



LEONIA MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT

Adopted by Leonia Planning Board on July 22, 2020

Prepared by: H2M architects + engineers



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

MAYOR

Honorable Judah Zeigler

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Pasquale Fusco, Council President
Maureen Davis, Councilwoman
Bernadette Flaim, Councilwoman
Louis Grandelis, Councilman
Joanne Choi Terrell, Councilwoman
Bill Ziegler, Councilman

PLANNING BOARD

Mayor Judah Zeigler
William Russell
Pat Fusco, Council Liaison
Michael DeGidio, Chair
Vincent Petti, Vice Chair
Tim Ford
Greg Edelman
Ron Wolf
Sean Thompson
Patrick Botten

PLANNING BOARD

Ira Gold
Alicia Stewart
Haeseok Ko
Dan Melfi, Zoning Officer
Alyson Lazarus, Board Secretary
Tina Evans, Recording Secretary
Daniel Steinhagen, Planning Board Attorney
Robert Costa, Planning Board Engineer

BOROUGH EMPLOYEES

Andrea Wardrop, Borough Administrator

H2M ASSOCIATES, INC.

Jeffrey Janota, PP, AICP
Nicole Venezia, PP, AICP
Paul Cancilla
Christol Henry

PREPARED BY



architects + engineers
practical approach. creative results.

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

Nicole Venezia, AICP, PP
33LI00639200

Jeffrey L. Janota, AICP, PP
33LI00582700



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Goals and Objectives	3
Introduction and Background	11
Significant Changes in Assumptions, Policies, and Objectives	17
Land Use Element	31
Community Facilities Element	54
Economic Development Element	59
Sustainability Element	73
Housing Element	93
Relationship to Other Plans	104
Recommendations Concerning Redevelopment	110



OVERALL GOALS & OBJECTIVES

In the Municipal Land Use Law, a master plan must include a “statement of objectives, principles, assumptions, policies, and standards upon which the constituent proposal for the physical, economic and social development of the municipality are based.” The 2003 Master Plan expressed these statements as a set of goals and objectives, with certain amendments made through adoption of the 2010 Community Facilities Plan Element and 2013 Sustainability Plan Element. The following list of goals formed the basis for the plans, policies, statements and proposals of these older Master Plan documents. Items with an asterisk (*) were added in the 2010 Re-Examination Report.

MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES

1. To encourage borough actions to guide the appropriate use or development of all lands in Leonia which will promote the public health, safety, morals and general welfare.
2. To secure safety from fire, flood, panic and other natural and man-made disasters.
3. To provide adequate light, air and open space.
4. To ensure development within the borough does not conflict with the development and general welfare of neighboring municipalities, Bergen County and the state as a whole.
5. To promote the establishment of appropriate densities and concentrations that will contribute to the well-being of persons, neighborhoods, communities and regions and preservation of the environment..
6. To encourage the appropriate and efficient expenditure of public funds by the coordination of public development with land use policies..
7. To provide sufficient space in appropriate locations for a variety of uses and open space, both public and private , in a manner compatible with the character of the borough and the environment.
8. To encourage the location and design of transportation routes which will promote the free flow of traffic while discouraging the location of such facilities and routes which would result in congestion, blight or unsafe conditions.
9. To promote a desirable visual environment through creative development techniques and good civic design and arrangements.
10. To promote the conservation of historic sites and districts, open space, energy resources and valuable natural resources, and to prevent urban sprawl and degradation of the environment through improper use of land.



11. To encourage senior citizen housing construction.
12. To encourage coordination of the various public and private procedures and activities shaping land development with a view of lessening the cost of such development and to the more efficient use of land.
13. To promote the maximum practicable recovery and recycling of recyclable materials from municipal solid waste through the use of planning practices designed to incorporate the State Recycling Plan goals and to compliment municipal recycling programs.

MASTER PLAN GOALS

1. To maintain and enhance existing areas of stability in the community, encourage the proper relationship between existing land uses by promoting a spatial distribution of uses and establishing areas which have their own integrity and uniformity of purpose. In particular, to preserve and protect the residential character and prevailing density of the community by restricting incompatible land uses from established residential areas, and limiting intensities of use to the levels, and locations, prescribed herein.
2. To enhance the development pattern and land use arrangement in the borough and reinforce the lot area requirements for single-family residential developments.
3. To provide a variety of housing types, densities and a balanced housing supply, in appropriate locations to serve the borough.
4. To promote the continued maintenance and rehabilitation of the borough housing stock.
5. To promote the revitalization and enhancement of the Broad Avenue corridor; to provide a comprehensive and coordinated long-range plan to guide the growth, development and physical improvements which are necessary to ensure the continued vitality of this portion of the borough; and to encourage the cooperation of merchants, property owners, residents and government in the overall upgrading and enhancement of this business district. The revitalization should include a definitive plan outlining the enhancement of the physical appearance of the business district through comprehensive and integrated streetscape improvements, building renovations, and related physical improvements.
6. To preserve and enhance the borough's commercial area by defining its functional role in the borough and enhancing the quality of life within the commercial center through an



appropriate mixture of activities; encourage the utilization of specific design elements identified in the master plan and to encourage the consolidation and expansion of off-street parking to provide greater convenience for shoppers. The borough should actively seek State and County funds earmarked for commercial revitalization.

7. To preserve the historic features of the borough as an integral part of the community's unique character.
8. To support the overall philosophy of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) as means of providing growth management on a state-wide basis while retaining the principles of home rule.
9. To promote a safe and efficient traffic circulation system that serves the community.
10. To increase the supply of senior housing where possible.
11. To ensure that any prospective development is responsive to the borough's environmental features, and can be accommodated while preserving these physical characteristics.
12. To encourage and provide buffer zones to separate incompatible land uses.
13. To reinforce the established single-family detached developed character along the Palisades Park Border.
14. To prepare an analysis to determine the needs for a new Borough Hall, ambulance corps, fire department and police department.
15. To prepare comprehensive design standards that will serve to enhance the site plan review process in the borough.
16. To discourage the proliferation of two-family dwellings.
17. To discourage the demolition of existing housing stock and their replacement with detached dwellings that appear visually and aesthetically out of character and scale with the neighborhood.

2013 SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

GOALS:

1. Reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Promote the use of renewable energy in homes, businesses and in public facilities.
3. Encourage the development of green buildings, green site design, and green streets.
4. Implement efficient land use and development patterns.
5. Provide transportation options and reduce vehicles miles travelled.



6. Protect open spaces, recreation areas and natural resources.
7. Promote water conservation and protect water resources.
8. Improve waste management and recycling.

EXAMPLE ADDITIONAL GOALS FOR A FUTURE UPDATE OF THE SEMP:

1. Improve public health, by promoting access to healthy, local food and exercise.
2. Promote economic development and vibrant local businesses.
3. Foster the “greening” of government, education and schools, and residents’ lifestyles.
4. Develop a creative learning culture.
5. Increase opportunities for and the amount of civic engagement and public participation.
6. Ensure social equity among all Leonia residents.

OBJECTIVE:

1. To conserve resources and regenerate the Borough’s ecosystems, ensure a vibrant local economy within a regional and global context, and promote high quality of life whether residing, working or playing in Leonia.

2010 COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

GOALS:

1. Consider temporarily relocating court proceedings to a larger facility within or adjacent to Leonia.
2. Choose a site for, design and construct a new Municipal Administration Complex where municipal offices, boards and the Court can be located. The Municipal Complex should be located in a central location, such as the vacant property on the corner of Broad Avenue and Beechwood Place.
3. Work with Bergen County and NJ Transit to build a new municipal complex in Overpeck Park at the location where NJ Transit is planning on constructing a parking garage. Place parking below the municipal complex and pedestrian and bicycle safety where warranted.
4. All municipally owned and community facilities should set an example for all residents by utilizing green-building and energy-saving design. All construction and operating technologies for newly built and renovated buildings should be at least to the LEED Silver standard of the US Green Building Council. All existing buildings should also utilize energy and resource conserving practices in daily operation.
5. To make room for the projected increase in elementary school aged children, the Municipality should investigate the



- possibility of enlarging the Early Childhood Center (located on the High School campus) become a facility for both pre and kindergarten students. The elementary school would then serve grades 1-5.
6. Since Leonia is essentially fully developed, there does not appear to be another location that could be used for a new school building, without invoking eminent domain. Since the existing building is in good condition, the School Board should consider adding another floor to all or part of the existing building to accommodate the projected increase in students.
 7. The Board of Education should start considering possible satellite locations for students should the population of Middle School aged children increase in Leonia and Edgewater. Possible locations and solutions could be a facility sharing program with the two private schools located in Leonia where space allows.
 8. When planning expansion and construction of facilities, the Board of Education should provide lead time sufficient to enable the Planning Board to conduct its review pursuant to the mandate of the Municipal Land Use Law, N.J.S.A. 40:55D-31a.
 9. When planning the expansion of existing facilities, or the construction of new facilities, the Board of Education should consider all realistic opportunities to coordinate efforts or share facilities with the Borough and surrounding communities.
 10. The Board of Education should make every reasonable effort to ensure that on-site parking at all of its facilities is consistent with the requirements applicable to privately owned similar facilities.
 11. Every five (5) years when the Board of Education prepares its Long-Range Facilities Plan, it should provide enough lead time for the Planning Board to complete its review as provided in the Educational Facilities Construction and Financing Act, N.J.S.A. 18A: 7G-4g and the Municipal Land Use Law, N.J.S.A. 40:55D-31b.
 12. All facilities operated by the Board of Education should set an example for all students and residents by utilizing green-building and energy-saving design. All construction and operating technologies for newly built and renovated buildings should be at least to the LEED Silver standard of the US Green Building Council. All existing buildings should also utilize energy and resource conserving practices in daily operation.
 13. The Fire Department, Police Department and EMS need new facilities that are built specifically for these uses. The Borough should construct a Public Safety Complex, which would house



the police and fire departments, the Emergency Medical Services, and all related offices. This facility should provide adequate garage space for all emergency vehicles, provide proper facilities for training, detention, and administrative work. The building should also provide sufficient facilities for storage of supplies and secure storage of sensitive materials and weapons. Possible locations for a Public Safety Complex include the vacant lot at 381 Broad Avenue (Block 1002, Lot 1), or the Complex could be built on the site of the current Police and Firehouse. The current buildings and parking area could be replaced by a new facility that includes structured parking for all residents, workers and visitors to the Broad Avenue area of Leonia. Both locations are geographically central areas in Leonia, which is important for minimizing emergency response times.

14. In lieu of an entirely new building, an addition should be added to the Fire Department building to allow for adequate passageways, proper storage of equipment, gear, files, and vehicles. New exhaust and ventilation systems should be added to the building and all of the electric wiring should be replaced.
15. When planning the construction of new facilities, the Borough should consider all opportunities to coordinate efforts or share facilities with surrounding Municipalities. The Borough should explore all opportunities for sharing fire, police and ambulance services with neighboring municipalities, and having a regional public safety facility. The location of a shared facility should be centered within the respective service area.
16. All municipally owned and community facilities should set an example for all residents by utilizing green-building and energy-saving design. All construction and operating technologies for newly built and renovated buildings should be at least to the LEED Silver standard of the US Green Building Council. All existing buildings should also utilize energy and resource conserving practices in daily operation.
17. It is hard to gauge what social services needs might be in Leonia. The Municipality should continue to outreach to social service agencies so that residents who need these services have access to them.
18. A Historic Preservation Plan element of the Master Plan should be prepared.
19. An inventory of all historic sites in the Borough should be prepared and updated on a regular basis.
20. Any updates to the elements of Leonia's Master Plan should consider all historic properties in the Borough, and the



preservation of these properties should be considered when plans are being created for the development, infill and redevelopment in areas surrounding these properties.

21. The Leonia Public Library should continue to evolve with the changes of Leonia's population, and continue to meet the community's needs.
22. An Open Space and Recreation Plan element should be prepared for the Leonia Master Plan.
23. Options for more public parking should be explored. Possibilities might include sharing parking lot space with private businesses after normal business hours, converting vacant land into parking lots and studying the feasibility of building structured parking in the downtown.
24. A parking utilization and circulation study should be conducted in the Fort Lee Road and Grand Avenue area.



Page Intentionally Left Blank



INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND



WHY MAKE A PLAN? / PURPOSE

To keep Leonia on a path towards success in all aspects of quality of life - from appropriate land use; to quality transportation for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists; preservation of the Borough's past while balancing modern building trends; access to and quality community facilities including schools, parks, emergency services and others; and to strategic economic growth in commercial areas – a guiding plan should be written and adopted by the Borough. This Master Plan Reexamination Report gives all these factors attention and lays out a plan for Leonia's future. This Reexamination Report serves as an important long-range planning tool for the Borough of Leonia. It not only establishes community vision but acts as an action plan for how to achieve that vision, a guiding document for the Governing Body and Planning Board.

This document was prepared by the Master Plan Reexam Team (the Borough of Leonia and its hired consultant: H2M). It outlines the issues and concerns raised in the 2002 Master Plan and recommend solutions to resolve them. This Master Plan Reexamination Report also includes an evaluation of Leonia's planning and development regulations and documents, and identifies which of the community's policies or objectives have changed (and which have stayed the same) since the completion of the Borough's last Master Plan in 2002 and Reexamination Report in 2010.



PLAN ORGANIZATION

The Master Plan Reexamination is organized into the following Elements:

Vision Statement and Goals and Objectives includes a recommended set of goals and objectives for incorporation into the Borough Master Plan.
Introduction and Background explains the purpose of the Master Plan Reexamination, the source of its authority from the New Jersey statutes, direction on how to implement the recommendations resulting from this reexamination report. This section also discusses the Master Plan Reexamination Survey results, conducted alongside this effort.
Significant Changes in Assumptions, Policies and Objectives discusses changes that have occurred since the 2002 Master Plan including changes in local demographics, changes that have occurred statewide both in the law and policy, county planning efforts and policies, regional planning efforts, and local planning efforts and policy changes.
All Elements provide a checklist of recommendations - new and old; a discussion of trends and policies affecting planning concerning the element topic; a discussion of new issues; and a status of issues and recommendations from the previous master plan element dating back to 2002.
Land Use Element Reexamination addresses community form and land development of the Borough.
Housing Plan Element Reexamination examines the current and future housing stock in relation to the Borough's forecasted population, as well as the Borough's obligation to provide for opportunities of affordable housing.
Community Facilities Element Reexamination examines civic facilities and institutions including park and recreational facilities, school buildings, emergency services including police, fire, and EMS, other safety concerns, and borough services and buildings.
Sustainability Plan Element Reexamination examines current and ongoing sustainability initiatives.
Appendices include a.



AUTHORITY

The Borough of Leonia last adopted its Master Plan in 2002. In 2010, the Borough adopted a new Community Facilities Plan and prepared a Master Plan Reexamination Report. Since 2010, the Borough adopted a Sustainability Plan in 2013.

Master Plan reexaminations are required for New Jersey municipalities per the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89. Per the statute, a planning board shall reexamine its master plan and development regulations every 10 years. In accordance with the MLUL, this Master Plan Reexamination shall state:

- (a) The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.
- (b) The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.
- (c) The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies, and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition, and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives.
- (d) The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.
- (e) The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law," P.L.1992, c.79 (C.40A:12A-1 et al.) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.



PLANNING PROCESS

This document was prepared in collaboration with local officials, the community, and an extensive review of Borough-specific planning materials. Plans and studies prepared by the Borough of Leonia and reviewed as part of this Master Plan Reexamination Report effort include:

- 2002 Master Plan
- 2010 Community Facilities Element
- 2010 Master Plan Reexamination Report
- 2013 Sustainability Element
- 2015 AINR Study
- Borough of Leonia Zoning Ordinance

In addition to reviewing the above planning materials drafted by the Borough of Leonia, other plans in the region and the state were reviewed. They are discussed under the **Relationship to Other Plans** section of this report.

H2M, the consultant preparing the Master Plan Reexam, hosted several subcommittee meetings to discuss the Leonia Master Plan Reexam. The meetings were held over the phone on April 6th, 16th, and 23rd of 2020. The subcommittee and H2M (the Master Plan Reexam Team) established expectations and discussed initial thoughts and issues.



PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The Master Plan Reexamination Report is a guiding document for multi-disciplinary planning and investment in the Borough of Leonía for the next 10+ years. Master Plans and Reexaminations are recognized as evolving documents and may be amended by the municipal Planning Board at any time to fit current trends or changed circumstances. In 10 years, the Planning Board must pursue another Master Plan Reexamination Report, or they may choose to undertake a new comprehensive Master Plan.

The Report is built on prior planning efforts and initiatives, a comprehensive analysis of existing conditions, and future opportunities and trends. The recommendations from these past planning efforts and new recommendations resulting from an analysis of existing conditions and recognition of future opportunities are included in a checklist format at the beginning of each Element. These recommendation checklists are designed for the purpose of “checking off” or tracking recommendations over the next 10-year period as a way to measure progress. Each recommendation is supplemented with four features:

- **Recommendation** states the recommendation.
- **Responsible Party or Partner** identifies the Borough entities or other agencies that will have a role in implementation.
- **Timeframe** estimates the amount of time to implement the item. It is categorized as either short-term (1-2 years), mid-term (2 to 5 years), long-term (5-10+ years), or ongoing (continuous).
- **“Check off” box** is a blank box for the Planning Board to “check off” the recommendation once completed. The Planning Board is also encouraged to provide a date of completion.

Recommendation	Responsible Party	Timeframe	Check Off Box	Year Completed
Recommendation Category				
1 2020 (new) Recommendation Recommendation statement	Borough and/or partner	Short-term Mid-Term Long-Term Ongoing	X ‘ ‘	Insert year

Summary Table of Past Issues and Recommendations		
Past Issue or Recommendation (from 2003 Master Plan or 2010 Reexam)	Increased or Maintained and Should Continue	Decreased or Resolved
1 2003/2010 (old) Recommendation or Issue	X ‘ ‘	X ‘ ‘



SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN ASSUMPTIONS, POLICIES, AND OBJECTIVES



A Master Plan Reexamination Report is required to look at the extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies, and objectives forming the basis of the last 2002 Master Plan. In the 18-year period since 2002, there have been a multitude of changes affecting Leonia. This section of the report examines changes in demographics, changes in the region, at the state, county, and municipal levels and changes within the law that are applicable to the elements of this Master Plan Reexamination Report.

REGIONAL PLANNING EFFORTS AND POLICIES

Below are recent regional planning efforts that have occurred since the 2002 Master Plan.

NJTPA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN 2045: CONNECTING NORTH JERSEY

The NJTPA is the federally authorized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the 13-county northern New Jersey region. The purpose of the MPO is to oversee and provide guidance over the use of federal funds on local transit projects. In doing so, the agency must ensure the funding is spent cost-efficiently on projects that improve mobility, support economic progress, and safeguard the environment. The NJTPA's Regional Transportation Plan has a vision to make the regions transit more efficient, livable, and resilient.

The NJTPA adopted the Regional Transportation Plan 2045: Connecting North Jersey on November 13, 2017. Leonia's development and regulations are consistent with the goals of the NJTPA Regional Transportation Plan.

TOGETHER NORTH JERSEY'S THE PLAN

Together North Jersey's (TNJ) The Plan is a guidance document funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant and executed by a coalition of varied key stakeholders known as "Together North Jersey". Published in 2015, The Plan aims to support multi-jurisdictional planning efforts in Northern New Jersey by addressing multiple issues and challenges and recognizing their interdependent challenges. In its vision for the future, The Plan asserts that a sustainable North Jersey region is competitive, efficient, livable, and resilient. To advance the Plan's vision, collective and individual action must be taken. Strategies in The Plan's 15 key focus areas were taken into consideration, and where appropriate, were integrated into this reexamination report.



Together North Jersey prepared The Plan in 2015. Leonia's development and regulations are consistent with the goals of Together North Jersey's: The Plan.

RPA'S THE FOURTH REGIONAL PLAN

The Regional Plan Association (RPA) is an urban research and advocacy organization focusing on the 31-county New York-New Jersey-Connecticut metropolitan, or tri-state region. Since the 1920s, RPA has produced four long-range plans in 1929, the 1960s, 1996, and 2017 to guide the region's growth. The most recent long-range plan, The Fourth Regional Plan, was released in November 2017 and looks forward to the year 2040. It is guided by four core values that serve as a foundation across issue areas: equity, prosperity, health, and sustainability. The 61 recommendations resulting from the regional plan will have an impact on communities at the local level if implemented.

STATEWIDE CHANGES

There have been significant changes at the State level since the 2002 Master Plan.

MUNICIPAL LAND USE LAW (MLUL)

The Municipal Land Use Law regulates local land use procedures by municipalities, an authority delegated from the State. Municipalities exercise this vested power, or "police power", by providing authority through their local municipal code for all zoning and planning within their municipal borders.

GREEN BUILDING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENTS

On August 5, 2008, the Municipal Land Use Law was amended to authorize municipal planning boards to adopt green building and environmental sustainability elements of the municipal Master Plan. The legislation permits *"a green buildings and environmental sustainability plan element, which shall provide for, encourage, and promote the efficient use of natural resources; consider the impact of buildings on the local, regional, and global environment; allow ecosystems to function naturally; conserve and reuse water; treat storm water on site; and optimize climatic conditions through site orientation and design."* Municipalities could rely on this legislation to require that all new construction satisfy "green" building criteria set forth in regulations or rating systems such as Leadership in Environmental Design (LEED).

RENEWABLE ENERGY

The Municipal Land Use Law was amended on March 31, 2009 to permit renewable energy facilities in industrial zones by right on



“parcels of land comprising 20 or more contiguous acres that are owned by the same person or entity.” Effective November 20, 2009, the definition of an “inherently beneficial use” was also amended to include *“a wind, solar, or photovoltaic energy facility or structure”*, thereby lessening the burden of proof required to obtain a use variance. An additional amendment to the MLUL on April 22, 2010 exempts solar panels from impervious surface or impervious coverage calculations in municipal site plan or subdivision applications.

Related solar laws include the “Solar Rights Law”, which prevents homeowners associations from prohibiting solar collectors (August 21, 2007), and the “Solar Easement Act”, which explicitly allows for voluntary creation of easements for access to direct sunlight.

PERFORMANCE AND MAINTENANCE GUARANTEES

On January 15, 2018, the Municipal Land Use Law was amended to modify the requirements for performance and maintenance guarantees required for developers. Prior to the amendment, developers were required to furnish a performance guarantee for improvements deemed *“necessary or appropriate”* while the amended law now requires developers to furnish performance guarantees *“of only those improvements required by an approval or developer’s agreement, ordinance, or regulation to be dedicated to a public entity, and that have not yet been installed”* with the exception of privately-owned perimeter buffer landscaping. The list of improvements referenced in the law are now limited to: streets, pavement, gutters, curbs, sidewalks, street lighting, street trees, surveyor’s monuments, water mains, community septic systems, drainage structures, public improvements of open space, and any grading necessitated by the preceding improvements. Erosion control and sedimentation control devices are no longer subject to performance guarantees. Soil Conservation Districts, under the Soil Erosion and Sedimentary Control Act, maintain the authority to review construction projects to ensure soil erosion standards are met.

