



Passenger Rail Stations

Technical Memorandum

An Element of Connecting Landscapes—the Transportation Plan for Chester County

PREPARED BY THE CHESTER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION



The Chester County Planning Commission is developing a long range transportation plan as was recommended in **LANDSCAPES**, the County's comprehensive policy plan. *Connecting Landscapes* will review all modes of travel and make recommendations for strategies and improvements. As the transportation plan develops, between 20 and 25 technical memorandums will be published and made available for public review. Different modes of travel will be addressed with background information, analyses, discussion of issues, and recommendations. When all technical memorandums are completed a final report will synthesize the recommendations into a plan element.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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Philadelphia—Harrisburg Line

Elwyn—West Chester Line

inactive

Philadelphia—Reading Line

inactive 



Summary

There are two passenger rail providers that serve Chester County. Amtrak provides regional and intercity service on the Keystone line which extends between Philadelphia and Harrisburg with connections beyond. SEPTA provides the R-5 commuter rail service on the same rail line extending between Philadelphia and Thorndale with regional connections in Philadelphia. This rail right-of-way, which is owned by Amtrak, extends on an east-west axis through the central portion of Chester County. There are 12 train stations along this line in the County. Two are served by Amtrak only, seven are served by SEPTA only, and three are served by both agencies. There are other inactive stations in the County on rail lines that no longer provide passenger service. See the map on facing page for a geographic representation of the Chester County stations on the Philadelphia–Harrisburg line as well as two other rail lines.



SEPTA and Amtrak are the two passenger rail providers that serve Chester County providing regional and intercity service.

The passenger rail service along the Philadelphia–Harrisburg line, particularly SEPTA's R-5 service, is the backbone of all public transportation in Chester County. The R-5 is the County's most heavily used public transportation service. Many bus routes intersect with the R-5, allowing transfers between routes. The condition and accessibility of the stations along this rail line are key factors in drawing new riders and retaining existing riders. This memorandum examines each of the stations along this line (and a few inactive stations along the former line between Elwyn and West Chester) and makes recommendations for improvements to the stations, parking facilities and immediate surroundings.

Of the 12 stations along the Philadelphia–Harrisburg line, one was built within the last five years, five have been rehabilitated within the last 15 years, and six are older structures in need of some level of rehabilitation. Stations in particular need of rehabilitation are Devon and Paoli.

Station parking is generally at capacity on weekdays at most stations from Exton to the east. Exceptions are Daylesford and Berwyn, which tend to have available parking throughout the day. To the west of Exton, at Whitford, Downingtown and Thorndale stations, there is plentiful parking available. Additional parking is most needed at Exton, Malvern, Paoli, Devon and Strafford.

Eleven of the 12 stations are served by some level of public bus transit. Several of the eastern stations are served by privately operated shuttle busses funded by employers. Pedestrian and bicycle access could be improved to almost all stations. Berwyn, Exton and Thorndale Stations are fully accessible to handicapped individuals per the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Strafford is almost fully accessible, but the final step of installing mini-high platforms has been delayed by a lawsuit.

Data collected by SEPTA indicates that Paoli is far and away the most heavily used station in the County, with nearly 1,500 boardings per day. Strafford is the second most heavily used station, with Exton, Malvern and Downingtown grouped in the next tier of stations by ridership. Berwyn, Whitford and Daylesford generate the lowest ridership of stations in the County. Surveys conducted by the Chester County Planning Commission (CCPC) indicate riders from about 60 of the County's 73 municipalities use the 10 SEPTA stations.

Background

Rail stations serve as the connection to other modes of transportation, including automobiles, walking, bicycles, and transit. While stations do not, in and of themselves, determine whether rail transportation is practical for a particular trip, they can enhance or detract from the travel experience. For some handicapped persons, they can also create barriers that are insurmountable.

Many stations in Chester County are in stages of disrepair. Levels of disrepair range from minor issues like the need to repaint shelters and station buildings, to repairing brick platforms, to major issues like the need to totally renovate a station. This state of disrepair is partly because the priority for capital spending generally has been on the basic infrastructure: track, switches, signals and vehicles. Nonetheless, Amtrak inherited some stations in the 1970s that were in significantly better condition than they are today. SEPTA leases most of the stations from Amtrak under lease agreements and has taken rehabilitation actions at a few sites.

Most of the stations evaluated within this document are on the Amtrak Keystone Corridor. Parkesburg and Coatesville are only served by Amtrak. Thorndale, Whitford, Malvern, Daylesford, Berwyn, Devon and Strafford are only served by SEPTA's R-5 regional rail service. Stations at Downingtown, Exton and Paoli are served by both Amtrak and SEPTA trains.

Methodology

The first step in this evaluation was to develop schematic diagrams of each station site as a working illustration for making corrections, based on field views, and comments. CCPC had diagrams of most locations from the 1982 *Chester County Public Transportation Study*. In all cases, these schematics were outdated, due to reconstruction or minor changes. The 1982 diagrams were computer-scanned and used as the basis for updated schematics.

Thorndale and Exton Stations did not exist in 1982. SEPTA engineering diagrams were used as the template. In addition, a map of a PennDOT-built parking facility at Exton was also incorporated. Stations at Whitford and Daylesford had been modified. Engineering diagrams were used to adjust these schematics.

Each station was visually inspected by CCPC staff in 2001 and 2004 to determine the condition of the existing station, how well the station functions, and what types of improvements may be needed. The purpose of this analysis was to develop a plan for improvements to all stations in Chester County, as well as to evaluate improvements already made. At each station, recommendations have been made. As a follow-up, CCPC will need to work with Amtrak, SEPTA, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, municipalities and other agencies to determine priorities and funding sources for improvement activities.



CCPC staff visually inspected each station to determine the condition, functionality and improvement recommendations.

In addition, field views were conducted at three locations along the Elwyn to West Chester rail corridor on a segment that was removed from passenger service in 1986. They are West Chester, West Chester University and Westtown. Should service be reinstated at a future date, these sites would be under consideration for stations.

Conclusions

Amtrak leases the station sites on the R-5 portion of the Keystone Corridor east of Thorndale to SEPTA. With the exception of Downingtown, Exton and Paoli, Amtrak does not serve these local stops. In order to improve the rail passenger experience, SEPTA usually plans station area improvements, even though it does not have title to the properties. Amtrak receives lease payments. Given that Amtrak is mandated by the U.S. Congress to be self-sufficient, this revenue is important.

Amtrak remains responsible for maintaining the tracks, switches and rail-based infrastructure. They conduct dispatching, are responsible for closure of tracks, and supply safety personnel for construction projects. Amtrak trains receive priority over SEPTA trains.

Conditions vary significantly between station sites. The types and conditions of facilities are greatly dependent on their age, levels of service and location within the corridor. Either topographic features or the property ownership and development of surrounding stations are factors that limit future expansion of some station sites. Growth in services and the resulting increases in ridership often require additional land for station improvements and added parking. While good for the rail operations, such expanded stations can conflict with the character of the neighboring community.

Stations in the traditional “Main Line” communities tend to have more facilities. With the exception of Daylesford, all stations between Malvern and Strafford have station buildings on the eastbound side with ticket agents, waiting areas, and rest rooms. They also have shelters on the westbound side. Many of the structures along the “Main Line” were built during the Pennsylvania Railroad’s operation of the passenger rail system. These structures are generally in need of maintenance or rehabilitation. Improvement projects have already addressed these needs at Berwyn and Strafford.



With the exception of Daylesford, all stations between Malvern and Strafford have station buildings on the eastbound side with ticket agents, waiting areas and rest rooms.

In the outer ring of suburbs, where most stations are newer, there are fewer amenities available. The lower levels of rail service found at these stations did not justify investment in the same level of station amenities found in communities with higher levels of rail service. SEPTA’s recent capital investment west of Malvern has been growing because of increased service generated by a population that is moving farther to the west. In addition, public infrastructure is now built under tighter budget constraints. In the case of Thorndale Station, a station building with a ticket booth, waiting area and rest rooms was originally recommended on SEPTA’s plans. Cost cutting led to its removal, in favor of large shelters.

Demand for station facilities on the R-5 corridor is high and is growing, particularly west of Malvern. While basic structures are part of a first stage of attracting riders, improvements to those facilities will be expected over time. Rail stations have potential as hubs for economic development, as proposed in Downingtown and Paoli. As important as station improvements are to making the rail rider's experience a positive one, improvements to level of rail service (headways, total number of trains, etc.) are at least as important and should not be overshadowed by station improvements.



Demand for station facilities on the R-5 corridor is high and is growing, especially western stations such as Thorndale Station.

Many stations have deferred maintenance items that are not being addressed, due to larger system needs. In addition, most older stations were not designed to manage the needs of an aging population or those with special needs, such as physically handicapped persons.

Parking at many stations is limited. Parking is a problem at Exton and all stations to the east except for Daylesford and Berwyn, which generally have available spaces. A combination of building larger parking lots and finding shared parking arrangements has been used to manage demand, with limited success.

Recommendations

- CCPC has made the R-5 its highest rail transit priority. (See technical memorandum, *Potential Passenger Rail Options*.) A major factor in future investment will be the ability to provide more capacity for rail service and parking or alternatives to parking. Local communities may have issues with projects that do not match the community character, even if they help the rail passengers in that community.
- The County should identify ways to increase suburb-to-suburb commuting on the regional rail system. For example, enabling residents of the Parkesburg area to commute to the Great Valley employment area via the R-5. This is predicated on either additional shuttle transit service between stations and destinations beyond the walking distance of the station or increased development densities in station areas. In any case, the quality of the stations is a component in making the commute a desirable one.
- In cooperation with Delaware County, SEPTA needs to determine how best to accommodate parking shortages on the R-3, the other regional rail line serving Chester County riders. The R-3 currently terminates at Elwyn in Delaware County. CCPC has documented that Chester County residents use this line, parking mostly at Elwyn or Media. SEPTA has committed to extending this line to Wawa, on Route 1 east of Route 322, which will make access to this line more convenient for southern Chester County commuters. This proposed extension will also add a station at Glen Riddle, near Route 452. Whether adding parking at Wawa will reduce parking capacity problems and spillover parking at existing Delaware County stations remains to be seen. If additional parking is needed, either additional parking could be built at existing R-3 stations or further con-



The R-5 is CCPC's highest rail transit priority.

sideration could be given to extending the R-3 to West Chester. As stated in the *Potential Passenger Rail Options Technical Memorandum* Chester County Planning Commission has made further extension of the R-3 to West Chester a low priority for a variety of reasons. If the Wawa extension is successful and parking demand continues to increase, this issue should be re-examined.

- The County, SEPTA and Amtrak should develop a set of standards for rail stations. These standards should cover station building components, parking quantity, public safety, circulation, and facilities for motor vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles. The agencies should also determine expected life cycles for station facilities, strategic plans for improvements or rehabilitation, and measures to build cooperation between agencies on rail facilities planning. The parties need to recognize that trains need to compete with automobiles, not only on travel time and reliability, but also on comfort, personal productivity and amenities.
- SEPTA should work to increase the amount of joint development around stations, where appropriate. In November of 2004, the Pennsylvania Legislature passed legislation to facilitate transit oriented development (TODs) in the vicinity of rail stations and other transit facilities (PA Act 238 of 2004, the Transit Revitalization Investment District Act).
- SEPTA or Amtrak should expand its leasing of space in stations to businesses. The most popular offering at present is coffee shops, but there is additional potential. For example, SEPTA already leases space in the Berwyn Rail Station for a picture framing shop. Niche markets should be identified that reflect underserved needs around each station.
- Municipalities should promote appropriate land uses and development densities in the vicinity of stations that enhance ridership potential and improve the interaction between the station and surrounding community. Examples of complementary land uses include convenience uses such as child care facilities, laundries, video shops, and higher density residential development that would allow walk-up access to the station.
- SEPTA should develop an Adopt-A-Station program at each site. Community groups could work with SEPTA on both keeping the site clean and landscaping issues that are not presently being addressed. The community and area businesses could take pride in a station that is aesthetically pleasing.



Station buildings can include additional uses.

