
2006 Land Use Plan Element

Township of Clinton
Hunterdon County, New Jersey

*Prepared by the Clinton Township Planning Board
in consultation with Banisch Associates, Inc.*

March 2006

Adopted on March 14, 2006

The original of this report was signed and sealed
in accordance with N.J.A.C. 13:41-1.3

2006 LAND USE PLAN ELEMENT

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The 2006 Land Use Plan Element for Clinton Township builds upon and refines the continuing planning process that began with the 1962 Master Plan. Elements of this early plan have served as guiding principles in the subsequent plans developed in 1976, 1983, 1991 and 2000, and the pattern of development to date has largely been guided by these principles. This Master Plan incorporates much of the substance and philosophy of the 2000 Master Plan, but provides recommended revisions and refinements intended to improve the Township's ability to protect important resources and manage growth.

A dominant theme in this planning process, as with the Township's prior Master Plans, has been the retention of the Township's rural, agricultural character and its high quality natural resources. The conservation of natural resources and sensitive natural features have also been a continuing objective, as the Township seeks to provide for the orderly development of the municipality in a fashion which promotes the health, safety and general welfare of Clinton Township, the larger region of which it is a part and the State as a whole.

Clinton Township is at a significant crossroads, both literally and figuratively. In the literal sense, the Township's regional location at the intersection of Route 31 with Route 22 and Interstate 78 assures that local development pressures will continue to increase, as long as vacant or underdeveloped lands remain available. These pressures threaten the scenic rural and agricultural character that has long assumed a high priority in local planning. Thus, while local land use regulations have attempted to respond to the challenge of protecting natural resources, land use planning initiatives are required to better protect these resources and to assure that the significant scenic attributes which comprise the rural, agricultural character are retained for the use and enjoyment of future residents.

The objectives of this Master Plan combine the purposes of the Municipal Land Use Law (NJSA 40:55D-2) with the longstanding objectives of the prior master plans, as refined in this planning process.

The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) extends the police power to municipalities to promote a set of clearly articulated purposes, which are incorporated as objectives of the Clinton Township Master Plan. These include:

- a. To encourage municipal action to guide the appropriate use or development of all lands in this State, 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 manmade disasters;
- c. To provide adequate light, air and open space;

- d. To ensure that the development of individual municipalities does not conflict with the development and general welfare of neighboring municipalities, the county and 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 New Jersey citizens;
- 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 arrangements;
- j. To promote the conservation of historic sites and districts, open space, energy resources and valuable natural resources in the State and to prevent urban sprawl and degradation of the environment through improper use of land;
- k. To encourage planned unit developments which incorporate the best features of design and relate the type, design and layout of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational development of the particular site;
- l. To encourage senior citizen community housing construction;
- 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 sources; 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 compliment municipal recycling programs.

In addition to the MLUL purposes, and the goals of rural conservation and resource protection, the objectives of the 1991 Land Use Plan have been refined and expanded in this Master Plan. These include:

Land Use and Management

To maintain the special character of the countryside that has made the Township an attractive place for many generations, and manage future development to preserve the rural character, including the Township's meandering streams and brooks, open fields and pastures, tree shaded streets, and rolling landscape.

To continue the Township's proactive planning for open space retention and agricultural preservation.

To provide for a reasonable balance among various land uses.

To continue land use policies that promote controlled development.

To establish development densities and intensities at levels which do not exceed the carrying capacity of the natural and built environment, and which respond to the limitations established by groundwater quality and quantity.

To encourage the development of necessary public services, such as utilities, community facilities and recreation, at a reasonable cost in response to the land use plan element.

To establish a system whereby necessary capital improvements can be programmed and planned in advance, and land can be reserved to meet future needs for open space and community facilities.

To offer flexibility in development techniques which recognize new approaches that are responsive to evolving demographic and economic needs.

To provide for desirable non-residential development in appropriate areas of the Township that will complement the existing character of the community and which will aid in broadening the local tax base.

To provide for reductions in the scale and intensity of non-residential development, due to the overzoning of non-residential zones in the past, the necessary open space preservation of non-residential zones, and the differential development capability of properties in the non-residential based on environmental limitations.

Natural Resources

To protect environmental resources including steep slopes, ridgelines, pristine watersheds, trout streams, wetlands, stream corridors, potable water reservoirs, aquifers, rivers, habitats of threatened and endangered species and unique natural systems.

