

## COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### Need for Goals and Objectives

Any community planning effort by its very nature must include goals. Without goals there would be little direction to the future of the community. In the case of planning for the Middle Carbon County Planning Area, goals establish the framework for change and growth management, and the foundation for maintaining key community characteristics. Goals pronounce the community's expectations and provide a vision of how the community plans to evolve into the future. Objectives are specific actions which are designed to achieve goals and satisfy community needs. Making decisions based on planning goals and attaining specific objectives improves the physical condition of the community and sustains and enhances the overall quality of life.

**S**hared Vision - Every successful business, organization, or individual has a plan for the future. Communities are no different. If nothing else, a community needs to agree on a shared vision of what it wants to become. This vision should address the full range of local concerns: schools, housing, economic development, neighborhoods, parks and open space. Creating a shared vision is important because it provides a blueprint for the future of the community. People may differ on how to achieve the community's vision, but without a blueprint nothing will happen.

Source: Balancing Nature and Commerce in Gateway Communities, Howe, J., McMahon, and Propst, L., Island press, Wash., D.C., 1997, p. 48.

### Community Balance

Rural communities and residents of rural communities are characteristically unique from their more urban counterparts, and have the opportunity to directly mold their communities. The same can be said for the Planning Area which is clearly a rural community in transition. *The rural community is seen as the conservator of its own resources, habitat, and culture. Local citizens are directly involved in the control of community assets as they plan for the retention, enrichment, and equitable use of those assets for present and future generations.*

*Along with the community's goals, specific objectives must be identified; actions and methods for achieving the goals. Some objectives will be the direct responsibility of local elected and appointed officials. Others will require the cooperation and participation of other levels of government and the private sector.*<sup>1</sup>



The goals of all residents of the community will not be the same. Some residents will demand community conservation and environmental protection while other residents will favor increased economic development. Some residents will demand more community facilities and services, while others prefer lower taxes. Some residents will strive for land use diversity while others would prefer to live in a residential community. One function of the community planning process is to strike a balance between these varied expectations and develop a shared vision to meet the overall goals of the community.

### County Planning and Area Wide Planning

A key factor in formulating a set of local goals and objectives is the planning conducted at the county level. Typically, a county-wide comprehensive plan establishes a broad framework for the future growth and development of the county. Carbon County adopted its first comprehensive plan

<sup>1</sup> P. Lusk, J. A. Rivera, F. O. Sargent, M. Varela, (1991) *Rural Environmental Planning for Sustainable Communities*, Island press, Washington, D. C., p. 5

in 1967, long before the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) required counties in the Commonwealth to adopt comprehensive plans. The County is currently updating its plan which was last updated in 1998.

MPC §301.4, states *municipal comprehensive plans which are adopted shall be generally consistent with the adopted county comprehensive plan. This Middle Carbon County Comprehensive Plan is intended to maintain consistency with the recommendations of the Carbon County Comprehensive Plan to the extent that the County Plan is not untenable in terms of the key provisions of the Plan.* Another test of consistency for this plan will be addressed in terms of the plans of neighboring municipalities along with the plans of other public entities and community organizations providing community facilities and services and dealing with growth and development issues. The Panther Valley School District and the Jim Thorpe School District are good examples of such entities.

### **A Guide and Policy Statement**

This *Comprehensive Plan* is intended to serve as a means of addressing the future growth and development of the Planning Area by identifying key issues and establishing goals and objectives. The community planning process is also aimed at fostering cooperation between Carbon County and the four municipalities as envisioned by §306 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code which states, *both the county and the municipality shall each give the plan of the other consideration in order that the objectives of each plan can be protected to the greatest extent possible.*

The following goals and objectives were developed by local officials based on the planning process. The goals and objectives are intended to serve as a guide and policy statement for land use management and community facilities and services decision making. Any significant action taken by a local municipality, be it the adoption of a zoning ordinance amendment or the improvement of a municipal building, should be evaluated in terms of the community's goals and objectives. In addition, community planning and land conservation and development management is an on-going process, and residents and local officials must periodically evaluate and update the goals and objectives to accurately reflect current community conditions and expectations.

### **General Community Development Objectives**

This statement of the General Community Development Objectives is intended to set the overall tone for the *Comprehensive Plan* and its implementation. More detailed goals and specific objectives for particular aspects of the Planning Area follow in a later section.

Cooperation - To use the comprehensive planning process to explore the potential for cooperation between the three Boroughs and the Township, other municipalities and the County on growth and development issues of area wide concern.

Internal Coordination - To strive for coordination between policies, plans, and programs in the Planning Area through cooperation among governing officials, appointed boards, community interest groups, and residents.

Public Information - Achieve greater awareness, understanding and participation of residents with the recommendations in the *Comprehensive Plan* via an active public information process with such methods as a web site, newsletter, and public meetings.