The amended law authorized two new types of guarantees: a temporary certificate of occupancy guarantee and a safety and stabilization guarantee.

The amended law additionally limited maintenance guarantees for improvements that are subject of the performance guarantee and are being released, and for certain private stormwater management improvements. The term of a maintenance guarantee automatically expires and cannot exceed two years.



Finally, the law makes it easier for improvement inspections conducted by the municipality to occur due to changes and procedures for funds in escrow.

TIME OF APPLICATION RULE

The Supreme Court of New Jersey in *Dunbar Homes, Inc. v. Zoning Board of Adjustment of Franklin Twp.* clarified the "Time of Application Rule" found within the Municipal Land Use Law. The rule replaced the prior "time of decision rule" on May 5, 2011. The time of application rule was enacted to address, *"situations in which a developer would spend time and money pursuing an application, only to have a municipality change the zoning to the developer's detriment while the application was pending."*

The rule states, *"Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, those development regulations which are in effect on the date of submission of an application for development shall govern the review of that application for development and any decision made with regard to that application for development. Any provision of an ordinance, except those relating to health and public safety that are adopted subsequent to the date of submission of an application for development, shall not be applicable to that application for development."*

In the court case *Dunbar Homes, Inc. v. Zoning Board of Adjustment of Franklin Twp.*, the municipality maintained the statute does not apply until the application for development is complete. The New Jersey Supreme Court concluded that although the submission does not need to be deemed complete, an "application for development" must be interpreted to mean *"the application form and all accompanying documents required for approval."* Therefore, what constitutes the contents of an application for development are left to municipalities under the police power, and all accompanying documents or waiver requests required by ordinance must be submitted to the municipality for the time of application rule to apply. If required documents are not submitted or a waiver is not requested, then the time of application rule could be applied by the municipality. An application for development cannot be deemed incomplete, however, if the municipality requires correction of any information found to be in error and submission of additional information.

SMART GROWTH, STORM RESILIENCY, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT OF A MASTER PLAN

The Municipal Land Use Law was amended in January 2018 to require a Land Use Element of a Master Plan to include a statement



of strategy concerning smart growth (to include potential locations for electric vehicle charging stations), storm resiliency (i.e. energy supply, flood-prone areas, environmental infrastructure), and environmental sustainability. Any newly adopted Land Use Element of a Master Plan for the Borough of Leonia is required by law to include such statements.

LOCAL HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT LAW

On September 6, 2013, Chapter 159 was signed into law, changing the way municipalities designate “areas in need of redevelopment” pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LHRL). Chapter 159 requires the municipality must indicate at the very beginning of the redevelopment study process whether the municipality is seeking to investigate a “Non-Condemnation Redevelopment Area” or a “Condemnation Area”. Under the legislation, areas in need of redevelopment in which the municipality is authorized to use eminent domain are called “Condemnation Redevelopment Areas”. Areas in need of redevelopment in which the municipality may not use eminent domain are called “Non-Condemnation Redevelopment Areas”. Under the previous law, municipalities were able to designate redevelopment areas without first identifying areas that would be subject to eminent domain.

Chapter 159 also revised the “e” criterion for designating an area in need of redevelopment. The amendment expanded the criteria for designating an area in need of rehabilitation where there is environmental contamination or a persistent pattern of tax delinquencies.

August 9, 2019, Governor Murphy signed bill A1700 into law that expanded the criteria “b” for designation under the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq. (LRHL), to include “stranded assets”. Specifically, the statute establishes a new criterion to designate property as being “in need of redevelopment” or “blighted”: any “building or buildings previously used for commercial, industrial, manufacturing, retail, shopping malls or plazas, office parks” that has “significant vacancies... for at least two years.” N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5b. While the duration of the vacancy is set forth in the statute, the extent of such vacancy, as of now, is left to the discretion of municipal officials.

In 2019, the New Jersey Appellate Division issued a ruling in *Borough of Glassboro v. Grossman, et al.* that interpreted key parts of the LHRL. The court ruled that whenever condemnation (eminent domain) is challenged, the condemning authority (i.e. the municipality or redeveloper) must justify its inclusion of the property.



Justification can include reports from a planner, engineer or traffic consultant; architectural plans or drawings; or a market study or economic forecast. The condemning authority may not include a property by declaring it wishes to “stockpile” the property for some future need in the redevelopment area – a particular redevelopment project must be identified and tied to the acquisition of the property. While redevelopment projects take time and may include changes in the plans, acquisition of a property is justified so long as the original taking was proven justified and pursued in good faith.

COAH AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Pursuant to the Mt. Laurel State Supreme Court cases, municipalities across the state must adhere to the requirements of the Fair Housing Act to provide for their “fair share” of affordable housing for low and moderate income persons and households. After the New Jersey Appellate Division invalidated the third round growth share regulations in 2007, the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) proposed a “revised” set of third round regulations. After a series of State Supreme Court cases pertaining to COAH’s inability to adopt appropriate Third Round Rules, on March 10, 2015, the Supreme Court declared COAH “moribund” and ordered the courts to provide a judicial remedy due to COAH’s failure. The decision determined municipalities may initiate declaratory judgment actions and seek approval of their housing element and fair share plans through the courts.

Municipalities must now provide for their Rehabilitation obligation or “Present Need”, the “Prior Round” obligation (the sum of their First and Second Round obligations), and the “Prospective Need” obligation (including the Gap Period between 1999 and 2015, and the new Third Round between 2015 and 2025) to provide for their “fair share” of affordable housing for low and moderate income persons and households.

Although municipalities are seeking approval of their housing elements and fair share plans through the courts for this round, a “Fourth Round” begins in 2025, when procedures may change.

RESIDENTIAL SITE IMPROVEMENT STANDARDS (RSIS)

The Residential Site Improvement Standards (RSIS) establish Statewide requirements for improvements in connection with residential development to include streets and parking, water supply, sanitary sewers and stormwater management. RSIS was amended in 2009 and 2011 with several minor editorial changes, changes to referenced standards, among other minor



amendments. The Site Improvement Advisory Board reviews RSIS annually to determine whether changes are warranted.

STATUS OF THE STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

In 1986, New Jersey adopted the State Planning Act— an effort to coordinate land-use planning among state agencies and different levels of government. The act mandated the creation of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (the “State Plan”), as well as the formation of the State Planning Commission, which is now called the Office of Planning Advocacy in the Department of State. The State Plan was adopted on March 1, 2001.

The Municipal Land Use Law requires municipal master plans *“include a specific policy statement indicating the relationship of the proposed development of the municipality as described in the master plan to: (1) the master plans of contiguous municipalities, (2) the master plan of the county, and (3) the State Plan adopted pursuant to the State Planning Act...”* This Reexamination Report complies with this requirement of the Municipal Land Use Law in **Relationship to Other Plans** section of this report.

However, the 2012 State Strategic Plan is the revision to the 2001 State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The mission statement of the plan is to *“focus the State’s policies and investments on vibrant regions by fostering targeted job growth, supporting effective regional planning and preserving the State’s critical resources.”* Several public hearings were scheduled throughout the State prior to adoption of the plan although the State Planning Commission has not acted on adoption.

WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES

FEDERAL COLLOCATION

U.S. Congress in 2012 enacted section 6409 of the federal Middle Class Tax Relief Act and Jobs Creation Act of 2012 (the “Collocation Act”), which states, *“State or local government may not deny, and shall approve, any eligible facilities request for a modification of an existing wireless tower or base station that does not substantially change the physical dimensions of such tower or base station.”* Since the adoption of the Collocation Act, the role of land use boards have been questioned regarding requests by telecommunication providers seeking collocation, as any “substantial change” to an existing tower or base station would require board review and where “substantial change” was not defined. In an effort to clarify and implement section 6409 of the Collocation Act, the Federal Communications Commission (“FCC”) issued an Acceleration of Broadband Deployment Report and



Order, that adopted new collocation rules including a definition for the meaning of “substantial change”, and newly established timeframes in which State and local government agencies can act on facility siting applications.

The New Jersey State League of Municipalities recommends municipalities develop new application forms that will ensure wireless telecommunication applicants are able to determine whether their project is an “eligible facility”, which must be mandatorily approved, or if the project involves a “substantial change”, which requires board approval per the FCC rules. Municipalities should also develop new checklists for wireless communication applications so land use boards can review applications in accordance with the FCC timeframes that differ from the customary timeframes set forth in the Municipal Land Use Law.

SMALL CELL WIRELESS FACILITIES

Recent developments in wireless technologies, specifically 5G, require the placement of Small Cell Equipment and Wireless Cabinets on utility poles within the public rights-of-way. Municipalities may allow for the issuance of supplemental licenses for the placement of such equipment on existing poles. Municipalities also have the power to zone these structures pursuant to the Municipal Land Use Law and may set standards in relation to the siting of small cell equipment, wireless cabinets, and wireless poles within the public rights-of-way. Reasons for such standards can include safety concerns such as blocking sight triangles, aesthetic concerns, and concerns of the rights of the public to access the public rights-of-way.

STORMWATER REGULATIONS

There are two sets of Stormwater Management Rules, effective on February 2, 2004, that together establish a comprehensive framework for addressing water quality impacts associated with existing and future stormwater discharges. The first set of rules is the New Jersey Discharge Elimination System Stormwater Regulation Program (NJPDES) rules, and the second set of rules known as the Stormwater Management rules. The Rules contain general requirements for stormwater management plans, stormwater control ordinances, and stormwater management standards mandatory for new development. The New Jersey Stormwater Management Practices Manual (BMP manual) is developed to provide guidance to address the Stormwater Management rules. The BMP manual was adopted parallel the regulations in 2004 and last revised in September 2017. Updates through 2017 include a



chapter one update (Impacts of Development on Runoff), updated structural stormwater management measures and one new measure for Blue Roof systems, which are systems designed to provide stormwater detention on roofs effectively reducing flow rates from roof, and reducing the size of downstream detention basins.

Municipal planning boards should review residential development for compliance with their existing stormwater control ordinances under the Municipal Land Use Law and compliance with the Stormwater Management rules under the Residential Site Improvement Standards (RSIS). Through the RSIS, stormwater rules are activated whenever a municipality requires the control of runoff from a site that is the subject of a site or subdivision application, whether or not a development is a “major development” as defined in the stormwater rules.

New stormwater rules were adopted on October 25, 2019 and are discussed in greater detail in the **Sustainability Element** of the Re-examination Report.

NJDEP FLOOD MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS

The latest Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules were adopted on November 5, 2007, and last amended on January 16, 2018. The rules govern disturbance of land and vegetation within the flood hazard area or riparian zone of regulated waters. Recent amendments also:

- incorporated FEMA advisory and preliminary flood mapping
- facilitated reconstruction after Superstorm Sandy
- increased riparian zone protections and mitigation options
- improved riparian zone protections within the “inner” half of the 300-foot zone
- added new permits-by-rule, general permits by certification, and general permits
- better aligned administrative procedures and rules with other federal, state, and local requirements such as the National Flood Insurance Program and Uniform Construction Code; facilitated environmentally beneficial activities
- provided a cap on stormwater fees; and clarified that a residential home or duplex cannot be constructed on a lot that was subdivided after the initial adoption of the Rules on November 5, 2007.

FLOOD DEFENSE ACT

A bill known as the Flood Defense Act (signed March 25, 2019) allows municipalities and counties to create their own local



stormwater utility with the ability to charge property owners a fee based on “a fair and equitable approximation” of how much stormwater runoff is generated from their property with the ultimate goal of upgrading antiquated stormwater systems (i.e. replacing pipes, maintaining catch basins, or creating rain gardens to absorb water). Large malls and office parks will likely feel the greatest effects of the bill, although any property, including residential, could be subject to the fee, with the exception of farms and commercial gardens. It is expected that only the most flood-prone towns will choose to create a utility to impose this “rain tax” but it is a new law that Leonia should also consider.

PLANNING BOARD AND ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENTS OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE - COVID-19

Governor Phil Murphy issued Executive Order #107 on March 21, 2020 that required all public hearings to transition to virtual meetings amongst a variety of other restrictions that limited residents' contact with others as a way to stem the spread of the Coronavirus. The Division of Local Government Services (DLGS) issued temporary guidelines amidst the Covid-19 pandemic on operational guidelines. The announcement provides recommendations regarding conducting hearings and facilitating public participation. Statewide restrictions limiting in-person public meetings and hearings are to be conducted by alternative electronic means such as Zoom, Facebook or YouTube. Recommendations regarding providing adequate public notice are broad but make sure to include web conference and dial-in options for the public. The notice must provide conference call access or web-meeting access information. Those lacking the resources or know-how for technological access should contact the Board Secretary for assistance in accessing the plans and the meeting. All plans and application materials must be on file with the Board Secretary for review by the public at least ten (10) days prior to the hearing. The Division encourages local officials to review this guidance with their Board secretaries and professionals. It is unclear whether the guidelines will have lasting effects on the way public bodies conduct public meetings, but it is something that the Borough should follow as municipalities continue to improve their access to virtual public meetings as the restrictions are in place



COUNTY PLANNING EFFORTS AND POLICY CHANGES.

Significant changes at the County level include:

2018 BERGEN COUNTY MASTER PLAN

As of writing the Bergen County Master Plan that was initiated in 2018 was still in the development process. The Plan was developed in order to meet the transit needs of the residents of Bergen County. It outlines a vision for a county-wide transit system that maximizes transportation investments, promotes efficiency and safety of riders and pedestrians, and promotes multimodal travel. The plan reflects the transit priorities of local, state, and regional stakeholders. Of major concern to Leonía is the desire of the County for the Northern Branch extension of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail. The benefits of this project would be to give residents greater options for commuting to Hudson County and New York City, a decrease in the amount of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and alleviating some traffic congestion in the region. The Plan also envisions the region to be a good candidate for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) assuming the completion of the Northern Branch extension. The need for the Borough to consider proposing TOD policies is discussed in the **Land Use Element** of the Report.

Upon the completion of the County's Master Plan Leonía's development and regulations will be amended if necessary to be consistent with the goals of the Bergen County Master Plan.

BERGEN COUNTY COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

Bergen County adopted a Complete Streets Policy in April 2012 and later prepared the Bergen County Complete Streets Implementation Action Plan, the purpose of which is to analyze and update existing Bergen County plans in order to incorporate a Complete Streets policy into future projects. The plan's goal is to present a variety of tools that will assist Bergen County in implementing these Complete Streets policies.

Leonía's development and regulations are consistent with the goals of the Bergen County Complete Streets Implementation Action Plan.

2019 BERGEN COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN

A public hearing for a draft version of the 2019 Bergen County Parks Master Plan was held on November 13, 2019. Overpeck Park, located along the western portion of Leonía, is one of the County's largest and most visited parks. The Master Plan considers Overpeck



Park one of the County's four "anchor parks" that serve as the "backbone" of the Bergen County park system. Because of the size of the park, Leonia is an exception to much of southern Bergen County in being well served by open space according to the Trust for Public Land metrics. The plan extensively discussed the park's issues and best assets. A significant issue cited were issues related to finding parking. Based on the Master Plan, one initiative that the County wants to pursue is to connect Overpeck Park to Palisades State Park through a greenway initiative, which would travel through Leonia. While the Borough does not have direct control over Overpeck Park, initiatives to create greater accessibility to the park and connect it to other nearby recreational areas is something the Borough can partner with Bergen County on to ensure equitable and easy access to open space for all Leonians.

LOCAL PLANNING EFFORTS AND POLICY CHANGES

Significant changes at the local level include:

LEONIA COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

The Borough adopted a Complete Streets policy on July 9, 2018 through Resolution 2018-177. The policy indicates that all public streets projects undertaken by the Borough shall be designed and constructed as a "complete street" wherever feasible to safely accommodate travel by pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit and motorized vehicles with particular focus on the safety of pedestrians.

2019 BICYCLE ROUTE ALTERNATIVES PLAN

In 2019, the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) in partnership with the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center and Sustainable Jersey, commissioned a bicycle route plan to connect Overpeck Park in Leonia to the George Washington Bridge (GWB). This plan was the result of an application by the Borough for a technical assistance grant from NJTPA. This Plan along with the Borough's Complete Streets Policy aims to create a safer environment for bicyclists with the desire that more residents would be encouraged to bicycle to and from work rather than driving. While this Plan was the result of an application submitted by the Borough, it would require the partnership of Fort Lee for the route to connect to the GWB. Given the County's stated desire in the 2019 Parks Master Plan to connect Overpeck Park to Palisades State Park, these efforts have the potential to be combined to create a single, comprehensive route that would allow for safe bicycle passage from Overpeck Park to the GWB and the Palisades.





ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

On the following pages is a list of adopted amendments to the Borough's Zoning Ordinance following the adoption of the 2010 Reexamination Report.

Zoning Ordinance Amendments		
	Ordinance # and Adoption Date	Purpose
1	# 05-10 Adopted May 3, 2010	Amended fine amounts for violation of Zoning Code
2	# 06-10 Adopted May 3, 2010	Amended sign ordinance
3	# 12-10 Adopted November 1, 2010	Amended permitted uses in the OB-District
4	# 13-10 Adopted November 1, 2010	Amended definition of "family"
5	# 14-10 Adopted November 15, 2010	Change to tree ordinance
6	# 11-11 Adopted September 7, 2011	Creation of a parking trust fund
7	# 2012-14 Adopted August 13, 2012	Adjusted role of alternates of the Planning Board
8	# 2012-17 Adopted December 17, 2012	Consolidated the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment into one entity
9	# 2014-2 Adopted May 5, 2014	Amended role of Zoning Officer
10	# 2016-11 Adopted December 5, 2016	Allowed Zoning Officer to issue zoning certificates
11	# 2017-01 Adopted April 3, 2017	Amended regulations to Alcohol Beverage Control
12	# 2017-06 Adopted May 15, 2017	Change to permitted uses
13	# 2017-09 Adopted August 28, 2017	Change to design standards and "lighting and signs"
14	# 2017-15 Adopted October 16, 2017	Amended fine amounts for violation of Zoning Code
15	# 2017-20 Adopted December 18, 2017	Creation of regulations to allow emergency standby generator and portable generator
16	# 2017-21 Adopted December 18, 2017	Change to regulations regarding exterior air conditioning units
17	# 2017-22 Adopted December 18, 2017	Creation of regulations to mounted solar panels
18	# 2018-10 Adopted August 6, 2018	Change to Prohibited Uses
19	# 2019-18 Adopted October 7, 2019	Adoption of floodplain management regulations
20	# 2020-05 Adpoted February 3, 2020	Change to Tree Ordinance
21	# 2020-06 Adopted July 6, 2020	Change to bulk standards
22	# 2020-17 Adopted July 20, 2020	Amended regulations to require affordable housing units set-aside



LAND USE ELEMENT REEXAMINATION



LAND USE ELEMENT RECOMMENDATION PLAN

The Land Use Element Recommendation Plan is broken up into two sections. The first is a table summarizing the past issues and recommendations that have reduced or increased based on the discussions identified in the **Past Issues and Recommendations** section of this Element. The second is a comprehensive Land Use Recommendation Table that includes recommendations from the 2002 Master Plan and 2010 Reexamination Report that still apply today, as well as new recommendations identified as part of this 2020 Master Plan Reexamination effort.

PART I

Below is a summary of the past issues and recommendations that have reduced or increased based on the discussions identified in the **Past Issues and Recommendations** section of this Element.

Summary Table of Past Issues and Recommendations		
Past Issue or Recommendation (from 2002 Master Plan or 2010 Reexam)	Increased or Maintained and Should Continue	Decreased or Resolved
LU-1 Zone Boundaries		
a Zoning Map	X	
LU-2 Residential Zones		
a Out of Character Development	X	
b Two-, Three- and Multifamily in Single-Family		X
c Encourage Construction of Senior Housing	X	
d Higher Intensity Uses Along Border	X	
LU-3 Redevelopment Sites		
a Willow Tree and Fort Lee Roads	X	
b Grand Avenue		X
LU-4 Retail / Commercial Zones		
a Broad Avenue Corridor	X	
b Streetscape and Façade Design Criteria	X	
C OB District	X	
d Grand Avenue and Fort Lee Road	X	
LU-5 Demolitions, Size and Number of New Homes		
a Demolition of Leonia’s Housing Stock	X	
LU-6 Development Regulations		
a Historic Preservation	X	
b Bulk Standards	X	
c Lot Widths	X	
d Floor Area Ratio	X	
e Steep Slopes		X



PART II

Below is a comprehensive Land Use Recommendation Table that includes recommendations from the 2002 Master Plan and 2010 Reexamination Report that still apply today (indicated with a *LU-1a*, for example), as well as new recommendations identified as part of this 2020 Master Plan Reexamination effort.

DIRECTIONS

“Check off” a completed recommendation and mark the year of completion as a way to measure progress. **Short Term:** complete in 1-2 years; **Mid Term:** complete in 3-5 years; **Long Term:** complete in 10+ years.

