

Borough of Washington
Warren County, New Jersey

Master Plan Reexamination Report

March 2022

Adopted:

_____, 2022

Prepared by



Heyer, Gruel & Associates

Community Planning Consultants

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WASHINGTON BOROUGH
Master Plan Reexamination Report 2021

Washington Borough
Warren County, New Jersey

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Adopted by the Land Use Board on April XX, 2022

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

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

This Report constitutes a Master Plan Reexamination Report for the Borough of Washington as defined by the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89). The purpose of the Reexamination Report is to review and evaluate the local Master Plan and Development Regulations on a periodic basis in order to determine the need for updates and revisions. The Municipal Land Use Law requires municipalities to perform a reexamination of their Master Plan and development regulations at least every 10 years. A reexamination, however, can occur as often as a municipality determines one is warranted. A municipality may choose to go through a reexamination process when there is a need to document recent noteworthy changes, or to plan for anticipated significant future changes in the community.

Washington Borough adopted its first Master Plan on September 10, 1979. The Borough adopted subsequent Reexamination Reports with the most recent Reexamination Report occurring on March 12, 2007. Since the 2007 Master Plan Reexamination, Washington Borough has adopted several Master Plan Elements. The current Master Plan Elements include:

- Open Space and Recreation Plan Element (2019)
- Housing Element and Fair Share Plan (2009; 2019)
- Washington Borough Downtown Redevelopment Plan (2009)

Previous Master Plan Elements that have been adopted include the following:

- Master Plan (1978)
- Reexamination Reports (1982, 1989, 1994, 2000, 2003, 2005)
- Existing Land Use Study and Land Use Plan Element (1993)
- Wastewater Management Plan (1997)
- Amendment to the Land Use Plan (2003)
- Housing Element and Fair Share Plan (1994, 2005)
- Center Designation Report (1995; revised 1999)
- Conservation Element and Recreation and Open Space Plan (2000)
- Downtown Revitalization Plan (2002)
- Redevelopment Area Boundary Study (2006)
- Municipal Partnership Planning Pilot Grant Study (2006)

Since the Borough adopted its most recent Master Plan Reexamination Report, the assumptions, policies and objectives of which the Master Plan is based have changed by virtue of: a) the enactment of the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act (“Highlands Act,” N.J.S.A. 13:20-1 et seq.) by the State Legislation on August 10, 2004; b) the adoption of the Highlands Regional Master Plan by the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council (“Highlands Council”) on July 17, 2008, which became effective on September 8, 2008; and c) the affirmative decision of the Mayor and Washington Borough Council to conform to the Highlands Regional Master Plan as a Highlands Center for municipal lands located in the Planning Area, as set forth by Ordinance 2021-06 adopted on November 9, 2021.

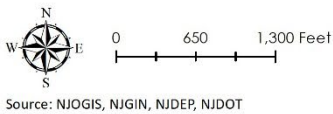
Accordingly, the Land Use Board has reexamined the Borough Master Plan and development regulations to determine the specific changes necessary to achieve consistency with the Highlands Regional Master Plan and thereby, to incorporate the specific changes in State policies, goals, and objectives as set forth by the Highlands Act. It is the intent of this Report to identify the specific revisions needed to bring the

Borough Master Plan and development regulations into conformance with the Highlands Regional Master Plan. It is also the intent of this Report to consider and provide recommendations concerning other land use and zoning issues in the Borough which have arisen during the past several years since the adoption of the 2007 Reexamination Report.

Periodic Reexamination of the Master Plan

New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89) requires the Master Plan Reexamination Report to contain the following:

- 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 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 Land Use Board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law," P.L.1992, c. 79 (C.40A: 12A-1 et 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; and,
- F. The recommendations of the Land Use Board concerning locations appropriate for the development of public electric vehicle infrastructure, including but not limited to, commercial districts, areas proximate to public transportation and transit facilities and transportation corridors, and public rest stops; and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary or appropriate for the development of public electric vehicle infrastructure.



Aerial (2020)
Washington Borough, Warren County, New Jersey



A: PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES IDENTIFIED IN THE PREVIOUS REPORTS

“The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last Reexamination Report.”

The goals and objectives of a Master Plan are intended to provide a policy framework for the Plan and to guide other activities in the Borough that have an influence on land development. This framework is not presented in an order of hierarchy; rather, all items are important to the future growth and development within the Borough of Washington.

The 2007 Master Plan Reexamination Report identified the following concerns as remaining relevant to the Borough:

- The need to maintain a strong business center by improving the downtown area; and,
- The need to provide an adequate supply of recreation lands and protection of environmentally sensitive lands in the Borough.

The 2007 Master Plan Reexamination Report also indicates the following assumptions forming the basis of the Master Plan and development regulations:

- Protection of environmentally sensitive resources
- Downtown revitalization
- Affordable housing
- Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act

SECTION B: REVIEW OF THE MAJOR PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES

“The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.”

Issues from the 2007 Master Plan Reexamination Report

The need to maintain a strong business center by improving the downtown area

The Borough adopted a Downtown Redevelopment Plan to guide development efforts along a portion of Washington Avenue and Route 31 on April 7, 2009. The Plan creates three distinct districts: The Washington Avenue Core District, Route 31 Gateway District, and the Public Park District. Since 2007, there have been several development applications within the Redevelopment Area including the CVS, Taco Bell, and Towne Center Project.

The CVS pharmacy/convenience store received site plan approval in 2019 and opened in the fall of 2021. A Taco Bell received approval in 2019 and is currently under construction. The Town Center Project, a mixed-use building with 50 units and first floor commercial space, received site plan approval in 2013. The Borough’s first micro-brewery, Buttsville Brewery, opened in an existing storefront in 2021. Additional changes of use have also occurred within the Borough.

The Washington Business Improvement District (BID) continues to provide services to the Borough. The BID was established in 2003 via Ordinance 7-2003. The BID provides assistance to all businesses within the Borough and serves as a small business development center. The BID is funded using a special improvement tax assessment and receives sponsorships from businesses and corporations.

However, there have been issues within the downtown with respect to property and building maintenance. In 2021, façade facing Washington Avenue of one of the buildings within the core of the downtown collapsed. Scaffolding has been installed for safety measures.

However, in order to maintain the Borough’s revitalization efforts, the downtown should continue to remain a priority for the Borough. This recommendation continues to remain valid.

The need to provide an adequate supply of recreation lands and protection of environmentally sensitive lands in the Borough.

The Borough adopted an Open Space and Recreation Plan in 2019, which was prepared in accordance with NJDEP Green Acres Standards. The Plan included an inventory of the Borough’s existing parkland, both publicly and privately owned, an assessment of natural resources, and recommendations for recreational facility development of public and private lands.

The Borough purchased the Shabbecong Nature Preserve on March 4, 2020 in accordance with their executed Settlement Agreement with Washington Station Ventures. The Borough received grants to assist with the acquisition of the property from NJDEP Green Acres and Warren County. Further, the Borough enacted a municipal open space tax for a period of 5-years to provide a local match to the grant sources. The Borough is currently working to install a network of hiking trails on the property that connects to other Borough-owned properties across the railroad.

Through the Borough’s Plan Conformance activities as a Designated Highlands Center, it is anticipated that the Borough will be evaluating their existing planning documents, ordinances, as well as determining

whether Highlands Redevelopment is appropriate, in order to encourage development and create a successful and thriving economic landscape.

This recommendation continues to remain valid.

Affordable Housing

The Borough of Washington participated in the Third Round Certification Process under the amended Third Round Rules. The Borough adopted a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan on November 9, 2009 and petitioned COAH on January 6, 2010. COAH deemed the petition complete on April 16, 2010. However, the Borough did not receive Third Round Certification as the majority of COAH’s rules were invalidated by the Appellate Division.

In response to Mount Laurel IV, which established the transitional process for municipalities to seek temporary immunity and a final Judgement of Repose, the Borough filed a declaratory judgement action on July 1, 2015 (Docket No. WRN-L-230-15). In an Order filed August 25, 2015, the Borough was granted temporary immunity from builder’s remedy actions.

On November 6, 2015, property owners Washington Station Venture, LP and Washington Venture Investment, Ltd. (collectively the “Washington Venture Entities”) was granted leave to intervene in the Borough’s Action. Fair Share Housing Center (FSHC) is also a participating party in the Action in accordance with Mount Laurel IV. A settlement agreement with FSHC was executed on December 10, 2018. A settlement agreement with Washington Ventures Entities was executed on July 10, 2018, and amended by two subsequent agreements dated September 9, 2019 and June 16, 2020.

The Settlement Agreement with FSHC includes the following obligation for the Borough of Washington:

Rehabilitation Share	69
Prior Round Obligation	0
Third Round Obligation	42

The Settlement Agreement with Washington Ventures Entities included provisions for the rezoning of property identified as Block 97 Lots 2, 3, and 4 and Block 97.01 Lot 1 on the Tax Maps of the Borough of Washington. The overall size of the tract is approximately 125.5 acres. In accordance with the executed Settlement Agreement and subsequent amendments, the Borough rezoned approximately 35 acres of the tract to the MO-3 Mountain Overlay Residential District, which permits no more than 50 for sale single-family homes on 7,000 square-foot lots subject to the extension of public water and sewer, and created additional standards for common open space, roadways, and accessory structures. Approximately 10 acres of the tract was rezoned to the C-3 Cemetery District, permitting the adjacent cemetery to expand over a portion of the property and allowing a 10,000 sq. ft. area be developed with a cell tower. As discussed above, the remainder of the tract, approximately 80 acres, was purchased by the Borough utilizing additional grant sources.

A Fairness Hearing was held on December 20, 2018, at which time the Court approved the Settlement Agreements between the Borough and FSHC, and the Borough, Land Use Board and Washington Venture Entities. The Court also deemed the agreements fair and reasonable and that they adequately protect the interest of low- and moderate-income households. The approval was memorialized by an Order entered by the Court on January 23, 2019.

The Borough adopted a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan on July 8, 2019, which was subsequently endorsed by the Borough Council via Resolution 2019-119 on September 3, 2019.

An Amended Fairness and Compliance Hearing was held on August 27, 2020, in which the Borough receives a Conditional Judgement of Compliance and Repose (CJOR). The Borough has satisfied the conditions of the CJOR, and a Final Judgement of Compliance and Repose was issued on November 16, 2021, granting the Borough immunity through July 1, 2025.

SECTION C: SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE ASSUMPTIONS IMPACTING THE MASTER PLAN

“The extent to which there have been significant changes in 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.”

