

Chapter 6 Housing Plan

Inventory information on past and current housing trends provides a basis for analyzing and planning for future housing demand and development and the types of housing issues that may arise in the Borough. These issues are addressed in the Housing Plan recommendations in the second part of this Chapter. Obligations of the Borough to provide for its “fair share” of a variety of housing types are also discussed in this Chapter.

Chapter Organization:

Housing Profile p. 6-1

- Number of Housing Units and Composition
- Housing Estimates and Projections
- Dwelling Unit Types
- Age of Housing
- Tenure in Current Residence
- Housing Occupancy and Tenure
- Household Size
- Households by Type
- Housing Value
- Housing Affordability

Housing Planning Implications p. 6-10

Housing Planning Recommendations 6-12

HOUSING PROFILE

Number of Housing Units and Density

A housing unit analysis looks at existing trends in the quantity and types of housing. This information is useful for determining future housing needs for Borough residents. Table 6-1 shows the past number of housing units in Malvern, the surrounding municipalities, and Chester County.

**Table 6-1: NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS,
MALVERN AND SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES, 1980-2010**

Municipality	1990	2000	2010	% Change (2000-2010)		Square miles	2010 Density (du/sq. mile)
				Number	%		
MALVERN	1,319	1,419	1,432	13	1.0%	1.3	1,101.5
Easttown	3,491	3,862	4,121	259	6.7%	8.2	502.5
East Goshen	6,535	7,496	8,655	1159	15.5%	10.1	857.0
East Whiteland	3,001	3,460	3,813	353	10.2%	11.0	346.6
Tredyffrin	11,924	12,551	12,679	128	1.0%	19.8	640.4
Willistown	3,434	3,932	4,500	568	14.5%	18.2	247.3
TOTAL	23,169	25,224	26,545	1,321	5.2%	--	--
Chester County	139,597	163,773	192,462	28,689	17.5%	756.0	254.6

Source: US Census Bureau, 1990-2010

Table 6-1 shows that between 2000 and 2010, a net total of 13 housing units (a 1% percent increase) were added in Malvern, as compared to a 17.5 percent increase in housing units in Chester County over the same time period. The slower new housing unit rate in Malvern is largely due to the limited amount of remaining undeveloped land and the typically slower population

growth rates in boroughs and other developed areas (such as Tredyffrin) in general. Some of the new housing units in the Borough may have resulted from redevelopment of previously developed sites and infill; that trend is likely to continue in the future. Expectedly for a small town, Table 6-1 shows that Malvern has the highest density in housing for the Malvern Area, followed by East Goshen and then Tredyffrin.

Housing Projections

Housing projections provide an indication of future housing demand and potential development pressure in the Borough and Malvern area. Table 6-2 shows the 2010 actual number of housing units in Malvern and the Malvern area and the projected number of units to the year 2030.

**Table 6-2: PROJECTED NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS
MALVERN BOROUGH AND SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES, 2010-2030**
(based on: DVRPC population forecasts, 2007 (see Chapter 3))

Municipality	2010 Actual	2020 projected	2030 projected	Projected Change 2010-2030					
				2010-2020		2020-2030		2010-2030	
MALVERN (2.22)*	1,432	1,512	1,595	80	5.6%	83	5.5%	163	11.4%
Easttown (2.87)*	4,121	4,009	4,287	(112)	-2.7%	278	6.7%	166	4.0%
East Goshen (2.28)*	8,655	8,954	9,605	299	3.5%	651	7.3%	950	11.0%
East Whiteland (2.68)*	3,813	4,419	4,789	606	15.9%	370	8.4%	976	25.6%
Tredyffrin (2.43)*	12,679	12,750	13,300	71	0.6%	550	4.3%	621	4.9%
Willistown (2.55)*	4,500	4,541	4,707	41	0.9%	166	3.7%	207	4.6%
Malvern Area	35,200	36,185	38,283	985	2.8%	2,098	5.8%	3,083	8.8%
Chester County (2.68)*	192,462	208,068	225,847	15,636	8.1%	17,779	8.5%	33,385	17.4%

Source: U.S. Census 2010; *American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2005-2009 for household size; Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission Population Forecasts, 2007.

Housing projections in Table 6-2 are calculated using the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) population projections published in 2007 based on 2005 population estimates, however 2010 Census data is shown as the base data in the table. The projected number of housing units are derived by dividing the DVRPC projected populations by the average household size for each municipality (average household size data is from the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey 5-years estimates 2005-2009).

The housing unit projections provide a “best guess” of the number of housing units that will likely be needed over the 20-year period (2010-2030). Malvern Borough is expected to have an increased need for housing of approximately 163 units (an 11.4% increase). The East King Street Redevelopment proposal, which includes 190 housing units as part of a mixed-use development, has received conditional use approval from the Borough as of March 2011. These units, when constructed over the next several years, would raise the total number of housing units in the Borough above the 2030 projection in which case the Borough would have more than met its projected housing unit needs.

The surrounding municipalities show varying rates of projected new units through 2030, with East Goshen and East Whiteland Townships expected to add the most number of new units and East Whiteland Township expected to add the highest percentage of new units. The Malvern area as a whole is projected to grow in housing by nearly 9 percent, and the County by 17.4 percent, again the slower growth rate of new housing units in the Malvern area overall indicates that it is a more developed area of the County as compared to other areas in the County.

