

Farmland Preservation Program
**Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan
& Planning Incentive Grant Application**

Submitted to:

**THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY
STATE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Submitted By:

The Holmdel Township Zoning Board
Holmdel Township, Monmouth County
4 Crawford Corner Road
Holmdel, NJ 07733

Prepared pursuant to:
The Municipal Planning Incentive Grant Statute (N.J.S.A. 4:1C-43.1)

Prepared By:

Phillips Preiss Grygiel LLC
Planning and Real Estate Consultants
33-41 Newark Street, Third Floor, Suite D
Hoboken, NJ 07030

Adopted by the Holmdel Township Planning Board on:

November 30, 2010

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	i
LIST OF FIGURES	ii
LIST OF TABLES.....	ii
INTRODUCTION	1
I MUNICIPALITY’S AGRICULTURAL LAND BASE	3
II HOLMDEL’S AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY – OVERVIEW	17
III LAND USE PLANNING CONTEXT	21
IV MUNICIPALITY’S FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM OVERVIEW	42
V FUTURE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM	48
VI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.....	68
VII NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION.....	75
VIII AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY SUSTAINABILITY, RETENTION AND PROMOTION.....	79
APPENDIX A.....	83
APPENDIX B.....	89

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Inventory of Agricultural Land in Holmdel Township, 2002	4
Figure 2: Map of Project Area	5
Figure 3: Farmland Soil Classification	10
Figure 4: Inventory of Agricultural Land in Holmdel Township, 1995	15
Figure 5: Inventory of Agricultural Land in Holmdel Township, 1986	16
Figure 6: Inventory of Agricultural Land by Planning Area in Holmdel Township.....	24
Figure 7: Regional Planning Areas	25
Figure 8: Zoning Map for Holmdel Township	33
Figure 9: Land Use in Holmdel Township 1986	37
Figure 10: Land Use in Holmdel Township 1995	38
Figure 11: Land Use in Holmdel Township 2002	39
Figure 12: Existing and Future Sewer Service Areas	40

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Properties in the Project Area	6
Table 2: Acreage of Soil Classifications for Active Agriculture Land, Township of Holmdel	9
Table 3: Farmland-Assessed Acreage in Holmdel Township, 1980-2007.....	13
Table 4: Farmland-Assessed Acreage in Monmouth County, 1983/4-2004	13
Table 5: Monmouth County Census of Agriculture Statistics, 1987-2002.....	13
Table 6: Monmouth County and Holmdel Township Agricultural Land as per NJDEP 2002 Land Use/Land Cover	14
Table 7: Agro Uses of Farmland-Assessed Acreage in Holmdel Township, 1980-2007 (in acres)	14
Table 8: Acreage Trends for the Top Five Crops in Holmdel Township, 1984-2005 (in acres)	18
Table 9: Historical Trends of Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold for Monmouth County and the State of New Jersey.....	18
Table 10: Agricultural Acres in Relation to Each Planning Area in Holmdel Township	23
Table 11: Estimates of Agricultural Land in Holmdel Township by Zoning District	32
Table 12: Percentage Breakdown of Land Uses in the Holmdel Township for 1986, 1995 and 2002	35
Table 13: Agricultural Acres in Relation to Each Planning Area in Holmdel Township	35
Table 14: Acreage of Existing Lots Within Each Size Category, Holmdel Township	36
Table 15: Township of Holmdel Residential Building Permits Issued, 2000-2008	41
Table 16: Acreage in the Project Area	50
Table 17: Soil Characteristics of Properties on the List of Farms	55
Table 18: Tillable Acreage of Properties on the List of Farms	56
Table 19: Project Area Density Calculations per N.J.A.C. 2:76-17.5	57
Table 20: Estimated Cost of Purchasing Development Easements from Properties on the List of Farms	63
Table 21: 10-Year Cost Projections	65
Table 22: Monmouth County and Holmdel Township Dedicated Open Space Fund Tax Collections, 1999-2008	66

HOLMDEL TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

Serena DiMaso, Mayor
Patrick Impreveduto, Deputy Mayor
Larry Fink, Committeeman
Rocco Pascucci, Committeeman
Janet Berk, Committeeman

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Jim Allocco, Township Resident
George Callan, Land-owning Farmer
Marge Callan, Land-owning Farmer
John Flemer, Township Resident
Denise Moutone, Township Resident

MUNICIPAL PIG ADMINISTRATOR

Denise Fritz

INTRODUCTION

Holmdel Township is a municipality with a proud agricultural heritage dating back to the 18th century. The Township has grown tremendously since the construction of the Garden State Parkway, and as a highly desirable community in which to live, the currently unrestricted farmland scattered throughout the Township is highly coveted by developers. As evidenced by its history—spanning decades—of promoting the paramount need to protect agricultural lands within the Township, Holmdel Township is very much committed to the goal of farmland preservation.

Realizing that the leveraging of multiple funding sources is essential to the future provision of preserved farmland, the main objective of the FY 2009 Holmdel Township Farmland Preservation Plan is to guide Holmdel Township's efforts in selecting the most appropriate funding sources, preserving its remaining farmland, and maintaining a viable agricultural industry. Although the prominence of the agricultural industry has decreased within the Township over the previous decades, farming is still a significant component of the community's character, and accordingly, the remaining farmland within the Township is an inimitable natural resource.

This application was prepared pursuant to the Farmland Preservation Planning Incentive Grant (PIG) Program. A Township Representative attended two (2) meetings with representatives of the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) Office and the Monmouth County Agricultural Development Board (MCADB) in July and October 2007 in order to learn about the application procedures and requirements. In addition, the Township held two (2) public meetings of the Agricultural Advisory Committee, which resulted in a general discussion of the Township's farmland history and agricultural industry; an identification of two (2) additional farms to add to the targeted List of Farms (as established in the 2002 PIG Application and 2004 amendment to the application) within the overall Agricultural Development Area (ADA); and the future needs and desires of the farming community.

The Farmland Preservation PIG program was established by the New Jersey Legislature in June 1999 to preserve areas of contiguous farmland that will promote the long-term viability of the agricultural industry. In May 2007, the SADC enacted new guidelines to provide uniform standards for the development of Municipal Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plans. These guidelines supplement proposed new rules at N.J.A.C. 2:76-17A, update previous planning standards, and incorporate recommendations from the 2006 edition of the Agricultural Smart Growth Plan for New Jersey, the Planning Incentive Grant Statute (N.J.S.A. 4:1C-43.1) and the NJ Department of Agricultural Guidelines for Plan Endorsement under the SDRP.

This Plan serves as a comprehensive update to both the original 2002 PIG Application and the 2004 PIG amendment and is intended to be complete and adequate pursuant to the laws governing the State's Farmland Preservation PIG program. The grant program is intended to preserve a "significant area of reasonably contiguous farmland that will promote the long term economic viability of agriculture as an industry in a municipality or county." (N.J.A.C. § 2:76-17A). Pursuant to N.J.A.C. § 2:76-17.6, the grant program requires that the Farmland Preservation Plan Element include all of the items listed above, in addition to a number of components that address the Township's agricultural land base, its agricultural industry, land use planning context, an overview of the Farmland

Preservation Program, the future of farmland preservation in the county, economic development, natural resource conservation and agricultural industry sustainability, retention and promotion.

I MUNICIPALITY'S AGRICULTURAL LAND BASE

To identify opportunities for farmland preservation and associated areas where agriculture is most likely to remain viable, it is essential to understand the location, size, and underlying soil characteristic of the Township's agricultural land base, as well as the potential to access a reliable water supply.

Location and Size of Agricultural Land Base

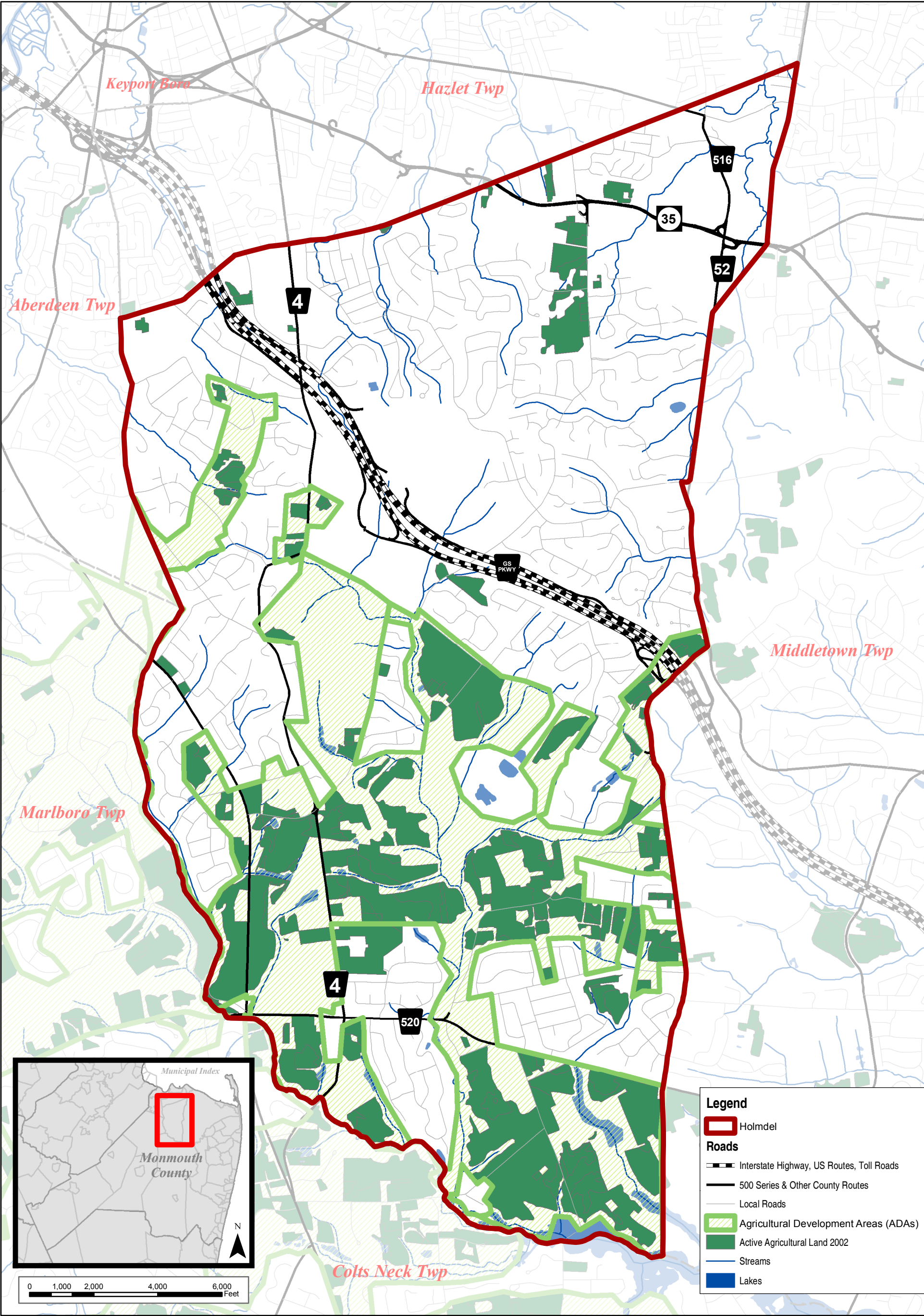
Agricultural lands account for approximately 1,477 acres of the Township, according to 2007 farmland assessment data. The number is down from approximately 3,624 agriculture acres in 1985. Parenthetically, note that the agricultural land count does not include publicly owned lands. Throughout Monmouth County, the downward trend of farmland acreage extends well beyond the early 1980s. The County's—along with the Township's—total farmland has declined significantly, commencing during the 1950s, which is when the Garden State Parkway was completed.

Figure 1 is a map showing all of the farmland within the Township, derived from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) 2002 land use/land cover data, and Appendix A lists the inventory of existing farmland (including publicly owned parcels) in Holmdel, based on Holmdel Township 2007 farmland assessment data.

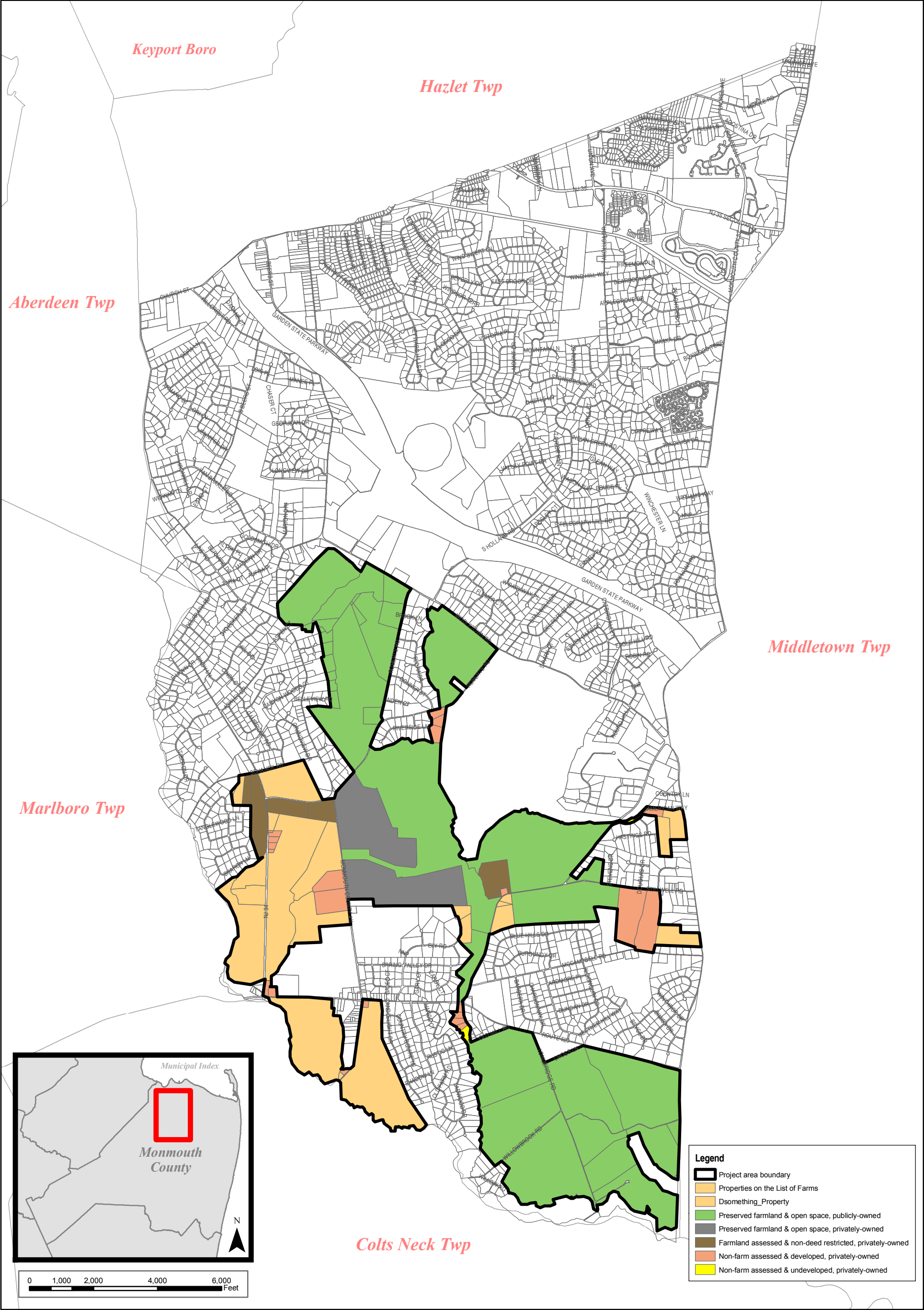
The farmland within the Project Area is listed in Table 1 and Figure 2 is a map detailing the entire Project Area, showing the locations of the targeted List of Farms for preservation. The list and the map are based on numerous existing documents, the Township's tax records and NJDEP 2002 land use/land cover data. The list and map includes the properties on the List of Farms; already permanently preserved open space and farmland that is publicly owned; privately-owned, deed-restricted properties; privately owned, farmland-assessed properties that are not on the List of Farms and are not deed-restricted; and other privately-owned properties that are not on the List of Farms and are not deed-restricted. The Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) is not aware of any properties in the Township that are farmed but not listed as farmland-assessed.

Among the 12 Monmouth County municipalities that have significant remaining farmland, Holmdel is ranked ninth (9th).

By the middle of this decade, much of the farmland in the area north of the Garden State Parkway had been developed. A few scattered farmland and open space sites remain in that area, while most of Holmdel's remaining farmland is concentrated in the southern half of the community. The largest farmland site in Holmdel is the former Chase tract, which was recently purchased by a group of public and non-profit agencies, including the Township. There are several other large parcels in the vicinity of the Chase tract, particularly along Holmdel Road and Route 34 south of Schanck Road.



Agricultural Land Inventory 2002



Project Area

Table 1: Properties in the Project Area

Properties on the List of Farms					
<i>Block</i>	<i>Lot</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Acreage</i>	<i>Farm Portion</i>
2	2 & 26	WESTOR PARTNERSHIP	26 Main St/Route 520	92	91
3.08	2	ATOCHEM NORTH AMERICA, INC.	S. Holmdel Road	118	100
9	5.01	BALLIN, CHARLOTTE & SHURE J TRUSTEE	193 Everett Road	16.9	13.2
9	17.04	BALMER, CAROLE J. DICK	96 Middletown Road	13.3	12.3
9	17.05				
9	17.06				
10	10.03	GURAL, DONALD & DEBORAH	Hastings Place	10.87	10
10	10.04	CALLAN, GEORGE & MARGIE	153 Everett Road	12.19	11.94
11	29.04	PANTANO, SALVATORE & SUSAN E.	31 Ely Road	6.01	5.01
11	29.05	PANTANO, SALVATORE & SUSAN E.	33 Ely Road	3.67	3.67
13/15	1,6,11/2	HMF ASSOC c/o VENTURA & MIESOWITZ	HIGHWAY 34	208.98	207.98
13	14	HOLMDEL CENTRE LLC	970 Holmdel Road	33.32	33.32
15	2.03	HCC, LLC	188 Highway 34	11.89	8.79
15	3.01	HOLMDEL NURSING & CONV. HOME	184-186 Highway 34	15.13	14.13
15	9.02	MARTINEZ, JOSE M	26 Schanck Road	5.28	5.28
16	2	ANSTALT c/o OPPENHEIM	Highway 34	39.6	39.6
Subtotal				587.14	556.22
Already Permanently Preserved Farmland and Open Space: Publicly-Owned Properties					
<i>Block</i>	<i>Lot</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Acreage</i>	<i>Farm Portion</i>
11	36	BAYONET FARM, TOWNSHIP OF HOLMDEL	Middletown Road	13.86	12
11	77.01	BAYONET FARM, TOWNSHIP OF HOLMDEL	Middletown Road	135.37	80
11	36.01	CHASE TRACT, COUNTY/TOWNSHIP	Holmdel Road	226.79	0
3	9&10	CROSS FARM, TOWNSHIP OF HOLMDEL	Longbridge Road	110.9	43
3	15	CROSS FARM, TOWNSHIP OF HOLMDEL	Willowbrook Rd.	71.4	41
5	2&3	CROSS FARM, TOWNSHIP OF HOLMDEL	Longbridge Road	115.57	86
9	15.01	HARDING FARM, TOWNSHIP OF HOLMDEL	Middletown Road	79.6	75
10	14.03	HARDING FARM, TOWNSHIP OF HOLMDEL	Stillwell Road	10	10
19	29	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	67	0
19	26.01	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	1.59	0
19	40	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	41.1	0
19	28	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	4.76	0
19	24	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	0.8	0
19	25.01	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	2.74	0
19	41	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	11.23	0
19	42	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	11.18	0
19	46	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	40.02	0

FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN

HOLMDEL TOWNSHIP

<i>Block</i>	<i>Lot</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Acreage</i>	<i>Farm Portion</i>
19	43	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	0.59	0
19	44	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	0.11	0
19	18.01	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	2.27	0
19	20.01	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	4.06	0
19	22.02	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	3.12	0
19	45	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	2.94	0
19	17,01&47	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	133.39	6
19	16	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	3.33	0
19	47.01	HOLMDEL PARK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH	Longstreet Road	6.03	6.03
20	4	F&F NURSERIES	23 Roberts Road	101.77	61.0
11	29.02	RAMANESSIN BROOK GREENWAY, TOWNSHIP OF HOLMDEL	Ely Road	1.48	0
11	58	THOMPSON PARK, MONMOUTH COUNTY	Middletown Road	22.23	0
7	1	THOMPSON PARK, MONMOUTH COUNTY	Longbridge Road	122.17	61.09
7	2 & 2.01	THOMPSON PARK, MONMOUTH COUNTY	Longbridge Road	131.2	118.08
7	2.02	THOMPSON PARK, MONMOUTH COUNTY	Route 520	18	0
7	3	THOMPSON PARK, MONMOUTH COUNTY	Route 520	4.62	4.62
7	5	THOMPSON PARK, MONMOUTH COUNTY	Longbridge Road	34.76	34.78
7	6	THOMPSON PARK, MONMOUTH COUNTY	Longbridge Road	66.41	19.92
Subtotal				1,602.39	658.52

Already Permanently Preserved Farmland and Open Space: Privately-Owned, Deed-Restricted Properties

11	33.01	CASOLA, ANTONIO & KIM	915 Holmdel Road	95.76	94.76
11	32.01	CASOLA, JR. CARMINE	939 Holmdel Road	94.24	93.24
Subtotal				190.00	188.00

Privately-Owned Properties That Are Not Deed-Restricted: Farmland-Assessed

<i>Block</i>	<i>Lot</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Acreage</i>	<i>Farm Portion</i>
11	80.01&81	RICE, DENNIS PATRICK	35 Middletown Road	20.73	17.93
13	2.01	GIULIANI, LUCA & ANTONINETTA	Holmdel Road	11.5	11.5
13	2.02	CASOLA, JR., CARMINE	Highway 34	13.28	13.28
15	7	CASOLA, ANTONIO & KIM	Highway 34	25.81	25.81
15	9.03	PIOTROWSKI, JOHN	Highway 34	5.28	4.28
Subtotal				76.6	72.8

Privately-Owned Properties That Are Not Deed-Restricted: Not Farmland-Assessed, Already Developed

<i>Block</i>	<i>Lot</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Acreage</i>	<i>Farm Portion</i>
2	25	SERLUCCO & HAASE, PARTNERSHIP	35 S. Holmdel Road	1.09	0
3	6.01	SOLDO, PAUL	4 Old Mill Road	1.7	0
3	6.02	DRONNE, RUSSELL E. & MAUREEN	Route 520-76 Main St.	1.02	0
3	6.03	McGEE, JOHN P. & CAROL	6 Old Mill Road	1.96	0
3	6.04	DALL, JOHN & STEPHANIE	8 Old Mill Road	1.47	0
3.08	1	EXXON CORPORATION	46 Main Street	0.76	0
9	14.01	SHERMAN, KATHLEEN	76 Stillwell Road	29.8	0
9	14.02	TENANT 79 ASSOCIATES LLC	Stillwell Road	25.55	0
10	10.02	SANTOPADRE, ERMENEGILDO & MARY ELLEN	3 American Way	2.51	0
11	57	HOLMDEL COMMUNITY CHURCH CEMETERY	Middletown Road	1	0
11.04	18	DEBORAH C. ZACHARY	20 Riverside Lane	4.62	0

FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN

HOLMDEL TOWNSHIP

<i>Block</i>	<i>Lot</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Acreage</i>	<i>Farm Portion</i>
11.04	19	MATTHEW & TIWA SUN	22 Riverside Lane	2.9	0
11.04	20	JOSEPH E. & DIANE L. PARISI	23 Riverside Lane	2.62	0
13	1.01	NEW JERSEY AMERICAN WATER COMPANY	Route 34	0.08	0
13	7	WEISS, FRANCIS	169 Route 34	1.15	0
13	8	TKACH, HENRY J. & PATRICIA A.	171 Route 34	1.15	0
13	9	WANG, PING C.	173 Route 34	0.96	0
13	10	MARTINEZ, MARIAN	175 Route 34	0.35	0
13	12	CRUZ CONSTRUCTION CORP.	962 Holmdel Road	11	0
13	13	HOLMDEL VENTURE c/o BERGMAN REALTY	Holmdel Road	16.8	0
13	6.01	SUN REFINING & MARKETING COMPANY	217 Route 34	1.4	0
13	16.03	WEST MAIN STREET ASSOCIATES	Route 520	2	0
Subtotal				111.89	0
Privately-Owned Properties That Are Not Deed-Restricted: Not Farmland-Assessed, Not Developed					
<i>Block</i>	<i>Lot</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Acreage</i>	<i>Farm Portion</i>
3	4	VENINO, WILLIAM	Ladwood Road	2.24	0
10.01	10	RIGHT OF WAY	American Way	0.43	0
10.01	11	RIGHT OF WAY	American Way	1.49	0
Subtotal				4.16	0
Grand Total				2,572.18	1,475.54
<i>Source: Township of Holmdel</i>					

FARMLAND SOIL CLASSIFICATION

Many parts of Holmdel have high quality soils for agricultural purposes. Figure 3 — which was compiled by the Monmouth County Agriculture Development Board and is the most current information available — shows soils in Holmdel that are classified as "prime farmland", "farmland of statewide importance" and "unique farmland" (Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2008). These terms are specifically defined by U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS), as follows:

- *Prime Farmland.* "Land best suited for producing food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops, and also available for these uses (the land could be cropland, pastureland, rangeland, forest land, or other land but not urban built up or water)." To qualify as "prime", the soils must also meet specific technical standards for moisture supply, pH, presence of water tables, flooding frequency, slopes, erodibility, climatic standards, permeability and density of rock fragments, as determined by the NRCS.
- *Farmland of Statewide Importance.* These are soils that are determined to be important by the State of New Jersey for farming but exhibit some characteristics that disqualify them from being classified as "prime". According to the NRCS, "these soils can be farmed satisfactorily by greater inputs of fertilizer and soil amendments, drainage improvement, erosion control practices, or flood protection."

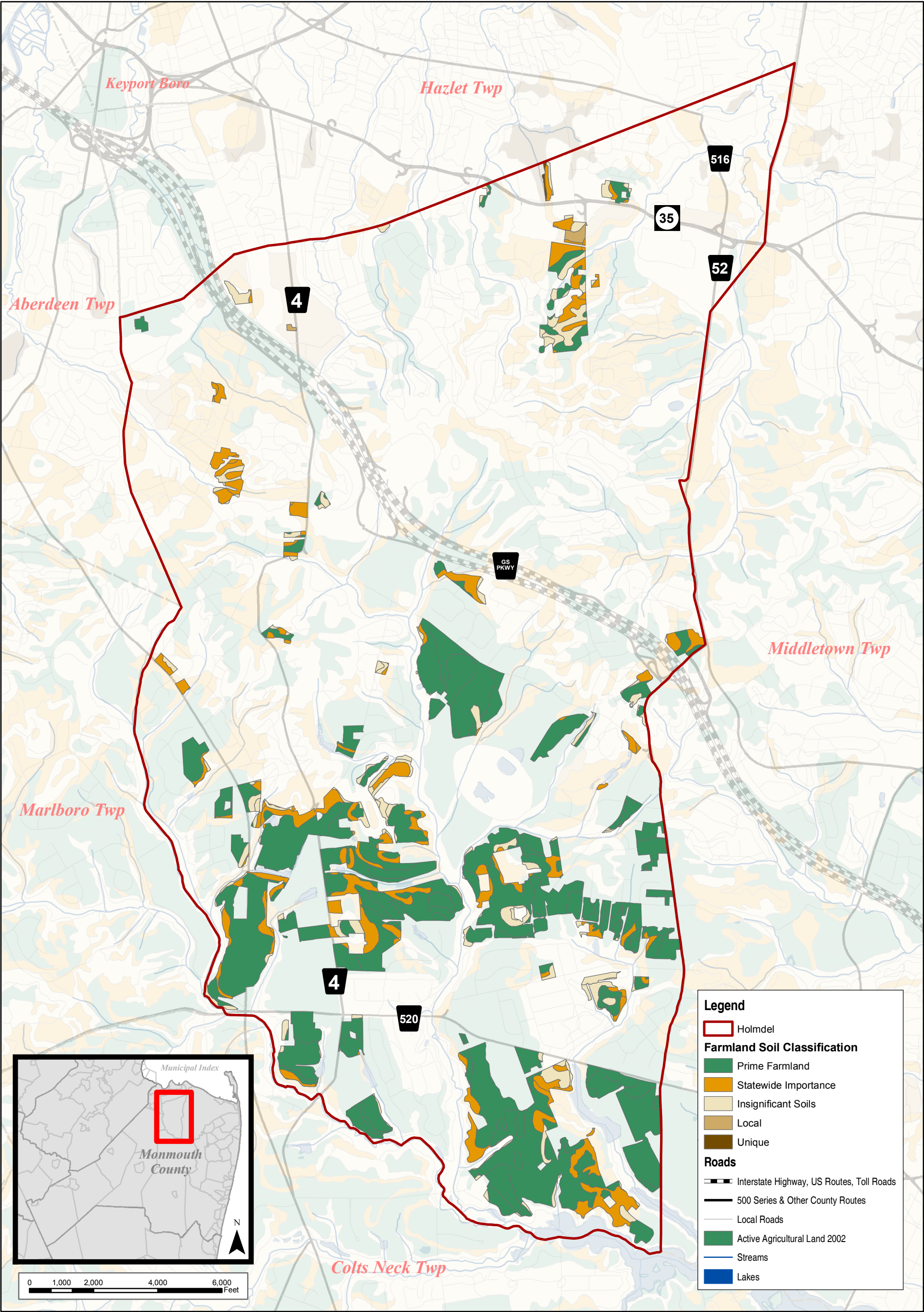
- **Unique Farmland.** This is land other than "prime" farmland that can be used for the production of specific high-value food or fiber crops and/or high yields of those crops. While not qualifying as "prime", it has a special combination of soil quality, location and moisture supply (including man-made irrigation systems) necessary for those crops.
- **Insignificant Soils for Farming Purposes.** These are soils that would not be able to sustain agriculture, whether because they have been developed with urban uses (residential, commercial, or industrial), or because they have steep slopes, wetlands, or surface water. The white-colored areas of the map inside the Township boundaries represent large bodies of water.

