

MASTER PLAN
Statement of Goals and Objectives

Borough of Bound Brook
Somerset County, New Jersey



Prepared for the Borough of Bound Brook Planning Board in Accordance with the
New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et seq.)

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Bound Brook Master Plan -- Statement of Goals and Objectives

1.1 Introduction

The statement of Goals and Objectives found in the Borough's 1988 Master Plan – the last previously adopted Statement of Goals and Objectives -- generally reflects the version of the Purposes section of the Municipal Land Use Law (NJSA 40:55D2) in place at that time.

Statements of goals and objectives are frequently very generalized and abstract. It is often hard to see how they reflect local aspirations and local conditions, or how to operationalize them.

This is the case with some of the Goals and Objectives adopted in 1988. For example, what is the appropriate balance between residential and non-residential development, and how would one make that determination? In the absence of an accepted benchmark, or metrics, a goal stated in this generalized fashion is not helpful in guiding decisions.

In addition, some of the purposes adopted in 1988 are now dated and discredited, and do not reflect contemporary planning values. For example, the “appropriate development of flood-prone lands [...] for both private and public uses” raises many issues and needs to be carefully qualified. Similarly, the “location and design of transportation routes which will promote free flow of traffic” is applicable primarily to limited access highways, which makes it essentially irrelevant for the Borough of Bound Brook. We note that the reference applies solely to vehicular traffic, while pedestrian and bicycle traffic are ignored.

As such, it is appropriate to develop a new statement of goals and objectives to provide more contemporary, sound, and place-based underpinnings to the updated land use plan element.

This statement should reflect the planning values shared by the Planning Board; the vision for the future of the community; the fundamental principles that guide the application of planning measures; and, whenever possible, metrics or rules of thumb to assist in their application.

1.2 State and County Goals and Strategies

Bound Brook’s planning framework has sought for many years to sync with the planning frameworks adopted by both the State and the County, and it is therefore appropriate to explicitly refer the goals and objectives adopted by these two levels of government in the new set of Goals and Objectives adopted by the Borough’s Planning Board.

The Goals and Strategies adopted by the New Jersey State Planning Commission for the state as a whole, and in particular, those goals and strategies that are pertinent to a mature developed community such as Bound Brook -- where the bulk of transformation will occur through the repurposing of previously developed lands for new uses and activities, as well as the reclamation and restoration of undeveloped or underdeveloped lands subject to recurring environmental events such as severe flooding – are incorporated herein by reference,

Those statewide goals and strategies are expressed in pages 23 through 109 of the 2001 State Development and Redevelopment Plan. In addition, those statewide policies found in pages 110 through 180 of the same document that are relevant to the Borough are also incorporated by reference herein.

Similarly incorporated by reference are the planning values implicit in the 2014 Somerset County Investment Framework and in the 2014 Economic Development Strategy. Also incorporated by reference are the relevant guiding principles and planning objectives of the draft 2017 Somerset County Housing Element found in pages 2 through 5 of that document.

Finally, it is appropriate to adopt Goals, Objectives and Principles specific to the Borough’s planning framework and local conditions. These goals will both help guide planning decisions and constitute a “to do” list of future actions and initiatives.

1.3 Local Goals and Objectives

Population

- Support diversity in all its manifestations.
- Facilitate the creation of places that encourage and support active, healthy living behaviors; functionally support all age groups and physical conditions; encourage social and cultural interactions; and encourage life-long learning and creative pursuits.

Land Use

- Ensure appropriate levels of privacy for all residential uses and continue to maintain adequate light, air and open space.
- Encourage new, context-sensitive buildings that reflect the scale and character of Bound Brook.
- Facilitate mixed-use buildings and neighborhoods with multiple building types in designated locations.
- Facilitate the repurposing of existing buildings and the redevelopment of vacant lots with appropriate new uses and structures.
- Ensure the highest level of consistency between the land use framework in the master plan, the Borough's zoning and land development regulations, and the adopted redevelopment plans.
- Adopt a land use framework that maximizes synergies and minimizes conflicts between different uses and activities.
- Seek to create interesting, lively places that strengthen the community by facilitating both business transactions and social interaction.
- Encourage new community-oriented service uses in designated locations.
- Locate larger scale and higher intensity uses along the Main Street / Talmage and Union Avenue (West of Livingston Street) corridors, in proximity to transit, goods and services.
- Carefully evaluate the consequences of every development decision in terms of whether it encourages walking, biking and transit use.
- Carefully evaluate land development procedures and eliminate any unnecessary and counter-productive administrative barriers, while maintaining appropriate oversight

Natural Resources

- Adopt stricter standards to reduce and mitigate stormwater runoff wherever possible.
- Encourage land development and building practices that reduce energy and water consumption.
- Seek to improve water quality in the Borough's water bodies such that they support recreation, as well as indigenous plant species and wildlife.
- Encourage the replanting of flood-prone lands with appropriate habitat-creating vegetation.
- Facilitate the remediation of contaminated lands within or adjacent to railroad rights-of-way as well as located elsewhere in the Borough.
- Encourage community-based volunteer cleanup efforts of the stream corridors, the riverfront and vacant lands and pursue grant opportunities to support such efforts.
- Facilitate the continued expansion of the Borough's tree canopy by requiring the planting of replacement trees when existing trees die or are cut down, and the planting

of an appropriate number of new trees, in both the public right-of-way, in parking lots and in private open space when sites are developed or redeveloped.

