

Plan Endorsement Draft Report for Lakewood Township



New Jersey Department of State
Office for Planning Advocacy
2/10/2016

This document is a draft recommendation report prepared by the Office for Planning Advocacy (OPA) as staff to the State Planning Commission (SPC) subject to change based on the continued input of our partner agencies, Lakewood Township and members of the public. OPA reserves the right to edit this document and the accompanying PIA prior to the presentation of the recommendation at the Plan Implementation Committee (PIC) and again before the State Planning Commission (SPC). Should edits be made up to that point or during either meeting, an updated document will be posted on the OPA website (www.njsmartgrowth.com), with edits highlighted accordingly. Notification of such posting will be sent via e-mail to the list of interested parties maintained by OPA. Interested parties may register with OPA to receive notifications of SPC meetings, hearings or other matters regarding petitions for Plan Endorsement by providing contact information, including name, organization, address and e-mail address to osgmail@sos.state.nj.us.

The detailed Lakewood Smart Growth Plan can be found here:

Adopted June 2013: <http://www.lakewoodnj.gov/images/db/sforsyth-7370-2014-Master-Plan-Amendment-Adopted.pdf>

Revision April 8, 2014: http://www.lakewoodnj.gov/images/db/sforsyth-4114-Smart-Growth-Plan-July-2013-Revision-Draft_Oak_Revision-Pages_Highlighted.pdf

Master Plan Amendment April 8, 2014:

<http://www.lakewoodnj.gov/images/db/sforsyth-7370-2014-Master-Plan-Amendment-Adopted.pdf>

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INTRODUCTION

The Township of Lakewood is seeking Plan Endorsement from the State Planning Commission (SPC). This report contains findings and conclusions concerning consistency of the Township's plans with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan). The review of the petition is based on information submitted by the petitioner and information otherwise available to the Office for Planning Advocacy (OPA). One of the reasons they are seeking Plan Endorsement (PE) is to work with the State is to ensure that their growth management plan, the Lakewood Smart Growth Plan (SGP) is acknowledged as a way for them to effectively accommodate the growth that has occurred in the past and is expected to continue over the coming decades.

Adopting a resolution in support of Plan Endorsement of their plans will demonstrate that they are taking appropriate steps to plan for the growth while also taking steps to respect the sensitive coastal area. The SGP and Plan Endorsement are only initial steps. They must now act to implement the details of the plan to maintain the balance between growth, protection and quality of life.



BACKGROUND

Lakewood Township (hereafter Lakewood or Township) initiated the Plan Endorsement process with a pre-petition meeting on June 6, 2005 and formally submitted a petition for Initial Plan Endorsement that was found complete prior to March 15, 2006. The SPC and Lakewood signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Action Plan dated May 23, 2006 to formally continue the process and address outstanding issues raised in the Consistency report also dated May 23, 2006.

Under the guidance from OPA and our state agency partners, the Township has worked to address the outstanding items of the Action Plan. Four community vision sessions were conducted in 2008 that specifically addressed the need for responsible growth management in the municipality. In November 2009, the Lakewood Smart Growth Management Plan was presented to the Planning Board. Lakewood held additional public meetings that were very well attended, prior to adoption of the Growth Management Plan by the Planning Board in June 2013.

The Land Use Element was adopted as part of the April 8, 2014 Master Plan Amendment. The Land Use Element addresses Lakewood’s continued growth, so that a portion of the Township and a few residential zones will be developed at a higher density while seeking to preserve some land in the Township. The Re-Examination of the master plan also on April 8, 2014 reflected much of the 2013 SGP including the need to address growth, conservation, the expected revisions to the Sewer Service Area and the Cedarbridge and Franklin Street Redevelopment Plans.

Under the State’s Coastal Zone Management rules, adopted pursuant to the Coastal Area Facility Review Act (CAFRA), in February 2000, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) adopted coastal centers which included a portion of Lakewood known as the Lakewood Coastal Regional Center. Approximately 12,240 acres or 76% of the Township is regulated by CAFRA’s rules. CAFRA seeks coordination with the State Plan and requires that CAFRA communities receive PE and Center designation as the first step in determining CAFRA consistency to extend an existing center or to create new ones. This means that before Lakewood can seek a determination from DEP for CAFRA consistency, they must receive PE and the State Plan Map needs to be amended with the revisions to the Centers, Cores, Nodes and Planning Areas.

	Lakewood Township	Ocean County	New Jersey
Land area (sq mi)	24.98	628.8	7,354.2
Population	92,843	576,567	8,791,894
Households	24,283	221,111	4,534
Average Household Size	3.73	2.58	2.59
Average Family Size	4.49	3.16	2.59
Population Density (Persons/Sq. Mile)	3,717	917	1,195
Housing Units	27,330	278,052	3,553,562
Home Ownership Rate	52.5%	81.7%	48.4%
Vacancy Rate	9.1%	19.8%	7.3%
Median Household Income	\$41,527	\$61,038	\$72,665
Per Capita Income	\$16,430	\$30,397	\$31,374
Persons Below Poverty Level	26.1%	10.2%	9.9%
Unemployment Rate (NJDOL July 2015.)	6.4%	6.4%	6.3%
Sources: US Census Bureau, NJDOL; Data from Decennial Census and ACS unless otherwise noted			

CHRONOLOGY

Event(s)	Date	Notes
Pre-petition Meeting	June 26, 2005	
Formally Submitted PE Petition	Before March 15, 2006	
Consistency Review and MOU Signed	May 23, 2006	
Natural Resource Inventory	October 4, 2006	Adopted
Master Plan Reexamination	2007	
Fair Share Plan	2008	
Master Plan Reexamination	2008	Addendum to 2007 Master Plan
Community Visioning for PE	2008	At least 4 prior to revised plan
Lakewood Smart Growth Plan (SGP)	2009	Approved by Township Committee as Vision Plan
Downtown Lakewood Traffic and Pedestrian Study	July 2009	
Consistency Review	2010	By State Agencies
Downtown Parking Strategic Plan	2011	
Ocean County - Future Wastewater Service Area (FWSA)	6/2012-Submitted to DEP 2/2013-Adopted by DEP	
Lakewood Smart Growth Plan (SGP)	June 2013	Adopted
Master Plan Re-Examination	April 8, 2014	SGP adopted as an element of Master Plan
Ocean County Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP)	Adopted by DEP, December 2015	Includes Lakewood chapter
PIC APPROVAL	January 2016	

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Four community visioning sessions occurred in 2008 that provided an opportunity for the public to voice their concerns about the growth and development in Lakewood and offer suggestions for the future. The public visioning sessions addressed many topics, but Transportation, Open Space and Development were recurring topics raised by those participating.

