



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study area for this planning process includes the City of Bradford, Foster Township and Bradford Township. The overriding goal of this program is to improve the quality of life for the people living in all three municipalities. It has become increasingly clear through the interview and fact-finding activities that the downtown core of the City of Bradford is the primary center of the entire region, and the greatest amount of work, as well as the greatest amount of potential, lies in this location.

This regional strategy includes proposals for economic development, zoning, tourism and community development for the whole study area, but it is notable that the majority of the “bricks and mortar” proposals are about improving the center of town. There are architectural improvements to be made elsewhere, but the necessity for a strong and healthy downtown as an anchor is of vital importance for the quality of life of the Bradford Community.

The primary objectives that have been identified below are divided into six strategies. It should not be surprising that in such a multi-disciplinary effort there are objectives and actions which could be placed under multiple strategies. The groups below attempt to combine goals that make sense as a group of tasks to be overseen by the same committee.



Grandma's House Tea and Gifts

OBJECTIVES

Economic Development

- Exploit identified industry clusters in order to enhance and support a sustainable and competitive local economy
- Capitalize on regional retail gap opportunities to help grow the local economy
- Provide lifelong learning and skill development opportunities that will lead to a world-class regional workforce
- Support and foster new industry, research, innovation and entrepreneurship

Housing

- Improve the quality, availability and diversity of housing options in Bradford for homeowners and renters in both market rate and low-income housing
- Support and encourage mixed-income neighborhoods

Urban Bradford

- Enhance and increase social & economic activity in the downtown core of Bradford
- Preserve Bradford's Historic Downtown core
- Support and encourage efforts that make downtown Bradford a place where residents can “live, work and play”

Community Development

- Create a clearinghouse of information to strengthen and boost civic pride in Bradford
- Encourage the development of places for local students to gather and have fun
- Address the demographic and economic realities of Bradford's declining population
- Increase cooperation and collaborative efforts among Bradford's communities and community leaders

Recreation and Tourism

- Welcome visitors to Bradford with attractive lighting, gateways and clear signage
- Improve Bradford's image as a destination and capitalize on the outdoor amenities of the region
- Revitalize the Tunungwant Creek and recognize it as an asset

Sustainability

- Make improvements to the Bradford community to positively impact the health of residents, the sustainability of the local economy and the sustainability of the local environment.

ACTIONS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN BRADFORD

Economic Development

Exploit identified industry clusters in order to enhance and support a sustainable and competitive local economy

1. Connections must be formed between the key economic sectors and economic development organizations.
2. Productivity, workforce skill and availability of industry assets (resources, transportation, distribution, tools) are critical to maintaining the health of these industry clusters.

Capitalize on regional retail gap opportunities to help grow the local economy

1. The results of the strategy analysis are a list of retail sales categories which hold good promise for retail ventures in Bradford.
2. Existing retail establishments must be encouraged to offer products that are desirable in the region in a manner that can appeal to shoppers of all ages.

Provide lifelong learning and skill development opportunities that will lead to a world-class regional workforce

1. Create local vocational training opportunities and other lifelong learning options
2. Promote educational partnerships between the high school, the university and local employers

Support and foster new industry, research, innovation and entrepreneurship

1. In order to lessen the economic dependence on the sustainability of the manufacturing sector, new sectors of innovation-based economic activity must be developed.

* This report summarizes the actions recommended in the Economic Development Strategy prepared by Impact Economics. For a complete list of action items please refer to Appendix A-II.

Housing

Improve the quality, availability and diversity of housing options in Bradford for home owners and renters in both market rate and low-income housing

1. Undertake neighborhood improvements in a holistic manner and encourage construction of infill housing.
2. Revise City of Bradford zoning code
3. Improve code enforcement procedures and tracking of rental property condition
4. Adopt design guidelines for new construction to ensure compatibility with Bradford's architectural character and zoning district goals
5. Repair and stabilize derelict houses
6. Support and encourage mixed-income neighborhoods

Urban Bradford

Enhance and increase social and economic activity in the downtown core of Bradford

1. Develop shared elevators downtown – use of upper floors downtown for apartments and offices
2. Use the expansion of Veterans Square to encourage growth of the farmer's market, to encourage outdoor dining and to create a comfortable space for formal and informal gatherings
3. Improve Downtown Parking by providing more organized lots and by re-examining the use of parking meters and parking restrictions downtown
4. Allow overnight on-street parking downtown to accommodate downtown housing

Preserve Bradford's Historic Downtown core

1. Encourage the renovation and restoration of historic downtown buildings, and provide community support and recognition of owners taking care of their properties
2. Adopt design guidelines for new construction to ensure compatibility with Bradford's architectural character and zoning district goals

Support and encourage efforts that make downtown Bradford a place where residents can "live, work and play"

1. Encourage and pursue new retail business and new restaurants to locate downtown and on West Washington Street as appropriate for their size
2. Favor commercial development over housing along West Washington Street to the city line
3. Establish guidelines for a more uniform streetscape in commercial districts – similar to the residential districts, this should include continuous curbs, grass or planting strips, continuous sidewalks and defined driveways - both for beautification and to make commercial districts more walkable. Begin the process at major intersections and expand from there.

Community Development

Coordinate the efforts of existing community organizations to strengthen and boost civic pride

1. Encourage Community Based Action and Volunteer Organizations.
2. Organize Clean-up Activities.
3. Urge the media to promote positive local happenings.
4. Develop and Maintain a database of interested volunteers.
5. Recruit University and High School Alumni back to the community and engage alumni who are in Bradford.

Encourage the development of places for local students to gather and have fun.

Address the demographic and economic realities of Bradford's declining population

1. Gather and publish facts about the distribution, income and make-up of Bradford's population to prevent exaggerations from spreading.
2. Use current data to compare the populations of Bradford's three municipalities.

Increase cooperation and collaborative efforts among Bradford's communities and community leaders

1. Provide recommendations for revisions to the Bradford Township and Foster Township zoning codes.
2. Investigate ways for the three municipalities to share services in an equitable manner to increase efficiencies and control costs.
3. Encourage municipal leaders to work together.
4. Encourage a stronger connection between the University and the City of Bradford.

Recreation and Tourism

Welcome visitors to Bradford with attractive lighting, gateways & clear signage

1. Improved signage along Route 219 and I-86 to alert travelers to the amenities available in Bradford – food, lodging, recreation, shopping
2. Improve the gateways into Bradford to be welcoming, attractive and provide clear directions for visitors
3. Create roundabouts along Davis Street to make intersections safer, more attractive and more welcoming
4. Light up downtown buildings to make Bradford enticing to drivers along Route 219

Improve Bradford's image as a destination and capitalize on the outdoor amenities of the region

1. Encourage businesses that support the needs of visitors and outdoor enthusiasts – lodging, outdoor equipment, etc.
2. Provide an information hub for visitors to Bradford
3. Build on Bradford's potential as a gateway community - a gateway to tourism, the outdoors, shopping and history

Revitalize the Tunungwant creek and recognize it as an asset

1. New amenities, trails, restaurants and businesses along the creek should face the water
2. Make the creek more usable for recreation, especially in town
3. Create a park along the Tunungwant Creek and East Washington Street, reopen the old pedestrian bridge over the water and use Pine Street to connect activities in the park to activities in Veterans Square
4. The continuation of the trail system through town should run along the creek as much as possible

Sustainability

Make improvements to the Bradford community to positively impact the health of residents, the sustainability of the local economy and the sustainability of the local environment.

1. Discourage Sprawl
2. Foster an urban core where residents can live, work and play.
3. Protect Resources