

# The Planning Process

The strategic, comprehensive planning process integrated the elements of the comprehensive plan as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (PAMPC) with selected principles of strategic planning.

The Plan meets the required MPC elements, but is not limited to these elements. Comprehensive plan elements included:

- A statement of goals and objectives and a plan for land use, housing, transportation, and community facilities and utilities.
- A statement of the interrelationship between plan elements.
- A discussion of short- and long-range implementation strategies.
- A statement indicating the relationship of the plan to planning in surrounding municipalities.
- A statement indicating that the existing and proposed development is generally consistent with the objectives of the County Comprehensive Plan.

Strategic elements included:

- Effective, focused information gathering.
- Extensive communication and participation.
- Accommodation of divergent interests and values.
- Development and analysis of alternatives.
- Understanding of the future implications of present policy.
- Discovery of policy changes to achieve desired futures.
- Focused, reasonable, and orderly decision making.
- Development of a plan of action.

For the Northern York County Region this integrated planning process began with the community's answers to important questions during Phase 1 - Understanding the Community (focus groups) and Phase 2 - Envisioning the Future (visioning forum)

***“What do you like most about the Northern York County Region?”***

***“What do you like least about the Northern York County Region?”***

***“What are your expectations for the planning process?”***

***“How will our current region look and feel in twenty years?”***

***“How would our ideal region look and feel in twenty years?”***

The Phase 1 activities led to the development of the Background Profiles for demographics and socioeconomics, land use and housing, natural resources and environmental features, transportation, wastewater and water utilities, and community services and facilities.

Synthesizing the information collected in Phase 1 was the focus of Phase 2. Beginning with the “probable future,” (i.e., the region’s future direction given the continuation of existing conditions and public policies) a community dialogue led to a preferred future in statements of the vision and regional goals and objectives.

Dramatic results were achieved as each phase built on the activities of the previous phase. The focus of Phase 3 – Developing the Technical Analysis and the Strategic Action Plan - was to explore the means to attain the region’s goals and objectives. Strategies were organized into six initiatives: growth management, transportation, environmental and transportation protection, economic development, historic preservation, and community services and facilities.

These strategies were compiled into the Comprehensive Plan’s Policy Plan. Creating a sound program for implementation of the strategies was the focus of the final phase. The program factored in time commitments, budget constraints, staff requirements, service delivery programs, and regional priorities for the Northern York County Region.

## **The Vision and Statements of Regional Goals and Objectives**



### **Well Planned – Balanced Land Use, Not Suburban Sprawl**

---

#### **The Vision:**

**In the future, growth will be well planned, providing a regional mix of residential and non-residential uses that discourage sprawl development patterns and strengthen the region’s economic tax base.**



**Goal:** To plan for growth and to manage sprawl by guiding development to areas in the region targeted for growth and infill and to provide these areas with adequate sewer, water, and transportation infrastructure.

## **Objectives:**

- Develop a regional, multi-faceted, growth management strategy.
  - ◆ Provide public education on the meaning of growth management policies, its advantages and limitations.
- Develop a land use plan that clarifies the specific categories of use and style of development.
  - ◆ Provide areas for residential, commercial, industrial, office, institutional, recreational, and mixed-use development within the targeted growth area.
  - ◆ Encourage and promote residential development patterns in rural areas that preserve open space.
  - ◆ Target new development in locations where infrastructure services are currently available or planned.
  - ◆ Promote high quality design techniques such as integrating land uses, mixing housing types, protecting open spaces, creating pedestrian oriented environments, and governing the design and placement of cellular towers so as to minimize their visual impact on the surrounding community character.
- Support the growth management strategy with land use regulations and design criteria.
  - ◆ Perform an audit on existing ordinances to assess their compatibility with growth management objectives and desired growth patterns.
  - ◆ Explore specific design tools that support the region's character and encourage the use of these tools in new development.
- Continue to promote integrated regional planning and encourage collaboration by forming a regional group that has equal representation from all municipal interests.

