

O'HARA TOWNSHIP

Comprehensive Development Plan

Chapter 11 - Citizen Participation

PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

1983 PHASE I, EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT

In the early 1980's, O'Hara Township created a Long Range Planning Committee to evaluate the existing natural and man-made environment in their community. The Long Range Planning Committee in conjunction with the O'Hara Township Planning Commission retained a consultant to assist them in the preparation of Part 1 of an O'Hara Township Comprehensive Plan, titled "Existing Conditions Report." This planning document consisted of approximately one hundred and thirteen (113) pages of text, twelve (12) maps and twenty-two (22) tables and provided a broad based perspective on socio-economic issues at the local and regional level, physiography, potential land use, access, utilities and services, and parks and recreation. A summary of the research data with conclusions was also included and provides the background for this synopsis.

The role of the citizen planner has increased significantly in the last quarter century and a review of past planning initiatives provides a continuity and a context for future planning efforts. At the time the Existing Conditions Report was prepared, certain relevant trends and characteristics were identified and discussed. O'Hara Township's population grew by sixty percent (60%) (5,768 persons to 9,233 persons) between 1950 and 1980, an average sustained rate of growth of two percent (2%) annually. The associated housing construction trends, however, resulted in site preparation activities which have since proven to be costly to private property owners and to the Township. A realization that past development practices was not sensitive to the physiographic characteristics of land in the Township resulted in policy changes at the local level aimed at mitigating documented impacts.

During this same post World War II expansion, the Regional Industrial Development Corporation began developing infrastructure to support light industrial, research and development, distribution and office facilities on lands formerly owned by Allegheny County and used as the Allegheny County Workhouse and Farm. While this regional commerce park provided full-time jobs for more than eight thousand (8,000) workers during its formative years, the same site development practices associated with widespread residential development were followed, producing similar environmentally related problems.

The 1983 Existing Conditions Report suggested that difficulties related to developing the remaining seven hundred and fifty (750) acres of land in O'Hara Township (half of which is constrained by the presence of steep slopes) would require more diligence and careful planning in order to avoid the environmental problems caused by past land disturbance activities. Preferred development in this "holding area" in the northwest quadrant and associated development scenarios would be the subject of the current land use work element which was a section in that report. While the issue of "build-out" and the depletion of the remaining developable land in the Township was not specifically addressed, concern was raised a quarter of a century ago about the pattern of development in the community. These general concerns became the impetus for the drafting of more focused land use and land development standards in the 1990's.

Another issue raised in the 1983 Phase I report was the cumulative effect of increased numbers of Township residents reaching retirement age in the ensuing decades. Fixed incomes mean decreased tax revenues which in turn mean less overall revenue for the provision of community services. The point was made that most of the Township's recreation facilities were designed for school-aged children and young adults, while the Township's population is aging in place. A recently completed Comprehensive Parks and Open Space Plan has addressed the long term recreation needs of Township residents which provides a more balanced, age sensitive local recreation program.

Generally, the demographic trend identified in the 1983 Existing Conditions Report has remained a concern. Revenue streams from Act 511 taxes have been in decline, but the socio-economic factors have changed, mitigating to some extent, the loss in overall tax revenues. The entry into the regional work force of a higher percentage of married women was an emerging trend twenty-five (25) years ago and is accurate in terms of present day labor force characteristics. Between 1970 and 1980, married women in the regional labor force grew from twenty-eight percent (28%) to forty-three percent (43%). Local tax

revenues from these additional wage earners have offset to some degree, the exit of retirees from the job market. Related issues, as discussed, were the decisions by working women to have children later during the child-bearing years and to have smaller families. This socio-economic shift gave rise to service sector expansions in terms of child-care and individual property maintenance.

As the light industrial base, both regionally and locally was developing, the need for convenient goods and services resulted in the occurrence of commercial corridors along Freeport Road and Old Freeport Road. While opportunities to spend disposable income at newly developed regional shopping centers in emerging suburban communities increased during the 1960's, some areas developed with a wider variety of neighborhood scaled businesses. This was true of the commercial areas which evolved in O'Hara Township. The Freeport Road corridor, a three-quarters (3/4) mile commercial strip, accommodated approximately one hundred and forty (140) businesses in 1983. New development patterns based on the tenets of "smart-growth" and the recommendations of the Brookings Institute Report released at the turn of the new century are currently being championed by a wide variety of planning and economic development agencies. The urban sprawl that occurred along high volume transportation corridors during the formative period of expansion after World War II has been reexamined in terms of access, circulation, scale of development, aesthetics and impacts on public utilities.

Given the findings and identification of development trends in the 1983 Existing Conditions Report, lessons have been learned. O'Hara Township has established a long range planning and growth management program which has produced a sustainable community. Elected officials have reacted to external development pressures effectively and the on-going evaluation of short and long term socio-economic cycles has provided a pro-active framework for adjustments to specific development standards necessary to achieve accepted community-wide goals. There were five (5) principles outlined in the Phase I Existing Conditions Report that bear repeating and are included in this synopsis. They are as follows:

- *Willingness to recognize that future conditions cannot be assumed to be merely an extension of past trends.*
- *Development of flexible planning approaches that address current needs but do not preclude changes and adaptations to future conditions.*
- *Less emphasis on long range "ultimate" plans and more emphasis on short range, incremental planning efforts. For example, instead of planning a large sewage treatment system, development of a series of smaller systems that eventually link together.*

- *Recognition that land resources are becoming scarcer and more valuable and, therefore, should be used more carefully than in the past. There should be a maximum effort to accommodate land development where it is most feasible, thus preserving areas where it is least suitable.*
- *Establishment of reasonable growth objectives that allow for phased expansion of community facilities and services, which will not strain municipal financial resources, especially in an area of fiscal uncertainty.*

Planning at the local level is a dynamic process. It starts with an examination of information from a variety of sources and relies on the efforts of people committed to improving their communities. By keeping a perspective on the forces which helped to shape the character of O'Hara Township the process will continue to benefit present and future residents.

OCTOBER 1993 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, PART II

KEY ATTRIBUTES

In the fall of 1993, O'Hara Township adopted a planning document which evolved from several years of research, discussion and public input. The baseline data used was actually compiled for use in the 1983 Part I Existing Conditions Report, in addition to the 1990 Decennial Census data and primary data sources available during the preparation of the document titled *Comprehensive Plan, Part II*. The latter document is the subject of this review and narrative, and provides continuity for O'Hara Township's continuing planning and growth management efforts.

Part II consists of approximately sixty-one (61) pages of text, eight (8) maps, several graphics and about eighteen (18) tables and charts with summary statistical data. In the Introduction to Part II, the consultant identifies eight (8) issues of concern to local residents and Township officials, which are the result of both external and internal growth pressure. As communities evolve, planning objectives change to meet new challenges. The characteristics of any community's population shifts as local and regional socio-economic factors affect the decision-making process. In addition to employment opportunities and home ownership, quality of life considerations are high on the priorities list of household residents. This is where planning at the community level can be invaluable.

Part II of the 1993 O'Hara Township Comprehensive Plan frames the concerns and challenges as follows:

1. The shortage of easily usable land for future growth;
2. The intensification and adaption of land uses in the Freeport Road corridor;
3. Regional traffic problems in the Freeport Road corridor;
4. Reclamation of the river frontage;
5. Environmental protection of the sensitive hills, valleys, and wetlands of the Township;
6. Preservation of housing values and elimination of poor housing conditions;

7. The gaining of O'Hara's families; and
8. The provisions of all appropriate public services to residents in future years.

These concerns relate to the impacts of continuing development over a period of a half of a century. Most are inevitable and some are public policy issues. At this point, fifteen (15) years later, many of the challenges identified in 1993 are still pressing and require the Township to focus its resources on new options and new solutions. On the other hand, some of the concerns are being addressed through the consistent administration of zoning and subdivision and land development regulations, which includes a thorough review and approval process focusing on the environmental impacts and performance characteristics of development proposals.

DATA SUMMARIES

The 1993 Comprehensive Plan begins with a description of a fragmented geographic area which consists of four (4) subareas, each a part of O'Hara Township. While each of the two (2) largest land areas (Eastern O'Hara Township about 3.3 square miles and Western O'Hara Township about 3.5 square miles) exhibit different settlement patterns due to the timing of development, regional access and available public utilities provided the impetus for the interest in the river terrace areas. An Existing Land Use Map prepared in conjunction with the Part II plan document indicates that most steep sloped areas (25% or greater) had been left undisturbed or supported forests. The development potential on these lands is compromised by the natural features and usability is diminished. At that point in O'Hara Township's evolution, most of the accessible areas had been targeted leaving land with environmental constraints as a large part of the community's inventory of undeveloped land.

