

Summary of Changes to Existing Plan:

Principle 1: Promote Smart Growth

ADDITIONS:

1. Noted land use trend shifting away from traditional manufacturing operations and office space needs due to economic changes affecting employment trends.
2. Reference added under “Office and Research Areas” to the potential revitalization and reimagining of these spaces following emerging employment trends following the COVID-19 pandemic.

DELETIONS:

1. Removed strategy and action item to “Conduct a review of the comprehensive plan after the 2010 Census data become available to ensure that data, policies and recommended actions continue to reflect conditions in the Jointure and to advance the community vision of its residents.”

REVISIONS:

1. Population and housing characteristics figures updated in accordance with most recent Census data.
2. Land use characteristics updated in accordance with current land use data.

Principle 2: Promote Sustainable Development and Protect Natural Resources

ADDITIONS:

1. Introductory reference to climate change added “Underlying the success and specifics contained within this principle, the Plan recognizes the ever-growing climate emergency facing our planet. Climate change is an existential threat to the future of our communities and our families. To face this threat, it is essential that all policies contained within this Plan maintain a view toward mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, promoting resiliency to extreme weather events, and furthering growth as a sustainable community.”
2. Under the “Renewable Energy, Energy Conservation, and Green Communities” subsection, a reference to promotion of EV charging stations was added.
3. Under the “Renewable Energy, Energy Conservation, and Green Communities” subsection, a reference to dedicated measures to mitigate the environmental impacts of plastic and Styrofoam was added.
4. Under the “Renewable Energy, Energy Conservation, and Green Communities” subsection, a reference to the Jointure adopting an ordinance adding a Solar Energy Equipment use was added.
5. New subsection for “Native Plants” added.

6. Regarding “Deer and Goose” subsection, reference added to a partnership between Wrightstown Township and a local archery club aimed at controlling deer populations.
7. Added the following items in Strategies and Actions
 - a. “Develop a climate resiliency plan to prepare the community for extreme weather events and utility and other disruptions.”
 - b. “Increase riparian buffer protection in areas lacking sufficient vegetative buffers”
 - c. “Consult the DCNR Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Plan to determine how best to practice stewardship of species threatened by the interactive stressors of Climate Change.
 - d. “Adopt planning and zoning provisions that require that any variance granted that involves the elimination of existing trees require a two-for-one replacement or commensurate in lieu payment for offsite replacement.”
 - e. “Enact more stringent requirements for reforestation and afforestation by developers.”
 - f. “Establish a community tree management program, to include an inventory of public trees and wooded areas and a maintenance schedule prioritizing replacement with native trees, understory, and herbaceous plants.”
 - g. “Prioritize selected areas for tree management and reforestation and the removal of invasive plants, especially those that threaten the viability and regeneration of native trees and shrubs.”
 - h. “Develop a plan for species diversity, stormwater mitigation, increased shade, extended green corridors, and other benefits of trees.”
 - i. “Explore pursuing a study to determine the locations and costs associated with removing dead trees, particularly in areas where development or revitalization opportunities are feasible.”
 - j. “Explore the possibility of adopting ordinances providing for the protection of native trees and trees of significance.”
 - k. “Establish a goal of ensuring that all community properties use native plants in new plantings.”
 - l. “Establish a goal of transitioning at least 50 percent of private properties to include no less than 20 percent native plants.”
 - m. “Require the removal of noxious and invasive plants that compete with native trees and other plants, before landscaping begins, as part of the planting plan for new development.”
 - n. “Prohibit the sale or use of noxious weeds and invasive plants and trees.”
 - o. “Promote use of vegetated buffers around BMPs and ponds to discourage use by Canadian Geese.”
 - p. “Work with homeowners’ associations (HOAs) to remove any restrictions on installation of home solar panels.”
 - q. “Study the feasibility of installing renewable energy sources - including solar and geothermal - at community facilities.”
 - r. “Incorporate LEED building standards into municipal ordinances.”
 - s. “Convert streetlights to a more efficient lighting option.”

DELETIONS:

1. Removed prior Strategy and Action item to “Amend the joint zoning ordinance to reflect floodplain soils found in the new Natural Resource Conservation Service soil classification scheme.”
2. Recommendations related to Stormwater removed and relocated to Principle 5 - Livable Communities.

REVISIONS:

1. Replace prior Strategy and Action item of “Establish a policy of ‘no net loss of tree canopy’ with a new Strategy and Action item to “Establish a policy of ‘increasing tree canopy and increasing the number of native trees’ through tree protection, tree replacement, and forest renewal efforts.”

