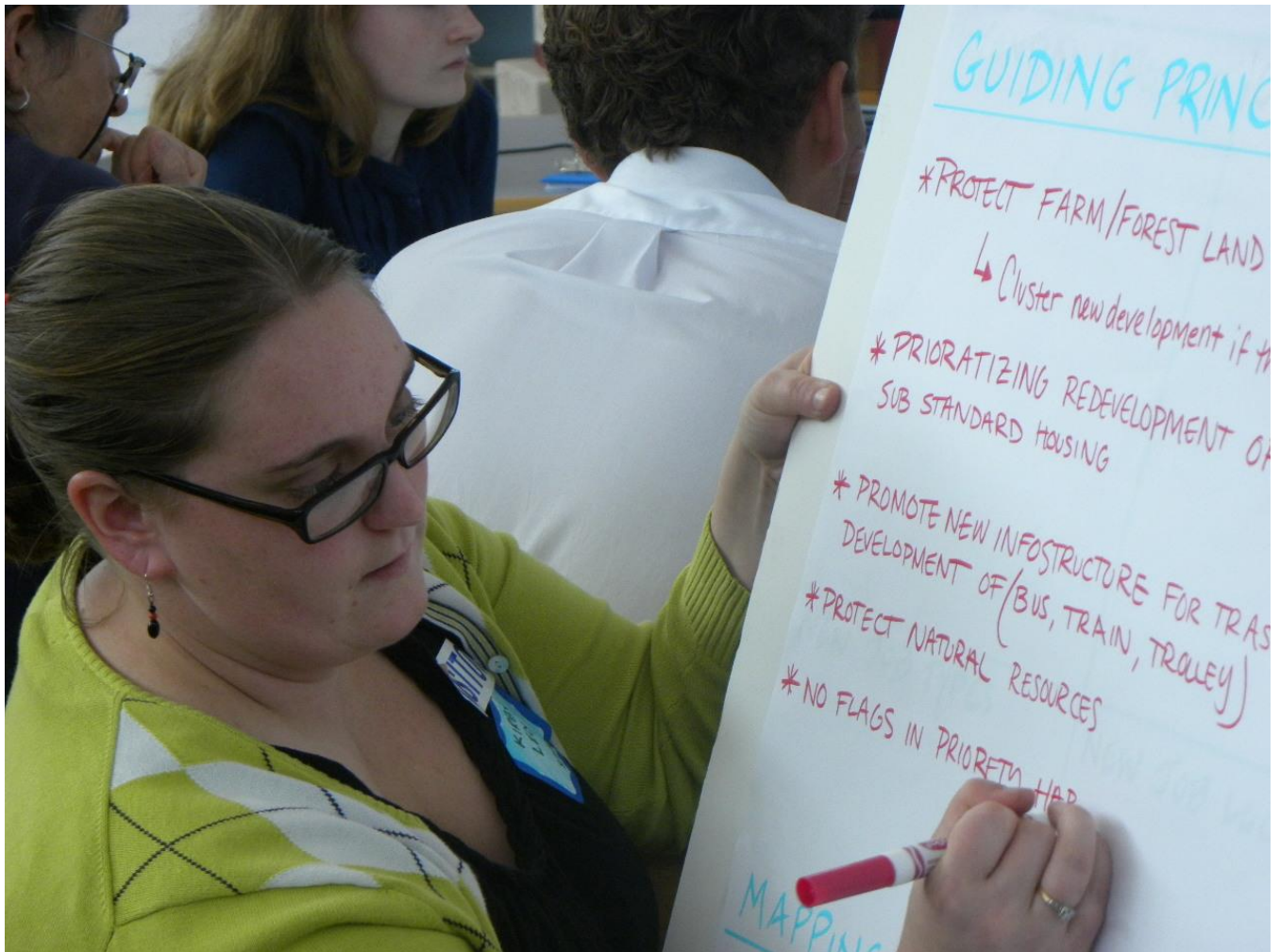


SUSTAINABLE FRANKLIN COUNTY

Chapter 2: Vision and Goals



INTRODUCTION

The Regional Plan for Sustainable Development (the “Plan”) presents sound, achievable strategies which meet the needs of present citizens without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. An overall Vision Statement was developed to provide a framework for the Plan. This Vision Statement takes into consideration the results of a goal setting survey, a survey of people of low or moderate income, and several public workshops. This public participation process is described in detail in Chapter 3: Public Participation.

