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**OLSEN AND ASSOCIATES, LLC**

**PENN TOWNSHIP  
WESTMORELAND COUNTY**

# Comprehensive Development Plan

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**  
**of the Penn Township Comprehensive Plan**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### FOREWORD

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It is the intent of the members of the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission and Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee to preserve the rural characteristics of Penn Township to the extent possible in the face of significant external growth pressures. It is also their intent to support quality development at a scale which will not overwhelm the Township's infrastructure. These are the basic tenets of the municipality's growth management philosophy and the strategies employed in order to achieve these goals, are incorporated into the Implementation Plan (Part 11) included in this Executive Summary. There are a variety of progressive and unique objectives identified, all of which will facilitate the achievement of the stated goals. As community leaders engage in the review and approval process for subdivision and land development applications, these inter-related activities and policy statements will function as guideposts to the private sector.

The plan document is to be used as a general reference and resource book with both existing conditions analysis and an outline for future activities, crafted to achieve both broad and specific community goals and objectives which grew out of the planning process. While there is an inclination to simply protect the status quo through the application of current ordinance language, most community leaders recognize that land development issues are rarely black and white. An ambitious planning education effort is recommended in Penn Township in order for the decision makers to gain a new perspective on options available to local communities through recent amendments to the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. Members of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee were exposed to new ideas and new tools with which to manage growth, during the preparation of the Plan document. This produced spirited discussions and a broad exchange of views. On some issues of concern, a tenuous consensus was reached. However, the process was invaluable.

An important aspect of planning at the community level which was recognized by all who participated in the preparation of the comprehensive plan, is that preferred courses of action invariably have consequences. For instance, the choice to remain a predominantly low density residential municipality means that without a more balanced tax base, at some point in the near future, either municipal services will need to be limited or tax increases will need to be passed to cover costs associated with the delivery of municipal services. This is one of the consequences of the preference to remain a low-density bedroom community. As long as the taxpaying residents of the Township support this preference as an identified planning philosophy, and are willing to deal with the consequences, there will be peace in the valley. At such time that the consequences of that preference are no longer palatable to property owners, or that newly elected officials have a different set of goals in mind, the political process will become an instrument for change.

Issues that required significant research and analysis in Penn Township relate to the two (2) planning principles identified at the outset; preserving the rural character and encouraging quality neighborhood scale development. While they are not mutually exclusive, both require a degree of investigation beyond the research and analysis provided in typical

comprehensive plan projects. The fact is, the Steering Committee has considered a variety of specific legislative actions and incremental steps designed to achieve the broader goals identified. Several progressive concepts for managing growth were incorporated into the Implementation Plan such as the use of Development Models, and Corridor Design Standards. These are relatively new regulatory tools in Western Pennsylvania with the potential to address a wide range of objectives. While the Steering Committee recognized that potential, the assignment of certain models to specific zones consistent with the district purposes is the next task. In addition, the classification of existing collector roadways as Preservation Corridors, Transition Corridors, or Growth Corridors also needs to be completed.

In order for Township officials to implement recommendations which evolved from the planning process, they must make sometimes difficult decisions about geographic areas within their municipal boundaries in terms of internal and external growth pressures, the characteristics of the natural environment that should be preserved, and the choice of site design features which that should be promoted within the context of the recommended development models. This is the business of implementation and follows formal plan adoption. The primary tools used to implement strategic actions identified in the plan are the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. Supplemental regulatory tools include design guidelines and the preparation of a Public and Private Improvements Code. Ideally they will be administered as related pieces of the same growth management puzzle.

Penn Township's Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee has provided their elected officials with a resource book and blueprint for the achievement of goals and objectives crafted to address the two overriding concerns expressed at the outset of the project. This companion document to the Comprehensive Plan presents a sophisticated growth management program which includes unique land-use policies, innovative design criteria, "neighborhood" planning and the expectation of success. There will be strong opinions offered in terms of how aggressively new policies should be implemented. However, the Penn Township Comprehensive Plan belongs to the residents of the community, and ultimately, they will determine its most effective use.

