

COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Need for Goals and Objectives

Any community planning effort by its very nature must include goals. Without goals there would be little direction to the future of the community. In the case of planning for a rural/agricultural community such as Franklin Township, goals establish the framework for change and growth management, and the foundation for maintaining key community characteristics. Goals pronounce the community's expectations and provide a vision of how the community plans to evolve into the future. Objectives are specific actions which are designed to achieve goals and satisfy community needs. Making decisions based on planning goals and attaining specific objectives improves the physical condition of the community and sustains and enhances the overall quality of life.

Shared Vision - Every successful business, organization, or individual has a plan for the future. Communities are no different. If nothing else, a community needs to agree on a shared vision of what it wants to become. This vision should address the full range of local concerns: schools, housing, economic development, neighborhoods, parks and open space. Creating a shared vision is important because it provides a blueprint for the future of the community. People may differ on how to achieve the community's vision, but without a blueprint nothing will happen.

Source: Balancing Nature and Commerce in Gateway Communities, Howe, J., McMahon, and Propst, L., Island press, Wash., D.C., 1997, p. 48.

Community Balance

Rural communities and residents of rural communities are characteristically unique from their more urban counterparts, and have the opportunity to directly mold their communities. The same can be said for Franklin Township which is clearly a rural community in transition. *The rural community is seen as the conservator of its own resources, habitat, and culture. Local citizens are directly involved in the control of community assets as they plan for the retention, enrichment, and equitable use of those assets for present and future generations.*

*Along with the community's goals, specific objectives must be identified; actions and methods for achieving the goals. Some objectives will be the direct responsibility of local elected and appointed officials. Others will require the cooperation and participation of other levels of government and the private sector.*¹

The goals of all residents of the community will not be the same. Some residents will demand community conservation and environmental protection while other residents will favor increased economic development. Some residents will demand more community facilities and services, while others prefer lower taxes. Some residents will strive for land use diversity while others would prefer to live in a residential community. One function of the community planning process is to strike a balance between these varied expectations and develop a shared vision to meet the overall goals of the community.

County Planning and Area Wide Planning

A key factor in formulating a set of local goals and objectives is the planning conducted at the county level. Typically, a county-wide comprehensive plan establishes a broad framework for the future growth and development of the county.



¹ P. Lusk, J. A. Rivera, F. O. Sargent, M. Varela, (1991) *Rural Environmental Planning for Sustainable Communities*, Island press, Washington, D. C., p. 5

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) mandates counties to adopt comprehensive plans and update the plans every 10 years. Luzerne County is currently working with Lackawanna County on a joint comprehensive plan and the two Counties recently completed an open space and recreation plan. MPC §301.4 states *municipal comprehensive plans which are adopted shall be generally consistent with the adopted county comprehensive plan*. This *Franklin Township Comprehensive Plan* is intended to maintain consistency with the recommendations of the *Lackawanna-Luzerne Comprehensive Plan* to the extent that the county plan is not untenable in terms of the key provisions of the *Township Plan*.

Another test of consistency for this plan will be addressed in terms of the plans of neighboring municipalities along with the plans of other public entities and community organizations providing community facilities and services and dealing with growth and development issues. The Dallas School District is a good example of such an entity.

A Guide and Policy Statement

This *Comprehensive Plan* is intended to serve as a means of addressing the future growth and development of the Township by identifying key issues and establishing goals and objectives. The community planning process is also aimed at fostering cooperation between Luzerne County and the Township as envisioned by §306 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code which states, *both the county and the municipality shall each give the plan of the other consideration in order that the objectives of each plan can be protected to the greatest extent possible*.

The following goals and objectives were developed by local officials based on the public participation and planning process. The goals and objectives are intended to serve the Township as a guide and policy statement for land use management and community facilities and services decision making. Any significant action taken by a local municipality, be it the adoption of a zoning ordinance amendment or the improvement of a municipal building, should be evaluated in terms of the community's goals and objectives. In addition, community planning and land conservation and development management is an on-going process, and the Township should periodically evaluate the goals and objectives to ensure that they adequately reflect current community conditions and the expectations of residents and officials.

General Community Development Objectives

This statement of the General Community Development Objectives is intended to set the overall tone for the *Comprehensive Plan* and its implementation. More detailed goals and specific objectives for particular aspects of the community follow in a later section.

Cooperation - To use the comprehensive planning process to explore the potential for cooperation between the Township and other municipalities and the County on growth and development issues of area wide concern.

Internal Coordination - To strive for coordination between policies, plans, and programs in the community through cooperation among governing officials, appointed boards, community interest groups, and residents.

Public Information - Achieve greater awareness, understanding and participation of residents with the recommendations in the *Comprehensive Plan* via an active public information process with such methods as a web site, newsletter, and public meetings.

