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DRAFT CONSISTENCY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

**PETITION FOR PLAN CONFORMANCE
BOROUGH OF NETCONG, MORRIS COUNTY**

Prepared by the State of New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and
Planning Council in Support of the Highlands Regional Master Plan

FEBRUARY 20, 2025

NEW JERSEY HIGHLANDS WATER PROTECTION AND PLANNING COUNCIL
Netcong Borough Petition for Plan Conformance
Draft Consistency Review and Recommendations Report

INTRODUCTION

The Borough of Netcong petitioned the New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council (“Highlands Council”) for Center Designation and plan conformance by adoption of Resolution #117 on December 5, 2024. The Borough’s Petition is for designation of the entire municipality as a Highlands Center.

Netcong Borough is a small municipality in western Morris County, less than one square mile in size. The entire municipality, consisting of 611 acres, is located in the Planning Area. Netcong is home to a population of 3,375 people, according to the 2020 U.S. Census.

The Borough is one of just 35 designated Transit Villages in the State. Netcong is served by two NJ Transit rail lines connecting to Hackettstown and Hoboken, as well as Lakeland Bus lines to the Port Authority Bus Terminal in Manhattan.

In September 2024 the Borough completed a “Highlands Center Designation Report for the Borough of Netcong.” The report found that Netcong’s “compact land area, good transit access, established downtown, and relatively small areas of sensitive land make it an ideal location for future growth” and the “goals, key recommendations, and pipeline projects set forth in [the] Center designation report are consistent with [the] RMP’s goals, policies, and objectives, ...”

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REPORT SUMMARY

Municipality: Borough of Netcong, Morris County

Date of Petition: December 5, 2024

Conformance Area: Planning Area

Staff Recommendation: Approval subject to conditions

A. REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE SUBMITTALS

1. Highlands Center Designation Report for the Borough of Netcong, September 2024 (Appendix A).
2. “Resolution of the Borough of Netcong to Petition for Plan Conformance, Designating the Entire Borough as a Highlands Center in Accordance with the Highlands Regional Master Plan,” December 5, 2024.

B. SUBSTANTIVE REVIEW

The Borough of Netcong, located in Morris County, completed a Highlands Center Designation Report to determine the feasibility of designating the entire municipality as a Highlands Center. The stated goals of the Center study are:

- Goal 1: Create a dynamic downtown business environment through public-private partnerships.
- Goal 2: Promote the Borough’s primary assets and special events to attract visitors to Netcong.
- Goal 3: Attract investment and development using the tools of zoning and redevelopment.
- Goal 4: Support a mix of land uses and smart growth principles in new development and infill redevelopment projects.
- Goal 5: Promote inclusionary housing development to help meet affordable housing demand in the Highlands Region.
- Goal 6: Increase capacity and make improvements to infrastructure to accommodate future growth.
- Goal 7: Make improvements to water- and land-based recreational resources through facility upgrades, expansions, and public accessibility and connectivity improvements.
- Goal 8: Improve circulation for motorized and non-motorized transportation modes to accommodate growth in demand and improve safety for users of all modes.
- Goal 9: Protect sensitive natural resources through the implementation of existing State and Borough regulations.

The Borough’s goals for Center Designation are generally consistent with the goals, policies, and objectives of the Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP). As a regional center Netcong is well-positioned to provide housing, transportation, jobs, and services for the surrounding areas. Additionally, the Borough offers a number of redevelopment opportunities and contains relatively few environmental constraints.

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Highlands Center Designation

A Highlands Center is an area within a municipality, or an entire municipality as is the case for Netcong, where development and redevelopment is encouraged and fostered. Highlands Centers are intended to support economic balance in the Highlands Region, providing for sustainable economic growth, while protecting critical natural and cultural resources.

With the implementation of a Highlands Center, the Land Use Capability Zones within the Center are replaced by zones that result from a comprehensive planning process, designed to identify the goals and best uses for the lands within the Center. The process is community-driven, allows flexibility in creating a tailored development plan for the Center, and should result in a healthy, active community with opportunities for growth and development consistent with the goals and principles of the Highlands Act and the RMP. Lands within a Highlands Center benefit from the detailed site-specific planning associated with center planning and may also be eligible for an expedited process toward inclusion in a sewer service area. The concept of Highlands Centers is similar to State Plan Centers but are not subject to expiration. Highlands Centers remain intact unless a specific action by the municipality causes their elimination. Like other land within the municipality, Highlands Centers may receive grant funding to implement important aspects of the center plan.

Upon approval of the Petition for Plan Conformance with Highlands Center designation, the Netcong Borough will undertake the appropriate center planning steps to develop a land use plan specific to the relevant needs and regional opportunities within Netcong. As noted in the Highlands Center Designation Procedures, the process of center planning is intended to be community driven and public outreach is a critical component of the process. Ultimately the Highlands Center will adopt zoning and regulations that are in alignment with the Highlands Regional Master Plan.

Environmental Factors

A review of the interactive environmental resource inventory for the Borough indicates the following environmental resources.

Total Forest Area

A total of 100.8 acres, or 16.5%, of Netcong Borough is located within a forested area.

- Deciduous Forest (>50% Crown Closure): 70.9 acres (11.6%)
- Deciduous Wooded Wetlands: 20.4 acres (3.3%)
- Deciduous Forest (10-50% Crown Closure): 9.4 acres (1.5%)

*The 22 acre municipally owned forested area in the southern part of the Borough accounts for nearly ¼ of designated forest lands.

Riparian Areas

A total of 196.9 acres, or 32.2%, of Netcong Borough is comprised of Riparian Areas. These areas are primarily associated with the Lake Musconetcong shoreline.

Critical Wildlife Habitat

A total of 159.6 acres, or 26.1%, of Netcong Borough contains Critical Wildlife Habitat. Species included in this designation as endangered, threatened, and special concern include:

- Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)
- Barred Owl (*Strix varia*)
- Bobcat (*Lynx rufus*)

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- Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)
- Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*)

Much of the habitat is associated with the woodlands noted above.

Critical Infrastructure

Sewer Service Area – A total of 528.6 acres, or 86.4%, of Netcong Borough is located within the sewer service area. This includes essentially **all** of the land within the municipality. Only the land under Lake Musconetcong is not in a sewer service area and a very small section of woodlands in the far southwest corner adjacent to Roxbury.

Public Water – The majority of Netcong is served by public water. Areas that do not currently receive public water are in the western and southwestern parts of the Borough. The Borough municipal system includes four (4) wells that are permitted to pump 17.8 million gallons per month (177 million gallons per year). The water distribution system includes approximately 11.4 miles of watermains with an average age of 80 years.

Historic Resources

Historic Districts – A total of 146.0 acres, or 23.9%, of Netcong Borough is located within the following historic districts:

- Morris Canal
- Old Main Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Historic District
- Stanhope Historic District

Historic Properties – There are 43 historic properties located in Netcong Borough. Historic Properties are buildings, sites, structures, or objects that are evaluated as historically significant.

• 53 WILTOP RD	• Astwick House
• Bell/Stoll/Allen Tavern House	• Bencivenga House
• Britton House 1	• Britton House 2
• Britton House 3	• Britton House 4
• Ceddia Houses and Feast of the Assumption Society Chapel	• Chegwidden/Mooney House
• Christenson/Loose House	• Conkling/Amon House
• Conkling/Kyle House	• Esposito House
• Furnace Falls Pond Bridge, circa 1874.	• George House
• Hilts/Mooney House	• John Wills Oil Company
• Johnson House	• Kennedy/ Quinn Building
• Kocias Building	• Lisk/Kyle House
• Love/Hilts House	• Lunger House
• McConnell/Estwick House	• McMullen/Haggerty House

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• Mekeel House	• Mooney/Christenson House
• Motion Autobody	• Musconetcong Iron Works Office Building
• Netcong Library	• Netcong Post Office/ Netcong Five and Ten Store Building
• Netcong-Stanhope Railroad Station	• New Jersey Arnold Damper Company
• Oliver/Roser House	• Palace Theatre
• Rudolf's Hilltop Tavern	• The Church in the Glen
• Togno/DiBernard House	• Waterloo Road Bridge over the Musconetcong River (SI&A # 1401-038)
• Wilkison House	• Wolfe/Griggs House
• Wolverton House	

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C. FINDINGS

In accordance with the adopted Plan Conformance Procedures (2019), the following criteria are used to determine if a proposed center is consistent with the goals, policies, and objectives of the RMP. Findings related to each criteria are provided below.

- 1) The proposed Highlands Center is located in an area with sufficient water availability, water supply, wastewater, and transportation capacity and is appropriate for increased land use intensity;
 - 2) The proposed Highlands Center is consistent with the resource protection standards of the Regional Master Plan, in accordance with the intent and purpose of the Highlands Act;
 - 3) The proposed Highlands Center is consistent with the Smart Growth and Low Impact Development (LID) standards of the Regional Master Plan; and
 - 4) There is a need for land uses within the community that may be met by the Highlands Center, particularly those that complement local and regional (or sub-regional) socio-economic needs, provide for affordable housing, increased transit opportunities, and the potential use of Highlands Development Credits.
- 1) Sufficient Infrastructure Finding – Netcong Borough has sufficient existing infrastructure capacity regarding water & wastewater service areas, transportation, and other resources to serve existing development and the already approved development projects in the proposed center designation.

The Borough will be pursuing a hydrogeological study to add a new well to their current system, thus increasing water service capacity. The increase in water service capacity will help accommodate existing and regional growth as anticipated by this regional Highlands Center. Any expansion of the water service shall require approval by the Highlands Council.

The Borough will be undertaking an infill and infiltration study (I&I) of the wastewater system to improve system capacity and accommodate growth.

The Borough will undertake a circulation study and the development of a circulation plan element as part of their municipal master plan. The purpose of the study is to determine existing conditions and potential changes that may occur with future growth. Additionally, the study will assess and make recommendations related to walkability, bicycle-friendliness, multi-use paths/trails, road safety, Safe Routes to School, and non-vehicular connections between key destinations.

- 2) Resource Protection Standards Finding – As noted above, the Borough has limited natural resource constraints. The 22 acre municipally owned forested area in the southern part of the Borough accounts for a significant portion of the sensitive areas within the municipality. These lands are protected. Additional resource protection standards will be incorporated as necessary into the land use regulations for the Center.

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- 3) Smart Growth/Low Impact Standards Finding – Netcong Borough serves as a regional center for the Highlands, and its designation and implementation as a Highlands Center will further the smart growth and low impact development standards of the Regional Master Plan. The Borough provides public transportation access to the region and the larger metropolitan area.
- 4) Community Land Use Needs Finding – The proposed Highlands Center addresses the need for land uses within the local community as well as regional demands. As a regional center, Netcong is poised to accept growth that might otherwise occur in more rural areas of the Highlands. Given its transportation resources, Netcong is appropriate for this type of growth and the Center designation will add to its ability to accommodate that growth.

D. STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND CONDITIONS

Staff Recommendation: Approve with Conditions

The approval of Netcong Borough’s Petition for Plan Conformance with Center Designation for the entirety of the Borough is recommended with the following conditions:

- 1) Adherence to the Plan Conformance Implementation Tasks set forth in the Implementation Plan and Schedule (IPS) (Appendix B). The Highlands Council is available to provide technical assistance and guidance for activities listed in the IPS. The Council’s approval of the Borough’s Petition specifically includes grant funding for those items listed in Fiscal Year 2025 of the IPS. Funding for items beyond Fiscal Year 2025 are subject to future Highlands Council approval. The approval of the petition includes approval of grant funding in the total amount of \$123,000 for FY2025 for the purposes outlined below and in the Implementation Plan and Schedule found at Appendix B.
- 2) **Adoption of Planning Area Petition Ordinance.** The Borough shall prepare and adopt a Planning Area Petition Ordinance and provide a certified copy to the Highlands Council.
- 3) **Center Planning.** The Borough of Netcong shall undertake the full process of center planning for the entirety of the Borough. As noted above, center planning is intended to be community driven with a significant public outreach component. Upon completion of the center planning, relevant master plan updates and zoning updates shall be adopted.
- 4) **Approval of Approved Highlands ERI.** The Borough shall review the Highlands Interactive Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI) as it relates to municipal resources and notify the Highlands Council of any necessary updates. Upon conclusion that the ERI is accurate, the Borough shall provide for and complete the required process of formal approval of the ERI. At the conclusion of the process, a copy of the minutes of the meeting(s) or resolution shall be provided to the Highlands Council.
- 5) **Hydrogeological Study.** The Borough shall undertake a hydrogeological study and ultimately a design to add a new well to the current municipal water service. The purpose of the study and the new well is

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to replace an existing well and increase water service capacity to accommodate existing municipal development and potential growth.

- 6) **Infill and Infiltration Study.** The Borough will conduct an infill and infiltration study (I&I) of the municipal sanitary sewer system to examine existing conditions and improve future capacity.
- 7) **Circulation Plan Element.** The Borough will prepare a circulation study and develop a municipal circulation plan element to assess existing conditions and plan for future growth. As noted above, the study will assess and make recommendations related to walkability, bicycle-friendliness, multi-use paths/trails, road safety, Safe Routes to School, and non-vehicular connections between key destinations.
- 8) **Preparation and Adoption of Housing Element and Fair Share Plan.** The Borough shall prepare and adopt a municipal Housing Element and Fair Share Plan in accordance with the requirements of the Fair Housing Act (N.J.S.A. 52:27D-301 et seq.) and Municipal Land Use Law. In accordance with the Fair Housing Act, all newly constructed residential development within the Highlands Region is required to reserve for occupancy by low- or moderate-income households at least 20 percent of the residential units constructed. As the 20% requirement is found in the Fair Housing Act, not the Highlands Act, all municipalities located in the Highlands Region are responsible for the 20 percent requirement, irrespective of plan conformance status or if the project is exempt from the Highlands Act.
- 9) **Stormwater Management Plan.** The Borough shall revise and adopt a municipal Stormwater Management Plan that includes: a) Highlands-specific amendments; b) revisions required by the Stormwater Management Rules at N.J.A.C. 7:8; and c) Stormwater Mitigation Plan. Additional work under the Program to include requirements of the current Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit. This may include: ordinance(s) revision and adoption; stormwater facilities mapping; new/updated storage and maintenance plans; training activities; and development of a Watershed Improvement Plan.
- 10) **Water Use and Conservation Management Plan.** In collaboration with the Highlands Council, the Borough shall undertake completion and adoption of a municipal wide Water Use and Conservation Management Plan.

E. INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding with the Office of Planning Advocacy (OPA), the Highlands Council provided a copy of the Borough of Netcong Petition for Plan Conformance to the OPA for comment. OPA, in a formal response, ... [details to be added].

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F. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

The Draft Consistency Review and Recommendations Report was posted to the Highlands Council website and made available at the Highlands Council offices in Chester, NJ, for review and comment by the general public.

A number of comments were received during the period established by the Highlands Council for receipt of written public comment (February 20, 2025 – March 20, 2025). The comment/response document is attached to this document at Appendix D.

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APPENDIX A

Highlands Center Designation Report for the Borough of Netcong
Borough of Netcong, Morris County



Highlands Center Designation Report for the Borough of Netcong

Prepared by PHILLIPS PREISS GRYGIEL LEHENY HUGHES LLC
Planning & Real Estate Consultants | September 2024

Spach Trahan, AICP, PP, Professional Planner's License #6435

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I. Introduction

Netcong is a small Borough in western Morris County, with an area under one square mile and a population of just over 3,000 people. Netcong is mostly developed, with some forest areas in the southern and western parts of the Borough. The northern edge of the Borough sits along Lake Musconetcong, Furnace Pond, and the Musconetcong River. Several major roadways pass through the Borough, including Interstate 80, U.S. Route 46, NJ Route 183, and County Route 631. A New Jersey Transit station is located at the center of the Borough, providing train access along the Morristown and Montclair-Boonton lines. Netcong's Main Street provides a traditional downtown within walking distance of the train station as well as lakefront properties and public access points. The remainder of the Borough includes traditional low-density development and sections of industrial development. The entirety of Netcong is within the Highlands Planning Area. Netcong is not within the Highlands Preservation Area.

A. Administrative History of the Highlands

The Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act (the "Highlands Act") was enacted on August 10, 2004. The Highlands Act established the New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council (the "Highlands Council") and provided for the preparation of the Highlands Regional Master Plan (the "RMP") to protect the critical natural resources and other significant values of the Highlands Region. The Highlands Act specifically emphasizes the protection of water resources for non-potable supply and ecosystem viability, but also includes goals relating to the protection of agricultural viability, ecosystems, animal and plant species, as well as scenic and historic resources.

