

Planning Policy and Implementation

Introduction

This Chapter outlines Kennett Township’s planning policies, in the form of goals and objectives, and provides a plan of action to implement those policies.

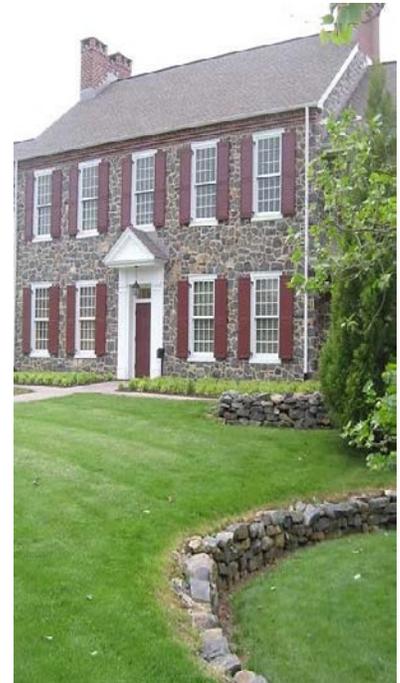
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Planning Policy

The goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan serve as guidelines to direct future growth, preservation, and other community planning in the Township. They form the Township’s planning policy and along with the implementation plan provide the framework necessary to realize the Township’s planning vision. Goals, objectives, and recommendations together provide the Township’s planning approach that will provide guidance on future planning decisions.

Township Planning Vision

To capture and summarize the township’s guiding planning principles, through this Plan process the Township created an overall planning vision to guide the community into its future:

Retain and enhance the traditional rural community identity and quality of life. Maintain a balance between the accommodation of change and development with the ability of the land to sustain new uses and the conservation of resources in order to preserve the rural character and protect the health, safety, and welfare of current and future residents.

Goals and Objectives¹

The following goals and objectives have been formed in support of the Township’s planning vision and to provide policy guidance for the Township over the next 20 years, the Plan’s timeframe.

Goals are the general, overall policies that, when implemented, will preserve the positive aspects of the Township and improve on those aspects that are less than optimum.

¹ The order of the goals and objectives in this Chapter does not imply that one has priority over another.

Objectives are the more specific policies which, when achieved, will collectively serve to implement the broader goals. The objectives should be achievable, measurable, and feasible from political, legal, and financial perspectives.

The goals from the Township’s 2004 Comprehensive Plan were used as a starting point and updated to reflect current planning philosophy and issues in the Township. The following primary sources were used to update the previous Township planning policies:

1. Issues and planning implications identified in Chapters 4 - 13.
2. Concerns identified during Comprehensive Plan update meetings.
3. Continued consistency with the goals and objectives of Kennett Area Regional Comprehensive Plan developed by Kennett Area Regional Planning Commission (KARPC) and adopted in 2000 by Kennett Township and other participating municipalities.
4. Consistency with the policies of Chester County’s Comprehensive Policy Plan, *Landscapes2*.

Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives are organized under the following planning topics:

- Land Use
- Housing
- Natural Resources
- Historic and Scenic Resources
- Community Facilities and Services
- Open Space, Trails, Parks, and Recreation
- Transportation and Circulation
- Regional Planning

Energy Conservation is an integral part of each planning topic and thus related goals and objectives are imbedded into applicable planning topics.

Land Use

Goal: Direct future growth to the most appropriate areas of the Township and establish a balance between land uses, the transportation network, and the ability of natural systems to support development.

Objectives:

- ❑ Discourage unplanned, scattered development by directing new land uses toward existing centers of development, areas with adequate infrastructure (i.e., sewer, water, and transportation), and lands with limited site constraints.
- ❑ Explore creative alternatives to residential development that would preserve rural, natural, historical, and cultural resources while providing an adequate and diverse tax base, services for residents, and locally focused employment opportunities.
- ❑ Accommodate a range of residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural including mushroom farming and specialized agriculture, and institutional land uses as required by law and, through appropriate land use regulations, ensure their compatibility with the existing Township character.
- ❑ Support and maintain the unique characteristics of the Township’s villages through such methods as specialized zoning districts designed to maintain village character. Where appropriate, ensure that village extensions are compatible with the existing village.

Housing

Goal: Plan for the present and future housing needs of residents while protecting the Township’s traditional rural, historic, natural, and scenic qualities.

