



# **Fairview Township Vision 2035 Comprehensive Plan Update**

**DRAFT**

June 4, 2024

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# 1 Introduction

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) enables local jurisdictions to conduct a comprehensive planning process to identify areas where growth and development will occur so that public infrastructure and services, including roadways, utilities, parks, and open spaces, can be adequately planned and township ordinances updated as needed to accommodate and manage growth.

## Comprehensive Plan Purpose

Fairview is classified as a Second Class Township within Erie County, Pennsylvania. This document is Fairview Township's comprehensive plan update – Vision 2035. Its purpose is to set forth Fairview Township's aspirations and hopes for the future of the community and policies relative to achieving these aspirations.

The Plan looks ahead ten (10) years to envision what Fairview Township should look like and then defines the efforts needed to get there. Municipal tax dollars will then be allocated toward these goals.

Elements of this Plan include guidance about where and what kind of housing, shopping, offices, and industrial buildings should be built and areas where natural resources should be preserved and protected; how people will move around the community; and how services and amenities will be made available to residents. The Plan also provides strategies by which the Plan's policies can be implemented.

## History of Planning in Fairview Township

This Plan continues the fine efforts that began with the 1998 Fairview Township Comprehensive Plan. That Plan was created when the Township of Fairview and the Borough of Fairview were being consolidated. Because of the 1998 successful municipal consolidation and long-term planning efforts, the Township has transformed from a bedroom community with considerable farmland, into a community that offers a wide range of land use opportunities.

### Pennsylvania Land Use Planning Tools

The four most prominent land use planning tools available for municipalities in Pennsylvania are the planning commission, comprehensive plan, subdivision and land development ordinance, and zoning ordinance. These tools are authorized under the state enabling statute, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Municipal governments are allowed by state law to choose some, all, or none of these tools and each can be used independently of the others.

### Purpose of Comprehensive Plan

- ❖ Sets forth the long range vision for physical development, agricultural preservation, housing, economic development, transportation, community facilities and related topics.
- ❖ Addresses community needs to prepare for change and to protect treasured assets.
- ❖ Serves as a marketing tool for the Township to clearly convey the community's values and priorities.
- ❖ Includes specific actions (policies, projects, and programs) and identifies timing and responsibilities for undertaking those actions.
- ❖ Contains map-based recommendations that indicate the Township's intent for where and how it will direct growth and change.
- ❖ Serves as a guide for future development regulations.

In 2012, the Township completed an amendment to the 1998 Comprehensive Plan. While the 2012 plan amendment built on the foundational goals included in the 1998 Plan, it also envisioned and embraced ongoing population growth via areas of higher (yet still moderate) density housing.

Now, having experienced considerable growth in the past decades, this Comprehensive Plan Update refocuses the Township's efforts to be more in line with the original 1998 goals to preserve the generally rural character of the community with considerable open space, manage and guide growth to appropriate locations where development already exists, and simultaneously maintain an overall low density for new housing development.

## Goals Overview

This Plan includes seven broad subject-based goals that address current conditions and issues. The goals are further supported by a set of objectives that help define the strategies to achieve the goals. The goals and related objectives were developed based on the following guiding principles:

- ❖ **Keep Fairview, Fairview with its rural, small town atmosphere**
- ❖ **Protect and enhance the environment**
- ❖ **Support economic vitality**
- ❖ **Improve quality of life**

### GOALS

- Goal A:** Promote new housing construction & housing maintenance that complements & maintains the Township's predominately low-density residential character & protects against urban sprawl.
- Goal B:** Transform Fairview's Downtown into a vibrant, walkable community gathering place.
- Goal C:** Foster a robust & sustainable economy through a range of development opportunities & a supportive climate for business investment.
- Goal D:** Expand mobility options & transportation network.
- Goal E:** Provide appropriate public utilities & desirable public amenities to accommodate desirable growth.
- Goal F:** Enhance & maintain Fairview Township's unique character, rural identity, & natural/historic resources.
- Goal G:** Promote well-planned, location-appropriate growth and preservation via the Future Land Use Plan.

## Implementation

Having an implementation framework is critical for ensuring that the Plan's recommendations become reality. The objectives and strategies noted for each goal will require the involvement of many entities with different missions, structures, and ways of conducting operations. They include government agencies, nonprofit organizations, informal stakeholder groups, businesses, and others.



## How to Use the Comprehensive Plan

This document serves several purposes both for Township policymakers and staff, as well as for private property owners, businesses, and future investors:

1. Guides the review of zoning amendments, special exception applications, and land development proposals....  
The Plan establishes principles for reviewing and approving new development and redevelopment, which provides current residents and businesses with some predictability regarding future development. The Plan should be referenced by applicable Township review bodies for all zoning and subdivision review processes, including zoning map amendments.
2. Informs capital improvements planning...  
Capital improvements (roads, sewers, water, etc.) should be planned in ways that advance the goals and objectives in the Plan. This Plan serves as one resource to be considered when making decisions related to capital improvements, facilities planning, etc. When major additions are made to the Township's list of capital improvements that will affect future land use planning (e.g., a newly proposed road), the Future Land Use Plan should be updated accordingly.
3. Provides items to be considered when preparing the annual budget...  
The Plan should be referenced when considering allocation of funds during preparations for the annual budget. Recommendations in the Plan require funding be set aside whether through new or existing revenue sources.
4. Increases ability to align economic initiatives with strategic partners...  
The Plan outlines several recommendations regarding the desired general locations and types of businesses. Documenting the Township's economic development objectives helps foster a collaborative environment with various governmental agencies.
5. Assists in applying for government grants....  
The Plan includes several efforts for which grant funding may be available. Having a prepared list of initiatives that documents their need and how each advances the Township's overall vision enable the Township to be more proactive and ready to apply for grants when the opportunities arise.

## Community Input

The Policies / Ideas in this Plan originated from the following sources:

- The 1998 Plan and 2012 Plan Amendment.
- Citizens' participation and public sentiments expressed at various Township meetings.
- Input from the Supervisors, staff, and the various Township boards (Planning Commission, Zoning Hearing Board, and Recreation Board).
- Input from Fairview Township Sewer and Water Authority.
- The current zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations.

## 2 Context

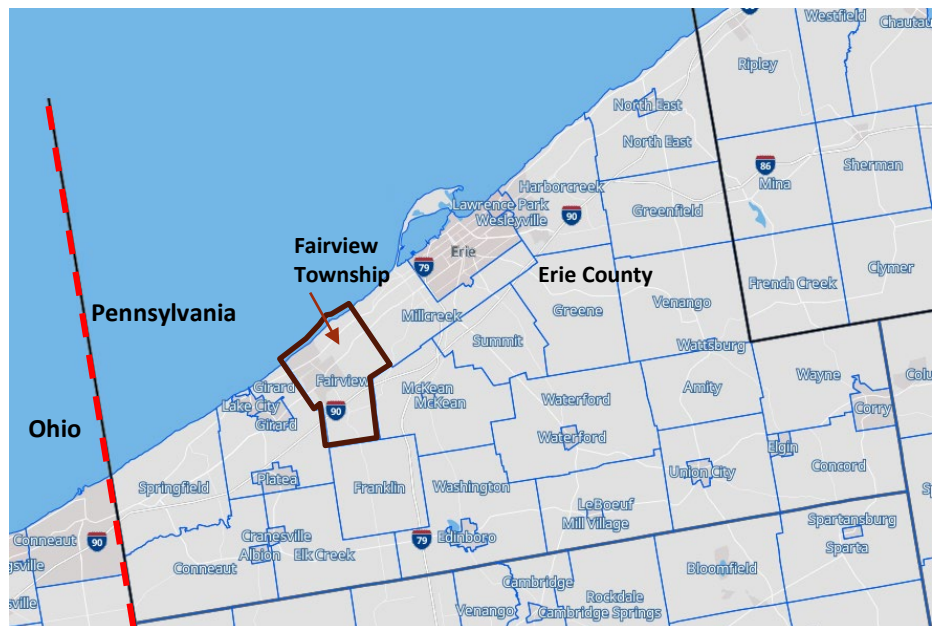
This chapter highlights key information on existing conditions that has informed the Plan's goals and objectives. This section includes summaries of the most salient conclusions drawn from a detailed analysis of existing conditions and trends that was completed as part of this Plan Update. The complete Background Data Analysis and Maps report is attached as Appendix A.

### Overview

Fairview Township is located in the west central portion of Erie County, approximately seven miles west of downtown Erie, and approximately 13 miles east of the Pennsylvania/Ohio border. It is a lake shore community, with approximately five miles of Lake Erie shoreline.

Fairview Township is a unique entity in Erie County and, as a consolidated municipality, a rarity in the Commonwealth. Generally, only one in three attempts at

municipal consolidation have been successful. Fairview Borough and Fairview Township began the consolidation process in 1992, and the electorate approved it in 1994, by 67% of Borough voters and by 56% of Township voters. After some study, the Township form of government was retained, and the consolidated entity was officially launched in 1998. That same year, the Township adopted its first Comprehensive Plan.



As a community made up of both the former Fairview Borough and the more rural Fairview Township, it has a unique combination of village characteristics, suburban type development and business parks, as well as abundant natural resources, farms, and rural landscapes. These attributes contribute to a high quality of life in a mostly country setting. As one of the few growing townships in Erie County, there remains additional housing and economic development potential. The challenge is to accommodate this potential while maintaining and preserving the low-density, rural character that has attracted so many of the residents and businesses that call Fairview Township home.



# Community Profile, Conditions and Trends

## People

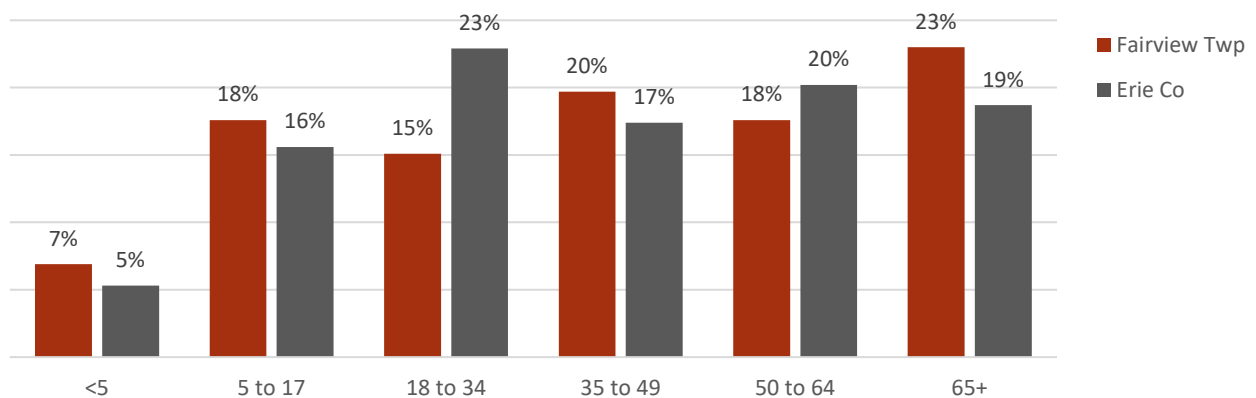
### Growing Population

Since at least 1980, Fairview Township has continuously been the fourth most populous municipality in Erie County. And it continues to grow, with a 2020 population of 11,138 residents, a 10% increase since 2010. During that same 10-year period, Erie County's population declined by 3.5% and the city of Erie's population declined by 6.8%. As the County's population slowly declines and people move outward from the city of Erie, Fairview Township is one of the few municipalities in the County that continues to experience steady growth. For example, neighboring Millcreek Township's population grew by only 1% and McKean Township by 0.6%; in contrast the municipalities to the west and south of Fairview each experienced population losses (-7.7% in Franklin Township, -4.6% in Girard Township, and -3.6% in Girard Borough). According to the Erie County Planning Department, Fairview Township is expected to continue to grow over the next 30 years, but at a slower pace of only 8%. Still, that rate of growth is the second highest increase forecasted for all municipalities in Erie County.

### Fewer Young Adults and More Seniors then in County

Age distribution within the Township varies somewhat compared to Erie County. There is a significantly lower percentage of Township residents between 18 and 34 years old (15%), generally comprised of college students and young adults entering the work force, than in the County (23%). In contrast, there is a higher percentage of adults between 35 and 49, as well as children under five and between the ages of 5 and 17. The higher percentages in these age groups are indicative of the increasing number of families with preschoolers and school age children moving to the Township to be in the Fairview School District. At the same time, the percentage of residents 65 years and older is higher in the Township (23%) than in the County (19%), which could be attributed to the number of assisted living facilities and nursing homes in Fairview.

Figure 1. Age Distribution



### School Enrollment

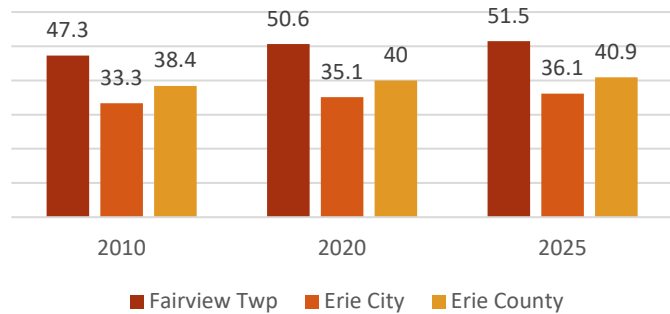
The higher percentage of school age children in the Township has resulted in a 28% increase in enrollment at the Elementary School between the 2008-2009 school year and the 2021-2022 school year. Enrollment at the middle school was also at its highest for the 2021-2022 school year. The district anticipates enrollment at the three school building will increase by 14% over the next few years.

### Aging Residents

Fairview Township's population is aging. The median age for the Township in 2020 was 50.6 years, compared to the much younger median age of 35.1 years for Erie City and 40 years for Erie County. In addition, the Township's population has aged at a faster rate (7%) between 2010 and 2020 compared to the City of Erie (5.4%) and the County (4.2%).

The number of older residents is expected to continue to grow significantly in the future as people live longer. According to the U.S. Administration on Aging, in 2019, persons reaching age 65 had an average life expectancy of an additional 19.6 years (20.8 years for women and 18.2 years for men).

Figure 2. Median Age

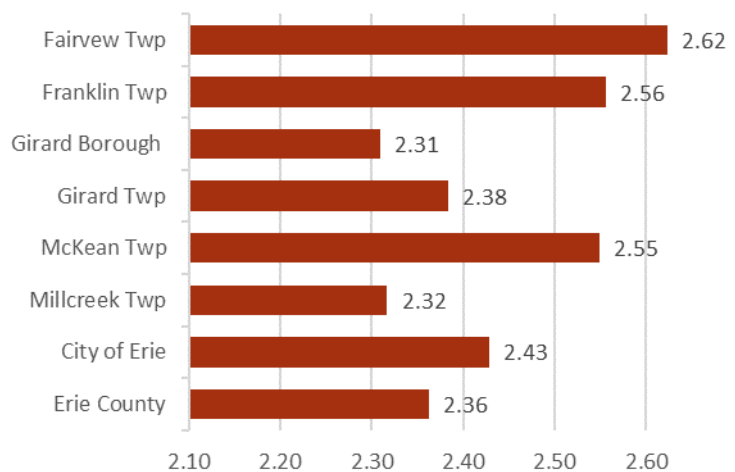


### Household Characteristics

Fairview Township continues to be a community that attracts families with children. Indeed, compared to surrounding communities and the County, it has the highest average number of persons per household and the highest percentage of households with children (31.8%), with only a small portion of them (2.7%) being single-parent households.

Nearly 20% of all Township households (approximately 790) are households where one person is living alone, and more than 60% of this group are age 65 years and older (466 households). In comparison, people, ages 65 and older make up only 44% of single person households in Erie County, less than 38% in Erie City and about 27% in the United States.

Figure 3. Persons Per Household 2020



These divergent trends – where the Fairview School District continues to attract families with children, while at the same time the percentage of people 65 and older continues to increase - have implications for the Township over the next 10 years. Healthcare needs increase as people age, and as more people (and more older people) choose to live alone, there will likely be greater demand for smaller housing units and low-maintenance housing. At the same time, growth in the number of families with children will impact the schools and continue to create demand for larger single-family houses and more recreation facilities.

## Places

### Abundant Natural Resources

Fairview Township enjoys an abundance of natural resources such as lakefront amenities, scenic river corridors with large expanses of woodlands, and rural/farming landscape. Nearly two-thirds of land in the Township is un/underdeveloped, such as land dedicated to agricultural use, woodlands, parks/protected open space or undeveloped. The remaining 35% is devoted to residential, commercial/industrial, or community/institutional development.

The Township's significant recreational and natural resources include more than five miles of Lake Erie coastline along its northern border, which offers some of the best freshwater sport fishing in the country, plus two well-known fishing rivers - Elk Creek, south of I-90, and Walnut Creek, in the eastern portion of the Township. They are the two largest creeks in the County and are best known for steelhead fishing. Preserving these water resources as well as other smaller streams, woodlands, the lakeshore, and their related recreational opportunities are essential for retaining the character and attractiveness of the Township.

Fairview Township is required by the state to regulate farmland as well as development along the Lake Erie shoreline, bluff areas, and important stream corridors.

### Parks, Trails, and Recreational Amenities

Access to parks, trails and recreation amenities is important for Township residents' overall health and wellness. Fairview Township has over 1,267 acres of parkland, recreational amenities and protected open space. The Township's six local parks range from the 0.1 acre Central Park, a pocket park, and the 1.4-acre Buseck Park, both located in the heart of downtown, to Pleasant Ridge Park which encompasses 86 acres at the western edge of the Township, south of U.S. 20. Pleasant Ridge Park provides more than two miles of trails for walking, hiking, and groomed cross country skiing as well as soccer and softball fields, a pickleball court, disc golf course, and a new playground.

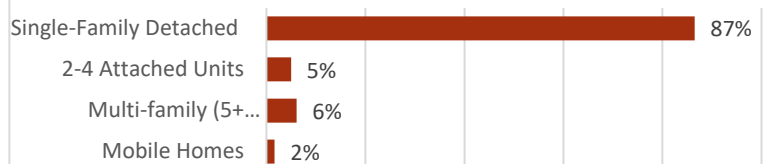
Access to Lake Erie is available at both Avonia Beach Park and Walnut Creek Marina, while Struchen Flats Park provides recreational and fishing access to Elk Creek. Flag Park at Fairview Business Park includes a large pond for fishing. In addition, Fairview School District's resources are available to residents through an intergovernmental agreement with the Township. This partnership between the Township and the School District provides residents the opportunity to use the School District's recreation facilities including the Chris Batchelor Memorial Court tennis courts at the high school.



### Housing Variety

The Township's land use regulations have helped preserve the community's residential character. For years, Fairview has been a community of traditional single-family homes on individual lots, due to the prevalence of single-family zoning.

