

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SURVEY RESULTS

As one of its initial efforts in the preparation of an update to the East Hanover Township Comprehensive Plan, the Township Planning Commission decided to seek input from all of the Township's property owners. Therefore, in February 2023, a Comprehensive Plan Survey was prepared. Postcard notifications were mailed to all property owners within the Township, with instructions on how to complete the Survey – either as a web-based survey that could be completed online or as a hard copy survey that could be completed and mailed to the Township Office for tabulation. The survey was a non-scientific “opinion” survey. 1,005 postcards were distributed and a total of 146 completed surveys were returned (a response rate of 14.5 percent.). The majority of the surveys returned included responses from more than one (1) person. The results of the Comprehensive Plan Survey will serve as a valuable tool for the Township Comprehensive Plan Committee and other Township officials.

The Comprehensive Plan Survey responses indicated a desire for a continuation of the Township's “rural lifestyle,” “peace, quiet and serenity” “and agricultural areas, as well as a corresponding preference, on the part of the majority of respondents, for limitations on future residential, industrial and commercial growth. The following represents a summary of the Township-wide survey responses:

- Over 96 percent of the respondents identified themselves as full-time residents and less than 3 percent were non-resident property owners.
- Overall, 77 percent of the respondents have lived in the Township at least 10 years; 51 percent have lived there over 25 years.
- 79 percent of the respondents had heads of household that were 45 years of age and over; included in this percentage were 33 percent that were 65 years of age and over.
- The largest number of responses (34 percent) came from Survey Region 4, followed by Survey Region 6 (19 percent), Survey Region 5 (16 percent), Survey Region 3 (14 percent), Survey Region 2 (11 percent), and Survey Region 1 (5 percent).
- The vast majority (82 percent) responding indicated that their property was used for residential purposes. 42 percent of the respondents owned two acres or less of land; 63 percent owned 5 acres or less of land.)
- Over 95 percent anticipated that their land would remain in present ownership or remain in the family over the next ten years.

- 94 percent use a drilled well as their primary water source. 84 percent use their well for drinking water, while 14 percent rely on bottled water for drinking.
- Only 7 percent of the respondents are served by public sewers. 61 percent rely on septic tank/sand mound systems and 31 percent rely on septic tank/drain fields.
- 74 percent of respondents have cable internet available at their property. 38 percent rely on cellular/mobile phone service for internet.
- When asked to identify community services that should be added in the Township, “municipal recycling” was cited the most frequently, followed in order by “internet,” “natural gas,” and “municipal trash collection.” “Senior center,” “local police,” “parks,” “medical center,” “cable TV” and “recreation center” were also cited frequently.
- When asked to identify community services that should be improved in the Township, “internet,” “cable TV,” “state police,” and “parks” were cited the most frequently. “Ambulance,” “municipal recycling,” and “senior center” were also cited frequently.
- Nearly three-fourths of all respondents stated that they would not be willing to pay an increase in taxes for any added/improved community services.
- When asked to identify what kinds of transportation facilities should be added in the Township, “pedestrian trails” was cited the most frequently, followed in order by “minor road improvements,” “bike lanes,” and “traffic calming.”
- When asked to identify what kinds of transportation facilities should be improved in the Township, “minor road improvements” was cited the most frequently, followed in order by “major road improvements,” and “traffic calming.”
- Over 80 percent of all respondents stated that they would not be willing to pay an increase in taxes for any added/improved transportation facilities.
- Of the 232 respondents indicating an occupation, approximately 25 percent identified themselves as being retired.
- Approximately 31 percent of the respondents indicated that they worked in the Township, with an additional 20 percent working elsewhere in the County; 45 percent of respondents working outside Lebanon County (in Pennsylvania); and only 3 percent of respondents working outside of Pennsylvania.

