

PRINCETON COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN 2017 REEXAMINATION REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et. seq.) requires that the governing body shall provide for a general reexamination of its master plan and development regulations by the Planning Board every ten years. Princeton has completed two such re-examinations of its 1996 Master Plan and this will be its third. In addition to these periodic Master Plan Re-examinations the Master Plan has been amended and updated from time to time as issues have been identified.

In 2013 Princeton Borough and Princeton Township consolidated into the municipality of Princeton. As such, the Regional Planning Board of Princeton no longer existed and the newly organized Princeton Planning Board readopted the existing Princeton Community Master Plan as the Princeton Planning Board's Master Plan. It should be noted, that while there were two separate municipalities with different governing bodies and separate zoning ordinances, the Princeton Community Master Plan was one document, and the goals and objectives contained therein applied to both communities.

Since the 2007 Reexamination Report, the following elements of the Master Plan have been amended and updated.

- 2008 Housing Element updated to address affordable housing issues.
- 2009 Land Use Element –amended to expand the Institutional /Educational uses section.
- 2011 Open Space and Recreation Element – added additional sites for acquisition.
- 2013 The Regional Planning Board of Princeton Master Plan was readopted as the Princeton Community Master Plan recognizing the consolidation of the two Princetons.
- 2013 Circulation Element – updated to emphasize transit
- 2013 Historic Element updated to include additional historic sites.

The Princeton Master Plan represents the collective thinking of the Community on its growth and development as well as its vision for the future. The Master Plan is a strategic plan to guide the Community's future as well as a policy tool for retaining and enhancing the special character, values, and quality of life that are fundamental to our community. The primary goals expressed through each element in the Master Plan are:

- Ensuring a proper balance between new residential developments, nonresidential development and affordable housing and preservation of open space,
- Protecting the natural environment,
- Preserving historic sites.
- Maintaining the character of neighborhoods

The Master Plan correctly predicted that the shortage of vacant, easily developed land coupled with increased pressure to redevelop both residential and nonresidential properties at greater density and intensity could impact the character of the community.

The purpose of this 2017 report is to discuss how well the Master Plan, its amendments and its Reexamination Reports, anticipated the community's needs and then to identify any needed changes to the Master Plan or to Princeton's development regulations. Following the adoption of this report, the Planning Board will undertake a detailed review of the changes recommended and propose amendments to the Master Plan. Listed below are the mandated statutory questions (Section 40:55D-89) that the community must address in its Reexamination Report.

- **The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.**
- **The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.**
- **The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development 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, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives.**
- **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.**
- **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:12A-1 et al.) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommend changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.**

SECTION I

The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.

The 2007 Re-examination Report identified the following problems and objectives relating to land development that the Princeton Community needed to continue to address.

- A shortage of vacant developable land to meet the many competing needs in the community.
- Providing affordable housing.
- Providing opportunities for middle-income housing.
- Meeting the housing needs of a growing senior population.
- Maintaining a range of housing opportunities to ensure a diverse population at all age and economic levels.
- Ensuring an economically healthy downtown and shopping center.
- Balancing institutional needs with neighborhood protection and protecting the community's tax base.
- Limiting traffic impacts from regional traffic.
- Ensuring that redevelopment is compatible with existing development.
- Promoting sustainable development practices.

Below is a brief discussion of these major problems and objectives as they relate to the various elements of the Master Plan.

LAND USE

Major goals and objectives of the Master Plan and Reexamination Reports recognized that Princeton is facing a shortage of vacant, easily developable land, that new development and redevelopment be compatible with surrounding neighborhood character and not negatively impact the natural environment. The Reexamination pointed out the need to maintain the character of our residential neighborhoods by developing additional zoning standards. The construction of larger homes in more modest neighborhoods also affects the affordability of the community, with the new larger home often selling for two or three times more than the demolished home. Developing neighborhood conservation districts to more accurately reflect existing character of particular neighborhoods and setting new controls on the height, setback and bulk of residential structures were identified as a major objectives.

The Reexamination reports also noted a concern regarding the storm water impacts from larger homes replacing smaller homes and recommended additional drainage standards to help address problems of storm water runoff from single family homes.

Nonresidential redevelopment pressures have been concentrated in the former Borough's downtown area and primarily concern parking and scale of buildings. The reports identified the

need to review the zoning in the municipality's service zones along Alexander Street and State Road as well as at the Princeton Shopping Center.

Many of the major educational institutions in Princeton have indicated they will need to expand and/or improve their facilities. Ensuring that these improvements are at an appropriate scale will continue to be a major objective for the community. Protecting the many small-scale neighborhoods that border these large institutions is an important objective. In 2009 the Land Use Element of the Master Plan was amended to better address educational institutions. New zoning was adopted (the AET zone and E5 zone) to address this issue. An additional objective regarding educational institutions is to limit non-taxable development expansion outside the educational zones as this erodes the community's tax base.

