

Chapter 2

Goals and Objectives

The Comprehensive Plan forms a vision for Horsham Township's future. A statement of community goals and objectives helps to achieve the vision and provides direction for assessing proposals for new development and assists in decision making by the Township Council and Planning Commission. The goals contained herein incorporate the goals from the *1978 and 1989 Comprehensive Plan Update*, and the *2003 Horsham Township Park and Recreation Plan*. New goals and objectives associated with the Horsham Township Comprehensive Plan Update 2011 are noted in this chapter.

Land Use

1. **Residential Land** - Permit residential development in those areas of the Township that have public services (such as water, sewer, drainage systems, improved roads and access to municipal parks). In the comprehensive plan these areas are known as future growth area(s). See also Growth Management Goals.

Objectives

- All major developers of residential developments will be required to submit an environmental impact statement. This 1989 objective has been achieved via the adoption in the Zoning Ordinance of environmental standards with net out provisions of restricted areas, avoidance of disturbance of woodlands and riparian corridors (2011).
 - Limit the development of scattered housing along public roads. All subdivision of three or more houses should provide, (wherever necessary for transportation purposes) their own road; and every house must install curb, gutter, sidewalks (when needed) and capped water and sewer lines where public sewer is not readily available.
2. **Housing** - In order to provide a variety of housing, areas in some of the growth area districts will be set aside for multifamily housing. Zoning alternatives will provide for a balanced mix of dwelling types. This 1989 goal has been achieved based on the existing proportion of high density single and multi-family housing vs. that proportion currently existing in Montgomery County (2011).

Objective

- To provide for a variety of housing types and densities, with an emphasis on planned, environmentally sensitive low density neighborhoods.
3. **Open Space Land – Agricultural Land** - Every effort will be made to preserve golf courses, agricultural lands, other open areas, and environmentally sensitive lands.

Objectives

- Promote the retention of the few agricultural lands remaining.
 - Many land preservation devices will be developed in the Growth Management Program (which will implement the comprehensive plan). Chief among these programs that may be employed are zoning, agricultural preservation, floodplain management, deferred taxing policies, a land conservation program, and leaseback arrangements.
4. **Commercial Land** - Confine new commercial growth along Route 611 and to locations near existing shopping centers that are presently zoned for commercial purposes.

Objectives

- The commercial areas at Route 309 and Welsh Road; at Welsh Road between Limekiln Pike and Norristown Road; Horsham and Drescher Roads and County Line Road and Route 611 should be preserved at their present zoned boundaries and not allowed to expand.
- A highway commercial zone should be designed for the areas along Route 611; a special study should be made to redesign this commercial strip. Automobile and pedestrian movement should be integrated and visual amenities improved. Redevelopment and revitalization remain a primary goal for 2011 – please see Chapter 9, for specific recommendations regarding the Easton Road - Route 611 corridor (2011).
- Support and assist the joint efforts of property owners and business operators to improve conditions in the older commercial areas. Redevelopment and revitalization remain a priority issue in 2011 for the Village Mall situated along Blair Mill Road and Moreland Avenue (2011).

5. **Industrial Land** - Industrial development will be concentrated in those areas containing adequate water, sewer, drainage and highway facilities. Specifically, industrial development will be encouraged in the Blair Mill Road industrial area and the industrially zoned area along Route 611 (to the east).

Objective

- All new industrial development must be accompanied by an environmental impact statement that answers all questions concerning the biota, the economic, and the fiscal and social impacts on the Township.

6. **Transition Areas** – Develop a strategy for vacant properties adjacent to commercial areas and situated along major highways.

Objective

- Develop land use districts that are compatible with residential neighborhoods that have smaller buildings and less intensity than those impacts normally associated with commercial operations.

Naval Air Station

1. Goal – Develop a master plan for future use of the facility subsequent to the use by the military. See Chapter 9, Recommendations, which lists specific concepts to be considered in connection with reutilization of the NAS surplus property (2011).

Objectives

- Eliminate future use as an airport.
- Evaluate the need of lands for through routing of traffic.
- Protect environmentally sensitive areas and important buffers along adjacent residential and recreational uses.
- Confirm that previous plan goals that stated restricted development at both ends of runway are no longer relevant.

Utilities

1. Sewage facilities – Water facilities

Goal - Provide sewage and water facilities throughout the Township.

Objectives

- Water and sewer facilities should be timed to permit service to the populations projected in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Cost to serve new development should be absorbed by those benefiting from the utility service.
- Establish land use growth patterns that can be accommodated by existing and projected future capabilities of the public sewage and water systems.

School Facilities and Public Buildings

Goal - To provide public facilities to meet the needs of the Horsham residents. Previously, Township residents expressed a desire for public facilities, such as a Library, within the Township. Note that this 1989 goal has been achieved (2011).

Objectives:

- A location, financing and timing plan should be undertaken to accomplish these goals.
- To work with the School District of Hatboro-Horsham to determine the type and amount of additional school facilities to meet the needs of existing and future residents.

Transportation

1. Goal - To protect, maintain and improve the carrying capacity of the Township's highway network and to make improvements that will eliminate or avoid hazardous conditions.

Objectives

- To undertake a highway improvement study of the major Township roads that will identify capacity deficiencies and hazards under current conditions and in light of anticipated growth.
- To include specific standards, criteria and procedures for traffic impact analysis into the municipal land use ordinances and to require an evaluation of the impact on the capacity of the road system for conditional uses, special exceptions and zoning change requests.

