

# **LACEY TOWNSHIP**

## **MUNICIPAL SELF-ASSESSMENT UPDATE REPORT**

Lacey Township Plan Endorsement Process

Prepared by

Heyer, Gruel & Associates  
Community Planning Consultants

August 2017

# **Lacey Township**

## **Municipal Self-Assessment Update Report**

Township of Lacey  
Ocean County, New Jersey

August 2017

Adopted by the Township Committee on

Prepared By:

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*Content contributed by Helen Zincavage, Associate Planner*

## Table of Contents

Section 1. INTRODUCTION .....	5
PURPOSE .....	6
FORMAT .....	6
REGIONAL CONTEXT .....	8
EXISTING STATE PLAN POLICY MAP DESIGNATIONS.....	10
Section 2. EXISTING PLANNING POLICIES & ORDINANCES .....	11
LAND USE .....	12
HOUSING .....	17
CIRCULATION .....	19
UTILITY SERVICE .....	22
COMMUNITY FACILITIES .....	23
RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE .....	25
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT .....	29
STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN .....	30
OTHER MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS .....	30
Section 3. MAJOR CHANGES IN ASSUMPTIONS AFFECTING PLANNING.....	32
EVALUATING PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS .....	33
TOWNSHIP DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS.....	33
THE CLOSURE OF OYSTER CREEK .....	38
HURRICANE SANDY AND RESILIENCY PLANNING.....	39
RENEWED EMPHASIS ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING .....	42
CIRCULATION CHANGES IN THE ROUTE 9 CORRIDOR.....	44
OCEAN COUNTY WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE .....	45
Section 4. ADDITIONAL PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS .....	47
Section 5. REGIONAL CENTER AND INDUSTRIAL NODE PROPOSAL.....	49
REGIONAL CENTER AND INDUSTRIAL NODE EXTENTS AND BASIS .....	50
Section 6. CONSISTENCY WITH STATE PLAN – CENTER CRITERIA.....	52
EVALUATING LACEY’S REGIONAL CENTER AGAINST SDRP CENTER CRITERIA .....	53
Section 7. CONSISTENCY WITH STATE PLAN – CENTER GOALS AND PLANNING AREA POLICIES .....	56
STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN GOALS .....	57
SUBURBAN PLANNING AREA (PA 2) GOALS.....	58

STATE PLAN GOALS FOR CENTERS AND NODES..... 60

Section 8. CONCLUSION ..... 63

CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS..... 64

## Section 1. INTRODUCTION

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Self-Assessment Update ("Update") is to systematically examine the current status of development and land use policy in Lacey Township in support of its petition for center designation as part of the State Plan Endorsement process. Lacey is seeking Regional Center designation within the commercial and residential heart of the Township, as well as the establishment of two industrial nodes in anticipation of the closure of Oyster Creek. This Update is intended to show how Lacey Township's local goals and objectives are consistent with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan ("SDRP"), and the ways in which Plan Endorsement with center designation will assist the Township in addressing its most pressing planning issues.

Lacey Township is pursuing Plan Endorsement in anticipation of future economic development initiatives. With the closure of the Oyster Creek Nuclear Facility, the Township will be undertaking an intensive economic development program to mitigate the loss of the plant. It is the vision of Township officials and residents that future economic development initiatives will take a center-based form, assisting the Township in transitioning away from the strip-based auto-oriented economic development patterns of the past to siting new businesses in neighborhood-based, pedestrian-friendly nodes of mixed-use development. Center designation through the Plan Endorsement process would affirm the intentions of the Township to pursue these forms of compact, mixed-use developments, while also allowing for the development specifications that will enable businesses to more easily locate in Lacey Township.

## **FORMAT**

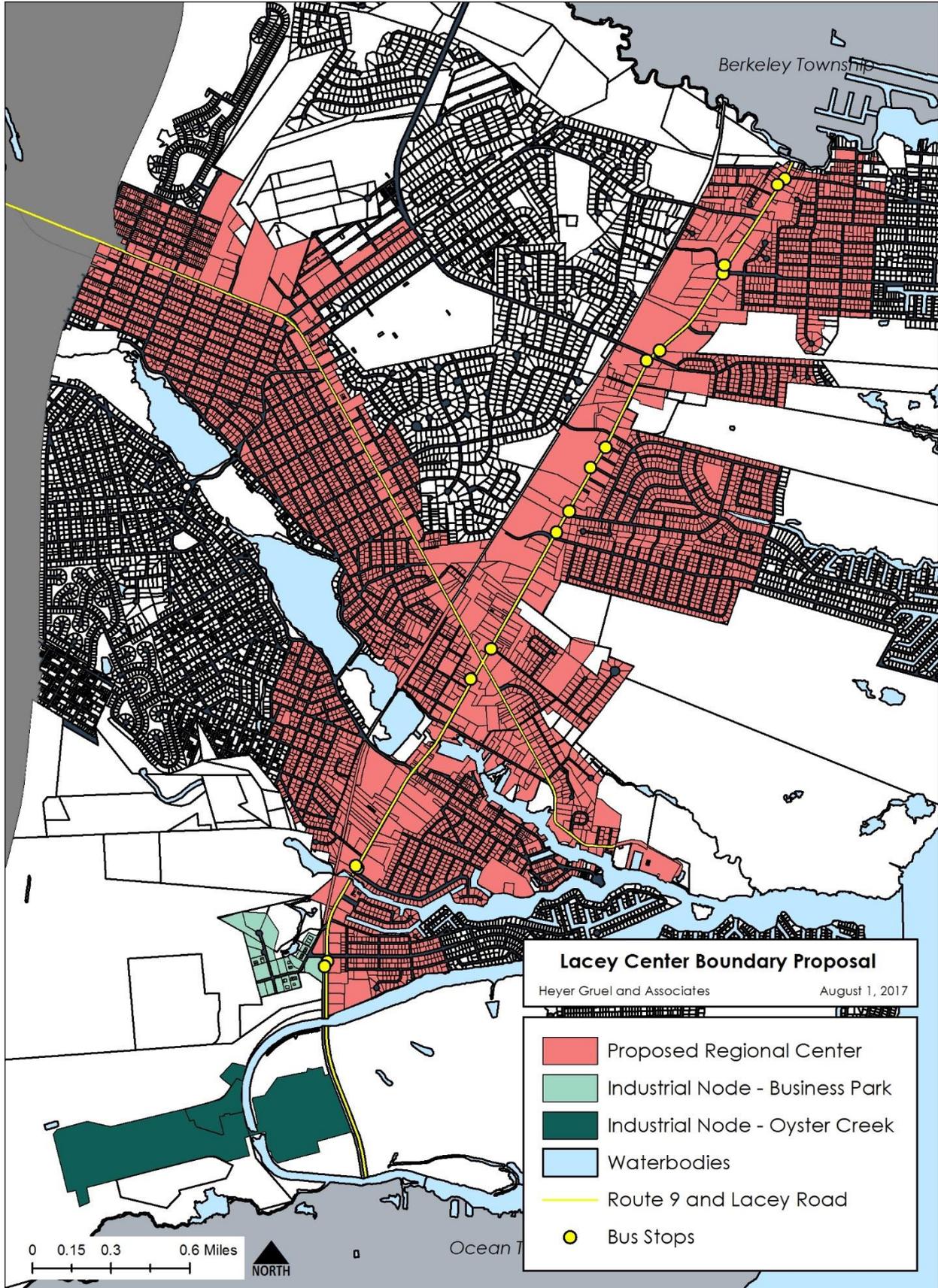
The Update will detail recent changes that have occurred in planning assumptions, activities and conclusions in Lacey Township that are consistent with center-based development, given that center designation is the focus of this Plan Endorsement application. After examining the Township's current land use policies and development regulations, this Update includes additional recommendations and actions that the Township is willing to take in order to construct a regulatory framework that is supportive of center-based development.

The Update takes the familiar format of a Master Plan Reexamination Report, considering:

**Section 2.** Objectives supportive of center-based development that are currently included in Township planning policies and development regulations. The specific documents examined were the Goals and Objectives statements in the Township's 2004 Reexamination Report (the most recent set of goal statements), the supplementary recommendations found in the Township's 2012 Master Plan Reexamination, and the Township's current land development ordinance.

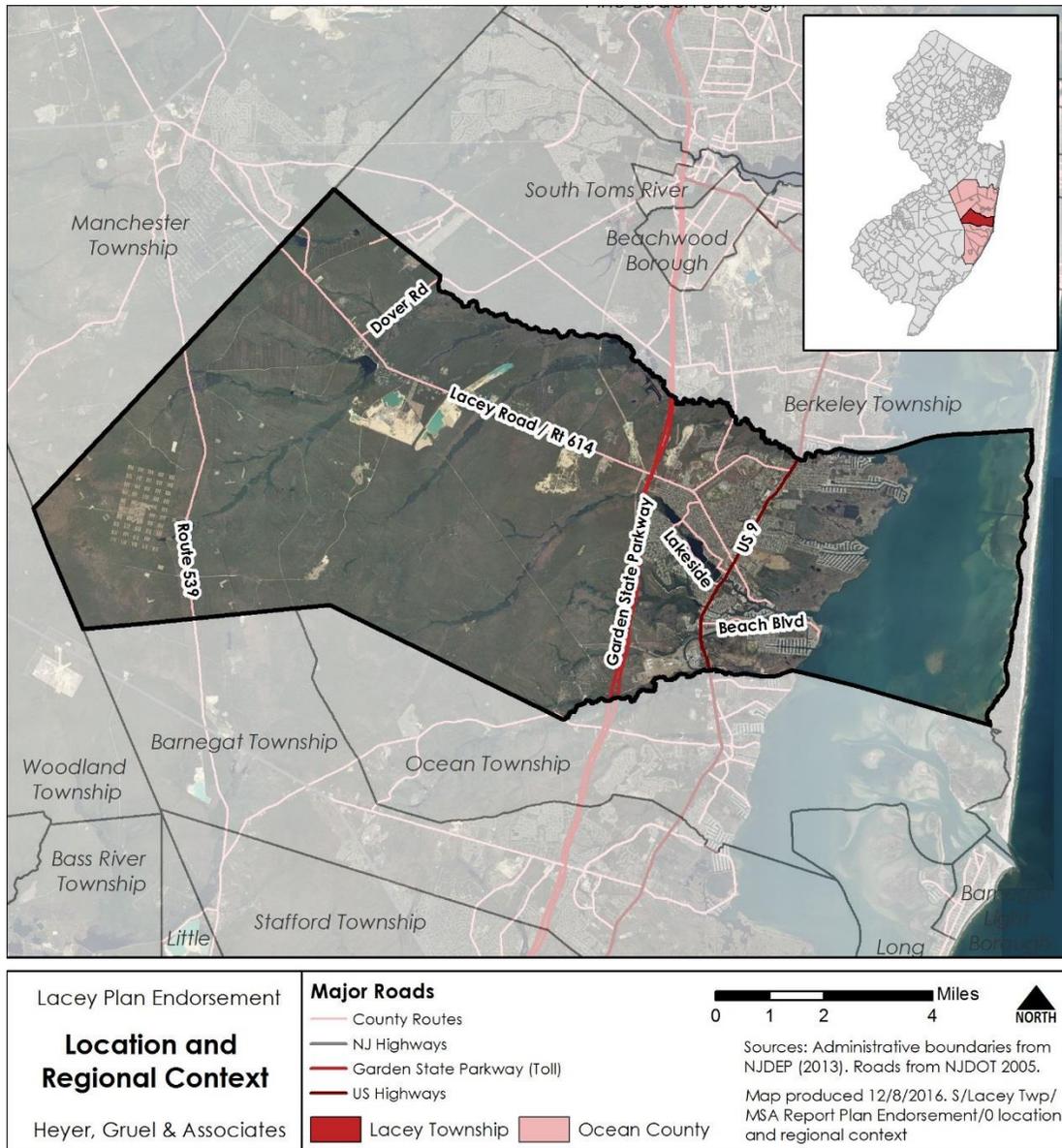
**Section 3.** Changes in general assumptions and new information proffered in recent Township studies and plans; and

**Section 4.** Additional recommendations for actions that would achieve consistency between the Township's policies and State Plan goals for areas center designation. These are the actions that the Township can take that are deliberately supportive of center-based development, and which should be enacted to reinforce the Township's commitment to this form of smart, compact growth.



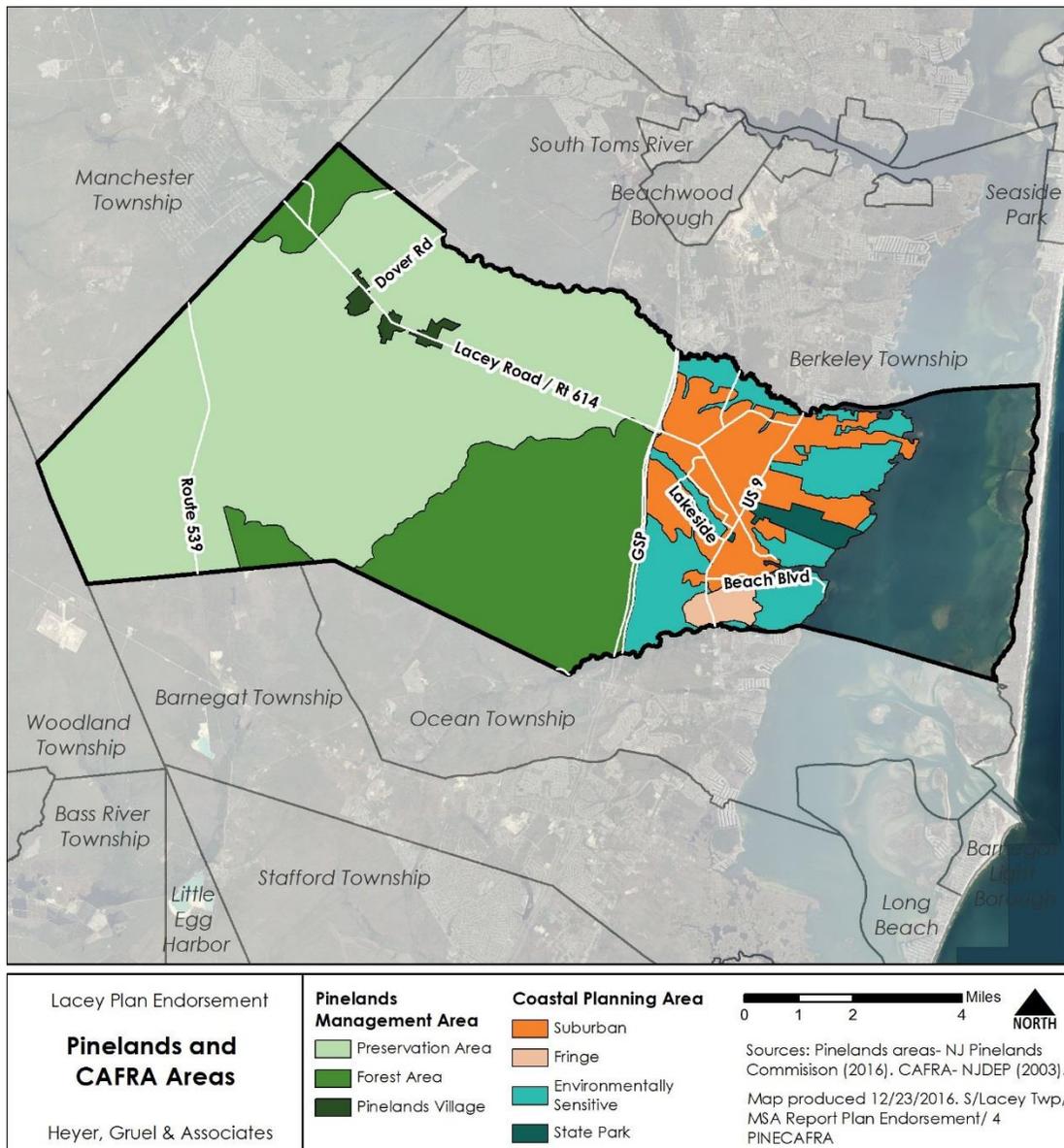
**REGIONAL CONTEXT**

Lacey Township is located in the southeastern coastal region of the State of New Jersey and in the central portion of Ocean County. The Township is bordered by five other municipalities, including Berkley Township to the north, the barrier island portion of Berkeley Township to the east, Ocean Township and Barnegat Township to the south, and Woodland Township and Manchester Township to the west. The Garden State Parkway and US Route 9 run through the Township north to south. With 86.1 square miles of land area, Lacey Township is the second largest municipality in Ocean County.