The redevelopment of the Princeton Medical Center properties, the hospital on Witherspoon Street and the rehabilitation facility on Bayard Lane, were major land development changes that the community grappled with over the last ten years. The Master Plan recommended that the hospital site be rezoned for a mixed use development and that the rehabilitation facility be rezoned for multi-family housing. Both sites have been redeveloped including a 20% set aside for affordable housing.

HOUSING

Balancing affordable housing needs with concerns about traffic, the environment, and neighborhood protection were major goals of both the Master Plan and the Reexamination Reports. The Master Plan and Reexamination Reports highlighted the problem of finding suitable land to provide affordable housing, senior housing and middle income housing. The Community maintains its commitment to providing affordable housing by creating additional zoning opportunities for additional affordable housing.

The Community identified the increasing number of teardowns occurring in certain neighborhoods as a growing problem. As indicated under the land use section, these teardowns both affect the visible character of our neighborhoods and impact affordability in these neighborhoods. Small to modest size homes are being demolished and larger more expensive homes are replacing them. The 2007 Reexamination recommended developing new zoning standards to address neighborhood character.

CIRCULATION

Residential and nonresidential growth in Princeton and the surrounding area has resulted in increased traffic on local streets. Princeton's two-lane, tree-lined streets continue to be burdened with through traffic which threatens the residential character of many of Princeton's roadways. The link between regional land use patterns and overcrowding on the local transportation system, especially east-west regional connections, continues to be a difficult transportation problem for the Community.

Providing reliable and frequent transit service as well as increasing opportunities for pedestrians and bicyclists were also problems identified in the Master Plan and the Reexamination Report. An

objective stated in the Reexamination report was to explore alternative modes of mobility and to develop a bicycle and pedestrian plan.

Other major objectives stated in the Master Plan and Reexamination Report included calming traffic and protecting neighborhoods, ensuring that road improvements are compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods, improving pedestrian and bicycle routes, reducing auto dependency through mass transit and jitney services, developing a local vision for transportation solutions, and protecting and enhancing gateways into the community.

Finally, the Reexamination report noted that the traffic impacts from the land use changes requested by Princeton University for its arts and transit zoning as well as any other major institutional zone changes should be evaluated. Specifically the report recommended the traffic impacts on Alexander Road from Princeton University's Arts and Transit project should be studied.

UTILITIES

The Master Plan and Reexamination Reports stated that ensuring there are adequate utilities to meet the needs of the Princeton Community was the primary objective of the Utility Element. Eliminating inflow and infiltration into the sewer system and replacing undersized storm drains and water lines were highlighted as major objectives.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

A major objective in the Master Plan and Reexamination Report was to insure that the Princeton community continues to be adequately served by a comprehensive system of municipal services including police, fire, first aid, library, public health, public schools, recreational, cultural, waste disposal and recycling facilities. The Reexamination Report identified the need to study whether the town requires a community center, determining the possible uses for the Valley Road School and investigating a joint public works garage.

OPEN SPACE/RECREATION/CONSERVATION

The preservation and acquisition of open spaces and developing new active recreation facilities were major goals in the Master Plan and Reexamination. The community has partnered with various public and private groups to acquire a number of properties. The Planning Board also utilized its site plan and subdivision process to preserve open space. Other objectives included making better use of existing recreational areas, providing an indoor recreation area, enhancing access to open space and providing a network of greenways to link open spaces.

Guiding growth away from environmentally sensitive areas and directing it to more suitable locations was a major objective stated in the Master Plan and Reexamination Report. The Princeton Ridge along the Princeton's northern border, floodplain and wetlands flanking the Stony Brook and Lake Carnegie, various waterways, and areas of steep slope were identified as areas needing both preservation and protection. The Reexamination Report recommended that the Master Plan should

incorporate the work that the Environmental Commission undertook in creating the natural resource inventory.

Minimizing storm water runoff impacts to area streams and properties was identified as an objective of the Community. The quality, quantity and volume of storm water runoff were identified as problems affecting our streams that need to be addressed.

HISTORIC

Identifying and protecting the many historic sites within the community was a major objective of the Master Plan and Reexamination Report. More particularly:

1. The impact of in-fill and redevelopment on the historic districts should be evaluated and guidelines developed.
2. Historic buffer/transition zones should be identified and created.
3. Additional historic districts should be delineated where warranted.
4. The boundaries and descriptions of existing districts should be examined to determine if additional properties should be included and to evaluate the overall contribution of each property to the district as a whole.
5. The significance of historic lands, landscapes, structures and districts should be restudied to re-evaluate and supplement previous surveys.

REGIONAL RELATIONSHIP

The impact from development in surrounding communities was identified as having a negative impact on the quality of life in Princeton. Large developments along Route 1 and other development in Hopewell, Lawrence, Plainsboro, South Brunswick and Montgomery Townships also have an impact on the Princeton Community. The Master Plan and 2007 Reexamination state Princeton should work with the surrounding communities to develop regional solutions to traffic and land use problems.

