

DVIRPC NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

FACING OUR FUTURE

Contemplating how best to tackle the host of issues Delaware Valley will confront in the coming years, the 13th Annual DVRPC Board Retreat was held on December 3, 1999 at the Springfield Country Club in Delaware County and focused on the theme, *Strategies for the 21st Century*.

Over 150 elected and appointed officials gathered, along with public and private sector representatives, to share the latest information and ideas, and to gain insight from national experts on creating a wider base of better jobs, stronger schools and revitalization of the urban core.

Noted policy analyst and author David Rusk provided food for thought in his keynote address. Rusk delivered the message that the Delaware Valley region will only begin to solve its root problems when public discussion focuses squarely on the interaction of race, sprawl and concentrated poverty. He cited Montgomery County, Maryland's Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit Policy whereby in all new apartment complexes and subdivisions (50 units or more), at least 15 percent must be affordable for households in the lowest third of the income scale. This allows many public housing families to be "mainstreamed." With Greater Philadelphia continuing to grow, adoption of such a policy could help break the cycle of poverty. Rusk also promoted state growth management laws and regional tax base sharing as "golden opportunities" that we should seize to preserve the region's future.

The early afternoon panel discussion centered around New Urbanism: Controlling Sprawl and Revitalizing the Urban Core. Guest speakers included Kim Coon,



Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Center for Local Government Services, and Todd Zimmerman, Co-Managing Director of Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc. Those discussions focused on Smart Growth which is environmentally sound, economically viable, and encourages livable communities. Livable communities were defined by Zimmerman as "compact, diverse and connected."

Attendees culminated the afternoon by participating in one of three lively break-out discussion groups. Discussion group topics included: Core Cities, Existing Centers & Older Suburbs, and Growing Suburbs & Rural Exurbs. Each session had a moderator who asked probing questions of each group to facilitate discussion. The Core Cities group weighed in with some tough questions of their own such as:

31,000 vacant lots in Philadelphia.

How do we plan for decline rather than just react to it? How should infrastructure be maintained?

Core Cities also discussed:

- ▶ Schools as the number one determinant of where people live;
- ▶ Cities, which must become more vibrant, (open space not necessarily vital to good city life);
- ▶ Mismatch between existing (old) housing and needs of households today; and
- ▶ Decreasing dependency on property tax— statewide decrease needed, among other topics.

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REACHING PUBLIC CONSENSUS FOR 2025

DVRPC has embarked on its long-range planning process known as Horizons, the Year 2025 Plan for the Delaware Valley, and is gathering the opinions of Delaware Valley citizens in an effort to assess the future needs of the region. The Commission has long had a reputation for valuing public participation, and as part of this commitment, scheduled four public workshops to introduce regional citizens to the issues, trends and choices that face us in the next 25 years. The workshops were held from late October to mid-November in King of Prussia, PA; Glassboro, NJ; Philadelphia; and Burlington, NJ.

"Revitalizing towns and cities was the highest spending category among all workshop attendees..."

Invitations were sent to several thousand individuals, with approximately 300 attending. At each of the three suburban workshops, participants were asked to register for one of three break-out discussion groups, focusing on Existing Centers, Cities and Older Suburbs; Growing Suburbs; and Rural Exurbs. For the workshop in Philadelphia, participants chose either Center City; the Neighborhoods; or the City in the Region. Upon entering, each participant was given a copy of *Horizons Report #1: The Shape of Things to Come*, which provided background information on the planning process, the

policies of the existing Year 2020 Plan, and current trends and their consequences.

Participants were also given a list of questions for consideration, as well as \$100 in \$10 denominations of DVRPC "play money" to prioritize as investment in six categories; namely, preserving farmland and open space; revitalizing towns and cities; bicycle and pedestrian facilities; building new roads; building new public transit systems; and improving existing transportation facilities. The results of both discussions and investments were

