, have issues with sight distance as a result of their topography. Residents also feel that nuisances such as crows and loud parties have begun migrating into the neighborhood. Finally, residents feel that it is a weakness that there are not more streamlined and readily available channels of communication to learn about Borough issues and resources.

Opportunities

Residents felt that the expansion of programs such as the First Time Home buyer program could help the neighborhood because it presents an alternative to



additional rental conversions in the neighborhood. Residents also felt that there was an opportunity to improve Borough communications on issues that impact neighborhoods and to hold more community dialogues such as the neighborhood SWOT meetings.

Threats

Neighborhood residents did not share any threats at the time that staff met to gather input.

SWOT at a Glance

- + Well-established neighborhood
- + Mix of resident ages and affiliations
- + Walkable, bike routes, bus service, access to major roadways
- + Proximity to SCASD schools and Westerly Parkway
- Traffic, sight distance on Pugh Street & South Atherton Street
- Non-resident parking on neighborhood streets
- Restrictions on overnight parking a hassle
- Access to information from the Borough
- Expand First Time Home buyer Program
- Make information more convenient, accessible
- More community dialogues

DRAFT

Tusseyview

Tusseyview is an attractive, stable neighborhood made up of a single-family residences, duplexes and some apartment buildings and comprises the southernmost portion of the Borough. The neighborhood was formulated from several annexations and subdivisions that took place in the 1950s and 1960s. Homes in the neighborhood are characteristic of residential architecture and construction in the mid to late 1900s and the early 2000s.

Today, the neighborhood is roughly bounded by South Atherton Street, Whitehall Road, Waupelani Drive and the residences along Oneida Street to the east of the Westerly Parkway Plaza. The southern border between State College Borough and College Township runs along the perimeter of this neighborhood. Several streets within this neighborhood cross into College Township.

The neighborhood remains primarily as a single-family residential neighborhood and is zoned almost exclusively for those uses. With the exception of the properties that front South Atherton Street, the neighborhood is zoned for and maintained as residential uses. Tusseyview is bounded by a series of commercial and civic uses along its northeastern edge. This includes a series of small offices, restaurants, hotels, school buildings and the Foxdale Village Retirement Community. While the proportion of residences in the neighborhood that are rented has increased over the years, the neighborhood has maintained its single-family character.

The neighborhood is in close proximity to many commercial, recreational and public uses. The lack of connectivity for the neighborhood via CATA Bus routes and bike routes is offset by the proximity to Westerly Parkway Plaza's grocery store and pharmacy, the SCASD High School and recreational amenities such as the Welch Pool and Orchard Park.

The Tusseyview Neighborhood Association is active with its residents, hosting several neighborhood meetings, picnics and other activities throughout the year. The Association is unique in that it identifies its boundaries slightly differently than this neighborhood plan. The Association communicates with and provides information to the residences immediately adjacent to the neighborhood in College Township, and the multi-family residences along Waupelani Drive. Because of these differences, it is important to note that this Neighborhood Plan discusses only the characteristics of the portion of the neighborhood outlined on the [Neighborhood Map on page XX](#).



Neighborhood Characteristics

The population of Tusseyview according to the 2010 Census was 995. This represents 2.4% of the total population of the Borough and a **X% increase in the neighborhood's population since 1990.**

The Tusseyview neighborhood has one of the lowest percentages of residents aged 18-24, the presumed college student age. The age patterns of this neighborhood tend to suggest there are somewhat larger families living in Tusseyview when compared to other neighborhoods. Within 13% of the neighborhood's housing units reside families with children. Partially due to the location of Foxdale Village Retirement Community in the neighborhood, and the stability of the neighborhood for residents to live in it for a long time, the highest percentage of neighborhood residents are in the 65 and older age group, with 35.1% of residents.



Of the neighborhood's 469 Occupied Housing Units, 49.5% are owner-occupied and 50.5% are renter-occupied. Therefore, the mix of owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing units is evenly balanced. According to the Borough's Registered Student Home list in December of 2013, there were **19 single-family homes or duplexes with student home permits** in the neighborhood. This represents roughly **4% of the occupied housing units in the neighborhood.**

Land use has been and is still predominantly single-family, owner-occupied housing with rental homes scattered throughout. Many of these rentals are concentrated in the northeastern part of the neighborhood along and near the Atherton Street and Waupelani Drive corridors. The

Tusseyview by the Numbers

Population (2010)	995
% of Borough	2.4%
Age of Residents (2010)	
Under 18	16.1%
18-24	12.2%
25-34	13%
35-44	8.3%
45-64	15.1
65 & up	35.1%
Occupied Housing Units (2010)	469
Owner-Occupied	49.5%
Renter-Occupied	50.5%
Increase in Units since 1995	XX%
Registered Student Homes (2012)	19

number of occupied units has XXX since 1995, most likely as undeveloped lots were developed and as single-family homes grew to accommodate small apartments and rooms for let. (See the Land Use map on page 31 and the Housing Tenure Map on page X.)

According to the Centre Region Planning Agency's Growth Forecast Map for 2009-2040 the neighborhood is essentially built out; only a few opportunities for the construction of new single-family homes on vacant lots were identified. The map also identified several properties along Marilyn Avenue behind the Ramada Inn on South Atherton as an opportunity for future multifamily housing development. In 2013, a new student housing complex was developed along Waupelani Drive immediately adjacent to the Tusseyview neighborhood. This student housing complex, with units located in both the Borough and College Township, provides cottage-style living for 587 residents with many amenities,

including a pool and other recreation facilities.