To promote the protection of biological diversity through the maintenance of large continuous tracts and corridors of recreation, forest, flood plain and other open space lands.

To continue the acquisition of important open space through the use of the Township's open space tax and other sources of funding.

To promote the development and adoption of resource management standards to manage land use activities in a manner that protects and maintains natural resources for the future use and enjoyment of generations to come.

To identify and manage stream corridor buffer areas adequate to maintain undisturbed vegetation and to maintain and improve water quality, wildlife corridors and opportunities for passive and active recreation.

To ensure that development involving steep slopes is required to meet design standards which enhance the attractiveness of the site.

To promote the maintenance of groundwater supply and quality through the adoption of aquifer management programs, including relevant standards for wellhead protection programs.

To limit new development served by on-site waste disposal systems to locations and densities where surface and groundwater sources are protected.

To preserve significant masses of contiguous land which contribute to the rural and agricultural character of the Township.

To protect and enhance opportunities for agricultural activities on lands appropriate for such uses.

Transportation

To encourage proactive planning and regulation to ensure the adequacy of transportation facilities for planned future development, including the establishment of appropriate street design standards, the establishment of public/private partnerships for funding mechanisms, the coordination of transportation modes to accommodate changing commuter patterns, and the establishment of park and ride facilities and shuttle service.

To guide development to support subsidized rail transport for people and materials movement, and to de-emphasize further highway development or extension into agricultural or scenic areas.

To establish transportation policies and programs that improve connection between housing and employment, including vehicular and pedestrian travel and bicycle paths.

To promote transit alternatives in new and existing development to reduce traffic congestion, including share rides, taxis, car/van pools, dial-a-ride, and flextime.

To manage and program development in rural areas so that traffic will not exceed the capacity of the existing rural road network to provide safe, efficient and convenient traffic movements during peak traffic periods.

To promote the design and development of roadway improvements necessary to serve major population and employment sectors of the Township.

To encourage transportation funding for maintenance of the existing transportation system, rather than encouraging new systems in rural areas.

To establish road access management plans for arterial highways.

Recreation and Open Space

To prepare and maintain recreation and open space master plans to establish and enhance recreational lands and public open space; to ensure linkages of public spaces through the use of greenways, blueways, paths and bikeways; and, to establish as the highest priority for public acquisition, areas of unique recreational or scenic value, or environmental sensitivity.

To encourage the public acquisition of areas of exceptional recreational value or scenic value, or environmental sensitivity, at all levels of government, with priority given to acquisition of land to meet present and future demand for resource-oriented recreation.

To provide tax benefits and limit liability for private owners who permit public use through participation in the State's open lands program.

To devise appropriate strategies for the public and private ownership and maintenance of open space and recreation lands.

Housing

To provide a reasonable diversity and balance of housing types to meet evolving needs, within a reasonable commuting distance of places of employment.

To promote and support development and redevelopment of affordable housing, particularly in areas served by public transportation which connect to areas of employment.

To discourage the extension of growth-inducing infrastructure and inclusionary development into rural areas.

Cultural Resources

To promote public policies designed to preserve and rehabilitate historic resources and districts.

To provide land use regulations and planning strategies which acknowledge and permit special treatment for historic landscapes, districts, sites, and structures by including appropriate setbacks, buffers and other design criteria.

Public Opinion Survey

In 1989 a public opinion poll was commissioned by Clinton Township and the Conservation Foundation's Successful Communities Program to identify land use planning objectives of local residents. The findings of this survey served to guide the prior planning process, and continue to provide an important expression of the community's objectives. Ranked in order of importance to those surveyed, these include:

- Maintaining a clean natural environment
- Maintaining an attractive community appearance
- Preventing traffic congestion
- Preserving open space and farmland
- Preserving the rural character of the Township

Clinton Township residents overwhelmingly found the Township to be a desirable place to live, yet nearly half of those surveyed expressed the opinion that development is happening in ways which make the Township a "worse" place to live. Similarly, while the avoidance of traffic congestion was a high priority, local road improvements in the rural areas were not deemed desirable, but rather seen as encouraging increased development in inappropriate locations.

While the results of the Successful Communities' survey are somewhat dated, the Board believes that the findings and conclusions of the survey remain valid today, as the Mayor's Task Force 2000 reaffirmed them. These findings have also guided the Township in the development of the foregoing goals and objectives, and support the land use and conservation policies that underpin the Township's planning and zoning.