Objectives:

- ❑ Allow for a variety of housing types in appropriate areas and ensure that the Township is providing for its “fair share” of multi-family housing. Explore opportunities for the implementation of regional fair share within the Kennett Area Region.
- ❑ Direct medium and higher density housing uses away from environmentally sensitive and constrained areas and into areas served by necessary facilities and services, compatible with adjacent land uses, and consistent with the recommendations of the Land Use Plan.
- ❑ Encourage creative site design and flexible land use ordinance standards to accommodate housing that blends into the character of the surrounding landscape.
- ❑ Encourage the maintenance and rehabilitation of the Township’s existing housing stock to maintain safe housing and stable neighborhoods and support active enforcement of the Township building code and other applicable codes.
- ❑ Review current Township standards regulating the density and location of farm worker housing to ensure they reflect and serve the needs of the Township and agricultural uses.

Natural Resources

Goal: Conserve the natural resources, wildlife habitat, agricultural land, and open spaces that are integral components of the Township’s character.

Objectives:

- ❑ Protect natural resources and sensitive areas through a combination of appropriate land use regulations, design techniques, along with public and private partnership and preservation initiatives.
- ❑ Promote low-impact development design options that place sensitive natural and other resources in permanently protected open space areas and direct development to the least constrained places.
- ❑ Support the Trails and Sidewalk Committee, Land Conservation Advisory Committee and the Environmental Advisory Council’s (EAC) ongoing efforts to document, provide community outreach, and protect important natural, scenic, and cultural resources.
- ❑ Educate residents about the benefits of protecting sensitive natural areas and the Township’s resource protection requirements.
- ❑ Inform residents about land preservation opportunities available through conservation organizations.
- ❑ Review and upgrade, if necessary, regulatory standards to promote and protect stream corridors and riparian buffers, floodplains, woodlands, steep slopes, native plants, wetlands, wetland margins, groundwater, and stormwater management.
- ❑ Ensure the Township’s resource protection standards are uniformly and consistently enforced.

¹ See Chapter 7 for more information

- ❑ Evaluate the impact of the deer population on Township residents and explore methods to address identified issues.

Historic and Scenic Resources

Goal: Maintain and protect historic and scenic resources and landscapes to preserve the rural context of the Township’s heritage and character.

Objectives:

- ❑ Maintain the inventory of all types of historic resources, such as residences, barns, mill races, outbuildings, bridges, and cemeteries, as part of the Township’s historic and cultural landscape, including heritage trees and specimen trees.
- ❑ Identify additional historic resources and districts that may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
- ❑ Support the Historic Commission’s ongoing efforts to identify, document, and preserve historic resources and landscapes, and to provide community outreach on historic preservation programs to residents and businesses.
- ❑ Apply Brandywine Battlefield Preservation Plan as a guideline when land or roadway improvements are proposed within or adjacent to battlefield related lands.
- ❑ Encourage proper maintenance and continued integrity of historic resources and villages within their historic landscape contexts.
- ❑ Adopt guidelines and incentives to encourage the preservation and reuse of historic resources and new development that is compatible with the Township’s historic landscape. Also consider protection of historic resources through regulatory measures.

Community Facilities and Services

Goal: Provide for appropriate and adequate community services and facilities within the practical fiscal limits of the Township and the natural constraints of the land.

Objectives:

- ❑ Recognize future facilities and services needs of Township residents as a function of population, age, and household trends.
- ❑ Provide open and clear communication between Township government and the community to ensure that residents are informed and have the opportunity to participate in important local issues.
- ❑ Provide residents with access to information on Pennsylvania municipal land use laws to promote better understanding of the limiting conditions under which a township operates.
- ❑ Coordinate water and sewage facilities planning with land use planning and natural resource protection objectives, and assess the impacts of proposed sewer, water, and stormwater facilities on groundwater quality, quantity, and recharge.
- ❑ Continually assess Township ordinance and other standards in light of increasing technology innovations, needs, and accessibly as well as growing and changing alternative energy sources.

- ❑ Continue to support fire and ambulance services that provide emergency service coverage for Township residents and businesses.
- ❑ Continue to provide appropriate financial support for library services consistent with other municipalities within the library service area.
- ❑ Maintain communication with the Kennett Consolidated School District concerning proposed developments to assist them in anticipating trends in future enrollments. Encourage the School District to maintain better communication with the Township and residents of the school district, particularly on issues relating to taxes.
- ❑ Continue to participate in capital requisition and cooperative purchase agreements through the Kennett Area Regional Planning Commission (KARPC) Cooperative.

Open Space, Trails, Parks, and Recreation

Goal: Continue to maintain, enhance, and expand rural, natural, historical, and cultural open space areas¹, trails, and parks and recreation opportunities for Township residents.

