



Hillsborough Township
Somerset County, New Jersey

2018 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT

*Adopted by the Hillsborough Township Planning Board
November 29, 2018*

Hillsborough Township Planning Board

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

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Introduction

The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) requires every municipality in New Jersey to provide for a general reexamination of its master plan and development regulations at least every 10 years (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89). The most recent reexamination of Hillsborough's master plan was adopted on October 23, 2008. The 2008 reexamination report was both preceded and followed by a number of master plan studies and updates as illustrated in Table I-1 on the following page. It should be noted that the last comprehensive update of the master plan was adopted in 1996.

The purpose of this report is to present a comprehensive overview of relevant demographic, land use, and policy changes that have taken place since the 2008 reexamination report was prepared. The Hillsborough Planning Board must adopt the findings of the reexamination report by resolution and submit a copy of the adopted report and resolution to the Somerset County Planning Board and NJ Office of Planning Advocacy. Additionally, a notice that the report and resolution have been adopted must be sent to the municipal clerk of each adjoining municipality.

The MLUL requires a reexamination report to address the five topics outlined below. The remaining sections of this report are organized to coincide with each topic.

- a. *The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of such adoption, last revision or reexamination, if any;*
- b. *The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date;*
- c. *The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for such plan or regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives;*
- d. *The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared; and*
- e. *The recommendations of the Planning Board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, P.L. 1992, c. 79 (C.40A:12 A-1 et al.) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommended changes if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.*

Table I-1 Overview of Master Plan Elements, Amendments & Reexaminations															
YEAR	Land Use	Housing	Circulation	Utility Service (sewer & water)	Community Facilities	Open Space & Rec	Conservation	Economic	Historic Preservation	Recycling	Farmland Preservation	Town Center/ Main Street	Stormwater	Reexam	
1975	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓									
1976	Amendments to 1975 elements														
1990	Compilation of amendments from 1980 to 1990														✓
1992	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
1996	Amendments to 1992 elements														
1997						✓									
1999												✓		✓	
2001									✓						
2002	✓ ¹	✓					✓ ¹							✓	
2005	✓ ²												✓		
2007						✓ ³									
2008		✓												✓	
2009	✓ ⁴										✓				
2010	✓ ⁵	✓											✓		
2013	✓ ⁶		✓ ⁷												

▫ See footnotes on next page ▫

Footnotes for Table I-1
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Agricultural & Mountain Districts.2. Gateway, Town Center, Transit Oriented Village, Transitional, Research & Development, Corporate Development, and General Industrial Zones. ("Phase II")3. Greenways Plan.4. Roycefield Trade Park.5. TECD District.6. Transit Ready Development District.7. Complete Streets, Town Center and Transit Ready Development District.

I. Problems & Objectives: 2008 Reexamination Report

A reexamination report shall address the major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of such adoption, last revision or re-examination, if any.

A. Identified Problems & Recommendations

The [2008](#) Reexamination Report reviewed the issues outlined in the [2002](#) Reexamination Report and found that most if not all of those issues had been addressed in the intervening years. The 2008 reexam made the following recommendations to address any outstanding or newly identified issues.

1. [Transfer of Development Rights](#) (TDR) - The required planning documents needed to adopt a Transfer Ordinance as a basis for TDR include the following: Development Transfer Plan Element; Utility Service Plan Element; Capital Improvement Plan and a Real Estate Market Analysis. A Build-Out Analysis for the Township will be provided as part of the TDR study.

2. The [Land Use Plan Element](#) is the central policy statement of the Master Plan. In conjunction with the 2005 Master Plan Amendment - Phase 2, several concerns have been raised which warrant an update to the land Use Plan Element as follows:

- (a) A request has been made to extend the proposed Transit Oriented Village on the east side of the rail line to include the Carriage Farm property. In addition, a small area between the proposed Route 206 Bypass and the rail line south of the proposed Transit Oriented Village has been identified as a logical extension of the Transit Oriented Village.
- (b) The proposed Corporate Center District, bounded by Hamilton Road, Millstone Borough, Amwell Road and North Willow Road, is located in a Planning Area 3 (PA 3) and is not in the sewer service area. It is therefore recommended that this area should be reexamined as a potential TDR sending area.
- (c) The nearby Glen Gery quarry site was subsequently identified as being built-out of the quarrying operations. The bulk of this property is located in Planning Area 2 (PA2) and is in the sewer service area. Subject to a reclamation plan and an environmental analysis the quarry site appears to be readily developable, located within reasonable proximity to the Town Center and adjacent to the Promenade Shopping Center. The Land Use Plan Element should address the potential reuse of the quarry.
- (d) The owner of the Roycefield Trade Park, located on Roycefield Road at the rear of the Veterans Industrial Park/DLA Depot property, has requested that the Township rezone this property (Block 142, Lot 23.10 - formerly 23B) from the current ED, Economic

- Development designation to I-2, Light Industrial, in order to permit a more compatible mix of uses at a more reasonable intensity.
3. The Circulation Plan Element has not been updated since 1986. A Circulation Plan Element will show the location and types of facilities for all modes of transportation required for the efficient movement of people and goods into, about and through the municipality taking into account the functional highway classification system of the Federal Highway Administration and the types, locations, conditions and availability of existing and proposed transportation facilities, including air, water, road and rail. Recommendations concerning bicycle paths, bicycle lanes and pedestrian paths should be included in this element. A number of proposed improvements are envisioned to facilitate access to Town Center and the proposed Transit Village, as well as to the VA Depot and the former Belle Mead GSA Depot which is intended as a research and development center and a major recreation and open space facility.
 4. The Farmland Preservation Plan was last adopted in 2002 as part of the Master Plan Amendment-Agricultural and Mountain Districts. This update is required pursuant to new regulations adopted by the SADC in order to continue funding PIG Project Areas as part of farmland preservation efforts.
 5. A new Housing Plan Element and Fair Share Plan must be prepared to comply with the Round 3 affordable housing requirements when they are revised and adopted pursuant to the recent litigation. It is noted that the Township has a Judgment of Repose which expires in October 2008 based on a settlement of previous Mt. Laurel litigation.
 6. As a result of the Sustainable Hillsborough Project, a Green Buildings and Environmental Sustainability Plan Element, which was recently included in the Municipal Land Use Law as a permitted master plan element, is recommended to be prepared with input from the Environmental Commission and the Sustainable Hillsborough Steering Committee.
 7. A comprehensive update of the Historic Preservation Plan Element is recommended in light of several inconsistencies found in the 2001 Plan.
 8. A Community Facilities and Recreation Plan Element is recommended in order to assess existing Township facilities and provide guidance for future use and potential areas of expansion, as well as the need for new facilities where appropriate.

B. Objectives

The 2008 Reexamination Report carried forward the goals and objectives adopted by the Planning Board as part of the 2005 Master Plan Amendment - Phase 2 to serve as the basis for future planning efforts in Hillsborough. Although there were no specific goal statements in the 2005 master plan, the plan did include the following objectives.

◆ Land Use Management

1. Provide a future land use pattern that includes agriculture (farms), recreation, employment, residential, public services and a safe and healthful environment.
2. The Township wants to continue and expand upon land use policies that guide development to suitable locations and at appropriate intensities, and provide for higher densities only in areas where the public water and sewers and all other necessary public utilities as well as transportation infrastructure are available or provided.
3. Plan for population densities in areas that do not exceed the carrying capacities of natural resources especially groundwater and the ability of the soil to sustain on-lot sewage disposal systems where public water and sewers are not available.
4. Exercise stewardship over the lands and waters of Hillsborough Township to ensure that these resources are available for the sustenance and enjoyment of present and future generations.
5. Protect and maintain the prevailing rural character and unique sense of place within Hillsborough, particularly in the Agricultural and Mountain districts, and includes some lands within the CDZ District, which includes historic settlement areas and scenic landscapes, which result from the natural topography, agricultural lands, woodlands and watercourses.
6. Promote cooperation with adjoining municipalities, particularly the Boroughs of Manville and Millstone, to advance consistent development and open space goals, policies and plans.
7. Advance the goals and objectives of Hillsborough Township through the incorporation of local policies and strategies that respond to the basic premises, intent and purposes of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan and the Somerset County Master Plan.

◆ Community Design

1. Explore opportunities for mixed-use development in a high-density core with commercial services and public facilities surrounded by lower density residential development.
2. Discourage strip commercial development.

3. Encourage the development of employment areas near residential neighborhoods with design that assures the peace and solitude of residents.
4. Planned centers should have coordinated architectural design, landscaping, lighting, signs, and similar design features.
5. Retain to the greatest extent practicable, attractive vistas from public rights-of-way, including views of hills, valleys, ridgelines, woodlands, farmlands, hedgerows, stream corridors, flood plains and other natural areas.
6. Promote flexible zoning provisions such as planned developments and cluster options that may aid in avoiding development in critical areas and permanently preserving open space including farmland.
7. Encourage employment areas in close proximity to the railroad corridors & major highway facilities.
8. Provide for employment centers close to residential development to reduce vehicular traffic and encourage alternative modes of transportation.
9. Require all non-residential development (e.g., industrial, office, commercial) to be compatible with nearby residential neighborhoods.

◆ **Natural Resources**

1. Protect the environment and environmentally sensitive areas of the Township from destruction or degradation, including but not limited to steep slopes, ridgelines, trout streams, wetlands, stream corridors, potable water supplies, watersheds, aquifers, rivers, view sheds, forests and other vegetation, habitats of threatened and endangered species and unique natural systems, and utilize the findings and recommendations of the Hillsborough Environmental Commission whenever possible to advance this objective.
2. Preclude development in environmentally critical areas by minimizing any intrusion and implement strategies to mitigate impacts.
3. Maintain and enhance biological diversity through the maintenance of large contiguous tracts and corridors of recreation, forest, flood plain and other open space lands.
4. Protect prime agricultural soils, soils of statewide importance and soils of local importance for their contribution to agricultural production.
5. Promote land use and management policies that provide for clean air and protection from noise and light impacts.