This characteristic presents the current Town Council with a difficult decision in terms of guiding growth into preferred areas. While "infill" development is consistent with the tenets of smart growth, a review and realistic assessment of the development potential of the remaining land is a logical activity in the preparation of the Township's "build-out" plan. There are at least two viable options; one is to consider narrow redevelopment and infill strategies and one is to introduce public utilities into undeveloped areas, some with physiographic constraints. While the latter option is more aggressive, there is no guarantee either will result in expanding the local tax base. This section of the Part II Comprehensive Plan makes a good case for low-density residential development on lands with recognized constraints. However, recent reports produced by the Penn State Agricultural Extensions on tax revenues generated from both residential and nonresidential development, indicate that in terms of service delivery, residential development actually impacts local budgets negatively. A third option, mixed-use development, could be implemented with overlay or village district zoning, and is also worth considering given the limited amount of developable land remaining.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

In 1993, demographic trends indicated a stable population of about nine thousand (9,000) residents over the previous thirty (30) year period between 1960 and 1990. These decades represent O'Hara

Township's peak sustained population. The most significant growth rates occurred in the 1950's at more than 5% annually. When compared to the official year 2000 figure of eight thousand, eight hundred and fifty-six (8,856) persons (at least one source, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, puts that number lower and projects declines through 2025), what is clear is that in the second half of the 20th Century, the community's population reached its highest point and declines are expected through buildout at the end of the second decade of the new millennium. In 1993, the pending population loss was discussed in terms of lower birth rates, smaller family size and outmigration for employment opportunities following the collapse of the steel industry within the region in the early 1980's. All three (3) factors are still affecting the Township's population although a shift from manufacturing to health services and research and development has occurred in the economic sector. The forecast at that point in the Township's evaluation was a population peak of over ten thousand (10,000) persons by the year 2010, while the current projections by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission is for a population of approximately seven thousand and twelve (7,012). This disparity is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, Population Characteristics and Projections. Smaller household sizes are due to a number of factors including the proliferation of two (2) working householders, and a jump in the median age because of an increasing number of "empty-nesters." In addition, the attraction of lower taxes and land prices in burgeoning rural areas, and shifts in regional employment trends have affected O'Hara Township's population projections.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS

Between 1980 and 1990 O'Hara's labor force in the service sector, trade and manufacturing categories decreased overall by about 8.7%, however unemployment fell from 6% to 2.9%. These data sets may reflect an increase in the number of persons retiring, pursuing part-time employment, or becoming self-employed. Median family incomes increased by more than 80% during the same period as compared to an increase of almost 110% in Fox Chapel and about 65% for all of Allegheny County. The 1993 document text comments that the median family income and median home values reported in Fox Chapel in 1990 was among the highest reported for any community in Pennsylvania.

With the decline of steel making and primary metal fabrication County-wide in the early 1980's, the labor force locally and regionally experienced a major shift from manufacturing to services, trade and technologies. However, the 1990 Part II Plan indicates that the percentage of adults with both high school and college diplomas in O'Hara Township was higher than Allegheny County but significantly lower than Fox Chapel. This characteristic of the local labor force provided a smoother transition than that experienced by traditional blue-collar mill towns. In fact, the mix of technical and light industrial uses in O'Hara as opposed to the heavily residential character of Fox Chapel was identified as the reason for the separation of the two municipalities. The development of the Regional Industrial Development Corporation's property in O'Hara Township, beginning in the 1950's, was an example of earlier shift from heavy industry supported by rail and river access to more commerce oriented industry supported by truck and automobile access. Prime industries at both the County and local level were still manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, and professional services through the early 1980's.

The historical development pattern that emerged in O'Hara Township began with river transportation. Canals and inclined rail systems provided a means of moving goods and people from Pittsburgh to other destination hubs in the region. This early infrastructure along the north bank of the Allegheny River provided development opportunities in O'Hara Township and drove both residential and industrial growth throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Canals eventually gave way to railroads as the primary method of transportation and forests were cleared to produce fuel for early iron furnaces. River terraces were eventually developed for steel and glass manufacture and also supported small residential enclaves where workers lived. These small scale developments gave O'Hara Township a mixed use heritage composed of residential settlements and specialty industries in contrast to communities along the other river valleys in the region where large tracts of land were assembled for the manufacture of steel. Farms and pastoral estates dominated higher elevations and attracted industrialists looking for home sites well into the 20th century.

DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

With the conversion of the County Workhouse property in the 1960's to a regional industrial/commerce park, arterial roadways replaced rail travel and stimulated additional development. Commercial businesses supporting the residential settlements and neighborhoods evolved, providing once again, a mix of land use which resulted in the development of multi-family housing and institutional facilities. As O'Hara Township grew into its current suburban residential form, the 1993 Part II Plan identified the following characteristics:

1. Ample and fairly uniform lots, curvilinear streets adopted to the topography and not forming a rectilinear grid;
2. Reasonably uniform front yards, side yards, and rear yards;
3. Reasonable uniformity of housing types designed to serve a traditional nuclear family (working father, home-keeping mother, school children, but no grandparents);
4. Exclusion of commercial and industrial uses from areas near residential subdivision.

The author points out that the development pattern that resulted from factors identified during the last periods of expansion in the 19th and early 20th centuries, is expected to change rapidly in the decade ahead. The plan cites changing demographics, environmental standards and the lack of developable land as future issues facing the Township. With new versions of "families," single parent households, working couples without children, retired couples or sole occupants, housing demands have and will change. In addition, land remaining for development will need to be engineered more carefully due to physiography and the lack of public utilities. Property maintenance in older residential neighborhoods was also identified as a concern related to the community's available housing stock.

Commercial development which occurred in the Freeport-Old Freeport Road corridors was characterized as poorly planned, rapid growth, resulting in traffic congestion and limited accessibility. In 1993, a continued demand for retail, office and service uses was projected although that demand has dissipated somewhat due to traffic circulation problems which need to be addressed through the provision

of off-site transportation improvements. Private sector investment, at some level, is still like to occur, however, in-depth market analysis and cost/benefit formulas will precede future land development proposals, given the limited amount of land available for nonresidential development. Riverfront land is recognized as a marketable asset in a County with more than ninety (90.5) miles of rivers and 2,000 miles of streams. The opportunity for riverfront development was provided for in the most recent zoning ordinance revisions and several developments have taken advantage of this community resource.

Land available for light industrial uses is limited to the RIDC property which, at build-out, is projected to provide for between eight thousand and ten thousand (8,000-10,000) full and part-time jobs. The intensity of development on this site has become an issue of concern as home-sites have been approved in close proximity to this industrial park. Required perimeter bufferyards and performance standards relating to exterior light, separation of vehicular traffic, stormwater management and other use characteristics have been adopted to lessen impacts and will need to be monitored as development is approved. The 1993 Part II Comprehensive Plan characterizes the RIDC uses as corporate offices, distribution warehousing, and high tech industries as opposed to manufacturing and processing uses. This category of land use generates a higher percentage of truck traffic and vehicular traffic in general than moderate density residential uses that developed on the eastern side of O'Hara Township. Site design standards, if applied consistently, can provide support for this mix of uses, to an extent, although certain characteristics of each use category are incompatible. The remaining "infill" development in close proximity to the RIDC property will need to be carefully designed and engineered to mitigate the perceived negative impacts of a nonresidential destination site.

The use of public and semi-public land uses was also discussed in the Part II Comprehensive Plan document. An estimated six hundred and forty (640) acres of tax-exempt land, mostly developed, was listed. These institutional and recreational lands accommodate Fox Chapel Area School District facilities, a VA hospital, municipal authority and County owned property. Services provided by the agencies which own and maintain these lands benefit Township residents as well as residents within the region and the loss of tax revenues from these uses is not a significant issue given their function.

TRANSPORTATION

With the extension of the Allegheny Valley Expressway (State Route 28) through O'Hara Township in the 1960's, access to Pittsburgh's northeastern employment centers and urban assets was enhanced. Every suburban arterial roadway constructed to provide access to developing areas in the Township intersects with State Route 28 or with State Route 8 at some location within the community. While Freeport Road still provides the primary access to local commercial areas and functions as the main street in several adjacent Boroughs, there are few transportation links between neighborhoods in O'Hara Township and neighborhoods in Fox Chapel Borough. This lack of interconnectivity is anomalous in the region and tended to isolate residential areas from each other resulting in a disjointed interior circulation pattern.

While regional access was enhanced with interchanges between SR 8 and I-279, I-579 and the Parkway East (Penn Lincoln), the configuration of site specific local streets which provide access to individual home sites were not developed with links to adjacent developing tracts. The 1993 Part II Comprehensive Plan states that this characteristic of the local transportation network is safer overall due to the isolation of these neighborhood street systems, which discourage alternative routing and "short cuts." Some communities see this isolation and lack of connectivity as a detriment to emergency service delivery and a shared slice of community.

In 1989, the traffic volume on Freeport Road was reported at 1,460 vehicles during a Saturday afternoon (2:00 to 3:00 p.m.) peak hour. Traffic volumes on Fox Chapel Road were reported at 1,005 vehicles during the same peak hour. The text states that while the p.m. weekday peak hour is usually the period when the highest number of trips are counted, in O'Hara Township that period ranks second. In any event, the numbers given in 1993 were significantly lower than the AADT (Annualized Average Daily Trips) reported by PennDOT in 2008. Projected traffic volumes for the year 1995 were estimated at 1,755 on Freeport Road and 1,456 vehicles on Fox Chapel Road. These numbers represent a 20% increase and a 45% increase in traffic volumes respectively, over a six (6) year period, 1989 to 1995. The source of these data is not identified, but increases of this magnitude suggest that either development of regional impacts were introduced or that alternate routes which were part of the regional transportation network were no longer available, forcing vehicles into the Freeport Road corridor. A normal background traffic growth of between 1% and 2% annually would result in traffic volumes in the 6% to 10% range over a six (6) year period. An increase of 45% is far beyond the statistical range for projected growth in traffic volume.

Compared to these data the AADT numbers provided by PennDOT for the subject roadway segments in 2008, and the 1989 study and 1995 projection are a level of magnitude lower. According to PennDOT, Annualized Average Daily Trips on Freeport Road to the east of the Fox Chapel Road intersection totaled just under 11,700 (11,693 AADT) and average daily trips on Fox Chapel Roads north of the Freeport Road intersection totaled more than 24,000 while trips north of the SR 28 intersection totaled more than 26,000 (26,286 AADT). The disparity in these traffic volume numbers can be interpreted in different ways. If the 1989 and projected 1995 statistics were inaccurate, the need to alleviate congestion through the provision of capacity improvements would be understated. Or if the 2008 AADT numbers are inflated, which seems doubtful as PennDOT was the source, then these two (2) transportation facilities present an immediate concern for future access and circulation to O'Hara Township. Clearly, intersections in both corridors are operating at low or failing levels of service, but options for mitigation have not been identified locally, and at a point in the near future, fundable options may cease to exist. The 1993 plan states that a public-private consortium coordinated by the then Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission (now SPC) had begun to look at solutions. This issue will be addressed in more detail in Chapter 7 of the current plan.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Part II lists four (4) broad areas of concern to Township residents: first, the quality of development; second, the environment; third, traffic; and fourth, services and facilities. While these concerns are common to most growing communities, O'Hara Township has been proactive from the outset of the formative periods of growth in addressing recognized impacts. In 1993, with less land available for development and increasing County and State environmental controls, the Township sought to broaden its protection of land with sensitive environmental features. A comprehensive package of zoning amendments with an emphasis on performance standards, use characteristics and submittal requirements was completed in the mid-1990's. The focus of these amendments was to support the approval of sustainable development through the consistent application of design criteria. Subdivision and land development standards were revised in the mid-2000's to require additional information on development impacts associated with proposed site improvements. Once again, the Township's concern for environmental issues was the impetus for the adoption of broader submittal requirements.

