Master Plan Reexamination Report
for the
Township of Old Bridge

Old Bridge Township
Middlesex County, New Jersey

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Prepared by:

Mark A. Remsa, P.P., L.A., AICP, ASLA.
10 Dewberry Court
Mount Laurel, New Jersey 08054

Old Bridge Township
Department of Community Development
1 Old Bridge Plaza
Old Bridge, NJ 08857

The original of this report was signed and sealed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 45:14A-12.

Mark A. Remsa, PP
# LI004039

Katherine O’Kane, PP, AICP
#33LI00634300
TOWNSHIP OF OLD BRIDGE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

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Owen Henry

Township Council

Brian Cahill, Council President
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Debbie Walker
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Esssam Abbas
Kasey Lenning
Joseph Mollis
Martin Pinck, Alternate #1
Laurie Anne Coletti, Alternate #2

Planning Consultant

10 Dewberry Court
Mount Laurel, New Jersey 08054
# Table of Contents

I. Introduction 1

II. Major Problems, Goals, and Objectives of the 2007 Master Plan Re-examination 1

III. Extent to Which Problems and Objectives Have Been Reduced or Increased 3

IV. Extent to Which There Have Been Significant Changes in Assumptions, Policies, and Objectives 9

V. Recommendations for Planning and Regulatory Changes 13
   A. Prior Recommendations that Remain Valid and Continue to be Implemented 13
   B. Prior Recommendations Never Addressed 13
   C. New Recommendations 17

VI. Redevelopment Areas and Recommendations 20
   A. Prior Areas in Need of Redevelopment and Redevelopment Plans 20
      1. Mannino Park Redevelopment Plan (YMCA) 20
      2. Rose and Lambertson Redevelopment Plan (Golf Course) 21
      3. Old Bridge Crossroads Redevelopment Plan 21
   B. Recently Adopted Areas in Need of Redevelopment and Redevelopment Plans 22
      1. Redevelopment Plan for 200 Laurence Parkway 22
      2. Runyon Redevelopment Area 23
      3. Water Works Road I Redevelopment Plan 24
I. Introduction

Under the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89), Periodic Examination, “the Governing Body shall, at least every 10 years, provide for a general reexamination of its master plan and development regulations by the planning board, which shall prepare and adopt by resolution a report on the findings of such examination, a copy of which report and resolution shall be sent to the County Planning Board”\(^1\).

The reexamination report statute requires a multi-step process that must be adhered to in order for the municipal governing body and planning board to exercise these powers lawfully. The reexamination report shall state:

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 revised, with particular regard to the 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, N.J.S. 40A:12A-1 et seq., 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”\(^2\).

In 1987, the Old Bridge Township Planning Board prepared the last comprehensive Master Plan, which was re-examined in 2007. In 2011, the Planning Board adopted the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan, and in 2013, adopted an Amendment to the Land Use Plan Element.

II. Major Problems, Goals and Objectives of the 2007 Master Plan Re-examination

The 2007 Master Plan Re-Examination was adopted by the Planning Board on September 11, 2007. This report identified the following major problems and objectives relating to growth, development, and preservation in the Township of Old Bridge. To provide a more concise summary of these problems and objectives, related and repetitive problems and

\(^2\) Ibid.
objectives and recommended changes provided in the 2007 Master Plan Reexamination Report have been consolidated.

1. Amend the Land Use Element of the Master Plan prior to enacting zoning changes.

2. Revise the Zoning Map to be consistent with the Land Use Element of the Master Plan and incorporate development plans for the Crossroads, Mannino Plan and Rose/Lambertson Redevelopment Plans and the Route 18 and the Arthur Kill, Raritan River, Raritan Bay Strategic Planning Areas.

3. Establish an overlay zone to promote development in Laurence Harbor in accordance with the Raritan Bay/Arthur Kill Strategic Plan (formerly Bayshore Economic Development Plan).

4. Update the Land Use Element of the Master Plan to provide strategies to achieve a better balance in jobs-to-housing ratio and improve the tax base.

5. Update the Land Use Element of the Master Plan to examine the need for changing land use intensity in areas where environmentally sensitive lands exist.

6. Consider community sustainability, including jobs-to-housing ratio, farmland production needs, open space and woodland preservation, passive and active recreational needs, water supply and watershed and wellhead protection, solid waste recycling, affordable housing needs, elderly care and housing needs, and goods and service needs, when preparing Master Plan Elements.

7. Establish indicators to periodically assess progress in achieving desired balances expressed in the Master Plan.

8. Incorporate all adopted redevelopment plans in the Master Plan.

9. Update the Farmland Preservation Element of the Master Plan to develop strategies for implementing farmland preservation using available funding sources.

10. Update the Recreation and Open Space Element of the Master Plan.

11. Protect and preserve environmentally sensitive lands and watershed areas.

12. Update the Housing Element of the Master Plan to ensure compliance with state requirements (third-round obligation) and provide affordable housing for senior citizens.

13. Update the Transportation Element to take into account changes in the Land Use Element, address compliance with State Highway Management Act, establish a township wide network of bikeways, increase park-and-ride facilities, and implement transportation management techniques to decrease peak hour congestion.
III. **Extent to Which Problems and Objectives Have Been Reduced or Increased**

Since the 2007 Master Plan Re-examination for the Township of Old Bridge, a number of the problems and objectives have been considered and/or implemented. The following represents an analysis of the problems and objectives identified in the 2007 Re-examination and the extent to which they have been addressed.

1. Amend the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan prior to enacting zoning changes.
   
a. Amending the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan prior to enacting zoning changes remains a valid objective for the 2017 Master Plan Reexamination Report.

