

***MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT
LAND USE PLAN ELEMENT***

**BOROUGH OF HIGHLANDS
MONMOUTH COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

Prepared For:
Planning Board
Borough of Highlands
Monmouth County, New Jersey

Prepared May, 2009 by:

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Adopted June 11, 2009 by the
Borough of Highlands Planning Board

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this amendment to the Land Use Plan Element of the Borough of Highlands Master Plan is to provide the basis for future changes to the zoning regulations within the B-1 and B-2 Zone Districts in the Bay Avenue Commercial Corridor to encourage revitalization.

BACKGROUND

Highlands Borough Planning Board adopted a Master Plan Reexamination Report on June 11, 2009, which recommended changes in the Master Plan and Development Regulations on Bay Avenue. The Planning Board recognizes the need for changes in the zoning requirements along the Bay Avenue corridor to stimulate the economy of the downtown area. Also, the Board acknowledges the impact of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and NJDEP flood hazard rules. The Borough wishes to encourage the establishment of a flourishing commercial area on Bay Avenue with shops and pedestrians. In addition to other changes, allowing for an increased height with upper floor residences in certain locations will create more investment in the downtown and generate more customers for the restaurants and shops. Effort to revitalize the area are consistent with state and county planning policies to encourage mixed land uses, compact development patterns, strengthening the community using existing infrastructure. The Reexamination Report also contains other Borough-wide recommendations which impact other zone districts and other aspects of land development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The revisions to the Master Plan and Development Regulations listed in the Master Plan Reexamination report dated May, 2009 and adopted by the Highlands Borough Planning Board on June 11, 2009, attached hereto, are hereby adopted.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

Monmouth County Growth Management Guide

The Monmouth County Growth Management Guide (GMG), the county's master plan, provides goals and objectives and some limited geographic specificity in regard to future land uses. The GMG is organized around the concept of preserving, strengthening and renewing built-up communities and projecting and preserving the critical environmentally sensitive and prime agricultural lands. The proposed changes to the Highlands Borough Master Plan and Development Regulations are intended to attract reinvestment to a commercial corridor which is important to the Borough and therefore the proposal is consistent with those goals and objectives of the County Master Plan

State Development and Redevelopment Plan

On March 1, 2001, the State Planning Commission ("SPC") adopted the new State Development and Redevelopment Plan ("SDRP"). The SDRP establishes a proposed statewide planning framework that is designed to maintain and revitalize existing cities and towns and organizing new growth in "centers" – compact, mixed-use communities that provide a variety of choices in housing, employment opportunities, entertainment, services, transportation and social interaction. The entirety of the Borough of Highlands is in Metropolitan Planning Area 1 (PA-1) in the SDRP. According to the State Plan, the intent of the Metropolitan Planning Area is to:

- Provide for much of the state's future development;
- Revitalize cities and towns;
- Promote growth in compact forms;
- Stabilize older suburbs;
- Redesign areas of sprawl; and
- Protect the character of existing stable communities.

The proposed land use designation is generally consistent with most of the objectives of the PA-1.