Lakewood's vision statement further confirms and defines the Township's smart growth planning approach:

Encourage social, economic and cultural vitality through smart growth planning, well-designed and context-sensitive land development while preserving the urban, suburban, historic landscapes and open space of the Township. In order for Lakewood to continue to be a desirable place to live and work, the municipality should:

- Encourage growth and development in appropriate locations and consistent with established land uses
- Encourage development and redevelopment based on smart growth planning principles, such as a balanced mix of land uses, pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented environments with a sense of place
- Work to improve the function and aesthetics of the Route 9 corridor through land use regulation, coordination with county, state and federal agencies, and cooperation with adjacent municipalities
- Strengthen the downtown area as a center of commerce and community focus through encouragement of the continued development and redevelopment of the downtown
- Provide sufficient educational, recreational, and community facilities to meet future needs
- Provide, through zoning, areas for residential development to meet the need for housing, including affordable housing, and promote a variety of housing types
- Promote the protection of the Township's natural resources

Consistent with this vision, Lakewood's Smart Growth Plan seeks to strike a balance between growth and preservation strategies, so that the quality of life will improve throughout the Township. The plan also strengthens the community by promoting sustainable development policies, preserving open space and promoting environmental protection in a comprehensive planning framework.

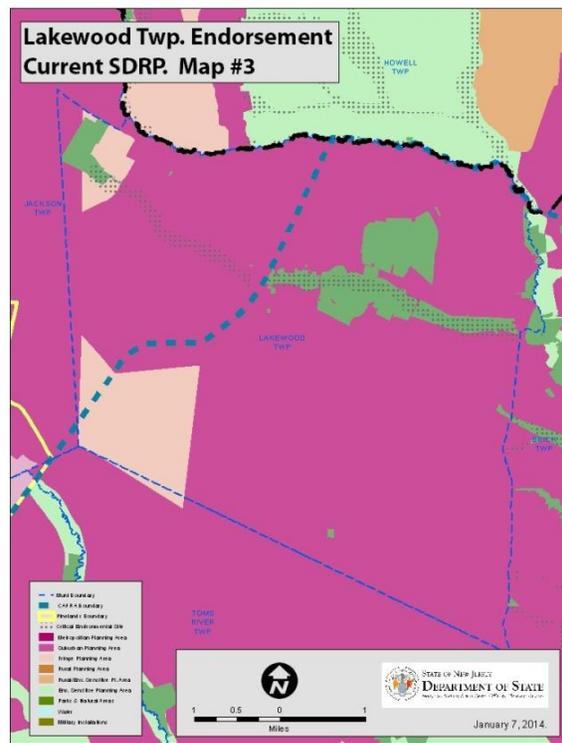
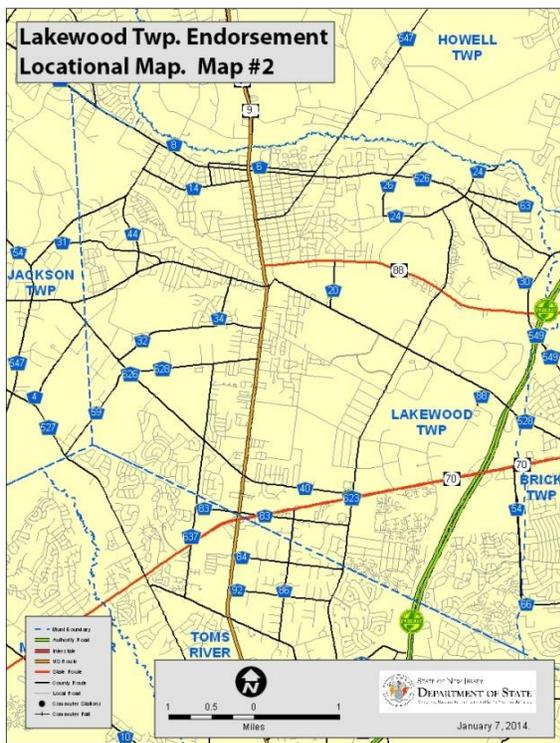
During the visioning sessions, all agreed that parking downtown and the ability to safely navigate throughout the Township were critical issues that needed to be addressed. OPA, through a 2007 Smart Future Planning Grant that was completed in 2011, provided money for the Township to examine the downtown parking situation. The study that also included public outreach, offered a number of recommendations including constructing a multi-level structured parking lot to help alleviate the current parking demand. Adopting a Transportation Improvement District was also

mentioned as a possible way to ensure that there was sufficient funding to accommodate the continued growth in the Township.

LOCATION & REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Township of Lakewood is located in northern Ocean County, and borders the Township of Howell, Monmouth County to the North, Township of Brick to the East, Township of Jackson to the West and Township of Toms River to the South. The Township is approximately 25 square miles in land area and includes major residential, commercial, and industrial areas. Several major roadways including the Garden State Parkway, US Route 9, NJ Route 70, NJ Route 88 and county highways, enable Lakewood to serve as an economic and cultural center for the region.

Early in the 20th Century, the Township served as a winter resort for wealthy industrialists like the Rockefellers and Goulds, today it is home to almost 100,000 people, businesses, industries, educational institutions as well as a hub for a segment of the Orthodox Jewish community. In addition to its major employer, the Kimball Medical Center, three industrial parks are located in Lakewood. Other economic development generators in Lakewood are the Foreign Trade Zone, State Urban Enterprise Zone and higher education schools like Georgian Court University and Beth Medrash Govoha (BMG), one of the largest yeshivas in the world.

