

II. Planning Goals & Objectives

A. OVERVIEW

These Goals and Objectives relate to a 10 to 15 year vision for Conewago Township. Changes to land use and the pattern of development in the Township through the year 2020 should be guided by these statements of policy and preference. These statements also serve as the “community development objectives” for the Zoning Ordinance, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), Act 247, as Amended.

The Goals, Objectives and Strategies were drafted during Public Workshops held during 2006 and 2007.

The Goals are general statements that reflect what Conewago Township envisions relative to the major elements of a Comprehensive Plan as required by the MPC, including: land use (residential, industrial, commercial, agricultural, recreational); transportation; utilities; community facilities; and the preservation of prime agricultural lands, floodplains and other areas.

The Objectives and Strategies are aimed at addressing each of the goals, either as an element of the Comprehensive Plan, or as an implementation measure. Collectively, the objectives and strategies are meant as a list of “action items” to be addressed as part of the planning process of the Township over the next several years.

The 10 Goals of this Comprehensive Plan are:

- Goal 1: Maintain a Balanced Pattern of Development
- Goal 2: Minimize the Sprawling Effect of Development
- Goal 3: Protect and Conserve Natural Features and Resources
- Goal 4: Maintain and Enhance Transportation/Circulation Systems
- Goal 5: Maintain and Upgrade Utility Systems
- Goal 6: Provide for Needed Land Uses
- Goal 7: Provide for Needed Community Facilities
- Goal 8: Promote a Diversity and Rehabilitation of Housing Types
- Goal 9: Maintain Sound Fiscal Policies and Programs
- Goal 10: Continue Participation in Regional Planning

These Goals are clarified on the following pages, with Objectives and Strategies for each.

GOAL 1: MAINTAIN A BALANCED PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT

Objective and Strategies:

1. Continue to maintain a character of developed areas in compact arrangements, with farmland and natural areas serving as separators.
2. Promote development toward existing developed areas and lands designated for development to help with the safeguarding of farmlands and undeveloped areas.

3. Concentrate development around and adjacent to the Boroughs and existing neighborhoods such as:
 - the Borough of Hanover
 - the Borough of McSherrystown
 - Midway
 - Diller Village
 - Edgegrove
 - Brushtown, and
 - Mt. Pleasant
4. Strive to keep the Hanover Shoe Farm and the Conewago Chapel Basilica properties as significant scenic and agricultural amenities, to aid in the balancing of the developed/undeveloped character of the Township.
5. Strive to maintain the other prime agricultural lands, in order to promote the visual and spatial relief between developed and undeveloped areas.
6. Promote “in-fill” development in existing areas of settlement and community to reinforce and add value to existing neighborhoods.
7. Encourage “in-fill” development in existing areas of settlement and community by minimizing ordinance restrictions to enhance the appeal of “infill.”
8. Promote re-use of existing properties and buildings to prevent impervious encroachment into pervious lands.
9. Encourage cluster development to preserve open space.
10. Control the expansion and extension of utilities infrastructure with a view toward continuing a balanced pattern of development.
11. Encourage and support studies for determining the sustainability of water resources and its associated infrastructure from increasing development.

GOAL 2: MINIMIZE THE SPRAWLING EFFECT OF DEVELOPMENT

Objective and Strategies:

1. Limit growth areas with the creation and implementation of urban growth boundaries to avoid a suburban sprawl pattern of development by creating boundaries to the expansion of existing neighborhoods and subdivisions.
2. Promote development around and adjacent to the Boroughs and existing neighborhoods such as:
 - the Boroughs of Hanover and McSherrystown
 - Midway and Diller Village
 - Edgegrove
 - Brushtown, and
 - Mt. Pleasant

3. Promote more R-2 development in the form of a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) with smaller lots, sidewalks, front porches, street/shade trees, on-street parking, and detached garages in rear yards.
4. Encourage the mixing of compatible uses, walkable communities and conserving open space by promoting Traditional Neighborhood Development.
5. Require tree plantings, hedgerows, hedges, buffer plantings, and other natural landscape treatment to screen the effects of existing sprawl-like subdivisions such as: Granny Estates, Conewago Drive, Plum Run View, Conewago Estates and Sherry Village.
6. Implement Transfer Development Rights (TDR) as a way of protecting farmlands by encouraging urban development in areas dedicated for residential and commercial development.
7. Promote cluster and TND development as a means of creating a more compact arrangement for future housing and as a means of defining open space around and on the perimeter of new neighborhoods.
8. Revise zoning district boundaries and development density to promote a more compact form of development.
9. Institute strict zoning regulations on agricultural lands to make the residential development process more difficult.

