

Implementation- Priority Initiatives for Mercer County

How should the County and its partners begin to implement the overall plan and vision for Mercer County? By prioritizing broad initiatives that will address county-wide issues and by structuring a framework for desirable future growth and resource conservation.

Four priority initiatives have been identified for Mercer County:

- Planning and Ordinance Leadership and Development Assistance
- Infrastructure Maintenance and Strategic Expansion
- Economic and Neighborhood Revitalization
- Natural Resource Protection

Each initiative is followed by a brief summary of how the initiative addresses the priority issues identified in Chapter 3. The action items that were the basis for determining the priority initiatives are found in the previous chapter

Planning and Ordinance Leadership and Development Assistance

Adoption and implementation of the County Comprehensive Plan, the Open Space Plan, and the Long Range Transportation Plan

Basis:

- Provides a Mercer County Land Use Vision
- Provides guidance for natural and historic resource protection
- Addresses the need for proactive, long-range transportation planning
- Identifies potential funding sources for a variety of infrastructure improvements
- Prioritizes revitalization of neighborhoods and traditional economic centers of the County



Implementation of County level GIS System

Basis:

- Provides a much needed data analysis tool for a variety of Mercer County organizations
- Allows for more accurate identification of natural, historic, and cultural resources
- Allows for better monitoring of several Mercer County indicators

Provide technical guidance to local officials by assisting with the development of local ordinances, design guidelines, and regional comprehensive plans.

Basis:

- Modernize local ordinances.
- Focuses on higher quality built environment and protecting the natural environment.
- Ensures greater consistency throughout the county.

Infrastructure Maintenance and Strategic Expansion

Prioritize maintenance and improvements to existing infrastructure in the county's older communities when budgeting limited financial resources.

Basis:

- Protects historic investment in the county's infrastructure, including sewer, water, and transportation
- Allows for infill development in the county's cities and boroughs by addressing DEP consent orders first

Be strategic with infrastructure expansion investments to ensure consistency with targeted growth areas and community objectives.

Basis:

- Prioritizes and focuses expansion projects
- Helps to minimize sprawl development
- Reflects the desire to incorporate smart growth principles

Economic and Neighborhood Revitalization

Prioritize revitalization efforts in Mercer County's traditional downtowns and older neighborhoods when providing technical, financial, and grant writing assistance to local officials and community groups.

Basis:

- Consistent with target growth concepts
- Protects traditional neighborhoods and downtown centers
- Protects natural resources by discouraging sprawl

Promote economic diversity through the support of downtown revitalization, natural resource based industries and new industries that can take advantage of the county's accessibility, work force, and cultural and historic assets

Basis:

- Provides additional economic stability over the long term
- Provides existing and potential new businesses with skilled labor force
- Encourages new ideas for agriculture and forestry industries
- Takes advantage of trends and interest in heritage tourism and outdoor recreation

Natural Resource Protection

Protect Mercer County's most sensitive natural resources by targeting growth, developing appropriate land use ordinances, and encouraging environmentally sensitive site design for new development

Basis:

- Provides protection for sensitive features, including waterways, woodlands, and prime agricultural soils
- Discourages sprawl

Encourage Public/Private Partnerships to address resource protection by providing technical and financial support for the efforts of the many organizations currently working in Mercer County through

Basis:

- Provides additional sources of needed funding
- Encourages sense of community

