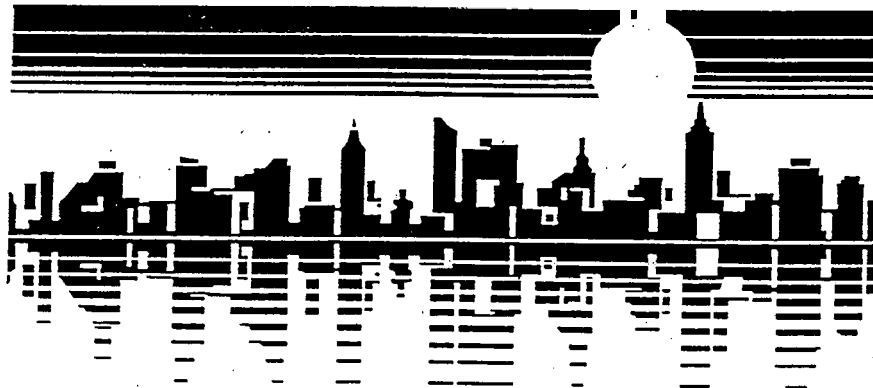


**CHESTER
CITY
VISION
2000**

Section Five

Community Facilities



Comprehensive Plan & Economic Development Strategy 1994

SECTION FIVE

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

INTRODUCTION

There is a strong relationship between the quality of life in a local community and the public facilities and human service programs that are provided to service that community. That is, the physical and economic development, or in Chester's case redevelopment, of its neighborhoods and streets require certain public investments. Without the public sector investment, the private sector will not be attracted to the area and the general quality of life is not maintained. There are many programs and public facilities servicing Chester City and they are vital to the lives of city residents. These facilities include: administrative services and municipal buildings, parks and playgrounds, water and sewer, schools, libraries, solid waste collection, hospitals and fire and police protection.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Administrative Services and Municipal Buildings

The principal public buildings in Chester are City Hall and City Hall Annex. These buildings located across the street from one another house the administrative depart-

ments that provide vital services to the city. City Hall provides offices for the Mayor and City Council members as well as various departments which council members supervise, including Public Safety, Parks and Public Property, Streets and Public Improvements.

Directly across the street from City Hall is the City Hall Annex. This building houses the City Finance Department, City Clerk, City Tax Assessor and Treasurer's office. Other important services which include programs related to neighborhood development and housing are delivered through the Redevelopment Authority and the Planning Department which occupy office space at the Colony Building located at 5th and Welsh Streets.

The city, through a parking authority, also owns three parking lots which are located in the vicinity of the Central Business District. The purpose of these lots was to provide adequate parking for visitors and shoppers patronizing the business district. The parking lot located on West 7th Street has the capacity to park over 250 automobiles, but it is not currently used by anyone shopping in the business district. It is too far removed from shopping areas and is not in view of the stores. The other two lots are located closer to the shopping area but are

also not often used by potential shoppers. These lots are occupied by employees of the various businesses and industries located in the area.

Refuse Collection

Trash is collected from businesses and residents at curb side four days a week by a private contractor. Trash is collected on Tuesday and Friday on the East side and Wednesday and Thursday on the West side. A fee of \$110 per housing unit is charged and incorporated in the basic city tax bill. However, businesses which require a collection on days which are not scheduled for their area, may enter into a separate agreement with a private contractor and thus, not be charged by the city. Items for recycling which include glass, metal, newspapers and food and beverage containers are collected every Wednesday. City employees are responsible for: one leaf collection in the fall, street cleaning and snow removal.

The city maintains its highway maintenance equipment at its garage located on West 2nd Street.

Parks and Recreation

The city of Chester currently has approximately 267 acres devoted to outdoor recreation. These facilities are distributed throughout the city providing residents with an opportunity to participate at a passive or an active recreation facility. Chester City's recreational services are primarily oriented toward outdoor activities.

In January 1991 the City developed a Park and Recreation Plan, titled "Recovery Action Program". This plan, prepared by

Carter Van Dyke Associates, identified 50 parks and recreation facilities located in Chester City. These facilities, shown on Figure CF-1 and listed in Table CF-1 include:

- 8 Public Parks
- 1 Public Boat Access Park
- 15 Play areas and vest pocket parks
- 6 Community Buildings
- 8 Schools with Recreation Facilities
- 11 Private Facilities
- 1 YWCA Building






An inventory of the city's major recreational facilities by Planning District is presented in Table CF-2. Currently, the largest city owned recreational facilities are Chester Park, Crozer Park, Sun Village Park, Memorial Park, Washington Park and the Commodore Barry Delaware River Access (public boat launch). These facilities are supplemented by school recreational facilities and small neighborhood vest pocket parks.

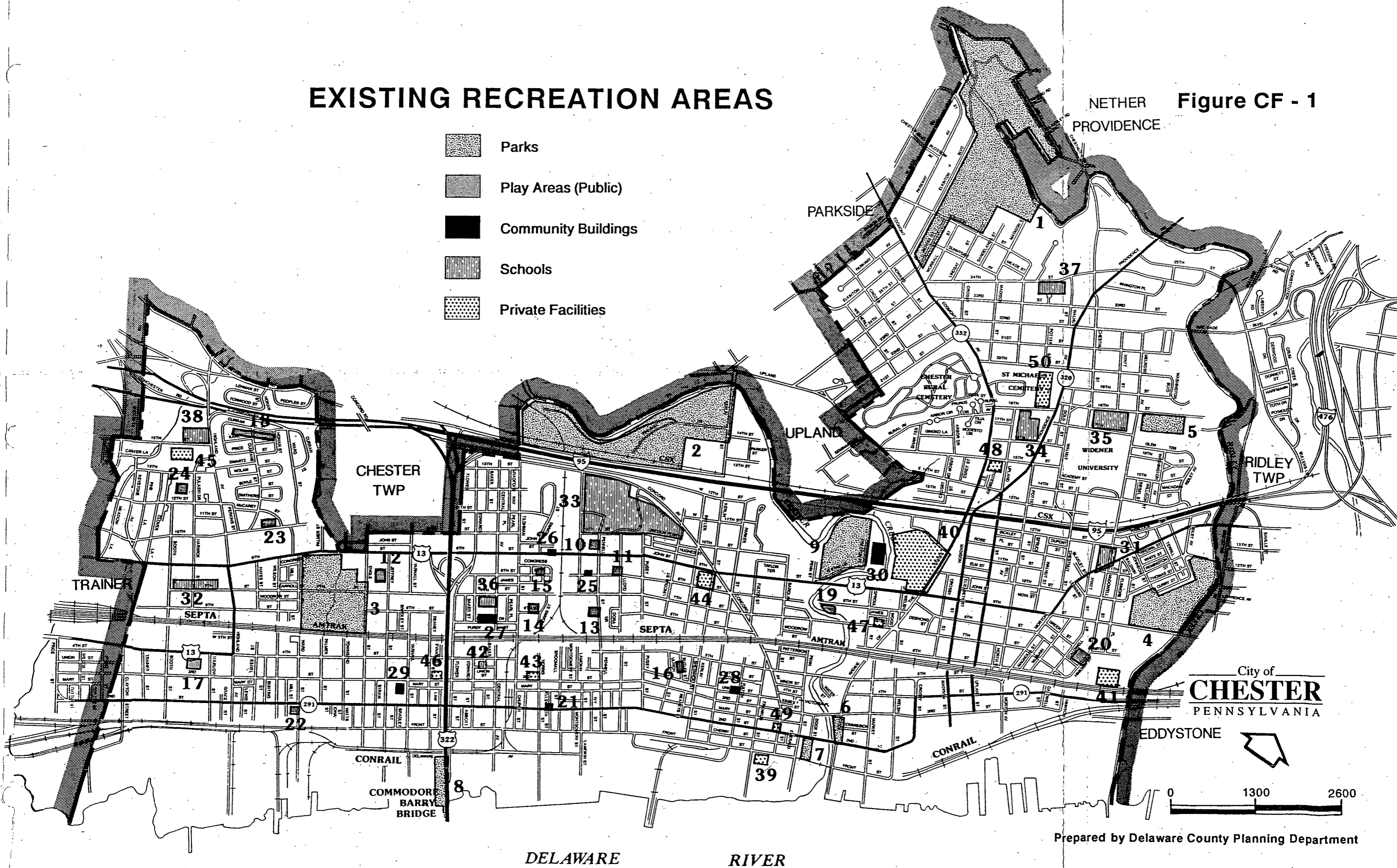
In terms of unique resources, the city has the only public boat launch in Delaware County. This facility is equipped with benches which allow residents to view passing ships, fish or enjoy the tranquillity of the water. The boat launch facility attracts many visitors from outside the city limits, in fact many of the users are other than city residents.

