

ADOPTED
MASTER PLAN
REEXAMINATION REPORT

TOWN OF HACKETTSTOWN, NEW JERSEY

JANUARY 2008

Prepared by the Master Plan Reexamination Subcommittee:

Joseph Bristow
Al Camporini
Gerald Di Maio, Jr.
Robert Moore
Thomas Thorp, Esq.

Assisted by:

Maser Consulting, P.A.

The original of this report was signed and sealed by



John Madden, P.P.
New Jersey Licensed Planner #1452
MC Project No. HKL-019

INTRODUCTION TO THE 2007 HACKETTSTOWN MASTER PLAN
REEXAMINATION REPORT

When the Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. C.40:55D-1 et seq.) was adopted in August 1976, the enabling legislation, which governed municipal planning and zoning in all New Jersey Municipalities, was completely revised. Once of the major changes was a provision that required the reexamination of master plans and development regulations every six years pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. C.40:55D-89. The reexamination report is to be prepared by the Planning Board for the governing body. The most recent amendments to N.J.S.A. C.40:55D-89 now require five elements in the reexamination report, as follows:

- a. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.
- b. The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.
- c. The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last reviewed with particular regard to density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives.
- d. The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.
- e. The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law," P.L. 1992, C.79(C.40A:12A-1 et al.) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommended changes if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

The prior Hackettstown Master Plan Reexamination Report was adopted in 2001. The Master Plan Reexamination Subcommittee of the Planning Board began its work on the Reexamination Report in the Fall of 2006 focusing on land use plan changes and amendments to development regulations. The Hackettstown Master Plan Reexamination Report recommends specific amendments to both the Master Plan and Zoning and Site Plan ordinances. An amended Zoning Ordinance text and zoning map may be part of, or a follow-up action to this Reexamination Report. According to N.J.S.40:55D-62-1 and 40:55D63, the statutory requirement for the giving of personal notice within a district of zoning ordinance amendment proposing a change to the classification or boundaries of a zoning district is not applicable to changes made as a result of a Master Plan Reexamination recommendation. Finally, the Hackettstown Master Plan Reexamination Report presents the statutory elements in an easy-to-follow formal concentrating analysis and recommendations on one or two consecutive pages.

HACKETTSTOWN MASTER PLAN RE-EXAMINATION REPORT 2007

<p>A. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last re-examination report.</p>	<p>B. The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.</p>	<p>C. The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies forming the basis for the Master Plan and development regulations as last revised.</p>	<p>D. The specific changes recommended for the Master Plan or development, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.</p>
<p><u>1A. Preservation and Revitalization of Main Street.</u></p> <p>The preservation and revitalization of the Main Street area is a continuing long-term goal. Many objectives to achieve this goal have been achieved. In 2001 the establishment of a special improvement district for the downtown area appeared to be warranted. The All Aboard for Hackettstown program which is affiliated with the Main Street, New Jersey program and funded in part by the Hackettstown Town Council is, in many respects, similar to a Special Improvement District. The program has the goal of enhancing the downtown area and has extended loans to property owners and lent design assistance that has resulted in improvements to commercial structures in the downtown area.</p> <p>The needs of the downtown area should be studied with input from All Aboard for Hackettstown and the Chamber of Commerce. Whether or not portions of the downtown qualify as an area in need of redevelopment should be investigated. The feasibility of placing utilities underground in the downtown area should be explored including the availability of grants to fund such an undertaking. Design standards should be established for downtown architecture and specific ordinance requirements adopted including the creation of a design review committee. The design standards should focus on preservation of existing structures and ensuring design compatibility of new structures and renovations with what already exists. Standards should be sensitive to cost concerns of property owners.</p>	<p><u>1B. Preservation and Revitalization of Main Street</u></p> <p>Preservation and Revitalization of Main Street still is a very active consideration in Hackettstown. Since 2001 efforts to revitalize the downtown area have intensified. A Business Improvement District (BID) was established and is currently operating. Since the BID was established recently, it is too soon to judge its success.</p> <p>The continued revitalization of the downtown area and the best way to proceed requires input from BID and the Chamber of Commerce. A particular concern relates to the appearance of the downtown area and the feasibility of establishing architectural standards.</p> <p>Since 2001 the Bergen Tool property has become available for redevelopment. There have been active discussions of how the property can be redeveloped since at least 2003. The ultimate redevelopment of this property will have important implications for the entirety of the downtown area. There must be a concerted effort between the Town and the developer to come up with a plan that is advantageous to all concerned. There will be more discussion on this topic in Section 1D of this report.</p>	<p><u>1C. Preservation and Revitalization of Main Street</u></p> <p>The Highlands Regional Plan and its implementing regulations will impose substantial development constraints on the Preservation Area surrounding Hackettstown. This restriction will stimulate market interest in redevelopment in Hackettstown, particularly on Main Street, one of the few downtown centers serving this section of the Highlands.</p> <p>Since 2001 Bergen Tool property has become available for redevelopment. There have been active discussions of how the property can be redeveloped since at least 2003. The ultimate redevelopment of this property will have important implications tirety of the downtown area.</p>	<p><u>1D. Preservation and Revitalization of Main Street</u></p> <p>Main Street is one of the few land resources available to this 3.6 square mile municipality to accommodate non-residential employment opportunities and tax ratables. As a center for regional health and educational facilities, civil and governmental services, and religious institutions, twenty-five percent of Hackettstown's land area is devoted to public and quasi-public uses. This is one of the reasons this community suffers under a substantial property tax burden. In a 2006 Star Ledger analysis of New Jersey's municipalities which compared the average tax bills with the housing market values and homeowner income to determine which New Jersey towns suffer the worst tax stress, Hackettstown was shown to be among the most severely stressed municipalities according to the study's tax trauma index. The municipality needs to do more to help revitalize Main Street so it can become a stronger economic engine for the whole community.</p> <p>One way to allow Main Street to help itself become more vigorous is for the municipality to investigate the potential of an Urban Enterprise Zone (UEZ) designation for Main Street. The UEZ, a state sanctioned program in place in 30 NJ municipalities, is aimed at revitalizing older downtowns through the use of a downtown's sales tax receipts over a twenty year period.</p> <p>The main benefit of the program is the availability of retailers to charge one half or 3.5 percent of the applicable NJ sales tax (currently 7%) to consumers of most retail goods to which the tax applies. Exceptions are liquor, cigarettes and conventional automobiles. The program not only benefits retailers by attracting consumers but also benefits the Town directly. The funds raised by the 3.5% sales tax collected by the merchants would remain in Hackettstown for future investments in the Town's Urban Enterprise Zone. These investments are flexible as to their use but usually involve the creation of improved infrastructure.</p> <p>Qualified businesses in the UEZs are eligible for tax incentives, reduced unemployment insurance, business counseling and marketing support. Certified UEZ retailers collect just 3.5 percent sales tax – half of the normal sales tax – a hugely attractive incentive that may be displayed in their establishments and incorporated into their advertising.</p> <p>Funds resulting from the sales-tax collection in these areas are reinvested in business development programs and are also used for capital investments in municipal services such as CCTV for street security, helping to purchase new police vehicles, "clean-and-green" initiatives (weekend sanitation services and planters in commercial districts) and façade improvements, all of which help revitalize the Town's core business area.</p>