THE LAND USE PLAN

The 2006 Land Use Plan retains much of the approach that has evolved through prior plans, but modifies the traditional lines of demarcation between residential and non-residential districts. Residential densities and the standards for the intensity of non-residential development have been modified to recognize the groundwater resources in the Township, and the differential development capability of different parcels. Rather than a change in approach or philosophy, this Land Use Plan is a refinement of the proposals from earlier Plans. In the six years that have elapsed since the prior Plan, there have been changes in policies and objectives that form the basis for the Master Plan, as detailed in the 2005 Reexamination Report. This Land Use Plan incorporates the specific changes for the Master Plan and development regulations recommended in the Reexamination Report.

The maps accompanying this Land Use Plan include the following:

- Figure 1, Land Use Plan map, showing the recommended land use and zoning classifications for the Township
- Figure 2, 1995 Land Use/Land Cover, showing the actual land use characteristics derived from aerial photography, which also includes the recommended land use and zoning classification for the Township
- Figure 3, HUC (Hydrologic Unit Code) 14 Subwatersheds and Surface Water Quality, which depicts subwatersheds in the Township and the NJDEP surface water quality classification that applies to each
- Figure 4, Highlands Boundaries and Well Head Protection Areas, which depicts the Highlands Act boundaries for the Preservation Area and well head protection areas for public community wells

Residential Land Use

The Land Use Plan includes eight (8) residential districts and one (1) PUD overlay area, which provide for a broad range of housing opportunities within Clinton Township. This Plan adopts new nomenclature (see Land Use Plan map) to better reflect the goals of the Township and the intent of the rural and residential districts. Significantly, the RC and RR-4 districts have been expanded to better address the Township's natural resource constraints, infrastructure limitations and public acquisitions. The Plan continues to recommend grandfathering provisions for residentially developed lots and residentially zoned lots, as reflected in the Township's zoning ordinance

Rural Conservation and Rural Residential – RC, RR-4 and RR-4S

The Rural Conservation (RC) and Rural Residential (RR-4 and RR-4S) districts include most of the land area of Clinton Township. The lack of public water and sewer infrastructure throughout most of this area requires that future development potential be designed in response to the carrying capacity limitations of the natural and man-made systems.

A central theme in the planning process has been the protection of water resources, with a particular emphasis on groundwater quantity and quality. Available groundwater in the RR-4 and RR-4S districts, which are generally underlain by shale and sandstone bedrock in unsewered areas, permits higher development densities than in the RC district, where precambrian and diabase aquifers prevail. This is because the storage potential of the shale and sandstone aquifers is enhanced by the extent of fracturing which provides void spaces for groundwater storage, while the precambrian and diabase rocks are non-porous and have limited fracturing and hence limited available groundwater. Limestone, which underlies portions of the Rural Residential districts, has substantial groundwater potential, but is also

susceptible to a variety of development-induced hazards such as sinkhole formation, subsidence and rapid transport of pollutants.

The groundwater protection strategy represented in the Rural Conservation and Rural Residential districts seeks to balance the goals of limiting the degradation of groundwater while also permitting appropriate uses of land. The policies of this Master Plan follow the non-degradation policies of the State relative to the protection of groundwater.

In 2003, the Township commissioned a study titled "Evaluation of Groundwater Resources of Clinton Township, Hunterdon County, New Jersey", dated September 19, 2003 and prepared by Matt Mulhall of M² Associates. The report separated the Township into four hydrogeologic zones, and recommended minimum lot areas based on dependable yield of groundwater resources to supply potable water and the capability of the groundwater to dilute pollutants. Based on the Board's analysis of these recommendations, and the suggestions of the consultant, the Board recommends that the maximum permitted density for development served by septic systems in the RR-4 and RR-4S Districts should be one unit per 4 acres and in the RC District should be 9 acres.

Additional support for the limited degradation policy that underlies the Rural Conservation and Rural Residential districts is provided by the surface water resources of the Township. The western and southern portions of the Township drain to the South Branch of the Raritan River, while most of the remainder of the Township drains to the South Branch of the Rockaway Creek. Both of these watercourses are categorized as trout maintenance streams by the N.J. Department of Environmental Protection, which indicates the high quality of surface water in the Township. This designation and the associated anti-degradation policy enunciated by the State seek to maintain the existing water quality.

