Bethel Park Comprehensive Plan Update
Planning Profiles

December 22, 2009
Draft Submission
Municipality of Bethel Park

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Introduction

The data for the Background Profiles are information collected from primary and secondary data sources, including key person interviews, existing reports and current studies, statistics and data from government agencies, and geographical information systems (GIS) mapping and data from Bethel Park. The data collection activities and drafting of the profiles occurred in the spring of 2009. It is understood that additional information may become available during the course of the planning process; where possible, this information was added. The profiles represent important background about the Municipality and will be referred to often during the planning process.

The purpose of the Background Profiles is not to reiterate information from previous studies and reports, but to give context and focus to the current effort. The report provides an update to dated information and a comparison of municipal planning and service activities. The focus is functional planning areas, i.e., demographics and socioeconomics, land use and housing, infrastructure, and community services and facilities.

These Profiles, plus the reports mentioned herein, provide the technical foundation for planning the future of Bethel Park. The objective is to develop an understanding of the link between current trends and policies and the future; however, the report is only one piece in creating a true picture of the existing community. The ultimate path of Bethel Park will crystallize as the materials found in this report and the messages heard from the community merge into one future direction.

The Bethel Park Comprehensive Plan Update is the end result of a twelve-month planning process. The Plan is the ending point of the planning process but, more importantly, it is the beginning point for action and implementation.

The Bethel Park Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) and staff have been instrumental in coordinating and guiding the process. The PZC steadfastly steered the process through monthly work sessions. The final work of the PZC, development of the action plan, sets the stage for the next community effort, implementation.

The future of Bethel Park is not outlined in the pages of this Plan. The future will be determined by the dedication of its citizens to bring this Plan to life.
The commitment of the PZC during the planning process is a demonstration of the Municipality’s capacity to meet common goals, objectives, and the strategies. The Bethel Park Council acknowledges the dedicate work of these citizens.
The Municipality of Bethel Park 2009
Comprehensive Plan Update

Profile 1: Demographic and Socioeconomic Update

The intent of this Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile Update is to highlight relevant characteristics of the people who live in the Municipality of Bethel Park. In particular, the update looks at existing features and trends that might influence planning activities.

A graph, chart, and/or a table, followed by a bullet point description are the chosen styles for the profile update. This concise format helps the reader and user to discern quickly the indicator’s importance.

The source of the data is the U.S. Bureau of the Census’ Year 2000 Census; the SPC Cycle 8 forecast adopted by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission on June 28, 2007; and the Census Bureau Estimates Table SUB-EST2007-05-42 released July 10, 2008.

Figure 1-1: Bethel Park Population Trend (total persons) Year 1900 to 2007 (estimated)

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Figure 1-18: Household Indices - Year 2007 Estimated Data
Population Size (Number of Persons)

The first measure of the size of the Municipality’s population over time is the population trend analysis.

Figure 1-1: Bethel Park Population Trend (total persons) 1900 to 2007 (estimated)


Figure 1-1 shows the trend line for Bethel Park from the beginning of the last century through the Year 2000, extending to the Year 2007 (estimated population). The trend line shows:

- The greatest municipal growth occurred in the era of 1940 to 1970.
- Since 1970, Bethel Park has been losing population.

Figure 1-2 compares the population of Bethel Park with its contiguous neighbors. The bar chart compares the Year 2000 U.S. Census and the Year 2007 U.S. Census estimates, which is the latest estimated data at the time of the development of the profiles (this data would be more current than the data from the data used in the Allegheny County Plan: Allegheny Places).

The findings show:

- Bethel Park is contiguous to seven municipalities. Six of these municipalities are in Allegheny County: Baldwin Borough, Castle Shannon Borough, Municipality of Mt. Lebanon, South Park Township and the Township of Upper St. Clair and Whitehall Borough. Peters Township is located in Washington County.
• Bethel Park had the largest population of the eight municipalities, followed by the Municipality of Mt. Lebanon.

**Figure 1-2: Population Change for Bethel Park and Its Contiguous Municipalities**


• Bethel Park’s estimated population in 2007 was approximately 1/5th of the total population of the region as it was in the Year 2000.

• All of the region’s municipalities, with the exception of Peters Township were estimated to have lost population from the Year 2000 to the Year 2007 (See the chart above. The data in blue is the 2000 population. The data in red is the 2007 estimated.)

• In 2000, Bethel Park’s population was 33,556 persons. By 2007, the Municipality’s estimated population was 31,700 persons, which was a decline of 5.5 percent.
**Population Forecasts**

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) develops forecasts for its service area counties and municipalities. The SPC Cycle 8 forecast, adopted by the SPC on June 28, 2007, provides the most up-to-date forecasts for the Municipality, the County, and the Region (the 7 contiguous municipalities).

Figure 1-3 starts the forecast analysis with Bethel Park. It begins with U.S. Census Data from the 2000 Census and the 2007 estimated data and then moves to the forecast data for years 2010, 2020, 2025, 2030 and 2035. The line shows the forecasted change in population for the period. Highlights of the chart are:

- **Bethel Park** is expected to have reached its lowest population (31,700 estimated persons) in 2007.
- Shortly thereafter, the expectation is the population will begin to grow, reaching its forecasted highest population by 2025 (35,839 persons).
- The population begins to decline in the years following 2025 to a forecast low of 32,885 persons by 2035.
- Other data analysis, such as household size and age of the population, might provide reasons for the ebb and flow in the population trends.

Looking 25 years into the future may lead to a greater margin of error, but also may help to reveal indicators of change. Consider the following indicators and how they may impact the size of the population:

- **Age of the housing stock** = older areas of the community may be ripe for redevelopment. The caveat here is to not underestimate the impact of redevelopment as the Municipality completes its planning.

- **Type of housing units** = use and reuse of land might accommodate a broader range of housing, that is townhomes (single-family semi-detached), row homes (single-family attached), clusters, and apartments.

- **Density of housing** = the broader range of housing may lead to greater density, which is calculated by units/acre. The calculation of development potential will help the Municipality to determine if land use regulation changes may be necessary and warranted.

- **Economic conditions** = the economic slowdown may have a dramatic impact on the municipalities ability to gain population as forecasted. Given the current economic climate, the expectation is that the slowdown experienced over the first part of the decade would continue longer than earlier projected. While growth may occur, the expectation is that it will grow at a slower pace.

The municipal leaders and staff must remain vigilant in the monitoring of these factors as the markers of change.

Figure 1-4 compares the forecast for the Municipality with the County and the Region.

The bar chart reveals:

- A forecasted upward period of population growth in every area from the year 2007 to 2020.

- Each geographic area is expected to begin a decline in the growth of the population from the year 2020 to 2035.

- Bethel Park is forecasted to slide into a loss of population by 2030; whereas, neither the County nor the Region are projected to actually lose population for the period.

- In addition to the factors previously stated for the Municipality, the type of decline predicted here may be the consequence of movement of the population to the outer suburban areas (farther away from the urbanized area of Pittsburgh) from the inner suburbs (older and closer to Pittsburgh).
The municipalities forecast to not lose population are Baldwin Borough, South Park Township, and Peters Township.

**Figure 1-4: Population Trend Forecast - Allegheny County, Bethel Park Region, Bethel Park Municipality - Percent Change Year 2000 to 2035**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2025</th>
<th>2030</th>
<th>2035</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Allegheny County</strong></td>
<td>-4.9%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bethel Park</strong></td>
<td>-5.5%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>-4.1%</td>
<td>-4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Region</strong></td>
<td>-6.0%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
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**Characteristics of the Population**

Indicators other than population size reveal more about the characteristics of the Bethel Park community. The distribution of the residents’ age and education and the percentage of persons with disabilities provide information regarding the future needs of the community and the type of strategies that may be required to meet these needs.

**Age of the Population**

Generally, an age-comparison shows how the municipal population ages over a ten-year period, using the decennial U.S. Census data. This comparative information is not available until the Year 2010 Census data is collected and distributed.

However, Bethel Park is a part of another program of the U.S. Bureau of the Census the 2005 to 2007 "American Community Survey (ACS)” estimates, which is based on data collected over a 3-year time period. The estimates represent the average characteristics of population and housing between
January 2005 and December 2007 and do not represent a single point in time.

This data helps to approximate the age distribution in the Municipality for the period. Figure 1-5, below, charts the data and compares the distribution for the Municipality, the County, the Commonwealth, and the Nation.


The data reveals more when the distribution is observed in the context of six major age groups. This distribution provides the basis for evaluating the need for targeted community services. See the analysis below:

- **Under 5 years of age** (5.9% of the population), preschool age group = need for day care, well-baby services.

- **5 to 19 years** (18.7%), school age group = need for schools, children and youth services and recreational activities.

- **20 to 44 years** (26.2%), young adults/child producing years = need for services for families, recreation activities for young adults, family housing units of different sizes as the family size grows, entertainment and cultural activities, and jobs (start-up to mid-level management).

- **45 to 64 years** (29.2%), mature adults = fewer demands/needs, generally stable jobs and home ownership, with the exception of smaller units for empty nesters and a blend of passive and active recreation (wellness programs).
• **65 to 84 years** (17.0%), older adults = need for a variety of housing types, more medical services, social services, senior activities, and alternative transportation to the private automobile.

• **85 years and more** (2.9%), frail adults – higher demand for health care (home-health care and continuum of care facilities), medical visit transportation, general transport, and housing.

Bethel Park’s age distribution is comparatively similar to that of the County, State and Nation; therefore, it would be expected that the Municipality would benefit from programs that are initiated or funded at various levels of government.

Figure 1-6 shows a clear trend regarding the aging of the Bethel Park population.