## WORK ELEMENT SUMMARIES/HIGHLIGHTS

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### **SUMMARY OF PREFACE - COMMUNITY PROFILES**

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- *Penn Township's median age of 35.1 years is the youngest among the nine (9) contiguous municipalities (tied with Plum Borough)*
- *The median household income in Penn Township is second highest at \$51,316.00, with only Murrysville's higher in the region.*
- *Family households comprise 82.9% of all households in Penn Township, the highest percentage in the region.*
- *The median value of a house in Penn Township is second highest in the region at \$121,300.00, Murrysville's is first at \$156,200.00.*
- *Penn Township has the third lowest percentage of aged 65 or over householders at 20.7%, North Huntingdon and Manor Borough have lower percentages.*
- *The poverty rate of 3.5% of the total population in Penn Township is the second lowest in the region, next to Murrysville at 2.8%.*
- *Penn Township has the second highest percentage of families with children at 39.5%, only Manor Borough is higher with 42.1%.*

### **Implications for Public Policy**

The population is generally younger than the Pennsylvania norm. This has numerous policy implications, including:

- ◆ Many residents will likely see residential quality of life as more important than attracting nonresidential development.
- ◆ Many residents will place a premium upon youth and child oriented recreation.
- ◆ Planning for housing will likely continue to emphasize single family detached homes (populations with higher proportions of elderly or young singles need other housing types).
- ◆ The population is young enough to sustain community growth. This natural increase will likely be augmented by in-migration.

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**SUMMARY OF PART 1 - INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE**

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The Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Ordinance are the tools for carrying out the plans set forth by the Comprehensive Plan. They provide the regulations which must be followed by all developers so that the Township’s needs can be accomplished. They are specific, detailed pieces of legislation designed to carry out the general proposals stated in the Comprehensive Plan. They:

- A. *coordinate and guide development*
- B. *directly affect real property*
- C. *provide standards for development*
- D. *delineate exact district boundaries*
- E. *specify detailed regulations*

**Implications for Public Policy**

The Township will utilize this plan for a variety of purposes, including:

- ♦ The official document the Township will rely upon in determining the appropriateness of actions involving infrastructure, major public works, construction and the disposition of real estate. County, School District, and Authority actions will also be reviewed by the Planning Commission for their consistency with the Plan.
- ♦ The Plan will be the document the Township will rely upon to support the policies within its Subdivision and Land Development regulations and Zoning Ordinances. While these ordinances do not need to follow the plan in exact detail, they must be generally consistent.

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**SUMMARY OF PART 2 - EARLY HISTORY AND SETTLEMENT PATTERNS**

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- *Penn Township was incorporated February 23, 1855.*
- *Penn Townships’ early economy was based on agriculture and coal mining.*
- *It organized as a Township of the 1st Class of January 1, 1958.*
- *At the time of incorporation, Penn Township was Westmoreland County’s twenty-second Township.*

**Implications for Public Policy**

- ♦ The nature of the population, combined with a fairly rich local heritage, may mean strong citizen support for programs to recognize or preserve community history.

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### **SUMMARY OF PART 3 - DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

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- *Penn Township's population increased by 23.3% between 1990 and the year 2000.*
- *A challenge to the year 2000 Census report was filed, resulting in an increase of 79 persons.*
- *Between 1980 and the year 2000, Penn Township's population grew by 22% while Westmoreland County's population decreased by about 6%.*
- *Penn Township has the lowest percentage of aged 65 or older persons (12.5%) of all communities in the region.*
- *Population growth between 2002 and 2010 is projected by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission at 31% or 3.8% annually.*
- *Projected population growth will level off, and then slightly decline after the year 2020.*

#### **Implications for Public Policy**

- ♦ Penn Township is clearly within the path of growth. This brings with it the obligation to plan for the anticipated population, particularly their housing needs.

