

# 2011 MASTER PLAN



**Borough of South River  
Middlesex County, New Jersey**

*Anthony D. Bignell*

---

**The original of this report has been signed and sealed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 45:14A-12.**



**BOROUGH OF SOUTH RIVER  
PLANNING BOARD RESOLUTION**

**ADOPTION OF MASTER PLAN**

Be it resolved by the Borough of South River Planning Board that:

**WHEREAS, N.J.S. 40:55D-28, et seq.**, of the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law, requires that the Planning Board prepare and, after public hearing, adopt a Master Plan to guide the use of the lands within the municipality in a manner which protects public health and safety and promotes the general welfare. The previous Master Plan was adopted in 1989 and the subsequent reexamination report was conducted in 1997. However, reexamination reports do not comprehensively address all of the changing issues that impact the Borough. The South River Planning Board has determined a completely new plan was needed to address the contemporary needs of the Borough. Therefore, the Planning Board of the Borough of South River has directed Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc., its planning consultants to prepare a new Master Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc., has prepared a Master Plan entitled "Master Plan of the Borough of South River 2011", dated February 2011, and submitted same to the Planning Board for its consideration; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Board, after carefully considering that proposed document, including all of the revisions, additions, and deletions it has requested and having properly advertised and held a public hearing on February 24, 2011; and thereafter considering the comments, questions and recommendations of the public; and the Planning Board after considering the recommendations of Henry Bignell, P.P., and Todd Bletcher, P.P., of Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc., has concluded the proposed Master Plan is reasonable and appropriate.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, be it resolved that the Planning Board of the Borough of South River hereby adopts the Master Plan pursuant to N.J.S. 40:55D-28, dated February 2011 as discussed during the public hearings.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT**, the Borough of South River Planning Board will publish a Legal Notice in the Home News Tribune within twenty (20) days of the memorialization of this written Resolution and also forward a copy of this Resolution and the Master Plan to the Middlesex County Planning Board within twenty (20) days of the memorialization of this written Resolution.

The above is a memorialization of a motion duly made and seconded on February 24, 2011, on the following vote:

**ROLL CALL VOTE**

**Those in Favor:** Gordon Anthony, Michael Beck, Suzanne Buffalino, Raymond Eppinger, George Evanovich, Donna Farren, John Frost, and Peter Guindi.

**Opposed:** None

**Abstained:** None

  
SUZANNE BUFFALINO, Chairwomen

  
M. ANITA HERMSTEDT, Secretary

The undersigned, Secretary to the Borough of South River Planning Board, hereby certifies that the above is a true copy of a Resolution memorialized by said Board on February 24, 2011 on the following vote:

**Those in Favor:** Gordon Anthony, Michael Beck, Suzanne Buffalino, Raymond Eppinger, George Evanovich, Donna Farren, John Frost, and Peter Guindi.

**Opposed:** None

**Abstained:** None

Dated: 2/24/11

  
M. ANITA HERMSTEDT, Secretary  
South River Planning Board

# Credits

**Raymond T. Eppinger, Mayor**

**Andrew J. Salerno, Business Administrator**

**Patricia O'Connor, RMC, Municipal Clerk**

## Master Plan Sub-Committee

Suzanne Buffalino  
Cynthia Urbanik  
John Frost  
Michael Beck

## Borough Council

John Krenzel, Council President  
John T. Trzeciak  
James Hutchison  
Michael Trenga  
Rui Almeida  
Peter Guindi

## Planning Board

Mayor Raymond Eppinger  
David Krempecki, 2009 Chairperson  
Suzanne Wisniewski-Buffalino, 2010 Chairperson  
Michael Beck, 2010 Vice Chairperson  
Cynthia Urbanik  
John Frost  
Michael Trenga, 2009 Council Representative  
Michael Clancy  
Peter Guindi, 2010 Council Representative  
Kenneth Berg  
Donna Farren  
Eric Rachel  
Marilyn Meloni, Mayor's Alternate  
George P. Evanovich, Alternate No. 1  
Gordon Anthony, Alternate No. 2

Thomas W. Barlow, Esq., Board Attorney  
Bruce Koch, PE, PP, CME, Board Engineer  
M. Anita Hermstedt, Board Secretary

## Master Plan Consultant

### *Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.*

424 AMBOY AVENUE, SUITE 201  
WOODBIDGE, NJ 07095  
PHONE: (732) 636 - 0200  
FAX: (732) 218 - 5975  
MAIL@BIGNELLPLANNING.COM

Henry D. Bignell, PP  
Thomas Sheehan, AICP, PP  
Todd Bletcher, AICP, PP

### Special Thanks To:

Mayor Raymond T. Eppinger, Andrew Salerno,  
Debra Jones, Arthur Londensky, Mary Bloss,  
M. Anita Hermstedt, John Frost, Anthony Ciulla,  
Cynthia Urbanik, Raja Warran, Debra Zemann,  
Patricia O'Connor, Andrea Londensky, Councilman  
James Hutchison, George Lyons, Michael  
Beck, John Mulvihill, Councilman Peter Guindi,  
Michael Frangella, Michael Bignell

# Table of Contents

## **I Introduction**

Overview of the Borough  
The 2009-2010 Master Plan  
The Master Planning Process  
Community Issues and Ideas  
Community Goals and Objectives

## **II Goals, Objectives and Plan Implementation**

Introduction  
Land Use Element  
Community Facilities Element  
Parks, Recreation, Open Space Element  
Recycling and Sustainability Element  
Historic Preservation Element  
Housing Element  
Circulation Element

## **III Community Profile**

Demographic Profile  
Economic Development Element

## **IV Land Use Element**

Introduction  
Existing Land Use  
Existing Zoning  
Revitalization Areas  
Environmental Characteristics  
Borough Wide Land Use Recommendations  
Land Use Recommendations for Specific Neighborhoods

## **V Community Facilities**

Inventory and Analysis of Community Facilities  
Education Facilities  
South River Borough Schools  
Municipal Government  
Emergency Services  
Libraries in South River

## **VI Parks, Recreation and Open Space**

Introduction  
Inventory and Analysis of Parks, Recreation and  
Open Space  
Geographic Assessment  
Recreation Programs  
Community Issues and Recommendations

## **VII Environmental Sustainability**

Recycling Element  
Sustainability Element  
Green Building  
Conservation Plan

## **VIII Historic Preservation**

Historic Preservation Element

## **IX Housing Element**

Affordable Housing Plan  
Public Housing  
Housing Stock Inventory  
Residential Standards & Future Construction

## **X Circulation & Mobility Element**

Circulation Plan

## **XI Wireless Communications Element**

Introduction  
Wireless CommunicationS Locations  
Recommendations

## **XII Relationship to Other Plans**

Introduction  
Relationship to State Planning  
Relationship to Middlesex County Planning  
Relationship to Abutting Municipalities

# Maps and Tables

<b>Table/Map</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
<i>Community Profile Element</i>		
Table III-1	Population Growth Trends 1970-2010	III-3
Table III-2	Population Growth Compared to Other Middlesex Cnty Municip.	III-4
Table III-3	Population Density Compared to Other Middlesex Cnty Municip.	III-4
Table III-4	Population Changes By Age 1980-2000	III-5
Table III-5	Population by Race	III-5
Table III-6	Significant Population Groups by Ancestry	III-6
Table III-7	Household Characteristics	III-7
Table III-8	Housing Characteristics	III-7
Table III-9	Educational Attainment	III-8
Table III-10	Occupation Analysis	III-9
Table III-11	Income Analysis	III-10
<i>Land Use Plan Element</i>		
Map	Existing Land Use Plan	IV-5 & 6
Map	Future Land Use Plan	IV-9 - 11
Map	Main Street Rehabilitation Concept Area	IV-14
Map	Waterfront Revitalization Concept Area	IV-17
Map	South River Flood Control Project (US Army Corps of Engineers)	IV-19
Map	Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan	IV-22
Map	Cemetery Conservation Plan	IV-22
Map	Educational Campus Plan	IV-26
Map	Borough Facilities Plan	IV-26
Map	Quasi-Public Uses	IV-26
<i>Community Facilities Element</i>		
Table V-1	2010 School District Enrolment by Grade	V-5
Table V-2	South River Crime Statistics 1999-2008	V-10
Table V-3	Fire Department Vehicles, Age & Replacement Needs	V-12

<b>Table/Map</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
<i>Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element</i>		
Table VI-1	Existing Recreational Facilities Inventory	VI-5
Table VI-2	Existing Recreational Facilities Inventory by Park Classification	VI-8
Map	Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan	VI-10
<i>Historic Preservation Element</i>		
Table IX-1	South River Register of Historic Places	IX-4
Map	Historic Preservation Plan	IX-6
Table IX-2	Buildings and Places of Historic Interest	IX-7
<i>Circulation Plan Element</i>		
Table X-1	Functional Classification of Roads	X-5
Map	Circulation Plan	X-6
Table X-2	Roadway Classification of South River Roads	X-8
<i>Wireless Communications Element</i>		
Map	Wireless Communication Plan	XI-2
<i>Relationship to Other Plans Element</i>		
Map	Policy Map of the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (Middlesex County)	XII-5

"The relevant question is not simply  
what shall we do tomorrow, but rather  
what shall we do today to get ready for tomorrow?"

Peter Drucker

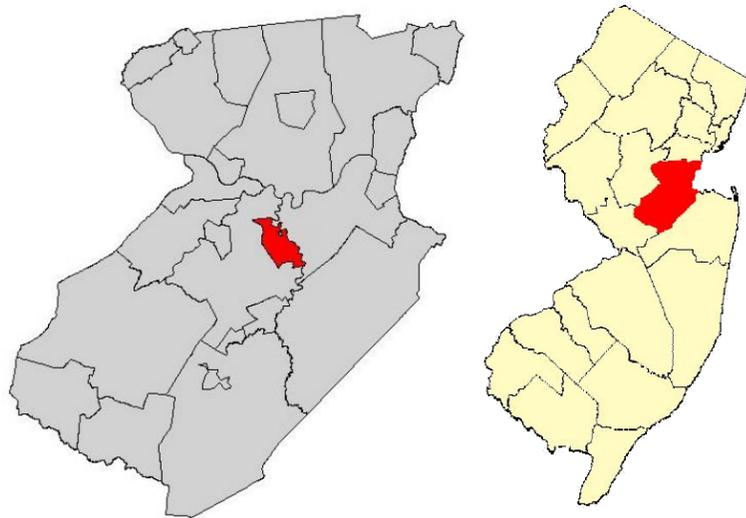
# Introduction

## Borough Overview

South River is 2.9 square miles in size and is located in the central portion of Middlesex County, on the shore of the South River, south of the Raritan River. According to the United States Census Bureau the Borough has a total area of 2.9 square miles of which 2.8 square miles is land and 0.1 square miles is water. According to the US Census Bureau, the 2008 population of the borough was estimated at 15,682 persons. What is now South River was originally formed as the town of Washington within East Brunswick Township on February 23, 1870. South River was incorporated as an independent borough by an Act of the State Legislature on February 28, 1898. Today South River borders both the Townships of East Brunswick to the west and Sayreville to the east.

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century South River was a magnet area for industrial manufacturing and shipping. However, the decline of manufacturing has been visible in the borough for several decades. South River is now a mature suburb of the New York metropolitan region with approximately 4,000 families and 5,700 housing units.

Map I-1 South River in Middlesex County



## The Master Plan Process

A Master Plan provides a comprehensive guide for the future land use, development, growth, sustainability and preservation of a community. The Master Plan is unique from other planning studies in that it takes a comprehensive approach to analyzing planning issues. Since the several elements of a Master Plan often interweave into each other, a comprehensive Master Plan should encompass several factors relating to community life including the physical, economic, environmental, social and aesthetic needs of the community. These should also be viewed in a regional context. This analysis was developed as a key ingredient of the Master Plan's Visioning Workshop Process.

## Plan Preparation

The Planning Board is responsible for the preparation of the Master Plan. A plan may only be adopted or amended by the Planning Board and only after a public hearing is held on the plan. Notice to all residents is required. The statute specifically states:

*“The Planning Board may and after public hearing, adopt or amend a master plan of components thereof, to guide the use of the lands within the municipality in a manner which protects public health, and safety and promotes the general welfare.”*

The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (Chapter 291, NJ, 1975), specifically N.J.S.A. §40:55D-89 further requires that the Governing Body, via the Planning Board, shall reexamine and review the Master Plan at least once every six years. The purpose of this requirement is to compel municipalities to periodically review current information and changing conditions within the municipality in the interest of keeping long range planning as up-to-date as possible. The previous Master Plan was adopted in 1989 and the subsequent reexamination report was conducted in early 1997. However, reexamination reports do not comprehensively address all of the changing issues that impact the borough. The South River Planning Board has determined that a completely new plan was needed to address the contemporary needs of the borough.

## Statutory Requirements

The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (Chapter 291, NJ, 1975), specifically N.J.S.A. §40:55D-28 sets forth legal criteria for a Master Plan. Each community must prepare a plan to comply with the requirements of the law. The plan is required to contain specific elements, and will often contain several other elements that relate to planning issues in a specific community. Failure to reexamine results in a presumption of invalidity of the land use regulations of the municipality.

## Required Content

The Master Plan must include a statement of objectives, principals, assumptions, policies and standards upon which the constituent proposals for the physical, economic and social development of the municipality are based. It must contain a housing plan element under N.J.S.A. §40:55D-62 if the municipality intends to adopt or amend a zoning ordinance. It must also include a land use plan element indicating:

- (a) natural conditions of the land including soil, topography, water supply, drainage, flood plan areas, woodlands;
- (b) existing and proposed location, extent and intensity of various types of future development of land including residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, educational and other purposes;
- (c) the location of any airport safety zones and boundaries;
- (d) a statement of recommended population density and development intensity;
- (e) a statement explaining the relationship of the above elements to the existing and any proposed zone plan or zoning ordinance of the municipality, of surrounding municipalities, and the County and State planning jurisdictions.

## Additional Content

The Master Plan may also contain the following elements:

- circulation plan
- utility service plan
- community facilities plan
- recreation plan
- conservation plan
- economic plan
- historic preservation plan
- recycling plan
- farmland preservation plan
- development transfer plan
- educational facilities plan
- any other plan element that the municipality sees fit to develop

## Contributions of Community Boards, Commissions, Committees and Stakeholder Groups

Meetings with individual stakeholder groups were also held, including meetings with:

- The South River Police Chief and Police Department
- The Borough Administrator
- The Fire Department
- The South River Rescue Squad
- The South River Board of Education
- The Historic Preservation Society, Inc.
- The South River Environmental Commission
- The South River Cultural Arts and Heritage Commission
- The South River Parks and Recreation Department
- The South River Public Works Department
- The South River Recreation Advisory Committee
- The South River Economic Development Commission
- The South River Tax Assessors Office

**Master Plan Workshop for the 2010 South River Master Plan**

**Workshop #1: October 24, 2009 10:00 am - 12:00 pm**

**Workshop #2: October 29, 2009 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm**

The South River Planning Board is preparing a new Master Plan for the Borough of South River. The Master Plan will be a comprehensive set of policies to guide future development in the community through land use, transportation, environmental preservation, housing, economic development and quality-of-life enhancements.

Mayor Eppinger and the South River Planning Board are seeking the comments of all borough residents and property owners in this process at two *Community Visioning Workshops*. All residents of South River are invited to attend either one of these workshops and participate in the process of re-shaping your community. Come and be heard!

**Location:**  
South River Elementary/Middle School Cafeteria  
3 Montgomery Street

**Contact Information:**  
Please contact Bignell Planning Consultants at 732.636.0200 for more information.



**Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.**

313 AMBOY AVENUE  
WOODBIDGE, NJ 07095  
PHONE: (732) 636-0200  
FAX: (732) 636-8232  
MAIL@BIGNELLPLANNING.COM

## Public Participation

The Mayor, Borough Council and Planning Board considers public participation essential to a successful Master Plan. Accordingly, the planning process provided the community with an opportunity to voice their thoughts, concerns and goals on a wide range of planning issues. Two Community Visioning Workshops were held in October of 2009. Over 80 residents came to the workshops to create the vision and define the goals of the 2010 Master Plan. During the sessions, community members identified important planning issues in their community and listed characteristics of South River that they wanted to preserve, create and change. Several focus groups also provided very useful information for creating specific planning areas within the borough. This plan reflects the ideas and contributions of these members of the South River community. Meetings with individual stakeholder groups were also held, including meetings with the South River Police Department, Fire Department, Rescue Squad, Board of Education, Historic Preservation Society and Environmental Commission.



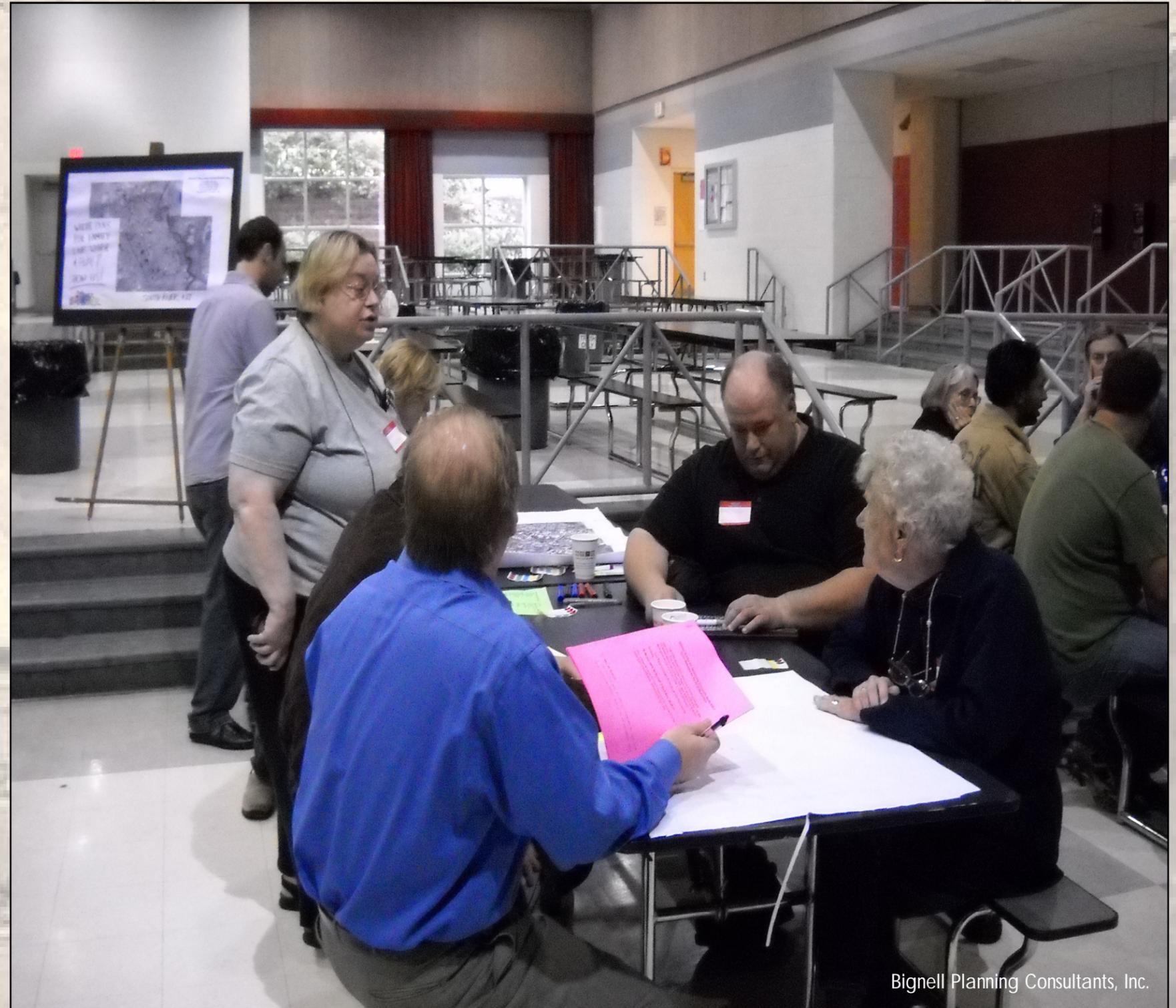
Photo Courtesy M. Anita Hermstedt

## The Master Plan Vision Statement:

*A summary of the issues and ideas and community goals developed from the visioning workshop sessions*

### Community Goals and Objectives

- To create an attractive and revitalized waterfront district with a mix of recreational, commercial and conservation uses and public access
- To create an attractive Main Street/Ferry Street corridor/district rehabilitation plan
- To create an attractive downtown with quality businesses for shoppers, visitors and diners
- To create a comprehensive improvement plan for the Whitehead Avenue corridor
- To create opportunities for more pedestrian, bicycle and public transportation
- To provide a coordinated public parking plan within the Main and Ferry Street district
- To improve traffic impacts, including truck traffic
- To create a visual entry to the borough
- To preserve the historic charm of the community with a coordinated architectural/signage scheme
- To preserve and maintain open space wherever possible
- To create a distinct and centralized public space/plaza
- To create a plan for future recreational facilities
- To increase the use of sustainable energy
- To create a plan to improve street trees and shade trees
- To create sustainable population and housing density
- To reduce the impacts of incompatible uses on residential property
- To improve distressed neighborhoods in the borough
- To be a more business-friendly community
- To encourage commercial/industrial/job growth in specific areas to alleviate residential property taxes
- To address the chronic flooding issues
- To improve public safety and property maintenance
- To rehabilitate blighted, dangerous or abandoned property



Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.

*The workshop-wide group created displays to identify which areas of the community they wanted to **Preserve, Create and Change**. Residents were later asked to select and identify the most important issues on the workshop charts. The following items were the most popular selections:*

**Preserve**

- Municipal Services, Facilities and Utilities
- Historic Buildings
- Community Character
- Trees/Parks, Open Space

**Create**

- Attractive downtown with commercial and retail uses
- An architectural and façade scheme for the downtown
- Inviting entrance to the borough
- A mixed-use waterfront area with passive recreation, water access, and commercial and conservation elements
- Multi-modal transportation access in the borough
- Parks and Open space

**Change**

- Current waterfront uses and buildings
- All abandoned buildings in town
- Appearance of lower Main Street
- Flooding problems
- Elimination of all illegal housing units
- Traffic impacts and volumes

*The workshop also created several focus groups which concentrated on creating a plan for a specific planning areas. The areas were:*

- Creating a Downtown/Main Street/Ferry Street Rehabilitation Area
- Creating a waterfront revitalization area and conceptual use list
- Preserving Community and Historic Character
- Parks, Recreation and Open Space



Sources for this section include:

- “The Story of New Jersey’s Civil Boundaries: 1606-1968”, John P. Snyder, Bureau of Geology and Topography; Trenton, New Jersey; 1969. p. 174.
- United States Census Bureau, Census results from 1960-2000.

**One man of tolerable abilities may work great changes, and accomplish great affairs among mankind, if he first forms a good plan, and, cutting off all amusements or other employments that would divert his attention, make the execution of that plan his sole study and business.**

**-Benjamin Franklin**





# Goals, Objectives and Plan Implementation

## Overview

The South River Master Plan shall provide a general guide for the physical, social, and economic development of the Borough. This Master Plan was prepared in accordance with the requirements set forth in the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et. Seq.). It is a document that is designed to guide the development and redevelopment of lands within the Borough in a manner which will promote and protect the public health, safety and general welfare of all present and future residents and citizens of the municipality.

These goals and objectives have been established for the Borough premised on assumptions relevant to the character and general profile of the community as well as desired policies for the development and redevelopment of municipal land. The goals and objectives which have emerged from this Master Plan reflect and reinforce the blend of both traditional and contemporary lifestyles that exist in South River.

## Part I: Assumptions

### Statement of Assumptions

- South River Borough will be able to guide its own growth in accordance with the Municipal Land Use Law and will have the opportunity for significant input into any county, state, and/or federal plans which may affect the Borough or its immediate environs or interests.
- That the State of New Jersey Development and Redevelopment Plan will coincide with the projected development pattern of South River Borough in that the existing “Town” development is recommended for the entire municipality.
- The Borough will continue to provide for its fair share of low and moderate income housing as determined by the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing, The Fair Housing Act, the Mount Laurel doctrine, and the successors of these institutions, and the applicable laws and programs of the State of New Jersey, however they may be structured in the future.
- That based on past growth trends and projected growth patterns; additional municipal services and community facilities will be needed.

- Since South River is a densely populated community comprised of smaller lot sizes and a lack of major usable open space areas, its residents rely on the additional use of both public and quasi-public spaces for their recreational enjoyment.
- The Borough is approaching near build-out and should not expect any new large residential developments in the future from vacant lands.
- That continued local commercial development (service establishments, neighborhood stores, etc.) can be anticipated.
- That since approximately 30% of the Borough’s housing stock is renter occupied, occupancy turnover rates are considered moderate. Associate issues regarding absentee ownership leading to neglect and deterioration of property is a concern.
- That the potential deterioration of the housing stock occupied by senior citizens who, at fixed income levels, are vulnerable to inflation and the costs of maintaining their housing unit, is a concern.
- That the conversion of single-family homes to two-family residences has occurred in the older residential sections generating concerns regarding: The property values of neighboring housing units, the need for additional parking, and the increased demand for municipal services.
- That industrial development will continue at a slow growth rate in the North End Industrial Park.
- The road improvements will be required in certain areas of the Borough to adequately handle traffic movements from both current and future development especially along Whitehead Avenue in the South End.
- That anticipated increased traffic along major thoroughfares in the Borough will necessitate the upgrading or signalization of certain intersections.

## Part II: Policies

### Policies of the Borough of South River as articulated by this Master Plan

- To acknowledge the existing character of the Borough and its neighborhoods as created and formulated by past and present development.
- To encourage a future development pattern which will promote, protect and enhance the long-term economic, social and general welfare interests of present and forthcoming residents.

- To permit the reasonable use and future development of land within the context of existing constraints, limitations, location and relationship to other land uses and to provide for the transfer of land ownership to a public body or agency in accordance with accepted practices or procedures.
- To promote a quality of life which benefits all municipal citizens and will encourage both young adults and senior citizens to remain within the Borough.
- To facilitate the social, economic and political interaction of present and future residents within all portions of the Borough.
- To continue to use practical and flexible development controls on a comprehensive basis in an effort to acquire open space, preserve the natural landscape and conserve and protect the sensitive ecological and environmental areas of the Borough.
- To consider the role of future public transportation in the community by identifying potential locations for new transportation routes and additional bus stops.



Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.

## Part III: Goals and Objectives

The over-riding goals and objectives established for South River Borough represent the cumulative intentions for the comprehensive future development of the community and are presented below. The specific actions recommended to be taken to achieve and attain these goals and objectives are set forth within the individual elements contained within this Master Plan.

### General

- To prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan which will guide the appropriate growth, development and redevelopment of the Borough over the next six years.
- To provide a higher level quality of life for the present and future residents and citizens of the Borough.
- To increase energy conservation to the greatest extent possible.
- To facilitate the reuse of existing resources in the most efficient and appropriate manner.

### Land Use

- To permit future residential and non-residential growth in a coordinated and managed approach and to promote logical transition uses between residential and non-residential areas.
- To maintain an appropriate balance of land uses and a variety of land use types within each land use category arranged to minimize the potential for conflict or incompatibility among them.
- To provide for and encourage the development of remaining vacant land, where appropriate, and the redevelopment of under-utilized land consistent with land capability, surrounding land uses, the fiscal balance of the Borough and practicalities of the current marketplace.
- To maintain the economic vitality of the community and encourage further economic development through continued industrial and commercial growth in appropriate locations.
- To generate alternative land use strategies to return fallow industrial and commercial lands to a tax productive role within the municipality.
- To identify the downtown business area that is in a state of decline and encourage redevelopment, rehabilitation and re-

talization thereupon to assure a healthy business district which is adequate to serve the residents of the Borough.

- To maximize the utilization of the South River waterfront, focusing on a comprehensive planning approach to capitalize upon the environmental and economic assets of land presently fallow along the river to generate new recreational, commercial, and residential vitality within the Borough.
- To promote the conservation of open space through the protection of the Borough's natural resources and to prevent the degradation of the environment through the prohibition of inappropriate land uses and development densities.
- To assure that adequate buffer requirements are provided that can protect the integrity of residential and public land uses.
- To establish corridor links between major open spaces to the greatest extent possible and incorporate required buffers where practically feasible.

### Housing

- To maintain a reasonable balance of housing types and to provide a variety of housing options and occupancy costs for a diverse population within the Borough including senior citizen housing and adult communities.
- To recognize the need for affordable housing and provide affordable housing units through rehabilitation and filtering.
- To preserve and improve the diversified, yet compatible and mature urban form of housing exemplified within the existing residential neighborhoods.
- To formulate programming strategies to prevent residential deterioration.
- To promote the health, safety and general welfare of the Borough's residents through enforced code compliance and recommended aesthetic standards.
- To discourage the creation of undersized building lots in all residential zones when minimum lot standards are not met.

### Municipal Services

- To ensure that all residents of the Borough receive and enjoy satisfactory and uniform municipal services and access to community facilities.
- To respond to land use and demographic changes which require adjustments in the provision and delivery of municipal services.



- To develop a systematic program for maintaining and upgrading the municipal infrastructure, network of services, and community facilities to ensure socio-economic vitality in the Borough.
- To assure that adequate facilities exist for all local government operations and to provide the necessary information to all Borough agencies for use in carrying forward their specific functions and programs.

### Community and Recreational Facilities

- To provide sufficient open space and developed parkland within the Borough in accordance with the recommendations of the National Recreation and Park Association.
- To develop, redevelop, and maintain park and recreational facilities within the Borough to meet the needs and demands of all present and future residents including senior citizens and the disabled.
- To develop and provide waterfront recreational activities to the residents of the Borough in appropriate locations.
- To avoid the duplication of recreational activities.

### **Circulation and Mobility**

- To provide the safe movement of people and goods through the Borough.
- To create safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian lanes of circulation within the Business District and through the Borough.
- To discourage traffic from outside the Borough from utilizing roadways internal to residential areas.
- To propose local road improvements and road realignments to alleviate specific problem areas as identified herein.
- To assure that adequate parking is provided for all types of development.

### **Historic Preservation**

- To recognize and encourage the preservation of those historic properties and buildings that contribute to the historical character of South River.

### **Wireless Communications**

- To encourage the safe and efficient location of wireless communications utilities throughout the Borough and to guide appropriate site selection for future facilities so as to minimize the negative aesthetic and detrimental impacts of expanding this infrastructure.
- To provide for a borough-wide plan for the location of all wireless communications facilities and to discourage installation of new facilities at undesirable sites.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

- To provide for and encourage the efficient collection of recyclable materials, with an overall increase in materials diverted from the municipal solid waste stream.
- To encourage alternative, renewable sources and methods of energy consumption so as to reduce overall energy use throughout the Borough.
- To provide for and encourage environmental education and stewardship for all citizens of the Borough.



Photo: South River Rescue Squad

## PART IV: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

A Master Plan sets forth the intended goals, objectives and policies of the community for which it was prepared. This Master Plan is intended to be a guide for the Borough of South River with regard to land use development in a manner which protects the public health, safety and general welfare of the community. Once a Master Plan has been adopted, the implementation and realization of its ideals and objectives can be achieved by means of four interrelated actions: legislative implementation, physical improvements, fiscal implementation, and continued planning. The basic legal documents which guide the long-range development and maintenance of property in the community are the Zoning Ordinance, Land Subdivision and Site Plan Ordinance and the Official Map. Other enforcement ordinances, such as the housing, building and public health codes aid in the plan implementation on the short-term, day-to-day basis.

### Zoning Ordinances— Including Redevelopment, Rehabilitation and Revitalization Zoning Ordinances

The Zoning Ordinance is the principal development regulation for controlling the use of private land and any structures or uses located thereon. By dividing the Borough into designated zone districts wherein specified land uses are permitted subject to appropriate regulations, the Zoning Ordinance serves as the principal tool for effectuating the Land Use Plan element of this Master Plan, thereby achieving the goal of guiding the development of the community towards a planned objective. Pursuant to the Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40: 62a), the Zoning Ordinance "...shall either be substantially consistent with the Land Use Plan element and the Housing Plan element of the Master Plan or designed to effectuate such plan elements..." Therefore, the Zoning Ordinance is one of the most important local land development regulations for pro-

tecting the public health, safety and general welfare from potentially harmful development activity. The zoning regulations to be established must be reasonable and accurately reflect the intent and objectives of the Master Plan. The rights of the individual property owner must always be considered in the preparation of the zoning ordinance or the amendments thereto. This Master Plan makes specific recommendations for changes to the zoning ordinance so as to create more specific land use regulations for several areas in the Borough.

### Subdivision and Site Plan Ordinances

The Subdivision Ordinance sets forth the procedures for the subdivision of land by private and public developers and establishes standards for the design of public improvements to be constructed in conjunction with such subdivisions. A Site Plan Ordinance establishes design standards for the development of parcels of land for uses other than single- or two- family homes, and the procedures for approval of such developments by the Planning Board. Whereas the Zoning Ordinance provides the legal means of controlling the use of the land, the subdivision and site plan ordinances give legal control over the layout of land that is to be subdivided and/or developed. Site plan review procedures and design standards are very often included as a part of the Zoning Ordinance. The Municipal Land Use Law requires that subdivisions and site plans conform to the applicable provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.

### Official Map

The official map is a legal document, adopted by the governing body of the municipality, designating lands which shall be reserved for future streets, public drainage right-of-ways, parks and playgrounds and other public areas as shown on the Master Plan. It also serves as the official statement of the governing body identifying which streets, drainage right-of-ways, parks and playgrounds it has accepted for maintenance. The Official Map is legally binding upon the governing body once it has been adopted. The Official Map must be an engineered document with detailed, dimensions and must be produced and

certified by a licensed engineer or land surveyor.

### State and Federal Legislative Action

The State of New Jersey has granted to individual municipalities certain powers to facilitate the improvement and acquisition of land for a public purpose. Many of the goals and initiatives recommended throughout this Master Plan may depend on the discriminating use eminent domain and condemnation. Eminent domain is the constitutional right of a government to take private property for public use upon just compensation by virtue of its superior domain of the sovereign power over all lands within its jurisdiction. Condemnation is the power to adjudge property unfit for private use and to declare it convertible to public use under the right of eminent domain.

### Eminent Domain and Condemnation: Use, Not Abuse

Condemnation is the power to adjudge property unfit for private use and to declare it convertible to public use under the right of eminent domain. Condemnation is sometimes used as a tool to implement the varied objectives of the various Master Plan elements. Eminent domain is a right of a government to take private property for public use upon *just compensation* by virtue of its superior domain of the sovereign power over all lands within its jurisdiction. Thus, the power of eminent domain, *as provided for in the federal and state constitutions*, is often a valuable tool for implementing goals of the various Master Plan elements. Recent Supreme Court cases and current media have focused negative attention on eminent domain *abuse* in recent years, with the difference between abuse and *use* often misunderstood. Several residents of the Borough voiced their opposition to eminent domain abuse at the community visioning workshops. Therefore this tool should be used with caution, if at all, and only as a last resort in any redevelopment procedure. Eminent Domain can only be used as part of a lawfully adopted Redevelopment Plan wherein its use should be specified when the plan is adopted.

## Capital Improvement Plan

A capital improvement is a physical construction or enhancement of relatively large size or importance, of considerable cost, and reasonably permanent in form or shape. Capital improvements include new construction; major improvements to existing roads, schools, playgrounds, sewer and water systems and municipal buildings; land acquisition for public purposes and major equipment installation. The preparation and adoption of a Capital Improvement Plan provides a means by which many of the proposed public improvements in the Master Plan may be scheduled for implementation. It may be characterized as a long-range calendar which:

- Lists the improvements that local officials deem necessary for future operations,
- Categorizes these improvements according to their urgency and priority,
- Specifies which governmental agency is responsible for each project, and
- Recommends a method of financing and scheduling of the projects.

The Municipal Land Use Law states that Capital Improvements Programs shall be prepared and recommended to the governing body by the Planning Board. Further, the Division of Local Finance of the State Department of Community Affairs now requires that every municipality prepare a six (6) year capital improvements program and capital budget to be updated on an annual basis. Within the financial framework and capability of the community, various elements of the Master Plan should be scheduled in the six-year capital improvements plan. Any modification to the recommended Capital Improvement Program requires an affirmative vote of a majority of the full authorized membership of the Borough Council, with the reasons for such modifications being recorded in the minutes of the Borough Council Meeting at which the Capital Improvements Plan is adopted.

In South River, where some of the public improvements shown on the Master Plan are not under the jurisdiction of the local governing body, cooperation will be required between the Borough and other governmental agencies to effectuate the proposals of

the Master Plan. Other governmental agencies, which have the primary responsibilities for the construction of some of the public improvements shown on the Master Plan, include the South River Board of Education and the County of Middlesex and the Federal Government. This Master Plan recommends the Borough apply for all appropriate federal and state aid grants in implementing this Master Plan's Objectives. This pursuit of government funding should be a continuing process.



## Main Street New Jersey

The National Trust for Historic Preservation created the National Main Street Center to help individual communities throughout the country develop a comprehensive revitalization strategy that would stimulate economic development in the downtown business district within the context of historic preservation. The Na-

tional Main Street Center works directly with the state program to provide technical assistance to a limited number of designated communities. In New Jersey, the Department of Community Affairs sponsors the Main Street New Jersey Program. The Main Street New Jersey Program and the National Main Street Center work closely with Main Street New Jersey communities to develop each local program. Selected communities have access to vast resources, training and technical assistance that would otherwise be cost prohibitive to the program. In addition to ongoing assistance from the Main Street New Jersey Program, numerous other important services are provided free of charge. Periodic selections are held for participation in the Main Street New Jersey's Downtown Revitalization Program. Any municipality may apply that meets the following eligibility criteria:

- A population between 4,000 and 50,000 based on the most current census.
- Commitment to employ a full-time program manager, with an adequate operating budget, for a minimum of three years.
- Historic architectural resources in a defined downtown commercial area.
- The Main Street approach emphasizes a wide variety of local people and groups working together to improve the downtown. As a result, funding for a local program should be derived from both public and private sector sources.

