

Media Borough Comprehensive Plan

Adopted June 18, 2026





MEDIA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2035

Shaping Everybody's Hometown Together

The Borough thanks the hundreds of residents, business owners, and stakeholders who contributed to their time and energy to the success of this plan. Without your support, this plan would not have been possible. Special thanks to the following people who dedicated countless hours to the success of the plan.

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David Fairman	Media Business Authority
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Harold Floyd	Planning Commission
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Plan prepared by FHI Studio now IMEG in partnership with Econsult Solutions Inc.

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Introduction & Vision



EVERYBODY'S HOME



MIDIA



Background

Media, Pennsylvania, often called “Everybody’s Hometown”, is a walkable and close-knit borough in Delaware County known for its historic character, vibrant downtown, and strong civic identity. Located just west of Philadelphia, Media combines small-town charm with regional accessibility and serves as the county seat, anchoring government, culture, and community life. As the County Seat and a regional destination, the Borough integrates a vibrant downtown, diverse housing stock, and government services, creating an environment where residents can live, work, and play without heavy reliance on private automobiles. This Comprehensive Plan builds on Media’s established strengths while guiding thoughtful growth, land use, and public investment to ensure the borough remains inclusive, resilient, and livable for current and future generations.

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan is a long-range policy document that expresses a community's shared values, aspirations, and priorities for the future. It serves as the Borough's primary guide for managing growth and change over a 10- to 20-year planning horizon and is the broadest public policy document a municipality can create to shape its physical development.

The Comprehensive Plan is built on three interconnected components.

1. **Background Studies.** These involve data collection and analysis of current conditions, including topics like demographics, land use, housing, transportation, and community facilities.
2. **Community Development Goals and Objectives.** Based on the background studies, this section outlines the municipality's vision and priorities for future development and addresses identified constraints, problems, opportunities, and needs.
3. **Plans for Future Actions.** This includes specific strategies and alternative actions related to various components such as future land use, housing, transportation, and community facilities.

Although a Comprehensive Plan is not a regulatory document, it plays a critical role in municipal governance. It serves as a strategic guide to manage change, balances the perspectives of residents, businesses, and other stakeholders, and provides the foundation for zoning ordinances, land development regulations, capital improvement programming, and municipal budgeting decisions. The Plan also communicates the community's values and priorities clearly to decision-makers, partners, and funding agencies alike. Together, these elements ensure that day-to-day decisions and long-term investments are guided by a consistent, community-driven framework rather than made in isolation.

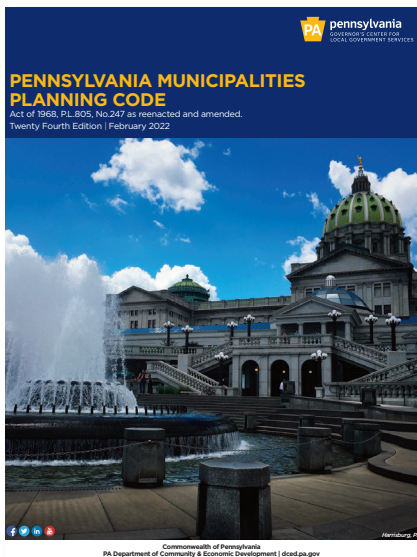


Why Does Media Need a Comprehensive Plan?

Media Borough is a built-out community with a strong identity, a walkable historic downtown, and a high quality of life. Maintaining these strengths while responding to changing needs such as housing affordability, infrastructure investment, environmental resilience, and mobility requires coordinated, long-term planning.

For Media, the Comprehensive Plan provides a shared framework to guide growth and investment while reinforcing the Borough's identity as "Everybody's Hometown." It aligns land use decisions, zoning updates, and public investments with community priorities to balance preservation and change.

An up-to-date Comprehensive Plan also positions the Borough to pursue state, regional and federal funding opportunities by demonstrating clear goals and implementation readiness. In accordance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, municipalities are required to periodically review and adopt a Comprehensive Plan to guide future development and policy decisions.



FOCUS ON

Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code

This Comprehensive Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), which establishes the legal framework for municipal planning in the Commonwealth. The MPC requires municipalities to periodically review and adopt a comprehensive plan to guide future growth, land use, housing, transportation, community facilities, and public investment.

While the MPC provides the statutory structure, the content of the Comprehensive Plan is locally driven. Media's Comprehensive Plan reflects the Borough's unique context as a built-out, walkable community and is shaped by local conditions, prior planning efforts, and extensive community and stakeholder input. The Plan serves as a policy foundation for future zoning and ordinance updates, capital planning, and grant applications, helping ensure that municipal decisions remain aligned with community priorities. [The Code is available here.](#)

How to Use This Plan

This Comprehensive Plan is intended to serve as Media Borough's primary guide for decision-making over the next decade. Borough Council, staff, boards and commissions, partner organizations, and residents should consult the Plan when evaluating development proposals, prioritizing public investments, updating ordinances, and advancing programs and partnerships.

The Plan is organized into four primary sections. **Chapter I, Introduction and Vision**, establishes the purpose of the Plan, articulates the community's long-term vision, and outlines the guiding principles that inform all subsequent recommendations. These principles are broad and enduring, providing a consistent lens for decision-making across land use, housing, mobility, environmental stewardship, and community investment. Together, the vision and guiding principles create a foundation for thoughtful growth, preservation of community character, and a high quality of life for current and future generations. **Chapter II, Context and Background**, describes Media's planning context, summarizes key takeaways from previous studies and plans, and documents the community and stakeholder engagement process that shaped the Plan's direction.

Chapter III, Plan Elements, forms the core of the Comprehensive Plan and translates the vision into topic-specific policy direction. Each plan element addresses a major area of community life and municipal responsibility, including:

1. Land Use and Community Design
2. Environment and Open Space
3. Transportation
4. Economic Development
5. Housing
6. Community Facilities and Utilities

Each plan element follows a consistent framework. Chapters begin with Existing Conditions and Trends to establish baseline realities, followed by a brief synthesis of Previous Plans and Community Input to ensure continuity and reflect resident priorities. Each element concludes with Goals and Recommendations that provide actionable direction aligned with the Borough's long-term vision.

Chapter IV, Implementation, outlines how the Plan is intended to be carried forward, including strategies for integration into Borough operations, opportunities for partnerships, and an implementation matrix to support coordination, accountability, and phasing. **Chapter V, Appendices and Supporting Documents** includes technical analyses and background materials that support the Plan.

The Plan is designed to be read as a cohesive whole or used by topic area, as needed. Goals and recommendations across chapters are intentionally interconnected, recognizing that decisions related to land use, mobility, housing, economic vitality, and environmental stewardship are interdependent. Together, these elements provide a clear and integrated framework for guiding Media's decisions and investments over time.

Plan Process

Previous Plan Review

Reviewing previous plans, assessing alignment with Borough's evolving needs, and identifying status of proposed projects.

Community Survey

Preparing an online survey to assess the community's issues, desires and recommendations for inclusion in the Plan.

Stakeholder Engagement

Engaging with the public and local stakeholders through workshops and focus group discussions, ensuring their input shapes the Plan's goals, strategies, and actions.

Conditions and Trends

Establishing a clear baseline of today's conditions and local or regional trends to show how Media may change over the next 10 years.

Preliminary Goals and Recommendations

Defining goals and objectives, aligned with the vision and grounded in community input and analysis to deliver actionable recommendations that guide sustainable growth strategies, and actions.

Open House

Working with the community to inform, educate, foster dialogue, and gather feedback.

Public Review and Comment

Conducting a public presentation of the draft Plan and introducing the Plan and its recommendations to the community.

Plan Drafting

Releasing the Plan for public comment and revising based on feedback with Steering Committee input.

Plan Adoption

Moving the final Plan through the formal adoption process, summarizing all relevant findings from the planning process.



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W. BAKER ST.

ONE WAY

WELLS FARGO



Vision Statement & Guiding Principles

In 2035, Media Borough continues to thrive as “Everybody’s Hometown.” It is an inclusive and equitable community with a diverse range of housing choices and prices where residents from all backgrounds and at all life stages can find a home. Media Borough is a vibrant community, defined by its walkable, historic downtown, thriving local businesses, and active public spaces that foster connection and a high quality of life. It is a sustainable community that cherishes and protects its open spaces and natural environment while actively pursuing a resilient future. Media Borough honors its unique heritage by preserving its historic character while thoughtfully embracing a future that ensures a prosperous and welcoming environment for generations to come.

Guiding Principles

Preserve and Enhance Media's Unique Character

Media Borough will protect the historic architecture and vibrant downtown that define its identity. The Borough will support its local businesses, encourage human-scaled development that complements its neighborhoods, and activate its public spaces to foster a strong sense of community and connection.



Foster an Inclusive and Welcoming Hometown

Media Borough will actively work to be a place where people from all backgrounds and life stages can find a home. This means championing a diverse range of housing options to address affordability, ensuring longtime residents can age in place, and providing services that support all members of the community.



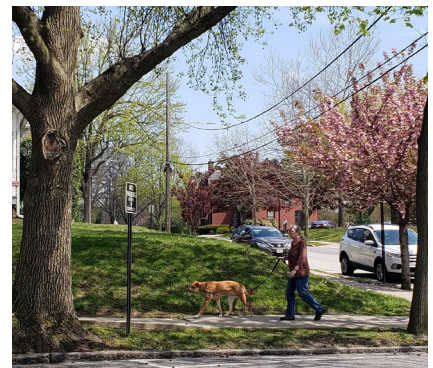
Champion a Sustainable and Resilient Environment

Media Borough will be a dedicated steward of its natural resources. This includes prioritizing the preservation of its cherished open spaces and tree canopy, investing in green infrastructure to manage stormwater and mitigate flooding, and promoting sustainable practices to ensure Media is resilient for future generations.



People-Focused Mobility

Media Borough will create a safer, more connected, and less car-dependent community. The Borough will prioritize the needs of pedestrians and cyclists by expanding and improving its network of sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike lanes and implement traffic calming measures to make its residential streets safer for everyone.



Move to Media - you do not need a car!
This should be the town motto. Lets be the
community of choice for the car-less.

Climate change has affected rain patterns.
We routinely have deluges now, and
flooding. Management needs to address the
impacts of this new normal for safety and to
protect homes and businesses.

The type of housing available in the
Borough impacts who can afford to live
here. We all benefit by having different
types of housing so we have a more diverse
community.

Extreme storms are becoming an increasing
norm. The time to act is now to prevent
major issues in the borough as a result of
climate change.

Our businesses and restaurants are one
of the major things that bring people into
town. We need to support them to keep
Media vibrant.

Providing a range of housing types at price
points that serve different wealth classes will
create a richer fabric in the community,
with service workers able to enjoy the
city that their labor has made into an
economically strong consumer destination.

Keeping with the historic architecture and
hometown feeling of Media, draws people to
move here. Stop the tear down of homes that
make media homely.

Media has an iconic charm due to the
unique architecture. I believe it is important
to preserve the aesthetic of the town to
attract business, and to encourage people to
live and work in the town.

So many people work in Media but cannot
afford to all live in Media. It's nice to live
where you work.

Having more community spaces (indoor
and outdoor) for people to gather, for free,
for meetings, projects, or just hanging out is
so important.





Planning Context

This section highlights the Borough's evolving demographics, market trends, and environmental pressures. Understanding this data ensures that every recommendation is grounded in reality. This planning context honors Media's heritage while providing the data-driven clarity needed to navigate the challenges of a growing, modern community. By weaving together past planning successes with current data, the plan establishes a clear and objective starting point for future growth.

Trends and Conditions

The following summarizes key existing conditions and trends. These findings serve as a foundation for the recommendations in the following sections.

Media is growing, but experiencing high population turnover. Media's population has grown modestly in recent decades, reflecting its continued attractiveness. At the same time, higher levels of residential turnover compared to the County indicate a community experiencing ongoing demographic change, with implications for housing stability, neighborhood cohesion, and long-term affordability.

Figure 1. Change in Number of Media Residents

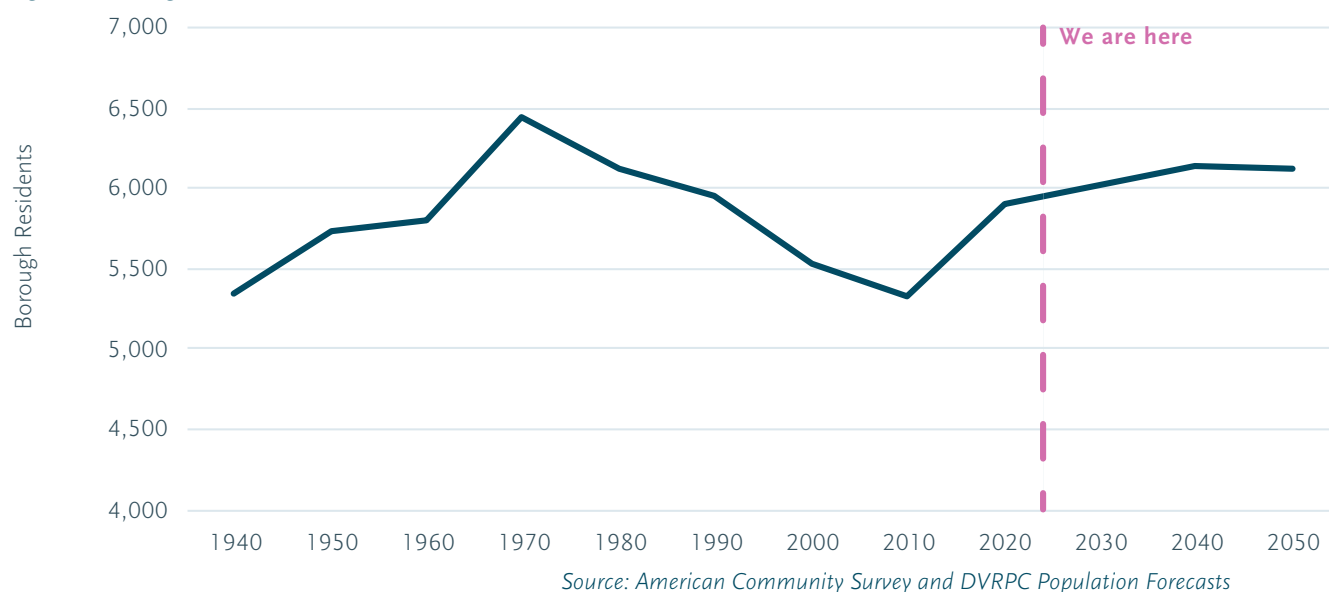
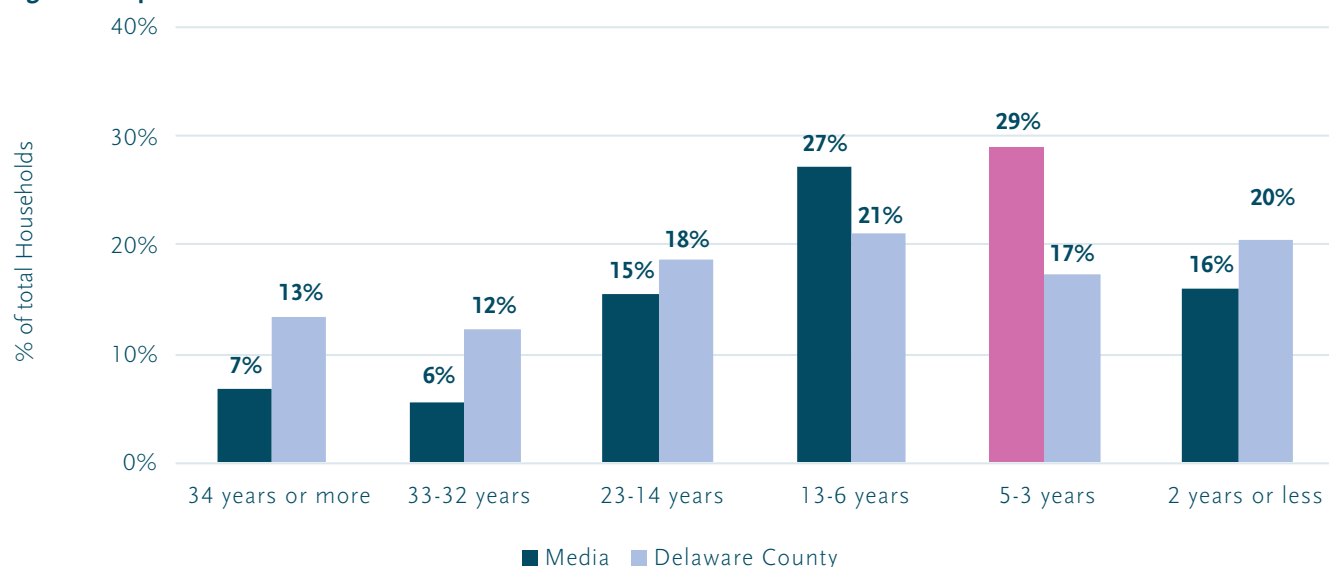


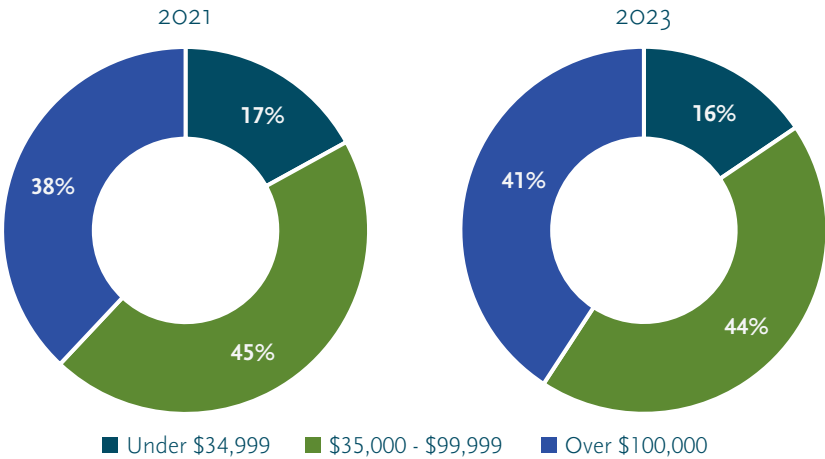
Figure 2. Population turnover in Media



Media’s household incomes are rising, yet the Borough remains largely middle-income.

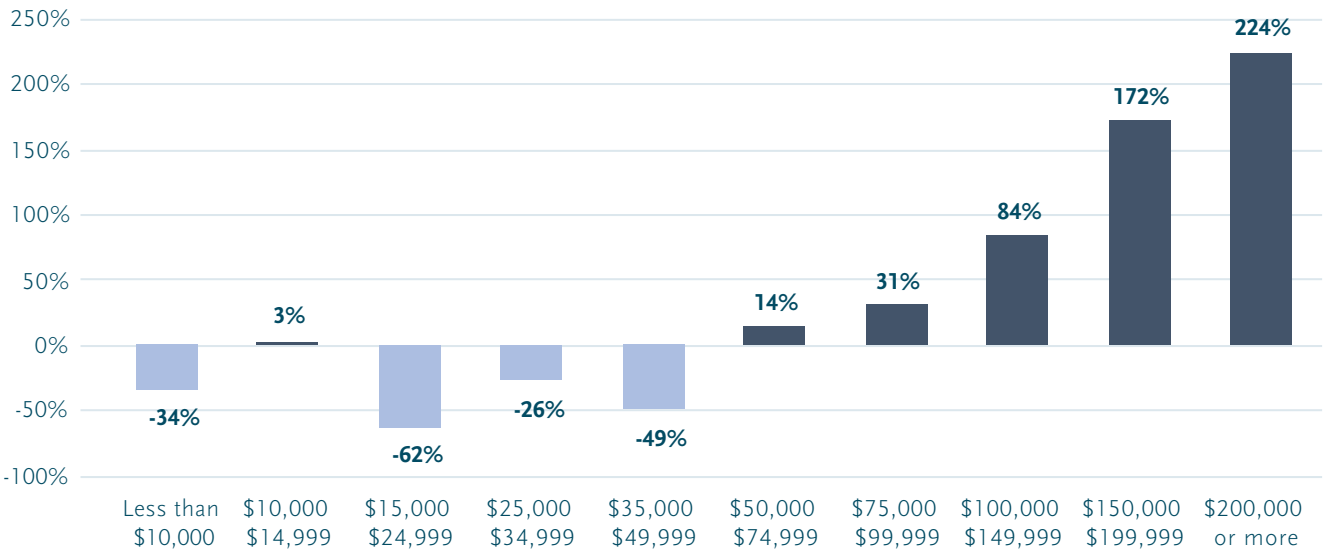
Media has seen a steady shift toward renter-occupied housing over the past decade. This change reflects evolving housing demand but also raises important questions about housing stability, affordability, and access to ownership opportunities.

Figure 3. Change in Media Residents Income



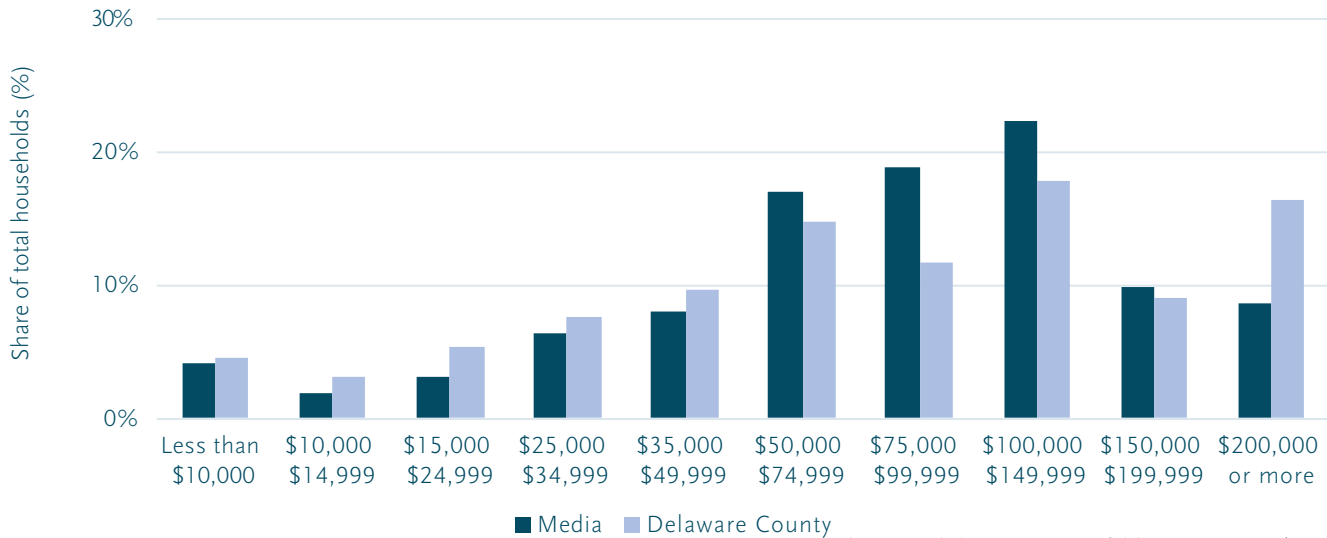
Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 2023 5-year estimates

Figure 4. Percent Change of Total Households in Income Group (2011-2023)



Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 2023 5-year estimates

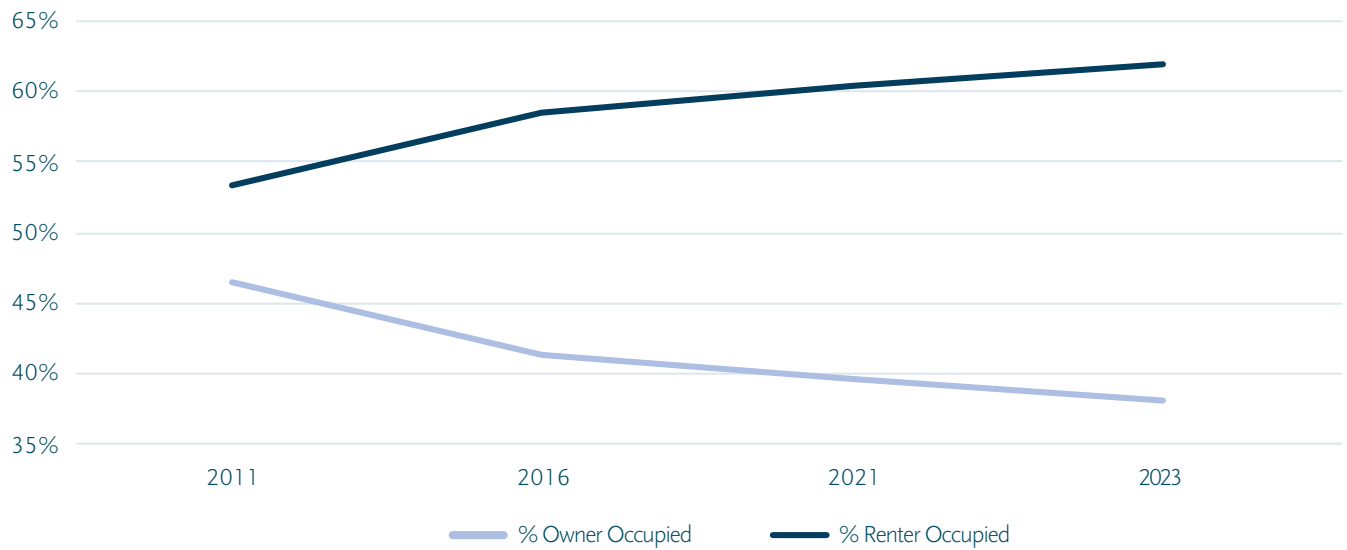
Figure 5. Share of Household Income Group



Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 2023 5-year estimates

Housing patterns are shifting towards renters. As the renter population grows, it affects housing affordability, stability, and neighborhood character. Recognizing this trend will help guide future housing policy and zoning decisions to support a balanced and inclusive housing market in Media.

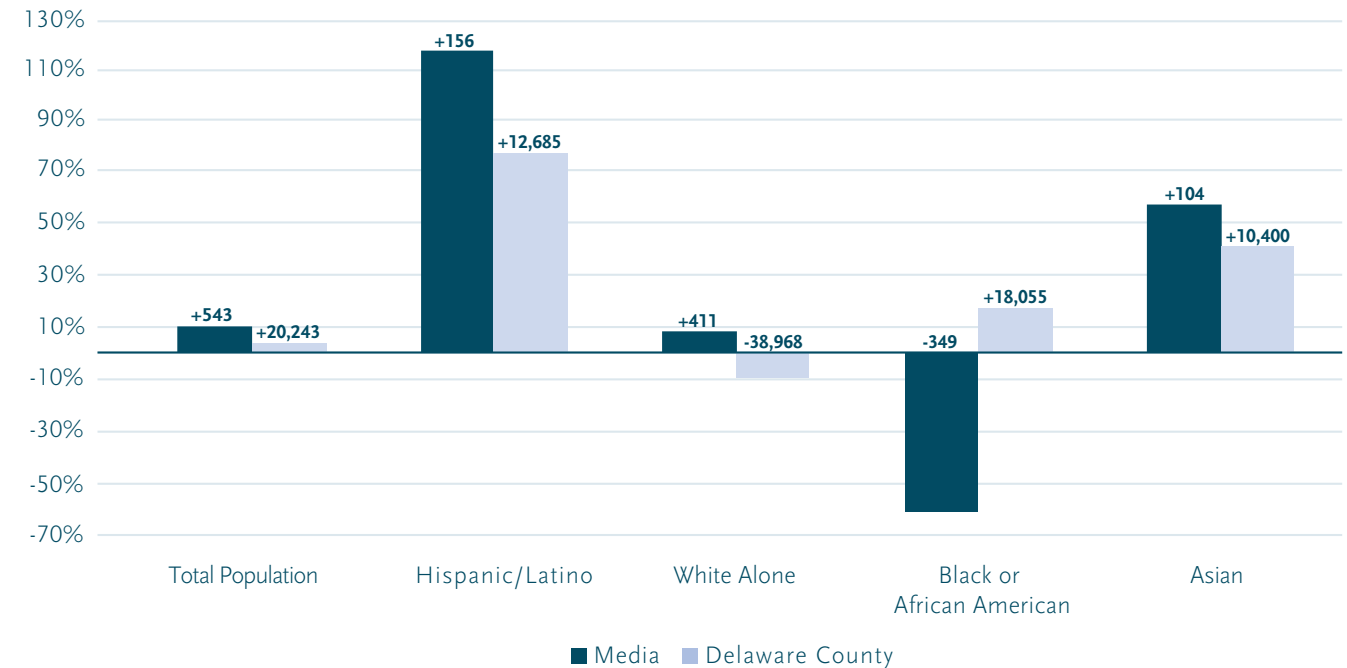
Figure 6. Change in Owner and Renter Occupied Housing in Media (2011-2023)



Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 2023 5-year estimates

Media’s demographic change has been uneven. While Media’s overall population has grown, demographic shifts reveal uneven outcomes across racial and ethnic groups. The Borough has seen small absolute, but large relative, increase in its Asian and Hispanic populations over the past few years. Over the same time, the Borough has experienced a decline in its Black population. These demographic changes underscore the dynamic conditions in the Borough.

Figure 7. Change in Racial Groups (2010 - 2020)



Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2010), ACS 2024 5-year estimates

Previous Plans

Media Borough has a strong history of planning at the local, county, regional, and state levels. In preparing this Comprehensive Plan, the Borough reviewed prior studies and plans from the Borough, Delaware County, SEPTA, DVRPC, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Together, these documents provide a technical foundation for understanding existing conditions, confirming long-standing challenges, and refining priorities to support coordinated, implementation-focused planning in a built-out community.

Consistent demographic and housing pressures

Recent Borough studies, particularly the *Affordable Housing Study (2023/2024)* and the *Open Space, Parks, Recreation, & Bicycle Routes Plan (2021)*, document changing household characteristics, rising housing costs, limited housing diversity, and growing pressure on affordability. These trends affect not only housing policy, but also park usage, transportation demand, and community services.

Limited open space and the importance of local environmental stewardship

The *Open Space Plan (2021)* identified that only a small share of Media's land remains as unprotected open space, underscoring the urgency of preservation and strategic acquisition. Technical infrastructure plans including the *Comprehensive Stormwater Plan (2016)*, *Stormwater Master Plan (2017)*, and *MS4 Pollution Reduction Plan (2017)* document aging systems, high impervious coverage, and known flooding challenges. Together, these plans emphasize the need to treat parks, streets, and redevelopment areas as functional green infrastructure. Regional plans, including the *Delaware County Natural Heritage Inventory (2011)* and watershed planning efforts, reinforce that Media's environmental impact will be driven by intensive local interventions rather than large-scale conservation.

A strong foundation for parks and recreation, with evolving needs

The *Open Space, Parks, Recreation, & Bicycle Routes Plan (2021)* provides detailed, park-specific recommendations and identifies service gaps particularly for teens and older residents. This Comprehensive Plan carries forward those priorities while strengthening connections to sustainability, stormwater management, and equity goals.

Transportation planning without an integrated framework

Media has undertaken numerous mobility-related studies, including the *Media Bicycle Plan (2016)*, *Traffic Calming Plan (2020)*, parking studies, and sidewalk improvement planning. Regional efforts such as the *Delaware County Vision Zero Safety Action Plan (2025)*, *DVRPC Regional Trails Program (2024)*, and *SEPTA's Trolley Modernization, Regional Rail, and Bus Revolution* plans provide additional direction. Collectively, these plans point to the need for a unified multimodal framework that connects safety, access, economic vitality, and environmental goals.

Progress in land use and zoning, with key decisions ahead

The *Media Borough Comprehensive Plan (2015)* established important long-term land use goals, including a transition toward form-based zoning. Since then, the Borough has adopted *Hybrid Form-Based Code Standards (2023)* for residential areas and *HARB Design Guidelines (2014)*, significantly advancing those goals. Outstanding questions remain, particularly related to downtown zoning and mixed-use areas, highlighting the need to evaluate how existing regulations align with housing, economic development, and community character objectives.

