



Borough of Bloomsbury Highlands Preservation Area Master Plan Element

Prepared by the State of New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council in Support of the Highlands Regional Master Plan in Consultation with the Borough of Bloomsbury, Hunterdon County, New Jersey

**Adopted:
April 16,
2013**

HIGHLANDS PRESERVATION AREA

MASTER PLAN ELEMENT

MASTER PLAN SUPPLEMENT

BOROUGH OF BLOOMSBURY

HUNTERDON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

**SUBMISSION TO THE NEW JERSEY HIGHLANDS WATER PROTECTION
AND PLANNING COUNCIL TOWARD ACHIEVING PLAN CONFORMANCE
WITH THE HIGHLANDS REGIONAL MASTER PLAN**

The Planning Board presented, discussed, and accepted public comment on this draft Master Plan supplement at its duly-noticed public meeting of April 16, 2013. Copies of the document were made available for review by the public at least 10 days prior to that meeting, and adequate notice of the meeting advising that the Highlands Element was on the agenda for discussion and public comment, was provided.

This document is based on a model Highlands Element prepared and provided to Highlands municipalities by the New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council. Modifications required to tailor it for application to the Borough of Bloomsbury were provided by the individual indicated below.

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INTRODUCTION

The Borough of Bloomsbury is located in the New Jersey Highlands Region. It is one of 88 municipalities protected by and subject to the provisions of the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act ("Highlands Act," N.J.S.A. 13:20-1 et seq.). The Highlands Act was enacted by the State Legislature on August 10, 2004 for the purpose of protecting, enhancing, and restoring Highlands natural resources, in particular water resources, which provide drinking water to over 5 million New Jersey residents. The Highlands Act created the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council (the "Highlands Council") and charged it with crafting a comprehensive master plan for the Highlands Region.

To complete that task, the Highlands Council engaged in a four-year planning process involving extensive scientific and technical analysis of the Region, along with an intensive program of public outreach and participation. The Highlands Council solicited the advice and input of all stakeholders and interested parties through a variety of means, including but not limited to: initiation of the "Partnership Program" for municipal and county government representatives; formation of 18 Technical Advisory Committees comprised of technical experts and practitioners in relevant fields such as land use planning, engineering, agriculture, real estate appraisal, transportation, and business; and development of the "Network," a forum for information-sharing and outreach to the general public. In addition, the Highlands Council has held and continues to adhere to a regular schedule of open public meetings providing continuous opportunity for public comment, and has provided for ongoing data sharing and access to information through its internet website.

The Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP) was adopted by the Highlands Council on July 17, 2008, and became effective on September 8, 2008. As the product of a long-term, participatory, and region-wide planning effort, the RMP is representative of the collective response of the wider community to the Legislature's call for a Highlands comprehensive master plan. The Borough places value in the regional planning process that was undertaken to fully develop the RMP and acknowledges its role in furthering the vision that it represents.

The Highlands Region encompasses some 1,343 square miles in the northwest part of New Jersey. The Highlands Act designates about half of the seven-county Region as Preservation Area (415,000 acres) and the other half as Planning Area (444,000 acres). The Act requires that jurisdictions having lands in the Preservation Area conform to the Highlands RMP with respect to that area, while for lands located in the Planning Area, conformance is voluntary.

The Borough of Bloomsbury is located fully within the Preservation Area. The municipality affirmatively seeks to align its land use planning program with the provisions of the RMP with respect to the whole of the municipality. For purposes of this document, these lands shall be formally designated the "Borough Highlands Preservation Area," with shortened references to the "Borough Preservation Area" or "Highlands Preservation Area," having the same meaning. This supplement to the Borough Master Plan, designated the "Highlands

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Element," represents a first step toward achieving full conformance with the Highlands RMP.

As a result of application of the "Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act Rules" (N.J.AC 7:38-1 et seq.), the Borough of Bloomsbury has limited potential for development other than projects that would be exempt from the Highlands Act. Specifically, the Highlands Municipal Build-Out evaluation for the Borough identified only four (4) lots that could potentially support non-exempt residential units.

The Highlands Element sets forth the policies that shall guide the future land use and development of the Borough Preservation Area. It provides the rationale and the framework for the adoption of land use regulations that are protective of Highlands resources and consistent with the Highlands RMP. In large part, these policies will be effectuated by adoption of a "Highlands Checklist Ordinance." This ordinance will require that applicants seeking development approvals for projects within the Preservation Area either provide confirmation of a Highlands Act exemption (pursuant to N.J.S.A. 13:20-28), as demonstrated by issuance of a Highlands Applicability Determination from the NJDEP; or obtain evidence of RMP-compliance in the form of a Consistency Determination from the Highlands Council. The Borough anticipates that all or nearly all proposals for development in this area will qualify for Highlands Act exemptions. Development not covered by such exemptions will, as applicable, be subject to the provisions of the Regional Master Plan, or the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) "Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act Rules" (N.J.AC 7:38-1 et seq), or both.

The Highlands Checklist Ordinance and any other regulatory requirement deemed necessary to effectuate these Highlands land use policies, shall apply to non-exempt land use activities in the Highlands Preservation Area. "Non-exempt" land use and development refers to uses, activities, and development projects not expressly listed as exemptions in the Highlands Act (N.J.S.A. 13:20-28). Land use activities, improvements, and development projects that are exempt from the Highlands Act shall remain subject to all other applicable provisions of the underlying municipal Master Plan, Zoning and Land Use Ordinances, and Development Regulations.

The Highlands Element amends or creates in limited form (where not already existing), the components needed to supplement the existing municipal Master Plan, as required for Plan Conformance and provided in the sections that follow. The Highlands Element is intended to apply in conjunction with the language of the existing Borough Master Plan to the maximum extent feasible. In the event of conflicts between the two, the Highlands Element shall supersede, unless the existing municipal Master Plan provisions are more restrictive.

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POLICIES, GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The Borough Highlands Preservation Area encompasses the whole of the municipality. It consists of approximately 632 acres of land (see Exhibit A, Borough Highlands Preservation Area).

The Borough Highlands Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI) prepared by the Highlands Council dated September 2011 provides detailed information concerning the physical features, natural resources and specific characteristics of the municipal Highlands Preservation Area. The ERI includes all of the information available through the Highlands Regional Master Plan and supporting technical documents, which document the wide array of natural and cultural resources that characterize the New Jersey Highlands Region.

The municipality recognizes the unique value of the Borough Preservation Area and seeks to protect and enhance it, in keeping with the Highlands Act and the Highlands RMP. Accordingly, the overarching land use policy with respect to the Borough Preservation Area is to place priority emphasis on the protection, enhancement and restoration of Highlands natural and cultural resources while ensuring that land use and development activities therein occur only in a manner and location that is consistent with the Highlands RMP.

