

Chapter Two

Population, Housing, and Economic Profile

INTRODUCTION

The demographic profile of the Region provides a means of anticipating and planning for future growth and shifts in the population composition. Significant changes in population have implications for housing demand, land development, the need for facilities and services, and pressures on the Region's natural resources and open space. Information on age, housing costs, income, and similar data provides a snapshot of where the Region is now and helps to anticipate future trends.

Because decennial census data is the best source of information for this type of analysis, and current data will not be available until 2001 or later, this chapter identifies trends using the most currently available census data plus estimates and projections where available. When new demographic information becomes available from the 2000 Census, it can be used to confirm or adjust the conclusions reached in this chapter.

This chapter analyzes the following information:

Population Profile:

- Historic Population Trends
- Population Estimates and Projections
- Population by Race and Hispanic Origin
- Age Distribution
- Persons Per Household

Housing Profile:

- Number of Housing Units
- Housing Projections
- Housing Types
- Home Ownership
- Housing Costs
- Housing Affordability
- Farm Worker Housing

Economic Profile:

- Income Levels
- Education
- Unemployment
- Employment Characteristics
- Commuting Patterns

PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

The demographics analysis indicates the following planning implications for the Region:

- ❑ **Regional Growth Rates** - The slower growth rate in the Borough over the past several decades in comparison to the surrounding townships is typical of other small towns and is due to both the limited availability of vacant land and the trend towards “bedroom community” developments in outlying areas that started in the 1950’s. Growth pressure from New Castle County is likely to continue and further increase the demand for housing in the Kennett Region. Existing land uses, municipal land use regulations, and site constraints will also affect future growth in the Region.
- ❑ **Planning for Future Growth** - Population and housing projections indicate approximately 6,000 additional residents and 1,378 new homes could be located in the Kennett Region by 2020. If past growth trends continue at the same rate, an even greater amount of development is possible in the Region over the next 20 years. Reducing scattered development and focusing it in and around the urban and rural centers are land use policies of the Region. Therefore, this Plan must address directing projected future growth into the most appropriate areas.
- ❑ **Hispanic Population** - The growing Hispanic population in the Region, and particularly in the Borough, has implications for demands on affordable housing (including farmworker housing), community services, and the need for assistance with assimilation into the local culture. The efforts in the Borough and surrounding townships could also focus on the benefits that a culturally diverse community can bring to the area. These factors must be taken into consideration throughout the Region in planning for housing, community facilities, and economic development.
- ❑ **Age of Population** - The median age in the Region is increasing, while the younger age groups are decreasing. This has implications for types of housing, facilities, and services needed to best serve the Region’s population.
- ❑ **Household Size** - The number of persons per household continues to decrease requiring more housing units, land, and infrastructure to serve the same population and may also indicate a need for more housing choices in terms of size, cost, and maintenance demands.
- ❑ **Growth Climate** - Based on building permits issued, residential development in the Region has leveled off since its peak in the 1980’s. However, the current economy and low interest rates continue to provide a climate favorable for new development indicating a need to ensure that land use regulations are in place that direct growth in ways consistent with the Region’s land use policies.
- ❑ **Housing Affordability and Diversity** - The most diverse and affordable housing options are located in the Borough. A “fair share” housing analysis should be conducted on a regional basis to determine if, based on the most current court cases, a reasonable amount of multi-family housing is being provided in the Region. Land use regulations and policies should be reconsidered if necessary based on the findings of this analysis. In addition, the majority of new homes being built in the Region are single-family detached on large lots, generally the most expensive form of housing. Limited housing options region-wide reduce choices available to many people, including the ability of first time homebuyers and non-traditional households to stay within the community. However, it is also important to recognize the influence of market conditions on the development and availability of various housing types.

- ❑ **Education and Income** - The Region's population can generally be characterized as well educated, affluent, and able to afford the relatively expensive housing costs typical of the area. Those residents that do not meet those characteristics are often located in the Borough where more affordable housing and easier access to services are available. These are factors to consider when planning for housing and community facilities and services.
- ❑ **Unemployment Rates** - The very low unemployment rates in the Region while generally desirable, can also be a deterrent to new or expanding businesses due to the scarcity of available employees. The low unemployment rates could affect economic development in the Region.
- ❑ **Industry and Occupation Characteristics** - The types of industries and occupations in the Region are generally typical of the County, with concentrations in services, retail trade, and manufacturing in terms of industries and concentrations in executives, professionals, technicians, sales, and administrative support in terms of occupations. However, the presence of the mushroom industry and the rural nature of much of the Region creates a higher percentage of persons in agriculture and farming than is typical of the County. The encouragement and implementation of programs and land use regulations that support farmland protection are both objectives of the Kennett Region. The overall decrease in manufacturing jobs has implications for the number of higher paying jobs available to residents without college degrees or technical training.
- ❑ **Commuting Patterns** - Fifty percent of the Region's residents commute to jobs outside of Chester County, with the greatest concentration going to Delaware. These commuting patterns indicate that the Region is largely a bedroom community and these commuting patterns must be considered in regional transportation planning. Attracting new jobs to the Region could both expand the tax base and reduce the length of commuting trips.

POPULATION PROFILE

Historic Population Trends

The Region grew by 73 percent between 1960 and 1990, mirroring the County-wide growth rate of 79 percent (see Figures 2-1 and 2-2). By far, Pennsbury experienced the largest percentage increase, growing by 255 percent during the 30-year period. However, in terms of numbers, the growth in East Marlborough was almost identical to that of Pennsbury. The Borough had the lowest percentage growth, typical of other boroughs in the County. This slower growth rate reflects both the more limited buildable area available in urban settings and the trend towards "bedroom community" developments in outlying areas since the 1950's.

When looking at individual decades, the rate of growth in the Region has been quite steady at about 20 percent over each ten year period. The County, on the other hand, experienced the highest rate of growth between 1960 and 1970. In terms of the actual number of people, rather than percentages, the greatest population growth in both the Region and the County occurred between 1980 and 1990, when the population grew by over 21,000 people. This population growth reflects both births within the Region and the in-migration of new residents.

Figure 2-1: Historic Population Growth (1960-1990)

	1960	1970	1980	1990	Increase '60-'90	
					No.	Percent
East Marlborough	2,417	3,031	3,953	4,781	2,364	98%
Kennett	3,026	3,394	4,201	4,624	1,598	53%
Kennett Square	4,355	4,876	4,715	5,218	863	20%
Pennsbury	936	1,763	2,604	3,326	2,390	255%
Pocopson	1,315	1,556	2,331	3,266	1,951	125%
REGION	12,052	14,620	17,804	21,215	9,166	76%
Chester County	210,608	277,746	316,660	376,396	165,788	79%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 2-2: Percent Change By Decade

	1960-1970	1970-1980	1980-1990
East Marlborough	25%	30%	21%
Kennett	12%	24%	10%
Kennett Square	12%	-3%	11%
Pennsbury	88%	48%	28%
Pocopson	18%	50%	40%
REGION	19%	22%	19%
Chester County	32%	14%	19%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Population Estimates and Projections

Estimates - According to the 1997 estimates in Figure 2-3, the Region has increased by an additional 14 percent or 3,035 resident since the 1990 Census. This increase is identical to the 14 percent County-wide increase. The townships of East Marlborough and Kennett are estimated to have the highest rate of growth in the Region (21 and 20 percent respectively), more than double that of the remaining three municipalities.