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### **SUMMARY OF PART 4 - HOUSING AND HOUSEHOLDS**

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- *Only 14.2% of the total year 2000 housing units was built prior to 1940 in Penn Township, which is fourth lowest percentage in the region among nine (9) contiguous municipalities.*
- *Penn Township's housing stock consists of 92.5% single-family detached dwellings, the highest percentage of the nine (9) contiguous municipalities compared.*
- *Penn Township's family households, at 82.9% in the year 2000, was significantly higher than the County (69.8%) or the Commonwealth (67.2%).*
- *At 97%, Penn Township has a higher percentage of owner-occupied housing units than either the County (93%) or the Commonwealth (91%).*

- *Of the 6,381 owner-occupied households in the year 2000, 3,053 (48%) are one or two person households, while 2,624 (41%) are three or four person households.*
- *Single parent households increased by 33% between 1990 and the year 2000.*
- *Sixty-two percent (62%) of all housing units in Penn Township were valued at less than \$150,000.00 in the year 2000.*
- *Between 1991 and the year 2000, there were 210 homes valued at \$300,000.00 or more, built in Penn Township. In 1990, there were only seven (7).*
- *More than half (50.9%) of all residential structures in Penn Township were built after 1969.*

**Implications for Public Policy**

- ◆ *The high percentage of newer homes means there is less of a market for the conversion of older homes to other uses (apartments, professional offices, etc.). There is also less of a need to prioritize grant resources towards housing rehabilitation.*
- ◆ *Penn Township is a community of homeowners. Citizens are more likely to be engaged in civic projects, and take an active role in community life. Such communities of homeowners are also likely to be sensitive about the impact of nonresidential development upon their residential use enjoyment and financial security.*
- ◆ *While it is a young community, there will be a growing 55+ population with unique housing needs.*

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**SUMMARY OF PART 5 - SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE**

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- *The median household income in Penn Township went from \$33,219.00 in 1989 to \$51,316.00 in 1999, an increase of 54% in only ten (10) years.*
- *In 1989 there were 111 households in Penn Township with reported incomes in excess of \$100,000.00. In 1999 that number grew to 976 households, an increase of almost 800%.*
- *Between 1992 and the year 2001, annual Township revenues grew from \$4.40 million to \$6.9 million, an increase of 56%.*
- *Penn Township committed more than 31% of its total annual budget to each of two line items, public safety (police and fire) and roadway maintenance (streets and roads) for the ten year period 1992 to 2001.*

- *Between 1997 and the year 2001, both public safety and roadway maintenance increased to 35.2% of the Township's total expenditures, per line item, up from 27% during the mid-1990's.*
- *The top three industries providing employment for Penn Township workers in the year 2000 were education, health and social services (20.7%), manufacturing (15.3%), and retail trade (11.5%).*
- *A higher percentage of the total number of workers are employed in professional management and administration (10.6%) in Penn Township, than Westmoreland County (7.6%) or the Commonwealth (8.5%).*
- *Management jobs increased by almost 11% (10.8) between 1990 and the year 2000, an increase of 1,142 good paying, full-time jobs for Penn Township residents.*

**Implications for Public Policy**

- ♦ Growth and development have increased public revenues, but public service expenses have also increased.
- ♦ The socio-economic profile indicates an emerging bedroom community with prosperous households.
- ♦ There is always the potential that the population increase will increase service delivery costs without generating sufficient revenue for a bedroom community to cover those costs.

