

# Highlands Council Meeting

Thursday, April 18, 2024





# Budget & Finance Committee

Resolution: Plan Conformance Grant Funding

# Planning Grant Funding Recommendations

## Stormwater Management Planning – \$91, 750

- Franklin Township, Warren County – \$41,500
- Harmony Township, Warren County – \$32,000
- Oxford Township, Warren County – \$18,250
- Supports MS4 Permit Compliance and RMP conformance

## Lake Management Planning – \$202,000

- Vernon Township, Sussex County
- Phase II of an assessment of the watersheds of township lakes
- Completed phase I included 13 lakes.
- Phase II includes 11 lakes.

# Plan Conformance Committee

Resolution: Highlands Center Designation

# Lopatcong and Pohatcong Center Amendment

- Original centers approved in 2012
- Application submitted by both townships for:
  - Block 38 Lot 1 in Pohatcong: To permit a 100% affordable housing project; and
  - Lopatcong (Block 102 Lots 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 8.01, 10, and 11) a small group of properties (“Lock Street Parcels”) proposed only for designation as part of the Highlands Environmental Resource Zone (HERZ).

# Amended Highlands Center

Lopatcong and Pohatcong Twps, NJ

- Proposed Center Expansion
- Adopted Highlands Centers
- Proposed HERZ
- HERZ



Date Exported: 4/15/2024

Lock Street Parcels  
Block 102 Lots 4, 5, 6,  
7, 8, 8.01, 10, 11

B 38  
L 1

Lopatcong

Greenwich

Phillipsburg

Pohatcong

678

122

122

519

122

519

519





# Public Comment and Recommendation

- 30-day public comment period
  - 3 comments received
  - Primary concerns related to former warehouse proposal and public process with the townships.
- Recommendation to approve with conditions
  - Continue center planning
  - Confirm wastewater capacity for affordable housing development
  - Highlands Environmental Resource Zone (HERZ) designations

**Recommend approval with conditions**

# Regional Master Plan Amendment Committee

3 Resolutions:

- Warehousing Standards Amendment – Adopt
- Land Use Capability Zone Map Amendment – Adopt
- Affordable Housing Amendment – Release for Comment



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# RMP Amendment

## Policy Standards for Warehousing in the NJ Highlands

# Policy Standards for Warehousing in the NJ Highlands

## What does the Highlands Amendment say?

The Highlands region is different from the rest of the state

### Where warehouses should not go

- Avoid the Preservation Area, Conservation Zone and the Protection Zone
- Minimize loss of farmland
- Avoid environmental features/avoid Impact to Features
- Where infrastructure is limited or non-existent
- Avoid Overburdened Communities

### Where warehouses should go

- Approved, **planned** Centers, Redev. A's
- Existing Community Zone
- Geographic proximity to transport network with ample capacity
- Access to other forms of transport (e.g. railroads)
- Locations with adequate existing infrastructure

# Policy Standards for Warehousing in the NJ Highlands

## Important Considerations

- Overall Impervious Coverage
  - Sub-Watershed Basis
  - Protect Integrity of Region's Waterways
- Transportation Network Analysis
- Highlands Resources
- Site Coverage/Clustering of Development
- Utility Capacity
- Carbonate Rock & Karst Topography
- Landscaping & Buffers
- Access to Site
- Stormwater Management
- Air, Heat & Noise, Lighting Impacts
- Energy
- Loading Requirements
- Green Infrastructure
- Building Standards
- What Can be Stored (Hazardous Materials)
- Truck Routing Plan
- Decommissioning Plan



# Policy Standards for Warehousing in the NJ Highlands

## Public Comment and Response

### 60-day public comment period; 12 comments received

- Concerns about the impact of warehouses on the region
- Concerns regarding traffic, environmental impacts of warehouses
- One comment: concern re: lack of authority due to voluntary Planning Area conformance
- Interagency comment from NJDEP regarding HPAA requirement for a Highlands Redevelopment Area Designation
  - In the Preservation Area HPAA is required. A change was made to address this.

# Policy Standards for Warehousing in the NJ Highlands

**Recommendation**  
**Adopt as RMP Amendment**

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# RMP Amendment

## Land Use Capability Zone (LUCZ) Map Update



# Land Use Capability Zone (LUCZ) Map Update

## Background

- LUCZ is guiding policy map for region; **foundation of all we do.**
- Adopted in 2008; much underlying data has since been updated.
- **LUCZ will reflect most current available data.**
- Two changes:
  - Addition of FEMA Flood Hazard Data (including the 500-year flood plain)
  - Removal of Public Water EAS (existing data was inaccurate and updated data was unavailable)

