



CHAPTER 3

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

To be effective, this Comprehensive Plan must reflect the common goals of the residents of the Planning Area. These goals range from physical policies, such as the appropriate use of land, to social and educational policies. Once these goals are formed, they represent a context within which decisions can be made regarding the use of land and the conservation of resources.

Since early 1995, the Joint Comprehensive Plan Committee has worked with concerned citizens and technical experts to prepare this Joint Comprehensive Plan for Leesport Borough, Ontelaunee Township and Perry Township. As representatives of the residents in the three municipalities, the Committee must make some critical decisions about where, when, and how the Planning Area will grow. The first and most important section of this Plan is to clearly articulate the goals and objectives of the Planning Area municipalities in terms of comprehensive planning for conservation and development.

As a first step in the planning process, Planning Area citizens were invited to participate in developing the new

Comprehensive Plan by attending a public meeting. This "kick off" meeting was conducted on May 24, 1995. Comments from citizens and municipal officials have been used to develop general goals regarding land uses, development, environmental protection, and other issues.

RESIDENT'S SURVEY

In addition to the public "kick-off" meeting, the Joint Committee members decided to seek input from all of the Planning Area's residents. Therefore, in the Summer of 1995, a Resident's Survey was circulated to all households within the Planning Area. The Resident's Survey will serve as a valuable tool for the Planning Area and will be referenced throughout this Plan where appropriate. The resident responses indicated a certain degree of disapproval of some forms of residential and commercial growth. The number of returned surveys was as follows:

Leesport Borough	41
Ontelaunee Township	39
Perry Township	<u>78</u>
TOTAL	158

The following represents a summary of the survey responses:

- Areawide, 75 percent of the respondents had lived in their current municipality at least 10 years; over one-half had lived there over 25 years; approximately 20% were born there.
- The vast majority responding indicated that their property was used for residential purposes.
- Near 80 percent anticipated that nothing different would happen to their land in the next ten years.
- 24 percent of the Leesport Borough residents indicated that they worked in the Borough, with an additional 44% working elsewhere in Berks County; 15 percent of Ontelaunee Township residents worked in the Township, with an additional 46% working elsewhere in the County; and 15 percent of Perry Township residents worked in the Township, with an additional 54% working elsewhere in the County.
- All residents of Leesport responding are served by public water, while only 22% from Ontelaunee Township and none from Perry Township are.
- All of the residents of Leesport responding are also served by public sewers, while only 12 percent from Ontelaunee Township and 6 percent from Perry Township are (or will be connected in the immediate future).
- Gardening and running/walking were the two

forms of family outdoor recreation most frequently identified by the survey respondents.

- Leesport residents ranked (1) peace and quiet and (2) emergency services as the most important quality of life issues; in Ontelaunee Township, (1) rural lifestyle and (2) peace and quiet were the highest ranked; in Perry Township, "peace and quiet" was ranked first, followed by "rural lifestyle". Good schools were also highly ranked in all three municipalities.
- When asked to identify public services needed in their respective municipality, Leesport residents ranked 24-hour police protection first, followed by minor road improvements; both Ontelaunee and Perry Township residents ranked minor road improvements first, followed by 24-hour police protection.
- The highest ranked things identified as detracting from the Borough/Townships were traffic (in Leesport); high taxes (in Ontelaunee Township) and junk yards (in Perry Township).
- The rural/small town atmosphere and agricultural landscapes were the two most frequently mentioned things that survey respondents hoped would never change.
- If they could change anything, Borough residents would want door-to-door mail delivery, and residents of both townships would like lower taxes.

- In terms of the character of future development in the Planning Area, the vast majority (94%) want the agricultural areas protected from mass development. Only approximately one-third of the respondents were in favor of additional housing development; the percentage of those in favor of additional commercial development ranged from 58% in Leesport, down to only 38% in Perry Township; only approximately one-third of the Planning Area residents were in favor of additional industrial development.

KEY COMMUNITY LEADERS INTERVIEWS

The Consultant team also interviewed several key community leaders (businessmen, etc.) to gain insights into a variety of matters. The results of these interviews generally supported the results of the Residents' Survey. In addition, the Planning Area was identified as a good location for business ventures - due both to its transportation system accessibility and its available labor pool.

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) has established the basic requirements for a comprehensive

plan, the first of which is a statement of community goals and objectives:

"The comprehensive plan, consisting of maps, charts and textual matter, shall include, but need not be limited to, the following basic elements: (1) A statement of objectives of the municipality concerning its future development, including, but not limited to, the location, character and timing of future development, that may serve as a statement of community development objectives as provided in section 606...." (Article III, Section 301, *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC)*; Act 247, P.L. 805, of 1968, as amended by Act 170, P.L. 1329 in 1988).