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**SUMMARY OF PART 6 - TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION**

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- *The majority of Penn Township's transportation network consists of Rural Minor Collector roadways and Local roads.*
- *State Route 130 is classified as a Rural Major Collector roadway and currently carries the highest volumes of traffic within Penn Township.*
- *The Maglev project routes, C-2 or C-5, not supported by Township officials, could result in the loss of more than 2,000 new homes and over 300,000 square feet of commercial development on more than 1960 developable acres.*
- *A Roadway Sufficiency Analysis was prepared in 1997 which involved the analysis of 12 local and state owned roadway corridors and 74 intersections.*
- *Penn Township implemented a transportation improvement program in June 1997 utilizing Act 209 impact fees to provide roadway improvements necessitated by new development.*

- *The adoption of Corridor Design Guidelines are recommended in order to manage growth along different types of transportation corridors identified within Penn Township.*
- *Penn Township's current transportation network consists of 98.84 miles of Township owned and maintained roadways, 51.59 miles of Commonwealth owned and maintained roadways, and 3.68 miles of County-owned roadways.*

**Implications for Public Policy**

- ♦ *In the continued high growth scenario, there must be care taken to ensure that growth does not overwhelm the transportation infrastructure.*
- ♦ *A major factor in developing design guidelines should be the ability to mitigate the impact of nonresidential development upon the residential community.*
- ♦ *Projected growth warrants a consideration to continue collecting and utilizing transportation impact fees.*

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***SUMMARY OF PART 7 - GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES***  
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- *Penn Township is divided into five (5) wards, each with a Commissioner elected to a four (4) year term.*
- *Penn Township became a Township of the First Class on January 1, 1958.*
- *There are ten (10) boards and commissions providing input to the elected officials on a variety of issues.*
- *The Township adopted a Comprehensive Recreation, Park and Open Space Plan in May of 2000 and collects fees from residential development through a mandatory dedication ordinance to develop and maintain new recreation facilities.*
- *The Penn Trafford Area Recreation Commission, created in 2001, programs recreational activities on seven (7) sites in Penn Township totaling approximately 78 acres.*
- *The Penn-Trafford School District owns and operates recreation facilities at each of eight (8) school facility sites totaling approximately 123 acres.*

**Implications for Public Policy**

- ♦ *The Township's emphasis on funding and improving recreation facilities and services is appropriate with its demographics.*

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## **SUMMARY OF PART 8 - EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

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- *The Penn-Trafford School District owns and maintains eight (8) school facilities attended by a total of approximately 4,774 school-aged children (2003-2004).*
- *Penn-Trafford's student enrollment total is the third (3rd) highest in Westmoreland County behind the Hempfield and Norwin School Districts.*
- *Approximately 86% of Penn-Trafford graduates attend a two (2) or four (4) year college or university.*
- *Total student enrollment between the 1999-2000 school year and the 2003-2004 school year increased by approximately 1.5% over the five (5) year period and is projected to decrease by 6.5% during the next five (5) year period to 2008-2009.*
- *Local school taxes make up 48.8% of the District's revenue (2000-2001).*
- *Average class sizes are: Elementary - 19 students; Middle School - 26 students; and High School - 25.6 students (2000-2001).*

### **Implications for Public Policy**

- ♦ *If residential tax base continues to be an important component of school district revenues, continued growth in home value and household income will be important.*
- ♦ *The Township's projected population may be in excess of continuing Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) projections on the school district level. PDE projections are a key component of the state reimbursement to local school districts for construction.*

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## **SUMMARY OF PART 9 - CURRENT AND FUTURE LAND USE**

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- *The last comprehensive plan adopted by Penn Township (May 1963) included a land use plan which emphasized industrial development because of two characteristics: 1) the availability of large tracts of level land, and 2) an expandable water distribution system.*
- *According to the 1963 Comprehensive Plan for Penn Township, twenty-five (25) square miles or seventy-eight percent (78%) of the land area was considered rural.*
- *Penn Township's Zoning Ordinance establishes nine (9) zoning districts, and two (2) overlay zoning districts.*

