

GENERAL REEXAMINATION OF THE MASTER PLAN

PENNSAUKEN TOWNSHIP

Camden County, New Jersey

XXX XX, 2021

Adopted by the Township Planning Board: ----
(Resolution # -----)

Prepared By:



232 Kings Highway East
Haddonfield, New Jersey 08033

Joseph M. Petrongolo, P.P., L.L.A., R.L.A.
Senior Associate
License #31LI00525100

Ashton G. Jones, P.P, AICP, CFM
Senior Planner
License #33LI00633800

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Introduction	1
II.	Reexamination Report Findings	2
	a. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.	2
	b. The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.	7
	c. 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.	9
	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.	15
	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:12-1 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. (L. 1975, c. 291, s. 76; amended 1980, c. 146, s. 6; 1985, c. 516, s. 18; 1987, c. 102, s. 29; 1992, c. 79, s. 50.)	18
III.	Conclusion	19

I. INTRODUCTION

Pennsauken Township is a suburb of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, located in the Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington (PA-NJ-DE-MD) Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) with over 6 million people. According to the 2019 U.S. Census Estimate, the Township had a population of 35,761, which is a 0.3% decrease from 2010. The Township has easy access to U.S. Routes 30 and 130, which transect the Township, as well as to other major state highways.

Pursuant to Section 40:55D-89 of the Municipal Land Use Law, at least once every ten years municipal master plans and development regulations are to be reexamined for the purpose of determining continued viability and the need for amendments. Consideration should be given to the emergence of land use issues and external influences such as statutory mandates which might impact the underlying basis of the master plan. The reexamination is intended to result in the articulation of planning policy issues which need to be addressed to ensure that the Township's preeminent planning policy document, which serves as the foundation for development regulation, has continued applicability. Parenthetically, failure to undertake the periodic reexamination constitutes under the law a rebuttable presumption that the development regulations are no longer reasonable.

In accord with the above citation, the reexamination is to address:

- a. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.
- 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 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.
- 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.
- 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:12-1 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. (L. 1975, c. 291, s. 76; amended 1980, c. 146, s. 6; 1985, c. 516, s. 18; 1987, c. 102, s. 29; 1992, c. 79, s. 50.)

The Master Plan Reexamination for Pennsauken Township dated September 1998, herein examined, consists of the following chapters: 1) Community/Vision Statement, 2) Planning Board Mission Statement, 3) Community Values 4) Overview, 5) Master Plan Goals, and 6) Land Use Element, 7) Housing Plan Element, 8) Circulation Element, 9) Utility Service Element, 10) Community Facilities Element, 11) Recreation Element, 12) Open Space & Conservation Element, 13) Historic Preservation Element, 14) Economic Plan Element, and 15) Statement of Plan Relationships.

As indicated in the 1998 Reexamination, the original master plan was prepared in 1971 and was one in a series of reports for the 1967-1972 Comprehensive Plan. Since its adoption, the Master Plan was reexamined three times, in 1982, 1994 and 1998. Consequently, this will be the fourth reexamination of the Master Plan.

II. REEXAMINATION REPORT FINDINGS

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

The statutory charge for this aspect of the reexamination is to identify problems and objectives indicated in the master plan. Issues deduced through an analysis of the 1998 Master Plan Reexamination and Update are outlined below.

1. Major problems existing at the time of the 1998 Reexamination

- (a) **Underutilization of waterfront** - Pennsauken had yet to capitalize on its unique location on the Delaware River. Prime undeveloped and underdeveloped sites along the waterfront represented an untapped opportunity for development and redevelopment as residential, commercial, industrial and open space uses.
- (b) **Blighting impacts from the south** - Land use patterns and associated building conditions to the south of the Township continued to place pressure on Pennsauken's adjoining neighborhoods and resulted in deteriorating conditions. In addition, inappropriate and incompatible zoning classifications persisted within these neighborhoods.
- (c) **Impact of county and state highways** - Unaesthetic visual conditions, traffic congestion and hazardous conditions for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians were prevalent along Pennsauken's major highway corridors and reflected unfavorably on the image and perception of the community.
- (d) **Lack of identifiable town center** - Although the Westfield Avenue business district is generally considered the "downtown" of Pennsauken, the lack of a clearly identifiable center has been a long-term, persistent

issue in the Township. Many properties in the district were either vacant or significantly underutilized, and there was an insufficient number of goods and services offered to attract shoppers to its center.