The 2007 Reexamination Report also identified increasing truck traffic on our roads as a major problem to be addressed.

SECTION II

The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to October, 2007.

LAND USE

Development and redevelopment continue to have both a positive and negative impact on the Community, depending on how well the development or redevelopment fits into the existing neighborhood character. Princeton's primary focus has been on the impact of the demolition of residential structures and the replacement of small- or modest- sized homes with much larger homes. This problem appears to have increased in recent years. Princeton has enacted new zoning to begin to address this concern and a neighborhood study has been completed which provides a blueprint for zoning fixes to address/protect neighborhood character.

As part of the post consolidation effort to harmonize the two municipalities stormwater ordinances new storm water regulations were recently adopted which provide additional tools to control storm water and limit storm water impacts caused by residential development and the construction of single family homes. These regulations also place greater control on sustainable alternatives.

The economic health and vitality of the downtown area continues to be an area of concern. Both the municipality's redevelopment project and Palmer Square's Hulfish Street residential project are complete. Small scale redevelopment is occurring at a slow pace and appears to be respecting the scale of the downtown. A parking study of the downtown is underway and will shed additional light on current parking conditions. The economic vitality of the Princeton Shopping Center and the office development along Bunn Drive and Thanet Circle remains a concern because of their importance to the non-residential tax base. The Shopping Center ownership has recently changed and the mix of retail uses appears to be changing. Both the downtown and the Shopping Center are impacted by national changes in retailing with more and more shoppers buying online instead of in local stores. Our office development is also showing the effects of changing market preferences for office space in larger downtowns and along the Route 1 corridor where additional amenities are provided, as well as changing workplace practices such as tele-commuting, offices, hoteling and other demand-reduction trends.

The Land Use Element was amended to address Institutional and Educational uses. A series of development general principles were adopted for all educational uses. Princeton University has completed a number of major projects including the Arts and Transit project, Andlinger Center for Energy and the Environment, Lakeside apartments and Merwick Stanworth apartments. The community still needs to evaluate what if any impacts the arts and transit project have on the Alexander Road corridor and whether there are opportunities along this corridor for additional development.

Both Princeton Day School and the Hun School have also completed major construction projects. In general, these new construction projects complement the objectives and design principles outlined in the Master Plan.

As opportunities for affordable housing become increasingly scarce within the Community the town amended its residential cluster provisions to provide a density bonus for residential developments that provide the municipality with land upon which affordable housing can be developed.

The University is currently working on its next long range plan. Its 2008 Long Range Plan was generally well received in the community. It was developed utilizing guiding principles of maintaining an auto-free pedestrian-oriented campus, preserving a park-like campus, maintaining existing campus neighborhoods, developing in a sustainable manner and sustaining strong community relations. These were all principles the community endorses.

The Princeton Seminary has indicated it is evaluating options for its Tennant campus on Stockton Street, and the community will need to provide input into how and if this site should be redeveloped. Rider University announced it will be selling its Westminster Choir College campus. The community will have to monitor these developments to insure that the new institution does not overwhelm the surrounding neighborhood and that any new development complies with the general principles outline in the Princeton Master Plan.

The reuse of the Princeton Medical Center properties is no longer an issue for the community. The Princeton Medical Center's two properties have been redeveloped. A mixed-use zone that provides both market-rate and affordable housing as well as retail and office space has been constructed on what was the Witherspoon Street location of the hospital. Princeton University has constructed a residential development at the Medical Center's Merwick campus.

In-lieu of providing age restricted housing the community has opted to provide housing to meets the needs of all residents by ensuring that new housing developments are suitable to people of all ages and lifestyles. The Community has also taken steps to permit residents to age in place by amending zoning to allow the provision of supportive services in all residential zones.

HOUSING

The State Supreme Court determined that the Council on Affordable Housing failed to adequately perform its function, and the State's affordable housing oversight has been taken over by the Courts. Princeton has been an active participant in the affordable housing process and while the various interest groups argue over affordable housing obligations Princeton has submitted a plan to create almost 450 affordable housing units.

Over 1,000 housing units will be constructed in the municipality as part of our affordable housing plan with approximately 450 units being affordable housing units. While the community maintains its commitment to providing affordable housing Princeton does not have large tracts of vacant land which can easily be zoned to provide affordable housing. Future affordable housing sites will need

to be based upon smart growth principles. Balancing affordable housing needs with concerns about traffic, the environment and neighborhood protection remain a key objective.

A growing problem has been the impact from teardowns of smaller homes. The municipality has recently completed a study documenting some of the impacts. Developing new standards that protect neighborhood character, streetscape and address affordability have become pressing issues. In addition, when growth and other planning goals and priorities work against preservation of character, it might become necessary to develop guidelines to protect livability and neighborhood aesthetics.