- To require an analysis of the impact on the road system to identify needed off-site improvements and to avoid hazardous conditions for major subdivisions and land developments. Note that this 1978 objective has been implemented by the adoption of requirement for the payment of impact fees based on mandatory traffic impact studies (2011).
 - To develop access criteria for minor subdivisions and major subdivisions and land developments along the Township's roads.
 - To develop a capital improvements program for needed highway improvements.
 - To develop funding programs whereby the costs of needed improvements are shared by the Township, the state and the builders.
 - To establish a transportation authority or to participate in a regional transportation organization to implement needed highway improvements.
2. Goal – Encourage the expansion of mass transit opportunities (2011).

Objectives:

- Create opportunities – likely to be in the form of additional bus routes – to connect to major employment and shopping destinations as well as those SEPTA rail stations nearby such as Ambler, Fort Washington, Warminster, Hatboro and Willow Grove (2011).
- Add attractive bus shelters and waiting areas to promote transit ridership (2011).

Township Park and Recreation (excerpted from the 2003 *Horsham Township Park and Recreation Plan*)

1. Goal – Create a park and recreation system that provides finest quality active and passive parks and recreation facilities that are intended to satisfy the needs of residents of all ages.

Objectives

- Deliver attractive and safe parks and facilities.
- Offer a broad range and level of structured recreation programs for individuals and groups to participate in active and passive activities that meet resident needs and interests.

- Create a park and recreation agency that is a model of excellence and efficiency by providing quality, user-friendly customer service that consistently supplies complete and accurate information and assistance.
2. Goal - To increase recreational opportunities for all age groups in those areas that are not presently convenient to public recreational facilities.

Objectives

- To work in coordination with the Horsham Park and Recreation Board to obtain suitable recreation sites. Note that this 1978 objective is under way based on the creation of the 2003 Township Park and Recreation Plan (2011).
- Develop a master plan for Kohler Park – Master Plan completed and moving toward funding and implementation (2011).
- Review and update the Park and Recreation Plan to reflect increased needs based on changing population and demographic trends.
- Establish a system of interconnecting spaces with trail links for pedestrians and bicyclists. Note that the development of the Power Line Trail is implementing this objective (2011).

Growth Management, Environmental Protection and Historic Preservation

1. Goal - To guide the form, location and timing of growth in order to protect the natural environment, enhance the man-made environment, bring balance to the mix of land uses in the community and consider appropriate land use for strategically located parcels that are likely to experience change during the plan horizon period of ten years. See also Smart Growth at Goal #4 (page 2-8) (2011).

Objectives

- To locate medium and high density development near transportation and commercial facilities which are served or are intended to be served by sewer and water services, safe roads with adequate capacities, and other services including schools, parks, playgrounds, open space, police services, fire protection, etc. It should be noted for a large part of the Township this Growth Management objective has been achieved. However, smart growth initiatives for large tracts of twenty (20) acres or greater are to be encouraged (2011).
- To provide for an appropriate balance of land uses which includes a variety of housing types as well as a diversity of nonresidential types of developed uses.

- To develop Township programs and procedures that will coordinate the provision for all Township facilities and services including sewer and water services, road improvements, stormwater facilities, parkland acquisition or improvement, police services, etc.
 - To develop new methods of funding services and facilities to meet the needs of current and future residents.
2. Goal – To protect the people’s right to clean air, pure water and the other natural and historic resources, and to guarantee a quality environment for present and future residents of Horsham Township.

Objectives

- Preserve environmentally sensitive and ecologically fragile lands.
 - To develop natural resource protection standards and incorporate these in zoning and subdivision/land development ordinances. Note that the Zoning Ordinance has been updated with many such regulations (2011).
 - To ensure proper collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater and to remedy conditions where pollution exists.
 - To incorporate mandatory open space requirements in Township ordinances for intensive residential developments.
 - Participate when practicable in County, State and Federal programs to support the acquisition or preservation of open space as documented in the Township Open Space Plan.
3. Goal - Protect and preserve the Township’s historic sites such as Graeme Park and Keith House, and noteworthy Class I historic buildings.

Objectives

- Create a workable resource protection strategy for protecting historic resources as well as historically valuable streetscapes.
- Provide proactive incentives for preservation of historic resources, including reuse of historic buildings compatible with surrounding land uses.

- It should be noted that the Zoning Ordinance has been updated to provide for mandatory preservation of Class I and Class II historic resources (demolition requires a special exception) along with reuse incentives supported by the Historic Resource Overlay District in the Zoning Ordinance, subject to review and advice by the Township Historical Advisory Commission (2011).
4. Goal (2011) – Develop practices and techniques to promote smart growth consistent with the following objectives:

Objectives (based on the American Planning Association Growing Smart Project):

- Use land resources more efficiently through compact building forms, infill development, and moderation in street and parking standards where practicable to lessen land consumption and preserve natural resources.
- Support the location of stores, offices, residences, schools and recreation facilities within walking distance of each other in compact neighborhoods.
- Provide a variety of housing choices that appeal to all age groups, family sizes and varied levels of affordability.
- Support walking and cycling as attractive alternatives to driving; and create alternate street forms that disperse traffic and lower traffic speeds in neighborhoods.
- Connect infrastructure and development decisions to minimize future costs where residents use existing services and facilities; require new development to satisfy its infrastructure needs on-site or through capital contributions to offset costs to the public.