One significant recreational issue of concern identified in public meetings is less than adequate maintenance of existing facilities. City residents indicated that there are areas in the city's parks where recreational and playground equipment is either missing or broken. This in turn has denied some residents the opportunity to participate in city sponsored recreation activities.

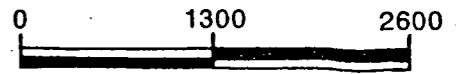
EXISTING RECREATION AREAS

NETHER PROVIDENCE **Figure CF - 1**

-  Parks
-  Play Areas (Public)
-  Community Buildings
-  Schools
-  Private Facilities



City of
CHESTER
PENNSYLVANIA



Prepared by Delaware County Planning Department

DELAWARE RIVER

TABLE CF - 1

CITY OF CHESTER

EXISTING RECREATION AREAS

(Location indicated on Figure CF-1)

PUBLIC PARKS

1. CHESTER
2. CROZER
3. MEMORIAL
4. SUN VILLAGE
5. WASHINGTON
6. ETHEL WATERS
7. WILLIAM PENN LANDING
8. COMMODORE BARRY BRIDGE
BOAT ACCESS AREA
9. EYRE DRIVE RECREATION AREA

PLAY AREAS

10. OCTAGON (vest pocket park)
11. LLOYD NEIGHBORHOOD (playground)
12. WILLIAM MITCHELL (vest pocket park)
13. FOUR SEASONS (vest pocket park)
14. LITTLE "S" (vest pocket park)
15. MARTIN LUTHER KING (vest pocket
park)
16. BUTLER (playground)
17. COMISIAK (playground)
18. HIGHLAND (vest pocket park)
19. McCLURG (playground)
20. PULASKI (playground)
21. PD-2 (playground)
22. PD-4 (playground)
23. WEST 10TH STREET (vest pocket park)
24. McCAFFERY (vest pocket park)

COMMUNITY BUILDINGS

25. LAMOKIN
26. BENNETT
27. LAMOKIN VILLAGE
28. WILLIAM PENN
29. WEST END CENTER
30. CHESTER COMMUNITY CENTER

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

31. JEFFERIS (closed)
32. PULASKI MIDDLE SCHOOL
33. SHOWALTER MIDDLE
SCHOOL
34. SMEDLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL
35. STETSER ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL
36. WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL
37. WETHERILL ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL
38. WILLIAM PENN ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL

PRIVATE FACILITIES

39. BOYS CLUB
40. DESHONG PARK
41. EASTERN LITTLE LEAGUE
42. ST. DANIELS
43. THOMAS COMMUNITY
CENTER
44. TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH
45. WESTERN LITTLE LEAGUE
46. WILSON MEMORIAL NURSERY
47. Y.W.C.A.
48. SALVATION ARMY
49. BENJAMIN BANNEKER HOUSE
50. KATHERINE DREXEL
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

SOURCE: Recovery Action Program, Carter Van Dyke Associates

PREPARED BY: RDC Institute, Inc.

A second citizen concern focused on the lack of outdoor swimming facilities in Chester. Although the city has numerous recreational facilities, the most noticeable missing facility is outdoor swimming pools for the public's general use during the hot summer months. Currently there are only two swimming facilities available for public use. The YWCA has a swimming pool but it is not open to the public on an all day schedule. The other pool is located at the Boys and Girls Club of Chester. The city is currently in the process of renovating the

former Eyre Drive YMCA as a community center. When completed this facility will have a swimming pool available to the public. This building also has the potential to provide opportunities for other indoor recreational needs.

A third major concern identified by city residents was the lack of sufficient indoor recreational and entertainment facilities. Missing facilities most often cited were skating rinks, bowling lanes and movie theaters.

TABLE CF-2

CHESTER CITY

MAJOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

PLANNING DISTRICT	PARK SITE	SIZE (Acres)	FACILITIES
ONE	Chester Park	71.96	A,P,PE,PA,PF,GC,B
	Washington Park	13.00	PA,PE
TWO	Sun Village Park	28.3	A,PF,PE,PA, PF,GC,B
	Deshong Park	15.8	A,P,PF
THREE	Crozer Park	49.4	A,P,PF
	Showalter School	23.0	A,PF
FOUR	Commodore Barry/ Delaware River Access	4.00	BL,F
FIVE	Memorial Park	21.2	A,P,PE,GC,PF,B

KEY:

A - Active

B L - Boat Launch

PF - Play Fields (Baseball, Football)

P - Passive

GC - Game Court

F - Fishing

PE - Playground Equipment

B - Shelter or Building

PA - Picnic Area

SP - Swimming Pool

SOURCE: Recovery Action Program, Carter Van Dyke Associates

PREPARED BY: RDC Institute, Inc.

Water

The city's water supply is provided by the Chester Water Authority (CWA). In addition to Chester, CWA provides water supply to surrounding municipalities in western Delaware County as well as municipalities in southern Chester County. CWA bills each residential and non residential customer based on consumption.