While projecting housing demand 20 years into the future can be difficult because of unknown factors such as the state of the economy, interest rates, and availability of land, it provides estimates that are useful for long range planning. With the construction of one or two larger housing developments, such as the one described above, housing projections for a given municipality can be equaled or exceeded before the end of a ten year projection period. Because of the potential skewing by a single large development, housing projections tend to be more accurate at the regional or county level than at the municipal level. The factors discussed above should be taken into consideration when determining how frequently comprehensive plan data and recommendations should be reviewed and updated.

Dwelling Unit Types

Table 6-3 shows the types of housing units in the Borough and Table 6-4 provides a comparison to the surrounding municipalities.

Table 6-3: MALVERN HOUSING COMPOSITION, 1980-2009

HOUSING UNIT TYPE	1980	1990	2000	2009	Change 2000-2009
	%	%	%	%	%
Single-Family Detached	33.1	31.0	32.6	33.6	3.1
Single-Family Attached and Two-Family*	31.2	30.3	37.1	30.8	-17.0
Multi-Family**	35.7	31.9	30.3	35.1	15.8
Mobile Home and Other***	-	6.8	-	0.5	--
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	--

Source: US Census Bureau, 1980-2010; American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2005-2009
 * Includes twins, townhouses, and duplexes ** Includes 3+ housing units in a structure, e.g. apartments, condos, quads *** Also includes Trailers, Boats, RVs, vans, other

There is a wide range of housing types in the Borough as shown in Table 6-3. According to the American Community Survey (2005-2009) data, 1/3 of the housing units are single-family detached, nearly 1/3 are twins/duplexes and townhouses, and a little over 1/3 are multi-family units. In the Borough, there is an even distribution of housing types and a variety of housing options to meet the needs of diverse population segments. One change of note that occurred from 1990 to 2000 is the elimination of units in the mobile home, trailer, or other category. This elimination may not represent an actual removal of units, but rather a proposal for mobile home units that were not built.

Table 6-4: HOUSING COMPOSITION, MALVERN AND SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES, 2009

Municipality	Total^ Units	Single-Family Detached	Single-Family Attached and Two-Family*	Multi-Family Units**	Mobile Homes and Other***
		%	%	%	%
MALVERN	1,432	33.6	30.8	35.1	0.5
Easttown	4,121	75.7	13.7	9.5	1.0
East Goshen	8,655	43.3	27.8	28.7	0.1
East Whiteland	3,813	56.7	16.5	21.8	5.0
Tredyffrin	12,679	53.4	21.9	24.2	0.5
Willistown	4,500	70.4	24.5	5.1	0.0
Chester County	192,462	62.2	18.8	16.2	2.8

Source: ^US Census Bureau 2010; all other data is from American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2005-2009
 * Includes twins, townhouses, duplexes ** Includes 3+ housing units in a structure, e.g. apartments, condos, quads
 *** Also includes Trailers, Boats, RVs, vans, other

Malvern has a higher percentage of multi-family units and twins, townhouses, duplexes and a lower percentage of single-family detached units in comparison to the Malvern area (Table 6-4),

which is expected in a town setting. Malvern’s percentages of attached and multi-family housing units are higher than that of Chester County overall, but are typical of the County’s boroughs.

The proposed 190 new housing units in the East King Street Redevelopment project will result in a higher percentage of housing units in Malvern falling into the multi-family category and may also impact the average household size in the Borough.

Age of Housing

Age of housing information in Table 6-5 is important because a higher percentage of older housing can have local planning implications, such as possible adjustments needed to building code requirements to meet the needs of older buildings or greater repair needs which can add additional financial burden on municipal residents.

Table 6-5: AGE OF HOUSING, MALVERN AND SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES

Municipality	1939 or Earlier	1940-49	1950-59	1960-69	1970-79	1980-89	1990-99	2000-09
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
MALVERN	31.8	3.2	8.9	9.1	14.2	19.4	11.0	2.5
Easttown	17.3	7.3	17.2	18.0	12.3	13.3	11.7	3.0
East Goshen	3.7	0.8	3.8	12.6	29.4	30.2	14.5	5.1
East Whiteland	2.6	2.0	16.7	14.3	23.4	20.5	9.8	10.7
Tredyffrin	6.7	3.8	19.6	17.2	17.4	26.2	8.0	0.9
Willistown	7.5	3.4	24.2	13.3	8.7	21.6	10.0	11.3
Chester County	14.2	3.1	9.6	10.4	15.5	17.1	16.4	13.7

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2005-2009

About 1/3 of the housing stock dates to 1939 or earlier and approaching half (44%) of the housing stock is pre-1960/older than 50 years (as of 2009) in the Borough. As expected, there is a higher percentage (about 44%) of older housing (1939 or earlier) in Malvern than in the surrounding townships, though 42 percent of Easttown’s housing stock dates to pre-1960/older than 50 years and conversely only about 8 percent of East Goshen’s housing stock dates to pre-1960 . In the 1990s and 2000s, as remaining developable lands in the Borough became limited, a decrease in new construction resulted, while the County overall saw relatively consistent continued housing growth from the 1970s through 2009. However, it should be noted that some of the drop in new housing in the late 2000s can be attributed to the 2008 worldwide economic recession which resulted in significantly reduced construction and development.

Tenure in Current Residence

Table 6-6 indicates when a household moved into its current place of residence. This data includes both existing Malvern residents relocating to another area within the Borough and new residents who have moved into the Borough.

