

2018 Northampton Township Comprehensive Plan

BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is a municipality's main policy document that details the collective vision for the future, the historic, environmental, and cultural facilities it seeks to protect, and the steps necessary to achieve this vision.

Comprehensive plans aid officials in land use planning and decision-making.

Community Background

NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Township Profile

Northampton Township

Comprehensive Plan

Demographics at the township level paint a picture of an older, upper middle-class community.

Northampton Township's population and housing totals reflect its status as a bedroom community and proximity to job centers.

Township Profile

*Northampton Township
Comprehensive Plan*

Demographic Characteristic	2000	2010
Population	39,384	39,762
Median age (years)	38.9	44.4
Households	13,014	13,920
Family households	10,964	11,331
Married-couple families	9,895	10,014
Single-mother families	422	460
Nonfamily households	2,050	2,589
Householders living alone	1,787	2,256
Average household size (persons)	3.01	2.84
Average family size (persons)	3.33	3.20
In group quarters	266	162
Median household income	\$82,655	\$105,148

Community Vision

*Northampton Township
Comprehensive Plan*

“With visible links to our rich history, and our diverse and attractive residential neighborhoods, parks, preserved open spaces and wooded stream valleys, Northampton Township is a healthy and sustainable community. Our community is safe, friendly, and connected, with a vibrant economy of varied businesses and high quality services, making it a great place to live, work, and raise families.”

Plan Principles

Northampton Township

Comprehensive Plan

Livable Built Environment: Ensure that all elements of the built environment—land use, transportation, housing, energy, infrastructure, and institutions—work together to provide a high quality of life that is sustainable for living, working, and recreating.

Resilient Economy: Ensure that the community is prepared to deal with both positive and negative changes in its economic health and encourage development and redevelopment strategies that foster sustainable business growth and build reliance on local assets.

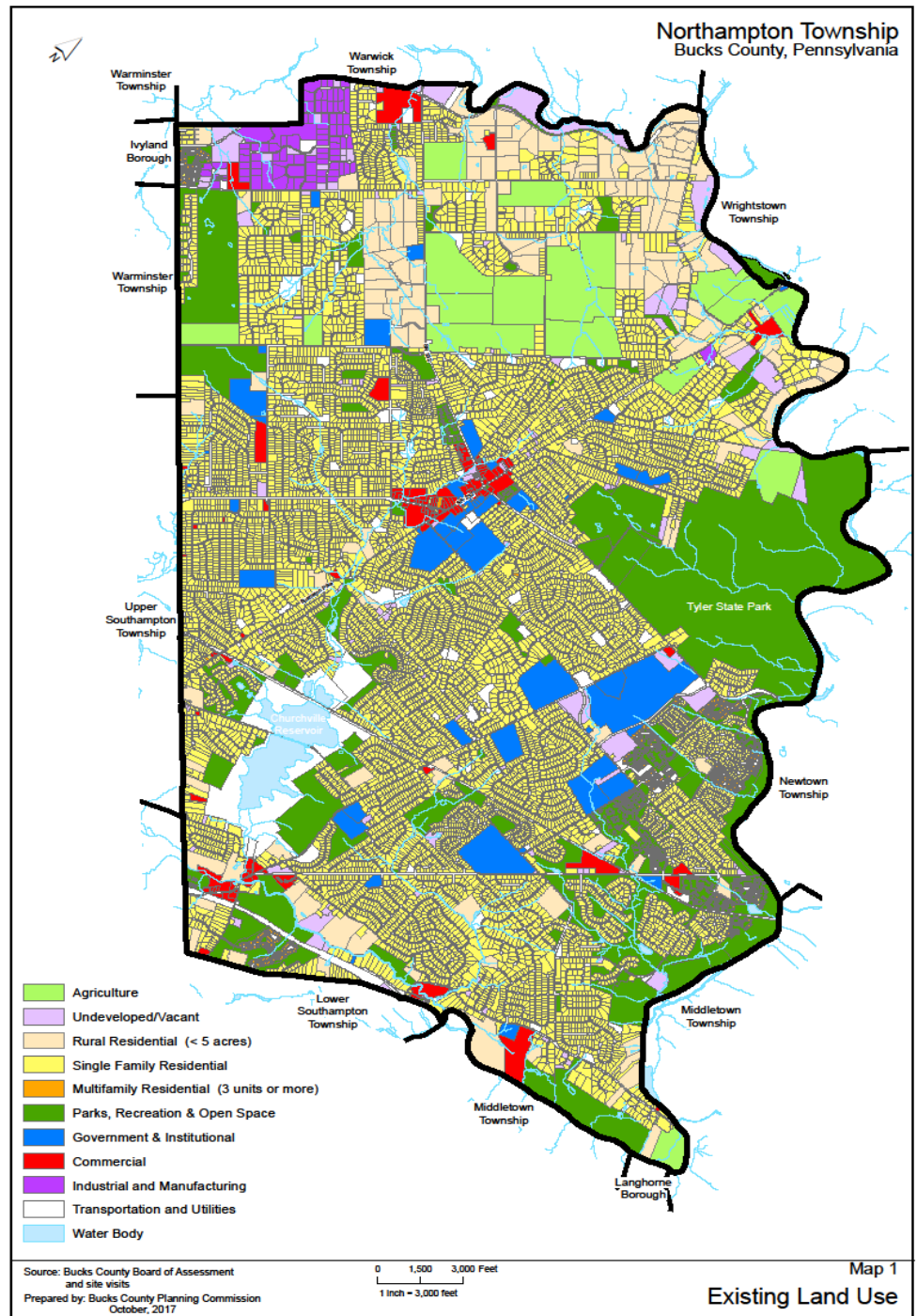
Lasting Landscape: Ensure that the contributions of natural resources to human well-being, including historic and visual amenities, are explicitly recognized and valued and that maintaining their qualities is a primary objective.

