

XI. Comparison with Other Plans

The State Municipal Land Use Law requires "...a specific policy statement indicating the relationship of the proposed development of the municipality as developed in the master plan to (1) the master plans of contiguous municipalities, (2) the master plan of the county in which the municipality is located, (3) the State Development and Redevelopment Plan adopted pursuant to the State Planning Act, P.L. 1985, c. 398 (C.52:18A-196 et al.) and (4) the district solid waste management plan required pursuant to the provisions of the Solid Waste Management Act P.L. 1970, c. 39 (C.13:1E-1 et seq.) of the county in which the municipality is located." The Township of Bloomfield Master Plan is consistent with the plans of adjacent communities, Essex County and the State of New Jersey as follows:

ADJACENT MUNICIPALITIES

Belleville

The Township of Bloomfield is bordered to the east by the Township of Belleville from Hoover Avenue in the north to Bloomfield Avenue in the south. The area is characterized by a mix of residential, commercial and industrial uses as well as parks and open space. The land use and zoning pattern along the municipal border is consistent with minor exceptions where the redevelopment of former industrial sites has occurred. For example, the area at the intersection of Franklin Street and Watsessing Avenue has been redeveloped with the Franklin Square shopping center but the zoning in Belleville remains industrial (I-B). There are no changes recommended for the land use and zoning pattern in this section of the Township although the nature and extent of future redevelopment in Belleville should be monitored.

Clifton

The Township of Bloomfield is bordered to the north by the City of Clifton. The area is characterized by a mix of residential, commercial and private open space/recreational uses. The land use and zoning pattern along the municipal border is consistent with the exception of the area west of the Garden State Parkway. In this area, the land use and zoning for properties fronting on Broad Street in Bloomfield is residential while in Clifton it is commercial. There are no changes recommended for the land use and zoning pattern in this section of the Township but traffic, noise and other impacts generated by office uses in Clifton should be monitored.

East Orange

The Township of Bloomfield is bordered to the south by the City of East Orange. The area is characterized by a mix of residential, industrial and park/open space uses. The land use and zoning pattern along the municipal border is consistent reflecting a common development history and neighborhood compatibility. The major transitional area is in the section of the Township consisting of Watsessing Center and the former Westinghouse site. This area is designated for future revitalization and redevelopment that should be coordinated with the adjacent area in East Orange. There are no other changes recommended for the land use and zoning pattern in this section of the Township, however, issues affecting neighborhood stability such as traffic, parking, illegal conversion, property maintenance and community facilities should be addressed.

Glen Ridge

The Township of Bloomfield is bordered to the west by the Borough of Glen Ridge from Watchung Avenue in the north to Laurel Avenue/Carteret Street in the south. The area is primarily residential in character with scattered commercial, institutional and private open space/recreational uses. The land use and zoning pattern along the municipal border is consistent with minor exceptions such as along Bloomfield Avenue, which has a mixed-use pattern of residential, commercial and institutional uses at the edge of the Bloomfield Center downtown area. There are no changes recommended for the land use and zoning pattern in this section of the Township.

Montclair

The Township of Bloomfield is bordered to the west by the Township of Montclair from the municipal boundary with Clifton in the north to Brookdale County Park in the south. The area is characterized a majority of residential uses with parks and open space. The land use and zoning pattern along the municipal border is consistent with compatible single-family residential neighborhoods and a shared County park. There are no changes recommended for the land use and zoning pattern in this section of the Township.

Newark

The Township of Bloomfield is bordered to the east by the City of Newark from Bloomfield Avenue in the north to First Avenue in the south. The area is characterized by a mix of residential and commercial uses with neighborhood retail/services on Bloomfield Avenue and detached one- and two-family housing to the south. The major transitional area in this section of the Township is along Bloomfield Avenue where the neighborhood commercial district has been in decline with marginal uses and signs of disinvestment. There are also neighborhood preservation issues and quality of life concerns including traffic, parking, illegal conversion, property maintenance and com-

munity facilities to be addressed. The current land use and zoning pattern remains appropriate, however, and no major changes are recommended.

Nutley

The Township of Bloomfield is bordered to the east by the Township of Nutley from the municipal boundary with Clifton in the north to Martin Street/East Passaic Avenue in the south. The area is characterized a majority of residential uses with scattered commercial uses on East and West Passaic Avenues. The land use and zoning pattern along the municipal border is consistent and no changes are recommended.

ESSEX COUNTY

The Township of Bloomfield Master Plan is consistent with the Essex County Master Plan which is an older document that has not been updated in many years. For the purposes of this analysis, the 1998 Essex County Cross Acceptance Report was used as a surrogate for the County Master Plan because it is relatively current, comprehensive in scope and addresses numerous municipal and County planning issues. The Township Master Plan incorporates many of the key findings and recommendations of the County Cross Acceptance Report, as follows:

1. *Downtown Revitalization:* The Township Master Plan supports the on-going revitalization of Bloomfield Center and other commercial districts such as Watsessing Center.
2. *Redevelopment:* The Township Master Plan recommends the redevelopment of major brownfield locations including the former Westinghouse site in Watsessing.
3. *Public Transportation Services:* The Township Master Plan promotes increase access to mass transit as a means of addressing traffic congestion, improving quality of life and supporting economic development efforts.
4. *Senior Citizen Housing:* The Township Master Plan encourages the provision of a full range of senior citizen housing so that residents can age in place and remain in the community.

