



Chapter 4 Land Use

This Chapter discusses land use patterns for Kennett Square and contains recommendations for the next ten years regarding how to achieve the land use goals for the Borough. Based on the analysis of existing land use patterns (in this Chapter), detailed planning topic analyses (contained in Chapters 5 to 12), and Borough policies (Chapter 2), this Chapter provides a land use plan for the Borough. Rather than containing land use planning recommendations that are broad-based, there are more specific recommendations related to land use (plus other planning topics) found in the nine Character Areas, as well as the topical planning Chapters 5 to 12.

The Land Use Plan factors all of the issues examined during the inventory and analysis phase, such as transportation, existing land use, housing, natural resources, historic resources, recreation, and community facilities, into the recommendations. It provides a framework for guiding other Plan sections in terms of where improvements to infrastructure are most appropriate and necessary and how impacts to the environment can be mitigated. However, all the Plan chapters work together to implement the goals and objectives and many recommendations from other chapters are essential to in accomplishing the recommendations in the Land Use Plan.

The first section of this Chapter identifies land use categories and provides an overview of the existing land use patterns and zoning within the Borough. An analysis of existing land use patterns and regulations is a crucial part of the Comprehensive Plan since understanding the present conditions provides the Borough with information needed to formulate land use policies and recommendations that maintain the Borough's character.

The second section of this Chapter contains the Land Use Plan, organized into subsections of the Borough identified as "character areas." The character areas represent different planning areas within the Borough. Realizing that there is "always more than one way to slice a pie", the boundaries of the individual character areas were developed for a variety of reasons. In some cases a character area boundary may be a specific neighborhood where another character area may use a specific feature such as the railroad or waterway. In other instances a residential street may be a boundary even though both sides of the street are residential, where one side is a congruent neighborhood while the other side has residential uses that back onto Industrial uses. In this case the point of grouping such "incompatible uses" is to address the issues between these uses within a character area rather than trying to adjust character area boundaries to contain only like uses.

Through mapping and analyzing existing land use, it is possible to identify land use conflicts, infill opportunities, and fair-share housing issues. This information is critical to identifying future land use

issues and important in planning for community facilities, transportation and circulation, zoning modifications, and infrastructure improvements.

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EXISTING LAND USE INVENTORY

LAND USE PATTERNS AND DISCUSSION

Kennett Square Borough is nearly “built-out” with relatively little undeveloped land remaining. While the Borough generally contains a mix of land uses, there are several definable land use patterns as follows:

- State Street and Cypress Street commercial/mixed use corridors.
- Birch Street Office/Industrial area; West South Street Industrial area.
- Large scale institutional lands, open lands, and parklands (YMCA, Schools, Nixon Park)
- Single-family residential (at the “4 corners”).
- Smaller scale residential / mixed residential neighborhoods in the center of the Borough.
- Larger multi-family residential complexes (Southwest, East).
- Vacant/Redevelopment areas/Infill (West central border (NVF), Birch Street).

Kennett Square has a small town, diverse land use character containing a variety of uses, densities, and development patterns. The core development pattern is urban in nature with lower densities towards the edges. Generally, there have been greater densities and mixing of uses in the center of town than the rest of the Borough. However, there are pockets of commercial uses scattered throughout the Borough which is a beneficial part of the community. Older single-family detached and single-family attached homes are the predominant housing types throughout the Borough, with some apartments primarily scattered throughout the central and eastern portion of town. West South Street, Birch Street, and South Walnut Street to a lesser extent, contain the industrial areas of the Borough. However, these areas also contain a mix of uses including residential, office, commercial, recreational, and institutional uses.

The eastern side of the Borough contains a concentration of institutional and recreational uses. These areas are largely open and contribute to the Borough through both visual appeal and preservation of natural resources and open lands. These include uses such as the Kennett High School, Kennett Area Community Park, the Kennett Fire Company property, YMCA, and Anson B. Nixon Park. Figure 4-1 and Figure 4-2 illustrate land use patterns as they occurred in 2010.

