

VI. Economic Plan

Introduction

The Township of Bloomfield has experienced significant economic change since the last Master Plan was prepared in 1989. The Township lost jobs during the national economic recession of the late 1980's/early 1990's, however, it has stabilized and experienced modest employment growth since that period. This trend is similar to that of Essex County, which also experienced employment loss and recovery during this period.

Bloomfield Economic Overview

Bloomfield is in the midst of an economic revival that is the product of planning, infrastructure investment and redevelopment programs initiated by the Township over the past several years. These include plans to redevelop major economic activity centers such as Bloomfield Center and former industrial areas such as the Schering and Macy's sites. Plans to continue the revitalization of the Center and capitalize on redevelopment opportunities at Westinghouse are currently being developed. The Township has also benefited from recent infrastructure investments such as the NJ Transit Montclair Connection and extension of the Newark City Subway as well as fiber optic cable installation along the Garden State Parkway. The benefits of these activities are exhibited by the growth of the education, retail, finance/insurance/real estate sectors in the Township.

Essex County Economic Overview

Essex County is the State's second largest employment center, however, the County economy is relatively mature with a slow overall growth rate. Total employment stayed relatively stable in Essex County between 1980 and 1990, increasing by 4,000 jobs or one (1) percent. The County, however, was hit hard by the national recession during the late 1980's and 1990's. Even though the national recession officially ended in 1991 and New Jersey reached an employment low in 1992, total employment in Essex County continued its downward slide until 1994, the County's seventh consecutive year of job loss. From a high point in 1987 to a low point 1994, the County's employment fell by 32,000 jobs (-10.4 percent) to reach a level of 283,200. In 1995, Essex County finally began to show the first signs of overall recovery, recouping an estimated 3,900 jobs, buoyed by modest growth in the service-producing industrial divisions.

In the short term, the overall growth rate in Essex County is expected to be relatively modest, lagging behind most of the more suburban areas in northern New Jersey region and New Jersey as a whole. Future job growth in Essex County will depend on economic momentum experienced statewide and will be led by growth in the expanding service-producing industry divisions. In the services division, employment growth in health services should continue but may be damp-

ened by hospital mergers and affiliations designed to address the growing managed care health insurance network.

Legal Basis and Purpose

The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law, Article 3, Section 40:55D-28(a) states that an economic plan element should “consider all aspects of economic development to be promoted with the characteristics of the labor pool resident in the municipality and nearby areas;” and (b) provide “an analysis of the stability and diversity of the economic development to be promoted.”

The purpose of the Economic Plan element is to evaluate the economy of the Township of Bloomfield and identify trends, strengths, opportunities and constraints. The Township’s economy is analyzed and compared with the Essex County economy to provide a comprehensive review of present economic activity and future economic development potential. It should also be noted that current employment and labor information is used wherever possible, however, some information dates to the 1990 U.S. Census.

Summary Of Major Trends

1. Private sector covered employment in Bloomfield fluctuated between a high of 15,531 in 1997 and a low of 11,902 in 1995. Anecdotal evidence, including a low municipal unemployment rate, indicates that the Township’s employment base has stabilized and entered a phase of moderate growth.
2. Private sector employment in Bloomfield is projected to increase to 14,000 by 2010. The majority of this increase will be generated by the redevelopment of targeted areas including Bloomfield Center, Westinghouse and parts of the Watsessing Industrial District. It is anticipated that most growth will occur in retail, finance/insurance/real estate (FIRE) and services.
3. Annual average wages in Bloomfield has remained stable at \$29,482 in 1997 and \$29,291 in 1998.
4. Unemployment in Bloomfield was 2.9 percent in 2000, which is significantly lower than the Essex County rate of 4.7 percent and the Statewide rate of 3.8 percent. This trend reflects the Township’s high quality labor force, good access to employment centers and local job growth.
5. The labor force in Bloomfield is relatively well-educated in comparison to the rest of Essex County. More than 60 percent of all Township residents age 25 and over have a high school, bachelor’s or graduate degree compared with 52 percent for the County. This gives the Town-

ship an economic development advantage in the competition for high skill employers producing most job growth.