## **People Oriented Neighborhoods**

---

### **The Vision:**

**In 2020, the region's residential neighborhoods will be a key component of the overall health of the region, places where residents feel a strong connection to their neighbors and value opportunities to work together for the betterment of all. They will be designed with a pedestrian orientation and offer a variety of housing styles to meet the needs of all age and income groups.**

**Goal:** To design new neighborhoods and enhance existing neighborhoods with a pedestrian focus that will increase the potential for interaction of residents and connections to neighborhood businesses and to augment the neighborhood's character through landscaping, aesthetic enrichment, and housing diversity.

**Objectives:**

- ❑ Promote standards for streetscape elements in new residential developments that include sidewalks (where appropriate), street trees, and environmentally friendly lighting.
- ❑ Adopt residential street design standards that are appropriate for the community's living environment and avoid the over-design of streets.
- ❑ Provide a range of residential development styles, including preservation of existing historical buildings, infill development, subdivisions in suburban settings and new mixed-use developments.
- ❑ Provide a range of housing types, values and styles to meet the needs of existing and future residents of the region.
- ❑ Invest in rehabilitation of older housing stock while preserving its architectural integrity.

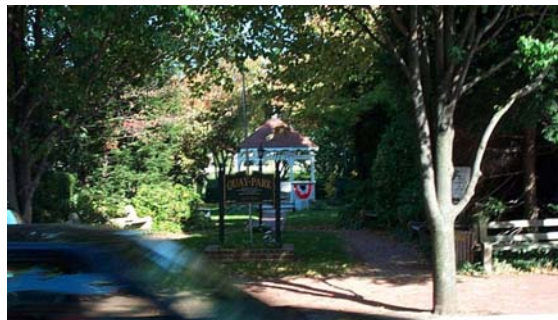


**Abundant Rural Open Space, Green Space and Recreation Areas**

---

**The Vision:**

**The region's future will be replete with recreation and open space, including bike and walking paths, linear parkways along streams, public common space in downtown, street trees and urban landscaping.**



**Goal:** To develop both passive and active recreational opportunities for all age groups, to preserve the rural open space, and to promote the greening of the urban environment (commercial centers) through landscaping and aesthetics.

## Objectives:

- Provide a regional approach to recreation, including the use of facilities and programming.
  - ◆ Coordinate efforts for the development of recreational opportunities with the promotion of the region's historic resources.
  - ◆ Provide a broad range of recreational programs for all ages including sports, cultural activities, informal gatherings, and community festivals / celebrations.
  - ◆ Provide the administrative structure and support to implement the regional recreation approach.
- Identify high priority open space areas for preservation or conservation, including areas of prime agriculture soils, and promote and educate the community on the economic benefits of open space preservation (see objectives Protect Sensitive Environmental Resources).
  - ◆ Provide financial support for land acquisition of open space lands that provide either recreational opportunities or natural resources protection.
  - ◆ Increase incentives for preserving open space in new residential developments.
  - ◆ Promote the use of street trees for new residential development and landscaping standards for new, non-residential development and redevelopment.
  - ◆ Incorporate street tree landscaping standards into land use ordinances.
  - ◆ Adopt measures to retain and conserve trees in areas subject to development.
  - ◆ Increase the percentage of tree cover on private residential and business lands.



## **Protected, Sensitive Environmental Resources**

---

### **The Vision:**

**In the future, natural resources that provide protection for the region's water supply, habitat for wildlife, and recreational benefits to the community will be preserved and protected.**

**Goal:** To protect the region's most valued resources including the forested lands of South Mountain, the Yellow Breeches Creek, important rural open spaces, and the State Gamelands.