### Selection Criteria Include:

The following criteria are used in reviewing and approving applications:

- Evidence that both the business community and local government support the Main Street Program philosophically and financially.
- Evidence of the community's need for, and interest in, downtown economic revitalization.
- Demonstration of a well-defined Downtown Commercial District.
- Evidence of architecturally and historically significant buildings in the downtown.
- Evidence of local historic preservation activity.
- Demonstration of the capacity for economic growth in the

downtown as a result of being a Main Street community.

- Evidence of the community's basic familiarity with Main Street Program principles.

This Master Plan identifies the Borough of South River as an ideal candidate for the Main Street New Jersey Program and suggests that the governing body consider an application to have South River designated to become a Main Street community.

## Fiscal Implementation

The availability of funding and other financial resources is one of the most important elements to the successful implementation of the goals and objectives recommended within this Master Plan. Financial support for most, if not all, of the capital improvements and acquisitions of land, as herein suggested, is available at either the federal, state, county or local forms of government as well as from private interest groups. The following list of funding resources may be applicable to the implementation process.

## Federal Government

The Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (ISTEA/TEA21) provides for federal funds to be distributed to individual states to promote alternative forms of mass transportation. In New Jersey, these discretionary funds, as allocated by the New Jersey Department of Transportation, are to be distributed through the direction of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan and the Metropolitan Planning Organizations as incentives to encourage local municipalities to develop appropriate plans. Subsequent thereto, the allocation of these funds for sidewalks, landscaping and other enhancements over and above the minimum requirements shall occur only where municipalities have adopted community-wide pedestrian plans. Hence, the any proposed Bicycle and Pedestrian Way contained within this Master Plan shall serve the Borough as the medium for meeting this funding prerequisite.

Community Development Block Grants are also conferred through the federal government to those municipalities which apply for and demonstrate a significant need to improve or provide

an important use for its community.

## State Government

The State of New Jersey makes available various sources of funding to its municipalities for capital improvements. Green Acres funds are available to both local and regional jurisdictions which demonstrate a significant need for a public use (generally open space or recreation land) in compliance with specific criteria to be met. **Additional state monies are also available through the Main Street Program to qualified communities generally in the form of matching funds as described earlier under Physical Implementation.**

## County Government

The County of Middlesex provides for discretionary funds to be distributed to those municipalities within its jurisdiction which demonstrates significant need for a capital improvement for a public use, as well as for distribution of US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development funds. Middlesex County prepares and adopts its own Master Plan and Capital Improvements Program which accounts for the needs of municipalities within its jurisdiction on a priority basis. Therefore, the Borough is encouraged to present to the County its own desired capital improvements or public use needs which may coincide with, or fall under, County authority so that they may be implemented via county action or programming. The Middlesex County Improvement Authority also provides the Borough opportunity for efficiencies in purchasing equipment and vehicles.

## Local Government

Individual municipalities implement their capital improvement projects through their own sources of funding. Other means for financing include the sale of bonds, the procurement of loans, special assessments upon tax payers directly receiving the proposed benefit and even local fundraisers.

## Private Interest Groups

Private Interest Groups often become the principal force behind

funding for local capital improvement projects or the provision of a desired public use. Private Interest Groups may consist of local business associates, local community associations or quasi-public fraternal organizations. The generation of said funds can be accrued via donations, membership fees, fundraisers and various forms of grants.

## Continued Planning

A Master Plan represents an overall objective which must be considered well into the future. It is a working document which should be subject to constant review and updating in response to changing needs and development activities of the local community. The Municipal Land Use Law provides that the Master Plan and local development regulations shall be re-examined by the Planning Board at least every six (6) years. The law further provides that the Planning Board shall prepare a report on the findings of such reexaminations and shall send a copy of the report to the County Planning Board and the Municipal Clerks of each adjoining municipality. It is recommended that the Borough Planning Board review, on an annual basis, the concepts and objectives of the Master Plan as to how they relate to any development that has actually occurred in the Borough during that year. In this respect, the Master Plan should be used on a continuing basis as the framework for considering development applications, zoning variances, and public improvement proposals.





**“Community cannot for long feed on itself; it can only flourish with the coming of others from beyond, their unknown and undiscovered brothers.”**

**-Howard Thurman, American Theologian, Clergyman**



# Community Profile Element

## General Population

The demographic element of the Master Plan organizes the general demographic characteristics of the Borough of South River in a series of tables useful for local government. The examination of these characteristics, and how they have changed over time, reveals details about how the population is changing. Analysis of past and emerging trends can be used to make projections on future growth and decline. Specific population traits such as population density, and age, race and gender distribution are provided in this section to show how changes within specific groups of people are occurring. We generate additional useful information by reviewing household characteristics in the Census data including household size, household income, housing typology and housing stock. With an accurate demographic assessment, the borough can better plan for the needs of an ever-changing citizenry.



## South River Population Trends

The net population of the borough has remained generally consistent from 1970 to 2000. However, within the 40-year period since the 1970 census, we can observe alternating trends of population growth and decline. While the 1970 census represented an all-time population high of 15,428 persons, the next 20 years were marked with a very slow and steady decline to the 1990 low of 13,692 persons. From 1990 to 2000, as the nation and region experienced an economic expansion, raw land was developed under several residential developments in the southern section of the municipality. That development period resulted in a population spike of 11% from 1990 to 2000. The turn of the century ended that growth spurt. The 2000-2020 population projects to resume no significant growth or decline within the data's margin of error, which can fluctuate

ate from single-digit declines to single digit growth of approximately 2.3% per decade.

Statistically, the population has risen and fallen around a 40-year arithmetic mean of 14,731 persons. With a standard deviation of 650 persons, this translates to an average fluctuation of only 4.4% over any given 10-year period in the last 40 years. Although the general trend from 1970 to 2020 shows or projects to show a population decline of 2% to 6%, the 11% growth rate seen in the 1990's more than compensates for this overall trend of single-digit population loss. Overall the population seems to be often moving in different directions depending on the decade. If the 2020 population projects to be at 14,617 persons, this would represent a remarkable rate of stability over the last 40 years.

**Table III-1 : Population Growth Trends: 1970-2010**

YEAR	SOUTH RIVER		MIDDLESEX COUNTY		NEW JERSEY	
	POPULATION	% CHANGE OVER PREVIOUS DECADE	POPULATION	% CHANGE OVER PREVIOUS DECADE	POPULATION	% CHANGE OVER PREVIOUS DECADE
1970	15,428	-	583,813	-	7,168,143	-
1980	14,361	-6.9%	595,893	+2.1%	7,364,823	+2.7%
1990	13,692	-4.6%	671,780	+12.7%	7,730,188	+5.0%
2000	15,322	+11.9%	750,162	+11.6%	8,414,350	+8.8%
2010	15,682	+2.3%	790,738	+5.4%	8,707,739**	+3.4%
2020 <sup>1</sup>	14,617*	-6.8%	823,162*	+4.1%	9,461,635	+8.6%

\* population projections from the Middlesex County Planning Department

\*\* data from 2008 & 2009 population estimates from the US Census Bureau

\*\*\* based on average of US Census and Middlesex County projections

<sup>1</sup> 2020 statistics are projections from the Middlesex County Planning Department & US Census Bureau

### South River Population Growth Rates Compared to other Selected Middlesex County Municipalities: 1970-2010

It is also noteworthy to recognize South River's population stability in contrast to the populations of other Middlesex County Municipalities. During the period from 1970 to 2010(2008) the population of the borough grew at an average rate of 1.6% over the 40-year period. Comparatively, municipalities with similar-sized populations in 1970 such as Metuchen and Highland Park all experienced population loss. South Amboy and Metuchen, both with almost identical population size as South River in 1970, experienced a rate of population loss from 16% to 18%. Highland Park saw a population loss of approximately 1.5%. In the alternative, North Brunswick, having a similar population to South River in 1970, has experienced over 138% population growth in that same time period.

### South River Population Density Compared to Selected Middlesex County Municipalities

Table III-3 illustrates the population density of the Borough of South River. As shown in the table, the population density is 5,408 persons per square mile. This density is 2 to 3 times more dense as is neighboring townships of East Brunswick, Sayreville or Old Bridge. The density is almost twice as high as South Amboy, a city with a comparable land area. Population density ranks third in Middlesex County only behind the City of New Brunswick and the Borough of Highland Park.

(Continued on next page)

**Table III-2 : Population Growth Rates Compared to other Middlesex County Municipalities: 1970-2010**

Municipality	1970 Population	2010 Projected Population	Rate of Growth/Decline
Old Bridge	48,715	69,044 (2007)	41.7%
East Brunswick	34,166	47,279 (2008)	38.4%
Sayreville	32,508	42,560 (2006)	30.9%
South Amboy	9,338	7,865 (2006)	-15.8%
Edison	67,120	99,532 (2006)	48.3%
North Brunswick	16,691	39,852 (2006)	138.8%
Metuchen	16,031	13,216 (2006)	-17.6%
<b>South River</b>	<b>15,428</b>	<b>15,682 (2008)</b>	<b>1.6%</b>
Highland Park	14,385	14,175 (2006)	-1.5%
New Brunswick	41,885	50,172 (2007)	19.8%

Source: Middlesex County Planning Department, US Census Bureau  
Recent available data was used for 2010 projections based on 2006-2008 Census and American Community Survey and NJ Municipal Data Book and economic growth trends from 2007-2010.

**Table III-3 : Population Density Compared to other Middlesex County Municipalities**

Municipality	Population	Area in Square Miles	Population Density (Persons per Square Mile)
Old Bridge	66,044 (2007)	40.7	1623
East Brunswick	47,279 (2008)	22.4	2111
Sayreville	42,560 (2006)	18.7	2276
South Amboy	7,865 (2006)	2.7	2913
Edison	99,532 (2006)	30.7	3242
North Brunswick	39,852 (2006)	12.3	3240
Metuchen	13,216 (2006)	2.7	4895
<b>South River</b>	<b>15,682 (2008)</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>5408</b>
Highland Park	14,175 (2006)	1.8	7875
New Brunswick	50,172 (2007)	5.8	8650

Source: Middlesex County Planning Department, US Census Bureau

## Population by Age and Gender

Population statistics by age range are provided in Table III-4. The table shows how specific age cohorts within the population have been changing since 1980. Trends vary widely by age range. The data shows a 30% increase in the population of school-aged children under 9 years of age, and a 30% decline population of young persons within the ages 15-24. The median age is 36.4 years and persons between 35 and 44 years of age have increased by over 86% since 1980. The highest rate of decrease effected people between the ages of 55 and 74. The highest rate of increase is seen in the over-75 population, where a 93% population increase was observed. The distribution of persons by gender show a 49.4% male population and a 50.6% female population. This distribution follows the general county and regional male/female distributions.



Photo Courtesy: M. Anita Hermstedt

### Table III-4 : Population Changes by Age 1980-2000

Age Group	1980	Percent of Total	1990	Percent of Total	2000	Percent of Total	Percent of Change from 1980-2000
Under 5 years	779	5.4%	904	6.6%	1,008	6.6%	29.4%
5 to 9 years	779	5.4%	751	5.5%	1,014	6.6%	30.2%
10 to 14 years	1016	7.1%	784	5.7%	945	6.2%	-7.0%
15 to 19 years	1255	8.7%	832	6.1%	903	5.9%	-28.0%
20 to 24 years	1349	9.4%	1056	7.7%	943	6.2%	-30.1%
25 to 34 years	2112	14.7%	2480	18.1%	2,474	16.1%	17.1%
35 to 44 years	1414	9.8%	1956	14.3%	2,640	17.2%	86.7%
45 to 54 years	1726	12.0%	1352	9.9%	1,936	12.6%	12.2%
55 to 64 years	2060	14.3%	1342	9.8%	1,228	8%	-40.4%
65 to 74 years	1260	8.8%	1441	10.5%	1,048	6.8%	-16.8%
75 and over	611	4.3%	794	5.8%	1183	7.7%	93.6%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>14,361</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>13,692</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>15,322</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>29.4%</b>

Source: US Census Bureau: 2000 Census, Data 2010 not available from American Community Survey/PUMS

### Table III-5 : Population by Race

Race	Number of Residents	Percent of Population: South River	Percent of Population: New Jersey
One Race	14,885	97.1 %	98.3 %
Two or more races	437	2.9 %	1.7 %
White	12,801	83.5 %	70.1 %
Black or African American	929	6.1 %	13.6 %
American Indian and Alaska Native	18	0.1 %	0.2 %
Asian	542	3.5 %	7.5 %
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	8	0.1 %	0.0 %
Some other Race	587	3.8 %	7.0 %
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	1,480	9.7 %	15.9 %

Source: 2006-2008 American Community Survey & 2000 US Census. Some individuals reported more than one race.

## Population by Race and Ancestry

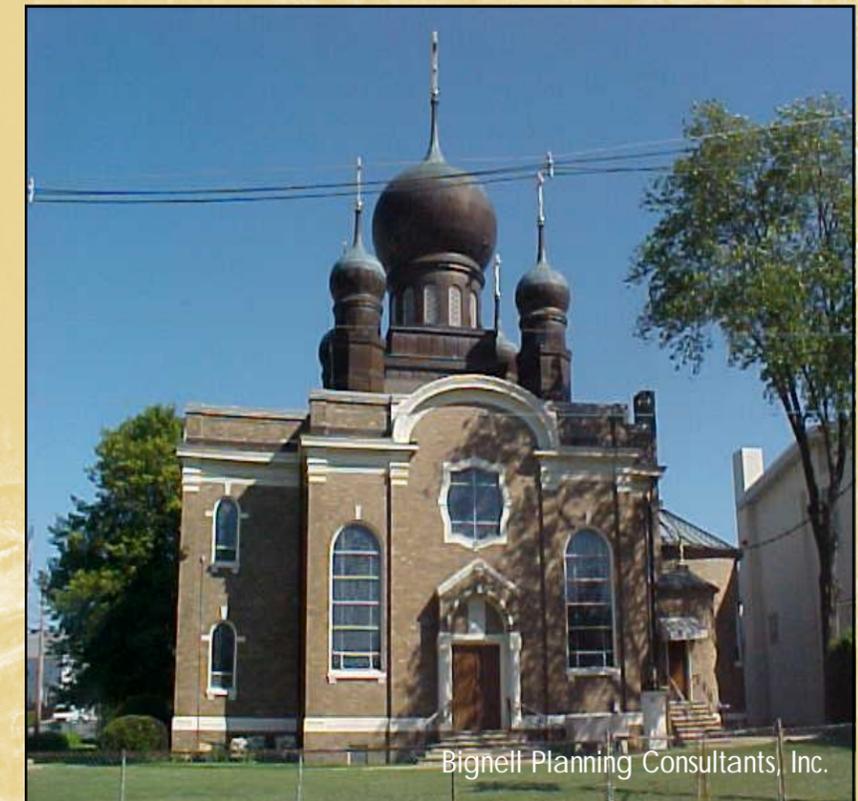
The borough of South River continues to be comprised of people from varied racial and ethnic backgrounds. Approximately 83% of the reported population is identified as white. This is a decrease from a 1980 high of 95.5%. African Americans make up six percent (6%) of the population. Approximately 9.7% of the population identifies themselves as Hispanic or Latino. This represents an increase from 1980 when only 2.3 percent of the population was of “Hispanic origin.” Asian, Pacific Is-

lander and Native American ethnicities combine to represent 3.7% of the population. A 2.9% discrepancy in the total population versus the sum of all the racial groups comes from 2.9 % of the population which identifying themselves as, “more than one race.” In terms of national ancestry, residents identified the most popular countries of ancestry as Poland, Ireland, Italy, Germany and Portugal, in that order. These nationalities combine to represent 68% of the population. The category of, “all other ancestry” represented approximately 22% of the population.

**Table III-6 : Significant Population Groups by Ancestry**

Country or Region of Ancestry	Persons in 1990	Percent of Population in 1990	Persons in 2000	Percent of Population in 2000
Arabian	-	-	177	1.2
English	348	2.5	578	3.8
German	1,505	11	1,916	12.5
Hungarian	730	5.3	638	4.2
Irish <sup>1</sup>	1,108	8.1	1,985	13.0
Italian	1,586	11.5	2,237	14.6
Polish	2,823	20.6	2,894	18.9
Portuguese	1,296	9.4	1,432	9.3
Russian	648	4.7	695	4.5
Ukrainian	208	1.5	290	1.9
American	331	2.4	375	2.4
West Indian (excluding Hispanic groups)	-	-	111	0.7
Other ancestries	1,039	7.5	3,417	22.3

Source: US Census Bureau: 1990 & 2000 Census. Not all ancestries reported. Some individuals reported more than one ancestry, therefore totals exceed 100%. A general margin of error is approximately 1%.



Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.



Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.

## Household Type, Size and Housing Unit Characteristics

The borough contained a total of 5,606 households as of the 2000 Census, up from a 1990 level of 5,091 units. A multi-decade average of approximately 2.75 persons per household can be observed since the 1980's and continues to the present day. Of the 5,769 housing units, 1,724 units, or 30.8% are renter occupied. Approximately 3,882 units or 69.2% are owner occupied. Of all dwelling units in the borough, a majority of 68.1% of units are detached, single family homes. Two-family homes comprise approximately 12% of the total housing units. A small portion of units are situated in 3-unit to 4-unit multi-family apartment buildings (6.1%) and large apartment complexes of 40 units or more (4.2%). The remaining 10% of units are spread among mid-sized apartment buildings between 5-40 units, townhomes or manufactured housing.



Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.

### Table III-7 : Household Characteristics

	1980	1990	2000
Total Households	5,091	5,091	5,606 (3,985 Family) (1,621 Non-family)
Persons Per Household	2.82	2.69	2.72

Source: 2006-2008 American Community Survey & 2000 US Census

### Table III-8 : Housing Characteristics

Housing Tenure	Occupied Housing Units	Percent
- Owner Occupied	3,882	66.4%
- Renter Occupied	1,724	30.8%
- Vacant units including seasonal units	163	2.8%
<i>Housing Tenure Totals:</i>	<i>5,769</i>	<i>100%</i>
Housing Type: (Units in structure)	Dwelling Units	Percent
- 1-unit, detached	3,928	68.1%
- 1-unit, attached	164	2.8%
- 2 units	703	12.2%
- 3 or 4 units	354	6.1%
- 5 to 9 units	121	2.1%
- 10 to 19 units	212	3.7%
- 20 or more units	244	4.2%
- Mobile/Manufactured home	43	0.7%
<i>Housing Units Total:</i>	<i>5,769</i>	<i>100%</i>

Source: 2006-2008 American Community Survey & 2000 US Census. \* Occupied housing units (households) total to 5,606 households.

## Education Attainment

Educational attainment reflects the level, culture and trends of educational achievement of the adult population in the South River community. The highest level of academic progress is shown in terms of highest grade completed and or high school diploma, or college or professional degree earned. All respondents were over the age of 25 at the time the data was collected, so the data does not reflect any person under 25 who is currently enrolled in a public or private educational institution. Note that some of this data can be misleading. In the past some indicators of educational attainment have showed decreasing levels of educational attainment in the borough. For example, from 1980 to 1990, the percentage of persons with a less than 5<sup>th</sup> grade education increased by 2.3%. Some oddities in the demographics can be attributed to immigration of foreign-born adults from countries with sub-standard education systems.

Generally, since 1980, persons attending college or having earned a four-year college degree have been steadily increasing. This data shows that more residents are attaining higher levels of education by attending college or professional schools. While in 1980, only 57% of adults living in the borough had completed high school, that rate jumped to over 76% by 2000. Further, the percentage of persons with undergraduate college degrees rose by 48% and the percentage of persons with graduate, and post graduate degrees rose by 113%. These changes suggests a decline in the older, foreign born generations of the population, which generally tend to have a lower average level of educational attainment. This trend resonates with the data show in table III-4, where a significant increase in the segment of the population age 25-44 is shown, along with a population decrease in the cohorts age 65 and 74 years old. The data also shows a significant upward trend in college attendance and completion of college and graduate level degrees. This can generally be attributed to an increase in generations of persons who are products of modern, standardized school systems and the competitive nature of the regional workforce. In-migration of persons with college-level educations has probably contributed to the increase in this percentage as well.

**Table III-9 : Educational Attainment**

Level of Education Attainment	1980	Percent of Total	1990	Percent of Total	2000	Percent of Total	1980-2000 Change of Percent by Level
Total Population 25 years and over:	9,168	100%	9,365	100%	10,547	100%	+15%
Less than 9th grade	2,520	27.5%	1,913	20.4%	1,228	11.6%	-58%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	1,415	15.4%	1,404	15%	1,250	11.9%	-22%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	3,345	36.5%	3,195	34.1%	3,693	35%	-4%
Some college, no degree	998	10.8%	1,248	13.3%	1,725	16.4%	+51%
Associate degree	-	-	378	4.1%	442	4.2%	-
Bachelor's degree	900	9.8%	951	10.1%	1,536	14.6%	+48%
Graduate or professional degree	-	-	276	3.0%	673	6.4%	+113%*
Percent high school graduate or higher	-	57.1%	-	64.6%	-	76.5%	+34%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	-	9.8%	-	13%	-	20.9%	+113%

Source: US Census Bureau: 2000 Census  
2008 Data not available from American Community Survey/PUMS or NJ Municipal Data Book

## Occupational Analysis

Occupation frequencies are shown in table III-10. As the US Census Bureau has changed occupational categories change from census to census, it has become more difficult to track trends and changes in this area. Overall trends show a rise in management, professional and related occupations, which coincides with increased levels of educational attainment. Construction and production occupations combine to employ approximately 30% of the labor force. The most popular employment industries are construction, manufacturing, retail sales and educational, health and social services.



Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.

### Table III-10 : Occupation Analysis

OCCUPATION	Total Employed	Percent
Management, professional, and related occupations	2,037	27.4%
Service occupations	889	12.0%
Sales and office occupations	2,141	28.8%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0	0.0%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	1,223	16.4%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	1,148	15.4%
<b>INDUSTRY</b>		
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	13	0.2%
Construction	1,076	14.5%
Manufacturing	973	13.1%
Wholesale trade	308	4.1%
Retail trade	980	13.2%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	566	7.6%
Information	208	2.8%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	502	6.7%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	740	9.9%
Educational, health and social services	1,072	14.4%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	364	4.9%
Other services (except public administration)	365	4.9%
Public administration	271	3.6%

Source: US Census Bureau: 2000 Census  
2010 data not available from American Community Survey/PUMS or NJ Municipal Data Book

## Income Demographics and Poverty Status

The level of income earned within a population is one of the most significant factors in influencing the socio-economic fabric of a community. Since 1980, average income levels in all income categories (per capita income, median household income, median family income) in the borough have risen but remain below Middlesex County and State averages. Income trends are shown in Table III-11.

An alarming statistic is the number of families/non-family households in the total population with earnings below the poverty level. Of a 1999 total of 3,85 families, a total of 3.7% (149 families) had earnings below the poverty line. When examining families with a female householder, where no husband was present (56 families) 11.2% of this cohort group had earnings below the poverty line. When including children under 5 in that group, the number of families below the poverty line rises to 25.5%. The demographic data also found a total of 744 individuals in the borough who reported income levels at or below poverty lines.



## Limitations on Data Quality

This plan element was prepared at the middle of year 2009. At the time this plan is being prepared, the Census Bureau is beginning the data collection process for the 2010 Census. The full results of the 2010 Census are not expected to be available until 2011. The Middlesex County Planning Department and the NJ Municipal Data Book provides some data elements for this element. Additional demographic data is available from the Public Use Micro-data Sample and American Community Survey. Administered by the federal government and based on a sample percentage of US residents, these surveys often reach 1 in 20 households and is conducted on 1, 3 and 5-year intervals between census years. These surveys generally focus on “census designated places” with populations of 20,000 residents or more. Therefore, data sources for the Borough of South River are limited. Further, surveys and The Census provide a “snapshot” count of residents and their characteristics in a community. These tools always face the challenge of counting certain segments of a population. The challenges of counting illegal housing units, transient populations and persons with illegal immigration status complicate the data. This Master Plan Element used the most recent and reliable data available compiled from several, sometimes conflicting, sources. A 2012 revision is recommended.

**Table III-11 : Income Analysis**

Income Type	South River 1980	South River 1990	South River 2000	2008 County Average	2008 State Average
Per Capita Income	\$7,965	\$16,186	\$23,684	\$33,315	\$34,899
Median Household Income	\$20,989	\$37,998	\$52,324	\$77,315	\$69,674
Median Family Income	\$23,425	\$44,353	\$62,689	\$90,769	\$84,743
Families Below Poverty Line	148 Families	216 Families	149 Families	-	-

Source: US Census Bureau: 1980-2000 Census  
2008 American Community Survey



**"Twenty years from now  
you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do  
than by the ones you did do."**

-Mark Twain



# Land Use Plan Element

## SECTION I: EXISTING LAND USE

### Introduction

The existing land use plan identifies land uses as they are presently developed regardless of their respective zoning. The existing land use plan was prepared in 2009 by several months of extensive field inventories of each lot in the Borough as well as reviewing data with the tax assessor and reviewing aerial photographs to verify land uses. Through the land use inventory process, any parcel that had no improvements but showed an apparent connection to an abutting land use was classified in the same category as the abutting use. Parcels that were clearly vacant and had no apparent relationship to any abutting parcel were classified as vacant. Almost all developable land in the Borough is developed with a mix of residential, commercial and industrial uses. The results are portrayed on the Existing Land Use Plan Map(s).

The Borough of South River is approximately 2.75 square miles, or 1,812 acres in land area. In addition, the Borough consists of claims to approximately 64 acres of water rights pertaining to the South River. The upland areas of the Borough is comprised of an assortment of land uses, including residential, commercial, industrial, public, quasi-public, right-of-way's and vacant land. Although diversity in land uses is evident, the community is predominantly comprised of singlefamily residential detached dwellings with a mature suburban character. Numerous vacant parcels exist throughout the Borough, and while some are legally joined to other undersized residential parcels, some are vacant and provide the availability for infill development.

### Residential Land Use

Approximately 45% of the Borough's land area, or 815 acres, is dedicated to residential use. Single-family detached dwellings represent approximately 97% of the residential land area, with two-family, three-family, and multi-family apartment buildings comprising the remaining percentages. Single family dwellings are found almost everywhere in the Borough, except in the northern industrial areas and the central business district. Most structures are older homes located on rectangular, often undersized



lots. Distinct, consistent tracts of development homes are located in the southern portion of the Borough, with many homes built on curvilinear streets and trapezoidal lots.

Two and three family homes occupy a small ( $\pm 2\%$ ) percentage of the land area in the Borough and are scattered throughout the older single-family neighborhoods in town. These uses are most prevalent in the transitional areas between residential and commercial uses. Many of these types of dwellings were once single-family homes which have been since converted.

Multi-family dwellings occupy a small portion ( $\pm 3\%$ ) of land area in the Borough but are the densest of all residential uses. These uses are randomly scattered throughout the Borough. Garden apartments, townhouses, boarding and rooming houses are all included in this category. There are several large apartment com-

plexes scattered throughout South River including near the high school and east of Whitehead Avenue. There are also a smaller number of multi-family apartment buildings located in and around the transitional areas surrounding the central business district. The larger garden apartment complexes are of typical 1950-1970 design, while the older, smaller buildings typically date to the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Several neighborhoods throughout the Borough have exhibited patterns of illegal conversions to higher densities within a single residential structure. A similar pattern of infill development inconsistent with surrounding neighborhood patterns and zoning ordinance standards has been observed.



## Commercial Land Use

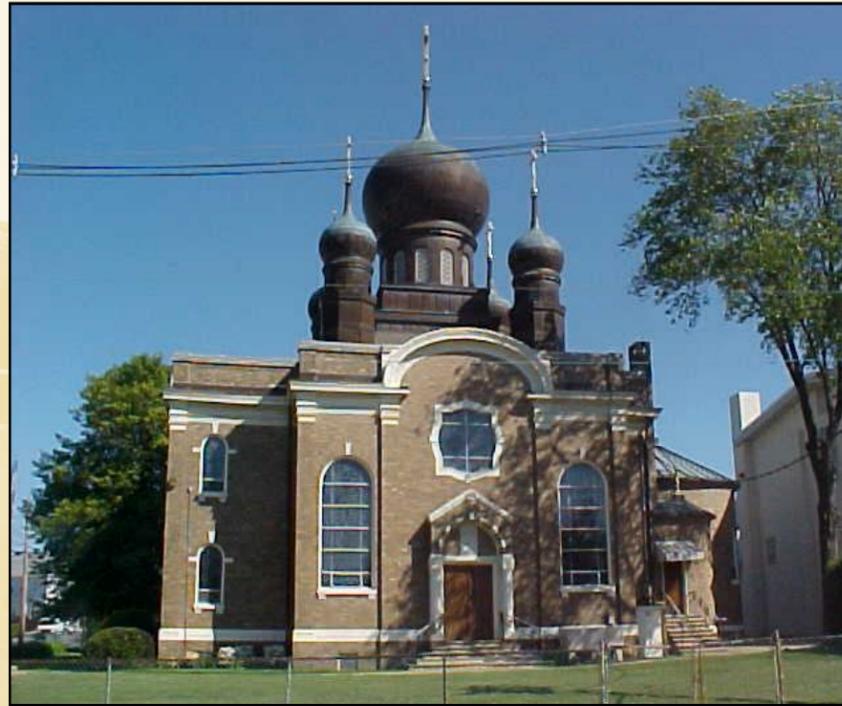
Commercial land use only accounts for approximately 5% of the Borough's land area, or approximately 83 acres. Commercial land use consists of retail and wholesale sales, general businesses, offices, mixed uses, and personal service businesses. Commercial uses are located throughout the Borough, mainly on the principal thoroughfares. Retail and service businesses are concentrated in the central business district along Main, Ferry, Prospect, Whitehead, Reid streets, and along Old Bridge Turnpike. Most commercial businesses are oriented to serve neighborhood-level or town-wide commercial clientele. Most commercial uses are located in small-format commercial spaces, several of which would benefit from some form of rehabilitation.

## Industrial Land Use

Industrial land use accounts for approximately ±5% of the Borough's land area, which equates to approximately 100 acres. This land use consists of manufacturing, distribution, construction, warehouses, and quarry production. The north end of the Borough contains a modern, large format industrial park with direct access to Edgeboro Road and Route 18. Despite several distribution warehouses in the area, large portions of this area remain vacant. The south end of the Borough contains smaller established

industrial uses such as light manufacturing and shipping and construction storage.

## Public & Quasi-Public Land Use



Public lands are contained in approximately 16% of the Borough's land area. This includes government offices, schools, public utilities, parks and recreation areas, county protected open space and municipal parking lots.

Quasi-public lands account for approximately 6% of the land in the Borough. This category includes houses of worship, private schools, fraternal organizations and social clubs. The predominant quasi-public uses include the Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, Knights of Columbus, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, and two private religious schools in the Borough.

Public rights of way account for approximately 17% of the land area in the Borough, the second largest land use category of land use in South River. This category includes Borough and county roads and bridges, as well as lands reserved for railroad rights-of-

way. Middlesex County roads include Main Street, Old Bridge Turnpike, and parts of Whitehead Avenue, Ferry Street, Reid Street, Jackson Street and Prospect Street. The Conrail Company owns the main east-west rail line in the Borough.

## Vacant Land

Vacant lands comprise a decreasing 6% of land area in the Borough. As large tracts of residential homes have been developed in the southern portion of town, vacant lands have decreased steadily since 1990. Parcels range from scattered 4,000 SF located in residential neighborhood to multi-acre parcels in the north end, area west of Whitehead Avenue, the Waterfront area and some environmentally sensitive areas between Varga Park and the Sayreville-South River Bridge. These vacant sites are generally suitable for development contingent on the availability of utilities and infrastructure, although some sites contain environmental constraints which limit their development potential. Many vacant parcels are environmentally sensitive areas with steep slopes, wetlands, marshes, or are generally located in floodplain areas associated with the South River.



## Existing Zoning Districts

The South River Zoning Ordinance had been in effect for several decades and creates numerous land use categories to govern the use of land.

### R-100 Single-Family Residential District

Permitted uses in this district include single family dwellings, houses of worship, public and private non-profit, educational institutions and public utility structures other than storage and maintenance garages. Multi-family dwellings are permitted as a conditional use. Minimum lot size is 10,000 SF with a minimum 100' width and minimum 90' depth.

### R-75 Single-Family Residential District

Permitted uses in this district include single family dwellings, houses of worship, public and private non-profit, educational institutions and public utility structures other than storage and maintenance garages. This zone also permits semi-detached housing. Minimum lot size is 7,500 SF with a minimum 75' width and a minimum 90' depth.



### R-2 Two-Family Residential District

Permitted uses in this district include single family dwellings, detached two-family dwellings, houses of worship, public and private non-profit, educational institutions and public utility structures other than storage and maintenance garages. This zone also permits semi-detached housing. Minimum lot size is 7,500 SF with a minimum 75' width and a minimum 90' depth. Sex clubs and massage parlors are prohibited in all residential districts.

### O-P Office Professional District

Permitted uses in this district include business and professional offices, office buildings, finance, insurance and real estate offices, medical offices, clinics, testing laboratories, educational training centers, and single-family residential dwellings. The zone allows home professional offices and home occupations as a condition use. Minimum lot size is 7,500 SF with a minimum 75' width and a minimum 90' depth.

### B-1 Neighborhood Business District

Permitted uses in this district include banks, business and professional offices, office buildings, finance, insurance and real estate offices, medical offices, clinics, testing laboratories, educational training centers, and single-family residential dwellings, houses of worship, public and private non-profit, educational institutions and public utility structures, retail shopping facilities, personal services and funeral homes. Minimum lot size is 5,000 SF with a minimum 50' width and a minimum 90' depth.

### B-2 Neighborhood Business District

Permitted uses in this district include banks, business and professional offices, office buildings, finance, insurance and real estate offices, medical offices, clinics, testing laboratories, educational training centers, and single-family residential dwellings, houses of worship, public and private non-profit, educational institutions and public utility structures, retail shopping facilities, personal services, funeral homes private recreation and amusement, hotels, animal hospitals, diners and nightclubs, as well as shopping centers. Gasoline stations and billboards are conditional uses in this zone. Minimum lot size is 5,000 SF with a minimum 50' width and a minimum 90' depth.

### L-I Research and Limited Manufacturing District

Permitted uses in this district include all uses permitted in the B-2 district, except those permitted in the R-75 district, scientific and research laboratories, industrial public utility installations, industrial uses, contractor shops, warehousing, printing and publishing, wholesale sales, public parking lots, and senior citizen housing projects. Gasoline stations and billboards are conditional uses in this zone. Hazardous materials and residential uses are prohibited. Minimum lot size is 20,000 SF.



### H-I Heavy Industrial District

Permitted uses in this district include all uses permitted in the L-I district, assembly of products, metal processing, manufacturing of machinery, alcohol, building materials, stone, food, glass, rubber, tires, wax, paper and plastics, textiles, chemicals, canning, bulk processing of wood or lumber. Billboards are conditional uses in this zone. Minimum lot size is 20,000 SF.