Establishing community development objectives facilitates the drafting of regulatory documents which are designed to reach goals. Planning without implementation strategies is useless and O'Hara Township's planning efforts have been fairly effective. While broad areas of concern and generally accepted remedies were provided in the 1993 Part II document, a more specific menu of actions, policies and legislative initiatives are called for as O'Hara Township moves toward build-out following its peak population years. Realistic solutions to specific problems and deficiencies buttressed by the support of property owners and taxpayers will result in an effective local planning program. Consensus building is key to the achievement of local planning objectives because if stated objectives are viewed as sympathetic to special interests, the credibility of the entire planning program is suspect.

The current planning effort will move from general recommendations included in the 1993 Comprehensive Plan to specific actions. Clearly both the impact of the natural environment and traffic congestion are still core issues of concern as the Township evolves. Infill housing with designed bufferyards or natural buffers is suggested where public utilities and access from local streets are available. This projected residential trend makes no distinction for the types of housing needed as demographics change. Preferred options and development models need to be identified during the current plan preparation work. In the opening narrative of the Part II document, certain infrastructure and land use characteristics were identified and they are still relevant today with regard to the location and site design features of residential developments in the Township. The growth management and redevelopment options recommended by the Planning Commission and Long Range Planning Committee will affect quality of life issues into the next decade as a larger percentage of the Township's population reaches retirement age.

Land use based on physiographic characteristics is described as "river terrace" and revenue ridges and valleys. Commercial and industrial development occurs to the south of SR 28 while residential development in separately identifiable areas with site specific circulation networks, occurs north of the SR 28 corridor. The RIDC Park occurs as a distinct, geographically buffered development with specialized light industrial uses and an integrated circulation system. These distinct areas of development are described

as “specialized use neighborhoods” which evolved during the Township’s suburban transition following World War II.

In the older settled areas along Old Freeport Road mixed land use is a result of early settlement patterns. While that corridor has changed significantly, a less homogeneous mix of uses is still evident. Montrose Hill and Pleasant Valley are also identified as examples of diverse neighborhoods as is the area adjacent to the Saxonburg Boulevard corridor. The authors of the Part II Plan state that by the early 1990’s most of the “easily usable vacant land” have been developed. Further, the plan document states that the northwest quadrant lacks adequate infrastructure and the lack of transportation capacity and safety improvements in the Old Freeport Road corridor makes both areas less attractive.

A series of twelve (12) land use goals were identified in the Part II Plan based on the existing conditions analyses. They are as follows:

1. Preservation of the wooded residential character of the community;
2. Improvement of the visual appearance of the Freeport-Old Freeport Road commercial core;
3. Protection of residential neighborhoods by adequate buffering through maintenance of wooded slopes, or through the planting of new landscape buffers;
4. The prevention of commercial or industrial intrusion into residential areas;
5. The protection of residential streets from through traffic, while avoiding the unnecessary creation of dead-end streets;
6. Incentives for developments which provide open space, retain woodland, and protect slope areas and other features of the natural environment;
7. Prevention of undue damage to the natural environment from the removal of foliage or by excessive grading;
8. Steep slopes to be used only if geotechnically sound;
9. Use of steep slope areas for passive recreation;
10. Reclamation of derelict land when new development meets other community goals;
11. Restricting the location of developments which generate heavy traffic to land having access to thoroughfare; and
12. Restricting industrial traffic to major thoroughfares.

As O’Hara Township moves toward build-out, this list should be gleaned for relevance and policy consistency. A priority list should be generated by the Planning Commission and Long Range Planning Committee where specific strategies have been identified. Riverfront development with an emphasis on public access is such a policy and both small scale commercial and planned residential development with recreational amenities, can take advantage of Allegheny River assets.

Specific targets for redevelopment or an expansion of land use options include the Margery Drive area and Pleasant Valley. Both areas have been compromised by their proximity to high-volume roadways, and in the Pleasant Valley area to natural feature constraints. With Margery Drive, the recommendation is to consider a set of commercial use options which also protects property owners who wish to maintain residences in the area. The addition of open space, pedestrian access to abutting commercial areas, and stream rehabilitation are recommended in respect to the Pleasant Valley neighborhood. These objectives

could still be viable fifteen (15) years later and will be a part of the Township's future land use plan. Options to be considered include a Business Transition Overlay District and an "adaptive reuse" conditional use category to be added to the zoning text as necessary. The Part II Plan recommendations stress the input of the twelve (12) property owners most affected by regulatory amendments related to land use.

In terms of housing, community goals reflect a protection of the status quo where residential neighborhoods have provided the foundation of values held in high regard by community residents. Planned Residential Developments (PRD's) are identified as appropriate residential development options for O'Hara Township because of the design components which permit a developer to preserve areas with environmental constraints as open space while clustering home sites in a variety of configurations on land within a single tract needing less disturbance and preparation. Given the topographic and stormwater issues related to development in the northwest quadrant, a well-planned residential neighborhood with a curvilinear interior street pattern, accessible open space and preferred active or passive recreational amenities seems to be a good fit.

O'Hara Township's transportation network evolved with a reliance on use by automobiles. The inference is that "T" intersections occurred less frequently than margining intersections due in large part to topographic constraints. While traffic volumes on rural collector roadways are not nearly as high as arterials or urban collectors, the design standards for such roads are also less stringent. The lack of drainage facilities to accept stormwater from cartways, deficient lane widths, and vertical and horizontal curvature characteristics are such that as formerly rural areas experience increased subdivision activity, the supporting infrastructure can be overwhelmed. The 1993 Plan suggests that certain arterial roadways, specifically SR 28, function as by-passes in older settled areas. Further, the reduction of conflicts in traffic movements through the design of limited access roads permits a more efficient movement of high volumes of traffic. The review of traffic impacts from development is an important aspect of the Township's review and approval process.

A Major Thoroughfare Plan which identifies a hierarchy of roads based on five (5) categories is provided. Collector roads include Saxonburg Boulevard, Dorseyville Road, Kittanning Road, Squaw Run Road, Hunt Road, Guyasuta Road, Field Club Road, Fox Chapel Road, Delafield Road, Alpha Drive, and Powers Run Road. These transportation facilities provide the interior circulation network in the Township and intersect with each other or with the arterial roads in the southern tier which parallel the Allegheny River. The plan proposes no new links to the existing network, nor any major transportation improvements. There is no discussion of current levels of service at key intersections, and that data, plus current traffic counts can aid decision-makers as they grapple with current and future circulation issues. An observation regarding the conflict at Conrail's rail line with vehicle traffic in O'Hara Township due to the lack of a grade separation points to a prominent deficiency in the overall regional as well as local traffic pattern.

Sanitary sewerage service is not available in portions of the East Little Pine Creek Basin, described as an approximate area of eight hundred and eighty two (882) acres, north and west of Dorseyville Road.

Alcosan (Allegheny County Sanitary Authority) provides effluent treatment to all other Township areas services. Line extensions to the Field Club and Timber Ridge Roads areas were in the planning stage in 1993. The economics of extending public sanitary sewerage service into the remaining unsewered areas involves a cost-benefit analysis, and a review of on-lot system failures. The public health issue dictates, to some extent, whether remedial sewer line projects are funded, but unit costs per household for tapping and connecting fees are also a factor.

Three (3) separate public water distribution authorities serve developed areas in O'Hara Township. The Hampton Township Municipal Authority, which purchases water from the Shaler Water Company, West View Water Authority and the City of Pittsburgh provides service to the Pleasant Valley and Saxonburg Boulevard areas. The Fox Chapel Water Authority provides service to the eastern half of O'Hara Township and areas east of Slitz Run and north of Dorseyville Road on the western half. The Allegheny River is its water source. The Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority provides service in the Old Freeport Road corridor. While the Part II Plan indicates that adequate water supplies for domestic and commercial usage is a requirement for development approval, there is no discussion of planned upgrades to components of each Authority's distribution and treatment facilities. A current inventory of the water distribution infrastructure and related maintenance activities since the early 1990's will be provided in Chapter 8, Government and Community Facilities, of the current plan document.

The Township's Park and Recreation Department operates, maintains, and programs activities on nineteen (19) parcels of land totaling approximately two hundred and fifty (250) acres. These include five (5) developed parks, thirteen (13) passive areas and a 5.5 acre island (Six Mile Island) in the Allegheny River. Table 17 of the 1993 Part II Plan lists the parks and facilities, some of which were secured through density transfer options. Private recreation facilities include the Boy Scouts of America Guyasuta Reservation, three (3) marinas and yacht clubs, and two (2) private swim clubs. These recreational lands are characterized as having been designed for children and younger adults and the Township's changing demographics resulted in revised recommendations in the recently completed Parks, Recreation and Open Space study to meet those needs as the Township's population ages in place. Standards for recreational needs by population have been established by Federal and Commonwealth guidelines and the Township has been pro-active in meeting those standards. A recent trend toward the use of trails for preferred recreational activities such as walking, jogging, and bicycling is discussed in the Part II Plan and the recommendation is to plan and develop additional trails linking recreational areas within the municipal boundaries as well as with adjacent municipalities.