			<p>Qualified UEZ businesses may be entitled to tax-free purchases of goods for their businesses that will be used at their businesses. These include purchasing items for "tangible personal property" (such as office supplies, office and business equipment, office and store furnishings, trade fixtures, cash registers and the like, with the exception of motor vehicles) and services for the installation, maintenance and repair of personal and real property used in the businesses. Area utility companies (gas, electric and water) will also adopt special tariffs and credits as incentives for expansion of UEZ businesses.</p> <p>UEZ qualified businesses may also be eligible to purchase building materials tax-free. These materials are to be used exclusively to erect new structures or to improve, alter or repair the real property of qualified business entities.</p> <p>UEZ funds could be used to implement a façade improvement program using historic photographs to renovate the look of Main Street to its original appearance. In addition, UEZ funds in combination with a grant from the NJ Department of Transportation can be used to plan and implement streetscape upgrades for Main Street which could include burying overhead utility lines.</p> <p>The 10+ acre Bergen Tool site on Main Street presents an opportunity to bring new life to Main Street. One potential scenario could be a mixed use redevelopment project incorporating retail goods and services and housing for non-family households on the front section of the site which could bring more people to reanimate Main Street and populate the streets. An illustrative example of how this site might be planned could include retail uses on the first floor of a mid-rise building with one and two-bedroom apartments, housing built for non-family households atop retail shops and restaurants and the Bergen Tool building fronting on Main Street restored to house an arts and craft center. All of these uses could enclose a plaza which could be a much needed public meeting place on Main Street. Open space funding from State and County sources should be pursued toward acquiring the current open space on the Bergen Tool property conditioned on full site remediation of any brownfield conditions. If open space funding is not forthcoming within a reasonable time period, an alternative redevelopment design solution should be implemented clustering development on the portion of the site fronting on Main Street and leaving between 3 and 4.5 acres in the rear for a recreational use to be determined later.</p> <p>It is recommended that the Planning Board prepare a concept plan for the most appropriate reuse of the Bergen Tool site establishing through fiscal impact and marketing analyses the most appropriate mix of development activities. This Concept Plan will address the amount of open space that shall be incorporated into a redevelopment of the property for a mixed use development.</p> <p>For example a redevelopment plan could be devised to allow a developer to pay for infrastructure and public costs such as affordable housing and a public arts and craft center through a tax increment financing arrangement. The public plaza could be paid for using a State Green Acres grant and Warren County open space tax funds in a pilot project similar to the kind of projects Somerset County funds for its older built-up municipalities.</p>
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<p><u>2A. Historic District issues and concerns.</u></p> <p>Issues and concerns related to requirements of the Historic District were still prevalent in 2001 as they were in 1994, the date of the prior Reexamination Report. The applications to expand St. Mary’s School and St. James Episcopal Church brought a focus to historic preservation issues in the Town.</p> <p>An opinion had been expressed by some that Main Street should be removed from the Historic District to expedite improvements by removing a layer of review (Historic Preservation Commission review). However, there are other strong opinions that Main Street should remain in the Historic District. In the 2001 Reexamination Report it was reaffirmed that Main Street should remain in the Historic District.</p> <p>It was recommended in 2001 that an updated historic resources inventory be prepared for the entire Town. Also that the Morris Canal be recognized as an historic resource. Another recommendation was that more “teeth” be put into the historic preservation ordinance.</p>	<p><u>2B. Historic District Issues and Concerns</u></p> <p>Over the last six years there have been major developments that had historic district implications, most notably St. Mary’s School expansion on High Street and the expansion of St. James Episcopal Church on Washington Avenue. Since those two applications were heard things have been relatively quiet in the historic district.</p> <p>Although the 2001 Reexamination Report recommended an updated historic resources inventory be prepared for the entire Town, one has never been commissioned. Also the historic preservation ordinance has not been revised as recommended in 2001.</p>	<p><u>2C. Historic District Issues and Concerns</u></p> <p>The implicit cost of implementing the historic district requirements has generated opposition to the locally-based, advisory historic district ordinance, particularly from Main Street property owners.</p>	<p><u>2D. Historic District Issues and Concerns</u></p> <p>To ease the financial concerns of property owners and to stimulate renovations that are attractive and compatible with a desired historical appearance but do not entail costly replications, the Town should consider the preparation of an architectural plan that provides a basic set of architectural guidelines of inexpensive but visually harmonious building improvement ideas like using paint to mask or replace missing building features.</p> <p>The 1988 Historic Resource Inventory should be updated when State or County funds, possibly through the Warren County Historic Conservancy, are made available to prepare this study.</p>

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<p><u>3A. R12.5/Office zone</u></p> <p>In 2001 it had become apparent that there was little, if any, demand for office conversions in the R12.5 Office Zone on Water Street. On the other hand there was an expression of interest in extending the R12.5 Office Zone further west along Grand Avenue. The Water Street area was rezoned to R12.5 Office Zone to encourage revitalization of residential structures. However, revitalization had occurred without the added incentive of office use. Therefore the Water Street area was rezoned back to R12.5 Residential. A recommendation of the 2001 Reexamination Report was that the R12.5/Office Zone should not be expanded on Grand Avenue.</p>	<p><u>3B. R 12.5/ Office Zone</u></p> <p>Since 2001 there have been no changes with regard to expanding the R 12.5 office zone further west on Grand Avenue and there have been no requests to create office uses in this area. This appears to be a dormant issue at this time.</p>	<p><u>3C. R 12.5/ Office Zone</u></p> <p>There have been no significant changes in the assumptions and policies expressed for the R12-5/office zone.</p>	<p><u>3D. R 12.5 /Office Zone</u></p> <p>No changes are recommended for the R12-5/office zone.</p>
<p><u>4A. Traffic control and street widening on Mountain Avenue.</u></p> <p>This problem had been reduced in the years prior to 2001 as new development had occurred which involved the dedication of right-of-way and monetary contributions for roadway widening and traffic signal improvements on Mountain Avenue and East Avenue (Rite Aid, Eckerd and Van Paftinos). Further widening and signalization improvements have occurred since 2001 with the approval and construction of Lowes.</p>	<p><u>4B. Traffic Control and Street Widening on Mountain Avenue.</u> The widening of Mountain Avenue associated with the completion of Lowes, the relocation of the Lowes entrance opposite Shelley Drive with a new signalized intersection, and recent widening work on Mountain Avenue between the Lowes and East Avenue have resulted in traffic flow improvements on Mountain Avenue. Further widening or improvement to Mountain Avenue is probably not feasible given right-of-way limitations and development patterns on Mountain Avenue. Some adjustments to the East Avenue signal to provide a lead left onto East Avenue from southbound Mountain Avenue and a restriping of the shoulder of Mountain Avenue south of the Lowes are being pursued by the Town with the NJDOT to further improve traffic flow.</p>	<p><u>4C. Traffic Control and Street Widening on Mountain Avenue.</u></p> <p>Making left turn movements on Mountain Avenue continues to be a concern with the increase of through and destination local traffic on this major regional road. The Town has requested NJDOT approval and funding to have a lead left to provide a gap for motorists to make a turn onto East Avenue from southbound Mountain Avenue.</p>	<p><u>4D. Traffic Control and Street Widening on Mountain Avenue.</u></p> <p>The proposal to create a service road on the west side of Mountain Avenue within Block 127 to facilitate left turn movements at the Shelley Drive traffic signal should be explored. A special assessment district should be created to implement this service road project. Property owners should be surveyed to determine if this project would be supported.</p> <p>As part of circulation studies on Mountain Avenue, an evaluation should be toward the goal of lowering its speed limit.</p>