- *The A-1 District can accommodate two (2) additional residential classifications with specific planning objectives.*
- *Currently, Penn Township provides for permitted residential, business (commercial), and light and heavy industrial uses, plus eight (8) conditional and twenty-five (25) uses by special exception.*
- *A total of 425 subdivision applications were approved by the Township between 1992 and 2001, an average of 42.5 submittals annually.*
- *Permits for residential construction resulted in an average of 129 new residential units annually between 1987 and 2002.*
- *One third of all permits issued for new commercial construction between 1987 and 2002 were issued during the year 2000 (26 out of 79).*
- *Penn Township officials are reviewing flexible zoning techniques such as the adoption of additional overlay zones, mixed use performance regulations and development models in order to mitigate development impacts in key areas with growth potential.*
- *During the spring and summer of 2003, two (2) exercises designed to identify areas with future development potential were completed and mapped, one by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and one by residents attending public meetings.*

### **Implications for Public Policy**

- ♦ The growth and complexity of the Township requires more flexibility in regulating land use and land development.
- ♦ In this type of community, traditional Euclidean zoning and future land use maps are less important than mitigation techniques that protect community character, while accommodating development.
- ♦ Future land use planning will be more likely to succeed if it is based upon broad consensus and citizen vision.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

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### OVERVIEW

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Penn Township has experienced several decades of significant residential development, and has used its local land use regulations, and special purpose ordinances to manage that development. Consistent application of Township standards has, for the most part, resulted in the type of quality development most communities welcome. With consistent staff input and a review and approval procedure which mandates a comprehensive submittal, the Board of Commissioners have provided Township residents with a planning process designed to maintain the quality of new development.

At this point in the Township's evolution, the consideration of preferred design criteria, thematic corridor development standards and procedures which require the mitigation of identified impacts, are elements of an expanded planning philosophy. The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee has also expressed concern over "traffic-heavy development proposals" especially in the SR 130 corridor. Penn Township took the initiative in the mid-1990's and adopted a long range transportation improvement program designed to provide public/private financing for transportation improvements necessitated by new development. This Act 209 local legislation has already resulted in about a million and a half dollars worth of transportation improvements along segments zoned for a mix of uses.

In addition to the required participation of the private sector for the provision of growth related infrastructure improvements, a comprehensive parks, recreation and open space plan was adopted in May of 2000 (Resolution Number 64). Again, Penn Township has recognized the need for the cooperative funding of amenities desired by Township residents. The planning objectives identified during the preparation of the recreation plan will be achieved through the administration of the mandatory open space dedication/fees-in-lieu-of-dedication ordinance which was adopted following the preparation of the recreation and open space plan.

The task is to craft short and long ranged community goals which focus on more specific activities which will achieve the objectives that grew out of the community attitude survey responses, and discussion during public work sessions. An implementation plan is a menu of activities which focus on reaching the community goals for which a consensus has been established. The preliminary goals and objectives provide a starting point of broad issues in nine (9) areas of concern. A chronology of activities designed to achieve those broad goals is included.

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## **THEMATIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

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Whether creating or updating a comprehensive development plan, the building of a consensus on those development objectives which are viewed as important to Township residents, as they relate to future growth or the preservation of community characteristics, is necessary if a comprehensive plan is to be "useable." These "community development objectives" will lay the groundwork for the formation of the plan's recommendations and any future implementation activities or policies identified as applicable to Penn Township. The following thematic objectives have emerged based on survey responses, input from the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, the Penn Township Planning Commission, and interested residents:

### **Agricultural**

- ✓ Promote the preservation of active farmland.
  - Encourage local farmers to participate in the Agricultural Security Program.
  - Monitor the loss of "prime agricultural land" (soils Class I and II) to new development.
  - Permit secondary businesses to operate on active farmland in order to supplement agricultural operations.
    - Seed and grain processing and sales.
    - Farm equipment sales and repair.
    - Retail sale of produce.
    - Retail sale of hunting and fishing supplies.
  - Provide forums for sound farming practices in Township assembly facilities.

### **Economic Development**

- ✓ Guide commercial and industrial development into areas with adequate infrastructure.
  - Evaluate capacities in existing public utility systems.
  - Continue to provide transportation improvements in identified growth corridors to support development.