In keeping with this policy, the following goals of the Highlands Act and Highlands RMP are embraced by the municipality and shall guide the land use and development of the Borough Highlands Preservation Area:

A. PRESERVATION AREA GOALS

1. To protect, restore, and enhance the quality and quantity of surface and ground waters;
2. To preserve extensive and, to the maximum extent possible, contiguous areas of land in its natural state, thereby ensuring retention of the unique and significant natural, scenic, and other resources representative of the Borough Preservation Area;
3. To protect the natural, scenic, and other resources of the Borough Preservation Area, including but not limited to contiguous forests, wetlands, vegetated stream corridors, steep slopes, and critical habitat for fauna and flora;
4. To preserve farmland, historic sites, and other historic resources;
5. To preserve outdoor recreation opportunities on publicly owned land;
6. To promote conservation of water resources;
7. To promote Brownfield remediation and redevelopment, where applicable;

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8. To promote compatible agricultural, horticultural, recreational, and cultural uses and opportunities within the framework of protecting the environment of the Borough Preservation Area; and
9. To prohibit or limit to the maximum extent possible construction or development which is incompatible with preservation of this unique area.

B. BOROUGH OF BLOOMSBURY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Borough of Bloomsbury prepared a Reexamination Report and Master Plan Amendment adopted November 20, 2012. In addition to the regional and state planning goals and objectives listed above, the Borough identified the following local planning goals and objectives:

1. Repeal the PUD zoning district and associated cluster provision and provide new bulk regulations that conform to the Highlands Regional Master Plan and any applicable and associated NJDEP regulations.
2. The Borough continues to seek additional outside funding sources to maintain and improve road conditions in the Borough.
3. Communicate and coordinate, as possible, with the County regarding the improvements and policies applied to the Route 579 bridge.
4. Off-tract improvements for new development and redevelopment should continue to be sought.
5. The Borough encourages sidewalks for new developments and redevelopment areas, however, in areas where large lots are proposed consideration of the total amount of impervious areas should be considered for its appropriateness.
6. Continue to upgrade park facilities such as repurposing the lower baseball field to soccer/lacrosse or multi-purpose field.
7. The Borough encourages developers to provide access or right-of-way to all citizens of the community, especially allow access to the riverfront area. The Borough encourages private owners to allow for public access to recreation and open space areas.
8. The Borough recommends that Borough- owned land on the riverfront should be improved as a public park. The Borough has no immediate intention to plan or implement a greenway along the river, nor to acquire land from private property owners for that purpose. However, to the extent that private property owners would be willing to voluntarily permit public access to the waterfront, they are encouraged to do so.
9. The Borough recommends that part of the submission and review requirements for any development application which includes the formation of a homeowner

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association, that the deed restrictions and bylaws concerning the provision and maintenance of private open space and recreational amenities be approved during the application review process.

10. The Borough recommends that the submission and review requirements for development approvals be amended to include review, and subsequent conditions of approvals of all applicable outside agency jurisdiction. In addition the applicants are encouraged to utilize the Musconetcong Watershed Guidelines at time of application.
11. Development applications should include stream setback and flood hazard areas; use of drought-tolerant plantings for certain projects; preservation of wooded areas; and provision of conservation easements for environmentally sensitive areas. In particular, the following requirements should be included:
 - a. Stream setback requirements and guidelines for construction in a flood hazard area should be amended to dovetail with and reinforce the current State-mandated standards for all projects.
 - b. In all multifamily residential and nonresidential projects, the use of drought-tolerant, indigenous plants should be encouraged to reduce water consumption. In addition, the use of vegetative ground cover alternatives to lawns should also be encouraged to reduce the use of fertilizers and pesticides.
 - c. in all projects, the preservation of wooded areas, or the supplementation of plantings to create or strengthen wooded areas should be encouraged as opposed to the clearing and removal of natural vegetation and their replacement by large expanses of lawn or other types of vegetated or landscaped areas.
 - d. Where developments contain areas of freshwater wetlands, wetland transition areas, stream buffers and other environmentally-sensitive areas, encourage the creation of conservation easements so as to protect these areas from the impacts of development.
12. Historic preservation remains an important goal of the Borough and recommends the following actions:
 - e. Form an historic commission;
 - f. Prepare a Historic Preservation Element of the Master Plan
 - g. Designate historic district(s) and apply for a listing of buildings and/or the district on the State's register; and
 - h. Adopt an historic preservation ordinance.
 - i. In addition, the Borough encourages the maintenance and rehabilitation of historic buildings through public education, including an awareness of technical and economic assistance available from County, State and federal agencies and other nonprofit preservation groups.
13. The Borough wishes to prevent, and would strongly discourage, any further development of service stations and truck stops, either adjacent to residential uses or anywhere else in the Borough. The negative impacts associated with the uses

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have become a detriment to the quality of life for Borough residents, in particular the adjoining residences, in particular emissions from idling vehicles, light pollution, congestion and illegal parking conditions. The Borough recognizes that such uses are entitled to continue as established and encourages any improvements with regard to traffic safety and congestion. In other parts of the Borough that are currently zoned B-2 or other zoning designations which permit retail and business uses to be established, more balanced, locally-oriented business uses are encouraged to meet the needs of the Borough's population.

C. GENERAL PURPOSES OF ZONING

The afore-listed goals for the use and development of lands located within the Borough Preservation Area are consistent with and intended to apply equally and in conjunction with the purposes of zoning as expressed by the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et seq.). Nothing in the body of the Highlands Element shall be construed to imply that the provisions of the MLUL are not also applicable to the Borough in exercising its authority to engage in land use planning and regulation pertinent to the Highlands Preservation Area.

