

Comprehensive Master Plan Goals & Objectives

- Goal 1. Achieve a proper balance in the distribution and location of the various land uses to provide a varied and healthful environment for people who live and work in the Township.
- Goal 2. Focus the Township's remaining development potential on lands that can support compact development, are well served by transportation infrastructure, and are in proximity to employment and service centers. Direct new development away from productive agricultural lands, stream corridors, wildlife corridors and other environmentally sensitive lands.
- Goal 3. Preserve and enhance the character of Hamilton's neighborhoods so that they may continue to positively contribute to the Township's quality of life.
- Goal 4. Provide realistic opportunities for a variety of housing types and sizes which are affordable to households at a variety of income levels.
- Goal 5. Support the Township's retail, office and industrial districts so that the Township may strengthen its position as a major economic engine in Mercer County.
- Goal 6. Foster the arts and culture in the Township so that they may enhance the quality of life and contribute to the local economy.
- Goal 7. Reduce the environmental footprint of the Township through water conservation measures, waste reduction, improved site design and reduced reliance on fossil fuels.
- Goal 8. Improve stormwater management and reduce impacts of flooding on built environments.
- Goal 9. Promote a balanced and multi-modal transportation system that safely and efficiently meets the needs of the Township's diverse population as well as visitors utilizing the regional transportation system.
- Goal 10. Plan for capital improvements to ensure that the Township's infrastructure (roads, stormwater management, sewer, water, telecommunications, etc.) and community facilities are properly developed and maintained.
- Goal 11. Provide ample parks offering both active and passive recreation facilities, preserve the agricultural character of the southwest portion of the Township and provide open space that supports the natural function of ecosystems.
- Goal 12. Support the rehabilitation and continued use of the Township's historic districts and buildings for education, tourism, neighborhood enhancement, economic development and the preserve the history of Hamilton Township.

Land Use Goals & Objectives

- Goal 1. Encourage properly scaled infill development and redevelopment throughout the Township's developed areas.
- Objective 1.a. Ensure that infill development is done in a manner that respects the style and scale of surrounding buildings.
 - Objective 1.b. Preserve the diversity and quality of neighborhood-oriented commercial uses which principally serve the surrounding residential population.
 - Objective 1.c. Encourage a broad range of nonresidential uses in traditionally single-use commercial centers, such as office parks and shopping centers, so as to increase convenience to patrons and reduce vehicle miles travelled.
 - Objective 1.d. Direct the development of regional uses (retail, including entertainment, office and industrial) which serve a regional market and may be significant traffic generators to areas where there is convenient access to the regional highway and/or rail network.
 - Objective 1.e. Review the official zoning map and modify districts where necessary to better match zoning to existing development patterns.
 - Objective 1.f. Promote mixed-use neighborhood centers in order to encourage redevelopment of large underutilized properties, enhance opportunities for residents to shop locally and to reduce vehicle miles travelled.
 - Objective 1.g. Support site remediation efforts on contaminated sites in order to improve the appearance of unsightly properties, support their eventual reuse and improve the Township's environmental health.
- Goal 2. Preserve the quality of residential neighborhoods.
- Objective 2.a. Discourage conversion of residentially-zoned properties to retail, office and industrial uses and the conversion of single family homes into multi-family structures.
 - Objective 2.b. Minimize and mitigate conflicts between residential and retail, office and industrial uses with adequate setbacks and screening to reduce visual, noise and lighting impacts of the nonresidential development on the neighboring residential lots.
 - Objective 2.c. Promote creation and maintenance of community facilities, such as parks and locally oriented retail and service centers to strengthen neighborhoods.

Land Use Goals & Objectives

- Goal 3. Pursue the preservation of productive agricultural lands, wildlife corridors and environmentally sensitive lands via fee simple acquisition, land trust dedication, conservation easement, development clustering and similar strategies.