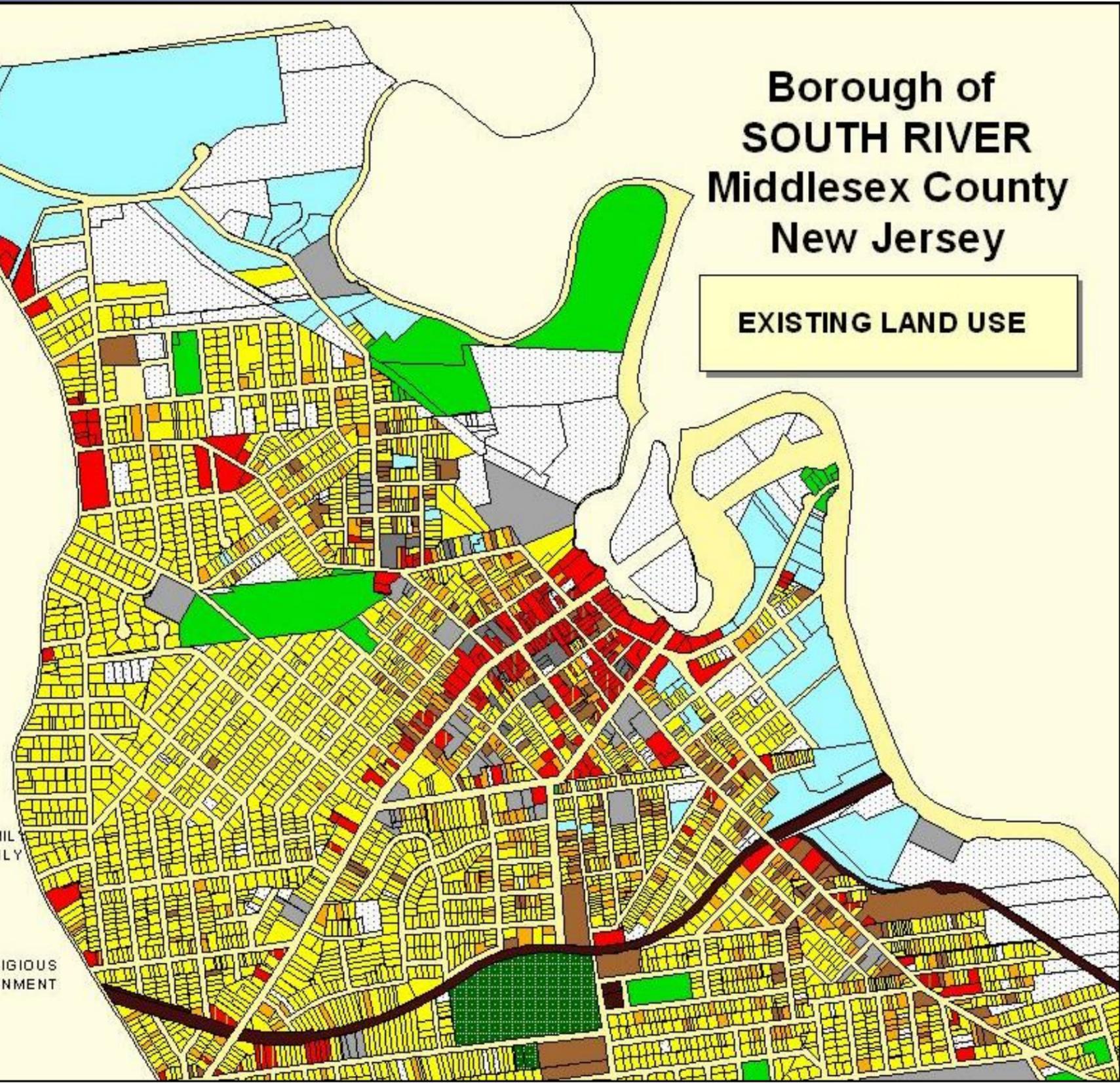
# Borough of SOUTH RIVER Middlesex County New Jersey

**EXISTING LAND USE**

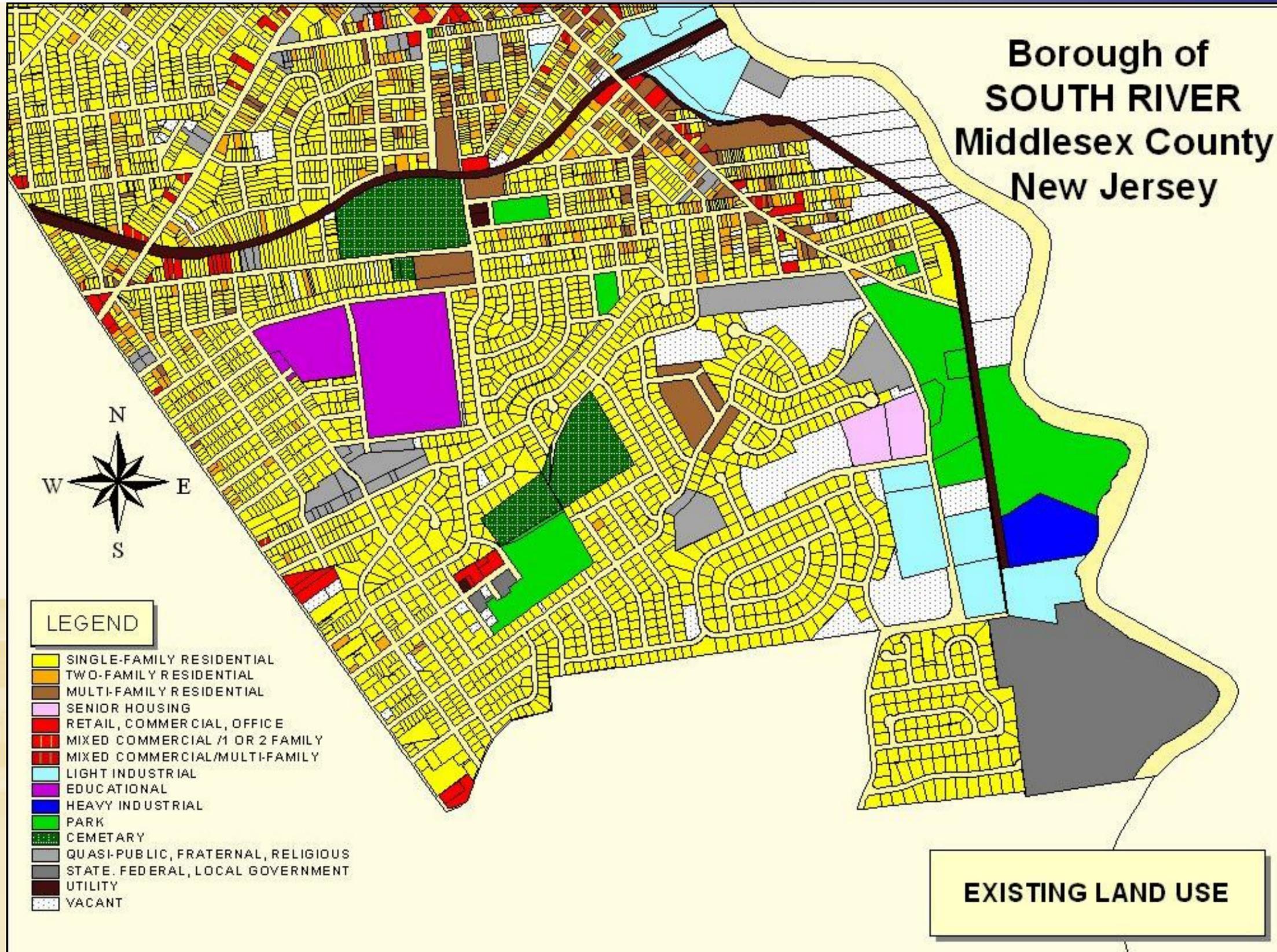


**LEGEND**

- SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- SENIOR HOUSING
- RETAIL, COMMERCIAL, OFFICE
- MIXED COMMERCIAL /1 OR 2 FAMIL
- MIXED COMMERCIAL/MULTI-FAMILY
- LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- HEAVY INDUSTRIAL
- PARK
- CEMETARY
- QUASI-PUBLIC, FRATERNAL, RELIGIOUS
- STATE, FEDERAL, LOCAL GOVERNMENT
- UTILITY
- VACANT



Borough of  
**SOUTH RIVER**  
Middlesex County  
New Jersey



## SECTION II: FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

This Land Use Plan Element provides a sound planning basis upon which future decisions may be made regarding planning, zoning, redevelopment, and future capital improvements. Because South River is predominantly developed, this Land Use Element does not propose any radical land use concepts that will dramatically alter the character of the community. Land development patterns are recommended to be continued in many neighborhoods. However, as recommended in previous Master Plans, focused redevelopment is needed in specific areas of the Borough including the Central Business District and the Waterfront. Land use policies need to be revised to keep up with changes in land use, changing populations, availability of land, and an aging built environment. Specific corridors and specific areas are encouraged to be studied and redeveloped and/or rehabilitated to an appropriate use. Infill development is needed throughout the Borough in both residential and commercial areas. This land use plan delineates the proposed location and future extent of developable and re-developable land within the Borough which should be used for residential, commercial, office, industrial, public, quasi-public, recreation, educational, cemetery and conservation purposes.



### Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives are specific to this Land Use Plan and represent the particular intentions of the Borough regarding development and redevelopment within each land use category so as to protect the public health, safety and general welfare of all present and future citizens of the municipality.

- To preserve and protect the existing viable low-density residential neighborhoods by promoting infill development of vacant lots within the framework of the existing land use pattern and zoning ordinance.
- To maintain and contain the existing medium density residential neighborhoods and uses (two and three-family dwellings) by restricting the conversion of single-family residential dwellings.
- To preserve and protect existing planned residential development for the elderly in an adult community.
- To preserve and protect existing senior housing facilities and encourage additional senior citizen housing in appropriate locations.
- To encourage economic development through the revitalization and redevelopment of the central business district along Main and Ferry Streets
- To examine the mixed-use commercial/residential land uses located along Whitehead Avenue and encourage their rehabilitation.
- To support the commercial and office attractiveness of the Borough in appropriate locations by encouraging existing compatible development along Old Bridge Turnpike.
- To encourage the establishment of professional offices within residential structures of colonial style architecture in appropriate locations along Main Street.
- To establish a Waterfront Redevelopment area along the eastern waterfront with focus on development and redevelopment of the existing commercial/business/industrial uses as a water-oriented uses incorporating mixed use residential, commercial and recreational activities.
- To encourage infill development and expansion of industrial uses in the North End Industrial Park and promote the light industrial development on such lands designate by the zoning map in the southern portion of the town off Whitehead Avenue.
- To provide adequate and appropriate land area for the potential expansion of public uses throughout the Borough.
- To provide adequate and appropriate land area for the potential expansion of public and private educational uses throughout the Borough.
- To provide adequate and appropriate land area for the potential expansion of recreation uses throughout the Borough and to link open spaces to the greatest extent possible so as to create a greenbelt throughout the Borough.
- To protect and conserve the Borough's environmentally sensitive areas including wetlands, steep slopes and floodplains as set forth in the Master Plan, the Middlesex County Master Plan, and the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan through the comprehensive use of planning techniques and the prudent control of future land development.
- To acknowledge the potential need to provide for a future land use plan for the development and redevelopment of land along the south river waterfront, shoreline and floodplain area in anticipation of the federal government flood control project, which will result in a significant disruption and alteration of existing properties, structures, and the municipal landscape.
- To provide adequate and appropriate land use regulations for the protection of existing cemetery lands throughout the Borough and to protect such spaces from encroaching residential development.

## Residential Land Use Plan Pattern

Residential development is the major land use in the Borough. This land use plan recommends maintaining the established general pattern of developed residential land use within the borough wherein higher density uses are recommended to be situated closer to Main Street and Whitehead Avenue. This land use policy seeks to avoid increased traffic flow through the lower density residential neighborhoods.

Lower density residential housing is recommended to be situated farthest away from downtown business and commercial uses as well as industrial areas. Medium density residential uses are recommended to be situated between higher and lower density neighborhoods thereby serving as a transitional residential use.

## Single-Family Residential Low Density Uses

Single-family residential development continues to be recommended throughout the majority of the Borough in accordance with previous 1989 and 1997 Master Plans. There are two significant areas designated for single family use. One area is the residential neighborhood located north of Main Street, south of the North End Industrial Park, east of Old Bridge Turnpike and west of the environmentally sensitive areas situated along the South River. The second principal residential area is located south of Main Street, north of East Brunswick Township, east of Old Bridge Turnpike and west of Whitehead Avenue. A third, smaller area of single-family residential dwellings is located east of Whitehead Avenue, north of the industrial zone and is bordered by the abandoned railroad line. These areas generally correspond to the existing R-100 and R-75 Zoning Districts.

These areas are not homogeneous single-family residential neighborhoods. Several multi-family, two-family, commercial, garden apartment, and quasipublic uses exist intermixed throughout these areas. Some are older commercial uses and two-family-uses that preexist the adopting of a zoning ordinance. This plan recognizes the existence of this land use pattern, however recommends that a zoning policy that discourages their enlargement or intensification be maintained. On the whole, sin-

gle-family residential land use is recommended at a density ranging between 4.4 to 5.8 du/ac. Single-family lot sizes should remain at a minimum of 7,500 SF to 10,000 SF, depending on the character of the neighborhood.

## Two-Family Residential Medium Density Uses

Two-family residential uses are recommended primarily in the central portion of the Borough in close proximity to the downtown business and commercial districts. This land use classification has been designated for specific parcels which currently consist of that use. Although many of these medium density uses are present elsewhere in the community, such a designation is restricted in favor of the single-family residential designation. This Master Plan recommends a continuation of that policy. This is intended to protect the integrity of those neighborhoods in light of the recognition that many structures are unsuited for conversion and should remain as single-family homes. On the whole, two-family residential land use is recommended at a density ranging between 4.4 to 5.8 du/ac. Lot sizes should remain at a minimum of 7,500 SF to 10,000 SF, depending on the character of the neighborhood and the density of the dwelling.



## Smart Growth

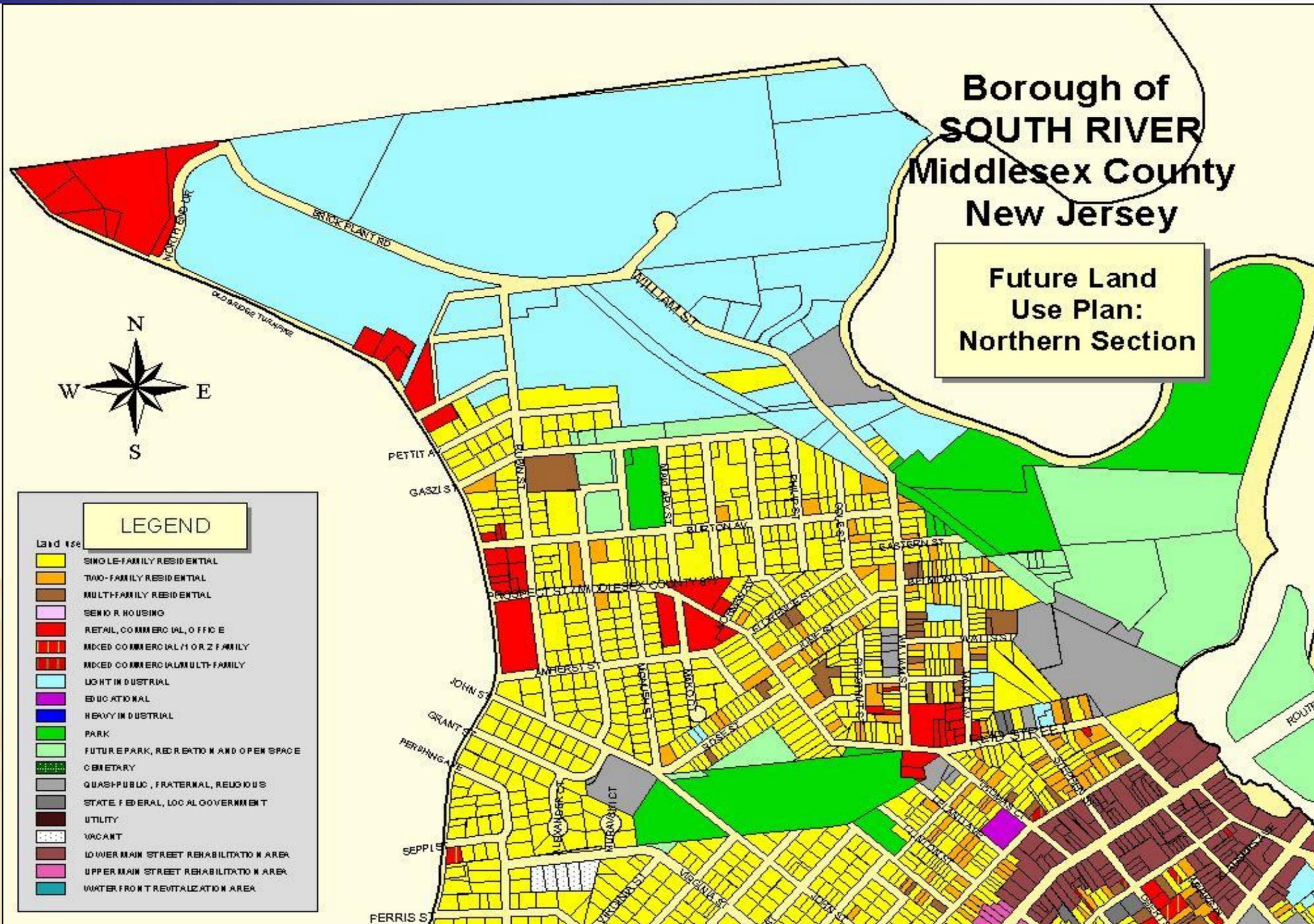
Smart Growth is the term used to describe well-planned, well-managed growth that adds new homes and creates new jobs, while preserving open space and environmental resources. Smart Growth supports livable neighborhoods with a variety of housing types, price ranges and multi-modal forms of transportation. Smart Growth is an approach to land-use planning that targets the State's resources and funding in ways that enhance the quality of life for residents in New Jersey. Smart Growth principles include mixed-use development, walkable town centers and neighborhoods, mass transit accessibility, sustainable economic and social development and preserved green space. Smart Growth can be seen all around us: it is evident in larger cities such as Jersey City and Hoboken; in smaller towns like Red Bank and in the rural communities like Chesterfield and Lambertville/New Hope.

In New Jersey, Smart Growth supports development and redevelopment in recognized Centers—a compact form of development—as outlined in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan, with existing infrastructure that serves the economy, the community and the environment. The future land use plan for the Borough of South River should be guided by, among other objectives, the guiding principals of Smart Growth.

## Principles of Smart Growth:

- Mixed land uses
- Compact, clustered community design
- Range of housing choice and opportunity
- Walkable neighborhoods
- Distinctive, attractive communities with a sense of place
- Open space and scenic resource preservation
- Future development strengthened and directed to existing communities using existing infrastructure
- Transportation options
- Predictable, fair and cost-effective development decisions
- Community and stakeholder collaboration in development decision-making

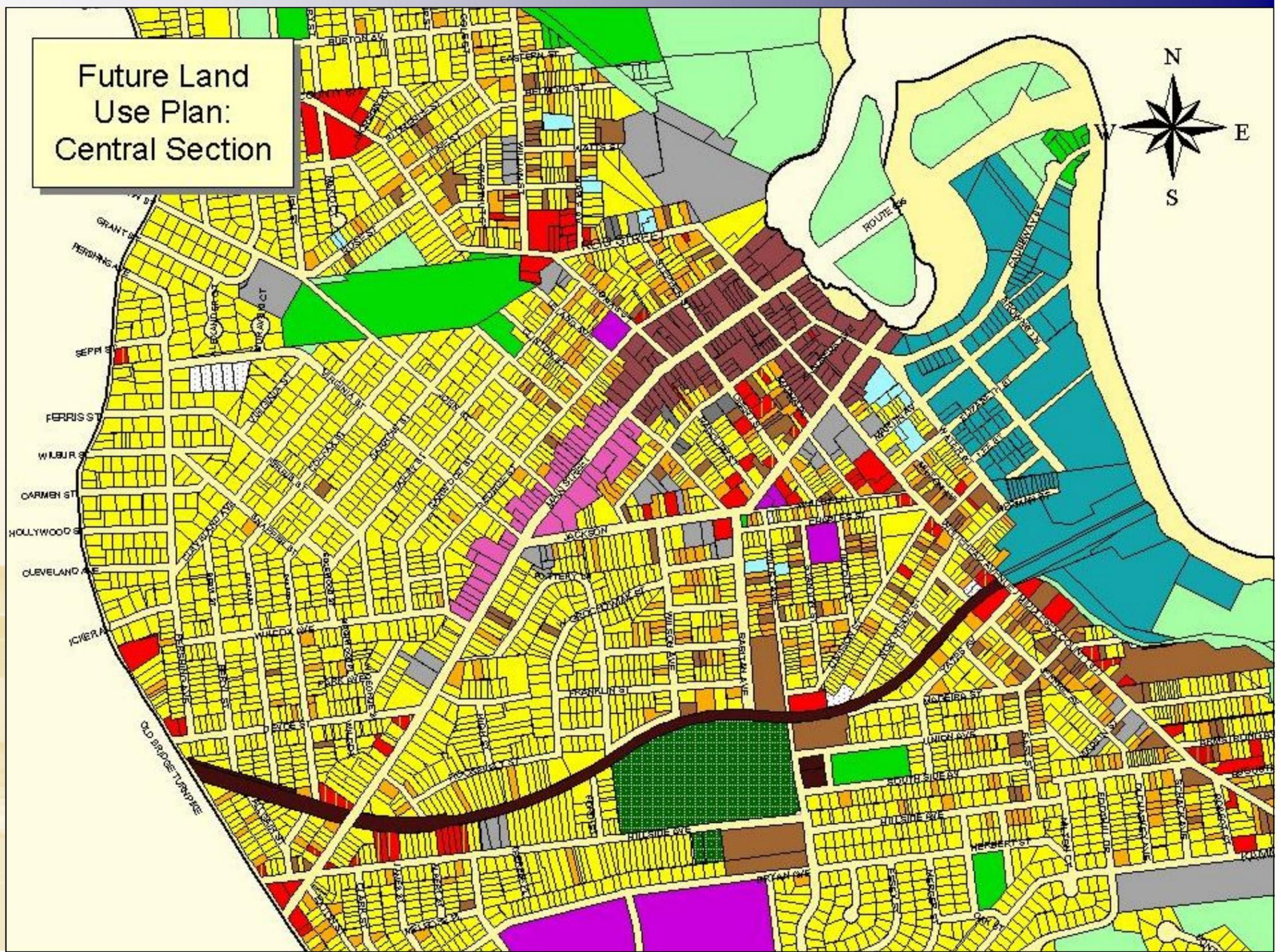
Source: NJDCA Office of Smart Growth

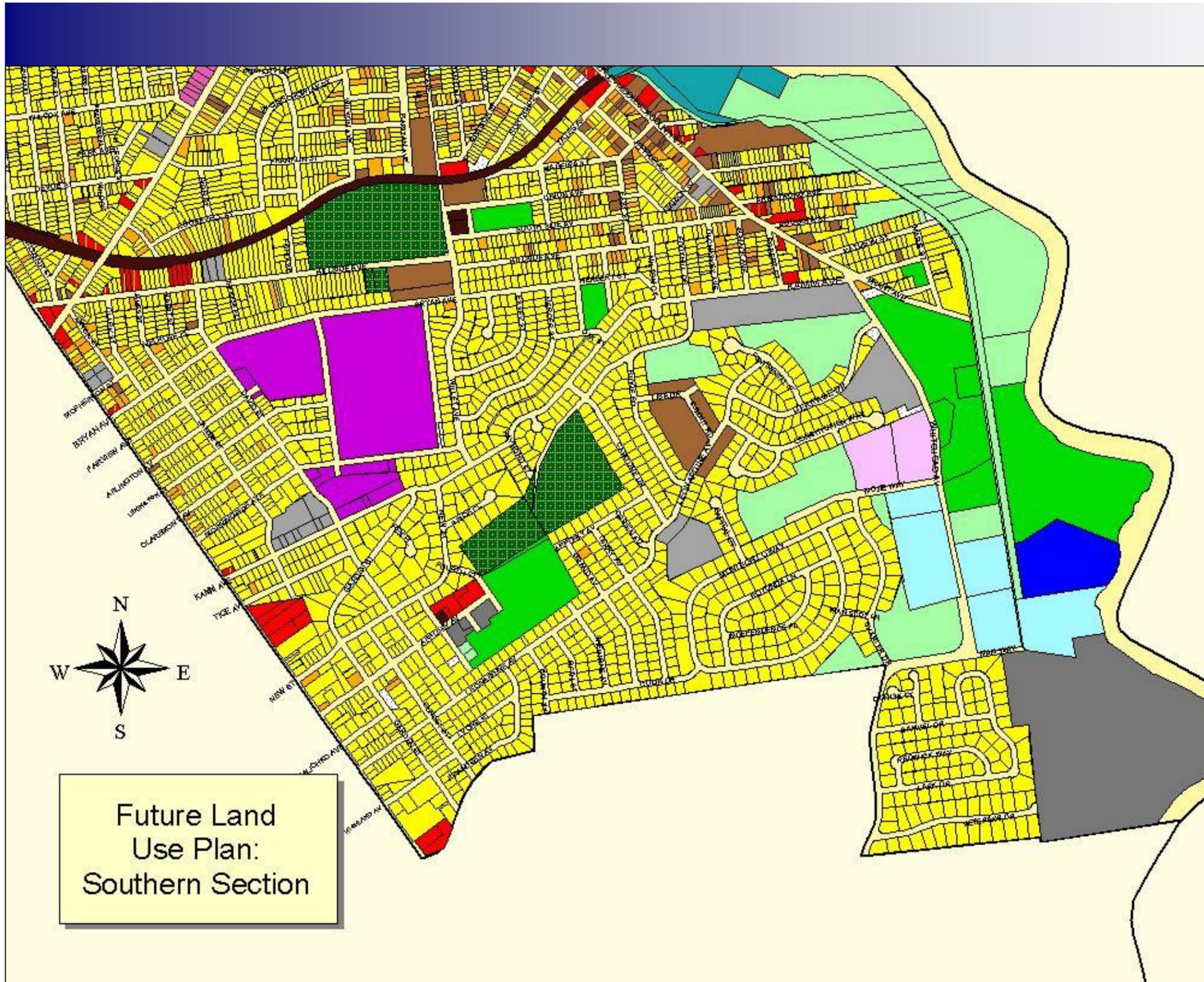


Future Land Use Plan:  
Central Section



LEGEND	
	SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
	TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
	MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
	SENIOR HOUSING
	RETAIL, COMMERCIAL, OFFICE
	MIXED COMMERCIAL/1 OR 2 FAMILY
	MIXED COMMERCIAL/MULTI-FAMILY
	LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
	EDUCATIONAL
	HEAVY INDUSTRIAL
	PARK
	FUTURE PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE
	CEMETARY
	QUASH PUBLIC, FRATERNAL, RELIGIOUS
	STATE, FEDERAL, LOCAL GOVERNMENT
	UTILITY
	VACANT
	LOWER MAIN STREET REHABILITATION AREA
	UPPER MAIN STREET REHABILITATION AREA
	WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION AREA





LEGEND	
[Yellow]	SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
[Orange]	TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
[Brown]	MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
[Light Purple]	SENIOR HOUSING
[Red]	RETAIL, COMMERCIAL, OFFICE
[Dark Red]	MIXED COMMERCIAL/H OR 2-FAMILY
[Dark Red]	MIXED COMMERCIAL/MULTI-FAMILY
[Light Blue]	LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
[Purple]	EDUCATIONAL
[Dark Blue]	HEAVY INDUSTRIAL
[Green]	PARK
[Light Green]	FUTURE PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE
[Green with dots]	CEMETARY
[Grey]	QUASI-PUBLIC, FRATERNAL, RELIGIOUS
[Dark Grey]	STATE, FEDERAL, LOCAL GOVERNMENT
[Dark Brown]	UTILITY
[White with dots]	VACANT
[Light Brown]	LOWER MAIN STREET REHABILITATION AREA
[Pink]	UPPER MAIN STREET REHABILITATION AREA
[Teal]	WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION AREA

**A note about the Future Land Use Plan Maps:**  
The three Land Use Plan Maps have been prepared to show a more accurate level of detail on small parcels than other maps in this Master Plan. The three sections were generated based on the geometry of the Borough. Maps are not to scale with each other and have not been scaled.

## Multi-Family & Garden Apartment Residential Uses

Multi-family residential uses are presently permitted in all residential zones as a conditional use on lots of 3 acres or more with several other conditions. Designated multi-family residential land uses represent existing isolated dwellings of three, four or more units which are generally located along the outskirts of business and commercial corridors, often arranged in multi-unit development complexes. Multifamily uses are not recommended for any vacant or undeveloped parcels in recognition of the borough's greater need for a sustainable balance of non-residential to residential use. Therefore, they should be removed as conditional uses in specific zones, or all zones. Multi-family residential land use is recommended at a density ranging between 8 to 10 du/ac. Lot sizes should remain at a minimum of 3 acres. In general, this is a land use that should be discouraged in most places in the Borough, except when provided as part of a housing



rehabilitation plan or in a planned redevelopment/revitalization area.

## General Commercial Uses

General commercial uses continue to be recommended along the eastern half of Main Street and within the central business district and situated along portions of Water and Ferry Streets. Several smaller areas of general commercial development exist throughout the Borough and continue to be recommended as neighborhood commercial uses. These areas include the area around the intersection of Main Street and Hillside Avenue, property fronting along Old Bridge Turnpike adjacent to the North End Industrial Park, the intersection of Old Bridge Turnpike to the northern end of town, the intersection of Old Bridge Turnpike and Race Track Road / Gladstone Drive, the intersection of Prospect, Reid and Thomas Streets, the intersection of Jackson and Raritan Streets and clusters of commercial development along the Whitehead Avenue corridor. The smaller neighborhood commercial areas throughout the Borough should provide ground floor retail and commercial occupancy. Off-street parking should be provided in these locations by the commercial uses. Office and professional uses are recommended to continue along Main Street and should incorporate all areas between Gordon Street and DeVoe Street. Professional office uses should be encouraged to locate in existing residential structures, many of which are large dwellings of colonial-style architecture. The objective of this area is should be to protect the existing area from undesirable or inappropriate land use conversions and provide for a reasonable transition between the downtown business district and the residential neighborhoods located north and south of Main Street.

## Senior Housing Uses

This plan proposes and recommends a land use designation for the designation and protection of existing senior housing facilities in the Borough. These facilities are recommended to continue in their current location in the southern end of the Borough of Whitehead Avenue and Wojie Way. These facilities exist and currently operating as senior housing developments, however, this use is invaluable to the community and should be specified as a matter of land use policy.



## Public Land Uses

The Land Use Plan identifies the locations for public, non-school uses. In general, public land uses are established and any new uses may be located anywhere in the Borough. The Borough is encouraged to consolidate municipal services into a central, prominent location through its long-term planning process.

## Quasi-Public Uses

The Land Use Plan delineates locations for quasi-public uses including houses of worship, civic and fraternal organizations clubs and charitable organizations. These land uses can be located almost anywhere throughout the Borough depending on the compatibility of surrounding uses. A minimum lot area of 3 acres and a site plan buffering policy is recommended to ensure that these uses do not create negative impacts on their surrounding neighborhoods. A deed restrictions policy should be adopted for these uses to ensure their perpetual quasi-public use and reduce the pressure on these organizations from developers.

## Main Street and Ferry Street: Downtown Business District

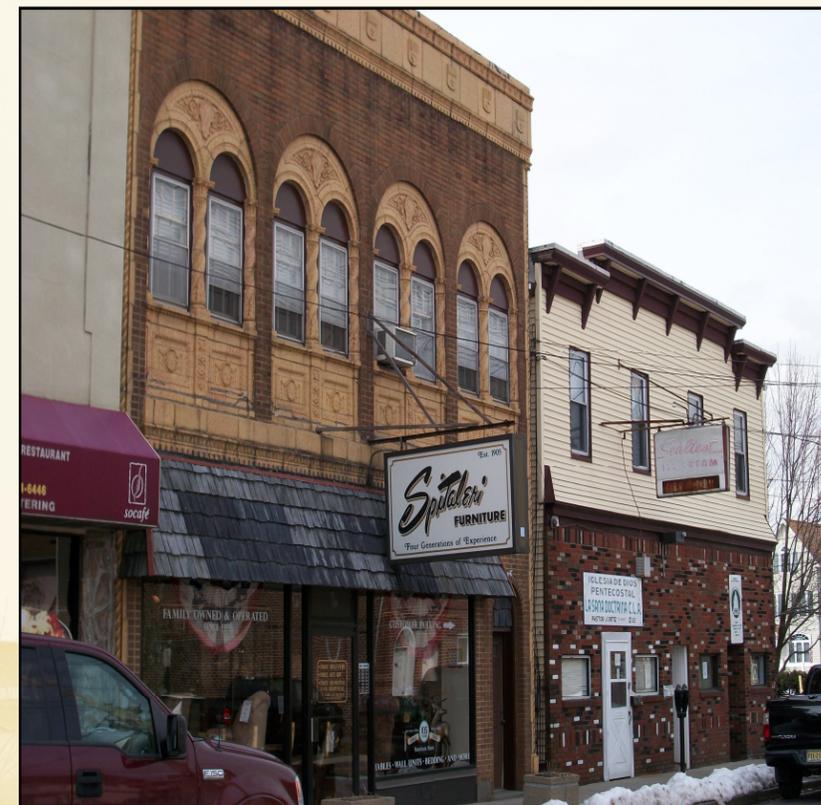
South River's central business district is situated on the Main Street corridor, with a retail core located between Water Street and Gordon Street and a sparse grouping of professional office uses extending as far east as Jackson Street. The business district also extends on a southbound axis to include the 350 foot length of Ferry Street between Main Street and Jackson Street. The district is bounded on the east by Water Street. For almost 300 years, there has been important commercial traffic at this location, where over time, a succession of ferries and bridges have carried people and goods from Ports in New York to Perth Amboy to southern New Jersey and Philadelphia. That road, now Main Street, is the principal reason for their being a business district there and it remains its major commercial resource for the Borough. (Houstoun, 1987)

The central business district is identified in this Master Plan as the 10-block area bounded by Gordon, Jackson, Water and Main Streets; however the core of the area is located on a three block stretch of Main Street between Jackson and Water Streets. The



area contains a mix of early 20th century, mid-century, and turn-of-the-century buildings. Much of the area was constructed when the region's industrial revolution was at its height, long before planning and zoning ordinances were adopted in the Borough. As the manufacturing base of the local economy began to change in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, South River's central business district was left behind in an era of booming development on the suburban fringe. The area's physical decline soon followed and in the 1970's South River saw its first population decline in modern times. The growth of commercial and retail shopping centers along the Route 18 corridor between 1970 and 1990 dealt another blow to the central business district. A 1987 Planning Study described the central business district as an area marked by, "scattered businesses, amidst vacant and unimproved lands, parking, and housing of average to poor quality." (Houstoun, 1987) Almost 25 years later, continued signs of decline remain prominent in this area.

South River's central business district was identified at the community visioning workshops as one of the most critical areas in the Borough where improvement is needed. This Master Plan recommends that a detailed planning study of this specific area be conducted. It is recommended that the governing body consider delineating a study area to include the blocks and lots identified above and consider creating a rehabilitation/revitalization zone to include the entire central business district. A concept delineation is shown to the right. This is a more aggressive approach than maintaining the existing zoning designation at this location and is intended to serve as a "jumpstart" to improving the physical conditions of the area. The governing body will need to determine how aggressive the zoning ordinance should be. In any form the zoning ordinance should encourage construction of new retail commercial buildings or rehabilitation of existing uses. The zone should encourage 2-story or 3-story mixed-uses and discourage boarding/rooming houses, multi-family apartment buildings, all drive-through uses, and all onestory buildings. Mixed uses should include ground floor retail and 2<sup>nd</sup> and possibly 3<sup>rd</sup> floor office spaces. Restaurants in the area should be encouraged, and, through their design, should provide outdoor dining opportunities. A central civic space/prominent municipal building should also be considered for this area. The area should be pedestrian friendly and should aim to make South River a "destination



downtown." Incentive programs should be considered to attract desirable retail, restaurant and commercial businesses to the area. Any new zone should review parking conditions in this area and provide a method to create additional public parking, if necessary. The zone should integrate transportation infrastructure into the design of the street and sidewalks to encourage use of NJ Transit's bus system in the area.

This Master Plan recommends, through appropriate land use controls, that the central business district be aggressively promoted as the Borough's principal commercial area and pedestrian commercial corridor by providing an attractive, comfortable and convenient environment in which to shop, eat and expand commercial activity. On street parking should continue to be maximized and off-street parking is to be located behind businesses, in public or private lots accessed off secondary roads. The focus of the central business district should be ground floor retail occupancy with office and personal service commercial uses above. Adap-

# Lower Main Street Rehabilitation Area

# Upper Main Street Rehabilitation Area

Rehabilitation areas shown are concept areas only. Any future zoning or rehabilitation ordinance will have to delineate a specific area based on the general concept shown.

tive reuse is of existing residential uses are recommended to create additional viable professional office use.

The Borough should also consider adopting architectural standards for the zone with an emphasis on historic preservation where appropriate. Buildings should be constructed with quality materials with an emphasis on brick, stone and other natural textures and colors to achieve a high level of architectural detail. Fixtures and finishes should generally create a desirable visual environment and should be appropriate for a downtown/Main Street area. Appropriate signage guidelines should be considered, along with a signage “program” for the entire area. The Borough should also consider a façade improvement program for this area, including a matching grant or low-interest loan program, in partnership with mainstreet.org or other Main Street programs from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. A streetscape improvement plan and/or fund should be considered for this district. The area plan should also consider creating a system of alleys and or access easements to eliminate trash and recycling



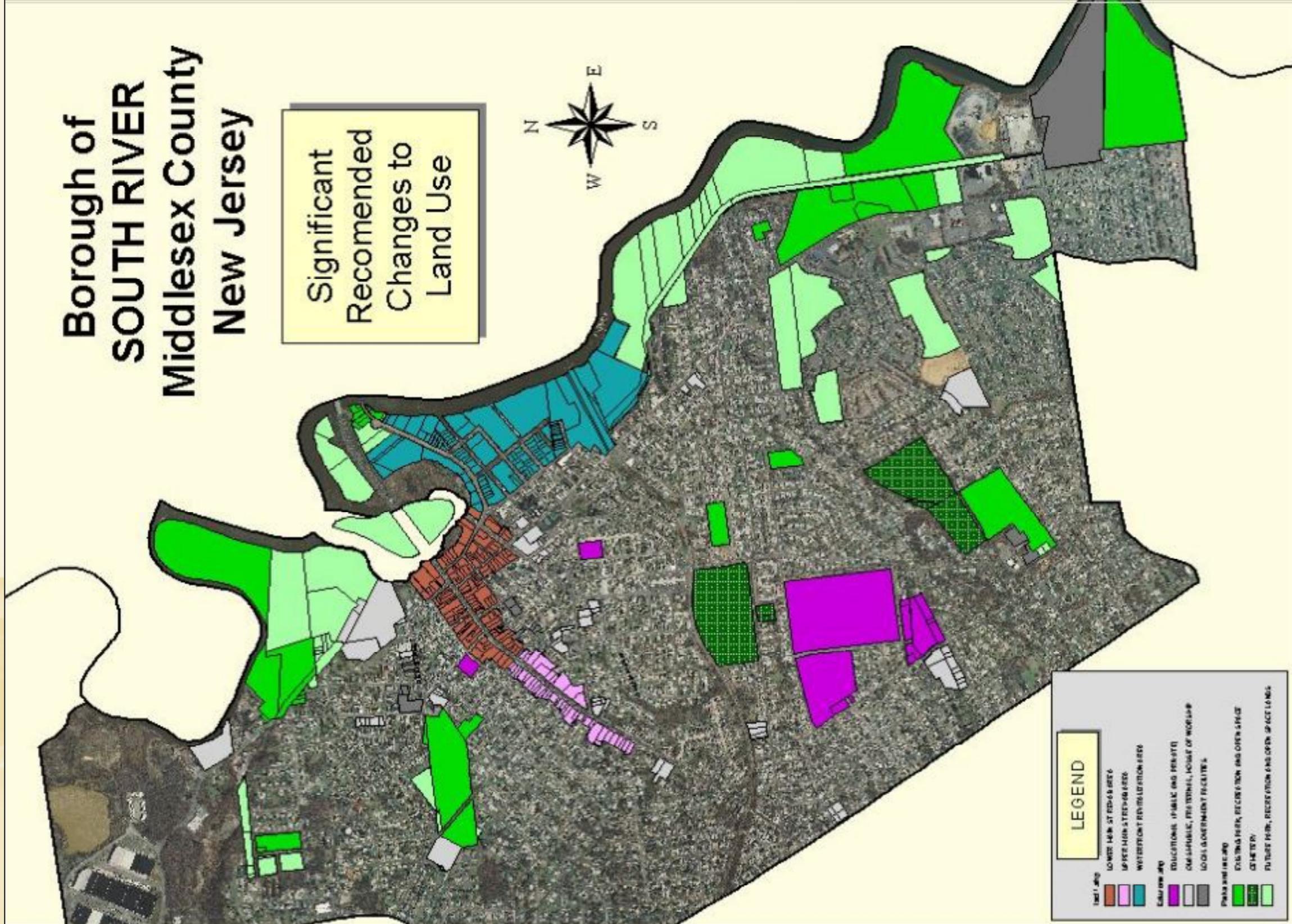
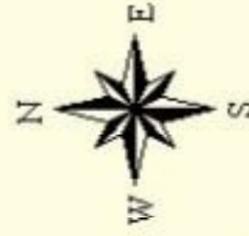
pick-up from any visible street frontage. The area should prohibit outside storage of all materials.

