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Township Services and Facilities

GOAL

Provide resources supporting effective and efficient delivery of services, enhance safety, improve stormwater management, and coordinate with partner entities to meet the needs of residents, businesses, and staff.



Objectives

- a.** Maintain a fiscally responsible Township budget that is responsive to evolving needs regarding provision of services and facilities.
- b.** Maintain and enhance communication with Township residents and businesses through various methods and consistently investigate new means of effective communication
- c.** Support the police department, fire company, code enforcement, and public works to protect the health and safety of Township residents.
- d.** Encourage effective Township committees and commissions and support resident participation in these entities.
- e.** Ensure proper management of stormwater runoff through appropriate practices and regulations that are current with evolving technology.
- f.** Continue cooperative efforts and regular communication with adjacent municipalities and regional entities that are mutually beneficial to planning and infrastructure activities.
- g.** Continue to support local educational institutions and their provision of adequate school facilities to serve the Township.

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 4.1 **Communicate effectively and efficiently with residents and businesses regarding Township business, safety concerns, and other topics that impact community members.**

The community needs to remain informed regarding Township business. This requires an ongoing commitment to reaching the public in a variety of ways. Methods of communication will need to be consistently reevaluated and adapted to remain effective.

Staff and elected officials should periodically evaluate the methods used to convey information to determine the most effective means of reaching all community members. Specific emphasis should be placed on how to best publicize public meetings and hearings. Further engagement should also be undertaken to determine what information the community desires to receive and adjust as necessary. Specific actions can include:

ACTIONS

- 4.1.A Conduct regular assessments of communication.** Conduct periodic assessments of the full range of communication methods used by the Township and the information they are providing to the community.
- 4.1.B Ensure communication occurs through a balanced variety of means such and electronic and non-electronic communication.** Non-electronic communication may include the community newsletter which can be distributed at neighborhood facilities in the community or may include a changeable copy sign at the Township building, or another visible community location. Specific efforts in non-electronic communication should be made to communicate effectively with the Amish community.
- 4.1.C Continue to evaluate virtual communications.** Evaluate the website periodically to ensure it provides sufficient breadth of information, appropriate communication of resources, and potential for further community interaction, within a user-friendly format.
- 4.1.D Implement new technologies.** Investigate, develop, and implement new technologies as necessary to increase efficiency and provide information and services for residents and businesses.

- 4.1.E Consider the development and distribution of a “welcome packet” for new community members.** These packets should include general information about the Township for new residents and business owners. The welcome packet can further help familiarize new residents and businesses with the Township and provide contact information for a variety of services provided.
- 4.1.F Continue to distribute the annual Township newsletter.** The annual newsletter can be distributed in annual Township billings, provided for pickup at the Township building, and posted to the Township website. A community newsletter can keep residents and businesses updated on Township events, meetings, and volunteer opportunities.
- 4.1.G Continue outreach and coordination with regional municipalities and organizations.** Having regular communications with other municipalities in the Octorara Region and other organizations such as the Western Chester County Chamber of Commerce is important in working to identify and address issues that impact the greater region.



The Township regularly posts information to its residents through the Township website.

RECOMMENDATION 4.2 Annually develop and implement a fiscally responsible Township budget that is responsive to evolving needs regarding provision of services and facilities.

The annual budget serves to identify and provide critical funding for all Township activities. To maximize the provision of Township services and facilities within available revenues, the continued development of a fiscally responsible budget annually is essential.

Staff and elected officials should continue to develop fiscally responsible budgets that reflect the needs of the Township and to implement specific policy goals of the Board of Supervisors. Routine engagement with the police department, emergency providers, and citizen volunteers should also help in its overall development. Specific actions can include:

ACTIONS

4.2.A Consider development of a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) to address long-term capital projects and facilities. A CIP would allow the Township to effectively plan for significant expenditures through a dedicated review and approval process that is updated annually. A CIP will further allow for the Township to anticipate significant infrastructure expenditures in advance to allow for the Township to explore other funding sources and grants for its implementation.

4.2.B Consider periodically providing a public survey for residents to identify priorities as it relates to the budget process. This could be done prior to the budget process commencing, with the results utilized by the Board of Supervisors when developing the budget priorities for the year.

West Sadsbury's municipal office is located on Moscow Road in the north central area of the Township.



RECOMMENDATION 4.3

Address stormwater runoff to protect public safety and ensure full compliance with federal mandates for water quantity and quality.