Signification environmental features in the Township include Barnegat Bay, Forked River, Oyster Creek (along a portion of the Township's southern border) and Cedar Creek (along a portion of the Township's northern border). Large portions of the Township are occupied by State and County recreation and open space areas, including Greenwood Forest Wildlife Management Area, Double Trouble State Park, and Forked River Mountain Wildlife Management Area.

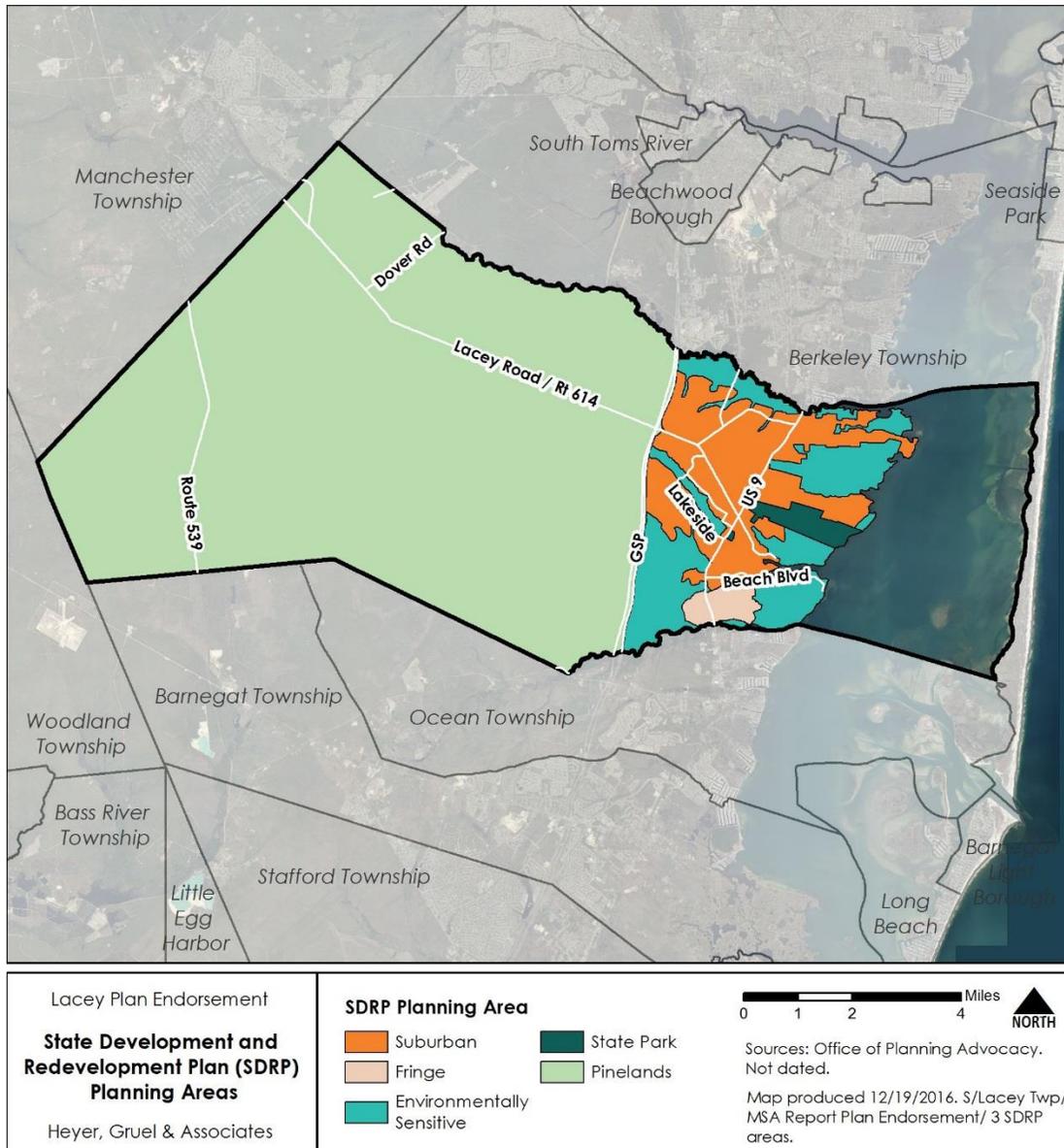
Despite the substantial overall size and extent of the Township, development exists within a confined cluster, between large tracts of environmentally sensitive areas. All lands in the Township west of the Garden State Parkway are located in the state-regulated Pinelands Region, while all lands east of the Garden State Parkway are subject to the jurisdiction of New Jersey's Coastal Area Facilities Review Act (CAFRA).



While both designations limit development, the vast majority of land to the west of the Parkway is located in either the Pinelands Preservation Area or Forest Area, two of the most sensitive and restrictive Pinelands Management Area classes. Consequently, most development is located east of the Parkway to the Bay, including approximately 95% of the Township's residential units. There is a small Pinelands Village located around Bamber Lake.

**EXISTING STATE PLAN POLICY MAP DESIGNATIONS**

As provided by data from the Office of Smart Growth, the total land area of Lacey Township is 86.1 square miles, or 55,103 acres. The Township's land area is divided between five State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) Planning Areas. All land west of the Garden State Parkway (the majority of the Township) falls within the Pinelands Planning Area. East of the Parkway, land is classified with the Suburban, Fringe, Environmentally Sensitive, and State Park Planning Areas.



## Section 2. EXISTING PLANNING POLICIES & ORDINANCES

## **BUILDING FROM EXISTING POLICY**

A Center is planned to function as a focal point for the economic, social, and cultural activities of a region, combining accessible, mixed-use commercial cores in close proximity to neighborhoods. In suburban areas, the SDRP acknowledges that Regional Centers are likely to involve considerable redevelopment and retrofitting, and must meet the specific challenges of increasing connectivity between uses, and pursuing land development through infill and reuse interventions. As a suburban community, Lacey will indeed face these challenges.

As will be shown, however, the Township has already begun taking steps to overcome these barriers to center-based development. This section of the Update will demonstrate the extent to which Lacey's existing planning documents and development policies and programs incorporate the features of center-based development.

## **LAND USE**

### Existing Planning Objectives and Recommendations

The 2004 Reexamination included 12 objectives related to general land use, two of which support center-based development, or would do so with minor modification:

1. Designate appropriate growth management districts for future guidance to developers.
2. Provide for mixed use patterns of development where the land is of such size and configuration as to permit energy efficient alternatives without impacting the existing development pattern of Lacey.

The 2012 Reexamination of the Land Use Element added two recommendations related to center- and node-based development:

1. Prepare an updated Land Use Element to incorporate zoning for non-age restricted multi-family residential development as a conditional use. The main purpose is to encourage affordably-priced workforce housing for the residents of Lacey Township in close proximity to public transportation.
2. Expand the M-100 zone near Oyster Creek to include Lots 4.03, 4.04, 4.05 and 4.06 in Block 1001 that are currently in the M-6 Industrial Zone and that the permitted and conditionally permitted uses of the M-100 Zone be expanded to include those permitted and conditionally permitted uses specifically mentioned in the M-6 Zone. This will allow the Township more flexibility in enticing other alternative type power plants to develop in this area.

### Status of Existing Objectives and Recommendations

The 2004 planning objectives are still valid and relevant, and would be furthered by center-based development. Designating a Regional Center area within the Township effectuates a growth-management strategy by giving developers clear guidance on the appropriate and feasible locations of future development. The core area of the Regional Center is located in areas that are already zoned for mixed-use development. The mixed-use character of these areas will be amplified by center designation. The second objective should, however, be modified, because it

is anticipated that center designation would somewhat impact the existing development pattern within the Regional Center.

All three of the recommendations from the 2012 reexamination report have been accomplished. The 2012 Reexamination itself included an update to the Land Use Element that introduced multi-family housing as a conditional use for the C-100, C-150, and C-200 zones, dwellings in mixed-use buildings in the C-150, C-200, and O-C zones, and two-family dwellings and mixed-use buildings along Manchester Avenue in the RO-100 zone. Since the 2012 Land Use Element Update, mixed-use buildings and multi-family residences as a conditional use have been introduced into many zones as represented in the following table:

<b>Zone</b>	<b>Mixed-Use Permitted?</b>	<b>Min Lot Size (interior)</b>	<b>Density</b>
C-300	Mixed-Use Permitted in conjunction with Retail Sales, Professional Office, or Personal Service uses; maximum of 2 apartments unless age-restricted (as accessory use); also permits townhouses and condos as conditional uses.	3 ac	max 10 units per gross acre for mf
C-200	Mixed-Use Permitted in conjunction with Retail Sales, Professional Office, or Personal Service uses; maximum of 2 apartments unless age-restricted (as accessory use); also permits townhouses and condos as conditional uses.	5 ac for multi-family uses	max 10 units per gross acre for mf
C-150	Mixed-Use Permitted in conjunction with Retail Sales, Professional Office, or Personal Service uses; maximum of 2 apartments unless age-restricted (as accessory use); also permits townhouses and condos as conditional uses.	45,000 sq ft	max 10 units per gross acre for mf
C-100	Mixed-Use Permitted in conjunction with Retail Sales, Professional Office, or Personal Service uses; maximum of 2 apartments unless age-restricted (as accessory use); also permits townhouses and condos as conditional uses.	5 ac for multi-family uses	max 10 units per gross acre for mf
OC	Mixed-Use Permitted in conjunction with Retail Sales, Professional Office, or Personal Service uses; maximum of 2 apartments unless age-restricted	20,000	
RO-100	Mixed-Use Permitted in conjunction with Office and Personal Business Service Uses; duplexes permitted as a conditional use.	15,000	

Thus, as the table above illustrates, many of the zones in Lacey already include a mixed-use component, which is one of the defining characteristics of center-based development.

The M-100 zone was expanded as recommended, widening the array of permitted uses allowed on these lots. This recommendation was added to the 2012 Reexamination based on the findings of a feasibility study that considered potential land uses in the wake of the imminent decommissioning of the Oyster Creek Nuclear facility. These lots are now under consideration for industrial node status, which will aid the Township in reactivating this site for economic purposes after operations cease at Oyster Creek.

Lacey Township Plan Endorsement  
Municipal Self-Assessment Update DRAFT

Since 2012, the Land Use Element has been updated one other time, in November 2016, primarily for the purpose of implementing a multi-family overlay district for properties fronting on Lacey Road and / or Route 9. Accomplishing this zoning change is the only major change to the zoning ordinance other than those described above since 2012. Annual Zoning Variance Reports from the last five years show no pattern of consistent variance relief that would require immediate attention from the Zoning Board and Governing Body.

There is currently one designated Redevelopment Area in Lacey Township, covering Lots 8.02 and 9 in Block 1837. The Redevelopment Plan for this area was adopted in November 2013. The overall goal of the redevelopment plan was to promote and facilitate the redevelopment and reuse of a former nursing home and Township-owned vacant land as an 100% affordable housing project. Construction of this project is nearing completion. The Redevelopment Plan area has since been expanded to include Block 1837.01, Lots 3.01, 4.01, 8.03, and 8.04.



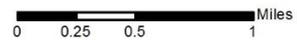
Lacey Plan Endorsement

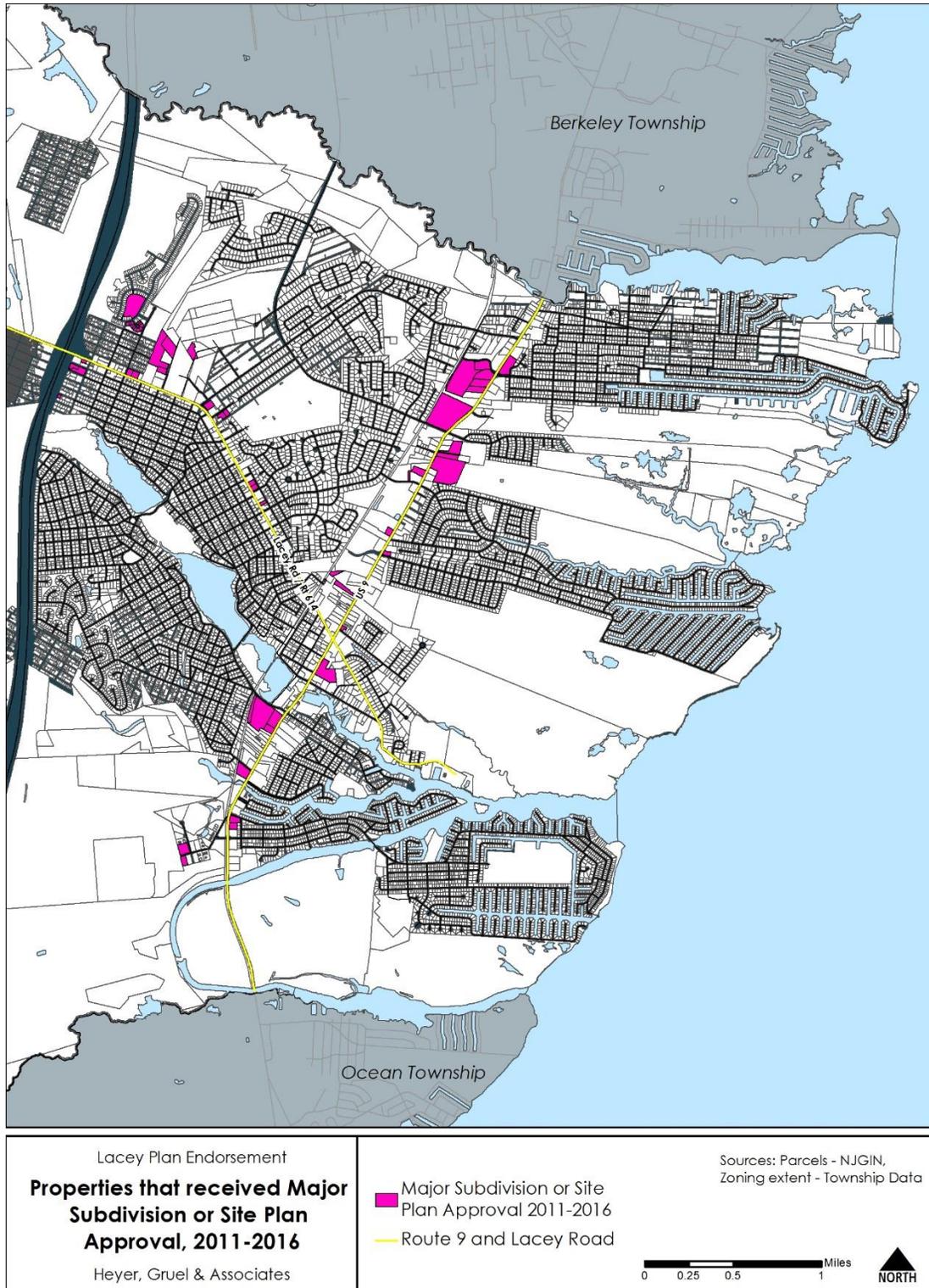
**Existing Mixed-Use  
Zoning Districts**

Heyer, Gruel & Associates

-  Mixed-Use Zoning Districts
-  Route 9 and Lacey Road

Sources: Parcels - NJGIN,  
Zoning extent - Township Data





Most of the applications for major subdivision or site plan approval have been located within the commercial core area of Route 9 or Lacey Road. Approvals were also issued in the industrial park area, and for larger-scale residential development in the northwestern portion of the Township in the vicinity of the Redevelopment Area and Township municipal building.

## **HOUSING**

### Existing Planning Objectives and Recommendations

The 2004 Reexamination included 11 objectives related to housing, three of which support center-based development, or would do so with minor modification:

1. Encourage housing densities based on the carrying capacities of existing infrastructure and natural resources.
2. Encourage a wide range of housing choices at reasonable cost including owner occupied two-family housing.
3. Devise strategies in coordinating housing with community services, economic development and employment opportunities as well as education and public safety efforts.

At the time of the 2012 Reexamination, the status of the Township's substantive certification pending before COAH was unknown. Consequently, no additional planning recommendations related to affordable housing were made beyond the zoning changes described above.