In addition to the commercial uses that border the neighborhood on South Atherton Street, and in the Westerly Parkway Shopping Center, there are a number of other civic and public amenities within and immediately surrounding the neighborhood. For example, the Friends School of State College and the State College Area School District High School lie on the boundaries of the neighborhood. Several churches are adjacent to the neighborhood and there are three small parks within the neighborhood. Additionally, the neighborhood is in close proximity to the Welch Pool and Orchard Park. Some areas of the neighborhood afford views of the Tussey Mountain Ridge and undeveloped land to the south of the Borough. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources indicated that the neighborhood has one of the lowest percentages of mature tree cover of all of the Borough's neighborhoods Just 26%



of the neighborhood's land area has mature tree coverage. (See the [Community Facilities map on page 41.](#))

Despite the heavy volumes of traffic on South Atherton and Waupelani Drive, traffic and transportation issues are minimal within the neighborhood. There are many cul-de-sacs and dead end streets which limit the amount of through traffic in the neighborhood. Some problems exist with speeding on South Allen Street, because it is a wide street with few stop signs. Additionally, the intersection of Allen Street, Atherton Street and Waupelani Drive presents several traffic and safety concerns. Previous attempts to reconfigure this intersection were not successful, but this continues to be a intersection of concern for both the Borough and the neighborhood's residents. Other transportation considerations include the portion of Whitehall Road that is adjacent to the neighborhood. This stretch of road is currently owned by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), and could be

considered for a turn back to the local municipal control if PennDOT and the municipalities can negotiate agreeable terms. (See the [Transportation Systems map on page 39.](#))

Atherton Street and Waupelani Drive carry heavy volumes of CATA bus traffic. These routes provide connections to campus, downtown, and the commercial and residential areas along South Atherton and Orchard Park. While these routes pass through the neighborhood frequently, there are only a few access points for Tusseyview residents wishing to use the buses. These are located along Waupelani Drive and the Westerly Parkway Plaza, and along Atherton Street, primarily near the intersection of Waupelani Drive and Atherton Street. There are bike routes located along Waupelani Drive, Allen Street, north of its intersection with Atherton Street, University Drive and Whitehall Road. However, there are no bike routes that run through the neighborhood.



Neighborhood SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Tusseyview residents feel that their neighborhood has high quality housing that is stable—there is little turnover among neighborhood residents. In addition, residents felt it was a strength that there are not an overwhelming number of student residents. Residents observe that the limited number of through streets in the neighborhood help mitigate traffic issues and result in limited traffic noise, particularly in areas such as Oneida Street and on West South Hills Avenue. Residents enjoy the neighborhood open spaces as well as the fact that the Westerly Parkway Plaza and the SCASD High School are within walking distance. Many also feel that their neighborhood is in close proximity to campus.

Weaknesses

Many of the residents' state weaknesses for Tusseyview were



related to traffic and parking issues. For example, while residents generally felt it was a strength that there were few through streets, they also acknowledged that it makes it difficult to access the neighborhood, and one of the main entry points—the intersection of South Atherton, South Allen and Waupelani Drive—is a very dangerous one. Residents have observed that Oneida Street is recently becoming a cut-through traffic route, perhaps because of the Waupelani Drive construction (that took place in 2013), and that peak traffic times can lead to gridlock at the intersection of Oneida Street and Westerly Parkway. There have been some observed issues with motorists not obeying traffic laws, such as speeding on Waupelani Drive and drivers using the turn lane on Westerly Parkway to bypass other traffic. Some residents have observed a problem with non-resident parking in the neighborhood—sometimes from high school students during the day and sometimes on football weekends.

Some residents feel that the parks in this neighborhood aren't as well maintained as other Borough Parks. Some residents have recently noticed an increase in nuisances from activities such as noise and parties, the migration of crows from campus and the recently installed Westerly Parkway Plaza sign, which is lit at night. Finally, residents expressed concerns that there seems to be a lack of cohesion in planning for this neighborhood, a lack of enforcement for rentals and student homes and poor communications of these issues on the part of the Borough and rental property owners/managers.

Opportunities

Residents felt that an opportunity for the neighborhood included the redevelopment of the Westerly Parkway Plaza to enhance its image and incorporate businesses and uses within

it that are convenient for the neighborhood to use. There was also a concern that there should be increased police enforcement like in the Highlands after the Retreat becomes occupied. Additionally, residents would like to see park maintenance improved with the possible addition of electricity in parks that do not currently feature it. Several residents also suggested that a bike connection could be made from the southern end of Allen Street to University Drive. Finally, residents felt that one of the biggest opportunities for the neighborhood would come from improved communications between the Borough and neighborhood residents—such as having a liaison for the residents, having more community dialogues like this meeting improving the navigation of and services on the Borough’s website.

Threats

Many of the neighborhood’s residents’ perceived threats in the neighborhood are related to the development of the Retreat student housing on Waupelani Drive. These threats included increased traffic, bus trips, non-resident parking on neighborhood streets, noise and foot traffic. Additionally, residents question the level of security for the new student housing and whether it will lead to an increase in petty crimes, like theft, in the neighborhood.

Other threats include the lax parking restrictions on home football weekends, the cut through traffic on Oneida Street as a result of the Retreat construction, and the functionality of the intersection at South Allen, South Atherton and Waupelani Drive. Owners feel that the 50/50 split of owner- and renter-occupied housing is a comfortable mix of housing. Because the neighborhood’s housing stock does not have amenities like newly constructed homes, residents are concerned that

more housing will be converted to rental housing. They also feel that the Retreat and any future development or conversion that might lead to additional rental housing is a threat to the stability of homeownership in Tusseyview. They also feel that the fee-in-lieu option for affordable housing requirements is a threat to those trying to find affordable housing in our community. Finally, some residents felt that because the neighborhood’s parks are very small and do not have the same level of maintenance that other parks have, there is a threat that they might become locations for future development.

SWOT at a Glance

- + Stability in housing and neighbors
- + Proximity to SCASD High School and Westerly Parkway Plaza
- + Limited traffic and noise on most streets
- + Open spaces
- Dangerous intersection at South Allen, South Atherton, Waupelani Drive
- Traffic, speeding and parking issues on Waupelani, Westerly Parkway, Oneida Street
- Communications between residents, landlords, Borough
- Parks not maintained as well as other Borough parks
- Redevelopment/enhancement of Westerly Parkway Plaza
- Information more accessible, more community dialogues
- Electricity and better maintenance in neighborhood parks
- X Traffic, parking, noise and safety impacts of Retreat
- X Increased ratio of renter-occupied housing
- X Fee in lieu option for affordable housing in new developments
- X Intersection of South Allen, South Atherton, Waupelani Drive
- X Neighborhood open spaces becoming developed

Orchard Park

Orchard Park is an area of the Borough that is almost exclusively multi-family residential. This area includes a mix of well-maintained apartments, condominiums, and townhomes set among mature trees and park amenities. Orchard Park provides a home to the third largest neighborhood in terms of number of residents. Many of these residents are graduate students, international students and traveling scholars, and professionals and families.

Orchard Park is bounded roughly by Westerly Parkway Plaza and the State High South Building, the Orchard Park Bike Path, the Borough boundary along Blue Course Drive, and the Borough Boundary that roughly follows Whitehall Road. It is among the last of the Borough's annexed and subdivided areas and among the most recent developments. In fact, areas of this neighborhood continue to expand, such as the Retreat Student Housing Development along Waupelani

Drive in 2013.