Community objectives regarding growth management endorses the Planned Residential Development (PRD) template as a model. As stated in previous sections of the 1993 Plan, environmental concerns relating to land use, specifically site preparation activities, require a comprehensive review for compliance with local regulatory provisions. The author proposes alternative design options which are more flexible and include an assessment of environmental impacts of "performance zoning" to dictate the intensity of development permitted. This type of regulatory approach relies on use characteristics to determine compliance with a variety of design and construction standards. The author also suggests that

environmental advisory councils, design review committee, and local business committees could play a role in administering a growth management program. Future requirements based on what the author says are “needlessly high standards” will add to the cost of development “without adding an increased measure of safety or health.” With the enforcement of any land use regulations, standards must be reasonable and be linked to the objectives outlined. Pennsylvania’s long history of property rights has provided a volume of land use case law which attempts to balance private versus public interests.

CONCLUSIONS

Throughout the 1993 Part II Comprehensive Plan, there is the theme of planning before acting. The thematic commentaries, data summaries, recommendations and general strategies for achieving recognized community-wide objectives, stress the need to do thorough review. While there are few specific recommendations for either legislative action or capital improvements programming, the plan document functions as the foundation for public policy debate and informed decision-making. The next logical step in O'Hara Township's planning process is to evaluate those policy recommendations and to craft a specific set of strategic actions designed to address issues raised in the document. The key is to build a consensus of support to address those qualities of life in O'Hara Township that residents and business owners embrace, and attempt to sustain those qualities while preparing for build-out. Planning is the identification of options and the recognition of consequences given certain choices. As O'Hara Township's community leaders act in the best interests of their property owners and taxpayers, it is more important than ever to have a plan which respects every resource available.

KEY PERSON INTERVIEWS

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2008 INTERVIEW OF ANNE E. STEPHENS, PH.D., SUPERINTENDENT, FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT, BY ERIC HAMILTON:

O'Hara Township is updating its Comprehensive Development Plan. This plan describes the Township's current conditions and goals for land use and community development. This plan was last updated over a decade ago. As part of the update process O'Hara is seeking input from a variety of community stakeholders. I am contacting you on behalf of the Comprehensive Plan Committee to seek the Fox Chapel Area School District's input. As a representative of an important part of the O'Hara community, we welcome your thoughts regarding issues that may be of particular concern to the FCASD. The following are some examples of questions that the FCASD may have an interest in addressing:

- What, if any, Township facilities or services could be improved to better meet the needs of the district and residents served by the district?

Of course, the response from the athletic department is the need for additional community fields. *The school district has so many teams and events that it is difficult to assist every group from outside the school that wishes to use the facilities. We also often have complaints from the citizens when we turn on the field lights or use the speaker system. The wear and tear on fields when we add community teams is also a problem.*

- What trends do you see in the population, tax base, or demographics of the district that might influence the Township's planning decisions?

We are currently having a demographic study completed. We thought that the O'Hara student population would not be increasing, but it seems to continue to grow. We have nearly 700 students at O'Hara Elementary School and had to add an additional kindergarten this year. We can share the demographic study with you when it is complete. We currently transport students living at the new Chapel Harbor development and the Docks to Kerr. The tax base does not seem to be moving up or down, but we are concerned about the economy and the possibility of having an increased problem of collecting taxes. It was very good that Fox Chapel was listed in the Pittsburgh Business Times in 2008 as having the #1 (Fairview) and #2 (O'Hara) elementary schools in Western Pennsylvania based on student achievement. We also had some of the highest SAT average scores in the state and nation. All of this helps when trying to attract people to the area. A new "Fox Facts" on our Web site lists all of the progress being made throughout the district.

- What are the most important growth and development related issues that the Township should attempt to address during the planning process? (Note: Significant portions of the Plan will be devoted to issues such as zoning and traffic.)

One area that we note as a concern remains at the intersection of Fox Chapel Rd. and Freeport Rd. Although a third turning lane has recently been added, there are still traffic issues in that location.

- Based on the school district's interactions with the O'Hara community, what do you see as the greatest opportunities to strengthen the community through zoning, land use, capital improvement and other development related decisions?

We would like to see the zoning status of the High School and Kerr changed.

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

FORMAT

In the spring of 2008 the O'Hara Township Long Range Planning Committee put together a community survey designed to illicit input from residents, while gauging attitudes on issues of concern, and gathering localized information which supports recommendations for future implementation efforts. A total of 3,727 surveys were mailed to households in the Township, 2,180 going to neighborhoods in Eastern O'Hara and 1,547 to Western O'Hara. There were 1,039 surveys returned, or about twenty-eight percent (28%), which provides recognizable statistical validity to the response. Of the total number of surveys returned, a response rate of 30.4% was calculated from recipients in the East O'Hara census tracts and 24.3% from recipients in the West O'Hara census tract, based on the total number of households surveyed.

A summary report of survey responses was prepared for review by members of the Long Range Planning Committee and is included in this Chapter for reference. Comments received from Township residents occurred most frequently to neutrally worded statements where responses reflected an attitude about the statement's content. However, throughout the survey instrument, respondents were specifically asked for input. In addition, residents were asked to prioritize a menu of selected response options which functions as a preference barometer in the context of the topic surveyed. The highest concentration of non-response errors occurred with these topical components due to the repetition of high or low numbers which respondents used to indicated preferences.

Themes emerged from an analysis of the survey responses to open option questions and they were segregated based on written comments into five (5) broad topics and one (1) specific retail category. This was the format of the summary report, color-coded for quick reference. The following broad themes received the highest number of responses: recreation, transportation, restaurants, retail and medical, with hardware as a preferred specific category illicitng significant response. Comments were not categorized as positive or negative, rather recorded as provided on returned surveys.

**O'HARA TOWNSHIP****COMMUNITY SURVEY**

O'Hara Township needs your input as we update our comprehensive plan. Please take a few minutes to complete this short survey and return it in the enclosed stamped envelope. The contribution of information is very valuable in the development of your community.

As this process moves along you will have an opportunity to attend a town hall meeting to share input with your friends and neighbors in the O'Hara community.

Your anonymous responses and comments will be collected, recorded, and tabulated to ensure an open and transparent process. Afterwards a summary will be made available through our newsletter and/or website.

Thank you in advance for your time and input.

1. How long have you lived in the Township?

- ☐ Five or less years ☐ 6-10 years
☐ 11-20 years ☐ More than 20 years

2. Number of children in your household under 18 _____

3. Would you be more likely to use public transportation if a park and ride were available near your home?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. What most concerns you about the neighborhood in which you live? Please number the following from 1 to 6 with 1 being the most concern and 6 the least.

- ☐ Traffic Safety ☐ Aging infrastructure (streets, sidewalks, lighting, play equipment)
☐ Pedestrian Safety ☐ Deteriorating Housing
☐ Crime ☐ Other

5. Most necessities such as groceries, clothing and medical supplies are available within O'Hara Township or within a short commute from O'Hara Township.

- ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Not Sure

6. Please mark the type of housing you think is most needed in the Township. Please number the following from 1 to 5 with 1 being the most needed and 5 the least.

- ☐ Affordable housing designed for or geared toward senior citizens.
☐ Affordable housing designed for or geared toward younger families
☐ Upper scale single family homes
☐ Upper scale condominium, townhome, or carriage homes
☐ Rental housing.

7. What personal services or businesses are most needed for the Township's residents and consumers?

8. The preservation of open space and natural areas should be a central design feature of future residential developments.

- ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Not Sure

9. What are O'Hara Township's most positive characteristics? Please number the following from 1 to 8 with 1 being the most positive and 8 being the least.

- ☐ Property values ☐ Government services ☐ Emergency services
☐ Regional access ☐ Schools ☐ Parks, Recreation & open space
☐ Road maintenance ☐ Other _____

10. Would you and/or members of your household be interested in attending a town hall meeting regarding these and other planning issues?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments: Please use other side.

Please return this survey by June 30th, 2008.

COMMUNITY SURVEY, JUNE 2008

	# Mailed	# Received	Percentage Received
East	2,180	663	30.4
West	1,547	376	24.3
Total	3,727	1,039	27.9
Twelve surveys (5 East O'Hara, 7 West O'Hara) were received over a month following the deadline date and after all the results had been tallied, totaled and posted. These surveys were not counted in the statistical replies, but were included in the comments section.			

1. How long have you lived in the Township?

	Five or less years		6-10 years		11-20 years		More than 20 years		No Answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
East	130	19.6	97	14.6	130	19.6	305	46.0	1	--
West	44	11.7	47	12.5	66	17.6	219	58.2	--	--
Total	174	16.7	144	13.9	196	18.9	524	50.4	1	.1

2. Number of children in your household under 18.

	0		1		2		3		4		No Answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
East	453	68.3	67	10.1	84	12.7	31	4.7	5	--	23	3.5
West	253	67.3	43	11.4	51	13.6	18	4.8	3	--	8	2.1
Total	706	67.9	110	10.6	135	13.0	49	4.7	8	.8	31	3.0

3. Would you be more likely to use public transportation if a park and ride were available near your home?

	Yes		No		No Answer*	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
East	259	39.1	393	59.3	11	1.7
West	166	44.1	199	52.3	11	2.9
Total	425	40.9	592	57.0	22	2.1

*Includes "Maybe," "Possibly," "Perhaps," etc.