![Figure 1-6: Bethel Park Median Age - Year 1970 to 2007](image)


• The median age has become progressively older in the last four decades. Beginning in the Year 1970, when the median age was 27.1 years and ending in the year 2007, with an estimated median age of 44.4 years, representing a change of more than 17 years.
• The planning update will need to consider if this shifting of the population is affecting the way the community views itself and if this view would be the impetus of new demands.

**Education of the Population**

The education indicators are school enrollment and educational attainment. The source for the latest information is the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2005 to 2007 ACS estimates.

![Figure 1-7: School Enrollment (percent of population 3 years and over enrolled in school) - Year 2007 Estimated Data](image)


The school enrollment distribution is fairly consistent in the four geographic areas. Observations of note include:

- The lower percentage of college or graduate school enrollments in all likelihood are due to the lack of institutes of higher learning in Bethel Park. Currently, enrolled students would be counted in the community in which they live. For example, students going to the University of Pittsburgh and living in Oakland would be counted in Pittsburgh.

- This lower percentage of college or graduate school enrollments would raise the percentages of other indicators.
Educational attainment is an important indicator from the economic perspective. One factor in the decision-making of a business to locate in a locale is the level of educational attainment and the availability of a workforce with appropriate skills and education. Generally, higher level skills and education translates to higher paying jobs and income, which may help to promote economic stability in normal times.


- Figure 1-8 shows that the community has a relatively high degree of educated persons.

- Bethel Park has the highest percentage of persons with a bachelor’s degree of the four areas (25%) and least percentage of persons with less than a 9th grade education.

**Disability Status of the Population**

The ACS disability status indices provide an estimate of the number of disabled in the civilian noninstitutionalized population, which are five years
and older. The Survey estimates nearly 4,000 persons in Bethel Park are disabled or approximately twelve percent of the estimated population. The distribution of disability by age group helps the community to identify specific service needs. Figure 1-9 shows the distribution for Bethel Park.


The chart shows:
• The age group with the highest incidence of disability is persons 65 years and over. The ACS estimates that approximately 32 percent of the estimated 6,500 persons in this age group have been diagnosed with a disability.

• The late adolescent and young to mature adult age group (16 to 64 years) represents approximately 66 percent of the estimated Year 2007 population. According to the ACS, seven percent of these individuals are disabled (1,592 persons).

• The 5 to 15 year age group has the smallest estimated population (4,650 persons) and the smallest number of persons with disabilities (257 persons), representing five percent of the total.

• The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations have been put in place to ensure that counties, cities, towns, and villages comply with the ADA by eliminating physical and communication barriers that prevent people with disabilities from participating fully in community life.

• Project Civic Action, a project of the U.S. Department of Justice, includes a Toolkit for State and Local Governments to help solve common ADA problems. Information is available on-line at http://www.ada.gov/civicac.htm
Characteristics of the Economy

Several demographic features are indicators of the community’s economy. These demographic indicators are employment by occupation and industry, level of income, and level of poverty.

Employment of the Population

Two employment indicators are occupation and industry. The first indicator to be considered is “occupation for civilian employees 16 years and over”. Figure 1-10 shows the distribution for various occupation sectors and compares this data with the County, Commonwealth, and Nation.


- Bethel Park’s two largest sectors, management/professional and sales/office, had an estimated higher percentage of employees in these occupations than the other areas, although these were the largest occupation sectors for all government levels.

- Bethel Park had estimated lower employment in occupations in service and production sectors than the other area.

The second indicator is employment by industry, which shows the type of businesses that are employing the residents of Bethel Park.
Figure 1-11 shows the distribution of employees by the type of workplace (industry).

![Figure 1-11: Industry for Civilians Employed 16 Years and Over - Year 2007 Estimated Data](image)

**Source:** U.S. Bureau of the Census the 2005 to 2007 "American Community Survey" estimates.

- The full title for each category from left to right on the chart above follows:
  - Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining
  - Construction
  - Manufacturing
  - Wholesale trade
  - Retail trade
  - Transportation and warehousing, and utilities
  - Information
  - Finance and insurance, and real-estate and rental and leasing
  - Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services
  - Educational services, and health care and social assistance
  - Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation, and food services
Other services, except public administration
Public administration

Bethel Park had an estimated higher percentage of employees than the other areas in the following industries: wholesale trade; retail trade, financial, and professional. Generally, the professional industries are higher income, requiring higher educational attainment and technical skills than finance and trade industries.

Of these industries, the U.S. Labor Department indicated that the financial sector and the trade sector lost employment in 2008.

The highest employment industry for all areas was education and health care services and social assistance. This sector represents industries that are traditionally more stable than other sectors and may be a suitable target for economic development activities. The expectation is that this will be a strong employment sector in the future.¹

### Income of the Population

One indicator of the relative strength of the local economy is income. There are five indices on Figure 1-12 that compare the mean income levels in Bethel Park to the mean of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania and the United States. These indices are mean household, family, non-family, per capita and retirement incomes.

¹ Fact Sheet from the US Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics for November '08

- Pennsylvania Labor Market Areas Ranked on Basis of Unemployment Rate (seasonally adjusted). Pittsburgh MSA ranked 6th lowest unemployment rate out of 14 total MSA
  - Pittsburgh MSA includes Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Washington and Westmoreland Counties.
  - In 11/07 unemployment rate was 4.4; whereas, in 11/08 the rate was 5.8.
  - Wages from November 2007 to November 2008 have not changed in the Pittsburg Metropolitan Area. In all other metropolitan areas of the state, there has been a decline in employee payrolls (not seasonally adjusted).
  - Employment Sectors that lost employment from June '08 to Nov '08: Manufacturing; Trade, Transportation, and Utilities; Information; Financial activities, although showed slight gain in November in the last two months loss; Leisure and Hospitality.
  - Given the current economic conditions, the expectation is that these factors will continue to change and eventually stabilize in the future.
Bethel Park’s mean income estimates reveal:

- The Municipality has an estimated higher mean income than the County, State and Nation in three of the five indicators: household (≈$73,500), family (≈$87,500) and per capita (≈$29,400). The Municipality has between a $5,000 to $10,000 difference in mean household and family income compared to the other areas.

- The mean income levels of the non-family households are comparatively similar across all areas, but are approximately half of the mean for family incomes.

- The Municipality has the lowest estimated mean retirement income of the four areas, which is estimated to be approximately $5,000 lower than the National mean. It is relatively similar to the mean for the County and the State. This indicator may need more consideration in combination with other factors and data as the planning process proceeds.
Poverty

Figure 1-13 presents the last socio-economic indicator, families and people with income below the poverty level.


- Two indicators were similar to the County, State and National estimated percentages, total married couples (relatively low compared to the overall distribution) and people 65 years and over (for Bethel Park relatively high compared to its distribution).

- Female householders had the highest poverty levels in the Municipality, but fell far below the percentage of the other areas.

- The economic recession, which began in 2008, is not considered in these estimates; therefore, it is expected that the percentage of families and people with income below the poverty level (estimated for the Year 2007) would be higher in the Year 2009. The data presented here may highlight a greater need to address poverty for all families and individuals, but to especially be cognizant of an increasing level of basic needs for both the female householder, no husband families and people 65 years and older and to coordinate with social service agencies to ensure that these needs are being met or at a minimum to obtain a better understanding of the short-term and long-term basic needs.
Characteristics of Households

This profile is not complete without the discussion of households; that is, the current number of households and the number forecast into the future, the average household size, and the type of households.

Number of Households

The SPC developed forecasts for the number of households, beginning with the data from the Year 2000 Census and projecting forward to the Year 2035. Figure 1-14 graphically depicts this information, plus provides the table of the forecasted numbers.

![Figure 1-14: Bethel Park Households Growth Forecast - Year 2000 to 2035](image)


Several observations of note for planning purposes are:

- The number of households is expected to grow from the Year 2000 to the Year 2025 (29.3% growth for the period) and then stabilize for the next 10 years.

- An important analysis is to compare the forecast for households to the forecast for population. It might be expected that the trend line for the
growth in the number of households would be a mirror image of the trends for the growth in population. Figure 1-15 draws this comparison.


- The rise and fall of these trend lines are illustratively similar; however, the relative growth in the number of households is much higher than the growth in population. Conversely, the percentage of decline is much higher in population as compared to households.

- A household as defined by the Census includes all of the people who occupy a housing unit. Based upon the above observation, the average household size must be forecasted to drop in size.

**Average Household Size**

Figure 1-16 compares the average household size for various areas.

Average household size is a useful indicator for population projections.

- Generally, the number of persons per household has been decreasing during the last half of the 20th Century. The greatest decreases have been occurring in areas that have a more urban character than rural.
• The Municipality’s average household size is closer to the State’s than the County. The expectation is the City of Pittsburgh (urban center) had the greatest impact on the County figures.

Figure 1-17 shows a forecasted downward trend that would impact the growth in population as compared to the growth in households.

• By the Year 2010, the average household size in Bethel Park is expected to decrease to 2.21 persons per household and continue to trend downward through the forecasted period.

• If this trend occurs as projected, by Year 2035, the average number of persons per household would be 1.95 persons. This phenomenon would lead to a greater demand in housing types for the small family or single occupant households.

Within the near term, Year 2000 to 2020, the number of persons per household is expected to decrease from a high of 2.51 persons per household (Year 2000 Census) to an estimated 2.49 persons (Year 2007 estimate) to 2.30 persons in 2010 and 2.14 persons in 2020. Again, ensuring the housing stock includes a variety of housing types and units for smaller households would be a planning consideration.

These statistics do not necessarily mean a decrease in population and indeed, the population is expected to increase for the next 15 years (may be a longer and slower period given the economic conditions of the last two years). What they do indicate is that fewer people may be living in each housing unit, than in the past.

