

XI. POLICY STATEMENT OF PLAN RELATIONSHIPS

The Municipal Land Use Law requires that all local master plans include a specific policy statement indicating the relationship of the proposed development presented in the plan to the master plans of contiguous communities; to the County Master Plan; to the State Development and Redevelopment Plan and to the Solid Waste Management Plan. As noted in the Land Use Element, the Regional Planning Board of Princeton has taken the plans and development patterns of adjacent municipalities into consideration while updating the Community Master Plan. The Board has also considered the Mercer County Growth Management Plan, adopted January 1986; Mercer County Transportation Plan, adopted 1993 and Mercer County Open Space Plan, adopted 1995 as well as the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan adopted in 1992.

RELATIONSHIP TO ADJACENT MUNICIPALITIES

Communities contiguous to the Princeton Community include Hopewell, Lawrence and West Windsor Townships in Mercer County; Plainsboro and South Brunswick Townships in Middlesex County; and Franklin and Montgomery Townships in Somerset County. The Stony Brook, Delaware and Raritan Canal, Lake Carnegie and Millstone River serve as natural buffers between the Princeton Community and West Windsor, Plainsboro, South Brunswick and Franklin Townships. However, as described in the Land Use and Circulation Elements, office and other forms of development occurring along the Route 1 corridor in three of these communities have resulted in significant effects on the Princeton Community.

Princeton's updated Community Master Plan is generally compatible with the plans of contiguous municipalities. Protecting natural resources such as the D & R Canal, Stony Brook and Lake Carnegie and minimizing traffic impacts are areas where Princeton and the communities surrounding it must work together.

Summary of Adjacent Master Plans

West Windsor's Master Plan has been adopted as a continuous series of special reports since 1986. It designates a "major open space/greenbelt" buffer along the south side of the Delaware and Raritan Canal, which forms the boundary with Princeton Township. The area between the Canal and Route 1, which runs parallel to the boundary, is specified for a variety of land uses, including office; commercial, low, medium and high-density residential; and education (assigned to lands in the northeast corner of West Windsor owned by Princeton University). Recent land use amendments will permit additional retail development between Route 1 and Canal Pointe Boulevard.

The Stony Brook, D & R Canal and Lake Carnegie form a natural buffer between Princeton and West Windsor. Both communities prize these natural resources and a coordinated effort is necessary to preserve them. The greenway proposed along the Stony Brook in Princeton Township complements a similar "greenbelt" proposed by the West Windsor Master Plan along the Delaware and Raritan Canal.

Continued office and commercial development, as well as, recent zoning amendments in West Windsor permitting additional office development along Route 1 are cause for concern. Traffic impacts from new development result additional cut-through traffic traverses Princeton as more and more motorists seek alternative to the congestion on Routes 1. The impact of commercial development in West Windsor on Quaker Road is a growing concern. Quaker Road is an important gateway into Princeton and provides a historical and pastoral setting in a rapidly urbanizing area. A regional approach, evaluating land use decisions and traffic impacts will be necessary. Princeton and West Windsor should work together on the Millstone By-pass, the Meadowbrook Road overpass, extension of Canal Point Boulevard and removal of traffic lights along Route 1.

Plainsboro's Master Plan adopted in 1991 designates Princeton Forrestal Center, a major mixed-use development on Route 1, and adjacent undeveloped land between Route 1 and the Princeton boundary as Planned Mixed Use Development. This designation permits offices, commercial uses and residential units at up to 8 dwelling units an acre. Plainsboro's Princeton Forrestal Center and mixed use development zone are buffered from Princeton by Lake Carnegie and the D & R Canal.

The D & R Canal and Lake Carnegie form a natural buffer between Princeton and Plainsboro. A coordinated effort between the two communities is necessary to preserve these prized natural resources as well as ensuring that traffic from these more intense uses utilize Route 1 or other arterial roads should be a shared goal of the two communities.

South Brunswick adopted a Master Plan reexamination in 1994 and designates the area next to Princeton as Low Density Residential (1 to 1.5 dwelling units per acre) The report indicates that the Canal and Lake Carnegie are viewed as an important buffer area. While the area immediately adjacent to Princeton in South Brunswick is compatible in use the area to the northeast along route 27 is cause for concern. Additional development in this area may change the nature of Route 27 as one enters Princeton. Any plans to dualize Route 27 outside of Princeton should be carefully reviewed as Route 27 in Princeton can not be widened to accommodate additional traffic.