These estimates are the most currently available for the Region and are prepared annually by the Chester County Planning Commission taking into account such factors as births and deaths, new development, and the average number of persons per household. As the 1990 Census figures become increasingly outdated, estimates become more important for determining current trends.

Figure 2-3: Population Estimates – 1997

	1990 (act.)	1997	Change 1990-1997	
			Number	Percent
East Marlborough	4,781	5,780	999	21%
Kennett	4,624	5,560	936	20%
Kennett Square	5,218	5,690	472	9%
Pennsbury	3,326	3,630	304	9%
Pocopson ¹	3,266	3,590	324	10%
REGION	21,215	24,250	3,035	14%
Chester County	376,396	427,320	50,924	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Chester County Planning Commission

Projections - The regional population is projected to increase 30 percent by 2020 (see Figure 2-4). This projected increase is again very similar to that projected for the County. In both number of residents and percentage increase, East Marlborough is projected to experience the greatest increase in population, closely followed by Pocopson. Reflecting past trends, the Borough is projected to have a considerably lower growth rate than the townships. Reducing scattered development and focusing it in and around the urban and rural centers are land use policies of the Region. Therefore, this Plan must address directing projected future growth into the most appropriate areas.

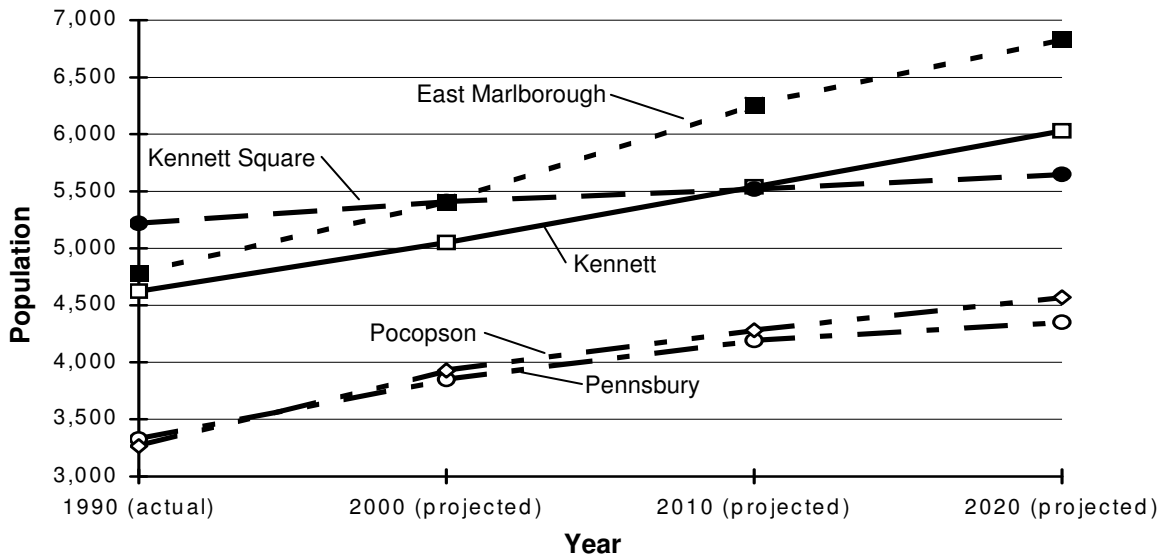
The population projections were produced by the Chester County Planning Commission employing the cohort-component method which uses expected trends in fertility, mortality, and migration rates to carry the population forward in five year increments. Past projections using this method have compared favorably to the actual 1990 Census population figures. Population projections are particularly valuable in predicting potential residential development that would be needed to accommodate new residents. The actual population increase in the Region will also be affected by such factors as available developable land, municipal land use regulations, and trends in the economy and interest rates.

When comparing the estimates and projections in Figures 2-3 and 2-4, the 1997 region-wide population estimates already surpass the year 2000 projections. The most current projections available were completed several years prior to the 1997 estimates. The estimates took into account new development that had not yet peaked in the Region until after the projections were completed. New County projections will not be calculated until after the 2000 Census, however, recently released State projections are approximately 4 percent higher than the County projections. This discrepancy was factored into the “potential future growth under current zoning” in Chapter Three, the “accommodation of future growth” analysis in Chapter Eight, and in the “fair share analysis” in Appendix A to provide more accurate analyses of these respective issues. However, it should also be noted that the projections beyond 2000 could still prove to be reasonable depending on such factors as future conditions in the economy, interest rates, and the availability of buildable land.

¹ The nursing home and prison populations were factored into both the estimates and projections. These populations are kept at a constant level. The population in Pocopson in 1980 included a total of 537 residents in these two institutions. The institutional population in 1990 was 851. A separate Census tract is planned for the prison and home in the 2000 Census. This change will provide a more accurate picture of demographics in the Township.

Figure 2-4: Population Projections - 2020

	1990 (act.)	2000	2010	2020	Increase '90-'20	
					Number	Percent
East Marlborough	4,781	5,410	6,260	6,830	2,049	43%
Kennett	4,624	5,050	5,540	6,030	1,406	30%
Kennett Square	5,218	5,410	5,520	5,650	432	8%
Pennsbury	3,326	3,850	4,190	4,350	1,024	31%
Pocopson	3,266	3,930	4,280	4,570	1,304	40%
REGION	21,215	23,650	25,790	27,430	6,215	29%



Chester County	376,396	425,800	460,200	489,300	112,904	30%
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Figure 2-5: Worst Case Population Growth - 2020

	Actual Growth 1960-90	Actual Population 1990	Projected Population			Increase 1990-2020	
			2000	2010	2020	Number	Percentage
E. Marlborough	98%	4,781	6,150	7,200	8,800	4,019	84%
Kennett	53%	4,624	5,770	6,900	8,400	3,776	82%
Kennett Square	20%	5,218	5,800	6,300	6,500	1,218	25%
Pennsbury	255%	3,326	4,120	5,000	6,300	2,974	89%
Pocopson	125% ¹	3,266	3,760 ²	4,700 ²	6,000 ²	2,734	84%
REGION	76%	21,215	25,600	30,000	36,000	14,721	70%

¹ Includes population growth in the County facilities (Pocopson Home and Prison)

² Assumes no expansion of the County facilities.

Source: KARPC Comprehensive Plan Task Force, 1999.

There is a benefit to consider a worst case scenario for population growth in the Region. This growth could continue at a rate similar to the period of 1960 to 1990 for the next thirty years. This scenario is considered in Figure 2-5 above. In fact, estimates of the 1997 population in the Region show that this is actually occurring. This worst case scenario could have a serious impact in planning for the future needs of the Region.

Population by Race and Hispanic Origin

Figures 2-6 and 2-7 indicate the composition of the Region’s population by race and by Hispanic origin. These are shown as two separate categories because a person of Hispanic origin can be of any race.

