

1987 MASTER PLAN

PASSAIC TOWNSHIP, N. J.

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**MASTER PLAN
PASSAIC TOWNSHIP
MORRIS COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
1987**

**Prepared by the Passaic Township Planning Board
December, 1986**

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HOUSING PLAN ELEMENT

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

The Planning Board of Passaic Township was established in 1944 and charged with exercising those powers pertaining to municipal growth and development, including the preparation and maintenance of a Township Master Plan. Although zoning was first adopted in the Township in 1937, the first Master Plan was not completed until 1958. A new plan was prepared in 1964 and revised in 1967. The most recent plan was prepared in 1972 and re-adopted in 1982.

Since adoption of the 1972 plan a number of significant planning related changes have occurred in the Township. Some of these are summarized here:

General - Since 1972, the Great Swamp Wildlife Refuge has completed its own Master Plan which calls for the acquisition of about 25 percent of the Township land area. Most of this land area has now been acquired.

Since 1972, the Township enacted "cluster" provisions in the subdivision ordinance and the Planning Board has approved several "cluster" subdivisions, assuring the preservation of additional open space in the community. The Township has also adopted an ordinance restricting development in the flood-plain to further protect these flood hazard areas from improper development.

Housing - In 1979 the Township was part of a Mt. Laurel I housing case with numerous other Morris County communities. That litigation against the Township was subsequently dropped, and in 1984 a developer brought suit against the Township under Mt. Laurel II. That suit is still pending.

The first significant multi-family development in the Township, Sunrise at Gillette, a 132-unit mix of apartments and townhouses, opened in 1985.

Land Use - The provision of appropriate areas for multi-family housing was an important element of the 1972 Master Plan. In 1981, the Township Zoning Ordinance was revised establishing a separate zone for multi-family housing.

A vacant land study, prepared in 1979 for the Morris County Housing Case, indicated that less than 400 acres of the Township was classified as vacant land available for development (private ownership, non-agricultural use, not in flood prone area).

Community Facilities and Open Space - The need to expand the municipal sanitary sewerage facilities was recognized in the 1972 Master Plan. Although sanitary sewer service has been extended and improved since 1972, the treatment plant itself is still operating in excess of capacity and new connections cannot be made until capacity is increased.

Since 1972, several new recreation facilities have been installed and an addition to the Township Library was completed. From its peak of 1,366 students in 1968, local district school enrollment dropped to 660 in October 1985, and the closing of Gillette School is anticipated.

Transportation and Circulation - The New Jersey Department of Transportation recently completed a program of electrification of the commuter rail line. The Main Street-Valley Road intersection was improved and signalized.

Visual Appearance and Natural Resources - The Township adopted, shortly after the 1972 Master Plan, a separate sign ordinance and separate site plan ordinance. These ordinances have done much to improve the visual appearance of the community.

Extensive landscape and site design improvements for the area around the Millington Train Station were undertaken, and the Main Street area of Stirling was ungraded with curbing, sidewalks and street trees.

B. Purpose of Planning and the Master Plan

Community planning is a concept which refers to the continuous advisory process of guiding land development, and redevelopment, in accordance with established policy toward pre-determined goals. It represents a conscious effort to shape the physical environment. Its ultimate objective is the welfare of those who live and will live in the community insofar as control of the physical environment will contribute to that end.

Community planning is comprehensive in approach. It considers all physical, social, economic and aesthetic factors having an impact on community life and their potential for change. Each of the many aspects to be examined must be analyzed in light of its relationship to the whole, and in forming final proposals, all planning considerations must be adjusted to each other. Only then will the recommendations for any specific question begin to make sense.

The primary product of the planning process is the Master Plan. This document presents for all to see and comment on:

1. Fundamental statements of policy in the form of principles and objectives regarding future development of the community;
2. Text and maps relating the policy statements to a physical design; and
3. General considerations of the ways and means by which plan proposals may be achieved.

The Master Plan provides a basis for an intelligent course of action by enabling the Planning Board and Township Committee to consider specific projects upon which they must act in terms of a clear overall picture of the end product desired. It also enables public and private agencies to relate their development to the design principles and objectives expressed in the plan.

Under State Law (40:55D-28) the responsibility for the preparation of a Master Plan rests with the Planning Board. The Master Plan is adopted (or amended) by the Planning Board after a public hearing. A current Master Plan is required for any community wishing to regulate land development through zoning controls.

The Master Plan must include a statement of objectives upon which the plan is based; a specific policy statement indicating the relationship of plan proposals to the plans of neighboring communities, the County and other appropriate jurisdictions; a land use plan element; a housing plan element (required by the State Fair Housing Act); and additional plan elements as appropriate. The Municipal Land Use Law lists the following additional plan elements which a community may find appropriate:

- Circulation;
- Utility Service;
- Community Facilities;
- Recreation;
- Conservation;
- Economic; and
- Historic Preservation.

In addition to the above plan elements, a community may include other special plan elements which may be appropriate for that community.

An adopted Master Plan must be reviewed, and updated as found necessary, at least once every six years, and the zoning ordinance must be consistent with the Land Use Plan Element of the adopted Master Plan.

C. The 1987 Master Plan

Work on revisions to the 1972 plan began early in 1984. A Master Plan Review Subcommittee was formed and the subcommittee recommended that the plan revision address the issues of housing need, circulation concerns and open space provision. The subcommittee also felt that the 1972 plan was sound as a policy document and did not require significant revision.