- The County, along with Transportation Management Associations, should take leadership on exploring alternatives to parking at regional rail stations. Many surface parking lots cannot be expanded without major land purchases. In addition, large lots do not fit well with the compact, pedestrian-friendly nature of transit-oriented development. Structured parking may not match the community character and may not be cost effective. In these cases, shuttle services could capture riders before they get in their automobiles. The first attempts at such service (SEPTA's 204, 207 [Whirl] and 208 bus routes), have had mixed results, but the ultimate potential of this approach has not yet been realized.
- The County, SEPTA, PennDOT and municipalities should work to implement provisions of the *Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan*, relating to rail lines. The plan sets a long-range goal of pedestrian improvements within one mile and bicycle improvements within two miles of all rail stations. These zones should be considered as priorities for implementing Chester County's Recommended Bikeway Network. Potential projects funded through Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) or Transportation Enhancement programs should be given priority for bicycle and pedestrian access to stations.
- Bicycle lockers are currently in place at the R-5 stations at Wayne (Delaware County) and Bryn Mawr (Montgomery County). Grant money has been obtained for the installation of bicycle lockers at several other R-5 stations, including six in Chester County. SEPTA has elected not to install these racks, citing security concerns in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Since that time, bicycle locker manufacturers have been working to improve their products to make them less susceptible to terrorist use. Additionally, most station sites along the R-5 are large enough to locate lockers far from the station buildings and platforms. As such, SEPTA should re-consider their policy on bicycle lockers and move towards installation of the proposed lockers at R-5 stations.
- Amtrak has granted rights to communications companies to install fiber optic cable in its corridor. Amtrak and SEPTA should negotiate access to fiber corridors for Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) projects relating to monitoring and communication of conditions on the entire transportation system. These cables also need to be factored into any construction project requiring excavation near the track corridor. ITS initiatives on the regional rail lines should be developed in the context of a regional ITS strategy and infrastructure architecture.



Bicycle parking should be an integral component of all stations.

The following pages contain profiles and schematic illustrations of all active Chester County stations. These stations are all located along the Philadelphia to Harrisburg line. Some are served only by SEPTA, some are served only by Amtrak, and a few are served by both SEPTA and Amtrak. Following these individual station profiles is a shorter description of inactive stations on both the Elwyn to West Chester line and the Norfolk Southern Philadelphia to Reading line.

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Parkesburg Station

Location

Parkesburg Borough, on the northwest corner of the intersection of Maple Avenue and Culvert Street.

Description

- Inbound station is restored historic structure, intended to provide for community activities and offices. Limited use of the structure as a station.
- Small shelter on outbound platform.
- “Park Tower” switching facility to east of station, no longer in use and creates issues relative to re-establishing service and extending to Arglen.
- LANDSCAPES designation “urban.”

Service Levels

- SEPTA: No service.
- Amtrak: 8 westbound & eastbound trains daily during weekdays—4 on weekends as of 2004.

Ridership

- SEPTA: No service.
- Amtrak: 9,690 boardings in 2003—4th of 5 stations in County.

Other Transit Connections

Coatesville Link



Pedestrian facilities have been improved.



Shelter and platforms on the outbound side will need improvements.

Key Issues

- Location and function of track switching facility is key to re-establishing SEPTA service.
- Borough considering moving station to east, to heart of downtown, if SEPTA service re-established. Cost analysis needed.
- If station is moved, renovated existing station building could still be used for community purposes and offices.
- Pedestrian facilities between the north and south side platforms have recently been improved.
- There may be development potential on the station site, particularly on the lot southwest of the station.
- Additional parking would be necessary on the south side lot if SEPTA service is re-established.
- Additional parking may also be possible on north-side.

Key recommendations

- ① Improve parking/pedestrian access
- ② New/improved platform/shelter
- ③ Repair or replace platform
- ④ Pedestrian improvements
- ⑤ Improve parking area
- ⑥ Possible retail/service development opportunities
- ⑦ Install lights on platform
- ⑧ Continue station rehabilitation
- ⑨ Directional signs to station

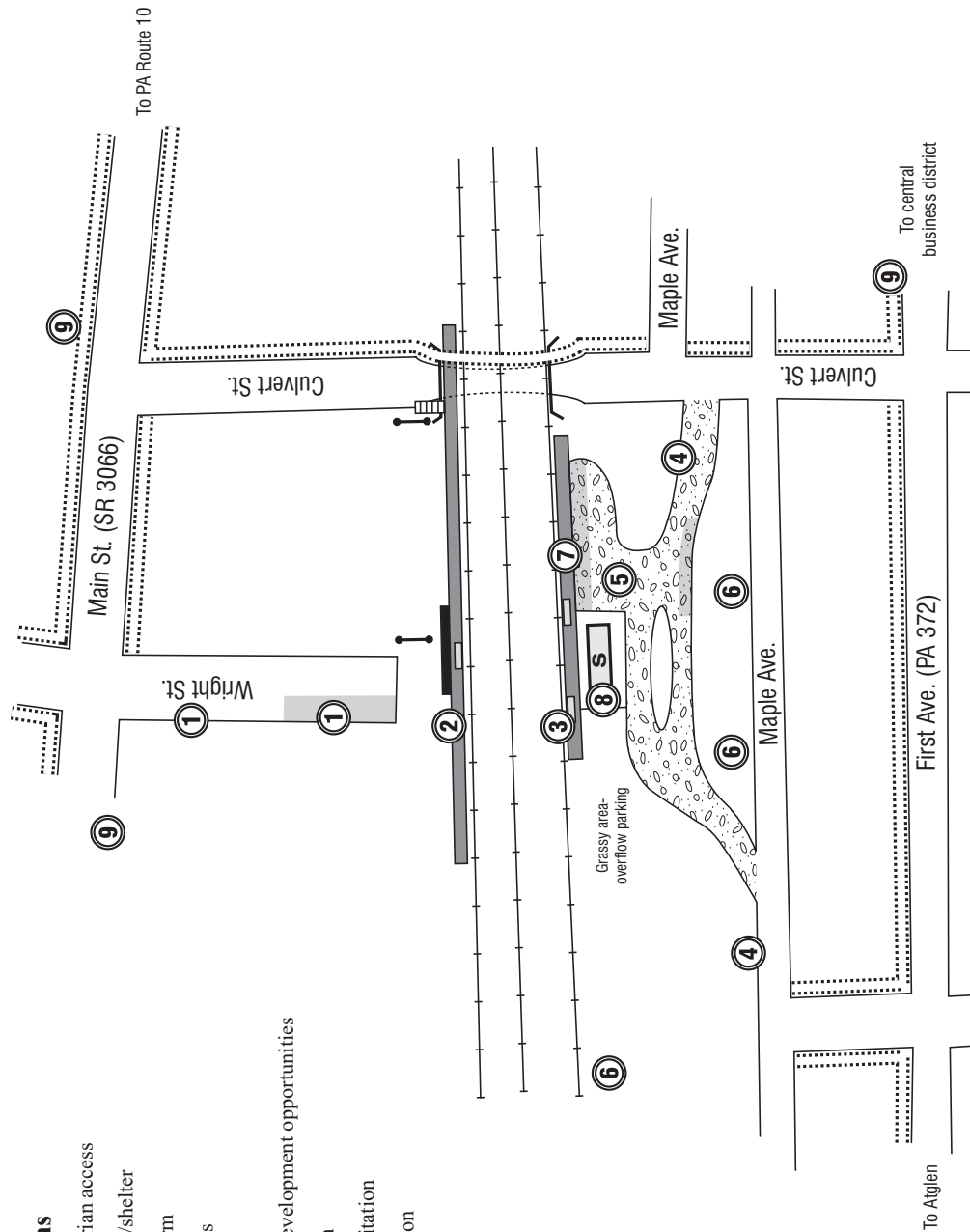


Figure 1
Parkesburg
Station

Road Track Bridge Gate Traffic flow	Station building Platform Shelter Canopy	Other on-site buildings Step-up platforms Stairs Pedestrian signal actuation button	Pedestrian access Pedestrian under-pass Handicapped ramp Mini-high platform	Parking area Gravel Bus loading area Kiss and ride
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NOT TO SCALE

Coatesville Station

Location

Northwest corner of Third Ave./Fleetwood St. intersection on the north side of the City of Coatesville. To the south of the station is a heavily urbanized portion of the city—development to the north is more suburban.

Description

- Inbound station built in 1868. It has been partially restored for office use, but is not currently occupied.
- Platforms and shelter areas on both inbound and outbound sides are in poor repair.
- LANDSCAPES designation “urban.”

Service Levels

- SEPTA: No service.
- Amtrak: 6 westbound & eastbound trains daily during weekdays—4 on weekends as of 2004.

Ridership

- SEPTA: No service.
- Amtrak: 1,682 boardings in 2003—5th of 5 stations in County.

Other Transit Connections

Coatesville Link and Krapf “A” bus stop at US 30 and 3rd Street, several blocks south of station. No service directly to rail station.



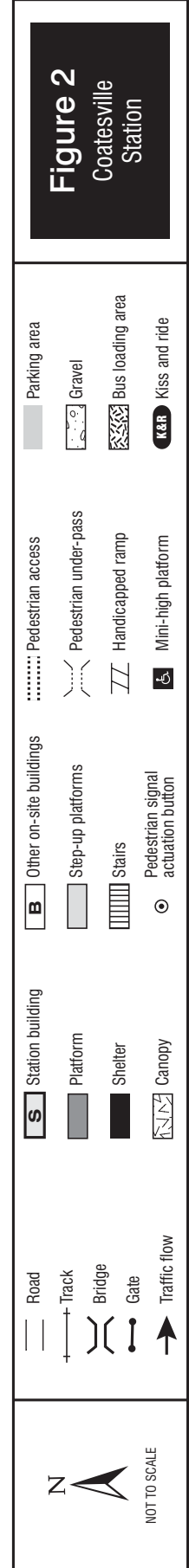
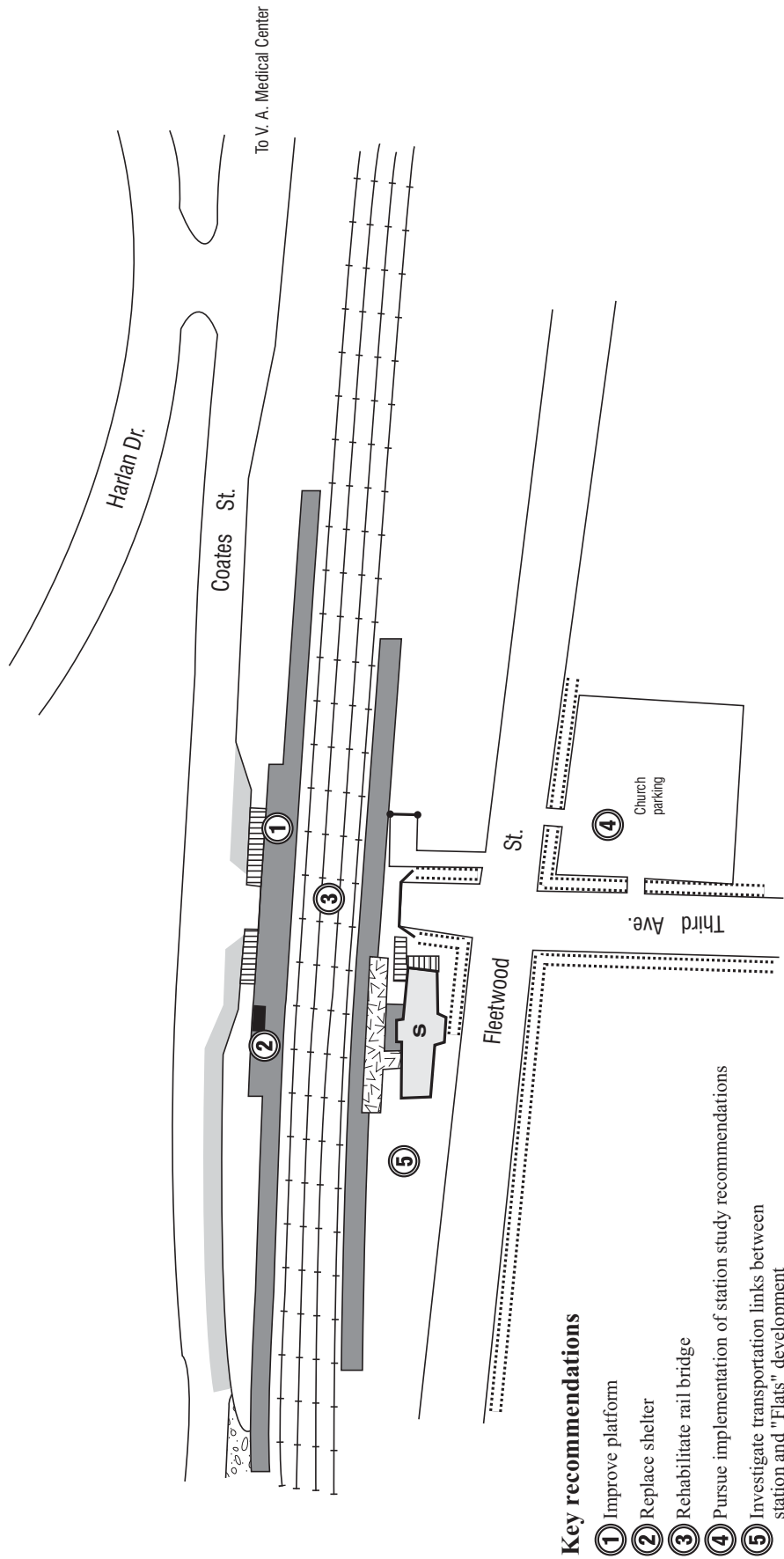
Shelter areas are in poor repair.