The primary source of water supplied by CWA is the Octoraro Creek Reservoir in Lancaster County. The reservoir has a 2.8 billion gallon capacity.

From the Octoraro Treatment Plant and Pumping Station, CWA distributes water to various storage areas. In Delaware County this water is sent to the Village Green tank farm in Aston Township. The farm contains eight 10 million gallon tanks. Water is then distributed to Chester Water Authority's customers throughout Delaware County including the city of Chester.

The CWA has an on-going improvement program and expends approximately one million dollars annually repairing and replacing infrastructure. Currently, there appears to be no problem with CWA meeting Chester's water demand in the foreseeable future.

Sewer

Chester's sewage is collected and treated by the Delaware County Regional Authority (DELCORA) System. Both residential and non-residential sewage is collected and conveyed by means of gravity and pumping stations to the treatment plant located at Front and Booth Streets.

The plant is treating 37 million gallons of sewage daily, with the capacity to treat up to 44 million gallons daily. The present capacity appears to be capable of treating additional sewage for Chester in the future. DELCORA is in the process of making long range improvements to increase their capacity to enable them to treat up to 60 million gallons daily.

Library Services

The J. Lewis Crozer Library located on the West Side of Chester is the only library providing library services to the residents in the city of Chester. Chester city residents have access to Widener University's library, but cannot take out books unless they are students.

J. Lewis Crozer Library was built in 1974 and was designed as a branch with the capacity to serve just the immediate neighborhood. The current status of the library is summarized in Table CF-3

The J. Lewis Crozer Library is administered by a Board of Directors. The library is operated by a professional librarian and children's librarian. Funds for the library are received from the city of Chester, the State Library of Pennsylvania, the School District, and fees collected from the rental of videos. The City Council does not include a library line item in their budget, thus, they must approve special funding each year.

The location and size of the Crozer library limits its effectiveness for serving all residents of the city especially ones living on the East Side. The building has approximately 6,800 square feet of usable space which is

TABLE CF-3
CHESTER CITY
LIBRARY SERVICE STATISTICS

Hours open	49 hours per week
Size of Collection	56,259
New Titles	4,000
Annual Circulation	60,141
Periodical Subscriptions	120
Videos	1,000
Paid Staff	12
Annual Budget	\$324,000

SOURCE: (1) 1990 Statistical Summary, Delaware County Library System.
(2) Interview with Librarian.

shared by both the library and the REACH project. Because REACH occupies a portion of the area, the library's reference section is not accessible to the public.

Although the library has cramped quarters, it still provides a refuge for young persons to do homework, and for anyone seeking a quiet place to read or study. The library has developed programs that are beneficial to the community. Some of the programs include: visits to elementary schools; an annual book mark contest; a summer reading club; and monthly story hours for children. The library also provides work shops for adults and conducts special activities during the year.

There is no public library on the East Side of the city for residents to use or take out books. The YWCA has considered the possibility of developing a library at their facility at 7th and Sproul. The J. Lewis Crozer Library is also investigating the potential of an East Side facility. Either of these options would will help address some of the needs of the residents on the East Side.

Hospitals

The citizens of Chester have excellent access to two fully equipped hospitals. Community Hospital (formerly Sacred Heart Medical Center) was recently purchased by the Crozer Keystone Health System. Community Hospital, built in 1953, is a 250 bed full-service hospital and one of the largest providers of psychiatric in-patient service in the County. It is a short-term general hospital and has a school of nursing affiliation, practical nursing and a school of radiological technology. The hospital also provides pediatric care, maternity and general medical surgery. Some of its special programs include: mammography, mobile C.T. unit and laser surgery.

Although the hospital is located in Chester, it draws the majority of its patients from other communities. Approximately 53% of the patients are not Chester residents. The hospital is one of the city's largest employers with approximately 675 employees.

The Crozer-Chester Medical Center, also owned by the Crozer Keystone Health System, is a 480 bed full-service hospital. Crozer-Chester Medical Center is located just outside the city boundaries, but does provide health care to many Chester residents.

The Crozer-Chester Medical Center is a result of a merger of the former Chester and Crozer Hospitals. This hospital is now one of the 13 designated trauma centers in Pennsylvania and the only one in Delaware County. Its special programs include: Alzheimer's Day Care Center; intensive care nursery; heart catheterization; Sleep Disorder Center; Lower Back Treatment Center and a regional Burn Center. The hospital also has an out-patient clinic at 9th & Sproul Streets for substance abuse and treatment of mental disorders.

Other health care facilities available to Chester residents are the ChesPenn Health Clinic, the Chester AIDS Coalition and the PA Department of Health.

With the two major hospitals and other health care facilities located in Chester, residents have access to excellent health care.

Police Protection

The Chester Police Department has a complement of 91 police officers who provide police services to the city. These personnel serve the city from a police administration building located at 5th and Avenue of the States.

Fire Protection

The city of Chester has a paid professional fire department that includes approximately 54 employees. Two fire stations provide fire protection for the city of Chester. Station 81 is located at 3rd & Tilghman Streets and is equipped with 1 engine and one squirt vehicle. They also have one engine in reserve.

The other fire station is located at 320 E. 14th Street. This facility serves as a general fire station and the Chester Fire Department administration building. This station is equipped with 1 engine and one ladder vehicle. They also have one engine in reserve. Training and maintenance of equipment is handled at this station.

Education

Chester City is part of the Chester-Upland School District. Chester City, Upland Borough and Chester Township make up the District. Presently, the building inventory of the Chester-Upland School District includes a senior high school, three middle schools, seven elementary schools and some ancillary buildings.

Over the last decade the school district has experienced problems in enrollment and with students scores on state evaluation tests. The school district and the community have recognized this as a major problem. The School Board is in the process of preparing a Comprehensive Master Plan for the School District with the purpose of reorganizing the school system. This plan will develop a strategy to address the current problems. The final recommendations of this plan have not been released.

There are five schools in the city that are operated by the Catholic Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The Archdiocese has announced plans to close all but one of these schools. The remaining school will serve an elementary school level population.

There are three private schools in the city with grades from kindergarten to seventh.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES ANALYSIS

Community facilities and services, which a government delivers to its tax payers, including residents and businesses, play a vital role in making a community livable. As mentioned in other sections of this plan, the city is experiencing many social, economic and physical problems related to crime, high unemployment, and loss of housing and population. The various services that a government delivers can have a positive impact and respond to many of these unfavorable trends. This section of the plan will discuss the major issues, opportunities and potential strategies related to community facilities and services in Chester City.

A. Administrative Services and Other Municipal Owned Buildings and Properties

1. Administrative Services

The major administrative services to the residents and other tax payers of Chester City are delivered through various city Departments located in three (3) separate buildings in the downtown area. These buildings include City Hall, City Hall

Annex and leased office area at Fourth and Avenue of the States.

The City Hall building is showing signs of an aged building not equipped to handle the demands of a modern society. The building is relatively small for the number of departments occupying it.