4. What most concerns you about the neighborhood in which you live?

Traffic Safety														
	1		2		3		4		5		6		No Answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
East	154	23.2	111	16.8	108	16.3	54	8.1	33	5.0	31	4.7	172	26.0
West	69	18.4	76	20.2	54	14.4	39	10.4	23	6.1	24	6.4	91	24.2
Total	223	21.5	187	18.0	162	15.6	93	9.0	56	5.4	55	5.3	263	25.3
Pedestrian Safety														
	1		2		3		4		5		6		No Answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
East	121	18.3	129	19.5	90	13.6	85	12.8	36	5.4	27	4.0	175	26.4
West	70	18.6	62	16.5	56	14.9	39	10.4	36	9.6	19	5.1	94	25.0
Total	191	18.4	191	18.4	146	14.1	124	11.9	72	6.9	46	4.4	269	25.9
Crime														
	1		2		3		4		5		6		No Answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
East	84	12.7	67	10.1	93	14.0	72	10.8	97	14.6	58	8.7	192	29.0
West	59	15.7	46	12.2	56	14.9	44	11.7	46	12.2	28	7.4	97	25.8
Total	143	13.8	113	10.9	149	14.3	116	11.2	143	13.8	86	8.3	289	27.8
Aging Infrastructure														
	1		2		3		4		5		6		No Answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
East	87	13.1	81	12.2	103	15.5	114	17.2	49	7.4	37	5.6	192	28.9
West	51	13.6	46	12.2	55	14.6	58	15.4	41	10.9	19	5.0	106	28.2
Total	138	13.3	127	12.2	158	15.2	172	16.6	90	8.7	56	5.4	298	28.7
Deteriorating Housing														
	1		2		3		4		5		6		No Answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
East	33	4.9	38	5.7	39	5.9	78	141.8	184	27.8	84	12.7	207	31.2
West	40	10.6	32	8.5	27	7.2	52	13.8	76	20.2	47	12.5	102	27.1
Total	73	7.0	70	6.7	66	6.4	130	12.5	260	25.0	131	12.6	309	29.7
Other														
	1		2		3		4		5		6		No Answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
East	60	9.0	22	3.3	13	1.9	8	1.2	8	1.2	79	11.9	473	71.3
West	35	9.3	9	2.4	7	1.8	9	2.4	8	2.1	46	12.2	262	69.6
Total	95	9.1	31	3.0	20	1.9	17	1.6	16	1.5	125	12.1	735	70.7

"No Answer" includes entries with only check marks or "X's" with no number indicated.

5. Most necessities such as groceries, clothing and medical supplies are available within O'Hara Township or within a short commute from O'Hara Township.

	Agree		Disagree		Not Sure		No Answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
East	628	94.7	21	3.2	10	1.5	4	0.6
West	356	94.7	14	3.7	6	1.5	--	--
Total	984	94.7	35	3.4	16	1.5	4	0.4

6. Please mark the type of housing you think is most needed in the Township. Please number the following from 1 to 5 with 1 being the most needed and 5 the least.

Affordable housing designed for or geared toward senior citizens.												
	1		2		3		4		5		No Answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
East	150	22.6	125	18.9	86	12.9	85	12.8	35	5.2	182	27.5
West	111	29.5	76	20.2	44	11.7	45	11.9	9	2.4	91	24.2
Total	261	25.1	201	19.3	130	12.5	130	12.5	44	4.2	273	26.3
Affordable housing designed for or geared toward younger families												
	1		2		3		4		5		No Answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
East	164	24.7	126	19.0	108	16.3	45	6.8	34	5.1	186	28.1
West	98	26.1	74	19.7	48	12.8	40	10.6	15	3.9	101	26.9
Total	262	25.2	200	19.2	156	15.0	85	8.2	49	4.7	287	27.6
Upper scale single family homes												
	1		2		3		4		5		No Answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
East	103	15.5	74	11.2	89	13.4	111	16.7	92	13.9	194	29.3
West	60	16.0	44	11.7	79	21.0	46	12.2	44	11.7	103	27.4
Total	163	15.7	118	11.4	168	16.2	157	15.1	136	13.1	297	28.6
Upper scale condominium, townhome or carriage homes												
	1		2		3		4		5		No Answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
East	73	11.0	95	14.3	114	17.2	114	17.2	66	9.9	201	30.3
West	32	8.5	50	13.3	54	14.4	93	24.7	44	11.7	103	27.4
Total	105	10.1	145	14.0	168	16.2	207	19.9	110	10.6	304	29.3
Rental housing												
	1		2		3		4		5		No Answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
East	12	1.8	30	4.5	54	8.1	49	7.4	316	47.7	202	30.5
West	6	1.6	8	2.1	39	10.4	18	4.8	196	52.1	109	28.9
Total	18	1.7	38	3.7	93	9.0	67	6.4	512	49.3	311	29.9

7. What personal services or businesses are most needed for the Township's residents and consumers?

	No Answer	
	#	%
East	404	60.9
West	193	51.3
Total	597	57.5

8. The preservation of open space and natural areas should be a central design feature of future residential developments.

	Agree		Disagree		Not Sure		No Answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
East	598	90.2	16	2.4	39	5.9	10	1.5
West	332	88.3	14	3.7	26	6.9	4	1.1
Total	930	89.5	30	2.9	65	6.3	14	1.3

9. What are O'Hara Township's most positive characteristics? Please number the following from 1 to 8 with 1 being the most positive and 8 being the least.

Property values										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	NA
East	#	168	133	97	78	49	47	20	10	61
	%	25.3	20.1	14.6	11.8	7.4	7.1	3	1.5	9.2
West	#	117	54	48	40	35	26	23	6	27
	%	31.1	14.4	12.8	10.6	9.3	6.9	6.1	1.6	7.2
Total	#	285	187	145	118	84	73	43	16	88
	%	27.4	18.0	14.0	11.4	8.1	7.0	4.1	1.5	8.5
Regional Access										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	NA
East	#	96	96	97	78	67	71	68	11	79
	%	14.5	14.5	14.6	11.8	10.1	10.7	10.3	1.7	11.9
West	#	66	55	55	44	41	36	34	4	41
	%	17.6	14.6	14.6	11.7	10.9	9.6	9.0	1.0	10.9
Total	#	162	151	152	122	108	107	102	15	120
	%	15.6	14.5	14.6	11.7	10.4	10.3	9.8	1.4	11.5
Road Maintenance										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	NA
East	#	65	50	75	77	94	96	129	11	66
	%	9.8	7.5	11.3	11.6	14.2	14.5	19.5	1.7	10.0
West	#	35	39	47	47	58	51	61	10	28
	%	9.3	10.4	12.5	12.5	15.4	13.6	16.2	2.7	7.4
Total	#	100	89	122	124	152	147	190	21	94
	%	9.6	8.6	11.7	11.9	14.6	14.1	18.3	2	9.0

Government Services										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	NA
East	#	38	31	28	54	88	139	150	27	108
	%	5.7	4.7	4.2	8.1	13.3	21.0	22.6	4.0	16.3
West	#	26	22	18	38	46	79	85	15	47
	%	6.9	5.9	4.8	10.1	12.2	21.0	22.6	3.9	12.5
Total	#	64	53	46	92	134	218	235	42	155
	%	6.2	5.1	4.4	8.9	12.9	21.0	22.6	4.0	14.9
Schools										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	NA
East	#	303	124	63	45	25	16	23	9	55
	%	45.7	18.7	9.5	6.8	3.8	2.4	3.5	1.4	8.3
West	#	149	80	44	30	23	12	9	6	23
	%	39.6	21.3	11.7	8.0	6.1	3.2	2.4	1.6	6.1
Total	#	452	204	107	75	48	28	32	15	78
	%	43.5	19.6	10.3	7.2	4.6	2.7	3.1	1.4	7.5
Emergency Services										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	NA
East	#	93	81	101	93	96	82	35	6	76
	%	14.0	12.2	15.2	14.0	14.5	12.4	5.3	.9	11.5
West	#	61	53	55	50	63	37	18	4	35
	%	16.2	14.1	14.7	13.3	16.8	9.9	4.8	1.0	9.3
Total	#	154	134	156	143	159	119	53	10	111
	%	14.8	12.9	15.0	13.8	15.3	11.5	5.1	1.0	10.7
Parks, Recreation and Open Space										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	NA
East	#	112	102	115	106	83	52	27	8	58
	%	16.9	15.4	17.3	16.0	12.5	7.8	4.1	1.2	8.7
West	#	50	44	71	61	41	43	26	8	32
	%	13.3	11.7	18.9	16.2	11.0	11.4	6.9	2.1	8.5
Total	#	162	146	186	167	124	95	53	16	90
	%	15.6	14.1	17.9	16.1	11.9	9.1	5.1	1.5	8.7
Other										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	NA
East	#	8	7	3	6	3	2	9	81	544
	%	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	79.6
West	#	7	5	2	2	1	4	8	55	292
	%	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	77.7
Total	#	15	12	5	8	4	6	17	136	836
	%	1.4	1.2	.5	.8	.4	.6	1.6	13.1	80.5

10. Would you and/or members of your household be interested in attending a town hall meeting regarding these and other planning issues?

	Yes		No		No Answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
East	395	59.6	233	35.1	35	5.3
West	235	62.5	125	33.2	16	4.3
Total	630	60.6	358	34.5	51	4.9

SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS

Slightly more than half (50.4%) of all respondents to the community survey indicated they have lived in O'Hara Township for more than twenty (20) years, with another nineteen percent (18.9%) indicating residency for between eleven and twenty (11-20) years. Nearly seven (7) in ten (10) respondents (67.9%) had no children under eighteen (18) years of age in their household (Questions Number 1 and 2).

On the use of public transportation, a greater percentage of respondents (57%) indicated a preference for private vehicle use versus public transportation (40.9%) (Question Number 3).

Question Number 4 asked for responses from residents to five (5) issues affecting daily living: traffic safety, pedestrian safety, crime, aging infrastructure, and deteriorating housing. A sixth option was "Other" which provides respondents with an open-ended opportunity to add a new concern or observation. Respondents were asked to assign a value of one through six (1-6) to each issue with "1" as the issue of most concern. It should be noted that a higher percentage of residents did not assign any value (No Answer) than assigned any value one through six (1-6).

A great majority of respondents (94.7%) agree that consumer staples such as food and clothing are available locally (Question Number 5).