Figure 3 shows that the largest contiguous areas of Prime Farmland are found in the southern part of the Township. These areas are relatively less developed than other parts of Holmdel, and many sites are still actively being farmed, as already discussed. The northern half of the Township contains scattered pockets of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance, interspersed with areas of Insignificant Soils. These areas of insignificant soils are composed mostly of developed sites and steep slopes.

Figure 3 shows the soil classification for active agricultural land in the Township. Table 2 below shows the acreage of each soil classification (i.e., prime, statewide, local, unique and other) based on the 2002 NJDEP land use/land cover data.

Table 2: Acreage of Soil Classifications for Active Agriculture Land, Township of Holmdel

<i>Soil Classification</i>	<i>Acreage</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Prime Farmland	1,286.0	73.9
Statewide Importance	309.4	17.8
Local Importance	6.2	0.4
Unique Importance	1.4	0.1
Other	177.4	10.2
Total	1,740.4	100*
Sources: State of New Jersey, Department of Environmental Protection, 2002; USDA NRCS		
*Note that total percentage does not equal 100 due to rounding		



Farmland Soil Classification

IRRIGATED ACRES AND AVAILABLE WATER SOURCES

Access to water is key to farm productivity and future viability. The NJ Farm Bureau considers water supply for agricultural lands to be one of its top 10 issues for 2007. As the NJDEP and federal government tighten restrictions regarding water, and more Monmouth County streams receive Category 1 designation, the agricultural community faces increasing difficulty in accessing plentiful water resources (Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2008).

There are a number of ways to irrigate a farm. Surface water from the local watershed can be collected and stored in a pond and then used to supply agricultural water needs. This method is often used for irrigation during periods of lower than normal precipitation. If the area to be irrigated is near a stream, it may be possible to withdraw water without building a pond. Groundwater is also a source of irrigation water. It may be removed by drilling a well and installing a pump, a potentially expensive proposition (Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2008).

To provide a general idea of the scale, Albert Jarrett of Penn State University estimates that irrigating cropland by sprinkler requires supply rates as high as 10 gallons per minute (gpm), per acre. Drip irrigation requires 3 to 7 gpm per acre. Farm ponds can lose 40-60% of volume to seepage and evaporation. Therefore, farm ponds require about 4 acres of upland watershed to supply one acre-foot of useable water per year (Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2008).

The NJDEP's Bureau of Water Allocation requires farmers to obtain water use registration or certification papers to withdraw larger quantities of surface water or groundwater. An operation needs water use registration if it withdraws less than 70 gallons per minute or less than 3.1 million gallons per month. A farm must obtain water use certification if it withdraws greater than 70 gallons per minute or greater than 3.1 million gallons per month. Forms are available on the NJDEP's website. They are submitted to, and processed by, the Rutgers Cooperative Extension, and then forwarded to the NJDEP (Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2008).

Water diversions were once considered routine, but because of increasingly strict environmental regulations and growing competition from other land uses, it is becoming more difficult to obtain permission for water withdrawals. It is very important not to let certifications lapse. In the coming years, it will be ever more valuable to have existing farm ponds, irrigation systems, and water rights (Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2008).

Farmers can obtain assistance with irrigation and water quality enhancement projects through the NRCS. The NRCS prepares conservation plans for both preserved and non-preserved farm owners. These plans may identify water needs and delivery systems, as well as conservation practices. The NRCS and its sister agency, the Farm Service Agency, can help landowners obtain cost-share grants to implement these plans (Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2008).

Irrigated acres have fallen in Holmdel over the last 25 years. According to Holmdel Township farmland assessment data, Holmdel had 89 irrigated acres in 1983/1984; six acres in 1991; 1 acre in 2000; and 0 acres in 2005.

The average precipitation rate in New Jersey is between 43 and 47 inches per year, and

despite some variations across the State, the Township is likely within this range; fall months are typically the driest. Though farmers rely on precipitation to support crop growth, surface and groundwater are also used during the growing season to water crops.

Monmouth County is underlain by the New Jersey Coastal Plain aquifer; large areas of Holmdel serve as recharge areas for the Red Bank Sand, Wenonah-Mount Laurel and Englishtown aquifers, which are part of the larger New Jersey Coastal Plain aquifer. Maintaining groundwater quality in Holmdel is extremely important since a number of the Township's residents use private wells for drinking water and more than 50 percent of the drinking water supply in the New Jersey Coastal Plain aquifer comes from groundwater. In addition, Holmdel contains the headwaters of several brooks. Mohingson Brook, Luppataong Creek, Flat Creek, East Creek, Takolusa Brook, and Mahoras Brook/Waackaack Creek are some of the major waterways in Holmdel.

It can be expected that availability of surface and groundwater in the Township would be reduced during the late summer months, depending on the temperature and precipitation during any given growing season. Though aquifers in the Middlesex-Monmouth-Ocean County region have been strained by population growth, there have been several reservoirs built in recent decades, which has helped landowners and homeowners shift from relying solely on groundwater.

FARMLAND ASSESSMENT AND CENSUS OF AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS AND TRENDS

During the 1980s and 1990s, as a direct consequence of increasing development pressure and rising land values, escalating levels of agricultural parcels in Holmdel were subdivided for housing. Rising land values and development pressure are primarily responsible for the loss of farmland. Commercial farming operations have been moving to less expensive, less intensively developed parts of the State or out of New Jersey altogether. In addition, many older family farms have closed as the children of farmers have pursued non-farm careers. This trend is reflected by the decreasing amount of land devoted to agricultural or horticultural use, as shown in Table 3. Figures 1, 4 and 5 show the amount of land used for agriculture in Holmdel in 2002, 1995 and 1986 respectively. It should be noted that the information in Table 3 is compiled from tax records and thus does not include the significant portions of publicly owned land in Holmdel that is used for agriculture. These public sites are discussed in greater detail in Chapters 3 and 4 of this document. While privately owned farmland has decreased steadily since 1980, as shown in Table 3, this decrease has been partially offset by the increase in publicly owned farmland through various preservation initiatives.

Table 3: Farmland-Assessed Acreage in Holmdel Township, 1980-2007

	<i>Acreage Used for Agriculture or Horticulture</i>	<i>Acreage as a Percentage of Total Township Acreage</i>
1980	4,706	41%
1985	3,624	32%
1991	2,709	24%
1995	2,493	22%
2000	1,949	17%
2004	1,818	16%
2007	1,477	13%

Sources: State of New Jersey, Division of Taxation, Twelfth Report (1980), Seventeenth Report (1985), Twenty-third Report (1991), Twenty-seventh Report (1995) and Thirty-second Report (2000), Data From New Jersey Farmland Assessment (2004) with Tax Year 2005 data, Data From FA-1 Forms for the 2007 Tax Year.

Table 4: Farmland-Assessed Acreage in Monmouth County, 1983/4-2004

	<i>Acreage Used for Agriculture or Horticulture</i>	<i>Acreage as a Percentage of Total Township Acreage</i>
1983/4	82,382	27%
1990	74,371	24%
2001	64,132	21%
2004	55,770	18%

Sources: New Jersey Farmland Assessment (1983/4, 1990, 2000, 2004)

As illustrated in Tables 3 and 4 above, both Monmouth County and Holmdel Township have lost agricultural land over the past two decades. The general trends in farmland-assessed acreage indicate that Holmdel has lost agricultural land at a somewhat greater rate than that of the overall County. As per the 2008 Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, much of the recent development in the County has been occurring along highway corridors, including Routes 34 and 35, which are proximate to Holmdel.

As per the US Census of Agriculture, the average size of a farm in New Jersey was 81 acres and the median size was 22 acres in 2002; in Monmouth County the average farm size was 53 acres and the median size was 15 acres (see also Table 5 below). In Holmdel, there were approximately 105 farm assessed parcels in 2007. The average farm size was approximately 34 acres and the median was 13 acres, which is smaller than that of both the State and the County.

Table 5: Monmouth County Census of Agriculture Statistics, 1987-2002

<i>Year</i>	<i>Farms</i>	<i>Land in Farms (acres)</i>	<i>Avg. Farm Size (acres)</i>	<i>Median Farm Size (acres)</i>
1987	840	65,849	78	-
1992	850	58,758	69	-
1997	874	59,405	68	13
2002	892	47,198	53	15

Source: US Census of Agriculture, 1987, 1992, 1997, 2002

There are several different sources of data for determining the acreage and location of agricultural land in the Township. Each of these sources uses a different methodology for

collecting and classifying farmland, so there is some variation amongst the data sources. For example, the NJDEP 2002 land use/land cover data indicated that there were 2,198 acres of farmland in Holmdel Township in 1995, whereas the farmland assessed acreage in the Township reported 2,493 acres in the same year. One potential explanation for this disparity is that NJDEP considers woodland to be a separate land use category from agricultural land.

According to the NJDEP 2002 land use/land cover data outlined in Table 6 below, the rate at which agricultural land has been lost in Holmdel between 1986-1995 and 1995-2002 has remained generally constant, with a 21% decrease in agricultural land between 1995 and 2002. Monmouth County has similarly seen a loss of agricultural land, though at a lower rate than that of the Township; the County's agricultural land decreased by 10% between 1995-2002, presumably due to increased development pressure and rising land values, resulting in the subdivision of former farmland, particularly for housing, throughout the County.

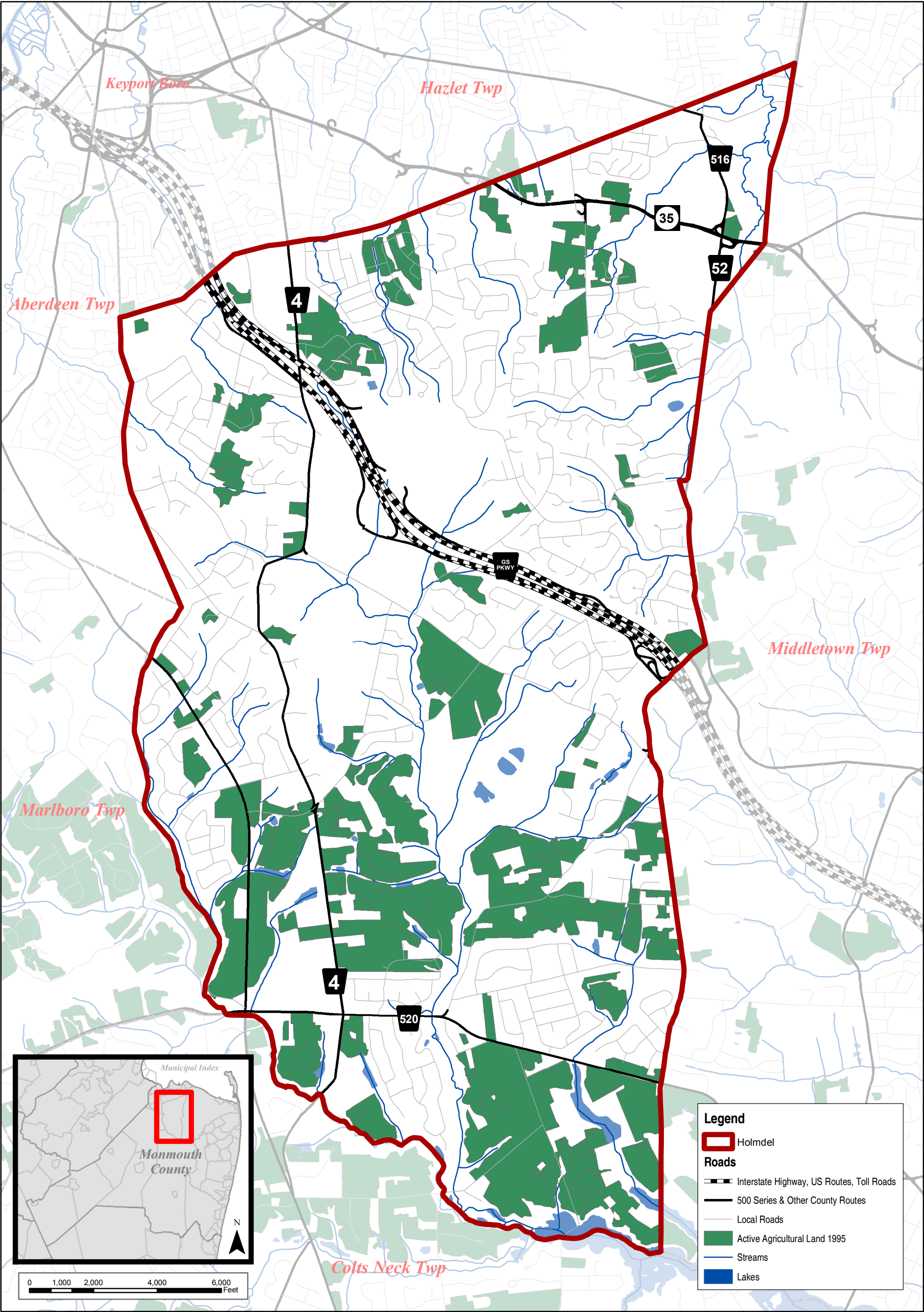
Table 6: Monmouth County and Holmdel Township Agricultural Land as per NJDEP 2002 Land Use/Land Cover

	1986	1995	2002	Percent Change 1986-1995	Percent Change 1995-2002
Monmouth County	61,056	53,501	48,500	-14%	-10%
Holmdel Township	2,709	2,198	1,740	-23%	-21%
<i>Source: NJDEP Land Use/Land Cover, 2002</i>					

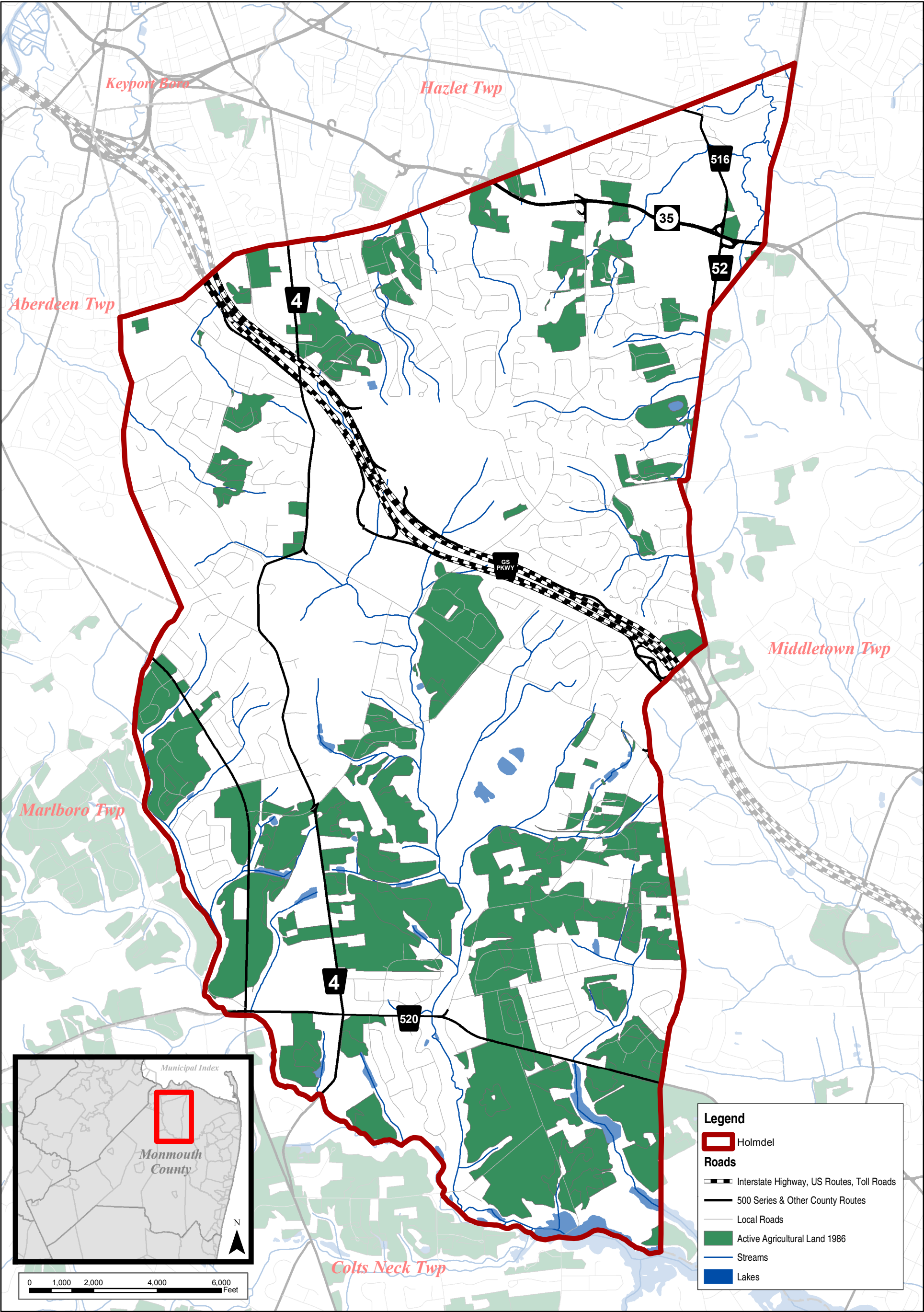
As shown in Table 7, most existing agricultural production in Holmdel consists of field crops (corn, barley, vegetables and fruits), with a much smaller amount of land used as horse or cow pastures. Also, many growers have converted to more lucrative nursery operations, in which they grow sod, trees, shrubs, flowers and other plants for use in landscaping. All agricultural uses have declined significantly since 1980. Additionally, Table 8 in Chapter 2 illustrates the acreage trends for the top five crops in the Township between 1984 and 2005, including sweet corn, trees and shrubs, soybeans, corn for grain, and other hay.

Table 7: Agro Uses of Farmland-Assessed Acreage in Holmdel Township, 1980-2007 (in acres)

	<i>Cropland Harvested</i>	<i>Cropland Pastured</i>	<i>Permanent Pasture</i>	Subtotal of Active Agriculture Use	<i>Woodland and Wetland</i>	<i>Horse Boarding</i>	Total Agriculture Uses
1980	3,157	177	369	3,703	1,002	n/a	4,705
1985	2,227	226	336	2,789	805	n/a	3,594
1991	1,896	75	144	2,115	594	n/a	2,709
1995	1,243	115	124	1,482	563	n/a	2,045
2004	890	96	93	1,079	293	7	1,372
2007	955	92	41	1,088	219	7	1,307
<i>Sources: State of New Jersey, Division of Taxation, Twelfth Report (1980), Seventeenth Report (1985), Twenty-third Report (1991), Twenty-seventh Report (1995) and Thirty-second Report (2000), Data From New Jersey Farmland Assessment (2004) with Tax Year 2005 data, Data From FA-1 Forms for the 2007 Tax Year.</i>							



Agricultural Land Inventory 1995



Agricultural Land Inventory 1986

II HOLMDEL'S AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY – OVERVIEW

Historically, and continuing until the Post-World War II boom and the concomitant construction of the Garden State Parkway in the 1950s, Holmdel had been principally an agricultural community. Documentation shows that agricultural uses within Holmdel existed in mid-17th century, and by the dawn of the Revolutionary War, the Township was one of the most affluent farming communities in the area that is now known as Monmouth County. The advent of commercial farming in the 1800s resulted in the production and sale of grain, hay, and nonperishable livestock items. The post-Civil War era saw the production of perishables for sale in markets for human consumption, including milk, eggs, fruits, and vegetables.

Holmdel has been attentive to the importance of preserving the bountiful agricultural heritage of the community. Two farms with beginnings dating back to the 1800s, the Bayonet and Longstreet Farms, are preserved for a number of cultural and historical agricultural purposes, with the latter showcasing late 19th century farm life.

Several sectors of Holmdel's farming industry have shown a marked decline in the last few decades. As was shown in Table 7, most existing agricultural production in Holmdel consists of field crops (corn, barley, vegetables and fruits), with a much smaller amount of land used as horse or cow pastures.

Case in point, some of the sharpest declines have occurred in the poultry and dairy industries. In 2005, Holmdel had only 25 chickens and no cows, compared to 174 chickens and 20 cows in 1983. Competition from other areas, low commodity prices, and high production costs have all contributed to the decline.

Over the last 30 years, vegetable production has shown a marked decline due to the loss of major food processing plants in New Jersey. The acreage of farmland devoted to vegetable production for processing has gone to field crop production, ornamental plant nurseries, sod farms, or it has been sold to developers. Vegetable production for the fresh market has shown a slower decline due to strong local and metropolitan areas for fresh produce, direct marketing to supermarkets, restaurants and farm stands, and at pick-your-own vegetable operations. Recently, vegetable farmers have included specialty crops such as herbs, oriental and other ethnic vegetables, pumpkins and field flowers to meet the growing consumer demand. Certainly, farmers have adapted to the marketplace, and this is one of the reasons behind the continued economic growth in the community and Monmouth County.

Table 8 below details the top five Township crops over the past 20 years. In 2005, Monmouth County's top five crops by acreage were trees and shrubs, soybeans, other hay, alfalfa hay and corn for grain. Like Holmdel, the largest crop in the County was trees and shrubs, which has become increasingly represented in the overall production mix for both the Township and the County over the past two decades. One of the largest crops in the County has consistently been soybeans; while soybeans were still well represented in the County's production mix in 2005, their overall acreage has diminished substantially over the past 20 years (12,988 in 1984 v. 4,404 in 2005). In Holmdel, no acres were dedicated to soybean production in 2005.

Table 8: Acreage Trends for the Top Five Crops in Holmdel Township, 1984-2005 (in acres)

	<i>Sweet Corn</i>	<i>Trees and Shrubs</i>	<i>Soybeans</i>	<i>Corn for Grain</i>	<i>Other Hay</i>
1984	402	245	193	182	153
1991	132	160	107	35	323
2001	330	169	41	78	108
2005	10	127	0	93	170
<i>Source: New Jersey Farmland Assessment Tax Years 1984; 1991; 2001; and 2005.</i>					

As the agricultural industry reacts to the changing economic climate, development activity in Holmdel Township mirrored local and regional trends. Between 2000 and 2008, 538 building permits were issued in the Township, although there has been a steady decline in permit issuance throughout the decade, with 117 issued in 2000 compared to seven issued in 2008. (See also Table 15: Township of Holmdel Residential Building Permits Issued, 2000-2008). Holmdel, with excellent schools, superior transportation connectivity, and plentiful natural vistas, has been and will continue to be an attractive place to reside. The steady decline in building permit issuance is not necessarily a function of a softening market (on the contrary, the residential market grew through the turn of the century, peaking in late 2005), but can be attributed to the decreasing ability of developable land, for which Township's well oiled farmland preservation policies, strategies, and programs have been working collectively and comprehensively to protect and preserve.

The importance of agriculture to Holmdel Township, Monmouth County, and the State may not be clear to the average resident. The most obvious benefits associated with agriculture include food production, employment opportunities, and net cash return. Agriculture also provides indirect benefits that contribute to the high quality of life enjoyed by the County's residents, such as providing scenic views that enhance the aesthetic value of communities, providing areas for groundwater recharge, and providing areas for wildlife habitat (Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2008). In Holmdel, the market value of agricultural products has similarly decreased over the past several decades. Farms in Holmdel have become increasingly smaller, as portions of former agricultural land have been sold off due to development pressure and the aging of local farmers; as a result, fewer acres are cultivated. To try and remain profitable, Township farmers have diversified their crops in recent years, to include hay, nectarines and lavender. See Table 9 for a description of the historical trends of market value of agricultural products sold for Monmouth County and the State of New Jersey between 1982 and 2002.

Table 9: Historical Trends of Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold for Monmouth County and the State of New Jersey

		<i>2002</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>1992</i>	<i>1987</i>	<i>1982</i>
Monmouth County	Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold (\$1,000)	81,551	67,973	50,945	56,598	38,147
	Per Farm	91,425	77,772	59,935	67,378	51,342
State of New Jersey	Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold (\$1,000)	749,872	697,380	532,988	496,003	435,966
	Per Farm	75,561	76,627	58,706	54,916	52,672

Source: Monmouth County Agricultural Profile and State of New Jersey Agricultural Census, 2007.

In addition to benefits to the local economy and to the environment, agriculture also benefits the local tax base. The American Farmland Trust conducted a cost of community services study in 1998 in five municipalities in Monmouth County: Freehold Township, Holmdel, Middletown, Upper Freehold and Wall. The study analyzed the impact different lands uses place on the municipal budget. In a reflection of results found nationwide, the Monmouth County study indicated that open lands, such as farms, forests, and open space, have a positive fiscal impact on the municipal budget, while residential development has a negative fiscal impact (Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2008).

Residential development may appreciate in value rapidly, but it also places a high service demand on community facilities (i.e., schools, police, fire, utilities, etc.), which results in an ultimate net cost to the municipality. Commercial and industrial development, conversely, contributes ratable over the short-term, but has been found to actually increase taxes over time and not appreciate as fast as open space and residential development (Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2008).

Farmland and open space, on the other hand, provides a surplus of tax revenues due to low service demands. This surplus may be used to offset the loss from other land uses that have high service demands. As per the 1998 American Farmland Trust study cited above, a municipality that provides a balanced approach to land use planning that includes farmland and open space preservation is better equipped to manage its future growth (Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2008).

The Township is also known locally for its farming markets, such as the Antonio Casola Farms Nursery and Greenhouse, the Dearborn Market, and Triple C Nurseries, all of which sell a variety of fruits, vegetables, Christmas trees and other non-farming related products. The Casola Farms operation is well known locally for its “pick your own” offerings. There are also small scattered roadside stands selling farm products that are grown on each respective farm.

A number of the Township’s farms are involved in direct sales to larger distributors that sell to local and regional supermarkets. The growth of sod farming and nurseries can be correlated directly to the loss of major food processing plants and the concomitant growth of personal affluence within the County and greater region over the past decades. Nursery operations, such as F&F Nurseries, have met the expanding market demand over the years.

As there are no seed suppliers or equipment dealers inside the municipal boundaries, Holmdel Township farmers are at an economic disadvantage, as they have to travel to the nearest dealer, located in Upper Freehold, or have items shipped to their farms. As such, Holmdel could certainly benefit from a farm supply broker within the Township.

As is explained in the following section, there is, and has been, continued pressure on the agricultural industry, as the agricultural land base has been diminishing for decades.