Table 6-6: YEAR MOVED INTO HOUSING UNIT*IN MALVERN**

Year Household Moved Into Housing Unit	Housing Units moved into*
	% of total housing units
2000 to 2009	47.1
1990 to 1999	28.9
1980 to 1989	9.5
1970 to 1979	8.6
1969 or earlier	5.9

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2005-2009 *Occupied housing units only. **Through March 2000 ***Data includes rental and owner occupied units

Almost half of Borough households moved into their current place of residence during the past decade, reflecting the larger trend of the relatively mobile and, to some degree, transient nature of many households in the U.S. over the past few decades. This rate of moving is similar to, though slightly less than, Chester County as a whole where 51 percent of households moved into their current place of residence over the past decade. Conversely, 14.5 percent of Borough households have lived in their current homes since at least 1979, which is a slightly higher percentage than that of Chester County at 12 percent. The slightly lower moving rate in Malvern could be attributed to its slower housing growth, stable population, central and easily accessible location, and amenities such as the train strain.

Housing Occupancy and Tenure

Housing occupancy and tenure (Table 6-7) shows the proportion of ownership-occupied housing and renter-occupied housing. Tenure is used to help examine whether there is housing ownership diversity in a community. Vacancy rates indicate the percentage of housing units that are vacant and are used to examine stability and housing demand in a municipality.

**Table 6-7: HOUSING OCCUPANCY AND TENURE
MALVERN AND SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES, 2009**

Municipality	Total ^A Units	Total Occupied Units	Vacant Housing Units	Owner- Occupied Units	Renter- Occupied Units
		%	%	%	%
MALVERN	1,432	93.8	6.2	59.0	41.0
Easttown	4,121	97.5	2.5	83.0	17.0
East Goshen	8,655	97.5	2.5	76.0	24.0
East Whiteland	3,813	92.5	7.5	76.2	23.8
Tredyffrin	12,679	97.5	2.5	81.0	19.0
Willistown	4,500	96.3	3.7	91.0	9.0
Chester County	192,462	95.7	4.3	78.2	21.8

Source: ^AUS Census Bureau 2010; all other data is from the American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2005-2009.

Of the occupied housing units, 59 percent are owner-occupied and 41 percent are renter-occupied. The percent of owner-occupied units in Malvern has slightly decreased since 2000, when 61.8 percent were owner-occupied. Malvern's owner-occupancy rates remain lower than most of the surrounding municipalities and Chester County, which is not uncommon for boroughs in the County which generally provide greater rental and diverse housing opportunities.

Malvern's vacancy rate has increased since 2000 when it was 4.1 percent, and is higher than the overall County rate, which has increased slightly since 2000 when it was 3.6 percent. This rise in the vacancy rate in Malvern is due to the high vacancy rates in rentals (9.5 percent in 2009), which constitute a notable percentage of units in Malvern, related to the widespread financial hardships caused by the ongoing 2008 economic downturn and the resulting inability of individuals to maintain their housing situation. Having some properties vacant is desirable as it allows mobility and housing choice within the community. The optimum vacancy rate for the Philadelphia area, as established by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, is 4 percent. A lower rate could indicate a stable community or an area with high housing demand, while a higher rate could signify out-migration or overbuilding of housing. Malvern's vacancy rate at somewhat above the optimum level indicates that housing supply somewhat exceeds more recent housing demand.

The 2010 census data will show if there has been a change in housing vacancy rates as a result of more recent housing market conditions. Anecdotal evidence suggests that overall the Borough has weathered the economic recession fairly well having only a few sheriff sales and no known foreclosures, and that the housing vacancy rates will be relatively low in the Borough; although the

“for sale” market has slowed with the ongoing economic downturn which could impact move out and vacancy rates. Also, a new residential development with six single-family detached residences was not fully sold in 2010, which could skew reported 2010 Census data vacancy rates. As of spring 2011, this development was completely sold.

Household Size

Household size indicates the average number of persons per household. This information helps in determining how many housing units are needed to serve the Borough’s population. Table 6-8 shows the household size in Malvern, its surrounding municipalities, and the County.

Table 6-8: HOUSEHOLD SIZE, MALVERN AND SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES, 1970-2009

MUNICIPALITY	1970	1980	1990	2000	2009	% Change (2000-2009)
MALVERN	3.12	2.53	2.35	2.23	2.22	-0.5%
Easttown	3.66	3.08	2.74	2.64	2.87	-3.7%
East Goshen	2.53*	2.68	2.47	2.35	2.28	-3.0%
East Whiteland	3.81	2.94	2.64	2.59	2.68	3.5%
Tredyffrin	3.39	2.78	2.44	2.36	2.43	3.0%
Willistown	3.54	3.08	2.82	2.55	2.41	-5.5%
Chester County	3.30	2.90	2.73	2.65	2.68	1.3%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2005-2009.

*Estimated from East Goshen Growth Impact study, 1971.

Between 1990 and 2000, Malvern Borough, the surrounding municipalities, and the County experienced a decreasing number of persons per household. Between 2000 and 2009, average household size countywide rose very slightly (2.65 in 2000 to 2.68 in 2009), varied among Malvern area municipalities, and remained essentially level in the Borough decreasing only very slightly over the past decade.

Borough household size is consistently smaller than neighboring communities. Malvern also had the lowest household size among boroughs in the County for 2009, followed closely by Spring City (2.24) and Phoenixville (2.29). In Malvern, the higher percentage of rental units which overall have smaller household sizes, single individuals living in Malvern to commute via train, as well as an increasing older population, are factors contributing to the decreasing household size.