Housing options was the topic in Statement Number 6 of the Community Survey. Rental housing was the least preferred (49.3%), while affordable housing for both seniors and young families (25.1% and 25.2%) received the highest percentage of "Most Needed" responses. Again, it should be noted that the "No answers" option received the highest percentage of responses other than the rental housing option, to each type of housing provided.

Question Number 7 was an open-ended opportunity for residents to offer suggestions as to what services or businesses are needed. A hardware store or home improvements facility was the overwhelming preference.

A great majority of respondents ((89.5%) also agree that the preservation of open space and natural areas is of prime importance in future residential development (Question Number 8).

Question Number 9 functions as a focus issue exercise and provides discussion points for the drafting of community goals and objectives. Schools (43.5%) and property values (27.4%) received the

highest percentage of high value rankings (1 through 8, with 1 being the most positive), while road maintenance (9.6%) and government services (6.2%) received the lowest percentage of high value rankings. These perceptions were confirmed by the high percentage of lower value rankings (6 through 8) received for road maintenance and government services, versus the low percentage of lower rankings received for schools and property values.

A little more than sixty percent (60%) of respondents would be interested in attending a planning oriented town hall meeting (Question Number 10).

Hardware	Hardware (72 replies), Busy Beaver (25), Lowes (9). Home Depot (10)	Restaurants	Restaurant (60), Dining (1), Fast food (2), takeout (1), diner (1)
Recreation	Recreation (6), trails (16), pool (17), ball field (4), bike/biking (20), park(s) (10), hiking/walking/jogging (17), playground(s) (4), library (10)	Retail	Electronics/computer (5), department (3), grocery/Whole Food (38), clothing (15), shoe (5), drug store/pharmacy (5), bakery (7), convenience stores (3)
Transportation	Road(s) (10), bus (34), transportation/public transportation (38), Park-n-Ride (7), traffic (6), taxi/cab (4)	Medical	Doctor (3), dentist (2), medical (7), emergency (1)

EAST

...a really good **diner**!

- better **recycling** for hard to recycle items

"Dollar" stores

"marked" cross walk

"Mom & Pop" ... Anything but Walmart!

* Home improvement retail

****Whole Foods** * Joann's or Michael's art store ** Better **restaurant** choices (not chains)

1. *More police patrols in neighborhoods, no just main **roads** 2. *24 hour stores*

? – Nothing, really.

24 hr **pharmacy**. an excellent meat market

A "mainstreet" CBD, Waterworks & other strip malls don't cut it. We go to Oakmont, Aspinwall, Sq. Hill, Shadyside to shop instead.

A **Busy beaver** –type store, night-time baseball

A dump.

A first class **restaurant**

a good **hardware** store!

A **HARDWARE** STORE

A **hardware** store, less gas stations

A home improvement/**hardware** type store

A public community **recreation** center – including a **pool**

A **walking** path – exercise areas – dog **park**!

A) **Restaurants**, e.g., a good deli! B) Upscale retail shops

adult classes – Presently it is limited –

Affordable **clothing** stores w/quality goods – not boutiques or TJ Maxx type stores

Affordable public **transportation** from local **roads**
all available

All good

an O'Hara Community **pool**, similar to what Hampton provides to their residents

An upscale **shoe** store

Another **drug store**, more adult **clothing** stores (affordable)

Another **grocery** chain, more **restaurants**

Another significant size **grocery** store to compete with Giant Eagle

Area pretty well covered

Art gallery

Art supply store, **hardware** store

Athletic facilities (track, gym, biking trails); restaurants; grocery

Audiologist

bakery, more restaurants

Better convenient stores

Better electrical service * Duquesne Light not very responsive

Better films at Waterworks, better class stores/shops, etc.

better grade restaurants, better grade clothing + shoes for adults

Better police presence. Street + Road Maintenance!!

Better police presence

better public transportation

Better quality retail stores, more moderately priced restaurants

better restaurants

Better restaurants & specialty shopping

Better restaurants & stores in Waterworks

Better traffic Freeport Rd & Fox Chapel Road

Better upscale shopping away from 28

Bigger library

Bigger post office with more parking

Bike lanes, public transportation — personal services & businesses are good mix

bike path

bike trails/walking trails

Bike/walking trails

Bus & Taxi service

Bus service to North Hills and Monroeville Malls

Bus service, cab service, sidewalks

Bus service, hardware store

Bus, Keep Movie Theatre! Cheaper rent

Busy beaver kind of stores

Busy beaver type store

Cab services (reliable one), house cleaning, computer store like Best buy

cannot think of anything — everything is close.

Can't think of any at this time

Car dealers

Card store; bakery; bike store; breakfast & lunch restaurants

Children & youth clubs

Close by/local hardware store

Clothing stores, Hardware Store

Code enforcement Park Pavilion + Ball field rental given resident preference* Open rentals to residents first. Then have a later time when non-residents can choose from what's available

Community Center

Community Cr/Library

Community pool which is more affordable than the 2 private pools in the area

Computer store

Costco

Costco!

Costco, higher end shopping as opposed to the Mills

Craft store like JoAnn Fabric

Current ones seem adequate

Current services are fine

Decent shopping area — Waterworks targets a very different segment of the population.

Department Store, Shoe store, Dollar Store, caregiver services for Elderly.

direct airline service to major cities

DMV — license & registration for cars

Do it yourself Hardware Business

Doctor services

Easier access to downtown

Electronic/computer

emergency medical services

Enforce rules already in the books. Fix traffic/light at FC & Freeport. We don't need more traffic lights. Harts Run & Saxonburg is a waste of gas.

Everything I need is within 5-10 minutes of my residence.

Everything is fine.

existing	Hardware store
Expanded transportation for seniors	Hardware store
Family priced restaurants, better/safer/more bike trails	Hardware store
family restaurants with NO smoking!!	HARDWARE STORE
Farmer's market	Hardware store
Farmer's Market or other source of local organic produce	Hardware store
Farmer's Market, Craft Store	Hardware store
Fed Ex/Kinko's; The Trillium Boutique and a car detailer are all missed. Another good, reasonably priced restaurant is a plus.	Hardware store
For senior citizens grocery stores, hardware stores	Hardware store — I really miss running in to Busy beaver
Garbage pickup — recycle — clear brush & trees from stop signs & ends of streets	Hardware store (small items)
Garden/landscaping center nursery/(plants),	Hardware store ~ Lowes/Home Depot
General household repair services	Hardware store, Abate/Applebee's
Good hardware or Busy beaver type	Hardware store, furniture store
Good pharmacies & doctors	Hardware store, handyman
Good police protection, Good Health facilities, Drs, Ambulances, Dentists etc. Ability to keep our taxes under control	Hardware store, no more gas stations!
good restaurants — not fast food	Hardware stores. Really miss Busy beaver.
Good upscale restaurants & shopping (Walmart — Kings — just don't do it)	Hardware type store (Lowes or Home Depot)
greater variety of shopping (clothes, etc.) and restaurants	Hardware type store, electronics store
Groceries, Banks, Post office, Restaurants, Barber	Hardware, garden, Hated busy beaver, but miss it.
Grocery	Hardware/home maintenance
grocery delivery	Hardware/plumbing store but not "Big Box"
grocery stores, medical facilities	health food store/healthy restaurants
Grocery, fuel, AAA services	high end shops (like Oakmont) specialty food stores (i.e. McGinnis)
Hardware	High quality bakery is needed
Hardware (i.e. Busy beaver)	High scale department store
Hardware store	Hiking & biking trails
Hardware store	Home care & housekeeping agency, child & elder care agency background check & bonded
Hardware store	Home improvement store (e.g. Busy beaver)
Hardware store	Home improvement/hardware
Hardware store	Home town services bakery, florist, hardware store etc.
Hardware store	Home/Hardware store
Hardware store	Hugh hardware store

I don't think we need any more businesses — especially gas stations

I don't want any more businesses or services

I have lived here 38 years (Inc. FCB). There is too much lower caliber shopping — Waterworks has destroyed life!

I really miss the JoAnn Fabrics store at the Waterworks, non-chain **restaurant**

I would like to see a community center similar to Hampton Township's. A good **Library** too!

Idea of merging services with the city is very, very bad. Their services are bad — ours are good.

I'm satisfied with what is currently available

Improved community center with more courts and **playground** and indoor track.

indoor public **community center** w/**basketball courts** & **swimming pool** & rental rooms

Just about right

Large **recreational** facility with indoor **pool**, tennis courts, + (ice skating)

Library

Library, better quality soccer/**baseball fields** — Let's maintain what we have.

Library, **parks**

lighting & police control to avoid night teenagers "activities" against cars

Local home improvement / **Hardware** to replace **Busy beaver**

Local **transportation**

Lowes or **Home Depot**

Mail boxes on streets, **shuttle bus** service to main lines (Montrose Hill)

Maybe more door to door services related to **transportation** to shopping, church etc

medical

Medical related

medical, groceries, auto repair

Men's warehouse or **clothing**, **hardware** store (small), barber shop

More exercise & nature **trails**

More exercise/gymnasiums/places to work out 7 days/week that are cheap

more fine cuisine **restaurants**

More **grocery** stores less gas stations

More **grocery** stores that are not upper scale

More mid-priced family **restaurants** (not fast food)

More police patrol

more senior services/activities, more police visibility at night/after dark

more short line **transportation** to **medical** facilities

More small **grocery** access A workout place

More upscale **clothing** stores

More up-scale shopping of all kinds. Some good **restaurants**.

More upscale shops & typical ones like: Ann Taylor, The Gap, more **restaurants**...family

More upscale stores + **food** markets, a **hardware** store

Need another **Busy beaver**!

Neighborhood mailbox and other essential services and/or products available within **WALKING** distance.

Neighborhood shop centers

Neiman Marcus or other upper scale **clothing** store

-nice **restaurants** — **hardware** store

Nicer **library** — sidewalks

Nicer **restaurants**, finer **clothing** shops

No complaints

No opinion — everything is OK now.