Use of Land - To achieve the best use of the land within the Planning Area while

encouraging quality residential and commercial development. The focus will be on the preservation of the environment and open space. This will ensure that the varying uses of land will complement one another and thus improve the economic, social, and aesthetic character of the overall community.

Range of Land Uses - To allow a range of residential and commercial uses at appropriate locations and establish performance standards through cooperative zoning to ensure that such uses do not unduly affect adjoining properties or the public health, safety and general welfare and are consistent with the historic and gateway character of the communities.

Population Density - To establish realistic population densities in order to ensure health standards, privacy and open space and in order to allow for the provision of community facilities and services in the most convenient and efficient manner.

Streets and Roads - To maintain and improve the street and road system for better internal circulation and safety and to protect residential neighborhoods from through traffic.

Facilities and Services - To provide the necessary community facilities and services to meet the needs of increased development and the increasing and changing population.

Environmental Protection - To guide the location of future development and establish performance standards to minimize negative impacts (*externalities*) on the natural environment and the community as a whole.

Housing - To provide the opportunity for a wide-range and variety of housing types at reasonable densities to meet the needs of all residents; newly-formed households, growing families and senior citizens, and to work with available agencies, programs and financing to address housing condition problems.

Economic Development - To provide, within the context of the larger community, the opportunity for local business and strengthen the area economy by encouraging well-planned commercial, industrial, residential, and recreational growth which will provide for local employment, shopping facilities, and recreational opportunities which in turn will strengthen the tax base.

Monitoring - To update and revise planning goals and objectives, and the operational tools necessary for implementation, in light of new data and changing conditions, and to meet a changing population, both current and new residents, in concert with maintaining small town character and quality environment.

**GOAL 1 - LIFESTYLE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER**

**Protect the Middle Carbon County Planning Area's quality lifestyle by maintaining and enhancing historical, small town and rural character; and, recognize the abundant forest land and other open land as important elements of the local economy, character, and scenic setting.**

The Planning Area's physical environment, regional location and past development practices have shaped its character as three small town enclaves surrounded by thousands of acres of open land. Open land and access to Lehigh River transportation routes were the cornerstone of the foundation of the area when its earliest settlers arrived, and have played critical roles in the growth and development of the Planning Area. Without this open land and the natural resources it offered, particularly agricultural soils, timber and coal, the character of the Planning Area would be dramatically different.

Maintaining historic small town character and surrounding open land and the quality lifestyle associated with it is key to the future of the Planning Area. The decline in the number of commercial establishments in Lansford and Summit Hill and the importance of tourism in Jim Thorpe present challenges to maintaining the economic viability of the communities. In Penn Forest Township, which is associated with the Pocono Mountain region, second home development has resulted in the conversion of thousands of acres of open space, and the pending Route 903/Pennsylvania Turnpike interchange will certainly stimulate demand for additional residential development. Large privately and publically owned parcels of land with sensitive environmental areas such as steep slopes and wetlands, which contain the headwaters of high quality streams and protecting groundwater and municipal water supplies, are key to the future of the Planning Area.

Future development must be managed with an overriding concern to sustain this community character.

**Note About Open Space**

The preservation of open space is a common thread of this *Comprehensive Plan*. Open space is land which has not been developed for a constructive or productive use and is intended for environmental and natural resource protection, scenic, or recreational purposes. Open space may include, for example, woodland, wetlands, watercourses, reverting farmland, and floodplain. In the Middle Carbon County Planning Area, hundreds of acres of forest land are preserved as water authority watershed, municipal open space, County park land, and state park, game and forest land. In Lansford and Summit Hill reclaimed coal strip mines comprise many acres of open land. In the case of a development project, open space may include passive recreation areas such as ballfields, lawns and buffer areas. Agricultural land is certainly open land, but not truly open space because it is in fact highly developed for crop and livestock production.

**LIFESTYLE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER OBJECTIVES****Small Town Character**

**Incorporate the maintenance and enhancement of historical and small town character into municipal decision making.**

- Volunteer Organizations - Continue to support and cooperate with all of the volunteer organizations involved in the enhancement of the four municipalities.
- Historic Character - Integrate the protection of historic character into all public decisions and work with property owners and community organizations to preserve historical character.
- Pedestrians - Provide a safe environment for pedestrians by improving sidewalks, controlling traffic, and requiring new development to address pedestrian traffic.
- Parks - Maintain existing community parks and recreation areas and develop new

ones as finances permit.