Figure 4-1: Existing Land Use, 2010

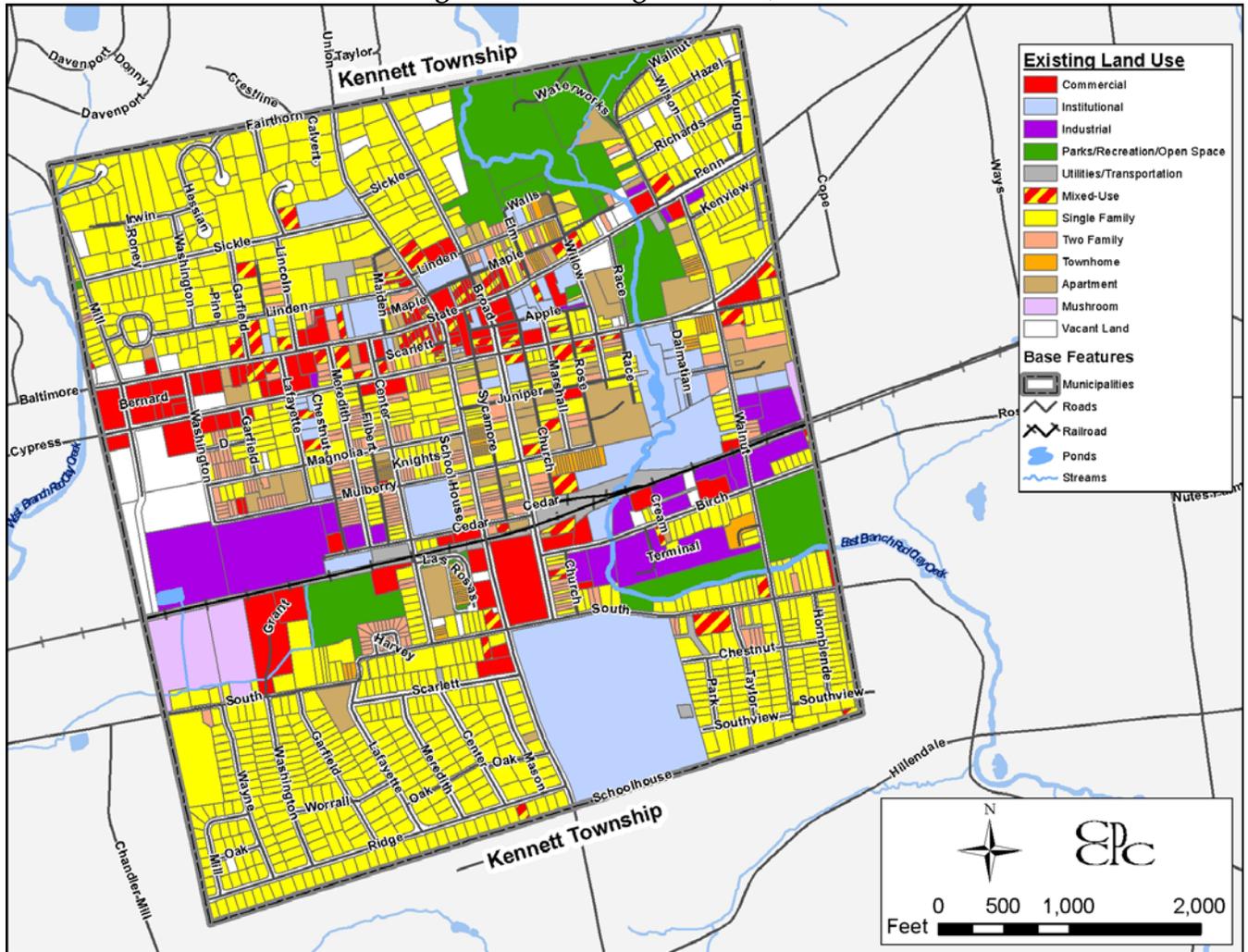


Figure 4-2: Existing Land Use Inventory, 2010

Land Use Category	Acres	% Of Total	# Parcels	% Of Total
Residential:	310.6	45.3%	1344	79.6%
Single-family residential	251.6	36.7%	950	56.3%
Two-family residential	24.5	3.6%	237	14.0%
Townhouses/Row homes	7.5	1.1%	99	5.9%
Apartments	27.0	3.9%	58	3.4%
Mixed Use	18.0	2.6%	83	4.9%
Commercial	38.7	5.6%	86	5.1%
Industrial	36.6	5.3%	25	1.5%
Institutional	68.3	10.0%	53	3.1%
Mushroom	12.1	1.8%	5	0.3%
Parks/Recreation	56.1	8.2%	22	1.3%
Vacant Land	22.3	3.2%	48	2.8%
Utilities/RR/Transportation*	123.5	18.0%	22	1.3%
TOTAL	686.2	100.0%	1,688	100%

Source: Chester County Planning Commission, 2010

* ROW Total includes all roadways and paper roadways

The inventory demonstrates that the Borough has a stable and well established land use pattern. The Borough of Kennett Square is largely built-out and has been so for several decades. Most of the new construction that has occurred in recent years has been in the form of redevelopment or infill development. Redevelopment is defined in different ways and can take various forms. It can mean adaptive reuse in cases where existing buildings or sites have been converted to a different use, construction that takes place following demolition of a vacant or outdated facility, or expansion or upgrading of existing buildings and uses for the same purpose, viewed simply as “modernizing”. Redevelopment is a critical concept in an urban environment because it allows a developed community to continue to grow, reducing the potential for stagnation that can lead to decline. Care must be taken, however, to ensure that the historic fabric of the community is not damaged through redevelopment efforts. Redevelopment must be sensitive to the historic characteristics of the Borough to ensure that integrity of both the downtown and the residential neighborhoods is not comprised. Change is innate to urban landscapes and new opportunities that meet, as well as generate, demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses must continue to be identified and carefully blended into the existing fabric.