Since the reexamination of the Borough’s Master Plan in 2007, there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives that must be addressed in the Borough’s Master Plan. These include but are not limited to compliance with the Highlands Regional Master Plan, demographic characteristics, housing conditions, employment, affordable housing, and regional plans.

Changes at the Local Level

Conformance with the Highlands Regional Master Plan

Since the adoption of the Borough’s most recent Master Plan Reexamination Report in 2007, the passage of the Highlands Act, adoption of the Regional Master Plan by the Highlands Council, and the adoption by the Governing Body of its resolution to conform the municipal planning documents to the Regional Master Plan, have significantly altered and increased the objectives that must be addressed in the Borough Master Plan, including but not limited to incorporating a variety of Highlands Resource protections, providing an emphasis on infrastructure and environmental carrying capacities, and initiating a substantial modification to the methodology to be used in determining permitted densities of development within the municipality.

Washington Borough had previously considered “opting in” to the Highlands Plan Conformance process in 2008, as the Borough is located entirely within the optional Planning Area. However, at that time, the governing body ultimately decided to not pursue Plan Conformance.

The Borough has since renewed its interest in conforming to the Highlands Regional Master Plan as a Highlands Center. Growth within the Highlands is encouraged within the Planning Area and within designated Highlands Centers. The Borough adopted the Resolution of Intent to Revise the Master Plan and Development Regulations for Highlands Plan Conformance for Land in the Planning Area on February 5, 2019 via Resolution 2019-44. Since this time, the Borough prepared its Initial Assessment (October 2020) and the Implementation Plan and Schedule (January 2021), which were submitted as part of the Borough’s Petition for Plan Conformance. The Petition was approved by the Highlands Council on February 18, 2021.

The Borough’s Petition for Plan Conformance includes a variety of actions that will be completed in order to conform to the Highlands Regional Master Plan, one of which is the adoption of a Master Plan Reexamination Report.

During the Borough’s Petition for Plan Conformance, the Borough mapped the underlying Highlands Land Use Capability Zones (LUCZs). The LUCZs will not take effect until the Borough adopts the Highlands Referral Ordinance or Highlands Land Use Ordinance. However, since the Borough is designated a Highlands Center, Borough specific Highlands Center Planning and subsequent Ordinances will take place of the abovementioned Ordinances negating the impact of the LUCZs. Furthermore, since portions of the Borough were identified as being within a Protection Zone of the Planning Area and having

environmentally sensitive resources, the Borough will be creating an overlay zone that relates to environmental protection of these areas.

Demographics

The population trends experienced in Washington Borough, Warren County, and New Jersey from 1930 through 2020 are shown in the chart below. In 2020, the Borough had a total population 7,299 residents, which represents a 13% increase from 2010. Between 1930 and 2000, the Borough’s population increased, with the most significant increase occurring between 1950 and 1960, when the population grew by nearly 20%, or 921 persons. Between 2000 and 2010, the Borough’s population decreased slightly by 3.7% or 251 people, before increasing by 838 people in 2020.

The Borough’s population somewhat mirrors trends occurring at the County and State Level. Between 1950 and 1960, Warren County grew by 16%, and the State 25.5%. However, between 2000 and 2010, both the County and the State experienced continued growth, where the Borough’s population declined. Further, the Borough experienced a more drastic population increase between 2010 and 2020 than both the State and County. In fact, nearly all growth occurring in Warren County between 2010 and 2020 occurred within the Borough.

Population Trends									
Year	Washington Borough			Warren County			New Jersey		
	Population	Change		Population	Change		Population	Change	
		Number	Percentage		Number	Percentage		Number	Percentage
1930	4,410	-	-	49,319	-	-	4,041,334	-	-
1940	4,643	233	5.3%	50,181	862	1.7%	4,160,165	118,831	2.9%
1950	4,802	159	3.4%	54,374	4,193	8.4%	4,835,329	675,164	16.2%
1960	5,723	921	19.2%	63,220	8,846	16.3%	6,066,782	1,231,453	25.5%
1970	5,943	220	3.8%	73,960	10,740	17.0%	7,171,112	1,104,330	18.2%
1980	6,429	486	8.2%	84,429	10,469	14.2%	7,365,011	193,899	2.7%
1990	6,474	45	0.7%	91,607	7,178	8.5%	7,730,188	365,177	5.0%
2000	6,712	238	3.7%	102,437	10,830	11.8%	8,414,350	684,162	8.9%
2010	6,461	-251	-3.7%	108,692	6,255	6.1%	8,791,894	377,544	4.5%
2020	7,299	838	13.0%	109,632	940	0.9%	9,288,994	497,100	5.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2020 data supplied by US Census Dec Redistricting Data (PL 94-171)

The following table represents the Borough’s population by age cohort for the year 2010 and 2019. During this 9-year time period, the Borough’s population remained relatively consistent. However, the Borough’s younger population (those under 24 years old) has decreased significantly, while the Borough’s senior population (over 55) has increased.

It is important to note that the US Census Bureau is in the process of releasing the results of the 2020 Decennial Census. At this time, the Bureau has not released the 2020 Census data by age cohort.

Population by Age 2010 and 2019, Washington Borough						
Population	2010		2019		Change, 2010 to 2019	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total population	6,461	100.0%	6,490	100.0%	29	0.4%
Under 5 years	415	6.4%	330	5.1%	-85	-20.5%
5 to 14	828	12.8%	722	11.1%	-106	-12.8%
15 to 24	845	13.1%	755	11.6%	-90	-10.7%
25 to 34	824	12.8%	923	14.2%	99	12.0%
35 to 44	1,038	16.1%	925	14.3%	-113	-10.9%
45 to 54	1,084	16.8%	1,111	17.1%	27	2.5%
55 to 64	745	11.5%	908	14.0%	163	21.9%
65 and over	682	10.6%	816	12.6%	134	19.6%

Source: US Census Bureau Table QT-P1; 2015-2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates S0101

Housing Characteristics

According to the recently released 2020 Decennial Census, Washington Borough had a total of 3,219 housing units in 2020, of which 93.3% were occupied and 6.7% were vacant. As of the writing of this Report, not all the statistics from the 2020 Decennial Census have been released, such as statistics pertaining to owner- and renter-occupied housing units.

The American Community Survey 2015-2019 5-year estimates provides additional details pertaining to other housing characteristics, such as ownership and the year structure built. According to the ACS, approximately 52.3% of all housing units are occupied by the owner, with the remainder (approximately 47.7%) are occupied by renters.

Housing Characteristics		
	#	%
Total Housing Units	3,219	100.0%
Occupied	3,002	93.3%
Vacant	217	6.7%

Source: 2020 Dec Redistricting Data (PL94-171)

	#	%
Total Occupied Housing Units (est.)	2,689	100.0%
Owner-Occupied Housing Units	1,406	52.3%
Renter-Occupied Housing Units	1,283	47.7%

Source: ACS 2015-2019 5-year estimates, S2501

Based upon the ACS 2015-2019 5-year estimates, housing construction has remained relatively steady, peaking between 1970 to 1979. The majority of the Borough's housing was built prior to 1980 (approximately 73%) and has a median year of construction of 1958.

Year Structure Built Washington Borough, 2019		
	#	%
Built 1939 or earlier	878	30.3%
Built 1940 to 1949	339	11.7%
Built 1950 to 1959	276	9.5%
Built 1960 to 1969	240	8.3%
Built 1970 to 1979	378	13.0%
Built 1980 to 1989	206	7.1%
Built 1990 to 1999	130	4.5%
Built 2000 to 2009	197	6.8%
Built 2010 or later	253	8.7%
Total	2,897	100.0%
Median Year Structure Built		
	1958	

Source: ACS 2015-2019 5-year estimates, B25034, B25035

Employment Characteristics

The 2015-2019 ACS 5-year estimates reveal that 76.3% of the population aged 16 and over in Washington Borough is in the labor force, where 67.2% of the County’s population 16 years and over is in the labor force. All of the Borough’s population is classified as being in the civilian labor force, with the majority being employed. These trends are also experienced within the County, where nearly all the labor force consists of mostly employed civilians.

Employment Washington Borough and Warren County, 2019 Estimates				
	Washington Borough		Warren County	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Population 16 years and over	5,357	100.0%	87,625	100.0%
In labor force	4,087	76.3%	58,845	67.2%
Civilian Labor Force	4,087	76.3%	58,818	67.1%
Employed	3,721	69.5%	55,354	63.2%
Unemployed	366	6.8%	3,464	4.0%
Armed Forces	0	0.0%	27	0.0%
Not in labor force	1,270	23.7%	28,780	32.8%

Source: ACS 2015-2019 5-year Estimates, DP03

There is currently very limited information available on actual job opportunities within municipalities. The Department of Labor collects information on covered employment, which is employment and wage data for private employees covered by unemployment insurance. The table below provide a snapshot of private employers and the number of jobs covered by private employment insurance from 2006 through 2019.

According to data from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the highest number of covered jobs in the Borough occurred in 2007 when 2,373 were covered by unemployment insurance. Private employment decreased most significantly between 2008 and 2009, when covered employment decreased by 297 jobs, due to the Great Recession. Between 2007 and 2011, nearly 500 jobs were lost in the Borough. Since 2012, private employment has remained relatively stable, reaching a decade high of 2,024 jobs in 2016. Since 2016, the number of jobs fluctuated, peaking to 1,974 jobs in 2019.