Other Household Indicators

Figure 1-18 presents four additional indicators that show the type of estimated households in the Year 2007.

The household indices show the distribution of the population by household type:
• This data shows that the Municipality had a relatively similar estimated distribution of family households (69.7%) to non-family households (30.3%) as the State and Nation. Compared to Allegheny County, Bethel Park had a higher percentage of family households and a lower percentage of non-family households.
The County had the highest estimated percentage of households with one or more people under 18 years of age (37.2%); whereas Bethel Park (31.8%) and the State (31.0%) had similar percentage of households with children and youth.

Both the local community (33.3%) and the County (38.2%) had a higher estimated population percentage with one or more people 65 years and older than the State (26.8%) and the Nation (23.4%). This indicator should be considered in the analysis of the needs of the 65 year plus age group.
The Municipality of Bethel Park 2009
Comprehensive Plan Update

Profile 2: Existing Land Use and Housing Profile

The purpose of this Existing Land Use and Housing Profile Update is to highlight relevant characteristics of the land, which is occupied, vacant, underutilized, or ripe for redevelopment. This profile speaks in general terms about the existing land use and more specifically about housing.

A graph, chart, and/or a table, followed by a bullet point description are the chosen styles for the profile update. Mapping will be used, where available. This concise format helps the reader and user to discern quickly the importance of indicators and community features.

The source of the data is the U.S. Bureau of the Census’ Year 2000 Census; U.S. Bureau of the Census’ 2005 to 2007 “American Community Survey (ACS); the Allegheny County Comprehensive Plan, Allegheny Places, adopted November 8, 2008, the Northern Route 88 Corridor Study, Appendix A of the 2004 Bethel Park Plan Update and the Bethel Park Industrial Park Revitalization Effort, Phase 1, dated April 2005.

Table 2-1: Number and Value of Housing Units – 2000 to 2008

Figure 2-1: Age of Housing Stock
Figure 2-2: Units in Structures
Figure 2-3: Size of Housing Units by Bedroom Indices
Figure 2-4: Housing Tenure
Figure 2-5: Average Household Size by Tenure
Figure 2-6: Housing Unit Occupancy
Figure 2-7: Owner-Occupied Home Values
Figure 2-8: Median Value of Owner-Occupied Homes
Figure 2-9: Renter-Occupied Housing Values
Figure 2-10: Renter-Occupied Median Housing Values
Figure 2-11: Mortgage as a Percent of Household Income
The initial study of a community’s built and natural environment generally takes form in the existing land use discussion. This update begins with the examination of the land use descriptions, information, and recommendations of the 1997 and the 2004 Plan Updates.

Land Use Description and Information

Both Updates introduce the description with a discussion of Development Patterns and Vacant Lands. Similarly, both introductions explain that “no accurate data exists of the current percent of land devoted to various land uses; however, a reasonably accurate assessment of future development patterns can be predicted over the short term”. In each case the Updates referred to the large parcel map available for review in the Planning Department that indicated the larger tracts of land that were discussed and reviewed for potential rezonings as a part of the comprehensive plan updates. Each Plan Update identified the percentage of the total municipal lands that were either vacant or with development potential. Land development activities reduced these percentages in the period between 1997 and 2004, from 8.6 percent to 4.9 percent. In the same period subdivision activities increased the number of land parcels, from 11,470 parcels to 12,800 parcels.

Since the completion of the Updates, Allegheny County has produced and adopted its first County-wide Comprehensive Plan. This Plan has mapped existing land use and other environmental features throughout the County using a Geographical Information System (GIS). The digital mapping and files will be available for municipal use shortly. The information will give new meaning and understanding to the discussion of the existing land use and to the development of a future land use concept. With this information the municipal planners, decision-makers, and the community will be able to make more informed decisions and to better understand the impact of these decisions. These benefits may include, but are not limited to:

- Detailed mapping that classifies and shows the location of various land uses by type: residential, commercial, industrial, transportation, recreation/conservation, community facilities, cemeteries, golf courses, agriculture, undeveloped lands, vacant and unclassified lands.

- Data that provides the number of acres and parcels devoted to the various land use classifications.
• The ability to complete development potential analysis by matching developable land (total land minus constrained lands) to development factors; such as, the number of housing units per acre (density) or the floor to area ratio of nonresidential space (intensity).

• The ability to determine if the community has enough variety/diversity in its housing stock and if this mix is distributed throughout the community.

• The ability to determine if the community has enough nonresidential development to supplement the community’s tax base to sustain essential community services and infrastructure.

• It shows the relationship between residential and nonresidential uses, including current and future opportunities for connectivity to work, transit, leisure activities, shopping, other neighborhoods, etc.

• It provides a basemap to envision the future and to test the impact of future scenarios.

• It provides a visual picture for discussing the present and the future with the community.

• It has a direct connection to land use regulations and changes to be made to regulatory maps (e.g., zoning, official maps, and infrastructure planning maps).

In short, accurate land use mapping is considered the quintessential tool in the arsenal of tools used by both professional and lay community planners. Without it the planners are operating at a disadvantage; with it the planners will receive greater clarity of direction and purpose. Unfortunately this data was not available at the time of the preparation of the 2009 Plan Update.

**Land Use Recommendations**

The previous planning documents based the majority of the recommendations on the status of properties with development and redevelopment potential. In 1997 a spreadsheet was developed and updated in 2004, which linked parcels to area descriptions, owners, current zoning, approximate acres, current status, potential/probable development, and recommended rezoning.

The prescribed process for rezoning land in Pennsylvania follows the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (PA MPC).

• The Code enables municipalities to begin this process in the Comprehensive Plan through the development of various studies (e.g.,
demographic and socioeconomic, existing land use, existing infrastructure, environmental and natural conditions).

- Then, through a process of analysis that examines existing conditions, capacities, and needs, moves into the development of future reports that help the community adapt to changes that have occurred and to meet specific demands.

- Any recommended changes in land use take into account changes that would be needed to keep public infrastructure and services in balance and affordable.

- These recommendations are translated into plan maps: future land use, future transportation, future utilities and future community facilities.

- These maps and the accompanying explanatory text or strategies become the guiding principles for modifications to land use ordinances; however, the comprehensive plan deals with broader principles than specific changes to the zoning or subdivision and land development ordinances. Changes to ordinances should be undertaken as part of implementing plan recommendations.

This Plan’s Future Land Use Map will examine parcels with potential and redevelopment potential; however, recommendations for these parcels will be presented in the broader classifications of the Future Land Use Plan than the very specific zoning districts. This approach provides the opportunity for the municipality to take a fresher approach and consider new ideas that align with “Smart Growth Principles” of the 21st Century (e.g., transit-oriented development; form-based zoning approaches; open space development; mixed-use buildings as well as mixed-use development – a concept explored in 2004).

Specialized Studies: Northern Route 88 Corridor Study

The Study was adopted as part of the 2004 Plan Update. It is important for several reasons:

- It was community-driven, community-based, and visionary.

- It utilized what in today’s terms would be called a sustainable approach – an approach shaped by the evaluation of land use, economics, and transportation.

- It was strategic in its approach, examining specific steps and projects and public and private actions to achieve its vision.
Three neighborhood ideas emerged from the corridor study: the Transit Village, the Residential Neighborhood, and the Commercial Neighborhood.

- The Transit Village – in the vicinity of the Port Authority of Allegheny County’s (PAT), Washington Junction light rail transit (LRT) station and close to residences and businesses was envisioned as a compact non-residential development that offers both a point of origin and destination. Elements included:
  - Structured parking at the LRT site.
  - Ground floor shops, services, and offices in the parking structure.
  - Range of low-traffic generating, employment opportunities that are located behind a natural buffer (steep slopes) from the residential area.
  - Pedestrian and bicycle connections between residential and business neighborhoods.
  - Detailed description of land use standards.

- The Residential Neighborhoods: Mine 3 District and vacant land northeast of the Route 88-Valley Drive intersection. Characteristics and recommendations were described:
  - Mine 3 District – importantly, this area was described as an established historic neighborhood, with a variety of housing types and opportunities for in-fill housing of the same type. It would be served by the Transit Village nonresidential uses. It was in need of stormwater and sewer infrastructure and roadway and pedestrian/bicycle improvements to reach its full potential.
  - Route 88-Valley Drive District – this undeveloped 37.5 acres site was described with several constraints to its development potential: site access, sanitary sewer capacity, adjacent activities, and steep topography. Specific standards would help to specify a suitable style of development for the site to reach its full potential.

- The Commercial Districts: Retail Business and Consumer Services District and Neighborhood Office District
  - Retail Business and Consumer Services District – the district was described as encompassing the northwestern corridor from School Street south to Bethel Church Road and providing residents’ and traveler’ consumer needs. Specific recommendations for the type of activities were derived from the Corridor Study’s market analysis. General standards set informed changes to be made to land use regulations.
  - Neighborhood Office District – represented plans for the southeastern corridor between Hillside and Loretta Drive. The orientation of activities would be neighborhood offices developments, with minimal parking and traffic generation and visual congruity with the surrounding residential neighborhoods. As in the retail business and
consumer services district both specific activities and general land use standards were part of the study’s recommendations.

- Current status of the recommendations and activities: Although the ideas generated in the Corridor study have not taken hold as envisioned, some development activity has occurred. The Plan Update will continue to support the type of activities prescribed for this area. The status of the transportation recommendations in the Route 88 Corridor are part of the Transportation Profile.

**Specialized Studies: Bethel Park Industrial Park Revitalization Effort Phase 1 (April 2005)**

This study is being brought into the Plan Update by reference. General information of the study and its recommendations are listed below:

- **General Description:** The Industrial Park is located at the intersection of South Park Road and Industrial Boulevard. In 2003, there were nearly 125 businesses, with most uses in processing, light manufacturing, assembly and warehousing. Approximately five businesses were observed to be vacant. About 10 lots remained undeveloped. Buildings in the Park date back to the 1950s. The style of development is on the horizontal rather than the vertical.