The land use inventory was based on several sources but relied primarily on tax assessment data obtained from the Chester County Assessment Office. A field survey was conducted for the prior Comprehensive Plan (2001) in September of 1999 to verify the data and make necessary adjustments in land use categories. Since the 1990 Comprehensive Plan did not include a detailed land use inventory of the entire Borough, little opportunity is available to show land use trends outside of the downtown district. The Kennett Center Plan component of the Borough’s 1990 Comprehensive Plan served as a secondary source of information for those properties in the downtown district. This inventory was updated in 2010 using current assessment data and the inventory was reviewed by the Borough Planning Commission for accuracy. Although there may be some minor individual disparities due to the constant changes occurring in the Borough, the existing land use inventory is generally accurate. The land uses in Kennett Square Borough are presented in nine categories. These are residential, mixed use, commercial, industrial, institutional, mushroom, parks/recreation, vacant, and utilities/transportation. Figure 4-1, Existing Land Use, displays the existing land use as discussed in the text and Figure 4-2 summarizes land uses and indicates the approximate acreage and percentage of each as presently found in the Borough.

Existing Land Use Categories

Residential Land Uses **1,344 parcels (80% of total); 310 Acres (45% of total)**

Residential land uses make up 80 percent of the Borough’s parcels. Residential uses comprise four categories of housing types. The predominant dwelling type in the Borough is single family-residential making up 56 percent of total Borough’s parcels and roughly 37 percent of the land in residential use. Two-family residential includes both twins and duplexes, makes up 14 percent of all parcels. Townhouses comprise six percent of parcels. Multi-family housing or apartments, which is characterized as housing with 3 or more dwelling units, accounts for three and one half percent of parcels. Multi-family units can also include the Mixed-Use category discussed below, as a majority of mixed use parcels consist of apartments over commercial uses. This addition would increase Multi-family units to roughly eight percent of all parcels.

While the Borough contains a variety of housing types, there are distinct patterns where certain types of housing are concentrated. A large concentration of older larger single family housing is found in the center or core of the Borough, while newer single family housing, in more suburban development patterns, are concentrated at the “corners” of the Borough. Larger multi-family complexes are found primarily in the east central section of the Borough while other apartments are found above stores along the State and Cypress Street corridors, known as “mixed use.” The central sections of the Borough are characterized as having higher densities with a diversity and mixture of housing types. Scattered housing sites are also found along the commercial and industrial corridors of Birch and Walnut Streets. Most of the newer housing developments, such as Stenning Hills and Southview, have been constructed in a more suburban manner but maintain a grid pattern of streets. Hessian Hills in the northwestern corner of the Borough, one of the most recent developments, was constructed in the late 1990s using cul-de-sacs in contrast with the traditional grid pattern of streets that predominates the remainder of the Borough.

Mixed Use

83 parcels (5% of total); 18 Acres (3% of total)

Mixed use is a combination of commercial uses and residential uses, commonly in the form of apartments over a commercial store. This use was not as accurately mapped in the 2001 Comprehensive Plan, so comparisons are not generally useful. A majority of these uses occur along the State and Cypress Street corridors. Mixed use can also be applied to both the Residential (primarily apartments) and Commercial land use categories.

Commercial Land Uses

86 parcels (5% of total); 39 Acres (6% of total)

Commercial uses in the Borough comprise 39 acres or roughly 6% of total land. Commercial uses are primarily located in the State and Cypress Street corridors across the northern portion of the Borough. There is a core of commercial uses at the intersection of South and Broad Streets in the southern portion of the Borough in addition to scattered uses along Birch and Walnut Streets. Commercial uses in the Borough are mainly small scale, individual retail, service, restaurants, and office uses with some mixing of second floor residential use. The commercial uses in the center or core of the Borough are a type and pattern that represents a traditional main street area. There are some larger scale commercial uses at the west end of the Borough, the east end of Cypress Street, and at the corner of South and Union Streets. There are a variety of business uses available which help serve the needs of Borough residents in addition to the surrounding region. In particular, there is a strong conglomeration of restaurants on State Street in the center of the Borough caters to employees and local residents while drawing a significant nighttime business. Part of the Borough’s economic development strategy relates to tapping the strong tourist industry of the Brandywine Valley.

