



**TOWNSHIP OF ABINGTON**  
Montgomery County, Pennsylvania

# Strategic Plan



# Perspectives on the Strategic Plan



**Bill Bole**, Commissioner, Ward 13  
Chair, Strategic Planning Committee

As a Township, we can only answer the question of “what we want to do” by first answering a more fundamental question: Who do we want to be? What are our values, and how—broadly and specifically—will we act on those values to drive Abington forward? These are the questions our strategic plan aspires to lay out. Culled from a series of conversations with township staff, elected leaders, and residents, the plan reflects a commitment to aligning our actions with our values, including continually working to make Abington an inclusive and welcoming community for everyone. Over the next few years, our strategic plan will inform our budget priorities and enhance how we measure success by making our progress more accessible and transparent.

In addition to serving as a public-facing tool for residents and business owners to understand how their tax revenue is being put to work, the staff who power our municipal services should see their work in the strategic plan. As costs increase and demand for services skyrockets, the strategic plan offers an organizing principle around which departments can plan their work.

Among the many lessons offered by the pandemic, we were reminded that the ground beneath us will shift in unpredictable, and sometimes momentous, ways.

---

**We can brace for change—even if it is not a once-a-century global pandemic—by anchoring ourselves in our values and embracing a shared commitment to working together to actualize our vision.**

Thank you to everyone whose input helped inform and shape our strategic plan. Let’s get to work!

**Richard J. Manfredi**,  
Township Manager

“In 2018, the Township implemented a more strategic approach by introducing prioritization for budgeting and results-driven service delivery. Since that time, we have worked to embed strategic planning within the daily operations of the Township through sound fiscal planning and budgeting, policy, and strategic governance.

In 2020, the Board of Commissioners approved engaging in a formal strategic planning process led by independent consultants. Through this process, the Township established clear operational and functional priorities based upon identified goals, objectives, and guiding principles for the Township Manager and Departments to execute the plan. In 2022, the Township developed a strategic governance model to increase public engagement and refine a systemic approach to governance and align the work of Township management with the legislative work of the Board of Commissioners, its Committees, and the various Boards, Commissions, Standing and Advisory Committees.

---

**As we continue to evolve forward, this 2024 - 2027 Strategic Plan will serve as the basis for decision-making and capital planning efforts in Abington.**

It will be refined annually to synchronize all planning efforts and deliver services that are reflective, relevant, and consistent with the vision of the Board of Commissioners and the community. The Strategic Planning process, as described above, has been and will continue to be a thoughtful and intentional approach to doing business.



# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Community Profile</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Project Overview</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Community Input</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Strategic Direction</b>	<b>7</b>



## Introduction

**In June 2022, the Township of Abington (Township) expanded their strategic planning process to continue to guide the organization toward its vision.**

The process included collaboration with the five-member Strategic Planning Committee of the Board of Commissioners, which provided input on the strategic planning process and content as it was developed. The resulting strategic plan builds on the work of previous planning efforts and continues the Township's focus on ensuring high quality of life and excellent service provision.



# Community Profile

**A first-ring suburb of Philadelphia known for its accessibility and affordability, along with a nationally recognized school district, police department, and fire department, Abington has something for everyone.**

Abington is a popular destination for people of all ages and prides itself on providing an excellent quality of life for residents and visitors, focusing on a diverse and inclusive community. Abington has been honored by being voted a “Best Place to Live” four times by Money Magazine. One of the contributing factors that makes Abington a desirable place to live, work, and invest is the Township’s accessibility by car, train, and bus.





The Township is easily accessible by Interstate 276, PA 611, PA 309, PA 232, and SEPTA service. With six train stations, three regional rail lines, and several bus routes, residents and employees can quickly travel to and from the City of Philadelphia and surrounding municipalities. This immense accessibility has made the Township an ideal location for educational institutions, healthcare systems, and employers, with over 4,500 businesses choosing to locate here.

Residents and businesses alike are serviced by robust and nationally recognized public services. The Abington Township Police Department became the first police department in Pennsylvania to be accredited by the Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission (PLEAC) and in 2004, the Department received International Accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). With a focus on community policing, the Abington Police Department is an integral community partner offering a plethora of programs to encourage dialogue amongst community members, seek public input and feedback on services, and provide needed support for residents and businesses.

The Abington Township Fire Department is the only full volunteer Fire Department in the United States to be accredited by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI). Only 301 Fire Departments in the world have achieved such accreditation. The Fire Department is also known for its education and training of fire professionals, having one of the only fire training facilities in the region.

The Township's Public Works Department offers year-round services, including refuse collection, an award-winning recycling program, street paving program, street light and vehicle maintenance programs, and more. The Engineering Department's construction

services management team is responsible for the installation of a variety of projects, including pedestrian safety, roadway reconstruction and stormwater management improvements at a fraction of the cost to Township residents.