Community Design

- Goal 4. Promote the development and redevelopment of attractive retail, office, industrial and mixed-use areas through the application of architectural and site design standards.

Objective 4.a. Utilize design strategies to promote safe environments – particularly in public assembly areas – and to reduce crime.

Objective 4.b. Encourage creation of a unique sense of place through distinctive design features, such as architecture and streetscape designs, for the Township’s prominent commercial corridors that reflect the particular character of each.

Objective 4.c. Where pedestrian access is encouraged, require pedestrian-friendly site design. such as providing pedestrian access from the street to the building and orienting buildings toward a public street, rather than a parking area.

Objective 4.d. Establish signage standards which will be appropriate for both new development and redevelopment and which will foster a cohesive, clear image in the commercial corridors of the Township.

Objective 4.e. Encourage the elimination of billboards in areas which are visually prominent in residential, retail and office areas.

- Goal 5. Promote the clustering of home sites in new residential subdivisions and discourage conventional large lot subdivisions within environmentally sensitive areas and on sites lacking public infrastructure in order to retain open space, farmland, and to preserve the natural environment.

Historic Preservation

- Goal 6. Increase public awareness, knowledge, and appreciation of historic districts and buildings and of the programs and resources that can be used to assist historic preservation activities.

Objective 6.a. Promote the development of driving tours, walking tours, informational brochures, and other methods of increasing public awareness of historic resources in the Township.

Objective 6.b. Promote the installation of interpretive signage for historic properties by private owners, historical organizations, and governments.

Land Use Goals & Objectives

Objective 6.c. Maintain productive partnerships among various organizations and agencies to promote and accomplish historic preservation goals.

Goal 7. Support the rehabilitation and reuse of historic buildings in a way that is compatible with the historic context.

Objective 7.a. Promote rehabilitation of historic buildings in identified areas consistent with the building's historic style and in a manner that is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Objective 7.b. Encourage and facilitate the donation of preservation, scenic, and conservation easements as a means of providing a financial incentive for the preservation of historically significant privately-owned properties.

Objective 7.c. Continue the current practice of seeking Hamilton Historic Advisory Commission commentary on all applications for development which could impact a historic building and/or district.

Goal 8. Identify and document historic buildings and districts within the Township which, due to their historic character, are worthy of preservation.

Housing

Goal 9. Promote the rehabilitation of substandard housing throughout the Township.

Objective 9.a. Prioritize rehabilitation programs in areas of disinvestment to enhance neighborhood pride, resident quality of life and eliminate unsafe conditions.

Goal 10. Meet the Township's constitutional obligation to provide for its fair share of the region's need for low and moderate income housing, as that obligation is defined by State statute and court precedent.

Objective 10.a. Provide a variety of housing types and unit sizes, affordable to households with a range of incomes, including workforce housing, particularly within walking and biking distance of transit, service centers and employment centers.

Agriculture

Goal 11. Preserve and promote the agricultural character in the southeastern part of the Township.

Land Use Goals & Objectives

Objective 11.a. Provide assistance to the Township's farmers by supporting right-to-farm policies.

Objective 11.b. Ensure that future development in and adjacent to agricultural lands utilizes rural design techniques to minimize the intrusion of development into the agricultural landscape.

Objective 11.c. Preserve vistas of agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands to promote the visual enjoyment of the land.

Goal 12. Encourage local food production and distribution, diversify the landscape, promote wellness and reduce food-related vehicle trips by supporting the Township's agricultural lands and urban agriculture.

Objective 12.a. Encourage creation of food gardens on residential lots and community gardens in public and private open space, such as, but not limited to, open space in planned developments, expansive lawn areas and parks.

Objective 12.b. Permit farmers' markets on appropriate Township-owned land and as a conditional use in the Township's nonresidential districts and the RRC district. Permit properly scaled farm stands where food is grown.