Use of Land - To achieve the best use of the land within the while allowing for reasonable residential and commercial development. The focus will be on the preservation the environment and open space. This will ensure that the varying uses of land will complement one another and thus improve the economic, social, and aesthetic character of the overall community.

Range of Land Uses - To allow a range of residential and commercial uses at appropriate locations and establish performance standards through zoning to ensure that such uses do not unduly affect adjoining properties or the public health, safety and general welfare and are consistent with the historic and gateway character of the communities.

Population Density - To establish realistic population densities in order to ensure health standards, privacy and open space and in order to allow for the provision of community facilities and services in the most convenient and efficient manner.

Streets and Roads - To maintain and improve the street and road system for better internal circulation and to protect residential neighborhoods from through traffic.

Facilities and Services - To provide the necessary community facilities and services to meet the needs of increased development and the increasing and changing population.

Environmental Protection - To guide the location of future development and establish performance standards to minimize negative impacts (*externalities*) on the natural and community environment.

Housing - To provide the opportunity for a wide-range and variety of housing types.

Economic Development - To provide, within the context of overall community conservation, the opportunity for local business and strengthen the area economy by encouraging well-planned commercial, industrial, residential, and recreational growth which will provide for local employment, shopping facilities, and recreational opportunities which in turn will strengthen the local tax base.

Monitoring - To update and revise planning goals and objectives, and the operational tools necessary for implementation, in light of new data and changing conditions, and to meet a changing population, both current and new residents, in concert with maintaining small town character and quality environment

GOAL 1 - Quality Lifestyle

Protect and enhance the Township's quality lifestyle by maintaining open space, and recognize agricultural land, forest land and other open land as important elements of the local economy, character, and scenic setting.

The Township's physical environment, regional location and past development practices have shaped and maintained its character. The key element is currently the Township's rural-agricultural landscape located so close to the City of Wilkes-Barre, Kingston Borough and other Wyoming Valley Boroughs. Without careful planning, vigilant land use management, and continued community conservation, the quality lifestyle sought by so many from nearby metropolitan areas can succumb to the cumulative effects of the demands of an increasing population.

Franklin Township is perceived as an attractive community offering a high quality of life within an easy commute to the metropolitan area. While agriculture once dominated the landscape, more and more families have located in the Township. In recent years, large lot subdivisions with very large homes have been the norm. Future development must be and managed with an overriding concern to sustain the area's community character based on open space while meeting the needs and expectations of residents for employment, shopping, services and community facilities.

Without careful planning and management, the use of the natural resources and sensitive environmental areas in the Township can lead to the decline of community character and the quality lifestyle it affords, with eventual direct threats to the environment and public health and safety. Of special concern are lakes, streams, ground water, agricultural, forest and soil resources. If the quality of the area's natural resources are diminished, the quality of life and the local economy will suffer.

OBJECTIVES:**Open Land and Rural/
Agricultural Character**

Conserve agricultural land, forest land, open space, significant natural features, and sensitive land areas to maintain rural-agricultural character.

- Important Areas - Identify and prioritize areas important for conservation.
- Identification Identify sensitive natural areas such as wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, woodlands, steep slopes, poor soils and flood plains, and adopt regulations to protect such areas by requiring resource sensitive development.
- Critical Resource Areas - Promote the conservation of open space within the Township and the County and actively promote the long-term preservation and maintenance of valuable natural resource areas through public negotiated acquisition, private dedication of easements, and other cooperative efforts.
- Connections - Maintain a connected network of open space to facilitate natural resource and habitat protection and passive recreational opportunities (e.g., trail networks).

Note About Open Space

The preservation of open space is a common thread of this *Comprehensive Plan*. Open space is land which has not been developed for a constructive or productive use and is intended for environmental and natural resource protection, scenic, or recreational purposes. Open space may include, for example, woodland, wetlands, watercourses, reverting farmland, and floodplain. In the case of a development project, open space may include passive recreation areas such as ballfields, lawns and buffer areas. Agricultural land is certainly open land, but not truly open space because it is in fact highly developed for crop and livestock production.

- Land Use Ordinances - Evaluate and develop land use ordinances in terms of effects on natural resources with the goal of maintaining open space to the greatest extent possible while allowing a reasonable density of development.
- Innovative Conservation Methods - Evaluate more progressive means of open land conservation including, conservation subdivision design, purchase of conservation easements and transferable development rights, especially in cooperation with conservancy and land trust organizations.
- Conservation Design - Use optional *conservation subdivision design* to cluster residential development away from important natural, historic, scenic and cultural features, and preserve the resulting open space.
- Transferrable Development Rights - Use optional transferrable development rights to direct development to locations with adequate infrastructure and enable conservation-minded landowners to preserve their properties.
- Development Incentives - Implement adopted municipal policies to conserve a variety of irreplaceable and environmentally sensitive resource lands, including provisions for reasonable incentives to create a greenway and trail system for the benefit of present and future residents.
- Area Wide Cooperation - Coordinate environmental preservation efforts with neighboring jurisdictions, and establish an action plan targeting environmental concerns that require a regional approach.
- Economic Development - Encourage local economic development groups to make natural resource protection an integral part of all promotion efforts.