The New Jersey Highlands Area is a $\pm 1,343$ square mile area in the northwest part of New Jersey stretching from Phillipsburg in the southwest to Ringwood in the northeast, and lies within portions of seven counties (Hunterdon, Somerset, Sussex, Warren, Morris, Passaic, and Bergen) and includes 88 municipalities. The Highlands Act established two major subareas within the Highlands region - the Preservation Area and the Planning Area. The Highlands Act designated specific boundaries for the Preservation Area, which consists of nearly $\pm 415,000$ acres and is located in 52 municipalities within the seven Highlands Counties. The Planning area consists of nearly $\pm 445,000$ acres located in 83 municipalities including the Borough of Netcong (the "Borough") which is entirely within the Planning Area.

The Highlands Council approved the Highlands Regional Master Plan on July 17, 2008. Conformance with the RMP is required throughout the Preservation Area and is voluntary within the Planning Area. The purpose of the Plan Conformance process is to provide a framework that supports the efforts of municipalities and counties in the Highlands Region to bring master plans and development regulations into conformance with the goals, requirements, and provisions of the RMP.

The Highlands Council has developed the Highlands Center designation which is intended to support balance in the Highlands Region by providing for sustainable economic growth while protecting critical natural and cultural resources. The designation can apply to all or a portion of a

municipality in the Highlands Region. This report seeks to establish the entire Borough of Netcong as a designated Center.

B. Stakeholder Outreach

This Center designation planning process involved outreach and consultation with various stakeholders to inform the assessments, goals, and key recommendations contained in this report. Meetings were held with the following stakeholders on various topics.

Table 1: Summary of Stakeholder Outreach

Affiliation	Name	Topic	Date
Morris County Chamber of Commerce, Morris County Alliance, Borough Councilmember, Borough Administrator	Meghan Hunscher, Craig Schlosser, Robert Hathaway Ralph Blakeslee	Downtown/ Economic Development	July 2, 2024
North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority	Ted Ritter	Morris Canal Greenway	July 15, 2024
Netcong Community Partnership/Council, Netcong Mayor, Borough Councilmember, Borough Engineer, Borough Administrator, Assistant Borough Administrator, Borough Department of Public Works, Borough Department of Public Works, Borough Recreation Commission, Rutgers University, NCP, The Growing Stage, NCP, Morris County Chamber of Commerce, Morris County Alliance	Joseph Nametko Elmer Still Robert Hathaway John Ruschke Ralph Blakeslee Richard Proctor Tim Hess Mike Canfield Kim Albensi Leigh Ann Von Hagen Stephen Fredericks Meghan Hunscher Craig Schlosser	Infrastructure, Recreation & Trails, Arts & Culture, Economic Development	July 17, 2024
Canal Society of NJ	Joe Macasek	Morris Canal Greenway	July 18, 2024

II. Planning Context

A. Past Planning Efforts

Master Plans

The Borough of Netcong adopted its last Comprehensive Master Plan in 1978, which included a land use plan, circulation plan, and community facilities plan. The 1978 Master Plan was subsequently updated in 1988 to include a new recycling plan and housing plan. The Borough adopted a reexamination report in 1998, in 2008, and in 2022. The latest Master Plan Reexamination Report was adopted on August 22, 2022 and constitutes a reexamination of the 2008 Reexamination Report.

Affordable Housing

The Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) granted the Borough of Netcong Substantive Certification on October 14, 2009 for its Third Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan adopted by the Planning Board on December 22, 2008 (the “2008 Plan”). However, in light of the 2015 decision to overturn COAH and return primary jurisdiction over affordable housing matters to the trial courts, the Borough prepared and adopted a revised Housing Element and Fair Share Plan in 2016 to fully satisfy its constitutional affordable housing obligation. The Borough also filed a declaratory judgment action in Morris County Superior Court and obtained a Judgement of Compliance shortly thereafter, affording protection against builder’s remedy lawsuits until post-2025. The Borough of Netcong was not required to adopt a mandatory inclusionary housing set-aside ordinance.

B. Demographics and the Economy

Demographics

The 2020 Decennial U.S. Census counted a total population of 3,375 persons residing in Netcong, with an average age of 43.8 years old. The racial breakdown of the population was 68.8% White, 4.7% Black or African American, 10.0% of two or more races, 12.4% of some other race, 3.5% Asian, and 0.6% Native American. The Hispanic or Latino population of any race accounted for 24.2% of the population. The 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) estimated that 18.2% of the population spoke a language other than English at home.¹

The Decennial Census recorded 1,490 housing units, of which 1,434 were occupied and 56 were vacant. Of the occupied units, 45.7% were owner-occupied and 54.3% were renter-occupied. The

¹ U.S. Census, Decennial Census 2020, Tables P3 and P4. American Community Survey 2022, 5-Year Estimates, Table S0601.

2022 ACS estimated that 66.0% of the housing structures contain a single unit, whereas 34.0% contain two or more units.²

Education

The 2022 ACS estimated that 37.2% of Netcong’s population age 25 or older had obtained a Bachelor’s degree or higher and 54.0% of the population had graduated from high school and did not have a Bachelor’s degree, including some college or an Associate’s degree. Those with less than a high school degree accounted for 8.8% of the population. The portion of the population currently enrolled in post-secondary education was 5.2%. A further 10.4% of the population was enrolled in nursery, primary, or secondary school.³

Jobs and Industries

The median annual earnings for the worker population residing in Netcong was estimated as \$68,438 for those ages 16 years and older in 2022, with 45.7% of the population earning over \$75,000. The portion of the population below the poverty level was 9.5%. Industries within which workers were employed rank as follows:⁴

Table 2: Employment by Industry in Netcong

Industry	Rank	Percent
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	#1	20.8%
Information and finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	#2	18.2%
Retail trade	#3	15.0%
Manufacturing	#4	9.2%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	#5	8.7%
Professional, scientific, management, and administrative and waste management services	#6	8.6%
Construction	#7	5.3%
Public administration	#8	5.2%
Wholesale trade	#9	3.4%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	#10	2.9%
Other services (except public administration)	#11	2.4%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	#12	0.5%
Armed forces	#13	0.0%

² U.S. Census, Decennial Census 2020, Tables H3 and H4. American Community Survey 2022, 5-Year Estimates, Table S1101.

³ American Community Survey 2022, 5-Year Estimates, Tables S0601 and S1401.

⁴ American Community Survey 2022, 5-Year Estimates, Tables S0601 and S0802.

Transit Village

The Borough of Netcong is one of just 35 communities to be designated as a Transit Village. The Borough was designated in 2005, after the Regional Plan Association completed its visioning report “Netcong Station Area Transit-Friendly Design Study” through NJ Transit’s Transit Friendly Planning Assistance Program. NJTOD.org, also known as the Transit Friendly Planning Newsletter, describes Netcong as “the transit-friendly rural place,” served by two NJ Transit lines connecting to Hackettstown and Hoboken, as well as a Lakeland Bus Lines route to the Port Authority Bus Terminal.⁵ Designation as a Highlands Center, planning efforts to support growth, and future transit-oriented development will support the purposes of the Transit Village designation.

Special Improvement District

The Borough of Netcong features a Special Improvement District (SID), which is operated by the Netcong Community Partnership (NCP). The NCP’s mission is to “attract, retain, and promote businesses in order to add to the quality of life and economic vitality of Netcong.” The NCP’s website, GoNetcong.com, promotes economic development and visitor access to businesses and events in the SID. According to its website, the NCP is “responsible for the revitalization and general upkeep of the Borough’s business district.” They provide services including “centralized marketing, promotions, and coordination of efforts.”⁶ NCP leadership and their activities will support Netcong’s status as a designated Center within the Highlands Region.

C. Land Uses

The predominant land uses in Netcong consist of low-density residential and industrial land, each occupying 24% and 23% of the Borough’s land area, respectively. Public property, utility/transportation, and vacant land uses also comprise the next largest share of land area, with 16%, 13%, and 11%, respectively. Commercial/office uses and multifamily residential land each occupy approximately 5% of the Borough’s land area. The remaining land uses categories of “other exempt,” houses of worship/charitable property, and public and private schools are the least common, each occupying only 1% of land area. The following table, figure, and map show the quantitative and visual representations of these land uses.

⁵ “Netcong: The Transit-Friendly Rural Place.” August 29, 2022. <https://www.njtod.org/netcong-the-transit-friendly-rural-place/>

⁶ “Netcong Community Partnership.” GoNetcong.com. <https://gonetcong.com/about-ncp/>

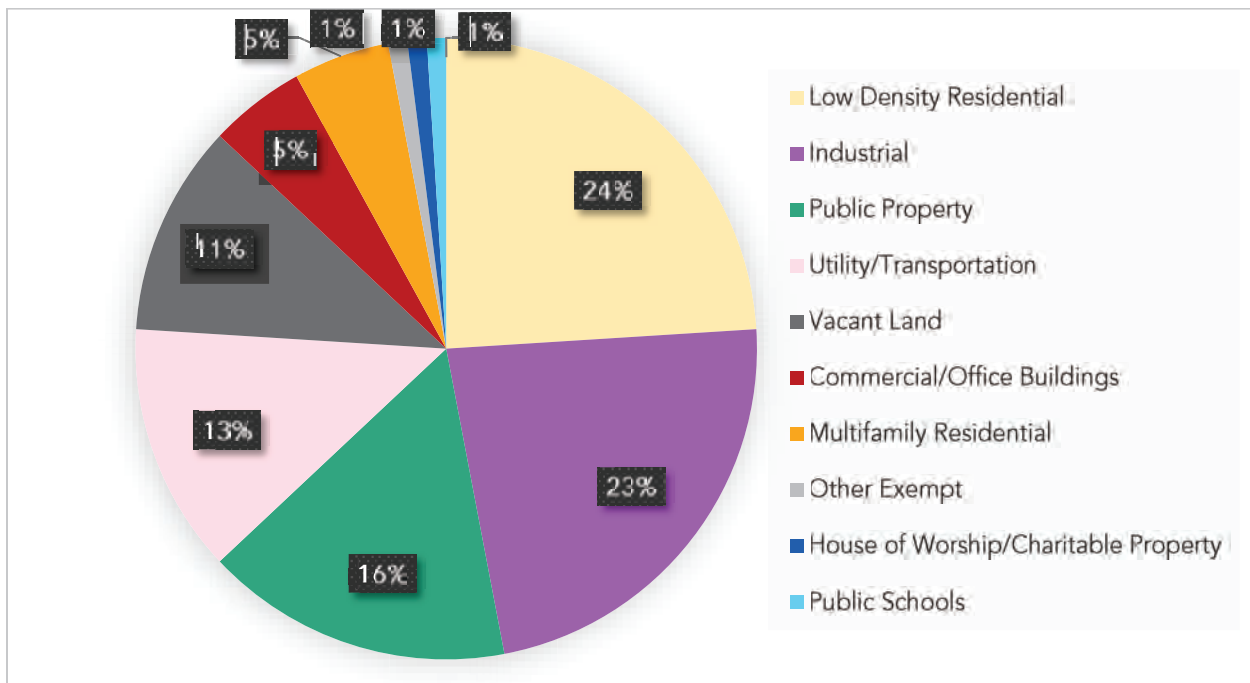
Table 3: Land Use by Area and Rank

Land Use	Area (Acres ±)	Rank
Low Density Residential	183	#1
Industrial	176	#2
Public Property	122	#3
Utility/Transportation	99	#4
Vacant Land	88	#5
Commercial/Office Buildings	42	#6
Multifamily Residential	41	#7
Other Exempt	10	#8
House of Worship/Charitable Property	7	#9
Public & Private Schools	6	#10

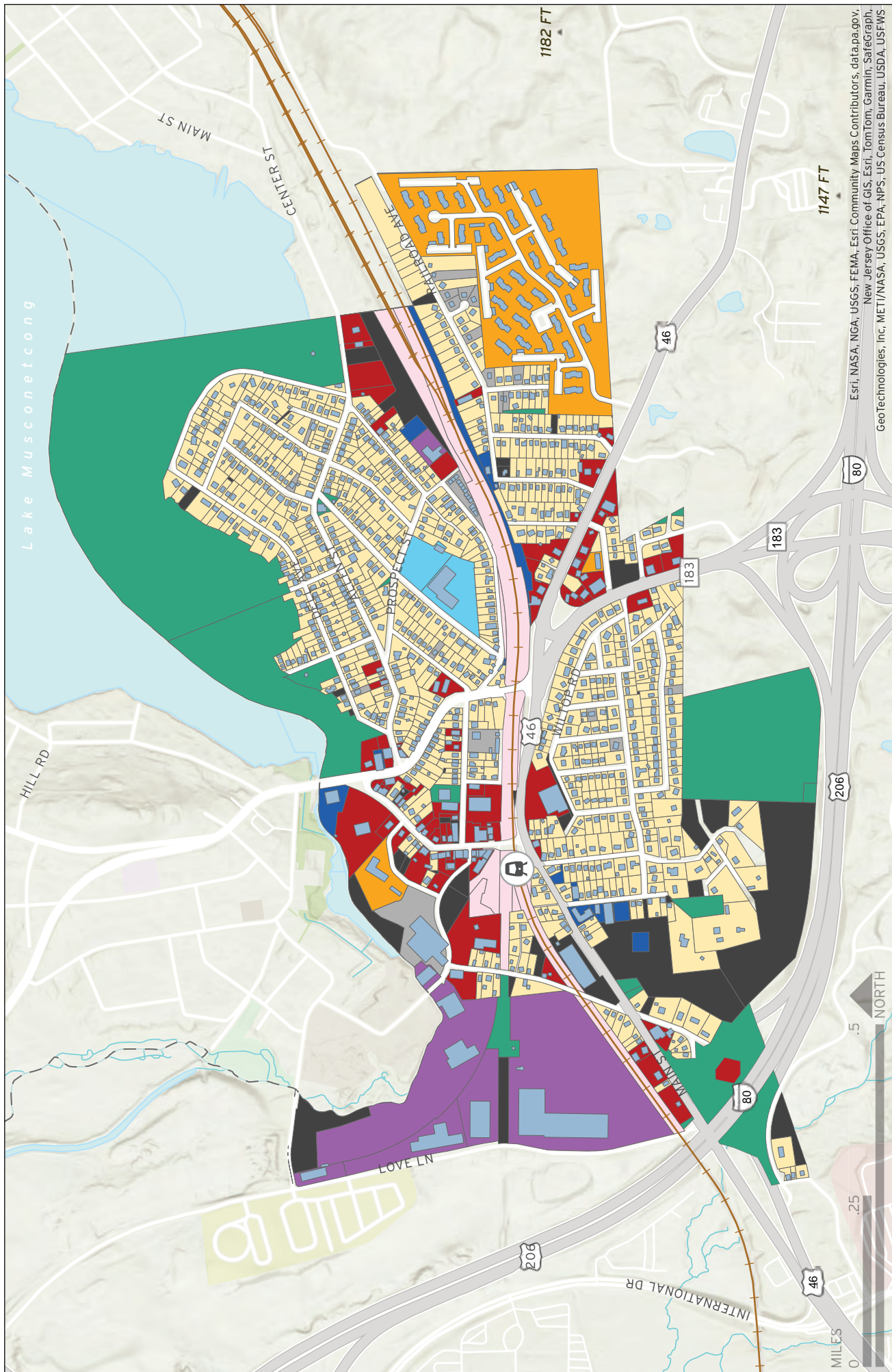
Source: Morris County GIS, last accessed August 13, 2024.

<https://morrisgisapps.co.morris.nj.us/gisdata.html>

Figure 1: Share of Land by Use



Source: Morris County GIS, last accessed August 13, 2024. <https://morrisgisapps.co.morris.nj.us/gisdata.html>



Map 1: Existing Land Use
 Highlands Center Designation Report
 for the Borough of Netcong

PHILLIPS PREISS GRYGIEL LEHENY HUGHES LLC 2024

- STRUCTURES
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- COMMERCIAL/OFFICE
- INDUSTRIAL
- UTILITY/TRANSPORTATION/RAILROAD
- PUBLIC SCHOOLS
- HOUSE OF WORSHIP/CHARITABLE PROPERTY
- PUBLIC PROPERTY
- VACANT LAND
- OTHER EXEMPT
- R NETCONG NJ TRANSIT RAILROAD STATION
- MONTCLAIR-BOONTON/MORRIS & RAILROAD NJ TRANSIT LINES

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Map labels include: HILL RD, LOVE LN, INTERNATIONAL DR, MAIN ST, CENTER ST, PATTERSON AVE, PROSPECT AVE, WILSON RD, and EHLER RD. Road shields for 206, 46, 80, and 183 are also present.

