

O'HARA TOWNSHIP

Comprehensive Development Plan

Chapter 12 – Implementation Plan

SUMMARY FINDINGS

The effectiveness of local municipal planning is directly related to the efforts of the participants to achieve the goals and community objectives that evolve from the actual planning process. As the planning document is being prepared, information from a variety of primary and secondary data sources is assembled, analyzed and put into the local government context. As issues are identified based on what has become known as a SWOT analysis for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats, consensus building begins. In support of the statistical data, thematic digital mapping products based on geo-rectified data files are produced. These mapping products have become widely available on the Internet for more general analysis and by utilizing geographic information system software, digital cartographic products at smaller scales and with significant increases in accuracy are an integral part of any local planning process.

As discussed in Chapter 11, Citizen Participation, the Long Range Planning Committee for O'Hara Township prepared a household survey early in the planning process, in order to solicit input on issues of concern from Township property owners and taxpayers. A total of 3,726 surveys were mailed to addresses in O'Hara Township by zip code and 1,039 surveys were returned, representing about a twenty-eight percent (28%) response rate, which is considered statistically valid. The true value of any attitude survey instrument lies in the identification of consensus issues and the comments supporting those issues. In Chapter 11, an analysis of the survey responses follows the survey instrument and statistical summaries of each element. The analysis provided impetus to explore options and resolve issues that were identified and resulted in the preparation of more detailed technical reports.

In large part, the community survey responses indicated that the current planning and growth management program and administrative professionals are in synch with the planning philosophy of the elected officials. O'Hara Township has a history of local planning activity and has demonstrated a willingness to devote resources to problem-solving efforts involving sometimes controversial development proposals. There has been a continuity and consistency in a review and approval process that encourages discussion from a variety of perspectives and interests. This plan update has attempted to address both long term and immediate concerns through the preparation of a number of technical reports and goal planning which focus on those issues of concern which will most directly affect Township residents as the community moves toward buildout.

Much of the effort directed by the Long Range Planning Committee has involved the relationship between housing options and the characteristics of the Township's population, a balanced tax base which would support the costs of municipal service delivery, a strategic planning initiative to facilitate the development and redevelopment of the Township's commercial corridor, and a recognition that many characteristics of the Township's development pattern should be maintained. The socio-economic profile in Chapter 5 provides an analysis of statistical data relating to local employment, occupation trends, household finances, local revenues and expenditures and household economics. This work element demonstrates that O'Hara Township has evolved into a fiscally stable community with long term sustainable assets and human resources. The outlook is positive, given local government's efforts to achieve the goals identified in this plan document.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The articulation of community-wide goals and objectives is an attempt to bring the data collection, discussions, analyses and commentary generated during an eighteen (18) month planning process, into focus in order to guide O'Hara Township through its buildout phase. Article III of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code provides a requirement for plan components. The ten (10) general work elements outlined in Chapter 1 provide municipalities and groups of municipalities with the framework for the efficient development of land within their municipal boundaries. Further, the location, character, and timing of development which relates directly to the plan for future land use and which in turn involves an analysis of the amount, intensity and character of projected land use, is of chief concern to a community planning for its future. In addition, the local and regional transportation and circulation network relates directly to employment opportunities, future development options, and access to community facilities. These two aspects of local planning efforts have direct impacts on the quality of life in any community. The O'Hara Township Long Range Planning Committee has focused on those aspects of community development recognizing that the character of the community as it evolves toward buildout will be influenced by the core issues of land use and transportation.

In addition to the formal plan elements, recommendations, comments, summary conclusions and support for a specific plan is included in this planning document. The following broad or long-range goals are supported by short-range objectives which incrementally provide for the achievement of the broader community goal, and are presented by work element in this planning document. The consensus is that the goal statements that follow are on-going policy directives which can be considered effective during the next eight (8) to ten (10) year period, and that the actionable objectives which are linked to the goal can be accomplished in three (3) to five (5) year increments in support of the long-range goal.

CHAPTER 2 – EARLY HISTORY AND SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

GOAL: CONTINUE TO MONITOR DEVELOPMENT SITES WITH AN HISTORICAL LINK TO PERSONS OR PLACES, IDENTIFIED AS IMPORTANT TO THE TOWNSHIP'S HERITAGE

Objective 1: Refer to "Portrait of An American Community: O'Hara Township, PA," 2008, as a source for historical facts.