Chester County has experienced more frequent and significant flooding events over the past decade. Surface and groundwater water quality can be improved, and flooding risk minimized through effective stormwater management. Various regulatory, educational, and infrastructure improvements can minimize the pollutant load of stormwater and properly manage quantity as required through federal and state regulations, including Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4).

Taking a proactive role is essential to minimizing negative impacts resulting from stormwater runoff, and requires coordinated effort between Township staff, the Township Engineer, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP), and the Chester County Conservation District (CCCD). Specific actions can include:

ACTIONS

- 4.3.A Consider sponsoring educational programs for Township residents and businesses on voluntary actions that impact water quality and quantity, such as implementation of water quality BMPs, planting trees within riparian buffers, and appropriate woodlands management.** Private conservation organizations such as Brandywine Conservancy and Natural Lands and public entities such as PA DEP and CCCD, provide materials and programs on these issues. Coordination with other local groups, such as scouting organizations, the YMCA, or other entities, can effectively reach an expanded audience with minimal effort.

Stormwater management facilities in the Township can be retrofitted or naturalized with new technologies to provide a relatively low-cost opportunity to reduce localized flooding, improve water quality, and improve ecological benefits of stormwater systems.



4.3.B Ensure regulatory controls are most impactfully addressing stormwater related issues. Evaluate established regulations to determine if what is enacted is the most up-to-date and efficient to meet the requirements of MS4, inclusive of Chapter 28 (Stormwater Management), Chapter 22 (Subdivision and Land Development), and Chapter 27 (Zoning). Potential considerations for revisions include:

1. Ongoing periodic review to ensure the most up-to-date best management practices (BMPs) are permitted, particularly in Chapter 28.
2. Updates to Chapters 22 and/or 27 to include provisions for restoration of riparian buffers along stream corridors.
3. Review and update as necessary to ensure consistency and eliminate conflicts between the three ordinances.

4.3.C Explore alternate funding sources for stormwater infrastructure. Investigate sustainable and consistent funding streams for stormwater management capital projects, and for compliance with the state and federal MS4 and Pollution Reduction Plan (PRP) requirements. Options for additional grant and bond funding, as well as new funding sources, should be evaluated to help the Township meet requirements of its stormwater permit and plans.

4.3.D Consider development of a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) to address long-term capital projects and facilities. Consider development of a formal capital improvements plan (CIP) to better plan for future capital improvements for stormwater infrastructure as described in Recommendation 4.2.A

4.3.E Target Township-owned properties for stormwater management upgrades. Have the Township Engineer identify and prioritize Township-owned properties suitable for new or enhanced/retrofitted stormwater facilities to address current and future management needs. If the Township Engineer determines additional properties may be necessary at a future date for MS4 compliance, specific ones should be targeted and included in the Official Map as described in Recommendation 6.1.

4.3.F Work regionally to address stormwater issues. Encourage adopting a regional approach toward issues in stormwater management through maintaining communications with surrounding municipalities regarding stormwater initiatives. Particular emphasis should be placed on the Octorara region municipalities as it relates to a regional approach to stormwater management.

**RECOMMENDATION
4.4**

Support effective and efficient delivery of government services through appropriate administrative and funding support of volunteer commissions and committees.

West Sadsbury has limited volunteer staffed commissions, councils, and boards tasked with furthering the policies of the Township as defined by the Board of Supervisors. Robust volunteer commissions and committees provide invaluable experience and viewpoints to both Township staff and elected officials in forwarding Township policy.

Maintain regular communication between the volunteer commissions, staff, and elected officials to ensure needed resources are in place. There should be a periodic review, perhaps annually, that is broader in nature and discusses resources that may be needed in the annual budget. To broaden the network of citizen volunteers, the Township can use existing methods of communication to directly engage and educate the public on the importance of direct citizen leadership and engagement within the Township. Specific actions can include:

ACTIONS

4.4.A Consider the need for additional commissions and boards.

The Township could consider formal establishment of new advisory commissions and boards such as:

1. Historical Commission. A Historic Commission could serve to foster greater appreciation of the rich and varied history of West Sadsbury. Specifically, this Commission could serve as the lead in educating citizens about lands, buildings, and sites of historic, architectural, archaeological, or cultural significance in the Township.
2. Environmental Advisory Council (EAC). An EAC advocates for the conservation of environmental resources. They could further advise the Board of Supervisors on matters dealing with protection, conservation, management, promotion, and use of natural resources within the Township.
3. Parks and Recreation Commission. A Parks and Recreation Commission could oversee the maintenance, programming, and improvements to West Sadsbury Park and the Jim Landis Woodland Preserve.