- Streetscape - As a means of enhancing small town appeal maintain/improve the appearance of business districts with streetscape improvements.
- Street Trees - Recognize the importance of street trees to the communities and continue to preserve and replace street trees.
- Zoning - Develop zoning performance standards to control residential density and minimize conflicts between existing and future development, and update periodically to address changing conditions.
- Cooperative Zoning - Consider the use of cooperative zoning in the Middle Carbon Planning Area as a means of directing higher density residential and commercial/industrial development to areas best suited for such development.
- Commercial Uses -Ensure consistency of commercial uses with existing community character by apply zoning performance standards to address noise, lighting, outdoor storage, and other potential effects as well as ensuring appropriate landscaping and signage.
- Commercial Design - Develop guidelines for commercial building design, landscaping and parking that will ensure high aesthetic quality and while meeting basic development needs.
- Commercial Location and Scale - Carefully control the location and scale of commercial establishments while recognizing the importance of such development to the convenience of local residents and the tax base.
- Economic Development - Cooperate with local business development organizations to promote commercial development which builds on community assets and which will not compromise the quality of life.
- Water and Sewer - Carefully consider the expansion of the central water supply and central sewage collection and treatment facilities in terms of stimulating unwanted development in areas with important historical, cultural, natural, and scenic features.
- Tourism and Recreation - Provide for tourism and recreation related businesses in all areas where conflicts with existing residential uses will not occur.
- County Facilities - Recognizing that serving as the County Seat has played an important part of the Jim Thorpe's history and economy, work with the Carbon County Board of Commissioners to ensure the expansion of County facilities is consistent with the goals and objectives of this *Comprehensive Plan*.

## Open Land

**Preserve and conserve forest and agricultural land, open space, significant natural features and sensitive land areas to maintain rural-recreational character.**

- Important Areas - Identify and prioritize areas important for preservation.

- Connections - Form a connected network of open space to facilitate natural resource and habitat protection and passive recreational opportunities (e.g., trail networks) with particular attention to connection with public lands.
- Conservation Design - Consider requiring the use of *conservation subdivision design* to cluster residential development away from important natural, historic, scenic and cultural features, and preserve the resulting open space.
- Innovative Conservation Methods - Evaluate more progressive means of open land preservation including purchase of conservation easements and transferable development rights, especially in cooperation with the Carbon County Office of Planning and Development, and conservancy and land trust organizations.
- Clean and Green - Encourage use of Act 319 *Clean and Green* as a means of forestalling development.
- Coal Company Lands - Work with the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company and other local companies as they continue to mine and reclaim their lands to address long term open space needs.
- Forestry Enterprises - Do not overly restrict forestry enterprises with unnecessary zoning regulations provided best management practices are employed.
- Small Business - Encourage home occupations and small businesses as a means of allowing the owners of large parcels to realize economic gain thereby forestalling the development of open land.

**GOAL 2 -LAND USE**

**Develop a land use plan for the Planning Area that integrates all aspects of growth and development including residential, commercial, industrial and open space.**

Land use management is a complex process that depends on the interrelationship of a number of factors including the historic development pattern, regional location, demographics, the regional economy, the transportation network, and soils and land capability. Most of these factors are beyond the control of local municipalities. However, this *Comprehensive Plan* gives Jim Thorpe, Lansford, Penn Forest and Summit Hill the opportunity to work together provide the foundation to manage the growth and development of the Planning Area using innovative land use management ordinances, careful programming of public facilities, and active participation of residents.

*Rampant land conversion is a first consequence of the way Pennsylvania is growing. Quite literally, development-as-usual is consuming the Commonwealth's traditional rural landscape of farmland, forests, wetlands, and open spaces. Overall, Pennsylvania developed some 1.14 million acres, or 1,800 square miles, of fields, open space, and natural land between 1982 and 1997 – the sixth-largest such conversion after Texas, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and California.*

*This also means that fully one-third of all the land that the Commonwealth has ever urbanized since its founding was developed in just 15 recent years. Put another way, over those 15 years the state consumed land at a rate equivalent to 209 acres a day, or 9 acres an hour, every hour.*

*Source: Back To Prosperity, A Competitive Agenda for Renewing Pennsylvania, p. 47.*

A healthy economy fosters a healthy community by providing business development and employment opportunities. The historical development pattern of the Planning Area has evolved from the predominance of coal extraction and transport to the increasing importance of recreation and tourism. Concurrently, much of the retail and service sector has shifted from the central business districts of the three Boroughs to areas outside the Planning Area with big box retailers and industrial development. Smaller scale retail establishments and a number of service establishments have developed along Route 903 in Penn Forest Township, but the Township continues largely as a bedroom community. Planning Area residents now rely on the wider region, traveling to areas such as Tamaqua, Hometown and the Lehigh Valley for employment, shopping and personal services.

Local government may choose to not take a direct role in economic development, or can actively participate with economic development organizations. In any case, the four Planning Area municipalities can institute land use management and development policies that have a positive effect on the local economy and tax base, while addressing community conservation concerns. Recreation and tourism, coal extraction and forestry enterprises continue to be important to the local economy and steps should be taken to sustain these activities with provision for environmental protection.

**LAND USE OBJECTIVES****Residential**

**Preserve the livability of existing neighborhoods and encourage development of livable communities in areas which are physically and environmentally suited adjacent to existing development and, where appropriate, public facilities and services can be conveniently and economically provided.**

- Outreach - Develop a community-wide outreach program to citizens, municipal departments, committees, and civic organizations on ways to preserve and enhance the small town residential character.
- Neighborhood Groups - Encourage the formation of resident organizations to promote neighborhood maintenance and restoration.