Agriculture and Forestry

Preserve agriculture and forestry as an important elements of the local economy.

- Economic Value - Recognize agriculture and forestry as a significant economic industry in the community and encourage economic opportunities in this industry.
- Right to Farm - Protect and promote the abilities and rights of farmers to engage in all sound agricultural management practices by recognizing the Right to Farm Law as an important element of farmer protection from nuisance complaints related to normal agricultural practices.
- Land Base - Preserve a large contiguous land base to assure that agriculture and forestry remain viable, permanent land uses.
- Conservation Design - Provide farmers and other owners of large parcels flexibility in the use of their property and allow them to benefit from area growth without developing all of their land by offering the option of *conservation subdivision design*.
- Programs - Encourage landowners to participate in the *Agricultural Security Program*, and the *Agricultural Preservation Program* for purchase of easements by Luzerne County.

- Tax Incentives - Encourage the use of *Act 319 Clean and Green* and other tax incentive programs as a means of forestalling development.
- Agricultural Advisory Committee - Consider creating a Township Agricultural Advisory Committee to promote agricultural preservation activities and other open space preservation activities in the Township in cooperation with the County and State agencies.
- County Action - Encourage Luzerne County to take an aggressive approach to preserving agriculture and forestry through planning, marketing and land preservation.
- Local Regulations - Do not overly restrict agriculture and forestry enterprises with unnecessary zoning and other regulations.

Commercial Uses

Ensure consistency of commercial uses with existing community character.

- Performance Standards - Apply zoning performance standards to address noise, lighting, outdoor storage, and other potential effects as well as ensuring appropriate landscaping and signage.
- Commercial Design - Develop guidelines for commercial building design, landscaping and parking that will ensure high aesthetic quality and while meeting basic development needs.
- Community Scale - Encourage community-scaled businesses with innovative design as opposed to strip commercial development.

Nuisances

Control common law nuisances and threats to public health and safety due to, among others, noise, lack of property maintenance, poor building practices, junk accumulation, and odors.

Water Supply/Quality and Surface Water Quality

Protect the supply and quality of drinking water and protect surface water quality.

- E & S Control - Reduce erosion and sedimentation by requiring compliance with DEP regulations
- Stormwater - Adopt an up to date stormwater ordinance to control runoff through the use of BMPs.
- Water Quality - Consider the impacts of residential and nonresidential development on water quantity and quality and encourage the use of best management practices.
- Sewage Disposal - Monitor the effectiveness of on-lot sewage disposal systems and evaluate central sewage disposal as a means of correcting any widespread problems.
- Well Ordinance - Apply well construction standards with a well ordinance in areas not served by community water supply.

- Community Water Supplies - Apply well head protection standards to maintain good drinking water quality.

Wildlife Habitat

Protect critical wildlife habitat areas.

- Natural Areas Inventory - Protect sites of rare, threatened, and endangered species as identified in the Luzerne County Natural Areas Inventory.
- Forest - Conserve large forested areas that provide habitat.
- Corridors - Protect wildlife corridors, consisting of networked open space areas and stream corridors.

Ridge Lines and Scenic View Sheds

Conserve ridge lines and scenic view sheds.

- Development Standards - Consider measures that will preserve the characteristics of important ridge lines and scenic view sheds by limiting the amount and type of clearing associated with development.

GOAL 2 - Land Use

Develop a land use plan for Franklin Township that integrates all aspects of growth and development including residential, commercial, industrial and open space.

Land use management is a complex process that depends on the interrelationship of a number of factors including the historic development pattern, regional location, demographics, the regional economy, the transportation network, and soils and land capability. Most of these factors are beyond the control of local municipalities.

In the case of Franklin Township, the landscape remains largely undeveloped while neighboring municipalities in Luzerne County have been experiencing increased development pressure. While large parcels owned by long term resident families may seem secure from development, increasing property values may shift the balance to residential development. Conversely, the potential for natural gas development and the value of gas leases and royalties may temper the residential development trend. In any case, this *Comprehensive Plan* gives the Township the foundation to manage the growth and development of the community using innovative land use management ordinances, careful programming of public facilities, and active participation of residents.