A heavily urbanized area is located south of the station.

Key Issues

- In 2004, the city completed an urban revitalization plan that emphasized the need to restore commuter rail service and revitalize the train station.
- The city is moving forward in partnership with private developers on a proposed \$600 million mixed use re-development plan centered around the “Flats” area near the intersection of US 30 and PA 82 within ¼ mile of the station.
- This development will both create additional impetus for re-establishment of SEPTA service to Coatesville and establish a need to effectively link this development area to the station.
- The city has published a train station area study that recommends new structured parking on southeast corner of 3rd Avenue and Fleetwood Street and various other station and pedestrian improvements.
- The city has been approved for a “Transportation Enhancements” grant to begin basic platform and shelter improvements on the station.



Thorndale Station

Location

On the south side of US 30 Business at South Bailey Road, in Caln Township. Surrounded by mostly commercial uses along US 30, with residential uses to the south.

Description

- Newest station in Chester County, opened in November 1999.
- Partially enclosed shelters on both platforms, no fully enclosed buildings for passenger use.
- Station is fully handicapped accessible.
- LANDSCAPES designation “suburban center,” surrounded by “suburban” designated areas.

Service Levels

- SEPTA: 16 inbound trains, 20 outbound daily during weekdays. 10 trains each direction on Saturdays.
- Amtrak: No service.

Ridership

- SEPTA: 293 daily boards—7th among stations in County; 77th in SEPTA network.
- Amtrak: No service.

Other Transit Connections

Krapf “A” bus stops on US 30 Business, at station.



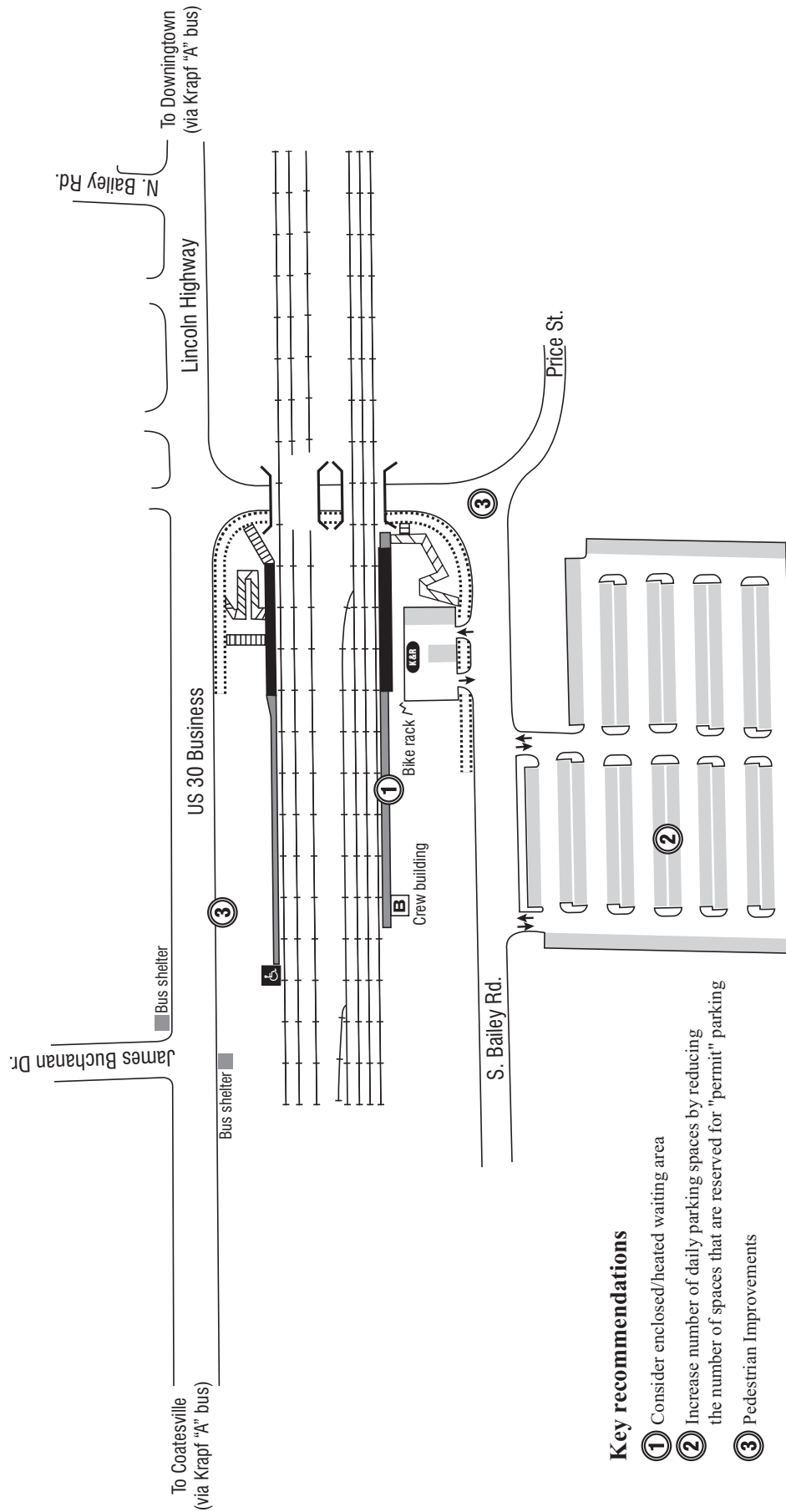
The newest station in Chester County and fully handicapped accessible.



Thorndale Station has significant parking with current demand at less than half of capacity.

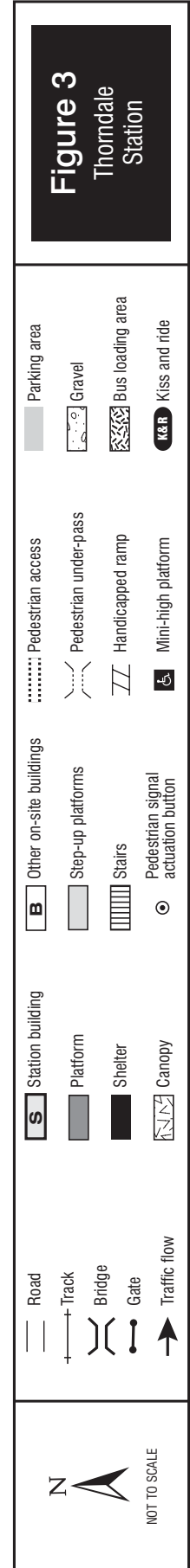
Key Issues

- As the last stop on the R-5, Thorndale attracts riders from throughout western Chester County.
- Thorndale Station has significant parking, with current demand at less than half of capacity.
- Since the station is very new, there are few issues with the station configuration or condition.
- The primary issues around the station involve land use—the Thorndale area is a suburban area that has historically been developed in a strip commercial pattern that is not conducive to interaction between a rail station and surrounding uses.
- Caln Township is working to amend their plans and ordinances to encourage a village center area immediately north and east of the station. This center would allow for more pedestrian access to the station and would likely contain land uses that would complement the station, such as child care centers, video stores, laundry establishments and other similar convenience uses.



Key recommendations

- ① Consider enclosed/heated waiting area
- ② Increase number of daily parking spaces by reducing the number of spaces that are reserved for "permit" parking
- ③ Pedestrian Improvements



Downingtown Station

Location

Between US 30 Business and Viaduct Avenue in Downingtown Borough.

Description

- Partially enclosed shelters on both sides. These shelters replaced a historic train station that was destroyed by fire in 1992.
- Includes a pedestrian tunnel connecting the inbound and outbound platforms.
- LANDSCAPES designation “urban.”

Service Levels

- SEPTA: 16 inbound trains, 20 outbound daily during weekdays, 10 trains each direction on Saturdays.
- Amtrak: 10 trips each direction during weekdays; 5 on weekends.

Ridership

- SEPTA: 299 daily boards—6th among stations in County; 74th in SEPTA network.
- Amtrak: 11,256 annual boardings; 3rd of 5 stations in County.

Other Transit Connections

Krapf “A” bus stops on US 30 Business, at station.



Shelters are on both inbound and outbound sides of station.



A pedestrian tunnel connects the inbound and outbound platform.

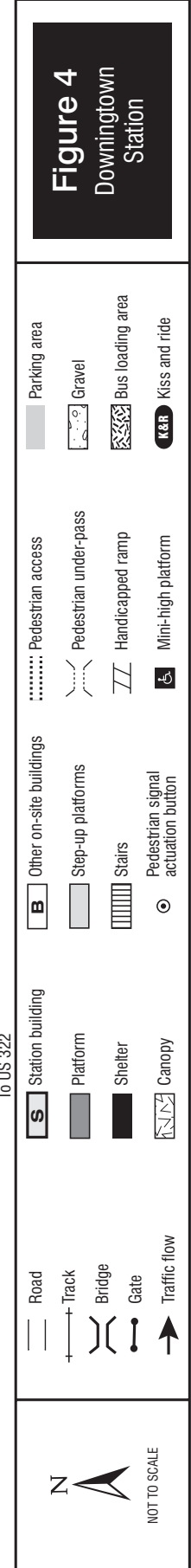
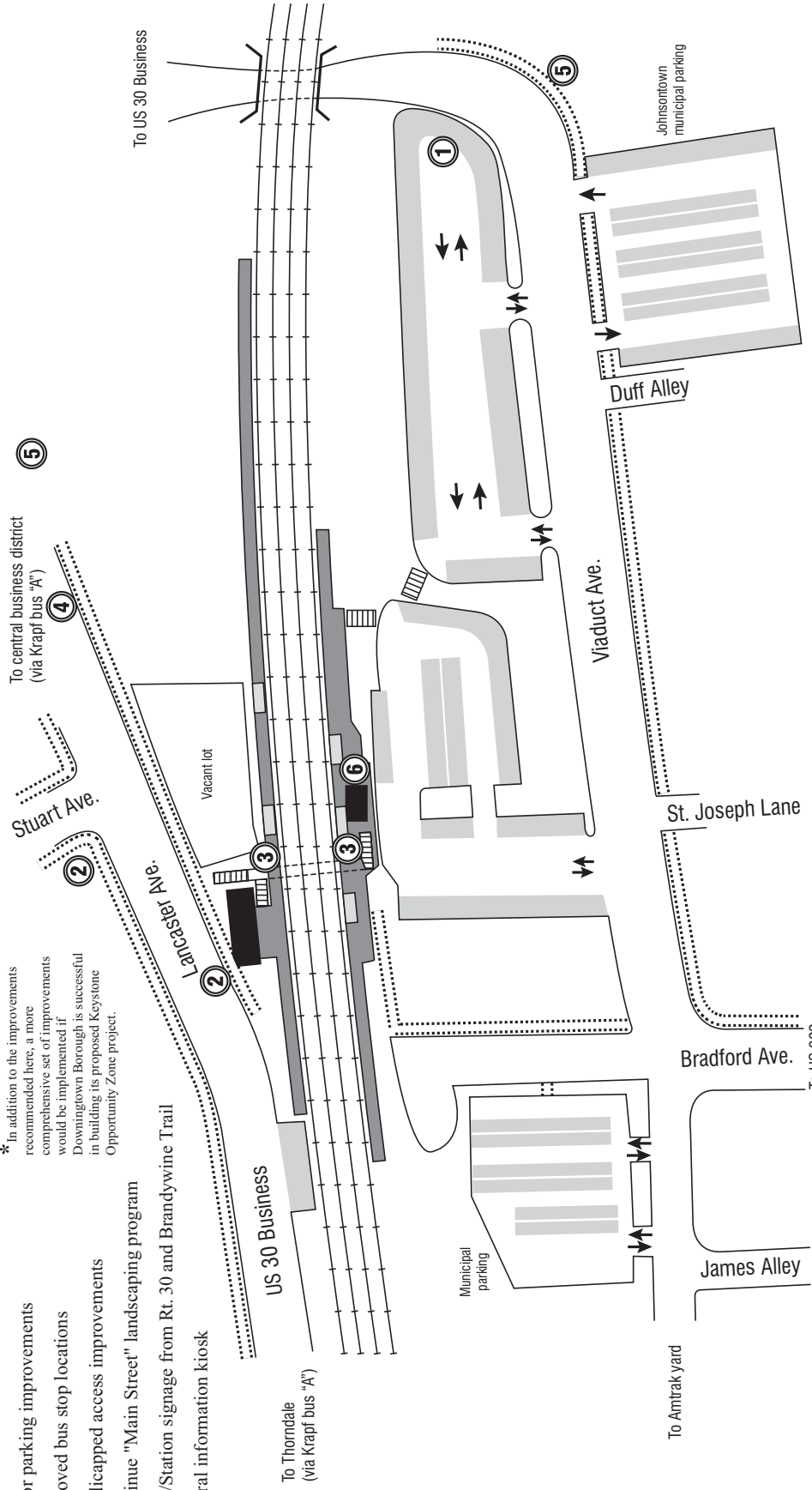
Key Issues