- 6. Bloomfield’s resident labor force is increasingly service-oriented with education, retail trade and FIRE services accounting for 41.5 percent of all workers in the Township. This trend is consistent with recent patterns of job growth in the region and State.
- 7. Future economic activity in Bloomfield will be focused on several large redevelopment areas including Bloomfield Center, the Westinghouse site and Watsessing Industrial District. These areas will generate future employment, increase tax rates and attract private sector investment. Other significant areas include the Broadacres Office Complex, Bloomfield College, Neighborhood Business Districts and community shopping centers.

Total Private Sector Employment

The total number of private sector jobs located in Bloomfield, known as covered employment,¹ fluctuated between 1990 and 1998. Total covered employment refers to all private sector or non-government jobs located in the Township that are held by residents and non-residents. As shown in Table VI-1, the number of jobs decreased from 1990 to 1995, increased from 1995 to 1997 and decreased again from 1997 to 1998. Overall, total private sector employment in the Township decreased by an estimated 716 jobs or 0.5 percent between 1990 and 1998. In comparison, Essex County had a decrease of 22,443 jobs or 0.7 percent during this period. This indicates that Bloomfield and Essex County have been influenced by the economic restructuring that has transformed the regional economy from a manufacturing base to a service base.

1 Covered employment is a monthly count of full and part-time employees who earned wages during the pay period as reported quarterly by employers covered by the New Jersey Unemployment Compensation Law. Basically, any employer paying at least \$1,000 in wages in the current or preceding calendar year is covered. Jobs not covered by the law include self-employed and unpaid family workers or certain agricultural and in-home domestic workers.

Table VI-1 Total Private Sector Employment, 1990-1998 Township of Bloomfield and Essex County						
Year	Township			County		
	Number of Jobs	Difference		Number of Jobs	Difference	
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
1990	13,709	--	--	312,331	--	--
1991	13,339	-370	-2.7	295,645	-16,686	-5.3
1992	13,060	-279	-2.1	288,221	-7,424	-2.5
1993	12,451	-609	-4.7	285,943	-2,278	-0.8
1994	12,421	-30	-0.2	287,229	1,286	0.4
1995	11,902	-519	-4.2	290,568	3,339	1.2
1996	12,198	296	2.5	286,849	-3,719	-1.3
1997	15,531	3,333	27.3	290,337	3,488	1.2
1998	12,993	-2,538	-16.3	289,888	-449	-0.2

Source: New Jersey Department of Labor, Essex County Cross Acceptance Report (1998)

Economic Base

In general, Bloomfield has experienced economic stability characterized by low unemployment and service-sector growth since the peak recession year of 1992. Between 1996 and 1998, the Township has experienced an increase in employment in the construction, transportation, communications and utilities, retail trade, FIRE and service sectors of the economy, as shown in Table VI-2. In contrast, there were employment declines in the agriculture, manufacturing and wholesale trade sectors of the economy.

Both Bloomfield and Essex County experienced significant declines in employment in the agriculture, manufacturing and wholesale trade sector of the economy between 1996 and 1998. Agriculture, construction and manufacturing industries are businesses that generally produce goods. All other industries are considered service-producing industries. Employment in the Township’s goods-producing sector fell from 2,492 in 1996 to 1,880 in 1998 compared with a decline of from 49,068 in 1996 to 47,464 in 1998 for the County.

During the 1996-1998 period, Bloomfield’s employment in the service-producing sector increased from 9,540 to 10,313. Similarly, the County’s employment in the service-producing sector of the economy increase during

Table VI-2 Private Sector Covered Employment by Industry, 1996 and 1998 Township of Bloomfield and Essex County				
Industry	Township		County	
	3Q 1996	3Q 1998	3Q 1996	3Q 1998
<i>Number of Employees</i>				
Agriculture	105	0	1,166	1,004
Construction	434	476	9,576	10,230
Manufacturing	1,953	1,404	38,326	36,230
Transportation, Communications and Utilities	750	1,398	36,573	36,642
Wholesale Trade	1,053	960	21,882	21,934
Retail Trade	2,211	2,369	39,935	41,614
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	1,001	1,148	31,355	31,275
Services	4,525	4,738	107,013	109,892
Total	12,032	12,492	285,836	288,819
Goods-producing sector	2,492	1,880	49,068	47,464
Service- producing sector	9,540	10,313	236,758	241,355
<i>Percent of Total Employment</i>				
Agriculture	0.9	0.0	0.4	0.3
Construction	3.6	3.8	3.4	3.5
Manufacturing	16.2	11.2	13.4	12.5
Transportation	6.2	11.2	12.8	12.7
Wholesale Trade	8.8	7.7	7.7	7.6
Retail Trade	18.4	19.0	14.0	14.4
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	8.3	9.2	11.0	10.8
Services	37.6	37.9	37.4	38.0
3Q: Third quarter, July, August and September of given year				
Source: New Jersey Department of Labor, Division of Labor Market and Demographic Research				