- (e) **Limited housing options** - Housing opportunities for families looking to “move up” to larger well-appointed homes and singles seeking luxury rentals, affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households and housing options designed to meet the needs of seniors were very limited. The Township’s housing stock, which is predominantly older small and medium-sized single-family housing, had not kept pace with the evolving housing preferences of the times.
- (f) **Limited transportation alternatives** - There was a dearth of alternative means of transportation throughout the Township, particularly for those dependent on public transit. Limited bus service and a single passenger rail line were the only available transit alternatives to the automobile.
- (g) **Inadequate, outdated municipal facilities** - The Township municipal building was inadequate to service the needs at that time and was not situated in an easily accessible location. The library contained outdated materials, had insufficient room for new materials and offered only limited opportunities to integrate newer technology.

2. Goals and objectives as identified in the 1998 Reexamination

The 1998 Reexamination contained a set of community goals and objectives which were organized into separate plan elements. These goals and objectives describe various facets and policies for articulating the community’s vision and are presented below as they appeared in the 1998 Reexamination Report.

Land Use Element Goals

- Maximize the value of Pennsauken’s Delaware River coastline for all Pennsauken residents.
- Maintain and further develop a balanced mix of land uses within the community.
- Preserve and strengthen the character of existing residential park areas.
- Consolidate and nurture Pennsauken’s industrial land uses.
- Encourage the use of sound urban design and planning techniques, including energy-wise construction, in new and redevelopment projects within Pennsauken.
- Preserve, protect and enhance natural, cultural and recreational resources, including open space areas, steep slopes, floodplains as well as historic and cultural locales.
- Establish and promote programs to upgrade the character of Pennsauken’s principal gateways.

- Guide future development with an eye toward impact upon future taxes and other costs which might adversely affect all residents.
- Foster economic and employment growth to enhance the community's quality of life and available services.
- Preserve and protect the character of established neighborhoods.
- Rezone where necessary to promote redevelopment of currently underutilized or inappropriately utilized lands.
- Rezone existing land uses as necessary to conform to this comprehensive community Master Plan.

Housing Element Goals

- Establish zoning to promote a diverse range of housing types to meet a broad spectrum of social, cultural, ethnic, economic, and market demands.
- Continue to provide Pennsauken's regional fair share of affordable housing for low, moderate, and middle income households.
- Provide higher density housing opportunities for affordable, luxury and senior housing in appropriate areas where impacts upon Pennsauken's quality of life, traffic circulation, schools and infrastructure system can be minimized.
- Balance Pennsauken's housing needs with other land uses and the goals and policies of other elements within the community Master Plan.
- Ensure that new housing development does not negatively impact the existing natural and man-made environment and is in character with envisioned land use patterns.
- Maintain strict enforcement of construction and other code standards within Pennsauken.

Transportation and Circulation Element Goals

- Provide ease of circulation between the distinct neighborhoods and districts which form Pennsauken. Work to mitigate the divisionary impact upon our community of the existing regional highway and rail systems.
- Encourage reduced dependence upon the automobile as the principal means of transportation for trips within the Township.
- Protect and improve the visual and human scale qualities of Pennsauken's roadways, bridges, culverts and other transportation facilities.
- Encourage strict enforcement of pedestrian safety in signed and marked pedestrian zones and crosswalks.
- Encourage the development of shared parking facilities in appropriate areas.
- Promote the use of energy efficient transportation technologies.

Goals to manage traffic, to protect and enhance traditional downtown and business districts, as well as residential neighborhoods, within Pennsauken:

- Encouraging pedestrian traffic by providing well-designed sidewalks within the public right-of-way.
- Employing traffic calming techniques where required to enhance pedestrian friendly street environments.
- Maintaining and enhancing Pennsauken's traditional pre-war street patterns as the preferred paradigm for new street development.
- Encouraging bicycle use by keeping local road speeds low and providing adequate facilities to securely park bicycles throughout the Township.
- Addressing the needs of those with physical impairments through proper design of the physical environment within the public right-of-way, including the proper curb cuts, tactile surface treatments, and other accessibility aids.
- Promoting the planting of street trees and use of contrasting materials for sidewalks, crosswalks, and parking lanes to create a pedestrian friendly, aesthetically pleasing environment.
- Developing local jitney or bus loop routes to link neighborhoods with each other and our service districts.
- Providing adequate street lighting in character with the residential character of our community.
- In commercial areas, providing adequate on-street parking opportunities to service community needs while keeping road widths to narrowest practical limits.

