

# Master Plan Reexamination Report

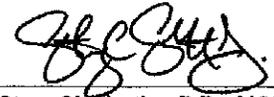
Prepared for:

Township of Washington  
Bergen County, New Jersey

Adopted by the Planning Board on February 22, 2006

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The original of this document has been signed and sealed in accordance with New Jersey Law

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## INTRODUCTION

The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL; N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89) requires that each municipality in New Jersey undertake a periodic review and reexamination of its local Master Plan. The purpose of the Reexamination Report is to review and evaluate the Master Plan and municipal development regulations on a regular basis in order to determine the need for updates and revisions. This report constitutes the Master Plan Reexamination Report for the Township of Washington as required by the MLUL.

The Township of Washington adopted its last Master Plan Reexamination Report in 1998. The current Reexamination Report serves as an amendment to the 1976 Revised Master Plan, and updates the goals and objectives presented in the 1976 Revised Master Plan as revised and amended through the 1998 Master Plan Reexamination Report.

## REQUIREMENTS OF THE PERIODIC REEXAMINATION REPORT

The MLUL requires that the Reexamination Report describe the following:

- The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.
- The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.
- The extent to which there have been significant changes in assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for master plans 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 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 recommendation 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 seq.) into the land use plan 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.

The report that follows addresses each of these statutory requirements.

**MAJOR PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES IN 1998, AND THE EXTENTS TO WHICH PROBLEMS HAVE BEEN RESOLVED OR INCREASED AND OBJECTIVES MET**

At the time of the 1998 Master Plan Reexamination Report, heavy traffic on Washington Township's principle roadways, particularly on Pascack Road and Washington Avenue, was a major problem for the Township. This had been an ongoing problem for the Township, and had resulted in the 1988 prohibition of certain uses from its Class "C" Retail Business Areas in order to avoid additional traffic generation in these areas. Faced with the issue of continued heavy traffic congestion, the Township's 1998 Master Plan Reexamination Report included the following general goal for the Township:

- Maintain the quiet single-family, residential, suburban community character, with some community-oriented services and facilities.

In order to meet this goal, the 1998 Master Plan Reexamination Report provided the following objectives:

- Maintain and preserve residential neighborhoods through neighborhood planning principles such as provision of neighborhood facilities and routing through-traffic around residential neighborhoods.
- Provide adequate community facilities to serve residents in terms of schools, parks, playgrounds, library, fire station, and other municipal buildings.
- Provide adequate community services for the residents in terms of police and fire protection, street cleaning, snow removal, garbage disposal, health services, recreational programs, senior citizen services, sewerage and water supply.
- Preserve and enhance the quality of the environment.
- Provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout the community.
- Maintain the quality of housing and non-residential buildings in regard to safety, health and appearance through administering and implementing the current property maintenance code and design review by the Planning Board.
- Encourage good design, amenity and proper landscaping in new and rehabilitated buildings.
- Preserve open space and limit impervious surface coverage.
- Protect and enhance the open spaces around the private lake area though appropriate application of current Township and State regulations.
- Conduct the Township's planning program within the framework of a regional setting and remain fully cognizant of the needs and rights of the adjoining municipalities and of Bergen County.
- Encourage storm water management controls for all new developments.
- Promote the conservation of energy through the use of planning practices designed to reduce energy consumption and to provide the maximum utilization of renewable energy sources.

- Encourage citizen and business participation in the planning process.
- Promote the maximum practicable recovery of recycling or recyclable materials from the municipal solid waste through the use of planning practices designed to incorporate the State Recycling Plan goals and to complement municipal recycling programs.

Since the last Master Plan Reexamination Report, the Township and its Planning Board have worked proactively to maintain Washington's "quiet, single-family, residential, and suburban" character. While traffic congestion continues to be an issue both in Washington Township and throughout the region, the Township has been successful in its efforts to protect Washington's residential character while providing needed community services. At the same time, the Township of Washington has addressed its affordable housing obligations with the adoption of its current Housing Element and Fair Share Plan in 2001.