- The station is located in a Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ), which makes the station area attractive for re-development.
- Downingtown Borough is pursuing a KOZ re-development project that would include a mix of high-density uses around a new train station.
- Almost all of the station's parking is located on the south side of the tracks. Vehicular access to that side of the station is limited due to an alternating one way underpass on Viaduct Avenue.
- Any KOZ development would be dependent on improved access to the south side of the station, which would be difficult to implement.
- There is currently adequate parking capacity at the station.
- The Brandywine Trail, which passes close to the station, provides good pedestrian and bicycle access from much of the borough and the surrounding area.

*Key recommendations

- ① Minor parking improvements
- ② Improved bus stop locations
- ③ Handicapped access improvements
- ④ Continue "Main Street" landscaping program
- ⑤ Trail/Station signage from Rt. 30 and Brandywine Trail
- ⑥ Central information kiosk

* In addition to the improvements recommended here, a more comprehensive set of improvements would be implemented if Downingtown Borough is successful in building its proposed Keystone Opportunity Zone project.



Whitford Station

Location

Northeast corner of the intersection of Whitford Road and Spackman Lane in West Whiteland Township.

Description

- A small station building on the south side with a waiting room—no other covered shelter.
- The area is primarily residential with commercial uses to the north along Whitford Road, toward US 30 Business.
- LANDSCAPES designation “suburban.”

Service Levels

- SEPTA: 16 inbound trains, 20 outbound daily during weekdays. 10 trains each direction on Saturdays.
- Amtrak: No service.

Ridership

- SEPTA: 230 daily boards—9th among stations in County; 96th in SEPTA network.
- Amtrak: No service.

Other Transit Connections

No transit connections. West Whiteland “Whirl” circulator bus previously stopped at station, but service ended in April, 2004.



Pedestrian circulation around the site is poor, with no sidewalks except within the parking area.



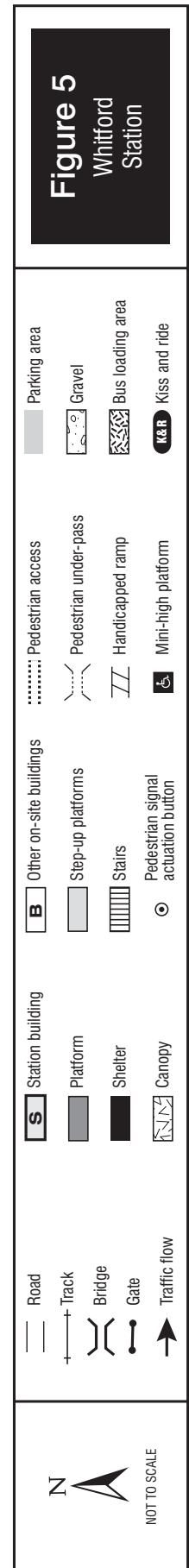
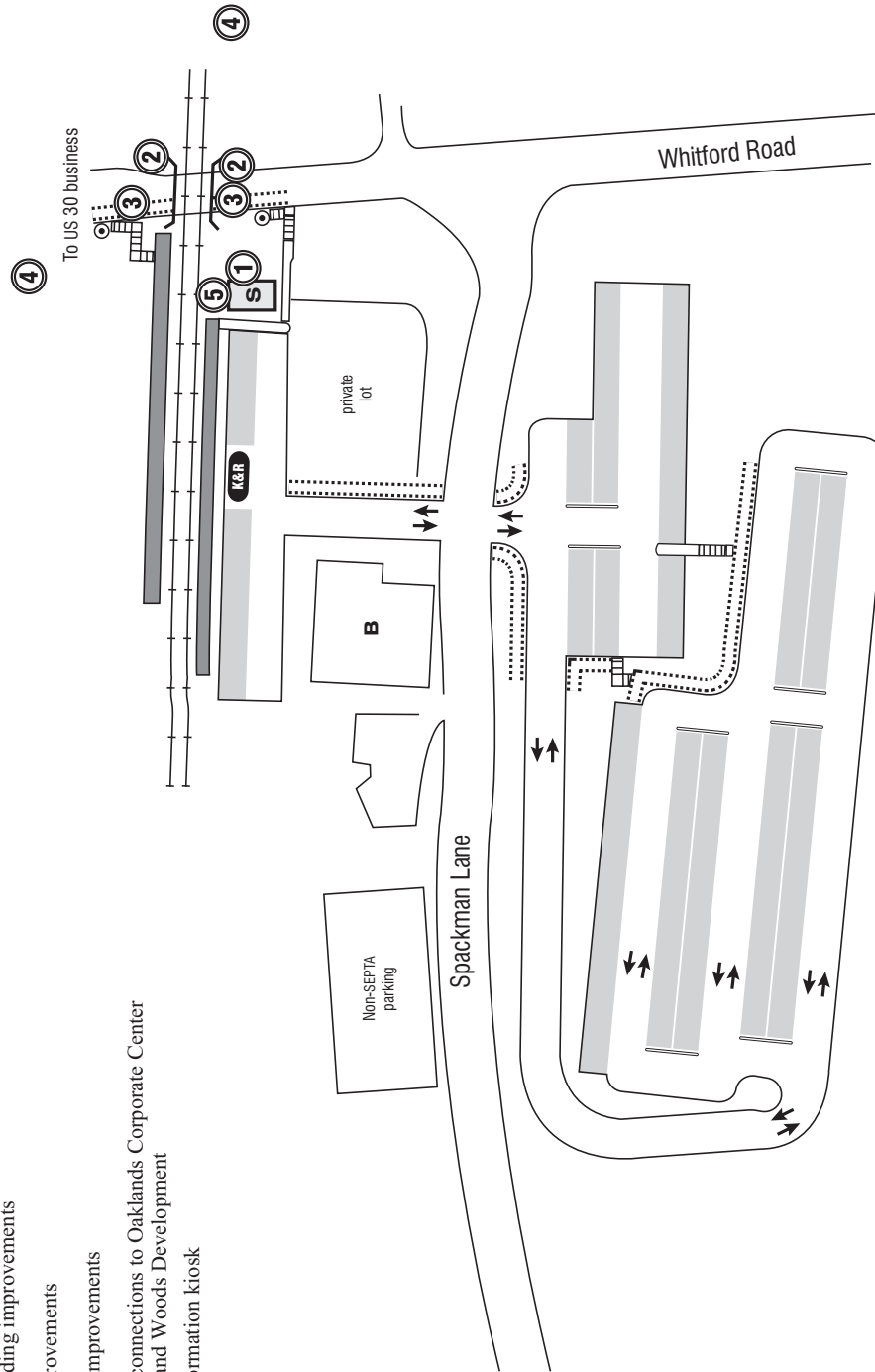
The parking lot was recently expanded. There is now plenty of parking available.

Key Issues

- Whitford is a park and ride station intended to take parking pressure off of the busier Exton Station, one stop to the east.
- The parking lot was recently expanded and there is plenty of parking available, with only about half of the capacity typically used.
- Pedestrian circulation to and around the site is poor, with no sidewalks except within the parking lot.
- The Norfolk-Southern’s Morrisville Line crosses over the tracks and platforms on a large metal bridge.

Key recommendations

- ① Station building improvements
- ② Bridge improvements
- ③ Pedestrian improvements
- ④ Pedestrian connections to Oaklands Corporate Center and Whiteland Woods Development
- ⑤ Central information kiosk



Exton Station

Location

East side of PA 100, just south of the Exton Bypass (US 30) entrance ramps in West Whiteland Township.

Description

- There are partially enclosed shelters on both sides of track, but no station buildings.
- The station is fully handicapped accessible.
- LANDSCAPES designation “suburban center.”
- There are major commercial uses to the north, with large residential developments immediately to the south.

Service Levels

- SEPTA: 16 inbound trains, 20 outbound during weekdays. 10 trains each direction on Saturdays.
- Amtrak: 8 westbound trains, 9 eastbound daily during weekdays. 4 westbound and 5 eastbound on weekends.

Ridership

- SEPTA: 539 daily boards—3rd among stations in County; 29th in SEPTA network.
- Amtrak: 15,247 annual boardings. 2nd of 5 stations in County.

Other Transit Connections

SEPTA’s 92 bus, connecting West Chester and Exton, and Krapf’s “A” bus, connecting West Chester, Exton, and Coatesville, both pass by the station on PA 100. The Whiteland “Whirl” previously stopped at the station at intervals designed to coordinate with arriving and departing trains, but it stopped service in April, 2004.