Goals that require coordination with Camden County, the State and surrounding communities:

- Provide leadership in promoting regional traffic coordination on state, county and municipal road projects.
- Promote regional accessibility to Pennsauken while enhancing the character of regional road systems passing within Pennsauken's borders.
- Balance land uses with the capacity of the circulation system to ensure that proposed new and redevelopment uses do not overload the transportation system.
- Develop strategies to insure that interstate truck traffic does not use the local street system inappropriately.
- Develop traffic data on current employment and commuting patterns and other street use patterns to evaluate the impacts from existing and proposed new and re-use development.

Goals requiring coordination with transportation providers:

- Encourage the further development, extension and use of both public and private mass transit systems.
- Encourage the development and coordination of specialized transit services to meet the needs of the elderly, disabled, and other

transportation dependent persons, as well as to promote less dependence upon the automobile as the primary mode of transportation within Pennsauken.

- Investigate the coordination of transportation services for school children with general public transportation services to provide a comprehensive community wide service.
- Provide a means to coordinate private transportation services (taxis, shuttles, limousine services) with each other and the public transportation system.
- Provide better information on available transit service using print and electronic media.

Community Facilities Element Goals

- Provide adequate municipal, educational and cultural facilities to meet the needs of Pennsauken residents.
- Provide ample opportunity for all Pennsauken residents, regardless of age, to reach their full potentials as contributing citizens.
- Create a centralized community of identifiable municipal facilities within a Town Center area. Encourage adjoining development of a compatible businesses and commercial uses.
- Balance the provision of community facilities with the goals and policies of other elements within the community Master Plan.
- Use community facilities to create a sense of place distinctive to Pennsauken by enhancing public areas with good design, art and pedestrian friendly landscapes and creating linkages to commercial, educational and cultural values.

Utility Service Element Goals

- Provide an adequate level of utility service to serve the present and projected future need within Pennsauken.
- Facilitate the implementation of other elements of the Master Plan through proper utility service planning and maintenance.
- Ensure that utility services do not have a negative impact upon the environment or the quality of life within Pennsauken.
- Provide our fair share of regional utility service facilities while recognizing that other communities must bear their fair share as well.
- Employ regional detention and water quality strategies to address the new and redevelopment project needs, as well as mitigating existing flooding and water quality concerns within the Township.

Recreation Element Goals

- Actively promote the further development and expansion of parks, open spaces and recreational facilities of varying sizes widely spread

throughout Pennsauken to meet neighborhood needs as well as the needs of the community at large.

- Improve and expand Pennsauken's athletic and non-athletic sports and cultural arts recreational opportunities for citizens of all ages within the Township.
- Promote the development of indoor recreation facilities through the development of a community center to serve Pennsauken's diverse recreational needs.
- Enhance public access to Pennsauken's open spaces.
- Create links between open space properties, whenever possible to form a network of open spaces.
- Preserve river and stream corridors as greenways and connections between other recreation and open space.
- Obtain easements over private land to augment public access to existing and proposed open space areas.
- Provide parking areas to service visitors to public open spaces.
- Take advantage of Pennsauken's recreation and open space amenities to generate economic development opportunities.

b. The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.

1. Major problems existing at the time of the 1998 Reexamination

- (a) **Underutilization of waterfront** - There has been some noteworthy development and redevelopment on the waterfront since 1998, including the Riverfront Village “workforce” affordable housing complex on the former Acme site, the PSE&G solar farm on a 32-acre brownfield site, construction of the Camden County Boathouse on the Cooper River and a major upgrade of the Delaware Gardens waterfront park. Despite these developments, there is still a disconnect between the Township’s residential neighborhoods and the waterfront with industrial land and rail line rights-of-way presenting barriers to riverfront access.
- (b) **Blighting impacts from the south** - Under its Abandoned and Vacant Property Initiative, Pennsauken has taken significant steps to address the problem of vacant and abandoned properties. It has also more aggressively promoted state and federal homeowner assistance programs such as the New Jersey HomeSaver Program and the Stabilizing Urban Neighborhoods Initiative. Consequently, blighting impacts from the south are less of an issue today. Moreover, new commercial development in the City of Camden will lead to improvement of East Camden neighborhoods that will have a spillover effect into Pennsauken.
- (c) **Impact of county and state highways** - Despite progress made by “Operation Clean and Green 130”, a Township-led initiative involving

county and state government in cleaning up and beautifying public spaces along Route 130, this highway corridor still has a haphazard visual character. Other major highway corridors in the Township could benefit from similar initiatives. Traffic congestion and hazardous, unsafe conditions persisted on county and state highways that transect the Township, particularly on Route 130 which was the subject of a recent DVRPC report entitled “Route 130 Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety Study”.