- **Identified issues** were described as hindrances to the Park reaching its full 21st Century potential: uncontrolled site access and poor traffic circulation, sign clutter, poor electrical service, inadequate stormwater system, and no uniform development guidelines.

- **Recommendations** were described as opportunities for improvement, with both actions and benefits. The list included:
  - Traffic signal and movement improvements at Industrial Boulevard and South Park Road.
  - Realignment of the Industrial Boulevard and South Park Road Intersections and repaving of all Park cartways.
  - A coordinated system of signage for wayfinding and business identification.
  - Work with Allegheny Power to reevaluate/assess and improve the Industrial Park’s existing electrical distribution system.
  - Construction of shared stormwater system improvements and use of best management practices to provide on-site recharge and infiltration.
  - Development of local policies/regulations for outdoor storage areas, service areas and parking.

- **Current status of the recommendations and activities:** Activities have been limited to traffic signal and stormwater system improvements. While more may be accomplished, the Bethel Park Planning and Zoning
Commission (PZC) recognize that the majority of the initiative must be taken by the property owner(s) of the park; however the PCA agrees that because of the Park’s acknowledged past as the first industrial park of its kind in the County and its potential for the future, the study recommendations should be carried forward into this five-year update.

**Housing Characteristics**

One of the main functions of local government is to ensure that the existing and future residents of the community have adequate and safe housing choices. These are represented by a variety of housing types and values. One way to assess how this imperative is being met is to look at both primary (inventories) and secondary data (census counts). The following charts present these data. Relevant facts follow each chart.

Previous planning activities considered housing changes in the number of housing units, age and size of units, and householder tenure. This data will be updated with information from the Municipal Building Permit Survey and estimates from the U. S. Bureau of the Census’ American Community Survey, based on data collected over the three-year period from 2005 to 2007. In addition to this comparative data, the profile examines estimated home values and the rate of burdened households (paying more than 30% of household income on housing).

**Number of Housing Units**

The 2004 Plan Update reviewed the number of housing unit starts over the period of 1980 to 2002. Within that time period the total new housing units brought on-line were 1,241 single family units, 506 townhouses, and 665 apartments for a total 2,279 new homes. The Update calculated the average number of starts per year by time period. The 2009 Update adds to this previous calculated information on Table 2-1 below:

- Over the last nine years from 2000 to 2008, Bethel Park has increased its housing stock by 373 units. It appears that Bethel Park will exceed the number of new units of the 1990’s (365 new units), but will not reach the levels of the decades before the 1990’s (1980’s = 1,003 units, 1970’s = 2,525 units, 1960’s = 2,903 units, 1950’s = 3,410 units).

- The greatest number of units was single family units. The 224 units represented 60 percent of the total units, with the 121 townhouses representing 32 percent and the 28 apartment units representing the remaining 8 percent of the total new units.

- Adding these new units to the number of units in the year 2000 (13,362 units), Bethel Park, today, has approximately 13,740 housing units. With an estimated 2007 population of 31,700 and a housing unit total in 2007
(minus the totals for the years 2008 and 2007) of 13,680, the number of persons per household would be 2.32 persons/household.

**Table 2-1: Number and Value of Housing Units – 2000 to 2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Single Family Units Totals</th>
<th>Townhouse Units Totals</th>
<th>Apartment Units Totals</th>
<th>Total Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>Ave. $/Unit</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>$4,219,000</td>
<td>$263,687.50</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>$7,825,595</td>
<td>$244,549.84</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>$11,587,400</td>
<td>$236,477.55</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>$10,472,000</td>
<td>$290,888.89</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>$6,978,156</td>
<td>$279,126.24</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>$2,474,915</td>
<td>$309,364.38</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>$5,502,850</td>
<td>$289,623.68</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>$4,598,282</td>
<td>$306,552.13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>$7,397,645</td>
<td>$308,235.21</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>$61,055,843</td>
<td>$280,945.05</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bethel Park Building Permit Survey, staff compilation, Year 2000 to 2008.

*2008 95 Nursing Home Units with a total value of $12,790,000.

Note: Since development of the profile, the Municipality so far this year (January to November 2009), has added 14 new single family units with a total value of $4,367,825 and an average cost of $311,987.50 per unit, continuing the upward cost of new housing, even in recessionary times. No townhomes nor apartments have been built or approved in 2009.

- The Demographic Profile indicated that the population was decreasing; however, the number of housing units is increasing. This inconsistency may be explained by the drop in the number of persons per household. In 2000, household size was calculated at 2.51 persons/household. Today, the same calculation yields 2.3 persons/household.

- Finally, the table shows the value per unit for all types of housing was on the rise from the year 2000 to the year 2008. This data does not reflect the recent recessionary and deflationary trends in the housing market.

**Age and Size of Units**

The housing stock of the municipality is characterized by its age and size. Figure 2-1 shows the relative age of housing units and compares this with the County, the State, and the National housing stock.

Age is an indicator of the value and the diversity of housing.
Figure 2-1: Age of Housing Stock


- The municipality’s housing boom was in the period of the 1950’s and the 1960’s, whereas, elsewhere in the County and the State enormous growth was seen prior to the 1940’s.

- Since the 1950’s, a gradual decline was seen in the number of housing units that came on-line each year.

- Today, the municipality’s housing stock is a mix of styles and sizes, which reflect the periods in which they were built.

An equally important indicator that demonstrates the diversity in housing is the number of units in a structure, which explains the type of unit.

- The majority of the units in Bethel Park, and across the County, State and Nation, are single-family detached units, making up 78.3 percent of all units in the municipality.

- The distribution of units by type is somewhat similar between the four geographic areas, which mean Bethel Park has a healthy variety and choice of housing types for its current and future residents.
Figure 2-2: Units in Structures - Estimated 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1-unit, detached</th>
<th>1-unit, attached</th>
<th>2 units</th>
<th>3 or 4 units</th>
<th>5 to 9 units</th>
<th>10 to 19 units</th>
<th>20 or more units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bethel Park</td>
<td>78.3</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegheny County</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


- The percentage of duplex units (1-unit attached) is lower than the other areas as are the units that would fall into the category of townhomes.
- The municipality has a greater percentage of the more dense apartment buildings (20 units or more) than the County, State and Nation.
- Based on this information, the municipal leaders may want to consider the need for more duplex and/or townhome units to broaden the range of housing unit choice.

The final indicator, of the size of the units presented in this Update, is the number of bedrooms in the housing units. The ACS provides 2007 estimated data below.

- The distribution appears relatively similar across all geographic areas.
- For Bethel Park, a little more than 45 percent of the units are three bedroom units (the most popular size for all 4 areas).
- Bethel Park has the highest percentage of homes with four bedrooms – homes larger than the average and lower percentages that are one and two bedroom units.
Figure 2-3: Size of Housing Units by Bedroom Indices - 2007
Estimated Data

- A limited number of units about 2.1 percent of all units in the municipality would be considered large units, with five or more bedrooms.

- The size of units may be a reflection of the community’s demand for housing.

Housing Unit Tenure

The final indicator of housing diversity is tenure: owner-occupied and renter-occupied. See the figure below for the estimated tenure in 2007.

- Tenure tells whether the unit is owner- or renter-occupied. Rental units provide opportunities for residents who are not able to buy a home or choose not to be homeowners. It broadens the housing opportunities within the community. Rental units may take form in every housing style and type.

- Bethel Park has a higher owner-occupancy rate (80.3%) than all of the compared areas. Consequently, its renter-occupancy rate (19.7%) is nearly ten percent lower than the County and the State.

The County’s Plan *Allegheny Places* will be explored during the planning phase for consistency with its housing plan in developing housing diversity.

**Figure 2-4: Housing Tenure - 2007 Estimated Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of Total Occupied Housing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner-occupied (percent of total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethel Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


- If other diversity indicators are taken into consideration with tenure, one method for broadening the housing base would be to create opportunities for smaller units in a variety of housing types.

- See Figure 2-5, which shows the average household size by tenure – smaller households may be translated into smaller housing units. Bethel Park’s average household size for owner-occupied units was estimated to be 2.66 persons per household and 1.78 persons per household for renter-occupied.

**Value of Housing Units**

Recent indicators from the ACS help to reveal the value of housing units in Bethel Park. The previous discussion of information, gleaned from the Bethel Park Building Permit Survey, revealed that the cost of new housing is increasing. This discussion looks at the picture for all housing. It begins with the occupancy rates and then examines the distribution and average value of both owner-occupied and renter-occupied homes. Finally, it reveals the number of household incomes burdened by the value of mortgages and rents for the year 2007.
The first indicator is the number of housing units that were occupied or vacant in 2007. The vacancy rate affects the cost of housing. A vacancy rate that is too high depresses housing value; whereas, a vacancy rate that is too low inflates the housing value. A healthy vacancy rate is generally between three to four percent.

- The vacancy rate in 2007 was low, which may have indicated rising housing costs.
- The expectation is that in 2009, these rates have increased with the recessionary and deflationary trends.
Figures 2-7 and 2-8 provide information on the value of owner-occupied home values in the year 2007. Again, recent national and local housing trends would suggest that these values have dropped but the relative distribution would remain the same, since all aspects of the housing sector appear to be experiencing equal changes.

- The estimated values for 2007 revealed that homes in Bethel Park were moderately valued, with the highest values in the $100,000 to $149,000 price range. Few homes were less that $50,000 in value and more than $300,000 in value.