As a basis for plan revision a number of background reports were prepared and prior reports were reviewed. All of the reports are listed in the plan bibliography. The background reports are available for review at the Planning Board office and include:

Report #1	Population, Housing and Employment, January 1985
Report #2	Housing Strategy Plan, February 1985
Report #3	Valley Road Corridor Site Study, April 1985
Report #4	Circulation Data Update, May 1985
Report #5	Master Plan Goals, July 1985
Report #6	Community Facilities and Services, November 1985
Report #7	Housing Plan Element, December 1985
Report #8	Area Plan Conformance, July 1986
(Draft)	Housing Plan Element, December 1986

Plan proposals, based on the findings of the background studies, were discussed at Planning Board work sessions. Much of the time at these sessions was devoted to the land use and housing plan elements and, in particular, the location and land area to be devoted to multi-family housing. This work process was made difficult by the uncertainty regarding the Township's legal obligation in providing its fair share of the regional need for low- and moderate-income housing. During the plan preparation period, the State Fair Housing Act, which took the Mount Laurel issue out of the Courts, was enacted. The Act essentially put off the determination of municipal fair share housing need until the State Affordable Housing Council established the criteria for such determination.

Rather than delay the plan preparation process any longer, the Planning Board has completed its work on the Master Plan, including a draft Housing Element. The Board acknowledges that amendments may be necessary following Affordable Housing Council review of the Housing Plan Element.

II. SUMMARY OF BACKGROUND REPORTS

This section briefly summarizes the background data findings of the Master Plan program. The full reports are on file at the Planning Board Office.

- . The Township is an environmentally sensitive area with only a limited amount of vacant developable land.
- . The Township incorporates large areas of designated wetlands and flood-prone lands in which development densities must be limited.
- . Development within the watershed of the Great Swamp should be limited in order to minimize any impact on the sensitive hydrologic function of the Swamp.
- . Valley Road remains Passaic's primary development corridor as well as its main circulation problems area. Future development and planning along this roadway should give much consideration to traffic impact.
- . Future traffic volume increases in Passaic will be largely the result of development in surrounding municipalities. As such development is not subject to local approvals, the Township should be careful to monitor traffic problems and request appropriate road improvements from the County.
- . The Township's limited access to surrounding communities will continue to hinder circulation patterns unless bridge and road improvements at these points is improved.
- . The completion of Interstate 78 will further improve access to the Passaic Township area, facilitating additional area development. This major road improvement, however, may serve to reduce traffic volumes along Valley Road.
- . Passaic experienced a slight population decline during the 1970's and a moderate population gain is forecast for the 1980's. Such trends were also noted for the Township's neighboring municipalities; however, Mt. Laurel housing litigation threatens to increase population levels in all communities in the area by much greater rates.
- . Passaic's population is somewhat older than the County and State populations. Its population continues to age, a trend that calls for increased community facilities for the middle-aged and the elderly.
- . The 1980 average household size in Passaic declined from 1970 levels but continues to be higher than the County, State and National averages. This trend, when considered with the "under-crowding" of Township housing units, suggests the need for smaller housing units.
- . The Township's housing stock is composed of primarily large, older single-family homes. The 1980 vacancy rates indicate a tight housing market. The age and size of the units suggest the

- potential for housing improvement and multi-family conversion programs. New residential construction has averaged 31 units per year since 1970, with most new units being single-family homes.
- . Passaic experienced a 35 percent increase in jobs from 1972 to 1982, and a similar, if not greater, job growth is likely by 1990, given commercial development pressure in Morris and Somerset Counties. Most economic growth in the area will be white-collar, service-oriented jobs similar to the existing occupational profile of Township residents.
 - . Passaic is a wealthy community when compared to the income and home values of the County and New Jersey. The 1980 Census data indicates local residents earn 50 percent more than the average resident in the region, and housing costs are similarly high.
 - . The Township's inventory of parks and open space exceed all State and County standards. Most of Passaic's parks and open space, however, are limited to conservation areas which, at best, serve passive recreation purposes. The Township is in need of additional land for neighborhood recreational facilities to provide more active recreation options for the present and future population. The Township should also continue its policy of acquisition and preservation of environmentally sensitive lands.
 - . Passaic's emergency and general service organizations are reasonably well-equipped and staffed by most planning standards. These organizations, which provide fire and police protection, first aid services, as well as a public works department and public library should adequately meet the Township's short-range needs. However, any major increase in residential, commercial or industrial development could require additional buildings, equipment and personnel for any or all of these services.
 - . The local school system is now operating at approximately 60 percent of capacity with no major enrollment changes anticipated through 1990. The Township should continue to evaluate the future use of school facilities given low enrollment levels, building age and the probability of future residential development.
 - . Passaic's housing stock will continue to expand during the 1980's. Residential development will take place through single-family residential construction, Mt. Laurel housing, market multi-family housing and other minor sources. It is projected the 1993 housing stock will exceed 3,000 housing units, a 27 percent increase over 1980 levels.
 - . Future employment growth in the Township will be limited to the internal expansion of existing firms and the small scale construction of retail and service facilities. No major additions to Passaic's job base are anticipated, as neighboring municipalities possess numerous locational advantages that will attract major employment generating projects.

III. 1987 PLAN GOALS

The 1972 Plan Goals were developed after very careful deliberation and, for the most part, are valid for application to the 1987 Plan.