### Status of Existing Objectives and Recommendations

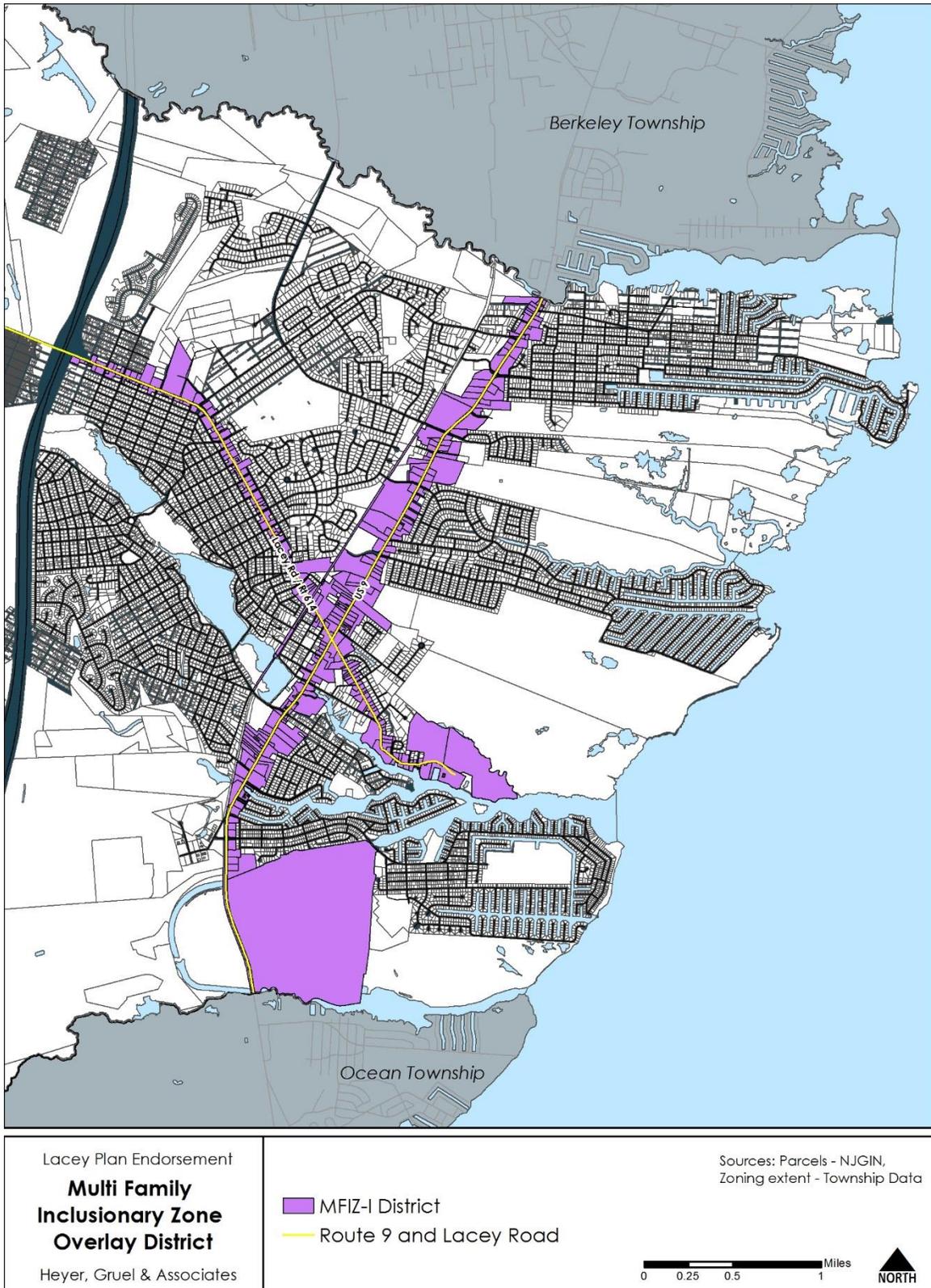
The 2004 planning objectives are still valid and relevant, and would be furthered by center-based development. The design of the Regional Center proposed for Lacey takes into account the extent and capacity of existing infrastructure. All of the Center is located within the sewer service area. Channeling new development into the Center preserves the Township's natural resource areas from development pressures. Expanding housing choices allows for a more resilient mix of housing types, affordable to all different types of households. Coordinating housing with the development of community services and economic development is exactly the kind of blending of uses that the Township hopes to accomplish with center-based development, although objective three should be changed slightly to acknowledge that coordination involves physically siting these uses in close proximity to one another so that residents can easily access neighborhood commercial areas and community services.

With the re-activation of the Third Round of affordable housing, Lacey took a proactive approach and has already reached a settlement agreement for the present housing round. The Township adopted an updated Housing Element and Fair Share Plan in April 2017. The Township's Third Round obligation is being addressed through two inclusionary developments; the Walter's Phase I family rental development and the Seabreeze at Lacey age-restricted rental development. Given that the Township has very little remaining developable vacant land, the Township received a vacant land adjustment, leaving an unmet need of 469 credits.

The Township has chosen to address its unmet need through an inclusionary overlay zone. The zone was incorporated into the Township's Master Plan through a Land Use Element Update in November 2016, and enacted via ordinance passed in December 2016 that officially established the Multi Family Inclusionary Zone (MFIZ-I) District Overlay. The MFIZ-I Overlay Zone is applied to all properties east of the Garden State Parkway fronting on US Route 9 or Lacey Road. Within the zone, multi-family developments must provide a mandatory set aside of 20% for sale units and 15% for rental units affordable to low- and moderate-income households. Multi-family housing developments permitted in the MFIZ-I Zone include townhomes, apartments, two-family dwellings, and single-family semi-detached dwellings. Inclusionary housing can be developed at a maximum of 16 units per gross acre, on lots at or above 45,000 square feet in size.

Lacey Township Plan Endorsement  
Municipal Self-Assessment Update DRAFT

In addition to the MFIZ-I Overlay, the Township has instituted a Township-wide requirement that any new multifamily development with 5 or more units shall provide an affordable housing set-aside of at least 20 percent (ordinance 2017-12).



These new affordable housing provisions ensure that as properties come up for redevelopment, a portion of the units will be available to low and moderate-income households.

As illustrated in the map, the MFIZ-I Zone overlaps with the portions of the Township that are already mixed-use, commercial-oriented zones. Center-based development would support bringing additional residents at higher densities to the areas around the commercial core. When residences are located in close proximity to commercial establishments that provide for every-day households needs, residents support local businesses, have the option of using healthier and more environmentally-friendly modes of accessing businesses, such as biking or walking, and conveniently accessing public transit options on Route 9 for travel to work or for recreation. The siting of the MFIZ-I Zone creates the opportunities for just this kind of higher-density, mixed-use development.

Providing a diversity of housing choices for households of different family structures, incomes, ages, cultural backgrounds, and educational levels contributes to community resiliency. It ensures that Lacey Township is an attractive and accessible residential community for residents at all life stages, creating a stable community that can fit into and support the economic development strategies that the Township is pursuing. Both residents and officials recognize these positive aspects of providing a range of housing choices.

To implement its Fair Share Plan, the Township has adopted or is in the process of adopting an updated Spending Plan, an updated Affirmative Marketing Plan Ordinance, and a contract with Community Grants and Planning to administer the Townships' Home Improvement Program.

## **CIRCULATION**

### Existing Planning Objectives and Recommendations

The 2004 Reexamination included 11 objectives related to transportation, five of which support center-based development, or would do so with minor modification:

1. Ensure areas are sufficiently linked with major highway and public transportation corridors.
2. Ensure public transportation services are expanded.
3. Discourage wherever possible the construction of cul-de-sacs or dead-end streets where street continuations and links are desirable or required for traffic circulation.
4. Promote the adoption of an ordinance that would establish an assessment fund and require the payment of a sidewalk assessment fee by the applicant or developer whenever the installation of sidewalks is waived for any development.
5. Review existing regulations policies and programs to maximize infrastructure maintenance and improvement efforts including specific plans for pedestrian walkways and bikeways

The 2012 Reexamination of the Circulation Element added one recommendation related to center- and node-based development:

1. There is a need to incorporate a Complete Streets Policy as a means to provide safe access for all users by designing and operating a comprehensive, integrated, connected multi-modal network of transportation options.



Lacey Plan Endorsement

**Public Transit  
Bus Routes with  
Stops in Lacey**

Heyer, Gruel & Associates

- Bus Stops
- - Bus Route 559

Sources: Parcels - NJGIN,  
Bus Routes - NJ TRANSIT



### Status of Existing Objectives and Recommendations

The 2004 circulation planning objectives are still valid and relevant, and would be furthered by center-based development. Centers should be multi-modal, allowing for easy access to public transit and points of intersection between transit modes. Encouraging linkages between residential areas and transit, as well as adequate transit service timing, frequency, and origin-destination mix are all important elements of center-based development and significant local transit goals. An analysis of walkable proximity to public transit stops was incorporated into the design of the proposed Regional Center. A gridded street pattern with continuous sidewalks lends itself to walkable neighborhoods with multiple routes to major destinations and the elimination of barriers to mobility caused by cul-de-sac development. Emphasizing improvements to include walkways and bikeways similarly open up additional transit modes for local daily trips.

The objectives first broached in the 2004 objectives were taken a step further in the 2012 Reexamination, which advocated for and also included a Complete Streets policy for the Township as a means to provide safe access for all users by designing and operating a comprehensive, integrated, connected multi-modal network of transportation options. The Complete Streets Policy acknowledges the benefits of providing for multiple modes of transit, including improved safety, connections to bicycling and walking trip generators, the promotion of a healthy lifestyle, the creation of a more livable community, reduced traffic congestion and reliance on carbon fuels, and financial savings of later retrofits. The Goals and Objectives of the Complete Streets policy include (but are not limited to):

1. Create a comprehensive, integrated, connected multi-modal network by facilitating connection to bicycling and walking trip generators such as employment, education, residential, recreation, retail centers and public facilities.
2. Provide safe and accessible accommodations for existing and future pedestrian, bicycle and transit facilities.
3. Establish a checklist of pedestrian, bicycle and transit accommodations such as accessible sidewalk curb ramps, crosswalks, countdown pedestrian signals, signs, curb extensions, pedestrian scale lighting, bike lanes and shoulders for consideration in each project.
4. Additionally, sidewalks, dedicated bicycle paths, and/or multi-use path shall be included in all new construction and reconstruction projects on "major roadways" and "safe routes" as defined by Ordinance and those used by more than 1,000 vehicles per day.
5. Establish a procedure to evaluate resurfacing projects for Complete Streets.
6. Address the need for bicyclists and pedestrians to cross corridors, as well as travel along them, in a safe, accessible and convenient manner; therefore, the design of intersections, interchanges and bridges shall anticipate use by bicyclists and pedestrians.

In the realm of pedestrian improvements, Lacey has furthered its objective of installing adequate sidewalks through new regulation. Ordinance xxx requires all proposed developments along Route 9 and Lacey Road to install sidewalks. The Township's 2012 Reexamination also establishes corridor design standards for these roads, so that the Township can require appropriate pedestrian amenities such as shade trees.

The most recent major change in the Township's street network is the planned implementation of a bypass road parallel to Route 9 that is meant to lessen traffic on portions of Route 9, which has faced increased usage pressure from developments in Lacey and in surrounding communities.

The bypass road, which will also contain a bicycle and pedestrian path, is further described in the changes of planning assumptions section, since it has not yet been implemented. Recently the Township authorized the execution of an additional planning study for the segment of Route 9 between South Lacey Road and Ocean Township.

The 2012 Reexamination was completed after Ocean County's 2011 Master Plan, and is consistent with the County's transportation planning policies. The County Plan emphasizes Central New Jersey's status as an air quality non-attainment area for certain Federal air quality standards. In order to improve air quality, Ocean County's plan advocates for transportation alternatives, including bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The County Plan also acknowledges that despite efforts to advance the Route 9 road widening project, progress has yet to be made in obtaining funding for project implementation. Given this reality, the County encourages municipalities to create circulation plans and consider traffic improvements on local roads that may offer various routes to and from key destinations such as shopping centers, schools and large residential subdivisions, keeping local traffic off Route 9. The bypass road furthers both of these County objectives by providing an alternate connection that will absorb traffic from Route 9, and by including multi-modal bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure alongside vehicle lanes.

## **UTILITY SERVICE**

### Existing Planning Objectives and Recommendations

The 2004 Reexamination included two objectives related to utility service, both of which support center-based development, or would do so with minor modification:

1. Ensure that development will have safe and adequate wastewater treatment facilities.
2. Ensure that development will have safe and adequate potable water sources. Work and cooperate with the Lacey Municipal Utilities Authority in the development of appropriate well head protection ordinances.

The 2012 Reexamination of the Utilities Element added one recommendation related to center- and node-based development:

1. There is a need to obtain maps of current public water and sewer facilities from the Lacey MUA and include them in the Master Plan.

### Status of Existing Objectives and Recommendations

The 2004 utility planning objectives are still valid and relevant, and would be furthered by center-based development. Concentrating new development and population within a Regional Center area keeps utility provisioning efficiency by drawing on the existing infrastructure system while protecting environmentally sensitive areas, such as well head zones, from the impacts of system expansion. The Regional Center will be located entirely within the existing sewer service area, where there is safe and adequate wastewater treatment capacity.

The ability of Lacey's wastewater and water supply infrastructure to serve existing and future needs was recently evaluated in the municipal chapter of the Ocean County Wastewater Management Plan, approved by the NJDEP on December 30, 2015. Per this analysis, Lacey's wastewater conveyance infrastructure is expected to continue to handle seasonal fluctuations and future growth in population.

Drinking water supply in the Township is derived from seven wells, five of which draw from Atlantic City Sand Aquifer, and two from the Kirkwood Cohansey Aquifer. Operation of the public water system is conducted by the Lacey Township MUA. The system has a current capacity of 4.176 MGD, with a peak daily usage of 3.535 MGD, leaving a surplus of 0.641 MGD for utilization as the Township grows.

Wastewater in the sewer service area is processed by the Ocean County Utility Authority, while the non-sewered areas of the Township are designated septic areas which must contend with nitrate dilution limitations. The analysis of wastewater demand within the sewer service area calculated a build-out scenario with an additional 2,063 residential units and 5,344,628 square feet of commercial space. This level of development would add 0.82 MGD of wastewater flow demand, for a total of 2.881 MGD. Most of the Township area outside the SSA have existing zoning limitations that do not conflict with the nitrate dilution modeling. Lacey is located across seven HUC11 watershed areas, which are the basis of the nitrate dilution analysis.

Significant discrepancy between municipal zoning regulations and nitrate dilution capacity exists in one watershed area within Lacey (HUC11 02040301110), which contains the commercial and industrially zoned areas in the vicinity of the Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station. If these areas developed to the full extent permitted, they would discharge far more than their proportional share of the total assimilative capacity of the watershed area, and would cause the HUC11 to exceed its nitrate target. However, the County anticipates that actual nitrate discharge would be far less than projected at build out. The Plan notes that any future development in the area in question is almost certainly to be either NJPDES permitted or added to the SSA through amendment. The Wastewater Management Plan also anticipates that a significant percentage of the remaining area in question will be designated for preservation during the course of the Plant decommissioning.

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

### Existing Planning Objectives and Recommendations

The 2004 Reexamination included four objectives related to community facilities, one of which supports center-based development, or would do so with minor modification:

1. Plan for and provide locations for future emergency service facilities necessary to service future development as projected by the land use plan.

The 2012 Reexamination of the Community Facilities Element added one recommendation related to center- and node-based development:

1. There is a need for an urgent care facility to reduce the demand on the hospital emergency rooms, while lessening the economic hardship of the Township's residents.

### Status of Existing Objectives and Recommendations

The 2004 community planning objectives are still valid and relevant, and would be furthered by center-based development. However, these objectives can be adjusted to reflect the access and proximity issues embodied in center-based development. For example, future emergency service facilities should be sited within the Regional Center so as to be easily accessed by the Township's denser population districts, and outside of the floodplain. The 2012 recommendation to pursue an urgent care facility has been addressed. Urgent Care Now Lanoka Harbor is now



## **RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE**

### Existing Planning Objectives and Recommendations

The 2004 Reexamination included five objectives related to recreation and open space facilities, none of which specifically address elements of center-based development, even with minor modification.