Decreasing household size has been an ongoing national trend¹. Statewide² and countywide data have also reflected this trend. Factors that contributed to the trend of decreasing household size include increases in divorced or separated couples, single parent families, longer life spans resulting in more senior citizens living alone, and younger adults postponing marriage and children. However, it appears average household size may be beginning to level.

With smaller household sizes, the number of housing units required to accommodate the same population increases. Types of housing needed also changes. Decreasing household size, ongoing economic challenges, and trends toward more compact, mixed-use development will impact demand for smaller housing types, which may include smaller single houses, townhouses, condominiums, or apartments.

The demand for housing units likely will increase at a slightly more rapid rate than the population. Since Malvern has limited undeveloped lands, this may mean that Borough population in the future will increase slowly as indicated in the population projections discussed in Chapter 3. However,

¹ U.S. average household sizes: 4.6 (1900), 4.54 (1910), 4.34 (1920), 4.01 (1930), 3.68 (1940), 3.38 (1950), 3.29 (1960), 3.11 (1970), 2.75 (1980), 2.63 (1990), 2.59 (2000), 2.6 (2009), 2.59 (2010)

² Pennsylvania average household sizes: 2.57 (1990), 2.48 (2000), 2.46 (2009)

redevelopment of underutilized properties could provide opportunities for housing growth should greater demand develop over time.

Households by Type

Table 6-9 shows the various types of households in the Borough and County. The majority of households consist of related individuals living together or “family households.” As compared with the County (71.3 percent), the Borough’s family households make up only 56.7 percent of the total. Approximately 1/2 of family households in both the Borough and County and approximately 1/4 of all households in the Borough have no children living at home, which is lower than in the County overall where approximately 1/3 of all households have no children living at home.

The number of “non-family households” with unrelated individuals living together is quite high in the Borough at 43.3 percent of total households, significantly higher than the rate for the County (28.7 percent). A higher percent of non-family households is typical of a borough, as compared with the County or the surrounding townships, and also likely influenced by proximity to the train.

Households “with persons 65 years or older” represent 1/4 of all households in the Borough, slightly higher than the County rate. With the aging of the “baby boom” generation, it is likely that both the Borough and the County will see increases in households with individuals 65 or older over the next decade and an increased demand for housing that addresses their particular needs.

TABLE 6-9: HOUSEHOLD TYPE, MALVERN BOROUGH AND CHESTER COUNTY, 2000-09

Household Type	2000 Percent of Total Households		2009 Percent of Total Households	
	Malvern	Chester County	Malvern	Chester County
Family Households - (related individuals with or without children*)	58.3%	71.8%	56.7%	71.3%
• Family Households with children at home	23.4%	35.1%	28.2%	35.0%
• Family Households without children at home	34.9%	36.7%	28.5%	36.3%
Householder Living Alone	34.2%	22.6%	35.6%	23.0%
• Householder living alone and 65 yrs or older	9.4%	7.6%	8.5%	8.0%
Households, all types, with one or more individual(s) 65 yrs and over	24.2%	21.5%	25.0%	22.7%
Nonfamily Households with non-related individuals living in one house	41.7%	28.2%	43.3%	28.7%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2005-2009.

*Children 18 years old and younger

The mix of household types in the Borough and County reflects the national trend of declining percentages of the “traditional” nuclear family and the widening range and increasing percentages of other household configurations³. The combination of changing household types and the lower number of persons per household based on 2009 and prior census data indicates a potential need for a wider variety of housing choices in the County to accommodate changing housing demands. A 2010 Pew Charitable Trust Study noted a related new emerging trend of a revival of multi-generational family households, due partly to economic recession job losses and home foreclosures and partly to other demographics factors. In 2008 16.1 percent of the U.S. population lived in a family household including two or more adult generations. This represents the beginning

³ U.S. Family Households: 73.7% (1980); 70.8% (1990); 69% (2000); 67% (2010)
 Pennsylvania Family Households:– 70.2% (1990); 67.2% (2000); 65% (2010)
 Chester County - 77.9% (1980); 74.5% (1990); 71.8% (2000)

of a reversal of the trend that started after World War II when multi-generations living together started to decline due to factors such as the growth of the nuclear family geared suburbs, decline in immigrant population, and increase in mortality and economic prosperity of the 65+ population. This trend is occurring among a range of demographic segments and appears to result from both economic as well as social demographic factors.

Housing Value

Table 6-10 shows median house value trends, while Table 6-11 shows median sales prices.

Table 6-10: MEDIAN REPORTED HOUSING VALUE, MALVERN AND SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES, 1990-2009

Municipality	Median Housing Value				% Change	
	1980	1990	2000	2009	1990-2000	2000-2009
MALVERN	\$51,500	\$127,100	\$187,800	\$346,400	47.8	84.5
Easttown	\$99,300	\$262,400	\$316,100	\$605,800	20.5	91.7
East Goshen	\$91,000	\$218,500	\$241,600	\$405,700	10.6	68.0
East Whiteland	\$70,400	\$160,700	\$184,400	\$349,800	14.7	89.7
Tredyffrin	\$98,800	\$231,200	\$269,800	\$445,300	16.7	65.1
Willistown	\$76,400	\$186,800	\$211,800	\$388,200	13.4	83.3
Chester County	\$63,500	\$155,900	\$182,500	\$328,900	17.1	80.2

Source: U.S Census Bureau, 1990- 2000, American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2005-2009, as reported by the homeowner.

