In Monday's column, we noted Pottstown's council and school board will have one of their triannual joint meetings next week.

Yesterday, we suggested the borough and school district should publish comprehensive, reader-friendly budgets to explain the services they provide and how much each one costs. Together, the borough and school district spend about $100 million annually.

At next week's joint meeting, Steve Bamford, executive director of PAID (Pottstown Area Industrial Development Inc.), will encourage council and the school board to provide a borough-wide real estate tax break for commercial property owners who improve their properties over the next 10 years.

It may well be a good idea, but it would be helpful to get a clearer picture of the businesses Pottstown already contains.

When PAID was reorganized in 2011, the bylaws envisioned that a newly-hired executive director would provide annual public reports on PAID's activities and conduct an inventory of all businesses with 10 or more employees.

Since then, PAID has hired an executive director (Bamford), created an attractive website, and started publishing a newsletter four times a year highlighting new development in the borough (six newsletters have been published so far).

Starting last year, Bamford has given PowerPoint presentations at joint council-school board meetings highlighting economic development. The presentations have included new and expanded businesses, a plan to develop underutilized parcels along Keystone Boulevard, and a brownfields grant to do environmental assessments of at least 10 properties in the borough.

That's great. Still, it would be helpful to have a compendium of businesses in the borough. Decades ago, the chamber of commerce published a booklet annually listing all the major employers in Pottstown and the number of people they employed.

Pottstown has five business campuses (below). It would be helpful to know who is located there. And what parcels, specifically, are ripe for redevelopment?

Newsletters and news articles provide information in drips and drabs. Now we need a comprehensive picture of employers and opportunities in Pottstown.