

**DRAFT FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE HIGHLANDS COUNCIL
AT THE JULY 10, 2008 COUNCIL MEETING**

**BASIC PLAN CONFORMANCE FOR COUNTIES
KEY REQUIREMENTS**

Note: Underlined items are specific tasks required of the county that are not based on models or templates provided by the Highlands Council. Upon RMP adoption, the Highlands Council will provide the basic information for county adoption of a Master Plan “Highlands Element” and “Highlands Regulations.” This document summarizes what each of these must accomplish.

RMP UPDATE ANALYSIS

Conduct an analysis of RMP maps and data applicable to the county to determine the need for RMP Updates. Submit a request to the Highlands Council listing proposed RMP Updates if any, along with the justification for each. A web-based program will be available through the Highlands Council for submission and processing of RMP Updates. Opportunities to request additional RMP Updates will continue to be available throughout the conformance process.

MASTER PLAN, POLICIES, & REGULATIONS

The County Master Plan, Management Plan Elements, and implementing regulations must incorporate a number of the Goals, Policies, and Objectives (GPOs) of the RMP. The County may choose whether to adopt “Highlands Elements” and “Highlands Regulations” as supplements to its planning documents or to amend each applicable component to include these requirements. In either case, Highlands provisions will be applicable to county facilities, improvement projects, and operations, to county management plans, and in county review of applications for non-exempt development in the Preservation Area and the Planning Area (if Planning Area Plan Conformance is sought). Conforming county Master Plan and Regulations must include and/or accomplish each of the items listed in the respective sections below.

MASTER PLAN

1. ***Policies, Goals, & Objectives.*** Adopt all county-relevant Goals, Policies, and Objectives (GPOs) of the RMP, modified to apply at the county level. In all cases, here and below, where GPOs are modified to apply to the county level, the resulting policies and objectives must be no less stringent than those of the RMP. (Where GPOs are discretionary, the county may choose which to incorporate, if any.)
2. ***Land Use Plan.*** Adopt applicable Highlands Land Use Capability Map categories including Areas, Zones, and Sub-Zones as an overlay or supplement to existing land use maps. Adopt the Land Use Capability Map (LUCM) series (upon verification of accuracy of factual information) to the limits of the county boundary lines.
3. ***Relationship of Master Plan to the RMP.*** Discuss and indicate consistency of County Master Plan with the Highlands RMP.

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**MASTER PLAN COMPONENTS: ENVIRONMENTAL AND
INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY**

1. ***Environmental Resource Inventory.*** Create or supplement an existing Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI) by adoption of Highlands Resource Area Maps (to limits of county boundary lines) along with descriptions of Highlands Resource categories as defined in RMP. Such factual changes should be submitted as RMP Updates where they affect RMP information.
2. ***Conservation Plan.*** Adopt Highlands Resource Area Maps, as applicable, to the limits of the county boundary lines. Adopt Highlands Resource categories as defined in the RMP, along with specific applicable GPOs, as modified to apply at the county level. Incorporate the basis for requiring Low Impact Development techniques and use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) as applicable to county development reviews. For application to county properties and facilities and in review of development applications, provide the basis for preparation and adoption of:
 - a) A ground water recharge protection and mitigation plan;
 - b) A wellhead protection plan (if applicable); and
 - c) A stormwater management plan.
3. ***Wastewater Utilities Plan.*** Adopt applicable RMP GPOs, modified to apply to the county level. Adopt by reference, the Highlands wastewater utilities guidance documents. Incorporate the basis for preparation and adoption of the County Wastewater Management Plan applicable to, at minimum, the Highlands portion of the County, or amendments to the existing Plan to the extent required to gain consistency with the RMP.
4. ***Water Use and Conservation Management Plan.*** Adopt applicable RMP GPOs, modified to apply to the county level. Adopt Highlands water utility technical guidance. Where a county utilities authority is the public water utility or water purveyor, provide the basis for preparation and adoption of a Water Use and Conservation Management Plan.
5. ***Transportation/Circulation Plan.*** Adopt applicable RMP GPOs, modified to apply to the county level. Incorporate Highlands Council study criteria for application in county review of any growth-inducing county or municipal transportation project. Provide the basis for further review and evaluation of transportation and transit conditions as related to the Highlands Region and the larger metropolitan transportation planning region.