The 2012 Reexamination of the Recreation Element added one recommendation related to center- and node-based development:

1. Create a Municipal Public Access Plan to enhance public access to New Jersey's beaches, bays and waterways.

### Status of Existing Objectives and Recommendations

Goals and objectives for open space and recreation in the context of center-based development strongly relate to providing adequate facilities close to population centers, so that recreational facilities are convenient to Township residents, integrated into neighborhoods and commercial districts, and situated within a network of multi-modal bicycle and pedestrian connections. To date, Lacey has not articulated planning goals for recreation that highlight these intended aspects of parkland development.

A new inventory of recreation facilities was prepared during the 2012 Master Plan Reexamination Report, which is reflected in the Recreation Facilities map below. With the exception of some of the Bayfront parks, many of the Township's recreation facilities are located in close proximity to the regional center area of Lacey Road and Route 9. As the Township plans for future recreational facilities, proximity and location within the Regional center will be significant factors. As described previously, the bypass road paralleling Route 9 will also have bicycle and pedestrian pathways, providing a route for the Ocean County Barnegat Bay Trail (known as the BBT) through Lacey Township. Having the BBT trails spine within the Regional Center provides a starting point to develop additional lateral routes by which trail users can access the Bayshore to the east and the pinelands natural areas to the west. These potential recreational connections can assist Lacey in the development of its Municipal Public Access Plan.

## **CONSERVATION / ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LANDS**

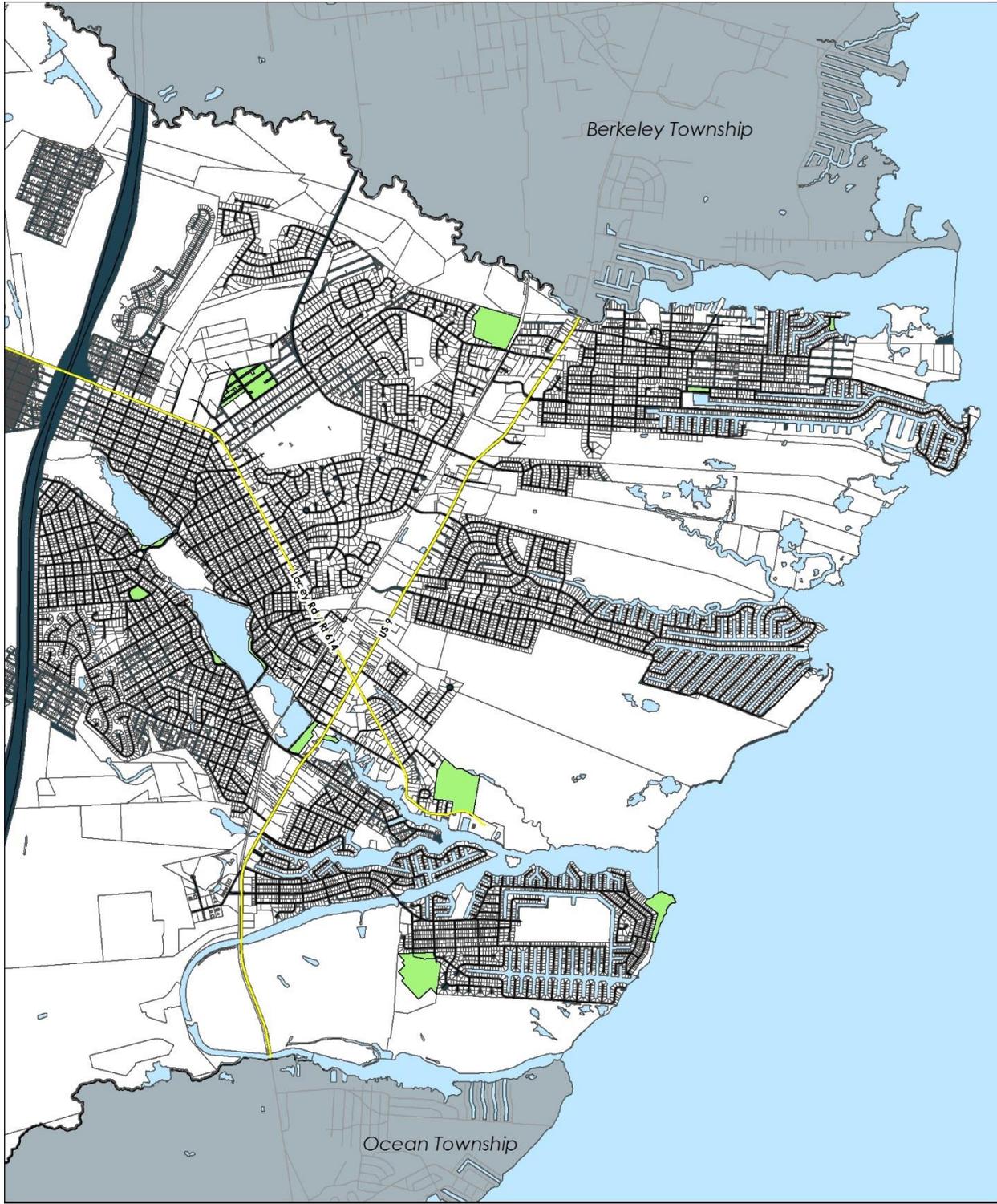
### Existing Planning Objectives and Recommendations

The 2004 Reexamination included three objectives related to conservation, one of which supports center-based development, or would do so with minor modification:

1. Ensure environmentally sensitive areas are given high priority for public acquisition.

The 2012 Reexamination added two recommendations related to center- and node-based development:

1. Any natural resources inventory mapping which has been completed should be obtained and included in the plan.
2. The Township should consider the requirement of "tree-save plans" for proposed development in an effort to save significant trees through more creative site design techniques.



Lacey Plan Endorsement

**Recreation  
Facilities**

Heyer, Gruel & Associates

 Township and  
County Parks

Sources: Parcels - NJGIN,  
Bus Routes - NJ TRANSIT



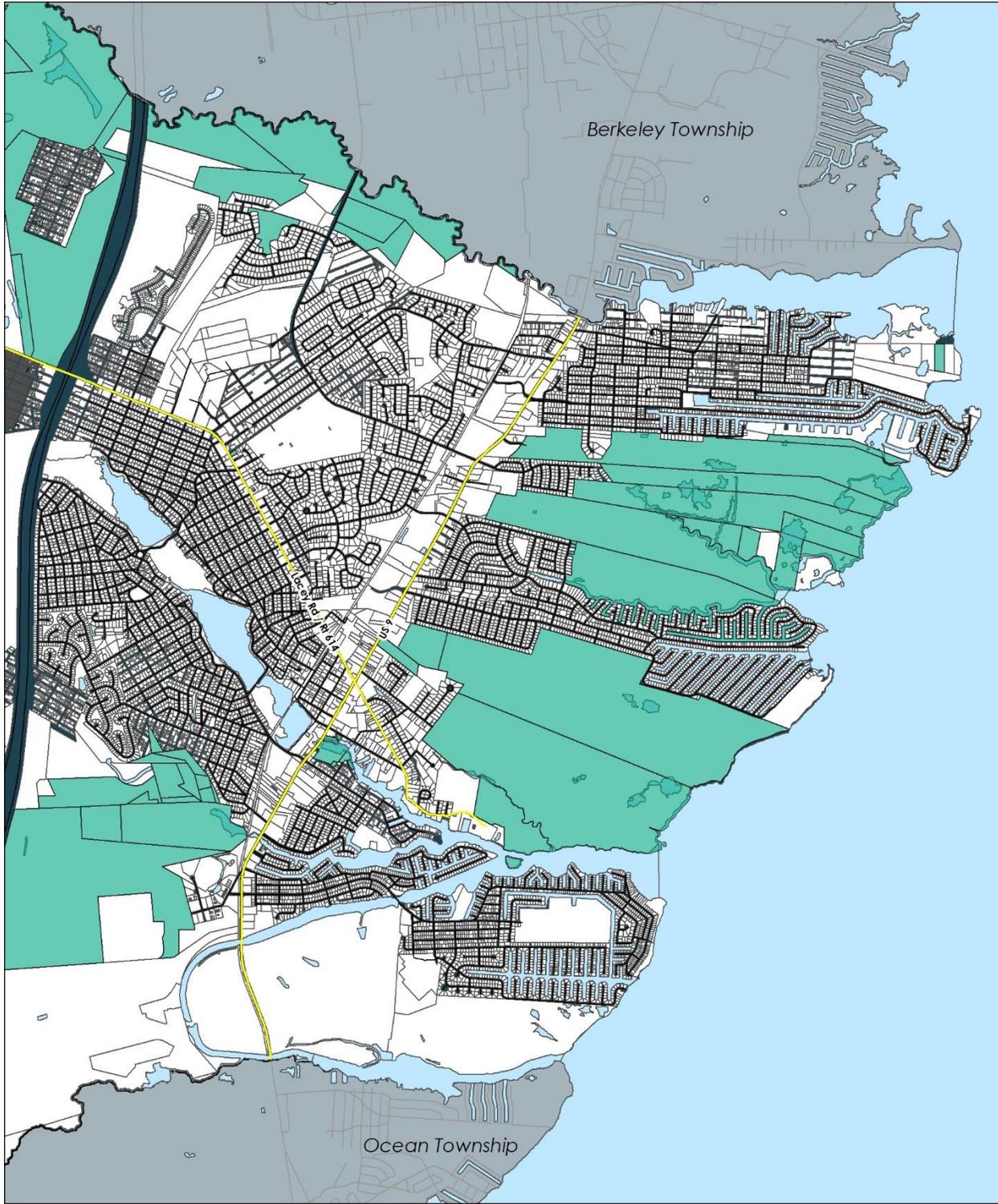
Status of Existing Objectives and Recommendations

The Township anticipates that center-based development will indirectly support preservation and conservation goals by channeling development away from environmentally sensitive planning areas and features. Environmentally sensitive areas outside of the center can be targeted for public acquisition and preservation efforts. Any natural resource inventory mapping should be updated regularly and used in consideration of future changes to the center or the sewer service area. Although conservation efforts often focus on large-scale acquisitions and whole tracts of land, the Township envisions a Regional Center area that is densely developed, but which also maintains a green aesthetic and integrates natural features that provide ecosystem services, such as water infiltration, and improve quality of life.

The Township lists 13 properties on its Recreation and Open Space Inventory on file with the New Jersey Green Acres program, all of which are west of the Garden State Parkway and outside the scope of the present Plan Endorsement process. Though they are not listed as official ROSI properties, there are a number of properties owned by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the United States Government, and the Ocean County Soil Conservation District that are held for conservation purposes.

In addition to preserving land through acquisition, the Township have developed a number of ordinances aimed at the conservation of natural features and vital ecosystems, as well as requiring the integration of natural features into the built environment during site development. The following chart summarizes the Township's resource protection ordinances:

<b>Ordinance</b>	<b>Date of Adoption/ Last Revision</b>
Air Safety and Hazardous Zoning (Chapter 128)	1996
Bulkheading and Shoreline Stabilization (Chapter 153)	1987
Construction, Renovation, and Demolition Debris Recovery Plan (Chapter 160)	2009
Excavations and Soil Mining (Chapter 175)	1997
Fishing and Crabbing (Chapter 181)	1996
Flood Hazard Areas (Chapter 185)	2013
Invasive Plants (Chapter 206)	2013
Littering (Chapter 219)	1996
Shade Trees (Chapter 297-48)	2013
Solid Waste (Chapter 289)	2010
Stormwater Regulations for Non-Pinelands Areas (Chapter 291)	2014
Stormwater Regulations for Pinelands Areas (Chapter 292)	2007
Trees (Chapter 313)	1991
Water Supply & Sewerage Facilities (Chapter 412)	1974



Lacey Plan Endorsement  
**State, Federal, &  
County Conservation  
Lands**

Heyer, Gruel & Associates

Land owned for  
Conservation by the US  
Government, NJDEP, and  
Ocean County Soil  
Conservation Program

Sources: Parcels - NJGIN,  
MODIV Tax Data



## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### Existing Planning Objectives and Recommendations

The 2004 Reexamination included four objectives related to economic development, two of which support center-based development, or would do so with minor modification:

1. Encourage mixed-use patterns of development at appropriate locations and densities.
2. Expand the economic base of Lacey Township, introducing ratables while maintaining economically and environmentally compatible growth.

The 2012 Reexamination of the Recreation Element added two recommendations related to center- and node-based development:

1. There is a need for an Updated Economic Plan Element, including reference to the Lacey Business Park and uses therein.
2. Comments and input should be obtained from the Lacey Township Economic Development Commission, including suggestions regarding a review of development regulations to encourage appropriate economic development through Zoning Ordinance amendments, including with the Historic Preservation District and the Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Plant property.

### Status of Existing Objectives and Recommendations

The 2004 and 2012 economic development objectives are still valid and relevant, and would be furthered by center-based development. These recommendations focus on mixed-use development and balancing economic growth with environmental sustainability, both of which are expected to be brought about through center-based development.

Economic development is a major issue for Lacey Township, and one of the principal driving forces behind the need for center-based development and designation. The Oyster Creek Nuclear Generation facility will be decommissioned in 2019. A regional-scale employer, the closure of Oyster Creek will impact regional employment and the Township's tax base. The full implications of the closure are described below, in the changes of assumptions section. With environmentally sensitive features to the west of the GSP in the pinelands and to the east along the coast, the Township is limited in potential growth locations. Economic development plans for areas like the Business Park, Historic Forked River, and other areas within the proposed Regional Center will be crucial to filling the void left by Oyster Creek.

Ocean County has the second highest job deficit in the State. In September of 2015 according to the New Jersey Department of Labor there were 265,400 Ocean County residents in the labor force as compared to 137,523 employed by the private sector jobs located in the County. In addition, Ocean County has the second lowest weekly private sector wage rate. The County's largest and fastest growing age group is 25 to 44 year-olds, which will increase the demand for high-salary jobs. However, Ocean County has the second lowest weekly wage rate in the State and the highest commuter rate, which is due to the insufficient number of higher skilled jobs at the local level. Designating portions of Lacey Township as a regional center and industrial nodes will open the Township to additional investment that can start to reverse some of these regional trends.

## **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### Existing Planning Objectives and Recommendations

The Township's most recent Stormwater Management Plan dates to 2007. The plan addresses groundwater recharge, stormwater quantity and stormwater quality impacts by incorporating stormwater design and performance standards for new major development; defined as developments that disturb more than 5,000 square feet of land, or 5,000 square feet of impervious coverage. It also reviewed existing ordinances and planning documents to allow for project designs that include low impact development techniques. The Plan's goals are as follows:

1. Reduce flood damage, including damage to life and property;
2. Minimize, to the extent practical, any increase in stormwater runoff from any new development;
3. Reduce soil erosion from any development or construction project;
4. Assure the adequacy of existing and proposed culverts, bridges and other in-stream structures;
5. Maintain groundwater recharge;
6. Prevent, to the greatest extent feasible, an increase in nonpoint pollution;
7. Maintain the integrity of stream channels for their biological functions and for drainage;
8. Minimize pollutants in stormwater runoff from new and existing development; and
9. Protect public safety through the proper design and operation of stormwater basins.

### Status of Existing Objectives and Recommendations

As outlined in the Plan, the Township recognizes the need for both structural (i.e. engineered) controls and non-structural stormwater strategies. The latter group include regulations that protect significant water recharge areas, minimize impervious surfaces, limit soil compaction, provide low-maintenance landscaping, and other such general regulatory approaches to retaining and filtering stormwater. Township ordinances were compared against the New Jersey Best Management Practices Manual in order to determine where better implementation of these strategies could be achieved. Since 2007, the Township has taken the following steps suggested by the 2007 Plan:

- Created a tree protection ordinance.

Recommendations that have yet to be implemented will be discussed below. The Township maintains a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan that is updated and executed by the Public Works Department.

## **OTHER MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS**

The 2012 Reexamination Report contained recommendations related to additional Master Plan elements that are only indirectly or tangentially related to center-based development.

## **1. HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

The 2012 Reexamination report recommended the preparation and adoption of a Historic Preservation Element that identifies historic areas, promotes adoption of development regulations encouraging preservation, encourage the use of historical architectural design. At the time, it was thought that Bay Avenue, formerly known as “Captain’s Road”, should be an emphasized element of the Historic District.