- Communication - Improve communication between town boards, private non-profit and other local civic organizations to recognize mutual interests for neighborhood enhancement efforts.
- Private Communities - Explore ways of working with homeowners associations in private communities to improve facilities and services.
- Resources - Identify financial resources and programs available for neighborhood and housing preservation.
- Property Maintenance - Consider the adoption and enforcement of property maintenance codes.
- Open Space Access - Create neighborhoods with direct visual access to open land, with amenities in the form of neighborhood open space, and with a strong neighborhood identity.
- Diversity - Provide for a diversity of lot sizes, building densities, and housing choices to accommodate a variety of age and income groups and residential preferences, so that the community's population diversity may be maintained.
- Residential Development Options - Provide multiple development options such as conservation design and transferrable development rights to minimize impacts on environmental resources (sensitive lands such as stream corridors, wetlands, flood plain, and steep slopes) and disturbance of natural or cultural features (such as mature woodlands, hedgerows and tree lines, critical wildlife habitats, historic buildings, and fieldstone walls)..
- Design - Provide greater design flexibility and efficiency in the siting of services and infrastructure, including the opportunity to reduce length of roads, utility runs, and the amount of paving required for residential development.
- Residential Integrity - Eliminate incompatible uses in residential districts.

### Commercial and Industrial

#### **Promote innovative forms of commercial and industrial development that are in harmony with the rural-recreational character of the community.**

- Standards - Adopt, monitor and update commercial and industrial development standards to protect the public health, welfare and safety, to preserve community character, and to minimize conflicts with the tourism-recreation trade by controlling such activities as noise; outdoor manufacturing, processing and storage; lighting; and other potential effects.
- Scale - Provide opportunities for innovative and community-scaled commercial use as opposed to strip commercial development.
- Services - Facilitate community service uses such as a pharmacy and medical center.
- Commercial Design Standards - Develop guidelines for commercial building design, landscaping and parking that will ensure high aesthetic quality and while meeting basic needs.

- Mixed Use - Encourage residential use of the upper levels of business district properties.

### Economic Development

**Expand the Planning Area's existing economic base by exploring economic development opportunities consistent with and building on the existing small town and rural-recreational character in order to strengthen the existing general and tourist economy, create employment opportunities and generate tax revenue.**

- Economic Development - Recognize the importance of the regional economy and cooperate with local business development organizations and agencies to promote commercial development which builds on community assets and which will not compromise the quality of life.
- Tourism - Support the efforts of local organizations and the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau to maintain and promote tourism.
- Location - Welcome new commercial and industrial development to areas of existing similar development and where community facilities are adequate so that the development is compatible with existing land use and community character.
- Home Occupations - Encourage local economic viability by allowing home occupations consistent with residential districts and small businesses consistent with recreation and tourism and the overall community character.
- Government Efficiency - Maintain an efficient government and keep taxes low as an incentive for economic development.
- Existing Business - Support the continued development and possible expansion of existing businesses providing local employment and contributing to the tax base.

### Incompatible Uses

**Provide adequate separation between incompatible land uses.**

- District Location - Evaluate the location of zoning districts relative to one another.
- Commercial - Evaluate the allowed uses in commercial zoning districts and encourage retail, office, and service uses.
- Industrial - Create a separate zoning district for industrial manufacturing, warehousing, and similar high impact uses.
- Setback/Buffers - Provide appropriate setbacks and buffers between land uses.
- Landscaping - Provide landscaping along road frontages in commercial and industrial areas.

**GOAL 3 - NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Conserve streams, lakes and other natural resources and use the resources in a way to sustain the Middle Carbon Planning Area's economy.**

Without careful planning and management, the use of natural resources and sensitive environmental areas in the Planning Area can lead to the decline of community character and the quality lifestyle it affords, with eventual direct threats to the environment and public health and safety. Of special concern are lakes, streams, ground water, forest and soil resources. If the quality of the area's natural resources are diminished, the quality of life and the local economy will suffer, and water supplies could be threatened.

The Lehigh River has long been a key ingredient of the Planning Area and County character and economy, serving as a transportation route and now a focus of recreation and tourism. Today, Mauch Chunk Lake and the surrounding Carbon County Park are also important recreation resources as are the lakes in private communities in Penn. Forest Township. Without the protection of headwaters, including such streams as White Bear Creek, Silkmill Run, Robertson Run, Slaughterhouse Creek, Little Bear Creek, Bear Creek, Wild Creek, Hell Creek and Cross Run, downstream water quality and water supply reservoirs cannot be preserved. Panther Creek in Lansford flows to the Little Schuylkill and also must be protected. Good surface water quality must be maintained to sustain its economic value to the Middle Carbon Planning Area and region. Watercourses also carry flood waters, and this capacity must also be considered.