No parking on both sides of Orchard Hill Dr.

None — no more staff/taxes

None — that are not already available

None — we have what we need

None stay off my property

None that I know of

None-we have at least one of everything

Not sure

Nothing — need to focus on **parks**

Nothing additional comes to mind. Good work!

Nothing really stands out as being missing

O'Hara dump

organic grocery store, farmers market

organized sports for kids after middle school

Park & Ride, local bus service

Parks, fields, community bldg

Parks; green space; mass transit; bike trails to Downtown

Patio homes all on 1 floor for empty nesters

Paved bike/skating trails, rails-to-trails, community swimming pools)

physicians & small convenience stores

Police → watch for drunken driving ↓ free access buses n-

Post office

Post office, community center

Public transportation

Public transportation

Public transportation

Public transportation

public transportation

public transportation

Public transportation

Public transportation — convenient pickup spots and times; high end grocery stores such as Whole Foods; CYCLE lanes & sidewalks

Public transportation, especially park and ride

Public Transportation, Public Pool

Quality Hardware store

Reasonable zoning

Recreational Center

Recycling

Recycling of cardboard, phone books on a regular basis.

Reduce school taxes

Removal of bad trees in O'Hara Twp. (paper alleys) that could fall on homes. Always a concern when we have a storm. Coming up Boyd Ave. near the Tanks large tree limb

(big & heavy) hanging across the road could fall and if it did could kill someone driving or walking.

Replace Busy beaver

Replacement for busy beaver

Restaurants

restaurants

Restaurants

Restaurants

Restaurants (not chains) that deliver, ethnic restaurants like Mexican or middle eastern

Restaurants Better Quality Stores

Restaurants, higher end clothing stores, dentists

Restaurants, need public transportation! Boutique shops

Restaurants, Specialty shops, Bike Paths

restaurants, walking trails

Restaurants/food plaza/food court.

Restaurants; water park for kids; convenience stores; a bus line

Riverfront park or trail

Safe Park 'n Ride places to go to Downtown, Oakland, etc.

Safety (police, fire, etc) shopping, medical

Safety measures for joggers & bikers along our roadways

Schools are good but can be improved. Likewise the library.

Self service/full service car wash

Senior citizen services

Services and Businesses are well provided.

services are more than adequate.

Shuttle service to and from shopping areas, Verizon FIOS TV, bicycle or walking spaces on the roads

Sidewalks

Sidewalks near schools

small family owned businesses instead of big boxes.

Small grocer/convenience! (not at the edge of the community)

Small grocery near by

Small grocery stores

SMALLER **GROCERY** STORES "URGI-CARE" HEALTH-CARE

Sr. **shuttle**

supermarkets

Sweeper repair, Jeweler, **Hardware** Store

Taxi service to Airport

Taxi's

The **library** building and **library** holdings are third rate

The shopping centers on Freeport provide just about everything

The St Margaret's **shuttle bus** would come as far as Montrose Hill. It stops at end of Blawnox

There is no downtown community gathering area that attracts the township people to intermingle

Those which people want & will pay for.

Traffic control, **hardware** like **Busy beaver**

Traffic flow to stores & gas stations (crazy system now)

Train — commuter svc from O'Hara/Aspinwall to Pgh/Oakland

Transportation

Transportation

Transportation

Transportation for the elderly to Drs appointments, **grocery** shopping

Transportation to Waterworks or to **bus** route.

transportation(especially **taxi** service)

Treat everyone's property & streets equally!

updated community center

upscale **clothing** stores, upscale **restaurants**, flower shop

Upscale **food** market such as **Whole Foods**

Upscale **grocery**, **workout facilities**

Upscale Shopping and **Restaurants**

Upscale stores in Waterworks

Verizon wireless signal is too weak to use in our area (Valley View)

Very little. We have good street crews & fine police.

Visiting nurses

Walking & **biking** trails with ease access from neighborhood upgrade/update Boyd Center

walking trails

Walking/bike trails; some street lights

Walking/biking trails

Waterworks upscale replacements for Dingbats & Abate'

We already have what we need

We are in good shape business wise

We feel taken care of!

We have enough

We have it all!

We have just about everything!

We love it as is

We need a good **hardware** store! We need a Kohl's type store. It would be nice to have a **Lowe's** or **Home Depot**.

We need a **hardware** store

We need: **Restaurants**, good **take-out food**, more **bike** paths & **bike** lanes on main **roads**

We really need a good **hardware** store since **Busy beaver** left. I also miss Jo-Ann Fabrics

Well supplied already. Need community center to be proud of — What's the hold-up at Boyd?

We're good as it

What happened to the **Community Center** to be built behind Boyd (I saw drawings) Esp. young people need areas to meet w/organized activities.

While working with the public (& Township residents) can be a challenge, phone courtesy needs to be addressed with Township Building staff members.

With Rt 28 construction, traffic regulation has been a problem. Township police have done nothing in this regard. However, if there is a baseball game at Squaw Run there is always a police car and police in attendance.

YMCA — Boyd Comm. Center cannot compete w/other Community Centers

WEST

*more enforcement of ordinances *laws for "cat" owners responsibility of destruction.

① Family physician/internal medicine office open in the evening hrs. ② Same for dental services.

911 call.

A "Home Depot/Lowes" type of store. A specialty grocery stores (i.e., Whole Foods) non-Giant Eagle

A BAKERY, FAMILY RESTAURANT

A community center

A community pool

A lawn bowling green

A listing of township "approved" home maintenance companies — i.e. choices of who to call for home repair

A private grocery store with "fresh" produce

A recreation center, like Hampton — or a decent YMCA

A replacement for Busy beaver — small hardware store

A stand-alone pharmacy (e.g. CVS or Rite-Aid)

A store like Busy beaver was.

A trail system that connects with the River to bike (walk/jog) for leisure & commute. No more bldg — keep it green.

AAA office.

Additional national restaurant chains, more upscale stores in Waterworks, additional fitness facility/gyms, kids activities ex.

Affordable access to community swimming pools for Twp. residents

Affordable lawn care. Farmers market.

An Indian Restaurant or 2!

Another Hardware/Plumbing store

Arresting heroin dealers on Kittanning Pike; leaving the kids alone

Better restaurants, cafe's w/entertainment

Better road maintenance — less loss of electricity during storms.

Better road plowing in winter

brush pickup — pot hole repair

Bus service

Bus service

Bus service for Parkview & nearby residents

Bus service for senior citizens

Bus service for seniors that don't drive

Bus service for those who need it.

Businesses that are profitable

Busy beaver type of store

Busy beaver Type Store.

Can't think of any

Can't think of any.

carpooling or alternate to mass transit

Cell phone tower??

Clearing sidewalks & driveways in winter. Small job repairs.

Community Center

Community swimming pool, Lowes or Home Depot

Complaint department

Craft store

Decent hardware store, good home supply store not Walmart

Doctor who makes house calls

Dog park of its own.

Dog training facilities

Drugstores & hardware

Dumpster available

Duncan Donuts

Enjoy local small businesses

Family dining — more options

farmer's market, dog park

fine as is

Follow up toward keeping residential areas residential,. Need ball field in Parkview plan.

Free Ride as Aspinwall has —to St. Margaret's etc.

Full service grocery stores; public transportation

Funding & information on low income house improvement.

Gas

Good restaurants, increased shopping areas, computer services

Grocery store, med. express — great addition to township

Grocery stores

Handymen to do small jobs/repairs

Hardware store

Hardware store

Hardware store!!

Hardware store, travel agency

Hardware store; family restaurants

Hardware stores, bakery

Hardware stores, grocery stores walking distance

Hardware. Senior Citizen Center

Home Depot

Home Depot — Busy beaver type store

Home improvement

Home improvement store

Home improvement store, fabric store

Home maintenance & repair. public transit

Home repair services, farmer's markets

Houses of worship. Leaf raking & snow removal for Senior Citizens.

I find no fault

I miss Busy beaver. We did not need another gas station!

I think most everything is covered now!

Improve roads around Waterworks Mall and 28 exits

Italian bakery

JoAnn Fabric (bring it back!)

K-Mart, Hardware stores, ski shop

Lack of Busy beaver type store, more restaurants

larger stores such as Target & Kohl's. The Waterworks always seems to have 3-4 stores vacant

Less chains; more local, Mom & Pops. (We go to Blawnox for coffee, not Waterworks) DON'T OVERGROW. Don't aim for push-push-putting more businesses. We moved here because this was a nice urban/suburban/county balance. Hope you can keep it. No local hardware store (Sharpsburg + Busy beaver are gone.) Lost abate — issued Waterworks (illegible) prices?

Let the market decide

Let's stay a suburb. Little need for additions

Logical zoning to allow strategically located convenience stores.

Lowes or Home Depot Closer to O'Hara

Midrange → higher shoe and/or clothing stores for men and women — something between TJ Maxx/Marshalls and London Dock

Mini bus service

Miss Busy beaver

More code enforcement, deer control

More concerts. A municipal golf course.

More contractors. More coffee shops & cafes/restaurants.

More drug stores such as CVS and more shopping areas

More Pickup of Leaves and Branches Service could be better

More public transportation, shops that are easy to walk/bike to, hardware/garden store

More small markets with fresh fruit and vegetables

More timely newsletters 4 x per year * boro meeting minutes on website — not outline of agenda, the actual minutes/transcript of the meeting

More upscale shoe stores & women clothes, art or craft shops (like Joanne Fabrics) "Target," appliance stores, GAP, "HARDWARE STORE"

Most services are provided for

Municipal short-distance transportation

Need more police patrols & be visible more often — too much vandalism

No more

None

None

None

None I can think of. Everything is readily available.

None needed

None. Everything here is great the way it is.

Not certain as I do not shop within the Township

Not sure

not sure of any at this time

Park/ride, bus service etc. so car use is minimal

Parks & walking paths; volunteer fire & EMS

Parks/recreation areas for the young people

Parkview has no ball field and no adequate playground.

