

DRAFT FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE HIGHLANDS COUNCIL  
AT THE MAY 22, 2008 COUNCIL MEETING

**Subpart XXXX.**

**Map Adjustments**

**Issue Overview**

The RMP addresses the requirements of the Highlands Act to provide guidance to municipalities and counties for the implementation of the resource protection and smart growth policies during Plan Conformance. The Highlands Council recognizes that the RMP was created at a regional scale and that additional planning information may be available at the federal, State, county, municipal or public level which has not been considered by the Council. The *Map Adjustments Program* outlines the protocols for processing and tracking Land Use Capability Zone Map adjustments which may affect numerous components of the RMP. This process may only be undertaken when all other means, such as RMP Updates and the use of Highlands Act exemptions or waivers are inadequate to address the planning considerations underlying the petition.

**Map Adjustment  
Program Summary**

The Map Adjustment Program allows for the exchange, verification and administration of planning information between the Council and local government units that result in a sound basis for local planning and development review in support of the overall policies and objectives of the RMP and the Highlands Act. A Map Adjustment is a Council decision based upon the petitioner's request for an adjustment of the Land Use Capability Map Zone designations. If the Council processes a Map Adjustment other than those resulting from re-evaluations of the Regional Master Plan, it will also follow the standards in the Map Adjustments Program.

The Map Adjustment Program outlines a process for proposing adjustments to the Highlands Land Use Capability Zone Map. Joint petitions amongst municipalities and counties are encouraged and priority for review will be given to conforming municipalities and counties. All Council approved Map Adjustments will be documented and publicly available.

The Council has developed numerous spatial layers in support of the RMP. Fact-based updates to these layers are addressed in the *RMP Update Program*. The Map Adjustment Program is designed to allow for additional planning information beyond the existing spatial layers to be considered in support of sound regional planning. An example of a Map Adjustment may be a proposed modification of a Conservation Zone immediately adjacent to an Existing Community Zone where public utilities and water availability could support an extension of the Existing Community Zone for a TDR Receiving Zone, in full conformance with RMP resource protection and smart growth policies and objectives.

**RMP Policies and  
Objectives Addressed**

**Policy 6A1.** To use the Land Use Capability Map Series (LUCM Series) as a geographic framework for land use planning and management within the Highlands Region.

**Objective 6A1a.** A Highlands Land Use Capability Map Series based on the most current, relevant and available data.

**Policy 6A3.** To develop a program allowing for petitions by municipalities and counties (with accompanying municipal support by resolution) for a Map Adjustment to the Land Use Capability Zone Map in the Highlands Region.

**Objective 6A3a.** A Council review process to assess local initiatives where Map Adjustments may be approved to the Land Use Capability Zone Map's

**DRAFT FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE HIGHLANDS COUNCIL  
AT THE MAY 22, 2008 COUNCIL MEETING**

Protection and Conservation Zones or the Environmentally-Constrained Sub-Zones.

**Objective 6A3b.** Map Adjustments proposed to change Protection and Conservation Zones or the Environmentally-Constrained Sub-Zones may be approved by the Highlands Council where it finds that the petition does not result in unintended or deleterious impacts on the LUCM Zone or RMP policies and objectives applicable to adjacent or nearby lands, and the petitioner demonstrates that the petition meets all of the following criteria:

1. demonstrates that all other means to apply policies in an area that are different than those prescribed by the Zone designation are inadequate to address the planning considerations underlying the petition, including techniques such as;

- Waivers under the Highlands Act
- Exemptions from the Highlands Act
- RMP Updates Program

2. provides a no net loss of Highlands resources and resource values within a municipality and as appropriate any HUC 14 subwatershed, including but not limited to water availability, water quality, critical habitat and agriculture, such that all Map Adjustments provide results that are equal to or exceed on a whole the resource protection provided by the RMP;

3. use of Highlands Development Credits or the reduction of the equivalent development yield so that there is no net increase in land use intensity;

4. complies with the intent of the Highlands Act and the RMP to protect environmental resources and employ smart growth principles to development, and demonstrates that Highlands resource protection and smart growth planning principles have been addressed;

5. where the petition is for the creation or extension of Existing Community Zones, the Map Adjustment also: creates a meaningful opportunity to provide affordable housing; improves the balance of housing and employment; and promotes the use of alternative modes of transportation, including transit, such as being located within close proximity of Highlands Baseline Transportation and Transit features.