this period. This trend is expected to continue as the Township economy continues its transition towards retail services and information based activity.

Annual Average Wages

The wages paid by employers in Bloomfield, known as annual average wages, remained flat between 1997 and 1998. Annual average wages re-

Table VI-3 Private Sector Annual Average Wages, 1997-1999 Township of Bloomfield, Essex County and New Jersey			
Year	Township (\$)	County (\$)	State (\$)
1997	29,482	38,361	37,032
1998	29,291	40,674	39,138
1999	Unavailable	44,301	40,805
Absolute Change, 1997-1999	-191*	5,940	3,773
Percentage Change, 1997-1999	-0.6*	15.5	10.2
* Change between 1997 and 1998.			
<i>Source: New Jersey Department of Labor, New Jersey State Data Center, Employment and Wage Data</i>			

fers to the average compensation for jobs located in the Township, whether they are held by residents or non-residents. Unlike per capita per income, which is based on place of residence, annual average wages are determined by work place. As shown in Table VI-3, the annual average wage for jobs in Bloomfield decreased from \$29,482 in 1997 to \$29,291 in 1998. This represents a negligible loss of \$191 or 0.01 percent during this period. In comparison, Essex County and the State have 1999 annual average wages of \$44,301 and \$40,805 respectively. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the Township’s relatively large number of jobs in low wage sectors of the economy such as retail may contribute to this difference. A positive consequence of this difference is that the Township’s wage levels are relatively affordable and represent a significant competitive advantage that may be used for economic development purposes.

Table VI-4 Major Employers, 2001 Township of Bloomfield		
Employer	Number of Employees	Industrial Sector
Board of Education	> 500	Government
ABB Lummus Global Inc.	251 to 500	Chemical engineering
Bloomfield College	251 to 500	Four year liberal arts college
Creative Embroidery Corp.	251 to 500	Manufactures embroidery products
Township of Bloomfield	101 to 250	Government
Bloomfield Post Office	101 to 250	Government
Continental Connector Co.	101 to 250	Manufactures electronic connectors
Hartz Mountain Corp.	101 to 250	Manufactures pet products and cleaning supplies
LS Rubber Industries Inc.	101 to 250	Manufactures rubber gaskets
Mark Solutions Inc.	101 to 250	Manufactures steel jail cells
Peerless Tube Co.	101 to 250	Manufactures aluminum and metal tubing and aerosol cans
Stanlar Industries	101 to 250	Manufactures rubber camping equipment

Source: Corfacts, New Jersey Business to Business Directory 2001, XI Edition and Board of Education

Major Employers

As shown in Table VI-4, the major employers in the Township of Bloomfield include the Board of Education, ABB Lummus Global Inc., Bloomfield College and Creative Embroidery Corp. The Township of Bloomfield is also a major employer with between 101 and 250 jobs. The majority of the large employers are in the engineering, education, manufacturing and public sectors of the economy. In the future, the majority of employment growth is expected to occur in the service sector rather than the goods producing, or manufacturing sector, of the local economy.

Labor Force Characteristics

Resident Labor Supply

Bloomfield’s resident labor force, or the group of residents currently employed or seeking employment, contains 25,634 workers, as shown in Table VI-5. This represents a labor force participation rate of 68 percent for the Township compared with 66 percent for Essex County and 67 percent Statewide. Almost 18 percent of Bloomfield’s labor force works in the Township. This is lower than