6. Identify and manage stream corridor buffer areas by maintaining undisturbed vegetation in order to protect and improve water quality, and provide wildlife corridors and opportunities for passive and active recreation.
7. Ensure that development involving steep slopes is planned and constructed to minimize steep slope disturbance.
8. Protect groundwater supply and quality through the adoption of aquifer management programs, including relevant standards for wellhead protection programs, and standards to protect groundwater recharge areas, such as impervious coverage limitations.
9. Promote the use of minimal necessary levels of nighttime outdoor illumination so as to protect and preserve the dark sky quality and starscape of the Agricultural and Mountain districts.
10. Protect and maintain the existing tree canopy during the development process, as well as to promote the replanting of areas where the canopy has been lost.

◆ **Housing**

1. Provide housing types to serve all ages, economic segments and family sizes according to State Law and consistent with available service facilities, schools and infrastructures.
2. Promote and support the development and redevelopment of affordable housing intended to address the Township's fair share of the region's lower income housing, particularly in areas served by public transportation which connect to areas of employment.
3. Residential development must be carefully phased as part of the Town Center, Transit Oriented Village and Corporate Center areas so as to provide a fiscal balance with any proposed commercial and industrial development.

◆ **Agriculture**

1. Encourage agricultural preservation throughout the Township, in recognition of the existing agricultural characteristics.
2. Preserve a large contiguous land base to assure that agriculture remains a viable, permanent land use.
3. Coordinate agricultural preservation activities with the State Agriculture Development Committee, Somerset County Agricultural Development Board and other open space preservation activities in the Township.
4. Recognize agriculture as a significant economic industry in the community and to encourage economic opportunities in this industry.

5. Encourage compatibility between agricultural operations and neighboring non-agricultural development through the right-to-farm ordinance.

◆ **Transportation**

1. Provide consistency in transportation management to meet the regional requirements and coordinate with other municipalities and governmental bodies for a regional approach to transportation that respects and enhances the character of the community.
2. Plan for improvements to the major street system to create a convenient circulation system sufficient to accommodate anticipated development.
3. In the Sourland Mountain, historic districts, and agricultural districts, promote a road system that remains narrow because of the physical constraints of the terrain and the limited traffic resulting from the restricted development opportunities.
4. Avoid strip frontage development along arterial and collector highways that would result in uncontrolled access.
5. Establish highway access management plans for arterial highways.
6. Require access to individual properties from streets with a local classification where feasible.
7. Promote industrial uses that have access to rail service.
8. Encourage public transportation to be readily accessible to residential areas of higher densities for convenient home-to-work travel.
9. Promote the development of future passenger rail service to and from the Township at a Transit Oriented Village located in the vicinity of the Route 206 Bypass interchange with Amwell Road.
10. Discourage future highway development or extension of the highway system into the agricultural, mountain and other scenic areas.
11. Promote transit alternatives in new and existing development to reduce traffic congestion, including ride shares, buses, mass transit, taxis, car/van pools, dial-a-ride, and flextime.
12. Minimize the impacts of transportation systems on the environment, including air and noise pollution.
13. Encourage pedestrian and bike paths within residential, non-residential and mixed-use developments designed to provide direct, easy access to new shopping areas and other land uses as an enticement to reduce vehicular travel.

14. There will be no through traffic permitted between Amwell Road and Hamilton Road in any existing residential development within the Town Center, Transit Oriented Village or Transitional development zones, i.e., Pineywoods Drive and Royce Book Road. Any through traffic will only be considered in non-residential areas.
15. Pedestrian and bicycle access and traffic calming improvements along existing Route 206, Amwell and Hamilton Roads should be considered and implemented in conjunction with development and other improvements within the Town Center, Transit Oriented Village and Corporate Center areas. Efforts must be made to minimize the Route 206 Bypass as a physical barrier to east-west pedestrian and bicycle access by possibly incorporating suitable pedestrian/bicycle bridge designs into the Route 206 Bypass at Amwell and Hamilton Roads.
16. Consider traffic calming solutions that could include some or a combination of all the following: signalization, landscaped center medians, special pavement and cross-walk treatments, signage, better lighting, lower speed limits, establishing a clear deference to pedestrian and bicycle traffic, curb extensions, on-street parking, roadway bumps and/or humps, etc.

◆ **Economic Development**

1. Provide expanded employment opportunities by encouraging development in appropriate areas for this purpose and consistent with available infrastructure and supporting services.
2. Promote employment opportunities and commercial services in locations compatible with existing and proposed development.
3. Assure the availability of commercially zoned land in areas of the community that are economically usable for commercial purposes.
4. Encourage commercial development or redevelopment in suitable areas of the community that are most economically useful for commercial purposes.
5. Promote the redesign of existing commercial sites to provide a more efficient land use pattern through such approaches as reduced curb cuts, interconnecting driveways, improved pedestrian and bicycle linkages and enhanced landscaping.
6. Promote regional cooperation with adjoining municipalities, with particular reference to the Boroughs of Manville and Millstone, in the development of economic development strategies.

◆ **Historic and Cultural Resources**

1. Preserve the historic and archaeological sites of Hillsborough Township and coordinate development to incorporate historic features wherever possible.

2. Encourage the preservation of historic districts, in particular those identified in the 1996 Master Plan and continued in this Master Plan.
3. Discourage encroachment on historic structures and sites by uses and buildings that are incompatible or detract in design.
4. Encourage the preservation, rehabilitation or adaptive reuse of historic buildings and structures that protects their architectural integrity and preserves their context within the historic landscape.
5. Promote the development of land use regulations, which acknowledge and permit special treatment for historic landscapes, districts, sites, and structures including setbacks, buffers and other design criteria.
6. Prohibit transportation improvements (local or regional), which do not take into consideration impact on historic districts and sites.

◆ **Community Facilities and Utilities**

1. Require infrastructure improvements scaled to permit development to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public.
2. Promote utilities to allow higher density development in appropriate locations.
3. Provide for expanded public facilities as part of new developments that reflect population growth and protect natural and historic features.
4. Require educational support, services and facilities to meet the increased demand created by new developments.
5. Program and plan for the expansion of necessary public services, such as utilities, community facilities and recreation, at a reasonable cost in response to the proposals in the land use plan element.
6. Ensure adequate public sewer capacity for proposed development levels within the Town Center, Transit Oriented Village, Corporate Center, ED, CDZ and GI zones and also include, where appropriate, expansion and/or modification of designated sewer service areas.
7. Establish a system so that required capital improvements can be programmed and planned in advance.
8. Ensure that the development process acknowledges and addresses the impact on community facilities and utilities through the payment of the fair share of any off-tract improvements for community facilities to the extent permitted by law.

9. Provide healthcare and specific needs of senior citizens.

◆ **Recreation and Open Space**

1. Require coordinated open space proposals as part of new developments that will be related to population growth and natural and historic features.
2. Prepare and maintain recreation and open space master plans to establish and enhance recreational lands and public open space; to establish linkages of public spaces through the use of greenways, greenbelts, waterways, paths and bikeways; and, to establish as the highest priority for public acquisition, areas of unique recreational, scenic or environmental value.
3. Encourage the public acquisition of areas of exceptional recreational or scenic value, or environmental sensitivity, at all levels of government, with priority given to acquisition of land to meet present and future demand for active and passive recreation.
4. Promote cultural activities that provide recreational opportunities for a broad spectrum of residents and visitors.
5. Assess and provide opportunities for active and passive recreation to meet the needs of all citizens.
6. Devise appropriate strategies for the public and private ownership and maintenance of open space and recreation lands.
7. Encourage private landowners to permit public use through participation in the State's "Leave a Legacy of Land" program.

◆ **New Town Center**

1. Create a new Town Center generally centered at the intersection of Route 206 and Amwell Road and extended into adjacent areas to become the residential, non-residential and mixed-use center of the Township.
2. Actively support the construction of the Route 206 Bypass roadway from existing Route 206 located just above the new Town Center into Montgomery Township. Only one Township interchange is desired where the bypass crosses Amwell Road at the new Transit Oriented Village Area.
3. Convert portions of existing Route 206 from state to county or Township ownership after the bypass is constructed to permit the creation of the New Town Center.
4. The new Town Center supports the goals and objectives of the State Plan and in particular Smart Growth policies.

5. Develop the Town Center to reflect a traditional village style as a gathering spot for residents and workers.
6. The Town Center will be integrated with adjacent and surrounding areas as much as possible to make it easy to enter and exit the area.
7. Pedestrian, bicycle and mass transit opportunities within the Town Center will be maximized.
8. Establish parks and plazas within the Town Center.
9. Promote the creation of neighborhoods within the Town Center.
10. Encourage innovative design, re-use of existing sites and a neo-traditional pattern and type of development.
11. Extend some Town Center design principles into the new Transitional and Gateway “Mixed-Use” zones.
12. The Town Center should be linked with the new Transit Oriented Village to complement one another.

◆ **New Transit Oriented Village**

1. Create a mixed-use development with a special emphasis on compact pedestrian-oriented environment that reinforces the use of public transportation.
2. Introduce land uses within a relatively small area that includes office, general and commuter-oriented retail, rental and for-sale dwelling units, child care and health related land use activities.
3. Incorporate parking garages in a transit oriented village plan and other special features like public art, banners and special event signs, special paving treatments, etc., to all be coordinated with and complementary to the new Town Center.

◆ **New Corporate Center**

1. Create a mixed-use development with a special emphasis on compact employment uses that effectively use both public transit and the Route 206 Bypass.
2. Introduce land uses within a relatively small area that includes office, commuter-oriented retail, limited rental and for-sale dwelling units, childcare and related land use activities.

3. Allow parking garages and other special features like public art, banners and special paving treatments, etc., to all be coordinated with and complementary to the Transit Oriented Village and the new Town Center.

II. The Extent of Increase or Reduction of Problems & Objectives

A reexamination report shall describe the extent to which such problems and objectives existing at the time of the last master plan have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.

This chapter analyzes the degree to which the recommendations and objectives offered in 2008 have been addressed to date. A full description of each recommendation and objective is provided in the previous section.