2. Revise the Zoning Map to be consistent with the Land Use Element of the Master Plan and incorporate Redevelopment Plans for the Crossroads, Mannino, and Rose/Lambertson Redevelopment Plans; as well as the Route 18 and the Arthur Kill, Raritan River, and Raritan Bay Strategic Planning Areas.
   
a. Prior to the 2017 Master Plan Reexamination Report, the Zoning Map was updated and adopted in April 2015. The Redevelopment Areas for the Crossroads and the Rose and Lambertson Redevelopment Plans were added at this time. The Zoning Map is currently (at the time of this report’s preparation) being updated to reflect the inclusion of the Mannino Park, 200 Laurence Parkway, and Runyon Redevelopment Areas. In addition, zoning changes as a result of the 1999-2025 Old Bridge Housing Element and Fair Share Plan are being included in the current zoning map revision. No specific zoning or study was developed for the Route 18 and the Arthur Kill, Raritan River, and Raritan Bay Strategic Planning Areas.

3. Establish an overlay zone to promote development in Laurence Harbor in accordance with the Raritan Bay/Arthur Kill Strategic Plan (formerly Bayshore Economic Development Plan).
   
a. An overlay zone for Laurence Harbor was not established.

4. Update the Land Use Element of the Master Plan to provide strategies to achieve a better balance in jobs-to-housing ratio and improve the tax base.
   
a. The 2011 Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan provided a buildout analysis for the proposed zoning changes. The analysis indicated there was a total of 26,601 dwelling units projected for the residential zoning districts. The Land Use Plan Element recommended significant changes to non-residential zoning districts. These changes were projected to increase the amount of non-residential floor area by 3,686,189 square feet that would result in a total buildout of 17,175,892 square feet. As a result of this projected increase in non-residential floor area, the buildout analysis projected improved ranges of jobs-to-housing ratios: low range 1.1 jobs to
1.0 dwelling units, and high range 1.6 jobs to 1.0 dwelling units. The 2011 Land Use Plan Element provided the following important observation:

“It is important to take away from this analysis that the economy and market demand for residential and non-residential space drives the selection of which land uses are developed and the amount of such land uses that are developed. The buildout analysis provides a future snapshot of what the municipality would look like in the event all of its lands are developed in accordance with the master plan.”

b. The 2011 Land Use Plan Element provided strategies for improving the jobs-to-housing ratio and the tax base by increasing CC Community Commercial districts, increasing the floor area ratio for SD3 and SD5 Special Development districts, and creating new EDO Economic Development Opportunity districts. The Old Bridge Township Council adopted zoning ordinance changes that implemented these recommended changes.

c. The 2013 Land Use Plan Element Amendment recommended additional changes to increase and improve non-residential development. Most of the recommendations were implemented.

The following summary indicates which recommendations were implemented:

i. A cluster of relatively large undeveloped lots (Block 25000, Lots 54, 55, 58.11 and 58.12) located along the west side of Englishtown Road south of East Greystone Road should be changed from R120 to EDO-1 Economic Development Opportunity zone. These lots front along a county highway and are situated across from an area recommended for EDO-1 and an area to north also recommended for EDO-1. The addition of these lots will create a cluster, or node, for economic development.

ii. The area located along the north side of Pleasant Valley Road and consisting of Block 19015, Lots 1, 2, 6, 7, 8.11, 8.12, 9, 10, 11.11, 11.12, 12, 13.11, 14, 15.11, 15.12, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 should be changed from R120 zone to R40 Low Density Residential zone. The area is adjacent to an existing R40 zone located along the southern side of Pleasant Valley Road. Making this change will bring these lots that are, in general, smaller than three (3) into closer conformity with the existing lot pattern in the area that is reflective of the R40 zone. Furthermore, this area should be studied to determine whether it should be changed to the Economic Development (EDO) zone.
iii. Block 26001, Lot 1.11 should be changed from R15 to EDO-1 Economic Development Opportunity zone to reflect the existence of the non-residential utility use (JCP&L building) located on the lot.

iv. The existing gasoline service station located at the corner of Route 9 and Cindy Street should be changed from R6 zone to C-C Community Commercial zone to reflect the existing commercial use of the parcel and to be compatible with the adjacent C-C zone.

v. Lots 1.11, 1.12 and 1.13 in Block 15502, which are located at the corner of Bushnell Road and County Route 516 and are zoned R6 zone, should be change to C-C Community Commercial zone. The lots are undeveloped and are adjacent to a C-C zone. The addition of these lots to the C-C zone would create a node of commercial development that would serve the surrounding residential neighborhoods and the travelling public on the county highway.

vi. Lot 44.11 in Block 9000, which split into the CC Community Commercial zone and the AF zone, and neighboring Lot 44.12 that is zoned AF should be changed to CC zone. The lots are located adjacent to an area zoned CC and would be able to take advantage of being located along County Route 516 for pass-by traffic for commercial purposes.

vii. Lot 3 in Block 3235, which has about two acres of land in the northern portion of Old Bridge, contains an existing office building. This lot should be changed from C-N zone to O-G2 General Office zone.

viii. Lots 1.11, 1.12 and 1.13 in Block 15502, which are located at the corner of Bushnell Road and County Route 516 and are zoned AF Apartment-Family Residential zone, should be change to C-C zone. The lots are undeveloped and are adjacent to a C-C zone. The addition of these lots to the C-C zone would create a node of commercial development that would serve the surrounding residential neighborhoods and the travelling public on the county highway.

ix. A triangular shaped area that contains existing residential lots that is located in the C-C zone along the northern side of Route 34 should be changed to R40 Low Density Residential zone. Making this change will recognize the existing residential land uses and land development pattern in the area.

x. An area along Route 34 in the vicinity of Disbrow Road should be changed from C-C Community Commercial zone, OG-1 General Office zone, S-D1 Special Development Zone and R-30 Low Density Residential to EDO-1 Economic Development Opportunity zone to allow the development and redevelopment of lands to create a diverse mix of non-residential uses along Route 34.
The following recommendations, which remain valid, were not implemented:

xi. Lot 3 in Block 19015 that contains the Goddard School, a non-residential use, should be changed from R120 zone to C-N Commercial Neighborhood zone. Making this change will expand the existing C-N zone that abuts Lot 3 to the south.

