

**TOWNSHIP OF TOMS RIVER**  
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**MEMORANDUM**

March 19, 2009

To: Leigh Jones, NJ Office of Smart Growth

Re: Monthly Report No. 2

This is the second in a series of monthly reports on Toms River's efforts to secure Plan Endorsement. Our schedule calls for reaching agreement with the staff of the Office of Smart Growth no later than June 30, 2009, followed by completion of Action Plan items by the end of 2009.

We have prepared and submitted electronically two maps. The first shows the location of all affordable housing sites as identified in the submitted Housing Element and Fair Share Plan that is now under review by the Court. The second is a map showing the location of the vacant and underutilized parcels five acres or larger, as explained in the following paragraphs:

As indicated in our meeting and in my earlier report, we are looking into the possible use of noncontiguous clustering as a way of reducing development potential in certain locations in order to supplement development potential in areas where development could be more readily accommodated, such as highway corridors. The map entitled "Vacant Lands over 5 Acres, Residential Lands over 5 Acres, and Farm Lands" is based on a query through our GIS system. The Ciba site is not included in the map, but will be considered separately because of its size and scale and ultimate potential as a major component of any future development considerations in the Township. At about 1,200 acres, it is larger in land area than about half the municipalities in Ocean County.

Attached hereto is an Excel spreadsheet that identifies various characteristics of the parcels that are shown on the vacant lands map. For those parcels that are constrained or have prior development approvals, we have placed them in one part of the table. In total, they amount to a little over 1,000 acres. The remaining parcels that would appear to be developable total about 500 acres, or only about two percent of the total land area of the Township. When the Ciba site is considered, the total amount of vacant and developable land is only about seven percent of the Township's 42 square mile land area.

It has been our contention all along that the remaining development potential of Toms River is primarily infill, with the exception of Ciba, and the map and spreadsheet bear this out. Please note that the spreadsheet has been compressed in order to provide only the basic data on each parcel. To the extent needed, columns can be expanded to show more information.

On some other issues, we continue to pursue Court approval of our affordable housing plan while monitoring the legislative actions relative to COAH issues. We continue to move ahead in that regard.

The Planning Board held a hearing on March 18 regarding the potential designation of a redevelopment area in the northwest quadrant of Route 166 and 37. The hearing concluded and the Planning Board has recommended to Council that it determine the area to qualify as an area in need of redevelopment.

Township Council recently adopted an ordinance which expands the potential for mixed use development in the RHB, MF-4 and R-150 zones on larger parcels in order to create the opportunity for additional affordable housing in proximity to mass transit routes and commercial development corridors.

In connection with the Route 9 corridor, we have been advised that there has been some movement on getting the widening project moved along by requiring that it be included in the 2009 TIP. This is new information to us and as we understand it, it affects those portions of Route 9 that lie in Lakewood and Toms River. It would be important in the overall consideration being given to Center boundaries if we can look at a closer timeline for widening Route 9.

It is hoped that we can engage in productive discussions not only on the above topics, including the potential for staging Center designations, but on developing an incentive-based approach to the remediation of areas that were developed with less than desirable surface water quality management systems. In the interest of improving water quality in the surface water system, including the Toms River and Barnegat Bay, attention should be given to creating methods for treating the older areas with upgrades funded by new development.

Toms River is at an advanced stage of development and, as such, needs to be sensitive not only to future development impacts, which are largely mitigated by new stormwater regulations, but to correcting pre-existing problems as new development and redevelopment continues in the Township.