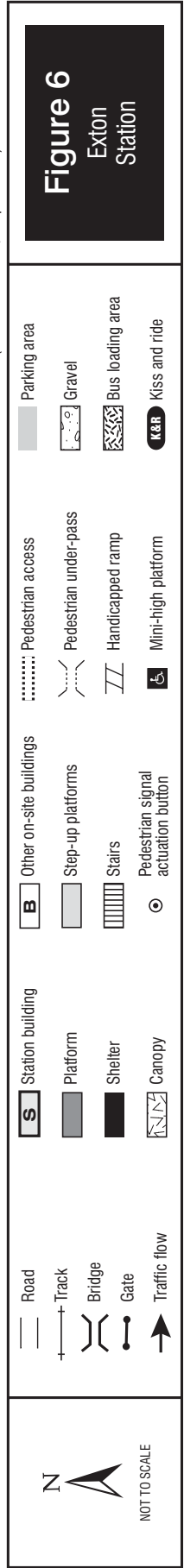
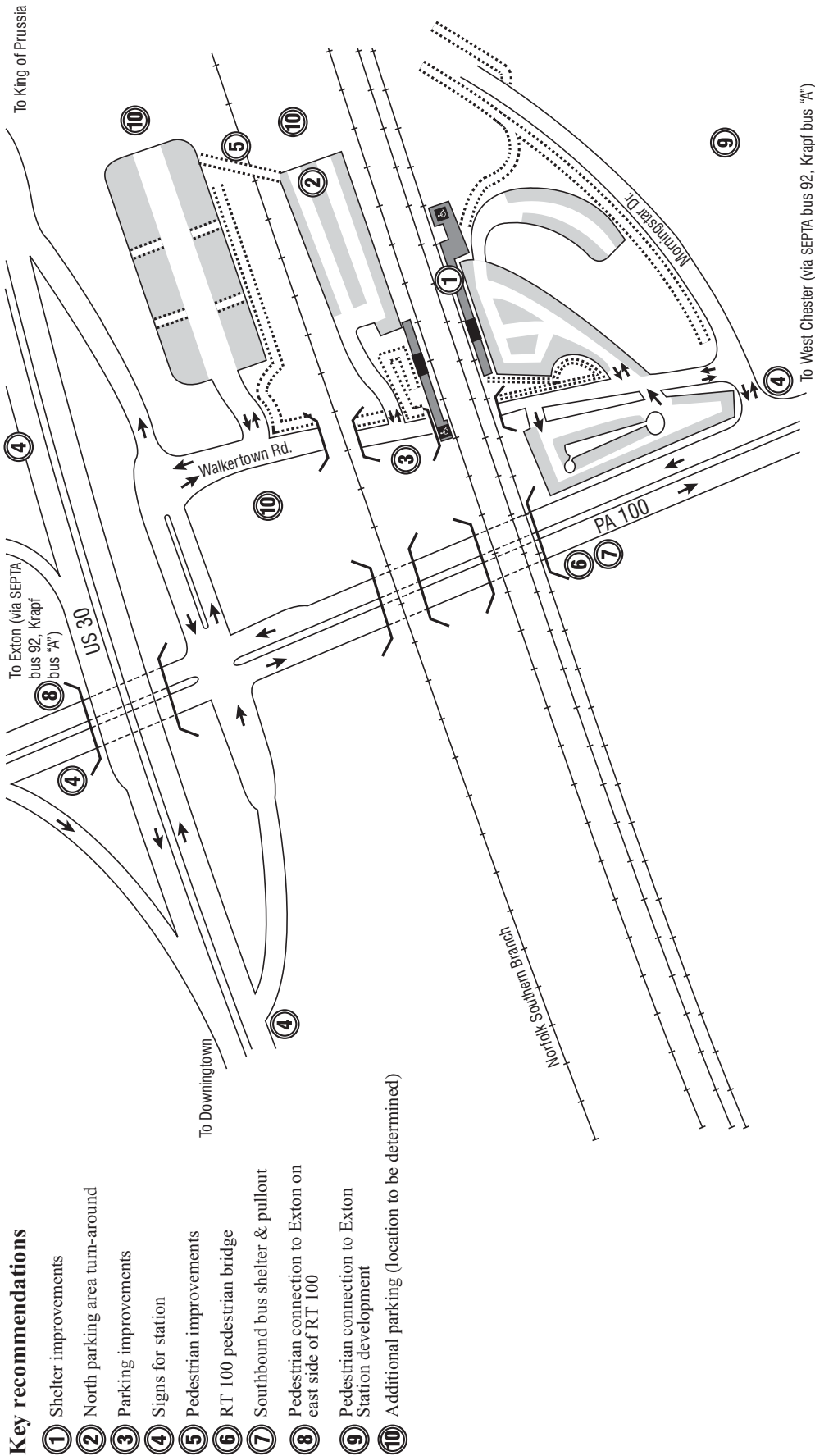
There is a major parking shortage at Exton Station.



A worn pathway connects the northernmost parking lot with the station area.

Key Issues

- A parking shortage is the most significant issue facing Exton Station. There are a total of 250 single-day parking spaces at Exton and the lots are full most weekdays. There are an additional 91 spaces set-aside for monthly permits, which are generally filled to about 75 percent of capacity.
- Pedestrian circulation is also an issue here. There is no safe way for residents of the Whiteland Woods development on the west side of PA 100 to cross over to the station. A worn pathway connects the eastern end of the northernmost lot with the station area.
- The bus stop on US 100 does not have a paved area or a pedestrian connection to the station area, creating an inconvenient and hazardous environment for riders.



Malvern Station

Location

Northwest corner of King Street/Warren Avenue intersection in the heart of Malvern Borough's downtown.

Description

- There is a full station building with ticket agent and coffee business on the south side of tracks.
- Parking is dispersed in several small lots.
- LANDSCAPES designation "urban."
- The station is surrounded by commercial uses along the King Street corridor immediately to the south and industrial and residential uses to the north, on either side of Warren Avenue.

Service Levels

- SEPTA: 36 inbound trains/38 outbound daily during the weekdays. 24/25 on Saturdays. 17 each direction on Sundays.
- Amtrak: No service.

Ridership

- SEPTA: 514 daily boards—4th among stations in County; 34th in SEPTA network.
- Amtrak: No service.

Other Transit Connections

SEPTA's 133 bus stops on King Street, in front of the station. The route links King of Prussia to Exton, with transfer possibilities to numerous other destinations available at each end of the route and at Paoli Station.



There is a high demand for parking, which is dispersed in several small lots.



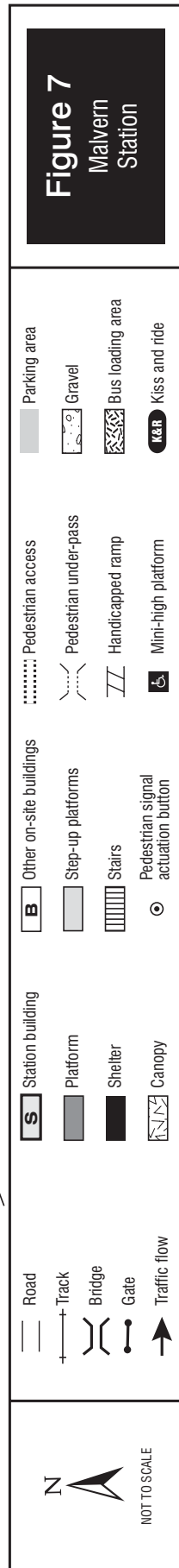
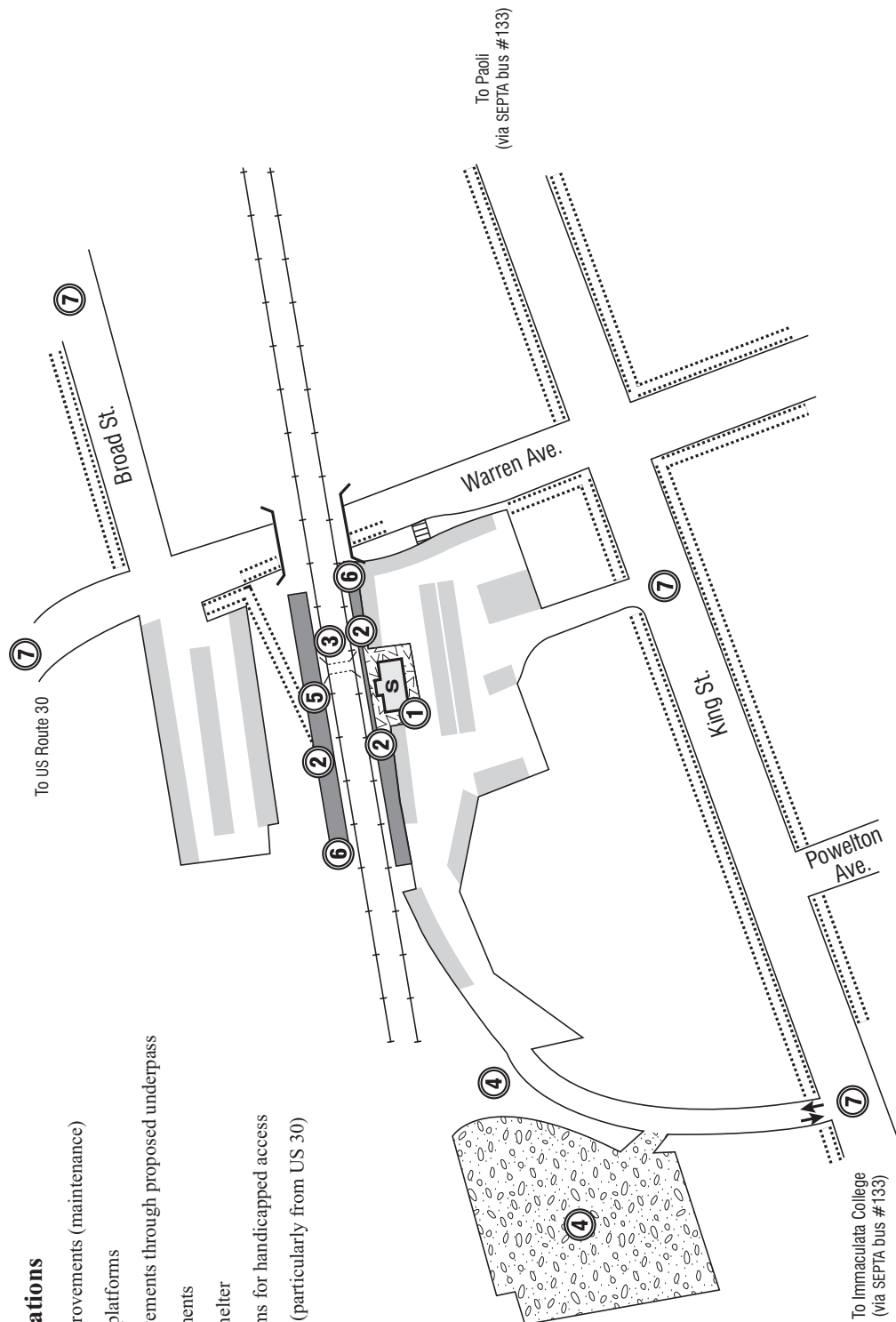
Pedestrians must walk through a very narrow and hazardous underpass.

Key Issues

- As the westernmost station on the R-5 line with a higher level of rail service, Malvern attracts many commuters from areas to the west. As such, parking demand is high and existing parking cannot accommodate the level of demand.
- Pedestrian circulation between platforms is hazardous, requiring walking through a very narrow Warren Avenue underpass. SEPTA plans to install a pedestrian tunnel by 2006. This tunnel will make the station handicapped accessible.
- Although the station area will be handicapped accessible, the trains will still be inaccessible to the handicapped unless "mini-high" platforms are installed on both sides of the track.
- There is no shelter on the westbound platform.
- Directional signing to the station from US 30 and from King Street should be improved.

Key recommendations

- ① Minor station improvements (maintenance)
- ② Improvements to platforms
- ③ Pedestrian improvements through proposed underpass
- ④ Parking improvements
- ⑤ Small outbound shelter
- ⑥ Mini-high platforms for handicapped access
- ⑦ Signing to station (particularly from US 30)



Paoli Station

Location

Northeast corner of US 30/North Valley Road intersection in Tredyffrin Township.

Description

- There is a full station building with ticket agent on the south side of tracks. The station is in poor condition.
- Most of the parking is located on the north side of the tracks, particularly to the west of North Valley Road.
- *LANDSCAPES* designation “urban”—this is the only urban designated area in Chester County not located in a borough or city.
- The station is surrounded by commercial uses along the US 30 corridor.

Service Levels

- SEPTA: 37 inbound trains/41 outbound daily during weekday. 26 in/27 out on Saturdays. 17 each way on Sundays.
- Amtrak: 10 each direction during weekdays. 5 each direction on weekends.

Ridership

- SEPTA: 1,462 daily boards—1st among stations in County; 3rd (not counting center city) in SEPTA network.
- Amtrak: 32,671—1st among 5 stations in County.

Other Transit Connections

SEPTA's 133, 204 and 206 routes stop at the station. SEPTA's 105 route stops on US 30 adjacent to the station. SEPTA's 118 route stopped on US 30 near the station until this portion of the route was discontinued in November 2004. Paoli is a primary transfer point for busses in Chester County.