The intents and purposes of the MLUL (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2) are expressly incorporated herein for application to Borough land use planning and management of the Highlands Preservation Area, as follows:

- a. To guide the appropriate use or development of all lands under Borough jurisdiction, in a manner which will promote the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare;
- b. To secure safety from fire, flood, panic and other natural and man-made disasters;
- c. To provide adequate light, air and open space;
- d. To ensure that the development of the Borough does not conflict with the development and general welfare of neighboring municipalities, the county, or the state as a whole;
- e. To promote the establishment of appropriate population densities and concentrations that will contribute to the well-being of persons, neighborhoods, communities and regions and preservation of the environment;
- f. To encourage the appropriate and efficient expenditure of public funds by the coordination of public development with land use policies;
- g. To provide sufficient space in appropriate locations for a variety of agricultural, residential, recreational, commercial and industrial uses and open space, both public and private, according to their respective environmental requirements in order to meet the needs of all citizens;

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- h. To encourage the location and design of transportation routes which will promote the free flow of traffic while discouraging location of such facilities and routes which result in congestion or blight;
- i. To promote a desirable visual environment through creative development techniques and good civic design and arrangement;
- j. To promote the conservation of historic sites and districts, open space, energy resources and valuable natural resources in the Borough and to prevent urban sprawl and degradation of the environment through improper use of land;
- k. To encourage planned unit developments, where appropriate, which incorporate the best features of design and relate the type, design and layout of residential, commercial, industrial and/or recreational development to the particular site;
- l. To ensure sufficient availability of senior citizen community housing;
- m. To encourage coordination of the various public and private procedures and activities shaping land development with a view of lessening the cost of such development and to the more efficient use of land;
- n. To promote utilization of renewable energy resources; and
- o. To promote the maximum practicable recovery and recycling of recyclable materials from municipal solid waste through the use of planning practices designed to incorporate the State Recycling Plan goals and to complement municipal recycling programs.

D. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HIGHLANDS ACT & MLUL

The Municipal Land Use Law gives authority to New Jersey municipalities to govern land use and development within their borders. The Highlands Act augments that authority to allow municipalities the power to enforce the goals, policies, objectives, and programs of the Highlands Regional Master Plan. The Highlands Act and the RMP together provide the regional perspective from which local decisions and actions will emanate.

As a result of the passage of the Highlands Act, the future of land use planning has significantly changed for both municipalities and counties in the Highlands Region. The New Jersey Supreme Court, in upholding the constitutionality of the Highlands Act in OFP, LLC v. State, 197 N.J. 418 (2008), affirmed the Appellate Division's decision, which emphasized the broad scope of the Highlands Act to protect the natural and agricultural resources of the Highlands through a coordinated system of regional land use controls. The Highlands Act creates a system in which a regional plan is designed to be implemented primarily through local government units. The net effect is that the statutory authority of local government units in the Highlands Region, inclusive of that provided under the

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Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), is not preempted by the Highlands Act, but rather is supplemented through the passage of the Highlands Act and the adoption of the Highlands Regional Master Plan. The Highlands Act provides, through the conformance of municipal master plans and ordinances with the Highlands RMP, authorities for municipal regulation that are in addition to those of the MLUL.

Accordingly, the criteria for approval of development applications under the ordinances that ultimately effectuate this Highlands Element will incorporate aspects of both the Municipal Land Use Law and the Highlands Act. To the extent that MLUL criteria for approval of variances, waivers, exceptions and/or any other relevant aspect are altered or supplemented by provisions indicated in the Highlands Element, authority for such modifications derives from passage of the Highlands Act.

The Highlands Council will coordinate with NJDEP during Highlands permit review for any major Highlands development including the review of waivers on a case-by-case basis: 1) if determined to be necessary in order to protect public health and safety; 2) for redevelopment in accordance with a Highlands Redevelopment Area Designation (see Land Use Plan, Section F); or 3) in order to avoid the taking of property without just compensation.

REDEVELOPMENT PLANNING

The Planning Board will examine the potential for redevelopment opportunities within the Highlands Preservation Area. The term “redevelopment” is used herein to refer to reconstruction or re-use of previously developed and underutilized properties (which include Preservation Area sites having 70% or more area in impervious surface), and to the rehabilitation and re-use of “brownfield” sites (identified as such by NJDEP). Unless specifically stated otherwise, neither the term “redevelopment,” nor the phrase “in need of redevelopment” is used herein to invoke the definitions, processes, powers or any other facet of the provisions of the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq.).

Rather, Highlands Preservation Area redevelopment planning refers to the identification of previously developed areas that: a) are suitable for re-use and/or reconstruction, or reversion to “greenfields,” such as parklands, conservation areas, or open space; and/or b) may be eligible for designation by the Highlands Council as Highlands Redevelopment Areas. Highlands Redevelopment Areas are typically characterized by ready access to or potential for water and wastewater utility infrastructure (and available or potential capacities); existing transportation infrastructure and/or services with links to viable transportation networks; proximity to supporting community facilities and services; and suitability for increased development intensity in keeping with smart growth planning principles. Where brownfields are involved, NJDEP identification of the brownfield site is a necessary step prior to Highlands Council designation of a Highlands Redevelopment Area. Such applications must be submitted to NJDEP for a Highlands Preservation Area Approval (HPAA) with Redevelopment Waiver.

It is the intent of this Plan to encourage redevelopment where appropriate within the Highlands Preservation Area, to ensure optimal and efficient use of land. By maximizing the use of previously developed areas and areas in need of environmental clean-up or other improvements, the municipality may provide for desirable new development (or new green spaces), while protecting lands that contain sensitive environmental features and important Highlands resources. This approach is intended to guide development toward the most suitable locations in the municipality, to encourage environmental clean-up where needed, and to maximize the use of existing infrastructure to meet future needs.

Redevelopment projects and activities that conform to density/intensity allowances and meet all other requirements of the applicable land use ordinances (specifically including those developed for the Highlands Preservation Area and the Highlands Preservation Area Rules at N.J.A.C. 7:38), do not require Highlands Redevelopment Area designation and may proceed as of right in accordance with all municipal procedural requirements. Any municipally-sponsored redevelopment project proposed pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A, while perhaps also requiring Highlands Council Redevelopment Area designation, must be advanced in accordance with all applicable statutory requirements, including preparation

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and adoption by the Governing Body of a Redevelopment Plan. The Planning Board, in making any Highlands Preservation Area determination of “area in need of redevelopment” pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A, will incorporate the considerations listed below for Highlands Redevelopment Area designations in evaluating the applicable criteria under N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5.

1. Definitions.

- a. A “brownfield” site consists of a commercial or industrial site that is currently vacant or underutilized and on which there has been or is suspected to have been, a contaminant discharge.
- b. A “grayfield” site consists of a site supported by existing infrastructure that contains an industrial or commercial facility (not excluding one having a residential component) exhibiting signs of abandonment or underutilization, but without evidence or expectation of contamination.
- c. A “redevelopment project” or “redevelopment activity” refers to the re-use, reconstruction, or conversion to alternate use, of a brownfield site, a grayfield site, or a previously developed site that is currently vacant or underutilized in the Highlands Preservation Area. Redevelopment projects and activities may include but are not limited to: removal, reconstruction, or adaptive reuse of existing buildings and other structures; construction of new buildings and other structures; and conversion/restoration of a site or portions of a site for open space, recreation or conservation purposes of any kind.
- d. A “Highlands Redevelopment Area” consists of a property or group of properties designated as such by the Highlands Council, and which includes one or more of the following: a) a brownfield site; b) a grayfield site; and c) any previously developed site in the Highlands Preservation Area. A Highlands Redevelopment Area may include the intervening or surrounding lands which are significantly affected by or are necessary to support such sites, and will be subject to a Highlands Council-approved redevelopment plan setting forth the full scope and details of the proposed redevelopment project(s) and/or activities.