Healthy Community: Ensure that public health needs are recognized and addressed through provisions for healthy foods, physical activity, access to recreation, education, health care, environmental justice, and safe neighborhoods.

Responsible Regionalism: Ensure that all local proposals account for, connect with, and support the plans of adjacent jurisdictions and the surrounding region.

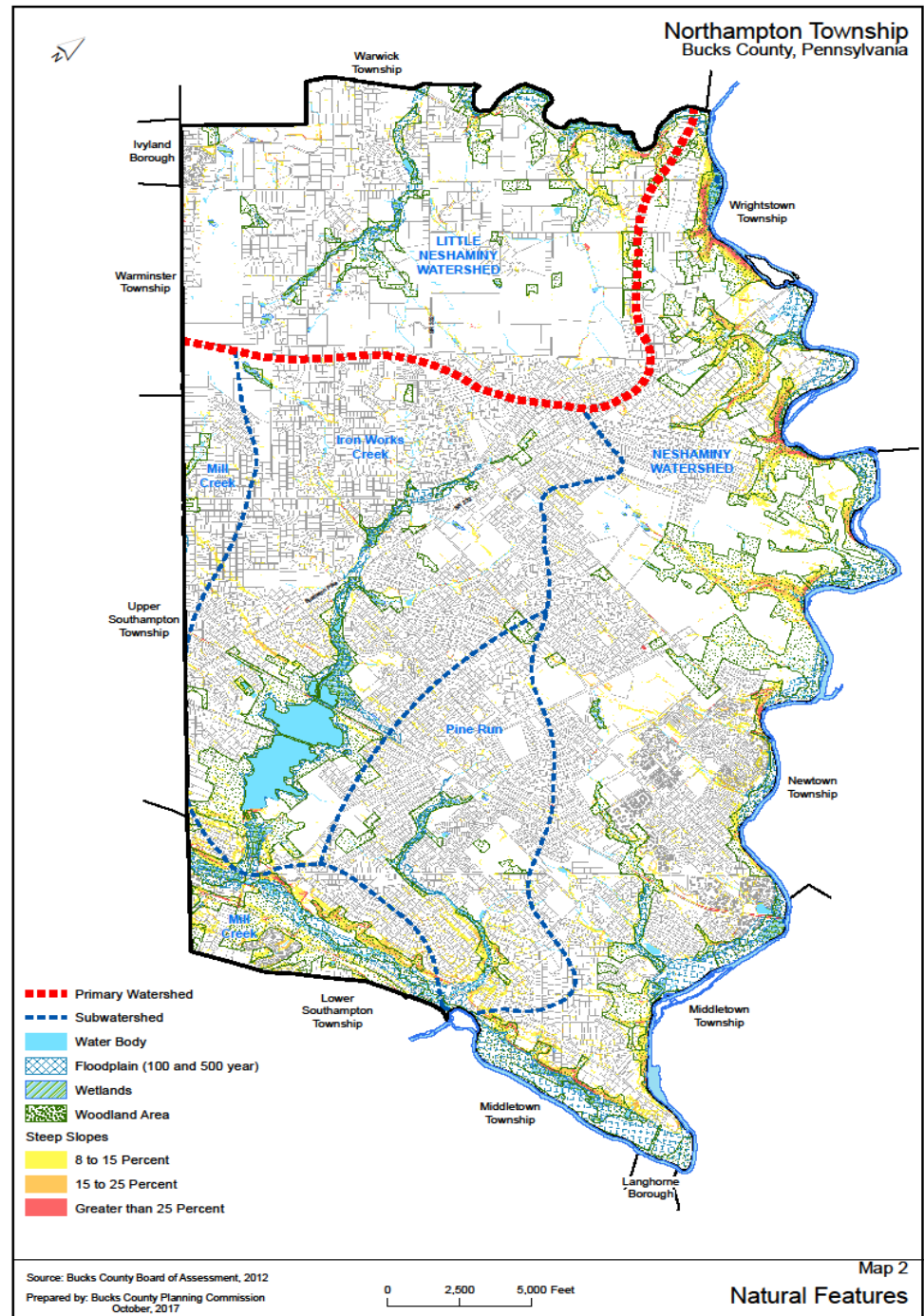
Land Use

Northampton Township Comprehensive Plan



Natural Resources

Northampton Township
Comprehensive Plan



