

**2014 AMENDMENT TO THE REEXAMINATION REPORT OF THE  
MASTER PLAN & UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE**

**TOWNSHIP OF LAKEWOOD  
OCEAN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

**Prepared For:**

Planning Board  
Township of Lakewood  
Ocean County, New Jersey

**Prepared by:**



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**Adopted April 8, 2014 by the  
Township of Lakewood Planning Board**  
*Original Signed and Sealed in Accordance with Law*

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## INTRODUCTION

According to the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), “the governing body shall, at least every ten years, provide for a general reexamination of its master plan and development regulations by the planning board, which shall prepare and adopt by resolution a report on the findings of such reexamination, a copy of which report and resolution shall be sent to the county planning board and the municipal clerk of each adjoining municipality.” (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89)

A Master Plan Reexamination Report is a periodic review of the municipal planning documents and the changing circumstances related to planning and development. The Lakewood Township Planning Board last adopted a Master Plan Reexamination Report on June 19, 2013. Prior to the 2013 Reexamination Report, the Planning Board adopted a Reexamination Report in March 2007, an Addendum in December 2008, and a comprehensive Master Plan in 1999.

The 2014 Amendment to the Reexamination Report is not intended to be a comprehensive review of all of the master plan elements and land development regulations. Lakewood Township, by law, does not have to perform such a reexamination until 2023. However, a significant change that has impacted land use planning in Lakewood is the adoption of the Ocean County Wastewater Management Plan sewer service area map in March 2013, and the imminent change to the state planning areas of the NJ Development and Redevelopment Plan. The 2014 amendment to the Master Plan Reexamination Report recommends zoning changes to encourage the expansion of sewer infrastructure and accommodate the growing population.

The MLUL requires that the reexamination report address five specific areas. These requirements are set forth below and are followed by the appropriate response statements.

**I. The first provision of N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89 of the Municipal Land Use Law(MLUL) states that the Reexamination Report shall include:**

***“The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of adoption of the last reexamination report.”***

The 2007 Master Plan Reexamination report was the result of a comprehensive and thorough review of the Township’s planning and zoning documents during 2006 and early 2007. The reexamination process included numerous public hearings prior to the adoption of the report. The adopted report included a series of zoning and planning recommendations, proposed changes to the Township’s Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), and an updated vision statement. Some of the problems facing the Township that were identified at the time of the last reexamination included increased development pressures, the need to provide housing and services for Lakewood’s growing population, the need for community facilities and schools, and traffic. The reexamination report also noted that the Township had filed a petition with the New Jersey State Planning Commission for Plan Endorsement and a determination regarding the consistency of the Township’s plan with the 2001 New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

An Addendum to the Master Plan Reexamination report was adopted in December 2008 and reaffirmed the Land Use Plan designations of the 2007 Master Plan Reexamination report for the area of the Township in which the study area is located. The subject area of the addendum was the area previously zoned A-1 in the southwestern portion of the Township.

The 2013 Reexamination Report of the Master Plan and Unified Development Ordinance recommended the adoption of the 2013 Smart Growth Plan as an element of the Master Plan and several amendments to the Zone Plan in the Oak Street Core area.

**II. The second provision of 40:55D-89 of the MLUL requires that the Reexamination Report address:**

*“The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.”*

Most of the problems and objectives listed in the 2007, 2008 Addendum and 2013 Master Plan Reexamination reports are still valid and continue to affect planning and zoning decisions in the Township. Lakewood’s substantial population growth has continued, with the Township’s population increasing by 32,000 persons from 2000 to 2010, further exacerbating the need for new housing and community services. The challenge for the Township continues to be designing and implementing an approach to community planning, which balances opportunities for growth and development with preservation strategies that protect the Township’s environmental and natural resources.

In conjunction with its smart growth planning initiatives, the Township is also continuing to pursue plan endorsement with the State Planning Commission. In 2008, Lakewood conducted a series of visioning meetings as part of the plan endorsement process to gather community input regarding smart growth, open space preservation and transportation issues. A Smart Growth Plan was adopted by the Township Committee in 2009. It constitutes the Township's vision statement, and was prepared based on smart growth principles, public input, and the town’s planning strategies. The Smart Growth Plan was updated in 2013, and adopted as an element of the Township Master Plan.

The Township Committee has also been engaged over the past two years formulating the revisions to Lakewood’s sewer service area as part of the update of the County’s Wastewater Management Plan to ensure that the Township has sufficient infrastructure capacity to support its future growth and development. The Ocean County Wastewater Management Plan was adopted in March 2013.