A. 2008 Recommendations

1. Adopt a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Ordinance

A draft TDR plan was prepared in 2010 in anticipation of commuter rail service being restored on the West Trenton Line. A new passenger rail station at Amwell Road would anchor a proposed Transit Village that was to serve as the primary TDR receiving area. However, the cancellation of the ARC tunnel project made restoration of rail service unlikely in the near future rendering the Transit Village and the requisite TDR receiving area no longer feasible. As a result the TDR plan was never adopted.

Although a full-scale TDR program has not been adopted, the Hillsborough Land Use and Development Ordinance has included a form of noncontiguous clustering since the 1980's (see § 188-93). This voluntary "Transfer of Development Credits" provision permits the owner of lands in the RS, R1, PD, CR, HS and TC Districts to increase the density of a Planned Development in exchange for dedicating separate lots for open space, school sites or other public use. Unlike a TDR program however, noncontiguous clustering does not entail the purchase and sale of development rights and lacks the focus of specific pre-planned sending and receiving areas.

2. Update the Land Use Plan Element

- A. Extend the Transit Oriented Village – This recommendation was addressed with the adoption of the Gateway C (GC) district in 2015.
- B. Establish a TDR sending area bounded by Hamilton, Amwell, North Willow, and Millstone Borough – As noted above, the TDR program was never adopted.
- C. Address the potential reuse of the Glen Gery Quarry – In 2017, the County completed a "framework plan" for the quarry property in the *Supporting Priority Investment in Somerset County Phase III Study*. The results of the study are discussed in detail in Section III.E.
- D. Rezone the Roycefield Trade Park – The subject tract has been rezoned I-2.

3. Update the Circulation Plan

Although a circulation update was prepared in 2013 for the Town Center and Transit Ready District, and the Township has adopted a Complete Streets Policy, a comprehensive Township-wide update of the 1992/1996 circulation plan has not been undertaken.

4. Update the Farmland Preservation Plan

The Farmland Preservation Plan was updated in 2009.

5. Adopt a new Housing Plan Element and Fair Share Plan

The Housing Plan was updated in 2010 but has been on hold pending the outcome of the ongoing affordable housing process, which may or may not be decided in 2018.

6. Adopt a Green Buildings and Environmental Sustainability Plan Element

A *Strategic Plan for a Sustainable Hillsborough* was adopted by the Township Committee in 2009. It was not, however, adopted by the planning board as an element of the master plan and was not intended to substitute for a Green Buildings element, which has not been prepared.

7. Update the Historic Preservation Plan Element

The Historic Preservation Element has not been updated since 2001.

8. Adopt a Community Facilities and Recreation Plan Element

The Community Facilities Plan was last adopted in 1992/1996. The Open Space and Recreation Plan was last updated 1997, with the exception of a recommended greenway concept that was added in 2007.

B. Continued Relevance of 2008 Objectives

There were 96 objectives organized under 13 headings in 2008. Although numerous, the objectives are fairly generic and often redundant. As noted earlier there were no specific goal statements, which may have contributed to the rambling nature of the objectives. And although the subject areas may still be relevant, e.g. “natural resources,” a clear and persuasive goal statement followed by a limited number of pointed objectives would provide more meaningful direction for future master plan updates. Policy statements, design standards, and supporting strategies should be reserved for the appropriate master plan element. Following is a condensed version of each group of objectives by heading, which is meant to serve as a starting point for the development of goals.

◆ **Land Use Management**

There were seven objectives under this heading that essentially call for balanced growth tied to reasonable infrastructure and natural resource capacity, sustainability, and cooperative planning with surrounding municipalities and the county.

◆ **Community Design**

There were nine objectives under this heading calling for mixed-use development in well-designed high-density cores, maintaining attractive vistas throughout the Township, avoiding development in critical areas, and preserving open space. The objectives also included a somewhat puzzling directive to provide employment centers near residential neighborhoods as well as in close proximity to the railroad corridors and the major highway facilities.

◆ **Natural Resources**

There were 10 objectives under this heading, all of which are fairly well summarized in the first objective:

“Protect the environment and environmentally sensitive areas of the Township from destruction or degradation, including but not limited to steep slopes, ridgelines, trout streams, wetlands, stream corridors, potable water supplies, watersheds, aquifers, rivers, view sheds, forests and other vegetation, habitats of threatened and endangered species and unique natural systems, and utilize the findings and recommendations of the Hillsborough Environmental Commission whenever possible to advance this objective.”

◆ **Housing**

There were only three housing objectives all of which can be summed up in the first objective:

“Provide housing types to serve all ages, economic segments and family sizes according to State Law and consistent with available service facilities, schools and infrastructures.”

◆ **Agriculture**

There were five Agriculture objectives all of which encourage agricultural preservation throughout the Township.

◆ **Transportation**

Transportation had the most objectives with 16. They basically addressed four main topics – promoting alternative modes of transportation (ped/bike/transit), discouraging future road expansion in the agricultural and mountain districts, controlling highway access, and traffic calming. There was one pointed “statement” prohibiting through-streets between Amwell Road and Hamilton Road in the Pineywoods Drive/Royce Brook Road neighborhood.

◆ **Economic Development**

There were six economic development objectives that call for encouraging commercial development and redevelopment in appropriate areas with available infrastructure and supporting services and promoting regional cooperation.

◆ **Historic and Cultural Resources**

There were six objectives under this heading promoting the preservation of historic and archaeological sites, districts and structures throughout the Township and the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of same. One standout objective prohibits transportation improvements that do not take into consideration their impact on historic sites.

◆ **Community Facilities and Utilities**

Of the nine objectives under this heading, eight can be summed up by objective #5: “Program and plan for the expansion of necessary public services, such as utilities, community facilities and recreation, at a reasonable cost in response to the proposals in the land use plan element.” The ninth objective is somewhat ambiguous simply stating “Provide healthcare and specific needs of senior citizens.”

◆ **Recreation and Open Space**

Seven objectives that all speak to the preparation of a comprehensive recreation and open space master plan.

◆ **New Town Center**

There were 12 Town Center objectives supporting the development of Town Center and the construction of the Route 206 Bypass.

◆ **New Transit Oriented Village**

There were three transit village objectives. As noted elsewhere in this report, the Transit Village concept was put on hold due to the cancellation of the ARC rail tunnel and the subsequent uncertainty of the new rail station being built at Amwell Road. As a place-holder of sorts, the full scale transit village morphed into the Gateway C district.

◆ **New Corporate Center**

These three objectives referred to the creation of a mixed-use development bounded by Hamilton, Amwell, North Willow, and Millstone Borough – a concept outlined in the 2005 Master Plan Amendment. The 2008 Reexamination Report recommended that the subject area be reexamined as a sending area instead. As noted earlier in this report, the TDR program was never adopted and the area remains zoned CDZ. As will be discussed later in this report, the CDZ zone as a whole needs to be reevaluated.

III. The Extent of Significant Changes in Assumptions, Policies & Objectives

A reexamination report shall describe the extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for such plan or regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives.

A. Demographic Overview

Population Change

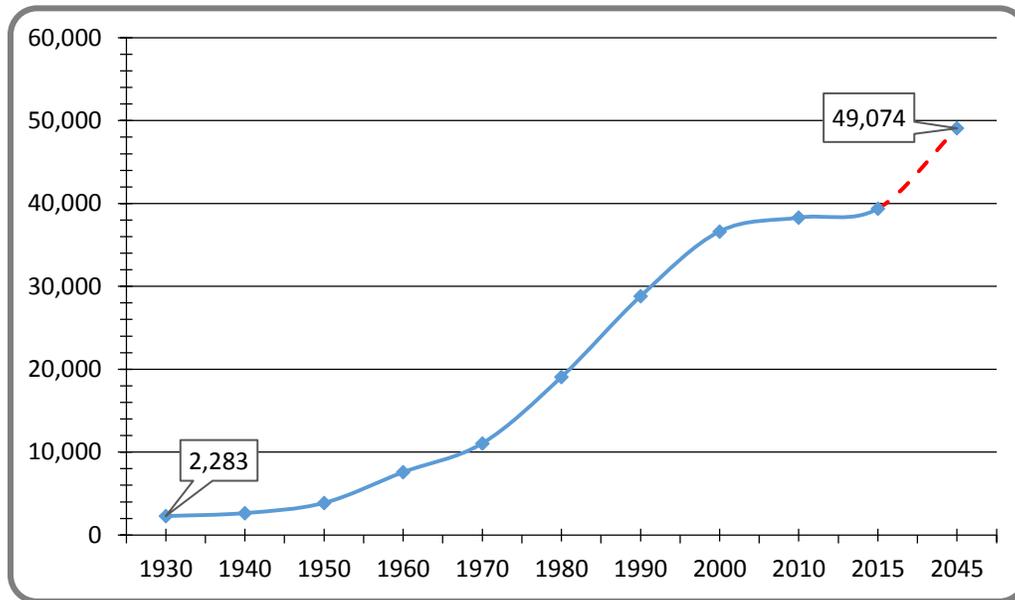
As illustrated in Figure III-1 and Table III-1, Hillsborough's population grew steadily between the years 1930 and 1950 and then doubled over the following decade to 7,584 in 1960. There was a sharp increase in the population in the 40 years between 1960 and 2000 resulting in a total growth of around 30,000 people. The largest 10-year percentage increase in that timeframe was 72% between 1970 and 1980. The largest numerical increase was 9,747 between 1980 and 1990.

Population growth has slowed somewhat since 2000 leveling off in the mid to high 30's. The 2015 Census recorded a total population estimate of 39,378 persons in Hillsborough – an increase of 1,075 persons (2.8%) since the 2010 Census and 2,744 (7.4%) since 2000.

The North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) issued its latest population forecasts on November 13, 2017. As reported by NJTPA, the number of residents in Hillsborough was expected to increase to 49,074 by the year 2045 – an increase of 9,696 or 24.6% over 2015. Somerset County's population is forecast to increase by only 10.8% during that same timeframe.