- Encourage a way-finding and signage program for all public lands or publicly accessible open lands in the Borough.
- Facilitate public access to the riverfront and to other preserved areas.

Housing

- Provide opportunities for housing, including affordable housing, appropriate to all relevant demographic profiles, economic capabilities and housing and lifestyle preferences.
- Continue to encourage the location of higher density housing in close proximity to transit options, goods and services.
- Continue to encourage the necessary maintenance and upgrading of the housing stock, both detached and attached, and both owner-occupied and renter-occupied, and explore potential new incentives for reinvestment by property owners.

Mobility

- Ensure that the Borough's sidewalk network is complete, well maintained and free from obstacles.
- Seek to upgrade all crosswalks with depressed curbs and adequate pedestrian cycles at signalized intersections.
- Develop a Borough-wide bicycle plan, including both dedicated bicycle lanes and shared streets. The intention is to create an integrated network linking all of the Borough's neighborhoods and taking advantage of off-road opportunities provided by the paths on the top of the levees, abandoned railroad rights-of-way, parks, cemeteries and other open space elements.
- Seek to locate adequate bicycle parking at all major destinations.
- Facilitate the installation of dignified bus shelters.
- Facilitate the continued upgrading of pedestrian and bicycle access routes to the train station and its platforms.
- Develop and implement an up-to-date, comprehensive parking management strategy for the downtown.
- Encourage a Borough-wide way-finding program showing major destinations: parks, recreation, the waterfront, civic buildings, historic locations, food and beverage, train station and other key destinations.

Economic and Fiscal Base

- Facilitate the continued diversification of the fiscal base with new revenue-generating businesses in clean industries capable of sustained growth.
- Support local entrepreneurs and facilitate the creation of new local employment opportunities in creative industries, arts and culture, hospitality, food and beverage, artisanal manufacturing, recreation, eco- and historic tourism, and other currently under-represented economic activities.
- Facilitate the creation of employment incubators, shared workspaces and home-based businesses.
- Support the Borough's efforts targeting abandoned properties.
- Support the repurposing of vacant or under-utilized Borough-owned properties.

Public Space

- Facilitate the creation of dignified new public gathering spaces, as well as the repurposing of existing public spaces, to strengthen community interaction and as venues for cultural activities.
- Encourage community-based cultural and arts initiatives in public spaces.
- Facilitate temporary uses, “pop-up” activities and mobile uses and streamline regulatory oversight.
- Pursue opportunities for public art installations in appropriate locations.
- Maintain and enhance local recreational facilities.

Architecture and Urban Design

- Require building design to provide articulated facades, ample fenestration, quality materials and compelling design features.
- Encourage the installation of murals and/or other art displays on prominent walls of both private and public structures.
- Discourage surface parking lots where possible, and require vegetative or other devices that are effective in concealing direct views of such facilities from the public realm.
- Require a high quality public realm with appropriate street furniture such as benches, trash receptacles and pedestrian-scale lights, as well as street trees, planter boxes and other street-appropriate vegetation without compromising accessibility and pedestrian circulation.
- Explore more lively and diversified hardscapes using colors and durable materials.

Sustainability

- Promote and facilitate best practices in energy conservation and in local renewable energy production.
- Promote and facilitate best practices in stormwater management, such as pervious pavements, green roofs, cisterns, rain gardens and bio-swales.
- Support the recycling of construction materials, and office and residential waste.
- Support domestic composting.
- Support sourcing of local goods and services.
- Develop and adopt standards for electric vehicle charging stations and require these in all new major development projects.
- Encourage the Borough and school district to adopt sustainability best management practices with respect to their facilities.
- Encourage the systematic removal of unnecessary impervious coverage as part of both public and private redevelopment projects.
- Encourage the retrofitting and upgrading of older residential and commercial structures for greater efficiencies in energy and water consumption, as well as the application of renewable energy sources.
- Facilitate the creation of community gardens on public or privately-owned lands for the enjoyment of the residents of multi-family residential buildings and of smaller lot detached structures.
- Require the reduction of stormwater runoff in all redevelopment projects.