Larger office buildings are an exception in Kennett Square, as exemplified by the Genesis Health Care building located at the corner of State and Union Streets. Although somewhat outside the scale of nearby businesses, this particular building is sensitive to the scale and style of the downtown uses and serves to provide a customer base that greatly supplements the existing market. In addition, the same could be said about the other significant Genesis office at the corner of Union and South Street, which is an adaptive reuse of a historic industrial building. In addition the Franklin Center building on the southwest corner of State and Broad Street is another example of newer, larger redevelopment that has occurred. This building is 70 feet high and contains a variety of office uses. While pushing the

envelope for building height in comparison with the remainder of the historical buildings, the Franklin Center building is generally considered in a positive light in regard to the aesthetics of the building, which is primarily made of red brick with many smaller windows that complements the traditional architecture of the Borough.

The Mixed Use category can also be applied to the commercial category, bringing the totals to 169 parcels (10% of total) and 57 acres (8% of total).

Industrial Land Uses **25 parcels (2% of total); 37 Acres (5% of total)**

Industrial uses make up about 37 acres or 5 percent of total Borough land. Industrial uses are those that focus on the manufacture, production, preparation, assembly, processing, storage, or packaging of products and materials. Most industrial facilities are self-contained in that they rarely have a commercial/retail component. Light industrial uses generally have a lesser impact on the surrounding properties than general or heavy industry in terms of noise, dust and odor. Outdoor storage of materials is a characteristic of general industrial uses. Most of Kennett Square's industrial uses are found adjacent to the railroad corridor in the southern half of the Borough.

Institutional Land Uses **53 parcels (3% of total); 68 Acres (10% of total)**

Institutional uses include public lands, non-profit institutions, and religious uses that comprise a significant land area in Kennett Square, 68 acres or 10 percent of total Borough land. Uses include public and private schools, the Fire Station, Kennett Friends Meeting, the Senior Center, the Post Office, Library, Borough Hall, and related municipal facilities. These uses are located throughout the Borough and vary in type, size, and purpose. They have a common purpose of addressing an overall community or public service need. The largest facility in terms of land area is the Kennett High School complex located on South Street. This facility encompasses a 36 acre site in the southern part of the Borough and has remained a community focus since its development in the 1930's. Another large public service facility site is the Kennett Fire Station and environs. This site is approximately five acres in size, much of which is open space. Other public and institutional uses in Kennett Square are located on smaller sites, mainly in the downtown core.

Mushroom **5 parcels (0% of total); 12 Acres (2% of total)**

Mushroom uses in the Borough comprise 12 acres or 2% of total land. Because the Mushroom Industry is such an important part of the local economy in southern Chester County and an important part the history of the region, Mushroom uses are individually recognized. In particular, the South Mill Mushroom facility in the southwestern portion of the Borough is the only facility in the Borough and an important part of the local economy.

Parks/Recreation **22 parcels (1% of total); 56 Acres (8% of total)**

This category accounts for 56 acres or 8 percent of Borough land, a combination of parks and recreational areas and facilities. The largest area in the category is Anson B. Nixon park, used for both active and passive recreational uses. Others uses include the Kennett Community Park and Pool, ball fields and soccer fields used for active recreation. It should be clarified that the YMCA, while a recreational facility which could be included here, from a land use perspective is an institutional use, and therefore is not included in this category. Further, the Fire Station property has a large area of open

space, part of which contains some sections of the Red Clay Creek Trail, however, that parcel is also considered institutional for the purposes of this section. **Note: re categorize a few, such as borough property w of fire station.**

Vacant Land

48 parcels (3% of total); 22 Acres (3% of total)

This category accounts for 22 acres or 3 percent of Borough land. The Borough contains few remaining vacant lands, most of which are smaller scattered lots. A majority of these are in industrial areas either on Birch Street in the southeast or the west central area near the border with Kennett Township (in part the former NVF).

Rights-of-Way

22 parcels (3% of total); 124 Acres (18% of total)

This category consists of road rights-of-way, the railroad right-of-way, and utility right-of-way and contains a total of 123 acres or 18 percent of land in the Borough. The Borough has a street system based on a traditional grid pattern that accounts for a significant percentage of the Borough's land area within this category. Although the percentage of land in this category is smaller in comparison to others, it is the most intensely used, requiring a large percentage of Borough resources in terms of maintenance and upkeep. Other utility sites include the water tower and electrical service stations.