A median house value is what residents believe their home is worth when they answer the census, regardless of whether their home is for sale or its appraised value. Table 6-10 illustrates the increased perceptions of housing values during the 2000s. The rapid increase in housing values in the 2000s can be attributed to lower interest rates, a pent up demand to purchase housing following years of high interest rates, and financial boom years in the mid-2000s. As well, in Chester County the rapid population growth that occurred as more people moved into the area and the trend towards increasingly larger houses also played a role in the rapid rise of housing costs. It is notable that Malvern’s median housing values have typically remained lower than most of the surrounding municipalities, with East Whiteland being most comparable.

Table 6-11: MEDIAN SALES PRICES PER YEAR MALVERN AND CHESTER COUNTY, 2000-2009

Year	# of Malvern Sales	Malvern Median Price	# of County Sales	County Median Price
2000	55	\$145,000	9,241	\$188,000
2001	66	\$157,500	9,083	\$200,000
2002	60	\$182,500	9,212	\$224,900
2003	48	\$183,950	10,240	\$245,000
2004	50	\$189,450	9,492	\$265,000
2005	75	\$220,000	9,333	\$295,000
2006	63	\$270,000	8,336	\$302,000
2007	48	\$216,000	7,335	\$312,000
2008	25	\$327,500	5,911	\$300,000
2009	40	\$250,000	5,413	\$276,700

Source: Chester County Planning Commission, *Housing Costs Profiles*, 2000-2009.

Table 6-11 shows the median sale price of homes sold in Malvern and the County between 2000 and 2009. Housing prices escalated in Malvern through 2006 and countywide through 2007. The Borough saw a decrease in median sales price in 2007, and then a dramatic increase in 2008,

followed by another decrease in 2009. The 2007 median sale price may be skewed due to a smaller number of units sold than in the year before. Also, a disproportionate number of those units were vacant lots and condominiums, typically smaller units that sell at lower prices than single family homes. The 2008 number may also be skewed for the same reasons, because larger homes at higher prices may have sold, proximity to the train station driven by higher gas prices, or it may represent a market “adjustment” to the 2007 sales scenario, with median sale prices in Malvern having been lower than that of the County through 2007. The countywide median sales prices decreased (4 percent) in 2008, a year later than the Borough. In 2009, with the nationwide economic downturn and housing market crisis in full swing, both the Borough and the County saw a notable decrease in housing prices, with the Borough experiencing a significant decrease in comparison with the prior year’s prices. The 24 percent price drop in Malvern from 2008 to 2009 can also be explained in part because of smaller, more affordably priced units being sold. When comparing 2006 (height of 2005-2008 housing market boom) to 2009 (2008 economic downturn in full swing), the decrease in sales price of 7.4 percent in Malvern is comparable with countywide trends of a 8.4 percent decrease. When comparing changes in housing prices over the course of the decade, it is notable that Malvern experienced a 72 percent overall increase in housing prices, while the countywide increase was 47.2 percent, in spite of the 2001-2002 economic slowing and 2008-2009 economic recession. This significant rise in housing prices has implications for affordability.

In comparing Tables 6-10 and 6-11, there is a distinct difference between the median housing value and median sales price in Malvern, which may be due to residents overestimating the value of their homes when completing the census.

Table 6-12 shows median rents in Malvern and the surrounding municipalities.

**Table 6-12: MEDIAN RESIDENTIAL RENT
MALVERN AND SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES, 1990-2009**

Municipality	Median Rent			% Change	
	1990	2000	2009	1990-2000	2000-2009
MALVERN	\$628	\$956	\$1,266	52.2	32.4
Easttown	\$481	\$688	\$1,093	43.0	58.9
East Goshen	\$564	\$846	\$1,119	50.0	32.3
East Whiteland	\$605	\$917	\$1,299	51.6	41.7
Tredyffrin	\$661	\$928	\$1,211	40.4	30.5
Willistown	\$744	\$1,152	\$1,777	54.8	54.3
Chester County	\$496	\$754	\$1,042	52.0	38.2

Source: U.S Census Bureau, 1990-2000, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates 2005-2009, as reported by renters.

As seen in Table 6-12, the residential rental market also experienced significant cost increases during the 1990s and 2000s. In 2009, Willistown Township rents were by far the highest in the Malvern area, and have been the highest over the past two decades, while Easttown has had the lowest rents. Higher rent is another important housing standard to consider as it has implications for housing affordability some individuals may be renting not by choice but in part because they can not afford to purchase a home. Thus if rentals are unaffordable as well as home ownership, this has significant economic, cost of living as well as quality of life implications.

The rental market in Chester County became tighter and vacancy rates continually decreased between 1980 and 2000. This resulted in rent increases and fewer affordable units, particularly larger units needed for families. The countywide rental vacancy rate rose between 2000 and 2009, which is a reflection of the economic situation of Chester County residents due to the economic recession. The Comprehensive Plan task force indicated that as of 2010 rental vacancies remain relatively low in the Borough and rents remain high.

Housing Affordability

Housing affordability is an analysis of whether a median income household can afford a median priced house. When the cost of housing increases at a faster rate than income, housing becomes less affordable.

Based on industry standards, 30 percent is the maximum amount of income that should be devoted to housing costs (whether purchasing or renting). Households paying more than 30 percent of their income towards housing costs are considered to be cost burdened by their housing. Based on American Community Survey (2005-2009) data, 1/3 of Malvern households are cost burdened, as compared with about 1/5 in 2000, while 1/3 of Chester County households are cost burdened by their housing, as compared with 1/4 in 2000. The Borough and countywide trends are comparable, and the increase in housing cost burden can be explained in part by the 2005-2008 national housing boom resulting in a sudden rapid increase in housing prices as compared to 2000. The Borough indicates that Malvern has semi-affordable housing as compared to other places in the County.