2. Redevelopment Projects and Activities.

- a. Redevelopment projects and activities that comply with all applicable land use ordinances (specifically including those developed for the Highlands Preservation Area) are encouraged in all Areas, Zones and Subzones of the Highlands Preservation Area. Such projects and activities are also subject to all applicable county, state, and federal regulatory requirements.
- b. Redevelopment projects and activities involving conversion to greenfields are particularly encouraged in environmentally constrained areas, where

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compliance with Highlands Preservation Area ordinance provisions for new development may not be feasible.

- c. In consideration of the foregoing, the Board may identify in the future specific sites, consisting of brownfields, grayfields, and/or other previously developed vacant or underutilized properties to be considered for potential redevelopment projects and/or activities in accordance with all applicable ordinances and regulatory requirements.
3. **Highlands Redevelopment Areas.** In assessing the potential for Highlands Redevelopment Area designations, the Planning Board incorporates the following relevant considerations:
 - a. Highlands Redevelopment Area designation in the Preservation Area is confined to: a) sites having 70% or greater impervious coverage, and/or b) sites designated as "Highlands brownfields" in accordance with NJDEP Preservation Area Rules (at N.J.A.C. 7:38-6.6). In addition to Highlands Council approval, a waiver is required from the NJDEP in conjunction with a Highlands Preservation Area Approval (HPAA).
 - b. Highlands Redevelopment Area designation will only be considered where lands are particularly suited to the proposed redevelopment plan, by virtue of a preponderance of existing characteristics such as, but not limited to: appropriate community location; availability of water and wastewater utility infrastructure and capacity; access to transit and/or other suitable transportation systems and networks; suitability for increased land use intensity or conversion to greenfields, as applicable; extensive coverage by impervious surfaces; proximity to community facilities and services; potential to embody and/or further smart growth principles; opportunity to protect resources; and potential to contribute to a sustainable local and/or regional economy.
 - c. Any redevelopment project or activity permitted under the auspices of Highlands Redevelopment Area redevelopment plan must be designed and developed in accordance with smart growth and Low Impact Development principles (see Section J).
 - d. Identification of opportunities for redevelopment projects and activities that are potentially suitable for Highlands Redevelopment Area designation in the Highlands Preservation Area should be assisted by the Highlands Council Redevelopment and Infill Analysis Tool. This review should also include any sites depicted in Exhibit B, "Highlands Contaminated Sites Inventory". Information on Highlands Contaminated Site Inventories is available in the

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Highlands Council *Regional Land Use Conditions and Smart Design Guidelines Technical Report.*

- e. In consideration of the foregoing, the potential Highlands Redevelopment Areas identified by the Planning Board to date, include the following:
 - i. Historic Mill Site, 27 Church Street. Block 16, Lot 6.01
 - ii. Possible designation and implication of Brownfield Designation for the North Street Development.

In addition to these two properties listed, the Borough continues to explore any other potential redevelopment area in an effort reuse, repurpose and revitalize the Borough's tax base and identify new uses compatible with the Highlands Act.

The Borough's 2012 Reexamination Report also identified the need to prepare an Economic Plan Element, as part of the Highlands Plan Conformance process, to include all aspects of economic development, and insure that the Borough's Land Use Plan and Zoning Map would provide for sufficient tax revenue-generating developments to offset those land uses which demand the provision of municipal services and costs, as well as educational costs and services.

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HOUSING PLAN

On May 18, 2010 the Borough of Bloomsbury Planning Board adopted the Third Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, prepared by Banisch Associates, Inc. On June 8, 2010 the Borough submitted the Plan along with a petition for Substantive Certification to the Council on Affordable Housing. The language provided by the Highlands Council herein is incorporated as a supplement to the Borough policies, goals, and objectives with regard to housing, and particularly affordable housing within the community. Given the Borough's existing development and Preservation Area inclusion, the Borough identified the most appropriate methods to achieve affordable housing is to take advantage of existing development and housing stock. To that end, the adopted Housing Element and Fair Share Plan identified accessory apartments and group homes/special needs housing as the most realistic form of affordable housing in the Borough.

The overriding policy of the Highlands Housing Plan is to ensure provision of a variety of housing opportunities sufficient to address the needs of the community, including the need for affordable housing, while at the same time respecting the density limits of the Highlands Element Land Use Plan, the resource constraints applicable to the Highlands Area, and the numerous other policies, goals and objectives set forth by the Borough's Master Plan. The Housing Plan furthers MLUL purposes of zoning (at N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2, specifically 2a., 2e., 2g., 2l.) and fulfills the requirements of the New Jersey Fair Housing Act (N.J.S.A. 52:27D-301 et seq.) which in keeping with New Jersey Supreme Court doctrine, as expressed in the "Mount Laurel" decisions, recognizes that every municipality in a "growth area" has a constitutional obligation to provide, through its land use regulations, a realistic opportunity for provision of a fair share of its region's present and prospective needs for housing for low- and moderate-income families.

A. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In furtherance of Borough efforts to ensure sound planning, the Highlands Housing Plan incorporates the following goals and objectives with respect to future housing in the Highlands Area:

1. To the extent feasible, the zone plan will guide anticipated new residential development into compact, center-based projects (optional addition: incorporating a mix of housing types and/or mixed residential/commercial uses).
2. To provide a realistic opportunity for the provision of the municipal share of the region's present and prospective needs for housing for low- and moderate-income families.

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3. To the maximum extent feasible, affordable housing units shall be incorporated into any new residential construction that occurs within the Highlands Area including any mixed use, redevelopment, and/or adaptive reuse projects.
4. To preserve and monitor existing stocks of affordable housing.
5. To reduce long term housing costs through:
 - a. The implementation of green building and energy efficient technology in the rehabilitation, redevelopment and development of housing. Recent innovations in building practices and development regulations reflect significant energy efficiency measures, and therefore cost reductions, through building materials, energy efficient appliances, water conservation measures, innovative and alternative technologies that support conservation practices, and common sense practices such as recycling and re-use.
 - b. The promotion of the use of sustainable site design, efficient water management, energy efficient technologies, green building materials and equipment, and retrofitting for efficiencies.
 - c. Maximizing the efficient use of existing infrastructure, through such means as redevelopment, infill and adaptive reuse.
6. To use a smart growth approach to achieving housing needs:
 - a. Use land more efficiently to engender economically vibrant communities, complete with jobs, houses, shopping, recreation, entertainment and multiple modes of transportation.
 - b. Support a diverse mix of housing that offers a wide range of choice in terms of value, type and location. In addition, seek quality housing design that provides adequate light, air, and open space.
 - c. Target housing to areas with existing higher densities and without environmental constraints, within walking distance of schools, employment, services, transit and community facilities with sufficient capacity to support them.