The 1972 Plan Goals were organized into four plan element categories (Land Use, Community Facilities and Open Space, Transportation and Circulation, and Visual Appearance and Natural Resources). The Municipal Land Use Law now includes nine plan elements for a Master Plan.

The 1972 Plan Goals have been retained, with minor adjustments, for use in the 1987 Plan and reorganized in accordance with the expanded plan elements. In addition, new goals have been added under the plan element headings of Utility Services, Drainage, and Sidewalks.

General - Because Township land is not a product or an unlimited commodity, but rather a precious resource to be husbanded, future land use development must be properly balanced to meet local physical, social and economic needs. Development of environmentally sensitive land should be prohibited.

Land Use - The existing characteristic of the Township as a relatively low density residential community should be preserved. Intensive development should be directed to appropriate areas along the Valley Road corridor where the provision of necessary transportation and other community facilities is feasible.

The development of the Valley Road commercial area as the primary shopping area should be encouraged; the existing satellite centers of Millington, Stirling, Gillette and Meyersville should be oriented toward neighborhood facilities.

The Valley Road primary shopping area should become a major Township focal point by encouraging the development of office, civic, cultural, recreational and other appropriate uses.

The economic base of the Township should be directed toward as broad a range of employment opportunities as possible consistent with the present high quality of living conditions.

Housing - Because of insufficient developable land area appropriate for multi-family use, the Township has no legal fair share obligation for lower income housing, other than its indigenous need. However, it is proposed that the Township provide for lower income housing through the construction of Township sponsored senior citizen housing, the establishment of accessory apartments, and the rehabilitation of units to provide for indigenous need.

Community Facilities and Recreation - Township municipal services, including police and fire protection, library service, utilities and recreational facilities should be maintained at a level consistent with the growth of the community and the needs of the population.

In order to discourage development of low-lying areas and maintain present open space characteristics, density modification housing developments and similar open space retention methods should be encouraged.

Circulation - In order to provide a convenient and safe means for the movement of traffic through the Township and the distribution of local traffic within the Township, an overall system of local collector and secondary streets should be established.

The development of a comprehensive system for pedestrian and non-street movement, including sidewalks, bicycle paths, bridal paths and open space trails and easements, should be prepared.

Every effort should be made to encourage the maintenance and improvement of existing rail facilities and to encourage the provision of supplemental public mass transportation.

Visual Appearance and Conservation - The maintenance and, where necessary, the improvement of the Township's visual appearance should be undertaken with a view toward making the community a more attractive place in which to live.

The major natural assets in the Township -- the Passaic River, Long Hill Ridge and the large open spaces -- are an intrinsic part of the Township's composition and, as such, should be protected from inappropriate development.

The man-made assets of the Township, in particular its many historic structures, should be preserved and their environments enhanced.

Severe soil capability limitations and other development constraints exist in much of the Township and intensive development in such areas should be discouraged.

Utility Services - The Township Sewer Treatment Plant capacity should not be expanded beyond that necessary to serve the development projected by this plan, estimated to be one million gallons per day.

Drainage - The regulation of flood plain fill and construction should be strictly enforced and such land limited to low intensity uses consistent with sound flood plain management and good planning. Surface water detention should be required for all major developments.

Sidewalks - All future development should provide sidewalks as called for in The Sidewalk Plan map.

IV. PLAN DESCRIPTION

A. Plan Approach

The 1987 Master Plan proposals, as described here, are based on the background data findings, the recommended plan goals and the following:

1. The Master Plan is structured into separate plan elements in accordance with the Municipal Land Use Law. However, the plan is treated as a continuation of the planning process as developed by the 1972 plan. In addition, the 1987 plan recognizes that the general pattern of land use has been established and major deviations from that pattern would be inappropriate.

2. The 1987 plan recognizes that the community is a very special place by virtue of its existing urban form; its severe development constraints; and its visual attractiveness. All plan proposals are intended to preserve and/or strengthen these features while reflecting the recommended plan goals.

B. Plan Elements

1. Land Use Plan

The Land Use Plan is the most important of the master plan elements because the Land Use Law requires that the zoning ordinance either be substantially consistent with the Land Use Plan or designed to effectuate such plan (40:55D-62a). For this reason the Land Use Plan Map is precise in its location of the various land use categories. As illustrated by the Land Use Plan Map, there are three primary land use categories: Residential, Commercial and Community Serving.

The Residential Land Use category is divided into three districts: low-density, medium-density and multi-family. The low-density residential district is the

Township's largest development category with lands designated for this use located throughout central and southern areas. The low-density residential category identifies existing development as well as areas where future low-density housing is appropriate. The appropriate zoning categories here would be the R-2 (1-acre) and R-3 (3/4-acre) districts.

The medium-density residential category identifies areas in Millington, Stirling, Meyersville and Homestead Park. The appropriate zoning category would be the R-4 (20,000 square feet) district. While this category is largely developed with single-family residences, infill development will permit a limited number of additional homes by the end of the decade.

The multi-family residential category identifies four parcels along the Valley Road corridor for multi-family housing. This category includes two existing and one approved multi-family housing areas and the proposed senior citizen housing site. Based on the anticipated build-out resulting from the residential areas of this plan, a 1993 population range of 8,500 (low) to 9,300 (high) is forecast.

Commercial land use categories in the Land Use Plan identify areas for business, industry and economic development. The Business category identifies areas to be used for retail and service-oriented functions in Millington, Stirling, Meyersville and Gillette. Although the category identifies mostly neighborhood level business areas, it also includes the ShopRite Center and Valley Mall located on Valley Road.