In fact, the Township of Washington has not significantly changed since the time of its 1998 Master Plan Reexamination Report, and remains a fully developed community. Consequently, the Planning Board reaffirms the goal and objectives of the 1998 Master Plan Reexamination Report with the exception of some minor changes and additions, which are discussed below.

#### UPDATED GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

In order to maintain the relevancy of the Master Plan to the issues and problems currently faced by Washington Township, the goal and objectives are updated as provided below.

#### UPDATED GOAL

Though the Planning Board reaffirms the general goal of the 1998 Master Plan Reexamination Report, the following editorial change is hereby made as part of this 2006 Master Plan Reexamination Report (text to be deleted is ~~struck through~~; text to be added is underlined):

- Maintain the quiet single-family, residential, suburban community character, with ~~some~~ community-oriented services and facilities.

#### UPDATED OBJECTIVES

**Community Facilities:** Since the Township's last Master Plan Reexamination Report, there have been several improvements to the community's facilities. These include additions and renovations to the Washington Township Public Library, which now features history, children's activity, and young adults' rooms, as well as an auditorium, and upgraded computer services, windows, lighting, and furnishings. In addition, the Court Chambers and Leyrer Hall have been connected with a 20,000 square foot structure,

which creates a proper municipal building for the Township of Washington. This 20,000 square foot space houses the municipal offices and the Jack Woods Senior Center.

These expanded facilities represent a significant achievement in the fulfillment of the objectives of the 1998 Master Plan Reexamination Report. Nonetheless, the Township of Washington is committed to providing further improvements to its community facilities. Consequently, this 2006 Master Plan Reexamination Report maintains the following objective of the 1998 Master Plan Reexamination Report, with the modification indicated below (text to be deleted is ~~struck through~~; text to be added is underlined):

- Provide ~~adequate~~ adequate community facilities, including schools, parks, playgrounds, the library, the fire station, and other municipal buildings, to sufficiently serve the Township's residents, ~~in terms of schools, parks, playgrounds, library, fire station, and other municipal buildings.~~

**Community Services:** The Township's objective to provide adequate community services to its residents is reaffirmed with the editorial modifications reflected below (text to be deleted is ~~struck through~~; text to be added is underlined):

- Provide adequate community services for the residents, including ~~in terms of~~ police and fire protection, street cleaning, snow removal, garbage disposal, health services, recreational programs, ~~senior citizen services,~~ sewerage and water supply.

**Senior Citizen Services:** In recent years, there has been an increase in the Township's population of those aged 65 years or greater. This trend is discussed in the community profile, which is provided in the next section of this Master Plan Reexamination Report. In order to accommodate the needs of this growing population, the Planning Board includes the following new objectives in this 2006 Master Plan Reexamination Report:

- Provide adequate community services for those aged 65 years or greater, including enhanced transportation options and activity programming.
- Provide a sufficient amount of housing opportunities for those aged 65 years or greater.

**Affordable Housing:** The Township of Washington has adopted a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan on March 28, 2001. Recognizing the fully developed character of the Township, this document includes a vacant land adjustment, which establishes the Township's Realistic Development Potential (RDP) at 24 low and moderate income housing units. The Housing Element and Fair Share Plan address the Township's obligation with an 11-unit Regional Contribution Agreement (RCA), seven units within group homes for the developmentally disabled, and six bonus rental credits resulting from the group homes. The adoption of the

Housing Element and Fair Share Plan has precipitated the inclusion of the following new objective within this 2006 Master Plan Reexamination Report:

- Continue to implement the Township's Housing Element and Fair Share Plan.

The Housing Element and Fair Share Plan were approved by the Court, and the Township was granted a judgment of compliance and repose on May 9, 2003, which continues in effect to December 31, 2007.

**Commercial Zones:** The Township has reviewed its current land use patterns and determined that the present extent of the Class "C" Retail Business Area, as regulated by Sections 245-42 through 245-57 of the Code of the Township of Washington, is sufficient for both the present and anticipated future needs of the Township, and no expansion of the Class "C" Retail Business Area is proposed. Consequently, the Planning Board includes the following as an objective of its 2006 Master Plan Reexamination Report:

- Maintain the Township's existing, balanced land use pattern by strictly adhering to the land use designations provided for each zone district in Chapter 245 of the Code of the Township of Washington and the Township Land Use Plan map, which is included in the 2006 Master Plan Reexamination Report. In particular, commercial uses should be limited to the existing Class "C" Retail Business Area.