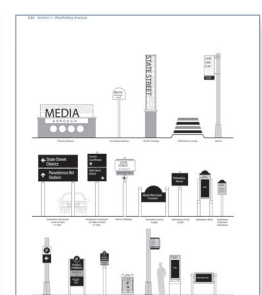
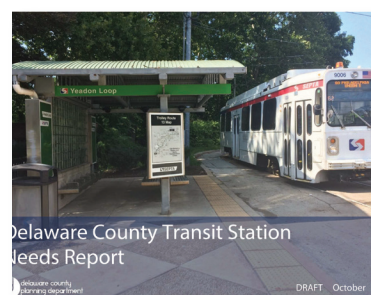
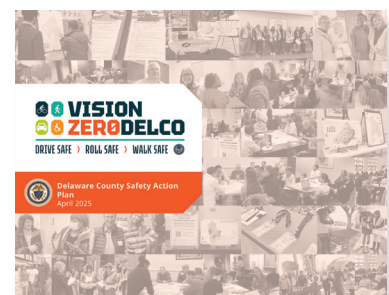
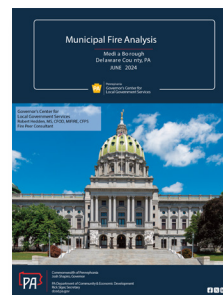
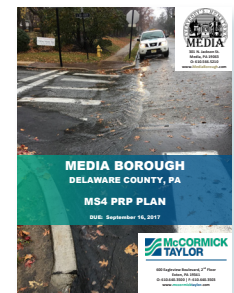
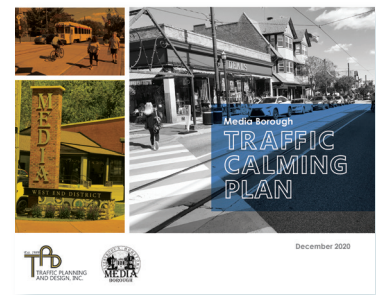
Economic development focused on downtown vitality

The *Economic Development Strategy and Implementation Plan (2017)* emphasized strengthening Media's downtown, diversifying businesses, improving public spaces, and managing growth in a constrained environment. These local priorities align with the Commonwealth's *Ten-Year Strategic Plan for Economic Development (2024–2033)*, which emphasizes downtown reinvestment, infrastructure modernization, housing supply, and support for small businesses.

Implementation capacity grounded in capital planning

The Borough's *Capital Improvement Plan (2025–2029)* provides a clear framework for prioritizing investments based on asset condition, public safety, funding availability, and long-term planning goals. This Comprehensive Plan is designed to strengthen the connection between policy direction and capital decision-making.

Taken together, prior plans consistently highlight that Media's future will be shaped by how well it manages reinvestment, infrastructure, and change within its existing footprint. This Comprehensive Plan builds on that foundation updating data, integrating cross-cutting priorities, and providing coordinated guidance to advance Media Borough's vision through 2035.



Covers from previous planning activities

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SEPTA Trolley Modernization



As part of the Trolley Modernization project, we are asking you to share your ideas for improvements do you support along State Street.
(Place dots in the boxes that best reflect your view)

Curb Bump Outs



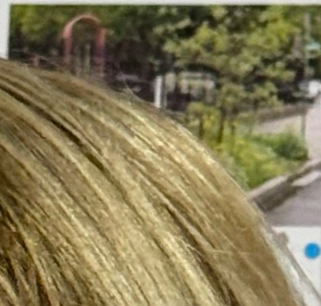
Streeteries & Parklets



Raised Intersections



Green Infrastructure



Bicycle Parking



Wayfinding



- Upgrading of trolley system to be more accessible, faster, and more user-friendly
- Replacement of fleet with modern, high-capacity ADA-compliant vehicles
- Construction of new stations with shelters, real-time arrival information, and level boarding platforms
- Conversion of existing double track on Center City

The Trolley Modernization project is a unique opportunity to design improvements that make the area safer and more accessible.

The Future of Transportation

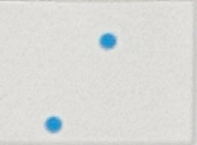
There are many ways in which we can improve our transportation system. We are looking for your input on how we can make our system more efficient and safer.

Find the Borough of Philadelphia QR code to learn more about the project.

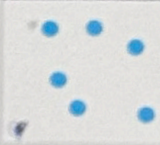
Dedicated bike lane on State St

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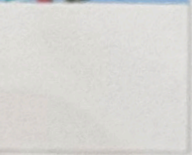
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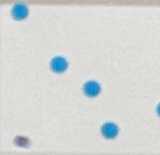
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finding



Benches



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Community Engagement

The recommendations within Media2035 are driven by the voices, values, and vision of those who live and work in the Borough. Community engagement served as the vital pulse of this process, transforming technical analysis into a shared public mandate. By centering the aspirations of neighbors and stakeholders, the plan ensures that every strategy authentically represents the vision of the Borough's residents, business owners, and stakeholders. This section highlights the collaborative journey that defines the future of "Everybody's Hometown," making the community's collective insight the ultimate authority for the roadmap ahead.

A Community-Driven Plan

The Media2035 Comprehensive Plan was shaped through an inclusive engagement process to reflect the priorities of people who live, work, own businesses, and spend time in Media Borough. From kickoff through plan refinement, community input directly informed the Plan's vision, guiding principles, and key focus areas.

Engagement combined in-person and online opportunities to make participation accessible, transparent, and meaningful. Input gathered throughout the process helped confirm long-standing challenges and refine priorities for a built-out borough managing reinvestment and change. The Borough and Project Team guided this work using the following engagement principles:

Accessible and Multi-Faceted

Engagement opportunities were offered through multiple formats, including online surveys, pop-up events, stakeholder meetings, a public workshop, and a formal public open house. This approach allowed participants to engage at varying levels of depth and at different stages of the planning process.

Inclusive and Community-Oriented

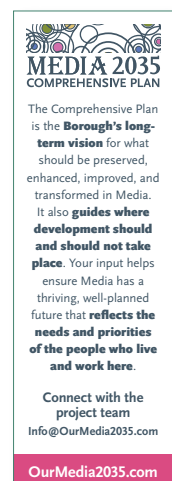
Outreach efforts were designed to reach residents, business owners, employees, and community stakeholders across neighborhoods, age groups, and tenure in the Borough. Particular attention was given to ensuring that both long-time residents and newer community members could participate.

Responsive and Transparent

Community input was collected throughout the process and used to test assumptions, validate emerging themes, and refine plan direction. Engagement materials, survey summaries, and background research were made publicly available through the project website to ensure clarity and transparency.

Meaningful and Iterative

Participants were invited to provide input at multiple milestones, from identifying priorities and “big ideas” to reacting to draft goals, strategies, and implementation concepts. This iterative process helped ensure that the Plan reflects community feedback rather than a single point-in-time response.



Above: Project staff hand out bookmarks to promote public participation | Below: bookmarks

Process

Between April and September 2025, the Borough implemented a comprehensive engagement program that included the following components:

Plan Promotion and Outreach

The Borough promoted engagement opportunities through a combination of digital and in-person outreach, including:

1. Borough email distributions and social media posts
2. Announcements at board and commission meetings
3. Fliers posted at Borough Hall
4. Bookmarks and fliers distributed by Steering Committee members and Plan Ambassadors
5. In-person outreach at community events, including the Media Egg Hunt

The project website, **OurMedia2035.com**, served as a central hub for information, allowing community members to learn about the process, RSVP for events, review background materials, and sign up for updates. Materials posted to the website included survey summaries, stakeholder meeting findings, trend analyses, and prior planning documents.

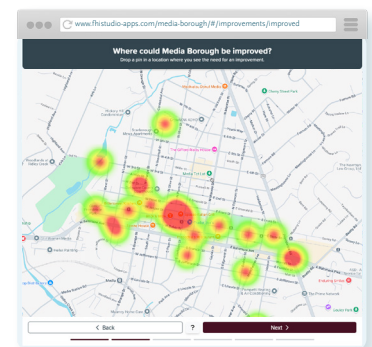


Surveys

Two online surveys were conducted between April and June 2025. Together, these surveys generated over 1,600 comments, including feedback on priorities, desired improvements, and long-term ideas. The surveys captured both quantitative input and open-ended responses, providing insight into how participants experience Media today and what they value most about its future. Survey respondents primarily live in Media, with additional participation from individuals who work in the Borough, own businesses, or visit regularly.

Media2035 Community Survey

429 responses



Survey About Media Businesses

135 responses

A screenshot of the 'Survey About Media Businesses' form. The title is 'What factors influenced your decision to establish your business in Media?'. Below the title, there is a list of factors with checkboxes: 'affordable rent or property costs', 'Proximity to Philadelphia', 'Good customer base', 'Local municipality support and incentives', 'Availability of workforce or employees', 'Family or personal ties to the area', and 'Other (please specify)'. Each factor has a corresponding radio button. At the bottom of the form, there are 'NEXT' and 'SKIP' buttons.

Left: Screen capture of OurMedia2035.com | Above: Screen captures of the Media 2035 Community Survey and Survey About Media Businesses

Pop-Up Events and Stakeholder Meetings

Two pop-up engagement events provided informal opportunities for residents and visitors to learn about the Plan, ask questions, and share feedback in familiar community settings. These events complemented five stakeholder meetings with community leaders, organizations, and partners, which helped surface sector-specific perspectives and implementation considerations.

Stakeholder conversations focused on identifying challenges, opportunities, and coordination needs related to housing, transportation, economic vitality, sustainability, and community facilities.

Public Workshop and Open House

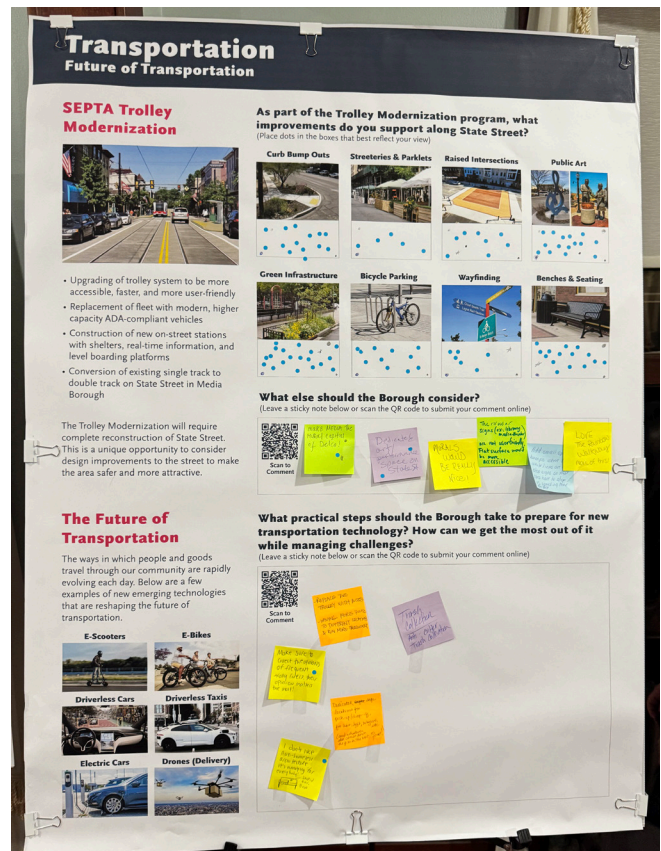
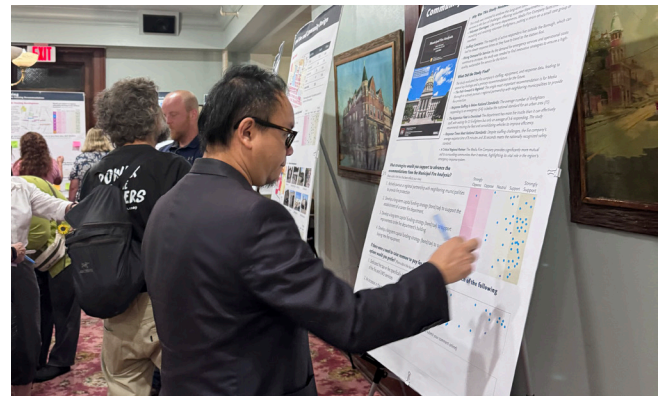
In September 2025, the Borough hosted an in-person Public Open House at Borough Hall to share draft plan concepts and gather detailed, place-based feedback. The Open House featured 17 engagement boards, including introductory materials and six topical focus areas:

1. Environment and Open Space
2. Transportation
3. Economic Development
4. Housing
5. Land Use and Community Design
6. Community Facilities and Utilities

Participants provided feedback through dot exercises, written comments, and QR-code surveys, allowing both immediate and follow-up responses.

Open House Participation Snapshot

1. 54 public participants
2. 16 Steering Committee members
3. 4 consultant team members



Community engagement during the Public Workshop

I would like to see more "Normal" instead of "LUXURY" apartments. I don't need an on-site gym. I just need a toilet & kitchen & room for a bed.

Promote Open + Participatory Governance - More Town Halls Ranked Choice Vote

WE NEED MORE LARGE SCALE DEVELOPMENT APARTMENT BUILDINGS W/ PARKING TO BRING MORE TRAFFIC TO THE LOCAL BUSINESSES

↑
ENCOURAGE ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS!! 😊

Stop Sign or Pedestrian Right of Way Sign at Veterans Square + State St.

So many people work in media but cannot at ALL live in MEDIA. It's nice to live where you work. 😊

Rent is too freaking expensive for small businesses esp. those in the creative space

More protection for structures that are historically &/or architecturally significant
Totally Agree

Stop Signs at Front + West to keep cars from racing up West St

It would be nice to see more groups for LGBT teens to engage + have fun!

We need senior-friendly housing!

make MEDIA the MURAL capital of Delco! 🎨

Comments collected during the Public Workshop

Findings

Community engagement revealed a strong consensus around Media's core values, emerging pressures, and priorities for the future. The following summarizes key takeaways from the engagement:

Media's "small-town feel" is the community's most valued asset, and residents want it protected. Participants repeatedly cited historic architecture, walkability, State Street's independent businesses, and a strong sense of community as the primary reasons people choose to live, work, and spend time in the Borough. There was a clear expectation that future decisions should reinforce these defining characteristics.

Housing affordability and choice emerged as the most pressing community concern. Residents and business stakeholders expressed growing concern that rising housing costs are pricing out long-time residents, families, seniors, and workers. While participants supported expanding housing options, they emphasized that new development should be context-sensitive, aligned with neighborhood scale, and paired with clear standards that protect community character.

Open space, parks, and environmental stewardship are core community values in a town with limited remaining land. Participants consistently ranked open space protection among their highest priorities, noting its importance to quality of life, community connection, and environmental health. There was broad support for continued investment in parks, tree canopy, and green infrastructure, alongside growing concern about stormwater management, flooding, and climate resilience in a fully built-out community.

Downtown is viewed as Media's defining economic and social heart, and people want it to evolve thoughtfully. Residents and visitors expressed strong satisfaction with Media's downtown experience, particularly its walkability, dining options, and independent businesses. At the same time, participants identified opportunities to strengthen downtown vitality through improved public spaces, outdoor seating, events, better wayfinding, and a broader mix of retail and services while maintaining State Street's unique character.

People-focused mobility and parking management are shared priorities.

Community members strongly supported investments to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and strengthen everyday walkability. Parking availability, cost, and wayfinding also emerged as recurring challenges affecting not only visitors and businesses, but redevelopment feasibility, employee access, community programming, and emergency response.

Land use and zoning feedback reflected support for change with clear guardrails and stronger implementation clarity. Participants generally supported updating zoning and design standards to guide future growth, particularly in mixed-use and employment areas, and expressed interest in adaptive reuse and context-sensitive infill that supports both housing and economic vitality. Stakeholders also noted early implementation questions related to the Hybrid Form-Based Code and historic review processes highlighting the need for clearer procedures, consistent application, and coordination.

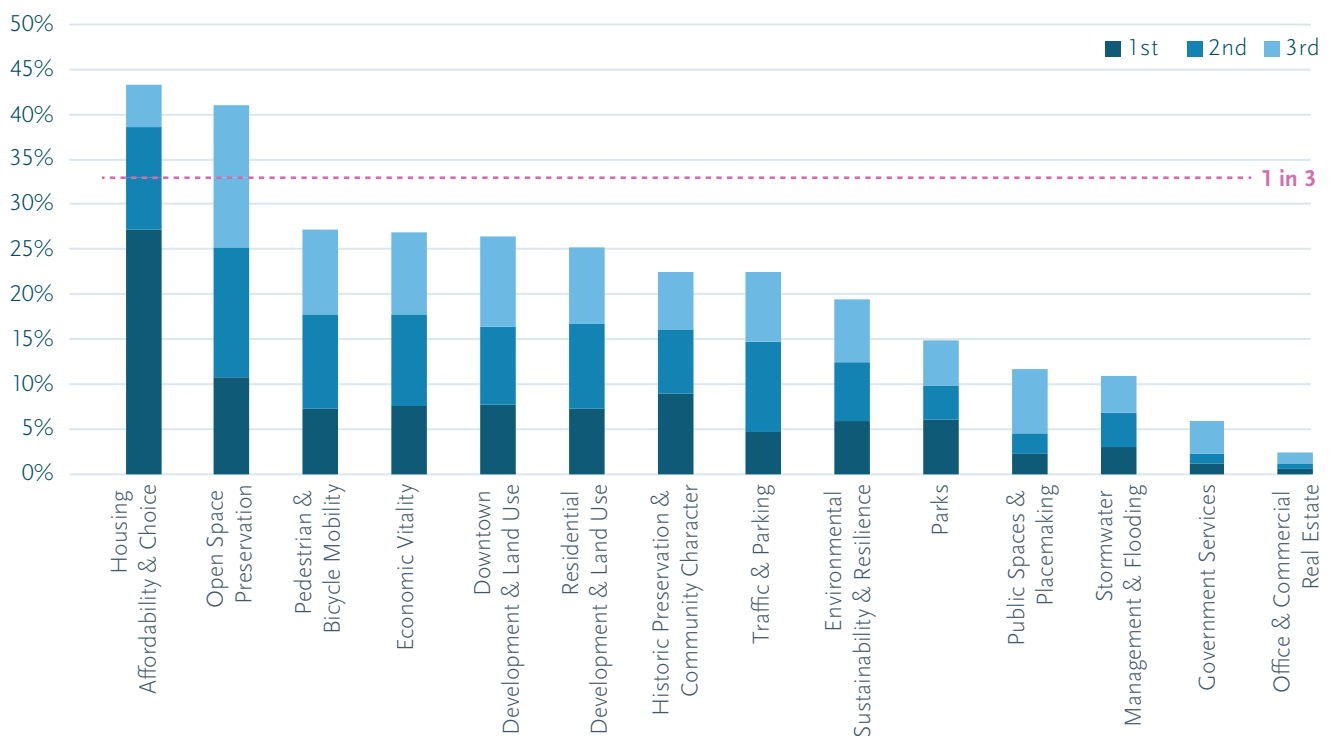
Media's small size heightens the need for coordinated decision-making. Stakeholders emphasized that in a borough under one square mile, decisions related to density, parking, stormwater, utilities, and public services are closely interconnected. Engagement feedback reinforced the importance of using a shared, values-based framework to manage tradeoffs, align investments, and ensure that growth does not outpace infrastructure capacity.

Downtown operations and maintenance shape economic vitality and experience. Stakeholders emphasized that cleanliness, sidewalk conditions, lighting, and consistent code enforcement directly influence how residents and visitors experience downtown Media and affect the success of local businesses.

Public facilities and emergency services were viewed as essential to long-term livability and implementation. Strong support was expressed for maintaining and strengthening community facilities, particularly fire and emergency services. Participants emphasized the importance of proactive planning, sustainable funding, and regional coordination to ensure that public safety and municipal services keep pace with change.

Overall, engagement reflected a desire for balance rather than transformation. The community's message was consistent: protect Media's character and small-town identity while taking thoughtful, incremental actions to expand housing opportunity, improve sustainability and resilience, enhance mobility and safety, and manage reinvestment in ways that align with long-standing community values.

Figure 8. Top priorities identified by survey participants; while the full list was broader, the Plan focuses on the six most frequently raised priorities for the remainder of the report.

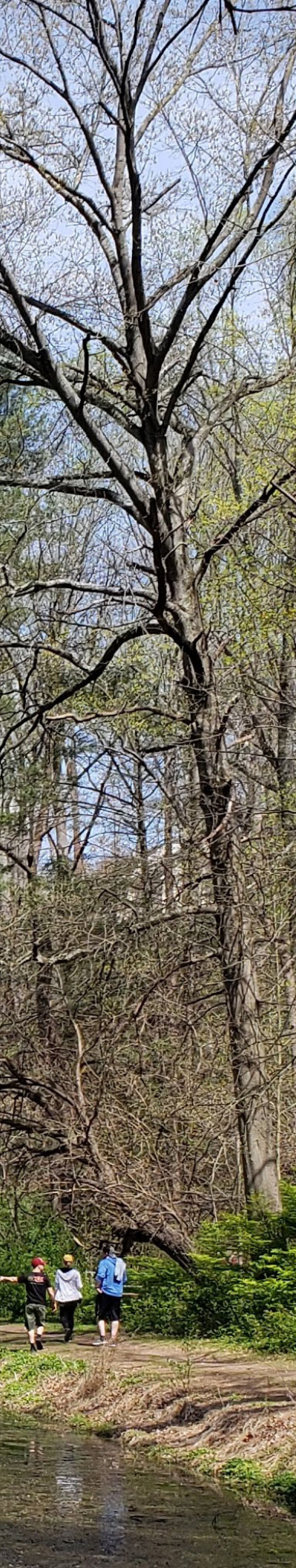


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Plan Elements







Environment & Open Space

By 2035, Media will be a resilient community where a flourishing tree canopy and integrated natural systems protect the community from the impacts of a changing climate. The Borough's public realm will be defined by high-quality parks and signature gathering spaces that serve as the foundation for healthy, active lifestyles for all ages. Through the wide-scale implementation of green infrastructure and a deep commitment to ecological stewardship, Media will prove that a dense, built-out community can lead the way in environmental sustainability and urban beauty.

Existing Conditions and Trends

The following summarizes key existing conditions and trends. These findings serve as a foundation for the recommendations in the following sections.

Residents enjoy good access to local parks, but opportunities to create new open space are limited. Most residential areas in Media are within a reasonable walking distance of a park or open space. However, there is very little undeveloped land remaining in the Borough, and most vacant parcels are small or were previously developed. This makes the preservation of the few remaining large, undeveloped parcels a critical consideration.

The Borough is actively managing local environmental issues but lacks regionally significant natural areas. Media has no land designated within the DVRPC Greenspace Network or as a County Natural Heritage Area, meaning environmental protection efforts will primarily have local, not regional, impacts. The Borough has been proactive in addressing known stormwater flooding issues, with numerous green infrastructure projects completed or planned. Data on the Borough's street trees indicates a generally healthy canopy, but also a need for ongoing monitoring and care to remove dead or poor-condition trees.



Stormwater issues and solutions are largely known, and the Borough continues to make progress on stormwater project implementation.

Media Borough updated its Stormwater Management Ordinance in late 2022, and it is highly compliant with modern standards. The Borough has also developed a Stormwater Management Plan and has been active in implementing it.

There is a need for ongoing tree care. The Tree Canopy is healthy but requires active succession planning. The Borough's urban forest is a defining characteristic of its "hometown" identity. Data from recent tree health surveys indicates a generally healthy canopy, but it is an aging one that requires vigilant monitoring to remove poor-condition trees before they become hazards. To protect this asset, the Borough has empowered

its Shade Tree Commission to manage planting by quadrant and recently adopted a Heritage Tree Protection Ordinance.

Sustainability is institutionalized. The Borough is increasingly moving from ad-hoc environmental initiatives to institutionalized sustainability. Recent recognitions as a Bee City, a Bird Town, and a Silver Certified Sustainable Community through Sustainable Pennsylvania reflect this broader commitment. Together, these designations signal support for pollinator habitat, bird stewardship, biodiversity, and broader municipal sustainability practices spanning land use, energy efficiency, waste reduction, health and wellness, and municipal operations. The Borough has also successfully implemented programs like curbside composting and single-use plastic reduction.



Previous Plans

The recommendations in the section are built upon a robust foundation of recent Borough and Regional planning efforts. The Comprehensive Plan process utilized these previous documents as a technical baseline to refine specific strategies for a built-out community.

A Blueprint for Preservation and Recreation

The Borough of Media Open Space Plan (2021) served as the essential inventory and strategic framework for this element. By documenting that only 5% of the Borough remains as unprotected open space (approximately 23 acres), it established the urgency of the current moment. This key finding allowed the Comprehensive Plan process to move past general preservation goals and focus instead on defining specific acquisition criteria and prioritizing the capital improvements needed to maintain the quality of existing parks.

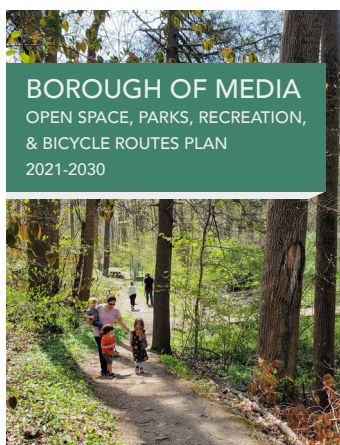
Managing Environmental Resources and Infrastructure

A suite of technical documents including the *Comprehensive Stormwater Plan (2016)*, the *Media Municipal Wasteload Management Report (2016)*, the *Media Borough Stormwater Master Plan (2017)*, and the *Media Borough MS4 Pollution*

Reduction Plan (2017) provided the critical data regarding the Borough's infrastructure constraints. With data showing 54% impervious coverage and aging systems, these documents shifted the planning perspective to view parks as "functional infrastructure". This baseline informed the Comprehensive Plan's approach to integrating green infrastructure like rain gardens into recreational spaces to address flooding and regulatory compliance.

Regional Context and Local Stewardship

Regional frameworks, including the *Natural Heritage Inventory (2011)*, the *Delaware County 2035 Land Use Policy Framework Plan (2013)*, and the *Delaware River Watershed Conservation Plan (2014)*, reinforced that because Media lacks large-scale regional preservation areas, stewardship must focus on intensive local interventions, such as protecting the tree canopy and stream banks. Furthermore, the *Affordable Housing Study (2023/2024)* underscored the scarcity of developable land, a reality that guided the plan's balanced approach to weighing the competing demands of housing, economic development, and environmental preservation.



Covers from previous planning activities

Community Input

Feedback gathered during the engagement process underscores a community that deeply values its “green” identity but is seeking tangible improvements in how these spaces are protected and maintained.

Preservation as a Core Value

Residents have unequivocally defined the preservation of open space as a core community value. In the survey, it ranked as one of the highest priorities, with participants viewing green spaces as vital for quality of life, community connection, and environmental health. This sentiment is driven by a significant concern regarding the potential loss of the Borough’s few remaining open lands to new development, reinforcing the mandate to protect these finite assets.

A Desire for Enhanced Stewardship

While the park system is a highly valued asset, residents emphasized the need for continued investment in maintenance and amenities. Feedback highlighted a specific desire for improvements to the quality of facilities, calling for upgraded equipment, better maintenance regimes, and the addition of essential comforts, such as public restrooms and seating, to ensure parks remain welcoming and usable for all residents.

Sustainability and Resilience

A notable number of participants identified environmental sustainability and resiliency as essential to Media’s long-term livability. There was broad support for investing in green infrastructure and improving building efficiency. Closely tied to this, respondents expressed concern over flooding and stormwater impacts, advocating for upgrades to aging infrastructure and a reduction in impervious surfaces to manage runoff from increasingly heavy storms.

“

Sustainability is always important, as it furthers the triple bottom line: people, planet, and profit. People, as living conditions improve when pollution is decreased; planet, in protecting and preserving the environment; and profit, as sustainable practices reduce waste and save money. This is a no-brainer.

“

Media currently has the economic means to be a good steward for the planet and can be a local leader in implementing sustainable practices. I like the fact that Media offers high quality recycling and composting services, and I hope that practices like this continue and expand.

“

Open Space preservation serves multiple functions. Studies show that having true green spaces with trees actually improves quality of life, and builds community. Green spaces, if actually green space with trees and not concrete, would help with stormwater mitigation and pollution filtering.

“

Having green space supports the environment, creates more opportunities for community, and reduces congestion. Also it just makes Media more beautiful!

Goals and Recommendations

1. Enhance the Parks and Open Space Network

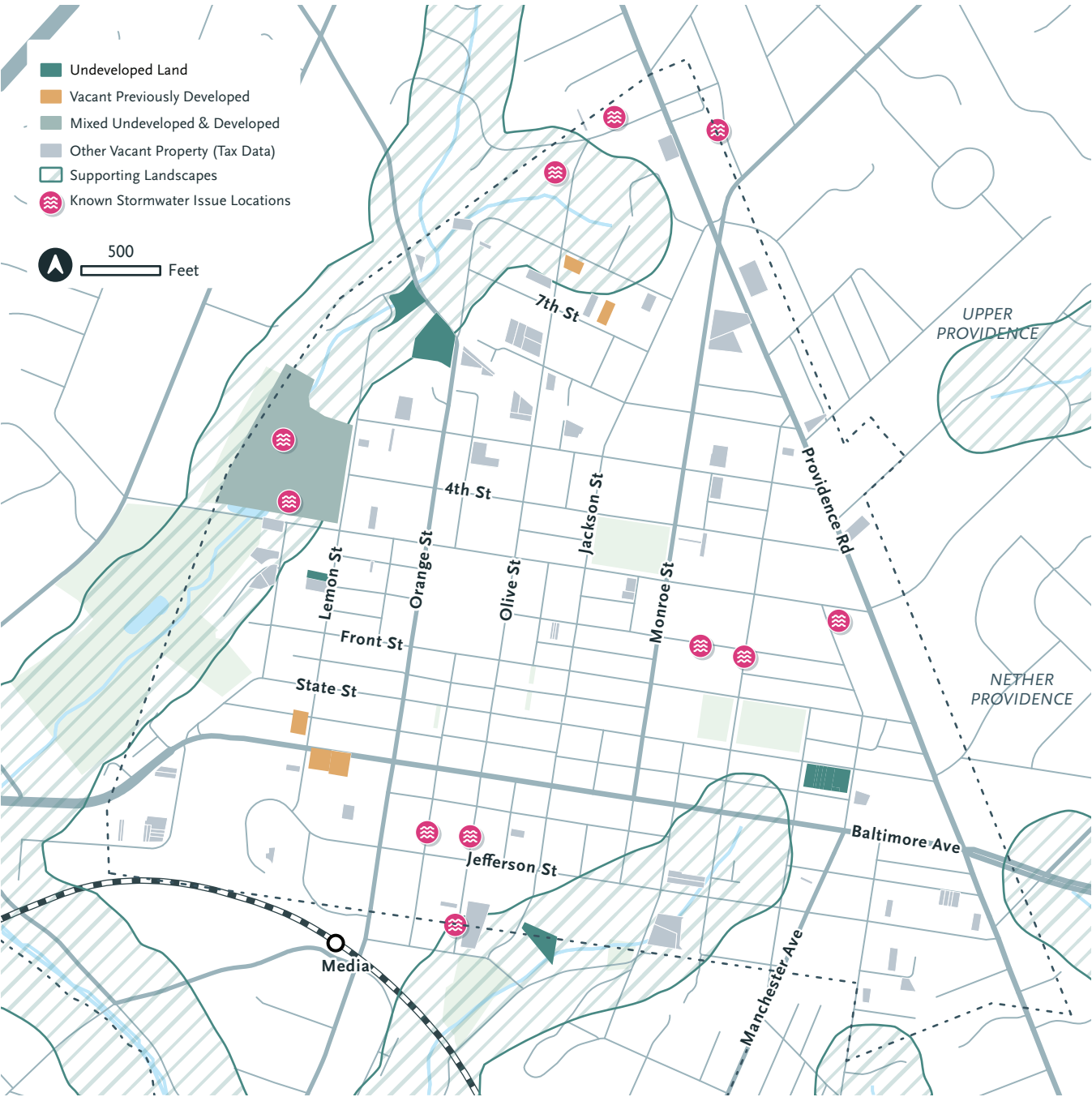
Media's system of parks and open spaces serves as the Borough's critical green infrastructure, which is essential for maintaining a sustainable and high-quality environment. This network performs indispensable ecological services, including mitigating the urban heat island effect, filtering stormwater, and preserving habitat connectivity within a dense urban fabric. Moreover, it is key to the social and economic vitality by providing places to gather, exercise, relax, and learn. The Borough's goal is to enhance this network through both improving existing assets and strategically acquiring land to meet its parks and open space needs.

A. Improve existing parks and green spaces. To meet resident expectations for high-quality public spaces, the Borough should implement the capital improvements outlined in the 2021 Open Space, Parks, Recreation & Bicycle Routes Plan ("Open Space Plan"). This includes high-priority projects such as developing a master plan for the Barrall Field and Elementary School complex and transforming Manchester Park into a signature gathering space with improved amenities for teens and families.

B. Enhance underutilized small-scale open spaces and greenways. In a dense community where large land acquisitions are expensive and hard to come by, the Borough should focus on incremental greening strategy that prioritizes the enhancement of existing, underutilized pockets of land into natural assets. This strategy focuses on converting modest public assets, such as the grass lawns surrounding the water towers and the Youth Center, into high-functioning ecological spaces through native plantings and pollinator gardens. Furthermore, the Borough should encourage residents to take over paper alleys and unimproved street rights-of-way for conversion into pocket greenways. Likewise, efforts to convert grass lawns into native plantings can go a long way to making the Borough more environmentally sustainable and attractive. By transforming

¹ Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Inventory identifies areas ecological resources across the state. Natural Heritage Areas (which are not present in Media) are the existence of habitat for plants and animals of special concern, the existence of uncommon or especially important natural communities, and the size and landscape context of a site containing good quality natural features. Supporting Landscape identifies areas surrounding or adjacent to core habitat that are not considered the primary habitat of the species of concern or natural community but may serve as secondary habitat.