- (d) **Lack of identifiable Town Center** - With continued efforts on code enforcement, façade improvements, streetscape enhancement, sidewalk widening and business recruitment, the Township has demonstrated its commitment to reinvigorating the central business district along Westfield Avenue. Notwithstanding these efforts, many properties remain vacant or underutilized, and foot traffic remains well below desirable levels.
- (e) **Limited housing options** - With the addition of Pennsauken Towers¹, the Riverfront Village “workforce” affordable housing complex, the Brittin Village 65-income restricted development and the new, upscale Haddon Point apartment/townhouse complex on the former site of The Mart, housing options have expanded significantly in Pennsauken. Consequently, the scarcity of housing choices is no longer a major issue in the Township.
- (f) **Limited transportation alternatives** - With the construction of the River Line with service between Trenton and Camden including three stops in Pennsauken, and the completion of the Pennsauken Transit Center which provides a direct transfer between the River Line and the PATCO Hi-speed/Atlantic City Line, the lack of transportation alternatives is less of an issue. In a general sense, however, Pennsauken is still lacking in transit accessibility.
- (g) **Inadequate, outdated municipal facilities** – With a major upgrade of the Pennsauken Free Public Library to be funded by a generous grant from the state’s Library Construction Bond Act (LCBA), the inadequacies of the library should no longer be an issue. However, the limitations of the municipal building remain an issue as they have not been addressed.

2. Goals and objectives as identified in the 1998 Reexamination

All goals and objectives indicated in the 1998 Reexamination Report remain largely relevant and applicable. The Township should continue to implement these policies and goals while consolidating objectives, policies and goals into a more succinct and approachable format. Although still viable, two of these goals have been at least partially realized:

¹ An 8-story, 100 unit apartment complex managed since 2001 and designed for seniors 62 and older

- (a) *Establish and promote programs to upgrade the character of Pennsauken's principal gateways.* "Operation Clean and Green 130" has improved the visual character of this corridor, although ongoing efforts are needed to bring it up to an acceptable standard. In addition, similar efforts involving other major highway corridors in the Township would be required in order to realize this goal.
- (b) *Provide higher density housing opportunities for affordable, luxury and senior housing in appropriate areas where impacts upon Pennsauken's quality of life, traffic circulation, schools and infrastructure system can be minimized.* In light of the expanded options for housing in the Township since the last Reexamination Report, much progress toward meeting this goal has been made. However, the range of available housing options should be expanded further to include mixed-use developments before this goal can be realized.
- c. ***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.***

Changes in Local Conditions

1. Approval of Redevelopment Areas

While no new redevelopment plans have been adopted subsequent to the last reexamination report, two redevelopment areas have undergone changes since then. They include the following:

- On August 29, 2019, The Waterfront Redevelopment Plan was amended to allow for demolition of a portion of a 275,000 SF building and rehabilitation/reconstruction of 175,000 SF for a warehouse and distribution facility at 175 Derosse Avenue (Block 1003, Lots 12 and 21). A new Redeveloper was also designated for the redevelopment area.
- The Crossroads Redevelopment Area, which encompasses the former Pennsauken Mart site, has been partially developed with 240 apartments, according to a 2018 article in The Inquirer. Phase II, which is currently under construction, will add 235 townhomes to the 35-acre site, according to the Delco Development website. The entire complex is known as "Haddon Point".

2. Sustainability Initiatives

- By the end of 2016, Pennsauken Township had received renewable energy grants totaling \$6.2 million from the State Board of Public Utilities' Clean Energy Program (NJCEP) for completion of the Township's Renewable Energy Park at the PCFA (Pollution Control Financing Authority) facility. NJCEP offers financial incentives, programs and services to local governments to help them save energy, money and the environment. The Park, which was completed at the end of 2016, recovers methane for energy production, produces solar energy through a solar array and accepts electronic waste from Camden County residents.
- The Township's Outdoor Lighting Policy, which has significantly reduced operating costs and spill light by utilizing MUSCO lighting solutions in the Municipal Building, is being extended to other municipally owned and operated buildings. The Policy also applies to all athletic fields as well as to new development and redevelopment in the Township when economically feasible.
- In 2016, Pennsauken was recertified at the Bronze level by Sustainable New Jersey² in recognition of the Township's efforts to implement solutions to key sustainability challenges. These efforts included, among others, the aforementioned Renewable Energy Park and the Outdoor Lighting Policy.