In terms of racial composition, the Region is almost identical to that of the County. Kennett Square is the most racially diverse of the five municipalities. The racial composition of the Region has remained nearly unchanged since the 1980 Census.

Figure 2-6: Population By Race – 1990

	White		Black		Asian		Other	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
East Marlborough	4,570	96%	110	2%	51	1%	50	1%
Kennett	4,383	95%	122	3%	39	1%	80	2%
Kennett Square	4,316	83%	625	12%	35	1%	242	5%
Pennsbury	3,263	98%	13	0%	44	1%	6	0%
Pocopson	2,930	90%	303	9%	21	1%	12	0%
Region	19,462	92%	1,173	6%	190	1%	390	2%
Chester County	344,931	92%	23,995	6%	4,070	1%	3,400	1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Between 1980 and 1990, Kennett Square experienced the largest increase in the number of Hispanic residents and has the highest percentage of Hispanic residents in terms of its total population. The Region as a whole has a significantly greater proportion of Hispanic residents in comparison to the County’s population composition. The rate of increase in the Region was nearly double that of the County, reflecting the concentration of the mushroom industry in the Kennett Region and the large number of Hispanic workers employed by that industry. (See also section entitled “Farm Worker Housing”)

**Figure 2-7: Population By Hispanic Origin²
1980 and 1990**

	1980		1990		Percent Change
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
East Marlborough	190	4.8%	191	4.0%	1%
Kennett	224	5.3%	322	7.0%	44%
Kennett Square	234	5.0%	662	12.7%	183%
Pennsbury	18	0.7%	22	0.7%	22%
Pocopson	22	0.9%	99	3.0%	350%
REGION	688	3.9%	1,296	6.1%	88%
Chester County	5,799	1.8%	8,565	2.3%	48%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

In recent years, the composition of the Hispanic population is also experiencing changes. While previously, a large segment of the Hispanic population consisted of single males, current trends include more married men with families. A need for affordable housing, bilingual services and school programs, and assistance with assimilation into the local culture are some of the impacts resulting from increases in the Hispanic population. It should also be noted that accurate counts of immigrant groups can be difficult to obtain for reasons including tracking migration, non-traditional household composition, fear of government agencies, and language barriers. Therefore, counts obtained through the U.S. Census are likely to be somewhat lower than the actual number.

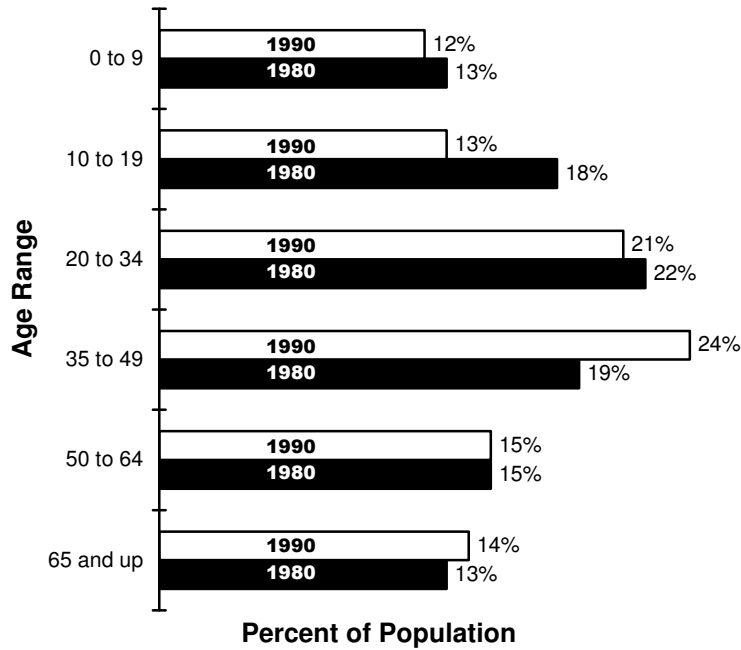
Age Distribution

As seen in Figure 2-8, the biggest changes in age distribution between 1980 and 1990 were a decrease in the 10 to 19 year old age group (falling from 18% to 13%) and an increase in the 35 to 49 year old range (rising from 19% to 24%). This pattern is typical of the county as a whole. The fall in the 10 to 19 year group is the result of lower birth rates. The increase in the 35 to 49 age group reflects both the “Baby Boom” generation and a pattern of in-migration of this age group, often second-time home buyers who can afford the more expensive housing in the Region.

² These numbers do not include temporary employees. See discussion immediately following Figure 2-6 and “Farm Worker Housing” discussion later in this chapter.

Figure 2-8: Age Distribution - 1980 and 1990

Age Range	Percent of Population		
	1980	1990	Change
0 to 9	13%	12%	-1%
10 to 19	18%	13%	-5%
20 to 34	22%	21%	-1%
35 to 49	19%	24%	5%
50 to 64	15%	15%	0%



65 and up	13%	14%	1%
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Figure 2-9 shows an increase in the median age for all municipalities in the Region. With the exception of Kennett Square, the median ages for the Region are somewhat higher than that of the County. The median ages of Kennett, Pennsbury, and Pocopson are affected by the presence of three significant retirement or nursing facilities: Kendal at Longwood (86 beds), Crosslands (250 units), and Pocopson Home (361 beds). The median age in East Marlborough will also be affected in the future by a 300 unit retirement facility recently approved by the Township. Friends Boarding Home, with 68 units available, is also located in the Region. The lower median age in the Borough could be a combination of fewer large retirement facilities and younger families taking advantage of the more affordable housing available in the Borough.

Figure 2-9: Median Age - 1980 and 1990

	Years Old		Change
	1980	1990	'80-'90
East Marlborough	32	36	12.5%
Kennett	39	43	10.3%
Kennett Square	32	34	6.2%
Pennsbury	39	44	12.8%
Pocopson	34	38	11.8%
Chester County	31	34	9.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The median age in the County and nationwide has been increasing due to the aging of the Baby Boom generation. The older age group buying homes and moving into the Region further affects the median age of the Region. Recent Census age structure estimates indicate that the median age of the County population will continue its upward trend. The increasing median age and growing older age groups will have implications for the types of facilities and services needed by the residents of the Kennett Region. Similarly, the decrease in the younger age categories will have implications for demands on school facilities.

Persons per Household

Average household sizes are shown in Figure 2-10. The decreasing number of persons per household has been and continues to be both a regional and national trend. Although East Marlborough and Pocopson experienced the greatest drop in household size between 1980 and 1990, they continue to have the largest household size in the Region. Household size projections for 2000 to 2020 were prepared by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission in the early 1990's to facilitate population and housing projections. County-wide and within the Region, the downward trend in household size is expected to continue, but at a decreasing rate.

Factors contributing to the smaller households include couples having fewer children, young adults postponing marriage, divorced or separated couples living on their own, and increasing numbers of older people living alone. The smaller household sizes have significant planning implications because it takes a greater number of housing units, infrastructure, and land to accommodate the same population. This is illustrated by the 19 percent increase in regional population versus the 23 percent increase in number of housing units between 1980 and 1990. The decreasing household size also may indicate a change in housing needs in terms of cost, size, and maintenance.