- The median value of owner-occupied homes in Bethel Park was nearly $30,000 more than the County’s median value, but almost $14,000 less than the Pennsylvania median and $50,000 less than the median for the U.S.

**Figure 2-7: Owner-Occupied Home Values - 2007 Estimated Data**


**Figure 2-8: Median Value of Owner-Occupied Homes - 2007 Estimated Data**

Similarly, the distribution for renter-occupied units is presented on Figure 2-9 and 2-10.


- The distribution of rental values shows that Bethel Park has relatively high rental values compared to the County and the State. The majority of renters in Bethel Park pay more than $500 dollars a month, with almost 10 percent paying more than $1,500 a month.

- Bethel Park’s median housing value for renter-occupied housing in 2007 was estimated to be $775/month. This median is higher than the median for the County and the State, by more than $100 than the County and $90 for the State. Bethel Park’s values compared more closely with the median value in the U.S., only approximately $15 less.
Finally, the profile considers the mortgage or rent as a percent of household income. Much attention has been given to this factor in recent months as it relates to housing costs that place a higher burden on household income than deemed prudent (a rate 30% or more of household income is considered too high). This rate appeared to be a precursor of the current economic recession. Figure 2-11 and 2-12 shows the percent of households with greater than 30 percent of household income being spent on mortgages and rents as estimated in the year 2007.

- The results of this evaluation yielded that for those households holding a mortgage in Bethel Park, 3.8 percent were marginally burdened and 15.3 percent were very burdened in 2007. Similar rates were experienced in the other areas; however, across the Nation almost 20 percent were excessively burdened by mortgage costs.

- Renters were spending more household income on rent, thus the burden rate was higher, with 4.7 percent of Bethel Park’s renters in the 30 to 34.9 percent range, but 36.3 percent in the 35 percent or more range. This rate was similar for all areas.

- Smaller more affordable housing units in all types might help to reverse the trend for households in Bethel Park and help to move renters into home ownership more quickly.

Figure 2-11: Mortgage as a Percent of Household Income - Rate of Burdened Households - Year 2007 Estimated Data


Figure 2-12: Gross Rent as a Percent of Household Income - Rate of Burdened Households - Year 2007 Estimated Data

Profile 3: Existing Infrastructure – Transportation and Utilities

The purpose of the Existing Infrastructure Profile Update is to highlight the accomplishments that have occurred in the improvement to and/or development of the Municipality’s Transportation and Utility Infrastructure.

Transportation Infrastructure

A Long Range Transportation Plan was completed in 2004 to support the activities of the last Comprehensive Plan Update (“Appendix B: 2004 Long Range Plan Update – Municipality of Bethel Park: Transportation Improvement Plan and Technical Memorandum #3 – Conceptual Roadway Improvement Plans”). This Update reports on the status of the improvement projects.

The Status Report on Objectives and Recommendations of the 1997 and 2004 Long Range Plan Updates is shown on the following page. The chart provides a project number, reference to comprehensive plan document, the location of the project, the description of the project, status of completion (i.e., complete, partially complete, not begun) and project notes. The projects are mapped on the Status of Transportation Projects Map. Outstanding progress has been made since the development of the plan; of the 29 projects listed, twelve (41%) of the projects have been completed, six (21%) have been partially completed, and 11 (40%) have not begun.

This chart will form the basis for the Transportation Plan Update.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>COMPLE</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>COMPLETE</th>
<th>PARTIALLY COMPLETE</th>
<th>NOT BEGUN</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>Baptist &amp; Broughton Roads and Baptist Road &amp; Highbee Drive/Grandview Farms Court</td>
<td>Construct left turn lanes on Baptist Road and Broughton Road and upgrade traffic signal at intersection of Baptist Road with Broughton Road. Construct left turn lanes on Baptist Road and install traffic signal at intersection of Baptist Road with Highbee Drive/Grandview Farms Court</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Installation of traffic signal at Highbee drive/Grandview Farms Court complete. Design in Progress for left turn lanes at both intersections, construction scheduled for completion in 2011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>Brightwood Road &amp; Lightwood Avenue and Brightwood Road &amp; Highland Avenue</td>
<td>Install Multi-Way Stop Sign Control on Brightwood Road approaches to Highland Avenue.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>Brightwood Road/West Library Avenue and Slater Road &quot;T&quot; Crossing</td>
<td>Install Multi-Way Stop Sign Control on Brightwood Road and Library Avenue approaches to Slater Road &quot;T&quot; Crossing</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>Brightwood Road/West Library Avenue and Mesta Street &quot;T&quot; Crossing</td>
<td>Install Multi-Way Stop Sign Control on Brightwood Road approaches to Mesta Street &quot;T&quot; Crossing</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>Broughton Road and Locust Road/Paxton Drive</td>
<td>Install traffic signal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bethel Church Road &amp; Highland Avenue and Bethel Church Road &amp; Meadowbrook Drive</td>
<td>Upgrade two (2) traffic signals</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>South Park and Logan Roads</td>
<td>Upgrade traffic signal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>Baptist and Homing Roads</td>
<td>Upgrade traffic signal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>South Park and Brightwood Roads</td>
<td>Construct left turn lane on South Park Road and upgrade traffic signal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Signal Partially upgraded in 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>Route 88 and Milford Drive</td>
<td>Align Milford Drive with Valley Drive and install traffic signal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>Route 88 and Hillside Drive</td>
<td>Realign Hillside Drive intersection with Route 88 to improve sight distance along Route 88</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To be performed by developer, traffic signal also to be installed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>Route 88 and Kings School Road</td>
<td>Construct left turn lanes on Route 88 and upgrade traffic signal. Continue three-lane cross-section northbound on Route 88 to Logan Road and construct left turn lanes on Route 88 at Logan Road and upgrade traffic signal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>McMurray and Clifton Roads</td>
<td>Widen McMurray Road to three-lane cross-section from Clifton Road to South Park Road</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>McMurray Road and Limestone Drive</td>
<td>Construct left turn lane on McMurray Road, right turn lane on Limestone Drive and install traffic signal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Developer completed preliminary traffic study, indicating no turning lane needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>Logan &amp; Irishtown Roads and Logan &amp; Patterson Roads</td>
<td>Southbound Logan Road and eastbound Patterson Road opposite westbound Logan Road to create standard four-way intersection and install traffic signal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project</td>
<td>COMP. PLAN YEAR</td>
<td>LOCATION</td>
<td>DESCRIPTION</td>
<td>COMPLETE</td>
<td>PARTIALLY COMPLETE</td>
<td>NOT BEGUN</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>South Park and Drake Roads</td>
<td>Reconstruct intersection to remove island separating left turn and right turn movements and Signalize</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Islands removed. Preliminary engineering for traffic signal complete. Construction scheduled for 2011.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Bethel Church and Logan Roads</td>
<td>Construct left turn lanes on Bethel Church Road and right turn lane on Logan Road, realign Brookside Boulevard opposite Logan Road, and install traffic signal</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Logan Road and Rt 88</td>
<td>Replacement traffic signal. Add left turn lane on Route 88</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Design for signal replacement complete. To be constructed in 2010 Roadway design not to be performed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>South Park and Brightwood Roads</td>
<td>Add left turn lane on South Park Road</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>See Project 9 above, which is a continuation of this project into 2004.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Broughton and Baptist Roads</td>
<td>Improve intersection movement by adding turn lanes on Baptist Road and upgrading traffic signal</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Design in Progress. See Project 5 above, which is a continuation of this project into 2004.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Logan and South Park</td>
<td>Replace traffic signal</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>See Project 7 above, which is a continuation of this project into 2004.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Baptist Road Bridge near 84 Lumber</td>
<td>Replace Bridge</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Constructed by PennDOT in 2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Bethel Church &amp; Highland and Bethel Church &amp; Meadowbrook</td>
<td>Replace two traffic signals</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>See Project 6 above, which is a continuation of this project into 2004.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Baptist &amp; Horning</td>
<td>Replace traffic signal</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>See Project 8 above, which is a continuation of this project into 2004.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Clifton Road and Rt 88</td>
<td>Replace Bridge</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Milford and Rt 88</td>
<td>Improve intersection by aligning road with Valley Drive</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>See Project 10 above, which is a continuation of this project into 2004.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Clifton and McMurry Roads</td>
<td>Install left turn lane on McMurry Road</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>See Project 13 above, which is a continuation of this project into 2004.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>N. Highland and Route 19</td>
<td>Add left lane on N. Highland Rd and timing changes to signal</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wastewater Utilities

Public wastewater services to Bethel Park are provided by two Sanitary Authorities: Bethel Park Municipal Authority and the Allegheny County Sanitary Authority (ALCOSAN). Approximately 1/3 of the Municipality is serviced by ALCOSAN Treatment Facility; the remaining 2/3 is under the service of the Bethel Park Municipal Authority’s Piney Fork Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Bethel Park provides the staffing for the maintenance and operation of the Piney Fork Wastewater Treatment Plant and the collection system. Each year an annual report is prepared that discusses maintenance, repair and operations; special orders and agreements; improvements to the collection system by watersheds; improvements to the treatment plant and pump station; and revenues and expenditures.

The list below provides a summary of the January 2009 Report. Many of the activities are in response to increasing federally mandated treatment standards. The cost of these improvements are part of the Authority’s capital improvements programming and bonds:

- The Municipality has a lease agreement with the Bethel Park Municipal Authority, which places responsibility for ongoing maintenance and repair of the system on the Municipality. These operations include field inspections, responding to citizen complaints, sewer cleaning, installation of manhole inserts, televising the collection system and raising manholes, as well as maintenance of the sewage treatment plant.

- The Authority performs and funds all capital additions, using contracted services.

