



A COMMUNITY VISION FOR THE CITY OF BRIDGETON

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New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Office of Smart Growth

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FORWARD

INTRODUCTION

I.	BACKGROUND INFORMATION	
I.1	Overview	3
I.2	Planning History	4
II.	METHODOLOGY FOR VISIONING	6
II.1	Workshop Topics	7
II.2	Methodology Summary	8
III.	MECHANICS	9
III.1	Outreach	9
III.2	Workshop Format	10
III.3	Mechanics Outcomes	11
IV.	WORKSHOP SUMMARIES	11
IV.1	Workshop #1: Economic Development and Transportation	12
IV.2	Workshop #2: Education and Workforce Development	12
IV.3	Workshop #3: Natural Resources and Recreation	13
IV.4	Workshop #4: Housing, Neighborhoods and the Historic District	13
IV.5	Workshop #5: Senior Citizen Issues	14
IV.6	Workshop #6: Hispanic community Issues	15
V.	VISION STATEMENT	16
	SLIDE SHOW ACTION PLAN	17
	APPENDICES	
A.1	Workshop #1 Summary Comments	35
A.2	Workshop #2 Summary Comments	37
A.3	Workshop #3 Summary Comments	38
A.4	Workshop #4 Summary Comments	41
A.4a	Post Workshop #4 feedback letter	45
A.5	Workshop #5 Senior Citizen survey results	47
A.6	Workshop #6 Survey results	51
B.1	Ranking of Master Plan topics on Housing and Neighborhoods	52
C.1	Workshop #1 Handout	55
C.2	Workshop #3 Handout	56
C.3	Workshop #4 Handout	57
	Photo Credits	58

FORWARD

The City of Bridgeton Vision Statement represents the work of City officials and citizens to picture their City as it might be in the coming decades. Yet, because we are right here in the present, the citizens who attended the Visioning Workshops also strove to be sensible. Over the years, too many plans and visions for Bridgeton have been written, never to see the light of day, much less be acted upon. The Vision Statement proposed here is grounded in practical, achievable actions. It is not all encompassing in terms of the myriad problems which face Bridgeton. There is nothing about the state of rental housing and there are no proposals for redevelopment. Those issues, and their many companions, are dealt with in the Master Plan and in the City's several Redevelopment Plans.

Over the course of the six Workshops held in 2009, a vision for a better future for Bridgeton materialized which centered on two themes. The identification of all citizens of Bridgeton with the Cohansey River and large City Park is an asset and advantage for framing a future vision. Citizens were awash with ideas for better utilization of these resources. The second theme, which consumed citizens equally, was the desire for a future Bridgeton in which they felt safe and comfortable on the streets, in the shops and in the Park. While other topics were presented, these two issues rose again and again as the core ideas for a better future for Bridgeton.

In these citizens' vision, Bridgeton will be a River oriented small City with many heterogeneous and safe neighborhoods inhabited by residents whose quality of life is enhanced by multiple places for River access, safe pedestrian and bike walkways around the City, and a vibrant public life in the Central Business District and throughout the City.

The report details how the Vision Statement was formulated. It is accompanied by a slide show which is intended to convey ideas for how to achieve the vision for Bridgeton arrived at by its citizens.

INTRODUCTION

The City of Bridgeton, as part of its Plan Endorsement process, has worked over the last year to create a Vision Statement which expresses what kind of community it wishes to be over the next two decades. The Vision Statement, in conjunction with the City's Municipal Self Assessment report, is the basis for the judgment of whether the City's agenda is consistent with the goals, policies and strategies of the State Plan. The State expects Bridgeton's Vision Statement to "... provide for sustainable growth, recognize fiscal constraints, plan for housing needs, and call for the preservation of natural, historic and agricultural resources."



Bridgeton began the process of envisioning its future in 2006 with preparation for a new Master Plan, which was completed and adopted in 2008. The process, including a Systems and Programs Needs Analysis, covered all the bases of a traditional Master Plan under the Municipal Land Use Law and, as

a result, brought to the fore numerous items for the City to implement in order to achieve the stated goals and objectives.

The Master Plan started and ended with the following “vision” for the City:

The City of Bridgeton will be recognized as the economic, ethnic, cultural and tourist destination for western Cumberland County with a safe vibrant downtown and mixed use neighborhoods, anchored by the Cohansey River as the center piece of water oriented residential, recreational and commercial uses with public access and amenities. The vision includes improvements to the waterfront with greenways and walkways, a hotel/conference center for visitors to come to Bridgeton, be entertained in Bridgeton and stay in Bridgton.

While the Master Planning process involved two public hearings, as well as numerous stakeholder interviews, there was little conversation within the City about the process and what citizens envisioned a better City to be like. The Master Plan raised and suggested actions for the betterment of the City in the immediate future. It has 85 suggested strategies to deal with housing problems, transportation failures, and the need for economic development. These are important short term goals prioritized over the next five years. Yet it is difficult, if not impossible, to identify a long term vision from a reading of the 2008 Master Plan. The goal, then, of this Vision Statement process was to consider the Master Plan information and, with it in mind, focus on what really matters to the citizens of the City in terms of their long term future. The vehicle to arrive at a citizens’ vision for Bridgeton’s long term future was six public workshops and their feedback.

The funding for the Visioning process came through funding from the Smart Future Grant Program administered by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Office of Smart Growth in the community visioning category. The grant specifically called for Bridgeton to utilize diverse methods for outreach to the entire community and, in particular, to engage its Hispanic community in the process.

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

I.1 Overview

Bridgeton is located regionally about half way between Atlantic City and Wilmington, Delaware in the southwestern portion of New Jersey. It is approximately 50 miles from Center City Philadelphia.

Bridgeton is a small city with a 2000 census population of 22,771 of which 18,311 persons live in households.¹ Almost one fifth of the City census count, mostly young men, are institutionalized in prison facilities located in the City. Bridgeton is located in rural Cumberland County, one of the poorest of New Jersey's 21 counties. Bridgeton is split longitudinally almost at its center by the Cohansy River. There are approximately 3-1/2 miles of river flowing through 6.4 square miles of Bridgeton. While no longer called Cohansy Bridge, Bridgeton continues to be the "City on the Cohansy."

Historically, Bridgeton has been the regional center for western Cumberland County. Originally a manufacturing and commercial center, Bridgeton evolved into the financial, governmental and cultural center of the area as manufacturing declined. The decline of the manufacturing sector has left Bridgeton with significant amounts of under utilized land, much of which borders the river.

Bridgeton, while not as strong an employment source as it once was, remains the primary employment center for western Cumberland County and retains much of the infrastructure to command that position into the 21st century. As well as being the economic heart of its region, Bridgeton is the home of the political, cultural and much of the recreational activities for Cumberland County. Bridgeton has the largest historic district in the State of New Jersey with over 2200 sites.



The City's regional importance is denoted by the presence in Bridgeton of the County office complex, the County library, the County Courthouse, the wastewater plant for western Cumberland County, as well as numerous other public and semi-public institutions serving the Cumberland County.

¹ 2006-2008 population estimates from the US Census are for 18,853 persons living in households.

The City's municipal park is hundreds of acres with a lakefront beach and a City owned zoo. The Bridgeton Symphony Orchestra's home base is in Bridgeton although it has become, over its twenty year history, a regional company, with venues in Atlantic County as well as Vineland and Bridgeton.

The burdens which the City government and its citizens bear to support facilities enjoyed by the larger area are the other side of Bridgeton's historic importance. Besides housing the County jail and courthouse, Bridgeton is a major supplier of cheap rental housing for temporary workers from the surrounding area. Consequently, the City supplies the majority of social and health services for this population.



I.2 Planning History

In 2006, before embarking on Plan Endorsement or on a Master Planning process, Bridgeton contracted with a planning firm to conduct a "Systems and Programs Inventory and Analysis Report." The purpose of the report was to establish where the City was in terms of planning and programs prior to establishing goals and objectives for a Master Plan.

The consulting firm of Thomas Comitta and Associates inventoried and analyzed past planning documents prior to conducting interviews with representatives from the following stakeholder categories:

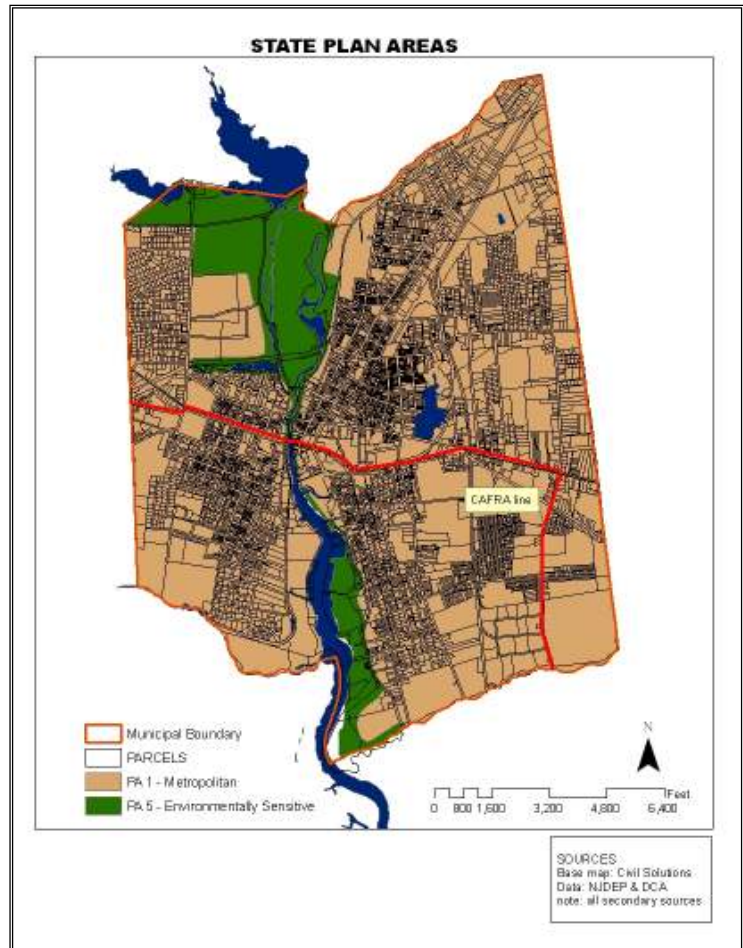
- Church related
- School
- Community organizations
- Government leaders
- Retail/industrial business interests
- Environmental groups
- Developers
- Downtown business owners.