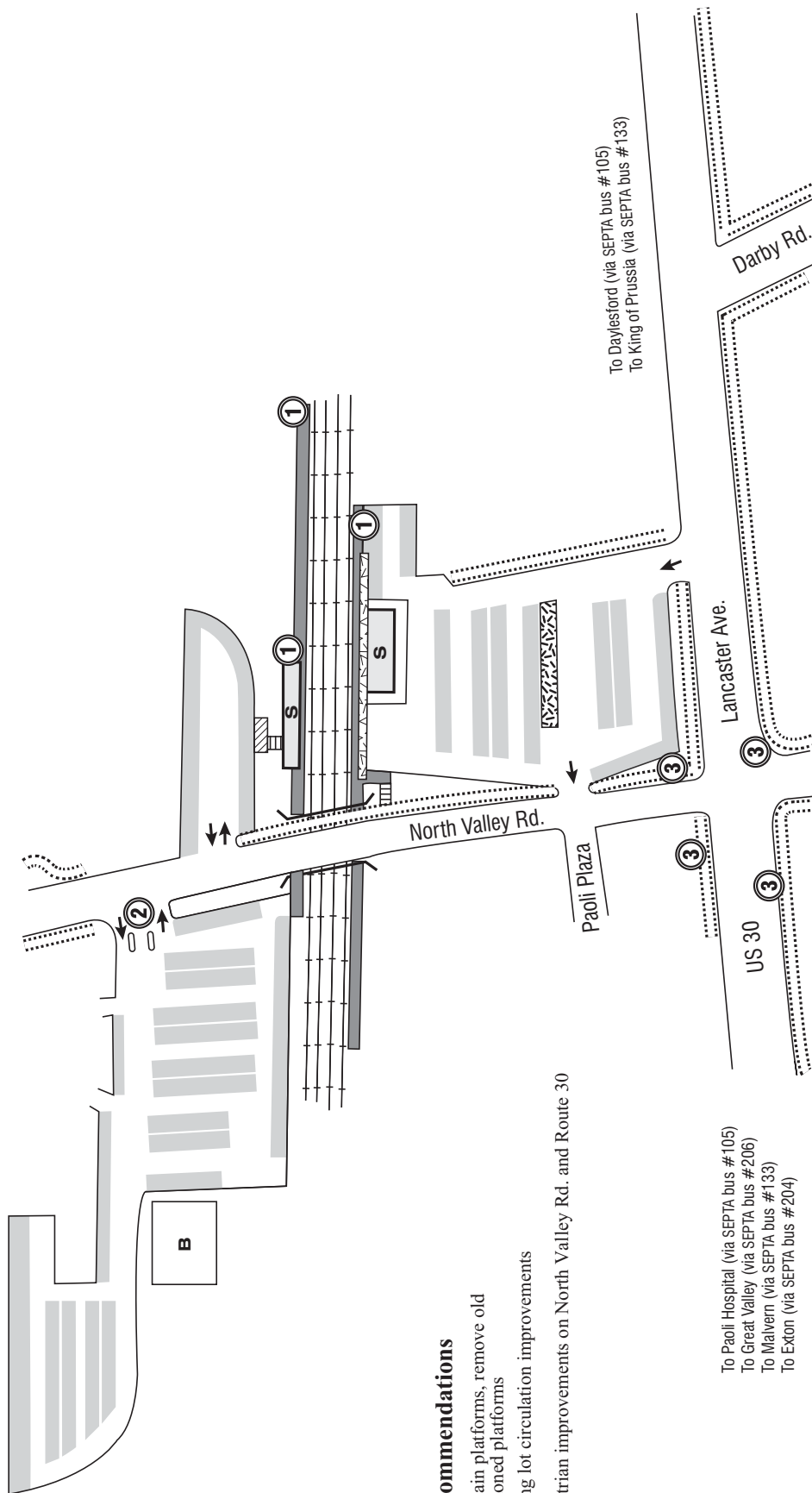
Pedestrian facilities need to be improved.



Demand for parking is much greater than the supply.

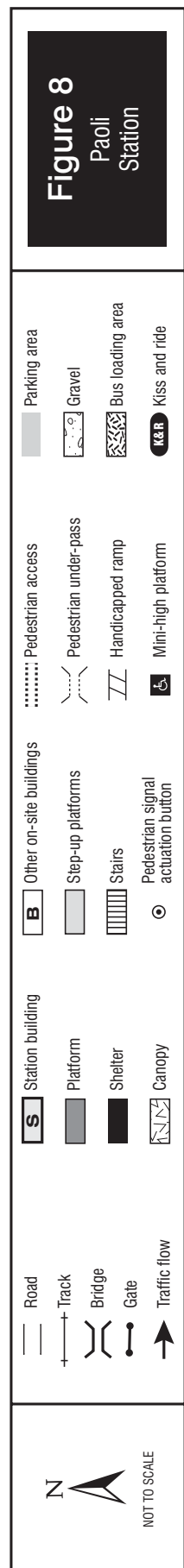
Key Issues

- SEPTA, Amtrak, Tredyffrin and Willistown Townships, DVRPC, PennDOT and Chester County are working cooperatively to develop a multi-modal Paoli Transportation Center to replace the existing train station. This center is Chester County's #1 transportation priority.
- In addition to a transportation center, this project will improve vehicular circulation in the Paoli area, add parking and will include a mixed-use transit oriented development in the area surrounding the transportation center.
- The recommended improvements shown on the facing page are intended to improve conditions during the interim period until a new station complex is completed as part of the Paoli Transportation Center project.



Key recommendations

- ① Maintain platforms, remove old abandoned platforms
- ② Parking lot circulation improvements
- ③ Pedestrian improvements on North Valley Rd. and Route 30



Daylesford Station

Location

East side of Old Lancaster Road, immediately north of US 30 in Tredyffrin Township.

Description

- There is a shelter on the south platform and a small platform on the north side.
- Parking is located on the north side of the tracks.
- LANDSCAPES designation “suburban.”
- The station is surrounded by office uses along the US 30 corridor, with residential areas to both the north and south.

Service Levels

- SEPTA: 36 inbound trains/40 outbound daily during weekdays. 26 in/27 out on Saturdays. 17 each way on Sundays.
- Amtrak: No service.

Ridership

- SEPTA: 213 daily boards—8th among stations in County; 81st in SEPTA network.
- Amtrak: No service.

Other Transit Connections

SEPTA’s 105 route stops on US 30 adjacent to the station.



Daylesford Station has a shelter on the south platform.



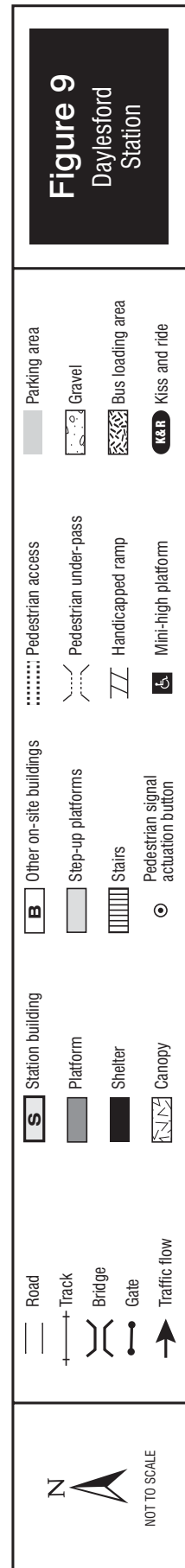
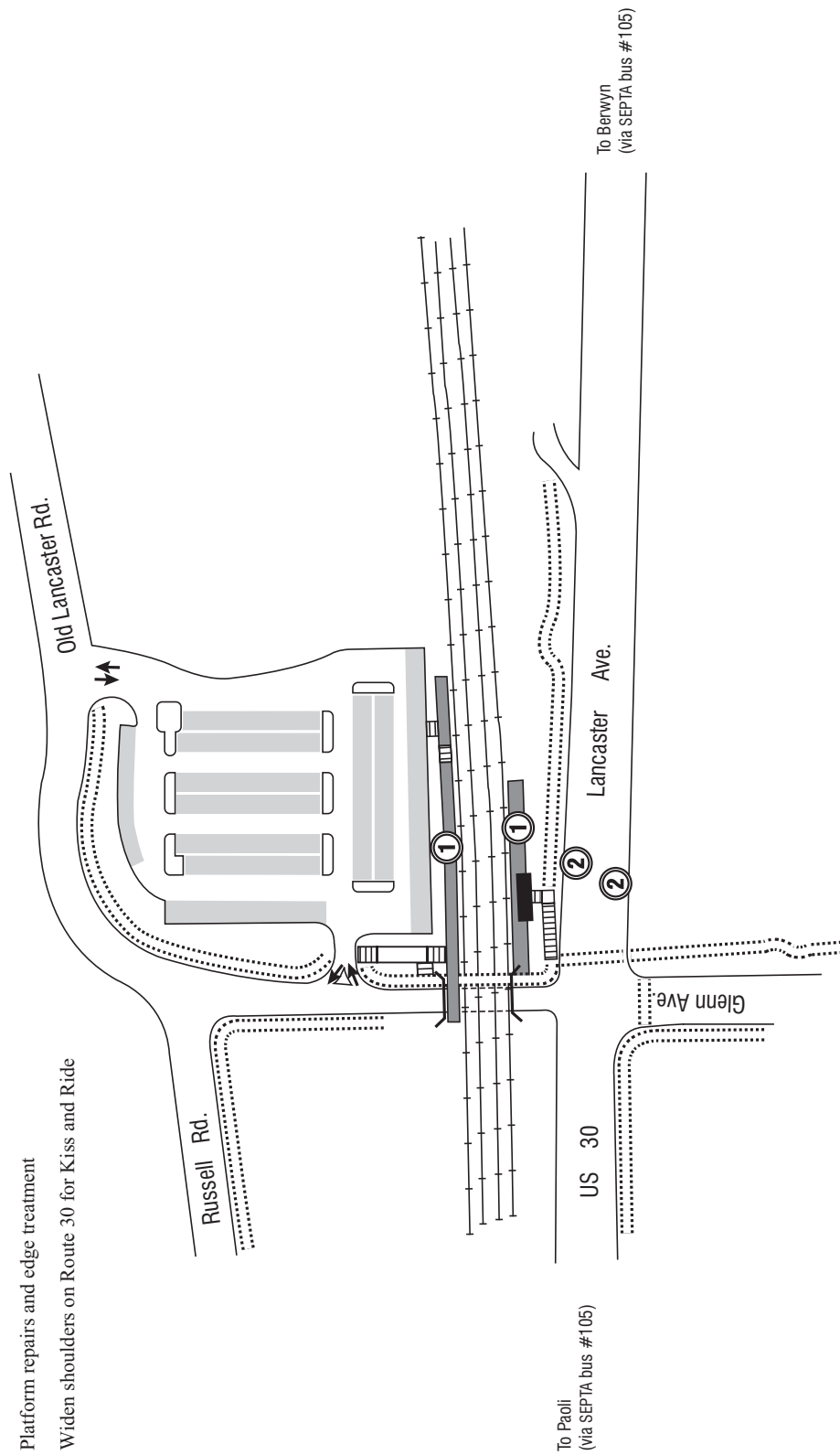
On most days parking is available with the lot 60 to 70 percent full.

Key Issues

- Daylesford is one of the few stations east of Paoli to have available parking most days. Although the lot was generally near or at capacity as recently as 2002, the lot is currently about 60-70 percent full most days.
- Since rail boardings actually increased somewhat between 2001 and 2003, the reduction in parking demand is difficult to explain.
- US 30 was recently improved in the area adjacent to the station, and has new crosswalks, sidewalks and turn lanes, which improved vehicular access to Daylesford Station.

Key recommendations

- ① Platform repairs and edge treatment
- ② Widen shoulders on Route 30 for Kiss and Ride



Berwyn Station

Location

North side of US 30 in the Village of Berwyn, in Easttown Township.

Description

- There is a full station building with a ticket agent and retail space on the south platform. There is a shelter on the north side platform. The station is fully handicapped accessible.
- Parking is located on both sides of the tracks and in an auxiliary lot to the south.
- LANDSCAPES designation “suburban”—adjacent to “suburban center” portion of Berwyn Village.

Service Levels

- SEPTA: 36 inbound trains/40 outbound daily during weekdays. 26 in/27 out on Saturdays. 17 each way on Sundays.
- Amtrak: No service.