*The purpose of conservation: The greatest good to the greatest number of people for the longest time.*  
- Gifford Pinchot

*I recognize the right and duty of this generation to develop and use our natural resources, but I do not recognize the right to waste them, or to rob by wasteful use, the generations that come after us.*  
- Theodore Roosevelt

*If we learn, finally, that what we need to "manage" is not the land so much as ourselves in the land, we will have turned the history of American land-use on its head.*  
- Gaylord Nelson, Founder of Earth Day

**NATURAL RESOURCES OBJECTIVES****Conservation and Sensitive Natural Areas**

**Conserve open land, including those areas containing unique and sensitive natural features such as woodlands, steep slopes, streams, flood plains and wetlands, by setting them aside from development.**

- Identification Identify sensitive natural areas such as wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, woodlands, steep slopes, poor soils and flood plains, and adopt regulations to protect such areas by requiring resource sensitive development.
- Critical Resource Areas - Promote the conservation of open space within the Planning Area and the County and actively promote the long-term preservation and maintenance of valuable natural resource areas through public negotiated acquisition, private dedication of easements, and other cooperative efforts.
- Land Use Ordinances - Evaluate and develop land use ordinances in terms of effects on natural resources with the goal of maintaining open space to the greatest extent possible while allowing a reasonable density of development.
- Development Standards - Maintain up-to-date standards in local ordinances for storm water control, soil erosion and sedimentation control, sewage disposal, solid waste disposal and other environmental concerns.

- Development Incentives - Implement adopted municipal policies to conserve a variety of irreplaceable and environmentally sensitive resource lands, including provisions for reasonable incentives to create a greenway and trail system for the benefit of present and future residents.
- Conservation Design - Use *conservation subdivision design* to cluster residential development away from important natural, historic, scenic and cultural features, and preserve the resulting open space.
- Transferrable Development Rights - Use transferrable development rights to direct development to locations with adequate infrastructure and enable conservation-minded landowners to preserve their properties.
- Area Wide Cooperation - Coordinate environmental preservation efforts with neighboring jurisdictions, and establish an action plan targeting environmental concerns that require a regional approach.
- Economic Development - Encourage local economic development groups to make natural resource protection an integral part of all promotion efforts.

## Water Supply and Surface Water

### Protect the supply and quality of drinking water and protect surface water quality.

- E & S Control - Reduce erosion and sedimentation by requiring compliance with DEP regulations
- Stormwater - Adopt up to date stormwater ordinances to control runoff through the use of best management practices.
- Water Quality - Consider the impacts of residential and nonresidential development on water quantity and quality and encourage the use of best management practices to preserve stream and River water quality for aquatic life and recreational use.
- Waterfronts - Consider adopting use regulations applicable to waterfront land recognizing that Article VI of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code enables local municipalities to adopt zoning ordinances which *may permit, prohibit, regulate, restrict and determine uses of land, watercourses and other bodies of water.*
- Sewage Disposal - Monitor the effectiveness of on-lot sewage disposal systems and evaluate central sewage disposal as a means of correcting any widespread problems.
- Well Ordinance - Apply well construction standards with a well ordinance in areas not served by community water supply.
- Floodplain - Use land use controls to direct new residential and commercial development away from floodplain to areas where land is adequate to provide facilities necessary to support development and flood damage is minimized.
- State Agencies - Work with the Pennsylvania Fish Commission, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and other agencies to identify and address

water quality and public safety issues.

**Wildlife Habitat**

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**Protect critical wildlife habitat areas.**

- Natural Areas Inventory - Protect sites of rare, threatened, and endangered species.
- Forest - Conserve large forested areas that provide habitat.
- Corridors - Protect wildlife corridors, consisting of networked open space areas and stream corridors.

**Ridge Lines and  
Scenic View Sheds**

**Conserve ridge lines and scenic view sheds.**

- Development Standards - Consider measures that will preserve the characteristics of important ridge lines and scenic view sheds by limiting the amount and type of clearing associated with development.

**GOAL 4 - HOUSING****Provide for secure and sound housing in a variety of types and densities.**

Families and individuals of all income levels reside in the Planning Area and need continued access to decent and affordable housing with proper community facilities. The housing stock in the planning area ranges from high cost single-family and vacation homes, to working class housing, to low value dwellings and mobile homes in deteriorating condition. Housing value and condition are linked to the local and area wide economy and must be addressed as a regional issue.. The special needs of young families looking for their first home and senior citizens on fixed incomes must be addressed. Stable, affordable and accessible housing is critical to helping people live independently and improve life opportunities related to family, work, education, recreation or other pursuits.

**T**he Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires *a plan to meet the housing needs of present residents and of those individuals and families anticipated to reside in the municipality, which may include conservation of presently sound housing, rehabilitation of housing in declining neighborhoods and the accommodation of expected new housing in different dwelling types and at appropriate densities for households of all income levels.*

**Z**oning must provide for housing of various dwelling types encompassing all basic forms of housing, including single-family and two-family dwellings, and a reasonable range of multifamily dwellings in various arrangements, mobile homes and mobile home parks.