Land Use Element Recommendation Table					
Recommendation	Implementing Party	Completion Timeframe	Completed	Year Completed	
General					
1	<i>(LU-1a)</i> Review existing land-use patterns and their compatibility with the zoning map, and make zone boundary changes as needed	Planner, Planning Board	Short-term		
2	<i>(LU-1a)</i> Change designations of zoning districts to better reflect the permitted uses in each district (i.e. R-1 for low-density, single-family residential, MF-1 for multifamily residential, etc.)	Planner, Planning Board, Borough Council	Short-term		
3	Use redevelopment tools on existing underutilized sites, including lots on Grand Avenue and Broad Avenue	Borough Council, Planning Board, Planner	Short- to Medium-term		
4	Update Chapter 290 of the Municipal Code as needed	Planner, Borough Council	Short- to Long-term		
5	Amend Leonia Municipal Code to coincide with changes to the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL)	Planning Board, Planner, Borough Council	Ongoing		
6	In any new Land Use Element, review zone boundaries and make recommendations as necessary	Planner, Planning Board	Ongoing		
7	<i>(LU-3a)</i> Utilize a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreement for the potential Willow Tree Road redevelopment area that will help to encourage a reuse of the site that could allow for greater intensity uses and work towards meeting the Borough’s fair share of affordable housing requirements	Planning Board, Borough Council	Short- to Medium-term		



8	<i>(LU-3b)</i> Consider extending the border further south along Grand Avenue to Station Parkway	Planner, Planning Board, Borough Council	Short-term		
9	Update regulations with the issuance of liquor licenses to make it easier for potential businesses to gain and use licenses	Borough Council	Short-term		
10	Develop programs that can provide services for seniors continuing to live in Leonia	Borough Administrator	Ongoing		
Residential					
11	<i>(LU-2a)</i> Analyze the bulk standards in single-family zone and determine whether action should be taken to redefine bulk standards to preserve neighborhood character	Planner, Planning Board	Short-term		
12	<i>(LU-2b)</i> Review lot sizes in the Multifamily zone and consider changes to the code that would encourage the consolidation of lots	Planner, Planning Board	Short-term		
13	<i>(LU-2c)</i> Develop strategies to allow for a greater housing typology with the focus on aging-in-place policies to allow seniors to continue to live in Leonia	Planner, Planning Board, Borough Council	Short- to Medium-Term		
14	<i>(LU-2d)</i> Monitor adjacent municipal development trends along the border with Leonia and adopt new land use policies that promote neighborhood preservation while supporting controlled, sustained growth within the Borough	Planner, Planning Board, Board Council	Medium- to Long-Term		
Commercial and Business Zones					
15	<i>(LU-4b)</i> Designate the Broad Avenue corridor as an Area in Need of Rehabilitation to allow for façade improvements and property upkeep as well as design standards for signage	Planner, Planning Board, Borough Council	Medium-Term		
16	Review and revise parking regulations to allow for greater investment in the Borough’s commercial corridors	Planner, Planning Board	Short- to Medium-Term		



Land Use Ordinance					
17	<i>(LU-6a)</i> Develop and implement new bulk controls such as building coverage limits and enhanced use regulations to strengthen existing land use pattern against the intrusion of incompatible land uses in its single-family neighborhoods	Planner, Planning Board, Borough Council	Medium-Term		
18	<i>(LU-6b)</i> Review lot sizes in the Multifamily zone and adjust regulations to become more compatible with the size of the lots in the district	Planner, Planning Board, Borough Council	Medium- to Long-Term		
19	<i>(LU-6c)</i> Develop a Floor Area Ratio that limits the development of overly large dwellings on small lots	Planner, Planning Board, Borough Council	Short- to Medium Term		
20	<i>(LU-6d)</i> Analyze the Borough's steep slope areas to find if issues regarding development in steep slopes are still relevant	Planner, Planning Board	Short-Term		



PAST ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following land use issues were identified in the 2002 Master Plan and 2010 Reexamination Report. This section discusses these issues, examines what activities and changes have taken place, and identifies whether the issues have since been reduced or have an increased need the Borough should address.

LU-1 ZONE BOUNDARIES

a. **Zoning Map**

The Issue: The Planning Board should review existing land-use patterns and their compatibility with the zoning map.

What has Changed: The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection has released new state-wide land use data. As there are likely to be land use changes, the Borough should conduct such an analysis in an updated Land Use Element and revise the zoning map as needed.

An additional issue with the Borough's zoning map is the zoning district designations don't reflect the type of use allowed in the zone (i.e. A1 is a single-family zone and B is a multifamily zone). The Borough should revise the zoning districts to accurately reflect the type of use allowed in the zone. For example, the A1 district should be changed to R-1 to reflect the zone's single-family residential characteristics, the B district should be MF-1 to reflect the multifamily residential characteristics, the D district should be C-1 to reflect the commercial/mixed-use character of the district, etc.

LU-2 RESIDENTIAL ZONES

a. **Out of Character Development**

The Issue: The Borough is concerned about construction of large, single-family homes, either through additions to or replacement of existing homes that are out-of-scale with the prevailing character of the existing neighborhood.

Land Use	
Past Issues	
LU-1	Zone Boundaries
LU-2	Residential Zones
LU-3	Redevelopment Sites
LU-4	Retail / Commercial Zones
LU-5	Demolition, Size and Number of New Homes
LU-6	Development Regulations
New Issues & Trends	
LU-7	Land Use Ordinance
LU-8	Community Character
LU-9	Recommendations Concerning Redevelopment
LU-10	Surrounding Redevelopment
LU-11	New Master Plan and Land Use Element



Replacement homes constructed in recent years exemplify the inappropriateness of over-sized homes in Leonia's established residential neighborhoods.

What has Changed: On July 6, 2020, Borough Council passed Ordinance No. 2020-06 that revised some of the bulk standards for the A-1, A-2, A-3 and A-4 Zoning Districts. This recommendation remains valid, as the Borough should continue reviewing the current bulk requirements to ensure appropriate standards are enacted that balance preserving neighborhood character and meeting the needs of today's housing market.

b. **Two-, Three- and Multifamily Houses in Single- Family Zones**

The Issue: A related issue to the construction of large, single-family homes is the construction of two-, three- and multifamily houses in areas zoned for single-family residences. This trend has the potential to undermine the Borough's long-standing objective of protecting the quality of life in the Borough's well-established residential areas.

What has Changed: The concern for this trend appears to have dissipated since the 2002 Master Plan. A more pressing concern is the trend for high-density multifamily development in the B-Multifamily Zone where applicants have applied for permits to develop at much higher intensity. While this type of development is appropriate in this zone, the Borough's smaller lot sizes are a barrier to development. The Borough should review lot sizes in this zone and consider changes to the code that would encourage the consolidation of lots.

c. **Encourage Construction of Senior Housing**

The Issue: The 2002 Master Plan called for the increase in housing for seniors where possible in the Borough. More recently, the Borough is characterized by an aging population, who may no longer need their single-family detached dwellings, but would like to remain in the community. It would be appropriate to encourage senior housing near existing multifamily developments, adjacent to the business districts, as depicted on the land use map.

What has Changed: On August 21, 2006, Borough Council adopted Ordinance No.13-06, which created District SH for Senior Housing. The 2010 Reexamination Report mentioned that the Borough had approved several land swaps for the purpose of facilitating construction of new senior housing for Borough residents. It is not clear how much new senior housing was



constructed as a result. The Borough should consider adopting aging-in-place policies that would allow seniors to remain in the community.

The Borough has seen its over 65 population increase as a percentage of the total population from 15.1% in 2010 to 18.7% in 2018, highlighting the increased need for a greater variety of land uses and housing typologies that would allow older Borough residents to remain in the community. Future land use strategy should focus on policies for aging-in-place that would promote a multigenerational community.

d. **High Intensity Uses along Border with Palisades Park**

The Issue: The Borough recognizes the fact that Palisades Park has permitted a number of higher density residential and light industrial uses in their community along the municipal border with Leonia. The Borough of Leonia strives to maintain a land use policy that retains its single-family character, including the area along the border with Palisades Park.

What has Changed: : In recent years, Fort Lee and Englewood have also permitted a number of higher density residential uses, especially along the border with Leonia. The Borough should continue to monitor this situation. This item should be addressed in a Land Use Element of a new Master Plan.

LU-3 REDEVELOPMENT SITES

a. **Willow Tree Road and Fort Lee Road Area**

The Issue: Selective redevelopment opportunities are possible in areas located along Willow Tree Road up to and around the intersection with Fort Lee Road. These areas coincide with the LI and B zones.

What has Changed: The Leonia Borough Council adopted Resolution No. 2014-127 on May 19, 2014 that directed the Leonia Planning Board to undertake a preliminary investigation to determine whether the “Study Area,” an area surrounding Fort Lee Road and Grand Avenue as depicted on the map below, qualifies as “an area in need of rehabilitation” in accordance with the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL) set forth in N.J.S.A. 40A:12A.

Rehabilitation projects can include the repair, reconstruction or renovation of existing homes and businesses, the conversion of commercial/industrial buildings to multi-family dwellings, the introduction of new construction, and the rehabilitation of all



infrastructure in the rehabilitation area. The 5-year tax exemption can be an effective tool to encourage property owners to make necessary or desirable improvements to their properties, where they may have otherwise delayed making such improvements for fear of increased property taxes. The savings from the tax exemption can also be a catalyst for business owners to improve their building facades and make site improvements.

On May 19, 2014, the Borough Council passed Resolution RES-2014-126 authorizing the Planning Board to conduct a preliminary investigation to determine whether or not the area of the Borough known as the Fort Lee Road and Grand Avenue Redevelopment Study Area qualified as a non-condemnation "area in need of redevelopment" pursuant to statutory requirements as defined in the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law ("LRHL," N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq.).

On November 30, 2015, the Leonia Borough Council passed Resolution 2015-189 designating twenty-two (22) properties within the Fort Lee Road and Grand Avenue area as an Area in Need of Redevelopment and all properties in the rehabilitation area as a designated area in need of rehabilitation.

At the time of the development of this re-examination report additional draft condemnation and non-condemnation areas in need of redevelopment studies for the Ft. Lee, Grand Avenue and Willow Tree Road had been prepared in draft form, with the understanding that the condemnation study would not be pursued, but rather pursue additional properties for non-condemnation outside the properties already designated in the 2015 Fort Lee and Grand Avenue Redevelopment Study

This recommendation is still current and should be pursued alongside the development of the new comprehensive master plan.

b. **Grand Avenue**

The Issue: The area of the western side of Grand Avenue between Fort Lee Road and Station Parkway has current conditions that could warrant an Area in Need of Redevelopment designation.

What has Changed: *The Leonia Borough Council adopted Resolution No. 2014-127 on May 19, 2014 that directed the Leonia Planning Board to undertake a preliminary investigation to determine whether the "Study Area," an area surrounding Fort Lee Road and Grand Avenue as depicted on the map below, qualifies as "an area in need of rehabilitation" in accordance with the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL) set forth in N.J.S.A. 40A:12A.*



Rehabilitation projects can include the repair, reconstruction or renovation of existing homes and businesses, the conversion of commercial/industrial buildings to multi-family dwellings, the introduction of new construction, and the rehabilitation of all infrastructure in the rehabilitation area. The 5-year tax exemption can be an effective tool to encourage property owners to make necessary or desirable improvements to their properties, where they may have otherwise delayed making such improvements for fear of increased property taxes. The savings from the tax exemption can also be a catalyst for business owners to improve their building facades and make site improvements.

On May 19, 2014, the Borough Council passed Resolution RES-2014-126 authorizing the Planning Board to conduct a preliminary investigation to determine whether or not the area of the Borough known as the Fort Lee Road and Grand Avenue Redevelopment Study Area qualified as an non condemnation "area in need of redevelopment" pursuant to statutory requirements as defined in the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law ("LRHL," N.J.S.A.. 40A:12A-1 et seq.).

On November 30, 2015, the Leonia Borough Council passed Resolution 2015-189 designating twenty-two (22) properties within the Fort Lee Road and Grand Avenue area as an Area in Need of Redevelopment and all properties in the rehabilitation area as a designated area in need of rehabilitation. The Area in Need of Redevelopment designation came as a part of an extensive study of the redevelopment area that the Borough explored as a way to spur new construction. Given that Leonia is well developed, utilizing redevelopment as a planning tool has the potential to spur significant change.

At the time of the development of this re-examination report additional draft condemnation and non-condemnation areas in need of redevelopment studies for the Ft.Lee , Grand Avenue and Willow Tree Road had been prepared in draft form, with the understanding that the condemnation study would not be pursued, but rather pursue additional properties for non-condemnation outside the properties already designated in the 2015 Fort Lee and Grand Avenue Redevelopment Study

This recommendation is still current and should be pursued alongside the development of the new comprehensive master plan.



LU-4 RETAIL / COMMERCIAL ZONES

a. **Broad Avenue Corridor**

The Issue: Broad Avenue is the Borough's main commercial corridor and is located between Crescent Avenue and Harold Avenue. Existing land use along Broad Avenue is mixed, including multifamily residential, retail commercial, and office uses. Properties along the Broad Avenue commercial corridor are currently zoned for D - Business and B - Multifamily, reflecting the two primary uses of the street. A major issue in the area include a lack of adequate parking for existing businesses, which prevents larger developments from existing in the zone.

What has Changed: Since the 2010 Reexamination Report, ownership of properties along Broad Avenue continue to change, but the previously mentioned parking issues remain. The Borough should review parking regulations along this corridor. In any new Circulation Element of a Master Plan update, the Borough should review parking regulations that other successful downtown business districts have adopted in order to help inform a parking strategy for Leonia.

Additional issues with the Broad Avenue are that the properties and signage have not been maintained resulting in a lack of 'curb appeal'. There is no consistency in signage or façade preventing the Borough to create a distinctive feel that would give the downtown a sense of place that would attract residents and visitors.

One way to combat the lack of curb appeal and attract visitors to the corridor could be to attract desired uses, such as restaurants. The Borough should consider undertaking appropriate zoning code amendments to allow for restaurants and similar establishments and issuing its liquor licenses. Changes to the regulations should ease the burden on owners that are looking to lease their properties to desirable land uses but are unable to meet the regulations given the existing conditions of the area. The issue and recommendation remain relevant.



b. **Streetscape and Façade Design Criteria**

The Issue: The Borough recognizes that the Broad Avenue corridor is characterized by some deteriorating elements and poor aesthetic features. The Borough seeks to revitalize and redevelop this area through the appropriate redevelopment mechanisms that are available to public and private redevelopment interests. The Borough's policy is to provide a comprehensive and coordinated long-range plan to guide the growth, development and physical improvements which are necessary to ensure the continued vitality of this area, including specialized area and bulk regulatory controls, signage and lighting provisions, parking and landscape features.

What has Changed: No changes have been made to designate the Broad Avenue corridor as an Area in Need of Redevelopment nor an Area in Need of Rehabilitation. The Borough should seek to designate the corridor as an Area in Need of Rehabilitation to allow for façade improvements and property upkeep as well as design standards for signage.

c. **OB District along Grand Avenue**

The Issue: The OB District land would be more suitable for small-scale office use, preferably in the form of conversions of the existing residential structure into two story office buildings on either side of Drill Hall.

What has Changed: No changes have been made to the OB District. As the changing office environment continues, the Borough should consider changing the regulations of the zone to attract office uses.

d. **Grand Avenue and Fort Lee Road**

The Issue: The four-corner area at Grand Avenue and Fort Lee Road should be evaluated for optimal utilization by commercial purposes while assuring the compatibility of this area with surrounding uses. A potential variation of the existing D district may be needed.

What has Changed: No changes to the zoning have been made to this area. However, properties in this area were subject to the Area in Need of Redevelopment study that the Planning Board commissioned and were subsequently designated as an Area in Need of Redevelopment. This matter is discussed in greater detail in the **Redevelopment** section of this report. The previous



recommendation is deemed complete and no further action is required.

LU-5 DEMOLITIONS, SIZE AND NUMBER OF NEW HOMES

a. **Demolitions of Leonia's Housing Stock**

The Issue: At the time of the 2010 Reexamination Report, the phenomenon was not unique to Leonia, but appeared to be a trend in New Jersey and in the US, generally. In communities across the state, developers had been demolishing older homes and replacing them with much larger homes on the same lot. These demolitions and new constructions represented a potential threat to the character of the Borough's signal-family neighborhoods.

These trends are being dictated by changing demands among prospective homebuyers driving the demand in the housing market. Around the time of the last Reexamination Report, data from the U.S. Census Bureau indicated that the median size of a single-family home had increased by nearly 50% since the early 1970s. The median size at the time was over 2,300 square feet, as compared with just 1,560 square feet in 1974. In many cases, the new homes that were being built were permitted as-of-right appear grossly over-sized in relation to the neighborhood because, unlike older homes, new ones were often built to the maximum limits of permissible zoning.

What has Changed: Since the 2010 Reexamination Report, there have been 15 one- and two-family units that have been demolished in the Borough. It is unclear from the data whether or not these units were reconstructed to build larger units in their place. Anecdotally, the Borough continues to experience the trend of older homes being replaced with larger homes or additions being added to the existing structure, resulting in a larger building footprint. Leonia should review its bulk standards and other regulatory mechanisms to allow for new construction that remains compatible with the existing neighborhood.



LU-6 DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

a. **Historic Preservation**

The Issue: The Borough has historically significant structures that have been identified, but a plan for their preservation and protection has not been prepared. The 2002 Master Plan recommended that a full Historic Preservation element that is pursuant to the applicable provisions of the Municipal Land Use Law be completed as a part of Leonia's Master Plan.

What has Changed: The Borough continues to consider drafting an historic preservation element for the Borough's Master Plan. Accordingly, additional regulations to supplement Article XV of the Leonia Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 290 of the Borough Code) have not yet been adopted. The 2010 Reexamination Report recommended that the area of Spring Street between Station Park and Grand Avenue be recognized as having a character and history which is significant to the Borough of Leonia and to African-American history as that street was home to three men who served this country as Tuskegee Airmen during World War II. This issue remains relevant and the Borough should undertake a Historic Preservation Plan in its next Master Plan.

b. **Bulk Standards**

The Issue: The Borough should consider new bulk controls such as building coverage limits and enhanced use regulations to strengthen existing land use pattern against the intrusion of incompatible land uses in its single-family neighborhoods.

What has Changed: Since the 2010 Re-examination Report, the Borough has made several changes to uses including permitted uses in the OB-District and regulations around solar panels. There have not been changes to bulk standards, but the Borough Council is currently reviewing ordinance 2020-06 that would change bulk standards including the amount of pervious surface. The Borough should continue to update permitted uses as new issues arise as well as bulk standards that meet the Borough's land use goals. This issue remains relevant and should continue.

c. **Lot Widths**



The Issue: In 2006, the Borough adopted Ordinance 04-06, which required a lot width of at least 75 feet for newly subdivided single-family lots. This measure discourages producing housing with side yards that look too narrow due to narrow lot width but makes possible the construction of very wide homes without the need for variances. The Borough should monitor the situation with the construction of extra wide homes.

What has Changed: It is unclear whether the ordinance regulating lot widths has led to the construction of extra wide homes. As a part of the Borough's Master Plan process, the Borough should extensively review bulk standards such as lot widths to consider updated regulations that create the desired development.

d. **Floor Area Ratio**

The Issue: In order to regulate the size of newly constructed homes that were replacing smaller homes in residential areas, the Borough was exploring how floor area ratio could be utilized to help regulate the overall size of new dwellings. A limitation on Floor Area Ratio (FAR), which regulates the ratio of the building size to lot size such that the floor area may not exceed a fixed percentage of the total lot area, would create a substantial protection mechanism. An exceedance of an adopted FAR standard would require a greater burden of proof (d variance) by applicants requesting such zoning relief

What has Changed: No amendments have been made regarding FAR. This recommendation remains relevant.

e. **Steep Slopes**

The Issue: The Borough had the following policy statement regarding development along the Borough's steep slopes: "...the Borough seeks to limit development to that which preserves steeply sloped areas (defined to include any slope of minimally fifteen percent grade) and discourage development in order to preserve and protect the natural features in the Borough."

What has Changed: No additional regulations protecting steep slopes or other environmentally sensitive features have been adopted since the last Master Plan in 2002. The Borough should review steep slope areas in the Borough to find if this issue is still relevant and whether a steep slope ordinance should be adopted.





NEW ISSUES AND TRENDS

An extensive review process in partnership with the Planning Board uncovered several land use issues and trends forming in Leonia today. These new issues and trends are discussed further below. Previous issues already identified in the 2002 Master Plan or 2010 Reexamination Report are discussed in the **Past Issues and Recommendations** section of this Element.

LU-7 LAND USE ORDINANCE

While the **Significant Changes in Assumptions, Policies, and Objectives** section of this report discusses regional, state and local policies and laws that may lead to amendments within the Borough of Leonia's Land Use Ordinance, there are other aspects of the Borough's Code that should be further refined and amended. By reviewing and amending the Subdivision and Zoning Chapters of the Borough Code, Leonia has the potential to streamline the process, maximize future development potential while maintaining its existing character. The Borough should specifically review Chapter 250 Subdivision of Land and Chapter 290 Zoning Sections of the Borough of Leonia Code. Any review of the code should be completed with a compliance review of federal, state, and county law requirements such as the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), Local Housing and Redevelopment Law (LHRL), Residential Site Improvement Standards (RSIS), affordable housing law (formerly COAH), State Plan, as well as applicable recommendations within this 2020 Master Plan Reexamination Report.