Ridership

- SEPTA: 248 daily boards—6th among stations in County; 65th in SEPTA network.
- Amtrak: No service.

Other Transit Connections

SEPTA’s 105 route stops on US 30 adjacent to the station.



The full station is on the south side with a shelter on the north side platform.



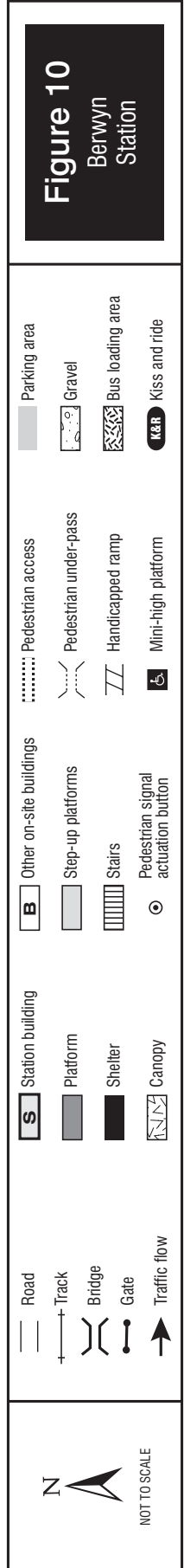
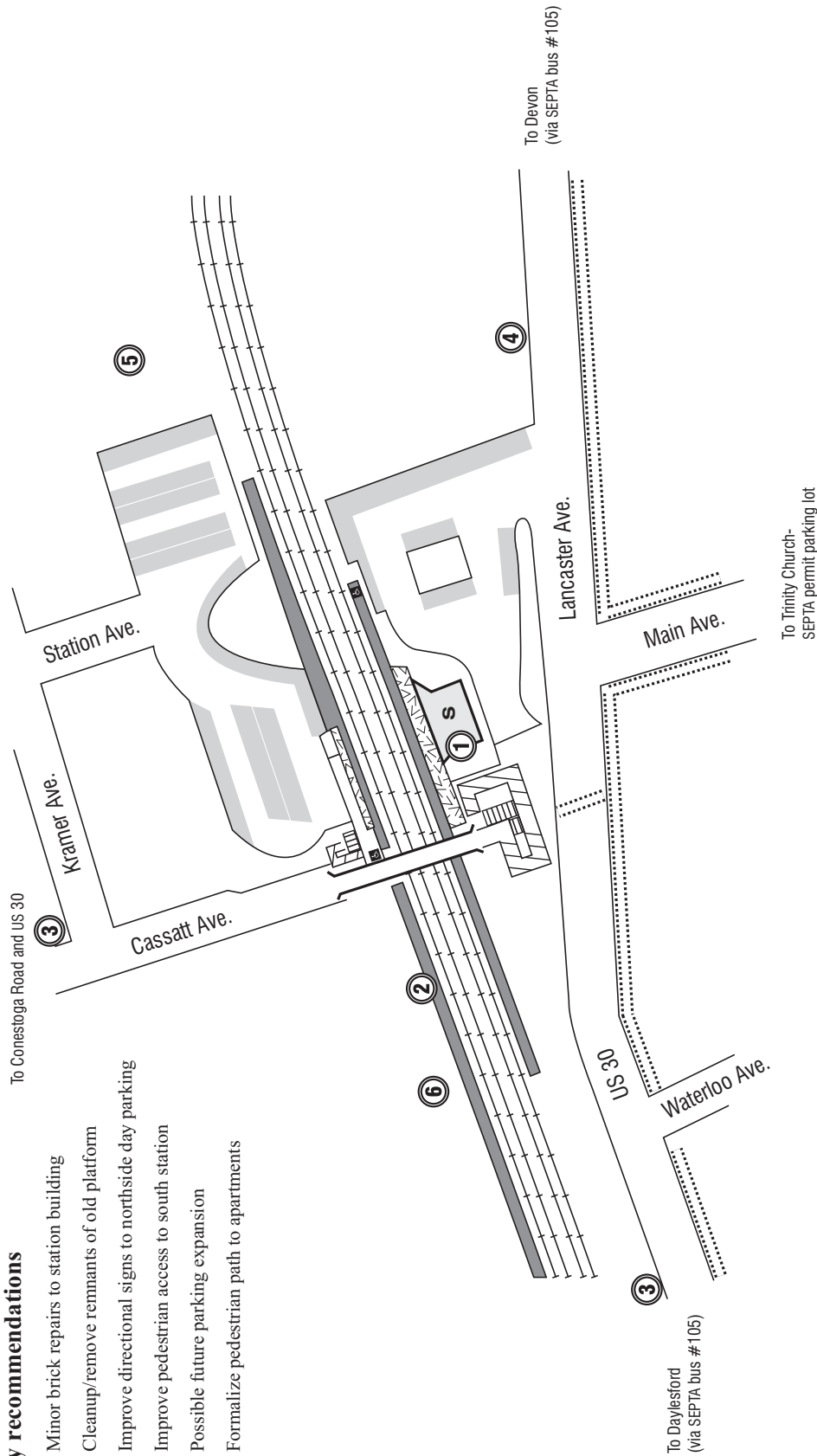
Berwyn Station is equipped with a full system of handicapped accessible ramps.

Key Issues

- A full renovation of the Berwyn station and station area was completed in the mid-1990s. A full system of ramps, an overpass and “mini-high” platforms were constructed to make the station fully handicapped accessible.
- Berwyn is one of the few stations east of Paoli to have available parking most days. The lot is generally about 70–80 percent full most days.
- The day parking for the station is located on the north side of the station and is difficult for motorists not familiar with the area to find. This could partially explain the availability of parking at the station.
- The Berwyn area consists of relatively high-density commercial and residential uses, making the station very attractive to “walk-up” riders.
- US 30 was recently improved in the area adjacent to the station, with new channelization, crosswalks and sidewalks installed. These changes improved both vehicular and pedestrian access to Berwyn Station.

Key recommendations

- ① Minor brick repairs to station building
- ② Cleanup/remove remnants of old platform
- ③ Improve directional signs to northside day parking
- ④ Improve pedestrian access to south station
- ⑤ Possible future parking expansion
- ⑥ Formalize pedestrian path to apartments



Devon Station

Location

On Devon Boulevard, just north of US 30 in Easttown Township.

Description

- There is a full station building with a ticket agent on the south platform, as well as a dilapidated auxiliary building. There is a shelter on the north side platform and a pedestrian tunnel connecting the two platforms. The station is in very poor condition.
- Parking is located on both sides of the tracks.
- LANDSCAPES designation “suburban.”

Service Levels

- SEPTA: 36 inbound trains/40 outbound daily during weekdays. 26 in/27 out on Saturdays. 17 each way on Sundays.
- Amtrak: No service.

Ridership

- SEPTA: 458 daily boards—5th among stations in County; 41st in SEPTA network.
- Amtrak: No service.

Other Transit Connections

SEPTA's 105 route stops on US 30, to the south of the station.



A pedestrian tunnel at Devon Station connects the two platforms.



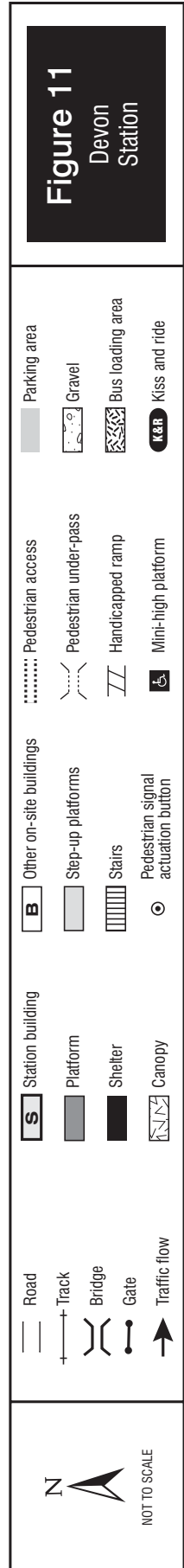
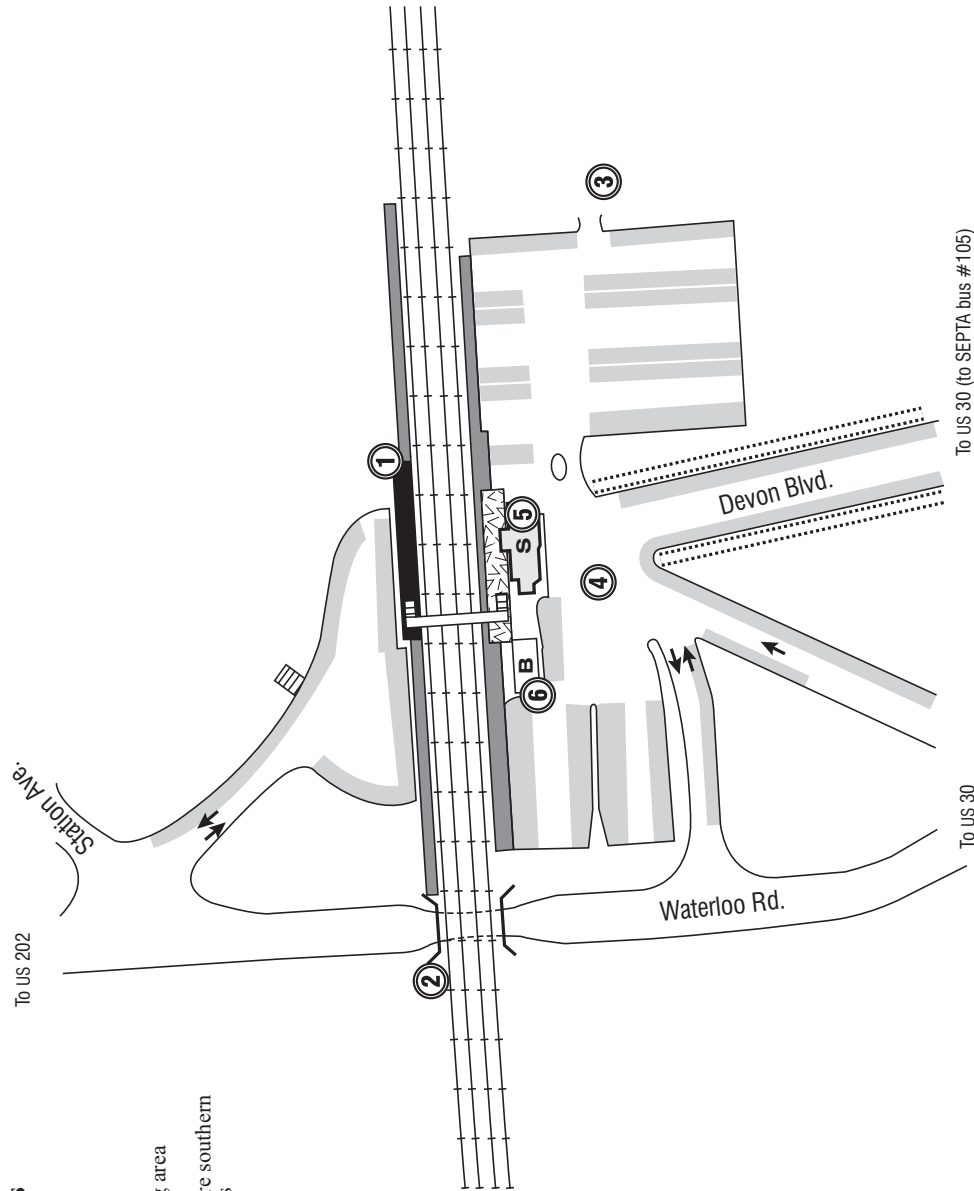
Vehicular circulation on the south side of the station is confusing for motorists.

Key Issues

- The station is in need of major renovations. “Transportation Enhancement” funding had been obtained and a renovation project was included in SEPTA's 2002 Capital Program, but has since been dropped because of uncertainties regarding the lease with Amtrak and Amtrak's plans for the station site.
- Amtrak has pursued and continues to pursue private mixed-use development options for the station site, but has not been successful in arriving at a proposal that is acceptable to both a private developer and Easttown Township.
- Parking at the station is generally at full capacity and additional parking is needed. Amtrak's proposals for private development on the site have included structured parking for use by both the development and the rail station.
- Vehicular circulation on the south side of the station does not function well and is confusing for motorists.

