

HIGHLANDS AREA PLAN

December 1994

Prepared by the

State College Borough Planning Commission

Highlands Area Plan

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Highlands Area Plan

Introduction

Background

The decision to prepare a neighborhood plan for the Highlands area of State College grew out of the Planning Commission's concerns with out-migration of families from the borough. Initially, the Commission sought to tackle this loss of families on a borough-wide basis. After several unsuccessful attempts to respond to this issue at the borough level, the Commission decided it would be more manageable to prepare a series of neighborhood or area plans.

The area plan for the West College Avenue area was the first to be prepared. Upon completion of that plan, the Commission turned its attention to the preparation of the Highlands Plan. The high priority given to preparing a neighborhood plan for the Highlands was largely the result of its proximity to downtown and campus; there is more pressure here than in other areas to convert housing from owner-occupied to renter-occupied. The proliferation of conversion units has been identified as one of the principal reasons behind the out-migration of families from older neighborhoods in the Borough.

A second factor which has over the years contributed to the importance of the issue of conversion housing is the location in the Highlands of the fraternity district with its large student population. Conflicting lifestyles between fraternity members and other residents has led some residents to relocate.

There are other factors which encourage permanent residents to relocate elsewhere in the Centre Region at work in the Highlands as well. Two of these are the small lots and older housing stock found in the neighborhood. The northern portion of the Highlands was subdivided in the 1920s. Reflecting the standards of that time, many of the lots in the Highlands are small in comparison to current suburban lot size norms. These smaller lots make it more difficult to build additions onto homes or add accessory buildings or swimming pools. The age of much of the housing stock means that many people view it as obsolete in terms such as energy efficiency, number of bathrooms, and square footage.

Taken together, these issues result in a neighborhood facing pressure to transition from an owner-occupied residential status to one of rental properties owned by absentee landlords.

Implementation

The Planning Commission discussed the plan and received input from residents at 16 meetings in 1993 and 1994. A tour of the study area was undertaken by the Commission and interested citizens in May 1993. The Commission held a public hearing on the plan on November 29, 1994. Final revisions were completed on December 15, 1994 and the plan was forwarded to Borough Council for further consideration.

The Highlands Civic Association has been an active participant throughout the planning process. Association members have provided testimony on issues and concerns in the neighborhood. They have also been instrumental in disseminating information on this planning initiative to neighborhood residents.

Assistance in formulating the plan was also provided by the fraternity-related organizations Lions Paw and the Lion Alumni Fraternity Association. Both of these organizations became involved because of their interests in preserving the fraternity system at Penn State. To do this, they recognized fraternities must to be good neighbors, making a positive contribution to the neighborhood and community.

Following adoption by Borough Council, the Planning Commission will initiate implementation of the plan's recommendations. Implementation will begin in 1995 and continue for several years. Implementation will involve numerous parties including the Borough, the University, area residents, student organizations, private developers, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PADOT), and the Centre Regional Planning Commission (CRPC). Identifying funding sources for the public improvements recommended in the plan will be an important element of the implementation process. Funding for some improvements will come through the Borough's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Funding for others will come from multiple sources, including, potentially, state funding.

Study Area

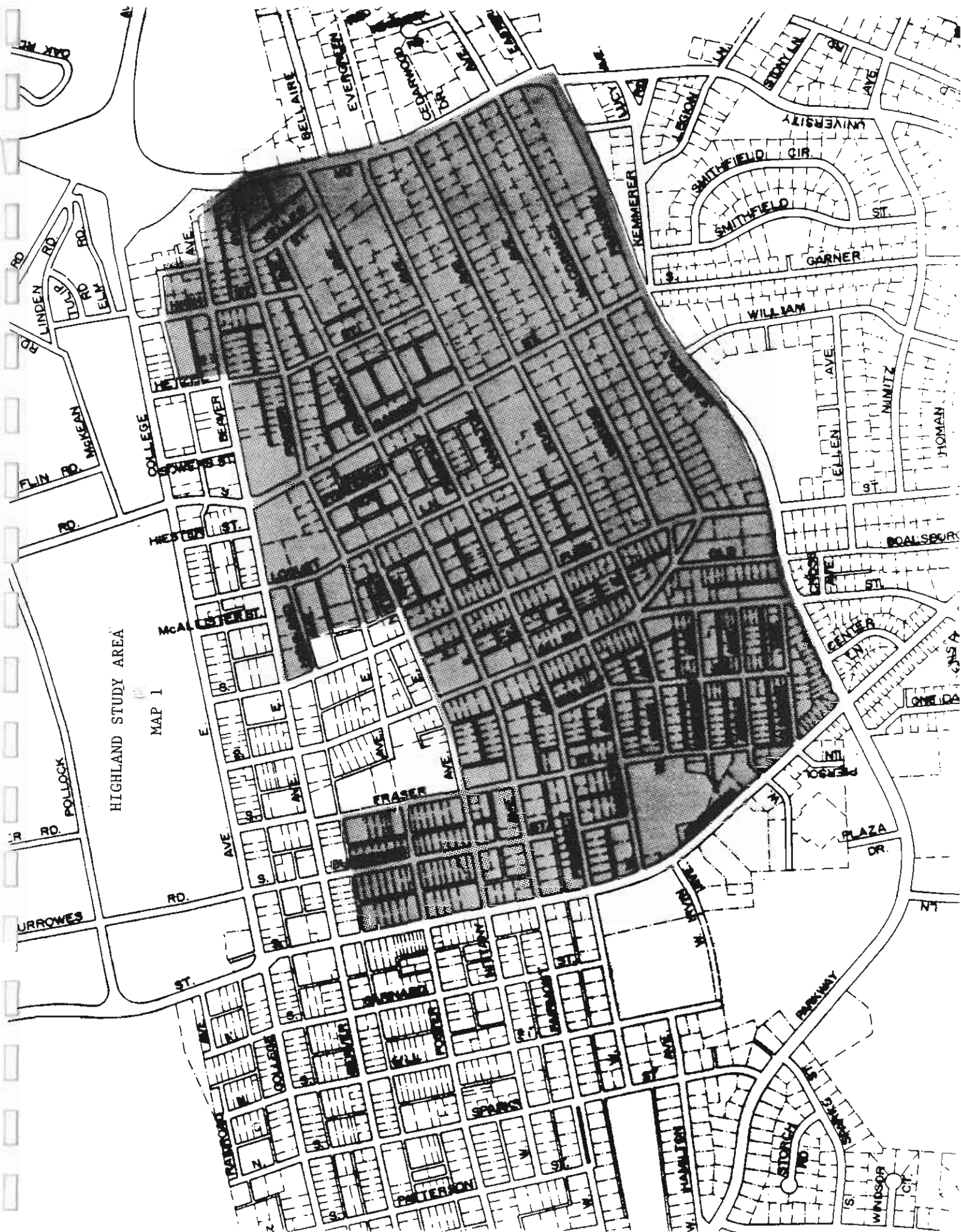
As shown on Map 1, the Highlands Plan study area is bounded by Atherton Street on the west, the Commercial District on the north, University Drive on the east, and Easterly/Westerly Parkway on the south.

Relationship with Regional Planning Process

Centre Region municipalities adopted a regional comprehensive plan in the summer of 1991. This policy level plan identified three levels of planning: macro, intermediate, and micro. The comprehensive plan is a macro-level planning document. Intermediate-level planning involves two steps 1) completing the studies necessary to determine what tools are needed to implement the goals established in the comprehensive plan and 2) developing those tools. The micro-level of planning involves the day-to-day administration of regulations and other tools developed at the intermediate planning level.

To make the transition from the macro-planning level to the intermediate-planning level, the CRPC developed the Strategic Planning Area (SPA) approach. Under the SPA approach, the Centre Region was divided into more manageable areas on the basis of strategic planning issues identified in the comprehensive plan. A detailed area plan will be prepared for each SPA. SPA plans will identify the relevant planning goals and policies, examine existing conditions and constraints on future development, evaluate development alternatives, and recommend a course of action.

The Highlands Neighborhood Plan encompasses a planning area that is significantly smaller and more intensively developed than most of the SPAs. However, to ensure the planning process



used in preparing the Highlands plan is compatible with the SPA process, the Planning Commission decided to employ the SPA approach in preparing the Highlands Plan. More detailed information on the SPA process is presented in Appendix A.

Comprehensive Planning Objectives and Policies

Planning activities in State College and other Centre Region municipalities take place within the framework established in the comprehensive plan. As with all local planning activities, recommended solutions to problems identified in the Highlands plan will, to the greatest extent possible, further the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan.

The comprehensive plan contains a number of objectives and policies that were considered during preparation of the Highlands area plan. These objectives and policies address issues such as preserving existing residential neighborhoods; minimizing adverse impacts of traffic and parking; preserving our historic resources; and, providing a range of housing opportunities.

A more detailed discussion of these objectives and policies is presented in Appendix B.

Neighborhood Planning Objectives for the Highlands

Just as planning objectives in the Comprehensive Plan are important for guiding the future of the Centre Region, the Planning Commission believes it is important to identify a set of planning objectives to guide future decisions in the Highlands. After considering comprehensive planning objectives, testimony and discussion at meetings, field observations, and quantifiable data, the Commission formulated the following planning objectives for the Highlands:

Land Use and Zoning

1. Retain and enhance the character of existing residential neighborhoods. Particular attention should be given to single-family areas and the fraternity district.
2. Preserve historic buildings and promote their reuse. Re-examine the uses permitted in the R-O district to ensure sufficient flexibility in uses exists to accommodate reuse of historic buildings without duplicating downtown.
3. Regulate vehicular access points (i.e., curb cuts) along University Drive, the Parkway and Atherton Street. Discourage strip development along these corridors.
4. Ensure that future development in the Highlands planning area complements development downtown. Provide for neighborhood commercial needs while preventing a significant intrusion of commercial and retail uses into the residential areas of the Highlands.
5. Ensure future development in the Highlands does not exceed the capacity of the region's utility systems.

6. Improve the quality of life by preventing or mitigating adverse environmental impacts of future development.
7. Provide for the recreational needs of residents.

Housing

8. Provide for a wide range of housing options, particularly home investment opportunities for families of all incomes.

Inter-group Cooperation

9. Increase Penn State, IFC, LAFA, and landlords' level of involvement in housing issues, particularly issues related to property maintenance and tenant behavior.
10. Maintain a high level of citizen involvement in the planning process.

Safety

11. Improve the sense of security and safety of neighborhood residents.

Traffic and Parking

12. Minimize the adverse impacts of vehicular traffic.
13. Minimize the adverse impacts of on- and off-street parking.
14. Encourage greater usage of bicycles and walking for the journey to work.

Existing Conditions

Land Use/Current Growth Trends

Land Use

The study area is fully developed. The largest public open space in the study area is East Fairmount Park. There are, however, other public open space areas adjacent to the neighborhood, including Easterly Parkway Elementary School, Walnut Springs Park and Lederer Park to the south and southeast; community fields to the west; and memorial field and Central Parklet to the north. Vacant privately-held land in the study area is also limited. The larger parcels include a site behind the Hamilton Square shopping plaza and land on East Prospect and East Hamilton owned by two churches.

The predominant land use is residential, and includes a mixture of single-family dwellings (both owner-occupied and rental), duplexes, rooming houses (frequently converted single-family houses), fraternities, and multi-family dwellings. The distribution of the different types of residential uses changes as one moves across the study area from north to south. Residential uses on the north edge are predominantly multi-family. As you move in a southerly direction, you find a transition to rooming houses, fraternity houses, smaller scale multi-family and conversion units. The southern section of the study area is predominantly single-family owner occupied units. Reflecting the former R-4 zoning of the study area, several significant multi-family buildings are located along the Allen and Pugh corridors.

The mix of units and tenure of households is demonstrated by information from the US and State College Area School District (SCASD) censuses. The study area contains all of US Census Tract 126 and portions of US Census Tract 120, Block Groups 1 and 2. According to the 1990 census 643 of the 731 occupied units in CT 126, BG 1 and 484 of the 575 occupied units in CT 126, BG 2 (88% and 84% respectively), (see Map 6) were renter-occupied. For CT 120, renter-occupied units numbered 422 of 620 total units (68%) in BG1 and 1260 of 1392 (90.5%) in BG2.