## Objectives:

- ❑ Adopt an open space protection plan (also see objectives for Abundant Rural Open Space, Green Space, and Recreation Areas).
  - ◆ Develop criteria for identifying and prioritizing the region's open areas based on the presence and relative value of the area's natural and environmental resources.
  - ◆ Create a development review process to assure that there is accessible, well-maintained open space provided, where possible, in all new residential developments.
  - ◆ Explore management options for resource protection, including farmland/woodland preservation, conservation easements, land acquisition, etc.
- ❑ Provide regional financial support for acquisition of priority open space lands that provide natural resources protection.
- ❑ Protect agriculture resources.
  - ◆ Explore the enhancement of the agricultural preservation program by providing regional financial support to buy farmers' development rights.
  - ◆ Promote community-supported agriculture as a means to assist in sustaining the agricultural base in the region. Target a minimum of 25% participation by local area farmers in a farmer's market.
  - ◆ Continue to educate farmers regarding agriculture security areas and programs (e.g., Clean & Green) and the use of conservation easements as important measures for the protection and preservation of agricultural lands.
- ❑ Adopt regulations that provide protection for sensitive natural resources, including slopes over 25%, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, and floodplains.
- ❑ Promote stormwater best management practices (BMPs).
- ❑ Support conservation education.
- ❑ Support and actively participate in environmental, nongovernmental organizations, such as the Yellow Breeches Watershed Association.

## Clean Air, Quality Water and Dark Skies

---

### The Vision:

**In the future, water resources will be clean and plentiful, air quality will not be degraded, light pollution will be limited and adequate protection will be provided to sustain resources for future generations.**

**Goals:** To conserve water resources, to protect the quality of important water supply and air, and to prevent light pollution.

### Objectives:

- ❑ Review land use regulations and update to achieve the following priorities:

- ◆ Reduce the impact of new development on stormwater runoff by reducing the overall percent of impervious surfaces created by new development.
- ◆ Promote stormwater BMPs for new development.
- ◆ Continue to implement and expand the wellhead protection program initiated in the region by the Dillsburg Area Authority.
- ◆ Address the use of efficient light types such as LPS (Low Pressure Sodium) and HPS (High Pressure Sodium), light trespass standards, and limits on illumination expressed as maximum, average foot-candles per square foot.
- Participate in educational and program activities of area and countywide watershed associations, such as the Yellow Breeches Watershed Association and the Watershed Alliance of York.



## **Better and Safer Transportation Network**

---

### **The Vision:**

**In 2020, every resident of the region has access to a diverse multi-modal transportation system to travel easily to jobs, businesses, and recreational and cultural activities. Increased public transit and alternative transportation provide local and regional travel that is safe, accessible, efficient and environmentally sound.**

**Goal:** To provide a transportation system that addresses Route 15 corridor improvements; traffic control; improved roadways with coordinated landscape, lighting, sidewalks and bus stops; public transportation; and bicycle and pedestrian friendly streets.

### **Objectives:**

- Continue to be actively involved with the PENNDOT Highway Development Process for Route 15 Improvements to ensure that the design of transportation solutions integrates the community's values and local land use decisions.
  - ◆ Work with PENNDOT to produce a transportation alternative that incorporates context sensitive design and environmental enhancements.
  - ◆ Resolve safety and operational deficiencies on Route 15 south of Range End Road associated with left turns and crossing traffic and with poor pavement and shoulder conditions.
- Create a functional classification system for the Northern York Region, incorporating roadway design and access management criteria.
- Identify and prioritize network deficiencies of a regional impact and work together with York County MPO to plan and implement the resolution of these deficiencies.
- Implement traffic calming measures on Baltimore Street to resolve safety and operational issues.

- ❑ Continue the roadway maintenance program, where currently established, and develop a roadway maintenance program in jurisdictions without a program. The maintenance program would include both municipal and PENNDOT Maintenance Programs.
- ❑ Highlight program areas where regional cooperation is a preferred option.
- ❑ Increase investment in public transit to expand services in the region, exploring funding options, such as a regional gas tax.
  - ◆ Develop a transportation center, connecting automobile and bicycle commuters with public transit and bikeways.
  - ◆ Explore regional rail service as a viable alternative to automobile transportation.
- ❑ Provide opportunities for safe bicycle and pedestrian traffic, both in the urbanizing areas and in suburban neighborhoods, with pathways to schools, businesses, and recreation areas.