Objective 2: Continue to promote recognition of the Township's history within the region, through references in a Township newsletter.

CHAPTER 3 – DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

GOAL: PROVIDE FOR RESIDENTIAL USE OPTIONS TO ACCOMMODATE ALL FUTURE RESIDENTS AS POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS CHANGE

Objective 1: Support in-migration of young families through promotion of local recreational and educational opportunities.

Objective 2: Monitor percentage of over-65 population by Census tract.

Objective 3: Monitor characteristics of the population in existing neighborhoods as infill development occurs.

Objective 4: Provide performance incentives such as density bonuses to support construction of comparatively affordable housing for young adults and seniors.

CHAPTER 4 – HOUSING & HOUSEHOLDS

GOAL: PROVIDE FOR A PRO-RATA SHARE OF DWELLING TYPES IN RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED-USE ZONING DISTRICTS

Objective 1: Review current residential use provisions in the Zoning Ordinance as they relate to future housing needs.

Objective 2: Determine the Township's fair-share of multi-family residential development opportunities.

Objective 3: Base future planning objectives, zoning district designations, or neighborhood improvement districts, on the boundaries of recognized neighborhoods.

Objective 4: Establish contact list with neighborhood associations to facilitate communication that furthers the objectives of this plan and helps to monitor neighborhood conditions, blight, poverty, and needs.

GOAL: MAINTAIN THE HOUSING STOCK AND RESIDENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE OF O'HARA'S EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS

Objective 1: Sustain property values by ensuring that existing housing stock is maintained.

Objective 2: Ensure the maintenance of rental housing, namely single family detached units through the consideration of a rental licensing program.

Objective 3: Consider establishing a home and neighborhood improvements recognition program to promote sustainable property values in older neighborhoods.

GOAL: ENSURE THE VITALITY OF EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS THROUGH THE MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND NEW INFILL HOUSING CONSTRUCTION

Objective 1: Develop policy by which the Township may participate cooperatively with property owners in the installation, repair or ongoing maintenance of neighborhood improvements including lighting, common areas, sidewalks, and landscaping by utilizing a Neighborhood Improvement Program, such as Block Group 2 in Eastern O'Hara Township.

Objective 2: Promote the construction of new housing choices compatible with existing housing in neighborhoods by reviewing the zoning ordinance to ensure that performance standards help to promote or encourage "infill" construction and that existing provisions do not discourage that investment.

GOAL: PROVIDE HOUSING CONFIGURATION OPTIONS FOR THE FULL RANGE OF O'HARA'S PROJECTED BUILD-OUT POPULATION, FROM YOUNG ADULTS TO SENIOR CITIZENS

Objective 1: Utilize Planned Residential Development, Traditional Neighborhood Development and Preferred Development Models to promote performance standards that encourage the provision of housing at a level affordable to senior citizens as well as young adults.

Objective 2: Draft standards to encourage the types of housing that provide for the needs of such populations, namely senior citizens who may require low maintenance and one level living.

Objective 3: Ensure achievement of the goal by promoting the adherence of zoning, subdivision, and specific plan housing option standards to State and Federal fair housing policies, specifically the Federal Fair Housing Act and subsequent amendments.

GOAL: PERFORM TARGETED CODE ENFORCEMENT BY CONDUCTING AN INVENTORY OF HIGHER RISK NEIGHBORHOODS AS IDENTIFIED WITHIN CHAPTER 4, HOUSING AND HOUSEHOLDS

CHAPTER 5 – SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

GOAL: SUPPORT A BALANCED MIX OF DEVELOPMENT TO KEEP RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY TAXES MANAGEABLE

Objective 1: Monitor number of households on fixed incomes.

Objective 2: Participate in multi-municipal service delivery programs to reduce per capita costs.

Objective 3: Continue to participate in COG related bulk acquisition programs.

Objective 4: Assess the impact of introducing public water and sanitary sewerage facilities into the northwest quadrant of the Township.

Objective 5: Maintain current level of reserve funds in the annual budget and increase funds when possible to supplement wage and real estate taxes revenues for municipal service delivery, based on projections for continued growth.