Figure 9. Undeveloped and Vacant Land, Supporting Landscapes, and Stormwater Issue Locations



these overlooked spaces into a connected network of micro-parks and natural infiltration zones, the Borough can substantially increase its green footprint and biodiversity within existing budget and scale constraints.

- C. Enforce rigorous criteria for land acquisition.** As a built-out community, Media's opportunities for open space expansion are both physically and financially constrained. Most parcels that become available are small, fragmented, and are unlikely to have major systemic impacts on environmental quality simply through preservation. Land in Media is also increasingly expensive, and the Borough has limited resources to spend on acquisition. Consequently, the Borough should not consider land purchases as a primary means of improving the open space network. Instead, the expenditure of municipal resources for land purchase must be reserved for exceptional cases where a parcel provides a clear, high-impact justification. To warrant consideration, an acquisition must directly facilitate substantial goals that cannot be achieved through other means, such as creating specific opportunities to expand the tree canopy or providing the necessary footprint for critical infrastructure projects identified in the Stormwater Master Plan or MS4 Pollutant Reduction Plan. To support these decisions, Figure 9 highlights vacant and undeveloped land as well as areas where flooding has been identified as a concern as well as Natural Heritage Inventory Supporting Landscapes¹ in Media.

2. Facilitate recreational experiences that enhance the quality of life for Media residents

Parks and recreation are vital components of Media's identity. They provide key spaces where community ties are strengthened, and individual well-being is nurtured. While the Borough already offers a diverse array of programs and spaces, changing demographics and resident feedback indicate a need to adapt services to be more inclusive and comprehensive. This goal focuses on closing service gaps (particularly for teens and elderly populations) and ensuring that every resident is aware of and able to access the recreational opportunities that make Media a vibrant place to live.

- A. Maintain and expand facilities for self-directed recreation.** Residents highly value the ability to use parks on their own terms, whether for walking, relaxation, or informal sports. The Borough should continue to support this by maintaining high-quality open fields and courts while exploring the addition of high-demand amenities like pickleball courts and safe cycling routes. Providing these diverse, accessible options ensures that residents of all ages can stay active and engaged without the need for structured programming or membership fees.
- B. Increase public awareness of recreational facilities and programs.** Despite a wealth of offerings, some residents lack information about how they can utilize the full range of recreational opportunities available in the Borough. To bridge this gap, the Borough should enhance its communication strategy by leveraging digital platforms, newsletters, and potentially a professional marketing approach to centralize information. Improving access to information ensures that all residents can fully utilize the park system and participate in the community life it fosters.
- C. Develop dedicated recreation services and spaces for middle schoolers and teens.** The Open Space Plan identifies a critical gap in recreational programming for youth aged 12 to 18, who currently lack dedicated spaces to gather socially. Similar feedback was received during the Comprehensive Plan process. The Borough should prioritize the creation of teen-friendly amenities, such as a skate park or improved gathering spaces at Manchester Park, and establish a Youth Recreation Council to give this demographic a voice in planning. Engaging teens directly addresses concerns about safety and the use of elementary school grounds while fostering a sense of ownership and belonging for the next generation.
- D. Advance diversity, equity, and inclusion through recreation.** To ensure “Everybody’s Hometown” remains welcoming to all, the Borough should actively work to remove barriers to recreational participation. To achieve this, the Borough should coordinate with youth groups, AARP, and similar organizations to improve accessibility. As recommended in the Open Space Plan, the Borough may also consider restructuring the Recreation Board to ensure diverse community voices are represented. By intentionally designing inclusive events and facilities, the Borough can celebrate its diversity and create a park system that serves as a common ground for all residents.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

AARP Community Challenge

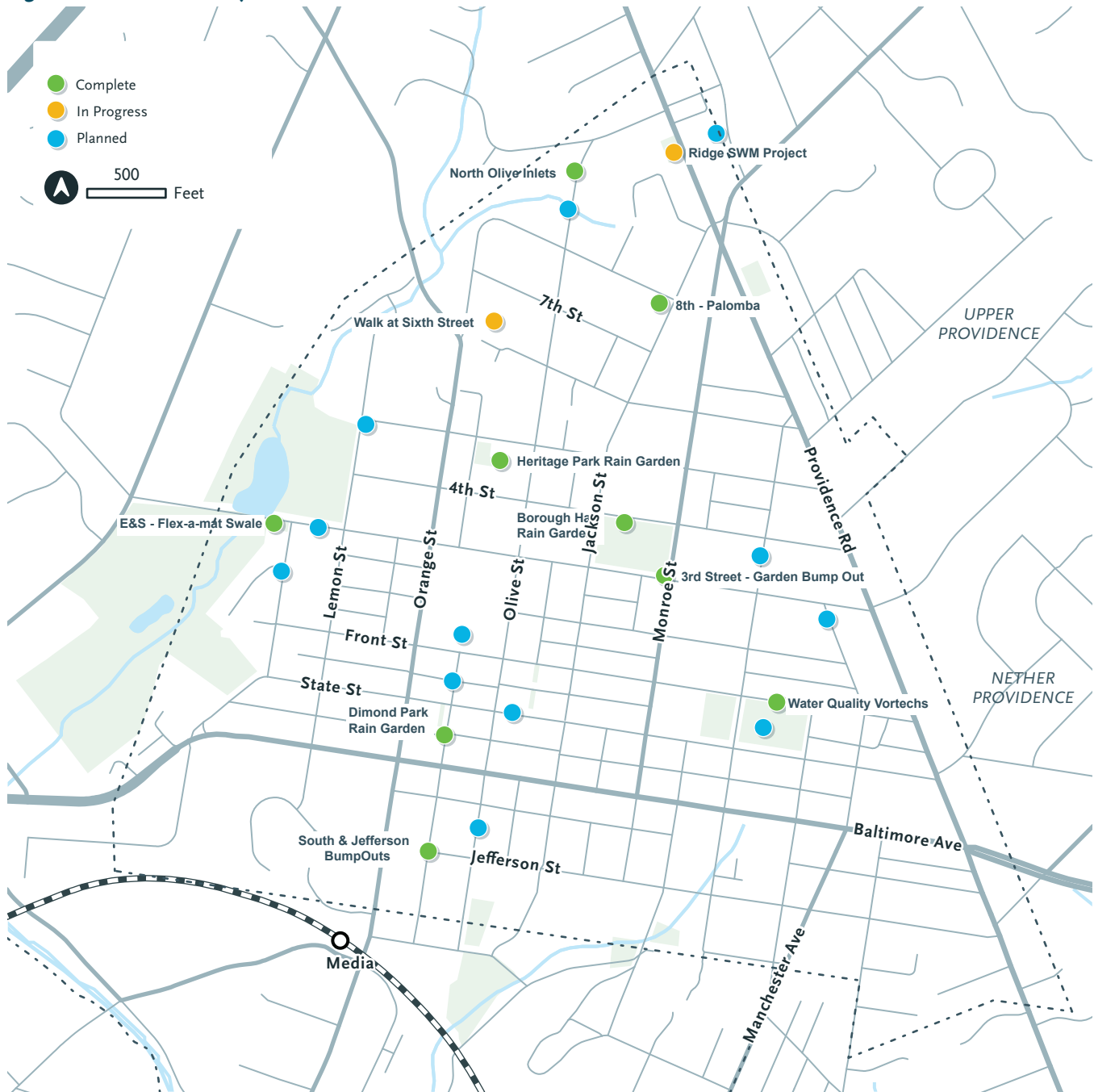
The AARP Community Challenge is a “quick-action” grant program designed to fund tangible, small-scale projects that improve community livability for residents of all ages, with a specific focus on those aged 50 and older. AARP offers three distinct funding tiers: Flagship Grants (up to \$15,000) for broad improvements like public spaces and transit, Capacity-Building Microgrants (\$2,500) that include technical coaching for walk/bike audits and home safety, and Demonstration Grants (up to \$25,000) focusing on replicable solutions for pedestrian safety, digital connectivity, and housing design. Open to nonprofits and government entities, the program prioritizes projects that can be completed rapidly to spark immediate community change and serve as a catalyst for long-term progress.

3. Protect and enhance the natural environment

As a compact, built-out community, Media Borough’s environmental health relies less on preserving vast tracts of wilderness and more on the intensive stewardship of its local natural resources. A robust natural environment is essential not only for ecological resilience but also for the health and well-being of residents, offering cooler streets, cleaner air, and a respite from urban life. This goal focuses on creating a connected network of green spaces throughout the Borough. Street trees, stormwater systems, and development regulations work in concert to protect Media’s unique natural heritage and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

- A. Continue to implement the Stormwater Master Plan and the MS4 Plan.** Managing stormwater is a critical obligation for the Borough, both to meet regulatory requirements and to protect local waterways from pollution and erosion. The Borough should continue to execute the projects and best management practices (BMPs) identified in its MS4 Pollutant Reduction Plan and Stormwater Master Plan. Figure 10 identifies where the Borough has planned, in progress, and completed projects.
- B. Explore innovative stormwater in office-to-residential conversions.** As properties transition to residential use in the office district, the Borough should explore innovative stormwater management requirements that integrate “green” solutions into the adaptive reuse process. This strategy involves encouraging or requiring the installation of green roofs, the replacement of traditional asphalt with

Figure 10. Stormwater Projects



permeable surfaces in repurposed parking areas, or the integration of bioretention planters into the building's streetscape. To ensure these standards are both effective and legally defensible, all requirements must be strictly consistent with the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Code (MPC), balancing the Borough's environmental mandates with the need to maintain the economic feasibility of creating new housing

C. Develop and implement a comprehensive tree canopy management strategy.

Media's tree canopy is a signature asset that defines the Borough's character, yet its long-term viability is threatened by the natural aging of dominant species, development pressures, and stressors of a changing climate. This condition is not unique to Media, as documented in Delaware County's Tree Canopy Assessment (2022). To preserve and enhance its assets, the Borough should continue to move towards a professionalized, lifecycle management model for tree maintenance. Recent activities include:

1. The Borough has hired a new urban forester with extensive credentials to focus on high-density environments.
2. The Shade Tree Commission is also working on a comprehensive study of all Borough trees.
3. As part of the Hybrid Form-Based Code process, the Borough adopted a Heritage Tree Protection Ordinance (§311.B-106 Trees).

Further implementation should prioritize strategies such as tree bump outs or silva cells to overcome local physical constraints. The Borough should also explore regional cooperation with neighboring municipalities to share maintenance costs and technical expertise.

4. Build a sustainable and resilient community

CASE STUDY

Radnor Township Renewable Energy and Conservation Plan

Radnor Township's plan serves as a robust model for municipalities targeting ambitious climate goals, specifically the "Ready for 100" commitment to transition to 100% clean electricity by 2035 and 100% renewable energy across all sectors by 2050. The strategy is built on a three-tiered approach: reducing consumption through energy efficiency and conservation, electrifying building heating and transportation systems to eliminate fossil fuel dependence, and accelerating the deployment of carbon-free renewable energy sources both on-site and through the grid. To achieve this, the plan prioritizes actionable tactics categorized by municipal ordinances, community actions, and advocacy.

Sustainability in Media Borough is more than an environmental goal; it is a core value interwoven with the community's identity. As climate change brings more frequent severe weather events, fostering resilience becomes a necessity for protecting public health, infrastructure, and economic stability. This goal focuses on institutionalizing sustainability through comprehensive planning, leading by example with municipal assets, and leveraging the zoning code to encourage private sector participation in building a greener, more durable Media.

- A. Develop a Sustainable and Resilient Media Plan.** The Borough has already made strides to support sustainability and resilience efforts, such as instituting a food composting program, purchasing renewable energy certificates annually, and installing solar arrays on public buildings. However, the Borough would benefit from a standalone plan to direct long-term policy decisions. Residents have expressed a clear desire for Media to address climate change proactively, viewing sustainability as both a responsibility to future generations and a practical investment. This plan can outline specific, actionable steps to reduce the community's carbon footprint, manage waste, and prepare for climate-related risks, ensuring that environmental stewardship is embedded in all future decision-making.
- B. Identify targeted energy-efficient upgrades for publicly owned property.** The Borough has an opportunity to lead by example, building on its history of successful initiatives such as achieving Bronze designation from the national SolSmart program. The Borough should conduct energy audits of all remaining municipal facilities to identify high-impact retrofits, such as HVAC modernization, LED lighting, or additional renewable energy installations. By optimizing the efficiency of its own portfolio, Media not only reduces long-term operating costs but also demonstrates the viability of green technologies to residents and business owners.
- C. Identify incentives for sustainable building and land development.** Media can incentivize new projects to contribute to the Borough's

environmental goals by providing incentives for sustainable design. For example, Cheltenham Township (Montgomery County) provides an incentive in its MU3 Mixed Use district. If a developer incorporates at least three sustainable development practices from a specified list (including green stormwater infrastructure, green roofs, on-site renewable energy systems, and minimized woodland disturbance, among others), then they are permitted increases in the maximum impervious area to 50% of the total lot area. Likewise, Abington Township's Business Center District ordinance allots bonus points for green building features which can be used to achieve increased height or density. For more information, see [Chester County's Building Energy Conservation & Efficiency: An Ordinance Toolkit for Local Municipalities.](#)

FOCUS ON

Cheltenham Township's Approach to Environmental Protection

Cheltenham Township's zoning ordinance is a strong example of how environmental protection can be built into multiple parts of a code, rather than addressed through a single standard. Cheltenham treats open space as ecological infrastructure. Its standards encourage connections to neighboring open space, preserve natural features such as woodlands, meadows, and streams except where restoration is needed, and require common open space to be permanently protected through easements or deed restrictions. Together, these provisions support long-term conservation, habitat continuity, and restoration.

The ordinance also uses district-level standards and incentives to improve environmental performance. In the MU3 District, Class 1 developments on sites of 7 acres or more have relatively low-intensity base standards, including 30% maximum impervious coverage, 70% minimum green area, and lower height limits. If they incorporate sustainable development practices, they may increase impervious coverage to 50%, reduce green area to 50%, and increase height to 60 feet. Class 2 mixed-use developments on tracts of 10 acres or more with at least 200 feet of frontage on a major collector or higher roadway may receive an FAR bonus of 0.5. To qualify for these bonuses, applicants must provide at least three sustainable development measures, including at least one stormwater or land conservation strategy and at least one energy, heat-island, or habitat protection strategy. Eligible measures include integrated stormwater management, green roofs, woodland preservation, heat-island reduction, on-site renewable energy, and permanent habitat or conservation land protection.

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Olive St

SEPTA 113
101 MEDIA

DOWNTOWN MEDIA
P
PUBLIC PARKING



Mobility & Transportation

By 2035, Media will boast a high-quality, multi-modal transportation network where safety is the baseline and every resident enjoys equitable access to the town center, schools, and transit. State Street will stand as a regional model for placemaking and modern transit integration, featuring a rebuilt trolley system that harmonizes with a pedestrian-first environment. The Borough's streets will be safe and connected, defined by a robust bicycle network and a dynamic curb management system that proactively accommodates emerging technologies while protecting the character of residential neighborhoods.

Existing Conditions and Trends

The following summarizes key existing conditions and trends. These findings serve as a foundation for the recommendations in the following sections.

Work-from-home is changing commute patterns.

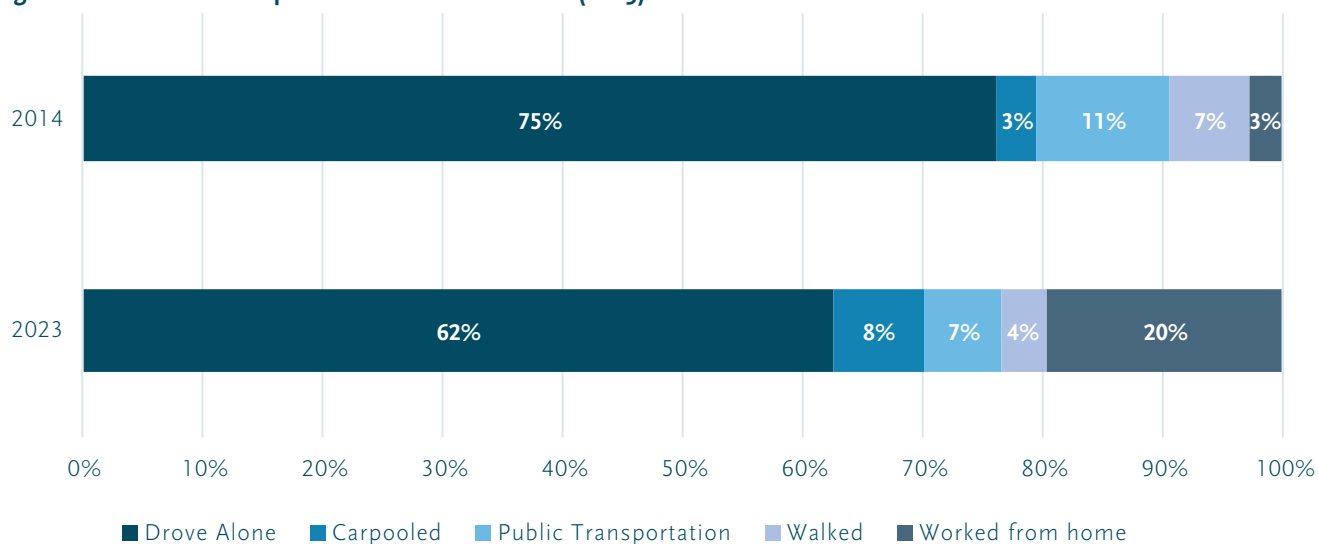
The post-pandemic shift toward remote and hybrid work has fundamentally altered travel behavior in the Borough. With fewer residents commuting, the traditional “9-to-5” peak demand on regional rail and trolley lines has shifted, while local neighborhood activity during the workday has increased. For now, the increase in work-from-home has largely reduced the number of people who drive alone to work (Figure 11). This trend is not unique to Media and underscores the growing importance of updating traffic studies to ensure that infrastructure aligns with needs. It may also create opportunities to implement new pedestrian and bicycle improvements.

Media functions as a regional employment hub.

As discussed in the Economic Development Element (page 74), more than 9,500 people commute into Media for work every day. This has substantial impacts on the Borough’s transportation system, especially its parking system. To the extent that the Borough can encourage commutes by means other than driving, the more likely it will be to address some of its traffic and parking issues.

There are serious injuries and fatalities on Media’s roads. Traffic safety is a critical public health issue. As noted in both Delaware County’s and DVRPC’s Vision Zero initiative, Media has experienced crashes resulting in both serious injuries and fatalities (also referred to as Killed or Seriously Injured, or KSI). (Figure 12). In particular, the County’s initiative identified the western section of Baltimore Avenue as a Corridor of Concern and more than a dozen locations where crashes are occurring that meet the profile

Figure 11. Means of Transportation to Work in Media (2023)



Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 2023, 5-yr estimates

Figure 12. Serious Injuries and Fatalities in Media (2013-2024)

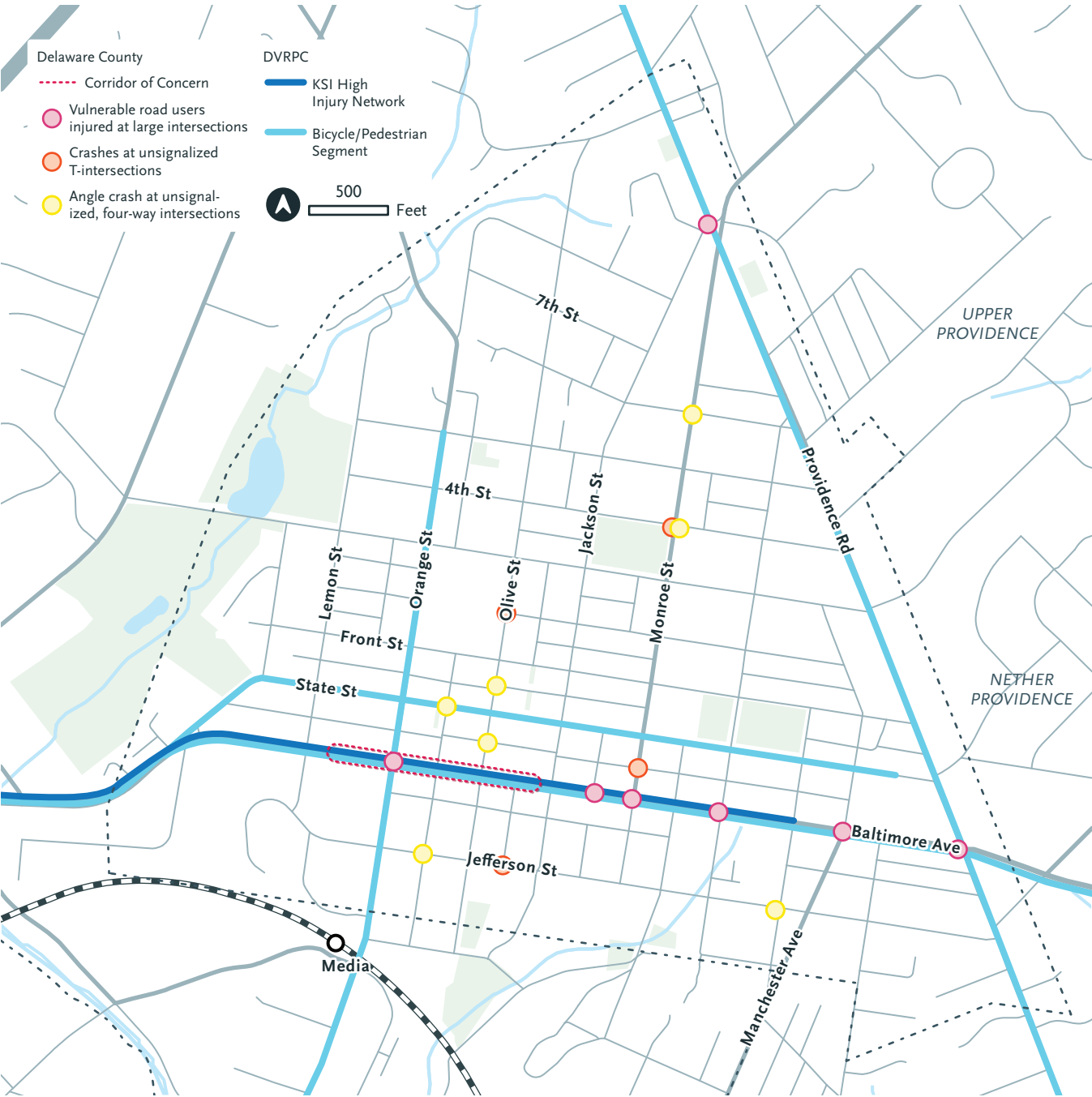


Source: PennDOT, Inventory of Crashes (2013-2024)

of crashes more likely to cause serious injuries and fatalities (referred to as Crash Profiles, in the Delaware County Vision Zero Plan). (Figure 13). Likewise, DVRPC has identified roads within Media as being on their high-injury network, including segments with two or more KSI crashes

within a half mile (KSI High Injury Network) and segments where two or more bicyclist and/or pedestrian crashes of any injury severity occurred, also within a half mile (Bicycle/Pedestrian Segment). (Figure 13).

Figure 13. Media Vision Zero



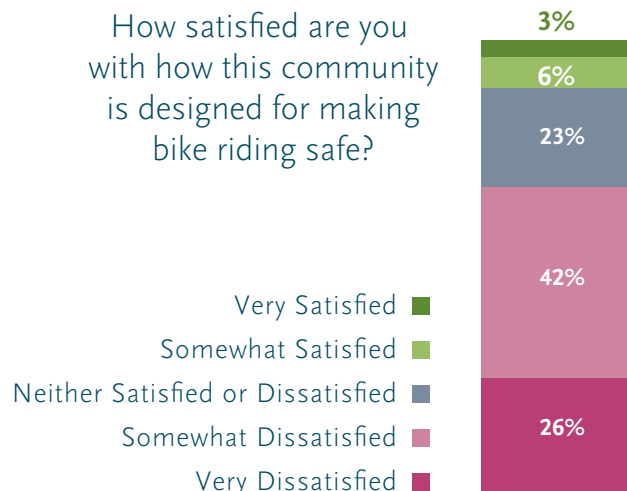
In addition to the factors identified by Delaware County that contribute to unsafe streets, Media's Traffic Calming Plan (2020) identified two conditions of note:

1. **Speeding:** Although identified as an issue in many areas of the Borough, speeding was observed to be a particular issue at several high-risk locations. On West Baltimore Avenue, less than 30% of vehicles traveled at or below the speed limit. On East Baltimore Avenue, just over 40% of vehicles traveled at or below the speed limit. And on Olive Street, less than 50% of vehicles traveled at or below the speed limit.
2. **Stop Sign Compliance:** Rolling through stop signs was the most common issue reported by the public. Field observations taken during the planning process confirmed that about 50% of drivers come to a complete stop. The remaining drivers perform “rolling stops,” and 5% do not stop at all. A DVRPC before-and-after analysis of the former trout mural at 3rd and Jackson suggests that visual traffic-calming treatments can improve driver behavior, including lower vehicle speeds and better stop sign compliance.

Media's bicycle network is inadequate. Media's bicycle network currently only consists of sharrows, which is a designation that indicates that drivers and cyclists should share the road. (Figure 15) Though once seen as adequate, these facilities provide no physical protection for cyclists and fail to meaningfully alter drivers' behavior or vehicle speeds. While intended to legitimize cyclists' presence and guide them out of the “door zone,” sharrows rely entirely on driver compliance rather than street design to ensure safety.

There is significant community interest in expanding the bicycle network and facilities, evidenced in the findings from the Bicycle Friendly Report Card (Figure 14). There has also been a variety of planning work done, including as

Figure 14. Bicycle Friendly Report Card



part of the 2016 Bicycle Plan and the 2021 Open Space, Parks, Recreation, and Bicycle Routes Plan. (Figure 16). Prior planning work has also identified Jackson Street as a potential corridor for protected bicycle infrastructure. The Borough Economic Development Strategy Plan (2017) recommended a protected bike lane on Jackson Street, finding that one-way conversion between 5th and Jefferson Streets could create room for separated bicycle lanes without removing parking, subject to resolving traffic and emergency access considerations. However, these efforts have not been comprehensive, and there is a need for a dedicated effort to plan for and implement improvements.

There is a need to improve sidewalks and close gaps. Despite the Borough's reputation as a walkable community, the pedestrian network needs investment. Residents report inconsistent sidewalk conditions (ranging from heaved concrete and cracks to abrupt terminations) that create barriers for residents, particularly those using wheelchairs, strollers, or mobility aids.

Figure 15. Existing Bike Network

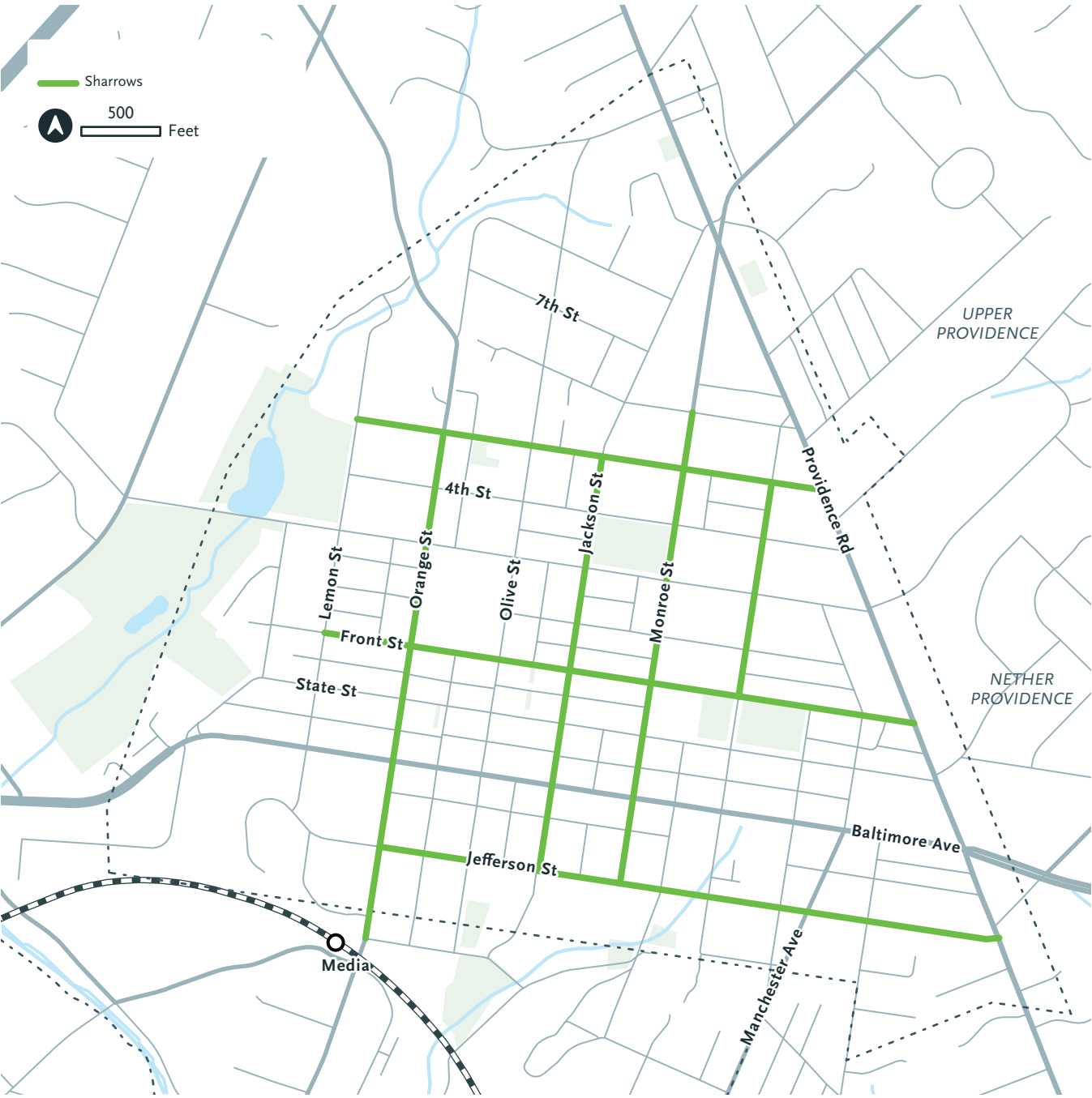
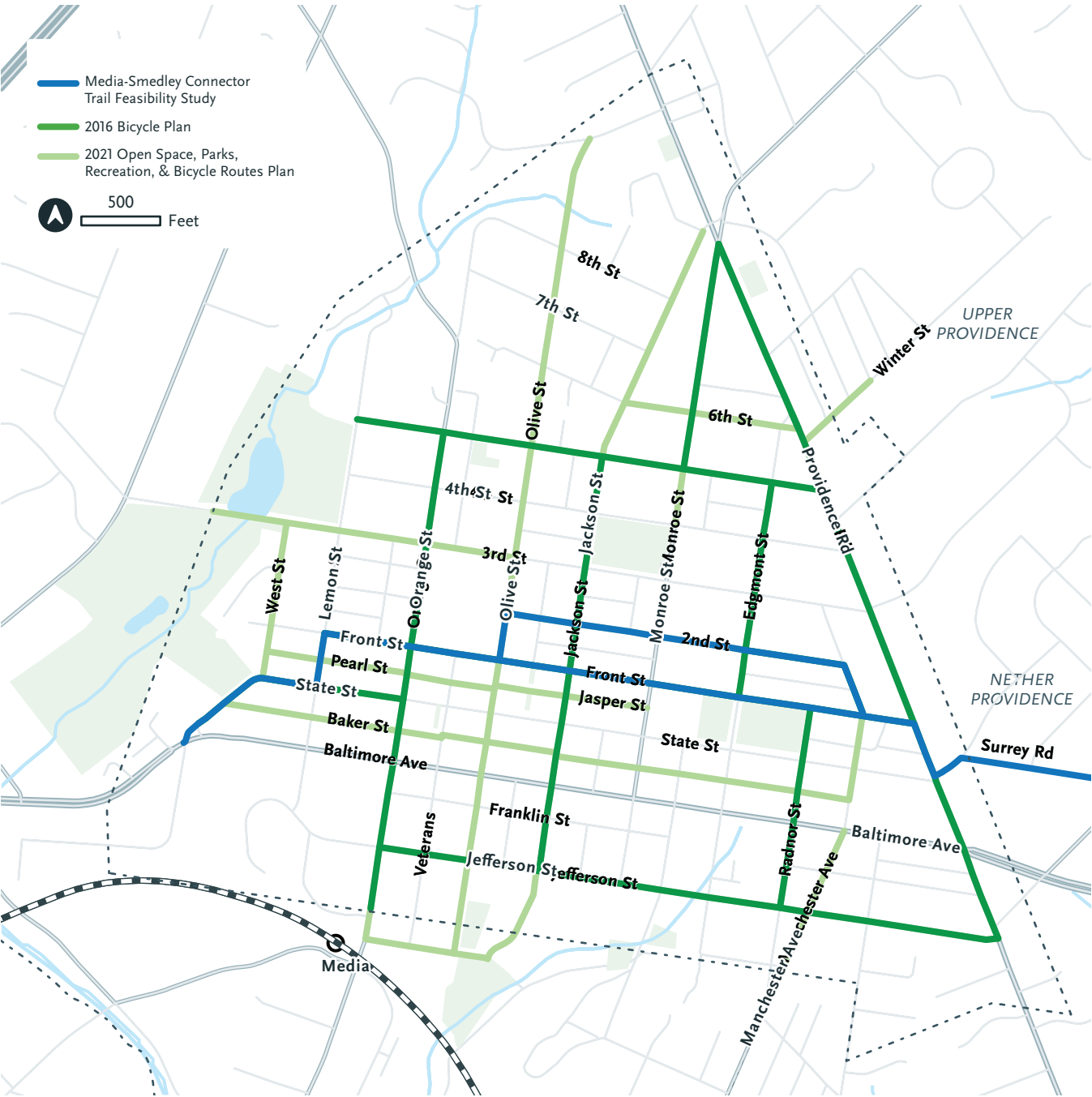


Figure 16. Proposed Bike Network



Parking and curbside management remain a complex challenge. While the State Street District thrives, parking remains a source of friction. Concerns persist regarding costs, the clarity of signage, and the “spillover” of visitors parking on residential streets. The Baltimore Ave garage is the anchor of the Borough’s parking system, but as the structure ages, maintenance requirements are increasing. In 2016, the Borough conducted a study that found that a multi-level parking facility is feasible to supplement the needs of the current and future parking demands for the area. However, much has changed in the Borough since then, and the conclusions may no longer be valid. The area has also been identified as a potential location for affordable housing (See *Housing*), something that was not envisioned in 2016.

