

## 2009 Comprehensive Plan Goal Statements

### **1. Growth Management**

*Goals: Grow in a harmonious way that maintains the character of the Township by providing a transition from urban to rural areas as demonstrated by the Rural to Urban Transect. Keep the pace of growth consistent with the Township's ability to install infrastructure in a fiscally responsible manner.*

*Goal Statements:*

- 1.1 Closely relate and coordinate future land use and transportation.
- 1.2 Promote denser development around existing villages and neighborhoods.
- 1.3 Provide opportunities for attractive, more creative new villages of appropriate size and location.
- 1.4 Calibrate growth management with zoning ordinance amendments.
- 1.5 Evaluate future character areas and density options north of Huckleberry Ridge and determine a long-term vision for this area.
- 1.6 Evaluate the long-term viability and appropriate location for industrial uses and zoning in the Township.
- 1.7 Review the growth management plan frequently to keep it fresh and up to date.
- 1.8 Evaluate the use of impact fees as a growth management tool.

### **2. Innovative Planning & Zoning Tools and Design Techniques**

*Goal: Incorporate state-of-the-art planning and zoning techniques to create attractive neighborhoods, mixed use, and nonresidential areas that promote walkability and are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.*

*Goal Statements:*

- 2.1 Incorporate mixed-use techniques into the Zoning Ordinance in order to create village and neighborhood centers in lieu of strip-style development.
- 2.2 Promote villages/hamlets as a form of cluster development (increase amount of open space traditionally incorporated into the existing villages).
- 2.3 Evaluate the use of overlay district zoning to protect and enhance existing villages.
- 2.4 Assess appropriate uses and locations for flex zoning.
- 2.5 Evaluate the potential for incorporating features of Form-based Codes into the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.
- 2.6 Incorporate "architectural zoning" to provide more aesthetic standards.
- 2.7 Reevaluate the usefulness of the R-10 (Residential) Zoning District and assess Planned Unit Development (PUD)/Planned Residential Development (PRD) alternatives that permit higher density development with more sophisticated design standards.
- 2.8 Evaluate the incorporation of techniques that encourage "Green Building", LEED-ND (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development), and sources of renewable energy into the Township Code.

### **3. Building and Maintaining Walkable Communities & Villages**

*Goals: Design new neighborhoods and retrofit existing places to be mixed use, walkable places, where daily tasks can be performed within a ½ mile. Emulate the character of existing villages like Cetronia, Greenawalds and Guthsville in new development and celebrate their visual cues. Promote intergenerational neighborhoods.*

*Goal Statements:*

- 3.1 Permit diversity in building style/types.
- 3.2 Incorporate appropriate criteria for infill development in and around existing villages.
- 3.3 Reevaluate "non-conforming uses" in light of promoting mixed use neighborhoods.
- 3.4 Incorporate open space into new and existing neighborhoods that meets the needs of the community.
- 3.5 Require developers to include walking paths and/or sidewalks in new commercial and residential developments as part of the SALDO parks and recreation contribution.
- 3.6 Develop a Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan that: evaluates the pedestrian/sidewalk network to inventory and prioritize gaps and needed improvements; establishes design and safety standards; and develops a list of grants and other funding sources for needed improvements.
- 3.7 Amend the Zoning Ordinance to: require sidewalks be installed on at least one side of the street in all new developments to connect existing and planned shopping, employment and residential areas; and to provide rigorous criteria for waivers.

### **4. Protection of Natural, Historic & Agricultural Resources**

*Goal: Optimize the protection, conservation and preservation of natural resources, historic sites and farmland in a balanced land use approach.*

*Goal Statements*

- 4.1 Protect water quality by incorporating the latest techniques for riparian buffer zones for streams, surface waters, and wetlands and providing protections for wellheads and recharge areas.
- 4.2 Consider effects of development on steep slopes and determine appropriate protection levels for steep slopes, while conserving the low, flatlands.
- 4.3 Evaluate appropriate protection levels for woodlands, and protection/replacement of shade trees and shade tree canopy.
- 4.4 Require additional investigation and studies for development proposed on sites that have underlying karst/carbonate geology.
- 4.5 Support and invest in the regional greenways concept to link the Township's "green infrastructure", which includes Covered Bridge Park.
- 4.6 Activate the South Whitehall Township Environmental Advisory Council (EAC).
- 4.7 Work with the Wildlands Conservancy, Lehigh County and others who can partner to conserve natural areas.
- 4.8 Promote historic preservation throughout the Township.
- 4.9 Preserve our covered bridges, historic barns, and historic neighborhoods, and visual amenities.
- 4.10 Document historical sites in order to ensure identification of all potential historical edifices and features.
- 4.11 Involve local historical societies, historians at local colleges and universities, and other interested parties in preservation efforts.
- 4.12 Explore state/county farm preservation programs as they might relate to South Whitehall Township farms.
- 4.13 Evaluate and increase percentage of South Whitehall land under preservation/conservation.
- 4.14 Assess the public's view on farmland preservation and use of taxpayer money to preserve more farms in South Whitehall Township.
- 4.15 Consider farmland protection through purchase of development rights.