Private Wage Covered Employment 2006-2019 Washington Borough			
Year	Number of Jobs	# Change	% Change
2006	2,270	-	-
2007	2,373	103	4.5%
2008	2,230	-143	-6.0%
2009	1,933	-297	-13.3%
2010	1,887	-46	-2.4%
2011	1,877	-10	-0.5%
2012	1,903	27	1.4%
2013	1,897	-7	-0.3%
2014	1,907	11	0.6%
2015	1,949	42	2.2%
2016	2,024	75	3.8%
2017	1,934	-90	-4.4%
2018	1,937	3	0.2%
2019	1,974	37	1.9%

Source: NJ Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development Labor Force Estimates

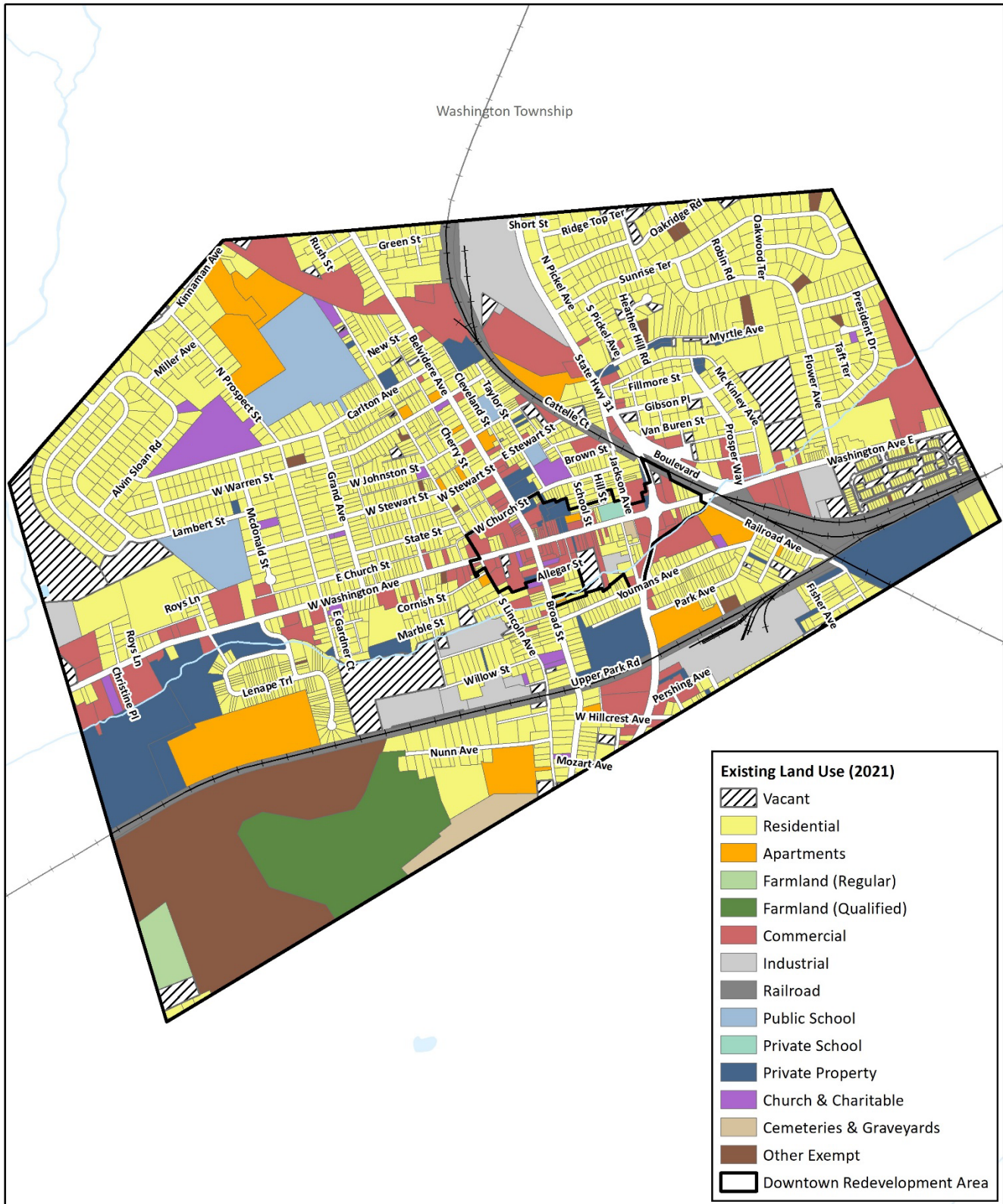
Existing Land Use

Based upon the Borough’s 2021 Tax Assessment Records and available GIS parcel data, the Borough is comprised of 2,380 parcels, totaling 1,105 acres. The following chart shows the number of parcels and the acreage associated with each classification based upon tax assessment records:

Existing Land Use (2021 Tax Assessment Records)				
Category	Number of Parcels		Acres	
	#	%	#	%
Vacant	63	2.6%	67.6	6.1%
Residential	2,013	84.6%	508.6	46.0%
Farmland (Regular)	1	0.0%	6.9	0.6%
Farmland (Qualified)	1	0.0%	45.3	4.1%
Commercial	160	6.7%	105.3	9.5%
Industrial	12	0.5%	52.4	4.7%
Apartments	19	0.8%	57.6	5.2%
Railroad	18	0.8%	47.9	4.3%
Public School	4	0.2%	33.6	3.0%
Private School	1	0.0%	1.2	0.1%
Public Property	45	1.9%	74.2	6.7%
Church & Charitable	23	1.0%	18.3	1.7%
Cemeteries & Graveyards	2	0.1%	8.2	0.7%
Other Exempt	18	0.8%	77.9	7.0%
Total	2,380	100.0%	1,105.0	100.0%

As shown in the chart above, residential (property classification 2) makes up the largest area of the Borough (over 500 acres) and constitutes approximately 84.6% of all the parcels in the Borough. The second largest category (in both acres and number of parcels) are commercial properties (property class 4A), which makes up over 105 acres and 160 parcels.

The following map shows the location of the Borough’s existing land use, based upon 2021 Tax Assessment Records, in the Borough.



Source: NJGIS, NJIN, NJDEP, NJDOT

Existing Land Use (2021)
Washington Borough, Warren County, New Jersey



Community Facilities

Washington Borough Municipal Building

Borough Hall, located at 100 Belvidere Road, was built in 1923. Borough Hall contains the Borough's offices and staff and is the meeting place for the Borough Council, the Land Use Board and other Boards and Committees. Since its construction, there have been many enhancements to the building. However, due to the age of the building, there are ongoing issues with maintenance of the building's utilities, such as electric and HVAC.

In early 2020, Borough Hall was scheduled to have an energy audit conducted of the building, that would identify additional energy efficiency measures. Due to the the Covid-19 pandemic, the energy audit has been delayed.

Parks/Open Space

The Borough has several parks located throughout the Borough, including Borough Park. An Open Space and Recreation Plan was adopted by the Land Use Board in May 2019. As a requirement for Green Acres matching grant funds, the Plan is required to be updated every 10 years. The Borough received a 50% matching grant from NJDEP Green Acres to purchase the Shabbecong Nature Preserve in accordance with their executed Settlement Agreement with Washington Ventures Entities. A 5-year local open space tax was enacted to assist with the purchase of the property. Warren County Open Space Funds were also received by the Borough to assist with the cost of preserving the land. The Borough is working to create a trails system through the Wandling Avenue property that will connect to the Shabbecong Mountain Preserve, and will provide passive recreation opportunities, including hiking trails, bird watching, etc.

The Borough no longer has a Recreation Committee. In its place is a non-profit organization, the Washington Borough Youth Association, that was founded in December 2020.

Public Schools

Washington Borough has two elementary schools that have kindergarten to 6th grade curriculum. Both schools are part of the Washington Borough School District. Taylor Street School is located at 16-24 Taylor Street and Memorial School is school is located at 300 West Stewart Street. In 2019, the Washington Borough School District was awarded the Lighthouse District recognition by the New Jersey Department of Education¹.

In 2021, the Karen Nash Memorial Butterfly Garden was installed in front of Memorial Elementary School. This quarter-acre butterfly garden and schoolyard wildlife habitat received awards from several organizations including the National Plant America, National Public, National Garden Club Inc., and the Garden Club of New Jersey State.

Washington Borough is part of the Warren Hills Regional School District for middle school (grades 7th and 8th) and High School (9th through 12th.) Warren Hills Regional Middle School is located within the Borough off of Carlton Avenue, where Warren Hills High School is located just outside the Borough's northern municipal boundary in Washington Township.

¹ https://www.nj.gov/education/lighthouse/cohorts/2019cohort/narratives/Washington_Borough_Narrative.pdf

Library

The Borough has its own public library, the Washington Public Library, located at 20 Carlton Avenue. The Washington Public Library is not part of the Warren County Library system. The library has a Board of Trustees and employs several staff members. However, in recent years, state library funding has been reduced, leading to a reduction in the number of staff employed and limited hours of operation. Friends of the Washington Public Library, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, was created to raise additional funding for the library that can be used to purchase new materials and to provide assistance as needed.

Emergency Services

As mentioned above, the Borough's Fire Department is located within Borough Hall. The Borough and Washington Township have a shared services agreement for police services. The Washington Township Police Station is located to the north of the Borough's municipal boundary with Washington Township on Route 31.

The Washington Emergency Squad, located adjacent to Borough Hall, is a non-profit combination paid/volunteer agency that provides Emergency Medical and Rescue Services to the citizens of Washington Borough and Washington Township. The squad operates 4 BLS ambulances licensed by the State of New Jersey Department of Public Health, as well as a Heavy Rescue unit that is equipped to respond to any call for service in which a person(s) needs to be removed from an area they are trapped.

Infrastructure

The majority of the Borough falls within the Sewer Service Area. The Borough owns and operates a municipal sewer treatment plant. The NJPDES Capacity Assurance Program released its "Municipal Facilities Average Flow vs Permitted Flow" for 12-consecutive months as of May 2019. The report found that the Washington Borough WWTP has a Permit Flow of 1.16 MGD, where the average flow is 0.753 MGD, resulting in the Borough having reached 65.11% of its capacity.

The Borough utilizes New Jersey American Water as its public drinking water system. NJ American Water has the Public Water State Identification of #NJ2121001 and consists of 5 wells that use ground water supplies from Jacksonburg limestone, Kittatinny Supergroup. The Washington System supplies approximately 1.3 million gallons per day to its customers that are located in Franklin Township, Washington Township, Oxford Township, Warren, Washington Township, Washington Borough and White Township. The permitted capacity of the Washington System is 4.535 MGD, with an average flow of 1.13 MGD. Approximately 25% of the capacity is being utilized.

Solid Waste Management

Historically, the Borough contracted with private haulers for solid waste removal, including recycling. However, in early 2021, the Borough the Borough's Department of Public Works began providing solid waste removal within the Borough. Each household and eligible business received two 95-gallon containers- one for trash, and one for recycling. Pick up occurs once per week throughout the year.

The Borough also expanded their brush collection operation with pick up occurring once per week between mid-April and mid-December. The Borough also collects Christmas Trees in January. The Borough recently opened a brush collection convenience center at the DPW property for the use of its residents. Vegetative waste is collected at the center and is hauled away by a private contractor, which uses the brush to produce mulch and topsoil.

Business Improvement District

As mentioned in Section B of this Report, the Washington Borough BID continues to provide its services as a small business resource center to the Borough and the Borough's businesses. The BID provides a series of networking event for business owners in the area, including BID Goodnight and a Lunch and Learn series. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Lunch and Learn series is currently postponed until further notice, and only recently, has BID Goodnight been reinstated.