Table VI-5 Resident Labor Force Characteristics, 1990 Township of Bloomfield, Essex County, New Jersey						
	Township		County		State	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Labor Force Participation						
Persons 16 and over	37,896	--	610,798	--	6,129,923	--
Persons in Labor Force	25,634	67.6	400,351	65.5	4,128,789	67.4
Employed	24,204	94.4	364,993	91.2	3,892,814	94.3
Unemployed	1,429	5.6	35,358	8.8	235,975	5.7
Males	17,237	45.7	282,456	46.2	2,913,998	47.5
Females	20,659	54.5	328,342	53.8	3,215,925	52.5
Commuting Characteristics						
Workers 16 and over	23,828	--	356,462	--	3,812,684	--
Percent drove alone	17,726	74.4	218,813	61.4	2,731,027	71.6
Percent in carpools	2,353	9.9	49,277	13.8	471,943	12.4
Percent using public transportation	2,325	9.8	60,746	17.0	336,708	8.8
Percent using other means	196	0.8	3,150	0.9	36,009	0.9
Percent walked or worked at home	1,228	5.2	24,476	6.9	236,997	6.2
Place of Work						
Worked in place of residence	4,253	17.8	94,470	26.6	668,911	23.0
Worked outside place of residence	19,575	82.2	260,578	73.4	2,233,703	77.0
Worked in county of residence	13,484	62.2	209,217	64.9	2,235,202	66.4
Worked outside county of residence	8,203	37.8	113,064	35.1	1,131,814	33.6
Worked in state of residence	21,687	91.0	322,281	90.4	3,367,016	88.3
Worked out of state of residence	2,141	9.0	34,281	9.6	445,668	11.7
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Labor Force Status and Employment Characteristics and Population and Housing STF 3A Place of Work						

most municipalities in the County and most municipalities in the State. On average, 27 percent of workers in Essex County municipalities work in their place of residence and 23 percent of workers Statewide work in their place of residence.

The majority of Bloomfield’s labor force or 74 percent commutes to work by car while 10 percent use public transportation. The percentage of workers from the Township who commute via public transportation is significantly lower than the 17 percent throughout Essex County and is slightly more than 9 percent State-wide.

	Township		County	
	Number	Difference	Number	Difference
1990	3.9	--	6.3	--
1991	5.1	1.2	8.1	1.8
1992	6.4	1.3	10.0	1.9
1993	5.8	-0.6	9.1	-0.9
1994	5.2	-0.6	8.3	-0.8
1995	4.8	-0.4	7.7	-0.6
1996	4.9	0.1	7.8	0.1
1997	4.1	-0.8	6.5	-1.3
1998	3.5	-0.6	5.6	-0.9
1999	3.6	0.1	5.7	0.1
2000	2.9	-0.7	4.7	-1.0
Total Change, 1990-2000		-1.0		-1.6

Source: New Jersey Department of Labor, New Jersey State Data Center, Labor Force Estimates

Resident Unemployment

The Township of Bloomfield has a resident unemployment rate that is significantly lower than Essex County, as shown in Table VI-6. The Township’s 2000 unemployment rate was 2.9 percent, which represents a decline of 3.5 percent from the peak recession year of 1992. In comparison, the County had a 2000 unemployment rate of 4.7 percent. The Township is expected to outperform the County in terms of unemployment for the foreseeable future because of the structural unemployment that exists at the County level.

Table VI-7 Resident Educational Attainment, 1990* Township of Bloomfield and Essex County				
Educational Attainment	Township		County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than 9th grade	2,810	8.6	61,631	12.2
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	4,416	13.5	89,936	17.8
High school graduate	11,297	34.6	140,507	27.8
Some college, no degree	4,549	13.9	71,791	14.2
Associate degree	1,294	4.0	20,804	4.1
Bachelor's degree	5,524	16.9	74,279	14.7
Graduate or professional degree	2,756	8.4	47,278	9.3
Total	32,646	100.0	506,226	100.0
Percent high school graduate or higher		77.9		70.1
Percent bachelor's degree or higher		25.4		24.0
* Persons 25 years and over				
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Social Characteristics				

Bloomfield's 2000 unemployment rate of 2.9 percent is not only lower than the County's unemployment rate of 4.7 percent, it is also significantly lower than the State unemployment rate of 3.8 percent. The Township's labor force is relatively stable compared to the rest of Essex County, where unemployment has remained consistently above the State average due to the continuing erosion of the manufacturing base and a skills gap in the labor force. Much of the unemployment problem in the County is concentrated in Newark and other adjacent urban communities, where the 2000 unemployment rate was 7.1 percent.