Agricultural Resources

*Northampton Township
Comprehensive Plan*



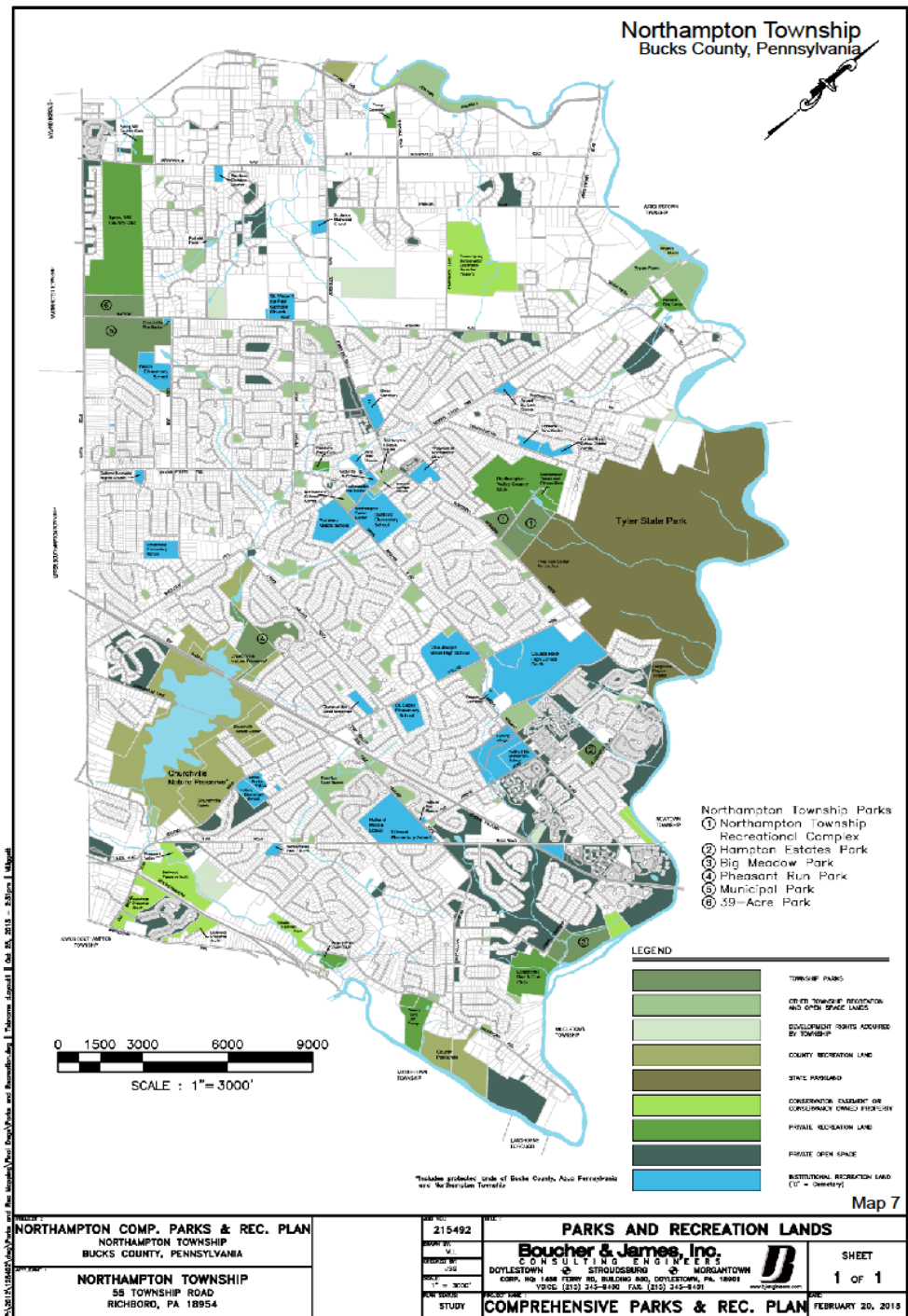
Historic and Scenic Resources

*Northampton Township
Comprehensive Plan*



Park and Recreation Resources

Northampton Township
Comprehensive Plan



Transportation and Circulation