- A Consent Order and Agreement (COA) signed on June 12, 1995 with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) specified improvements within the Piney Fork Watershed (covered by the Authority). Mandated improvements have been completed, but no termination response of COA has been received from DEP. Flow monitoring is on-going.

- The Municipality and Authority entered into an Administrative Consent Order (ACO) in 2004 with the Allegheny County Health Department, which is similar to the ALCOSAN ACO – represents 82 communities and authorities. The ACO for the Bethel Park Authority applies to McLaughlin and Saw Mill Run Watersheds. All tasks will be completed by November 30, 2010.

- Major accomplishments of 2008 are listed below:
- **McLaughlin Run Watershed** (McLaughlin Run North and South) – flows conveyed to ALCOSAN:
  - Replacement of deteriorated sewer lines and manhole and first wye connections and performance of spot repairs.
  - Substantially completed Winfred Manor, Kennebec, and Donati Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation.
  - Performed point-of-sale dye testing, manhole inspections/repairs, and televising.

- **Piney Fork Watershed** (Cat Fish Run, Lick Run, Sleepy Hollow, portion of Brush Run, and Piney Fork (Route 88)) – watersheds tributary to Piney Fork Treatment Facility:
  - Performed point-of-sale dye testing, manhole inspections/repairs, and televising.
  - Replaced manholes and backflow valves.
  - South Hills Area Council of Governments (SHACOG) Joint Pipe Lining Project – multi-community joint sanitary sewer rehabilitation project to take place over several years.
  - Piney Fork Trunk Sewer Realignment – relocation of severely deteriorated brick interceptor manhole out of the stream channel of Piney Creek – 75% complete.

- **Saw Mill Run Watershed** – conveyed to ALCOSAN conveyance and treatment system:
  - Performed spot repairs and investigations.
  - Saw Mill Run Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Phase 1 – reduction of wet weather flows from the Milford Road area – 60% complete.
  - Saw Mill Run Northeast and West Sewer Lining- major repairs upstream of the Milford Road drainage area.
  - Performed point-of-sale dye testing, manhole inspections/repairs, and televising.

- **Painter’s Run Watershed** – treated by ALCOSAN
  - Performed point-of-sale dye testing and televising.

- **Brush Run Watershed** – treatment at Piney Fork, with a portion at ALCOSAN.
  - Performed point-of-sale dye testing and televising.

- **Lick Run South Watershed** – conveyed to Pleasant Hills Municipal Authority – no significant activities

- **Piney Fork Sewage Treatment Plant and Pump Station Improvements:**

A list of twenty specific, major items of work has been completed or are scheduled for completion under the capital improvements program.

**Stormwater Management**

The Municipality’s stormwater management requirements are included in the subdivision and land development section of the Municipal Code. These requirements include specifications for the design of stormwater management facilities and storm sewer systems for all proposed development and re-development. As part of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection’s MS 4 regulations for urban storm water systems, the Municipality will be required to update its stormwater management ordinance within the next five years. The new state regulations include storm sewer system operation and maintenance, water quality and storm water infiltration components as well as new stormwater management facility release rate restrictions.

The Municipality is continually completing maintenance projects on the storm sewer system by rehabilitating existing catch basins and reconstructing deteriorated storm sewers. Other projects include constructing new storm sewers to remove drainage issues along Municipal streets. Approximately eight to ten years ago, the Municipality addressed two areas that were prone to chronic flooding by constructing regional flood control facilities in the Logan Creek and McLaughlin Run watersheds.

The funding for all of the Municipal storm sewer projects is part of the capital budget each year.

Other utilities that serve Bethel Park are run by private entities. Planning for these utilities is not in the purview of the Municipality. Adequate service is assumed for all areas of the community.
The Municipality of Bethel Park 2009
Comprehensive Plan Update

Profile 4: Community Services and Facilities Profile

The 2004 Long Range Plan Update did not address Community Services and Facilities, which is a topic for review under the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). The services include administrative, emergency, recreational, library, and educational services.

A series of key person interviews form the basis for this profile, as well as the review of pertinent community service documents. It is not the intent to do a comprehensive assessment of each service provider. These assessments are completed by the individual service providers on a routine basis. This profile will provide the results of the interviews and highlight relevant information for planning purposes.

Administrative Services

Bethel Park Administrative Services are described on the Municipal Website as follows:

“The Department of Administration, which is located in the Municipal Building (5100 West Library Avenue) on the second floor, provides for the coordination and oversight of all Municipal Departments. Staffed by a Council appointed Municipal Manager, the Department also employs a full time Assistant Municipal Manager, an Administrative Assistant and an Administrative Secretary. All Council and Departmental activities and meetings are coordinated through Administration.”

Additional facts relevant to the planning process follow:

- **Home Rule Community** - The residents of Bethel Park elected a Home Rule form of Government in 1978, which resulted in Bethel Borough being renamed as the Municipality of Bethel Park. This Home Rule form of government provides the Municipality with greater powers of governance than the former Borough form of government (taken from Bethel Park website).

- **Form of Government** – A nine-member Council and Mayor form of government was chosen for Bethel Park. Each Council member represents the ward in which he/she lives.

- **Departments of Government** – The Municipal government has six departments: administration, finance, community service, recreation, Bethel Park TV (BPTV), and police.
- **Finance** – “The Department of Finance administers the budgeting, accounting and payroll functions for all Municipal Departments. A Finance Director, Accounting Supervisor, Payroll Clerk and a Secretary, staff the department.” (Bethel Park website). Facts from the Finance Department include:
  o Earned income tax = 1.4 percent of income. The Municipality now receives 0.9 percent while the School District receives 0.5 percent.
  o Municipal real estate tax is 2.18 mills (calculated as assessed value x .00218). The assessed value is to be equal to the Market Value of a home. The Allegheny County Assessors Office sets the assessed value. The Bethel Park School District also sets a Real Estate Tax rate which is billed by Centax at the same time as the Municipal Real Estate Tax.
  o Local services tax = $52/year.
  o Other taxes are realty transfer tax (this tax has continued to decrease over the past year – a reflection of the housing recession, amusement tax, and mechanical device tax.

- **Community Services** - The Department of Community Services encompasses the following departments and services: Public Works, Building Permit/Inspection/Code Enforcement, Recycling/Leaf Collection, Environmental Engineering, Sewage Treatment Plant Operations (to be discussed in the Infrastructure Profile), Planning and Zoning, Municipal Engineering, and Garbage Collection. These services provide the following functions:
  o **Public Works** - maintains the municipal streets, storm and sanitary sewers, all municipal parks, street signs, and municipal facilities.
  o **Planning and Zoning** - provides assistance to residents and developers on land use issues included but not limited to subdivision applications, land development applications and zoning related issues.
  o **Engineering** - plans and implements maintenance and capital improvement projects for municipal streets and storm sewers and provides assistance with grading permits, street opening permits, and storm water management projects.
  o **Garbage Collection/Recycling/Leaf Collection** – provides weekly curbside garbage collection to all single-family residential homes. The Municipality Website lists collection preparation procedures for garbage, appliances, carpeting, hedge cuttings, and paints. Bethel Park requires the recycling of glass, #1 and #2 plastics, cans, and newspapers and provides instructions for the containment of these items. These items are collected weekly with other garbage. Leaf waste is collected seven times a year. The Garbage Collection service produces a Waste Management Newsletter to keep the public informed regarding schedule and policy changes.
BPTV – is a full service television production studio, whose facilities and resources are available free to any individual, organization or group in Bethel Park.

- **Appointed Boards and Commissions** – the government is served by the following boards and commissions. Each of these boards/commissions have been identified in the Bethel Park Code Book, which provides for the purpose, duties, and operation of each entity:

  - **Parks and Recreation Board** – shall be responsible for the periodic review of parks, recreation and leisure service programs and makes recommendations to the Council and School Board, when appropriate.
  - **Civil Service Commission** – shall conduct interviews and make recommendations to the Council on vacancies and promotions for civil servants in the Police Department.
  - **Planning and Zoning Commission** – shall function as the planning agency and advise/recommend to the Municipal Manager, Council and Department of Community Development on all plans related to development in the community, as well as all matters described in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC).
  - **Zoning Hearing Board** – shall be responsible for hearing appeals on the rulings of the zoning officer, conducting hearings on variances and special exceptions and the challenges on the validity of the Zoning Ordinance or Map in accordance with the MPC.
  - **Building and Fire Codes Appeals Board** – shall be responsible for hearing appeals on rulings by the Building Official or Fire Official in enforcing the Building Codes or Fire Codes of the Municipality.
  - **Emergency Medical Service Committee** – shall participate in the Emergency Medical Service Advisory Board as representative of Bethel Park with the Tri-Community Emergency Medical Service System.
  - **Municipal Authority** – shall be responsible for the construction of the sewage treatment plant of Bethel Park, functioning as the Sewage Authority.
  - **Cable Television Board** - has 14 duties that range from receiving citizen complaints to monitoring new legislation and regulations and making recommendations to the Council regarding Cable Service
  - **Library Board** – shall oversee the establishment, operation, and maintenance of the Bethel Park Public Library.

Currently, the Municipality has no plans to expand staffing.
Figure 4-1: Municipality of Bethel Park
Administrative Organization Chart

Municipal Council

Director of Community Services

Assistant Director of Community Services / Municipal Planner

Assistant Municipal Manager

Finance Director

Recreation & Leisure Services Director

Public Access Director

Asst. Recreation & Leisure Services Director / Community Center Director

Public Works Supervisor

Municipal Engineer

Environmental Engineer

Sewage Treatment Plant Superintendant

Code Enforcement

Council Appointed Boards & Commissions

Zoning Hearing Board

Planning & Zoning Commission

Municipal Authority

Park, Recreation & Leisure Services Board

Cable TV Board

Mayor

Chief of Police

Lieutenants (2)

Sergeants (6)

Patrolmen (26)

Satellite Organizations

Bethel Park Volunteer Fire Department

Tri-Community South Emergency Medical Services

Bethel Park Public Library
• The Municipality owns the municipal building, one pump station as a lease back arrangement with Bethel Park Sanitary Authority (Lick Run Pump Station), the sewage treatment plant, the community center and a maintenance garage. (See the recreation discussions for municipal parks and recreation facilities. The utility facilities and issues will be discussed in the Infrastructure Profile.) Although there are no plans for new municipal buildings over the next five years, space may be reconfigured and reallocated.