The lobby is dimly lighted and is lacking adequate waiting room area for visitors. In addition, a directory with directional signs to direct visitors to their destination is lacking. These types of conditions tend to create unfavorable impressions regarding the quality of service the city delivers.

The City Council holds their regularly scheduled meeting on the 3rd floor of City Hall. This area is relatively small and does not have adequate space for meetings or lobby space to accommodate visitors prior to entering into the Council Chambers. Because City Hall is not large enough to house all city departments, several are located in the Annex and another building on the Avenue of the States.

The Redevelopment Authority and the Planning Commission deliver vital services related to housing and economic development, yet these departments share a building that is inadequate in size and is in disrepair. In addition, the building is not handicapped accessible and its current poor condition contributes to a perception of poor service.

2. Municipal Owned Buildings and Property

According to tax records, the city government owns many other buildings and properties scattered throughout the city. Some

of the buildings provide a defined function such as the city's garage, which stores Park and Streets Department equipment or a fire station. But other buildings and property are not so clearly defined or identified.

Many buildings and properties currently owned by a city agency are not identified as part of the system that delivers a service. Some of these properties might be candidates for placement on the tax roles.

Issues

- A major issue is the condition of the city's buildings that provide vital services to its residents and businesses.
- Another important issue is the location and function of city owned properties located throughout the city. Many properties owned by the Redevelopment Authority and the city of Chester remain vacant and unused. Although the city makes an effort to maintain these properties, they still become depositories for trash and unlawful events. Once this happens the neighborhood begins to decline and more buildings become vacant.

Opportunities

- Properties that are identified as surplus should be considered for private reuse. These properties, once cleaned up and utilized for legitimate uses, will tend to encourage new reinvestment in the area.
- Where vacant land is located between existing structures, these parcels may be considered for conveyance to adjacent properties for off-street parking or additional side yards.
- Consolidation of all city agencies into one

building for more efficient administration and delivery of services and information should be seriously evaluated.

Potential Strategies

- Inventory all city owned properties and identify their location and function. This list should be computerized for easy updating.
- Properties that are identified as surplus should be considered for immediate sale unless they are part of a larger parcel assembly or land banking program.
- The city should commission a space study to determine how much area is needed to consolidate all city agencies in one building so services can be provided on a more cost efficient and productive manner.
- On an interim basis, physical conditions in City Hall that create a perception of poor quality services (e.g. lighting, signage, etc.) should be upgraded. Similar physical upgrades should occur at the leased premises at Fourth and Avenue of the States and/or a new location should be sought.

B. Parks and Recreation

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) has developed open space standards specifically tailored for the urban realities of the Delaware Valley. As part of this process, DVRPC developed a year 2000 deficiencies and needs list for Delaware County municipalities based on year 2000 population projections. The standards developed by DVRPC recommend a total of 6.17 acres of local park land per 1000 residents.

For Chester City these standards translate to a required area of 246 acres to serve

the projected population in the year 2000 (Table CF-4). Based on this analysis, the city's current 267 acres of recreational capacity is more than sufficient to meet the anticipated demands of the city's population.

The Carter Van Dyke study, referred to in the existing conditions section, assessed the city's Park and Recreation program with a special emphasis on the need for indoor recreational capacity. The study developed goals and recommendations for improving the city's park and recreation system. This part of the city's Comprehensive Plan will reiterate several of the findings, make some adjustments based on additional information and focus on the deficiency or surplus of land devoted to park and recreation. In addition we will discuss major issues related to specific areas.

In looking at the recreational needs of the city in comparison to the current location of available facilities, two factors have driven this analysis: seeking to improve user access to recreational facilities and seeking to improve the city's ability to adequately maintain its recreational resources.

The Van Dyke study reports that the city is lacking meaningful indoor recreation facilities. Because of this disparity in recreational area the city should focus on providing a balance of indoor and outdoor recreational space to meet the needs of its population. To some extent this may require reducing the area devoted to outdoor space and increasing its potential to generate more indoor activities. Thus, there are certain issues that relate to expansion and reduction of park land that have been identified through community meetings and our assessment of existing conditions.

1. Crozer Park

Crozer Park is a 49.4 acre parcel that includes a lower level and an upper level. The front lower level consist of ball fields and open field. The back portion of the lower level contains a building which is in disrepair and a swimming pool that was recently filled. Access to this area is via a long winding drive that is frequently blocked by downed trees and trash from illegal dumping. This area, because of its remote location is difficult to police and is undesirable for active or passive recreation. The upper level consists of little league ball fields which are in fair to poor condition and in need of grass cutting and regrading. Portions of at least one, and possibly two ball fields are located on private property.

In addition, the park is separated from most of the city's residents by I-95. The southbound I-95 on-ramp at Kerlin Street is located several hundred feet from the entrance to the park. At various times during the day egress and ingress to the park is not desirable for foot and bicycle traffic because of the heavy automobile and truck traffic using the I-95 access ramp.

Much of the park consists of dense woodland which needs continuous clearing of trash and downed trees. Maintenance of this area is relatively expensive and therefore, is not performed on any regular basis.

Issues

- A major issue is whether the city should continue to put limited resources into an area that is hampered by many obstacles that prevent the park from being used to its full potential.

TABLE CF-4

**YEAR 2000 RECREATION NEEDS AND DEFICIENCIES
(In Acres)**

CHESTER CITY

CLASSIFICATION	Existing Inventory (1993)	Year 2000 Required (4)	Year 2000 Deficiency (-) or Surplus (+)
Community Parks (1)	193.2	119.7	73.5(+)
Neighborhood Parks (2)	54.8	99.75	44.95 (-)
Sub-Neighborhood Parks (3)	19.3	26.7	7.4 (-)
TOTAL:	267.3	246.15	21.15 (+)

1. Community Parks. The primary purpose is to serve both active and passive recreation. Park sizes range from 20 to 100 acres in size and should serve a population between 10,000 to 50,000 persons. The DVRPC recommended standard for community parks is 3 acres per 1,000 persons.

2. Neighborhood Parks. Neighborhood parks serve active and passive recreational activities requiring little space. The parks should be 5 to 20 acres in size and serve a population between 2,000 and 12,000 persons. The DVRPC recommended standard for neighborhood parks is 2.5 acres per 1,000 persons.

3. Sub-Neighborhood Parks. Sub-neighborhood parks are small vest pocket parks or tot lots. A park should cover at least 200 sq. ft. and serve 50 to 2,500 persons. The DVRPC recommended standard for vest pocket parks is .67 acre per 1,000 persons.

4. 2000 required acreage are the amount of park land needed based on the DVRPC year 2000 population forecasts for Chester City.

SOURCE: Recovery Action Program, Carter Van Dyke Associates.
DVRPC Population Forecasts 1990-2020

PREPARED BY: RDC Institute, Inc.

- Because of the proximity to I-95 ramps and heavy traffic, access for pedestrians is hazardous.