- 34 of the 143 respondents indicate that they or their immediate family were engaged in an agricultural operation. Of those, 15 considered themselves full-time farmers. 58 percent of those engaged in an agricultural operation thought that the Township should invest some of its financial resources toward the purchase of agricultural easements.
- In response to a question as to the type of preferred development if future residential development occurs in the Township, “single family dwellings” received the greatest response (53 percent), followed by “in retirement communities” (19 percent), and “in developments that are a mixture of single family homes, townhouses and apartments, with areas of open space” (11 percent). Duplex and two-family dwellings, “townhouse dwellings” “apartment dwellings” and “in mobile home parks” received very low rates of response. The majority of the respondents stated that further residential development should occur in areas served by public sewer.
- Approximately 60 percent of those responding to the survey question about the need for more business (commercial) locations in the Township responded that there was no need. If additional commercial development is to occur, the forms of commercial development most favored by the respondents to the survey were uses that would service the day-to-day needs of Township residents, i.e., gas stations, restaurants, home based service businesses and convenience stores. Office uses, neighborhood shopping, home based retail businesses, and landscaping/construction businesses were favored to a lesser extent.
- Approximately one-fourth those responding to the survey were, or may be, in favor of additional industrial development. The forms of industrial development most often cited were small scale (machine shops, etc.) and low impact (electronics/“high tech” manufacturing). “Warehousing” and “heavy industry” were cited to a much lesser extent.
- When asked what type of amenities they would support being added or improved within the Village of Ono, 35 percent of the 190 respondents said “none”. Seasonal decorations, traffic calming and community events (block party, parade) had the highest responses to the question. However, only 20 percent of the respondents would be willing to pay an increase in taxes to fund such amenities,
- The vast majority of the respondents expressing an opinion supported the idea that the Township take greater efforts to preserve and/or protect the Township’s natural areas, woodlands, agricultural lands/farms and historic resources/structures. The preservation of natural areas received the highest positive response, followed closely by the preservation of woodlands.

- Approximately one third of the respondents indicated that they used the Township's H.M. Levitz Memorial Park often. Approximately one-half of the respondents indicated that they used the Park seldom, while approximately one in seven respondents indicated that they never use the Township Park.
- Only one in five of the respondents indicated that they believe that the Township needs more public park land. Of these, over 90 percent of the respondents indicated that the additional park land should occur either in the form of (1) expansions to the existing park or (2) small, neighborhood-oriented parks.
- Preserved natural areas, paved jogging/walking/biking trails, and unpaved trails/an interconnected trail system were the three types of additional recreational facilities cited as "most needed" in the Township. A children's playground and a dog park were also mentioned frequently. In addition, the age groups most often cited as needing more recreation opportunities were young teens (ages 13-14), teens (ages 15-19) and seniors (55+).
- Township residents ranked (1) "rural lifestyle," (2) "peace, quiet and serenity," and (3) "agricultural areas" as the three most important qualities of life in the Township. "Small town lifestyle," "natural beauty/scenery," "natural areas (wildlife, etc.)," and "family ties" were also frequently cited.
- The things most often cited as what residents liked about the Township were (1) the rural/small town lifestyle, (2) the open space/natural beauty, (3) the peace and quiet, and (4) the agricultural landscape. Among other things noted were the limited amount of development, accessibility to work/shopping in the region, friendly residents, etc.
- The things most often identified as detracting from the Township were (1) unkempt properties and junked vehicles, (2) traffic, (3) industrial and warehouse development, and (4) too much residential development. Among other things noted were the casino and gambling, no internet access, speeding on local roads, apartments and low income housing, the lack of services. etc.
- The things identified as the most important issues for the Township to consider were (1) prohibiting warehouses and industrial development, (2) preserving agricultural land and operations, (3) not raising taxes, (4) preserving the rural/small town lifestyle, (5) limiting residential development/allowing only "smart" residential development, (6) protecting natural resources and areas, and (7) managing/restricting large scale/"big box" commercial development. Among other things noted were the restricting of large scale solar farms, providing public water and sewer service, regulating unkempt properties, adding limited commercial and service businesses, restricting low income housing, etc.