1. This property has been re-zoned to EDO-1.

xii. Retain the O-G5 base zoning for the area and provide for an overlay zone that permits a mix of non-residential and residential land uses for Block 2150, Lots 4.11 and 6.13.

1. This property has been re-zoned to MUIH per the 1999-2025 Old Bridge Housing Element and Fair Share Plan.

xiii. A conditional use that permits multifamily residential flats mixed with non-residential uses should be provided for areas zoned EDO-1 and EDO-3, except for the areas zoned EDO-3 along Route 9 north of Jake Brown Road and extending to the vicinity of the Route 9 and Route 34 intersection. The EDO-3 area recommended to be excluded from the multifamily conditional use should remain strictly as an EDO-3 zone.

xiv. A special master plan study should be prepared for the EDO-3 areas that are situated along Route 9 north of Jake Brown Road and extend to the vicinity of the intersection of Routes 9 and 34 and are recommended to be excluded from the multifamily conditional use discussed above in paragraph 3. Since these EDO-3 areas are very large and front along the northbound and southbound lanes of Route 9, they have the potential become mixed-use centers of commerce, employment and housing.

5. Update the Land Use Element of the Master Plan to examine the need for changing land use intensity in areas where environmentally sensitive lands exist.

a. The 2011 Land Use Plan Element recommended the following changes to reduce land development potential in the R120 Low Density/Severe Environmental Constraints Residential zone, which were not implemented and are still valid:

i. Due to the fact that there is little, if any, remaining development potential for large-scale planned developments in the R120 zone the planned development option should be removed from The Land Development Ordinance.

ii. The results of the Middlesex County nitrate dilution study, which will be part of the County’s wastewater management plan submitted to NJDEP, should be considered in determining whether the areas of the
R120 zone that are to be served by septic systems should have lower gross densities for development. Note that the County still has to prepare the study.

iii. For R120 developments that are to be served by sewers consideration should be made to require mandatory clustering of residential development on smaller lots with no increase in gross density beyond what is permitted under the conventional R120 lot sizes. Requiring a mandatory cluster will disturb less environmentally sensitive lands and preserve more open space. A subdivision concept plan based on conventional R120 zoning without variances, design exceptions or waivers should be prepared to determine the maximum lot yield for clustering. No increase in density for clustering should be permitted. Clustered housing should be based on R20 bulk, area and yard requirements. The Land Development Ordinance should be revised for requiring mandatory clustering in the R120 zone. Furthermore, consideration should be given to permitting duplexes, townhouses and flats in clusters with the provision of no increased gross density beyond the lot yield of the R120 concept plan. Note the cluster requirement is still optional.

iv. The 2013 Land Use Plan Element Amendment recommended the following changes to reduce the intensity of development in the E-R Environmentally Sensitive/Recreation zone, which were not implemented and remain valid:

1. The following principal uses currently permitted in the E-R zone by the Land Development Ordinance should be eliminated because they are too intensive in use due to the creation of impervious surfaces that generate additional stormwater runoff and contaminants in runoff, the generation of significant vehicular traffic to and from sites zoned E-R, and the potential to degrade environmentally sensitive areas:
   a. Resorts
   b. Animal Husbandry Services
   c. Veterinarian Services
   d. Animal Kennels

2. The following conditional uses currently permitted in the E-R zone by the Land Development Ordinance should be eliminated because they are too intensive in use due to the creation of impervious surfaces that generate additional stormwater runoff and contaminants in runoff, the generation of significant vehicular traffic to and from sites zoned E-R, and the potential to degrade environmentally sensitive areas:
   a. Miniature Golf, Gymnasiums and Athletic Clubs, Swimming Pools (Non-Residential)
   b. Museums
3. The following residential accessory uses currently permitted in
the E-R zone by the Land Development Ordinance should be
eliminated because no residential uses are permitted in the E-R
zone:
   a. Swimming Pools/Residential
   b. Residential Agriculture

6. Consider community sustainability, including jobs-to-housing ratio, farmland
production needs, open space and woodland preservation, passive and active
recreational needs, water supply and watershed and wellhead protection, solid
waste recycling, affordable housing needs, elderly care and housing needs, and
goods and service needs, when preparing Master Plan Elements.

   a. These sustainability objectives remain valid for the 2017 Reexamination
      Report.

   b. The community sustainability objectives for farmland production needs,
      open space and woodland preservation, passive and active recreational
      needs, water supply and watershed and wellhead protection, solid waste
      recycling, affordable housing needs, and elderly care and housing needs
      still need to be addressed.

   c. The 2011 Land Use Plan Element included recommendations for improving
      jobs-to-housing ratio, i.e., significant changes to non-residential zones, and
      addressing needs for goods and services, i.e., EDO Economic Development
      Opportunity zones.

7. Establish indicators to periodically assess progress in achieving desired balances
expressed in the Master Plan.

   a. Establishing indicators to assess progress in achieving desired outcomes
      remains a valid objective for the 2017 Reexamination Report and still
      needs to be addressed.

8. Incorporate all adopted redevelopment plans in the Master Plan.

   a. Incorporating all adopted redevelopment plans in the Master Plan remains
      a valid objective for the 2017 Reexamination Report. The 2011 Land Use
      Plan Element incorporated current redevelopment plans. Since 2011,
      additional redevelopment plans were adopted and need to be
      incorporated into the 2017 Reexamination Report.