Land Use	
Past Issues	
LU-1	Zone Boundaries
LU-2	Residential Zones
LU-3	Redevelopment Sites
LU-4	Retail / Commercial Zones
LU-5	Demolition, Size and Number of New Homes
LU-6	Development Regulations
New Issues & Trends	
LU-7	Land Use Ordinance
LU-8	Community Character
LU-9	Recommendations Concerning Redevelopment
LU-10	Surrounding Redevelopment
LU-11	New Master Plan and Land Use Element

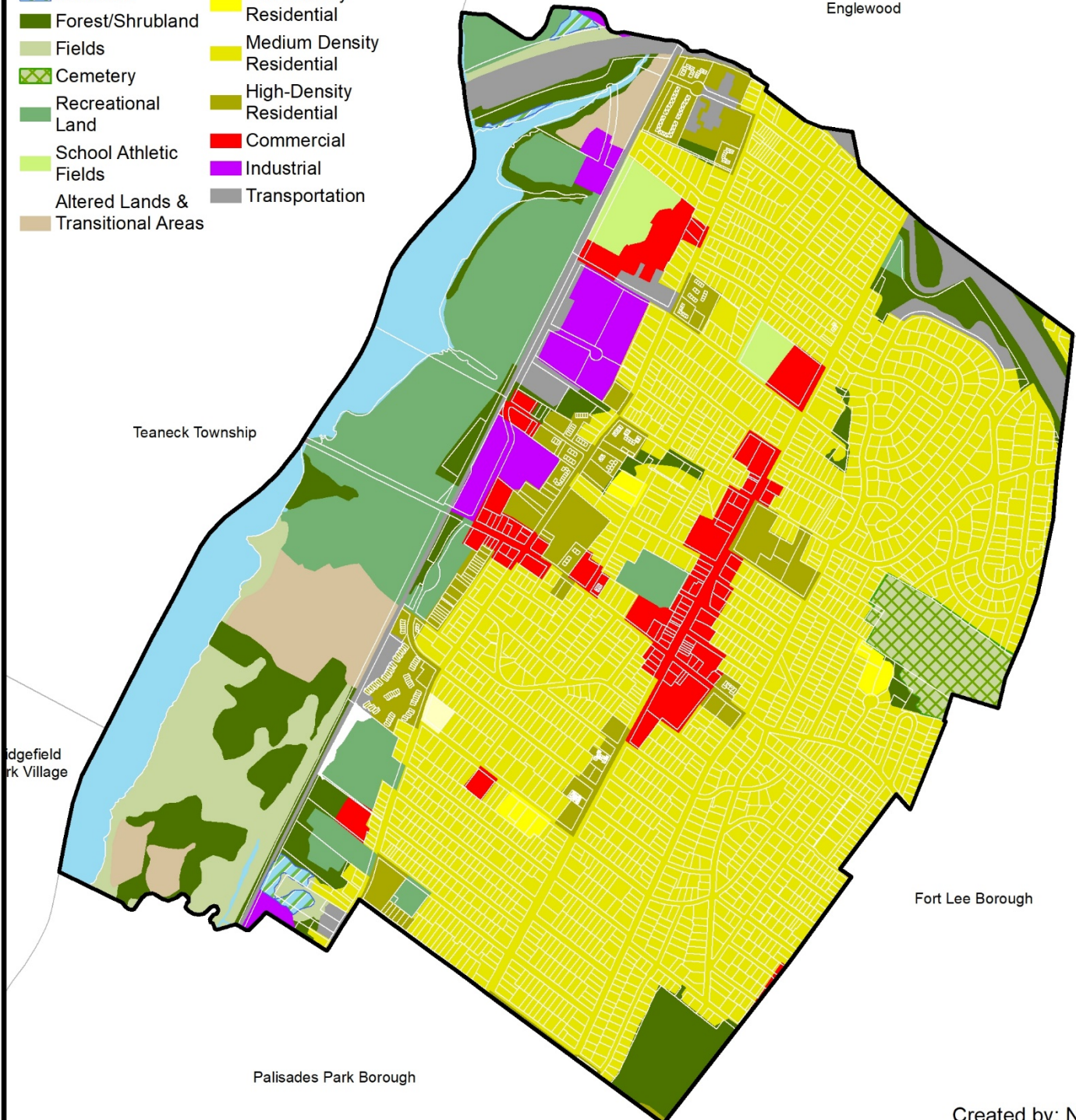
BOROUGH OF LEONIA

2015 Land Use Map



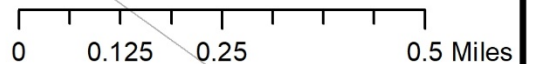
Legend

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Water |  Rural Residential |
|  Wetlands |  Low-Density Residential |
|  Forest/Shrubland |  Medium Density Residential |
|  Fields |  High-Density Residential |
|  Cemetery |  Commercial |
|  Recreational Land |  Industrial |
|  School Athletic Fields |  Transportation |
|  Altered Lands & Transitional Areas | |



Created by: NMV
Date Created: May 13, 2020

Sources:
NJGIN Parcel Data Published 11/01/2017,
NJDEP 2015 Land Use/Land Cover





LU-8 RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING REDEVELOPMENT

The Local Housing Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL) grants New Jersey’s municipalities the authority to designate areas in need of rehabilitation or in need of redevelopment given that they meet specific statutory criteria. The LRHL also provides a process for the preparation and implementation of redevelopment plans for designated areas. As market conditions change and permitted land uses become obsolete or sites remain underutilized, redevelopment is one planning tool the Borough can use from its toolbox. This section discusses areas that are recommended for study.

The Borough of Leonia is well developed, with limited availability for new construction. Therefore, new construction would likely have to occur through redevelopment. While a majority of Leonia is very well maintained, creating a strong sense of community character, there are select opportunities for redevelopment.

With the preliminary funding and design of the proposed light rail stop located adjacent to Ft. Lee Rd. and the associated parking structure across the tracks in Overlook Park, Leonia made the decision to be proactive and designate specific properties at the intersection of Grand Avenue and Fort Lee Rd as an Area in Need of Redevelopment and the entire study area (shown above) as an Area In Need of Rehabilitation. Given its location along a major road and the area’s current land uses, the area has the potential to support a greater intensity of use. Since the original study adoption, Leonia has approved the expansion of the study area for redevelopment to include the properties Along Willow Tree Road. The designation of this area could help to diversify the housing stock by allowing senior housing and the possible consolidation of the Kulite Facilities, opening surface parking for potential infill development. The Borough is currently undertaking a study to determine whether specific properties in the area would meet criteria for designation as an area in need of redevelopment.

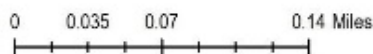
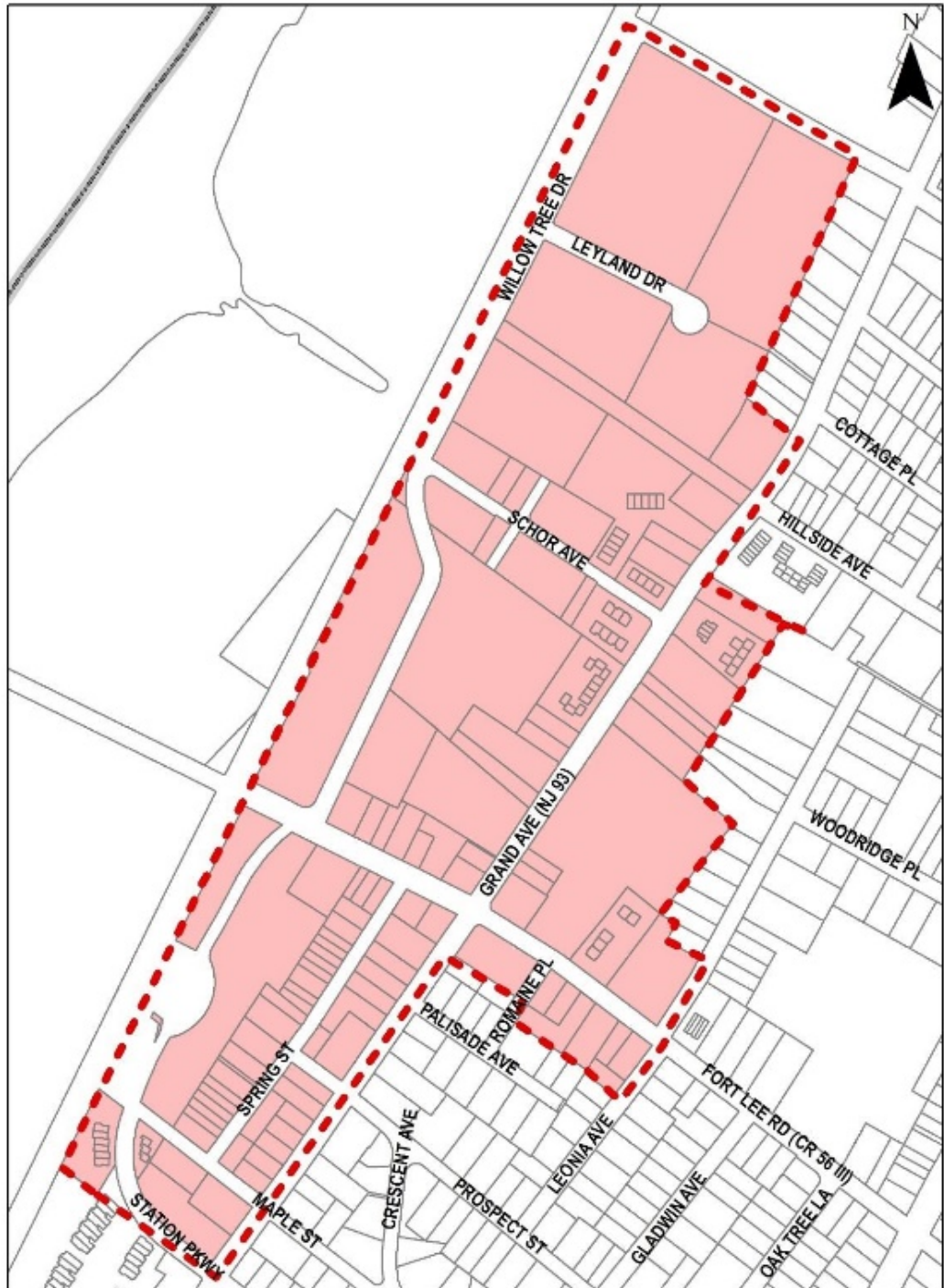
Another location for potential redevelopment or rehabilitation is the Broad Avenue Commercial District. The Broad Avenue district is the Borough’s main commercial district. Currently, there is a mix of retail, office, multifamily and other uses along the corridor. In many places along the corridor there are mismatches in building height and width and significant issues with aesthetics and parking requirements that currently prevent the Borough from attracting significant commercial development that would create a more

Redevelopment is a process to rebuild or restore an area in a measurable state of decline, disinvestment, or abandonment. Redevelopment may be publicly or privately initiated but is commonly recognized as the process governed by the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law and undertaken in accordance with a redevelopment plan adopted by the municipality. If used correctly, it can transform an underutilized or distressed area into an economically viable and productive part of the community.

Rehabilitation is an undertaking, by means of extensive repair, reconstruction or renovation of existing structures, with or without the introduction of new construction or the enlargement of existing structures, in any area that has been determined to be in need of rehabilitation or redevelopment, to eliminate substandard structural or housing conditions and arrest the deterioration of the area.



vibrant commercial corridor. A redevelopment or rehabilitation designation would give property owners in the corridor the opportunity to improve their buildings and create a greater uniformity in the aesthetics that would help to create a vibrant district that residents and visitors want to come to.



Borough of Leonia
Bergen County
New Jersey



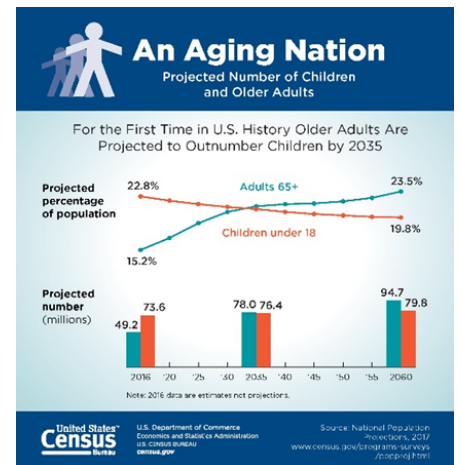
LU-9 COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Recent changes in demographic and market trends have pushed the need and desire for smaller scale housing units in suburban locations with downtown amenities, but within close proximity to and convenient access to major employment centers like New York City. Leonia fits this trend. It is a community that is within a few miles of New York City and easily accessible to the George Washington Bridge. There is ample bus service into Manhattan and with the potential northern expansion of the Hudson-Bergen light rail, the Borough will have another alternative mode of transportation to commute to New York as well as important Hudson County centers such as Jersey City and Hoboken.

Leonia maintains the reputation as a family-oriented community with an excellent school system. This reputation is very attractive for prospective residents, especially families, looking for an excellent place to live. The vast majority of Leonia's housing stock is single-family units, either attached or detached, (63.4%), while 14.2% of the housing units are units in buildings with 2-4 apartments and 21.7% are units in buildings with five or more units. In the last decade from 2009 to 2019, 35 multifamily units and no mixed-use units were constructed. During this same time period, 12 one- & two-family units were constructed, according to New Jersey Certificate of Occupancy ("CO") data.

LU-10 AGING-IN-PLACE

The U.S. Census Bureau projects that by 2035 the number of adults over the age of 65 will outnumber the number of children under the age of 18. However, Leonia is ahead of the nation in the percentage of the population that is above 65 years old. According to the 2018 5-year estimate data, the over-65 population as a percentage of the Borough's total population was 17.5%, which is significantly higher than the percentage in 2010 (15.1%), both of which are above the over-65 population in New Jersey, increasing from 13.5% to 15.5% over the same time period. The aging demographics in Leonia create a challenge for the Borough in maintaining its population. Between the high property taxes and the cost of maintaining the older detached single-family homes that are most common in Leonia, seniors may be more likely to move out of the Borough to downsize to more affordable options elsewhere. Given that Leonia is already ahead of the general trend at the national level, the Borough needs to begin to adopt policies and land use changes that will allow a greater number of seniors to be





able to “age-in-place” rather than being priced out of the Borough entirely.

While Leonia does have certain development characteristics that promote independent living and age-friendly development such as a well-connected street network and access to public transportation, it does lack certain characteristics such as a wide mix of uses in its downtown and the lack of destinations per square mile. New Jersey Future’s 2014 “Creating Places to Age in New Jersey” gave Leonia a score of 4 out of 4 on the quality of places for older populations, ranking it on par with neighboring Englewood and Fort Lee. While this recognition does show that Leonia has significant characteristics that make it a quality community to age in place, the Borough can make several changes that can make it much better. With its compactness and “good bones”, the Borough should concentrate on diversifying its future housing stock particularly in zones that could accommodate a wide range of housing typologies. This will help ensure that Leonia is well supplied with the types of housing people are likely to want as they age, and at prices affordable to retirees.

The Borough should also begin to develop programs that can provide services for seniors continuing to live in Leonia. These would be initiatives such as creating programming to involve residents of all generations, to prevent the feeling of isolation from those programs typically geared toward the younger age cohorts.

LU-11 SURROUNDING REDEVELOPMENT

In the 2002 Master Plan, there were concerns about the effect of Englewood’s redevelopment plan. By the 2010 Reexamination Report, Englewood’s redevelopment efforts had been realized through substantial new construction. The extent of the impacts on Leonia had not been measured at the time of the report. Measures of the impact on Leonia have still not been measured. Anecdotal information would suggest that traffic has increased as a result.

Since 2010, there has also been significant redevelopment activity in neighboring Palisades Park and Fort Lee. As a result of the redevelopment activity, these municipalities are seeing much higher rates of growth in population and construction activity compared to Leonia. Given that redevelopment activity is now occurring on several bordering municipalities, the Borough should protect Leonia’s community character and take control of its growth by taking actions that will mitigate some of the effects of



these neighboring changes while still encouraging controlled, sustained growth within the community.



LU-12 NEW MASTER PLAN AND LAND USE ELEMENT

A great deal has changed in Leonia since the last full Master Plan in 2002 with an aging population, significant growth pressures occurring in surrounding municipalities and potential future redevelopment occurring in the Borough. Given these changes, combined with changing patterns in living preferences, retail and workplace environment, it is critical that the Borough develop a new Master Plan with specific emphasis on examining the Borough's land use. Doing so will allow Leonia to meet the changes and challenges occurring and can continue to be the vibrant, livable community that residents enjoy.



Page Intentionally Left Blank



COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT REEXAMINATION



COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT RECOMMENDATION PLAN

The Community Facilities Element Recommendation Plan is broken up into two sections. The first is a table summarizing the past issues and recommendations that have reduced or increased based on the discussions identified in the **Past Issues and Recommendations** section of this Element. The second is a comprehensive Community Facilities Recommendation Table that includes recommendations from the 2002 Master Plan and 2010 Reexamination Report that still apply today, as well as new recommendations identified as part of this 2020 Master Plan Reexamination effort

PART I

Below is a summary of the past issues and recommendations that have reduced or increased based on the discussions identified in the **Past Issues and Recommendations** section of this Element.

Summary Table of Past Issues and Recommendations			
Past Issue or Recommendation (from 2002 Master Plan or 2010 Reexam))		Increased or Maintained and Should Continue	Decreased or Resolved
CF-1 Education Facilities			
a	School Facility Capacity	X	
b	Additional School Location		X
CF-2 Public Facilities			
a	Municipal Court		X
b	Municipal Building	X	
c	Stormwater Management	X	
d	Fire Division	X	
CF-3 Shared Services			
a	Facilities Share	X	



PART II

Below is a comprehensive Community Facilities Recommendation Table that includes recommendations from the 2002 Master Plan and 2010 Reexamination Report that still apply (indicated with a *CF-1a*, for example), as well as new recommendations identified as part of this 2020 Master Plan Reexamination effort.

DIRECTIONS

“Check off” a completed recommendation and mark the year of completion as a way to measure progress. **Short Term:** complete in 1-2 years; **Mid Term:** complete in 3-5 years; **Long Term:** complete in 10+ years.

Community Facilities Element Recommendation Table					
Recommendation	Implementing Party	Completion Timeframe	Completed	Year Completed	
Educational Facilities					
1	(<i>CF-1a</i>) Work with the Board of Education during the Master Plan process to ensure the goals of the district’s long-range planning efforts continue to result in a highly regarded school district	Borough Council, Board of Education, Planning Board	Ongoing		
2	(<i>CF-1b</i>) Continue to support Board of Education in their efforts to find cost-effective solutions to appropriately meet projected enrollment	Borough Council, Board of Education	Ongoing		
Borough-owned Facilities					
3	(<i>CF-2b</i>) Complete planning and engineering phase for a new municipal building and begin construction	Administrator, Borough Council	Short- to Medium-term		
4	(<i>CF-2c</i>) Include an updated Stormwater Management Plan as an element in the Borough’s new Master Plan	Administrator, Planning Board	Short-term		
5	(<i>CF-2b</i>) Complete construction of new municipal building that includes Police Division	Borough Council	Short- to Medium-term		
6	(<i>CF-2d</i>) Allow fire division to move facilities to the space occupied by the police department to help expand space for the division.	Borough Council	Medium-term		
Government Communication & Coordination					
7	Continue to improve online communication to borough	Administrator, Clerk, Planner	Short-term		



	residents with website improvements, the use of social media, and consider a regularly scheduled newsletter				
8	Continue to improve online service options for Borough residents	Administrator, Clerk, Planner	Short- to Long-term		
9	Continue to utilize Nixle as a means to give weekly updates and reminders to Borough residents	Borough Mayor	Short-term		
10	Frequently monitor New Jersey law on virtual public meeting attendance	Administrator, Borough Attorney	Ongoing		



PAST ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following community facility issues were identified in the 2002 Master Plan and 2010 Reexamination Report. This element examines what activities and changes have taken place and where those issues have increased or decreased.

CF-1 EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

a. **School Facility Capacity**

The Issue: The 2010 Reexamination Report detailed issues with school facility capacity within the Leonia Public School District. This included projected increases in elementary school aged children, which made for important discussions over reconfiguring the school district. The 2010 Report recommended that Leonia explore the possibility of enlarging the Early Childhood Center (located on the High School Campus) programming to include both pre and kindergarten students. This would allow the elementary school to then serve grades 1 through 5.

What has Changed: In the past decade, enrollment has increased 11.5% (using 2018-2019 school year data). These increases have been particularly felt on the elementary school level as the 2010 Report predicted. The Board of Education completed a \$3.6 million expansion of the Leonia High School building to accommodate additional school enrollment capacity. In recent years, the Board of Education has discussed the possibility of moving 5th grade students into the middle school. As of writing, the Leonia Board of Education is planning to move the 5th grade into the middle school for the 2021-2022 school year to free up capacity at the elementary school. The BOE explored a potential referendum to fund a \$10 to \$15 million for school expansion, but this idea was shelved given the significant decrease in tax revenue from the COVID-19 pandemic. Even prior to the current economic downturn, recent referendums in nearby municipalities were rejected by voters. As a part of a new Master Plan, the Borough should work closely with Board of Education to support long range planning efforts.

b. **Additional School Location**

Community Facilities

Past Issues

- CF-1 Educational Facilities
- CF-2 Public Facilities
- CF-3 Shared Services

New Issues

- CF-4 Government Technology & Communication
- CF-5 Borough School System



The Issue: The 2010 Reexamination Report recognized that since Leonia is essentially fully built out, there doesn't appear to be another suitable location for a new school building without invoking the municipality's power to use eminent domain. Alternatively, additional floors could be constructed to all or part of the existing high school building to accommodate projected increase in students.

What has Changed: The Board of Education explored the possibility of renting St. John the Evangelist Catholic School building from the Archdiocese of Newark to help meet capacity needs and enrollment trends. However, the Board of Education and its consultants rejected this plan on a financial basis, as renovations were required to bring the building up to code and to meet the standards for the state's Department of Education. Additional school locations do not appear possible at this time given the lack of available land, and the Borough should work with the Board of Education to find cost-effective solutions to appropriately meet projected enrollment that does not require the construction of new buildings.

CF-2 PUBLIC FACILITIES

a. Municipal Court

The Issue: The 2010 Reexamination Report recommends that the Borough consider temporarily relocating court proceedings to a larger facility within or adjacent to Leonia.

What has Changed: As of January 2019, the Borough's municipal court has been located in Fort Lee. Plans to relocate the Court back in Leonia will occur upon completion of the new municipal building. The new municipal court will be relocated on the third floor of the newly constructed municipal building. This recommendation is deemed complete.

b. Municipal Building

The Issue: The Borough's facilities are becoming more and more functionally obsolete over time as they age without modernization and are in need of major upgrades and/or construction of new buildings to house various public services. Borough Hall and Borough Annex are two examples of buildings that require a significant overhaul in order to ensure Borough services can be properly housed and provided for to Borough residents. The 2010 Reexamination Report recommended that the Borough choose a site for, design and construct a new



Municipal Administration Complex where municipal offices, boards and the Court can be located. The Borough should also seek to construct a municipal complex that houses all emergency services including Police, Fire and Emergency Medical services.

What has Changed: Efforts are currently underway to address these issues and construct a new building to house all the public services. As of writing the Borough's governing body has decided to construct a new municipal building on the site of the old Ambulance Corps in Wood Park that will house the Police Department and the Municipal Court. The initial plan to build a new municipal complex in Overpeck Park where NJ TRANSIT was planning to build a parking garage as a part of the Northern Branch extension have been scrapped. Until the building is constructed, this item remains relevant and should continue.

c. Stormwater Management

The Issue: The Borough should incorporate the Stormwater Management Plan as an element of the Master Plan, as required by the Municipal Land Use Law.

What has Changed: This recommendation remains relevant. The Borough's updated Master Plan will include a Stormwater Management Plan to be in line with the Municipal Land Use Law.

d. Fire Division

The Issue: An addition to the existing fire department building should be built to provide adequate passageways, proper storage of equipment, gear, files, and vehicles. New exhaust and ventilation systems should be added to the building and all the electric wiring should be replaced.

What has Changed: Based on plans for the municipal building, the fire department would be moved to the old police department corridors, which would help increase the space allotted to the fire department. Until the fire division is able to move into this facility, this item remains relevant and should continue.

CF-3 SHARED SERVICES

a. Facilities Share



The Issue: The Borough should consider all opportunities to coordinate efforts or share facilities with surrounding Municipalities. This should include considering shared service agreements with nearby municipalities.

What has Changed: The topic of shared service agreements (SSAs) has become a more present and contentious discussion in Leonia. The recommendation remains relevant and the Borough should continue to explore potential shared service agreements with nearby municipalities that will provide residents with the same or better service than they currently experience.



NEW ISSUES AND TRENDS

A robust community outreach process uncovered issues and trends in Leonia and should be considered when planning for Leonia's future. Some issues raised through the public outreach process had already been identified in the previous 2002 Master Plan or 2010 Reexamination Report and are discussed in the **Past Issues and Recommendations** section of the reexamination of the Community Facilities element.