CIRCULATION

Regional through-traffic continues to be the major transportation problem. Due to Princeton's central location, the community continues to be heavily impacted by increasing regional traffic. A cooperative effort between Princeton, neighboring communities, the county, state, and regional authorities is essential to expand the regional transportation system to handle the expected demand. This must include both highway and transit solutions. Through Princeton's efforts the NJDOT established the Central New Jersey Transportation Forum, which brings local elected officials together to discuss regional development and transportation issues.

In 2013 the Circulation Element of the Master Plan was amended to place greater emphasis on transit. Through those efforts, service for the FreeB, a local bus circulator, has been expanded. The Planning Board also meets annually with Princeton University to discuss Tiger Transit and how effectively it serves the University and community. The Planning Board has been working to improve both pedestrian and bicycle access in town and another amendment to the Circulation Element focused on pedestrians and bicycles, is being considered.

UTILITIES

Ensuring that the Princeton Community has adequate infrastructure to serve the needs of the community without adversely affecting the environment or quality of life in Princeton remains an ongoing concern. Significant progress has been made in achieving the goals of providing adequate water supply, sewer service, solid waste and recycling pick-up, and for the conservation of energy.

Water Supply

Improvements made by New Jersey American Water Company assure that Princeton has an adequate supply of water. New developments are required to submit fire-flow tests to confirm that adequate water pressure is available for firefighting apparatus. The replacement of outdated fire hydrants is also required. The Water Company continues to work with the community to strengthen the supply of water and replace old water lines when roads are reconstructed.

Sewer Service

The Stony Brook Regional Sewer Authority (SBRSA), located on River Road in Princeton Township, serves the Princeton community as well as surrounding towns. The SBRSA continues to upgrade its facilities to operate more efficiently and to reduce plant odors. The SBRSA has adequate sewage treatment capacity to meet the Princeton community needs.

Solid Waste and Recycling

Prior to consolidation the Borough provided residential solid waste pick-up and the Township required residents to arrange for private pick-up. Post consolidation, all of Princeton has once-a-week pick-up for residential solid waste. The town also provides a separate and optional weekly collection of compostable material. A county-wide recycling program provides bi-weekly curbside pick-up of all recyclable material. The Princeton community currently recycles slightly more than 50 percent of its solid waste. Leaves, trees stumps, and branches are picked-up and turned into mulch at a composting facility shared with Lawrence Township.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Consolidation of the two Princetons permitted the community to address shortcomings in their existing municipal buildings. Renovations have been made to the former Borough Hall and Township Hall. While these actions addressed many needs, a solution to whether or how to consolidate the three public work locations still needs to be determined. The question of whether the community wants or needs a community center has been deferred.

The Princeton Regional Schools are reviewing current school needs to determine the best way to deal with increases in enrollment. A remaining question is the status and redevelopment of the Valley Road building.

OPEN SPACE/RECREATION/CONSERVATION

The Community continues to make major strides in meeting the goals and objectives of the open space and recreation element. Through partnerships with the State, County and local nonprofit land conservation groups over 75 acres of land has been preserved since the last Re-examination Report. The Recreation Board has also completed a master plan study of its active recreation needs. The Community Pool was reconstructed, Mary Moss Park will soon be reconstructed, and other park improvements are underway. Approximately 27.5% of Princeton's land is counted as open space.

In 2010 the Environmental Commission completed a new Environmental Resource Inventory. This Inventory is a valuable resource during the site plan and subdivision review process in identifying environmentally sensitive features to be preserved. Similarly, the Shade Tree Commission completed updates to the municipality's tree preservation ordinance which call for limiting tree removal, reforestation and limiting invasive species. The Shade Tree Commission is taking the lead on the Community's response to the Emerald Ash Borer which has the potential to decimate many wooded areas in Princeton.

Municipal stormwater regulations were consolidated so properties in the former Borough and Township are now treated the same. The impervious area threshold for a minor development was set at 400 square feet and a major development is now defined as a half-acre of disturbance or 5,000 square feet of new impervious surface. While these changes should address many of the concerns regarding storm water impacts from new development, further amendments to the stormwater ordinance may be warranted to address, for example, the opportunity for innovative stormwater management in redevelopment projects.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Princeton Community has identified a large number of the historic properties and sites within the community and the focus continues to be protecting historic sites and properties. In 2013 the Historic Element of the Master Plan was amended to include additional historic sites in the former Borough. Additional work on updating the list of historic properties for the entire community is still needed. A new historic overlay zone was adopted for the Witherspoon Jackson neighborhood. This new district is roughly bounded by Witherspoon Street to the east, Paul Robeson Place to the north, John Street to the west and Birch Avenue to the south.

Post consolidation the ordinances governing historic preservation for the former Borough and Township have been harmonized into one new ordinance.

REGIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Development in Central New Jersey continues to have a major impact on Princeton. The Route 1 corridor has developed into a major retail and office center. Residential and office development to the north of Princeton along Route 206 continues to impact the Princeton community. Reaching consensus on regional strategies for land use and traffic circulation in central New Jersey remains an objective.