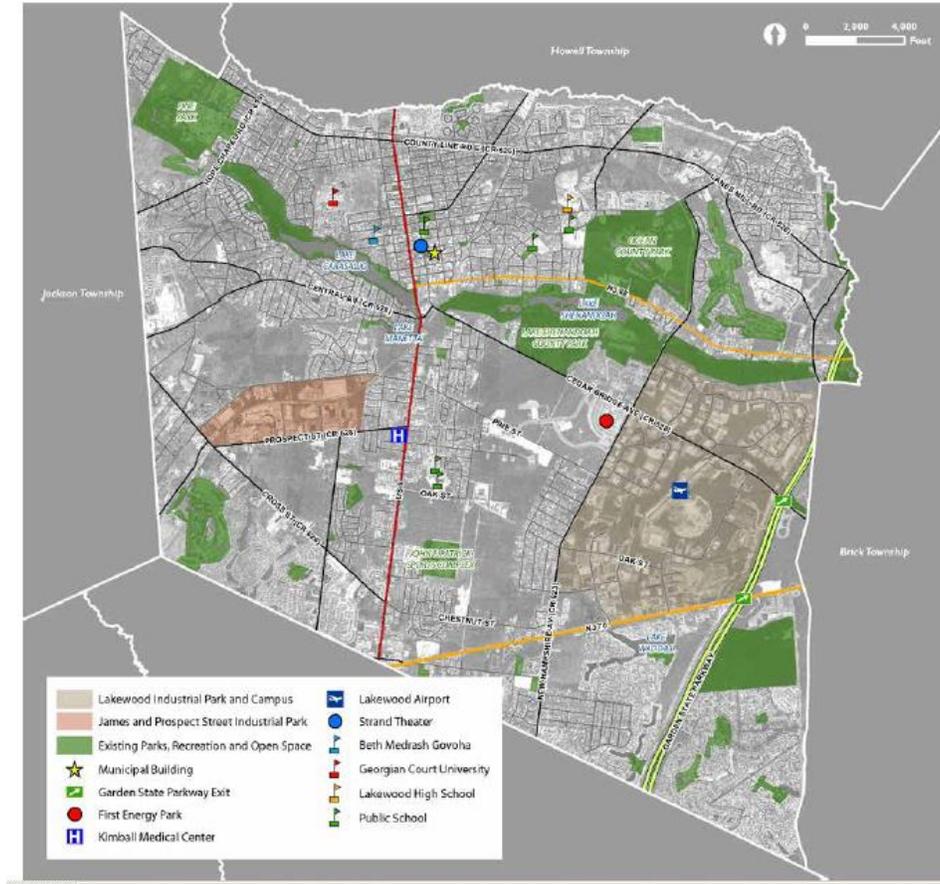


Two significant Lakewood landmarks, the Ocean County Park and the Georgian Court University, are located on lands that were once owned by wealthy part-time Lakewood residents, the Rockefellers and Goulds, respectfully. Today, Lakewood is comprised of 6.9% of Park Land, more than 1,100 acres and Georgian Court University comprises 158 acres. Georgian Court University which provides a comprehensive liberal arts education in the Roman Catholic tradition, is now a co-educational institution of more than 2,300 students. BMG has also grown from its start in 1943 as a small yeshiva which to now offers higher education classes to over 6,000 Jewish men on its campus in Lakewood. Also providing cultural opportunities to the region is the Strand Theater, which has been recognized artistically and architecturally after being placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Although flooding occurs in Ocean County, Lakewood has not suffered repetitive losses. They participate in the FEMA sponsored National Flood Insurance Program. There are 157 parcels in the Special Flood Hazard Area or 0.61% of all parcels in the Township. In August of 2011 the North Branch of the Metedeconk River had major and record breaking flooding above its 7 foot flood stage and crested at 11.40 feet.

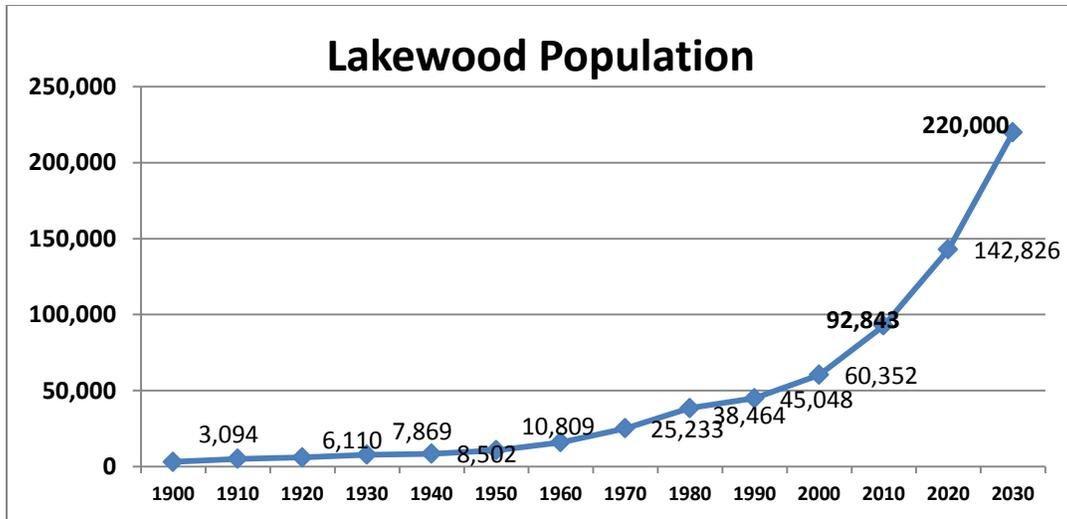
The current State Plan Map (Map) shows 91% of the Township's 16,060 acres as PA 2 or Suburban Planning Area. While only 7.5 acres is currently depicted as State Parkland on the Map, the combined local, county and State parks totals more than 1,100 acres.

Key Locations



DEMOGRAPHICS AND LAKEWOOD TOWNSHIP'S FUTURE

The SGP begins with the realization that Lakewood is at a crossroads, because of its significant residential growth. In 2014, the New Jersey Department of Labor estimated that there are more 95,000 people which makes Lakewood the 7th largest municipality in the State. The racial breakdown of the population is approximately 75% white, 17% Hispanic, 6% Black.



Everyone anticipates that Lakewood’s population will continue to grow. The North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) projects that the population will grow to 133,730 by 2040. The SGP population projections are much higher. The SGP assumes that Lakewood will continue to grow exponentially as it has over the past three decades and is projected to pass the 100,000 mark within the next few years and based on Lakewood’s projection will pass 200,000 by 2030. This assumes that the growth rate will continue to be above 50% for the next two decades.

Past three decade population growth

	Growth	Percentage Growth
1980 - 1990	6,500	17.12%
1980 - 1990	15,000	33.97%
2000 - 2010	32,000	53.84%

The growth rate is likely to continue to be high, because of the high number of births in Lakewood and of the high demand from those who want to be part of this growing community. The SGP attempts to address where growth will occur in the following table. Two residential growth areas, Cedarbridge and Oak Street were projected to generate more than 4,200 housing units which could accommodate approximately 16,000 people.

Due to outstanding legal issues regarding the proposed Cedarbridge Redevelopment Area, at this time, the redevelopment plan can’t be updated to include residential uses. When the SGP was adopted, there was also public concern about the proposed large scale residential development in the Oak Street Core. It was decided that development will continue under current zoning and will generate 230 fewer units.

**Table 2.3 Housing Projections,
Smart Growth Plan Components**

	2010 (Units)	2030 (Units)	Δ 2010- 2030 (Units)
Downtown Regional Center	7,135	7,476	341
Cedarbridge Town Center	1	1	-
Oak Street Core	675	3,199	2,524
Cross/Prospect Street Core	94	2,363	2,269
Highway Cores	669	2,234	1,565
Industrial Parks	92	92	-
Balance of Township	17,666	19,521	1,855
Totals	26,332	36,621	8,554

Source: T&M Associates

This means that while births and demand continue to grow, the supply of housing will fall short by approximately 3,700 dwelling units from the SGP. If the population grows to 220,000 people, approximately 10,000 people will need to find housing elsewhere from where the SGP says growth will occur. Lakewood’s planners understand that additional residential development will be required to address any housing shortfall that may occur if the current population trend continues. This could include plans for redevelopment and increased density within the downtown regional center or other areas of the Township determined to be appropriate for higher residential densities. This will have to be addressed as part of a future long-range planning analysis.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Water

Public water service in Lakewood is provided by both the Lakewood Township Municipal Utilities Authority (LTMUA) and the New Jersey American Water Company (NJAWC). The LTMUA has reviewed the SGP and has determined that is poised to meet current and immediate future demands in its service area and is taking further steps to increase its capacity to meet future needs. Current projects include new wells and expansion of the New Hampshire water treatment facility, among other projects designed to improve capacity and performance of the system.