CF-4 GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATION

Technology systems are being implemented in a growing number of municipalities across the United States. Beyond social media, digital interactions between municipalities and residents is already widely practiced, whether it be through recycle route alerts or reminders, alerts about road closures, or online bill pay. Some digital applications, for instance, allow for development application submissions, tracking, and public viewing. Other web applications offer online community engagement initiatives for Borough-sponsored projects. Data-driven efforts across civic functions is also gaining popularity. Jersey City's Open Data Portal, for instance, offers a multitude of interactive datasets including zoning, murals map, municipal budget visualization, and more. The public health crisis created by the COVID-19 outbreak has forced many municipalities to adopt technology practices to help continue government functions while abiding by social distancing guidelines. While the crisis has caused many negative circumstances, it has allowed municipalities to rethink how they could use technology in a way that can improve the delivery of public services. The Borough should learn from this experience and upgrade the use of technology in a way that creates a more responsive and transparent delivery of essential services.

The Borough can improve its communication efforts with general awareness of community events and amenities. Residents are not always aware of the all the amenities and activities Leonia has to offer. The Borough does normally communicate with residents through email blasts, social media, the Borough's website and Nixle messenger. Leonia could make notices and information regular, and more accessible while attempting to use these platforms to better engage with residents and the issues they see with the Borough. The Borough's website could also use significant

Community Facilities
Past Issues
CF-1 Educational Facilities
CF-2 Public Facilities
CF-3 Shared Services
New Issues
CF-4 Government Technology & Communication
CF-5 Borough School System



improvement to make it more user friendly, so residents can more easily access needed information.

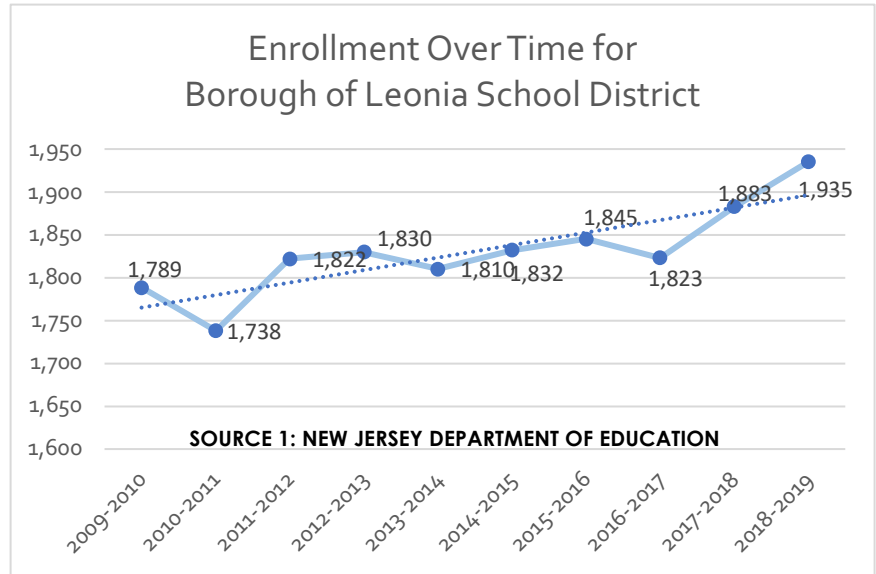
As a result of the Governor's State of Emergency, municipalities across New Jersey, including Leonia, have had to host all public meetings virtually using conference-style platforms such as WebEx or Zoom. In order to allow for virtual public meetings, municipalities must create some format to allow public participation of these meetings. The Borough should continue to monitor the law regarding the use of virtual meetings and continue to implement digital public participation in public meetings if it continues to be deemed lawful.

The public health emergency brought on by the pandemic has made Borough officials better utilize various communication platforms. The Borough Mayor has utilized Nixle messaging to give daily updates with regards to the COVID-19 outbreak. As the outbreak continues to subside, it is recommended that the Borough continue to use this messaging service on a weekly basis to communicate with residents about ongoing events, public services, and other issues such as completing the 2020 Census. While the pandemic has had a significant negative impact on Leonia, it has allowed Borough officials the opportunity to better utilize technology to communicate with residents. This is a positive trend that should be something that the Borough tries to implement further as officials have become more comfortable using these platforms during this time.

CF-5 BOROUGH SCHOOL SYSTEM



The school system in Leonia is one of the Borough's greatest assets. A strength of a school district can help attract families to move to the Borough. This local data reflects a larger statistic, where school-aged children in Leonia (23.5%) are roughly on par with the national



share, represented as approximately a quarter of the population, according to 2018 census data. The school system's reputation of excellent, quality education has put demographic pressures on the school district's facilities. Despite some fluctuations in enrollment over the past decade, the Borough has seen a significant upward trend in enrollment. In the 2018-2019 school year, enrollment was 1,935 students, which represented a 11.5% increase from enrollment in the 2006-2007 school year. The enrollment increase during this time period comes despite declines in enrollment at both the county (-0.63%) and state levels (-1.71%).

Leonia School District has a sending/receiving relationship with the neighboring Borough of Edgewater where the District provides Middle and High School education to Edgewater residents. Edgewater has experienced a population boom over the past 20 years as the population has grown from 7,680 residents in 2000 to 12,184 in the most recent ACS 5-year estimates in 2018 (a 58.6% increase). This growth has far outpaced NJTPA's previous population projections for the community where the organization projected the Borough to not reach its 2018 population levels until the year 2025. This population increase puts increased pressure on the School District's capacity to provide middle and high school services even as Leonia's own population grows, albeit at a much slower pace. The School District continues to maintain one (1) elementary school, one (1) middle school and one (1) high school.



As school enrollment continues to trend upward in the Borough, it is important to maintain adequate facilities and ensure capacity. With a reputation for a high-quality education in Leonia, that reputation should also be reflected in school properties. Despite the recent expansion of the high school, the Board of Education is continuously planning for potential future expansions including an additional expansion of the high school that could occur over the next five years or so. It is critical that the Borough maintains a good working relationship with its Board of Education so that Leonia can continue to attract new residents through its reputation of having an excellent school system while also ensuring future population growth is properly accommodated in school facilities.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT REEXAMINATION



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT RECOMMENDATION PLAN

The Downtown Economic Development Element Recommendation Plan is broken up into two sections. The first is a table summarizing the past issues and recommendations that have reduced or increased based on the discussions identified in the **Past Issues and Recommendations** section of this Element. The second is a comprehensive Downtown Economic Development Recommendation Table that includes recommendations from the 2002 Master Plan and 2010 Reexamination Report that still apply today, as well as new recommendations identified as part of this 2020 Master Plan Reexamination effort.

PART I

Below is a summary of the past issues and recommendations that have reduced or increased based on the discussions identified in the **Past Issues and Recommendations** section of this Element.

Summary Table of Past Issues and Recommendations		
Past Issue or Recommendation (from 2002 Master Plan or 2010 Reexam)	Past Issue or Recommendation (from 2002 Master Plan or 2010 Reexam)	Past Issue or Recommendation (from 2002 Master Plan or 2010 Reexam)
ED-1 Economic Development Focus Area		
a Broad Avenue Commercial District	X	
b Fort Lee Road Gateway	X	
c Grand Avenue	X	
d OB District	X	
ED-2 Central Business District		
a Improvements	X	
b Zoning Change	X	
c Public Transit	X	
ED-3 General Economic Vitality		
a Economic Leakage to Surrounding Munis	X	
b Lack of Commercially Zoned Land	X	
c Northern Branch Extension	X	
d Lot Consolidation	X	
e Economic Incentives	X	



PART II

Below is a comprehensive Downtown Economic Development Recommendation Table that includes recommendations from the 2002 Master Plan and 2010 Reexamination Report that still apply today (indicated with a *ED-1a*, for example), as well as new recommendations identified as part of this 2020 Master Plan Reexamination effort.

DIRECTIONS

“Check off” a completed recommendation and mark the year of completion as a way to measure progress. **Short Term:** complete in 1-2 years; **Mid Term:** complete in 3-5 years; **Long Term:** complete in 10+ years.

Downtown Economic Development Element Recommendation Table				
Recommendation	Implementing Party	Completion Timeframe	Completed	Year Completed
General				
1	(<i>ED-1a</i>) Adopt design standards for new development along Broad Avenue	Planner, Borough Council, Planning Board	Short-term	
2	(<i>ED-1a</i>) Designate the Broad Avenue commercial corridor as an Area in Need of Rehabilitation	Borough Council, Planning Board	Medium-term	
3	(<i>ED-1b</i>) Provide safe and attractive pedestrian and bicycle connectivity from Fort Lee Road to Overpeck Park by creating an environment that encourages walking and bicycling	Borough Engineer	Ongoing	
4	(<i>ED-2a</i>) Work with an economic development consultant to create a plan for the Broad Avenue CBD	Borough Council, Borough Administrator	Medium-term	
5	(<i>ED-2c</i>) Encourage greater use of NJ TRANSIT bus system, especially at locations along Broad Avenue in the CBD	Borough Administrator, NJ TRANSIT	Ongoing	
Commercial Land Supply				
6	(<i>ED-1c</i>) Update zoning code to reflect Area in Need of Redevelopment changes or further changes to commercially zoned areas	Planner, Planning Board, Borough Council	Short-term	
7	Create new zoning for Broad Avenue using a form-based zoning approach while encouraging greater	Planner, Planning Board, Borough Council	Medium-term	



	density and greater heights for existing buildings in the CBD				
8	(ED-3b) Amend the zoning code to encourage increased density in select non-residential areas	Planner, Planning Board, Borough Council	Medium- to Long-term		
Business Development, Retention, & Attraction					
9	Form a business advisory committee to create a strategy towards achieving the goal of creating a more vibrant Broad Avenue	Borough Council, Borough Administrator, Other Partners	Short- to Medium-term		
10	Plan for transit-oriented development around a potential train station should the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail be extended	Planning Board	Long-term		
11	Amend the zoning code to encourage lot consolidation in the Multifamily zone	Planner, Planning Board, Borough Council	Short- to Medium-term		
12	Designate the Willow Tree Road area as an Area in Need of Redevelopment and utilize a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program that will incentivize new development in an area that can support a higher density of uses	Planner, Planning Board, Borough Council	Short-term		



PAST ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following economic development issues were identified in the 2002 Master Plan and 2010 Reexamination Report. This section discusses these issues, examines what activities and changes have taken place, and identifies whether the issues have since been reduced or have an increased need the Borough should address.

ED-1 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOCUS AREAS

a. **Broad Avenue Commercial District**

The Issue: Broad Avenue is the Borough's main commercial corridor and is located between Crescent Avenue and Harold Avenue. The 2002 Master considers the major issues in the area are the lack of adequate parking for existing businesses, making the commercial corridor more aesthetically appealing and more attractive to customers and a greater mix of businesses. Possible techniques for revitalizing the corridor include Special Improvement District designation, the adoption of design standards for new development, or incentives for redevelopment and renovations.

What has Changed: The Broad Avenue Commercial District remains underutilized and unable to attract major investment that would transform it into a true downtown commercial corridor. This policy recommendation remains relevant and shall continue as part of this Master Plan Reexamination.

b. **Fort Lee Road Gateway**

The Issue: Provide safe and attractive pedestrian and bicycle connectivity from Fort Lee Road to Overpeck Park by creating an environment that encourages walking and bicycling.

What has Changed: This policy recommendation remains relevant and shall continue as part of this Master Plan Reexamination. The Borough should consider how creating a network of Complete Streets that encourage walking and bicycling could be utilized as an economic development tool. These measures should be coupled with efforts to revitalize commercial corridors and encourage transit-oriented development.

Economic Development
Past Issues
ED-1 Economic Development Focus Areas
ED-2 Central Business District
ED-3 General Economic Vitality
New Issues & Trends
ED-4 Downtowns as Center of Place
ED-5 Evolution of Retail
ED-6 Non-Traditional Workplace



c. **Grand Avenue**

The Issue: Amend Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map to provide for commercial uses along the west side of Grand Avenue.

What has Changed: The western side of Grand Avenue north of Fort Lee Road is a part of a redevelopment study area to determine whether to designate the area as an Area in Need of Redevelopment. Areas further south of Grand Avenue have also been identified as parts of the Borough that could accommodate a higher intensity of use, especially as it relates to land uses across the border in Palisades Park. Zoning changes should be made that reflect the determination of an Area in Need of Redevelopment and further changes that could include more commercial uses.

d. **Underdevelopment of Commercial District**

The Issue: Commercial districts are underdeveloped being primarily one story with nearby surface parking lots.

What has Changed: Leonia's commercial districts continue to be underdeveloped with little diversity of uses that contribute to a vibrant commercial corridor. This issue remains relevant and should continue as a part of the Master Plan Reexamination. The Borough should refer to the "Downtowns as Centers of Place" section of the report to understand best practices to help revitalize commercial districts.

e. **OB District**

The Issue: Revise the bulk and design standards for the OB District that include architectural and façade standards, building massing standards, parking standards, etc. and include photos that show examples of desirable development

What has Changed: No changes have been made to the regulations of the OB District. This recommendation remains relevant and should continue.

ED-2 CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT (CBD)

a. **CBD Plan**

The Issue: The 2010 Reexamination Report recommends creating and adopting an updated Central Business District (CBD) Plan to help revitalize Leonia's CBD along Broad Avenue.



What has Changed: As of writing, there has been no adoption of an updated Central Business District Plan. The recommendation remains relevant and the Borough should consider working with an economic development consultant to create a plan that will help lead to the revitalization of the corridor.

b. **Zoning Changes**

The Issue: The 2010 Reexamination Report recommended using a form-based zoning approach for Broad Avenue. Additional zone amendments could include greater density and greater heights for existing buildings in the CBD and allowing offices and public uses on upper stories while leaving ground floor stories available for retail and service-oriented uses.

What has Changed: This policy recommendation remains relevant and shall continue as part of this Master Plan Reexamination. Several municipalities in New Jersey have been able to revitalize their downtowns through changes to their zoning code to allow for greater density and heights to create a mix of uses that create a vibrant commercial district. Some of these municipalities have utilized a form-based zoning approach to achieve this greater vibrancy. The Borough should adopt a zoning change to the Broad Avenue Corridor after further review and analysis. In addition to the zoning changes, the Borough should form a business advisory committee made up of public officials and business owners on Broad Street to create a strategy towards achieving the goal of creating a more vibrant Broad Avenue.

c. **Public Transit**

The Issue: The Master Plan calls for encouraging greater use of NJ TRANSIT bus system, especially at locations along Broad Avenue in the CBD.

What has Changed: NJ TRANSIT continues to provide bus service along Broad Avenue with Route 166 that takes Leonia commuters to and from the Port Authority Bus Terminal in Manhattan. In 2017, Bergen County commissioned a study of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) routes throughout the County that included a route that went through Broad Avenue in Leonia. As traffic congestion continues to be an issue in Leonia, the Borough should continue to encourage the use of public transit and work with the County to implement a BRT route that travels along Broad Avenue. This issue remains relevant and should continue.



ED-3 GENERAL ECONOMIC VITALITY

a. **Economic Leakage to Surrounding Municipalities**

The Issue: Workforce and population projections indicated that growth in the workforce and the population in Leonia will lag when compared to surrounding communities, the county and the state.

What has Changed: The Borough continues to have demographic trends and projections that show Leonia lagging behind several surrounding communities. As the population of the Borough continues to age and the average household size decreases, it is critical that Leonia increase its number of residential units to increase its workforce population. This issue has become greater in recent years as there has been increasing development in surrounding municipalities.

b. **Lack of Commercially Zoned Land**

The Issue: Leonia has very little land that is commercially zoned making Leonia's zoning a barrier to attract businesses. As a result, the Borough has fewer businesses compared to neighboring municipalities causing a higher tax burden on residents and a consumption leakage to surrounding communities.

What has Changed: This issue remains relevant as there has been little rezoning in the Borough since the 2010 Reexamination Report that would allow for a greater percentage of land in Leonia that could be utilized for commercial and business uses. Additionally, much of the commercially zone land is underutilized as the commercial corridors consist of mainly one-story buildings that do not allow for a greater mix of uses. The Borough should consider significant changes to its zoning code to encourage increased non-residential density in certain areas.

c. **Northern Branch Extension**

The Issue: Leonia should maximize the economic development opportunities afforded by the proposed Northern Branch rail station by planning for a transit-oriented development (TOD) at the same time as it plans for the development of the proposed station.



What has Changed: As of writing, the Northern Branch Extension project is still in the development stage with no timeline for when the line would be constructed. The Borough should still be proactive in planning for transit-oriented development to take advantage of the added connectivity should the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail be extended. Several communities in Hudson County have seen significant growth around these light rail stations. Because of this trend, this recommendation remains relevant for the Borough.

d. **Lot Consolidation**

The Issue: Amend Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map to provide for commercial uses along the west side of Grand Avenue and establish new zoning requirements that encourage lot consolidation.

What has Changed: Lot consolidation remains a relevant issue in the Borough. Since the 2010 Reexamination Report, there have been several applications to build high-density multifamily units in the Multifamily Zone along the west side of Grand Avenue. The main concern regarding this trend is the over-development of the lots that cannot support the proposed density. In order to attract more development in this area, the Borough will need to amend the zoning code to encourage lot consolidation in this area.

e. **Economic Incentives**

The Issue: The Borough should offer incentives for desirable types of development especially along the west side of Grand Avenue.

What has Changed: Since the 2010 Reexamination Report, the Borough has begun a redevelopment study for the area west of Grand Avenue and north of Fort Lee Road. The Borough should consider designating the area as an Area in Need of Redevelopment and utilize a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program that will incentivize new development in an area that can support a higher density of uses.



NEW ISSUES AND TRENDS

A robust community outreach process uncovered several economic development issues and trends forming in Leonia today. These new issues and trends are discussed further below. Previous issues already identified in the 2002 Master Plan or 2010 Reexamination Report are discussed in the **Past Issues and Recommendations** section of this Element.

ED-4 DOWNTOWNS AS CENTERS OF PLACE

Downtowns have traditionally offered residents places to shop, places to worship, and opportunities to civically engage. While downtowns thrived as places to congregate, the rapid suburban growth of the 1950s not only brought a boom of single-family residences, but with it strip mall retail and big box stores. Downtowns during this time became neglected and deteriorated over time. Today, downtowns are back and thriving once again, as centers of place, offering a variety of amenities, activities and conveniences for all ages. Downtowns have a special place in the minds of Americans. Community events such as Memorial Day and Fourth of July parades, winter holiday lighting events, and Thanksgiving parades that typically run along a city or town’s Main Street.

Leonía’s downtown, which encompasses several blocks along Broad Avenue, has not been able to take advantage of this trend happening in the nation. The Broad Avenue district fails to attract enough residents and visitors alike to the downtown as it lacks the types of businesses and attractive streetscape that some of the more successful downtowns in New Jersey have. As a result, potential businesses are looking at other nearby downtowns that have a more active street life as a place they look to invest their capital.

Economic Development

Past Issues

- ED-1 Economic Development Focus Areas
- ED-2 Central Business District
- ED-3 General Economic Vitality

New Issues & Trends

- ED-4 Downtowns as Center of Place
- ED-5 Evolution of Retail
- ED-6 Non-Traditional Workplace



ED-5 EVOLUTION OF RETAIL

With a changing population both on the national and local level comes changed shopping preferences. The new wave of consumers today are less inclined to buy consumer goods than consumer experiences. The Millennial and iGen are not buying as much goods as their Baby Boomer counterparts, in part due to these “Millennial Buyer” preferences and in part due to financial considerations, where Millennials have less disposable income today when compared to Baby Boomers at the same age. Compounding these buyer preferences and limited buying power is the fact that there will be less consumers in the future than today, as the US Census Bureau projects that by 2035 older adults aged over 65 will outnumber children. These older adults are past their peak spending years (average age 42) and will spend less in the marketplace as they age. Retailers are beginning to feel these affects as national retailers are closing their doors from increased competition amongst a smaller and less rich consumer base.

In addition, even people who do purchase consumer goods, the shift is towards “e-commerce” and away from traditional brick and mortar retail stores. Over the past several years, ecommerce spending has grown by about 15% each year, and now represents about 14% of total retail sales in the United States. Of that online spending (\$517.36 billion), 40% is attributed to Amazon. While the 14% figure is relatively small today, more than half of all retail sales growth is online. So not only are small businesses needing to reflect changing consumer spending patterns, larger traditional retailers (Walmart and Target as “category killers”), they must also differentiate themselves to the consumer who has the power to buy anything from anywhere from their home or smartphone.

In addition to these long-term shifts that are impacting local retail, the current COVID-19 pandemic threatens to further exacerbate this shift to online and big box retailers. The need to socially distance and maintain sanitized spaces is disadvantaging small businesses that operate on much smaller margins compared to national and multinational chain stores. An aspect of local businesses that had been thriving like restaurants that help to create a unique experience compared to the sterile everyday chain store is also under significant pressure to survive given the needed health guidelines to protect residents from contracting the virus. It is unclear at this point to definitively predict what the pandemic's implications are for the future of downtowns like Leonia, but the short-term impacts are likely to be profound even if treatments and vaccines are widely available and distributed before the end of



2020. As a way to help businesses and restaurants on Broad Avenue in the short-term, the Borough should try experimenting with innovative tactics such as opening up the street to outdoor seating and pedestrians to help restaurants comply with regulations around physical distancing. Given the uncertainty, it is imperative that Leonia begin to plan for a post-pandemic future that involves a vibrant and healthy downtown that residents and visitors alike feel comfortable visiting.

With the increased competition from online and big box retailers, property owners and landowners now need to create themed entertainment marketplaces, providing customers an experience beyond quality price and product variety. In addition to creating these unique experiences inside their stores, retailers are now looking for asset-rich places to locate, where customers are more inclined to wander and shop longer. Municipalities play a large part in attracting retailers and consumers by providing these outdoor experiences. Leonia has many rich assets, particularly its cultural assets and geographic location, but the Borough has yet to fully take advantage of these assets to create an economically vibrant downtown and neighborhood commercial district. As a part of the new Master Plan, the Borough will need to do an in-depth economic development analysis that highlights its needs and creates an implementable strategy that will lead to a more economically diverse and vibrant Leonia. This work may also require the assistance of an economic development consultant that can work with the Borough and land use planner to develop a cohesive strategy that is in line with the rest of the Master Plan's goals.

ED-6 NON-TRADITIONAL WORKPLACE

Traditional centralized workplaces are not as common today as they were in the age of suburban office parks of the 1980s and 1990s. Instead, companies are increasingly using freelancers or contractors to complete tasks, a new "gig economy", where these temporary employees do not need to go to a centralized office location to complete their work. Remote work, also referred to as telecommuting or teleconferencing, for permanent employees is also on the rise, breaking traditional proximity requirements. The future workplace no longer looks like a cubicle, but rather a home office, a café, or co-workspace. Co-workspaces are shared work environments for employees not employed by the same organization, but who work independently and share similar values, and offers solutions for work from home distractions and isolation. Even traditional workplaces are providing their employees with alternate options to their desks such as standing desks, work bars or



cafes built into traditional work environments. Increasingly, these spaces are becoming more popular, changing the way we have traditionally thought of workplace environments.