In addition to the trout maintenance classification for the above two streams, the northern part of the Township includes the North Branch of the Rockaway Creek and Beaver Brook, both of which are categorized as trout production waters. Trout production streams represent the highest water quality established by the State outside of public areas and C-1 streams, and are subject to more stringent anti-degradation policies. The NJDEP designated the South Branch of the Rockaway Creek and portions of the Beaver Brook as Category 1 surface waters, providing for increased levels of surface water protection.

In combination with the protection of groundwater and surface water resources, the Rural Conservation and Rural Residential districts respond to the goals of conserving significant elements of the rural and agricultural countryside.

The rural character that pervades much of Clinton Township is highly susceptible to degradation. Full development at previously permitted densities has consumed much of the countryside, and even when clustered, has produced minor conservation acreages which generally contain critical land areas (wetlands, flood plains, steep slopes, etc.) In this development pattern, permitted units have been situated in a somewhat geometric arrangement that fails to recognize the natural patterns of the landscape and tends to eliminate or mar scenic vistas and characteristics. Full development has also required dramatic alteration of rural roadways to accommodate safe traffic movements and increased

carrying capacity. As this alteration occurs, roadside features (trees, hedgerows, stone rows, etc.) and alignments (narrow cartways and winding alignments) are frequently lost and the rural ambiance undergoes a subtractive process resulting in conversion to a more suburban appearance.

Similarly, suburban development has consumed substantial agricultural lands in Clinton Township and resulted in land use conflicts where new neighbors frequently object to the noise, odor, and other impacts of agricultural land uses on residential neighborhoods. The Rural Conservation and Rural Residential districts are intended to reduce the amount of residential development so that fewer residences are affected by agricultural impacts and more lands can be retained for continued agricultural use. As agriculture continues to become more intensive and entrepreneurial, smaller agricultural parcels can have a meaningful role in agricultural production, especially with such advantageous access to the regional highway network for ease of distribution to densely populated areas.

The RC and RR-4 districts have been designed to address simultaneously the goals of protecting groundwater quality, conserving the scenic rural character and promoting continued agricultural use opportunities. Recognizing the importance of retaining significant land areas in an undeveloped state, and in furtherance of the goals of this Plan, the RC and RR districts permit cluster or lot-averaging development in order to foster better design. Those portions of the RC district located in the Highlands Preservation are also governed by the Highlands and DEP rules. The RR-4S district also seeks to accomplish the resource conservation goals of this Plan, and permits cluster or lot-averaging development when the proposed development is served by septic systems, or cluster development when served by public sewers.

This Plan seeks to promote the comprehensive planning of clustered or lot-averaging new development. Significant opportunities for conservation and resource protection can be afforded by undeveloped lands, or limited development of lots resulting from lot-averaging. The value of cluster development can be enhanced by standards relating to the minimum size and physical characteristics of proposed open space, and by standards addressing the relationship of the clustered development to adjoining properties. Similarly, lot-averaging designs should shift the more intensive development to those areas that can best support the installation of site improvements, and should locate less intensive development in those areas that exhibit sensitive natural resources, active or prime agricultural lands or mature woodlands.

The determination of whether cluster development or lot-averaging best meets local objectives should be made by the applicant and the Planning Board at the earliest phases of the development process. The development of concept plans should include a dialogue between the applicant and the Planning Board to identify these objectives on a site-specific basis. Clustering and lot averaging do not result in greater lot yield than conventional developments, but afford significant benefits to both the Township and landowner. The Township should also explore the use of open lands subdivisions, which is similar to clustering except that the large remaining parcel(s) stays in private hands.

In order to permit the greatest opportunity for the conservation of open lands, lot averaging should be permitted for any subdivision in the Rural Conservation and Rural Residential districts, including a two-lot minor subdivision.

The RC district corresponds to areas with lower groundwater potential, and includes scattered residential developments interspersed among the agricultural and wooded lands which dominate major portions of the Township. This area contains some of the best agricultural soils, as well as some of the most restrictive soils limitations found in the Township.

Within the RC district, the extent of development to date has not dramatically altered the scenic character, and permitted densities are designed to retain desirable natural and cultural features. Likewise, as some of the best soils have already been developed, new development will increasingly encounter more restrictive natural characteristics.