Personal care homes

Pharmacies

playground in Parkview neighborhood!

Please post actual transcripts of township meetings on the website. In fact, more recent news/announcements/crime alerts should be posted on the website.

Plumbing electrical

Police checking on the elderly & getting to know the new police

Police, more O'hara township summer activities (affordable/neighborhood activities) O'Hara township recreational activities need to increase

Privately owned public transportation

Proximity of: fire hydrant locality in comparison to each home

Public swimming pool

Public transportation

Public transportation

Public transportation

Public transportation

Public Transportation — circle route through township to shopping areas

Public transportation, sidewalks — bicycle paths.

Quality childcare, laundry services

Restaurant

Restaurants

Restaurants

Restaurants

restaurants @ hardware stores

Restaurants (moderately priced)

Restaurants, bagel shop, park/playground

Restaurants, hardware stores

restaurants, upscale grocery store, more recycling options + enforcement

Road maintenance should be #1

Satisfied with current services & businesses

Senior Bus Service to go shopping etc

Senior Citizen Center

Seniors need help in acquiring affordable meals and house services when needed.

Sidewalks

Sidewalks or roadside walkways — transportation to local stores

Small grocery stores.

Small privately owned grocery stores! Not oil (illegible)

Smaller scale — Lowe's — Home Depot, Lawyers, maintenance men, caregivers

Starbucks, upscale women's clothing, specialty gift & garden, paper store

Street cleaning on Kittanning Pike

Sufficient

Swimming pool, YMCA or YWCA indoor exercise facility

There are sufficient services and businesses in or close by our township

too many banks/more practical shopping business/dollar store

Township pool (year round)

Trader Joe's

Transportation

Transportation for elderly & those who don't drive or choose not to drive (b/c of ↑ gas prices)

Transportation to & from community shopping

Twp to maintain County Club lane

Unsure

Upper scale department store/clothing stores (Macy's etc)

Upper scale grocery store, e.g. Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, Gyms, Lowes-type store

Upscale rec center — more walking & bike trails

Upscale shopping, **Whole Foods** Store.

We have most types

Whole Foods

Wi-Fi

Work within area for the 60+ work force.

YMCA type of PE. **Busy beaver** type of business

YMCA with swimming **pool**. There is no public swimming **pool** in the area.

SUMMARY

Chapter 11, Citizen Participation, examines:

- Past Planning Efforts
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Community Survey

Past Planning Efforts

Chapter 11, Citizen Participation outlines previous planning efforts, namely the 1983 Phase I, Existing Conditions Report and the October 1993 Comprehensive Plan, Part II. Given the findings and identification of development trends in the 1983 Existing Conditions Report, lessons have been learned. O'Hara Township has established a long range planning and growth management program which has produced a sustainable community. Elected officials have reacted to external development pressures effectively and the on-going evaluation of short and long term socio-economic cycles has provided a pro-active framework for adjustments to specific development standards as necessary to achieve accepted community-wide goals. There were five (5) principles outlined in the Phase I Existing Conditions Report that bear repeating and are included in this synopsis. They are as follows:

- Willingness to recognize that future conditions cannot be assumed to be merely an extension of past trends.
- Development of flexible planning approaches that address current needs but do not preclude changes and adaptations to future conditions.
- Less emphasis on long range "ultimate" plans and more emphasis on short range, incremental planning efforts. For example, instead of planning a large sewage treatment system, development of a series of smaller systems that eventually link together, should be considered.
- Recognition that land resources are becoming scarcer and more valuable and, therefore, should be used more carefully than in the past. There should be a maximum effort to accommodate land development where it is most feasible, thus preserving areas where it is least suitable.
- Establishment of reasonable growth objectives that allow for phased expansion of community facilities and services, which will not strain municipal financial resources, especially in an era of fiscal uncertainty.

A series of twelve (12) land use goals were identified in the Part II Plan based on the existing conditions analyses. They are as follows:

1. Preservation of the wooded residential character of the community;

2. Improvement of the visual appearance of the Freeport-Old Freeport Road commercial core;
3. Protection of residential neighborhoods by adequate buffering through maintenance of wooded slopes, or through the planting of new landscape buffers;
4. The prevention of commercial or industrial intrusion into residential areas;
5. The protection of residential streets from through traffic, while avoiding the unnecessary creation of dead-end streets;
6. Incentives for developments which provide open space, retain woodland, and protect slope areas and other features of the natural environment;
7. Prevention of undue damage to the natural environment from the removal of foliage or by excessive grading;
8. Steep slopes to be used only if geotechnically sound;
9. Use of steep slope areas for passive recreation; Reclamation of derelict land when new development meets other community goals;
10. Restricting the location of developments which generate heavy traffic to land having access to thoroughfares; and
11. Restricting industrial traffic to major thoroughfares.

Throughout the 1993 Part II Comprehensive Plan, there is the theme of planning before acting. The thematic commentaries, data summaries, recommendations and general strategies for achieving recognized community-wide objectives, state the need to do a thorough review. While there are few specific recommendations for legislative action or capital improvements programming, the plan document

functions as the foundation for public policy debate and informed decision-making. The next logical step in O'Hara Township's planning process is to evaluate those policy recommendations and to craft a specific set of strategic actions designed to address issues raised in the document. The key is to build a consensus of support to address those qualities of life in O'Hara Township that residents and business owners embrace, and attempt to sustain those qualities while preparing for build-out. Planning is the identification of options and the recognition of consequences given certain choices. As O'Hara Township's community leaders act in the best interests of their property owners and taxpayers, it is more important than ever to have a plan which respects every resource available.

Stakeholder Interviews

Dr. Anne E. Stephens, Superintendent of the Fox Chapel Area School District, was interviewed. She confirmed continued growth of the student population in O'Hara Township despite Department of Education projections showing decreases. She also highlighted common transportation concerns such as the intersection of Fox Chapel Road and Freeport Road. She observed that the tax base overall does not appear to be moving "up or down."

Community Survey

In the spring of 2008 the O'Hara Township Long Range Planning Committee put together a community survey designed to illicit input from residents, while gauging attitudes on issues of concern, and gathering localized information which supports recommendations for future implementation efforts. A total of 3,727 surveys were mailed to households in the Township,

2,180 going to neighborhoods in Eastern O'Hara and 1,547 to Western O'Hara. There were 1,039 surveys returned, or about twenty-eight percent (28%), which provides recognizable statistical validity to the response. Of the total number of surveys returned, a response rate of 30.4% was calculated from recipients in the East O'Hara census tracts and 24.3% from recipients in the West O'Hara census tract, based on the total number of households surveyed.

A summary report of survey responses was prepared for review by members of the Long Range Planning Committee and is included in this Chapter for reference. Township residents commented most frequently to neutrally worded statements in the survey, where responses options reflected an attitude about the statement's content. However, throughout the survey instrument, respondents were specifically asked for input. In addition, residents were asked to prioritize a menu of selected response options which functions as a preference barometer in the context of the topic surveyed. The highest concentration of non-response errors occurred with these topical components due to the repetition of high or low numbers which respondents used to indicated preferences.

Themes emerged from an analysis of the survey responses to open option questions and they were segregated based on written comments into five (5) broad topics and one (1) specific retail category. This was the format of the summary report, color-coded for quick reference. The following broad themes received the highest number of responses: recreation, transportation, restaurants, retail and medical, with hardware as a preferred specific category eliciting significant response. Comments were not categorized as

positive or negative, rather recorded as provided on returned surveys.

Slightly more than half (50.4%) of all respondents to the community survey indicated they have lived in O'Hara Township for more than twenty (20) years, with another nineteen percent (18.9%) indicating residency for a period of between eleven and twenty (11-20) years. Nearly seven (7) in ten (10) respondents (67.9%) had no children under eighteen (18) years of age in their household (Questions Number 1 and 2).

On the use of public transportation, a greater percentage of respondents (57%) indicated a preference for private vehicle use versus public transportation (40.9%) (Question Number 3).

Question Number 4 asked for responses from residents to five (5) issues affecting daily living: traffic safety, pedestrian safety, crime, aging infrastructure, and deteriorating housing. A sixth option was "Other" which provides respondents with an open-ended opportunity to add a new concern or observation. Respondents were asked to assign a value of one through six (1-6) to each issue with "1" as the issue of most concern. It should be noted that a higher percentage of residents did not assign any value to the response option (No Answer) than assigned a value of one through six (1-6).

A great majority of respondents (94.7%) agree that consumer staples such as food and clothing are available locally (Question Number 5).

Housing options was the topic in Statement Number 6 of the Community Survey. Rental housing was the least preferred (49.3%), while affordable housing for both seniors and young families (25.1% and 25.2%) received the highest percentage of "Most Needed" responses. Again,

it should be noted that the “No answers” option received the highest percentage of responses other than the rental housing option, to each type of housing provided.

Question Number 7 was an open-ended opportunity for residents to offer suggestions as to what services or businesses are needed. A hardware store or home improvements facility was the overwhelming preference.

A great majority of respondents (89.5%) also agreed that the preservation of open space and natural areas is of prime importance in future residential development (Question Number 8).

Question Number 9 functioned as a focus issue exercise and provided discussion points for the drafting of community goals and objectives. Schools (43.5%) and property values (27.4%) received the highest percentage of high value rankings (1 through 8, with 1 being the most positive), while road maintenance (9.6%) and government services (6.2%) received the lowest percentage of high value rankings. These perceptions were confirmed by the high percentage of lower value rankings (6 through 8) received for road maintenance and government services, versus the low percentage of lower rankings received for schools and property values.

A little more than sixty percent (60%) of respondents indicated they would be interested in attending a planning oriented town hall meeting (Question Number 10). An open house was conducted in November of 2009 and provided Township residents with materials, graphics, mapping products, and implementation options to convey the key recommendations that evolved from the planning process.