Since 2012, no additional activity has taken place in pursuit of historic preservation. However, the proposed Regional Center includes the historic Forked River portion of the Township. To the extent that historical preservation or the repurposing of historic properties can be leveraged to attract investment or visitors to this portion of Lacey Township, it supports the Township’s emphasis on center-based development. Properties in this area may become more attractive for adaptive reuse with the center designation.

## **2. RECYCLING**

The 2012 Reexamination report added a Recycling Plan Element for the first time. Recycling occurs in a variety of communities – urban, suburban, and rural; center-based and sprawling. While recycling certainly supports the Township’s sustainability efforts, it is not directly supportive of center-based development.

### Section 3. MAJOR CHANGES IN ASSUMPTIONS AFFECTING PLANNING

## EVALUATING PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

Certain events or trends cause planners and municipal officials to re-evaluate the fundamental assumptions on which they base community development goals and objectives. In many cases, such basic changes in planning assumptions have broad implications that permeate through multiple functional areas of planning practice, such as land use, transportation, conservation, and community facilities planning. This section summarizes the following trends and events, which have changed the basis for planning in Lacey Township:

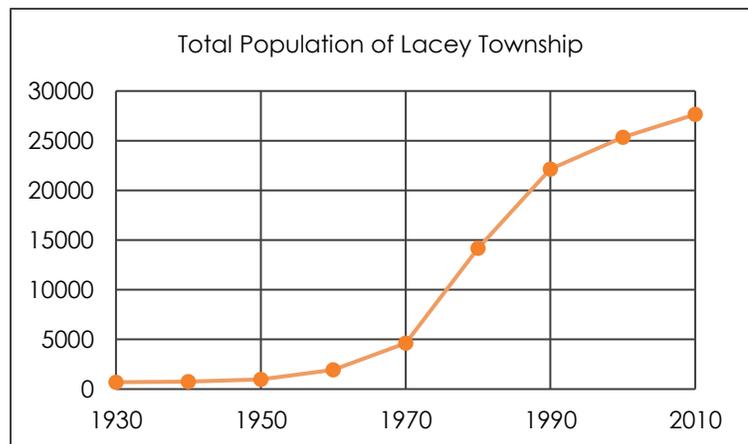
1. Demographic Trends
2. Hurricane Sandy
3. The imminent closure of Oyster Creek
4. Renewed activity in affordable housing
5. Circulation changes along the Route 9 corridor
6. Ocean County's new wastewater management plan

## TOWNSHIP DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

### Overall Population

Lacey is still a growing municipality with an overall population that continues to rise, albeit at a slowed rate from the peak growth period of 1970 to 1990. The 2010 decennial census reported a population of 27,644 for Lacey Township. The rate of change between 2000 and 2010 was a 9% increase. Lacey represents 4.8% of the total population of Ocean County.

Year	Total Population Lacey Township	Population Change
1930	692	
1940	752	9%
1950	966	28%
1960	1,940	101%
1970	4,616	138%
1980	14,161	207%
1990	22,141	56%
2000	25,346	14%
2010	27,644	9%



### Population Density

As expected, the lowest population densities per square mile fall in census areas that overlap with the Pinelands. Densities in these census block groups can be as low as 8 persons per square mile. The highest population densities can be found along major roads, such as Route 9, Lacey Road, and Lakeside Drive. Densities within Forked River are along the mid- to low-range for the Township.

### Age Distribution

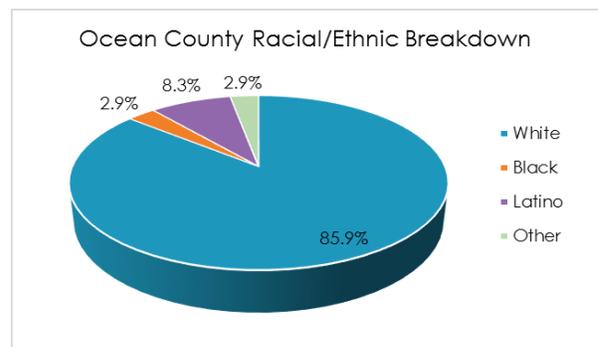
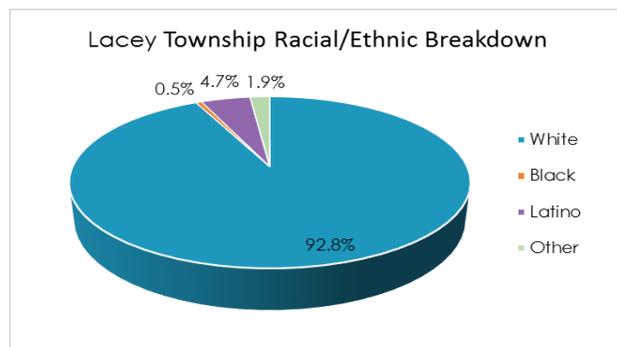
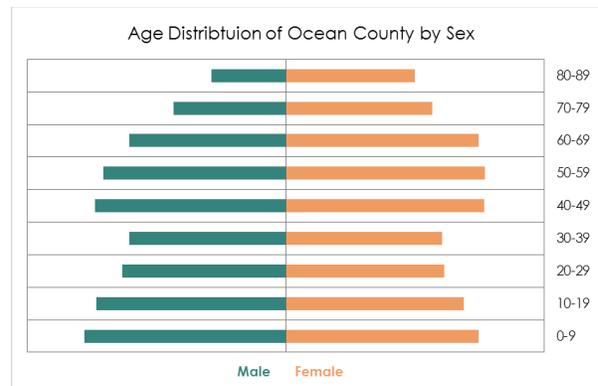
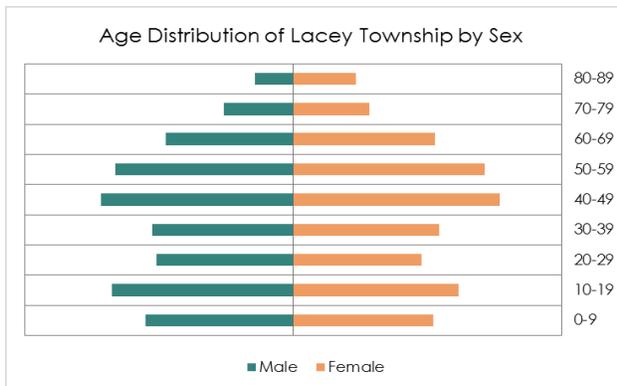
The age structure of the Township is similar to that of Ocean County and the State of New Jersey as a whole. In Lacey, the age distribution resembles an uneven barbell. The age cohorts with the most members are the middle-aged groups of 40-49 and 50-59. While there is a substantial senior population, it is actually outweighed by younger age cohorts in the 0-9 and 10-19 age range.

Ocean County's age distribution is smoother than that of the Township, with less drastic changes between cohorts. The County as a whole also has more population in senior cohorts as relative to those in the youngest cohorts. The County also has more population in the 0-9 range than Lacey, indicating either a higher overall birthrate, or a lower incidence of families moving to the Township with very young children. Both pyramids show a pinch in the 20-29 and 30-39 age ranges. The age distribution of New Jersey mirrors that of Lacey Township.

### Racial Distribution

As of 2010, Lacey's racial / ethnic distribution was relatively uniform. Almost all of the population (92.8%) identifies as white. Latino is the next largest ethnic group, at 4.7% of the population. African American individuals make up less than one percent of the population.

Ocean County has a similar demographic makeup, with a slightly smaller portion of the population (85.9%) identifying as white, and comparatively larger percentages of black and latino populations. The Township and County are quite different from the state as a whole, in which over a third of the population is not white.



### Households and Housing Units

There are 10,183 households in Lacey Township, which constitutes 4.6% of all households located in Ocean County. Average household size in Lacey is 2.71 persons, higher than average household size in both Ocean County (2.58 persons) and the State (2.68 persons).

There are 11,537 housing units in the Township. Homeownership rates are very high in Lacey. At 89.1%, the Township's rate is 8 percentage points higher than that of Ocean County (81.1%), and 24 percentage points higher than that of the State. Vacancy rates in the Township are low (12% of total housing stock) as compared to Ocean County (20.5%). As with Ocean County overall, most vacancies represent seasonal homes occupied for a portion of the year. Almost all homes in the Township are single-family detached homes, a difference from the County, in which only three quarters of dwelling units are single-family detached homes.

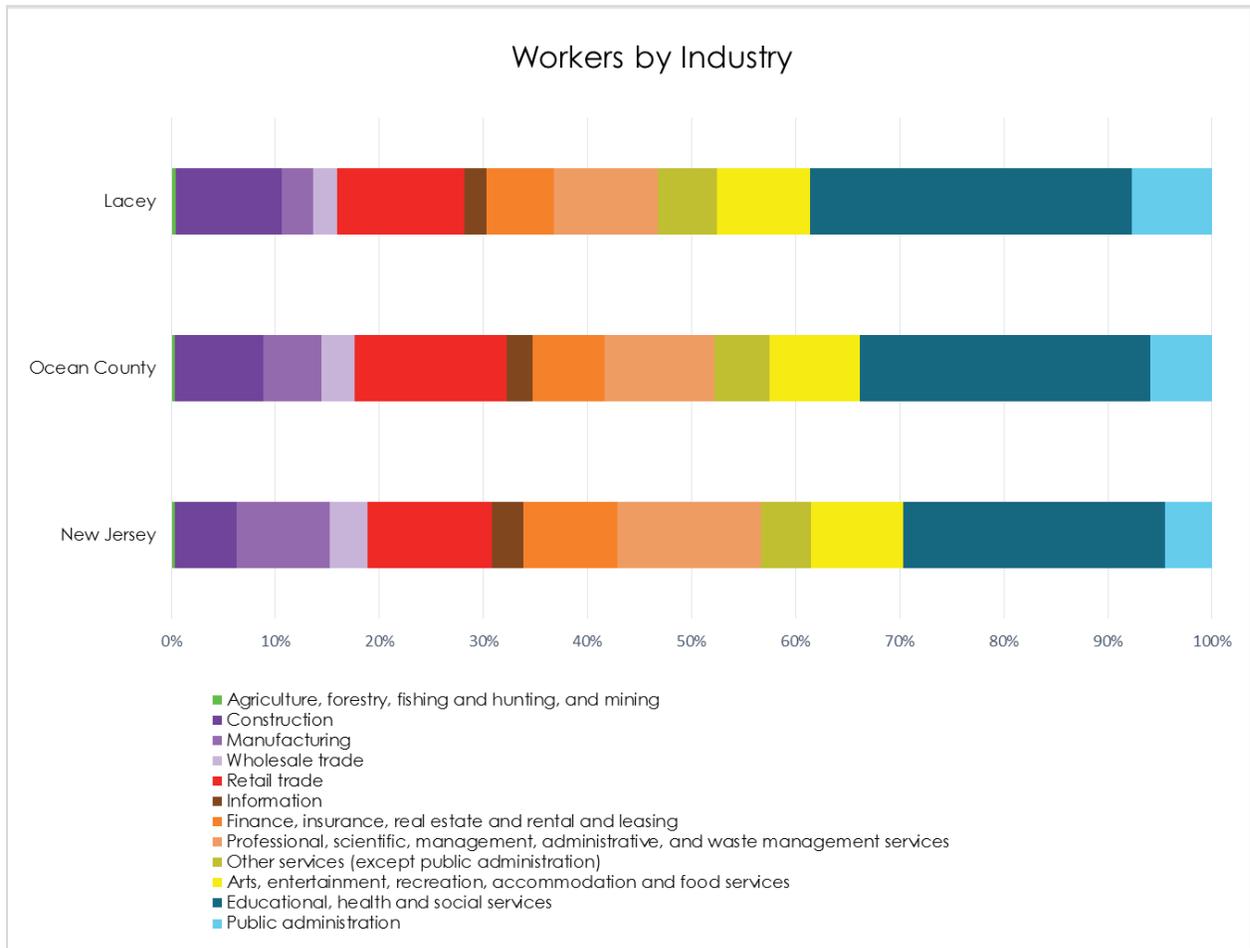
	Lacey Township	Ocean County
Total Housing Units	11,573	278,052
Occupied Units	10,183	221,111
Vacant Units	1,390	56,941
Percent Vacant	12.0%	20.5%
Types of Vacancies		
For rent	5.8%	8.5%
Rented, not occupied	0.4%	0.6%
For sale only	11.4%	8.0%
Sold, not occupied	2.2%	1.5%
For seasonal or occasional use	70.0%	73.9%
All other vacancies	10.3%	7.6%

Type of Unit	Lacey Township	Ocean County
Single Detached	95.3%	75.8%
Single Attached	1.3%	9.2%
2 Units	1.1%	3.3%
3 or 4 Units	0.1%	2.2%
5 to 9 Units	0.1%	2.0%
10 or More Units	2.0%	5.4%
Mobile Home	0.0%	2.1%

### Income and Employment

Median household income in Lacey is \$71,714, which is significantly higher than the County's median household income (\$61,994). In fact, it is almost as high as the State median income (\$72,093). Per capita income measures follow a similar pattern, with Lacey's figure (\$33,665) lower than State (\$36,582) levels but higher than County levels (\$31,200). The 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-year dataset estimates the poverty rate in Lacey (8.9%) to be lower than both the County (11.3%) and State (10.8%) rates. However, Lacey's unemployment rate (6.9%) is higher than that of both the County (5.2%) and the State (5.8%).

In 2010, the three largest industry sectors employing Lacey Township residents were: (1) education, health and social services; (2) retail trade; and (3) construction. While the first two categories are also large industries at the County and State levels, construction is not a top-three industry for the State and County. Lacey follows similar patterns to State and County industry sectors, with professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste management services being a major employment sector.



Lacey's population differs from the County and State because it is more heavily concentrated in the construction and public administration sectors. It is significantly less concentrated in manufacturing and wholesale trade.

**Projections**

The Plan Endorsement process will assist Lacey Township in planning for projected increases in population, households, and employment; in understanding the infrastructure needed to accommodate these jobs, houses, and people; and in providing adequate capacity for anticipated growth. Toward that end, this report includes projections of population, households, and employment through the year 2045 (the limit of available data).

This report utilizes population projection numbers provided by North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA), obtained from the Ocean County Department of Planning. NJTPA predicts population will increase by 4,435 people to 32,075, a 16% change over 2010 values. Households will increase by 1,898, an increase of 19%. Job growth is anticipated to yield an additional 1,598 jobs between 2010 and 2045. This change would amount to an employment growth of 28% within the Township.

	2010 (Census)	2015 (NJTPA)	2020 (NJTPA)	2025 (NJTPA)	2030 (NJTPA)	2035 (NJTPA)	2040 (NJTPA)	2045 (NJTPA)
Population	27,640	27,747	28,142	28,823	29,583	30,962	31,656	32,075
Households	10,180	10,257	10,426	10,713	11,041	1,639	11,912	12,078
Jobs	5,640	6,333	6,545	6,671	6,784	6,963	7,133	7,238

If these figures are correct, Lacey Township will need to provide for additional housing and economic development. At that point, significant population growth would only be possible through redevelopment.

### Demographics Summary

The demographic trends discussed above present the image of a Township that will continue to grow into the future. Given the projections for the Township's population, and its purposeful approach to attracting additional economic development, preparation must be made for accommodating additional residential and economic growth. The Township envisions channeling this growth into center-based mixed-use development that builds off of the current locations of high population density. One of the chief goals for future planning documents will be to create the opportunity for this type of development to take hold. Compact, center-based development also makes sense, given the Township's significant environmental constraints.

### Comparison of Key Demographic Indicators for Lacey, Ocean County, and New Jersey

	Lacey Township	Ocean County	New Jersey
Land Area (sq mi)	86.1	640.8	7,417
Population	27,644	576,567	8,791,894
Median Age	41.3	42.6	39.0
Households	10,183	221,111	3,214,360
Average Household Size	2.71	2.58	2.68
Housing Units	11,573	278,052	3,553,562
Home Ownership Rate	89.1%	81.1%	65.4%
Vacancy Rate	12%	20.5%	9.5%
Median Household Income	\$71,714	\$61,994	\$72,093
Per Capita Income	\$33,665	\$31,200	\$36,582
Poverty Rate	8.9%	11.3%	10.8%
Unemployment Rate	6.9%	5.2%	5.8%

## **THE CLOSURE OF OYSTER CREEK**

Lacey is home to the Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Generating Station, located in the south-central portion of the Township. Oyster Creek is the oldest operating commercial nuclear power plant in the country. It is quickly approaching the end of its operational life, and is scheduled to be decommissioned at the end of 2019. The decommissioning of the plant will have a drastic impact on the fiscal condition of Lacey Township and regional employment. The plant operates with 700 full time employees, and 42 percent of the Township's annual budget comes from fees paid by the facility.