Abington has vibrant outdoor amenities and community spaces. With more than 25 public parks, 375 acres of open space, and an award winning Library, the Township prides itself on its commitment to create dynamic places for community engagement. It is also home to various community recreational opportunities including a nature center, walking/hiking trails, campgrounds, outdoor swimming pools, ball fields, playgrounds, summer camps, and special events. The Township is currently undergoing several initiatives that look to the future and development of community spaces, including a strategic plan for the Library and a Recreation, Parks, and Open Space (RPOS) Plan and the development of an Inclusive Park. The Abington Free Library, with two locations in the Township, offers year-round programming for all ages and interests, in-person and online services, and facility rentals. The Library is a PA Forward Star Program – Gold Level Library and has been recognized for its inclusivity and first of its kind programming.

The Township's largest asset is the people who comprise it. Over the past ten years, the Township's affordability has remained consistent, with nearly 80% of residents owning their home. The Township is fortunate to have strong volunteer, philanthropic, religious, art, and educational organizations made up of community members. With community neighborhoods, such as Willow Grove, Roslyn, Crestmont, Glenside, Rydal, North Hills, and Meadowbrook, Abington is comprised of tight-knit neighborhoods webbed together by a commonality-community.



# Project Overview

---

The planning process was designed to reflect on the work accomplished in implementing the previous strategic plan, and to incorporate input from the community, employees and the Township Board. Major elements of the process included:

- Administration work on the organization's mission and values
- Strategic Planning Committee engagement around defining the vision and focus areas for the Township
- Community input to refine the vision and six identified focus areas
- Administration and key personnel implementation planning sessions to prioritize and resource key projects, programs, and initiatives
- Township Board of Commissioners adoption



# Community Input

## the VISION

- AVOID a GENERIC STATEMENT...
  - MORE SENSE of PLACE

“INCLUSIVE” is BETTER than WELCOMING

● We PROVIDE REGIONAL CONNECTION

## INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

NOT JUST WORDS!

- IMPLEMENTATION is IMPORTANT
- MULTI-USE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING
- MORE COMMUNITY CENTERS in NEIGHBORHOODS



## ECONOMIC GROWTH



- ENSURE BUSINESSES are WELCOMING and CREATE a SENSE of PLACE
- ZONING MUST ALIGN to COMMUNITY VALUES

## VIBRANT PUBLIC SPACES



- ENSURE GREEN SPACES are ACCESSIBLE
- PUBLIC ART can HELP with TRAFFIC CALMING and PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
- EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT WILL HELP with INCLUSIVITY
- CREATE a SENSE of PLACE



## EXCELLENT PUBLIC SERVICES



- MORE TRANSPARENCY and EASE of ACCESS
- BETTER PUBLICIZE PUBLIC MEETINGS and PROGRAMS
- ENSURE PEOPLE are HEARD
- SHARE STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS



## FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY



- NEED ACCESS and to LEARN/ UNDERSTAND the CONTENT IT'S HARD for the COMMUNITY to USE...
- MORE TRANSPARENCY
- SUPPORTS RESIDENTS to THRIVE
- BALANCE REVENUE with IMPACT CLARIFY the IMPACTS



## SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE



MORE TREE CANOPY

- COMP PLAN ALLOWS DENSE DEVELOPMENT MAKES IT HARD to IMPLEMENT “SUSTAINABLE”
- MORE GREENSPACE DON'T OVER DEVELOP
- SAFE and WALKABLE/ MORE BIKE LANES





# Strategic Direction

## Vision

The Township's vision, which describes its desired future state is:

**Abington is a vibrant, inclusive and welcoming community, supported by engaged and informed residents, a diverse local economy, and regional connections that make the Township an attractive destination for all to thrive.**

## Mission

An organization's mission and values speak to its core purpose and culture. The mission captures why the organization exists - who it is, what it does, and why it does it. Abington's mission is:

**Abington Township's dedicated team is committed to providing quality SERVICE to all within our community.**

## Values

The Township's values, which represent deeply held beliefs and name the principles upon which decisions should be based, include:

**Sustainability**  
**Excellence**  
**Respect**  
**Vision**  
**Integrity**  
**Commitment**  
**Engagement**

## Focus Areas

The vision is supported by six focus areas, which represent the categories of things that must go well in order to reach the Township's desired future state. These focus areas ultimately guide activities and resource allocations, and include:



### Fiscal Sustainability



### Economic Growth



### Vibrant Public Spaces



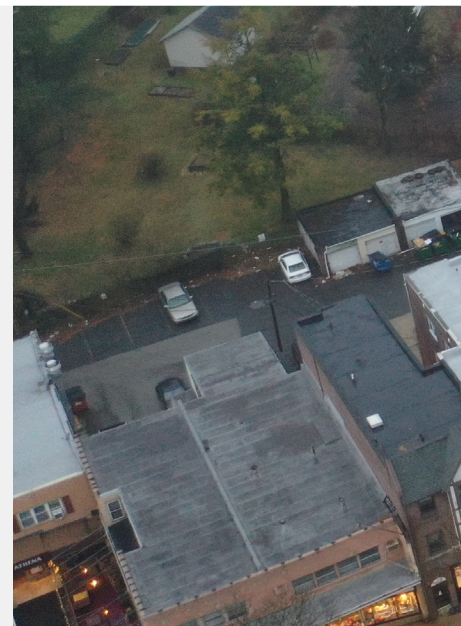
### Excellent Public Services



### Sustainable Infrastructure

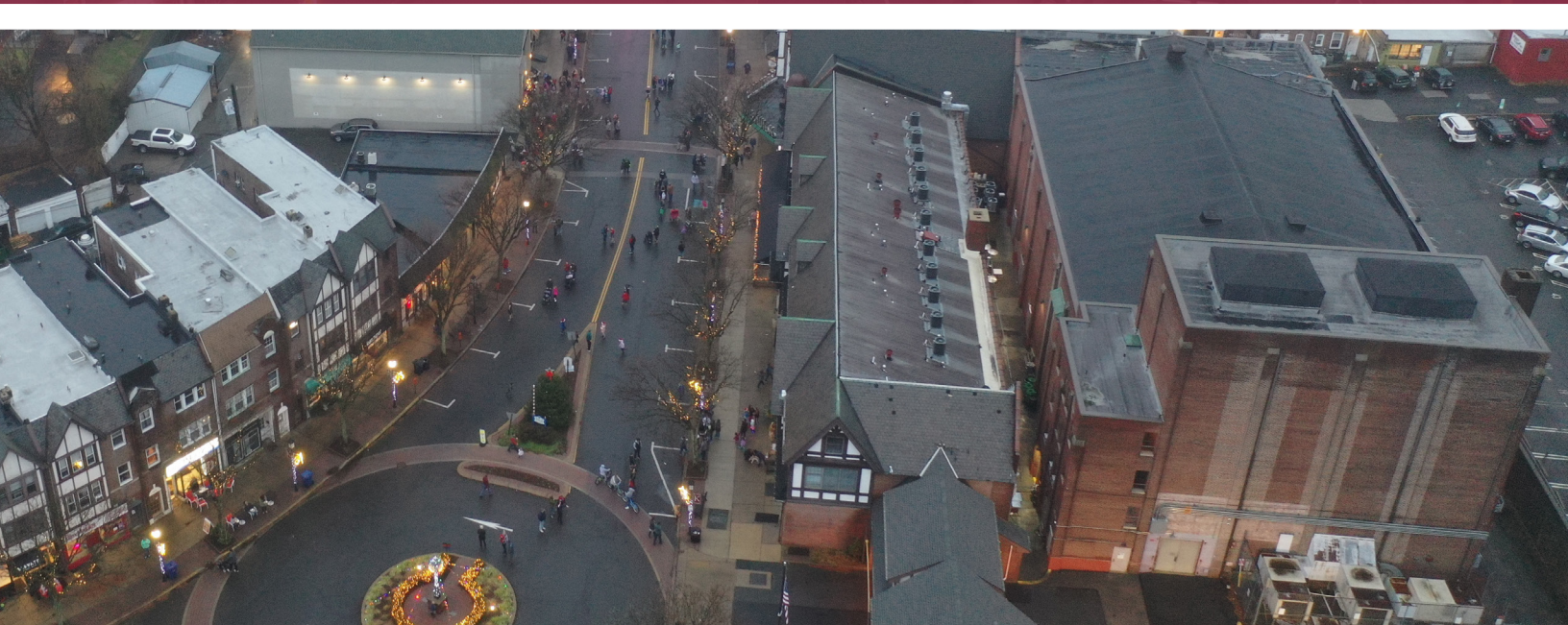


### Inclusive Community





This plan articulates the Township's vision, mission, values, and key focus areas. **Each element of the plan contributes to Abington successfully identifying where the Township should be in the future**, addressing current and anticipated challenges, and managing resources and assets.