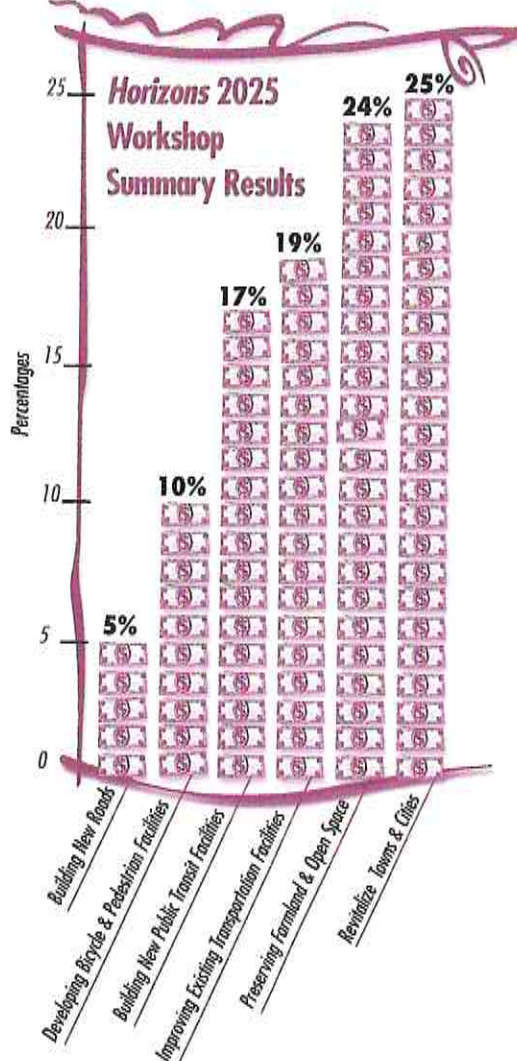
intriguing. Comments in the break-out groups generally focused on trends and forces; land use, including municipal decision-making; environment and resource protection; economic development; housing; and transportation. Investing in the region's future, using the DVRPC "play money", was distributed as shown on the following graph and as described here:

- ▼ Preserving farmland and open space was first or second in each workshop;
- ▼ Revitalizing towns and cities was the highest spending category among all workshop attendees;
- ▼ Developing bicycle and pedestrian facilities was twice as high as Building new roads;

▼ Building new public transit facilities ranked three times higher than building new roads; and Improving existing transportation facilities was the highest of the four transportation categories.

These findings strongly support the key policies in the Year 2020 Plan and indicate their importance as we move toward 2025.

Horizons will continue to move ahead with *Report #2: Issues and Choices* planned for release in February, 2000. Three additional reports will be published during FY 2001, and more public workshops and opinion polls will take place as well. *Questions regarding Horizons, the Year 2025 Plan, should be addressed to the Public Affairs Office (215-238-2875).*



GROUP FOCUSES ON CENTRAL JERSEY TRANSPORTATION



Central New Jersey is a large area which overlaps two Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) jurisdictions -- DVRPC's Greater Philadelphia region to the south and the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority's Greater New York region to the north. The Central New Jersey Transportation Forum was formed in January, 1999 to address varied transportation concerns and to promote interregional cooperation.

The Forum provides a unique opportunity to bring together numerous regional organizations -- each with a stake in area transportation systems. The Forum consists of NJDOT, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, NJ Transit, NJ Office of State Planning, DVRPC, NJTPA, Middlesex County, Mercer County, Somerset County, MSM Regional Council, Keep Middlesex Moving, Greater Mercer Transportation Management Association, municipalities in and around the study area, local businesses and advocacy groups. The study area generally covers thirteen municipalities in Mercer, Middlesex and Somerset counties.

The goal of the Forum is to develop a consensus for the appropriate planning strategies which will address identified critical issues. At the Forum's first meeting, five critical transportation issues were determined:

- ▼ East-west access;
- ▼ Truck activity and goods movement;
- ▼ Transit and alternative modes;
- ▼ Land-use/transportation planning; and
- ▼ System-wide planning and coordination.

These critical issues have been addressed in subsequent meetings. These meetings have included technical presentations, background information and guest speakers related to the identified issues. To date, presentations have been made on NJ 31 truck study results; land-use/transportation planning trends in the study area and the status of NJ Transit initiatives in the region. In an effort to get municipalities directly involved in identifying planning strategies, DVRPC asked each of them to present their vision of development trends and municipal initiatives in their community over the next twenty years. This process proved to be extremely informative. Future land development and transportation improvements were discussed, giving neighboring municipalities insight on how they may coordinate future efforts.