Anticipating the significant challenges that decommissioning will represent, Lacey Township proactively undertook a feasibility study in September 2012, examining the potential of installing a new, non-nuclear power generation facility on a nearby parcel to offset the loss of the nuclear plant. The alternatives analysis considered several different types of power-generation, and determined that a gas fired combined cycle power generation facility would be the most feasible option in terms of time, statewide energy goals, existing infrastructure, and similarity of scale to the existing facility. It would, however require significant upgrades to the existing gas distribution pipeline.

The Report identified several obstacles that would need to be overcome in order to site a new power generating facility, including obtaining industrial water service capacity; upgrades to the gas distribution pipeline; the constraints of the current CAFRA impervious surface limits based on existing planning area designation; restrictive zoning regulations; initial project costs; working around environmental constraints, and the objections of other competing parties.

While the establishment of a new gas fired plant would help to stabilize Lacey's tax base and consumer energy prices, it would not completely address the effects of decommissioning. Such a plant would employ around 25 to 30 people, far short of the 700 full time staff now working at Oyster Creek. Consequently, the Township feels the need to expand its economic development strategy well beyond considerations of a new power generating facility. Both the industrial node designation in the area of the existing power plant and regional center designation would enable the Township to address the coming economic challenges with an approach grounded in smart growth land development practices.

## **HURRICANE SANDY AND RESILIENCY PLANNING**

The experience of Superstorm Sandy and Hurricane Irene changed the calculus and the stakes of local land use planning efforts in many communities across New Jersey. These storms caused tremendous damage to homes, utilizes, public spaces, and other community facilities. In the face of proven vulnerability to natural hazards, municipalities, counties, and other regional entities in New Jersey are introducing resiliency, sustainability, and hazard mitigation measures into community development practices.

Sustainability is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Resiliency is defined as the capacity of a system to withstand disturbance while still retaining its fundamental structure, function, and internal feedbacks. One pillar of resiliency is the use of mitigation techniques before disaster strikes in order to anticipate and potentially avoid likely threats to life and property.

Lacey Township was particularly affected by Sandy. Impacts from the storm surge and wind damage were detailed in the Township's 2014 Strategic Recovery Planning Report (SRPR), including:

- Damage to 652 residential properties, 545 of which sustained major damage and 107 of which sustained severe damage;
- Damage to more than 1,095 businesses and financial losses from the disruption of operations;
- Flooding of approximately 175 roadways;
- Disruption to electricity and sewer service utilities; and
- Damage to Bayfront Park.

The worst flood damage to residential properties occurred in the portions of the Township situated to the east of Route 9, in communities such as Bayside Beach, Lanoka Harbor, Riviera Beach, Sunrise Beach, Forked River Beach, and Parker's Point. Electrical service was interrupted in all parts of the Township, impacting private users as well as public communication networks and pump stations. Some portions of the Township remained without power for two weeks.

Sustainability and resiliency planning are closely tied to emergency management and hazard planning, the purpose of which are to support efforts that contribute to disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

These types of planning approaches require an analysis of existing land use patterns and development regulations in the context of unique local environmental conditions and knowledge of local susceptibility to natural hazards such as flooding, wave action, hurricane winds, and other potential threats to life and property. The goal of these efforts is to create land use policy that respects the realities of local natural features, so that the natural and built environments work in concert to minimize the impacts of storms and other emergency events. Resiliency and sustainability measures impact multiple functional areas of a community's physical development, from the form and location of permitted land uses, to the condition and redundancy of vital transportation networks and utility infrastructure, to the ability of a community to bounce back economically in the wake of storm damage.

The Township's SRPR contains several recommendations that bolster Lacey's hazard mitigation and resiliency planning and implementation efforts, including:

1. Employ storm-resistant building strategies in all future municipal construction in areas to the east of the Garden State Parkway, including:
  - a. the use of steel, concrete, or wooden pilings to elevate buildings and protect them from storm surge;
  - b. reinforcing construction so as to provide increased strength and wind load resistance;
  - c. designing buildings to be aerodynamic; using wind-resistance doors and windows; and
  - d. using flexible (e.g., wood) or high-strength (e.g., reinforced concrete) building materials.
2. Enhance pump stations:
  - a. Install elevated generators.
  - b. Elevate electric cabinets.
3. Secure critical infrastructure:
  - a. Install waterproof water meters.
  - b. Install rainfall stoppers under manhole covers.
4. Provide elevated generators at public schools.
5. Partner with key institutions to develop an emergency shelter for township residents:
  - a. Develop partnerships.
  - b. Examine potential locations.
  - c. Develop an emergency shelter operation plan.
6. Develop and implement an emergency communications plan between Township and County officials, police and emergency services, and local utilities.
7. Develop a plan to make communication facilities and infrastructure more robust and storm-resistant, including by providing generators at township antennas:
  - a. Provide generators at antennas and secure antennas.
  - b. Invest in a radio system for use by police and utility workers.
8. Automate and expedite processing of building and zoning permits.
9. Explore opportunities to participate in the Community Rating System.
10. Adopt a master plan element for floodplain management.
11. Incorporate the principles of the 2013 Multi-Jurisdictional All Hazard Mitigation Plan into the Lacey Township Master Plan.

12. Develop a municipal emergency operations management plan that includes provisions for: a community emergency response team; a township-wide evacuation system; and, an emergency operations center.
13. Secure funds to raise buildings above baseline flood elevation.
14. Preserve environmentally sensitive lands to maximize stormwater infiltration and promote resiliency.
15. Develop a municipal Geographic Information System (GIS) to support future planning efforts.
16. Implement permanent shoreline stabilization measures at the terminus of Laurel Boulevard in Forked River Beach.

In May 2014, the Federal Emergency Management Administration approved the Ocean County All- Hazard Mitigation Plan, which includes municipal data. According to the Plan, 16% of the parcels in Lacey Township are located in the Special Flood Hazard Area, with a total combined improvement value of \$815,384,000. According the County's comparative risk assessment analysis, Lacey Township is at a higher than county-average risk for flooding, hurricane damage, utility interruptions, wildfire, climate change, transportation accidents, urban fire and explosion, nuclear incidents, tornadoes, and earthquakes.

The Township suggested fourteen prioritized mitigation projects that were included in the County Plan, summarized in the chart below.

<b>Mitigation Action or Program</b>	<b>Priority</b>
South Dock Flood Control – replace docks and bulkheads to protect from coastal erosion and flood-related hazards	High
Bayberry Flood Control – fix drainage in Marshlands	High
NE Pines Flood Control Project	High
Elevate 243 dwellings in Lacey Township through HMGP, RFC, FMA, and CDGA funds	High
Continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program to support proactive floodplain management	High
Continue to enforce building codes thus protecting homes from risk related to hazards including flooding, fire, wind, earthquake, winter storm	High
Bay Front Control Project – add floodhead/walls and rip rap to protect Bay Front Park from flood related hazards	High
Reactivate the CRS Program	High
Join FireWise to mitigate wildfire and wildfire impacts on properties	High
Develop a Reverse 911 System to assist in communication for all hazards	High
Create an emergency AM Radio Station	High
Maintain and update Township Facebook page	High
Purchase and install permanent generators and elevate equipment control panels to maintain critical community services during utility interruptions. – Municipal Utilities Authority	High
Purchase and install permanent generators at schools. – Lacey BOE	High

## **RENEWED EMPHASIS ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Lacey has a history of addressing its constitutional obligation to provide its fair share of regional low- and moderate-income housing. However, the “Third Round” of affordable housing has been a decades-long conflict over methodologies, during which municipalities struggled to comply with their obligations while unit figures and procedures continually shifted, or were brought back to the drawing board.

Lacey first petitioned COAH for substantive certification of its second round Housing Element and Fair Share plan on June 6, 2000. Second round interim substantive certification was valid until December 20, 2005, or one year after the effective date of the adoption of COAH's third round methodology and rules (December 20, 2004). The Township revised its Housing Element and Fair Share Plan and submitted it to COAH in 2008, after the first iteration of the Third Round Rules were promulgated.

Prior to any action by COAH on Lacey Township's revised Plan, the third round regulations were challenged. COAH revised its third round rules effective June 2, 2008 and again on October 20, 2008 to address the 2007 Appellate Division decision challenging the rules. The Court directed COAH to derive obligation numbers using a methodology similar to that which was used in the first and second rounds, rather than relying on the newer growth share approach.

COAH made no progress in adopting a constitutional framework for affordable housing methodology. In March 2015, the New Jersey Supreme Court disbanded COAH. Before its decision 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 no longer functioning, trial courts were to resume their role as the forum of first instance for evaluating municipal compliance with Mount Laurel obligations, and also established a transitional process for municipalities to seek a Judgment of Compliance and Repose (“JOR”) in lieu of Substantive Certification from COAH.

On January 18, 2017 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), the Court decided that for the sixteen year period between 1999 and 2015 (known as the “gap period”) when the Council on Affordable Housing 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.

With a final set of Third Round procedures being adjudicated in the Courts, the Township took a proactive stance and made the decision to enter into a settlement agreement with Fair Share Housing Center, which would enable the Township to move forward with a known obligation figure. The settlement agreement was executed on October 13, 2016. The Agreement set the Township's cumulative 1987-2025 obligation as follows:

- Rehabilitation Component = 54 units
- Prior Round Obligation 1987-1999 = 580 units
- Third Round Obligation 1999-2025 = 581 units

These components yield a total obligation of 1,215 units. Given Lacey's environmental constraints and the extent of existing development, there is a lack of available developable vacant land upon which the Township can create realistic opportunities for affordable housing at the present time. To demonstrate the extent of the lack of available land, the Township undertook a vacant land assessment. The analysis concluded that the Township's Realistic Development Potential is limited to 112 affordable units.

The Township adopted a new Housing Element and Fair Share Plan in March 2017 outlining the ways in which it has met its prior round obligation, and strategies for accommodating its Realistic Development Potential, which include the following:

- Contracting with an administrative agent to implement a Home Improvement Program to address its rehabilitation obligation
- Participating in the Ocean County CDBG and HOME Housing Rehabilitation Programs
- Credits without controls for for-sales units (units constructed between April 1980 and December 1986)
- Family rental units
- Age-restricted rental units
- Supportive / special needs housing units

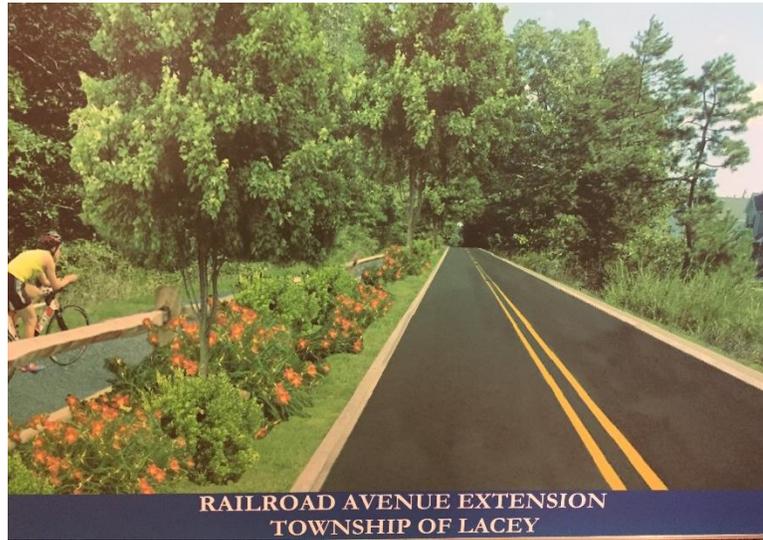
After rehabilitation, prior round, and the Realistic Development Potential are accounted for, the Township is left with an unmet need of 469 units. To address the unmet need, the Township adopted an inclusionary zoning overlay on November 30, 2016, which covers all properties with frontage on US- 9 and/or Lacey Road east of the Garden State Parkway. Within the overlay zone district, an affordable housing set aside is required for any multi-family development of five or more units at a rate of 15% for rental projects and 20% for sale projects. The ordinance ensures that as properties come up for redevelopment, a portion of the units will be available to low and moderate-income households. The corridors within the overlay are currently developed with mostly commercial uses and have good access to employment and shopping via bus transit. With a number of aging commercial sites, these corridors are poised for redevelopment.

Providing a diversity of housing choices for households of different family structures, incomes, ages, cultural backgrounds, and educational levels contributes to community resiliency. It ensures that Lacey Township is an attractive and accessible residential community for residents at all life stages, creating a stable community that can fit into and support the economic development strategies that the Township is pursuing. Both residents and officials recognize these positive aspects of providing a range of housing choices.

## CIRCULATION CHANGES IN THE ROUTE 9 CORRIDOR

Mobility within Lacey Township will be impacted significantly by the implementation of the multi-modal Railroad Avenue road and trail extension that will be installed parallel to Route 9.

The Railroad Avenue project will be constructed within the former Barnegat Branch railroad right-of-way. The project has two main goals, which are to address traffic congestion on Route 9 by providing a parallel bypass road for non-truck traffic, and to create an open space / recreation opportunity for cyclists and pedestrians.



The roadway and bicycle / pedestrian path will run 1.9 miles from Lacey Road in the south to South Street in the north. A traffic study anticipating the effects of the Railroad Avenue Extension was completed by T & M Associates in April 2008, which found that the project would divert traffic from Route 9 and Lake Barnegat Drive. Improved roadway conditions are expected at several key intersections with Route 9, including South Street, Laurel Blvd, Haines Street, Musket Drive, 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Sunrise Blvd, and Lacey Road. Modeling and traffic projections have illustrated that in comparison with no-build/no-change scenario, construction of the Railroad Avenue Extension will elevate roadway levels of service in the peak afternoon travel periods from the E to F “unacceptable” range to B and C levels of service.

Project implementation is imminent. The Township has already obtained a CAFRA permit from NJDEP. The permit, issued on October 16, 2014, authorizes the construction of the 1.9-mile bypass road, consisting of two 11-foot wide travel lanes and an 8-foot wide pedestrian/bike pathway. In terms of alignment, South Street will connect Railroad Avenue to Route 9, with a new right turn lane in the southbound direction at the Route 9 and South Street intersection to facilitate access to westbound South Street. Use is limited to cars and school buses, excluding large trucks and trailers, with a posted speed of 30 miles per hour. The bicycle/pedestrian path completes an integral link in the Ocean County Barnegat Bay Trail, and will be separated from the roadway by a vegetated buffer with fencing and landscaping as depicted in the image above.

The project is supported by both NJDOT and Ocean County. Anticipated benefits for residents from the Railroad Avenue Extension are expected to include the following positive changes:

- Reduced congestion on Route 9;
- Improved connectivity between residential communities and local / regional destinations;
- Relief of through-traffic currently utilizing Lake Barnegat Drive to bypass Route 9;
- Improved safety and a reduction of accident volumes;
- Expanded recreational opportunities and improved user experience of bikers and walkers who already use the existing ROW;
- Improved connectivity to Hebrew park.