**Figure 2-10: Persons per Household³
1980, 1990, & projections To 2020**

	Average Household Size				
	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
East Marlborough	3.26	2.95	2.89	2.83	2.81
Kennett	2.73	2.52	2.46	2.40	2.39
Kennett Square	2.67	2.67	2.46	2.50	2.42
Pennsbury	2.82	2.77	2.50	2.53	2.44
Pocopson	3.29	3.04	3.03	2.94	2.95
Chester County	2.90	2.73	2.70	2.73	2.63

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1980 & 1990), Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (2000-2020 projections)

HOUSING PROFILE

Number of Housing Units

Between 1960 and 1990, housing in the Region increased by 116 percent, a somewhat slower rate than the County (see Figure 2-11). Between 1980 and 1990, East Marlborough and Kennett had the greatest increase in the number of new homes while Pocopson had the highest percentage increase. The significant increase in homes in East Marlborough can primarily be attributed to a large Planned Residential Development (PRD) built in the 1980's.

Figure 2-11: Number Of Housing Units (1960-1990)

	1960	1970	1980	1990	Increase '60-'90		Increase '80-'90	
					Number	Percent	Number	Percent
East Marlborough	683	878	1,247	1,682	999	146%	435	35%
Kennett	904	1,053	1,516	1,835	931	103%	319	21%
Kennett Square	1,302	1,632	1,824	1,984	682	52%	160	9%
Pennsbury	294	473	928	1,141	847	288%	213	23%
Pocopson	277	356	579	830	553	200%	251	43%
REGION	3,460	4,392	6,094	7,472	4,012	116%	1,378	23%
Chester County	58,995	80,457	110,183	139,597	80,602	137%	29,414	27%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 2-12 shows the number of building permits for new housing units issued between 1990 and 1997, reflecting building trends in the years since the 1990 Census was completed. East Marlborough and Kennett Township issued, by far, the greatest number of new building permits since 1990, with over 1,000 permits issued between them. In terms of the Region, the number of permits issued peaked in 1992 and was its lowest in 1996. To date in the 1990's, the County experienced its peak demand for permits in 1997, closely followed by 1995. These numbers still do not approach the peak levels of development experienced in the 1980's when 5,158 permits were issued in 1986. Permits dropped significantly in 1990 due to the downturn in the economy. The current combination of a healthy economy and low

³ Note that the persons per household does not include persons living in institutions or group quarters such as Pocopson Home and the prison and may not include many transient farmworkers and illegal immigrants.

interest rates has caused a general upturn in building which started in the mid-1990's and continues today.

Figure 2-12: Building Permits Issued (1990-1997)

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	Total
East Marlborough	49	23	114	54	110	72	43	53	518
Kennett	83	96	169	74	49	37	15	32	555
Kennett Square	4	0	4	4	7	3	5	6	33
Pennsbury	9	4	3	22	42	20	12	7	119
Pocopson	13	6	7	12	5	9	10	8	70
REGION	158	129	297	166	213	141	85	106	1,295
Chester County	1,934	2,068	2,340	2,098	2,485	2,831	2,253	2,935	18,944

Source: Chester County Planning Commission

Housing Projections

The housing projections in Figure 2-13 are calculated by dividing the population projection for that year (see Figure 2-4) by the average household size for each municipality.⁴ This calculation results in the number of housing units needed to accommodate the projected population. The total increase in the Region between 1990 and 2020 is projected to be just under 3,000 new housing units, bringing the total number of units to 10,360.⁵ This projected increase is nearly 10 percent higher than that projected for the County. Individually, Pocopson is projected to have the greatest percentage increase (82%) while Kennett Square is projected to have the slowest increase (16%). Again, the factors affecting actual population increases (available land, land use regulations, the economy, interest rates) will also influence the housing projections. Figure 2-14 shows the increase in number of housing units, both actual and projected, between 1960 and 2020.

Figure 2-13: Housing Unit Projections - 2020

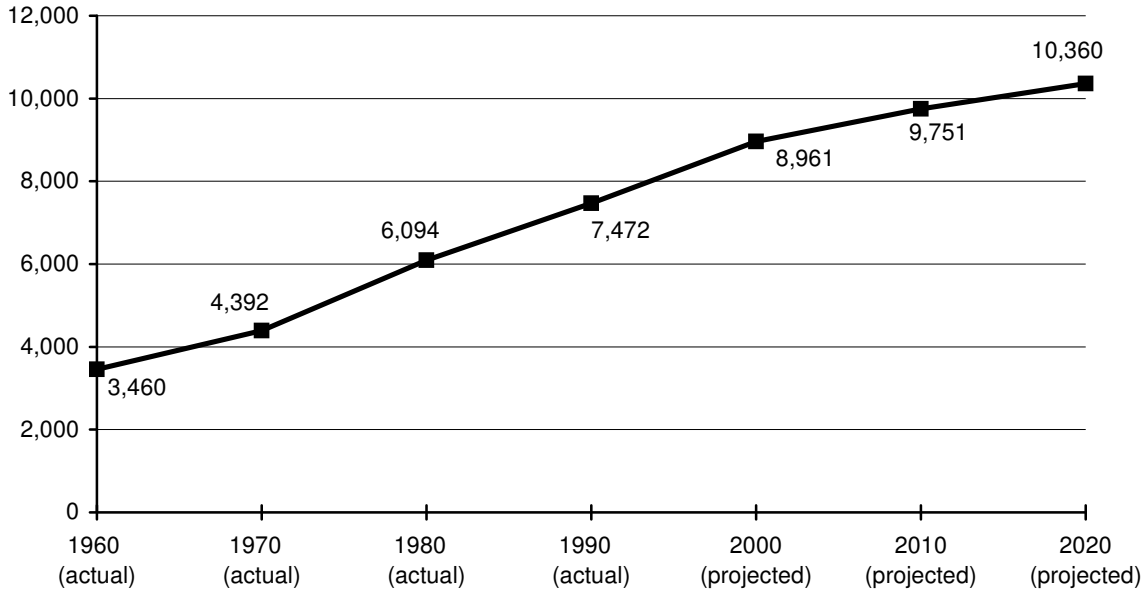
	1990 (act.)	2000	2010	2020	Increase '90-'20	
					Number	Percent
East Marlborough	1,682	1,872	2,166	2,363	681	41%
Kennett	1,835	2,053	2,252	2,451	616	34%
Kennett Square	1,984	2,199	2,244	2,297	313	16%
Pennsbury	1,141	1,540	1,676	1,740	599	52%
Pocopson	830	1,297	1,413	1,508	678	82%
REGION	7,472	8,961	9,751	10,360	2,888	39%
Chester County	139,597	157,704	170,444	181,222	41,625	30%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Chester County Planning Commission, DVRPC (1996 household size estimates)

⁴ The household size projections from Figure 2-9 were used in this calculation.