Industrial and economic development areas are also located, for the most part, along the Valley Road corridor. The Economic Development category covers three undeveloped tracts located along Morristown Road and one on Valley Road, while the Industrial category identifies two existing industrial areas in Millington and Stirling.

Community serving lands complete the Township Land Use Plan and are divided into two categories. The major category is the Conservation district, which represents the largest district in the Township. This district covers most environmentally sensitive land in Passaic including the Great Swamp, flood plains and wetlands, as well as other areas such as parks and public property. Development in these areas is either prohibited or only permitted to a very limited degree.

The second Community Serving category is the Semi-Public category that identifies church properties, cemeteries, clubs and other semi-public uses. Development in this category should be limited by current parcel ownership.

The Land Use Plan of Passaic Township is presented in map form at the end of this report and should be consulted for all site specific details. Table One, below, summarizes the gross acreage devoted to each plan category.

TABLE ONE
PASSAIC TOWNSHIP
1987 LAND USE PLAN

<u>Plan Category*</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Percent of Total Township</u>
Residential	2,612.6	32.7
Low Density	2,185.0	
Medium Density	381.5	
Multi-Family	46.1	
Commercial	394.2	4.9
Business	222.0	
Industrial	28.4	
Economic Development	143.8	
Community Serving	4,993.2	62.4
Conservation	4,825.8	
Semi-Public	167.4	
Totals	8,000	100.0

*Including streets, railroad, and water bodies.

2. Housing Plan

The Housing Plan element of the Passaic Township Master Plan is concerned with the provision of housing consistent with the present and future needs of present and prospective Township residents. Future housing needs, however, are complicated by Passaic's regional obligation under the Fair Housing Act. The Land Use Plan has designated three specific residential categories by use and general density, and the Housing Plan element includes specific proposals for a variety of future housing needs. The lower density districts (low- and medium-density) will meet most of Passaic's single-family residential needs, while the multi-family districts will respond to affordable and market related multi-family housing needs. The latter residential categories are located exclusively within the Valley Road corridor where site access and community and shopping facilities will complement multi-family development. Specific site locations for all residential uses are shown on the Land Use Plan.

The 1972 Township Master Plan included a housing need study, projecting market and low and middle income dwelling unit needs to 1980. The low and middle income housing need of 225 units was based in part on 1970 regional income levels. Passaic Township was probably the first municipality in the State to undertake such a study.

In compliance with the 1975 Mt. Laurel I decision, the Township rezoned several acres to provide for multi-family housing. The revised zoning established an "MF" Zone and an "R-4A" Zone. These zones permitted townhouse and apartment development and provided a density bonus if the developer included low and moderate income units. A total of 208 multi-family units have been built or approved in these zones, but the lower income density bonus has not been used.

In 1983 the State Supreme Court Mt. Laurel II decision was handed down and in 1985 the State Fair Housing Act was adopted. In 1986 the State Council on

Affordable Housing (COAH), determined that the Township lower income housing need, for the 1987-1993 period was 198. This lower income housing need is divided among three categories with a fourth category summarizing several adjustments allowing Passaic to reduce its fair share by 20 units.

Indigenous Need	25 units
Reallocated Present Need	103 units
Prospective Need	90 units
Fair Share Adjustments	<u>-20 units</u>
Total	198 units

The fair share housing need of 198 units is described by the COAH as a "pre-credited need," meaning the COAH will permit certain adjustments to this need before a municipality is required to develop a housing plan. These adjustments, which are to be distinguished from the adjustments made during the calculation of municipal fair share, are permitted to reflect the municipality's limitations to development caused by environmental characteristics, land availability and other physical considerations.

As a part of Master Plan preparation, an existing land use study was undertaken. The purpose of this study was to determine the present (1986) use of each parcel of land in the Township. A map depicting the results of this study was then mounted and three development constraint transparent overlays (floodplain areas; wetlands; and steep slopes) were added. From this information a separate map was then drafted which indicates all parcels of land in the Township which are indicated as vacant or agricultural use and are not located in any of the three development constraint areas.

Of the total 8,000 acres in the Township, 5,487 acres or 68.59 percent of that total area is constrained by either wetlands, flood plain or steep slopes. This means that only 2,513 acres or 31.41 percent of total Township area is outside of such constraints. This land constraint situation, at least insofar as the extent (2/3 of the Township) of the three constraints examined is concerned, is probably unique for a municipality located in a growth area.

The vacant and agricultural use map was then planimetered to determine the gross acreage indicated. These areas totaled 413.20 acres as indicated on the table below.

Total Township Area	8,000	acres
Wetlands		
Flood Plain	5,487	acres
Steep Slope		
Net unconstrained area	2,513	acres
Net vacant and agricultural area	413.20	acres

Finally, each parcel on this map was examined to determine its availability and suitability for development as sites for lower income housing. Land parcels less than two acres in size; land parcels that have been approved for development; land parcels that are in the development approval process; and land parcels that are not otherwise suitable for lower income housing were then deducted from the total. The results of this analysis are indicated in the table below.