GOAL: THE TOWNSHIP SHOULD UTILIZE THE ECONOMIC ANALYSES WITHIN THIS PLAN AS A MARKETING TOOL TO DEMONSTRATE AN ADEQUATE MARKET TO POTENTIAL BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS WITHIN THE FREEPORT AND OLD FREEPORT ROAD CORRIDORS

GOAL: THE TOWNSHIP, PRESENTLY HAVING SUFFICIENT CAPITAL RESERVES, SHOULD CONTINUE THIS POLICY IN ORDER TO PLAN FOR FUTURE DECREASES IN WAGE TAX AS THE INFLUX OF MID TO UPPER INCOME FAMILIES REPLACING THE HOUSEHOLDS OF SENIORS EVENTUALLY SUBSIDES OR WHERE SERVICE DEMANDS OF SUCH RESIDENTS INCREASE

CHAPTER 6 – EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

GOAL: CONTINUE TO SUPPORT EDUCATIONAL USES, RETRAINING FACILITIES AND VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS PROVIDED BY PUBLIC AGENCIES AND PRIVATE INTERESTS

Objective 1: Maintain liaison with the Fox Chapel School District regarding student enrollment projections.

Objective 2: Encourage the development of new industries and research facilities which promote low impact environmental characteristics.

CHAPTER 7 – TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

GOAL: REQUIRE THAT ANY EXPANSION, CONSTRUCTION, OR DOCUMENTED BASE LEVEL INCREASES IN TRIP GENERATION IMPACTING ADJACENT INTERSECTIONS BY PROPOSED EXPANSIONS TO EXISTING ESTABLISHMENTS OR NEW LAND DEVELOPMENT, PARTICIPATE IN A TOWNSHIP-WIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Objective: Draft standards for transportation oriented developments for inclusion in the current Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

GOAL: ENCOURAGE SUSTAINED FUNDING OF PLANNED TRANSPORTATION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS THROUGH IMPACT-BASED FUNDING AND USER-BASED CONTRIBUTIONS, THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WHICH SHOULD BE EVALUATED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED AND THE TIMING AND SCOPE OF ANTICIPATED IMPROVEMENTS:

OBJECTIVE 1: Consider creation of a transportation partnership district coinciding with the boundaries of the specific plan, namely the interchange area with Route 28 and Freeport and Old Freeport Road corridors.

OBJECTIVE 2: As an alternative to Objective 1, consider reciprocal user fees as development exactions in exchange for development beyond that typically authorized in the base district, notably the C District. Developments generating comparatively greater numbers of trips, may be authorized where fees subsidizing district-wide improvements are paid. The preceding is designed to act as a form of performance zoning, where such fees are not required at the base level and a fair share of such establishments are provided for elsewhere in the Township.

OBJECTIVE 3: Encourage the creation of neighborhood improvement district standards to fund and maintain both pedestrian and vehicular improvements by providing a local match of dollars and/or services for shared improvements.

GOAL: EXPRESSLY AUTHORIZE MIXED USE PARKING REQUIREMENTS WHERE A PROPORTION OF PARKING SPACES ARE "DOUBLE-COUNTED" DEPENDING ON THE PEAK USE OF THE ESTABLISHMENTS SUCH AS RESTAURANT VERSUS OFFICE

Objective 1: Parking studies by the Urban Land Institute or the Institute of Transportation Engineers should be referenced.

GOAL: EXPLORE COOPERATION WITH RIDC PARK PROPERTY OWNERS AND ASSOCIATIONS INCLUDING COORDINATION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS WITHIN THE PARK

Objective: Consider establishing a Business Improvement District which permits implementation through private contributions and/or site planning, that may reduce traffic including staggered work hours or ride sharing programs .

GOAL: CREATE A STREET CLASSIFICATION MAP TO BE UTILIZED IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF ORDINANCES AND FUTURE TRANSPORTATION, DENOTING LOCAL, COLLECTOR, AND ARTERIAL STREETS

GOAL: UTILIZE MITIGATIONS PROPOSED IN THE WOOSTER AND ASSOCIATES TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION ANALYSIS, SEPTEMBER 2009, AS TRANSPORTATION COMPONENT OF A SPECIFIC PLAN FOR THE SR 28 INTERCHANGE AREA AND FREEPORT ROAD CORRIDOR

CHAPTER 8 – GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

GOAL: CONTINUE TO OPERATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT WITH TAXPAYER INPUT

Objective 1: Prepare a semi-annual newsletter to apprise taxpayers of local initiatives.