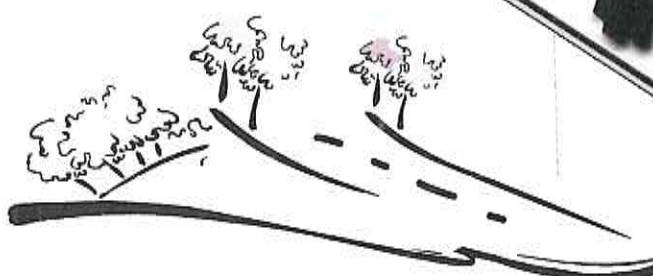
Existing and future east-west access conditions are being modeled through NJDOT's consultant. This work will identify trip patterns and congestion locations which will be invaluable in the planning process. A "no build" condition will be modeled in the near future using year 2020 demographics, the existing transportation network and proposed TIP projects to identify future trip patterns and congestion locations.

The Forum will assist with implementing programmed projects and identifying new projects for future implementation.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW!

The New Jersey State Transportation Conference, **TransAction 2000**, has been set for April 25, 26 and 27, 2000 at the **Tropicana Resort and Casino in Atlantic City!**

The Conference focuses on the impacts and opportunities for improving air quality and quality of life through bus, commuter and light rail, and paratransit services. More than 50 workshops and five concurrent tracks are included in the conference, as well as a major expo and reception. Last year, over 800 attendees from 22 states and Canada participated. Participant and vendor registration **forms are available by contacting Frank Reilly in the Morris County Department of Transportation (908-903-1077).**



AGING AND MOBILITY

NEW REPORT RECOMMENDS STRATEGIES TO AID THE ELDERLY

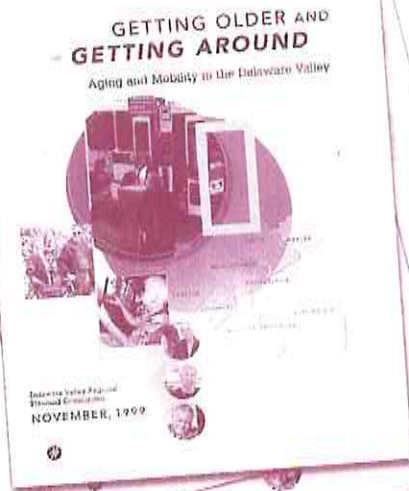
Growing older is a fact of life, yet we seldom take the time to consider what the future may bring as we age. What will life be like in our later years? How will we get from place to place? A new report, *Getting Older and Getting Around*, reviews the location and scope of the Delaware Valley's current and forecasted elderly population, and presents recommendations to improve mobility and enhance the quality of life for elderly residents, both in urban areas, and developed centers, and in suburban and rural areas, where many of the next generation of elderly are expected to live.

Projections indicate the Delaware Valley will be home to over 1.1 million people age 65 and older by 2025, with an expected increase of 58% in the elderly population

"Projections indicate the Delaware Valley will be home to over 1.1 million people age 65 and older by 2025, with an expected increase of 58% in the elderly population since 1990."

since 1990. Almost one in five of the region's residents will be over the age of 64, up from its current 13%. Most of this growth will occur in the region's suburbs, in areas not currently served by public transit and at densities which will make it difficult to implement transit as a viable alternative to the private automobile.

Driving is the preferred means of transportation for older adults. Most have relied



solely on their automobiles, are unfamiliar with other modes of transportation, and are hesitant or unable to learn new modes at an advanced age. By the year 2030, almost 20% of all driver mileage will be attributable to elderly drivers. Once they are absolutely unable to drive, many seniors will find themselves unable to independently access necessary services and facilities or to continue to participate in social, cultural and community activities.

Getting Older and Getting Around recommends both transportation and non-transportation strategies that would improve the

ability of the region's seniors to access services and facilities and enhance their quality of life. Some key recommendations include:

▼ Suburban municipalities should **revise municipal plans and zoning regulations**, to encourage increased densities, mixed-use communities and service clustering. Similarly, non-profit agencies and developers should work with the region's municipalities to **expand affordable housing opportunities for seniors** (including independent living units, intermediate care units and nursing homes) **in existing developed centers.**

▼ The region's transit service providers should **work pro-actively to create a more efficient, cost-effective and accessible region-wide transit network.** Transit accessibility for people of all ages should be enhanced and marketing campaigns that encourage all residents to try transit should be expanded.

▼ The multitude of social service agencies, church and community groups that currently provide transportation services to the elderly should **coordinate their efforts.**

▼ State and federal transportation agencies should **re-design suburban highways** in appropriate locations in response to the needs and abilities of older drivers.

▼ Likewise, the private sector should **re-design automobiles** to assist elderly people who are capable of safely operating their own vehicles.

▼ Finally, senior citizens and the near-elderly should be encouraged to **realistically plan for the day when they will no longer be able to drive**, and consider how their transportation needs will be after retirement.