⁵ As discussed earlier in this chapter, under the population projection section, adjusted population and housing figures were in Chapters Three, Eight and Appendix A to provide a more accurate analysis of potential future development, accommodation of future growth, and fair share issues.

**Figure 2-14: Number of Housing Units in the Region
1960-2020
Actual and Projected**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Chester County Planning Commission

Housing Types

Over 70 percent of the homes in the Kennett Region are single-family detached (see Figure 2-15). Twins and townhouses comprise 11 percent of the housing stock. Multi-family homes comprise most of the remaining housing stock at 15 percent, while mobile homes comprise only 1 percent of the Region’s homes. In comparison to the County, the Region has a higher percentage of single-family homes and fewer townhouses, twins, multi-family, and mobile homes.

Figure 2-15: Housing Units By Type – 1990

	Single-Family Detached		Twin/Townhouse		Multi-Family or Other		Mobile Home		Total Number
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
East Marlborough	1,386	82%	184	11%	86	5%	26	2%	1,682
Kennett	1,443	79%	140	8%	225	12%	27	1%	1,835
Kennett Square	983	50%	296	15%	695	35%	10	1%	1,984
Pennsbury	883	77%	157	14%	100	9%	1	0%	1,141
Pocopson	755	91%	57	7%	17	2%	1	0%	830
REGION	5,450	73%	834	11%	1,123	15%	65	1%	7,472
Chester County	84,795	61%	21,773	16%	27,517	20%	5,512	4%	139,597

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Based on building permit data, between 1990 and 1997, an additional 943 permits for single-family detached, 261 permits for townhouses, 41 permits for multi-family, and 82⁶ for mobile homes have been

⁶ Of the mobile home permits, 73 were issued in East Marlborough in 1992.

issued in the Region. A full comparison of changes in housing compositions will not be possible until the year 2000 Census is completed. However, the building permit data to date indicate that the ratio of single-family homes to townhouses/multi-family homes, at 75 percent and 24 percent respectively, remains about the same for the Region.

Kennett Square has the highest percentage of attached and multi-family housing in the Region, which is typical of other Chester County boroughs. By comparison, the Borough has a higher percentage of single-family detached structures (50%) than West Chester (16%) and Downingtown (29%), but lower than West Grove (67%) and Avondale (65%). At over 90 percent, Pocopson has the highest percentage of single-family detached homes. A “fair share” housing analysis, conducted at the regional level, will help determine whether the Region is providing a reasonable number of housing options for current and future residents, as determined by current court decisions. (See Appendix A for further discussion and analysis of the Region’s fair share obligations.)

Home Ownership

The percentage of residents who either rent or own their homes generally corresponds to the types of housing available in a particular community. The higher the number of single-family homes, the higher the percentage of homeowners versus renters (see Figure 2-16). Pocopson has the highest percentage of home ownership (90%) corresponding very closely with housing composition of 91 percent single-family homes. The Borough has the highest percentage of renters (41%), again corresponding to its wider range of housing types. The higher percentage of renters is typical of boroughs throughout the County because they have a wider range of housing options in terms of size, types, and rental availability than do most townships.

**Figure 2-16: Housing Tenure
Owner Or Renter Occupied - 1990**

	Percent of Occupied Units	
	Owner	Renter
East Marlborough	84%	16%
Kennett	78%	22%
Kennett Square	59%	41%
Pennsbury	84%	16%
Pocopson	90%	10%
Chester County	74%	26%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Housing Costs

In terms of both median housing value and median rent, most municipalities in the Region are significantly more expensive than the County (see Figure 2-17). In addition, these costs have risen at a faster rate. The value of homes in Pocopson increased at the greatest rate in the Region. All townships in the Region had a median home value of more than \$220,000 compared to a much lower County-wide median value of \$156,000.

With the exception of Kennett Township, rents increased at a slower rate than housing prices. Rents are generally tied more closely to market conditions and incomes than are housing prices. Regardless of

these factors, rents more than doubled in all municipalities except for Pocopson between 1980 and 1990. Rents in Kennett and Pennsbury are double the median rent of the County while rents in the remainder of the Region are very similar to that of the County. The exceptionally large rent increase in Kennett Township might be partially attributable to the presence of the Kendal and Crosslands retirement communities. The overall higher rents in the townships may be caused by the limited number of rentals available and the fact that many of these rentals are single-family homes which demand much higher rents.

Figure 2-17: Median⁷ Housing Value And Rent - 1980 & 1990

	Value		Rent		% Change 1980 to 1990	
	1980	1990	1980	1990	Value	Rent
East Marlborough	\$91,500	\$223,500	\$198	\$447	144%	126%
Kennett	\$93,200	\$236,400	\$269	\$1,000	154%	272%
Kennett Square	\$46,300	\$110,600	\$209	\$443	139%	112%
Pennsbury	\$89,600	\$252,700	\$500	\$1,000	182%	100%
Pocopson	\$77,200	\$223,100	\$296	\$519	189%	75%
Chester County	\$63,500	\$155,900	\$237	\$496	146%	109%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Housing Affordability

To assess the affordability of housing in the County, the Chester County Planning Commission prepares an affordability index based on the index developed by the National Association of Realtors. The index assesses the relationship between income and housing costs using median household income, median sales prices, average mortgage rates, tax millage, insurance costs, and closing costs. The monthly housing cost includes the mortgage payment, taxes, and insurance. The index assumes a 10 percent down payment and 28 percent (the industry standard) as the maximum amount of income that should be devoted to housing. An affordability index of 100 or higher is considered affordable to a household with the median adjusted household income for Chester County.

Figure 2-18: Housing Affordability – 1996

	Median Sale Price	Monthly Hsg. Cost	Closing Costs	Affordability Index ¹
East Marlborough	\$240,000	\$1,947	\$40,080	69.5
Kennett	\$215,000	\$1,776	\$35,905	76.2
Kennett Square	\$117,000	\$932	\$19,539	145.1
Pennsbury	\$258,500	\$2,066	\$43,170	65.5
Pocopson	\$242,500	\$1,999	\$40,498	67.7
Chester County	\$156,250	\$1,277	\$26,094	105.9

Source: Chester County Planning Commission;

¹An affordability index of 100 or greater is considered affordable to a household with the median household income for Chester County.

Figure 2-18 shows the affordability index numbers for the Region’s municipalities and for Chester County. As of 1996, housing in Chester County as a whole was affordable to a household with the

⁷ “Median” is the middle value when all values are put in decreasing order.

median County income. Over the past several years, housing has become more affordable in the County primarily due to low interest rates and a decrease in the rate of rapidly increasing housing costs experienced in the 1980's.

In terms of the Region, the four townships have housing prices considerably higher than what is considered affordable to the average Chester County household. Only Kennett Square is considered to be affordable. The availability of smaller homes, older housing stock, and smaller lots accounts for the lower median sales prices in the Borough. Prices and affordability in Kennett Square are in line with that of other Chester County boroughs. (Index values for boroughs in Chester County range from 117 in Elverson to 295 in Coatesville.)

