

RECOMMENDATIONS

POLICY

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

Chester should develop place-based communication systems in conjunction with industrial facilities and relevant municipal agencies. A localized communication system can provide real-time notification on air quality concerns, industrial accidents, emergency planning, and any anticipated flooding. The City should ensure all residents are aware of local emergency plans and have guidance on where to find information on emergency management.

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING POLICIES & INCENTIVES

In partnership with the County, State, and environmental organizations, Chester needs to incentivize and prioritize investments in environmental monitoring given its proximity to major industrial hazards. The City should continue to monitor facilities' adherence to EPA-set standards for industrial pollution and provide robust information on its website.

CHESTER COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT: ARBOR ESTATES HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

The Chester Economic Development Authority and Riverfront Alliance formed a collaboration to expand economic opportunities and improve quality of life. In 2017, the collaboration partnered with the Chester Community Improvement Project (CCIP) to develop four new units of affordable housing known as the Arbor Estates development. CCIP is also responsible for housing acquisition and rehabilitation projects in the city.¹⁸

STAYING IN PLACE

ANTI-DISPLACEMENT MEASURES

The City should establish and enforce a municipal fair housing ordinance to help educate tenants and landlords on their rights and responsibilities. Identify priority neighborhoods where action is needed to preserve affordable housing for existing low- to middle-income residents. Other tools include working with adjacent municipalities and/or Delaware County on a land bank and supporting community development corporations in ensuring safe housing and increasing affordable housing in the city.

FAIR AND SAFE HOUSING PROGRAMS

The City should seek and incentivize redevelopment and infill opportunities that require affordable housing on vacant land. New housing should be prioritized on upland sites with less flood risk and adjacent to public transportation and community amenities. Expand funding for the Chester Economic Development Authority Home Buyers Assistance Program to assist more first-time homebuyers and future public-private partnerships. See Arbor Estates Housing Development as an example.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & LAND INITIATIVES

Chester should include access to high quality job opportunities and job training for any new developments, prioritizing local residents for jobs. The City should initiate a working group to anticipate growing employment sectors and work with local academic institutions like Widener University to provide periodic skills training at all age levels.



PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS

GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE (GSI) POLICIES AND INITIATIVES

Chester should establish a green stormwater infrastructure working group to advance implementation of the Green Stormwater Infrastructure plan and develop community partnerships. The group can identify the best incentivization tools for implementing GSI programs in vacant/underutilized land, including stormwater fee discounts, expedited permitting, grants, and rebate and installation financing.

UPLAND MITIGATION OF CREEKS AND STREAMS

Chester should coordinate with Delaware County agencies and neighboring upland municipalities to better steward Chester Creek and to implement more conservation, restoration, and green infrastructure throughout the watershed.

IMPROVED FLOODPLAIN CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS

The City should set more stringent standards for municipal projects and new development, like increasing the minimum buffer distance from floodplain boundaries. The City can implement tools and incentives for private landowners and developers to discourage building in the floodplain. The City should also periodically review floodplain and building elevation standards against the most current FEMA flood predictions and risk data to update standards as needed.

STORM DRAIN INFRASTRUCTURE & MAINTENANCE

In conjunction with the green stormwater infrastructure program implementation, the City should study existing stormwater infrastructure capacity and review past flood and overflow events to identify where storm drain infrastructure needs to be updated. Support public works, streets, and other government department training and maintenance programs.

INDUSTRY

ARMOR, RAISE, PROTECT

Chester should evaluate facilities with the capabilities to enact near-term protection plans and incentivize retrofit programs.

EVACUATION ROUTES & LOCAL RECOVERY PLANS

The City's Office of Emergency Management should work with active industrial facilities and neighboring municipalities to create a local recovery and emergency response plan in the event of a disaster. Review current evacuation routes alongside state and industrial facility evacuation plans and facilitate outreach programs with the public to ensure all residents have the most current information.

SITE-SPECIFIC DECOMMISSION PLANNING

Chester should plan for the eventual closure and/or redevelopment of the major fossil fuel facilities in the community.