D. Zoning Districts

The Borough of Netcong has 12 traditional zoning districts, including several single-family residential districts, a garden apartment district, a couple of business districts, three industrial districts, and a special office/research district. The following sections describe the purposes, permitted land uses, and bulk zoning regulations of the Borough's zoning districts.

R-1, R-1A, R-2, R-3, and R-3A Single-Family Residential Districts

The Borough's single-family residential districts permit single-family detached dwellings; churches, parish houses, and burial mausoleums; and essential services such as municipal buildings, police and fire stations, libraries, public parks, and playgrounds and schools. Uses that are customarily incidental to residential uses, including swimming pools, are permitted as accessory uses. The minimum lot area for these single-family residential zones is 6,000 square feet for the R-1 Zone, 6,500 square feet for the R-1A Zone, 5,000 square feet for the R-2 Zone, 8,000 square feet for the R-3 Zone, and 15,000 square feet for the R-3A Zone. The minimum lot width requirement is correspondingly similar, and the minimum lot depth is 100 feet for all five zones. The maximum building height is 2½ stories and 35 feet for each zone. The maximum impervious lot coverage is 40% for all single-family zones except the R-3A Zone, which caps lot coverage at 30%. The zones have minimum floor area requirements of 1,000 square feet for the R-1 and R-1A Zones, 800 square feet for the R-2 Zone, 1,200 square feet for the R-3 Zone, and no minimum requirement for the R-3A Zone. The minimum required yard setbacks range from a 25-foot front yard in the R-2 Zone to 50 feet in the R-3A Zone, seven (7) feet for a side yard in the R-2 Zone to 40 feet in the R-3A Zone, and 25 feet for a rear yard in the R-1 Zone, R-1A Zone, and R-2 Zone to 40 feet in the R-3A Zone.

R-3 Single-Family Residential

There are additional provisions for major subdivision developments in the R-3 Zone, including a reduced minimum lot area of 6,000 square feet per lot, but the overall density of such subdivision shall be a maximum of 8,000 square feet per dwelling. The minimum lot width is 70 feet per lot. The minimum tract area is three acres.

R-3A Single-Family Residential

There are additional provisions for major subdivision developments in the R-3A Zone, including a reduced minimum lot area of 10,000 square feet per lot, but the overall density of such subdivision shall be a maximum of 15,000 square feet per dwelling. The minimum lot width is 80 feet per lot. The minimum tract area is three acres.

R-4 Garden Apartment

The R-4 Zone permits garden apartments on a minimum lot area of 10 acres, with a minimum lot width of 300 feet and lot depth of 400 feet. Building height is permitted to 2½ stories and 35 feet. The maximum permitted density is nine (9) units per acre, and a maximum of five units are permitted per garden apartment building. The maximum building coverage is permitted up to

20% and the impervious lot coverage up to 35%. The minimum tract area for recreational purposes shall be 15%. The R-4 Zone has specific restrictions related to the dimensions buildings, the distance between buildings, the setbacks to the street, the floor area and facilities provided in each unit, the location and type of parking, and provisions related to internal roadways and sidewalks.

B Commercial Business

The B Zone permits a range of commercial uses, including retail sales and service facilities, such as stores, shops, financial institutions, hotels, motels, social halls, lodges, fraternal organizations, eating and drinking places with or without entertainment; business and professional offices; theaters; churches and parish houses; and enclosed passenger automobile or truck salesrooms; gasoline filling stations; car-washing establishments; and public garages subject to certain limitations and standards. The zone permits cannabis retailers and billboards as conditional uses. The zone prohibits several types of heavy commercial or industrial uses. All uses are subject to performance standards to limit nuisances such as fire hazards, smoke, waste, vibration, noise, and other nuisances. The minimum lot area is 6,000 square feet and dimensions are 60 feet wide and 100 feet long. The minimum floor area for structures in the B Zone is 1,000 square feet. Building heights are limited to two stories and 30 feet. The minimum required setbacks are 25 feet for the front yard, five (5) feet for each side yard and 15 feet for combined side yards, and 25 feet for the rear yard. The maximum permitted impervious lot coverage is 40 feet.

B-C Borough Center

The purpose of the B-C Borough Center Zone is to promote mixed-use commercial and residential development within the downtown, to serve the daily needs of Borough residents and surrounding areas. A range of uses are permitted, summarized as retail stores, food and beverage establishments, banks and financial institutions, instructional art studios, professional offices, personal service establishments, travel agencies, apartments on second floors above commercial uses and accessory apartments, single-family detached residences, municipal buildings and offices, churches and parish houses, theaters, social halls and organizations, and age-restricted housing subject to specific standards. Single-family residences, senior and executive housing, and certain businesses are permitted as accessory uses. The B-C Zone prohibits warehouses, manufacturing, junkyards, and similar industrial uses; massage parlors; adult bookstores and entertainment; rooming and boarding houses; financial service centers; and tattoo parlors. Permitted conditional uses in the B-C Zone include public garages, cannabis retailers, and billboards.

There are two sets of bulk standards for the B-C Zone: for senior and executive housing units and for all other permitted uses. For senior and executive housing units, the minimum lot area is three (3) acres, the lot width is 100 feet, and the lot depth is 200 feet. The maximum density is 12 units per acre. The maximum building height is three stories and 50 feet. The minimum setbacks are 100 feet for the front yard, 25 feet for each side yard, and 75 feet for the rear yard. The minimum impervious lot coverage is 60%. For all other permitted uses, the minimum lot area is 6,000 square feet with 60 feet of lot width and 100 feet of lot depth. The minimum floor area is 1,000 square

feet and the maximum impervious coverage is 60%. Building height is limited to two stories and 30 feet for most uses, except that banks, financial, professional, business, and real estate offices are permitted height to the lesser of three stories or 40 feet. The minimum required setbacks are 25 feet for front yards, five (5) feet for each side yard and 15 feet for combined side yards, and 25 feet for rear yards. A maximum residential density is not specified for non-senior units. Rather, density is restricted by the permitted location of residential units on upper stories, the maximum permitted height, and other bulk requirements.

I-1 General Industrial; I-2 and I-3 Limited Industrial

The purpose of the I-1 Zone is to provide areas for a wide range of industrial uses, where the potential for industrial growth is good due to convenient transportation routes, utility services, and population proximity, and within the limits of design and environmental regulations. Permitted uses include offices and office buildings; warehousing, shipping, and receiving; research; manufacturing, finishing, and assembly of products; utilities; outside storage areas; and industrial operations without changing molecular structures.

The purpose of the I-2 Zone is to recognize the need for employment centers while orienting the uses to major highways for ease of access. Permitted uses include offices, warehousing, shipping and receiving, assembling of finished products without changing molecular structures, research, and lumberyards. Additional prohibits uses includes those uses that are permitted in the I-1 Zone but not specifically permitted in the I-2 Zone.

The I-3 Zone serves the same purpose as the I-2 Zone and permits and prohibits the same uses, except that business commercial uses are additional permitted.

The three industrial zones specifically prohibit residential uses; mink or fox farms; piggeries; and rubbish, garbage, trash dumps, incinerators, and junkyards. All uses in the industrial districts are subject to performance standards to limit nuisances including but not limited to fire hazards, smoke, waste, vibration, noise, and glare.

The minimum lot area is 40,000 square feet for the I-1 Zone and 30,000 square feet for the I-2 Zone and I-3 Zone. For the I-1 Zone, the minimum lot width is 200 feet and the minimum lot depth is 150 feet; and for the I-2 Zone and I-3 Zone, the minimum lot width is 150 feet and the lot depth is 200 feet. For all three industrial zones, the minimum floor area of buildings is 1,500 square feet, the maximum building height is two stories and 30 feet, and the maximum impervious coverage is 60%. In the I-1 Zone, the minimum setbacks are 75 feet for the front yard, 30 feet for the side yard, 75 feet for both side yards, and 75 feet for the rear yard. In the I-2 Zone and I-3 Zone, the minimum setbacks are 60 feet for the front yard, 20 feet for the side yard, 50 feet for both side yards, and 60 feet for the rear yard.

LOR Limited Office/Research

The purpose of the LOR Zone is to provide for limited office/research uses proximate to environmentally sensitive lands. The zone regulations are intended to balance development within the Route 80 corridor with the sensitivity to environmental features and adjacent residential

uses. The LOR Zone permits professional, executive, or administrative offices; and research laboratories and offices devoted exclusively to research, product development and testing, and engineering and sales development.

Prohibited uses include pilot plants related to research facilities; animal, viral, or bacterial research; and assembly or manufacturing of any type.

The minimum lot area for the LOR Zone is 20 acres and the minimum lot frontage is 250 feet. The minimum setbacks are 100 feet for the front yard, 75 feet for each side yard, and 100 feet for the rear yard. Land within the LOR Zone is required to provide an additional setback of 200 feet and a landscaped buffer of 50 feet from any residential use or zone. Building height is permitted up to 30 feet where surface parking is provided and 40 feet with a parking garage in the building. The maximum permitted impervious lot coverage is 30%. The maximum floor area ratio (FAR) for all buildings combined is 0.10. Buildings shall be spaced at least 50 feet apart. Environmental protections include a requirement that delineated wetlands and transition areas shall enter into a permanent conservation easement as a condition of approval of any development application. An Environmental Impact Statement and a Traffic Impact Analysis are required to be submitted with any site plan application in the LOR Zone.

E. Redevelopment Areas

The Borough of Netcong has been proactive in encouraging the redevelopment of blighted and underutilized land for over 20 years. The following sections summarize these redevelopment efforts and their status today.

Station Area Redevelopment Plan

In 2003, NJ Transit and the Regional Plan Association (RPA) began a series of community design workshops to transform underutilized land near transit facilities into new, mixed-use development through NJ Transit's Transit Friendly Planning Assistance Program. The results of the workshops were distilled into a report, "Netcong Station Area Transit-Friendly Design Study."

In 2004, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Netcong directed the Planning Board to determine whether an area in the northwesterly portion of the Borough qualified as an area in need of redevelopment. The Planning Board prepared a study called "Redevelopment Area Investigations for an area bounded by Flanders Road, Furnace Pond, Bank Street, Main Street, and Route 46," dated March 2004. The Planning Board recommended designation of all of Block 19 and Block 16, Lots 24, 25, and 25.01, and the Borough Council officially designated the properties as an area in need of redevelopment.

The Station Area Redevelopment Plan was first adopted in 2005 for a 12.8-acre subset of the redevelopment area on Block 19, Lots 20, 21.01, 22, 28, 28.01, 29, 30, 34.02, 35, 36, 37, 38, and 39. The Plan was based upon the design and land use concepts of the NJ Transit/RPA study. The Plan permitted mixed-use development with improvements to land use, circulation, and the character of the underutilized area north and west of the existing NJ Transit Booton rail tracks, with

a focus on for-sale condominiums, townhomes, and semi-attached single-family homes. New public spaces and a new train station building were incorporated into the Plan.

An amendment to the phase one redevelopment of the Station Area was prepared in August 2016, titled Phase 1 Amendment to the Station Area Redevelopment Plan. This plan discusses the lack of traction to implement the original 2005 Plan as related to issues with diverse ownership and difficulties in assembling properties to carry out the redevelopment scheme. In addition, a weakening condominium market, recession, growth of online retail, and legal changes to the use of eminent domain in securing land. The amended 2016 Plan allowed for a phased approach to implementation of the Station Area Redevelopment Plan, focusing on redevelopment of the NJ Transit property, which includes Block 19, Lots 35, 36, 38, 39, and a portion of Lot 37, as the first phase. Uses permitted in the Phase 1 Area include multifamily residential dwellings, either for sale or for rent, required ground-floor retail, offices, and surface/structured parking. The maximum density is 32 units per acre, which may be increased to 40 units per acre if structured parking is provided. Building heights are permitted to the lesser of four stories or 50 feet. The Amended Plan also removed the public realm requirements that were part of the original Plan, but encouraged creative and innovative approaches to modifying the street grid and open space plan.

Since the Plan's adoption in 2005 and amendment in 2016, no redevelopment activity has occurred, despite the Borough's facilitation efforts. The Station Area Redevelopment Plan Area continues to hold potential to become a vibrant mixed-use district. The 2022 Reexamination Report recommended that the Borough re-visit the Plan to move forward a viable redevelopment scheme.

Block 16.01, Lots 24 and 25.01 Redevelopment Plan ((a.k.a. Crown Point or 34 Bank Apartments)

The 2004 redevelopment designation involving Block 19 and Block 16, Lots 24, 25, and 25.01, as described for the Station Area Redevelopment Plan, applies to the Crown Point redevelopment site. A Redevelopment Plan for Block 16.01, Lots 24 and 25.01 was prepared in September 2016 for the former Quirk industrial property, consisting of a ±4.8-acre area bound by Bank Street, Furnace Pond, and the Musconetcong River. The Plan permitted multi-family residential buildings with a maximum residential yield of 126 units including a 10-percent set-aside of affordable units. The building height was permitted to four stories and 48 feet measured at the highest eave and 70 feet measured at the roof ridgeline. The Planning Board reviewed and approved a site plan application for "Crown Point Netcong" in 2017, consisting of a four-building multi-family residential project that was generally consistent with the Redevelopment Plan. The development is now constructed and located across Bank Street from the unrealized area of the Station Area Redevelopment Plan.

Block 19, Lot 14 Redevelopment Plan (a.k.a. Old Pocketbook Factory, Flanders 46, or The CrownWalk Apartments)

The 2004 redevelopment designation involving Block 19 and Block 16, Lots 24, 25, and 25.01, as described for the Station Area Redevelopment Plan, applies to the "Flanders 46" redevelopment

site. The Planning Board adopted a Redevelopment Plan for Block 19, Lot 14, dated October 2013, to allow redevelopment of the then-industrial property, which is situated on Flanders Road between Route 46/Main Street and the rail right-of-way. The Redevelopment Plan was later amended in February 2019. The Plan permits multi-family residential development with a maximum residential yield of 80 units and an eight-percent set-aside of affordable units. Building heights are permitted to five stories, 48 feet to the highest eave, and 58 feet to the roof ridgeline. The Planning Board approved a residential project that is generally consistent with the amended Redevelopment Plan. The development has been constructed.

ShopRite Redevelopment

The Planning Board authorized preparation of a redevelopment investigation for Block 28, Lots 15-21, which was dated February 2018. The Planning Board recommended the study area's designation as an "area in need of redevelopment," and the Borough Council affirmed and declared the redevelopment designation on July 12, 2018. Subsequently, the Borough Council adopted the Redevelopment Plan for Block 28, Lots 15-21, also known as the ShopRite Redevelopment Plan, on April 9, 2020 and amended it on November 11, 2020. The redevelopment area consists of the ShopRite and its parking lot, as well as surrounding properties. The intent of the Redevelopment Plan was to "provide for the renovation, modernization and expansion of the existing ±29,000 square foot Shop-Rite supermarket." The Plan permitted supermarket uses and ancillary uses including a fulfillment center, a pharmacy, a liquor store, and parking and loading spaces. On March 28, 2022, the Planning Board granted site plan approval for a project that is consistent with the Redevelopment Plan.

Stoll/Allen Street Redevelopment

The Planning Board authorized a redevelopment investigation that resulted in the report, "Redevelopment Area Study for Stoll Street/Allen Street Area," dated October 2005. Based on the study, the Planning Board recommended, and the Borough Council affirmed, designation of Block 8, Lots 15, 16, 17, 23.01, 24, 24.02, 24.03, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, and 32 as an area in need of redevelopment. The redevelopment area is divided into three "sectors," including an older industrial complex on the western half, automotive uses on the eastern half, and a small residential/commercial enclave on the north-central section.

The Stoll/Allen Street Redevelopment Plan was adopted by the governing body in 2009. The Stoll/Allen Street Redevelopment Plan permits townhouse and multifamily development at a density not to exceed 12 units per acre. Since its last amendment in 2009, no redevelopment activity has occurred, and the prospective redeveloper seeking to assemble properties within the redevelopment area is now gone. Consequently, the Plan Area requires a fresh look to determine whether existing constraints, which include possible environmental contamination and diverse ownership, can be overcome either in whole or in part to facilitate redevelopment.