The BID organizes multiple community events throughout the year, including the following:

- Day of the Dead
- Rock N Roll/Steampunk Fair
- Arts, Crafts & Music Festival
- Festival in the Borough
- Hometown Halloween
- Small Business Saturday
- Hometown Holiday

The BID also assists the Green Team with the Annual Green Fest and the weekly farmers market from June through October, which attracts residents and visitors into the Borough.

The BID received grants for past projects which included benches, planters, trash cans, and light pole banners for general and special occasions.

Shade Tree Commission

The Borough first established a Shade Tree Commission in 1979, which has been subsequently amended in 2012 and in 2021. The Shade Tree Commission oversees the regulation, planting care and control of shade trees upon or in the streets, highways, public places, parks or parkways within the Borough. The Shade Tree Commission consists of seven residents of the municipality.

2019-2023 Community Forestry Management Plan

In 2019, a Community Forestry Management Plan was prepared for the Borough and is the fourth consecutive five-year plan that builds upon successes realized in implementing the Borough's three previous five-year plans. The Plan is primarily focused on public trees along Borough streets and on Borough properties. The Plan provides comprehensive shade tree management strategies that will help preserve the aesthetic appeal of existing streetscapes and the overall character of residential neighborhoods and the Borough.

Sustainability & Resiliency

Municipalities in New Jersey are following national and global trends towards planning for enhanced environmental sustainability and community resiliency. Land use planning and land development policies play a key role in advancing resiliency and sustainability initiatives, because land development policies mediate the natural and built environments.

Sustainability is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In 2013, the Mayor and Council of Washington Borough passed Resolution 53-2013 supporting participation in the Sustainable Jersey Municipal

Certification Program. Sustainable Jersey is a statewide voluntary program that encourages municipalities to implement sustainable practices across many community development dimensions. The Borough's Environmental Commission serves as the liaison to the Program for the Borough. In July 2017, the Washington Borough Green Team was created via Ordinance 2017-12.

The Borough's Green Team received Bronze Certification from Program in 2019 by implementing sustainable actions, including the following:

- *Animals in the Community Education*- The Animal Control Officer educates the community about interacting with local wildlife, loose pets, the importance of native animals, licensing of pets, and general education about wildlife, both online and in person at schools and the library. Dove Environmental also provides environmental education programming at the Karen Nash Memorial Butterfly Garden, located at Memorial Elementary School, as well as at the Green Fest, Festival in the Borough, Farmers Markets, and events sponsored by Warren County Clean Communities.
- *Companion Animal Management Pledge*- The Borough passed numerous ordinances and resolutions over the years pertaining to animals in the community. The Borough code was amended to require proof of sterilization and rabies vaccination for cat and dog licensing. The animal control ordinance was also amended to address trapping, sterilization and release of feral cats (TNR), and regulations concerning agricultural animals, such as chickens, were also added to the Code.
- *Creating a Green Team*- the Green Team was formed in 2013 and was established by ordinance in July 2017, which allows the Green Team to work more closely with Borough Council, the Borough Manager, and the Washington Business Improvement District. The Green Team consists of the Mayor, the Borough Manager, the Executive Director of the Business Improvement District, at least 1 Borough Council member, 1 member of the Shade Tree Commission, and at least 1 Planning Board member.
- *Community Education and Outreach*- The Green Team hosts two cleanups along the Shabbecong Creek annually. During the clean ups, a member of the Green Team educates attendees about environmental topics.
- *Green Fair*- The Green Team hosts the Annual Green Fest which coordinates with the opening of the Washington Borough Farmers Market. The Green Fest features environmental vendors, non-profit organizations, educational booths, and live music. The Green Fest is a family-friendly and free event that conveys the importance of protecting the environment and supporting local farmers.
- *Municipal On-Site Solar System*- In 2017, the Borough commissioned two solar energy array projects- A 32.4 kW roof-mounted solar energy system was installed at the DPW garage, and a 480 kW ground-mounted photovoltaic system was installed at Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- *Community Gardens*- The Washington Community Garden Association, a non-profit organization, was created in the fall of 2010, and manages the garden plots, which are rented on an annual basis.
- *Farmers Market*- The Green Team, Borough Council, and Washington Borough Business Improvement District run the Washington Borough Farmers' Market on Saturdays from June through October. The GreenFest kicks off the opening of the Farmers' Market, and incorporated throughout the season are theme days, which help to attract attendees. Each week, a variety of

fresh produce, cut flowers, potted herbs and plants, honey, eggs, dried herbs, artwork and crafts are available.

- *Innovative Community Project 1*- The Green Team received a \$2,000 Sustainable Jersey grant in 2017 to plant native perennial plants in Veterans Park and the adjacent parking lot. Shrubs and Trees and shrubs were also planted along the Shabbecong Creek at the Borough-owned property, to reclaim the area from invasive species.
- *Sustainable Land Use Pledge*- Borough Council passed a resolution endorsing a Sustainable Land Use Pledge in 2018. Completed sustainable activities include replacing the lights in Borough Hall and the DPW Garage with LED fixtures, purchasing a large, wooded property to preserve as open space, updating the Open Space and Recreation Plan, and receiving grants to begin the cleanup process for a brownfield within the Borough.
- *Support Local Businesses*- The Green Team received certification points towards their Bronze Certification for the Washington Borough Business Improvement District.
- *Adoption of an Open Space and Recreation Plan*- The Open Space and Recreation Plan was adopted by the Land Use Board in 2019.
- *Community Forestry Management Plan and New Jersey Urban and Community Forestry Accreditation*- The Shade Tree Commission approved its most recent Community Forestry Management Plan in 2019 and is accredited by the NJ Urban and Community Forestry Program.
- *Tree Maintenance Program*- The Shade Tree Commission manages over 1,100 trees that are located within Borough rights-of-way and within Borough parks. These trees are observed annually for hazards. Certified contractors are used for most of the work and the DPW assists periodically.
- *Tree Planting Program*- In 2016, the Shade Tree Commission received a grant from the NJ Division of Parks and Forestry for tree planting. 26 trees were planted using this funding- 8 trees were planted in Borough Park to provide shade and improve the aesthetics along Route 31, and the remaining trees were planted in front of private homes with the goal of improving aesthetics and providing shade, wildlife habitat, and clean air.
- *Municipal Communications Strategy*- The Borough has focused on improving municipal communications, including updating its website with information from GovPilot, an active Facebook page, and sends out Nixle Alerts via text and email regularly.
- *Digitizing Public Information*- The Green Team received certification for providing information in an electronic format, mostly stemming from the up-to-date Borough website and other online forums.
- *Prescription Drug Safety and Disposal*- The Washington Township Police Department is a Project Medicine Drop location, where people can drop off unneeded and expired medications. The Borough has a shared service agreement with the Washington Township Police Department.
- *Community Paper Shredding Day*- The Green Team hosts a community paper shredding day annually, which usually coincides with their annual GreenFest. Warren County also provides paper shredding services twice a year.

In addition to the Borough's Sustainable Jersey Certification, an electric vehicle charging station was installed within the public parking lot, located at 44 East Washington Avenue, in 2021. The electric vehicle charging station is the first EV station in Warren County. The Business Improvement District received a

grant through the NJDEP program “It Pays to Plug In” to assist with the cost of purchasing and installing the station.

Environmental Contamination

The Borough has several known contaminated sites, as well as the Pohatcong Valley Ground Water Contamination Superfund Site. The following chart gives additional information pertaining to the contaminated sites, and corresponding map shows the location of these areas.

NJDEP Known Contaminated Sites					
Site ID	PI Name	Address	PI Number	Program	Level of Site Complexity
561	Mobil Oil Corp 315C9X	143 Washington Ave	9501	Post Remedial Case	C2
561	Lukoil #57246	143 Washington Ave E	20499	RAP Case	
567	Rossi Pontiac Buick Gmc	29 Rt 31 S	6176	RAP Case	C2
15032	Delta Gas	160 E Washington Ave	926	LSRP Case	C2
15032	Krausers Bp	160 Washington Ave E	207854	LSRP Case	C2
14559	Pohatcong Valley Grd Wtr Contamination*	Rte 653 To Rte 31	G000005662	NJDEP Publicly Funded case	C3
71795	Five Carp Co Llc	14 Brass Castle Rd	G000014772	LSRP Case	C1
51456	Park Hill Apartments	66 Park Ave	17035	RAP Case	
41981	Maxon Chevrolet - Olds Inc	200 210 E Washington Ave	1547	NJDEP Publicly Funded case	C3
42597	Burd Motor Co Inc	220 E Washington Ave	3164	Post Remedial Case	C2
67277	New Jersey American Water Co Wells 3 & 4	50 Dale Ave	G000011599	NJDEP Publicly Funded case	C3
66875	Turbine Alloy Corporation	280 Belvidere Ave	G000009567	LSRP Case	D
29275	Washington Borough Coal Gas Jcp&L	115 Lincoln Ave S	18062	LSRP Case	C3
367811	Bill Fox Enterprises	33 39 Willow St	778705	LSRP Case	B
196773	Washington Boro Parking Lot	50 52 Washington St	258334	RAP Case	
598718	33 W Washington Ave	33 W Washington Ave	752375	LSRP Case	B

*Listed on the EPA National Priorities List

As shown in the chart above, the Borough has 16 known contaminated sites located within its municipal boundary. Each site is assigned a Site ID, Program Interest (PI) Name, and a PI Number. The Program column refers to the lead program for the site, which include the following:

- *Post Remedial Case:* Sites where an No Further Action (NFA) or Remedial Action Outcome (RAO) with limited restricted use and/or restricted use institutional control has been issued.
- *RAP Case:* Remedial Action Permit case. Restricted Use or Limited Restricted Use No Further Action (NFA)/Remedial Action Outcome (RAO) case with an associated soil and/or ground water

