
Jackson Township Master Plan Executive Summary

Prepared for the
***Jackson Township Planning Board
95 West Veteran's Highway
Jackson, New Jersey 08527***

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**Jackson Township Master Plan
Executive Summary**

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Jackson Township Master Plan Introduction

1.0 MASTER PLAN OVERVIEW

1.1 Master Plan Purpose/Responsibility

The Jackson Township Planning Board has exclusive responsibility for the preparation of the Master Plan. The Master Plan is a guidance document that has limited authority. In most cases, the policies or principles that are recommended in the Master Plan must be implemented by the Township governing body through land use ordinances. All ordinance amendments must be reviewed for consistency with the Master Plan by the Planning Board.

1.2 Reflection and Re-evaluation

In developing an updated master plan, Jackson Township has an opportunity to reflect, re-evaluate, and adjust its community goals and policies. The reflection aspect of a Master Plan is to understand the community based on empirical data and to recognize the land development that has occurred. Except in unique circumstances, land development ordinances should seek to enhance residential communities and minimize the extent of non-conformance. The re-evaluation part of the Master Plan relates to how to move forward, particularly with regard to land development policies for undeveloped or underdeveloped lands in the Township.

1.3 Re-examination

Because this Master Plan is a comprehensive re-examination of the Township's land development policies, it constitutes a re-examination of the Master Plan in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89. In communities such as Jackson in which many factors are affecting land development and in a state with a constantly evolving regulatory environment, it is recommended that Jackson develop a continuing planning process. The Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) recommends that the recommendations of that study be reviewed for relevancy two years after the joint base is established in October of this year. It is specifically recommended that the master plan be re-examined in conjunction with the JLUS re-examination in 2011.

1.5 Vested rights

It should be emphasized that changes in the Master Plan and in the related ordinances may not be reflected in the "field" when developers have vested rights under prior ordinances. Landowners and developers that have obtained preliminary or final subdivision or site plan approval can exercise their rights under those prior approvals for a certain period of time under the Municipal Land Use Law.

1.6 Developable Land

Jackson Township is entering a phase of its development in which the land remaining for development is more constrained by environmental factors. The total vacant unconstrained land has been estimated to be about 6,663 acres. There are now only a few major undeveloped tracts remaining in the Township and those tracts need to be carefully designed to protect the environmental character.

2.0 COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Master Plan contains a generalized community profile to characterize the Township and to reveal planning issues even though it is difficult to characterize a growing community, as census data is outdated. Based on available data, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Growth. Jackson has experienced rapid growth over the last 40 years, which has meant recurring changes to the physical landscape, and ever-increasing public facility needs.
- Census. The 2000 Census indicated that Jackson had 14,640 housing units, an average household size of 3.0, and a population of 42,816 persons.
- Current Population. A total of 4,775 new housing units have been certified since 2000 and the population has increased to approximately 55,000 persons.
- Age Distribution. Jackson had a strong middle age adult group with younger children but a relatively small older population in 2000. Since then over 3,000 age-restricted units have been constructed which has helped balance the age distribution profile.
- Transience. The 2000 Census reported that 44% of the Township lived in a different house from that of five (5) years earlier.
- Education. The Census data has revealed that educational levels are higher in Jackson than the County and that they significantly improved from 1990 to 2000.
- Employment. Residents are employed in a diversity of industries with an emphasis in education and the health services. Local employment is relatively low and average commutation distances relatively long.
- Income. Reported median income of \$79,250 is 40% higher than that of the County.
- Housing Value. The median sales price for residential homes in 2007 was \$342,488, which was relatively high and ranked 39th highest in southern New Jersey.
- Tax Assessment. The total equalized tax valuation was \$7.4 billion in 2007. The portion of the tax burden borne by residential development (86.2%) is relatively high.
- School Enrollment. The public school enrollment increased over 40% in the last decade and is now near 10,000 students.
- Crime Rate. The crime rate is very low.

3.0 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Master Plan contains a Goals and Objectives Statement. A key goal is to work towards a balanced community. While the housing stock is now more balanced in meeting needs, commercial and industrial development needs to be expanded to meet local demands.

Jackson Township Master Plan
Executive Summary: Conservation Plan Element

The Municipal Land Use Law (NJSA 40:55D-28b8) indicates that a Master Plan may contain a “conservation plan element providing for the preservation, conservation, and utilization of natural resources including, to the extent appropriate energy, open space, water supply, forests, soils, marshes, wildlife, harbors, rivers, and other waters, fisheries, endangered or threatened species, wildlife and other resources, and which systematically analyzes the impact of each other component and element of the master plan on the present and future preservation, conservation, and utilization of these resources”.