In addition to addressing problematic transportation infrastructure and vehicular traffic patterns, municipalities are taking a wider view of their transit systems to develop multi-modal circulation networks that are functional for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as cars. This movement comes from an expanded understanding of the health and quality-of-life benefits that accrue to communities that present a wider array of transportation options to residents and visitors, allowing network users to access the combined benefits of recreation and transportation. Sidewalk requirements and the Township's Complete Streets Policy are examples of initiatives already being conducted in Lacey that further these aims. The Township could take additional steps to implement and expand bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

### **OCEAN COUNTY WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE**

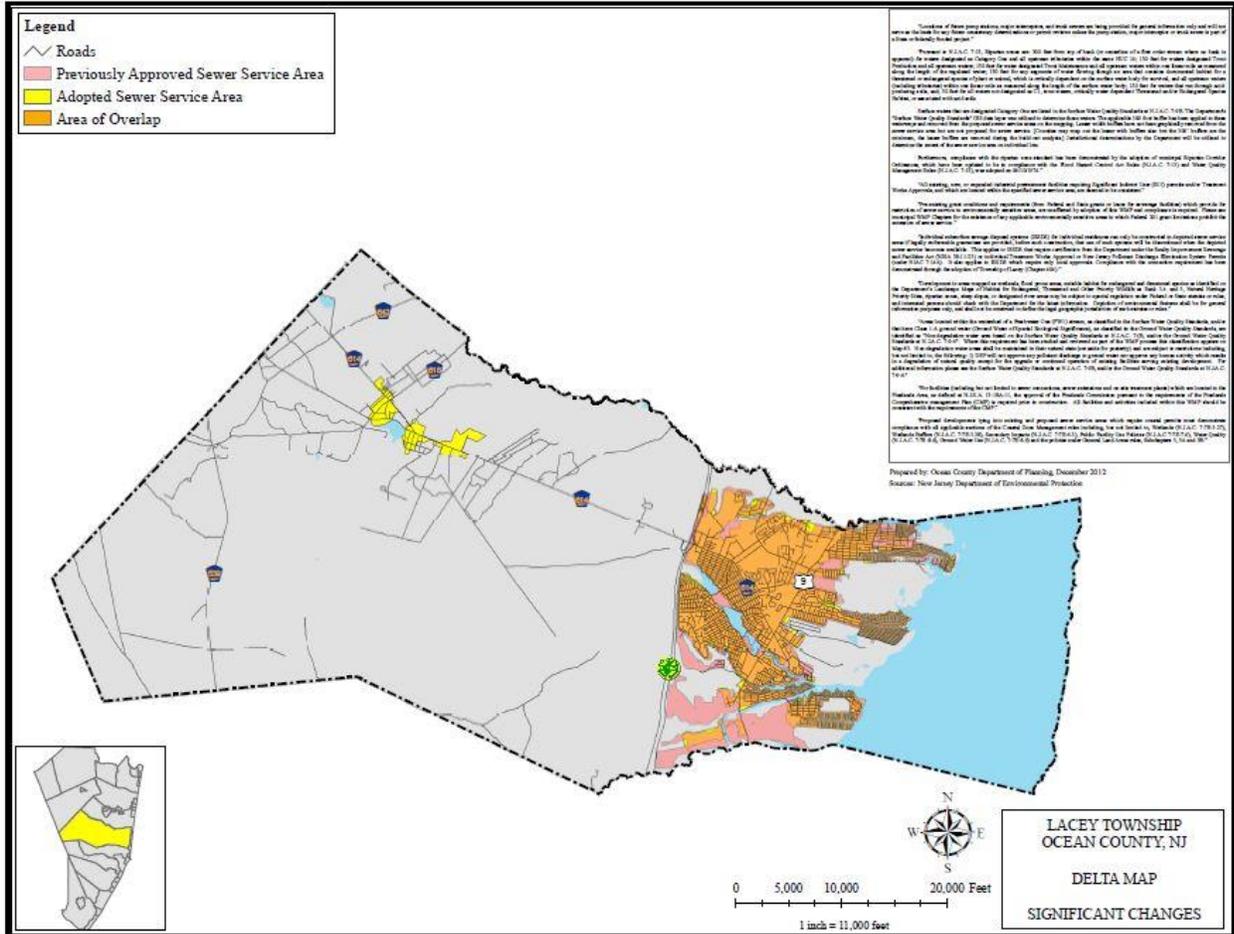
The ability of Lacey's wastewater and water supply infrastructure to serve existing and future needs as determined by the Ocean County Wastewater Management Plan was discussed above. In short, the County plan found that the wastewater demand within the sewer service area as calculated at build-out with an additional 2,063 residential units and 5,344,628 square feet of commercial space can be accommodated.

Significant discrepancy exists between municipal zoning regulations and nitrate dilution capacity in one watershed area within Lacey (HUC11 02040301110), which contains the commercial and industrially zoned areas in the vicinity of the Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station. If these areas developed to the full extent permitted, they would discharge far more than their proportional share of the total assimilative capacity of the watershed area, and would cause the HUC11 to exceed its nitrate target. The Plan notes that any future development in the area in question is almost certainly to be either NJPDES permitted or added to the SSA through amendment. The Wastewater Management Plan also anticipates that a significant percentage of the remaining area in question will be designated for preservation during the course of the Plant decommissioning.

In addition to its discussion of system capacity, the 2015 County Plan also caused changes in assumptions by adjusting the extent of the mapped and approved sewer service area within the Township. In accordance with NJDEP policy, only existing development and vacant land that is not affected by regulated environmental constraints may be included in the SSA. The portions of the SSA that were removed by the new County Plan were mainly located in such environmentally sensitive areas. Smaller areas that were removed include sections of undeveloped lands between Laurel Harbor and Sunrise Beach, and surrounding Deer Head Lake and Lake Barnegat. The largest areas removed were located in the southeast portion of the Township, including parcels owned by Exelon Generation Company and the federal government.

All existing development in Lacey east of the Garden State Parkway is connected to the existing sewer system. The SSA was expanded to incorporate the Pinelands Village areas along Lacey Road west of the Garden State parkway, and in small areas with existing development along Pheasant Hollow Drive, Colgate Avenue, and Nautilus Boulevard.

Lacey Township Plan Endorsement  
Municipal Self-Assessment Update DRAFT



## Section 4. ADDITIONAL PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

As noted in Section 2, Lacey Township already incorporates some elements of planning and regulation that support a center-based community development pattern. However, additional recommendations can be made, particularly in light of the changes in planning assumptions discussed above in Section 3.

The Township expects to pursue a Master Plan Reexamination Report, which it hopes to complete and submit with all final Plan Endorsement documentation. As part of the reexamination process, existing recommendations will be modified where appropriate and additional recommendations will be put forward that more consistent with the center-based development concept. While the exact set of new recommendations will be developed in concert with the Township's Plan Endorsement visioning process, changes are likely to be reflected for each of the functional planning areas, including land use, housing, circulation, utility service, community facilities, recreation, conservation, economic development, and stormwater management.

## Section 5. REGIONAL CENTER AND INDUSTRIAL NODE PROPOSAL

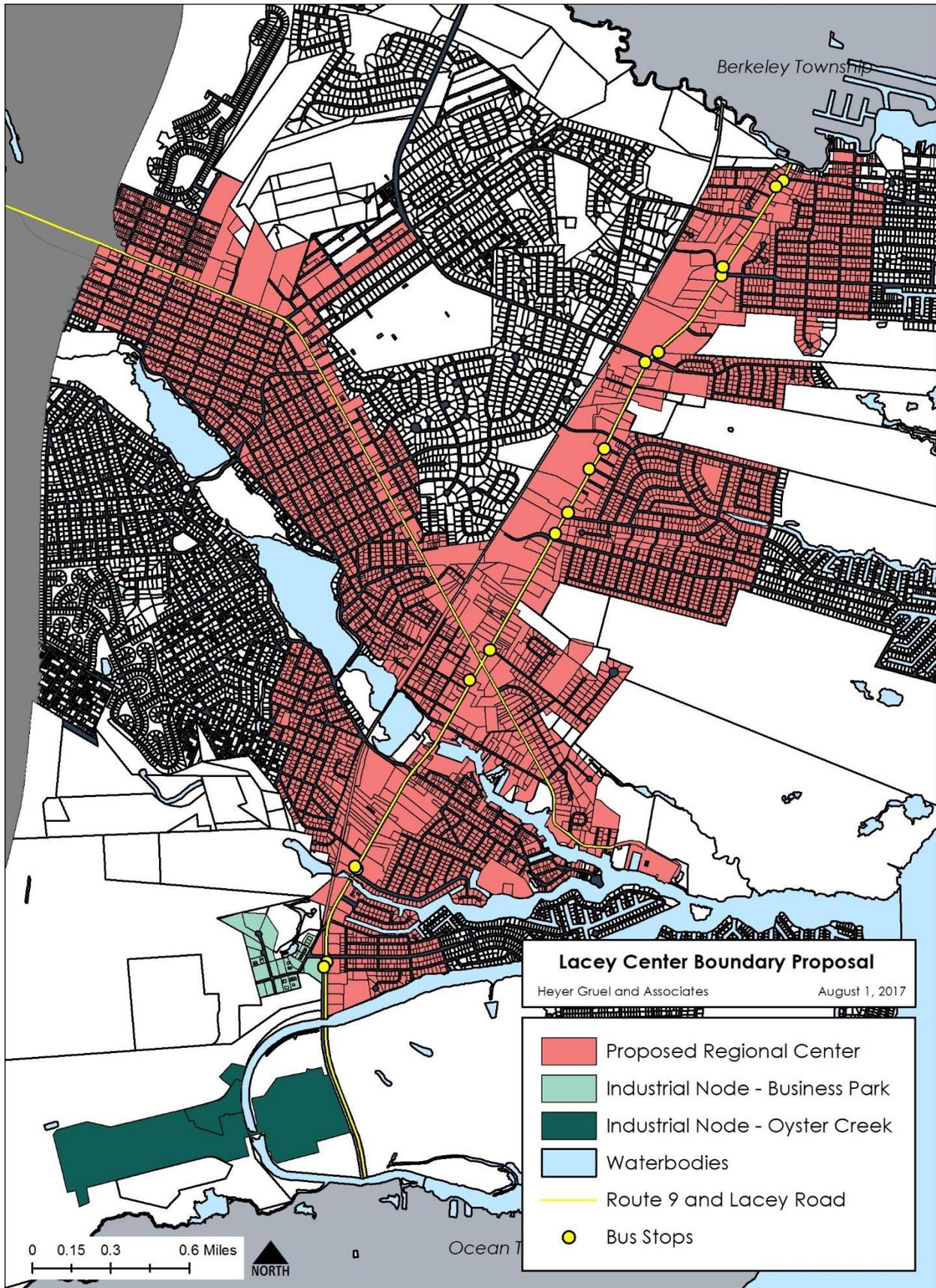
## **REGIONAL CENTER AND INDUSTRIAL NODE EXTENTS AND BASIS**

The following map shows the current proposal for the Regional Center and industrial nodes in Lacey Township. The extent of the Regional Center as represented in the proposal came about as a synthesis of the following factors:

1. Properties located within the existing approved sewer service area.
2. Properties located within the Township's Multi-Family Inclusionary Zone Overlay or identified as a targeted inclusionary site in the Township's Fair Share Plan.
3. Properties located within a commercial zone that permits mixed-use development.
4. Properties located within the Township's historic Forked River district.
5. Properties located walking distance (within a half-mile) of a public transit bus stop.
6. Residential properties located in proximity to the center's commercial corridors that exhibit a grid-like pattern of development and location in a zone with relatively small minimum lot size requirements.
7. Areas located in State Planning Area 2.

These factors were chosen because they embody the portions of the Township where physical proximity, layout, and development regulations have already set the stage for mixed-use, walkable, transit-oriented, higher density center-based development. Including the affordable housing overlay ensures that the Regional Center will capture most of the intended new development within Lacey. The Township intends to create development regulations that promote the highest chances of a development outcome where the commercial corridor areas and their surrounding neighborhoods are mutually supportive of one another. Proximity to transit routes encourages non-motorized travel, and makes it possible for residents to easily commute to other locations within and outside of Lacey.

The two industrial nodes build off the Township's existing industrially-zoned areas. Under node designations, both areas are much more likely to attract tenants requiring higher impervious thresholds for their operations that can be an economic asset to the Township as it adapts in the wake of the decommissioning of Oyster Creek.



## Section 6. CONSISTENCY WITH STATE PLAN – CENTER CRITERIA

**EVALUATING LACEY’S REGIONAL CENTER AGAINST SDRP CENTER CRITERIA**

The SDRP contains population, employment, and housing criteria that serve as a general guide for establishing whether the appropriate conditions exist within a community to support center designation. Communities seeking center designation at various levels should be relatively close to meeting these criteria, or be poised to meet them in the near future.

As excerpted from the SDRP, the criteria for Regional Center designation in PA 2 are as follows:

<b>CRITERIA FOR CENTER DESIGNATION/PLANNING FOR THE YEAR 2020</b>						
	<b>URBAN</b>	<b>REGIONAL CENTER PA1, 2</b>	<b>REGIONAL CENTER PA3, 4, 5</b>	<b>TOWN</b>	<b>VILLAGE</b>	<b>HAMLET</b>
Area (in square miles)		1 to 10	1 to 10	<2	<1	10 to 50 acres without community wastewater; <100 acres with community wastewater
Population	>40,000	>10,000	>5,000	1,000 to 10,000	<4,500	25 to 250
Gross Population Density (people/ square mile)	>7,500	>5,000	>5,000	>5,000	>5,000	3,000
Housing		4,000 to 15,000	2,000 to 15,000	500 to 4,000	100 to 2,000	10 to 100
Gross Housing Density (dwelling units/acre)	>4	>3	>3	>3	>3	>2
Employment	>40,000	>10,000	>5,000	>500 to 10,000	50 to 1,000	
Jobs: Housing Ratio	>1:1	2:1 to 5:1	2:1 to 5:1	1:1 to 4:1	.5:1 to 2:1	

Note: Criteria are intended to be applied flexibly. Density criteria are relevant primarily to new Centers and to the growth areas of existing Centers, and are less relevant to the built-up portions of existing Centers. Designation criteria refer to the Center’s planning horizon year (for example, 2020 population rather than current population).

The criteria above were evaluated for the extent of the proposed Regional Center area in Lacey Township. Exact counts are not available for the criteria at the exact scale of the proposed Regional Center, so the following methods and data were used to arrive at reasonable estimates for each factor.

**Area in square miles:** Calculated in ArcGIS for the shape of the proposed center.

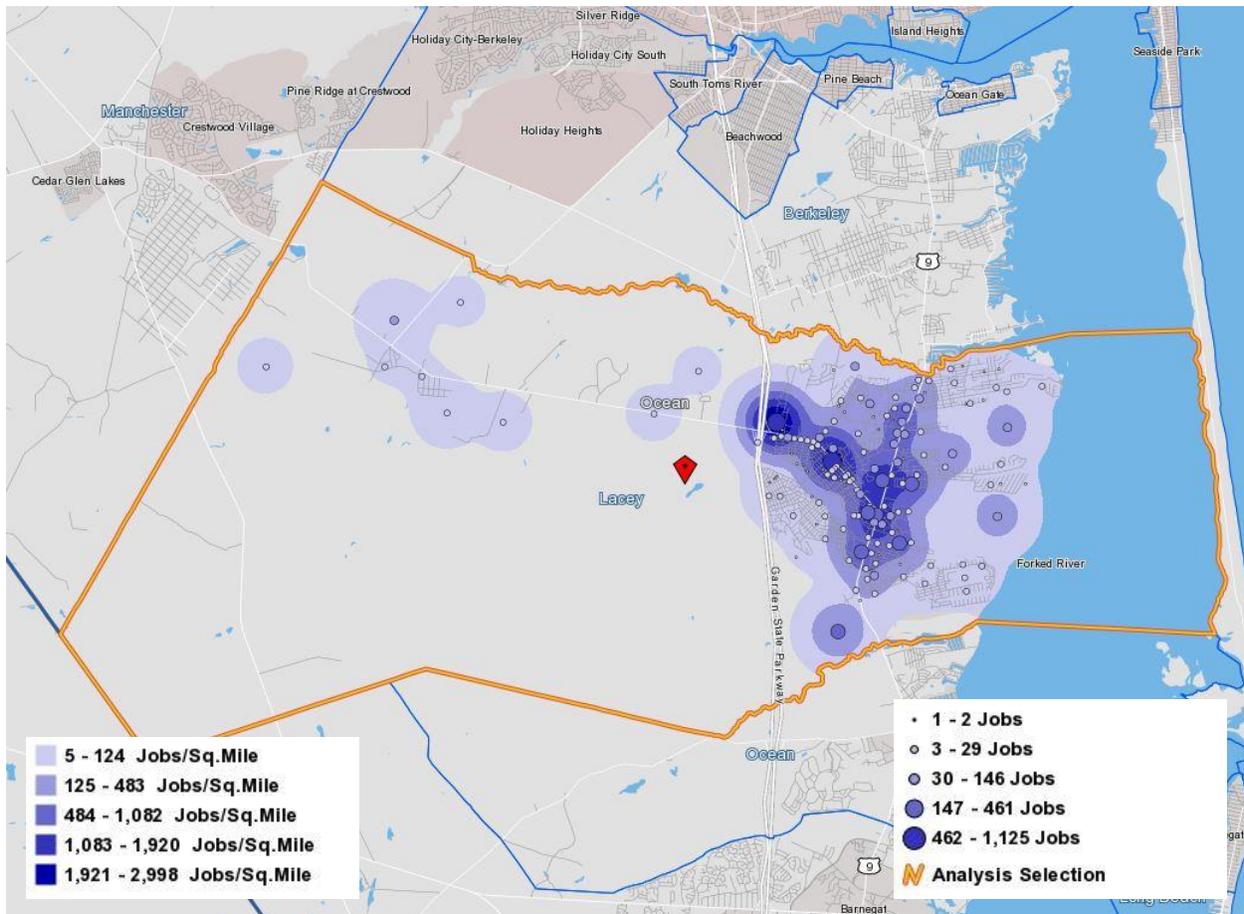
**Population:** Multiplied the Housing Units calculated for the center by the average household size in Lacey Township as provided in the 2010 US Census (2.71 persons per household).