# Fiscal Sustainability

## Abington achieves fiscal sustainability through emphasis on:

- Decision-making that balances short-term needs with long-term impacts
- Balanced revenue distribution
- Implementation of sound fiscal policies, budgeting practices, and financial reporting practices
- Financial planning to support current and future provision of Township services
- Meeting benchmarks for financial reporting requirements established by the Governmental Finance Officer Association (GFOA)

## Strategies

1. Implement business process improvements to better understand and evaluate the short- and long-term costs of providing Township services.
2. Create and pursue avenues for public and private partnerships that maximize resources, address regional issues, and diversify the Township's revenue streams.
3. Evaluate and implement innovative technology initiatives that support increased engagement, customer convenience, and operational efficiency.
4. Regularly review the Township's financial policies and practices to ensure alignment with strategic priorities.



# Economic Growth

## Abington fosters economic growth through the pursuit of:

- Local economic diversity with a variety of business types and sizes
- Investment in community infrastructure, including services, corridors, and the built environment
- A reputation for being an easy and safe place to do business
- Partnerships with public, private, and governmental entities

## Strategies

1. Utilize stakeholder input to develop a collaborative road map for strategic economic development, infrastructure, and budget planning.
2. Work in concert with other governmental entities to increase the overall tax base, create local jobs, and increase investment in the Township by implementing strategic economic development pursuits, including those that build demand for supporting businesses and new development.
3. Support and attract local Township businesses through ongoing engagement, convenient processes, and excellent customer service.







# Sustainable Infrastructure

## Abington's focus on sustainable infrastructure serves the Township today and tomorrow through:

- Neighborhoods, transportation systems, and technology and telecommunication infrastructure that allow people to connect
- Design, development, and maintenance of modern, resilient facilities
- Efficient resource use and mitigation of negative environmental impacts
- Financially responsible investment in adaptable assets and green infrastructure

## Strategies

1. Establish proactive maintenance and asset management guidelines to support the efficiency and operability of existing infrastructure.
2. Utilize advanced technology to upgrade and modernize the Township's infrastructure and facilities.
3. Develop and implement plans, procedures, and policies to ensure operational continuity of the Township's infrastructure in the event of emergencies.
4. Continue intergovernmental and public utility integration and coordination.
5. Pursue environmental initiatives, including green infrastructure installation, waste reduction and diversion, and energy efficiency, to ensure a sustainable community.
6. Expand access to and implementation of non-vehicular modes of transportation including bicycle, pedestrian, bus and regional rail infrastructure



# Inclusive Community

## Abington's inclusive community is built on the Township's commitment to:

- Celebration of diversity in people, cultures, and ideas
- Responsive, community-focused public safety
- Access to a wide array of housing options, neighborhood resources, and accessible public spaces
- A welcoming atmosphere for residents, business owners, and visitors

## Strategies

1. Support and build public and private partnerships to expand service delivery, enhance community programming, and promote resident access to healthy, active, and quality experiences.
2. Identify and implement innovative public safety programs that ensure a safe, equitable, and diverse community for all.
3. Partner with other organizations to create opportunities for renters and home buyers of all ages and backgrounds through programs that support access to safe and attainable housing.
4. Enhance resident and stakeholder connections with the Township through focused outreach and communication.
5. Develop and offer recreational programs and activities for all ages, backgrounds, and interests.







# Vibrant Public Spaces

## Abington's vibrant public spaces support a thriving community by ensuring:

- Equitable access to geographically diverse Township facilities
- State-of-the-art, multi-use spaces that encourage collaboration and foster civic engagement
- Desirable amenities that create a sense of place and make Abington a safe, accessible destination for residents and visitors

## Strategies

1. Develop a Facilities Master Plan and update other existing plans related to the Township's public spaces, utilizing community input on desires and preferences.
2. Assess current and future Township facility needs, taking into consideration location, current use, and accessibility of business districts.
3. Evaluate and study traffic calming and traffic safety needs.
4. Build awareness of the Township's public spaces and how to access them to increase use.





# Excellent Public Services

**Abington's excellent public services are the result of its commitment to quality customer experiences and:**

- Investment in the development of our valued, dedicated employees and volunteers
- Inclusive community outreach and engagement
- Effective collaboration and trusted partnerships
- Innovation, continuous improvement, and data-driven decision-making
- A values-driven organizational culture



## Strategies

1. Serve internal and external customers in a timely manner that meets or exceeds set service level standards.
2. Ensure systems are in place to support employee development, succession planning, and organizational resiliency.
3. Provide appropriate professional training and resources to ensure that employees and volunteers are able to complete their work successfully and grow professionally.
4. Sustain the continuous improvement of a comprehensive and integrated approach to Township outreach and communication, internally and externally.
5. Continue to develop relationships with external stakeholders to expand or enhance service delivery.
6. Foster a culture of mutual respect, camaraderie, teamwork, and continuous improvement.







**TOWNSHIP OF ABINGTON**  
Montgomery County, Pennsylvania

[WWW.ABINGTONPA.GOV](http://WWW.ABINGTONPA.GOV)