Figure 4. Type of Housing



After the 2008 housing crisis, developers expressed a need for more condominiums and multi-family housing units. In response, the Township increased the number of areas zoned R-3, which permits multi-family development at a maximum density of six dwelling units per acre.

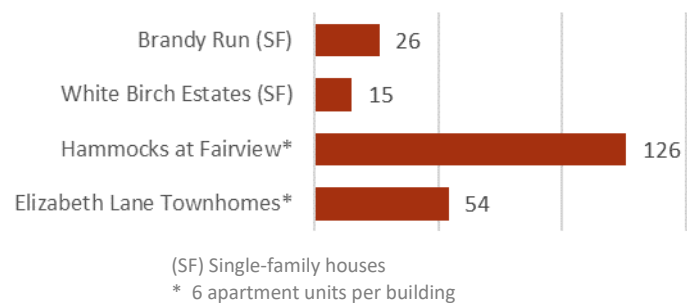
As a result, several new townhomes, condominiums, and moderate density apartment developments were constructed causing the percentage of single-family homes to decrease from approximately 92% in 2000 to 87% in 2019. As the population ages, and as fewer working adults choose to spend their time gardening and doing other house-related improvements, there will continue to be some demand for homes that require less maintenance, such as condominiums, apartments, and small lot subdivisions.

### Continued Housing Growth

According to the 2020 Census, Fairview Township continued to experience new housing development at an average rate of 26.6 units per year between 2010 and 2020. While this rate of growth was higher than all the surrounding communities and the County, it was slower than the previous decade, when Fairview Township's average was nearly 31 houses per year. It is possible that the slowdown was due in part to supply

chain issues with construction materials due to COVID. It appears that demand has returned because there are at least 220 housing units that have been approved by the Township and are currently under construction. This includes The Hammocks at Fairview, a new 'luxury' apartment complex currently under construction, located along McCray Road east of the Fairview Schools campus.

Figure 5. New Housing Units



### Housing Needs

According to the 2020 Census, 94% of the 4,284 housing units in the Township are occupied, with 6% vacant. Of the occupied housing units, over 86% are owner-occupied, while the other 14% are renter-occupied. Senior households (with one or more resident(s) age 65 or older) are projected to increase, which may require additional considerations regarding house design (such as universal design), social services and transportation.

### Condition of Housing Stock

Fairview Township has maintained the high quality of its housing stock with its continued emphasis on code enforcement. In the typical western Pennsylvania township, the number of "problem" homes needing physical remediation is usually between 8% to 10%. A field survey of housing in Fairview showed only slightly above 2% of the units as substandard, and the most serious cases were already being resolved.

The Erie County Land Bank, created in 2018, provides additional programs to assist Fairview Township and other participating municipalities in maintaining quality housing and eliminating blighted properties. The Erie County Land Bank can assist with strategic land assembly by acquiring, holding, and transferring interest in real property and demolishing deteriorated buildings.

### High Household Incomes and Home Values

Despite the increase in moderate density housing (at a maximum of six units per acre), the Township has been able to maintain its desirable and high-quality housing stock.<sup>1</sup> Fairview Township's 2020 median household income is \$85,585, which is 170% of the County's median of about \$49,200, and higher than all the surrounding municipalities which range from \$50,000 to \$69,000. Not surprising, the Township also has a high median value of owner-occupied houses (\$249,700) which is about 56% higher than the County's median of \$160,200. Similarly, the Township's median gross rent, at \$1,219, is about 43% higher than the County's median of \$851. The Township's medians are also higher than the State's medians but to a lesser extent.

**However, it is important to note the US Census Bureau's caution about higher than usual margin of error for ACS data collected during 2020 at the height of the COVID pandemic. Unfortunately, the implications impact all 5-year ACS estimates that include 2020 data.**

### Housing Affordability

Another traditional concern is housing affordability. Fairview Township housing is typically listed as the highest valued in Erie County. Past Census and market data (see 2007 Erie County Housing Plan Update) confirm this statement. Though this may be true, HANDS, a well-known developer of affordable housing, recently completed the Pine Grove subdivision at the eastern edge of downtown Fairview on the south side of U.S. 20. Pine Grove is the organization's latest "rent to own" complex in the Township. The 25 single-family units are available to limited income families. This clearly indicates that though housing values are high in the Township, it does not preclude the construction of modestly priced homes.

### School District

Fairview Township's most successful asset is the Fairview School system. The district's reputation for maintaining excellent academic standards attract families with children to relocate to the Township. Indeed, the Fairview School District has experienced significant growth in its student population, so much that it recently completed a \$45 million construction project that significantly increased classroom capacity at both the elementary school and high school.

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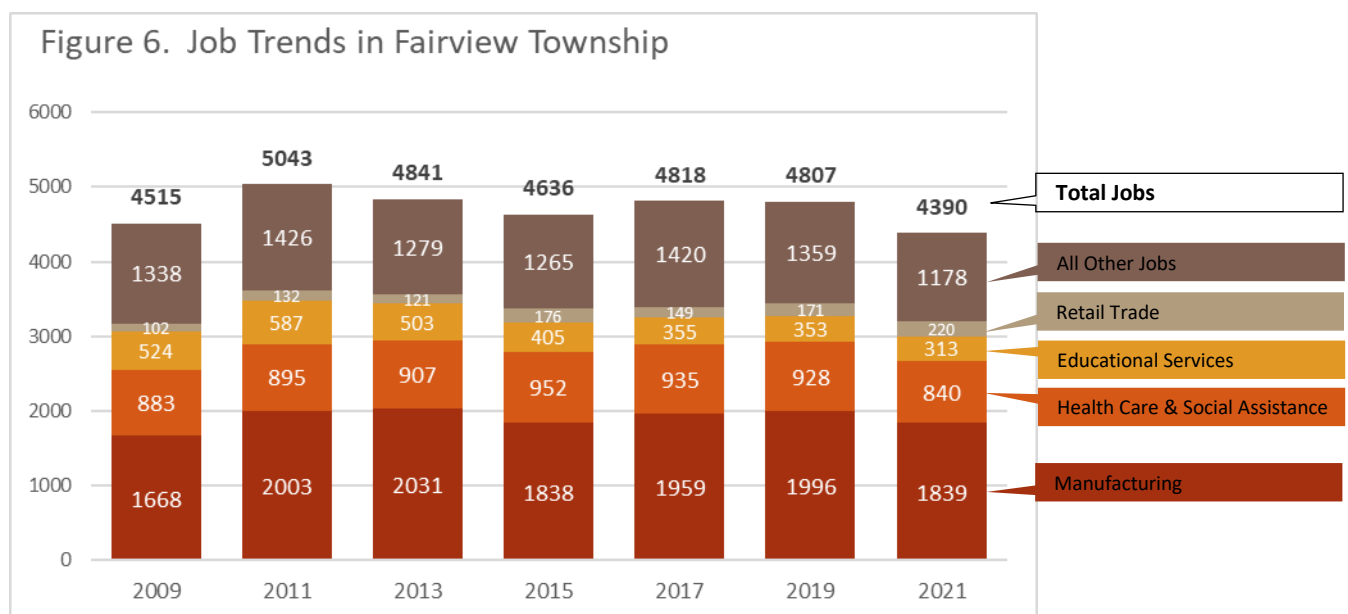
<sup>1</sup> Note: The Township is in the process of reducing the maximum density for the R-3 District from six units per acre to four units per acre.

## Economy / Services

### Employment Opportunities

In 2021, nearly half of all jobs in Fairview Township were in the Manufacturing sector (43% of total employment). The next largest sector, Health Care and Social Assistance, was a distant second at 19%, followed by Educational Services (7.1%) and Retail Trade (4.6%).

While it is common for the number of jobs to fluctuate year to year, the COVID pandemic clearly affected Fairview Township employers. Between 2019 and 2021, the data indicates approximately 417 jobs (8.7%) were lost. The largest reduction in number of jobs was in the Manufacturing sector, while the Educational Services sector lost the largest percentage (-11.3%) of the top four sectors. In contrast,



the number of jobs in the Retail sector increased by nearly 30%.

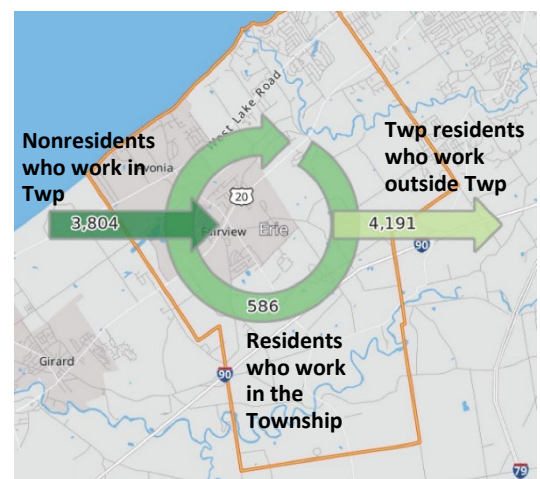
### Highly Educated Workforce

Fairview Township attracts highly educated residents. Nearly all residents over the age of 25 have achieved a high school degree (includes equivalent) or higher. In addition, more than 50% of the same population group has also earned a bachelor's degree, while nearly 22% have attained a graduate or professional degree.

### Most Workers Leave the Township

Approximately 4,777 Fairview Township residents are employed, of which only 586 (12%) work at one of the 4,390 jobs in the Township. The other 4,191 residents commute to jobs outside the township.

**Figure 7. Commuter Trends**



Source: U.S. Census OnTheMap Inflow/Outflow Report (2021)



This means that nonresidents commute to the Township to fill the remaining 3,804 jobs (87%) in the Township. This may be partially a result of greater opportunities for jobs in other sectors and the ability to earn higher wages outside the Township.

### **Infrastructure Assets**

The Township benefits from significant infrastructure assets that provide opportunities for economic investment. These include approximately 78 miles of excellent paved roads maintained by the Township, as well as county and federal highways, the rail corridors and water access.

### **Township Services**

Many people choose to live in Fairview Township because of the excellent services provided. The Township has an extremely advanced Planning/Zoning Code Enforcement office, and more than two-thirds of the Township is served by the Fairview Township Sewer and Water Authority, which facilitates economic and housing development.

## **Township Accomplishments & Considerations**

### **Transportation**

Major transportation improvements have been completed within the last few years stemming from new Millfair Road bridge across the railroad tracks between W Lake Road (PA 5) and W Ridge Road (U.S. 20). This project also included the construction of a roundabout at the Millfair Road and W Lake Road intersection.

Transportation within the downtown continues to be an issue. The greatest concern is the increased vehicle trips and the need for an additional south bound route to alleviate congestion in the heart of Downtown at the W Ridge Road (U.S. 20) and Avonia Road (PA 98) intersection. The Township retained a consultant to design and implement a Downtown Revitalization Plan, which included several recommendations on ways to deal with vehicle and pedestrian transportation. In 2023, the Township commissioned a transportation study of the area to determine the best ways to address the congestion for the larger area encompassing the Downtown and connection to I-90 via Avonia Road (PA 98).

### **Municipal Building**

The Municipal Building is located on seven acres along the Avonia Road corridor between I-90 and Downtown. The building currently meets the needs of the Municipality, but storage may be a future concern. In 2019, the Township Supervisors purchased two acres east of the Municipal Building to allow for future improvements/expansion.

### **Public Water and Sewer**

Due to increased demand, the Sewer and Water Authority purchased two new public water wells and in 2018 developed a new water tower at Pleasant Ridge Park. The Authority has extended public sewer to several existing developments to meet the needs of failed septic systems including Green Valley Subdivision and Shauna, Dennis, and Miller Avenues.

According to the Fairview Township Sewer and Water Authority, the Downtown Revitalization Project area has sufficient public water lines available and most of the area is also served by adequate sanitary sewer. For properties currently on septic systems, some could be connected to the sanitary sewer

system from the rear of the properties. Only one area, a portion of Avonia Road north of West Ridge Road, will be a challenge to tie into the system.

### Stormwater Management

Fairview Township is a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) reporting area in which stormwater discharge is regulated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP). Since the 2012 plan, PA DEP has continually added new regulations dealing with stormwater runoff. In 2015, the Township adopted required new regulations mandated by PA DEP. As part of the requirements, the Township must increase its standards on reporting to the state about its stormwater activities. This MS4 Project also required the Township to buy vacant parcels and develop stormwater quality control basins.

The Township completed its first stormwater management project at the end of Welcana Drive in 2020. The Welcana stormwater management facilities capture runoff from portions of three subdivisions and reduce sediment loads from more than thirty (30) acres of previously untreated development in Fairview Township. The project, partially funded by a Growing Greener Grant through the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), was the Township's first toward achieving mandated sedimentation reduction goals for Trout Run. In addition to Trout Run, there are three other state-designated impaired waterways in Fairview Township—Walnut Creek and two unnamed tributaries to Lake Erie—that are subject to the MS4 program.

The storm sewer system in the Downtown Revitalization project area was installed in the 1940s. The Downtown plan recommends that, as part of the downtown improvements, the Township should consider partnering with PennDOT to upgrade the roadway and replace the old storm sewer lines. It also would be beneficial to install bicycle-safe catch basin grates whenever catch basins grates need to be replaced.<sup>2</sup>

### Recreation

In 2022, partially funded by a Community Conservation Partnership Program grant through the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), the Township completed a major playground expansion project at Pleasant Ridge Park. The state-of-the-art, ADA accessible recreational facility was designed to meet best practices in youth fitness through sliding, swinging, spinning, climbing, brachiating, and balancing apparatus. The project included stormwater improvements, paving the parking lot, and a rubber compound base commonly referred to as “pour-in-place” surface. The old playground, consisting primarily of swings and a teeter-totter, was relocated to Avonia Beach Park.

In 2023, Fairview Elementary School followed suit with a new, publicly accessible playground of their own. Utilizing numerous grants along with private funding, the playground incorporated sensory panels, a music station, and different textured climbing and motion swinging stations to engage students in play that stimulates neurodiversity. It also included two different merry-go-round stations that were designed to include children in wheelchairs. In 2021, an 18 hole disc golf course was installed throughout Pleasant Ridge Park. The course was funded in part by a Community Assets - Parks, Fields, & Trails grant through the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority (ECGRA).

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<sup>2</sup> Roszak, Paul, CT Consultants. Summary of Existing Conditions and Preliminary Recommendations for the Fairview Township, Pennsylvania Downtown District Master Plan, 3/25/2020

On December 31, 2023, the Fairview Parks and Recreation Authority voluntarily chose to terminate its existence. In its place, by way of ordinance, a Recreation Board was established to supervise, regulate, equip, and maintain Township-funded recreation programs and facilities. This decision was made in response to the near crippling effect that the COVID-19 pandemic had on the Authority. Municipal aid from Fairview Township and Fairview School District preserved the Fairview Parks and Recreation Authority, but the Board of Directors recognized the futility of not being proactive. The ordinance that created the Recreation Board also established a Parks and Recreation Department, and its staff, present and future, are employees of Fairview Township.

### **Downtown Plan Implementation**

The Township purchased two downtown properties with the intent to fix properties with physical remediation issues. In 2021, the Township purchased a retail building at 7314 W Ridge Road (0.29-acre parcel) and in 2022, an adjacent property at 3712 Lakeview Avenue (0.38-acre parcel) that was occupied by a 1,316 square foot single-family house. Demolition of both buildings was completed with assistance from the Erie County Land Bank so the combined site could be converted into a public parking lot to serve downtown businesses.

### **Zoning Map Changes**

The Township's R-3 Residential District permits multi-family housing at a moderate density of six dwelling units per acre. Moderate density multi-family housing is permitted only in the R-3 Residential District. In recent years, the Township became concerned that the condominium trend had slowed, and the development of rental apartment units was on the increase. As a result, the Planning & Zoning Department analyzed the pace of multi-family development and the amount of potential development on the remaining vacant land zoned R-3 Multi-Family District. In 2021, after engaging affected landowners for their comments and concerns, the Township Planning Commission rezoned approximately 100 parcels from the R-3 Multi-Family District to the R-2 Single-Family District and approximately 14 parcels to the R-1 Single-Family District.

In addition, the Township has been discussing reducing the density in the R-3 District from six units per building and six units per acre to four units per building/acre.

### **Citizen Input**

During the past few years, the Township has been involved in several public meetings related to the Downtown Revitalization project and the more recent Downtown Corridor Study. Citizens voiced several concerns and recommendations, including the following abbreviated list:

- Keep Fairview, Fairview, with its rural, small-town atmosphere without endless subdivisions.
- Encourage the use of the PA 5 corridor for single family development.
- Concentrate on improving /incentivizing downtown revitalization.
- Designate the I-90 interchange area as best suited for industrial and warehousing uses (and reduce the amount of truck traffic moving through the Township).
- Designate U.S. 20 as best suited for commercial development.
- Maintain Avonia Beach and Pleasant Ridge Parks, cited as the most popular recreational resources in the Township.



- Address traffic concerns in certain locations.
- Maintain the present quality of township services such as road work and snow removal, which are highly rated.
- Address concerns about downtown businesses, properties around the I-90 Interchange and Pleasant Ridge Manor.

### **Compliance with State Requirements**

Over the past decade the Commonwealth has enacted new laws and adopted various regulations that have had a major impact on every municipality, affecting its local government, its residents, and its businesses. This legislation covers a multitude of topics from storm water management, statewide building codes, new agricultural laws, emergency management, recycling and even leaf burning. Our state legislators and administration have control and responsibility of these items and they need to be accountable for them.

# 3 Goals, Objectives, & Strategies

The purpose of Fairview Township's comprehensive plan is to help guide future development and land preservation efforts over the next 10 years. This chapter summarizes the Plan's key components - the goals and objectives, which together form the foundation of the Township's long-term vision. These terms are defined as:

- ❖ **ASPIRATIONAL GOALS**, sometimes called stretch goals, are ambitious outcomes that seek to support and achieve the community vision over a long period of time. They provide an overarching framework for thinking holistically about the Township. While broadly written, the goals are stated specifically enough so that it is possible to assess whether progress has been made in achieving them.
- ❖ **OBJECTIVES** are a subset of a goal. They relate to and identify ways to achieve a specific goal, often supported by specific, measurable strategies.

## GOALS

These following goals provide the framework the Township will use to achieve its vision for the future:

- Goal A: Promote new housing construction & housing maintenance that complements & maintains the Township's predominately low-density residential character & protects against urban sprawl.
- Goal B: Transform Fairview's Downtown into a vibrant, walkable community gathering place.
- Goal C: Foster a robust & sustainable economy through a range of development opportunities & a supportive climate for business investment.
- Goal D: Expand mobility options & transportation network.
- Goal E: Provide appropriate public utilities & desirable public amenities to accommodate desirable growth.
- Goal F: Maintain, preserve, & enhance Fairview Township's unique character, rural identity, & natural/historic resources.
- Goal G: Promote well-planned, location-appropriate growth & preservation via the Future Land Use Plan.