Copies of the *Getting Older and Getting Around* report are available through DVRPC's Information Services Center. **For more information, call 215-238-2828.**

WORKING TOGETHER FOR BETTER POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

There are 352 cities, townships and boroughs in the nine-county Delaware Valley region, each exerting its own form of local authority. As part of a continuing project to foster inter-municipal cooperation, DVRPC is preparing a series of short "How-to" guides for elected and appointed officials. These guides are designed to illustrate how local officials can launch specific cooperative ventures with their neighbors in adjoining municipalities in order to improve services and/or reduce costs.

The third report in the series, *Inter-Municipal Police and Emergency Services*, describes how municipalities can increase efficiency and still save money through working and planning with adjacent and neighboring communities.

The report includes an overview of regional and inter-municipal police and emergency services and municipal incentives to facilitate their creation. It also includes two case studies related to regional police

and inter-local emergency services within the region.

The report outlines the advantages, impacts, and process by which inter-municipal police and emergency service can be developed.

The **advantages** include:

- ▶ Better Coordination of Services resulting in uniform policies and regulations ;
- ▶ Better Personnel Training resulting in more efficient and higher quality service;
- ▶ Reduced Costs by sharing personnel and equipment; and
- ▶ Career Enhancement Opportunities by providing a wider range of training and higher salaries.

Potential **negative impacts** of inter-municipal or regional police and emergency services include:

- ▶ Loss of Sense of Community (this perception can be minimized by having the municipality's representative "bridge the gap" between agency and community.)

▶ Loss of Control (again, this can be remedied by having the municipality's representative or elected official act as its liaison with a inter-municipal agency or organization.)

▶ Loss of Citizen Contact (often temporary, as police become acquainted with new areas).

The report offers case studies to support how inter-municipal cooperation is already working effectively in our region. It also lists financial incentives to promote inter-municipal cooperation in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Previously released "How To" guides in this series include, *Regional Recreational Commissions and Inter-Municipal Cooperation for Highway and Transit Corridor Planning*.

For more information about Inter-Municipal Police and Emergency Services or other reports, please contact DVRPC's Information Services Center at 215-238-2828. ☎

New Committee to Monitor and Influence Regional Land Use

As the Delaware Valley continues to grow and evolve, shifting patterns of land use and development change the natural environment and create a demand for transportation services and facilities.

The DVRPC Land Use and Development Committee was created to assess and influence these patterns by providing input and guidance for DVRPC initiatives that affect regional land use such as regional land use plans, long-range population and employment forecasts, and the Annual Work Program.

The Committee serves as a forum for communications between state, county and

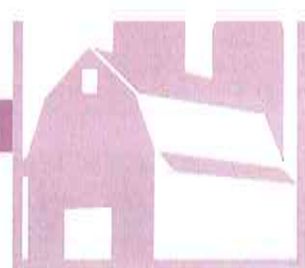
municipal land use planning officials, private sector developers and homebuilders, environmental advocates and others.

The group reviews and analyzes proposed state legislation or policy that affects land use and development planning, and prepares policy positions for recommendations to the DVRPC Board. The committee also assists staff with monitoring new construction and development proposals in the nine-county Delaware Valley region, as well as identifying information on innovative and effective planning tools and local efforts to manage growth for documentation and dissemination by DVRPC.

The group has already heard presenta-

tions on New Regionalism strategies; Transit-Oriented Development sites; water and sewer systems; County & Municipal Population and Employment Forecasts; Willingboro Plaza Shopping Center Development; Pennsylvania Senate Bill 300; and new development in floodplain areas.

The Committee will meet on at least a quarterly basis (*more frequently as needed*) and report its results directly to the DVRPC Board. ☎



"DVRPC staff members ride in an effort promote open space, vibrant communities and transportation options."

BIKER RALLY

Last September, DVRPC staff members joined Pennsylvania State Senator Allyson Y. Schwartz (pictured in center) and others on the 10th Annual Bike Ride to Promote Open Space and Livable Communities. Using the West River Drive and city streets, the group ride featured stops at the Manayunk Farmer's Market, the Fairmount Waterworks, and the Schuylkill River Park. DVRPC's participation was part of our continuing effort to promote open space, vibrant communities and transportation options in the Delaware Valley.



ABOVE: DVRPC staff members join Pennsylvania State Senator Allyson Y. Schwartz after a hard days "ride" in support of the Delaware Valley.