Rampant land conversion is a first consequence of the way Pennsylvania is growing. Quite literally, development-as-usual is consuming the Commonwealth's traditional rural landscape of farmland, forests, wetlands, and open spaces. Overall, Pennsylvania developed some 1.14 million acres, or 1,800 square miles, of fields, open space, and natural land between 1982 and 1997 – the sixth-largest such conversion after Texas, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and California.

This also means that fully one-third of all the land that the Commonwealth has ever urbanized since its founding was developed in just 15 recent years. Put another way, over those 15 years the state consumed land at a rate equivalent to 209 acres a day, or 9 acres an hour, every hour.

Source: *Back To Prosperity, A Competitive Agenda for Renewing Pennsylvania*, p. 47.

OBJECTIVES:**Incompatible Uses****Provide adequate separation between incompatible land uses.**

- District Location - Evaluate the location of zoning districts relative to one another.
- Commercial - Evaluate the allowed uses in commercial zoning districts and encourage retail, office, and service uses.
- Industrial - Create a separate zoning district for industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, and similar high impact uses.
- Setback/Buffers - Provide appropriate setbacks and buffers between land uses.
- Landscaping - Provide landscaping along road frontages in commercial and industrial areas.

Residential**Encourage the development of livable communities and preserve existing neighborhoods.**

- Open Space Access - Create neighborhoods with direct visual access to open land, with amenities in the form of neighborhood open space, and with a strong neighborhood identity.

- Diversity - Provide for a diversity of lot sizes, building densities, and housing choices to accommodate a variety of age and income groups and residential preferences, so that the community's population diversity may be maintained.
- Landowner Development Options - Provide multiple development options for landowners in order to minimize impacts on environmental resources (sensitive lands such as stream corridors, wetlands, flood plain, and steep slopes) and disturbance of natural or cultural features (such as mature woodlands, hedgerows and tree lines, critical wildlife habitats, historic buildings, and fieldstone walls)..
- Design - Provide greater design flexibility and efficiency in the siting of services and infrastructure, including the opportunity to reduce length of roads, utility runs, and the amount of paving required for residential development.

Commercial

Promote innovative forms of commercial development that are in harmony with the rural-agricultural character of the community.

- Scale - Provide opportunities for innovative and community-scaled retail commercial use as opposed to strip commercial development.
- Services - Facilitate community service uses such as a convenience store and medical center.

Economic Development

Expand the Township's existing economic base by exploring economic development opportunities consistent with and building on the existing rural-agricultural character in order to strengthen the existing economy, create employment opportunities and generate tax revenue.

- Location - Welcome new commercial and industrial development to areas of existing similar development and where community facilities are adequate so that the development is compatible with existing land use and community character.
- Home Occupations - Encourage local economic viability by allowing home occupations consistent with residential districts.
- Economic Development - Recognize the importance of the regional economy and cooperate with local business development organizations to promote commercial development which builds on community assets and which will not compromise the quality of life.
- Government Efficiency - Continue to maintain an efficient government and keep taxes low as an incentive for economic development.
- Existing Business - Support the continued development and possible expansion of existing businesses providing local employment and contributing to the tax base.

GOAL 3 - Natural Resources

Conserve natural resources and open space and use the resources in a way to sustain the area's economy, including maintaining agriculture and forestry as an integral part of the local landscape and economy.

Without careful planning and management, the use of the natural resources and sensitive environmental areas in the Township can lead to the decline of community character and the quality lifestyle it affords, with eventual direct threats to the environment and public health and safety. Of special concern are lakes, streams, ground water, forest and soil resources. If the quality of the area's natural resources are diminished, the quality of life and the local economy will suffer.

The purpose of conservation: The greatest good to the greatest number of people for the longest time.
- Gifford Pinchot

I recognize the right and duty of this generation to develop and use our natural resources, but I do not recognize the right to waste them, or to rob by wasteful use, the generations that come after us.
- Theodore Roosevelt

If we learn, finally, that what we need to "manage" is not the land so much as ourselves in the land, we will have turned the history of American land-use on its head.
- Gaylord Nelson, Founder of Earth Day

OBJECTIVES:**Agriculture and Forestry Promote the long term sustainability of agriculture and forestry.**

- Include soil erosion and sedimentation and stormwater control provisions in the Township zoning ordinance and subdivision and land development ordinance.
- Encourage landowners to use agricultural best management practices and use the technical service available from the Luzerne County Conservation District, the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- Encourage landowners to participate in the *Agricultural Security Program*, and the *Agricultural Preservation Program* for purchase of easements being developed by Luzerne County.
- Encourage the use of *Act 319 Clean and Green* and other tax incentive programs as a means of forestalling development.
- Do not overly restrict agriculture and forestry enterprises with unnecessary zoning and other regulations.
- Evaluate more progressive means of open land preservation aimed at agricultural land preservation including agriculture protection zoning, conservation subdivision design, purchase of easements, and transfer of development rights, especially in cooperation with conservancy and land trust organizations.
- Economic Development - Encourage local economic development groups to make the use of local agriculture and forest products an integral part of all promotion efforts.