The study area contains seven SCASD Census Tracts (2BB, 2BC, 2BD, 2BE, 2BF, 2BG, 2BH) and a portion of an eighth tract, 2BJ (see Map 2). According to the 1992 SCASD census, 3166 of the 3511 (90.17%) occupied housing units in these eight tracts were renter-occupied (See Map 8).

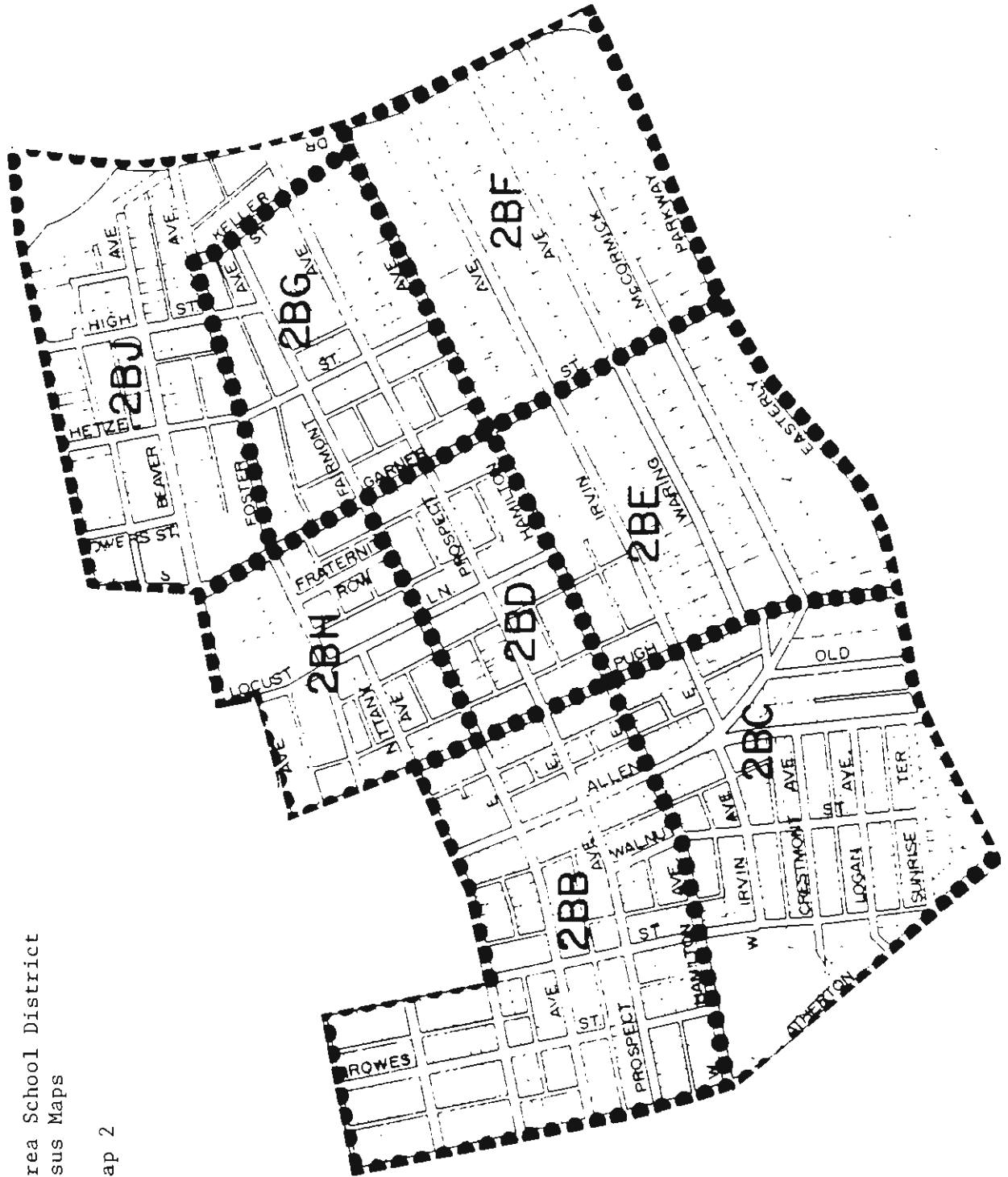
The study area has few commercial uses. The majority of these are concentrated in and around the Hamilton Square shopping center. There are number of professional office uses, located primarily in the R-O areas of Atherton, Burrowes, Allen, and Pugh Streets. The study area is also the location of several human service facilities, again, concentrated in its R-O section.

The type and mix of land uses has remained generally stable over time. Land-use maps prepared in 1977 and 1990 demonstrate this stability. These maps show similar patterns of land uses, with a predominance of residential uses. The 1990 land-use map is included as Map 5.

The stability of land use is also reflected in census numbers. Between 1980 and 1990, the total number of housing units in Census Tract 120 grew by only 130 units, from 1976 to 2106. These

Highlands Area School District
Census Maps

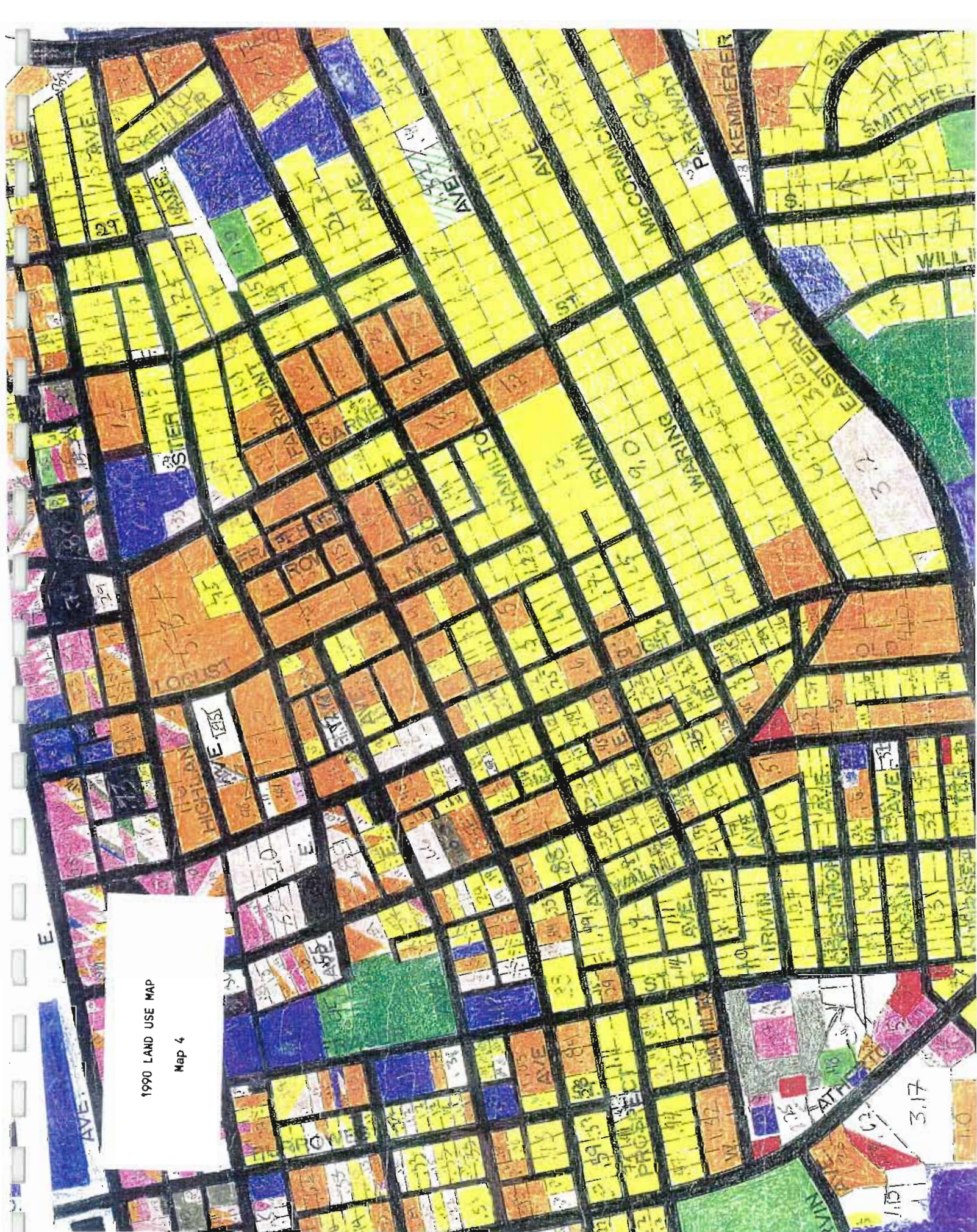
Map 2





MAP 3

Highlands Area U.S. Census Tracts and Block Groups



1990 LAND USE MAP

Map 4

1. RESIDENTIAL
 - A. Single Family Residential
 - B. Single Family Mobile Home: including mobile homes in parks
 - C. Two to Four-Family Residence: such as converted Single Family Units; Duplexes
 - D. Multi-Family Residences: such as Townhouses; Apartments; Dormitories; and converted Single or Two-Family Units
2. COMMERCIAL
 - A. Retail
 - B. Service
 - C. Heavy Commercial: such as Automobile Dealers; Lumber Yards; Warehouses; Fuel Distributors; Automotive Salvage
3. INDUSTRIAL
 - A. Heavy Industry: such as Chemical Manufacturing; Metal Products Manufacturing
 - B. Light Industry: such as Publishers; Bottling Companies; Research and Development
4. MINED LAND
 - A. Strip Mine
 - B. Quarry
 - C. Natural Gas
5. TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATION AND UTILITIES
 - A. Highway: such as Streets and Roads; Bus Terminals; Large Parking Lots
 - B. Railway or Terminal
 - C. Airport
 - D. Utility: such as Sewage Disposal Plants; Power Generating Stations; Water Utilities
 - E. Pipe Line or Transmission Wire Easement
 - F. Communication: such as Television and Radio Facilities
6. PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC
 - A. Governmental: such as Postal Services; Police Stations; Township Offices; Corrections Institutions; Fire Halls
 - B. Educational: such as Elementary or Secondary School Facilities; Vocational Schools; College Classroom Buildings
 - C. Church or Cemetery
 - D. Miscellaneous Service: such as Museums; Libraries; Historic Areas; Labor Union Halls; Professional Organizations
7. RECREATION: such as Parks; Playgrounds; Golf Courses; Beaches; Swimming Pools
8. AGRICULTURE
9. FORESTED
10. WATER: such as Streams; Rivers; Creeks; Canals; Lakes
11. VACANT OR UNUSED: such as Swamps; Non-Agricultural Fields; Empty Lots
12. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

130 units represent a 6.5% increase over the ten-year period. In Census Tract 126 these numbers were 79 and 6.0%, respectively.

The two US census tracts displayed more variation in the change in housing tenure. In Census Tract 126, the number of owner-occupied units decreased by 37, from 216 to 179 (17%) and the number of renter-occupied housing units increased by 8.6% (from 1038 to 1127.) In Census Tract 120, the number of owner-occupied units decreased by only 3, from 333 to 330 (>1%) and the number of renter-occupied housing units increased by 6% (from 1587 to 1682.)

Looking at SCASD census data for the period between 1988 and 1992, we see a similar pattern of a gradual shifting in the mix of owner versus renter occupied property to one more oriented to renter occupancy. In 1988, there were 480 owned units and 2919 renter units (14% and 86%, respectively) in the area, while in 1992 these numbers were 470 owned units and 3166 renter units (13.4% and 86.6%, respectively).

Opportunities for intensification of development exist primarily in the R-3, R-O, and CP-2 zoning districts. Their larger range of uses, smaller lot requirements, and other favorable development standards increase the likelihood that new development will occur in these zoning districts.