An increasing disruption to the traditional workplace is the amount of workers who work from home. Nationally, the percentage of workers who work from home has increased from 4.1% in 2010 to 4.9% in 2018. In Leonia, approximately 5.6% of workers work from home in 2018 compared to 6.8% in 2010. This share in 2018 is slightly higher compared to both the County's (4.7%) and State's (4.4%) share of workers who work from home. While not reflected in these statistics, the current Covid-19 pandemic has required many people who had never worked remotely on a regular basis to do so. Companies have been discussing allowing more of their employees to work from home even after the pandemic subsides. It is important that Leonia track the trending workplace policies as it plans to adapt to this changing environment.

LOOKING AHEAD

The future of Leonia relies on attracting residents, businesses, and visitors to build a sustainable economic base. Leonia must consider the aforementioned trends, which are reflective of changing lifestyle preferences, in order to attract future residents', businesses', and visitors' desires and needs while weighing these trends against existing local preferences.



Page Intentionally Left Blank



SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENT REEXAMINATION



SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENT RECOMMENDATION PLAN

The Sustainability Element Recommendation Plan is broken up into two sections. The first is a table summarizing the past issues and recommendations that have reduced or increased based on the discussions identified in the **Past Issues and Recommendations** section of this Element. The second is a comprehensive Housing Recommendation Table that includes recommendations from the 2013 Sustainability Plan that still apply today, as well as new recommendations identified as part of this 2020 Master Plan Reexamination effort.

PART I

Below is a summary of the past issues and recommendations that have reduced or increased based on the discussions identified in the **Past Issues and Recommendations** section of this Element.

Summary Table of Past Issues and Recommendations			
Past Issue or Recommendation (from 2013 Sustainability Plan)		Increased or Maintained and Should Continue	Decreased or Resolved
S-1 Water Quality and Stormwater Management			
a	Stormwater Management Performance Standards	X	
b	LID Techniques along Roadways	X	
S-2 Water Consumption			
a	Water Use Standards	X	
b	Rainwater Collection	X	
S-3 Recycling			
a	Education of Residents		X
b	Public Recycling Containers		X
c	Plastic Bags		X
d	Recycle Ordinance		X
S-4 Energy			
a	LEED Building Standards	X	
b	Clean Energy Program Community Partner		X
c	Solar Panels		X
d	Energy Efficient Buildings	X	
e	Energy Audit	X	
f	Solar Access Preservation	X	
g	ENERGY STAR for Small Businesses	X	
S-6 Green Space			
a	Parks and Community Centers	X	
b	Park Connections	X	
c	Pedestrian Plaza	X	
d	Open Space & Recreation Master Plan	X	
S-7 Pervious Material and Site Design			
a	Pervious Surface	X	
b	Permeable Surfaces	X	
S-8 Transportation			



a	“Complete Streets”	X	
b	Northern Branch Corridor	X	
c	Promotion of Public Transportation	X	
d	Increase Walkability through Mixed-Use Development	X	
e	Transportation Demand Management	X	
f	Fuel Efficiency & Alternative Fuel Vehicles	X	
g	Alternative Fuels	X	
h	Efficient Maintenance of Vehicles	X	
i	Electric Charging Stations	X	
j	Pedestrian-Oriented Development	X	
k	Safe Routes to School		X
l	Pedestrian Master Plan	X	
m	Bicycling	X	
S-9 Tree Cover			
a	Tree Ordinance		X
b	Tree Inventory	X	



PART II

Below is a comprehensive Sustainability Recommendation Table that includes recommendations from the 2010 Reexamination Report that still apply today (indicated with a *S-1a*, for example), as well as new recommendations identified as part of this 2020 Master Plan Reexamination effort.

DIRECTIONS

“Check off” a completed recommendation and mark the year of completion as a way to measure progress. **Short Term:** complete in 1-2 years; **Mid Term:** complete in 3-5 years; **Long Term:** complete in 10+ years.

Recycling & Sustainability Element Recommendation Table					
Recommendation		Implementing Party	Completion Timeframe	Completed	Year Completed
General					
1	Create a new Sustainability Element	Planner, Environmental Commission	Short		
2	(S-9b) Create a Community Forestry Management Plan	Planner, Shade Tree Commission	Medium		
Borough Code					
5	(S-1a) Update applicable design and performance standards for stormwater management measures as presented in N.J.A.C. 7:8, and continue to monitor updates to this law	Planner, Borough Engineer, Borough Council	Short		
6	Amend the code to conform to recent changes to the MLUL for performance and maintenance guarantees	Planner, Borough Council	Short		
7	Consider codifying green building incentives	Planner, Borough Council	Short		
8	(S-2a) Establish building water use standards and flow rates for various types of uses	Planner, Planning Board, Borough Council	Short to Medium		
9	(S-2b) Permit rainwater collection tanks, cisterns and rain barrels to be located within the required setbacks	Planning Board, Borough Council	Short		



10	(S-3d) Require all large construction and renovation projects to submit Recycling and Reuse Plans that outline how the developer will meet Borough requirements for reducing, reusing or recycling waste generated	Planning Board, Borough Council	Short		
11	(S-4a) Require new residential buildings, or substantial rehabilitations, to follow new Green Building codes and align to green building best practices	Planning Board, Borough Council	Short to Medium		
12	(S-4f) Adopt a Solar Access Preservation ordinance	Planning Board, Borough Council	Medium to Long		
13	(S-7a-b) The Borough should implement sustainable design standards, such as requiring permeable surfaces to be used where feasible, into the Borough code	Environmental Commission, Planning Board, Borough Council	Medium to Long		
Campaigns, Programs, and Capital Improvements					
14	(S-1b) Use stormwater management LID techniques along roadways and in landscaping	Borough Engineer, Environmental Commission	Ongoing		
15	(S-1a) Encourage and use structural stormwater systems such as drywells, and other systems such as rain gardens	Borough Engineer, Planning Board, Planning Director	Short		
17	(S-4g) Encourage business owners in Leonia to adopt ENERGY STAR energy efficiency standards	Environmental Commission, Borough Administrator	Ongoing		
18	(S-4d) Construct new municipal buildings using the most energy efficient systems feasibly possible	Borough Council	Short to Medium		
19	Identify location for a Level 2 Vehicle Charger and seek funding to offset costs of acquisition and installation	Planner, Environmental Commission	Short		



21	(S-8a) Continue to implement actions that further the adopted complete streets program and seek funding for those actions where available	Planner, Public Works, Borough Engineer	Short to Long		
22	(S-8c) Continue to promote public transportation by Borough residents	Planner, NJ TRANSIT	Ongoing		
23	(S-9g) Incorporate bicycle routes suggested by the Bicycle Routes Plan and develop a more comprehensive bicycle network	Planner, Borough Council	Medium to Long		
Education					
24	Continue to update the Sustainability Page on the Borough’s website to educate residents on sustainability topics through brochures, facts, and best practices	Planner, Borough Administrator	Ongoing		
25	(S-6d) Add to Sustainability page on municipal website to educate residents about incentives for purchasing electric vehicles.	Borough Administrator	Short		



PAST ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following sustainability issues were identified in the 2013 Sustainability Plan. The following examines what activities and changes have taken place and where those issues have increased or decreased.

S-1 WATER QUALITY AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

a. **Stormwater Management Performance Standards**

The Issue: The Borough should require stormwater management Low Impact Development (LID) strategies such as bioretention, rain gardens, filter strips, swales, vegetated green roofs, or open space.

What has Changed: On October 25, 2019, NJDEP adopted new stormwater rules (N.J.A.C. 7:8) to replace the current requirement that major developments incorporate nonstructural stormwater management strategies to the “maximum extent possible” to meet groundwater recharge standards, stormwater runoff quantity standards and stormwater runoff quality standards, with a requirement that green infrastructure be utilized to meet these same standards. The new rules will go into effect on March 2, 2021. In essence, the new rules will require a more objective review standard for stormwater management than the more subjective “maximum extent possible” by creating a mathematically-based set of standards for projects to comply to with regards to stormwater design. The adopted changes also include changes to the infiltration of captured stormwater. The infiltration through best management practices can now be included in engineering calculations. The Borough will need to adopt a new model ordinance to comply with these new stormwater rules by the time enforcement of the new rules begins on March 2, 2021.

Additionally, on January 15, 2018, the Municipal Land Use Law was amended to modify the requirements for performance and maintenance guarantees for developers. The amended law limited maintenance guarantees for improvements that are subject of the performance guarantee and are being released, and for certain private stormwater management improvements. The Borough should be aware of these changes in the law and update the local zoning ordinance to be in compliance.

Sustainability

Past Issues

S-1 Water Quality and Stormwater Management

S-2 Water Consumption

S-3 Recycling

S-4 Energy

S-5 Green Space

S-6 Pervious Material and Site Design

S-7 Transportation

S-8 Tree Cover

New Issues

S-9 New Sustainability Element



No new regulations have been put in place for stormwater improvements. This issue remains relevant and has increased and should continue.

b. **LID Techniques along Roadways**

The Issue: Use stormwater management Low Impact Development (LID) techniques including the installation of curb planters, rain gardens, swales, and xeriscaping along roadways and in landscaping. Provide the contact information for local horticulturists, plant nurseries and landscape architects on the local green contractor listing.

What has Changed: The Borough has not yet implemented Low Impact Development techniques along roadways or in landscaping. This remains a relevant issue and should continue

S-2 WATER CONSUMPTION

a. **Water Use Standards**

The Issue: Establish building water use standards (potable and non-potable) and flow rates for various types of uses; evaluate compliance with WaterSense criteria.

What has Changed: The Borough has taken no action to establish building water use standards and flow rates for various types of uses. This recommendation remains relevant. The Borough should promote products that achieve the WaterSense label for water efficiency and performance.

b. **Rainwater Collection**

The Issue: Permit rainwater collection tanks, cisterns and rain barrels to be located within the required setbacks.

What has Changed: No changes have been made to the Borough Code to permit rainwater collection barrels or tanks. This recommendation remains relevant.

S-3 RECYCLING

a. **Outdoor Recreation Facilities**

The Issue: Prepare an easy-to-understand Trash and Recycling Guide that can fit on a magnet or clipped to a home trash can. Prepare the guide as part of an effective waste handling marketing plan. Mail the magnet to every Leonia residence.



What has Changed: The Borough has a recycling flyer that is located on the Borough's website under the Environmental Commission's section. There is also the website LeoniaRecycles.org that gives detailed recycling solutions for various items that residents may be looking to recycle.

In January 2018, the State of New Jersey licensed with Recycle Coach to centralize recycling information for municipalities and counties in an app for smart devices and computers. The app allows users to input their address to access information such as when to put recyclables and solid waste out for pick-up including regular and holiday collection schedules. It includes articles about becoming better recyclers, a section to ask questions about recycling, quizzes, educational podcasts, and the ability to receive specific communication from the borough or county.

The Borough uses the app to inform residents about collection requirements, to send out notifications, give residents personalized character, among other services. Between the Recycle Coach app and the Leoniarecycles.org website, the Borough makes significant efforts to educate residents about recycling. This issue is deemed complete and no further action is required.

b. **Public Recycling Containers**

The Issue: Evaluate where additional recycling containers in public places are needed. Provide facts about recycling and trash production on the containers to educate consumers.

What has Changed: The Borough has recycling containers in all public parks, schools and the Municipal Complex. No further action is required.

c. **Plastic Bags**

The Issue: Enable DPW to collect plastic bags. As of the 2013 Sustainability Plan, DPW was not accepting plastic bags. It is likely that the bags were ending up in the waste stream if residents did not return them to grocery stores.

What has Changed: The Borough does not allow for plastic bags to be collected as a part of the recycling collection done by DPW. However, residents can bring their plastic bags to collection bins located at CVS, Borough Hall, the Library and Recreation Center. On February 3, 2020, Leonia Borough Council passed Ordinance No. 2020-03 which prohibited the



use of single-use plastic bags in the Borough that went into effect on June 1, 2020. Given these accommodations, this recommendation is deemed complete and no further action needs to be taken.

d. **Recycle Ordinance**

The Issue: Amend the Borough's Site Plan and Subdivision ordinances to require all large construction and renovation projects (i.e. over \$50,000) to submit Recycling and Reuse Plan that outlines how the developer will meet Borough requirements for reducing, reusing or recycling waste generated. Develop a model Recycling and Reuse Plan.

What has Changed: As of writing, the Borough's ordinance requires any subdivision or site plan that requires planning board approval should include an outdoor area for recycling. This issue is deemed complete and no further action is required.

S-4 ENERGY

a. **LEED Building Standards**

The Issue: The Borough should adopt an Ordinance that requires new residential buildings, or substantial rehabilitations, to follow new Green Building codes and be Energy Star compliant or align to USGBC or other green building codes and techniques.

What has changed: As of writing, no changes have been made to the ordinance with regards to a green building codes. This recommendation remains relevant and should continue.

b. **Clean Energy Program Community Partner**

The Issue: The Borough should increase participation in the New Jersey Clean Energy Program.

What has Changed: The New Jersey Clean Energy Program launched its Community Partner initiative in 2009 but is no longer active. This item is no longer relevant.

c. **Solar Panels**

The Issue: Leonia should increase the use of solar energy and other forms of alternative energy in the Borough.

What has Changed: Borough Council passed Ordinance No. 2017-22 that regulated the use of roof mounted solar panels. This ordinance was passed to promote the use of solar energy while



standardizing the requirements for roof mounted solar panels. The Borough's school district is a municipal leader in the use of solar panels as all three of the school buildings in Leonia have solar panels mounted on their roofs. While the Borough does not have roof mounted solar panels on its municipal buildings, the Borough should utilize solar energy as a part of a planned new municipal complex. This recommendation remains relevant and should continue.

d. **Energy Efficient Building**

The Issue: Conduct energy audits of all public facilities and set site-specific goals and establish a government sector energy efficiency task force.

What has Changed: The NJ Energy SmartStart Buildings Program gives applicants the opportunity to improve energy efficiency of their retrofit building project or new construction by installing or upgrading equipment for energy efficiency (i.e. heating and cooling systems, water heating, lighting and controls, motors and variable frequency drives, and other customized pieces) and also receive financial incentives. Incentives are doubled for buildings operated by a local government or K-12 public school. The Borough does not participate in this program but is also planning to construct a new municipal complex. This new construction should be installed using the most energy efficient systems as feasibly possible. This recommendation remains relevant and should continue.

e. **Energy Audit**

The Issue: Through the New Jersey Clean Power Choice Program (NJCEP), conduct an energy audit of the municipal building and other public buildings.

What has Changed: The Borough has not completed an energy audit of the municipal building and other public buildings since the 2013 Sustainability Plan. Since energy audits are a moment in time, continued monitoring of energy usage is vital in measure progress towards a reduction in energy consumption. Therefore, this issue remains relevant and should continue.

The Borough should consider applying for NJCEP's Local Government Energy Audit, which is subsidized 100% of the cost of the audit, up to an incentive cap. The audit includes an inventory of all energy-consuming equipment, comprehensive utility bill analysis, facility benchmarking, and feasibility of solar and combined heat and power. When the audit is complete, the program manager provides a list of recommended, cost-



justified measures and facility upgrades that will help reduce operating expenses.

f. **Solar Access Preservation**

The Issue: Adopt a Solar Access Preservation ordinance that protects building owners who install photovoltaic energy systems from a neighboring building that could block sunlight from reaching the system.

What has Changed: While the Borough did adopt an ordinance to regulate roof mounted solar panels, the ordinance did not address protecting building owners with roof mounted solar panels from a neighboring building that could block sunlight from reaching the panels. The State of New Jersey in 2013 revised Statute §46:3-25 to give residents the option to negotiate solar easements with their neighbors to guarantee their solar panels get adequate exposure to light. This issue remains relevant and should continue.

g. **ENERGY STAR for Small Businesses**

The Issue: Assist Leonia's businesses in signing up for ENERGY STAR for Small Business and NJDEP Sustainable Business registry.

What has Changed: As of writing, no action has been taken on this recommendation. The Borough should work to encourage businesses in Leonia to adopt ENERGY STAR energy efficiency standards.

S-5 GREEN SPACE

a. **Parks and Community Centers**

The Issue: Locate parks, community facilities and shopping nodes near underserved residential areas.

What has Changed: Little to no action has been done for this recommendation since the 2013 Sustainability Plan. The Borough should continue to find ways to expand parks and community facilities in areas of the Borough underserved by these types of public space.

b. **Park Connections**

The Issue: Create connections between walking paths, such as between the Highwood Hills Natural Area and Overpeck Park walking path. Work with Fort Lee Borough to connect to Palisades Park.



What has Changed: The Borough's 2019 Bike Routes Plan detailed routes that would connect Overpeck Park to the George Washington Bridge. The Borough should implement some of the recommendations from this plan and add on to this plan to connect the route to Palisades Park.

c. **Pedestrian Plaza**

The Issue: Look at establishing a pedestrian plaza in the Broad Avenue downtown district (i.e. at Beachwood and Broad Ave or Magnolia and Broad Avenue). Provide benches, outdoor eating tables, street trees, and public art.

What has Changed: No actions have been taken towards creating a pedestrian plaza in the Broad Avenue downtown district. There have been public art installations through Sculpture for Leonia, a non-profit organization that works to bring public art to Leonia. The Borough could begin working towards a permanent pedestrian plaza by installing a pilot project that could create greater public space in the Broad Avenue downtown district.

d. **Open Space and Recreation Master Plan**

The Issue: Adopt an Open Space and Recreation Master Plan (OSRP) for the Borough that inventories all existing parks, recreation and natural resources and creates a plan for future endeavors (acquisitions, maintenance, park programming, etc.).

What has Changed: There has been no Open Space and Recreation Master Plan that the Borough has adopted. This recommendation remains relevant.

S-6 PERVIOUS MATERIAL AND SITE DESIGN

a. **Pervious Surface**

The Issue: Re-evaluate the maximum pervious surface percentage requirements for each Zone District.

What has Changed: As of writing, the Borough is currently considering Ordinance No. 2020-06 to provide a definition of building coverage, lot coverage and height. In addition, revisions to the Zoning Code at 290-9C, the rear yard criteria for buildings on a lot extended from street to street; and corner lots shall meet the front yard setback on each street, with one side and a rear; 290-8E, minimum lot area frontage and 290—F, to decrease the amount of allowable lot coverage from 65% to



55% on residential lots with a provision that any undersized lot less than 6,000sqft, with a detached garage, shall be credited 50% of the driveway coverage from the front of the structure to the garage. The Borough will monitor variances very year to determine if the coverage limits are creating unnecessary variances on existing homes.

b. **Permeable Surfaces**

The Issue: Require permeable surfaces (i.e., porous pavement, permeable pavers) to be used where feasible. Provide guidance documents and standards for the proper site preparation, construction and maintenance.

What has Changed: No ordinances have been adopted to require permeable surfaces. This recommendation remains relevant.

S-7 TRANSPORTATION

a. **“Complete Streets”**

The Issue: Increase walking, bicycling and use of public transportation as a mode of transportation through instituting Complete Streets policy.

What has Changed: The Borough adopted a Complete Streets policy on July 9, 2018 through Resolution 2018-177. Leonia applied and received assistance from the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) and the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center through NJTPA's Complete Streets Technical Assistance program to develop a bicycle route plan to connect Overpeck Park to the George Washington Bridge. The Borough should continue to pursue and implement a bicycle network through Leonia.

b. **Northern Branch Corridor**

The Issue: Develop mixed-use opportunities near the proposed commuter rail station if the Northern Branch Light Rail is advanced.

What has Changed: As of writing, the Northern Branch Extension project is still in the development stage with no timeline for when the line would be constructed. The Borough should still be proactive in planning for transit-oriented development to take



advantage of the added connectivity should the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail be extended. Several communities in Hudson County have seen significant growth around these light rail stations. These communities have showed how transit-oriented development can help to create successful mixed-use developments that allow residents to live and shop or eat without having to take a trip in a vehicle. This type of development will help to decrease the amount of vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Because of this trend, this recommendation remains relevant for the Borough.

c. **Promotion of Public Transportation**

The Issue: Promote the use of public transportation by Borough residents.

What has Changed: According to the American Communities Survey five-year estimate for 2018, 17.7% of Leonia commuters took public transportation to work. This represents a slight decrease from the 2010 Census when 21.2% of Leonia commuters took public transportation to work. This data indicates that public transportation has become a less popular means of transportation in the Borough, which is likely increasing traffic congestion in Leonia. The Borough should explore ways to provide a reliable and convenient micro-transit service, reliable train and bus, and safe walking and biking routes.

d. **Increase Walkability through Mixed-Use Development**

The Issue: Promote mixed-use development along existing Broad Ave and Fort Lee Road commercial areas that encourages people to walk between destinations, rather than drive.

What has Changed: Since the 2013 Sustainability Plan, the Borough has been exploring an Area in Need of Redevelopment designation for this area. If an Area in Need of Redevelopment is designated, any subsequent Redevelopment Plan should encourage mixed-use development for this area of Leonia, which will increase walkability of the Borough. This recommendation remains relevant and should continue.

e. **Transportation Demand Management**

The Issue: The 2013 Sustainability Plan called for improving parking in Leonia through the promotion of Transportation Demand Management (TDM).



What has Changed: Since the 2013 Sustainability Plan, ride-hailing services and other micro-transit systems have proliferated greatly. TDM policies work to incorporate many forms of micro-transit like ride-hailing services such as Lyft or Uber, bike shares such as the CitiBike program, or bus/jitney systems like Boxcar and EZ Ride/Meadowlink. Also known as demand responsive transit, micro-transit are transportation systems that match the demand for a trip with the ability to supply a trip. They are typically provided for by private transit operators and can supplement or fill in gaps in coverage, service capabilities, and convenience within the public transportation system. Micro-transit can be further expanded to fill “last mile” gaps of the public transit system, as local jitney services or shuttles from new developments to reduce parking demand around the Downtown and further encourage transit usage. Leoniea should review what other municipalities have done to solve increased connectivity without the need for additional parking.

f. **Fuel Efficient and Alternative Fuel Vehicles**

The Issue: Require municipal fleet vehicles to reach specific fuel efficiency standards and encourage residents and businesses to purchase fuel efficient vehicles and alternative fuel vehicles.

What has Changed: This remains a valid recommendation and should continue.

g. **Alternative Fuels**

The Issue: Require Borough vehicles to be alternative fuel or flex-fuel vehicles.

What has Changed: No action has been taken to this recommendation. The Borough should look towards using fuel efficient or alternative fuel vehicles when possible.

h. **Efficient Maintenance of Vehicles**

The Issue: Encourage residents to purchase fuel efficient vehicles.