The success of any downtown area is not only based on planning and zoning efforts, but is intrinsically connected to the civic and community organizations that administer activities and programs on a year-round basis to attract shoppers, workers and visitors to the downtown district. This office recommends the Borough explore an aggressive campaign to energize the economic development, civic, and business organizations of the community to help in any re-zoning effort. Their long-term efforts will be as important in maintaining momentum of the areas revitalization as any

ordinance can be. Several other municipalities' organizations host bicycle tours of town, organize regular meetings of business owners, maintain employment and real estate networks of vacant Borough business spaces, publish municipal business directories and host community events such as farmers markets and street fairs. Other municipalities, through their downtown economic entities, administer local programs to recognize "Gold Star Local Businesses" and "Borough Dollars," gift certificate program where gift certificates can be purchased from a central source and then used at participating businesses in the Borough. Alternative ideas are encouraged; however implementation will be a continuous challenge.

Borough of  
**SOUTH RIVER**  
Middlesex County  
New Jersey

Significant  
Recommended  
Changes to  
Land Use



**LEGEND**

Lower High Density Residential	Medium Density Residential	Educational, Public and Private	Existing Park, Recreation and Open Space
Upper High Density Residential	Commercial, Professional, Office or Workshop	Local Government Facilities	Future Park, Recreation and Open Space Lands
Waterfront Revitalization Area	Parks and Recreation	Existing Park, Recreation and Open Space	

## Waterfront Revitalization Area

South River's waterfront was identified at the community visioning workshops as one of the most critical areas in the Borough where improvement was needed. This Master Plan recommends that a detailed planning study of this specific area be conducted. The governing body should delineate a study area to include the parcels shown on the opposite map. This land use recommendation should include all parcels east of Water Street, all parcels on the north and south sides of Causeway Street, the industrial parcels in and around the Conrail right-of-way and most waterfront parcels east of Whitehead Avenue. The Borough should determine if existing single-family, two-family and multi-family residential uses should be excluded from this area, however all other parcels, including all industrial parcels, the marina parcel and former rail right-of-ways should be included in the study area.

The Waterfront revitalization concept should be roughly divided into two areas; an active revitalization core located between Veterans Memorial Bridge and the Marina property, as well as a passive recreation area from the Marina parcel continuing south along the waterfront. The implementation of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Zone on several open space and waterfront parcels in that area will satisfy with the passive recreational intent of this concept plan. There continues the possibility of a limited





Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.

with the US Army Corps of Engineers and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. The project was authorized for construction on November 8, 2007. The project recommended hurricane and storm damage protection from a 500-year event and ecosystem restoration of 379.3 acres of degraded wetlands. The protection component of the plan consists of a storm surge barrier spanning the South River for a length of 320 feet, with a clear opening of 80 feet, two combined levees (10,712 feet long)/floodwalls (1,655 feet long) constructed along the east and west bank of the South River in the Boroughs of Sayreville and South River, and interior drainage facilities (i.e., pump stations, outlets, etc.). The ecosystem restoration consists of returning 379.3 acres of wetlands to wetland forest, upland forest, low emergent marsh, mudflat, and open water. (US Army Corps of Engineers, January 4, 2010) The location of these future drainage facilities, pump stations, floodwalls and outlets will affect the potential for development on this site. A comprehensive revitalization plan will have to be crafted to complement, not conflict with the proposed storm damage protection plan. (See USACOE alignment on following pages.)



Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.

access passive recreation trail connecting these areas, however, this depends on municipal desire for that project and other safety and access issues.

The upper active revitalization area is where the greatest potential for development exists. Given this site's location on the waterfront and its proximity to Main Street it is an ideal location for a mixed-use retail, office and commercial/restaurant development. Waterfront recreation uses and marinas should also be incorporated into the plan. The Borough should consider preparing a comprehensive revitalization plan for the entire area so as to prepare a conceptual layout of roads and pedestrian right-of-ways, development sites, parking, and infrastructure. Any development

in the area should be pedestrian friendly and interconnected to the central business district and the Borough's waterfront parks. The Borough may consider allowing a density or height bonus to encourage developers to select and develop on this site. The potential exists for a limited number of mid-rise, high-end, loft style housing units, should the Borough consider such a use as appropriate. Any residential units may be limited to studio and 1-bedroom apartment units. Any development should be designed so as to provide an attractive setting to enjoy the natural area of the waterfront, wetlands, wildlife and river.

All development on this site will be affected by the Army Corps of Engineers flood control project, currently in the design stages

## Flood Control Area Land Use

This Master Plan recommends, as a new land use concept, the Borough consider creating a specific land use district for all properties directly or indirectly affected by the pending federal flood control project. The proposed system of levees, flood-walls and drainage structures will impact several dozen parcels in the Borough, mostly north of the Sayreville-South River Bridge. An overlay zone would be an appropriate method of land use control in this situation and could be an additional layer of, or supplant the existing land use zones in that location. The purpose of this land use policy would be to recognize and delineate the properties that may be physically impacted by the federal flood control project. The land use district should consider adopting a no-growth policy until the flood control improvements have been constructed, so as to protect the safety of residents and land owners in these locations and to prevent development that would interfere with or increase the difficulty of constructing an effective flood control infrastructure. A draft version of the Army Corps of Engineers alignment is shown on the right.



South River Rescue





## Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Although the Borough of South River has approximately 159 acres of public land devoted to parks and recreational uses, the 1990 Master Plan does not provide for any “Park and Recreation”, or a “Open Space Conservation” land use designation in the Land Use Plan. Similarly, the current zoning code does not provide for a Parks and Recreation Zoning District. Existing park and recreation properties are currently zoned within the residential or industrial zones applicable with their surrounding neighborhoods.

A special zoning district to encompass all existing parkland, recreational facilities, open space land, dedicated drainage and/or conservation areas and areas contemplated for Park, Recreation and Open Space acquisition should be considered. This Master Plan recommends the creation of such a zoning district for Parks Recreation and Open Space. This zone should include all existing municipal parkland, all county open space lands, and specific private parcels of existing, dedicated conservation or stormwater management areas. The purpose of this zone is to recognize and



consolidate all municipal park parcels, sports fields, sports courts, paper streets, wooded areas, ponds, wetlands and county open space lands into a single unified zoning district and to establish a protective land use policy to regulate these environmentally sensitive lands.

The zone should allow for the continuation of all existing Parks and Recreation facilities throughout the Borough. Permitted uses in this zone should include parks and recreation fields, facilities and offices, storage and maintenance buildings and equipment related to recreational use, recreation centers, sports fields and courts, public water fountains and restroom facilities, concession stands, benches, picnic facilities, shelters, safety and facility lighting and facilities necessary for public safety infrastructure. The zone should also allow outdoor fundraising activities, such as carnivals, fairs, etc., upon issuance of the necessary permits from

the Borough agencies, on lands of existing quasi-public organizations in the Borough.

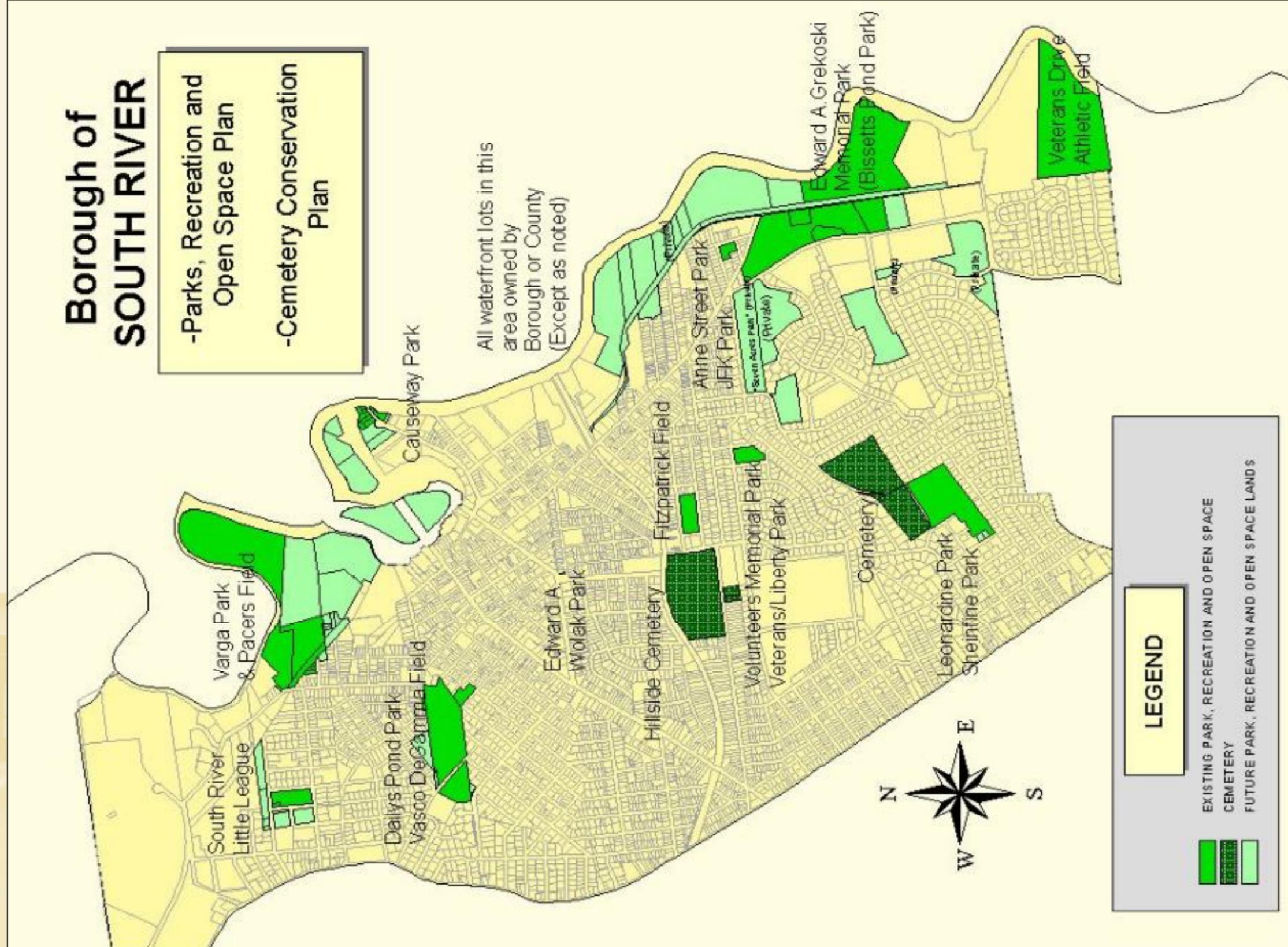
The zone should allow for privately owned drainage structures and basins and all municipal utilities. Inclusion of select private land in this zone is not necessarily a recommendation for acquisition. However, it does seek to protect the health, safety and welfare provided to the community by these specifically designated stormwater management areas.

The zone could allow commercial sports and recreation facilities, should the Borough contemplate such uses into designated locations within the zone. The zone could also allow environmental and/or outdoor or experiential educational uses in this zone. The zone should discourage and prohibit residential, commercial or industrial uses.

# Borough of SOUTH RIVER

- Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan
- Cemetery Conservation Plan

All waterfront lots in this area owned by Borough or County (Except as noted)



**LEGEND**

- EXISTING PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE
- CEMETERY
- FUTURE PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE LANDS

## Cemetery Conservation

This Master Plan recommends the creation of a Cemetery Conservation Zone for the Borough. All existing cemetery sites and burial grounds, both public and private, should be included in this zone. Permitted uses and structures should include cemeteries, mausoleums, monuments, buildings/structures for funeral or memorial services, gazebos/arbors and similar orna-



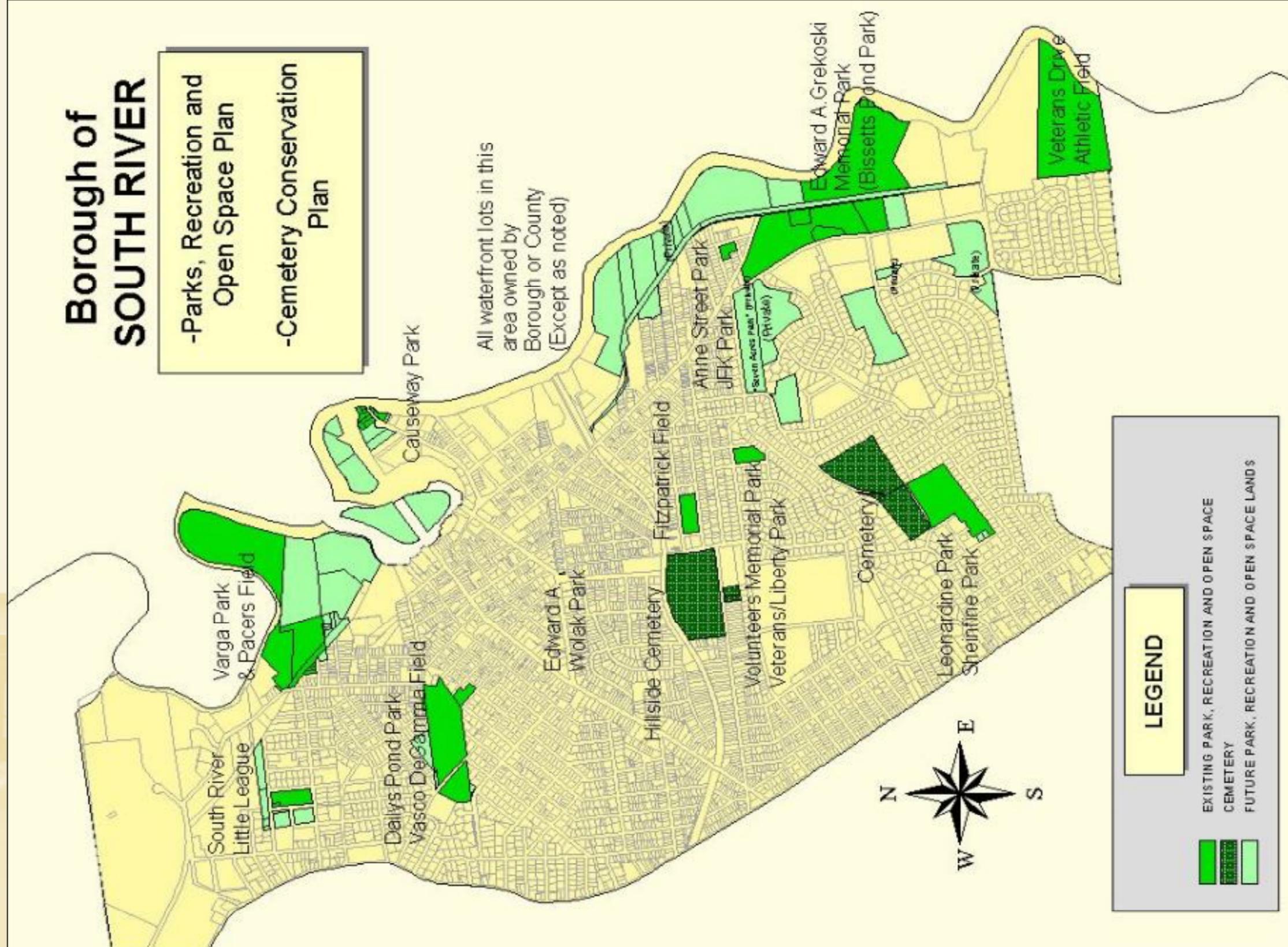
mental structures, buildings for cemetery administration and maintenance purposes, interior roads and paths, small parking areas, landscape/hardscape elements, traditional flagpoles, and fencing walls and gates and all other uses that are customary and incidental to the operation of a cemetery.

The purpose of this zone should be the recognition and protection of existing cemetery lands and the conservation of vacant, "cemetery owned" land for future cemetery use. The purpose of the zone should be to discourage the subdivision and/or sale of such parcels for residential or commercial development.

# Borough of SOUTH RIVER

- Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan
- Cemetery Conservation Plan

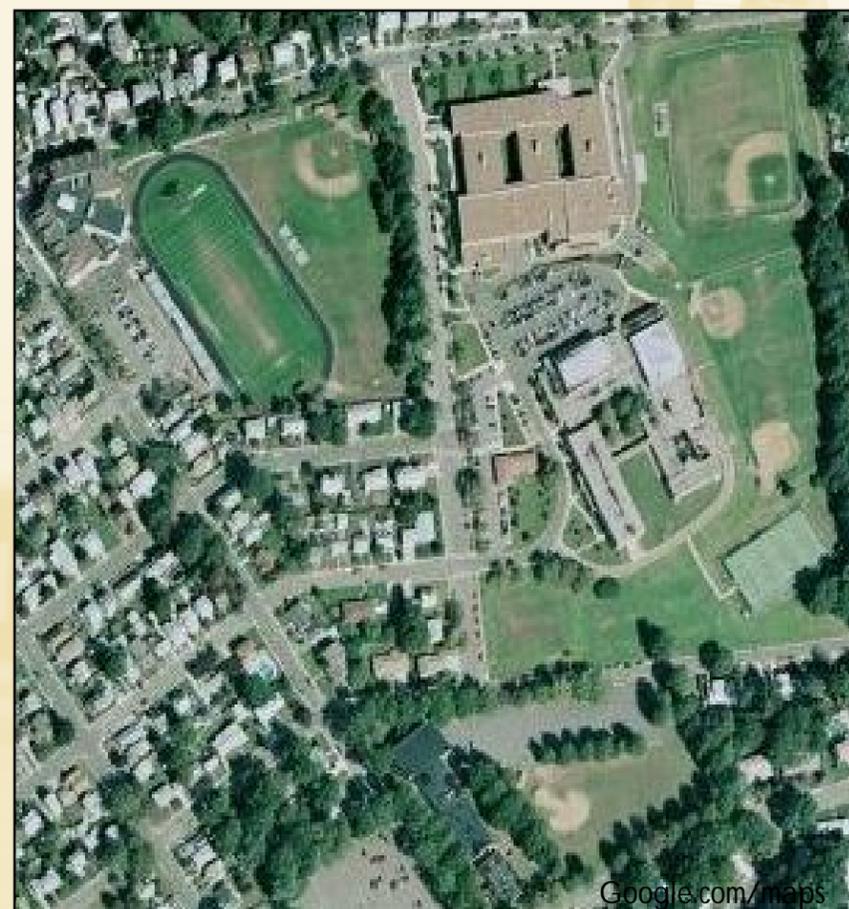
All waterfront lots in this area owned by Borough or County (Except as noted)



## Educational Land Uses

This Master Plan recommends the creation of an educational properties district for the Borough. Existing municipal and/or Board of Education property should be considered for inclusion in this zone. They are the parcels containing:

- South River High School
- South River Middle School
- South River Elementary School
- South River Primary School
- Deny Stadium
- Board of Education offices and buildings
- All publicly owned parcels abutting the school campus containing sports fields and school parking lots

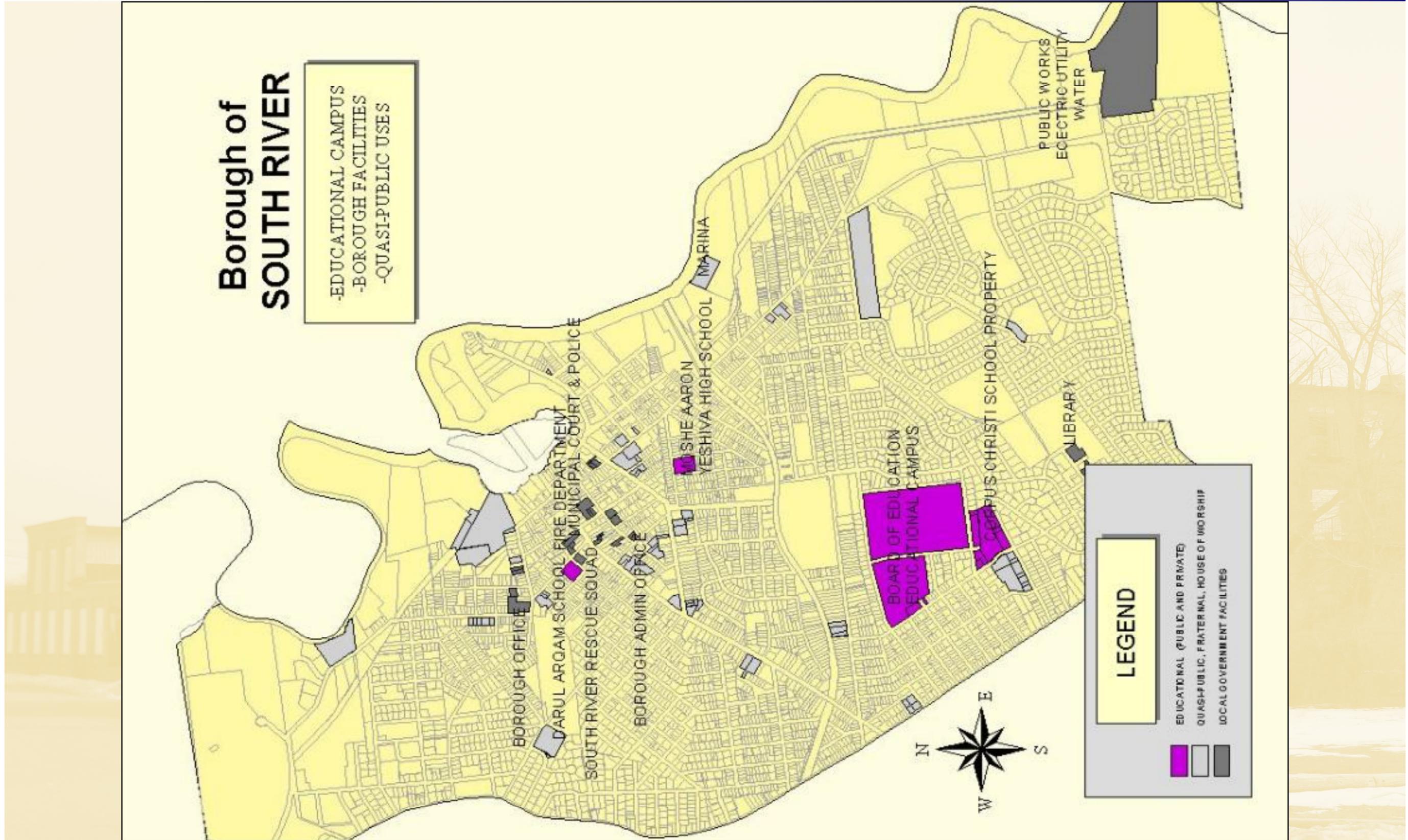


In addition to the public school educational properties, the zone could include all of the Block 191 parcels, should the Borough wish to acquire them, and all functioning private day school properties in the Borough. Any zoning change should allow existing residential uses in the zone to continue forever but would prevent new residential growth in this zone.

Permitted uses and structures should include all school buildings for public or private institutions teaching a state-approved curriculum and all buildings and structures directly related to the administration and maintenance of such an educational institution. This should include sports fields and stadiums, playgrounds, parking areas, flagpoles, fencing, walls and gates and all other structures that are customary and accessory to the operation of a day school for children between 4 and 18 years of age.

The purpose of this zone should be the recognition and protection of existing lands for educational use and the conservation of vacant lands for the future expansion of school facilities, should the need ever arise. The intent of the zone should be to discourage the subdivision, sale or conversion of any such parcels for residential development.





## Light Industrial (Research and Limited Manufacturing) and Heavy Industrial Uses

The Borough contains several industrial uses scattered throughout the Borough with several light or heavy industrial uses on or near the waterfront. This Master Plan recognizes society's need for these uses, their valuable contributions to the

Borough in terms of jobs and tax revenues and their minimal use of municipal services. This plan further recognizes the information found in the Community Profile Element showing the high frequency of industrial, construction and trade workers in the community.

The intent of this Master Plan is to provide a land use recommendation for the growth of these industrial uses in two specific areas in the Borough, so as to allow for their continued use and expansion in these appropriate locations. It should be

the responsibility of good government to clearly designate areas for industrial use and to encourage industrial businesses to locate there, instead of at alternative sites where their negative impact could be detrimental to existing residential neighborhoods and destructive to local roads. Therefore, it is the desire of this Master Plan to account for all industrial businesses that may be affected by any zoning changes recommended by this plan, and ensure that an equal or greater amount of land is available elsewhere in the Borough so as to allow for the voluntary relocation of these uses in a more appropriate area, should the need ever arise. To that end, this Master Plan makes the following land use recommendations:

Light industrial use should be concentrated the LI (Research and Limited Manufacturing) Zoning district in the industrial area in the northern portion of the Borough on William Street, Gates Avenue and Brick Plant Road. This area has existed for several decades as a light industrial area, but still contains several large vacant, developable parcels. This area has direct access to Route 18 via Edgeboro Road. Expanding industrial uses there would eliminate the heavy truck traffic generated by these users on local access streets. This area should remain as a Light Industrial zone. The Borough should actively encourage businesses to relocate to this area with municipal programs and incentives. As a destination for light industrial business the borough may, through its economic development entity, consider connecting employment opportunities to this area.

The second, smaller commercial area is located on the west side of Whitehead Avenue between Whitehead Avenue and Charter Drive, south of Wojie Way. The area contains several light industrial and commercial uses fronting on Whitehead Avenue, as well as three industrial buildings/sites on the east side of Whitehead Avenue and north of Ivan Way. This commercial area is appropriate for Light Industrial Use and should be restricted to indoor commercial, manufacturing and light industrial activities. Several mapping discrepancies have developed in the past as to the zoning designation for this area. This Master Plan recommends this area be designated as an L-I Zone.



## Reid Street Corridor Improvement & Whitehead Avenue Corridor Improvement

Both the Prospect/Reid Street Corridor and the Whitehead Avenue Corridor were areas identified by the community as areas in need of improvement. However, these areas were not prioritized as “most important” items for attention. The Reid/Prospect Street corridor serves as a highly traveled entrance route into the Borough and serves as a Main Street avoidance road to circumvent the congestion and traffic signals on Main Street. The corridor contains a winding right-of-way surrounded by residential housing, bars, commercial sales and service uses, light industrial, fraternal, government, gasoline station, public park, a vacant school building and retail uses. The tempo and scale of buildings along this right-of-way is chaotic and does not reflect well upon the Borough.

The Whitehead Avenue corridor from Jackson Street to Kamm Avenue is marked by dilapidated buildings, distressed housing, vacant lands, and a general state of disinvestment. Some pr-



tions of the corridor appear to be well maintained, however many parcels appear blighted and undesirable. Some buildings are vacant and abandoned. A strong zoning code and property maintenance code and housing code enforcement effort should be considered as first steps for this area. Additionally, this Master Plan recommends planning studies be conducted for both areas and that appropriate redevelopment, rehabilitation and/or revitalization efforts be undertaken in these locations.

The Prospect/Reid Street Corridor should provide a welcoming residential, park and civic appearance for vehicles traveling along the Prospect/Reid Street. Scattered manufacturing and light industrial uses should be discouraged. Commercial and retail uses should be encouraged to locate in the central business district.

Any future uses on this corridor should contemplate the high traffic flow on this road and should discourage vehicle backing movements onto the county right-of-way. The former school/municipal property opposite Daily's Pond Park should be considered for commercial redevelopment.

The Whitehead Avenue corridor should provide the appearance of a healthy housing stock and a small central cluster of retail and personal services. The corridor should provide an attractive intersection where Whitehead Avenue intersects with the Conrail right-of-way. Both corridors should be considered for a mixed-use land use policy with ground floor commercial uses and upper floor residential space. All uses in these areas should provide off street parking.



**“Cities have the capability of providing something for every body, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”**

**-Jane Jacobs**





# Community Facilities Element

## SOUTH RIVER SCHOOLS

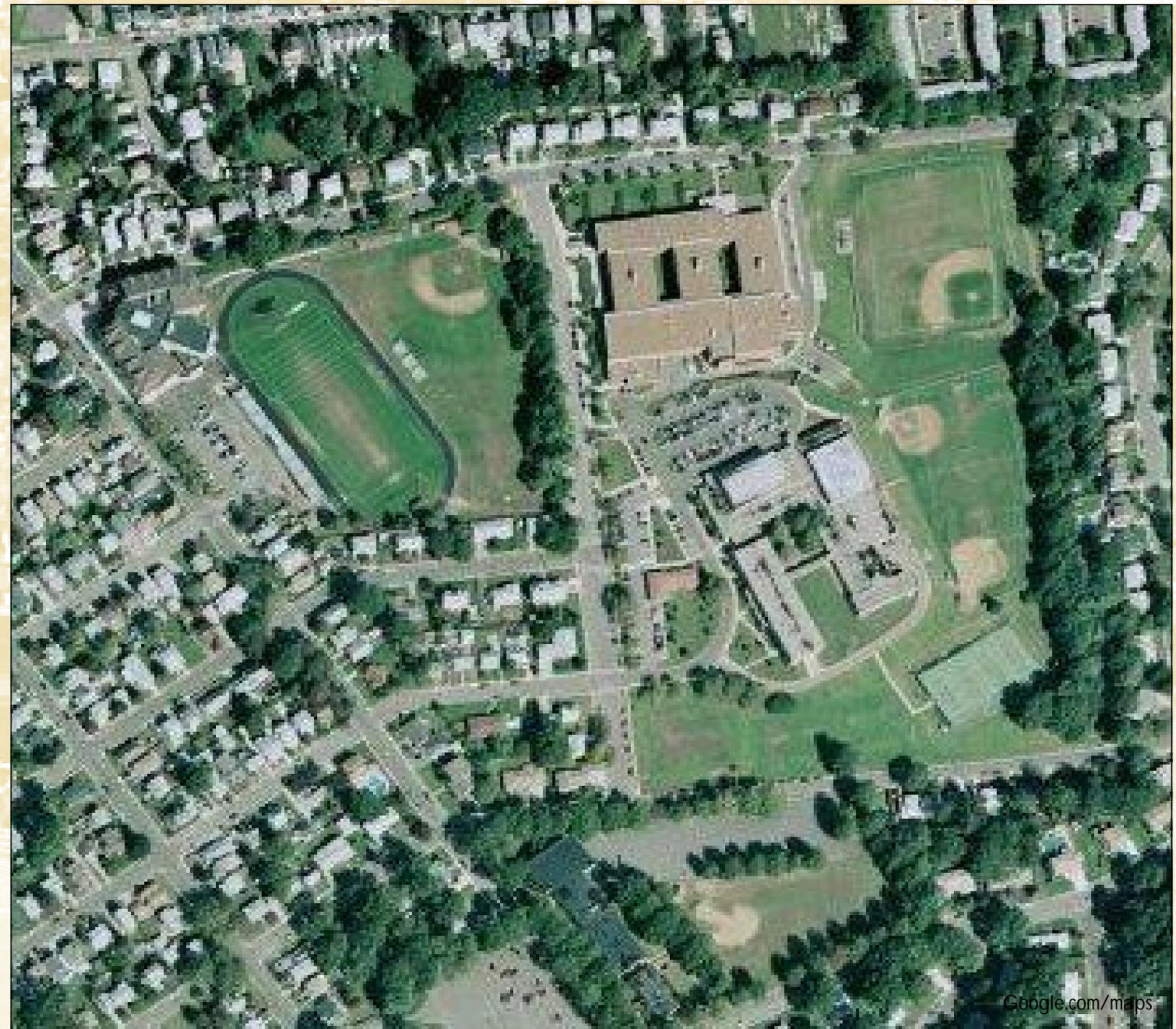
### Current Facilities and School System

Serving a community of over 15,000 residents, the South River Board of Education operates four schools in the borough. The schools are situated in three separate buildings on a 32-acre educational campus at the corner of Johnson Place and Montgomery Street. This site also includes Denny Stadium, a football and track facility as well as several other athletic fields for baseball, softball, soccer and tennis activities.

The district serves a racially, ethnically, and economically diverse student population from Pre School and Kindergarten through twelfth grade. For the 2009-2010 school year, the district reported a total enrolment of 2,334 students. School officials have experienced a pattern of slow and consistent growth over the past several years. Enrollment statistics show an average growth rate near two-percent per year. School officials expect student population growth to continue at this rate as the borough approaches the “build-out” of all available land. The campus design provides for an efficient consolidation of facilities and services. The geographic location of the campus in the central portion of the borough keeps transportation costs to a minimum.

### Strategic Planning

Long range public school facility planning in South River is the responsibility of the Board of Education. The New Jersey Department of Education requires boards of education to develop long-range plans and update them regularly. The South River Board of Education is currently within the 2009-2012 Strategic Plan. The current plan, and its successors, are required to be coordinated with the Municipal Master Plan and as such, are incorporated herein by reference. A copy of the Board of Education’s 2009-2012 Strategic Plan is available at the district’s website: <http://www.srivernj.org>.



Google.com/maps



### South River Middle School.

The South River Middle School is located at the corner of Johnson Place and Montgomery Street and shares a facility with the South River Elementary School. For the 2009-2010 school year, the school had an enrolment of 551 students. The modern building is shared with the South River Elementary School and allows integration of internet and computer technology into the educational curriculum. School officials expect the capacity of the Elementary/Middle School building to meet their needs for the next decade.



### South River Primary & Elementary School

The South River Primary School is located at the corner of David Street and Johnson Place. Constructed in 1997, the building was designed to consolidate several older school buildings from around the borough. The school serves students in Kindergarten through second grade. For the 2009-2010 school year, the school had an enrolment of 507 students. School officials expect the capacity of this building to meet their needs for the next decade.

The South River Elementary School is located at the corner of Johnson Place and Montgomery Street. The school serves students in Kindergarten and third through fifth grade. For the 2009-2010 school year, the school had an enrolment of 634 students. The modern building is shared with the South River Middle School. The school's website states the elementary school infusion of technology including modern computer labs, classroom computers with internet access and SmartBoards. The facility provides a wireless environment to enhance student and staff access to the schools internal network and to the Internet.

**Table V-1  
2010 District Enrollment by Grade**

GRADE	ENROLLMENT
GRADE 12	140
GRADE 11	168
GRADE 10	165
GRADE 9	172
<b>HIGH SCHOOL TOTAL:</b>	<b>645</b>
GRADE 8	197
GRADE 7	191
GRADE 6	160
<b>MIDDLE SCHOOL TOTAL:</b>	<b>548</b>
GRADE 5	172
GRADE 4	145
GRADE 3	188
LEARNING/LANGUAGE DISABLED	19
KINDERGARTEN	104
<b>ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TOTAL:</b>	<b>628</b>
GRADE 2	194
GRADE 1	180
KINDERGARTEN	76
PRE SCHOOL	34
VERBAL BEHAVIOR	10
LEARNING LANGUAGE DISABLED	19
<b>PRIMARY SCHOOL TOTAL:</b>	<b>513</b>
<b>DISTRICT ENROLLMENT TOTAL:</b>	<b>2,334</b>

Source: Superintendent's Report, January 28, 2010

## South River High School

South River High School is located at 11 Montgomery Street. New Jersey Monthly magazine recognized South River High School as one of the ten "most improved" high schools in New Jersey. According to the magazine, the school improved from #271 in 2006 to #186 in 2008. For the 2009-2010 school year, the school had an enrollment of approximately 641 students.

School officials have indicated a need for additional classroom space in the next decade to accommodate the growing size of incoming grade cohorts. In reviewing the number of students currently in grades two through eight, the population of high school students can be projected to grow to approximately 750-800 students by the year 2020. The 2009-2012 Strategic Plan recognizes this issue and calls for the expansion of classroom space at South River High School for the year 2010.



Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.

## Board of Education & Administration Office

The Board of Education maintains a central administration office at 15 Montgomery Street. The 2009-2012 Strategic Plan, under the Facilities subsection, plans for the remodeling of the district offices to comply with ADA requirements and expand room for Special Education classrooms in the year 2011.

Sources for this section have been compiled from the South River



Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.

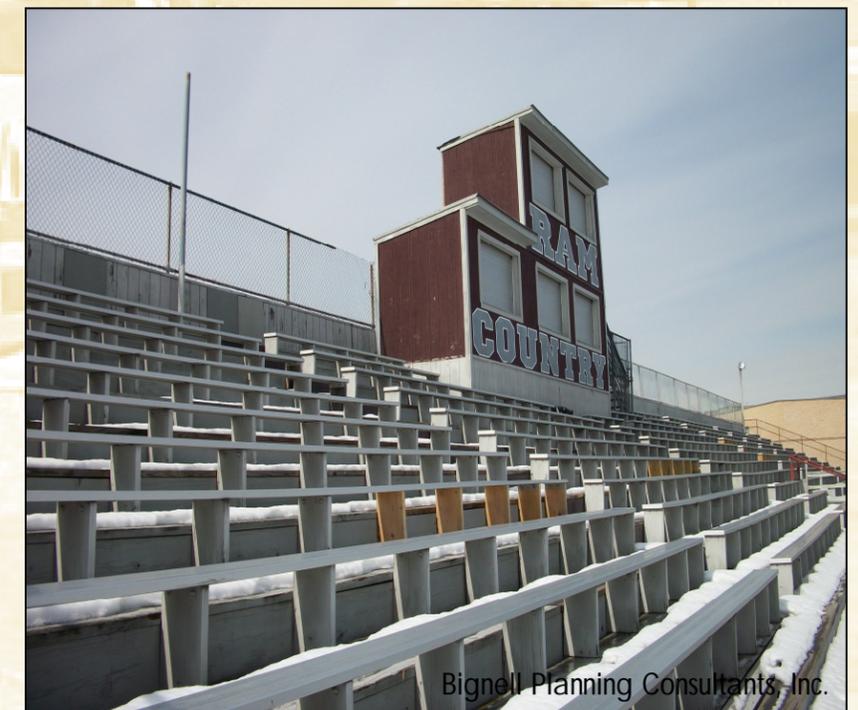
Board of Education Website, The New Jersey Department of Education 2007-2008 School Report Card, and interviews with Former Superintendent of Schools Ronald C. Grygo, School Business Administrator Kenneth Kokoszka, High School Athletics Director Carl Buffalino and the members of the South River Board of Education.