**Objective 6A3c.** Map Adjustments proposed to change an Existing Community Zone to another LUCM Zone or Sub-Zone may be approved by the Highlands Council where it finds that the petition demonstrates that the affected area:

1. is not currently developed at a density and scale that prevents the area from providing the agricultural or environmental protection benefits of the Conservation or Protection Zones, or the Environmentally-Constrained Sub-Zones;
2. is not currently served by public wastewater infrastructure;
3. includes ecological or agricultural attributes that are associated with the Conservation or Protection Zones; and
4. does not include a designated Redevelopment Site or TDR Receiving Zone.

**DRAFT FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE HIGHLANDS COUNCIL  
AT THE MAY 22, 2008 COUNCIL MEETING**

**Map Adjustment  
Process**

Requests for a Map Adjustment must be submitted by a Highlands Region municipality or county (with accompanying municipal support by resolution) in a petition or as part of Plan Conformance. Joint petitions among municipalities and counties are encouraged. Review priority will be given to conforming municipalities and counties. All petitions for Map Adjustment will be evaluated for consistency to the RMP and must meet Objective 6A3b.

**Map Adjustment  
Standards**

All petitions for a Map Adjustment will be evaluated for consistency with the RMP. The Map Adjustment Process evaluates areas where policies as prescribed by the most current LUCM Zone may differ from local planning initiatives. This process allows for flexibility while at the same time ensuring sound planning principles and conformance with the RMP policies and objectives, and must be undertaken once all other administrative remedies have been exhausted or are determined to be inapplicable.

Map Adjustments are evaluated for resource protection measures to meet or exceed protections provided by the RMP. A demonstration of a no net loss of resources is a method which allows for local flexibility while at the same time ensuring that resources are protected regionally. Demonstrations can be in the form of resource protection or mitigation planning and would identify the area and value of protected resources. Water availability is particularly important and reductions in water deficits must be addressed to equal or exceed appropriate mandates pursuant to the RMP.

Map Adjustments to change the Protection and Conservation Zones or Environmentally-Constrained Sub-Zones should limit the impact to areas with environmental constraints and represent areas that have ready access to infrastructure. Highlands Development Credits or the reduction of the equivalent development yield elsewhere, which result in the no net increase in land use intensity, must be used or demonstrated. The intent is to apply compact development concepts, create a meaningful opportunity to provide affordable housing; improve the balance of housing and employment; and promote the use of alternative modes of transportation, including transit, such as by being located within close proximity of Highlands Baseline Transportation and Transit features, in accordance with community character. This ensures that Map Adjustments are consistent with existing infrastructure and compatible with historic and efficient land use development patterns, and discourages scattered piecemeal development patterns.

Map Adjustments petitions will be evaluated in the context of regional LUCM Zones to identify and address potential unintended changes or deleterious impacts to areas adjacent to the proposed Map Adjustment area. This is to ensure that adjustments in one area do not unintentionally reduce protections to surrounding areas.

All petitions for Map Adjustments must be prepared by a qualified New Jersey Licensed Professional and must be submitted with an authorizing municipal resolution.

**Map Adjustment –  
Requirements for  
Digital Submission  
Standards**

All petitions for Map Adjustments shall include digital submissions that meet the NJDEP Geographic Information System Mapping and Digital Data Standards (N.J.A.C. 7:1D Appendix A) and the following minimum requirements:

**DRAFT FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE HIGHLANDS COUNCIL  
AT THE MAY 22, 2008 COUNCIL MEETING**

1. All digital geospatial data must meet or reference published standards such as those defined by the Federal Geographic Data Committee or a defined survey standard, regardless of scale. Testing against base maps or photography of known accuracy determines the accuracy of data. This will ensure appropriate positional accuracy of the geographic data, and therefore, compatibility of digital information.
2. All digital geospatial data must be provided to or produced for the Council as GIS Shape Files (.SHP) and are required to be in North American Datum 1983 (NAD83) horizontal geodetic datum, and in the New Jersey State Plane Coordinate System (SPC) or the most current SPC and in an ARCGIS compatible format.
3. All digital geospatial data must be documented using the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) Metadata Standard or be compliant with the FGDC metadata standard.

See the NJDEP Geographic Information System Mapping and Digital Data Standards (N.J.A.C. 7:1D Appendix A) for the complete submission standards.