These figures illustrate a clear gap between household income and housing costs countywide and in Malvern for a significant portion of the population, issues which have likely continued or worsened with the recent economic downturn. Chester County and the overall Philadelphia metropolitan region have felt less of an impact on housing prices than other regions and the nation as a whole. The total drop in values for the Philadelphia region is expected to be about 10 percent (from highest to lowest value), compared with a 34 percent drop nationally⁴. Even with a drop in prices, housing affordability continues to be a concern for many Chester County residents and communities. Chester County's housing market is expected to recover slowly once labor market conditions improve and unemployment declines.

HOUSING PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- Malvern has followed the national trend toward smaller household sizes, as measured by the number of people per housing unit. The countywide and Borough household size has remained relatively level since 2000, which may indicate a change in the trend. It is likely, however, that Malvern's household size will continue to be small as related to the Malvern area and to the County as a whole. The smaller household size and more diverse household composition will likely continue or increase the demand for smaller housing types and more diverse housing choices.
- The high percentage of non-family types of households in Malvern is typical of a borough and is likely influenced by proximity to the train line. The mix of household types in the Borough and County reflects the national trend of declining numbers of the "traditional" nuclear family and the widening range and increasing percentages of other household configurations. With the aging of the "baby boom" generation, it is likely that both the Borough and the County will see increases in households with individuals 65 or older and also an increased demand for housing that addresses their particular needs. The combination of changing household types and the lower number of persons per household indicates a potential countywide need for a wider variety of housing choices to accommodate changing housing demands. However, the revival of multi-generational family households, due partly to the economic recession and resulting job losses and home foreclosures and partly to other demographics factors, also will influence housing needs.

⁴ "Housing Stimulus Recovery Stymied by Foreclosures," Michael Bratus; *Daily Local News*, March 10, 2010.

- Malvern is numerically projected to have a small increase in housing demand through 2030. However, quality of life factors such as the train station, walkability, a local “Main Street” business/service corridor, the East King Street Redevelopment project, and numerous parks may influence increasing demand for housing in the Borough. Expectedly Malvern has had a slower new housing unit rate than countywide due to the limited amount of remaining undeveloped land and the typically slower population growth rates in boroughs and other developed areas (such as Tredyffrin). Due to smaller household sizes and a slight projected population increase to 2030, the future demand for housing units will likely increase at a slightly more rapid rate than the population rate. Since Malvern has limited undeveloped lands, redevelopment of underutilized properties, adaptive re-use of existing buildings, infill on larger lots, conversions, and rehabilitations could provide opportunities for new housing units. The housing units developed as part of the East King Street Redevelopment proposal would more than meet the new unit projected need to 2030 in terms of number of units. With the addition of these units, it is possible that Malvern will see a greater demand for housing than the projections indicate through 2030. The Borough has numerous characteristics that make it an appealing community choice, including the train station, diverse housing, traditional town center, parks, walkability, and the new office and retail opportunities in the East King Street Redevelopment.

The rise in vacancy rates in Malvern and the County, related to the wide spread financial hardships caused by the ongoing 2008 economic downturn and the resulting inability of individuals to maintain their housing situation, makes Malvern’s vacancy rate at somewhat above the optimum level. This indicates that housing supply somewhat exceeds more recent demand and is consistent with the slight drop in population from 2000 to 2009. Anecdotal evidence suggests that overall the Borough has weathered the economic recession well having a few sheriff sales and no known foreclosures and that housing vacancy rates will be relatively low in the Borough and should have little effect on future housing demand.

- The Borough serves a key role by providing a greater diversity of housing units than is generally found elsewhere in the Malvern area. A variety of housing options (including both types and rental vs ownership of units) help to meet the needs of diverse population segments. This housing diversity is a strong asset of the Borough and should be preserved. The proposed 190 new housing units in the East King Street Development will help to maintain housing diversity in the Borough and will result in a higher percentage of multi-family units and may also impact the average household size in the Borough. This greater housing diversity found in Malvern is typical of the County’s boroughs.
- The higher percentage of older housing (1939 or earlier) in Malvern can have local planning implications, such as possible adjustments needed to building code requirements to meet the needs of older buildings or greater repair needs which can add additional financial burden on municipal residents.
- Housing affordability (for both purchased and rental units) is a growing issue for a significant segment of the population both in Malvern and Chester County overall, an issue that is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. The housing boom time of 2005-2008 that rapidly escalated housing prices as well as rents and the subsequent housing bust and economic recession that lead to job losses are major recent factors in housing not being affordable for a notable amount of the population. Even with a drop in prices from 2008 to 2009, housing affordability continues to be a concern for many Chester County residents and communities. Individuals may be renting not by choice but in part because they can not afford to purchase a home. If rentals are unaffordable as well as home ownership, this has significant economic,

cost of living, and quality of life implications. There is a gap between household income and housing costs in Malvern and countywide for a significant portion of the population, issues which have worsened with the recent economic downturn.

HOUSING PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

Malvern Borough is a diverse and well-balanced community with regard to housing options. An analysis for the Borough indicates that Malvern, as of 2011, is providing for its fair share of multifamily housing. The housing inventory detailed earlier in this Chapter determined that there are approximately equal percentages of single-family detached, single-family attached, and multifamily housing units in the Borough. There are limited undeveloped parcels in the Borough and redevelopment infill activity will be the opportunities for new housing. The recommendations below are to be considered in the context of planning for new, infill, and redevelopment housing.