As empowered and directed by the sections referenced in the Pennsylvania MPC, and based on the public hearings and the analysis of community participation, municipal officials of the three Planning Area municipalities have developed the following set of community development objectives:

GENERAL GOALS

- *To preserve the community character that makes the planning area and the individual municipalities unique, distinctive and identifiable places.*
- *To develop a coordinated land use pattern which provides a variety of uses, recognizes land capacity and respects natural features.*
- *To protect, conserve and preserve the open spaces, drainageways, floodplains and other natural resources of the region.*
- *To preserve agricultural areas for agricultural use and maintain its importance in the local and regional economy.*
- *To provide for residential and non-residential growth in appropriate areas so as to avoid the problems of random development.*
- *To maintain and improve a healthful residential environment with adequate recreational, commercial and industrial supporting areas.*
- *To provide for the diverse housing needs of all planning area residents.*
- *To provide for the safe, efficient and convenient movement of people and goods.*
- *To maintain and improve the economic base of the region and provide employment opportunities for all residents.*
- *To provide needed community facilities, utilities and services of levels commensurate with a growing population.*
- *To explore opportunities to cooperate with neighboring municipalities in order to promote the economical and efficient provision of all municipal services.*

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Natural and Cultural Resources Protection Objectives

1. *Preserve the natural features of the planning area by discouraging development in the area's more environmentally sensitive portions.*
2. *Preserve prime agricultural land by encouraging productive farming activities and farm-related businesses.*

CHAPTER 3

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

3. *Encourage land use and development patterns which complement and accentuate the distinctive features of the planning area's natural and cultural environment.*
4. *Encourage the preservation and protection of the planning area's cultural, historic, architectural and archaeological resources.*
5. *Preclude the construction of public utilities or other public facilities in agricultural and other environmentally sensitive areas unless required to alleviate an existing problem.*

Land Use Objectives

6. *Identify areas for future growth in the planning area and direct growth to these areas.*
7. *Create an orderly pattern of growth by encouraging new development in areas which can be economically served by utilities and roadways, while discouraging new development in areas where construction and service costs would be excessive.*
8. *Update the individual municipalities's existing zoning and subdivision/land development ordinances to guide future growth in a manner consistent with*

the Joint Comprehensive Plan.

9. *Protect agricultural areas from encroachment by non-farm activities that interfere with or prevent normal farming activities.*
10. *Regulate intensive agricultural uses to minimize adverse impacts on adjacent residents and property owners.*
11. *Transform the scattered residential pattern which presently exists into more concentrated and identifiable residential developments within the proposed growth areas.*
12. *Limit the intrusion of incompatible nonresidential uses into residential areas.*
13. *Encourage economic diversity by reserving adequate land for commercial and industrial location in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan.*
14. *Limit the number of new commercial centers and concentrate on effectively using and developing existing commercial centers.*
15. *Discourage spot commercial and strip commercial development along highways and encourage instead*

planned clusters of commercial development.

- 16. *Encourage a wide range of industry types in order to assure a more balanced future economic base.*
- 17. *Develop industry to modern standards with adequate sites which will allow for future expansion, adequate off-street parking and loading facilities, and adequate buffer areas where adjacent to other uses.*

Housing Objectives

- 18. *Encourage the development of a full range of housing types in order to meet the varying needs of all families, including a wide range of choices in housing types, costs and location.*
- 19. *Encourage the rehabilitation, replacement or elimination of physically unsound or poorly located structures and facilities.*
- 20. *Encourage housing and development procedures (such as cluster and PRD) which in addition to protecting established values, permit experimentation in housing types, construction methods, new materials and arrangement of units.*

Transportation Objectives

- 21. *Develop a area-wide circulation system which serves existing and anticipated future land uses, provides maximum convenience of movement to the population, and shapes the extent and direction of growth within the planning area.*
- 22. *Support and assist the Berks County Planning Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation in planning and designing major thoroughfares.*
- 23. *Improve existing road patterns in order to handle increased traffic.*
- 24. *Encourage the location of new roadway facilities in a manner which feasibly complements the Future Land Use Plan.*
- 25. *Provide adequate development controls to minimize any adverse impacts of future development proposals on the transportation system.*
- 26. *Eliminate "strip" development and on-street parking, and effectively control driveway entrances on major thoroughfares.*

CHAPTER 3

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

27. *Provide for adequate off-street parking facilities and safe pedestrian access in those portions of the planning area where warranted by traffic and/or specific land uses.*
28. *Concentrate local maintenance funds in areas of highest priority.*
29. *Support the increased coverage and frequency of public transportation service in the area.*

Community Facilities, Utilities and Services Objectives

30. *Develop a maximum relationship between the development of land and the provision of adequate public facilities.*
31. *Wherever feasible, provide public water and public sewerage service to adequately serve all existing or potential growth areas within the planning area.*
32. *Preclude the extension of public sewerage and/or water service outside the designated growth areas except to alleviate an otherwise uncorrectable problem.*
33. *Provide all feasible areas with adequate storm sewer facilities.*

34. *Provide for adequate police protection to assure the welfare and safety of the residents in all parts of the planning area.*
35. *Support adequate fire protection and medical and emergency service to all planning area residents.*
36. *Continually review police, fire and emergency service needs and coordinate the provision of these services with adjoining municipalities.*
37. *Encourage the development of adequate school facilities to serve the planning area's school age children.*
38. *Support educational, recreational and cultural opportunities for all age groups.*
39. *Encourage cooperative planning and financing of recreational sites and facilities among the communities of the planning area and the region.*
40. *Provide mechanisms for discussion and choice among the citizenry concerning the development of the planning area and for citizen participation in public affairs.*