



At its February 5, 2024, meeting, the Franklin Township Environmental Commission (“EC”) approved the goals and objectives listed below. Some of these goals, objectives, and corresponding projects are projected to be longer-term, while some have already been completed. The EC will review and amend its goals and objectives annually.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES - 2024

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	TASKS AND PROJECTED TIMELINE
Reduce motor vehicle idling within the Township through zoning.	Work with the Franklin Township Planning Board to amend the Municipal Sign Ordinance (§1112-108) to include requirements for anti-idling signage.	The EC added drafted a memo to the Township Council with requirements for the installation anti-idling signage at specific commercial, institutional, and industrial properties. The recommendation included that anti-idling signage must be depicted on site plan application submitted after the date of adoption of Ordinance #4440-24 , dated May 14, 2024.
Stream Cleanup (Annual)	Cleanup of a designated stream in the Township annually	The Annual Stream Cleanup was held on April 15, 2024 in partnership the Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership and the New Brunswick EC at Mile Run. Planning for the 2025 Annual Stream Cleanup is underway.
Complete the <i>Franklin Township Community Energy Plan</i>	Community Energy Plans identify sustainable energy initiatives based on existing energy production facilities, renewable energy generation, workforce development, environmental benefits, and more.	Franklin Township received a \$10,000 grant from the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities to complete the Franklin Township Community Energy Plan. This document was finalized in July 2024.
“No Mow Til Earth Day”	Encourage residents to leave a portion of their front lawn unmowed to allow dandelions and other plants to grow during the most prominent nesting season for pollinators.	This project, modeled from the Bee City USA’s No Mow May program , was held for the first time in April 2024. One of the EC Commissioners completed a comprehensive study of No-Mow May principles on his own property, which was used to create the foundation for the public program. An article announcing the program will be in the upcoming issue of the Franklin Times, and the information has been posted on the Township’s website (now called “No-Mow Til Earth Day”). The EC plans to host this program annually.
PROJECT	SYNOPSIS	TASKS AND PROJECTED TIMELINE

Investigate strategies for the Heat Island Management and Mitigation	The Commission has shown an interest in researching the Heat Island Effect across different sections of the Township. Having this information, along with the corresponding locations of vulnerable populations, will help in mitigating the impacts of extreme heat events. Looking at the existing tree canopies and measuring temperature at designated points will be important data to collect.	<p>The Township completed two projects that include a focus on the Heat Island Effect and its mitigation as a component of a larger project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Community Energy Plan (July 2024)</i> contains data about temperature changes, energy usage during extreme heat events, and sources of energy generation - <i>Local Health Assessment and Action Plan (December 2023)</i> includes data about the impact of the Heat Island Effect and higher temperatures due to higher population density and percentage of impervious coverage to vulnerable populations. Mitigation strategies are proposed specifically for Wards 4 and 5. <p>In coordination with the Shade Tree Commission, the EC is looking at potential amendments to the Tree Ordinance. Through this project and Sustainable Jersey Recertification, the Tree Canopy Calculations were updated, showing only a slight decrease in canopy. These figures should be reviewed in greater detail.</p> <p>The Shade Tree Commission is also spearheading a project that will inventory trees specifically in Wards 4 and 5 and provide recommendations as to where trees should be planted in order to increase the tree canopy, thereby lowering ambient temperatures, reducing air pollution, and improving community health.</p>
Survey Land East of Franklin Boulevard for Appropriate Locations to Plant Street Trees	Street trees are needed specifically in the area east of Franklin Boulevard. Measurable results should be recorded.	Commissioners have completed a preliminary assessment of street trees in this area this task and sent results to the Township Manager. These results will be coordinated with the ongoing Tree Inventory being conducted by the Shade Tree Commission.
<i>Franklin Township Micromobility Study</i>	Create a Study that focuses on non-motorized movement along one of the Township’s main corridors. The impacts on GHG, electricity consumption, improvements in environmental quality, improvements in transportation options, and equity will all be focused on.	The EC obtained a grant for \$10,000 to develop a small-scale micromobility study that would safely and effectively move people from Wards 4 and 5 in a westerly direction towards the Municipal Building. This Study focuses on the improvement of striping, sidewalks, roads, bicycle storage, and more. Once completed, the EC can use this as a foundational document for obtaining grant funding for implementation of prioritized projects.
PROJECT	SYNOPSIS	TASKS AND PROJECTED TIMELINE
Draft Amendments to Municipal Trees Ordinance (§222) to increase	Update the Township’s Tree Ordinance to include more appropriate tree replacement strategies and “in-	Because of increased development and tree loss, a joint committee of the STC and EC was formed to prepare amendments to the Tree Ordinance.

