

BROWN ESTABLISHED 1830 TOWNSHIP

Spring 2013

Comprehensive Planning Process

The Brown Township Trustees and Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department have partnered to update the Brown Township Comprehensive Plan. The plan will address how land is used, how the community looks, and how people get around the township.

The Township Trustees requested that Franklin County planners manage the planning process. A Working Committee composed of township residents appointed by the Township Trustees is representing the public throughout the process and providing detailed feedback to the planning team.

The planning process began in September 2012 and will continue into early 2014. The process is divided into three phases: Information Gathering and Visioning, Policy Recommendations, and Plan Writing. The process includes three public meetings—one in each phase of the project—to gather meaningful community input on the plan. The plan will largely be based on the input gathered at these meetings.

During the Information Gathering and Visioning phase, county planners reviewed existing and previous plans, interviewed stakeholders, and analyzed a variety of data in order to gain an understanding of the current conditions and trends in the community. At the first public meeting, planners presented the results of this research

and asked participants about their likes, dislikes, and vision for the future of the community.

County planners then worked extensively with the Working Committee to translate the public meeting results into draft policy recommendations to achieve the community's vision for the future. Residents will have a chance to provide input on those policy recommendations at a second public meeting in June.

During the final phase of the planning process, county planners will again work with the Working Committee to refine the policy recommendations based on the results of the second public meeting. They will also create an implementation plan to prioritize the most important actions and identify who is best able to carry out those actions. These elements will then be combined with the current conditions analysis to create a Draft Plan.

County planners will present the Draft Plan at a final public meeting in an open house format. Residents will be able to view the plan at their own pace, ask questions, and provide their final thoughts on how the plan could be improved. Following review of the feedback from the open house meeting, planners will consider revisions and produce the final plan document.

The final Brown Township Comprehensive Plan will be submitted to the

Brown Township Trustees, Franklin County Planning Commission, Franklin County Rural Zoning Commission, and Franklin County Board of Commissioners for adoption. Once adopted, the plan will serve as a guidance document for Brown Township's future.

*Information provided by
Scott T. Ulrich, Planner*

*Franklin County Economic Development
and Planning Department
525-7303*

Public Meeting

The next public meeting for the Brown Township Comprehensive Plan will be held at 6:30 p.m. on June 25 at Hilliard Bradley High School. At this meeting, residents will be asked for feedback on the policy recommendations that have been drafted to achieve the community's vision. County planners will present the draft goals and actions and ask for suggestions on how they can be improved.

*Information provided by
Scott T. Ulrich, Planner*

*Franklin County Economic Development
and Planning Department*

Comprehensive Plan Update

Current Conditions

To gain a basic understanding of the history, current conditions and trends, and critical issues facing Brown Township, county planners analyzed relevant data, conducted stakeholder interviews, and performed field research. This information served as the basis of the Current Conditions & Vision Report. Below is a summary of the report. The full report can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/browntownshipplan> under "Planning Process Documents."

People:

The population of Brown Township was 2,249 in 2010. The population grew by about 700 people over the past 30 years and is projected to grow by about 1,200 people over the next 30 years. Overall, Brown Township's population is older and less diverse than the rest of Franklin County. Township residents are deeply rooted, with more than half having lived in their current home for more than 10 years.

Land Use:

Agriculture is the most prevalent land use in the township, accounting for a little more than half of the land area – but this area is shrinking. Residential uses account for almost one-third of the township land area, with lot sizes ranging from as small as ½-acre up to the more common 5-acres.

Land Suitability:

The same soils that make Brown Township so good for farming also make it problematic for building homes and household sewage treatment systems. Ongoing efforts in the Big Darby Creek watershed focus on protecting stream corridors, wetlands, and wooded areas.

External Forces:

The city of Hilliard is located to the east of Brown Township and had a population of 28,435 in 2010. The City annexed about 1,000 acres from Brown and Norwich Townships between 2008 and 2011. Hilliard's

water and sewer service area includes an additional 11,500 acres in Brown and Norwich Townships that could be annexed in the future. This area is commonly referred to as the "Hilliard Growth Area."

Public Meeting Results

The first public meeting for the Brown Township Comprehensive Plan was held on December 11, 2012. More than 100 residents, property owners, business representatives, and other interested individuals attended the meeting. County planners gave a brief presentation and then asked meeting attendees to fill out a survey to give input on what they like about the community and what they would change. The survey was also available online and mailed to all households in the township.

A total of 224 surveys were completed and below is a summary of the responses. The full results are available in the draft Policy Recommendations Document, which can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/browntownshipplan> under "Planning Process Documents."

Land Use:

The biggest concerns for township residents were preserving rural character and protecting the Big Darby watershed. When asked what "rural" means, four of the top five responses involved agricultural elements of the landscape. If any development occurs in the township, respondents want it to reflect the surrounding character and preserve scenic elements and environmentally sensitive land.

Community:

Respondents expressed pride in Brown Township's distinct identity as a rural, agricultural, tight-knit community with generous open space. Most respondents desire to continue living in the township, but many are concerned that increasing costs will make that difficult in the future. There is widespread concern about the

loss of township land to Hilliard and the subsequent development being inconsistent with the rural landscape.