CIRCULATION PLAN

The existing Master Plan does not have a Circulation Plan Element providing detailed information on existing and proposed transportation infrastructure within, or providing access to and from the municipality, including information on all modes and supporting facilities and services. It is the intent of the Planning Board to fully develop and adopt such an Element, applicable at minimum to the Highlands Preservation Area. It will include a mapped inventory of all Highlands Preservation Area transportation features, detailed description of each, applicable municipal goals and objectives, as well as the information and additional goals and objectives listed below.

The “Highlands Roadway Network” (Exhibit C) and “Highlands Transit Network” (Exhibit D) maps together illustrate the regional transportation network and facilities of the Borough Highlands Preservation Area. Municipal roadways and transportation features interface with those of the region and the state as a whole, as will be discussed and illustrated in the underlying Circulation Plan Element for the Borough Highlands Preservation Area.

The Planning Board currently anticipates, proposes and/or has identified need for modifications to the portion of the transportation system located within the Highlands Preservation Area, as listed and briefly described below:

1. Railway infrastructure improvements;
2. Bus availability/routing enhancements;
3. Parking improvements;
4. Bicycle lanes or bike trail installations;
5. Pedestrian safety enhancements;
6. Sidewalk/lighting improvements;
7. Provision of multi-modal linkages to/between community facilities;
8. Roadway infrastructure improvements.

As discussed in the ERI, future and existing development and redevelopment in the Highlands Preservation Area relies upon a complex network of roads, railways and bridges serving not only the municipality, but the county, the region and the state as a whole. A variety of modes of transportation are vital to ensuring efficient movement of people and goods, including but not limited to automobile, bus, rail, truck, bicycle and pedestrian. By promoting smart growth principles and efficient land use, the municipality and the Highlands Region as a whole can expand access to a multi-modal transportation system while protecting environmentally sensitive areas and Highlands resources.

Accordingly, the following goals and objectives shall guide the development, improvement, and on-going management of the transportation network and supporting facilities of the Borough Highlands Preservation Area.

1. To ensure that transportation facilities and infrastructure are designed and located in a manner that achieves optimal efficiencies in land use and provision of service,

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while at the same time, protecting the environmental resources and critical environmental areas of the Highlands Preservation Area.

2. To enhance opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle access, mobility and safety, through provision of sidewalks, walking trails, pedestrian crosswalks, bicycle lanes and trails, bicycle racks, and networked linkages that both access and connect community facilities, parks, schools and shopping areas.
3. To improve public safety through implementation of traffic calming measures in areas with high pedestrian activity.
4. To provide for safe and efficient pedestrian connections including features such as sidewalks, proper lighting, signage, shelters and “green street” initiatives such as those of the New Jersey Department of Transportation’s (NJDOT) Pedestrian Safety Initiative.
5. To enhance roadway corridors and encourage pedestrian activity, where appropriate, by installation of ample sidewalk areas with aesthetic enhancements such as street trees, decorative lighting, and benches.
6. To promote safe routes for children to travel to and from school, potentially with the financial and technical assistance of NJDOT’s Safe Routes to School Program.
7. To optimize use of existing roadway capacity by appropriate means, such as increased bus, van, jitney and car pool ridership.
8. To identify roadways designated as scenic byways and, to the extent of municipal jurisdiction, to protect and preserve their defining characteristics in conjunction with the scenic viewsheds they provide access to.
9. To recognize and support the unique needs of the agricultural industry to move farm vehicles and goods along transportation corridors, and to establish safe travel routes for farmers and agri-tourism, as appropriate in the Highlands Preservation Area, to ensure the safety and viability of farming as an occupation.
10. To evaluate the potential growth-inducing effects of roadway improvements that will increase traffic capacity, such as substantial new land use, new residents or new employment.
11. To prohibit road improvements in areas for which a Growth-Inducing Study demonstrates that proposed improvements do not support the resource protection and smart growth policies otherwise established by the Highlands Element, or that are likely to be growth-inducing for lands with limited or no capacity to support human development without adverse impact on Highlands Preservation Area resources.
12. To limit road improvements where roads are constrained by topography, adjacent forested lands, or other sensitive environmental features such as critical habitat.

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13. To ensure that road improvements are designed to enhance community character and to avoid adverse impacts to adjoining or otherwise affected properties.
14. To promote land use patterns that support a balance of jobs to housing as a means of reducing motor vehicle trips and average trip lengths.
15. To seek and encourage to the extent applicable, development and redevelopment in areas proximate to rail stations and along bus routes.
16. To promote development of mixed land uses, where appropriate, in locations that result in reduced motor vehicular trips and average trip lengths.
17. To permit and encourage use of shared parking areas, driveways, and other such infrastructure to limit paved surfaces and maximize efficiencies.
18. To ensure coordination between transportation planning and the Land Use Plan Element and to integrate smart growth principles into both.

The Borough's Reexamination Report of 2012 also identified several issues regarding circulation in the Borough, including:

- Circulation Element, to include examination of ways to:
 - limit traffic through local residential streets;
 - enhance safety, including better visibility at busy intersections in the Borough;
 - control speeding and promote traffic calming, including the use of signage and other methods available;
 - ensure that adequate parking is provided for new development and redevelopment;
 - enforce parking violations on municipal roads;
- Providing mass-transit support infrastructure such as a Park and Ride facility.
- Investigate how any possible expansion of the NJ Transit Rail Line might impact the Borough.

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LAND PRESERVATION AND LAND STEWARDSHIP PLAN

The existing Master Plan does not have an Open Space and Recreation Plan Element providing detailed information on existing and proposed open space preservation and recreational opportunities in the community. It is the intent of the Planning Board to fully develop and adopt such an Element, applicable at minimum to the Highlands Preservation Area. Until such time as that task is complete, the narrative herein shall serve as the Land Preservation & Land Stewardship Plan Element.