What has Changed: The Borough should post on its p its Municipal Sustainability Page brochures, initiatives, and educational materials with regards to incentives around purchasing electric vehicles and the positive impact it has on the environment.

i. **Electric Charging Stations**



The Issue: Study providing electric charging stations in municipal parking lots and encourage local businesses to install them conveniently in their lots.

What has Changed: On January 17, 2020, the State adopted electric vehicle (EV) incentive legislation, which set out significant goals to expand the use of plug-in EVs. The measure includes adding four hundred (400) public fast charging stations at 200 locations along major roadways and throughout New Jersey municipalities by 2025. The Borough could support greater use of electric vehicles by streamlining charging station permitting and inspection processes, mandating or incentivizing charging station installation at new commercial buildings and multi-unit dwellings.

The key to the State effectively implementing its goal will be to work with municipalities for installing strategically located recharging and refueling stations to support the vehicles. The most likely candidates for needing and being able to support AFV infrastructure investments include Multi-Family Residential Use, Retail Business Use, Service and Industry Use, and Education Use. The Borough should pass an ordinance requiring EV chargers be installed in all new multi-family construction and possibly new non-residential construction of a certain size. Current zoning and building codes should also be reviewed and amended to accommodate definitions for AFV fueling and Plug-in Electric Vehicle (PEV) charging infrastructure, permitting PEV charging as an accessory use, introducing AFV signage, amending parking codes to include restrictions and enforcement policies for municipally-controlled PEV charging stations, and streamlining permitting and inspection processes.

The Borough currently has two EV Level 2 charging ports in the municipal parking lot at 1 Borough Place. The Borough should study additional areas that could provide electric charging stations as the adoption of electric vehicles become more widespread. This recommendation remains relevant and should continue.

j. **Pedestrian-Oriented Development**

The Issue: Prepare a redevelopment investigation and draft a redevelopment plan that requires compact, pedestrian-oriented development for the commercial section of Fort Lee Road. Require pedestrian and bicycle connections to the Broad Avenue shopping district and Overpeck Park.



What has Changed: An Area in Need of Redevelopment study is currently underway for the area. A redevelopment designation could allow for greater intensity uses. In addition to the increased intensity, the plan should incorporate infrastructure improvements that improve the streetscape to give Leonia residents safe connection to both Broad Avenue and Overpeck Park.

k. **Safe Routes to School**

The Issue: Undertake a Safe Routes to School Program. Students walking to and from school will alleviate traffic generated by school drop-off and will provide students and parents with daily exercise.

What has Changed: The Borough and its schools including Leonia Middle School and the Anne C Scott Elementary School have been recognized by Safe Routes to School New Jersey in 2018 and 2019 for their Safe Routes to School program. This issue is deemed complete and no further action is needed.

l. **Pedestrian Master Plan**

The Issue: Develop a Borough-wide Pedestrian Master Plan that encompasses and builds on the Walkability Audits. The Plan makes recommendations for streetscape improvements, amenities and infrastructure in specific locations to improve the pedestrian experience and overall safety. It assesses gaps in the pedestrian network and what is needed to solve them.

What has Changed: The Borough has not developed a Pedestrian Master Plan. As a part of the Circulation Element of the Master Plan, the Borough should focus on pedestrian mobility and safety to improve the safety and experience of pedestrians in Leonia.

m. **Bicycling**

The Issue: Develop a Borough-wide bicycle map that shows commuter and recreational routes and clearly indicates lower and higher traffic streets.

What has Changed: In 2019, the Voorhees Transportation Center developed a Bicycle Routes Plan for the Borough to connect Overpeck Park to the George Washington Bridge. These plans would require working with surrounding municipalities to



complete. The Borough should incorporate the routes suggested by the Bicycle Routes Plan and develop a more comprehensive bicycle network.

S-8 TREE COVER

a. Tree Ordinance

The Issue: The 2013 Sustainability Plan recommended that the Borough update the Tree Ordinance to determine if changes are needed to tree replacement requirements and tree removal permit process. The Plan also recommended updating the Tree Ordinance to include a list of trees which are native, non-invasive and have high carbon sequestration rates.

What has Changed: On January 21, 2020, Borough Council passed Ordinance No. 2020-05, which amended Chapter 275 "Trees" of the Borough's Code. Effective as of April 1, 2020, the Borough will require a permit and payment of Tree Replacement Fee for trees on private property that have a Diameter of Breast Height, DBH, of eight (8) inches or greater with certain exceptions. The Tree Replacement Fee goes to the Leonia Shade Tree Trust Fund that is used by the Shade Tree Commission toward the cost of purchasing, planting, maintaining and protecting trees within the Borough. This recommendation is deemed complete and no further action is needed.

b. Tree Inventory

The Issue: Prepare a tree inventory using GIS so that tree information can be attributed to a specific location. Set canopy goals and track year-over-year canopy coverage, also using GIS.

What has Changed: As of writing, there has been no inventory taken that tracks the canopy coverage in Leonia nor GIS mapping showing trees at specific locations. Given the current scenario where many of the street trees in Leonia are very old and are dying, the Borough should conduct a tree survey to gain a better picture of the health of its trees and develop a Community Forestry Management Plan that will help ensure a healthy ecosystem for future generations in Leonia.



NEW ISSUES AND TRENDS

A robust community outreach process uncovered issues and trends forming in Leonia today and should be considered when planning for Leonia’s future. Some issues raised through the public outreach process had already been identified in the previous 2013 Sustainability Plan and are not discussed here. Those items are discussed in the **Past Issues and Recommendations** section of this Element.

S-9 NEW SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENT

Since 2013, there has been a multitude of research, trends, and best practices surrounding sustainability that this Reexamination Report could not completely and thoroughly discuss. Therefore, the Borough should prepare a Conservation and Sustainable Community Plan Element as part of any new Master Plan undertaken by the Borough, or as a stand-alone element.

Sustainability

Past Issues

- S-1 Water Quality and Stormwater Management
- S-2 Water Consumption
- S-3 Recycling
- S-4 Energy
- S-5 Green Space
- S-6 Pervious Material and Site Design
- S-7 Transportation
- S-8 Tree Cover

New Issues

- S-9 New Sustainability Element



HOUSING ELEMENT REEXAMINATION



HOUSING ELEMENT RECOMMENDATION PLAN

The Housing Element Recommendation Plan is broken up into two sections. The first is a table summarizing the past issues and recommendations that have reduced or increased based on the discussions identified in the **Past Issues and Recommendations** section of this Element. The second is a comprehensive Housing Recommendation Table that includes recommendations from the 2002 Master Plan and 2010 Reexamination Report that still apply today, as well as new recommendations identified as part of this 2020 Master Plan Reexamination effort.

PART I

Below is a summary of the past issues and recommendations that have reduced or increased based on the discussions identified in the **Past Issues and Recommendations** section of this Element.

Summary Table of Past Issues and Recommendations			
Past Issue or Recommendation (from 2002 Master Plan or 2010 Reexam))		Increased or Maintained and Should Continue	Decreased or Resolved
H-1 Affordable Housing and COAH			
a	Affordable Housing	X	
b	Development near Grand Avenue	X	
c	Bergen County Home Improvement Program		X
H-2 Housing Diversity			
a	Senior Housing	X	



PART II

Below is a comprehensive Circulation Recommendation Table that includes recommendations from the 2002 Master Plan and 2010 Reexamination Report that still apply today (indicated with a *C-1a*, for example), as well as new recommendations identified as part of this 2020 Master Plan Reexamination effort.

DIRECTIONS

“Check off” a completed recommendation and mark the year of completion as a way to measure progress. **Short Term:** complete in 1-2 years; **Mid Term:** complete in 3-5 years; **Long Term:** complete in 10+ years.



Housing Element Recommendation Table					
Recommendation		Implementing Party	Completion Timeframe	Completed	Year Completed
Affordable Housing					
1	(H-1a) The Borough of Leonia should develop a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan (HEFSP) and look to provide affordable housing for low- and moderate-income persons and households	Borough Council, State-Appointed Court Master	Short- to Long-term		
2	(H-1a) The Borough should pass an ordinance requiring a certain percentage of new residential units in multifamily developments to be set aside as affordable housing units for low- and moderate-income households.	Borough Council	Short-term		
3	(H-1b) The Borough should utilize the Grand Avenue and Fort Lee Road redevelopment area to provide affordable housing units	Borough Council, Planning Board	Medium- to Long-term		
4	(H-1c) Utilize monies available through Bergen County Home Improvement Program to rehabilitate eligible housing	Planner, Borough Council	Medium-term		
5	Work to provide opportunities, where feasible, to achieve the Borough's affordable housing obligations	Planning Board	Short- to Medium-Term		
Housing Diversity					
6	(H-2a) Evaluate feasibility of future development of senior citizen housing, including independent living, assisted living and congregate care housing, each containing affordable housing components	Borough Council, Planning Director, Planning Board	Ongoing		
Housing Preferences					
7	Provide diverse housing for residents beyond the	Borough Council,	Ongoing		



	detached single-family residence, where appropriate and feasible	Planning Board, Private Developers			
8	Prepare a new Housing Element as part of a Master Plan update	Planner, Planning Board	Short-term		



PAST ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following housing issues were identified in the 2002 Master Plan and 2010 Reexamination Report. This element examines what activities and changes have taken place and where those issues have increased or decreased.

H-1 AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND COAH

a. **Affordable Housing**

The Issue: New Jersey municipalities must adopt a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan (HEFSP) to plan for the provision of their "fair share" of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income persons and households. At the time of the 2002 Master Plan, COAH announced a new process of achieving substantial certification. The 2002 Master Plan recommended that once new Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) regulations were adopted, the Borough should adopt a new affordable housing plan and should seek other opportunities to create low and moderate-income housing.

What has Changed: The Fair Housing Act created the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) to administer housing obligations. COAH's responsibility was to calculate each municipality's affordable housing obligation. The formula for calculating these obligations and the rules surrounding these obligations have changed over the years.

Since 2002, the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) created Third Round Rules to cover the years 1999-2014. In 2007, these rules were challenged and subsequently invalidated by the New Jersey Appellate Court. COAH's new Third Round Rules took effect on June 2, 2008 and were amended on September 2, 2008.

On March 10, 2015, the New Jersey Supreme Court declared COAH "moribund" and ordered the courts to provide a judicial remedy due to COAH's failure. The March 10th Decision provided that municipalities may initiate declaratory judgment actions and seek approval of their housing element and fair share plans for the third round (now a period from 1999-2025) through the courts. With COAH now disbanded, the process to calculate an affordable housing obligation for each municipality was called into question. Several outside sources, Econsult and Fair Share Housing Center (FHSC), released reports that calculated the municipal obligations according to COAH

Housing

Past Issues
 HP-1 Affordable Housing and COAH

HP-2 Housing Diversity

New Issues & Trends
 H-3 Housing Changes



rules. The municipal obligations resulting from each report widely differed. Most municipalities “settled” with FSHC by accepting the responsibility to provide for a 30% reduction in their calculated affordable housing obligation and the Courts have issued a Judgement of Repose for those towns.

The Borough of Leonia was granted substantive certification at COAH’s May 1, 2002 meeting. Leonia addressed its 50-unit pre-credited need (31 new construction/19 rehabilitation) through 10 units at Grandview Meadows constructed in 1985, seven units rehabilitated since April 1, 1990, a 12-unit housing rehabilitation program administered by the Bergen County Home Improvement Program and a 21-unit vacant land adjustment. The unmet need of 21 units will be met with three affordable sale units that are already completed and with development fees.

The Borough must submit a draft development fee ordinance in adoptable form, and a draft spending plan for COAH review and approval within 60 days. Upon meeting these conditions, Leonia will receive final substantive certification.

A new round is expected to begin in 2026, meaning the Borough will have to prepare an updated Housing Element and Fair Share Plan. The Borough should adopt a new affordable housing plan for the Third Round (1999-2025) and the Fourth Round (2025-2035) and should continue to seek opportunities to create low and moderate-income housing.

On July 20, 2020, the Borough Council passed Ordinance No. 2020-17 that requires any multifamily development of five or more residential units to set aside 15 percent of rental units as affordable units for low- and moderate-income households and 20 percent of for sale units to be affordable units. As redevelopment opportunities arise in the Borough, this ordinance will help to spur the development of affordable units in the Borough. The Council should pass this ordinance to help with meeting the Borough’s affordable housing obligations. This item is ongoing and should continue to be observed.

b. **Development near Grand Avenue**

The Issue: The 2010 Reexamination Report recommended investigating the inclusion of mixed-use development in close proximity to Grand Avenue and Fort Lee Road in Leonia. Such development should require that a certain percentage of the new residential units in the project be set-aside for low and moderate-income households.



What has Changed: The Fort Lee Road and Grand Avenue Redevelopment Study Area, an area that includes several blocks located near Overpeck Park and Leonia High School, was investigated to determine whether the specific areas of the Borough satisfy statutory criteria to qualify as an “area in need of redevelopment” and/or an “area in need of rehabilitation” under the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL). Resolution 2014-126, adopted May 19, 2014, authorized the Planning Board to conduct this preliminary investigation and public hearing.

The 2015 investigative study concluded that the Fort Lee Road and Grand Avenue Rehabilitation Study Area qualifies as “an area in need of rehabilitation” in accordance with N.J.S.A. §40A:12A-14(a). The report recommended that the Leonia Borough Council adopt a resolution finding that the Study Area is an “Area in Need of Rehabilitation” in accordance with the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law. On November 30, 2015, the Borough Council passed Resolution 2015-189 to designate twenty-two (22) properties in the study area as an Area in Need of Redevelopment.

Two additional redevelopment studies of the area were initiated based on Resolutions 2018-200 and 2018-201. The non-condemnation study area expanded the 2015 study area to include the Willow Tree Road area while the condemnation study area expanded the initial 2015 study area to include additional properties to the north along Grand Avenue. Both studies have yet to be completed. These changes in the redevelopment designation area are discussed in greater detail in the **Redevelopment** section of this report.

c. **Bergen County Home Improvement Program**

The Issue: The 2002 Master Plan called for the promotion of maintenance and rehabilitation of the Borough’s housing stock through programs such as the Bergen County Home Improvement Program. The 2010 Reexamination Report called for the preservation of the Borough’s aging housing stock to continue as well as a comprehensive review of the Borough’s property maintenance regulations.

What has Changed: It is recognized in the Borough that the maintenance of the Borough’s housing stock has improved since the 2010 Reexamination Report as the economy has improved since the Great Recession. As of writing, the Bergen



County Home Improvement Program is not something that the Borough utilizes. This recommendation is deemed complete and no further action is required.

H-2 HOUSING DIVERSITY

a. **Senior Housing**

The Issue: The 2002 Master Plan recommended the creation of a Senior Housing zone district to encourage the development of senior citizen housing that enables older residents to “age in place” including independent living, assisted living and congregate care housing with affordable housing component considered as part of the project.

What has Changed: In 2009, the second phase of the Leonia Senior Apartments included 33 units. However, housing units that are affordable and accommodating to seniors is a relevant topic that has increased as the share of the Borough’s senior population continues to increase. The Borough should continue to find ways to find opportunities to provide affordable housing to its aging population. This topic of “aging-in-place” is discussed in more detail under the **Land Use Element Reexamination**, in the **New Trends and Issues** section.



NEW ISSUES AND TRENDS

Housing

Past Issues

HP-1 Affordable Housing and COAH

HP-2 Housing Diversity

New Issues & Trends

H-3 Housing Changes

A robust community outreach process uncovered issues and trends forming in Leonia today and should be considered when planning for Leonia's future. Some issues raised through the public outreach process had already been identified in the previous 2002 Master Plan or 2010 Reexamination Report and are not discussed here. Those items are discussed in the **Past Issues and Recommendations** section of this Element.

H-3 HOUSING PREFERENCES

While the number of housing units in Leonia has increased over time increasing from 3,434 housing units per the 2010 ACS to 3,499 housing units per 2018 ACS, representing a 65-unit increase. This increase in housing units is attempting to meet a changing population that has resulted in a new housing demand. The younger adults waiting to marry and have kids and the older population looking to age in place have formed a new housing demand profile, which includes a higher proportion of smaller, multi-family units, a larger proportion of rental units, and units that are affordably priced. While Leonia does provide some of these offerings, the Borough should look to fully meet this demand, particularly as its population continues to age.

A great deal of the housing stock that exists in Leonia consists of modest and large single-family homes that were built in the early to mid-twentieth century. According to the 2018 ACS five-year estimates, a majority (58.2%) of occupied housing units had three or more bedrooms compared to 16.0% that had 1 bedroom. Many of the smaller, multi-family units consists of one- and two-bedroom units that cater to this new demand.

A majority of the occupied housing units in Leonia are owner-occupied housing units (59.6%) while approximately 40.4% of the housing stock in the Borough is renter-occupied. Almost one-third of renter-occupied housing units in Leonia are in attached or detached single family homes (32.2%) and over one-third are in buildings with five or more units (40.0%).

Housing affordability is a significant concern for the Borough. Experts generally agree that households should spend no more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs. When more than 30 percent of income is spent on housing, it is considered



unaffordable. Accounting for owners and renters, 79.0% of households earning less than \$75,000 annually spent more than 30% on housing costs, whereas only about 22.8% of households earning more than 75K spent more than 30% on housing costs.

In light of this new issue, and the changes in the housing affordable obligations of municipalities state-wide, the Borough should prepare a new Housing Element as part of an updated Master Plan.



Page Intentionally Left Blank



RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

The Municipal Land Use Law requires municipal master plans “include a specific policy statement indicating the relationship of the proposed development of the municipality as described in the master plan to: (1) the master plans of contiguous municipalities, (2) the master plan of the county, and (3) the State Plan adopted pursuant to the State Planning Act and (4) the district solid waste management plan required pursuant to the provisions of the “Solid Waste Management Act.””

ENGLEWOOD

The City of Englewood (Bergen County) is located to the north of the Borough of Leonia. Interstate-95, a major US Highway, divides both municipalities in the east-west direction. Englewood borders Leonia's entire northern boundary.

The boundary does not follow a strict street line and travels through various properties and roadways. Englewood's One-Family Residence (R-E) zone district borders Leonia's Residential Single Family (R-3) and Multiple Family (B) zones. Both zone districts are developed in a similar style (approx. 5,750 square foot lot sizes) with predominantly single-family homes. The land uses in these zone districts are compatible with one another.

Englewood's Multiple Residence (RM-C) zone district borders Leonia's Parkland District (P) zone. The majority of the Parkland District (P) zone district exists as a park which backs up to single-family residences in Leonia and cuts off at Interstate-95 before reaching Englewood. The zones are compatible and will not have a negative impact on one another.

Englewood's Open Space (OS) zone district borders Leonia's Single Family (A2). These zone districts are compatible and will not negatively impact one another.

Englewood last prepared a Master Plan in March 2014 which was most recently amended as of February 19, 2015. The Borough of Leonia's land use pattern and existing regulations are consistent with existing and zoned development in Englewood.

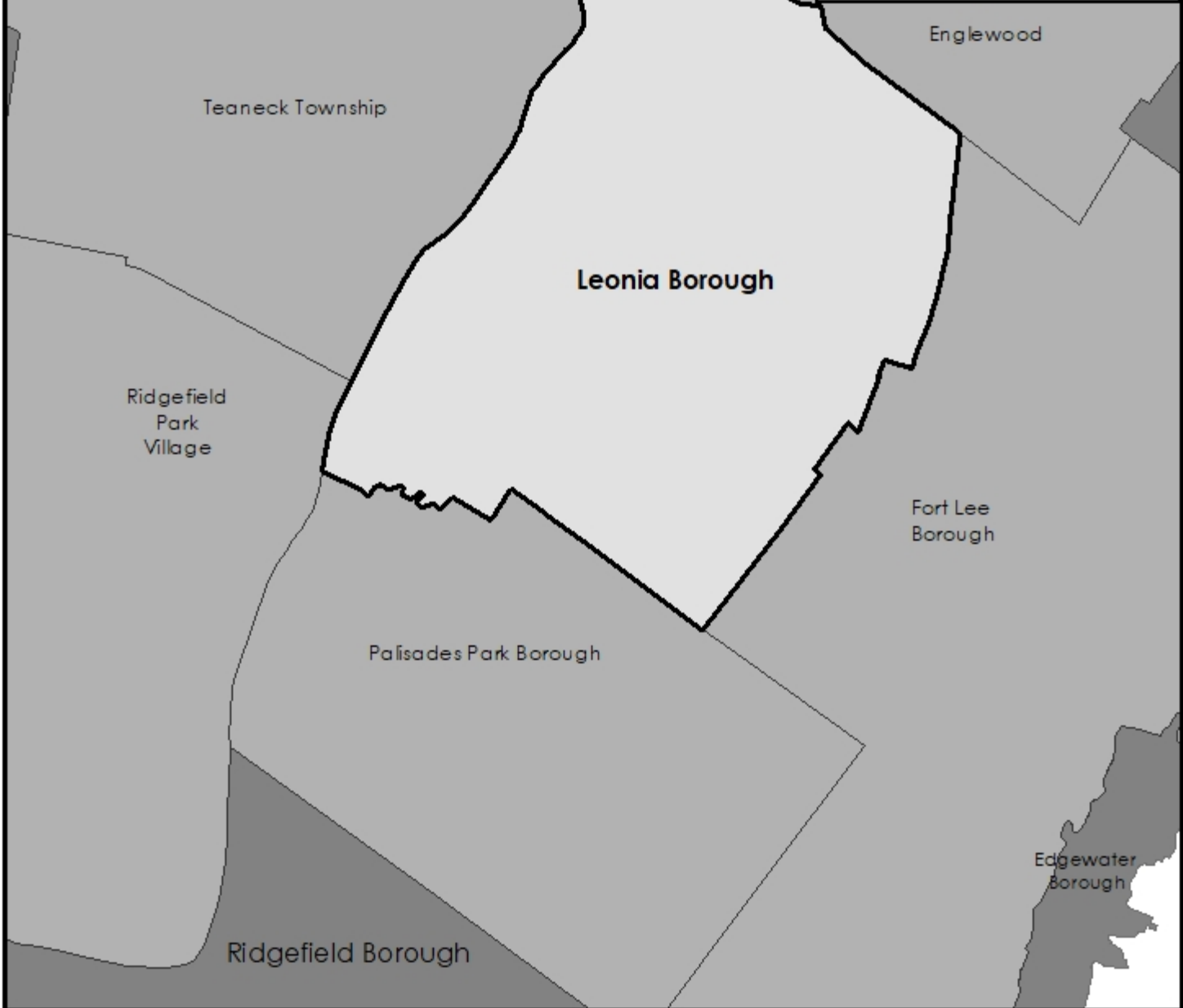
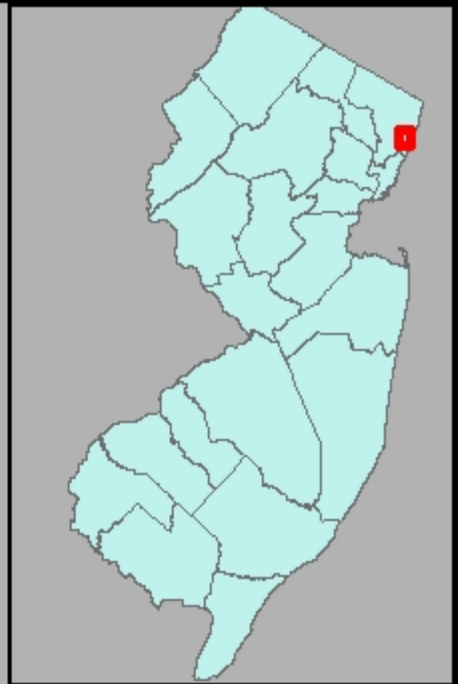
BOROUGH OF LEONIA

Surrounding Municipalities Map

Created by PFC
5/18/2020
Sources: NJGIN



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles





FORT LEE

The Borough of Fort Lee borders Leonia's eastern boundary. The two municipalities are divided by Jones Road as well as a portion of North Bergen Boulevard. The municipal boundary does not follow a strict street line or any natural features. The area along the border in both municipalities is zoned almost entirely for residential uses.