**Additional Objectives:** In order to help the Township meet its goal of maintaining its single-family, residential, suburban community character, with community oriented services and facilities, the Planning Board also supplements the objectives contained in its 1998 Master Plan Reexamination Report as follows:

- Develop and adopt proper ordinance standards for the limitation of impervious surface coverage.
- Maintain the Township's aesthetic appeal by passing an ordinance for the preservation and protection of its trees.
- Extend Gorga Place to allow for the residential subdivision of properties located within Blocks 1101 and 1201.
- Improve the economic viability and aesthetic appeal of the Township's Retail Business zone district through the development of design standards for new development and the improvement of existing business uses.

**EXTENT TO WHICH THERE HAVE BEEN SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN ASSUMPTIONS, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES**

Since the adoption of the 1998 Master Plan Reexamination Report, the emergence of new housing and land use trends at the local level, as well as changes at the State level, have prompted several changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives of the Township.

**COMMUNITY PROFILE**

**Population:** Table I shows the change in the Township's age distribution over the past decade. Though the population in most age cohorts has decreased, the Township of Washington has experienced an increase in the number of children aged 14 years and less, as well as those aged 65 years or more. Despite the significant increase in the population aged 65 years or greater, the Township's overall population has decreased by 307, or approximately 3.3 percent from 1990 to 2000. The percentage of the Township's population aged 65 years or more is likely to continue to increase in the coming years, due to the fact that age-restricted housing units have been added to the Township's housing stock after the 2000 US Census. Because they were constructed after 2000, the impact of these age restricted units is not reflected in the Table below.

Table I - Age Distribution				
Township of Washington, 1990 and 2000				
	1990		2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 5 years	551	6.0	606	6.8
5 to 9 years	506	5.5	582	6.5
10 to 14 years	528	5.7	543	6.1
15 to 19 years	533	5.8	408	4.6
20 to 24 years	646	7.0	321	3.6
25 to 34 years	1,299	14.1	949	10.6
35 to 44 years	1,410	15.3	1,530	17.1
45 to 54 years	1,353	14.6	1,329	14.9
55 to 59 years	704	7.6	605	6.8
60 to 64 years	674	7.3	553	6.2
65 to 74 years	724	7.8	955	10.7
75 to 84 years	250	2.7	465	5.2
85 years and over	67	0.7	92	1.0
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>9,245</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8,938</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: 1990 and 2000 US Census

As shown in Table II, the racial composition of the Township has been relatively consistent. In the period from 1990 to 2000, the Township experienced only a small decrease in the white; Asian; and, American Indian or Alaska Native populations. In the same period, there has also been a slight increase in the black or African American population.

RACIAL DATA				
Township of Washington, 1990 and 2000				
	1990		2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White	8,635	93.4	8,229	92.1
Black or African American	48	0.5	88	1.0
American Indian or Alaska Native	10	0.1	4	0.0
Asian	526	5.7	498	5.6
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other	26	0.3	119	1.3
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>9,245</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8,938</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: 1990 and 2000 US Census

**Housing:** Although the population decreased by 3.3 percent in the period from 1990 to 2000, the Township gained 55 new housing units and experienced a 78.5 percent decrease in the amount of vacant units. In addition, the number of seasonal units decreased by 46.2 percent. These developments indicate that the size of the Township's households is decreasing, which results in increased housing demand and correlates with the increased proportion of the population aged 65 years and greater.

HOUSING UNITS				
Township of Washington, 1990 and 2000				
	1990		2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Occupied Units	3,091	96.9	3,219	99.2
<i>Owner Occupied</i>	2,939	92.1	3,093	95.3
<i>Renter Occupied</i>	152	4.8	126	3.9
Vacant Units	99	3.1	26	0.8
<i>Seasonal</i>	13	0.4	7	0.2
<i>For Rent / Sale / Other</i>	86	2.7	19	0.6
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>3,190</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3,245</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: 1990 and 2000 US Census

As shown in Table IV, only 4.2 percent of the Township's housing stock was constructed in the period from 1990 through March 2000. The overwhelming majority, or 75.5 percent, of the Township's housing stock was built prior to 1970.