The Orchard Park area is the only neighborhood in the Borough that is zoned entirely to permit the development of multi-family housing. Within the neighborhood, there are several small and large apartment, townhome and condominium developments that give the impression of many "communities" within this neighborhood area. Because each of these small communities is served by either a Condominium Association or a rental leasing company, there has not been any cohesion among the residents of this area in terms of self-governance and neighborhood association services.

This area is also one in which the boundary between the Borough and neighboring townships is very abstract. For example, the most recent development in this area, the Retreat, is built such that its entrance and several of the buildings are located within the Borough, but the majority of the development is located within College Township. Additionally, Blue Course Drive is home to many small apartment and townhome communities, making the boundary line indiscernible.



Neighborhood Characteristics

The population of the Orchard Park Area according to the 2010 Census was 4,000. This represents 9.5% of the total population of the Borough and a **X% increase in the neighborhood's population since 1990.**

The age of Orchard Park residents are skewed towards college age and early adult aged residents, which is consistent with the character of this neighborhood as a place that is popular for students and young professionals. Nearly 67% of the neighborhood's population is between 18-34. Conversely, Orchard Park is among the area with fewest percent of households with children. Within 10.6% of the neighborhood's housing units reside families with children.

Of the neighborhood's 2,053 Occupied Housing Units, 10.7% are owner-occupied and 89.3% are renter-occupied. Orchard Park has the highest percentage of renter-occupied housing of all of the Borough's neighborhoods. According



to the Borough's Registered Student Home list in December of 2013, there was 1 duplex with student home permit in the neighborhood, mostly due to the fact that this designation applies to a housing type and zoning district that are largely missing from the Orchard Park area.

Land use has been and is still predominantly multi-family, renter-occupied housing with some owner-occupied units scattered throughout. Many of these owner-occupied units are concentrated along Hart Circle, and in townhome communities off of Stratford Drive, Southgate Drive and Blue Course Drive. The conversion of owner-occupied units to rentals has become prominent in this area. (See the [Land Use map on page 31](#) and the [Housing Tenure](#)

Orchard Park by the Numbers

Population (2010)	4,000
% of Borough	9.5%
Age of Residents (2010)	
Under 18	7.5%
18-24	31.6%
25-34	35.4%
35-44	8.3%
45-64	10%
65 & up	7.2%
Occupied Housing Units (2010)	2,053
Owner-Occupied	10.7%
Renter-Occupied	89.3%
Increase in Units since 1995	X%
Registered Student Homes (2013)	1

map on page 37.)

According to the Centre Region Planning Agency's Growth Forecast Map for 2009-2040 the neighborhood is essentially built out; there were only a handful of sites indicated as suitable for future development and redevelopment opportunities. For example, the vacant field site located between the edges of the multi-family housing area of Orchard Park and the single-family housing area of Tusseyview was depicted as an area suitable for future multi-family housing, and is now the home to the Retreat Student housing complex, which was constructed in 2013. The map also indicated some opportunity for additional public uses along Waupelani Drive near South Hills Business School and the YMCA, and a greater mix and intensity of uses at the Westerly Parkway Plaza site. Significant redevelopment activity could be on the horizon if the SCASD High School renovation moves forward. Additionally, in nearby Ferguson Township, a major

student housing development on the Toll Brothers' property has been proposed for Whitehall Road. (See the Future Development section on pages XX.)

The Orchard Park area is conveniently located near a number of amenities. Within the adjacent Westerly Parkway Plaza shopping center are a number of restaurants, a gym, a grocery store and a pharmacy. Along Waupelani Drive are a number of civic uses, such as the South Hills Business School, the YMCA, churches and a nursing home. The neighborhood is also home to the Knights of Columbus, which is a convenient voting location during elections. Residents in Orchard Park also have access to High Point Park and Orchard Park with their many recreational amenities and walking/biking paths. A new regional park on Whitehall Road, which is expected to be completed by 2016 and the completion of the Musser Gap trail connection to the Rothrock State Forest will provide even more access to outdoor and recreational amenities.



Just outside of the neighborhood is open space and rural areas. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Greentree Unit, which includes most of Orchard Park and the Greentree neighborhood, has only 32% mature tree canopy. Much of this vegetation is maintained in the Orchard Park, Highpoint Park and along the Orchard Park bike path. (See the [Community Facilities map on page 41.](#))

Traffic and transportation issues have fluctuated over time in the Orchard Park area. Whitehall Road, Waupelani Drive and Blue Course Drive are major streets connecting this part of the Borough to the major amenities both in the Borough and in neighboring townships. Additionally, during construction or times of peak traffic, some cut through traffic uses neighborhood streets to bypass issues. This can lead to congestion and speeding problems. Additionally, the right of way in some areas is challenging to accommodate driving lanes, on-street parking and bus traffic.. A new traffic light was installed at the intersection of Whitehall Road and Blue Course Drive as part of the Whitehall Road expansion.

Parking issues are minimal in the neighborhood. There have been some recent modifications to the on-street parking arrangements for Orchard Park. Because these parking zones alternate sides of the street on various days of the week, there are some issues with cars that are not moved at the appropriate time. (See the [Transportation Systems map on page 39.](#))

Waupelani Drive, Stratford Drive and Southgate Drive carry significant CATA bus traffic for the R bus and its various iterations. The R route is among the busiest of the routes that CATA operates and one that is fully operated within the Borough's boundaries. This route features regular routes connecting to downtown, campus and the major population areas of Orchard Park. Additionally, this route features

“express” routes, and one-way routes to handle peak service times.

Several bike routes run through or around the perimeter of the Orchard Park neighborhood area, connecting it to Borough amenities as well as recreational bike routes throughout the Centre Region. Waupelani Drive is designated as an on-street bike route, as is nearby Westerly Parkway. The Orchard Park shared use path acts as the northern boundary of the neighborhood and provides connections into the downtown and campus area of the Borough, as well as to the south and east where other regional recreational trails are located, such as the Blue Course bike path. A new bike lane was implemented along Whitehall Road as part of the reconstruction of that corridor in 2013.



Neighborhood SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Residents of Orchard Park feel that the area is very safe, quiet and tidy. It was stated as a strength that there is access to both High Point Park and Orchard Park and that the future Whitehall Road Park and bicycle access will further improve the neighborhood. Residents feel that having access to the Westerly Parkway Plaza and SCASD schools make the neighborhood a great place for people with children. Bus service, bike service and ease of driving make the area a good location for accessing other parts of the Borough, such as downtown. Additionally, residents feel that this area presents the opportunity for some of the most affordable housing within the Borough.