VACANT AND AGRICULTURAL LAND
PASSAIC TOWNSHIP
1986

Total Parcel Acreage		413.20
Acreage Reduction		
Less Than 2 Acres in Size	116.21	
Development Approved or Pending	58.93	
Great Swamp Drainage Basin		
And Other Locational Constraints	160.28	
Access Limitation (Rear Lands)	<u>38.21</u>	
	373.63	
Net Developable Acreage		39.67

As indicated in the above table, a total of 39.67 acres is considered to be vacant, suitable, developable, available and approvable land for lower income housing. Under the substantive rules of the COAH an additional municipal adjustment for adequate recreation area (5:92-8.3), municipalities may reserve three percent of their total developed and developable acreage for active municipal recreation and exclude this acreage from consideration as potential

sites for low and moderate income housing. As indicated earlier in net unconstrained area (total land area less wetlands, flood plain and steep slope) is 2,513 acres. The table below provides the adjustment calculation for adequate recreation area.

Developed and unconstrained area	2,513 acres
Recreational reserve (3% of above)	75.4 acres
Less existing active recreational area (See Master Plan Report #6)	34.1 acres
	<hr/>
Available recreation land exclusion	41.3 acres

Because the acreage available for a recreation land exclusion of 41.3 acres exceeds the 39.67 acres considered to be vacant, suitable, developable, available and approvable for lower income housing, the Township has no land area remaining for such housing and therefore, no fair share number for new construction. The Township is still obligated to provide for its 19 units of indigenous need (25 actual deteriorated units less 6 spontaneous rehabilitation).

Although the Township has no legal fair share housing obligation other than its indigenous need, it is proposed that the Township provide for lower income housing through the construction of senior citizen housing, the establishment of accessory apartments, and the rehabilitation of units to meet its indigenous need. These three programs are outlined below.

- a. Senior Citizen Housing. The Township has submitted an application to the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency for financial assistance in the development of an 80-unit senior citizen housing complex on a 5.5-acre site in Stirling. This project includes 40 units of lower income housing and 40 units of market housing.
- b. Accessory Apartments. It is proposed that the Township zoning ordinance be revised to permit the establishment of accessory apartments in all single-family residential zones. Such apartment units would be permitted only if they were rented to eligible lower income households. It is estimated that from 24 to 36 such units can be realized over the next six years (average of only 4 to 6 units per year).
- c. Rehabilitation. It is proposed that the fair share plan include the rehabilitation of substandard units already occupied by low and moderate income households. The rehabilitation of 19 such units is required to meet the indigenous need requirement.

3. Community Facilities and Recreation Plan

The Community Facilities and Recreation Plan element of the Master Plan is concerned with the public and semi-public facilities needed to meet all educational, cultural, health and general welfare needs of present and future Township residents. Although many community and recreation facilities have already been established, the need for new and improved facilities will continue. The purpose of this plan is to recommend facility and service changes necessary under the future land use pattern.

Areas intended for present and future community and recreation uses are shown on the Land Use Plan in two categories. The first -- Conservation/Flood Plain/Public/Park -- is the largest of all land use districts and serves environmental needs as well as community and recreation purposes. The second category -- Semi-Public Uses -- identifies a variety of churches, cemeteries and clubs.

The Conservation/Flood Plain/Public/Park district serves numerous community purposes. As indicated earlier, some of these purposes are environmentally related, and, as a result, are discussed in the Conservation Plan. The district also addresses community and recreation needs based on the findings of Master Plan Revision Report #6. This master plan background study proposed the retention of most existing community facilities including schools, fire, police, first aid and library services. These existing facilities are all shown on the Land Use Plan for continued community use. The background study also noted the continued need for a new municipal complex, but recognized the existing facility will serve the Township needs over the short term.

The Community Facilities and Recreation Plan may change when the Board of Education completes its long-range school plans. These school plans may recommend the closing of the Gillette School, a 1972 Master Plan recommendation that remains valid in light of continued low enrollment

levels. The closing of the school and relocation of school pupils to the districts other facilities will free the Gillette School for re-use as the new municipal building. Another possible Board of Education recommendation is the closing of both the Millington and Gillette Schools, resulting in the use of the Central School by all district students. Under this recommendation, the Millington School could be used for a new municipal building and the Gillette School sold for office purposes. Both options appear sound from a planning perspective as each recommends the centralization of community facilities and the re-use and reorganization of the Township's under-utilized schools.

The community facility background report determined that much of the Township's recreation space is limited to passive and conservation-oriented uses. For this reason, the Land Use Plan identifies appropriate areas for neighborhood level active recreation uses. Development of such facilities will improve the balance of recreational services in the Township. Notwithstanding these active recreation needs, it is also a specific recommendation of this plan that all public bodies continue their periodic purchase of any conservation or environmentally sensitive lands as they become available in this district.

Semi-public uses also serve a variety of community needs in the Township. These uses are all identified under a separate land use category and all present uses should be retained for community services. Although no new semi-public areas are proposed by the Land Use Plan, the Township may have to consider the need for such facilities as future residential expansion takes place.

4. Circulation Plan

The Circulation Plan of the Passaic Township Master Plan is concerned with all roadways and streets serving the Township and with all related aspects of traffic and circulation. Because Passaic's development plan is dominated by

single-family residential areas and the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, the basic circulation pattern is established. Some modifications and improvements are proposed, however, to upgrade the local circulation network.

The background study on circulation (Master Plan Revision Report #4) found that Passaic's traffic pattern is greatly influenced by several roadway features and developments. These include the Township's reliance on Valley Road as its primary traffic corridor; its limited access points to surrounding communities; the completion of Interstate 78; and the likelihood that development in nearby communities will significantly increase traffic along the Valley Road corridor in Passaic.