In addition, the consultant ran two half day workshops with City Department heads to garner information on the daily organization and management of the City. The final report was intended to give the consultant hired for the Master Plan insights into how the City functioned prior to a new Master Plan.

Bridgeton used the "Systems and Programs Inventory and Analysis Report" to compose an RFP for a Master Planning consultant. The Consultant was requested to produce a Master Plan compliant with the Municipal Land Use Law which could act as a Revitalization tool. The City specifically requested that the Master Plan contain a marketing strategy for redevelopment and a new Zone Plan to better utilize the existing space. The resulting Master Plan, adopted in September 2008, covers all the legal requirements for a general Master Plan while focusing closely on redevelopment strategies. Aside from a tightly focused economic section, it is too broad and general, not to mention lengthy at over 300 pages, to adequately present a cohesive vision for the future of the City.

Simultaneously with the Master Planning process, Bridgeton began the process of seeking Plan Endorsement from the State Planning Commission. Bridgeton entered the 21st century struggling economically and socially. It was eager to explore any avenue to relieve its 'Distressed City' status and to help its citizens to a path with better jobs, improved housing and a renewal of social and community structure. Plan Endorsement, with its promise of State incentives, was alluring to the struggling City. Consistency with the State Plan and the prospect of fashioning a 'Future Vision' for the City were added benefits.

In March of 2007, the City submitted a pre-petition to the Office of Smart Growth for Plan Endorsement. The City knew that its Regional Center designation, established in 2001 and encompassing the entire City, was due to expire in January, 2008. By moving through Plan Endorsement, Bridgeton expected to regain its designation as a Regional Center with the same boundaries as previously designated. The Permit Extension Act, passed by the State Legislature in September 2008 re-instated the part of the City which is in Planning Area #1 as a Regional Center. This designation will expire on December 31, 2010 with the Permit Extension Act unless the City is re-designated through Plan Endorsement before that time.²



After its pre-petition meeting with the Office of Smart Growth, the City appointed a six member Plan Endorsement Advisory Committee which worked over the next months to prepare the required "Municipal Self Assessment Report" for State agencies to review for consistency with the State Plan. The Departments of Community Affairs, and Departments of Transportation and Environmental Protection made comments, termed "Opportunities and Constraints" reports with regard to their analysis of the Self Assessment report in terms of consistency with the State Plan.

At that juncture, the City was faced with reconciling and utilizing two somewhat divergent planning documents. The Master Plan with its short term revitalization goal was not informed by the State agency comments and was not focused on a long range future for the City. The State agency comments spoke to inconsistencies with the State Plan and, in the case of the

² Recent legislation, signed by Governor Corzine on 1/18/10 has extended the Act through 2012.

NJDEP report, gave specific and technical remedies, but these did not answer the City's need for a long term vision either.

The Master Plan provides specific actions on which the City should act over the next five years, but it does not furnish a cohesive vision for the twenty year planning horizon. There were indications of what the community wants for Bridgeton in the two public sessions held during the Master Planning preparation. The Master Plan hints at where the City seems to be headed and it suggests an economic revitalization plan to renew the City. But the Master Plan does not present a desired common overall vision for the City.

Based on this, Bridgeton, with funding from DCA, embarked on a comprehensive visioning process. The type of Visioning predicated as part of this funding involves broad interactive public participation over several months. The Plan Endorsement Advisory Committee and the Visioning Committee made the decision to utilize the Master Planning experience and results as the basis for focused workshops in the community which would look ahead to what Bridgeton can be in 20 years.

II. METHODOLOGY FOR VISIONING

The Visioning Steering Committee first met in February, 2009. At that meeting, the fundamental process for visioning in Bridgeton was discussed and laid out.

Visioning is a process by which a community envisions the future it wants and plans how to achieve it.

The Committee decided that the just adopted Master Plan should inform the Visioning process. It was important to the City that the Master Plan and Visioning complement each other. There was no desire to re-invent or re-do the work of the Master Plan. As a result, it was decided that every Workshop would utilize the Master Plan goals and objectives for that session's target issue as part of the graphic and oral presentation. For instance, at the Workshop on Economic Development and Transportation, all the goals and objectives for Transportation and Economic Development were listed on large format Boards for the public to view as they met in their discussion groups.

With this concept in mind, the Visioning Committee arrived at the idea of multiple Workshops, each centered on a specific topic with City wide ramifications. Since redevelopment was the fundamental target of the Master Plan, the Committee determined that it should look at the issues which matter to residents on a daily basis and for which change and/or improvement are possible rather than rehashing the revitalization issues which were laid out for immediate implementation in the Master Plan. In deciding what issues to highlight at the Workshops, the Committee reviewed the "Systems and Programs Inventory and Analysis Report" and the Master Plan as well as the Municipal Self Assessment. These recent documents formed the descriptive information for the Committee in terms of where Bridgeton's planning was in 2009.

The “Opportunities and Constraints” report from the State was utilized to review the State’s analysis of the City’s Municipal Self Assessment report. The Committee combined this information with their perceptions of issues which would engage citizens in order to create a list of topics for the Workshops. There were several guidelines employed in arriving at topics.

1. The Committee did not want the Visioning Process to repeat work which was already accomplished or ongoing. For this reason, since the City had already engaged consultants to produce redevelopment plans for different areas of the City, the Committee decided that they would not utilize specific areas as topic categories.
2. In addition, by staying away from “visioning by neighborhood,” the Committee hoped to attract a City wide spectrum of people to each Workshop.
3. Finally, the Committee determined that the Workshop topics should reflect current trends, and deal only with issues which are amenable to strategies for change.

Based on these guidelines, the Committee arrived at four workshop topics and, subsequently, added two interest group focused workshops:

- Economics and Transportation
- Housing, Neighborhoods and Historic District
- Recreation and Natural Resources
- Education and Workforce training
- All issues in Spanish
- Senior citizens’ issues

II.1 Workshop Topics

The Master Plan makes a link between the lack of good transportation options and the City’s economic health. The Opportunities and Constraints report reflects the economic difficulties which a vision for Bridgeton’s future must face. The Committee considered this link between economic matters and transportation an area in which citizens would have strong ideas for a better future combined with ideas and strategies to implement their ideas. This was chosen as the first Workshop topic.

“Bridgeton’s economy was built on a sector whose primacy has diminished with economic shifts and that is unlikely to see a resurgence.” (State Agency Opportunity and Constraints Analysis for City of Bridgeton March, 2009)

The second Workshop topic considered an issue into which “land use” documents, like the Master Plan, do not normally delve. But, in the opinion of the Committee, any future for Bridgeton should be based on a clearly defined and implementable vision for Workforce Education. This topic was intended to supplement the first Workshop’s information.

“The City must work to not only attract jobs that meet the skill sets of its residents, but also new educational opportunities that will enable residents to compete for higher skilled, higher wage positions.” (State Agency Opportunity and Constraints Analysis for City of Bridgeton March, 2009)

The Committee regarded the topic for the third Workshop as one of the most essential to establish a City wide shared vision. The City’s natural resources, particularly the Cohansey River and the City Park, are indelibly part of its identity. The intertwining of recreation with natural resources creates opportunities as well as a tension among residents of the City. A

vision for the City's future which preserves and utilizes its natural assets while providing the ever increasing need for citizen recreational opportunities was a key issue to the Committee.

The Opportunities and Constraints Analysis from the State talked about the importance of the City's "historic bones." The Committee knew that the ongoing issue of the size, intensity and complexity of the Historic District is complicated by rental housing issues and traditional neighborhood boundaries. The City must have a long term vision for its Historic District which recognizes its housing and neighborhood issues. Based on this, the Committee picked Neighborhoods, Housing and the Historic District for the fourth Workshop topic.

"...it is Bridgeton's good "bones" that can contribute to sustainable revitalization from economic, social, and environmental perspectives."
(State Agency Opportunity and Constraints Analysis for City of Bridgeton March, 2009)

Besides these specific topics, the Committee realized that there are two groups within the City which are traditionally under represented in discussions of the future. The City's senior citizens and the Hispanic community represent the past and the future of the City. Both groups are well equipped to contribute ideas and strategies to create a better future Bridgeton. And both groups have a tendency to avoid venues such as night time workshops, public buildings and official meetings. The Committee determined that there should be two additional Workshops, each aimed at these target groups which would present and gather information to supplement the information from the first four Workshops.

Ultimately, then, six Workshops were planned, spanning seven months. The overall strategy for the Workshops was to introduce topics and encourage as much feedback as possible, while looking for a long term vision based on achievable strategies, .

II.2 Methodology Summary

In summary, the foundation methodology of the Visioning Committee was to use the Master Plan and its precedents as the initial basis for the question, "What sort of community does Bridgeton want to be over time?". The short term strategies of the Master Plan formed the basis for finding key topics with which to engage citizens' views.

Once the Workshop topics were determined, the Opportunity and Constraints report from State agencies was utilized to design questions and issues which would elicit citizens' feelings on "where Bridgeton is headed?". The Workshops, then, were informed by the State's feedback on the Municipal Assessment.

"By strategically targeting areas for revitalization, by undertaking redevelopment in a mixed-use, higher density manner, and by focusing on existing assets such as the waterfront and historic resources, Bridgeton can revitalize itself in a sustainable manner."

(State Agency Opportunity and Constraints Analysis for City of Bridgeton March, 2009)

Through Workshop introduction statements, the current state of Bridgeton and the direction indicated under the new Master Plan's goals were presented. The anticipated outcome from each Workshop was threefold:

1. The viewpoint of the citizens with regard to how the Master Plan's goal fit their twenty year vision for the City.
2. Whether the goal seemed reasonable and consistent with their vision of the City's future and, if so, how it can be sustained and strengthened.
3. If the goal failed to fulfill their vision for the future, what corrective strategies can be implemented.

The Committee recognized the difficulties involved in reaching a wide array of Bridgeton's citizens, particularly those who traditionally had been absent from the planning process. More crucially, the Committee wanted to create workshop atmospheres which fostered positive, forward thinking ideas. Too often, public forums in Bridgeton have been reduced to lists of grievances and criticisms of the past. The Committee acknowledged the importance of sufficient publicity before each workshop as well as the value a positive agenda would have for the success of the workshops. These two items, outreach and workshop format, constituted the essential mechanics of the visioning process.