Conservation and Sensitive Natural Areas

Conserve open land, including those areas containing unique and sensitive natural features such as woodlands, steep slopes, streams, flood plains and wetlands, by setting them aside from development.

- Identification Identify sensitive natural areas such as wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, woodlands, steep slopes, poor soils and flood plains, and adopt regulations to protect such areas by requiring resource sensitive development.
- Critical Resource Areas - Promote the conservation of open space within the Township and the County and actively promote the long-term preservation and maintenance of valuable natural resource areas through public negotiated acquisition, private dedication of easements, and other cooperative efforts.
- Land Use Ordinances - Evaluate and develop land use ordinances in terms of effects on natural resources with the goal of maintaining open space to the greatest extent possible while allowing a reasonable density of development.
- Development Incentives - Implement adopted municipal policies to conserve a variety of irreplaceable and environmentally sensitive resource lands, including provisions for reasonable incentives to create a greenway and trail system for the benefit of present and future residents.
- Conservation Design - Use *conservation subdivision design* to cluster residential development away from important natural, historic, scenic and cultural features, and preserve the resulting open space.
- Transferrable Development Rights - Use transferrable development rights to direct development to locations with adequate infrastructure and enable conservation-minded landowners to preserve their properties.
- Area Wide Cooperation - Coordinate environmental preservation efforts with neighboring jurisdictions, and establish an action plan targeting environmental concerns that require a regional approach.

Water Supply/Quality; Surface Water Quality

Protect the supply and quality of drinking water and protect surface water quality.

- E & S Control - Reduce erosion and sedimentation by requiring compliance with DEP regulations
- Stormwater - Adopt an up to date stormwater ordinance to control runoff through the use of best management practices.
- Water Quality - Consider the impacts of residential and nonresidential development on water quantity and quality and encourage the use of best management practices.
- Sewage Disposal - Monitor the effectiveness of on-lot sewage disposal systems and evaluate central sewage disposal as a means of correcting any widespread problems.
- Buffers - Establish setbacks/buffers for streams, lakes and wetlands.

- Well Ordinance - Apply well construction standards with a well ordinance in areas not served by community water supply.
- Community Water Supplies - Apply well head protection standards to maintain good drinking water quality.

Wildlife Habitat**Protect critical wildlife habitat areas.**

- Luzerne County Natural Areas Inventory - Protect sites of rare, threatened, and endangered species as identified in the Luzerne County Natural Areas Inventory.
- Forest - Conserve large forested areas that provide habitat.
- Corridors - Protect wildlife corridors, consisting of networked open space areas and stream corridors.

Ridge Lines/Scenic View**Conserve ridge lines and scenic view sheds.**

- Development Standards - Consider measures that will preserve the characteristics of important ridge lines and scenic view sheds by limiting the amount and type of clearing associated with development and controlling the location of buildings.

GOAL 4 - Community Facilities

Ensure that community facilities and services are provided to meet the needs of the Township.

Residents rely on community and public facilities and services to meet their transportation, educational, water supply, sewage disposal, police protection, emergency response, recreation and other daily living need. Municipalities, particularly rural municipalities such as Franklin Township, do not, and cannot, provide all the facilities and services required by residents. Instead, many such services are provided by other levels of government or volunteer organizations. Nevertheless, without diligent and ongoing attention to the operation and maintenance of existing facilities and services, and planning for new facilities and services, a municipality can fall short in adequately serving its residents.

Community facilities and utilities should be considered resources with limited capacities that are to be provided in appropriate places to support and implement a multi-municipal comprehensive plan. The location of certain key facilities, including water, sewer, schools, and roads, are often essential to providing the necessary services to accommodate more intensive residential and nonresidential development. Conversely, these services will facilitate unintended development in areas, such as important farming areas or areas with limiting natural resources, where growth may not be appropriate. The location of other services, facilities, and utilities should be considered in relation to their ability to support or conflict with the land use planning for the multi-municipal area. The land use planning should facilitate the efficient and economic provision of public, quasi-public, and privately provided community services wherever possible.

Source: *Planning Beyond Boundaries*, p. 3-18.

