

Howland Township Comprehensive Community Plan

YEAR SEVEN: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Many people are rightly cynical about their governments. Too often elected officials make grand theater out of plans and blueprints for the future put together by expensive consultants or blue-ribbon citizens committees. And then nothing more is made of it, until a new plan is rolled out a few years later with more bluster and fanfare. The cycle repeats.

Not in Howland Township. Our residents expect better, and with this fourth update, we show them that their elected officials and township employees have made good on their promise in 2010 to rely on the comprehensive plan in their daily decision-making and as they work to accomplish the lofty goals and objectives set out in it. We are proud that, as you will see in the following pages, that these goals have become ingrained in every department.

Our residents – and our fellow citizens in the Mahoning Valley – want their government officials to do everything that they can to keep good-paying jobs here and to attract new ones. They often see those same government officials tout their efforts to go after the large-scale projects that can change an area’s economy in one fell swoop. The GM Lordstown complex is one example. But, as we all have learned, it is the small business that is the backbone of our economy. Local governments have some ability to help create the environment for these small businesses to succeed, particularly with the physical infrastructure upon which those businesses rely.

Without the fanfares and flourishes, Howland Township has quietly been doing its part to drive economic development in areas over which we control. That means working with our neighbors and other government entities to address the concerns that have been brought to our attention by the successful business that call Howland and Warren home. In the Golden Triangle, for example, a 687-acre industrial area mostly within our borders, this work has taken many years of meetings, surveys, and conversations with the owners and operators of the 30 businesses there who employ nearly 3,000 people. As noted in our last update, these efforts and collaborations led to a grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration to hire the engineers and experts to help us create an infrastructure improvement plan to address the issues raised by the Golden Triangle business through \$10-million worth of projects.¹ This update highlights how we and our partners have worked to find the funds to make these improvements. The comprehensive plan is a critical component of the grant applications to show the funding agencies that the proposal is part of our vision.

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) project is another example of a multi-year collaborative effort, this time with the Howland Local School District to improve pedestrian safety around our schools. Parents and guardians were surveyed in several schools. From those, the high school and middle were selected for the program. Additional meetings were held. Engineering surveys of the areas around these schools were done. And then a grant was secured to make nearly \$400,000 in infrastructure improvements at the intersections of East Market Street with Brewster and Willow drives. That project was finished last year. Everyone who uses these community facilities in the center of our township now benefits.

It may not be flashy, but it is demonstrable progress. And that is possible because Howland Township, unlike many other communities, has a planning department to focus on these long-term projects and to be ready for the future when it comes, not to be reactive and hope for the best. Our residents expect nothing less from us: that’s why they live here.

But the comprehensive plan is not just about economic development. It is about working towards a greater vision for our community. Our residents told us they wanted Howland to be a more walkable community: they want the ability to safely exercise or to get places without using a vehicle. So it appears in our comprehensive plan. Since the last update, it has been included in our zoning resolution: all new development along State Route 46, East Market Street, and North River Road must have a sidewalk. And when ODOT plans the future of its road network in the township, it looks to – and is guided by – the comprehensive plan.

¹ The plan is available on the township’s website at <http://www.howlandtownship.org/golden-triangle-infrastructure-plan>.

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We now see the fruits of that planning, as Mercy Health has installed the first sidewalks along 46 in Howland in front of their new hospital and medical center. The new Lidl grocery store will be the first development south of the 82 bypass to have sidewalks. Both of these developments, as well as the new Fastenal, Chic-fil-A, and Dollar General properties, about which we have received many positive comments from you, highlight the new features in our zoning resolution that found their genesis in the comprehensive plan, such as alternative parking lots and improved aesthetics and stormwater management.

This is the fourth update to show you how these lofty goals manifest themselves. Each project, policy, or program is described on the left-hand side of the accompanying tables, and, on the right, you will see a mark indicating how that project, policy, or program addresses one or more of the various categories. This is our checklist to see how we are doing and to ensure that we are continuously marching towards those goals.

The comprehensive plan is a living document and not a punch list. We strive to be a strong, forward-thinking community and the best-run township in Trumbull County, operating in a professional, transparent manner. We encourage you to read this update – together with the previous ones – to get the full picture of where your Township is headed.

Your township trustees,

Rick G. Clark
September 26, 2017

Dr. James J. LaPolla, Jr.