While impacts from regional development continue to erode the quality of life Princeton has seen some success from bringing together all the municipalities in central New Jersey to work on regional solutions. The Central Jersey Forum, hosted by NJDOT and DVRPC, has been an avenue for local elected officials to meet quarterly and discuss circulation and land use issues that affect all of central New Jersey.

SECTION III

The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development 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, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in state, county and municipal policies and objectives.

DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND LAND USES

The Borough of Princeton and the Township of Princeton consolidated into one municipality in 2013. Prior to consolidation the Planning Board, its Master Plan and Re-examination Report treated the community as one planning entity albeit with two separate governing bodies and two separate zoning ordinances. While consolidation was a significant step for the community in providing more efficient services it did not have a profound impact on the assumptions, policies and objectives in the master plan or in our development regulations.

Table 1 shows the change in the number of housing units for Princeton over the last 25 years. From 2000 to 2010 Princeton saw a very modest increase in residential units of 240 units or a 2.3 percent increase in ten years. From 2010 to 2015 the number of units is increased by 409 units or 4.1 percent. This increase between 2010 and 2015 in housing units is a direct result of the municipality's efforts to provide affordable housing.

Year	Number	% change
1990	9,068	--
2000	9,719	7.1
2010	9,949	2.3
2015	10,358	4.1

Sources 1990, 2000, 2010 Census & 2015 Estimate American Fact finder

Table 2 shows the population change in Princeton for 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2016. Similar to the number of housing units there appears to be an increase in population in 2016 correlating with an increase in residential units. The population increase between 2010 and 2016 is 9.4 percent. Approximately 18% (5,334 persons in 2010 Census) of Princeton's population is comprised of college or university students.

Year	Number	% change
1990	25,214	--
2000	30,230	19.9
2010	28,572	-5.5
2016	31,249	9.4

Sources 1990, 2000, 2010 Census and 2016 Estimate American Fact Finder

While the number of people and number of housing units has been increasing in the last few years the overall density and distribution of population and land use has not changed significantly from the last re-exam or the 1996 Princeton Community Master Plan. For the most part denser development is occurring near the downtown with lower density development occurring further from the downtown. Princeton has added a number of new homes, primarily multifamily units have been added as part of the efforts to meet Princeton's affordable housing obligation. Most of the new residential development is in walking distance of the downtown and includes AvalonBay's 280 units and the redevelopment of Merwick Stanworth with 326 residential units

HOUSING CONDITIONS

In general, the Princeton Community's housing stock is in excellent condition. The 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates indicates that approximately 65 percent of the housing built in Princeton are approximately 50 years old or older.

The 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates reports that approximately 58.8 of Princeton's occupied housing units are owner-occupied and 41.2% are renter occupied. Housing costs continue to rise and exceed county and statewide averages. According to the municipal assessor, the average price of a residential property in Princeton in 2017 is \$821,771.00.

Retaining affordable and moderate-income housing units remains an important policy of the Princeton community.

With the exception of a few isolated instances of overcrowding, there are few deficient housing units in Princeton. The community provides a housing rehabilitation program for low and moderate-income individuals. Approximately 10 percent of the total housing units in Princeton are restricted as affordable units. Princeton continues to be an active participant in the affordable housing process and has submitted a declaratory judgment to the Courts to establish Princeton's fair share of affordable housing. This matter is still be litigated and should be resolved this year, at which time the town may have to amend its Housing Element and Fair Share Plan.

There have been no significant changes to the condition of Princeton's housing that change any of the underlying assumptions regarding housing found in the 1996 Master Plan or Re-examination Reports.

CIRCULATION

The growth in central New Jersey continues to impact Princeton's circulation network. Previous Master Plans and Re-examination Reports recommended channeling through-traffic to higher-capacity roads on the periphery of town such as Province Line Road or Route 92. These periphery roads will not be built, and while the goal of having through traffic take periphery roads remains there are no apparent solutions. Recently the Community has focused on increasing and enhancing transportation options rather than building bigger roadways. Princeton's policy that roadway improvements in town must be consistent with the human scale, historic and residential character of Princeton remains. The Circulation Element will need to focus on pedestrian and bicycle mobility, encouraging transit usage and facilitating transportation demand management strategies.

Princeton has adopted a Complete Street policy which calls for the town to create a comprehensive, integrated and connected multi-modal network which provides access for all modes of transportation to employment centers, educational facilities, retail areas and residential neighborhoods. Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users – pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Implementation of the Complete Streets policy is through the planning, design, construction, maintenance and operation of new and retrofit of transportation facilities in an effort to improve safe access, mobility and health of all users.

Regional and local transportation projects are underway that impact the Princeton Community. A brief summary of these projects follows.