At the same time, the surge in food delivery services (e.g., Uber Eats) has led to frequent double-parking and blocked Trolley as well as the travel lanes as drivers seek temporary access near restaurants. Similarly, ridesharing creates

congestion during peak evening hours, as vehicles cluster to pick up or drop off passengers without dedicated loading zones. The result is that the current curbside and off-street parking and loading infrastructure is largely organized for a world that no longer exists.

Traffic is impacting the quality of life of residents. As a county seat and regional destination, Media experiences significant peak-hour congestion at key intersections and corridors. As detailed in the Traffic Calming Plan (2020), several key issues drive traffic:

1. **Regional Cut-Through Traffic:** Congestion on major highways like Route 1 and I-476 forces regional traffic through the Borough as technology-equipped drivers seek faster routes. This pushes drivers onto local roads such as Rose Tree Road, Ridley Creek Road, and Orange Street.



Rendering Showing Trolley Modernization in Media

2. Local Diversion: Routine congestion on main arteries like Baltimore Avenue and Providence Road displaces traffic onto parallel streets, specifically Jefferson Street, Monroe Street, and Ridge Road/Olive Street.
3. Local Demand: As the Borough's downtown has grown more popular, it is increasingly a destination in the region, which contributes to increased traffic.

SEPTA Trolley Modernization will transform State Street. The “D1” trolley line (formerly Route 101) is a defining feature of Media’s character and an important transit connection for residents, employees, and eastern Delaware County. SEPTA is currently advancing a once-in-a-generation modernization program to replace its entire fleet of 1980s-era Kawasaki trolley cars with modern, fully ADA-compliant light rail vehicles that require substantial infrastructure upgrades along the route. These new vehicles will be significantly longer (approximately 80 feet) and feature low floors to allow for level boarding. In addition there is an opportunity for the Borough to partner with SEPTA and pursue state and federal funding to coordinate transit investment with placemaking, safety, and streetscape improvements.

This investment creates major opportunities and challenges for Media. The project has the potential to fundamentally reshape State Street, not only through infrastructure upgrades but through a stronger commitment to pedestrian-friendly spaces, placemaking, stormwater management, and safety. Long-term, this is likely to create substantial benefits for the Borough, its residents, and businesses. In particular, the project creates an opportunity to rethink State Street, including whether more space could be dedicated to sidewalks, public gathering, and an expanded Plum Street Mall experience. If done properly, the result could be critical investments that support the historic, pedestrian-focused fabric of State Street. However, the scale of the

project is likely to create major disruptions for residents and businesses. As a result, careful planning and construction management will be critical to protecting businesses. The Borough will also have to contend with uncertain timelines, as SEPTA continues to refine its implementation strategy.

Technology is changing how people move. The rapid proliferation of emerging transportation technologies has the potential to reshape how people move in Media, and the physical infrastructure needed to support them. The rise in micromobility options (such as e-bikes and e-scooters) offers a valuable mobility choice, especially for those who do not have access to a car. But they also introduce new conflicts regarding where these devices should operate and park. Simultaneously, the transition to electric vehicles (EVs) creates questions about charging infrastructure, particularly for residents who lack driveways. Furthermore, the growth of ride-sharing services and the potential future of autonomous vehicles requires the Borough to rethink curb management, shifting focus from static parking spaces to dynamic pick-up and drop-off zones to prevent congestion. For a more detailed discussion, see *Focus On: Emerging Transportation Technologies* on page 56.

FOCUS ON

Emerging Transportation Technologies

The landscape of urban mobility is undergoing a fundamental transformation. From electric scooters appearing on sidewalks to autonomous vehicles being tested on public roads, emerging transportation technologies are reshaping how people move through communities. For municipalities like Media Borough, these innovations present both tremendous opportunities and complex challenges that require careful consideration and proactive planning. While many aspects of these technologies will ultimately be regulated at the state or federal level, local governments retain significant authority over the physical infrastructure and public spaces that make these new mobility options possible.

In Media, these technologies are already beginning to shape local travel behavior. Residents are already using e-scooters to make the uphill trip from the train station to Orange Street more manageable, and micromobility could also support a potential future county trail connection west to Granite Run. Ridehailing may also help some households remain one-car households, particularly when combined with telework and transit access, which could modestly ease parking demand. At the same time, electric vehicles and battery-powered micromobility devices create new infrastructure and safety considerations, including charging, storage, and battery fire risks.

Micromobility: E-Scooters and E-Bikes



Left: E-bike | Right: E-scooter

The rise of shared electric scooters and e-bikes has introduced a flexible transportation option that can bridge the gap between walking and driving, particularly for trips that are too far to walk but too short to justify a car. For communities with walkable downtowns, these devices provide residents and visitors with an attractive option for moving between destinations, reducing parking congestion and vehicle emissions. Research indicates that e-bikes extend travel distances significantly compared to traditional bicycles, making them especially valuable for people who otherwise do not have or wish to drive. Any expansion of micromobility in Media, however, should be paired with careful attention to safety, particularly where routes intersect with trolley tracks and other constrained street conditions.

Micromobility devices also introduce friction points that municipalities must address. The most immediate challenges concern where these devices should operate and where they should be parked. E-scooters traveling at speeds up to 15-20 mph create conflicts with pedestrians on sidewalks, but may also feel unsafe to riders when forced into traffic lanes alongside cars or in bicycle lanes. Similarly, improperly parked devices can block sidewalks, obstruct building entrances, and create accessibility barriers for people with disabilities. Evidence from cities nationwide shows that injuries associated with these devices have increased substantially, though data collection remains inconsistent and many incidents go unreported.

While the states typically handle licensing and registration requirements for vehicles, municipalities generally retain authority over local traffic laws, parking regulations,

and the use of public rights-of-way. For now, this means local governments can establish where micromobility devices are permitted to operate and where they may be parked, but the State may establish age restrictions, vehicle requirements, and safety standards (e.g., helmets). At the same time, the patchwork of varying regulations across jurisdictions creates confusion for riders and enforcement challenges for police, leading calls to broader state-wide regulation regarding where they can be operated.

Ride-Hailing and Delivery Services



Driver working for ride-hailing and delivery services

The explosion of ride-hailing services like Uber and Lyft, along with food and package delivery through apps, has already transformed travel patterns in many communities, including Media. These services increase transportation access for people without cars and provide flexibility that traditional transit cannot match. Equally important, they create an additional way for visitors to get Downtown without stressing the parking supply.

However, they also have drawbacks. They contribute to increased congestion, and proliferation of double parking, as studies show that ride-hailing vehicles spend significant time driving without passengers. Media's authority over these services is notably limited to regulating curb access, establishing pick-up and drop-off zones, and enforcement. Nonetheless, this is also the area where they are having the most visible impact.

Electric Vehicles and Charging Infrastructure



Electric car plugged in to charger

The transition to electric vehicles offers significant environmental benefits through reduced local emissions and represents a growing segment of the automotive market. The widespread adoption of electric vehicles thus creates an opportunity for the Borough to advance its environmental goals. The primary infrastructure challenge lies in ensuring adequate public charging stations, particularly for residents who lack private driveways or garage parking where they could install home chargers.

Municipalities possess substantial authority over EV charging infrastructure deployment through their control of zoning ordinances, building codes, and parking regulations. Many communities nationwide have updated codes to require or incentivize EV charging infrastructure in new construction and major renovations, recognizing that retrofitting charging stations after construction costs four to six times more than installing them during initial development. Some local governments have also designated parking spaces for EV charging, established design standards for charging equipment, and created streamlined permitting processes to reduce barriers for property owners seeking to install chargers. In Media Borough, one of the biggest challenges to wide adoption will be accommodating on-street charging in areas where homes do not have off-street parking.

Municipal parking lots present particularly valuable opportunities for public charging

infrastructure. These facilities typically offer longer dwell times than street parking, making them ideal for Level 2 chargers that can fully charge a vehicle in several hours. Some municipalities generate revenue through charging fees, while others offer discounted or free charging as an incentive for EV adoption. Additionally, municipalities can require or incentivize workplace charging in commercial developments, which research suggests is particularly important for employees without home charging access.

Autonomous Vehicles and Curb Management



Waymo autonomous vehicle

Though widespread deployment remains years away, autonomous vehicles represent perhaps the most transformative emerging technology for urban transportation. The shift from personal vehicle ownership toward transportation-as-a-service models could dramatically reduce parking demand while simultaneously increasing the need for pick-up and drop-off zones. This transition requires municipalities to fundamentally rethink curb space, one of their most valuable and underutilized public assets.

Currently, most curb space functions as long-term parking storage. However, the rise of ride-hailing services has already demonstrated increased demand for short-term passenger loading zones. When autonomous vehicles become common, this pressure will intensify

as vehicles circulate to pick up and drop off passengers rather than sitting parked. Without proactive planning, this could lead to vehicles idling in travel lanes, increased congestion, and conflicts with transit vehicles, delivery trucks, and cyclists competing for limited curb access.

The Borough holds primary authority over curb management through their control of local parking regulations and street design. Forward-thinking communities are beginning to digitize their curb inventories, creating databases that specify regulations for each segment of curb space in machine-readable formats. This “digital curb” approach enables dynamic management where curb space can serve different purposes at different times, parking during evening hours, passenger loading during morning rush hour, and delivery zones at midday. Some cities have successfully implemented geofencing technology that directs ride-hailing drivers to designated pick-up locations, reducing traffic disruptions and improving both driver and passenger experiences.

Adapting to Change

As these technologies continue to evolve, municipalities face the challenge of planning for an uncertain future while addressing present-day concerns. The most effective approach involves focusing on what Media can control: the physical infrastructure and public spaces that enable these technologies. By updating zoning codes and parking regulations, creating dedicated space for micromobility devices, investing in EV charging infrastructure, and implementing dynamic curb management systems, Media can shape how these technologies integrate into their communities.

Previous Plans

The recommendations in this section build on a strong foundation of Borough and regional transportation planning efforts, using these documents as a technical baseline to refine strategies for a compact, built-out community and address gaps identified through the previous plan review.

A Fragmented Foundation for Mobility and Safety

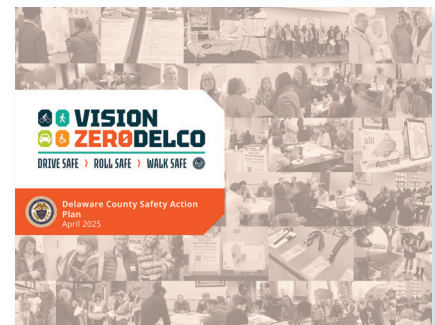
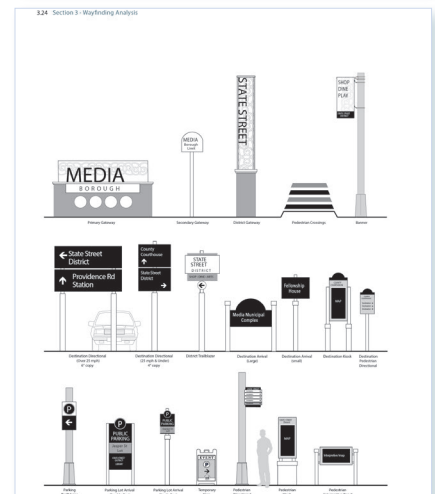
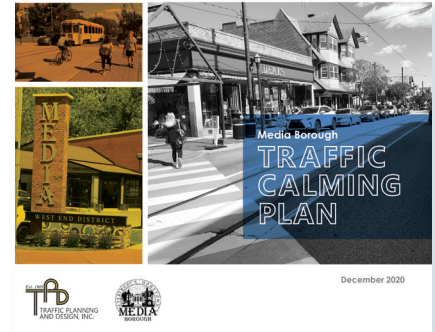
Borough-level plans, including the *Media Bicycle Plan (2016)*, *Media Borough Traffic Calming Plan (2020)*, and *Recreation & Bicycle Routes Plan (2021)*, provided the primary foundation for this element. While these documents consistently identified traffic speeds, safety concerns, and multimodal conflicts, the Previous Plan Review found they were developed independently and lack a unified framework for prioritizing projects or linking transportation investments to broader community goals. This finding shifted the Comprehensive Plan's focus toward establishing a clear multimodal vision and transportation goals.

Managing Bicycle, Parking, and Access Systems

The *Wayfinding Master Plan (2016)* and *Limited Parking Supply and Demand Study (2016)* highlighted navigation and parking challenges but were limited in scope, while bicycle facility recommendations across plans remain inconsistent. This baseline informed the Comprehensive Plan's focus on addressing parking, wayfinding, and bicycle facilities as interconnected systems within a constrained physical environment.

Regional Context and Network Coordination

Regional frameworks, including the *Delaware County 2035 Transportation Plan (2017)*, *Delaware County Transit Station Needs Report (2017)*, the *Trolley Modernization Plan (2022)*, the *Vision Zero Action Plan (2025)*, and the *DVRPC Regional Trails Program (2024)*, reinforced Media's role within a broader transportation network while highlighting the need for stronger alignment between local and regional efforts. This context guided the Comprehensive Plan's emphasis on coordination with County, SEPTA, and regional partners to align local priorities with regional safety, transit, and trail initiatives.



Covers from previous planning activities

Community Input

Feedback gathered during the engagement process reflects a community that strongly values Media's walkability and human-scale character, while expressing concern about safety, access, and the day-to-day functioning of the transportation system.

Safety and Everyday Walkability

Residents consistently emphasized the importance of improving pedestrian and bicycle safety as a core priority. Community input highlighted concerns about traffic speeds, challenging crossings, and conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists, particularly along key corridors and near the downtown. Participants expressed strong support for investments that strengthen everyday walkability, improve comfort for people of all ages and abilities, and reinforce Media's identity as a place where walking and biking are viable, safe ways to get around.

Parking, Wayfinding, and Access Challenges

At the same time, parking availability, cost, and wayfinding emerged as recurring challenges affecting residents, businesses, employees, and visitors. Feedback underscored that parking issues extend beyond convenience, influencing downtown vitality, redevelopment feasibility, employee access, community programming, and emergency response. Participants frequently noted confusion around where to park and how to navigate the system, reinforcing the need for better coordination of parking and access management.

Coordination, Operations, and System Capacity

Community members also highlighted the importance of coordination across transportation systems in a Borough with a very small footprint. Engagement revealed an understanding that decisions related to streets, parking, transit access, and operations are interconnected and must be managed collectively. In addition, stakeholders emphasized that day-to-day operations and maintenance, such as pavement and sidewalk conditions, streetscape quality, wayfinding, and enforcement, play a meaningful role in shaping safety, economic vitality, and the overall experience of moving through Media. This feedback reinforced the need for a shared framework to guide tradeoffs and prioritize transportation investments.

Slow moving traffic on State Street is overflowed onto side streets which creates a headache during rush hour. Better traffic flow in town improves residents lives.

Media has made great improvements in this regard during the past decade, but more can be done to encourage cycling/walking.

Walking is one of the main reasons for moving here. Would like to see some traffic calming measures and protected bike lanes on some of the busier streets.

We need more crosswalks to recognize the places where pedestrians can cross, and give them a legal outlet to get from one side to another rather than doing it unsafely.

Goals and Recommendations

1. **Improve Safety and Eliminate Serious Injuries and Fatalities on Roadways**

As a regional destination and county seat, Media faces the constant challenge of balancing its role as a hub with its identity as a residential community. High traffic volumes, speeding vehicles, and unsafe driving not only degrade the quality of life for residents and visitors but also pose real safety risks. The Borough has adopted a Vision Zero commitment, establishing a goal of eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries. This Comprehensive Plan builds on that commitment by prioritizing street design, policies, and investments that place the safety of all road users first.

A. Continue to implement and update the Traffic Calming Plan. The 2020 Traffic Calming Plan provided a community-vetted roadmap for taming vehicle speeds, yet several critical recommendations on state-owned roads were unable to move forward due to regulatory hurdles. The Borough should continue to systematically advance the approved local interventions, such as speed humps and curb extensions, to ensure residential streets remain safe. Simultaneously, the Borough should work with PennDOT to re-examine the specific projects that were previously denied, exploring alternative engineering solutions or updated design standards that can achieve the intended safety outcomes within the state's permitting framework. Consolidating the other recommendations from this plan into the Traffic Calming Plan and potentially re-branding it as a Traffic Calming and Safety Improvement Plan, would help ensure that efforts are coordinated. Figure 17 illustrates where the Traffic Calming Plan and the County's Vision Zero plans overlap.

B. Implement safety improvements at the “5-Points” intersection. The five-legged intersection of Providence Road, State Road, Monroe Street, Jackson Street, and Summer Street presents a unique safety challenge for the Borough. Located near the Route 1 Bypass off-ramp, this complex junction is characterized by long crossing distances and fast turning movements that create hazardous conditions for pedestrians, evidenced by a documented history of 28 crashes between 2020 and 2025. To address these risks, the Borough should move forward with the design and construction of the targeted safety improvements identified in the 2020 Traffic Calming Plan and the

Figure 17. Traffic Calming Projects



Capital Improvement Plan. This includes installing high-visibility stamped asphalt crosswalks, upgrading the existing “pork chop” island to physically slow vehicle turning speeds, and shortening crossing distances on Monroe Street with ADA-compliant ramps and accessible signals.

- C. Address safety deficiencies along West Baltimore Avenue.** Delaware County’s Vision Zero analysis has designated the western section of Baltimore Avenue as a “Corridor of Concern,” a classification driven by a history of crashes and documented high-risk driving behaviors. Field data indicates that less than 30% of vehicles travel at or below the speed limit on this stretch, creating a hostile environment for pedestrians and residents. To reverse this trend, the Borough should coordinate with PennDOT to prioritize this corridor for rigorous traffic calming interventions. Improvements should focus on changes in physical design that naturally induce slower speeds and protect the high volume of pedestrians accessing local businesses.
- D. Target systemic risk factors using Vision Zero crash profiles.** Rather than waiting for fatalities to occur at specific “hotspots” to justify investment, the Borough should adopt a proactive, systemic approach to safety. Delaware County’s analysis has identified more than a dozen locations within Media that meet specific “crash profiles” or geometric or operational conditions statistically most likely to result in severe injuries or fatalities. In addition, the plan identifies potential countermeasures for each profile. These are safety strategies that can be implemented to improve roadway safety. Going forward, the Borough should incorporate these strategies into its ongoing efforts to implement traffic calming and other roadway improvements.
- E. Leverage available funding sources to improve safety and mobility.** The Borough should continue to apply for funding, leveraging the County’s and DVRPC’s Safety Action Plans as resources. It should also monitor legislation at the state and federal levels, should additional authorization make more funding available. Finally, the Borough should also consider applying through funding streams like the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), and the Safe Streets & Roads For All (SS4A) program.

The Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program offers a unique opportunity for small municipalities to apply directly to the federal government for safety funding. Designed to reduce roadway fatalities, the program allows towns and villages to secure grants for both developing “Safety Action Plans” and constructing improvements, leveling the playing field for communities that often lack the resources to compete for state-controlled dollars. However, this direct funding line is scheduled to sunset with the Fiscal Year 2026 authorization, making the upcoming grant cycles the final opportunities to secure these specific federal resources.

2. Enhance the Pedestrian Network

Walking is foundational to Media’s identity as “Everybody’s Hometown.” For many residents, walking is not just recreation but a primary mode of transportation for commuting, errands, and social connection. To support this, the pedestrian network must be treated as critical infrastructure that is continuous, safe, and accessible to people of all abilities. The Borough’s goal is to ensure that every resident can safely walk to the downtown, schools, and transit stations without encountering barriers or safety hazards.

A. Conduct a comprehensive sidewalk and crosswalk inventory.

While the Borough’s walkability is a major asset, gaps in the network and aging infrastructure create barriers for residents, particularly those with mobility challenges. The Borough should undertake a comprehensive inventory of all sidewalks and crosswalks to establish a baseline of current conditions. This assessment should document physical conditions, identify gaps in connectivity, and evaluate compliance with accessibility standards. The result is a foundation for a data-driven investment framework.

B. Develop a strategic pedestrian improvement plan. With finite resources for capital improvements, the Borough cannot address every infrastructure need simultaneously. The Borough should utilize the inventory data (above) to develop a prioritized Strategic Improvement Plan that targets investment where it will have the greatest impact. This plan should prioritize high-traffic corridors, specifically focusing on ensuring there are safe routes to school and strong connections to the Media Station and trolley line (also called “last mile” connections). The strategic plan will help ensure that improvements directly enhance safety and connectivity for the most vulnerable users.

C. Improve connections to the SEPTA Regional Rail Station. The Media Regional Rail Station serves as a vital gateway, providing direct transit access to Center City Philadelphia and connecting the Borough to regional employment hubs such as the Wawa headquarters, Swarthmore College, Lansdowne, and the University City medical and academic campuses. Despite this proximity, a significant gap exists in the high-quality pedestrian infrastructure needed to link the Borough’s residential core to the station.

As the Borough advances plans for the new Mixed Industrial District along Brooke Street, which will introduce a greater concentration of residential and creative office uses, it should also explore how to integrate multimodal connectivity into the area’s redesign. The Borough should actively explore the feasibility of dedicated pedestrian and bicycle paths running parallel to the rail line, transforming an underutilized industrial edge into a functional transit corridor. By prioritizing these “last-mile” connections, the Borough can fully leverage its transit assets to create a seamless, car-light link between local neighborhoods and the broader regional rail.

3. Create a safe and connected bicycle network

Media has the density and mix of uses to be a premier bicycling community, yet the current infrastructure limits ridership to only the most confident cyclists. Residents have expressed significant interest in expanding the network to support active lifestyles and local businesses. The Borough’s goal is to transition from a fragmented system to a comprehensive, low-stress network that makes cycling a viable, safe transportation option for residents of all ages and abilities.

A. Transition from “sharrows” to dedicated facilities. Currently, the Borough’s bicycle network consists entirely of sharrows, a designation that requires cyclists to share the lane with moving vehicles. As noted in the existing conditions, these facilities provide no physical protection and rely entirely on driver compliance rather than street design to ensure safety. To meaningfully alter driver behavior and improve safety, the Borough should assess opportunities for dedicated bicycle infrastructure, such as protected bike lanes or neighborhood greenways, wherever feasible. Because Media’s street network is constrained, this should begin with a feasibility analysis to determine which corridors can accommodate dedicated facilities.

B. Advance the Media-Smedley Connector Trail – Courthouse

segment. Connecting the Borough to the regional trail network is a high priority for residents, yet critical gaps remain in the “last mile” access to Smedley Park. The Borough should move forward with the immediate designation and marking of the “Courthouse segment” along Front and Second Streets as a formal bicycle route. While long-term goals may call for separated facilities, clearly marking and signing these streets as shared bicycle facilities now will establish a vital link in the regional system, improving wayfinding and driver awareness along this key recreational corridor.

C. Prepare a new bicycle plan with a focus on upgrading facilities.

While various planning efforts, including the 2016 Bicycle Plan and the 2021 Open Space Plan, have identified potential bicycle routes, these efforts have not been comprehensive or fully implemented. The Borough should commission a new, comprehensive Bicycle Master Plan that moves beyond shared lanes to identify opportunities for protected or dedicated infrastructure. This updated plan should audit existing street widths to find space for higher-quality facilities, prioritize safe connections to the trolley and train station, and consolidate the findings of previous studies into a single, actionable implementation strategy.

4. Modernize parking and curb management

Parking in a vibrant community is a complex challenge that requires balancing the needs of businesses, residents, and visitors. With the downtown thriving and the municipal garage reaching the end of its useful life, the Borough faces a critical inflection point. The Borough’s goal is to move beyond static parking counts to a dynamic management approach that reduces friction, protects residential quality of life, leverages technology, and supports placemaking improvements such as seating, shade trees, and public art. Improvements recommended in the Economic Development section and other pedestrian-oriented streetscape enhancements can make walks from parking areas more engaging and reduce some of the psychological stress associated with parking.

A. Conduct a comprehensive parking supply and demand study.

Parking management relies on accurate, up-to-date data, yet the Borough’s most recent major studies are nearly a decade old. To make informed infrastructure decisions, the Borough should commission a borough-wide modern Parking Study that captures

the post-pandemic reality of travel and storage. This study must include a detailed evaluation of supply and demand across the entire parking and loading ecosystem. It should analyze the Baltimore Ave Garage, the downtown core, and the adjacent residential neighborhoods where “spillover” is a friction point. The study should also investigate how private garages are being utilized, including whether their use for storage or other non-parking purposes may be contributing to on-street parking demand. It should assess whether existing parking resources, including the Baltimore Avenue Garage, are adequate to serve visitors, employees, and downtown businesses, and should identify strategies to maintain or expand convenient public parking supply near the downtown. Potential solutions may include public-private partnerships or coordination with Delaware County at existing sites on Orange Street. Furthermore, it should include a technical analysis of current land use and parking conditions to determine whether zoning standards align with actual utilization rates.

- B. Update parking requirements to facilitate office-to-residential conversions.** The post-pandemic market has created a clear trend of converting underutilized professional offices in the Office District back into residential uses. Many of these buildings were originally constructed as homes, making them ideal for housing, yet the Borough’s current parking requirements often serve as the primary obstacle to these beneficial conversions. To support adaptive reuse, the Borough should update zoning standards to allow for modest reductions in parking mandates where on-street capacity is sufficient. Furthermore, the Borough should permit stacked (tandem) parking configurations by-right for these projects, accepting this common residential arrangement to unlock housing supply without requiring new impervious surfaces.
- C. Implement a modern curbside management strategy.** The rise in on-demand delivery and ridesharing services has fundamentally altered how streets are utilized, creating frequent congestion from double-parked vehicles on State Street. To address this, the Borough should transition its focus from solely managing vehicle storage to actively managing curb access. This involves designating specific “flex zones” at key intersections or high-activity clusters that are reserved for active loading and unloading rather than long-term parking. The Borough should work with the MBA and other stakeholders to identify priority locations, peak demand periods, and operational needs for businesses. By formalizing these spaces, potentially using signage that adjusts regulations based on peak evening demand, the Borough can reduce travel lane blockages and improve safety for all road users.

5. Leverage Trolley Modernization to enhance State Street

A. Continue to advocate for long-term high-quality transit service.

Trolleys are the backbone of Media's identity as a transit-oriented community, providing a unique and essential link between the Borough, Eastern Delaware County, and the 69th Street Transportation Center. Likewise, regional rail serves as an important connection for both residents and those commuting into work in the Borough. This service is a critical economic and social lifeline, offering reliable access for residents commuting to regional jobs and for the thousands of employees who travel into the Borough daily. As the regional transit system faces increasing operational and financial strain, the Borough should continue to affirmatively assert that the continuation and improvement of transit service is a non-negotiable priority.

B. Leverage Trolley Modernization to enhance State Street. SEPTA's

Trolley Modernization program serves as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to fundamentally elevate the State Street experience and reinforce its identity as Media's signature pedestrian-oriented district. By proactively partnering with SEPTA, the Media Business Authority (MBA), and local stakeholders, the Borough can ensure that regional transit investments are harnessed to achieve local placemaking, safety, and greening priorities. The Borough should strongly advocate for a "complete streets" redesign of the roadway and station areas, integrating raised intersections and curb extensions (bump-outs) to dramatically improve pedestrian safety while embedding public art, green stormwater infrastructure (GSI), and bicycle parking directly into the new station footprints. Likewise, the Borough should continue to engage SEPTA the potential for double tracking State Street to permit normal bidirectional trolley operations.

Beyond physical infrastructure, this modernization allows the Borough to evaluate strategic pedestrian enhancements along key blocks, potentially reallocating curb space to expand sidewalks and strengthen physical connections to the Plum Street Mall. The Borough should advocate for additional feasibility studies to develop and design creative placemaking, safety, and other improvements to complement the project. By optimizing the streetscape for people rather than just throughput, the Borough can expand the

vibrant “living room” feel of the downtown core. To ensure these enhancements support a thriving commercial environment, the design process should be tightly integrated with the Borough’s parking and curbside management strategy, balancing high-quality public spaces with the functional loading and access needs essential to local business success.

- C. Work aggressively to mitigate impacts of Trolley Modernization on businesses and residents.** While the Trolley Modernization program offers long-term benefits, the scale and duration of such a significant infrastructure project present real concerns regarding the daily operations and economic health of the State Street District. To safeguard the vitality of the local economy, the Borough should prioritize a “partnership-first” approach, ensuring that the Media Business Authority (MBA) and local business owners are central participants in the process from the final design phase through the completion of construction. This engagement is critical to ensuring that engineering decisions, such as track alignment and platform placement, are balanced with the functional needs of a thriving commercial corridor.

To mitigate disruption, the Borough should advocate for a methodical, block-by-block construction schedule that maintains pedestrian access and limits the simultaneous loss of parking and loading zones across the district. Furthermore, the Borough should request SEPTA to establish and fund a robust, multi-channel marketing and communication strategy to inform the public that Media remains “Open for Business” during construction. By asking for SEPTA to also fund associated sidewalk, crosswalk, and streetscape upgrades, the Borough can ensure that the project results in a modernized, high-quality environment that justifies the temporary challenges of construction and secures the long-term success of the business community.

6. Incorporate new transportation technology while protecting Media's character

The rapid proliferation of emerging transportation technologies is reshaping how people move, creating both new opportunities for connectivity and new demands on physical infrastructure. From electric vehicles (EVs) to e-scooters and the prospect of autonomous fleets, the Borough must adapt to these innovations. The Borough should embrace the value that these technologies bring to improve mobility and sustainability, while establishing clear guardrails that protect the safety of pedestrians and the historic character of Media's neighborhoods.

A. Incorporate micromobility planning into the Bicycle Plan.

Micromobility options, such as e-bikes and e-scooters, offer valuable "last-mile" connections to regional transit while providing critical mobility for residents without vehicle access, including youth and seniors. However, the regulatory landscape remains fluid, as the State has not yet advanced clear statutes regarding licensing and classification, leaving municipalities to navigate this uncertainty. Rather than creating a standard-alone regulation, the Borough should advocate for state-wide policy.

In the meantime, the Borough should recognize that micromobility infrastructure is likely to align with the needs of cyclists. As such, the Borough should begin integrating micromobility strategies directly into the proposed Bicycle Master Plan. This unified approach should designate operational zones and explore the full range of options for how these devices can operate safely in Media. It should also identify locations for parking corrals near transit hubs, commercial centers, schools, and civic centers. By planning for cyclists and device users together, the Borough can build a cohesive network that reduces sidewalk clutter and ensures safety for all road users.

