

Wayne County Comprehensive Plan Update

Chapter XI - Goals

These goals are intended to help define the needs and interests of Wayne County as a foundation for this Comprehensive Plan. Recommended policies will be based on these choices:

Goal 1: Promote Local and County Economic Development

- Promote and support the development of broadband service throughout the entirety of Wayne County.
- Continue to give support to WEDCO's development and marketing of the Sterling Business Park in Southern Wayne County.
- Maintain a working relationship with the Wayne Economic Development Corporation (WEDCO), local Chambers of Commerce, Penn's Northeast, and other organizations that can help the County develop new job-creating businesses.
- Help municipalities, through technical assistance, to identify, properly zone and promote land suited to commercial and industrial development based on land capability, availability of buildings and utilities, proximity to the transportation network and compatibility with adjoining uses.
- Solicit compatible businesses and industries and work with existing enterprises to facilitate their expansion and further development as economic enterprises.
- Develop, where appropriate, tax and/or other economic incentives (e.g., Keystone Opportunity Zone, Stourbridge Complex) to attract capital intensive industry.
- Support new business creation by providing technical assistance and referrals to small business assistance support agencies.
- Aggressively seek state and federal site development and economic development funds.
- Further develop the County's agriculture industry and protect the agricultural land base.
- Promote cultural tourism based on the County's numerous historical assets, architecture and arts, including its museums and sanctuaries.

Goal 2: Preserve and Enhance the Small Town Nature and Quality of the County

- Work with municipalities to ensure land use regulations do not unnecessarily limit the ability of the private market to produce affordable housing and condensed and mixed use projects that match traditional, small town development patterns and accommodate the varied housing types now found throughout the County.

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- Through technical assistance to townships and boroughs who request it, foster the drafting of local land use regulations to direct development away from areas having major physical limitations for growth.
- Assist local governments in setting basic minimum lot sizes that are large enough to provide for health and safety but not so large as to require more open space and farmland than necessary be consumed in residential development.
- Assist municipalities in drafting land use regulations that promote agriculture by avoiding or reducing conflicts between residential and agricultural land uses.
- Promote the development of small business enterprises, including home occupations, to maintain a diverse economy with appeal to households of all income levels.
- Provide assistance to Wayne County Redevelopment and Housing Authorities as they seek state and federal funding for community rehabilitation and enhancement projects.

Goal 3: Maintain and Protect the County's Natural Resources

- Assist municipalities in establishing development and design standards based on land capabilities such as poor soils, steep slopes and other limiting factors and establishing development and design standards based on these land capabilities by using Geographic Information System (GIS) technology.
- Promote water quality monitoring of the County's ponds, lakes, streams, and rivers in the areas where extensive development could present potential problems, specifically including a continuation of the water quality testing throughout the Lake Wallenpaupack watershed.
- Support the efforts of private conservation entities, including but not limited to the Wayne County Agricultural Land Preservation Board to preserve working farms and valuable open spaces through the voluntary acquisition of conservation easements.

Goal 4: Promote the Availability of Recreational Facilities and Attractions

- Promote the unique features of streams such as the Lackawaxen River and West Branch of the Delaware River in tourism strategies, accompanying this with support for recreational development and resource protection initiatives.
- Develop Hankins Pond as a historical and recreational asset.
- Support the further development of private recreational enterprises and the tourism industry as part of the County's economic development program.
- Assist municipalities in drafting standards that require developers of major subdivisions composed of small lots to provide recreation areas and open spaces and also ensure continued maintenance of these.

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- Advise municipalities on ways to ensure land use regulations accommodate recreation and tourism enterprises including but not limited to agricultural tourism, outdoor recreation and family recreation.
- Continue the development of the County Farm property for recreation and support municipal park improvement projects with technical assistance.
- Promote community use of school facilities.