Matthew G. Vansuch

Howland Township Comprehensive Community Plan

Township Project/Policy/Program	Demographics & Housing	Land Use	Economic Development	Natural Resources	Public Health	Community Services & Facilities	Transportation, Mobility & Accessibility
The Township annually appoints a representative to the Trumbull County Health Advisory Board to ensure issues that affect Township residents are learned and appropriately addressed.					X		
The Howland Wellness Committee, an all-volunteer community group, coordinates projects that enhance the health and wellness of the community. They received the 2016 Community Health Award for the management of Chronic Diseases from the Ohio Department of Health.	X				X	X	
The Township and the Howland Park Board, working with the Howland Wellness Committee, received grants from the Trumbull County Health Department's Creating Health Communities program to enhance Bolindale Park through competitive pickle ball upgrades to the former tennis courts and the bi-monthly Bolindale Farmers Market, a satellite of the Howland Farmers Market, which expands access to quality local produce and products to more of our residents.	X				X	X	
The Howland Farmers Market and the Bolindale Farmers Market accept SNAP EBT cards to enable all of our residents to access fresh, locally-sourced produce and foodstuffs.					X		
Township employees conducted another successful fundraising drive for the township's two food pantries at Howland Community Church and Bolindale Christian Church, raising approximately \$7,000. The Bolindale Food Pantry continues to serve approximately 70 families in the Bolindale neighborhood. Staff from the OSU Extension also provides nutrition education.					X		
Each spring, the Township acquires 50-gallon rain barrels that are artfully and uniquely painted by Howland High School art students. The barrels are then auctioned to the highest bidder and proceeds go to a local organization determined by the students. Once installed, rain barrels contribute to water conservation and storm water management in surrounding neighborhoods.				X			
The Township continues to coordinate a summer recreation program with Kent State University's International Center for Sports & Tourism Management and the Center for Sports & Recreation. Kids between the ages 6 and 13 can participate in fishing, football, cheerleading, soccer tennis, golf, swimming, outdoor adventures, painting, drawing, and pottery. This popular community program encourages physical activity, teaches new skills, builds confidence, and enhances the social bonds of the community	X						
In 2016, interested residents worked with the Township to restart a Holiday Tree Lighting Celebration for the community. The event will take place again this year.	X					X	

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The Howland Farmers Market, in its tenth year, continues to grow, as new farm and food vendors come on-board every year. The Market is held weekly during the summer months and bi-monthly in November through May. The 30+ fresh produce, meat, and value-added vendors generated over \$172,653 in gross sales in 2016, a 33% increase over 2015. And, a grant from the USDA Farmers Market Promotional Program in 2015 helped six small business vendors take their in-home operation to the Youngstown Kitchen Incubator, opening new opportunities for them and to take their businesses to the next level. The grant also allowed the Township to hire a part-time coordinator for the Market, Cynthia Beckes-O'Connor, and give additional exposure to the Market through increased advertising on local TV channels and on social media. The Township organized a first-ever Farm-to-Table Dinner at Barrel 33 to celebrate and highlight the local people who bring products to the Market and the working lands upon which our food is grown or raised and to raise funds to support the Winter Farmers Market.		X	X		X		
The Township continues to support the Howland Community Gardens by administering the program, providing basic tools, tilling the garden spots in the spring and fall, and providing water to the site. Participation remains strong.	X				X	X	
The Township accepted a generous donation of time, labor, and materials from a local landscaping company (Creekside Gardens) to maintain the gateway signage and landscaped area at the Niles-Cortland Road and SR 82 interchange.			X				
The Township received a \$1,000 grant from the Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste District to collect 1,029 scrap tires from township residents. The tires are then recycled, keeping them out of our landfills.				X	X		
The annual leaf and Christmas tree collections and the semi-annual limb and branch collection events divert bio-degradable material from landfills. The collected material becomes compost and is reused.				X		X	
Howland Township continues to encourage recycling among township residents. In conjunction with the Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste District, three recycling drop off sites are maintained for use by Township residents. The Township continues to encourage participation in the curbside recycling program. The Township partnered with the Trumbull County Commissioners to secure the future of the private North River Road recycling center by having a three-person board appointed to run the facility and dedicating a small funding source that will sustain this popular service. The site recently benefitted from a clean-up and the parking area was paved.				X		X	