B. Explore a shared electric jitney service to enhance local mobility and reduce parking pressure.

The Borough's dense commercial core and aging parking infrastructure necessitate a transition toward flexible, non-single occupancy vehicle solutions. To achieve this, the Borough should execute a feasibility study to evaluate the design, operations, and potential public-private partnership structure for an electric shuttle circulator that links residential neighborhoods

directly to the State Street Business District and regional transit hubs. By establishing a service model that prioritizes first- and last-mile connectivity, the Borough can expand equitable access for older adults and zero-car households while simultaneously reducing the demand for new impervious parking surfaces. Furthermore, this initiative would serve as a replicable, low-emission pilot for the region, aligning local infrastructure with modern sustainability and air quality goals

- C. Continue to support Electric Vehicle (EV) charging.** The transition to electric vehicles creates a specific infrastructure challenge for Media, where many residents live in homes without driveways or garages. The Borough should continue to permit residents to create curbside charging options that are powered from residential buildings. Meanwhile, the Borough should look for outside grant funding that might support necessary utility investments. The Borough should hold off on extensive planning efforts, unless it begins to see an influx in demand that cannot be accommodated on a home-by-home basis. At the same time, the Borough should continue to prioritize the installation of public charging hubs in municipal lots and garages.
- D. Monitor driverless vehicle progress and adapt curbside policies.** While fully autonomous vehicle fleets are not yet a daily reality in Media, the technology is advancing rapidly and has the potential to eventually transform how people move. As driverless capabilities expand, the demand for curb space will shift dramatically from long-term vehicle storage to high-frequency pick-up and drop-off maneuvers. The Borough should actively monitor industry developments and state regulations regarding autonomous vehicles to stay ahead of these changes. As adoption increases, the Borough must be prepared to iteratively update its curbside management policy (see *Modernize parking and curb management*). Furthermore, should autonomous vehicles become widely adopted and parking demand substantially decrease, the Borough should proactively engage residents and business owners to develop strategies for re-imagining and re-purposing these valuable areas of the public realm.

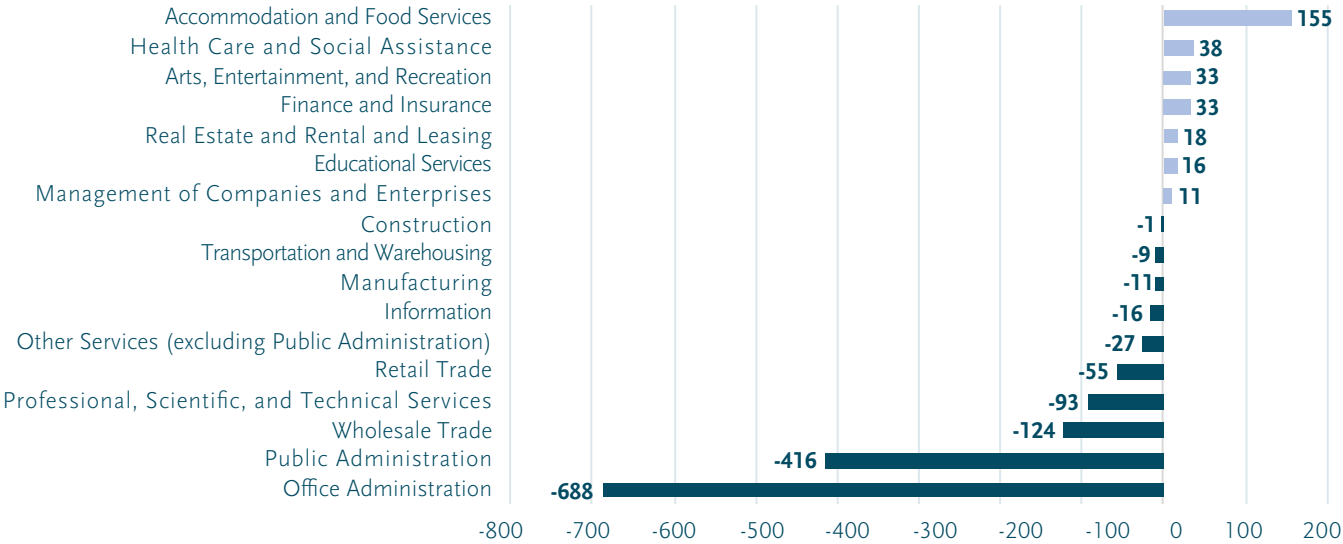




Economic Development

In 2035, Media will thrive as a resilient regional employment hub and a premier destination for independent businesses, artisan makers, and experiential retail. The downtown core will remain the beating heart of civic and social life, supported by a healthy diversity of storefronts that meet both the daily needs of residents and the interests of regional visitors. While a dynamic “shop local” spirit drives activity on State Street, there will be new opportunities for professional and creative industry and commercial development, ensuring a sustainable tax base that supports the Borough’s unique civic character.

Figure 19. Employment Change by Industry, 2018 - 2022



Source: US Census Bureau, LEHD OnTheMap 2022



Businesses featuring during Dining Under the Stars in Media

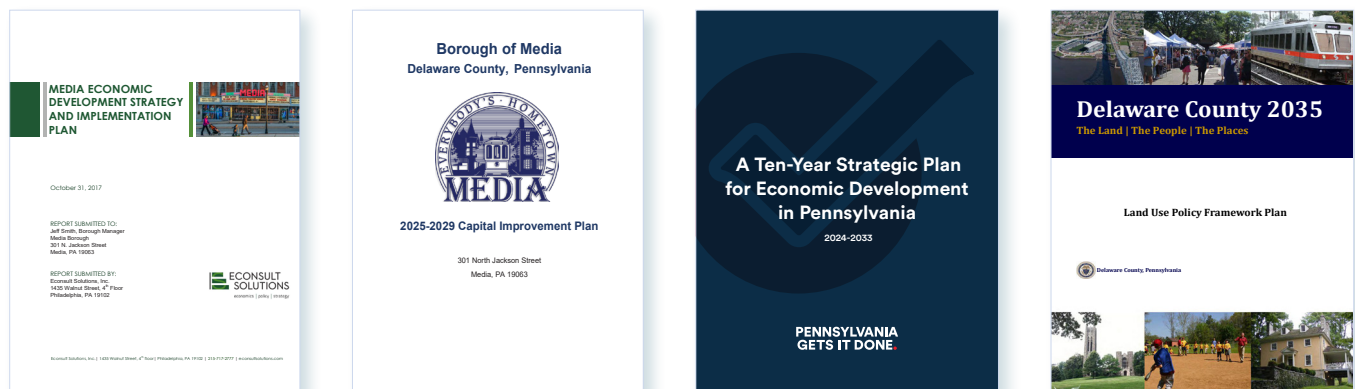
Previous Plans

The recommendations in this section build on a focused set of Borough and Regional planning efforts addressing economic development strategy.

Strengthening the Economy

The *2017 Economic Development Strategy and Implementation Plan* focused on strengthening Media's economy while preserving its small-town character by supporting downtown vitality, leveraging walkability, transit access, and cultural assets, and guiding growth through mixed-use development and updated zoning. It

identified challenges such as rising commercial rents, limited retail diversity, underutilized public spaces, housing affordability pressures, and auto-oriented development patterns, and outlined implementation actions to address these issues, many of which later required updating as conditions evolved. The *2024 Pennsylvania State Economic Development Plan* complemented these local efforts by prioritizing downtown and Main Street investment, infrastructure modernization, housing expansion, small business support, and innovation to promote resilient and inclusive economic growth.



Covers from previous planning activities

Community Input

The community survey and stakeholder engagement findings demonstrate that Media has a strong and resilient local economic base, supported by a highly engaged resident population. Most respondents are long-term residents who report frequent dining and shopping in the Borough, primarily due to walkability, convenience, and the presence of small, locally owned businesses. This pattern is reinforced by the Media Business Association’s intentional efforts to recruit unique retail tenants that distinguish downtown Media from more conventional commercial districts.

Dining in Media

Overall satisfaction with dining options is high, and while satisfaction with shopping options is slightly lower, it remains generally positive. These results indicate that Media’s downtown and neighborhood commercial areas are functioning well and contribute meaningfully to the Borough’s identity and quality of life.

Desire for Greater Variety of Services

Residents expressed a desire for greater variety in retail, dining, entertainment, and leisure uses, as well as enhancements to public spaces that support outdoor seating and community activity.

Concerns About Parking

Parking availability and accessibility were also cited as ongoing concerns that influence shopping and dining behavior. Stakeholder input aligned closely with survey results, underscoring the importance of strategic, incremental improvements that expand choice and vibrancy while maintaining Media’s small-town character and strong sense of place.

Figure 21. Survey Respondent Characteristics

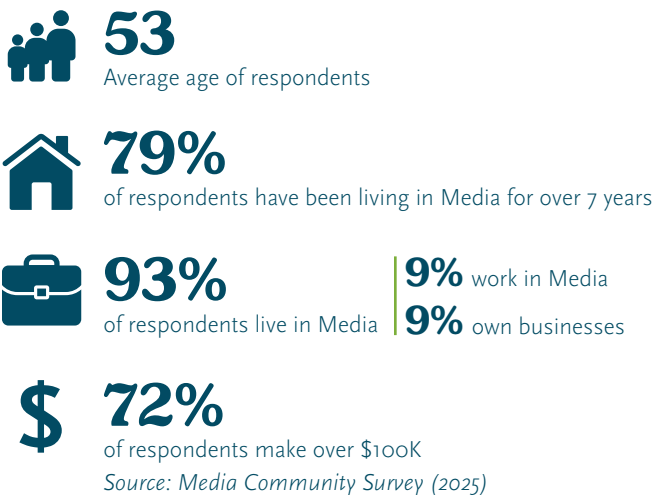
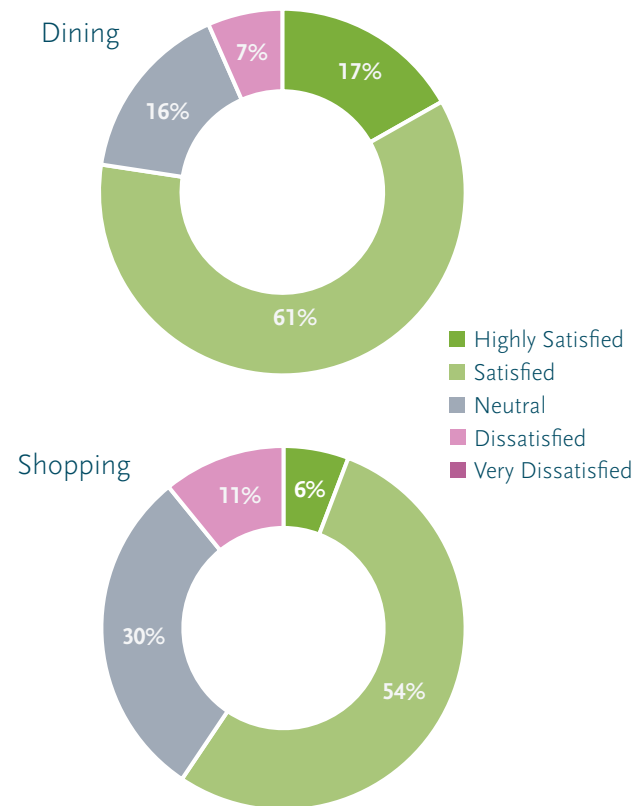


Figure 20. Survey Respondent Satisfaction with Dining and Shopping Options in Media



Source: Media Community Survey (2025)

Goals and Recommendations

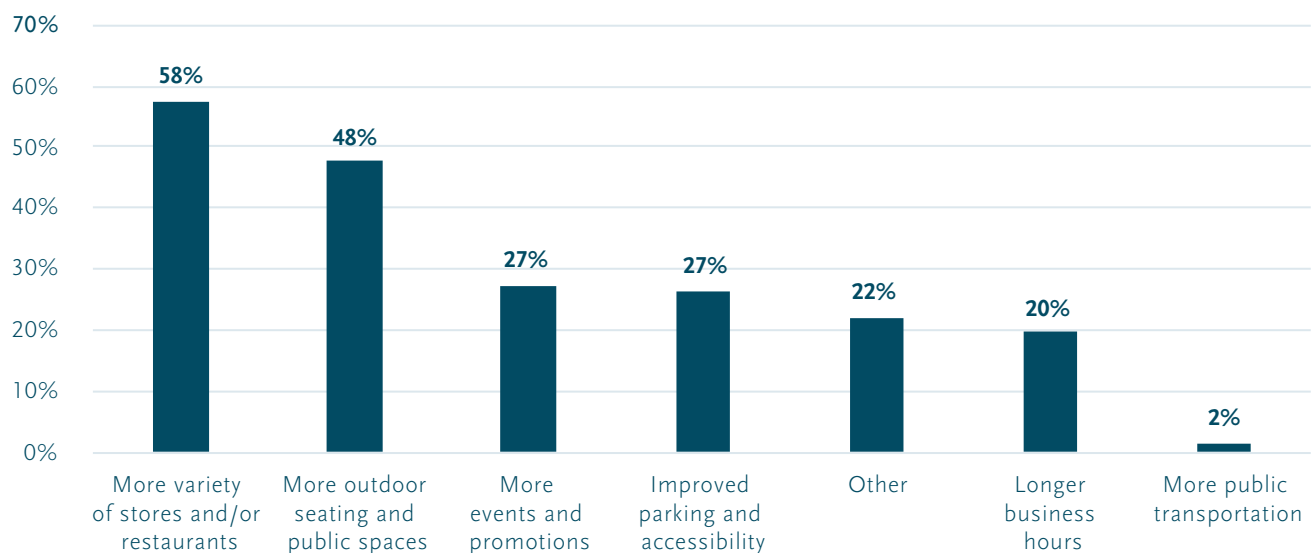
1. Enhance business variety and diversity

Media's downtown continues to function as an active commercial center, but the existing mix of businesses does not fully address identified needs. High rents, low vacancy rates, and limited storefront availability constrain opportunities for new businesses to locate and expand. In addition, conditions related to parking, signage, and pedestrian access influence business visibility and customer activity across downtown areas.

A. Focus on missing business types, particularly entertainment and leisure uses, and specific needs such as bakeries, apparel, home goods, experience retail, and fitness centers. Market conditions have supported strong growth in restaurant uses, resulting in a concentration that limits other retail and service options. As a result, some everyday needs and non-food destinations are underrepresented. Expanding the range of business types would help address these gaps and contribute to a more balanced and resilient local economy. (Figure 22)

B. Support a business mix that serves both residents and regional visitors. Downtown Media serves both daily needs and destination activity. Businesses oriented toward residents support quality of life and routine activity, while destination uses contribute to visitation and foot traffic. Maintaining a balance between these functions supports consistent economic activity and reinforces downtown vitality.

Figure 22. Survey Responses to “What changes or improvements would encourage you to dine or shop more frequently in Media?”



Source: Media Community Survey (2025)

2. Improve infrastructure and accessibility

Community input has identified parking availability, sidewalk conditions, lighting, and public space quality as main factors influencing both day-to-day commerce and long-term business viability. As these infrastructure elements directly affect how residents and visitors navigate, experience, and engage with downtown, addressing them becomes key to sustaining Media's downtown as a walkable, vibrant commercial center.

- A. Downtown and business focused parking study.** As part of the previously suggested parking study, Media should conduct a downtown and business focused parking study to help understand how current parking conditions support or hinder commerce, so the Borough can develop targeted strategies that increase accessibility while preserving the compact, walkable character that defines downtown.
- B. Downtown and business focused sidewalk and crosswalk inventory.** As part of the previously suggested sidewalk and crosswalk inventory, Media should conduct a downtown and business focused sidewalk and crosswalk inventory. By documenting current conditions, cataloging maintenance needs, and establishing objective criteria for prioritization, Media can develop a multi-year capital improvement program that transforms the pedestrian experience downtown.
- C. Expand Cultural Programming and Arts Investment Downtown.** Residents and visitors consistently identify arts, entertainment, and live music as top priorities for strengthening Media's downtown experience, with 50 percent of survey respondents calling for more entertainment and leisure options. The Media Theatre is a vital community asset that would benefit from significant public and/or private investment. A revitalized Theatre operating multiple nights per week with a diverse program of music, film, comedy, dance, and theatrical performances would deepen the State Street District's identity as a regional destination, generate consistent foot traffic for surrounding businesses, and further solidify Media's draw for visitors from across the region. Complementing this anchor investment, a robust mural arts program led by the Media Arts Council, building on the Council's ongoing work on mural zoning, regulations, and funding, could further enhance the downtown streetscape and reinforce Media's creative character.

D. Create placemaking opportunities. Public spaces such as Plum Street Mall and other downtown gathering areas represent opportunities to strengthen the relationship between businesses and the public realm. Community members have expressed appreciation for Media's existing public spaces while also recognizing untapped potential to make these areas more inviting, flexible, and responsive to how people use downtown. Strategic placemaking through enhanced seating, thoughtful landscaping, seasonal programming opportunities, and design elements that invite lingering, can transform underutilized spaces into assets that extend the downtown experience beyond storefront transactions. The Borough should continue the Plum Street Mall improvements and assess the feasibility of widening sidewalks along State Street adjacent to the Mall, extending park improvements to the northern and southern blocks, and connecting all three into a unified, continuous pedestrian corridor from State Street to 2nd Street.

3. Strengthen Media Business Authority operations

The Media Business Authority (MBA) serves as a critical partner in Media's economic development ecosystem. Community feedback and previous planning efforts have recognized the MBA as a valuable asset to the economic development landscape. The walkable downtown is a primary factor in attracting residents to the borough and keeping strong property values. The MBA is a key partner which contributes to the success of the downtown area, commonly referred to as the State Street District. This goal focuses on re-imagining the MBA's role, beyond events, to align with broader Borough economic development objectives, ensuring the organization has both the mission clarity and financial stability necessary to drive sustained downtown vitality.

A. Support the MBA's goal to make a pristine State Street District. The MBA envisions the State Street District maintaining a high level of maintenance and capital investment. This means, adequate, clean, trash and recycling receptacles with regular pickups, vigorous street cleaning and sidewalk and curb replacement would satisfy this goal. Year-round planter management, upgraded street lighting, a district-wide public address system and public restrooms would make Media a premier destination. Adding safe crosswalks indicated with unmistakable signage will further enhance the State Street District's walkability. Much of the State Street District's maintenance is the

responsibility of the borough's Public Works Department. An increase in the department's budget and staff may be required to appropriately service the district.

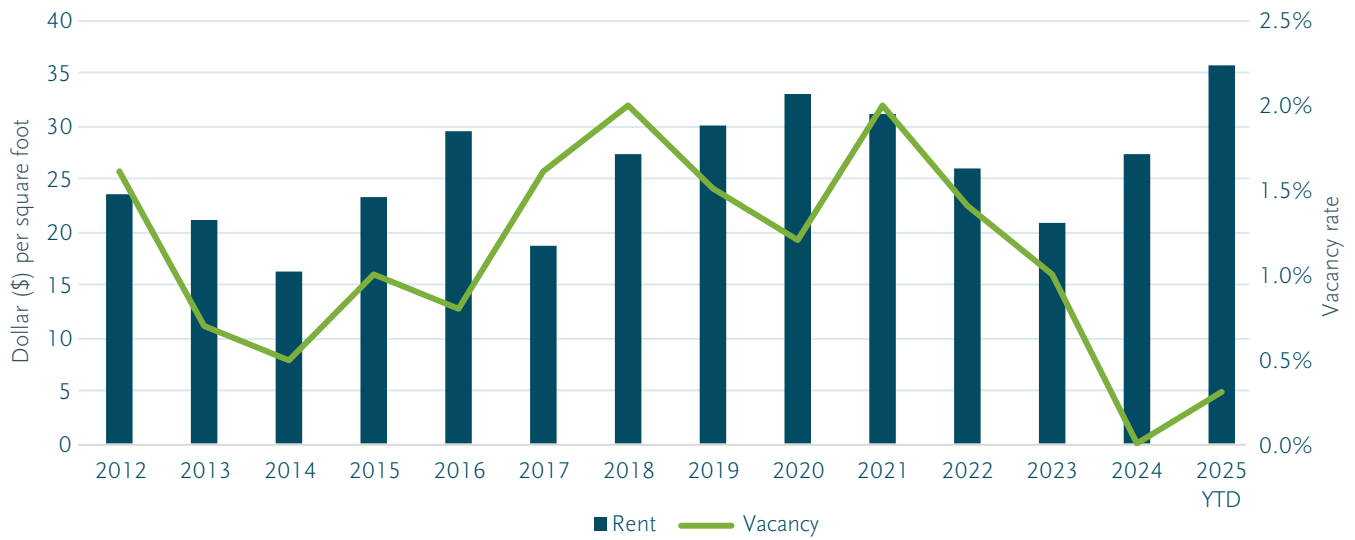
- B. Establish sustainable funding mechanisms that support long-term organizational capacity.** The MBA currently operates through a combination of Borough contribution (40% of its budget) and event-generated income, a funding model that constrains strategic planning and limits the organization's ability to invest in non-event activities. Diversifying funding sources could include competitive planning grants, private public partnerships, expanded membership programs, or special-assessment funding such as a Business Improvement District (BID). Increased funding will allow the MBA to continue its mission of business attraction, support and advocacy, increase staff to a recommended number of three and continue to produce world-class events that draw thousands of visitors to Media to patronize State Street District businesses.
- C. Support the implementation of the 5-year strategic plan for the MBA.** In 2026, the MBA will complete a 5-year strategic plan for the organization, defining its mission and purpose while identifying the most effective ways to enhance the State Street District's business community and to firmly establish Media as a desirable shopping and dining destination. The Borough should review the plan and assess ways to support the organizations growth as it aligns with Council's vision.

4. Improve property owner engagement and market dynamics

Property owners play a central role in shaping leasing conditions, reinvestment decisions, and overall market dynamics. Improved coordination among property owners, businesses, and the Borough can help align private decisions with public economic goals. This goal focuses on building relationships that align private investment decisions with community priorities, creating market conditions that support both property owner success and a thriving, accessible local economy.

- A. Strengthen property owner engagement in collaborative economic development efforts.** Property owners possess valuable insights about market conditions, tenant challenges, and building constraints that can inform public policy, while also benefiting from coordinated efforts around business recruitment, district marketing, and infrastructure improvements. Regular communication and collaboration can support shared objectives. Increased engagement can also support reinvestment and adaptive use of existing spaces. Coordination helps address challenges that affect business turnover and long-term viability.
- B. Address high rent barriers that prevent new small businesses from entering the market.** Market analysis and business owner feedback have identified high commercial rents as a barrier preventing new entrepreneurs, particularly locally owned small businesses, from entering Media's commercial market. The Borough has an opportunity to provide incentives, such as fee waivers for licensing and permitting and recognition programs for property owners who offer below-market starter leases, to reduce upfront cost burdens for emerging businesses and encourage locally based property owners to offer flexible lease terms. Technical assistance can be coordinated through the MBA, Pennsylvania DCED, the Delaware County Economic Development Corporation, and regional Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) to connect entrepreneurs with business planning support, cash flow analysis, lease negotiation guidance, and supplemental financing through the Delaware County Local Development Corporation (LDC), which offers working capital loans help cover early-stage operating costs. Pop-up or temporary retail programs can also allow new businesses to test concepts in Media's market before committing to permanent space. Potential locally seeded assistance fund to provide first-year rent or buildout support for qualifying businesses. By implementing these strategies, Media can create a path for small-scale entrepreneurs to access commercial space, demonstrate municipal commitment to preserving local business character, and establish market conditions that balance property owner financial needs with the community's economic development priorities (Figure 23)

Figure 23. Media's Retail Rent and Vacancy over Time



Source: CoStar (2025)



Dining Under the Stars in Media

FOCUS ON

Dining Under the Stars

Media Borough's Dining Under the Stars initiative builds on a strong restaurant district, a compact and walkable State Street corridor, and active community participation. The Borough converts State Street into a pedestrian-focused dining environment on a weekly basis every May through September, and engages more than two dozen restaurants. By reallocating street space for outdoor dining, the program increases business visibility, encourages longer visits downtown, and reinforces Media's role as a local gathering place and regional destination.

The MBA leads the initiative through consistent scheduling, direct coordination with business owners, and clear public communication. Through predictable operations and shared expectations, Dining Under the Stars strengthens business continuity, supports customer demand, and sustains the small-scale, locally focused character of Media's downtown.

5. Support existing business success

Existing businesses form the foundation of Media's local economy and contribute to the Borough's character. Community engagement has revealed deep appreciation for Media's small-scale, locally owned business mix, with residents consistently expressing loyalty to establishments that provide personalized service, authentic experiences, and meaningful connection to place. The Borough's ability to support their continued success is important not only for economic stability but for preserving the qualities that make Media unique. This goal focuses on leveraging existing strengths, addressing operational challenges proactively, and ensuring that the businesses currently serving the community have the support and visibility necessary to thrive.

- A. Build on high customer satisfaction.** Media's existing businesses benefit from strong local support, with resident feedback consistently highlighting positive shopping and dining experiences. This foundation of customer satisfaction represents a significant competitive advantage that distinguishes Media from larger commercial centers. The Borough has an opportunity to amplify this strength through initiatives that deepen the connection between businesses and their customer base. The MBA already actively supports this work through shop local campaigns, promotions, and events that highlight downtown businesses. Building on that foundation, the Borough and MBA can further strengthen customer loyalty through targeted campaigns, customer appreciation events, and communication strategies that help residents discover the full breadth of what downtown offers.
- B. Maintain the small, friendly, local business character that residents value.** The scale and character of local businesses are central to Media's identity. Preserving this character supports differentiation from surrounding commercial areas. A focus on locally oriented businesses reinforces community character.
- C. Address operational challenges such as construction disruptions and street closures related to Trolley Modernization.** Infrastructure projects, construction activity, and street closures related to Trolley Modernization can disrupt daily business operations. Business owners and the MBA have expressed concerns about the cumulative impact of these disruptions on customer access, sales continuity, and overall viability during extended construction periods. The Borough has an opportunity to minimize these impacts by proactively engaging with SEPTA to negotiate meaningful commitments around

construction phasing, advance communications, and temporary wayfinding that keeps businesses visible during active work. Examples of mitigation programs to offset some construction-related losses are: dedicated business interruption grant funds tied directly to demonstrable revenue losses, such as LA Metro's Business Interruption Fund, which provides grants to small businesses along construction corridors, municipal construction mitigation grant programs that cover marketing and operating costs during disruption periods, and coordinated loan funds established in partnership with local lenders or Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs). Coordinating this effort through the MBA, which has direct relationships with business owners, would ensure that support reaches those most impacted.

D. Strengthen marketing coordination and regional positioning.

Residents and business owners have identified opportunities to increase regional visibility, improve wayfinding for first-time visitors, and create consistent messaging that communicates what makes Media distinctive. The MBA already engages in marketing Media and their events, especially through its partnership with the Delaware County Tourism Bureau, which enhances the organization's efforts to serve as a destination marketing organization. However, a strengthened marketing approach can develop unified branding that highlights the downtown's walkable scale, local business character, and authentic experiences while ensuring individual businesses benefit from increased overall visitation. Media can amplify the collective appeal of its commercial district, support businesses that lack resources for extensive individual marketing, and reinforce the Borough's position as both a local and regional destination.

6. Improve property conditions

Community input and previous plans identified property maintenance and code enforcement as factors influencing the overall business environment. Participants supported consistent enforcement to maintain safe, accessible, and well-maintained commercial properties. Strengthening inspection and compliance was viewed as supporting both economic activity and community expectations.

A. Increase enforcement through Inspection and Compliance.

Community members have expressed a desire for enforcement that holds property owners accountable, viewing code compliance as both a shared responsibility and a practical investment in the district's future. Through a strengthened inspection and compliance program, the Borough can incentivize owners to keep maintaining their properties, which in turn will support businesses, protect public safety, and reinforce the quality expectations that define Media's commercial identity. As a first step, the Borough should identify and prioritize the most frequently cited compliance issues (i.e., sidewalks and awnings). By focusing enforcement resources on strategic high-visibility issues, the Borough can generate tangible, visible improvements that build public confidence in the program.

7. Expand opportunities for economic investment

Media's economic success is currently concentrated along a few primary corridors, leading to high rents and limited physical space for new businesses to gain a foothold. To ensure the Borough remains a resilient regional hub, the borough should update its land use regulations to support economic development in key areas. By modernizing zoning and encouraging a broader mix of uses, the Borough can create the next generation of commercial space that do not compete with its existing retailers, but instead offer a more diverse set of offerings. This goal focuses on transforming secondary streets and industrial zones into vibrant, mixed-use environments that provide lower-entry costs for entrepreneurs while expanding the Borough's tax base and employment opportunities.

A. Establish the Mixed Industrial District to foster innovation and housing. The Borough's traditional industrial zones represent an untapped economic frontier. To unlock this potential, the Borough should transition these areas into a new Mixed Industrial District. This designation moves beyond 20th-century manufacturing to

allow for a dynamic blend of light industrial, “maker” spaces, and creative offices, integrated with new residential development. The Mixed Industrial District could thrive as a live-work environment that attracts modern industries and provides the flexible spaces required by startups and local artisans who are currently priced out of the downtown core. For more details on the land use strategy, see Mixed-Industrial (page 124).

B. Transform Baltimore Avenue into a vibrant mixed-use corridor.

While State Street serves as the Borough’s “living room,” Baltimore Avenue remains an underutilized asset with significant economic upside. The Borough should implement zoning changes along Baltimore Avenue to facilitate its evolution into a high-functioning mixed-use corridor. This strategy involves encouraging commercial activity that complements rather than competes with State Street, while capitalizing on the opportunities for expanded housing options. By improving the public realm, bringing more residents to the corridor, and encouraging more retail, the Borough can transform this transit-adjacent corridor into a secondary economic engine that captures regional investment while improving the daily experience for residents in the surrounding neighborhoods. For more details on the land use strategy, see Baltimore Avenue Corridor (page 123).

C. Cultivate an Arts and Innovation District within the Office Zone.

To address the changing demand for traditional professional office space, the Borough should consider modernizing the Office District to permit a broader spectrum of arts, creative, and maker-oriented uses. This strategy focuses on expanding the list of permitted uses in the area to allow for galleries, arts education centers, small-scale craft manufacturing, and specialized studio spaces. By lowering the regulatory barriers for these “light-touch” creative industries, the Borough can fill vacancies in underutilized office buildings with high-vibrancy tenants that complement existing residential and professional uses. Moreover, these spaces are likely to demand lower rents than those on State Street, which would provide an opportunity for these types of business to locate in Media when otherwise they would have been priced out. This shift not only diversifies the local economy, but also creates a unique cultural destination that supports Media’s identity as a center for the arts and lifelong learning. For more details on the land use strategy, see Office-Residential (page 120).





Housing

In 2035, Media will be the embodiment of “Everybody’s Hometown,” a community where the historic architectural fabric seamlessly integrates with modern, diverse living options. By embracing new housing types in strategic locations and actively dismantling historical barriers to housing, the Borough will ensure that residents at every stage of life can find a dignified and attainable place to call home. Media will be a vibrant, inclusive community with a wide range of housing types that are integrated into the existing historic fabric through context-sensitive design. To sustain this, the Borough will champion initiatives that keep housing costs within reach for a broad spectrum of the workforce and residents. This commitment ensures that economic accessibility remains a cornerstone of the community, allowing people of all income levels to thrive in Media.

Existing Conditions and Trends

The following summarizes key existing conditions and trends. These findings serve as a foundation for the recommendations.

Media's housing stock is diverse but aging.

Media Borough is defined by a distinct and historic housing mix that supports a density and walkability rare in the region. Unlike many suburban communities dominated by single-family subdivisions, Media features a diverse blend of twins, rowhomes, apartments, and detached houses that has historically supported a wide range of income levels. However, this stock is aging, with most homes built before 1960. While this contributes to the Borough's "Classic Town" charm, it presents ongoing challenges regarding energy efficiency, maintenance costs, and the presence of hazardous materials like lead paint, which can be burden for lower-income homeowners and renters alike.

Housing affordability creates a critical gap for the local workforce. Rising housing costs are threatening the economic diversity that has long been a hallmark of the Borough. Both home prices and rents have increased significantly, outpacing wage growth for many residents. This trend has created a severe burden for a large segment of the community, particularly for essential workers such as teachers, nurses, and first responders, many of whom are increasingly priced out of the neighborhoods they serve. As a result, very few emergency first responders live in the community. As demand for luxury units grows, naturally occurring affordable housing (such as older, modest apartments) is increasingly being renovated and repositioned at higher price points, fueling displacement risks for long-term residents.

Housing affordability threatens Media's identity as "Everybody's Hometown". For generations, Media has prided itself on being "Everybody's Hometown," a motto that reflected a genuine reality: a community where wealthy professionals, hourly service workers, young families, and retirees lived side-by-side. This economic diversity was made possible by a varied housing stock that offered entry points for people at every stage of life. As regional demand for walkable, transit-rich communities surges, the resulting spike in real estate costs is rapidly eroding the Borough's accessibility.

Market shifts are driving office-to-residential conversions. The post-pandemic shift in work patterns has softened demand for traditional office space, creating a new opportunity for housing creation within the Borough's Office District. Property owners are increasingly seeking to convert underutilized professional buildings, many of which were originally constructed as large single-family homes, back into residential uses. These conversions offer a low-impact pathway to increase the housing supply without altering the physical character of the streetscape. However, these projects face obstacles because of parking regulations, and to a lesser extent, the limits on number of units permitted in the buildings.