Zoning

The study area includes 7 zoning districts: R-2, R-3, R-4, R-O, CP-2, PK, and PA. The majority of the land in the study area is R-2. R-3 is located mainly along Allen and Pugh from the Parkway north to Fairmount. R-O is located along the northern edge of the study area and provides a transition from downtown to the residential to the south. The R-4 land in the study area is located along University Drive between Hamilton and Foster Avenues. The area bounded by West Hamilton, Logan Avenue, South Fraser and South Atherton is zoned CP-2. Fairmount Park, located in the 500 block of East Fairmount, is zoned PK. The Hillel site on Locust Lane is zoned PA (see Map 10).

Environmental Characteristics

Soils

The primary soil types in the study area are Hagerstown silt loam (HaB)37, Hagerstown silty clay loam (HcB)37, Opequon-Hagerstown (OhB)57, Opequon-Hagerstown complex (OhC)58, Nolan (No), and Urban (URB).

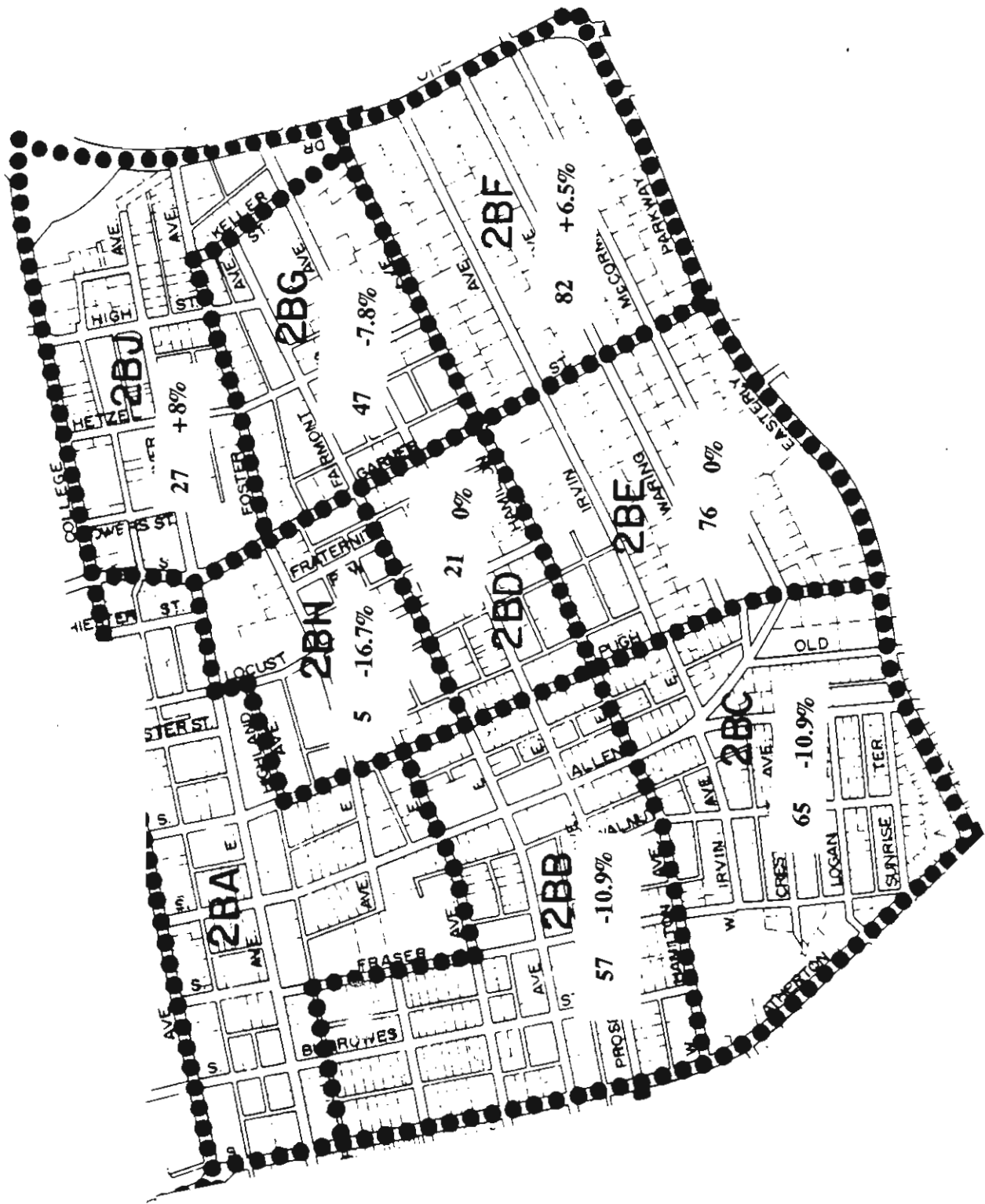
Hagerstown soils are deep (i.e., depth measured to bedrock), well drained soils in limestone residue. They are commonly found in limestone valleys. Permeability is moderate. Potential for sinkhole formation in this (and other limestone based soils) is high. Potential for ground-water pollution is high if soil is used for waste disposal. Hagerstown soils have some limitations for urban development due to shrink-swell potential, depth to bedrock, potential for sinkholes, and frost action.

Opequon soils are shallow, well-drained soils in limestone residue. Permeability is moderate. Shallow depth to bedrock, slope, and possible sinkhole formation are limitations. Potential for

