

I. Goals and Objectives

Goals

1. Provide a balanced land use pattern that preserves residential neighborhoods, strengthens the vitality of commercial districts, enhances remaining industrial areas, preserves and addresses parks and open space, protects environmentally sensitive natural features, accommodates community facilities and facilitates local/regional circulation.
2. Preserve and enhance the suburban residential character of the Township by protecting established neighborhoods, maintaining a balance of housing choices, providing for compatible in-fill housing and planning for appropriate residential development in targeted redevelopment areas where land uses are in transition.
3. Encourage the continued development of a fully intermodal circulation system that integrates roadways, mass transit, pedestrian/bicycle routes, greenway corridors and freight and goods movement facilities. Coordinate land uses with transportation facilities to facilitate access and encourage alternatives to driving.
4. Promote the growth of a diversified economic base that generates employment growth, increases tax ratables, improves income levels and facilitates the redevelopment of brownfield sites. Focus economic development efforts on growth sectors of the economy and existing commercial and industrial districts.
5. Maintain the existing system of parks, recreation and open space and explore the development of additional facilities to meet the needs of Township residents. Advocate for increased maintenance and improvements in Essex County parks.
6. Continue the existing system of community facilities in order to preserve the current high level of public services and provide new facilities, where necessary, in order to accommodate population growth, economic development and the changing needs of residents.
7. Support conservation efforts in order to preserve environmentally sensitive natural features, protect residential neighborhoods, preserve and address open space, promote public health and facilitate brownfield redevelopment.
8. Preserve and upgrade the existing utility infrastructure including public water, stormwater management and wastewater treatment. Continue rehabilitation programs while pursuing selected replacement and expansion projects in order to accommodate growth and redevelopment. Incorporate high technology infrastructure, such as fiber optic lines, into utility planning.
9. Promote historic preservation in order to maintain the Township's unique character, protect designated historic resources and complement economic development efforts.

10. Promote recycling in order to protect the environment and reduce the Township's solid waste stream.

Objectives

Land Use

1. Maintain established residential neighborhoods by adhering to density limits, preventing the intrusion of non-residential uses and controlling bulk.
2. Strengthen commercial districts by encouraging a mix of uses that provide employment, retail opportunities, services and entertainment.
3. Encourage and retain industrial uses wherever feasible, subject to the provision of buffering and screening, adequate access and performance standards to mitigate nuisances.
4. Preserve existing parks and open space throughout the Township.
5. Plan for and promote the redevelopment of underutilized or vacant commercial and industrial properties including Westinghouse.
6. Create attractive gateways at the principal entrances to the Township through upgraded land uses, streetscape improvements and signage.
7. Provide for adequate parking to serve established residential and commercial areas. Incorporate adequate parking into new developments.
8. Coordinate land uses with existing and planned transportation infrastructure including the Montclair Connection and Newark City Subway Extension.
9. Address quality of life issues resulting from land use conflicts, intensive commercial and industrial uses, increases in residential density from illegal conversions, vacant or underutilized parcels and limited parking in residential and commercial districts.

Community Facilities

1. Maintain and upgrade existing community facilities, where necessary, and provide new community facilities to serve anticipated population, employment and economic growth.
2. Upgrade existing schools and plan for new school facilities to accommodate enrollment growth, curriculum changes, new programs and technological advances.
3. Maintain and upgrade existing emergency service facilities, especially those facilities which are aging or obsolete. Plan for and provide new facilities to serve planned growth and improve efficiency of service.
4. Maintain and upgrade public library facilities.
5. Maintain the existing civic center and provide a new Township-wide recreation center.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

1. Preserve and maintain the existing system of parks, open space and recreation facilities.
2. Explore opportunities for enhancement of the Township parks and open space system.
3. Support and promote efforts to improve County parks.
4. Explore the development of a Greenway network along stream corridors linking residential neighborhoods to parks and major activity centers.

Circulation

1. Encourage and support the development of a fully intermodal transportation system consisting of roads and highways, mass transit and bicycle/pedestrian facilities.
2. Promote mass transit use by maximizing access to NJ Transit commuter rail and bus service. Focus on improvements to train stations including Bloomfield, Watsessing and Grove Street stations.
3. Increase bicycle/pedestrian safety and circulation by improving traffic signals at key intersections, utilizing traffic calming measures and providing bike lanes that connect activity centers throughout the Township.
4. Provide way-finding signage on major roads and at gateway locations to facilitate circulation and identify the route to key activity centers and destinations in the Township.
5. Evaluate and implement methods of providing adequate parking to serve existing development and proposed redevelopment.

Economic

1. Promote increased diversification of the economic base to address the regional decline of manufacturing, capitalize on growth in the service sector and protect against cyclical downturns in the economy.
2. Focus economic activity in the Township's major economic centers including Bloomfield Center. Recognize the unique character of each area and promote development that will strengthen and reinforce market niches.
3. Capitalize on the Township's competitive advantages for economic development purposes including its location in the center of the northern New Jersey/New York City region, extensive transportation and utility infrastructure, land available for redevelopment, stable labor force and quality of life.
4. Plan for and promote the redevelopment of Westinghouse in order to create employment, generate tax ratables and enhance the quality of life for residents and workers.
5. Promote the revitalization of the Bloomfield Center CBD as a mixed-use, transit oriented residential, commercial and transportation destination.
6. Support transit-oriented development in station areas, especially on underutilized or vacant commercial and industrial property.
7. Continue commercial and industrial retention and recruitment efforts.

Conservation

1. Protect and preserve environmentally sensitive natural features through sound planning and land use regulations.
2. Encourage the remediation of contaminated sites and brownfield redevelopment to enhance the local environment and return vacant sites to productive use.
3. Consider adoption of a critical areas ordinance to protect natural features and adjacent areas.

Historic Preservation

1. Acknowledge the importance of historic resources in providing a link to the past, preserving the Township’s unique character, enhancing the visual appearance of neighborhoods and promoting economic development.
2. Complete an historic resources survey and identify structures, sites and districts for historic designation.
3. Apply for Certified Local Government status from the State Historic Preservation Office in order to promote local historic preservation and increase access to grant funding as well as technical assistance.

Utilities

1. Maintain and upgrade the Township’s existing utility infrastructure including public water, wastewater treatment, sanitary sewers and stormwater management.
2. Plan and implement new utility infrastructure to replace aging and obsolete systems that serve redevelopment areas.
3. Protect the integrity of the public water supply including storage, treatment and distribution systems.
4. Encourage the development of high technology infrastructure including fiber optic data transmission lines, digital switching stations, telecommunication facilities and high-speed internet access.

Recycling

1. Promote recycling to reduce the solid waste stream and increase the reuse of man-made resources.
2. Encourage existing commercial and industrial uses to recycle and support the development of “green” industries that incorporate recycling into the production process.
3. Promote the creation of a Township recycling center for the drop-off of materials.

Goals and Objectives

Housing

1. Protect and preserve established residential character through zoning enforcement, inspections of multi-family dwellings and rehabilitation, where necessary.
2. Maintain a balance of housing options to meet the needs of all residents.
3. Continue the Township's residential rehabilitation program to improve substandard housing units and preserve neighborhood stability, especially in Ampere and Watsessing.
4. Address the need for a broad range of senior citizen housing including independent living, assisted living and congregate care housing.
5. Encourage the development of transit-oriented higher density multi-family housing in close proximity to station areas.