Objectives:

- ❑ Continue to develop a Township-wide greenway system and open space network using riparian and woodland corridors, conserved lands, proposed Brandywine Battlefield Preservation Plan networks, and the Red Clay Creek regional greenway concept, and determine and pursue the best methods and practical opportunities for safe implementation and oversight.
- ❑ Inform residents about land preservation opportunities available through conservation organizations.
- ❑ Facilitate the implementation of a local and regional sidewalk and trail system and coordinate with the development of the greenway system and open space network.
- ❑ Continue coordination with the Kennett Area Regional Park Board (KARPB), Kennett Area Park Authority (KAPA), and Friends of Anson B. Nixon Park on recreation efforts serving the needs of Township residents and the region at large.
- ❑ Evaluate current and future need for recreational lands, facilities, and programs, and coordinate with local and regional recreational organizations to meet these needs.

Transportation and Circulation

Goal: Plan for a safe, efficient, and diversified circulation system that addresses both current and future transportation needs of the Township while protecting community-defining characteristics.

Objectives:

- ❑ Coordinate land use development and transportation infrastructure so that higher intensity land uses are appropriately located near major transportation corridors.
- ❑ Ensure proposed roads are designed and maintained consistent with the function they serve. Upgrade existing roads as needed to reflect their current function in the circulation network.
- ❑ Prioritize transportation improvements to address issues identified in this Plan with areas designated for future growth.

¹ See Chapter 11 for more information

- ❑ Balance the benefits of future transportation improvements with their potential negative impact on community-defining scenic areas, roadways, bridges, and vistas, and recognize the traffic calming benefits of rural roadways and bridges. Consider how to address Chandler Mill Bridge.
- ❑ Direct commuter through-traffic and local traffic to appropriate roadways based on road function.
- ❑ Implement access management strategies along the Township’s major transportation routes to address safety and congestion issues.
- ❑ Plan for pedestrian and bicycle transportation needs in the Township including sidewalks, foot paths and bike paths, and create a connected network to access centers of activity and recreation.
- ❑ Monitor potential need for public transportation service in the Township, particularly in designated growth areas.
- ❑ Coordinate local and regional transportation projects with the PA DOT 12-year program and stay apprised of state and federal funding opportunities that support Township transportation goals.
- ❑ Continue to support the regional Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway, Red Clay Creek Scenic Byway, and Harriet Tubman Trail of Freedom that transverse Kennett Township.
- ❑ Continue to implement KARPC Regional Transportation Study recommendations.

Regional Planning

Goal: Continue cooperative planning with surrounding municipalities and regional planning groups to achieve mutually beneficial goals for the Township and Region.

Objectives:

- ❑ Continue working with the KARPC to implement the recommendations of the Kennett Area Regional Comprehensive Plan (2000). Continue coordination with the KARPC to allow for the provision of land uses on a regional basis, regionally consistent resource protection measures, and compatible circulation networks along municipal borders.
- ❑ Maintain consistency with the County Comprehensive Policy Plan, Landscapes2, and review and implement applicable recommendations of the water resources and open space elements of Landscapes2, Watersheds and Linking Landscapes for an integrated regional protection of resources.
- ❑ Continue coordination on planning and transportation issues and solutions with organizations in New Castle County, Delaware.
- ❑ Continue coordination with Brandywine Battlefield communities to implement Brandywine Battlefield Preservation Plan (2013) and study the feasibility of developing a Battle Path trail and 1777 Loop trail in order to provide greater pedestrian and bicycle access in the Township, create a greenway linking open space areas, and connect with regional facilities. Cooperate with other groups that are addressing scenic, historic, and cultural features on a regional basis.
- ❑ Cooperate with surrounding municipalities and public and private entities such as the Route 1 corridor economic/coordinated development regional planning group, to establish a region-wide network of greenways, sidewalks, trails, paths, and bike routes which link recreation destinations with neighborhoods, employment centers, shopping areas, and public schools.

Implementation Plan

An Implementation Plan provides a ‘blueprint’ guide for carrying out Comprehensive Plan policy. It presents a summary of the recommendations described in the Plan chapters that follow, and outlines ‘when’, ‘by whom’, and ‘how’ planning efforts should be implemented.

The Implementation plan is an effort to itemize possible goals to be addressed by the Township. Those goals should be the outgrowth of community input and Board of Supervisor oversight, and as hands-on managed by specific committees of the Township. The specific goals set forth hereafter are a collection of possible goals which need to be considered by, and adopted by, the respective committees. Consequently, those goals are for illustrative purposes only, are not binding, and may be modified, deleted or added to, as circumstances require.