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<p><u>5A. Protection of residential neighborhoods by buffering them from adjoining inconsistent land uses.</u></p> <p>Protection of residential neighborhoods from incompatible land uses was an ongoing concern in 2001. It was felt that the identity of the Town as a whole, and the integrity of the individual residential neighborhood areas should be preserved, enhanced, and protected via buffering from inconsistent adjoining land uses such as retail commercial and industrial activities. This concern extended to the expansion program of Centenary College and its potential impact on surrounding residential areas.</p>	<p><u>5B. Protection of Residential Neighborhoods by Buffering them from Adjoining Inconsistent Land Uses.</u> Both the Planning Board and Zoning Board are always cognizant of the need to buffer residential neighborhoods from adjoining inconsistent land uses. The buffers required in the current ordinances for commercial and industrial uses have generally been satisfactory. One exception has been the buffer adjacent to the roller rink on Route 57 along the HC/R-12.5 zone boundary. This use, which is a commercial recreation use, has been problematic and the Town has been considering changes to the LDO to increase setbacks and/or buffers for commercial recreation uses where said uses are permitted.</p>	<p><u>5C. Protection of Residential Neighborhoods by Buffering them from Adjoining Inconsistent Land Uses.</u></p> <p>The issue of reducing the impacts of commercial and industrial activities on adjoining residential properties continues to be an issue.</p>	<p><u>5D. Protection of Residential Neighborhoods by Buffering them from Adjoining Inconsistent Land Uses.</u></p> <p>The strict enforcement of buffers and setback requirements for non-residential properties is a strongly held land use policy of the Town's planning and zoning boards. Town officials should explore the need to impose prohibitions on outdoor speakers and enforcement of noise abatement regulations, the imposition of hours of operation limitations and other measures to control the effects of non-residential activities situated in residential settings.</p> <p>The zoning ordinance should be reviewed to consider if greater setback distance or acoustical materials should be required where uses in the CC and HC districts abut residential districts.</p>
<p><u>6A. Conservation of Natural Resources</u></p> <p>Even though the Town was largely developed there was concern in 2001 that special attention needed to be paid to those remaining areas that were as yet undeveloped and the natural resources and environmental constraints that existed on the vacant parcels.</p>	<p><u>6B. Conservation of Natural Resources</u> Since the last Reexamination Report, plans have been submitted for two of the largest remaining vacant parcels in the Town. Hunters Brook, proposed by K. Hovnanian was approved and natural resources were protected to the extent allowable under the zoning ordinance and Municipal Land Use Law. In particular, steep slopes adjacent to the Musconetcong River were protected by prohibiting development in this area and by dedicating open space along the river. The ability to preserve natural areas on the former Trout Brook Estates property was enhanced by the State declaring Trout Brook to be a C-1 water body thereby requiring a 300 foot buffer and through ordinance amendments adopted by the Town to permit age restricted housing on the site.</p> <p>In addition to the Hunters Brook and Trout Brook tracts, the Town was successful in acquiring easement rights along the Musconetcong River in connection with the redevelopment of the Hackettstown Mall and BAS properties along Mountain Avenue. Conservation easements were procured to protect the river and allow public access for the enjoyment of residents.</p>	<p><u>6C. Conservation of Natural Resources</u></p> <p>The Highlands Regional Master Plan, in draft form as of the preparation of the Re-examination report, proposes a number of policies aimed at preserving the quality and quantity of groundwater and surface water in this region. Toward that end, it proposes that the remaining large tracts of undeveloped land in Hackettstown be placed in a Conservation Zone where, unlike the Planned Community Zone which encompasses most of the Town's area, development would be permitted but limited in extent. Although compliance with the Highlands Plan is not mandatory for Hackettstown, eventually conservation zone policies may be enforced through the permitting regulations of the Department of Environmental Protection.</p>	<p><u>6D. Conservation of Natural Resources</u></p> <p>The Town should evaluate whether or not certain properties with high presentation value should be recommended for acquisition, either wholly or partially, using grant monies under the direction of the Highlands Council and whether existing land development ordinances should be revised to be consistent with Highlands regulations.</p> <p>The Town should support the proposed open space acquisition by the State of the Trout-Brook Estates property, an environmentally constrained site which is proposed as a protection zone site in the Highlands plan.</p>

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<p><u>7A. Preservation of Open Space Areas.</u></p> <p>A major objective expressed in 2001 was the preservation of additional open space wherever and whenever possible. At the time the Town was moving forward with the acquisition of the Spina Tract and had just received funding from the Warren County Open Space Trust Fund. It was noted that Greenways along the Morris Canal and Musconetcong River should also be explored as well as a linkage between the two. Better use should be made of existing open space such as that associated with Brook Hollow Estates by identifying points of public access. The need for more athletic fields was also identified as an area to be investigated.</p>	<p><u>7B. Preservation of Open Space Areas.</u></p> <p>Over the last six years, the Town has acquired and developed the Spina Tract for recreational purposes walking trails and open space preservation. There has been no action taken in other areas such as studying the feasibility of Greenways along the Morris Canal and Musconetcong River or investigating the need for more athletic fields.</p> <p>Although the development of the Spina tract has increased the number of playing fields and other recreational facilities, there is still pressure on the Town's facilities and the Town needs to continue its search for additional property for recreational development if same should become available in the future.</p>	<p><u>7C. Preservation of Open Space Areas.</u></p> <p>The Highlands Regional Master Plan, now in draft form, proposes that key historical and natural features like the Morris Canal and the Musconetcong River be preserved undisturbed either through acquisition or development buffer regulations.</p>	<p><u>7D. Preservation of Open Space Areas.</u></p> <p>Town officials should strongly support the preservation by the Highlands Regional Council of the Morris Canal, the Musconetcong River corridor and the Fish Hatchery since these features form a greenbelt completely around the Town.</p> <p>Preservation of large open space tracts by any governmental level should also include developable land capable of accommodating an active outdoor recreation use.</p>
<p><u>8A. Development of Non-Residential Lands Should be Controlled with Respect to Pollution.</u></p> <p>The primary concerns in 2001 with respect to pollution on non-residential lands related to development in the LM – Limited Manufacturing Zone. The permitted uses in this zone district excludes those uses which produce noticeable noise, vibrations, smoke, dust, odors, heat or glare outside of enclosed buildings. Each site plan application is reviewed with respect to these items to ensure compliance.</p>	<p><u>8B. Development of Non-Residential Lands Should be Controlled with Respect to Pollution.</u></p> <p>This is no longer a major concern. Development in the LM Zone has been limited to low impact, non-polluting uses.</p>	<p><u>8C. Development of Non-Residential Lands Should be Controlled with Respect to Pollution.</u></p> <p>Manufacturing of the type that generates exterior pollution is almost completely gone from the Town. The major source of air pollution in the Town is from traffic congestion, whose solutions lie with road improvements or an automotive transformation such as electric cars.</p>	<p><u>8D. Development of Non-Residential Lands Should be Controlled with Respect to Pollution.</u></p> <p>No changes in local ordinances to deal with this issue are recommended.</p>