Of particular note is the population change recorded since the last comprehensive update of the master plan in 1996. In the intervening two decades, the Township's population grew by over one-third – an increase of over 10,000 new residents.

**Figure III-1
Hillsborough Population
1930 to 2015 – Projected to 2045**



Source: 1930 – 2015 U.S. Census and NJTPA projection to 2045.

**Table III-1
Hillsborough Population: 1930 to 2015 – Projected to 2045**

Year	Population	# Increase	Percent Change
1930	2,283		
1940	2,645	362	15.85
1950	3,875	1,230	46.50
1960	7,584	3,709	95.70
1970	11,061	3,477	45.80
1980	19,061	8,000	72.00
1990	28,808	9,747	51.13
2000	36,634	7,826	27.20
2010	38,303	1,669	4.50
2015	39,378	1,075	2.80
Projected 2045	49,074	9,696	24.62

Source: 1930 – 2015 U.S. Census and NJTPA projection to 2045.

Population Density

When compared to 10 adjoining municipalities, Hillsborough ranked seventh in overall density with 716 persons per square mile in 2015 (see Table III-2). Somerville ranked first at 5,170 PPSM while East Amwell was the least densely populated with only 138 PPSM. The overall density in Somerset County was just over 1,000 persons per square mile. New Jersey was at 1,218 persons per square mile.

Hillsborough covers 55 square miles making it the largest municipality in Somerset County. Franklin is second with 47 square miles and Millstone is the smallest with .76 square miles.

**Table III-2
Population Density Rank - 2015**

Municipality	Persons Per Square Mile
1. Somerville	5,170
2. Manville	4,269
3. Raritan Borough	3,597
4. Bridgewater	1,388
5. Franklin	1,383
6. Branchburg	724
7. Hillsborough	716
8. Montgomery	699
9. Millstone	640
10. Raritan Twp.	585
11. East Amwell	138
Somerset County	1,061
New Jersey	1,218

Source: US Census 2000; ACS 2015

Core Density

Although the overall density in Hillsborough is relatively low or typically “suburban,” what might be considered the residential core of the Township exhibits a much higher density. For the purposes of this exercise, the Township core is roughly defined by the Norfolk Southern rail line to the north, Mountain View Park to the south, Beekman Lane to the west and Route 206 to the east. This area corresponds to all or parts of Census Tracts 537.04, 537.05, 537.06, and 538.04 (see Figure III-2 on the following page). In 2012, the most densely populated census tract of the four was Tract 537.05 with 5,480 persons per square mile, which is on par with Somerville. The four tracts combined had a density of 3,070 persons per square mile, which is comparable to Raritan Borough. By contrast, the density in the balance of the Township was only 474 persons per square mile. The far-western section of the Township, basically the Mountain and Agricultural zones, had an even lower density at 190 persons per square mile. (It should be noted that these numbers do not take into account the continued build-out of residential projects east of Route 206.)

Age of Residents

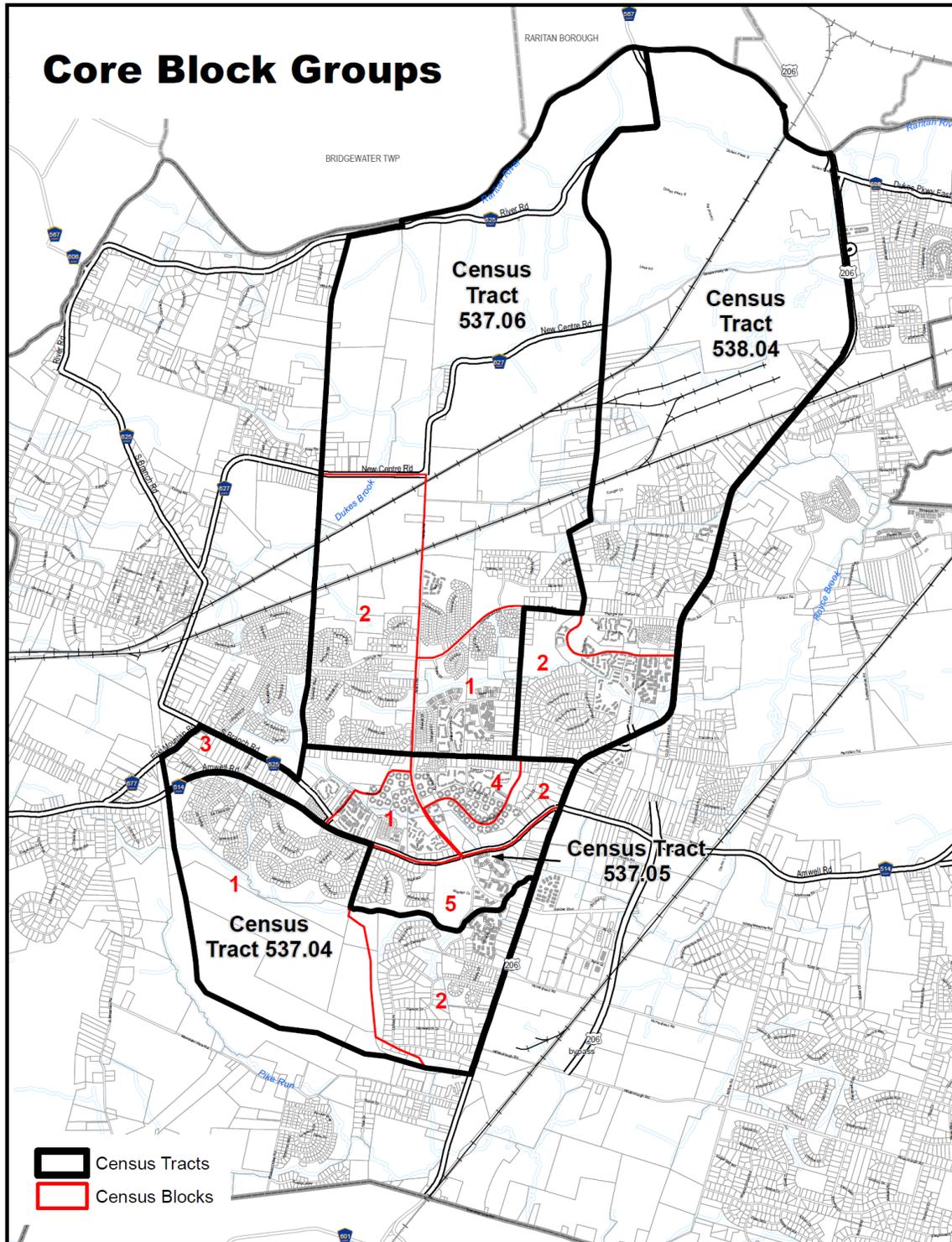
In the year 2000, the median age in Hillsborough was lower than both the County and the State (see Table III-3). By 2015 however, the Township’s median age rose by almost five years from 35.7 to 40.3, about the same as the County and slightly older than the State. Of the adjoining towns, East Amwell’s median age was the highest at 48.5 and Somerville was the lowest at 35.6.

**Table III-3
Median Age – 2000 & 2015**

	Median Age	
	2000	2015
Hillsborough	35.7	40.3
Somerset County	37.2	40.8
New Jersey	36.7	39.4

Source: Census 2000 DP-1/SF-1; ACS 2015

FIGURE III-2



Reflecting the increase in the median age, Hillsborough experienced decreases in the two younger age cohorts and increases in the two oldest cohorts between 2000 and 2015. Likewise, the school age cohort – 5 to 19 years of age – also decreased. (See Table III-4.) When compared to the County and State (Table III-5), Hillsborough had about the same percentage of its population in the two younger cohorts combined but had slightly more residents in the school age cohorts.

**Table III-4
Hillsborough Age Cohorts by Percent – 2000 & 2015**

Age Cohort	2000	2015	Change
0-19	31.0	27.7	- 3.3
20-44	38.8	29.8	- 9
45-64	23.3	32.1	+ 8.8
65+	6.9	10.5	+ 3.6
5-19 (school age)	23.1	21.1	- 2.0

Source: US Census 2000 DP-1/SF-1 & American Community Survey 2015

**Table III-5
Age Cohorts by Percent – 2015**

	Age Cohort				School Age
	0-19	20-44	45-64	65+	5-19
Hillsborough	27.7	29.8	32.1	10.5	21.1
Somerset County	25.8	30.0	30.4	13.6	20.2
New Jersey	25.3	32.4	27.9	14.4	19.3

Source: American Community Survey 2015

Resident Occupations and Industry Groups

In 2015, the majority of Hillsborough residents worked in either management and professional jobs (54%) or sales and office jobs (26%) – slightly higher numbers than the county and state-wide populations. Approximately 9% of residents worked in service occupations, with just over 5% in production & transportation, and in natural resources, construction, and maintenance (see Table III-6).

“Occupation” is defined by the US Census as the kind of work a person does to earn a living. Examples of management and professional occupations include financial and computer professions, architects and engineers, legal occupations, and healthcare practitioners. Sales and office occupations include consulting and administrative support occupations.

Table III-6
Resident Occupation, 2015
(Expressed as % of Employed Civilian Population 16+)

	Management & professional	Service	Sales & office	Natural Resources, Construction, & Maintenance	Production & Transportation
Hillsborough	54	9.07	26.43	5.44	5.06
Somerset County	51	12.43	23.52	5.52	7.53
New Jersey	40.9	16.73	24.75	7.21	10.41

Source: 2015 American Community Survey DP03

Table III-7 provides an overview of the industries where Hillsborough residents worked in 2015. Employment by “industry group” represents the type of activity that takes place at a person’s place of work regardless of their individual occupation. The two leading industry types employing both Hillsborough and Somerset County residents were (1) professional, scientific, management, administration and waste management, and (2) educational, health and social services. This represented a slight shift from 2000 for Township residents when the educational, health and social services group was ranked first, and manufacturing was ranked second. Professional, scientific, management, administration and waste management moved from third in 2000 to first in 2015 while manufacturing dropped to fourth in 2015.