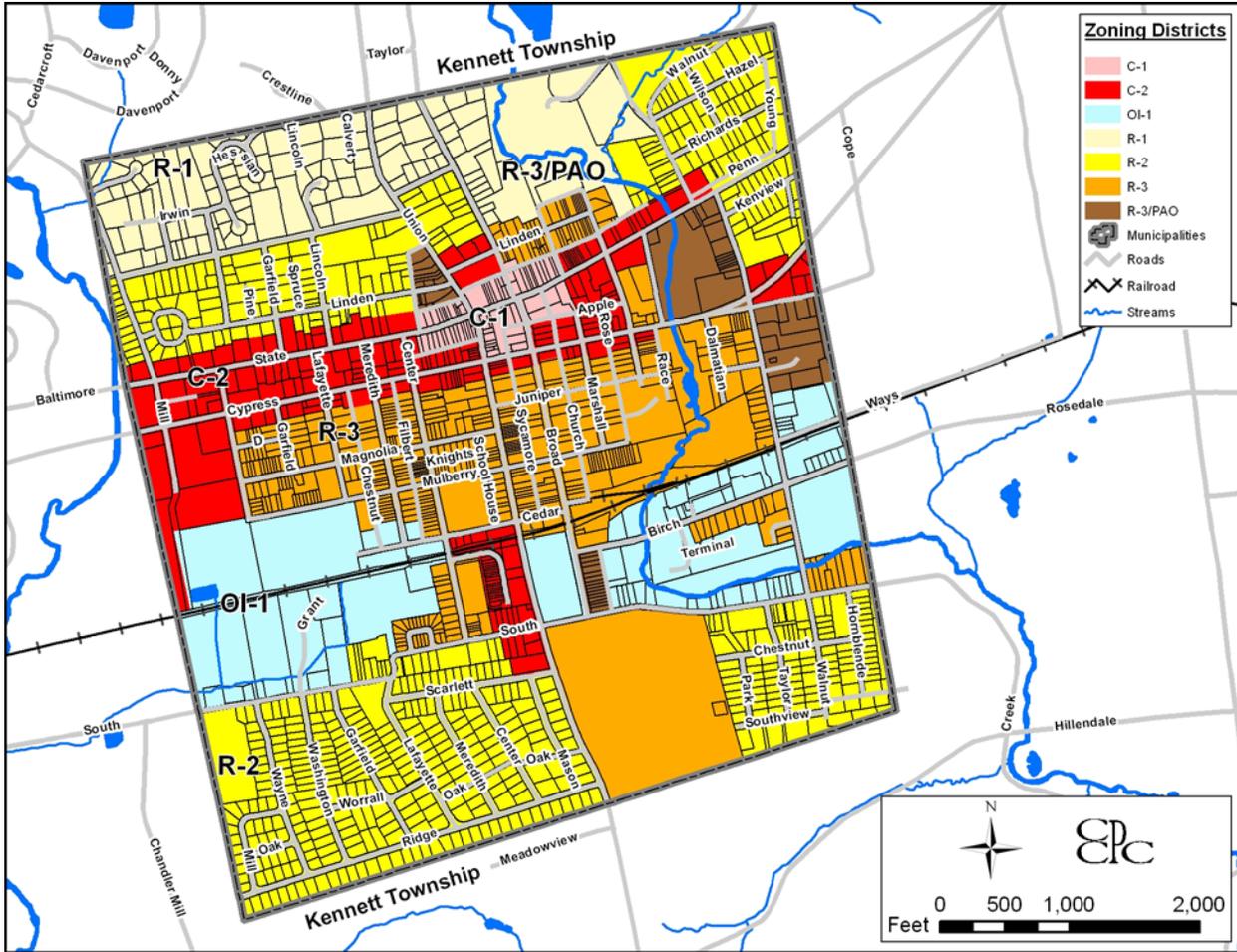
ZONING ANALYSIS (EXISTING LAND USE REGULATION)

The way in which land is developed or redeveloped is highly dependent on local land use regulations in conjunction with environmental constraints. In Kennett Square, the Borough's zoning ordinance, subdivision and land development ordinance, and general codes (including the building and housing code), create the regulatory framework. This section will focus on a more detailed description of the Zoning Ordinance and how the existing structures relate to the regulations.