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The Fire Department re-opened its third satellite station in 2016, Bolindale station #31 on Ridge Road. The station had been staffed only by volunteers for the previous 12 years. Morgandale #32 and the Main Station #30 on Niles Cortland Road are now staffed 24-7, and Bolindale is staffed every day from 7 am to 4 pm.			X		X	X	
The Fire Department coordinated a smoke detector outreach program in all three of the manufactured home parks in the township by going door-to-door with the aim of having every home serviced by at least one operating smoke detector.					X		
The Fire Department is going paperless. Staff is scheduled with a web-based program, and site inspections and reporting are done using paperless technology.						X	
The Fire Department worked with Baby Box University, the safe sleep education initiative, to serve as a distribution site for free baby boxes to any expectant parents who complete a brief online course. Ten boxes were given out in the program's first week. Ohio's infant mortality rate is higher than the national average, and Trumbull County's rate is higher than Ohio's average.					X	X	
With Nicholas Roberts Jeff Urso being promoted to Chief and Assistant Chief, and two new officers hired (Keith Peterson and Jordan Wert), the Police Department is at near-optimum staffing levels.						X	
To address complaints about speeding in particular residential neighborhoods, the Police Department upgraded and deployed the speed trailer to raise awareness in residential neighborhoods. The Township is now soliciting bids for hand-held radar speed guns that can be another tool they can use in these and other high-incident areas to enforce the speed limits and increase public and residents' safety.	X					X	
The Police Department applied for the 2017 Community Oriented Police Grant which, if awarded, will provide the department with an additional police officer.						X	
Resident Christian Sincich refurbished the police shed that stores important police training equipment as part of his Eagle Scout project.						X	
The Township and the Howland Local School District collaborate to fund the school resource officer program, which places a patrol officer in the school buildings every day during the school year.	X				X	X	
The Police Department joined forces with Project Dawn to equip every police officer with naloxone kits.					X	X	
Hazardous material handling kits were provided to every officer to ensure their safety when processing opioid overdose scenes. Trauma kits were also distributed to better prepare them in the instance of a traumatic injury.					X	X	

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The \$400,000 Safe Routes to School (SRTS) grant received from the Ohio Department of Transportation in 2013 culminated in 2016 with improvements in pedestrian safety in and around Howland Middle and High Schools that included new signalization and pedestrian crosswalk infrastructure being installed at two intersections on East Market Street (Brewster and Willow).					X		X
The Township, Warren City, Trumbull County, and Eastgate Regional Council of Governments hosted a tour of the Golden Triangle for federal program managers to introduce these future funders of federal grants to the Golden Triangle's unique qualities and challenges.			X				X
The Township, Warren City, Trumbull County Engineers Office, and the Trumbull County Commissioners hosted two Golden Triangle Business Advisory meetings with Golden Triangle business leaders to present on the progress of the Golden Triangle Infrastructure Improvement Plan. These meeting are essential at maintaining communications with the business community to assess their ongoing needs.			X				X
In 2016 and 2017, the Township collaborated with Howland High School graduating seniors, the Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste District, Trumbull County Engineer's Office, Warren City, and the Trumbull County Commissioners to conduct litter clean-up events in the Golden Triangle.			X				X
In 2017, the Township entered into negotiations with Warren City, Warren Township, and BDM, the property owners of the old WCI Steel property, to form a Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) to coordinate efforts to redevelop this property. Negotiations are ongoing. The property has also been returned to a greenfield thanks to the Township's demolition standards that require a property owner who demolishes the structures on a property to remove everything, including the concrete slabs.		X	X				
In 2017, the Township was awarded a \$307,000 grant from Clean Ohio to acquire property in the Golden Triangle to preserve wetlands and other storm water beneficial resources. This will help address flooding that has presented problems for the bsuinesses.		X	X	X			