Lastly, in 2018, the Borough declared the existing Shop-Rite property along Route 46 and six contiguous single-family residences as an area in need of redevelopment. In 2020, the governing body adopted a redevelopment plan for the entirety of these lands providing for the

expansion/modernization of the existing Shop-Rite supermarket. The Shop-Rite owners recently submitted a site plan application to the Planning Board consistent with the aforementioned redevelopment plan and obtained approval for same on March 28, 2022.

St. Michael's Redevelopment

The Planning Board recommended that Block 26, Lot 6 and a portion of Lot 10 be designated a non-condemnation area in need of redevelopment on October 24, 2022, based on an investigation dated July 2022. The Borough Council officially designated the properties as a redevelopment area on November 10, 2022. The Planning Board subsequently adopted a Redevelopment Plan for Block 26, Lots 6 & a Portion of Lot 10, dated August 2023. The properties consist primarily of surface parking lots associated with an unbuilt early childcare learning center and St. Michael's Church, as well as undeveloped land on an oversized residential lot. The Plan permits 3½-story market-rate townhouses and three-story affordable senior multi-unit dwellings. The maximum permitted residential yield is 64 townhouse units and 12 senior units. A site plan application has not yet been submitted.

Block 15 Redevelopment

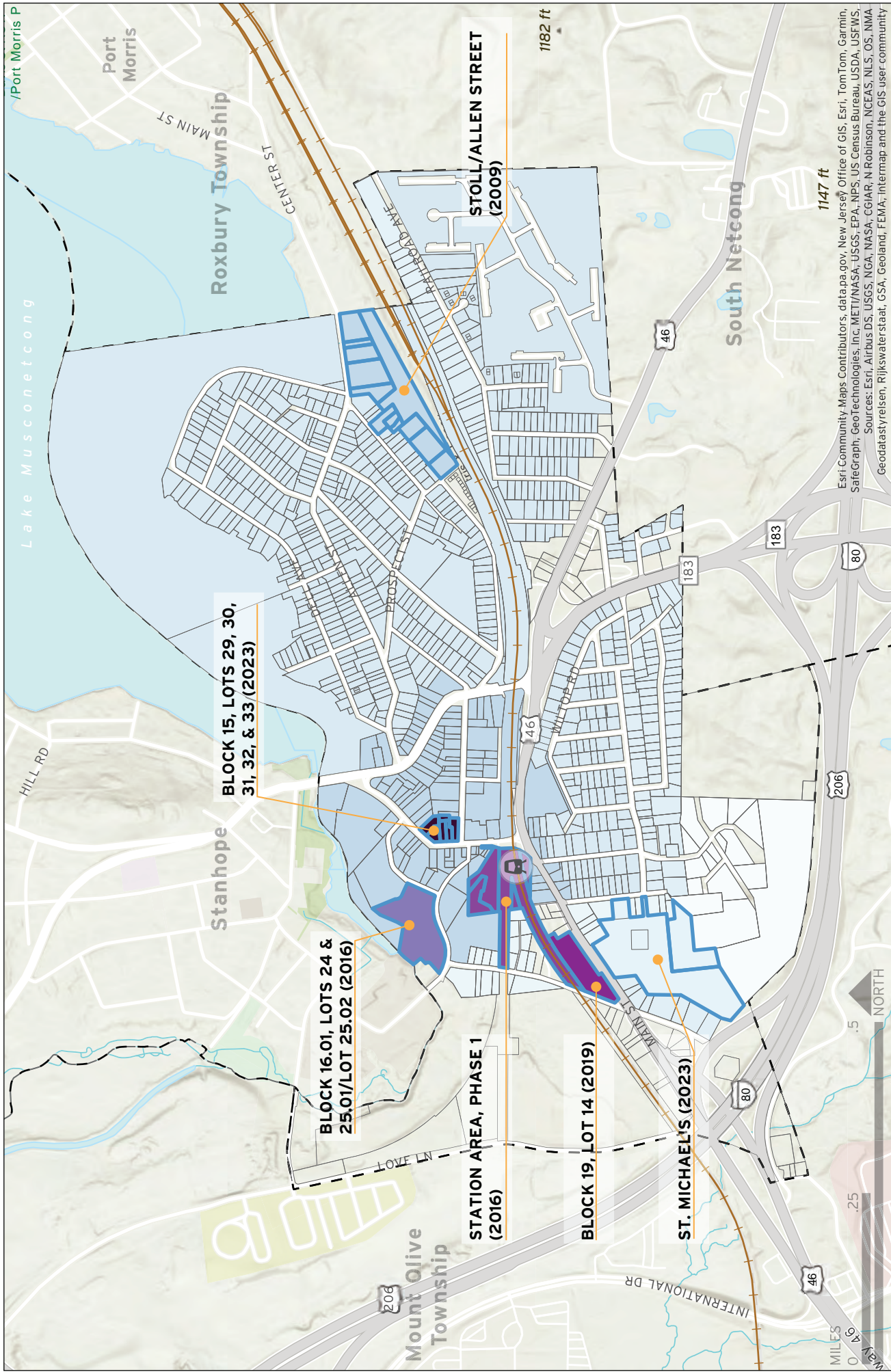
On June 26, 2023, the Planning Board adopted a resolution recommending that five contiguous properties on the east side of Main Street and the north side of Maple Avenue be designated as a "rehabilitation area" consistent with the LRHL at N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-14. Thereafter, the Borough Council took official action to designate the area, also known as Block 15, Lots 29, 30, 31, 32, & 33, as "in need of rehabilitation" on July 13, 2023 in accordance with Resolution 2023-71. In December 2023, the Borough adopted a "Redevelopment Plan for Block 15, Lots 29, 30, 31, 32, & 33." The Plan permits a variety of commercial uses on the ground floor and multifamily residential dwelling above, for a total building height up to three stories. A maximum of 50 residential units and a minimum of 6,000 square feet of commercial area is required. The Plan also requires a 15% set-aside of affordable units. The Block 15 Rehabilitation Area is located within the official ½-mile Transit Village area. The Planning Board is undertaking review of a recently-submitted site plan application.

F. Residential Density

Residential redevelopment plans have generally permitted higher residential densities than Netcong's underlying zoning districts. In these plans, permitted density has ranged from 6.5 units per acre to 44.25 units per acre, with an average density of close to 30 units per acre. By contrast, the maximum permitted densities in underlying zoning districts ranges from 2.9 units per acre to 12 units per acre, with an average density of approximately 7.5 units per acre. Table 4 and Map 2: Permitted Residential Densities reflect the permitted densities within underlying zoning districts and adopted residential Redevelopment Plan areas.

Table 4: Permitted Residential Densities

Zoning District/ Redevelopment Area	Permitted Residential Density
R-1	7.3 units/acre
R-1A	6.7 units/acre
R-2	8.7 units/acre
R-3	5.4 units/acre
R-3A	2.9 units/acre
R-4	9.0 units/acre
B	N/A
B-C	12 units/acre
I-1	N/A
I-2	N/A
I-3	N/A
LOR	N/A
Phase 1 Amendment to the Station Area Redevelopment Plan (2016)	32 units/acre <i>Mixed use concept</i> 40 units/acre <i>Mixed-use concept with structured parking</i>
Redevelopment Plan for Block 16.01, Lots 24 and 25.01 (2016), now Lot 25.02	26.25 units/acre <i>Multifamily residential (126 units/4.8 acres)</i>
Amended Redevelopment Plan for Block 19, Lot 14 (2019)	35 units/acre <i>Multifamily residential (80 units/2.279 acres)</i>
Stoll/Allen Street Redevelopment Plan (2009)	12 units/acre <i>Townhouse and multifamily residential</i>
Redevelopment Plan for Block 26, Lot 6 & a Portion of Lot 10, a.k.a. St. Michael's (2023)	6.5 units/acre <i>(64 townhouse units + 12 affordable senior units/11.71 acres)</i>
Redevelopment Plan for Block 15, Lots 29, 30, 31, 32, & 33 (2023)	44.25 units/acre <i>Mixed-use concept (50 units/1.13 acres)</i>



PERMITTED DENSITY (UNITS/ACRE)



RESIDENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT PLAN AREAS



NETCONG NJ TRANSIT RAILROAD STATION



MONTCLAIR-BOONTON/MORRIS & RAILROAD NJ TRANSIT LINES



MUNICIPALITIES

Highlands Center Designation Report
for the Borough of Netcong

PHILLIPS PREISS GRYGIEL LEHENY HUGHES LLC 2024

Map 2: Permitted Residential Densities

Esri Community Maps Contributors, data.pa.gov, New Jersey Office of GIS, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, Geotechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA, USFWS, Sources: Esri, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA Geodatastyrelsen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap and the GIS user community

G. Circulation

Roads

The Borough's network of roadways includes Morris County Route 631 (Allen Street) running east-west in the northern part of the Borough, NJ Route 183 (Ledgewood Avenue) running north-south through the center of the Borough and into Stanhope, and U.S. Route 46 (Main Street/Ledgewood Avenue), running east-west to the south of the railroad tracks. A small section of Interstate-80 crosses the southwest corner of the Borough and connects to Route 46. All other roadways in Netcong are local streets, including Main Street.

The Borough has a prioritized list of repair projects for local roads, which it implements on an annual basis. There is a need for the Borough to undertake larger roadway projects, including installation of an emergency bypass under the NJ Transit tracks. The Borough is also desirous of completing a Borough-wide traffic study and circulation plan to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people using motorized and non-motorized transportation modes. Such a study must also account for future development and growth of Netcong as Center.

Train

Netcong Station provides weekday commuter rail access to Newark Penn Station and Hoboken Terminal via the Morristown/Morris & Essex line and the Montclair-Boonton line, with additional transit connections available to New York City. Hackettstown is the westernmost terminus of both lines.

The railroad tracks run east-west and bisect the Borough into a northern half and a southern half. The station is located near the intersection of Main Street and Route 46/Main Street. Netcong Station serves as the focal point of the Transit Village area.

Pedestrian Connections

The northern parts of Netcong, including the downtown, generally provide a well-connected sidewalk network. The downtown Main Street area has undergone streetscape improvements to improve the pedestrian experience in the area. However, certain local streets in the northern part of Netcong, such as Hillside Avenue and Allen Terrace, do not provide sidewalks.

The Wiltop Road neighborhood, located south of Route 46, is generally devoid of sidewalks. The Netcong Heights apartment complex provides sidewalks on at least one side of each internal street. The nearby roads of West Railroad Avenue and Union Street provide sidewalks, but other local residential streets in the neighborhood to the west do not have any sidewalks. Major roadways vary in the extent to which they provide continuous sidewalks. For example, Route 46/Ledgewood Avenue has a sporadic sidewalk network on both sides of the street. By contrast, Route 183/Ledgewood Avenue provides continuous sidewalks on both sides of the street.

The Borough is desirous of completing a circulation assessment of the Borough's roads, sidewalks, and bicycle routes to ensure safe and widespread movement of all users, including children on their way to school and individuals with mobility restrictions. A circulation plan should

address gaps in the sidewalk network, unsafe street crossings, and ADA accessibility. Connections to key destinations, such as schools, parks, and the business district, should be emphasized. Coordination with outside agencies will be necessary to complete improvement projects on routes under county, state, or federal jurisdiction.

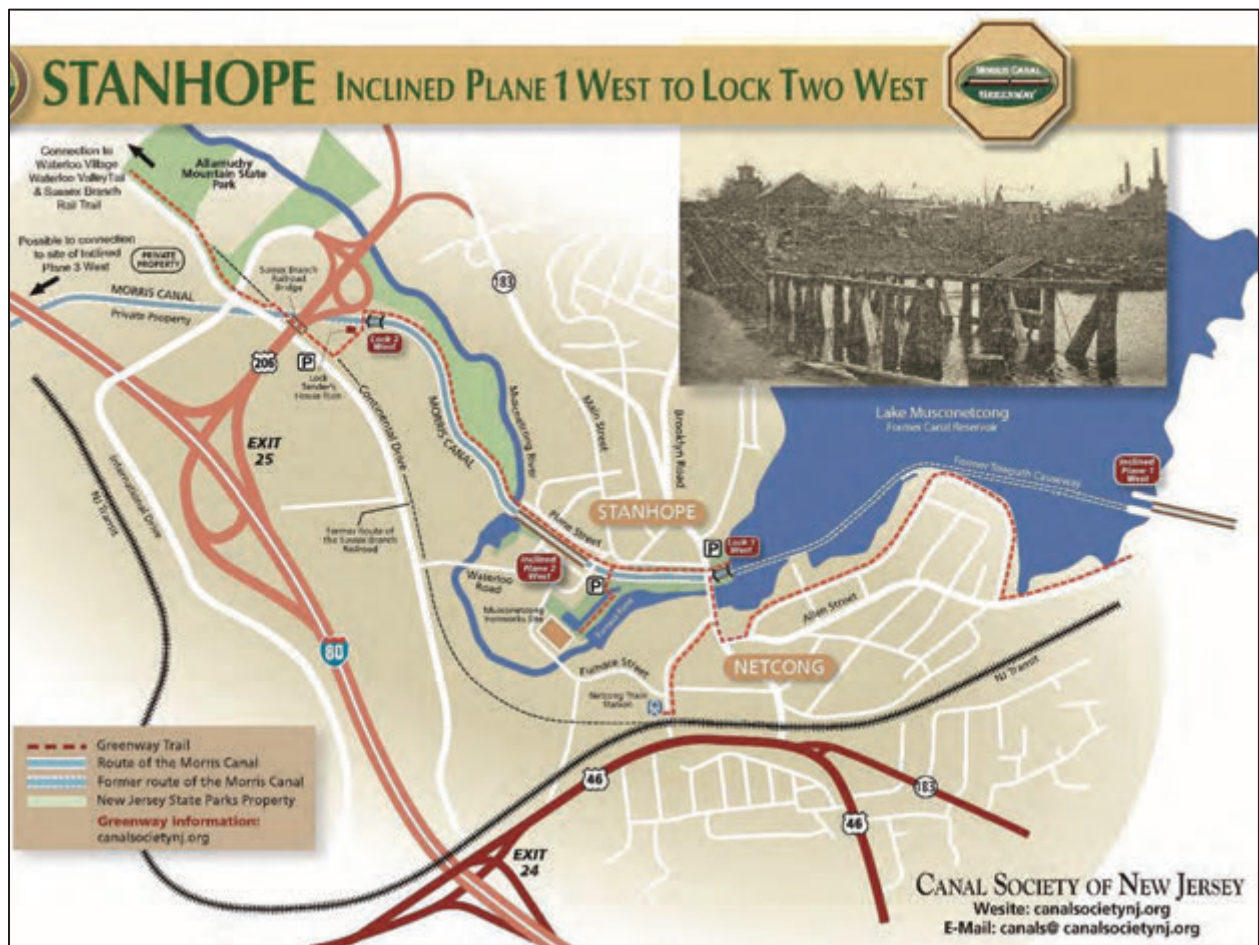
H. Recreation

Trails

The Morris Canal is a >100-mile former canal stretching east-west across the State of New Jersey, from Jersey City to Phillipsburg. The Morris Canal & Banking Company first opened the Canal in the 1830s to transport resources from Pennsylvania to the east, including ports in Jersey City. According to the Canal Society of New Jersey, "As New Jersey's first industrial transportation system, the canal promoted commerce and shaped the economic development of the northern part of the state." The canal was closed after the 1920s after becoming obsolete.⁷ Today, groups including the Canal Society of New Jersey, the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, and municipalities seek to preserve and restore the canal and provide continuous public access paths for recreation, also known as the Morris Canal Greenway.

⁷ "Explore the Morris Canal." The Canal Society of New Jersey. <https://canalsocietynj.org/canal-history/morris-canal/>

Figure 2: Morris Canal Greenway in Netcong



The Borough of Netcong applied for a Planning and Design grant through the Morris County Trail Construction Grant Program in June of 2024 to complete the Morris Canal Greenway Trail from one end of the Borough to the other. The planning and design work will involve:

- A boardwalk section along the north end of Arbolino Fitness Park on Koclas Drive;
- Wayfinding, striping, and/or a shared use path along Koclas Drive/Dell Avenue, along Main Street connecting the Greenway to the Netcong train station, and along Bank Street;
- Restoration of a nature trail along the waterfront of Furnace Pond (part of Lake Musconetcong), located between Furnace Street and Ledgewood Avenue.