## School Athletic Facilities

The Board of education maintains a natural grass football field in Denny Stadium, two natural grass soccer fields, two baseball fields and one softball field, as well as track and field space, and a tennis facility with four individual tennis courts. Both the cost of maintenance and the natural wear and tear of the football field is problematic for the athletic department. Poor weather conditions often affect the usability of these fields for several days. The 2009-2012 Strategic Plan calls for the replacement and/or refurbishment of Denny Stadium facility and playing field. The addition of a synthetic playing surface would eliminate maintenance costs, field saturation problems, and would provide a playing surface for both football and soccer games. This would improve field conditions elsewhere on the campus where soccer and baseball/softball teams share fields.

The athletic department also has use of two municipal parks for soccer and baseball teams. A baseball field at the Bissetts Pond Park/Edward A. Grekoski Park on Whitehead Avenue provides lighted baseball facilities for evening games. Veterans Park near Veterans Way also provides a lighted field for evening soccer games. Both municipal parks provide ample parking for spectators.

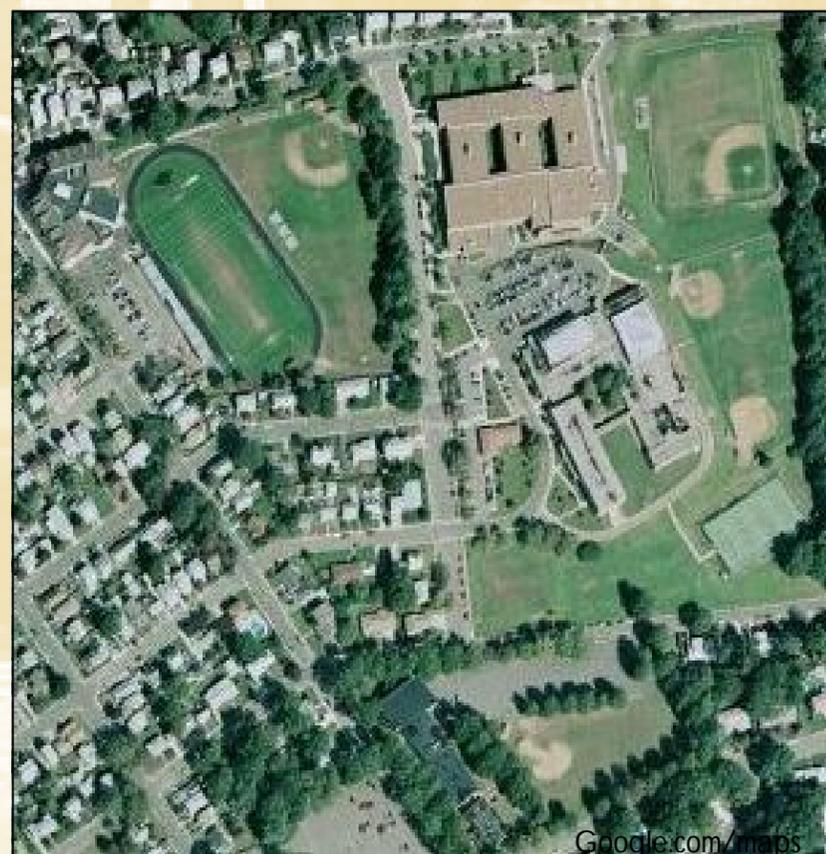
A single indoor gymnasium in the high school is provided for both basketball and wrestling events. Although this space provides a practice area for basketball teams, wrestling practice is conducted in the high school cafeteria. The need exists for an additional sub-gym or other multi-purpose indoor athletic space somewhere on the property. The addition of a sub-gym in the high school or primary school building should be considered. The 2009-2012 Strategic Plan also calls for the refurbishment of the tennis court surface, fencing and lighting. This renovation should include the addition of one additional tennis court to the complex, allowing for more efficient scheduling when the teams participate in standard 5-court tennis match events.



## Planning for expansion/protection of School Properties

The Superintendent of Schools and Board of Education have also identified a number of physical planning issues affecting the school facility. With a growing high school population, and an educational complex almost entirely surrounded by existing single family residential development, the options for physical expansion of the campus are limited.

Block 191 Lots 3, 3.01, 3.02, 3.04, 6, 6.01, 4.01 & 4.02 are located on the south side of the Denny Stadium. Future acquisition of these parcels could allow for the contiguous expansion of Board of Education property and would allow the Board of Education to occupy the entirety of the block surrounded by Johnson Street, Montgomery Street, David Street and Lexington Avenue.



These lots are currently occupied by eight (8) detached single-family residential dwellings, thus making site assembly a difficult task. Given the shape and size of these parcels, the significant cost of this option, the disruption to existing residential homeowners and the marginal benefit received may render any expansion at that location unrealistic.

Another option would be an acquisition/lease agreement/public private partnership with the Corpus Christi School property, located immediately south of South River High School. This would include Block 339, Lots 1 and 2, Block 201, Lots 1 and 3, Block 382, Lot 2, Block 383, Lots 1 and 2 and Block 384, Lot 1.

## Educational Campus Zone

Since the expansion of school facilities may become a real need for the Board of Education in the long term, a new educational campus zone should be considered by the Governing Body. The purpose of this zone would be to provide for the orderly expansion of the educational campus and to discourage encroachment of new single-family uses into existing private lands near the campus. This would include all existing Board of Education property and could include all of the Block 191 parcels abutting the existing educational campus, should the Borough wish to acquire them. The zoning should also allow for the continuation of all functioning private day school uses. Any zoning change

should allow existing residential and school uses to continue forever but would prevent new residential growth in these locations. See the Land Use Element for further discussion.

## Parking and Transportation

Parking remains a moderate issue for the high school complex. Adequate parking is provided for faculty and staff. No on-site student parking is provided. No general parking is provided. This leaves only on-street parking for students during school hours which affects quality of life for the local residents. Any future facility expansion should consider the creation of additional on-site, secure, supervised, and buffered parking for students as well as general parking for large school events.

Since the school district is an entirely walking district, the provision of safe and adequate sidewalks on all school routes are a priority. The district does participate in National programs like *National Walk to School Day* and the Federal *Safe Routes to School* program. The Governing Body should consider adopting a "Safe Routes to School" map identifying the most common routes to the educational campus and should provide and/or require safe sidewalks and other pedestrianfriendly improvements along these routes. Development along these routes should be discouraged from seeking sidewalk waivers. Approving agencies should use caution when considering sidewalk waiver applications in these locations.



## SOUTH RIVER LIBRARY

The South River Public Library, located at 55 Appleby Avenue was constructed in 1977 and is approximately 8,500 square feet. The Library houses a collection of approximately 38,000 items in various formats, including a large collection of DVDs. It has added audiobooks and eBooks in a downloadable format within the last couple of years. The South River Library is part of the Libraries of Middlesex (LMx) and belongs to LMxAC, memberships which expand its collection to 2.6 million titles via a shared catalog and a robust Inter-Library Loan service.

In addition to traditional library services, the library offers programming for children and adults, meeting room space for community groups and tutors, databases available from home, as well as 12 computers for public access via a broadband connection for all ages. The Library also offers wireless connectivity. The Library is open six days a week throughout the year. The original plan for the 1977 library was a 15,000 sq ft building. The Library has been working on an expansion plan for many years, and hopes to add needed space in the very near future.



## MUNICIPAL FACILITIES

The Borough of South River Municipal Government maintains three (3) municipal buildings for administrative use. The building at 48 Washington Street contains the Mayor's Office, and offices for the business administrator, municipal clerk, tax assessor and collector, financial services, code enforcement/zoning departments. This one-story facility provides small meeting spaces and general counter services for general local government needs.

The Human Services building located at 55 Reid Street provides senior services, and parks and recreation offices and other municipal services.

A Criminal Justice Building is located at 61 Main Street. This building has been recently renovated and contains police headquarters, holding cells, police storage and office spaces, municipal court/council chambers, court offices, and a portion of the borough's emergency communications system. On site parking is provided for police vehicles only. Other public works, recreation and utility buildings are located throughout the borough and are discussed in other elements of the plan.





Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc

## POLICE DEPARTMENT



Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc

### Police Department

The South River Police Department provides 24-hour law enforcement services to the borough. The department is located at 61 Main Street and consists of 31 police officers including command staff. The police department is divided into patrol, operations/detective bureau and administrative divisions and maintains a fleet of 13 police vehicles. The department facilitates community outreach programs such as in-school D.A.R.E programs and bicycle safety programs such as the “Bike Rodeo.”

### Current Facilities

The South River Police Department is located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor and basement of a nearly centuryold building at 61 Main Street (Block 151, Lots 3, 6.01 and 401) which has been recently remodeled. Although the remodeling was necessary and has drastically improved this facility, the amount of space in this building is no longer sufficient for a modern police department of 31 officers and civilian administrative staff. Additional space is need for general office space, file storage space and general meeting and training space. When municipal court is in session the build-

ings small lobby is often filled to capacity. The department also needs additional space for dedicated processing and holding facilities for both adult and juvenile offenders. For operational purposes, additional space is needed for locker rooms, evidence storage space, secure ammunition storage space, and communications system/computer mainframe storage spaces. The location of some of these areas in the basement of the building make them prone to flooding and/or water damage.

### Strategic Planning

Any future relocation of South River Fire Department from the George Street Firehouse to a new location on Main Street would present a realistic opportunity for the police facility to expand in a northerly direction onto lots 4.01 and 6.01. All these lots are located in the B-2 Zone. If the total of this land area will be sufficient for an expansion, and since the borough tax office has confirmed that all these parcels are owned by the borough, no land use designation changes are needed. Given the historical significance of the George Street Firehouse, the borough should strongly consider the adaptive reuse of this building, instead of its removal.

### Improving Quality of Life

Meetings with the Police Chief and administrative staff have produced a list of planning issues that are linked to a high frequency

of police activity. All issues relate to land-use planning by impacting the health, safety and welfare and morals of the community. They include:

- Nuisance calls stemming from existing bars/taverns in the borough which are close to residential areas. These include noise, trash and trespassing complaints as well as instances of assault by tavern patrons.
- Local fraternal/civic organizations renting social halls for large and disruptive events, often occurring late into the night and producing large crowds of people who are parking in and disturbing residential areas.
- With the other emergency service agencies, frequent and repetitive rescue calls when flooding occurs in areas near Causeway Street and east of Water Street.
- Frequent “false alarm” calls to the senior citizen housing complexes: Willet Manor Senior Apartments, 340 Whitehead Avenue and South River Landing at 20 Wojie Way.
- Frequent police calls and reports of various criminal activity at the boroughs several boarding houses: 11 Main Street, 65 Ferry Street, 18 Washington Street, 27 Jackson Street, 27 Washington Street.

**Table V-2 : Crime Statistics in South River: 1999-2008**

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>Murders</b>	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Rapes</b>	1	1	0	1	1	0	2	1	0	2
<b>Robberies</b>	5	6	10	7	13	6	10	4	5	8
<b>Assaults</b>	12	32	31	18	24	20	20	15	20	32
<b>Burglaries</b>	28	26	42	58	79	83	46	43	38	49
<b>Thefts</b>	136	87	82	105	113	143	127	159	113	173
<b>Auto theft</b>	6	8	17	9	17	20	6	9	12	9
<b>Arson</b>	4	1	1	1	2	3	3	0	7	5

Source:City-data.com



Photo Courtesy Steven M Baron

## FIRE DEPARTMENT



Photo Courtesy: Steven M. Baron

### Current Facilities

The South River Fire Department has been keeping South River safe from fire for over a century. The department is a completely volunteer organization with approximately 75 volunteer firefighters and company officers. The South River Fire Department receives approximately 500 calls each year from the Borough of South River and from surrounding communities. The department has ten (10) vehicles, including four (4) pump trucks, one (1) ladder truck, one (1) off-road utility vehicle, three (3) chief vehicles and one (1) mobile command vehicle. Besides firefighting services, the fire department participates in Fire Prevention Week by visiting South River schools for fire safety programs as well as appearances at other community and civic events.

The fire department is situated in two separate buildings in the borough, each containing at least one engine company. All facilities respond to fire calls in the borough regardless of where the incident is located. Both fire companies have the ability of responding to any call, anywhere in the borough, within minutes.

The borough's main fire house is located in a century year-old firehouse building on George Street. This building was constructed circa 1918. The building is located on Block 151, Lots 3, 6.01, and portions of 4.01. A second building is located on Appleby Avenue between Second and Third Streets (Block 234 and Block 237). That building was constructed circa 1974. That facility provides three vehicle bays no sleeping quarters for firefighters volunteering for an overnight shift. The consensus of the several fire chiefs is that the two existing fire houses in the borough are appropriately located for maximum incident coverage, and that no additional facilities are needed.

### Future Facility Needs: Vehicles

Firefighting apparatus are a significant part of a municipal budget. The following table provides an inventory of the department's current fleet of vehicles and their life expectancy. Scheduled replacement should be anticipated in the borough's future capital budgets.

**Table V-3 : Fire Department Vehicles, Age in 2010 and Projected Replacement.**

APARATUS:	AGE IN YEARS:	PROJECTED REPLACEMENT YEAR:
Engine #2	20	2010
Engine #4	15	2016
Ladder Tower	12	2014
Engine #5	11	2019
Engine #3	6	2024
Mobile Command Vehicle	28	No Replacement Needed
Utility Vehicle/Brush Truck	43	No Replacement Needed
Chief Vehicle #001	2	2018
Chief Vehicle #002	3	2017
Chief Vehicle #003	8	2012

Source: South River Fire Chiefs, January 25, 2010

### Future Facility Needs: Firehouse

The George Street Firehouse is approaching the century mark in age and is in need of a significant renovation and or complete replacement. Discussions with the Fire Chief and the several Ex-Chiefs have determined the need for a modern, 5-bay fire house. Any new facility should have a minimum of five vehicle bays capable of serving several SU-30 and one SU-47 fire apparatus, sleeping areas, small office/administration space, bathroom space, and a general meeting space. Any new facility should also have modern decontamination showers. The current George Street site is not large enough to contain this new facility.



Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.

At the time of this report, the Fire Department is considering several large parcels on or near the Main Street Corridor as potential sites for a new firehouse. The minimum required land area would contain 1 to 1.5 acres, frontage on or near Main Street, and be located at least 500' away from traffic control signals. From a land use planning prospective, any new site should be designated on the Master Plan for municipal use. Any site abutting the residential zone should be significantly buffered so as to minimize the impact of this use from existing residential homes. The Borough should also be aware of the property tax implications of purchasing any private land and converting it to tax-exempt status.



All Photos V 14-V-15 Courtesy South River Rescue Squad

## RESCUE SQUAD



The South River Rescue Squad was formed in 1936. For over seventy five years the organization has served the residents of South River by providing emergency medical and life saving services to the community and the surrounding areas.

### Organization

The organization is comprised of approximately 20 paid and volunteer members. Twelve paid Emergency Medical Technician's provide emergency coverage during the day while the remaining evening and weekend shifts are covered by other volunteers.

The Rescue Squad receives approximately 1,400 calls each year for the Borough of South River and from surrounding communities via mutual aid to other municipalities. With the geographic size of the borough and the central location of the current Rescue Squad facility, the organization has the ability to respond to all emergency calls within the borough with a response time of 3-5 minutes. The majority of emergency calls are for medical emergencies and for medical transportation services to hospitals. The Rescue Squad also handles heavy rescue, vehicle extrication and water rescue operations in the borough.

### Current Facilities

The Rescue Squad occupies an existing ±2,500 SF building on the corner of George Street and Thomas Street. The building contains four vehicle bays and twelve parking spaces for additional equipment and member vehicles. The organization has three ambulance apparatus, one heavy rescue vehicle, one marine support vehicle, one responder vehicle, two rescue boats and one wave-runner rescue vehicle.



### Future Facility Needs

The current Rescue Squad building was constructed in the 1930's and is in need of building upgrades and improvements. The Rescue Squad leadership has not expressed a need for a new or a re-located facility, but rather for improvements at their current location. Improvements should include space for equipment and vehicle storage, sleeping quarters for night shift volunteers, storage space/locker space for volunteers' personal belongings, general office space, communications space, storage space of special items (tanks, tools, fuels) and disposal areas for any bio-hazard

material. The Rescue Squad is also in need of decontamination showers and general showering facilities. Finally, capital and operating revenues, as well as levels of volunteer pay all continue to remain a concern for the organization. It is therefore recommended that adequate means of funding be provided to the Rescue Squad so as to serve the public as proficiently as possible.



Sources for this section have been compiled from interviews with Captain William Synek, and from [www.southriverrescue.org](http://www.southriverrescue.org).



**“Forests are the lungs of our land, purifying the air and giving fresh strength to our people.”**

**- FDR**

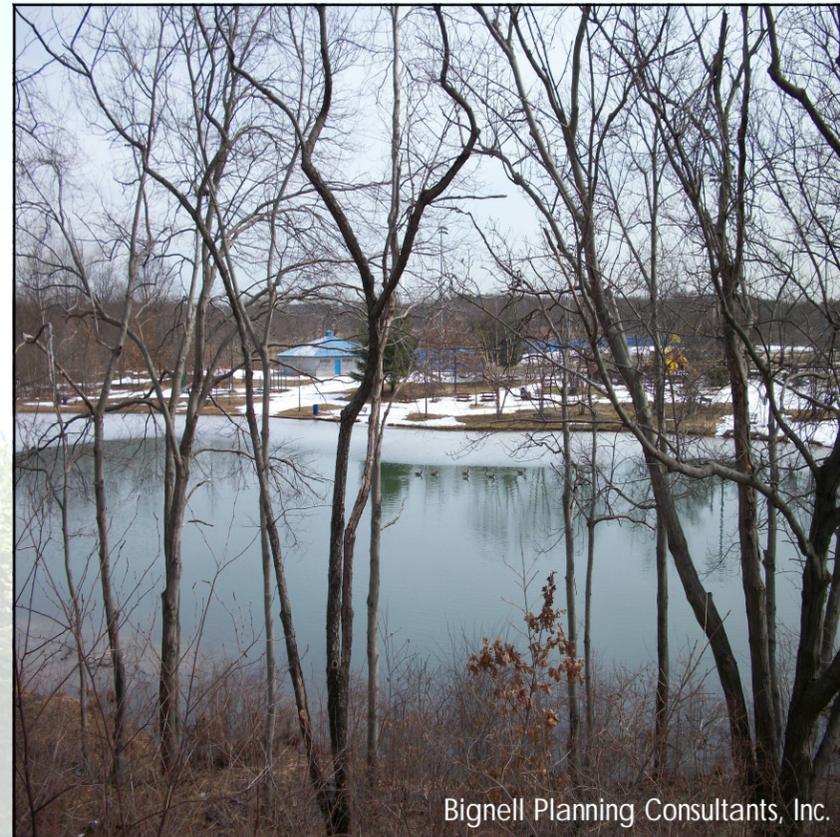


# Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element

## PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

### Introduction

The purpose of this element is to provide a realistic guide for the planning, development and expansion of public parks, recreational facilities, and open space in South River for the use, benefit and enjoyment of all citizens of the borough. Parks and recreation opportunities play a vital role in maintaining a high quality of life. Clean, safe, and well-located park facilities, which provide an ample opportunity for various types of active and passive recreation, are closely related to a community's reputation as a desirable place to live. In communities where development conditions are near build-out, parks and open space play a key role in providing common public spaces where the community can gather for civic, social and family activities.



This Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan Element addresses the provision of all public parks, recreational facilities and open space. In 2009-2010, an open space/land use inventory was conducted as part of the master planning process. The recommendations set forth in this plan element are based upon the findings of that existing land use inventory and the proposed Land Use Plan. This element highlights areas for improvement at existing park facilities and proposes future acquisition, designation and development of new facilities throughout the borough. The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan Map shows the locations of existing and proposed public parks, recreation facilities and open space lands recommended for development and/or preservation. Finally, this element makes recommendations for specific parcels to be included in a new Parks Recreation and Open Space Zoning District.

### Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives are specific to the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan and represent the intentions of the Borough of South River with regard to the provisions of public parkland, recreation amenities and open space so as to protect the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of all present and future citizens of the borough. These goals and objectives are as follows:

- To provide the recommended recreation space standard of parkland to the residents of the borough as set forth by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the Division of Parks and Forestry.
- To provide the recommended and desired amount of recreational facilities to the residents of the borough, especially ball fields, sports courts, and multi-purpose fields.
- To provide the Recreation Commission and Recreation Department Director and other pertinent Borough agencies with specific information on community demographics for use in determining the types of facilities and equipment to be installed at various park locations.
- To utilize the borough riverfront to the greatest extent possible for providing additional recreational amenities to the residents of the community with an emphasis on providing marine facilities in conjunction with other active and passive recreational facilities.
- To develop a bicycle and pedestrian network in conjunction with the Middlesex County Open Space and Recreation Plan.
- To develop additional pocket parks within both the older and newer residential neighborhoods of the borough.
- To provide conservation areas as well as active and passive recreational facilities.
- To provide adequate parking and pedestrian/bicycle access and storage at all public parkland locations.

## Recommended Recreational Standards

The National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA) recommends that recreational planning be carried out on a community wide basis, placing a premium on integrating and relating all parkland and associated facilities into the public domain to more effectively serve the municipal population. Recreation land should be located so that all citizens will be provided with opportunities for participating in the recreational activity of their choice. The NRPA recommends that a community's needs for the special segments of the population, including the aged, the young, the handicapped, and the economically and socially disadvantaged, be addressed through the provision of recreational facilities specifically designed to serve those with special needs.

Based upon current planning standards promulgated by the NRPA, it is possible to calculate the recreation areas necessary to service the Borough of South River. The NRPA employs a population multiplier factor to indicate the total acres required for each type of recreational use and establishes a minimum suit size criterion.

The NRPA recommends that the total community park system provide a minimum of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed open space per 1,000 population. Of this total, the local government should provide for the largest portion of parkland. The remaining parkland is than to be provided at the county, state and/or federal government level.

Using this standard and based on the Borough's estimated 2010 population of approximately 15,500 persons, a range of 96 to 162 acres of total recreational land should be provided within the Borough. These parks fall into one of the following categories

**Mini-Parks** of one (1) acre or less are recommended at the rate of 0.25 to 0.5 acres per the 1,000 population, or a total of 3 to 7 acres throughout the Borough. These parks are intended to serve an area within a ¼ mile radius of residential concentrations and should contain specialized facilities for specific use groups such as tots, adolescents, or senior citizens.

**Neighborhood parks/playgrounds** of fifteen (15) or more acres are recommended at a rate of 1 to 2 acres per 1,000 population, or a



total of 15 to 31 acres Borough wide. These parks should be designed to serve a population of up to 5,000 persons within a ½ mile radius and should provide for intense recreational facilities such as field games, court games, playground apparatus, and picnicking, all of which may be included within a school/park facility.

**Community Parks** of twenty-five 25 or more acres are recommended at a rate of 5 to 8 acres per 1,000 population, or total of 77 to 124 acres Borough wide. Community parks should serve several neighborhoods within a 1 to 2 mile radius and should include both natural features, such as water bodies and areas for walking, and intense recreational facilities.

## Existing Park and Recreational Facilities

There are approximately 128 total acres of public land devoted to recreational use in the Borough of South River, of which approximately 61 acres have been actively and purposefully developed. Public parkland accounts for 92 total acres, of which approximately 41 acres are developed for recreation. Public school facilities account for 36 acres of total land, of which approximately 18 acres are developed for recreation. A breakdown of the land devoted to public recreation for each designated park facility is provided in Table VI-1. There are no park facilities provided in the Borough by any county, state or federal government agency.

The general classifications for the parks in the Borough are also provided in Table VI-1. According to this classification system, South River, should provide 3-7 acres for mini-parks, a total of 14-27 acres for neighborhood parks, and a total of 68-140 acres for community parks. A summary of the lands devoted to recreational use by type of park is provided in Table VI-2. A description of each park facility provided in the Borough and the amenities each offers is discussed below.

## Borough Parks and Recreation Facilities

**Varga Park** – This Park is located in the northeastern portion of the Borough between the South River and the abandoned Raritan River Railroad with direct access off Eastern Street. The park consists of 21.7 total acres of which approximately 7 acres are developed for recreation. The undeveloped areas are encumbered with environmental constraints. The amenities offered at this site include two (2) ball fields and picnic facilities near the river. The park also provides parking for approximately 35 cars and a storage rack for 10 bicycles, and a skateboard facility.

**Pacer's Field** – This Park is located adjacent to Varga Park to the north with direct access off William Street. The park consists of 18.8 total acres of which approximately 6 acres are developed for recreation. The undeveloped areas are encumbered with environ-

mental constraints. The amenities offered at this site include one ball field, one basketball court, two tennis courts and various playground equipment including swings, seesaws, a slide, a merry-go-round, and jungle-gym apparatus. The park also provides parking for approximately 10 cars, contains several bicycle racks and has potential roadway access to the river bank.

**Leonardine Park** – This park is also known as **Sheldon Sheinfine Park** and consists of approximately 8 acres excluding approximately 3 acres utilized for the South River Library site. This Park

is located in the southwestern portion of the Borough near the intersection of Leonardine Avenue and Grand Avenue with direct access from the terminus of Sixth Avenue. Approximately 4 acres are developed for recreation. The amenities offered at this site include two (2) basketball courts, one multi-purpose field, one large play structure, picnic tables, and various playground equipment consisting of swings, a seesaw, a slide, and a junglegym apparatus. There are no provisions for off-street parking and there are no bicycle racks.

**TABLE VI – 1  
EXISTING RECREATIONAL FACILITIES INVENTORY**

Facility	Total Acreage	Developed Acreage	Classification of Park
<b>Borough Property:</b>			
Varga Park	21.7	6.6	Community
Pacer's Field	18.8	6.0	Community
South River Little League Field	4.3	2.2	Community
Daley's Pond Park/Vasco De Gamma Field	14.0	12.7	Community
Veterans Drive Athletic Field	4.0	4.0	Community
Leonardine/Sheldon Sheinfine Park)	8.6	4.3	Neighborhood
Edward A. Grekoski Park (Formerly Bissett's Pond Park)	58.6	5.0	Neighborhood
Fitzpatrick Field	2.3	2.3	Neighborhood
Volunteer Memorial Park (Liberty Park, Veteran's Park)	1.5	1.5	Neighborhood
Causeway Park	1.0	1.0	Neighborhood
JFK Park/Anne Street Park	.8	.8	Mini-Park
Edward A. Wolak Park	.1	.1	Mini-Park
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>135.7</b>	<b>46.5</b>	
<b>Public School Property:</b>			
South River Educational Campus	23.5	18.0	Community
<b>Total Recreation Area: (Acres)</b>	<b>159.2</b>	<b>64.5</b>	

**Daley's Pond Park** — This Park is located in the north central portion of the Borough between Prospect Street and John Street. Direct access to the facility is attained off Prospect Street although additional pedestrian points of access include Bright Avenue, Clinton Avenue, and Leland Avenue. This park consists of 14 total acres of which approximately 13 acres are developed for recreation. The amenities offered at this park include one soccer/multi-purpose field called Vasco De Gamma Field, a walking path around the pond complemented with several benches, one basketball court, one large play structure and playground equipment consisting of swings, a see-saw, a slide, and a

jungle-gym apparatus. The park also provides parking for approximately 28 cars and contains bicycle racks.

**Fitzpatrick Field** — This Park is located in the southern central portion of the Borough near the Willett Avenue railroad crossing. Direct access to the facility is attained by either Southside Avenue, Union Avenue, or Center Street. The park consists of 2.3 acres, all of which is developed for recreation. The amenities offered at this site include one ball field, one basketball court, and playground equipment consisting of swings, a slide, a see-saw and a jungle-gym apparatus. There is no off-street parking



and there are no bicycle racks available on-site. However, parking is permitted along the surrounding site streets and at the terminus of Union Avenue which is a gravel turnaround area.

**Edward A. Grekoski Memorial Park** — This park is located in the southeastern portion of the Borough between Whitehead Avenue and the abandoned Raritan River Railroad with direct access off Whitehead Avenue. This park is formerly known as Bissett's Pond Park and consists of 58.6 total acres of which approximately 5 acres are developed for recreation. Bissett's Pond is located within the park boundaries but swimming is not currently permitted. The amenities offered at this site include one multi-purpose court, 1 tot-lot consisting of a large play structure, a sand area with several children's toys, benches, picnic tables and



barbeque grills. The park also provides parking for approximately 30 cars and contains bicycle racks. The facility is particularly suited to meet the needs of the elderly residing within Willett Manor located directly across Whitehead Avenue.

**Volunteers Memorial Park** – This Park is located in the south central portion of the Borough along Bryan Street at the terminus of Johnson Place. There is direct access to the park off Bryan Street, Herbert Street, Bray Avenue and Oak Street. Some sources refer to this location as **Veteran's Park or Liberty Park** in the past and

consists of 1.5 acres, all of which is developed for recreation. The amenities offered at this site include one basketball court, one large play structure, several swings, a see-saw and bicycle racks. There are no provisions for parking although parking is permitted along the surrounding side streets where recent improvements have established a portion of Bray Street as a gravel lot area.

**JFK Park/Field** – This Park is located in the southeastern portion of the Borough between Whitehead Avenue and the abandoned Raritan River Railroad just north of Bissett's Pond. Direct access is

attained off Anne Street, Marie Street and Brant Street. This park is also known as **Anne Street Park** and consists of three-quarters of an acre, all of which is developed for recreation. The amenities offered at this site include two (2) basketball courts and playground equipment consisting of swings, a slide, a seesaw, a merry-go-round and jungle-gym apparatus. There are no provisions for bicycle racks. The park is enclosed with a 3 foot high fence but has a gate opening along each side. There are no provisions for off-street parking although cars are permitted to park along the surrounding side streets.

**South River Little League Field** - This field is located in the northwestern portion of the site with direct access off Burton Avenue. The facility consists of 4.3 acres of which approximately 2 acres are developed for recreation. The complex is comprised of one regulation little league field and a clubhouse/press box facility. The field also provides bicycle racks and parking for approximately 40 cars on a gravel lot.

**Edward A. Wolak Park** – This sitting plaza is located in the central portion of the Borough at the intersection of Raritan Avenue and Jackson Street. The mini-park is approximately 2,500sf in size and is actually situated within the Raritan Avenue right-of-way where it is exceptionally wide (approximately 100 feet). The amenities offered at this site include six seat benches placed in a passive landscaped setting. There are no off-street parking provisions and no bicycle racks although cars are permitted to park along the nearby side streets.

**Causeway Park** – Causeway Park is the newest of South River's parks and is located at the eastern terminus of Causeway Street. The park is currently utilized for passive recreation along the northern end of Borough's waterfront, just south of the Sayreville-South River Bridge. The area of Causeway Park is estimated to be one (1) acre. This park is also known as Cannon Brothers Park.

**Veteran's Drive Athletic Field** – Veteran's Drive Athletic Field is located at the eastern terminus of Veterans Drive. The park and has four acres of useable land, 32 parking spaces with two handicapped accessible spaces. It is an irrigated athletic field, currently set up for soccer use. The field is lighted. The field usage is governed by the Recreation Commission.



## School Recreation Facilities

School facilities can also be considered as providing for recreational area although public access to such facilities can be more restricted. The recreational amenities located on South River Educational Campus are described below. The South River Educational Campus is located in the southwestern portion of the Borough with access off Montgomery Street. The complex is comprised of 23.5 total acres and devotes approximately 18 acres to recreational purposes.

The Board of education maintains a natural grass football field in Denny Stadium, two natural grass soccer fields, two baseball fields and one softball field, as well as track and field space, and a tennis facility with four individual tennis courts. Both the cost of maintenance and the natural wear and tear of the football field are problematic for the athletic department. Poor weather conditions often affect the usability of these fields for several days. The 2009-2012 School Facility Strategic Plan calls for the replacement and/or refurbishment of Denny Stadium facility and playing field. The addition of a synthetic playing surface would eliminate maintenance costs, field saturation problems, and would provide a playing surface for both football and soccer games. This would improve field conditions elsewhere on the campus and throughout the borough where soccer and baseball/softball teams share fields. See the School Facility section of the Community Facilities Element for

additional details.

## Assessment of Existing Parks & Recreational Facilities and Open Space

There are approximately 160 acres of parkland located in the Borough of which approximately 65 acres are developed for recreational use. This data suggests that South River satisfies the mid-range for the provision of total parkland but is deficient in developed recreational land. However, considering that no parkland is provided within the Borough by any county, state or federal government agency, it can be reasoned that South River provides a commendable amount of parkland to its residents. This contention is also supported by the knowledge that an extensive contingency of quasi-public institutions reside in the community which provide additional recreational amenities. Further, the Borough is situated in the heart of Middlesex County which provides for fourteen (14) county parks that encompass over 5,000 acres. In addition, the state also provides for three state parks in the county area. The NRPA also recommends that the Borough provide between 3 and 7 acres of land for mini-parks, 15 to 31 acres of land for neighborhood parks and between 77 and 124 acres of land for community parks. In attempting to satisfy this criteria, it has been determined that South River provides 0.9 acres of mini-parks, of which 0.9 acres is developed for recreation; 72 acres for neighborhood parks, of which 14 acres is developed for recreation; and 86 acres for



Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.

community parks, of which only 49 acres is developed for recreation. A summary of these findings is provided in Table VI-2. This data suggests that the Borough is deficient in providing for mini-parks by approximately 3 acres and also needs to develop at least 20 more acres within the existing boundaries of its community parks.

Continued on following page.

TABLE VI – 2

### EXISTING RECREATIONAL FACILITIES INVENTORY BY PARK CLASSIFICATION

Classification of Park	Recommended Acreage for South River	Total Acreage	Developed Acreage
Mini-parks	3-7	0.9	0.9
Neighborhood Parks	15-31	72	14.1
Community Parks	77-124	86.3	49.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>95-140</b>	<b>159.2</b>	<b>64.5</b>

## Future Parks, Recreation & Open Space Planning

This Recreation and Open Space Plan recommends a number of initiatives which focus upon maintaining, expanding and improving the parkland and recreational facilities offered to the residents of the Borough. The proposed recommendations are based on the examination and analysis of data presented in previous sections of this Master Plan. That evaluation recommends acquisition of the most desirable lands as well as the improvement of existing facilities. These recommendations are described below and are shown graphically on the combined Existing Recreational Facilities Map and proposed Parks Recreation and Open Space Plan where appropriate.

### Parks, Recreation & Open Space Zone

Although the Borough of South River has over 159 acres of public land devoted to parks and recreational uses, the current Master Plan does not provide for any "Park and Recreation", or a "Open Space Conservation" land use designation in the Land Use Plan. Similarly, the current zoning code does not provide for a Parks and Recreation Zoning District. Existing park and recreation properties are currently zoned within the residential or industrial zones applicable with their surrounding neighborhoods.

This zone should include all existing municipal parkland, all county open space lands, and specific private parcels of existing, dedicated conservation or stormwater management areas. The purpose of this zone is to recognize and consolidate all municipal park parcels, sports fields, sports courts, paper streets, wooded areas, ponds, wetlands and county open space lands into a single unified zoning district and to establish a protective land use policy to regulate these environmentally sensitive lands.

Permitted uses in this zone should include parks and recreation fields, facilities and offices, storage and maintenance buildings and equipment related to recreational use, recreation centers, sports fields and courts, public water fountains and restroom facilities, concession stands, benches, picnic facilities, shelters, safety and facility lighting and facilities necessary for public safety infrastruc-

ture. The zone should also allow outdoor fundraising activities, such as carnivals, fairs, etc., upon issuance of the necessary permits from Borough agencies, on lands of existing quasi-public organizations in the Borough.

The zone should allow for drainage structures and basins and all municipal utilities. The zone could allow commercial sports and recreation facilities, should the Borough contemplate such uses into designated locations within the zone. The zone could also allow environmental and/or outdoor or experiential educational uses in this zone. The zone should discourage and prohibit residential, commercial or industrial uses.

### Planning For Park Expansion and Open Space Preservation

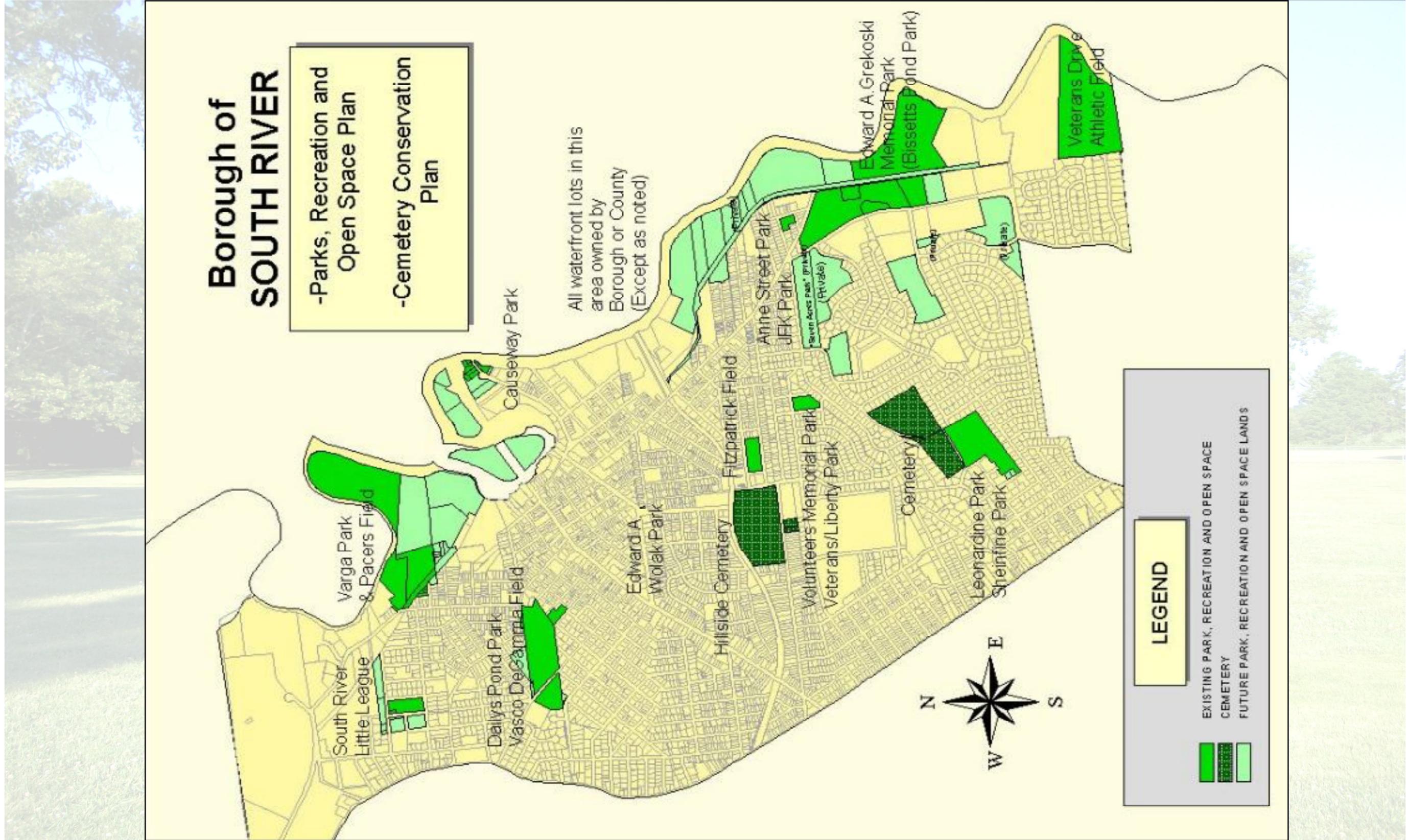
The following items should be considered for the expansion of existing parkland and preservation of existing open space:

#### Former Rail Right-of-Way

- As identified in the 1997 Master Plan, the Borough of South River has acquired the abandoned Raritan River Railroad R.O.W. south of the Conrail Railroad line. This railroad right-of-way totals 9.25 acres in area and extends nearly 1¼ miles north from the Borough DPW complex to the Conrail Rail Line. It consists of a uniform 66' width for a majority of its route and a variable width for the remaining segment. This property is also situated adjacent to, and parallel with, a similarly configured parcel of Borough-owned property. This abutting land is located directly to the west and extends almost ¾ of a mile (at a width of 12') from the DPW complex to Kathryn Street. This Master Plan identifies the abandoned railroad property valuable land. This Master Plan recommends this parcel be designated for parks, recreation and open space use in the Land Use Element of this plan, and that any future zoning changes should include this parcel into a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Zoning District.