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The Township Zoning Commission continued to modernize the Zoning Resolution. The most recent changes took effect July 2017 and primarily affected the residential zoning districts. The updated code adds flexibility regarding the size of accessory buildings. Location of accessory structures modified. Home occupations and agricultural uses were added as permitted uses in the residential districts. Minimum standards were added to all multi-family projects and to project of a non-residential nature.	X	X	X		X	X	
The Board of Trustees amended the zoning resolution to implement priority pedestrian corridors along the main thoroughfares in the Township: East Market Street, North River Road, and State Route 46. Any property being developed along these streets must now include a sidewalk.		X			X	X	X
The Township Administrator was appointed to the Trumbull County Planning Commission.	X	X					X
Howland Township received a \$1,000 grant from the Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste District to collect 1,029 scrap tires from township residents. The tires are then recycled, keeping them out of our landfills.				X	X		
The annual leaf and Christmas tree and the semi-annual limb and branch collection events divert bio-degradable material from landfills. The collected material becomes compost and is reused.				X		X	
The Zoning Department annually responds to approximately 225-250 property maintenance complaints, primarily in residential neighborhoods, with nearly a quarter of them being high-grass nuisance complaints.	X						
The Township negotiates with natural gas providers to secure the best price for Howland consumers.						X	
The Township negotiated with the Howland Historical Society to locate their offices and future museum to the Sloas Farm house located on North River Road.						X	

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A \$215,000 ARC grant secured by the Township and the Trumbull County Engineer's Office funded needed improvements to Commonwealth Avenue in the Golden Triangle, including storm water retrofits and intersection upgrades, that were finished in 2016.			X				X
In 2016, a \$281,000 Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Rapid Response Grant was awarded to the partners to improve Mill and Supreme Streets for heavy truck traffic and to extend water lines to supply needed fire suppression capabilities and fire hydrants in these areas. This provided critical infrastructure improvements to accommodate the growing industries located there, like Flex Strut.		X	X				X
The Township, the Trumbull County Engineer's Office, and the Eastgate Regional Council of Governments have been in regular communications with the Ohio Department of Transportation regarding upgrade options to major intersections in the Township: SR46 and SR82; SR46 and East Market Street; and SR82 and Howland Wilson Road.	X				X	X	
The Trumbull County Engineer's Office partnered with the Township to apply for and receive federal Transportation Alternative Program funds to improve the western end of North River Road. This completes a multi-year project to improve this road. Improvements included sidewalks, park benches, trash receptacles, storm drainage improvements, and a flashing crosswalk at the Sloas Farm Property. The sidewalk's terminus is at the north end of the Howland Wildlife Preserve trail, giving residents the ability to walk several miles from the Howland Township Park north to North River Road.	X		X		X		X
The Township worked with Mercy Health to permit the construction of a 50,000 square foot medical facility on Niles-Cortland Road NE. The new facility was designed to be harmonious with the character of the corridor while being protective of the neighboring properties. Upgraded storm water facilities on the site ensure that properties downstream of the facility will not be impacted. Mercy Health was the first development project to install a sidewalk as part of their project scope in accordance with revised zoning standards.					X	X	

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The Township saw the total valuation of new construction for 2016 trended up over the three prior years. Twenty-two new single family homes were constructed, doubling the number from 2015. Residents continue to show a strong sense of home-ownership and commitment to the Township, as demonstrated by their willingness to re-invest in their properties. Investment in residential additions, accessory structures, pools, and fences is 56% higher over 2015. New institutional, commercial, and industrial construction improved over prior years, with notable projects including the Mercy Health Facility, St. Mary and St. John the Beloved Monastery and Church, Stonebridge Restaurant, and the new Fastenal location in the Golden Triangle. The Avalon Spa and Resort and Aldi's both constructed attractive additions. In the Golden Triangle, Flex Strut celebrated yet another expansion, adding nearly 12,000 square feet of industrial space.