ZONING ORDINANCE

A full update of the zoning ordinance occurred in 1994. The current ordinance is dated October 2006, with further amendments thereafter. The ordinance contains district and use regulations along with general regulations, environmental protection standards, sign, off-street parking, and administrative regulations. The use regulations include three residential districts, a mixed residential and office district, two commercial districts, an office/industrial district, and four overlay districts, two of which deal with environmental protection, one of which deals with retail and downtown development, and the last dealing with tall buildings in the central portion of the Borough. Lastly, an amendment in 2009 allows for "neighborhood development" as a conditional use in the C-2 commercial district to permit mixed use developments. Additional zoning information and analysis is provided in the individual Character Area Discussions in the Land Use Plan section later in this Chapter. Figure 4-3 displays the Borough Zoning Map.

Figure 4-3: Zoning Map



Residential Districts 461 Acres (67% of Borough)

R-1 (Lower Density Residential District) 86 Acres (12% of Borough)

This district is intended to encourage single family detached homes on lots of 10,500 square feet. This district is designated in the northern tier of the Borough in the neighborhoods north of State Street. Most of the lots in these areas are in compliance with this designation.

R-2 (Low Density Residential District) 212 Acres (31% of Borough)

This district is intended to provide for single family detached uses on lots of 7,000 square feet. The neighborhood encompassing Linden and Sickle Streets, the neighborhood located in the northeast corner of the Borough including Richard Drive and Hazel Avenue, Stenning Hills in the southwest corner, and Southview in the southeastern corner are designated R-2.

The majority of lots in these neighborhoods meet the minimum lot size requirements and most exceed the minimum. Of the areas designated as R-2, approximately X are less than 7,000 square feet in size. Many of these are only slightly under the minimum requirement. In addition to meeting the minimum size, the uses are in conformance to the regulations, as nearly 100 percent of the lots in all of these neighborhoods are single family detached units.

R-3 (Medium Density Residential District) 163 Acres (24% of Borough)

The purpose of this district is to provide for a variety of housing options and alternatives, including single family detached, twins, townhouses, and a variety of multiple-family units, along with a number of public and community uses. Lot areas vary based on the use but range from 2,000 to 5,000 square feet for a detached single family residence. Most of the residential area south of Cypress Street and north of the railroad corridor is designated as R-3. Since the district provides for nearly all forms of housing, existing uses are largely conforming. Lot sizes in this district generally exceed the minimum 2,000 square foot requirement. Another significant area designated as R-3 is the high school, also a conforming use.

Residential/Office District

24 Acres (4% of Borough)

R-3/PAO (Medium Density Residential/Professional Office District)

This district allows for mixed residential and office uses intended to provide yet another alternative for affordable housing and a mix of uses. The district permits a wide range of single and multi-family housing alternatives by right. The minimum lot sizes for most uses range from between 2,000 to 5,000 square feet in size, a variety of accessory uses that complement the mixed use nature of the district are permitted.

The R-3/PAO district is found in four locations. Two are on the eastern side of the Borough in the vicinity of State and Cypress Streets. One area is on Linden Street west of north Union Street and the last is a linear area located between Broad and Church Streets, south of Birch Street.

Commercial Districts Borough)

96 Acres (14% of

C-1 (Kennett Center Primary Retail District)

12 Acres (2% of Borough)

The C-1 district is intended to encourage a variety of retail uses in the core of Kennett Square's downtown. It permits a wide variety of commercial uses by right, mainly of a local retail nature. It also allows for upper floor offices and housing uses that are compatible with the retail uses and accessory uses that support the overall intent of the district. The minimum lot area is 2,000 square feet; housing units must comply with the Borough's housing code. The upper floors appear to be underutilized and have the potential to serve as secondary commercial, office, or residential uses. Space for small business incubation is always needed and such uses could greatly contribute to the downtown environment.

C-2 (Secondary Commercial District)

84 Acres (12% of Borough)

This district encourages a variety of commercial uses and moderate residential uses that are intended to support the Primary Retail District. This includes all nearly all forms of commercial, office, retail, and residential uses either by-right or as an accessory use. Uses are subject to the supplemental regulations contained in the ordinance. Required lot areas are 5,000 square feet, providing for a slightly larger scale than those uses contained in the C-1 district. Most of the commercial area located outside the Primary Retail Center is designated as C-2 since it provides for a wide variety of commercial, office, and residential uses. The bulk of this district is located between and adjacent to State and Cypress Streets west of Willow Street across the midsection of the Borough, with the exception of the Primary Retail Area (C-1). In addition, a linear area located in the southern part of the

Borough west of Union and south of Cedar Street is designated as C-2 incorporating a number of existing uses allowed by this district. Because of the broad range of uses allowed, including various forms of residential dwellings, the uses in this district appear to generally be conforming.