While adjacent land uses in South Brunswick are compatible, traffic impacts from developments in South Brunswick along Route 27 could have a deleterious effect on the quality of life in Princeton. Widening of Route 27 in South Brunswick should be carefully reviewed. Route 27 in Princeton can not be widened to accommodate additional traffic. A coordinated effort between the two communities is necessary to preserve and protect the D & R Canal, Lake Carnegie and the Millstone River.

Franklin Township adopted a reexamination report in 1994. Franklin designates the area adjacent to Princeton as Rural Residential (1 acre or greater lot size) and Suburban Residential (1 to 4 dwelling units per acre) except for the Village of Kingston which is designated as a historic village. A canal protection zone is proposed along the Delaware and Raritan Canal. While the area immediately adjacent to Princeton in Franklin is compatible in use, the area to the northeast along Route 27 is cause for concern. Large residential developments have been approved in Franklin and the widening of Route 27 is also proposed.

While adjacent land uses in Franklin Township are compatible, traffic impacts from developments in Franklin along Route 27 and County Route 514 could have a deleterious effect on the quality of life in Princeton. Of particular concern are plans to widen Route 27. Any proposed widening should be carefully reviewed as Route 27 in Princeton can not be widened to accommodate additional traffic. A coordinated effort between the two communities to preserve and protect the D & R Canal, Lake Carnegie and the Millstone River should be developed.

Montgomery's Master Plan was adopted in 1993 and revised in 1996, designates the area along Cherry Valley Road as residential with recommended lot sizes of one to two acres. This area permits residential clustering on lots as small as 6,000 square feet. Thus the homes recently constructed appear to be at a much higher density. Apartments and townhouses are designated for Montgomery's northeastern boundary with Princeton.

Most of the land along Princeton's northern boundary with Montgomery Township is designated low-density residential. Service commercial, high-density residential and research-office uses are specified in the vicinity of Route 206 and Mount Lucas Road.

Unlike Princeton's neighbors to the south and east the boundary between Princeton and Montgomery is not buffered by natural boundaries such as streams and lakes. The recent housing developments in Montgomery along Cherry Valley Road are visible all along the boundary. Additional consideration should be given to increasing residential setbacks from Cherry Valley Road to preserve the remaining rural character of this section of the community. With the exception of Griggs Farm this area in Princeton is relatively undeveloped and proposed for medium density development. The scenic and rural character of the roadway should be maintained.

A careful review of impacts to Cherry Valley Road will need to be undertaken by both communities with particular attention to the intersection with Route 206. Both Montgomery and Princeton will be affected by development to the north and should work together on ensuring that Route 206 remains a two lane road and that suitable periphery roads are provided to funnel traffic to Route 1 and Interstate 95/295.

Hopewell's Master Plan, adopted in 1992, is similar to Princeton's in that it is founded on a central premise that environmentally sensitive areas should be protected. The area of Hopewell adjacent to Princeton Township's northwest border is designated low-density residential (1.5 to 3 acre minimum lot size).

The western part of Princeton Township next to Hopewell is designated as low-density residential, except for areas proposed for conservation along the Stony Brook Corridor. In general, the proposed Hopewell Township land uses are compatible with Princeton's proposals. Recent discussions to extend sewer service and thus encourage more intense development along Carter Road have raised concern in Princeton due to the additional traffic it may generate.

Lawrence's Master Plan, adopted in 1995, designates the area along Princeton's westerly boundary as Environmental Preservation, except for the established Bristol-Meyer-Squibb and Educational Testing Services (ETS) facilities. The residential areas are specified for low-density residential development (1.5 to 3 acre lot sizes) based upon the prevalence of severe environmental constraints to development such as poor soil conditions and seasonally high groundwater. The floor area ratio for ETS and Bristol-Meyer-Squibb is 0.10 and 0.12 respectively.