	No.		No.		No.		No.	
	Permits	2016 Valuation	Permits	2015 Valuation	Permits	2014 Valuation	Permits	2013 Valuation
Total Valuation	178	\$ 18,922,372	181	\$ 12,085,951	194	\$ 7,798,350	179	\$ 4,505,457
Single Family Dwellings	22	\$ 5,096,399	11	\$ 2,049,975	10	\$ 2,617,095	5	\$ 1,182,020
Multi-Family Dwelling (2-6 famil	1	\$ 408,000	0	\$ -	1	\$ 162,000	0	\$ -
Residential Additions/Other	29	\$ 716,830	28	\$ 539,376	47	\$ 1,207,909	33	\$ 536,220
Detached Garages	12	\$ 193,892	8	\$ 137,500	10	\$ 135,000	3	\$ 94,000
Fences	37	\$ 130,619	26	\$ 91,457	34	\$ 95,680	40	\$ 98,616
Storage Sheds	19	\$ 40,704	15	\$ 39,256	13	\$ 46,590	19	\$ 30,971
Swimming Pools	15	\$ 255,777	9	\$ 47,700	9	\$ 218,476	9	\$ 155,600
Residential Investments	135	\$ 6,842,221	97	\$ 2,905,264	124	\$ 4,482,750	109	\$ 2,097,427
Commercial Additions/Accessor	3	\$ 1,900,599	2	\$ 85,687	3	\$ 110,000	1	\$ 12,500
New Commercial	2	\$ 1,698,450	3	\$ 8,039,800	3	\$ 3,193,080	4	\$ 2,294,830
Industrial/institutional	3	\$ 9,762,000	2	\$ 1,055,200	1	\$ 12,520	1	\$ 75,000
Business Use Permits	16		24	\$ -	10	\$ -	13	\$ -
Signs/Temp Signs	50		53	\$ -	43	\$ -	41	\$ 25,700
Non-Residential Investments	74	\$ 13,361,049	84	\$ 9,180,687	60	\$ 3,315,600	60	\$ 2,408,030
Demolitions	12							
TOTAL VALUATION	221	\$ 20,203,270	181	\$ 12,085,951	184	\$ 7,798,350	169	\$ 4,505,457

DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING

DEMOGRAPHICS

Goal: Provide bases for public policies through up-to-date population, demographic, and socio-economic data.

Objectives:

1. Acquire federal, state, regional, and local source data for use in the development of public policies, particularly U.S. Census data;
2. Regularly update the Comprehensive Community Plan data; and
3. Make population, demographic, and socio-economic information available to the general public.

HOUSING

“Howland Township is a community with well-established, attractive and diverse neighborhoods. Because the Township’s land base is predominately occupied by single family residential homes and an aging population, the Township is focused on maintaining a high quality residential living environment...” Comprehensive Community Plan, July 2010

Goal #1: Preserve and enhance the quality of life in existing neighborhoods.

Objectives:

1. Strengthen and promote neighborhood stability;
2. Create neighborhood empowerment and engagement programs;
3. Evaluate the type and number of residential zoning classifications and “right-size” certain districts; and
4. Reduce the incidence of property maintenance and nuisance regulations.

Goal #2: Provide adequate, high quality, and diverse housing and living opportunities within Howland Township.

Objectives:

1. Provide a range of housing options to serve the long-term needs of the Township;
2. Encourage the provision of additional public and private amenities, the preservation of open space and environmentally responsible development practices;
3. Evaluate the need for, and proper location of, senior housing;
4. Encourage mixed-use residential;
5. Develop neighborhood overlays to define and delineate locally significant districts;
6. Promote the re-development of older residential areas; and
7. Evaluate potential markets for residential growth.

LAND USE

Goal #1: Preserve and enhance the character and quality of life in residential areas.

Objectives:

1. Promote residential development that protects existing, low-density neighborhoods while allowing greater flexibility at the periphery and core of the Township;
2. Protect and enhance the quality of life in existing residential neighborhoods;
3. Develop incentives to encourage the provision of additional public amenities;
4. Ensure that all development is compatible with the surrounding use, scale, and character;
5. Encourage preservation of open space and environmentally responsible development.

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Goal #2: Ensure that Howland is well-served by attractive, cohesive commercial districts in appropriate locations that meet the daily needs of its residents and visitors.

Objectives:

1. Provide a broad range of office and commercial venues;
2. Enhance the appearance of existing and future office and commercial development;
3. Promote small- to medium-scale office and commercial developments;
4. Promote re-development and infill of existing, underutilized commercial areas; and
5. Allow for greater flexibility to accommodate progressive development strategies, and greater control by the Township to ensure a high quality development environment.

Goal #3: Maximize the benefits derived from public investment in community facilities and infrastructure.

Objectives:

1. Create and enhance land use policies that promote efficient use of public infrastructure; and
2. Promote the location of community facilities in areas compatible for their use and which area accessible to the public served.

Goal #4: Achieve a sustainable balance between development activities, preservation of natural resources, and open space.

Objectives:

1. Ensure that Township Resolutions reflect a high priority for the environment;
2. Establish a unified open space and greenways network;
3. Encourage preservation of trees and forests;
4. Protect and enhance surface and ground water quality;
5. Develop and promote innovative grading and soil conservation practices;
6. Promote local food production; and
7. Enhance scenic qualities along major roadways and gateways to the Township.