Table III-7
Employment by Industry Group 2015
(Expressed as % of all Civilian Employed 16+)

Industry Group	Hillsborough Township	Somerset County
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0.3	0.3
Construction	4.6	4.4
Manufacturing	11.9	12.4
Wholesale trade	4.4	3.6
Retail trade	10.6	9.9
Transportation, warehousing, utilities	3.7	4.1
Information	4.3	4.2
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	12.4	10.6
Educational, health and social services	15.4	15.9
Professional, scientific, mgmt., administration, waste mgmt.	21	21.9
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, food services	5.7	6.4
Other services (except public administration)	3.1	3.8
Public administration	2.6	2.5
TOTAL	100	100

Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2011 - 2015, DP03

Journey to Work

In 2015, just over one half of Hillsborough residents worked within Somerset County and almost 95% worked in New Jersey (see Table III-8). Only 5.5% of workers commuted to a job outside of the State. Residents of Somerset County as a whole were fairly evenly split between working in their home county versus another county in New Jersey.

Table III-8
Job Locations of Hillsborough Residents, 2015

Place of Residence	% Working in:			
	Somerset County	Other NJ County	New Jersey	Outside NJ
Hillsborough	54.2	40.3	94.5	5.5
Somerset County	46.18	46.57	92.76	7.23

Source: US Census, American Community Survey B08130

In 2015, the vast majority of resident commuters in Hillsborough (85.1%) drove alone to work, which was a higher rate than the County and State. Approximately 4.4% carpooled, 3.0% used public transportation and the remaining 7.5% walked to work, had other means of transportation, or worked from home (see Table III-9).

Table III-9
Commute to Work, Mode of Travel, 2015
(Expressed as % of workers 16+)

	Drove Alone*	Carpooled	Public Transportation	Walked	Other	Worked at Home
Hillsborough	85.1	4.4	3.0	0.7	0.6	6.2
Somerset County	78.7	7.8	4.7	1.7	1.3	5.8
New Jersey	71.9	8.1	11.1	3.1	1.9	4.0

Source: US Census American Community Survey B08130

*Includes car, truck, van or motorcycle

As shown in Table III-10, just under one half of Hillsborough residents (46.9%) commuted less than half an hour from home to their place of work with slightly less (40%) commuting between 30 and 60 minutes. By comparison, over one half of Somerset County residents (53.2%) commuted less than one half hour and 32.4% commuted between 30 and 60 minutes. The mean travel time to work was about one half hour for both Township and County residents. The average travel time for Hillsborough residents in 2000 was only one half minute less (31.6 in 2000 – 32.2 in 2015).

Table III-10
Travel Time to Work, 2015

Travel Time	Hillsborough	Somerset County
Less than 10 minutes	7.9%	8.1%
10 to 19 minutes	20.2%	24.3%
20 to 29 minutes	18.8%	20.8%
30 to 44 minutes	27.2%	22.6%
45 to 59 minutes	13.1%	9.8%
60 to 89 minutes	8.4%	8.8%
90 or more minutes	4.4%	5.6%
Mean Travel Time to Work	32.2 minutes	31.8 minutes

Source: US Census American Community Survey DP03 and B08303

B. Land Use

The land use pattern in Hillsborough is illustrated on the Existing Land Use Map in Section VI. The land use inventory is based on MOD-IV tax data and field adjustments. Hillsborough's 55 square miles include a full range of residential, agricultural, commercial, industrial, and institutional land uses as described below. Table III-11 outlines the distribution of each category by parcel acreage (generally excludes public streets and rights-of-way) and as a percentage of the total Township. The residential, agricultural and open space categories are by far the largest single land use groups with each accounting for about one quarter of the total Township acreage.

Residential

Residential properties of all types cover 9,950 acres or 29.6% of the total parcel acreage. Of that total, only 794.26 acres are classified as multi-family (consisting of four or more units) and townhouses. (Residential acreage may include commonly held open space and/or stormwater facilities directly associated with the host development.)

According to the US Census, the total number of housing units in Hillsborough increased from 12,813 (12,649 occupied) in the year 2000 to a total of 14,038 (13,300 occupied) in 2015, an increase of 1,225 units or 9.56% in that 15-year span.

Age of Housing

Almost three fourths of the housing stock was built prior to 1990.

Year Built	%
Prior to 1970	20
1970 to 1989	52
1990 to 2014	28

Based on median age, Hillsborough's housing stock was younger than both the County and the State in 2015.

Median Age	
Hillsborough	34
Somerset County	38
New Jersey	51

Source: ACS 2015

Housing Types & Tenure

86% of the housing stock in Hillsborough was comprised of single-family units in 2015.

Units in Structure	%
Single (attached & detached)	86.5
2 units	1.5
3 + units	12.1

More than 80% of the housing units in Hillsborough were owner-occupied in 2015.

	Housing Units	%
<i>Total Occupied</i>	<i>13,300</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Owner-occupied	11,476	83.10
Renter-occupied	1,824	16.9

Source: ACS 2015 DP04 B25004

Agriculture

Agricultural properties account for approximately 9,210 acres or 27.4% of the total parcel acreage and can be found in most sections of the Township with the exception of the Township core.

Commercial

Commercial properties (retail, service and office) account for 1,344.59 acres or 4% of the total. They are, for the most part, concentrated along Route 206.

The US Census reported that there were 715 businesses located in Hillsborough in 2002. That number rose to 851 in 2012. Professional, scientific and technical services, and health care and social assistance industries accounted for over one third of the businesses.

Industrial/Utilities/Railroad

Industrial, utility and railroad properties cover 1,568.81 acres or 4.66% of the Township.

Public Buildings/Facilities/Land

Public land uses (excluding parks and open space) cover 1,295.27 acres or 3.85% of the Township. This category includes government facilities, schools, and NJDOT property.

Parks and Open Space

Municipal, county and state parks and open space account for 7,914.54 acres or 23.55% of the Township.

Institutional, Church & Charitable

These quasi-public uses cover 1,693.19 acres or 5.04% of the total. The main Duke Farms estate accounts for the vast majority of those acres. (It should be noted that agricultural lands owned by Duke outside of the main estate are not included in this category.)

Vacant

A very small portion of the Township – approximately 630.81 acres or 1.88% — is categorized as vacant. It should be understood that “vacant” in this context means there is no discernable land use of any kind currently occupying the site. For example, a woodlot under farmland assessment is categorized as agricultural; an open storage yard might be categorized as industrial. In addition, approved developments that are not yet totally built-out have in some cases been mapped as completed in an attempt to keep the map current. And as noted earlier, residential acreage may include commonly held open space and/or stormwater facilities.

**Table III-11
2018 Existing Land Use**

Land Use Category	Parcel Acres*	% of Total
Residential	9,156.12	27.24%
Multifamily Residential (4+ units) and Townhouses	794.26	2.36%
Agricultural	9,210.00	27.40%
Commercial	1,344.59	4.00%
Industrial	1,375.91	4.09%
Utilities and Railroad	192.90	0.57%
Public School	239.86	0.71%
Public Buildings/Facilities/Land	1,055.41	3.14%
Municipal & County Parks & Open Space	7,209.35	21.45%
State Parks & Open Space	705.19	2.10%
Institutional, Church & Charitable Property	1,693.19	5.04%
Vacant Land	630.81	1.88%
TOTAL	33,607.58	100.00

Source: MOD-IV tax records and field adjustments

* Streets and public rights-of-way are not included in parcel acreage figures.

Since the last reexam report in 2008, approximately 2,600 dwelling units and over 600,000 square feet of commercial space have been approved by Township Boards.

C. Zoning

Overview

As illustrated on the Zoning Map in Section VI and outlined in Table III-12, there are 40 distinct zoning districts in Hillsborough – 13 residential, two agriculture/conservation, four town center/gateway, two mixed-use, seven commercial/office, two corporate, six industrial, two resource-based, and two redevelopment. Just over one half of the Township is zoned for residential use and approximately 30% is zoned for agriculture and conservation. About 10% of the Township is zoned for various business uses and 6% is zoned for industrial and resource extraction. The two largest zones are Agriculture (26% of the Township) and Mountain Conservation (19% of the Township). There are 25 zones that individually account for less than 1% of the Township acreage.

New Zones Created Since 2008	
Year	Zone
2008	HS
2009	LI
2010	TECD
2010	ARW
2015	GC
2017	MUID-1

A number of zones are redundant with minimal distinctions in terms of permitted uses or bulk standards. Some of the distinctions are based on design standards or the addition of a specific accessory or conditional use rather than substantive land use policy. The potential to merge one or more zones will be discussed in Section IV.

Inconsistencies

An analysis was conducted of the relationship between the current zoning scheme and the existing land use pattern in Hillsborough. Overall there are few inconsistencies between the general zoning categories (e.g., residential, business, industrial) and the underlying land use. Those that do exist are generally small scattered lots within a larger zone.

Zoning and land use inconsistencies can point to at least two possible scenarios. The existing zoning may represent a preferred future vision for the area – e.g. residential – that differs from the current land uses – e.g. industrial – in which case an inconsistency is to be expected and the zoning should be maintained. If, however, development in the area is trending towards a more preferred land use than the current zoning district allows, the zoning is likely outdated and should be changed or at least amended.