This work would create a full walking loop connecting Netcong Station, the Main Street downtown area, the Greenway, and the Furnace Pond waterfront.

Figure 3: Morris Canal Greenway Expansion Plan



Source: Borough of Netcong.

Parks

Netcong is home to notable public-access parks along Lake Musconetcong, namely Arbolino Fitness Park and DiRenzo Park. Arbolino Park is located at the northeastern edge of the Borough at the intersection of Allen Street and Koclas Drive. A multi-use path runs through the park along the Lake. The park also features a baseball field, tennis courts, a basketball court, and outdoor fitness equipment. Notably, Arbolino Park has a handicap-accessible kayak launch. The restrooms at Arbolino Park are in need of an upgrade.

DiRenzo Park is located at the north-central part of the Borough at the intersection of Dell Avenue and Water Street. DiRenzo Park features a playground that is currently being replaced, a covered picnic area, and views of Lake Musconetcong. Events are hosted at both parks throughout the year. Finally, there is the Lake Musconetcong boat launch, which is located approximately 500 feet west of DiRenzo Park on Dell Avenue.

These parks serve the northern sections of the Borough, though residential neighborhoods in the southern part of the Borough are currently underserved by recreational park facilities. There is a large forest area at the southern end of the Borough, which is encumbered under the Green Acres program. However, the Wiltop Road neighborhood located south of Route 46/Main Street does not have easy access to recreational facilities. Future recreational planning efforts should include a new park in the Wiltop Road neighborhood. The design of the park should involve equitable community input on their desired active and passive recreational features as well as landscaping design.

Other new park facilities should include conversion of an existing parking lot, which is located in the downtown, to a recreational facility or plaza. A park in this location would encourage social gathering, improve walkability in the downtown Transit Village, and support place-making and local businesses by providing a focal point for the downtown. The planning and design of this park should also involve equitable community input, including from business operators.

Public and private sources should be used to fund park improvements and acquisitions. This may come in the form of grants, the municipal capital budget, or contributions from private real estate developers in the form of redevelopment agreements.

I. Water and Sewer Infrastructure

Sewer Service

The Highlands ERI indicates that 528.6 acres of the Borough is within a sewer service area. The mapped sewer service area includes areas that are currently served (i.e. connected to) by permitted wastewater treatment facilities as well as areas of permitted discharges to surface or groundwater. Based on the map view, the only land area portions of the Borough that are outside a sewer service area include the far southeast corner of the Borough on the Netcong Heights apartments property (Block 45, Lot 1) and the lakeside half of three properties along Lake Musconetcong and Koclas Drive/Dell Avenue. Therefore, at least a portion of all properties in the Borough receive sewer service. The mapped areas of sewer service are not an indication of capacity. Netcong does not have septic areas.

The Borough indicates a need to complete infill and infiltration (I&I) work to accommodate future development and growth.

Public Water

The ERI also shows the areas served by existing Public Community Water Systems (PCWS). A majority of Netcong receives public water. Areas that do not receive public water principally include the western and southwestern edges of the Borough, generally located west of Flanders Road and within Forest Areas to the south of development on Amendola Drive and Olive Street. Land within the Existing Community - Environmentally Constrained Sub-Zone is not served by public water. Land within the Lake Community Sub-Zone is almost entirely served by public water. Land within the Existing Community Zone is mostly served by public water, except for the areas west of Flanders Road and along the southern border of the municipality as described previously. It should be noted that the publication date for this map layer is July 1, 2008; therefore, this information may be outdated.

The Borough obtained New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust Fund monies to upgrade its water supply system, which included rehabilitating its one-million-gallon reservoir and replacing/repairing deteriorating water mains/pipes. Undersized water mains along Route 46 were replaced and sections of the existing main on the south side of Route 80 were extended. A number of hydrants/valves were replaced as were customer water meters. The Borough's former one-half-million-gallon reservoir that had been out of service was also demolished.

The capacity of water service in the Borough is projected to experience strain based on growth projections. The Borough has identified the need for a new water well to sustain adequate water service. The Borough has started to engage a hydrogeologist to study and prepare a detailed plan for installing a new water well.

The Borough needs other upgrades to the water system as well. There is the need complete water main upgrades to accommodate current and anticipated downtown water flows. The Borough also needs to identify galvanized pipes and lead in the system and to undertake a replacement program. New federal and NJDEP limits on PFAS⁸ chemicals in the water supply will require specialized PFAS filters. These filters will address public health concerns of drinking water as well as help to improve the quality of waterways such as Lake Musconetcong.

Stormwater Management

The Borough typically completes routine repairs of its stormwater sewer system through municipal employees. To accommodate future development and growth, the Borough needs to complete a stormwater management plan to identify existing and future problem areas in the system. In addition, the Borough would like to pursue public green infrastructure projects in poor drainage areas. From private sector development, more stringent rules from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) now require structural and non-structural (e.g., green) infrastructure interventions for projects defined as 'major developments.' Netcong is also exploring the idea of establishing a stormwater management utility that would collect fees based on the amount of stormwater a property generates, with such fees dedicated for local stormwater management purposes.

⁸ Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS).

III. Highlands Indicators and Protections

A. Land Use Capability Zones

Overview

The Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP) of 2008 established various “Land Use Capability Zones” and an associated map, the goal of which was to, “address the requirements of the Highlands Act and provide regional guidance for the implementation of the policies contained in the Regional Master Plan.” The RMP further stated that “The challenge of the Land Use Capability Zone Map was to recognize the range and nature of land throughout the Highlands Region, and assign an overlay zone that best represents the requirements of the Highlands Act and the policies of the Regional Master Plan.”

In addition, the RMP explained that the Land Use Capability Zones are intended to demonstrate the overall carrying capacity for development within each zone. It states:

Carrying capacity has two basic components - natural resource capacity and infrastructure capacity - that must both be addressed in establishing an appropriate development density. Essentially, growth can only occur if the natural resource carrying capacity (e.g., water supply source, pollutant assimilative capacity, ecological viability) and infrastructure carrying capacity (e.g., public water supply, wastewater treatment, and transportation systems) are available.

The Highlands Council has three primary overlay zones and four sub-zones, each with their own purpose, application, and development criteria. The zones and sub-zones are defined as follows:

Protection Zone. This zone consists of high natural resource value lands that are important to maintaining water quality, water quantity and sensitive ecological resources and processes. Land acquisition is a high priority in the Protection Zone and development activities will be extremely limited; any development will be subject to stringent limitations on consumptive and depletive water use, degradation of water quality, and impacts to environmentally sensitive lands.

Wildlife Management Sub-Zone. This sub-zone consists of both areas managed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System and Wildlife Management Area System administered by the NJDEP Division of Fish & Wildlife’s Bureau of Land Management. These areas are part of a network of lands and waters for conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats and permit compatible wildlife-dependent recreational uses such as hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation. There is no minimum mapping threshold for the delineation of the Wildlife Management Sub-Zone.

Conservation Zone. This zone consists of areas with significant agricultural lands interspersed with associated woodlands and environmental features that should be preserved when possible. Non-

agricultural development activities will be limited in area and intensity due to infrastructure constraints and resource protection goals.

Conservation Zone - Environmentally Constrained Sub-Zone. This sub-zone consists of significant environmental features within the Conservation Zone that should be preserved and protected from non-agricultural development. Development activities will be limited and subject to stringent limitations on consumptive and depletive water use, degradation of water quality, and impacts to environmentally sensitive lands

Existing Community Zone. This zone consists of areas with regionally significant concentrated development signifying existing communities. These areas tend to have limited environmental constraints due to previous development patterns and may have existing infrastructure that can support development and redevelopment provided that such development is compatible with the protection and character of the Highlands environment, at levels that are appropriate to maintain the character of established communities.

Existing Community Zone - Environmentally Constrained Sub-Zone. The Environmentally Constrained Sub-Zone consists of significant contiguous Critical Habitat, steep slopes and forested lands within the Existing Community Zone that should be protected from further fragmentation. They serve as regional habitat “steppingstones” to larger contiguous Critical Habitat and forested areas. As such, they are not appropriate for significant development, and are best served by land preservation and protection. Development is subject to stringent limitations on consumptive and depletive water use, degradation of water quality, and impacts to environmentally sensitive lands.

Lake Community Sub-Zone. The Lake Community Sub-Zone consists of patterns of community development that are within the Existing Community Zone within 1,000 feet of lakes. The Highlands Council focused on lakes that are 10 acres or greater and delineated lake management areas consisting of an area of up to 1,000 feet (depending on the protection focus) from the lake shoreline in order to protect water quality, resource features, shoreline development recreation, scenic quality and community character. A future management area is planned, encompassing the full lake watershed, for protection of the lake water quality. This zone has unique policies to prevent degradation of water quality, and watershed pollution, harm to lake ecosystems, and promotion of natural aesthetic values within the Existing Community Zone.

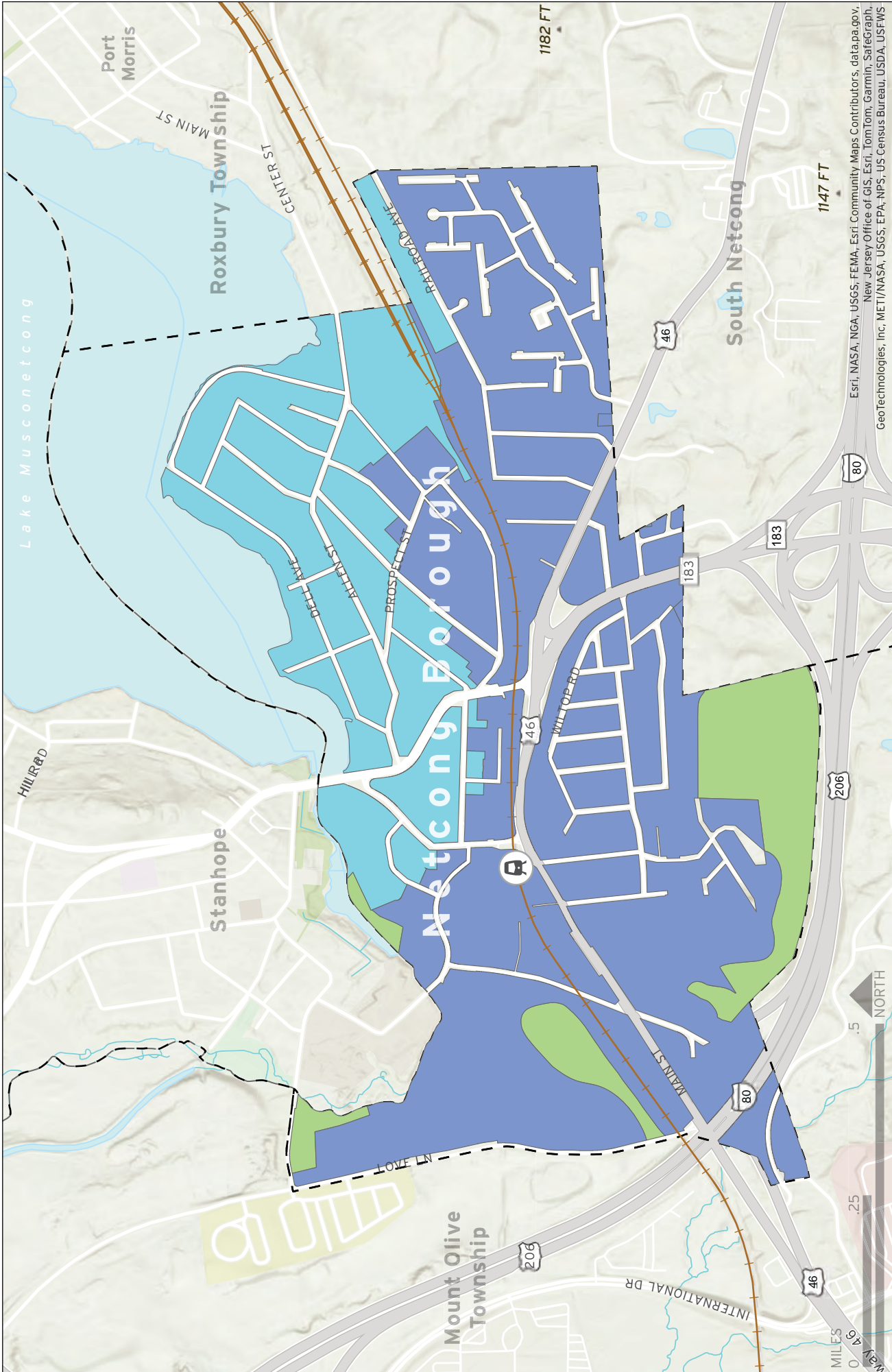
Land Use Capability Zones in Netcong

Almost all of Netcong is designated as an Existing Community Zone, or its associated Sub-Zones. The area of the respective Zones and Sub-Zones are described in Table 1 and their location is shown on Map 2. The Lake Community Sub-Zone is located in the northwest of the Borough, around Lake Musconetcong. While there are several distinct areas of Existing Community Zone - Environmentally Constrained Sub-Zone, the bulk of this zone is located in the southern section of the Borough. Netcong does not contain any Conservation Zones, Conservation Zones - Environmentally Constrained Sub-Zones, or Wildlife Management Sub-Zones.

Table 5: Land Use Capability Zones in Netcong

Land Use Capability Zones	Area (Acres)	Percent (%)
Existing Community Zone	374.3	70.3%
Lake Community Sub-Zone	114.1	21.4%
Existing Community Environmentally Constrained Sub-Zone	44.4	8.3%
Protection Zone	0.0	0.0%
Wildlife Management Sub-Zone	0.0	0.0%
Conservation Zone - Forest Area	0.0	0.0%
Conservation - Environmentally Constrained Sub-Zones	0.0	0.0%
Total Land Area	532.7	100%

Source: "Land Use Capability Zones" GIS Geodatabase. NJ Highlands Council, NJGIN Open Data. Published June 3, 2024.



LAND USE CAPABILITY ZONE DESCRIPTIONS

- EXISTING COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSTRAINED SUBZONE
- EXISTING COMMUNITY ZONE
- LAKE COMMUNITY SUBZONE

NETCONG NJ TRANSIT RAILROAD STATION

MONTCLAIR-BOONTON/MORRIS & RAILROAD NJ TRANSIT LINES

MUNICIPALITIES

Highlands Center Designation Report
for the Borough of Netcong
PHILLIPS PREISS GRYGIEL LEHENY HUGHES LLC 2024

Map 3: Land Use Capability Zones



Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, Esri Community Maps Contributors, data.pa.gov, New Jersey Office of GIS, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, Safeligh, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA, USFWS

B. Sensitive Land and Water Resources and Protections

State regulations provide protection for sensitive features, such as for wetlands and riparian buffers. In addition, the Borough Code regulates critical areas in "Article XI Critical Areas" of "Chapter 194, Land Development Procedures." These regulations cover land or water falling within the following classifications:

- A. Flood hazard area: The stream channel and the relatively flat area adjoining the channel of a natural stream which has been inundated or covered by floodwaters from a one-hundred-year storm frequency flood as defined by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.
- B. Wetlands area: Areas saturated by surface or ground water and/or containing hydrophytic vegetation and as further defined in N.J.S.A. 13:9B-1 et seq., entitled "Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act."
- C. Critical slope area: Any area having a grade of greater than 25%.
- D. Steep slope area: Any area having a grade of 15% to 25%.
- E. Stream area: Any body of continuously or intermittently flowing water, whether designated as a stream, brook, river or otherwise, and consisting of a bed and banks.
- F. Lake area: Any nonflowing body of water with a mean depth of three feet or greater and a surface area greater than one acre, whether designated as a pond, lake or reservoir."

Article XI provides regulations for the above defined critical areas which are applied to all applications for minor or major subdivision or site plan approval in all zones in the Borough.