- The park is defined as a community park and could be considered surplus as indicated in the DVRPC standards for open space and recreation in urban areas.

- The existing little league ball fields would need to be relocated if this park area is designated for other uses. Since at least one of these fields is currently located on private property, this may be a prudent action in any case.

Opportunities

- Because of the proximity to I-95, this area could accommodate a higher intensity commercial or industrial use.

- Shifting the use of this site to a non recreational use would present an opportunity for the city to divert maintenance resources to a recreation area that has a better opportunity to serve city residents.

- If this property is sold for private use, it would increase a declining tax base for the city.

- Existing active recreational uses could be relocated.

Potential Strategies

- The city should determine if there is interest from private developers for commercial/industrial development of this site.

- The city should evaluate whether any portion of the recreational activity at this site

(e.g. stream valley) is unique and should be retained by the city.

- Based on the results of the above listed determinations, the city should develop and implement a reuse plan for Crozer Park that maximizes the use of the site.

2. Eyre Drive Recreational Center

To replace the recreational resources (primarily little league ball fields) lost with a conversion of Crozer Park to another use, the city should consider the creation of a major new recreational center on the property adjacent to Chester High School and the former YMCA. (See Figure CF-2)

This parcel is approximately 15 acres in size and is already home to the city's major indoor recreational facility. With a carefully designed layout, this site could accommodate 3-4 ball fields, basketball courts, tennis courts and possibly an outdoor swimming pool (proposed for this location in the Carter Van Dyke study). This facility could be designed and built as a model urban recreation center.

Issues

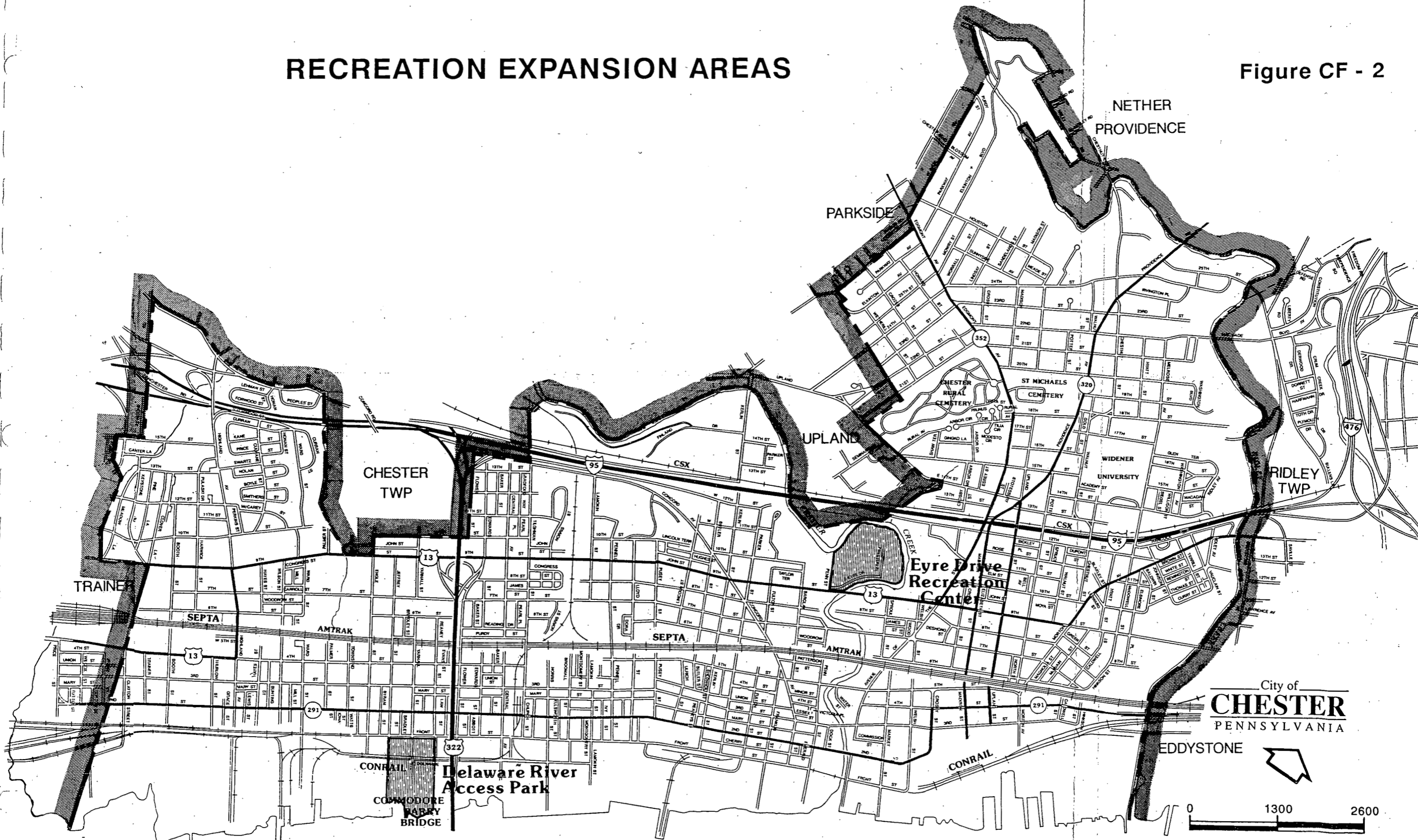
- An Eyre Drive recreational center provides a more accessible location to city residents than does Crozer Park.

- With a higher level of use, improved access to this site will become essential.

- The parking lot for Chester High School may need to be reconfigured to allow for the optimum design of the site.

RECREATION EXPANSION AREAS

Figure CF - 2



Prepared by Delaware County Planning Department

Opportunities

- Development of a major outdoor recreational facility at this location builds on and reinforces the investment the city has already made in converting the former YMCA building to an indoor community recreation center.
- Property to the northeast across the Chester Creek from the Eyre Drive property could eventually add to the recreational capacity of the site.

Potential Strategies

- The city should engage a recreational planner/landscape architect to create a development plan for the Eyre Drive Recreational Center. The plan would allow the city to proceed with the development of this facility as funds and opportunities became available. In addition to the recreational facilities themselves, the plan should include a discussion of field lighting, area lighting, vehicular access pedestrian circulation, bleachers, parking, a concession stand and any other related issues.
- The city should engage a professional engineer to work with the recreation planner/landscape architect to design a new bridge to provide access to the Eyre Drive center across Chester Creek at the eastern edge of the facility.
- The city should actively seek state and federal funds to develop this facility based on the design concepts. In particular, the Land and Water Conservation Funds program, the Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery Program (UPARR) and Foundation and corporate support should also be solicited.