Northampton Township
Comprehensive Plan

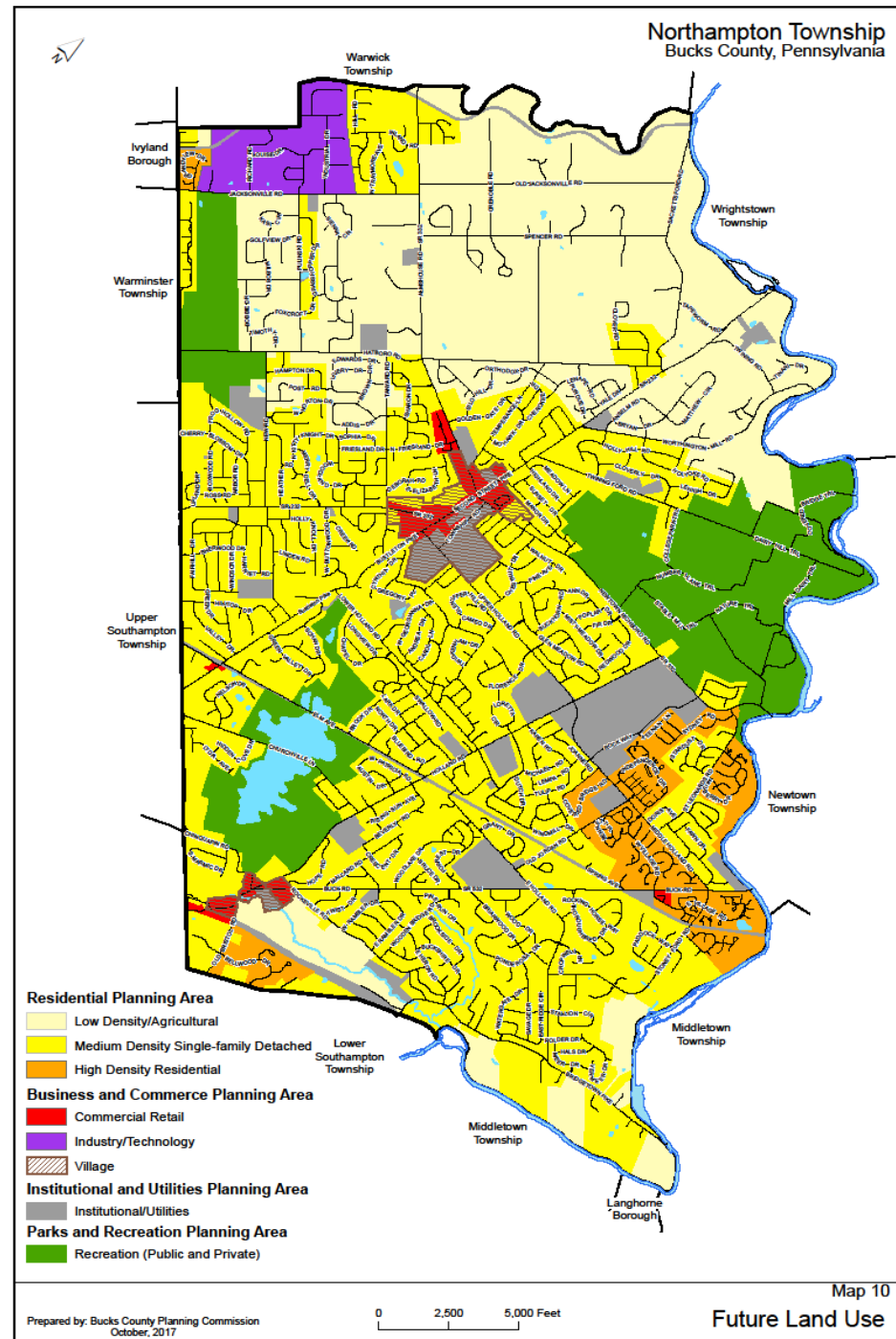


Future Land Use and Implementation

NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

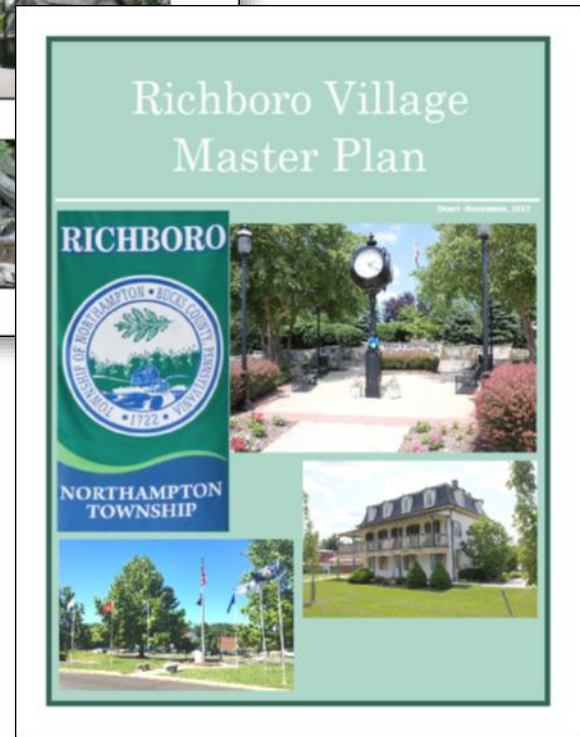
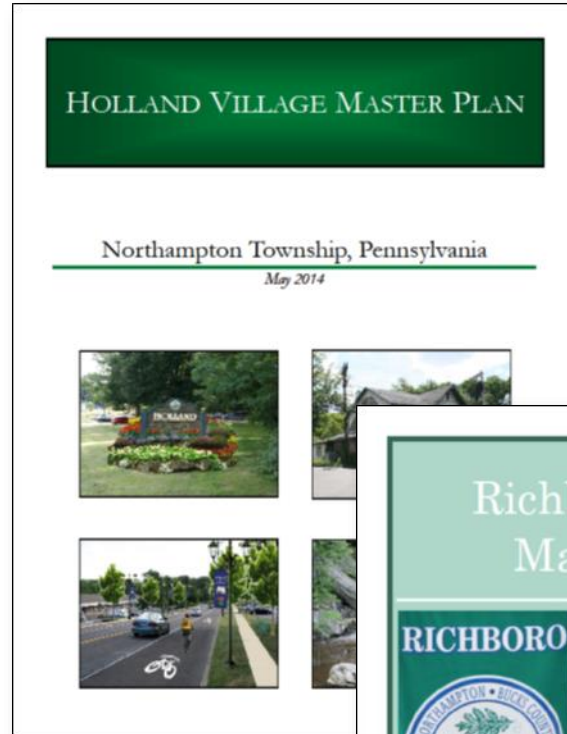
Future Land Use