**Provides basis for all future RMP Amendments  
and will be critical for affordable housing analysis.**

## Land Use Capability Zones

### Zone

- Protection
- Conservation
- Existing Community

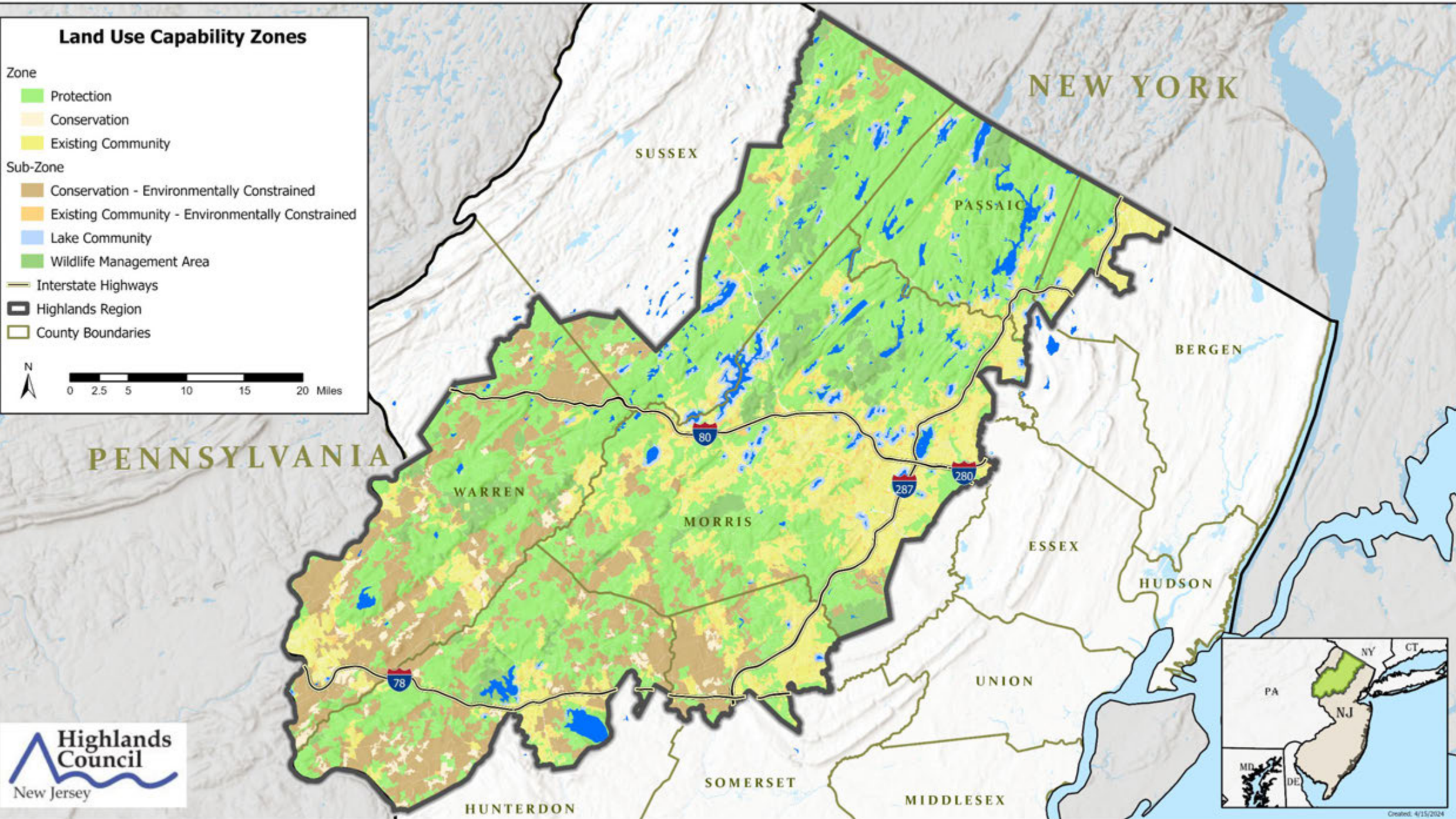
### Sub-Zone

- Conservation - Environmentally Constrained
- Existing Community - Environmentally Constrained
- Lake Community
- Wildlife Management Area

Interstate Highways

Highlands Region

County Boundaries





# Land Use Capability Zone (LUCZ) Map Update

## Public Comment and Response

### 60-day public comment period, 8 comments received

- One comment requested site specific changes
  - Site specific changes are handled through the RMP Update and Map Adjustment programs
- One comment questioned the expansion of the ECZ
  - This is largely due to corrections in the process since the original and expansion of sewer service areas
- One comment requested clarification on availability of updated Utility Capacity Technical Report.
  - Clarification added to the document to show its only the data layer updated and not the full report
- One comment opposed to the update to preserved woodlands
- Five commentors expressed concern over Vernal Pool Buffer change from 1000 ft. to 300 m.



# Land Use Capability Zone (LUCZ) Map Update

## Recommendation Adopt as RMP Amendment

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# Proposed RMP Amendment

## Affordable Housing

# Affordable Housing RMP Amendment

- Outlines **specific changes to existing RMP goals, policies and objectives** and **additional guidance** for Highlands municipalities required as a result of new Fair Housing legislation
- **One of 3 documents** to be released by the Highlands Council related to the new legislation
  - RMP Amendment
  - Affordable Housing Locational Guidelines
  - Highlands Municipal Build Out Instructions and Grant Program

## Recommendation

Release RMP Amendment for 60-day public comment and 6 public hearings