III. MECHANICS

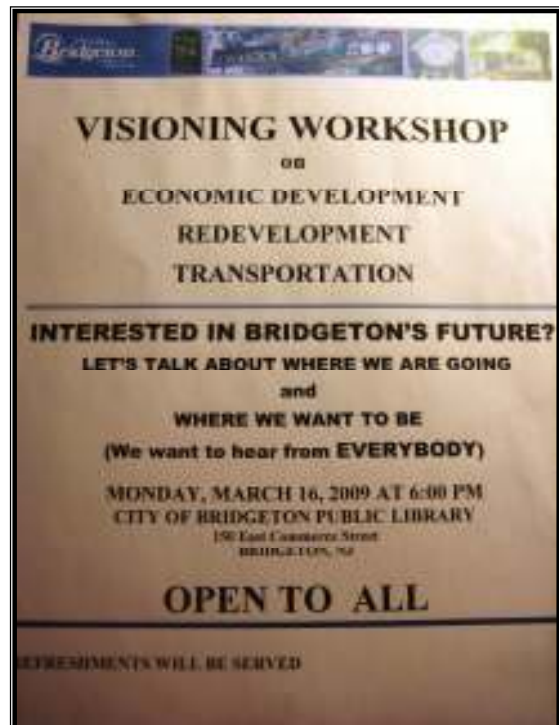
III.1 Outreach

Each Workshop required a slightly different promotion and publicity effort, but all six workshops retained some commonality in their outreach approach. All six Workshops were promoted through:

- Press releases to two English language newspapers
- Press release to Spanish weekly
- Press release to online Spanish media
- PSAs to local Spanish and English radio stations
- Press release to County and City websites

In an attempt to reach a wider pool than the above cited methods, each Workshop was preceded by a concentrated avalanche of fliers in English and Spanish, distributed the week prior to the Workshop. Drug stores, grocery stores, all City buildings, and most downtown businesses were blanketed with fliers in English and Spanish.

Personal invitations were sent to stakeholders with interest in each Workshop's topic. The entire Board of Education was invited to the workshop on Education and Workforce Training. Business leaders from Bridgeton and surrounding Townships received personal invitations to the



Economic Development and Transportation Workshop. Environmental groups and sports club leaders were asked to attend the Recreation and Natural Resources Workshop. Landlords and members of the Historic District Commission were invited to Workshop #4 on Housing, Neighborhoods and the Historic District. Officials from surrounding Townships were invited to all the workshops.

Slightly different outreach supplemented the standard advertising described above for the 'targeted audience' workshops aimed at Senior Citizens and the Hispanic Community. The City and County Senior Daycare directors helped in advertising the Seniors' Workshop and it was held during a regular Bridgeton Seniors' lunch program.

The Hispanic community Workshop publicity and outreach was planned for two months. The Spanish sub-consultant visited churches, handed out fliers at downtown gatherings, and spoke on the radio to advertise the Workshop. The venue in an Hispanic church (as opposed to a government building) centrally located (for pedestrian access) within the Bridgeton Hispanic community was chosen for the comfort level of the community.

III.2 Workshop Format

While each Workshop had a distinctive character, all six entailed the same general format. The first five Workshops started with an Introduction and offer for Spanish translation for any participants who so desired. Although there were Hispanic attendees at the first five Workshops, all were comfortable in English and did not require translation assistance. The sixth Workshop was conducted entirely in Spanish.

All the workshops began with a short explanation of Plan Endorsement and the Visioning process. Participants were invited to explore the large format posters from the Master Plan elements which were hung for each workshop. At the first four 'topical' workshops, a short presentation related to the topic constituted the introductory remarks .



The presentation was supplemented with discussion questions/issues handouts and, at three workshop, smaller scale maps for individuals to mark up. These were intended to give graphic support to the smaller discussion groups which followed the presentation. The discussion questions/issues were purposely formatted to avoid the tendency toward negativism. The discussion groups of 6-8 people were asked to utilize the posters, the presentation and the handouts to put together their thoughts on the where the City is with respect to the topic, where they would like to see it in the next 20 years and to give practical strategies for how the City might get from here to there. Each table had a "facilitator" who transcribed the groups' findings onto large pads. After the discussions petered down, the large group re-assembled and

each facilitator presented his/her group findings. This was followed by more discussion among the large group.

At the two 'targeted audience' workshops, the opening presentation was followed by a short written survey and informal discussion. Facilitators acted to help explain the questions and to take comments at these two workshops. There was less general discussion and more individual input from participants.

III.3 Mechanics Outcomes

In general, and considering the socio-economic status and problems of Bridgeton, the Workshops' attendance and community mix should be considered satisfactory. On the other hand, the turnouts never exceeded 50 people so the workshops could hardly be considered the 'voice' of Bridgeton. The Committee's idea to chose target issues for the Workshops was successful because each Workshop brought out, at least, a smattering of people to whom the issue was dear. These attendees might not have gone to more general workshops.

The largest turnout was for Hispanic community workshop. We were forewarned that this is a very difficult cohort to draw out to any gathering which evoked the government. Based on

this, the outreach campaign was designed to de-emphasize any official aspect. The Workshop was held in a church and multiple Hispanic organizations were enlisted. In the end, almost 60 people participated in the two sessions and the turnout for the Workshop and its follow-up was close to 70 people, including children.

Finding the voice of a community which is as disadvantaged and diverse as Bridgeton's is a challenging task. Our main effort was to encompass, at least, some representation from the different stakeholders which make up Bridgeton. We were especially eager to hear from those who often are disenfranchised at public gatherings, including the elderly, minorities, non-English speakers and youth.

IV. WORKSHOPS' SUMMARIES

The six workshops were held in six different venues in order to accommodate different comfort levels within the community. All the workshops featured large format posters of Bridgeton, including aerial, topographic, and land use. In addition, each of the Workshops had several other large format maps and graphics pertinent to the topic of the evening. At the first four workshops, participants were given 11x17 maps of the City, showing relevant features, to mark up during discussion. These were generally utilized as reference and support for discussion. There was very little graphic response. The last three workshops utilized short surveys to supplement the presentation and the discussion.

The synopses of the six workshops that follow highlight the issues that attendees came back to over several different themed Workshops. They also, outside the Vision Statement which is the core of this report, are intended to present the sense of futility and frustration citizens feel, as well as the lack of a common perception of community, which pervades Bridgeton. The workshops did produce a few issues about which residents felt strongly, but that cannot hide the deep divisions and frustrations which split this community.

IV.1 Workshop #1: Economic Development and Transportation

The first Workshop took place in the Bridgeton Library basement. It utilized the Master Plan's goals and objectives (presented in large type format on posters hung throughout the room) to move the discussion toward prioritizing and focusing on what citizens want to see come out of the Master Planning process. The 35 attendees broke into groups of six to eight. They were instructed to utilize the handouts, both small scale maps and a list of general economic and transportation questions (Appendix C.1) to stimulate discussion. The requested outcome was a list showing:

- Aspects of the economic life of Bridgeton that are worth preserving
- Positive transportation/circulation features in the City
- What should be changed
- What should Bridgeton's economy and transportation system look like in 20-30 years?
- Useable ideas for how to get there.

The groups worked together for about an hour and then chose a "presenter" to share their discussions with the larger group. The anticipated outcome was for the group to express what they found positive in the City and what they saw as the best future for the City on a longer timeline than the Master Plan's implementation strategies. It became apparent during the

presentations that there was considerable overlap concerning what is important and what is achievable among the four groups.

The results from the four groups were later collated and distributed to all attendees and Visioning Committee members (Appendix A.1). Items were flagged for frequency and likelihood of achievement. While most of the ideas raised reflect the goals and objectives of the Master Plan, they were winnowed down to a few over-riding concepts during the group discussions.



IV.2 Workshop #2: Education and Workforce Development

The issue of education and workforce training drew about 30 attendees, including several representatives of large employers in the City. The Workshop revolved around a presentation by Bridgeton High School staff and students involved in the 'School to Careers' program. The theme of their presentation was the High School's orientation to workforce readiness through early introduction to employment opportunities and training needed and with a few work programs.

One of the employers present spoke briefly about the educational and career opportunities available through the presence of Rutgers University satellites in the City. He emphasized the importance of employee readiness in information technology.

There was a clear division between groups which felt all education/employee materials should be in English and other participants who were for bi-lingual education and employment opportunities. In spite of this, the five groups identified challenges facing the City in terms of workforce readiness and actions which could be taken to improve education and workforce readiness (Appendix A.2).

IV.3 Workshop #3: Natural Resources and Recreation

The Visioning Committee was eager to include Bridgeton's various recreation associations in the third workshop. With the cooperation of the Chairman of the City's Recreation Committee and the Department head, the third Workshop was held at the City's Hall of Fame building and combined with the monthly Recreation Committee.

The moderator, after the usual brief introduction to Plan Endorsement and Visioning, focused the Introductory remarks on the Master Plan's objectives with regard to Recreation and Natural Resources. The Master Plan recommendations for Recreation and Natural Resources were distributed in a handout (Appendix C.2). The attendees were asked to focus on what Bridgeton now has that works in terms of Recreation and Natural Resources. Then they were to take the rather vague implementation strategies in the Master Plan and focus on action possibilities to achieve what they want for Bridgeton in 20 years.

The Moderator then went over the NJ DEP Opportunities and Constraints report with regard to Natural Resources. Although some of the action items are more technical than appropriate for Visioning, the groups were asked to consider the action items that overlapped with issues from the Master Plan.

The discussion tables grouped themselves by interest with the environmentalists joining each other and recreation committee people banding together. This was perhaps the one workshop at which discussion groups should have been randomly assigned. Ultimately, though, with the presentation of group findings and additional discussion, some common themes for a future in Bridgeton emerged (Appendix A.3). Paramount was the importance of the Park and River to the City.

IV.4 Workshop #4: Housing, Neighborhoods and the Historic District

Almost one-half of the people drawn to this Workshop stated they came out for the first time because their neighborhoods feel threatened. Other attendees invited were local real estate owners, design professionals and downtown business owners. The Workshop was held at the newly opened City Municipal and Police Building in the southwestern section of the City. The room was set up to display on large format posters the City's neighborhoods, street patterns, the Historic District as well as the usual aerial photograph and land use maps of the City.

After a description of visioning for those attending a workshop for the first time, there was a brief slideshow of different neighborhoods in the City. The intention was to start the attendees thinking about what they liked/disliked about the components of their neighborhoods. The brief slide show was followed with a presentation by the Chairperson of the Historic District Commission. It encompassed the significance and current status of the City's Historic District.