A mapped inventory of Preserved Lands in the Borough Highlands Preservation Area, current through September 2011, appears at Exhibit E, "Preserved Lands" (duplicated from the ERI). This Plan in addition incorporates (from the ERI) Exhibit F, "Highlands Conservation Priority Areas," and Exhibit J, "Highlands Agricultural Priority Area." This Plan recognizes and incorporates the definitions, derivations and delineations used to develop these maps, as provided in the ERI.

Preserved Lands in the Borough Highlands Preservation Area include lands under ownership by the municipality, the county, and the state. The Planning Board recognizes and will address the need for a more complete inventory of all dedicated easements after Plan Conformance has been attained, with the assistance of the Highlands Council. In total, the maps indicate 142 acres of Preserved Lands.

Highlands Conservation Priority Area lands are those designated a high priority for preservation due to exceptional water and ecological resource value. The priority order derives from the Highlands Council Resource Assessment methodology, which identifies and ranks Highlands lands based on a combination of indicators, including but not limited to: watershed conditions, Highlands Open Waters, riparian areas, prime ground water recharge areas, forests, critical habitat and steep slopes.

The Highlands Agricultural Priority Area, lastly, consists of those lands determined by the Highlands Council, in coordination with the NJDA and the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC), based on an agricultural resource assessment, to have the highest agricultural resource values.

The following goals and objectives will guide the future identification, prioritization, dedication, and stewardship of Preserved Lands in the Borough's Highlands Preservation Area:

1. To apply Highlands Council prioritization criteria in making determinations regarding non-agricultural Land Preservation (whether by fee simple or easement dedication), which are ordered as follows:
 - a. Lands within Highlands Conservation Priority Areas; and

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- b. Lands within Highlands Resource Areas generally, including but not limited to forested portions of Forest Resource Areas, Critical Habitat Areas, and Riparian Areas, particularly any portion of a Resource Area designated as "High Integrity" or "High Resource Value."
2. To maintain a current Recreation and Open Space Inventory (ROSI) where required by the NJDEP Green Acres Program.
3. To seek ways to establish and fund local land acquisition for preservation and stewardship programs or to expand existing open space and stewardship programs.
4. To identify lands subject to stewardship programs within this Land Preservation and Land Stewardship Plan and to provide that information to the Highlands Council.
5. To require that conservation or land stewardship easements imposed during the course of development applications be enforceable by the Highlands Council and at least one of the following entities, as qualified and amenable in accordance with the particular circumstances: the Borough, the County Agriculture Development Board, the SADC, Green Acres, or a non-profit land trust organized pursuant to § 501 (c)(3) of the federal tax code and engaged in the protection of land for the purpose of providing long-term stewardship of land resources.
6. To establish a stewardship and monitoring program for preserved lands owned by or dedicated to the Borough. This objective may be accomplished with the assistance of a non-profit land trust organized pursuant to § 501 (c)(3) of the federal tax code and engaged in the protection of land for the purpose of providing long-term stewardship of land resources.
7. To develop and implement a Forest Management Plan or Forest Stewardship Plan consistent with the standards of the NJ Forest Stewardship Program for application to municipally-owned forest lands.
8. To ensure periodic monitoring of easement restrictions protecting Critical Habitat Areas, associated species and ecological communities from any changes in land use or management practices that would impair these resources.
9. To implement Riparian Area restoration practices on Preserved Lands that give priority to ecological and watershed protection measures.
10. To identify and preserve opportunities for outdoor recreation, including a variety of active and passive recreation options, in such locations and in such manner as to ensure environmental resource protections, while addressing the needs of the local population for physical activity, social interaction, connection with nature and the natural environment, and enjoyment of the outdoors.

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The Borough has identified the following issues be investigated as part of the 2012 Reexamination Report:

- Conservation Element
 - introduce measures to protect and improve environmentally-sensitive areas
 - Utilization of the Musconetcong Watershed and Highlands Environmental Resource Inventory
- Open Space and Recreation Element
 - examine measures to preserve open space,
 - provide public access to the Musconetcong River-front
 - Examine possibility of creating a park on Borough-owned property along its length.

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AGRICULTURE RETENTION/FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN

The existing Master Plan does not have an Agriculture Retention/Farmland Preservation Plan Element providing detailed information on existing and proposed farmland preservation priorities in the community. It is the intent of the Planning Board to fully develop and adopt such an Element, applicable at minimum to the Highlands Preservation Area. Until such time as that task is complete, the narrative herein shall serve as the Agriculture Retention/Farmland Preservation Plan Element.

A map displaying all agricultural uses or actively farmed lands in the Borough Highlands Preservation Area, current through September 2011, appears at Exhibit G, "All Agricultural Uses" (duplicated from the ERI). In addition, this Plan incorporates Exhibit H, "Important Farmland Soils" (also duplicated from the ERI), Exhibit I, "Agricultural Resource Area," and Exhibit J, "Highlands Agricultural Priority Area." This Plan recognizes and incorporates the definitions, derivations, and delineations used to develop these maps, as provided in the ERI and in all background technical data which derive from: the NJDA, the SADC, the NJDEP, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Highlands RMP and Highlands Council *Sustainable Agriculture Technical Report*.

Preserved Farmland includes farms that are preserved through the SADC Farmland Preservation Program, farms that have final approval from the SADC, and farms under the SADC eight-year easement program. *All Agricultural Uses* includes lands currently serving farming and/or other agricultural purposes, whether permanently deed restricted or not. The map of *Important Farmland Soils* provides a delineation of the four farmland soil classifications as prepared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), NRCS, Soil Survey Geographic Database for farmland soil quality, including:

- a) Prime Farmland Soils - Soils having the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops. It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. Prime farmland soils are not excessively erodible or saturated with water for a long period of time, and they either do not flood frequently or are protected from flooding.
- b) Soils of Statewide Importance – Soils that produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. This soil may support yields as high as Prime farmland if conditions are favorable.
- c) Unique Farmland Soils - Soils used for special crops (such as cranberries in the New Jersey Pinelands). Unique soils are determined on a statewide basis by the State Soil Conservation Committee.
- d) Locally Important Farmland Soils - Soils designated and ranked by the County Agriculture Development Board. Locally Important soils include those soils that are

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not Prime or of Statewide Importance and are used for the production of high value food, fiber, or horticultural crops.

The Agricultural Resource Area consists of those areas of most concentrated and contiguous agricultural uses in the Highlands Preservation Area, using Important Farmland Soils as a critical factor in the delineation. Highlands Agricultural Priority Areas, lastly, are those determined by the Highlands Council, in coordination with the NJDA and SADC, based on an agricultural resource assessment, to have the highest agricultural resource values.