Goal 5: Provide and Maintain an Adequate Transportation Network

- Continue to work closely with PennDOT and municipalities to provide constructive input into the State's 12 year Highway and Bridge Program.
- Identify specific highway and bridge needs and pursue measures to remedy those specific problems found, including high accident locations.
- Assist communities in developing street encroachment and highway access standards.
- Control the creation of new driving hazards by developing model access, parking, setback, and road standards which can be used by communities to evaluate new subdivisions and developments.
- Support the designation of bike lanes, trails and the like through the County and promote these and other highway based routes and tours, including the Route 6 Heritage Corridor, as a means of alternative transportation and a method of tourism promotion.
- Support the accommodation of pedestrians and wheeled mobility users in the County's downtowns, village centers and commercial corridors via sidewalks, dedicated walkways and more accessible public rights-of-way.
- Work with interested agencies and local governments to help identify sites and plan the development of park and ride facilities and additional downtown parking within the County's commercial centers (e.g., Hawley and Honesdale Boroughs).
- Promote the availability of rail service to the central part of Wayne County as a major comparative advantage for economic development in the region and opportunity to attract capital intensive industry.
- Work with various transportation providers, including bus, train and similar services, to create tourism infrastructure that will draw campground visitors, for instance, to main streets and provide tours of the County.
- Promote and maximize use of Wayne County's existing public transportation, including privately operated services and Micro-Transit operations.

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Goal 6: Provide for Necessary Community Facilities

- Identify necessary and desirable County and municipal community facilities including but not limited to emergency services, medical services, libraries and roads and promote capital improvements programming to address these needs.
- Develop Community Hubs to connect Wayne County's far-flung communities.
- Identify ways to support emergency services volunteerism through incentives as well as coordination of private and public services on a regional basis to ensure proper coverage at the highest level of service with the least public expense.
- Seek out community facilities grant and loan funds where appropriate to reduce the burden on local taxpayers.
- Support civic organizations providing for community facilities such as the Wayne Memorial Health System, libraries (which are much more than books today), senior centers, youth centers, museums and other cultural facilities.
- Prepare long range plans for recreation and park development throughout the County in locations suited to the demands of projected population growth.
- Ensure emergency management plans address health emergencies as well as natural and other disasters, using both adaptive and preventative measures as may be appropriate to achieve resilience.

Goal 7: Maintain and Improve the Supply of Affordable Housing

- Address the need of County military veterans for more affordable housing via a combination of information services, zoning and other incentives and development initiatives.
- Finance housing rehabilitation by seeking and administering state and federal grant and loan funds either directly through County agencies or by assistance to individual municipalities who prefer to develop their own programs.
- Work with developers (profit as well as non-profit) and the County Housing Authority to increase the supply of affordable housing both for sale and for rent, encouraging projects such as Hamlin Heights, Maple City Apartments, Laurel Place Apartments and Stourbridge Apartments.
- Assist Wayne County's municipalities in drafting housing-friendly land use regulations that provide for all types of housing, including accessory dwellings, two-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings, upper story apartments on main streets, manufactured homes and compact housing.

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Goal 8: Promote Energy Diversification and Efficiency

- Position the County to take economic advantage of its natural gas assets and renewable energy development potential by anticipating infrastructure and service demands and helping municipalities provide for these needs.
- Support the responsible development of the County's natural gas resources and renewable energy as domestic sources of clean fuel that can help meet national and County energy demands.
- Ensure land use regulation will easily accommodate renewable energy systems (e.g., solar, wind, geothermal) as accessory uses to residential development. To that end, Wayne County has adopted legislation relative to the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) program, a financial tool for property owners to obtain low-cost, long-term financing for energy efficient equipment, renewable energy, water conservation, resiliency and indoor air quality. Loan payments become payable as part of property tax bills.
- Consider incorporating elements of the National Association of Home Builders *Model GREEN Home Building Guidelines* in land use regulations.
- Address the possibility of additional utility-scale solar and wind energy facilities through development of model regulations for processing these as conditional uses or special exceptions under zoning or as land developments under ordinances regulating such developments, depending on how state law on the subject evolves.