3. Deshong Park

Issues

- On July 19, 1984, the Court of Common Pleas of Delaware County, ordered that the Deshong Park, together with buildings be conveyed in fee simple to the Delaware County Industrial Development Authority, in trust for the County of Delaware, to develop and create tax ratable properties to benefit the city of Chester and the County of Delaware. The Court further stated that no conveyance shall be made by the Industrial Development Authority without prior approval of the Orphan's Court of Delaware County.
- Activities at the Deshong Park are currently administered by a local organization known as the Board of Directors of the Alfred O. Deshong Museum and Cultural Arts Center (AODMCAC).
- Currently the Deshong Park (approximately 15 acres) contains ball fields, an arboretum, a mansion and a museum. The museum serves as a community building and cultural center. The ball fields are used on an infrequent basis for active recreation and for picnics for various groups in the city. Over the last couple of years the park has been faced with several development options. These options incorporated the museum in their plans, but utilized other areas for buildings and parking areas. No development option is being actively considered at this time. Currently, the Board of Directors of AODMCAC is faced with the dilemma of how to raise funds for the development of programs. The park currently receives funds from a Delaware County administered trust fund for maintenance of the park grounds and buildings. Other funds are raised through donations

and foundations for certain programs and projects. The Board of Directors of the AODMCAC are proposing an ambitious program for a wide range of activities at the park.

Opportunities

- The museum and other portions of the property are considered as having historical significance. The Board of Directors of AODMCAC has submitted an application to the PA Historical Museum Commission for verification of the site's historical significance. This action is now pending.
- The park is strategically located in an area that is suitable for high intensity development.
- Portions of the park including the museum should be preserved for cultural activities.
- An opportunity exists for the museum and other portions of the site to be incorporated into a concept that would generate income for the maintenance and operation of the museum.
- The arboretum functions as downtown green space and can be an integral part of an overall physical revitalization program for the Central Business District.

Potential Strategies

- Resolve the ownership and operation of the park by establishing a Task Force consisting of members of the Board of Directors of AODMCAC, city officials and representatives from Delaware County. The Task Force should come to a consensus on the future use and operational structure of the Park. The Task Force should then

meet with the Orphan's Court and ask them to remove their jurisdiction from any further activity related to Deshong Park.

- Develop a scenario that accomplishes the following: preserves the museum for cultural activities; provides a use that will generate income that could be used to support maintenance and operation of the museum; and, provides a tax return to the city for general services.

4. Indoor Facilities

Issues

- The Carter Van Dyke study identified the lack of indoor recreational facilities as a major deficiency of the city's park and recreational system.
- There is only one indoor swimming pool that has been available for residents to use year round. This pool is located in the YWCA and has certain limitations for everyday use. In the past year, the Chester Boys and Girls Clubs have added a second outdoor pool opportunity, and the city Department of Parks and Recreation has initiated a program to provide a third opportunity in the former East End YMCA building.
- Movie theaters, bowling alleys and skating rinks are several indoor activities that citizens have frequently identified as needed facilities.
- The city has purchased the former East End YMCA and is in the process of rehabilitating this building, but the process has been slow and the building is frequently vandalized.

Opportunities

- The city currently owns several vacant buildings that could be utilized for community activities oriented to either senior citizens or youth.
- The former YMCA building is an excellent structure that could be rehabilitated to help meet the needs of indoor facilities. It currently has an area that was designed for roller skating.
- The city should incorporate planning for indoor activities with local churches and other community organizations.

Potential Strategies

- Complete the rehabilitation of the former YMCA and utilize the building to help meet the need for indoor activities.
- The city should contact the Dept. of Community Affairs for the purpose of identifying their funding cycle and the types of programs these agencies sponsor. The city should also seek to identify other state and federal programs that provide grants and technical assistance for recreation.
- Create community task forces to help identify specific needs in various areas so resources can be used to their full potential.
- Consider developing recreational programs that could be incorporated with school facilities churches and the YWCA.
- As part of its overall economic development activities, the city should investigate the potential for bringing a movie theater and a bowling alley back into the city.

5. Commodore Barry Bridge Delaware River Access - Public Boat Launch

The city of Chester owns the only public boat launch in Delaware County. The park has a small area for city residents to visit the waterfront to fish or watch ships pass by, but the major purpose of the park, by virtue of its boat launch and large parking area, is to accommodate individuals with watercraft. This park should therefore be considered regional because of its drawing power from not only out of the city but the county and state as well.

Issues

- The major issue with this park is how it can be utilized to its full potential by not only accommodating out of city visitors but city residents as well. This park attracts many visitors from outside of the city.

Opportunities

- To improve adjacent lands with uses that would complement the boat launch activities.
- To increase the size of the park by purchasing adjacent land from PECO Energy and extending the length of waterfront for public use. (See Figure CF-2)
- To improve the access from 9th Street to Front Street (via Flower Street) thus creating better access to the waterfront properties.
- To make the park a regional facility and thereby encouraging new investment in the area and promoting a new image for the Chester Waterfront.

Potential Strategies

- Apply for funds from the CZM program for the purpose of doing a feasibility study on increasing the size of the facility and designating it as a regional park.
- Enter into negotiation with PECO Energy for the purpose of purchasing a portion of their property
- Meet with and gain support from both county and state officials for designating, marketing and supporting the Commodore Barry Bridge Delaware River Access as a regional recreational facility.
- Identify state and federal funding sources for improving access to the facility.
- Improve access and signage to the park to enhance park usage.
- Identify and evaluate potential waterfront related commercial uses that should be considered for location in or near the park.

6. Recreational Facility Upgrade and Maintenance

Issues

- Many city recreational facilities are in need of rehabilitation. This issue was clearly stated at the community meetings held as part of this planning process.
- Resources available for rehabilitation are limited.
- The type and level of use of a recreational facility directly affects the need for rehabilitation or upgrade of a facility.

Opportunities

- The city's recreational facilities are an excellent resource base for providing quality recreational opportunities to the residents of Chester.
- With improved maintenance, Chester's recreational facilities can better serve the population of the city.

Potential Strategies

- The city should engage in a process of prioritizing the rehabilitation of its parks and playgrounds. This process may require outside technical assistance.
- Based on a prioritization schedule, the city should identify and target resources to the top priority items.

The recreational strategies identified above have focused on several key recreational facilities in the city. In concert with the other recreational sites in the city, these targeted strategies are designed to result in a balanced and geographically well distributed set of recreational facilities for the city of Chester.

C. Library Services

The J. Lewis Crozer Library is the only public library in the city of Chester. It is located on the far east side of the city and is open only 50 hours a week with no evening hours. In comparison, the next closest library located in Ridley Township, is open 66.5 hours a week and is open during the evenings. These hours not only accommodate school children but also those who work during the day who can only visit the library in the evenings or on weekends.

Most residents living on the East Side of the city visit the library in Ridley Township rather than travel across the city to J. Lewis Crozer's building located on West 7th Street. There are several reasons for this. First, most of the visitors going to Ridley's library are from Planning District One. The access to Ridley via MacDade Boulevard is more direct and quicker than traveling to the West side. In addition, many of those visitors are only available to visit the library during the evening hours when the Chester facility is closed.