The RC district permits residential developments at a density of 0.11 unit per acre, with a minimum lot size of 9 acres for conventional subdivisions. The permitted densities are subject to reductions based on the presence of environmental and other limiting factors. The lot size may be reduced to 100,000 square feet for clustered or lot-averaging subdivisions, provided that cluster developments in the RC district yield at least 60 percent of the total tract area for open space or resource conservation, and lot-averaging developments meet standards relating to the minimum number of smaller lots.

As noted above, the RR-4 district corresponds to the areas that have the greatest groundwater availability and thus permit relatively higher residential densities. The existing land use character has also been a major consideration in the location of the RR-4 district, while at the same time attempting to accommodate resource conservation and management objectives. The RR-4 district is generally located west of Route 31 and along the Township's eastern boundary adjoining Readington Township. The RR-4 district permits residential developments at a density of 0.25 unit per acre, with a minimum lot size of 4 acres for conventional subdivisions. The permitted densities are subject to reductions based on the presence of environmental and other limiting factors. The lot size may be reduced to 65,000 square feet for clustered or lot-averaging subdivisions, provided that cluster developments yield at least 50 percent of the total tract area as open space or resource conservation lands, and lot-averaging developments meet standards relating to the minimum number of smaller lots.

The RR-4S district shares many of the resource characteristics of the RR-4 district, but somewhat different land use characteristics and infrastructure capabilities have evolved in this area. The RR-4S district extends from Allerton Road on the south to Route 78 on the north, bordered on the east by the ROM-1 district on Route 31 and on the west by Franklin Township and the Town of Clinton. The RR-4S district is partially sewered, and includes a wide range of single-family and multi-family housing types. A portion of the RR-4S district is designated as a Planned Unit Development (PUD) overlay, which encompasses the Beaver Brook residential development, golf course and office/retail complex.

Residential lots to be created in the RC, RR-4 and RR-4S districts will require at least 1 acre of contiguous, non-critical land when served by on-site sewage disposal. Non-critical lands are lands with slopes of less than 15%, and free of wetlands, flood plains and waterbodies.

Suburban Residential (SR) and Village Residential (VR)

The SR and VR districts include some of the earliest suburban residential developments (SR), as well as the historic settlement areas at Annandale and Allerton (VR).

The SR district permits lots of 30,000 square feet with public sewers, and is limited to existing residential neighborhoods. A minimum lot size for development on septic systems also should be provided in the development regulations. Residential lots to be created in the SR district will require at least 1 acre of contiguous, non-critical land when served by on-site sewage disposal. Non-critical lands are lands with slopes of less than 15%, and free of wetlands, flood plains and waterbodies.

The VR district permits 9,000 square foot lots, the highest single-family density provided in the Land Use Plan. The bulk of lands in the VR district encompass the nuclear settlement area at Annandale. Smaller VR districts are found adjacent to the Town of Clinton and at Allerton.

Affordable Housing - AH-1, AH-2 and AH-3

The AH-1, AH-2, and AH-3 districts respond to the affordable housing obligation of Clinton Township, with realistic opportunities for higher density inclusionary developments. The AH-1 district is the largest affordable housing district, located immediately east of Lebanon Borough. This district permits a maximum density of 4 units per acre, up to a total of 1,140 units on Lots 18 and 31, and requires a 16% set-aside of affordable units for low and moderate-income households. A General Development Plan (GDP) was approved for this parcel in late 1996, and an amended GDP was approved by the Planning Board in December 1998. The amended GDP provides for 1,019 units, including at least 145 lower income units. A preliminary site plan and subdivision application for 911 units was denied in 2001.

The large size of this district, roughly half of the area of Lebanon Borough, provides a significant opportunity for comprehensive planning of an attractively designed inclusionary development. The prominent location of this district, with high visibility from Route 22 and having the Cushetunk Mountain as a scenic backdrop, suggests the need for attentive site design to minimize the visual intrusion into this scenic viewshed. Traffic access opportunities require careful consideration, to provide efficient circulation to the arterial road network and to limit negative impacts on Lebanon Borough.

The AH-2 district is located adjacent to Annandale, and provides for the highest residential density permitted in Clinton Township. This district expands the Township's highest density settlement area eastward, and is bounded by the N.J. Transit rail line to the north and Interstate 78 to the south. These man-made boundaries serve to define and limit

the scope of future development on Annandale's eastern flank. The AH-2 district is a logical adjunct to Annandale, and may provide the opportunity for senior citizen housing in this established neighborhood.