Table 2-1 summarizes recommendations by plan chapter, and specifies their priority, primary group(s) responsible, and suggested approach(es) for implementation. Recommendations in Table 2-1 are discussed in greater detail under the individual plan chapters.

Together, the set of goals and objectives (above) and this plan for implementation address the Township’s 2015-2035 planning vision. It should be noted that, to date, the Township has addressed and successfully undertaken some of the key recommendations from its 2004 Comprehensive Plan; though there are outstanding but still relevant recommendations from the 2004 Plan that are carried forward into this 2015 Plan update, as well as updated and new recommendations.

→ Priority or Rank of a recommended action and timeframe needed to undertake it are inherently interrelated and thus integrated into one category in Table 2-1. **Priority ranking** indicates an action’s level of importance in the Township, incorporating the general timeframe in which an action should be initiated while taking into account factors such as other Township action items, responsibilities, and work program, as follows.

Rank ‘A (Act On)’ actions are of the highest priority to the Township. Note that a Rank ‘A’ action could also be the first step in a long-term program. Ideally, higher priority ‘A’ actions would be initiated within a more immediate timeframe of 2-years from Comprehensive Plan adoption; however, in some cases implementation may take longer due to the amount of effort required and/or cost involved.

Rank ‘C (Consider Acting On)’ actions are for the Township to consider undertaking and can be thought of as second tier priority items. Medium priority ‘C’ actions would be further considered and possibly initiated within 2 to 5 years of Plan adoption or after Priority ‘A’ actions have been accomplished or are well underway.

Rank ‘E (Explore)’ actions are items intended to be further studied and are not considered Township priorities per se, but have been identified as notable enough that they should be kept in mind and may be initiated depending on the outcomes of further study. Lower priority ‘E’ items would be explored and initiated as time and funding permit or as changing conditions necessitate.

Ongoing (‘O’) actions require a perpetual effort and often involve monitoring or continuing existing programs in which the Township is already involved.

→ **Key Parties** highlights those entities having *primary* responsibility for initiating and implementing a recommendation, dependent on the specific nature of the recommendation. In some cases, more than one party has a primary involvement. Possible Township parties who may be involved in individual actions are listed below as are their abbreviated names in Table 2-1. Other non-Township parties may also need to be involved to implement an action, but are not included in the table as they would be

identified at the time the Township decides to begin implementing an action. Table 2-1 assumes the Board of Supervisors will be involved in every recommended plan action and so they are not listed under each action.

BoS -	Board of Supervisors	Admin -	Township Administration
Ag -	Agricultural Area Advisory Committee	Business -	Business Advisory Committee
BC -	Route 52 Bikeway Committee	Comm Pride -	Community Pride
Comm -	Communications Committee	EAC -	Environmental Advisory Council
Deer Mgt -	Deer Management Committee	KAPA -	Kennett Area Park Authority
HC -	Historical Commission	KARPC -	Township representative to KARPC
KAPRB -	Kennett Area Park & Recreation Board	Lib Bd -	Library Board
LCAC -	Land Conservancy Advisory Committee	Recycling -	Recycling Committee
PC -	Planning Commission	Sustain -	Proposed Sustainability Committee
Safety -	Safety Committee		
Ped -	Trails and Sidewalks Committee	WLC -	Ways Lane Committee

- **Associated Plan(s)** indicates Plan chapter(s) to which a recommendation applies and/or where a recommendation is discussed in greater detail. Chapter 13 Sustainable Future and Energy Conservation Plan is an associated plan that factors into all recommended actions and thus is not repeated in each Table 2-1 cell.
- **Implementation Approach** provides a brief summary of suggested key methods to undertake and place a recommendation into action.

Implementation Progress Reports

Plan recommendations should be re-evaluated on a regular basis to ensure they are still valid, appropriate, and current. A review and update of the full Plan should occur at least every 10 years per the PA MPC; this 2015 Comprehensive Plan update has addressed this state law requirement. As well, a progress report as to the status of implementing plan recommendations should be completed by the Township yearly. Specifically, as part of their annual work program, Kennett Township Board of Supervisors can assess progress made in the Township overall to initiate and undertake Plan recommendations, and can direct committees to provide an annual report to the Board of Supervisors and other Township groups starting the year after the Plan is adopted. Reports should include an inventory and brief assessment of initiated, completed, and proposed actions and determine what, if any, adjustments or additions might be needed to adopted Plan recommendations. This information should also prove useful when the next full update of the Comprehensive Plan is undertaken. Continual evaluation of Plan recommendations is essential to the successful implementation of Township policy and planning vision.