CITIZENS DECIDE THE FUTURE OF RANCOCAS CREEK

New Jersey's Rancocas Creek is a special resource, providing natural beauty, recreation, and habitat for wildlife.

However, inappropriate development, uncontrolled stormwater runoff, and lack of proper stewardship threaten the health of the Rancocas and its ability to be enjoyed by all. To counter these trends, DVRPC, the Rancocas Conservancy, the Burlington County Office of Land Use and various municipalities have partnered to develop a greenway plan.

A greenway is a corridor of open space that links natural, cultural and recreational resources. There are environmental, scenic, economic and recreational benefits to establishing a greenway. For example, greenways can reduce flooding, protect water quality, recharge groundwater, provide wildlife habitat, preserve scenic views, increase property values, enhance appreciation of the waterway as a resource, provide recreational opportunities, and build community pride.

The greenway plan will examine issues facing the creek and address various methods of stream corridor protection. Methods include identifying parcels that may be appropriate for acquisition and conservation easements, recommending stronger land use regulations to protect the fragile stream corridor, organizing "Friends of the Rancocas" type groups that monitor water quality and conduct stream clean-ups, and disseminating information on good

stewardship. Implementation of all recommendations will be voluntary.

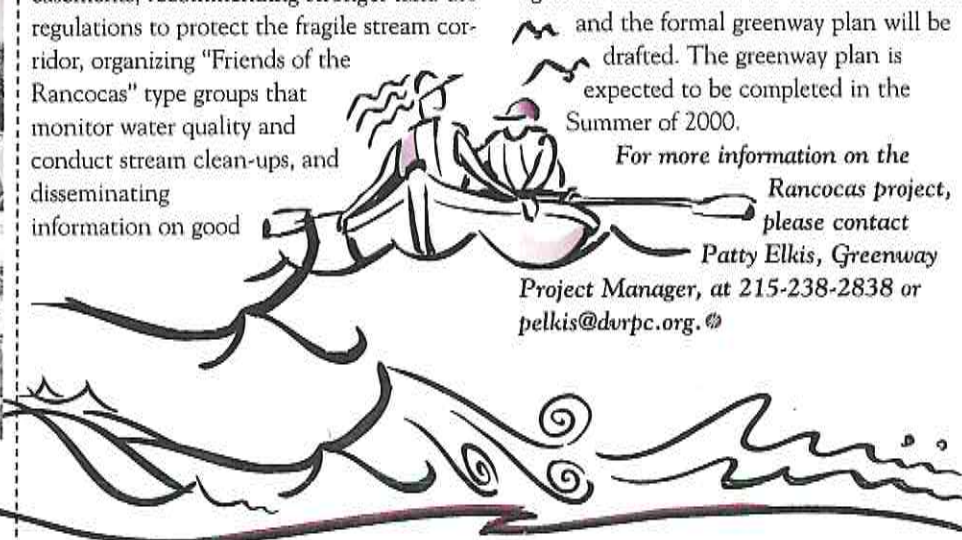
Two public forums were held in Burlington County to explain the Rancocas Greenway Project and to elicit citizen input. Topics discussed at the forums included:

- ▼ Canoeing along the creek;
- ▼ Unauthorized all-terrain vehicle (ATV) use along trails;
- ▼ Runoff pollution from neighboring golf courses; and
- ▼ Width of buffer areas, among many other issues.

Forum attendees were also given a chance to share their experiences about the creek. The overall consensus seems to be that the creek has been an overwhelming asset to the community and it continues to enrich the quality of life for those in the area. One woman shared that she had met the love of her life along the creek at Smithville.

DVRPC is currently working to address land acquisition, recreation, and historic resource issues raised at the forums. Within the next few months, we will hold another set of forums to present recommendations to the public. At that time, public input will again be factored into the recommendations and the formal greenway plan will be drafted. The greenway plan is expected to be completed in the Summer of 2000.

For more information on the Rancocas project, please contact
Patty Elkins, Greenway
Project Manager, at 215-238-2838 or
pellis@dvrpc.org.



REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE ELECTS NEW CHAIR

At its November meeting, DVRPC's Regional Citizens Committee (RCC) elected long-time RCC member **Sue McNamara** as Chairperson. Ms. McNamara is Executive Director of the Bicycle Coalition of the Delaware Valley where she works with city, state and federal elected and appointed government officials to gain better facilities for bicyclists and better bike access to streets, trails and transit. Since taking the helm at the Bike Coalition in 1992, she has increased membership from 600 to 2,200, two-thirds of whom are in the suburbs.