The AH-2 district permits a maximum density of 5.2 units per acre, and requires a 17.3 % set aside for low and moderate income households. A preliminary site plan and subdivision, involving 202 total units, including 35 lower income units, was approved for this parcel in 1998. Attentive site design in this district seeks to ensure that new development is a complement to and does not detract from the historic character of Annandale. Likewise, traffic access options require careful scrutiny to assure that the circulation impacts of this district do not create undue negative impacts on established traffic patterns and historic structures. The inclusionary development in the AH-2 district (The Mews at Annandale) is complete.

The AH-3 district permits single and multiple family development at a density of approximately four (4) units per acre, and requires new construction or contributions to address local housing obligations. This district is located near Marianne's Corner, overlooking the Spruce Run Reservoir. A 98-lot subdivision for this property was approved in 2001, and is largely completed.

Limestone geology and the proximity of the AH-3 district to the public water supply and recreation resources at Spruce Run requires careful site planning. To protect the visual character of the Spruce Run viewshed, design considerations should focus on mitigation of visual impacts observable from the public access areas at the reservoir.

Enhanced water quality management strategies should address both the construction phase and long term impacts. Additionally, a "Spruce Run Overlook Park" of roughly one (1) acre will be required as an open space set aside, in addition to any recreation facilities required to serve the on-site population. This overlook park should provide access by Township residents as well as residents of the district.

Planned Unit Development - PUD

The Planned Unit Development overlay is designated for roughly 300 acres located at the southwesterly corner of the Route 31/I-78 intersection. Including lands of the Beaver Brook Country Club, this district provides for a mixture of residential and non-residential uses, well situated for regional accessibility.

The maximum residential density for the PUD district is three (3) dwelling units per acre devoted to residential use. Residential uses may be developed as single family dwellings, townhouses or apartments, with single family units limited to 10% of the total dwelling unit yield.

Retail sales and service uses, banks, office buildings and hotels and conference centers are deemed appropriate commercial uses for this planned development district.

The minimum tract area for PUD use is 50 acres, with commercial uses permitted only on tracts exceeding 200 acres. The residential development of the PUD is complete, and there is some limited development potential available in the office/retail complex.

Non-Residential Land Use

The Land Use Plan includes nine non-residential districts that provide for a broad range of retail, office, research and limited manufacturing uses. These districts are located both within and outside proposed sanitary sewer service areas. When on-site sewage disposal is proposed, nitrate reduction alternative designs may be required to protect groundwater quality. The permitted intensity of development (floor area ratio and maximum impervious coverage) is subject to reductions based on the presence of environmental and other limiting factors.

Due to the prominence of the non-residential districts along the major transit corridors in the Township, and the proximity of these districts to residential areas, attentive site design is extremely important to protect the scenic amenities and residential character of the Township. Therefore, each of the non-residential districts will include screening, buffering, and landscaping standards designed to promote attractive and compatible development. The Township also has adopted a series of non-residential design guidelines, addressing building arrangement and location, architectural standards, landscaping standards and stormwater management standards to promote attractive, compatible development.

Retail Commercial – C-1 and C-2

Retail commercial districts are arranged in distinct nodes, which are designed to provide for retail sales and services at strategic locations within the Township. These districts respond to the existing land use character along Route 31, building upon the intent of curtailing strip commercial development patterns. These districts also replaced portions of the former C-1 district along Route 22 to respond to expected growth of population in the Affordable Housing zones, as well as regional traffic increases.

The C-1 district permits development on lots of at least 75,000 square feet, while the C-2 district requires a 5 acre minimum lot. The Township has also adopted amendments to the development regulations that incorporate a precise list of permitted retail sales and service establishments to avoid any confusion as to which uses are permitted. Shared access arrangements should be promoted wherever practicable. The maximum building size in the C-1 and C-2 districts also has been reduced to better reflect the permitted uses in the districts and the goals of the municipality.

The C-1 and C-2 districts occupy a large part of the frontage on Routes 31 and 22. These districts are the only retail commercial districts in the Township, and thus have a unique importance in addressing the retail commercial needs for the Township's residents now and in the future. While located on State highways, these districts offer attractive locations for a wide range of business activities, including retail commercial, office, banks, restaurants, service industries and athletic activities. Given this location, there is pressure for auto-related uses to become the dominant land uses. However, this would not be in the

best interest of the Township, as it would commit the Township's valuable commercial property to a single group of uses that do not serve the broader needs of the community.