The purpose of the Conservation Plan element is to ensure that adequate provisions are being made for the protection and management of environmentally sensitive lands in the Township.

1.0 NATURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY

Conservation Plan element contains an inventory of natural resources including a discussion of the following Plan Maps:

- **Map C-1: Surface Water Resources Map**
- **Map C-2: Geology and Groundwater Resources Map**
- **Map C-3: Topographic Map**
- **Map C-4: Soils Map**
- **Map C-5: Groundwater Recharge Rate Map**
- **Map C-6: Environmental Features Map**
- **Map C-7: Critical Habitats Map**

2.0 CONSERVATION PLAN MAP

Map C-8 Conservation Plan Map indicates areas of the Township that are worthy of conservation due to their natural resource value. The Conservation Plan Map is based on available natural resource data and includes freshwater wetlands, wetland buffers, flood prone areas, Category 1 riparian buffers, and special stream buffers. Defined critical habitats are shown as an overlay hatch pattern.

3.0 PROPOSED POLICIES

The Conservation Plan Map is to be the basis of an overlay Conservation Zoning District with site-specific zoning limits established based on the submission of Letters of Interpretation (LOI). Recent changes in State regulations affirm that LOIs may be used as a checklist requirement for land development applications. Once the Conservation zoning district limit is established for subject property, the bulk and density standards for the development district would be satisfied by the lands within the development district and not the Conservation district. The specific means of implementing this Conservation Plan recommendation will be affirmed at the time of Ordinance preparation.

The establishment of a Conservation zoning district would not affect the use of currently developed lands within the district limits but would increase awareness of the proximity and sensitivity of the regulated area.

Jackson Township Master Plan
Executive Summary: Open Space and Recreation Element

The Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) is intended to address the extent of existing and future public open space in the Township and the use of that open space for recreational purposes.

1.0 EXISTING RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE INVENTORY

Map OS-1: Existing Open Space and Recreation Map indicates the land tracts that are currently committed to public or quasi-public open space including 13,203 acres of State owned lands; 1,912 acres of County owned; and 877 acres of Township owned lands. *Map OS-1* also indicates private lands that contribute to the overall recreation and open space in the community and the extensive Township lands that have not been formally committed to open space.

2.0 PROPOSED RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE INVENTORY

Map OS-2: Proposed Open Space and Recreation Map indicates the land tracts that should be committed and/or acquired for recreation and open space purposes in the Township. The Open Space Plan Map recommends that a total of 2,534 acres of Township owned land be formally committed to open space purposes. *Map OS-2* also indicates that 2,800 acres of privately owned, environmentally sensitive, lands that should be considered for acquisition.

3.0 RECREATION LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS

The key conclusions of the Level of Service discussion are as follows:

- Jackson Township has adequate parkland in terms of land area but the key issue is the quality of the parkland and the adequacy of the recreational facilities provided.
- There is a need for neighborhood parks to provide proximate recreational facilities in Jackson. These neighborhood facilities are best developed as part of planned developments and maintained by homeowner/neighborhood associations.
- Jackson has a diversity of public recreational facilities with the principal recreational demand being the need for quality recreational fields. The Township should continue to develop a small number of existing parks into major recreational complexes and develop community parks that serve a variety of recreational purposes.
- Jackson has a need for an indoor recreational facility to meet its community recreation programs needs located at one of the Township's existing parks. The indoor facility should be designed for flexible use and cost-efficient construction and operation.
- Facility Needs Assessment. Township recreational officials should periodically assess the adequacy of the Township's facilities based on empirical data, surveys, and their professional knowledge. These facility assessments should result in annual reports to the governing body with regard to facility deficiencies.

4.0 OPEN SPACE/CONSERVATION FACILITY MANAGEMENT

The OSRP recognizes that public lands are owned by a variety of entities in the same area and recommends that contiguous open space facilities be managed by single public or non-profit entity equipped to handle the responsibility. This objective can be accomplished by land swapping or by the use of management agreements. The use of non-profit entities to manage open space should also be considered if they have demonstrated their management experience and if they have management principles that are consistent with those of the Township.

5.0 FARMLAND PRESERVATION

The OSRP recognizes the lands that have been preserved under County farmland preservation program in the Township. If the pending applications are funded, a total of about 250 acres will have been preserved in Jackson Township under the farmland preservation program as shown on Map OS-2.