VISION STATEMENT

The Regional Plan for Sustainable Development’s 20-year vision for Franklin County is one in which economic vitality and social equity will thrive in balance with our natural and cultural resources. Our region’s agricultural, forestry, and manufacturing heritage and history of innovation and creativity will provide a strong foundation for increased local living-wage jobs, more affordable and energy efficient housing, increased utilization of locally-grown and produced wood products, greater availability and security of locally-grown food, locally-produced clean energy, and revitalized town centers. Sound infrastructure, sustainable transportation options that support mixed use development and reuse of historic structures in our town centers, and reduction of fossil fuel use are essential to increasing the sustainability of our region. Sustainable development decisions and long-term planning policies that include energy efficiency and conservation as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation will effectively and equitably meet the needs of all current and future generations of Franklin County.

GOALS

Goals Survey

A compilation of the top goals from the Sustainable Franklin County Goals Survey is included in this chapter. Complete survey results and demographics of the respondents are located in Appendix A. Goals listed in the Survey were developed over a several-week process, during which regional plans were reviewed for existing and relevant goals and objectives, which were then compiled by topic. This compilation of goals was subjected to a thorough review and comment period by the Consortium Members and Steering Committee. The final goals were incorporated into the Goals Survey, accessible online and in paper form.

The Survey included an introduction and provided a definition for sustainability that was used throughout the planning process. Organized by topic, the Survey included an overview for each topic, with the aim of providing an education element to the survey and clarifying any potentially unfamiliar terminology. Within each topic, a list of the compiled goals was provided and respondents were asked to select their top three goals for that topic. Each topic offered the ability for respondents to select “other” as a top goal and to write in goals they thought were the most important to the topic.

The online Goals Survey was made available from Sept. 1 through Oct. 28, 2011 through SurveyMonkey, a web-based tool used to capture and compile responses to surveys. Several survey responses were submitted on paper and were manually entered into SurveyMonkey.

Input was received from 180 respondents and all but four Franklin County towns were represented. Nearly 92 percent of respondents live in Franklin County and about 88 percent work in the County. Approximately 52 percent of respondents were between the ages of 45 to 64. The top three goals for each topic are shown on the following page.

TOP THREE HOUSING GOALS

1. Improve the energy efficiency of housing.
2. Improve the quality of existing housing.
3. Locate housing near employment and town centers.

TOP THREE TRANSPORTATION GOALS

1. Increase availability and use of public transit.
2. Restore passenger rail service.
3. Increase bicycle/pedestrian facilities and promote walking and bicycling.

TOP THREE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1. Redevelop vacant or underutilized industrial and commercial buildings or sites.
2. Support sustainable economic development in the region.
3. Promote and invest in specific business sectors including manufacturing, agriculture and clean energy.

TOP THREE ENERGY GOALS

1. Promote energy conservation and efficiency.
2. Increase the quantity of locally-produced clean energy.
3. Reduce the use of fossil fuels.

TOP THREE NATURAL RESOURCES GOALS

1. Protect farmland and local food supplies.
2. Protect forests.
3. Protect drinking water supplies and reduce water usage.

TOP THREE CULTURAL RESOURCES GOALS

1. Foster the growth of arts and culture.
2. Support our agricultural heritage.
3. Preserve rural and scenic landscapes.*
3. Revitalize and preserve historic town centers.*

*These two goals were tied for third place.

TOP THREE LAND USE GOALS

1. Prioritize redevelopment of vacant or underutilized structures & properties.
2. Locate new businesses in town centers or near transit services.
3. Coordinate new development with existing transportation, water and sewer infrastructure.

TOP THREE INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS

1. Protect and expand “green infrastructure” to reduce flooding, purify air and water and decrease energy use for cooling.
2. Improve broadband internet access.
3. Maintain or upgrade sewer and water infrastructure.