The most pressing problems facing the J. Lewis Crozer Library are lack of space and how to better serve the residents on the East side.

Issues

- Currently the library contains 6800 square feet and this is shared with another organization. Sharing of space limits the use of reference materials for students or others doing research on special projects.
- Residents on the East side of the city travel outside of city boundaries for library service, which reduces funds from the state for library assistance.
- Finding a new location for the Reach Program so the area that they are occupying can be available for access to the reference library or additional space for visitors to read and work at tables.

Opportunities

- There is an opportunity to improve the library services in the city of Chester by removing the space and service hour limitations of the existing J.Lewis Crozer Library facility and by expanding the geo-

graphic service area.

- The school district, YWCA and various community centers are agencies the library could work with in delivering a reading service for all residents of the city.

Potential Strategies

- Relocate the Reach Program into a building that is centrally located and owned by the city or a city-related agency. This action would allow the library to utilize the entire building for library services.
- Work with the YWCA to provide them with necessary technical assistance in developing a reading room.
- Initiate a study to determine the feasibility of providing a mobile library.
- Provide additional funds so the existing library can increase its service to the public by hiring more staff and extending hours of operation.
- Develop a long range capital funding and improvement schedule focusing on development of a branch library on the East Side, a mobile book unit, and expansion of the existing West End facility.

D. Police Protection

As stated earlier in this document, the emphasis of this plan is on the physical aspects of the city. In the context of police protection then, this plan will focus on the physical aspects of police protection and will not address other aspects of police operations.

Over the past three years, the Chester Police Department has responded to an

average of over 50,000 service calls per year. To respond effectively to this volume of service need, the Department requires a physical facility capable of effectively supporting a modern, technologically sophisticated police department.

In February of 1990, the city completed a Space Programming Study for a Proposed Police Headquarters Building. This work was prepared by Moeckel Carbonell Associates Inc., an architectural firm from Wilmington, Delaware.

This report indicated that "the Department's current facility is imposing significant inefficiency and hazard on police operations that are destined to grow worse as the demand for police services grows".

Based on their analysis of the needs of the Chester Police Department, the consultants established building and site area requirements for a new facility. According to their analysis, a new facility should include 30,000 square feet of space on two floors and parking for 120 vehicles. The minimum site area recommended for such a facility was 67,000 square feet or approximately an acre and a half.

The study went on to identify four possible locations for a new police headquarters (See Figure CF-3). These sites included:

1. Southeast corner of 7th and Penn Sts.
2. Southwest corner of 9th and Madison Sts.
3. Northwest corner of Madison and 4th Sts.
4. Deshong Memorial Park

The consultants do not make a specific rec-

ommendation in favor of any of the four sites. They do, however, suggest that the 4th and Madison site is too removed from the center of the city. They also suggest the 9th and Madison site is too small for the required need.

Issues

- The city needs to determine which location for the new police headquarters will best serve the needs of the city and the police department.
- Part of the best location analysis relates to the costs and other aspects of the potential sites.
- While the Deshong Park site offers a location for a police headquarters based on its central location and visibility, selection of this site would negatively affect the arboretum and the downtown green space that it represents. It is also likely that selection of this site would generate significant citizen opposition.

Opportunities

- A new police headquarters building will allow for more efficient provision of police services to the residents of Chester.
- A new police headquarters building will provide the police department with a new image of increased professionalism that will help them with all of their other activities.
- Selection of the 7th and Penn site would serve to anchor the western edge of the central business district and would make strong use of a site that might otherwise remain unused for the foreseeable future.

Potential Strategies

- The city should make a final decision on the location of a new police headquarters building as the first step in moving the process forward. Based on all of the elements considered in this plan, the 7th and Penn site seems to be the best of the four sites reviewed by Moeckel Carbonell Associates Inc.
- As a second step, the city should solicit bids for the necessary architectural and engineering work that would be required to bid the construction of the new facility. This activity should be undertaken with active involvement of the police department and appropriate city officials.
- A special task force of key city officials and financial advisors should be established to identify possible financial mechanisms that could be used to finance construction of the new headquarters building.

E. Fire Protection

The two fire stations handle approximately 1800 fire alarms each year. Out of the 1800 alarms approximately 600 are false and require no fire fighting action.

Although the city firefighters handle most of the alarms, they seek assistance approximately six (6) times a year from firefighters located in adjacent municipalities. They include Brookhaven, Parkside, Upland, Eddystone, Garden City and Lennox Park Fire Company.

The Chester Fire Company has been very aggressive in working to prevent fires. This is done through code enforcement and educational programs. The major cause of

fires in the city are electrical problems and accidents (i.e. cooking, smoking, etc.).

Issues

- Accidental fires through careless smoking and kids playing with matches account for the majority of fires in residential areas.
- Another major cause of fires are code violations. These fires develop and become hazardous to life and property through faulty electrical systems and non-operative fire alarms.
- Bringing total personnel as close to national standards as possible within the city's fiscal constraints should be considered as a means of enhancing the fire protection efforts of the fire department.

Opportunities

- An opportunity exists for the fire department to continue its educational program in the schools and in the neighborhoods regarding fire safety and prevention.
- The fire department should continue to utilize community groups to help educate residents regarding fire prevention.

Potential Strategies

- The fire department should continue to work closely with the city code enforcement process to correct existing code violations and to prevent any future violations.
- Continue to schedule presentations at the local schools to inform students on the proper use of fire extinguishers and the danger of smoking in bed or in close proximity to inflammable materials.

- Continue to disseminate fire prevention and safety brochures to community organizations and neighborhood groups.

F. Educational Facilities

As mentioned earlier, the School District and others are in the process of developing plans to address the problems and opportunities associated with educating the city's youth. This section of the Comprehensive Plan will, therefore, focus on issues related to school district property as it fits in with the fabric of the community. In particular, the issue of maximum use of all physical resources, and proper disposition of unneeded facilities, is a key concern.

- An example of this approach is dual use of facilities. Since the school district is a separate political entity, the city government has no direct influence over its decisions on facility use. However, city council and the school district should seek to cooperate with each other in identifying areas of joint use of school facilities for recreational, community meeting and other purposes.

Issues

- Many school owned properties and buildings are scattered throughout the city. These properties should be maintained in a manner that minimizes land use conflict in the community.
- The city currently has an abundance of open space and recreational land for city residents use. The school district also has ball fields and gymnasiums that could be jointly used by city residents and school students. Joint use may help eliminate the need for any excess capacity.

Opportunities

- Surplus property is costly to the school district. The property identified as surplus should be evaluated for reuse options and properly disposed.
- There is an opportunity to incorporate school and city recreational areas for community use. This could also create surplus properties for both the school district and city government. If this is the case, then excess property could be returned to tax ratable status and both the city and school district could benefit from tax revenues.