The Essex County Cross Acceptance Report also identified Bloomfield Center as a key downtown core within the region. The Township's master plan and redevelopment plan reinforce the Center as a major activity center and destination for the community and region.

The Township of Bloomfield master plan is also consistent with the Essex County Solid Waste Management Plan for the disposal of solid waste and recycling of reusable materials.

STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Township of Bloomfield Master Plan is consistent with and implements many of the goals, strategies and policies of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan). Bloomfield is located in the Metropolitan Planning Area (PA1), which is characterized by strong connections to major metropolitan centers, mature development patterns, aging infrastructure systems, necessary housing rehabilitation, growth through redevelopment and increasing demand for regionalized services. The Township exhibits many of these characteristics and the Master Plan addresses significant issues such as residential quality of life, neighborhood preservation, downtown revitalization, targeted redevelopment and increased parks, recreation and open space.

The Bloomfield Master Plan is consistent with State Plan goals and strategies as follows:

1. *Revitalize the State's Cities and Towns:* The Township Master Plan supports the on-going revitalization of Bloomfield Center and contains recommendations to strengthen other commercial districts such as Watsessing Center and preserve residential neighborhoods in transition.
2. *Conserve the State's Natural Resources and Systems:* The Township Master Plan includes recommendations for protecting existing parks, recreation and open space while adding new parks, recreation and open space facilities such as the proposed greenway along stream corridors and potential new parks at the National Starch and Westinghouse sites.
3. *Promote Beneficial Economic Growth, Development and Renewal.....:* The Township Master Plan advocates smart growth and economic development through the revitalization of existing business districts such as Bloomfield Center, transit-oriented development near NJ Transit train stations and the targeted redevelopment of vacant former industrial areas such as the Westinghouse site.
4. *Protect the Environment, Prevent and Clean Up Pollution:* The Township Master Plan gives priority to the preservation of existing parks, recreation and open space while introducing new methods of protecting the environment. These include the proposed greenway along streams in the Township to provide flood control and passive recreation, a new critical areas ordinance to protect environmentally sensitive areas and brownfield remediation.
5. *Provide Adequate Public Facilities and Services at a Reasonable Cost:* The Township Master Plan promotes efficiency in public services and facilities through a smart growth approach. The Master Plan provides for growth in existing business districts served by adequate infrastructure

and encourages public-private partnerships such as the revitalization of Bloomfield Center, proposed greenway and a potential park at the Westinghouse redevelopment site.

6. *Provide Adequate Housing at a Reasonable Cost:* The Township Master Plan makes the preservation of residential neighborhoods a priority and supports efforts to develop a broad range of housing in appropriate locations including Bloomfield Center, Watsessing Center, former South Junior High School and the Residential Townhouse District. The Master Plan also supports the development of a full-range of senior citizen housing so that residents can age in place.
7. *Preserve/Enhance Areas of Historic, Cultural, Scenic, Open Space and Recreational Value:* The Township Master Plan supports the Bloomfield Green Historic District through the creation of a new College District zone that balances the protection of existing residential uses with the Bloomfield College campus. The Master Plan also promotes increased access to the historically significant Oakeside Cultural Center and improvements to the Watsessing and Brookside County Parks designed by the Olmstead firm in the late 19th/early 20th century.
8. *Ensure Sound and Integrated Planning and Implementation Statewide:* The Township Master Plan provides a comprehensive and up-to-date vision and guide for smart growth, future development/redevelopment and increased parks, recreational and open space. It is coordinated with the on-going revitalization of Bloomfield Center and will be implemented through a new zoning ordinance, redevelopment plans and public-private partnerships.

The Bloomfield Master Plan is also consistent with the policies of the State Plan including those for comprehensive planning, economic development, transportation, open lands/natural systems and design. In light of this, consideration should be given to applying for plan endorsement from the State Planning Commission. This would strengthen the Township's planning efforts and increase access to State grant funding, technical assistance, infrastructure investment and streamlined permitting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Coordinate planning and development efforts with adjacent municipalities, possibly through a joint application for a State smart growth grant for north-central Essex County and/or the Bloomfield Avenue corridor.
2. Work with Essex County to seek the development of a new County master plan and/or strategic plan that will address issues of regional significance such as traffic and transportation; parks, recreation and open space; and downtown revitalization/economic development.

3. Consider a petition for master plan endorsement from the State Planning Commission to increase access to State grants, technical assistance and streamlined permitting.