### Grekoski Park Area

- The 1997 Master Plan identified Lot 1 in each of Block 373, 374, and 375 (as located along the South River in the southeastern portion of the Borough) as highly desirable private land consisting of 34.86 total acres. It recommended that this land be acquired and developed as recreational fields (football/soccer) and a riverfront beach area in conjunction with the development of the abandoned railroad property. At this time, all parcels have been acquired by Middlesex County as open space.
- The 1997 Master Plan identified Block 370, Lot 1 and Block 371, Lots 1.01 and 2 as municipal property ideally suited to be developed as an active recreational area with direct access and parking off Bissett Place and linkages to Edward A. Grekoski Park and the proposed pedestrian way within the abandoned railroad property. This property has been acquired and is now under borough ownership. This Master Plan recommends this parcel be designated for parks, recreation and open space use in the Land Use Element of this plan, and that any future zoning changes should include this parcel into a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Zoning District.
- The 1997 Master Plan identified Block 362, Lot 1 (located west of Whitehead Avenue in the southeastern portion of the Borough) as highly desirable private land consisting of 13.7 acres. This property currently contained a pond surrounded by environmentally sensitive type wetlands. It was recommended that this land be preserved as open space. Block 362 has been subdivided since the last Master Plan and this parcel has been redesigned as Block 362.1, Lot 1. The current lot area is shown on the tax map as 7.2 acres. This Master Plan recommends this parcel be designated for parks, recreation and open space use in the Land Use Element of this plan, and that any future zoning changes should include this parcel into a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Zoning District. The Borough, when conducting any zoning changes to this lot, should also consider including two nearby parcels: Block 363.04, Lot 33 and Block 362.01, Lot 12 in the Open Space district. All these parcels are associated with the residential development surrounding Charter Drive/Rotunda Lane and contain drainage facilities for this development. The parcels are shown on the following plan.



## Veteran's/ Volunteers Park

- This Master Plan recommends that those sections of Bray Avenue and Herbert Street (which are currently undeveloped and located adjacent to Veteran's Park) be vacated and made part of Veteran's Park. This action will increase the size of a neighborhood park by approximately ½ acre thereby achieving one of the goals of this Master Plan.
- This Master Plan recommends that the section of John Street that is currently undeveloped (0.28 ac) and located within Dailey's Pond Park be vacated and made part of the park.

## Daily's Pond Park

- The 1997 Master Plan identified Block 30, Lot 23 as highly desirable private land consisting of 1.6 acres and recommended that said property be acquired and made part of Dailey's Pond Park. This property has been acquired and is now under borough ownership. This Master Plan recommends this parcel be designated for parks, recreation and open space use in the Land Use Element of this plan, and that any future zoning changes should include this parcel into a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Zoning District. Two additional abutting parcels: Block 146, Lot 3 and Block 30, Lot 23 should be also be designated for parks, recreation and open space use in the Land Use Element of this plan, and that any future zoning changes should include this parcel into a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Zoning District. All lots should be combined into a single park parcel.

## South River Little League Property

- The 1997 Master Plan identified several parcels surrounding the existing "South River Little League" property as Block 59, Lot 1; Block 60, Lots 1 and 1.01 (2.2 acres) and those undeveloped sections of Hollander Street and Jacob Place (0.5 acres) as municipal property ideally suited to be developed as active recreational land consisting of additional Little League and softball fields. This plan recommends all parcels listed above, and also Block 58, Lot 1 ("South River Little

League") be designated for parks, recreation and open space use in the Land Use Element of this plan, and that any future zoning changes should include this parcel into a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Zoning District. Also, several parcels of Borough owned open space are located along the northern boundary of the Little League parcel. These are Block 49, Lots 1,2,3 & 1.01. These lots should be designated for parks, recreation and open space use in the Land Use Element of this plan, and that any future zoning changes should include this parcel into a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Zoning District. All parcels, and abandoned street rights-of-way should be consolidated into a single parcel.

## Causeway Park

- Several Parcels of Borough owned land are located on the western terminus of Causeway Street and have been included into Causeway Park. Although some of the parks parcels are clearly identifiable, others are not due to the obsolete arrangement of lot lines. The following Borough owned parcels should be merged with the existing park lots: Block 325, Lots 8-16, Block 327, Lots 21, 22, 23 (all presumed merged into County-owned lot 22), and lot 26. The abutting lot 25 is under private ownership and currently contains an abandoned dwelling unit. The Borough may wish to consider acquisition of this lot. All lots should be merged into a single parcel.

## Varga Park & the South River Bridge Area

- Several large parcels of wetlands and wooded areas are located south of Varga Park/Pacers Field and are now under Borough ownership. These parcels should be merged with the existing park parcel and designated for parks, recreation and open space use in the Land Use Element of this plan, and that any future zoning changes should include this parcel into a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Zoning District. Additionally, parcels of Borough ownership are located around the base of the Bridge. These parcels should also be included into the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Zone.

## Eastern Waterfront

- Almost all parcels on the eastern waterfront of the Borough, between the marina parcel and the Public Works yard are now under Borough or County ownership. Except for one (1) remaining privately owned lot: Block 303, Lot 12 all parcels can now form a contiguous greenway from Grekoski Park to the marina. The Borough should consider acquiring the remaining parcel: Block 303, Lot 12 and should consider combining all parcels into Grekoski Park. The consolidation of these parcels would facilitate the construction of passive recreation opportunities in this area with linkages to the marina, Grekoski Park and the future Waterfront revitalization and rehabilitation area.

## South End Parcels

- Four large and vacant parcels of open space are located south of Kamm Avenue and west of Whitehead Avenue. Block 353, Lot 1 is unofficially referred to as "Seven Acres Park" and is under private ownership by a local house of worship. Since the property is privately owned and rarely used except for fundraising carnivals and similar events by the owner, the Borough should consider protecting the property from development pressure by including it the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Zone. This zone, by design, would allow for the non-profit organizations, by right, to use the land for carnivals and similar uses, upon issuance of the appropriate permit from the Borough.
- Block 354.01, Lot 15 is located directly south of Block 353, Lot 1. This parcel is heavily wooded and contains several delineated wetlands and wetland buffer areas, as well as drainage facilities for the development of singlefamily homes along Heritage and Continental Courts. The property tax records for this parcel indicate that a development/property management company: M&M Co. (Mazel & Munford Co.) remains the owner of the property. With the several environmental constraints on the property and given its current use as a drainage spillway and detention basin the storm-water control benefits of this property should be pro-

tected. For this reason, the Borough should consider protecting the property from development pressure by including it the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Zone. This property is not recommended for acquisition.

- Block 356, Lot 1.06 and Block 351.06, Lot 1 are two vacant, Borough-owned parcels in the south end of the Borough. Both are under Borough ownership. The Borough should consider including both lots the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Zone.

## Facilities Maintenance

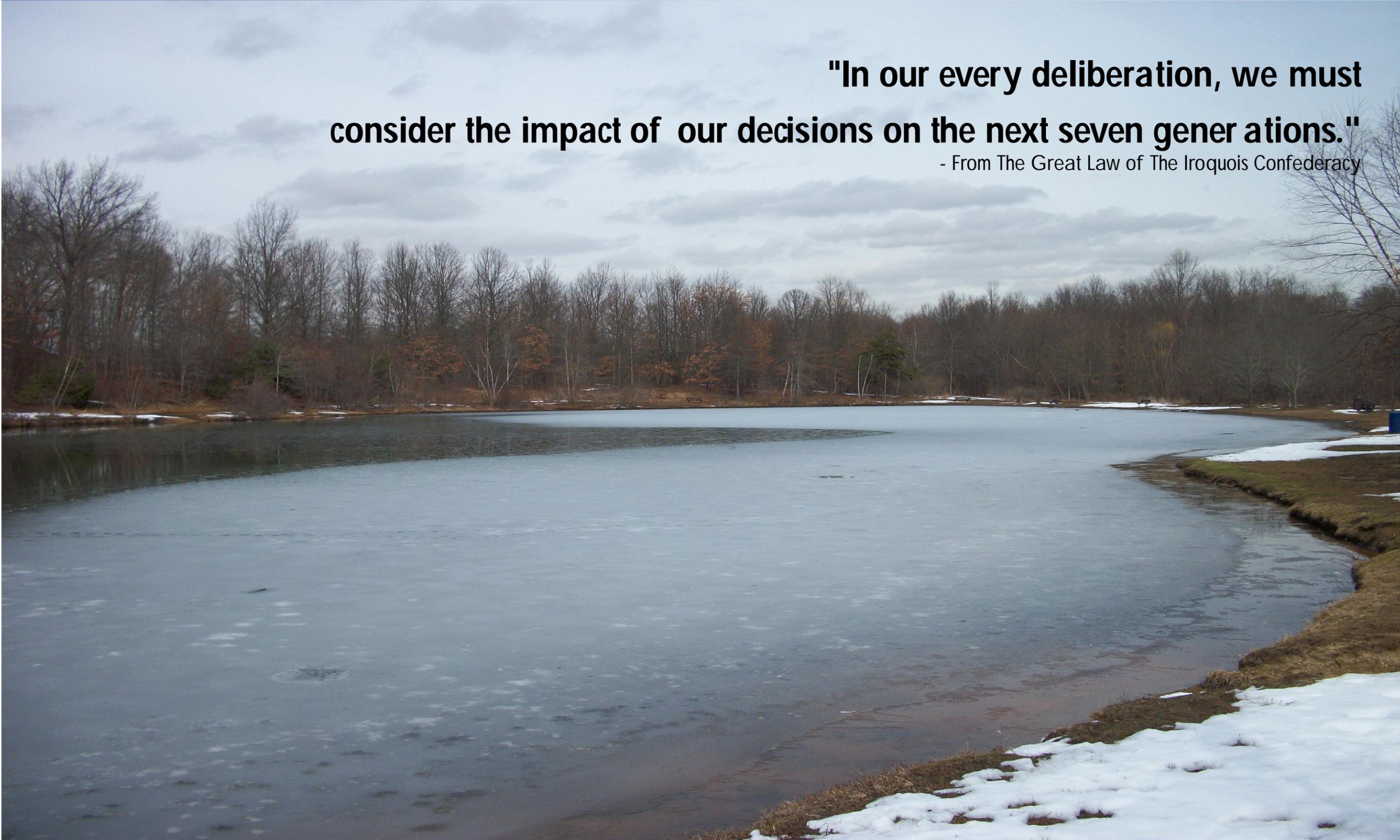
The 1997 Master Plan Parks and Recreation Element provided a diverse set of recommendations for improvements to all of the identified park facilities. This document is more a list of short-term goals and maintenance items than a long-term facilities plan. As such, the residents of the Borough would be best served when the elected and appointed officials of the Borough manage and maintain that document. This Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan element endorses and references that standing list of improvements and in coordination with the Mayor, Council, Recreation Advisory Committee, and recommends continued implementation of all improvement listed therein.

## Conclusion

The Borough of South River has many needs regarding developed recreational space. However, many opportunities exist to provide Borough residents with not only the facilities they demand, but also desirable facilities found in other communities. It is therefore recommended that a separate Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan be prepared to specifically outline the development opportunities available to the Borough and the degree of feasibility each opportunity presents.



Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.



**"In our every deliberation, we must  
consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations."  
- From The Great Law of The Iroquois Confederacy**



# Environmental Sustainability:

Recycling Element — Sustainability Element — Green Building

## RECYCLING ELEMENT

### General Overview

The passage of New Jersey's mandatory recycling legislation in 1987 was a major milestone in our state's solid waste management history and helped establish New Jersey as a leader in this field. The "New Jersey Statewide Mandatory Source Separation and Recycling Act" (Recycling Act), N.J.S.A. 13:1E-99.11 et seq., set forth an ambitious program that reshaped a key aspect of the everyday lives of state residents, businesses and institutions.

The Recycling Act required New Jersey's twenty-one counties to require all municipalities to adopt ordinances based upon their county's recycling plan. County recycling plans were also required to designate the strategy to be utilized for the collection, marketing and disposition of designated recyclable materials.

The Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. §40:55D-28b(12)) also states that recycling plan elements in municipal master plans must incorporate the State Recycling Plan Goals, including providing for the collection, recycling and disposal of all materials designated in the municipal recycling ordinance.



Photo Courtesy Middlesex County

### Goals and Objectives

The purposes of the Mandatory Statewide Source Separation and Recycling Program include:

- The removal of various recyclable materials from the municipal solid waste stream.
- The reduction of flow of solid waste to sanitary landfill facilities
- The conservation and recovery of valuable resources
- To increase the supply of reusable raw materials for industry

This Recycling Plan Element shall, therefore, provide a realistic guide for the establishment of a municipal solid waste program which fulfills the Borough's obligation to both Middlesex County and the State of New Jersey.

The primary objective of this Recycling Plan Element is to reduce the solid waste stream of the community. An additional objective is to encourage all new development and redevelopment in the borough to incorporate appropriate recycling facilities into their construction and design. These objectives can be accomplished through the following actions:

- Continued participation in the Middlesex County recycling program.
- Encourage increased recycling efforts and where possible, increase the number of substances that are recycled.
- Continue and expand recycling educational programs
- Expand opportunities for recycling in public places.
- Ensure future development applications for the construction of and new single family or two-family units or 3 or more multi-family units provide for the collection, storage and disposal of recycling materials.
- Ensure future development applications for the construction or renovation of 500 SF or more of building space in non-residential uses provide for the collection, storage and disposal of recycling materials.



Photo Courtesy Middlesex County

### Borough, State National Recycling

USEPA reports an average nationwide generation of Municipal Solid Waste to be an average of 1.16 tons/year (2,320 lbs/year), or 6.4 lb./day. New Jersey residents now generate over nineteen million tons of solid waste in per year. We recycle 10.3 million tons or 51.8% and 9.5 million tons are sent for disposal. Of the 9.5 million tons disposed, 1.5 million or 8% of the total waste we generate goes to resource recovery facilities, 3.8 million or 20% is disposed at landfills in New Jersey and 3.9 million or 19% is sent for out-of-state disposal. (NJDEP 2003)

Between 1985 and 2003, the generation of total solid waste in New Jersey has risen by an annual average of approximately 4%, however, the waste stream continues to grow faster than our ability to recycle it. If the total waste stream continues to increase, resulting in a 2015 waste stream of 33.0 million tons, we will have to recycle 72 percent of the stream to avoid growth in disposal. Currently, we are only recycling 51.8 percent. We must also do more to prevent the generation of waste. (NJDEP 2003) The Borough of South River generates approximately 4,000 tons of solid waste each year since 2005. (MCSWDP)

## Municipal Recycling Program

Municipal Recycling programs in New Jersey are regulated under the Statewide Mandatory Source Separation and Recycling Act of 1987, the State of New Jersey Solid Waste Management Plan of 2006 and, in the Borough of South River, the Middlesex County Solid Waste Management Plan, revised through: November 2008 and the Middlesex County Recycling Plan of 1994.

The borough is required to comply with the Middlesex County Solid Waste Management Plan and Recycling Plan and as such, said plans are hereby incorporated into this plan by reference. Any future revisions, amendments and successors to those enabling documents shall be also incorporated in this plan by reference. Responsibilities under the county recycling plan include:

### a) Mandating Recycling of Materials Prescribed in County Plan

Each municipality in Middlesex County must adopt an ordinance mandating the source separation and recycling of at least the materials identified in the County's adopted and approved Plan. Municipalities may mandate other materials not designated in the County Plan.

### b) Source Separation of Leaves

Municipal ordinances must also include source separation of



Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.

leaves for composting.

### c) Amending Ordinance to Mandate Additional Prescribed Materials

Municipal ordinances must be amended if the county plan is revised.

### d) Providing a Recycling Channel for Each Mandated Material

Municipalities shall provide, either curbside collection or a drop-off center that will enable all generators to recycle each of the mandated materials.

### e) Enforcement and Penalty Provisions

Municipal ordinances shall specify enforcement provisions and establish fines which will be imposed for failure of to comply with requirements of the recycling ordinance.

### f) Municipalities to Market Recyclable Materials

Each municipality shall develop a method of marketing the collected materials.

### g) Municipal Responsibility for Meeting 50% and 60% Goals

Each municipality is responsible for all actions which are necessary to ensure that the 50% and 60% Countywide recycling goals are met. This includes programs of education, inspection and enforcement.

### h) Municipal Recycling Education Requirements

Each municipal education program must include notification every six months to all persons concerning the municipality's recycling program, the materials being recovered, procedures required for separation and collection and hours of drop-off center operation.

### i) Reporting

Each municipality must provide report tonnage statistics to the county each year.

**j) Requiring Registration of Haulers, Scavengers or Volunteer Groups** Municipal ordinances may provide that collectors of recyclables register and provide data on the results of their collection.

### k) Single/Dual Stream Recycling



Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.

Municipalities may opt to collect their recyclables in a single stream or dual stream. South River collects comingled items.

### l) Compliance with Municipal Land Use Law

Municipalities must update their ordinances to include requirements/design standards to ensure that a proper recycling system for all mandated recyclables will be provided for in developments consisting of 50 or more single family units, 25 multifamily residential housing units and any commercial or industrial development proposal of 1,000 square feet or more of land. A recycling system must also be in place throughout the construction phase.

### m) Construction and Demolition Waste

Municipalities must update their ordinances to include the following section: At the time of issuance of any building permit, the building code official must provide written instruction on proper disposal and recycling of construction and demolition waste and furnish a Notification of Construction/Demolition Activity Form that must be filled out by the permittee and faxed to the DSWM within 48 hours of the issuance of a municipal permit.

## South River Solid Waste Disposal & Recycling Program

The Borough of South River has established the following recycling plan as part of the municipal program.

- Since 1985, a recycling ordinance has been in effect which requires the separation of glass bottles, aluminum cans, newspapers and leaves from other solid waste for comingled collection and ultimate recycling.
- The borough has, by ordinance, adopted the position of recycling coordinator. The municipal solid waste program is directed by the coordinator who serves under the supervision of the Director of Public Works.
- The borough is a participant in the county solid waste program and has constructed a recycling center within the municipal public works complex.
- The recycling element of the county program provides for the collection, storage and disposal of all recyclable materials within the borough including newspaper, mixed paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastic, appliances, oil, leaves, compost material, etc.
- All recycling material is collected by the Middlesex County Improvement Authority twice per month and deposited with approved recycling centers.
- All non-recyclable household solid waste is collected curbside by the South River Sanitation Department.
- Non-residential generators of solid waste must dispose of their refuse by contractual agreement.
- The recycling center at the public works facility operates Saturday drop off hours for recycling only, from 8AM to 1PM.
- Residents of the borough can, through the MCIA, recycle household hazardous waste, paint, tires and electronic equipment on designated drop-off days throughout the year.

## Recommendations for Future Program Planning

In order to assure that future land development and rehabilitation in the borough will encourage and accommodate recycling programs, the Borough should consider the following:



### Trash Collection Program Continuation

- The Department of Public Works operates on a 3-day per week schedule of trash pickup falling on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. A total of nine (9) trash routes are used. Mondays are designated for seasonal organic pickup (leaves, grass, branches). Fridays are designated for special bulk pick up (large appliances, furniture, etc.) The Director of Public Works recommends continuation of this system.
- The department maintains a fleet of approximately six (6) rear-loading garbage collection vehicles. Vehicle life span is approximately 5 years. Continued fleet replacement is necessary and should be included in municipal financial planning.
- Consider alternative fuel technologies when making planned fleet vehicle replacements

### Recycling Program Development

- Expanded recycling programs should be considered, as recommended by the recycling coordinator, for tire collection program. Tire collection would be handled through the existing public works/recycling center.

- Consider streamlining and improving leaf recycling and collection practices. Alternative collection methods, including requiring bio-degradable leaf bags should be considered and are recommended by the recycling coordinator.
- School recycling remains an ongoing effort in the borough. Areas for improvement include increased availability and convenience for source separation in classrooms, cafeterias, offices, sporting venues and general spaces. This should be considered for student/staff use and in foodservice areas.
- Consider examining Main Street trash collection and recycling practices and programs, receptacle improvements and signage, as this is an area of concern for the Public Works department.

### Recycling Education

- The borough should consider, along with the Department of Public Works, implementing a recycling education program for both children and adults and increased recycling opportunity, ease and signage for adults.

### Residential Development

- Each Application for residential development of three (3) or more dwelling units of multi-family housing must inclusion provisions for the collection, disposal and recycling of all materials designated by ordinance. A single family unit or a unit within a two-family dwelling should provide a designated area with at least 12 square feet of floor area conveniently arranged and located as a holding area for a four-week accumulation of materials. Such an area may be inside the building.

### Non-residential Development

- Each application for a non-residential use must inclusion provisions for the collection, disposal and recycling of all materials designated by ordinance. Each use should quantify the amount of recyclable materials and should provide a designated area conveniently arranged and located as a holding area for a one-week accumulation of materials. Such an area may be inside the building.
- Such storage areas shall be designed for truck access pick-up of materials. Such areas shall be suitable screened from view if located on the exterior of the building.

## SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENT

*(From the New Jersey Sustainable State Institute (NJSSI) & Sustainable Jersey)*

Recent amendments to New Jersey's Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), N.J.S.A. 40:55D 28(b)(16), have authorized the inclusion of a Green buildings and environmental sustainability plan element. The revision states: *A municipal master plan may include: Green buildings and environmental sustainability plan element which shall provide for, encourage and promote the efficient use of natural resources and the installation and usage of renewal energy systems; consider the impact of buildings on the local, regional and global environment; allow ecosystems to function naturally; conserve and reuse water; treat storm-water onsite; and optimize climate conditions through site orientation and design.*

According to the NJSSI, The concept of sustainability is built on the understanding that the three systems that support humanity- our society, our economy, and the natural environment- are interdependent. We cannot address one system without impacting the other two areas, and the pursuit of a sustainable society occurs through recognition that we must factor these implications into all of our decisions in order to ensure we are able to meet future needs as well as current ones. To sustain a high quality of life and to ensure that those conditions are preserved future generations we must recognize:

**The economic component** of sustainability is about living today at a level of income and material comfort that our descendants will also be able to enjoy.

**The environmental component** of sustainability is about maintaining our natural resources and the quality of our environment so that future generations will reap the same benefits from them as we do.

**Social sustainability** is about ensuring we have a culturally rich life, that we are a fundamentally fair and just society, and that we and our civic institutions can effectively work to solve our problems.



Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc

The principal goal of this Sustainability Plan Element is to make sustainability inherent in Borough policies and regulations. The sustainability of the municipality's resources, including the built and natural environments, is dependent on the implementation of the goals, policies and strategies of this plan element.

Through the adoption of this plan element, municipal residents may

learn the components of sustainability and how planning for sustainability advances the means for the environment, the economy and the community to become more sustainable. Understanding the interdependence of the three elements of sustainability, this plan element seeks to reduce activities that encroach upon nature, meet human needs fairly and efficiently, and reduce dependence upon fossil fuels, underground metals, and minerals.

## Sustainable Jersey

One way to implement the goals of this plan element and to create a more sustainable community is participation in the *Sustainable Jersey* certification program. Sustainable Jersey is an initiative of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities' Mayors' Committee for a Green Future, the Municipal Land Use Center at The College of New Jersey, The New Jersey Sustainable State Institute at Rutgers University, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, the Rutgers Center for Green Building, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, and a coalition of NJ non-profits, state agencies, and experts in the field. This is an incentive program for municipalities in New Jersey that want to go green, save money, and take steps to sustain their quality of life over the long term. *Sustainable Jersey* has a list of required and elective "actions" (see below) that municipalities can implement to receive the certification. These actions address issues such as global climate change, pollution control, biodiversity, buying locally, community outreach, green building, and sustainable agriculture. The process of participation in their certification program is designed to make communities more sustainable. *Sustainable Jersey* provides municipalities that enter the program with a comprehensive package of tools, resources, guidance materials, training, and financial incentives, to support and reward progress.

The following list of actions from Sustainable Jersey are listed by category and are explained in more detail on the website:



www.sustainablejersey.com:

### Community Partnership & Outreach

Create Green Team  
Community Education and Outreach  
Energy Outreach and Incentive Programs  
Organize a Community Energy Outreach Program  
Purchasing Clean and Green Energy  
Efficient Home Heating and Cooling Subsidies

Home Energy Audits and Upgrades  
ENERGY STAR Appliances and Products  
Refrigerator-Freezer Recycling

### School-based Energy Conservation Programs

Education for Sustainability Programs  
Green Challenges & Community Programs  
Hold a Green Fair

### Diversity & Equity

Diversity on Boards & Commissions  
Environmental Justice in Planning & Zoning  
Lead Education and Outreach Programs  
Lead-Safe Training Programs  
Cumulative Risk Assessment

### Energy Efficiency

Energy Audits for Municipal Facilities  
Energy Audits for One Building  
Inventory and Audit All buildings

### High Efficiency Municipal Buildings

High Performance Building Portfolio

### Greenhouse Gas

Municipal Carbon Footprint  
Community Carbon Footprint

Climate Action Plan  
Wind Ordinance

### Green Design Funding

Green Building Policy/Resolution  
Green Building Training  
Design Commercial and Residential Buildings  
Green Building Scorecard  
Site Plan Green Design Standards  
Green Building Education

### Green Design Municipal Buildings

New Construction  
Upgrade/Retrofit-Water Conservation  
Upgrade/Retrofit-Light Pollution  
Construction Waste Recycling

### Health and Wellness

Building Healthier Communities  
Anti-Idling Education & Enforcement Program  
Safe Routes to School

### Land use & Transportation

Sustainable Land Use Pledge  
Sustainability Master Plan Revision  
Complete Streets Program  
Municipal Planning and Zoning Self-Assessment

### Local Economies

Buy Local Programs  
Support Local Businesses

### Green Business Recognition Program

Green Jobs/Economic Development  
Food Funding Bronze  
Support Local Food  
Buy Fresh Buy Local Programs  
Farmers Markets  
Institutional Purchasing Program

### Natural Resources

Environmental Commission

Caring for Conservation Easements  
Easement Inventory and Outreach  
Easement Inspections and Evaluations

### Natural Resource Inventory

Open Space Plans  
Natural Resource Protection Ordinances  
Habitat Conservation Ordinance  
Environmental Assessment Ordinance  
Tree Protection Ordinance  
Clustering Ordinance

### Tree & Woodlands Management

Community Forestry Plan and Canopy Goal  
Tree Planting Programs  
Tree Maintenance Programs  
Tree Hazard and Health Assessment

### Water Conservation Education Program

Water Conservation Ordinance

### Operations & Maintenance

Green Purchasing Program  
Adopt a Green Purchasing Policy  
Recycled Paper  
Green Cleaning Products  
Green Maintenance Equipment and Materials  
Energy-Efficient Appliances or Equipment

### Grounds & Maintenance

Integrated Pest Management  
Efficient Landscape Design  
Minimize Water Consumption  
Recycled Materials and Composting

### Green Fleets

Fleet Inventory  
Driver Training  
Purchase Alternative Fuel Vehicle  
Vehicle Conversions  
Retrofit Diesel Vehicles  
Meet Target for Green Fleets

Adopt Behavioral Policies

Sustainability Planning  
Community Asset Mapping  
Community Visioning  
Sustainable Community Plan  
Vision Statement and Goals  
Indicators and Targets

Waste Management

Recycling  
Recycling Depot  
Construction and Demolition Waste Recycling Ordinance  
Food Waste  
Carpet and Foam Padding  
Bulky Rigid Plastics  
Shrink Wrap  
Community Paper Shredding Day

Waste Reduction

Waste Audit of Municipal Buildings Schools  
Pay-As-You-Throw Program  
Grass - Cut It and Leave It Program  
Backyard Composting Program  
Materials Reuse Program  
EPA WasteWise Partner

Innovative Demonstration Projects

Solar  
Wind  
Geothermal  
Green Roofs  
Raingardens  
Other

Animals in the Community

Companion Animal Management Plan  
Pledge Supporting NJ Wildlife Action Plan  
Wildlife Interaction Plan  
Animals in the Community Education

**Green Buildings & LEED**

A nationwide movement has been observed over the last 5 years centering around Green Building and the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). LEED is internationally recognized green building certification system. Administered by the US Green Building Council, the LEED certification program has created a rating system to encourage and recognize environmentally friendly construction. The LEED process and rating system is a performance-based system which awards points to encourage the use of environmentally sustainable materials, designs, construction practices and energy systems. When a minimum amount of points are earned to satisfy several criteria in the rating system, the USGBC will certify a building as a “green building.”

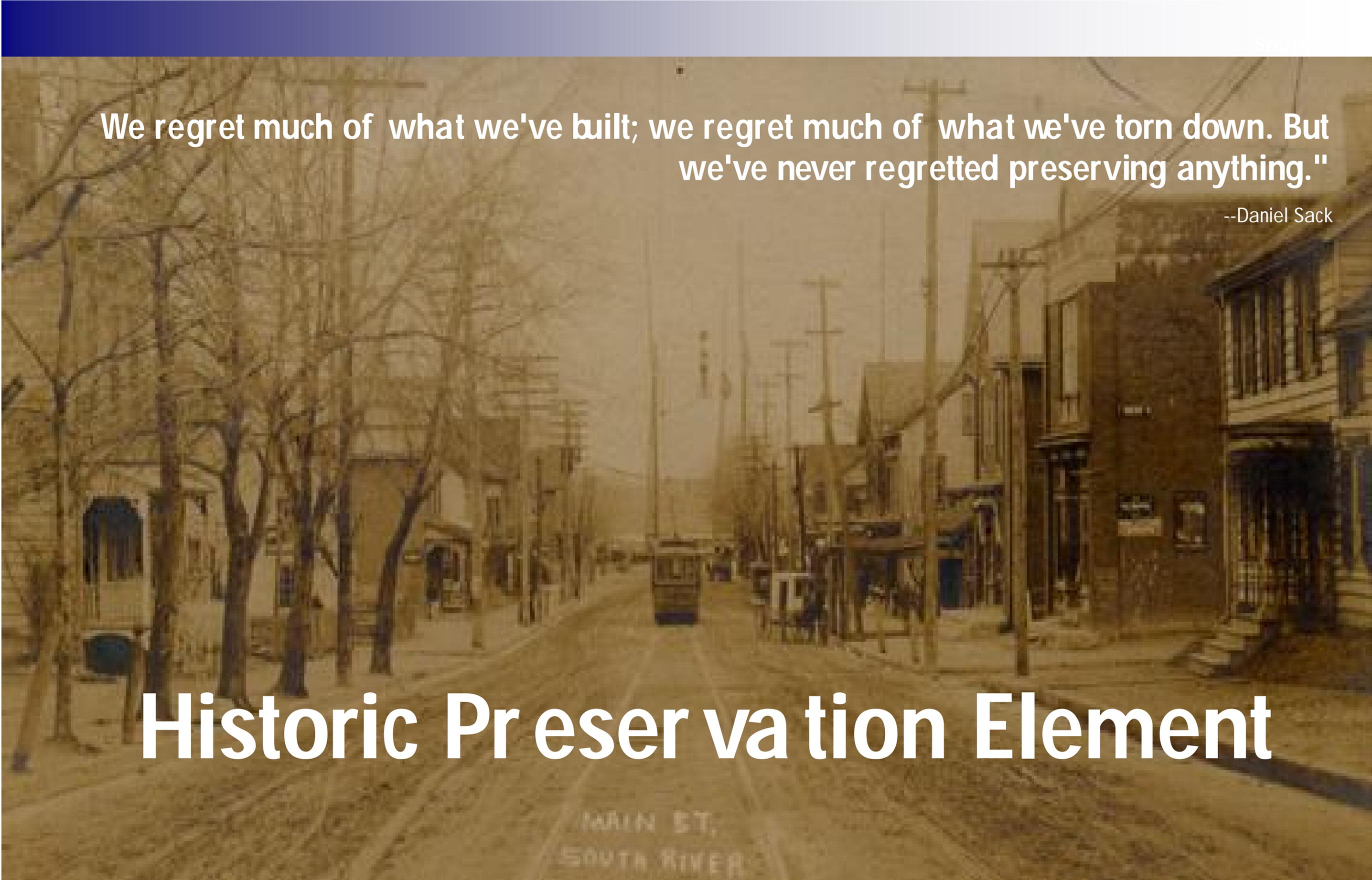
The principal goal of this Green Building Plan Element is to strongly encourage participation in the LEED certification program for all future buildings built, or rehabilitated in the borough. The Borough Council, should, through its future land use ordinance revisions, encourage LEED participation in all future site plan, subdivision, and redevelopment/rehabilitation ordinances. This topic should be considered by the borough’s Environmental Commission and their recommendations directed to the Borough Council for appropriate action. As this is an innovative area of planning, the borough should periodically refer to the US Green Building Council as the state of the art evolves.



Bignell Planning Consultants, Inc.

Sources for this section have come from:

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Available: <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/dshw/recycling>  
Middlesex County Solid Waste Management Plan (Revised through 2008)  
Middlesex County Recycling Plan (1994) Middlesex County Improvement Authority, Available: [mciauth.com/recycling\\_faqs.htm](http://mciauth.com/recycling_faqs.htm)  
New Jersey Sustainable State Institute, Available: <http://policy.rutgers.edu/njssi/about.asp>  
Sustainable Jersey, Available: [www.sustainablejersey.com](http://www.sustainablejersey.com)  
United States Green Building Council, Available : [www.usgbc.com](http://www.usgbc.com), George Lyons, Director of Public Works, and Donna Sottdard, Recycling Coordinator



We regret much of what we've built; we regret much of what we've torn down. But we've never regretted preserving anything."

--Daniel Sack

# Historic Preservation Element

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

### General Overview

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended in 1980, has encouraged states and their component municipalities to assume active roles in historic preservation. New Jersey's Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et. Seq.) sets forth the standards, criteria and procedures by which municipalities may regulate the use of land including the designation and regulation of historic sites or districts.

The New Jersey Register of Historic Places was set up by legislation (N.J.S.A. 13-1B-15.128) in 1970 with the intention to preserve the State's historic, architectural, archeological and cultural heritage. The State Register mirrors the National Register and lists the buildings, districts, sites, structures and objects of national, state, and local significance.

In January 1986, New Jersey adopted historic preservation enabling legislation. These amendments to the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) allow for a "historic preservation plan" element of the Master Plan, a local ordinance and a commission officially establishing historic preservation planning as part of zoning. By making historic preservation an element of the Master Plan, the concept of historic preservation is incorporated into the planning process. **After July 1, 1994 all historic sites and districts designated in the zoning ordinance must be based on identification in the Historic Preservation Plan element.** The statute provides that the Zoning Ordinance may provide design criteria and guidelines. Therefore, the Historic Plan Element shall provide a realistic guide for the planning, development and expansion of historic and potentially historic land uses and districts in the Borough of South River.

### Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives are specific to the Historic Preservation Plan and represent the particular intentions of the Borough with regard to the preservation of historic sites and possible provision of historic districts so as to protect the public health, safety and

general welfare of the present and future residents and citizens of the municipality. These goals and objectives are as follows:

- To preserve the historical, cultural and architectural integrity of any and all land uses or structures located within the Borough considered to have significant historical importance.
- To nominate and have placed on the Federal or State Register as many places of historical significance deemed worth of such prestige.
- To consider the establishment of historic district(s) in areas of the Borough considered historically significant and which could benefit from such a designation.



Photo Credits: All photos this section: South River Historical Preservation Society, Inc.

## Places on the National and State Registers of Historic Places:

- **Camden and Amboy Railroad Main Line Historic District (ID#2970)**  
Camden and Amboy Railroad right-of-way  
SHPO Opinion: 7/12/1991
- **Old School Baptist Church and Cemetery (ID#1940)**  
64-66 Main Street  
NR: 1/7/1992 (NR Reference #: 91001926)  
SR: 11/19/1991
- **St. Mary's Church (ID#4206)**  
Corner of Jackson Street and Whitehead Avenue  
NR: 12/10/2003 (NR Reference #: 03001276)  
SR: 10/24/2003
- **Willett Elementary School (ID#1941)**  
Charles Street  
SHPO Opinion: 12/21/1976  
SHPO: 1/04/77, 2/08/78



## Criteria for Historic Consideration

This Master Plan review provides a checklist of planning criteria for the evaluation of historic properties to be used as a possible basis for new or enhanced zoning standards to protect historic resources in the Borough. These criteria cover historic, architectural, setting, use and cost considerations.