## **Strong Local Economy**

---

### **The Vision:**

**In the future the Northern Region will sustain a healthy local economy where residents will be able to earn a living wage. The region will have full employment and a full range of social services, and a range of housing that will match demand and family incomes.**

**Goal:** To sustain livable-wage jobs and to provide opportunities for job training and education and social supports to meet the needs of the labor force.

### **Objectives:**

- ❑ Develop an adequate tax base to pay for community services and facility needs by balancing residential growth with non-residential growth (commercial, office and industrial).
  - ◆ Designate areas for employment centers within the region's targeted areas for growth.
  - ◆ Enhance older, established business areas and promote their assets, especially in the region's urban area of Dillsburg.
  - ◆ Coordinate the location of new employment centers with access to a variety of transportation types.
  - ◆ Increase local ownership of and support for local businesses.
- ❑ Develop a clear definition of the characteristics of businesses allowed within homes and implement uniform regulations for the development of home businesses based on the definition and Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requirements.
- ❑ Update the region's statistical database with 2000 census information and reports in order to better understand changes that have occurred in industry and employment

sectors, income and educational levels, and the correlation between these data and the socioeconomic well-being of the region.

- ❑ Provide continuing education opportunities to prepare area residents for new work environments (see Quality Facilities and Services objectives).
- ❑ Increase the availability of high-quality childcare options that are affordable and accessible to all residents.
- ❑ Expand the membership and services of the Dillsburg Area Business Association to include broad region-wide support.
- ❑ Expand transportation opportunities for low-to-moderate income individuals through the Ways-to Work project and Welfare-to-Work program.



## **Respected Historic and Cultural Resources**

---

### **The Vision:**

**In the future, the community has identified, promoted and protected important cultural and historical assets to effectively preserve the character of the community and support economic activity associated with heritage tourism. Additionally, historic resources are tied into an overall regional greenway system.**

**Goal:** To preserve local landmarks, buildings, cultures, and traditions that make the Northern York Region unique.

### **Objectives:**

- ❑ Define the public's role in the preservation of special places and celebrate the contribution of businesses, organizations, and individuals.
- ❑ Identify and preserve appropriate adaptive reuse for historic landmark structures.
  - ◆ Complete a detailed historic building survey for the region that prioritizes property for preservation planning purposes.
  - ◆ Support efforts under way to preserve and restore the Dillsburg Tavern.
  - ◆ Promote historic preservation and the region's downtown in Dillsburg.
  - ◆ Consider adoption of an historic preservation district in Dillsburg to provide protection for valued historical structures.

- ❑ Improve pedestrian and bicycle access that will connect the region's urban center to surrounding historical and cultural areas, including neighborhoods, parks, schools, recreation facilities and rural open spaces.

## **A Vibrant Downtown**

---

### **The Vision:**

**In 2020, development in the region's urban center of Dillsburg will enhance the quality of life in adjacent neighborhoods and will contribute to a healthy regional economy. The downtown's community character will be preserved with reduced levels of traffic and noise and increased pedestrian activity.**



**Goal:** To enhance the region's urban core (downtown Dillsburg) through downtown revitalization that will address commercial development and promotion, on-street and off-street parking, the pedestrian environment, heritage tourism, and quality of life issues.

### **Objectives:**

- ❑ Promote the rehabilitation and maintenance of buildings and structures through a variety of techniques and incentives, and establish an acceptable set of property maintenance standards.
- ❑ Develop and implement a streetscape plan for both Dillsburg and Franklintown Boroughs.
- ❑ Develop and promote design guidelines for new non-residential development that is in keeping with historic character of the existing downtown.
- ❑ Implement the existing Dillsburg Revitalization Plan in the designated area contiguous to the downtown.
- ❑ Consider adoption of historic district zoning to bolster commercial revitalization and business investment and to increase tourism.
- ❑ Evaluate the benefits of Pennsylvania's Main Street program and consider program development.
- ❑ Promote and provide incentives for infill development in targeted areas.
- ❑ Expand the number of businesses in the downtown that offer goods and services to the region, including recreation-oriented businesses (e.g., movie theater).