Penns Neck Route One Improvements

Since 2004 the Penns Neck improvements have called for a grade separated interchange to relieve traffic congestion at Route 1 and Washington Road, Fisher Place and Harrison Street. Funding for the preferred improvements is not available and will not be for the foreseeable future. Recently NJDOT has focused its efforts on widening Route 1 and eliminating many of the traffic signals to provide congestion relief. Princeton and neighboring municipalities should remain attentive to state initiatives to ensure that they benefit the community in addition to enhancing the flow of traffic along Route 1.

Route 1 and Harrison Street Turning Movement

Access to the Princeton Hospital's new location in Plainsboro Township at Route 1 and Plainsboro Road was a major concern for the community and the intersection of Harrison Street with Route 1 was widened to accommodate a left turn lane from Harrison Street onto Route 1 northbound. This intersection is no longer a concern, but future changes by NJDOT may again raise concerns.

Route 206

In January 2006 Princeton working with NJDOT and its consultants developed the Route 206 Joint Vision Plan and Traffic Calming Study. This effort takes a corridor-level approach to finding solutions to local concerns. The vision plan contains a series of traffic calming elements – street trees, roundabouts, back-in angled parking, and pedestrian median refuges designed to slow vehicular traffic and increase opportunities for pedestrians. The Vision Plan remains a planning document and is referred to as new development or major road projects along Route 206 are undertaken.

Transit Service

Princeton operates a neighborhood bus service known as the freeB which provides neighborhood bus service around town on a fixed route. The freeB is a free bus service funded by and serving the Princeton community. Most freeB bus stops are marked with a “B” sign; however the bus will stop at NJ TRANSIT bus stops and anywhere along the route for passengers where it is safe to do so.

Princeton University’s TigerTransit transportation system operates on a fixed route schedule throughout the Princeton campus and surrounding community. The service is open to the community without charge.

NJ Transit operates the 605/610 bus line from Montgomery Township through Princeton to Quakerbridge Mall in Lawrence Township and the 606 from Princeton to Robbinsville.

USA Coach operates commuter buses from Princeton to the New York Port Authority Bus Terminal.

Pedestrian and Bicycles

Princeton has made significant strides in providing a system of pedestrian and bicycle paths as well as traffic calming devices to increase safety and the opportunity to bike or walk to school or work. Recently the governing body changed the town’s policy on sidewalks and now provides 100% of the funding for new sidewalks. All local road projects now go through a rigorous complete street analysis with the aim being that all roadway capital project account for pedestrian and bicyclist needs.

CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Developing a sustainable policy to promote energy efficiency, water conservation, green buildings, and green stormwater infrastructure in addition to reducing resource consumption as the community continues to focus to protect the natural environment.

Guiding growth away from environmentally sensitive areas and clustering buildings in suitable locations continues to be a community policy. The community has met its goal of preserving 25 percent of our land area as open space and continues to seek opportunities to preserve land and protect natural resources. As the Princeton community approaches build-out, consideration should be given to the maintenance of open space, creating better open space linkages and providing greater access to these areas.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Developing a sustainable policy to promote energy efficiency through building design will be a new focus for the community. Both the community and the school board are undertaking an energy audit of their facilities to identify energy efficient strategies. As part of this commitment to energy efficiency the town has partnered with New Jersey Resources Clean Energy Ventures to construct on the old municipal landfill site a 3 megawatt solar field that will supply power to the Stony Brook Regional Sewer Authority. The community continues to explore alternatives to single-occupancy driving patterns.

COLLECTION, DISPOSITION AND RECYCLING OF DESIGNATED RECYCLABLE MATERIALS

Princeton continues to participate in Mercer County's recycling program and has expanded upon it by providing an option for collection of food wastes to be composted and providing opportunities for recycling computers and other electronic equipment to remove potentially toxic material from the waste stream. There is growing interest in reviewing our waste collection fee structures to encourage optimal waste disposal practices for non-recyclables, recyclables and compostables (including yard waste).

STATE AND COUNTY POLICY CHANGES

As discussed in the housing portion of this section, the lack of action by the state to provide regulations for affordable housing has led to the need for a court imposed solution. This solution is still being developed.

State Plan

The final draft of the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) was published in January 2010. The Princeton Community was an active participant in the development of the SDRP. The SDRP is intended to serve as a guide for public and private sector investment in New Jersey and as a policy document to guide state and local agencies' planning.

The State Plan also designates large masses of land that share a common set of conditions, such as population density, infrastructure, level of development, or natural systems into one of five planning areas. Each planning area has a series of policy objectives that guide the application of the SDRP. None of these designations preclude development.

Within our boundaries are the following planning areas:

Suburban Planning Area (PA2)

This area includes the entire former Borough and the more densely populated portions of the former Township. The intent of this area is to provide for much of the state's future development and redevelopment; promote growth in Centers and other compact forms; protect the character of existing stable communities; protect natural resources; redesign areas of sprawl; reverse the current trend toward further sprawl; and revitalize cities and towns.