## Goal A: HOUSING

**Promote new housing construction & housing maintenance that complements & maintains the Township's predominately low-density residential character & protects against urban sprawl.**

### Overview

Historically, Fairview has been a community centered on traditional single-family homes. Though single-family units still comprise most of the housing, the number of multi-family units grew rapidly over the last two decades. With the rapid growth of denser housing becoming a concern, the Township conducted a survey of property owners whose land was zoned R-3 Multi-Family, which permits multi-family housing at six dwelling units per acre. Ultimately, the Township rezoned numerous parcels from the R-3 Residential District to R-2 Residential Single-Family, which permits single-family houses on 20,000 square-foot lots (an overall subdivision density of about 1.6 dwelling units per acre). A smaller number of parcels were rezoned from R-3 to R-1 Residential Village, which permits single-family houses on 10,000 square-foot lots (an overall subdivision density of about 3.1 dwelling units per acre).

Fairview Township continues to attract new housing development and population growth. The US Census reports the Township's 2020 population to be 11,138, a 10% increase since 2010 and the Erie County Long Range Plan forecasts it to increase 8% to 12,056 by 2050. Building permit records confirm a steady pattern of new single-family units and multi-family unit construction from 2016 to 2021. New single-family and multi-family unit construction slowed a bit in 2019 and 2020, however, there were 24 single-family units and 18 multi-family units in three buildings constructed in 2021.

Based on the number of recently approved housing developments and building permits issued, residential construction of both single-family and multi-family dwellings in Fairview is continuing at rates similar to the last few years.

One area of concern is the preservation of housing values, which is one of the purposes of the zoning ordinance. It appears that the differential between the Township and County's median housing values for owner-occupied units has decreased since 2010. Based on the 2022 5-year ACS estimates, Fairview Township's median value for owner-occupied units increased 40% to \$249,700, while Erie County's median value increased an estimated 44% to \$160,200. The concern is related to not only the lower percentage increase, but also to the high margin of error for the Township's median value (+/- \$15,542 (6.2%)) compared to the County's significantly lower margin of error (+/- \$3,199 (2.0%)). As noted in the Background Report, the US Census Bureau acknowledges that the ACS data gathered during the height of the 2020 COVID pandemic had a low response rate and an unacceptably high margin of error, especially for jurisdictions with smaller populations (such as Fairview Township).

There are a variety of possible reasons for the lower differential, such as the increase in condominium units, which tend to have a lower per unit value due to smaller floor area and less land area, lower



average value for new single-family construction, or lower appreciation rates for existing housing. More analysis is needed to better understand the trend.

The housing objectives are divided into two elements: 1) strategies to address future housing needs of the Township and 2) improvements to the existing housing stock.

As previously noted, Fairview's housing stock is in excellent condition. It has a high market value, and there is a good range of affordability. This Plan's primary recommendation is for Township leaders to continue their current program of code enforcement and sound development standards.

This Plan anticipates that Fairview will continue to experience housing growth over the next decade. If housing development continues at the current average pace of 26 housing units per year, in 10 years, the housing stock will increase to approximately 4,600 units.

This projection is based on the following sources:

- ❖ The demonstrated growth patterns from the Census
- ❖ The Erie County Assessment Records
- ❖ Fairview permit records

The projection also anticipates a continued slow, subtle change in the Fairview Township housing market to more units suited to older occupants. These types of units are needed to meet the needs of an aging population, as well as an increase in consumers who desire a smaller home with little to no maintenance concerns. Despite these anticipated trends, there will continue to be a steady demand for single-family units in Fairview, which will ensure single-family housing remains the predominate form of housing in the Township.

## Housing Objectives & Strategies

### **A.1. Preserve and protect the character, quality, and integrity of existing and future single-family neighborhoods.**

- A.1.1. Continue to promote Fairview's historic focus on single family development by retaining the R-1 and R-2 single-family zoning districts as the predominate form of zoning for new residential development.
- A.1.2. Maintain the current low-density development standards for new single-family subdivisions throughout the Township regardless of their intended market. The key development standards that influence subdivision design and layout are minimum lot area, lot width, front yard setback and side yard setbacks and minimum building floor area.
- A.1.3. Preserve existing single-family areas by promoting complementary residential patterns in appropriate, limited locations and with adequate buffering requirements between single-family developments and moderate density developments.
- A.1.4. Amend the R-3 District to limit new multi-family structures to a maximum density of four units per acre and not more than four units in a building, especially where an R-3 District abuts a single-family or agricultural district.

- A.1.5. Continue to discuss regulating transient housing/short-term rentals to preserve residential neighborhoods.

**A.2. Provide an appropriate mix of alternative housing options with a range of different types and affordability in limited locations, consistent with Fairview’s historical development patterns.**

Examples of alternative housing options include low-maintenance, small-lot developments, condominiums, and moderate density multi-family dwellings as currently permitted in the R-3 District.

- A.2.1. Permit and promote moderate-density housing options limited to not more than four dwelling units per acre and not more than four units in a building, located close to transportation nodes, with appropriate amenities, and in areas where public utilities and R-3 moderate density housing already exist.
- A.2.2. Consider creating distinctions between (and requirements for) different types of multi-family units permitted in the R-3 District. Currently, a multi-family dwelling is defined as a building with two or more units. Consider defining and differentiating the following types of multi-family:
  - ❖ Duplex – a dwelling with two dwelling units either side-by-side or stacked one above the other.
  - ❖ Single-family attached units - often referred to as townhomes - where three to four units are attached side-by-side.
  - ❖ Low-rise apartments – limited to a maximum three floors (see also H.2.4 below) and a maximum of four units in a building.
- A.2.3. Monitor trends in multi-family housing development and amend the Future Land Use Plan and Zoning Map as needed. It is important to make sure that the moderate-density district (R-3) is focused where infrastructure support is available.
- A.2.4. Ensure consistency with the current development patterns of Fairview. For example, new construction, including multi-family units, should continue to be low-rise (no more than three stories) with appropriate setbacks and other design requirements, such as building materials and landscaping.

**A.3. Consider allowing housing alternatives that make it easier for older residents to age in place, while retaining the single-family character of the neighborhood.**

- A.3.1. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow an accessory dwelling unit as a special exception for a single-family house (applicable to districts where single-family houses are the only housing type permitted, such as the R-1, R-2, A-1, and A-2). Currently these districts allow only one dwelling unit on a lot, and the house must have a minimum gross floor area of 1,000 square feet.

While there are a number of ways accessory dwelling units can be accommodated, it is important to develop specific criteria to ensure there is no outward sign of an accessory dwelling unit, such as limiting the size of the accessory unit, requiring it to be within the original footprint of the single-family house and not allowing a separate outside entrance.

- A.3.2. To increase the supply of quality housing for older residents, consider allowing small-scale age-restricted alternative housing in single-family districts as a special exception when 1) water and sanitary sewer service are available, 2) the development is located on a major road, and 3) the development is properly designed to be compatible with the surrounding single-family neighborhood (i.e., comparable density).

**A.4. Protect the integrity and quality of all housing by ensuring that the existing housing stock and neighborhoods are well maintained and continue to retain their value, encourage new investment, and attract new residents.**

- A.4.1. Continue routine code enforcement in subdivisions.
- A.4.2. Pursue demolition when needed. Work with the Erie County Land Bank whenever demolitions are needed.
- A.4.3. Research and promote housing rehabilitation funding for income-eligible residents. Identify and promote partners that can assist with funding or other resources, such as the County, Erie County Land Bank or USDA.
- A.4.4. Continue to support volunteer programs that help property owners with maintenance issues.
- A.4.5. Establish a monitoring program to keep potential nuisance properties from becoming nuisances.

**A.5. Promote the continued positive use of alternative housing facilities, such as but not limited to Pleasant Ridge Manor, through enhanced development requirements.**

- A.5.1. Establish modern landscaping and screening requirements in the zoning ordinances.
- A.5.2. Follow and enforce sound sign control practices. Review the existing sign regulations, including regulations for temporary signs, and update if needed.

## **Goal B: DOWNTOWN**

### **Transform Fairview's Downtown into a vibrant, walkable community gathering place.**

#### **Overview**

Renewal of the Downtown was a priority in both the 1998 and 2012 Comprehensive Plans. Indeed, enhancing Downtown Fairview is a very desirable goal for economic, aesthetic, and perceptual reasons. Economically, a vital commercial core contributes to the tax base of a community while demanding less in services than residential areas. Aesthetically and perceptually, a rejuvenated downtown would visually showcase Fairview's prosperity and vitality which then creates pride in one's community and enhances its unique identity.

Key recommendations from the past plans included moving the overhead utilities underground and installing new streetlights. These projects remain important and have been carried forward. Another goal for a rejuvenated Downtown is to create a favorable environment for commercial growth that will attract more visitors/patrons downtown.

The Township has already taken several steps to advance the revitalization efforts:

- ❖ In 2018, the Township engaged a consultant to develop a downtown redevelopment plan.
- ❖ As part of that project, the consultant prepared an existing conditions report and surveyed residents to obtain feedback on what a revitalized downtown should look like.
- ❖ A Downtown Master Plan with sample renderings and identifying major project elements was created in 2020 (see images on next page). The Master Plan reimagines the corridor with the following improvements to encourage additional use of the downtown area:
  - concrete sidewalks with decorative pavement,
  - new accessible pedestrian ramps,
  - street lighting,
  - improved public parking, and
  - plantings and decorative features.
- ❖ The Township collaborated with the downtown consultant to explore the potential for a new zoning district that would foster redevelopment consistent with the Downtown Master Plan
- ❖ Fairview Township retained WRA to complete a multimodal transportation plan with recommendations for transportation improvements within the downtown stretch of Fairview and surrounding areas to reduce congestion and improve roadway safety. The Plan includes short-, medium-, and long-term concepts that address current concerns and accommodate future growth. (See Goal 5 for transportation improvement strategies.)
- ❖ The Township Planning and Zoning Department and Planning Commission are currently discussing the potential of adopting a targeted LERTA<sup>3</sup> program to encourage downtown development. The Downtown Plan suggests initial steps focus first on fostering private

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<sup>3</sup> LERTA (Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Act): This is a program where assessable improvements to properties are exempt from real estate taxes for a specified period (usually 5 years). To be effective, all three taxing bodies (municipal, county, and school district) must participate.

investment. Then, as these efforts bring renewed retail vigor and tangible evidence of success, an enhancement program could be initiated.

One unknown in the downtown equation is the future of the Fairview Evergreen Nurseries property. There is some talk that their operations center may move west. Indeed, some activities are already being conducted at their Girard Township. If the nursery does relocate, it creates significant potential for multi-use development at this 66-acre site.

Figure 8. Concept Drawings for Downtown Improvements

Fairview Township, Pennsylvania

Downtown District Traditional Neighborhood Development

Concept Development



West Ridge Road Near Lakeview Avenue Facing West: Proposed Improvements



Prepared for  
Fairview Township, Pennsylvania

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Prepared by CT Consultants, Inc.  
June 24, 2020

## **Downtown Redevelopment Objectives & Strategies**

### **B.1. Implement Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) zoning regulations and other controls that encourage redevelopment and permit compatible new development consistent with the recently completed Downtown Plan.**

Mixed-use zoning provides an opportunity to promote a range of compatible land uses within a specified area, foster a more walkable environment, and increase vibrancy and variety in the built environment. Zoning for a mixed-use zoning district should be consistent with the intent and character described in the Downtown Master Plan.

Putting in place zoning regulations that permit the type of development envisioned by the Downtown Master Plan is critical for encouraging/requiring the appropriate investments and helping to concentrate development in ways that support economic success in the downtown. Regulations should address changes to minimum lot size, setback, height, parking, and Floor to Area Ratio (FAR) requirements. It may also involve ensuring that the zoning ordinance is not so cumbersome that potential developers have difficulty understanding it.

- B.1.1. Adopt the proposed TND mixed-use zoning district regulations to promote new development that gradually brings about the reconfiguration envisioned for downtown. Carefully review the existing zoning ordinance to ensure any new TND regulations do not create conflicts with existing regulations.
- B.1.2. Amend the Zoning Map to add the boundaries of the proposed TND district at the time the new district it is adopted.
- B.1.3. Consider adopting building and site design guidelines for the downtown area, including more extensive landscape standards, sign standards and building façade requirements, such as a minimum amount of window (transparent) area on building façades.

### **B.2. Develop a comprehensive parking strategy for Downtown Fairview.**

The amount and location of parking is a critical component of a successful downtown. Transitioning to a more walkable downtown requires providing parking in strategic locations to encourage people to walk from one business to another rather than moving their car.

- B.2.1. Evaluate the current supply of parking in the downtown area. Update the Township's parking inventory to note the location, amount, type, and overall availability of parking in downtown compared to the parking needed to support existing and potential future businesses and residents while also encouraging a high-quality public realm.



- B.2.2. Conduct a cost/benefit analysis of creating public parking rather than requiring each property owner to provide on-site parking. Creating strategically located public parking is one of the best ways to foster redevelopment and creating a more walkable environment.
- B.2.3. A comprehensive parking strategy should consider a range of parking alternatives, explore funding options, and prioritize continued progress toward addressing parking needs. This recognizes the need to plan for long-term incremental change.

### **B.3. Pursue installation and funding for public improvements: roadway, utilities, and streetscape improvements.**

Ideally, a wholistic program to install all elements of the public infrastructure at the same time is most beneficial and least disruptive to all parties, including store owners, residents, patrons, and Township officials.

- B.3.1. Pursue water, sewer, and storm sewer utility improvements as well as right-of-way improvements as outlined in the Plan.
- B.3.2. Ensure adequate sidewalks are provided. Sidewalks are essential in promoting a walkable environment. When appropriately designed and located they provide safe and comfortable places for people to walk. Sidewalks should be designed of sufficient width to accommodate people of all ages and abilities. Sidewalks should include buffers to street traffic (such as adequate tree lawns and street trees). Improvements should be pursued as funding is available.

### **B.4. Encourage infill development on underutilized parcels in and adjacent to the downtown area.**

Infill development is the process of developing vacant or under-developed parcels within areas that are already largely developed, such the current downtown area. Instead of directing development outward, focusing on infill development in the downtown helps to create a denser, livelier environment that is more likely to attract residents, shoppers, and visitors.

- B.4.1. Consider establishing an infill incentive program (which could be in addition to a targeted LERTA program). Identify the types of incentives that are most likely to spur new infill development.
- B.4.2. Identify other ways the Township or potential partners can facilitate infill development and assist property owners in overcoming barriers. Traditional barriers to infill development include neighborhood opposition, inflexible codes, and difficulty assembling land. Potential ways to facilitate development include reduced fees and grants.

- B.4.3. Encourage new housing in and adjacent to Downtown to meet residential demand while helping to reduce pressure to build new housing developments in the more rural areas of the Township.

### **B.5. Continue to pursue grant funding for completing elements of the Downtown Plan.**

Once the Downtown Master Plan was completed, the Township embarked on a strategic initiative to obtain funding in phases. Since 2021, the Township has sought funding from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development's Multimodal Transportation Grant Program for the Highway 20 Corridor Improvements project.

Fortunately, the Township has both the financial and staffing capacity to pursue grants funding. Other sources of income noted by the Township include cash contributions provided by Liquid fuels tax, Act 13 impact fees, and other statutorily allocated fees/taxes paid directly to the municipality, and a PennDOT State Infrastructure bank loan to finance the local match.

- B.5.1. Continue the Township's strategic initiative to obtain funding in phases.
- B.5.2. Consider dedicating other sources of Township income and pursue additional sources for potential funding, such as cash contributions provided by Liquid fuels tax, Act 13 impact fees, and other statutorily allocated fees/taxes paid directly to the municipality, and a PennDOT State Infrastructure bank loan to finance the local match.

## **Goal C: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Foster a robust & sustainable economy through a range of development opportunities & a supportive climate for business investment.**

#### **Overview**

Industrial and commercial properties throughout Fairview are facing the pressures of the current post-COVID economy. Innovation to stay viable in today's market requires flexibility in the traditional norms that have been handed down from the past. Fairview wants to allow for these possibilities with one caveat – not at the expense of residents' quality of life. Slow, steady growth has worked well for Fairview thus far and should be pursued into the future.

There are two primary areas where new larger scale economic development can occur on commercially and industrially zoned parcels: along US 20 and at the I-90 (Exit 16) interchange, where the Fairview Business Park is located. Smaller sites/nodes zoned for neighborhood business are located at key intersections, such as the intersection of Manchester Road and W Lake Road (PA 5).

The Fairview Business Park includes property just north of I-90, Exit 16, on both sides of PA 98. It is the largest business park in Erie County. One of the Township's key economic development goals is encouraging continued development in the Fairview Business Park and ensuring that new development does not overwhelm local traffic. The business park has the necessary infrastructure in place to accommodate additional development. Being adjacent to I-90 makes the vacant sites easily accessible without adding traffic to local streets (assuming most traffic will utilize I-90 rather than traveling through the interior of the Township. Fairview Township recently amended the Industrial Park zoning to add government entities as permitted uses.

There are approximately 18 vacant parcels remaining in the business parks, mostly on the east side. The vacant parcels range in size from about 2 acres to nearly 33 acres. In mid-2023, the Erie County Executive sought to create a 150-acre business park on the south side of U.S. 20 across the street from Pleasant Ridge Manor, which would have straddled Fairview and Girard Townships. The County noted the need to create a large park that could offer 50-acre development sites, stating that the remaining sites at the Fairview Business Park were too small for modern industrial needs. After considerable opposition from residents and township officials, Erie County voted to abandon the plan.

Another notable event related to Fairview Business Park is the change in ownership. When the business park was first established in the mid-1990s, it was owned and managed by the Greater Erie Industrial Development Corp (GEIDC). After considerable growth in the first 10 years, interest in the park waned. Unfortunately, GEIDC filed for Chapter 7 liquidation in 2016 and was unable to continue to manage the business park. After the demise of GEIDC, all remaining vacant lots in Fairview Business Park were purchased by a private investor at a sheriff sale. The Township is optimistic that the change in ownership and management of the park will spur interest in the remaining vacant parcels.

## Economic Development Objectives & Strategies

### **C.1. Continue to encourage new commercial and light industrial development at the I-90 Interchange area.**

- C.1.1. Continue efforts to attract new development to Fairview Business Park. Fairview Business Park continues to be a valuable economic asset of the Township in a prime location with excellent access to I-90. Considerable new light industrial development has occurred since the 2012 Plan. It is important that the business park continues to attract new development that complements and enhances the Township and provides employment opportunities for residents. Commercial and light industrial uses continue to be the target businesses, as opposed to heavy industry. The Township looks forward to working with the new owner to reach full buildout of this important business park. See also the Future Land Use Plan.
- C.1.2. Encourage new business development south of the I-90 interchange where water and sewer service exist. The southwest quadrant of the I-90 / Route 98 Interchange is a priority growth site. The area is zoned for light industrial and highway commercial uses. Sanitary service includes a force main sanitary sewer under I-90, which extends south to Sterrettania Road and east along Market Road. Water service is available via an 8-inch water line extended under I-90. Additional expansion south of I-90 is planned over the next 20 years to create a loop, with water lines extending south along Sterrettania Road, east along Market Road and north along Platz Road extending northward under I-90, then west at Kreider Road to connect to exiting lines on Klier Drive. See also the Future Land Use Plan.