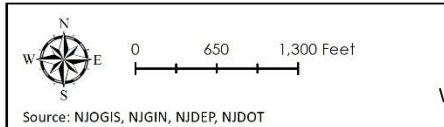
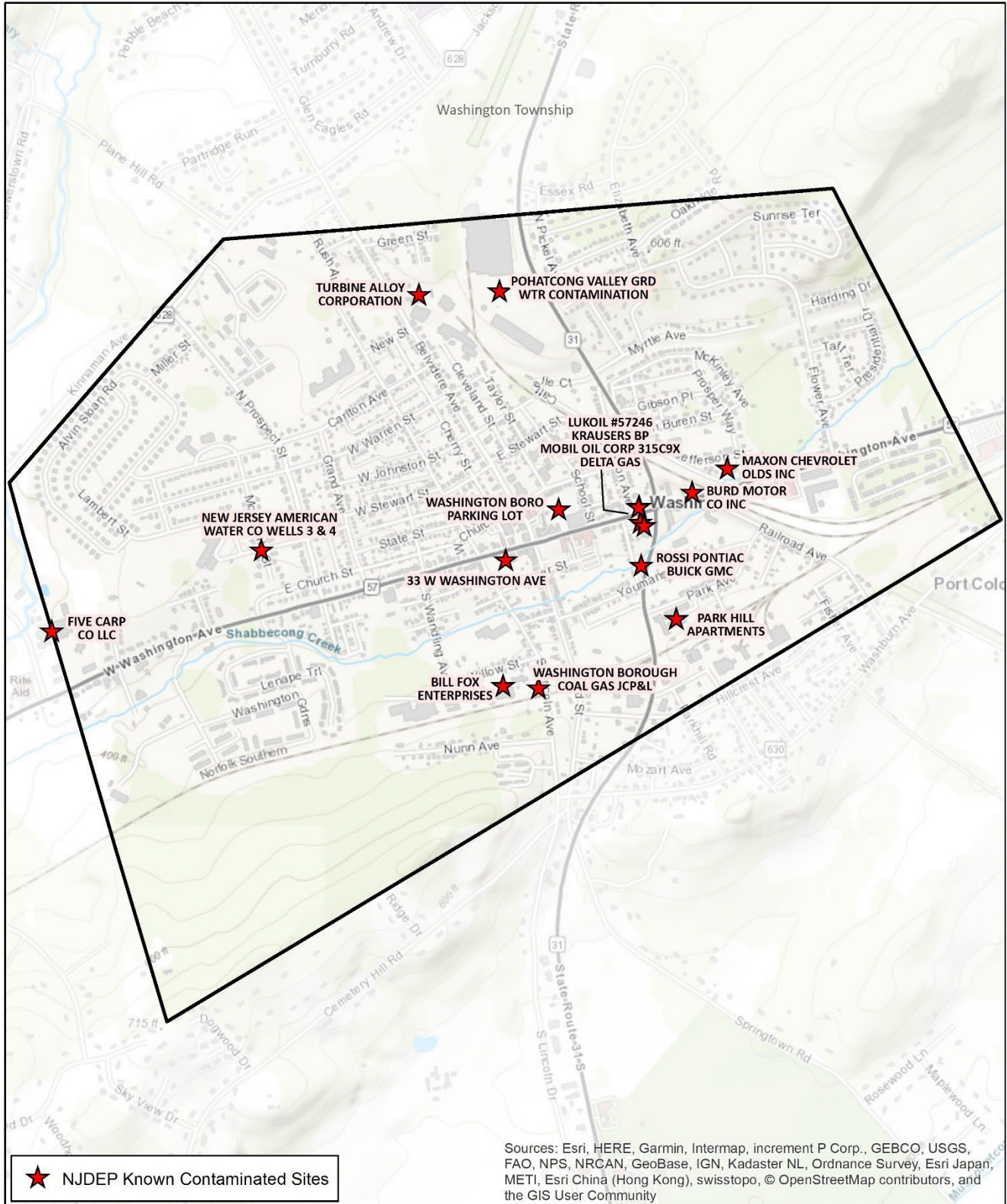
Remedial Action Permit. The case is now under the auspices of the Bureau of Remedial Action Permits, with biennial certification required.

- *LSRP*: Case is being handled under the Licensed Site Remediation Professional (LSRP) program
- *NJDEP Publicly Funded*: Sites where targeted remediation is undertaken by the Department's Publicly Funded Element for situations where the responsible entity is unknown, unwilling or unable to perform the necessary remediation to ensure that the health and safety of the public and/or the environment are not jeopardized.

The Level of Site Complexity is based on the Site Remediation Program's 1989 Case Assignment Manual. It is the intent of the Site Remediation Program that remedial levels be determined for the overall degree of contamination at a site recognizing that individual areas of concern may involve remedial actions of varying levels. The following gives a description of each of the levels applicable to Washington Borough's contaminated sites:

- *B*: Single phase remedial action; single contamination affecting only soils.
- *C1*: No formal design; source known or identified; potential ground water contamination.
- *C2*: Formal design; known source or release with ground water contamination.
- *C3*: Multi-phased remedial action - unknown or uncontrolled discharge to soil or ground water.
- *D*: Multi-phased remedial action; multiple sources/releases to multi-media, including ground water.

In addition to the above properties, the Borough received grant funding through the NJDEP Hazardous Discharge Site Remediation Fund Municipal Grant Program for the Preliminary Assessment, Site Investigation, and Remedial Investigation (PA/SI/RI) tasks for the Aristicover Incorporated Site, also known as Vikon Tile Site, located at 125 Taylor Street. Working with a consultant, the Borough has completed a building characterization and hazardous materials survey of the existing structures at the site. In addition, a soil and groundwater site investigation is underway to confirm any areas of concerns and locations where volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs).



Known Contaminated Sites
Washington Borough, Warren County, New Jersey



Changes at the County and Regional Level

Warren County Strategic Growth Plan (2005)

The Warren County Strategic Growth Plan was first adopted in December 2004 and revised in October 2005. The Plan serves as an update to the County's 1979 General Development Plan and the 1984 Transportation Plan. The Plan was formed through an extensive process of identifying key issues, developing goals and measurable indicators, documenting existing conditions, forecasting future conditions, creating an alternative land use vision, forecasting future conditions under the alternative vision, refining the alternative vision, and identifying implementation recommendations. The Strategic Growth Plan lays out the following 12 goals, all of which have bearing on land use in the Borough of Washington:

1. Preserve and enhance rural character as well as agricultural, natural, environmental, historic and open space resources and provide incentives to achieve this goal.
2. Focus growth in existing centers and provide financial incentives to local government, school districts and developers to achieve this goal.
3. Protect and enhance water quality and quantity.
4. Maintain and improve the existing transportation system to provide safe and efficient mobility and access.
5. Provide safe and efficient alternative modes of transportation to reduce auto dependence.
6. Improve public infrastructure to support existing centers
7. Encourage desirable development that provides local employment opportunities in existing centers.
8. Increase educational and cultural opportunities.
9. Promote inter-municipal, county and state cooperation.
10. Encourage state legislation to provide localities more control over growth.
11. Ensure that benefits and costs of plan implementation are shared equitably among all residents, landowners and businesses in Warren County.
12. Provide a mix of housing types.

Warren County Solid Waste Management Plan (2007)

Warren County adopted its Solid Waste Management Plan in September of 2007 and revised the plan in June of 2008. The Plan was developed for the Board of Commissioners in cooperation with the Warren County Solid Waste Advisory Council. The Plan begins with a brief overview of the historical generation of solid waste in relation to the population within the County. The Plan also notes that Washington Borough has a municipal contract with private haulers to collect household waste and limited quantities from businesses, and that all remaining waste is collected through private contract.

As mentioned above, the Borough no longer has a municipal contract with private haulers to collect household waste, as the Borough's Department of Public Works began providing solid waste removal in early 2021.

Highlands Regional Master Plan (2008)

The Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP) was developed as a regional planning framework to guide future land use practices and resource protection in the unique environment of the Highlands Region. Washington Borough is one of the 19 municipalities of Warren County located in the Highlands Region. A

total of 1,262 acres of the Borough are located within the bounds of the Planning Area; no lands are located within the Preservation Area. As such, conformance with the RMP is completely voluntary. The RMP refers to Washington Borough as being among the communities with opportunities for redevelopment, provide that water, sewer and transportation capacity is available. The Borough is currently working with the Highlands on Plan Conformance activities pertaining to their designation as a Highlands Center.

Warren County Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update (2017)

Warren County most recently adopted its Farmland Preservation Plan in 2017. The plan provides a summary of the changes in the County's agricultural land base and trends of the agricultural economy. Prior to 2002, the County relied more heavily on the sale of livestock and poultry products; however, as of 2012, crops and nursery product sales have had consistently higher market values.

Through the use of a variety of programs including the County Easement Purchase Program, County Planning Incentive Grant Program, Municipal Planning Incentive Grant Program, and Term Preservation Program, roughly 23,270 acres of farmland across 260 farms have been permanently preserved in Warren County. The Plan set the goals of preserving 900 acres across 15 farms by May of 2018 (1-year goal), 4,500 acres across 75 farms by May of 2022 (5-year goal), and 9,000 acres across 150 farms by 2027 (10-year goal).

The Plan notes that the area in and around Washington Borough has the largest cluster of agricultural support firms, where equipment and tractor retailers are located. Further, Washington Borough continues to support the County's farming by hosting the Washington Borough Farmer's Market, a partnership between the BID and the Borough's Green Team, during the warmer months, providing a venue for local farms to sell their products.

Warren County Open Space and Recreation Plan (2018)

Warren County adopted their Open Space and Recreation Plan in 1999 and subsequent updates in 2008 and 2018. The Plan serves to balance the County's vast outdoor recreational resources with environmental protection, farmland preservation, historic preservation, natural resource and historic resource education. The Plan enumerates the following goals and policies with respect to open space and recreation:

- Land bank as much as possible for future use or conservation
- Acquire properties or easements where necessary along established and proposed trails specifically the Highlands/Warren Trail, abandoned railroad rights-of-way, and the Morris Canal, to create greenways as a high priority.
- Acquire properties or easements where necessary along streams and rivers to establish greenways and linear parks.
- Acquire environmentally sensitive sites.
- Acquire cultural, historical, and archeological open space sites.
- Act as a facilitator in the coordination of land purchases among all levels of government and non-profit agencies.
- When possible, develop a modest, passive recreation system that allows activities like walking, hiking, sightseeing, bird watching, etc.

- Where appropriate, give consideration to providing opportunities for traditional uses, such as hunting and fishing.
- Interconnect various open space reserves.
- Interagency Coordination regarding future improvements and maintenance purposes.
- Consideration should be given to accessing trails through urban areas through acquisition and easements.