MAP 5

SINGLE FAMILY, OWNER OCCUPIED DWELLINGS CHANGE 1988-1992

TOTAL 380 - 3.3%

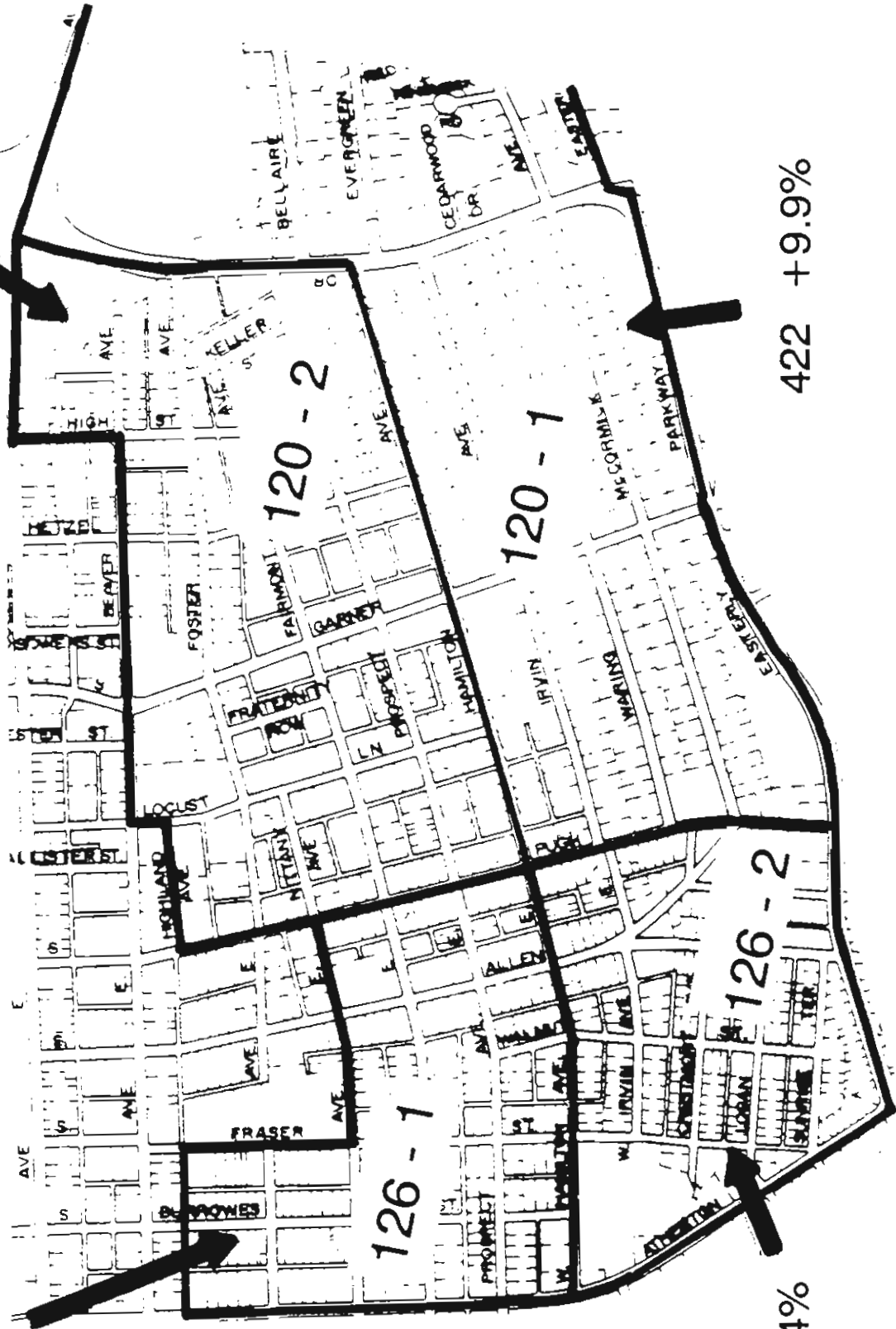


MAP 6

RENTER OCCUPIED UNITS CHANGE 1980 - 1990

1260 +4.7%

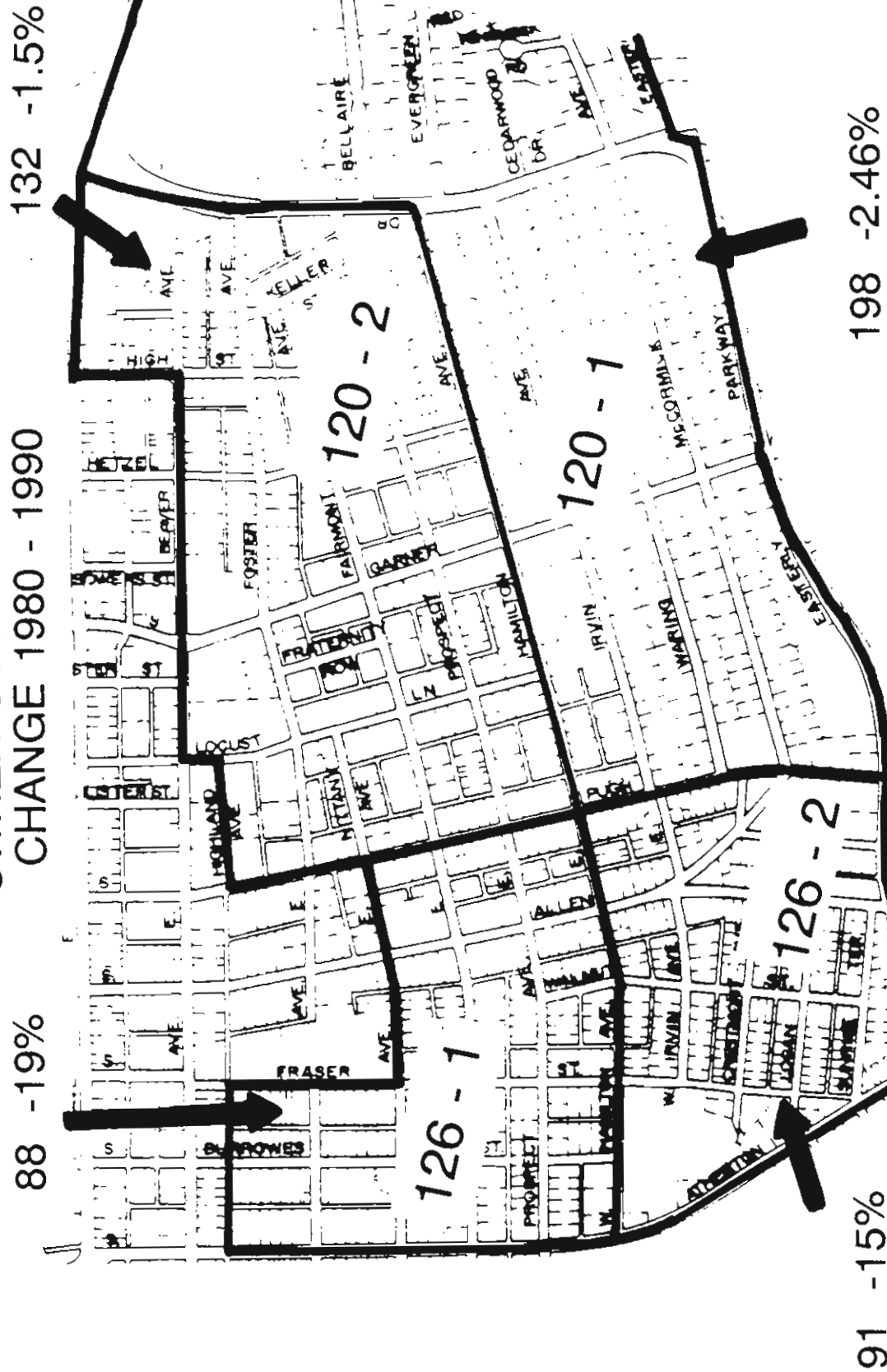
643 +15.6%



Highlands Area U.S. Census Tracts and Block Groups

MAP 7

OWNER OCCUPIED UNITS CHANGE 1980 - 1990

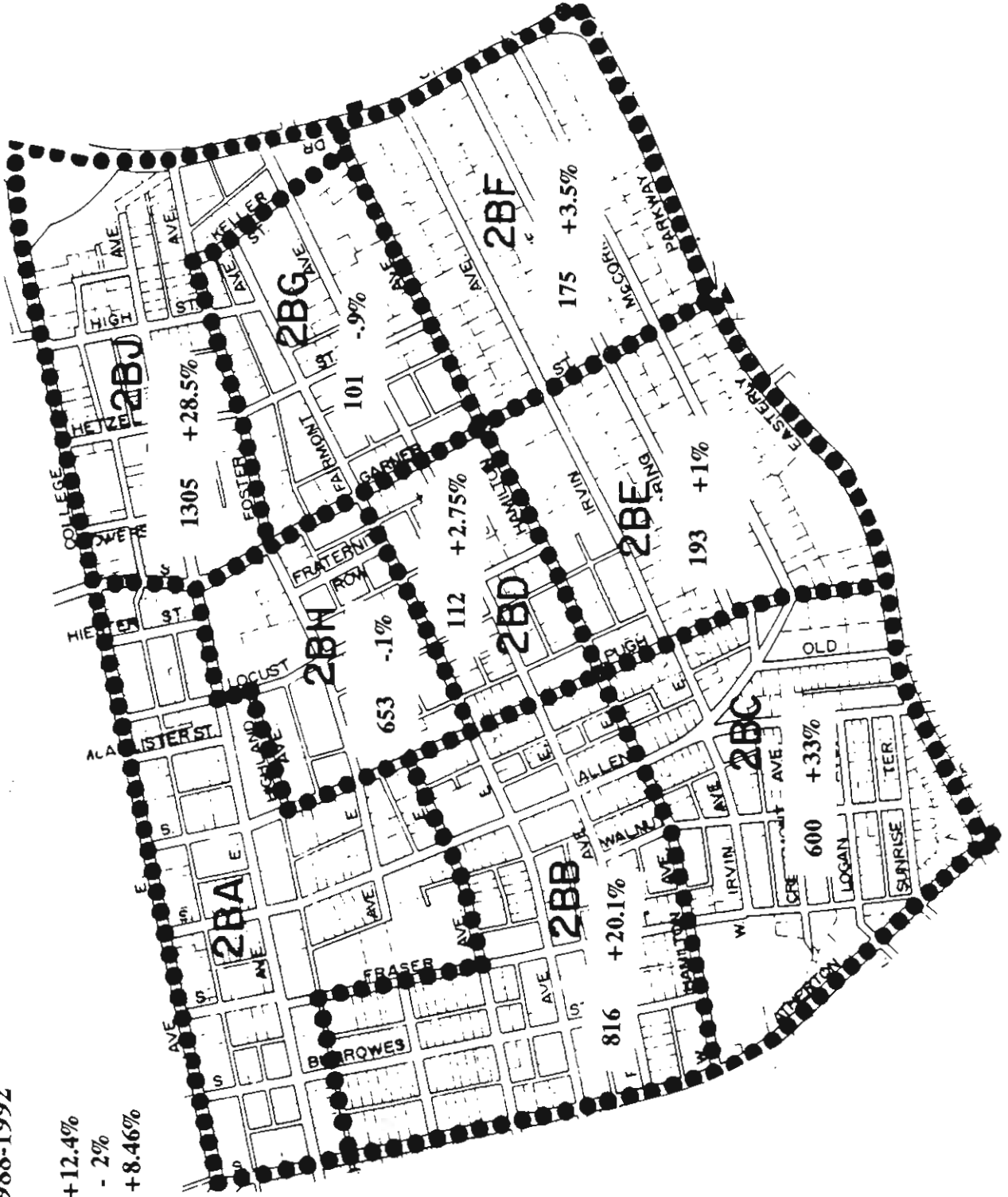


Highlands Area U.S. Census Tracts and Block Groups

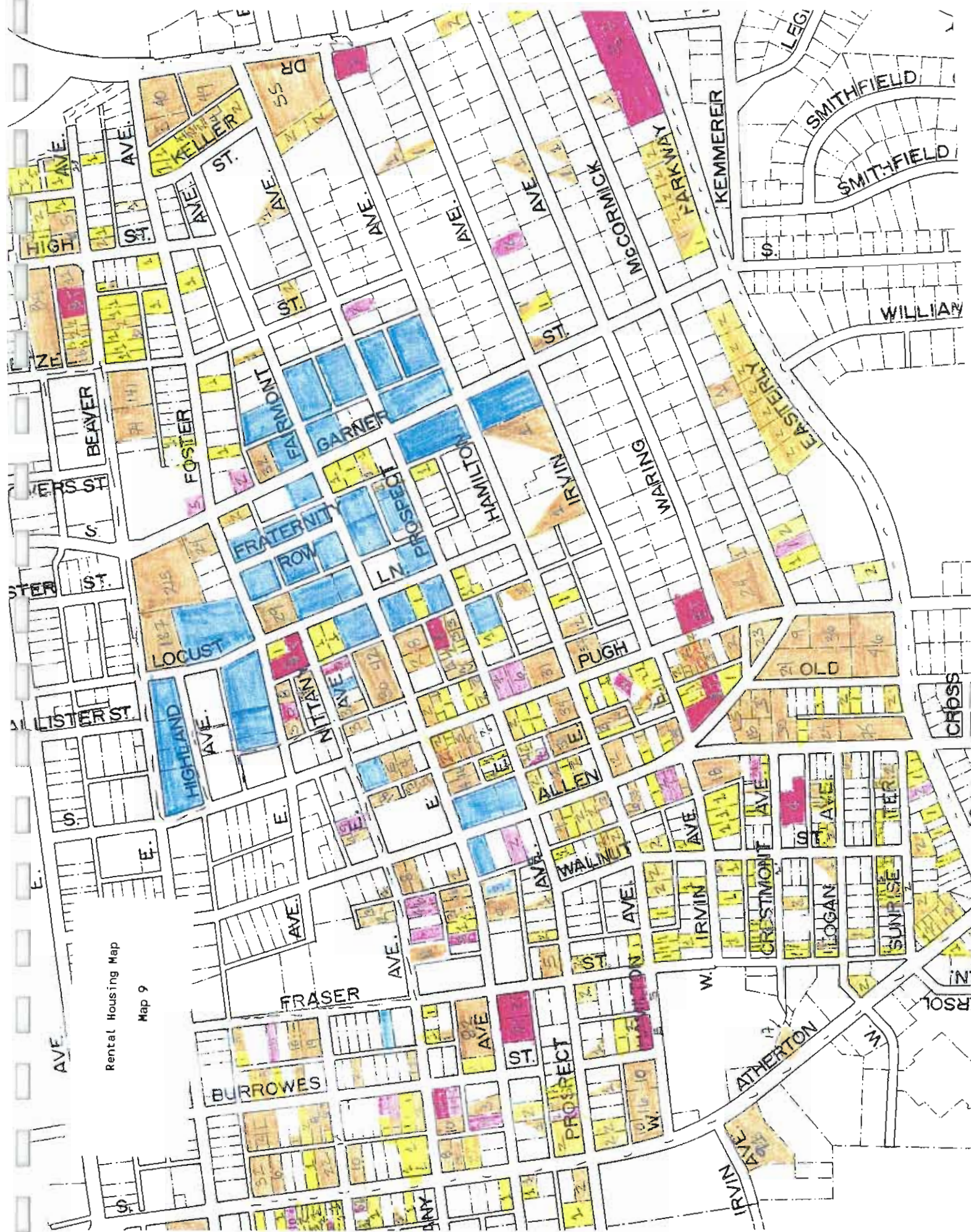
MAP 8

ALL DWELLINGS
CHANGE 1988-1992

Total 3955	+12.4%
Own 470	- 2%
Rent 3166	+8.46%





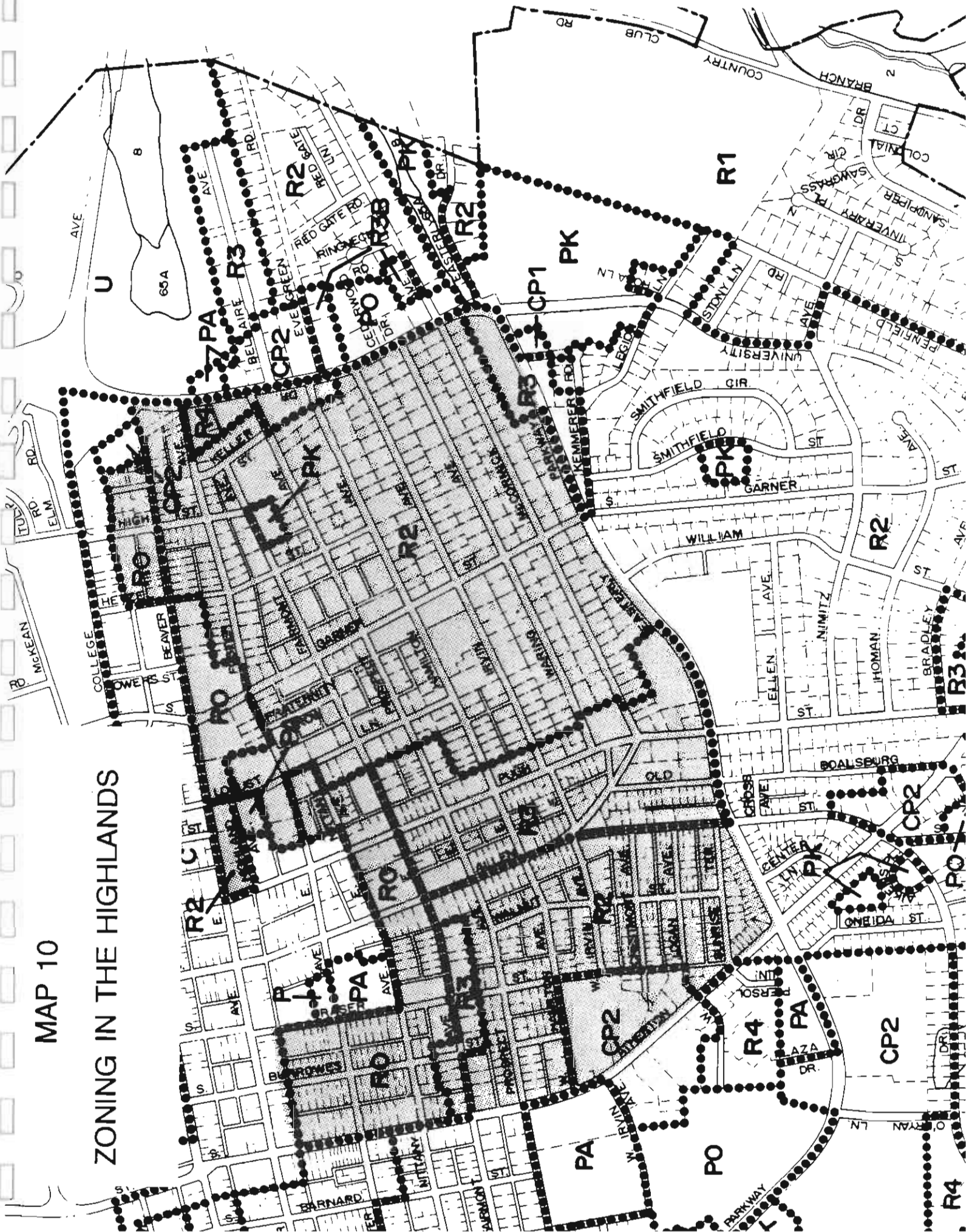


	Single-Family
	Two-Family (duplex)
	Townhouse
	Rooming House
	Condominium
	Apartment
	Fraternity

Source: Centre Region Rental Housing Permit File (5/21/93)

MAP 10

ZONING IN THE HIGHLANDS



ground-water pollution is high if used for waste disposal. Opequon soils have similar but more severe limitations for urban development than do Hagerstown soils.