### **C.2. Promote new economic growth that emulates successful developments in the area, encourages a more diversified economic base, and increases local jobs.**

- C.2.1. Continue to recruit new businesses to the Township, concentrating on expanding the range of business sectors to increase diversity. As noted earlier, approximately 40% of jobs in the Township are in the manufacturing sector and only about 12% of employed residents work at a local business.
- C.2.2. Develop economic incentive policies and programs to stimulate the desired type of economic development.
- C.2.3. Promote phase two development at Fairview Business Park and the existing development incentives, including the Tax-Free Keystone Opportunity Zone and LERTA. Most of the vacant parcels in the business park were recently acquired by a new private-sector owner. This should lead to increased marketing efforts to attract new development.

- C.2.4. Consider creating a website with economic development related information, including community/demographic data, information on any available incentives (whether offered by the Township or others), and links to other entities that provide incentives. For example, Erie County's economic development website has a page titled "Why Choose Erie County PA for your Business Expansions, Relocation or Start-up?" The website includes a community profile with statistics such as the education levels of residents, which is the kind of information that does not require frequent updates.

### **C.3. Promote new retail development in locations that serve densely developed neighborhoods.**

- C.3.1. Identify logical growth areas on the Future Land Use/Growth Area maps. Identify areas that may be suitable, but are not currently zoned for commercial, and consider rezoning, especially areas that are already served by utilities.
- C.3.2. Work with landowners to market available sites.

## **Goal D: TRANSPORTATION**

### **Expand Mobility Options & Transportation Network.**

#### **Overview**

A sound Transportation Plan is necessary for the efficient operation of the Township and to provide essential links to the overall regional system to support daily life. It is also needed to preserve the qualities that Fairview Township residents enjoy.

The existing transportation network provides numerous east-west travel options, but fewer north-south connections. Previous plans have advocated for new north-south connections, but none have occurred. One of the major impediments to north-south travel is the limited number of connections across I-90; there are only two, Avonia Road (PA 98) and Franklin Road.

This Plan incorporates the recommendations from various sources, including the Erie County 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan, the 2020 Downtown Master Plan and the 2023 Corridor Study, a multimodal transportation plan for the greater Downtown area including the Avonia Road corridor between I-90 and Downtown.

Fairview Township retained Whitman, Requardt & Associates to complete a Corridor Study and develop a multimodal transportation plan with recommendations for transportation improvements within the downtown stretch of Fairview and surrounding areas. The recommendations focus on four subjects/plan goals: improving operations/reducing congestion, supporting growth, improving roadway safety, and improving quality of life. The Plan includes short-, medium-, and long-term concepts that address current concerns and accommodate future growth. The need for this corridor study was noted in the Erie County 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan as the "PA 98 Corridor Relief Study recommended in the Township's 2012 Comprehensive Plan."

### **Transportation Objectives & Strategies**

#### **D.1. Implement the transportation improvements recommended in the Corridor Study and the Downtown Master Plan.**

Below is a summary of the recommended improvements, listed in order of priority noted in the Corridor Study. See the report for visual depictions of the improvements plus additional commentary on potential funding sources, likely timeframe for construction, and estimated cost.

- D.1.1. Install a roundabout at the McCray Road / Buckingham Place intersection with Avonia Road (PA 98).
- D.1.2. Install a roundabout in Downtown at the W Ridge Road (U.S. 20) and Water Street intersection.
- D.1.3. Realign Old Ridge Road at the east end of Downtown to create a 90-degree intersection with W Ridge Road (U.S. 20).



- D.1.4. Reconfigure the curb radius at the Avonia Road (PA 98) and Water Street intersection to minimize roadside collisions. Consider adding a signal in the future if one becomes warranted.
- D.1.5. Install a marginal access road north of U.S. 20 at the west end of the Township to service the Pleasant Ridge Manor and PHB, with a single access point to U.S. 20 across from Dobler Road. This would enable consolidation of drives, improve access control, and provide for safer turning movements. This requires widening U.S. 20 to accommodate the turning lanes. This recommendation was also noted in Fairview Township's 2012 Plan. The Erie County 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan notes a study should be conducted to evaluate the need for a signal for this new intersection, however, the Long-Range Plan does not rank or fund the study.
- D.1.6. Improve the main Downtown intersection (W Ridge Road (U.S. 20) and Avonia Road (PA 98)) by installing an optimized signal to improve traffic flow and reconfiguring the curb radius to improve truck turns and reduce collisions.
- D.1.7. Restripe U.S. 20 to calm traffic, otherwise known as a "road diet." This involves reducing the current four-lane road configuration to three-lanes, with one travel lane in each direction and a center two-way left turn lane. This is consistent with the recommendation in the Downtown Master Plan to slow down traffic in Downtown Fairview.

The following recommendation from the Downtown Master Plan includes improvements to make the area more walkable and pedestrian friendly.

- D.1.8. Construct transportation enhancements along U.S. 20 from Old Ridge Road to Linda Avenue and at the intersection of Avonia Road (PA 98) and Chestnut Street. *These improvements are included in Erie County's 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and noted as fully funded.*

The project includes streetscape enhancements such as decorative pavement, decorative pedestrian lighting, and street trees. Also included are ADA-compliant pedestrian ramps, storm drainage infrastructure, and intersection improvements. This project is ranked #4 in the County's plan, with funding for the preliminary engineering for the fiscal term 2027-2032 and funding for the Final Engineering, Right-of-way, Utilities and Construction for the fiscal term 2033-2050. It is also noted as a regionally significant project.

## **D.2. Maintain a safe and efficient transportation network.**

- D.2.1. Realign W Lake Road (PA 5) at Hardscrabble Intersection (golfer crossing). *This project is included in Erie County's 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan and noted as fully funded.* It involves realigning PA 5 at Hardscrabble Boulevard to come to a 90-degree intersection to improve line of sight, safety, and traffic operations. Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) will be added for safety of crossing pedestrians and golf carts. This project

is ranked #23 in the County's plan, with funding for the project earmarked for the fiscal term 2033-2050.

- D.2.2. Address traffic problems at key intersections. The following are locations that were identified by residents (via the Township Citizens Survey or at public meetings) as presenting potential safety issues. Once the Township Engineer evaluates the locations, those locations merited for further investigation should be grouped for a traffic study.
  - ❖ Bear Creek Road and W Ridge Road (U.S. 20), for westbound traffic.
  - ❖ Franklin Rd/ Linda Ave and W Ridge Road (U.S. 20).
- D.2.3. Encourage a second means of access in existing subdivisions that currently only have one, such as Brandy Run, Olde Ridge, The Commons, and Walnut Heights. This list includes subdivisions that have stub streets that enable street extensions.
- D.2.4. Upgrade Avonia Road from W Lake Road (PA 5) northward to Lake Erie. The Township now owns this segment of Avonia Road. The road needs improved drainage, widened road surface and stabilized berms to accommodate a bike trail. Under the TurnBack Program with PennDOT these items will be taken care of. The Turnback Program is a cooperative and voluntary program between PennDOT and municipal governments. The objective of the Turnback Program is to transfer the ownership of state-owned roads that are better suited to local government purposes. This includes roads that have low average daily traffic or would benefit the municipality both socially and economically.<sup>4</sup>
- D.2.5. Study the merits of installing a continuous center turn lane in various locations along W Ridge Road (U.S. 20), between Millfair to Manchester, which includes Creamland Drive-In (6221 W Ridge Road).
- D.2.6. Re-establish pavement markings after repaving (recommended by Erie County 2050 Long Range Plan).

### **D.3. Modernize the I-90/SR-98 interchange and improve traffic flow along the SR-98 corridor.**

The I-90/SR-98 interchange (Exit 16) is an important entryway into the Township. This area, including the Avonia Road (SR 98) corridor north to Downtown, is where much of the recent and proposed developments are located. Avonia Road (SR 98) provides access to Fairview Business Park (East and West) and to the Fairview Schools campus. Improving this corridor was one of the focuses of the 2023 Corridor Study.

- D.3.1. Develop access management guidelines. While traffic congestion is generally limited to a small segment of PA 98, new development along this corridor is challenged by this problem. Access management guidelines for cars can help to improve thru-traffic movement and enhance safety on

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.penndot.pa.gov/Doing-Business/LocalGovernment/TurnbackProgram/Documents/Highway\\_Transfer\\_Program\\_Fact\\_Sheet.pdf#:~:text=The%20Turnback%20Program%20is%20a%20cooperative%20and%20voluntary,that%20are%20better%20suited%20to%20local%20government%20purposes.](https://www.penndot.pa.gov/Doing-Business/LocalGovernment/TurnbackProgram/Documents/Highway_Transfer_Program_Fact_Sheet.pdf#:~:text=The%20Turnback%20Program%20is%20a%20cooperative%20and%20voluntary,that%20are%20better%20suited%20to%20local%20government%20purposes.)

busy corridors. Guidelines often focus on the spacing between signalized intersections and driveways and creating turning lanes and medians among other interventions.

#### **D.4. Improve connectivity in the Township's overall transportation network.**

Create new roads and extend existing streets to provide more connections and ease traffic congestion on main corridors. This includes extending various streets, as recommended in the 2012 Plan as well as establishing policies to ensure new large-scale development increases connectivity.

- D.4.1. **Extend Fairfield Road westward to Dobler Road.** This entails constructing approximately one-half mile of road. This will improve east-west travel, provide emergency detour for Downtown traffic, and improve the connection between Pleasant Ridge Park and the broader community.
- D.4.2. **Extend Eaton Road southward to U.S. 20.** As suggested in the 1998 Plan, extending Eaton Road southward would provide another north-south access road from PA 5 to U.S. 20 between Avonia Road and Dutch Road. This would involve constructing approximately 1,600 feet of new roadway between Old Ridge and U.S. 20. Avonia and Dutch are about two miles apart, so this would provide local residents more convenient access, but should not be designed for truck traffic. The extension would also benefit the public water system by providing the opportunity to connect water mains between W Lake Road (PA 5) and U.S. 20 service areas. Consequently, the right-of-way for this road should be wide enough to accommodate the proposed water line loop. Also, it should line up with the recommended Platz Road Extension noted below.
- D.4.3. **Extend Platz Road northward to U.S. 20.** This would provide an alternate north-south route midway between Bear Creek Road and Avonia Road (which are nearly 2 miles apart). This would involve constructing approximately 4,700 feet of new roadway. However, there are challenges because of the considerable length of new roadway and the area is noted as having extensive wetlands.

The Platz Road extension would provide a good central access point to U.S. 20 and could alleviate some traffic along Avonia Road. The terminus of Platz Road on U.S. 20 should form an intersection with the proposed Eaton Road extension. A traffic light at this intersection is recommended. This road extension increases the importance of reconstructing the Platz Road bridge over I-90 to carry traffic south to Sterrettania Road.

D.4.4. Develop a policy and/or regulations to address developments lacking more than one point of access. Consider amending the subdivision regulations to:

- (1) Prohibit cul-de-sacs unless a through road is not feasible (currently the subdivision regulations permit a cul-de-sac if a through street is “not essential” to the subdivision’s street system);
- (2) Limit the number of lots that can be served by a single access point for the initial phases of a multi-phased subdivision; and
- (3) For phased subdivisions, require the second access be constructed once the number of lots platted reaches the established limit. Multiple access points for larger subdivisions provide several benefits: greater convenience for residents, more effective police and fire protection, and increased efficiency of road maintenance.

This recommendation was included in the 2012 to address both public safety and traffic issues. The subdivision regulations note that new subdivisions will be “generally required” to include street connections into and from adjacent areas – which places the burden on the developer of the adjacent property. The problem occurs in the uncertainty of when, if ever, the neighboring property will be developed.

## **D.5. Encourage multi-modal transportation, including bike trails, pedestrian ways.**

A well designed, robust multimodal transportation system is important for recreation, tourism, and providing mode choice for travel. Bike trails, sidewalks, and other pedestrian ways, collectively referred to as “active transportation” can improve health and well-being through exercise. For bicyclists and pedestrians, infrastructure can include sidewalks, trails, bicycle lanes, or wide shoulders to provide accessibility and mobility options. Providing more connections for residents and visitors to conveniently access local recreational destinations is also beneficial for tourism and residents’ quality of life.

- D.5.1. Continue to evaluate the existing sidewalk network to identify maintenance needs and gaps in the sidewalk system. Connections between residential subdivisions and parks, the schools, and other key destinations should be a priority.
- D.5.2. Continue to work with developers to install sidewalks connecting the Fairview School Campus to residential developments east of the campus.
- D.5.3. Explore “Safe Routes to School” funding to help connect the schools to neighborhoods via sidewalks and multi-use paths.
- D.5.4. Continue to require new developments, redevelopment, and infill development to construct or otherwise pay for extensions to or expansion of multi-use pathways and/or sidewalks, and/or connections to regional trails, regardless of location or density of the development. For example, a connection to one of the two regional bike trails with routes through

Fairview Township could qualify, (see Figure 9, below, from the 2020 Erie County Parks and Recreation Plan (P&RP)). The 2020 Erie County P&RP advocates that even rural areas should have these amenities, noting that during the development of the plan, “numerous residents from rural areas voiced concerns about having access to a “safe” place to walk and bicycle. Rural roads are often unpaved, with inadequate berm area to safely support pedestrians and bicyclists.” In addition, improving bike routes is a priority in the Erie County Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

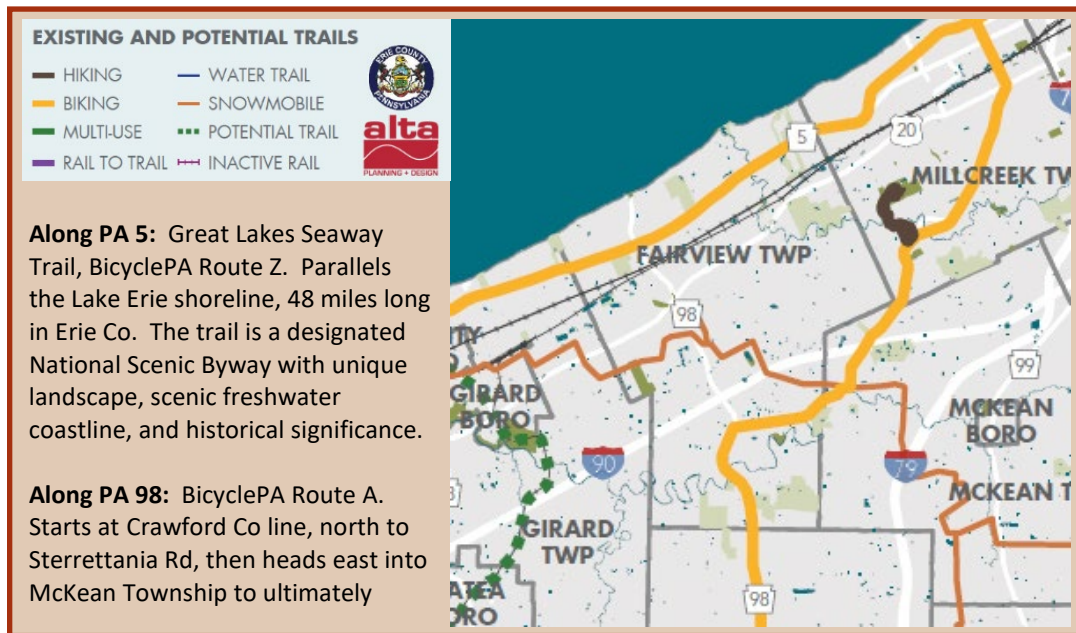


Figure 9. Existing and Potential Trails.

Excerpt from Erie County Parks, Trails + Recreation Plan, 2020, page 28.

**D.6. Work with Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority to improve bus services to those areas of the Township that will support it.**

Currently, daily and weekend transit service in Fairview is provided by two routes of the Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority (EMTA).

- ❖ Bus Route 29 - follows U.S. 20 from Downtown Erie and terminates at the Institute of Medical & Business Careers complex, just west of Millfair Road.
- ❖ Bus Route 31 Frontier - provides service from W 4th to the Institute for Medical & Business Careers to Lincoln Library and Erie International Airport.

The following additional routes provide weekday service at a lower frequency:

- ❖ Bus Route 32 Westlake – provides weekday service only from Downtown Erie along West Lake Road to the Institute for Medical & Business Careers, Lincoln Library, and Erie International Airport.
- ❖ Bus Route 229 Fairview – provides limited weekday service (three trips) from the Downtown Erie Intermodal Transit Center with stops at Fairview Industrial Park, Matrix Tools, and Grimm Industries.
- ❖ Bus Route 12 Albion - provides limited east-west service between Downtown Erie and Albion, along W Ridge Rd with one stop in Fairview. This service only runs between Monday and Friday, with just two buses per day.

- D.6.1. From a standpoint of employment potential for local businesses and alternate travel opportunities for residents, Township officials should explore with EMTA the potential of a route extension to service additional locations in Fairview Township as the population and employment increases.



## **Goal E: PUBLIC SERVICES**

**Provide appropriate public utilities & quality public amenities to accommodate desirable growth.**

### **Overview**

This goal includes recommendations for improving and enhancing the Township's wide range of public utilities and public facilities. This includes recommendations for expanding water and sewer services to accommodate new development in the proposed growth areas identified in the Future Land Use Plan.

Providing quality public services are important for both residents and business, as too are quality parks and recreation facilities. In addition, studies show that access to parks, recreation amenities and trails provides direct benefits to citizens' overall health and wellness. High quality services and amenities, including cultural facilities (i.e., museums) and water access, are also important tourist generators.

### **Public Services Objectives & Strategies**

**E.1. Continue to follow Fairview Sewer Authority priorities as set forth by the Act 537 Plan.**

**E.2. Facilitate utility improvements to increase interconnectedness that helps minimize the need to expand the water and sanitary sewer systems.**

- E.2.1. Encourage new development to locate in areas where utilities exist or are easily accessible.
- E.2.2. Build a water utility connection between the PA 5 and U.S. 20 service area, in connection with the recommended proposed Eaton Road extension, in coordination with the Fairview Water Authority.

**E.3. Support expansion of the utilities to service targeted growth areas not currently served.**

- E.3.1. Continue to coordinate with the Fairview Sewer and Water Authorities on planned service area expansions, especially in the Fairview Village area to support increased development.
- E.3.2. Continue to develop new groundwater sources in coordination with the Water Authority.
- E.3.3. Continue the policy of not funding public water or sewer projects in Rural Resource Areas. Any development in Rural Resource Areas will not be supported by public funding or grants.

- E.3.4. Continue proactive actions to address stormwater management, including upgrading the storm sewer system along U.S. 20 through Downtown Fairview as part of the planned Downtown Revitalization upgrades.