Recognizing the background study's findings, this circulation plan recommends the completion of the following road improvements in the Township:

- . Establish a 40 m.p.h. speed limit throughout the length of Valley Road.
- . Widen Valley Road to a uniform 4-lane width with marked turning lanes at appropriate locations.
- . Complete turning lanes at Valley Road and Plainfield Avenue.
- . Install traffic signal at Valley Road and Poplar Avenue.
- . Require local business and industry property owners to improve individual access problems along public roadways, at the time of site plan review.
- . Widen Passaic River Bridge on Plainfield Road.
- . Widen Passaic River Bridge on Mountain Avenue.
- . Remove embankment and vision problems at intersection of Mountain Avenue and Morristown Road.

These roadway changes will improve short-term traffic conditions and should be completed as soon as possible.

Future development projects should also be required to undertake necessary road improvements. Such improvements should include the continued upgrading and widening of Valley Road and the improvement of Township access points to surrounding communities. Additionally, it is recommended the Township monitor future traffic conditions -- particularly the Interstate 78 developments -- and seek appropriate county road improvements as necessary.

5. Visual Appearance and Conservation Plan

The Visual Appearance and Conservation Plan of the Master Plan is concerned with the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas of the Township and the retention of Passaic as a visually attractive community. The plan's central concerns are conservation of both the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, and the flood plain areas along the Passaic River in the southern section of the Township. The plan also seeks to encourage all public and private action that will make possible the preservation of local wooded areas, water bodies and other natural features.

The Land Use Plan uses a Conservation/Flood Plain/Public/Park category to identify the Great Swamp and other environmentally sensitive areas of the Township. Under this plan, these areas are specifically recommended for conservation purposes. Public acquisition of any privately held parcels in this district is encouraged whenever possible. Use of these conservation lands for recreation uses is also encouraged, but only if the natural features of the district are not seriously disrupted. Finally, this plan encourages the use of high quality site design standards on all future development to maintain the visual integrity of Passaic Township.

6. Utility Service Plan

Utility Service Plans are concerned with the present and future adequacy of water supply and distribution, sewerage treatment, solid waste disposal and other utility services. For Passaic Township the primary concern is that of sanitary sewer service.

Water, gas, electric and telephone are all supplied by the respective utility companies, which periodically survey to be certain that demands and future needs can be met.

Solid waste disposal is presently contracted by the Township with an independent scavenger. The number of pickups and special services are provided for with the contract.

Recycling of appropriate materials is presently performed on a volunteer basis but may become mandatory in the future.

The Township provides sanitary sewers to the majority of home owners within the Township. There remains unserved areas along Long Hill Road, Mountain Avenue, Morristown Road and Meyersville Road. For the most part, the majority of these areas are high and have soils which will support subsurface disposal. As funds permit, the collection system should be expanded to problem areas. Developers are required to install lines and provide upgrading where necessary. This is an on going process as development occurs. The Township presently owns and operates a sewage treatment plant located adjacent to the Passaic River on South Warren Avenue in the Stirling area. The rated capacity of the plant is 0.850 M.G.D. The plant was upgraded to its present capacity in 1985. This upgrading of both quality and a small amount of increased capacity allows the Township to continue operating under a N.J.P.D.E.S. Permit, which is good until August 1989. At that time a second stage oxidation ditch and appurtenance must be installed in order to meet new effluent quality standards, which will then be required to be met.

Present dry weather flows are averaging 0.6 M.G.D. Average flows during wet weather are much higher due to infiltration. While this was a major problem in the past the N.J.D.E.P. at present seems more concerned with the quality of the treated effluent rather than whether a specific plant volume is at or over the design volume.

The Township must monitor all development applications to insure that it is not approving projects for which there may be not enough sewer capacity.

The L-19 sewer project (Meyersville) has been placed on line. This area will account for approximately 50,000 gallons of the approximately 0.25 M.G.D. increased dry flow capacity. This would then leave approximately 200,000 gallons available for additional connections and growth.

If the Meyersville area were extended both easterly to Fenview and westerly to Long Hill Road, there would be an additional 90 connections required to serve existing homes. In addition to these, the Township has applications with either Preliminary or Final approvals for 237 dwelling units. At 300 G.P.D. per dwelling unit, a total of 98,100 G.P.D. would be required.

As may be seen, approximately 50 percent of the available dry weather flow has been, or is about to be, approved. This does not take into consideration any commercial proposals approved or presently before the Township Boards.

To date it has been the Township's policy that the recent treatment plant expansion was to serve the Meyersville Area and provide some small amount of growth. From the above it would appear that the Township has approximately 100,000 G.P.D. available for possible future growth.

7. Drainage Plan

Due to the location and terrain of Passaic Township there are two major areas of concern relative to drainage and flooding.

- a. Major flooding events - 100-year storms.
- b. Minor - non-flood events, but more frequent.

The Township recognizes that the results of major flooding type storms (100-year) are regional in nature and that it has no practical way, by itself, of controlling the resulting floods. Realizing this, the Township still sees a responsibility for the safety of the public both as to life and property.

The minor non-flood events are seen more as a nuisance than life threatening in nature and affect only the local surroundings. The Township does have the ability to control the results of these minor events by requiring the safe transportation of storm water to the Passaic River. This can work effectively as long as the river is not at flood stage.

Policy for Major Flood Events;

1. Protection of public, through control of development within 100-year flood areas along the Passaic River and tributaries.
2. Areas to be protected and elevation to which protection is required is delineated in the Flood Damage Protection Ordinance.
3. Recent State D.E.P. regulations establish standards, and State, as well as local approval for development in these areas is required.