Table IV - Residential Units Constructed		
Township of Washington, 2000		
	2000	
	Number	Percent
1999 through March 2000	16	0.5
1995-1998	30	0.9
1990-1994	90	2.8
1980-1989	361	11.1
1970-1979	299	9.2
1960-1969	882	27.2
1940-1959	1,404	43.3
1939 or earlier	163	5.0
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>3,245</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: 1990 and 2000 US Census

Despite the reduced residential construction activity shown in Table IV, there has been an increase in the number of new residential units constructed after the year 2000. As shown in Table V, a total of 106 certificates of occupancy have been issued for residential units from 2002 to 2003. It is noted that most of the certificates of occupancy would have been issued for age-restricted residential units associated with the Washington Grand development.

Table V - Residential Certificates of Occupancy and Demolition Permits Issued		
Township of Washington, 1996 through July 2005		
	Certificates of Occupancy	Demolition Permits
1996	1	1
1997	8	2
1998	7	0
1999	4	3
2000	8	3
2001	8	2
2002	76	4
2003	30	3
2004	3	1
2005 (January 1 to July 31)	0	0

Source: New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division of Codes and Standards

Table VI provides information on the changes in household characteristics that have occurred in the period from 1990 to 2000. Among these changes is the significant increase in the percentage of householders aged 65 years and older, which, at the time of the 1990 US Census accounted for only 4.4 percent of the total population, and comprised 7.7 percent of the population at the time of the 2000 US Census. Table VI

also provides information on the decreased average household size of 2.77 persons, which is a manifestation of the Township's aging population.

TABLE VI - Household Characteristics				
Township of Washington, 1990 and 2000				
	1990		2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Family Households	2,699	87.3	2,688	83.5
Non-Family Households	392	12.7	531	16.5
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>3,091</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3,219</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Householders 65 and over	135	4.4	248	7.7
Average Household Size	2.99	N/A	2.77	N/A

Source: 1990 and 2000 US Census

### CHANGES AT THE STATE LEVEL

**State Development and Redevelopment Plan:** The State Planning Commission adopted the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) in June 1992 and later revised it in March 2001. The SDRP contains a number of goals and objectives regarding future development and redevelopment of New Jersey. The primary objective of the SDRP is to guide development to areas where infrastructure is available or can be readily extended to, such as along existing transportation corridors, in developed or developing suburbs, and in urban centers. New growth and development should be located in "centers", which are "compact" forms of development, rather than in sprawl development. The overall goal of the SDRP is to promote development and redevelopment that will consume less land, deplete fewer natural resources and use the State's infrastructure more efficiently.

To achieve these goals, the SDRP proposes a number of statewide policies and objectives. Among these is the redevelopment and revitalization of New Jersey's cities and urban areas. As set forth in the 2001 SDRP:

*Revitalizing the State's cities and towns cannot be a simple matter of restoring them to their former glory, but rather of transforming them. To be sustainable, a new vision of the economic, environmental, and social role each community will play within a larger region should be developed and pursued cooperatively in the context of a Regional Strategic Plan."*

Washington Township is identified as Planning Area 1 (Metropolitan). Among the objectives of Planning Area 1 is to protect the character of existing stabilized communities. Accordingly, the Township's planning efforts are consistent with the SDRP's objectives for Planning Area 1.

**Residential Site Improvement Standards:** The New Jersey Residential Site Improvement Standards (RSIS) were adopted in January 1997, and last revised on February 7, 2005. The RSIS governs any site improvements carried out in connection with a new residential development. The RSIS were designed to create uniform standards and ensure predictability in the development process. The rules supersede municipal standards for residential development. It is, therefore, recommended that the Township's development regulations continue to be evaluated in light of consistency with the RSIS as implemented by the State.

### SPECIFIC CHANGES RECOMMENDED FOR THE MASTER PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

The Township of Washington has carefully reviewed its Master Plan and Development Regulations. Other than the updated goal and objectives and recommendations described in the prior sections of this report, no further changes are recommended for the Master Plan and Development Regulations at this time. The Township's current planning goal and objectives are listed below.