Nolan soils are deep, well-drained soils that formed in the alluvium that washed from uplands underlain by limestone and shale. Most are associated with floodplains. In general, Nolan soils are less suitable for intensive urban development due to high water tables during wet periods.

Urban soils are those that have been so altered or obscured by development that identification of the under lying soil is not feasible. The original soil has been removed, covered or mixed by earth moving or construction.

Vegetation, Habitats, and Endangered Species

As indicated in the discussion of land use, the study area is fully developed, with little vacant land and no significant open space other than East Fairmount Park and the vacant portions of the sites owned by the two churches on East Prospect and East Fairmount Avenues. However, saying the area has limited open space does not mean it is devoid of vegetation. Significant numbers of mature street trees line the streets and many individual lots are well-landscaped.

The Centre County Natural Heritage Inventory does not identify any critical habitats in the study area. The Inventory does, however, identify the Thompson Spring and Thompson Run immediately to the east as an area of high significance. According to the Inventory,

...the spring supports a globally endangered species of animal. This species is dependent on exceptional water quality and it is evident that the spring is coming from an undisturbed, highly significant underground aquifer system (Centre County Natural Heritage Inventory, Western PA Conservancy, November 1991, Page 150).

Steps should be taken to ensure that future development in the Highlands neighborhood and downtown does not adversely affect this environmentally sensitive area.

Topography

The topography is characterized by a ridge line running through the center of the study area on an east/west axis, falling off to low points along Calder Way to the north of the study area and Easterly Parkway to the south. The high point of this ridge (known as Fairmount Ridge) is approximately 1185 feet above sea level at the intersection of Atherton and Fairmount. The low point, approximately 1050 feet above sea level, is at intersection of University Drive and Easterly Parkway.

Drainage

Stormwater runoff is collected in a system of storm sewers and piped in an easterly direction. Localized flooding problems in the Lytle's Addition stormwater drainage basin in the southwest corner of the study area are being addressed through a multi-year improvement project. A second area of concern with respect to stormwater management is found in the Holly Alley

stormwater system. Here much of the stormwater flows overland to a storm sewer trunk line built between 1931 and 1966.

The ultimate outlets of water conveyed in an easterly direction are the Duck Pond/Thompson Run and Walnut Springs Park. In addition to the critical habitat mentioned above, Thompson Run and its tributary, Walnut Springs, join Slab Cabin Run near Claster's on East College Avenues. Slab Cabin Run then merges with Spring Creek west of Houserville in College Township. Spring Creek has been designated as a High Quality Cold Water Fishery (HQCWF). All tributaries to Spring Creek between its source and where it crosses PA550 in Benner Township should also be treated as HQCWF.

Floodplain/Wetlands

According to the most recent Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the study area is designated Zone X, area outside the 500-year flood plain.

The nearest flood-plain areas are located east of the study area along Walnut Springs and Thompson Run. In addition, the presence of Nolan soils along Easterly Parkway is indicative of flood prone areas. However, the installation of man-made flood control systems has resulted in this area being deleted from the flood zones as defined in the Borough's zoning ordinance.

According to the State College Quadrangle of the National Wetlands Inventory Maps, there are no wetlands in the study area.

Water Quality (surface and groundwater)

No well fields or potential well fields are located in the study area. The nearest well field is the Harter-Thomas well field, located approximately 1.5 miles to the south. None of the critical recharge areas or buffer areas identified in Nittany Geosciences' report on the recharge areas for State College Borough Water Authority well fields lie within the study area.

Potential negative impacts on water quality from development in the study area are mitigated to some extent by the fact that the area is served by the State College Borough Water Authority and by a system of public storm and sanitary sewers. The presence of these public systems eliminates the potential for contaminants to enter the ground water system through on-lot wells or septic systems.

Air Quality

The State College Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is an attainment area under the standards of the federal Clean Air Act (CAA). In order to receive designation as an attainment area, the MSA must meet or exceed minimum air quality standards for a number of pollutants, including carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, ozone, nitrogen dioxide, hydrocarbons, and lead.

From a planning perspective, location in a CAA attainment area means air quality concerns do not limit the range of uses considered acceptable. For example, the air quality in the Highlands

does not pose any risk to existing or future residents of the area. Therefore, planning that accommodates additional residential uses would be acceptable from an air-quality perspective.

Maintaining and improving our status as an attainment area is critical. Thus, when planning for future redevelopment in the Highlands, we must consider the impact future land uses will have on air quality.

It should be pointed out that the proximity of the Highlands to the downtown and campus facilitates use of alternative modes of transportation for the important journey to work. In fact, according to the 1990 US census, 55% of Highlands residents 16 years of age or older who were in the labor force, walked or bicycled to work. This compares with 16.5% in Center County and 5.9% in PA who walked or bicycled to work. Looking at the percentages of workers who drove alone to their place of work, we find that 32.7% of the residents of the Highlands utilized this mode to get to work while numbers for Centre County and Pennsylvania were 62.6% and 71.4%, respectively.

Existing vistas

The existence of vistas in the study area is limited by the level of its development and its central location in town. Homes along East Irvin and East Waring have a good view of the mountain ranges to the south and east of the Borough. A similar view also exists for dwellings along University Drive.

While not a "vista" in the traditional sense, the neighborhood contains many streets lined with architect-designed, mail order, and other attractive houses, many of which were included in the Holmes-Foster/Highlands National Register Historic District nomination.

Traffic Circulation

Because we are studying what is essentially a developed area, the network of streets and alleys is in place. The ability to construct new streets or widen existing streets is severely constrained by existing development patterns and the size of rights-of-way.

The study area is bounded by 4 major roads (Beaver, Atherton, the Parkway, and University Drive.) The major streets that penetrate the neighborhood, Allen, Pugh, and Garner Streets, all run on a north-south axis. Only two of the east-west streets, Prospect and Hamilton extend uninterrupted across the entire neighborhood.

Traffic counts for streets in and adjacent to the neighborhood are shown on Map 11. The Regional Transportation Plan lists the following links in or adjacent to the study area as either moderately or seriously deficient as of 1990: University Drive (between College and the Parkway); South Atherton (between Foster and Prospect); South Allen (between Beaver and Fairmount). (Note: to be considered deficient, a highway link must be operating at a Volume to Capacity ratio [V/C] of .75 or greater.)

Highlands Area 1993 Traffic Counts



If no additional capacity is added to the highway network, the 20-year projection of deficient links indicates continuing deficiencies on University Drive, South Atherton and South Allen and the addition of East Beaver Avenue to the list.

The critical traffic issue in the Highlands deals primarily with management of through traffic on local streets. The proximity of the neighborhood to downtown and campus means that it lies between two major regional destinations and residential areas to the south and east. This spatial relationship, coupled with congestion on the existing arterial network and the slowness with which major road improvements (e.g., the Inner Loop) are completed, results in non-neighborhood traffic penetrating the neighborhood.

Traffic-related safety issues were also identified as a concern by residents. Speed and other unsafe driving practices (e.g., running stop signs) were of particular concern to residents. In 1992 and 1993, the State College Police Department handled 549 vehicle code infractions or accidents in the study area.

Parking

Parking issues manifest themselves in two ways in the Highlands. The first, a corollary of the through traffic phenomenon, is the demand for on-street parking, particularly on streets in the north side of the neighborhood. Traditionally, this demand has been for long-term parking by individuals working downtown or on campus or students attending classes at PSU.

The adverse impacts of on-street parking have been mitigated by the implementation of the "rollback" parking permit system. Under this scheme, certain streets were designated for commuter parking while other streets designated for residential parking only.

The second manifestation is on-site parking at rental (including fraternities) properties in the neighborhood. The main adverse impact of on-site parking is the loss of green space on individual building lots. The unsightly appearance of many existing nonconforming parking lots is the second way on-site parking negatively effects the neighborhood.

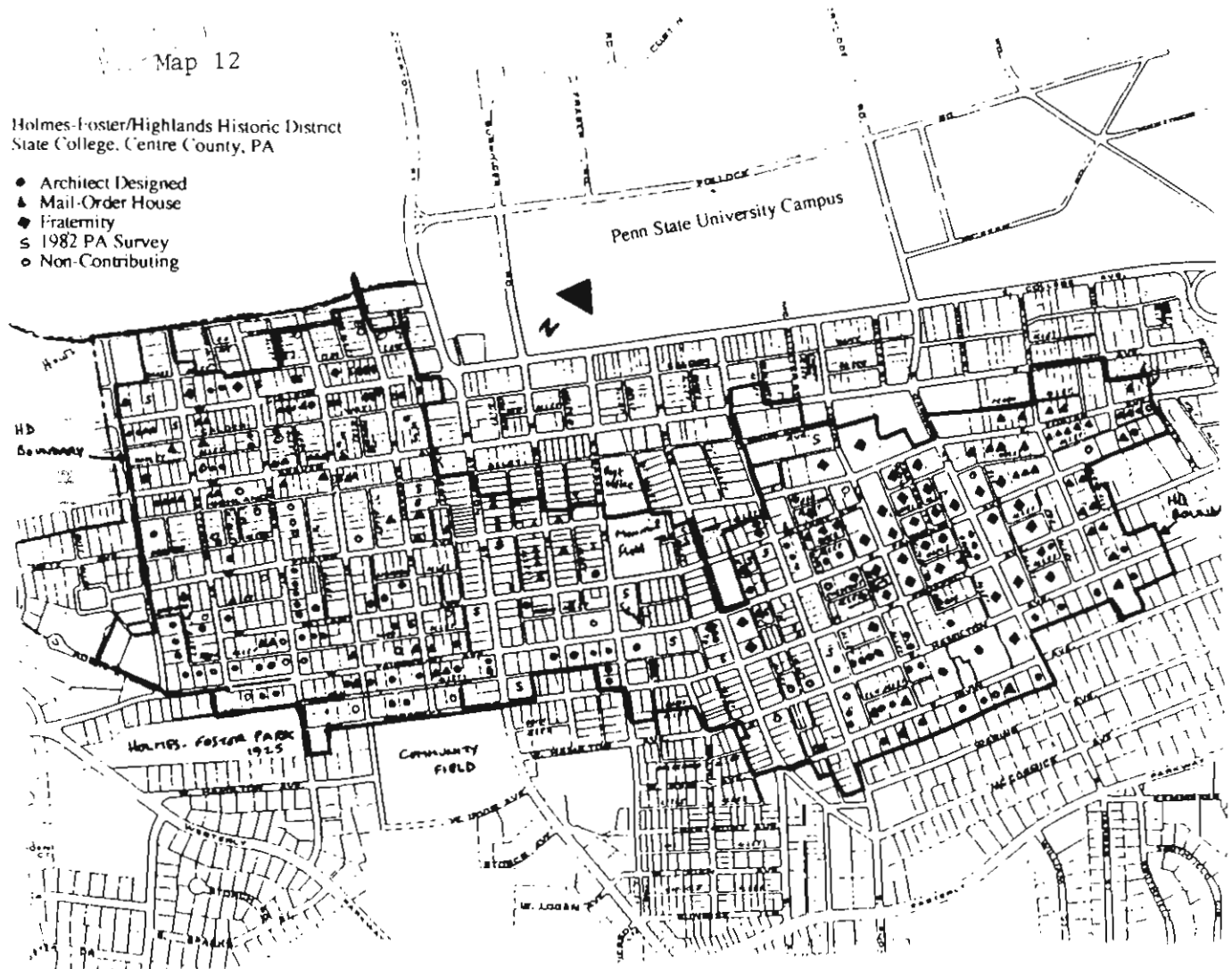
To some the degree future loss of green space will be limited by the recent adoption of a zoning amendment that established lot coverage maximums in residential zoning districts. Under this amendment, no more than 12% of a lot at a one- or two-family dwelling may be used for on-site parking. However, the provisions of this amendment are not retro-active and do not apply to parking at multi-family dwellings, fraternities, or rooming houses.