Policy of Storm Water Management - Minor Storms

1. Detention will be required as a general policy. Each site to be reviewed for specifics. Purpose of detention to control rate of runoff after development thereby limiting erosion and/or minor flooding of local low spots. Detention to be handled on each site, rather than larger municipal facilities.
2. Design
 - a. Drainage systems - pipe network, ditches, etc. design for 25 year storms, unless directed otherwise.

- b. Detention -
1. Surface - where practical control following storm frequencies of 5, 10, 25, 50, and 100 year frequencies. Peak rate not to be increased from existing prior to development.
 2. Subsurface - where practical through use of stone beds or seepage pits with no controlled outlet - hold. Two-inch runoff from impervious surfaces. Seepage pits or subsurface bed with controlled outlet to control rate of discharge to existing rate or less.
3. Detention facility to be designed to be as maintenance free as possible. Maintenance of detention facilities to be responsibility of a homeowners' association where appropriate.

8. Sidewalk Plan

A separate Sidewalk Plan has been prepared as part of the Township Master Plan. Although not a requirement of the Municipal Land Use Law, the Sidewalk Plan was developed at the Planning Board's request to provide a basis for requiring sidewalk improvements from developers. This plan proposes the connection of existing sections of sidewalks and the linking of developed areas of the Township to major pedestrian traffic generators such as community facilities and neighborhood core areas. All future development in the Township should provide sidewalks as called for in the Sidewalk Plan map included in this report. It is also the intent of this Plan that developers of all parcels adjacent to an existing or proposed sidewalk provide sidewalk extensions into such developments.

C. Full Development Description

The implications of the 1987 Master Plan, in terms of development impact (population, dwelling units, jobs, and traffic) are summarized below. For comparison purposes actual data from prior years is also indicated.

Population

1970	7,393
1980	7,275
1993	8,500 (low) to 9,300 (high)
2000	9,300

Dwelling Units

1970	2,100
1980	2,389
1993	3,040

Jobs

1982	1,534
1990	1,850
2000	2,000

Business Establishments

1982	181
2000	240

Traffic (Valley Road/Stirling)

1972	11,235 vehicles per day
1985	17,149
1995	23,000

D. Conformance to Area Plans

The Municipal Land Use Law requires that all local Master Plans include a specific policy statement indicating the relationship of proposed development, as presented in the Master Plan, to Master Plans of contiguous municipalities; to the County Plan; and to related comprehensive guide plans (40:55D-28d).

1. Municipal Master Plans and Zoning

The preparation of the Passaic Township Master Plan included consideration of the master plans and zoning ordinances of surrounding communities. A brief description of these considerations is provided below.

Berkeley Heights Township - The southeastern portion of Passaic abuts the Township of Berkeley Heights. Virtually all adjacent lands in Berkeley Heights are zoned OL (Open Land) to reflect county parks and other county land holdings along the Passaic River. A small portion of nearby land in Berkeley Heights lies in an LI (Light Industrial) zone that is separated from Passaic by the Passaic River.

Passaic Township land along the Berkeley Heights border is in a conservation classification on the Township Land Use Plan. The zoning and land use plans of the two communities are therefore in conformance with each other.

Chatham Township - Chatham Township is located immediately east of Passaic Township. Zoning in this area of Chatham falls into two residential districts and two conservation districts. The residential districts are the R-1A (Residence - 100,000 square feet minimum lot size) and the R-3 (Residence - 20,000 square feet minimum lot size). The two districts are located in the area of Meyersville Road and Long Hill Road. The two conservation districts are the WA (Wilderness Area) which covers the Great Swamp area, and the CP (County Park) which includes land along the Passaic River.

Chatham's residential zoning is adjacent to, and consistent with, the low density residential districts in Passaic Township. Chatham's WA and CP districts are also consistent with Passaic's Land Use Plan, which places both the Great Swamp and Passaic River areas in a conservation designation.

Harding Township - Harding is located along Passaic's northern border in an area almost completely encompassed by the Great Swamp. Harding's zoning in this area is limited to its PL (Public Land) district that reflects the presence of government held land in this area.

Harding's zoning along this border is consistent with Passaic's conservation district that covers the Great Swamp area.

Bernards Township - The common border between Bernards and Passaic runs from Harding Township in the north to the Route 78 interchange with King George Road to the south. Zoning of adjacent lands in Bernards alternate between a P-1 (Public Purpose) zone and several residential zones. The residential zones range from low to medium density and include the R-2 (2-acre minimum lot size), R-4 (30,000 square feet), R-5 (40,000 square feet) and R-6 (30,000 square feet) districts.

The Bernards Township zoning pattern presents no major inconsistencies with the Passaic Land Use Plan. Lands in this area of Passaic are predominantly in a low density residential district that spans the Basking Ridge Road/Valley Road area, while conservation districts cover the Great Swamp and Passaic River areas. Additionally, the Passaic River forms the entire border between the two communities and provides an adequate buffer for the land use and zone patterns of the two municipalities.

Warren Township - Warren is located immediately south of the Passaic Township border. Most of the land in this area has been zoned ECR, Environmentally Critical Rural Residential, again in recognition of the

Passaic River flood plain corridor. Additionally, a small area to the west of Plainfield Road has been zoned GI-1, General Industrial.