### **5. Parks, Recreation & Open Space**

*Goals: (Parks & Recreation Plan)*

*Goal Statements:*

- 5.1 Maintain Covered Bridge Park and acquire additional open space along the Jordan Creek.
- 5.2 Maintain and implement an up-to-date comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan for the Township.
- 5.3 Consider the Lehigh County Plan for Parks & Recreation when planning for Township Open Space.
- 5.4 Promote neighborhood parks where needed.
- 5.5 Create shared open space at edges of adjacent new development for smaller multi-neighborhood parks.
- 5.6 Give high consideration to open space as we grow.
- 5.7 Preserve quality open space in the northern tier.
- 5.8 Consider returning some active open space to passive open space if not needed.
- 5.9 Define and provide improved standards for different types of active and passive open space in the Zoning Ordinance and SALDO.

## **6. Housing Opportunities and Choices**

*Goal: Provide a variety of housing and neighborhood choices for families of all sizes, abilities and income levels in the Township.*

*Goal Statements:*

- 6.1 Evaluate the housing opportunities, particularly in the rural area.
- 6.2 Assess the benefits of mixed-use communities.
- 6.3 Assess the benefits of mixed-use buildings in appropriate locations.
- 6.4 Evaluate housing affordability in the Township.
- 6.5 Evaluate age-qualified housing needs in the Township

## **7. Transportation Efficiency & Effectiveness**

*Goal: Facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods now and as the Township grows. Promote multimodal circulation, particularly walkability, throughout the Township.*

*Goal Statements:*

- 7.1 Identify transportation improvements needed to alleviate existing problems and avoid future conflicts resulting from growth and development
- 7.2 Use the Official Map to lay out potential/probable sites for new roadways in advance of submitted plans for land use
- 7.3 Promote opportunities for alternative transportation means, such as walking, biking and increased bus service.
- 7.4 Provide the opportunity for neighborhood shopping (for convenience items) and Live-Work units (a form of “zero-commute housing”) to reduce the number of vehicle trips and congestion on local roadways.
- 7.5 Provide opportunities for Park & Ride sites near I-78/Rt. 22/Rt. 309 and other areas to encourage carpooling.
- 7.6 Consider mass transit in site planning for more efficient access to this type of transportation.
- 7.7 Amend the Township zoning map so that the traffic-related intensity of permitted uses is appropriate to the capabilities of the existing and planned road network.
- 7.8 Reevaluate the viability and design of cul-de-sacs due to their potential to cumulatively create traffic congestion on the collector roads.
- 7.9 Increase the number of secondary north/south and east/west routes in the Township.
- 7.10 Consider establishing official transportation districts as part of an Act 209 Plan in order to provide an opportunity for future impact fees.
- 7.11 Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and program that will properly prioritize transportation improvement projects by evaluating the urgency of an improvement with the cost of that improvement.
- 7.12 Work closely with LVPC and adjacent municipalities on regional transportation issues.
- 7.13 Establish a citizen advisory group that focuses on traffic problems.
- 7.14 Define the role, scope and feasibility of uses for the existing rail line.

## **8. Municipal Infrastructure & Services**

*Goal: Develop performance measures and benchmarks for all municipal services and utilities and expand or refine municipal functions to satisfactorily meet them as the Township grows.*

*Goal statements:*

- 8.1 Continue to support volunteer fire/ambulance services vs. paid full-time services with Township funding and policy.
- 8.2 Continue to support Township policing efforts.
- 8.3 Develop and maintain consistency between land use and sewage systems/public water systems plans.
- 8.4 Match Infrastructure with affordability based on new zoning areas and anticipated tax revenues.
- 8.5 Consider alternative options for sewer treatment, particularly in the Jordan Valley.
- 8.6 Examine the feasibility of the Township's future sewage treatment capacity at the Allentown plant.
- 8.7 Examine tools to better protect water supply sources and recharge areas, including a wellhead protection ordinance and a riparian buffer ordinance.
- 8.8 Maximize use of the Township Municipal Authority.
- 8.9 Create and annually review a five-year Capital Improvements Plan that prioritizes capital projects and informs the yearly budget and work program prior to the budget each year.
- 8.10 Develop a goal-oriented, performance-based municipal services budget with Activity-Based Costing to replace the line item budget.
- 8.11 Consider employing user fees to a greater degree to support municipal services.
- 8.12 Explore cooperation with adjacent municipalities and the County for municipal services.
- 8.13 Ensure Township has adequate space for vehicles, equipment and personnel.
- 8.14 Clarify Township boundary confusion regarding municipal services, with neighboring municipalities.
- 8.15 Consider developing a landfill policy.

## **9. Economic Viability**

*Goal: Strengthen the tax base through planned land use.*

*Goal Statements:*

- 9.1 Keep planned development in step with infrastructure growth and the Township's fiscal capabilities.
- 9.2 Encourage business development in targeted areas.
- 9.3 Explore light industrial versus heavy industrial uses in the Township.
- 9.4 Manage transportation constraints to economic development.
- 9.5 Recognize the implications of development on the Parkland School District.
- 9.6 Involve the Chamber of Commerce and local businesses in planning.
- 9.7 Encourage low-impact home occupations as opportunities to grow small businesses.

## **10. Regional Coordination**

*Goal: Work with LVPC, Lehigh County, and adjacent municipalities to coordinate and share services where feasible.*

*Goal Statements:*

- 10.1 Give consideration to growing in context with adjacent municipalities and the LVPC Comprehensive Plan.
- 10.2 Coordinate transit, roads, recreation, and public safety with regional partners.
- 10.3 Work with Lehigh County to obtain grants fostering cooperation with adjacent municipalities (e.g., Park & Recreation's Comprehensive Plan with North Whitehall Township), while maintaining our own identity and needs.