Weaknesses

One weakness residents observed was that some of the vegetation along Orchard Park bike path is poorly maintained. Additionally, some residents observe that Stratford is becoming a cut through from Whitehall Road and there is increased speeding. Parking continues to be problematic due to the parking alternating between both sides of the street on designated days. Residents experience some problems with congestion due to parking, traffic, pedestrians and buses making layovers at stops near Waupelani Drive. Finally, some residents feel that while the shopping center has been receiving some physical improvements in 2013, the quality of the Weis grocery is not sufficient for the demand of customers it could potentially serve.



Opportunities

Residents feel that the new Whitehall Road Park and bike path as well as the Musser Gap trail will be improvements for the neighborhood, and that the light at Whitehall Road and Blue Course Drive will help with traffic. Residents feel that this area has a great opportunity for focusing reinvestment in owner occupied housing and affordable housing units for the Borough. Finally, residents feel that there is an opportunity for improving the lighting throughout the neighborhood.

Threats

One threat that was identified by residents was the relocation of the SCASD High School or Corl Street Elementary School. Of particular concern was the idea of moving the High

School to Whitehall Road, which would require the Borough to purchase more land and could have negative traffic impacts on the Orchard Park area. Further conversion of owner-occupied housing units to rentals also poses a threat for individuals hoping to get financing to purchase a unit in the neighborhood. Finally, residents are interested in what impacts might result from the Retreat in terms of traffic, parking and general security issues.



SWOT at a Glance

- + Safe, quiet and tidy
- + High Point Park, Orchard Park, future parks & bike paths
- + Proximity to Westerly Parkway Plaza, SCASD schools
- + Bus service, bike access and ease of access to Borough
- + Affordability of housing in Orchard Park
- Maintenance of vegetation along Orchard Park bike path
- Stratford Drive traffic, speeding, parking management
- Safety of pedestrians, motorists, buses on Stratford Dr.
- Maintenance and quality of Weis Grocery store
- New Whitehall Rd. park and bike path; Musser Gap Trail
- Focus neighborhood for development of affordable and workforce housing
- Additional lighting in neighborhood
- ✗ Relocation of SCASD schools
- ✗ Further conversion to rental housing-- impacts on ability to obtain financing for buying a unit
- ✗ Parking and security impacts from the Retreat

Greentree

Greentree is a relatively new neighborhood in the Borough of State College. Few of the homes in this neighborhood date back more than 50 years. It is a quiet, suburban-style community that is close to many community amenities. The neighborhood is bounded by the western Borough Boundary, Orchard Park and State High to the south and east, and Westerly Parkway to the north. It is in close proximity to the Welch Pool, SCASD High School, Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church and School, the YMCA, and the Westerly Parkway shopping center. Greentree is well-known for its “Twelve Days of Christmas” display that is organized by residents living along Sparks Street. This display attracts many residents from around the greater State College area during the holiday season.

The Greentree neighborhood is among the newest of the Borough’s neighborhoods. The northernmost portion of this

neighborhood, between Saxton Drive and South Sparks Street, was annexed into the Borough in the mid 1950s and homes were constructed throughout the mid 1950s and 1960s. Land area that comprises the remainder of the neighborhood was later annexed and subdivided in order to create the Greentree Development. According to historic building permit records, groups of approximately 5 homes were built at a time and then sold beginning in the early 1970s. Most of the homes in the neighborhood were constructed by the mid 1980s.

The Greentree Association was formed in the early 1980s so that neighbors could get together to socialize and share concerns. Since its formation, the association has organized various events and activities for Greentree residents, such as the annual neighborhood garage sale and picnic. In 2013, many Greentree residents, along with other community members, participated in a day-long volunteer project to build the Kaboom! Playground in Orchard Park. Neighborhood leadership regularly shares important information and updates about community and government events through their Yahoo Group and Facebook page. The Association has also frequently represented the interests of its homeowners in the neighborhood with regards to rental housing permitting issues, future development opportunities, and zoning concerns.

The neighborhood remains today as one of the few Borough neighborhoods that is zoned completely for single-family residences and open space. It also exists as one of the Borough’s neighborhoods with the highest rates of homeownership and households with children, and is among those with the lowest number of Student Home permits. Residents cite the neighborhood’s increasing home values and proximity to the SCASD High School and other community amenities as attractive qualities for new Borough residents.

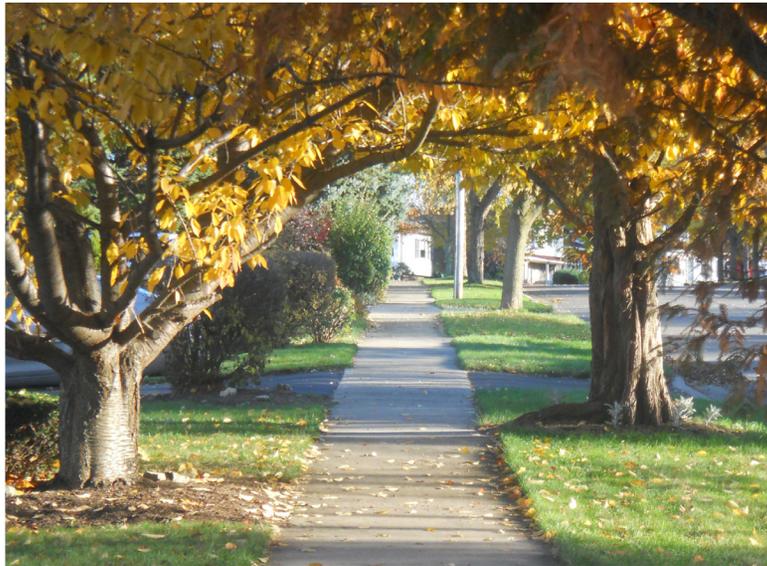


Neighborhood Characteristics

The population of Greentree according to the 2010 Census was 923. This represents 2.2% of the total population of the Borough and a **X% increase in the neighborhood's population since 1990.**

The age of Greentree residents is indicative of many families residing in the neighborhood. While the largest percentage of residents fall within the 45-64 age group, with 31.9% of residents. However, the second largest age group are those under 18 years old, representing 24.3% of the neighborhood population. Within 31% of the neighborhood's housing units reside families with children, which is the highest rate among the Borough's neighborhoods. Additionally, the 18-24 year old age group, which is the presumed undergraduate student age, represents only 4.6% of the neighborhood's population.