Principle 3: Provide for Mobility and Connections

ADDITIONS:

1. Added language under Strategy and Action item to “Encourage pedestrian/multi-use path facilities for all new developments” to include “Support efforts to develop SEPTA’s former Newtown Rail Line and the proposed Middle Neshaminy Greenway into a shared-use path and develop bike and pedestrian facilities to link Jointure communities to the Circuit Trail System. Jointure should incorporate recommendations found within the Newtown Township Trail Plan into its larger plan to build trails within its area.”

DELETIONS:

1. Deleted discussion from the Public Transportation section pertaining to reestablishing the Newtown Rail Line and the Newtown Rush Bus as these are no longer relevant for the area.
2. Deleted language in the Transportation Improvement Program section, which referenced the Bucks County Regional Traffic Study group, which released a now outdated traffic study in 2007.
3. Deleted language related to a discussion of Bucks County regional traffic study, which is no longer relevant.
4. Deleted transportation impact fees section as it is no longer relevant.
5. Deleted Strategies and Actions items pertaining to preserving the Newtown rail right-of-way for a non-trail use and extending the Warminster rail line to New Hope.

REVISIONS:

1. Replaced references to the R2 and R3 rail lines with “Warminster” and “West Trenton” respectively.

2. Revised the projects listed in the Transportation Improvement Program Section to reflect the most recent projects listed under DVRPC's transportation improvement program.
3. Replaced discussion and all references to the Transportation Enhancements Program with discussion and references to its replacement, the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program.

Principle 4: Preserve Open Space and Protect Agriculture

ADDITIONS:

1. Updated various preservation acreage figures.
2. Chart listing "Municipal Agricultural Preservation Efforts" added.
3. Added a new item in Strategies and Actions to "Develop, adopt, and implement specific goals and metrics for open-space preservation as set out in the current Open Space Plan."

DELETIONS:

REVISIONS:

1. Removed reference to "continue to coordinate with the county regarding land and easement purchases through the Bucks County Open Space and Natural Areas programs" as that program has sunset. Included note of support for this type of program if proposed by BC in the future.

Principle 5: Livable Communities

ADDITIONS:

1. Added subsection on "Green Stormwater Infrastructure" and its potential benefits to the Jointure communities.
2. Added subsection on "Administration."
3. Added subsection on "Health Care/Elder Facilities."
4. Added language to subsection on "Emergency Medical Services" to better illustrate conditions within the Jointure.
5. Added subsection on "Emergency Communications/9-1-1 Service."
6. Added subsection on "Post Office."
7. Added subsection on "Religious Institutions."
8. Added subsection on "Civic Groups and Facilities."
9. Added subsection on "Telecommunications."
10. Added subsection on "Hazard Mitigation Planning."
11. Added the following items in Strategies and Actions
 - All Strategy and Action items related to "Telecommunications."
 - All Strategy and Action items related to "Hazard Mitigation."

DELETIONS:

REVISIONS:

1. Updated information under Wastewater Facilities and Wastewater Facilities Planning subsections to reflect updated system information and wastewater facilities plans.
2. Updated language in the Stormwater Management subsection related to the Neshaminy Creek Watershed Stormwater Management Plan.
3. Updated discussion related to NPDES permit requirements for small MS4s, which includes the development of a Pollution Reduction Plan.
4. Revised subsections on “Police,” “Fire Protection,” and “Medical Services” to reflect updated information.
5. Updated figures and discussion of trends around school district enrollments within the “Schools and Colleges” subsection.
6. List of Strategies and Action items have been revised and reconfigured to better fit with the flow of the chapter (i.e. organized as callbacks to subsections from above).
7. List of Strategies and Action items related to Stormwater Management lifted from Principle 2 - Protect Natural Resources and relocated to this section.
8. Added reference to green stormwater infrastructure in Strategy and Action item to “Review ordinances to ensure the townships are encouraging the use of state-of-the-art stormwater BMPs, including the provision of Green Stormwater Infrastructure.”

Principle 6: Provide Parks and Recreation

ADDITIONS:

1. Added subsection on “Funding Initiatives.”
2. Added subsection on “Overview of Open Space and Protected Lands,” which includes an overview chart, organized by open space type (permanently protected lands and temporarily protected lands).

DELETIONS:

REVISIONS:

1. Updated subsection on Planning for Open Space to include most up to date planning efforts, including both Open Space planning and Park and Rec planning.