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MASTER PLAN COMPONENTS: OPEN SPACE AND FARMLAND PRESERVATION

1. ***Open Space and Recreation Plan.*** Adopt applicable RMP GPOs, modified to apply to the county level. Cross-reference to any existing Open Space and Recreation Plan. Adopt an up-to-date, mapped inventory of preserved county parks, open space, and recreational lands (unless an existing inventory remains current); and, in the case of any county lands preserved using funding from the NJDEP Green Acres Program, an up-to-date Recreation and Open Space Inventory (ROSI) (unless an existing ROSI remains current). (If these inventories would be one and the same, the updated ROSI alone will satisfy this requirement.)

2. ***Agriculture Retention/Farmland Preservation Plan (if applicable).*** Adopt Highlands Agricultural Resources Area Map to the limits of county boundary lines. Adopt applicable RMP GPOs, modified to apply to the county level. Cross-reference to any existing County Farmland Preservation Plan. Incorporate a commitment to the Right to Farm Act and to supporting municipal ordinances and strategies to preserve and retain the viability of agricultural land within the county. Adopt an up-to-date, mapped inventory of preserved farmland (unless an existing inventory map remains current).

MASTER PLAN COMPONENTS: COUNTY FACILITIES AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

1. ***County Facilities Plan.*** Adopt applicable RMP GPOs, modified to apply to county facilities. Incorporate goals in support of green building design and enhanced energy efficiency. Provide basis for consideration of opportunities for shared services both at the county level and in support of municipal initiatives.

2. ***Historic Preservation Plan.*** Incorporate applicable RMP GPOs, modified to apply to the county level into the Historic Preservation Plan. Adopt listing and discussion of applicable county resources from the Highlands Historic and Cultural Resources Inventory and the New Jersey Register of Historic Places.

COUNTY POLICIES & REGULATIONS

Adopt the following for application to county facilities, improvement projects, and operations, and in county review of applications for non-exempt development filed pursuant to the New Jersey County Planning Act (N.J.S.A. 40:27-1 et seq).

1. ***Resource Area and Supporting Regulations.*** Adopt as internal policy, and for application to development reviews, Highlands requirements regulating water and wastewater, Highlands resources, and all Highland Resource Areas located within the county. Such regulations will ultimately cover the following, where applicable:
 - a. Steep Slopes
 - h. Critical Habitat

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| b. Forest Areas | i. Carbonate Rock Areas |
| c. Open Water and Riparian Areas | j. Agricultural Resources |
| d. Ground Water Recharge Management | k. Lake Management |
| e. Wellhead Protection | l. Low Impact Development |
| f. Stormwater Management | m. Scenic Resources |
| g. Right to Farm | n. Historic/Cultural |

2. ***Open Space Preservation.*** Adopt Highlands conservation and land stewardship easement language for use in county easements.
3. ***Development Review Checklists.*** Update development application submission checklists as needed to include the following requirements:
 - a. Where applications have been prepared in a digitized format, include digital parcel information compliant with Highlands Digital Parcel Map standards.
 - b. For all non-exempt development applications, include a Highlands Consistency Determination from the Highlands Council indicating that the proposal is consistent with the RMP, or can be revised to achieve consistency via specific changes outlined therein;
 - c. For non-exempt development applications having received a Consistency Determination indicating that specific revisions are required to achieve consistency, a certification from the applicant's professional(s) affirming that the plans have been revised to specifically address the inconsistencies identified by the Highlands Council and that to the best of his/her professional knowledge, they have achieved consistency.
4. ***Filing/Recording Procedures.*** Where applications have been prepared in a digitized format, require that approved subdivision plats, easements, and other like reservations of land be submitted for recording with the County in digitized format compliant with Highlands Digital Parcel Map standards.

COUNTY SELF-ASSESSMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Complete County Self-Assessment (CSA) and prepare CSA Report. The CSA Report should list and discuss all changes to the county planning program that remain necessary from the time of filing a petition, to achieving full Plan Conformance. It should identify areas requiring coordination with the Highlands Council and/or with affected municipalities and other agencies. The CSA Report must also include a proposed Implementation Schedule, indicating the timeframe for anticipated completion of the individual items and the overall program.

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MAP ADJUSTMENTS

With regard to County properties and facilities only, provide a narrative discussion on proposed Map Adjustments, if any, along with the justification for each. Map Adjustments refer to changes to the Land Use Capability Zone Map such that all map adjustments provide results that are equal to or exceed on a whole the resource protection provided by the RMP. Map Adjustments will be considered by the Highlands Council in accordance with the specific criteria provided in the RMP.