3. Affordable Housing

The Township received Third Round substantive certification from COAH on June 10, 2009.

4. Stormwater Management

- The Township adopted a Municipal Stormwater Management Plan (MSWMP) as part of its Master Plan in 2005. As Pennsauken is a nearly built-out community the MSWMP remains viable. The Township will continue to update this document as may be necessary and take under consideration any amendments in the future.
- As per the March 2, 2020 rules which amended state stormwater provisions, the Township adopted a Stormwater Control Ordinance on January 21, 2021. The amended rules replaced the nonstructural stormwater management strategies, with specific green infrastructure Best Management Practices (BMPs) to address stormwater quality and quantity

²A private organization that provides tools, training and financial incentives to support communities pursuing sustainability programs.

5. Census Analysis

The 2015-2019 American Community Survey (ACS) estimate reveals that, although Pennsauken Township has experienced only negligible growth in population since the 2000 Census (See Figure 1 below), it has seen a more robust 4.2% growth in housing units. While owner-occupancy rates have only modestly declined since 2000, renter occupancy has increased significantly. In addition, vacancy rates increased from 2000 to 2019, albeit at a lower rate than renter occupancy (13.8% vs. 23.9%). As most of the vacancies are rentals and most recent construction involves multi-family units, these increases reflect a greater amount of multi-family rental housing options available in the Township.

Figure 1: Census Statistics for Pennsauken Township

	2000	2010	2019 Estimate	2000-2019 % Change
Persons	35,737	35,885	35,761	0.1%
Households	12,381	12,633	12,276	-0.8%
Median Housing Value (Owner Occupied)	\$141,500*	\$220,200*	\$158,200	-11.8%
Housing Units	12,938	13,560	13,482	4.2%
Owner-Occupied	9,462 (73.1%)	10,494 (77.4%)	9,282 (68.8%)	-1.9%
Renter-Occupied	2,416 (18.7%)	2,472 (18.2%)	2,994 (22.2%)	23.9%
Vacant	1,060 (8.2%)	594 (4.4%)	1,206 (8.9%)	13.8%
Persons per Owner- Occupied unit	3.14	2.93	2.99	-4.8%

Source: 2000 Census, 2010 Census, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

*Adjusted for inflation and expressed in 2019 dollars

As indicated in Figure 2 below, single family residential development comprises the largest land use classification in the Township with 23.6% of its acreage. Transportation is the second largest with nearly 18.9%, followed by Water with 14.9% and Industrial with 13.4%. No other classifications occupy more than 10% of the Township. With just 4.9% of land classified as commercial, it is no surprise that Pennsauken desires additional commercial tax ratables.

Figure 2: 2015 Land Use by Acres

Land Use	Acres	%
Single Family	1,841	23.6%
Multi Family	39	0.5%
Industrial	1,042	13.4%
Transportation	1,468	18.9%
Utility	259	3.3%
Commercial	384	4.9%
Community Services	206	2.6%

Military	0	--
Recreation	339	4.4%
Agriculture	1	--
Mining	0	--
Wooded	649	8.3%
Vacant	395	5.1%
Water	1,162	14.9%
Total	7,787	100%

Source: DVRPC Data and Forecasts

The number of housing units authorized by building permits is one of many economic indicators used nationally. In fact, the housing market is a sector that is considered a leading indicator of changing economic conditions. Figure 3 below contains building permit data gathered from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (NJDCA) for the years 2010 through 2019. As indicated, most of the building permits for housing units during this period were issued during the last three years. With the exception of 2012, there were only a handful of permits issued in any given year from 2010 to 2016.