Principle 7: Sustain and Support our Commercial and Jobs Base

ADDITIONS:

1. Added subsection on “Trends in Non-Residential Land Use.”
2. Added the following items in Strategies and Actions

- a. “Reevaluate zoning regulations in the LI and O-LI zoning districts in Newtown Township (area of Newtown Business Commons) to ensure permitted uses and district regulations are geared to ensure continued viability of this area.”
- b. “Explore additional uses to complement existing uses (e.g. corporate office and research use) in the Office Research Area near the access to I-295 and the Newtown Bypass.
- c. “Remain apprised of ongoing and emerging trends in non-residential land use, including but not necessarily limited to: 1) adaptive reuse and infill development; 2) commercial and office space; and 3) warehouse use.”

DELETIONS:

REVISIONS:

1. Updated description of the Commercial/Business areas within Newtown Township.

Principle 8: Protect Historic Resources

ADDITIONS:

1. Two sites added from Wrightstown Township, now on National Register of Historic Places:
 - a. Wrightstown Octagonal Schoolhouse, added on November 9, 2007
 - b. John and Alice Fullam House, added on March 15, 2019
2. Added the dates for when each historic resource was added to the National Register.
3. Added a section labeled Historic Preservation Awards, which is a program that recognizes the efforts of property owners to appropriately rehabilitate and maintain their historic property.
4. Added information on a historic preservation plan, which is a program for conserving historic resources. Also detailed in their own sections, all of the elements that comprise a historic preservation plan:
 - a. Historic resources survey details the two types of surveys:
 - i. Reconnaissance level surveys, which involve examining photographs, archives, and documents to generate data about the general age, construction, architectural style, and significance of historic structures in the area. Secondly, in order to ensure survival of historic resources and make effective use of them, it is necessary to inventory historic resources on a property by property basis.
 - ii. Evaluation surveys, which is conducted on a historic resource that has potential for listing on the National Register.
 - b. Assessment of threats and constraints involves an evaluation of the negative influences that impact these resources.
 - c. Goals and policies are necessary to guide and provide a focus for the preservation program.
 - d. The comprehensive plan should bring preservation concerns to the forefront as it establishes policy for all activities in the community.

5. Added elements to the preservation tools and implementation section.
 - a. Demolition regulations: demolition delay ordinance can be enacted, or demolition can be regulated using an overlay zone.
 - b. Financial incentives and grant programs: Included grants from the PHMC and discussed the Certified Local Government program. Upper Makefield is a CLG.
 - c. Design guidelines: Adherence to guidelines ensures that buildings fit within the context of the existing architecture of an area. Although guidelines are not binding, they make a strong statement about the importance of preservation to a community.
 - d. Conservation districts, which are established to adjoin historic districts to regulate structures and appearance and minimize threats to the historic district.
 - e. Historic preservation awards, which recognizes the efforts of property owners to appropriately rehabilitate and maintain their historic property.
6. Added the following items in Strategies and Actions
 - a. “Adopt design guidelines for designated historic areas.”
 - b. “Conduct a historic resource survey in order to identify any historic resources that are to be protected or added to the National Register of Historic Places.”
 - c. “Continue to recognize, preserve, and protect historic resources in the area.”
 - d. “Encourage efforts of private property owners toward restoration and adaptive reuse of historic structure and sites by providing additional use opportunities as incentives for preservation.

DELETIONS:

1. Gropius House was deleted from the Wrightstown Township National Register of Historic Places list; nothing under this name is on the National Register.

REVISIONS:

1. Expanded on the introduction topic of historic preservation and its importance to the Newtown Area.
2. Expanded on the National Register of Historic Places and what role the PHMC and the SHPO plays. Also, how a resource on the National Register differs from a resource that is deemed a National Historic Landmark.

Principle 9: Preserve Our Villages

ADDITIONS:

1. Add language to the recommendation to “Adopt village centered design guidelines...”
 - a. “...to ensure that the architectural integrity of existing historic resources are retained and that new infill construction and construction adjacent to villages fits in with the existing village architecture.”

2. Added the following items in Strategies and Actions
 - a. “Continue to recognize, preserve, and protect historic villages in the area.”
 - b. “Apply for grants for pedestrian and streetscape improvements for the villages.”
 - c. “Conduct village studies to determine eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places.”
 - d. “Conduct a historic survey in order to identify any historic resources within the villages.”
 - e. “Adopt village centered design guidelines.”

DELETIONS:

1. Removed enumerated list of “Selected Recommendations - Wycombe,” but maintain reference to the 2000 village study which outlines said recommendations.

REVISIONS:

1. Rearrange subheadings of “Elements of a Village” as if the reader were approaching a village and rename accordingly: Village Viewshed, Village District Boundary, Village Interior.