**E.4. Provide for the health and safety of citizens by continuing to support and invest in Fire Prevention and Protection and provide for Ambulances and Rescue and Life Saving Services.**

The merger of Fairview Fire & Rescue and Lake Shore Fire Department is expected to be finalized by 2025. The newly formed Fairview – Lake Shore Fire Department will look to capitalize on consolidated manpower, pooled resources, and municipal aid to continue to secure the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the Township. Future investments in equipment and apparatus will be made based on the needs of the entire Township instead of being limited by service area boundaries. The merged fire company will utilize two ambulances and paid Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) to provide year-round Basic Life Support (BLS) services twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week. As needed, Fairview Township will budget annually to underwrite the cost of readiness, which is the leased staffing.

In January 2024, Fairview Township joined the Boroughs of Girard, Lake City, and Platea and the Townships of Girard and Springfield to take over governance of West County Paramedic Association (WCPA). Having been governed by eight western Erie County fire companies, including Fairview Fire & Rescue and Lake Shore Fire Department, since its inception, WCPA struggled to remain solvent without municipal aid. Sustainability in the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) industry has become increasingly more difficult. As a licensed Advanced Life Support (ALS) provider, WCPA provides a service that volunteer fire departments are unable to offer. In addition, the paid EMTs utilized by Fairview – Lake Shore Fire Department are leased through West County Paramedic Association, making the organization's survival vital to Fairview Township. Possible future Fire & EMS goals include:

- E.4.1. Construct a new fire station within municipal boundaries to replace Station 50 at 5310 West Lake Road (in Millcreek Township).
- E.4.2. Build a new fire station south of Interstate 90.
- E.4.3. Turn over BLS service to West County Paramedic Association (contingent upon municipal members attaining and maintaining solvency) while preserving the presence of ambulances at Stations 50, 52, and 53.
- E.4.4. Implement a fire tax or an EMS tax, or both if needed.

**E.5. Work with Internet Service Providers to expand broadband to all areas of Fairview Township.**

High quality, fast and reliable internet service is critical for all aspects of society. Households and business with poor or no service suffered greatly when the COVID-19 pandemic forced teleworking and remote learning as a means to curtail in-person interaction. An exhaustive internal study conducted in 2023 identified 68 properties in

the Township that were unserved (less than 25 Mbps downstream and 3 Mbps upstream) or underserved (less than 100 Mbps downstream and 20 Mbps upstream).

With the assistance of Cohen Law Group, a Request For Qualifications: Broadband Expansion and Deployment (RFQ) was issued in April 2023. Charter Communications (Spectrum) and Velocity Network (VNET) responded, and the detailed information within the RFQ was included in their Countywide applications to Pennsylvania's COVID-19 ARPA Capital Projects Fund Broadband Infrastructure Program.

- E.5.1. Continue to support the efforts of Charter Communications and Velocity Network to obtain funding from other sources in the event Erie County fails to be awarded in the first round of funding from the Commonwealth. Additional funding sources include, but are not limited to the federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program.

#### **E.6. Continue to upgrade and enhance the recreational amenities at Fairview Township parks as demand dictates and funding allows.**

Fairview Township's six public parks, with a total of 130 acres, provide a variety of recreation opportunities. The Fairview Parks and Recreation Department has identified a number of projects that could be undertaken by the Township over the next 10 years to enhance the facilities to serve the entire Township:

- E.6.1. Upgrade **Flag Park**, with the goal of providing a connection to Pleasant Ridge Park. Recommended improvements include:
  - ❖ Install a Veterans Memorial around the flagpole, in coordination with Fairview Legion.
  - ❖ Construct amenities such as:
    - Multipurpose trail,
    - Public restrooms,
    - Open air pavilion, and
    - Soccer field in the southern part of the park.
  - ❖ Expand the existing parking lot to increase the number of parking spaces.
  - ❖ Plant trees.
  - ❖ Evaluate the possibility of constructing an amphitheater.
- E.6.2. Continue to make improvements to **Pleasant Ridge Park**. Recommended improvements include:
  - ❖ Restructure the softball fields to create 3 full size fields.
    - Move field 3 to the northeast corner to mirror field 2.
    - Consider installing two to three youth soccer fields.
  - ❖ Pickleball courts
  - ❖ Improve the disc golf course:
    - Redesign the course layout.
    - Cement the tee pads.

- ❖ Install a multipurpose trail around the sports fields and pavilion, with the ultimate goal of having trail connections to the school campus and Flag Park.
  - ❖ Add stone material on trails to eliminate muddy/wet spots.
  - ❖ Install additional parking spaces along Barker Road.
- E.6.3. Continue to make improvements to **Avonia Beach Park**, such as:
- ❖ Install a public restroom.
  - ❖ Renovate Brugger House.
  - ❖ Install ADA accessibility to the beach.
- E.6.4. Potential improvements to **Struchen Flats Park**, such as:
- ❖ Upgrade the parking area: remove the trees in the middle of the area and create a more defined area for cars to park.
  - ❖ Create a hiking trail system in the wooded portion of the park, lay material down on the trail to eliminate muddy/wet spots.

### **E.7. Continue to support improvements to recreational resources within the Township to meet the needs of residents.**

Recreation programs for Fairview are operated jointly through an intergovernmental agreement between Fairview School District and the Township, under the direction of the Township's Recreation Board. The agreement ensures the physical resources of both entities are available to Township residents. As noted in the Background section, the Fairview Recreation Board is comprised of members appointed by both bodies and oversees several activities throughout the year.

As noted in the 2012 Plan, each community is unique when it comes to meeting residents' recreational needs, especially in relation to the desirable amount of parkland and types of recreational facilities such as ballfields and tennis courts verses pickleball courts and disc golf. Yet, there is a continuing need in the Township to maintain and often enhance the recreational facilities to meet the health and recreation needs of residents.

- E.7.1. Utilize the per-lot recreation fee charged for new development per the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to provide additional amenities for the Fairview parks system. Periodically review the fee and update as needed.
- E.7.2. Continue to periodically conduct a Parks and Recreation Survey in concert with the School District and Recreation Board to increase the Township's understanding of residents' needs and desires as well as where enhancements and improvements can be made and if there are any barriers to need to be addressed.
- E.7.3. Identify and remove access barriers to parks, trails, and recreation opportunities. Barriers can include lack of recreation facilities within walking or biking distance, lack of sidewalks, as well as poorly maintained and deteriorated sidewalks. See also multi-modal strategies in Objective D.5., under the Transportation goal.

## **Goal F: PRESERVATION**

### **Maintain, preserve, & enhance Fairview Township's unique character, rural identity, & natural/historic resources.**

#### **Overview**

Fairview Township has a distinctive combination of historic small village character, rural agricultural areas, notable scenic waterways, and, north of I-90, a variety of residential neighborhoods and developments at various densities. Preserving and maintaining the natural environment and enhancing the built environments that make Fairview Township unique are key to ensuring that the Township is a place with lasting value, one in which residents can take pride.

### **Preservation Objectives & Strategies**

#### **F.1. Promote the preservation/conservation of critical natural areas, concentrations of large, wooded areas and other important environmental resources.**

The environmental constraints map highlights the areas with steep slopes, floodplain, wetlands, and bluffs, while the tree canopy map and aerial photo showcases areas of dense foliage. Based on this analysis, natural areas within the Township that have significant environmental value and/or require special management warrant specific attention, such as steep slopes (slopes 15% and greater), wetlands, riparian areas, land within the 100-year floodplain and densely wooded areas.

Careful management of growth and development is essential to protect the integrity of the area's natural systems that support human and wildlife need, such as identifying and conserving open space and natural areas that make up the scenic, environmentally sensitive, and natural resources of Fairview Township.

The Township already has good protection for flood plain and coastal bluff areas in the zoning ordinance with the current A-3 Conservation District (bluff setback area and floodplain ordinance). Planned Unit Development regulations are another common method for fostering land preservation. Over the years, the Township Planning Commission and Township Supervisors have discussed the pros and cons of adopting PUD zoning regulations and have determined that PUD cluster regulations would not achieve the low-density housing character found throughout the Township.

The following are additional measures that could be considered.

- F.1.1. Continue to assist in the enforcement of riparian and wetland setback requirements to protect stream corridors and significant wetland areas from the encroachment of development. Riparian setbacks help achieve the EPA's water quality goals. Requiring property owners to maintain a natural buffer around wetlands helps minimize runoff, pollution, and sedimentation.

- F.1.2. Continue to raise awareness and support other entities' efforts to obtain open space funding for the acquisition of natural areas for conservation.
- F.1.3. Follow environmental best management practices (BMPs) for publicly owned property and encourage private property owners to do the same (this is especially important for forest management). Some BMPs to encourage include:
  - ❖ Allow forested habitats to achieve and maintain old growth conditions.
  - ❖ Avoid fragmenting existing forested areas with additional buildings or infrastructure.
  - ❖ Leave fallen trees in place to help provide habitat, soil nutrients, and humus.
  - ❖ Limit trail construction along the top of tributary gorges.
  - ❖ Control and prevent the spread of invasive species.
  - ❖ Encourage connectivity between habitat patches and maintenance of natural corridors that connect forests, wetlands, and waterways is of critical importance for many species.
- F.1.4. Encourage preservation and conservation of privately owned critical natural areas within the Township. Increase public awareness of conservation organizations and options such as conservation easements, lease and management easements, and potential land acquisition by a conservation organization.
- F.1.5. Continue to require via zoning new residential and business construction to concentrate in areas where development already exists and utilities are readily available, including infill development in the Downtown area.

## **F.2. Maintain and enhance Fairview's unique character.**

Introduce new methods of beautification and landscaping that are consistent with historical development patterns in Fairview.

- F.2.1. Consider adopting design standards to ensure all development is aesthetically pleasing and retains Fairview's unique qualities.
- F.2.2. Adopt modern, increased landscaping requirements in ordinances.
- F.2.3. Develop ordinances requiring screening of visual nuisances and distractions.
- F.2.4. Continue to work with developers on the installation of trees in commercial and industrial developments
- F.2.5. Develop and implement policies related to streets trees in residential subdivisions, such as identifying specific types of trees.
- F.2.6. Continue to assist residents in accessing funding and grant resources for property maintenance and beautification.



### **F.3. Conserve Fairview's historic and cultural resources.**

The Plan policy is to have historic initiatives be left to the property owners, rather than an imposition from the Township. Currently, one of the two sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places is already in the hands of the Historic Society.

- F.3.1. Continue informal support of the Township's historic resources, especially the Sturgeon House.
- F.3.2. Continue to support downtown revitalization, per the Fairview Downtown Plan. According to the community survey conducted for the 2017 Erie County Cultural Heritage Plan, preservation of main streets and business districts ranked third as the places that are most important to the cultural heritage of the County.

### **F.4. Continue to promote agriculture production and preservation.**

- F.4.1. Add agritourism as a special exception use in the A-1 Rural District, with minimum requirements such farm size (e.g., 10 acres) and road frontage (e.g., 500 feet) to reduce the potential impact on adjacent landowners. Currently, agritourism is permitted only in A-2 Agrarian District, which is located south of I-90. There are several large agricultural areas north of I-90 that are zoned A-1, including areas north of PA 5, which are more easily accessible to tourists traveling along W Lake Road (PA 5), which is part of the Great Lakes Seaway Trail.
- F.4.2. Continue to monitor/review farmers' use of the existing agritourism ordinances and update as needed to ensure regulations for rural ag-related businesses, including event centers and wineries, adequately protect both the agricultural operation as well as adjacent properties.
- F.4.3. Promote the Agriculture Securities Area designation.

### **F.5. Increase promotion of the Township's natural and cultural assets to increase tourism and support/diversify the local economy.**

Fairview Township has many natural and cultural assets that attract visitors. Research shows that successful tourism promotion can have a positive impact on other areas of the local economy, including job creation.

- F.5.1. Highlight local tourist attractions on the Township's website. The tourism industry is often driven by outdoor attractions and recreation activities. In addition to allowances for agritourism noted above, Fairview Township has several other assets that attract visitors and help support local businesses, including:
  - ❖ W Lake Road (PA 5), which is part of the Great Lakes Seaway Trail, a National Scenic Byway designated in 2005.

- ❖ Historic landmarks, such as the Sturgeon House, home to the Fairview Area Historical Society.
  - ❖ Nationally recognized fishing access points and hot spots including:
    - Walnut Creek Marina, a public boat ramp that provides charter boat services and boating/fishing access to Lake Erie.
    - Walnut Creek.
    - Elk Creek, including Sterrettania access to Elk Creek.
    - Struchen Flats Park Access.
    - Fairview Gravel Pit Access.
    - Flag Park.
  - ❖ Township parks that draw from beyond the Township (in addition to the Township parks noted above for fishing access):
    - Avonia Beach Park.
    - Pleasant Ridge Park.
  - ❖ Golf courses and driving ranges.
- F.5.2. Consider creating a wayfinding system to help highlight landmarks and destinations. For example, Fairview's portion of the Great Lakes Seaway Trail follows PA 5, and wayfinding signage at major intersections such as Avonia Road, PA 98, could help direct visitor traffic to Downtown and other local destinations.
- F.5.3. Consider a branding campaign.

## Goal G: LAND USE

### Promote well-planned, location-appropriate growth and preservation via the Future Land Use Plan.

#### Overview

One primary purpose of a comprehensive plan is to provide context and consistency to a community's funding plans and land use regulations. The ideas in the comprehensive plan are to be reflected, ideally, in the community's zoning and other ordinances, but such ordinances are relatively inflexible: they simply ask the question, "Does this proposed change meet the standard?" rather than considering the cumulative effect of changes in the community. **The latter consideration is one of the major roles of the comprehensive plan, which then helps guide necessary changes in the community's land use regulations.** Reviewing changes to existing land uses is the best way to review and monitor the cumulative effects of development.

#### Existing Land Use

To develop a Future Land Use Plan, an analysis of past development patterns is appropriate. A close look has been taken at what has materialized in Fairview Township since the 2012 Plan Update. Below is a summary of changes that have occurred based on a comparison of the existing land use maps of the two previous background plans: those being from 1996 and 2010, respectively. From this map review, generalizations about future development can be made.

#### Residential Development

The biggest change in Fairview's land use over the past fourteen years is residential. This has occurred in four types of development:

- ❖ Random homes on large lots in rural areas. Some are 'farmettes' with accommodations for horses; others are large-lot rural (often 'estate') homes.
- ❖ Infill on vacant lots within existing residential developments, such as The Commons, Manchester Farms, Olde Ridge, and locations where new sanitary sewers have been installed, such as along Miller Road and Kell Road.
- ❖ New subdivisions such as Bear Run, Brandy Run, Stoneridge, Mill Stone, Pine Grove, Swanville Place and Evergreen Farms.
- ❖ A significant number of multi-family housing was constructed, with many developments offering "empty nesters," young professionals, as well as smaller families, housing with limited or no maintenance. Places such as Buckingham Place, Fairview Landings, Turtle Creek, Swanville Apartments, the Village at Walnut Creek, Elizabeth Lane Townhomes, and The Hammocks at Fairview.

## Commercial Development

Based on the 2012 Existing Land Use Plan, commercial development showed the least change, and as noted in the 2012 Plan, there continues to be little increase in “neighborhood” business developments envisioned at the few nodes currently zoned B-1 Neighborhood Business.

## Industrial Development

Industrial development has been quite vigorous over the intervening years. This is particularly true with Fairview Business Park (East and West), which has seen steady development over the last decade. This has been a good example of industrial development creating a visual as well as economic asset. Room for more development within this business park is adequate for the next few years. In addition, Fairview has experienced light industrial development along Middle Road and Blair Road.

## Agriculture

The primary agricultural land in Fairview is located south of I-90. However, there are parcels throughout most of the Township that are used agriculturally. Some of these sectors are developed in general crop farming, while others are fields used by Fairview Evergreen Nurseries. One important consideration discussed in the 2012 Plan was the newly adopted state laws designed to protect farming. The Pennsylvania “Right to Farm” legislation led to amendments to the Township’s land use ordinance. Further complicating the issue was the fact that many of the parcels being actively farmed had residential developments next to them.

Erie County’s Agricultural Land Preservation Program offers two programs to encourage agriculture. The Agricultural Conservation Easements program financially incentivizes landowners to make a long-term commitment to agriculture. Erie County government uses federal, state and county funds to purchase permanent Agricultural Conservation Easements on private property which restricts further development in order to preserve the property for agricultural use. Landowners retain private ownership of the property and may still use, lease, or sell the property, though any new owner must abide by the terms of the easement. While this program guarantees farmland will remain farmland, very few farms in Fairview Township have participated: only 132 acres in the Township are protected with a permanent agricultural conservation easement.

The Agricultural Security Areas (ASAs) program was established by Erie County as another method for protecting agricultural land in active farming operations. The voluntary program allows landowners to enroll their properties or remove them from an ASA at any time. The rules for an Agricultural Security Area require a minimum area of 250 acres owned by one or more persons and the land must be engaged in the production of crops, livestock, or livestock products.<sup>5</sup> Once designated, normal agricultural activities are exempt from local nuisance ordinances (such as those that involve noise, dust, or odors). Several Fairview Township landowners have enrolled over 2,130 acres in the ASA program since 1994, though the last ASA acreage enrolled was in 2014.

## Old Fairview Borough

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan addressed some land use concerns to revitalize the central portion of Fairview Township known as the old Fairview Borough. Because of state building code regulations, the idea of allowing multiple uses within an area that was primarily made up of older dwellings did not

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<sup>5</sup> Agricultural Security Areas, Erie County Planning and Community Development: <https://eriecountypa.gov/departments/planning-and-community-development/programs/agricultural-land-preservation/>

facilitate expansion as planned. As a result, the Township Planning Commission and governing body worked with a consultant to create a Downtown Master Plan, see a discussion of the Downtown on page 24 for more details. The plan also endorses creating a new zoning district to encourage the envisioned land uses, building configurations, landscaping and signage that will create a more walkable and vibrant downtown.

### **Implications for the updated Future Land Use Map**

To a large extent the Future Land Use Map of 1998 remains valid, although adjustments are warranted to account for recent development, changing demographics and business practices and recent downtown planning efforts.

This Plan fully realizes that all types of growth—residential, agricultural, commercial, and industrial—are primarily the result of private-sector decisions, based upon market needs and costs, not a plan. However, this Plan serves as a guide for property owners, developers and Township officials when evaluating the appropriateness of the private sector’s proposed development. It is also important to stress that these areas were selected as logical extensions of past patterns and not as an “official” endorsement of any specific development on any particular property.