Overall, to sustain the presence and viability of the agricultural industry in the Township, which is important to stabilizing the municipal tax base and minimizing environmental issues associated with potential residential development, the Township will require additional farmland preservation appropriations.

AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES WITHIN THE MARKET REGION

The Farmer's Brokerage and Supply ("FB&S"), located in Upper Freehold and owned by the NJ Farm Bureau, is a major supplier to Holmdel farmers. FB&S sells seed, hardware, parts of tillage equipment, chemicals, and fertilizers, in addition to operating a custom application business. For equipment and machinery, dealers in South Jersey, such as Farm Rite, Pole Tavern Equipment, and Leslie G. Fogg, Inc., and those in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, such as Hoover Inc., Messick Farm Equipment, and Wengers, are major suppliers. Farmers also rely on mail-order and the Internet for supplies.

While there are no longer any large fruit and vegetable processors remaining in Monmouth County, there are some "value added" producers that make pies, wine, spirits, non-alcoholic cider and sorbet using local agricultural products (Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2008). As per the AAC, most farmers in the area take their agricultural products to local farm stands and markets. Within Holmdel, there are a few business-to-business nurseries, including F&F Nursery and Casola's Farm. Some Township nursery and horticultural operations have indicated that they sell their goods through wholesale catalogues. Some farmers have also engaged in some form of "agricultural entertainment" beyond that of simply "pick your own" operations, allowing visitors to tour local farms and view fields and animals, particularly in the fall months of September and October.

There is not much remaining of the agricultural-related industries within the Township, though the AAC has indicated there is a local provider of deer fencing for area farmers. In the larger Monmouth County region, the equine industry has an established network of veterinary and feed/hay suppliers. Holmdel farmers have also indicated that farms specializing in boarding and raising horses have become more prominent in recent decades.

The Township should continue to market the existing farms for their goods and services and seek out additional opportunities to attract niche agricultural uses to the Township to serve both the community and region. It is suggested that the Township's various agricultural boards meet more regularly to brainstorm on how to expand and adapt the Township's farming activities.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Salem County maintains a comprehensive online resource, entitled "Green Pages: An Agricultural Resource Guide," which contains listings regarding where to obtain support services and market agricultural products. It can be found at <http://saalem.rutgers.edu/greenpages/index.html>.

III LAND USE PLANNING CONTEXT

To assist the Township in selecting farms suitable for preservation, and to better understand the constraints and supports of the agricultural economy, this chapter will examine the State Plan, the County's planning initiatives, the Township's Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance, overall land use patterns and trends, existing and proposed infrastructure, and TDR opportunities.

THE STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN AND CROSS ACCEPTANCE

The State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP), or "State Plan," articulates a vision of the future growth of the entire State in such a way that will promote sustainability and enhance the quality of life for all New Jersey residents. According to the implementation legislation, the purpose of the State Plan is to "coordinate planning activities and establish planning objectives in the following areas: land use, housing, economic development, transportation, natural resource conservation, agriculture and farmland retention, recreation, urban and suburban redevelopment, historic preservation, public facilities and services, and intergovernmental coordination." The State Plan was first adopted in 1992, updated and revised in 2001, and is currently under awaiting an adoption of a 2006 revision.

The SDRP contains the following Planning Areas. Although agricultural land can exist within any of the designated planning areas, a majority exists within Planning Areas 4 and 4B, including 94% of all preserved farmland in the State.

- Planning Area 1: Metropolitan Planning Area
- Planning Area 2: Suburban Planning Area
- Planning Area 3: Fringe Planning Area
- Planning Area 4: Rural Planning Area
- Planning Area 4B: Rural Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area
- Planning Area 5: Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area

According to the SDRP, the Plan's intentions for Planning Areas 4 and 4B have six key objectives:

- To maintain the environs as large contiguous areas of farmland and other lands;
- To revitalize cities and towns;
- To accommodate growth in Centers;
- To promote a viable agricultural industry;
- To protect the character of existing, stable communities; and
- To confine programmed sewer and public water services to Centers.

The overall objective is to balance growth and conservation, and it is expressed through a policy map depicting a range of six Planning Areas and five Designated Centers, each with its own goals, objectives, policies, and strategies. Planning Areas are geographically delineated to reflect the State's varying levels of development, infrastructure capacities, and presence of natural resources but not necessarily municipal or county boundaries.

According to the SDRP, Centers are identified by a range of population, employment, density, housing, and infrastructure: Urban Centers, Towns, Regional Centers, Villages, and Hamlets. Centers are ranked in a hierarchy and thus all are located and designed to accommodate a capacity of desired growth as defined by specific delineation.

The following are pertinent SDRP Agricultural Policies in relation to the Township's agricultural base:

- *Agriculture Policy 2: Preservation of the Agricultural Land Base.* "Consider the expenditure of public funds for preservation of farmland as an investment in public infrastructure and thereby emphasize the public's interest in maintaining long-term agricultural viability."
- *Agriculture Policy 3: Coordinated Planning.* "Coordinate planning efforts of all levels of government to ensure that policies and programs promote agriculture."
- *Agriculture Policy 4: New Development.* "Plan and locate new development to avoid negative impacts on agriculture."
- *Agriculture Policy 5: Innovative Planning and Design Techniques.* "Encourage creative land planning and design through tools such as clustering, phasing and density transfers, purchase and donation of development rights, agricultural enterprise zones and districts and the provision of self-contained community wastewater treatment systems to serve [the State Plan's designated] Centers, to accommodate future growth in ways that maintain the viability of agriculture as an industry, while avoiding conflict with agricultural uses."
- *Agricultural Policy 9: Enhancing the Agricultural Industry.* "Promote economic development that supports the agricultural industry on municipal, county and statewide levels."
- *Agricultural Policy 13: Local Ordinances and Building Codes Sensitive to Agricultural Use.* "Promulgate local ordinances and state building code and fee criteria which are sensitive to the special purposes of agricultural construction and seasonal use."
- *Agriculture Policy 16: Promote Agricultural Management Practices.* "Encourage the use of agricultural management practices to ensure sustainable and profitable farming while protecting natural resources."

In order to ensure accuracy, the SDRP must be updated periodically, and the process by which this occurs is called Cross-Acceptance, defined as the process of comparing statewide planning policies among government levels with the purpose of attaining consistency among municipal, county, regional, and State plans. This process creates a more accurate representation of the SDRP, as the coordination process ensures that all jurisdictions have openly vetted planning recommendations, based on growth and conservation. The Monmouth County Planning Board is the designated Negotiation Entity for the current and prior round of Cross-Acceptance and has been working with all County municipalities over the past several years on reviewing planning trends and determining if and where revisions on the SDRP map should occur. The Cross-Acceptance report was submitted to the Office of Smart Growth in 2007, and the County is currently waiting for the NJ Office of Smart Growth to release its final findings and recommendations. After this process is completed, the State Planning Commission is then required to adopt the new

As seen in Figure 6 and Table 10, much of the existing farmland in Holmdel lies within the central and southern area designated as Planning Area 5 (Environmentally Sensitive) in the State Plan. One of the policy objectives for PA-5 addresses agriculture as follows: “Encourage farmland retention and agricultural viability. Promote agricultural practices that prevent or minimize conflicts with sensitive environmental resources.” Holmdel has been actively working toward these goals.

Table 10: Agricultural Acres in Relation to Each Planning Area in Holmdel Township

<i>Planning Area</i>	<i>Total Acreage</i>	<i>Acreage of Agricultural Land within PA</i>	<i>Percentage of Agricultural Land to Total Acreage Per Planning Area</i>
Suburban (PA 2)	3012	117	6.5%
Fringe (PA 3)	646	7	0.4%
Environmentally Sensitive (PA 5)	7033	1,425	78.9%
County Parks	706	258	14.3%
Total	11,397	1,807	100%

Sources: State of New Jersey, Department of Environmental Protection, 2002

A sliver of the extreme northern portion of the municipality is located within a state-controlled special resource area (CAFRA). None of the properties identified in the Project Area are located within the CAFRA delineated area.

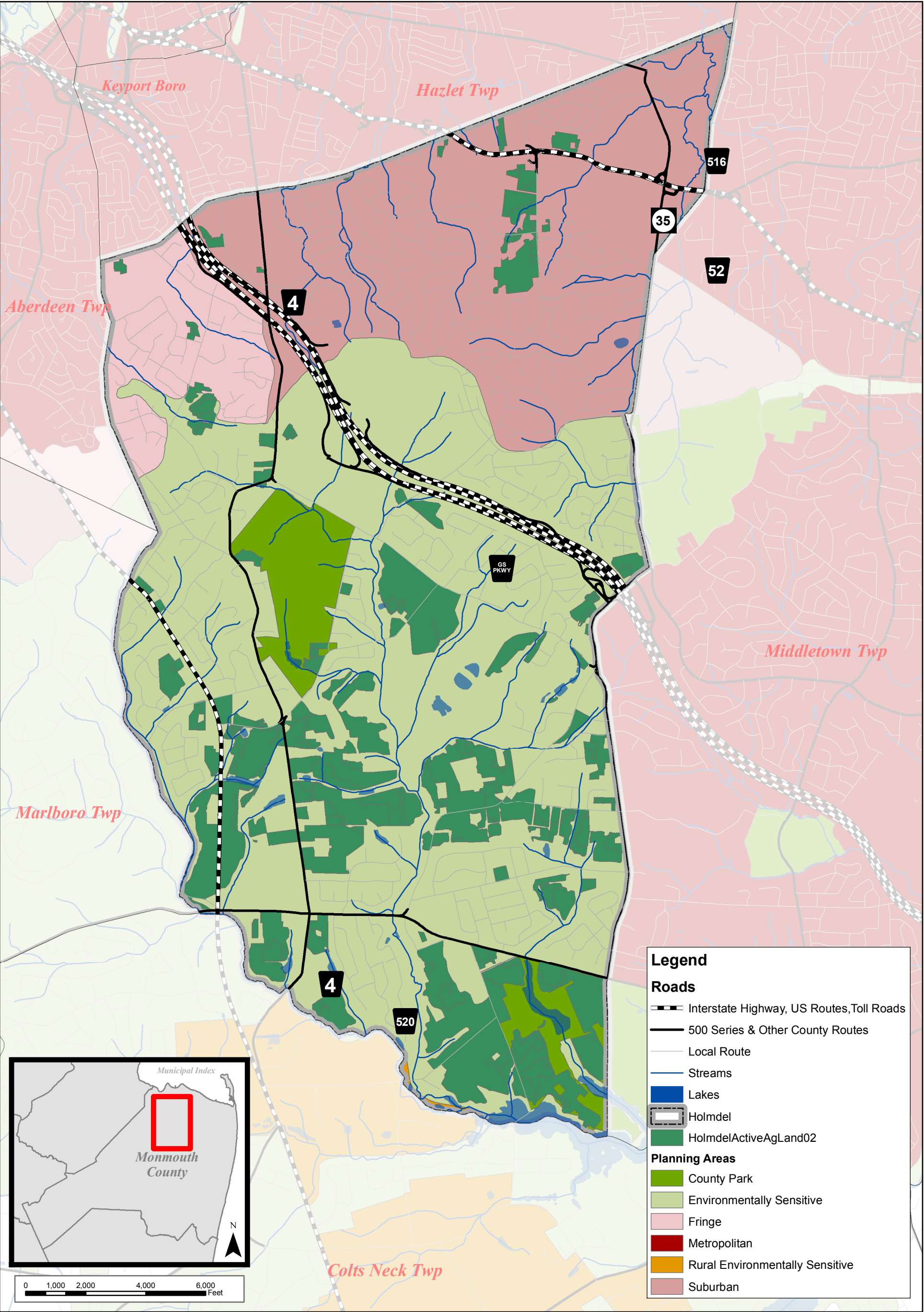
MONMOUTH COUNTY GROWTH MANAGEMENT GUIDE

The Township's initiatives with regard to farmland preservation are consistent with the Monmouth County Growth Management Guide, and especially the following “Farmland Preservation & Agricultural Development” goal: “To promote and preserve the agricultural industry and to assist municipalities in farmland preservation.”

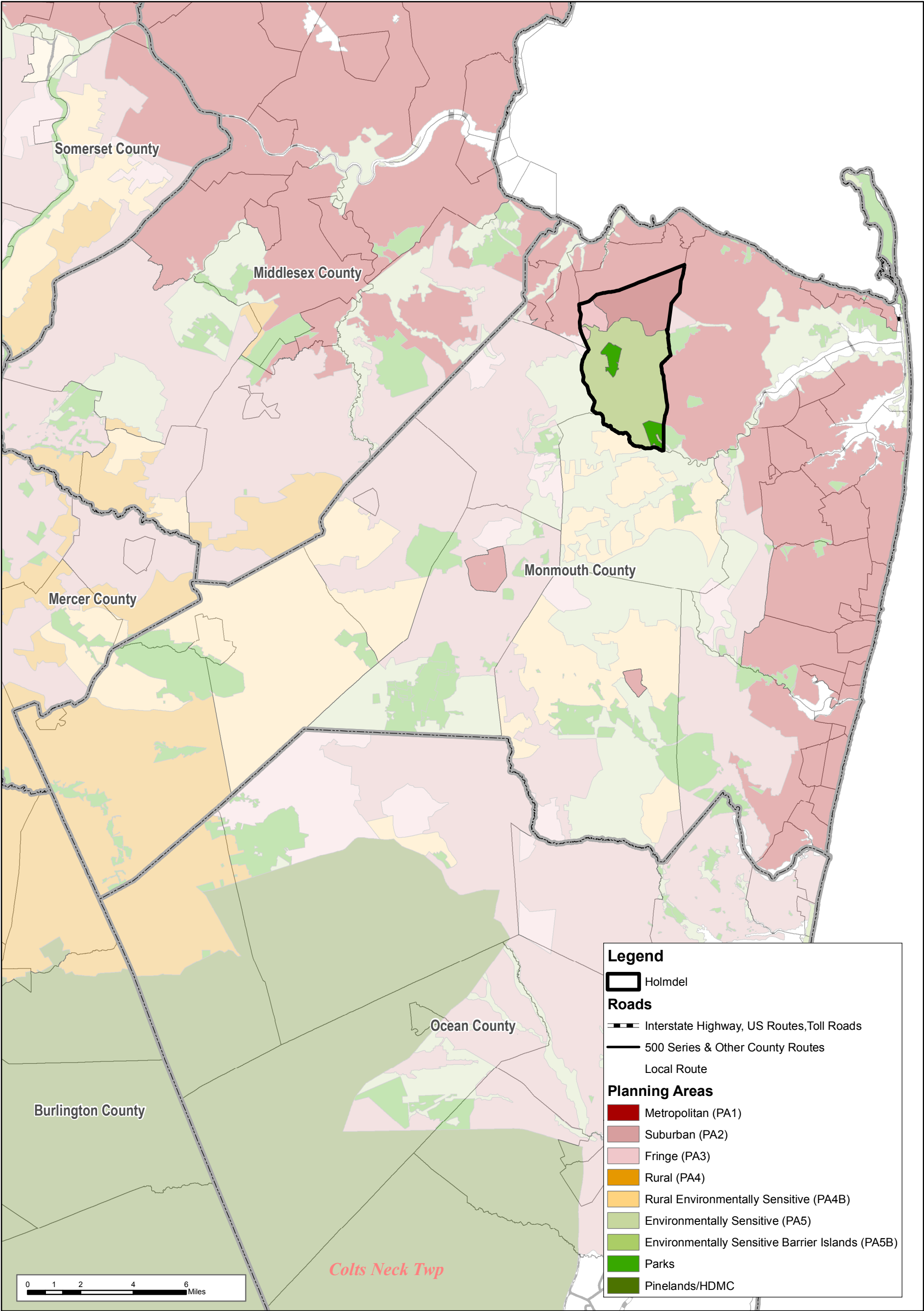
MONMOUTH COUNTY FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN

Holmdel's initiatives for farmland preservation are also consistent with the Monmouth County *Farmland Preservation Plan*. The *Plan* refers to the Growth Management Guide Map from the *Growth Management Guide*, which identifies two “Limited Growth Areas” within the County. This designation was given based on the following criteria: “absence of infrastructure, presence of significant areas of environmentally sensitive or special use lands and lack of public transportation.”

One of these Limited Growth Areas includes “those areas that are tributary to the Swimming River Reservoir and the Manasquan River Reservoir” and “Agriculture/Conservation Areas that generally [coincide] with the Limited Growth Areas consisting primarily of farmlands and woodlands.” Southern Holmdel, which includes the bulk of the remaining farmland in the Township, and is part of the Swimming River Reservoir watershed, is included in one of the Limited Growth Areas.



Planning Areas in Holmdel Township



Regional Planning Areas

MASTER PLAN POLICIES

The Goals and Objectives section of the 2004 Holmdel Township Master Plan includes several goals that are intended to encourage the preservation of farmland. They are as follows:

- Goal 2.B: Protect the unique character of Holmdel, which consists of desirable residential neighborhoods, attractive commercial areas and business campuses, and the historic hamlet of Holmdel Village and its agricultural environs.
- Goal 2.C: Preserve Holmdel's high quality of life by protecting the Township's open spaces from development and reducing the negative impacts associated with new development.
- Goal 4.J: Protect the visual quality of scenic corridors throughout Holmdel, particularly vistas of open space, natural features, farmlands and historic sites.
- Goal 7.I: Coordinate park planning with initiatives for farmland and open space preservation and natural resource conservation.

More specific Farmland Preservation Goals that are identified in the Master Plan have been carried over from the 2002 Farmland Preservation Plan. These include:

- Goal 5.A: Continue to preserve large contiguous open space areas that provide opportunities for farming.
- Goal 5.B: Encourage development patterns that maintain opportunities for agricultural activity.
- Goal 5.C: Promote the continued agricultural use of productive farmland soils.
- Goal 5.D: Promote the continued viability of the agricultural industry.

Building upon these goals, the 2004 Master Plan called for much of the southwestern part of the Township to be designated for low-density residential/agricultural use. The Plan also recommended that creative zoning techniques, such as cluster development and lot averaging, be utilized in order to concentrate new housing and reserve large contiguous areas of open space that could continue to be farmed. A large portion of this area was permanently preserved when the Chase Tract was purchased in 2001. Much of the remaining area is still currently being used for agriculture purposes.

In addition, the Township adopted a Farmland Preservation Plan Element on March 19, 2002, as an amendment to the 1993 Master Plan. The Farmland Preservation Plan sets forth numerous goals and recommendations for preserving farmland, as follows:

- *Goal 1:* Continue to preserve large contiguous open space areas that provide opportunities for farming.
- *Goal 2:* Encourage development patterns that maintain opportunities for agricultural activity.

- *Goal 3:* Promote the continued agricultural use of productive farmland soils.
- *Goal 4:* Promote the continued viability of the agricultural industry.
- *Recommendation 1:* Continue to explore a wide variety of local, State, County, foundation and non-profit funding sources that can be utilized for purchasing farmland or development easements for the purpose of permanent farmland preservation.
- *Recommendation 2:* To the greatest extent possible, utilize locally raised funding to leverage County and State funding for the purpose of purchasing farmland or development easements.
- *Recommendation 3:* Allow local property owners to consider voluntary donations of farmland to the Township, County, State or to a foundation or non-profit organization for the purpose of permanent farmland preservation.
- *Recommendation 4:* Seek out and work with farmland property owners who are interested in preserving their properties as farmland, whether for a temporary time period or permanently.
- *Recommendation 5:* Give preference to larger farmland parcels for preservation purposes.
- *Recommendation 6:* Give preference to farmland preservation on sites adjacent to permanently preserved farmland, open space, parks and other publicly owned lands.
- *Recommendation 7:* Consider allowing agro-tourism activities and small overnight accommodations on existing farms.
- *Recommendation 8:* Consider expanding opportunities for farmers to establish and benefit from temporary farm stands, retail farm markets and seasonal sales.
- *Recommendation 9:* Work with farmers, the County, the State and local chambers of commerce to develop strategies for marketing Holmdel farm products and promoting agro-tourism.
- *Recommendation 10:* Work with farmers to identify technical or financial information that may help improve the efficiency, productivity, or profitability of their farm operations.
- *Recommendation 11:* Consider allowing farm operations to have small secondary businesses, subject to certain restrictions, that can provide supplementary income for the farm operation.
- *Recommendation 12:* Encourage agricultural education programs to promote the understanding of and appreciation for farms and farmers.

MASTER PLAN POLICIES SUPPORTING AGRICULTURE AS A BUSINESS

In addition to preserving farmland, the Township's plans and zoning policies have encouraged the survival of agriculture as a business enterprise. In addition to the goals and objectives noted, the 1993 Master Plan included an entire section entitled "Rural Conservation Strategies." As set forth in that section, one of the goals of the Holmdel

Planning Board is “to promote continued agricultural operations and the expansion of agricultural activity.”

The following policies have also supported agricultural as a business:

ROADS

In the Township’s Master Plan update of 1993, the Township adopted a policy “to retain the two land rural road system which prevails throughout most of Holmdel to the greatest extent practical.” The intent of this policy was to maintain the rural character improvements *in response* [emphasis added] to traffic safety requirements and the traffic flow demands of development according to the Land Use Plan.” Because roadway improvements were designed to respond to the demands of new development, most roadway improvements in the 1990s were concentrated in the northern part of the Township, where most of the development occurred. Significantly, the Township decided against a newly proposed roadway connection between Middletown Road and Route 34, which would have cut through open farmland areas north of Holmdel Village.

By concentrating roadway improvements in the northern part of Holmdel, the Township achieved its objectives—as laid out in the Master Plan—of focusing improvements where there was demand and to maintain as much of the Township’s rural character as possible. At the same time, because roadway improvements were steered away from rural areas, the Township attempted to ensure that improvements would not induce additional growth and depletion of open space resources.

WATER

The southern part of Holmdel—where the Project Area is located—is served by the New Jersey American Water Company (NJAWC). Formerly known as the Monmouth Consolidated Water Company, NJAWC is a subsidiary of American Waterworks, based in Voorhees, NJ. NJAWC’s water supply network in southern Holmdel is far less developed than the Shoreland Water Company’s (SWC) network, which serves northern Holmdel. SWC has more than 3 times the amount of connections as NJAWC. There are no current plans to expand the NJAWC network in Holmdel, although additional water connections and line plans may be upgraded as new development projects are completed.

WASTEWATER

The Bayshore Regional Sewerage Authority (BRSA) serves portions of Holmdel, Marlboro, Union Beach, Keansburg, Keyport, and Matawan. As discussed in BRSA’s 1990 plan, as amended through 1995, all of Holmdel lies within the BRSA service areas, but this does not mean that all of the Township is designated for sewer expansion. The BRSA has designated the northern portion of the Township for sewer service (including the municipal complex, the New Jersey Highway Authority’s facilities off Exit 116, and the Lucent campus), while the southern portion of the Township is designated for discharge to groundwater (septic systems and package treatment plants). It is the position of the Township that only the existing buildings on the Alcatel-Lucent site are included in the sewer service area, while the HMFGRC property should no longer be included within the sewer service area.

The reliance on discharge to groundwater suggests that any new development in the southern part of the Township—where the Project Area is located—will tend to be low-

density in character. Without sewer, the overall growth potential of the southern part of the Township would be limited, suggesting that farmland preservation would be appropriate in the area.

ZONING REGULATIONS SUPPORTING AGRICULTURE AS A BUSINESS

There are two ways in which the Township has attempted to minimize the loss of farmland. First and foremost, as development pressure has resulted in the loss of farmland acreage, the Township has partially compensated for this trend through the purchase of farmland. Three Township-owned properties—Cross Farm, Bayonet/Harding Farm, and DePalma Farm—are partially leased to farmers for cultivation purposes. Also, a portion of the Chase Tract, which was purchased via a partnership between the Township, the County, the State, and non-profit organizations, has been sold back to private land owners with permanent agricultural deed restrictions.

Second, the Township allows cluster development, which has the potential for conserving some open space areas that could sustain agricultural activity. As per the Holmdel zoning ordinance, cluster zoning is “a planned development technique based on a density of dwelling unit(s) per acre. The permitted number of dwelling units is then clustered into one or more portions of the overall tract on reduced lot sizes so that individual segments of the tract have higher densities, provided that other portions of the tract are left in open space or common property so that the gross density limitation of the entire tract is not exceeded.”

Cluster development is permitted in the R-40A, R-40B and R-4 zones as a means to “provide flexibility in residential design options mutually acceptable to the approving authority and the developer.” According to § 30-55 of the Township Development Regulations, “in the R-40A District land area equal to the minimum of twenty (20%) percent of the entire tract in and in the R-40B District land area equal to a minimum of forty (40%) percent of the entire tract, shall be set aside for agriculture or for open space or for recreation; buffer areas...; conservation areas...; floodplains...; or common property...” According to § 30-131.7, a cluster development in the R-4 zone “shall provide a minimum of thirty (30%) percent of the tract as open space.” Depending upon the size of the original parcel, the resulting open space area could be large enough to sustain farming activity. Cluster development is required in the R-4R and R-4H zones. As per § 30-129.6, residential clustering is required for all development in the R-4R zone (except for subdivisions of three or fewer lots, provided that the “parent lot” is not greater than twenty acres); all parcels over 20 acres are subject to residential clustering requirements and the minimum set aside for open space is sixty (60%) of the tract. In the R-4H zone (§ 30-128.6), residential clustering is also required and a minimum of sixty (60%) of the tract must be set aside for open space, including parks, recreation facilities, reservation areas and preservation areas.

In November 2005, the Township adopted a Conservation Zoning Ordinance that may have an impact on the Project Area. The Conservation Zoning Ordinance established the R-4R and R-4H zones, as described above. One of the key purposes of this ordinance is to require clustering on lots over 20 acres for all parcels within the R-4R zone, which includes the Project Area. The ordinance also establishes a maximum gross residential density for the entire R-4H district of one “hamlet estate house” for each 5 acres.

The Township’s Zoning Code contains a variety of provisions that are supportive of farm

business. First and foremost, the Township's zoning districts are permissive with regard to farming activity. "Agriculture and farms in general" and accessory farm buildings are permitted in most of the Township's residential, office and industrial districts (§ 30-127 through § 30-153). Most of the farmland areas in Holmdel fall into the R-4, R-4R and R-40B Residence and Agriculture zones and the OL-1 Office Laboratory zones, all of which allow agricultural uses and accessory farm buildings. Cross Farm, Bayonet/Harding Farm, Holmdel Park and Thompson Park — all of which are publicly owned but partially leased out for farming — are included in the P Public Lands zone.

The code allows farms to establish "retail farm markets" (§ 30-119) and "temporary farm stands" (§ 30-120); "pick your own" signs are permitted as well (§ 30-96.1). These provisions are primarily intended to provide farmers with a mechanism for selling their products directly to customers, as opposed to wholesale or retail corporations, thereby providing an additional means of income.

The code also allows farms to house temporary farm workers on-site (§ 30-127.4), providing farmers with a better ability to attract migrant agricultural laborers. The Township also attempts to relieve farmers of some regulatory burdens by exempting accessory structures to agricultural and horticultural uses from undergoing site plan review (§ 30-3; § 30-131.4).

The Township attempts to prevent new development from having detrimental impacts on adjacent properties, including farmland. In terms of drainage, the Township's Development Regulations attempt to ensure that new development will not result in flooding on adjacent sites and that natural drainage patterns and groundwater recharge will be maintained if possible. According to § 30-57:

- "No water shall be diverted as to overload existing drainage systems or create flooding or the need for additional drainage structures on other lands without proper and approved provisions being made for taking care of these conditions, including off-tract improvements."
- "The overall drainage pattern shall consider ways in which groundwater recharge can be encouraged, along with consideration of flood control, erosion control, and having positive drainage, all in the interest of maximizing the utilization of the renewable resource of water."
- "Where any development is transversed by a watercourse or drainage ditch, a drainage right-of-way easement shall be dedicated to the Township. The easement shall be dedicated to the Township. The easement and right-of-way shall include provisions assuring the following:
 - o preservation of the channel of the watercourse;
 - o prohibition of alteration of the contour, topography, or composition of the land within the easement and right-of-way except for Township drainage improvements and maintenance;
 - o prohibition of construction or plantings within the easement and right-of-way that will interfere with the natural flow of water; and
 - o reservation of the public of a right of entry for the purpose of maintenance work and of installing and maintaining a storm or sanitary sewer system or

- “Where the amount of runoff determined by the approving authority engineer is sufficient to justify detention of peak flow, one (1) or more detention basins shall be required.”