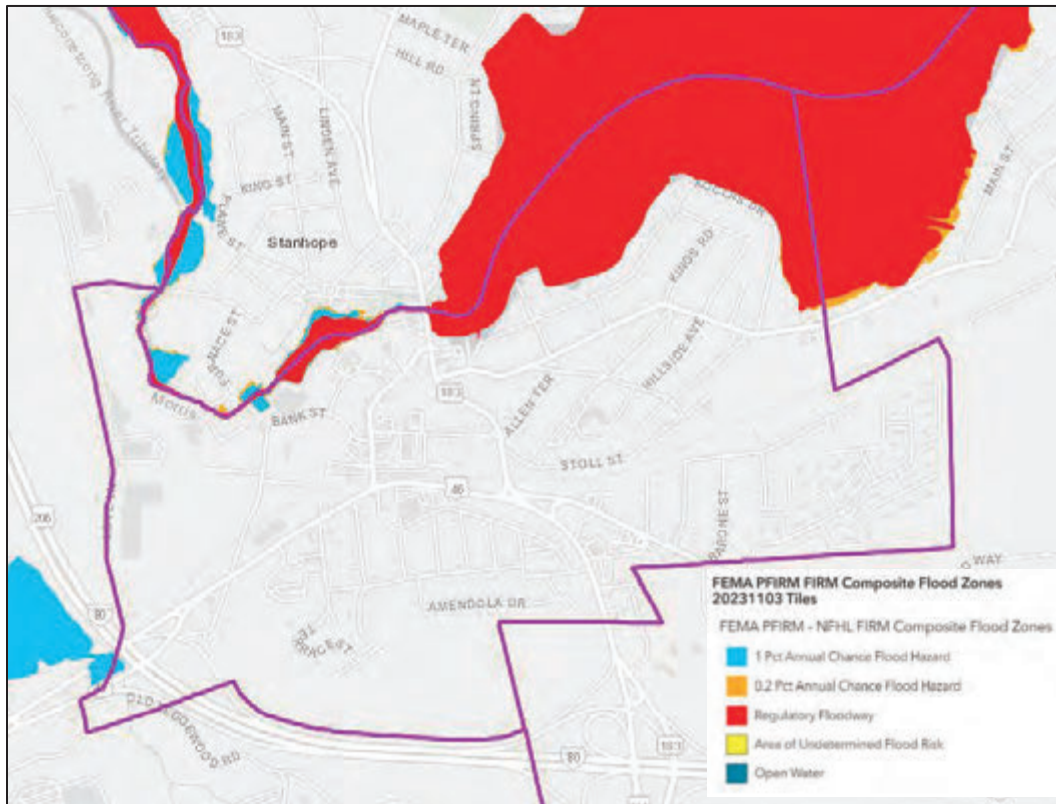
The Highlands Council has also defined areas of value in the Borough and identified these areas through its online Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI) tool⁹. A summary of sensitive land and water resources is provided as follows, based on the Highlands Council's ERI tool and other sources. The following sections also elaborate on Borough regulations to protect these sensitive features.

Flood Hazard Areas

The areas of Lake Musconetcong and Furnace Pond are within a regulatory floodway. Besides these, there are minimal areas of flood hazard in the Borough, particularly on land. There is a small food hazard area with 1% annual chance of flood hazard near the border with Stanhope on the east side of Bank Street, and a small area near I-80.

⁹ The Highlands Interactive Environmental Resource Inventory ("ERI") is a map-based application designed to assist in the development of municipal ERIs.

Map 4: Special Flood Hazard Areas



Source: NJFloodmapper.com. FEMA PFIRM FIRM Composite Flood Zones 20231103 Tiles.

The Borough ordinance states that in flood hazard areas having a drainage area of less than 50 acres, no building or structure shall be erected or constructed, either above or below ground level, within the flood hazard area or within a minimum of 50 feet from the center line of any stream. In flood hazard areas having a drainage area of 50 acres or greater, no building or structure shall be erected or constructed, either above or below ground level, except in accordance with a stream encroachment permit issued pursuant to the Flood Hazard Area Control Act, N.J.S.A. 58:16A-50 et seq., and a minimum of 50 feet from the top of the stream embankment.

Lakes and Stream Areas

Lake and stream areas in Netcong consist of Lake Musconetcong, Furnace Pond, and the Musconetcong River.

The Borough Ordinance stipulates that no building or structure shall be erected or constructed, either above or below ground level, within 50 feet of the edge of any pond, lake or stream. The following uses or activities are permitted in lake or stream critical areas, provided that they do not disturb the natural and indigenous character of the areas and are otherwise permitted in the zone in which the premises is located: (1) Conservation of soil, vegetation, water, fish and wildlife; (2) Fishing, swimming, boating, water-skiing and hunting; (3) Trails for nonmotorized use; (4) Grazing;

(5) Dispersal areas for surface water; and (6) Docks, piers, boathouses, marinas and fences constructed in accordance with Borough ordinances.

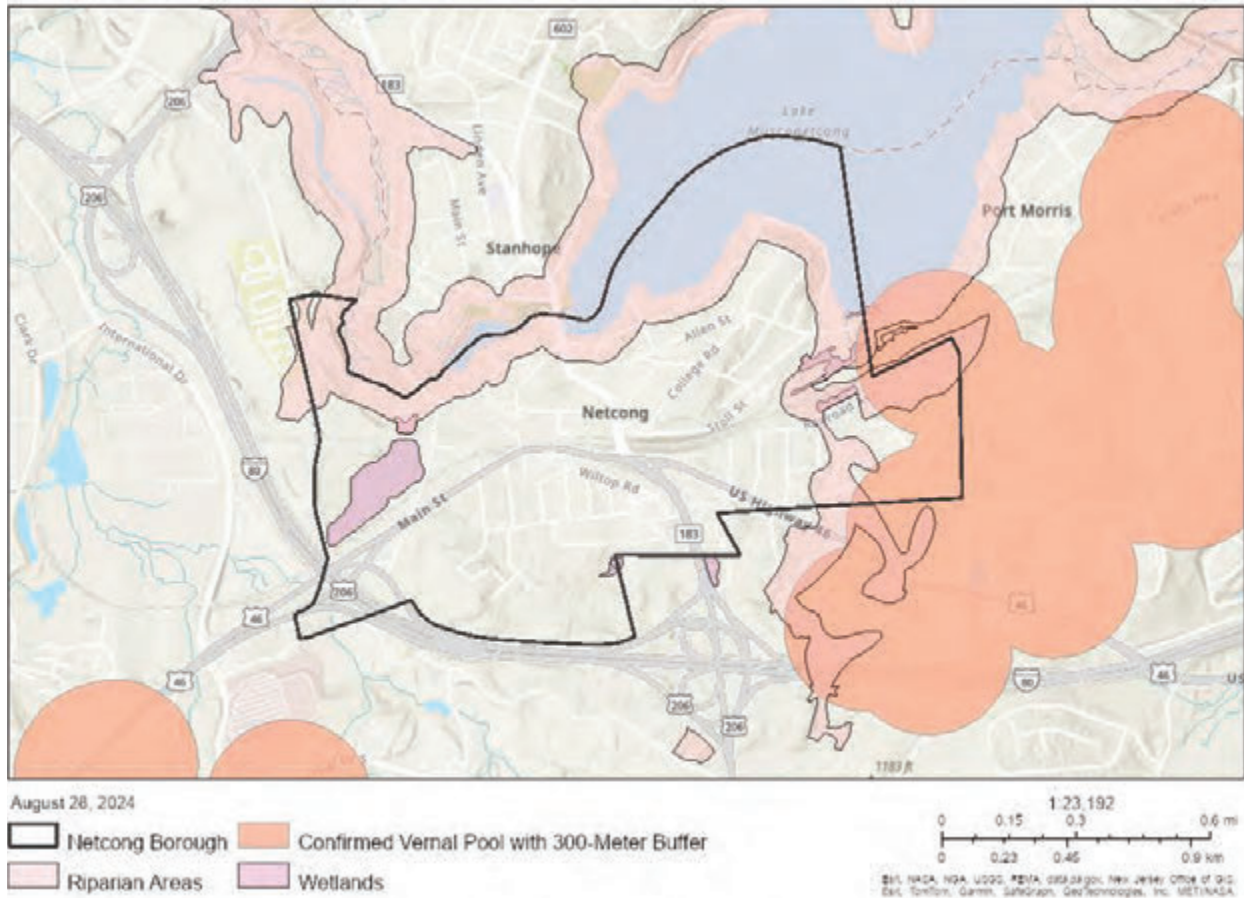
Wetlands, Vernal Pools, and Riparian Areas

The largest area of wetlands¹⁰ in the Borough is located on the southeastern half of Block 18, Lot 3, to the west of Flanders Road and to the north of the rail tracks. Smaller wetlands areas are located on the Stoll/Allen redevelopment plan area, south of I-80, near Waterloo Road, between the railroad tracks and Railroad Avenue, and in two small pockets of the forest at the southern end of the Borough.

There is a vernal pool 300-meter buffer area located along the eastern end of the Borough over part of the Netcong Heights apartments complex. Riparian areas are located along the northern land boundary of the Borough, adjacent to Lake Musconetcong, Furnace Pond, and the Musconetcong River. Additional riparian areas are located to the west of I-80, over the eastern half of the Stoll/Allen Redevelopment Plan area, and over the northern and western parts of the Netcong Heights apartments complex.

¹⁰ Deciduous Wooded Wetlands.

Map 5: Wetlands, Vernal Pools, and Riparian Areas



This map was developed using the New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by the Highlands Council and is not state-authorized.

Source: Highlands Region Interactive Environmental Resource Inventory. Highlands Council.

The Borough Code's regulation of wetlands is dependent upon whether or not the wetlands and proposed activity fall within the jurisdiction of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) pursuant to the New Jersey Freshwater Wetlands Act (the "Act"), N.J.S.A. 13:9B-1 et seq. The NJDEP has exclusive control over regulated activities within freshwater wetlands as defined in the act. Any development application in Netcong which involves wetlands requires that the applicant submit to NJDEP a request for a freshwater wetlands letter of interpretation pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:7A-8 et seq. No such application for development shall be deemed complete unless and until a response from the NJDEP is received. The regulation of activities within such wetlands shall be within the exclusive jurisdiction of NJDEP. If a NJDEP wetlands permit is required for a development application, the permit must be obtained before the Borough reviews the application.

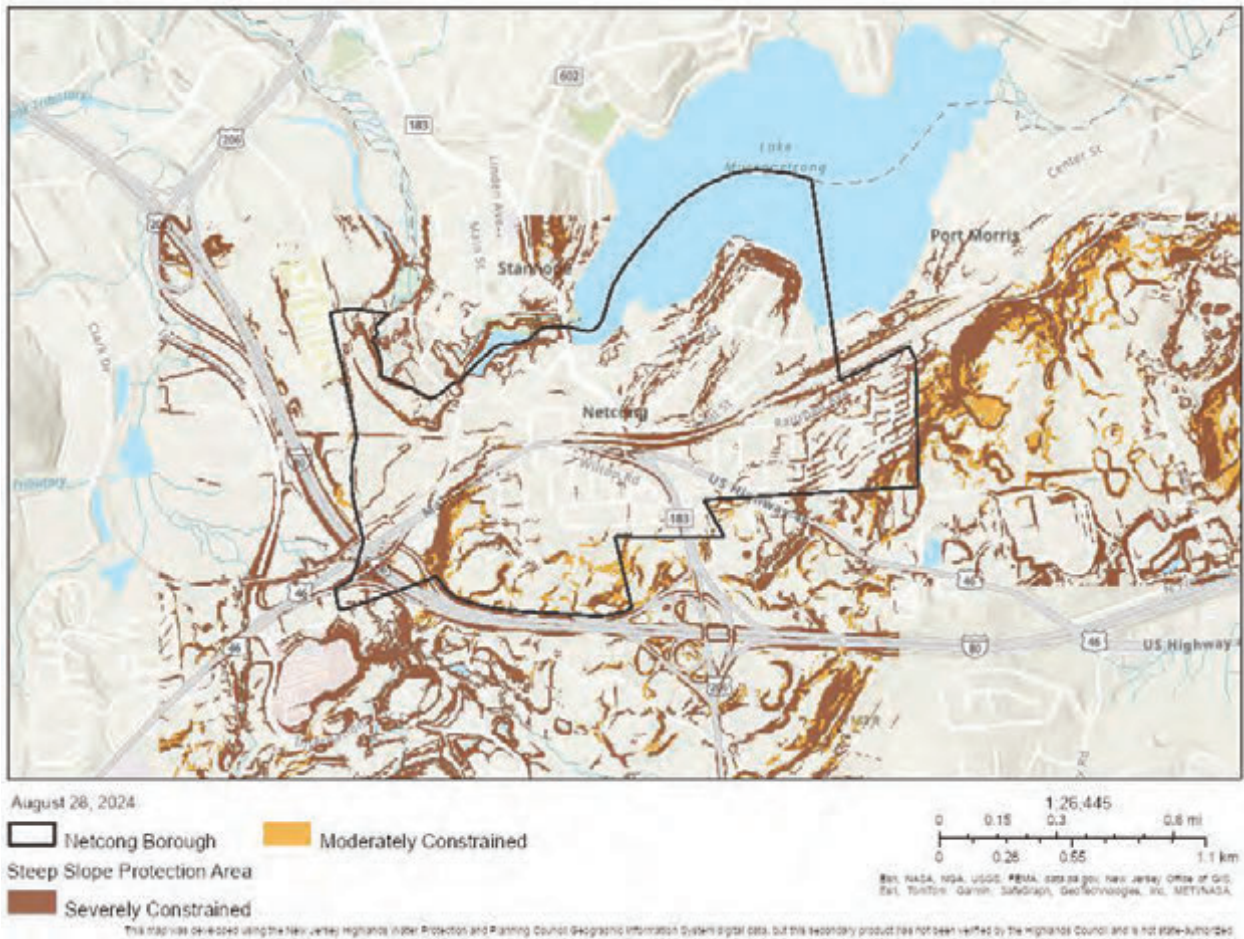
Regulation of riparian areas is governed by Ord. §194-95 (Q) (8) and Ord. §194-95 (Q) (9), which applies to major developments. The regulations provide reference to N.J.A.C. 7:13-4.1(c)1, which establishes 300-foot riparian zones along Category One waters, as designated in the Surface Water Quality Standards at N.J.A.C. 7:9B, and certain upstream tributaries to Category One

waters. Regulation in the 300-foot riparian zone is controlled by N.J.A.C. 7:13-11.2(j)3.i. Additionally, Netcong in Ord. §194-87 C prohibits the construction of buildings or structures within 50 feet of any lake, pond, or stream. Netcong does not have any specific protections for vernal pools.

Steep and Critical Slope Areas

There are sporadic steep slope protection areas throughout the Borough. Areas that are mostly devoid of steep slope constraints include the downtown Main Street and Ledgewood Avenue/Route 183 area, the Wiltop Road neighborhood, and the industrial area west of Flanders Road.

Map 6: Critical Steep Slope Areas



Source: Highlands Region Interactive Environmental Resource Inventory. Highlands Council.

The Borough Ordinance regulates steep and critical slope areas. Minimum lot sizes and density of development shall be modified in areas of slopes greater than 15%. Slope calculations shall be based on elevation or contour intervals of two feet and shall be computed as follows: (1) Determine the area of each part of the proposed lot for each slope range in the slope factor table below (Table 3); (2) Multiply each area by the appropriate slope factor in the slope factor table; (3)

add the areas; (4) compare the results with the minimum lot area requirement of the zone to determine the deficiency, if any; and (5) Increase the initial lot area by the deficient amount, repeating the above steps until the lot size conforms to the zoning requirements.

Table 6: Steep Slope Factors, by Ordinance

Slopes (percent)	Factor
0% to 15%	1.00
15.1% to 25%	0.33
25.1% or greater	0.20

Source: Chapter 194-87(D) of the Chapter 194, "Land Development and Procedures Ordinance of the Borough of Netcong."