9. Update the Farmland Preservation Element of the Master Plan to develop
strategies for implementing farmland preservation using available funding sources.

   a. Updating the Farmland Preservation Element of the Master Plan remains a
      valid objective for the 2017 Reexamination Report and still needs to be
      addressed.
10. Update the Recreation and Open Space Plan Element of the Master Plan.
   a. Updating the Recreation and Open Space Plan Element of the Master Plan remains a valid objective for the 2017 Reexamination Report and still needs to be addressed.

11. Protect and preserve environmentally sensitive lands and watershed areas.
   a. Protecting and preserving environmentally sensitive lands and watershed areas remain valid objectives for the 2017 Reexamination Report.

12. Update the Housing Element of the Master Plan to ensure compliance with state requirements (third-round obligation) and provide affordable housing for senior citizens.
   a. The Housing Element and Fair Share Plan was updated through the courts under a declaratory judgment process that began in 2015 and concluded in 2017. This plan included affordable age-restricted housing. This objective has been addressed.

13. Update the Transportation Plan Element to take into account changes in the Land Use Element, address compliance with State Highway Management Act, establish a township wide network of bikeways, increase park-and-ride facilities, and implement transportation management techniques to decrease peak hour congestion.
   a. Updating the Transportation Plan Element remains a valid objective for the 2017 Reexamination Report and still needs to be addressed.

IV. Extent to Which There Have Been Significant Changes in Assumptions, Policies, and Objectives

The following summary contains the changes in the significant conditions that affect the growth, development, and preservation of a municipality, and translates them into policies and objectives for planning the future of the Township.

1. Addressing Old Bridge Township’s state mandated affordable housing obligation.
   a. For more than fifteen years, the State of New Jersey ignored its role as the regulator and administrator of the New Jersey Affordable Housing Act that requires municipalities to provide realistic opportunities for providing affordable housing through zoning and other mechanisms. In response, the New Jersey State Supreme Court stepped in to undertake this role and established a process for municipalities to initiate a legal mechanism through declaratory judgment to prepare and have their Housing Element and Fair Share Plans (HE&FSP) approved by county Superior Courts. Old Bridge Township voluntarily participated in the Declaratory Judgment process to have its 1999 to 2025 HE&FSP approved by Middlesex County
Superior Court. The court issued its order of compliance for Old Bridge’s plan in June 2017.

b. It is assumed that Old Bridge Township will implement the court approved 1999-2025 Housing Element and Fair Share Plan (HE&FSP). Implementation of this Plan consists of adopting zoning ordinances to address affordable needs, undertaking a Rehabilitation Program for existing affordable housing that are noncompliant with current building codes, supporting 100% affordable housing development, and providing Affordability Assistance to low- and moderate-income households from the Township’s Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

c. Through the implementation of the approved Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, 349 new affordable housing units for senior citizens and 680 affordable housing units for families will be provided in Old Bridge Township.

2. Addressing Old Bridge Township’s state mandated affordable housing obligation will pressure the Township’s objective for a more balanced jobs-to-housing ratio.

a. Old Bridge Township has made significant strides in planning for a more balanced jobs-to-housing ratio. In the 2008 and 2013 Land Use Plan Elements, recommendations were made to increase the amount of non-residential space through zoning changes. The Township Council adopted a number of ordinances that aimed to put these recommendations into action. However, the State mandated affordable housing obligation has impacted that Township by requiring more housing than previously planned for in 2008 and 2013. In order to address this concern, two of the four affordable housing zoning districts created as part of the 1999-2025 HE&FSP – the MUIH and Rt. 9 MUIH zones – have a mix of residential and non-residential uses. As a result, the concern for keeping a balanced jobs to housing ratio amidst housing obligations has been somewhat alleviated. For example, the Route 9 Mixed Use-Inclusionary Housing Center Zone is planned to have a ratio of 1 job-to-1 dwelling unit. It is still important to monitor potential impacts to the job-to-housing ratio in the future.

b. It is assumed that as State mandated affordable housing obligations are met, the Township will be pressured to maintain a more balanced jobs-to-housing ratio.

3. Zoning changes recommended in the 2008 Land Use Plan Element and the 2013 Amendment to the Land Use Plan Element will be implemented to bring the jobs-to-housing ratio closer to 1-to-1.

a. The buildout analysis provided in the 2008 Land Use Plan Element indicated the recommended changes to the mix of residential and non-residential uses would result in a full buildout of about 26,600 dwelling units and about 17.2 million square feet of non-residential space that would result in a range of jobs-to-housing ratio from 1.1-to-1.0 to 1.6-to-
1.0. During the declaratory process for affordable housing, it was found that there would be an addition of 3,109 dwelling units (market-rate and affordable units) of which 1,718 dwelling units (55.3% of the total units) would be in the Route 9 Mixed Use-Inclusionary Housing Center zoning district. It was found that this zoning district would maintain a 1-to-1 jobs-to-housing ratio at full buildout of the project. Using the low range of 1.1 jobs-to-1.0 housing ratio, it can be found that the increase of dwelling units from the inclusionary housing projects less those units from the Route 9 Mixed Use-Inclusionary Housing Center zoning district that has a 1-to-1 jobs-to-housing ratio would result in a net increase of 2,391 dwelling units. Adding these dwelling units to the projected full buildout of about 26,600 dwelling units results in about 30,518 jobs (add 1,718 jobs from Route 9 Mixed Use-Inclusionary Housing Center zone) to 30,510 dwelling units, which in other words is a 1.0 jobs-to-1.0 dwelling units ratio.

b. It is assumed that the zoning changes that resulted from prior Master Plan recommendations and new housing as mandated by the 1999-2025 HE&FSP will result in a balanced jobs-to-housing ratio at full buildout of Old Bridge Township. Any future changes in zoning must respect this balance.