The Lakewood Township Municipal Utilities Authority (LTMUA) service area is approximately eleven square miles in area and serves primarily the eastern portion of the Township. The potable water facilities include:

- 85 miles of water mains
- Two water treatment plants on Shorrock Street and New Hampshire Avenue
- Five water storage tanks with an effective storage of 5.8 to 6.0 million gallons
- Eleven wells drawing water from the Englishtown, Raritan and Cohansey Aquifers.
- Two of the existing LTMUA wells are equipped for use as Aquifer Storage and Recovery facilities
- LTMUA is in the process of bringing three more wells on-line.

The LTMUA is currently in the midst of completing an interconnection with the Brick Township Municipal Utilities Authority (BTMUA). The newly created interconnection will have the capacity to supply the LTMUA with 1.0 MGD.

The NJAWC franchise area is located in the western portion of the Township and is included in NJAWC's Coastal North regional public water system which supplies water to 36 municipalities throughout Monmouth and Ocean Counties.

- The potable water facilities include:
 - 1,650 miles of water mains
 - Three surface water treatment plants
 - Twenty-eight (28) storage facilities
 - Twenty-four (24) wells drawing water from the Englishtown, Raritan and Cohansey Aquifers. Ten of the twenty-four wells are located within Lakewood Township.

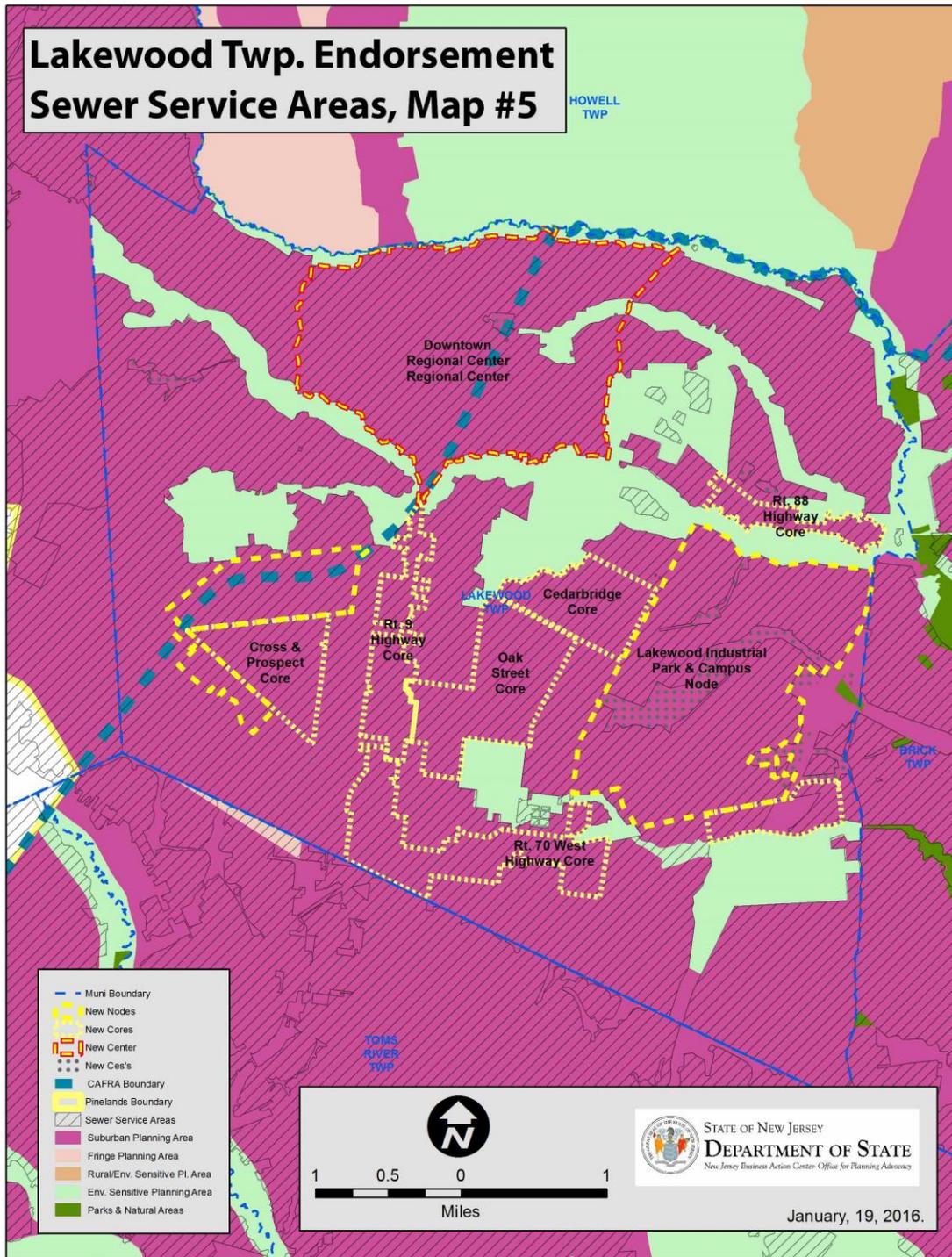
Both water purveyors have indicated to Lakewood Township that potable water supply would not limit growth based on the levels of population increase forecast in this Plan.

Sanitary Sewers

The Ocean County Utilities Authority (OCUA) is the regional wastewater treatment plant and interceptor agency for Lakewood Township. The OCUA operates the Northern Water Pollution Control Facility located in Brick Township. The facility treats wastewater from Lakewood and Brick Townships and several other municipalities in northeastern Ocean County and southern Monmouth County.

The Northern Plant has a current average flow of 26 million gallons per day (MGD). The current permitted capacity of the plant is 32 MGD. However, the plant has a potential maximum capacity, subject to physical plant improvements and NJDEP approval, of 36 MGD, which would allow for 10 MGD of future growth. The utility

purveyors feel this is sufficient to accommodate the expected growth. Remaining treatment capacity is provided on a first come first serve basis.



Given that significant growth is not anticipated in the other communities served by the Northern Plant, Lakewood's purveyors expects that there will be sufficient sewer capacity during the next 15 to 20 years to serve projected growth in the Township. In the long term, wastewater treatment capacity should be monitored and evaluated relative to projected future growth.

