

"Discovering Collingswood"

A Master Plan for the Borough of Collingswood

Goals and Objectives

JUNE 1999

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Prepared for:

Borough of Collingswood Planning Board as part of the Community's Master Plan Analysis

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(The original of this report has been signed and sealed in accordance with the law)

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COLLINGSWOOD MASTER PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

I. INTRODUCTION

The goals and objectives are a required element of the Master Plan. They are a summary of the community's desires and an overall description of the development pattern which will be supported in the different elements of the Master Plan. The goals and objectives are listed for each element within the Master Plan, such as Land Use, Circulation, and Recreation.

The Master Planning process incorporates detailed background studies and an inventory with input from the community and elected officials to create the goals and objectives listed here. From these, a specific list of recommendations have been introduced, which will be the foundation for implementation of the overall goals and objectives.

II. OVERALL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. INCORPORATE THE PURPOSES OF MUNICIPAL LAND USE LAW

The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) in 40:55D-1, states the intent and purposes of municipal planning across the state. These fifteen goals create the foundation on which this Master Plan is based.

III. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS

The following are the goals and objectives for each Plan Element of the Master Plan. The elements are listed as capital letters, the goals are listed as numbers, and the specific objectives are listed as the bullets under each specific goal:

A. LAND USE

1. Provide for strong regulations to ensure compatible land uses throughout the Borough
 - Creation of a strong buffer ordinance to establish a natural separation between different types of land uses
 - Capitalize on the existing land uses to establish new uses in the surrounding areas (e.g. commuter convenience services near PATCO's Collingswood Station)

2. Support the development of a strong Central Business District
 - Work with franchise developers and investors to draw speciality commercial, retail, and niche businesses into the downtown's designated strategic redevelopment parcels
 - Enhance the marketing of the CBD to promote the downtown as destination shopping and entertainment
 - Institute programs that foster strong businesses and marketability such as a Special Improvement District and a Main Street program
3. Promote a strong housing program with the goals of renovating, upgrading, and transforming the previously converted multi-family housing back to their original single-family form.
4. Establish areas within the Borough which are appropriate for, and support, industrial and intensive commercial uses
 - Revise the zoning and land use regulations to better support the development of highway-oriented commercial uses
5. Encourage pedestrian friendly routes, particularly in the CBD and West Collingswood Neighborhood Commercial Area, through the use of appropriate design solutions and regulations.
 - Develop traffic calming and pedestrian-oriented improvements such as paved cross-walks, bump-out pedestrian crossings, and appropriate signage in specific areas of the Borough

B. HOUSING

1. Expand and enhance the current building code enforcement program to promote a well-maintained residential housing base.
 - Develop a program for spot inspections of exterior building and yard conditions to enforce zoning and building codes.
 - Require the annual registration and issuance of an occupancy permit for all rental units beginning at time of occupancy or change of tenant.

2. Promote ongoing rehabilitation and upgrading of existing housing, both single and multi family.
 - Retain existing multi-family housing units in localities in the community that are proximate to open space, access corridors, and commercial facilities.
 - Develop a neighborhood rehabilitation strategy for housing preservation and enhancement
3. Promote the owner occupancy of existing multi-family conversions in appropriate locations
 - When construction loans are provided for maintenance of multi-family units, provide loan only if property will be deed restricted to require owner to live on premises
4. Promote the conversion of multi-family units to single-family units in areas of predominantly single family homes
 - Continue to provide construction loans for conversions of multi-family units with additional stipulations such as a deed restriction to remain as single-family.
5. Continue to provide a variety of affordable housing to citizens of the community.
 - Expand housing options for senior citizens in proximity to the Central Business District.

C. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Although not a specific element within the *Discovering Collingswood Master Plan* document, Economic Development concepts are inter-woven throughout each Master Plan element. Specific recommendations and implementation methods are discussed in a separate document, *Master Plan Implementation Strategies*, prepared by Peter P. Karabashian Associates, Inc., June 1999. The overall goals and objectives for the Borough's economic development are listed here:

1. Establish strategic redevelopment districts throughout the Borough to take advantage of redevelopment designation benefits that can be used to attract commercial and industrial businesses to locate / relocate within the community.