Resident Labor Skills

Bloomfield's resident labor force is relatively well-educated compared with Essex County as a whole, as shown in Table VI-7. Approximately 60 percent of all Township residents age 25 and over have a high school, bachelor's or graduate degree. In comparison, only 52 percent of all County residents have a high school, bachelor's or graduate degree. The gap between the Township and County is most pronounced for high school graduates. Approximately 77.9 percent of all Bloomfield residents age 25 and over have a high school degree compared with 70.1 percent for all Essex County resi-

Table VI-8 Resident Labor Force by Industry of Employment, 1990 ¹ Township of Bloomfield, Essex County and New Jersey				
	Township		County	
Industry	No. of Employees	Percent of Labor Force	No. of Employees	Percent of Labor Force
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	155	0.5	2,030	0.6
Mining	8	0.0	306	0.1
Construction	1,239	5.1	17,983	4.9
Manufacturing, non-durable goods	2,316	9.6	31,200	8.6
Manufacturing, durable goods	2,135	8.8	29,045	8.0
Transportation	1,217	5.0	22,713	6.2
Communications & other public utilities	842	3.5	12,079	3.3
Wholesale trade	1,170	4.8	17,714	4.9
Retail trade	3,488	14.4	47,159	12.9
Finance, insurance & real estate	2,463	10.2	36,970	10.1
Business & repair services	1,230	5.1	20,492	5.6
Personal services	501	2.1	9,957	2.7
Entertainment & recreation services	283	1.2	4,291	1.2
Health services	2,150	8.9	36,137	9.9
Education services	1,927	8.0	30,830	8.5
Other professional & related services	2,073	8.6	29,840	8.2
Public administration	1,044	4.3	15,767	4.3
Total	24,201	100.0	364,513	100.0
¹ Employed persons 16 years and over				
* Figures may not match employment information in Tables IV-1 and IV-2 due to data collection methods used by the U.S. Census.				
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990				

Table VI-9 Resident Labor Force by Occupation, 1990 Township of Bloomfield and Essex County				
Occupation	Township		County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Executive & managerial	3,437	14.2	47,029	12.9
Professional specialty	3,815	15.8	55,726	15.3
Technicians & related support	1,236	5.1	12,598	3.5
Sales	2,940	12.1	38,540	10.6
Administrative support	5,672	23.4	74,939	20.6
Private household	14	0.1	1,761	0.5
Protective service	710	2.9	9,470	2.6
Service	1,631	6.7	37,121	10.2
Farming, forestry & fishing	78	0.3	1,985	0.5
Precision production, craft & repair	2,421	10.0	30,312	8.3
Machine operators & assemblers	953	3.9	23,826	6.5
Transportation	641	2.6	15,242	4.2
Handlers, helpers & laborers	653	2.7	15,964	4.4
Totals	24,201	100.0	364,513	100.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Labor Force and Employment Characteristics

dents. The percentage of Township residents with bachelor’s or graduate degrees is 1.3 percent higher than the County.

Resident Employment Characteristics

The Township of Bloomfield has a significant concentration of residents working in the retail trade, FIRE and manufacturing industries, as shown in Table VI-8. In total, 43 percent of all Township residents are employed in these industries. Many residents also work in health services, education and other professional services. The Township is under-represented in several industries including entertainment, personal services and communications. Since these are growth industries, there is an opportunity for the Township to capture an additional share of these jobs in the region.

Bloomfield has a significant concentration of residents working in executive and managerial, professional specialty, administrative support and precision production, craft and repair occupations as shown in Table VI-9. Greater

than 63 percent of all Township residents are employed in these occupations. The Township also has a greater proportion of resident workers employed in

Table VI-10
Employment Projections, 1998 to 2008
Township of Bloomfield and Essex County

