

The Township's Vision

"Vision without action is a daydream.....Action without vision is a nightmare"
– Chinese Proverb

The Visioning Process

To help guide the planning process it was important to develop a Vision for Franklin Township. Through this effort, the community was able to reflect on past and recent trends affecting the Township and incorporate their goals and ideas into a collaborative vision for the future.

Creating the vision is both a process and a product. The process enables collective imaginations to envision the community's desired future and develop the courage to achieve it. The product is the vision; the overall image of what the community values and what it wants to be in the future. Visions are based on reality and not wishful thinking. The vision statement is the formal expression of that vision.

The vision statement is important because it helps to keep the community on track. It serves as a compass that guides the community through the ups and downs of economic, social, and political change.

Reaching a Consensus

Early in the comprehensive planning process, public input was provided on items such as "What is Franklin Township?", "What three words best describe Franklin Township?", and what is your Vision for Franklin Township (ten years from now)?

These discussions allowed Project Steering Committee members, elected / appointed officials, residents, business owners, and stakeholders to express their feelings about the Township in the present as well as their thoughts about its future. Some of the responses for the current views of Franklin Township included:

What is Franklin Township?

- Friendly, family-oriented community
- Great community with potential
- Beautiful, safe place to live and work
- On the brink of prosperity
- Centrally located

- Where I want to live
- A golden opportunity for growth

Three Words that best describe Franklin Township.....



"A vision without a task is but a dream. A task without a vision is drudgery. But a vision and a task are the hope of the world."

Church in Sussex, England, ca. 1730

These thoughts and ideas helped to initiate the discussions on the development of a vision statement. When people were asked, "What is your Vision for Franklin Township's future?", a lot of creative and realistic answers were provided. The major themes (elements) of the input included: quality of life; aesthetics; infrastructure; transportation; economy; and housing. The following are selected (and combined) responses that were most often stated:

- A thriving, beautiful place where people will want to live, work, play and feel safe
- A place where people should be able to raise a family and earn a good living
- A place that people will want to move to, not move away from
- A thriving, beautiful community for families of all ages
- A community that has quality senior care opportunities and where older people can live out their remaining years
- A place where kids grow up and stay in the community to raise their own families with reasonable taxes, good jobs, safe neighborhoods, and quality education
- A bedroom community with all types of housing – for families, single people, and the elderly

- Sense of community
- A safe, affordable community with places for entertainment and activities without having to leave Waynesburg
- A developed recreation area around the old reservoir
- High speed internet for all
- Business friendly
- Additional growth in a variety of diverse manufacturing / commercial developments
- Utilize the (County) properties – Airport and Fairgrounds – for new development
- Take advantage of the Interstate / Interchange
- Be the leader in the County

The following Vision Statement was developed after reaching a consensus on what residents valued most about the Township and what they would like to see in the future.

Franklin Township’s Vision.....

We are a leader in Greene County and the region. Capitalizing on our numerous assets that include being located along a major interstate between two growing regions, an abundance of natural (energy) and cultural resources, a variety of recreational opportunities, quality educational institutions, and a strong business climate, Franklin Township is a desirable place where people want to live, work, and play.

We are friendly and welcoming to all generations - a community where our children can grow up and remain in the Township to raise their own families and a place where mid-lifers and seniors can find adequate housing options and a diversity of social and recreational activities.

Through our progressive leadership, Franklin Township has seen additional growth in retail and commercial opportunities, new industries, and service-oriented businesses due to an improved and expanded infrastructure network. This growth and development is a reflection of the vision established through an inclusive and open planning process. A process that identified the relevant issues and the goals to address them.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish" – Proverbs 29:18

Defining Franklin Township's Future – Utilizing the Vision

To be competitive in the Region and beyond, Franklin Township will have to not only implement plans and initiatives that support the community's Vision but identify and promote the characteristics that make it desirable to potential residents, businesses, and industries. Conversely, the Township will need to focus on creating / improving some of the things that are considered obstacles to attracting new residents and growth / development opportunities to the municipality. The following information provides some insight into what factors are important to people, businesses, industries and visitors when they are looking for places to relocate or visit.

Livability and Sustainability

The Project Steering Committee members completed the following exercise – “What are the most important factors to the livability and sustainability of Franklin Township?” They were asked to rank their top five factors. Taking into account the number of times a factor was selected in each respondent's top five; the following were identified as being the most important, important, or somewhat important:

Most Important

- Good Municipal Leadership
- Attracting new businesses / industries into the Township
- Lower Taxes
- Providing additional types of housing (for all ages)

Important

- Thriving Economy
- Attracting new residents into the Township
- Creating a Sense of Place / Community
- Public Involvement / Engagement
- Working with the County and Surrounding Municipalities

Other Factors that received at least one top five ranking

- Retaining the younger generation in the Township
- Expand Public Water and Sewer service into areas that presently do not have it
- Regionalization of Municipal Services
- Making improvements in the current road system
- Appearance / Aesthetics

These results are not much different from what is considered important to municipalities across the Region, the Commonwealth, and the United States. Over the years, there have been many reports and articles written about the keys to a successful community. Characteristics identified include:



An article in the New York Post “Millennials don’t know their neighbors at all” (Tyler Schmall, South West News Service – July 10, 2018) included the results of a poll asking participants what they felt are qualities of a good community. The study of 1,000 millennials and 1,000 non-millennials was conducted by OnePoll on behalf of community investment platform CNote. The following are the Top 12 qualities that were identified:

1. Safe area to live (75%),
2. Friendly neighbors (75%),
3. Good schools (74%),
4. Good local businesses (67%),
5. Parks and gardens (59%),
6. A sense of acceptance and belonging (56%);
7. Good roads (50%),
8. Churches (43%),
9. Community initiatives (42%),
10. Diversity (39 %),
11. Coffee shops (33%),
12. Good bars (19%).

Many of these qualities reflect what residents and business owners in Franklin Township are saying about present conditions in the municipality or what they feel are important to the future growth and development of the Township.