Residents wish to age in place but face limited options. Media's walkability and sense of community make it an ideal place to retire, yet many long-term residents struggle to find suitable housing options as they age. Seniors living in multi-story rowhomes or large detached houses often wish to downsize to smaller, single-floor units within the Borough but find that such inventory is virtually non-existent. The lack of accessible condos or apartments, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), or smaller housing

options forces many older residents to leave the community they helped build simply to find a home that matches their physical needs.

The hybrid form-based code is preserving neighborhood character while enabling new choices. The adoption of the Borough's hybrid form-based code has proven to be a successful regulatory tool for managing change in residential neighborhoods. By shifting the focus from strict use-segregation to the physical form of buildings, the code has addressed long-standing resident concerns about out-of-character development. Simultaneously, this modern framework has begun to unlock new housing diversity by permitting compatible "gentle density," such as Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), allowing

neighborhoods to evolve and accommodate more residents without sacrificing the architectural integrity that defines Media's charm. For more details, see *Focus On: Hybrid Form-Based Code* on page 92.



Figure 24. Diverse housing types in Media

FOCUS ON

Hybrid Form-Based Code

Why Did Media Update Its Zoning Code?

The zoning update was first identified in Media's 2005 Comprehensive Plan as a necessary step to address the growing disconnect between the Borough's outdated zoning regulations and the community's long-term vision for growth and preservation.

1. **Protecting Media's Character:** Residents expressed concern that the old code allowed large, bulky single-family homes that were out of scale with existing neighborhoods and did not reflect the historic character and walkable fabric that define Media.
2. **A Need for More Housing Options:** The previous zoning framework made it difficult to create a broader range of housing types, such as accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and small multi-family buildings, even though these options are increasingly needed to meet changing household sizes, affordability needs, and aging-in-place goals.
3. **An Outdated and Inefficient Process:** Many existing homes and lots did not conform to the old zoning standards, meaning homeowners often had to seek variances for modest renovations or additions, creating unnecessary time, cost, and uncertainty.
4. **Unpredictable Development Outcomes:** Because the old code focused primarily on use and maximum size, it provided limited guidance on building form or design, leaving the community with little control over how new development looked or how it fit into its surroundings.

What Does the New Code Do?

The new zoning code shifts the focus from strictly regulating use to shaping building form and design, helping ensure that new development reinforces Media's established character and neighborhood patterns.

1. **Aligns Zoning with Existing Conditions:** Minimum lot sizes and standards were adjusted to better reflect the reality of Media's built environment, bringing more properties into compliance and making it easier for homeowners to improve their homes without special approvals.
2. **Controls Building Height:** The code lowers maximum building heights in areas that do not already contain three-story buildings, helping prevent new construction from feeling out of scale with surrounding homes.
3. **Requires Key Design Elements:** Essential architectural features that contribute to Media's character, such as functional front porches, are now required in new development, reinforcing streetscape quality and neighborhood identity.
4. **Supports "Missing Middle" Housing:** Clear, predictable standards were introduced for a wider range of housing types, including duplexes, courtyard buildings, and ADUs, expanding housing choice while maintaining neighborhood compatibility and supporting long-term affordability.

FOCUS ON

Affordable Housing Study Findings

Areas of Community Concern

1. Rising costs threaten Media's identity as "Everyone's Hometown."
2. Affordability is slipping for middle- and low-income households, and seniors lack accessible downsizing/co-living options.
3. Community cohesion is weakening amid rapid change.
4. Historic Black neighborhoods are gone.
5. The inclusivity and diversity that define Media are at risk.

Housing Market Dynamics

1. Affordability challenges are regional and extend beyond Media.
2. Starter homes are being replaced by new single-family construction, making rentals more competitive.
3. Construction and borrowing costs are rising amid tight for-sale supply.
4. Voucher recipients, low-income households are effectively priced out.
5. Workforce rentals (~\$1,200 – \$1,400) remain accessible to middle-income households.

Increasing Affordable Housing - Opportunities & Barriers

1. Developers are interested, but neighborhood opposition is a barrier.
2. Pre-identifying sites and adopting a holistic housing strategy, backed by steady funding and enforceable inclusionary zoning, can speed delivery.
3. Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) options are limited in Media. Partnerships with Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) can improve project financing.

Adopted Goals and Strategies

Goal 1: Eliminate barriers to affordable housing

1. Deepen partnerships with housing agencies and organizations to increase funding for programs targeted at marginalized populations
2. Combat inequities in the housing market by educating marginalized populations about available programs and funding opportunities
3. Eliminate zoning barriers to increase density.

Goal 2: Expand affordable housing opportunities for low-moderate income households

1. Preserve affordable housing units by providing incentives for landlords who wish to redevelop and maintain affordability to households 80% AMI and below (1 person HH, \$64,064).
2. Increase supply of affordable units on the market by promoting nontraditional housing such as Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and home-sharing opportunities.
3. Adopt a market-informed inclusionary zoning policy for new construction and substantial rehabilitation.
4. Develop Borough-owned property for low-income households (under \$75,000).
5. Establish partnerships with local property owners to build affordable housing targeting low-income families (under \$75,000).

Goal 3: Ensure senior citizens can age in place

1. Deepen relationships with partners that support seniors aging in place.
2. Develop Borough-owned property for age-restricted affordable housing.
3. Establish partnerships with local property owners for age-restricted affordable housing.
4. Educate seniors on available home improvement programs, grants, and funding.

Previous Plans

The housing recommendations in this section are informed by a set of Borough and regional planning efforts that document housing conditions, market trends, and policy direction in Media.

Clarifying Housing Needs and Policy Gaps

The *Media Borough Comprehensive Plan (2015)* provided an initial framework for housing-related issues, but the Previous Plan Review found that housing was not addressed as a standalone topic. While the plan included population and housing analysis, most housing guidance was embedded within land use recommendations and lacked explicit housing strategies. This gap highlighted the need for the Comprehensive Plan to directly address housing conditions and outcomes.

Using Recent Data to Ground Housing Strategy

The *Affordable Housing Study (2023/2024)* served as the most current and detailed analysis of housing conditions in the Borough. The study documented rising home prices and rents, a mismatch between household needs and the existing housing stock, limited availability of smaller and “missing middle” housing types, and a significant share of cost-burdened households. The Previous Plan Review also noted that the study includes broader data on household characteristics and housing stock, supporting a more comprehensive understanding of housing needs.

The *Pennsylvania Housing Action Plan (2026)* establishes the Commonwealth’s first comprehensive, data-driven strategy to address systemic housing shortages and affordability challenges. The plan identifies a projected

shortfall of 185,000 housing units by 2035 and sets a target to produce 450,000 new units to meet future demand. The plan is organized around five core pillars: building and preserving housing stock, expanding opportunity for all residents, providing pathways to housing stabilization, modernizing development regulations, and improving agency coordination.

Balancing Housing, Land Use, and Preservation

Regional frameworks, including the *Delaware County 2035 Land Use Policy Framework Plan (2013)*, *Delaware County 2035 Historic Preservation Plan (2018)*, and *Delaware County 2035 Housing Plan (2020)*, provided relevant context for coordinating housing strategies with land use and preservation goals. This context informed the Comprehensive Plan’s approach to integrating housing strategies with broader planning considerations in a built-out borough.

Aligning Housing Policy with Capital Planning

The *Capital Improvement Plan (2025–2029)* informed how housing strategies intersect with infrastructure capacity, facilities, and public investment. While not a housing plan, the Previous Plan Review identified the CIP as a key implementation tool that influences where and how housing-related initiatives can be supported. This finding guided the Comprehensive Plan’s emphasis on coordinating housing policy with capital planning to ensure that infrastructure investments align with housing goals and constraints.

Community Input

Community engagement findings highlight housing affordability and availability as key concerns, alongside the need to balance rising costs with Media's character and livability.

Affordability and Housing Choice

Survey results and stakeholder discussions identified housing affordability as an increasing challenge tied to limited housing options. Participants noted that Media's walkability, transit access, and strong downtown have contributed to rising home prices and rents, making it harder for young families, seniors, and lower- to moderate-income households to remain in the Borough. Stakeholders emphasized a mismatch between household needs and the existing housing stock, particularly the limited availability of smaller and "missing middle" housing types.

Aging in Place

Supporting residents as they age emerged as a recurring theme. Participants stressed the need for smaller, accessible housing options near downtown services to allow long-term residents to remain in Media as their housing needs change, rather than being forced to relocate.

Managing Growth in a Built-Out Borough

Stakeholders recognized that Media's limited land area requires careful management of growth. New housing was expected to be compatible with existing neighborhoods and infrastructure capacity. Office-to-residential conversions were frequently cited as an opportunity to add housing without consuming remaining open space, while acknowledging associated financial and regulatory challenges.

When we moved to Media (more than 40 years ago), it seemed like a very affordable community, with housing at many price points. It seems now that there are fewer options for people of limited means, as housing costs have increased faster than incomes.

I want Media to truly be 'Everybody's Home Town', not just for those who can afford the high real estate prices.

The type of housing available in the Borough impacts who can afford to live here. We all benefit by having different types of housing so we have a more diverse community.

Replacing historic homes with 'McMansions' affects the diversity of the people and hometown charm.

Smaller houses, or apartment-sized homes are needed. There is limited space to live in Media.

Goals and Recommendations

1. Eliminate barriers to obtaining affordable housing that are a result of long-standing discriminatory practices in the housing market

Access to quality housing is the foundation of a diverse and vibrant community, yet rising costs and historical systemic issues have created exclusionary pressures that threaten Media's character. The Borough recognizes that passivity in the face of these market forces effectively reinforces inequality. Therefore, the Borough is committed to actively dismantling these barriers, ensuring that economic status and background do not determine one's ability to call Media home.

A. Deepen partnerships to increase funding for targeted housing programs. The Borough cannot solve the housing crisis in isolation; it requires robust collaboration with established regional entities. To effectively support marginalized populations, the Borough must deepen its partnerships with housing agencies and non-profits, such as the United Way, the Foundation for Delaware County, and the Fellowship House. The immediate priority is to connect Borough residents with existing pre-purchase programs, ensuring they have access to down payment assistance and housing counseling services. Over the long term, the Borough should transition from a passive partner to an active funder, allocating municipal budget to directly support these counseling and assistance programs. Additionally, the Borough should explore a collaboration with the Fellowship House eventually implement a "HomeShare" program, an innovative model that matches seniors or residents with extra space to those seeking affordable accommodation.

B. Combat inequities through targeted education and outreach. Information is a critical tool for empowerment, yet many residents remain unaware of the support systems available to them. To bridge this gap, the Borough should actively educate people, especially those in marginalized populations, about existing funding opportunities and assistance programs. This effort begins with the creation of a dedicated, centralized housing resource page on the Borough's website, serving as a "one-stop" portal for information. Beyond passive hosting, the Borough should launch a proactive communication campaign, utilizing its newsletters and social media channels to push this information out to the community. By

partnering with trusted community organizations like the Fellowship House and the NAACP, the Borough can ensure these resources actually reach the residents who need them most.

- C. Identify zoning barriers and areas to increase density.** Current zoning regulations often unintentionally stifle the development of naturally affordable housing. To reverse this, the Borough must modernize its code to identify barriers to density. The Hybrid Form Based Code took an important step by allowing for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and permitting modest density increases that allowed development that fits within existing neighborhoods. Going forward, the Borough should convene a “Braintrust” of developers, architects, and lenders to identify other specific regulatory friction points that hinder affordable projects. Long-term, this work should culminate in the adoption of zoning changes that would allow housing that is currently not permitted to be built in the Borough. This may also result in the adoption of new housing types in the residential districts (R-1, R-2, R-3, and R-4) or the modification of standards therein.

2. Expand the supply of housing options in strategic locations

Media’s housing challenges are not limited to a single income bracket. Though there are clear and growing gaps in availability for lower income households, there is demand for attainable housing to meet a variety of resident’s needs, including those of young professionals, retirees, and non-family households, among others. Increasing the supply of new housing is essential to meeting these diverse needs and stabilizing costs, yet this growth must be carefully balanced against the imperative to maintain the neighborhood quality and character that residents prize. Therefore, the Borough is committed to actively expanding opportunities for new housing production in targeted areas, ensuring that new development complements the community’s historic fabric.

- A. Update zoning to direct housing growth to key districts.** To meet housing demand without disrupting established residential neighborhoods, the Borough must direct new growth toward underutilized commercial and industrial areas. As further detailed in the Land Use Element, the Borough should undertake specific updates to reduce zoning barriers and create new housing capacity in these districts:

1. **Update Zoning in the Highway Business Office (HBO) District and its associated overlays** to allow for new residential typologies, incentivizing the inclusion of affordable units while simultaneously requiring improvements to the streetscape and public realm. This effort should consider rezoning Front Street office spaces to support first-floor retail with residential units above, helping create a more active mixed-use corridor.
2. Replace the current Industrial District with a new **Mixed-Industrial District**. This updated classification will unlock significant opportunities for use expansion, allowing for dynamic mixed-use environments in areas previously restricted to single-purpose industrial use.
3. **Update Office Zoning to Facilitate Residential Conversions** to streamline the conversion process, removing regulatory friction for adaptive reuse projects that repurpose existing office buildings into residential units.

Housing production in these areas will largely progress through market-rate options. To ensure that some affordable housing is also constructed, it will be important for the Borough to include within these updates its efforts to Adopt a market-informed inclusionary zoning ordinance.

3. Maintain and expand affordable housing opportunities for low-to-moderate income households

Media's housing market is at a critical inflection point. While the Borough has long been known as a diverse community accessible to all, rising costs are rapidly outpacing local incomes, creating a severe cost burden for nearly half of all renting households. As part of the Affordable Housing Study, the Borough identified households earning under \$75,000 (as of 2025) as a key income group to target. The Borough is committed to a proactive strategy that both incentivizes the preservation of existing affordable units and directs new, context-sensitive development to specific growth zones. This approach ensures that Media expands its housing supply to stabilize costs without sacrificing the historic charm and neighborhood quality that residents prize.

A. Preserve existing affordable units through landlord incentives.

The Borough's most sustainable source of affordability is its existing stock of rental housing. To prevent the loss of these units to high-end redevelopment, the Borough should actively partner with

landlords who wish to maintain affordability. This strategy begins by establishing a working committee to meet with owners of small multi-family buildings to understand their needs. Based on this dialogue, the Borough should adopt an ordinance that provides tangible incentives specifically for landlords who commit to keeping rents affordable for households earning 80% or less of the Area Median Income. While related, this strategy is different than the strategy to adopt an inclusionary zoning ordinance, which focuses on increasing the production of new deed restricted affordable housing.

B. Adopt a market-informed inclusionary zoning ordinance.

Inclusionary zoning is a way to create new, deed restricted, affordable housing that is integrated into new housing projects. (See *Focus On: Inclusionary Zoning on page 100* for more details). The Borough should explore whether to place inclusionary requirements on all housing projects above a certain size (e.g. larger than 5 units) or to target it to specific districts. For the policy to be effective, it must be market-informed: setting the requirement too high might limit housing production while setting it too low might result in limited supply of affordable units. As such, it is recommended that the Borough create a working committee to review policies from peer communities and interview developers to understand economic feasibility. Following this research, the Borough should adopt a policy that requires or incentivizes a percentage of new units to be attainable.

C. Promote nontraditional housing options like ADUs. To increase the supply of affordable units without altering the scale of residential neighborhoods, the Borough must embrace nontraditional housing types. The Borough should actively promote the development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and home-sharing opportunities, building off its efforts to legalize ADUs across the Borough. This effort requires a coordinated communication campaign, led by a working committee and the Planning Commission, to educate residents on the benefits of ADUs. The Borough should also use its own communications channels and public-facing resources to support education and awareness around ADUs. Short-term actions include developing promotional materials to de-stigmatize these options, while long-term the Borough should focus on broader community implementation.

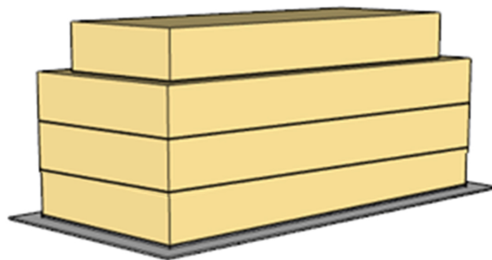
FOCUS ON

Inclusionary Zoning

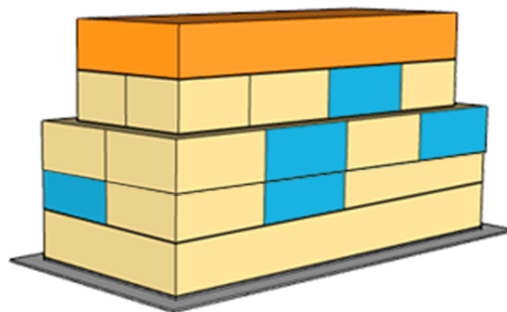
Inclusionary zoning is a housing policy that incentivizes developers to include affordable housing units within new residential developments. The policy requires builders of market-rate housing projects to set aside a certain percentage of units (often 10-20%) to be sold or rented at below-market rates to low- or moderate-income households. These units are typically deed-restricted, which means they are required to be rented or sold at that price in perpetuity. Affordability is typically defined using Area Median Income (AMI), which is the midpoint household income in the metropolitan region. For example, a municipality might require that affordable units be made available to households earning 60% of AMI or 80% of AMI. Typically, as the maximum income decreases, the number of units required does so as well.

To offset the financial cost of providing these below-market-rate units, municipalities offer various incentives to developers. The most common is a density bonus, which allows builders to construct taller buildings or more buildings on the site than zoning laws would normally permit. Beyond density bonuses, communities may also provide expedited permits and streamlined approvals to reduce project timelines, relaxed design standards that offer more flexibility in construction, fee waivers or reductions on development charges, and reduced parking requirements. These incentives help expand affordable housing stock while allowing developers to increase their total number of units or reduce costs to maintain profitability.

4 Stories - 46,000 sqft



5 Stories - 55,000 sqft



Illustrative Examples

D. Develop Borough-owned property for affordable housing. The Borough should lead by example by utilizing its own assets to support the production of attainable housing. The Borough has identified several locations (Figure 25) that offer the potential for redevelopment. Community engagement conducted during the comprehensive planning process indicated overall support for the use of these sites. One advantage of this process is that it offers the opportunity for the Borough to advance a wholly affordable project, rather than trying to address the process incrementally through inclusionary zoning policy. Likewise, since the Borough controls the land and the process, it gives it more flexibility in establishing affordability goals and meeting other Borough requirements. This effort is connected to, and should be coordinated with, efforts to Develop Borough-owned property for age-restricted housing.

The Recommendations Report from the Affordable Housing Study provides more detailed information about the pathways this could take, an initial step can be hiring a consultant (or consultants) who can advise and assist the Borough as it moves through the development process. This person or firm would not be responsible for redeveloping sites. Instead, they would provide expertise in RFPs/RFQs, contracts, pro-forma development/analysis, affordable housing laws, grants, and related activities to ensure the Borough is getting the best products and are protected against future liabilities. All projects should include robust community engagement to envision the site's future.

E. Partner with local property owners to build targeted housing. Beyond its own land, the Borough should facilitate the construction of affordable housing on private sites. Figure 25 also shows several privately owned locations that offer potential for redevelopment. To advance these projects, the Borough should establish strategic partnerships with local multi-family property owners to identify redevelopment opportunities for low-income families. This begins with Council liaisons and the Borough Manager meeting directly with landlords to build relationships and share the Borough's vision. By fostering these public-private connections, the Borough can encourage landowners to redevelop their sites in a way that aligns with community affordability goals.

Figure 25. Potential Affordable Housing Locations



4. Ensure senior citizens can age in place

Media's walkability, transit access, and strong community fabric make it an ideal place to retire. However, many long-term residents find themselves struggling to maintain large family homes while facing a lack of smaller, accessible options for downsizing. The Borough is committed to ensuring that aging does not mean displacement. By supporting physical modifications to existing homes and fostering the creation of new age-restricted units, the Borough aims to provide seniors with the agency to choose whether to stay in their current residence or move to a more suitable home within the community they helped build.

- A. Deepen relationships with partners supporting aging in place.** The Borough does not need to reinvent the wheel to support its seniors. Instead, it should leverage the expertise of existing organizations. The Borough must actively deepen its relationships with established partners such as the County Office of Services for the Aging (COSA) and the American Association of Retired People (AARP), and Senior Community Services. The initial focus will be on identifying and aligning with the specific programs these organizations already offer. Over the long term, the Borough should transition to financially supporting programs, allocating municipal funds to bolster efforts that directly assist Media residents in maintaining their independence.
- B. Build age-restricted housing.** To directly address the shortage of senior housing, the Borough should utilize its own land assets and partner with local landowners to build senior housing. This strategy is connected to, and should be coordinated with, its efforts to:
 - 1. Develop Borough-owned property for affordable housing
 - 2. Partner with local property owners to build targeted housing
- C. Promote ADUs and home-sharing as senior living solutions.** Nontraditional housing types offer unique benefits for the aging population, providing opportunities for seniors to downsize into an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) on a relative's property or to generate income by renting out a portion of their own home. As an early effort, the Borough should form a working committee including the Department of Aging and Senior Community Services to develop materials promoting ADUs and home-sharing. A targeted communication campaign will be essential to educate seniors on how these options can provide the financial flexibility and companionship needed to remain in the Borough.

D. Educate seniors on resources for home modifications and stability.

Many seniors wish to stay in their own homes but struggle with the costs of necessary safety upgrades or repairs. To support them, the Borough must actively educate residents on available grants and funding for home improvements. This work should be coordinated with efforts to Combat inequities through targeted education and outreach. This includes creating a dedicated “Senior Housing Resources” webpage and launching a communication campaign via newsletters and social media. Additionally, the Borough should explore establishing a “Give Back Saturday” program, partnering with groups like Habitat for Humanity or Williamson College of the Trades to connect seniors with contractors who can assist with essential modifications like ramp installation or bathroom accessibility upgrades.

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Land Use

In 2035, Media will be a premier community defined by a vibrant, walkable lifestyle and a perfectly balanced mix of residential, commercial, and civic uses. The Borough's landscape will feature a seamless blend of historic preservation and innovative infill, where underutilized office spaces and industrial areas have been transformed into dynamic, mixed-use environments. Through the expansion of high-quality design standards, every new investment will respect the scale and rhythm of the existing urban fabric, ensuring that growth strengthens the Borough's compact, sustainable, and charming character.

Existing Conditions and Trends

The following summarizes key existing conditions and trends. These findings serve as a foundation for the recommendations in the following sections.

A diverse mix of land uses enables a sustainable, walkable lifestyle. Media Borough benefits from a historic development pattern that blends residential, commercial, and civic uses within a compact footprint (See Figure 26). As the County Seat and a regional destination, the Borough integrates a vibrant downtown, diverse housing stock, and government services, creating an environment where residents can live, work, and play without heavy reliance on private automobiles. This proximity of uses is the foundation of the community's sustainability, fostering economic resilience and reducing carbon emissions by supporting transit and pedestrian activity. Maintaining this equilibrium is essential as market pressures evolve, ensuring that no single use dominates at the expense of the Borough's "Complete Community" character.

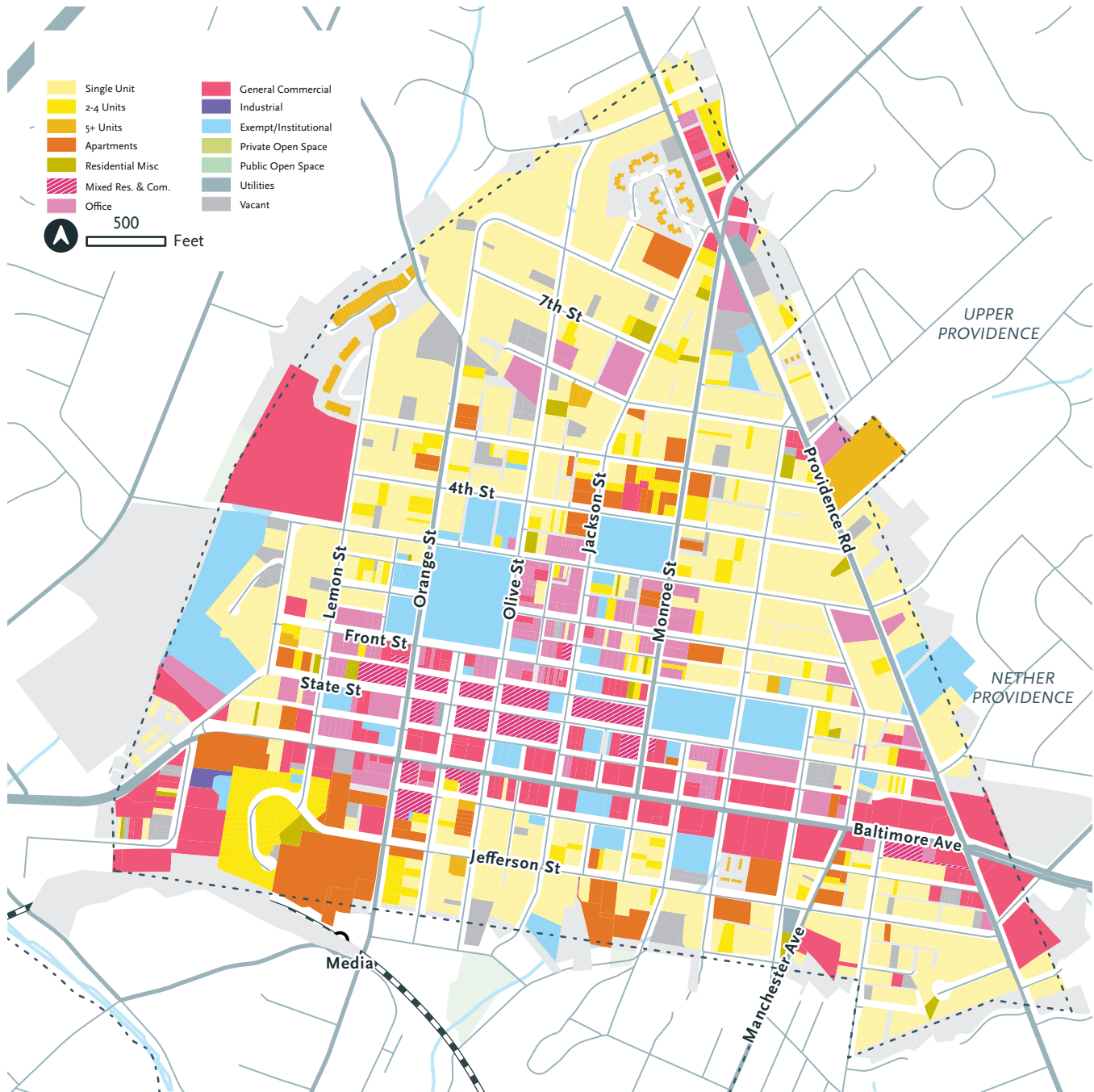
Future growth is limited to infill and adaptive reuse. Media is a fully developed community where large-scale greenfield development is no longer possible. Consequently, future growth is physically restricted to infill projects, the adaptive reuse of existing buildings, and the redevelopment of underutilized sites. This constraint places a premium on strategic planning to ensure that new development integrates natural features and community amenities into the existing urban fabric.

Stormwater management requires creative incentives. The combination of a changing climate and high impervious coverage is forcing a shift toward Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) as a necessary component of site modification. While Media has updated its stormwater management ordinance to meet state standards, regulating further improvements on private property remains a challenge. Therefore, achieving stormwater goals beyond the statutory minimums will require the Borough to encourage implementation through incentives and voluntary partnerships with property owners.

Underutilized office space offers new housing potential. Post-pandemic work patterns have fundamentally altered the commercial landscape, leaving significant office space underutilized. This shift has created friction in the market but also an opportunity for office-to-residential conversions, as detailed in the Housing Element. Facilitating these conversions is essential to meeting the community's need for a wider variety of housing types, including attainable options for essential workers and accessible units for seniors.

State Street's success requires expanding commercial opportunities. As noted in the Economic Development Element, the vibrancy of State Street has driven up rents and occupancy rates, creating a high barrier to entry for new businesses. To sustain local economic diversity, the Borough must identify new locations where commercial land uses can expand. Creating these new entry points for entrepreneurs is critical for long-term economic health, though it requires careful management to mitigate potential impacts on adjacent residential areas.

Figure 26. Current Land Use Map



The industrial district has evolved beyond traditional manufacturing. There are currently few traditional industrial uses in the Borough. This is a result of larger trends that favor locating in modern industrial parks and/or areas with better infrastructure and roadway connectivity. As a result, the current Industrial District is already largely composed of single- and two-story commercial uses. Nonetheless, artisan manufacturing, maker spaces, light fabrication and similar modern industrial uses may be more interested in Media because they can attract high-quality talent, take advantage of its retail offerings, and provide a mixture of manufacturing and retailing in a single location. However, the existing zoning does not easily accommodate this shift toward a more dynamic mix of activities.

Baltimore Avenue is a prime corridor for transformation. Baltimore Avenue currently functions as a mix of disparate land uses with an inconsistent streetscape, where auto-oriented businesses contribute to the safety issues identified in the Transportation Element. However, the corridor's large, deep lots and strong regional visibility make it the location with the highest potential for significant change over the next decade. Although the Borough has previously explored zoning updates for this area, no changes have been implemented to date, leaving a key opportunity for revitalization unrealized.



Figure 27. Existing Uses in the Industrial Zone

Early outcomes of form-based zoning seem successful in the residential neighborhoods. The adoption of the hybrid form-based code has proven successful in addressing resident concerns regarding the scale and character of development in residential areas. This regulatory framework is working to preserve neighborhood identity while allowing for the incremental addition of housing options. See *Focus On: Hybrid Form-Based Code on page 92*. Moving forward, the Borough has identified several necessary improvements to the code to ensure it continues to effectively achieve these community goals. These include creating an office specific building type, clarifying how to measure building heights, and clarifying the application process to make clear what relief is necessary for different standards.

A new residential project approved under the hybrid form-based code demonstrates that specific design requirements, such as pitched roofs and porches, produce housing that aligns with the neighborhood's character. Additionally, the inclusion of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) has increased the total unit count beyond what traditional zoning would have permitted.



Figure 28. New residential development approved under the hybrid form-based code

Previous Plans

The recommendations in this section are informed by a set of Borough and regional planning efforts that collectively document Media's development patterns, constraints, and policy gaps. These plans provided the baseline for clarifying land use intent and aligning housing, preservation, and capital planning.

Establishing the Land Use Framework

The *Media Borough Comprehensive Plan (2015)* provided the primary policy framework for land use in the Borough. The Previous Plan Review found that while the plan articulated a clear long-term vision, it did not include an updated analysis of future land use patterns, and several land use and downtown zoning recommendations remain outstanding. This finding informed the Comprehensive Plan's focus on clearly defining future land use intent and strengthening the connection between policy direction and implementation.

Open Space and Housing as Land Use Constraints

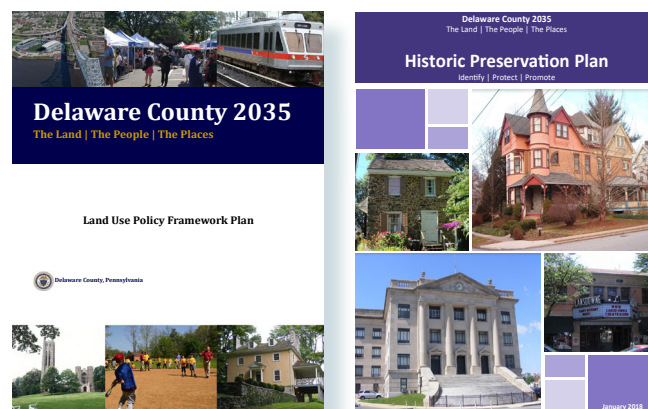
The *Borough of Media Open Space Plan (2021)* and the *Affordable Housing Study (2023/2024)* provided critical context for land use decision-making in a fully built-out community. The *Open Space Plan* documented the scarcity of remaining unprotected open space, reinforcing the need to carefully manage redevelopment and infill. The Affordable Housing Study documented rising housing costs, limited housing diversity, and mismatches between household needs and available housing types. Together, these plans guided the Comprehensive Plan's approach to balancing housing opportunity, neighborhood character, and open space protection within future land use decisions.

Regional Policy and Preservation Context

Regional frameworks, including the *Delaware County 2035 Land Use Policy Framework Plan (2013)*, *Delaware County 2035 Historic Preservation Plan (2018)*, and *Delaware County 2035 Housing Plan*, reinforced the importance of aligning local land use decisions with broader countywide goals related to growth management, historic resources, and housing needs. This context informed the Comprehensive Plan's emphasis on context-sensitive land use patterns and coordination with preservation and housing objectives.