Housing Supply

6.1 Review ordinances to ensure they allow appropriate residential densities and diverse housing choices consistent with existing neighborhoods throughout the Borough.

Malvern Borough is identified as an urban landscape in the Chester County Comprehensive Policy Plan, *Landscapes2*. In the Plan, urban landscapes are expected to accommodate “a diversity of housing types at appropriate urban densities for all income levels.” The Borough should ensure that ordinances support development or redevelopment of housing that is consistent and compatible with existing neighborhoods, such as through zoning and land development. At the same time, the Borough could offer incentives to developers to create housing opportunities for a mix of income levels. County-wide, housing for individuals or families with very low incomes is in extremely short supply.



6.2 Permit adaptive reuse of existing buildings, infill on larger lots, conversions, and rehabilitations, where appropriate, for housing to accommodate projected population growth.



It is projected that Malvern Borough will need an additional 163 housing units between 2008 and 2030. Some of these units have already been built. Others are currently proposed. The Borough could meet anticipated housing demand through various strategies. As there are very few buildable and undeveloped parcels available in the Borough, redevelopment will likely be the primary strategy for creating more housing opportunities. The Borough should evaluate existing regulations and determine if there is a need to update the zoning or

subdivision/land development ordinances or building code standards regarding redevelopment and infill.

6.3 Maintain the existing level of housing diversity within the Borough and, through development or redevelopment, provide for a fair share of multifamily housing.

The Borough has a very diverse housing profile, where more than 35 percent of existing housing units are multifamily. The Borough should continue current housing and diversity of housing types and options in zoning regulations to address PA MPC and Federal Fair Housing Act requirements. Also, a land development plan proposal is in process (2011) to build an additional 190 multifamily units as part of a mixed-use development along East King Street at the edge of the Borough and into Willistown. These units will be developed at a relatively high density which is consistent with the policies of *Landscapes2* and supports the Borough's continued provision of its fair share housing obligations.

6.4 Accommodate new or redeveloped affordable, supportive housing for the elderly.

Countywide, the need for affordable housing options for the elderly is great and is growing. Nearly 25 percent of households in the Borough have at least one member that is age sixty-five or older. There are examples of affordable senior rental housing in the County that Malvern Borough could consider. Westminster Place in Parkesburg and the Brandywine Center in Coatesville are both relatively new facilities featuring income-restricted housing for seniors with first-floor commercial or medical services space intended to serve the residents on-site as well as the larger community. Each was developed through public/private/non-profit partnerships with funding sources that will guarantee long-term affordability for the tenants. The Borough should encourage mixed income housing policy and zoning and as part of future redevelopment projects involving housing.

Housing Condition

6.5 Identify areas of substandard or deteriorating housing and target resources for rehabilitation to those neighborhoods.

The Malvern Borough Neighborhood Planning Areas provide a divisible and approachable way for the Borough to continually evaluate individual residential neighborhoods in terms of the character and condition of housing. In areas where regular maintenance may be lacking for some properties, the Borough could initiate and seek funding for neighborhood beautification programs. By involving property owners in the beautification, neighbors may be motivated to improve and maintain their properties which can result in neighborhood pride and stable or increasing property values. Investigate funding options to provide for improved maintenance and safety of this housing.

6.6 Review Borough codes to ensure they do not inadvertently discourage or make more difficult the repair and maintenance of older housing stock.



Around 1/3 of the housing stock in the Borough is 70 years or older and nearly half is 50 years or older. As expected, there is a higher percentage of older housing in Malvern than in the surrounding townships. A higher percentage of older housing can have local planning implications, such as the need for possible adjustments to building code requirements to meet the needs and limitations of older buildings. Older buildings also often have greater repair/maintenance needs which can add additional financial burden on residents. Building codes requirements should not add additional financial burden by creating standards that are not attainable for older

buildings and/or serving as a disincentive for continued use of older housing stock. Zoning regulations, conditions imposed upon proposed development through the SLDO, as well as property maintenance codes should be examined as well to ensure they do not contain provisions that create barriers for older housing.

6.7 Provide outreach to landlords to achieve compliance with building codes in rental housing units.

Renter-occupied housing units account for 41 percent of the total number of units in the Borough. Rental properties can at times pose a challenge related to maintenance. Malvern Borough should initiate a process of communicating with landlords on at least an annual basis with updates to building codes or other property maintenance requirements.

6.8 Inform homeowners about resources available to assist with home repair and maintenance needs through the Housing Partnership of Chester County (HPCC), Good Works, or other home repair programs.

Within the Borough, there are likely low and moderate-income homeowners who would qualify for home repair services provided by the Housing Partnership of Chester County (HPCC). The Housing Rehabilitation Program provides an interest-free loan for up to \$25,000 for correction of code violations including, but not limited to, structural, plumbing, heating and electrical problems.

The Home Maintenance Program provides assistance to eligible homeowners, who are age 65 or older, with moderate home repairs and modifications such as roof, minor plumbing, flooring repairs, and general repairs that may improve the physical functioning of the elderly individuals. The Borough can provide information about these options via the Borough website and newsletter, and postings or informational brochures in Borough Hall.

6.9 Encourage volunteerism with local groups that provide housing construction and rehabilitation services to low-income and elderly homeowners.

There may be opportunities for Borough residents to volunteer, with programs like Good Works, Inc., to assist low-income homeowners to repair their homes and improve their quality of life. The Borough can provide information about these types of opportunities via the Borough website, newsletter, and postings or informational brochures in Borough Hall. Such efforts are most successful when supported at the grass-roots level.