6.0 AIR INSTALLATION LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

To ensure land use compatibility around the Joint Base military installation, it is recommended that the Township actively pursue farmland and other development rights transfer or acquisition mechanisms in the Whitesville and Grawtown Road areas in conjunction with Ocean County and the Department of Defense.

Jackson Township Master Plan
Executive Summary: Land Use Plan Element

The Land Use Plan has been discussed as two separate but interrelated Plans for the Pinelands area and the area of the Township outside of the Pinelands. Certification by the Pinelands Commission is required for approval of the Land Use Plan for the Pinelands Area.

1.0 LAND USE PLAN (OUTSIDE OF PINELANDS)

Table ES-1 lists the basic changes included in the Land Use Plan for the area exclusive of the Pinelands. These include establishing an overlay Conservation Planning district to fully protect natural resources; creating a limited commercial district to increase commercial development opportunities; reducing the extent of non-conforming conditions; establishing zoning densities appropriate for the sewer service area; and establishing density appropriate for areas dependent on septic systems.

2.0 LAND USE PLAN (PINELANDS AREA)

Table ES-2 lists the basic changes included in the Land Use Plan for the Pinelands Area. The proposed changes are focused on increasing the protection of natural resources along the Toms River Corridor and increasing land use compatibility with the Joint Base.

The Land Use Plan specifically discusses the findings of the Toms River Corridor Study, the Environmental Integrity Assessment (EIA), and the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS). The Toms River Corridor Study emphasized the importance of protecting corridors along the Toms River to serve as links between critical habitats. The EIA conducted an assessment of the Pinelands to determine areas of high integrity based on the importance of the resource and the absence of encroachment. The JLUS examined the land use compatibility of the Joint Base that is to be formally established later this year. The study found that the most substantive potential land use conflicts are in Jackson Township as a result of anticipated noise impacts associated with the air-training mission at Lakehurst.

3.0 PLAN MAPS

- *Map LUI: Existing Land Use Map*
- *Map LU2: Existing Zoning Map*
- *Map LU3: Defense Air Facility Influence Zone (DAFIZ) Map*
- *Map LU4: Developed/Developable Map*
- *Map LU5: Preliminary State Plan Map*
- *Map LU6: Land Use Plan Map*

4.0 BUILD-OUT

A build-out analysis of the existing zoning and the Land Use plan was conducted and resulted in the following conclusions:

- *Developable Land.* Approximately 6,663 acres are considered developable land or about 10% of the Township. An additional 1,936 acres is considered underdeveloped land that is subject to further development under the Land Use Plan.

Residential Development

- **Existing Housing.** The analysis estimated that there are 19,423 housing units in the Township;
- **Existing Zoning.** The analysis projected that an additional 7,565 units could be constructed in the Township under current regulations or a 39% increase;
- **Land Use Plan.** The analysis projected that an additional 5,650 residential units could be constructed in the Township under the Land Use Plan or a 29% increase. The Land Use Plan reduces the residential build-out despite increasing the conforming status of hundreds of land tracts.

Non-residential development

- **Existing zoning.** The build-out analysis projected that a maximum of 4.9 million square feet of commercial development and 9.7 million square feet of industrial development could be constructed in the Township under current regulations.
- **Land Use Plan** The build-out analysis projected that a maximum of 9.5 million square feet of commercial development and 14.3 million square feet of industrial development could be constructed in the Township under the Land Use Plan. The Land Use Plan increases the non-residential development opportunities by 65% with much of the additional industrial development located within the Clayton Tract.

5.0 STATEMENT OF PLAN CONSISTENCY**5.1 State Plan**

The Land Use Plan has been determined to be generally consistent with the State Plan with the exception of Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area along Cedar Swamp Road and Perrineville Road. The Land Use Plan specifically explains why these planned development areas were retained. If necessary, the Plan Endorsement process could be utilized to resolve plan differences.

5.2 Pinelands Commission

The Land Use Plan has been determined to be generally consistent with the policies and objectives of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) even though there are substantive differences in the proposed management districts since the CMP did not fully assess the impact of the air training mission at NAES Lakehurst and has not been modified based on the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS).

5.3 Municipal Plans

The Land Use Plan has been determined to be generally consistent with the current zoning around the Jackson boundaries.