Through the SGP, Lakewood Township will also promote green and sustainable technologies in building and site design and related conservation efforts to reduce wastewater flows and ensure that sufficient regional treatment plant capacity is available for the long term.

The LTMUA operates 43 major collector lines to the OCUA system and two (2) sewage pump stations in the eastern portion of the Township. The NJAWC operates ninety (90) miles of sanitary sewer main in the western section of the Township and thirteen (13) sanitary lift stations.

Water Quality Management Plan Amendments

The DEP adopted revisions to the previously approved sanitary sewer service area maps for Lakewood and other communities throughout New Jersey. The Township has been working with the Ocean County Planning Board to address NJDEP's proposed changes in the Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP).

Lakewood's proposed sanitary sewer service area in the Ocean County Wastewater Management Plan includes the entire Township in the sewer service area with the exception of the environmentally sensitive area at Crystal Lake Preserve, the freshwater wetlands and designated preservation area at Cedarbridge Redevelopment area, a portion of the Kettle Creek watershed north of NJ State Highway Route 70, as well as along various stream corridors and previously preserved open space tracts.

In addition to the proposed modifications to the WQMP, Lakewood proposes the following actions to ensure that the Township will continue to have an efficient and effective water and sewer system that meets the future infrastructure needs of the Township:

- Encourage compact development in appropriate locations to minimize infrastructure costs
- Encourage redevelopment and infill development to reduce the need to extend water and sewer services.
- Research innovative finance solutions for new facilities and maintenance to lessen local public costs
- Adopt green building standards for new construction and neighborhoods to increase energy efficiency and reduce infrastructure load
- Consider the adoption of a Water Conservation Plan that promotes water conservation and addresses future demand and supply issues

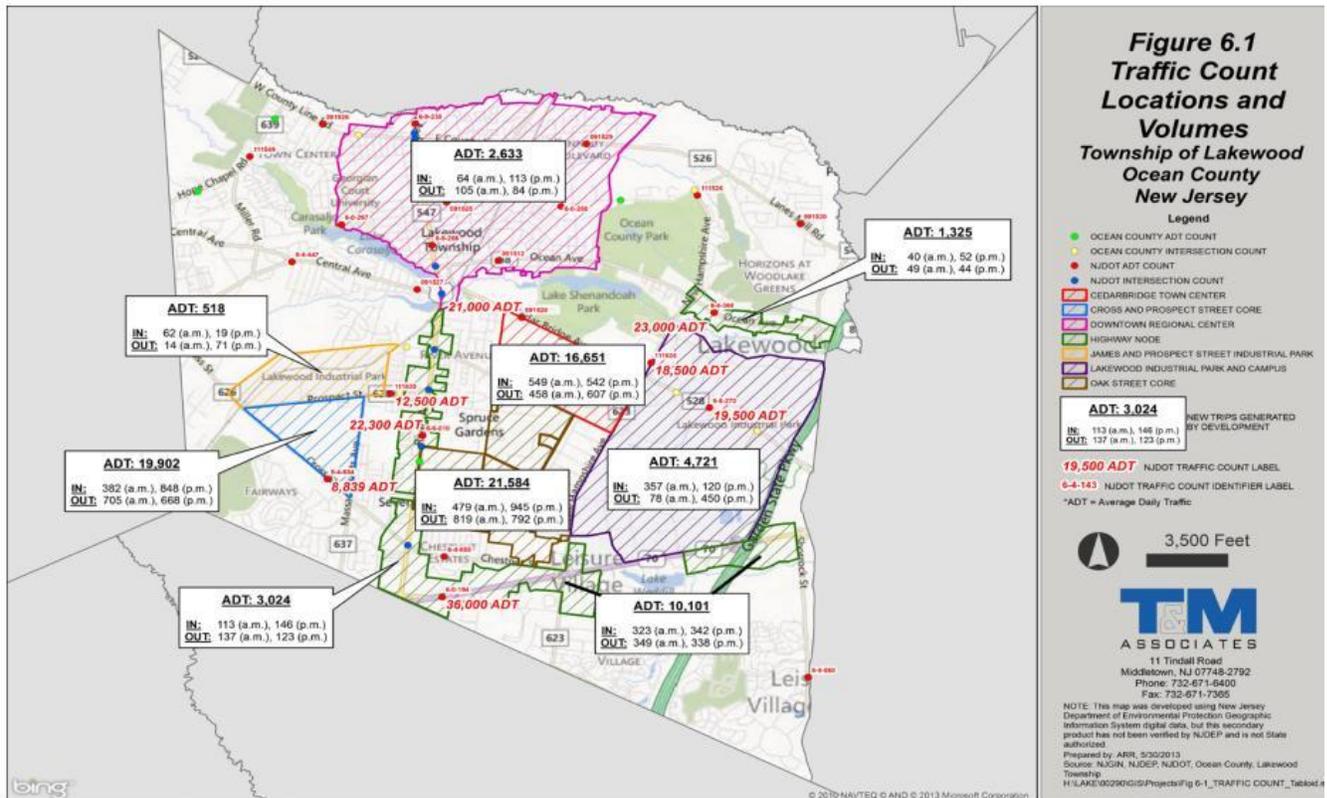
TRANSPORTATION

Circulation

While there are only two roads that run the length of the Township from North to South, U.S. Route 9 and the Garden State Parkway, there are several major east-west roads (County Line Road, State Route 88, Central Avenue/Cedarbridge Avenue, James Street/Pine Street, Cross Street, and State Route 70).

Money from the State and Federal government has been awarded to Lakewood to address connectivity in the Cedarbridge Redevelopment Area. For example the New Jersey Department of Transportation (DOT) provided over \$4 million in Discretionary Aid and Economic Development funds for the South New Road connecting Cedarbridge Avenue, New Hampshire Avenue and Pine Street. The New Jersey Economic Development Authority awarded \$4 million dollars for infrastructure and the United States Economic Development Agency awarded \$1 million for infrastructure improvements in the area.

Since Lakewood serves as an employment, educational and cultural hub for the region, it is served by 12 bus lines which stop throughout the Township as well as the



Lakewood Bus Terminal which has 98 parking spots. Because Lakewood is home to a number of parochial schools, there are many school buses that travel locally and regionally on a daily basis to/from the Township.

A new community shuttle began in March 2015 when the Township initiated a public transportation system with funding from the Federal Transit Administration. The Lakewood Township Community Shuttle or L has two routes; one loop serves the downtown area and the other loop serves the Industrial Park.

Other transportation options are available including park & ride facilities, taxis, walking, bicycles and the local airport. Although historically the Township was served by passenger rail service, that service stopped in the 1950's. At this time NJ Transit has no plans to restart rail service, but Lakewood is a stop on one of the proposed alignments of the Middlesex, Ocean, and Monmouth (MOM) Counties Line.