The interview process highlighted a desire to continue services along the same path.

• The mix of residential and non-residential development helps to offset the tax burden on citizens and provide a high level of community service.

• Major activities in the next five years would focus on infrastructure improvements to improve traffic flow and movement and to address sanitary lines and treatment plant capacities (see the infrastructure profile).

Emergency Services

The primary emergency service providers for the residents of Bethel Park are the Bethel Park Police Department, Bethel Park Volunteer Fire Company, the Tri-Community Emergency Medical Services, and Bethel Park Emergency Management Agency. This section presents a brief synopsis of these services, including the services’ accomplishments, challenges, and priorities.

Bethel Park Police Department

The following paragraph, taken from the Bethel Park website, describes the current status of the Police Department:

“The Bethel Park Police Department is a full-service community-oriented police department, located on the first floor of the Bethel Park Municipal Building. Thirty-eight full-time police officers, four emergency dispatchers, a secretary and a records clerk staff the Department. The Department is responsible for 24-hour community-wide law enforcement and responds to, and dispatches all requests for emergency services.

The following chart provides the organizational structure of the Department. The 38 sworn officers include the Chief of Police, two Lieutenants, five Sergeants, a Traffic Sergeant, three Investigators, a Crime Prevention and Community Resource Officer, a School Resource Officer, two Traffic Officers,
a K-9 Unit and 21 Patrolman. The Department is not unionized, but does have a bargaining unit that is currently in arbitration.

Figure 4-1: Bethel Park Police Department Organizational Structure

The Department offers a number of programs to the community, including:

- Citizen Police Academy - the objective of the program is to open new lines of communication and to create partnerships between the Police Department and the community,

- Law Enforcement Apprenticeship Program (LEAP) for high school students - the objective of the LEAP program is to provide information about the law enforcement profession for those students who may have an interest in pursuing law enforcement as a career at the federal, state, or local level,

- 911 Cell Phone Program for older adults, and

- Police Pals Program for elementary students.

The Department maintains an inventory of nineteen vehicles and a vehicle replacement schedule. The vehicles are equipped with car video cameras and mobile data terminals, which are hooked into the main dispatch. The radio systems are coordinated with the systems of other emergency agencies.
The service is funded through the general Municipal Fund and equipment and training grants. Grants are available from the State and Federal governments. The Council of Governments (COG) has been successful in obtaining training grants for the seventeen municipalities it represents.

The interview process highlighted the excellent relationship the Department has with the Council. The Department was described as well-equipped and a beneficiary of an excellent vehicle replacement program. Two needs were recognized:

- To continue to monitor the availability of grants to offset municipal budgets, and
- To explore opportunities to add more space for the crime prevention officer, patrol office, and evidence room.

**Bethel Park Volunteer Fire Company**

The Bethel Park Volunteer Fire Company has been a part of the community for 80 years. It is an all-voluntary service and does not use municipal dollars for its funding. The following facts are relevant to the planning process:

- The Company operates out of three locations: Brightwood Road, Clifton Road, and Milford Road. A brief description of each station follows:

  - **Brightwood Station** – the largest facility, the station contains four bays, which houses two pumper engines, one aerial truck, one heavy rescue, and one squad car. In addition to the garage, the station has a banquet hall and meeting room. Bingo is held weekly at the Stations, which along with the annual fund drive and donations are the major sources of funds.

  - **Clifton Station** – is a satellite station. This station was refurbished recently. It has three bays, which house one engine, one squad car, a rescue trailer and the fire safety house. The Station is near the Allegheny County Hazmat (Specialized Intervention Team) Green Unit, which is supported by Station volunteers.

  - **Milford Station** – is a satellite station. It has three bays and regularly houses one engine and one squad car. The station has no structural problems and no plans for updates.

- The Company’s service area is Bethel Park and provides first-call services for parts of South Park Township. It has mutual aid agreements with the South Hills Region.

- The Company’s replacement program for vehicles is on a 5-year cycle.
Currently, the Company has about 85 members, with 50 active firefighters. Recruitment activities are done through brochures, signage, and by word of mouth.

**Emergency Medical Services**

Tri-Community South Emergency Medical Services (EMS) provides EMS to Bethel Park. The Tri-Community website, http://www.tcsems.org/, describes its services:

"Tri-Community South EMS provides emergency medical services with highly trained and state-licensed medical personnel 24 hours a day seven days a week, in a jointly-owned and operated program with the Municipality of Bethel Park (53% ownership), and the Townships of South Park and Upper St. Clair.

Tri-Community South EMS receives no direct subsidies from our municipalities, nor does it receive any revenue from the Local Services Tax (formerly named the Emergency and Municipal Services Tax). An annual subscription drive is held each fall for the residents in our service area. For a nominal fee, a household is provided with total emergency ambulance coverage without direct charge whenever emergency service and transport is needed. Your subscription also covers treatment at the scene or household with no transport to the hospital.”

Additional facts may be pertinent to the planning process:

- The Services’ main office is located at 5490 Progress Boulevard in Bethel Park. This three year old building is 14,500 square feet. It houses six ambulances and two response vehicles.

- The service runs two satellite bases: (1) the South Park Municipal Building on Brownsville Road, and (2) the Upper St. Clair Municipal Building on McLaughlin Run Road. Each of these bases has garage space for one vehicle and facilities for the EMS crew.

- All vehicles are in good condition and are replaced in accordance with a schedule.

- The service uses a paid staff. It is staffed with an office staff of four full-time and one part-time billing and administrative personnel, an ambulance staff of 25 full-time and 4 part-time employees, and five volunteers. All ambulance staff are certified for ambulance duty.

- The call volume increases annually. Several causes of the increase are more people without health care insurance and more seniors. The
percentage of calls by municipalities and Allegheny County’s South Park are as follows:

- Bethel Park – 55.1%
- Upper St. Clair – 22.5%
- South Park – 18.6%
- Allegheny South Park - .07%

- The service has an annual budget of $2.8 million. It is funded through:
  - Subscriptions - $60/year
  - Donations
  - 3rd party reimbursements – this funding is trending downward
  - DCED Grants for equipment, computers, and safety.

Noted problems with funding are:

- Less than 25% of the 80,000 residents subscribe
- Difficulty in getting payment from patients that use non-participating providers. To resolve this problem, the service is working on getting duel signatures and using advocate organizations to lobby for legislative changes.

- Tri-County is only one of four services in the Commonwealth with a CAAF Gold standard license. The service is nationally recognized and was the Ambulance Service of the Year in Pennsylvania.

- The service has the largest CPR training program in the State and a canine AED program recognized as the best in the U.S.

- The interview process highlighted several areas of concern and need:
  - Recruitment and retention – maintaining staff levels are difficult because it requires a time consuming medical training program, but pays a little more than minimum wage and no benefits. The employees are not eligible for State retirement funds (not considered public safety).
  - Responding to non-medical emergencies – responding to 911 calls to carry obese patients.

**Emergency Management Agency (EMA)**

The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Code requires all municipalities to prepare and maintain an Emergency Operation Plan (EOP). The EOP prescribes activities that will be undertaken by the municipal government and other community officials for the protection of the lives and property of its citizens during a natural, technological, or terrorism emergency or disaster.
The EOP has been kept current and updated regularly. The EOP addresses the following features:

- Situations and Assumptions
- Concept of Operations/Continuity of Government
- Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities – the Emergency Management Coordinator (prepares, coordinates, and manages the EOP, which requires considerable time to keep current and to stay up-to-date on training). The EOP includes Officers for public information, communications and warnings, fire and rescue, police services, and health/medical.

The primary Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is Bethel Park Municipal Building. The secondary EOC is the Bethel Park Fire Hall.

**Recreational Services**

In 1996, the Municipality completed a Department of Community and Natural Resources (DCNR) *Comprehensive Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plan*. The 1997 *Long Range Development Plan Update* reported on the progress of the *Recreation Plan* implementation. Notable accomplishments were the completion of building and environmental studies of the Park Avenue site for the development of the Bethel Park Community Center and the acquisition of a 55-acre tract of land known as the “Guttmann Property” for a community Park (Millennium Park). A park conceptual plan and estimated construction costs were developed.

Other recommendations of the 1996 *Recreation Plan* included:

- Continue maintenance of existing neighborhood parks – mentioned often were new preschool equipment, water fountains and upgrade equipment to safety standards.
- Work with service area residents to determine the need for new neighborhood parks. Possible service areas were identified: Dashwood South, Simmons Village, Brush Run and Dashwood.
- Continue to meet maintenance, safety and ADA requirements on Community Parks (Bethel Park had a large surplus of community park land).
- Expedite construction of the Montour Trail, considering linking the Trail with South Park and the community park in the Guttmann property.
- Consider programming recommendations for specific age groups: preschoolers, school-age children, teens, adults, and senior citizens.
- Consider finance recommendations related to budgeting, fees and charges, fundraising, and five-year capital improvements schedule. A five
year capital improvements schedule and budgeting process was completed for the recreation services (Year 1997 to 2001).