Table ES-1
Jackson Township Land Use Plan (Exclusive of Pinelands Area)
Executive Summary

ID	Planning District	Substantive Proposed Change
1	Conservation Planning District	Overlay Planning District to be basis of Conservation zoning district; Limits to be established based on GIS mapping and refined based on LOI; Development district standards to be satisfied exclusive of this district;
2	Community Commercial (CC) District	Planning district established to distinguish commercial nodal development from Highway Commercial zoning district; Intent is to allow more flexible development pattern and to use floor area ratios;
3	Limited Commercial (LC) District	Planning district established to support and enhance Highway Commercial district; Limited uses to be permitted in LC district as transition to residential districts and to maximize HC district for retail commercial;
4	Commercial Recreation-1	Planning district includes part of RC planning district and is intended to include sewer portion of Six Flags Great Adventure where complex expansion may take place.
5	Commercial Recreation-2	Planning district includes part of RC planning district and two existing golf courses and is intended to include lands that are not included in proposed sewer service area and are committed to natural lands;
6	Agricultural Retention (AR)	Planning district to recognize tracts that have been preserved under County farmland preservation program or have obtained final approval for preservation;
7	Restricted Residential (R-5)	Land Use Plan reduces the extent of the Restricted Residential Planning District by only including areas that are severely constrained; Much of this district will be included in overlay Conservation Planning District;
8	Rural Residential (R-3)	Land Use Plan establishes rural residential planning district to encompass residential areas outside of sewer service area; Three acre lot size supported provided that nitrate dilution standards are satisfied;
9	Rural Residential (R-2)	Rural Residential Planning District established to encompass residential areas outside of sewer service area adjacent to Metedeconk National Golf Course; Lot size to be supported by nitrate dilution model;
10	Low Density Residential (R-1)	Planning district established to replace R-3 zoning district within proposed sewer service area; One acre density selected to reflect prior development pattern and to ensure the efficient use of infrastructure; clustering recommended for larger tracts without density incentive;
11	Moderate/Medium Density Residential (R-9; R-15; R-20; R-30)	Land Use Plan creates moderate and medium density residential districts to recognize prior neighborhoods in sewer service area with smaller lot sizes and thereby reduce the extent of non-conforming lots;;
12	Planned Retirement Community (PRC)	PRC Planning District revised to include approved retirement community in PMUD zoning district;
13	Recreation and Open Space (ROS)	The extent of the ROS Planning District is increased based on the Open Space and Recreation Plan; Planning District is limited to lands committed that are to be committed to open space and recreation;
14	Public Facilities and Education (PFE)	PFE Planning district established to recognize lands committed to a public purpose other than recreation;

Note: No substantive changes in Multi-Family and PMURD zoning districts other than impact of Conservation District; Minor changes in NC and HC district limits;

Table ES-2
Jackson Township Land Use Plan (Pinelands Area)
Executive Summary

ID	Planning District	Substantive Proposed Change
P1	Conservation Planning District	Overlay Planning District to be basis of Conservation zoning district; Limits to be established based on GIS mapping and refined based on LOI; Development district standards to be satisfied exclusive of this district;
P2	Air Installation Compatible Use (AICUZ)	Overlay Planning District to be basis of regulations to ensure that any future development within accident potential zones or noise impact zones is fully compatible with military mission and that future residents are fully informed on unmitigated impacts;
P3	Planned Office/Industrial Development (POID)	Planning district established to permit planned office/industrial development in southeaster portion of Clayton tract; Proposed use would be more compatible with air training mission and would increase the opportunity for industrial development in the Township in close proximity to military base;
P4	Resource Extraction and Reclamation (RER)	Planning district established to recognize existing extraction operation and to support continued mining activity; All existing and prior uses in this district are to be closed and reclaimed to achieve a defined productive end use;
P5	Regional Growth Commercial (RGC-1)	Planning District expanded to increase commercial development opportunities along Hope Chapel Road;
P6	Pinelands Village	Land Use plan changes configuration of Legler Pinelands Village along Toms River Road to reduce the potential for residential development within Air Compatibility Use Zone
P7	Rural Development (RD)	Planning District increased in extent and Regional Growth Area reduced due to potential noise conflicts as a result of air training mission at NAES Lakehurst; Plan seeks to avoid conflicts whenever possible and to require deed notices and sound attenuation when conflicts cannot be prevented;
P8	Forest Area-6	Planning District increased in extent and Regional Growth Area reduced due to high environmental integrity along Toms River and Dutch Mill Brook Corridors and due to potential noise conflicts as a result of air training mission at NAES Lakehurst; Plan seeks to avoid conflicts whenever possible and to require deed notices and sound attenuation when conflicts cannot be prevented;
P9	Forest Area-2	Planning District expanded to establish consistent forested protection area along both sides of Bowman Road;
P10	Forest Area-1	Planning District expanded to establish consistent protected corridor along Toms River out to Hope Chapel Road;