Industrial District

103 Acres (15% of Borough)

OI-1 (Office/Industrial District)

This district identifies areas near road and rail transportation routes appropriate for industrial development. The permitted uses include office uses, manufacturing, processing, and production operations ranging from light to moderate intensity. More intensive operations are allowed by conditional uses. The minimum lot area in this district is 20,000 feet, most uses permitted are subject to additional standards found in the supplemental regulations. Most existing industrial uses are located adjacent to the rail line that passes through the central portion of the Borough. The largest industrial area, which includes the NVF complex, is found on the west side of the Borough while smaller, but equally intensive industrial operations, are clustered in the eastern half of the rail corridor. The vacant/open industrial areas that could possibly present redevelopment opportunities are found mainly on the west side.

Overlay Districts

FP (Flood Overlay District)

The floodplain district supplements the base zoning districts by setting for additional regulations that serve to prevent or reduce potential loss caused by floods. Much of the east branch of the Red Clay Creek is floodplain and encompasses mostly recreational and residential areas in the Borough. It also traverses an industrial area along Birch Street where issues exist, particularly relating to the storage of materials and chemicals that could cause contamination in a flood situation. See Chapter 10, Natural Resources, for more information on Floodplains.

SS (Steep Slope Overlay District)

The steep slope district regulates construction on areas where the topography is not conducive to development. The Borough overall has a gently rolling topography, however, the northwest, northeast, and southeast corners have steep areas that are regulated by the provisions of the overlay district. See Chapter 10, Natural Resources, for more information on Steep Slopes.

MSD (Main Street Development Overlay District)

This district overlays the central core of the downtown. Its purpose is to foster the economic growth and protect the stability of the downtown and its historic building fabric. It establishes design guidelines aimed at preserving the historic integrity of existing structures and ensuring the compatibility of new structures. Proposals to modify structures in this district must be reviewed by the Architectural Review Board before a certificate of appropriateness is granted. The Borough Council makes the final decision on all permit requests. The provisions outlined in this district have been effectively used by the Borough to protect the historic integrity of the downtown commercial district. Expansion of the district could extend the same benefits to key residential areas.

TBO (Tall Building Overlay)

This overlay permits buildings up to seventy-five (75) feet in height by conditional use within the block bounded by State, Cypress, Union, and Race Streets.

LAND USE PLAN

This Land Use Plan provides a 10 year vision for desired land use patterns in the Borough. Specifically, this Plan and Figure 4-4 designate Character Areas that discuss existing conditions and recommend changes in various land uses, development patterns, and implement measures to improve conditions and resolve identified issues. While recommendations presented in this Chapter are focused on land use concerns, they do take into account an examination of the following:

- Existing land uses, development patterns, and physical character.
- Borough goals and objectives pertaining to land use.
- Circulation patterns and the capacity of the transportation network.
- Location of sensitive resources including natural, historic, and cultural.
- Goals and policies of the previous 2001 Borough Comprehensive Plan; the previous 1993 Borough Open Space and Recreation Plan; the Kennett Common Report; the Kennett Square Borough Vision Plan; the Kennett Square Borough Revitalization Plan; and the 2010 Kennett Square Borough Strategic Plan.

This Land Use Plan links together the other planning chapters of this Comprehensive Plan. Combined with these other chapters, the Land Use Plan forms the Borough policy which serves as the basis for local land use regulatory and non-regulatory actions.

Kennett Square has a small town, diverse land use character containing a variety of uses, densities, and development patterns. This Plan aims to maintain the Borough's existing character while allowing development and redevelopment to occur in a manner consistent with that character.

The Land Use Plan recognizes that while the Borough land use pattern is well established and there is little remaining undeveloped land, development, and changes in land use will not cease in the future. As the Borough continues to evolve and grow to meet the goals, needs, and demands of its residents, the rail line, businesses, and land use changes that could occur on smaller vacant sites and through changes in use on currently developed lands. These changes are likely to occur through conversions, adaptive re-uses, and other redevelopment activities.

Figure 4-4 displays these categories by their acreage and Figure 4-5 identifies the boundaries of the Character Areas on the following page.