Fringe Planning Area (PA3)

This area includes the lower-density populated areas of the former Township. The intent of these areas is to: accommodate growth in Centers; protect the Environs primarily as open lands; revitalize cities and towns; protect the character of existing stable communities; protect natural resources; provide a buffer between more developed Metropolitan and suburban planning areas and less developed rural and environmentally sensitive planning areas; and confine programmed sewers and public water services to Centers.

Rural/Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA4B)

This area includes the lands preserved by the purchase of the development rights for the Institute Woods on either side of Quaker Road. The intent of these areas are to: maintain the Environs as large contiguous areas of farmland and other lands; revitalize cities and towns; accommodate growth in Centers; promote a viable agricultural industry; protect the character of existing, stable communities; and confine programmed sewers and public water services to Centers.

Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA5)

This area includes the lands located in the northern portion of the former Township and often referred to as the Princeton Ridge. This area also corresponds to the RA and RB zones in the former Township. The intent of these areas are to: protect environmental resources through the protection of large contiguous areas of land; accommodate growth in centers; protect the character of existing stable communities; confine programmed sewers and public water services to centers; and revitalize cities and towns.

The changes in the SDRP have not altered the assumptions, policies and objectives that formed the basis for Princeton's 1996 Master Plan, 2001 & 2007 Reexaminations or existing development regulations. The Princeton community's planning efforts are consistent with the SDRP

Mercer County Plan

The Mercer County Master Plan was adopted by the Mercer County Planning Board on September 8, 2010 and amended in May, 2016. The Mercer County Master Plan consists of a parent document and four elements, each of which had been independently updated on a periodic basis since 1986. The Mercer County Master Plan proposes a regional planning framework for guiding growth and conservation opportunities in the county over the next twenty years.

The following broad policies guide the balanced growth concept in the County Plan:

- Promote appropriate location and design of new development with opportunities for transit, regional equity and preservation
- Promote redevelopment
- Promote desirable compact design that supports transit and promotes walking
- Promote land use patterns that limit stormwater runoff and increase green infrastructure
- Direct growth to transit corridors and centers
- Mix uses to promote walkable communities Mercer County's vision for balanced growth throughout the county relies on the following key outcomes:
- Adequate level of housing choice and affordability that makes it possible for residents to live in the county throughout their lives
- Adequate transportation and housing choice to maintain an educated workforce and a stable economy
- Enhanced core transportation corridors through the implementation of access management, connectivity, and wise land use decisions
- Continued strategic investment in open space and recreational facilities so that residents and employees enjoy enhanced quality of life in the county

These policies are compatible with the Princeton Master Plan.

SECTION IV

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.

This Reexamination report discusses changes that have occurred in Princeton. Some of these changes are readily apparent, others less apparent, and some are just beginning to be felt. While there have been changes, many of the same issues continue to be in the forefront of Princeton's planning. The community continues to wrestle with the following:

- A shortage of vacant developable land to meet the many competing needs in the community.
- Providing affordable housing.
- Providing opportunities for middle-income housing.
- Maintaining a range of housing opportunities to ensure a diverse population at all age and economic levels.
- Ensuring an economically healthy downtown and shopping center.
- Balancing institutional needs with neighborhood protection and protecting the community's tax base.
- Limiting traffic impacts from regional traffic.
- Ensuring that redevelopment is compatible with existing development.
- Promoting sustainable development practices.

This re-exam recommends that the Princeton Community Master Plan be updated to address the above issues and to incorporate the following specific recommendations, along with any other issues that come to light upon detailed review and public comment.

A. Land Use

Non Residential Development

1. A review of zoning and development along Nassau Street from Bayard Lane, east to Harrison Street should be undertaken to determine the capacity for any additional development. This review should include capacity analysis, density concerns, historic preservation, development of design standards, and traffic circulation.
2. Additional regulations concerning the scale, size and character of nonresidential buildings in Princeton should be developed. The Community may want to explore developing form-based codes that go beyond the typical height, setback and FAR regulations found in our zoning.
3. The zoning for the Princeton Shopping Center should be reviewed, with a view towards developing it as a mixed-use zone. This zone could permit senior housing and other types of housing such as affordable housing, and market-rate housing, as well as additional nonresidential development.

4. The service zones along Alexander Road and Route 206 should be studied to determine if these areas function as service zones or if a new zone designation elsewhere would be feasible
5. Princeton should review the existing ordinances on continuing care retirement communities in Princeton. Given the shortage of large vacant tracts and the ordinance requirement to utilize the underlying FAR, the likelihood of a CCRC being constructed is remote.
6. Additional conditional use standards should be developed for nursing homes and assisted living facilities, which are permitted in certain residential zones.
7. The conditional use sections of both communities zoning ordinances should be reviewed to insure compatibility with the Municipal Land Use Law and goals and objectives of the Master Plan and to provide measurable standards.
8. Given reduced demand for office space, especially in outlying areas consideration should be given to identifying alternative sites and evaluating the appropriateness of other land use designations in the ordinances.