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<p><u>9A. Future Residential Development in Vacant Areas Should Contain Sufficient Open Space.</u></p> <p>Existing zoning regulations require open space dedication in those zoning districts which account for the majority of the vacant areas in the Town. This includes the areas where single family residential clusters and planned residential developments are permitted optional development alternatives. Between 1994 and 2001 Brook Hollow Estates had been approved as a planned residential development with a mandatory 30% open space set aside.</p>	<p><u>9B. Future Residential Development in Vacant Areas Should Contain Sufficient Open Space.</u></p> <p>Similar to Brook Hollow Estates, Hunters Brook has been approved as a planned residential development with a 30% open space set aside.</p>	<p><u>9C. Future Residential Development in Vacant Areas Should Contain Sufficient Open Space.</u></p> <p>See comments 6C and 7C.</p>	<p><u>9D. Future Residential Development in Vacant Areas Should Contain Sufficient Open Space.</u></p> <p>See comments 6D and 7D.</p>
<p><u>10A. Development Plan should promote new development and redevelopment of non-residential uses.</u></p> <p>It was noted in 2001 that this objective had been reduced in the years between 1994 and 2001. Due to the strong economy, there was much new development and redevelopment of non-residential uses. Recent projects noted in 2001 that fall into this category include Boston Market, McDonald's, Quick Chek, Rite Aid, Eckerd, DiFiglia, Hackettstown Regional Medical Center and associated medical offices, Mama's Pizzeria, Skyland Orthopedics, Van Paftinos Shopping Center, Dr. Sandhu, Piemontesi Body Shop, 216 Stiger Street, Cunningham, and the P & D Realty Shopping Center and Garden State Asphalt facility.</p>	<p><u>10B. Development Plan should Promote New Development and The Development of Non-Residential Uses.</u></p> <p>New development and redevelopment has continued to be strong since the last Reexamination Report. The most significant redevelopment which has occurred was the replacement of the Hackettstown Mall with a Lowes, Applebees and Wendys. Plans have also been approved to redevelop the so called "abandoned mall" site which was an eyesore on Mountain Avenue for many years.</p> <p>In addition to development/redevelopment activities on Mountain Avenue, Hackettstown Community Hospital underwent a major expansion, Centenary College built a technology center and two residence halls and is currently reconstructing its gymnasium, and the Compac Corporation relocated its corporate facilities to Bilby Road in the Town from Morris County.</p>	<p><u>10C. Development Plan should Promote New Development and The Development of Non-Residential Uses.</u></p> <p>See Comment 1C regarding Main Street.</p> <p>The recent surge in development has brought with it unwanted side effects in the form of increased traffic, impacts to established residential areas and the loss of open space. The ability to reduce traffic impacts in Town by the construction of a bypass road has been eliminated by Highlands Regional Council and NJDEP policies.</p>	<p><u>10D. Development Plan should Promote New Development and The Development of Non-Residential Uses.</u></p> <p>The Town will have to wrestle with the benefits and side effects of new development pressures as one of the few places in the vast Highlands region available for growth with infrastructure, a solid balanced land use base and range of existing services.</p> <p>Pressure will be on the Town in the future to permit through redevelopment the intensification of building along Main Street and Mountain Avenue corridors in the form of increased density, coverage and the use of structured parking. The benefits of this future development market will be the opportunity to generate greater tax revenue sources to offset the Town's limited land area base for hosting tax-generating activities.</p> <p>One of the side effects of new development will be the need to deal with the Third Round affordable housing regulations of the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH).</p> <p>As of December 2004, COAH has revamped its rules with a "growth share" approach to implement affordable housing. Unlike its methodologies in the 1st and 2nd rounds when COAH allocated to each municipality a specific obligation for new and indigenous affordable</p>

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	<p>While some of the development that has occurred over the past six (6) years has been positive for the community, there have been impacts including increased traffic, increased water usage and wastewater generation, etc. In addition, the more recent development is now triggering the need for affordable housing construction in the Town pursuant to COAH's third round requirements.</p>		<p>housing units, the third round rules will directly relate the requirement to provide affordable housing to actual economic development of new market-priced residential and non-residential uses. The third round rules will result in Hackettstown being required to provide for both rehabilitation of existing housing and new low and moderate cost units whenever new growth or redevelopment occurs.</p> <p>As of December 2004, COAH has revamped its rules with a “growth share” approach to implement affordable housing. Unlike its methodologies in the 1st and 2nd rounds when COAH allocated to each municipality a specific obligation for new and indigenous affordable housing units, the third round rules will directly relate the requirement to provide affordable housing to actual economic development of new market-priced residential uses. The third round rules will result in Hackettstown being required to provide for both rehabilitation of existing housing and new low and moderate cost units whenever new growth or redevelopment occurs.</p> <p>There are three components to COAH’s third round Methodology: the rehabilitation share, and remaining Prior Round obligation for the period 1987-1999, and the “growth share”. Growth share is generated by residential and non-residential growth in the municipality during the period from 1999 through 2014 units, and delivered from January 1, 2014 through January 1, 2014. As a result for every eight market-rate residential units constructed, the municipality shall be obligated to provide one unit that is affordable to households of low or moderate income. Job creation carries a responsibility to provide housing as well. For every 25 newly created jobs as measured by new or expanded non-residential construction within the municipality, the municipality shall be obligated to provide one unit that is affordable to households of low and moderate income. This method tightens the working definition of “realistic opportunity” to meet the constitutional obligation with not merely a good faith attempt, but with the actual provision of housing for low and moderate income households.</p> <p>The Third Round rules have determined each municipality’s rehabilitation obligation based on the new Census. Hackettstown was allocated a rehabilitation (indigenous) housing share of 53. As for Hackettstown’s</p>

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			<p>future obligation for new low and moderate income housing units, it is dependent on the extent of new development of vacant sites or redevelopment of currently built on properties.</p> <p>The Third Round regulations were voided by an Appellate Court decision in January 2007. The Court gave the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) six months to amend their rules. COAH has subsequently appealed this ruling to the New Jersey Supreme Court and was allowed an extension to January 2008 to produce revised Third Round regulations. One area of the COAH rules the Town is watching with interest is the future treatment of the non-residential growth share requirement which imposes a burden on non-residential projects not involved with housing or receiving any development benefit to subsidize this new expense. To somewhat ease this burden and generate actual affordable housing opportunities within the community, it is recommended that the Town amend its non-residential growth share requirement giving double credit for the creation of a 2-bedroom rental affordable unit and triple credit for the creation of a 3-bedroom rental affordable unit. Since the Town will get double credit for 75 percent of all affordable rental units created in the Town, this relaxation of the obligation for non-residential uses will be a more equitable solution to this State-imposed mandate on non-residential uses that poses minimal risk to the Town.</p>

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<p><u>11A. Traffic Circulation Issues</u></p> <p>The traffic circulation difficulties experienced within and around the Town Center should be addressed and resolved in a manner which:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Preserves the historic qualities and attributes of the Town Center; Coordinates local plans for traffic circulation improvements with those of Warren County and the State of New Jersey; Provides, whenever possible, off-street parking facilities for the commercial activities along Main Street in order to lessen congestion along the roadway and add to the convenience of shoppers; and Limits and controls driveway access to the major roadways in the town by encouraging adjacent landowners to cooperatively share access points to the roadways whenever possible. <p>At the time of the 2001 Reexamination Report it was noted that Warren County commissioned a study for a Hackettstown Bypass, with the intent of diverting traffic from Mountain Avenue and East Avenue and a portion of Route 46. Based on the evaluation of alternatives in the Bypass Study, it was clear that an alternative which features construction of a bypass from Route 57 to Route 46, roughly paralleling East Avenue provides superior traffic service to the region. It was concluded that the bypass alignment was preferable to improvement of East Avenue itself for a number of reasons. However, during the community</p>	<p><u>11B. Traffic Circulation Issues</u></p> <p>The traffic circulation issues expressed in the 2001 Reexamination Report relative to the Mountain Avenue bypass are still valid. As indicated previously, improvements were constructed on Mountain Avenue in connection with the redevelopment of the Hackettstown Mall to improve traffic flow.</p>	<p><u>11C. Traffic Circulation Issues</u></p> <p>Traffic at this regional crossroads has increased since the last Master Plan Re-examination with the construction of major commercial centers in Hackettstown and neighboring Mansfield Township.</p> <p>The Highlands Regional Plan policies will effectively eliminate the ability to implement most of the proposed road improvements involving a route around the periphery of the Town.</p>	<p><u>11D. Traffic Circulation Issues</u></p> <p>Traffic circulation polices recommended in the last Re-examination report should be retained.</p> <p>Future circulation plans should focus on funding projects to upgrade existing roads and improvement of the State Highways in Town.</p> <p>Pedestrian improvement proposed in the recent NJTPA walkability study should be considered as part of plans to improve Main Street.</p> <p>The Town should consider moving forward with the traffic signal need study at the Washington Street and Grand Avenue intersection to facilitate State funding support of this signal.</p>