Leonia's Single Family (A2) district border's Fort Lee's One Family Residential (R-2A) zone and One & Two Family Residential (R-3) zone. All three districts are zoned for detached single family dwellings. Fort Lee's One Family Residential (R-2A) district is the municipality's mid-range density residential district characterized by minimum lot sizes of 6,000 square feet. These zone districts will not negatively impact one another.

The Borough of Fort Lee last adopted its Master Plan in May 1988 and had its last Reexamination on May 16, 2011. Leonia's development and regulations are consistent with existing and zoned development in Fort Lee.

PALISADES PARK

Palisades Park borders all of Leonia's southern boundary. The municipal boundary does not follow a strict street line or any natural features. The area along the border in both municipalities is zoned almost entirely for residential uses. A portion of Leonia's southern boundary is zoned for the Single Family (A-3) and Multiple Family (B) zone which borders Palisades Park's One and Two Family Residential (AA) district. These zones are compatible with one another.

Palisades Park last adopted a Master Plan in 1993 and completed a Master Plan Reexamination on May 25, 2000. The 2003 Master Plan recommends single-family residential development along the Leonia-Palisades Park border. Leonia's development and existing regulations are consistent with existing and zoned development in Palisades Park.

RIDGEFIELD PARK

The Borough of Leonia is separated from the village of Ridgefield Park by Overpeck Creek, where Leonia's entire western boundary is part of Overpeck County Park

Ridgefield Park borders a small portion of Leonia's southwestern boundary. The municipal boundary follows the natural features of the Overpeck Creek. The area along the border in both municipalities is similarly zoned and consists of the Overpeck County Park. Ridgefield Park's northeastern boundary that is zoned for



Single-Family Residential District (R-1) which borders Leonia's Single Family (A-2).

Ridgefield Park last adopted its Master Plan on September 21, 2009. Leonia's development and existing regulations are consistent with existing and zoned development in Ridgefield Park.

TEANECK

Teaneck is separated from Leonia by Overpeck Creek. Both municipalities' Master Plans call for the preservation of open space along the creek.

Teaneck borders a majority of Leonia's western boundary. The municipal boundary follows the natural features of the Overpeck Creek. The area along the border in both municipalities is almost entirely consistent of Overpeck County Park. The area along the border in both municipalities is zoned entirely for residential uses. Teaneck's southeastern boundary is zoned for Residential Single Family (R-S) which borders Leonia's Single Family (A-2).

Teaneck last adopted its Master Plan Reexamination on April 14, 2017. Leonia's development and existing regulations are consistent with existing and zoned development in Teaneck.

BERGEN COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Solid Waste Management Act (NJSA 13:1E-1) requires that each solid waste management district create a plan that includes suitable sites for solid waste disposal as well as a disposal strategy for the district. The Bergen County Solid Waste Management Plan is the agenda-setting document for solid waste disposal based upon the rules and regulations set forth in New Jersey's Statewide Solid Waste Management Plan.

There are not privately-owned regulated locations for recycling activities in Leonia. The Bergen County Solid Waste Management Plan is therefore compatible with the Leonia Master Plan Reexamination Report.

2011 VISION BERGEN

The Visioning Component of the Bergen County Master Plan was developed as a common vision that transcends municipal boundaries. It outlines the issues most amenable and relevant to the visioning process to empower small local governments to work together on initiatives that are often too large for each of them to tackle individually. This plan reflects the priorities of local, state and regional stakeholders.



Vision Bergen describes Leonia as a borough in the southern region of the county. The plan analyzes how a majority of its NJ TRANSIT buses are routed in the southern region. The plan notes future transit improvements, including the extension of the Hudson Bergen Light Rail line. The plan also highlights Leonia's low-density residential zones. Leonia along with Fort Lee make up most of the southeast regions' low-density single-family land. However, the Visioning Component expressed too much land is dedicated and zoned for such uses and is undesirable. The plan touches on housing demolition in the southern region and in Leonia specifically, the borough having one of the highest demolition rates in the County.

Bergen County adopted the Visioning Component alongside the Master Plan in June 2011. Leonia's development and regulations are consistent with the goals of Vision Bergen

2001 NEW JERSEY STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

In 1986, the New Jersey Legislature passed the New Jersey State Planning Act, which created the State Planning Commission and required the preparation and adoption of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (the "State Plan"). The most current adopted plan is dated March 1, 2001. The purpose of the State Plan is to:

Coordinate Planning Activities and establish statewide planning objectives in the following area: 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 (N.J.S.A. 52:18A-200(f), the State Planning Act).

The State Plan uses a policy map to differentiate areas from highest growth to lowest growth based on information, such as natural resources, sewer availability, etc. These differentiations are called planning areas, which range from PA1-Metropolitan to PA-8 state park. The Borough of Leonia lies fully within the Metropolitan Planning Area (PA1). The SDRP specifies that PA1 areas shall be the locations for the majority of the state's future growth through expansions, infill, and redevelopment. The SDRP promotes growth within existing urbanized areas, preferably in the form of compact development with ready access to existing infrastructure, including transit systems. The Borough of Leonia is almost entirely suburban with only a few commercial areas. The PA1 area should:



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

This Leonia Master Plan Reexamination Report is consistent with the State Plan.



RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING REDEVELOPMENT

REDEVELOPMENT AND REHABILITATION INITIATIVE

The Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL) grants New Jersey municipalities the authority to designate areas in need of rehabilitation or in need of redevelopment given that they meet specific statutory criteria. The LRHL also provides a process for the preparation and implementation of redevelopment plans for designated areas. This section of the Reexamination Report identified areas in Leonia that have been investigated for redevelopment or rehabilitation and/or for which a redevelopment plan has been adopted, or for areas that are recommended for initial study.

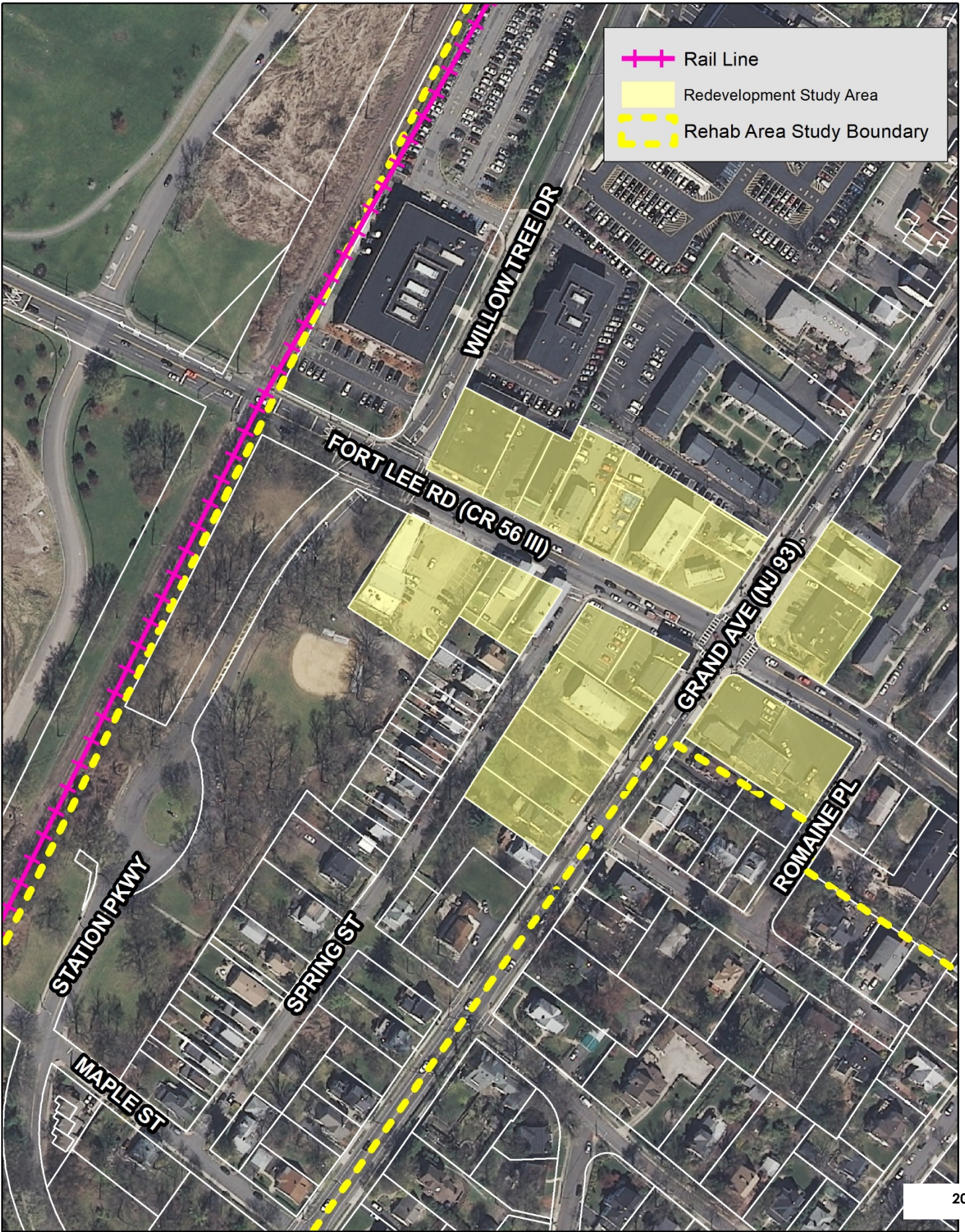
“Redevelopment Planning” is a term used to describe both redevelopment and rehabilitation activities and is a regulatory land use tool used to benefit the general public by addressing environmental, economic, social and physical conditions of communities in need of revitalization. It contains certain tax incentives and other tools that may spur new life into an area.



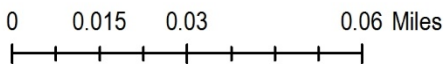
CURRENT REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

On November 30, 2015, the Leonia Borough Council passed Resolution 2015-189 designating twenty-two (22) properties within the Fort Lee Road and Grand Avenue area as a non-condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment. As of writing, this is the only area in the Borough that has received this designation.

The Area in Need of Redevelopment designation came as a part of an extensive study of the redevelopment area that the Borough explored as a way to spur new construction. Given that Leonia is well developed, utilizing redevelopment as a planning tool has the potential to spur significant change. The Leonia Borough Council on May 19, 2014 adopted Resolution 2014-126, which authorized the Planning Board to conduct a preliminary investigation and public hearing to determine whether an area known as the Fort Lee Road and Grand Avenue Redevelopment Study Area met the statutory criteria to qualify as an “area in need of redevelopment”. The area included twenty-two (22) properties of approximately 4.2 acres located along Fort Lee Road and Grand Avenue. The study was undertaken with the intent to comprehensively revitalize the Study area to address a number of Borough issues and priorities, including: stimulating economic development, alleviating persistent traffic congestion along Fort Lee Road and Grand Avenue, reducing the high vehicle accident rate in the Study Area, increasing the supply of parking and shared parking opportunities, beautifying the area, enhancing connectivity with Overpeck Park, and providing an area where surrounding residents can easily walk or ride a bike to shop eat, and enjoy a vibrant commercial node. The conclusion of the study was that the area qualified as an “area in need of rehabilitation”.



2015 RED



Borough of Leonia
Bergen County
New Jersey





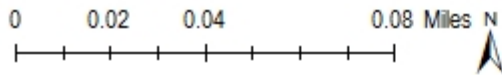
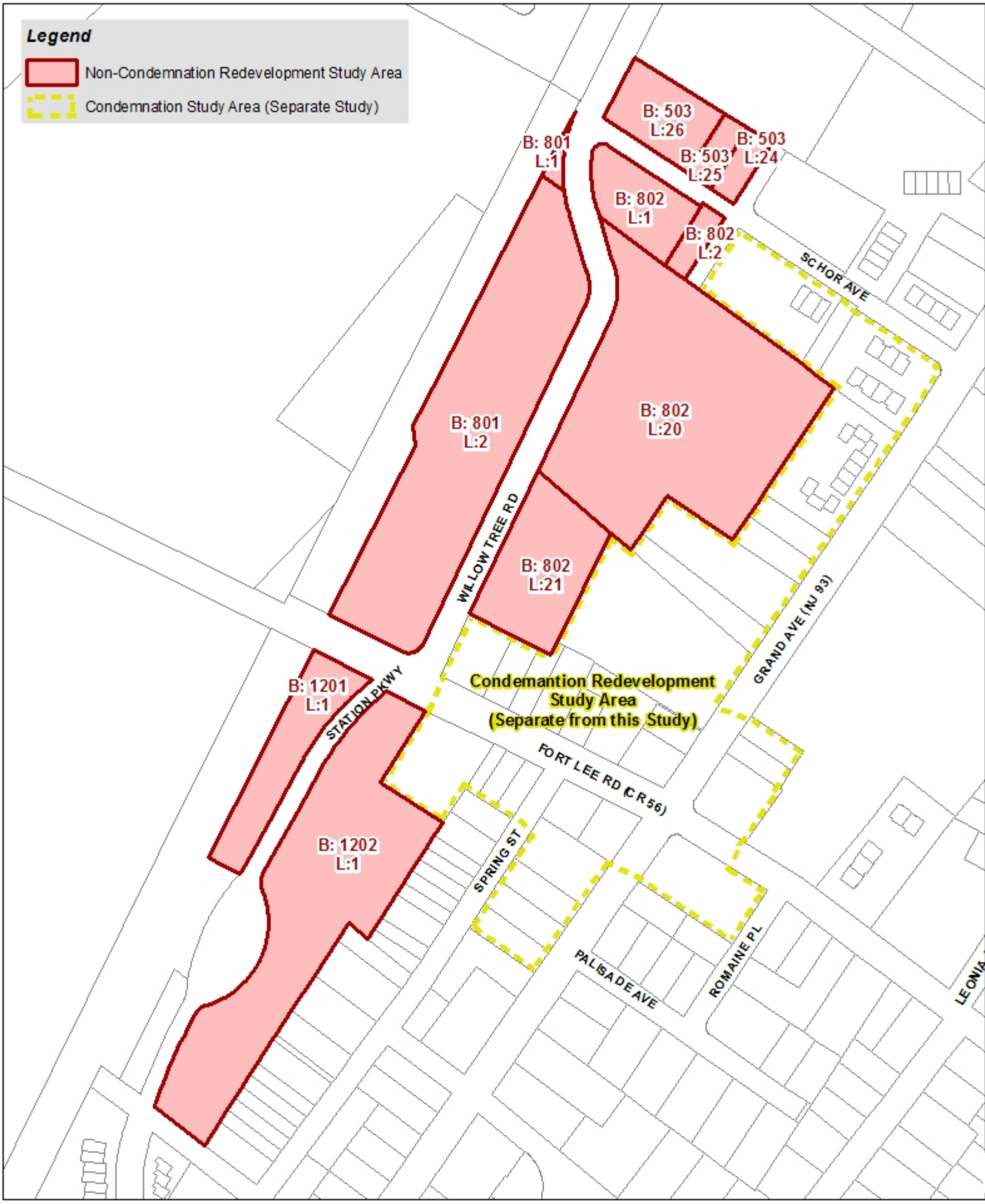
On September 5, 2018, Leonia Borough Mayor and Council adopted two Resolutions. Resolution 2018-200 authorized the Planning Board to conduct an updated condemnation redevelopment study of the Fort Lee Road and Grand Avenue area. As a part of the updated study, the area encompassed 31 properties. The newly included properties contained properties north along Grand Avenue and on Schor Avenue. The updated redevelopment investigation looks to accomplish the same goals as the 2015 Preliminary Investigation Report as they remain equally as relevant. The study was then revised to be non-condemnation redevelopment from a condemnation redevelopment study. 2018 study has yet to be completed.

The second resolution adopted by Leonia's Mayor and Council was Resolution 2018-201, which authorized the Planning Board to conduct a preliminary investigation and public hearing to determine whether the Willow Tree Road area, which consists of eleven (11) parcels¹ meet the statutory criteria to qualify as a non-condemnation "area in need of redevelopment". This study was an update to the 2015 study. This updated study has yet to be completed.



¹ Block 801, Lots 1 and 2; Block 802, Lots 1, 2, 20, and 21; Block 503, Lots 24, 25, and 26; Block 1201, Lot 1; and Block 1202, Lot 1

Legend

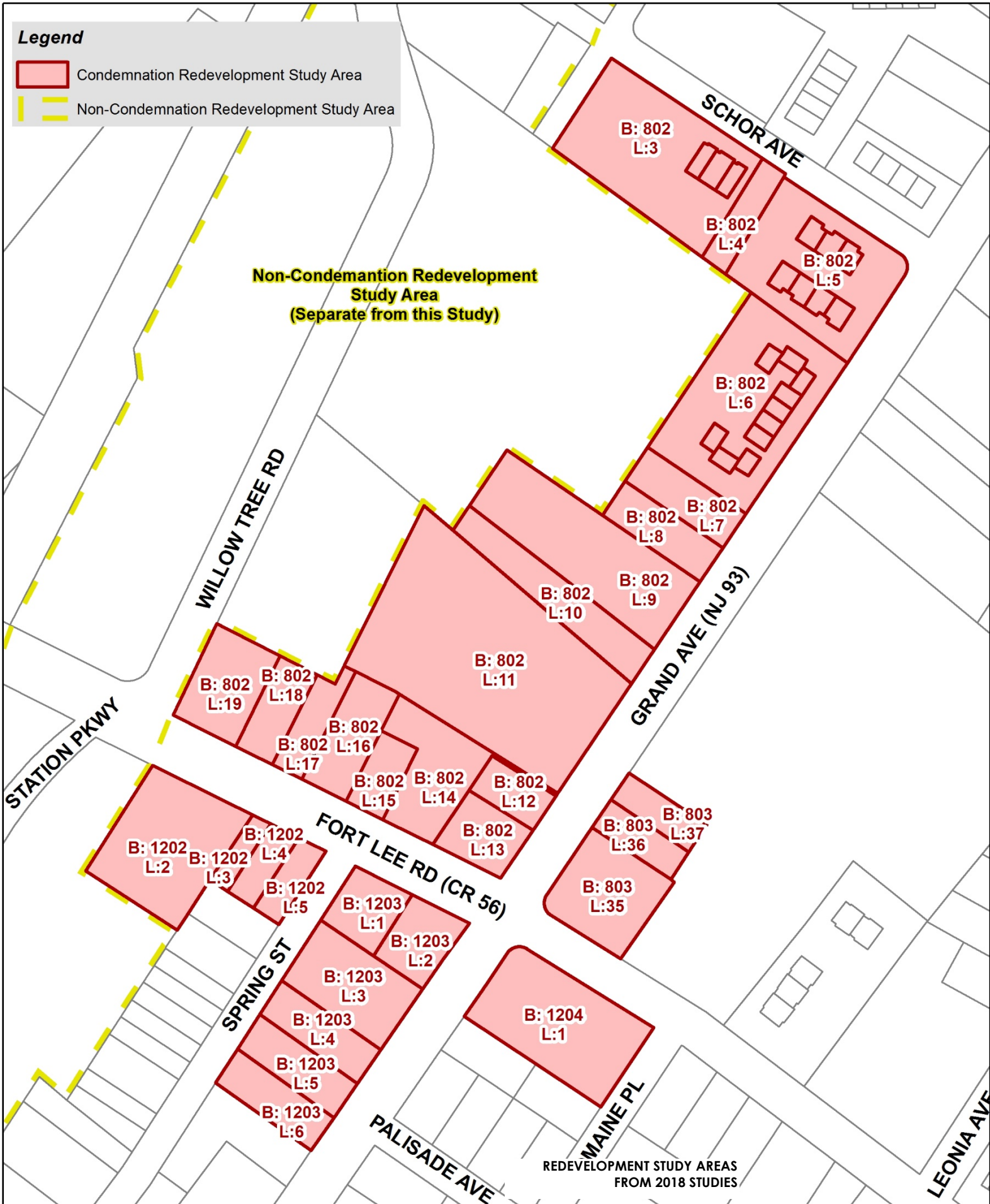
-  Non-Condemnation Redevelopment Study Area
-  Condemnation Study Area (Separate Study)



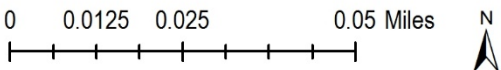
Legend

-  Condemnation Redevelopment Study Area
-  Non-Condemnation Redevelopment Study Area

**Non-Condemnation Redevelopment Study Area
(Separate from this Study)**



REDEVELOPMENT STUDY AREAS
FROM 2018 STUDIES





FUTURE REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

As market conditions change and permitted land uses become obsolete or sites remain underutilized, redevelopment is one planning tool that the Borough of Leonia should look to implement as a strategy to enhance the character of the community while providing for the opportunity to diversify the municipal tax base.

Future redevelopment opportunities that should be explored in more detail include an assessment of the commercial buildings located along the Broad Avenue commercial corridor. While many of the buildings are in good condition and have active retail and restaurants on the first floor, several buildings are showing their age. The uses in the corridor also fail to meet the current demand of “Downtowns as Centers of Place” where mixed-use buildings that have “active” ground floors and residential units on the second and third floors. The buildings’ location in the center of the Borough in close proximity to the Municipal Complex provide the potential for redevelopment that could better utilize the space. The Borough should explore the potential reuse of the corridor and give property owners the opportunity to renovate their buildings in a way that would enhance the character of the community and provide some property tax relief to Borough property owners.