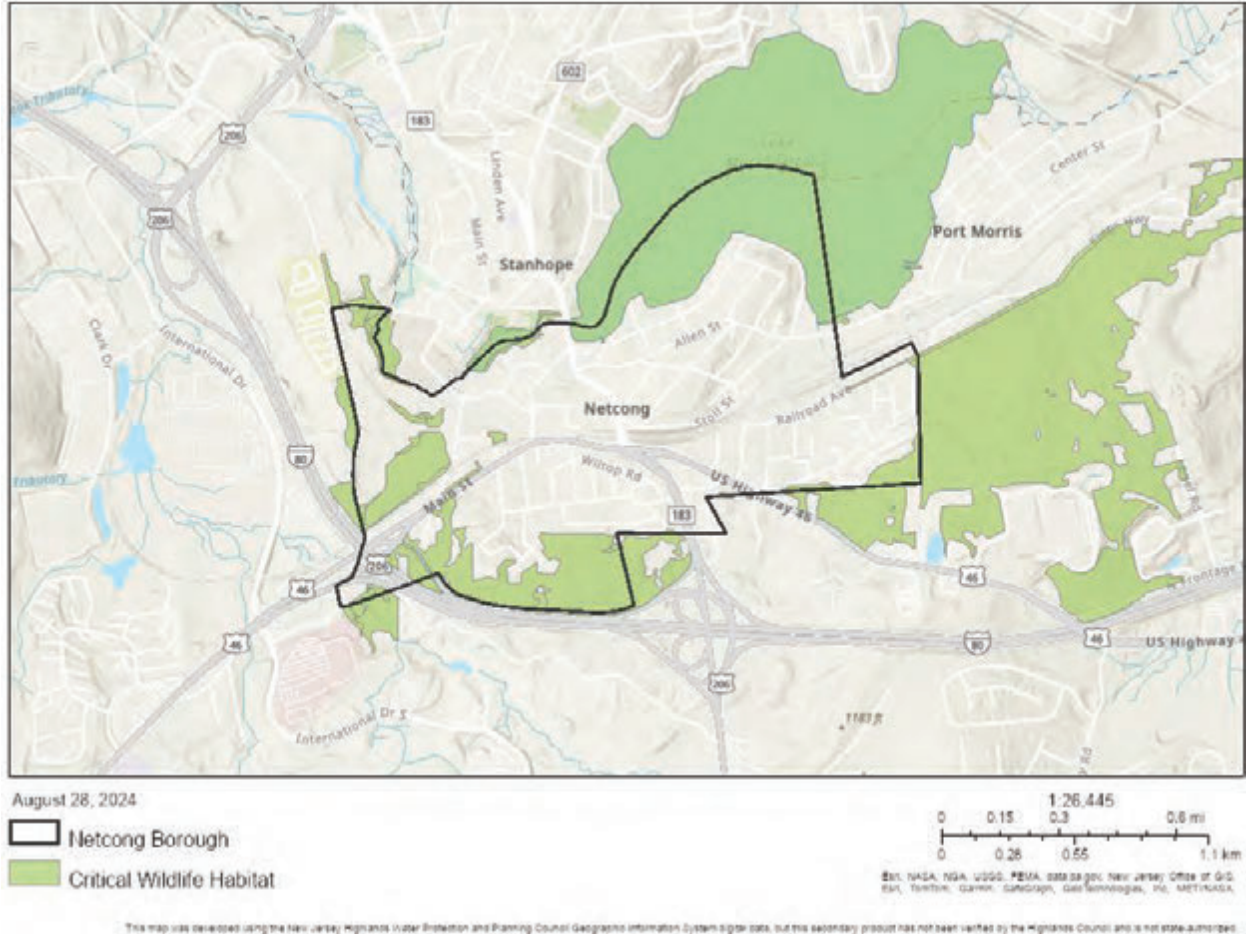
This steep slope adjustment allows lots in Netcong to maintain similar developable areas without encroachment on steep slopes. This protection is substantially less strict than those proposed in the Model Highlands Ordinance. It is clear, however, that protection of steep slopes fits within the goals of the Borough and should be accommodated throughout the Highlands Center Designation process.

Specific areas of steep slopes that should be considered for additional protections include areas located in close proximity to Lake Musconetcong, where minor disturbance of slopes may have a greater impact on environmental conditions within the lake.

Critical Wildlife Habitat

There are critical wildlife habitats on Lake Musconetcong, Furnace Pond, and the Musconetcong River, as well as in the forest areas at the southern end of the Borough, at the southwestern corner of the Borough, and roughly contiguous with the wetlands area to the west of Flanders Road.

Map 7: Critical Wildlife Habitats



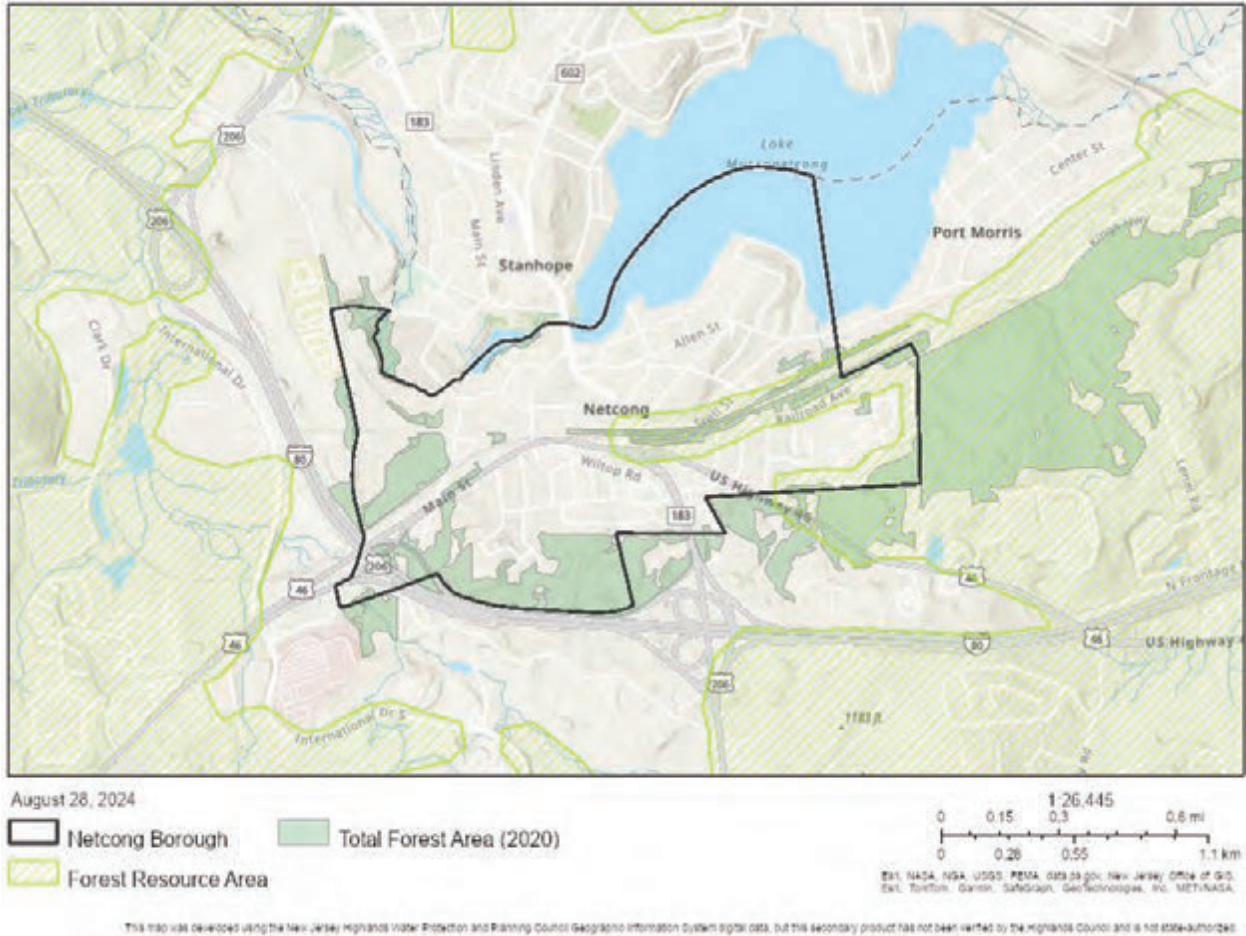
Source: Highlands Region Interactive Environmental Resource Inventory. Highlands Council.

Forest Areas

Besides Lake Musconetcong, forest areas in the Borough tend to correspond to the critical wildlife habitat areas. Additional forest area is located along the railroad tracks in the eastern half of the Borough. The eastern rail track area and the southeast corner of the Borough are the only parts considered to be within a 'forest resource area,' which are "high ecological value forest areas."¹¹

¹¹ Forest Resource Area Metadata. https://www.nj.gov/njhighlands/maps/gis_data/Forest_Resource_Area.html

Map 8: Forest Areas



Source: Highlands Region Interactive Environmental Resource Inventory. Highlands Council.

IV. Center Area Boundary

The Center area boundary will encompass the entire Borough of Netcong. This accounts for over 1,000 parcels as listed in the MOD-IV data, over 600 acres of land and water, and a full range of land uses, development densities and intensities, and ecological areas. The entirety of Netcong is within the Highlands Planning Area. Netcong is not within the Highlands Preservation Area.

Most land in the Borough is readily developable within the Existing Community Zone and the Lake Community Subzone, as these areas are already disturbed and are ripe for redevelopment. Some parts of the Borough are within the Existing Community - Environmentally Constrained Subzone, which tend to cover forest areas, critical wildlife habitats, wetlands, and encumbered Green Acres land. These land areas are adjacent to developed portions of the Borough and are relatively small in area, by comparison with other environmentally sensitive areas of the Highlands Region. Any future growth that is contemplated shall comply with State and Borough regulations related to sensitive areas, such as State wetlands regulations, the Borough's steep slope ordinance, etc.

The Center designation process allows for additional restriction of land that contains environmentally sensitive resources, which is designated as a Highlands Environmental Resource Zone (HERZ). The delineation of a HERZ recognizes that a designated Center, while generally suitable for future development and redevelopment, may contain areas of sensitive resources that may require additional protection. In Netcong, existing State and Borough regulations already regulate and dictate the extent to which sensitive lands can be developed. Therefore, no additional protections are necessary, and no HERZ area is recommended for Netcong as a designated Center.

V. Goals of the Highlands Center Designation

The Borough of Netcong's goals as a designated Center shall be the following:

A. Goals

Goal 1: Create a dynamic downtown business environment through public-private partnerships.

Goal 2: Promote the Borough's primary assets and special events to attract visitors to Netcong.

Goal 3: Attract investment and development using the tools of zoning and redevelopment.

Goal 4: Support a mix of land uses and smart growth principles in new development and infill redevelopment projects.

Goal 5: Promote inclusionary housing development to help meet affordable housing demand in the Highlands Region.

Goal 6: Increase capacity and make improvements to infrastructure to accommodate future growth.

Goal 7: Make improvements to water- and land-based recreational resources through facility upgrades, expansions, and public accessibility and connectivity improvements.

Goal 8: Improve circulation for motorized and non-motorized transportation modes to accommodate growth in demand and improve safety for users of all modes.

Goal 9: Protect sensitive natural resources through the implementation of existing State and Borough regulations.

VI. Key Recommendations

The outreach process yielded the following key recommendations and implementation actions to achieve the goals of Netcong as a Center-designated place.

A. Economic Development

- Netcong will engage with the Morris County Alliance to promote and build capacity for Borough's primary economic assets.
 - Netcong's primary assets include The Growing Stage, Lake Musconetcong, and the Morris Canal Greenway.
- The Netcong Community Partnership will enroll in the "Main Street Morris" program, also known as the cluster program, through the Morris County Alliance to take advantage of networking, omni-channel marketing, ads, and capacity-building opportunities and services.
- Businesses that grow through the Main Street Morris program and are ready to compete at a higher level will be encouraged to engage and grow with the Morris County Chamber of Commerce.
- Major property developers of mixed-use downtown developments will be encouraged to engage with the Morris County Chamber of Commerce to fill vacancies of new commercial spaces.
- The Netcong Community Partnership and The Growing Stage will coordinate with the Morris County Alliance/Tourism Division to promote a pipeline of events with regional draw.
- Netcong will utilize the Highlands sub-branding being developed by the Morris County Chamber of Commerce.

B. Development and Redevelopment

- Encourage residential and mixed-use development at densities that will achieve the growth potential of Netcong as a designated Center.
- Amend redevelopment plans as needed to incentivize infill redevelopment in cases where development interest has stalled.
- Establish requirements for good civic and architectural design in redevelopment plans and development proposals to enhance the Borough's community character.
- Provide public amenities on private and public land to support new growth, including but not limited to plazas and pocket parks, benches, street trees, public art, etc.

- Encourage the use of sustainability measures in municipal projects and private development.
- Continue to apply State and Borough regulations for sensitive resources when considering new development proposals.

C. Infrastructure

- Increase the carrying capacity of Netcong’s water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater infrastructure to accommodate new growth as a designated Center.
- Make improvements to infrastructure systems to comply with new regulations, to improve reliability and quality of service, and to protect the public from the effects of natural hazards, e.g. flooding.
- Assess the efficiency and adequacy of circulation routes and make improvements to accommodate new growth as a designated Center, supporting safe and efficient flows of movement for both motorized and non-motorized modes of transportation.

D. Natural Assets and Recreation

- Make improvements to the Morris Canal Greenway trail, add wayfinding to and along the Greenway, and improve its connectivity with other key destinations, e.g. the downtown and train station.
- Increase tourism by promoting public access, recreational activities, and unique accessibility features on Lake Musconetcong.
- Create new parks and plazas to accommodate growth as a designated Center.
- Improve existing park facilities to benefit residents and to increase capacity for events and programming.

E. Implementation of Pipeline Projects

As a designated Center encompassing the entirety of the Borough, Netcong will need to accommodate future growth through various improvement projects. The following list of projects are in the Borough’s pipeline to implement the goals of the Center designation and the Highlands Regional Master Plan. Priority projects are indicated with an asterisk (*).

Table 7: Pipeline Projects

Project	Purpose	Priority Level	Timeline
Infrastructure			
*New water well: hydrogeologist study and design	Increase water service capacity for existing conditions and growth potential.	High	Short-term
*Infill & infiltration (I&I) work for sanitary sewers	Improve the Borough’s capacity to accommodate development growth. Current MSA is near 90%.	High	Short-term
*Circulation study and plan element for the Master Plan, Borough-wide	Study traffic circulation flows for existing conditions and projected growth, identify interventions to improve flow and reduce traffic delays. In addition, assess and make recommendations related to walkability, bicycle-friendliness, multi-use paths (i.e., trails), safety for all road users, Safe Routes to Schools, and non-vehicular connections between key destinations.	High	Short-term
Water main upgrades	Accommodate downtown flows for existing conditions and growth potential.	Medium	Long-term
Repairs to stormwater catch basins	Repair a collapsed catch basins – Borough Wide improvements.	Medium	Short-term
PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) remediation, purchase and install filters	Improve water quality standards to meet new Federal and NJDEP guidelines/requirements.	Medium	Long-term
Route 46 Sidewalk extension – Flanders Road to Train Station	Enable residents of new developments to walk safely to the Netcong Train Station.	Medium	Long-term
Green infrastructure projects	Manage drainage issues on public roadways and land.	Low	Long-term
Sustainability			
Alternative energy for municipal facilities and fleets: audits, planning, and design	Improve the sustainability of municipal facilities and fleets.	Low	Long-term
Public electric vehicle service equipment (i.e., chargers): planning and design	Transition municipal fleets to electric models and encourage adoption of electric vehicles.	Low	Long-term

Planning and Visioning			
Land Use Element of the Master Plan, including Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment	Address growth potential as a Center in a new Land Use Element.	Medium	Long-term
Housing Element and Fair Share Plan preparation and Fourth Round compliance planning	Compliance with Fourth Round reporting and planning requirements.	Medium	Short-term
Recreation and Open Space			
*Morris Canal Greenway improvements: planning and design	Improve the aesthetics of and views along the Greenway; improve access to Lake Musconetcong; improve safety, walkability, bicycle-friendliness, and ADA-accessibility of the Greenway.	High	Short-term
ADA improvements to DiRenzo Park including new restroom facilities, walkways and seating. Planning.	Improve basic services for park users. Foster improved relationships between community members of different ages.	Medium	Short-term
New recreational facilities and improvements for downtown parking lot: planning and design	Convert vacant property on Bank Street in the downtown business district into a parking lot and community space. Visioning with broad community input.	Medium	Short-term
Morris Canal Greenway: wayfinding signage	Improve visibility of the greenway path, and improve visitor connections between the greenway, the train station, and the downtown business district.	Medium	Long-term
New recreational park in Wiltop neighborhood: planning and design	Provide a park facility in an underserved part of the Borough. Visioning with broad community input.	Low	Long-term

The following scope and cost information are planned for the highest priority projects, listed below in order of priority. Funds for these high-priority pipeline projects are currently unsecured or incomplete. As such, support from the Highlands Council will help implement these priority projects to support the growth of Netcong as a designated Center.