#### GOAL

The overall planning goal of the Township of Washington is as follows:

- Maintain the quiet single-family, residential, suburban community character, with community-oriented services and facilities.

#### OBJECTIVES

The planning objectives of the Township of Washington are as follows:

- Maintain and preserve residential neighborhoods through neighborhood planning principles such as provision of neighborhood facilities and routing through-traffic around residential neighborhoods.
- Provide community facilities, including schools, parks, playgrounds, the library, the fire station, and other municipal buildings, to sufficiently serve the Township's residents.
- Provide adequate community services for the residents, including police and fire protection, street cleaning, snow removal, garbage disposal, health services, recreational programs, sewerage and water supply.
- Provide adequate community services for those aged 65 years or greater, including enhanced transportation options and activity programming.
- Provide a sufficient amount of housing opportunities for those aged 65 years or greater.

- Continue to implement the Township's Housing Element and Fair Share Plan.
- Preserve and enhance the quality of the environment.
- Provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout the community.
- Maintain the quality of housing and non-residential buildings in regard to safety, health and appearance through administering and implementing the current property maintenance code and design review by the Planning Board.
- Encourage good design, amenity and proper landscaping in new and rehabilitated buildings.
- Preserve open space and limit impervious surface coverage.
- Protect and enhance the open spaces around the private lake area through appropriate application of current Township and State regulations.
- Conduct the Township's planning program within the framework of a regional setting and remain fully cognizant of the needs and rights of the adjoining municipalities and of Bergen County.
- Encourage storm water management controls for all new developments.
- Promote the conservation of energy through the use of planning practices designed to reduce energy consumption and to provide the maximum utilization of renewable energy sources.
- Encourage citizen and business participation in the planning process.
- Promote the maximum practicable recovery of recycling or recyclable materials from the municipal solid waste through the use of planning practices designed to incorporate the State Recycling Plan goals and to complement municipal recycling programs.
- Maintain the Township's existing, balanced land use pattern by strictly adhering to the land use designations provided for each zone district in Chapter 245 of the Code of the Township of Washington and the Township Land Use Plan map, which is included in the 2006 Master Plan Reexamination Report. In particular, commercial uses should be limited to the existing Class "C" Retail Business Area.
- Develop and adopt proper ordinance standards for the limitation of impervious surface coverage.
- Maintain the Township's aesthetic appeal by passing an ordinance for the preservation and protection of its trees.
- Extend Gorga Place to allow for the residential subdivision of properties located within Blocks 1101 and 1201.
- Improve the economic viability and aesthetic appeal of the Township's Retail Business zone district through the development of design standards for new development and the improvement of existing business uses.

## LAND USE PLAN MAP

The Township of Washington's Land Use Plan map is shown in Appendix A. The Land Use Plan Map reflects the Township's existing development characteristics. No changes are proposed to the Township's existing zone plan, with the exception that a new Planned Residential Townhouse Development (PRTD) area has been added to the West of the Parkway along Van Emburgh Road, which is part of the Township's Housing Element and Fair Share Plan. The Plan also reflects other zone changes adopted since the last Master Plan Reexamination Report.