Figure 3: Dwelling units authorized by building permits

Year >	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Avg.
Permits Issued	10	9	49	4	11	5	4	122	71	127	41

Source: NJDCA Construction Reporter, Building Permits, Yearly Summary Data, and Housing Units Authorized by Building Permits for New Construction

Changes in County Conditions

1. Cross Camden County Trail Feasibility Plan

In 2017, the Board of Freeholders adopted the Cross Camden County Trail Feasibility Plan. The Plan evaluates the feasibility of constructing a bicycle and pedestrian trail across the entire length of the County, beginning at the Delaware River waterfront and extending to the southeastern county line. This trail will act as the backbone of the future county-wide trail and bike lane network that was recently planned in conjunction with the DVRPC. For a summary of the segment of the trail that is proposed for Pennsauken, see the section on the DVRPC below.

2. Camden County Sustainability Plan

In 2018, the Camden County Board of Freeholders adopted the County's first long-range sustainability plan. Under the plan, new initiatives have been established to achieve the vision of a Sustainable Camden County. Much of the focus is on County-owned properties, in particular green buildings and the

environment, sustainable purchasing, support of local farms, and community outreach. Among the Green Community Spotlights showcased in the Plan are Pennsauken's PCFA facility and the Township's Outdoor Lighting Policy.

3. Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority (CCMUA)

Since the last reexamination, across public agencies in New Jersey, including the CCMUA, there has been an emphasis on building sustainable communities. The Authority has employed the US Environmental Protection Agency's Climate Evaluation and Awareness Tool which assists utility entities in identifying potential climate change threats and assessing their risks in order to determine how utility operations will be impacted. In an effort to reduce the rate of infiltration/inflow from groundwater intrusion into the wastewater management system, the CCMUA encourages the municipalities it serves, including Pennsauken, to make needed repairs in their local collection systems. These repairs will reduce pumping requirements and, correspondingly, electricity costs. If passed onto its ratepayers, these cost savings will constrain future rate increases for Pennsauken's property owners.

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

1. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Federal law requires that Metropolitan Planning Organizations like DVRPC update their long range plans every four years. Connections 2045 and related documents were published in December 2017, while Connections 2050 is currently being developed.

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is an agreed-upon list of specific priority projects to receive and spend federal transportation funds. These lists also include non-federally funded projects that are regionally significant. In addition to the more traditional highway and public transit projects, TIPs can also include bicycle, pedestrian, and freight-related projects. The FY 2020 TIP, which remains in effect until September 2022, identifies five projects in Pennsauken Township:

- **Union Ave./Park Ave. reconstruction** This project includes the milling and overlaying of the road surfaces of Union Avenue (County Rte. 615) and Park Avenue (County Rte. 621) to Maple Avenue and replacing concrete curb and driveway aprons. Also included are stormwater upgrades, ADA improvements, striping and raised pavement markings.
- **Kaighn Ave. bridge replacement** This project calls for roadway improvements to Kaighn Avenue (County Rte. 607) from North Park Drive to Euclid Street in Camden and includes complete bridge replacement. These improvements will decrease travel time, alleviate

flooding, reduce maintenance costs and provide multi-modal connection to The Circuit, Greater Philadelphia’s Regional Trail Network.

- **Route 70, Route 38 to Cooper Ave.** This project involves milling, resurfacing, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of the cartway and shoulder pavement in both directions. Ramps and crossroads are also included.
- **Route 70 Gateway/Airport Circle** This project will result in operational, geometric, safety and aesthetic improvements and involves modifications to the roadway through widening or reduction in the width of the grass median. Also included are such streetscape elements as median treatments, multimodal accommodations, burial of aerial utilities, painting the NJ Transit Bridge and signage.
- **Route 73 Bridge over Route 130** Initiated by the Bridge Management System, this project is replacing the structurally deficient and functionally obsolete bridge and ramp, originally built in 1930 and modified in 1959.

2. Regional Trails Program

DVRPC’s Cross Camden County Trail Feasibility Plan (2017) includes a segment in Pennsauken. The existing Cooper River South Trail in Cooper River Park along North Park Drive connects to the Cooper River North Trail and the recently opened Gateway Park. When completed, this trail, which is part of The Circuit, will link Pennsauken via the East Atlantic Bikeway with Shore trails to the south and with the Benjamin Franklin Bridge and Philadelphia to the west.

State of New Jersey

1. Affordable Housing

On March 10, 2015, the New Jersey Supreme Court handed down the Order In re Adoption of N.J.A.C. 5:96 & 5:97 by the N.J. Council on Affordable Housing, 221 N.J. 1 (2015) (Mount Laurel IV). In that decision, the Supreme Court held that since the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) was no longer functioning, trial courts were to resume their role as the forum of first instance for evaluating municipal compliance with Mount Laurel obligations. The Court also established a transitional process for municipalities to seek a Judgment of Compliance and Repose (“JOR”) in lieu of Substantive Certification from COAH.