The objective of the Master Plan with regard to the long controversial District was to make it more effective.

The attendees broke into smaller groups to discuss what makes a strong neighborhood and how to preserve and/or garner sound neighborhoods in the City for the next two to three decades. The Historic District as part and parcel of neighborhoods was to be taken into account with particular ideas for fulfilling the Master Plan goal for delineating tiers for review in the six Historic District neighborhoods.



As the discussion groups worked, participants were asked to consider questions, then fill out a short values survey on housing and neighborhood development (Appendix C.3).³ Twenty-three of the twenty-nine participants filled out a form. When the groups re-convened to present their

discussion results, there was significant divergence among them in terms of what makes a neighborhood and what problems are in neighborhoods. Furthermore, the groups had a

difficult time projecting action items into the next decades. Clearly the immediacy of home and hearth bring out more volatility than some other issues in the City. The summary of each group's comments is Appendix A.4. Furthermore, in accord with the strong feelings evidenced at the Workshop, there were several emails and a thoughtful letter in response to the Summary after it was distributed. The emails are incorporated into the Summary and the letter on is Appendix A.4a.

IV.5 Workshop #5: Senior Citizens Issues

The Senior Citizen workshop was organized in a slightly different manner in order to incorporate a wider range of citizen involvement. Some older residents, especially those more socio-economically fragile citizens, have a difficult time making their voices heard at public forums, especially ones conducted at night. Both the venue and the timing of the fifth workshop were important to include this segment in the visioning. The Workshop was held in the Community Room of the Hall of Fame building, which is the daily venue for a Seniors' lunch program, just before the lunch was served.

After consultation with those involved in seniors' activities, the Workshop was formatted using additional facilitators who could talk one-on-one with the citizens while they filled out the surveys. The introduction on Visioning emphasized the importance of older citizens in planning and spoke about their ability to look back 30 years, making them particularly able to visualize 30 years into the future.

³ Results of the survey are in Appendix B.1

Many of the participants gathered into impromptu small discussion groups as they filled out the surveys. There was much more interaction among the attendees than the moderators had been led to expect. The survey questions, in particular the ones related to safety, provoked strong responses and dialogue. The extra facilitators attempted to get down all of the conversations that ensued from the survey. Personal safety fears and a longing for the “old Bridgeton” dominated most group discussions.



There were 31 participants and 29 surveys returned (Appendix D.5). The survey results reinforce the group discussion tenor that crime in the form of fear for their safety is of paramount importance to this group. Crime prevention and emergency assistance aid received the highest percentage of “very important to me” answers. Almost 89% of the respondents listed “crime prevention programs” as an essential city improvement.

Seniors were remarkably lukewarm about aspects of the City’s character, including its reputation as historic, tourism, cultural diversity, but, under this general category, were strong about the importance of the Park and Zoo to the City’s character. Not surprisingly, the importance of education and recreation issues as an overall category, received a tepid response.

IV.6 Workshop #6: Hispanic Community Issues

The final workshop took place at a centrally located community church, Iglesia Pentecostal y Misionera. In an effort to encourage attendance, dinner was provided and children were especially invited. Participants were asked to answer four questions (Appendix C.2) and fill out a survey. Spanish speaking facilitators were available to take down additional information about participants’ views of Bridgeton today and their ideas for Bridgeton in the future.

The survey results (Appendix A.6) had a weakness which was not foreseen. Many of the participants, eager to be agreeable, simply indicated that every item on the survey was very important to them. The fact that over 25% of the surveys were completed in this manner reduces somewhat the validity of the results. But the surveys were not entirely meant to be statistically reliable. They acted as vehicles to garner discussion among the participants. The comments from the attendees to the four general questions probably better reflect the attitude toward and vision for Bridgeton of this small representation of the Hispanic community.



The comments indicated that the community is united in its fear of street violence. On the other hand, most see Bridgeton as a good place to live for its cleanliness, beauty and parks. This cohort regards the cultural diversity of the City as an asset.

V. VISION STATEMENT

A vision statement should be the nucleus of a community's idea of where it is and where it wants to go. It should be about perceptions and hope and, most importantly, common ground. The good citizens who came out to this series of Workshops provided a vision for a possibly better future for this beleaguered City. A great deal of their proposals, as with the Master Plan, are realistically unfeasible. But the dreams and visions do give the City several strong possibilities for making a better City. It is these core issues, based on the workshops' outcomes, upon which the vision statement is based. Because there is so much dissension and, to be truthful, factional divisions within the City, it is even more important that the vision be clear-cut and achievable.

There is one feature of Bridgeton about which there is a united community feeling. It is that characteristic which is central to the City's future and around which all can rally. Across the board, citizens of Bridgeton care for the Cohansy River and their City Park. The River is the core of the City's identity, around which almost every faction can bond. This came through in every Workshop's feedback with the exception of the second Workshop on Workforce Training and Education. While that Workshop was the one event at which the discussion groups did not advocate for the River as central to the City's needs and image, the discussion groups did emphasize the importance of "quality of life" issues, including a safe atmosphere, as essential to get and retain an effective workforce.

An atmosphere of safety is the other aspect around which there is common feeling. Residents of Bridgeton want to feel safe and comfortable within the City. Whether it is reality or perception, crime and disorderliness is distressing the populace and is destructive to the tenor of the City. A City which is safe and attractive, where people are comfortable on any street, is a dearly held aspiration of most citizens.

With very little money and lots of willpower, Bridgeton can make itself physically more pleasing, it can preserve pieces of its architectural past (but not all), and it can become safer feeling to its residents. After those are underway, and if there is the willpower and money, the City can move to implement other actions which arise from the fundamentals of the vision.

The Vision of Bridgeton as a safe, pedestrian oriented 'City on the Cohansey' can be achieved from within by the citizens and their local government. This is the beauty of what the people of Bridgeton envision for themselves. It is already at hand if they and City government work together to take up the responsibility.

The remainder of this report is a slide show explaining the Workshops' Vision and citing actions to bring it about. It is intended to be distributed as widely as possible. The hope is that this Workshop exercise will generate an outcome to galvanize many segments of the community behind a common idea that the citizens of the City can make their own future. The power point is a guiding document that creates an action framework for Bridgeton's Vision Statement.

Slide 1

Introduction: A vision for Bridgeton

This slide show is intended to present a guide to actualizing a future for the City of Bridgeton which could be embraced by all and enacted from within. It is based on a series of Workshops as well as on City planning documents and State agencies' responses.

There are 2 major platforms to Bridgeton's vision statement and each has a strategy which is within the City's capability, both financial and social, if it chooses to pursue it.

- #1: The Cohansey River and the Park are central to the City's image of itself.
- #2: The citizens of Bridgeton want a safe and secure environment where they feel comfortable walking, shopping, biking and living.

The following slides describe the Vision and strategies to implement it.



VISION STATEMENT

Bridgeton is a small City blessed with a beautiful river, a large park and an abundance of historically valuable architecture. It can use these assets to bring together its leaders and citizens in order to create a pedestrian oriented community based on identifiable, safe neighborhoods with clearly marked pathways integrating neighborhoods with each other and with a River oriented greenway connecting the City to its municipals neighbors to the north and south.

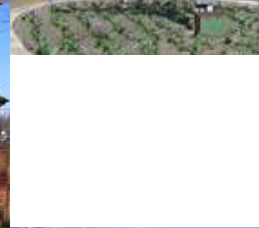
In focusing on the River/Park and on the issue of safety, Bridgeton must admit that the long journey to revitalization must come from within. Bridgeton's leaders and citizens need to make a long term commitment to incremental and achievable steps which highlight the River and security. In this manner, they will create a City attractive to business investment

The strategies and action suggestion in this slide show and report arose from citizen discussion at six Visioning Workshops. They are supported by both the Master Plan and State agencies' responses to the City's self-assessment.



THE RIVER AND THE PARK

Bridgeton envisions its historic parkland and the Cohansey River as the core catalysts for a realizable future as a small, revitalized City with outstanding natural and social amenities, with opportunities for entrepreneurs and with citizens proud of their city on the Cohansey.



1. The Cohansey River and Park are central to the City's image

The Master Plan and the State Agencies' O&C report contain numerous recommendations with regard to the River.

City leaders should utilize citizens, businesses, institutions, churches, and its youth to create a City in which the River is understood and celebrated as an economic and social asset.





1. The Cohansey River & City Park are central to the City's image

1.1 Conduct a River clean up program

The River should be seen as attractive and approachable, especially as it runs through downtown and through the Park. There must be better, safer and more comfortable feeling amenities, particularly in the urban downtown. Signage is necessary to connect residents and visitors to different parts of the River and Park



Achievable Actions

1. Organize existing organizations (Boy Scouts, Church groups) to regularly clean the entire City River corridor, both stream and banks.
2. Realign and improve seating and create new areas for resting/picnicking along River.
3. Soften the downtown River parking area, creating green areas out of underutilized parking and providing shade, shelter and seating.
4. Utilize Rutgers Marine Center personnel and offers of aid to formulate plans for Mary Elmer and Sunset Lakes to reduce phosphorus.¹
5. Utilize personnel at Rutgers Center to keep citizens informed of progress with Upper Cohansey Watershed Restoration Plan.²

¹ Dept. Of Environmental Protection Opportunities & Constraints Report Summary of Major Issues #23

² Dept. Of Environmental Protection Opportunities & Constraints Report Summary of Major Issues #24



1. The Cohansey River & City Park are central to the City's image

1.2 Carve new connections between the River and the Park and downtown

Due to the emphasis on car travel, there is a disjunction between the downtown and the Park, between North of Broad Street and South of Broad, and between much of the downtown and the River.

Pedestrian and bike paths with adequate signage and lighting should be made to connect Laurel St to the River, and Commerce, Cohansey and Washington Streets to the Park. A pedestrian oriented crossing should be established across Broad Street at the Boat Ramp Park.

Crosswalk in Bridgeton



Possible busy street crosswalk strategies



Achievable Actions

1. Open downtown through Fountain Plaza to east bank of Cohansey to Park.
2. Orient City activities (parades, ceremonies) to River and highlight new amenities.
3. Improve Boat Ramp park with additional facilities, signage, a boat.
4. Work to improve Route 49 crosswalks, especially downtown at the boat ramp.



