

MEMORANDUM

To: Washington Township Planning Commission

From: Joe Tangari, AICP, Jill Bahm, AICP

Date: 2/2/2023

Re: Master Plan Goals & Objectives

Introduction

The Township has completed the first phase in the development of its new Master Plan, which was primarily focused on public input. Based on this input the Planning Commission can now begin to draft the plan. To set our direction, we'll be setting our goals. The memo that follows details our thoughts on the structure of our goals and offers some suggested starting points for establishing them.

Visions and Strategies of the Last Master Plan

The visions and strategies of the last Master Plan have been provided in a separate document. These were structured around particular land uses, and while this is helpful for thinking about development, we do think that it is useful to consider a different structure for the updated version.

Below, we've proposed a structure that begins with a broad, overarching vision statement for the Township, which is then supported by goals that are further broken into objectives. This structure then becomes the framework for a chapter dedicated to implementation; this chapter will take each objective and assign specific, discreet action items to it, noting responsible parties, priorities, timeframes, and potential funding sources, as applicable.

Vision Statement

A vision statement is a compact, high-level statement that will guide the master planning process and inform the guiding principles we develop for the plan. It applies to the whole township, and it should be brief, general, and comprehensive. For instance, Boston, Massachusetts' Boston 2023 plan adopts the following statement as its guiding vision:

Boston in 2030: a city where Bostonians live in vibrant neighborhoods, where all residents are able to participate in the city's economic growth, and where one of our most significant resources—our waterfront—can thrive.

Obviously, Boston is a very different place from Washington Township, but the principle of a vision statement still applies. Based on what we've heard in this process so far, we've drafted the following vision statement:

As Washington Township continues to grow, new development will occur in a planned manner that respects the history, natural environment, and rural character of the community even as it acknowledges the need for progress. Washington Township's future will be built on a strong, diverse economy, housing opportunities that serve an array of needs, and well-managed growth.

At our February 9th study session, we'll discuss this statement and make any adjustments or revisions the Planning Commission feels are necessary.

Goals and Objectives

Having established an overall vision for the Township, we can then move on to supporting it with goals. At this point, we are looking to establish a consensus on our goals for the Township's future. Objectives, which add detail to our goals, will be addressed at a future meeting, after we've established the goals themselves.

The draft goals that follow are not organized strictly along the lines of land use, though all have land use implications.

1. Economic Development. The Township will work to make itself attractive to businesses with the potential to provide professional employment opportunities, and plan to provide land for their facilities
2. Access to Services. The Township will ensure that land is available for commercial development that provides services to residents in appropriate locations.
3. Housing. The Township will provide and permit housing that serves a variety of needs, facilitates aging in place, and offers a high level of quality and aesthetic appeal.
4. Environmental Quality. New development and redevelopment, when it occurs, will respect the natural environment and preserve its important features to the maximum extent possible.
5. Transportation. The Township's road and pathway system will provide safe and efficient circulation for all users, includes pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. Road design will respect the context of the area surrounding the road.
6. Community Facilities and Services. The Township will provide high-quality facilities and services that meet the needs of residents and businesses.
7. Quality of Life. Residents will have a high quality of life regardless of where in the Township they live.
8. Unique Places. The Township will recognize its unique areas and sites, including its historical, agricultural, natural, and principal commercial or mixed use areas and support their future development in accordance with each of their needs and characters.
9. Harmonious Development. Where more intense uses are developed close to less intense uses, screening, setbacks, and other measures will be used to ensure that potential negative impacts are minimized.