Potential Strategies

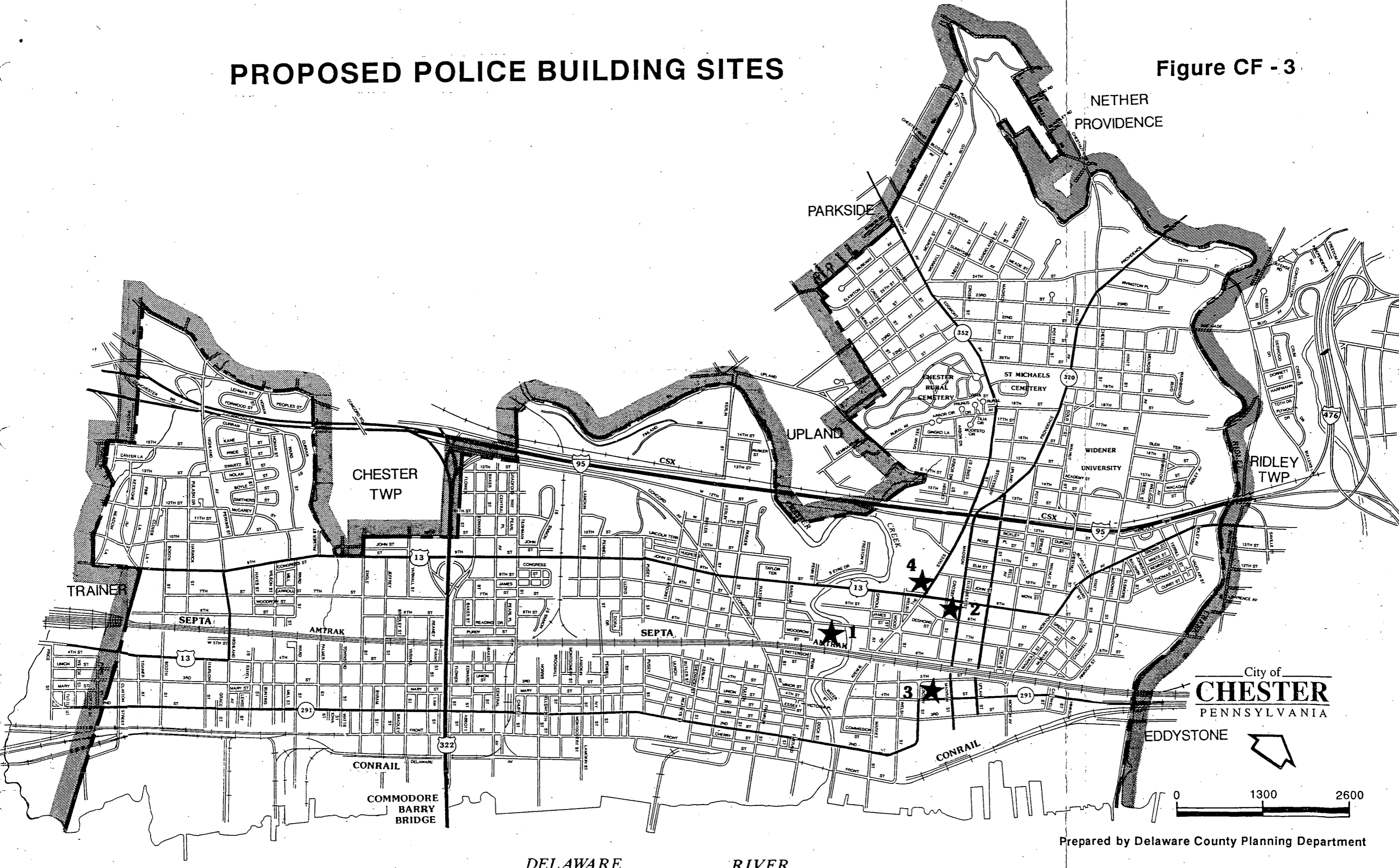
- Develop an inventory and identify the use and function of all school district owned properties. Areas that are not incorporated into the district long range plan should be considered as surplus and disposed of in the most beneficial manner.
- Properties with uses that are scattered in areas that are more suitable for other types of uses, especially tax ratables, should be considered for relocation and consolidated in areas more suitable for institutional use.
- Identify properties that can be jointly used by the school district and city government. Develop a program to share maintenance and improvement costs.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

As was discussed above, the various community services, such as trash collection, fire and police protection and recreation services that the city delivers to its taxpayers, represents the city's effort to improve the quality of life for its inhabitants. Based

PROPOSED POLICE BUILDING SITES

Figure CF - 3



City of
CHESTER
PENNSYLVANIA

Prepared by Delaware County Planning Department

on our analysis of existing conditions and the information collected at a series of community meetings, the goals and objectives listed below were developed to guide the city into the 21st century.

PARKS & RECREATION

GOAL: Provide the residents of Chester with park and recreation facilities that are readily accessible and which are maintained in a safe and attractive manner.

Objective 1: Assess the utility of current city recreation facilities and determine whether appropriate additions or deletions to these facilities are necessary or desirable.

Objective 2: Provide capital funds to upgrade existing recreational facilities based on an assessment of need.

Objective 3: Encourage the efficient use and co-use of available city and school district recreational facilities whenever possible.

GOAL: Develop comprehensive recreation policies and programs that respond to the leisure preferences of the community and adapt to the changing needs of the citizens.

Objective 1: Encourage the formation of joint government/community task forces to identify ongoing recreational needs and to resolve critical issues related to effective use of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities.

GOAL: To provide professional management, adequate funding and staffing for community recreation facilities and services.

Objective 1: Develop programs and approaches that enable the Department of Parks and Public Property to better identify and implement operational and maintenance improvements where needed.

Objective 2: Encourage and support the use of corporate and community organization assistance in the maintenance and upkeep of neighborhood facilities.(e.g. Adopt a Park Programs)

LIBRARY SERVICE

GOAL: Enhance the capacity to distribute library materials and to market library services throughout Chester.

Objective 1: Extend library services to areas where they are not available, especially the East Side.

Objective 2: Identify programs and providers that can assist in expanding the utilization of library resources and facilities.

FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION

GOAL: Provide fire and police protection so all geographical areas of the city are adequately serviced.

Objective 1: Maintain the highest quality professional law enforcement personnel and facilities within the financial capability of the city to effectively serve all areas of the city.

Objective 2: Maintain the highest quality professional fire-fighting personnel and facilities within the financial capability of the city to effectively serve all areas of the city.

TRASH COLLECTION

GOAL: Provide efficient refuse collection and street maintenance services with special emphasis on a clean, trash free community.

Objective 1: Encourage the coordination of refuse collection with neighborhood

organizations clean-up/fix-up campaigns so trash removal from vacant lots and streets can be undertaken more effectively.

Objective 2: Promote and encourage the enforcement of litter and dumping laws.