Objective 2: Pursue intergovernmental cooperation agreements with adjacent communities where benefits to O'Hara Township residents can be demonstrated.

GOAL: UTILIZE THE TOWNSHIP'S TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY, 2005, PROJECT IMPLEMENTATIONS SECTION, TO CONNECT THE INVENTORY OF GREEN AREAS TO SERVE AS A GUIDE FOR MANDATORY LAND DEDICATION LOCATIONS

Objective 1: This access should serve as a policy guide to the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Planning Commission, and Council.

GOAL: SUPPORT THE MAINTENANCE OF IDENTIFIED GREENWAYS THAT PROVIDE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PEOPLE, RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL FACILITIES, AND PROTECT BIO-DIVERSE AREAS, STEEP SLOPES, AND RIPARIAN CORRIDORS.

OBJECTIVE 1: Include purchase of trail easements as public capital improvements which may be funded, in part, by fees in lieu of land dedication.

OBJECTIVE 2: Encourage conservation and preservation of greenways areas through the cluster development option and local regulatory protection of steep slopes and riparian buffers by the enforcement of environmental performance standards.

GOAL: ESTABLISH RELATIONSHIPS WITH PROPOSED HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATIONS TO PROMOTE GREENWAY CONNECTIONS AND CONTINUITY, ENSURE PRIVATE MAINTENANCE OF COMMON AREAS, AND PRESERVATION OF WOODED SLOPES

Objective 1: Review proposed Homeowner's Association documents for references to community-wide recreation goals and security of long-term maintenance of semi-public or common facilities such as lighting, private sidewalks, and landscaping.

GOAL: UTILIZING CENSUS DATA, TARGET AREAS FOR INCOME SURVEYS AND POSSIBLE SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING OF STREET REPAVING OR RELATED INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS (AREAS SUCH AS BLOCK GROUP 2 IN EASTERN O'HARA NEAR BLAWNOX) AND ATTEMPT TO GAIN FUNDING THROUGH ALLEGHENY COUNTY'S CDBG PROGRAM

GOAL: ADOPT RELATED MANDATORY LAND DEDICATION REQUIREMENTS, OR FEES-IN-LIEU-OF-DEDICATION, AS PER 503(11) OF THE MUNICIPALITIES PLANNING CODE AS AN IMPLEMENTING TOOL OF THE RECREATION PLAN AND THIS PLAN

GOAL: GIVEN RECENT GAINS IN YOUNGER FAMILIES, A STABLE POPULATION OF YOUTH WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP AND FOX CHAPEL SCHOOL DISTRICT, AND RELATED DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS, THE TOWNSHIP SHOULD UTILIZE THE STANDARDS OF ITS COMPREHENSIVE PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE PLAN TO UPDATE SUCH FACILITIES BASED ON POPULATION NEEDS

Objective 1: The inventory of facilities should be used as a capital improvements plan addendum to which fees-in-lieu of recreation are paid.

CHAPTER 9 – CURRENT AND FUTURE LAND USE

GOAL: PREPARE PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT DESIGN STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL AND NONRESIDENTIALLY ZONED INFILL PROPERTIES

Objective 1: Monitor interest in selected tracts with development potential through staff generated community development activity reports.

GOAL: DRAFT NEIGHBORHOOD SCALE LAND (MINOR) DEVELOPMENT LANGUAGE FOR INCLUSION IN THE CURRENT SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

Objective 1: Protect existing developed property from impacts of proximity development by drafting site specific design standards.

Objective 2: Provide an efficient review and approval process for new small-scale commercial land development and expansion of existing facilities.

Objective 3: Review current zoning district use provisions for Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code consistency and revise ordinance text consistent with plan recommendations.

GOAL: MONITOR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN INCLUDED IN THE COMPREHENSIVE PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN, EVALUATE ACHIEVEMENT OF SHORT-TERM AND MID-TERM PRIORITIES

GOAL: IDENTIFY A "POTENTIAL GROWTH AREAS" IN ORDER TO GUIDE NEW DEVELOPMENT INTO PREFERRED AREAS WHERE UTILITY EXTENSIONS, ACCESS AND SITE PREPARATION COSTS ARE ECONOMICALLY FEASIBLE FOR DEVELOPMENT

Objective 1: Consider a "traditional neighborhood development option" for the Margery Drive neighborhood within the context of a specific plan.