- Promote redevelopment of vacant properties in these areas via marketing and financial incentives
 - Designate a public revolving fund to acquire and re-market properties to encourage compatible land uses
2. Support the implementation of a Special Improvement District (SID) within business, industrial and highway commercial areas.
- Encourage the creation of a central budget to “organize and operate” the Borough’s downtown with special events and characteristics.
 - Initiate a facade, sign and window treatment enhancement effort in the CBD as a first priority.
 - Implement a business district parking plan to serve the public and private uses within the immediate area.
 - Augment the SID with a Main Street Program.
 - Use SID management services and funds to improve signage and landscaping along the Route 130 corridor.
 - Use SID and other funds to promote the Route 130 corridor through a comprehensive marketing program
3. Financially support the recruitment and attraction of specialty businesses, including markets, restaurants, and retail chains.
- Create an intensive marketing strategy using the “Discovering Collingswood” theme to showcase the Borough and outline the redevelopment incentives available to prospective businesses.
4. Encourage the creative re-use of existing residential buildings along commercial corridors.
- Promote the conversion of residences to professional office uses in the Collings Avenue and Route 30 corridors with incentive financing and a revised land use ordinance. Retain residential character of buildings and regulate through a strong site plan ordinance.

D. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

1. Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public officials and employees through the provision of adequate facilities
 - Relocate police and court facilities into a common public safety building within the Central Business District to allow for the required additional office space.
 - Upgrade and expand the existing fire station and ambulance facility.
 - Combine Board of Education offices to allow for efficiency between departments and the provision of extra classroom space.
 - Implement a parking plan to locate parking contiguous to businesses in the CBD and create new areas for public parking.
2. Continue to support the creative re-use of the Excelsior Scottish Rite Temple as a theater and as a cultural center to create a focal point within the community.
 - Jointly market the Temple and local businesses through such programs as restaurant discounts, and dinner/theater combinations.
 - Support the development of a West Collingswood Re-development Plan to encourage compatible uses with the cultural center, such as restaurants and galleries.

E. RECREATION

1. Encourage the redesign of Knight Park to include a variety of unique programming and environmental features.
2. Coordinate with the local Board of Education to allow for the school playgrounds to be used as active neighborhood recreational centers.
 - Create a "lock and key" program for the neighborhood elementary school parks supervised by neighborhood volunteers.
 - Continue to upgrade school playground facilities.

3. Continue to upgrade and improve the Newton Creek and Cooper River Parks through active coordination with Camden County Park Department.
4. Capitalize on the Borough's remaining vacant parcels as well as the yards of homeowners to promote the preservation of open space and passive recreational opportunities.
 - Continue with the urban reforestation and tree-planting/maintenance program throughout the community.
 - Develop an environmental interpretive signage and sponsorship program focused on Knight, Cooper River and Newton Creek Parks to promote awareness of the environmental attributes of the Borough.

F. INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES

1. Improve road and storm water management systems to prevent flooding
 - Work with public transportation agencies to incorporate adequate storm water control in specific road improvement projects, such as the widening of Route 130.
2. Continue to upgrade and improve the current sewer and water systems
 - Use available grant monies and improve existing infrastructure to increase capacity needed to meet the needs of new industrial and commercial uses

G. CIRCULATION

1. Promote walking and bicycle use in the Borough
 - Install bicycle racks in prominent locations throughout the Central Business District, Knight park, and public school sites.
 - Implement traffic calming techniques to slow automobile traffic in areas of heavy pedestrian traffic

2. Through the redevelopment process, work with the business owners in the downtown areas to develop areas for public parking
3. Continue to coordinate with state and county agencies to fund and implement road improvement projects.

H. RECYCLING

1. Decrease the amount of trash disposed by residents by increasing the amount of recycling
 - Develop a pay-as-you-throw program

I. CONSERVATION

1. Preserve and better use the existing open spaces within the Borough
 - Promote the concept of community gardens in Knight Park and other community open spaces
 - Encourage backyard habitat gardens
 - Implement a replacement program for aging shade trees within the Borough
2. Explore the possibility of creating wetlands mitigation sites in key locations in the Borough for preservation of open spaces, education, and revenue sources.

J. HISTORIC PRESERVATION

1. Increase awareness of the historically significant structures and sites which exist in Collingswood.
 - Design a unique historic marker system to indicate all historic homes, buildings, and sites within the Borough.
2. Continue to improve upon the existing methods of historic preservation
 - Create and adopt a design guide for historic renovations which can be utilized by local residents