A number of free and low cost training opportunities on various planning topics are available to Township volunteers.



4.4.B Continue providing support to the Planning Commission.

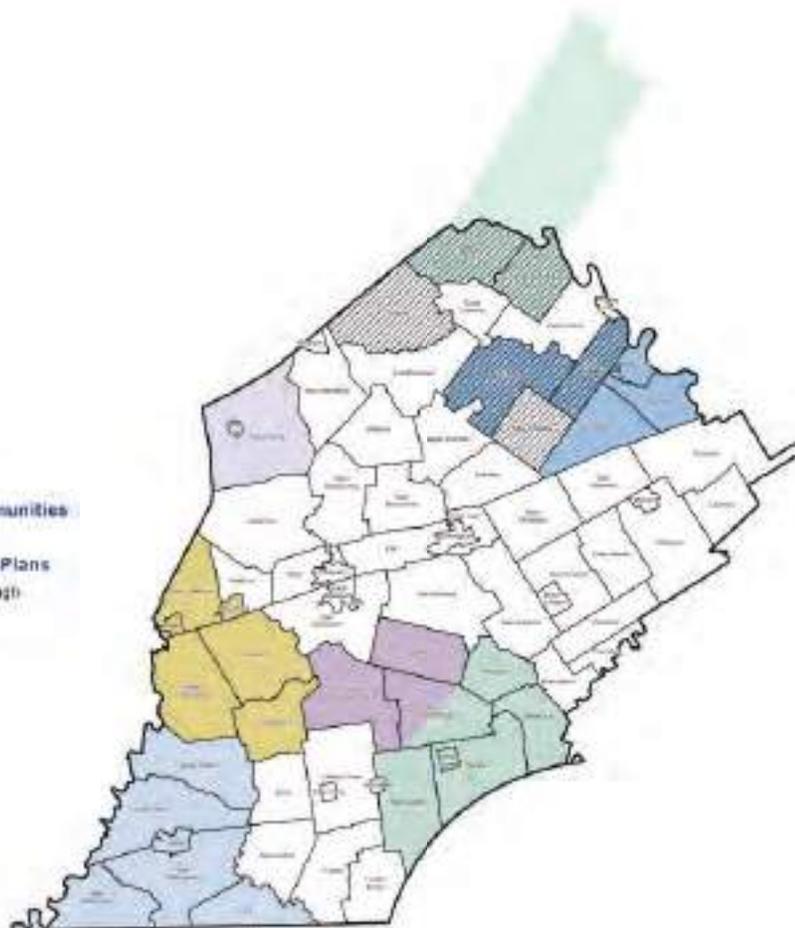
Consider commission member opportunities to attend land use training classes and/or workshops. Land use training courses on community planning, zoning, and subdivision are offered through the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute (PMPEI). Chester County 2020 offers these PMPEI courses through its Master Planner Program.

4.4.C Investigate whether there is benefit in creating a community survey to evaluate interest in volunteering for Township boards and commissions and committees. Resident input, such as a survey, will help to best understand what various interests and needs are in the community. Interests and needs in the community should be addressed by existing commissions and committees, although strong interest in a particular topic may be appropriate to consider when analyzing the potential need for new boards and commissions.

4.4.D Coordinate with partner municipalities in the Octorara Regional Planning Commission. The Octorara Regional Plan includes the Boroughs of Atglen and Parkesburg and the Townships of West Sadsbury, West Fallowfield, Highland, and Londonderry. The plan seeks to guide development in order to protect sensitive environmental resources and the rural character that forms the identity of the Octorara Region. While the regional planning commission is not currently active, the Regional Plan remains relevant for policy and land use decisions. Coordination should occur with partner regional municipalities to identify if there is a benefit to meeting as an active regional planning commission. Activities of a regional planning commission may include formal joint planning efforts (such as policy plans and zoning ordinances), review of subdivisions and land developments within the region, and consistent communication and coordination between regional municipalities. As the regional plan is more than 20 years old, the participating municipalities should specifically consider updating the regional plan.

This map shows regions in Chester County that have adopted multi-municipal comprehensive plans and/or have regional planning commissions and committees.