tree canopy and protect trees during development.	lieu of replacement trees” contributions to the Shade Tree Fund, and other agreed upon items	<p>This group began working together in December 2022 and will continue until completion.</p> <p>In January 2023, the Township Council approved an increase in tree replacement fees from \$30.00 per tree to \$300.00 per tree. (§222-5.3)</p> <p>The EC and Shade Tree Commission will continue to work together to draft recommended amendments that will ultimately increase the tree canopy and protect trees especially in Wards 4 and 5.</p>
Implementation of <i>Local Health Assessment and Action Plan</i>	This project identifies existing health conditions and disparities in Franklin Township and identifies recommendations for a move towards “health equity”. The impacts of planning, zoning, access to open space and healthy foods, income, traffic, environmental design and more are all incorporated into the Local Health Assessment and Action Plan.	<p><i>The Franklin Township Local Assessment Report and Action Plan</i> was adopted in December 2023. Since this point, many of the recommendations for project have been investigated and/or have started through different Boards, Commission, and Committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tree inventory and planting recommendations in Wards 4 and 5 (Shade Tree Commission) ▪ Stigma Free Franklin work for mental health (Special Projects) ▪ Trails planning for inclusivity (Trails Advisory Committee) ▪ Focus on preservation of open space and farmland in underserved Wards (Open Space Advisory Committee) ▪ Stormwater management in Wards 4 and 5 through the implementation of Green Infrastructure (Environmental Commission)
Green Building Ordinance	Develop an ordinance that requires solar panels for buildings (not just warehouses) over 100,000 square-feet.	A committee of the EC has already been established to research and implement this project.
Stormwater Utility Feasibility Study	Identify the ability to develop a Stormwater Utility, which would assess fees to buildings that generate stormwater, and use that revenue to maintain and improve stormwater management. The Clean Stormwater and Flood Reduction Act of 2019 allowed for municipalities to engage in this type of project.	Research funding opportunities, processes, regulations, and success stories to investigate the feasibility of a Stormwater Utility in Franklin Township.
PROJECT	SYNOPSIS	TASKS AND PROJECTED TIMELINE
Development of a <i>Sustainability Plan</i> and a <i>Municipal Climate Action Plan</i>	These Plans include baseline metrics of greenhouse gases (Carbon Footprint), identifies ways to mitigate them, and establishes a timeline to do so. Policy,	Data from the <i>Franklin Township Community Energy Plan</i> is needed to create this Plan. After discussion with the EC, the following suite of documents (in order) were discussed:

	planning, zoning, and behavioral projects will be recommended at a variety of scales.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete the <i>Franklin Township Community Energy Plan</i> (July 2024) 2. Develop <i>Sustainability and Resiliency Element of Master Plan</i>, in coordination with Planning Department. 3. Develop a <i>Municipal Climate Action Plan</i>, in coordination with the Planning Department.
Leave Leaves Campaign	Encourage residents to leave fallen leaves on their lawns to allow for an improved ecosystem and soil quality. Coordination with Somerset County Solid Waste is recommended.	The EC plans to develop guidance and benefits for leaving leaves during the Fall season, along with marketing and educational materials.
Skip the Stuff Ordinance	Clean Ocean Action has created a model ordinance for municipalities that would prohibit restaurants from including single-use plastic cutlery and condiment containers unless specifically requested by the customer. This will lead a significant reduction in the nearly 40 million plastic utensils that are disposed of each year in the United States.	The EC began reviewing the model ordinance in June 2024. A draft will be presented at one of the September EC meetings for recommendation of adoption by the Township Council.