The Warren zoning districts are consistent with Passaic's Land Use Plan, which designates most of this area for conservation purposes. Again the presence of the Passaic River provides an effective buffer between the two communities.

2. County Plan

Morris County Land Use Plan - The Morris County Master Plan was prepared in 1975. This document contains a Future Land Use Plan Element which recognizes Passaic's large amount of environmentally sensitive open space in the Great Swamp and Passaic River areas. The Plan also notes the continued presence of three village settlements in Passaic (Millington, Stirling and Gillette) and forecasts no major population-employment centers for the Township.

The Morris County Future Land Use Plan is consistent with the Land Use Plan of Passaic Township.

3. State Plan

State Development Guide Plan (SDGP) - The SDGP places Passaic Township in two development classifications. A Growth Area designation covers most of the Township outside the Great Swamp, while a Conservation Area includes the Great Swamp lands in Passaic, Harding and Chatham. The growth category is intended to identify areas with adequate development infrastructure and a relative absence of farms and open space. The conservation designation identifies natural resource areas that require protection from environmental degradation through development controls and governmental land acquisition.

The SDGP is generally consistent with the Passaic Township Land Use Plan in that it recognizes the Great Swamp and Valley Road corridor as

distinctly different areas. The State Plan, however, fails to recognize the environmentally sensitive Passaic River area. Current efforts to update the SDGP should be monitored by local officials to ensure that the conservation district is expanded to include the river flood plain/wetlands corridor.

In summary, the current Land Use Plan of Passaic Township is in general conformance with the plans of all neighboring municipalities, the County and the State. Further, Passaic's secluded location between the Passaic River and the Great Swamp greatly limit the Township's exposure to development impacts of nearby communities. Despite this, future planning efforts should continue to investigate the conformance of local and regional plans with those of Passaic.

V. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

A. Introduction

Plan implementation refers to the various measures available to the Township to insure execution of the Plan. These involve both legal and informal measures. The informal measures include educating the public and governmental officials responsible for the day-to-day decisions that have an effect on Township development, of the existence of a Master Plan. The legal measures, which are also known as land use controls, include site plan review, zoning and subdivision regulations, building and housing codes, and the like. There are also additional aids to plan implementation in the form of capital improvement programming and various State and Federal assistance programs for specific projects.

The adoption of the Master Plan does not signify an end to the local planning effort. Planning is a continuing process through time in a community alert to its changing needs. State law requires a periodic review of the Plan and of the data supporting the Plan, with the necessary updating of various proposals or elements of the Plan. Data of the kind used in the planning process become invalid or obsolete as time passes. New data, therefore, must be acquired, analyzed and interpreted into an updated Plan as conditions require. In addition, a major feature of a continuing planning program is that more detailed proposals may be developed for various elements of the Plan.

A community needs an aggressive, positive policy for improvement. This policy must operate at three levels: the level of the individual citizen; the level of the various businesses and developers who are responsible for major improvement activities; and finally, at the public level of elected, appointed and hired officials who are responsible for the review and approval of development activities.

Daily decisions, as they are formed week after week, month after month, and year after year, are in the end those which create the community as it exists at a given point in time. There have been all too many instances of logical, even inspired, plans which failed to change the community in any effective way, in the course of time. To be effective, a Plan must live in the minds of those who make daily decisions to insure that those decisions are constantly working toward the final goal.

B. Legal Requirements

The Master Plan, upon adoption by the Planning Board, gives the community the legal basis for control over future development. The major points which are contained in the Municipal Land Use Law (chapter 291, Laws of N.J. 1975) are summarized as follows:

The location and design of new streets created through the process of land subdivision or site plan approval may be required to conform to the provisions of the Circulation Plan element of the Master Plan. (40:55 D-38b(2)).

Where the Master Plan provides for the reservation of designated streets, public drainageways, flood control basins or public areas, the Planning Board may require that such facilities be shown and reserved in subdivisions and site plans in locations and sizes suitable for their intended use. The reservation powers are effective for a period of one year after approval of a final plan. The municipality must compensate the owner for such action. (40:55D-44).

Whenever the governing body or other public agency proposes to spend public funds, incidental to the location, character or extent of a capital project, such proposal must be referred to the Planning Board for review and recommendation. No action shall be taken without such recommendation or until 45 days have elapsed after such reference. (40:55 D-31).

All of the provisions of a zoning ordinance, or any amendment or revision thereto, shall either be substantially consistent with the Land Use element of the Master Plan or designed to effectuate such plan element. (40:55D-62).

C. Implementation Proposals

As discussed in the various Plan elements some revisions or additions to the present development ordinances are necessary to implement the Master Plan. Many of these have been discussed by the Planning Board during plan development and some have been drafted into ordinance form.

The major ordinance revision concerns the zoning ordinance map. Because the Land Use Law requires that the zoning ordinance be consistent with the Land Use Plan, several zone map changes are necessary. A proposed new zone map has been prepared and is included in this report. No new zone districts are required, but the arrangement of the zone districts has been adjusted on the proposed zone map to conform to the future land use categories on the Land Use Plan as follows:

<u>Land Use Plan</u> (use category)	<u>Zone Map</u> (applicable zone district)
Conservation	R-1 and P
Semi-Public	R-1 and P
Residential (low density)	R-2 and R-3
Residential (medium density)	R-4
Residential (high density)	R-MF and SC
Commercial	B-1-5; B-1-20; B-2 and B-3
Industrial	LI-2
Economic Development	ED-3 and ED-5

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