The overriding policy of this Plan is to ensure the long-term sustainability of agricultural resources and the viability of agriculture as a business in the Highlands Preservation Area. Achieving this aim requires maintenance of a healthy agricultural environment with a sufficient agricultural land base. Accordingly, the below-listed goals and objectives will guide the future land use and management of the Borough Agricultural Resource Area.

1. To promote farmland preservation and limit non-agricultural uses within the Agricultural Resource Areas.
2. To apply Highlands Council prioritization criteria in making determinations regarding Agricultural Land Preservation (whether by fee simple, easement dedication, transfer of development rights, or other agricultural land conservation techniques), which are ordered as follows:
 - a. Farmland designated as Agricultural Priority Area, as defined in the Land Preservation and Land Stewardship Plan Element and delineated in Exhibit J; and
 - b. Farmland located within an Agricultural Resource Area, as defined above and delineated in Exhibit I.
3. To limit non-agricultural uses within the Agricultural Resource Area to the extent feasible, to those designed to support the preservation of farmland, avoid conflicts with agriculture, maintain and enhance the sustainability and continued viability of the agricultural industry, protect Important Farmland Soils, and meet the resource management and protection requirements of the Conservation Plan Element.
4. To require that, where preservation of agricultural lands within the Agricultural Resource Area is not feasible, any residential development be permitted only under conservation design parameters, such as cluster development.
 - a. To require that cluster or conservation design development within the Agricultural Resource Area support the preservation of farmland, avoid conflicts with agriculture, maintain and enhance the sustainability and continued viability of the agricultural industry, protect Important Farmland Soils, and meet resource management and protection requirements of the Conservation Plan Element.

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- b. To require that all cluster or conservation design development within the Agricultural Resource Area be buffered appropriately to avoid conflicts between non-agricultural development and agricultural activities, and to protect existing agricultural uses and sensitive environmental resources.
 - c. To require that all land preserved in perpetuity for agricultural purposes as a result of clustering be subject to a conservation easement enforceable by the Highlands Council and at least one of the following: the municipality, the County Agriculture Development Board or the SADC.
 - d. To permit retention of the original farmstead or construction of new farmsteads associated with preserved agricultural lands in cluster developments, wherever feasible.
 - e. To require implementation of best management practices, including development and implementation of a Farm Conservation Plan that addresses the protection of water and soil resources prepared by the USDA NRCS, Technical Service Provider (TSP), appropriate agent or NJDA staff, and approved by the local Soil Conservation District (SCD).
5. To permit family and farm labor housing in the Agricultural Resource Area as appropriate, to support the viability of permitted agricultural operations, subject to compliance with the resource management and protection requirements of the remainder of the Highlands Element.
6. To promote the Right to Farm Act and to incorporate land use regulations that are consistent with and further its intents and purposes.
7. To protect and enhance surface and ground water quality and natural resources within the ARA by promoting the use of Best Management Practices including the use of USDA NRCS and Farm Service Agency cost-share programs.
8. To promote the long-term viability of the local agricultural industry by promoting and utilizing existing county, state, and federal agriculture related programs and developing land use regulations and programs where appropriate, in support of direct marketing, organic farming, niche markets, agri-tourism initiatives such as farmers' markets and roadside stands (located on or off the site of an active farm), ancillary business opportunities, community supported agriculture, and other such projects, programs, or activities.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

The existing Master Plan does not have a Community Facilities Plan Element providing detailed information on all existing community facilities, including but not limited to government offices, fire, police, and rescue squad facilities, parks and playgrounds, educational facilities, libraries, public works facilities and yards, treatment works, storage depots, and so forth. It is the intent of the Planning Board to develop and adopt such an Element, at minimum applicable to community facilities located within the Highlands Preservation Area. It will include a mapped inventory of such facilities, a brief description of each, and applicable goals and objectives including but by no means limited to those listed below.

The overriding policy of this Plan is to ensure that community facilities reflect community needs while minimizing resource impacts and maximizing the efficiency of resource use. Achieving this aim requires attention to the design and location of community facilities. Accordingly, the below-listed goals and objectives will guide community facilities in the Borough Highlands Preservation Area.

1. To locate and maintain community facilities and services that support compact development patterns and shared services, and provide a high level of service.
2. To identify existing and planned community facilities and to encourage shared service opportunities, whether at intra- or inter-municipal levels.
3. To identify for all such facilities, realistic options to enhance energy efficiencies, incorporate “green” building materials and technologies, reduce pollutant emissions, and minimize “carbon footprints;” and to develop a community strategy for implementing them.
4. To consider and incorporate all feasible Low Impact Development techniques in the design, development, operation and management of existing and proposed community facilities. (For description and discussion of LID techniques, see Conservation Plan Element.)
5. To incorporate the goals, objectives and resource protections discussed throughout this Highlands Element into the planning and development of properties and facilities under municipal jurisdiction.

The Borough also intends to examine the adequacy of the Borough’s space and facilities for administration (“Borough Hall”). While no alternatives are currently available at this time, the Borough should identify future needs in the event of future possibilities to address current deficiencies arise.

In addition the Borough remains vigilant to the potential for school facilities to become overcrowded and will investigate any future possibilities for school facilities if the need arises.

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A sustainable economy is important to the well-being of the Borough and the wider economic region of which it is a part. It is the intent of the Planning Board to examine this issue and to prepare an economic development plan for future adoption, which will set forth strategies for strengthening the local economy and/or the municipal contribution toward the wider economy to which it belongs.

The goals and objectives of the Sustainable Economic Development Plan in addition include, but are not limited to:

1. To develop appropriate strategies to improve the local tax base and create jobs and economic opportunities, while remaining consistent with the other policies and objectives of the Highlands Element.
2. To ensure opportunities for home office, entrepreneurial and other small business activities, as appropriate.
3. To identify appropriate opportunities for development and/or redevelopment, including possible brownfield redevelopment that may further the goal of economic sustainability.
4. To encourage development of small business incubator programs, particularly those focused on advancing specific goals and objectives of the Highlands Element, such as initiatives in compact design, native species landscaping, Low Impact Development, energy efficiency and resource conservation.
5. To coordinate with the Highlands Council and other applicable state and/or county agencies to develop or participate in eco-, agri-, and/or heritage tourism programs, as appropriate.

As mentioned previously, the Borough remains eager to revitalize non-residential uses. The Borough will investigate the potential for redevelopment as an ongoing process to increase the tax base while maintaining the Borough's character and conform to the Highlands Regional Master Plan.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

The existing Master Plan does not have an Historic Preservation Plan Element setting forth the applicable goals and objectives, criteria for historic designation, and specific properties of historic interest in the community. It is the intent of the Planning Board to fully develop and adopt such an Element, applicable at minimum to the Highlands Preservation Area. Until such time as that task is complete, the narrative herein shall serve as the Historic Preservation Plan Element.