Lawrence's Master plan designates the lands adjacent to Princeton as low-density residential, except for two areas with existing corporate campuses. Any proposed expansions at either Bristol-Meyer-Squibb or ETS are cause for concern as these two uses generate substantial traffic and much of it traverses residential streets in Princeton. Expansion at either facility will continue to erode the quality of life in Princeton. Regional solutions for keeping through traffic off local streets must be developed. The impact of commercial development along Route 1 in Lawrence on Quaker Road is a growing concern. Quaker Road is an important gateway into Princeton and provides a historical and pastoral setting in a rapidly urbanizing area.

RELATIONSHIP TO MERCER COUNTY PLANS

Mercer County adopted a County Growth Management Plan in 1986 this plan classifies land within the County according to four general growth management areas: Urban Growth Areas, Regional Growth Areas, Suburban Growth Areas, and Limited Growth/Agricultural Areas. Urban Growth Areas include the City of Trenton and adjacent urban areas. Regional Growth Areas are defined as those areas best suited to accommodate the highest intensity of new development. The Route 1 corridor extending to the boundary of Princeton Township is one of the areas so designated. Suburban Growth Areas are developed and developing areas occupied by single-family residential housing mixed with other areas occupied by single-family residential housing mixed with other land uses. A density of between one unit per two acres and four units per acre is suggested for these areas, with clustering noted as one means of varying the intensity of development. Limited Growth/Agricultural Areas are characterized by land of limited development potential due to such factors as the presence of sensitive environmental features and absence of public infrastructure.

In addition to the four management areas described above, the Growth Management Plan identifies two special management areas: Conservation Areas and Village Centers. Conservation Areas contain important natural and cultural resources such as recreational areas, historic sites, or environmentally sensitive areas including stream corridors, wetlands and steep slopes. Village Centers are established settlements with a strong individual identity, possessing a recognizable center and defined physical boundaries.

The Mercer County Plan designates most of Princeton as a Suburban Growth Area. The northern portion of Princeton Township centered around The Ridge is shown as a Limited Growth/Agricultural Area. Princeton Borough and contiguous settled parts of the Township are classified as a Village Center. Existing recreational areas and open spaces, and corridors along the Delaware and Raritan Canal, the Stony Brook and other stream corridors, are designated Conservation Areas. This Master Plan update is compatible with the Mercer County Growth Management Plan.

RELATIONSHIP TO STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) was adopted in 1992 and specifies a series of statewide goals and policies for growth and development. The SDRP is organized around a hierarchy of growth management areas of varying intensities and types of land uses. The Princeton community encompasses four SDRP planning areas.

The Borough and the adjacent more heavily populated portion of the Township are located in a PA 2 Suburban Planning Area. Surrounding most of the Borough and including a portion of the Township is PA 3 Fringe Planning Area. This area is less intensely developed than the central core and includes a number of cluster developments. In the southwestern portion of the Township is a PA 4B Rural Environmentally Sensitive area. The 4B area was designated to preserve the Institute of Advanced Studies farmland and maintain consistency with Lawrence Township's 4B area. The 4B area includes important ecological resources such as natural woodlands, wildlife habitat, open water, and marshes as well as productive farmland. In the extreme northern and southern portions of Princeton Township are Planning Area (PA) 5 Environmentally Sensitive areas. The northern area contains Princeton's diabase ridge. The ridge area includes environmentally sensitive areas such as woodlands, headwater streams, steep slopes, scenic corridors and vistas. Low density zoning categories have been applied in this area. The D & R Canal Park, Stony Brook, and Lake Carnegie form a narrow band along Princeton's southern boundary which is also included in PA 5. This southerly band consists of the waterways, wildlife refuges, a flyway, and environmentally sensitive lands around them.

Princeton has been an active participant in the State planning process. Portions of the Princeton community were recently designated as a Regional Center by the State Planning Commission and in general, the Princeton community's planning efforts are consistent with the SDRP's land use patterns, goals, and objectives.

RELATIONSHIP TO SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Princeton Community currently recycles slightly more than 50 percent of its solid waste. The majority of the nonrecyclable solid waste is presently being trucked to the Grows Landfill in Falls Township, Pennsylvania, in accordance with the Mercer County Waste Management Plan.

Mercer County has adopted a solid waste management program which involves the construction of a Regional Resource Recovery Facility. Questions regarding the financing, size, long term cost to tax payers, and environmental concerns regarding the suitability of this technology have recently caused the County to decide not to construct this incinerator.