The following list is recommended as one step in the process:

### Historic Considerations

Is the place or structure associated with:

- The life or activities of a significant historic person or any activities of significant importance to the Borough (i.e., military hero or famous battlefield)
- A major group or organization of historic importance with the nation, state or local community
- A major historic event (i.e., cultural, social, military, economic

or political)

- A major recurring event in the history of the nation, state, or local community (i.e., an annual celebration)
- A past or continuing institution which has contributed substantially to the history of the Borough (i.e., a prominent institution)

### Architectural Considerations

Is the structure or building:

- One of only a few of its age which remains in the Borough?
- A unique example of a particular architectural style of period in the Borough
- One of only a few good or remaining examples of a particular architectural style of period in the Borough
- The work of a nationally famous architect or a notable work of a major local architect or master builder
- An architectural curiosity or picturesque work of particular artistic merit
- Showing evidence of original materials and/or workmanship which has significant historic value
- Retaining the integrity of a historically significant original design

### Location and Setting Considerations

Is the structure or building:

- Generally visible and/or accessible to the public
- An important element in the historical character of the Borough or a neighborhood of the Borough or could it be both
- Contributing to the architectural continuity of any street in the Borough.
- Located on its original site
- Appropriate for historic preservation (i.e., trees, walls, fences, yards, gardens, etc.)
- Subject to the encroachment of any detrimental influences

### Use Considerations

Is the structure or building:

- Threatened by demolition from any public or private action
- Eligible to warrant consideration for its use as an exhibit or museum by having sufficient educational value
- Able to be obtained for its original or present use
- Adaptable to an appropriate reuse or activity without detriment to its architectural integrity

### Cost Considerations

- Is the preservation or restoration required economically feasible?
- Is the continued maintenance economically feasible once the preservation or restoration has been completed?

**TABLE IX – 1: SOUTH RIVER REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

**EXISTING INVENTORY OF PLACES OF HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE AS IDENTIFIED BY THE SOUTH RIVER CULTURAL ARTS AND HERITAGE COMMISSION AND THE SOUTH RIVER HISTORIC PRESERVATION SOCIETY**

BLOCK:	LOT:	LOCATION:	BLOCK:	LOT:	LOCATION:
157	8	44 Main Street	155	1	35,41 Ferry Street
161	8	Old Bridge Baptist Church-Main Street	154	1	21 Ferry Street
151	2-1	South River Municipal Main Street	154	2	7,13 Ferry Street
151	1	First National Bank-Main Street	154	3	1,3 Ferry Street
157	3	John Whitehead Building-Main Street	154	7	15,17 Ferry Street
147	25	South River Trust Company- 25 Main Street			Klauser's Alley
150	5	American House Hotel-Reid Street & Main Street	212	1-1	126 Old Bridge Turnpike
157	8	30 Main Street	131	16	J. Van Ness House-OBT -New Brunswick Turnpike
177	6	36 Main Street	167	1-A	238 Main Street
157	6	44 Main Street	167	3	232 Main Street
157	11 & 12	50, 56 Ferry Street	166	30	230 Main Street
157	13	46 Ferry Street	166	8-1	226 Main Street
158	2	Ferry Street & Jackson Street	166	7	224 Main Street
158	3	8 Ferry Street	166	6	222 Main Street
158	4	10 Ferry Street	166	5	190 Main Street
158	5	12,14,16 Ferry Street	103	21	187 Main Street
158	6	18,20 Ferry Street	103	14	Clark House -163 Main Street
158	7	22, 24 Ferry Street	164	12	154 Main Street
158	8	16 Mark Place	164	13	152 Main Street
156	1	63,65 Ferry Street	169	14	150 Main Street
156	2	63,63 Ferry Street	162	1-1	124 Main Street
156	3	57,59 Ferry Street	103	3	German Presbyterian Church-Washington Street
156	4	55 Ferry Street	163	4	70 Washington Street
156	5	49 Ferry Street	321	11	S. Willet House-211 Whitehead Avenue
156	6	45 Ferry Street	321	7	Holy Trinity Baptist Church-Whitehead Avenue
156	7-1	43 Ferry Street	320	3	181 Whitehead Avenue
155	8	33 Ferry Street	306	7	181 Whitehead Avenue
155	7	25 Ferry Street	-	-	Hermann Street
155	6-1	27 Ferry Street	304	1-1	Hermann-Aukam Handkerchief Factory
155	6-2	29,31 Ferry Street	302	8	Raritan River Hotel-107 Whitehead Avenue
285	3	Orthodox Church of Sts. Peter & Paul	30	17	116 Prospect Street

## Places of Historical Importance

A number of buildings and places within the Borough date back to the Colonial American period resulting from the community's early days of settlement. The Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission (MCCHC) compiled an inventory of historic, cultural and architectural resources for the county between the years 1977 and 1979. The table to the left was created from data taken from the Middlesex County Cultural Heritage Commission (MCCHC) inventory and should be considered part of the Historic Preservation Plan for South River Borough. None of those buildings, however, are officially listed on either the State or Federal Register of Historic Places, although the Willett School was previously nominated for the State Register by the MCCCHC. The Commission also published a supplemental inventory in 1985 which considered the properties previously surveyed for National Register eligibility. This supplemental survey identified five possible places eligible for the National Register.

- The St. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church
- The Hermann-Aukamm Handkerchief Factory & Housing
- The Main Street District
- The Jay Van Ness House
- 152 Main Street

The original list of properties identified by the Cultural and Heritage Commission are listed in this table and were made part of the Historic Plan Element of the 1997 Master Plan. This Master Plan updates by reference, the "Register of Historic Places" as documented in the 1997 Master Plan. This listing can be used as a guide for the Planning Board when considering future development in the Borough. The Borough may also wish to consider adding the above properties and buildings for nomination on the State and National Register. (See Table VIII -1.)

## Places of Historical Interest

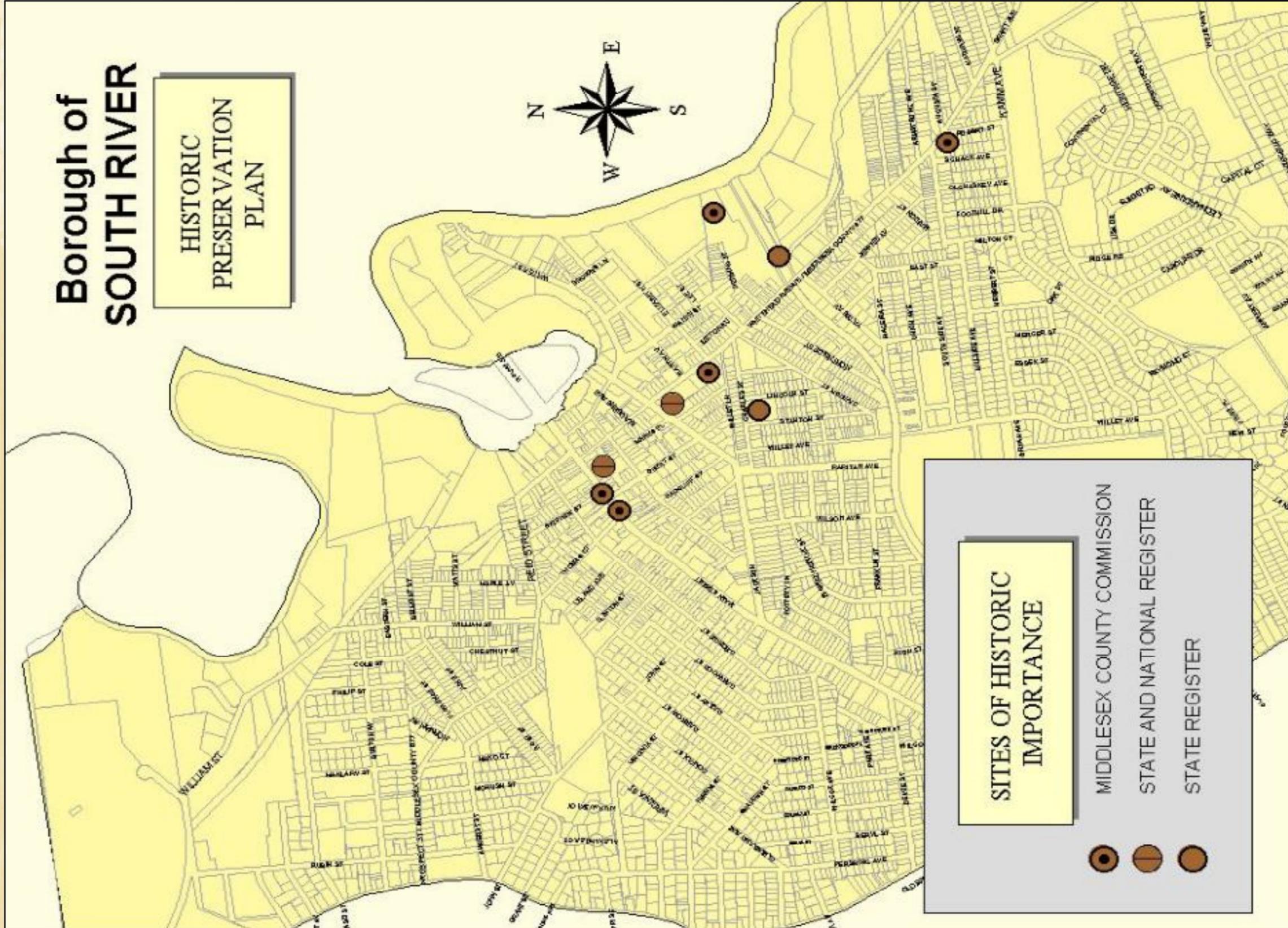
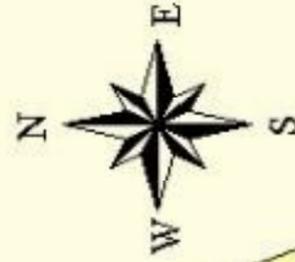
Table VIII-2 shows a list of the buildings, places in the Borough of South River which do not meet the criteria for historical consideration but are of local historic interest. The "known as" column was generated from an inventory taken by the Historic Preservation Society, Inc.



266—Public School No. 3, South River, N. J.

# Borough of SOUTH RIVER

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN



**TABLE IX - 2**

**BUILDINGS AND PLACES OF HISTORICAL INTEREST IDENTIFIED BY THE SOUTH RIVER HISTORIC PRESERVATION SOCIETY, INC**

NUMBER:	STREET:	KNOWN AS:	NUMBER:	STREET:	KNOWN AS:
<b>DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL</b>			<b>RESIDENTIAL AREAS</b>		
20-22	Main Street	Union Hotel	Main Street from downtown to Hillside Ave.		
30	Main Street	Ram's Head	Whitehead from Jackson to Elizabeth St.		
36	Main Street	Italianate Building	<b>CHURCHES</b>		
42-44	Main Street	Krakowiak	30	Jackson Street	St. Mary's Church
46	Main Street	Beckers	-	Holmes Avenue	St. Mary's School
50	Main Street	-	22	Holmes Avenue	St. Mary's Convent
52-54	Main Street	Duchocks	76	Whitehead Ave	Sts. Peter & Paul Russian Church
56-58	Main Street	White glazed brick	199-201	Whitehead Ave	Burning Bush of God
60	Main Street	John Alexander bldg	20	William Street	St. Stephens Church
62	Main Street	Ben Franklin	82	Main Street	Conklin United Methodist
64	Main Street	White glazed brick	42	Thomas Street	1 <sup>st</sup> Reformed Church
64-66	Main Street	SR Museum	76	Washington	Union Baptist Church
66	Main Street	SR Pub	<b>SCHOOLS</b>		
7	Main Street	Laffin Chevrolet	-	Prospect Street	Lincoln School
9-11	Main Street	Hotel Pershing	-	Charles Street	Willet School
19	Main Street	Restaurant	-	Thomas Street	Old High School
25	Main Street	SR Trust	<b>INDUSTRIAL</b>		
41-43	Main Street	Brick Building	-	Herman Street	Silk Mill – Herman-Aukerman Factory
	Main Street	1 <sup>st</sup> National Bank	11	Russel (corner of Water)	
65	Main Street	Stucco covered brick	-	Martin Avenue	Lace Embroidery Works
65	Ferry Street	Grand Hotel	<b>CIVIC</b>		
45	Ferry Street	Polish Falcons	-	George Street	George St Firehouse
22	Ferry Street	Ice Cream	330	Old Bridge Turnpike	Serenity Spa
18	Ferry Street	Spitilari Furniture	-	Jackson Street	Knights of Columbus
43,1, 2, 60-62, 56	Ferry Street				
2,10, 12, 14	Ferry Street				
11	Jackson Street	Willis Hall-Portuguese Fisherman			
15-17	Jackson Street				
23	Jackson Street	Pawlowski Property			

## Recommendations

This Historic Preservation Plan Element recommends several initiatives which are focused upon maintaining and improving the places, structures and buildings of historical importance that are located throughout the Borough.

- The Borough should make a concerted effort to place eligible historic sites for consideration on the State and National Register of Historic Places. An historic designation could result in federal or state funding to assist in the rehabilitation, restoration, or preservation of any identified historic building or site.
- There are a concentration of historic sites along Main Street and Ferry Street in the Downtown Business District. Land use planning and aesthetic objectives for this area must consistently focus upon the historic sensitivity of these buildings and places. The Borough should consider creating a Historic Preservation Designation for this district.
- A majority of the historic sites identified in the Borough are located on Main Street and Whitehead Avenue outside of the Downtown Business District. The municipal review and approval process for the conversion, rehabilitation, redevelopment, or additions/alterations to those structures must be sensitive to their inherent historic and/or archaeological value with the goal of preserving and enhancing those values.
- Sensitivity to the impacts of the historic and archaeological legacy of the Borough should be a common objective throughout all of the elements of this Master Plan. Therefore, the remaining vestiges of the history of South River should be identified and integrated into the future land use planning considerations of the Borough.
- Historic Preservation work should follow the U.S. Department of the Interior's standards for rehabilitation.

Sources for this element include:

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection - Historic Preservation Office

South River Historical and Preservation Society Inc.

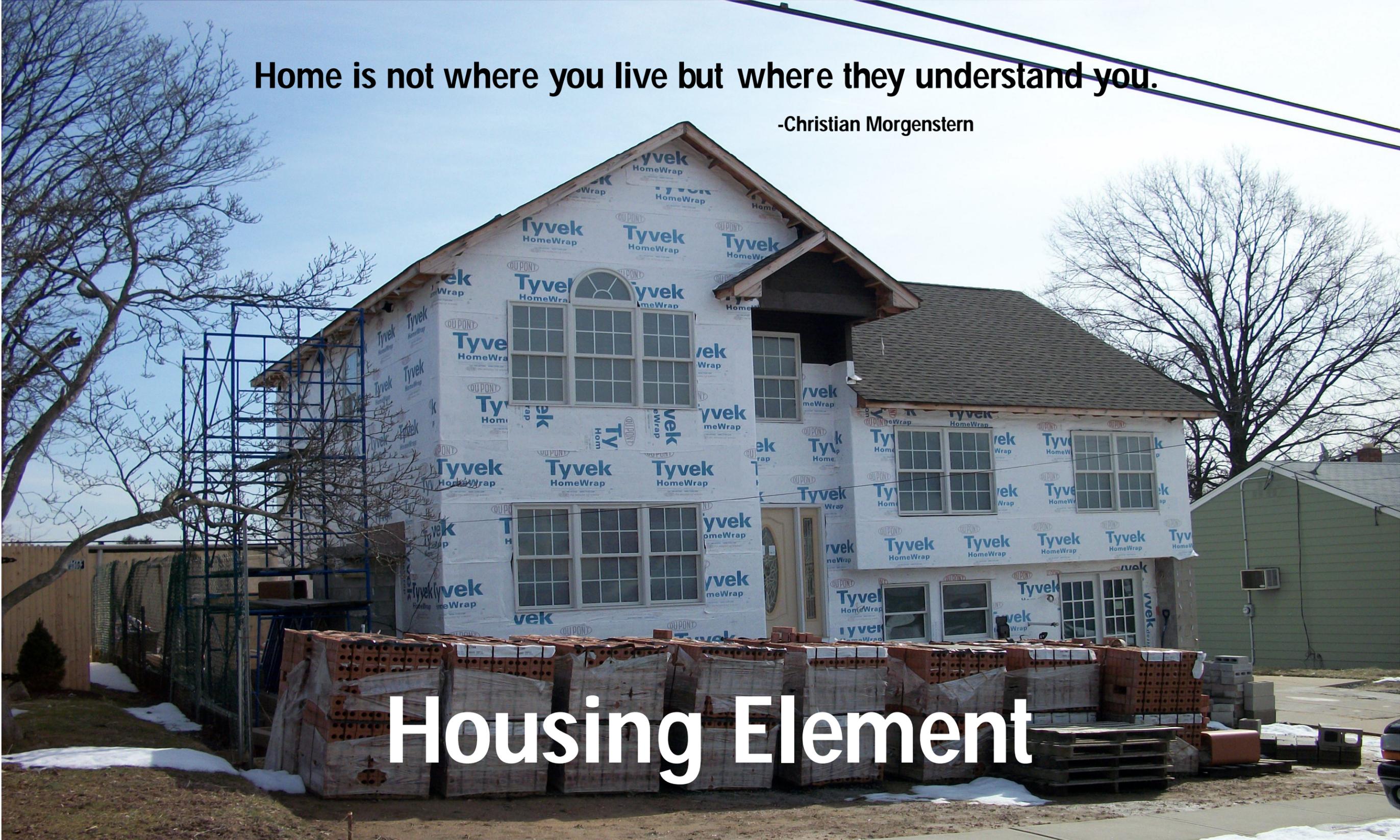
South River Cultural Arts and Heritage Commission

Federation Planning Information Report, Historic Preservation Law, New Jersey Federation of Planning Officials, Vol. XX No. 2., p. 217.



Home is not where you live but where they understand you.

-Christian Morgenstern



# Housing Element

## COAH AND THE CHALLENGES OF PREPARING A HOUSING ELEMENT

With the Mount Laurel I & II decisions, the Supreme Court of New Jersey has established the doctrine that all municipalities in the State have a constitutional obligation to provide a realistic opportunity for the construction of low and moderate income housing. In response, the New Jersey Legislature adopted the Fair Housing Act. This act established the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) and administrative agency within the state government tasked with administering *how* municipalities should address their affordable housing need. Since 1986 COAH has promulgated three “rounds” of controversial and complex housing regulations. Several dozen court rulings on the matter, most of them objecting to the regulations, have been decided by the courts. The result has produced an environment of conflicting policies, burdensome regulations and municipal officials frustrated with the confusing methods of calculating and satisfying local housing obligations.

Despite the challenges to administering a court-mandated housing doctrine, the goal of providing affordable housing to all residents of the Borough is a noble one. However, the high costs of housing within the region makes this a more difficult task. Further, since the median household income in this part of the country is among the highest in the nation and, since median incomes in the Borough historically lag behind the county average, many South River households may be surprisingly eligible for moderate income housing.

This Housing Element is intended to guide the orderly and efficient implementation of the Borough’s housing policies. However, at the time this Master Plan is being created, the Governor and New Jersey Legislature are considering legislation to abolish the State’s Council on Affordable Housing. Independent of any changes to the State’s affordable housing policies and institutions, all municipalities are still subject to the other Legislative and Judicial mandates created by the Fair Housing Act and the Mount Laurel decisions. This situation leaves the Borough of South River, and many other municipalities, in a difficult situa-



tion. The Borough needs to create a housing policy to comply with COAH regulations at a time when that agency’s future is uncertain. The following Housing Plan Element has been prepared as a draft Housing Plan Element. Should the Borough find it necessary to update this plan in the future, it can easily be revised to reconcile with changes in state policy.

### STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

New Jersey’s Fair Housing Act of 1985 and the Municipal Land

Use Law (MLUL) require municipalities to adopt a housing element that addresses the municipal present and prospective housing need, with particular attention to low and moderate income housing. A housing element shall contain at least the following:

1. An inventory of the municipality’s housing stock by age, condition, purchase or rental value, occupancy characteristics and type including the number of units affordable to low and moderate income households and substandard housing capable of being

rehabilitated;

2. A projection of the municipality's housing stock, including the probable future construction of low and moderate income housing, for the next 10 years, taking into account, but not necessarily limited to, construction permits issued, approvals of applications for development and probable residential development of lands;
3. An analysis of the municipality's demographic characteristics, including but not necessarily limited to, household size, income level and age;
4. An analysis of the existing and probable future employment characteristics of the municipality;
5. A determination of the municipality's present and prospective fair share for low and moderate income housing and its capacity to accommodate its present and prospective housing needs, including its fair share for low and moderate income housing; and
6. A consideration of the lands that are most appropriate for construction of low and moderate income housing and of the existing structures most appropriate for conversion to, or rehabilitation for, low and moderate income housing, including a consideration of lands of developers who have expressed a commitment to provide low and moderate income housing.

## Neighborhood character

Like many older cities in the State, the Borough has a diverse housing stock. The Borough provides a broad range of housing choices including detached single family residential homes, two-family homes, duplexes, low rise garden apartment complexes, 2-3-4-5 dwelling unit homes, manufactured housing and boarding houses. The majority of land area is devoted to providing the most frequent and prolific housing type in the Borough: single family detached dwellings. In fact, 68% of all dwelling units in the Borough are single family detached structures. Additionally the Borough provides a wide range of housing options for residents of all incomes. While approximately 70% of the units in

the Borough are owneroccupied, the remaining 30% (about 1,700 units) are renter occupied.

The development patterns in South River vary by neighborhood. The south section of the Borough generally contains planned neighborhoods of medium density, homogenous single-family detached housing, where many of the structures are less than 20 years old. This area has experienced significant residential construction since 1990. Many parcels in this area provide 7,500 to 10,000 sf of lot area. Most neighborhoods in this area of the town contain post-WWII housing types arranged on grid patterns or curvilinear streets.

The central portion of the Borough (generally between Main Street and Hillside/Kamm Avenues) contains neighborhoods of small, dense rectangular lots. Most single parcels contain an average of 4,000 sf. Many of these pre-WWII era housing were built as working-class row houses when the Borough was dominated by manufacturing uses. These neighborhoods generally contain smaller, less expensive housing, intermingled with former commercial and manufacturing buildings, many of which have been converted to residential use. These areas are characterized by higher frequencies of 2-family and multi-family and mixed uses, sometimes all within a single building, as well as an aging housing stock. This area also contains most of the Borough's garden apartments, condominiums and multifamily apartment complexes. This area is characterized by onstreet parking problems since many of the existing dwellings were constructed without adequate parking for a modern household. Streets in this area are arranged on a grid pattern, however the existing local and collector streets were never designed to provide high degrees of interconnectivity.

The northern portion of the Borough contains predominantly single family residential housing. Many of these dwellings are on parcels comprised of one or more 40'-wide lots. All streets are arranged in grid patterns, some of which are "diagonal" to other grid layouts. The area is almost completely built out. Similar to neighborhoods in the central portion of the Borough these neighborhoods contain a scattering of 2-family and multi-family

uses, as well as former industrial buildings converted into residential 1 or 2-family houses. The northern residential neighborhoods are neatly contained in an area south of the light industrial land uses in the northern portion of the Borough.

## Housing Goals

The Borough of South River should continue to address the housing needs of its broad range of residents. In doing so, the Borough should continue to address the housing issues within the Borough. They include:

- Providing adequate and affordable housing within the Borough.
- Through land-use planning, provide a realistic opportunity for the creation of low and moderate income housing to satisfy all legally imposed obligations under COAH and/or any of its successors.
- Requiring all housing in the Borough to be safe and code compliant.
- Reducing substandard housing through rehabilitation and/or redevelopment.
- Ensuring housing units provide appropriate densities
- Reduce overcrowded units through enforcement and other pro-active means.
- Encouraging a variety of housing options attractive to households of varying types and income levels
- Increasing/maintaining owner occupancy
- Containing the spread of urban decay from dilapidated buildings to surrounding properties and neighborhoods
- Reducing the pattern of illegal housing units and illegal conversions.
- Synthesizing the demographic data found in the Community Profile Element so as to comprehensively plan for Borough's future. (This element incorporates the findings and analysis found in that section.)
-

## Draft Housing Element

In an attempt to meet its affordable housing obligation under COAH, the Borough directed a housing consultant to prepare a Housing Element for the Master Plan. The report was prepared and submitted to the Borough in November 2008. Based upon the recommendations of the housing consultant at that time, *Bernard and Nebenzahl, LLC*, the Borough has yet to formally adopt this report as the Housing Element of the Master Plan. The intent of the delay was to prevent adoption of a housing plan that would be irreconcilable with upcoming changes in state housing policies and agencies. This Master Plan incorporates that Draft Housing Element: Interim Report herein as the (draft) Housing Element of this Master Plan. The document contains approximately 33 pages, plus appendices. The document is available through the Borough Clerk's Office. The draft Housing Element contains the following analysis elements:

- Analysis of Housing Stock
- Units Affordable to Low and Moderate Income Households
- Characteristics of Housing Stock
- Projected Housing Stock
- Demographic Characteristics
- Household Size and Age Distribution
- Income
- Employment Characteristics
- Education
- Projection of Future Employment
- Land as a Scarce Resource
- Vacant Land Inventory and the Growth Share Adjustment
- Compliance Options
- Rehab Share
- The Regulatory Framework for New Construction
- Zoning and Fees
- Regional Contribution Agreements
- Redevelopment
- Municipal Construction
- Supportive and Special Needs Housing
- Accessory Apartments
- Market to Affordable Program
- Assisted Living Units
- Affordable Housing Partnership Program
- Extension of Expiring Control

## DRAFT HOUSING ELEMENT INTERIM REPORT

**Borough of South River,  
Middlesex County, New Jersey**

**November 13, 2008**

**PREPARED FOR:**  
**Borough of South River**  
48 Washington Street  
South River, N.J. 08882 -1247

**PREPARED BY:**  
***Bernard and Nebenzahl, L.L.C.***  
77 North Union Street  
Lambertville, N.J. 08530



**“Restore human legs  
as a means of travel.  
Pedestrians rely on food for fuel  
and need no special  
parking facilities.”**

**-Lewis Mumford**



# Circulation and Mobility Element

# CIRCULATION AND MOBILITY ELEMENT

## Overview

This Circulation and Mobility Plan Element shall provide a realistic guide for the planning and development of a thorough and comprehensive traffic and circulation system in the Borough. This element summarizes existing traffic conditions, illustrates existing traffic circulation patterns, portrays the location and types of facilities supporting all modes of transportation, discusses planned traffic improvements and recommends additional traffic improvements beyond those planned by all the other governmental agencies.

The Existing Traffic and Circulation Element includes data on traffic volume, safety and congestion, transit activity, and classifies the existing road network according to function and jurisdiction. Although there is relatively little land remaining in South River for new development or redevelopment, strategies are presented that can reduce unnecessary transportation demands and alleviate unwarranted traffic congestion.

The Plan Element addresses the location and types of facilities for all modes of transportation required for the efficient movement of people and goods into, about and through the Borough of South River. The plan element takes into account the functional highway classification system of the Federal Highway Administration and the types, locations, conditions and availability of existing and proposed transportation facilities regarding all water, road and rail. The plan element recognizes that most of the existing system of roadways will all likely remain in place for the next 50 years and will continue to experience high traffic volumes in select corridors. The intent of this plan element should therefore be to examine and make recommendations to improve efficiency and access to the Borough's transportation networks.

## Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives are specific to the Circulation and Mobility Plan and represent the particular intentions of the Borough with regard to vehicular and pedestrian travel ways so as to protect the public health, safety and general welfare of all present and future residents and citizens of the municipality.

These goals and objectives are as follows:

- Provide improved inter- and intra-municipal traffic movement.
- Provide improved roadways for the safe and efficient movement of vehicles.
- Provide a safe and efficient circulation system for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Provide for a variety of modes of transportation, including vehicular, pedestrian, bicycling and mass transit.
- Provide for an increased parking supply convenient to the downtown business area of the Borough.
- Continue to review and evaluate strategies to reduce vehicle trips in the Borough in an effort to address the Clean Air Act and its subsequent amendments.

## Planned Improvements

Inquiries were made to the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), the Middlesex County Planning Board and the Borough Engineer to determine whether any improvements to the South River circulation system are planned by each respective government entity.

### State of New Jersey – Department of Transportation

There are no planned roadway or transportation improvements for South River Borough identified under NJDOT's 2009-2018 Transportation Improvement Program.

### Middlesex County – Department of Transportation

The Middlesex County Planning Department has issued a Mid-

dlesex County Comprehensive Transportation Study in 2003. That report and its successors are hereby incorporated herein to this Master Plan and are available from the Middlesex County Planning Department. Since transportation networks are best viewed using a county, state and regional lens, and because of the relative size of the Borough, the County Transportation Plan becomes a very useful tool in preparing the Borough's Mobility and Circulation Element. The Middlesex County Planning Department also provides and coordinates several transportation programs, activities and projects affecting the County including:

- The federally funded Sub-regional Transportation Planning Program
- Monitoring of Transportation projects and federal and State transportation programs
- Transit ridership volumes on Middlesex County bus and railroad facilities
- Traffic volumes and their trends
- Review of transportation proposals required by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, and other State, regional or local agencies
- Processing of project modifications of the federally funded Transportation Improvement Program and the State funded Capital Transportation Program
- Processing of Bus Stop and Bus Shelter requests affecting County Roads
- Periodic update of the Middlesex County Transit Guide
- Periodic update of the Middlesex County Bikeway Suitability Map
- There are no planned roadway alterations for South River Borough identified under the current Middlesex County Capital Improvement Program. In addition, the Middlesex County 2003 Comprehensive Transportation Study did not identify any corridor wide congestion problems, spot congestion problems or deficient bridges being located in South River Borough.

### Borough Engineering Programs

The Borough of South River formulates six-year Capital Improvement Programs which does not currently propose any ma-

major capital roadway improvements. Future Borough Capital Improvement Programs will rely on this municipal Master Plan and, in particular, this Circulation Plan Element to identify roadway and transportation improvement projects in need of funding.

## Recommended Improvements

This Circulation Plan recommends a number of initiatives which are focused upon improving the circulation pattern and transportation safety of the travelling public. The proposed recommendations are based on the examination of data presented in previous sections of this Master Plan. These recommendations are listed below and shown graphically on the combined Circulation Map and Proposed Circulation Plan.

- The construction of the unimproved section of Oak Street between Bryan Street and Kamm Avenue to facilitate residential transportation movement in the south central portion of the Borough.
- A traffic/parking study to identify and develop locations for additional municipal parking lots in the Downtown Business District. These locations should be situated behind commercial businesses on Main Street to be unobtrusive to the public, but convenient and readily accessible to the local business patrons.
- The vacation of certain municipal streets should be carried out to facilitate the expansion and improvement of certain municipal parks and public school facilities as described in detail in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan Element.
- A traffic engineering study of the geometry and design criteria of Reid Street should be conducted to improve the hazardous roadway bend between George Street and Stephen Street.
- A traffic engineering study of the geometry and design criteria of Prospect Street should be conducted to improve the hazardous roadway bend between William Street and Nelson Street.
- Coordination of efforts with the Middlesex County Transportation Department should be pursued to improve and expand public mass transit opportunities by way of creating new and/or revised bus routes and locating additional bus stops and related facilities, particularly along Main Street.



- The development of the Vitatrail Bicycle and Pedestrian Way proposed near Grekoski Park, Whitehead Avenue, Kuberski Court and Samuel Drive.
- The procurement of land along Whitehead Avenue, through acquisition or dedication, for adequate public right-of-way to facilitate the safe realignment of this collector road as proposed in this Circulation Plan and required by the Middlesex County Engineering Department.
- The requirement for appropriate pedestrian walkways to be incorporated within any new residential or commercial development and to be linked to any existing or proposed municipal bicycle or pedestrian way.
- The previous Circulation Plan in the 1989 & 1997 Master Plan proposed that “the sharp S-Turn at the southern end of Whitehead Avenue be improved by enlarging the radius to provide for easier turning movements.” Since Whitehead Avenue is under the jurisdiction of Middlesex County, the Borough is required by County policy to enter into an agreement with the County whereby the municipality must first obtain the necessary right-of-way prior to the County making the necessary improvements. The Borough of South River reaffirms its endorsement for this proposal and acknowledges the prescribed procedure for its implementation.

## Future Intersection Improvements

The following intersections are potential candidates for modification. A traffic engineering study should be conducted to investigate the need for the provision of traffic control devices or the redesign of roadway geometry at identified problematic street intersections which have exhibited high frequencies of traffic accidents for several years.

- These intersections are:
- Prospect Street & Nelson Street
- Main Street & Ferry Street
- Prospect Street & William Street
- Main Street & Water Street
- Willett Avenue & Hillside Avenue
- Main Street & Gordon Street
- Willett Avenue & Johnson Place
- Washington Street & Obert Street

## Roadway Access and Classification

There are no major regional roadways that traverse through the Borough. However, this circumstance does not preclude South River from having adequate regional access. The Borough is directly impacted by State Route 18, located a short distance from the Borough's western boundary. This thoroughfare is a principle north-to-south arterial roadway serving central New Jersey that provides direct linkage to the New Jersey Turnpike which lies a mile to the north. Access to Route 18 from South River is accomplished through the use of several county routes and local streets in nearby East Brunswick Township. The Garden State Parkway and State Route 9 are located approximately five miles east of the Borough and are readily accessible via several county routes through the adjoining municipality of Sayreville.

Roadways and streets are classified based upon the functions which they are expected to perform. There is a functional hierarchy of roads and streets that directs the higher level of service with providing both interregional and inter-municipal travel, whereas the lower level of service roadways are regulated with providing intra-municipal and local travel. The intermediate

level of service roadways are generally inclined to collect and distribute traffic between the higher capacity thoroughfares and the lower capacity access roads. The different functional classifications of roadways as standardized by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (N.J.D.O.T.) are described in Table X-1.

There are three (3) basic classifications of roadways identified as serving the Borough: Minor Arterial, Collector, and Local Access. The Borough further classifies the Collector Road designa-

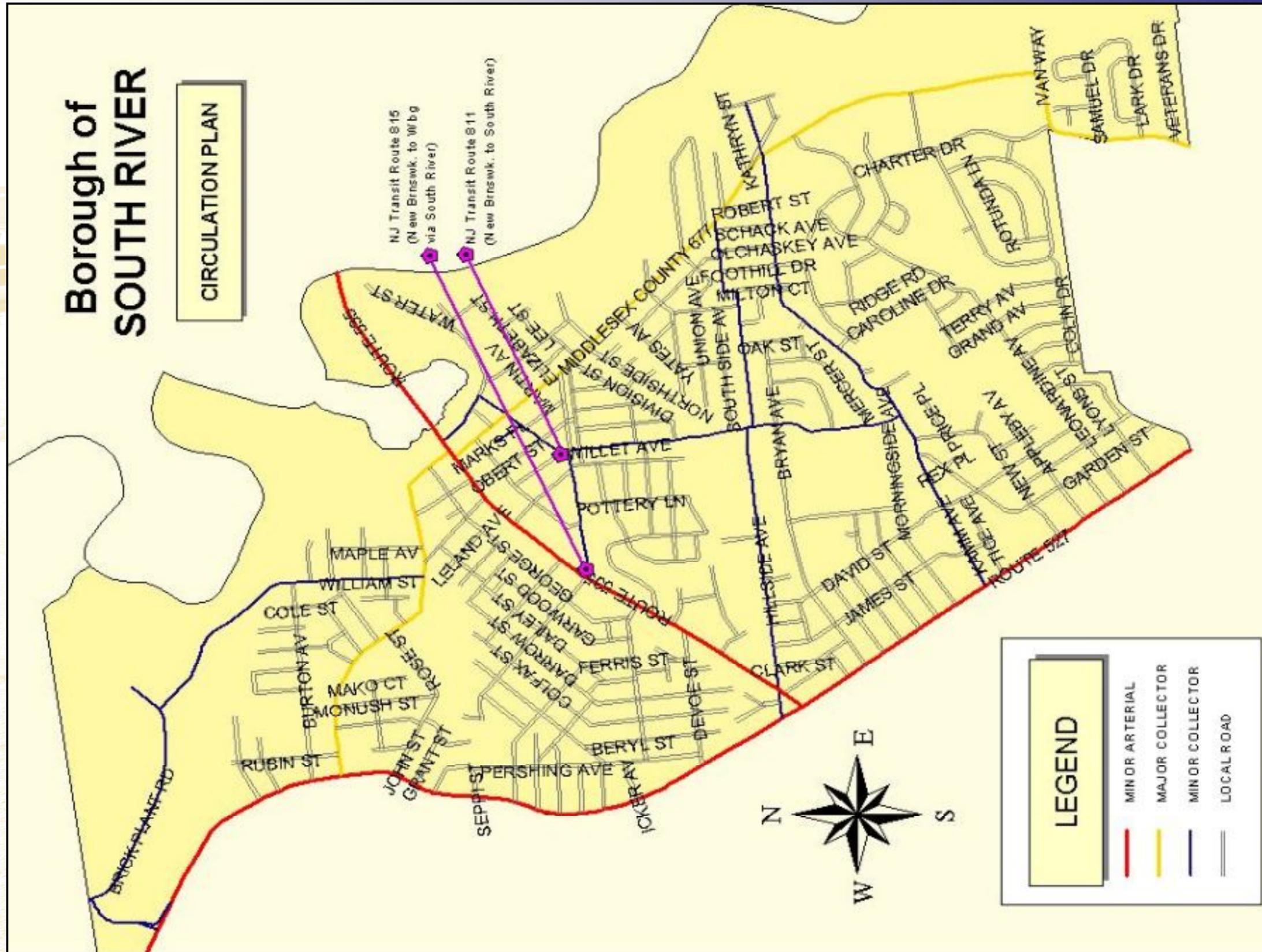
tion into Major Collector, Minor Collector and Local Collector and had added the classifications Local Street and Private Street within the Local Access designation to distinguish between roadways maintained by the Borough and those maintained by the private sector. There are no roadways located in the Borough identified as Freeways, Expressways or Principal Arterials. The types of roadways serving the Borough are illustrated on the Circulation Plan Map.