Of the neighborhood's 359 Occupied Housing Units, 93.3% are owner-occupied and 6.7% are renter-occupied. Greentree



is one of few Borough neighborhoods in which a significant majority of the housing in the neighborhood is maintained as owner-occupied. According to the Borough's Registered Student Home list in December of 2013, there were 5 single-family homes or duplexes with student home permits in the neighborhood. This represents just over 1% of the occupied housing units in the neighborhood.

Land use has been and is still predominantly single-family, owner-occupied housing with a few rentals scattered throughout. These rentals are not concentrated in one particular area of the neighborhood, and instead seem to be well-integrated into the neighborhood character. (See the [Land Use map on page 31](#) and the [Housing Tenure](#)

Greentree by the Numbers

Population (2010)	923
% of Borough	2.2%
Age of Residents (2010)	
Under 18	24.3%
18-24	4.6%
25-34	7.7%
35-44	12.1%
45-64	31.9%
65 & up	19.4%
Occupied Housing Units (2010)	359
Owner-Occupied	93.3%
Renter-Occupied	6.7%
Increase in Units since 1995	X%
Registered Student Homes (2013)	5

map on page 37.)

According to the Centre Region Planning Agency's Growth Forecast Map for 2009-2040 there were no areas within the neighborhood boundaries that were indicated as suitable for future development or redevelopment. However, given that the neighborhood shares a boundary with Ferguson Township and is located near the commercial and civic amenities along Westerly Parkway and Waupelani Drive, development and redevelopment activities in those areas can impact the Greentree neighborhood. In 2013, upgrades were made to the nearby Westerly Parkway Shopping Center and a process to prepare a plan for a renovated SCASD High School was initiated.

The neighborhood is within walking distance of the State College Area School District's High School, Our Lady of Victory Church and Elementary School, the Welch Pool,

Orchard Park's playground and other recreational facilities, Holmes-Foster Park and the Westerly Parkway Plaza, which includes a grocery store, gym and several restaurants. The neighborhood is primarily surrounded by other suburban-style developments, including other single family neighborhoods located in Ferguson Township, and the multi-family housing developments in the Orchard Park neighborhood area. (See the Community Facilities map on page 41.)

While the neighborhood's aesthetics and ambiance are attractive, residents occasionally cite the lack of trees and street lights. In fact, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources indicated that the neighborhood has the greatest opportunity for increasing tree canopy of any of the Borough's neighborhoods. Just 32% of the management zone which includes both the Greentree and Orchard Park neighborhoods has mature tree coverage, most of which is located in Orchard and High Point



Neighborhood SWOT Analysis

parks.

Due to the curvilinear nature of the neighborhood's streets, and the fact that Bayberry Drive is the only through street, the State College Borough Public Works Department does not consider the neighborhood's streets to be of high concern from a traffic management standpoint. Residents do cite some localized issues with speeding on Bayberry Drive and an increased parking and traffic demand when sporting events and other activities take place in Orchard Park. There is some potential for future impacts on traffic by new park and residential developments along Whitehall Road and Blue Course Drive, but these impacts have not yet been studied. Parking issues are minimal in the neighborhood. In fact, Greentree neighborhood is the only Borough neighborhood in which on-street parking is not regulated.

The neighborhood has access to two CATA Bus routes on Bayberry Drive and Westerly Parkway. These routes lead to downtown and campus, and connect to the Science Park Road area and Pine Grove Mills. The Orchard Park bike path runs along the southern edge of the neighborhood and residents can access it either from the intersection of Bayberry and Blue Course Drives or along Westerly Parkway next to the Welch Pool. This path connects with a series of paths and on-street routes that lead to downtown and campus, as well as regional shared-use paths in Ferguson Township, such as the Blue Course Drive path. (See the [Transportation Systems map on page 39.](#))

Strengths

Greentree neighborhood residents feel that their neighborhood is a safe, quiet neighborhood that is family-oriented and a place where neighbors know each other. They feel that the limited number of rental units and the fact that young families with children are moving in will spark future home improvements in the neighborhood and help protect property values. Residents observe that homes in their neighborhood sell quickly. Residents feel that their neighborhood is centrally located in relation to many State College and regional amenities—it is in close proximity to Corl Street Elementary and State High, the Parkway Plaza, Orchard Park and bike paths. The neighborhood is well connected to the rest of State College through walking, biking and CATA access, which also makes the neighborhood's proximity to downtown and campus a strength for residents. Neighborhood ambiance



is created through neighbor's relations and traditions such as the 12 Days of Christmas and the church bells from Our Lady of Victory.

Weaknesses

Residents felt that one of the greatest weaknesses of the neighborhood was related to traffic. The neighborhood experiences speeding and reckless driving on through streets such as Bayberry and Saxton Drives, and notice that traffic problems increase during school and sporting events. Neighborhood residents also felt that overhead utilities were a weakness both from an aesthetic standpoint and for the risk of power failures during storms. Some residents felt that the neighborhood is too dark, lacking both street lighting and pedestrian-scale lighting. Finally, a resident felt that the fact that the neighborhood does not have access to natural gas as an energy source was a weakness.

Opportunities

Residents felt that the greatest opportunity for the neighborhood would be to maintain the consistency and integrity of the homes and nearby facilities in order to protect property values and the high quality of life in the neighborhood. Some other opportunities residents thought would help maintain the neighborhood's character included: traffic calming, such as installing stop lights at Blue Course and Bayberry and at Saxton and Westerly Parkway; upgrading the grocery store and other retail opportunities at Westerly Parkway Plaza; and extending natural gas lines to the neighborhood.



Threats

Residents typically felt that the threats to their neighborhood's character stem from development decisions around Greentree. One issue that neighbors felt could threaten the neighborhood would be the relocation and redevelopment of the State College High School. Residents were concerned with the zoning of the school's properties and what the future uses could be. Additionally, residents mentioned development that is happening in Ferguson Township and whether those developments will have traffic impacts on the neighborhood, particularly at areas like the intersection of Bayberry and Blue Course Drives. While Greentrees is currently majority owner-occupied housing, residents felt that more turnover to renter-occupied housing could be a threat to the neighborhood's stability.