**Municipal Parks**

The municipality owns fourteen parks, nine neighborhood parks and five community parks. Other parks are owned by the School District, the County, service organizations, and religious institutions. These parks are open for public use. The Municipality keeps an up-to-date inventory of these parks.

- The neighborhood parks have a service area of ¼ to ½ mile and are between 1 to 15 acres in size:
  - Birch Tree Park on Ashland Drive - .75 acres
  - Brookside Park (undeveloped) on Glen Rock Drive – 2.50 acres
  - Elm Tree Park on Glen Hill Drive – 3.95 acres
  - Mollyhill Park at 259 Santa Fe Drive – 6.00 acres
  - Oak Tree Park on Summit Street – 3.04 acres
  - Pine Tree Park on “N” Street – 1.01 acres
  - Shamrock Woods (undeveloped, with a walking path) – 4.05 acres
  - UPMC Field at 1300 Oxford Drive – 1.50 acres

Facilities at these parks are oriented towards neighborhood activities and generally include pavilions, play apparatus with swings for infants and adults or slides, spring toys. Several of the parks include basketball courts (1/2 or full), a climbing wall (Elm Tree), inline hockey court (Mollyhill), baseball/softball field (Oak Tree and UPMC).

- The five municipal-owned community parks (identified in the *Recreation Plan*) have a service area of 1 to 2 miles and are larger than the neighborhood parks or provide specialized services for the entire community:
  - Millennium Park at 5900 Baptist Road – 40 acres (contains a sports complex, with numerous fields for soccer, lacrosse, baseball/softball, and one lighted adult softball field).
  - Miner’s Park on 5480 Main Street – 8.08 acres (lighted basketball court and facilities for baseball/softball and adult softball).
  - Park Avenue Fields at 5151 Park Avenue – 11 acres (shares site with the community center and contain lighted multi-purpose field, walking track and storage unit/press box).
  - Peter Page Park on Church Street – 16.65 acres (walking trail, arboretum and community garden plots).
  - Simmons Park located at 1200 Clifton Road – 25.50 acres (contains a sports complex, with lighted basketball courts, lighted sand volleyball court, lighted baseball/softball fields, lighted inline hockey court, lighted tennis courts, batting cage, walking trail, concessions stand and restrooms).
- Village Green Park at 7000 Alicia Drive – 11 acres (soccer/lacrosse field, baseball/softball field, horseshoe courts, walking trail and restrooms).

- South Park is a major County-owned Regional Park, which occupies land in Bethel Park and South Park Township. The 1996 Recreation Plan conducted a community survey to gather information about citizen use and preference for park facilities. When asked what parks and playgrounds were most often used by Bethel Park residents, South Park was ranked 1st and Simmons Park was ranked 2nd. South Park offers numerous recreation opportunities to Bethel Park residents, which adds to the community’s quality of life.

- The park is 2,013 acres; approximately 1/3 of the acreage is located in Bethel Park.

- The Bethel Park portion of South Park contains the following facilities: Holes 13 to 16 of the 18 hole golf course, 3 B’s Action Park, playfields, 100 Acre House, nearly 20 groves and shelters, Corrigan Drive VIP Center (Banquet room, bumper boats, go carts, 18 hole miniature golf), Girl Scout Cabin, Ice Skating Rink, Wave Swimming Pool, parts of Bison Ridge Trail, Corrigan Walkway and other trails. Other facilities in South Park Township include numerous courts and fields, a fairground and children’s playground complex, a theatre, nature center, game preserve, horse show ring, workout trail, and model airplane field, pony rink, BMX track, Oliver Miller homestead and off-leash dog areas.

- The Park has a programmed schedule with planned activities for the entire year. Complete information is published and available on-line @ www.county.allegheny.pa.us/parks

- Allegheny County Parks Comprehensive Master Plan (2001) contains a complete listing of recommendations, priorities for non-capital projects, and a capital improvements plan. For South Park, the improvement suggestions included: a preservation plan for historic structures, creation of an aquatic park in the vicinity of the wave pool, convert an area of the park to an indoor recreation center, add nine holes to the golf course, and develop off-leash dog areas.

- The park is funded, in part, by the Allegheny Regional Asset District (ARAD). The District area conforms to the County Area. The District provides funding to libraries, parks and recreation, cultural, sports and civics facilities and programs through a one percent sales tax. This money is necessary for the maintenance of the park. Other funds used to support the park are the County’s general fund, user’s fees and contributions.

**Bethel Park Community Center**

The Bethel Park website (http://www.bethelpark.net/COMMUNITY_CENTER_HOME.cfm) describes the Community Center (located at 5151 Park Avenue), which was considered by many of the individuals interviewed for this planning process,
the most outstanding accomplishment of the last five years, completing its final phase of development.

“The Bethel Park Community Center continues to be the center of activity in the community. Frequently reserved for social and professional functions, the facility is becoming well known throughout the South Hills. The Community Center, with 40,495 sq. ft. of space, includes: areas for special events and meetings, a full-service gymnasium, an exercise studio, walking track and a separate classroom. A large multi-purpose room has seating to accommodate 300 and is capable of being divided into three separate rooms. The Community Center also includes separate youth and adult lounges, game room, catering-style kitchen, stage, and an outside concession area on the lower level to serve the athletic field. Walking trails, playground equipment, and a lighted soccer/multi-purpose field are situated on the center’s grounds.”

Recreation and Leisure Programming

The Bethel Park Department of Recreation and Leisure Services provides a wide variety of programs for residents of all ages: aquatic programs (Bethel Park High School Pool), youth programs (workshops, arts/crafts, dance, fitness/exercise, sports, theater, and special events), adult programs (same categories as youth), older adult programs (computer training, Gold Card Club), and Bethel Park Community Theatre Heritage Players. Seventy-five percent of these activities are provided in the Community Center.

Accomplishments and Priorities

Interviews were conducted with key individuals involved with the Department of Recreation and Leisure Services and the Board of Parks, Recreation and Leisure Services. These interviews were used to provide a clearer understanding of the Services’ accomplishments, challenges, and priorities.

Accomplishments

The interviewees suggested the following list of accomplishments:

- **Bethel Park Community Center:** Clearly, the primary accomplishment of the last five years (since the last plan update) was the completion of the addition to and the utilization of the Bethel Park Community Center. The Center is a source of great pride for the community and an important gathering space. The use of the Center is free to the residents (organized classes, programs, etc. are offered for a fee). Recreation improvement activities have focused on the Community Center.

- **Use of the walking track at the Center:** The track has been a gathering activity, particularly for the community’s older adults.
• **Sports Field Master Schedule**: The wide variety of youth sports activities has been putting tremendous pressure on the use of sports fields in many communities across the State. Bethel Park is no exception, but has handled this problem successfully over the past five years through the development of a **sports coalition group**. Working with a list of the available time for all facilities, the coalition is able to meet its needs. The Recreation and Leisure Department prepares a master schedule and issues permits based on the schedule. This process is seen as both fair and equitable.

**Priorities**

The top priorities for the recreation services over the next five years are:

- Develop more programming for the five to ten year old age group, with an emphasis on parent-child programs.
- Hire a youth coordinator.
- Provide additional services for seniors, bus trips, etc.
- Continue to review program needs.
- Add passive recreation space to the outdoor area around the Community Center (focus on older adult recreation).
- Bring recreation back as a valued activity, in particular unorganized play time for children.

**Library Services**

The Bethel Park Library occupies 16,000 square feet of the Bethel Park municipal building. The Library’s governing board approves policy and secures money for the organization. In addition to the Board, the Friends of the Library provide volunteer services to assist with mailings and special projects.

Other information relevant to the planning process follows:

- **Staffing** – The library has 39 staff members, 10 full-time and 29 part-time. It also uses volunteers to help with children’s programs, older adult outreach, and repair of books.

- **Relationship to Allegheny County Library System** - Five years ago, Bethel Park Library joined the Countywide Library system (the last one in the County to join). It is one of 44 members. Anyone in the County may use the libraries of the system. The library’s circulation increased an estimated 21% when it joined the County system.

- **Service Area** – While the library’s primary service area is Bethel Park, residents from other municipalities in the region use the library: Peters Township, MT Lebanon Borough, Upper St. Clair and South Park Townships.
• **Funding** – the breakdown of funding is 52% from Bethel Park, 17% from the State, 24% from Allegheny County Assets District, and the rest from user fees (fines, copies, and book sales).

• The interview process highlighted several areas of concern and need:
  - Expansion of circulation – more copies of best sellers.
  - Promotion of the library as a place to spend time (the Light Rail Transit system is right outside the door).
  - Continuation of program development.
  - Address the ideas and concerns provided by library users in 2008.
  - Take another look at the 1997 strategies for the development of a local business resources and programs clearinghouse, completion of a community organization data base, programming to promote volunteerism.

**Educational Services**

Planning for public educational services is in the purview of the Bethel Park School District; therefore, this section focuses on the interface between the Municipality and the School District. In particular, it looks at the process of working together to ensure a high quality of life and service for the community.

Bethel Park School District serves all of Bethel Park’s 4,850 public school students. Its five elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school campus (8 buildings) are shown on the Community Facilities Map.

The School District’s relationship with government services and the community goes beyond the land development process for new or expanded facilities. This relationship is highlighted below:

• **Recreation** – The District provides space for recreational activities and programs organized by the Bethel Park Community Center and Recreation Services. These facilities and fields are available free of charge to the Municipality.

• **Adult Evening Classes** – The District makes available space for adult classes.

• **School Resource Officer** – The District has an active partnership with the Bethel Park Police Department and other emergency service providers in promoting safety programs in the schools.

• **Future Priorities** - The District and the Municipality currently are working through a land development process for new high school facilities. The expectation is that the lines of communication will remain open and
collaborative efforts between the District and the Municipality will continue.