Historic Resources

The Highlands contains some of the oldest housing in State College (e.g., the John Hamilton house) and the only building off campus listed on the National Register of Historic Places (520 South Fraser Street.) Eighty-seven properties within the study area are listed in the Centre Region inventory of historic resources completed in 1982. Fifty-six of these are current or former fraternities. Many mail order houses are found throughout the neighborhood. Built between 1910 and 1940, these home represent a unique period of housing construction in the U.S.

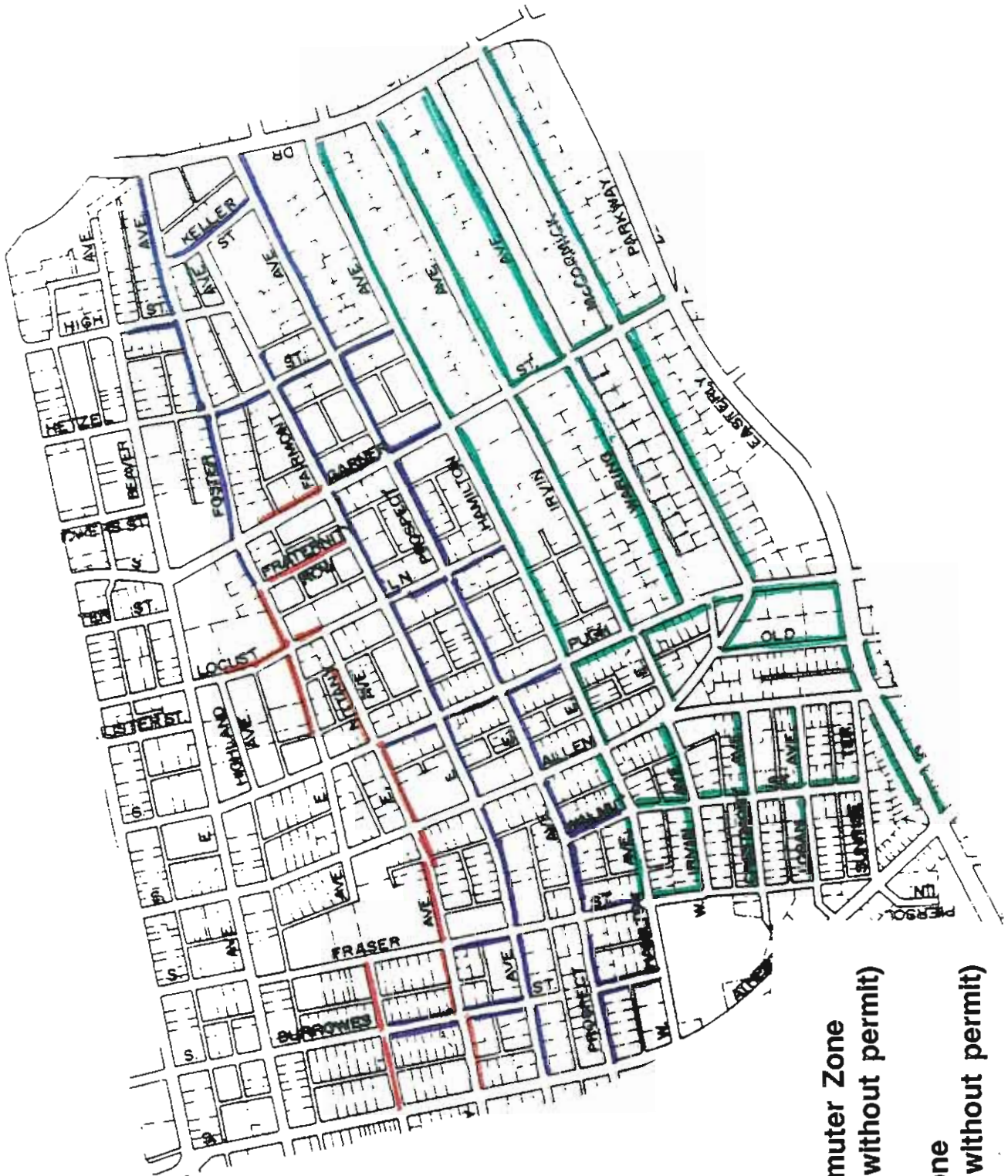
The Ad Hoc Historic Resources Committee included the majority of the study area north of Irvin Avenue between Atherton and Garner in the nomination for the establishment of a National Register Historic District that spans the Holmes-Foster and Highlands neighborhoods. This nomination, and one for a historic district in College Heights, were submitted to the PA Historic and Museum Commission in November 1994. A decision on these nominations is expected in March 1995.

Map 12 shows the proposed Holmes-Foster/Highlands National Register Historic District.



MAP 13

ROLLBACK



- Residential/Commuter Zone
(1-hour parking without permit)
- Residential 1 Zone
(2-hour parking without permit)
- Residential Zone
(2-hour parking without permit)

Services and Facilities

Utility Systems

The providers of telephone, gas, electricity, and water services were contacted in order to gain a better understanding of the ability of these utilities to serve the neighborhood. Two questions were posed to the providers:

1. According to the 1992 State College Area School District census, the study area contains 3955 dwelling units. Does your existing system have adequate surplus capacity to accommodate a 10% increase in the number of dwelling units? a 20% increase?
2. What, if any, improvements to the utility systems serving this area have you identified as being necessary to continue providing an adequate level of service to the neighborhood?

Providers of electricity, gas, and water service responded. In all cases, the utilities had sufficient capacity serve a 20% increase in the number of dwelling units as well as to continue serving the neighborhood. In the case of natural gas, serving new areas would require extension of gas lines under the street but the capacity of the system to supply product was adequate.

Streets and Sewers

Maintenance and improvements of the streets and sanitary and storm sewers in the study are the responsibility of the State College Public Works Department. Public Works believes the sanitary sewer system in the study area could accommodate a 20% increase in the number of dwelling units served without difficulty unless this increase were concentrated in a few major development projects. In this case, upsizing of sewer lines may be needed.

The condition of the storm sewer system was addressed earlier under Drainage.

Public Works assesses the condition of streets throughout the Borough on a biennial basis. Streets are assigned a numeric score between 0 and 100 on the basis of 10 criteria, including pavement cracking, rutting, curb quality, traffic type, and patching. The lower the numeric score, the poorer the overall condition of a street. Streets are then ranked from the lowest to highest numeric scores.

Street with scores of 50 or less are further reviewed to determine which can, within budgetary constraints, be added to the Capital Improvement Program for reconstruction or resurfacing. Where curb replacement is also needed, resurfacing is deferred until the curb work is completed. Within the study area, sections of Hamilton, Prospect, Irvin, and Nittany Avenues and Fraser and Allen Streets were scored at 50 or below.

Fire Protection

Fire protection is provided by the Alpha Fire Company, based in the Public Safety building at the southwest corner of Beaver and Atherton. This location is adjacent to the study area; because of its proximity, response time should be adequate.

As noted earlier, the study area is served by public water (through the State College Borough Water Authority). While the location of individual fire hydrants was not obtained, it appears that the availability of public water is adequate for effective fire protection.

Police Protection

Police protection is provided by the State College Police Department. Input received from Highlands residents has sensitized the Planning Commission to the relevance of crime, particularly class II crime, as an important issue in the neighborhood. The majority of this crime is what is traditionally known as petty crime -- vandalism, disorderly conduct, and public drunkenness. According to the Police Department, much of this crime is related to or the result of alcohol abuse.

In addition to testimony from residents, the Commission reviewed calls for service received by the Police Department during 1992 and 1993 from police reporting areas in the Highlands as a way of quantifying the extent of personal safety issues. During the two years reviewed, the Police Department logged 1619 complaints for disorderly conduct, 491 complaints for criminal mischief, and 170 complaints for liquor law violations/public intoxication. In addition to those "conduct" offenses, 519 thefts and 102 burglaries were reported to the police during 1992 and 1993.

Methods for deterring crime were reviewed with Mr. David Castor, Community Relations Office for the State College Police Department. Two programs were identified as having potential for reducing crime in the study area. The first of these was establishment of traditional neighborhood watch programs.

The second was the less familiar method of crime prevention through environmental design. Under this approach you essentially harden a property through use of lighting, building features and materials, and landscaping to make the property less vulnerable to crime. These types of preventative actions can reduce crimes such as vandalism and breaking and entering.

Schools

The study area is in the State College Area School District. The Easterly Parkway Elementary School is adjacent to its southern boundary. The mid-point of the study area is approximately 3600 feet from the North and South buildings of the State College High School. Memorial Field and the Nittany Avenue Offices are adjacent to the study area; the Fairmount School is in the study area.

According to the 1992 SCASD census, 274 children either in public schools or about to enter public schools lived within the study area. This compares with 386 such children in 1981 and 627 in 1973. This represents decreases of 41% and 129%, respectively.

Recreation

East Fairmount Avenue park is located in the northeast quadrant of the neighborhood. Approximately 1.5 acres in area, East Fairmount Park contains playground equipment, a basketball court, and a picnic shelter and tables. Although East Fairmount is the study area's only public recreation space, several others are located adjacent to the neighborhood, including: Walnut Springs and Lederer parks immediately to the south and east; the 11 acre site of the Easterly Parkway Elementary school, also to the south; Community Fields, immediately to the west; and Central Parklet, to the north.

There are a few vacant privately owned parcels in the neighborhood that provide opportunities for informal recreation activities. Two of these are located along South Garner Street in the fraternity district; a third is in the 900 block of South Allen Street; a fourth is in the 900 block of South Fraser Street; a fifth is in the 200 block of East Nittany.

In addition, many fraternity houses are located on lots large enough to provide opportunities for outdoor recreation by their members.

A Vision for the Highlands

Extending from downtown to the Parkway and from University Drive to Atherton, the majority of the land encompassed in the Highlands Area Plan had been annexed into the Borough by 1932. Although not all of this land was subdivided and developed immediately following annexation, the study area does include some of the earliest development in the Borough of State College. Early development was influenced by the need for faculty, staff, and student housing. Of particular importance was the construction in the early years of the 20th century of many fraternity houses, most of which remain.

That portion of the planning area north of Irvin Avenue has been included in a nomination for the establishment of a National Register Historic District prepared by the Historic Resources Study Committee (HRSC). The HRSC believes this area represents a largely undisturbed example of early twentieth-century residential architecture. Its preservation should be of paramount importance.

The Highlands contains many streets of well-established single family homes. Retaining what exists and reclaiming streets originally developed as single-family dwellings should be pursued.

There has been some pressure from the development community to expand the commercial zone south into the Highlands. Such an expansion goes against the planning objective of keeping a compact, intense downtown core. Therefore, in planning for the future of the Highlands, we should ensure the commercial core of downtown does not diffuse into the neighborhood. Intense retail commercial development in areas other than the vicinity of Hamilton Square should be discouraged. Opportunities for reusing existing structures in the R-O zoning districts for office, mixed office/residential and, possibly, personal services should be encouraged. This will offer owners a wider array of economically viable alternative uses for these older buildings and, thus, further the objective of preserving our historic and architectural resources.

The community believes that in the future the Highlands planning area should retain its predominantly residential character. Because of its proximity to downtown and campus, the area is well situated to continue its traditional role of housing in support of campus activities as well as playing a role in the housing of owners and employees of local businesses. The community encourages housing providers to develop a wide range of housing types and prices making the Highlands accessible to a broad spectrum of residents. By providing a range of housing choices, the accessibility of the neighborhood to campus and downtown will encourage walking and bicycling as the preferred modes of travel, thereby reducing vehicular traffic generated by students and employees going to campus and downtown on a daily basis.