Also, in conjunction with a subdivision or site plan approval, the submission of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must accompany the submission of a Preliminary Plat. The EIR is intended to identify environmentally sensitive areas and resources and the potential impacts of the development project upon those areas or resources (§ 30-59).

Moreover, according to § 30-67, “where a property containing a floodplain is proposed for development or other improvements, no proposed development or structure except approved drainage structures shall be located within a one-hundred (100) year floodplain.” Agriculture is one of the few uses that would be permitted that help protect farming operations. First, it helps prevent pollution of surface or groundwater during flood periods by eliminating potentially hazardous substances from flood hazard areas. Second, by keeping development out of the flood areas, floodwaters are less likely to overflow into adjacent areas, including farmland areas, minimizing disruption to farmhouse and agricultural businesses.

The Township’s zoning regulations also include provisions to minimize soil erosion. According to § 30-101, “stripping of vegetation, grading or other soil disturbance shall be done in a manner which will minimize soil erosion,” and “whenever feasible, natural vegetation shall be retained and protected.” The regulations also require temporary drainage provisions to cope with the altered drainage patterns resulting from soil disturbance activities. Also, “water runoff shall be minimized and retained on site wherever possible to facilitate groundwater recharge,” and “sediment shall be retained on site.”

Additional planning techniques that may be considered in the Township to encourage the preservation of contiguous tracts of farmland include:

Lot Averaging: This technique permits the reduction in the size of some lots so that others may exceed the minimum lot area requirements; the lot averaging approach requires that a majority of lots fall within a range of sizes in order to permit large lots to meet specific onsite conservation objectives.

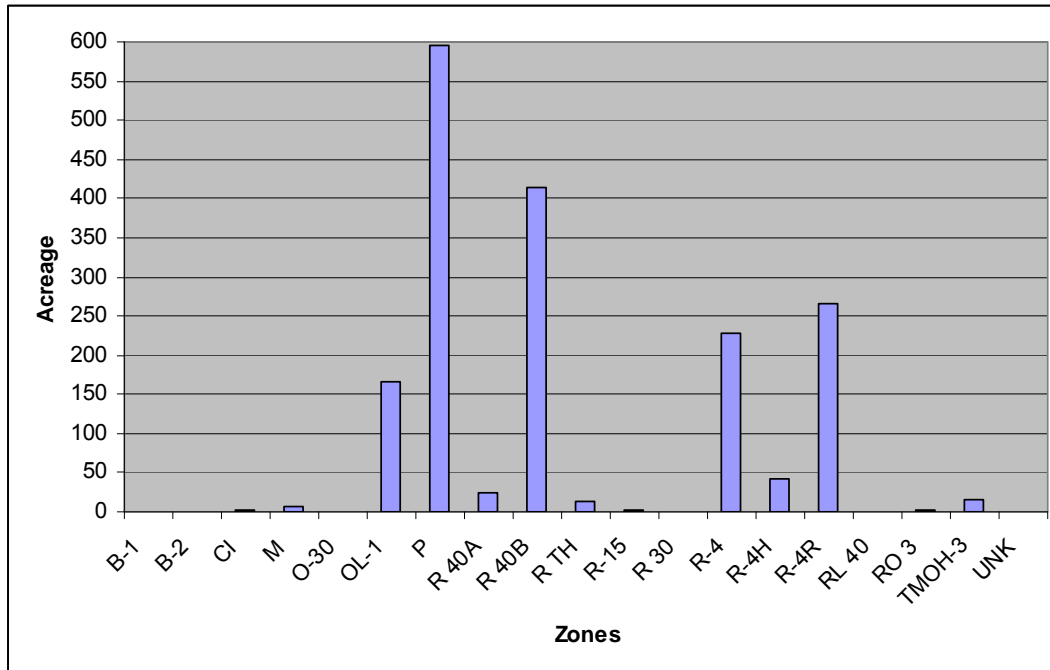
Non-Contiguous Cluster Zoning: Similar to that of cluster zoning, non-contiguous cluster zoning permits cluster development on non-contiguous land under common ownership (i.e. density is concentrated on one parcel while a parcel elsewhere remains undeveloped as open space).

Transfer of Development Rights: A TDR program separates the development rights from a parcel of land itself, allowing the landowner to sell the development rights from their property to a buyer (i.e., developer, local government), thereby permitting increased development density on the buyer’s property. A local government may also purchase development rights as a means to restrict growth. In Holmdel’s case, a TDR program could be used to preserve farmland by transferring growth elsewhere, while compensating landowners to preserve their land. As per Monmouth County’s 2008 Farmland Preservation Plan, most of the County’s municipalities are no longer primarily rural in nature, so any TDR program will have to be designed to achieve goals other than farmland

protection, and may include historic preservation or redevelopment. TDR has not been used in Holmdel, though a pilot program has been successfully used in Burlington County to preserve 2,788 acres of farmland as of March 2008.

Please see Chapter 6 of this document for more information about the Township's promotion of the agricultural business. See Figure 8 for a zoning map of the Township and Table 11 below for estimates of agricultural land by zone.

Table 11: Estimates of Agricultural Land in Holmdel Township by Zoning District



Sources: State of New Jersey, Department of Environmental Protection, 2002

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Township established the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) on February 25, 2002. The Committee currently consists of five members, all of whom are Holmdel residents and two of whom are land-owning farmers. The Committee played a key role in the preparation of this document.

FARMERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Several years ago, the Township Committee established a Farmers Advisory Committee, made up primarily of local farmers, who periodically advise the Township Committee with regard to agricultural issues. The Farmers Advisory Committee is informal in that it was not created by ordinance but simply by the request of the Township Committee. The Advisory Committee has provided a means whereby the Township Committee can better understand the needs and concerns of local farmers, agricultural businesses and farmland property owners.



OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COUNCIL

In 1999, the Township Committee established the Open Space Advisory Council. The main charge of the 9-member council is "to review and recommend parcels of land to be included in the Open Space Plan" and "to recommend acquisition and preservation of lands within the Township of Holmdel" (Ordinance 99-22). The Council established a Farmland Preservation Subcommittee in 2001.

In January 2002, the Open Space Advisory Council completed a Farmland Preservation Plan, which recommended that the Township adopt a goal to preserve one-half of the remaining privately held farmland in Holmdel (about 690 acres as of January 2002).

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

In 1999, the Holmdel Environmental Commission completed the report *Preserving Open Space in Holmdel*. The report identifies parcels throughout the Township as candidates for preservation, including farmland parcels. The report established a goal to "preserve at least one large tract in northern Holmdel and at least one large tract in southern Holmdel for continued use as farmland." The report was the basis for the Township's Open Space Plan, which was submitted to the State for a Green Acres Planning Incentive Grant in 2000.

CURRENT LAND USE TRENDS

Overall Farmland Trends

Tables 3, 6 and 7 in Chapter 2 depict the decrease in farmland acreage and various agricultural uses within the Township between 1980 and 2007. The data clearly indicates that the cumulative acreage in the Township has been steadily decreasing, although this has also been a statewide trend. Agricultural lands account for approximately 1,477 acres of the Township, according to 2007 farmland assessment data. The number is down from 3,624 agriculture acres in 1985. Parenthetically, note that the agricultural land count does not include publicly owned lands. Throughout Monmouth County, the downward trend of farmland acreage extends well beyond the early 1980s. The County's—along with the Township's—total farmland has shown a significant decline, commencing during the 1950s, which is when the Garden State Parkway was completed.

Understanding the high value and desirability of the Township's land base, the municipality has been responsive to open space and farmland preservation needs by working with the county, state, and non-profit agencies, resulting in 190 preserved acres over the past 20 years.

Land Use Trends Using NJDEP Land Use Data

In an analysis of publicly-accessible NJDEP 2002 land use/land cover GIS data, previously agricultural land has changed over to non-agricultural uses between 1986 and 2002. During this time period, the percentage of total acreage classified as residential use increased by almost ten percent, from 29 percent in 1986 to 38 percent in 2002, whereas the percentage of total acreage classified as agricultural land decreased by almost eight percent, from 24 percent in 1986 to 16 percent in 2002. The percentage of total acreage classified as forested lands and wetlands remained much the same between 1986 and

2002 (16 percent and 12 percent, respectively). The maps on the following pages (Figures 7-9) demonstrate this land use change trend and Table 12 provides the percentage breakdown of land uses in the Township for 1986, 1995 and 2002. Please note that modified wetlands in agricultural production are classified as agriculture on Figures 7-9 and in Table 12.

Table 12: Percentage Breakdown of Land Uses in the Holmdel Township for 1986, 1995 and 2002

	1986	1995	2002
<i>Residential</i>	29.3%	34.5%	38%
<i>Commercial/Services</i>	5.4%	3.8%	4%
<i>Industrial</i>	1.3%	0.9%	1%
<i>Transportation/Communications/Utilities</i>	2.4%	1.8%	2%
<i>Urban Built-Up Land</i>	4.3%	7.2%	5%
<i>Recreational Land</i>	2.3%	2.0%	3%
<i>Agricultural Lands</i>	23.7%	19.6%	16%
<i>Forest</i>	16.1%	15.7%	16%
<i>Water Bodies</i>	1.0%	1.0%	1%
<i>Wetlands</i>	12.8%	12.3%	12%
<i>Barren Lands</i>	0.7%	1.0%	1%
<i>Managed Wetlands (Modified)</i>	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<i>Source: State of New Jersey, Department of Environmental Protection, 2002</i>			

Sewer Service Areas / Public Water Supply Service Areas

Table 13 shows farmland acreage for the Township, broken down with respect to acreage located in sewer service areas.

Table 13: Agricultural Acres in Relation to Each Planning Area in Holmdel Township

	<i>Acreage of Agricultural Land (acres)</i>
<i>Existing Sewer Area</i>	165
<i>Future Sewer Area</i>	794
<i>Source: State of New Jersey, Department of Environmental Protection, 2002</i>	

Figure 12 depicts the Township's current sewer service area, as well as areas proposed by the NJDEP to be removed from the Township's overall sewer service area. It is the position of the Township that existing buildings on the Alcatel-Lucent site are included in the sewer service area, while the HMFGRC should no longer be included in the sewer service area. Figure 12 also shows water supply facilities and service areas within the Township; this figure illustrating water supply facilities is based on 1998 NJDEP Public Community Water Purveyor Service Areas, and does not entirely reflect existing conditions in the Township. (Public Community Water Purveyors are systems that pipe

water for human consumption to at least 15 service connections used year-round, or one that regularly serves at least 25 year-round residents.) Public water service has been expanded to include much of the Township, as all new subdivisions are required to have public water connections; there are some limited areas of Holmdel that continue to rely on private wells. The Township is served predominately by Shorelands Water Company, a public water utility, with the New Jersey American Water Company (NJAWC) serving the southern portion of the Township.

MUNICIPAL MASTER PLAN AND ZONING – OVERVIEW

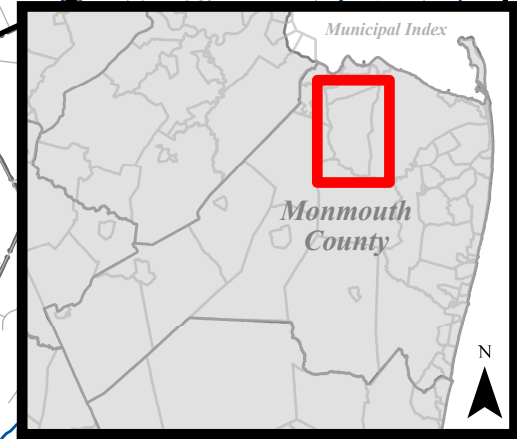
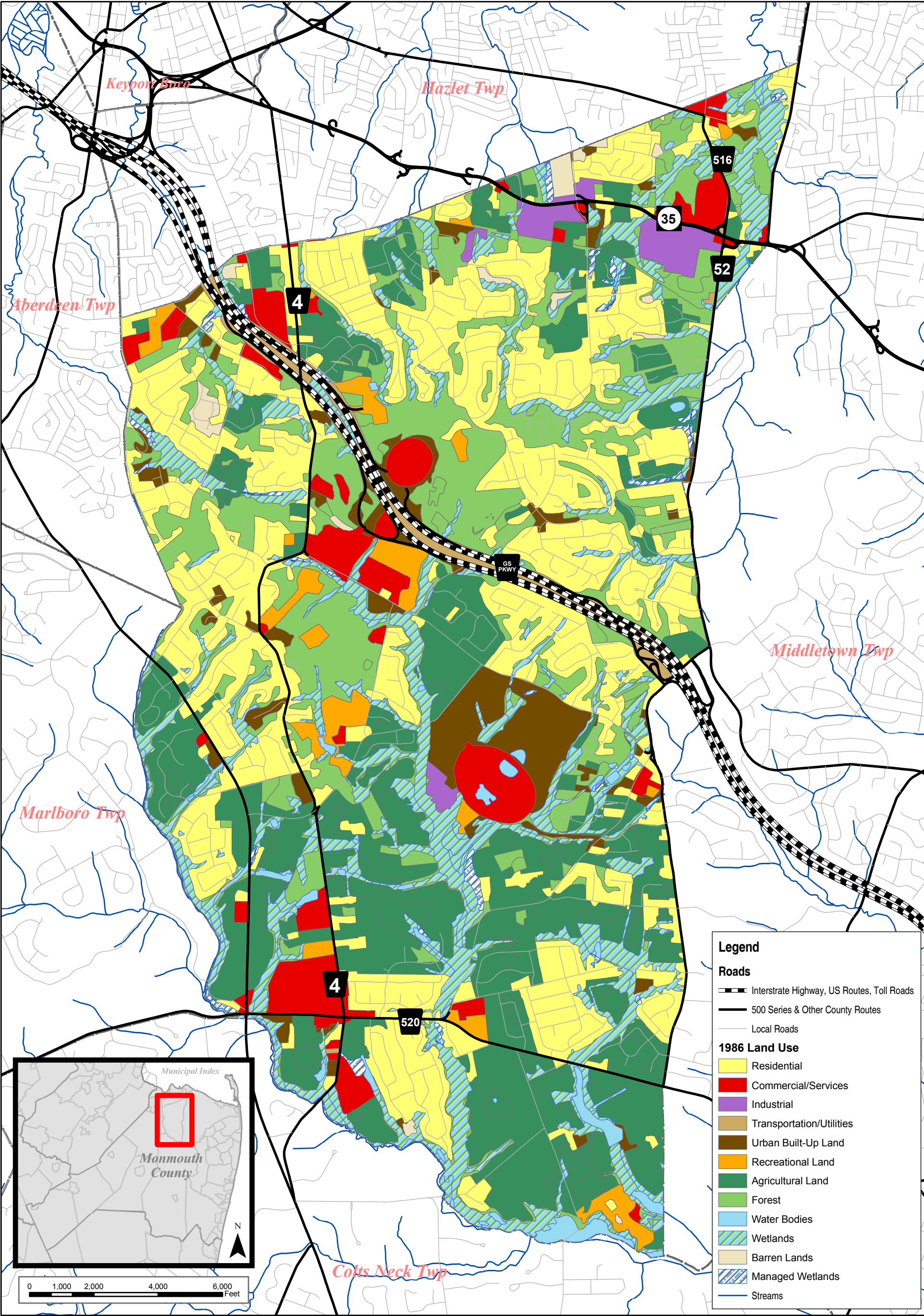
A review of the Township's goals, objectives, and policies relating to agriculture can be found in Chapter 3. Specifically relating to land use techniques that are described within the 2004 Master Plan/2002 Farmland Preservation Plan Element and implemented through the Zoning Ordinance, there are multiple planning techniques that support agriculture, including a cluster option, lot averaging, and rural zoning (1 unit per 4 and 5 acres). Cluster development has the potential for conserving some open space areas that could sustain agricultural activity, in addition to serving as a marketable amenity for potential homebuyers. Cluster development is permitted in the R-40A, R-40B, and R-4 zones and is required in the R-4R and R-4H zones. The downside of clustering provisions is that, of course, development still occurs, albeit at a significantly smaller scale than what would occur with higher-density traditional zoning. A review of the multitude of master plan and zoning techniques in support of agriculture can be found earlier in this chapter.

LOT SIZE DISTRIBUTION

Table 14 shows the numerical acreage breakdown within each size category. The majority of larger lots can be found in SDRP Planning Areas 4, 4B, and 5, as well as outside the County sewer service areas, whereas the smaller lots are found in Planning Areas 1 and 2 and are typically within the County sewer service area.

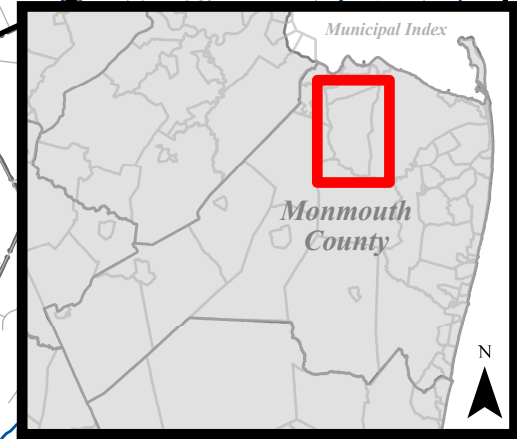
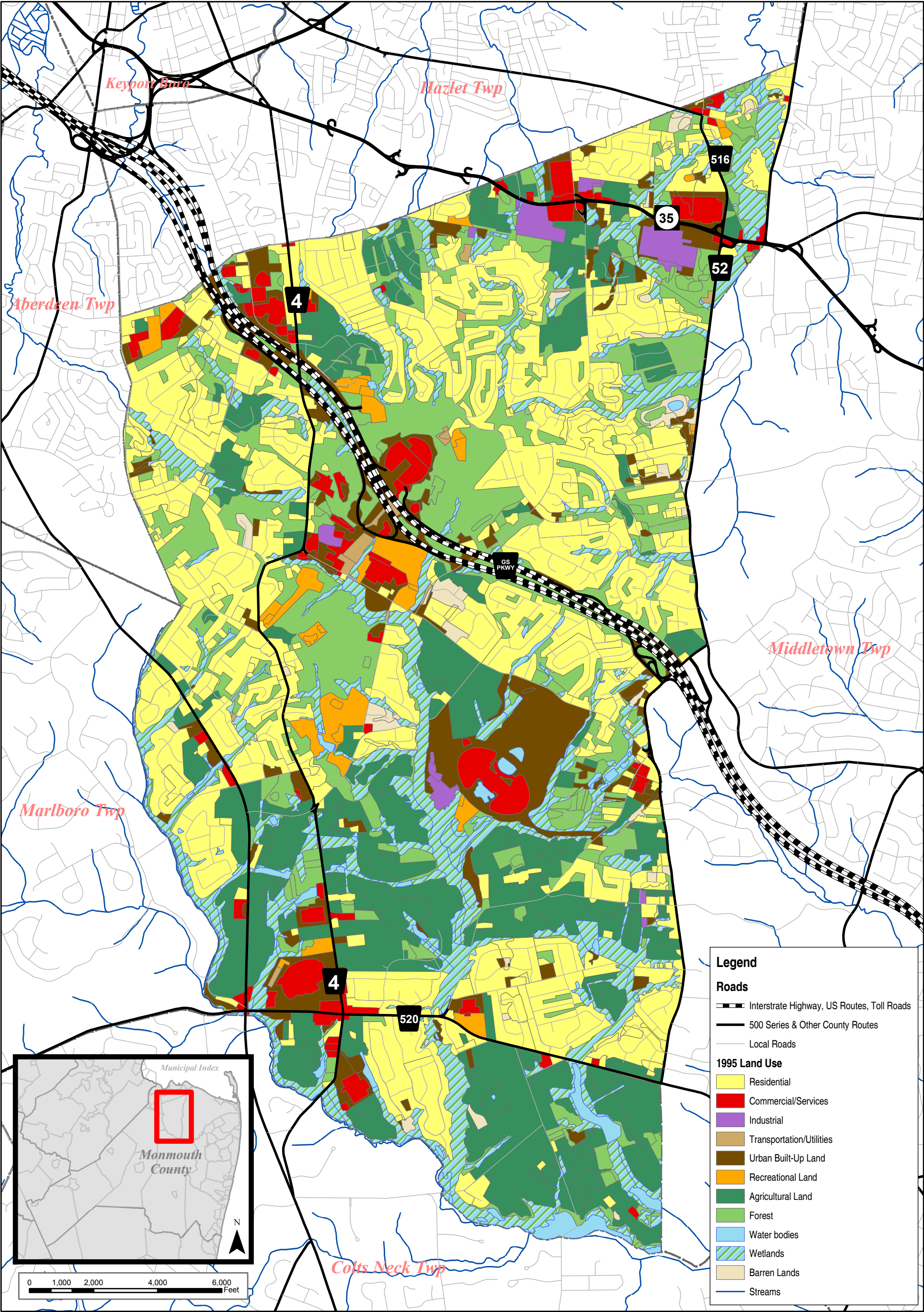
Table 14: Acreage of Existing Lots Within Each Size Category, Holmdel Township

	<i>Small Lots <1 acre</i>	<i>Medium Lots ≥1 & ≤5 acres</i>	<i>Large Lots >5 & ≤10 acres</i>	<i>Very Large Lots >10 acres</i>	<i>Total</i>
Number of Acres Per Lot Size Category	948	4,184	686	5,741	11,559
Percentage of Total Acreage Per Lot Size Category	8%	36%	6%	50%	100%
<i>Source: Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, April 2008.</i>					



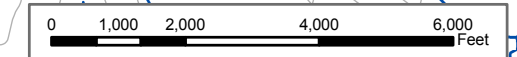
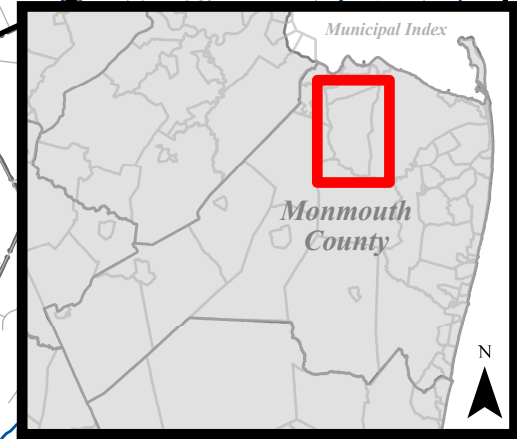
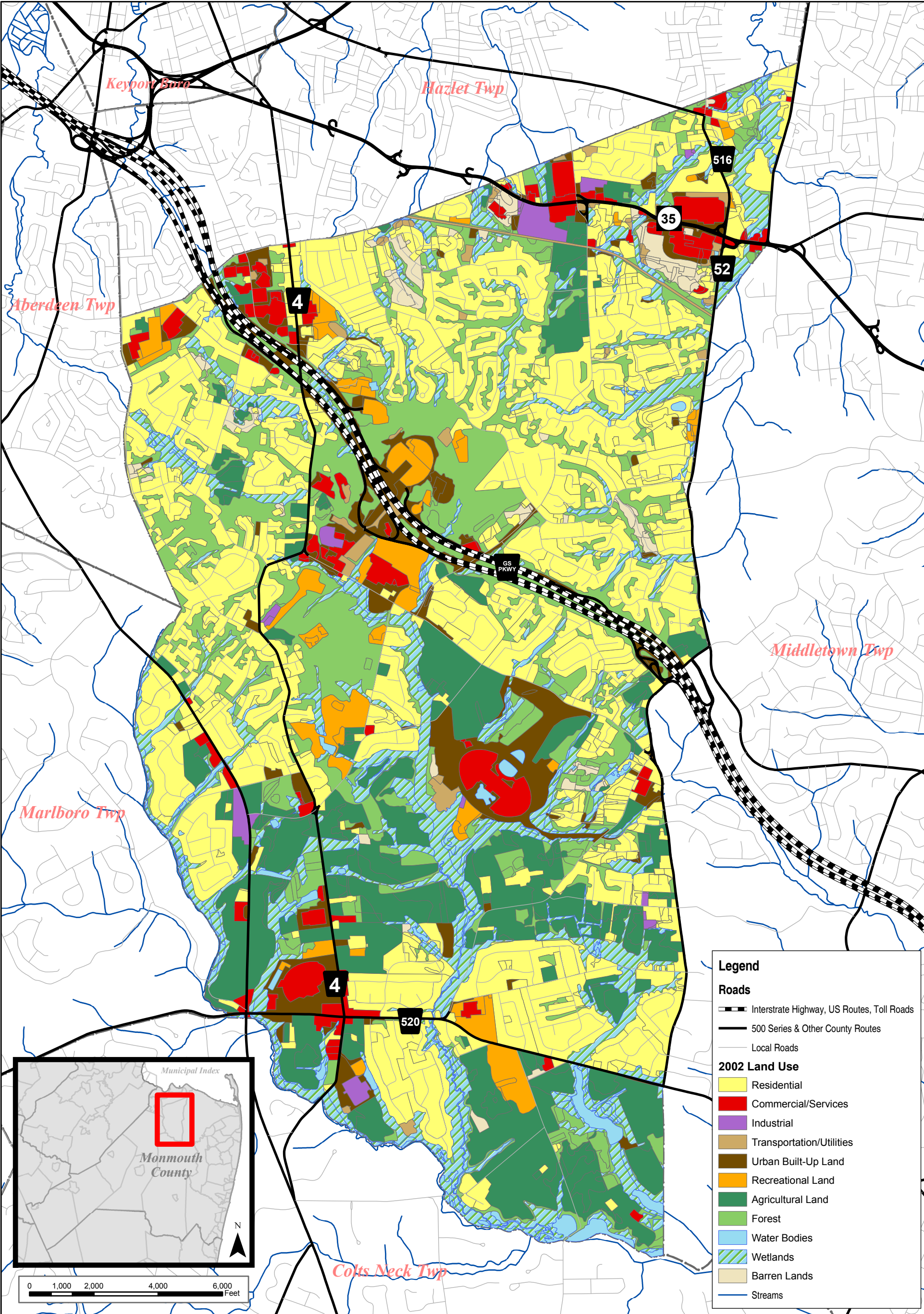
0 1,000 2,000 4,000 6,000 Feet

Land Use 1986

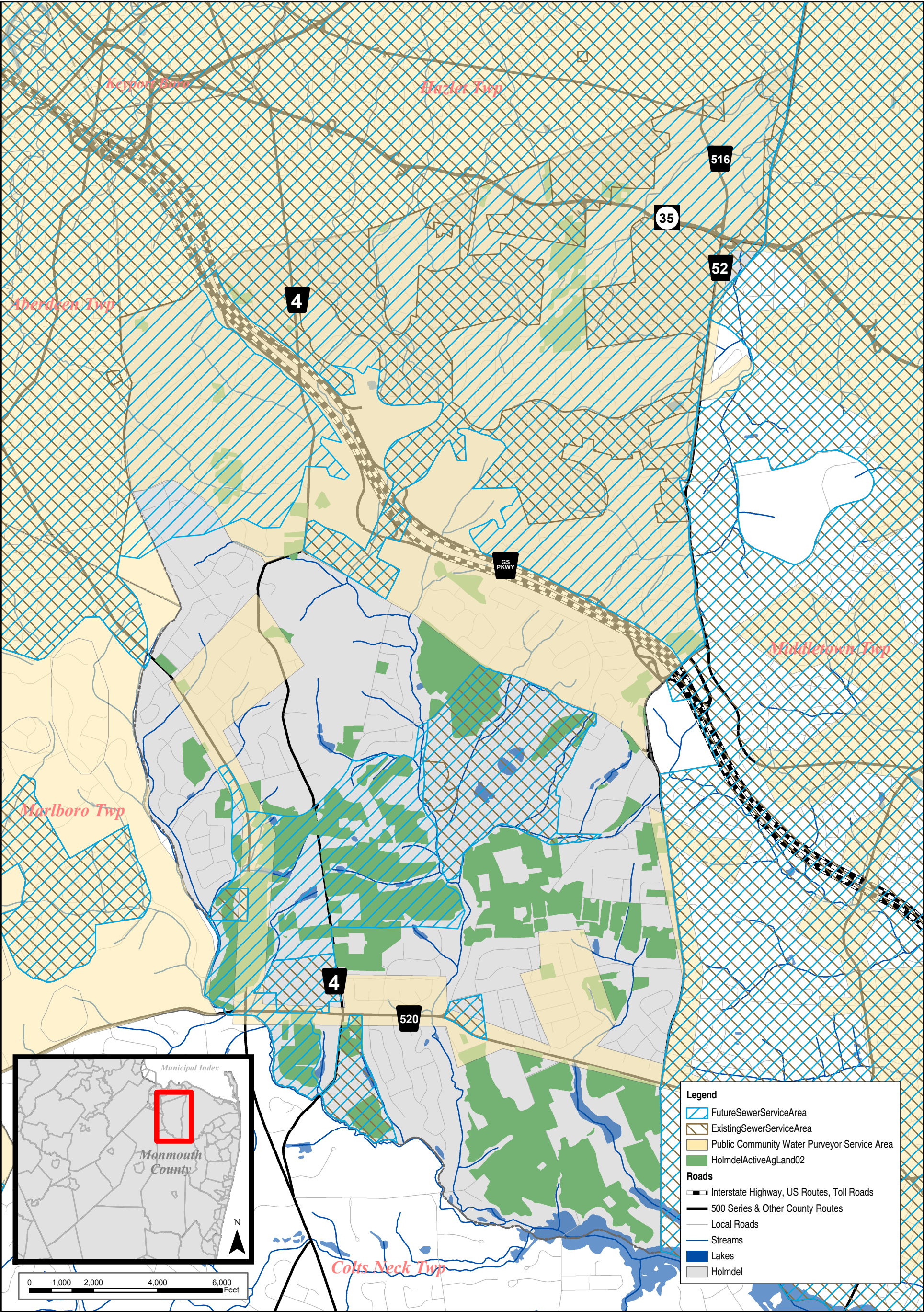


0 1,000 2,000 4,000 6,000 Feet

Land Use 1995



Land Use 2002



Existing and Future Sewer Service Areas

DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES AND LAND USE TRENDS

As discussed in Chapter 2, the Township's land has been under significant development pressure since the opening of the Garden State Parkway in the 1950s. As the agricultural industry reacts to the changing economic climate, development activity in Holmdel Township mirrored the local and regional trends. Holmdel's population has increased steadily over the past two decades, with a population of 11,523 in 1990, 15,781 in 2000 and 17,244 in 2006. The 2006 Monmouth County *At-a-Glance Report* estimates that the Township's 2025 population will be 19,608; this represents an approximately 24% increase from the Township's 2000 population. As seen in Table 15 below, 538 residential building permits were issued between 2000 and 2008 in the Township, although there has been a steady decline in permits issued over the decade (117 issued in 2000 v. seven issued in 2008). Holmdel, with excellent schools, superior transportation connectivity, and plentiful natural vistas, has been and will continue to be an attractive place to reside. The steady decline in building permit issuance is not necessarily a function of a softening market (on the contrary, the residential market grew through the turn of the century, peaking in late 2005), but can be attributed to the decreasing ability of developable land, for which Township's well oiled farmland preservation policies, strategies, and programs have been working collectively and comprehensively to protect and preserve.