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<p>involvement phase of the study, it became clear that Washington Township officials strongly opposed the bypass alignment. In the interest of achieving consensus and progressing the project, the Hackettstown Town Council suggested that the East Avenue alternative be selected initially to provide short term relief in the corridor. Hackettstown also requested, however, that the bypass be retained as an optional part of the plan, so that it could be revisited at some future time as a longer term solution.</p> <p>It was also noted that the Land Development Ordinance encourages adjacent landowners to improve traffic flow by sharing access points and granting floor area ratio and lot coverage bonuses for shared access. This provision has been utilized along Mountain Avenue to the benefit of the landowners and the traveling public.</p>			
<p><u>12A. Sidewalks Should be Constructed.</u></p> <p>Sidewalks should be constructed when possible, depending upon the probable volume of pedestrian traffic and the location of the subject property relative to destinations in walking distance, such as the center of Town.</p> <p>Both the Planning Board and Zoning Board have been proactive in requiring sidewalks in association with new development. The problems associated with lack of sidewalks are gradually being reduced, particularly along Willow Grove Street where new development has occurred in an area previously without sidewalks and the respective Boards have required the installation of sidewalks. A sidewalk Master Plan should be prepared which would serve as an aid in receiving State sidewalk grants.</p>	<p><u>12B. Sidewalks Should be Constructed.</u></p> <p>Both the Planning Board and Zoning Board continue to require sidewalks wherever feasible. A Sidewalk Master Plan has not been prepared however.</p> <p>It should be noted that the Town eliminated a number of sidewalk gaps over the past six years through capital projects sponsored by the Town with NJDOT funding including gaps on Washington Street, Bells Lane, Willow Grove Street, Stiger Street, Grand Avenue and Madison Street.</p>	<p><u>12C. Sidewalks Should be Constructed.</u></p> <p>Greater emphasis is being placed on the importance of pedestrian safety and connectivity of sidewalks and paths by State and Federal agencies. The Warren County Planning Board with the NJ Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) recently examined walkability opportunities and deficiencies in Hackettstown and made recommendations on needed walkability improvements. The NJTPA is the regional agency which determines funding priorities for the northern New Jersey area.</p>	<p><u>12D. Sidewalks Should be Constructed.</u></p> <p>It is recommended that a sidewalk, trails and bikeway Master Plan be prepared. It can be used to secure new pedestrian-oriented grants offered under such funding programs as The Safe Routes to School Act.</p>

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<p><u>13A. The feasibility of expanding the limits of the Health Facilities Zone should be examined.</u></p> <p>This objective was partially addressed prior to 2001 when a study was undertaken and a zoning ordinance amendment was adopted in 1998 that permitted medical offices as a conditional use in the R-30 Residential District within 1,000 feet of the Health Facilities Zone (HF Zone). In 2001 it was noted that the Hospital should be encouraged to realistically determine their need for additional space and discuss these needs with the Planning Board. Currently the Hospital occupies facilities in other areas of the Town on a short-term basis.</p> <p>At the time of the 2001 Reexamination, Hackettstown Regional Medical Center and Mr. Van Paftinos requested consideration of an expansion to the HF Zone to extend into the Limited Manufacturing (LM) Zone District on Bilby Road. The Planning Board was not receptive to this proposal unless and until the Hospital can demonstrate a clear need for additional lands to be zoned HF in order to accommodate needs directly related to hospital use. The Planning Board recommended no changes to the LM Zone District at that time. The Planning Board also was not receptive to the proliferation of medical office uses in residential zones on Willow Grove Street. No changes to the Master Plan were recommended at this time.</p>	<p><u>13B. The Feasibility of Expanding the Limits of the Health Facilities Zone Should be Examined.</u></p> <p>No changes have been made since 2001 to the limits of the Health Facilities Zone. The study of the need to expand the District remains topical given the Hackettstown Regional Medical Center's success and the overall growth in the health care industry.</p>	<p><u>13C. The Feasibility of Expanding the Limits of the Health Facilities Zone Should be Examined.</u></p> <p>The Board of Adjustment recently approved a use variance to permit a medical office building of 45,000 square feet on a 4.782 acre tract in the LM zone district adjacent to hospital-med property in the Health Facilities Zone. This new office facility will house an ambulatory surgical care facility, offices for specialty physicians and administrative office space for hospital staff. It is a joint venture of the Medical Center and Gordon MAB Associates who has partnered with hospitals and doctors in thirty medical buildings in New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania. This new office will be 100 percent taxable as a private entity. It represents a likely method of providing medical facilities in the future.</p> <p>Due to demographic trends and medical insurance payment policies, the Hackettstown Regional Medical Center will likely expand as one of the few medical centers serving this section of the Highlands. It has adjacent vacant land with opportunities to expand in the foreseeable future.</p> <p>With the development restrictions imposed by the Highlands regulations, those activities serving or related to the medical field with a market in the Highlands region may find the availability of developable land in the vicinity of the hospital an attractive inducement which the Town may wish to capitalize on.</p>	<p><u>13D. The Feasibility of Expanding the Limits of the Health Facilities Zone Should be Examined.</u></p> <p>It is recommended that the Town explore the potential of expanding the area of the Health Facilities Zone into the current Limited Manufacturing Zone district. This zoning change should be considered to attract higher quality uses to the area around the hospital. The presence of the Hackettstown Regional Medical Center as the region's primary medical center should be exploited to capture businesses in emerging specialties of cell therapy, bio-life sciences and medical information technology as well as offices for medical specialists. To support the medical center, the HF Zone should expand its list of permitted uses to allow educational facilities designed to train medical personnel as well as uses which support its mission such as hospice services. The area around the hospital would also be appropriate in the future for medical retail services such as surgical and home health supplies, manufacturer of prosthetic and other medical devices as well as a limited range of housing for its medical staff, age-restricted and elderly households including a continuing care retirement community and assisted living facilities. All residential units involving either medical staff or age-restricted households should provide a set aside for non-age restricted affordable housing units consistent with Council on Affordable Housing regulations.</p> <p>Private for-profit medical uses should also be permitted as a conditional use in the LM zone within a half mile of the HF zone.</p> <p>It is recommended that the HF Zone be expanded to Bilby Road replacing the existing LM Zone. This area will eventually be interconnected to the current medical center which would facilitate improved emergency access. An expanded HF Zone should be viewed as a regional medical park campus that should encompass a range of uses that would complement the medical center.</p>