2. Stormwater Regulations

On March 2, 2020, the State of New Jersey published amended stormwater management rules in the New Jersey Register. The amended rules, which took effect March 2, 2021, replaced the nonstructural stormwater management

strategies, with specific green infrastructure Best Management Practices (BMPs) to address stormwater quality and quantity.

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.

1. **Master Plan Recommendation** Due in part to the age of both the 1971 Master Plan and the 1998 Master Plan Update, there is a clear need to prepare a new comprehensive master plan which would include all required elements and consider those optional elements which are relevant to the issues currently facing the Township. One such option is a Green Buildings and Environmental Sustainability Plan Element. In 2016, the Township was recertified by Sustainable Jersey³ in recognition of its efforts to implement solutions to key sustainability challenges. In keeping with these efforts, the Township should examine the possibility of adopting a Green Buildings and Environmental Sustainability Plan Element. This Element would provide policy and form a foundation for future regulations that could incentivize renewable energy, passive solar design, green building design and other sustainable practices.
2. **Strengthen Economic Development**. The Township and Economic Development Department should continue to promote Pennsauken as a business-friendly municipality. A marketing effort with Pennsauken branding, entry signage, etc. could help with promotion of the Township. “Operation Clean and Green 130” could be replicated on other major vehicular corridors that run through Pennsauken. The Township should also continue working with local businesses and business groups including the Pennsauken-Merchantville Area Chamber of Commerce on improving economic vitality in the Township.
3. **Develop the Town Center**. Notwithstanding recent efforts to reinvigorate the Westfield Avenue business district, more efforts are needed to clearly identify this district as the “Town Center”. While a proposal to create such a Business Improvement District (BID) is currently under review, the Township should also consider up zoning the area adjacent to Westfield Avenue to attract and create a higher density core which could support more restaurants and businesses. Active bus transit on the corridor provides alternative means of transportation and could support higher density.
4. **Smart Growth and Sustainable Development**. In 2016, Pennsauken reaffirmed its 2013 adoption of a Resolution in Support of Smart Growth Land Use Policies and a Sustainable Land Use Pledge. The Township should continue to encourage the incorporation of smart growth planning and design in all proposed development and support future development that contains sustainable design elements.

³ Sustainable Jersey is an organization that provides tools, training and financial incentives to support communities pursuing sustainability programs.

5. **Development Regulation Recommendations**

As the last comprehensive update of the Township's development regulations was performed in 1981, a thorough review of development ordinances would be warranted in the near future. In the meantime, below are some recommendations which resulted from a cursory review of these ordinances.

- (a) **Residential Site Improvement Standards (RSIS).** Where appropriate, the Township should update its ordinances to comply with RSIS requirements (N.J.A.C. 5:21-1 et seq.).
- (b) **Definitions.** Consideration should be given to adding definitions and modifying others within the Township's ordinances for clarity to ensure a clear understanding for the public and code enforcement personnel.
- (c) **Major/Minor Site Plan.** With exceptions for single- and two-family detached dwellings, all site plan applications in the Township, irrespective of whether they are minor or major site plans, are subject to the same procedures and submission requirements. The current approach may adversely impact local businesses in that site plan applications and procedures require applications of small and large sized development to conform to the same requirements. The Township should explore creating different application procedures and submission requirements for minor and major site plans.
- (d) **Buffering of industrial uses abutting residential zones.** Under current zoning regulations, any proposed use in a Waterfront Management Area, Commercial district, or Professional Office district whose side or rear lot line is adjacent to a residential district or use shall be screened from such residential district or use by a landscaped buffer strip. Any proposed use in an Industrial district that abuts or is adjacent to a residential district or use should also be subject to such a buffering requirement.
- (e) **Periodic reexamination of Master Plan.** The requirement in Section 141-28 of the Municipal Code for a general reexamination of the Master Plan at least every six years should be revised to every ten years to reflect current state Municipal Land Use Law requirements.
- (f) **5G and other smart technologies** "Smart" technologies are those which enable mobile, web, databases, wireless access and sensors to meet the needs of its users. Recognizing the significance and benefits of these new technologies, appropriate standards should be established. For example, standards should be developed to accommodate the location of 5G facilities while protecting surrounding residential areas from their visual impact.