**Gross Population Density:** Divided the estimated Regional Center population by the size of the regional center.

**Housing Units:** Calculated in ArcGIS by selecting all of the Class 2 residential and Class 4C multi-family properties located within the proposed regional center and running a count.

**Gross Housing Density:** Use a factor of 640 to convert the area of the proposed center from square miles to acres (2,304). Divide the housing unit count by the area in acres.

**Employment:** Estimated from the US Census Bureau's On the Map tool for downloading economic data. According to the map below, most jobs in Lacey are located east of the Garden State Parkway, within the proposed Regional Center and the Industrial Node areas.



Total Primary Jobs		
2014		
	Count	Share
Total Primary Jobs	5,710	100.0%

There are a recorded 5,710 primary jobs in Lacey Township. To net out the jobs located west of the GSP, the mid-range of the job count indicated by the dot symbol was selected, these figures were added together to yield total estimated jobs west of the parkway, and then subtracted from the total 5,710 primary jobs to yield an estimate of jobs within the proposed center.

**Jobs to Housing Ratio:** calculated as the number of jobs divided by the number of housing units in the regional center.

<b>Lacey Township's proposed Regional Center versus SDRP Criteria for PA 2</b>			
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>SDRP Threshold</b>	<b>Existing Conditions in Lacey Regional Center</b>	<b>Meets criteria?</b>
Area (square miles)	1 – 10	3.6	YES
Population	>10,000	11,205	YES
Gross Population Density	>5,000	3,112	no
Housing	4,000 to 15,000 units	4,135 units	YES
Gross Housing Density (dwelling units/acre)	>3	1.8	no
Employment	>10,000	5,520	no
Jobs to Housing Ratio	2:1 to 5:1	1.3:1	no

As can be seen from the table above, at the moment the Township meets three of the seven criteria for Regional Centers in the SDRP. A number of factors should be taken into consideration that will affect these figures in the immediate future. First, the estimation techniques described are conservative in nature. The estimation of population and households did not take into account those properties in the core area of Lacey Road and Route 9 that are assessed commercial but may have residential tenants on upper floors. The density is likely higher on the ground than represented here.

Second, the population and number of dwelling units in Lacey Township must necessarily increase as the Township continues to comply with successive rounds of affordable housing obligations and new development occurs within the Multi-Family Inclusionary Zone (which is located within the center). Center designation will actually make it possible for the Township to better utilize the limited amount of vacant and redevelopable land within the regional center for multi-family, higher density development that will boost the figures for gross population density and gross housing density.

Third, a major impetus for Plan Endorsement and Regional Center designation is Township economic development efforts. After Oyster Creek is decommissioned, it is likely that employment figures will drop slightly. However, it is the Township's full intention to stimulate economic development in the center area, which will allow the criteria figures related to employment to increase over time.

## Section 7. CONSISTENCY WITH STATE PLAN – CENTER GOALS AND PLANNING AREA POLICIES

## **STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN GOALS**

The SDRP articulates eight overarching statewide goals for community development. The designation of a Regional Center and Industrial Nodes in Lacey Township contributes to each of these goals in the following ways:

### **1. Revitalize the State's cities and towns.**

Lacey is a largely built-out community. It has expanded to the extent possible given its location in two of the State's major protected environmental regions – the pinelands area and the coastal CAFRA area. The character of the Township's development has historically been largely suburban in nature, with vehicular-oriented arterial commercial corridors surrounded by residential neighborhoods. At this point in time, the Township recognizes the need for revitalization, particularly if it is to meet other significant planning-related goals such as the provision of affordable housing and economic development in the face of the closure of the Oyster Creek nuclear plant. If the Township is to maintain and improve its existing quality of life, there is widespread recognition that some change is required.

Center designation will permit the Township to be considering larger-scale redevelopment initiatives that can revitalize the status quo in the following ways:

- Encouraging new development patterns that attract different types of households desiring the conveniences of walkable, mixed-use, well-designed communities;
- Creating the development conditions necessary to attract investment from businesses that will create local jobs; and
- Permitting larger-scale residential development that can add density near the Township's core, representing a local consumer market that will support Township businesses.

Recent Township actions such as the expansion of mixed-use zones, the affordable housing overlay, the complete streets policy, among others have established many of the regulatory and policy bases for center-based development. Regional Center designation will add the physical ability to accommodate redevelopment of a denser, more center-based characteristic.

### **2. Conserve the State's natural resources and systems.**

Center designation gives clear direction to developers as to the Township's desired location for development, and incentivizes the siting of development within areas that are already developed. Although it is very unlikely that greenfield development would occur within Lacey due to the preponderance of environmentally sensitive areas and corresponding development restrictions, center designation carves out a portion of the municipality where higher impervious surface thresholds capture new development, steering it away from the natural resources areas located outside of the center.

### **3. Promote beneficial economic growth, development and renewal for all New Jersey residents.**

The investment incentives created through center designation will promote economic growth within the Township.

**4. Protect the environment, prevent and clean up pollution.**

In encouraging economic development, center designation does elevate permitted impervious surface thresholds, which can have a negative impact on the infiltration of stormwater and the conveyance of pollutants from surface areas to ground and surface waters. As the Township pursues economic development, it is committed to implementing parallel sustainability measures that can mitigate some of these elevated impacts, such as the non-structural stormwater best management practices discussed above, and the permanent preservation of Township-owned conservation lands that protect wetlands and other natural features that perform vital pollution-related ecosystem services.

**5. Provide adequate public facilities and services at a reasonable cost.**

As center designation encourages economic and residential development within a limited portion of the Township, it will become easier to match community services with the neighborhoods they are meant to serve. A confined service area implies that the provision of services can be accomplished more efficiently, i.e. at a reasonable cost, building on existing services and infrastructure.

**6. Provide adequate housing at a reasonable cost.**

The proposed Regional Center is being implemented in concert with the Township's Housing and Fair Share Plan. All of the affordable housing that will be built is anticipated to be located within the Regional Center. Designation will assist developers in accomplishing larger inclusionary projects.

**7. Preserve and enhance areas with historic, cultural, scenic, open space, and recreational value.**

The location of the Regional Center incorporates the Township's historic Forked River district, as well as a number of recreational areas and the planned portion of the Ocean County Barnegat Bay Trail alongside the Route 9 bypass road. Encouraging additional residential development in proximity to these areas will contribute additional users of these facilities.

**8. Ensure sound and integrated planning and implementation statewide.**

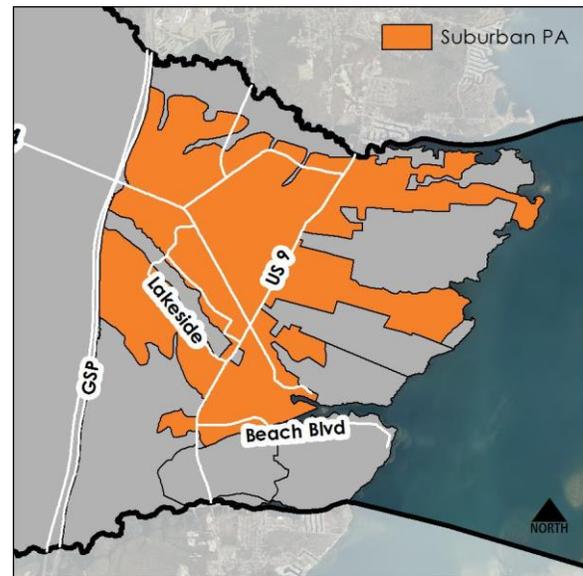
The Regional Center designation is being pursued in close coordination with representatives of the municipality and the state, working together to define its boundaries and ensure that the ultimate character of the regional center reflects statewide planning and development goals.

**SUBURBAN PLANNING AREA (PA 2) GOALS**

The vast majority of the proposed Regional Center is located within Planning Area 2. The Suburban Planning Area (PA 2), is the largest non-pinelands Planning Area in Lacey. According to its text, the State Plan "anticipates growth throughout New Jersey in all Planning Areas. The character, location and magnitude of this growth vary among Planning Areas according to the specific character of the area." The State Plan envisions PA 2 as the location providing for much of the State's future development. At present, the SDRP describes existing suburbs as low-density, automobile-centric developments where the pattern of scattered subdivisions and employment centers offers few focal points for community interaction. Extending services and infrastructure

throughout these low-density areas requires a tremendous amount of resources, driving up the cost of property taxes.

The SDRP promotes forms of new growth that break from these historical patterns of sprawl toward compact development in Centers. While the magnitude of growth will be large in PA 2, the character of development will be compact, drawing on existing infrastructure and creating areas of higher density. In this way, the SDRP endeavors to redesign areas of sprawl and reverse trends toward further sprawl. Select policy objectives for the Suburban Planning Area are:



1. Guide development and redevelopment into more compact forms such as Center and former single-use developments that have been retrofitted or restructured to accommodate mixed-use development, redevelopment, services and cultural amenities. Provide a full range of housing choices primarily in Centers.
2. Guide opportunities for economic development into Centers.
3. Emphasize the use of public transportation systems and encourage densities capable of supporting transit.
4. Conserve continuous natural systems, the continued viability of agriculture, and provide maximum active and passive recreational opportunities.
5. Encourage redevelopment efforts in existing Centers and single-use areas which can be redeveloped into mixed-use areas.
6. Phase and program the extension of public facilities and services to support development in Centers.

#### CAFRA Coastal Suburban Planning Area

All of the land in Lacey Township east of the Garden State Parkway and not contained within the Pinelands is located within the portion of the coast regulated by the State's Coastal Area Facilities Review Act (CAFRA). CAFRA was enacted in order to counteract development pressures that threatened the quality of waterfront and aquatic natural resources in areas along New Jersey's shoreline. With the passage of CAFRA, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection received the authority to regulate all major development within the delineated CAFRA area, thereby controlling the water pollution, beach deterioration, and exacerbated stormwater runoff associated with increased development in this environmentally, economically, and culturally important area of the State.

The State Planning Commission and NJDEP coordinate planning policy in the CAFRA zone. NJDEP adopted rules that incorporate portions of the State Plan and the State Plan Policy Map into the Rules on Coastal Zone Management. A number of statewide planning policies are included in the SDRP covering the coastal region of New Jersey, including:

1. Rely on the plans and regulations of the NJDEP which may incorporate policies of the State Plan as a basis for implementing the objectives of the federal Coastal Zone Management Act and CAFRA. Coordinate efforts to establish an intergovernmental coastal management program.
2. Promote well-planned coastal communities that sustain economies and the natural environment. Manage development to protect and enhance the special uses and unique qualities of the coastal area.
3. Coordinate growth management plans and policies with response planning and mitigation for disasters.
4. Promote coastal maintenance and restoration, and encourage recreational opportunities and public access.

Reciprocally, the CAFRA legislation integrates State Plan goals, objectives, and mapped planning areas. The standard State Plan Areas become "Coastal" Planning Areas in the CAFRA zone. CAFRA section 7:7-13.15 anticipates that the existing inventory of undeveloped and underdeveloped land in the Suburban Coastal Planning Area should be sufficient to accommodate much of the market demand for future growth and development in the CAFRA area. Further, ***internally-oriented, mixed-use centers should be encouraged in the Coastal Suburban Planning Area***, although development not in or adjacent to an existing sewer service area should be less intensive. Policy objectives are as follows:

1. Encourage mixed-use development and redevelopment in compact centers.
2. Guide opportunities for economic development and employment in centers, and promote seasonal and year-round travel and tourism activities in the coastal resort areas.
3. Encourage links from coastal suburban areas to employment centers within public transit, and promote transportation systems that address the special seasonal demands of travel and tourism along the coast.
4. Ensure adequate wastewater treatment capacity, and minimize off-site stormwater runoff by encouraging the use of best management practices which protect the character of natural drainage systems.

The proposed Regional Center in Lacey addresses each of the policy objectives for Planning Area 2, both generally and in the context of the Coastal planning areas. The intention for the center is to create a mixed-use portion of the Township that combines symbiotic uses; encourages economic development to locate within the center; ties neighborhoods to transit access points; conserves natural areas by incentivizing development outside of the environs; encourages the redevelopment of single-use areas; and achieves efficient use of existing public infrastructure without further costly expansions.

#### **STATE PLAN GOALS FOR CENTERS AND NODES**

The purpose of this Plan Endorsement application is to pursue CAFRA Regional Center and Industrial Node designation for portions of Lacey Township, with an understating of the character of land development envisioned for these areas by the SDRP, and the intent of aligning the Township's local land development policies to reflect state-level goals for nodes and centers.

As expressed in the SDRP, Centers are made up of three key components:

**1. Clear boundaries, delineated to reflect physical features and / or changes in the character of development;**

The proposed Regional Center has clear boundaries along environmentally sensitive physical features, the sewer service area, and takes into consideration relative differences in the character of existing development.

**2. Cores, which serve as the commercial, cultural, and civic heart of the center; and**

The Core has been drawn around the commercial heart of the Township.

**3. Neighborhoods, which contain a balanced mix of uses, are defined by walking distances of approximately 10 minutes (1/2 mile), and have a clear identity and personality.**

In most areas, the Regional Center was extended out from its mixed-use core area by a half-mile network distance in order to capture a ten-minutes walking time.

According to the SDRP, new Regional Centers should:

**1. Be located in the state's major transportation corridors;**

The proposed Center is located along the vehicular corridor of Route 9 and the County's major non-motorized greenway, the Barnegat Bay Trail.

**2. Be compact and contain a mix of uses;**

The proposed Center is based in the Township's existing mixed-use districts, and will further encourage mixed-use characteristics to expand within its boundary.

**3. Have a core of commercial activity; and**

The Regional Center is located around the cross-roads of two commercial corridors.

Through the Plan Endorsement process, municipalities pursuing center-based designation must demonstrate that their Master Plan and other land development policy documents envision the following community characteristics:

**1. The center's accommodation of anticipated future population and employment;**

It has been demonstrated that the Regional Center contains the zones where the highest density residential development is permitted, and contains the core that is the intended location of new inclusionary and affordable housing sites.

**2. A mixed-use character within proposed zones;**

It has been demonstrated that the Regional Center builds from the Township's existing mixed-use areas, and will continue to encourage a trend toward mixed-use development.

**3. A pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented circulation network;**

It has been demonstrated that the Township develop the Regional Center boundary with reference to existing transit-oriented development, and that the Township has put in place supportive policies such as a Complete Streets policy and sidewalk improvement requirements.

**4. Increased access to community facilities; and**

The Township is committed to aligning future community facilities with center-based development as it unfolds.

**5. The Center's role in its regional context.**

With the presence of Oyster Creek, Lacey has always played a central economic role in the regional economy. Despite the impending decommissioning of the plant, Lacey is pursuing Regional Center designation as a proactive measure in adapting to changed circumstances, attempting to find ways that will enable it to carry the mantle of regional economic leadership into the next decades through center and node designation.

Section 8. CONCLUSION

## **CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS**

Through this document, Lacey Township has demonstrated the status of its existing planning policies and regulations; where they comport with the State Plan's vision for regional centers and industrial nodes, and where they currently could be amended to further align with this vision. Given all of the policies that the Township has put in place within recent years across all functional areas of planning, it is poised for successful Regional Center designation and center-based development.

With a firm foundation in its existing conditions, the Township moves to the next step in the Plan Endorsement process of asking residents for input and crafting a community vision statement that will further establish the ways in which the community supports the type of mixed-use, vibrant, green, accessible development that is characteristic of a true center.