4. Implementing farmland preservation using available funding sources.

a. It is assumed that Old Bridge Township will continue its efforts to preserve farmland using available funding sources including, but not limited to, county and state funds. It is also assumed that market demand for buildable land will continue to pressure farmland preservation efforts in Old Bridge Township.

5. Protecting environmentally sensitive lands and watershed areas.

a. It is assumed that Township land development regulations that aim to protect environmentally sensitive lands and watershed areas will continue to be implemented. The Township will continue working with State and County agencies to address stormwater management quantity and quality impacts that protect wetland and riparian areas, as well as other important environmentally sensitive lands.

6. Updating the Transportation and Circulation Plan Element of the Master Plan.

a. Traffic in Old Bridge Township has increased significantly over the years. Motorists travelling through the township from neighboring municipalities and farther away communities contribute significantly to roadway congestion. New development in Old Bridge has also contributed to this traffic. There has been a growing interest in addressing these traffic impacts from current and future growth, establishing a Township wide bikeway network, increasing park-and-ride facilities, and addressing compliance with the New Jersey State Highway Management Act. There is a need to update the Transportation and Circulation Plan Element.
b. It is assumed that the Transportation and Circulation Plan Element of the Master Plan will be updated to address growing concerns about traffic impacts and congestion as well as other important circulation networks and infrastructure within Old Bridge Township.

7. Updating the Open Space and Recreation Plan Element of the Master Plan.

a. As the community continues to grow and demographics change - particularly with the growth of an aging population and the Millennial Generation (in general those born during the early 1980s to the mid-1990s) - the demand for both passive and active open space and recreation will likely increase. It is assumed that the Open Space and Recreation Plan Element of the Master Plan will be updated to address changes in demographics of the Township and demand for passive and active recreation open space.

8. Updating Routes 9 and 18 Planning Area strategies.

a. The Routes 9 and 18 Planning Area strategies were developed nearly 20 years ago. Since that time, retail habits have changed – and more specifically, online retail has continued to grow and appears to be increasing without any cessation. Route 9 was one of the first Post-World War II commercial corridors in Old Bridge, and has been subject to the fluctuations in the economy over time. While Route 18 has limited access in most sections, there are pockets of existing commercial development. The planning for these highway corridors must be updated in order to ensure that they remain competitive and a benefit to Old Bridge Township.

b. It is assumed that Routes 9 and 18 Planning Areas will be studied and the planning strategies will be updated.


a. The aftermath of Superstorm Sandy in 2012 has led to widespread resiliency planning amongst our state’s coastal and riverine communities. To better prepare for future storms and flooding events Old Bridge volunteered to take part in the Getting to Resilience (GTR) Program which aims to assist municipalities with their resiliency planning to decrease impacts from future flooding. The outcome of said participation was a Community Vulnerability Assessment (CVA) which helped identify critical assets in the community to enhance resiliency efforts in Old Bridge. Old Bridge has a vast amount of wetlands and tidally influenced streams, contains neighborhoods in flood hazard areas, and is encompassed by environmentally sensitive lands. Community assets such as civic centers, public works facilities, parks, and neighborhoods are a few of the resources identified by the assessment as vulnerable assets. Due to potential flood hazards and the need to protect vulnerable structures and
residents, the township should make it a priority to plan for future storms and flooding.

V. Recommendations for Planning and Regulatory Changes

Old Bridge Township has addressed many of the objectives, goals, and recommendations listed in the 2007 Master Plan Reexamination Report, the 2011 Master Plan Land Use Element, and the 2013 Master Plan Land Use Element Amendment. Still, some items have not been addressed or implemented, and thus the recommendations in this Master Plan Reexamination Report have been organized into three categories: (1) prior recommendations that remain valid and should continue to be implemented; (2) prior recommendations that were never addressed, remain valid, and should be addressed; and (3) new recommendations that have emerged in response to changing policies and land use trends in the Township and the State as a whole.

A. Prior Recommendations that Remain Valid and Continue to be Implemented

The following recommendations are currently being implemented and thus remain valid objectives for the Township to continue:

1. The Township will continue to implement the court-approved 2016 Housing Element and Fair Share Plan (HE&FSP). At the same time, the Township shall focus on a balanced jobs-to-housing ratio through the mixed-use inclusionary housing and commercial components to the affordable housing zone changes included in the HE&FSP.

2. The Township will continue implementing farmland and open space preservation within the municipality.

3. The Township will continue protecting environmentally sensitive lands and watershed area within the municipality.

B. Prior Recommendations Never Addressed

The 2007 Master Plan Reexamination Report, the 2011 Master Plan Land Use Element, and the 2013 Master Plan Land Use Element Amendment set forth a number of recommendations - of which, several were not addressed or implemented, but nevertheless presently remain valid and are be reiterated for purposes of prioritizing them moving forward. The following recommendations are both carried forward and elaborated upon in this Reexamination Report:

1. The Township shall prepare an updated Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan with the following considerations:

   a. Focus on the areas along Routes 18 and 35, Arthur Kill, Raritan River and Raritan Bay. These areas contain some of the oldest development that requires repurposing to make them relevant in the marketplace and reinvestment to effectuate realignment. Inventory and analyze the assets of these areas, i.e., waterfront views and access, estuaries and natural areas, state highway access, for consideration of updating land use plans and strategies for these areas. When analyzing these areas, consider
exploring redevelopment as permitted under the State Housing and Redevelopment Law.

b. The properties located on the north side of Pleasant Valley Road consisting of Block 19015, Lots 1, 2, 6, 7, 8.11, 8.12, 9, 10, 11.11, 11.12, 12, 13.11, 14, 15.11, 15.12, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 should be studied to determine whether the zoning should be changed from R-120 to Economic Development Opportunity zone. The following guidance for conducting the study is provided:

i. Currently, the properties identified above (Figure 1) have a mix of single-family homes on large lots and businesses with outdoor operations, such as landscaping, arborists, and equipment storage, situated on large lots.