Art & Culture

Goal 13. Incentivize development and redevelopment which is supportive of arts and culture, particularly within the Arts and Culture Overlay in order to enhance the quality of life for residents and regional visitors to the area.

Objective 13.a. Adopt zoning incentives for the development and redevelopment of arts and culture uses in the Arts and Culture Overlay District. Arts and culture uses should include but not be limited to indoor and outdoor gallery space, performing arts space, lecture halls or related training facilities, artist studio space and artist live/work space.

Objective 13.b. Adopt zoning incentives for development and redevelopment within the Arts and Culture Overlay District that will provide for mixed use and various commercial uses in order to foster the following:

- An expanded customer base in the immediate area;
- A variety of uses that will attract local and regional visitors, such as dining, shopping and entertainment uses;

Land Use Goals & Objectives

Objective 13.c. Promote development of office, rehearsal and meeting spaces for cultural organizations, spaces for the creation of art and theater spaces within the Arts and Culture Overlay District; and

Objective 13.d. Promote the adaptive reuse of the Township's vacant and underutilized industrial and manufacturing buildings in the Arts and Culture Overlay District for uses that are consistent with or complementary to arts and culture.

Goal 14. Enhance the built environment of the Arts and Culture District through the installation of public art.

Objective 14.a. Support the installation of public art including but not limited to sculpture within the Arts and Culture Overlay District. Other types of public art may include murals and decorative art integrated into the built environment.

Objective 14.b. Create a network of wayfinding art installations and signage to achieve the following:

- Raise awareness of art and culture in the community;
- Provide direction to art and culture facilities in the Township;
- Create/reinforce connections between regional transportation systems, such as the Hamilton Train Station and Interstate 295, and art and culture facilities, such as the Grounds For Sculpture; and
- Leverage art and culture activities to boost tourism in Hamilton Township and increase civic pride.

Goal 15. Foster community art and cultural events within the Arts and Culture Overlay District and Hamilton Township as a whole.

Objective 15.a. Consider parks, libraries, schools, community centers and historic buildings as venues for arts and cultural activities;

Objective 15.b. Explore ways the municipality can partner with area schools to promote the presence of art in the community as well as arts and culture education and activities; and

Objective 15.c. Explore partnerships with arts and cultural organizations in order to foster the increased presence of art and culture in Hamilton Township.

Circulation Goals & Objectives

- Goal 1. Provide a balanced road system of adequate capacity to safely and efficiently accommodate the present and anticipated transportation needs of residents and retail, office and industrial users.
 - Objective 1.a. Reevaluate the necessity and desirability of Master Plan road connections in the 1996 Master Plan in light of current traffic patterns and development trends.
 - Objective 1.b. Support road and intersection improvements that will relieve congestion and improve the distribution of traffic throughout the Township.
 - Objective 1.c. Support traffic calming measures that will reduce cut-through traffic within residential neighborhoods.
 - Objective 1.d. Encourage use of shared driveways, particularly in commercial corridors, to minimize curb openings in order to minimize left turn locations and reduce conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians/bicycles.
 - Objective 1.e. Support a system of sidewalks and bikeways that allow safe and convenient non-vehicular access and circulation throughout the Township, particularly for children, older citizens, non-drivers and the mobility challenged, as well as those that cannot afford a car or choose to live car free.
 - Objective 1.f. Continue the current process of funding transportation improvements through contributions by applicants for development in the Transportation Improvement District (TID) funding.

- Goal 2. Encourage provision and use of alternative modes of transportation.
 - Objective 2.a. Support bicycling and walking connections to trip generators such as mass transit, employment, education, residential, recreation, retail centers and public facilities.
 - Objective 2.b. Support street designs that make walking and bicycling a pleasant and safe experience for all users by incorporating walking and bicycling facilities, providing separation between pedestrians and moving vehicles, incorporating street furniture and street trees into the streetscape and providing clear signage.
 - Objective 2.c. Encourage increased ridership in the Township's mass transit facilities by supporting pedestrian/bicycling connections to transit stops and working with NJ Transit on providing safe and comfortable waiting areas.