The Future Land Use Map illustrates desired development patterns utilizing the Township Zoning Map as the base. The Future Land Use Map is similar to past plans, with some changes:

- ❖ Important environmental areas are identified and are protected via the A-3 Conservation District.
- ❖ Traffic concerns are of the utmost importance.
- ❖ Based on concerns related to the increase in multi-family development concentrated in small areas of the Township, the Township amended the zoning map to reduce the amount of land zoned R-3 Multi Residential, much of which was concentrated along Avonia Road (PA 98) between I-90 and Downtown.
- ❖ Future light industrial development should emulate the standards of the Fairview Business Park.
- ❖ A mixed-use district of both commercial and light industrial remains appropriate for the eastern end of U.S. 20.
- ❖ With the creation of a Downtown Master Plan (which identifies key public and private improvements and a funding strategy for implementing the Plan), and guidance from the recently completed Corridor Study (which recommends specific traffic improvements), the Township has made considerable progress in creating a more walkable Downtown. The next step is to adopt a new zoning district with appropriate use standards, development standards and design review criteria to guide private property improvements.

### **Zoning and Land Use Analysis**

To better understand the zoning ordinance and its role in good land use planning, the following overview is presented. A more detailed discussion of current zoning is found in the Background Report.

### Current Zoning

The twelve zoning districts currently used in Fairview Township and reflected on the Fairview Township Zoning Map (last updated 2022) are described below, including a summary of the types of uses permitted.

A-1 Rural: Essentially a low-density rural residential and limited farmland district.

A-2 Agrarian: Rural residential and full agriculture use.

A-3 Conservation: Essentially the floodplain and Coastal/Bluff Hazard Area.

R-1 Village: Single-family dwellings with complementary and accessory uses permitted. Churches, parks, playgrounds, forestry and by special exception; educational and philanthropic uses, bed and breakfast inns and family day care.

R-2 Suburban Single: Single-family dwellings with complementary and accessory uses permitted. Churches, parks, playgrounds, municipal buildings, public libraries, fire/police stations and by special exception; educational and philanthropic uses, bed and breakfast inns and family day care.

R-3 Suburban Multi: Single-family and multi-family dwellings with complementary and accessory uses permitted. Churches, parks, playgrounds, municipal buildings, public libraries, fire/police stations and by special exception; educational and philanthropic uses, group homes, bed and breakfast inns and family day care.

B-1 Neighborhood Business: Local (retail store, bank, and office), corner restaurant, bed and breakfast, coffee house, arcade, retail and minor manufacturing of bakery goods and sweets, personal service business and other similar uses. Converted houses within the village allow owner occupied businesses.

B-2 Highway Commercial: Regional (retail store, bank, office, professional service business), chain restaurant, hotel/motel, tavern, bowling alley, retail and small manufacturing of bakery goods and sweets, personal service business, outdoor recreational/commercial, auto (sales, service, rental, repair, and fuel station), integrated centers, office complexes and other similar uses.

B-3 Commercial Industrial (*adopted based on 2012 Plan recommendation*): Regional (retail store, bank, office, professional service business), chain restaurant, hotel/motel, tavern, bowling alley, retail and small manufacturing of bakery goods and sweets, personal service business, outdoor recreational/commercial, auto (sales, service, rental, repair, and fuel station), integrated centers, office complexes and other similar uses.

I-1 Light Industrial: Assembly/manufacturing, building supplies, labs, utility companies, office buildings, transportation, warehousing, contactor equipment storage and other similar uses. Auto repair by special exception.

I-2 Industrial Park: Fairview Business Park. Basically, a light industrial district on fifty (50) acres or more.

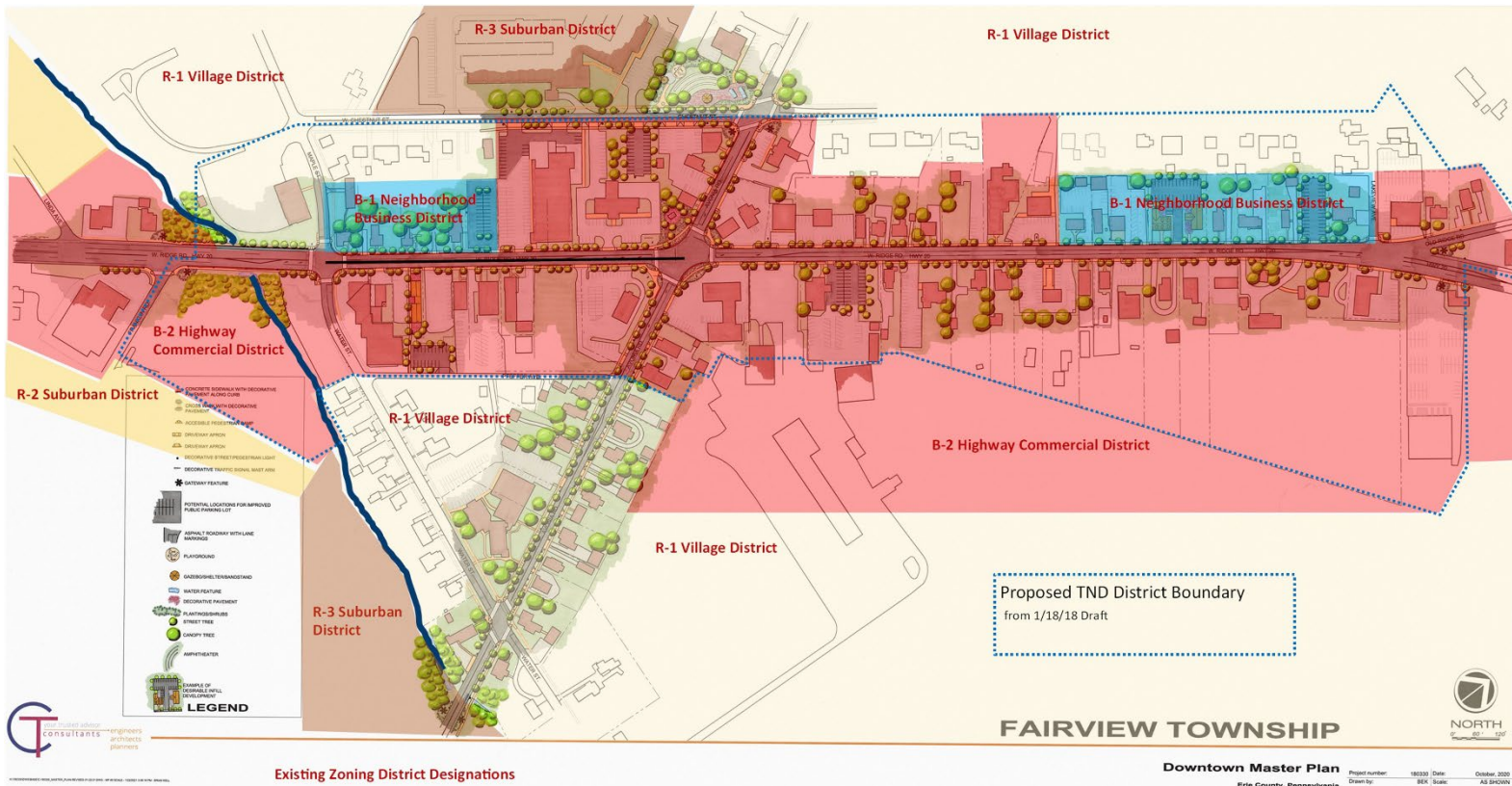
I-3 Heavy Industrial: Most light industrial uses, junkyards, landfill/transfer station, concrete/asphalt processing facilities and mineral/aggregate extraction.



## Possible New District

Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) District to apply in the downtown area.

Figure 10. Downtown Plan, Proposed TND District Boundary



See Figure 10 below.

Table 1 below, summarizes each district's minimum lot requirements and residential density.

Table 1. Current and <b>Proposed (P)</b> Zoning District Lot Requirements and Density			
District (Uses)	Minimum Lot Area Requirements	Residential Density (units per ac)	
		Statistical Density	"Effective" Density
A-1 Rural	1 acre	1 du/ac	0.8 du/ac
A-2 Agrarian (Dwelling)	2 acres	0.5 du/ac	0.4 du/ac
(Other Uses)	10 acres		
A-3 Conservation District	--	--	--
R-1 Residential Village (Single-family)	10,000 sq ft	4.4 du/ac	3.1 du/ac
(Other Uses)	20,000 sq ft		
R-2 Residential Suburban Single (Single-family)	20,000 sq ft	2.2 du ac	1.6 du/ac
(Other Uses)	1 acre		
R-3 Residential Suburban Multi (Single-family)	15,000 sq ft	2.9 du/ac	2.1 du/ac

Table 1. Current and <b>Proposed (P)</b> Zoning District Lot Requirements and Density			
District (Uses)	Minimum Lot Area Requirements	Residential Density (units per ac)	
		Statistical Density	"Effective" Density
(Multi-family)	20,000 sq ft	4.0 du/ac	-
<b>TND Traditional Neighborhood Development (P)</b>			
Nonresidential	15,000 sq ft	--	--
Multi-family Residential	15,000 sq ft	6.0 du/ac	6.0 du/ac
Single-family Residential	10,000 sq ft	4.4 du/ac	3.1 du/ac
B-1 Neighborhood Business	20,000 sq ft		
B-2 Highway Commercial	20,000 sq ft		
B-3 Mixed Commercial/Light Industrial	1 acre		
1-1 Light Industrial	1 acre		
I-2 Industrial Park	1 acre		
I-3 Heavy Industrial	1 acre		
Notes: Statistical Density = Minimum lot size divided by 1 acre (43,560 square feet), does not account for roads, etc. For example, the statistical density of the R-1 Residential Village district is 10,000 square feet/43,560 square feet = 4.4 dwelling units per acre. "Effective" Density = Calculated for single-family subdivisions by combining the area of the lot, plus the area of ½ the road ROW (determined by multiplying the lot frontage by ½ the ROW width), plus an inefficiency factor to account for lots that exceed the minimum due to configuration of the development site and road layout. Effective density is a way to approximate the number of residential lots that could be developed on a typical development site.			

### Current Land Use

Zoning determines the use of the properties throughout Fairview Township, while a land use analysis/map quantifies the current use of properties in the Township. The analysis provides an understanding of the current zoning's effectiveness and what changes, if any, may be needed. It also looks at the current trends and needs of society and the land characteristics of Fairview Township. Some practical issues from this study are as follows:

- ❖ Highway Commercial – Some areas west of Polly Drive on U.S. 20 may be difficult to develop, due to wetland issues. The area at the east end of U.S. 20, between Manchester Road and Millfair Road, on the north side of U.S. 20, was rezoned to the recently adopted B-3 Mixed Commercial/Light Industrial District, as recommended in the 2012 Plan.
- ❖ Neighborhood Business: The current Zoning Map includes a number of smaller areas zoned B-1 Neighborhood Business. The purpose of this district is to encourage small scale retail development that provides convenient services to nearby residential neighborhoods for everyday staples such as a loaf of bread or a gallon of milk. Areas currently zoned B-1 include:
  - Avonia Road and PA 5 - This area is located at the western edge of a larger area of B-2 Highway Commercial zoning along PA 5. This stretch of commercial should be examined to identify different characteristics between the one area zoned B-2 and the other zoned B-1 in order to justify the different zoning. The

2012 Future Land Use Map recommended the B-1 zoning west of Trout Run be changed A-1 consistent with the rest of the area along PA 5, west of Trout Run.

- PA 5 and Dutch Road intersection – Though this location does have higher traffic flow than the prior area, daily volumes are still below current convenience-store thresholds. The 2012 Future Land Use Map recommended the B-1 zoning in the southeast quadrant of the intersection be changed to R-2. That corner is currently developed with a commercial use and should remain B-1.
- Heidler Road and Millfair Road – The 2012 Plan recommended this area as a growth area. Since then, a new single-family subdivision has been approved and is under construction. Currently, the 2.5-acre southwest corner lot is zoned B-1 zoning and can accommodate a small convenience “neighborhood” store, provided additional residential development occurs in the vicinity.
- PA 98 and Sterrettannia Road – All four quadrants of the PA 98 and Sterrettannia Road are zoned B-1. This small area of B-1 zoning is immediately south of a larger area south of I-90 zoned B-2 along the PA 98 frontage area and I-1 Light Industrial behind. The B-1 zoning provides a logical stepdown/transition to the remainder of the area zoned A-2 Agrarian.
- ❖ There is likely to be some continued demand for alternative residential dwelling types, based on the demographic trends. The Township’s recent changes to the R-3 Zoning retains a sufficient amount of R-3 acreage between I-90 and Downtown and along U.S. 20 to accommodate the expected demand over the next 10 years. This topic is covered in more detail under Goal B. Downtown.
- ❖ The issue of agricultural use and zoning was an important topic in the 2012 Plan. As a result, the Township amended the Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with Pennsylvania’s new Right-to-Farm (RTF) laws.
- ❖ A new zoning district for Downtown needs to be reviewed and adopted in order to facilitate the types and character of new development and redevelopment envisioned by the Plan. At the same time, the district provisions need to ensure the homes along Chestnut St are protected while promoting improved Downtown viability.
- ❖ There are some specific areas of the Township where agricultural preservation and land conservation are of vital importance to retaining the rural character of the Township. As such, these specific areas are noted on Figure 13. Growth & Preservation Areas Map as priority preservation/conservation areas. Based on this designation, the Township determines it is in its best interests to maintain the existing agriculture zoning to not support the extension of water or sanitary sewer lines within these areas. One such specific area includes more than 2,000 acres of A-1 zoning north of I-90, east of Platz Road and west of the R-2 Residential District along Millfair Road, including the A-1-zoned area along Heidler Road.

## **Future Land Use Map**

The Future Land Use Map (Figure 11 on the next page) provides guidance for decisions regarding where and how new development and changes to the physical environment in Fairview Township should take place. The Future Land Use Map has been developed in consideration of a range of factors including anticipated population trends, economic development objectives, desires for rural land and environmental preservation, as well as existing and proposed infrastructure.

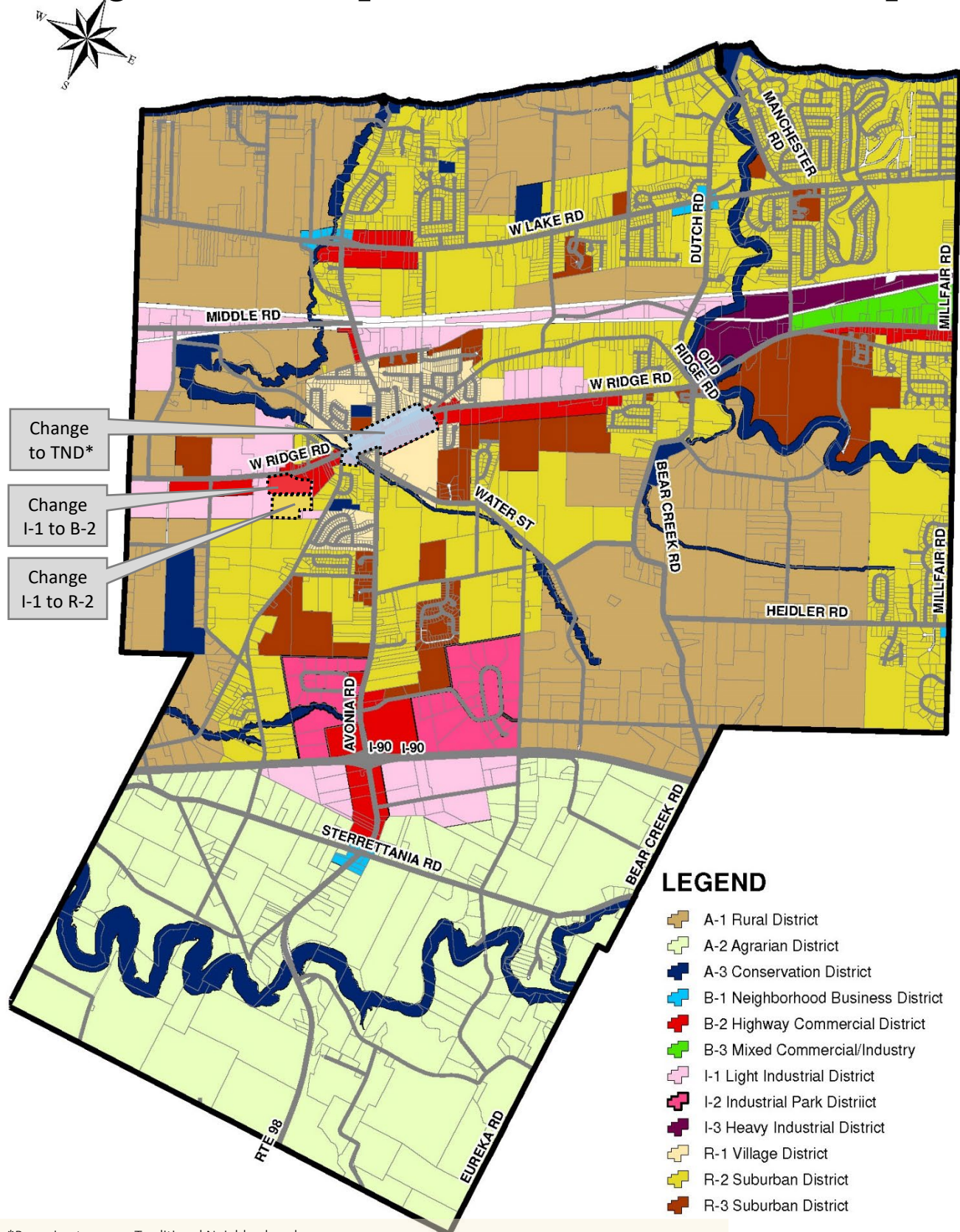
The Future Land Use Map depicts the land uses the Township envisions for different areas of the Township. It is not an “existing land use map;” although, in many cases desired future uses in an area may be the same as those that exist today. The intent of the map is to identify broad land use categories to provide guidance regarding future development with the ability to be flexible enough to provide for a mixture of uses.

The Future Land Use Plan has several functions. The most important ones are to protect existing development from negative impacts from future development, guide the Township’s future development in accordance with its land use ordinances, indicate to the Fairview Sewer and Water Authorities where in its service areas to expect growth and the anticipated density within the growth areas, and finally, to preserve its natural assets.

As noted in the first pages of this Plan, many of the policies espoused by the 1998 Plan appear to be quite effective. However, every community is dynamic, not static. Even good policies must be reviewed periodically. The desire for Fairview to remain like it is today, only better, creates our guidance for the decision making necessary to shape our future.



Figure 11. Proposed Future Land Use Map



\*Rezoning to a new Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) District would not occur until after the major physical improvements are installed.

## Growth Areas

In looking for potential growth areas, a very conservative attitude was adopted. Growth areas were selected based upon these criteria:

- ❖ Are they reasonably near and accessible to existing sewer and water facilities?
- ❖ Are they generally larger parcels where little land assembly would be required?
- ❖ Are they contiguous to currently developed areas, promoting infill?
- ❖ Is the proposed future land use consistent with the current zoning?

