

Land Use Element: Institutions

Draft Goals and Objectives

The purpose of the draft goals is to recognize the importance of institutional land uses, while also recognizing the diversity of institutional land uses and their impacts to the adjacent residential community.

1. Explore creative techniques to allow institutions to evolve while maintaining protections of the surrounding residences. Striking a balance between the needs of institutions and their adjacent residential neighbors is of utmost importance.
2. Recognize institutional land uses as a distinct and defining land use within Lower Merion Township and develop specific land use strategies to address issues relating to the growth and preservation of institutional land uses.
3. Develop policies and land use regulations that recognize the diversity of institutional land uses within Lower Merion. Future policies and regulations should address the impact of institutions upon the Township's economic, social, transportation, housing, open space and recreational needs.
4. Develop strategies for the preservation and enhancement of historic, cultural, and educational resources which are defining elements of Lower Merion Township. While institutions have an air of permanence, the vast majority of institutional properties are temporarily protected and potentially vulnerable to future development.

Draft objectives to be included with the overall institutional land use goals:

- a. Develop quantifiable methods to determine the appropriate capacity for institutional land uses in the Township and develop strategies for addressing the impact of institutional change upon residential neighborhoods and the Township as a whole. (Goal 2)
- b. Develop tools to permit reasonable expansion of institutions while eliminating negative externalities upon residential neighborhoods in which institutions are located. (Goal 1)
 1. Determine if the most effective tool for managing the reasonable expansion of existing Institutional Uses is the Special Exception approval process or the creation of an Institutional Overlay District.
 2. Require all Institutions to submit a Concept Development Plan (CDP) as part of the Special exception or Land Development process. (Goal 4)

- c. Establish partnerships and procedures to ensure that future institutional expansions are consistent with Township economic, circulation, housing, historic preservation and open space goals. (Goal 3)
 1. Explore the potential of transferring development rights (TDR) and the Official Map as authorized by the MPC to permit institutional expansion in exchange for making land available to satisfy other Township goals, such as acquiring playfields, developing trails and preserving historic properties.
 2. Determine ways that institutions can increase contributions to the local tax base.

The draft institutional goals and objectives were discussed by the Land Use Committee at the meeting on April 30, 2012. The committee provided some edits, but indicated general agreement with the draft goals and objectives overall. The preliminary recommendations, which were discussed by the committee in May build upon these goals and objectives.