Housing Accessibility

6.10 Ensure that regulations and planning actions do not restrict opportunities for congregate living situations for people with special needs.



People with disabilities face some of the greatest challenges compared with other demographic groups in regard to securing safe, affordable, and accessible housing. Physically accessible units are in very short supply across the County. Also, regulatory restrictions on options like group homes and/or negative stereotypes of residents may have the impact of restricting housing choices available to individuals with disabilities. Malvern Borough should conduct an analysis of existing regulations to determine compliance with the Fair Housing Act as it relates to housing for individuals with special needs. For example, the Borough should

review the zoning definition for “family” to ensure it is in line with current federal standards as well as review other relevant parts of zoning, and should consider conditions imposed on proposed developments/SLDO provisions, etc. to ensure they do not provide restrictive barriers to this type of housing.

6.11 Grant “reasonable accommodations” to permit development or redevelopment of housing for individuals with disabilities.

The federal Fair Housing Act requires that a request for relief from zoning, SLDO, or other local code requirements be granted if the request is reasonable and the relief creates an opportunity for the disabled to access housing of their choice within the local community. The request may be denied if it would create an undue burden on the municipality or result in a fundamental change to the character of the neighborhood. In general, a congregate living situation for people with disabilities should be treated like any other residential use with like requirements and restrictions.

6.12 Share information about fair housing and fair lending practices.

The federal Fair Housing Act (Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968) prohibits discrimination, in matters related to housing, based upon race, color, national origin, religion, gender, disability, or familial status (collectively known as the “protected classes”). Housing discrimination may occur in any number of contexts, including the marketing, sale, or rental of real estate; accessing credit or insurance; and the regulation of land uses.

Municipal ordinances may, either with or without intent, contain regulations that reduce the opportunities for members of the protected classes to achieve housing of their choice that is integrated into the local community. Municipal officials could benefit from expanded knowledge of fair housing issues and compliance, and the Borough could share resources to educate residents and landlords about rights and responsibilities under the Fair Housing Act. For example, the Borough could include a link on the Borough website to the Philadelphia Suburban Fair Housing Council. The Borough could include information in the Borough newsletter, and informational brochures or other materials in Borough Hall.

Housing Affordability

6.13 Continue to support zoning regulations that encourage a diversity of housing types and costs throughout the Borough.

The Borough should ensure that residential and mixed-use zoning districts continue to provide opportunity for a diversity of housing in such a way as to preserve the moderately priced housing that exists in addition to housing that is affordable to middle and upper-income residents.

6.14 Permit development of quality, attractive housing that is well integrated into the community and meets low- to moderate-income affordability standards.

The median sales price trends in Malvern show that housing in the Borough is slightly more affordable on average than the County overall. However, as of 2009 around 1/3 of Malvern households are cost burdened, as compared with about 1/5 in 2000, meaning they are paying more than 30 percent of their gross income toward housing. Cost burdened situations are considered unaffordable and can lead to mortgage defaults, foreclosures, and evictions, as has been the case nationwide due to the housing crisis. This issue

should be taken into account during zoning, SLDO, building, and property maintenance code updates.

Housing Sustainability

6.15 Study the transit-oriented development (TOD) concept and determine its feasibility for implementation, in coordination with considering improvements to the Malvern train station property.

Malvern Borough may be ideally suited for the implementation of a transit-oriented development district to include the train station property and adjacent parcels. A TOD would incorporate compact, dense, mixed use development, all within convenient walking distance to the train station. A TOD could also present an opportunity to develop new, quality, moderately-priced housing that is mixed with, and indistinguishable from, similar market rate units. The Borough should examine the possibility of implementing a TOD zoning overlay starting with using the Malin Road Extension Study information.

6.16 Create ordinance requirements or incentives for the development or redevelopment of housing that meets “green” building standards.

Sustainable housing is housing that is affordable to the resident over the long term, within healthy, vibrant neighborhoods. For many homeowners and renters, housing becomes unaffordable with the additional cost of heat and other utilities. Incorporating green methods and materials via zoning requirements reduces energy costs, making utility costs more affordable. Features such as water conserving fixtures, energy star appliances, high efficiency lighting, renewable energy sources like photovoltaic (PV) panels, and green roofs all contribute to reducing energy usage and therefore lowering the long term costs for the resident. Another item that should be included in zoning or SLDO provisions is a requirement for planting of appropriately sized and native street trees as an additional key sustainability measure in an urbanized environment.

6.17 Protect the character of existing neighborhoods through appropriate standards for the redevelopment or reuse of infill properties for residential purposes.

As zoning and SLDO and the UCRP action plan are updated, consideration should be given to consistency, compatibility, and connections between adjoining residential and commercial areas, and within residential neighborhoods, consistent with the categories and recommendations of the Neighborhood Planning Areas and the Land Use Plan. Also, developing or referencing existing design guidelines to readily illustrate development that is compatible with the Borough’s established neighborhoods/character could be considered.

6.18 Provide for, where needed, extension of sidewalks along residential streets.

Sidewalks provide an important form of pedestrian circulation for Borough residents. Sidewalks create connections within and between neighborhoods and connect neighborhoods to non-residential areas of the town. As shown on Maps 9-3 and 9-5, the sidewalk survey (see Appendix B) conducted by the Borough Planning Commission has identified several locations where extension or addition of sidewalks in residential neighborhoods is appropriate.