As a result of the public's need to keep moving safely, Lakewood has developed a transportation strategy that relies on the principles of smart growth that will offer alternatives for the growing population and the limited capacity of the road network.

Some of the highlights:

- Development and redevelopment must accommodate and provide transportation infrastructure such as streets, pedestrian walkways and bicycles lanes or routes as well as mass transit options
- Install new traffic signals at key intersections
- Complete the "gaps" in local streets, while also making improvements to intersections where needed
- Restrict on-street parking on some streets
- Work with NJDOT to implement improvements to Route 9

The intent of the Transportation Strategy of the SGP is to improve the road network throughout Lakewood to facilitate and disperse vehicular movements within the Township and reduce congestion by reducing the need to access Route 9 or the other major highways. This will include extending and connecting the existing road network at key locations as specified in this plan. This strategy also will include the development of mixed-use cores and satellite retail and service areas as part of smart growth development strategy that provides shopping and service opportunities proximate to existing and planned residential neighborhoods, including the Township's proposed affordable housing sites.

At the same time, the Township recognizes the need to emphasize multi-modal transportation alternatives, such as park and ride facilities, mass-transit, pedestrian linkages, and bikeways. The plans for the centers, cores, and nodes will encourage local transit connections in site design through bus shelters, bus pull-outs, bicycle racks, drop-off areas and similar facilities. Transit opportunities to be explored include the expansion of existing bus services and routes within the Township along

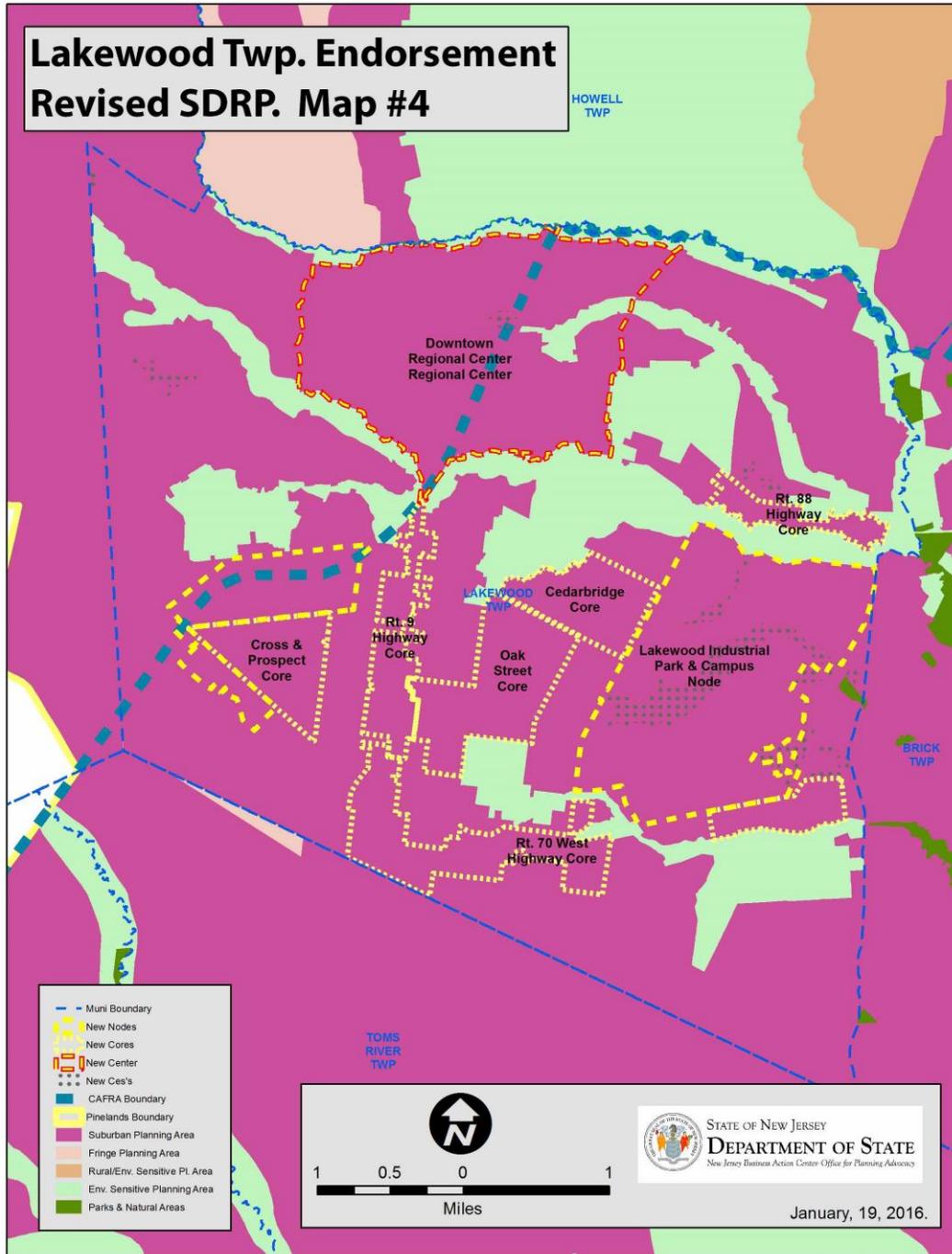
with local jitneys, van and shuttle services. Transit-oriented development opportunities, including residential and mixed-use development will also be explored.

At the end of 2014, Lakewood adopted a Transportation Improvement District (TID) to help fund the transportation improvements recommended in the Township's Smart Growth Plan (SGP). Specifically, the TID will "ensure that infrastructure, including, but limited to off-tract road and related drainage, lighting, sidewalks, signage, traffic control devices and the like could be maintained and created to accommodate new development." The TID encompasses the area of Lakewood Township proximate to the Cross Street Core and Oak Street Core. The TID identifies improvements to roads and intersections that will be needed to accommodate the increase in traffic volumes associated with the proposed development within these cores and the surrounding area of the Township. As part of the TID, an individual developer will be responsible to address their incremental impact to the surrounding street network. The TID will allow Lakewood to obtain the funding necessary to install the identified road and intersection improvements. The cost of improvements will then be assessed to individual developers in the form of a cost per site generated trip. Given the projected rate of growth, the TID will ensure funding is in place to provide a transportation infrastructure that can accommodate the forecasted increase in traffic volumes due to the implementation of the SGP. The Township is also investigating the use of similar TIDs in other areas of the Township.

While the State recognizes Lakewood's renewed effort to craft a set of municipal plans that embrace many smart growth principles, there are concerns about the sustainability of Lakewood's projected population growth from a transportation system perspective. To appropriately address this, the updated Circulation Element should include a clear statement that recognizes the role of state roads for conveying through rather than local traffic. The plan should provide access to local businesses on local roads. The statement should acknowledge that the State does not have the funds to widen Route 9 in the foreseeable future and that Lakewood should continue to investigate alternative north-south roadways to lessen the traffic congestion on Route 9.