- Federation of Northern Chester County Communities**
-  Regions with Multimunicipal Comprehensive Plans
 -  Honey Brook Township and Honey Brook Borough
 -  Octorara Region
 -  Oxford Region
 -  Phoenixville Region
 -  Pottstown Metropolitan Region
 -  Unionville Area Region
 -  Kennel Run Area Region



RECOMMENDATION 4.5 Support the West Sadsbury Township Police Department and regional fire departments to protect the health and safety of Township residents.

The Township has a responsibility to ensure police, fire, and ambulance services are accessible, effective, and efficient. Provisions of such services are a fundamental component of protecting the well-being of residents, and although not all of these providers (such as fire and ambulance services) are directly tied to the Township, their mission is a municipal responsibility.

Through the Township budget and staff activity, West Sadsbury should continue to coordinate with these providers on a routine basis, provide leadership in the discussions of funding, provide direct financial support, and engage with the service providers and the community regarding other means to support these services. Specific actions can include:

ACTIONS

4.5.A Continue to coordinate directly with the Chief of Police. Coordination should occur to regularly assess Department staffing, equipment, and facilities to most effectively address Department needs to effectively serve the residents and businesses of the Township. The Township should continue to coordinate with the Pennsylvania State Police to provide service during hours in which West Sadsbury Township Police Department officers are not on duty.

West Sadsbury's Police Department provides services between 8 AM through midnight. The Pennsylvania State Police provides coverage to the Township between the hours of midnight to 8 AM.



- 4.5.B Actively publicize the need for and value of volunteer emergency responders.** Through the West Sadsbury website, social media, newsletter, and other means the Township can help raise the profile of the fire company and ambulance services, and their reliance on volunteers. Greater awareness within the community may positively impact the numbers of volunteers and the level of success of any fundraising programs.



West Sadsbury is served by the Keystone Valley Fire Department, which is located in neighboring Parkesburg Borough.

- 4.5.C Continue coordination with and support of emergency service providers** The Township should continue to coordinate with West Sadsbury Township Police Department and regional fire department to foster positive relationships throughout the community and to highlight the services provided by these departments. This can be achieved through continued outreach and presence at community events, open houses to highlight the role of these departments, or participation in national events to build community relationships such as National Night Out.

RECOMMENDATION 4.6 Continue to support public works and code enforcement to facilitate timely and responsive services for Township residents and businesses.

Public works is tasked with the responsibility of the long-term and ongoing maintenance of Township facilities and infrastructure such as public streets and rights-of-ways. Code enforcement is tasked with the responsibility of the enforcement of the Township code and zoning ordinance. Ensuring these functions continue to have adequate resources is essential in their ability to fulfill their responsibilities to residents and businesses alike.

The Township should continue to monitor the levels of and calls for service as it relates to public works and code enforcement. This monitoring can help inform annual budget requests to allocate resources to best address public need. Specific actions can include:

ACTIONS

4.6.A Continue to monitor overall public works requests and adjust funding allocations as needed. With more unfunded mandates for increased Township responsibility for stormwater infrastructure, in addition to routine tasks of road and park maintenance, enhanced funding may become essential in continuing the provision of exemplary public facilities and infrastructure.

4.6.B Ensure the code enforcement process is transparent and understandable. Ensure concerns received by code enforcement are both investigated and addressed in a timely manner. If further follow-up is requested from involved parties, ensure all communication is timely and transparent.

West Sadsbury’s Public Works Department provides a number of critical services to the Township including local road maintenance, repair, and snow response.



RECOMMENDATION 4.7 Continue to support educational institutions and their provision of high-quality school facilities and programming to serve community members.

An essential feature of the quality of life experienced by Township residents is the high quality of educational institutions that serve the community.

Although the facilities and programming provided by these institutions are not provided by the Township, an open dialogue to understand and plan for their future needs impacting the community is critical. Specific actions can include:

ACTIONS

- 4.7.A Continue to foster strong partnerships with the Octorara Area School District.** Coordinate on a routine basis as it relates to facilities and long term planning with the Octorara Area School District.
- 4.7.B Support partnerships with both the Octorara Area School District and private schools as it relates to recreational facilities.** Partnerships with local schools may evaluate the potential feasibility of Township residents utilizing school-owned recreational facilities during non-school hours.
- 4.7.C Analyze impacts of land use on the school district.** Share subdivision and land development plans that may impact student enrollment levels and the use of school facilities for community and recreational purposes.



The Octorara High School provides a number of career and technical programs, including a robust agriculture program.



Although no public schools are located within the Township, Amish schools can be found providing educational opportunities to the Amish community.