Circulation Goals & Objectives

- Goal 3. Encourage inter-connectivity in order to reduce road congestion, reduce vehicle miles travelled and increase convenience.
 - Objective 3.a. Encourage street connectivity in order to improve traffic distribution and reduce vehicle miles travelled.
 - Objective 3.b. Provide for pedestrian access between residential, office and retail developments.
 - Objective 3.c. Require cross access easements between adjacent parking areas in retail and office development.
- Goal 4. Recognize and preserve the character of scenic roadways in order to promote a positive and varied community identity.
- Goal 5. Implement the recommendations of the 2007 Township-wide Traffic Study to the extent noted in the Circulation Element.

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Economic Development Goals & Objectives

- Goal 1. Promote a strong and sustainable economic development climate in order to provide employment, a positive tax base, convenience and quality public services and facilities for residents and businesses.
- Objective 1.a Promote infill development and redevelopment opportunities.
 - Objective 1.b Support the provision of incubators for small or modest retail, office and industrial uses.
 - Objective 1.c Promote tourism and recreation related to the Township’s shopping, dining and arts and culture uses.
 - Objective 1.d Maximize assistance and cooperation with other public and private sector economic development partners, such as but not limited to regional education institutions, the Mercer County and New Jersey Chamber of Commerce, Hamilton Partnership and the Economic Development Commission.
 - Objective 1.e Support a diversity of retail, office and industrial uses in the Township in order to encourage well-balanced and sustainable economic development.
 - Objective 1.f Improve accessibility and transportation linkages to facilitate access to places of employment in the Township.
- Goal 2. Encourage the development of retail, office and industrial areas, consistent with the Master Plan.
- Objective 3.a Incentivize development and redevelopment on designated large vacant or underutilized sites by permitting mixed use development.
 - Objective 3.b Remove and/or reduce unnecessary regulatory barriers to new retail, office and industrial development which is consistent with the Master Plan.
 - Objective 3.c Promote existing business retention and expansion.
 - Objective 1.d Maintain the Township’s principal commercial corridors as viable linear retail and office districts with a diversity of businesses, adequate parking, coordinated signage and attractive streetscape.
 - Objective 1.e Identify and enhance existing pedestrian-oriented neighborhood scale commercial districts.
- Goal 3. Ensure that the Township’s infrastructure can support the existing and potential retail, office and industrial users.

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Economic Development Goals & Objectives

- Objective 1.a Roads, stormwater management and sewer and water plans should be consistent with the development capacity of the Township's residential retail, office and industrial areas.
- Objective 1.b Coordinate with Mercer County and the State of New Jersey to ensure that all areas intended for retail, office and industrial growth are within the designated sewer service areas.
- Objective 1.c Encourage telecommunications companies to offer broadband internet to all of Hamilton Township.

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Open Space & Recreation Goals & Objectives

- Goal 1. Preserve open space sufficient to meet the current and future needs of Township residents.
 - Objective 1.a Acquire land which would help meet perceived needs for future recreational opportunities.
 - Objective 1.b Acquire lands for environmental protection and to satisfy open space objectives such as farmland and/or rural preservation. Lands in need of environmental protection include greenways, wetlands, steep slopes, stream corridors, floodplain, floodways, aquifer recharge areas, and the like.
 - Objective 1.c Supplement Hamilton Township Municipal Open Space Funding with other funding sources such as State, County, and non-profit programs including but not limited to: State Green Acres Program; Mercer County Trust Fund Tax Acquisitions; and the State Farmland Preservation Program; the Infrastructure Trust Monies for stream corridor acquisition; and non-profit agencies and private donations.