On the other hand, the Region's townships are considerably less affordable than most townships in the County. By comparison, Valley Township, with a rating of 157 is considered the most affordable township in the County while Birmingham, with a rating of 56, is currently considered the least affordable township in Chester County. Reasons for the higher housing costs in the Region include the relatively larger lots required, newer (and larger) homes being built, and a willingness on the part of homebuyers to pay a premium for the quality of life available in the Region.

The lack of affordable housing has many planning implications, the most important being that professionals with moderate incomes including teachers, public safety personnel, and small business owners may not be able to secure suitable housing, forcing long commutes and traffic congestion, which takes a toll on the quality of life for everyone in the Region. Limited housing choices often force younger families out of the area which reduces residential continuity and community diversity. There are many barriers to the development of affordable housing and understanding these barriers can lead to solutions.

Barriers to Affordable Housing - The barriers to affordable housing are the circumstances existing in a municipality that limit the construction, financing, or purchase of affordable units. The barriers can vary by municipality or region with some types of barriers more or less evident depending on location and local politics. They tend to fall into one of three categories: social, financial and regulatory. Market conditions are another important consideration in the affordable housing. Each municipality should first recognize the barriers to affordable housing, their consequences, and then work toward eliminating those they can influence in their respective communities. Barriers in the Kennett Region are described as follows:

Social Barriers

Often based in local prejudice and misunderstanding, social barriers can be summed up in the "not in my backyard" or NIMBY syndrome. Opposition to affordable housing, particularly attached housing and multi-family units, can prevent the development of such housing, even if it is permitted by local ordinances. Social barriers are particularly evident in the opposition expressed by neighboring residents to affordable housing in public hearing processes. Such scenarios can illustrate how local officials, obligated to carry out municipal policy contained in the Comprehensive Plan, can find themselves in conflict with small, but vocal, groups of constituents. Even though the concerns associated with affordable housing such as declining property values, greater congestion, and higher than average demand for services are unfounded in most

circumstances, local officials often bow to such pressure and fail to recognize the long term benefit that affordable housing has for a municipality.

Because such opposition is common, developers often do not pursue affordable housing, even if there is a considerable market demand. The fear of local attitudes, and the costs associated with delays and possible denials, is enough to deter development even if there is a recognized need. This is true of developments permitted by right, but especially true of housing forms subject to conditional use or special exception permits, which represents a significant percentage of alternate housing forms in the Kennett Region.

Financial Barriers

Examples of financial barriers are the price of land, cost of financing, price of application and inspection fees, and similar costs associated with land use development and site plan approval. The price of land in Chester County is considered to be one of the most significant barriers to affordable housing development because land costs generally represent the greatest percentage of the overall cost of a subdivision. The already high land costs are exacerbated by the typically large minimum lot size requirements in the Kennett Region.

Although the price of land is obviously driven by market forces and out of the direct control of the municipalities, it is influenced in part by zoning. Ensuring that adequate unconstrained, developable land is available for all types of units can help prevent inflated land costs. Defining development standards, streamlining the review and approval process, and allowing a wider range of housing types to be permitted by-right can also serve to reduce development costs.

Regulatory Barriers

The land use regulations contained in municipal zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances, determines the type of construction that takes place. Depending on the way these regulations are designed, they sometimes serve to hinder the development of affordable housing. The zoning regulations that mandate large minimum lot sizes, large setbacks, wide streets and extensive site amenities in the residential district are known to increase the cost of development and ultimately the price of housing. Provisions that allow for flexibility in subdivision design and for higher net densities, shallower setbacks and reduced street widths, can substantially reduce costs, however, such alternatives are usually reserved for certain districts and only then as conditional uses. Eliminating the regulatory barriers to creative design can result in more innovative site plans that are less costly as well.

Market Conditions

In addition to the above barriers, the influence of market conditions must also be considered. The Municipalities Planning Code assumes a relationship between the size of a building lot and the cost of the house on that lot (i.e. a small lot has a small house which should equate to a lower cost). However, the Region is seeing circumstances contrary to this assumption. Builders are constructing either large house on small lots with much higher prices or expensive townhouses. This situation is shutting out the starter home and the lower income family. This phenomenon appears to be market driven and, short of state or federal legislation, there is little municipal government can do to address it.

Farm Worker Housing

Southern Chester County, including several municipalities in the Kennett Region, has a strong agricultural history in the production of mushrooms. This industry began in the County in the early 1900's shortly after the discovery of new production methods that were easily adapted to the region and complimented the agricultural uses already present in the area. As it evolved, mushroom production grew into a concentrated, labor-intensive agricultural activity that impacted the Region's land use, development patterns and natural systems. Mushroom facilities were built and expanded throughout the area. Support industries and facilities for the production, preparation and transportation of mushrooms developed concurrently. Compost, the medium in which mushrooms are grown, was easily accessible due to the extensive agricultural operations located throughout southeastern Pennsylvania. Supporting agricultural activity, of which the mushroom industry is a major component, is incorporated into several objectives contained in the Region's Policy Plan.

The availability of a large labor force is key to the mushroom industry's success. Mushroom farming is quite labor-intensive and not as mechanized as many other types of agricultural activities. The work is manual and the conditions are often unpleasant. The labor force for this industry, particularly the "pickers," have traditionally been solicited from immigrant populations that had few other employment alternatives. Over the past few decades, most mushroom farm workers have been Hispanic, originating first from Puerto Rico and more recently from Mexico. Although many of the farm workers are not permanent residents, spending only a specific number of months in this area, these circumstances are changing. Studies indicate that the percentage of farm worker families (including children) living in the region is increasing. The 1990 census reported the Hispanic population in the Kennett Region to be approximately 6 percent. Social service agencies that work with this population believe the percentage to be much higher because many farm workers were not enumerated during the census. The Multi-State Strategic Plan (1997) prepared for the Alliance for Better Housing indicates that the farm worker population is approximately 3,000 to 4,000, for an overall mushroom farm worker related population of 10,000 to 12,000.

These unique circumstances can obviously pose housing problems if the housing is not developed to accommodate this segment of the population and its unique requirements. Most mushroom farm workers have limited financial resources, no credit history, no transportation, and a low income, intensified by the fact that a percentage of earned income is often sent back to their homes in Mexico to support other family members. A survey conducted by the Alliance for Better Housing in 1996 indicated that the household income of mushroom farm workers ranged from \$5,000 to \$60,000 per year with the range most frequently cited as between \$25,000 and \$35,000. Consequently, traditional housing options do not always meet the needs of a large percentage of the mushroom farm worker population. Homeownership is not feasible for most, the availability of rental housing is limited, and only a certain percentage of workers can reside in on-farm housing. As a result, the housing that is available becomes overcrowded, generating maintenance problems, and sometimes creating tension between neighboring residents. This tension is often exacerbated by cultural differences.

Although the housing needs of most mushroom farm workers are not conventional, they can be addressed by providing for varied, affordable housing options designed for both individuals and for families. Since this target population supplies labor specifically for the mushroom industry, the industry itself must participate in addressing the housing shortage. Nearly 80 percent of mushroom growers report that they offer on-farm housing, however, the quantity and quality of the housing is questionable according to the Alliance for Better Housing Strategic Plan. Most is designed for single males and few on-farm opportunities are available for families. Leaders in the mushroom industry, in addition to improving on-farm housing, can supplement and support the housing development for families in several ways. First and foremost, growers should cooperate with municipalities, public agencies and non-profit entities in

identifying and developing housing for this population that is so critical to the economic viability of the Region. In addition, municipalities should cooperate in allowing for farmworker housing.