**HOUSING OBJECTIVES****Current Residents****Meet the housing needs of current Planning Area residents.**

- Sound Housing - Encourage preservation of presently sound housing.
- Rehabilitation/Reuse - Encourage the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of existing older homes which typically are larger and more difficult to maintain, especially for individuals on fixed incomes.
- Housing Programs - Encourage participation in all county, state and federal housing rehabilitation and assistance programs to ensure residents receive full benefit from such programs.
- Condition - Consider the adoption of an ordinance to regulate nuisances and safety hazards associated with dilapidated and dangerous structures.

**Housing Growth****Accommodate anticipated housing growth in appropriate locations, at appropriate densities, and with suitable amenities.**

- Density - Provide for varying densities based on available infrastructure and suited to the Planning Area's character and landscape.
- Multi-Family - Allow multi-family dwellings in conservation design in all zoning districts at the same density as single-family dwellings, but provide increased buffers and setbacks where multi-family adjoins single-family neighborhoods.
- Amenities - Provide for recreation and open space amenities within residential developments.

- Design Standards - Require all residential development to meet adequate design standards and provide proper community facilities via the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.
- Facility Maintenance - Require in the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance the continued ownership and maintenance of all improvements and facilities associated with residential development.

**Types and Affordability**

**Provide housing choice by encouraging housing of different types, size and tenure in suitable locations, at a range of prices within the reach of households of varying financial capacity.**

- Senior Housing - Encourage the development of nursing homes, adult care centers, assisted living facilities and other housing types which provide amenities that are attractive to retirees.
- Type and Density - Allow residential development of various types in suitable areas at a density sufficiently high to moderate the land cost of the increasing cost of housing, while requiring adequate off street parking, water supply and sewage disposal.
- Fair Share - Ensure that the Planning Area provides its required *fair share* of housing
- Gated Alternatives - Promote alternatives to private, gated communities.
- Innovative Design - Advocate conservation design, village style or traditional neighborhood development.
- Incentives - Consider density and design incentives to encourage the development of age-restricted and affordable housing.

**GOAL 5 - COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

**Ensure that community facilities and services are provided to meet the needs of the Middle Carbon County Planning Area.**

Residents rely on community and public facilities and services to meet their transportation, educational, water supply, sewage disposal, police protection, emergency response, recreation and other daily living needs. Municipalities do not, and cannot, provide all the facilities and services demanded by residents, many such services being provided by other levels of government or volunteer organizations. Nevertheless, without diligent and ongoing attention to the operation and maintenance of existing facilities and services, and planning for new facilities and services, a municipality can fall short in adequately serving its residents.

*Community facilities and utilities should be considered resources with limited capacities that are to be provided in appropriate places to support and implement a multi-municipal comprehensive plan. The location of certain key facilities, including water, sewer, schools, and roads, are often essential to providing the necessary services to accommodate more intensive residential and nonresidential development. Conversely, these services will facilitate unintended development in areas, such as important farming areas or areas with limiting natural resources, where growth may not be appropriate. The location of other services, facilities, and utilities should be considered in relation to their ability to support or conflict with the land use planning for the multi-municipal area. The land use planning should facilitate the efficient and economic provision of public, quasi-public, and privately provided community services wherever possible.*

*Source: Planning Beyond Boundaries, p. 3-18.*

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES OBJECTIVES****Facilities and Services****Maintain existing public facilities and**

**services and plan carefully for new public facilities and services.**

- Maintenance - Provide necessary maintenance of existing municipal buildings, equipment and other community facilities to extend the useful life and forestall unnecessary capital expenditures.
- Efficiency - Manage all municipal facilities and services efficiently and effectively.
- Capital Improvements Program - Systematically identify the need for local municipal community facilities and services, including useful life replacement of existing facilities, and develop a capital budget to meet the needs.
- Recreation - Focus resources on maintaining and improving existing recreation facilities and develop new facilities as resident needs dictate and financial resources permit.
- Recycling - Continue current recycling efforts and work with the Carbon County Department of Solid Waste to improve municipal programs.
- Infrastructure Needs - Encourage Carbon County to take the lead with area municipalities to coordinate planning for the infrastructure needs.
- Cooperation - Encourage and participate in any area intergovernmental cooperation efforts for community facilities planning and economies of scale for joint purchasing, recreation and other facilities and services.

**Emergency Services****Protect the Planning Area with effective emergency services.**

- Expanded Service - Identify isolated and under served areas and assess the need for expanded or additional fire and ambulance stations.
- Volunteer Organizations - Acknowledging the critical importance of such groups to the community, encourage and continue to support volunteer fire, ambulance and other public service organizations.
- Police Protection - Continue to provide police protection at a level necessary to meet community needs.