- Goal 2. Develop open space and recreational facilities sufficient to meet the current and future needs of Township residents.
 - Objective 2.a Expand park lands with active recreational facilities to meet the present and future needs of Hamilton Township. Develop linear linkages between parks, historic properties, and from residential neighborhoods which promote alternative transportation.
 - Objective 2.b Promote recreational activity with appropriate and adequate access by all age and user groups throughout the Township.
 - Objective 2.c Foster continued cooperative use of facilities and open space with the Hamilton Township Board of Education.
 - Objective 2.d Foster continued and expanded cooperation with private commercial landowners and residential communities to utilize open space for shared recreational activities.
 - Objective 2.e Periodically review and update the recreation inventory and needs analysis to evaluate and provide for estimated needs.
 - Objective 2.f Explore modifications of the Township Open Space Plan to achieve symbiosis with State, County, non-profit groups, and adjacent Community Greenway Plans, and to include passive recreational activities (i.e. public access, nature trails, picnicking).

Open Space & Recreation Goals & Objectives

Objective 2.g Encourage pride and a sense of ownership of park facilities by Township residents through facilities which are well maintained and serve the needs of its users.

Goal 3. Balance the provision of open space with other land uses.

Objective3.a Reinforce the planning efforts of the Township, County, and State Master Plans.

Objective3.b Balance open space and recreational facilities throughout the Township relative to neighborhoods to provide adequate access and opportunity to all people of the Township, and enhance the welfare of residents.

Objective3.c Promote the development of mini-parks within neighborhoods.

Objective3.d Identify and correct deficiencies in neighborhood-scaled parks and open space and recreation facilities.

Objective3.e Foster cooperative efforts to preserve regionally significant areas with the State, County, and adjacent municipalities.

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Green Buildings & Environmental Sustainability Goals & Objectives

- Goal 1. Raise awareness among residents and businesses about global climate change and the sources of climate changing gases through educational outreach and publicizing the Township’s sustainability efforts.
 - Objective 1. a. Support the Township’s Climate Action Plan.
- Goal 2. Encourage the installation of renewable energy facilities as accessory uses in all zone districts by providing appropriate standards for their use and installation.
 - Objective 2. a. Permit renewable energy facilities as accessory uses in all zone districts in a way that is compatible with the character of the area.
 - Objective 2. b. Encourage retail, office and industrial property owners to cover roof tops and surface parking lots with solar structures.
- Goal 3. Permit renewable energy production as principal uses in appropriate locations, as well as nonresidential uses which support the renewable energy industry.
- Goal 4. Encourage development, redevelopment and building renovations to incorporate green building design techniques.
 - Objective 4. a. Encourage energy efficient upgrades to homes, particularly those in rehabilitation programs, in order to reduce costs to residents and reduce the environmental footprint of the Township’s housing stock.
 - Objective 4. b. Encourage new construction and building rehabilitation to employ green building design techniques with incentives, such as but not limited to, increases in development intensity.
 - Objective 4. c. Reduce energy needs and light pollution through improved lighting standards regarding light levels and types of fixtures.
- Goal 5. Reduce vehicle miles traveled by reducing vehicular travel and the need for transported goods.
 - Objective 5. a. Provide support for and encourage the establishment of locally owned and operated businesses.
 - Objective 5. b. Promote connectivity and use of alternative modes of transportation through an integrated circulation plan that addresses the needs of all users.
 - Objective 5. c. Encourage local food production through farmland preservation efforts and by supporting urban agriculture.