Social service organizations including the Alliance for Better Housing, and its parent organization La Comunidad Hispana, are committed to improving the lives of the farm workers, including addressing critical housing needs. These organizations, through the public/private partnerships they have formed, have been successful in increasing the housing stock through rehabilitation, conversion, and new construction. The Multi-Stage Strategic Plan (1997) currently identifies Toughkenamon to a significant extent, and Kennett Square for housing development because of their proximity to services and utilities, as well as to mushroom farms. Redevelopment is an especially important component of the strategic plan, and one which can address neighborhood concerns as well as provide quality housing. As long as the need continues to be identified, organizations will likely continue to work toward providing safe, sanitary housing for the mushroom farm worker population.

ECONOMIC PROFILE

Income Levels

Overall, the Region’s households have a substantially higher median income than that of the County which, in turn, has the highest median household income of any county in the State (see Figure 2-19).⁸ Consistent with the housing prices in the Region, the townships have a higher median income than the Borough. The more affordable housing stock available in the Borough would be expected to attract more households with moderate incomes, particularly considering the high cost of housing in the surrounding townships.

Figure 2-19: Median Income - 1990

	Household
East Marlborough	\$ 65,880
Kennett	\$ 58,853
Kennett Square	\$ 34,375
Pennsbury	\$ 77,054
Pocopson	\$ 67,364
Chester County	\$ 45,642

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Changes in poverty levels in the Region show an interesting trend (see Figure 2-20). In 1980, East Marlborough had the second highest poverty level at 6.5 percent, but by 1990 this number had dropped to the lowest in the Region. This change may be attributed to a decline of the mushroom industry in East Marlborough and a subsequent drop in farm worker housing located in the township.

⁸ Median household incomes (Table 2-18) and persons living below poverty level (Table 2-19) do not include residents living in group quarters, such as Pocopson Home and the prison.

Figure 2-20: Percent of Persons Below Poverty Level- 1980 & 1990

	1980	1990	Change
East Marlborough	6.5%	1.1%	-5.4%
Kennett	4.5%	3.8%	-0.7%
Kennett Square	7.1%	8.5%	1.4%
Pennsbury	1.6%	1.8%	0.2%
Pocopson	4.9%	2.0%	-2.9%
Chester County	6.4%	4.7%	-1.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

In comparison to the County, the Region generally has a lower percentage of residents living below the poverty level. With the exception of the Borough, poverty levels in the Region either fell or stayed the same. The availability of affordable housing (and lack of it outside the Borough) and easier access to needed services and facilities explains, at least in part, the higher poverty levels found in Kennett Square. Somewhat higher poverty levels and lower median incomes in urban areas in comparison to rural or suburban areas is typical in Chester County and in many other areas in the State. The Borough's poverty level of 8.5 percent compares as follows to other boroughs in the immediate area: Tagline (4.8), West Grove (5.9), Avondale (11.1), Oxford (11.9), West Chester (17.1). The highest poverty levels in the County are found in South Coatesville (25.5) and Modena (26.6).

Education

As seen in Figure 2-21, the Region as a whole has a high level of educational attainment. This is reflected in the higher incomes and more expensive homes generally found in the Region. In three of the five municipalities, nearly half or more of all residents have at least a Bachelor's degree. This compares to 34 percent for Chester County which already ranks among the highest in the State. Levels of education generally correspond to income levels and available housing options discussed in prior sections. The Borough has the lowest percentage of college graduates and the highest percentage of residents without a high school diploma. Pocopson also has a relatively high level of residents lacking a high school diploma. This is most likely because residents living in group quarters (i.e., the prison and nursing home) are factored into the Census data on educational attainment.

Figure 2-21: Highest Educational Attainment by Percent – 1990

	Less Than High School	High School	Some College or Assoc. Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate or Professional Degree
East Marlborough	9%	19%	22%	31%	20%
Kennett	12%	21%	18%	28%	20%
Kennett Square	29%	34%	16%	13%	7%
Pennsbury	5%	21%	18%	31%	26%
Pocopson	24%	24%	19%	19%	14%
Chester County	15%	29%	21%	22%	12%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Unemployment

The unemployment rates for the Region, Chester County, and Pennsylvania⁹ dropped in all three areas between 1980 and 1990. Chester County continues to enjoy one of the lowest unemployment rates in the State and, in 1990, the Region's unemployment rate was even lower than that of the County. Low unemployment rates are generally desirable. However, when employment rates become too low, the lack of available employees can become a deterrent for new businesses seeking to locate in the area and for existing businesses seeking to expand.

**Figure 2-22: Percent Unemployment
1980, 1990 & 1998**

	1980	1990	1998
Region	5.9%	2.1%	n/a
Chester County	4.6%	3.0%	2.7%
Pennsylvania	7.4%	6.0%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census (1980 & 1990), Pa. Dept. of Labor and Industry
(1998 - not directly comparable to 1980, 1990 data)

Employment Characteristics - Industry and Occupation

Employment characteristics provide an overview of the types businesses in which the Region's residents are employed and the type of work they do for that business. Changes in these characteristics show trends in the overall economy of an area and changes in the types of employment available.

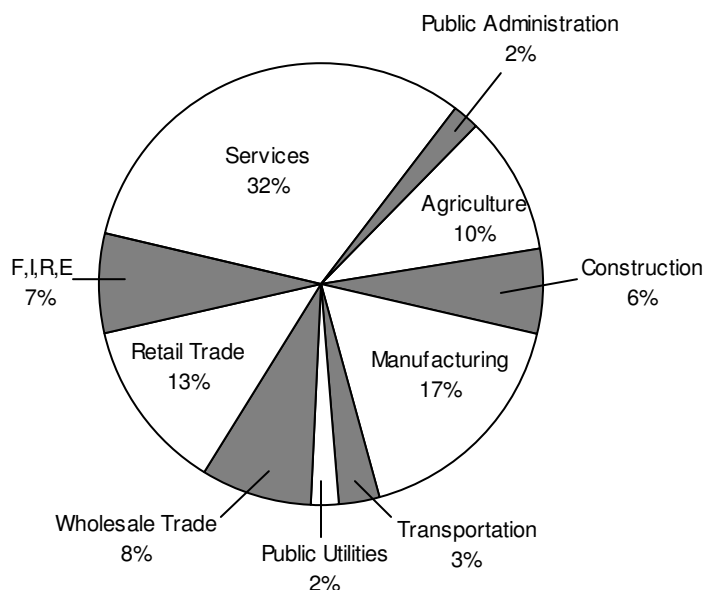
Employment by Industry - Industry is defined as the type of business conducted by the person's employing organization. In both the County and Region, the biggest decrease in type of industry was seen in manufacturing (see Figure 2-23). In terms of industry increases, there were not any dramatic changes. The category of "finance, insurance, and real estate" and wholesale trade had the largest increases in Region, growing from 4 to 7 percent and 4 to 8 percent, respectively. Similarly, there were not any large gains in any one industry County-wide.