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<p><u>14A. Contingency Planning Should be Undertaken for Future Use of State Owned Properties Should They Become Available.</u></p> <p>This objective was noted in 2001, but has yet to be addressed. The possibility of leasing properties from the State for use as athletic fields should be investigated. Also, potential use of the National Guard Armory on Willow Grove Street for municipal purposes should be explored.</p>	<p><u>14B. Contingency Planning Should be Undertaken for Future Use of State Owned Properties Should They Become Available.</u></p> <p>No action has been taken since 2001 in this area. It is still an area in need of study. It should be noted that no State parcels were available for purchase by the Town since the last report.</p>	<p><u>14C. Contingency Planning Should be Undertaken for Future Use of State Owned Properties Should They Become Available.</u></p> <p>No significant changes in the assumption and policies associated with this issue have occurred since 2001. Current severe state budgetary constraints warrant vigilance as to the future sale and re-use of State owned properties in Hackettstown.</p>	<p><u>14D. Contingency Planning Should be Undertaken for Future Use of State Owned Properties Should They Become Available.</u></p> <p>See Comment 7D.</p>
<p><u>15A. The Circulation Plan Element should be revised to reflect recent improvements proposed by NJ Transit and the New Jersey Department of Transportation.</u></p> <p>The Circulation Plan Element was not revised subsequent to receipt of the Hackettstown Bypass Study. Now that the Study has been completed, data gathered during the course of the Study (including data on mass transit options) should be incorporated into the Master Plan.</p>	<p><u>15B. The Circulation Plan Element should be revised to reflect recent improvements proposed by NJ Transit and the New Jersey Department of Transportation.</u></p> <p>The Circulation Plan Element was not revised subsequent to receipt of the Hackettstown Bypass Study. While the inclusion of the improvements in the Hackettstown Bypass Study into the Circulation Plan Element remains a goal, it is understood that many of the improvements in this study will not to be able to be constructed due to the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act.</p>	<p><u>15C. The Circulation Plan Element should be revised to reflect recent improvements proposed by NJ Transit and the New Jersey Department of Transportation.</u></p> <p>Hackettstown will be one of the few Planned Community Zones in Warren County capable of accommodating future development due to the Highlands land use regulations. The Town will also be eligible for an increased number of State and Federal grants to make road, transit and pedestrian improvements.</p>	<p><u>15D. The Circulation Plan Element should be revised to reflect recent improvements proposed by NJ Transit and the New Jersey Department of Transportation.</u></p> <p>A number of roadway and transit improvements have been completed by the Town and other agencies since the last re-examination report in 2000/2001. Some of the projects completed including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mountain Avenue Improvements (State and Developers) 2. Route 57 (State) 3. Grand Avenue (Town) 4. Stiger Street (Town) 5. Beatty Street (Town) 6. Washington Street (Town) 7. Bells Lane (Town) 8. Madison Street (Town) 9. Train station including parking lot (N.J. Transit) 10. Shelley Drive Traffic Signal (State and Developers) <p>The Circulation Plan Element should be revised to put the Town in the position to take advantage of greater funding assistance due to its Planned Community Zone status.</p> <p>As indicated in 11D above, the Town should focus its efforts on upgrading existing streets under its jurisdiction in the Municipality and lobbying other governmental agencies to upgrade its roads within the Town's jurisdiction due to the inability to effectuate the regional improvements recommended in the County's Hackettstown Corridor Study of 2000.</p>

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			<p>Some of the projects that the Town needs to focus on over the next 6 years including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Further improvements to Mountain Avenue to improve safety particularly at intersections (State). 2. Improvements to Warren Street between Washington Street and the high school (Town with assistance from the municipal aid portion of the Transportation Trust Fund). 3. Traffic signal at the Washington Street – Grand Avenue intersection (Town with assistance from the municipal aid portion of the Transportation Trust Fund). 4. Valentine Street (Town with assistance from the municipal aid portion of the Transportation Trust Fund). 5. Franklin Street (Town with assistance from the municipal aid portion of the Transportation Trust Fund). 6. Maple Avenue (Town with assistance from the municipal aid portion of the Transportation Trust Fund). 7. Request the State and County to have signage alerting motorists to the presence of pedestrian crosswalks.

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<p><u>16A. The Stormwater Management Plan Element should be revised to reflect recent changes to Stormwater Management Design Standards.</u></p> <p>Although the Stormwater Management Plan Element was not revised, this objective had been addressed by 2001 through the adoption of the Residential Site Improvement Standards by the State of New Jersey, which regulates stormwater management design of residential properties and supplants municipal requirements. The municipal standards, which control non-residential development, underwent a comprehensive revision in the early 1990's and were considered current. However, since 2001 the State required the adoption of new Stormwater Management Plans consistent with State Stormwater Management Regulations. The Master Plan was amended in 2005 and a new stormwater ordinance was adopted in 2006 to implement these regulations.</p>	<p><u>16B. The Stormwater Management Plan Element should be revised to reflect recent changes to Stormwater Management Design Standards.</u></p> <p>Since 2001, the State required the adoption of new Stormwater Management Plans consistent with State Stormwater Management Regulations. The Master Plan was amended in 2005 and a new stormwater ordinance was adopted in 2006 to implement these regulations.</p>	<p><u>16C. The Stormwater Management Plan Element should be revised to reflect recent changes to Stormwater Management Design Standards.</u></p> <p>Should the Town agree to comply with the Highlands regulations, it may require additional stormwater management controls or community wide improvements.</p>	<p><u>16D. The Stormwater Management Plan Element should be revised to reflect recent changes to Stormwater Management Design Standards.</u></p> <p>No Stormwater Management Plan Element changes are recommended at this time.</p>

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<p><u>17A. The Community Facilities Plan element should be updated to reflect current needs for municipal facilities.</u></p> <p>In 2001 it was determined that the community facilities plan element should be updated and include consideration of potential uses for the lot dedicated to the Town in association with Brook Hollow Estates and potential use of the National Guard Armory. Also, it was noted that the municipal building was too small and the Plane Street garage was in a poor location.</p>	<p><u>17 B. The Community Facilities Plan element should be updated to reflect current needs for municipal facilities.</u></p> <p>No action has been taken with respect to updating the Community Facilities Plan Element, since the last reexamination report. The Town is in need of improvements to its office space including general office space, court space, police space, and improvements to address ADA and OSHA issues. It is very difficult for the staff to work in the municipal building on a day when court is in session due to the lack of space for court activities. The Town built a new salt storage building in 2006 to comply with the State's stormwater regulations.</p>	<p><u>17 C. The Community Facilities Plan element should be updated to reflect current needs for municipal facilities.</u></p>	<p><u>17 D. The Community Facilities Plan element should be updated to reflect current needs for municipal facilities.</u></p> <p>The NJTPA projects Hackettstown will add 1,394 more persons by 2030 bringing the Town's population to 10,270 persons. Given the effects of the Highlands Regional Master Plan (see Comments 1C and 10C), Hackettstown is likely to achieve this population forecast. Using the facility needs standards recommended in the <u>Planner's Estimating Guide</u> for a high level of service, the amount of floor area Hackettstown should plan for to serve its year 2030 population is shown below for the following key municipal services:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1556 786 2039 987"> <thead> <tr> <th>Public Facility</th> <th>Standard (SF/Resident)*</th> <th>Floor Area Recommended for 10,270 population</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Police Facility</td> <td>.65</td> <td>6675 sq. ft.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fire/Emergency Medical Services</td> <td>.40</td> <td>4108 sq. ft.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>General Government</td> <td>.90</td> <td>9243 sq. ft.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Community Center</td> <td>.75</td> <td>7702.5 sq. ft.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Library</td> <td>.6</td> <td>6162 sq. ft.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*Planners Estimate Guide. Projecting Land Use and Facility Needs, Arthur C. Nelson (2004)</p> <p>An update of the Community Facilities Plan Element is recommended which considers the functional local demand for municipal services from a future resident population and the Centenary College population.</p>	Public Facility	Standard (SF/Resident)*	Floor Area Recommended for 10,270 population	Police Facility	.65	6675 sq. ft.	Fire/Emergency Medical Services	.40	4108 sq. ft.	General Government	.90	9243 sq. ft.	Community Center	.75	7702.5 sq. ft.	Library	.6	6162 sq. ft.
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<p><u>18A. A comprehensive assessment of recreational needs should be performed to compare existing facilities against recognized standards.</u></p> <p>In 2001 there was a shortage of athletic fields and it was determined that an inventory should be conducted and an assessment performed of existing and future needs.</p>	<p><u>18B. A comprehensive assessment of recreational needs should be performed to compare existing facilities against recognized standards.</u></p> <p>No action has been taken on this issue.</p>	<p><u>18C. A comprehensive assessment of recreational needs should be performed to compare existing facilities against recognized standards.</u></p> <p>See Comment 17D</p>	<p><u>18D. A comprehensive assessment of recreational needs should be performed to compare existing facilities against recognized standards.</u></p> <p>The Recreation Plan should be revised by the Recreation Commission in anticipation of a 2030 Town population of 10,270 persons.</p>
<p><u>19A. The feasibility of using waterways for recreation purposes should be investigated. Pedestrian trails and bikeways parallel to waterways should also be studied.</u></p> <p>No progress has been made in the study of these issues.</p>	<p><u>19B. The feasibility of using waterways for recreation purposes should be investigated. Pedestrian trails and bikeways parallel to waterways should also be studied.</u></p> <p>No studies have been performed in these areas since 2001. However, the Town did construct pedestrian paths along the River in connection with the municipal park construction and did procure conservation easements along the Musconetcong River in connection with the redevelopment of the Hackettstown Mall and BAS tracts.</p>	<p><u>19C. The feasibility of using waterways for recreation purposes should be investigated. Pedestrian trails and bikeways parallel to waterways should also be studied .</u></p> <p>See Comment 7C</p>	<p><u>19D. The feasibility of using waterways for recreation purposes should be investigated. Pedestrian trails and bikeways parallel to waterways should also be studied .</u></p> <p>See Comment 7D</p>
<p><u>20A. A five year capital improvement program for municipal facilities should be established.</u></p> <p>This objective has not been addressed although it has been frequently discussed. Currently capital improvements are considered on an as-needed basis which has worked well.</p>	<p><u>20B. A five year capital improvement program for municipal facilities should be established .</u></p> <p>Capital improvements are considered on an as-needed basis which has worked well in the last few years. More comprehensive planning is anticipated to be needed due to the upcoming capital needs of the Town, particularly as it relates to the municipal building.</p>	<p><u>20C. A five year capital improvement program for municipal facilities should be established .</u></p> <p>There have been no changes to assumptions or policies involved with this issue.</p>	<p><u>20D. A five year capital improvement program for municipal facilities should be established .</u></p> <p>See Comment 17D and 18D. A joint committee of Planning Board and Governing Body members should be established to prepare a capital improvements program dealing with new capital equipment replacement and major maintenance projects, particularly those dealing with resolving current drainage and stormwater management issues.</p>