PROPOSED MAP AMENDMENTS

If the SPC endorses Lakewood's petition and after Lakewood updates their zoning ordinance to reflect the SGP, the State Plan Map should be updated based on the following.



Summary of Proposed Map Amendments

Planning Area	Label	Acres	Acreage Δ from the 2001 Map
PA 2	Suburban	13,076	-1,566
PA 3	Fringe	-	-1,394
PA 5	Environmentally Sensitive	2,975	2,975
State Park	State Park	7.53	0

Type of Map Amendment	Label	Acres
Regional Center	Downtown Regional Center	1,943
Core	Cedarbridge Core	261
Highway Core	Rt. 70 East	144
Highway Core	Rt. 88	125
Highway Core	Rt. 70 West	440
Highway Core	Rt. 9	250
Node	Lakewood Industrial Park & Campus	1,593
Node	James & Prospect St Industrial Park	415
Core	Cross & Prospect	277
Core	Oak Street	454
New CES's	Critical Environmental Sites	257

STATE PLAN GOALS REVIEW

GOAL 1: REVITALIZE THE STATE'S CITIES AND TOWNS

This policy applies to select areas in the state with very dense development, significant infrastructure, high populations and a heavy transit system presence. Lakewood with its continuous population and employment growth has not only grown on undeveloped land, but significant growth has occurred through infill redevelopment. The SCP expects the growth of over 6,000 dwelling units throughout the Township.

In 2013, more than 80 approvals (minor subdivision, site plan, etc.) were granted by the planning board. Eight (8) of the approvals were for commercial development which included the expansion of industrial, office and retail properties. Seventeen (17) were for religious school related expansions or reuse of the properties. Eight (8) of the approvals were for change of use to a synagogue or expansion of the existing synagogue. Finally, twenty-eight (28) applications were for residential use.

Redevelopment projects:

- Cedarbridge
- Franklin Street

One of the main goals of the SGP is to revitalize Lakewood's downtown, sustain and support its existing regional employment centers, and provides new areas for mixed-use development in the Township. In addition, the Lakewood Smart Growth Plan provides for infill development and redevelopment based on smart growth principles in nodes of development along the Township's regional highway corridors.

GOAL 2: CONSERVE THE STATE'S NATURAL RESOURCES AND SYSTEMS

Lakewood and DEP came to an agreement on the revised Sewer Service Area (SSA). While a great deal of the Township is built and accessible to the SSA, portions were removed to ensure that C1 Streams, Crystal Lake and the land near the Metedeconk River would be protected from future development. Lakewood worked with Ocean County and DEP to complete their Chapter of the County WQMP and is expected to be adopted by the beginning of February 2016.

There are three (3) county parks where people swim, fish, bike and play tennis, along with two (2) public golf courses; and ten (10) municipal playgrounds.

The Metedeconk River and its associated tributaries provide both a natural border with the Township of Howell, Monmouth County and a framework for an integrated open space system of passive and active recreation areas, many of which are located in close proximity to Lakewood's downtown.

Lakewood has several County and local parks and recreation areas, including Lake Shenandoah and Lake Carasaljo and identified conservation areas, including the Crystal Lake Preserve and the Shorrock Open Space area, as well as recreation areas at Pine Park and the John F. Patrick Sports Complex.

The SGP encourages:

- Compact development in appropriate locations to minimize infrastructure costs
- Redevelopment and infill development to reduce the need to extend water and sewer services

It also proposes the following:

- Research innovative finance solutions for new facilities and maintenance to lessen local public costs
- Adopt green building standards for new construction and neighborhoods to increase energy efficiency and reduce infrastructure load
- Consider the adoption of a Water Conservation Plan that promotes water conservation and addresses future demand and supply issues

**GOAL 3: PROMOTE BENEFICIAL ECONOMIC GROWTH,
DEVELOPMENT AND RENEWAL FOR ALL RESIDENTS OF NEW
JERSEY**

Many companies involved in the biomass industry, energy production, manufacturing and the transportation, distributing, and warehousing industries are located in Lakewood due in part to the Urban Enterprise Zone and Foreign Trade Zone.

Lakewood's Industrial Park system consists of 2,200 acres of clean industry-zoned and industrial park professional service zoned lands containing more than 8.5 million square feet of industrial space in 200 buildings.

There are more than 2,500 local retail and professional businesses; and about 500 of them participate in the UEZ. According to Patricia Komsa, the executive director who coordinates the UEZ and FTZ, "As of April 2010, the UEZ supported 7,049 full-time jobs and 1,190 part-time jobs. It has created 1,934 full time and 348 part-time positions with \$576.6 million in private business investments."

The US Census estimates that almost 92,000 people work in Lakewood on a daily basis. Approximately 60,000 commute to Lakewood from outside the community.

The SGP proposes a series of centers, cores and nodes where most of Lakewood's anticipated growth will occur over the next two decades. These areas will be linked with a comprehensive transportation and bicycle and pedestrian network that will be designed to reduce congestion on the Township's road network and provide a variety of local and regional transportation options for Lakewood's residents. The plan also provides for a variety of community facilities, including new parks, located throughout the Township, as well as sufficient affordable housing to meet Lakewood's existing and future needs. The proposed development pattern, including proposed new center-based development, will be based on the principles of smart growth and characterized by walkability, a range of housing options, available transportation choices, and environmental sustainability.

GOAL 4: PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT, PREVENT AND CLEAN UP POLLUTION

In 1984, the Lakewood Township/Cross Street Landfill was closed. The 28 acre property was properly closed according to DEP's rules.

New Jersey Clean Communities Council has awarded over \$150,000 in grant money to Lakewood.

In 2002 US EPA awarded a \$200,000 site assessment grant to the Lakewood Development Corporation to investigate nine (9) properties.

Two Hazardous Discharge Site Remediation Fund grants were awarded for projects in Lakewood. One grant was used to help converted the property at 312 5th Street into a Municipal Parking Lot. The other grant is for an investigation at 244 Main Street.

While beginning work on the Franklin Street Redevelopment, it was discovered that there were environmental issues that needed to be addressed. Although delayed, the Franklin Street Redevelopment continues as a redevelopment project to revitalize this gateway to the downtown.

The Lakewood Smart Growth Plan encourages targeted areas for development and redevelopment that can benefit from greater density while preserving prioritized open space areas for preservation through non-contiguous clustering.

The SGP sets forth the Township's Environmental Preservation Strategy. This strategy is designed to protect the Township's natural resources, including Category 1 (C-1) waterways, wetlands, and critical habitat areas. It represents a comprehensive approach that links existing open space areas with new large contiguous tracts of land, protecting valuable natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas that otherwise would potentially be open to development without a Smart Growth Plan.

GOAL 5: PROVIDE ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES AT A REASONABLE COST

There are fifteen (15) municipal playgrounds.