**Figure 2-23: Employment Characteristics by Industry
Percent of Residents Working in Selected Industry (1980-1990)**

	Region			Chester County		
	1980	1990	Change	1980	1990	Change
Agriculture	10%	10%	0%	4%	4%	0%
Construction	4%	6%	2%	5%	6%	1%
Manufacturing	29%	17%	-12%	29%	20%	-9%
Transportation	2%	3%	1%	4%	3%	-1%
Public Utilities	1%	2%	1%	2%	3%	1%
Wholesale Trade	4%	8%	4%	5%	6%	1%
Retail Trade	12%	13%	1%	13%	14%	1%
F,I,R,E	4%	7%	3%	6%	9%	3%
Services	31%	32%	1%	30%	34%	4%
Public Admins.	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	0%

⁹ Note that the 1998 figures are not directly comparable to the 1980 and 1990 Census figures.

Kennett Region - 1990



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

F,I,R,E includes Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate

Services include business, personal, health, educational, and other services.

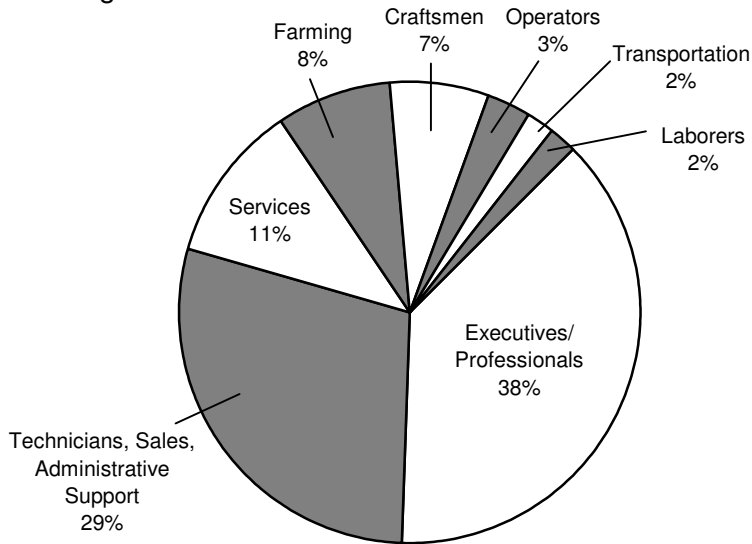
In 1990, the largest employment sector in both the County and the Region was in the area of “Services” which includes business, personal, health, education, and other services. This concentration in the services industry is typical of a population with the higher level educational attainment typical of this area. The Region also continues to have a higher percentage of persons employed in the agricultural sector, reflecting the concentration of the mushroom industry in the Kennett Region. Retail trade and manufacturing (despite its significant decrease) also continue to be significant employers in the Region and County.

Employment by Occupation - Occupation, shown in Figure 2-24, is the type of work a person does on the job, regardless of the industry in which they are employed. The County and Region both experienced their biggest decreases in the categories of craftsmen and operators, corresponding to the decrease in the manufacturing industry discussed above. Similarly, the biggest gains were seen in the categories of “Executives/Professionals” and “Technicians/Sales/Administrative Support.” These two categories, combined, represent nearly 70 percent of the occupations for both the County and Region. In comparison to the County, the Kennett Region has a higher percentage of farming related occupations. Again, this can be attributed to the presence of the mushroom industry and to the rural nature of much of the Region.

Figure 2-24: Employment Characteristics by Occupation
 Percent of Residents Working in Selected Occupations (1980 – 1990)

	Region			Chester County		
	1980	1990	Change	1980	1990	Change
Executives/ Professionals	34%	38%	4%	29%	35%	6%
Technicians, Sales, Admin. Support	25%	29%	4%	29%	33%	4%
Services	11%	11%	0%	11%	10%	-1%
Farming	8%	8%	0%	3%	3%	0%
Craftsmen	10%	7%	-3%	12%	9%	-3%
Operators	6%	3%	-3%	9%	5%	-4%
Transportation	3%	2%	-1%	4%	3%	-1%
Laborers	3%	2%	-1%	4%	3%	-1%

Kennett Region - 1990



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

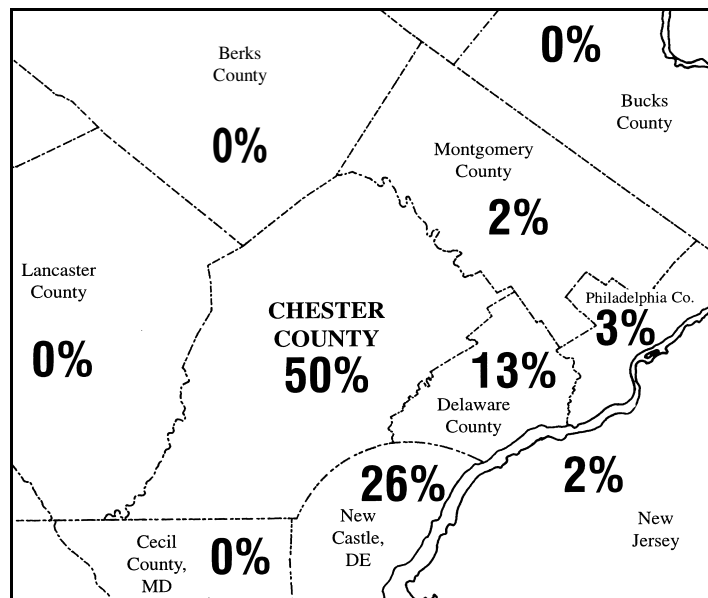
Decreases in manufacturing jobs and increases in service and administrative jobs are a national trend. One impact of the downturn in manufacturing is the reduction of good paying jobs available to residents without higher education levels. In addition, many of the service sector jobs that are available are lower paying in comparison to manufacturing jobs that have disappeared.

Commuter Patterns

Figure 2-25 shows where the Region's residents commute to work. While 50 percent of residents work within the County, a large percentage (26%) commute to New Castle County, Delaware. This commuting pattern is indicative of the Region's orientation to the south and the Wilmington and Newark area. By comparison, 61 percent of all County residents work within the County and only 8 percent commute to jobs outside of Pennsylvania.

Figure 2-25: Commuter Patterns, Place of Work - 1990
 Percent of Residents Commuting to Each Destination

Destination	Region	
	Number	Percent
Chester County	4,984	50%
Philadelphia County	324	3%
Delaware County	1,270	13%
Bucks County	28	0%
Montgomery County	245	2%
New Jersey	217	2%
New Castle Co., DE	2,641	26%
Cecil Co., MD	27	0%
Lancaster SMSA	10	0%
Elsewhere	265	3%
Total	10,011	100%



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The Region's commuting pattern has implications for transportation planning, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 11. This commuting pattern also indicates that the Region continues to serve to some extent as a bedroom community, with many residents working outside the immediate area.