**Table III-12
Existing Zoning Districts**

Zone	Overview/Primary Use	Acres	% of Total
Residential			
MVH	Millstone Valley Historic: 5-acre single-family	327.11	0.93%
MZ	Mountain Conservation: 15-acre single-family	6,753.14	19.14%
RA	Residential/Agriculture: 1 to 2-acre single-family	2,839.79	8.05%
RS	Rural/Suburban: 1 to 1.5-acre single-family	2,168.66	6.15%
R	Residential: ¼ to 1-acre single-family	4,167.62	11.81%
R1	Residential-1: 12K to 20K SF detached/attached single-family	844.53	2.39%
R2	Residential-2: 2K to 8K SF singles, gardens, townhouses	210.36	0.60%
CR	Central Residential: 2K to 17,500 SF singles, attached, townhouses	550.24	1.56%
PD	Planned Development: 2K to 6K SF singles, gardens, townhouses	389.83	1.10%
AH	Affordable Housing: 2K to 15K SF singles, attached, townhouses	177.55	0.50%
RCA	Regional Contribution: 2K to 15K SF singles, attached, townhouses	56.70	0.16%
ARPDG	Age Restricted Planned Development: 190-acre tract, singles/multi	190.30	0.54%
RC	Retirement Community: 50-acre tract, singles, duplex, townhouses	60.81	0.17%
Sub Total		18,736.62	53.10%
Agriculture/Conservation			
AG	Agricultural: 3 to 10-acre single-family & agriculture	9,321.81	26.42%
OS-CL	Open Space-Cultural Landscape: preservation, education, ag.	1,238.62	3.51%
Sub Total		10560.44	29.93%
Town Center/Gateway			
TC	Town Center: 2-acre mixed residential commercial	142.57	0.40%
GA	Gateway A: 2-acre mixed residential commercial	210.43	0.60%
GB	Gateway B: 2-acre single-family and commercial	96.52	0.27%
GC	Gateway C: 2-acre mixed residential commercial	144.11	0.41%
Sub Total		593.63	1.68%
Mixed-Use			
GV	Green Village: 40-acre tract multifamily, retail, hotel, office	52.26	0.15%
MUID-1	Mixed-Use Inclusionary: 28 acres, multifamily, retail, office	27.87	0.08%
Sub Total		80.13	0.23%
Commercial/Office			
HOO	Home Occupation/Office: 2-acre single-family & offices	40.90	0.12%
P/R	Professional/Retail: 5-acre attached single-family, retail, office	16.54	0.05%
C1	Neighborhood Shopping Center: 2-acre retail, office	90.17	0.26%
HS	Highway Service: 2-acre commercial	338.71	0.96%
O2	Office: 2 to 5-acre office, medical, retail	145.02	0.41%
O5	Office/Research: 5-acre office, research, medical, manufacturing	345.35	0.98%
OLC	Office Light Commercial: 2-acre retail, office	13.65	0.04%
Sub Total		990.35	2.81%
Corporate			
ED	Economic Development: 50-acre office park	751.11	2.13%
CDZ	Corporate Development: 50-acre corporate office park	961.90	2.73%
Sub Total		1,713.01	4.86%

▣ Table continued on next change ▣

Table III-12 continued

Zone	Overview/Primary Use	Acres	% of Total
<i>Industrial</i>			
I-1	Light Industrial: 1-acre offices, research, manufacturing	366.58	1.04%
I-2	Light Industrial: 2-acre offices, research, manufacturing	251.59	0.71%
I-3	Light Industrial: 2-acre offices, research, manufacturing	47.42	0.13%
LI	Light Industrial: 2-acre offices, research, manufacturing	296.05	0.84%
TECD	Transitional Economic Development: 5-acre office, light industry	226.14	0.64%
GI	General Industrial: 5-acre offices, research, manufacturing	159.51	0.45%
<i>Sub Total</i>		1,347.28	3.82%
<i>Resource Extraction</i>			
M	Mining: mining + general industrial	325.84	0.92%
Q	Quarry: quarrying + general industrial	546.45	1.55%
<i>Sub Total</i>		872.29	2.47%
<i>Redevelopment</i>			
NARA	New Amwell Redevelopment: single & multifamily residential	21.46	0.06%
RD	Research & Development: research, office & recreation	367.80	1.04%
<i>Sub Total</i>		389.26	1.10%
TOTAL		35,283.01	100%

D. Affordable Housing

At the time of the 2008 reexamination report the affordable housing process was still operating under the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) third round rules. In 2010, the Township adopted a new Housing Plan Element and Fair Share Plan in accordance with those rules. Since then, continuing litigation at the State level has resulted in the dissolution of COAH and the Courts taking full jurisdiction over the affordable housing process. By 2016, the Township was in the process of negotiating a revised affordable housing obligation and is now anticipating the adoption of a new housing plan by the end of 2018.

In the meantime, the Township adopted two ordinances designed to accommodate new inclusionary affordable housing projects. The MUID-1 Mixed-Use Inclusionary Zone was created on a 28-acre parcel located on the northbound side of Route 206. A special overlay option was adopted for a nine-acre parcel on the south side of Amwell Road east of Route 206. The TC Zone was amended to provide additional opportunities for inclusionary developments. The 65-acre Sherman tract was recently purchased by the Township for an affordable housing development. Similar amendments will be required to accommodate the final housing plan.

E. County Plans & Studies

■ As part of the ongoing county-wide planning initiative, *Supporting Priority Investment in Somerset County*, Somerset County prepared two land use studies known as “framework plans” for two districts in Hillsborough. The Phase II report was completed in July 2015 and addressed the Town Center, Gateway A, and Gateway B districts. The report supported the Township’s efforts to develop a mixed-use Town Center with an added focus on tourism, hospitality and entertainment; and taking advantage of the proposed train station on Amwell Road.

The Phase III report was completed in June 2017 and focused on properties north and south of Hamilton Road. The report presented several development scenarios including an expansion of the Promenade shopping center with retail and/or a health and wellness hub on the northern Glen Gery property along Falcon Road; a low-impact data center or light industrial district on the southern half of Glen Gery along Hamilton Road; and a preservation scenario with minimal clustered housing on the 423-acre tract on the south side of Hamilton Road.

While the Phase II report required little if any changes to the Township’s land use plans or ordinance, the Phase III report provides a blueprint for the eventual rezoning of the outdated Mining and CDZ zones.

■ In 2017, the County started work on the *Somerset County Preservation Plan*, which will update the County’s 2000 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Master Plan and the 2008 Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan; and include a new Historic Preservation Plan. The new Preservation Plan will provide land use, funding and partnership strategies for preservation in Somerset County.

F. Other Policy Changes

A number of other notable changes have taken place since the last reexamination report was prepared that will impact future land use decisions.

- The reactivation of the West Trenton Line and the construction of a train station off of Amwell Road has been put on indefinite hold pending the completion of the Gateway Project, a series of new bridges and tunnels needed to provide additional rail capacity into New York City.
- The Wastewater Management Plan was amended in 2016 to include 97.5 acres of the Royce Brook Golf Course in the sewer service area.
- The Route 206 Bypass is scheduled for completion in 2020, which will enable the transformation of existing Route 206 into Main Street. In addition, the widening of Route 206 from Old Somerville Road to Brown Avenue is tentatively scheduled for completion in 2022. This project will have a direct impact on local circulation as Route 206 is transformed into a divided highway with jughandles.
- Remediation of the 300-acre former Belle Mead Army Depot northern parcel is scheduled for completion in 2018, which will present new opportunities for the reuse of the site.

IV. Recommended Master Plan & Ordinance Changes

The reexamination shall describe the specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.

A. Master Plan Changes

Overview

As noted in the Introduction, the last comprehensive update of the master plan was adopted 22 years ago in 1996. At the time, the Township's population was approximately 29,000 people. It has since grown to over 39,000. Although there have been numerous planning studies and plan amendments over the years, they appear to have been somewhat incremental, sometimes reactive, and focused on a specific site or sites. The land use element has received most of the attention since 1996; but the most recent revisions (2009, 2010, and 2013) were tied to specific zone change requests. The earlier 2002 amendments were limited to the Agricultural & Mountain Districts and the 2005 revisions primarily addressed Town Center and the major commercial districts. Little or no attention has been paid to the densely populated core of the Township or the eastern districts.

The 1996 circulation element was minimally revised in 2013 to add a conceptual street network in the Town Center and Transit Districts. The open space and recreation element was updated in 1997 and was amended in 2007 but only to incorporate a greenway brochure. The historic preservation element was updated in 2001. The conservation element was updated in 2002 to incorporate the Agricultural and Mountain Districts. The remaining elements – utility service, community facilities, economic, and recycling – have not been updated since 1996.

The “core” elements – land use, circulation, open space, community facilities, and perhaps historic preservation, would be the most likely candidates for a comprehensive update. If nothing else, the base data is likely out-of-date. For instance, since 1996/97 there have been substantial changes in land use, the street network, and preserved open space. There are several proposed historic districts that were never adopted and there is no comprehensive mapping of historic sites.

Recommendations

Above all, the **housing element** will need to be updated as soon as the affordable housing settlements are finalized. In addition to the housing element, the following master plan elements should be revisited and updated preferably in the order provided. Each element should include comprehensive GIS-based mapping. Recommendations carried forward from the 2008 reexam are indicated with a ✱.

1. Goals and Objectives Statement

Prepare a new Goal statement. As noted in Section II, there were 96 objectives organized under 13 headings in the 2008 reexam that were fairly generic and often redundant. The lack of specific goal statements contributed to the rambling nature of the objectives. Clear and persuasive goal statements followed by a limited number of pointed objectives would provide more meaningful direction for future master plan updates.

2. Land Use Element

The land use element is a required master plan element and serves as the basis for the zoning ordinance. It is arguably the most important element. As such it should be as up-to-date as possible and reflect the Township's vision for the future. The last truly comprehensive **long-range land use plan map** for Hillsborough Township dates back to **1980**. A new land use element will evaluate and consolidate all of the revisions adopted since 1996 to ensure consistency and continued relevance, and address changes that have taken place in the Hillsborough landscape over the last 20 years. The updated element will include a new comprehensive land use plan map that will guide the location and configuration of zoning districts.

3. Circulation Element ✱

Although a circulation update was prepared in 2013 for the Town Center and Transit Ready District, and the Township has adopted a Complete Streets Policy, a comprehensive Township-wide update of the 1992/1996 circulation plan has not been undertaken. An updated element should address all modes of transportation including pedestrian and bike trails, new streets created as a result of new subdivisions, the potential to vacate paper streets, the creation of a street typology to support the complete streets policy, a more definitive street network for the Town Center, opportunities for mass transit, and the completion of the Route 206 Bypass and the subsequent widening of Route 206 from Old Somerville Road to Brown Avenue.