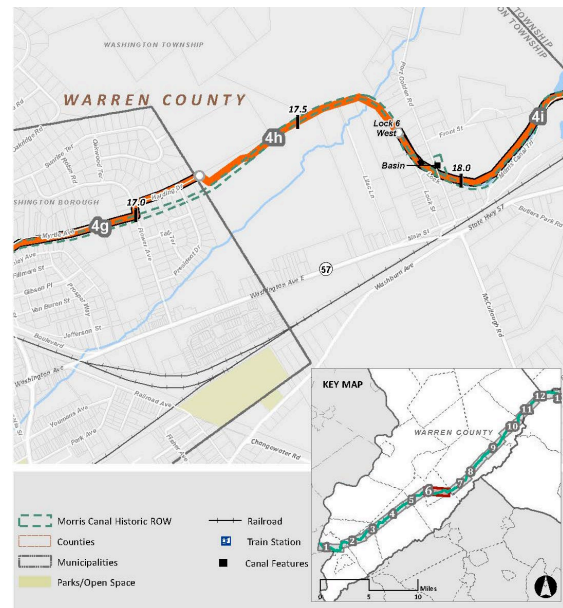
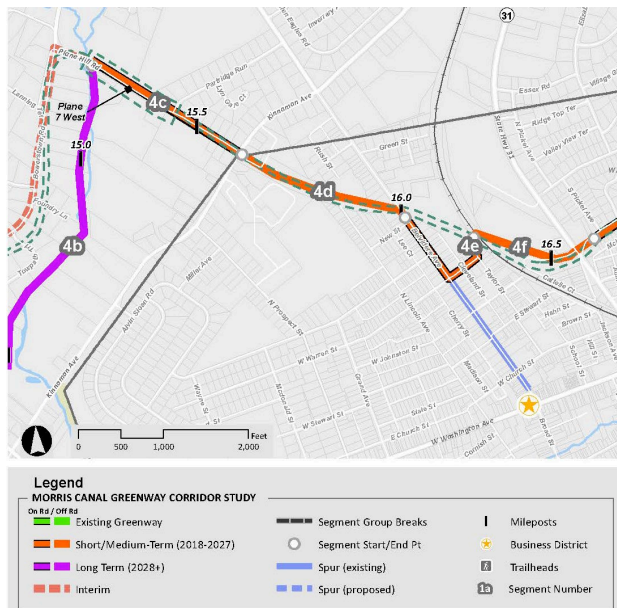
Morris Canal Greenway Study (2018)

In 2018, NJTPA prepared the Morris Canal Greenway Study, which identifies a continuous route of 111 miles for development of a world-class greenway, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, along or close to the historic Morris Canal. The vision of Morris Canal is:

- To preserve and enhance the historic Morris Canal route,
- To preserve the Canal’s scenic, recreational, and historic resources,
- To tell the story of life along the canal,
- To highlight its distinctive “mountain climbing” characteristics and inclined planes,
- To provide convenient urban, suburban and rural access to a trail.

In Washington Borough, the Plan envisions the trail entering the Borough from Washington Township along Harding Drive, continuing down Myrtle Avenue, crossing Route 31 and continuing up a portion of Cattelle Street. From here, the trail is proposed to run adjacent to the railroad tracks, crossing over onto Warren Street, before diverting north along Belvidere Avenue. The trail is then proposed to run along the rear of several properties, leading to Kinnaman Avenue, before diverting back into Washington Township.

The Plan also shows an existing spur along Belvedere Avenue is existing to reach the Borough’s business district.



Warren County Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2021)

Warren County first adopted their FEMA-approved Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) in 2006, in accordance with state and federal standards. The 2021 Warren County HMP includes individual plans for each municipality within the County, including the Borough of Washington. The Plan identifies projects that can help to reduce damages from future natural hazards, such as flooding, drought, extreme weather, and others. The HMP also evaluates the risks and identifies planned projects designed to prevent and mitigate the effects of future natural disasters. The Plan identifies the following vulnerabilities with regard to hazard problems in the Borough, ranked by probability of occurrence, risk ranking score, and hazard ranking:

- Frequent probability of occurrence with high hazard ranking:
 - Hurricanes
 - Nor'Easters
 - Severe Storms
 - Severe Winter Storms
 - Hazardous Materials
- Frequent probability of occurrence with medium hazard ranking:
 - Drought
 - Flood

The 2021 Warren County HMP lists 25 proposed Hazard Mitigation Initiatives that the Borough can implement in their hazard mitigation and resilience efforts. The following are those Initiatives identified as high priority:

1. **(20-04)** Protect buildings and infrastructure in high hazard areas.
2. **(20-10)** Mitigate vulnerable structures in flood-prone areas along Shabbecong Creek and Pohatcong Creek via Retrofit (e.g. elevation, floodproofing) or acquisition/relocation to protect structures from future damage. Prioritize repetitive loss and severe repetitive loss properties.
3. **(20-11)** Implement green infrastructure solutions along State Route 57 through coordination with NJDOT.
4. **(20-22)** Implement soil stabilization measures such as planting soil-stabilizing vegetation on steep, publicly owned slopes.
5. **(20-24)** Conduct a citywide public communication campaign to increase COVID-19 awareness.
6. **(20-25)** Target harden critical facilities by installing surveillance cameras to reduce the risk of terrorism.

Draft Warren County Transportation Plan (2021)

Warren County first adopted its Transportation Plan in 1982, and in mid-2020, the County created a Steering Advisory Committee to oversee the update and held multiple focus group meetings throughout 2020 and 2021. The Draft Plan presents the following goals resulting from the engagement process and previous studies:

1. Provide transportation infrastructure that is consistent with Warren County's rural character
2. Focus growth and infrastructure in existing centers
3. Minimize and mitigate environmental and stormwater impacts of transportation infrastructure
4. Maintain and improve the existing transportation system
5. Provide multimodal transportation choices that improve safety, mobility, and equity
6. Improve the resiliency of Warren County's transportation infrastructure

7. Improve access to education and employment opportunities
8. Promote cooperation and participation to advance mutual interests
9. Encourage state enabling legislation to provide municipalities and counties more authority over the impacts of traffic on their roadways from new development
10. Monitor and incorporate technological trends and innovations in transportation projects and strategies

The resulting vision statement of the 2021 Draft Transportation Plan is as follows: *Warren County is noted for its scenic rural landscapes, prized farmlands, natural and historic assets, and desirable quality of life. The Warren County Transportation Plan is a collaborative and cooperative effort to preserve and enhance these qualities and provide multimodal transportation choices that improve safety and mobility, and create a more equitable, sustainable, and resilient future.*

The Plan discusses the 2045 Centers-Based Scenario, which examines the potential of targeting population growth in existing centers (such as Washington Borough), rather than continuing the pattern of decentralization across lower-density areas. Washington Borough is among the list of municipalities with the greatest potential to benefit from sustainable smart growth development and housing principles. The Borough earns this reputation as a viable center-based municipality due to its existing walkable downtown and multimodal network, as well as its proximity to a light industrial employment center.

Changes at the State Level

Electronic Waste Management Act (2007)

Governor Corzine enacted a law establishing a required recycling system to ensure safe and environmentally sound disposal of electronic devices and their components (also known as “e-waste”). This law requires original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) to pay a registration fee to the NJ DEP and establish a collection, transportation and recycling system for the recovery of televisions and all personal or portable computers. The fees generated will in turn be used to fund the program and issue payments to authorized processors of recycled devices and parts. As part of this law, a ban on the disposal of these items into the general waste stream went into effect on January 1, 2011.

Municipal Land Use Law Amendments

Since the adoption of the 2008 Reexamination Report, changes made to the MLUL have presented implications for the Borough and its land use policies and ordinances.

2010 Time of Application

The previous Time of Decision law allowed municipalities to modify the zoning regulations after an application for development was submitted to a municipality’s planning/zoning board but before a formal decision was rendered. The 2010 Time of Application law (P.L. 2010 c.9) no longer permits changes to the zoning ordinance once an application is submitted. The development regulations that are in place at the time a development application is submitted to the planning/zoning board will govern the review of the application and any decision pertaining to it.

2011 Reexamination Report

The first change in the 2011 amendment changed the minimum time period for the required periodic reexamination of the municipal master plan from every six years to every ten years.

2011 GDP Approvals

The second change in the 2011 amendment provided for the submission of general development plans (GDP). GDP approval can be sought for tracts of land greater than 100 acres in size or for projects consisting of 150,000 square feet of nonresidential floor area or 100 residential units.

2013 Cluster Development

The first 2013 amendment added a definition, purpose, and standards related to cluster development. Cluster development involves concentrating development within a portion of a site in order to protect and preserve environmentally sensitive features.

2013 Performance Guarantees

The second 2013 amendment was related to transferring performance guarantees between a developer and its successor.

2015 Noticing

The 2015 amendment allowed for the transmittal of certain notice documents via email.

2016 Military Bases

The 2016 amendment added a new purpose of the Act and includes definitions and standards related to land use planning near military bases.

2017 Performance and Maintenance Guarantees

The first 2017 amendment modified the scope of improvements that could be covered by performance and maintenance guarantees. A performance and maintenance guarantee can only be required for improvements within a public right-of-way and those affecting adjacent properties such as buffer areas and the like.

2017 Smart Growth

The second 2017 amendment requires the Land Use element of a municipality's Master Plan to address "smart growth which in part, shall consider potential locations for the installation of electric vehicle charging stations, storm resiliency with respect to energy supply, flood-prone areas, and environmental infrastructure, and environmental sustainability issues."

2019 Municipal Public Access Plan as Optional Master Plan Element

The first 2019 amendment added the Municipal Public Access Plan as an optional Master Plan Element: "A public access plan element that provides for, encourages, and promotes permanently protected public access to all tidal waters and adjacent shorelines consistent with the public trust doctrine, and which shall include a map and inventory of public access points, public facilities that support access, parking, boat ramps, and marinas; an assessment of the need for additional public access; a statement of goals and administrative mechanisms to ensure that access will be permanently protected; and a strategy that describes the forms of access to satisfy the need for such access with an implementation schedule and tools for implementation."

2019 Zoning Board Backlogs

The second 2019 amendment to the MLUL allows for the creation of supplemental zoning boards in order to address backlogs of applications under certain circumstances.

2019 Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

The third 2019 amendment deals with electric vehicle charging and became effective November 6, 2019. The MLUL was amended include provisions for electric vehicle charging stations:

- The first component of this amendment involves the preparation, modification, and required contents of a Master Plan (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28). The components of the Land Use Element (a required Master Plan Element) have been updated to include a provision requiring the Element to show the “existing and proposed location of public electric vehicle charging infrastructure.”
- The second component of this amendment involves the requirements of the Master Plan Reexamination Report (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89). A new required section, Section F, has been added. This new section states the reexamination report shall state “the recommendations of the planning board concerning locations appropriate for the development of public electric vehicle infrastructure... and recommended changes, if any in the local development regulations necessary or appropriate for the development of public electric vehicle infrastructure.”