**Water Supply and Sewage Disposal****Ensure adequate water supplies and sewage disposal facilities.**

- Municipal Sewage Disposal - Maintain municipal sewage collection, conveyance and treatment systems in good operating condition and develop a capital improvements program to plan for necessary improvements and replacements.
- Municipal Water Supply - Maintain municipal water supply systems in good operating condition and develop a capital improvements program to plan for necessary improvements and replacements.
- Water Supply Protection - Apply well head protection standards to maintain good drinking water quality and manage water authority lands carefully to protect the watersheds.
- Well Ordinance - Apply well construction standards with a well ordinance in areas not served by community water supply.
- On-Site Sewage Systems
  - Monitor the effectiveness of on-lot sewage disposal systems and evaluate central sewage disposal as a means of correcting any widespread problems.
  - Ensure that on-site sewage systems are maintained, and that failing systems are repaired and new systems are installed in accord with DEP standards.
  - Consider the adoption of a sewage disposal ordinance to govern the installation, operation and maintenance of on-site sewage systems.

**Storm Water****Improve Stormwater Management.**

- Existing Problems - Evaluate storm water management facilities and develop a plan to address existing problems.
- Improvements - Include require stormwater management improvements in the capital improvements program.
- Innovative Controls - Incorporate innovative stormwater management techniques into new development.
- Education - Address existing problems with stormwater runoff through outreach

and education of landowners

**New Development**

**Ensure that an adequate and safe water supply system, a proper sewage disposal system, well designed and constructed roads, stormwater management and other facilities are provided by developers as part of any residential development.**

- SALDO - Periodically update the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to include standards to ensure most current and sound development practices.

**GOAL 6 - CIRCULATION**

**Establish and maintain an adequate circulation system to safely and efficiently move people and goods.**

Safe and well maintained roads are vital to all communities, serving not only as the means of travel within the community, but as the direct link to the region and beyond. Land use management tools must consider the capacity of roads, directing commercial and higher density development to areas served by roads capable of carrying increased traffic and the trucks necessary to serve resort and other commercial establishments. Concurrently, providing for pedestrians and bicyclists is also important, particularly in the three Boroughs.

Public roads and streets in the Planning Area total about 135 miles, with the three Boroughs and the Township having direct jurisdiction over a total of 77 miles of roads and streets, being entirely responsible for improvements and maintenance. Road maintenance accounts for significant proportions of the budgets of all four Planning Area municipalities, and local officials must plan carefully to ensure adequate funding for the improvement and maintenance of locally-owned roads. The more heavily traveled routes are owned and maintained by the State and total 49 miles, with an additional 18 miles or so (9 miles northbound + 9 miles southbound) of the Northeast Extension of the Pennsylvania Turnpike. In addition to the Turnpike, major state routes in the Planning Area include Route 209 running east from Schuylkill County through Lansford, Nesquehoning and Jim Thorpe to Lehigh, Route 902 connecting Route 209 in Lansford through Summit Hill and south to Mahoning Township and Lehigh, and Route 903 connecting Jim Thorpe north to Penn. Forest Township and Kidder Township.

**C**irculation - Planners typically talk about "circulation" rather than transportation because circulation (getting around) is the goal of the citizens they serve, whereas transportation is just a method of achieving that goal. A good circulation plan includes more than streets and roads – it includes means of pedestrian and bicycle circulation and, in many communities, some form of mass transportation.

Although good circulation plans involve more than roads, the starting point for an existing conditions analysis of circulation is a map of streets and highways in the community.

Source: *Community Planning, an Introduction to the Comprehensive Plan*, p. 80.

**CIRCULATION OBJECTIVES****Circulation Network**

**Improve the current roadway system to provide efficient traffic flow while maintaining a safe environment for pedestrians.**

- Classification - Inventory and classify according to function all public roads and bridges.
- Public Transportation - Support the Carbon County Community Transit system to maintain existing services to agency clients, and expand public service when financially feasible.
- Commuting to Work - Provide for park and ride areas and bus depots in appropriate zoning districts to facilitate commuting to work outside the Planning Area.
- Road Linkages - Include the consideration of through road connections as part of the development review and approval process.
- Project Impacts - Ensure that transportation improvement projects are consistent with the town's policies for protection of natural, cultural and historic resources, and minimize the impact on residential neighborhoods, and consider pedestrian and bicyclist access..

- Development Location - Limit higher density and higher traffic impact development to areas with adequate highway capacity.

**State Roads**

**Work cooperatively with adjoining municipalities, the County and PennDOT to address regional traffic impacts and highway improvement needs.**

- Improvements - Identify key intersections and other problem areas, and required improvements.
- Planning - Actively participate in all County and PennDOT highway planning programs.
- Route 903/PA Turnpike - Anticipate the growth and development effects of the pending Route 903/PA Turnpike interchange and update zoning as necessary.