Objective 2: Draft an adaptive reuse option, as a change-of-use policy for insertion into the Zoning Ordinance.

Objective 3: Draft site design standards which buffer structures from transitional characteristics on adjacent properties.

Objective 4: Link neighborhood scale land development provisions from previous planning efforts.

Objective 5: Draft standards for mixed use hamlet and village models within the current zoning district provisions, as a flexible development option.

GOAL: REVISE PRD-3 STANDARDS AS APPLICABLE TO PROPERTY IN THE R-3 DISTRICT TO INCLUDE A TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT FORM OF PRD WITH LESSER MINIMUM SITE SIZE, BUILDING ORIENTATION AND SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS WHICH ENCOURAGES REDEVELOPMENT IN OLDER, ESTABLISHED NEIGHBORHOODS

GOAL: ENCOURAGE UTILIZATION OF REVISED PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS WITHIN THE ZONING ORDINANCE AND TREAT PRDs AS PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT MODELS

Objective 1: Reduction of minimum site size of PRD-2 (as permitted in R-1 and R-2) from twenty (20) contiguous acres to ten (10) contiguous acres.

Objective 2: Allow PRD-2 to access local streets (versus arterial or collector) if the average net density, as defined in the Zoning Ordinance, does not exceed the density permitted in the underlying district.

Objective 3: Allow for slight reduction in minimum lot width for the lot averaging PRD option where overall density is not increased.

Objective 4: Authorize major subdivisions as conditional uses in R-1 and R-2 while lot averaging and PRD-2 remain as permitted uses. Related conditions should include definition of extraordinary impact, such as impact on slopes and landslide prone areas. Options encouraging clustered dwelling sites with related preservation of open space, greenways, and natural features should be provided for by lowering the acreage thresholds often associated with alternative forms of development and streamlining the approval process.

GOAL: REVIEW AND ASSESS A MAXIMUM BUILDING SIZE IN THE C DISTRICT IN LIGHT OF MODERN STANDARDS, PARKING, ACCESS, AND ACCESS MANAGEMENT TO ADJOINING FREEPORT AND OLD FREEPORT ROADS

Objective 1: Create a transitional district that provides for small scale mixed uses, building size maximums, a variety of preferred residential uses, pedestrian linkages, and performance standards to encourage preservation of existing structures within the areas of South Margery Drive, portions of Old Freeport Road, and the PennDot maintenance facility property.

Objective 2: Include standards for all conditional uses in the SM District that require onsite traffic improvements, where required to maintain or achieve minimum levels of service.

GOAL: PROVIDE FOR REASONABLE DEVELOPMENT OF MINERALS, INCLUDING OIL AND NATURAL GAS

OBJECTIVE 1: Protect Township transportation assets from the impacts of natural gas and extractive industry resource development through amendments to current zoning and subdivision and land development ordinance provisions.

OBJECTIVE 2: Examine current surety policies and access standards, and revise if necessary, where impacts of such operations warrant revision, assuming that extractive industries are treated in the same manner as other uses of similar impact.

GOAL: PROMOTE THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL AREAS WITH ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS.

OBJECTIVE 1: Utilize land use regulatory tools to promote preservation of natural areas in proposed developments, where such areas are identified in the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory.

OBJECTIVE 2: Ensure preservation of natural areas in open space through cluster or conservation subdivision standards to include easements and covenants in favor of the Township, a homeowner's association or the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

OBJECTIVE 3: Establish and maintain a database of private lands and open spaces preserved through the development approval process for use in monitoring recreational opportunities for a segment of the Township's population.

STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY

Through the development of its comprehensive plan, O'Hara Township has studied and made policy recommendations intended to ensure that the ongoing character of existing development, redevelopment, and new developments are compatible with the character of existing or foreseeable development in adjoining municipalities. Particularly, the impact of planned commercial, residential, and mixed use development are addressed within this statement.