- Establish a streamlined development approval procedure where permanent full-time jobs will result.
- Reclassify additional developable land for commercial and industrial use in order to lessen future residential property tax burdens.

### **Historic Preservation**

- ✓ Encourage the preservation of cultural and historic sites and structures in the Township.
  - Create an inventory of qualified structures and places based on historical society documents.
  - Map sites known to have historical significance.
  - Consider limiting height and intensity of development within a selected buffer area surrounding historic structures and sites.

### **Infrastructure**

- ✓ Ensure that existing facilities and services are maintained at levels which meet the needs of current and future residents.
  - Continue to produce monthly or quarterly development/permit trend reports and include GIS mapping to locate permitted development.
  - Identify corridors with growth potential and monitor capacities in systems extended into those corridors to support growth.
  - Continue to provide transportation improvements where needed, through the impact fee program.
  - Request municipal authorities to file annual capital improvements project inventories with descriptions of scope of work.
  - Coordinate with the Penn Township Sewer Authority Board the expansion of sanitary sewers into developable areas zoned M1 and M2 and selected growth corridors.

### **Land Use**

- ✓ Encourage development which maintains the rural character of Penn Township.

- Limit high density, high intensity development to selected growth areas with adequate infrastructure.
- Continue to require the provision of open space in residential subdivisions through the mandatory dedication ordinance.
- Consider use of development models to achieve the goal of preserving rural character in the Township.
- Provide incentives to applicants which incorporate preferred design standards into residential and nonresidential land developments.
- Create one or more additional land use classifications from the current A-1 Agricultural-Rural District.
- Consider the preparation of a development design manual to convey preferred site design and construction standards to prospective developers of vacant land.

### **Natural Resources Preservation**

- ✓ Promote the preservation of natural resources and environmentally sensitive land in Penn Township.
  - Consider the creation of a conservation overlay district to preserve certain areas with pronounced natural features.
  - Consistently enforce environmental performance standards Township-wide through provisions of an amended zoning ordinance.

### **Residential/Housing**

- ✓ Maintain low density residential uses in predominantly rural areas while providing for housing for all socio-demographic ranges in transition areas.
  - Control site design aspects of multi-family development through access and open space requirements.
  - Provide expanded areas for low maintenance single-floor multiple family housing for the growing number of over 55 aged Township residents.
  - Promote the use of low density residential development models as opposed to traditional subdivisions.

- Consider providing for several options for creative residential development, one for single-family only development, and include these alternatives as permitted or conditional uses in certain selected residential zoning districts.

### **Traffic and Circulation**

- ✓ Encourage land use patterns which minimize traffic congestion and rely on performance based standards to produce a safe and efficient circulation system.
- Continue to provide transportation improvements at key intersections and along identified roadway segments through the local impact fee program.
- Assess capacity improvement options at specific nodes along the State Route 130 corridor.
- Prepare a "specific development plan" for the management of development and redevelopment activities in targeted areas along the State Route 130 corridor.
- Consider preparation of "Corridor Design Standards" in each of three (3) types of corridors in Penn Township in order to manage projected growth.
- Research the possibility of funding a pedestrian/bicycling circulation plan which can be incorporated into the regional trail system.

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### ***IMPLEMENTATION GOALS***

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#### **A. GOAL: PRESERVE OPEN SPACE AND LIMIT THE IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.**

##### **Implementation Objectives:**

1. Preserve the natural environment, including steep slopes, floodplains and wetlands through local land development regulations.
  - Amend the current Zoning Ordinance to include environmental performance standards applicable to all development proposals.
  - Consider the creation of a "conservation overlay" district to limit development in sensitive areas.
  - Expand current grading and stormwater management regulations in the current Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