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<p><u>21A. The Conservation Plan Element should be reviewed and revised as appropriate taking into consideration recent court cases dealing with environmental constraint ordinances.</u></p> <p>This objective has not yet been addressed.</p>	<p><u>21B. The Conservation Plan Element should be reviewed and revised as appropriate taking into consideration recent court cases dealing with environmental constraint ordinances .</u></p> <p>No review or revision of the Conservation Plan Element has taken place since 2001.</p>	<p><u>21C. The Conservation Plan Element should be reviewed and revised as appropriate taking into consideration recent court cases dealing with environmental constraint ordinances .</u></p> <p>See Comments 6C, 7C.</p>	<p><u>21D. The Conservation Plan Element should be reviewed and revised as appropriate taking into consideration recent court cases dealing with environmental constraint ordinances .</u></p> <p>See Comments 6D, 7D.</p>
<p><u>22A. The feasibility of a Limestone ordinance should be studied.</u></p> <p>There has been movement toward fulfilling this objective but such a study has yet to be funded.</p>	<p><u>22B.The feasibility of a Limestone ordinance should be studied .</u></p> <p>The feasibility of a Limestone Ordinance has not been studied. No funds have been made available.</p>	<p><u>22C.The feasibility of a Limestone ordinance should be studied .</u></p> <p>There have been no changes to assumptions or policies involved with this issue.</p>	<p><u>22D.The feasibility of a Limestone ordinance should be studied .</u></p> <p>No apparent need for such an ordinance since there has not been any construction problems related to Karst geology in the municipality.</p>
<p><u>23A. The Utility Service Plan element should be revised.</u></p> <p>This objective did not fall into the category of a problem and has not been addressed. The only area of concern in 2001 with respect to utilities is the desire to put overhead utilities on Main Street underground. Grant monies should be investigated to help accomplish this objective.</p>	<p><u>23B. The Utility Service Plan element should be revised.</u></p> <p>No further progress has been made on this topic since 2001.</p>	<p><u>23C. The Utility Service Plan element should be revised.</u></p> <p>See Comment 1D.</p>	<p><u>23D. The Utility Service Plan element should be revised.</u></p> <p>The Hackettstown Municipal Utilities Authority should be asked to evaluate the effect of the Highlands Regional Master Plan on the expansion capabilities of the Hackettstown Municipal Utilities Authority in terms of its service area and permitted yields. These new constraints could affect both development potential and the availability of new flows and utility improvement costs and customer fees.</p>

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<p><u>24A. Hackettstown should pursue center designation in accordance with the provisions of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.</u></p> <p>As of 2001 the Town had actively pursued center designation as a Regional Center since 1995. This was a joint effort with Mansfield, Independence, Mount Olive and Washington Townships and the Counties of Warren and Morris. Many meetings were held among the municipalities, counties and the Office of State Planning to refine the center boundaries. Consensus was never reached on these boundaries. The process was put on hold during the 1997-1999 Cross Acceptance and Reexamination process associated with the new version of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan which was adopted on March 1, 2001.</p>	<p><u>24B. Hackettstown should pursue center designation in accordance with the provisions of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan .</u></p> <p>The process was put on hold during the 1997-1999 Cross Acceptance and Reexamination process associated with the new version of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan which was adopted on March 1, 2001. No action has been taken since. Plan endorsement, which replaced the center designation process, will have to be obtained by the Town in the future within three (3) years of housing plan approval by COAH.</p>	<p><u>24C. Hackettstown should pursue center designation in accordance with the provisions of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan .</u></p> <p>Compliance with the Highlands Regional Master Plan will replace the Plan Endorsement process under the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The Plan Endorsement process begins within three (3) years of Housing Plan approval by COAH.</p>	<p><u>24D. Hackettstown should pursue center designation in accordance with the provisions of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan .</u></p> <p>The Town will have to decide if it wants to comply with the Highlands Regional Master Plan and its regulations and be eligible to receive its proposed financial assistance to prepare an updated Master Plan consistent with Highland policies and ultimately receive project financing.</p>

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<p><u>25A. Mountain Avenue</u></p> <p>The area of Mountain Avenue which includes the Hackettstown Mall and the abandoned mall should be investigated to see if it qualifies as an area in need of redevelopment. Design standards for future development should be established and adopted by ordinance. A proposal was made by Providence Corporation to consider changes to the Land Development Ordinance to permit five story senior citizen multi-family construction in the Highway Commercial district which was not endorsed by the Planning Board.</p>	<p><u>25B. Mountain Avenue</u></p> <p>Since the 2001 Reexamination Report Hackettstown Mall has undergone redevelopment and a site plan has been approved for redevelopment of the abandoned mall site. Notwithstanding, the Industrial and Economic Committee has recommended that other redevelopment zones be pursued, including along Mountain Avenue. Research will have to be done to verify that statutory requirements have been met before an area along Mountain Avenue is declared in need of redevelopment.</p>	<p><u>25C. Mountain Avenue</u></p> <p>See Comment 10C.</p>	<p><u>25D. Mountain Avenue</u></p> <p>An area in need of rehabilitation study is recommended for the CC zone district section of Mountain Avenue near its intersection with Route 46 to determine if the area meets the statutory criteria under the local Housing and Redevelopment Law for the rehabilitation designation. Before making a decision to encourage development of this area for commercial uses, the feasibility of restoring homes in this area for affordable housing using affordable housing fee monies, State housing grants, tax abatement and tax credits should be explored.</p> <p>The Mountain Avenue corridor is also a potential candidate for a streetscape plan which would incorporate aesthetic improvements such as new signage standards, i.e. replacing the hodge-podge of pylon signs with monument signs with a uniform sign structure, landscaping, and lighting fixtures as well as pedestrian and vehicular circulation improvements.</p>