The plan encourages the maintenance of the character and intensity of existing development within RIDC Park which is compatible with proximate uses and lands in adjoining municipalities. The plan

encourages pedestrian friendly development with reciprocal access easements, consolidation and redevelopment of lots, landscaping and buffering, limitation of curb cuts, and provision of neighborhood scale uses along the Freeport and Old Freeport Road corridors that are compatible with the adjoining commercial districts in Aspinwall and Blawnox. Such development will be compatible with The Waterworks Mall in the City of Pittsburgh and the business center of Sharpsburg.

The plan encourages compatible infill development within traditional residential neighborhoods, particularly those bordering similar neighborhoods in Blawnox. The plan encourages the continued maintenance and viability of the existing single family plans that border similar uses within Fox Chapel Borough. The plan encourages the use of cluster and Planned Residential Development within undeveloped areas of the Township, primarily in the northwest. Use of such tools ensures adequate buffering of future development from adjoining lands, primarily in residential land uses in Shaler and Indiana Townships.

While not immediately adjacent to Fox Chapel, development at the interchange of Route 28 and Fox Chapel Road will impact the gateway to both Fox Chapel Borough and O'Hara Township. Mixed use development through implementation of a Specific Plan is encouraged. This plan will facilitate access, circulation, aesthetics, redevelopment of underutilized and deteriorating single family residences, and support sustainable development. The preceding is planned to provide a positive improvement to this gateway area and positive impacts to both communities.

Adoption of a Specific Plan, of which a cooperative implementation agreement is required with Allegheny County, will best ensure compatibility with the Allegheny County Comprehensive Plan, Allegheny Places, as adopted in 2008. In particular, the Specific Plan aims to manage development and redevelopment in the Freeport and Old Freeport Road Corridors and Route 28 Interchange. This area is best referenced as a "corridor place" within the Allegheny Places. The anticipated standards of the Specific Plan will address access, management, encourage mixed use development, and interconnectivity as encouraged by the following recommendation in Chapter 4 of Allegheny Places:

"The intent of Corridor Places is to break away from the old pattern of strip development. They will be planned instead as nodes or hubs, with a gridded street network that interconnects uses and has limited access points on existing major roadways."

The County Plan specifically references "lack of access management strategies" and references an evaluation of County-owned roads. Each item is addressed within the recommend holistic approach taken by a Specific Plan which will in turn address Old Freeport Road, a County-owned road, and will manage access along the key corridors.

In summary, the plan recommendations are compatible with existing and anticipated land uses in adjoining municipalities, and are not only compatible with, but will actively further the recommendations of Allegheny County's Comprehensive Plan, Allegheny Places.

SPECIFIC PLAN

A key planning initiative that evolved during the discussions concerning future land use and transportation issues involve the preparation of a specific plan for the area surrounding the SR 28 interchange with the Freeport Road corridor and Fox Chapel Road. Separate technical reports were prepared by Township consultants to assess the transportation/circulation issues and the potential development and redevelopment of land in the township's commercial corridor. The appropriate mix of land uses, flexible development options and transportation oriented design standards were reviewed in the context of establishing a geographic planning unit utilizing the authority granted through Article XI, Section 1106 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

This initiative would be the subject of an agreement between Allegheny County and O'Hara Township to implement the recommendations included in comprehensive plans adopted by both governments. The components of the agreement will be consistent with the following Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code provisions:

SECTION 1106. SPECIFIC PLANS.

ARTICLE XI, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATIVE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENTS (PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPALITIES PLANNING CODE)

- (a) *Participating municipalities shall have authority to adopt a specific plan for the systematic implementation of a county or multimunicipal comprehensive plan for any nonresidential part of the area covered by the plan. Such specific plan shall include a text and a diagram or diagrams and implementing ordinances which specify all of the following in detail:*
- (1) *The distribution, location, extent of area and standards for land uses and facilities, including design of sewage, water, drainage and other essential facilities needed to support the land uses.*
 - (2) *The location, classification and design of all transportation facilities, including, but not limited to, streets and roads needed to serve the land uses described in the specific plan.*
 - (3) *Standards for population density, land coverage, building intensity and supporting services, including utilities.*
 - (4) *Standards for the preservation, conservation, development and use of natural resources, including the protection of significant open spaces, resource lands and agricultural lands within or adjacent to the area covered by the specific plan.*
 - (5) *A program of implementation including regulations, financing of the capital improvements and provisions for repealing or amending the specific plan. Regulations may include zoning, storm water, subdivision and land development, highway access and any other provisions for which municipalities are authorized by law to enact. The regulations may be amended into the county or municipal ordinances or adopted as separate ordinances. If enacted as separate ordinances for the area covered by the specific plan, the ordinances shall repeal and replace any county or municipal ordinances in effect within the area covered by the specific plan and ordinances shall conform to the provisions of the specific plan.*
- (b) (1) *No specific plan may be adopted or amended unless the proposed plan or amendment is consistent with an adopted county or multi-municipal comprehensive plan.*