The intent of these retail commercial districts is to provide a balance among the permitted principal and conditional uses so that the diverse needs of the Township's residents are addressed. In recent years the Township has received numerous applications for the conditional use of motor vehicle service stations and the permitted use of motor vehicle sales establishments, and an application for the permitted use of public garages. In order to maintain a desirable balance among various land uses, and to provide for desirable non-residential development that will complement the character of the community, both of which are principal objectives of the Master Plan, it is recommended that these uses be removed from the list of permitted and conditionally permitted uses. The implementation of this recommendation is further supported by the Township's objectives to provide a desirable visual environment, and to limit excessive light and the resulting impacts.

The Land Use Plan map reflects some adjustments to the boundaries of the C-1 and C-2 Districts. At Beaver Avenue and Highfields Road, the two corner lots, occupied by a commercial/office use and the NJ Department of Transportation, have been added to the C-1 District. In the C-2 District on the south side of Route 22 east of Lebanon Borough, four lots that were formerly in the ROC District have been added to the C-2 district.

Office Building - OB-1 and OB-2

The Office Building districts generally retain the prior configuration in the Clinton Point section, and along Beaver Avenue and Route 31 south. The OB districts provide for uses that can benefit by the increasing traffic volumes, while limiting the traffic impacts which they generate, as compared to retail uses.

Suggested minimum lot criteria for the OB districts are as follows:

OB-1 - 150,000 square feet

OB-2 - 20,000 square feet

The OB districts provide for a broad range of office development opportunities, and minimum lot criteria respond to available land areas. The OB-2 district standards should be designed to protect the unique historical and architectural characteristics found in the Beaver Avenue area. Recognizing the adverse impacts of traffic in this area, the OB-2 district permits professional offices and personal service shops as well as continued residential use of these structures.

Unlike the other non-residential districts in the Township that permit offices, which are expected to include a large component of research and laboratory uses, the OB-1 district seeks to provide office and related uses designed to meet the need for high-quality office space in buildings devoted exclusively to the uses permitted in the districts.

This Land Use Plan reflects some adjustments in the OB-1 district and the elimination of the OB-3 district. The OB-1 district on the west side of Route 31 north of the

Spruce Run Reservoir property has been changed to the RC district to reflect the area's inclusion in the Highlands Preservation Area, and the automatic revocation of the sewer service area under the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act. The OB-3 district located at Beaver Avenue and Grey Rock Road has been eliminated and included in the RR district to reflect its acquisition by the Township Board of Education for a new Middle School, which is currently under construction.

Research Office Commercial - ROC

The ROC district has been created in response to the unique growth pressures emerging along Route 22 between Lebanon Borough and Readington. This district adjoins the AH-1 district which borders Lebanon Borough and which is expected to yield a large number of new residential units.

Prior designation in the ROM district acknowledged the appropriateness of this area for research and office uses. However, the scenic character of this area suggests that increased setbacks should be provided to limit visual intrusion into the viewshed.

The ROC district permits research and office uses, as well as a limited commercial development option. This district may offer an opportunity for complimentary development with the AH-1 district where direct access to Route 22 can be provided to the affordable housing development. In this event, additional retail commercial development should be permitted in a comprehensively designed format, where the housing, commercial and research/office uses share a centralized circulation system and access to Route 22.

Commercial development should only be permitted when a tract of at least 50 acres is comprehensively developed.

Research Office Manufacturing - ROM-1, ROM-2 and ROM-3

The ROM districts have evolved during the prior Master Plans as a response to exceptional regional highway access and the desire to provide a strong ratable base and employment opportunities. The ROM-1 districts extend along Route 31 and the I-78 corridor to Petticoat Lane. The high visibility of this area suggests that increased setbacks and expanded landscape standards be directed toward developing a greening influence along this portion of the highway corridor. The large size of most undeveloped tracts provides a significant opportunity for attractive, comprehensively designed developments. The ROM-1 district is also found east of Cokesbury Road and north of I-78.