- Conduct a natural resources audit and map identified areas.
2. Limit the development of wooded areas by regulating forestry operations and timber management.
    - Define the term “forest” broadly in Zoning Ordinance.
    - Establish standards for harvesting based on percentages and numbers of certain sizes trees.
    - Amend supplemental regulations to include limits on harvesting of mature stands of trees.
    - Reference “forest” management standards in Section 190-21(B)41.
  3. Acquire open space through a mandatory dedication program or pursue the conservation of natural open space and wooded areas through land development standards.
    - Administer the recently adopted Comprehensive Recreation Plan with the focus on preserving “passive recreation” areas which will remain undisturbed.
    - Consider the creation of environmental overlay districts to limit the impact of development on identified sensitive areas.
  4. Consider identifying a “Rural Resource Area” that is restricted for all but extractive industries (mining, oil and gas extraction, sand and gravel excavation), recreation, forestry and tourism related development.
    - Monitor impacts of development in natural resource areas.
    - Monitor loss of land in agricultural production.

**B. GOAL: IMPLEMENT A LAND USE PLAN BASED ON GROWTH MANAGEMENT STANDARDS WHICH RESPECT INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS.**

**Implementation Objectives:**

1. Guide development into areas appropriate for growth.
  - Identify select corridors for growth based on access and utility availability.
  - Identify preferred land uses within those corridors.
  - Amend zoning map and/or text where appropriate, to accommodate selected land uses.

- Complete a land resource survey to determine the amount and developability of land in specified growth areas.
2. Provide for an ongoing planning program which will be reviewed and revised as necessary, based on identified trends, and concerns of property owners.
- Continue to provide monthly and quarterly community development reports.
  - Utilize the Township's GIS software to generate trend maps which indicate lots for which building permits have been issued (quarterly).
  - Complete a review of Zoning Hearing Board activities on an annual basis.
    - Identify patterns of variance requests as they relate to specific ordinance provisions.
    - Introduce amendatory language to Zoning Ordinance when warranted, to reduce number of appeals.
  - Provide funds in the general budget for training and continuing education of Planning and Zoning Board members, Zoning Hearing Board members, and Commissioners.
3. Limit the construction of intense development in and adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas.
- Identify specific areas for preservation based on natural features.
  - Research the need for the creation of a conservation district where an aggregate of environmentally sensitive sites are in close proximity to each other.
4. Promote the use of mitigating site design features including use of natural topography, landscaping, existing vegetation and bufferyards between disparate land uses through the adoption of a "Development Guidelines Manual."
- Consider adoption of a Township-wide special purpose landscaping ordinance or assign a portion of the Design Manual to landscaping requirements.
  - Encourage compact building forms in planned, multi-use developments, leaving open space on site.
  - Encourage "low-impact" site preparation activities which limit the disturbance of sloped areas.

- Expand options in certain residential districts through development models, and provide for several types of mixed residential neighborhoods, i.e. single family and mixed residential/neighborhood commercial.
5. Adjust and revise current site plan review procedures and controls based on preferred development patterns.
- Select features of development site design which are effective and limit impacts on abutting properties.
  - Prepare standards for inclusion in the Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances based on observation of preferred design concept.
  - Include "limit of construction" and "structure orientation" standards to development submittal requirements.
6. Monitor the extension of public utilities and services into areas targeted for growth.
- Quantify available EDU's in system expansions and track permits as they are issued.
  - Estimate "buildout" based on current trends and proposals.

**C. GOAL: PROVIDE FOR HOUSING TYPES WHICH REFLECT THE DEMOGRAPHIC NEEDS OF THE TOWNSHIP.**

**Implementation Objectives:**

1. Provide for a variety of housing types (single-family detached, townhouse, apartment, mobile home) for all income ranges.
- Review current residential district uses to assure compliance with the Fair Housing Act.
  - Add multi-family housing to "transition zones" between low density residential and nonresidential classifications as a "discretionary use."
  - Provide for low maintenance "quad" housing marketed toward empty nesters and retirees in certain residential zoning districts.
2. Initiate a local program for the removal or adaptive reuse of deteriorated or vacant housing.
- Segregate the Township into "residential planning units" and conduct a windshield survey to confirm the presence of deteriorated housing.