- (2) *No capital project by any municipal authority or municipality shall be approved or undertaken, and no final plan, development plan or plat for any subdivision or development of land shall be approved unless such projects, plans or plats are consistent with the adopted specific plan.*
- (c) *In adopting or amending a specific plan, a county and participating municipalities shall use the same procedures as provided in this article for adopting comprehensive plans and ordinances.*
- (d) *Whenever a specific plan has been adopted, applicants for subdivision or land development approval shall be required to submit only a final plan as provided in Article V, provided that such final plan is consistent with and implements the adopted specific plan.*
- (e) *A county or counties and participating municipalities are prohibited from assessing subdivision and land development applicants for the cost of the specific plan.*

A significant advantage to the drafting and adoption of a specific plan is that the Township can establish a unique menu of uses, dimensional standards, review and approval criteria and planning objectives, which are different and apart from regulations in place in any other zoning district. The study area should be treated as a distinct planning unit with its own strengths and development constraints. In addition, based on the community survey responses, uses preferred by Township residents can be provided for in this area as uses by right and made attractive to private sector interests through the establishment of unique standards consistent with the objectives of the Township's comprehensive plan.

In terms of implementing the intergovernmental cooperative agreement, several strategic actions have been identified for the preparation of a specific plan and the drafting of unique standards for access, buffering, signage, site design and use options, in the area covered by the specific plan. The ability to craft unique regulations applicable to development proposals submitted for land situated within the specific plan study area is a good fit for O'Hara Township and addresses a variety of concerns which have developed over the years. Strategic actions associated with this element of the implementation plan, are as follows:

1. Review and assess a maximum building size in the current C District in light of state-of-the-art standards, parking, access, and access management to adjoining Freeport and Old Freeport Roads.
2. Require that any expansion, construction, or determined threshold of percent increase in trip generation by proposed establishments or land developments participate in a corridor overlay.
3. Corridor design guidelines or standards should be developed that requires landscaping, minimization of access points, sidewalks or contribution of a fee-in-lieu of sidewalks or dedication of pedestrian easements in lieu of sidewalks.
4. Section 72-14.113 of the Zoning Ordinance should be revised to include twenty percent (20%) increase in trip generation as well as building size. The current section requires that parking for an entire area be provided at current standards if building expands twenty percent (20%) or more. Performance standards in the specific plan area may provide for an access management approach to development and redevelopment activities.

5. Expressly authorize mixed use parking requirements where a proportion of parking spaces are “double-counted” depending on the peak use of the establishments such as restaurant versus office. Reference parking standards from studies prepared by the Urban Land Institute or the Institute of Transportation Engineers.
6. Incorporated a menu of use options that provides for small scale mixed uses, building size maximums, a variety of residential uses, pedestrian linkages, and performance standards to encourage preservation of existing structures within the areas of South Margery Drive, portions of Old Freeport Road, and the PennDOT maintenance facility property.

SUMMARY

O'Hara Township has evolved into an economically stable, diverse community with core values attractive to blue collar and professional sectors. It has been well managed and responsive elected officials have provided desired amenities and infrastructure which have contributed to a steady increase in land valuation. As the remaining developable land is scrutinized for development, consideration of how to sustain revenues in order to cover costs associated with the delivery of services is appropriate. There are issues concerning the Freeport Road commercial corridor, traffic congestion, upgrading aging public utility systems in older developed areas, stormwater management and preserving open space, which have been addressed as the need arises. This planning document serves as a palette of options available to community leaders to enter the latter stage of community development with a plan to sustain the quality of life taxpayers have come to expect from investing in O'Hara Township's future. Past practice has proven that a respect for diverse opinions and a willingness to make timely decisions can and must be the key to achieving the community's goals.