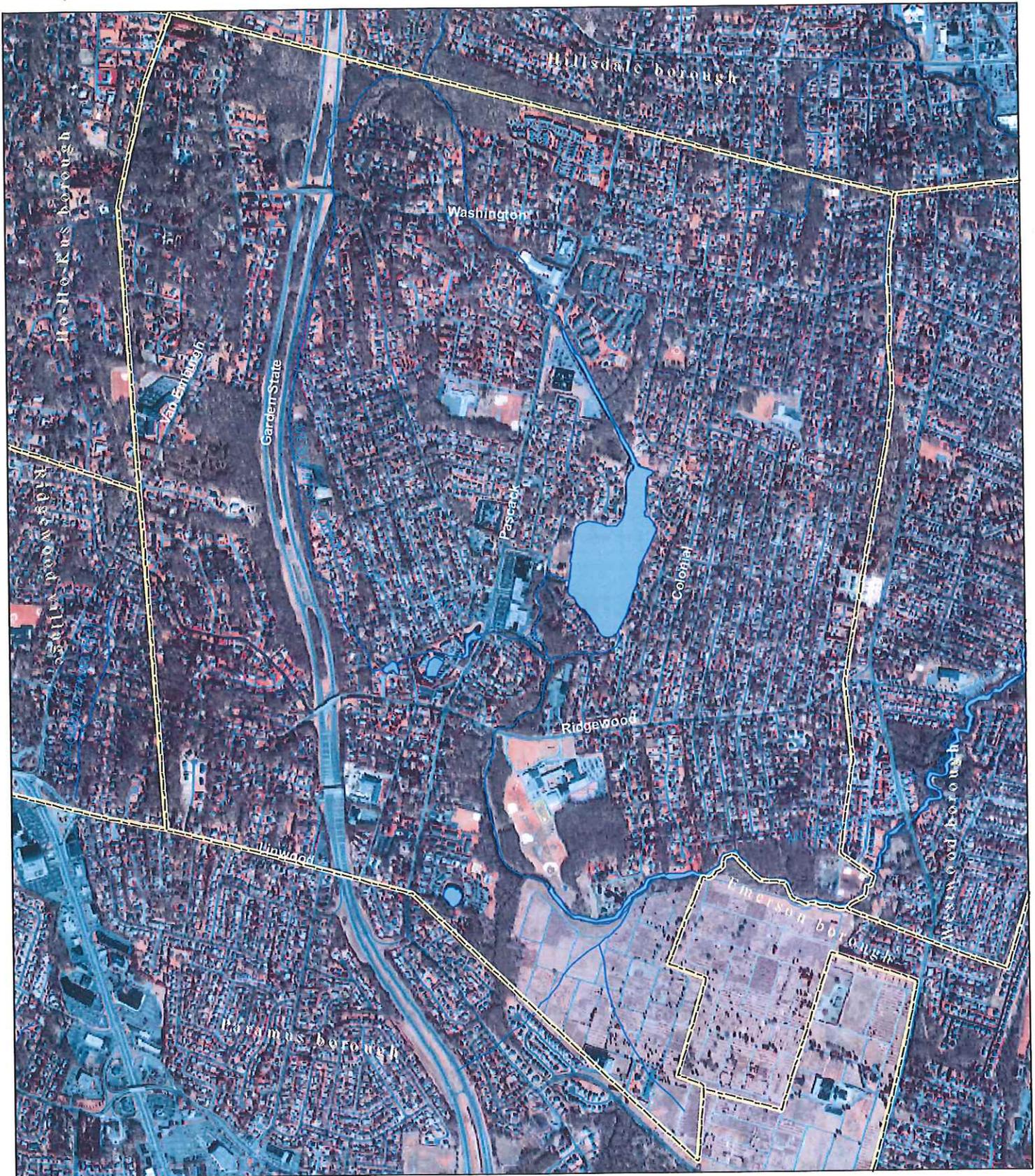
## REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

Washington Township has not adopted or prepared any redevelopment plans in accordance with the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq.). This Reexamination Report requirement is, therefore, not applicable to the Borough.