Key recommendations

- ① Platform repairs
- ② Ballast guard on bridge
- ③ Improve informal parking area
- ④ Consider redesign of entire southern parking/circulation/access
- ⑤ Station rehabilitation
- ⑥ Eliminate building



Strafford Station

Location

On Old Eagle School Road, between Crestline Road and Strafford Avenue in Tredyffrin Township.

Description

- The station was recently fully renovated and consists of a full station building on the south side, complete with a ticket agent and indoor waiting area, as well as a historic shelter on the north side platform.
- Parking is located on both sides of the tracks, with an auxiliary lot to the south at a church on Old Eagle School Road.
- LANDSCAPES designation “suburban.”

Service Levels

- SEPTA: 36 inbound trains/40 outbound daily during weekdays. 26 in/27 out on Saturdays. 17 each way on Sundays.
- Amtrak: No service.

Ridership

- SEPTA: 898 daily boards—2nd among stations in County; 9th in SEPTA network.
- Amtrak: No service.

Other Transit Connections

SEPTA's 105 route stops on US 30, nearly 1/2 mile south of the station. SEPTA's 208 bus stopped at Strafford Station and was timed to meet the train, but this route was discontinued in late 2003.



Improvements need to be made to the sidewalks under the rail bridge.



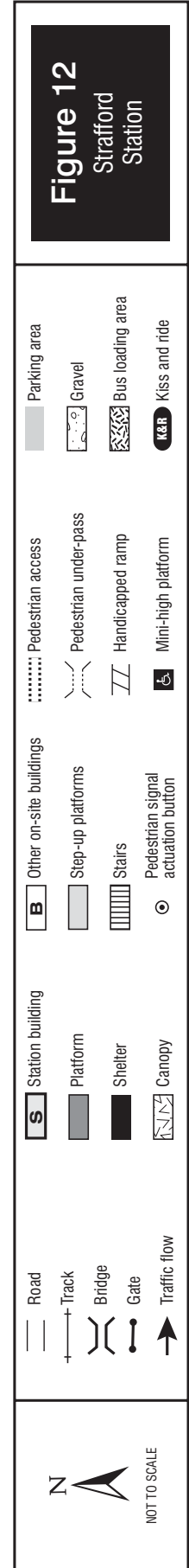
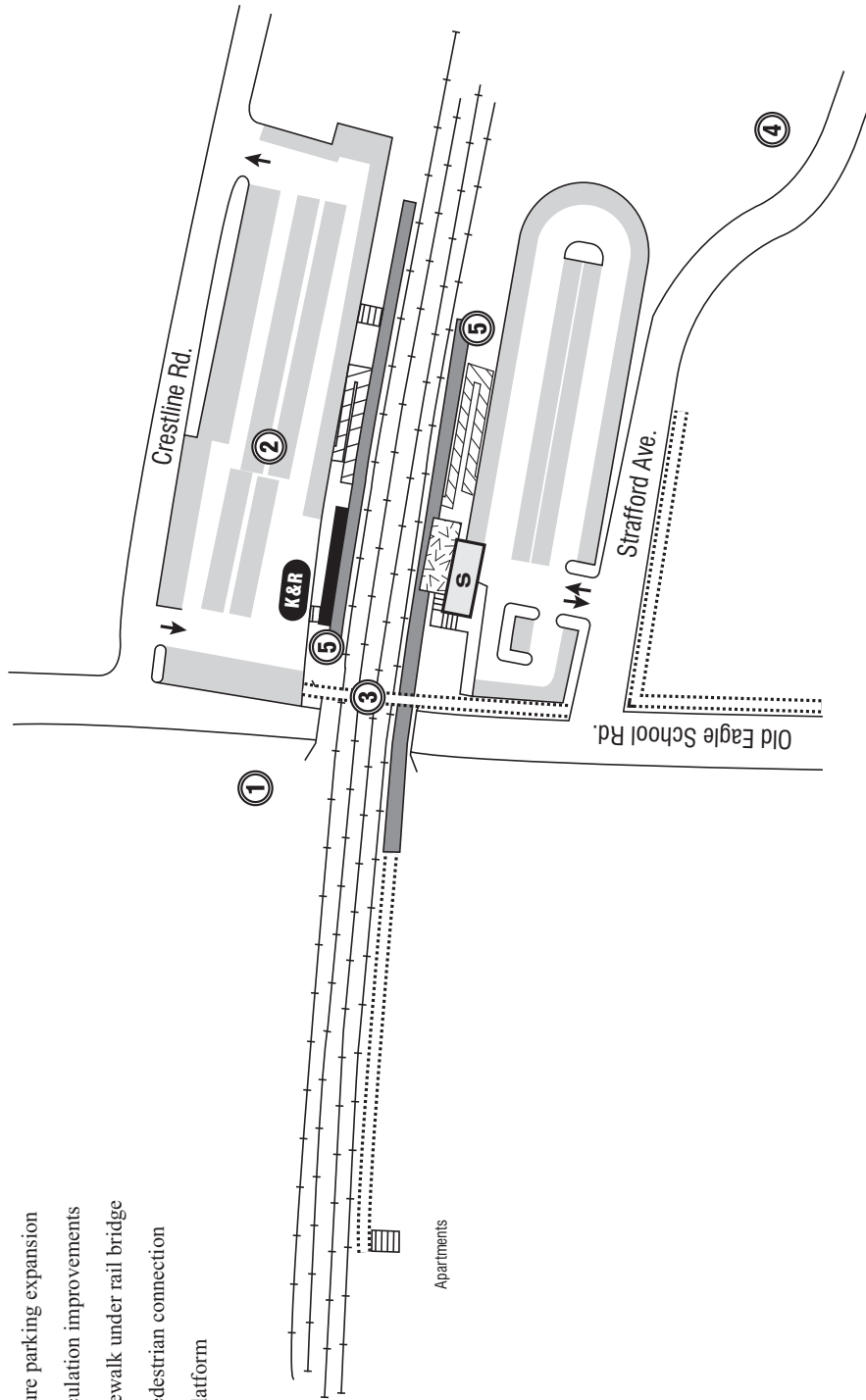
A historic shelter is on the north side platform of Strafford Station.

Key Issues

- Since the recent renovation of the station has eliminated issues associated with building, platform and site conditions, parking is now the key ongoing concern at the station.
- The station parking lots contain 215 spaces, more than half of which are day parking and the remainder reserved for monthly permits. The day parking is consistently at capacity.
- SEPTA has leased space in the parking lot of Our Lady of Assumption Church. Spaces are often available in this lot, but pedestrian circulation between the lot and the station is only fair.
- Opportunities for additional parking are very limited.
- Mini-high platforms are planned and will make the station fully handicapped accessible. A lawsuit has delayed installation.

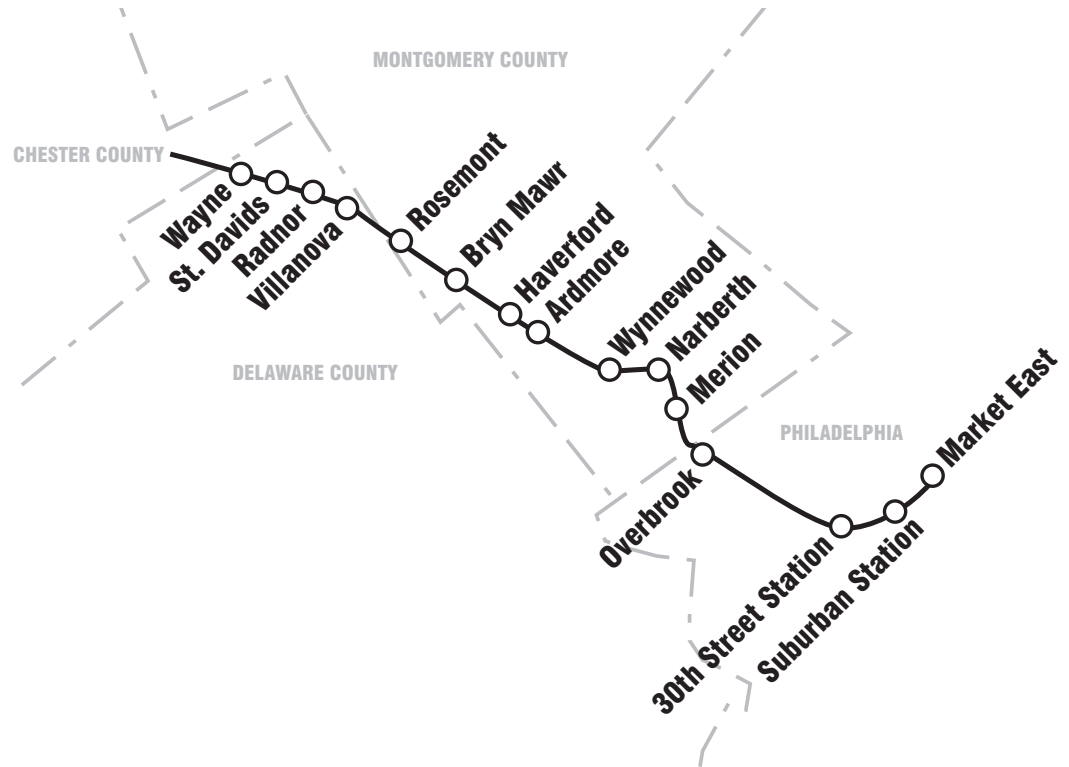
Key recommendations

- ① Possible future parking expansion
- ② Possible circulation improvements
- ③ Improve sidewalk under rail bridge
- ④ Improved pedestrian connection
- ⑤ Mini-high platform



Map 2 | R-5 Rail Stations Outside Chester County

For reference purpose, Map 2 identifies R-5 rail stations that may be used by County residents or businesses. These stations were not analysed as part of this study because they are located outside Chester County.



Chester County Stations without Regular Passenger Rail Service

West Chester

This station is located along East Market Street in West Chester Borough. The area consists primarily of commercial uses along the Gay and Market Street corridors, but there are residential uses to the south and southwest. The station was last used on a regular basis by SEPTA's Elwyn to West Chester service, which linked to the R-3 in Elwyn. This service was discontinued in 1986. The station is currently used by the West Chester Railroad, which operates a limited number of tourist trains on select weekends. There is a small building on the station site—the original station building was demolished prior to the end of SEPTA's service in 1986. There are no plans to re-activate regular service to West Chester at this time—see the technical memorandum, *Potential Passenger Rail Options* for further discussion. Construction of a new station would be needed if service were re-instituted.

West Chester University

This station is located on a small parcel at the intersection of Nields Street and Adams Street in the southeast corner of West Chester Borough. The station is located on tracks that form a boundary between a primarily industrial area to the east and a residential area to the west. West Chester University is located about four blocks to the west. As with the West Chester Station, this station has not seen regular service since SEPTA discontinued the Elwyn to West Chester Service in 1986. There is a small, dilapidated shelter on the site, but no station buildings. Construction of a new station would be needed if service were re-instituted.

Westtown

Westtown station is located south of PA 926 in Thornbury Township. The old station building is currently used as an art gallery and another commercial building is located on the same site, to the west. There is a remaining passenger platform, adjacent to the station building. The area surrounding the station consists primarily of low-density residential uses, parks and a few remaining farms. A new high school is under construction northeast of the station. This station last saw regular service in 1986, when SEPTA's Elwyn to West Chester line was discontinued. Should regular passenger service be re-instituted, consideration should be given to relocating the station, possibly to the north side of PA 926.

Columbia Station

This station is located on the east side of Phoenixville Borough, on Bridge Street. It is located on the Norfolk Southern line that runs from Philadelphia to Reading. SEPTA ran a diesel passenger service on this line that connected Philadelphia to Pottsville (Schuylkill County) and later shortened to terminate in Pottstown. This service was discontinued altogether in 1981. The station building, still in very good condition, is now home to a catering service/banquet facility. The proposed Schuylkill Valley Metro may use this line or may pass through Phoenixville on the Pennsylvania Railroad line and avoid this station area altogether. If it does use this line, either Columbia Station would have to be converted back to active use or an alternative location would have to be found.

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