In keeping with the residential character of the planning area, through commuter traffic on residential streets should be minimized. Commuter traffic to downtown and campus should be carried by Atherton, College, Beaver and University Drive. The recommendations in the study currently being prepared by the Neighborhood Traffic Mitigation Committee will provide guidance on methods to ensure residential streets carry only that traffic they were designed to accommodate.

In order to increase the attractiveness of the Highlands as a quality residential area, the community should strive to create a safe environment, free from unwanted noise, vandalism, and other crime.

Issues to be Addressed

Land Use and Zoning

Identification of subdistricts and the unique characteristics of each area.

Uses permitted in the R-O zone adjacent to downtown.

Flexibility in permitted uses as an incentive to retain structures in those portions of the proposed historic district located in the R-O zone.

Appropriateness Public Activities zoning for the Hillel site.

Areas of the Highlands Neighborhood that will be included in a National Register Historic Districts.

Maintaining the fraternity system as an integral part of the Highlands Neighborhood.

"Livability" of the neighborhood.

Applicability of the three-unrelated rule to townhouses.

Adding townhouses in older neighborhoods to the concentrated rental housing inspection program.

Retaining the variety of inhabitants in the neighborhood.

Neighborhood cohesiveness.

Shifts from rental to owner-occupied houses.

Availability and affordability of owner-occupied and family housing.

Conversion of owner-occupied housing to rental housing.

Parking

Enforcement of regulations prohibiting parking outside of approved parking areas.

Controlling installation of small, rental parking areas on residential lots throughout the Highlands.

Parking lots located at fraternities and other rental properties in the area.

Sight distance problems caused by cars parked on streets.

Parking needs and demands of different land use categories.

Traffic

Vehicular through traffic on neighborhood streets.

Visibility of stop signs.

Running of stop signs.

Health and Safety

Noise, particularly from fraternities and rental units.

Vandalism and other crime against persons and property.

Disruptive pedestrian traffic.

Improving the safety of pedestrians.

Public safety issues that cannot be solved through traditional planning techniques.

Inter-group Cooperation

Getting the fraternities (including LFAA), neighborhood association, and rental property owners together to discuss neighborhood concerns.

Recommendations

Land Use

- * Carefully monitor certain areas (e.g., University Drive, South Atherton Street, that portion of South Garner Street close to downtown, and South Allen Street) and apply overlay zoning techniques such as Highway Transitional Use or Urban Overlay District in appropriate locations as necessary to maintain property investment. These overlay regulations allow nonresidential uses while maintaining the moderate scale and residential character of the neighborhood.
- * Hillel has desired to redevelop their 224 Locust Lane property for several years but has been unable to do so. In order to ensure that the zoning of the site does not put an undue burden on Hillel, the Borough should reconsider the zoning of this site.
- * Re-examine the list of uses permitted in the R-O district to ensure permitted uses meet neighborhood and community needs and encourage retention of historic buildings.
- * Opportunities may exist for infill in R-3 and R-O zoning districts with higher density single-family housing. In order to accommodate this infill, establish a new type of dwelling unit called single-family attached. This dwelling could supplement or replace the land use category known as row- dwellings. Occupancy in single-family attached dwellings would be regulated by zoning limitations on unrelated individuals rather than the square footage-based standards that apply to multi-family dwellings.
- * Develop more innovative uses of the properties on the alley network in the R-3 and R-O sections of the neighborhood. These uses could include conversion of garages to housing and/or artist and artisan studios or use of alley frontages for small accessory housing units located on properties containing an owner-occupied single family house.
- * Preserving the quality of the older sections of the Highlands is an important objective of this plan. In order to facilitate preservation, review the areas zoned R3 and R4 to see if that zoning is appropriate to encourage reinvestment in residential uses and other residentially-scaled uses in older areas.
- * Implement the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Historic Resources Study Committee (HRSC). Approximately half of the study area is included in a nomination for the establishment of a National Register Historic District. Preservation and reuse of historic buildings should be facilitated, with special attention given to preserving single-family homes and fraternities. Potential uses for these buildings include bed and breakfast homes, owner-occupied condominiums, and professional offices. Where preservation of an entire building is not warranted, consider methods for preserving architecturally significant facades.
- * A lack of balance in the mix of owner-occupied and renter-occupied dwellings contributes to lessening the quality of life in our neighborhoods. In order to ensure the stability of the single-family areas of the Highlands, develop a management plan for rental housing in the neighborhood.
- * Current R-2 zoning regulations do not contain development standards for the expansion of nonconforming fraternities. A zoning ordinance amendment should be prepared to address this deficiency.

Motor Vehicle Traffic Management

- * The Inner Loop is an important element in the Centre Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (CRMPO) strategy to reduce congestion on the regional highway network and local and neighborhood streets. The Borough should support the MPO's efforts for its completion.
- * To minimize the amount of through traffic on local streets, encourage efforts to keep the majority of traffic on arterial streets such as South Atherton Street, College and Beaver Avenues, the Parkway and University Drive.
- * Managing through traffic on residential streets is a complex undertaking. The joint subcommittee of the Pedestrian & Traffic and Planning Commissions currently studying mitigation of through traffic should continue functioning in this capacity. Actions taken to reduce through traffic on residential streets should be guided by the recommendations of this subcommittee on neighborhood traffic mitigation.
- * Public transit can be an effective alternative to the private car. To reduce dependence on the private car, we should maintain and enhance existing transit routes that connect the study area to downtown and campus. Attention should be given to using smaller transit vehicles in neighborhoods.
- * Many motorists currently use High Street and East Foster Avenue to access University Drive rather than remaining on the Beaver/College Avenue arterial system. To prevent this cut-through movement, East Beaver Avenue should be extended to connect with University Drive.

Parking

- * The appearance of parking lots can have a significant impact on the aesthetics of a neighborhood. Use zoning, property codes, and owner-developed pricing policies to improve unsightly rental parking lots and parking outside of approved parking areas.
- * Continue the rollback residential permit parking system.
- * Many fraternities have large parking lots that were built prior to the adoption of our current parking standards. Incentives should be devised to improve the aesthetics of parking lots at fraternities.

Pedestrian Facility Improvements

- * The location of the Highlands is conducive to walking to downtown and campus. To increase pedestrian use and safety, we should implement activities that:
 - reduce the level of pedestrian/vehicle conflicts;
 - enhance sidewalk facilities (e.g., widening, curb ramps, maintenance); and,
 - improve street lighting by expanding the number of lights and reducing the length of time it takes to install new street light fixtures.

Bicycle Facility Improvements

- * Bicycles can provide a viable alternative to the private car for many trips. To encourage expanded use of bicycles, bicycle routes should be established from the Highlands to downtown and the University in coordination with the regional master bicycle plan.

Home Ownership Opportunities

- * Retention and expansion of family-oriented residential areas are an important public policies. To further this policy, the Borough should:

Initiate a joint effort with the Highlands Civic Association to prepare an informational/promotional piece for the Highlands that would be distributed to all potential homebuyers.

Urge Penn State and other major employers to establish employer-assisted homebuyer programs.

Develop a program to assist renters to purchase the units they are currently renting.

Rental Housing

- * The rental housing code inspection program is an important tool for ensuring the safety and maintenance of the large stock of rental housing located in the Borough. In order to ensure the safety of tenants and the quality of the rental housing stock, increase the frequency of rental housing code inspections, as necessary.
- * Assess the adequacy of the staff levels assigned to zoning enforcement and expand this staff capacity as necessary.
- * Coordination among departments with responsibility in the area of rental housing is important to ensure the most effect use of limited public resources. To optimize effective use of resources, the Borough should continue the liaison on rental housing inspection between Borough Health and Planning Departments and the Centre Regional Code Administration office.
- * Local ownership and management of rental housing often results in better maintained, less disruptive rental properties. To further local control, the Borough should assist the neighborhood association in creating a non-profit housing corporation to purchase and manage rental housing in the neighborhood.
- * The Borough has adopted many ordinances related to rental housing. These ordinances should be vigorously enforced and the Borough should revoke the rental housing permit for properties where repeated violations of Borough ordinances occur.
- * The Borough Manager established the Housing Task Force as a mechanism to deal with properties which cause particularly adverse impacts in the neighborhood. This inter-departmental task force should continue to serve as the focal point for identifying and dealing with problem properties.

- * Poorly developed skills in what it means to be a resident of a community can lead to inappropriate behavior. In order to better prepare students for off-campus living, the Borough should develop a cooperative program with the University's off-campus housing office and other university offices to encourage the civic responsibility of students living in the neighborhood.
- * The owners of rental property bear a heavy responsibility for the way in which their properties fit into the texture of a neighborhood. The Borough should work with rental property owners and owner organizations to improve property maintenance and tenant behavior.

Public Safety and Welfare

- * The Borough has adopted many ordinances intended to improve the safety and security of our residents. To realize this intent, the Borough must actively enforce its current ordinances.
- * The Community-Oriented Policing program builds rapport and mutual respect among members of the community and the police. The Borough should continue its COP program.
- * Neighborhood watch organizations provide an effective mechanism for residents to increase personal safety in their neighborhoods. The Borough should continue its policy of encouraging the formation of neighborhood watch organizations.
- * Site design can reduce or prevent certain types of crime through lighting, building design and materials, and landscaping. The State College Police Department should assist in expanding crime prevention through environmental design to decrease vandalism in the neighborhood.
- * A significant percentage of the criminal activity in the Highlands is committed by Penn State students. To further discourage this unacceptable behavior, the Borough should request Penn State to discipline students who have multiple convictions for disorderly conduct, alcohol and drug law violations, and vandalism.
- * Behavior at fraternities and apartments does not always conform to accepted community standards. To reduce this unacceptable behavior, ask the IFC and property owners to place restrictions on social functions at fraternities and apartments with multiple citations for disorderly conduct, noise, alcohol and drug violations, and snow removal and weed violations.
- * Community service can be an effective method for preventing future criminal activity. The Borough should capitalize on this effective but under-used method of crime prevention by encouraging the District Magistrate to require community service for offenses such as disorderly conduct and vandalism.
- * In cases where community service is judged to be an ineffective sanction, the Borough should request the District Magistrate to set fines at the maximum allowed by law for individuals who repeatedly commit offenses such as disorderly conduct, alcohol and drug law violations, and vandalism.
- * Lighting is an effective tool for deterring crime. The Borough should work with the Highlands Civic Association to increase the number and use of exterior yard lights in the neighborhood.
- * On some streets, the canopies of Borough shade trees reduce the effectiveness of the standard street light fixtures. On these streets, the Borough should use low, "under canopy" streetlight fixtures.

- * Where people have pride in their community it is reflected in the care they give to maintaining the quality of life in that community. Develop programs to encourage pride of community among all citizens (e.g., Centennial Celebration, First Night, Historic District walking tours).

Appendix A

CENTRE REGION STRATEGIC PLANNING PROGRAM

(Prepared by Centre Regional Planning Commission Staff - January 1994)

The adoption of the updated Comprehensive Plan by the Centre Region's municipalities represented a significant milestone for the Region's comprehensive planning program. This document provides a plan for the future development of our community and outlines the policy framework to be used by the Region's municipalities to address planning issues in a comprehensive and regionally consistent manner. In combination with the adopted Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan and forthcoming Regional Transportation Plan, the Comprehensive Plan provides the basis for an effective regional growth management program.

To facilitate the implementation of the Plan, CRPC staff devised a Strategic Planning Area (SPA) concept. This approach resulted in the delineation of ten manageable areas within the Region's municipalities based on strategic planning issues identified in Comprehensive Plan. A map which delineates ten SPAs for the Region is attached.

The goal of the SPA approach is to develop detailed reports for each of the delineated areas. (A preliminary outline for these reports is attached). Each report will conclude with the recommendation of detailed land use plans for each area, including recommendations regarding the preferred type, intensity, location and timing of development to occur in each SPA. In addition, recommendations for land use regulations and ordinances to be applied in the Region and each Strategic Planning Area will be presented. The policies and planning principles contained in the Comprehensive Plan will provide the basis for these Strategic Plans.

It is important to note that most of the Strategic Planning Areas encompass portions of more than one municipality. A key component of the Strategic Planning Program is interaction between the municipalities impacted by the SPAs. This interaction will be achieved through joint meetings between municipal planning commissions to facilitate the discussion of intermunicipal planning issues.