**Table X-1 : Functional Classification of Roads**

Roadway Class	Typical Access Type	Notes
Freeway/Expressway	Limited or no access to abutting land uses.	Access only from major streets, at interchanges (eg. Turnpike).
Principal Arterials	An Inter-regional road that conveys traffic between centers.	Should be excluded from residential areas (eg. Route 18).
Minor Arterials	Collects and distributes traffic between lower-order residential streets and arterials and expressways.	Designed to promote free traffic flow; therefore, parking should be prohibited and direct access to homes should be avoided. Should be designed so they cannot be used as shortcuts by non-neighborhood traffic (eg. Old Bridge Turnpike).
Collectors	Provides frontages for access to lots and carries traffic of adjoining residential access streets. Is not intended to interconnect adjoining neighborhoods or subdivisions.	Should not carry regional through traffic (eg. Whitehead Avenue).
Local Access Roads	Provides frontage for access to lots and carries traffic having destination or origin on the street itself.	Carries least amount of traffic at lowest speed.

# Borough of SOUTH RIVER

## CIRCULATION PLAN



## Roadway Jurisdiction

Roadways in New Jersey can be under the jurisdiction of either the federal, state, county, or local forms of government. There are no roadways located in South River that are under the jurisdiction of the federal government or the New Jersey Department of Transportation. There are, however, four roadways under the jurisdiction of Middlesex County.

-Main Street (County 535) traverses east-to-west through the center of the Borough and is the prime thoroughfare through its downtown business district. This roadway is classified as a Minor Arterial by the Borough with a recommended 66 foot right-of-way width.

-Old Bridge Turnpike (County Route 527) traverses north-to-south along the Borough's entire western border and serves as the municipal boundary between South River and East Brunswick Township. This roadway has been classified as a Major Collector by the Borough and a 49.5 foot right-of-way has been recommended.

-County Route 677 traverses through the Borough from north to south and is principally located within the eastern portion of the municipality. The route through the Borough follows Prospect Street to Reid Street across Main Street to Ferry Street and through Whitehead Avenue back into East Brunswick Township. This roadway is classified as a Major Collector and has an extremely variable right-of-way width throughout its length ranging from 33' wide on Reid Street to 80' wide on parts of Whitehead Avenue.

-County Route 675 is comprised of the Causeway and Water Street terminating at Main Street. The importance of this route diminished with the removal of the Old Causeway Bridge which continued the passage through the Borough of Sayreville along Jernee Mill Road. This route remains under county jurisdiction. The Borough classifies this roadway as a local collector with an existing variable right-of-way width.

The remaining roadways throughout the municipality fall under the jurisdiction of the Borough of South River. These roadways, as identified by their functional classification, are illustrated on the Existing Circulation Plan Map and listed in Table X-2.

## LEVELS OF SERVICE

**LEVEL OF SERVICE A** represents free flow. Individual users are virtually unaffected by the presence of others in the traffic stream. Freedom to select desired speeds and to maneuver within the traffic stream is extremely high. The general level of comfort and convenience provided to the motorist, passenger, or pedestrian is excellent.

**LEVEL OF SERVICE B** is the range of stable flow, but the presence of other users in traffic stream begins to be noticeable. Freedom to select desired speeds is relatively unaffected, but there is a slight decline in the freedom to maneuver within the traffic stream for LOS A. The level of comfort and convenience provided is somewhat less than at LOS A because the presence of others in the traffic stream begins to affect individual behavior.

**LEVEL OF SERVICE C** is in the range of stable flow, but marks the beginning of the range of flow in which the operation of individual users becomes significantly affected by interactions with others in the traffic stream. The selection of speed is now affected by the presence of others, and maneuvering within the traffic stream requires substantial vigilance on the part of the user. The general level of comfort and convenience declines noticeably at this level.

**LEVEL OF SERVICE D** represents high density, but stable flow. Speed and freedom to maneuver are severely restricted, and the driver or pedestrian experiences a generally poor level of comfort and convenience. Small increases in traffic flow will generally cause operational problems at this level.

**LEVEL OF SERVICE E** represents operating conditions at or near the capacity level. All speeds are reduced to a low, but relatively uniform value. Freedom to maneuver within the traffic stream is extremely difficult, and it is generally accomplished by forcing a vehicle or pedestrian to "give way" to accommodate such maneuvers. Comfort and convenience levels are extremely poor, and driver or pedestrian frustration is generally high. Operations at this level are usually unstable, because small increases in flow or minor delays within the traffic stream will cause breakdowns.

**LEVEL OF SERVICE F** is used to define forced or broken-down flow. This condition exists wherever the amount of traffic approaching a point exceeds the amount which can traverse the point. Queues form behind such locations. Operations within the queue are characterized by stop and go waves, and they are extremely unstable. Vehicles may progress at reasonable speeds for several hundred feet or more, then be required to stop in a cyclic fashion.

Source: [Highway Capacity Manual](#), Special Report 209, Transportation Research Board, National Research Council, Washington, D.C.

## Traffic Congestion

Certain areas of the Borough experience some traffic congestion during the morning and afternoon peak rush hours. Most of the traffic congestion occurs within South River's downtown busi-

ness area and along other smaller commercial traffic corridors. Main Street serves as an inter-municipal county route that conveys traffic between town centers and is the center of the Borough's economic activity, containing most of its commercial establishments. Main Street provides direct access to onstreet

parking for the patrons of those commercial establishments, on-street parking thereby slowing down the traffic volume. The intersection of Main Street with Reid Street also has an impact on traffic congestion as a result of a long cycle associated with the traffic signal located there. Additional traffic congestion occurs to a lesser extent where Main Street and Prospect Street both intersect separately with Old Bridge Turnpike and where Prospect Street, Reid Street and Thomas Street all converge. The degree to which the roads and intersections are impacted by traffic congestion is determined by the level of service assigned to each affected roadway location. A description of the levels of service classification system is given in the previous table.

### Alternative Modes of Mobility

The Borough of South River offers alternative modes of transportation to automotive travel relevant to bus transit, freight rail transportation, bicycle and marine transportation. Pedestrian travel is served by the Borough's sidewalk system serving the community's pedestrian population.

### Bus Transit

Local and regional bus transportation is provided by New Jersey Transit and Suburban Transit. Local bus transportation is accessible within South River and includes a designated point of transfer on Main Street between Obert Street and Ferry Street. Regional bus transportation is not directly accessible within South River itself, but is readily accessible via the East Brunswick Transportation Center. This facility is located at the corner of Tices Land and Old Bridge Turnpike which is adjacent to the municipal boundary at the north end of the Borough. Regional bus transportation is considered readily accessible to South River residents.

### NJ Transit

NJ Transit serves Old Bridge, East Brunswick and South River providing express service to New York via the New Jersey Turnpike. This route originates in the Browntown Shopping Center and travels along County Route 516 to State Route 18 to the East Brunswick Transportation Center prior to embarking onto the

Turnpike. Routes originate in New Brunswick and provides service to North Brunswick, North Brunswick Shopping Center, Milltown, East Brunswick, Brunswick Square Mall, South River, Rutgers University and St. Peter's Hospital. This route travels along Easton Avenue and a portion of Clifton Avenue to Route 18 and along Route 18 into East Brunswick. Another route originate in New Brunswick and serves Rutgers University, East Brunswick, Mid-State Mall, Brunswick Square Mall, Old Bridge, Browntown Shopping Center, South River, Sayreville, South Amboy, Perth Amboy, Woodbridge and Woodbridge Center.

### Senior Citizen Bus Service

The Borough provides a jitney bus pickup/drop-off service for the Borough senior citizen population to facilitate transportation for convenience trips to supermarkets, pharmacies, doctors/offices, the Central Business District Area, senior center, etc.

### Rail Transit

Freight rail transportation facilities exist in South River although passenger rail do not. The Conrail-Raritan River Railroad maintains and operates the rail line in the Borough. There are two passenger rail lines available to the residents of South River that

are located some distance outside of the municipal boundaries. The N.J. Transit-North Jersey Coast Line lies east of South River with the closest available train station located in South Amboy. The N.J. Transit Northeast Corridor Line lies west of South River with the closest available train station located in New Brunswick. Each station is accessible through regional bus transportation services.

### Bicycle Transit

There are no officially designated bicycle paths that exist in South River although bicycles are a prevalent mode of transportation in the Borough, particularly for residents who do not drive automobiles. Bicyclists currently utilize existing streets and sidewalks throughout the municipality.

### Marine Transportation

There is a private marina located in the eastern portion of the Borough along the Raritan River that services small pleasure craft. This facility has numerous boat slips and a boat storage yard. Since the depth of the water is relatively shallow along this stretch of the river, boats requiring a deeper draft cannot be served by this marina.

<b>Minor Arterials:</b>	Main Street (Country Route 535) County Route 527 (Old Bridge Turnpike)
<b>Major Collectors:</b>	County Route 677 (Prospect St., Reid St., Ferry St., Whitehead Ave.)
<b>Minor Collectors:</b>	Kamm Avenue, Moscow Avenue, Willett Avenue (from Clayton Ct. South), Raritan Avenue (from Clayton Ct. North), Hillside Avenue, Jackson Street, William Street, Brick Plant Road, North End Drive,
<b>Local Collectors:</b>	Burton Avenue, Thomas Street, Albourne Street, DeVoe Street, Johnson Place, David Street, First Street, Leonardine Avenue, Caroline Avenue, Prentice Avenue, Sheldon Avenue, Causeway Street, Water Street.
<b>Private Streets:</b>	North End Industrial Park Loop Road
<b>Local Streets:</b>	All other roads not indicated above.



**'Apparently we love  
our own cell phones  
but hate  
everyone else's'**

**- Author Unknown**

# **Wireless Communications Element**

## Wireless Communication Priority Sites & Land Use Policy

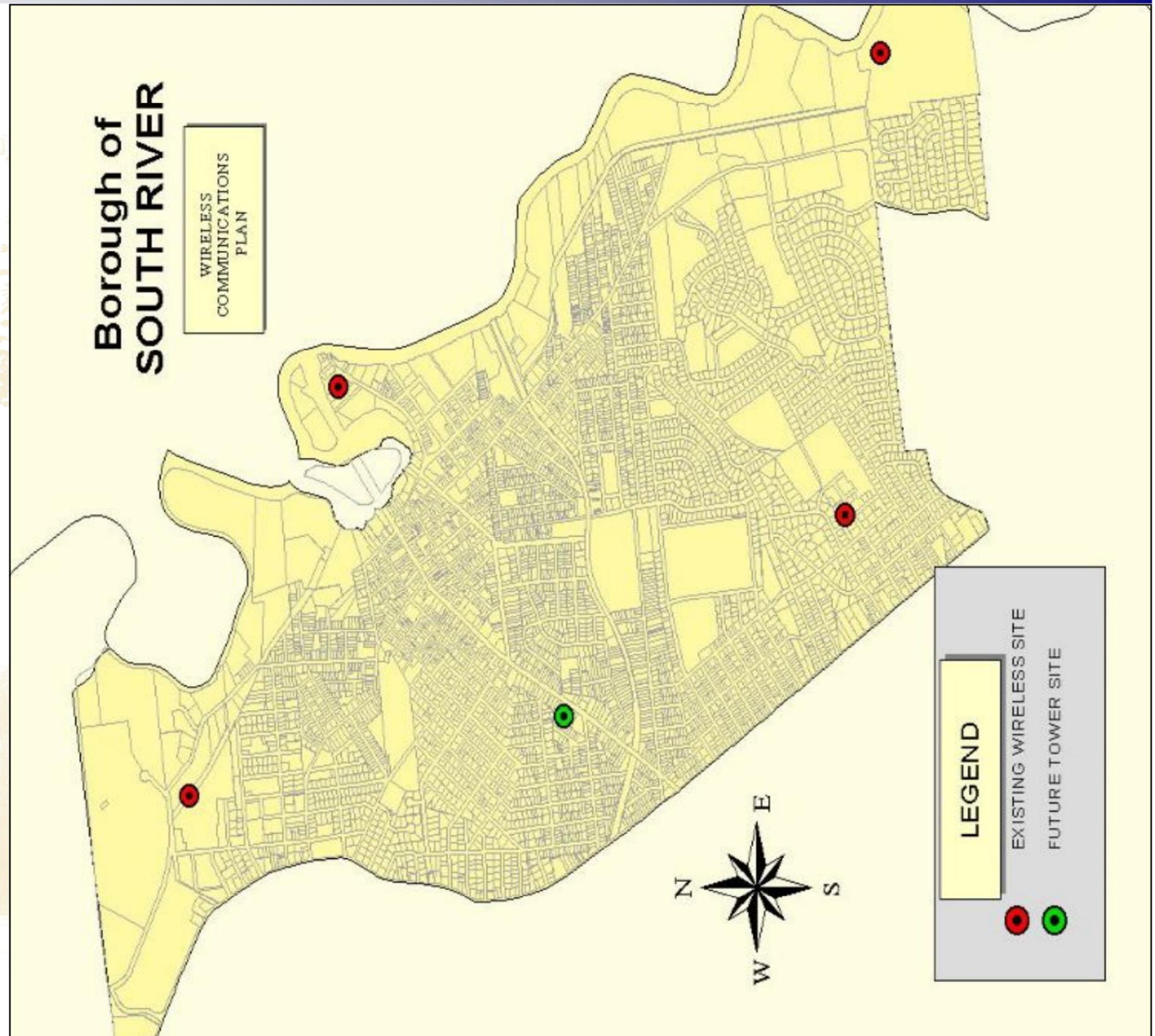
This Master Plan recommends the creation of a wireless communications ordinance as a portion of the Land Use ordinance of the Borough. The purpose of the ordinance should be to establish several desirable locations and policies for the continued and future location of wireless communications monopoles, antennas, and equipment structures throughout the Borough.

The ordinance should identify several existing locations where monopoles or existing towers are located and encourage co-location at these sites. The Borough should consider creating a priority system by which specific locations would allow equipment as a permitted use and which would require site plan review and approval. The ordinance should discourage construction of new monopoles and/or installation of new antennas except at locations where new poles are contemplated by the Master Plan. Setback requirements for all poles and antennas, as well as stealth, camouflage and screening requirements for all equipment should be established. A minimum distance to residential, school and park uses should be established. The ordinance should also require submission of a Borough-wide wireless communications plan from each applicant.

### Priority Locations

The priority locations for new wireless communication antennas and facilities are shown on the map on the opposite page and are recommended to be:

- The existing monopole at the eastern end of Causeway Street.
- The existing tower in the public works yard on Ivan Way.
- The existing municipal water tank at the corner of Appleby Avenue and 2nd Street.
- The newly proposed municipal firehouse, which, although the final location has yet to be determined, is expected to be situated along the Main Street Corridor in the central portion of the Borough. The purpose of this location should be the efficient co-location of commercial wireless carriers and municipal emergency communications.
- The existing monopole within the North End Industrial Park near the intersection of Brick Plant Road and William Street.





# Relationship to Other Plans

## Introduction

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28d. of the Municipal Land Use Law, a Municipal Master Plan shall include a specific policy statement indicating the relationship of proposed development for the municipality as set forth in its Master Plan to:

- The Master Plans of contiguous municipalities
- The Master Plan of the County in which the municipality is located
- The State Development and Redevelopment Plan
- The District Solid Waste Management Plan of the county in which the municipality is located.

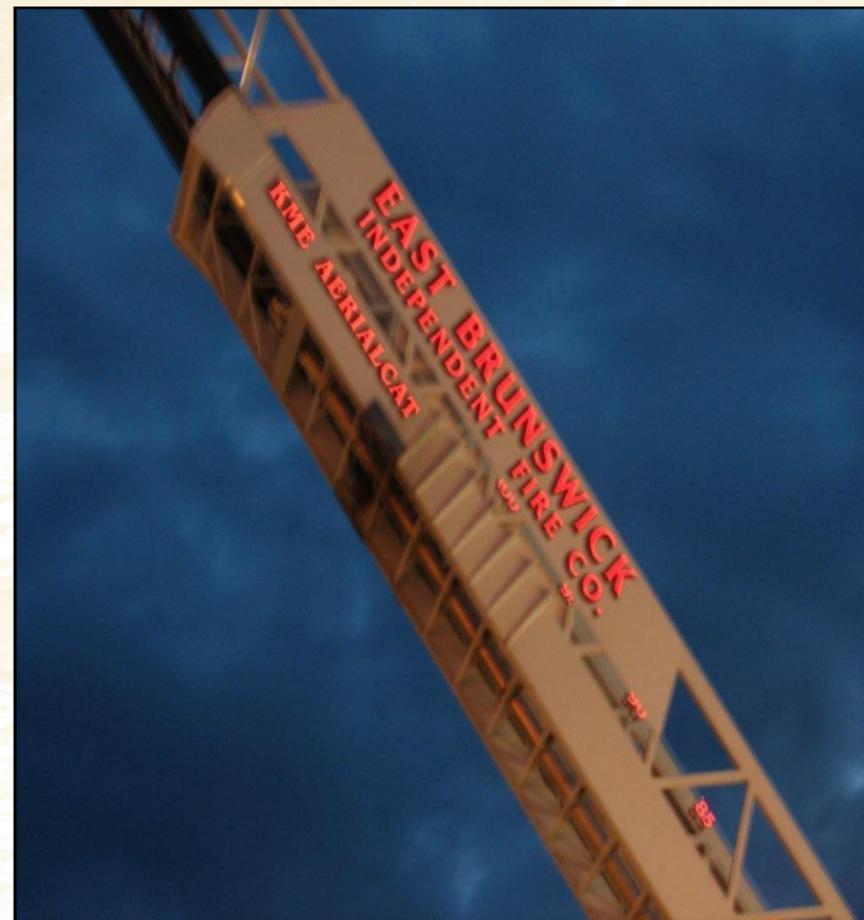
This requirement seeks to insure that individual master plans and zoning ordinances are generally compatible with those of surrounding communities and that individual municipalities view themselves within the context of regional planning issues. The South River Borough Master Plan has been designed to achieve a high degree of consistency and compatibility with the planning efforts of its adjoining communities, the County Planning Board and the State Planning Commission.

## Contiguous Municipalities

The Borough of South River is surrounded by two (2) municipalities. The Township of East Brunswick borders the Borough to the north, south and west, whereas the Borough of Sayreville borders South River to the east. Both of these municipalities are located in Middlesex County. The South River separates the Borough from Sayreville and the Old Bridge Turnpike delineates the common western boundary of the Borough with East Brunswick Township. No distinct features distinguish the northern or southern common boundaries between South River and its adjacent municipality, other than property lines.

## Southern Boundary

The East Brunswick Township Master Plan provides for single-family residential development on 15,000 SF lots land located adjacent to the southwest boundary of South River and provides for planned multi-family residential development on land located adjacent to the southeast boundary. The South River Master Plan provides for compatible single-family residential development on lots averaging between 7,500 SF and 15,000 SF for the southwestern areas of the Borough adjacent to East Brunswick. To the southeast, the South River Master Plan provides for public land as comprised of the Borough's Department of Public Works Complex, parkland and open space. These uses are compatible with the established pattern of low density single-family residential dwellings in the adjacent section of East Brunswick Township.



## East Brunswick Township: North Boundary

The East Brunswick Township Master Plan provides for industrial and manufacturing types of uses on land located adjacent to the northern boundary of South River. One of the most notable uses in the Township is the section of Edgeboro Landfill, just north of the municipal border. The South River Master Plan provides for similar types of industrial development on large tracts of land for the area of the Borough adjacent to East Brunswick. The "Golden Triangle" development, bordering the Borough on Old Bridge Turnpike, is currently planned for mixed use development consisting of 200-400 housing units, retail medium format shopping/strip malls and a "big box" shopping development.

## Western Boundary

The East Brunswick Township Master Plan provides for Highway Commercial uses on land located along Old Bridge Turnpike north of the Raritan River Railroad Line. Interspersed among the Highway Commercial Land Use District are small areas designated for single-family residential development on lots less than 15,000sf. This same type of residential development is also designated for all land located along Old Bridge Turnpike south of the railroad line.

The South River Master Plan provides for compatible commercial use districts and single-family development on lands located along Old Bridge Turnpike adjacent to East Brunswick Township. There are three small General-Commercial Land Use Districts recommended to be located predominantly along the northwestern portion of the Borough in close proximity to the similar highway commercial districts designated by the East Brunswick Master Plan. The single-family development recommendation in the South River Master Plan for the area along Old Bridge Turnpike in the southwestern portion of the Borough Provides for 7,500sf to 10,000sf residential lots. This is compatible with the adjacent residential type development as specified by the East Brunswick Master Plan.

## Sayreville Borough: Eastern Boundary

The 1998/2004 Borough of Sayreville Master Plan provides for Waterfront Development along the South River to the north, commercial development to the south and general business uses within a small area centrally located along Washington Avenue opposite the Sayreville-South River Bridge to the east. The Waterfront Development District provides for waterfront oriented uses (ie., marinas, restaurants,) on presently underutilized and undeveloped tracts of land. The Special Economic Development Districts are intended to provide for industrial uses on large environmentally constrained tracts of land. The General Business District provides for local commercial uses located along an intra-municipal traffic corridor.

The South River Master Plan primarily provides for conservation and recreation areas for land located along the South River. The Conservation and Recreation land use designation is compatible with all land areas located adjacent to it across the South River, particularly the Waterfront Development District.

The South River Master Plan also provides for a Waterfront Redevelopment Areas located along the South River just south of the Sayreville-South River Bridge. This land use designation provides for waterfront oriented commercial uses which are similar to, and compatible with, the general commercial district located across the river in Sayreville.

## Middlesex County Comprehensive Master Plan

Middlesex County has several documents relating to county planning efforts. The 2003 Middlesex County Open Space and Recreation Plan details the county's open space and recreational facilities. Although no new county facilities are planned for the Borough, this Master Plan shares the County's goals of identifying acquisition targets and improving recreational facilities. The Middlesex County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan aims to establish a network of bike and pedestrian access throughout the County. Both that plan and this Master Plan encourage bicycle and pedestrian mobility.

The Middlesex County Comprehensive Master Plan provided for seven (7) types of general land use categories for South River which consisted of Heavy Industrial, Light Industrial, Commercial, Urban, Suburban, Open Space and Vacant Lands. The Heavy and

Light Industrial land use designations coincide with the north end Industrial Park. The commercial land use designation is consistent with similar development along Main Street and Whitehead Avenue. The Urban land use designation reflects the multi-family and higher density residential developments encompassing the local commercial districts. The Suburban land use designation reflects the lower density residential developments located outside of the urban districts. The Open Space land use designations are generally representative of the location of water bodies and environmentally sensitive areas in the Borough. The vacant land use designation is reflective of current and previous undeveloped tracts of land situated in the southeastern portion of the municipality.

The Borough of South River is a relatively mature community and minimal development has occurred since 1979 in comparison to other surrounding communities. Thus, the Middlesex County Land Use Plan for the year 2000 still maintains a high degree of applicability to South River's existing land use development patterns and subsequently portrays a high level of compatibility with the Borough's existing and proposed Master Plans.

## Middlesex County Growth Management Strategy

The Middlesex County Master Plan Management Strategy case studies. In January of 1995, Phase II of the Growth Management Study had been prepared which focused on four case study areas within the county. The Borough of South River and parts thereof, were recognized and evaluated from a land development perspective within the Route 18 Case Study Area. The Growth Management Strategy update specifically identified the North End Industrial Park and South River's Downtown Business District along Main Street as two key areas for study.

### North End Industrial Park

The North End Industrial Park, consisting of several Frank A Greek & Sons properties, was considered to have a positive interrelationship with Route 18. Traffic into and out of this industrial development is principally correlated with Route 18 via Edgeboro Road for direct accessibility via Old Bridge Turnpike (County Route 527) and its secondary roadways. The Growth Management Strategy, therefore, recognizes the need for roadway and infrastruc-

ture improvements to adequately support this activity.

### Main Street Business District

The Downtown Business District of South River was identified as having a negative interrelationship with Route 18 in that the through traffic bound for this major arterial highway congests Main Street during peak periods and the competing commercial development located along Route 18 draws business away from South River's downtown retail development. Thus, the County Growth Management Plan states: "The Central Business District has marginal viability. Shoppers tend to gravitate toward Route 18, and the considerable amount of traffic using the Sayreville-South River Bridge does not typically stop for shopping because of a lack of parking, diversified shopping, and popular retail outlets. Hence, most patronage is local. In the face of uncertain profits, both landlords and tenants are reluctant to make major investments to renovate and restore the commercial district.

In the future, the business district should be restructured to be competitive with businesses on Route 18. The best approach to accomplishing this would be to avoid direct competition with the types of business established on Route 18 and instead favor alternative shopping. Ultimately, South River's businesses may consist chiefly of small shops carrying specialty items located in a downtown carefully preserved or remodeled as the kind of traditional small town center which South River has been in the past.

## Middlesex County Solid Waste Management Plan

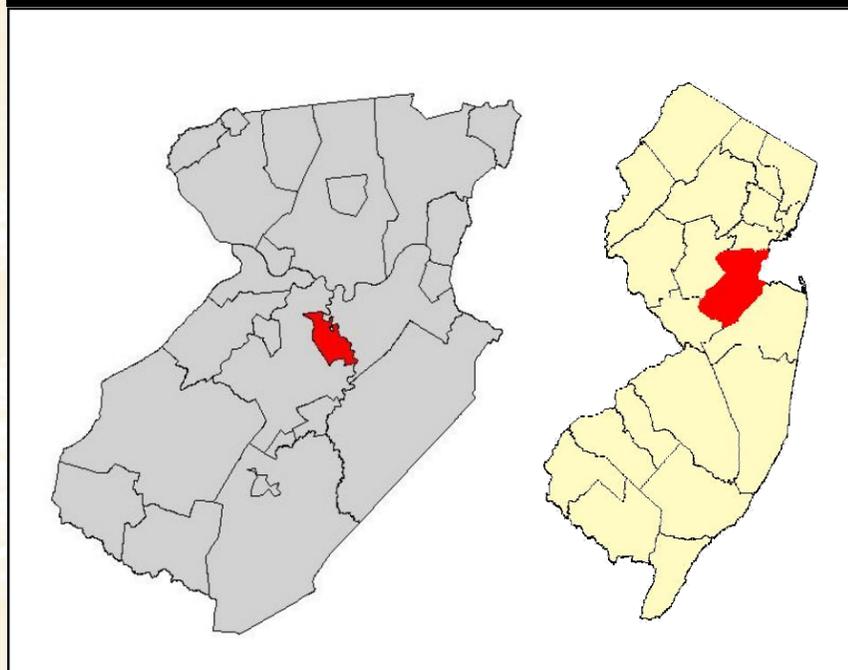
The Solid Waste Management Act designated every County in the State as a solid waste management district, and requires each district to prepare a Solid Waste Management Plan. The Middlesex County Planning Department is responsible for preparing the Middlesex County Solid Waste Management Plan. The County adopted a Solid Waste Management Plan in 2008. The Borough of South River is in compliance with the Middlesex County Solid Waste Management Plan. The Borough participates in the recycling of solid waste, including newspaper, cardboard, glass, aluminum, tin, white goods, office paper, waste oil, and grass and leaves.

## New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan

The State Plan provides a vision for the future that will preserve and enhance the quality of life for all residents of New Jersey. The State Plan is the result of a cross-acceptance process that included thousands of New Jersey citizens in hundreds of public forums, discussing all of the major aspects of the plan - its goals, strategies, policies and application. This process ensures that the plan belongs to the citizens of New Jersey, whose hopes and visions have shaped it. The purpose of the State Plan is to:

*Coordinate planning activities and establish Statewide planning objectives in the following areas: land use, housing, economic development, transportation, natural resource conservation, agriculture and farmland retention, recreation, urban and suburban redevelopment, historic preservation, public facilities and services, and intergovernmental coordination.*

Map I-1 South River in Middlesex County



## Planning Areas

The State Development and Redevelopment Plan provides a balance between growth and conservation by designating planning areas that share common conditions with regard to development and environmental features:

- Areas for Growth: Metropolitan Planning areas (Planning Area 1), Suburban Planning Areas (Planning Area 2) and Designated Centers in any planning area.
- Areas for Limited Growth: Fringe Planning Areas (Planning Area 3), Rural Planning Areas (Planning Area 4), and
- Areas for Conservation: Fringe Planning Area (Planning Area 3), Rural Planning Areas (Planning Area 4), and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas (Planning Area 5).
- Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas (Planning Area 5). In these planning areas, planning should promote a balance of conservation and limited growth—environmental constraints affect development and preservation is encouraged in large contiguous tracts.

*All buildable land in the borough of South River is located in Planning Area 1: Metropolitan Planning Area.* This MPA includes many developed urban areas throughout the state and has strong ties to major metropolitan centers. Most of the communities in Planning Area 1 are fully developed or almost fully developed with little or no vacant land available for more development. Therefore, much of the change in Planning Area 1 will occur in the form of re-development and infill development. South River's designation as a Metropolitan Planning Area in the State Plan is not expected to change.

## State Plan Policy Map

The State Plan Policy Map reflects these planning policies graphically. Therefore, the State Plan Policy Map serves as the underlying land use-planning and management framework that directs funding, infrastructure improvements, and preservation for programs throughout New Jersey. Simply stated the State De-

velopment and Redevelopment Plan with the State Plan Policy Map is a dynamic vision of New Jersey's development and conservation patterns. With that in mind, the State Planning Commission incorporates new data from state agencies, counties and municipalities on an ongoing basis.

## Goals of State Planning

The State Plan concentrates on three fundamental issues:

- Where are the most appropriate locations where future development and redevelopment should be encouraged, and conversely where are the locations where future growth and development should be discouraged?
- What should be the nature of the future development and redevelopment that should be encouraged in those appropriate locations and how might the locations where development and redevelopment should be discouraged be protected?
- How should the numerous participants engaged in the planning process, organize themselves to effectively devise and employ the State Plan to guide development decisions and the implementation of those decisions?

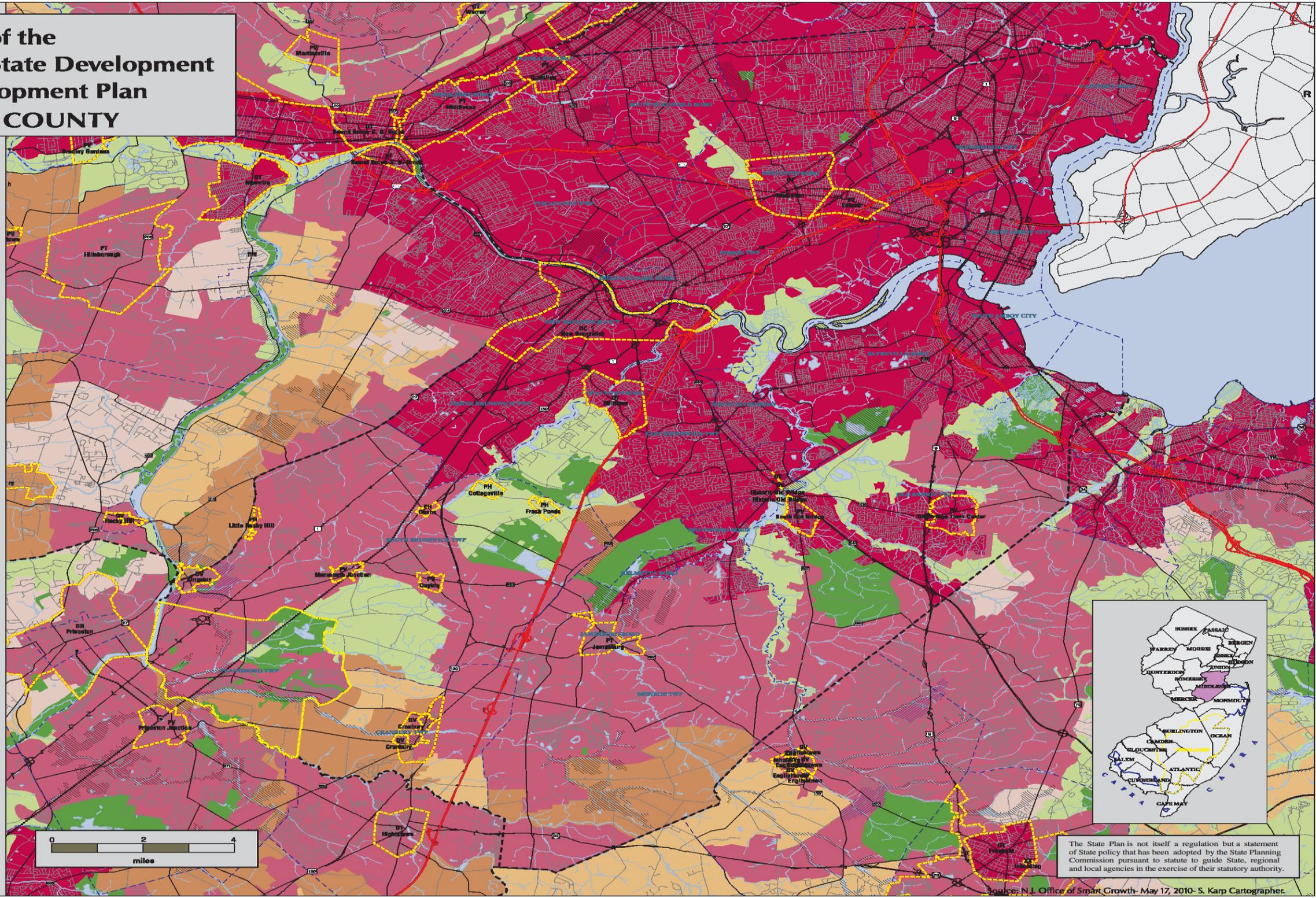
Addressing these three fundamental issues and providing the guidance necessary to arrive at the answers is central to the purpose of the State Plan. While other important issues inevitably arise in the course of attempting to address these issues, these three issues are the fundamental ones that the State Plan attempts to address.

Since the development of the Middlesex County Master Plan in 1979, a regional planning approach has come to the forefront of land use planning and development in the State of New Jersey. The New Jersey State Planning Act, promulgated on January 2, 1986, set the stage for the preparation of the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan). Subsequent to a lengthy preparation process, the State Plan was adopted on June 12, 1992 by the New Jersey State Planning Commission.

The State Plan sets forth statewide policies to guide development and redevelopment in New Jersey. In order to implement these

# Policy Map of the New Jersey State Development And Redevelopment Plan MIDDLESEX COUNTY

- Centers**
- U C - Urban Center
  - D R - Designated Regional Center
  - P R - Proposed Regional Center
  - D T - Designated Town
  - P T - Proposed Town
  - D V - Designated Village
  - P V - Proposed Village
  - D H - Designated Hamlet
  - P H - Proposed Hamlet
- Urban Complex**
- Urban Complex
- Endorsed Plans**
- Endorsed Plans
  - Center Boundaries
  - Nodes
- Planning Areas**
- Metropolitan Planning Area
  - Suburban Planning Area
  - Fringe Planning Area
  - Rural Planning Area
  - Rural/Env. Sensitive Planning Area
  - Env. Sensitive Planning Area
  - Env. Sens./Barrier Is. Planning Area
  - Parks and Natural Areas
  - Meadowlands
  - Military Installations
  - Water
  - Critical Environmental Site
  - Historic & Cultural Site
- Highlands Management Areas**
- Highlands Planning Area
  - Highlands Preservation Area
  - Protection
  - Conservation
  - Conservation Constrained
  - Existing Community
  - Existing Community Constrained
  - Lake Community
  - Wildlife Management
- Pinelands Management Areas**
- Pinelands Boundary
  - Regional Growth Area
  - Town
  - Village
  - Rural Development Area
  - Agricultural Production Area
  - Special Agricultural Area
  - Forest & Preservation Area
  - Military & Federal
- Boundaries**
- Municipal Boundary
  - County Boundary
  - Interstate & Toll Roads
  - State & County Roads
  - CAFRA Boundary
  - Commuter Rail & Stations



**N** Way to grow.



The State Plan is not itself a regulation but a statement of State policy that has been adopted by the State Planning Commission pursuant to statute to guide State, regional and local agencies in the exercise of their statutory authority.

Source: N.J. Office of Smart Growth- May 17, 2010- S. Karp Cartographer.

Planning areas are large masses of land that share certain characteristics which suggest that growth must be guided to certain locations and land use patterns within the Planning area to take advantage of, or to protect, the characteristics of the Planning area. Planning areas have two components; centers and environs. The six categories of Planning Areas are as follows:

- PA1 Metropolitan Planning Area
- PA2 Suburban Planning Area
- PA3 Fringe Planning Area
- PA4 Rural Planning Area
- PA4B Rural/Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas
- PA5 Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas

The State Plan designates South River as being a Town with a core area identification (ie., having a downtown). According to the State Plan, the Borough is located in the PA1 Metropolitan Planning Area. The PA1 designation reflects the enormous amount of public and private sector investments in the building and maintaining of a wide range of facilities and services to support these such communities. As described in the State Plan communities in a PA1 Planning Area, such as South River, are almost fully developed with little vacant land available for new development. New growth will take the form of redevelopment, as anticipated in South River.

The policy objectives for the PA1 Planning Area are instilled in the South River Master Plan as follows:

**LAND USE:** Guide new development and redevelopment to ensure efficient and beneficial utilization of scarce land while capitalizing on the inherent public facility and service efficiencies of the concentrated development patterns.

**HOUSING:** Preserve the existing housing stock through maintenance and rehabilitation and provide a variety of housing choices through development and redevelopment.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** Promote economic development by encouraging redevelopment efforts such as infill and

land assembly, public/private partnerships and infrastructure improvements.

**TRANSPORTATION:** Capitalize on the high density settlement patterns that encourage the use of public transit systems and alternative modes of transportation to improve travel among major population centers, employment centers and transportation terminals.

**NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION:** Reclaim environmentally damaged sites and mitigate future negative impacts, particular waterfronts, scenic vistas, any remaining wildlife habitats and Critical Environmental/Historic sites. Give special emphasis to addressing air quality concerns; and provide open space and recreation amenities.

**RECREATION:** Provide maximum recreational opportunities by concentrating on the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing parks and open space while expanding the system through redevelopment and reclamation projects.

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION:** Integrate historic preservation with redevelopment efforts in a way that will not compromise either the historic resource or the area's need to redevelop.

**PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES:** Complete, repair or replace existing infrastructure systems to eliminate deficiencies and enable future development and redevelopment efforts.

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION:** Provide for the regionalization of as many public services as feasible and economical. Coordinate the efforts of State, county and municipal governmental to ensure sound redevelopment by encouraging private sector investment and providing supportive government regulations, innovative tax policies and other governmental policies and programs.