1. The Cohansey River & City Park are central to the City's image

1.3 Create a "map" of the River, lakes, towpath, Park for distribution

Maps of the Riverfront, Park, all paths and all connectors should be posted on kiosks around the City and available throughout downtown.

Residents and visitors need to know where the River goes and what it offers. Points of interest (Nail Museum, canoe rentals, etc.) should be on map.

Achievable Actions

1. Use County GIS information and expertise.
2. Utilize County website and other on-line resources to establish Bridgeton's open space identity.
2. Develop businesses' interest thru Main Street and have them advertise to support map.
3. Make laminated pocket sized maps for bicyclists and pedestrians.
4. Promote map.





1. The Cohansey River is central to the City's image of itself.

1.4 Ordinance change can protect and promote the River

Given the economic, environmental and social importance of the Cohansey River to the City of Bridgeton, the City should proactively amend its land use zoning ordinance to reflect the policies and implementation strategies contained within the Riverfront Redevelopment and Open Space Strategy (2003) and the Lower Cohansey River Management Plan (1998).¹

Achievable Actions

1. Enact a stream corridor protection Plan and Ordinance¹
2. Require pedestrian access/bike paths for all new riverfront development²
3. Reward/encourage river oriented uses (e.g. with added density type for preferred uses such as restaurants on river)²



San Antonio Riverwalk



Fountain Plaza in
Bridgeton

¹ Dept. Of Environmental Protection Opportunities & Constraints Report Summary of Major Issues #6

² Master Plan Implementation Plan



1. The Cohansey River is central to the City's image of itself.

1.5 Create a Byway on the River from Fairfield to Upper Deerfield.¹

Without a doubt, this is the most consistently suggested action item across almost all the Workshops, in past planning documents, and in the current Master Plan and NJDEP recommendations.

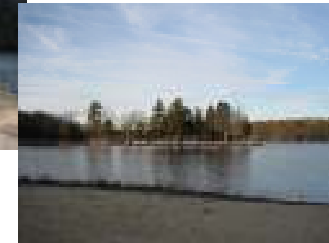
A Greenway would unite Bridgeton around the Riverfront and present multiple access points to the River as it passes from rural to urban to parkland.

Achievable Actions

1. Utilize past studies (Riverfront plan of 2003) as basis for planning and easements along the River.¹
2. Open discussions with Hopewell, Fairfield and Upper Deerfield to create a multi-municipal plan for River access and maintenance.
3. Create a Greenway signage plan that complements and supports the City's River logo signage.²



South of Broad to Sunset Lake



¹ Dept. Of Environmental Protection Opportunities & Constraints Report Summary of Major Issues #25
² Master Plan Implementation Plan

THE FEELING OF SAFETY

The people of Bridgeton and visitor must feel safe and comfortable throughout the City or future revitalization will be stymied.



Time and again, the issue of safety and crime arose at workshops. It haunts Bridgeton's future.



There is a way for the City and its citizens to feel safe and comfortable. The physical environment must be improved so that people enjoy being in their neighborhoods, on the streets, in the shops, and visiting the Park.



A safe City is filled with people enjoying their environment



2. A safe City means all citizens are comfortable anywhere

The feeling of safety involves both crime prevention and an ambiance which conveys to citizens that their City is a secure place to be. Citizens at the Workshops had both the perception that Bridgeton is crime ridden and expressed personal alarm at the idea of walking freely in the City.

City leaders should mobilize a Safety Initiative involving the media, businesses, and educational institutions to formulate a City wide plan for a Safe City. It should emphasize citizen involvement, educational dialogue on diversity, physical improvements and neighborhood identity.



Children at play on street with speed bumpers



2. A safe City means all citizens are comfortable anywhere in it

2.1 Mobilize to create a city-wide Citizens' Safety Plan

City officials must take the lead to create a city-wide effort based on making every street and neighborhood clean. Neighborhood leaders should be identified and their guidance sought. Schools and the media should be enlisted to promote neighborhood identity and pride through safe streets.



Achievable Actions

1. Give distinctive neighborhoods an identity which residents see as pride of ownership.
2. Utilize vacant lots as community gardens/parks in order to assure they are occupied.
3. Enlist the *News* and other media to support the program.
4. Create intra- and inter-neighborhood walking and biking routes and keep them clear and well lit.
5. Organize existing neighborhood organizations and NGOs to create community gathering areas and neighborhood recreation areas.
6. Offer awards and rewards to areas which improve.
7. Have the High School start a community service requirement for City improvements.
8. In dense neighborhoods, create car speed bumps to slow traffic and allow children to play.



2. A safe City means all citizens are comfortable anywhere in it

2.2 Improve City signage for pedestrians, bikers, and vehicles

Create a graphic “type” for all signage in the City with allowances for each neighborhood’s character. Use new signage in City wide walking/biking network for residents and, if successful, visitors to explore the City.

Achievable Actions

1. Make new City graphics an art project within the High School.
2. Utilize the City logo at every Gateway.
3. Garner downtown business support to encourage private sign change by offering incentives for new business signs.
4. Use civic organizations (Girl Scouts, churches) to organize walking tours outside their neighborhoods so they can learn the City and its assets.





2. A safe City means all citizens are comfortable anywhere in it

2.3 Develop a city-wide network for walking and biking

Bridgeton should take advantage of its compact size to create a well marked intra-City route by which all citizens can, if they wish, walk to the River, the downtown or to school. The more residents on the streets, the safer the City will feel.

Achievable Actions

1. Employ traffic calming techniques within the City.
2. Start a walker award program for miles covered.
3. Get senior citizens involved in supervised walking clubs.
4. Reward downtown office workers with coupons/prizes if they visit stores during lunch hour.
5. Start a 'lunch at the library' program for workers with prizes and pizza.
6. Advertise the City as a walkable destination.



TRAFFIC CALMING Is The Right Solution

SAFER: Devices that elevate or narrow sections of the street force drivers to pay attention and slow down, decreasing the chances that a driver will hit people walking or bicycling.⁵

SELF-ENFORCING: Unlike crossing guards or other police officers, traffic calming devices are always on duty, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

CHEAP: The cost of traffic calming varies by device, but most traffic calming devices are inexpensive. Plus, because traffic calming devices help reduce deaths and fatalities, the City saves money on emergency care.⁶

QUIETER: When there is less driving and less speeding, noise levels also decrease. Effective traffic calming means slower, more constant speed and less stopping and starting. Less stopping and starting mean less noise from acceleration and braking.⁷

GOOD FOR BUSINESS: Studies have shown that people are more likely to shop in a walking friendly environment than on a congested, polluted and unpleasant street.⁸

CLEANER: When motorists travel at slower, more constant speeds, they accelerate and decelerate less often, which can reduce tailpipe emissions up to 50%.⁹





2. A safe City means all citizens are comfortable anywhere in it

2.4 Use City's Historic District as pedestrian oriented asset

Residents and tourists need to see the Historic District NOT as the largest in the State but as an amenity with individually interesting houses and civic buildings which promote Bridgeton's rich history.



Achievable Actions

1. Urge the school district to incorporate the City's historic architecture into the 4th grade civic curriculum.
2. Make a bigger affair over the successful art program which uses City architecture.
3. Highlight areas with several historic sites on City walking and biking maps.





2. A safe City means all citizens are comfortable anywhere in it

2.5 Make celebrating diversity a #1 priority at all levels of the City

Mistrust and fear among different ethnic groups is crippling progress in Bridgeton. Government, business, non-profits, religious and recreational must address this challenge openly and directly in order to raise all of our consciences.



Achievable Actions

1. Establish a Cultural Diversity Panel and support its findings and recommendations.
2. Use the City's recreation programs to teach tolerance and to encourage cross cultural sports.
3. Encourage and support events that bring different socio-economic groups together.
4. Ask churches to sponsor cross-cultural programs.
5. Encourage the Board of Education to promote adult literacy and English language programs.



Photo credit: /

Major principles for enacting Bridgeton's Vision

- Need an action plan to move forward
- Make actions happen by planning only for what City and residents can do with available funds
- Unite City leaders and residents around ideas & policies to garner sustained support for action plan.



APPENDIX A.1
WORKSHOP #1: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION
SUMMARY COMMENTS

Issues and ideas are listed below in order of frequency mentioned

TO BE PRESERVED/RETAINED OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS

- River's importance in City
- Cultural diversity
- Reputation as 'historic'
- Park and Zoo
- Regional public transit service
- Walkability/size of downtown
- Presence of utility based infrastructure
- Affordable real estate

TO BE ACHIEVED OVER NEXT 20 YEARS AS PART OF ACTION PLAN

- Create and market an image for Bridgeton
- Sponsor tourism
 - Utilize cultural diversity
 - Focus historic aspect on downtown
 - Utilize River attraction
 - Cleaner streets
 - Signage improvements
 - Wayfinding
 - Store fronts
 - Transportation centers
 - Existing parking lot visibility
 - Utilize City "gateways"
 - Ecotourism support
 - Attract wider tourist base
 - Improve access to and River frontage
 - Bike and hike trails
- Improve public transit internally and regionally
 - Improve access and amenities of regional bus termini
 - Promote and advertise service and schedules
 - Initiate a jitney service within City
 - Push for light rail service connections regionally
- Food based economy
 - Build on agricultural history and base
 - Service foods

- Safe and effective pedestrian oriented circulation for downtown and River
 - Connect Park and Downtown for pedestrians
 - Utilize rail right-of-way for extended bikeways
 - Create Route 49 pedestrian crossings
 - Promote skateboarding and bike pathways through town for youth access areas
- Revitalize downtown with 'Main Street' encouragement
- Increase homeownership
- More quality retail
- Resolve residential parking problems
- Promote inter-cultural communication
 - Language instruction
 - Events celebrating different cultures

SUGGESTED ADDITIONS SENT OR TELEPHONED IN

- I wonder if what seems to me a high profile omission from the list of potential Byway & historical attractions (historic sites, park, zoo) could be added: Museums.

There are several initiatives or potential initiatives underway that make this a realistic goal rather than pie in the sky (the Woodruff Collection @ the Library , the Nail House Museum, the Swedish Farmstead). I'm sorry I didn't work it more into our table discussion. You could say one gets distracted by so much potential!!

- Three pages of specific suggestions for Gateway and wayfinding signage were submitted in writing. These will be added as an appendix to the final submitted Visioning Report.
- The importance of an intra-City public transportation system was identified by a caller. The question of scheduled routes and source of financing should be explored.