**III. The third provision of 40:55D-89 of the MLUL requires that a Reexamination Report address:**

*“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.”*

The assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis of the Lakewood Township Master Plan and the Lakewood Township Unified Development Ordinance have not significantly changed. The population growth in Lakewood Township will continue and requires a comprehensive planning response on behalf of the Township. The one major change has been the establishment of a vision for future growth and development in the Township through the adoption of Lakewood’s Smart Growth Plan in 2009 and 2013. As stated in the Smart Growth Plan:

“Lakewood’s Smart Growth Plan seeks to create a balance between growth and preservation strategies to improve communities, enhance transportation options, and create economic opportunity. The plan also strengthens community, promotes sustainable development policies, preserves open space and promotes environmental protection in a comprehensive planning framework.” (Smart Growth Plan, p. 8)

The plan proposes a center-based approach to new development that concentrates new development into well-planned compact communities of place, promotes redevelopment and revitalization of Lakewood’s traditional downtown, encourages new infill development and redevelopment along the Township highway corridors, and protects critical environmental resources.

In order to adequately address anticipated growth and development in the Township, Lakewood should implement the vision and land use planning strategy established in the Township’s Smart Growth Plan.

As part of the 2013 Master Plan Reexamination Report, the Planning Board recommended the following additional amendments to the Township’s Zone Plan and Unified Development Ordinance:

1. In the Oak Street Core, the Planning Board is not currently proposing any changes to the existing zoning north of Oak Street;
2. In the Oak Street Core, the areas south of Oak Street (excluding the HD-7 highway zone) should be rezoned to a new R-10A zone that permits single-family homes as well as duplexes on 10,000 square foot lots; and

3. Any proposed multi-family developments should require a 50-foot buffer to the property line of the multi-family use.

### **Other Plans and Initiatives**

A number of township plans have been adopted over the last several years that have changed the planning context of the township. These plans and initiatives are discussed in the following subsections.

#### ***2013 Smart Growth Plan***

In 2009, the Township Committee adopted the Lakewood Township Smart Growth Plan as the township's future vision plan for the community. In 2013, the Lakewood Township Planning Board adopted an updated version of the Smart Growth Plan, as an amendment to the Master Plan that supplemented and revised the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan. The Smart Growth Plan promotes center-based development to accommodate the township's growing population. Among the areas identified in the plan for such center-based development are the Downtown Regional Center; Cedarbridge Town Center; Oak Street Neighborhood; Cross and Prospect Street Core; and three separate Highway Cores. The Smart Growth Plan also identifies the township's two industrial parks as Industrial Nodes, but foresees no additional residential development in them.

As noted in the Smart Growth Plan, it is not unreasonable to expect that Lakewood's population will reach 220,000 by 2030. This represents an increase of about 130,000 residents over the 2010 population. Although the areas targeted for growth that are identified in the Smart Growth Plan are able to accommodate a significant part of the township's future population, they are unable to accommodate all of the projected population growth. The Smart Growth Plan proposes over 10,000 new housing units in various centers, cores and nodes throughout the Township. However as noted in the Plan:

“While this is a significant amount of new housing, additional long-range planning efforts will be needed to ensure that a sufficient amount and variety of housing is available to meet the needs of Lakewood's growing population.” (2013 Smart Growth Plan, p. 5)

#### ***Expansion of Sewer Service Area***

Since the last master plan reexamination report was adopted in 2007, and the addendum to the 2007 master plan reexamination report was adopted in 2008, the township's sewer service area has been revised and expanded. The purpose for the change was to provide for significant environmental benefits by reducing the number of residential units on septic systems and to encouraging new sewer connections.

#### ***Revisions to State Planning Areas***

As part of the Township's smart growth planning efforts, the Township has applied to the New Jersey State Planning Commission (SPC) for Plan Endorsement. The Township's application is currently under review by the Office of Planning Advocacy (OPA) and various State agencies, and is expected to be acted on shortly. As part of its application, the Township has proposed

revisions to the delineated state planning areas within the study area. State planning areas correspond to various statewide land use planning policies presented in the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) and are used as a guide for land use policy at all governmental levels.

**IV. The fourth provision of 40:55D-89 of the MLUL requires that the Reexamination report address:**

*“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.”*

The Planning Board does not recommend the preparation of a comprehensive Master Plan at this time. Any specific changes can be accomplished by the adoption of an amendment to the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan. The Planning Board recommends that a Land Use Plan amendment to the Master Plan be adopted to respond to the rezoning requests in the southwest part of the Township in the R-12, R-20 and R-40 Residential zone districts. The specific zoning amendments are proposed in the Land Use Plan Element, Master Plan Amendment adopted by the Planning Board on April 8, 2014.

**V. The final provision of 40:55D-89 of the MLUL requires that the Reexamination report address:**

*“The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of the 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 element of the municipal master plan, and recommend changes, if any in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.”*

As recommended in the 2007 Master Plan Reexamination report, the redevelopment plan boundaries of the Franklin Street Redevelopment Plan should be identified on the Lakewood Township Zoning Map. The boundaries of the Cedarbridge Redevelopment Plan are already delineated on the Lakewood Township Zoning Map.