OBJECTIVES:**Public Facilities and Services****Maintain existing public facilities and services and plan carefully for new public facilities and services.**

- Maintenance - Provide necessary maintenance of existing municipal buildings, equipment and other community facilities to extend the useful life and forestall unnecessary capital expenditures.
- Efficiency - Manage all municipal facilities and services efficiently and effectively.
- Capital Improvements Program - Systematically identify the need for local municipal community facilities and services, including useful life replacement of existing facilities, and develop a capital budget to meet the needs.
- Water and Sewer Extensions - Evaluate the development of any central water supply or central sewage disposal service in terms of stimulating unwanted development.
- Cooperation - Encourage and participate in any area intergovernmental cooperation efforts for community facilities planning and economies of scale for joint purchasing, recreation and other facilities and services.
- Cable/Internet Access - Work with Comcast via a Township franchise ordinance to ensure universal access to cable television service high-speed (256 KBPS or higher) internet service.

- Cellular Telephone - As a matter of public safety, work with cellular communications providers to ensure the entire Township is adequately served with 3G service, including the federally mandated locating abilities for mobile phone users within the bounds of the zoning ordinance relative to tower location and antenna collocation.
- Child Care / Elder Care - Monitor the need for additional child care and elder care facilities and work with community organizations to meet any identified needs.
- Urgent Care Service - Encourage the County and regional health care providers to develop urgent care facilities to bridge the gap between doctors and emergency rooms to better use health care resources.

Emergency Services

Protect the Township with effective emergency services.

- Expanded Service - Identify isolated and under served areas and assess the need for expanded or additional fire and ambulance stations.
- Volunteer Organizations - Acknowledging the critical importance of such groups to the community, encourage and continue to support volunteer fire, ambulance and other public service organizations.
- Police Protection - Continue to rely on the State Police, but monitor the need for local police protection.
- Communications - Enhance public safety by ensuring local emergency management officials have access to television and radio broadcasts over-the-air and via cable and satellite providers.

Water Supply and Sewage Disposal

Ensure adequate water supplies and sewage disposal facilities.

- Well Ordinance - Apply well construction standards with a well ordinance in areas not served by community water supply.
- Community Water Supplies - Apply well head protection standards to maintain good drinking water quality.
- On-Site Sewage Systems - Ensure that on-site sewage systems are maintained, and that failing systems are repaired, and new systems are installed in accord with DEP standards.
- Sewage Disposal - Monitor the effectiveness of on-lot sewage disposal systems and evaluate soil-based central sewage disposal as a means of correcting any widespread problems.

Storm Water

Improve Stormwater Management.

- Existing Problems - Evaluate storm water management facilities and develop a plan to address existing problems.

- Improvements - Include require stormwater management improvements in the capital improvements program.
- Innovative Controls - Incorporate innovative stormwater management techniques into new development projects consistent with Department of Environmental Protection and any adopted stormwater management plan.
- Education - Address existing problems with stormwater runoff through outreach and education of landowners.

New Development

Ensure that an adequate and safe water supply system, a proper sewage disposal system, well designed and constructed roads, stormwater management and other facilities are provided by developers as part of any residential or commercial development.

- SALDO - Periodically update the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to include standards to ensure most current and sound development practices.

GOAL 5 - Circulation System

Establish and maintain an adequate circulation system to safely and efficiently move people and goods.

Safe and well maintained roads are vital to all communities, serving not only as the means of travel within the community, but as the direct link to the region and beyond. No major state routes cross Franklin Township, with Eighth Street (State Route 1021) serving as the primary route between the Village of Orange in the center of the Township to West Wyoming Borough and the greater Wilkes-Barre area. Local officials must plan carefully to ensure adequate funding for the improvement and maintenance of locally-owned roads. Franklin Township owns and maintains 15.96 miles of roads, PennDOT owns 11.18 miles, and Luzerne County owns 6.96 miles. Land use management tools must consider the capacity of roads, directing commercial and higher density development to areas served by roads capable of carrying increased traffic and the trucks necessary to serve commercial establishments.

Circulation - Planners typically talk about "circulation" rather than transportation because circulation (getting around) is the goal of the citizens they serve, whereas transportation is just a method of achieving that goal. A good circulation plan includes more than streets and roads – it includes means of pedestrian and bicycle circulation and, in many communities, some form of mass transportation.

Although good circulation plans involve more than roads, the starting point for an existing conditions analysis of circulation is a map of streets and highways in the community.

Source: *Community Planning, an Introduction to the Comprehensive Plan*, p. 80.

OBJECTIVES:**Classification**

Inventory and classify according to function all public roads and bridges, and assess maintenance and safety concerns and the improvements needed.

- Road Task Force - Consider organizing a local Road Task Force with nearby municipalities to address regional traffic impacts and highway improvement needs.
- Planning - Actively participate in all County and PennDOT highway planning programs.
- Improvements Program - Develop a local road and intersection maintenance and capital improvements program.