While selecting these growth areas, local officials are aware of the public sentiment that the residents of Fairview Township wish to retain the rural flavor of the community and not see an endless sea of either subdivisions or commercial development. Consequently, the potential growth areas were chosen with care. The following seven areas generally meet the above criteria:

- ❖ **Area #1, Fairview Village/Downtown Infill Area.** As noted on pages 24 through 28, renewal of Fairview's Downtown has long been a priority for the Township. Much progress has been made since the 2012 Plan: the Township Supervisors are actively pursuing grants to implement the revitalization strategies outlined in the 2020 Downtown Master Plan and the transportation improvements recommended in the 2023 Corridor Study Report. Once the roadway reconfigurations, utility improvements and streetscape upgrades are completed, the Township plans to spur private sector revitalization and development through a new Traditional Neighborhood District (TND) zoning district being considered for the heart of Downtown along W Ridge Road (U.S. 20). Growth Area #1 encompasses the entire 56-acre area proposed to be included in the area targeted for a new Traditional Neighborhood District (TND). Within this area there are approximately seven acres of developable land and various underdeveloped parcels, plus an additional 65 acres located adjacent to and south of the W Ridge Road frontage that is owned and used by Fairview Evergreen Nurseries. The nursery's large site, currently zoned R-1 Village, provides significant development potential for both residential and commercial uses that would enhance the Downtown Village area. With frontage on both U.S. 20 and Water Street there is the potential for good traffic circulation to enable customers and residents to avoid the Avonia Road/W Ridge Road intersection. To date, there is no indication if or when the Nursery would relocate/redevelop the site.
- ❖ **Area #2, Franklin Road/North Infill Area.** This area was part of Fairview Village prior to the merger. It has access to US 20 and Franklin Road and includes approximately 73 acres of developable land. The site has approximately 750 feet of frontage on W Ridge Road and 430 feet of frontage on Franklin Road. Both sewer and water service are accessible. There is a small storage building on the property, near W Ridge Rd. Zoning on the parcel is currently split, with the northern 40 acres zoned I-1 Light Industrial and the southern 33 acres zoned R-2. Given the area's adjacency to the Village area, it is recommended that the industrial zoning be changed to mixture of B-2 Commercial and R-2 Residential to enable development that will support the development envisioned in the Downtown Master Plan.



- ❖ **Area #3, Franklin Road/South Infill Area.** Area #3 is north of the Fairview Business Park – West and includes approximately 95 acres zoned R-3. The area has most of its frontage on Franklin Road, with additional access available from Fairfield Drive and Avonia Road. Sanitary sewers and water service abut the area. There are some limited topographic and environmental challenges to this area, but it can be developed. Residential development at approximately four dwelling units per acre is anticipated based on the proposed changes to the R-3 District. This type and density of development is suitable based on the area's proximity to the Fairview Business Park's industrial zoning. A "Growing Greener" type of development would be ideal for this property.
- ❖ **Area #4, Business Park East.** This area includes nearly 200 acres and extends from Avonia Road eastward approximately 3,500 feet into the Fairview Business Park. It includes a mix of zoning: R-2 and R-3 Residential (adjacent to the Brandy Run subdivision), B-2 Commercial and I-2 Industrial Park. There are some wetland considerations, but these limitations have been studied and development can be accommodated. Given its location near the I-90 / PA 98 Interchange, this area continues to be a prime development area.
- ❖ **Area #5, Southwest Interchange Quadrant Area.** This area includes about 100 acres of vacant/underdeveloped land, with approximately 25 acres of B-2 zoning along the Avonia Road frontage and I-1 Light Industrial zoning behind. Water and sanitary sewer lines have been extended under I-90, with a sanitary sewer line installed along Avonia Road to Sterrettania Road and extended partway along Market Road. The area is best suited for interchange-type development, which includes a range of light industrial and commercial uses, similar to the existing low-density, campus type development found on the east side of Avonia Road.
- ❖ **Area #6, W Ridge Road (U.S. 20) Growth Opportunity Area.** This area is opposite Pleasant Ridge Manor as well as two major industries. It includes approximately 130 acres (not counting a sizeable area at the west end located in a floodplain) to an average depth of approximately 1,400 feet. There are approximately 30 acres with ½ mile of frontage and 600 feet of depth along W Ridge Road zoned B-2, while the remaining 100 acres are zoned I-1. Now that public water and sewer have been extended to Pleasant Ridge Manor, this area could accommodate a variety of uses, including a small light industrial park. However, in light of the Township's objections to the County's recent efforts to create a 150+/- acre industrial park in this area, care is needed in determining the appropriate recommendation for future growth.
- ❖ **Area #7, W Lake Road (PA 5) Northeast Infill Area:** This 53-acre area includes approximately 43 acres zoned R-2 with about 10 acres of frontage along W Lake Road zoned B-1 Neighborhood Business. The area is surrounded by residential development on three sides and is a logical infill area for additional housing. New housing development also provides the opportunity to increase connectivity for the houses in the subdivision to the west via an east/west connection between Pinewood Drive and Dutch Road. The area abuts farmland to the south, which provides a buffer area between any residential development and the railroad corridor.

With the exception of Area #6, W Ridge Road (U.S. 20) Growth Area, the growth areas essentially accommodate infill development or are an extension of existing developed areas. These “Growth Areas” should be capable of absorbing residential, commercial, and industrial growth for at least one, and possibly two, decades. While these Growth Areas are highlighted in this plan, the Township recognizes that development in other areas of the Township may occur provided it is consistent with the zoning in place at the time development is proposed. Indeed, as Fairview Township continues to be a highly desirable community in Erie County, continued growth is a certainty. The Land Use elements presented in this Plan intend to reasonably accommodate that growth and still “keep Fairview, Fairview.”

## Growth Area Projections

Table 2., Growth Area Capacity below, provides an overview of the projected development, based on the five listed assumptions.

1. The acres reported in Table 2 do not include the estimated number of acres impacted by environmental constraints.
2. R-1 and R-2 Development. In all cases where the land in the growth area is currently zoned R-1 or R-2, development was projected as single family housing in compliance with existing zoning. Single-family houses were determined based on the estimated “effective density” for single-family units, calculated by combining the minimum lot area, plus ½ the road ROW area (determined by multiplying the minimum lot frontage by ½ the ROW width), plus an inefficiency factor to account for lots that exceed the minimum required size due to configuration of the development site and road layout (such as oversized lots around the bulb of a cul-de-sac).
3. R-3 Development. Dwelling units were estimated based on the proposed maximum density of four units per acre.
4. Commercial development was estimated at 10,000 square feet of building floor area per acre of developable land.
5. Industrial development was estimated at 8,000 square feet of building floor area per acre of developable land.

Table 2. Growth Area Capacity							
Area	Residential Development			Commercial		Industrial	
	Acres	Units	Population	Acres	Square Feet	Acres	Square Feet
1	55	170	440	7	70,000	0	0
2	53	85	220	20	200,000	0	0
3	85	340	880	0	0	0	0
4	51	170	440	68	680,000	59	471,440
5	0	0	0	25	251,000	74	588,400
6	0	0	0	31	307,048	99	790,583
7	44	70	180	10	100,000	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>2,160</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>1,608,048</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>1,850,423</b>
<i>Source: Consultant estimates.</i>							

### **Water and Sewer Service to the Growth Areas**

Two important criteria for designating various areas of the Township as “Growth Areas” was access to existing sanitary sewer service and water service. In all of the growth areas, utility service is “accessible” in that existing utility lines are either adjacent to the property or within 1,000 or so feet. In addition, certain factors must be kept in mind relative to the expansion of water and sewer facilities:

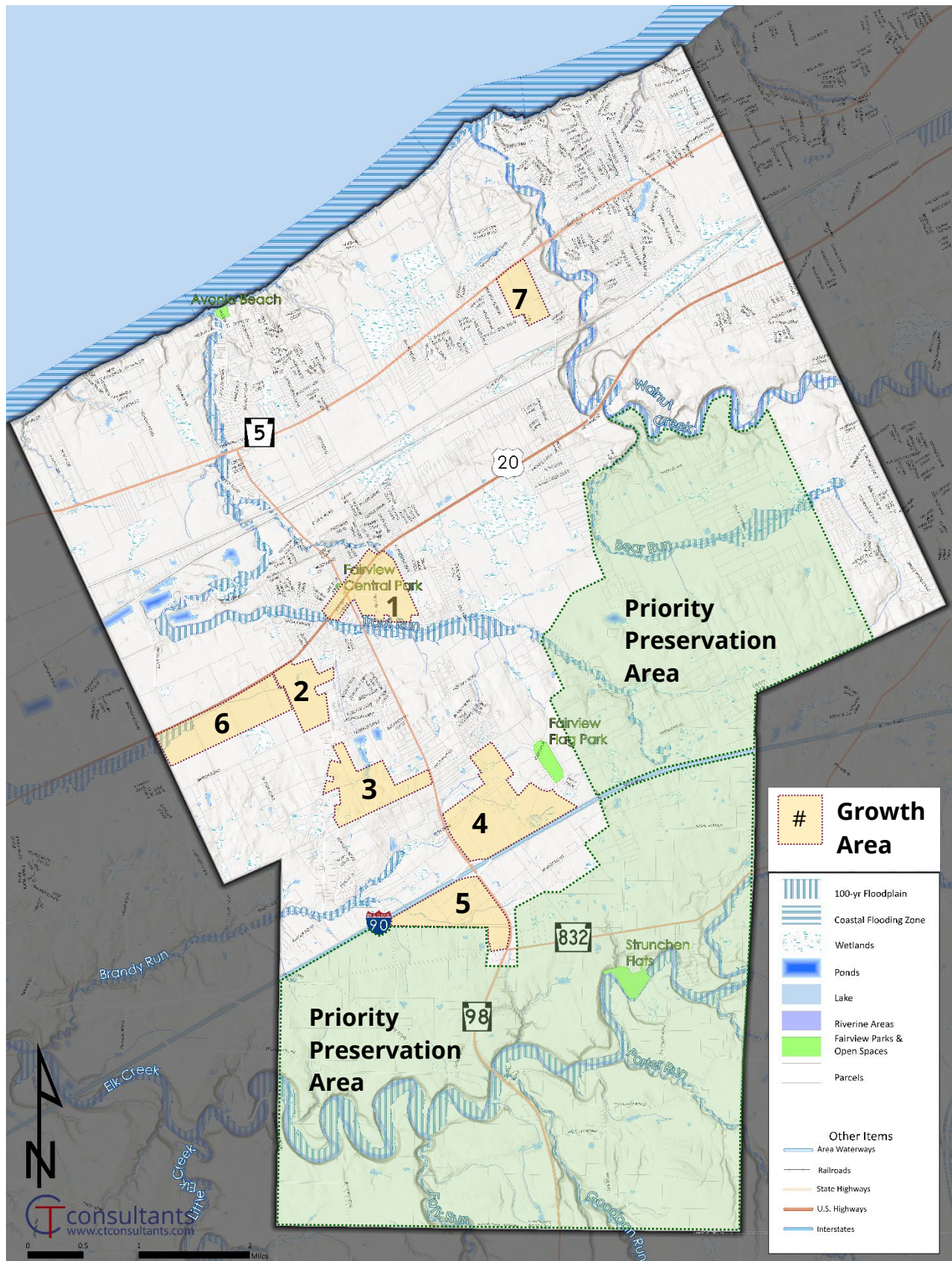
- ❖ The developer is responsible for the cost of utility expansions/extension.
- ❖ In some cases, the developer may be required to install a pump station to access a nearby gravity sewer line.
- ❖ Issues of line and service capacity need to be monitored.

### **Priority Preservation Areas**

In addition to the growth areas noted above, there are areas of Fairview Township where preservation of the existing rural character and very low density of development are essential. Specifically, this includes areas currently zoned A-1, A-2 and A-3, most notably the A-1 Rural District north of I-90 and along Heidler Road (west of Bear Run Circle), Bear Creek Road, Ruhle Road, Water Street and the entire A-2 Agrarian District area south of I-90, as shown on Figure 12. Growth & Preservation Areas Map. As such, this Plan advocates for retaining the current agricultural zoning for the long-term.



Figure 12. Growth & Preservation Areas Map



# 4 Implementing the Plan

This Comprehensive Plan is a key tool used by the Township for managing growth and development. Yet, it is also an important document that can assist property owners, potential businesses and developers when deciding where, when, and how to make investments in Fairview. A viable implementation program is one that identifies action items to assist in carrying out the recommendations in the Plan. This Section consolidates the various action steps discussed in Section 3.

## Implementation Tools

This Comprehensive Plan was prepared with the understanding that the Township Supervisors are the ones primarily responsible for planning for the future of the community. At the same time, there are multiple entities, such as the Fairview Water and Sewer Authorities, Fairview School District, Erie County, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, business owners and property owners who also have a stake in Fairview's future. As a result, achieving some of the Township's goals may require a cooperative effort. In addition, it will take resources – funding from a variety of sources to carry out many of the strategies. The following paragraphs highlight the various implementation tools available.

### Zoning & Subdivision Regulations

The Township's land development regulations are important tools to implement the land use policies in the Plan. The Township's regulations ensure private property investment complies with Fairview Township's land development goals. This Plan identifies potential amendments to the zoning and subdivision regulations. These recommendations need to be thoroughly reviewed, evaluated, and properly drafted by the Fairview Township Planning and Zoning Department, Planning Zoning Commission, and Board of Supervisors, in compliance with the Township's regulations.

### Public Infrastructure Improvements

Fairview Township, like all communities, has been built over time via both private and public investments. The Township's collection of public infrastructure, including roads, bridges, sidewalks, water and sewer lines, and stormwater management facilities, are essential to Fairview's neighborhoods and economy. Providing and maintaining modern, connected, and reliable infrastructure is a critical element of plan implementation. This underscores the need to not only maintain the Township's current infrastructure, but also to continue to make capital improvements by budgeting for, upgrading, replacing, and, where needed, expanding infrastructure. It is also important to coordinate with the other entities that own/maintain infrastructure within the Township.

### Partnerships

As noted throughout this Plan, collaborative partnerships between the Township and other public agencies, non-profits, and community groups is critical to implementing the Plan. While the Township is responsible for a large share of the implementation strategies, there are a number of physical elements within the Township that are owned/controlled by other public entities. For example, Erie County notes in its updated Parks, Trails, and Recreation Plan its goal to support local municipalities'

efforts to obtain grant funding for parks, trails, and recreation projects. In addition, partnerships are essential in addressing initiatives that extend beyond the municipal limits, such as water quality and stormwater management, transportation planning, and economic development. Maintaining and fostering supportive partnerships with organizations and private sector entities that share similar goals is becoming increasingly important and is often a requirement for grant funding. The Township already has a variety of partnerships that are critical for providing services to the residents.

In addition, partnering with the private sector is important in encouraging necessary redevelopment, which tends to be more expensive and complex than developing greenfield sites. According to the Urban Land Institute, public/private partnerships are “the most effective means to intervene in an uncertain market.” From an economic development perspective, partnerships share the financial risks between public and private entities. Research shows that communities that invest in strategic projects not only benefit from increased tax revenues from the specific redevelopment, but more importantly, strategic projects are a catalyst for more development, which leads to even higher tax revenues.

### Funding

While all of the above implementation tools are important, nothing will be accomplished without the necessary resources. There are a number of ways projects are funded, however, funding programs are known to change or be eliminated, so it is necessary to maintain ongoing research for funding opportunities.

## IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Recognizing the need to prioritize implementation based on available resources, Table 3 Action Plan for Implementation, categorizes the action steps by timeframe for implementation and priority. It is also recognized that in order to facilitate the most effective plan implementation, some flexibility may be necessary. New opportunities may arise, which could affect the implementation schedule making it pertinent to move some strategies higher in the implementation schedule.

Fairview Township is responsible for carrying out most of the actions, however, others may have a shared interest in achieving the action step and be willing/able to partner with the Township.

Entities are noted in the matrix starting on the next page using the following abbreviations:

ECC - Erie County Council  
 ECLB - Erie County Land Bank  
 ECPC - Erie County Parks Commission  
 EMTA - Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority  
 Erie MPO - Erie Area Metropolitan Planning Organization  
 FHWA - Federal Highway Administration  
 FSD – Fairview School District  
 FTA - Federal Transit Administration

FTE - Fairview Township Engineer  
 FTP&R - Fairview Township Parks & Recreation Dept  
 FTPC - Fairview Township Planning Commission  
 FTPIg - Fairview Township Planning Dept  
 FTS – Fairview Township Supervisors  
 FW&SA – Fairview Water & Sewer Authorities  
 PDOT - Pennsylvania Department of Transportation



The following table summarizes the Plan's actions, organized by Goals in the order presented in Chapter 3.