# **Engaged Community and Responsive Government**

---

## **The Vision:**

**In the future, municipal administrative services will be expanded to provide adequate staffing for administering plans, programs, facilities and enforcing ordinances. Strong community volunteerism and support of events and activities will be the norm. Citizen advisory committees will continue to be utilized to gain public input on plans, services and policies.**

**Goal:** To provide opportunities for continued citizen involvement in community and volunteer events and activities and to ensure the responsiveness of municipal organizations and government administration to its citizenry.

## **Objectives:**

- Explore opportunities for cooperating on administrative tasks and sharing staff to provide municipal services.
- Explore methods to improve community volunteerism and build financial support for municipal organizations, including volunteer fire companies.
  - ◆ Provide public education regarding the services of the fire and emergency medical service providers and the need to support these efforts through monetary contributions and volunteer efforts.
  - ◆ Explore various options to enhance emergency services coverage and response time throughout the region, including enhancement of existing services and provisions for coordination among emergency service providers.
- Explore the possibility of a county-level, social service and government, resource center in the Northern York County Region.

## Quality Facilities and Services

---



### The Vision:

In the future, the region's youth will continue to be provided with high quality education and social support. Lifelong learning opportunities will be available to all. The region's services and facilities will keep up with the pace of growth.

**Goal:** To provide high quality education at all levels, youth to adult, and community services and facilities, including government, emergency, and health-care / social services and library resources.

**Objectives:** (see Engaged Community and Responsive Government for objectives on emergency and government services).

- Work with the Northern York School District to coordinate the District's long-range and strategic planning efforts with the planning activities of the region and its municipalities.
  - ◆ Continue to promote vocational career opportunities at the high school level.
  - ◆ Develop an educational learning complex that offers job retraining programs in the region and coordinates services with higher learning institutions for new business and job development.
  - ◆ Communicate development and planning activities with the School District and work together to resolve common issues and/or problems.
- Provide library services and staffing to keep pace with service demands.
  - ◆ Work to provide high speed internet access to the library, senior center, and schools.
  - ◆ Work closely with the library to offer programs to help educate children.
- Offer a fuller range of senior services, including home-based senior care, small care facilities located within neighborhoods, and senior center activities.

## Policy and Action Plan

The Policy and Action Plan sets the direction for growth and development over the next twenty years. The Plan introduces six policy initiatives built around the themes of growth management, transportation, environmental and natural resources protection, economic development, historic preservation, and community services and facilities. Each initiative includes a series of strategies. The strategies reflect projects, programs and organizational structure needed to meet the region's vision and goals and objectives. An integral part of each initiative is the action plan. The action plan provides a framework for achievement through its prioritized listing of strategies, assignments of responsibility

for strategy initiation and primary implementation, benchmarked activities, preliminary cost estimates and potential funding sources.

## **Statement of the Relationship Between Planning Elements**

Cross references throughout the policy plan and action plan tie the strategies and initiatives together. These references are too numerous to list; however, the following statements provide a brief listing of the type of relationships that are integrated throughout the policy and action plan.