Climate Change and Vulnerability Assessment

On February 4, 2021, Governor Murphy signed into law an amendment to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28, which states the preparation, contents, and modification requirements to Master Plans. The amendment requires that any Land Use Plan Element adopted after February 4, 2021 must include a “Climate Change-Related Hazard Vulnerability Assessment.” The Assessment is mandatory and includes:

- Analyze current and future threats to, and vulnerabilities of, the municipality associated with climate change-related natural hazards, including, but not limited to increased temperatures, drought, flooding, hurricanes, and sea-level rise;
- Include a build-out analysis of future development in the municipality, and an assessment of the threats and vulnerabilities related to that development;
- Identify critical facilities, utilities, roadways, and other infrastructure that is necessary for evacuation purposes and for sustaining quality of life during a natural disaster, to be maintained at all times in an operational state;
- Analyze the potential impact of natural hazards on relevant components and elements of the Master Plan;
- Provide strategies and design standards that may be implemented to reduce or avoid risks associated with natural hazards;
- Include a specific policy statement on the consistency, coordination, and integration of the climate-change related hazard vulnerability assessment with any existing or proposed natural hazard mitigation plan, floodplain management plan, comprehensive emergency management plan, emergency response plan, post-disaster recovery plan, or capital improvement plan; and
- Rely on the most recent natural hazard projections and best available science provided by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

Local Redevelopment and Housing Law

2013 Amendments

In 2013, two changes were made to amend criterion 'e' based on the *Gallenthin v. Paulsboro* decision, and to modify the notice requirements based on the *Harrison v. DeRose* decision. These changes were made in response to concerns regarding the use of eminent domain. The language of Criterion 'E' was amended to require that a property be "unproductive" rather than "not fully productive." Additional notice requirements were instituted to require a statement at the outset of the redevelopment process whether properties in a potential redevelopment area could be subject to condemnation.

The 2013 legislation also amended and clarified the conditions necessary to classify an area in need of rehabilitation when there is evidence of environmental contamination.

2019 Amendment

Effective November 6, 2019, the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law was amended to update the requirements of a Redevelopment Plan (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-7). Paragraph a.8. was added to require a redevelopment plan to include "proposed locations for public electric vehicle charging infrastructure within the project area in a manner that appropriately connects with an essential public charging network."

Additionally, Criterion "b" of the LRHL was expanded to include the discontinuance or abandonment of buildings used for retail, shopping malls and office parks, as well as those buildings which have had significant vacancies for at least two (2) consecutive years.

Electronic Waste Management Act (2011)

In 2011, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection requires that televisions, computers, electronic tables, e-book readers, and monitors be recycled at designated recycling collection points. These electronic devices are no longer able to be discarded in the regular waste stream as most contain lead, mercury, cadmium, nickel, zinc, brominated flame retardants, and other potentially hazardous materials.

Flood Hazard Area Control Act Update (2016)

The Flood Hazard Area (FHA) Control Act Rules, N.J.A.C. 7:13 were adopted on November 5, 2007 and amended on June 20, 2016. The FHA rules implement the New Jersey Flood Hazard Area Control Act (N.J.S.A. 58:16A-50 et seq.). Because development within flood hazard areas can compound the frequency and intensity of flooding, the FHA rules incorporate strict standards for development within flood hazard areas to mitigate the adverse effects of development. The 2016 comprehensive amendment reduced unnecessary burdens, added appropriate flexibility, and provided better consistency with Federal, local, and other State requirements. The amendment additionally addressed several implementation issues that had been identified since the implementation of the 2007 rules.

Rideshare Programs (2017)

In 2017, New Jersey adopted regulations establishing statewide standards for ridesharing companies like Uber and Lyft. The law includes procedures designed to protect the consumer, such as criminal background checks for drivers and standards for insurance coverage.

Affordable Housing Third Round (2017)

The “Third Round” of affordable housing obligations within New Jersey has been a decades-long conflict over methodologies. The Coalition on Affordable Housing (COAH) made no progress for years in adopting a constitutional framework for affordable housing and so, in March 2015, the New Jersey Supreme Court disbanded COAH. In re Adoption of N.J.A.C. 5:96 & 5:97 by the N.J. Council on Affordable Housing, 221 N.J. 1 (2015) (“Mount Laurel IV”), the Court held that because COAH was moribund, trial courts were to resume their role as the forum of first instance for evaluating municipal compliance with Mount Laurel obligations. The Mount Laurel IV decision also established a transitional process for municipalities to seek temporary immunity and ultimate a Judgment of Compliance and Repose (JOR) or the “judicial equivalent” of Substantive Certification from COAH.

On January 18, 2017 in In Re Declaratory Judgment Actions Filed by Various Municipalities, County of Ocean, Pursuant To The Supreme Court’s Decision In In re Adoption of N.J.A.C. 5:96, 221 N.J. 1 (2015) (“Mount Laurel V”), the Court decided that for the sixteen year period between 1999 and 2015 (known as the “gap period”) when COAH failed to implement rules creating fair share obligations for municipalities, the Mount Laurel constitutional obligation did not go away. Therefore, municipalities continue to be responsible for the need created during the gap period.

The Borough adopted a Housing Element/Fair Share Plan on July 8, 2019, which outlines the strategies that will be implemented to meet their affordable housing obligation. The Borough received its Final Judgement of Compliance and Repose on November 16, 2021, granting the Borough immunity through June 30, 2025.

Short Term Rental Regulations (2018)

In June 2017, the New Jersey Legislature passed a bill to tax short-term rentals (AB 4587). The bill proposed to extend the state sales and use tax and hotel and motel occupancy fee to “transient accommodations.” The bill defines “transient accommodations” as a “room, group of rooms, or other living or sleeping space for the lodging of occupants, including but not limited to residences or buildings used as residences.” Renters would be responsible for paying the taxes and fees. The bill, however, was vetoed by Governor Christie.

In July of 2018, P.L. 2018, Chapter 49 was approved, which allows municipalities to impose the following taxes and fees on transient accommodations where applicable: the municipal occupancy tax, the sports and entertainment facility tax - Millville, the Atlantic City luxury tax, the Atlantic City promotion fee, the Cape May County tourism tax and assessment, and the hotel occupancy tax. This new law mandates that transient space marketplaces, like Airbnb, collect and pay the tax on behalf of the property owner.

In response to rising concerns about P.L. 2018, C. 49, Governor Murphy signed Assembly Bill 4814/4520, which applies to “rentals of professionally managed units and rentals obtained through a transient space marketplace or travel agency, as long as the transient space marketplace or travel agency does not exclusively offer transient accommodations owned by the marketplace or travel agency”, effectively excluding transactions made directly between property owners and renters.

COVID Permit Extension Act (2020)

The year 2020 saw the emergence of the COVID-19 global pandemic, which caused a temporary shutdown of many government services. On July 1, 2020, Governor Murphy signed the Permit Extension Act of 2020,

P.L. 2020, c.53 (“Chapter 53”) into law as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of this law is to provide a relaxation of the requirements for municipal action related to deadlines under the MLUL. Chapter 53 effectively extends the terms of all governmental permits, approvals and deadlines, which were due to expire on March 9, 2020 until at least six (6) months after the end of the public health emergency (the “COVID-19 Extension Period”). The suspension applies to state and local permits and approvals including New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJ DEP) issued land use approvals, municipal land use approvals, flood hazard permits, water supply permits and certifications, water quality management plan approvals and other environmental approvals.

On June 4, 2021, Governor Murphy signed law A.5820 and Executive Order EO244 which terminated the Covid-10 Public Health Emergency, marking the end of the Covid-19 Permit Extension Act.

New Jersey’s Global Warming Response Act 80x50 Report (2020)

In 2020, the NJDEP in partnership with numerous agencies including the Board of Public Utilities, Economic Development Authority, Division of Community Affairs, NJ Transit, Department of Labor, Department of Transportation, and the Department of Agriculture, issued New Jersey’s Global Warming Response Act 80x50 Report for Evaluating Our Progress and Identifying Pathways to Reduce Emissions by 80 percent by 2050.

The Report analyzes existing policies and programs and provides options to assist policymakers in crafting new initiatives to bridge the emissions reductions gap. Key strategies to achieve the 80% reduction by 2050 include 100% clean energy, 100% light-duty electric vehicles, and 90% of buildings being electrified. The Report analyzes transportation, residential and commercial buildings, electric generation, industrial sector, and waste and agriculture.

2020 New Jersey Scientific Report on Climate Change

In addition, in June 2020, NJDEP released the 2020 New Jersey Scientific Report on Climate Change. This report evaluated climate change and its effects, as well as its effects on resources and ecosystems.

The Report details the effects of climate change on temperature, precipitation, sea-level rise, ocean acidification, air quality, water resources, agriculture, forests, wetlands, terrestrial carbon sequestration, terrestrial systems, freshwater systems, marine systems and cyanobacteria.

Cannabis Regulations (2021)

Assembly Bill 21 / Senate Bill 21 was introduced on November 5, 2020 and adopted by both houses on December 17, 2020 and was signed by the Governor on February 22, 2021. The bill legalizes personal use cannabis for certain adults, subject to state regulation, decriminalizes small amounts of marijuana and hashish possession, and removes marijuana as a Schedule I drug. The bill defines 6 classes of license based on different operational aspects. For municipalities, Section 31 provides an option to adopt Municipal Regulations or Ordinances that permit or prohibit one or more classes of license within the municipality along with regulating time, manner, place, and quantity. Section 40 permits municipalities to levy an optional Cannabis “Transfer Tax and User Tax” that is capped at 1% of wholesale activities and 2% of cultivation, processing, and retail activities.

Ordinances that prohibit or otherwise regulate cannabis that predate the Act are not valid, a new Ordinance would need to be adopted within 180 days of passage of the Act. If an Ordinance regulating /

prohibiting one or more classes of license is not adopted within 180 days, then any class not prohibited will be deemed permitted in the following locations:

1. Classes 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 will be permitted in all Industrial Zones;
2. Class 5 will be permitted in all Retail / Commercial Zones.

After 180 days, if a municipality does not prohibit one or more classes, it must wait five (5) years to adopt an ordinance that prohibits cannabis uses. At that time, the ordinance would be prospective and would not apply to any lawfully existing businesses that open during the five-year period.

The Borough adopted Ordinance No. 2021-07 on July 20, 2021, permitting cannabis retailers and alternative treatment centers and medical cannabis dispensaries as conditional uses within the B-1 Highway Business District and B-2 Central Business District. Cannabis cultivators, manufacturers, wholesalers, and distributors are permitted as conditional uses within the I Industrial District.