**Local Actions**

**Develop a coordinated Planning Area program to maintain local municipal streets, roads and sidewalks.**

- Improvements Program - Develop a local road and intersection maintenance and capital improvements program.
- Cooperation - Work cooperatively with other municipalities to achieve road maintenance and improvement efficiency by sharing equipment and coordinating contract bidding for services and materials.
- Highway Occupancy Permit
  - Require as part of zoning approval for new or expanded uses, the issuance of a highway occupancy permit by the Borough/Township or PA DOT, as appropriate.
  - Maintain an up-to-date road occupancy ordinance setting standards for driveway access to Borough/Township roads and storm water and utility improvements within the road right-of-way.
- Parking and Access - Require adequate, but not excessive, off-street parking and loading, limit curb cuts, and require well designed access points.
- New Development - Maintain up-to-date standards for construction of new subdivision roads.
- Road Dedication - Continue the policy of not accepting development roads for public dedication unless the road serves a clear benefit that accrues to the public as a whole and not only residents of the development.
- Official Map - Using an official map, establish and reserve public street alignments and adequate rights-of-way for planned street improvements.

**Pedestrians and Bicyclists**

**Consider the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in all transportation planning.**

- Opportunity - Provide opportunities for a range of non-automotive transportation alternatives that are easily available to residents and visitors.

- New Development -Consider all new development proposals in terms of effects on existing and provision for new facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Pedestrians - Provide a safe environment for pedestrians by improving sidewalks, controlling traffic, and requiring new development to address pedestrian traffic.
- Sidewalks - Recognize the importance of sidewalks to the quality of life in the Boroughs and develop a sidewalk inventory, improvement, construction, and maintenance program to ensure long term viability of sidewalks.

**GOAL 7 - HISTORIC RESOURCES**

**Protect historic resources as an important part of the character and economy of the Planning Area.**

Stopped

The preservation of historic buildings, sites and other features, and encouraging new development to be consistent with existing historic character are critical to the future of the community. Many historic sites and structures are found in the Middle Carbon County Planning Area, ranging from the Summit Hill site of the discovery of anthracite coal in 1791 and later Switchback Railroad route, to the Lansford No. 9 Mine, the world’s longest continuously operated hard coal mine, to the widely-known historic Jim Thorpe downtown, to the Old Albrightsville Cemetery in Penn Forest Township. The Planning Area has embraced history and historical sites as an important ingredient of the community and local economy. Local history and historic resources have been very well documented. Each of the three Boroughs is fortunate to have an active local Historical Society along with other history-oriented organizations. *The Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor is a joint effort of private groups and interested citizens, county and municipal governments, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the federal government to conserve cultural and natural resources in the five-county region of Pennsylvania that traverses the historic Delaware and Lehigh Canals. Since the Delaware & Lehigh's designation by Congress in 1988, it has been our mission to restore historic places, conserve green space for public use and preserve and interpret our heritage to enhance life for generations to come.*<sup>2</sup>

**P**ennsylvania has more than 100,000 historic resources identified by the National Register of Historic Places. Thousands more could be identified across the state, in cities, towns and villages, and rural areas. This rich heritage is under threat-from abandonment and demolition of decaying urban building stock, destruction of rural landscapes and prime farmland for housing and business, and highway construction to accommodate the tidal wave of trucking and passenger traffic. As with our natural resources, we must strengthen our values and develop strategies to maintain our historic resources. Historic resources are worth saving. Without these resources, communities would lose their integrity, identity, and their attractiveness to newcomers. The goal is to strike a balance between development and saving what's important to the community's past.  
 Source: Better Models for Development in Pennsylvania, p. 83.

**HISTORIC RESOURCES OBJECTIVES**

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Conservation</b>         | <p><b>Boroughs - Continue to support local historical societies and other historic resources organizations.</b></p> <p><b>Township - Encourage the creation of a Penn. Forest Historical Society.</b></p>  |
| <b>D &amp; L Corridor</b>   | <b>Coordinate local efforts to conserve cultural resources with Delaware &amp; Lehigh National Heritage Corridor programs.</b>   |
| <b>Tourism</b>              | <b>Continue to support and participate in economic development efforts that highlight historic resources.</b>  |
| <b>Municipal Ordinances</b> | <p><b>Provide for conservation of cultural resources in Borough/Township ordinances.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Adaptive Use</u> - Allow the adaptive use of historic commercial buildings and large older homes to enable owners to adequately maintain the structures.</li> <li>• <u>New Development</u> - Adopt conservation subdivision design standards to ensure that an assessment for any structure older than 50 years and threatened by development.</li> </ul> |

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<sup>2</sup> www.delawareandlehigh.org.

The regulations should promote the retention of those structures deemed significant, because of age, architectural style or relationship to an historic event. design techniques to encourage (or require) developers to incorporate conservation of historic resources in new development.

- Demolition - Consider the adoption of demolition ordinances to prohibit demolition by neglect and require demolition review.

**Design Guidelines**

**Encourage consistency with the *Design Guidelines for D&L Corridor Market Towns* for development and redevelopment projects.**

**Public Information**

**Inform property owners about the significance and economic value of historic resources, and of the opportunities for their conservation.**