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<p><u>26A. Centenary College</u></p> <p>The future development of Centenary College should be carefully planned to reduce the impact on adjacent residential areas. Solutions to on-street parking issues must be developed including the creation of more on-campus parking areas as the College expands. The Town and College should jointly study the need for athletic fields with an eye towards sharing of facilities. The historic integrity of existing buildings should be preserved. Establishment of a “way finding” system is also endorsed. Also, Centenary College has never been included as a permitted use in the zoning ordinance. The Master Plan should be amended to recommend that a zoning district be established recognizing the College as a permitted principal use or conditional use and establishing appropriate Zoning Standards and bulk requirements. By amending the Zoning Ordinance to create a College Zone, every application for development will not need Zoning Board of Adjustment approval.</p>	<p><u>26B. Centenary College</u></p> <p>Since the 2001 Reexamination Report there has been much activity related to Centenary College. A Zoning Ordinance Amendment was adopted in 2003 which made the College a conditional use in the R-30 Single Family Residential Zoning District. The ordinance was further amended in 2004 and 2005 in response to litigation and other issues. Several site plans have been submitted under the conditional use requirements including the addition of a residence hall and associated parking area and a site plan for a new gymnasium. A major impact of these site plan approvals has been the increase in off-street parking. In response to the new ordinance requirements the College now has a Master Plan for future improvements. To date there has been no joint study of the need for athletic fields. Expansion of facilities on the college campus continues to be an area of concern, as well as the College's recent purchase of adjacent properties in the residential district and interest in other properties in the Town to allow for additional college growth.</p>	<p><u>26C. Centenary College</u></p> <p>Centenary College and the Town was recently engaged in litigation over the Town's actions to contain the intrusion of the College into the surrounding stable residential neighborhood and to redress the effects of Centenary College's unprecedented growth in the last ten years.</p>	<p><u>26D. Centenary College</u></p> <p>Centenary College is an asset to the Town of Hackettstown whose campus expansion has produced adverse impacts on its surrounding residential neighborhood. The College has grown dramatically since 1990 and its future growth is likely.</p> <p>The integrity of the residential neighborhood around Centenary College must be protected. Any additional encroachment into this residential neighborhood will be viewed as a substantially negative community planning impact. The Town and the College need to come to an agreement as to how future growth of the College can be orchestrated for the benefit of both the College and the Town.</p> <p>The Town should expeditiously prepare a planning study to determine the appropriate zoning district boundaries for a College Zone that includes the existing college campus and a possible area for future development. This study would define for all stakeholders – Centenary College, the Town and the residential neighborhood surrounding the College – where and how the College's future growth should be steered. One concept that should be explored with College officials are ways of drawing Centenary College activities and improvements onto Main Street. This is an integration concept that Rutgers University has implemented in New Brunswick and it has contributed to the revitalization of that older central city.</p> <p>Regarding the accommodation of off-street parking demand at Centenary College, ordinance requirements should be amended to permit the implementation of a parking garage in the middle of the campus away from neighboring residences or wrapped by a campus building to effectively screen the parking structure.</p> <p>The Town should continue to monitor the parking situation at Centenary College. Under an agreement reached with the college, every January 1st the College will present to the Town a review of the existing and projected supply and demand of campus parking including recommendations on how the College would remedy on campus any parking shortfall.</p>

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<p><u>27A. Trout Brook Estates</u></p> <p>Representatives of Trout Brook Estates requested consideration for rezoning to allow age-restricted housing on the property at a higher density than permitted with current approvals. The Planning Board recognized that there are many environmental constraints on this property and the appropriate controls should be put in place to protect steep slopes, provide a buffer around Trout Brook and protect the Morris Canal. Because of poor access to the property, the Planning Board did not consider an increase in density appropriate and in fact expressed the opinion that the density then permitted by way of overlay should be reevaluated as part of any Master Plan update.</p>	<p><u>27B. Trout Brook Estates</u></p> <p>Zoning has been adopted to allow an Active Adult Residential Community as a conditional use in the area of the former Trout Brook Estates. Commensurate with the Planning Board’s concerns expressed in the 2001 Reexamination Report the density permitted was reevaluated and reduced from a permitted 4 dwelling units per acre to 1.5 dwelling units per acre. Other controls implemented in the ordinance to protect environmental features on the property including 45% open space, an undisturbed 75 foot buffer from the Morris Canal bed and buffer requirements adjacent to surrounding properties. Since the adoption of the Active Adult Residential Community Trout Brook has been declared a C-1 stream by NJ DEP further enhancing the preservation of lands with buffers around the on-site water courses. Although the ordinance process has been successful, there are concerns with the affordable housing criteria in the ordinance since the Town has met its quota of age restricted, low and moderate income units and would receive no further third round credits. The ordinance may have to be amended further to provide for housing that the Town would receive third round credit for.</p>	<p><u>27C. Trout Brook Estates</u></p> <p>This issue with Trout Brook Estates may be moot if the State implements its proposal to acquire this site for open space.</p>	<p><u>27D. Trout Brook Estates</u></p> <p>The ordinance should be amended to require non age-restricted affordable housing as part of any development.</p>

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<p><u>28A. R-30 District</u></p> <p>The single family residential neighborhoods in Hackettstown have remained stable and increased in value partially due to Hackettstown's recognition as one of the most desirable communities to live in New Jersey.</p>	<p><u>28B. R-30 District</u></p> <p>Property owners in Hackettstown have made improvements to their homes to meet contemporary lifestyle desires.</p>	<p><u>28C. R-30 District</u></p> <p>Property owners in the R-30 district have needed to apply for variance relief for greater impervious coverage to accomplish even minor home improvements.</p> <p>There are concerns about teardowns of existing older homes, and their replacement with massive residential structures out of scale with the neighborhood. The Courts established in <u>Rumson Estates v. Fair Haven (2003)</u> that municipalities can set regulatory limitations i.e. floor area ratio maximums to restrict the size of replacement homes in established neighborhoods.</p>	<p><u>28D. R-30 District</u></p> <p>The R-30 zone district particularly lots along Fifth Avenue should be studied to determine appropriate area and bulk regulations consistent with the applications that have come before the Board of Adjustment. This study should examine whether area and the bulk standards of the current zone should be revised or if a new zone district should be created to allow for an area of uniform lot area and bulk characteristics for those properties that deviate from the R-30 zone requirements. In addition, the Planning Board should evaluate whether or not similar amendments are needed to restrict the size of future replacement residences in all the Town's residential districts. Many older suburban municipalities in New Jersey have adopted limitations on the amount of floor area or the cubic volume of space allowed housing additions as well as design requirements to soften the appearance of building additions so that they remain in scale and character with adjacent homes.</p>
<p><u>29A. Age-Restricted Housing</u></p> <p>The Housing Plan and Fair Share Plan as well as the zoning ordinance permits age-restricted housing as a Conditional Use.</p>	<p><u>29B. Age-Restricted Housing</u></p>	<p><u>29C. Age-Restricted Housing</u></p> <p>The Town has exceeded the allowable amount of age-restricted affordable housing it can receive Third Round credit for. A requirement that new age-restricted housing projects provide non-age restricted affordable housing or its equivalent growth share fee is being litigated.</p>	<p><u>29D. Age-Restricted Housing</u></p> <p>The Conditional Use permitting age-restricted housing in the HC and HF Districts with a permitted density of twenty-two (22) units per acre with a 20% set aside should be removed from the Ordinance since the Town will not receive credit for age restricted affordable units in the third round.</p> <p>The zoning ordinance should be amended to add an additional conditional use in the HC district allowing a three story mixed commercial residential use on Mountain Avenue at a gross density of 10 dwelling units per acre. Market rate apartments would be limited to no more than two bedrooms per unit. A fifteen percent affordable housing set aside should be required. No individual retail store should exceed 10,000 square feet and all retail uses should be situated on the first floor.</p>