NJTPA Long Range Transportation Plan (2021)

The North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority adopted its Long-Range Transportation Plan (“Plan 2050”) on September 13, 2021. The Plan outlines the existing conditions of the State’s transportation network, including context, trends and performance. The Plan contemplates a number of environmental factors that present challenges to future transportation planning as North Jersey continues to face development pressures, such as climate change, air quality, environmental mitigation, water quality, open space and wildlife habitats, and cultural and historic resources.

The Plan states that Warren County has been witnessing a recent increase in warehouse activity. Although it is not stated within the plan, this pattern in turn can cause increases in truck traffic through Washington Borough. In the discussion of strategies and implementation, the Plan refers to three projects during the pilot phase of the Freight Concept Development Program, two of which occurred in Warren County: the Phillipsburg South Main Street Bridge Rail Clearance Project and the Hackettstown Bridge over Drain Weight Restriction Elimination Project.

Climate Change Resilience Strategy (2021)

The State of New Jersey issued a Climate Change Resiliency Strategy in April of 2021, building upon the findings of the 2020 Scientific Report on Climate Change. This Report outlines six priorities with strategies which include:

1. Build Resilient and Healthy Communities
 - 1.1 Integrate Resilience into Local and Regional Planning
 - 1.2 Increase Technical Assistance Programs to Address Community Resilience
 - 1.3 Modify Regulatory Programs to Address Climate Change Impacts and Encourage Adaptation Over Time
 - 1.4 Decrease Vulnerability of Existing Infrastructure and Development
 - 1.5 Incentivize Sustainable Growth and Redevelopment that Incorporates Resilience and Investment in Safer Areas
 - 1.6 Integrate Public Health into Community Resilience Planning and Activities
2. Strengthen the Resilience of New Jersey’s Ecosystems

- 2.1 Promote Resource Conservation and Natural Lands Management to Strengthen Ecological Resilience
- 2.2 Manage Agricultural Lands, Forests, and Other Ecosystems for Climate Impacts and Environmental Stressors
- 2.3 Deploy Natural and Nature-based Solutions for Resilience
- 3. Promote Coordinated Governance
 - 3.1 Ensure Continuing Efforts by the Interagency Council on Climate Resilience to Lead a Coordinated, Whole-of-government Approach to Resilience
 - 3.2 Actively Engage Local Governments and Other Partners to Develop Resilience Solutions
 - 3.3 Incorporate Equity and Inclusion in Resilience Decision-making
- 4. Promote Climate-Informed Investments and Innovative Financing
 - 4.1 Expand Public Communication Efforts on Climate Change and Impacts on New Jersey
 - 4.2 Expand Climate Change Education and Training Opportunities
 - 4.3 Integrate Climate Change Vulnerability and Impacts into State Assessments
 - 4.4 Build a Collaborative Research Agenda to Guide Future Climate Resilience Research
- 5. Coastal Resilience Plan
 - 5.1 Integrate Climate Change into Existing State Investments and Funding Decisions
 - 5.2 Expand the Availability of Financing for Resilience Investments from Public and Private Sources
 - 5.3 Ensure Equity and Transparency in Resilience Investments

SECTION D: RECOMMENDED CHANGES FOR THE BOROUGH'S MASTER PLAN AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

“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.”

Environmental Resources

The Borough should prepare and adopt an Environmental Resource Inventory in accordance with their petition for Plan Conformance with the Highlands Council. In addition, the Borough should also prepare additional Master Plan Elements and studies, as needed, which focus on the protection, management, and restoration of environmental resources within the Borough, such as the Shabbecong Creek.

Goals and Objectives/Highlands Center Plan

It is recommended that the Borough update its Goals and Objectives and provide a vision statement related to the Master Plan's existing and proposed elements, as recommended below. The revised goals and objectives should be consistent with the Highlands Regional Master Plan and be included as part of the Borough's Highlands Center Plan. The Highlands Center Plan will serve as the visioning element for the Borough and will determine the appropriate placement of environmental resource protection overlay zones.

Highlands Master Plan Element

It is recommended that the Borough prepare and adopt a Highlands Master Plan Element in accordance with their petition for Plan Conformance with the Highlands Regional Master Plan.

Land Use Element

It is recommended that the Borough adopt a comprehensive Land Use Plan Element that will serve as the basis for future ordinance revisions.

The Land Use Element should review the existing ordinance in detail and determine whether additional standards are required for regulating development as a means to protect the existing development pattern and neighborhood character. For example, the R-1, R-2, R-3 and R-4 Zones do not currently have a maximum impervious coverage standard, and only the R-3 Zone has a building coverage standard. Further, the B-1, B-2, OB, and I Zones do not incorporate building coverage or lot coverage requirements. The Land Use Element should also recommend whether properties are located within the appropriate zone and review, identify and recommend zone changes to any split-zoned lots.

Additional design standards pertaining to the sustainable and resilient development of the community should also be incorporated into the Zoning and Land Development Ordinance.

Further, as required by law, the Land Use Plan Element should also incorporate the Climate Change-Related Hazard Vulnerability Assessment.

Circulation Element

It is recommended that the Borough review all circulation documents and prepare and adopt a comprehensive circulation element. The Plan should address and integrate circulation issues, policies, and actions, including intersection improvements, corridor improvements, parking, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and wayfinding.

Community Facilities

The Borough should determine whether Borough Hall is in need of a significant renovation due to on-going problems associated with the age of the building and should also pursue an Energy Audit of the facility. This study should examine whether Borough Hall can be retrofitted and upgraded to incorporate energy saving measures and improved working conditions, or whether the Borough should relocate Borough offices to another location.

It is also recommended that the Borough prepare a Community Facilities Element which will ultimately provide policies for the future provision of educational/cultural resources, public safety, examine whether additional community facilities are needed, and determine whether the existing facilities are sufficient. Specific recommendations for each community facility, property and building should be provided.

Sustainable Economic Development Plan Element

It is recommended the Borough prepare a Sustainable Economic Development Plan Element that will support the efforts of the Washington BID and will serve as a marketing tool for the Borough. The Sustainable Economic Development Plan will act as a proactive tool to create the foundation for long-term economic viability. The Plan should be used as the basis for policies and actions that will promote future economic development in the Borough.

Sustainability/Resiliency

When updating the Borough's Master Plan, resiliency and sustainable measures should be incorporated into each of the Master Plan Elements, focusing on resilient and sustainable building design, design standards, site improvements, stormwater management, as well as additional practices that will create a more sustainable and resilient Washington Borough.

Further, the Borough's Green Team should continue participating in the Sustainable Jersey Program.

Stormwater Management Plan

It is recommended that the Borough prepare an updated Stormwater Management Plan element of the Master Plan which maps the location of stormwater outlets, focuses on areas of the Borough where additional stormwater management is needed, incorporates green stormwater design, and investigates whether the establishment of a stormwater utility would be beneficial to the Borough.

Wastewater Management Plan

The Borough should prepare and adopt an amended Wastewater Management Plan. The Wastewater Management Plan should be prepared in accordance with NJDEP rules and regulations.

Relationship to Other Plans

The Relationship to Other Plans Element of the Master Plan was last adopted in 1979 and does not reflect current planning initiatives and concerns of the adjacent municipality. A new Element should be prepared to reflect current conditions of both Washington Township, Warren County, Highlands Council, and the State of New Jersey.

Additional Recommendations

It is recommended that the Borough add a line item to the Land Use Board application form, requiring the applicant to indicate whether the project is located in a Redevelopment Area and list the Redevelopment District.

The Borough should update its Land Development Ordinance to include updated definitions in accordance with recent statutory requirements and incorporate revisions as a result of the Borough's Highlands Plan Conformance initiatives as a Highlands Center.

The Borough should review and revise its property maintenance ordinances to determine whether stricter standards are necessary.

In accordance with State Law (P.L. 2021, c. 171), electric vehicle charging stations and Make-Ready parking spaces should be permitted accessory uses within all zoning districts in the Borough. Further, the Borough should adopt the DCA Model Statewide Municipal EV Ordinance, which will codify the state law within the Borough's Land Development Ordinance.

The Borough should review the standards pertaining to Cannabis operations in the Borough to ensure that businesses can locate in appropriate locations.

It is recommended that the Borough's Zoning Map be updated to incorporate the MO-3 Mountain Overlay-3 Zone, C-3 Cemetery Zone, the Downtown Redevelopment Area, as well any additional zoning boundary changes that have occurred since the Zoning Map was last adopted.

The Borough should continue to seek Shared Services Agreements with surrounding municipalities to determine whether cost saving-measures can be applied with other municipalities which would lead to improved services and resources for Borough residents.

The Borough should review and evaluate its emergency management warning system(s) to determine whether any changes are necessary.

SECTION E: RECOMMENDED REDEVELOPMENT PLANS

“The recommendations of the Land Use Board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the “Local Redevelopment and Housing Law,” P.L. 1992, c. 79 (C.40A: 12A-1 et 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.”

The Borough adopted the Downtown Redevelopment Plan on April 7, 2009 and have subsequently adopted amendments. Amendments include Ordinance 2018-16 which defined and permitted retail services, microbreweries and open air/covered outdoor dining areas as permitted/accessory uses within the Washington Avenue Core District and Route 31 Gateway District. Ordinance 2018-24 permitted restaurant, fast food as a permitted use within the Washington Avenue Core District and within the Route 31 Gateway District, and permitted restaurant, fast food with a drive-thru as a permitted use subject to conditions within both districts.

It is recommended that the Downtown Redevelopment Plan be reviewed and amended to incorporate changes which have occurred in the Borough over the past decade and incorporate sustainability, water conservation, and resiliency standards.

The Borough should also consider pursuing Area in Need of Redevelopment or Rehabilitation within the Borough, particularly along the Washington Avenue (Route 57) and Route 31 corridors as a means to stimulate economic activities and attract new businesses.

SECTION F: RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE

“The recommendations of the Land Use Board concerning locations appropriate for the development of public electric vehicle infrastructure, including but not limited to, commercial districts, areas proximate to public transportation and transit facilities and transportation corridors, and public rest stops; and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary or appropriate for the development of public electric vehicle infrastructure.”

It is recommended that the Borough encourage the installation of public electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure on non-residential properties throughout the Borough, especially those properties that have parking lots on site. Specifically, EV charging stations should be located within the Highway Business District (B-1), Central Business District (B-2), Industrial District (I), Public Land District (PL), as well as within the Borough’s Redevelopment Area.

The recommendations in Section D include the recommendations for electric vehicle charging stations and make-ready parking spaces to be permitted accessory uses in all zoning districts and Redevelopment Plan(s) within the Borough.