Ocean County Parks Department is responsible for three park facilities in Lakewood:

Metedeconk River Conservation Area	318 Acres
Lake Shenandoah County Park and Sports Complex	143 Acres
Ocean County Park	323 Acres

A branch of the Ocean County Library is located in Lakewood.

Summertime activities in the parks include activities for children, a Jazz Music festival and school bands as well as a Lakewood Lions Charity Renaissance Festival.

There are shared service agreements between the Township, County and other municipalities, as follows:

- 2014 - County of Ocean - "Prosecutor's Program"
- 2012 - Borough of Beach Haven - Truck Wash
- County of Ocean - Police Services - Child Restraint Group.
- 2010 - County of Ocean - 911 Emergency Telecommunications Services.

According to the SGP nearly a third of Lakewood's land uses are dedicated to regional open space and recreational facilities, including Ocean County Park, Lake Shenandoah, and Lake Carasaljo. Lakewood hosts the Lakewood Blue Claws, a minor league baseball team, as well as the Strand Theater. Lakewood's SGP recognizes the need for a pragmatic and sustainable approach to accommodate growth by supporting appropriate infill development and redevelopment opportunities while enhancing mobility, preserving open space, providing adequate recreation and community facilities, and a variety of housing choices to best accommodate this anticipated population growth.

GOAL 6: PROVIDE ADEQUATE HOUSING AT A REASONABLE COST

Lakewood as an urban aid municipality has fully complied with its affordable housing obligations and has no outstanding first and second round affordable housing obligations. Therefore, it has not sought an order of repose in its court action. Lakewood is under the jurisdiction of the Superior Court Law Division, Ocean County in “In the Matter of Application of the Township of Lakewood, Docket Number OCN-L-3039-08.” In that action, Lakewood has been working with Philip B. Caton, who the Court appointed as special master to review and analyze Lakewood’s compliance with the Fair Housing Act.

Lakewood is actively involved in municipal rehabilitation projects and continues to grant approvals for development that includes affordable housing components. In 2013, the Lakewood Planning Board granted preliminary site approvals for 63 affordable multifamily housing units. Lakewood anticipates continued development and continued approval of affordable housing units.

The Township participates in the New Jersey, Housing Mortgage Finance Agency’s Live Where You Work, Homebuyer Program.

The SGP states the need for a variety of housing options to best accommodate the anticipated population growth and their PIA notes the need to continue to adequately address affordable housing.

GOAL 7: PRESERVE AND ENHANCE AREAS WITH HISTORIC, CULTURAL, SCENIC, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL VALUE

The following properties are listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

- 115-117 Second Street
- 411 Madison Avenue
- 421 Third Street
- 422 Second Street
- 422 Fifth Street
- All Saints Episcopal Church Parish House
- Falkenburg - 114 Madison Avenue
- Francis P. Freeman House
- Garden State Parkway Historic District
- Georgian Court (George Jay Gould Estate)
- Mary Clarke Gourlie House
- Harriet Hall / Dr. George W. Lawrence House
- Lakewood Historic District
- Lynx Hall Carriage House
- MacDonald Hall
- J. Mott Ironworks Water Trough
- NJS Stone Arch Bridge
- Lorenzo Richardson House
- William Robertson Farmstead Site
- Rockefeller Park Buildings & Site
- Strand Theatre
- United States Post Office
- YMCA

The SGP also strengthens community, promotes sustainable development policies, preserves open space and promotes environmental protection in a comprehensive planning framework. In addition, the Township proposes a comprehensive strategy to preserve and protect important open space areas throughout the Township, including the preservation of key habitat preservation areas, the adoption of a non-contiguous clustering ordinance to direct growth toward areas appropriate for growth and away from areas to be preserved, and a series of environment protection ordinances designed to protect critical natural resources.

The SGP supports Lakewood’s ability to protect and preserve its existing open space and maintain and improve where needed its existing recreation areas. Lakewood will list all existing Township owned parks and open space on Lakewood’s Recreation and Open Space Inventory.

GOAL 8: ENSURE SOUND, INTEGRATED PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION STATEWIDE

Lakewood is working with Ocean County and with neighboring communities on planning issues related to transportation, county and state highways, and 911 issues. They are also working with the NJTPA and DOT along with the County and Toms River to address highway access management issues. By working together, they can keep traffic moving along Routes 9, 70 and 88.

Lakewood participated in the Ocean County, 2013 Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Lakewood worked with Ocean, Monmouth and Middlesex Counties, NJ Transit and NJTPA to conduct the analysis for the proposed Middlesex, Ocean and Monmouth (MOM) train service.

The Township is recognized as part of New Jersey's coastal planning efforts, with the areas east of the Southern Branch Main Line under the jurisdiction of the DEP CAFRA.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The planning vision of Lakewood Township is consistent with the State Plan as defined in the State Planning Rules. The Lakewood Smart Growth Plan looks to the State Plan as a guide to help deal with the growth that has occurred over the past few decades and is expected to continue. While the State Plan is a guide, it is Lakewood’s responsibility to follow through by implementing the SGP to address the growth before it occurs. This means that Lakewood needs to update its zoning ordinances as the next step to address where growth is encouraged and to be consistent with the proposed State Plan Map changes with the Regional Center, Cores and Nodes as outlined in this report. Lakewood worked with Ocean County and DEP to ensure that the Lakewood chapter of the County WQMP was finalized. It expected to be adopted by DEP in February 2016. After the zoning ordinance is amended, OPA will update the State Plan Map. Lakewood also needs to work with the DEP as outlined in the PIA before receiving CAFRA Consistency.

While these are the steps that must be taken to provide growth options in Lakewood, the SGP also offers direction to develop open space through a non-contiguous cluster ordinance. Although the State of New Jersey updated the non-contiguous cluster ordinance to make it easier to succeed, Lakewood must follow through to provide property developers with options to grow while preserving land in the Township. Staff recommends Plan Endorsement for Lakewood’s SGP, because it offers a balanced approach for growth and preservation.

Regarding Lakewood’s original request that the Cedarbridge Development Project be designated a Town Center, it is our recommendation that it should not be designated a Town Center without a residential component in accordance with the rules and definitions of the current State Plan. The proposed resolution for Plan Endorsement will state that at the time when residential development is permitted, that time the State Plan Map will be updated to show Cedarbridge as a Town Center and no longer be a Core.

This recommendation recognizes the collective efforts made by the Public Stakeholders, Planning Board, Township Committee, Ocean County and Lakewood’s Planning Consultant, Stanley Slachetka and the staff of T & M Associates. Together they have forged a plan that works toward the vision of the 2001 State Development and Redevelopment Plan as well as the 2012 Draft State Strategic Plan. OPA and our State Agency Partners look forward to working with them to further their planning efforts and the realization of their current plans and efforts.

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION AGENDA

See the attached PIA.