- (g) **Medical Marijuana and Cannabis Regulations.** In light of State legislation that permits the use of cannabis for recreational purposes, and the fact that the state had previously permitted medical marijuana, the Township should explore ways to regulate the appropriateness of site location and design in a manner that promotes public health, safety, and welfare. Specifically, the Township should consider permitting recreational cannabis and/or medical marijuana businesses as a conditional use in the C-1 Commercial Districts, LI Limited Industrial Districts, and HI Heavy Industrial Districts.
- (h) **Principal use.** Zoning regulations should be revised to indicate in what instance more than one principal use is permitted.
- (i) **Conditional uses.** There are instances where while a use is indicated as conditional, no conditions are prescribed in the code. Revisions should be considered.
- (j) **Permitted uses.** The Township should evaluate the appropriateness of uses permitted in certain zones including, but not limited to, agriculture in residential zones, etc..
- (k) **Update bonding ordinance.** The Township should update performance bond and guaranty ordinances to be compliant with state requirements.
- (l) **Rezoning.** This report recommends that consideration be given to the following changes to the zoning regulations and map:
- **Upzoning the area adjacent to the Pennsauken Transit Center,** particularly along Derousse Avenue and River Road. In keeping with its Resolution in Support of Smart Growth Land-Use Policies, the Township should consider revising existing zoning regulations to encourage transit-supportive uses. Transit Oriented Development (TOD) supportive zoning sets specific development standards for areas surrounding transit, encouraging transit use by requiring higher densities, a mix of uses, and bicycle and pedestrian amenities. In addition to the area around the Transit Center, TOD supportive zoning should be considered for areas around the 36th Street and Route 73 stations of the River Line.
 - **Elimination of split lot zoning.** There are a number of lots in the Township that are split between two zoning districts by a zoning district boundary. In these cases, zoning regulations for each district must be applied separately to each portion of the lot. Consideration should be given to placing the lots entirely in one of the two zones that they are split between.

- **Updating the zoning map.** An updated zoning map would accurately reflect current zoning, overlay zones and new zoning changes based on this report.
- **Waterfront Development.** The Township should evaluate all uses and zones along the waterfront to determine suitability with recent development projects.
- **Betsy Ross Bridge Rezoning.** Consideration should be given to rezoning the area in the vicinity of the Betsy Ross Bridge approach and Route 130 currently zoned R-1 to either C-1 or C-2.

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:12-1 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. (L. 1975, c. 291, s. 76; amended 1980, c. 146, s. 6; 1985, c. 516, s. 18; 1987, c. 102, s. 29; 1992, c. 79, s. 50.)

1. On August 20, 2020, the Township Committee adopted a resolution deeming a 10.72-acre tract with frontage on Route 130, Merchantville Avenue and Wayne Avenue (Block 4924, Lots 8, 9, 10 and 11) to be a Non-Condensation Area in need of Redevelopment pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et. seq.
2. Currently under consideration by the Township is a proposal to consider whether the entire municipality should be determined to be in need of rehabilitation. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 40A:12A-14, this determination is contingent upon finding that any of the following conditions persist: 1) a significant portion of Township’s structures are in a deteriorated or substandard condition; 2) more than half of the housing stock in the delineated area is at least 50 years old; 3) there is a continuing pattern of vacancy, abandonment or underutilization of properties in the area; 4) there is a persistent arrearage of property tax payments; 5) environmental contamination is discouraging improvements and investment; and 6) a majority of the water and sewer infrastructure in the delineated area is at least 50 years old and is in need of repair or substantial maintenance.
3. In the future, additional areas may be deemed in need of redevelopment or rehabilitation given the applicability of certain criteria and undertaking of appropriate procedures outlined in the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law. If the study area is deemed an area in need of redevelopment or rehabilitation, this would then permit the preparation and execution of a redevelopment plan, and – should the plan call for such action – the acquisition of buildings and land through condemnation, the leasing or selling of property without public bidding, and allow the area to qualify for financial incentives.

III. **CONCLUSION**

This reexamination report concludes that while the 1998 Reexamination remains viable, as the last Master Plan was prepared in 1971 and updated in 1998, the Township should consider the preparation of a new comprehensive master plan in which all the various master plan elements are revised and consolidated into a unified document. This unified master plan would provide a clear picture as to the Township's goals for future development.

DRAFT