Institutional Uses

1. The Planning Board has identified the Princeton YM/YWCA as an area that could be redeveloped. New zoning to meet the diverse needs of this institution and the community should be adopted.
2. Rezoning the eastern side of lower Alexander Road to meet both the Community and Princeton University's needs should be studied to assess the land use and circulation impacts.
3. An update of the long-range plans of the Princeton Theological Seminary, Westminster Choir College, and The Institute for Advanced Study regarding long-term development in and around their campuses should be completed prior to any new major expansions. Ensuring that any development at these institutions is compatible with surrounding neighborhoods and roadway capacity is critical to the well-being of the community.
4. Assist the governing bodies in developing a policy on payment in-lieu of taxes for non-profit institutions that erode the community's tax base by removing taxable property from our tax rolls.

B. Housing

1. Regulations to maintain housing that is affordable to all income levels continues to warrant further study and action.
2. Developing neighborhood conservation districts that balance preservation goals with competing priorities, (such as increasing the availability of moderate income housing) should be developed. Some of the controls to be considered include the following.
 - a. Limiting the volume/bulk and massing controls on heights, grading, coverage, setback, stories, attics, and basements
 - b. Controlling vertical and facade features such as garages, windows, walls and siding.
 - c. Regulating projecting features such as porches, patios, dormers decks, garages and chimneys.

- d. Reviewing the types of permitted structures including accessory apartments and two family units.
- e. Landscape features including driveways, walkways, trees, yards, fences and impervious coverage.
3. Develop zoning strategies for providing and integrating affordable housing into the community.
4. Consider rezoning Princeton Community Village to permit additional affordable housing.

C. Circulation

1. A revision to the existing pedestrian and bicycle section of the Circulation Element is necessary to reflect the concern for providing alternatives to the automobile.
2. The Route 206 Vision Plan should be further studied; once additional details on specific improvements are developed and community concurrence reached, the improvements should be implemented by the State.
3. Regional through-traffic and truck traffic continue to be a primary issue for the Princeton community. The Board should continue to monitor state and county activities regarding proposed highway improvements along Route 206, Route 1 and Washington Road.
4. Exploration of alternate modes of mobility should be considered.

D. Utility Services

1. Undersized storm drains and water lines should be replaced. Innovative stormwater management practices that reduce runoff and take pressure off of existing 'gray' infrastructure should be utilized wherever feasible.
2. New or upgraded utility services should be buried underground whenever possible.

E. Community Facilities

1. The need for a community center should be studied further taking into account the rehabilitation of the former Borough Municipal Hall, reconstruction of the Suzanne Paterson Center, and construction of the former Princeton Township municipal building.
2. The Board of Education has begun to study possible uses for the Valley Road School Building. Any recommendation should be reflected in the Princeton Community Master Plan in light of overall community needs.
3. A joint public works garage and vehicle storage area for the Princeton and the Board of Education should continue to be investigated.
4. The Planning Board should work with the Princeton School system on identifying suitable areas to expand to meet the growing school enrollment.

F. Open Space, Recreation and Conservation

1. Community land acquisition goals and priorities should be reviewed to identify all properties to be acquired and/or preserved.

2. A review of Princeton's open-space policies, goals, and objectives should be undertaken to maintain existing facilities and to balance other community goals.
3. Identification of additional areas for small parks, public gardens and additional linkages to municipal parks should be undertaken.

G. Historic Preservation

1. The impact of in-fill, demolition and redevelopment on the historic districts should be evaluated and guidelines developed for all types of districts.
2. Historic buffer/transition zones should be identified and created.
3. Additional historic districts should be delineated where warranted.
4. The boundaries and descriptions of existing districts should be examined to determine if additional properties should be included and to evaluate the overall contribution of each property to the district as a whole.
5. The significance of historic lands, landscapes, structures and districts should be restudied to re-evaluate and supplement previous surveys.
6. Consideration should be given to developing specific standards, including design standards and preservation guidelines for each historic district.
7. All suggested historic districts should be included in the Master Plan with specific boundaries where possible.

H. Development Regulations

1. The permitted uses in the former Borough and the former Township's service zones should be reviewed and inappropriate uses removed. If necessary new service zones should be created to provide the community with areas for necessary service uses.
2. Both communities' flat/apartment ordinances should be reviewed to determine if they should be modified to encourage additional housing while studying potential impact on the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

I. Other Changes

A number of studies and efforts are underway that may identify new concerns or changes in our assumptions that need to be addressed. The following studies and reports should be reviewed and reflected in the Master Plan as appropriate. An amended or new Master Plan should be considered to incorporate sustainability and resiliency policies.

Princeton Downtown Parking Study
Princeton Environmental Commission Sustainability Element
Solid Waste Management
Sustainable Princeton's Climate Action Plan

SECTION V

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:12a-1 et al.) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommend changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

The downtown redevelopment plan should be revised to further refine the development of Phase III along Witherspoon Street.