SWOT at a Glance

- + Ambiance, maintenance of housing, quiet, safe
- + New families move in, increase in property values
- + Proximity to SCASD schools, Westerly Parkway Plaza
- + Orchard Park, bike paths
- + Walkable, bikeable, CATA access
- Traffic, speeding result of nearby events
- Aesthetics of overhead utilities, impact of storms
- Lack of street and pedestrian lighting
- No natural gas service
- Maintain the consistency and integrity of homes
- Maintain nearby public and private services
- Traffic calming, stop lights
- Enhance Westerly Parkway Plaza, more retail uses
- Extend natural gas lines to neighborhood
- X Development in Ferguson & College Townships
- X Relocation of SCASD High School, Corl Street Elementary
- X Zoning of school properties
- X Future development opportunities for West Campus, Ferguson & Patton Twps
- X Conversion to renter-occupied housing
- X Location of neighborhood Boundaries

Holmes-Foster

Holmes-Foster is an historic neighborhood to the south and east of the Penn State Campus and Downtown. The neighborhood is a vision of high-quality architecture, tree-lined streets, and the prosperity of the 1910s and 1920s. The predominance of large, mature trees throughout the neighborhood contribute to the neighborhood's character and demonstrate the Borough's early commitment to the planting of shade trees. The neighborhood is bounded by Railroad Avenue to the north, Westerly Parkway to the south, Buckhout Street to the west and Atherton Street to the east. Railroad Avenue is named as such because it is the historic route of the Bellefonte Central Railroad's freight service.

The neighborhood is among the oldest of the Borough's neighborhoods and a substantial portion of the neighborhood is within the Highlands-Holmes Foster registered National Historic District. Annexations of land that make up the area

of the Holmes-Foster neighborhood took place from about 1917 to 1954. This land was then subdivided as the Foster Brothers, Holmes and Foster, Fairview Heights and Oak Park Plots.

As the college became more successful, and prosperity in the community grew, the neighborhood formed. Neighborhood growth began as a series of modest Victorian homes near downtown and led to much larger, architecturally detailed housing made with brick and stone from local materials. Much of the historic housing was built between 1896 and 1941 and the beginning of World War II. One house in the neighborhood dates back to the last half of the 19th Century. In 1920 and 1921, the State College Chamber of Commerce determined that there was a large number of families living in student rooming houses and, therefore, a number of houses were quickly built along Gill Street by an organization that was formed to sell the houses without profit.

College Avenue boasted many prominent buildings, including the only remaining fraternity in the western part of the Borough and an apartment building that was at one time the first hospital in State College. The section of the neighborhood north of College Avenue has come to be known as the West End in recent years and has become a very popular area for student rental housing close to campus in converted single-family homes.

Holmes-Foster is represented by a neighborhood association, which is active in representing the interests of the neighborhood's residents and in organizing several events each year, including an annual block party and a "Welcome Walk." Residents invite their neighbors and student residents to these events as a way to get to know each other and promote positive relations among neighbors.



Neighborhood Characteristics

The population of Holmes-Foster according to the 2010 Census was 1,597. This represents 3.8% of the total population of the Borough and a **X% increase in the neighborhood's population since 1990.**

The age of Holmes-Foster residents is well-balanced, with each significant age group making up roughly an equal part of the neighborhood's population. However, the largest percentage of residents are within the resumed college student age group of 18-24 with 38.2% of residents. Within 16.8% of the neighborhood's housing units reside families with children.

Of the neighborhood's 713 Occupied Housing Units, 41.8% are owner-occupied and 58.2% are renter-occupied. According to the Borough's Registered Student Home list in December of 2013, there were **XX single-family homes or duplexes with student home permits** in the neighborhood.



This represents roughly **XX% of the occupied housing units in the neighborhood.**

Land use has been and is still predominantly residential with a mix of renter and owner-occupied housing units. Some small offices, commercial establishments and churches are located along College and Beaver Avenues. Immediately outside of the Borough boundary along College Avenue, uses change to commercial uses such as gas stations, printing shops and other offices and storage facilities. The southern part of the neighborhood overlooks the State High north building and Community Field. The western part of the neighborhood transitions to a mix of multi-family housing, the Corl Street Elementary and the Borough's service facility.

Holmes-Foster by the Numbers

Population (2010)	1,597
% of Borough	3.8%
Age of Residents (2010)	
Under 18	14.3%
18-24	38.2%
25-34	10.2%
35-44	9.7%
45-64	17.4%
65 & up	10.1%
Occupied Housing Units (2010)	
Owner-Occupied	41.8%
Renter-Occupied	58.2%
Increase in Units since 1995	X%
Registered Student Homes (2013)	XX

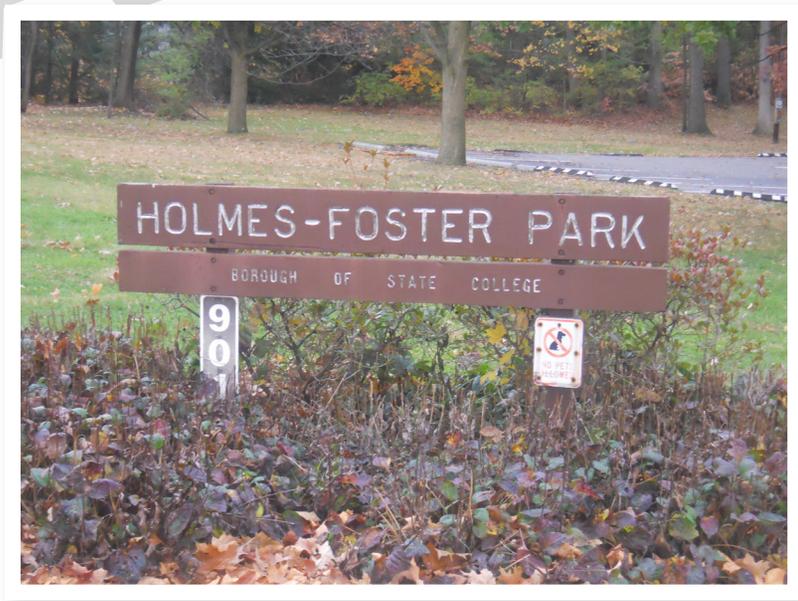
Despite a slight decrease in population over the past 20 years, occupied housing units have actually increased by 2% since 1995. (See the Land Use map on page 31 and the Housing Tenure map on page 37.)