Green Buildings & Environmental Sustainability Goals & Objectives

- Goal 6. Enhance the Township’s green infrastructure so that its benefits may be fully realized, including but not limited to improved stormwater management, flood protection, reduced nonpoint source pollution, increased groundwater recharge, reduced urban temperatures, carbon sequestration and energy conservation.
- Objective 6. a. Retain existing trees during the development process and require trees to be integrated into site design, including but not limited to along roads and sidewalks and within parking areas.
- Objective 6. b. Increase the use of green infrastructure, including functional landscaping, to address such issues as stormwater management, urban heat island effect, and the need for wildlife habitat.
- Goal 7. Encourage residents and business owners to practice water conservation.
- Objective 7. a. Promote the use of high-efficiency appliances, such as water heaters, toilets, dishwashers, low-flow shower heads, and washing machines in the Township.
- Objective 7. b. Reduce impervious surfaces in the Township by encouraging use of porous surface materials and through such techniques as reduced parking ratios and/or shared parking.
- Objective 7. c. Encourage the use of sustainable landscaping, such as native and adaptive plants and xeriscaping (landscaping or gardening that reduces or eliminate the need for supplemental watering or irrigation).
- Goal 8. Reduce the waste generated by households, businesses and institutions.
- Objective 8. a. Ensure all public spaces and nonresidential and multi-family developments have adequate recycling facilities.
- Objective 8. b. Encourage composting, including at the Township’s Ecological Facility, to reduce waste from households, commercial uses and institutions.

Conservation Goals and Objectives

- Goal 1. Protect Water Resources, Improve Water Quality, and Reduce Flooding
 - Objective 1.a. Preserve remaining wetlands
 - Objective 1.b. Retain open space near areas that have high flooding for increased infiltration of rainwater and stormwater
 - Objective 1.c. Preserve parcels of land that have high groundwater recharge
 - Objective 1.d. Examine and upgrade stormwater facilities to prevent flooding, including utilizing more nonstructural measures
 - Objective 1.e. Improve stormwater management and review at the site plan level to minimize impervious cover and enforce best management practices, including an independent consultant review of all storm water reports.
 - Objective 1.f. Actively promote greater water conservation
 - Objective 1.g. Promote development of Watershed Management Plans, working with partners such as the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Watershed Resources Program
 - Objective 1.h. Identify appropriate land uses for wellhead protection areas leading to adoption of a wellhead protection ordinance
 - Objective 1.i. Conduct reexamination of Township’s Storm Water Management Plan and incorporate into Master Plan.
- Goal 2. Create a Greenway System along rivers and streams that protects and links important natural, recreational and cultural features
 - Objective 2.a. Identify greenway linkages throughout the township
 - Objective 2.b. Show potential trail connections linking neighborhoods to parks and community destinations
- Goal 3. Protect and Manage Critical Environmental Habitats and the Urban Tree Canopy in the Township
 - Objective 3.a. Preserve Landscape Project-identified critical and suitable habitats for threatened and endangered species and species of special concern
 - Objective 3.b. Implement the Forest and Tree Management Plan adopted by the Township
 - Objective 3.c. Continue development of a street tree inventory

Conservation Goals and Objectives

Objective 3.d. Promote more tree planting

Objective 3.e. Preserve existing woodlands

Objective 3.f. Establish an invasive species removal program

Objective 3.g. Develop Management Plans for preserved lands under Township jurisdiction, working with local neighborhood groups and other support groups wherever possible

Goal 4. Protect human and Environmental health from Contamination and Pollution

Objective 4.a. Expand the use of the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program to all public lands and landscaping contracts with the municipality. Encourage such use on school sites.

Objective 4.b. Known Contaminated Sites:

- Track progress in remediation and restoration of sites in the township
- Develop website information pages on known contaminated sites and their remediation status so that inappropriate uses/projects are prevented
- Encourage rehabilitation and reuse of sites with completed remediation through an incentives program

Objective 4.c. Air Quality:

- Track enforcement of permitted facilities
- Provide education to residents about air pollutants

Objective 4.d. Foster sustainable agricultural practices

- Promote use of IPM and alternative fertilizers
- Encourage organic production
- Encourage use of federal and state programs to vegetate streambanks, restore wetlands, and preserve habitat on farms
- Propose an amendment to the Site Investigation/Soil Sampling section of the Land Development Code to tie it more closely to NJDEP technical standards and requirements as pertains to commercial/industrial sites.