# APPENDIX A: Land Use Plan



# APPENDIX B: Aerial Photograph



11 Tindall Road  
 Middletown, NJ 07748-2792  
 Phone: 732-671-6400

**ASSOCIATES** Fax: 732-671-7365

0 750 1,500 3,000  
 Feet

-  Streams
-  Open Water
-  Municipal Boundary

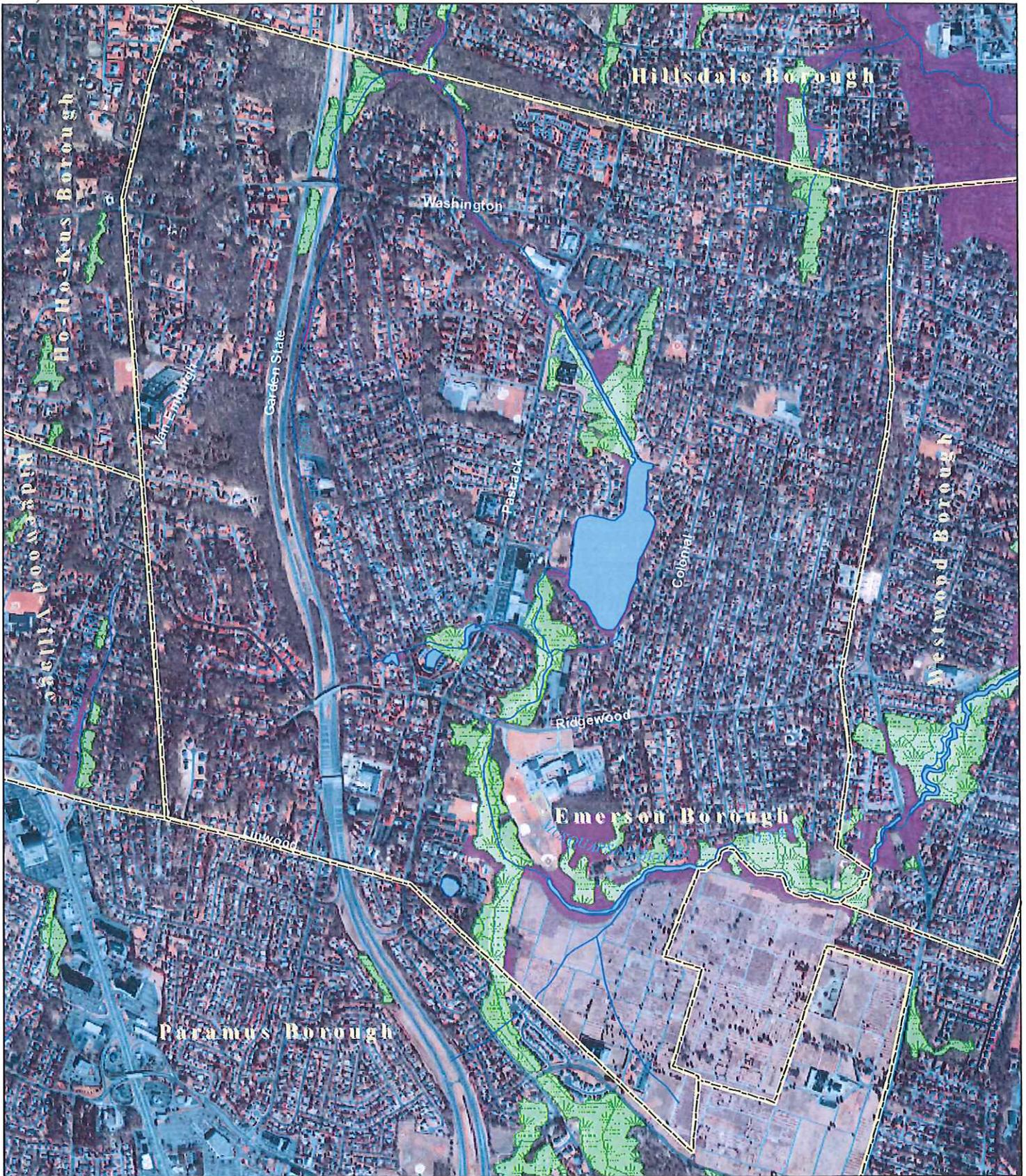
## Aerial Photograph Washington Township Bergen County, New Jersey

Prepared by: JMP, February 8, 2006  
 Source: NJDEP  
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NOTE: This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by NJDEP and is not State-authorized.

## **APPENDIX C: Environmental Constraints**



11 Tindall Road  
 Middletown, NJ 07748-2792  
 Phone: 732-671-6400  
 Fax: 732-671-7365

ASSOCIATES

0 750 1,500 3,000  
 Feet

-  Freshwater Wetlands
-  100 Year Flood Hazard
-  Streams
-  Open Water
-  Municipal Boundary

## Environmental Constraints Washington Township Bergen County, New Jersey

Prepared by: JMP, February 8, 2006  
 Source: NJDEP  
 File Path: H:\wtbc\00030\GIS\Projects\wtbc30\_wet\_lettersize.mxd



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