Table 15: Township of Holmdel Residential Building Permits Issued, 2000-2008

<i>Year</i>	<i>Permits Issued</i>
2000	117
2001	106
2002	112
2003	73
2004	53
2005	24
2006	21
2007	25
2008	7

Land values have taken somewhat of a hit as a result of the softening market in recent years. Because of the value placed on Holmdel's bucolic setting and desirable residential qualities, it seems that the impact on property values has been less here than elsewhere in the State, especially given that land values have risen exponentially since the turn of the century. Land supply in the Township has been decreasing with each year so it is unlikely that Holmdel's undeveloped land values will ever significantly drop in price.

TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR) OPPORTUNITIES

At this time, the Township has not identified any potential Transfer of Development Right (TDR) opportunities, mostly due to the existing patterns of development throughout the community, which does not particularly lend itself well to TDR implementation. Potential receiving areas are already built out to a great extent, and would therefore have difficulty handling additional density without disturbing the existing patterns of development in the Township. The Township may consider participating within a regional TDR program, subject to an understanding and review of partner municipalities, amount of land commitment, and other various requirements.

IV MUNICIPALITY'S FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Before planning for future farmland preservation efforts can begin, a better understanding of areas in which farmland is the preferred or dominant land use, the municipality's accomplishments to date, the array of preservation programs and conservation options, and coordination with open space initiatives is needed.

Monmouth County has been extremely supportive of the Township's initiatives for farmland preservation in recent years. In 2001, the County contributed to the purchase of the Chase tract, in partnership with the Township, the State, and local non-profit organizations. In 2004, and then later with the purchase of the entire property in 2007, the same funding sources appropriated a mixture of funding to allow for the purchase of the F&F Nurseries property.

Overall, the Township has been very aggressive over the past number of years in the preservation of farmland, and as a result, its Open Space Trust Fund has been completely utilized to offset the costs of the preservation that has occurred. As the Township pays down all outstanding farmland purchase debt, it will commence solicitation of property owners of the remaining farms in the Project Area by direct contact of landowners by the Township Committee and the Agricultural Advisory Committee.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS (ADAs)

Agricultural Development Areas (ADAs) are delineated for the purposes of identifying specific areas within both counties and municipalities to serve as the focal point for agricultural uses. Within these areas, agricultural uses are the preferred land use. The relationship between ADAs and the state grant programs is extremely significant, in that farms must be within a designated ADA to be eligible for any of the SADC's farmland preservation programs. Although the SADC is responsible for setting the minimum requirements for ADAs, counties set the specific criteria and delineate their ADAs graphically.

According to State statutory guidelines, ADAs must encompass productive lands, not conflict with municipal zoning ordinances, be free of commercial or suburban development, and comprise no more than ninety percent of a County's agricultural land base. Similar to eligibility requirements for farmland preservation projects, additional factors such as soil suitability and existing land use, are important criteria in determining ADA boundaries.

Counties are permitted to enunciate discretionary criteria and may consider waivers from the strict application of the following waivers, provided that the statutory criteria are met. Within Monmouth County, lands will be considered part of a designated ADA if it meets the following requirements:

1. Land consists of a parcel or group of reasonably contiguous parcels with a minimum total area of 50 acres and which are currently in agricultural production or have a strong potential for future production.
2. Land is not already committed to non-agricultural development.
3. Land meets the statutory criteria for the identification of ADAs:

- a. "Encompasses productive agricultural lands which are currently in production or have a strong potential for future production in agriculture and in which agriculture is a permitted use under the current municipal zoning ordinance or in which agriculture is permitted as non-conforming use."
- b. "Is reasonably free of suburban and conflicting commercial development."
- c. "Comprises not greater than 90 percent of the agricultural land mass of the county."
- d. "Incorporates any other characteristics deemed appropriate by the board." (See Requirements 1 and 2 above).

Figure 1, Agricultural Land Inventory 2002, depicts ADAs within Holmdel Township.

TOWNSHIP FARMLAND AND OPEN SPACE ACQUISITION

The Township has acquired significant tracts of farmland and open space with the cooperation of local landowners. In the 1970s, the Township acquired Bayonet/Harding Farm (by purchase and partial donation) and Cross Farm (by purchase) in the southern part of Holmdel. These were significant land acquisitions, as each farm is several hundred acres. Bayonet/Harding Farm measures 239 acres and Cross Farm measures 298 acres in size. Significant portions of both farms (177 acres of Bayonet/Harding Farm and 170 acres of Cross Farm) are currently leased to local crop and sod farmers.

In 2000, with the establishment of the Open Space Tax, the Township purchased the 96-acre DePalma Farm, which is located in northern Holmdel. Purchased in part with Green Acres funds, DePalma Farm is currently being leased back to the prior owner for farming.

In Spring of 2001, the Township partnered with Green Acres, Monmouth County, Monmouth Conservation Foundation, Friends of Holmdel Open Space (FOHOS), and the SADC to purchase and preserve the 416-acre Chase tract, the largest remaining open space parcel in Holmdel. A portion of the revenues from the Open Space Tax, County funds, matching grant funds from the State's Green Acres program, and more than \$8 million from the State's Farmland Preservation Program were combined to fund the purchase. The Monmouth Conservation Foundation and FOHOS raised approximately \$500,000 from the public, which was donated to the acquisition.

Approximately 226 acres of the tract is managed by the Monmouth County Park System as a nature preserve for passive recreational use. The remaining land area — approximately 190 acres purchased by SADC — has been auctioned off to private owners with permanent deed restrictions. Agriculture will continue to be permitted on those properties, and virtually all residential or non-residential uses will be prohibited.

In 2005, the Township acquired the F&F Nurseries, consisting of approximately 101 acres, for \$7 million. The Township applied to the SADC under the 2003 PIG Program to sell a development easement to the SADC on approximately 61 acres with a one acre non-severable exception, with Monmouth County holding title to this portion. The Green Acres Program acquired 32 acres along the stream corridor in fee simple title. The Township will retain approximately 7 acres for open space purposes.

The Township also acquired a few smaller tracts of open space that are being used

primarily for passive recreation. These include the Laurel Avenue Nature Area (18.2 acres) and the Ramanessin Brook Greenway Nature Trail (22.2 acres). In addition, the planned Labbe Park extension (12.0 acres) will be used for open space and walking trails.

In total, the Township has approximately 251 acres as preserved farmland and 899 acres as preserved open space. Of the total preserved farmland, the Chase tract consists of 190 acres of deed-restricted, privately owned land for agricultural use only and F&F Nurseries consists of 61 acres. The remaining preserved open space acreage is in the form of publicly owned land (including Bayonet/Harding Farm, Cross Farm, and DePalma Farm, Laurel Avenue Nature Area, Ramanessin Brook Greenway Nature Trail, and Labbe Park extension).

In addition, the County holds two sizeable pieces of open space in the Township: Thompson Park (377 acres) and Holmdel Park (340 acres). Large portions of Thompson Park, measuring approximately 238 acres, are currently leased out for farming. Also, Holmdel Park features Longstreet Farm, an historic working farm that showcases agricultural life and activity from around the year 1900. It is a popular destination for families and school field trips.

As of 2007, all permanently preserved farmland and open space within the Township's boundaries account for 1,867 acres.

PRESERVATION PROGRAMS AND OPTIONS

Within New Jersey, there are numerous farmland preservation options that are administered by both the state and individual counties, including the County Easement Purchase Program, the Municipal Planning Incentive Grant Program, and the Direct Easement Purchase Program.

County Easement Purchase Program (CEPP)

Although the County Easement Purchase Program has now been succeeded by the Countywide Planning Incentive Grant Program (Countywide PIG), already approved CEPP projects are being processed up until 2008. Through this program, landowners sell the development rights (also known as easements) on their farmland to their county. Ownership of the land is retained, but the landowners agree to permanent deed restrictions that allow only agricultural uses. A majority of the funding comes from the SADC to purchase development rights on approved farms. Briefly, the process worked as follows: landowners apply to their county agriculture development board (CADB); the CADB reviews applications and forwards approved ones to the SADC; and the SADC then determines if the farm is within a ADA and prioritizes applications for preservation funding through a ranking system that assigns points for a variety of factors (such as soils, tillable acres, size of farm, imminence of development, etc); and then the scores are used to determine a ranking list for future preservation.

County Planning Incentive Grant (PIG) Program

As the successor to the CEPP, the County PIG is a new program that encourages a comprehensive planning process for farmland preservation at the county level. The over-arching goal of the County PIG is to preserve significant amounts of contiguous farmland. The initial step in eligibility for this option requires counties to adopt comprehensive farmland preservation plans, over-arching documents that detail and explore farmland

related activities and history within the jurisdictions. In addition, the SADC minimum eligibility requirements for all programs (N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.20) must be met. Once accepted by the SADC, counties will receive base grants and then compete with others for additional funds. Farms must still continue to meet the basic eligibility requirements for farmland preservation funding (the SADC requires farms preserved through this program to rate at least 70% of the average quality score of the last three funding rounds), in addition to any specific requirements per the county (for example, in Monmouth County farms must be at least 25 acres in size, unless it is adjacent to an already preserved farm and soils must score 55 or higher in the County's Land Evaluation system).

Municipal PIG Program

The SADC administers the Municipal Planning Incentive Grant (PIG) Program with the intent to provide grants to eligible municipalities to purchase agricultural development easements for permanent preservation of farmland in designated project areas. The SADC funds a majority of the program, while the county and municipality cover the remainder of the acquisition costs. In order to be eligible, a municipality must develop and adopt a farmland preservation plan element in its municipal master plan, a right to farm ordinance, and establish an Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC). Among the variety of requirements, municipalities must have a designed project area and a list of target farms.

SADC Direct Easement Purchase

As the name suggests, the SADC purchases easements directly from landowners through the state acquisition program. As with all programs, selection is based on set criteria, such as farm location and scoring criteria (soils, tillable acres, proximity to other farms, etc.). Currently, Monmouth County farms must be 39 acres or larger (75% of average County farm size) to be ranked "Priority Farms" for inclusion in this program.

SADC Fee Simple

Under this program, the state purchases a farm outright, retires the development rights, and auctions the property to the highest bidder, with the caveat that the property must continue to be farmed.

Non-profit

The non-profit funding program involves the inter-play between a non-profit organization and the SADC, with the latter providing grants to such organizations to fund 50 percent of the fee simple or development easement values on farms to ensure their permanent preservation. Unlike other programs, the non-profit organizations apply directly to the SADC, as opposed to applying first to the county or municipality, with the same ranking criteria used as in the other programs.

Eight Year Programs

Unique among the other preservation programs, the Eight Year Program does not require the landowners to place a permanent development restriction on their land; rather, farmland owners agree to restrict nonagricultural development for a period of eight years in exchange for benefit. The two types of eight-year programs are: 1) municipally approved programs (which require a formal agreement among the landowner, county, and

municipality) and 2) non-municipality approved programs (which require an agreement between only the landowner and county). The process requires landowners to apply directly to their county agricultural development board, and criteria require that a farm be located in an ADA, be eligible for Farmland Assessment, and meet local and/or county program criteria. There is no direct compensation, but landowners are eligible to apply for state grants that fund up to 50 percent of the cost of approved soil and water conservation projects. In addition, important benefits afforded to landowners include greater protection from nuisance complaints, emergency fuel and water rationing, zoning changes and eminent domain actions.

CONSISTENCY WITH SADC STRATEGIC TARGETING PROJECT

The SADC's 2003 Strategic Targeting Project was intended to help prioritize farmland preservation investments and secure a "bright future" for the agricultural industry. (Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2008)

The primary goals of the SADC's strategic targeting project area:

- To coordinate farmland preservation/agricultural retention efforts with proactive planning initiatives;
- To update and create maps to target preservation efforts;
- To coordinate with open space, recreation and historic preservation efforts; and
- To preserve lands that possess soils of statewide importance and are designated as prime agriculture soils in productive outside of sewer service areas.

Over the years, Monmouth County has been very supportive in Holmdel's farmland preservation efforts. The Township has a well oiled farmland preservation planning machine, with municipal boards like the Open Space Advisory Council, the Environmental Commission and the Agricultural Advisory Committee, all of which have worked collectively over the years in furtherance of farmland preservation efforts. Moreover, the municipal planning documents, such as the Master Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and the 2002 PIG Application, support the agricultural business and farmland preservation, and are inclusive of mapping to target preservation efforts, which are expanded upon herein, in coordination with MCADB GIS efforts.

AAC representatives, all of whom are actively involved in the Township and are knowledgeable of open space, recreation and historic preservation efforts, track and support the County's farmland preservation and open space efforts and relevant agricultural efforts, and attend MCADB meetings to keep the board apprised of their efforts. The AAC should consider working more closely with the MCADB regarding farmland preservation issues beyond comprehensive planning, including strategic landowner outreach, application processing, cost-share determination, trail planning, conservation subdivisions, infrastructure planning and habitat and historic preservation planning. It is recommended that members of the AAC meet twice a year with a MCADB representative to review the status of the municipal program, seek advice and share information on potential farmland preservation projects. Finally, as described throughout this Plan, the Township's Farmland Program partners with many nonprofits and State and County open space departments.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM FUNDING EXPENDED TO DATE BY SOURCE

In 2001, \$8.7 million was spent on farmland preservation in the Township for the 190 acre property formerly owned by SADC/Chase Bank. Approximately \$6.7 million came from the State, approximately \$1.5 million came from the County, and \$500,000 was supplied by the Township. In 2005, the Township acquired the F&F Nurseries, consisting of approximately 101 acres, for \$7 million. Monmouth County holds title to a 61 acre easement on the F&F Nurseries property. The total cost for the easement was \$2,752,488, of which \$1,651,492 was SADC funding. The Township applied to the SADC under the 2003 PIG Program to sell a development easement to the SADC on approximately 61 acres with a one acre non-severable exception, with Monmouth County holding title to this portion. The Green Acres Program acquired 32 acres along the stream corridor in fee simple title. The Township will retain approximately 7 acres for open space purposes.

MONITORING OF PRESERVED FARMLAND

Typically, the MCADB holds the responsibility of monitoring preserved farmland throughout the County and commences the process prior to closing on an easement by visiting the property and documenting the conditions; if the SADC holds an easement, the MCADB is not responsible for the monitoring. Throughout the initial and annual monitoring process, the MCADB interfaces with the landowner, municipality and the SADC. While the holder of the deed of easement is responsible for annual monitoring of preserved farms, the Township and the AAC would notify the appropriate agency if violations were suspected.

V FUTURE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM

Expanding on the previous section, this chapter highlights the future of Holmdel's farmland preservation program. It discusses short-term and long-term goals, project areas in which to concentrate efforts, eligibility and ranking criteria, policies related to easement acquisitions and funding and administrative resources.

PRESERVATION GOALS

Although many Monmouth County municipalities, especially those that have experienced the intense influx of residential units over the past ten or so years, certainly view farmland preservation as a favorable alternative to development, there are obvious limitations and barriers to such wishful goals. The advent of the exploding housing market in the early 2000s has had a substantial impact on both the municipal and county farmland preservation goals, as the pace of development has overrun optimistic preservation goals.

Since the submission of the Township's 2002 PIG Application, the housing market has grown considerably, reached its apogee, and currently has been declining. Generally, homes are no longer commanding the high sales prices that were commonplace in 2005, and builders are grappling with a surging inventory. An examination of the residential building permits issued between 2000 and 2008 indicates a precipitous decline each year over that period, with 25 issued in 2007 and 7 issued in 2008, which is evidence that residential construction has slowed in Holmdel.

Clearly, the availability of land for development is becoming increasingly limited within Holmdel, thus threatening the future provision of farmland preservation. Over the next 10 to 20 years, well over 1,000 acres could be converted from farmland and open space into a range of residential and non-residential uses. Although land values have taken somewhat of a hit as a result of the softening market, one can assume that the bucolic setting that makes Holmdel so special will lessen the impact here, especially given that land values have risen exponentially since the turn of the century. In addition, with land supply dwindling each year, it is thus unlikely that Holmdel's undeveloped land values will ever significantly drop in price.

Unfortunately, the State as a whole is in the midst of a budgetary crisis and the Garden State Preservation Trust coffers have been depleted. The lack of currently available financial support has been limiting appropriations for farmland preservation purposes. However, landowner interest has grown in light of the softening of the residential market, and the 2007 New Jersey statewide bond act referendum will ultimately provide an additional \$15 million for the Municipal PIG program, which does not include the additional funding that could be spent in Holmdel under the County PIG program (Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2008).

Therefore, taking all of the above into account, the purpose of this section is to set goals that will allow the Township achieve its commitment to preserve farmland and promote the long-term viability of the agricultural industry in Holmdel.

Holmdel has always been committed to the utilizing the Open Space Trust Fund and will continue to appropriate funds for agricultural preservation purposes, preferably as part of a financing package partnering with other public entities and non-profits. Creative tax money leveraging is important to securing the most favorable position for which the

Township can utilize to protect and preserve its remaining farmland.

Weighing these factors, trends and limitations, the Township's 1, 5, and 10-year acreage targets are 10 acres, 70 acres, and 338 acres, respectively. These targets are based on the limited availability of funds within the Open Space Trust Fund currently and continuing over the next several years. It is anticipated that, at year five, approximately a third of the total acreage target could be achieved. It must be noted, however, that these targets are merely projections, thus they are subject to change over time and can be amended when needed (Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2008).

Holmdel Township employs SADC's standards, set criteria and polices related to Farmland Preservation applications, and as such, does not have any formal policies relative to same.

PROJECT AREA SUMMARY

The Township Committee has identified the Project Area shown on Figure 2. Consistent with the intent of the Farmland Preservation Program, the new SADC rules, and minimum County standards, the Project Area is predominately one continuous area that includes reasonably contiguous tracts of sizeable farmland properties. Based on the Township's correspondence with the MCADB in 2002, the original Project Area was located within an Agricultural Development Area (ADA), and most of the newly added properties into the Project Area are within the same ADA.

In addition to all those properties included on the List of Farms, the Project Area includes open space and farmland that have already been permanently preserved. These include:

- Holmdel Park (owned by Monmouth County)
- Chase Tract (jointly owned by Monmouth County, Holmdel Township and local non-profit organizations)
- F&F Nurseries (jointly owned by Monmouth County, Holmdel Township and the Green Acres program)
- Bayonet/Harding Farm (owned by Holmdel Township)
- Cross Farm (owned by Holmdel Township)
- Thompson Park (owned by Monmouth County)
- Two privately held parcels with agricultural deed restrictions

Portions of Bayonet/Harding Farm, Cross Farm and Thompson Park are being actively used for agricultural activity. Holmdel Park primarily provides opportunities for passive recreation (i.e., hiking and biking), although a small portion of the park is set aside for the Longstreet Farm, an historic farm that showcases late 19th century farm life. The Chase Tract is currently being planned for passive recreational uses. Because passive recreational uses are low impact and allow most of the land area to remain in a natural state, both Holmdel Park and the Chase Tract are compatible with adjacent agricultural activities.

Table 1 outlines the Properties in the Project Area, as mapped in Figure 2. As presented

below in Table 16, the Project Area is approximately 2,572 acres in size. About 93% percent of the land area is composed of the properties on the List of Farms and already preserved tracts of farmland and open space (including deed restricted properties).

Table 16: Acreage in the Project Area

<i>Project Area</i>	<i>Acreage</i>	<i>Percentage of Total</i>
Properties on the List of Farms (see Section 3)*	587.14	22.83%
<i>Already Permanently Preserved Farmland and Open Space</i>		
Publicly-Owned Properties	1,602.39	62.30%
Privately-Owned, Deed-Restricted Properties	190.00	7.39%
<i>Privately-Owned Properties that are Not Deed-Restricted</i>		
Farmland-Assessed	76.6	3.00%
Not Farmland-Assessed, Already Developed	111.89	4.35%
Not Farmland-Assessed, Not Developed	4.16	0.16%
Total	2,572.18	100.00%
* All properties on the List of Farms are privately held and are wholly or partially farmland-assessed. .		

MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

In order to meet minimum eligibility requirements for potential farmland preservation, for both municipal and county programs, potential land must qualify for farmland assessment and be located within an Agricultural Development Area (ADA). Among other criterions, both programs require properties to be of a specified minimum parcel size, to have suitable soil quality, have development potential that warrants preservation and must score above a certain threshold to be considered for preservation.

The State and County both have set eligibility criteria in order to qualify for farmland preservation consideration. Aside from meeting the minimum State minimum eligibility criteria, as outlined below, farms being considered for the Countywide PIG must be at least 25 acres in size or be adjacent to an already preserved property. A farm must have a Land Evaluation score of at least 55. This score is based on an index (from 0 to 100) that ranks the agricultural quality of the property's soils. The index awards points for prime agricultural soils, soils of Statewide importance and unique soils. According to the County, even if a property does not meet this criterion for the Countywide PIG, it may meet the minimum SADC standards for other programs.

SADC minimum eligibility criteria are as follows (as per N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.20):

<i>SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria (as of 7/7/2007)</i>	<i>For lands less than or equal to 10 acres</i>	<i>For lands greater than 10 acres</i>
Minimum Value of Annual Agricultural or Horticultural Production	\$2,500 per year	No requirement
Minimum Tillable Acres	At least 75% of the land or 5 acres, whichever is less	At least 50% of the land or 25 acres, whichever is less
Minimum Acreage of Soils Capable of Supporting Agricultural or Horticultural Production	At least 75% of the land or 5 acres, whichever is less	At least 50% of the land or 25 acres, whichever is less
<i>Development Potential</i>		
Zoning – General	The municipal zoning ordinance for the land as it is being appraised must allow additional development, and in the case of residential zoning, at least one additional residential site beyond that which will potentially exist on the premises.	
Access for Additional Development	Where additional development of the land depends on the potential to provide access, the municipal zoning ordinance allowing further subdivision of the land must be verified in writing by the municipal zoning officer/planner. If access is only available by means of an easement, then the easement must specify that further subdivision of the land is possible.	
Max. Acreage of Freshwater Wetlands (as per NJDEP wetlands map)	No more than 80% of the land	No more than 80% of the land for lands less than 25 acres; no requirement for lands ≥ 25 acres
Max. Acreage of Steep Slope Areas (slopes > 15% as per current USDA Soil Survey)	No more than 80% of the land	No more than 80% of the land for lands less than 25 acres; no requirement for lands ≥ 25 acres
Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Eligibility	If the land is eligible for the allocation of development credits pursuant to a TDR program authorized and duly adopted by law, then none of the above requirements will apply to the application.	
<i>Source: Middlesex County Agriculture Development Board, 2008</i>		

There are a number of small farms in Holmdel that do not meet the minimum requirements for the Countywide PIG program, for the most part because they do not meet the size requirement of 25 acres and/or are not adjacent to an already preserved property. Holmdel farmers with smaller properties have noted that they have a loyal customer base, consisting of local residents that generally live within a ten mile radius of the farm. These smaller farms in the Township, which tend to be more visible, as well as more accessible, to the public than larger commercial farming operations, could be lost to development more readily than larger tracts because they do not meet the minimum eligibility criteria to qualify for farmland preservation consideration.

MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY RANKING CRITERIA

Due to the innate competitive nature of the farmland preservation program, the State and County utilize a farm ranking system that is based on overall “quality scores,” which are

determined based on a number of factors, including soil quality, proportion of tillable acres, proximity to other preserved farms, imminence of change, size and density and local support for agriculture. The major difference between the State and County ranking systems is that the SADC assigns points and weights criteria differently than the County. See Appendix B for the State Agricultural Development Committee ranking criteria.

Currently, the MCABD rates its farms using both the State system and its own. However, applications for farms not meeting these criteria will be accepted and considered for approval on a case-by-case basis. Landowner applications are accepted by MCADB on a rolling basis. The Board periodically reviews applications and analyzes such factors as the proximity to other preserved farms, expected cost, available funding and the overall Land Evaluation Site Assessment (Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2008). Developed by the MCADB in 2002, Land Evaluation Site Assessment, or 'LESA' score, is a tally of the Land Evaluation score and a Site Assessment score that assigns points to such factors as percentage of property actively farmed, proximity to other preserved property, local commitment to the farmland preservation program (supportive zoning & planning, willingness to cost share), size of the farm and stewardship (e.g. an existing Farm Conservation Plan, enrollment in the Eight-year Program, etc.).

However, under the 2007 revised State rules, landowners submitting applications for properties under either municipal or county program must meet a threshold score under the statewide scoring system, which analyzes factors such as soils, tillable acres, boundaries and buffers, local commitment, size and density, CADB prioritization, and imminence of change. The SADC rules require eligible farms to either meet or exceed 70% of the average quality score of all County Easement Purchase Program or future Countywide PIG farms that had received preliminary approval in the last 3 fiscal years. As of 2008 in Monmouth County, the score required is 48 (70% of 69.01), which is amongst the highest thresholds in the state.

The AAC will use Monmouth County and SADC ranking criteria in reviewing farmland for potential preservation. It is the overall goal to recommend the most suitable properties for farmland preservation funding. Like the MCABD, the ACC will accept applications from farms that do not meet the minimum eligibility criteria and consider them for approval on a case-by-case basis. Coordination between the Township and County will continue on an ongoing basis, and final ranking decisions will be decided after consultation with the MCADB. Due to the limited funding statewide, while the AAC would like all targeted farms to receive preservation, the reality of the economic times will not allow such an aspiration. However, the AAC will continue to add farms to the Township's targeted farmland list, as warranted, and will work with the County in coordinating ranking decisions.