Note: No substantive changes in other zoning districts other than impact of Conservation Planning District;

Table ES-3
Jackson Township Zoning/Planning District Comparison
Non-Pinelands

Land Use Designation	Current Zoning		Proposed Land Use Plan	
	District	Acres	District	Acres
Recreation and Open Space	ROS	5,442	ROS	7,045
Public Facilities and Education			PFE	517
Agricultural Retention			AR	170
Restricted Residential	R-5	3,254	R-5	2,047
Rural Residential (Very low density)	R-3	12,409	R-3	6,650
Rural Residential (Very low density)	R-2	800	R-2	328
Low Density Single family Residential			R-1	4,859
Moderate Density Single family Residential			R-30	51
Medium Density Single family Residential	R-20	428	R-20	912
Medium Density Single family Residential	R-15	933	R-15	706
Medium Density Single family Residential	R-9	610	R-9	420
Planned Retirement Community	PRC	1,701	PRC	1,943
Planned Mixed Unit Residential Development	PMURD	627	PMURD	636
Planned Unit Development-Residential	PMUD	1,511		
Mobile Home Park	MHP	208	MHP	205
Multi-Family	MF	349	MF	412
Multi-Family Affordable Housing	MF-AH 6	19	MF-AH 6	19
Community Commercial			CC	489
Highway Commercial	HC	1,703	HC	1,458
Neighborhood Commercial	NC	497	NC	405
Limited Commercial			LC	872
Recreation Commercial	RC	1,985		
Commercial Recreation			CR-1	679
Commercial Recreation			CR-2	1,848
Light Manufacturing	LM	1,149	LM	949
Industrial	I	365	I	371
Totals		33,991		33,991

Table ES-4
Jackson Township Zoning/Planning District Comparison

Pinelands Area

Land Use Designation	Current Zoning		Proposed Land Use Plan	
	District	Acres	District	Acres
Forest Area	FA-1	2,783	FA-1	3,613
Forest Area	FA-2	2,470	FA-2	3,023
Forest Area	FA-6	929	FA-6	1,431
Military Installation	MI	6,310	MI	6,310
Preservation Area	PA	9,288	PA	9,314
Planned Environmental Development	PED-1	11	PED-1	11
Planned Environmental Development	PED-9	233	PED-9	233
Pinelands Manufacturing	PM	434	PM	452
Planned Office/Industrial Development			POID	660
Pinelands Village	PV	1,310	PV	1,151
Pinelands Village Commercial	PVC-1	6	PVC-1	6
Pinelands Village Commercial	PVC-2	105	PVC-2	105
Resource Extraction and Reclamation			RER	849
Rural Development	RD	578	RD	1,595
Rural Development	RD-1	869	RD-1	716
Rural Development	RD-9	3,428	RD-9	571
Regional Growth	RG-2	1,464	RG-2	98
Regional Growth	RG-3	138	RG-3	138
Regional Growth Commerical	RGC-1	17	RGC-1	57
Regional Growth Commerical	RGC-2	5	RGC-2	45
Totals		30,379		30,378

Table ES-5
Jackson Township Master Plan
Zoning/Land Use Plan Buildout Comparison

<i>Non-Residential Development</i>				
Development Type	<i>Current Zoning</i>	<i>Land Use Plan</i>	Difference	Percent Change
	Maximum Square Feet	Maximum Square Feet		
Commercial Development	4,898,801	9,523,283	4,624,482	94.4%
Industrial Development	9,711,222	14,295,433	4,584,211	47.2%
Total Buildout (s.f.)	14,610,023	23,818,716	9,208,693	63.0%
<i>Residential Development</i>				
Dwelling Unit Type	<i>Current Zoning</i>	<i>Land Use Plan</i>	Difference	Percent Change
	Maximum Dwelling Units	Maximum Dwelling Units		
Single family	3,181	2,320	-861	-27.1%
Age restricted	2,875	1,681	-1,194	-41.5%
Multi family	1,550	1,608	58	3.7%
Total Buildout (d.u.)	7,606	5,609	-1,997	-26.3%