Goal #5: Eliminate annexation in order to maintain our current boundaries.

Objectives:

1. Establish cooperative relationships with neighboring municipalities and townships to manage sustainable growth and development;
2. Develop strategies to guard against annexation;
3. Encourage infill development through incentives; and
4. Identify objectives, policies, and programs for joint planning and decision-making.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal #1: Ensure that Howland Township is an attractive environment for economic development.

Objectives:

1. Retain existing industries and businesses;
2. Promote Township resources to prospective businesses and industries;
3. Revitalize industrial areas and brownfields to provide for adaptive re-use or other types of development;
4. Provide regulations and incentives that encourage sustainable development and enhance community character; and
5. Formulate and adopt an Economic Development Plan for Howland Township.

Goal #2: Ensure diversity in the Township's employment base.

Objectives:

1. Provide a variety of jobs at varied skill levels within the Township;
2. Broaden the Township's partnership with local Universities and trade schools;

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3. Recognize, enhance, and promote employment, cultural, academic, and recreational opportunities within Howland Township;
4. Promote a balance between industrial, office, commercial/retail, and residential property tax revenues; and
5. Work with local, regional, and statewide organizations to promote Howland Township as a desirable place to start a business.

Goal #3: Reinforce existing corridors as Township commerce centers.

Objectives:

1. Promote the sustainability of the Golden Triangle;
2. Promote mixed-use development in the Howland Corners and Elm Road areas to encourage a vibrant and sustainable commercial environment;
3. Promote Howland Corners as the office, commercial, and cultural center of the Township and encourage activities that attract a diverse and multi-generational population; and
4. Enhance highly-traveled gateways into Howland Township with unique and distinctive landscaping, signage, and other design features.

Goal #4: Become a leader in the development of manufacturing, office, and research facilities associated with the health care industry “tech-belt” promoted by Congressman Tim Ryan

Objectives:

1. Identify compatible areas for a range of uses within the Township.

Goal #5: Welcome green and ecologically sound businesses, developments, and solutions.

Objectives:

1. Understand barriers and opportunities for new and existing business development;
2. Develop incentives to assist in small business development that will help grow the green economy;
3. Promote energy technology that is conservation-based and draws from renewable sources to help existing and future industry and business; and
4. Support the principles of sustainability (transportation, energy efficiency, green building, and waste minimization).

NATURAL RESOURCES

Goal #1: Retain the beauty and function of the natural environment that characterize Howland Township.

Objectives:

1. Ensure that conservation of natural resources and the environment is a high priority;
2. Restore and improve natural environs previously impacted; and
3. Establish a unified open space and greenway network.

Goal #2: Protect, maintain, and enhance the Township’s forest and tree resources.

Objectives:

1. Realize the amenity value of the Township’s wooded areas;
2. Preserve existing trees and forests; and
3. Preserve and improve the quality of the tree-growing environment.

Goal #3: Maintain and protect the quality and quantity of surface and ground water resources.

Objectives:

1. Preserve and enhance existing watershed resources;
2. Protect a safe and reliable water supply for all sectors of the community; and
3. Support water conservation measures in all sectors of the community.

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Goal #4: Promote energy conservation and pollution prevention practices to reach a sustainable use of natural resources.

Objectives:

1. Link land use and transportation planning to reduce vehicular miles traveled;
2. Embrace alternative, renewal energies and investments in alternative energy sources; and
3. Coordinate with governmental and non-governmental agencies to promote waste and emission reduction, the purchasing of power saving items, preserving green space, and implementing lasting energy saving policy.

Goal #5: Preserve scenic features that characterize Howland Township.

Objectives:

1. Preserve and enhance visible topographic and other notable features;
2. Preserve and enhance scenic qualities along roadways and gateways; and
3. Ensure that the design of new development embraces, complements, and enhances the Township character.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Goal #1: Support healthy lifestyles in Howland Township.

Objectives:

1. Consider public health impacts in all land use, transportation, and community design decisions.

Goal #2: Improve air quality and subsequent respiratory health.

Objectives:

1. Decrease dependence on motor vehicles through affordable, safe, and sustainable transportation options;
2. Promote alternative and renewal energies;
3. Maximize investments made in infrastructure; and
4. Maximize coordination with governmental and non-governmental agencies on exposure reduction.