Capital Planning and Implementation

The *Capital Improvement Plan (2025–2029)* provided an implementation lens for land use planning by documenting infrastructure and public investment priorities that affect where and how development can occur. While not a land use plan, the Previous Plan Review identified the CIP as a key tool for aligning land use policy with infrastructure capacity and long-term investment decisions. This relationship shaped the Comprehensive Plan's focus on linking future land use guidance with capital planning.



County Planning Documents

Community Input

Community engagement findings highlight strong resident interest in land use decisions that protect Media's character while allowing for thoughtful change in a fully built-out borough.

Protecting Neighborhood Character and Scale

Participants raised concerns about development perceived as out of scale with surrounding neighborhoods and emphasized the importance of land use policies that reinforce existing patterns and respect historic context. This feedback highlights a preference for compatibility and context-sensitive development.

Supporting Walkability and Compact Development Patterns

Community input reinforced Media's identity as a walkable, compact borough, with strong support for land use patterns that concentrate activity in appropriate areas, particularly downtown. Respondents valued mixed-use environments that support daily needs within walking distance.

Managing Change in a Built-Out Community

Engagement findings reflected an understanding that Media has limited land available for new development, underscoring the need to carefully manage redevelopment and infill. Participants emphasized the importance of clear land use guidance to balance growth pressures with neighborhood stability.

Desire for Clear Land Use Direction

Stakeholders emphasized the value of transparent land use policies that clearly communicate where change is expected and where stability is prioritized, helping reduce uncertainty around future development.

Continue support of mixed-use zoning-like apartments along State Street.

I love Media's history and how previous community members have made an effort to preserve this. I've seen other communities where historical buildings have been razed and replaced with brand new structures. Part of Media's charm/identity is its historical character.

As an artist, having places to go in town to write or read or paint is so important to my wellbeing and my livelihood. Creating and improving public spaces in Media will continue to form more connections for residents to build community.

State Street is the heart of Media, for residents, visitors, and businesses. Everybody's hometown status is cemented by a main street that can act as a hub for leisure and commerce for all.

The mega mansions invade the character of the borough.

Goals and Recommendations

1. **Guide the Evolution of Media's Land Use to Support a Vibrant, Sustainable, and Complete Community**

Media is a fully built-out community facing significant pressure to adapt. The Borough must actively manage its limited land resources to respond to the changing nature of office demand, the transition of industrial uses, increasing housing attainability and access needs, and the need to adapt to a changing climate, among other needs. The Borough's goal is to continue to modernize its land use regulations to ensure that the community changes in a way that is responsive to these needs.

A. Update the Hybrid Form-Based Code to ensure predictable, high-quality outcomes.

- While the form-based code has successfully protected neighborhood character, early implementation has highlighted areas where technical adjustments are necessary. The Borough should update the code to improve usability, flexibility, and administrative efficiency. Key updates include:
1. **Architectural Flexibility:** Update regulations to permit stoops or porticos in instances where front yards are too shallow for porches, and refine building height definitions to avoid artificially restricting compatible development.
 2. **Administrative Clarity.** Clarify what standards require simple zoning compliance and which need to go through a more complex land development review.
 3. **Building Typologies.** Create a dedicated "Office" building type to allow for new commercial construction and update ownership standards for "two-plex" units to ensure they remain viable. Identify how to regulate office-to-residential conversions.
 4. **Technical Clarity.** Replace complex "Light and Air" standards with simplified step-back requirements.

B. Facilitate the adaptive reuse of underutilized office space for housing.

The post-pandemic shift in work patterns has left significant vacancy in the Office District, creating a unique opportunity to address the Borough's housing shortage without new greenfield development. The Borough should update zoning regulations to streamline the conversion of these professional buildings into residential units. This strategy will focus on removing regulatory

barriers such as restrictive parking mandates to unlock a new supply of diverse housing options for seniors and the workforce. The Borough should also consider whether the reduction in parking should be an incentive for providing affordable units to ensure the housing remains accessible. As discussed in Expand opportunities for economic investment (page 86), the office district is also an ideal location to allow for galleries, arts education centers, small-scale craft manufacturing, and specialized studio spaces.

- C. Transform Baltimore Avenue into a safe, multi-modal mixed-use gateway.** Baltimore Avenue currently suffers from an inconsistent streetscape and auto-oriented design that creates safety hazards and deters pedestrian activity. Recognizing its status as the area with the highest potential for change, the Borough should prioritize comprehensive rezoning, building off the work from 2007 to 2018, where it aligns with Council’s vision and public support. This effort should focus on establishing community-supported design standards that encourage mixed-use development, enhance the streetscape, and align with the safety goals of the Vision Zero initiative.
- D. Modernize the Industrial District to foster innovation and mixed-use flexibility.** The current industrial zone no longer serves industrial uses; commercial uses dominate. The success of nearby West End Flats and West End Walk demonstrates that the area has great potential for meeting some of Media’s housing needs. Rezoning the area as an Mixed-Industrial Zone would allow for the area to evolve, potentially creating opportunities for a variety of uses from maker spaces to breweries/brewpubs, artisan manufacturing, and housing.
- E. Extend the Hybrid Form-Based Code to remaining Euclidean districts.** The Borough’s adoption of a Hybrid Form-Based Code in residential neighborhoods has proven effective at managing building scale and preserving community character. However, key commercial and transitional areas, such as Baltimore Avenue and the Industrial District, remain under traditional Euclidean zoning that prioritizes the separation of uses over the quality of the built environment. To ensure consistent, high-quality development, the Borough should evaluate whether to expand the form-based framework to these remaining districts. However, any expansion of the form-based framework to these areas should be carefully evaluated, especially where there are few opportunities for redevelopment. Where appropriate, this shift can establish clear physical standards that foster mixed-use pedestrian environments and predictable outcomes,

particularly in high-opportunity corridors where current regulations have failed to produce a cohesive streetscape.

F. Integrate zoning recommendations from all Comprehensive Plan elements. The Land Use Element serves as the regulatory backbone for the entire Comprehensive Plan. To fully realize the community's vision, the zoning updates proposed in this element must encompass the specific regulatory strategies identified in other elements, including:

1. Update parking requirements to facilitate office-to-residential conversions
2. Identify incentives for sustainable building and land development
3. Identify zoning barriers and areas to increase density
4. Adopt a market-informed inclusionary zoning ordinance
5. Promote nontraditional housing options like ADUs

Future Land Use

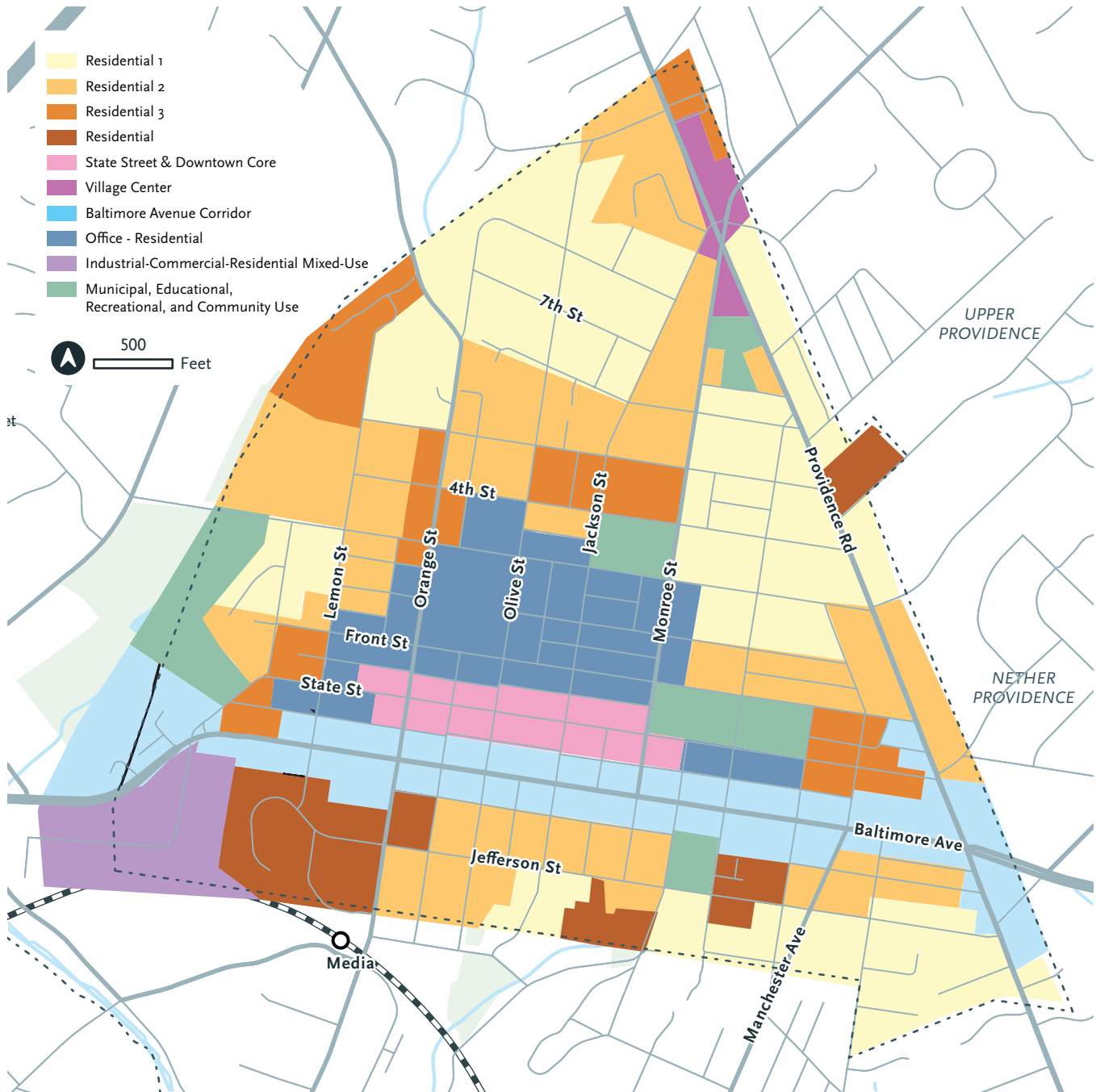
The Future Land Use Map (Figure 29) expresses Media Borough's intent for where and how existing characteristics should be maintained, enhanced, and evolve. This map serves as a vital tool for the Borough to guide decisions about future land use and development over time. However, it is not a mandate for development or redevelopment, but instead describes the Borough's expectations regarding future development or change if it is pursued by property owners.

While the Land Use Map may serve as the basis for potential future zoning code updates, it remains separate and distinct from the official zoning map. It is a visionary document designed to ensure that as Media evolves, it continues to be a vibrant, walkable, and sustainable community for all.

Each section includes a vision for the area as well as a table of identifying the future potential mix of building types and/or land uses. An overview of building types can be found in the following section. These mixes are intended to describe the long-term future for these areas. The following describes how to interpret that information.

1. Primary Building Types (P): One or more land uses that are intended to be the predominant focus of the place. For example, a neighborhood place type may have one or more residential uses that together make up more than half of a given area.
2. Supporting Building Types (S): The supporting or complementary land uses which are compatible with the primary use but are not the main focus of the place type.

Figure 29. Future Land Use Map



Residential



Media’s residential neighborhoods will continue to embody the spirit of “Everybody’s Hometown” by offering a diverse array of housing choices that welcome residents at every stage of life. The future residential landscape will continue to offer housing in a variety of forms, including but not limited to detached homes, twins, rowhouses, small-scale multi-family buildings (2 – 4 units) and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as well as small, moderate, and larger scale multi-unit buildings. Strategic redevelopment of key sites will offer the opportunity for new deed-restricted affordable housing that provides attainable entry points for young families, essential workers, and seniors wishing to age in place within their community. Where larger residential redevelopment occurs, it will include units for low- and moderate-income households.

Future development in residential areas will be defined by sensitive evolution rather than rapid transformation. Guided by form-based standards, new investment will respect the scale, rhythm, and architectural heritage that defines Media’s “Classic Town” charm. Homeowners will be empowered to modernize and expand their properties to meet contemporary needs (improving energy efficiency and accessibility) without sacrificing the visual integrity of the streetscape. In transition zones, underutilized structures, particularly former professional offices, will find new life as residential units, ensuring that the Borough’s built heritage remains vibrant and occupied.

Building Type Mix

Building Types	R1	R2	R3	R4
Detached Home	P	P	P	S
Semi-Detached	S	P	P	P
Attached House	-	S	P	S
Office, Stand Alone	-	S	P	S
Small Flats	-	S	P	S
Civic & Cultural Buildings	-	-	S	P
ADUs	S	S	S	S
<i>Primary (P); Supporting (S)</i>				

Related Goals and Recommendations

1. Implement traffic calming on residential streets
2. Incentivize green stormwater infrastructure
3. Inventory and improve the pedestrian network
4. Preserve existing affordable units through landlord incentives.
5. Promote nontraditional housing options like ADUs.
6. Partner with local property owners to build targeted housing.

Office-Residential



The Office-Residential District will evolve into a flexible, mixed-use neighborhood that adapts to the changing nature of work while preserving its distinctive architectural heritage. As demand for traditional professional space shifts, the district will transition from a single-purpose employment zone into a vibrant area that seamlessly blends commercial activity with new residential living. Underutilized professional buildings, many of which were originally constructed as single-family attached- and detached-homes, will be revitalized through adaptive reuse, converting functional obsolescence into valuable community assets.

Future investment in this district will prioritize the occupancy and vitality of these structures over rigid use restrictions. The regulatory framework will support the conversion of office space into: diverse housing options, including apartments and live-work environments, as well as artist spaces, including galleries, arts education centers, small-scale craft manufacturing, and specialized studio spaces. This evolution will maintain the physical scale and historic character of the streetscape, allowing the district to serve as a high-quality transition zone that buffers the downtown core from surrounding residential neighborhoods while providing essential housing supply.

Building Type Mix

Building Types	
Detached Home	S
Semi-Detached	S
Attached House	P
Office, Stand Alone	P
Small Flats	S
Civic and Cultural Buildings	S
ADUs	S
Primary (P); Supporting (S)	

Related Goals and Recommendations

1. Facilitate office-to-residential conversions
2. Modernize parking requirements for adaptive reuse

State Street & Downtown Core



The Downtown Core will maintain its role as the vibrant center of the Borough, serving as the center of civic, commercial, and social life. This district will be defined by a dynamic mix of independent businesses, restaurants, and cultural institutions that draw visitors while remaining accessible and welcoming to residents. Existing traditional mixed-use buildings, civic, and cultural buildings will continue to serve as the core of the district. Limited new mixed use development will occur in infill locations, replacing outdated stand-alone commercial and parking areas. New development and renovations will adhere to strict design standards that reinforce the historic storefront rhythm, while “flex zones” and updated parking strategies will ensure that the needs of businesses are met without compromising the pedestrian experience or the quality of life in adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Future investment will leverage the SEPTA Trolley Modernization project as a catalyst for placemaking, transforming the streetscape into a safer, more pedestrian-oriented environment that seamlessly integrates transit, commerce, and public gathering spaces. As the district thrives, development will focus on managing the “friction” of success by prioritizing curb management and active transportation over vehicle storage.

Building Type Mix

Building Types	
Retail, Stand Alone	S
Office, Stand Alone	S
Mixed Use, Traditional	P
Mixed Use, Modern	S
Flats, Medium	S
Civic and Cultural Buildings	S
Primary (P); Supporting (S)	

Related Goals and Recommendations

1. Leverage Trolley Modernization for streetscape enhancements
2. Implement dynamic curbside management
3. Conduct a comprehensive parking supply and demand study

5-Points District



The 5-points intersection is envisioned to become a welcoming neighborhood destination and gateway in the “North End” that balances its historic role as a small-scale commercial hub with modern, mixed-use vitality. To sustain this district’s economic health, land use policy should encourage pedestrian friendly land development practices, such as rear yard parking rather than front yard parking. It should also encourage the integration of residential units on upper floors, providing housing options that support local businesses and ensure around-the-clock activity. By maintaining a diverse mix of retail, service, and professional uses at the street level, 5-Points district will continue to serve as a convenient, human-scaled alternative to the primary downtown core, reinforcing the Borough’s “hometown” character.

The land use transformation of the 5-Points district will be catalyzed by the implementation of the targeted safety improvements. This includes installing high-visibility stamped asphalt crosswalks, upgrading the existing “pork chop” island to physically slow vehicle turning speeds, and shortening crossing distances on Monroe Street with ADA-compliant ramps and accessible signals. See Implement safety improvements at the “5-Points” intersection (page 61)

Building Type Mix

Building Types	
Retail, Stand Alone	P
Office, Stand Alone	P
Mixed Use, Traditional	P
Primary (P); Supporting (S)	

Related Goals and Recommendations

1. Implement safety improvements at the “5-Points” intersection

Baltimore Avenue Corridor



Baltimore Avenue will transform from an auto-oriented thoroughfare into a safe, cohesive, and inviting gateway that announces arrival into Media Borough. While remaining a largely regional-retail corridor, future development will leverage larger lots and regional visibility to support affordable high-quality residential and mixed-use projects.

The physical character of the avenue will be re-imagined to prioritize safety and multi-modal connectivity, directly addressing its designation as a Vision Zero “Corridor of Concern”. Investments in the public realm will include traffic calming measures, improved pedestrian crossings, and a unified streetscape. These will help stitch the northern and southern halves of the Borough together, reducing the barrier effect of the roadway. As redevelopment occurs, it will introduce a mix of residential and commercial uses designed to engage the sidewalk, creating a walkable environment that extends the vibrancy of the town center westward.

Building Type Mix

Building Types	
Retail, Stand Alone	P
Office, Stand Alone	S
Mixed Use, Modern	P
Flats, Medium	P
Flats, Medium-Large	P
Civic and Cultural Buildings	S
<i>Primary (P); Supporting (S)</i>	

Related Goals and Recommendations

1. Address safety deficiencies on the “Corridor of Concern”
2. Expand the supply of housing options in strategic locations
3. Adopt a market-informed inclusionary zoning ordinance

Mixed-Industrial



Media’s Industrial District will transition into a dynamic hub for innovation, artisan manufacturing, and mixed-use living. This area will become a home for “maker spaces,” experiential retail, and creative enterprises that require flexible workspaces but benefit from proximity to a walkable downtown. Zoning in this area will embrace flexibility, allowing light fabrication and commercial uses to co-exist alongside new residential opportunities, creating a vibrant 24/7 environment previously absent in this part of the Borough.

This evolution will be supported by a regulatory framework that encourages the redevelopment of underutilized sites into modern, mixed-use facilities. By permitting residential uses in this district, the Borough will create a unique neighborhood character that blends the area’s working heritage with modern amenities, providing space for entrepreneurs to grow and for residents to live in a distinct, loft-style environment.

Building Type Mix

Building Types	
Light-Industrial, Stand Alone	S
Commercial	S
Mixed Use, Residential Light-Industrial	P
Mixed Use, Residential Commercial	P
<i>Primary (P); Supporting (S)</i>	

Related Goals and Recommendations

1. Expand the supply of housing options in strategic locations
2. Adopt a market-informed inclusionary zoning ordinance

Municipal, Educational, Recreational, and Community Use

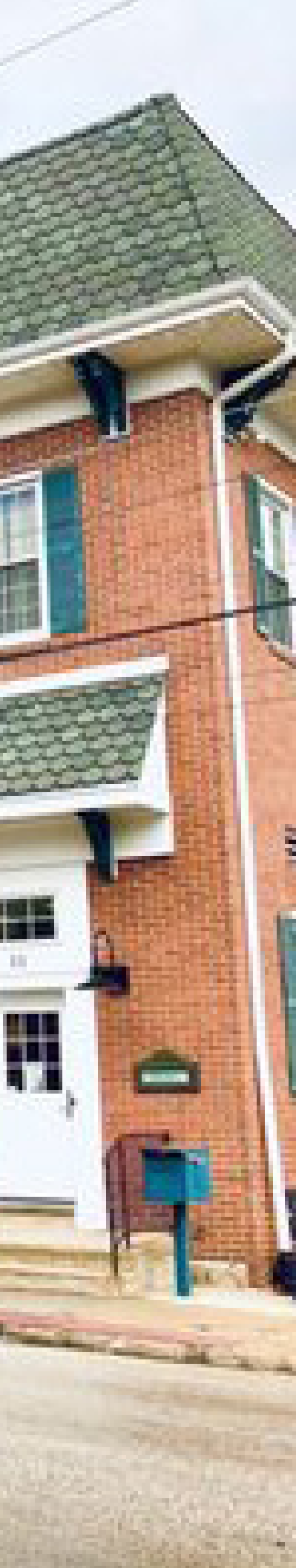


The Municipal, Educational, Recreational, and Community Use areas will stand as the permanent civic foundation of Media Borough. These areas are home for the educational, recreational, and community use of the entire Borough, ensuring that these essential assets are preserved rather than lost to private development. Recognizing that Media is a fully developed community with limited open land, these existing facilities will be protected and enhanced to serve their essential public functions.

Building Type Mix

Building Types	
Civic	P
Cultural	P
Recreational	P
Educational	P
Primary (P); Supporting (S)	





Community Facilities

In 2035, Media's community facilities will stand as the permanent civic foundation of the Borough, ensuring that essential educational, recreational, and public safety assets are enhanced for all generations. Public safety will be anchored by a premier fire company operating from a modern, high-functioning facility designed for rapid response and firefighter wellness. Community spaces will be inclusive and responsive, featuring dedicated social areas for youth and accessible programming for seniors. By leading through example with energy-efficient municipal buildings, the Borough's infrastructure will model sustainability while serving as a common ground for social connection and civic engagement.

Existing Conditions and Trends

The following summarizes key existing conditions and trends. These findings serve as a foundation for the recommendations in the following sections.

The historic Fire Station and volunteer model face critical sustainability challenges. Media Fire Hook & Ladder Company No. 1 is a cornerstone of the Borough's public safety, yet both its physical facility and operational model are at a critical inflection point. The historic station at 11 S. Jackson Street, constructed in 1969, lacks "drive-through" bays, forcing apparatus to back in from State Street, a maneuver that creates significant safety hazards and traffic disruption. Internally, the station fails to meet modern safety standards for "hot zone" isolation, meaning carcinogens from gear cannot be effectively separated from living quarters, and the lack of private bunkrooms hinders the recruitment of a diverse workforce.

Compounding these physical constraints is the pressure on the volunteer staffing model. Like departments nationwide, the Company faces a decline in volunteerism driven by changing demographics and economic pressures that limit residents' ability to respond to daytime calls. Furthermore, the administrative burden of running an independent non-profit, managing everything from grant writing to facility maintenance, increasingly distracts volunteer leadership from their core mission of training and emergency response.

Aging municipal infrastructure requires reinvestment. The municipal complex, comprised of Borough Hall, the police station, and Community Center, are facing the cumulative effects of aging. The buildings require ongoing systems improvements, including HVAC upgrades, roof repairs, and elevator modernization, among others.

Stormwater mandates are driving infrastructure upgrades. The management of stormwater has evolved from a basic drainage function to a complex regulatory obligation. The Borough is facing increasing pressure to meet state and federal MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) requirements, which necessitate significant capital investment in pollution reduction and flood mitigation. This "invisible utility" requires ongoing modernization of inlets and piping systems to manage heavier rainfall events.



Above: Media fire truck | Below: PLACEHOLDER

Previous Plans

The recommendations in this section build on a focused set of Borough planning efforts addressing critical public facilities and services related to infrastructure performance and public safety.

Managing Stormwater as Core Municipal Infrastructure

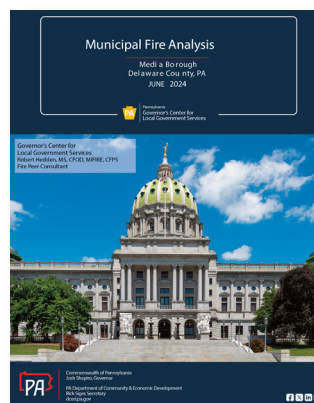
The *Media Borough Stormwater Master Plan (2017)* and the *Media Borough MS4 Pollution Reduction Plan (2017)* provided the primary foundation for understanding stormwater-related community facilities and services. Together, these plans documented aging infrastructure, high impervious surface coverage, and regulatory obligations under the MS4 permit, while identifying required capital improvements and ongoing operational responsibilities such as expanded street sweeping and pollutant reduction measures. This baseline framed stormwater infrastructure as a core municipal service and informed the Comprehensive Plan's focus on coordination, long-term maintenance, and integration with broader capital and facilities planning.

Public Safety Facilities and Emergency Response Capacity

The *Municipal Fire Analysis (2024)* established a baseline for evaluating fire protection services, facility needs, and response capacity within a constrained, built-out community. The analysis identified service demands, facility considerations, and operational factors that informed the Comprehensive Plan's emphasis on ensuring emergency service facilities are appropriately maintained, located, and coordinated with land use, transportation, and capital investment decisions.

Aligning Facilities Planning with Capital Investment

Together, the *stormwater plans*, *MS4 requirements*, and *Municipal Fire Analysis* highlighted the need for a coordinated approach to community facilities planning that addresses regulatory compliance, public safety, and long-term system performance. While each document provides detailed technical guidance, the Previous Plan Review found they are not fully integrated into a single facilities framework. This finding guided the Comprehensive Plan's focus on strengthening the connection between facilities planning, operational needs, and capital programming to prioritize the Borough's most critical community services.



Covers from previous planning activities

Community Input

Feedback from the engagement process reflects strong community support for maintaining reliable public facilities and services as a foundation of quality of life in Media.

Dependable Services as a Quality-of-Life Priority

Community survey results consistently showed that residents place high value on dependable municipal services and infrastructure. Participants expressed that well-functioning public facilities, particularly those related to safety and basic services, are essential to maintaining Media's livability and community character.

Flooding, Maintenance, and Infrastructure Performance

Stormwater and drainage issues emerged as recurring concerns in survey feedback and open-ended comments, often tied to residents' everyday experiences during heavy storms. This input reinforced the importance of maintaining and upgrading aging infrastructure, as well as addressing operational needs such as ongoing maintenance and system performance.

Public Safety and Emergency Services

Public safety was identified as a key priority through the community survey process. Residents emphasized the importance of ensuring that facilities supporting emergency services are capable of meeting current and future needs, particularly in a compact community where access and response are closely tied to infrastructure and land use conditions.

Planning for a Built-Out Community

Across engagement efforts, participants demonstrated an understanding that Media's limited land area and resources require careful prioritization and coordination. Community input highlighted the need for long-term planning that aligns facilities, operations, and capital investments to ensure that public resources are used efficiently and provide broad community benefit.

Keeping everyone safe and providing high quality Fire and EMS services leads to a better quality of life.

As a family with young kids, we spend tons of time at parks. Adding bathrooms, picnic tables, trash cans and shade make us want to spend more time at them.

Working with community organizations like MAC and TTM... rotating these events throughout Media. This way we encourage people to come out, meet each other, get to know their neighbors and connect the community.

Goals and Recommendations

1. Maintain and modernize core municipal facilities to ensure efficient service delivery

Borough Hall, the Police Station, and the Community Center serve as the operational heart of Media, hosting everything from daily government administration to vital public safety functions and community gatherings. However, as these facilities age, they require consistent reinvestment to remain safe, accessible, and energy-efficient. The Borough is committed to making upgrades to mechanical systems, roofing, and technology, among other improvements, to ensure that these public assets continue to serve residents effectively while avoiding the higher long-term costs associated with deferred maintenance.

2. Ensure the long-term sustainability and operational readiness of Fire and Emergency Services

The Media Fire Hook & Ladder Company has served the Borough for over a century, but the traditional volunteer model and aging infrastructure are straining under modern demands. To guarantee rapid response times and the safety of both residents and first responders, the Borough must proactively evolve its approach. This involves physically modernizing facilities, strengthening career leadership, and stabilizing funding streams to support a resilient, future-proof department.

A. Actively pursue regional partnerships for fire and EMS protection.

Emergency events do not recognize municipal boundaries, and the challenges facing Media are often shared by neighboring communities. To ensure the long-term sustainability of advanced life support services, the Borough should remain an active participant in the multi-municipal working group tasked with investigating the formation of an EMS joint authority. By leveraging the technical assistance and peer-to-peer consulting provided by the DCED, the Borough can develop a sustainable service delivery model that addresses escalating operational costs and recruitment challenges. This continued regional approach will allow for the design of a stable budgeting and billing framework to ensure high-quality, reliable emergency care for all residents.

- B. Establish a dedicated fire tax or fee.** Ensuring public safety requires a stable, predictable funding stream that is insulated from the fluctuations of the general municipal budget. To support the significant capital investments needed for a new station, apparatus replacement, and potential career staffing, the Borough should implement a dedicated fire tax or fee. During engagement efforts for this plan, that option was preferred over an increase in the property tax rate. This specific revenue source would be restricted to fire and EMS needs, providing the financial certainty required for long-term strategic planning and ensuring that these critical services are not forced to compete with other municipal priorities.
- C. Upgrade the existing fire station and explore regional partnerships before making major capital investments.** While Station 23 at 11 S. Jackson Street is well-maintained, it has reached maximum capacity and requires critical repairs, including fixing roof leaks and installing contemporary 21st-century upgrades. Before committing to a full-scale replacement or major capital improvements, the Borough should continue its discussions with adjacent municipalities about regional services, as described above. This approach ensures that any future facility upgrades are designed efficiently to serve both Media and its regional partners.
- D. Hire a full-time career Fire Chief.** The administrative complexity of running a modern fire company has outgrown the capacity of volunteer leadership. The fire company should consider hiring a career Fire Chief to manage these day-to-day operational and strategic duties. This shift will alleviate burnout among volunteer officers, allowing them to refocus their energy on training and active emergency response.
- E. Strengthen volunteer recruitment and retention.** Even with paid support, volunteers remain the backbone of the department. To reverse the decline in numbers, the Borough must implement tangible incentives to attract and retain members. Strategies should include expanding tax credits, offering tuition assistance, and establishing a Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) to financially reward long-term commitment, ensuring that volunteerism remains a viable and attractive option for residents.

3. Continue to implement the Stormwater Management Plan to mitigate flooding and improve water quality

As weather patterns shift and severe rainfall events become more frequent, effective stormwater management has evolved from a basic utility function into a critical public safety and environmental priority. The Borough should advance the goals and strategies identified in the Environment and Open Space Plan, including Continue to implement the Stormwater Master Plan and the MS4 Plan.

4. Establish price-stable renewable energy as the default in the Borough

The Pennsylvania Energy Plan Collaborative (PEPC), formerly known as the Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) project, allows communities to leverage their collective purchasing power to make renewable energy the default electricity supply for residents. This flips the current model where consumers must actively “opt-in” to avoid defaulting to traditional fossil fuel generation. This aggregation is highly beneficial because it gives communities the market clout necessary to negotiate stable, competitive rates for green energy while providing a buffer against the volatile price spikes common in traditional wholesale markets. In 2024, Media Borough joined a coalition of communities that filed a petition for a declaratory order with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) to seek approval for this “opt-out” structure. Though this was denied, the Borough should continue to advance this effort by documenting community demand and to ensure residents gain transparent access to affordable, renewable power.





Relationship to Other Plans

In 2035, Media will have advanced its shared goals thorough strong regional collaboration. By aligning local land use and transportation strategies with Delaware County’s broader frameworks, the Borough will amplify its impact on regional sustainability, housing affordability, and transit efficiency. This future Media will thrive through proactive partnerships with its neighbors, ensuring that shared corridors like Providence Road are safe, cohesive roadways that reflect a unified vision for a resilient and connected Delaware County.

Connection Between Plan Elements

Introduction

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Code (MPC) requires that a comprehensive plan include, “a statement of the interrelationships among the various plan components which estimates the environmental, energy conservation, fiscal, economic development and social consequences on the municipality.”

This plan goes above and beyond this requirement. The plan articulates a comprehensive and interconnected series of recommendations, and each section includes a discussion of the impact of recommendations on Township. This section summarizes and further elaborates on how the effects of recommendations on:

1. Environment
2. Energy Conservation
3. Township Finances (Fiscal Management)
4. Economic Development
5. Social Conditions

Environment

Media2035 will improve environmental sustainability by focusing on the stewardship of local resources, the integration of green infrastructure into the built environment, and the alignment of land use policies with ecological health. In a fully developed community, the plan ensures a balanced approach to growth by prioritizing the preservation of the Borough's remaining open spaces and the restoration of its urban ecosystem. The following demonstrate how the plan's recommendations will collectively improve the environment:

Ecosystem Restoration. The plan's recommendations to expand and maintain the urban tree canopy will mitigate the heat island effect and improve air quality throughout the downtown and residential neighborhoods.

Green Infrastructure Integration. The implementation of green infrastructure recommendations, such as incorporating bioswales and rain gardens into roadway projects like the SEPTA Trolley Modernization, will reduce runoff and protect local water quality.