The Centre Region Planning Agency's Growth Forecast Map for 2009-2040 indicated significant opportunities for intensification and greater mix of uses along the College and Beaver Avenue corridors. It also indicated a future opportunity for the expansion or redevelopment of the Borough's service facility near the intersections of Metz and Osmond Streets. Additionally, there were several lots throughout the neighborhood that are currently vacant that could accommodate new single-family homes. The proximity of the Holmes-Foster neighborhood to potential development areas in the downtown, on the Pennsylvania State University's West Campus, and along West College Avenue in Ferguson Township means that residents could

experience some impacts, either positive or negative, as a result of future development.

Holmes-Foster Park is an 11 acre park that virtually borders the southern edge of the neighborhood. This park includes amenities that can be used by residents, including picnic pavilions and grills, playgrounds, and basketball and bocce ball courts. A group of Penn State students worked with neighborhood residents to prepare a master plan for the park, and in 2014 the Borough will receive grant funding to implement some of the improvements in the master plan. (See the Community Facilities map on page 41.)

In keeping with its historic roots as a neighborhood with significant mature tree canopy, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources indicated just over 40% of the land area in Holmes-Foster and the West End had mature tree canopy. DCNR also indicated that there is



Neighborhood SWOT Analysis

an opportunity to increase this tree canopy in the areas of the neighborhood that are closest to downtown and campus.

Traffic and transportation have historically had significant impacts on the neighborhood. The neighborhood is bounded by Atherton Street and the College and Beaver Avenue corridor, which are major arterial streets that are managed by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. These roadways typically carry significant traffic volumes. In an effort to reduce through traffic and maintain quiet neighborhood streets, a pedestrian island was installed at the intersection of Foster Avenue and Atherton Street. This served to help improve pedestrian safety and reduce the number of vehicles using Foster Avenue as an alternative to College and Beaver Avenues. This device, paired with the fact that Sparks Street is the only through street traversing the neighborhood north to south has resulted in a slightly reduced traffic volume in the neighborhood. However, some streets and intersections continue to be of concern for speeding. Additionally, high volumes of traffic on College and Beaver Avenues continues to be of concern, particularly for pedestrian safety. Parking issues are minimal in the neighborhood. Many streets in Holmes-Foster have been designated as 'No Parking Anytime' zones or are restricted to 2 Hour parking or Residential Permit parking. (See the [Transportation Systems map on page 39.](#))

Accessing community amenities on foot from the neighborhood is made convenient by its proximity to downtown, campus and other attractions. Additionally, there are bike lines on Gill and Sparks Streets and Foster Avenue. These connect the neighborhood to downtown, campus, the SCASD schools and the Orchard Park bike path. Several CATA Bus routes utilize College and Beaver Avenues as a means to connect such areas as Pine Grove Mills and Cato Park to downtown and campus, which provides neighborhood residents with access if it is needed.

Strengths

Holmes-Foster residents reported many strengths in their neighborhood. The first was that there is a high aesthetic value to the neighborhood. Residents enjoy the historic roots and quality architecture in the neighborhood. Houses along alleys that are close to each other, such as the type of housing that is along College Avenue, and the fact that most of the housing is pedestrian/neighborhood scale was stated as a strength. Residents also enjoy that the neighborhood has an "arboretum" feel, with many mature trees and vegetation, views of Mount Nittany and the lack of high rise apartment buildings.

Residents also felt that the neighborhood has many amenities in or nearby that contributed to its strengths. For example, the neighborhood is close to downtown Penn State, public schools, parks groceries and pharmacies. Within the neighborhood there are private schools, daycares and religious institutions and small businesses. Residents also enjoy the neighborhood parks, green spaces, Community Field and the mature trees. Amenities within and surrounding the neighborhood are highly accessible because the neighborhood is very walkable, bikeable, the alleys are accessible and sidewalks feature ADA amenities.

Finally, residents enjoy the sense of community and spirit that they observe in their neighborhood. They enjoy living in a neighborhood with residents from a diversity of age groups and backgrounds, particularly that there are families with children. Some residents feel that there are positive relationships between them and their student neighbors and enjoy opportunities to interact with each other. They observe that it is a strength that there are many residents that have lived in the neighborhood for a long time, contributing to the sustainability and maintenance of the neighborhood.

Finally, residents feel like their neighbors help each other and they observe low crime rates and the freedom from fear.

Weaknesses

Among the major weaknesses that residents of Holmes-Foster indicated was traffic and noise, deficiencies in the Urban Village, and maintenance and behavior issues. Traffic issues include through traffic (both vehicular and pedestrians) and speeding on Sparks St. Foster Avenue and S. Atherton St. Residents feel that there aren't enough traffic control measures existing in the neighborhood, particularly during school times and on Sundays. Other neighbors find the traffic signage, particularly along Westerly Parkway to be unsightly. Residents also indicate that this traffic causes noise, as do late walkers traveling through the neighborhood at night.

Several residents expressed weaknesses in the Urban Village area of the neighborhood. These included poor sidewalk and street conditions that don't seem to be repaired as quickly or adequately as other areas of the neighborhood. Additionally, because of the quality of housing, the ambiance, and other conditions, such as the lack of a bus stop for school aged children, it is difficult to attract families to live in the Urban Village.

Property maintenance and renter behavior were frequently stated as a weakness of the neighborhood. Residents observe issues with property maintenance and neglect in some areas of the neighborhood, although they admit they can't understand why some areas are maintained at a much higher level than others. In some cases, maintenance affects public areas of the neighborhood, such as when broken glass obscures a street or alley, or snow and vegetation aren't cleared from sidewalks. Residents feel that lease pressures mean that new renters aren't always

current on local ordinances and other restrictions, which could result in poor maintenance or behavior. Finally, the neighborhood feels that party houses and the noise, litter and petty crimes associated with late night activities are a weakness.

Additional weaknesses cited by residents included a lack of knowledge regarding Borough ordinances, the Borough's methods for maintenance, such as snow clearing, sometimes being problematic for residents, and not having the appropriate mechanisms in place for getting to interact with student neighbors in a positive way. Finally, residents expressed concern that much planning work has been done for the Holmes-Foster neighborhood, but that continued planning efforts make the neighborhood feel like they must defend it from future changes.

Opportunities

One of the major opportunities identified by the neighborhood was the opportunity to make the neighborhood attractive for reinvestment as the Centre Region continues to grow outwards. This includes preserving and enhancing existing infrastructure, attracting additional amenities such as bike and pedestrian connections to campus, more green space and a coffee shop, farmers market and other community uses in the neighborhood. Additionally, careful consideration for the redevelopment of West College Avenue both in the Borough and Ferguson Township, throughout the Urban Village, the former train station and the former OWHouts site could be positive opportunities for the neighborhood.