![Figure 1](image)

ii. In addition, the properties on the south side of Pleasant Valley Road, which are currently located in the R-40 zone (Figure 2), have similar development characteristics should be studied to determine whether they should be changed to Economic Development Opportunity zone or a similar type zone. These include Block 20000, Lots 1, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.12, 22.11, 23.11, 24.11, 24.12, and 27.
iii. The permitted uses in the EDO-1 and EDO-3 zones should be studied for the feasibility of multifamily residential uses mixed with non-residential uses.

iv. In particular, the EDO-3 zone, which is located along Route 9 north of Jake Brown Road extending to the vicinity of the Route 9 and Route 34 intersection, should be studied for mixed use and multi-use to create more vibrant and sustainable development.

2. The Township shall prepare an updated Transportation and Circulation Plan Element of the Master Plan. The following guidance is provided:

   a. This element should take into account changes in land use over time, and the changes proposed as part of the updated Land Use Plan Element. In particular, as a result of an anticipated increase in multifamily housing that result from the 1999-2025 Affordable Housing obligation for Old Bridge, the element should address potential impacts to the existing transportation network and identify appropriate areas for intermodal connectivity, including: the establishment of a township-wide network of bikeways and pedestrian trails; the expansion of public transportation park-and-ride facilities; and addressing compliance with State Highway Management Act access requirements.

3. The Township shall prepare an updated Open Space and Recreation Plan Element of the Master Plan. The following guidance is provided:
a. As a result of the anticipated increase in multifamily housing and resulting increase in population, an inventory of open space properties and assess future needs for the growing community should be prepared.

4. The Township shall update the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan in the next anticipated “round” of affordable housing obligations commencing in 2026.

5. The Township shall prepare an updated Farmland Preservation Plan Element of the Master Plan.

6. The Township should develop metrics to measure and assess progress made in implementing the recommendations and strategies of the various Master Plan Elements and Reexamination Reports. The following example is provided:

   a. The actual jobs-to-housing ratio should be measured periodically and then compared to the ratio planned for by the Township. From this data basis points can be developed to assess change and formulate new policies to direct land uses and development and redevelopment toward the targeted jobs-to-housing ratio.
   
   b. In a similar manner, as the Township carries out open space and recreation inventories and prioritizes the continuation of preserving environmentally sensitive land, the Township should measure actual preserved open space acreage and compare it to the open space planned for preservation.

7. The Township shall incorporate all adopted redevelopment plans in the Master Plan. Since the 2011 Land Use Plan Element, additional redevelopment plans were adopted and need to be incorporated into the 2017 Reexamination Report.

8. From the 2011 Land Use Plan Element, the following zoning recommendations were made and remain a valid focus for the Township:

   a. Within the R120 Residential zone, remove the planned development option.
   
   b. Within the R120 Residential zone, require that developments are clustered.

9. From the 2013 Land Use Plan Amendment, the following zoning and land use recommendations were made and remain a valid focus for the Township:

   a. Within the permitted principal uses of the ER Environmentally Sensitive/Recreation zone remove the following: resorts; animal husbandry services; veterinary services; and animal kennels.
   
   b. Within the conditional uses of the ER zone, remove the following: miniature golf, gymnasiums and athletic clubs, swimming pools (non-residential); and museums.
   
   c. Within the ER zone, remove all references to residential uses and residential accessory uses, including but not limited to the following: swimming pools, residential uses; tennis courts, residential; and residential agriculture.
C. **New Recommendations**

In response to the changing assumptions, objectives, policies, the following new recommendations are made:

1. **Current and future redevelopment areas** should be examined for their potential for to revitalize areas and address future affordable housing obligations. Redevelopment presents an opportunity to utilize vacant, abandoned, or underutilized parcels for creating economic development opportunities as well as inclusionary housing. As discussed above, the areas located along Route 9 north of Jake Brown Road and extending to the vicinity of the Route 9 and Route 34 intersection are an economic corridor and should be further explored for multi- and mixed-use through means of redevelopment.

2. **In preparation of the updated Land Use Plan Element**, the following recommendations should be considered:
   a. A prior recommendation in the 2011 Land Use Plan Element suggested utilizing the findings of the Middlesex County Nitrate Dilution Study for non-sewer areas within the Township to support reductions in housing density to protect environmentally sensitive areas. Unfortunately, the nitrate dilution study was not completed. Nevertheless, it is recommended that consideration be given for reducing the minimum 120,000-square foot lot size for the R-120 Residential Zoning District to a new minimum of 6 acres (new R-240 Residential Zoning District) to protect environmentally sensitive areas where sanitary sewers do not exist.

   b. Many commercial and retail developments, particularly along the Route 9, Route 34, and CR 516 corridors, appear to have parking areas that exceed the demand, leaving a “sea of asphalt”. These commercial areas should be studied to determine whether the excess of parking can be repurposed for new development that is appropriate and compatible with the existing commercial and retail development. In addition, conditional shared parking regulations should be studied as an opportunity to amend current Township parking requirements, which could alleviate over-parking existing and future commercial developments.

   c. In addition, parking requirements for non-residential uses should be studied to determine whether they can be reduced without causing parking problems and whether shared parking for multiple uses is appropriate.

   d. To ensure that residential developments are adequately parked for both residents and visitors, current parking standards should be examined to determine whether current parking standards are sufficient.

   e. Current EDO zones have a purpose of encouraging the development of businesses and non-residential uses. The land uses permitted in the EDO-1 and EDO-3 zones should be studied to determine whether they should be
expanded to create greater flexibility and diversity that would strengthen the local economy and benefit Old Bridge Township.

f. Zones that permit multifamily housing should be examined in terms of their adequacy of requiring onsite open space, recreational facilities and amenities. If found to be inadequate, new requirements should be incorporated into those zones.