Local Actions

Develop a coordinated Township program to maintain an adequate capacity of the road network.

- Development Location - Limit higher density and higher traffic impact development to areas with adequate highway capacity.
- Parking and Access - Require adequate off-street parking and loading, limit curb cuts, and require well designed access points.
- New Development - Maintain up-to-date standards for construction of new subdivision roads.
- Road Linkages - Include the consideration of through road connections as part of the development review process.

- Road Dedication - Continue the policy of not accepting development roads for public dedication unless the road serves a clear benefit that accrues to the public as a whole and not only residents of the development.
- Official Map - Using an official map, establish and reserve public street alignments and adequate rights-of-way for planned street improvements.

Pedestrians and Bicyclists

Consider the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in all transportation planning.

GOAL 6 - Housing

Provide for secure and sound housing in a variety of types and densities.

Families and individuals of all income levels live and work in the Township with homes ranging from very modest mobile homes to more recently constructed *McMansions*. Families with low to moderate incomes need continued access to decent and affordable housing with proper community facilities. The special needs of young families looking for their first home and senior citizens on fixed incomes must be addressed. Similar to commercial development, the Township can employ zoning to direct housing types and densities to the most appropriate locations. Conservation subdivision design with a density bonus and allowing multi-family dwellings as part of conservation design in all zoning districts are examples.

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires *a plan to meet the housing needs of present residents and of those individuals and families anticipated to reside in the municipality, which may include conservation of presently sound housing, rehabilitation of housing in declining neighborhoods and the accommodation of expected new housing in different dwelling types and at appropriate densities for households of all income levels.*

Zoning must provide for housing of various dwelling types encompassing all basic forms of housing, including single-family and two-family dwellings, and a reasonable range of multifamily dwellings in various arrangements, mobile homes and mobile home parks.

OBJECTIVES:**Current Residents**

Meet the housing needs of current Township residents.

- Sound Housing - Encourage preservation of presently sound housing.
- Rehabilitation - Promote rehabilitation of houses in decline.
- Housing Programs - Encourage participation in all county, state and federal housing rehabilitation and assistance programs to ensure residents receive full benefit from such programs.
- Maintenance - Consider adopting standards which require the maintenance of dwellings to prevent dilapidation.

Housing Growth

Accommodate anticipated housing growth in appropriate locations, at appropriate densities, and with suitable amenities.

- Location - Coordinate the location of new housing with pending road improvements
- Density - Provide for varying densities suited to the Townships' character and landscape.
- Multi-Family - Allow multi-family dwellings in conservation design in all zoning districts at the same density as single-family dwellings.
- Amenities - Provide for recreation and open space amenities within residential developments

Types and Affordability**Provide a diversity of housing types and affordability levels.**

- Senior Housing - Encourage the development of nursing homes, adult care centers, assisted living facilities and other housing types which provide amenities that are attractive to retirees.
- Type and Density - Allow residential development of various types in suitable areas at a density sufficiently high to moderate the land cost of the increasing cost of housing, while requiring adequate off street parking, water supply and sewage disposal.
- Fair Share - Ensure that the Township provides for its required *fair share* of housing in any land use management ordinances.
- Innovative Design - Advocate conservation design, village style or traditional neighborhood development.
- Incentives - Consider density and design incentives to encourage the development of age-restricted and affordable housing.

GOAL 7 - Historic Resources**Protect historic resources as an important part of the character of the Township.**

A number of historic sites and structures are found in Franklin Township, ranging from residences and outbuildings, to churches, to a former Grange Hall. Buildings were erected as part of a growing community, and although many of the early structures are now gone, the many which remain add tremendously to the character of the community. In addition to buildings, stone walls and fences are significant historic features throughout the Township. Originally an integral part of early agricultural practices, stone walls and fences are now being incorporated into home design and as the prime feature in landscaping. The preservation of historic buildings and other features, and encouraging new development to be consistent with the existing historic character are critical to the future of the community.

Pennsylvania has more than 100,000 historic resources identified by the National Register of Historic Places. Thousands more could be identified across the state, in cities, towns and villages, and rural areas. This rich heritage is under threat-from abandonment and demolition of decaying urban building stock, destruction of rural landscapes and prime farmland for housing and business, and highway construction to accommodate the tidal wave of trucking and passenger traffic. As with our natural resources, we must strengthen our values and develop strategies to maintain our historic resources. Historic resources are worth saving. Without these resources, communities would lose their integrity, identity, and their attractiveness to newcomers. The goal is to strike a balance between development and saving what's important to the community's past.

Source: Better Models for Development in Pennsylvania, p. 83.

OBJECTIVES:**Historical Society**

Work with the Luzerne County Historical Society to promote historic preservation in the Township.