Additional opportunities for the neighborhood include implementing amenities to help improve the functionality and aesthetics of the neighborhood. This includes slowing traffic, readdressing street lighting to be less intrusive and more pedestrian-scale, create natural buffers and barriers

to prevent trespassing between yards and developing neighborhood gateway or welcome signs.

Finally, residents observed many opportunities for improving relations both within the neighborhood and outside the neighborhood. This included opportunities for getting to know students better, including them in neighborhood projects, and changing the perception that long-term residents don't want to know students. Residents also wanted to improve connections to campus, both a physical connection and developing a working relationship with Penn State for future decision making. And finally, residents expressed interest in improving communications with the Borough and having more clarity and consistency in zoning and ordinance enforcement.

Threats

Threats that were indicated by residents included losing the amenities that currently make the neighborhood desirable and negative impacts from future development. Residents indicated that the relocation of either the Corl Street Elementary or the SCASD High School would be threats, as would losing the businesses that are currently located in the neighborhood. Aging housing stock, absentee landlords and a local historic district without the authority to prevent demolition were also indicated as threats. Some residents felt it is a threat to have the perception that all renters are students and that no families will want to live in certain areas, because high levels of investment won't take place in an area. Other threats would be anything that impacts the integrity of Community Field and high maintenance of parks and bike paths.

While well-planned development was generally thought of as an opportunity, residents also felt that development could be a threat if it doesn't take the neighborhood context into consideration. For example, the Terraced Streetscape

district and future development along West College in Ferguson Township could threaten the neighborhood scale of College Avenue. High density housing such as the development proposal for the southwest corner of College and Atherton and the Retreat could bring unintended impacts to the neighborhood. Additionally, residents felt that the uncertain future of the Urban Village due to planning stalled planning efforts is a threat.

SWOT at a Glance

- + Historic roots, quality architecture, neighborhood scale
- + Mature trees, "arboretum" feel, views of Mt. Nittany
- + Proximity to downtown, campus, SCASD schools, parks, grocery, other daily amenities
- + Neighborhood has several parks, small businesses, schools and churches
- + Walkable, bikeable, ADA accessible
- + Sense of community, positive neighbor relations, low crime rates
- Speeding, traffic, noise and late-night pedestrian traffic
- Maintenance and amenities lacking in Urban Village
- Maintenance, behavior in rental housing; renter education
- Lack of knowledge on Borough ordinances
- Much planning completed, but still planning
- Make neighborhood attractive for reinvestment
- More open space, community spaces/uses, small businesses focused on neighborhood
- Address traffic issues, pedestrian-scale street lighting
- Natural borders/buffers, and neighborhood gateway signage and other identity signs
- Improving connections among residents and into campus
- X Losing positive neighborhood & nearby amenities
- X Aging housing stock, absentee landlords
- X Local historic district with no power to prevent demolition
- X Impacts of development in Ferguson Twp & Downtown

West End

The West End neighborhood has historically been considered a part of the Holmes-Foster neighborhood. In fact, this area was the first area of rapid residential growth in modest Victorian style homes that eventually led to the growth of the large, historic homes that today make up the Holmes-Foster neighborhood. The West End area has evolved over time, however, to one with a much different character than the Holmes-Foster neighborhood. Particularly, it is now a collection of offices, commercial establishments, churches and rental housing that border the West Campus edge of the Pennsylvania State University.

The blocks that make up the eastern half of this area were part of the original Borough boundaries when it was incorporated in 1904. Annexations of land that make up the rest of the West End area took place in 1922.



Many buildings in the West End are contributing structures to the Highlands-Holmes Foster National Historic District. As the college became more successful, and prosperity in the community grew, the neighborhood formed. Neighborhood growth began as a series of modest Victorian homes near downtown and led to much larger, architecturally detailed housing made with brick and stone from local materials. Much of the historic housing was built between 1896 and 1941 and the beginning of World War II. College Avenue boasted many prominent buildings, including the only remaining fraternity in the western part of the Borough and an apartment building that was at one time the first hospital in State College.

The West End has been an area of the Borough that has been studied in much detail for many years. This is due in part to its prominent location as a gateway into and out of the Borough along the College and Beaver Avenue corridors, and its role as a transition area between the Holmes-Foster neighborhood, West Campus and Downtown. It has also been studied due to its conversion from a mixed-use neighborhood to one of scaled-back investment and predominately student-occupied rental dwellings. The West End Revitalization Plan, prepared in the mid-2000s, laid out a vision for this area to become a more dense, mixed-use neighborhood that would be attractive to undergraduate and graduate students as well as young professionals. The Plan called for infill to promote the neighborhood's historic character, to compliment the downtown, and to provide for more housing opportunities in a walkable environment. It also called for a number of community spaces and improvements to make the area more safe and accessible by pedestrians and cyclists. The Downtown Master Plan, adopted in 2013, explored the concepts of this West End Plan and recommended that they be implemented in conjunction with the Downtown Plan's activities.

Neighborhood Characteristics

The population of the West End area according to the 2010 Census was 2,324. This represents 5.5% of the total population of the Borough.

Residents in this area are typically between the ages of 18 and 24, the presumed age group for undergraduate students. This age cohort represents 88.8% of the population in the West End. Within only 2% of the neighborhood's housing units reside families with children.

Of the West End's 819 Occupied Housing Units, 96.3% are owner-occupied and 3.7% are renter-occupied. The West End is one of the few areas of the Borough's neighborhoods in which nearly all of the housing is maintained as renter-occupied. According to the Borough's Registered Student Home list in December of 2013, there were XX single-family homes or duplexes with student home permits in the neighborhood. This represents roughly XX% of the

occupied housing units in the area.

Land use in the West End is mixed, and has the potential to support neighborhood-scale commercial venues. In addition to rental housing, this small area also hosts a mix of commercial establishments such as auto service station, an equipment rental facility and a beer distributor. There are also several professional offices and a church located in the West End. This area abuts Penn State University's West Campus and such campus structures as the West Campus power substation and the historic train depot which is now a regional bus hub. (See the Land Use map on page 31 and the Housing Tenure map on page XX.)

West End by the Numbers

Population (2010)	2,324
% of Borough	5.5%
Age of Residents (2010)	
Under 18	1.3%
18-24	88.8%
25-34	5.7%
35-44	1.2%
45-64	1.6%
65 & up	1.3%
Occupied Housing Units (2010)	819
Owner-Occupied	3.7%
Renter-Occupied	96.3%
Registered Student Homes (2013)	XX