GOAL 3: PROTECT AND CONSERVE NATURAL AND HISTORICAL FEATURES AND RESOURCES

Objective and Strategies:

1. Create an open space and recreational network along streams, especially Conewago Creek and Plum Creek.
2. Encourage TND and cluster development as a means of preserving woodlands, wetlands, wet and hydric soils, floodplains, steep slopes and scenic areas.
3. Conserve prime agricultural lands, especially those with prime agricultural soils, and those of the Hanover Shoe Farms and the Conewago Chapel Basilica.
4. Strengthen ordinance provisions related to the protection of land and water resources.
5. Promote forward thinking in the approach of protecting our water resources by utilizing new methods and technologies in stormwater collection, control and management.
6. Limit the removal of existing woodlands, especially due to the fact that little woodland remains in Conewago Township.
7. Require the replacement of large trees, which are removed during land development, with smaller trees in effort to promote reforestation.
8. Limit development in areas of carbonate geologic constraint.

9. Require mitigation of the adverse environmental effects of land development through the restoration of natural landscapes.
10. Implement new zoning district overlays such as “natural resource conservation area” and “riparian buffers” to protect environmentally sensitive areas such as steep slopes, wetlands, floodplains/floodways, prime agricultural soils, wooded areas, carbonate geologic areas, streams, etc.
11. Protect the attractiveness of undeveloped areas from the debilitating effects of development as a means of maintaining the natural and scenic character of the Township.
12. Create an EAC (Environmental Advisory Council).

GOAL 4: MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE TRANSPORTATION/CIRCULATION SYSTEMS

Objective and Strategies:

1. Improve traffic controls at critical intersections and along main transportation routes, especially along Route 116 and Route 194.
2. Implement studies to determine how to relieve congestion and promote the enhancement of failing and below-par road intersections.
3. Remedy dangerous traffic intersections with primary attention to the intersections of Mount Pleasant Road and Route 194; Sunday Drive, Racehorse Road and Route 116; and Oxford Avenue, Elm Avenue, Route 116 and Third Street.
4. Promote “traffic calming” and other traffic managing techniques and methods.
5. Consider broadening the geographic area for the study relating to extension of Eisenhower Drive.
6. Participate in the review of Eisenhower Drive and look into alternate routes which may be in the best interest of the township as a whole.
7. Promote a system of through-streets, versus cul-de-sac streets, as a means of encouraging a dispersal of vehicular traffic.
8. Construct sidewalks within new residential developments and as an extension from areas with existing sidewalks, and to connect neighborhoods with nearby including nonresidential activity areas (e.g. schools, businesses and industries.)
9. Promote sidewalk connectivity between and within all residential developments.
10. Establish buffers around roadways adjacent to residential areas to control noise, vibration and pollution.
11. Establish vehicle noise ordinances, such as brake retarder legislation, within and around residential areas.
12. Establish a greenway/pathway system along Conewago Creek.

13. Maintain liaison with Adams County officials and PennDOT in an effort to coordinate transportation improvement projects.
14. Study effectiveness of impact fees and implement if in the best interest of the township.
15. Promote various methods of public transportation.
16. Incorporate "Access Management" recommendations into the Township's Ordinances.

GOAL 5: MAINTAIN AND UPGRADE UTILITY SYSTEMS

Objective and Strategies:

1. Expand public water to presently unserved areas, in conjunction with a plan for the control of the spread of development to selected areas of the Township.
2. Expand public sewer to presently unsewered areas, in conjunction with a plan for the control of the spread of development to selected areas of the Township.
3. Establish an urban growth boundary to direct residential and commercial development and ensure the extension of public water and sewer utilities are within this boundary.
4. Coordinate utility line extensions with the Borough of Hanover.
5. Attempt to remedy existing malfunctioning sewage systems.
6. Upgrade the Hanover Regional Sewer Plant as needed.
7. Consider alternative utility systems for the betterment of the Township.