APPENDIX A.2
WORKSHOP #2: EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE TRAINING ISSUES⁴
SUMMARY COMMENTS

<u>CHALLENGES</u>	<u>ACTION MATCH</u>
• Identify Employment opportunities of the future: Look Ahead	8
• Create more diverse employment to entice educated to stay	8
• Promote quality of life as reason to stay	12
• Teachers' attitude toward Bridgeton impacts students' attitudes	12
• Forty percent of population lacks a HS diploma	9

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

1. **Bring college programs to downtown Bridgeton and/or distance learning to City**
2. Improve public transportation service between CCC and Bridgeton
3. Create practical business training programs for entrepreneurs
 - Start on-going dialogue with local businesses on their employee needs
 - Aim new programs at post-industrial jobs
4. Continue partnerships with CCC and Rutgers
 - Find internship programs through existing institutions
5. Hire more career oriented Guidance Counselors
6. Address math deficiencies in elementary school
 - Abbott type parent liaison programs
7. Air condition all schools
8. Training programs based on local strengths
 - Utilize preservation of natural and cultural quality of life to draw industries
 - tourism, agriculture, hospitality, culinary, environmental jobs, historic preservation
 - Investigate importing existing programs
9. **Utilize/lure established Language Training Programs for community wide adult and youth bi-lingual education** (English to Spanish AND Spanish to English)
10. Develop hotel and B&B industry
11. Utilize more 'stepping stone' jobs such as the WAWA program to improve student work skills
 - Encourage more intern programs
 - **Address basic skills and life skills in schools**
 - Problem solving and decision making
12. Institute Local Pride program in Schools
13. **Introduce idea of career at elementary level** and continue successful programs at HS
14. Create role model/mentor programs, esp. for women and minorities
15. Bring a Visioning Workshop to the High School for student feedback
16. Coordinate resources among all schools for best effectiveness of programs
17. All education only in English to ensure "total understanding"

⁴ Notes: Suggested Actions are listed by number after corresponding Challenge
 Bold items were brought up more than one time

APPENDIX A.3
WORKSHOP #3 : NATURAL RESOURCES AND RECREATION
SUMMARY COMMENTS

Group #1

WHAT WE HAVE THAT IS IMPORTANT

- One concentrated and central sports “area” around High School
 - Baseball
 - Soccer
 - Track and Field
 - Football
- Changing demographic
 - Need to be aware of different/new recreation needs and desires
 - Skateboard Park
 - More soccer fields

WHAT WE NEED

- Full time Director for Senior activities
- Develop raceway/lake for more activities
 - More canoeing/boating
 - RV spaces near Mary Elmer Lake
- Utilize empty downtown lots – get residents involved in making them work
 - Gardens
 - Benches
- More walking paths in Park for all ages which are SAFE
 - Feeling of SAFETY in park and downtown
- Community recreation Center will be asset (planned on West Avenue)
- Money earned by Parks and Recreation (fees etc.) should be directed to specific Recreation/Parks projects such as the Zoo.
- Make Park/Zoo energy efficient
 - Solar Power

Group #2

WHAT WE NEED

- Skateboard Park
 - If don’t create park, than repeal anti-skateboarding on streets law
- Recreation facilities need to be more open than just for organized leagues
 - All tax payers are paying for their maintenance
 - Do not lock/post prohibited signs at tennis courts/field/park access
 - Seniors/handicap access to trails
 - Enforce “no dumping” rather than close trails
 - Stop removing benches just because don’t like people sitting on them
- Open “Mt. Trashmore” for access like off road biking/climbing
- Sponsor events in the Park to draw more public
 - Dog shows
 - Kayak/canoe races
 - Cross country races
- Develop walking paths on both sides of the River

- In downtown (CBD “loop” including both River walks)
 - Finish/make more attractive walk Val Mode side Riverwalk)
- Walking path from CBD to Sunset Lake
- Importance of having “supervisor” or “information source” at all public areas
- Need separate Zoo, Parks and Recreation Directors (2 at least)
- Consider resident “key” access for facilities (or beach tag system)
- Utilize/promote ecotourism and other informed educational opportunities
- Publicize that canoes/kayaks are now available at Sunset Lake (not Canoe House)
- Alternate ideas over Zoo fees (This is not Philadelphia Zoo, but, rather, local amenity)
 - Vending machines
 - Concession stand

Group #3

WHAT WE HAVE:

- River
- Park
- Open Space
- Historic District
- Sunset Lake/Piney Point
- Zoo
- Sports Complex
- Raceway
- Downtown dock
- Natural areas in CAFRA zone
- Tot lots/playgrounds/ballfields

WHAT WE NEED:

- Money
 - Use County Open Space Plan as basis for State funding
- Become a Shade Tree City?
- Create Parks and access to River below Broad Street
- Connect Val Mode Riverwalk with path all the way to Sunset Lake
- Make downtown walking path “loop” along River
- Create/publicize walks from neighborhoods to City venues like Zoo, Sports Complex, River
- Develop/improve/publicize parking facilities for walkers
 - End of Washington Street to allow access to Raceway walk, Zoo etc.
- Create community gardens in all empty lots
- Park at end of Water Street
- Ensure preservation
 - River bluffs
 - Enforce/increase buffer at Rocaps Run
 - Forested areas along Jackson and Indian Runs
 - Tie Historic District and Natural Resources
- Improve and expand Zoo
 - Carousel (at Downtown and/or Zoo)
 - Beer Garden

- Events

Group #4

WHAT WE HAVE

- Walking trails
- Amphitheatre
- River

WHAT WE NEED

- Extend improve walking trails
 - Pave some for elder/handicap access
 - Extend to HS for parking access
 - Loop trails from Park to Fountain to downtown
- Expand parking at the amphitheatre
- Bike trails
 - Extend down West Avenue to Dutch Neck Village (Hopewell)
 - New route = End of Water Street up to CBD and into Park
- Develop Recreation Centers in growing neighborhoods
 - Hope VI
- Clean up and redevelop
 - Old City dump
 - Owens
 - Sludge site
- Use Cohansey River to encourage and draw people into City

COMMON THEMES

- **Park access, River and trail system improvements**
- **Zoo importance and potential**

APPENDIX A.4
WORKSHOP #4: HOUSING, NEIGHBORHOOD AND the HISTORIC DISTRICT
SUMMARY GROUP COMMENTS

NOTE: Chevrons indicate action items

Group #1

Neighborhoods are:

- Small units which are well identified through social interactions
- Different sizes which are not easily divided into larger “named” areas
 - Neighborhoods exist within larger neighborhoods
 - Ethnic enclaves
- Similar needs for different neighborhoods but concerns/fears vary according to status
 - Gangs
 - Government
 - Immigration issues
- Transportation to work, stores is a common problem in all neighborhoods
 - Need for more neighborhood stores
- High percentage rental neighborhoods suffer from
 - poorer maintenance and
 - poorer City services such as trash pickup
- Higher percentage of home ownership shows more positive community identity

Role Historic District plays in City:

- Regarded by homeowners as obstacle
- Question whether trying to preserve too much
- Use as incentive to maintain/preserve
- Strengthen by providing:
 - More information
 - More support services to homeowners

In 20-30 years:

- More playgrounds and facilities for kids
- “Green spine” path from Sunset Lake to Fairfield
 - Bike paths
 - Different neighborhood access points
- Work on getting industrial off waterfront
 - Waterfront development for public
- Open spaces should be user friendly
- Spread money out among all green spaces (not just Zoo)

Group #2

Disclaimer: Threw agenda out the window and asked “Why did people come out tonight?”⁵

- Population density is too high in neighborhoods
 - Creates too many cars on the streets
 - Creates too much noise
 - More public transportation to cut down on cars
 - Safe bicycle paths may cut down on cars
 - Use downtown buildings for upstairs apartments
- Encourage Homeownership
 - Raising City permits discourages home owners
 - Have City sponsored “pride” projects/contests for home owners
 - Good City maintenance of streets encourages home owner maintenance
 - Utilize State money for local home improvement projects (Historic Properties Reinvestment Act)
 - Assist people to become new homeowners
 - Use/publicize federal programs to encourage banks to provide home loans
 - Look at zoning to encourage dual ownership of duplexes sharing one lot
- Be more proactive with Grants
 - City should have dedicated grant writer
 - Our State and Federal taxes are going to other Cities’ grants
- Increase Safety
 - Enforce current curfew laws
 - Get information out to parents about curfews
 - Use Schools to disseminate information
 - Enforce laws about motorized bikes/scooters/four wheelers
 - Get police into neighborhoods (on foot or bike)
 - Increase small park security so they are used more
 - Start Block leader program
 - City should sponsor block parties so people know who belongs
 - Block leaders should liaison with City government
- Encourage businesses/private to keep properties clean
 - Retail stores should add trash receptacles (esp. if they sell disposable product)
 - Use Earth Day in schools to promote Neighborhood Maintenance
 - Use School requirement for community service in Neighborhoods to jump start all neighborhoods’ maintenance
 - Churches should encourage congregations to care about their neighborhoods
 - City sponsored contests with publicity for “clean neighborhood”
- Make more and resuscitate old bike trails
 - Old RR bridge in park
- City sponsored community gardens will encourage neighborhood spirit
 - Use abandoned lots
- Cut down size of Historic District

Group #3

⁵ This was corrected by email after the summary was issued. It should have stated: #1. The facilitator for each group is presenting the opinions expressed by member of each group and those opinions are not necessarily those of the facilitator. #2. AIn the one hour allotted for discussion, it is not possible to verify whether or not information presented is factual. Before action is taken on any item, it may be necessary to research whether items that were presented by group members are indeed factual.