The ROM-2 district extends from Petticoat Lane to Cokesbury Road, and also presents an important opportunity for coordinated development. The two roads which access the ROM-2 district also provide access to the residential districts in the northern part of the Township, and thus are vulnerable to conflicts between residential and truck traffic. While the ROM-1 district permits laboratories, offices, research facilities and pilot plants, the ROM-2 district formerly permitted warehouses, wholesale distribution centers and light industry in addition to the ROM-1 uses. However, since warehouses and wholesale distribution centers are completely dependent on high volumes of truck traffic and extended

hours of operation, and these uses conflict with residential uses in terms of circulation, noise and hours of operation, it is recommended that the ROM-2 and ROM-3 districts permit only the ROM-1 uses and light assembly and manufacturing.

To encourage the development of high quality research and office uses in the ROM-1 and ROM-2 districts, the permitted FAR (.15) excludes such amenity spaces as atriums, indoor mechanical installations, guardhouses and gallery spaces.

The Circulation Plan includes proposals for significant roadway improvements in and around the ROM-1 and ROM-2 districts. The reduction in area and preservation of lands in the ROM-2 district obviates the need for significant roadway improvements, and the proposed connector road was eliminated in the 2000 Circulation Plan.

The ROM-3 District was originally proposed in the 1991 Plan, when it was called the light industrial district. This district is located along Route 22 from the Round Valley access road to Lebanon Borough, and from Main Street to Readington Township. The ROM-3 District includes the same list of permitted uses as the ROM-2 District, except that the minimum lot criteria is 5 acres rather than 20 acres due to the lot configurations in the area.

Planned Development Overlay

The Planned Development overlay provides for comprehensively planned major developments that occupy the most prominent portions of the ROM districts along I-78. These areas provide major regional economic development nodes with advantageous highway access to be further enhanced by significant circulation improvements as detailed in the Circulation Plan.

The underlying ROM-1 and ROM-2 district standards will apply when the Planned Development option is not employed. However, supplemental land uses will be permitted in the Planned Development format, in accordance with an approved General Development Plan.

Planned Developments will require a minimum tract area of 500 acres in the ROM-1 district. When development of a conforming tract is proposed, permitted uses will be expanded beyond those allowed in the underlying ROM district to include the following:

- Hotels
- Limited manufacturing and warehousing ancillary to a permitted use, provided such uses are conducted within a building
- Limited retail commercial uses, designed primarily to serve employee populations on-site
- Banks
- Motor vehicle service stations limited to the sale of petroleum products
- Restaurants
- Health clubs

- Day care centers

The Planned Development format will also provide greater flexibility in the application of bulk standards. For example, the averaging of floor area ratio (FAR) and maximum impervious coverage will be permitted, where the floor area and coverage allowed on the entire tract at the time of GDP approval can be redistributed within portions of the tract. This averaging concept will allow the preservation of significant woodlands and other natural features without penalizing the developer for protection of these areas.

Parking standards will also respond to the type of user (i.e. research vs. single entity corporate office vs. other office uses) and size of proposed facilities. It may also be appropriate to utilize maximum parking ratios as a method of managing transportation demands to these sites.

Provisions for compact car parking and reservations for future parking ("ghost parking") not needed at the time of initial construction will also serve to limit unnecessary impervious coverage.

Variations in required minimum lot criteria will respond to the needs of various uses, offering further flexibility in Planned Developments. Similarly, maximum height restrictions will provide for 65' roof height whenever required parking is provided under a building or in multiple level parking structures.

The 65' height limit will also be permitted for buildings which do not employ covered parking, provided such structures do not account for more than 30% of the permitted floor area on the tract. In any event, structures which exceed 45' in height shall be situated away from the higher land surface elevations of the tract, and in areas which minimize the visual intrusion on scenic viewsheds.

In approving a General Development Plan for a Planned Development, the Planning Board may grant an approval for a General Development Plan for a term not to exceed 20 years from the date of final approval of the first section. This term should be based upon the scale of the development, prevailing economic conditions, a timing schedule, the developer's ability to complete the Planned Development and the contents of the General Development Plan.

Upon approval of the General Development Plan, the developer may submit separate sections of the Planned Development for final approval according to the terms of the General Development Plan. This procedure can establish phasing parameters at the beginning of the review process, to allow for orderly development of the Planned Development overlay areas.

I, Rebecca E. D'Alleinne, Administrator, hereby certify that the attached Land Use Plan Element is a true and correct copy of a plan adopted by the Planning Board on March 14, 2006.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rebecca E. D'Alleinne". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Rebecca E D'Alleinne, Administrator