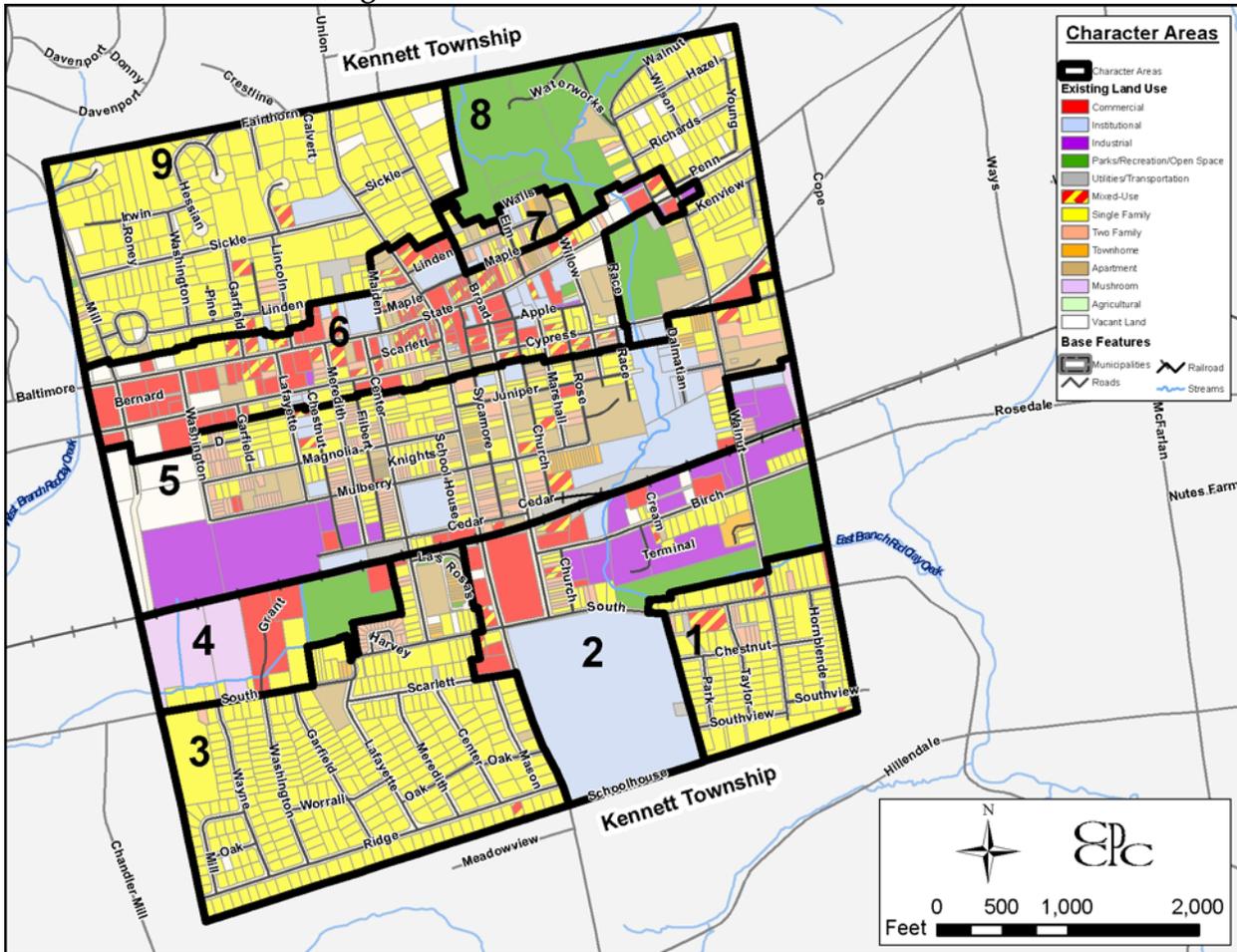
*Note: Character Area maps showing existing land use contain an "agriculture" category, which for the over-all land use categories was recategorized into the appropriate category. In some cases "agriculture" is a vacant parcel, a parcel with a barn or garage, or a wooded parcel. This change involves only a few small parcels and is statistically insignificant. Further, for some areas such as Character Area 5, some land uses were recategorized to facilitate important discussion, such as institutionally owned properties recategorized as open space as their primary function instead of their land use type.

Figure 4-4: Character Areas (Land Use Plan)

Character Area	Acres	% of Total
1 – Southview	37.9	6%
2 – Birch Street	98.4	14%
3 – Stenning Hills	108.9	16%
4 – South Street West	29.9	4%
5 – Central Core	138.6	20%
6 – Downtown	80.9	12%
7 – East Linden	8	1%
8 – Northeast	80.8	12%
9 – Northwest	102.5	15%
TOTAL	685.9	100%

Source: Chester County Planning Commission, 2010

Figure 4-5: Character Areas (with Land Use)



Because maintaining the existing Borough character is a primary goal of this plan, Character Areas are designed to reflect existing land uses and Borough character, and create a method to group specific recommendations to facilitate the Land Use Plan. Character Areas are not intended to delineate exact boundaries of specific neighborhoods, zoning districts, or groups of uses, but are used to provide a framework to discuss issues within and between Character Areas such as land uses, existing zoning, infrastructure, transportation, transitions, and other relative features.