3. In preparation of an updated Circulation and Transportation Plan Element, the following recommendations should be considered:

a. As described above, impacts to the transportation and circulation system resulting from anticipated housing as part of the Township’s 1999 to 2025 Affordable Housing Obligation should be studied.

b. Consideration should be given for the need for intermodal and multi-modal forms of transportation including, but not limited to, bicycle park-and-ride facilities and public transport shuttles.

c. A request was made by the owners of Block 5001, Lots 13.16 and 13.17 to change a particular recommendation of the circulation plan element of the master plan titled “Circulation Plan Year 2025” dated August 1998 and revised through July 30, 2000. The requested change is for the deletion of the recommendation to extend Manzo Boulevard from its current cul-de-sac terminus that is west of Prickets Brook to Cheesequake Road. After careful consideration of this request, it is recommended to require the setting aside a non-exclusive right-of-way or easement for the planned extension of Manzo Boulevard through Block 5001, Lots 13.16 and 13.17 to Cheesequake Road, and to defer the construction of the actual roadway of Manzo Boulevard to the future at time when such a road is deemed necessary. It is further recommended that - if deemed necessary by the Township’s OEM Coordinator and Fire Marshal and for so long as Manzo Boulevard is not completed - a fire lane be constructed within a non-exclusive rights-of-way or easement to access all or portions of Lots 13.16 and 13.17 in Block 5001 - though not necessarily the same location or connection for the envisioned Manzo Boulevard extension. Any such fire lane and its location will be subject to the approval of the Fire Marshal and shall to be constructed in accordance with standards prescribed by the Fire Marshal.

4. In preparation of an updated Open Space and Recreation Plan Element, the Township should study the potential impact and subsequent demands that anticipated future housing will have on the Township’s open space network and recreational facilities. Existing open space and recreational facilities should be inventoried and analyzed in terms of their accessibility and ability to service a growing community.

5. A Community Facilities Plan Element should be prepared to inventory existing facilities and resources; analyze the ability of these facilities and resources to
serve current and future development; and develop strategies for addressing current and future needs.

6. A Sustainability Plan Element should be prepared to provide goals, objectives, policies and strategies for achieving sustainable, resilient development in Old Bridge Township. When preparing this element, recommendations made in the “Getting to Resiliency for Old Bridge Township” draft report prepared by Rutgers University should be considered and implemented.

7. The Township currently has a State Approved 2016 - 2020 Community Forestry Management Plan and should continue to implement it as long as it remains valid. In addition, this Plan should be used in guiding future land use and conservation goals, particularly in preparation of the updated Land Use Element and Conservation Element of the Master Plan.

8. Given the Zoning Officer’s input regarding Inconsistencies in Chapter 250 Land Development Ordinance and his recommendations to address them, the following recommendations are made:
   
a. At one point in time the ordinance contained a provisional use section, which was similar to conditional use provisions, but did not require site plan approval. Although the provisional use section was removed, the provisional use designation remains. It is recommended that the “P” provisional use category be removed from Schedule C “Schedule of Permitted Uses”.

   b. Schedule C “Schedule of Permitted Uses” identifies two-family dwellings as conditionally permitted in several zones. However, section 41 of the ordinance does not list the use or its conditions. This absence of required information creates a fundamental problem in dealing with development applications that propose a two-family use. It is recommended that the conditions be established or remove them as conditionally permitted uses from the schedule.

   c. The Township Code defines “Home Business, Home professional office, and Home occupation”. While the ordinance clearly provides prohibited uses within this definition, the ordinance lacks a description of contemplated or permitted uses for home business or home occupation. It is recommended that the Township consider revising the definition to show examples of permitted uses; additionally, consideration should be given to providing a list of prohibited uses that are specifically identified to decrease the propensity of misuse.

   d. Section 50 of the ordinance requires a sliding scale setback for decks in several zones. According to the ordinance, in some instances, the deck setback is greater than the principal structure setbacks. It is recommended that the ordinance be amended to limit the corresponding required side and rear yard setbacks for decks in relation to the principal structure. For example, for decks higher than two feet above the finished grade, side
and rear yards shall be increased two feet for each additional vertical foot or fraction of a vertical foot above the initial two-foot height, but in no instance shall the setback for the deck be greater than the setback required for the principal structure.

e. Setbacks for accessory structures are inadequately addressed for patio home and townhouse style developments. For example, patio homes are permitted to have a zero lot line setbacks while decks must have a setback of 7 to 11 feet. Most common types of construction are decks and patios under this scenario. The ordinance should be revised to make setbacks for decks and patios congruent with principal buildings, i.e., patio homes and townhouses.

9. In addition to including the Zoning Officer’s recommendations, it is recommended that a number of changes to Chapter 250 Land Development Ordinance be made to improve and update various sections. These recommended changes are contained in Appendix A. To address changing development trends and land use issues, the Land Development Ordinance should undergo periodic reviews for improvement and to address trends and issues that impact land development in Old Bridge Township.