4. Historic Preservation Element ✱

The Historic Preservation Element has not been updated since 2001. The lists of historic sites and districts need to be updated and corrected and a map created to accurately reflect the lists. Proposed districts should be adopted or dropped from consideration. The new element should also include an outline for a new Historic Preservation Ordinance.

5. *Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) **

The Open Space and Recreation Plan was last updated in 1997 with the exception of a recommended greenway concept that was added in 2007. A new OSRP should be prepared to help guide future open space acquisitions and recreational development in the Township and ensure coordination with County open space plans. The OSRP should be prepared in conformance with the New Jersey Green Acres guidelines for participation in the Planning Incentive Program and as such would consist of: a set of goals; an inventory of existing open space and recreation facilities; a recreation and open space needs analysis; and an action plan for the preservation and expansion of the open space and recreation system.

6. *Community Facilities Element **

The Community Facilities Plan was last adopted in 1992/1996. All existing and proposed community facilities – municipal, county, state, federal, and quasi-public – should be identified and mapped. Community facilities include but are not limited to general government buildings, schools, police, fire, emergency medical services, civic centers, cultural and arts facilities.

7. *Green Buildings and Environmental Sustainability Plan Element **

Prepare a Green Buildings and Environmental Sustainability Plan Element. This new element would serve as the basis for incorporating green building and sustainability practices into the Land Use and Development Ordinance.

B. Ordinance Changes

Overview

The general impression of the zoning ordinance is that it has a number of redundancies, inconsistencies, and gaps that make the administration of the ordinance somewhat challenging at times. In addition, the zoning scheme can be described as “robust” with more than 40 separate zoning districts. In some cases the overlaps are obvious. For instance, there are five light industrial zones. Certain districts, such as Mining and CDZ, are reflective of outdated uses, plans and policies. Some zones cover only one or two parcels – possibly remnants of previous zones changes. Some zones are overly detailed with design specifications while others have none. A number of zones exhibit minimal distinctions in terms of permitted uses or bulk standards.

There are also structural or “housekeeping” issues to be addressed. There are cases where a new provision was adopted without deleting the old provision. For example, there are two definitions of a minor site plan. In another example, a newer section of the ordinance permits multiple principal uses in non-residential zones while the industrial zones still prohibit multiple uses. The zoning schedules are missing certain zones and at times conflict with the narrative in the ordinance.

And, of course, additional affordable housing provisions and zones will need to be added to the ordinance.

Ideally, a comprehensive update of the zoning ordinance would be done in concert with or following a comprehensive master plan update. But there may be instances where some basic and/or more pressing issues may need to be addressed sooner.

Recommendations

The following revisions to the Land Use and Development Ordinance ought to be adopted in support of the master plan elements recommended in the previous section and to correct certain structural shortcomings in the ordinance. The 2008 recommendations are identified with a *. Additional ordinance changes may be identified as the various master plan elements are completed. (These recommendations are not listed in any order of priority.)

1. Address the potential reuse of the Glen Gery Quarry and Mendel Property. *

As discussed in Section III, the County prepared several development scenarios for the former quarry and the so-called Mendel property on Hamilton Road as part of the Supporting Priority Investment in Somerset County initiative. The report provides a blueprint for the eventual rezoning of the outdated Mining, CDZ, and O-5 zones. Due to the size of the affected district, any rezoning should complement an updated master plan land use element.

2. Revisit the Transfer of Development Credit provisions (§188-93). *

As discussed in Section II, a full-scale Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program was never adopted due in part to the delay of the reactivation of passenger rail service in the Township. The ordinance does however, include a voluntary Transfer of Development Credit (TDC) option permitting the owner of lands in the RS, R1, PD, CR, HS and TC Districts to increase the density of a Planned Development in exchange for dedicating separate lots for public use. The past performance and continued value of the TDC program should be evaluated.

3. Reevaluate the Architectural and Site Design Overlay Zone (§188-167 through 175).

The ASDO is a lengthy list of design standards covering the entire length of Route 206. The overlay applies to 15 separate zoning districts ranging from residential to industrial. Several of those zones, the TC and Gateway zones in particular, have their own set of design standards in addition to the ASDO standards. As a result, the ASDO is at times redundant or inconsistent with the underlying zoning, and often inappropriate given the vast span of the zoning districts covered. It should also be noted that the ASDO was originally intended to be administered by an Advisory Subcommittee that would review development applications prior to any board hearings on the application. The subcommittee was disbanded in 2009.

4. Revise the Historic Preservation Ordinance (§188-109).

The historic preservation section of the Land Use and Development Ordinance is overly complex, difficult to decipher, and needs to be simplified. This should be done in concert with the update of the historic preservation master plan element.

5. Incorporate existing redevelopment plans into the Land Development Ordinance.

As described in Section V of this report, there are two designated redevelopment areas in Hillsborough. They are governed by The Belle Mead Redevelopment Plan and New Amwell Redevelopment Plan. Both plans supersede the existing zoning but neither plan is mentioned in the zoning ordinance.

6. Consolidate undersized and redundant zones.

As noted earlier in this report, there are 40 separate zones in Hillsborough ranging in size from 13 acres (OLC) to 9,321 acres (AG). Undersized zones should be considered for consolidation into adjoining zones. Redundant zones should be considered for consolidation into fewer zones. For example, there are five light industrial zones: I-1, I-2, I-3, LI and TECD, and one general industrial zone – GI. A cursory review of the zones indicates minimal substantive differences. They could likely be consolidated into three zones along the lines of light, general and commercial/industrial. Likewise there are six single-family zones and five garden/townhouse zones that ought to be analyzed for possible consolidation.

7. *Revise and clarify regulations pertaining to public facilities and services.*

The Land Use and Development Ordinance is inconsistent in how it addresses public facilities and services such as municipal buildings, emergency services, police stations, recreation facilities, and schools. They are not clearly defined and by way of omission are actually prohibited in a number of zones. The recently adopted ordinance governing utilities in the Township can be used as an example of how to define public facilities and regulate their location in a comprehensive and concise manner.

8. *Review and revise the sign ordinance. (§188-83)*

The sign ordinance should be reviewed and revised for clarity. In addition to the main section regarding signs (188-83) there are separate sign requirements in the TC and Gateway zones. Consideration should be given to consolidating all sign requirements in one section. In addition, the sign requirements should be reviewed and revised to ensure compliance with recent Federal Court decisions requiring content-neutral sign regulations.

9. *Review and update the telecommunications ordinance. (Article VIII)*

The current ordinance should be updated for clarity and to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations.

10. *Camplain Road rezoning.*

To complement the planned development of the 65-acre Sherman tract for affordable housing, the remaining residential properties fronting the south side of Camplain Road should be rezoned from industrial to residential.

11. *Miscellaneous zoning provisions.*

There are a number of provisions in the ordinance that have become obvious for their shortcomings. Following are just two of several examples.

- Fences – There are currently no standards governing fences on residential properties and limited restrictions in non-residential zones. There are no limits on height, or where they can be placed on the property. In other words, there is nothing to prevent a person from constructing a six-foot-high stockade fence in the front yard. Reasonable controls should be added to the ordinance.
- Accessory structures – In the majority of cases, accessory structures are subject to the same requirements as the principal structure in term of size and height. For instance, a detached garage or shed could conceivably be the same height as the house – 2 ½ stories or 35 feet. Standards should be developed that are more appropriate for what should be a subordinate structure on the property. It is not uncommon to limit residential accessory structures to 15 to 20 feet in height.

12. Review the former court-mandated developments and related bulk standards.

There are 12 court-mandated residential developments that have bulk standards different from what is otherwise permitted in the underlying zone. Of these, seven are located in the R zone, three in the RA, and one each in the R1 and AG zones. Brittany Estates (R), Country Classics 1-4 (RA), Northridge Pond (RA), and Seasons (R) have identical standards. Contempo West (R), New Center Village (R), Rohill (R), and Sherwood Forest (R) all have similar standards, with the latter two developments differing from the first two only in the minimum side yard setback. The remaining four developments are all different. Consideration should be given to consolidating matching developments into a single zone or otherwise amending the underlying district to reflect these standards.

13. Reevaluate the ED-Economic Development zone.

The ED zone applies to the northern parcel of the former Belle Mead Army Depot, which borders Mountain View County Park, and the Midpoint Logistics Center, formerly known as Veterans Industrial Park. The ED zone, which basically calls for the development of 50-acre office parks, should be evaluated to determine if it is still appropriate for these sites.

14. Rename and redraw the Millstone Valley Historic Zone.

The Millstone Valley Historic Zone straddles Millstone River Road in the southeast corner of the Township. Although it includes “historic” in the name, the zone is not a historic district. As such it is often confused with the overlying Millstone Valley Agricultural Historic District and the Millstone River Road Historic District that borders the zone to the south. In addition, the zone boundary does not follow property lines and as a result creates a number of split-zone lots.

15. Review, reorganize, and update environmental provisions.

There are no fewer than eight separate sections in the ordinance that address environmental issues ranging from buffers and conservation easements to critical area calculations and tree mitigation. Consideration should be given to consolidating all of the environmental provisions into one section to avoid redundancy and possible inconsistencies, and to ensure that none of the requirements are missed in a development application. In addition, each requirement should be reviewed for consistency with current state regulations and for their effectiveness in achieving their stated purpose.

V. Redevelopment Plans

The Reexamination Report shall include the recommendations of the Planning Board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, P.L. 1992, c. 79 (C.40A:12 A-1 et al.) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommended changes if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

There are two designated redevelopment areas and two areas in need of rehabilitation in Hillsborough as outlined in Table V-1. Although the Sunnymead Landfill was designated a redevelopment area, a redevelopment plan was never prepared or adopted. The Belle Mead and New Amwell plans are described below. Both plans superseded the existing zoning but neither plan is mentioned in the Land Use and Development Ordinance – an apparent oversight that needs to be remedied. A redevelopment plan has yet to be adopted for the Sherman Tract.