Transportation:

Many respondents are troubled by the traffic speeds and volumes experienced in the township. Many respondents also feel that narrow, winding roads contribute to rural character and should be preserved. When combined with the increased traffic volumes and speeds, these roadway characteristics can create safety problems.

Draft Policy Recommendations

County planners and the Working Committee used the survey results to establish the community's vision for the future, which provides the foundation for creating the plan's policy recommendations. The policy recommendations contain two components: goals and actions. The goals address the community's vision for the future. The actions are programs, policies, or projects designed to achieve each goal. Below is a summary of the draft policy recommendations. The full recommendations and supporting text for each action can be found in the draft Policy Recommendations Document, at <http://tinyurl.com/browntownshipplan> under "Planning Process Documents."

Land Use

The land use recommendations seek to preserve farmland. With the understanding that development cannot be prevented everywhere, additional recommendations ensure that any future development will preserve rural character and environmental resources.

Goal A:

Preserve farmland

Actions to achieve this goal include increasing minimum lot sizes in some areas, allowing landowners to sell their development rights to areas outside the township while

maintaining ownership of the land, and informing farmers about existing voluntary farmland preservation programs.

**Goal B:
Maintain rural residential character**

Actions to achieve this goal include preventing conflict between residential and agricultural uses, encouraging new development to preserve rural character and environmental resources, adopting lighting regulations to prevent light pollution, and discouraging any new interchanges along I-70 in Brown Township.

**Goal C:
Ensure commercial development preserves rural character**

Actions to achieve this goal include identifying areas appropriate for commercial uses, limiting the types of uses, and adopting design guidelines for commercial sites.

**Goal D:
Protect the natural environment**

Actions to achieve this goal include requiring new development to preserve environmentally sensitive land, using the most appropriate wastewater and stormwater technologies, continuing stream restoration efforts, and informing farmers about opportunities for voluntary enrollment in conservation programs.

Community

Community recommendations seek to strengthen the township's community identity, support the local agricultural economy, and encourage cooperation with neighboring jurisdictions.

**Goal A:
Promote the township's unique characteristics**

Actions to achieve this goal include seeking scenic byway designation for township roadways, highlighting and protecting historic and cultural resources; and encouraging landowners to preserve old barns.

**Goal B:
Support a viable local food system**

Actions to achieve this goal include directing small business programs to farmers, connecting local food producers with markets and consumers, allowing and encouraging limited agricultural support businesses, and encouraging farmers to convert to more profitable specialty crops.

**Goal C:
Encourage cooperative and complementary development in the Hilliard Growth Area**

Actions to achieve this goal include adopting a non-annexation agreement with the City of Hilliard.

Transportation

Transportation recommendations aim to preserve the rural character of the township's roadways while improving safety and accommodating all road users, to the extent practical.

**Goal A:
Improve the safety of the road network**

Strategies to achieve this goal include encouraging safety improvements on high-crash roads and at high-crash intersections.

**Goal B:
Ensure that roadways reinforce**

the rural character of the township

Actions to achieve this goal include adopting rural road design guidelines for township roads and encouraging the County Engineer to design roads with input from township residents.

**Goal C:
Create a roadway network that allows for orderly development and traffic management**

Actions to achieve this goal include updating the Franklin County Thoroughfare Plan and discouraging new Hilliard roads from aligning with Brown Township roads.

**Goal D:
Improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and accessibility**

Actions to achieve this goal include completing a Safe Routes to School Travel Plan and requiring new development to provide bikeway connections to nearby destinations.

*Information provided by
Scott T. Ulrich, Planner*

*Franklin County Economic Development
and Planning Department*

Brown Township Blockwatch

More than 350 people receive alerts about crime or suspicious activity in the township. If you would like to join the neighborhood watch program, send an email to brn.twp.blockwatchcoordinator2@gmail.com with your name, address, and best contact number(s). If you do not have access to email, contact one of the Trustees who will put you in touch with the coordinator.

Always report suspicious activity to the Sheriff's Office at 525-3333 and call 911 in case of emergency.



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Hilliard, Ohio 43026

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- Fill out the **name, address, additions and corrections form** on the Brown Township website under “Newsletters”
- **Call** the Township Fiscal Officer (614-876-2133)
- Via **fax** to the Township Office (614-876-2421)
- Or by **mail** to the return address above.
- To have your newsletter addressed in your name instead of “Brown Township Neighbor,” please visit <http://www.Brown.Twp.Franklin.oh.us/newsletters.htm>.



*L-R: Gary Dever, Greg Ruwe,
Joe Martin and Ron Williams*

Brown Township Administration Office

2491 Walker Road, Hilliard, Ohio 43026 876-2133

Website

www.brown.twp.franklin.oh.us

Fiscal Officer

Greg Ruwe 876-2133

Trustees

Mr. Gary Dever 876-4768

Mr. Ronald Williams..... 876-6118

Mr. Joseph Martin..... 870-9601

Norwich Fire Department

Robert Kaufman, Chief876-7694

Brown Township Board of Trustees Meeting

When: 3rd Monday of every month at 7:30 p.m.

Where: 2491 Walker Road, Hilliard, Ohio

For Police, Fire and Medical Emergencies, Dial 911