MUNICIPAL POLICIES RELATED TO FARMLAND PRESERVATION APPLICATIONS AND PRESERVED PROPERTIES

The Township follows all County and State policies relating to farmland preservation applications, although it reserves the right to deviate from certain requirements on a case-by-case basis if it determines that a particular property is worthy of preservation or participating with the following housing opportunity programs. However, depending on the particular funding program sought, the County or State holds the ultimate decision-making power.

The Township Ordinance allows farms to house temporary farm workers on-site (§ 30-

127.4), providing farmers with a greater ability to attract migrant agricultural laborers. In the event that a landowner with an existing development easement with the County or State decides to erect such housing, the County and State have a formal review process to determine the reasoning behind the request and the potential the impact on the existing preserved land. If the County approves, then the request is passed to the SADC, which must pass a resolution in favor of the request.

Although rarely requested at the County level, house replacement requests on easement properties have been requested in the past. Similar to the agricultural labor housing application process, a landowner must submit to a formal application process, with a review focusing on the landowners' needs and motives, the size and location of a new building envelope, and impact on the farming operation. The County and State must both approve such a request.

Residual Dwelling Site Opportunity allocations (RDSOs), which are floating housing opportunities that a farm over 100 acres in size may request as part of their deed of easement, are administered through the County. RDSOs may be allocated to parcels at a density of one dwelling unit per 100 acres; this density calculation includes existing and proposed residential buildings. Somewhat rare, the County receives about one request a year. State Policy P-31 must be followed in the event of such a request, particularly to ensure that construction and use of a residential unit is for an agricultural purpose.

A Division of Premises request enables the fee owner of a preserved property to divide an agricultural easement and sell one or more resulting farms. The County receives about one request a year. Formal guidelines for this request are contained in SADC Policy P-30A, which requires a similar level of review and analysis as the aforementioned requests. Policy P-30A requires that the division must be for agricultural purposes and result in agriculturally viable parcels.

Lastly, Exceptions are areas of a farm that are specifically delineated so they will not be subject to the majority of the restrictions in the deed of easement. There are two types of Exceptions; Severable and Non-Severable. Severable Exceptions may be subdivided from a farm, while Non-Severable Exceptions may not be subdivided. As per Monmouth County's Farmland Preservation Program, a Severable Exception generally needs to meet the minimum lot size for a local municipality's zoning and the landowner should pursue subdivision approvals concurrently with a farmland application. Sometimes municipalities will have lot size waivers for exception areas if the bulk of the property is going into preservation, so although Severable Exceptions often become stand-alone lots they do not always have to conform to bulk zoning standards. A Non-Severable Exception is typically used to provide a site for a future farmhouse, particularly when there is no house presently on the property; this type of exception cannot usually be subdivided further, and will be tied to the farm, meaning it cannot be subdivided from the farm and sold separately. An Exception can also be requested around an existing farmhouse, ensuring that it would not be subject to all the farmland preservation deed restrictions. Both severable and non-severable exceptions are permitted, and can be used for a variety of purposes, including future housing opportunities, continued use of non-agricultural uses/businesses, open space, trails, etc. Monmouth County and the Township do not encourage or discourage exceptions; rather they try to ensure that the size and location of an exception makes sense for the farming operation (i.e., ensure there is an opportunity for housing). F&F Nurseries, for example, was granted a one acre exception for a farmhouse; exceptions have also been used in the Township for greenways and trailways

on preserved farmland. Whenever exceptions are permitted, they are in accordance with SADC policies. The ACC will work with applicants to limit the number and agricultural impacts of exceptions, especially severable exceptions and the County will review and decide these on a case-by-case basis, with particular focus on the size and location of the requested exception.

As the AAC understands that landowners require flexibility at times, it is supportive of applications for any of the previously mentioned policies and will work with the landowners, County, State and any other parties that may be involved in the application process in order to find appropriate funding mechanisms that may be applicable.

LIST OF FARMS

The List of Farms represents those properties that the Township intends to target for the purpose of purchasing development rights under the auspices of the Farmland Preservation PIG Program. In identifying properties to be placed on the List of Farms, the AAC took into account: 1) contiguity with already preserved open space areas; 2) parcel size; 3) soil quality; and 4) landowner interest.

The Township has expanded the original target List of Farms enunciated in the 2002 and 2004 PIG submissions to include five (5) additional farms. In the intervening period, the F&F Nurseries property was subsequently preserved and development began on Block 9, Lots 14.01 and 14.02. Consequently, both have been removed from the target List of Farms.

The List of Farms is located on the top of Table 1. Those properties included on the List of Farms are also depicted on the map in Figure 2. The total land area of the properties on the List of Farms is approximately 587 acres. Each of the properties on the List of Farms is wholly or partially farmland-assessed, and approximately 95 percent of the total acreage in the List of Farms is farmland-assessed. According to the FA-1 tax forms submitted by farmland-assessed properties to the Township Tax Assessor's Office, approximately 64 percent of the farmland assessed acreage of the List of Farms is composed of cropland, which includes not only field crops like vegetables, grains, and corn, but also nursery stock and orchards. (See "Tillable Acreage", Table 18, below, for more detail on croplands, pasturelands and woodlands).

SOIL CHARACTERISTICS

The properties on the List of Farms have high-quality soils. As shown on Table 17, of the 587.14 acres of land on the List of Farms, about 68 percent qualify as "Prime Farmland," and another 13 percent qualify as "Farmland of Statewide Importance." None of the properties on the List of Farms have "unique farmland" soil characteristics. Figure 3 shows soils in map form.

Table 17: Soil Characteristics of Properties on the List of Farms

Block	Lot	Location	Acreage	Prime Farmland		Farmland of Statewide Importance	
				Acreage	Percent	Acreage	Percent
2	2/26	26 Main Street	92	47	52%	12	13%
3.08	2	S. Holmdel Road	118	84	71%	7	6%
9	5.01	193 Everett Road	16.9	13	74%	4	23%
9	17.04	96 Middletown Road	13.3	12.3	93%	0	0%
9	17.05	Middletown Road					
9	17.06	Middletown Road					
10	10.03	Hastings Place	10.87	8.6	79%	0	0%
10	10.04	153 Everett Road	12.19	10.39	85%	1.7	15%
11	29.04	31 Ely Road	6.01	6	99%	0	0%
11	29.05	33 Ely Road	3.67	3	100%	0	0%
13/ 15	1,6,11/ 2	Highway 34	208.98	161	77%	28	13%
13	14	970 Holmdel Road	33.32	26	77%	3	8%
15	2.03	188 Highway 34	11.89	9	76%	0	0%
15	3.01	184-186 Highway 36	15.13	10	65%	2	16%
15	9.02	225 Schanck Road	5.28	5	95%	0.3	6%
16	2	Highway 34	39.6	2	13%	16	40%
Total			587.14	397.29	68%	74	13%

Source: State of New Jersey, Department of Environmental Protection, 2002

TILLABLE LAND

A significant proportion of the acreage on the List of Farms—approximately 64 percent—represents “tillable land.” Tillable Land is defined as the sum of “Cropland Harvested” and “Cropland Pastured,” as reported by farmland-assessed properties on the FA-1 forms filed in the Township’s Tax Assessor’s Office. A breakout of Tillable Land for each property on the List of Farms is shown on Table 18.

Table 18: Tillable Acreage of Properties on the List of Farms

<i>Block</i>	<i>Lot</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Acreage</i>	<i>Assessed Portion</i>	<i>Cropland Harvest</i>	<i>Cropland Pastured</i>	<i>Permanent Pasture</i>	<i>Woodland & Wetland</i>	<i>Horse Boarding</i>	<i>Total Tillable (1)</i>	<i>% Tillable</i>
2	2 & 26	26 Main Street	92	91	50	0	20	21.5	0	50	54%
3.08	2	S. Holmdel Road	118	100	45	16	0	39	0	61	52%
9	5.01	193 Everett Road	16.9	13.2	13.2	0	0	2	0	13.2	78%
9	17.04	96 Middletown Road	13.3	12.3	12	0.3	0	0	0	12.3	92%
9	17.05	Middletown Road									
9	17.06	Middletown Road									
10	10.03	Hastings Place	10.87	10	10	0	0	0	0	10	92%
10	10.04	153 Everett Road	12.19	11.94	7.44	0	0	0	4.5	7.44	61
11	29.04	31 Ely Road	6.01	5.01	5.01	0	0	0	5.01	5.01	83%
11	29.05	33 Ely Road	3.67	3.67	3.67	0	0	0	0	3.67	100%
13/15	1,6 & 11/2	Highway 43	208.98	207.98	143.40	0	0	65.08	0	143.4	69%
13	14	970 Holmdel Road	33.32	33.32	30	0	0	3.32	0	30	90%
15	2.03	188 Highway 34	11.89	8.79	5.4	0	0	3.4	0	5.4	45%
15	3.01	184-186 Highway 63	15.13	14.13	0	13	0	0	0	13	86%
15	9.02	25 Schanck Road	5.28	5.28	5.28	0	0	0	0	5.28	100%
16	2	Highway 34	39.6	39.6	17.5	0	0	22.10	0	17.5	44%
Total			587.14	556.22	347.90	29.30	20.0	156.40	9.51	377.20	64.24%

Source: FA-1 tax forms submitted by farmland-assessed properties to the Township Tax Assessor's Office for 2007.

DENSITY CALCULATIONS

As required pursuant to N.J.A.C. 2:76-17.A.5, this section presents information on the density of farmland in the project area. The density is to be determined in the following way:

"By calculating the ratio of the sum of the acreage contained in...

- lands from which development easement purchase applications have been approved by the municipality or board and submitted to the Committee pursuant to the Agricultural Retention and Development Act, as amended, and the Garden State Preservation Trust Act;
- lands from which fee simple applications have been approved by the Committee;
- other lands from which development easement applications have been approved by the Committee as authorized pursuant to the Garden State Preservation Trust
- land from which development easements have been purchased;
- other permanently deed restricted farmlands;
- lands enrolled in farmland preservation programs or municipally approved farmland preservation programs; and
- other permanently preserved lands dedicated for open space purposes that are compatible with agriculture, as approved by the Committee;

as compared to the total acreage of the project area."

Based on these figures, the density of the project area is 70 percent. See Table 19 below for density calculations for the Project Area.

Table 19: Project Area Density Calculations per N.J.A.C. 2:76-17.5

Total Project Area		2,572.18 acres
<i>Number of Target Farms Including Those with Final Approval</i>	16	
i. Targeted Farms (acres)	587.14	
ii. Application Granted Final Approval (acres)	0	
iii. Development Easements Already Purchased (acres)	61.00	
iv. Other Permanently Deed Restricted Farmlands (acres)	190.00	
v. Enrolled in 8-year program (acres)	0	
vi. Open Space (acres)	1,541.39	
Total ii. to vi. (acres)	1,792.39	
Density (ii. to vi. / total area)	0.70	

FUNDING PLAN

In order for implementation of farmland preservation policies and objectives to occur, appropriate funding sources must be identified, as well as policies behind the sources. According to the County, it is less expensive to purchase easements than to fund a fee simple acquisition. As a result of partnering with the County and State, the Township is responsible for only 16% of what an outright purchase would cost.

Available Funding Mechanisms

Recognizing the current lack of municipal farmland preservation funding, the Township is willing to consider any appropriate funding mechanism for preserving farmland. The Township will work cooperatively with government agencies, non-profit organizations and private foundations — such as Green Acres, the SADC, the MCADB, the Monmouth Conservation Foundation and the Friends of Holmdel Open Space — to identify funding sources.

As noted in previous sections, the Township already has a local Open Space Tax that ideally should provide a consistent revenue stream for the purpose of open space acquisition. However, the fund is currently depleted as a result of recent acquisitions. Potential State funding sources include the Green Acres Program through the Department of Environmental Protection and the Farmland Preservation Program through the SADC.

SADC's Farmland Preservation Program is multi-faceted, including:

1. Planning Incentive Grants to municipalities and counties for the purchase of development easements.
2. Direct purchase of development easements or fee-simple farmland by SADC.
3. Grants to non-profit organizations for purchase of development easements or fee-simple farmland.
4. SADC Fee Simple purchases.

Funding is also available from Monmouth County through the MCADB. The County, for example, at the Township's request, may be able to provide some funding in conjunction with a Planning Incentive Grant from the SADC. County Agricultural Development Boards in New Jersey are responsible for approving, conditionally approving, or disapproving applications for participation in farmland preservation programs. The primary source for easement purchases under the Monmouth County's Farmland Preservation Program is the County's Capital Budget. As of June 2007, the County had allocated \$30.5 million towards the purchase of agricultural easements. Also in 2007, the County had earmarked \$8 million of its overall budget for pending preservation projects, and a \$9.5 million allocation is expected in 2008. County funding is also derived from an open space and farmland preservation tax of 1.5 cents per \$100 of equalized assessed value, with much of the open space funding being directed to the County Park System. Beginning in 2006, the County

began earmarking \$1.1 million annually for the Farmland Preservation Program from the Open Space Trust Fund, in which the unrestricted money is more flexible than spending from the Capital Budget. Lastly, the County periodically bonds for open space projects.

Other potential funding sources include foundations and non-profit organizations, whether locally based, regional or national. Examples include the Monmouth Conservation Foundation (which contributed to the purchase of the Chase Tract), the New Jersey Conservation Foundation and the Trust for Public Land. The Land Trust Alliance is a national umbrella organization that can provide additional information on land trusts and conservancies both in New Jersey and nationally.

There are significant State and County funding resources available for farmland preservation. The 1999 Garden State Preservation Trust Act (GSPT), for example, established a 30 year constitutional dedication of \$98 million per year with the first 10 years (ending in 2009) going towards acquisition and bond service and the remaining 20 years dedicated to entirely paying off GSPT bonds.

In order to gain access to State and County funding for farmland preservation, the Township must be willing to put forward some of its own money. There are three main local sources that the Township can use to finance farmland preservation: the existing Open Space Tax, the issuance of bonds for a specific acquisition program and the Township's general funds. Another possibility is to use the revenues from the Open Space Tax to secure bond funding, although the fund will be in debt service, as a result of recent funding, over the next several years. The Township should consider using any or all of these funding sources, depending on availability and competing needs, to leverage County and State funding.

There may be some interest among property owners in donating all or a portion of their farmland properties, whether in fee simple or in the form of a development easement, to a public entity, a foundation, or a non-profit organization. Property owners could potentially receive significant tax benefits from making such donations.

There are a variety of short-term and long-term mechanisms for farmland preservation. Long-term preservation programs have already been discussed. One short-term program that can be considered in Holmdel is the Eight-Year Farmland Preservation Program and the Eight-Year Municipally Approved Farmland Preservation Program. Under these two programs, property owners agree to keep the land in agricultural production for a minimum period of 8 years in return for various benefits.

It is anticipated that when the Township pays down its current debt accrued from aggressive land acquisition efforts and begins to replenish the Open Space Trust Fund, a plan will be developed to being solicitation of the remaining farms in the Project Area by direct contact of landowners by the Township Committee and the AAC, for the purpose of informing them of the various programs available to save their land from development. The Township has already had some success with outreach efforts. In February 2000, the Open Space Advisory Council held a landowners forum, during which the County informed landowners about the Farmland Preservation Program. In October 2007, a public meeting

of the AAC was held to discuss the farmland preservation plan, and another AAC meeting will be scheduled for early 2009 to discuss the Plan further. Outreach efforts are essential to informing the public, particularly farm landholders, about the importance of the farmland preservation program.

Funding Issues Relative to Farm Size

Larger farmland parcels are generally more commercially viable as farms. In addition, by considering large parcels, the Township can potentially preserve larger areas of open space for each preservation initiative, recognizing that all such efforts are time consuming and expensive. By the same token, since larger parcels will generally cost more than smaller parcels, the Township should also maintain a willingness to preserve smaller parcels that may be more affordable, even if smaller parcels are not the top priority.

Nothing should preclude the Township from considering the preservation of a smaller farm property, should the property be deemed suitable or preferable for preservation purposes. The Township should be willing to discuss preservation planning options with any property owner, regardless of lot size, who may voluntarily come forward with an interest in preserving his or her land.

Large, contiguous areas of farmland and open space are preferable to scattered sites for several reasons. First, the concentration of farmland reduces the potential for nuisance impacts on residential areas. Second, large areas of contiguous farmland are more commercially viable as farm operations because they allow farmers to achieve economies of scale. Third, the preservation of large farmland areas is preferable from an environmental perspective, as it maintains larger clusters of woodlands, natural drainage patterns and habitat areas and migratory corridors for special status species.

As of 2007, the largest remaining areas of viable farmland are found in the southern part of the Township. While there are a few scattered farm sites in the northern part of Holmdel, most of these farms are small in size (the one exception is DePalma Farm, which is already owned by the Township) and are surrounded by more intensive residential and non-residential development. The Township may want to consider such sites for possible open space and/or parkland use, since there may be a greater need for expanded recreational opportunities in the more densely developed northern sections of the municipality.

Financial Support by the County

Monmouth County has been extremely supportive of the Township's initiatives for farmland preservation in recent years. In 2001, the County contributed to the purchase of the Chase Tract, in partnership with the Township, the State and local non-profit organizations, and in 2007, the Township closed on the F&F Nurseries, whose acquisition was made possible through the partnership of the Township, the County and the State.

Financial Policies Related to Cost-Share Requirements Between the Township, County, and other Funding Partners

Under the County Easement Purchase Program, a “sliding scale” mechanism for funding allocations is used. The State’s share of the total cost is the same percentage as the County’s share of the remaining costs, with the municipality responsible for the remaining funds. For example if the State funds 60% of the easement purchase price, the County will fund 60% of the remainder (24% of the total cost), and thus the Municipality will fund 40% of the remainder (16% of the total cost); this is based on an SADC cost share of 60% and is dependent on the per acre assessment cost (see N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.11). This 60-24-16 split is the most common in the County. The State uses the same sliding scale, albeit with one wrinkle: its current cost share formula lowers the State’s contribution as land values rise. As such, in municipalities with high land values, such as the Township, municipalities may have to pay beyond 16% of an easement’s total cost.

SADC Cost Share is based on the Following:

<i>Landowner’s Asking Price</i>	<i>Percent Committee Cost Share</i>
From \$0 to \$1,000	80% above \$0
From > \$1,000 to \$3,000	\$800 + 70% above \$1,000
From > \$3,000 to \$5,000	\$2,200 + 60% above \$3,000
From > \$5,000 to \$9,000	\$3,400 + 50% above \$5,000
From > \$9,000 to \$50,000	60%
From > \$50,000 to \$75,000	\$30,000 + 55% above \$50,000
From > \$75,000 to \$85,000	\$43,750 + 50% above \$75,000
From > \$85,000 to \$95,000	\$48,750 + 40% above \$85,000
From > \$95,000 to \$105,000	\$52,750 + 30% above \$95,000
From > \$105,000 to \$115,000	\$55,750 + 20% above \$105,000
From > \$115,000	\$57,750 + 10% above \$115,000
<i>Source: N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.11</i>	

Open Space Trust Fund

In 1999, the Township adopted an Open Space Tax on property to be used "to acquire, maintain and preserve open space," including farmland. Monies collected from the Open Space Tax are deposited into the Open Space Trust Fund, and the money is to be used “to acquire, maintain, and preserve open space.” The tax was originally set at 1 cent per \$100 of value and raised to 2.5 cents in 2001. The Township used the Trust Fund to purchase the 96-acre DePalma Farm, which is located in northern Holmdel. In spring 2001, the Township collaborated with Green Acres, Monmouth County, the Monmouth Conservation Foundation, FOHOS and the SADC to purchase and preserve the 416-acre Chase Tract, the largest remaining open space parcel in Holmdel. Part of the revenue stream from the Open Space Tax was combined with other funding sources to make the purchase. The Monmouth Conservation Foundation and FOHOS raised approximately \$500,000 from the general public, which was donated to the acquisition.

The future revenue stream from the 2.5-cent Open Space Tax has been set aside for the

upcoming years to amortize the Township's payments on DePalma Farm, the Chase Tract and F&F nurseries. No increase in the Open Space Tax is planned at this time, although the Township Committee may consider increases in the future

The one downside of exhibiting aggressiveness in pursuing farmland preservation opportunities is the depletion of scare resources. In this instance, the scare resource is funding contained within the Open Space Trust Fund. Although the Township has had an Open Space Tax since 1999, it has been completely utilized to offset the costs of the preservation that has occurred in the intervening years. In 2007, the Open Space Tax has yielded approximately \$1.16 million; however, the fund has been essentially expended fully on 2007 principal and interest payments from prior borrowings for land acquisition projects.

Bonding

The Township envisions the use of bonding as the primary mechanism for covering its share of purchasing development easements through the Farmland Preservation PIG program. The funding source for the amortization of the bonding would be either the Open Space Trust Fund or the Township's General Fund. In order to utilize the Open Space Trust Fund, the Township would have to increase the Open Space Tax, as a result of the current debt service. There are no current plans to increase the Township's Open Space Tax, but the Township may consider an increase in the future. In order to utilize the General Fund, the Township Committee would have to identify funding to be used for the purpose of purchasing development easements during the budgeting process.

Donations

The Township's Farmland Preservation Plan includes a policy to "allow local property owners to consider voluntary donations of farmland to the Township, the County, the State or to a foundation or non-profit organization for the purpose of permanent farmland preservation." Property owners could potentially receive significant tax benefits from making such donations. The Township will consider all offers of development easement donations.

Option Agreements

The Township has no immediate plans to pursue the purchase of options on any of the properties on the List of Farms. The Township may consider employing such a mechanism as a short-term strategy for preserving a farmland parcel that the Township believes to be in imminent danger of being converted from agricultural to non-agricultural uses.

Installment Purchases

The Township is committed to exploring the feasibility of installment purchases with property owners on the List of Farms. Installment purchases would allow the State, the County and the Township to allocate a smaller amount of money toward the purchase of an individual farm in a given year. This suggests that other funding could be made

available to pursue other acquisitions. This purchase plan assumes that about 20 percent of the land preserved under the PIG grant would make use of installment purchases.

Cost Projections

Based on documentation from the MCADB and the SADC relative to the recent preservation of the F&F Nurseries tract, development easements in the Project Area would cost approximately \$46,307 per acre. (Note that the estimated \$46,307 per acre estimate is close to the \$50,000 per acre threshold for 60% SADC cost share as per the SADC sliding scale formula.). The actual cost of the easement would vary somewhat from property to property, depending on the natural characteristics of the site. For example, for sites that are less suitable for development (i.e., those that have drainage problems or steep slopes), the development easement would be expected to sell at a lower cost. The cost of the easement would also vary based upon a property's location, soil characteristics and zoning, as well as the status of any development approvals.

For the purposes of this application, the average cost of development easements in the Project Area is estimated to be \$46,307 per acre. The estimated total cost of purchasing development easements from all the properties on the List of Farms is approximately \$27.2 million, expressed in current dollars. A property-by-property break-out of the cost is shown in Table 20.

Table 20: Estimated Cost of Purchasing Development Easements from Properties on the List of Farms

<i>Block</i>	<i>Lot</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Total Acreage</i>	<i>Estimated Cost @ \$46,307 per Acre</i>
2	2 & 26	26 Main Street	92	\$4,260,244
3.08		2S. Holmdel Road	118	\$5,464,226
9	5.01	193 Everett Road	16.9	\$782,588
9	17.04 17.05 17.06	96 Middletown Road	13.3	\$615,883.10
10	10.03	Hastings Place	10.87	\$503,357.09
10	10.04	153 Everett Road	12.19	\$564,482.33
11	29.04	31 Ely Road	6.01	\$278,305.07
11	29.05	33 Ely Road	3.67	\$169,946.69
13/15	1,5,11/2	Highway 34	208.98	\$9,676,310.72
13	14	970 Holmdel Road	33.32	\$1,542,949.24
15	2.03	188 Highway 34	11.89	\$550,590.23
15	3.01	184-186 Highway 36	15.13	\$700,624.91
15	9.02	25 Schanck Road	5.28	\$244,500.96
16	2	Highway 34	39.6	\$1,833,757.20
TOTAL			587.14	\$27,187,765.54
<i>Source: State of New Jersey, Department of Environmental Protection, 2002</i>				

Funding Plan Associated with 1, 5, and 10 Year Preservation Goals

Based on the use of bonding and the 60-24-16 split between the State, the County and the Township, respectively, the yearly monetary outlays required by each entity are outlined in

Table 21.

It should be noted that the yearly outlays are a function of the current and future availability of funds. The Township will be paying debt service on past purchases over the next several years, and the State will similarly have less of a capacity to cost share over the same time period. A bright spot, however, is that according to the County, in order to keep preservation budgeting commensurate with the region's rise in land prices, as well as the growth of the Municipal PIG Program, the Farmland Preservation Program's budget allocation has risen significantly. The AAC should keep in tune with the County and actively promote the most appropriate properties on the targeted List of Farms for potential preservation.

At this point, the proposed funding plan is quite conservative with upcoming Fiscal Year and years two through four, with increasing aggressiveness beginning with year 5, as a result of the Township trust fund moving beyond paying debt service (although a decrease in the value of taxable land may hinder trust fund growth over the next years). However, with aggressive use of installment purchase agreements, the Township may be able to increase its pace of preservation for the first 5 years. At this point, however, as this analysis is intended to be as conservative as possible, the Township's preservation funding plan will be unable to increase significantly until year 5. Should economic conditions change over the upcoming years, these numbers may certainly be adjusted upward.

As a consequence of limited funding over next five years and the potential for the real estate market to re-energize, agricultural lands may be lost to development. Potential strategies to minimize the loss of agricultural land are the use of no-cost option agreement to lock in reasonable prices and a right of first refusal for some of the targeted farms. Holmdel has not considered selling deed-restricted farmland as a means to raise revenue for future preservation. The Township would prefer to exhaust other options before selling deed-restricted farmland (i.e. renting property to local farmers), though such a measure could be employed, where appropriate, in the future. The F&F Nurseries property, for example, includes easements for public greenways and trailways; the Township does not want to privatize these existing public uses. The AAC should work with the landowners on the list of targeted farms and educate them directly on their options, should they be interested in preserving their land.

Table 21: 10-Year Cost Projections*1 YEAR GOAL: 10 ACRES**5 YEAR GOAL: 70 ACRES**10 YEAR GOAL: 338 ACRES*

	<i>Estimated Acres</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>	<i>State Share (60%)</i>	<i>County Share (24%)</i>	<i>Municipal Share (16%)</i>
FY 2009	10	\$463,070	\$277,842	\$111,136.80	\$74,091.20
FY 2010	10	\$463,070	\$277,842	\$111,136.80	\$74,091.20
FY 2011	10	\$463,070	\$277,842	\$111,136.80	\$74,091.20
FY 2012	15	\$694,605	\$416,763	\$166,705.20	\$111,136.80
FY 2013	25	\$1,157,675	\$694,605	\$277,842	\$185,228
FY 2014	35	\$1,620,745	\$972,447	\$388,978.80	\$259,319.20
FY 2015	50	\$2,315,350	\$1,389,210	\$555,684	\$370,456
FY 2016	60	\$2,778,420	\$1,667,052	\$666,820.80	\$444,547.20
FY 2017	75	\$3,473,025	\$2,083,815	\$833,526	\$555,684
FY2018	48	\$2,222,736	\$1,333,641.60	\$533,456.64	\$355,637.76
TOTAL	338	\$15,651,766	\$9,391,060	\$3,756,424	\$2,504,283

Unfortunately, even if the Township's 5 and 10 year preservation goals are met (70 acres and 338 acres, respectively), a significant amount of farmland will remain susceptible to development. There are approximately 587 acres of farmland on the List of Farms alone; within the project area there are approximately 77 acres of privately-owned, farmland assessed, and non-deed restricted property that has not yet been slated for preservation. Nevertheless, the preservation of farmland can be a less financially burdensome alternative for the Township in the long-run; allowing farmland to be developed into housing will increase the cost of support services, and could lead to a greater tax burden than if the land had been preserved as farmland or open space. As discussed in Chapter 2, even commercial and industrial development, which offers a short-term increase in ratables, has been found to increase taxes over time and not appreciate as fast as farmland and open space.