**Table V-1
Redevelopment Plans**

Title	Original Block & Lot	Designation Type & Date	Redevelopment Plan Adopted
Sunnymead Road Landfill	B 182, Lot 7B	Redevelopment – 9/25/2007	None
Belle Mead GSA Depot	B 175, Lots 39.01 & 39.03 B 177, Lots 23.01 & 23.03	Redevelopment – 4/22/2008	12/9/2008; Rev.12/19/2017
New Amwell	B 163, Lots 101, 102, 103, 104 & 105	Rehabilitation – 11/11/2014	5/12/2015
Sherman Tract	B 86, Lot 21 & B 90, Lot 6.01	Rehabilitation – 7/10/18	Projected 2019

Belle Mead GSA Depot

The Belle Mead GSA Depot Redevelopment Plan covers the 369-acre southern half of the former Belle Mead Army Depot. The plan establishes the RD/Research and Development District, which is intended to accommodate a range of low intensity office uses, scientific and applied research facilities, the development and application of technology and production facilities, and recreational uses. Mountain View County Park now covers over 300 acres of the site. The first phase of the park opened in 2017. As of the date of this report, another 40 acres were under contract to a private developer for the development of a regional indoor recreation facility.

New Amwell

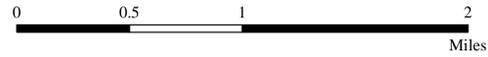
The New Amwell Redevelopment Plan covers approximately 23 acres on the north side of Amwell Road at Pleasant View Road. The plan enabled the construction of 54 affordable dwelling units known as Westering Place (completed); and 74 market rate units known as Meadow Brook (under construction).

VI. Maps →→→

1. Existing Land Use
2. Existing Zoning

EXISTING LAND USE 2018

TOWNSHIP of HILLSBOROUGH
SOMERSET COUNTY, NEW JERSEY



RARITAN TWP
HUNTERDON COUNTY

READINGTON TWP
HUNTERDON COUNTY

BRANCHBURG TWP

BRIDGEWATER TWP

RARITAN BOROUGH

SOMERVILLE BOROUGH

BRIDGEWATER TWP

EAST AMWELL TWP
HUNTERDON COUNTY

NORFOLK SOUTHERN

MANVILLE BOROUGH

FRANKLIN TWP

MONTGOMERY TWP

MILLSTONE BOROUGH

LAND USE

- | | |
|---|---|
| Residential | Public School |
| Multifamily Residential (4+ units) and Townhouses | Public Buildings/Facilities/Land |
| Commercial | Institutional, Church & Charitable Property |
| Agriculture | Municipal & County Parks & Open Space |
| Industrial | State Parks & Open Space |
| Utilities & Railroad | Vacant Land |

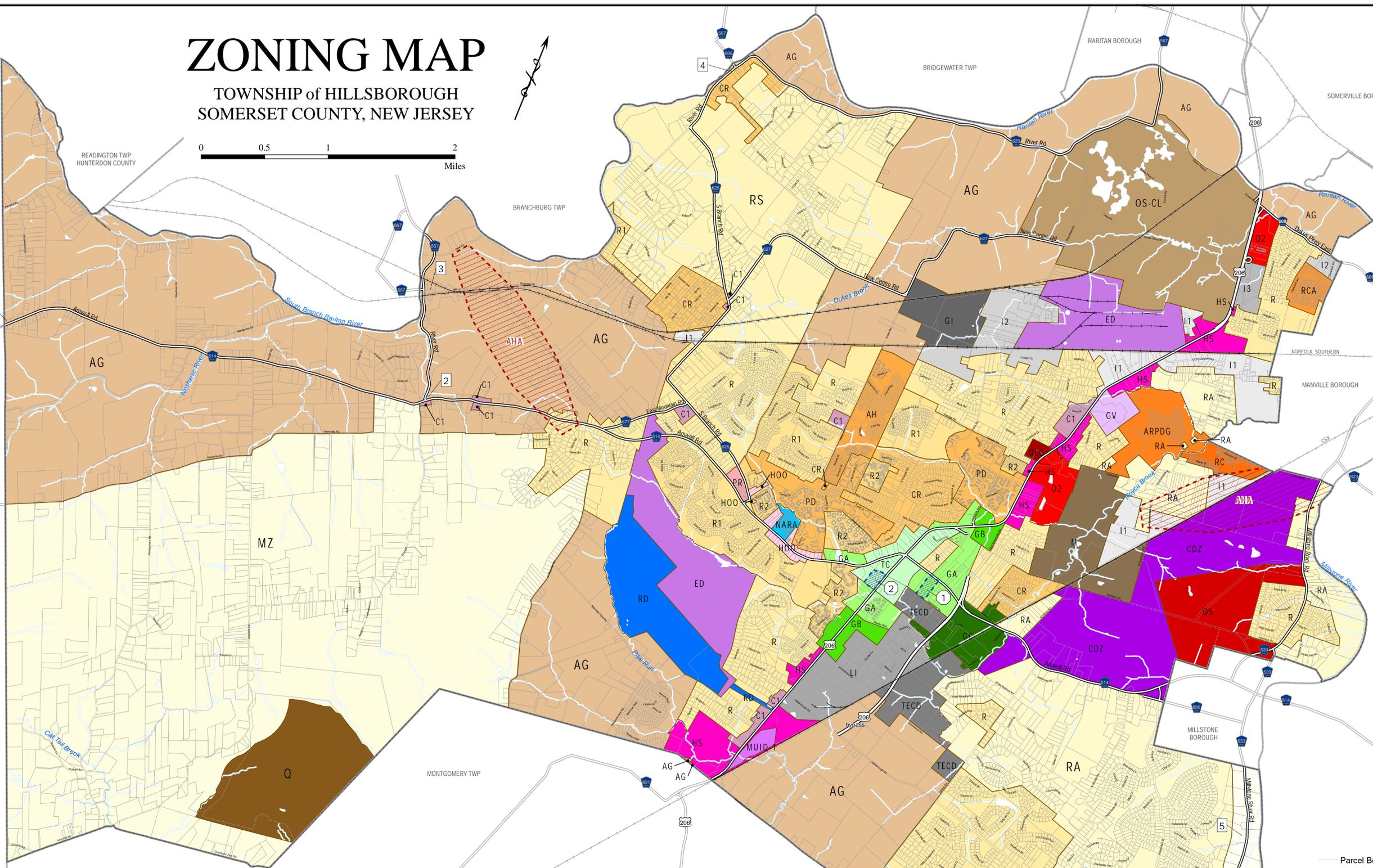
- Parcel Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- County Road
- US Highway
- Railroad
- Stream

- County Roads in Hillsborough Township**
- 514 - Amwell Road
 - 533 - Millstone River Road
 - 567 - River Road
 - 608 - Dukes Parkway East
 - 625 - South Branch River Road
 - 627 - New Centre Road/Dukes Parkway West
 - 677 - East Mountain Road

The base map was prepared by Somerset County Planning Division for Hillsborough Township, June 2018.
Revised by Maser Consulting, September 2018.
Parcel Boundary data were developed by Somerset County; Municipal and County Boundary and Road data were acquired from NJ Office of Information Technology; Stream data were acquired from NJ Department of Environmental Protection

ZONING MAP

TOWNSHIP of HILLSBOROUGH
SOMERSET COUNTY, NEW JERSEY



ZONING DISTRICTS

Residential

- MVH / Millstone Valley Historic
- MZ / Mountain Conservation
- RA / Residential/Agricultural
- RS / Rural/Suburban
- R / Residential
- R1 / Residential 1
- R2 / Residential 2
- CR / Central Residential
- PD / Planned Development
- AH / Affordable Housing
- RCA / Regional Contribution Area
- ARPDG / Age Restricted Planned Development Gateway
- RC / Retirement Community

Agriculture/Conservation

- AG / Agricultural
- OS-CL / Open Space - Cultural Landscape

Town Center/Gateway

- TC / Town Center
- GA / Gateway A
- GB / Gateway B
- GC / Gateway C

Mixed-Use

- GV / Green Village
- MUID / Mixed-Use Inclusionary District-1

Commercial/Office

- HOO / Home Occupation/Office
- PR / Professional/Retail
- C1 / Neighborhood Shopping Center
- HS / Highway Service
- O2 / Office
- O5 / Office/Research
- OLC / Office Light Commercial

Corporate

- ED / Economic Development
- CDZ / Corporate Development

Industrial

- I1 / Light Industrial
- I2 / Light Industrial
- I3 / Light Industrial
- LI / Light Industrial
- TECD / Transitional Economic Development
- GI / General Industrial

Resource Extraction

- M / Mining
- Q / Quarry

Redevelopment

- NARA / New Amwell Redevelopment Area
- RD / Research & Development Redevelopment Area

OVERLAY DISTRICTS

- AHA / Airport Hazard Area

Historic District

1. Clover Hill
2. Neshanic
3. Neshanic Mills
4. South Branch
5. Millstone Valley Agricultural
6. Millstone River Road

See April 5, 2001 Historic Preservation Element for district property lists.

Inclusionary Overlays

1. Multifamily Inclusionary
2. Mixed-Use Inclusionary

- Parcel Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- County Road
- US Highway
- Railroad
- Stream
- Zoning District Boundary

Zoning district lines are intended to follow street center lines, streams, and lot or property lines unless otherwise indicated in Chapter 188, Land Use and Development.

County Roads in Hillsborough Township

- 514 - Amwell Road
- 533 - Millstone River Road
- 567 - River Road
- 608 - Dukes Parkway East
- 625 - South Branch/River Road
- 627 - New Centre Road/Dukes Parkway West
- 677 - East Mountain Road

This map was prepared by Somerset County Planning Division for Hillsborough Township, June 2018. Revised by Maser Consulting, September 2018. Adopted by Ordinance No. 80-14; Last amended by Ordinance No. 2015-10 and Ordinance No. 2017-07. Current as of September 1, 2018.

Zoning data were developed by Somerset County Planning Division; Parcel Boundary data were developed by Somerset County; Municipal and County Boundary and Road data were acquired from NJ Office of Information Technology; Stream data were acquired from NJ Department of Environmental Protection