Neighborhood assets (strengths of some areas):

- Trees and homes
- Diversity of home types
- Spacious feeling in many areas
- Off street parking
- Hope VI fitting in

Improvements for future are:

- More sidewalks in some areas
- Tree planting
- Local playgrounds for Pearl Street and SE neighborhoods
- More community pathways to City Park
- Better lighting
- Decrease density
- Upstairs apartments downtown
- Vacant lots as gardens/parks

Group #4

Neighborhood problems and potential solutions:

- Duplexes and dual ownership impact
 - Tax incentives for façade improvements exist
 - Conversion to single family homes possibility
 - Grants for façade preservation are available
- Parking as problem
 - Use of back alleys for parking
 - City needs to address who owns and maintains
- Gateways importance
 - Improve Pearl Street (and other) Gateways with more trees
- Transient population
 - Institute neighborhood watches
 - Notice that more and more “migrants” are buying into City
 - Want to be part of City life
 - Improve communication with City led “how to” programs
- Quality of Life issues
 - Importance of beautifying City
 - Attracts new people and tourists
 - City should be seen as “fun” place to live
 - Revitalize walking tour program
 - Create neighborhood “story” programs
 - Take tourism seriously with City support for office
- Need sustainable and vital Parks
 - Camping, kayaking events should be encouraged in Parks
 - Lake to Zoo pathway within Park needs work to encourage utilization
 - Figure out why tot lots are underutilized and fix
 - Add teen programs within neighborhoods
 - Make it easy for kids to get to Park

- Use Zoning to create “prime Neighborhoods” which emphasize elegance
 - Encourage Bed and Breakfasts
 - Make a professional district
 - More affordable housing is wrong objective
 - Upstairs apartments in downtown

APPENDIX A.4a
Post Workshop #4 feedback



31 August 2009

Ms. Sarah E. Birdsall, PP, AICP
PO Box 243
Greenwich, NJ 08323

Re: City Vision Statement

Dear Sally,

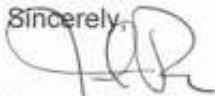
It's been awhile, but I wanted to thank you for the personal invitation to participate in the city "visioning" workshop held on 8 June 2009. I've had plenty of time over the last twenty-five years to envision what Bridgeton could be relative to where it is today but few opportunities to share that with other business owners and design professionals. As I carefully read the summary of the Workshop #4 in which I participated in, it occurs to me that some of the comments associated with Group #1 aren't precisely accurate or rather as comprehensive as discussed. In particular are those which I made reflecting the promotion of a "Green spine" from Sunset Lake to Fairfield Township and the associated relocation of industrial uses away from the waterfront. As I mentioned at the meeting, it is my belief that the single greatest and underutilized asset of this city is the park system, the core of which rivals many much larger and more progressive cities and which many small cities and towns our size "would die for." It therefore, seems a no-brainer to connect all the various communities and neighborhoods in and around Bridgeton to a comprehensive circulation system that leads into and out of the park system and facilitates the full use of these resources. Central to this concept is the idea of connecting greenways in Hopewell, Upper Deerfield and Fairfield Township into a larger regional bike and pedestrian recreational complex. This complex could easily be achieved using the watercourses presently under municipal or county governance and former railroad right-of-ways feeding into the Sunset Lake and North Bridgeton areas. Unfortunately, it appears the endangered picturesque railroad bridge over the Cohansey River I commented about that night has been permanently lost due to lack of such a vision. This support for a "Green spine" roughly parallel to the Cohansey River should not be mistaken for support of governmental action to relocate any commercial or industrial business away from the river against their will.

It is our observation that many of the businesses located along the waterfront were positioned there owing to a historical reliance on waterborne trade which is no longer relative to their operation or even extant. However, the costs and inconvenience

of relocation, the few options for suitable city real estate and the potential negative effect of relocation to a business all conspire to discourage consideration of relocation. The creative solution to this public policy dilemma is not the abuse of eminent domain powers to forcibly evict businesses which have contributed to the tax base and employment of the city for many generations in favor of sweetheart deals with new developers which promise "the moon". The concept presented in Group #1 was for government to approach the mercantile interests along the river and request a temporary easement for a narrow strip of land along the waterfront which would become permanently deeded to the municipality or its agent at the conclusion of the city's obligations regarding the tract. While not mentioned at the "visioning" workshop, this spine could be as small as fifteen feet wide; just enough to complete the bulkhead improvements and brick sidewalk improvements with associated shade trees, park benches and street lights characteristic of the existing boat ramp and dock facility. A simple fence could be erected to prevent trespassing on the adjacent business owners' land to be retained. These are the kind of public improvements that government is most suitable to perform and businesses are least likely to invest in as they are not critical to operation and in fact would have an unhealthy effect on profitability. It is my belief, that businesses along the waterfront would support such an endeavor with the understanding that government would not seek to acquire the balance of their property against their will. The creation of such a public greenway would actually solve the problems for the business owners associated with riparian claims and bulkhead maintenance while enhancing their private investment in real estate. The City of Bridgeton could achieve the otherwise costly- in a monetary, business employment and public sentiment sense; acquisition of open public space all the way to its Cohansey Bluffs tract bordering Fairfield Township and the environmentally significant Cohanzick Country Club. The natural and organic attrition of businesses seeking the highest and best use of its real estate assets due to increasing land values and adjacent public improvements will assure that over a reasonable and employment-friendly time frame, businesses will relocate to other sites which relate more to how business is conducted in the present and future. This seems to me a win-win situation for all parties. A plan similar to this suggestion was offered by my company in 2003 to the Bridgeton Municipal Port Authority in 2003 but was rebuffed. I still think it the most viable way to interest waterfront commercial and industrial business to participate in the reality of a new vision for Bridgeton.

Thank you for your love for and dedication to the city and greater community and I look forward to sharing with you again in a positive manner in the future. If you have any questions or comments concerning my views or contributions to Group #1, feel free to call.

Sincerely,



Joseph Ross
President of the Corporation

cc. City of Bridgeton

**APPENDIX A.5
WORKSHOP #5: SENIOR CITIZEN SURVEY**

Please circle the number at the right that best describes how important it is to you for the City to have these services	Total Question Response	Very Important to me	Percentage Very Important	Important to me	Percentage Important	Not Important to me	Percentage Not Important
TRANSPORTATION							
Public Transportation on a Schedule within the City	26	18	69.23%	5	19.23%	3	11.54%
Public Transportation to points outside the City	16	11	68.75%	2	12.50%	3	18.75%
Targeted transportation to senior center, doctor, shopping	27	19	70.37%	7	25.93%	1	3.70%
Transportation for out-of-the-area medical treatment	24	17	70.83%	7	29.17%	0	0.00%
Pedestrian walking paths throughout City	23	15	65.22%	5	21.74%	3	13.04%
Greenway path along Cohansey	19	8	42.11%	5	26.32%	6	31.58%
EDUCATION & RECREATION ISSUES ...							
Exercise, dancing, & walking groups and classes for Seniors	24	14	58.33%	6	25.00%	4	16.67%
Entertainment, site seeing, recreation programs for Seniors	24	10	41.67%	12	50.00%	2	8.33%
Continuing education including computer training	20	9	45.00%	7	35.00%	4	20.00%
Family events/outings	19	8	42.11%	7	36.84%	4	21.05%
Events/outings with other seniors	20	7	35.00%	12	60.00%	1	5.00%
Please circle the number at the right that best describes how important it is to you for the City to have these services	Total Question Response	Very Important to me	Percentage Very Important	Important to me	Percentage Important	Not Important to me	Percentage Not Important

Please circle the number at the right that best describes how important it is to you for the City to have these services	Total Question Response	Very Important to me	Percentage Very Important	Important to me	Percentage Important	Not Important to me	Percentage Not Important
Volunteering/civic engagement programs using Seniors	20	8	40.00%	5	25.00%	7	35.00%
Programs at the Amphitheatre	20	4	20.00%	8	40.00%	8	40.00%
English as a second language courses	23	5	21.74%	4	17.39%	14	60.87%
College level classes downtown	20	3	15.00%	7	35.00%	10	50.00%
OTHER ISSUES ...							
Emergency assistance	25	20	80.00%	5	20.00%		0.00%
Help with home repairs for Seniors	24	16	66.67%	6	25.00%	2	8.33%
Help with housekeeping for Seniors	22	12	54.55%	6	27.27%	4	18.18%
HOUSING							
Sufficient and diverse housing for Seniors	24	12	50.00%	6	25.00%	6	25.00%
Choice of senior housing mixed with other ages	24	7	29.17%	4	16.67%	13	54.17%
Housing repair/rehabilitation program for Seniors*	14	8	57.14%	2	14.29%	4	28.57%

Please circle the number at the right that best describes how important it is to you for the City to have these services	Total Question Response	Very Important to me	Percentage Very Important	Important to me	Percentage Important	Not Important to me	Percentage Not Important
CITY IMPROVEMENTS							
Park improvements	25	15	60.00%	6	24.00%	4	16.00%
Sidewalk replacement and more sidewalks	22	15	68.18%	5	22.73%	2	9.09%
Public water improvements	23	13	56.52%	9	39.13%	1	4.35%
Crime prevention programs	27	24	88.89%	3	11.11%		0.00%
Youth Services and Youth recreation programs	20	11	55.00%	7	35.00%	2	10.00%
RANK IMPORTANCE TO CITY'S CHARACTER							
Cultural diversity	19	5	26.32%	11	57.89%	3	15.79%
Reputation as 'historic'	21	6	28.57%	4	19.05%	11	52.38%
Park and Zoo	22	16	72.73%	5	22.73%	1	4.55%
Size of downtown	19	8	42.11%	7	36.84%	4	21.05%
Affordable real estate	22	12	54.55%	7	31.82%	3	13.64%
Tourism	21	8	38.10%	6	28.57%	7	33.33%

APPENDIX A.6
WORKSHOP #6: HISPANIC COMMUNITY SURVEY

	Total Question Response	Very Important to me	% Very Important	Important to me	% Important	Not Important to me	% Not Important
TRANSPORTATION							
Public Transportation on a Schedule within the City	47	35	74.47%	8	16.76%	4	8.35%
Public Transportation to points outside the City	42	36	85.71%	4	9.33%	2	4.66%
Targeted transportation to senior center, doctor, shopping	47	40	85.11%	5	10.45%	2	4.17%
Transportation for out-of-the-area medical treatment	46	37	80.43%	8	17.09%	1	2.13%
Pedestrian walking paths throughout City	47	30	63.83%	14	29.39%	3	6.26%
Greenway path along Cohansey	47	30	63.83%	10	20.99%	7	14.63%
ECONOMIC ISSUES							
Stores stocking Mexican food	46	27	58.70%	13	28.26%	6	13.04%
Stores within neighborhoods	46	29	63.04%	14	30.43%	3	6.52%
Jobs in industry	46	40	86.96%	3	6.52%	3	6.52%
Year round jobs	46	43	93.48%	3	6.52%	0	0.00%
EDUCATION & RECREATION ISSUES ...							
Children's education	47	42	89.36%	3	6.38%	2	4.26%
Continuing education including computer training	43	38	88.37%	3	6.98%	2	4.65%
English as a second language courses	44	39	88.64%	3	6.82%	2	4.55%
College level classes downtown	46	39	84.78%	7	15.22%		0.00%
Work-study opportunities for High School students	47	40	85.11%	6	12.77%	1	2.13%
College Counseling	31	23	74.19%	4	12.90%	4	12.90%
Job training	46	38	82.61%	7	15.22%	1	2.17%