### Key

#### Action Status

- O Ongoing (currently occurring on a repeating basis)  
 B Begun (initiated, but not yet complete)  
 F Future (to be initiated)

#### Timeframe (actions that are not ongoing)

- I Immediate: Year 1 - 3  
 M Mid-term: Year 4 - 8  
 L Long-term: Year 9+

**Table 3. Action Plan for Implementation**

Goal/Objective/Strategy	Status	Timeframe	Twp / Partners
<b>Goal A: HOUSING. Promote new housing construction &amp; housing maintenance</b>			
<b>A.1. Preserve and protect the character, quality, and integrity of existing and future single-family neighborhoods.</b>			
A.1.1. Continue to retain R-1 and R-2 single-family zoning as the primary districts for new housing development.	O	--	FTPC, FTPIg, FTS
A.1.2. Maintain current low-density development standards for new single-family subdivisions in R-1 and R-2 Districts.	O	--	FTPC, FTS
A.1.3. Preserve existing single-family areas by requiring adequate buffering between single-family developments and moderate density developments.	O	--	FTPC, FTS
A.1.4. Amend R-3 District to limit new multi-family structures to a maximum density of four units per acre and not more than four units in a building.	F	I	FTPC, FTS
A.1.5. Continue to discuss regulating transient housing/short-term rentals.	O	--	FTPC, FTS
<b>A.2. Provide an appropriate mix of alternative housing options with a range of different types and affordability in limited locations.</b>			
A.2.1. Revise the Zoning Ordinance to limit moderate-density housing (maximum four dwelling units per acre and not more than four units in a building), located close to transportation nodes, with appropriate amenities, and in areas where public utilities and R-3 moderate density housing already exist.	B	I	FTPC, FTS
A.2.2. In zoning ordinance, define the types of multi-family housing permitted in R-3 District (e.g., duplex, single-family attached units, and multi-family apartment building).	F	M	FTPC, FTS
A.2.3. Monitor trends in multi-family housing development; amend Future Land Use Plan and Zoning Map as needed.	O	--	FTPC, FTPIg, FTS
A.2.4. Adopt design requirements for multi-family development in the R-3 District.	F	M	FTPC, FTS
<b>A.3. Consider allowing housing alternatives that make it easier for older residents to age in place, while retaining the single-family character of the neighborhood.</b>			
A.3.1. Amend the zoning ordinance to allow an accessory dwelling unit as a special exception for a single-family house (applicable to districts where single-family houses are permitted, such as the R-1, R-2, A-1, and A-2).	F	L	FTPC, FTS
A.3.2. Consider allowing small-scale age-restricted alternative housing development in single-family districts as a special exception when (1) water and sanitary sewer service are available, (2) the development is located on a major road, and (3) the development is designed to be compatible with the surrounding single-family neighborhood (i.e., comparable density).	F	L	FTPC, FTS
<b>A.4. Protect the integrity and quality of all housing by ensuring that the existing housing stock and neighborhoods are well maintained and continue to retain their value, encourage new investment, and attract new residents.</b>			
A.4.1. Continue routine code enforcement in subdivisions.	O	--	FTPIg
A.4.2. Pursue demolition when needed; work with the Erie County Land Bank whenever demolitions are needed.	O	--	FTS, ECLB



Table 3. Action Plan for Implementation

Goal/Objective/Strategy	Status	Timeframe	Twp / Partners
A.4.3. Research and promote housing rehabilitation funding for income-eligible residents.	O	--	FTPlg, FTS, ECLB
A.4.4. Continue to support volunteer programs to help property owners with maintenance issues.	O	--	FTS
A.4.5. Establish a monitoring program to keep potential nuisance properties from becoming nuisances.	O	--	FTS
<b>A.5. Promote the continued positive use of alternative housing facilities, such as but not limited to Pleasant Ridge Manor, through enhanced development requirements.</b>			
A.5.1. Establish modern landscaping and screening requirements in the zoning ordinance.	O	--	FTPC, FTPlg, FTS
A.5.2. Continue to enforce sound sign control practices; review and update the current sign regulations, including temporary signage.	O	--	FTPlg
<b>Goal B: DOWNTOWN. Transform Fairview's Downtown</b>			
<b>B.1. Implement Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) zoning regulations.</b>			
B.1.1. Adopt the proposed TND mixed-use zoning district regulations to promote new Downtown development.	F	M	FTPC, FTPlg, FTS
B.1.2. Amend the Zoning Map to add the TND mixed-use zoning district.	F	M	FTPC, FTPlg, FTS
B.1.3. Consider adopting building and site design guidelines for Downtown, with more extensive landscape standards, sign standards and building façade requirements, such a minimum amount of window area.	F	M	FTPC, FTPlg, FTS
<b>B.2. Develop a comprehensive parking strategy for Downtown Fairview.</b>			
B.2.1. Update the parking inventory and evaluation for the Downtown area.	B	I	FTPC, FTS
B.2.2. Conduct a cost/benefit analysis of creating public parking rather than requiring on-site parking for each property.	F	M	FTPC, FTS
B.2.3. Create a comprehensive parking strategy with funding options; prioritize specific areas to address long-term parking needs.	F	M	FTPC, FTPlg, FTS
<b>B.3. Pursue installation and funding for public improvements: roadway, utilities, and streetscape improvements.</b>			
B.3.1. Pursue water, sewer, storm sewer utility and right-of-way improvements outlined in Plan.	O	--	FTS, FW&SA
B.3.2. Ensure adequate sidewalks are provided, appropriately designed, and located to accommodate people of all ages and abilities, with adequate tree lawns and street trees.	O	--	FTS
<b>B.4. Encourage infill development on underutilized parcels in and adjacent to the downtown area.</b>			
B.4.1. Consider establishing an infill incentive program; identify types of incentives most likely to spur new infill development, which are in addition to LERTA.	B	I	FTPC, FTPlg, FTS
B.4.2. Identify other ways the Township or potential partners can facilitate infill development and assist property owners in overcoming barriers, such as reducing fees and offering grants.	F	M	FTPC, FTPlg, FTS
B.4.3. Encourage new housing in and adjacent to Downtown.	O	--	FTPC, FTS
<b>B.5. Continue to pursue grant funding for completing elements of the Downtown Plan.</b>			
B.5.1. Continue the Township's strategic initiative to obtain funding in phases.	O	--	FTPlg, FTS
B.5.2. Consider dedicating other sources of Township income and pursue additional sources for potential funding.	O	--	FTS

Action Status: **O** Ongoing  
**B** Begun  
**F** Future

Timeframe: **I** Immediate = Year 1 -3  
**M** Mid-Term = Year 4 to 8  
**L** Long-Term = Year 9+

Table 3. Action Plan for Implementation

Goal/Objective/Strategy	Status	Timeframe	Twp / Partners
<b>Goal C: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. Foster a robust and sustainable economy</b>			
<b>C.1. Continue to encourage new commercial and light industrial development at the I-90 Interchange area.</b>			
C.1.1. Continue efforts to attract new development to Fairview Business Park, targeting commercial and light industrial.	O	--	FTS
C.1.2. Encourage new business development south of the I-90 interchange where water and sewer service exist.	O	--	FTS
<b>C.2. Promote new economic growth that emulates successful developments in the area, encourages a more diversified economic base, and increases local jobs.</b>			
C.2.1. Continue to recruit new businesses to the Township, concentrating on expanding the range of business sectors to increase diversity.	O	--	FTS
C.2.2. Develop economic incentive policies and programs to stimulate the desired type of economic development.	O	--	FTS
C.2.3. Promote phase two development in the Fairview Business Park and the existing development incentives, including the Tax-Free Keystone Opportunity Zone and LERTA.	O	--	FTS
C.2.4. Consider creating a website with economic development related information, including community/demographic data, information on incentives (offered by the Township or others), and links to other entities that provide incentives.	O	--	FTP!g, FTS
<b>C.3. Promote new retail development in locations that serve densely developed neighborhoods.</b>			
C.3.1. Identify logical growth areas on the Future Land Use/Growth Area maps.	O	--	FTPC, FTP!g, FTS
C.3.2. Work with landowners to market available sites.	O	--	FTP!g, FTS
<b>Goal D: TRANSPORTATION. Expand mobility options and transportation network.</b>			
<b>D.1. Implement the transportation improvements recommended in the Corridor Study and the Downtown Master Plan.</b>			
D.1.1. Install a roundabout at McCray Road/Buckingham Place intersection with Avonia Road (PA 98).	F	M	FTS, Erie MPO, PDOT
D.1.2. Install a roundabout in Downtown at W Ridge Road (U.S. 20) and Water Street intersection.	F	M	FTS, Erie MPO, PDOT, FHWA
D.1.3. Realign Old Ridge Road at east end of Downtown to create a 90-degree intersection with W Ridge Road (U.S. 20).	F	M	FTS, Erie MPO, PDOT, FHWA
D.1.4. Reconfigure the curb radius at the Avonia Road (PA 98) and Water Street intersection.	F	M	FTS, Erie MPO, PDOT
D.1.5. Install marginal access road north of U.S. 20 to service Pleasant Ridge Manor and PHB with a single access point to U.S. 20 across from Dobler Road. Related improvements include widening U.S. 20 to accommodate turning lanes and conducting a study to evaluate the need for a signal for the new intersection.	F	M	FTS, Erie MPO, PDOT, FHWA
D.1.6. Install an optimized signal at W Ridge Road (U.S. 20) and Avonia Road (PA 98) intersection in Downtown; reconfigure curb radii to improve truck turns and reduce collisions.	F	M	FTS, Erie MPO, PDOT, FHWA
D.1.7. Restripe U.S. 20 to reduce the four-lane road to three-lanes, with one travel lane in each direction and a center two-way left turn lane.	F	M	FTS, Erie MPO, PDOT, FHWA
D.1.8. Construct transportation enhancements along U.S. 20 from Old Ridge Road to Linda Avenue and at Avonia Road (PA 98) and Chestnut Street intersection. <i>Fully funded per Erie County's 2050 LRTP.</i> Recommended enhancements include: ❖ Streetscape enhancements, e.g., street trees, decorative pavement, pedestrian lighting, ❖ ADA-compliant pedestrian ramps and other intersection improvements, and ❖ Storm drainage infrastructure.	F	M	FTS, Erie MPO, PDOT, FHWA

Action Status: **O** Ongoing  
**B** Begun  
**F** Future

Timeframe: **I** Immediate = Year 1 -3  
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**L** Long-Term = Year 9+

Table 3. Action Plan for Implementation

Goal/Objective/Strategy	Status	Timeframe	Twp / Partners
<b>D.2. Maintain a safe and efficient transportation network.</b>			
D.2.1. Realign W Lake Road (PA 5) at Hardscrabble Intersection (golfer crossing). <i>Fully funded per Erie County's 2050 LRTP.</i>	B	I	FTS, Erie MPO, PDOT
D.2.2. Address traffic problems at key intersections. Once the Township Engineer evaluates the list of locations, those locations merited for further investigation should be grouped for a traffic study. Key intersections include: ❖ Bear Creek and W Ridge Road (U.S. 20), for west bound traffic ❖ Franklin Rd/ Linda Ave and W Ridge Road (U.S. 20)	F	M	FTS, Erie MPO, PDOT
D.2.3. Encourage a second means of access in existing subdivisions that currently only have one, such as Brandy Run, Olde Ridge, The Commons, and Walnut Heights.	B	I	FTPig, FTS
D.2.4. Upgrade Avonia Road, from W Lake Road (PA 5) northward to Lake Erie, to improve drainage, widen the road surface and stabilize berms to accommodate bike trail.	F	L	FTS, Erie MPO, PDOT
D.2.5. Study the merits of installing center turn lanes in various locations along W Ridge Road (U.S. 20), from Millfair to Manchester, including at Creamland Drive-In (6221 W Ridge Road)	B	I	FTS, Erie MPO, PDOT, FHWA
D.2.6. Re-establish pavement markings after repaving (recommended by Erie County 2050 LRTP).	O	--	FTS, Erie MPO, PDOT, FHWA
<b>D.3. Modernize the I-90/SR-98 interchange and improve traffic flow along the SR-98 corridor.</b>			
D.3.1. Develop access management guidelines to improve thru-traffic movement and enhance safety.	O	--	FTS, Erie MPO
<b>D.4. Improve connectivity in the Township's overall transportation network.</b>			
D.4.1. Extend Fairfield Road westward to Dobler Road to provide emergency detour for Downtown traffic and improve the connection between Pleasant Ridge Park and the broader community.	F	L	FTS
D.4.2. Extend Eaton Road southward to U.S. 20 midway between Avonia Road and Dutch Road, in tandem with needed utility extensions. Design road to align with the recommended Platz Road Extension at an intersection with U.S. 20.	F	L	FTS
D.4.3. Extend Platz Road northward to U.S. 20 to provide an alternate north-south route midway between Bear Creek Road and Avonia Road (which are nearly 2 miles apart). See #4.2 above.	F	L	FTS
D.4.4. Develop policy /or regulations to address developments lacking more than one point of access. Consider amending the subdivision regulations to (1) prohibit cul-de-sacs unless a through road is not feasible (2) limit the number of lots that can be served by a single access point for the initial phases of a multi-phased subdivision; and (3) for phased subdivisions, require the second access be constructed once platted lots reach the limit established under (2).	B	I	FTPC, FTPig, FTS
<b>D.5. Encourage multi-modal transportation, including bike trails, pedestrian ways.</b>			
D.5.1. Continue to evaluate the existing sidewalks to identify maintenance needs and gaps in the sidewalk system, with connections between residential subdivisions and parks, the schools, and other key destinations being a priority.	O	--	FTE, FTS
D.5.2. Continue to work with developers to install sidewalks between the Fairview School Campus and developments east of the campus.	B	I	FTE, FTS, FSD, developers
D.5.3. Explore "Safe Routes to School" funding to help connect the schools to neighborhoods via sidewalks and multi-use paths.	O	--	FTE, FTS
D.5.4. Continue to require new developments, redevelopment, and infill development to construct or pay for extensions to or expansion of multi-use pathways and/or sidewalks, and/or connections to regional trails.	O	--	FTS, ECPC
<b>D.6. Work with Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority to improve bus services to those areas of the</b>			

Action Status: **O** Ongoing  
**B** Begun  
**F** Future

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Table 3. Action Plan for Implementation

Goal/Objective/Strategy	Status	Timeframe	Twp / Partners
<b>Township that will support it.</b>			
D.6.1. Explore with EMTA the potential of a route extension to service additional locations in Fairview Township as the population and employment increases.	O	--	EMTA, FTS
<b>Goal E: PUBLIC SERVICES. Provide appropriate public utilities and quality public amenities</b>			
<b>E.1. Continue to follow Sewer Authority priorities as set forth by the Act 537 Plan.</b>	O	--	FTS, FW&SA
<b>E.2. Facilitate utility improvements to increase interconnectedness that helps minimize the need to expand the water and sanitary sewer systems.</b>			
E.2.1. Encourage new development to locate in areas where utilities exist or are easily accessible.	O	--	FTPC, FTS
E.2.2. Build a water utility connection between the PA 5 and U.S. 20 service area, in connection with the recommended proposed Eaton Road extension, in coordination with the Water Authority.	F	M	FTS, FW&SA
<b>E.3. Support expansion of the utilities to service targeted growth areas not currently served.</b>			
E.3.1. Continue to coordinate with the Fairview Sewer and Water Authorities on planned service area expansions to support increased development.	O	--	FTS, FW&SA
E.3.2. Continue to develop new groundwater sources in coordination with the Water Authority.	O	--	FTS, FW&SA
E.3.3. Continue the policy of not funding public water or sewer projects in Rural Resource Areas.	O	--	FTS, FW&SA
E.3.4. Continue proactive actions to address stormwater management, including upgrading the storm sewer system along U.S. 20 through Downtown as part of the planned Downtown Revitalization upgrades.	O	--	FTS, FW&SA
<b>E.4. Continue to support and invest in Fire Prevention/Protection and EMS services.</b>			
E.4.1. Construct a new fire station within municipal boundaries to replace Station 50 (currently located at 5310 West Lake Road in Millcreek Township).	F	L	FTS
E.4.2. Build a new fire station south of Interstate 90.	F	L	FTS
E.4.3. Turn over BLS service to West County Paramedic Association (contingent upon municipal members attaining and maintaining solvency) while preserving the presence of ambulances at Stations 50, 52, and 53.	F	M	FTS
E.4.4. Implement a fire tax or an EMS tax, or both if needed.	F	L	FTS
<b>E.5. Work with Internet Service Providers to expand broadband to all areas of the Township.</b>			
E.5.1. Continue to support the efforts of Charter Communications and Velocity Network as they pursue funding to extend high-quality internet service to residents and businesses throughout the entire Township.	O	--	FTS
<b>E.6. Continue to upgrade and enhance the recreational amenities at Fairview Township parks as demand dictates and funding allows. See page 41 for suggested improvements for each park noted below.</b>			
E.6.1. Upgrade Flag Park, including providing a connection to Pleasant Ridge Park.	F	L	FTP&R, FTS
E.6.2. Continue to make improvements to Pleasant Ridge Park.	O	--	FTP&R, FTS
E.6.3. Continue to make improvements to Avonia Beach Park.	O	--	FTP&R, FTS
E.6.4. Enhance Struchen Flats Park.	O	--	FTP&R, FTS
<b>E.7. Continue to support improvements to recreational resources within the Township, to meet the</b>			

Action Status: **O** Ongoing  
**B** Begun  
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Table 3. Action Plan for Implementation

Goal/Objective/Strategy	Status	Timeframe	Tw / Partners
<b>needs of residents.</b>			
E.7.1. Provide additional amenities for the Fairview parks system utilizing the per-lot recreation fee charged for new development per the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.	O	--	FTP&R, FTPIg, FTS
E.7.2. Continue to periodically conduct a Parks and Recreation Survey in concert with the School District and Recreation Board.	O	M	FTP&R, FSD, FTS
E.7.3. Identify and remove access barriers to parks, trails, and recreation opportunities. See also Objective 5 under the Goal D. Transportation.	O	--	FTP&R, FSD, FTS
<b>Goal F: PRESERVATION. Maintain, preserve, and enhance Fairview Township's unique character, rural identity, and natural/historic resources.</b>			
<b>F.1. Promote the preservation/conservation of critical natural areas, concentrations of large, wooded areas and other important environmental resources.</b>			
F.1.1. Continue to assist in the enforcement of riparian and wetland setback requirements to protect stream corridors and significant wetland areas from the encroachment of development.	O	--	FTS
F.1.2. Continue to raise awareness and support other entities' efforts to obtain open space funding for acquisition of natural areas for conservation.	O	--	FTS
F.1.3. Follow environmental best management practices for publicly owned property and encourage private property owners to do the same (this is especially important for forest management).	O	--	FTS
F.1.4. Encourage preservation and conservation of privately owned critical natural areas within the Township and increase public awareness of conservation organizations and options such as conservation easements, lease & management easements, and land acquisition by a conservation organization.	O	--	FTPIg, FTS
F.1.5. Continue to require via zoning new residential and business construction to concentrate in areas where development already exists and utilities are readily available, including infill development in the Downtown area.	O	--	FTPC, FTPIg, FTS
<b>F.2. Maintain and enhance Fairview's unique character.</b>			
F.2.1. Consider adopting design standards to ensure aesthetically pleasing development that retains Fairview's unique qualities.	O	--	FTPC, FTPIg, FTS
F.2.2. Adopt modern, increased landscaping requirements in ordinances.	B	I	FTPC, FTPIg, FTS
F.2.3. Develop ordinances requiring screening of visual nuisances and distractions.	B	I	FTPC, FTPIg, FTS
F.2.4. Continue to work with developers on the installation of trees in commercial and industrial developments	O	--	FTPC, FTPIg, FTS
F.2.5. Develop and implement policies related to streets trees in residential subdivisions.	F	M	FTPC, FTPIg, FTS
F.2.6. Help residents access funding and grant sources for property maintenance and beautification.	F	M	FTPIg, FTS
<b>F.3. Conserve Fairview's historic and cultural resources.</b>			
F.3.1. Continue informal support of the Township's historic resources, especially the Sturgeon House.	O	--	FTP&R, FTS
F.3.2. Continue to support downtown revitalization, per the Fairview Downtown Plan.	O	--	FTPIg, FTS
<b>F.4. Continue to promote agriculture production and preservation.</b>			
F.4.1. Add agritourism as a special exception in the A-1 Rural District, with minimum requirements such farm size (e.g., 10 acres) and road frontage (e.g., 500 feet).	F	L	FTPC, FTPIg, FTS
F.4.2. Continue to monitor use of the existing agritourism ordinances and update as needed.	O	--	FTPIg, FTS

Action Status: **O** Ongoing  
**B** Begun  
**F** Future

Timeframe: **I** Immediate = Year 1 -3  
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Table 3. Action Plan for Implementation

Goal/Objective/Strategy	Status	Timeframe	Twp / Partners
F.4.3. Promote the Agriculture Securities Area designation.	O	--	FTS
<b>F.5. Increase promotion of the Township's natural and cultural assets to increase tourism and support/diversify the local economy.</b>			
F.5.1. Highlight local tourist attractions on the Township's website.	O	--	FTS
F.5.2. Consider creating a wayfinding system, including wayfinding signage, to help highlight local landmarks and destinations.	F	M	FTS
F.5.3. Consider a branding campaign.	F	M	FTS



Avonia Beach Park, May 2024  
CT Consultants

Action Status: **O** Ongoing  
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