Sustainable Land Use Patterns. The plan focuses on infill development and the adaptive reuse of office structures, which will limit ecological disruption and reduce the community's carbon footprint by supporting transit activity.

Green Building Incentives. The plan recommends a regulatory framework for green building incentives, which will encourage developers to include features like green roofs and on-site renewable energy.

Proactive Stormwater Management. The continued implementation of the Stormwater Master Plan and MS4 Plan will ensure that municipal infrastructure investments are targeted toward areas with the highest flooding vulnerabilities.

Energy Conservation

Media2035 will enhance energy conservation by promoting sustainable development, reducing consumption through municipal leadership, and encouraging the transition to renewable energy systems. The implementation of the plan's recommendations will align the Borough's growth

with the goal of achieving carbon neutrality while reducing long-term operational costs for both the municipality and private property owners. The following demonstrate how the plan's recommendations will collectively improve the energy conservation:

Renewable Energy Expansion. The plan recommends installing solar arrays and geothermal systems on municipal buildings, which will reduce dependence on fossil fuels and lower public utility costs. It also advancing Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) as part of its green energy initiatives.

Energy Efficiency Improvements. The plan focuses on updating building codes and facilitating energy-efficient retrofits for aging structures, which will ensure that new and renovated buildings meet high-performance standards.

Incentivizing Green Building. The implementation of a regulatory framework that provides height or density bonuses for green building certifications, such as LEED, will encourage developers to integrate renewable energy systems into residential and commercial projects.

Sustainable Transportation. The plan's recommendations to expand Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure and promote transit-oriented development will reduce the community's overall energy consumption related to personal vehicle travel.

Strategic Growth. The plan emphasizes the adaptive reuse of existing office buildings for housing, which will conserve the embodied energy of existing structures and reduce the need for energy-intensive new construction.

Borough Finances

The recommendations will strengthen the Borough's fiscal sustainability by aligning the use of resources with community goals, improving the efficiency of infrastructure investments, and fostering sustainable economic growth. By focusing on cost-effective development patterns that will enhance land values, the plan ensures financial stability for future generations. The following demonstrate how the plan's recommendations will collectively improve the Borough finances:

Targeted Infill and Adaptive Reuse. The plan's recommendations to prioritize infill development and the conversion of underutilized office space into housing will reduce the need for costly service extensions while maximizing the use of existing infrastructure.

Revenue Diversification. The implementation of revitalization strategies for the Baltimore Avenue corridor and the Industrial District will boost property values and expand the municipal tax base through a more vibrant mix of commercial and residential uses.

Proactive Asset Maintenance. The plan focuses on establishing structured maintenance schedules for parks, the Olive Street Garage, and other public infrastructure to reduce long-term repair costs and improve service delivery.

Efficient Infrastructure Investment. The plan's recommendations to leverage regional projects, such as the SEPTA Trolley Modernization, will allow the Borough to coordinate local streetscape and stormwater improvements with larger capital investments, reducing the fiscal burden on the municipality.

Cost-Effective Sustainability. The implementation of energy-efficient retrofits for municipal buildings and the transition to renewable energy will lower long-term utility and operational costs for the Borough.

Economic Development

Media2035 will promote economic vitality by leveraging the Borough's role as a regional destination and County Seat to attract businesses and foster local job creation. The implementation of the plan's recommendations will ensure a resilient local economy that meets the evolving needs of residents, entrepreneurs, and visitors while maintaining the community's unique character. The following demonstrate how the plan's recommendations will collectively advance economic development in the Borough:

Mixed-Use Integration. The plan's recommendations to encourage housing and commercial uses in the Downtown Core and Industrial District will stimulate local commerce and create a vibrant, round-the-clock environment.

Commercial Expansion and Diversity. The plan focuses on identifying new locations for businesses outside of State Street, which will provide affordable entry points for entrepreneurs and diversify the Borough's retail and service offerings.

Targeted Revitalization. The implementation of comprehensive rezoning and streetscape improvements along the Baltimore Avenue corridor will attract new investment and transform an auto-oriented thoroughfare into a welcoming mixed-use gateway.

Strategic Capacity Building. The plan recommends expanding the role and financial stability of the Media Business Authority (MBA), which will strengthen business recruitment, retention, and marketing efforts across the Borough.

Regional Accessibility. The plan's focus on leveraging the SEPTA Trolley Modernization project and improving pedestrian connectivity will enhance access to local businesses for both residents and regional visitors.

Social Conditions

Media2035 will improve social equity and community well-being by ensuring that all residents, regardless of age, income, or ability, have access to safe housing, reliable transportation, and vibrant public spaces. The implementation of the recommendations will reinforce Media's identity as "Everybody's Hometown" by fostering inclusivity and strengthening the social fabric through targeted community investments. The following demonstrate how the recommendations will improve social conditions in the Borough:

Inclusive Housing Options. The plan's recommendations to promote Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), office-to-residential conversions, and age-restricted housing will ensure that seniors can age in place and that the local workforce can find attainable homes within the Borough.

Equitable Mobility. The plan focuses on expanding the pedestrian and bicycle networks, which will provide safe and reliable access to transit, schools, and parks for residents who do not own or drive a vehicle.

Systemic Safety. The implementation of Vision Zero principles and traffic calming measures will protect the most vulnerable road users, ensuring that streets are safe for children, seniors, and people with disabilities.

Diverse Recreational Services. The plan recommends creating dedicated spaces for teens and expanding inclusive programming to ensure public parks serve the social and developmental needs of the Borough's diverse population.

Targeted Outreach and Advocacy. The plan's focus on deepening partnerships with regional housing and social service organizations will ensure that marginalized populations have direct access to the funding and resources they need to thrive.

Conclusion

The recommendations of Media2035 are thoroughly integrated to address the environmental, energy conservation, fiscal, economic development, and social needs of Media Borough. By prioritizing sustainability, inclusivity, and fiscal responsibility, the strategies collectively support a resilient, vibrant, and equitable community. These interconnected actions ensure that future growth aligns with the Borough's long-term vision for a sustainable and prosperous future as "Everybody's Hometown."

Relationship to County Plans

Media2035 aligns closely with the goals and objectives outlined in Delaware County 2035: Land Use Policy Framework Plan, and associated County Plans, by incorporating strategies that balance growth with the preservation of the Borough's character, resources, and quality of life. Media2035 demonstrates a commitment to sustainable development, transportation enhancements, and the protection of natural and historic resources, ensuring that future development meets the needs of the community while respecting its established identity.

Reinforcing Media as a Regional Activity Center

Media2035 aligns closely with the Delaware County Land Use Policy Framework Plan by concentrating growth and investment within one of the county's most prominent "Activity Centers". The plan's emphasis on directing new development toward infill projects, the adaptive reuse of underutilized office space, and the revitalization of the Baltimore Avenue corridor supports the regional goal of maximizing existing infrastructure while minimizing sprawl. By focusing on higher-density residential and mixed-use growth near the downtown core and transit hubs, the Borough reinforces the County's strategy of creating vibrant, walkable destination centers that serve as anchors for regional economic and social activity.

Integrating Complete Streets and Regional Multi-modal Networks

Media2035 advances the goals of the Delaware County Transportation Plan and the Delaware County Bicycle Plan by prioritizing a high-quality multi-modal transportation network that reduces reliance on personal vehicles. The plan's commitment to "Complete Streets" is

exemplified by the proactive coordination with SEPTA for the Trolley Modernization project, which will transform State Street into a safer, more pedestrian-oriented environment through the integration of curb extensions and raised intersections. Furthermore, the Borough's strategy to transition from sharrows to dedicated bicycle facilities and to complete the Media-Smedley Connector Trail aligns with the County's regional vision for a low-stress, interconnected cycling network. By implementing dynamic curbside management and supporting electric vehicle infrastructure, the plan ensures that local mobility adapts to emerging technologies while supporting the broader sustainability objectives of the County.

Advancing the County's Vision Zero Safety Framework

Media2035 aligns with the Delaware County Vision Zero Plan by adopting a proactive, systemic approach to traffic safety that aims to eliminate all roadway fatalities and serious injuries. The plan directly addresses the County's designation of West Baltimore Avenue as a "Corridor of Concern" by recommending rigorous traffic calming interventions to combat documented high-risk driving behaviors. By utilizing the County's Vision Zero crash profiles to identify and mitigate systemic risks at complex junctions, such as the "5-Points" intersection, the Borough ensures its infrastructure investments are targeted toward the locations most likely to result in severe crashes. This local commitment to safety design supports the regional goal of creating a transportation network that prioritizes the lives of all road users, particularly the most vulnerable pedestrians and cyclists.

Expanding Housing Diversity in a High-Accessibility Transit Core

Media2035 supports the Delaware County Housing Plan (2020) by expanding the supply of diverse and attainable housing options within a high-accessibility transit core. The plan focuses on maintaining the Borough's "Everybody's Hometown" identity by facilitating office-to-residential conversions and implementing a market-informed inclusionary zoning ordinance to create deed-restricted affordable units. These efforts directly align with the County's goal of providing a varied housing stock that meets the needs of all residents, including essential workers and young professionals. Furthermore, the Borough's commitment to promoting Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and developing age-restricted housing on Borough-owned land advances regional strategies for aging in place and long-term housing affordability.

Fostering Economic Vitality through Small Business and Civic Hub Support

Media2035 will strengthen the Borough's economic resilience by aligning local revitalization efforts with the Delaware County Economic Development Plan's focus on diverse and sustainable growth. The plan reinforces Media's status as a regional destination and the County Seat by recommending the expansion of the Media Business Authority (MBA) and identifying new opportunities for commercial growth beyond the State Street corridor. By supporting the "Dining Under the Stars" initiative and other large-scale events, and incentivizing the adaptive reuse of underutilized office spaces, the Borough directly advances County goals to diversify the commercial tax base and maintain vibrant downtowns. Additionally, the plan's focus on small business recruitment and addressing high rent barriers mirrors regional priorities to sustain local entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Advancing Urban Resiliency through Local Natural Resource Stewardship

Media2035 aligns with the Sustain Delco plan and the Delaware County Natural Heritage Inventory by institutionalizing environmental stewardship within a mature urban fabric. The plan focuses on enhancing the environment through the expansion of the urban tree canopy and the continued implementation of the Stormwater Master Plan and MS4 Plan, directly supporting County goals for climate resiliency and natural resource protection. By prioritizing the preservation of the Borough's few remaining large open spaces, such as the Broomall's Lake Country Club property, Media2035 ensures that local natural assets continue to provide essential ecological services like air filtration and heat mitigation. Furthermore, the development of a standalone Sustainable and Resilient Media Plan will ensure that long term policy decisions remain consistent with regional sustainability frameworks.

Supporting Mature Neighborhoods through Sustainable Redevelopment

Media2035 reinforces the goals of the Delaware County Land Use Policy Framework Plan by ensuring that new investment respects the scale and character of the Borough's established neighborhoods. The plan focuses on utilizing context-sensitive design standards and the Hybrid Form-Based Code to manage building scale while allowing for the incremental addition of diverse housing options, such as Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). By encouraging sustainable redevelopment, including energy-efficient upgrades for aging structures and the adaptive reuse of professional offices, the Borough advances County strategies for neighborhood stabilization and reinvestment. This balanced approach ensures that as Media evolves, it protects its architectural heritage and "Classic Town" charm while contributing to a more resilient regional landscape.

Relationship to Plans of Adjoining Municipalities

Media Borough shares borders with two municipalities in Delaware County: Upper Providence and Nether Providence Townships. The existing and proposed developments within Media2035 are generally compatible with the comprehensive plans and land use goals of these contiguous communities. By addressing key regional priorities such as sustainable development, transportation safety, and environmental preservation, the plan ensures cohesive growth across municipal boundaries.

Upper Providence

Media2035 aligns with the Upper Providence Township Comprehensive Plan by emphasizing the protection of shared natural resources and the maintenance of established community character. Both municipalities prioritize the preservation of open space and the restoration of ecological systems, particularly through riparian buffer protection and reforestation efforts that enhance biodiversity across municipal borders. Media's commitment to managing stormwater through green infrastructure and its focus on sensitive infill development complement Upper Providence's goals to balance growth with environmental stewardship.

In terms of mobility, Media's multi-modal initiatives strongly support the transportation objectives shared by Upper Providence. Both plans seek to improve the safety and efficiency of all travel modes, with a specific focus on expanding pedestrian and bicycle networks that connect residential areas to regional destinations. Media's adoption of Vision Zero principles and traffic calming measures along shared corridors, such as State Road and Providence Road, will require a coordinated approach to regional safety and connectivity.

Finally, the two municipalities share a commitment to providing a range of housing options that address the needs of a changing demographic. Media's strategies for facilitating senior housing and diversifying its housing stock through Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) mirror Upper Providence's interest in supporting aging-in-place and maintaining housing affordability. By aligning these land use and housing policies, both communities ensure that future development respects the regional identity while fostering long-term social and economic resilience.

Nether Providence

Media2035 aligns with the vision established in the Swarthmore, Rutledge, and Nether Providence Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan by emphasizing the preservation of community character and the enhancement of multi-modal connectivity. Both plans prioritize directing growth toward established centers and transit hubs to minimize impacts on mature residential neighborhoods. The focus on maintaining the integrity of its residential districts through context-sensitive infill mirrors Media's use of form-based standards to ensure that new development harmonizes with the existing historic fabric.

In terms of mobility and safety, Media's commitment to Vision Zero and pedestrian infrastructure supports Nether Providence's goals for improved trail connectivity and safer roadways. Both municipalities seek to expand their respective bicycle and pedestrian networks to provide residents with viable alternatives to personal vehicle travel. The shared interest in enhancing access to regional rail and trolley services ensures that transportation investments across municipal borders work in concert to improve safety and accessibility for all users.

Environmental stewardship remains a cornerstone of the relationship between the two communities. Nether Providence's recommendations for protecting natural resources, managing stormwater through green infrastructure, and preserving open space align directly with Media's approach to environmental protection and enhancement. By coordinating efforts on riparian buffer restoration and tree canopy maintenance, both municipalities contribute to a more resilient regional ecosystem that mitigates the impacts of climate change and enhances the overall quality of life.

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Implementation





Implementation

Implementation serves as the essential mechanism that translates the community's vision into tangible results. This section establishes a strategic framework for prioritization, ensuring that limited resources are directed toward the most impactful and urgent actions. By incorporating criteria such as regulatory compliance, community impact, and feasibility, the plan ensures that every step forward is both legally sound and fiscally responsible. This structured approach transforms Media2035 into a dynamic and accountable tool for progress, guiding the Borough toward a future that is as actionable as it is aspirational.

Overview

Introduction

The structure of Media2035 was crafted to ensure that each goal and strategy is actionable and aligned with the Borough's long-term vision. By organizing the plan this way, Media2035 provides a practical, flexible framework to guide decision-making and resource allocation. This structure promotes efficient implementation by focusing on measurable outcomes, fostering accountability, and creating a roadmap that can adapt to changing circumstances. The implementation of the plan's recommendations will vary based on the nature of each action. Broadly, these actions can be categorized into the following approaches:

Legislative Action

Many of Media2035's recommendations will require the adoption of new legislation by the Council, such as amendments to zoning ordinances or land development regulations. Legislative changes are essential for establishing long-term frameworks that support the Borough's goals. These efforts are often highly technical and may require substantial input from Borough staff, boards, and commissions, as well as consultants with specialized expertise. By adopting clear, updated ordinances, the Borough can ensure that development aligns with Media2035's vision and community values.

Policy Changes

Some of the plan's actions can be accomplished through internal policy changes, which allow the Borough to adjust its approach without requiring new legislation. For example, Media could adopt a policy of including pedestrian facilities in all roadway projects to strengthen its pedestrian network over time. This approach involves a shift in decision-making processes that emphasizes

strategic priorities, such as sustainability, safety, or accessibility, without requiring large capital investments. Policy changes are an effective way to create meaningful shifts in outcomes by simply altering operational practices to better reflect the Borough's goals.

Funding and Capital Planning

Implementing Media2035's objectives will require sustainable funding sources and strategic capital planning. Thus, a capital improvement plan (CIP) plays a crucial role in supporting significant infrastructure projects, such as road repairs, stormwater improvements, and park enhancements. Additionally, targeted grants, public-private partnerships, and innovative financing methods will be essential for funding specific initiatives outside of the CIP. This combined approach to funding and capital planning helps the Borough to balance immediate needs with long-term investments.

Coordination and Partnerships

Achieving the plan's goals will also depend on collaboration with external partners, such as PennDOT, Delaware County, neighboring municipalities, and local institutions. These partnerships expand the Borough's capacity by providing additional expertise, funding, and support, especially for large-scale or regionally coordinated projects. For instance, working with regional transit authorities can advance mobility goals, while partnerships with local nonprofits can support housing or sustainability initiatives. By building and maintaining strong relationships, Media can leverage resources and knowledge from a variety of stakeholders to drive successful implementation of shared goals.

Prioritization

This plan does not prescribe a set order for actions, given the comprehensive nature of its recommendations. Instead, it is recommended that Borough staff work with Council through the annual budgeting and capital improvement process to identify and set priorities. This approach allows the Borough to establish a balanced, transparent prioritization process that addresses urgent needs, supports long-term goals, and reflects community values.

The Borough's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) already utilizes a dedicated prioritization framework to manage physical assets and infrastructure. The below framework is not intended to replace the CIP framework. Instead, it offers a broader set of criteria to help evaluate the full scope of recommendations, including non-capital items such as policy updates and community programs. The following criteria can help the Borough effectively balance competing needs and make informed choices about which actions to prioritize each year.

Need and Urgency

When establishing priorities, consider the scale and seriousness of the problem to be addressed. Is it an issue that impacts health, safety, or welfare? What are the potential consequences if the problem is not addressed in the coming year? An action that addresses an urgent, high-need issue may warrant prioritization, particularly if delaying action would lead to worsening conditions, increased costs, or missed opportunities for positive change.

Regulatory Compliance

Evaluate whether an action is required to fulfill legal obligations or adhere to County, State, or Federal mandates. This includes compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA),

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) directives, and established Borough ordinances. Prioritizing regulatory requirements protects the Borough from potential liabilities and ensures continued eligibility for external grants and funding sources.

Community Impact and Long-Term Benefits

Consider the potential impact of successfully implementing the action, focusing on how it could improve future conditions. While some actions may not address an immediate problem, they may yield substantial long-term benefits, such as enhanced quality of life, improved public health, or strengthened Township finances. Evaluate the type of benefit the action provides: will it improve public safety, enhance governance, increase economic resilience, support environmental sustainability, or address another important outcome? Prioritizing actions with strong, lasting benefits ensures that resources contribute to the Township's long-term vision.

Cost, Effort, and Feasibility

Assess the relative cost or level of effort required to implement each action. While achieving quick, small wins can build momentum and demonstrate progress, it is also important to prioritize foundational actions that set the stage for larger improvements. Consider whether the action is financially feasible in the short term or if it could be spread across multiple years. Feasibility also includes available staff capacity, logistical challenges, and potential partnerships, ensuring that priorities are realistic and attainable.

Time Sensitivity and Opportunity Windows

Time-sensitive actions should be evaluated to capture opportunities that may not be available in future years. Consider whether there are regulatory deadlines, time-limited funding sources, or other external factors that make an action particularly

urgent this year. By prioritizing actions that require immediate attention, the Borough can avoid missed opportunities and take advantage of timely resources that align with its goals.

Equitable and Inclusive Implementation

Equity should be a key consideration in the prioritization process. Actions that provide broad community-wide benefits or directly address the needs of vulnerable populations may have a higher impact on quality of life for those who are least able to advocate for themselves. Consider whether an action would promote fair and accessible services for all residents, including those who may not traditionally participate in public processes. For example, improving pedestrian infrastructure benefits children, elderly residents, and those with limited mobility, who may face greater barriers in an auto-oriented environment.

Implementation Matrix

This section includes a matrix to assist implementation. The following provides a brief overview of each column in the matrix.

Lead and Supporting Entities

The Borough has identified a preliminary lead entity for each action. Where appropriate, supporting entities have also been identified. Though these are frequently Borough departments, they may also include other government entities as well as community partners.

Cost

The cost estimates included in the matrix are planning-level cost estimates. Some strategies may be grant-eligible, meaning net Borough costs could be materially lower than the gross estimates shown. All estimates should be validated through professional feasibility studies before budgeting or financing decisions are made.

Obstacles

It is important to recognize that many actions identified in this plan face obstacles to implementation. This does not mean that the actions cannot be advanced, only that there are key barriers that must be addressed. This plan identifies three key types of obstacles.

Staffing

The Borough currently does not have the staff resources to implement the action. This can be overcome by hiring new staff, bringing on consultants or contractors, and/or through shared agreements with partners, such as state agencies, neighboring municipalities, or the County.

Funding

The Borough (or lead entity) lacks the financial resources necessary to implement the action in whole or part. This can be addressed through the Borough budget process. Where funding gaps exist, the Borough may also look to grants or partnerships to support implementation.

Legislative

There is a legal obstacle to implementing the action. Most frequently, this refers to federal or state laws that prohibit the Borough from implementing the action.

Environment & Open Space

Environment & Open Space					Obstacles		
ID	Description	Lead Entity	Support Entities	Cost	Staffing	Funding	Legislative
1	Enhance the Parks and Open Space Network						
1.A	Improve existing parks and green spaces	Public Works	Recreation Commission; Properties Committee	\$\$\$	●	●	
1.B	Enhance underutilized “small-scale” open spaces and greenways			\$\$\$\$		●	
1.C	Enforce rigorous criteria for land acquisition	Borough Council	Grants Coordinator	\$\$		●	●
2	Facilitate recreational experiences that enhance the quality of life for Media residents						
2.A	Maintain and expand facilities for self-directed recreation	Recreation Coordinator	Recreation Commission	\$	●	●	
2.B	Increase public awareness of recreational facilities and programs	Recreation Coordinator	Recreation Commission	\$	●		
2.C	Develop dedicated recreation services and spaces for middle schoolers and teens	Recreation Coordinator	Recreation Commission	\$	●	●	
2.D	Advance diversity, equity, and inclusion through recreation	Recreation Coordinator	Recreation Commission	\$	●		
3	Protect and enhance the natural environment						
3.A	Continue to implement the Stormwater Master Plan and the MS4 Plan	Borough Engineer	Code Enforcement	\$\$\$\$		●	
3.B	Develop and implement a comprehensive tree canopy management strategy	Public Works	Shade Tree Commission	\$\$		●	

Cost: \$ = under \$50K | \$\$ = \$50K–\$250K | \$\$\$ = \$250K–\$1M | \$\$\$\$ = \$1M+

MBA: Media Business Authority | MPC: Media Planning Commission | CDC: Community Development Committee

● = known obstacle to implementation

Environment & Open Space

Environment & Open Space					Obstacles		
ID	Description	Lead Entity	Support Entities	Cost	Staffing	Funding	Legislative
4	Build a sustainable and resilient community						
4.A	Develop a Sustainable and Resilient Media Plan	Special Projects Coordinator	EAC	\$\$	●	●	
4.B	Identify targeted energy-efficient upgrades for publicly owned property	Special Projects Coordinator	Properties and Public Works Committee; EAC	\$\$\$		●	
4.C	Identify incentives for sustainable building and land development	Code Enforcement	CDC	\$			●

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Mobility & Transportation

Mobility & Transportation					Obstacles		
ID	Description	Lead Entity	Support Entities	Cost	Staffing	Funding	Legislative
1 Improve Safety and Eliminate Serious Injuries and Fatalities on Roadways							
1.A	Continue to implement and update the Traffic Calming Plan	Borough Engineer	Public Works; Transportation Committee	\$\$\$		●	
1.B	Implement safety improvements at the “5-Points” intersection	Borough Engineer	Public Works; Transportation Committee	\$\$		●	
1.C	Address safety deficiencies along West Baltimore Avenue	Borough Engineer	Public Works; Transportation Committee	\$\$\$		●	
1.D	Target systemic risk factors using Vision Zero crash profiles	Borough Engineer	Public Works; Transportation Committee	\$	●		
1.E	Leverage available funding sources to improve safety and mobility			\$	●		
2 Enhance the Pedestrian Network							
2.A	Conduct a comprehensive sidewalk and crosswalk inventory	Borough Engineer	Public Works; Transportation Committee	\$	●	●	
2.B	Develop a strategic pedestrian improvement plan	Borough Engineer	Public Works; Transportation Committee	\$	●	●	
2.C	Improve connections to the SEPTA Regional Rail Station			\$\$\$			
3 Create a safe and connected bicycle network							
3.A	Transition from “sharrows” to dedicated facilities	Borough Engineer	Public Works; Transportation Committee	\$\$			

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Mobility & Transportation						Obstacles	
ID	Description	Lead Entity	Support Entities	Cost	Staffing	Funding	Legislative
3	Create a safe and connected bicycle network						
3.B	Advance the Media-Smedley Connector Trail – Courthouse segment	Borough Council	Public Works; Transportation Committee	\$\$	●	●	●
3.C	Prepare a new bicycle plan with a focus on upgrading facilities	Borough Engineer	Public Works; Transportation Committee	\$\$		●	
4	Modernize parking and curb management						
4.A	Conduct a comprehensive parking supply and demand study	Borough Engineer		\$		●	
4.B	Update parking requirements to facilitate office-to-residential conversions	Code Enforcement	Borough Council	\$	●	●	●
4.C	Implement a modern curbside management strategy	Borough Council		\$	●		●
5	Leverage Trolley Modernization to enhance State Street						
5.A	Trolley Modernization Streetscape Project (State Street) [Funded in CIP]	Administration	MBA	\$\$\$\$		●	
6	Incorporate new transportation technology while protecting Media’s character						
6.A	Incorporate micromobility planning into the Bicycle Plan	Public Works	Transportation Committee	\$	●		
6.B	Implement a shared electric jitney service to enhance local mobility and reduce parking pressure	Public Works					●
6.C	Continue to support Electric Vehicle (EV) charging	Public Works	Transportation Committee	\$\$		●	●
6.D	Monitor driverless vehicle progress and adapt curbside policies	Borough Council	Transportation Committee	\$			●

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Economic Development

Economic Development						Obstacles	
ID	Description	Lead Entity	Support Entities	Cost	Staffing	Funding	Legislative
1	Enhance business variety and diversity						
1.A	Focus on missing business types, particularly entertainment and leisure uses, clothing stores, and specific needs such as bakeries, apparel, home goods, experience retail, and fitness centers	MBA	Borough Council	\$	●		
1.B	Support a business mix that serves both residents and regional visitors	MBA	Borough Council	\$	●		
2	Improve infrastructure and accessibility						
2.A	Downtown and business focused parking study	Public Works	Transportation Committee	\$		●	
2.B	Downtown and business focused sidewalk and crosswalk inventory	Public Works	Code Enforcement; Transportation Committee	\$	●		
2.C	Expand Cultural Programming and Arts Investment Downtown	MBA	Borough Council; MAC	\$		●	
2.D	Create placemaking opportunities	MBA	Borough Council	\$\$\$		●	
3	Strengthen Media Business Authority operations						
3.A	Support the MBA's goal to make a pristine State Street District	MBA	Borough Council	\$\$		●	
3.B	Establish sustainable funding mechanisms that support long-term organizational capacity	Borough Council	MBA	\$\$		●	
3.C	Support the implementation of the 5-year strategic plan for the MBA			\$		●	

Cost: \$ = under \$50K | \$\$ = \$50K–\$250K | \$\$\$ = \$250K–\$1M | \$\$\$\$ = \$1M+

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● = known obstacle to implementation

Economic Development					Obstacles		
ID	Description	Lead Entity	Support Entities	Cost	Staffing	Funding	Legislative
4	Improve property owner engagement and market dynamics						
4.A	Strengthen property owner engagement in collaborative economic development efforts	MBA	Borough Council	\$			
4.B	Address high rent barriers that prevent new small businesses from entering the market	MBA	Borough Council	\$\$		●	
5	Support existing business success						
5.A	Build on high customer satisfaction	MBA		\$			
5.B	Maintain the small, friendly, local business character that residents value	MBA	Borough Council	\$			
5.C	Address operational challenges such as construction disruptions and street closures related to Trolley Modernization	MBA	Borough Council	\$\$			
5.D	Strengthen marketing coordination and regional positioning	MBA	Borough Council	\$			
6	Improve property conditions						
6.A	Increase enforcement through Inspection and Compliance	Code Enforcement		\$\$	●		
7	Expand opportunities for economic investment						
7.A	Establish the Mixed Industrial District to foster innovation and housing			\$	●		●
7.B	Transform Baltimore Avenue into a vibrant mixed-use corridor			\$	●		●
7.C	Cultivate an Arts and Innovation District within the Office Zone			\$	●		●

Cost: \$ = under \$50K | \$\$ = \$50K–\$250K | \$\$\$ = \$250K–\$1M | \$\$\$\$ = \$1M+

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Housing

Housing					Obstacles		
ID	Description	Lead Entity	Support Entities	Cost	Staffing	Funding	Legislative
1	Eliminate barriers to obtaining affordable housing that are a result of long-standing discriminatory practices in the housing market						
1.A	Deepen partnerships to increase funding for targeted housing programs	Borough Council	Administration	\$	●		
1.B	Combat inequities through targeted education and outreach	Administration	Borough Council	\$	●		
1.C	Identify zoning barriers and areas to increasing density	Code Enforcement	CDC	\$	●		
2	Expand the supply of housing options in strategic locations						
2.A	Update zoning to direct housing growth to key districts	Code Enforcement	CDC	\$\$	●	●	
3	Maintain and expand affordable housing opportunities for low-to-moderate income households						
3.A	Preserve existing affordable units through landlord incentives	Borough Council		\$\$		●	●
3.B	Adopt a market-informed inclusionary zoning ordinance	Borough Council		\$\$			●
3.C	Promote nontraditional housing options like ADUs	Borough Council		\$	●		
3.D	Develop Borough-owned property for affordable housing	Borough Council		\$\$\$\$		●	

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Housing					Obstacles		
ID	Description	Lead Entity	Support Entities	Cost	Staffing	Funding	Legislative
3.E	Partner with local property owners to build targeted housing	Borough Council		\$\$\$			
4	Ensure senior citizens can age in place						
4.A	Deepen relationships with partners supporting aging in place	Borough Council		\$			
4.B	Build age-restricted housing	Borough Council		\$\$\$\$			
4.C	Promote ADUs and home-sharing as senior living solutions	Borough Council		\$			
4.D	Educate seniors on resources for home modifications and stability	Borough Council	Administration	\$\$			

Cost: \$ = under \$50K / \$\$ = \$50K–\$250K / \$\$\$ = \$250K–\$1M / \$\$\$\$ = \$1M+

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Land Use

Land Use						Obstacles		
ID	Description	Lead Entity	Support Entities	Cost	Staffing	Funding	Legislative	
1	Guide the Evolution of Media's Land Use to Support a Vibrant, Sustainable, and Complete Community							
1.A	Update the Hybrid Form-Based Code to ensure predictable, high-quality outcomes	Code Enforcement	MPC; CDC	\$	●			
1.B	Facilitate the adaptive reuse of underutilized office space for housing	Code Enforcement	MPC; CDC/MBA	\$	●			
1.C	Transform Baltimore Avenue into a safe, multi-modal mixed-use gateway	Code Enforcement	MPC; CDC/MBA	\$	●	●		●
1.D	Modernize the Industrial District to foster innovation and mixed-use flexibility	Code Enforcement	MPC; CDC/MBA	\$	●			
1.E	Extend the Hybrid Form-Based Code to remaining Euclidean districts	Code Enforcement	MPC; CDC/MBA	\$\$	●			
1.F	Integrate zoning recommendations from all Comprehensive Plan elements	Code Enforcement	MPC; CDC	\$	●			

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Community Facilities

Community Facilities					Obstacles		
ID	Description	Lead Entity	Support Entities	Cost	Staffing	Funding	Legislative
1	Maintain and modernize core municipal facilities to ensure efficient service delivery						
1.A	Municipal facility maintenance and modernization (beyond CIP horizon)			\$\$\$\$		●	
2	Ensure the long-term sustainability and operational readiness of Fire and Emergency Services						
2.A	Actively pursue regional partnerships for fire protection			\$	●		
2.B	Establish a dedicated fire tax or fee	Borough Council	Public Safety Committee	\$			●
2.C	Construct a new, modern fire station			\$\$\$\$		●	
2.D	Transition to a “combination” staffing model			\$\$\$			
2.E	Hire a full-time career Fire Chief	Borough Council	<u>Fire Department</u>	\$\$		●	
2.F	Strengthen volunteer recruitment and retention			\$		●	
3	Continue to implement the Stormwater Management Plan to mitigate flooding and improve water quality						
4	Establish price-stable renewable energy as the default in the Borough						

Cost: \$ = under \$50K | \$\$ = \$50K–\$250K | \$\$\$ = \$250K–\$1M | \$\$\$\$ = \$1M+

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