Northampton Township Comprehensive Plan



Village Planning

*Northampton Township
Comprehensive Plan*



Plan Elements and Recommendations

NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Agricultural Plan

Northampton Township

Comprehensive Plan

- Continue collaboration between county, state, and local programs for farmland preservation as opportunities arise.
- Continue to review the zoning ordinance to provide opportunities for farmland preservation, such as through cluster subdivisions on a reduced site area that permit a greater area of open space, and smaller minimum lot size for dwelling units.
- Permit a wide variety of agricultural uses and accessory uses that support the farming industry, including adaptive reuse of existing farm structures, farm-related businesses, alternative energy structures, etc., that allow farmers to adapt to changing industry trends.
- Provide assistance in bringing together the local farmer with the local consumer by promoting local sources for produce and sponsoring local farmers' markets. Educate residents as to the importance of the local agricultural industry and benefits of farming to help reduce social frictions between neighbors.

PLAN ELEMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Natural Resources Plan

*Northampton Township
Comprehensive Plan*

- Encourage preservation of remaining trees and woodlands, as well as increasing the township tree canopy, by requiring tree replacement and afforestation when a certain amount of woodland cover is removed.
- Develop ordinance provisions to require native plants in landscaping plans (e.g., buffer yards, along streets, in parks and open spaces).
- Encourage sustainable long-term management and maintenance of vegetation on public properties including parks and recreational facilities.
- Consider the benefits of including Low Impact Development (LID) into land use ordinances to minimize impacts of existing natural features.
- Review and implement, as appropriate, the watershed management recommendations of the *Little Neshaminy Creek River Conservation Plan*. Provide education of streamside property owners on proper riparian management and maintenance.

PLAN ELEMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Historic and Scenic Resources Plan

Northampton Township

Comprehensive Plan

- Update historic survey, complete National Register nominations, and evaluate potential additional historic district designations, focusing on those resources deemed eligible or potentially eligible for the National Register.
- Identify vulnerable historic buildings and explore funding programs to help restore deteriorating conditions.
- Bolster enforcement of building and maintenance codes to prevent deterioration of historic structures and the potential for demolition by neglect. Consider a control of demolition ordinance to provide a waiting period before a demolition permit is issued, so that means of saving the structure can be considered.
- Adopt zoning regulations to preserve and protect individual historic structures by expanding incentives for conservation of historic and architecturally significant structures and landscapes, offering added design standard flexibility, or allowance for certain additional uses, beyond those otherwise authorized within the zoning district.
- Ensure any roadway improvements along identified scenic roads are safe, yet appropriate to enhance the scenic road view, as well as the treatment of the roadside edge and adjacent scenic views.

PLAN ELEMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Housing Plan

*Northampton Township
Comprehensive Plan*

- Encourage residential conversion and adaptive reuse in high density or mixed commercial areas that are appropriate.
- Consider provision for in-law suites or accessory apartments to supplement future housing needs of older family members.
- Support private and public efforts to rehabilitate and maintain housing stock, including, but not limited to, disability-adaptive improvements, rehabilitation of owner-occupied and rental properties, code enforcement, and historic preservation.
- Encourage Keystone Green Building and Green Building Alliance initiatives for LEED, Passive House, Energy Star, Green Globes, and Net Zero Energy design and certification for new construction.

PLAN ELEMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Transportation, Circulation, and Mobility Plan

Northampton Township

Comprehensive Plan

- Implement a Complete Streets Policy Plan, where appropriate.
- Continue to work with TMA to ensure that the public transportation needs of the community are being met.
- Promote access management improvements along all arterial and collector roads, minimizing points of turning movement conflict, coordinating and channeling access from adjacent uses, and reducing the number of existing and substandard access points wherever feasible.
- Develop a traffic calming program for local streets experiencing speeding and high volume of cut-through traffic that impact neighborhood safety.
- Enhance connectivity by continuing to improve the pedestrian circulation system (e.g., sidewalks, trails, road crossing safety) to schools, parks, and community facilities and ensure that appropriate streetscape features are included in design.

PLAN ELEMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Economic Development Plan

Northampton Township

Comprehensive Plan

- Ensure the economic development policies of the Holland and Richboro master plans are implemented.
- Establish partnerships with county and regional economic development agencies and the Chamber of Commerce to identify growth industries to market the Business Commons.
- Identify and address issues that will help facilitate business attraction, retention, or expansion.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the LERTA program.

PLAN ELEMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2018 Northampton Township Comprehensive Plan

BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