- ❑ In general, the connection between land use and the development of infrastructure is of primary importance to the region's efforts to manage growth.
- ❑ The implementation of the roadway standards program, access management standards, and roadway network maintenance/improvement program will ensure that the region's transportation system supports the future land use scenario by focusing the majority of infrastructure dollars within the primary and secondary growth areas.
- ❑ The environmental and natural resources initiative supports the rural resource elements of the growth management plan by emphasizing the management of the region's watersheds through environmental site planning standards, the stormwater best management practices program, the agricultural preservation/forestry conservation program, and environmental education opportunities.
- ❑ The economic development initiative focuses on the Dillsburg redevelopment area and downtown revitalization program. Sustaining a healthy business environment requires a direct interface with future land use and transportation plus the active involvement and promotion of the business community and training of the workforce.
- ❑ An interrelated economic development initiative is the historic preservation initiative which seeks to build a local heritage management action plan and preserve historic resources in an effort to promote the region as an interesting place to visit and work.
- ❑ The community services and facilities initiative relates to the quality of life of the region by addressing recreation, senior, governmental and library services and includes methods for communicating with the community and soliciting community volunteers..

## **Statement of the Relationship to Contiguous Municipalities and the County**

The Policy and Action Plan sets forth strategies that have the potential to affect adjoining municipalities. The majority of these strategies are related to land use. For this reason, it is necessary not only to provide the opportunity for the contiguous municipalities to review the Plan, but also to complete a consistency review. The contiguous municipalities', existing land use, comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances were reviewed. Inconsistencies occurring in the region with other municipalities are separated by the Yellow Breeches Creek, which acts as a natural buffer to separate incompatible uses.

- ❑ Latimore Township, Adams County: The Township adopted its comprehensive plan in 2000 and subsequently updated its zoning in 2002. The region borders Latimore Township at Franklin Township's southwestern boundary. The future land use designation in this area is "rural conservation," which is consistent with Latimore's zoning designation "agriculture conservation".

- ❑ Washington Township, York County: The Township does not have a recent (more than 20 years old) comprehensive plan. The region borders Washington Township at Franklin Township's southeastern boundary. The future land use designation in this area is "rural conservation" and "public", associated with the State Gameland, which is consistent with Washington Township's zoning designation "rural residential/agriculture" and "woodland preservation."
- ❑ Warrington Township, York County: The Township's comprehensive plan is at least ten years old; zoning reflects the plan's future land use designations. The region borders Warrington Township at Carroll and Monaghan Township's southern boundary. The future land use designation in this area is "rural conservation," which is consistent with Warrington Township's zoning designation "rural agriculture" and "conservation."
- ❑ Fairview Township, York County – The Township's adopted comprehensive plan is reflected in the Township's zoning ordinance. The region borders Fairview Township at Monaghan Township's eastern boundary. The future land use designation is "rural conservation," which is consistent with Fairview Township's zoning designation "residential rural."
- ❑ Upper Allen Township, Cumberland County – The Township recently adopted its comprehensive plan and is in the process of updating its zoning ordinance. The region borders Upper Allen Township at the Monaghan and Carroll Townships' northern boundary. The future land use for the area is "rural conservation" with the exception of the area along Old Gettysburg Road, which is "highway commercial." The entire area is separated by the Yellow Breeches Creek, which forms a natural barrier between land uses. The area in Upper Allen Township is designated "rural living," "village center," "public/semi-public," and "low density residential." The only inconsistency would be the location of the "highway commercial" area in the region next to the "low-density residential" area in Upper Allen along the Old Gettysburg Pike. The location of the Creek in this vicinity will soften the impact as well as design guidelines set forth in this Regional Plan.
- ❑ Monroe Township, Cumberland County: The Township's comprehensive plan was completed in 1994. The Township's current zoning is based on the comprehensive plan. The region borders Monroe Township along Franklin and Carroll Townships' northern boundary. The future land use for the area is "rural conservation" and "public land." The area in Monroe Township is zoned "conservation" along South Mountain, "agriculture" in the lowland areas, and "suburban residential" east of Williams Grove Road. The only inconsistency occurs where the region's "rural conservation" area would abut the "suburban residential" zone; however, the Yellow Breeches Creek is a natural buffer in this location.

The Plan is consistent with the York County Growth Management Plan and other elements of the York County Comprehensive Plan. Members of the York County Planning Commission Staff have been present at each CPAC meeting and at events throughout the planning process. Frequent coordination with specific staff members has occurred to confirm consistency and positions.