Industry Title	1998		2008		Change: 1998-2008		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent Total	Percent Annual
Total Nonfarm Payroll Employment	380,050	100.0	407,950	100.0	27,850	7.3	0.7
Goods Producing	46,550	12.2	42,550	10.4	-4,000	-8.6	-0.9
Mining	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Construction	10,000	2.6	10,850	2.7	850	8.7	0.8
Manufacturing	36,550	9.6	31,650	7.8	-4,900	-13.4	-1.4
Service Producing	333,500	87.8	365,400	89.6	31,900	9.6	0.9
Transportation, Comm., Utilities	38,000	10.0	44,100	10.8	6,100	16.1	1.5
Wholesale Trade	23,800	6.3	24,950	6.1	1,200	5.0	0.5
Retail Trade	41,700	11.0	44,000	10.8	2,300	5.5	0.5
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	35,200	9.3	36,250	8.9	1,100	3.1	0.3
Service	121,700	32.0	143,600	35.2	21,850	18.0	1.7
Public Sector, with Public Education	73,150	19.2	72,500	17.8	-650	-0.9	-0.1

Source: New Jersey Department of Labor, Labor Market and Demographic Research, Occupational and Demographic Research, December 2000

technicians, sales and protective occupations compared to Essex County. In total, 20.1 percent of all Township residents are employed in these occupations versus 16.7 percent for County residents.

Employment Projections

The employment picture in Bloomfield is expected to improve significantly in the long-term with continued economic growth at the State and national levels as well as the redevelopment of key activity areas such as Bloomfield Center. As shown in Table VI-10, Essex County’s total employment (private and public sector) is projected to increase by 27,850 jobs from 380,050 in 1998 to 407,950 in

2008. If Bloomfield's employment growth occurs at the same rate as the County, the Township's total employment will increase to 13,942 in 2008. This represents a gain of 948 jobs or approximately 7.3 percent between 1998 and 2008. This trend is consistent with County projections which anticipate approximately 14,000 private sector jobs by 2010 in the Township.

The majority of the employment growth in Bloomfield will be in the service sector, however, new jobs in retail and FIRE may be created as a result of the redevelopment of the Bloomfield Center. The outlook for manufacturing and other industrial employment is uncertain given the long-term decline in this sector at the County and State level. The erosion of the local manufacturing base is an issue to be addressed within the context of the overall economic development strategy for the Township. Broad-based service sector growth is expected to compensate for any further contraction in manufacturing employment. In the public sector, government employment will continue to be an important element of the local economy.

Bloomfield will capture some of the County's growth and provide both a competitive and locational advantage for businesses. Growth will be encouraged by reuse of vacant or transitional industrial sites, further retail development and service sector growth within Bloomfield Center and the retrofitted Broadacres office complex.

In contrast, continued long-term decline is anticipated in manufacturing of durable goods and non-durable goods. This trend reflects regional, State and national trends such as the relocation of industry to the south and west as well as lower cost foreign countries. These projections should be used with caution because of the difficulty of anticipating future events, however, they are useful for indicating the direction of change in total employment and identifying long-term trends in specific industries that will generate job growth.

Future Employment

The Township of Bloomfield contains several areas with significant potential for economic development. They include Bloomfield Center, Broad Street/North Center, Westinghouse, Watsessing Industrial District, Broadacres Office Complex and the various Neighborhood Business Districts. These areas, which are described below, offer opportunities for future development that will generate employment, tax ratables and private investment.

¹ Essex County Cross Acceptance Report, 1998, p. 15

Bloomfield Center

Bloomfield Center is located on Bloomfield Avenue and is the central business district (CBD) of the Township. The Center has economic development potential through the selective redevelopment of underutilized parcels and the upgrade of existing buildings. Economic development in this area will capitalize on the NJ Transit MidTOWN Direct service, which is projected to attract future retail and service uses catering to commuters and those desiring to live near the station. It is estimated that the Center may be able to accommodate several hundred thousand square feet of commercial space for retail, services and offices.

Broad Street/North Center

The North Center is Bloomfield's second largest business district. It contains a mix of retail, service and office uses. Modest future employment growth is projected through in-fill development, renovation of existing buildings and cyclical growth. The majority of future growth will be in areas such as personal services and restaurants.

Westinghouse

The 14± acre property located at Watsessing Avenue and Arlington Avenue is currently being remediated by the owner, Viacom. This area is suitable for planned redevelopment with mixed uses and a transit orientation because of its proximity to the NJ Transit Watsessing Station. Employment will depend on the extent of redevelopment and mix of uses, however, the site may accommodate several hundred thousand square feet of new development depending on the mix of uses and site layout.

