

Pembroke Township and Hopkins Park

Sustainability Plan Summary

Sustainability is a dynamic process which enables people to realize their potential and improve their quality of life in a way which simultaneously protects and enhances the earth's life support systems.

To achieve the vision of sustainability:

- *A broad cross-section of the community needs to be engaged in the process.*
- *Stakeholders should honor their commitments and obligations.*
- *Decision-making should be participatory and open*
- *Participants should respect differences and be flexible in accepting new ideas.*
- *The process should include opportunities to share out and reflect upon findings.*
- *To achieve these principles, this plan is organized around the following areas:*
- *Cultural vitality: Preserving and celebrating local culture, heritage and traditions*
- *Economic health and social equity: Sustaining and growing the local economy for all*
- *Environmental responsibility: Building community and strategic connections around natural resources*
- *Planning for future land use, infrastructure, and institutions*

Key challenges for the people of Pembroke

Declining Population. 2018 estimates for Pembroke Township (2,072) and Hopkins Park (603) show that population has decreased slightly since the census year of 2010 and markedly since 1980.

An aging population. When compared to Kankakee County, Pembroke Township has a slightly higher proportion of population over the age of 65 (17.7 percent compared to 14.1 percent for Kankakee County). Pembroke and Hopkins Park have far fewer people in the 25-50 age range compared to Kankakee.

Education, employment and income challenges. Compared with Kankakee County as a whole, Pembroke Township has poverty rates more than three times as high as the county rate, and median household income that is around half of that of the county.

A basic framework

PLAN AREA	VISION	SUSTAINING PRINCIPLES
Preserving and Celebrating Local Culture, Heritage, and traditions.	A community identity rooted in local history, heritage, and tradition is preserved, celebrated, and shared.	Share and celebrate the community. Regional destination for history and culture. Focus on the natural environment and landscapes
Sustaining and Growing the Local Economy	A diverse and vibrant range of businesses that build upon the unique character, agricultural heritage, and hospitality of the community is supported.	Connect economic development to other community goals. Promote quality of life through economic development. Focus growth strategically Celebrate heritage.
Building Strategic Connections around Natural Resources	A tradition of local land and natural resource stewardship continues to protect and celebrate unique local natural resources through collaboration with a range of local stakeholders.	Use diverse strategies. Engage local ownership. Celebrate and share. Address community impacts. Cultivate partnerships.
Planning for Future Land Use, Infrastructure, and Institutions	Pembroke/Hopkins Park has physically developed with a rural, small- town atmosphere.	Grow around existing infrastructure. Make decisions collaboratively. Development pays a fair share. Create cohesive clusters.

Area A: Preserving and Celebrating Local Culture, Heritage, and Traditions

Vision

Continue to preserve, celebrate, and share a community identity rooted in local history, heritage, and tradition.

Action Steps

1. Create a sustainable Pembroke/Hopkins Park non-profit hub as the critical link between heritage and sustainability
2. Develop a plan for ongoing community education in sustainability that draws on partner networks locally, regionally, and nationally
3. Support the continued development of the Pembroke Library as a center for recreational, educational, and social activities
4. Identify sustainable funding for the STEM Coordinator at Lorenzo R. Smith school
5. Promote community heritage and identity through signage and maps
6. Support the development of cultural heritage and environmental tourism activities within Pembroke/Hopkins Park
7. Support a historic resources survey of Pembroke/Hopkins Park
8. Develop the Pembroke Township Heritage Trail
9. Resolve the issues surrounding the Guiding Star Memorial Cemetery
10. Integrate local culture and heritage into school curricula and youth development activities

Area B: Sustaining and Growing the Local Economy

Vision

Support a diverse and vibrant range of businesses that build upon the unique character, agricultural heritage, and hospitality of the community.

Action Steps

1. Expand cultural heritage tourism business
2. Encourage the expansion of retail opportunities
3. Increase the accessibility of employment opportunities within surrounding areas
4. Integrate workforce training with economic development opportunities
5. Develop a community energy policy.) at the University of Illinois.
6. Develop a community waste management strategy
7. Support Pembroke/Hopkins Park farmers. Pursue businesses and training initiatives that capitalize upon local small scale agricultural assets, and cultural traditions
8. Connect to statewide efforts
9. Educate landowners about their legal rights and responsibilities
10. Foster a physical environment that enhances the “green marketing persona
11. Maintain quality housing stock
12. Make appropriate transportation improvements, especially for pedestrians

Area C: Building Strategic Connections Around Natural Resources

Vision

Continue a tradition of local land and natural resource stewardship, and continue to protect and celebrate unique local natural resources through collaboration with a range of local stakeholders.

Action Steps

1. Develop a set of guiding principles for selection and protection of conservation lands that avoid unduly affecting public infrastructure and community assets
2. Provide open space and recreational opportunities to enhance the quality of life for residents of Pembroke/Hopkins Park.
3. Work closely with federal, state, and local agencies to preserve environmentally sensitive areas
4. Develop a recreational trail network
5. Develop a seed sourcing network
6. Develop a volunteer network to assist in the management of natural areas
7. Work with Riverside Hospital to develop a “nature prescription” program — Such programs have made the most of places that border natural areas by using them as prescribed recreation zones.

Area D: Planning for Future Land Use, Infrastructure, and Institutions

Vision

Promotes development consistent with sustaining a rural environment and small-town atmosphere.

Action Steps

1. Approve only new residential, commercial, and industrial developments which can be adequately served by existing Pembroke/Hopkins Park infrastructure, and which maintain and reflect the area's small town and rural atmosphere
2. Provide adequate development opportunities while recognizing the need to preserve environmentally sensitive areas
3. Build community consensus for growth and development along the Pembroke/ Hopkins Park development corridor. Target major development around development hubs.
4. With consent of the landowner, potential revenue could be derived by leasing land for ground mounted solar arrays, which can be paired with pollinator friendly plantings for both ecological value and lower maintenance
5. Agree on Land Use Principles

Ecological and Social Conservation Principles

Vision

A landscape where globally significant oak savannas and sand prairie are sustained in perpetuity, and where both the greater Pembroke/Hopkins Park community and nature thrive as a result.

Ecological

1. High priority lands are those identified through the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI). These are exceedingly rare statewide, and represent the most ecologically intact and diverse examples of undisturbed natural communities left in the state.
2. Consolidate INAI sites where possible. Fewer perimeters per unit area is better, ecologically and from a management standpoint.
3. Connect where possible. Connected is better than disconnected because it increases patch size and allows for better plant and animal movement and dispersal.
4. Restore selected large parcels currently in crop production to create grasslands from 30-100 acres in size. These will a) provide critical grassland bird habitat consistent with the original Wildlife Refuge concept; b) create buffers adjacent to oak savanna remnants; and c) increase the size of natural habitat patches.

Social

1. All acquisitions, easements, cooperative agreements, or other conservation actions are conducted only with the full consent of the landowner.
2. Be aware of sites of cultural and historical importance, especially those identified in the Quality of Life Planning Process, and assure that land conservation does not adversely affect them.
3. Avoid acquisition of lands for conservation that are served by water and sewer infrastructure as much as possible.
4. For lands acquired for conservation, create as welcoming an environment as possible as allowed by law or in concert with conservation objectives.
5. Promote land uses and developments which are compatible with adjacent conservation lands.
6. Foster the community's connectivity to the natural assets in its neighborhood.
7. Uphold existing laws and regulations that prohibit flooding of neighboring properties.
8. Create effective and transparent communication channels. **Additional**
 1. Foster public-private partnerships when possible.
 2. Acquire and utilize resources for the education of youth in the community, through programs such as the U. S. Fish and