

**Vision Statement for the Borough of Stockton
Statement of Master Plan Goals and Objectives**

pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28(b)(1)

Stockton Borough is located in the southwestern portion of Hunterdon County, nestled along the Delaware River, and bisected by the Delaware River and Raritan Canal on the western side. The Borough has a diverse history, and is enriched with scenic, cultural and environmental resources. Flanked by the Delaware River to the south and a sloping ridgeline to the north, the landscape shapes a development pattern that highlights the Borough's long, historical link with the river. The forested and agricultural lands that currently surround the Borough's developed areas offer visitors and residents a sense of connection with the past. Stockton's vision of itself is to honor its historic antecedents, protect the Borough's natural resources and maintain the built and natural environment much as it is today.

The Borough's Master Plan goals and objectives are specifically tailored to Stockton's unique circumstances, including its geographic location and natural resource base, as well as the Borough's quaint, small town historic character and ambience as it has evolved over the last two centuries as a Delaware River town. The goals and objectives, and the means by which they may be achieved, are also guided by the available resources and constraints present in the natural and built environments. Effective land use planning seeks more than mere compatibility of uses in a spatial arrangement that is functionally efficient and aesthetically appropriate. Effective planning is the process that implements the community's vision of itself through policies, strategies and regulations consistent with the Borough's goals and objectives.

The Municipal Land Use Law (M.L.U.L.) states that the Master Plan shall generally comprise a report or statement and land use and development proposals with maps, diagrams and text, and a statement of objectives, principles, assumptions, policies and standards which are the bases of constituent proposals for the physical, economic and social development of the municipality (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28(b)(1)). The Master Plan's goals and objectives respond to this provision in the M.L.U.L. This vision statement consolidates and adds to the goals and objectives of the Borough's Land Use Plan adopted on September 12, 2006 and Conservation Plan adopted November 16, 2005. The additions are consistent with the Borough's vision of itself.

Goals and Objectives

1. *Protect the health, safety and general welfare of Stockton Borough Residents.*
 - a. Protect against local and downstream flooding.
 - b. Encourage safe traffic and pedestrian patterns to ensure the safety of residents and visitors to the Borough.

- c. Encourage the use of new and existing access ways to increase public access throughout the Borough.

Suggested revision:

Prepare and adopt a Circulation Plan Element in accordance with the M.L.U.L. N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28(b)(4).

- d. Protect the local, regional and state water supply and quality.
2. *Protect and maintain the existing variety of residential and non-residential opportunities in the Borough.*
- a. Encourage a range of retail and service activities at a scale designed to meet the everyday needs of the residents of Stockton and the region.
 - b. Maintain a healthy balance of residential and non-residential uses in Stockton.
3. *Protect and maintain the cultural and historic land use pattern in the Borough.*
- a. Preserve, protect and enhance the community's existing character.
 - b. Manage growth to protect Stockton's historic character and the existing scale of neighborhoods and commercial areas.
 - c. Encourage aesthetically pleasing design and construction techniques for context sensitive modifications to buildings.
 - d. Identify and encourage the protection of architecturally and historically significant structures and districts.
 - e. Protect and preserve scenic vistas.
 - f. Coordinate change in the Borough with all appropriate local, State and Federal agencies and regulations.
 - g. Protect pre-historic sites and their archeological artifacts; investigate, document, preserve, protect archeological resources.
4. *Promote and enhance Stockton as a cultural, commercial and tourism hub of the Delaware River communities.*
- a. Manage change consistent with historic and existing development patterns.
 - b. Encourage context sensitive redevelopment within a central business district, at a scale and intensity consistent with the Borough's historic development patterns.

5. *Protect and maintain natural systems and man-made infrastructure in the Borough.*
 - a. Limit population densities to protect and respect the capacities of natural systems and man-made infrastructure capabilities, and protect the local and regional quality of life.
 - b. Preserve, protect and improve the ecological integrity and balance of the Borough's surface waters and their impacts on the Delaware River.
 - c. Protect and maintain wildlife and plant habitats.
6. *Provide adequate community services and facilities for Borough residents.*
 - a. Expand the range of community services to meet the needs of the Borough.
 - b. Enhance the supply of recreational opportunities and facilities available for use by residents of Stockton.
7. *Preserve and promote opportunities for agricultural and horticultural activities in the Borough.*
 - a. Preserve farmland capable soils for continued agricultural use.
 - b. Maintain agricultural and horticultural opportunities where possible in the Borough.
8. *Provide for adequate affordable housing to meet local needs and obligations.*
 - a. Encourage the rehabilitation of housing units that may be now, or may become, substandard, especially to address the Borough's affordable housing obligation
 - b. Promote policies that limit any negative impact on community character.
9. *Protect and maintain the essential character of the Borough's natural environment.*
 - a. Protect and maintain environmentally sensitive natural resources including floodplains, stream corridors, steep slopes, ridgelines, wetlands and their transition areas, important forests & woodlands, grasslands and unique critical habitat areas.
 - b. Preserve, to the maximum extent possible, environmentally sensitive lands and other lands needed for recreation and conservation purposes.
 - c. Promote a contiguous "greenbelt" and/or "bluebelt" along the perimeter of the Borough.

- d. Promote the retention of open space and farmland throughout the community.
- e. Promote the continuation and expansion of agricultural, horticultural, recreational, and cultural uses and opportunities.
- f. Promote the retention of open space throughout the community including the preservation of trees, natural vegetation, forests and agricultural land.
- g. Preserve wooded areas, including wetland forested areas, critical forest habitat and the 'neighborhood forest.'
- h. Recognize and protect wooded steep slopes, hillsides and the Borough's unique views and vistas.
- i. Limit disturbance and development of forests, meadows, grassland areas, steep slopes, ridgelines, scenic vistas and views, streams and their corridors, groundwater aquifers and recharge areas, wetlands and swampy areas, unique landscapes, and agricultural areas;
- j. Prevent contamination of ground water resources, protect recharge areas and maintain safe drinking water supplies;
- k. Identify wellhead protection and recharge areas.
- l. Protect existing stream corridors and establish policies aimed at protecting water quality;
- m. Encourage the preservation of natural vegetation and prevent the unnecessary cutting of trees along stream corridors;
- n. Preserve and protect high quality Category 1 (C-1) waterways, and where possible institute measures such as enhanced riparian buffering and restoration to renovate surface water quality.
- o. Reduce disturbance within floodplain areas whenever possible.
- p. Protect and improve the water quality of the Delaware River in accordance with the Lower Delaware River Management Plan.
- q. Limit disturbance within and require appropriate setbacks from stream corridors.
- r. Protect and preserve important farmland soils.
- s. Protect rural, open space areas from inappropriate suburban sprawl type development;

- t. Preserve farmland and historic sites and other historic resources;
- u. Protect historic sites, farmsteads, districts and the historic character of the cultural landscape.