GOAL 6: PROVIDE FOR NEEDED LAND USES

Objective and Strategies:

1. Provide for a variety of housing types including: single-family, two-family, multi-family in various arrangements, and mobile homes/mobile home parks.
2. Promote a diversity of mixed uses to serve neighborhoods and the overall needs of the township.
3. Provide affordable housing for all age ranges.
4. Consider tax incentives and other county, state and federal programs to enable the construction of different housing types for all ages and all income levels.
5. Allow for the growth and expansion of industrial and commercial development to provide additional employment opportunities and tax base.
6. Encourage the re-development of existing and built properties.

7. Recruit commercial and industrial businesses and find means to enhance the township's appeal for commercial and industrial businesses to establish within the township (i.e. tax incentive programs).
8. Relax the land use regulations to enable in-fill and re-development of vacant commercial and industrial properties and buildings.
9. Provide one large, centrally located, neighborhood park to address the recreational needs of township residents.
10. Create an account and investigate grants and funding for the purchasing of lands.
11. Form a Recreation Task Force to generate and implement creative ideas on establishing recreation parks within the Township.

GOAL 7: PROVIDE FOR NEEDED COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Objective and Strategies:

1. Continue to provide support to the local volunteer fire companies.
2. Evaluate the feasibility of integrating municipal services in order to promote them on a more cost effective basis, such as police protection.
3. Continue to support and rely upon regional facilities in terms of hospitals, health care and emergency services.
4. Continue to support and rely upon school district facilities and programs.
5. Provide one large, centrally located, neighborhood park to address the recreational needs of township residents.

GOAL 8: PROMOTE A DIVERSITY AND REHABILITATION OF HOUSING TYPES

Objective and Strategies:

1. Promote a diversity of housing types including forms of housing such as single-family detached, two-family detached and semi-detached, and multi-family in various arrangements.
2. Provide for opportunities for mobile home park development as required by State law.
3. Promote for more R-2 type development in the form of a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) featuring: smaller lots, sidewalks, front porches, street/shade trees, private detached garages in rear yards, on-street parking, and mixed/compatible commercial and civic uses to “anchor” the neighborhood.
4. Promote more affordable housing through a TND approach to residential development.
5. Allow for more R-2 type development with greater mixed use opportunities.

6. Improve ordinance standards and regulations (zoning and subdivision/land development) which relate to the planning and design of housing developments.
7. Investigate programs to promote the enhancement of properties (property maintenance regulations). Investigate grant programs, such as block grants and Main Street grants, and other means of assisting in the rehabilitation of properties (property maintenance and zoning) in areas such as Midway. Find assistance for existing housing areas to renovate/rehabilitate properties to “brighten” the community and establish an inviting appeal.
8. Evaluate the need for retirement community housing.
9. Encourage TND and cluster development as a means of preserving open space.
10. Provide a bonus for clustering to allow an increase in density, over “by-right” zoning to provide for more land designated as open space.
11. Promote the rehabilitation of housing, especially in the Midway section of the Township.

GOAL 9: MAINTAIN SOUND FISCAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Objective and Strategies:

1. Continue to exercise sound fiscal budgeting and expenditures.
2. Diversify the tax base by providing additional opportunities for industrial and commercial/business use.
3. Promote commercial and industrial uses by utilizing county, state and federal resources for the education of business owners to know opportunities exist in the Township for the location of their businesses.
4. Attempt to obtain open space land through the land development process, at no purchase cost to the Township.
5. Maintain the recreational “fee-in-lieu” program, whereby the developer of subdivisions/land developments provide a fee to the Township for the purpose of constructing park improvements or for acquiring land for park and recreational purposes, in accordance with State law allowing the same. Consider “fee-in-lieu” to be consistent with market standards.

GOAL 10: CONTINUE PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL PLANNING

Objective and Strategies:

1. Maintain liaison with the Adams County Planning Commission and other relevant and related groups and entities in an effort to coordinate planning from a broader perspective.
2. Continue participation with regional transportation planning as a means of improving the local/regional road network.