A. HISTORIC, CULTURAL, AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The Borough survey of historic sites appears as a map within the ERI, which is duplicated herein at Exhibit K, "Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological Resource Inventory." The specific list of affected properties and a brief discussion pertaining to each is provided below. The list comes directly from the Highlands Region Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological Resources Inventory (as of June 2011), which includes: 1) all properties listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places; 2) all properties which have been deemed eligible for listing on the State or National Register; and 3) all properties for which a formal State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) opinion has been issued.

This Plan recognizes that the historic, cultural and archaeological resources of the Highlands Preservation Area form an essential component of its character and aesthetic quality. They preserve a part of the history of the Borough Highlands Preservation Area and provide a link to its past. They remind us of significant people, places and events in our history and they provide vital information about what life was like in this community in earlier times. The Borough of Bloomsbury affirms the need to preserve such resources and has identified the need to prepare a Historic Preservation Plan Element

Accordingly, the below-listed goals and objectives shall apply to the Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological resources in the Highlands Area.

1. To examine the character and qualities of the community's Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological resources to gain further understanding of the extent of their contributions to the aesthetics, character, economic vitality, and sense of place of the community.
2. To consider the educational value of the community's Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological resources and encourage opportunities to celebrate and share information about the community's heritage.
3. To consider the character and qualities of the community's Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological resources in any development application that may affect them, whether directly or indirectly.

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4. To examine the potential for development and adoption of regulatory provisions that are protective of the Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological resources of the community.
5. To consider the character and qualities of the community's Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological resources in future development of the Land Use Plan, Community Facilities Plan, Circulation Plan, and all other aspects of the Highlands Element.

The following sites, districts and properties are listed in the Highlands Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological Resources Inventory:

- a) County Route 579 Bridge (SHPO ID#3775);
- b) Central Railroad of New Jersey Mainline Corridor Historic District (SHPO ID#3500);
- c) Alfred Gray and Julia Junkin (Smith) Creveling House (SHPO ID#5020);
- d) James and Anna (Smith) Creveling House (SHPO ID#5021);
- e) Lehigh Valley Railroad Historic District (SHPO ID#4154); and
- f) Milford Road Bridge over Lehigh Valley Railroad (SHPO ID#3776).

RELATIONSHIP OF MASTER PLAN TO STATE/REGIONAL/LOCAL PLANS

By adoption of this Highlands Element, the Borough Master Plan is brought into alignment with the Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP). The Highlands Element incorporates all of the policies, goals, and objectives of the Highlands RMP that are relevant to the use and development of land in the Borough Highlands Preservation Area. The Highlands Element calls for the development and adoption of various land use regulations and specific environmental management plans, which together will effectuate its vision and in so doing, advance the intents and purposes of the Highlands RMP.

The Highlands Act provides that any portion of a municipality located in the Highlands Preservation Area is exempt from the State Planning Commission (SPC) Plan Endorsement process. It provides further that once the RMP has attained Plan Endorsement from the SPC for the Planning Area, Highlands Council approval of Plan Conformance with respect to lands in the Planning Area shall be deemed the equivalent of Plan Endorsement.

By aligning the municipal Master Plan with the Highlands RMP, its consistency with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) is achieved. A map depicting the municipality's SDRP Planning Areas appears at Exhibit L. The Highlands Element furthers SDRP policies, goals, and objectives in many ways, not least of which are the following:

1. Seeking to protect, preserve, restore, and enhance the natural resources of the Highlands Preservation Area;
2. Encouraging the use of smart growth principles in locations of the Area deemed appropriate for development and/or redevelopment;
3. Protecting historic, cultural and aesthetic resources;
4. Encouraging a sustainable local economy;
5. Protecting agricultural resources, supporting local agricultural businesses, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices;
6. Preserving open space and providing for an array of active and passive recreational opportunities; and
7. Ensuring a viable and well-integrated transportation network that incorporates and encourages multi-modal options and efficiency of land use.

The Highlands Element modifies the relationship of the Borough development plan to those of the county and contiguous municipalities insofar as it affects the intents for land use and development within the Borough Highlands Preservation Area. Given that the Highlands Element introduces a substantial number of new constraints to development based on environmental resources and carrying capacities, it is anticipated that the future impacts from development of the Highlands Preservation Area will be reduced from previous trends. A complete understanding will not exist however, until further analysis is undertaken to determine the full impacts of conformance with the RMP on the municipal

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Land Use Plan. An important component of that analysis will be in regard to watershed-based planning. To the extent that the Borough shares a HUC14 subwatershed with other municipal and/or county entities, a cooperative planning effort involving all parties will be vital to ensuring sound use and management of the available water resources. It will also be important to understand which, if any, of the adjoining municipalities and/or the county conform to the Highlands RMP and for what portions of their land areas. The land uses, the permitted densities and intensities of development, and the locations and extent of anticipated growth in neighboring Highlands communities that are also pursuing conformance with the RMP are all subject to change. Until information is available concerning such decision-making, a comparison between these master plans will not be meaningful. Further discussion of these aspects will therefore be provided in the next amendment to the Master Plan.

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ACRONYMS

CADB	County Agriculture Development Board
ERI	Environmental Resources Inventory
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
HAD	Highlands Applicability Determination
HDC	Highlands Development Credit
HPAA	Highlands Preservation Area Approval
MLUL	Municipal Land Use Law (of the State of New Jersey)
NJDA	New Jersey Department of Agriculture
NJAC	New Jersey Administrative Code
NJDEP	New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
NJDOT	New Jersey Department of Transportation
NJSA	New Jersey Statutes Annotated
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
RMP	Regional Master Plan (of the New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council)
ROSI	Recreation and Open Space Inventory
SADC	State Agriculture Development Committee
SCD	Soil Conservation District
SDRP	State Development and Redevelopment Plan
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SPC	State Planning Commission
TDR	Transfer of Development Rights
TSP	Technical Service Provider
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

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EXHIBITS

- A.** Borough Highlands Preservation Area
- B.** Highlands Contaminated Sites Inventory
- C.** Highlands Roadway Network
- D.** Highlands Transit Network
- E.** Preserved Lands
- F.** Highlands Conservation Priority Areas
- G.** Preserved Farms, SADC Easements, All Agricultural Uses
- H.** Important Farmland Soils
- I.** Agricultural Resource Area
- J.** Agricultural Priority Area
- K.** Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological Resource Inventory
- L.** SDRP Planning Areas