- Historical Society - Consider the creation of a local historical society.

Identify and Evaluate

Develop an inventory of historic resources and evaluate the resources for register status.

- Historic Register - Based on the historic resources inventory, create a local historic register and consider nomination of qualifying structures and places to the National Register of Historic Places.

Adaptive Reuse

Encourage the adaptive reuse of historic resources.

- Adaptive Use - Allow the adaptive use of large older homes to enable owners to adequately maintain the structures.

Design Guidelines

Develop guidelines for residential and commercial development to encourage historically sensitive design.

Education

Educate property owners on the significance and value of historic resources, and of the opportunities for their preservation.

Funding

Identify funding sources for historic preservation.

GOAL 8 - Recreation and Heritage
Provide adequate recreation facilities and programs for Township residents and conserve open space.

The Township owns and maintains a park on the Township Building parcel and, under the direction of the Township Recreation Board, a Master Site Plan for the Park has recently been completed. Cooperation among area municipalities, the School District, and sports leagues will be critical to meeting long term recreation needs. Funding for the continued maintenance of facilities, particularly new facilities, is a critical issue.

National Recreation and Parks Association
We believe that parks and recreation:

- *Enhances the human potential by providing facilities, services and programs that meet the emotional, social and physical needs of communities.*
- *Articulates environmental values through ecologically responsible management and environmental education programs.*
- *Promotes individual and community wellness that enhances the quality of life for all citizens.*
- *Utilizes holistic approaches to promote cultural understanding, economic development, family public health and safety, by working in coalitions and partnerships with allied organizations.*
- *Facilitates and promotes the development of grassroots, self-help initiatives in communities across the country.*

Source: <http://www.nrpa.org>.

OBJECTIVES:

Coordinated System

Create a coordinated system of parks and recreation facilities available to Township residents.

Benefits of Parks and Recreation

- Source of community pride.
- Increased property values.
- Attracts and retains businesses.
- Primary factor in quality of life.
- Provides opportunities for fun and play.
- Builds strong family bonds, the foundation of our society.

- Existing Facilities - Focus on maintaining and improving existing Township recreation facilities.
- Master Plan - Use the Township Park Master Plan as the foundation for recreation planning.
- Improvements - Ensure improvements at existing facilities are made in accord with an overall plan and all facilities are maintained.
- Future Needs - Monitor population growth and demographic changes and consider the recreation needs of all age groups.
- Standards - Ensure that all facilities meet current safety and handicapped accessibility requirements.
- Official Map - Show planned recreation facilities on an Official Map to ensure that the land can be acquired.
- Cooperation - Work with area municipalities, the School District, and community recreation organizations to improve recreation facilities and programs.

Efficiency

Provide an efficient parks and recreation management system.

- Staff - Provide adequate staff to manage and maintain facilities to maximize effectiveness of Township and volunteer resources.
- Capital Expenditures - Consider land acquisition and capital improvements carefully in terms of community needs and the Township’s ability to finance and

maintain new facilities.

- Management Plan - Develop a management plan that clearly identifies management needs and assigns responsibilities.
- Communication - Establish clear communication channels among the Board of Supervisors, Recreation Board, assigned staff and volunteers.

Natural Heritage

Preserve the natural heritage of the Township by conserving large blocks of open space and scenic areas.

Benefits of Open Land Preservation

- Maintains and honors a link to the past.
- Provides a legacy for future generations.
- A source of community pride.
- Maintains overall community property values.
- Sustains the local recreation economy.
- Promotes environmental health.
- Preserves the quality of life.
- Maintains the viability of the forest industry.

- Land Protection - Work with landowners and land trusts to encourage the use of an array of land protection options including conservation easements, land donations, and bargain sale of land to trusts and other conservation organizations.
- Land Stewardship - Promote land stewardship by supporting the conservation and public education efforts of Luzerne County, land trusts and other conservation organizations.
- Key Parcels - Identify key parcels of land and focus preservation efforts on these parcels via acquisition, easement, or allowing innovative development techniques.
- Innovate Development design - Incorporate innovate design options in the Township zoning ordinance and subdivision and land development ordinance such as conservation subdivision design and transfer of development rights.
- Local Funding - Explore options for the funding of acquisition of conservation easements including the use of local tax funds.

Funding

Establish stable, equitable funding to support open space and recreation actions.

- Continued Funding - Continue to budget Township funds for park and recreation facilities in concert with the increasing population and expanding tax base.
- Capital Budget - Develop a capital improvements budget to set money aside for anticipated facility needs.
- Operation and Maintenance - Always consider long term operation and maintenance costs as part of funding requirements.
- Grants - Use local capital expenditure funds to leverage grants for planning, acquisition and development.