Goal #3: Improve the built environment to encourage active lifestyles.

Objectives:

1. Ensure street, sidewalk, and bike path safety and accessibility for all users;
2. Increase and enhance park, open space, and recreational facilities; and
3. Ensure accessibility, safety, beauty, and cleanliness of public spaces.

Goal #4: Establish a stronger local/regional food system.

Objectives:

1. Promote community gardens and farmers markets;
2. Encourage small scale agriculture in the Township; and
3. Encourage county/regional farmland preservation to advocate a local agriculture economy.

Goal #5: Improve access to medical, mental health, and social services for all residents.

Objectives:

1. Maximize use of available resources and programs through other governmental and non-governmental agencies.

Goal #6: Improve water quality through greater consideration in land use decisions.

Objectives:

1. Preserve and enhance existing watershed resources; and
2. Protect a safe and reliable water supply that can be used by all sectors of the community.

COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES

Goal #1: Continue to support recycling of as much of the solid waste generated by residents and businesses as possible.

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Objectives:

1. Encourage waste reduction and cost-effective re-use and recycling through appropriate policies and programs;
2. Ensure convenient access to recycling facilities for Township residents; and
3. Enhance existing curb-side collection programs when possible.

Goal #2: Prepare for catastrophic events to minimize damage and effectively implement recovery operations.

Objectives:

1. Maintain and periodically update an effective emergency response program;
2. Reduce the potential for loss of life and property damage in areas subject to flooding; and
3. Reduce the potential for loss of life and property damage due to fallen power lines.

Goal #3: Continue to provide adequate police and fire protection and emergency medical services to Township residents.

Objectives:

1. Minimize the response time for all emergencies; and
2. Ensure safety in existing and future neighborhoods.

Goal #4: Ensure adequate provision of utilities and services provided by non-Township agencies and service providers.

Objectives:

1. Inventory current sewer and water infrastructure and identify future needs;
2. Identify areas with failing septic systems;
3. Support conversion to underground utilities; and
4. Work with existing utility providers to maintain or improve services to the Township.

Goal #5: Increase access to information technologies and its utility for all residents of the Township.

Objectives:

1. Improve computer and information technology access in the Township; and
2. Use technology to improve internal processes and service to residents and businesses.

Goal #6: Promote quality active and passive recreational and cultural opportunities for Township residents and businesses.

Objectives:

1. Inventory existing facilities available to the public;
2. Increase the number of active and passive parkland acres to meet or exceed National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) standards through coordination with the Howland Township Park District;
3. Identify future recreational facility needs; and
4. Engage in long-term capital planning for Township facilities, parks, and infrastructure.

TRANSPORTATION, MOBILITY, & ACCESSIBILITY

Goal #1: Provide greater choice, accessibility, and flexibility for all people to move about the Township.

Objectives:

1. Require multiple modes of transportation as part of new developments;
2. Incorporate multiple modes of transportation into road construction projects, and work on cooperative maintenance agreements;
3. Encourage pedestrian networks in local business districts to allow a friendly built environment for living, shopping, visiting, or passive enjoyment;
4. Encourage the connectivity of open spaces, greenways, and recreational areas with public multi-purpose trails;
5. Encourage public transportation into and through the Township on main thoroughfares;
6. Implement safety improvements at substandard intersections;
7. Retro-fit existing neighborhoods with sidewalks and bike trails, where applicable;

8. Develop a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plan for Howland Township.

Goal #2: Promote safe and efficient flow of vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic.

Objectives:

1. Participate in area transportation planning efforts;
2. Increase traffic calming measures;
3. Improve traffic flow by reducing congestion on the major corridors serving the Township;
4. Improve and expand alternative transportation systems;
5. Develop a Town Center circulation plan for the Howland Corners area; and
6. Continue multi-year capital planning for roadway improvements.

Goal #3: Provide connectivity to adjacent communities, throughout the region, and beyond.

Objectives:

1. Plan for Howland access to regional, statewide, and nationwide alternative transportation and multi-modal planning efforts;
2. Encourage safe and efficient use of existing rail lines; and
3. Maintain and enhance the Township's access to railroads and air service.

Goal #4: Protect and enhance the natural environment along transportation corridors.

Objectives:

1. Limit road expansion and widening by offering progressive solutions to traffic issues; and
2. Promote beautification efforts along corridors and entrances to the Township.