Other Financial Information

As discussed above, the Township has an Open Space Trust fund, which can be used to cost share on agricultural easement acquisitions, as well as for other farmland projects. Table 22 below illustrates the trends in both Monmouth County and Holmdel dedicated open space tax collections between 1999 and 2008.

Table 22: Monmouth County and Holmdel Township Dedicated Open Space Fund Tax Collections, 1999-2008

	Monmouth County			Holmdel Township		
	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Rate per \$100</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Rate per \$100</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1999	465,636.33	0.026	1.05	176,456.72	0.010	0.41
2000	Not Available			Not Available		
2001						
2002	462,911.81	0.024	0.85	478,814.00	0.025	0.89
2003	726,998.60	0.037	1.25	494,768.00	0.025	0.84
2004	708,897.81	0.035	1.11	503,607.00	0.025	0.79
2005	659,353.42	0.032	0.99	508,252.00	0.025	0.77
2006	591,296.53	0.029	0.88	507,807.00	0.025	0.76
2007	677,169.23	0.015	0.99	1,155,260.00	0.025	1.65
2008	688,449.55	0.015	0.96	1,144,913.00	0.025	1.61
<i>Source: Monmouth County Board of Taxation, General Tax Rate Certification Schedule, 1999-2008</i>						

FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM / AGRICULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES

Holmdel Township devotes a fair amount of administrative resources to the Farmland Preservation Program. The Township Planning Board provides staff support for the Farmland Preservation Program, with the consulting planner holding the responsibility for this plan. The Township Administrator's Office provides ongoing support to the Farmland Preservation Program, including the preparation of yearly updates, communication between the Planning Board and the multiple open space/farmland municipal committees, and coordination with the consulting planner. The Township's Chief Financial Officer, Tax Assessor, Clerk, Attorney, and Engineer are also instrumental in supporting the Farmland Preservation Program. Computer support, including the farmland inventory and GIS mapping, is provided by the consulting planner's office and supplemented by the MCADB, as needed.

FACTORS LIMITING FARMLAND PRESERVATION IMPLEMENTATION

The two most significant factors that will hinder farmland preservation in the future are 1) funding deficiencies; and 2) landowners selling to developers. Simply stated, if funding options are limited, regardless if it is a perception or reality, landowners may consider selling to a developer, rather than taking a "wait and see" approach. Even though the county is in the midst of an economic recession and construction activity has dropped recently, this downturn is certainly temporary, and the market will eventually turn. All available funding sources, including state, county, municipal, and non-profit, are limited, and there is no clear indication as to future coffers. If in fact funding continues to be limited as the real estate market begins to recover, there is a distinct possibility farmland in affluent municipalities, such as the Township, may be turned into non-agricultural land uses.

Although it is impossible to predict the future, any reduction of the Township's ratable base, due to decreasing land values, in successive years will have a direct impact on the Open Space Trust Fund, for which the Township will be paying debt service over the next several years, thus restricting the Township's ability to acquire additional farmland.

VI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Recognizing the rich agricultural heritage of Holmdel, the community, through various business and outreach programs, should continue to leverage both the monetization and marketing potential of agriculture. In order continue to prime the viability of agriculture within the community and the immediate region, as well as take advantage of the burgeoning “eat local” movement, economic development strategies are imperative. The 2006 *Agricultural Smart Growth Plan for New Jersey* describes the goals of economic development as “stabilizing and fostering an active and productive agricultural industry” to retain viable farms; “facilitating investments in agricultural infrastructure” to support, maintain and expand the business of farming; and “identifying and facilitating the creation of new markets” to help farmers “access and ever-changing marketplace.”

CONSISTENCY WITH NJ DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture’s 2008 *Economic Development Strategies*, a comprehensive state policy guide for advancing the agricultural industry, contains strategies for all facets of the industry, including produce, dairy, crops, livestock, wine and agri-tourism, among others. Beyond the specific recommendations, this publication possesses excellent data, such as production numbers, acreage and inputs/outputs, as well as information about state funded assistance and promotion programs. For the Township, specific recommendations relating to promoting and access to community markets is paramount, especially as the “eat locally grown food” trend does not appear to be waning anytime soon. Most of the agricultural products sold by Township farmers are distributed locally at farmer’s markets; the NJ Department of Agriculture’s Economic Development Strategy of strengthening existing and new community markets directly benefits Holmdel farmers. Additionally, as agri-tourism has become a larger part in keeping small farming operations viable, agri-tourism-related strategies have become increasingly relevant and valuable to Township farmers. Township farmers feel, to some extent, that the Economic Development Strategies are geared more towards larger farming operations, rather than small farms, as are found in Holmdel. Farmers would like to see more strategies designed to make small farms viable (i.e. deer management strategies: farmers have reported significant losses of crops and other agricultural products because of deer).

AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY RETENTION, EXPANSION, AND RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

There are many strategies for agricultural industry retention, expansion and recruitment. The 2007 document, entitled *New Jersey Department of Agriculture 2007 Economic Development Strategies*, lists 121 strategies organized around the following sectors: produce, horticulture, field and forage crops, dairy, livestock and poultry, organic, seafood, equine, wine and general.

Although Holmdel naturally engages in most of the strategies articulated in this plan, the

community should continue to seek additional opportunities, such as actively engaging and galvanizing the farming community in preserving, marketing, and encouraging agricultural economic development, in furtherance of the *2007 New Jersey Department of Agriculture Economic Development Strategies*. This Farmland Preservation Plan, as well as the *2007 New Jersey Department of Agriculture Economic Development Strategies*, should be used as the cornerstone and primer for understanding the agricultural environment, as well to understand the past to plan for future trends and needs. However, as agricultural economic development is a dynamic process, the farming community should continue to refine and devise new strategies over the years, and not entirely rely on what is articulated herein.

Institutional

The Township's farming community has a multitude of institutional support services at its disposal, including governmental agencies, academic institutions and community groups, all of which provide support and marketing services to farming operations. According to the *2008 Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan*, as prepared by the Monmouth County Planning Board and Monmouth County Agricultural Development Board, these services range from "seller-buyer matching programs to estate planning to public relations campaigns to market research coordination."

Farmer Support

As discussed in this Plan, the Township has a number of supportive services for farmers. Township receives inquiries from both buyers who are interested in acquiring preserved farms, as well as sellers who are interested in learning about the numerous options available in preserving their farmland. The Township generally refers such requests to the MCADB and the SADC. The MCADB maintains a spreadsheet of buyer and seller contact information and has made one known, successful match. MCABD staff also regularly refers existing and potential farmers to the SADC's Farm Link Program. According to its web site (www.state.nj.us/agriculture/sadc/farmlink.htm), the Farm Link Program is "a resource and referral center for new farmers seeking access to land and farming opportunities, landowners seeking farmers, and farmers working on estate and farm transfer plans." The web site lists farming opportunities available and sought, such as farms for sale or lease, internships and relocation and expansion options.

Other requests typically asked at the County level that may be of interest to Township farmers include questions regarding educational opportunities related to entering the farming profession, converting an operation from one type to another, or assuming responsibility for an inherited farm. The Northeast Organic Farmers Association of New Jersey (NOFA-NJ) periodically offers workshops entitled "Exploring the Small Farm Dream", based on materials from the New England Small Farm Institute, and helped organize a full course at Mercer County Community College. Rutgers Cooperative Extension also offered a new farmers course in 2006 using a similar curriculum. In addition, there are a wealth of Internet resources available to aspiring farmers including the web sites Growing New Farmers, www.growingnewfarmers.org and The New Farm, www.newfarm.org. Aside from offering courses, Rutgers Cooperative Extension will deploy

its agents to work with landowners to select crops and livestock suited to the soils of a particular site.

Aside from figuring out what to grow and how to grow it, farmers need to finance their businesses to buy equipment and land, and to erect barns, buildings, and housing. First Pioneer Farm Credit provides loans and financial services to new and established farmers. The USDA Farm Service Agency coordinates various conservation and loan programs for which area farmers are eligible. Whole Foods Market has instituted a privately funded loan program. It has set aside \$10 million for low interest loans to farmers and plans to host a conference in New Jersey later this year. Monmouth County's Community Development Program, in conjunction with the Monmouth County Economic Development and Tourism office, used to offer a Small Business Loan Program for which farmers could apply. However, the program spent down its available funds. Potential applicants have instead been taking advantage of relatively cheap home equity loans for business-related needs.

The County and its nonprofit and municipal partners periodically offer workshops on topics related to estate planning. For example, in April 2007 the MCADB and Monmouth Conservation Foundation sponsored a seminar on tax incentives and installment purchase agreements (IPAs). MCADB staff also directs many landowners to the SADC's December 2004 publication *Transferring the Family Farm: What Worked, What Didn't for 10 NJ Families*. The report offers case studies on the orderly – and not so orderly – intergenerational transfer of farmland and farm assets, and includes a profile of Monmouth County's Heritage Hill Farm.

Marketing and Public Relation Support from the County and Holmdel Township

The MCADB, the Monmouth County Department of Economic Development and Tourism, and the Department of Agriculture have and continually maintain the agriculture industry within both the County and State. For instance, the county published a "guide to farms" in 1993, indexed by different categories, and the Department of Agriculture has an extensive website of farm and farming information. There are also various other marketing and promotional publications that have been undertaken by various county and state agencies. Please see the *2008 Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan*.

Although the Township does not have breadth of resources and dedicated full-time staff to manage, maintain and market the community's agricultural attributes, it has been continually supportive of the farming community. This document lays out a number of strategies for Township promotion of agriculture, as well as tools for individual farmers. The Township should encourage and support the following strategies.

Farmers benefit from the ability to market their products on-site, as it allows them to sell directly to customers, rather than "middle-man" wholesalers or retailers. Current zoning regulations regarding farm stands, farm markets and seasonal sales should be reviewed to determine whether changes are warranted to assist farmers in this regard.

Communication between government agencies, farmers, business leaders and the general public would allow individuals to share innovative ideas and coordinate work efforts. Both

agriculture and agro-tourism are regional industries, and regional coordination could help bolster the industry both in Holmdel and nearby municipalities.

There are successful examples around the Country of how small-scale farmers have managed to thrive in an increasingly competitive industry dominated by large commercial farm operations. Building off State and County resources, the Township should identify success stories and compile a set of case studies or guidelines that can provide useful insights for Holmdel farmers.

Marketing and Public Relation Support – State Government

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture instituted the Jersey Fresh promotional campaign over 20 years ago to increase awareness of locally grown produce and food products. Numerous farmers and venues use the Jersey Fresh logo. In recent years the program has expanded to include the designations Jersey Bred (for horses and lambs), Jersey Seafood and Jersey Grown (for horticulture). The NJ Department of Agriculture also maintains a web site, www.state.nj.us/jerseyfresh/index.htm, which is a great place to locate roadside stands, community farmer's markets and pick-your-own facilities.

Community Farmers Markets

Community Farmers Markets benefit both farmers and the general public, as farmers have an outlet for selling their goods, and the general public has the opportunity to purchase fresh and locally grown agricultural and various homemade products. According to the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, they are becoming "more popular than ever because exceeding numbers of consumers are becoming interested in buying their fresh produce directly from local farmers." The location and times of these markets are generally fixed and seasonal, to coincide with on-going harvests throughout the spring, summer, and fall.

Although some Holmdel farmers are vendors in various markets in the region (in addition to much smaller scaled roadside stands throughout the Township), there is a need in the community for a large-scale market to serve the regional community, and to take advantage of the community's strategic regional location. It is suggested that the Township work with the applicable state agencies and local municipalities to organize a farmers market, to create a critical mass of potential consumers and to establish additional opportunities for farmers markets, such as at the Aberdeen-Matawan, Hazlet and Middletown train stations.

Agro-tourism

Many tourist-oriented activities fall under the umbrella of agro-tourism. They would include historic "living" farms like Longstreet Farm and "farm experience" tours and vacations. Agro-tourism is one of the most rapidly growing tourism activities in the Country, and it also tends to be appealing to day-trippers and weekenders.

For example, farm visits and tours for school children could be arranged. Youngsters

would be able to meet farmers, hear about different types of farming and learn where their food comes from and how it is grown, harvested and sold.

Located less than one hour from New York City, the region is presented with a huge market for day and weekend travelers, and there may be an unfulfilled demand for such uses in Holmdel and surrounding areas. Farm-based bed-and-breakfasts and country inns could provide overnight accommodations for people taking weekend trips to the Monmouth County area and/or the shore area. One possibility for the Township to explore is to establish a working and/or historic farm. The Bayonet/Harding Farm is a potential candidate for such a use.

Farmers can use small secondary businesses to supplement their income from agricultural production. For example, a farmer who has carpentry skills may choose to set up a woodworking shop in an underutilized portion of a barn. Such a "farm business" could be permitted subject to meeting certain regulations in order to ensure that the business is secondary to the farm use, compatible with the surrounding agricultural and residential areas, and not detrimental to the natural environment.

Direct Sales of Supermarkets and Restaurants

With a strategic location along the Garden State Parkway, proximate to numerous arterial roadways, and within a greater region with a critical mass of supermarkets and restaurants, it is suggested that the Township and the farming community actively seek out opportunities for direct sales to supermarkets and restaurants. It should take advantage of the burgeoning trends of eating locally grown food products. There are existing examples in the area, such as the Cheesequake Farm (selling to Whole Foods in Middletown) and St. Peterburg's Farm (selling directly to Mediterra, Trepiani and Triumph Brewery in Princeton).

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

A CSA is an arrangement whereby a consumer purchases a pre-determined share of a farm's bounty for the season, receiving a weekly share of the current produce. According to the County Plan, "organizing a CSA enables the farmer to predetermine his/her customer base, reduce risk, and avoid having to go into debt at the beginning of the season." Aside from the receiving fresh produce, a CSA also serves as a "demonstration project" and allows its members to have a stake in the success of the farm. There are currently no CSAs within Holmdel, but it should be certainly encouraged in the community.

Agricultural Education and Market Research Coordination

Rutgers University and its affiliated programs are the backbone of agricultural education in the State. Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE), which falls under the umbrella of the New Jersey Agriculture Experiment Station (NJAES), provides technical assistance and recommendations related to crops and livestock. RCE works to sustain and enhance agricultural production. The agency runs educational and research programs in all 21 New Jersey counties. Producers contact RCE agents for assistance with issues such as soil

fertility, water quality and supply (including drought and irrigation management), integrated pest management and crop management. Two local agricultural agents are based in the Monmouth County agricultural building on Kozloski Road in Freehold Township. They work not only with commercial agriculture, horticulture and aquaculture operations, but also homeowners, school groups and government agencies.

FARMING BUSINESS SUPPORT

Like any other industry, the farming business is multi-dimensional and relies on a network of suppliers for resources, inputs and machinery. The Township is fortunate to be situated within a county with a strong agricultural business network.

Input Suppliers and Services & Product Distributors and Processors

The Farmer's Brokerage and Supply ("FB&S"), located in Upper Freehold and owned by the NJ Farm Bureau, is a major supplier to Holmdel farmers. FB&S sells seed, hardware, parts of tillage equipment, chemicals and fertilizers, in addition to operating a custom application business. For equipment and machinery, dealers in South Jersey, such as Farm Rite, Pole Tavern Equipment and Leslie G. Fogg, Inc., and those in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, such as Hooper Inc., Messick Farm Equipment and Wengers, are major suppliers. Farmers also rely on mail-order and the Internet for supplies.

Within Holmdel, there are a few business-to-business nurseries, including F&F Nursery and Casola's Farm.

The Township should continue to market the existing farms for their goods and services and seek out additional opportunities to attract niche agricultural uses to the Township to serve both the community and region. It is suggested that the Township's various agricultural boards meet more regularly to brainstorm on how to expand and adapt the Township's farming activities.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Salem County maintains a comprehensive online resource, entitled "Green Pages: An Agricultural Resource Guide," which contains listings of where to obtain support services and market agricultural products. You can find it at <http://salem.rutgers.edu/greenpages/index.html>.

ANTICIPATED AGRICULTURAL TRENDS

With such a vibrant and diverse agricultural community, it appears that farming will continue to remain strong in the Township. However, the most significant threat to farming is development, therefore both the Township and County should continue to remain responsive to the agricultural needs and encourage and facilitate marketing and adaptive opportunities. Certainly, as indicated throughout this report, lands classified as agricultural have declined over recent decades, as a result of the attractiveness of the Township for both residential and commercial development. In addition to continuing their traditional farming activities, farmers should diversity operations and seek out niche options, such as producing herbs, flowers and niche crops, consider selling homemade products, and seek

out direct market opportunities, such as sales to supermarkets and restaurants. There is an ever-growing market for these opportunities, and the community should take full advantage.

AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT NEEDS

While the Township is committed to working with the agricultural community and entities that support or have a stake in the community, as seen through its master plan, zoning ordinance, and various actions taken in support of agriculture throughout the years, it does not have the financial resources to contribute to the construction of brick-and-mortar agricultural facilities and infrastructure, or commit significant investments in agricultural economic development on a local and/or regional basis. However, the AAC should work with the Township in potentially securing limited funds for marketing and promotional opportunities, such as working with area municipalities and the state to plan and implement a seasonal farmer's market on the grounds of the PNC Bank Arts Center. Aside from funding, it is also recommended that farmers take a more active and visible role with local economic development, service organizations and trade groups. The enhanced visibility afforded by connection to these organizations will contribute to an increased understanding of agricultural needs. Moreover, the Township and the AAC should work actively with local municipalities and the greater region on joint agricultural initiatives. The Township has also shown legislative support by recently enacting a right-to-farm ordinance.

VII NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION

Managing and conserving soil and water is key to a vital agricultural industry. Similarly, waste management and energy supply are critical issues for Holmdel's farmers.

Natural Resource Protection Coordination

There are a number of agencies that coordinate natural resource protection and various grant programs administered by these organizations. Summaries can be found below.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) of the USDA assists the public with issues related to soil, water and general natural resources conservation. In particular, the staff provides assistance in preparing conservation plans, and assists in securing funding through Federal programs to implement them. Conservation enhancement cost share opportunities are available to most landowners. The agency offers services to the County's agricultural community through its field office, which is located in Franklin Township (Somerset County). As per the 2008 Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan, the Freehold office of the NRCS provides professional expertise in Monmouth County's right-to-farm cases, as well as assists farmers with the development of conservation plans. Additional NRCS resources are available from the Service's Plant Materials Center, which is located in Middle Township (Cape May County).

Farm Service Agency (FSA)

The FSA provides cost share and incentive payments for conservation protection installation. It also provides annual rental payments for removing highly-erodible land and environmentally sensitive cropland from production, and for restoring and protecting grasslands. Additionally, the FSA administers several conservation programs, including the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.

Soil Conservation Districts

The Freehold Soil Conservation District (SCD) handles Monmouth County. The office administers the Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Act, Chapter 251, as part of New Jersey State policy. According to Freehold SCD's web site (www.freeholdscd.org), the aim of the act is "to reduce the danger from stormwater runoff, to retard non-point source pollution from sediment and to conserve and protect the land, water and other natural resources of the state." Construction, grading and demolition projects that disturb more than 5,000 square feet of the surface area of the land require soil erosion and sediment control plans. Commercial farms may be required to prepare such a plan for parking lot installation, soil grading, and the erection of agricultural structures. Cultivation of farmland for food, fiber or animals is typically exempt.

Natural Resource Protection Programs

The SADC Soil and Water Conservation Grant Program provides grants, up to 50% of a project's costs, to owners of permanently preserved farms and Eight-year Program participants. Irrigation, erosion control and stream corridor enhancement projects are among those that are eligible. Many Monmouth County farmers have obtained Soil and Water Conservation grant money over the years.

Federal Conservation Programs

The NRCS and FSA administer a number of federal Farm Bill programs, including the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). Monmouth County farmers have used EQIP money for irrigation projects, manure management and conversion of gas engines to diesel. The WHIP program is designed for non-federal landowners who wish to improve or develop fish and wildlife habitat. CREP is intended to reduce agricultural water runoff and improve water quality by paying farmers to remove highly erodible pastureland and cropland from production.

NJDEP Landowner Incentive Program

The NJDEP Landowner Incentive Program provides technical and financial assistance to private landowners interested in preserving and protecting threatened or endangered plant and animal special that may be present on their properties. Nearly \$775,000 is budgeted for the program in 2009. Examples of projects that the program may assist with include: restoring vernal pools; controlled burning of vegetation as a means of increasing soil productivity with natural plant nutrients; and stream fencing to limit disturbance and siltation of a stream corridor, among others. Additional information is available from the NJDEP.

As per the AAC, Holmdel farmer participation in the aforementioned programs is minimal. While there may have been participation in the past, farmers have expressed that, at present, many of their farms are too small to be eligible for participation in these programs. They remain open to participation in these programs in the future.

Water Resources

The County's Growth Management Guide emphasizes the necessity of considering the water needs of the agricultural industry in water supply planning. County water conservation strategies are detailed below.

Conservation Strategies

Water conservation is both a sound environmental practice and a necessity to ensure the viability of the Township's agricultural industry in the future. It is also important with regard to the general difficulty and great expense of securing water allocation permits, which, given the changing environmental conditions, can only be expected to intensify in the future. There are numerous methods of water conservation and allocation, including:

- Improving soil's water-holding abilities by increasing its organic content;

- Selecting native and/or drought-tolerant plants; and
- Improving the efficiency and quality of water delivery systems.

Additional strategies are plentiful. A good resource for additional strategies is the Sustainable Agriculture Network, which is an affiliate of the USDA.

The challenges associated with water supply for farmers in Holmdel, as well as at the County level, are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 1. Monmouth County's 1995 *Growth Management Guide* strongly promotes the conservation and protection of water resources in the County through a number of policies, including regional and local planning for drought conditions, encouraging the use of water conservation techniques, supporting the public acquisition of open space in watersheds that are under development pressure and encouraging the consideration of the water needs of the agricultural industry in water supply planning. Though Holmdel farmers could experience water supply shortages in the future, potentially in the face of global climate change and future development in the region and the State, the County and Township have recognized the importance of water needs of farmers and have been proactively planning accordingly.

Waste Management Planning

Many equine and livestock owners work with the NRCS to develop manure management plans.

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) has adopted Animal Waste Management Rules (N.J.A.C. 2:91), effective March 2009. The general requirements of the rules include: 1) no agricultural animal operation shall allow animals in confined areas to have access to waters of the State unless such access is controlled in accordance with the NJDA BMP Manual; 2) manure storage areas shall be located at least 100 linear feet from surface waters of the state; 3) the land application of animal waste shall be performed in accordance with the principals of the NJDA BMP Manual; 4) no livestock that have died from a reportable contagious disease or an act of bio-terrorism (nor associated animal waste) shall be disposed of without first contacting the State Veterinarian; 5) any person entering a farm to conduct official business related to these rules shall follow bio-security protocol.

More farms will therefore need to prepare formal plans. Large-scale operations, such as Puglisi Egg Farms, often have more elaborate manure management systems and regularly truck waste offsite. The region has no current plastic mulch recycling program. The MCADB receives occasional calls from neighbors of farms that use plastic groundcover, since the material photodegrades over the course of the season and small pieces may blow away in the wind. The Monmouth County Planning Board has a solid waste management section. Staff members provide advice and resources for farmers looking to recycle tires and wood palettes and remove old farm dumps and newer construction debris. The County publishes a recycling guide that lists various solid waste management vendors and landfills.

Energy Conservation Planning

A small number of Monmouth County farmers have begun to tap alternative and sustainable energy sources to power their homes, buildings and irrigation pumps. New technologies in wind and solar energy collection systems, combined with financial incentive programs from the State and other sources, have brought these alternative energy systems within the reach of many local farmers. A handful of local farms have installed solar power systems on barn roofs and in fields to make electricity, lower utility costs, and reduce pollution. Participating landowners receive a rebate from the New Jersey Clean Energy Program, an Environmental Benefit Credit, and private investments cover installation costs. Sun Farm Network, a commonly used firm based in Califon, handles the design, installation and maintenance of solar systems for its clients. Excess power is typically sold to local utility companies. Wind power is another sustainable source of energy. A few farms in the county still maintain small windmills. Because of modest wind strengths, the interior of the county is not well-suited to large-scale wind power operations. However, the coastal regional shows more promise.

Although there is no official policy, the SADC has encouraged the use of solar and wind power generation on preserved farms as long as it is in support of the agricultural operation (not primarily to sell to the grid), and does not hinder the agricultural viability of the property.

VIII AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY SUSTAINABILITY, RETENTION AND PROMOTION

Holmdel Township recognizes the importance of supporting its existing agricultural industry. The Township understands that excessive infrastructure investments in rural areas can end up increasing the rate and intensity at which farmland is developed. In 1993, as part of the Master Plan update, the Township adopted a policy “to limit and/or curtail the extension of growth-inducing infrastructure, particularly into environmentally sensitive areas.” In general, road, sewer, and water infrastructure are considered the most likely to induce growth, as they permit more intensive development than would otherwise be possible. The Township recognizes that curtailing infrastructure expansion would help support the sustainability and promotion of the agricultural industry.

RIGHT-TO-FARM AND AGRICULTURAL MEDIATION PROGRAMS

The overall intent of a right-to-farm ordinance is to protect farmers from nuisance complaints that related to typical farming activities, such as noise, farm machinery traffic and dust. The State adopted the Right-to-Farm Act in 1983 and amended it in 1998, and it likewise protects farmers from municipal regulations that may restrict farm activity. The intent of the Act is for the “protection of commercial farm operations from nuisance action, where recognized methods and techniques of agricultural productive are applied, while, at the same time, acknowledged the need to provide a proper balance among the varied and sometimes conflicting interests of all lawful activities in New Jersey.” The MCADB oversees the state policies that protect commercial farm operations against nuisance action and assists municipalities with interpreting the Act. When a filing occurs, whether it is a Site-specific Agricultural Management Practice or a Conflict Resolution case, as long as the farmer is protected by a right-to-farm ordinance, the County will undertake a comprehensive review, including a site visit and a hearing. An overarching test is to determine if the farming activity is consistent with generally accepted management practices. According to the County, a vast majority of right-to-farm matters are adjudicated in favor of the farmer. It must be noted, however, that not all matters progress to a hearing; the County encourages both parties to work out a solution informally.

The AAC can act to minimize right-to-farm conflicts by promoting and holding an informal session with interested and/or concerned parties that may have existing or the potential for future issues with the farming community. By both educating and reaching out to the greater community, the AAC may be able to minimize potential conflicts in the future.

The 2008 Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan stated that Holmdel, among other municipalities, would benefit from a Right-to-Farm Ordinance. The Township has since adopted a Right-to-Farm Ordinance in December of 2009 (Chapter 24, Farming; 24-1 Right to Farm). The Township’s Right-to-Farm Ordinance is based on, and is consistent with, the model ordinance provided by the SADC. The Ordinance is also intended to “promote a good neighbor policy by advising purchases and users of property adjacent to or near

commercial farms of accepted activities or practices associated with those neighboring farms.” The intent is that mandatory disclosures will allow potential purchases to understand the impacts of living near agricultural operations and therefore minimize future conflict. The Ordinance also lays out a method by which a person “aggravated by the operation of a commercial farm” may file a complaint, directing such complains to the MCADB.

FARMLAND ASSESSMENT

Numerous properties within the Township are participants in New Jersey’s Farmland Assessment Program, which is designed to reduce the property tax burden for the state’s farmers. The Township encourages and promotes participation in this program, as it is a significant inducement that helps to promote and sustain the agricultural industry. To be eligible for farmland assessment, a landholder must own at least five (5) acres and generate at least \$500 of agricultural income annually. The land must have been actively devoted to agricultural or horticulture for the current tax year and two prior years. The farm residence is not eligible for the lower tax rate. Landowners with farmland assessed property can save thousands, if not tens of thousands, of dollars a year.

OTHER STRATEGIES

As discussed throughout this Plan, it is clear that the Township is quite supportive of its agricultural base, and the AAC will review initiatives that are not currently Township policy, such as permit streamlining, wildlife management strategies and agricultural training. The Township is already supportive of agricultural labor housing, per the Zoning Ordinance regulations. Some farmers in the Township already participate in the New Jersey Department of Motor Vehicles “farm license plate program,” which provides special farm plates for farm machinery and implements (that move beyond 20 MPH) to travel during daylight hours on roadways, but not more than 15 miles from the farm. Farmers may be able to benefit from permit streamlining, but this is a strategy that the AAC must discuss prior to raising it with the Governing Body. Relative to wildlife management strategies, all are managed by either the County or the State, such as deer eradication programs. Deer play a role in hindering farming within the Township due to crop predation. The AAC should continue to work with county and state officials in expanding farming strategies within the Township.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES FOR THE PROMOTION OF AGRICULTURE

Goals

- (1) Protect the unique character of Holmdel, which consists of desirable residential neighborhoods, attractive commercial areas and business campuses, and the historic hamlet of Holmdel Village and its agricultural environs.
- (2) Preserve Holmdel’s high quality of life by protecting the Township’s open spaces from development and reducing the negative impacts associated with new development.