Draft Strategic Plans have been developed for two areas in the Centre Region to-date. The Draft Scotia Road/Meeks Lane Strategic Plan provided information which resulted in the rezoning of the Gray's Woods Property and is being utilized as a guide for open space planning in the Buffalo Run valley. Other activities which are being pursued in this area include the establishment of an agricultural security district and a revision of the ten year sewer service area in the Township to remove areas which are appropriate for conservation planning techniques. These activities will assist with the implementation of the Town Center concept recommended for this area in the Comprehensive Plan.

The Draft West College Avenue/Science Park Road Strategic Plan provides a strategy for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations for the West College Avenue Corridor. In addition, the Draft Plan suggests approaches to implement the Comprehensive Plan's Center oriented concept in the Bristol and Foxpointe areas of the Township.

In 1994, CRPC staff will begin work on the University Drive Strategic Planning Area. Staff is in the process of devising a public participation process which will be utilized to involve residents, municipal planning commission members, elected officials and other parties in the planning process for this SPA.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AREA REPORT OUTLINE

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Regional Comprehensive Planning Process
- B. Study as Supplemental Detailed Plan

II. STUDY AREA

- A. Location/Boundaries
- B. Municipalities

III. EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS AND POTENTIAL CONSTRAINTS TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

- A. Land Use/Current Growth Trends - Within and Adjacent to Strategic Planning Area
- B. Environmental Characteristics
 - 1. Soils
 - 2. Vegetation
 - 3. Topography
 - 4. Drainage
 - 5. Floodplain
 - 6. Water Quality - Surface and Groundwater
 - 7. Air Quality
 - 8. Existing Vistas
- C. Traffic Circulation and Potential Improvements Which May Impact Development Capacity.
- D. Services and Facilities - Existing Conditions and Future Needs
 - 1. Water and Sewer
 - 2. Fire and Police
 - 3. Schools
 - 4. Recreation

IV. SUMMARY OF PLANNING ISSUES AND IMPACTS IDENTIFIED IN THE FOREGOING EVALUATIONS

- A. Localized Impacts/Planning Issues
- B. Regional Impacts/Planning Issues

IV. PLANNING GOALS AND POLICIES

- A. Relationship to Centre Region Comprehensive Plan
- B. Joint Municipal Planning Goals for Strategic Planning Area (including measurable objectives)
- C. Policies in Comprehensive Plan to be Utilized as a Guide to Achieve the Identified Planning Goals (including relationship to development center concept)

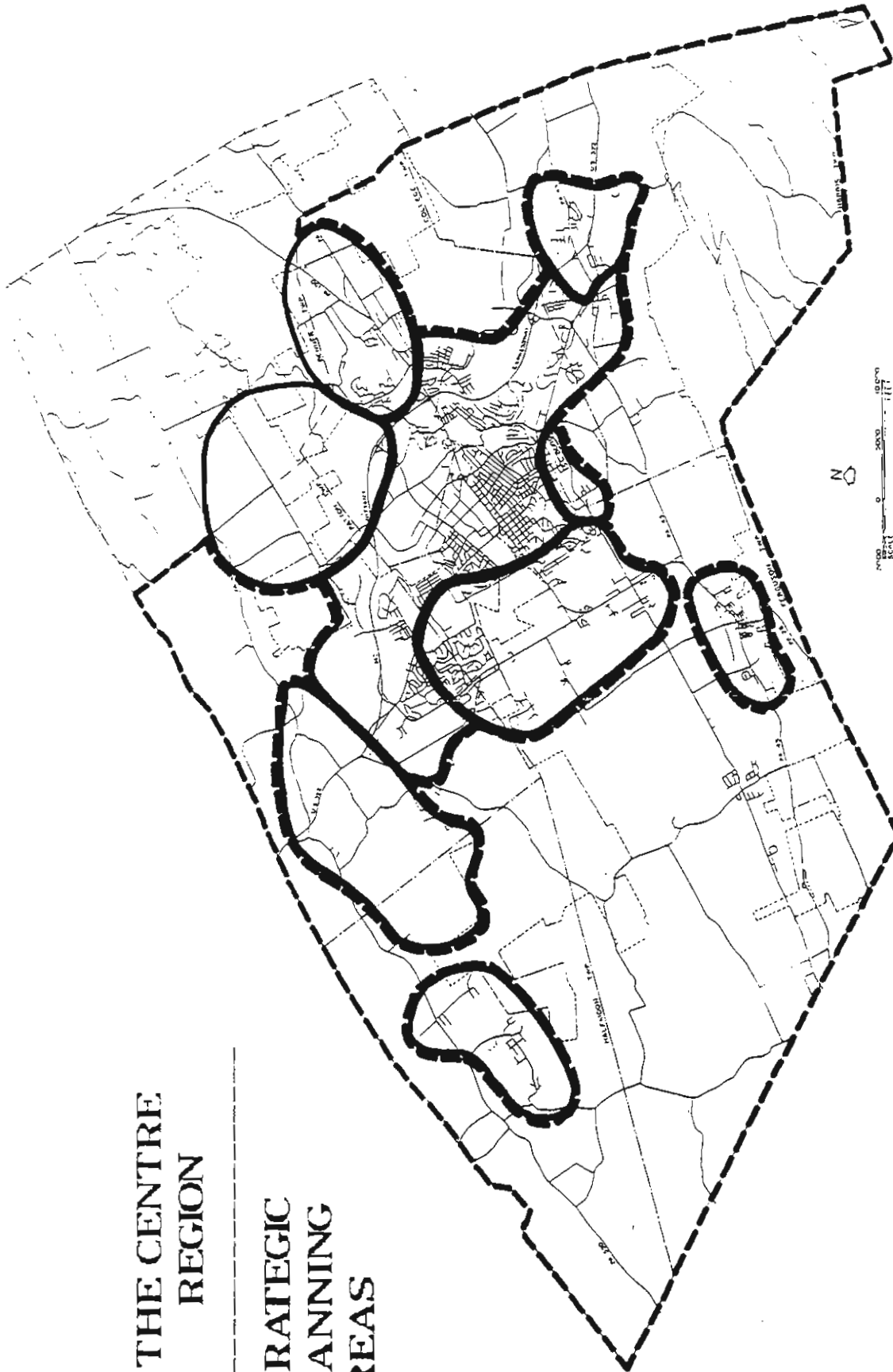
V. EVALUATION OF POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Detailed Plan for Future Development
- B. Land Use Changes Required to Implement Selected Alternative (Map)
- C. Methods for Addressing Inter-Municipal Issues
- D. Zoning/Land Development or Other Regulations Required to Implement Detailed Plan (model regulations)
- E. Other Recommendations, as Applicable
 - 1. Timing Mechanisms in Relationship to Regional Issues
 - 2. Capital Improvement Programming
 - 3. Special Financing Districts

THE CENTRE REGION

STRATEGIC PLANNING AREAS



PREPARED BY THE CENTRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION, SEPTEMBER, 1978

Appendix B

Comprehensive Plan Objectives and Policies

The Centre Region Comprehensive Plan establishes the framework for guiding future growth and development in the Centre Region. The Plan contains a series of objectives and policies for use in evaluating alternatives and coordinating decisions to ensure the community's future visions are attained.

One step in the process of preparing the Highlands Area Plan was the identification of the Comprehensive Plan objectives and policies that should guide development in the Highlands. These objectives and policies are discussed below.

Future Development Patterns

A number of the objectives/policies from the future development patterns section are relevant to the Highlands Plan. Several relate to quality of life issues such as promoting adaptive reuse of historic structures; maintaining open space in the region's most intensively developed areas; retaining and enhancing the character and community identity of existing neighborhoods; locating multifamily housing along arterial streets; managing redevelopment with existing neighborhoods to mitigate its impact on the character of these neighborhoods; maintaining sidewalks and street trees.

Several of the comprehensive plan's objectives for the development of the Downtown Center are important considerations for the Highlands Plan. These include maintaining a strong, vital, diverse downtown; promoting excellence in design and preserving valuable structures and landmarks; and, providing the public improvements necessary to support future development. The adjacency of downtown to the Highlands makes maintaining a strong downtown important to the quality of life in the neighborhood.

Environmental Protection

This section has two objectives which are important considerations for the preparation of this plan. The first is maintaining the existing quality of life by preventing or mitigating adverse impacts of future development (which in the context of the area encompassed by this plan could include redevelopment), particularly prevention of water and noise pollution. The second stresses the need to ensure development does not exceed the carrying capacity of the region's systems.

Land Use

Again, two objectives or policies were identified as important considerations in planning for future development in the Highlands area. The first discourages strip development along major transportation corridors while second urges the location of new commercial land uses in areas with adequate reserve capacity in the utility systems to support these uses. In particular, the comprehensive plan encourages locating new commercial uses in the Downtown, Suburban

Commercial, and Town Centers. Planning that is sympathetic to these objections will prevent infiltration of commercial uses into this predominantly residential study area.

Transportation

A significant number of transportation objectives and policies serve as yardsticks against which to measure our planning efforts, including:

- * Timely completion of the highway and transit improvements necessary to meet future needs
- * Regulate land service access to minimize access points and improve safety
- * Pursue effective congestion management strategies
- * Evaluate and implement transportation demand-management strategies
- * Promote and expand use of CATA and Loop transit services
- * Provide improvements necessary to accommodate bicycle travel in the Centre Region
- * Facilitate pedestrian travel
- * Utilize corridor overlay zoning

Housing

The heavy residential component of existing land use in the area and its proximity to downtown and campus result in a high level of importance for housing related objectives and policies. In considering future housing needs and demands for this area, we should:

- * Locate housing within existing and new development centers as defined in the Comprehensive Plan
- * Provide for a wide range of housing types for all socio-economic groups
- * Provide for the Borough's share of affordable housing
- * Continue to use building and property maintenance codes.

Historic Preservation

The Highlands area contains some of the oldest housing stock in the Borough. Many of these older buildings are current or former fraternity houses. These factors make historic preservation objectives important for this planning effort. Specifically, we should:

- * Identify historic buildings and implement historic overlay districts to protect concentrations of historic buildings
- * Use the inventory of historic resources as guide for determining the impact of development proposals on historic resources
- * Support programs of existing local preservation groups
- * Support the nomination of historic districts and qualifying properties for inclusion on the PA inventory and National Registry of Historic Places.

Appendix C

Hillel Rezoning

Hillel, located at 224 Locust Lane, was downzoned from R-4 to R-2 in February 1974 as part of the general revision of the State College zoning map. The primary purpose of this downzoning was to provide a connection between the fraternities located on the south side of Beaver Avenue between Pugh Street and Locust Lane that were also downzoned to R-2 at that time and other R-2 land in what was to become known as the Highlands neighborhood.

In 1984 Borough Council rejected a request by Hillel to rezone the property from R-2 to "C" General Commercial. The main reasons for Council's refusal to rezone were the desire to maintain a compact commercial area, the lack of a parking requirement in the C zone, and the desire to prevent the spread of commercial uses into neighborhoods. It was noted in the discussions of the proposed rezoning that took place at that time that any consideration of rezoning Hillel should include a consideration of the appropriateness of the R-2 zoning in the 200 Block of East Beaver Avenue.

In 1988 Hillel requested the property be rezoned from R-2 to R-O. This request was made to facilitate the redevelopment of the Hillel site as an 84-unit apartment building that would contain 6000 square feet of space for use by Hillel. The proposed development plan would have taken advantage of an option that was part of the R-O regulations at that time. This option allowed developers to build to 65 feet in return for meeting certain design and use guidelines. The Towers and Calder Commons were developed under this option. The proposal was withdrawn because of opposition by the neighborhood and the lack of support for the proposed rezoning on the part of the Planning Commission. Subsequently, the development densities of the R-O were reduced and the development option was removed from the ordinance.

In 1990 Hillel requested the zoning ordinance be amended to allow the redevelopment of the site as a 6000 square foot building for use by Hillel and a commercial parking lot. In May 1991 the Public Activities (PA) zone was added to the zoning ordinance and Hillel was rezoned to PA. This new zoning accommodated the proposed development plan which was abandoned at a later date.