Recently, Sue was named to Philadelphia Mayor John Street's Transportation and Energy Policy transition team.



ABOVE: Dennis Winters, former RCC chairperson, hands over the gavel to newly elected Chair Sue McNamara.

Last year, she chaired the RCC's Transportation Sub-Committee and was a member of DVRPC's Transportation Enhancements Sub-Committee and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Committee. She also worked with DVRPC to create the Suburban Bike Network, which evaluates 75 miles of suburban roads scheduled for reconstruction and provides plans for bicycle facilities on those roads.

She replaced three term Chair Dennis Winters of the Clean Air Council. DVRPC thanks Mr. Winters for the time, energy and leadership he has provided to the RCC, and we look forward to another productive year under Ms. McNamara's guidance. 🍷

Regional Household Travel Survey Underway

DVRPC has awarded a contract to *NuStats Research & Consulting* of Austin, TX, to conduct a household travel survey covering thirteen counties in southern New Jersey and southeastern Pennsylvania.

Travel data will be collected from a sample of 5,640 households randomly selected from the 2.16 million found in the region. The selected households will be asked to maintain a diary of all trips taken by members, by whatever mode, over the course of an assigned 24-hour day. This data will then be collected through a telephone interview and used to paint a picture of how residents travel inside and outside the region.

This activity-based survey will examine the reasons for travel, as well as the actual trips, allowing a realistic analysis of why people travel, how they make their decisions and allocate their daily travel activities. In

this way, future travel needs can be anticipated and facilities designed to meet these needs, thus helping to boost the quality of life, while maintaining the economic health and viability of the region.

This activity-based survey will examine the reasons why people travel...thus helping to boost the quality of life, while maintaining the economic health and viability of the region. 🍷🍷

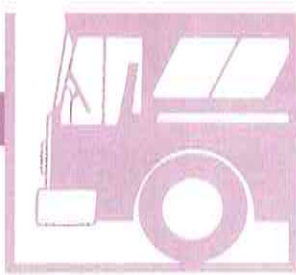
The survey, conducted in liaison with the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO), will cover the DVRPC counties (Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Mercer) and the SJTPO counties (Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem) in New Jersey; as well as the five

DVRPC counties in Pennsylvania (Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia) and will continue through Spring, 2001.

NuStats has a great deal of experience nationwide in conducting surveys of this type, and has previously managed travel and opinion polls on transportation issues in major cities across the country.

The survey is necessary to obtain updated information on work and non-work trip generation, travel patterns, modal choice, and vehicle occupancy; information that is essential for all transportation planning projects, including travel forecasts, highway and transit feasibility studies, land use planning, parking studies, welfare-to-work programs, bicycle and pedestrian studies, air quality analyses, and development of traffic control strategies.

Look for the results of this important research in a future issue of DVRPC News. 🍷



FACING OUR FUTURE (cont. from page 1)

The *Existing Centers & Older Suburbs* group discussed:

- ▶ The loss of identity of the region's older communities;
- ▶ The merging of commercial centers into the suburbs;
- ▶ The need to build on available assets;
- ▶ The effect of changing commuting patterns, among other topics.

The *Growing Suburbs and Rural Exurbs* group discussed:

- ▶ Municipal leadership and vision;
- ▶ Affordable housing in growth areas;
- ▶ Reinvestment in cities and first ring suburbs;
- ▶ Public transit in rural areas, among other topics. ☺



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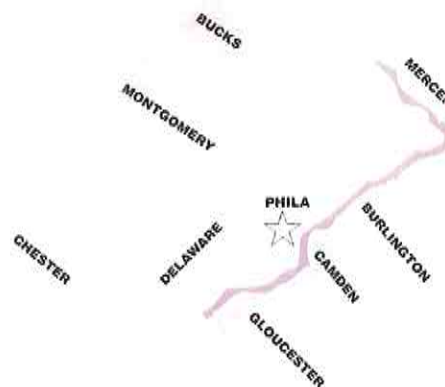
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Since its establishment in 1965, DVRPC has been instrumental in ensuring the orderly growth of the bi-state region. As the federally-funded metropolitan planning organization, DVRPC also provides data and consulting services to public and private sector organizations, and fosters cooperation among all levels of government. Shown above is the nine-county Delaware Valley region.