Watsessing Industrial District

This District is located south of Bloomfield Avenue between Watsessing Center and LaFrance Avenue in the southern part of the Township. It is one of the last intact industrial areas in the Township. Future industrial activity is projected to decrease and consideration must be given to new employment generating uses that capitalize on the area's access, infrastructure and available land. Consideration should be given to high technology uses such as "cyber hotels", distribution and back office operations. The Township has been awarded a State Cyberdistrict grant that can be used to plan for such uses in this area.

Broadacres Office Complex

The Broadacres office complex is located on Broad Street in the northern part of the Township. The complex is in the Regional Office District and is home to major corporations such as SYSTRA Consulting and ABB Lummus Global Inc. The continued upgrade and improvement of buildings in the complex is encouraged in order to maintain it as Class A office space.

Neighborhood Business Districts

Bloomfield has multiple Neighborhood Business Districts that provide shopping, services and entertainment for residents of the neighborhoods that they serve. The largest of these districts are the North Center, Brookdale, Watsessing Center and eastern Bloomfield Avenue shopping areas. Future growth in these districts will be limited, however, in-fill development, redevelopment of vacant/underutilized buildings and business turnover may produce additional employment, tax ratables and economic activity. The preparation of development plans for these districts is recommended to address problems, identify opportunities and provide a guide for future investment. Targeted investment of public and private funds for building rehabilitation, facade improvements, streetscape upgrades and increased parking is encouraged. Funding for such improvements may come from Special Improvement District (SID's), Community Development Block Grants and TEA-21 Transportation Enhancement Grants.

Recommendations

1. Develop an economic development plan/strategy to promote investment, employment growth and increased tax ratables on a Township-wide basis.
2. Improve circulation in and around Bloomfield Center through roadway, mass transit and pedestrian/bicycle improvements. These include creation of a loop circulation system, creating additional off-street parking, installing way-finding directional signage, integrating NJ Transit bus and commuter rail service, providing shuttle service to the Bloomfield Station, encouraging traffic calming measures and providing bicycle lockers. Consider the creation of an economic development corporation to plan, coordinate and implement economic development initiatives in consultation with key stakeholders.
3. Promote and support the ongoing revitalization of Bloomfield Center through the redevelopment process, Special Improvement District and Bloomfield Center Alliance. Consider future areas of the Center for investigation as an area in need of redevelopment.
4. Encourage and support the redevelopment of the former Westinghouse site with a mix of uses and transit orientation. Consider the use of the redevelopment process to facilitate the reuse and development of the site.
5. Strengthen the Township's Neighborhood Business Districts through targeted development plans, increased public investment, private sector incentives and the use of innovative funding mechanisms. Recom-

mended actions include business district plans, streetscape improvements, increased parking, incentives for building rehabilitation and facade upgrades and funding mechanisms such as SID's, CDBG, and TEA-21 Transportation Enhancement Grants.

6. Facilitate the upgrade of existing commercial uses such as community shopping centers and office complexes through retrofitting of existing buildings, installation of modern infrastructure, improved parking/circulation and limited expansion. Coordinate public improvements and zoning changes with private sector plans for such sites.
7. Preserve remaining industrial uses in the southeastern section of the Township through flexible zoning, access improvements, infrastructure maintenance and incentives for new investment. Reorient industrial districts towards viable long-term uses such as warehouse/distribution, light assembly, printing, food processing and high-technology uses such as data centers, "cyber hotels" and internet switching stations.
8. Target high technology uses in business retention/recruitment efforts to capitalize upon the Township's Cyberdistrict grant, fiber optic infrastructure along the Garden State Parkway and Bloomfield College Advanced Technology Institute. Support the installation of high technology infrastructure along the Township's rail lines and in conjunction with major road reconstruction. Pursue environmentally-friendly green industries that use high technology in production processes.
9. Utilize NJDEP Brownfield Programs to facilitate the redevelopment of environmentally contaminated sites ranging from small former gas stations to large industrial areas such as the former Westinghouse site.
10. Consider implementation of a streamlined development application process that is "business friendly" and provides a coordinated approach to the development process. Recommendations include a pre-application Technical Review Committee, expedited completion review and access to the Township Zoning Ordinance/Master Plan on the internet.