VI. Existing Redevelopment Areas and Recommendations

A. Prior Redevelopment Areas and Plans

Over the years, the Old Bridge Township Council has adopted several redevelopment plans by ordinance in order to address the need for redevelopment and to improve the local economy. These redevelopment plans, which are identified below, have been incorporated into the Land Use Element of the Master Plan.

1. Mannino Park Tract Redevelopment Plan (YMCA)
   Ordinance No. 17-2005, adopted June 27, 2005

<table>
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<th>Mannino Park Redevelopment Area Parcel Information</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>8005</td>
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**Area:** The Mannino Park Redevelopment Area includes two (2) parcels known as 1 & 100 Mannino Park Drive (Block 8005, Lots 1 and 6), which consist of approximately 165.3 acres of total area based on Township Tax records. The Redevelopment Area includes frontage along County Road 516 and Mannino Park Drive.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the Mannino Park Redevelopment Plan was to provide publicly accessible community arts and recreation facilities.
2. Rose and Lambertson Redevelopment Plan (Golf Course)
Ordinance No. 14-2006, adopted April 24, 2006

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<td>211 AMBOY &amp; LAMBERTSON RD</td>
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Area: The Rose and Lambertson Redevelopment Area includes four (4) parcels known as 157 Lambertson Road (Block 10252, Lots 1.12 and 4), 211 Amboy and Lambertson Road (Block 11251, Lot 20), and Warne Road (Block 11251.13, Lot 15). The Redevelopment Area consists of approximately 218.3 acres of total area based on Township Tax records, and includes frontage along five (5) roads: Farrington Road, Lambertson Road, Warne Road, John Partridge Road, and Amboy Road.

Purpose: The purpose of the Rose and Lambertson Redevelopment Plan was to provide mechanisms for a proposed Golf Course and subsequent facilities on the site.

3. Old Bridge Crossroads Redevelopment Plan
Ordinance No. 20-02, adopted October 23, 2006
Amended by Ordinance No. 48-2006, adopted October 28, 2006
Amended by Ordinance No. 2007-30, adopted December 10, 2007
Amended by Ordinance No. 2008-23, adopted July 14, 2008

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*a* These lots have been changed or subdivided since their inclusion in the Resolutions and Ordinances adopting the Redevelopment Studies and Plans.

(b) Formerly known as Block 20002, Lot 67.12
Area: The Old Bridge Crossroads Redevelopment Area includes thirteen (13) parcels, which contain approximately 542.8 acres based on Township Tax records. The Redevelopment Area includes frontage along four (4) roads: East Greystone Road, Marlboro Road, Texas Road, and State Highway 18.

Purpose: The purpose of the Old Bridge Crossroads Redevelopment Plan is to develop an area that has had difficulty being developed over time and has been problematic in determining the most appropriate mix of land uses. The Plan seeks to provide a mix of residential housing types and neighborhood retail services to serve a growing senior population; as well as utilize high quality design standards in the construction of residential/mixed-use development, including highway commercial and office development and market opportunities for high-value commercial uses. Overall, the Plan seeks to provide appropriate infrastructure improvements to the area.

B. Recently Adopted Areas in Need of Redevelopment and Redevelopment Plans

In addition, since the adoption of the last Master Plan Reexamination, the Township of Old Bridge has adopted the following Redevelopment Studies and Plans:

1. Redevelopment Plan for 200 Laurence Parkway
   Ordinance No. 2016-01, adopted February 8, 2016

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<td>128</td>
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<td>39</td>
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<td>140 NORWOOD AVE</td>
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Area: The Redevelopment Plan for 200 Laurence Parkway includes two (2) parcels known as 200 Laurence Parkway (Block 39, Lot 128) and 140 Norwood Avenue (Block 39, Lot 140), which contain 0.75 acres based on Township Tax records. The Redevelopment Area includes frontage along three (3) roads: Laurence Parkway, Woodland Avenue, and Hilltop Avenue.

Purpose: The Redevelopment Plan for 200 Laurence Parkway consists of the redevelopment of a former township-owned building used for a Senior Citizens and Social Services Center and a vacant, undeveloped adjoining lot, both of which are located in the R-5 Residential Zone. The building has been subject to flooding and subsequent damage, including visible mold, damaged flooring and drywall, insufficient air movements, odor, and others. The building’s use was ultimately abandoned. Redevelopment presents an opportunity to advance State Plan goals of providing adequate housing at a reasonable cost, specifically affordable housing, veteran’s housing, or housing for victims of storm damage.
2. Runyon Redevelopment Area
   Resolution No. 276-16, adopted July 11, 2016

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Area: The Runyon Redevelopment Area includes forty-seven (47) separate parcels, which total approximately 689.4 acres based on Township Tax records. The large Redevelopment Area is located in the northwest portion of the Township, and includes frontage along eight (8) roads: Bordentown Avenue, Cheesequake Road, Perrine Road, Water Works Road, Old Waterworks Road, Highway Route 9, Runyon Road, and Manzo Boulevard.

Purpose: The purpose of designating the area in Need of Redevelopment was based on the analysis that found approximately 6% of the land was developed, 70% was undeveloped or vacant and 24% was underutilized. Based on Master Plan recommendations, the Redevelopment Area is intended to lay the groundwork for achieving a better jobs-to-housing ratio. A redevelopment plan must be prepared to carry out the purpose of the Runyon Redevelopment Area as well as other goals and objectives of the Master Plan.

3. Water Works Road 1 Redevelopment Plan
Ordinance No. 2017-04, adopted February 27, 2017

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<tr>
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Area: The Water Works Road 1 Redevelopment Area consists of (2) separate parcels, which total approximately 265.3 acres based on Township Tax records. The Redevelopment Area fronts along Runyon Road.

It is recommended the Old Bridge Township Council pursue the preparation of a redevelopment plan for the remainder of the Runyon Redevelopment Area.