	Total Question Response	Very Important to me	% Very Important	Important to me	% Important	Not Important to me	% Not Important
HOUSING							
Sufficient and diverse housing	47	31	65.96%	14	29.79%	2	4.26%
Housing loans for homebuyers	46	36	78.26%	7	15.22%	3	6.52%
CITY IMPROVEMENTS							
Park improvements	47	33	70.21%	12	25.53%	2	4.26%
Sidewalk replacement and more sidewalks	46	34	73.91%	8	17.39%	4	8.70%
Public water improvements	45	40	88.89%	4	8.89%	1	2.22%
Crime prevention programs	43	39	90.70%	2	4.65%	2	4.65%
Youth Services and Youth recreation programs	47	40	85.11%	3	6.38%	4	8.51%
GOOD THINGS ABOUT THE CITY							
Cultural diversity	46	31	67.39%	9	19.57%	6	13.04%
Reputation as 'historic'	46	25	54.35%	16	34.78%	5	10.87%
Park and Zoo	46	29	63.04%	15	32.61%	2	4.35%
Size of downtown	44	24	54.55%	13	29.55%	7	15.91%
Affordable real estate	47	35	74.47%	8	17.02%	4	8.51%
Tourism	44	24	54.55%	15	34.09%	5	11.36%
Fatherless Households							

APPENDIX B.1
RANKING OF MASTER PLAN TOPICS
HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

The Breakout Discussion Handout contained five Housing objectives and seven Neighborhood Development objectives from the Master Plan. Participants were asked to rank them with 1 being most important. Of the 29 participants, 23 handed back their papers.

Under Housing, the participant rankings showed:

- Highest value to Supportive Services to new and existing homeowners;
- High value to Acquisition of dilapidated structures for transfer to non profit homebuilders
- Neutral value for Rehabilitation of existing homes and for Home buyer assistance
- Least importance to Infill construction to increase the supply of affordable housing
-

Under Neighborhood Development, participant rankings demonstrated:

- Highest value for Youth services/community recreation programs
- High value for Public water supply replacement and Crime prevention programs
- Neutral assessment of Improvements to Park facilities, improvements to streetscapes, and sidewalk improvements
- Least importance to the goal of increased public transportation in neighborhoods

↓ MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVE	TOTAL NUMBER RANKING →						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HOUSING							
Home buyer assistance	6	4	2	5	6		
Rehabilitation of existing homes to increase viable housing stock for low income	2	5	10	4	2		
Infill construction to increase supply of affordable housing	1	3	1	8	10		
Support services to new and existing homeowners	7	7	4	3	1		
Acquisition of dilapidated structures for transfer to non profit homebuilders	6	7	5	3	2		
NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT							
Improvements to Park facilities	3	1	4	6	2	4	3
Sidewalk replacement and new sidewalks	0	2	6	5	5	3	2
Public water supply replacement	5	4	3	4	1	2	4
Youth services/community recreation programs	2	8	6	1	6	0	0
Neighborhood streetscape improvements	5	0	1	4	3	5	5
Increased public transportation to neighborhoods	4	2	4	2	1	5	4
Crime prevention programs	6	7	0	1	4	3	2

APPENDIX C.1
WORKSHOP #1 HANDOUT
ECONOMICS AND TRANSPORTATION

1. What is the economic base of Bridgeton today? Is it viable for 20 years?
2. What is the future of small local businesses?
 - a. How to encourage if wanted
3. Should CBD be more walkable
 - a. Intersections (Commerce & Laurel)
 - b. Feeling of central place?
4. Is the infrastructure adequate (buildings, utilities, streets) for 20 years?
 - a. What are the priorities for improvements
5. If we concentrate on a service economy, what needs to be:
 - a. Improved
 - b. Changed
 - c. Preserved
6. Is the condition of the City's roads/State highways hindering economic development in Bridgeton?
 - a. Route 49 & Buckshutem upgrade: DOT plans – how to make the most of
 - b. Congestion on Route 77? Effect on goods movement, tourism, downtown?
7. Do we need public transit within the City?
 - a. Who would use
 - b. Possible routes (USE MAPS AND TRACE)
8. How can the limited regional public transit be improved?
 - a. Is rail service possible to or near Bridgeton
9. What do people passing through on Route 49 and 77 see in Bridgeton?
 - a. How does this impact any tourism/visitor traffic?
10. What new businesses are attracted to Bridgeton
 - a. Can we name two new businesses in Bridgeton in last year?
 - b. Type of business, Customer base, Location
11. Is it possible to recapture consumer expenditures within City?
 - a. Groceries, Clothes, Sundries, Specialties Others?
12. What skills or kind of workers do we have to work with?
13. What skills or kind of workers do we need?
 - a. High school trained
 - b. Technical
 - c. College educated
14. Do we have a traffic congestion problem?
 - a. Route 77 is a medium congested highway according to DOT analysis
 - b. What changes in circulation will help economic growth?
 - c. What transportation (RR & roads) improvements are needed to sustain the economy
15. Name two methods to change the single biggest obstacle to Economic rejuvenation in Bridgeton?
 - a. Are they viable?
 - b. What needs to be done to achieve them?

Summarizing questions

1. What kind of economy presents a better future for Bridgeton?
 - a. Tourism/Service economy
 - b. Light industry/agriculture
 - c. Other ideas?
2. How to balance Redevelopment with development of vacant land?
 - a. Trend analysis
 - b. Improvement: land value ratio map
 - c. Focus Redevelopment areas?
3. Is the way the CBD looks an advantage or disadvantage? How do we want to present ourselves?
 - a. Historic buildings
 - b. Brick sidewalks
 - c. Signage
 - d. Store fronts?
4. Envision Route 77 in Bridgeton (train bridge to route 49 – the entire span) in 20 years
 - a. Types of businesses
 - b. Gateway possibilities
 - c. Traffic flow
5. Do we want to “capture” shore traffic on Route 49?
6. Are the Zoo and Park Economic assets for the future?
 - a. Changes needed?
 - b. Income generation?
 - c. Private enterprise?
 - Snack bar, canoe house, restaurants
7. Do we need Intra-City transportation for the future?
 - a. Loop jitney
 - b. Who pays (customer or public)
8. How can transportation and economic development better complement each other?

Final Statements

Five things to retain about Bridgeton’s current economy and/or transportation system

Five things which would make the economy/transportation system better in 20 years

Achievable

Ideas for Ways and means of achieving

REMEMBER:

- Think positively: know challenges: don’t get bogged down w/ negatives.
- Be realistic
- Ideas can be as small as better storefronts or signage

APPENDIX C.2
WORKSHOP #3 HANDOUT
RECREATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS (from Master Plan)

- Continue a program of upgrading and maintaining existing recreational facilities to provide safe, accessible and modern amenities
- Seek grant funding to support upgrade and maintenance measures.
- Acquire land/use City land for mini neighborhood park/playground facilities where they are now lacking (NOTE: Map of existing)
- Explore opportunities for recreation centers/community centers for youth
- Make recreational facilities more accessible and meet ADA requirements
- Expand the Cohansey greenway
- Provide a full range of passive and active recreational opportunities for all City residents, regardless of age and abilities

ACTION PLAN TOPICS:

- Are Rec Leagues sustainable today and in a decade?
- Can City maintain/police mini parks/playgrounds?
- What are we missing in “full range of passive and active opportunities”?

NATURAL RESOURCES ACTIONS (from DEP Report on Municipal Assessment)

- Hazardous sites cleanup (see Environmental constraints maps)
- Treatment of Stormwater
 - Storm drain stencils
 - Proper Oil Change education/provision of places
- CAFRA zone
 - Sensitive habitat (erosion, recharge, access issues)
 - Impact on development of non-use
- Cohansey River
 - River Plans compliance
 - Stream Corridor protection ordinances
 - Symbol of City
 - Under-utilized
 - Public access
 - Tourism draw
 - Ideas for using Rutgers facility as part of City’s Natural Resources Action Plan-
- Greenway plans
- Create environmentally friendly design guidelines for Ordinance

APPENDIX C.3
WORKSHOP #4 HANDOUT
NEIGHBORHOODS AND THE HISTORIC DISTRICTS

1. Where are Bridgeton's residential neighborhoods?
 - Mark boundaries on table maps and "name"
 - Indicate with markers where "Public paths" for bikes and walkers between neighborhoods and through City to CBD and other areas should be
 - List strengths and weaknesses of neighborhoods (as many as familiar with)
 - Discuss how you want neighborhood to "look" in 20 and 30 years
 - i. What are the good features of various neighborhoods
 - ii. Role of commercial within residential areas
 - iii. What can City do to improve, stabilize, maintain
 - List possible improvements for all and/or specific neighborhoods
 - i. Does Hope VI type development work

2. Historic District presentation feedback
 - Role of Historic District in City as whole AND in neighborhoods?
 - Ways to strengthen?

3. Discuss the value of and rank by importance of the following Action Items from Master Plan:

HOUSING

- Home buyer assistance
- Rehabilitation of existing homes to increase viable housing stock for low income
- Infill construction to increase supply of affordable housing
- Support services to new and existing homeowners
- Acquisition of dilapidated structures for transfer to non profit homebuilders

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

- Improvements to Park facilities
- Sidewalk replacement and new sidewalks
- Public water supply replacement
- Youth services/community recreation programs
- Neighborhood streetscape improvements
- Increased public transportation to neighborhoods
- Crime prevention programs

**APPENDIX C.4
WORKSHOP #6 HANDOUT
HISPANIC COMMUNITY ISSUES**

ESCRIBE TU OPINIÓN

1. ¿Cuáles servicios de la ciudad necesitan tu familia y tú?

2. ¿Qué es lo bueno de vivir en Bridgeton?

3. ¿Qué es lo difícil de vivir en Bridgeton?

4. ¿Cuán seguro te sientes caminando por la vecindad?

PHOTO CREDITS

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Slide 16 (all)	http://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au
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