- (3) Protect the visual quality of scenic corridors throughout Holmdel, particularly vistas of open space, natural features, farmlands and historic sites.
- (4) Coordinate park planning with initiatives for farmland and open space preservation and natural resource conservation.
- (5) Continue to preserve large contiguous open space areas that provide opportunities for farming.
- (6) Encourage development patterns that maintain opportunities for agricultural activity.
- (7) Promote the continued agricultural use of productive farmland soils.
- (8) Promote the continued viability of the agricultural industry.

Strategies

- (1) Continue to explore a wide variety of local, State, County, foundation and non-profit funding sources that can be utilized for purchasing farmland or development easements for the purpose of permanent farmland preservation.
- (2) To the greatest extent possible, utilize locally raised funding to leverage County and State funding for the purpose of purchasing farmland or development easements.
- (3) Allow local property owners to consider voluntary donations of farmland to the Township, County, State or to a foundation or non-profit organization for the purpose of permanent farmland preservation.
- (4) Seek out and work with farmland property owners who are interested in preserving their properties as farmland, whether for a temporary time period or permanently.
- (5) Give preference to larger farmland parcels for preservation purposes.
- (6) Give preference to farmland preservation on sites adjacent to permanently preserved farmland, open space, parks and other publicly owned lands.
- (7) Consider allowing agro-tourism activities and small overnight accommodations on existing farms.
- (8) Consider expanding opportunities for farmers to establish and benefit from temporary farm stands, retail farm markets and seasonal sales.
- (9) Work with farmers, the County, the State and local chambers of commerce to develop strategies for marketing Holmdel farm products and promoting agri--tourism.
- (10) Work with farmers to identify technical or financial information that may help

improve the efficiency, productivity, or profitability of their farm operations.

- (11) Consider allowing farm operations to have small secondary businesses, subject to certain restrictions, that can provide supplementary income for the farm operation.
- (12) Encourage agricultural education programs to promote the understanding of and appreciation for farms and farmers.

TOWNSHIP/AAC VISION STATEMENT FOR AGRICULTURE IN THE TOWNSHIP

The mission of the farmland preservation program in the Township of Holmdel is to provide opportunities for viable farm operations through the preservation of agricultural lands in the face of increasing development pressure. The Township seeks to allow farmers of all sizes to remain a part of the local economy, and will take measures promote them, especially through agri-tourism, farmer's markets and "farmer friendly" land use measures.

APPENDIX A

List Includes: Public Properties with Current Farm Activity, Private Properties with Permanent Deed Restrictions on Development and Private Properties that are Farmland-Assessed

KEY:
1 = Public Properties with Current Farm Activity
2 = Private Properties with Permanent Deed Restrictions on Development
3 = Private Properties that are Farmland-Assessed.

Block	Lot	Owner	Location	Acreage	Farm Portion	Code ¹	Cropland Harvested	Cropland Pasture	Permanent Pasture	Non-Appurtenant Woodland	Appurtenant Woodland	Other
2	2	Westor Partnership	26 Main St; Rte 520	91	89.5	3	50		20		21.5	
2	24	Giordano, Lynne; Executrix	S. Holmdel Rd	7.9	7.9	3	5				2.9	
2	26	Westor Partnership	S. Holmdel Rd	1	1	3						
3	9 & 10	Township of Holmdel	Cross Farm, Longbridge Rd	110.9	43	1						
3	15	Township of Holmdel	Cross Farm, Willowbrook Rd	71.4	41	1						
3.08	2	Atochem North America, Inc.	S. Holmdel Rd	118	100	3						
5	2 & 3	Township of Holmdel	Cross Farm, Longbridge Rd	115.57	86	1						
6	1	Friedauer, Robert & Walter	110 Main St	14.25	13.25	3	13.25					
7	1	County of Monmouth	Thompson Park, Longbridge Rd	122.17	61.09	1						
7	2 & 2.01	County of Monmouth	Thompson Park, Longbridge Rd	131.2	118.08	1						

7	2.02	County of Monmouth	Thompson Park, Rte 520	18	0	1						
7	3	County of Monmouth	Thompson Park, Rte 520	4.62	4.62	1						
7	5	County of Monmouth	Thompson Park, Longbridge Rd	34.78	34.78	1						
7	6	County of Monmouth	Thompson Park, Longbridge Rd	66.41	19.92	1						
8.06	11.02	Wuestneck, Josiah and Stephanie	11 McCampbell Rd	8.07	7.07	3			6			1.07
9	5.01	Ballin, Charlotte Pinco	193 Everett Rd	17.5	17	3	15				2	
9	7.03	Charpek, William	187 Everett Rd	2.5	2.5	3	2.5					
9	7.04	Tenant 79 Associates, LLC	7 Palmetto Court	5	5		5					
9	14.08, 14.09,	Sherman, Kathleen	76 Stilwell Road	29.8	28.8			22		6.8		
	14.10											
9	15.01	Township of Holmdel	Harding Farm, Middletown Rd	79.6	75	1						
9	17.04	Balmer, Carole J. Dick	96 Middletown Rd	11.38	10.38	3	12	0.3				
9	17.05	Balmer, Carole J. Dick	Middletown Rd	1	1	3						
9	17.06	Balmer, Carole J. Dick	Middletown Rd	1	1	3						
9	22	Vene, Nicholas & Tammy	40 McCampbell Rd	7.7	6.7	3	5.7					
9	40	Ceres, Gerald V. & Rita W.	McCampbell Rd	15.58	14.58	3		14.58				
10	10.03	Gural, Donald & Deborah	Hastings Pl	10.87	10	3	10					
10	10.04	Callan, George & Margie	153 Everett Rd	12.189	11.939	3	7.439		4.5			
10	14.03	Township of Holmdel	Harding Farm, Stillwell Rd	10	10	1						
10	16	Doria, Frank W. & Sue	177 Stillwell Rd	5.4	5.06	3	5.06					
11	29.01	Hop Brook Farm, LLC c/o E.E. Cruz	Holmdel Rd	63.95	60.95	3						

11	29.02	Ramanessin Brook Greenway, Township of Holmdel	Ely Road	1.48	0	1						
11	29.04	Pantano, Salvatore & Susan E.	31 Ely Rd	6.01	5.01	3		6.5			2.18	
11	29.05	Pantano, Salvatore & Susan E.	33 Ely Rd	3.67	3.67	3						
11	32.01	Fox Hollow Farms LLC	939 Holmdel Rd	94.23	93.23	2	93.23					
11	33.01	915 Holmdel Road Associates LLC	45 Roberts Road	96	95	2	95					
11	36.01	Township of Holmdel/Monmouth County	Chase Tract, Holmdel Road	226.79	0	1						
11	38	LTI NJ Finance LLC	Roberts Rd	473.69	90	3	90					
11	62	Lavin, James	Galloway	2	2	3	5					
11	64	Lavin, James	Round Hill	3	3	3						
11	76	Township of Holmdel	Bayonet Farm, Middletown Rd	13.86	12	1						
11	77.01	Township of Holmdel	Bayonet Farm, Middletown Rd	135.37	80	1						
11	80.01	Zugel, Christina M. (Zais Group)	35 Middletown Rd	20.73	16.93	3	1.5	4.43	5			1
13	1	HMF					143.4				65.08	
13	2.01	Giuliani, Luca & Antoinetta	Holmdel Rd	11.5	11.25	3	10.75				5	
13	2.02	Roberts Road/Route 34, LLC	Highway 34	13.5	13.5	3	13.5					
13	6	H.M.F. Assoc. c/o Ventura & Miesowitz	215 Highway 34	107.42	106.42	3						
13	11	H.M.F. Assoc. c/o Ventura & Miesowitz	Holmdel Rd	36	36	3						
13	14	Holmdel Centre, LLC	970 Holmdel Rd	33.32	33.32	3	30				3.32	

14	4	Zellers, Carl F	5 Pleasant Valley Road	8.91	7.91	3		7			0.91	
15	2	H.M.F. Assoc. c/o Ventura & Miesowitz	Highway 34	63.16	63.16	3						
15	2.03	HCC, L.L.C.	188 Highway 34	14.1	8.8	3	5.4				3.4	
15	3.01	Holmdel Realty Associates, Ltd.	184-186 State Highway 34	10.5	9.5	3	9.5	13				
15	7	Casola, Antonio & Kim	Highway 34	24.24	24.24	3	24.24					
15	9.02	Martinez, Jose M.	25 Schanck Rd	5.28	5.28	3	5.28					
16	2	Anstalt, Akron c/o M. Oppenheim	Highway 34	39.6	39.6	3	17.5				22.1	
17	9.23 & 9.24	St. Mina Coptic Orthodox Church Corp	130 Hwy 34	17.65	17.65	3	16.65				1	
18	1, 6, 11, & 12	Manzo, Joseph	Line Rd	56.32	18.85	3	56.32					
18	20	Kilcummins-Dover Properties, L.L.C.	Highway 34	28.16	28.16	3				28.16		
19	17.01 & 47	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	133.39	6	1						
19	16	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	3.33	0	1						
19	18.01	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	2.27	0	1						
19	20.01	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	4.06	0	1						
19	22.02	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	3.12	0	1						
19	24	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	0.8	0	1						
19	25.01	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	2.74	0	1						

19	26.01	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	1.59	0	1						
19	28	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	4.76	0	1						
19	29	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	67	0	1						
19	40	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	41.1	0	1						
19	41	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	11.23	0	1						
19	42	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	11.18	0	1						
19	43	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	0.59	0	1						
19	44	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	0.11	0	1						
19	45	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	2.94	0	1						
19	46	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	40.02	0	1						
19	47.01	County of Monmouth	Holmdel Park, Longstreet Rd	6.03	6.03	1						
19	38	Ondrush, Lucille	Crawfords Corner Rd	6.38	5.38	3	2	3.38				
20	4	F&F Nurseries	23 Roberts Rd	101.77	100.77	1						
21	10 & 10.01	Urbanski, Francis X.	Red Hill Rd	29.3	27.3	3	13.26		5		9.04	
25	21	Flemer, Albert, Helen & Suzanne & Roth H.	South Holland Rd	13.7	12.7	3					2.7	
27	8	Manzo, Joseph and Phyllis	Holmdel Rd	13.4	8.38	3	8.38					
28	19	Emmrich, William A., Jr. & Kathy	21A Van Brakle Rd	9.44	8.94	3	0.75			8.94		

28	22	Manzo, Joseph and Phyllis	38 Line Rd	19.85	18.85	3				18.85		
29	4	Pappa Family Trust; D. Poppa, Trustee	16 South Beers St	48.55	47.55	3	37.55				10	
29	8	Sweeney, Stephen P	18A South Beers St	5.86	5.77	3	5.2				0.57	
29	35	Peseaux, Malcolm	816 Holmdel Rd	9.89	8.89	3	8.89					
30.09	15.02	Cresci, Albert & Rose Marie	33 South Beers St	6.04	5	3	4				1	
35	15	Mocci, Joseph & Gail	Beers St	9.4	9.3	3	8.3			1		
49.02	40	Potter, William H., Jr.	Middletown Rd	18	15	3			15			
50.19	48	Township of Holmdel	De Palma Farm, Centerville Rd	96.79	95.78	1						
50.31	76.01	Croddick Real Estate Holdings, LLC	2182 Highway 35	42.593	12	3	12					
58	29	Granato Family Limited Partnership	Highway 35	7.52	6.52	3						
58	29.01	Granato Family Limited Partnership	Highway 35	3.22	3.22	3	9.54					
59	6 & 7	Folchetti, Maryann & Cerlione, M.	2147 Highway 35	11.375	10.375	3	9				1.375	
TOTAL				3,133.95	2,176.27		867.089	71.19	55.5	63.75	154.075	2.07

Source: Holmdel Township Open Space Advisory Council and 2007 Tax Assessment records

71.4% 5.9% 4.6% 5.3% 12.7% 0.17%

APPENDIX B

State Agriculture Development Committee Policy P-14-E:
Prioritization of Project Areas and Individual Applications

STATE AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

POLICY

PRIORITIZATION OF PROJECT AREAS AND INDIVIDUAL APPLICATIONS

I. Purpose

To establish a priority ranking of individual applications to direct the expenditure of farmland preservation bond funds dedicated for the purchase of development easements.

II. Authority

N.J.A.C. 2:76-6
N.J.S.A. 4:1C-31

III. Supersedes

Policy: P-14-A dated 12/15/88
Policy: P-14-A dated 9/21/89
Policy: P-14-A dated 1/18/90
Policy: P-14-B dated 3/25/93
Policy: P-14-C dated 9/28/95
Policy: P-14-D dated 12/19/96

IV. Definition

As used in this Policy, the following words and terms shall have the following meanings.

“Agricultural Development Area, hereafter referred to as ADA, means an area identified by a board pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 4:1C-18 and certified by the State Agriculture Development Committee.

“Exceptions”, means portions of the applicant’s land holdings which are not to be encumbered by the deed restriction contained in N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.15.

“Project area” means an area identified by a board or the Committee which is located within an ADA and is comprised of one or more development easement purchase applications approved by the board and received by the Committee, lands where development easements have already been purchased, other permanently deed restricted farmlands, farmland preservation programs and municipally approved farmland preservation programs.

“The degree to which the purchase would encourage the survivability of the municipally approved program in productive agriculture” means the degree to which the purchase of a development easement on the farm would encourage the survivability of the project area in productive agriculture.

V. Summary Policy for Ranking Individual applications and Project Areas

Utilizing the criteria in N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.16 individual applications will be ranked in order of highest to lowest statewide by the State Agriculture Development Committee. This ranking will be based on a numeric score, hereafter referred to as the “**quality score**” which evaluates the degree to which the purchase would encourage the survivability of the municipally approved program in productive agriculture and the degree of imminence of change of the land from productive agriculture to a nonagricultural use. The Relative Best Buy criterion will also be used as a factor to determine which applications will receive a higher funding priority. Although this policy contains the procedure for ranking project areas, the Committee will only utilize the criteria that pertains to ranking “individual” applications to determine the applicant’s quality score.

The factors used to determine the degree to which the purchase would encourage the “survivability of the municipally approved program, in productive agriculture” and “degree of imminence of change of the land from productive agriculture to a nonagricultural use,” will be evaluated at least 30 days prior to the Committee’s certification of a development easement value.

The “relative best buy formula” to determine the applicant’s formula index will be calculated at the time of the Committee’s final review. The formula index will be factored with the applicant’s quality score to establish the applicant’s final score. The application will be ranked by the Committee from the highest to lowest to determine a funding priority subject to available funds.

The general philosophy will be to acquire development easements on “key” farms which result in a stabilization of agriculture in that project area or act as a catalyst to encourage future program participation in the project area.

The Prioritization Policy is organized in accordance with statutory requirements identified in the Agricultural Retention and Development Act N.J.S.A. 41C-11 et seq. and criteria described in N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.16. Listed below is a summary of the major criteria with their relative weights.

A. FACTORS WHICH DETERMINE THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE PURCHASE WOULD ENCOURAGE THE SURVIVABILITY OF THE MUNICIPALLY APPROVED PROGRAM IN PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURE (N.J.S.A. 4:1C-31b. (2))

1.0	SOILS	Weight15
1.1	TILLABLE ACRES	Weight15
2.0	BOUNDARIES AND BUFFERS	Weight20
3.0	LOCAL COMMITMENT	Weight20
4.0	SIZE AND DENSITY	Weight20
5.0	CADB PRIORITIZATION (HIGHEST RANKED APPLICATION)	Weight10

B. DEGREE OF IMMINENCE OF CHANGE OF THE LAND FROM PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURE TO NONAGRICULTURAL USE
(N.J.S.A. 4:1C-31b. (3) Weight10

C. RELATIVE BEST BUY (N.J.S.A. 4:1c-31b. (1))

VI. Specific Methodology for Ranking Project Areas and Individual Applications.

A. FACTORS WHICH DETERMINE THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE PURCHASE WOULD ENCOURAGE THE SURVIVABILITY OF THE MUNICIPALLY APPROVED PROGRAM IN PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURE.

1.0 SOILS Weight 15

The New Jersey Important Farmlands Inventory prepared in 1990, by the U.S.D.A., Natural Resource Conservation Service is used as the reference to identify soil quality -Prime, Statewide, Unique or Locally Important. A percentage figure for each of these four soil categories is calculated for both the individual application and the project area.

The acreage of each Important Farmland Classification shall be to the rounded to the nearest whole number.

Formula:

% Prime soils x 15= _____
% Statewide soils x 10= _____
% Unique soils x (0 or 12.5*) = _____
% Local soils x 5 = _____

Total weight = the sum of the categories.

* If a designated “unique” soil is not being used for its unique purpose, no points will be assigned. If points are to be awarded for unique soils, the county must provide justification.

1.1 TILLABLE ACRES Weight 15

The Committee shall evaluate tillable acres which emphasize the importance of land use and productivity. Priority will be given to the proportion of land deemed tillable. Factor to consider will be lands devoted to cropland, harvested, cropland pasture and permanent pasture. The following weights have been allocated in the land use classifications below.

Formula:

% Cropland Harvested x 15 = _____
% Cropland Pastured x 15 = _____
% Permanent Pasture x 2 = _____

The following definitions shall be used for evaluating tillable acres.

“Cropland harvested” means land from which a crop was harvested in the current year. Cropland harvested shall include the land under structures utilized for agricultural or horticultural production.

“Cropland pastured” means land which can be and often is used to produce crops, but its maximum income may not be realized in a particular year. This includes land that is fallow or in cover crops as part of a rotational program.

“Permanent pasture” means land that is not cultivated because its maximum

economic potential is realized from grazing or as part of erosion control programs. Animals may or may not be part of the farm operation.

2.0 BOUNDARIES AND BUFFERS: Weight 20

The weights reflect differences in both permanence and the buffers' effectiveness in reducing the negative impacts of nonagricultural development.

The following weights have been assigned:

Deed restricted farmland (permanent)	20
Deed restricted wildlife areas, municipal county or state owned parcels	18
Eight year programs and EP applications	13
Farmland (unrestricted)	6
Streams (perennial) and wetlands	18
Parks (limited public access)	14
Parks (high use)	5
Cemeteries	16
Golf course (public)	14
Military installations	14
Highways (limited access), Railroads	10
Residential Development	0
Other: (landfills, private golf courses)	*

* Value to be determined on a case by case basis at the time of review.

Formula:

$$\text{Weight of buffer} \times \frac{\% \text{ perimeter of project area affected by buffer}}{100} = \text{Total Weight per buffer}$$

Total of all the individual buffer scores = Total boundary and buffers score.

2.1 Negative Consideration:

EXCEPTIONS Weight (Up to -10)

The Committee shall evaluate all exceptions. Factors for determining if there is an adverse effect to the applicant's agricultural operation are as follows:

- * Severability potential from the Premises
- * Number requested
- * Size
- * Percent of Premises
- * Right to Farm language
- * Location and use (negative impact)

NOTE: Each county is responsible for future monitoring of each exception for ensuring compliance with restrictions placed upon the exception.

No negative points are assessed if one or both of the following pertain to the application.

1. The exception is for county and/or municipal farmland preservation and/or open space purposes.
2. The exception cannot be severed from the restricted premises unless associated with an agriculturally viable parcel pursuant to the terms of the Deed of Easement.

If one (1) or two (2) above do not apply, proceed with the following:

A. Number Requested:

For each exception requested: **(-2 points)**

B. Size:

The size of the individual exception exceeds local zoning requirements to construct one single family residential dwelling.

For each building lot, or portion thereof, in excess of the local zoning requirements: **(-1 point)**

Note: **If the exception exceeds the local zoning requirement but the landowner agrees to restrict the exception to permit only one residential dwelling, then no negative points shall be assigned.**

C. Percent of Premises:

The total acreage of the exception(s) exceeds 10% of the total acreage. **(-1 point)**

D. Right to Farm Provisions:

Approved Right to Farm language will be incorporated in the deed of the exception. **(1 point)**

E. Location and Use:

The location and/or use of the exception has a significant negative impact on the premises. **(Max. - 10 points)**

NOTE: Each county is responsible for ensuring compliance with restrictions placed upon exceptions.

3.0 LOCAL COMMITMENT: Weight 20 Max.

Priority will be given where municipal, county, regional, and state policies support the long term viability of the agricultural industry. Factors indicating support:

- 3.1** Zoning requiring an average minimum lot of at least three acres with clustering and/or mandatory buffering to provide separation between development and existing agricultural operations and/or use of other measures such as transfer of development credits, sliding scale, very low density zoning and/or any other equivalent measures which discourage conflicting nonagricultural development.

5 points

- 3.2** There is sewer or other growth leading infrastructure serving the premises or within hook-up distance.

Yes ____ 0 points

No ____ 3 points

- 3.3** The purchase of a development easement is consistent with municipal, county, and state plans.

Yes ____ 2 points

No ____ 0 points

3.4 Municipal commitment to actively participate in the Agriculture Retention and Development Program;

- A. Active Municipal Liaison with CADB
- B. Planning board actions regarding nonagricultural development support farmland preservation. (Ex. Planning board requests CADB review of applications for subdivision approval within ADAs.)
- C. Municipal governing body actions regarding nonagricultural development support farmland preservation.
- D. Municipality has previously approved eight year programs.
- E. Development easements have already been purchased in the community.

1 point each

3.5 Right to Farm ordinances

- A. A township that has a “Right to Farm” ordinance.

4 points

- B. The Right to Farm ordinance requires a developer and/or landowner who plans to build or sell a dwelling in an agricultural area to inform through their agent, prospective purchasers of the existence of the Right to Farm ordinance and the protection it grants to agricultural operations. This notification is included in the deed and recorded.

1 point

3.6 Community financial support for the project area/individual application.

Financial support is construed as strong local commitment. Generally, if municipal/private dollars are invested in a project, there is greater care taken by the community to protect the area from the negative effects resulting from the nonagricultural development. The method to compare the many diverse municipalities with respect to their direct financial support for farmland preservation is to measure their total dollar contribution per thousand dollars of current equalized (100%) assessed value for the municipality.

The local contributions include the total of all passed municipal bond referenda and/or allocations from the budget, private or corporate contributions, and funding from any other sources since January 1, 1980 with the exception of landowner donations, county, state, and federal contributions. Landowner donations will be considered under the Relative

Best Buy criterion.

The current Equalized Assessed Value for the municipality will be the one in effect on January 1 of the current year expressed in thousands of dollars.

The assessment of points will be based on an index derived from the following ratio:

Formula:

$$\frac{\text{Total locally committed dollars since Jan. 1980}}{(\text{State Equalized valuation}/\$1,000)} = \text{Index}$$

* for the specific municipality

This Equalized valuation figure is listed in the most recent Annual Report of the Division of Local Government Services, prepared by the Department of Community Affairs or may be obtained by contacting the local tax office.

Example 1.

Benefit Township has committed \$1.8 million toward Farmland within the past five years. The State equalized valuation figure divided by 1,000 is 80,120.

The index is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\$1,800,00}{\$80,120} = 22.47$$

Based on the scale, listed below an index of 22.4 is awarded 5 points.

Example 2.

In Harrow Township \$150,000 has been set aside for Farmland Preservation. The state equalized valuation figure divided by 1,000 is \$1,290,839.

The index is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\$150,000}{\$1,290,839} = .12$$

Based on the scale listed below, an index of .12 is awarded 1 point.

Points will be allocated based on the following scale:

Index of greater than 10	5 points
Index between 7 and 10	4 points
Index between 5 and 7	3 points
Index between 2 and 5	2 points
Index greater than 0 but less than 2	1 point

Discretion may be used in the assignment of points, based on whether or not actual funds have been expended for farmland preservation.

4.0 SIZE AND DENSITY Weight 20 Max.

4.1 Individual Applications:

Individual applications will be scored on both size and density with a maximum of 10 points awarded for density for a maximum total combined score of 20.

4.1(2) Size (Max. 10 points)

Points are based on the size of each individual application relative to average farm size in the respective county according to the latest U.S. Census of Agriculture. Points will be awarded for size up to a maximum of 10 as follows:

$$\text{Points Awarded} = \frac{\text{Size of Individual application}}{10 \times (2 \times \text{county average farm size})}$$

The factor 2 encourages counties to enroll farms above average in size.

4.1 (3) Density (Max. 10 points)

The density score will be awarded based on the following:

An application which is not reasonably contiguous (within one-half mile linear distance) with another development easement purchase application approved by the board and received by the Committee, lands where development easements have already been purchased, other permanently deed restricted farmlands, farmland preservation programs and municipally approved farmland preservation programs in the project area will receive (0) points. One (1) point will be allocated for each reasonably contiguous (within one-half mile linear distance) farmland preservation program or municipally approved farmland preservation program. Two (2) points will be allocated for each of the other above noted lands in the project area which are determined to be reasonably contiguous (within one-half mile linear distance)

with the subject application and each other not to exceed a maximum score of (10 points).

Example 1:	Receives (0) points
Example 2:	Receives (5) points
Example 3:	Receives (10) points

SP = Subject Property
8YR = 8-Year Program
Blank Space = Easement Purchase Application or
Previously Deed Restricted

5.0 **CADB PRIORITIZATION**

Consideration will be given to the board's highest ranked application to recognize local factors which encourage the survivability of the municipally approved program in productive agriculture and degree of imminence of change of the land from productive agriculture to a nonagricultural use. The CADB's highest ranked application will receive 10 points.

B. **DEGREE OF IMMINENCE OF CHANGE OF THE LAND FROM PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURE TO NONAGRICULTURAL USE**

Weight (Max of 10)

use An application can receive up to (10) points where the Committee determines that the imminent conversion of the farm (application) from an agricultural to a nonagricultural use would negatively impact the survivability of the project area in productive agriculture.

There are two aspects which shall be considered when evaluating the imminence of change: 1) factors which measure the degree of imminence of change of farmland to a nonagricultural use and 2) factors that evaluate the impact of the farmland conversion.

I. Factors considered for evaluating the Degree of Imminence of Farmland Conversion

County Comparisons (relative indices):

1. Avg. certified county easement value for previous round:
(1 point max.)
2. County Single Family Unit Permits (3 years): (1 pt. max)
3. County Farmland Assessed cropland acre loss for 10 years:
(1 point max.)
4. County Farmland Assessed cropland percent loss for 10 years:
(1 point max.)

Township Comparisons (relative indices):

1. Township Single Family Unit Permits for 3 years:
(1 pt. max.)
2. Township Farmland Assessed cropland acre loss for 10 years:
(1 pt. max.)
3. Township Farmland Assessed cropland percent loss for 10 years:
(1 pt. max.)

Farm-specific indicators:

1. Subdivision approval (final): 2 pts.
2. Estate situation: 2 pts.
3. Bankruptcy/Foreclosure: 2 pts.

II. Factors considered for evaluation the impact of the farmland Conversion

State Comparisons (relative indice):

1. Combined SADC Quality Scores for size, boundaries, and buffers and density: (0.5 pt. max.)

County Comparisons (relative indice):

1. Combined SADC Quality Scores for size, boundaries and buffers and density: (0.5 pt. max.)

MAXIMUM FOR CATEGORY: (10 POINTS)

The above indices will be updated annually and provided to CADB Staff.

C. **RELATIVE BEST BUY (STATUTORY FORMULA)**

This criterion will only be evaluated at the time of final Committee review.

$$\frac{\text{Nonagricultural development value}}{\text{nonagricultural development value}} - \frac{\text{agricultural landowner asking price}}{\text{agricultural value}} = \text{formula index}$$

“Landowner Asking Price” means the applicant’s per acre confidential offer for the sale of a development easement.

D. FUNDING PRIORITY

1. The Committee's funding priority will be given to those applications which have a higher numeric values obtained by the application of the following formula:

applicant's
quality score + (formula index x 200) = final score

S:\POLICIES\P14e