1. Hydrogeologist study and design of a new water well. The Borough is engaging a specialist engineer, UHL & Associates, Inc., to perform study and prepare a design for a new water well. The estimated cost is \$**TBD**.

2. Sanitary sewer I&I study. The Borough is currently working with H2M Associates, Inc. on a preliminary study. This will allow the Borough to prioritize larger areas to be studied. The estimated cost is \$TBD.
3. Morris Canal Greenway Plan. The Borough intends to prepare a set of design and construction documents, as well as bid documents, to build and make improvements to a section of the Morris Canal Greenway trail through the Borough. The estimated cost is approximately \$120,000. Ultimately, the design and construction documents will be submitted to the Morris County Trail Program for a construction grant.
4. Circulation Element of Master Plan including Bicycle, Pedestrian and Trails. The Borough seeks to engage Bright View Engineering to complete a circulation assessment and plan, with an estimated cost of \$TBD.

VII. Relationship with Planning Documents

A. Relationship with the Netcong Master Plan

Netcong's Master Plan goals align with the intentions of this Highlands Center designation; both are intent on providing for the preservation of resources in concert with adequate housing and economic activity. Netcong will continue to encourage development and redevelopment within the Borough at a scale that contributes to regional goals, the protection of natural resources, and the maintenance of the quality of life that Netcong residents currently enjoy.

B. Relationship with the Highlands Regional Master Plan

The Highlands Council adopted the Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP) in July of 2008. The RMP assessed the conditions of the Highlands Region at the time, and set forth various goals, policies, and objectives.

Netcong seeks to become a Center-designated place within the Highlands Region. The compact land area, good transit access, established downtown, and relatively small areas of sensitive land make it an ideal location for future growth. The goals, key recommendations, and pipeline projects set forth in this Center designation report are consistent with RMP's goals, policies, and objectives, as follows.

RMP Goals, Policies, and Objectives

Goal 6E: Incorporation of regional development patterns and related environmentally sensitive areas within existing community zones.

Policy 6E1: To promote the location of sustainable and economically viable development activities in the Existing Community Zone where not constrained by existing environmentally sensitive resources.

Objective 6E1a: The Existing Community Zone in the Highlands Land Use Capability Zone Map shall include existing previously developed areas of regional significance.

Consistency Statement for Goal 6E: The proposed Center designation encompasses the entirety of the Borough of Netcong, which is entirely within Existing Community Zones and Subzones. Areas with sensitive environmental resources are located near or on disturbed land. Existing State and Borough regulations are adequate to control development on these sensitive lands.

Goal 6F: Support of compact development, mixed use development and redevelopment and maximization of water, wastewater and transit infrastructure investments for future use of land and development within the existing community zone.

Policy 6F1: To promote compatible development and redevelopment within the ECZ.

Policy 6F2: To promote the restoration and redevelopment of brownfields, particularly those located in or adjacent to transportation corridors or transit stations. In cases where redevelopment is not appropriate, encourage “brownfield to greenfield” approaches.

Policy 6F3: To ensure that development activities within the ECZ are subject to standards and criteria which ensure that development and redevelopment incorporate smart growth principles and do not adversely affect natural resources.

Policy 6F4: To ensure that development and redevelopment within the ECZ are served by adequate public facilities including water supply, wastewater treatment, transportation, educational and community facilities.

Policy 6F5: To ensure that development and redevelopment in the ECZ are compatible with existing community character.

Policy 6F6: To encourage new population growth, where desired by the municipality, and development in the ECZ is in the form of center based and mixed use development.

Objective 6F6a: Center based development initiatives shall be planned within the Existing Community Zone at densities appropriate to the Zone, the community character, the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. Densities of five dwelling units and above are encouraged, and are required in areas designated as voluntary TDR Receiving Zones where TDR benefits are sought under the Highlands Act.

Policy 6F7: To encourage redevelopment in the Existing Community Zone as a means to relieve development pressure from more environmentally sensitive areas.

Consistency Statement for Goal 6F: The entire Borough of Netcong is located within the Existing Community Zone or one of its subzones. The Center designation goals are supportive of new development and infill redevelopment. Compact designs and smart growth principles are encouraged for development projects, particularly located within the Transit Village radius and designated redevelopment areas. Infrastructure improvements are specifically outlined in this Center designation report to accommodate future growth.

Goal 6H: Guide development away from environmentally sensitive and agricultural lands and promote development and redevelopment in or adjacent to existing developed lands.

Policy 6H4: To promote compatible growth opportunities that include in-fill development, adaptive re-use, redevelopment, and brownfields redevelopment in existing developed areas.

Objective 6H4a: Identification of existing developed areas within the Highlands Region using the Developed Lands Analysis.

Objective 6H4b: Identification of brownfields, grayfields and underutilized properties that have potential for redevelopment that is compatible with resource protection and smart growth principles.

Policy 6H5: To promote land uses which create a sense of place with attractive, walkable neighborhoods that support community connectivity of developed lands and community facilities.

Objective 6H5a: Communities of place with a mix of uses which promote multi-purpose trips, through proximity of neighborhood retail, commercial, and entertainment uses to residential land uses that create communities that are largely self-sufficient regarding daily needs.

Objective 6H5b: Communities of place with a pattern of development which promotes the use of transit, walking, and biking.

Policy 6H8: Regional growth, where accepted through local planning and regulations, should identify opportunities to maximize land use intensity while protecting natural features and community character.

Objective 6H8a: Development and redevelopment initiatives shall encourage the use of HDC as a means to enhance the existing or adjacent community while protecting local and regional natural resources.

Objective 6H8b: Preparation and implementation of standards ensuring that development protects environmentally sensitive resources in all Land Use Capability Zones and Sub-Zones.

Policy 6H9: To incorporate smart growth principles and green building design and technology in development and redevelopment initiatives.

Consistency Statement for Goal 6H: As a designated Center, Netcong will encourage development within its compact land area, particularly as infill redevelopment or in areas adjacent to developed land. Growth occurring near the train station and within the Transit Village radius is intended to provide a mix of land uses to create a self-sufficient community. Economic development activities will support the business district and place-making efforts. The Borough will pursue improvements to circulation, including wayfinding, pedestrian walkability, and enhanced multi-use paths along the Morris Canal Greenway. The most environmentally sensitive areas will remain protected.

Goal 6J: Accommodation of regional growth and development needs through the reuse and redevelopment of previously developed areas, including brownfields, grayfields, and underutilized sites.

Policy 6J1: To encourage Preservation Area redevelopment of sites with 70% or greater impervious surfaces or a brownfield in areas designated by the Highlands Council as Highlands Redevelopment Areas in accordance with N.J.A.C 7:38-6.6 and 6.7.

Policy 6J2: To encourage redevelopment in the ECZ in the Planning Area of brownfields, grayfields, and other previously developed areas that have adequate water, wastewater, transportation capacity, and are appropriate for increased land use intensity or conversion to

greenfields, as approved through Plan Conformance or the Highlands Redevelopment Area Designation process.

Consistency Statement for Goal 6J: The Borough of Netcong already has several designated redevelopment areas and has adopted redevelopment plans to encourage growth within the Existing Community Zone. This report outlines specific infrastructure needs to ensure adequate water, sewer, stormwater, and transportation capacity that will accommodate future growth. The Netcong train station already provides important transit accessibility, which will be enhanced with other circulation improvements.

Goal 6K: Concentrate residential, commercial and industrial development, redevelopment, and economic growth in existing developed areas in locations with limited environmental constraints, access to existing utility, and transportation infrastructure.

Policy 6K1: To promote redevelopment of brownfields, grayfields, and other previously developed areas in a manner consistent with the goals and requirements of the Plan.

Objective 6K1a: Establish interagency teams as necessary to support and expedite redevelopment and development activities that conform to the Plan.

Objective 6K1b: Encourage and support the use of planning and financing tools that are available through state agencies and programs for appropriate redevelopment.

Consistency Statement for Goal 6K: This report recommends actions that will support economic development focused on the existing downtown area. The Borough will coordinate with the Morris County Chamber of Commerce and real estate developers to encourage infill redevelopment on other disturbed land located outside of the downtown.

Goal 6L: Conforming municipalities and counties consider development, redevelopment and brownfields opportunities in their master plans.

Policy 6L1: To require that conforming municipalities identify any development, redevelopment, and brownfield opportunities in the local land use plan element of their master plans, as appropriate.

Policy 6L2: To require that conforming municipalities amend development regulations and zoning to enable project implementation of local redevelopment initiatives that are identified under Policy 6L1 and locally endorsed through Plan Conformance.

Objective 6L2a: Municipal review of local redevelopment projects consistent with RMP smart growth and Low Impact Development policies and objectives.

Consistency Statement for Goal 6L: The Borough of Netcong has proactively designated several redevelopment areas within its compact municipal borders. A full build-out of these redevelopment projects is still in-process. Continued growth and infill redevelopment is anticipated for the future.

Goal 6M: Protection and enhancement of Highlands Resources through the remediation of contaminated sites in region.

Policy 6M1: Encourage and support the restoration and redevelopment or open space use of contaminated areas.

Consistency Statement for Goal 6M: Redevelopment designations through the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law are encouraging remediation of contaminated land.

Goal 6N: Use of smart growth principles, including low impact development, to guide development and redevelopment in the Highlands Region.

Policy 6N1: To establish smart growth programs and Low Impact Development principles for use within the Highlands Region to guide and control development and redevelopment throughout the Highlands Region.

Objective 6N1a: Conservation development standards which protect natural resources, environmentally sensitive areas, open space and agricultural lands, and enhance community character.

Objective 6N1b: Implement flexible site development review programs that allow for adjustments such as reduction of minimum setbacks, modification of uniform road frontage requirements, increase in maximum permitted height or allowing non-contiguous clustering of development entitlements where necessary to mitigate or eliminate adverse impacts on Highlands natural resources.

Objective 6N1c: Development standards which recognize that portions of a parcel proposed for development which are not developable may be considered for the purpose of satisfying on-site passive open space requirements.

Objective 6N1d: Minimum requirements for water conservation measures in site layout and structures, including but not limited to water efficient landscaping (including use of native and drought-tolerant plant species), rain collection systems, use of gray water, and water-efficient landscape irrigation.

Policy 6N2: To require municipalities and counties to adopt stormwater management Low Impact Development standards to preserve or mimic the natural hydrologic features and characteristics of the land.

Objective 6N2a: Implementation of on-site stormwater management features that maintain, restore and enhance the pre-existing natural drainage patterns of the site.

Objective 6N2b: Limitations on the amount of impervious cover allowed on a site as a means to protect and increase stormwater infiltration and reduce stormwater runoff.

Objective 6N2c: Minimum requirements for site-specific hydrologic studies during local development review and Highlands Project Review which identify the velocity, volume and pattern of water flow into, through, and off of the parcel proposed for development.

Objective 6N2d: Minimum requirements that stormwater management systems employ a "design with nature" approach.

Objective 6N2e: Minimum requirements for use of grass channels, dry swales, wet swales, infiltration basins, bio-swales and water gardens, green roofs, and other low impact approaches to attenuate and control stormwater and provide multiple environmental benefits.

Policy 6N5: To require through Plan Conformance that municipalities and counties incorporate programs for community and neighborhood design that support a variety of housing options, mixed uses, redevelopment, adaptive re-use of historic sites and structures, and infill development in their master plans and development regulations.

Objective 6N5a: Minimum requirements for the use of Low Impact Development and sustainable design practices to support affordable maintenance of housing, particularly affordable housing.

Objective 6N5b: Local development regulations and guidelines that advocate mixed use development and redevelopment where appropriate.

Objective 6N5c: Local development regulations and guidelines that incorporate form-based zoning, where appropriate, to support compact, walkable communities.

Objective 6N5d: Increased opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle networks, including sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, and supportive facilities such as bike racks.

Objective 6N5e: Local development regulations and guidelines that advocate shared parking, driveways, and other infrastructure in order to limit paved surfaces.

Policy 6N6: To require through Plan Conformance that municipalities and counties include community outreach, collaboration, and meaningful involvement from the local population in the development of planning and design regulations and programs.

Consistency Statement for Goal 6N: Netcong's existing redevelopment plans allow for mixed-use development, multi-family development, inclusionary affordable housing, and redevelopment of commercial sites as appropriate for the context of the site. In the downtown, redevelopment plans include regulations to support compact, walkable development. On sites with steep slopes or other sensitive resources, the redevelopment plans seek to protect these sensitive areas and cluster development activity on suitable land. In addition, all new, major developments in the Borough must comply with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's most recent stormwater management rules, which require both structural and non-structural methods for handling peak stormwater flows. Lastly, the Borough's efforts to enhance the Morris Canal Greenway and improve

connections between key destinations will achieve improved walkability, bike-ability, and recreational enjoyment in Netcong.

Goal 6O: Market-rate and affordable housing sufficient to meet the needs of the Highlands Region within the context of economic, social, and environmental considerations and constraints.

Policy 6O1: To establish a region-wide, comprehensive approach to addressing housing needs in the Highlands Region, serving all age groups, income levels, and mobility options.

Objective 6O1a: A comprehensive housing program addressing regional housing needs within the context of preserving the character and environmental integrity of the Highlands.

Objective 6O1b: An interagency partnership with the COAH in support of the achievement of both the resource protection requirements of the RMP and the municipal constitutional obligation, in "growth areas," to provide a realistic opportunity for the construction of a fair share of affordable housing for low and moderate income households.

Objective 6O1c: Preserve and monitor existing stocks of affordable housing.

Policy 6O2: To promote, where appropriate and permitted by the Land Use Capability Zone, center-based development approaches that address a mix of housing types, support mixed uses, and implement compact development approaches.

Policy 6O3: To promote, where appropriate and permitted by the Land Use Capability Zone, affordable housing within new residential and mixed use development, redevelopment, or adaptive reuse projects.

Policy 6O4: To encourage the targeting of new housing to areas with compatible existing densities and within walking distance of schools, employment, transit, and community facilities and services.

Policy 6O5: To locate and maintain community facilities and services that support compact development patterns, shared services, and provide a high level of service.

Policy 6O7: To require that conforming municipalities implement both the resource protection requirements of the RMP along with the New Jersey Supreme Court's doctrine, in its Mount Laurel decisions, that every municipality in a "growth area" has a constitutional obligation to provide through its land use regulations, sound land use, and long range planning, a realistic opportunity for a fair share of its region's present and prospective needs for housing for low and moderate income families.

Policy 6O8: To require that conforming municipalities update and adopt a housing element, fair share plan, and implementing ordinance(s) to reflect current conditions and resource protection requirements of the RMP.

Objective 6O8a: Conforming municipalities, through housing plans, will evaluate and provide for alternate mechanisms to address affordable housing obligations where RMP resource protection standards restrict the ability of planned but not built sites to be developed for affordable housing.

Consistency Statement for Goal 6O: As a designated Center, the Borough of Netcong will be poised to development inclusionary multifamily housing and missing middle housing to provide affordable housing options for residents of the Highlands Region. Due to Netcong's compact character, residents of new housing options will have access to goods, services, and community facilities, often within walking distance. They will also have access to outside job centers via the commuter train lines and major roadways that run through the Borough. The Borough of Netcong has complied with its Third Round affordable housing obligations and will work proactively toward compliance with its Fourth Round obligations, including adoption of a new Housing Element and Fair Share Plan.

Goal 8A: Sustainable economic development in the Highlands Region.

Policy 8A1: To maintain and expand the existing job and economic base by promoting appropriate, sustainable, and environmentally compatible economic development throughout the Highlands Region.

Objective 8A1a: Highlands Economic Development Program to identify and promote sustainable economic development opportunities in the Highlands Region, in a manner that integrates economic, social, and environmental factors.

Objective 8A1b: Serve as an advocate and technical resource for Highlands economic development initiatives in work with municipalities, counties, regional agencies, and the private sector to promote sustainable economic development in the Highlands Region.

Objective 8A1c: Public private partnerships to support economic development initiatives.

Objective 8A1d: Positive fiscal impact to local governments and the Region through appropriate economic development initiatives.

Policy 8A2: To preserve the high quality of life in the Highlands Region through economic planning and implementation of the RMP.

Policy 8A3: To identify and pursue state and federal programs that offer financial and/or technical assistance for sustainable economic development in the Highlands Region.

Policy 8A4: To serve as a clearinghouse for economic development opportunities in the Highlands Region.

Objective 8A4a: Identification, marketing, and support of Highlands Region areas including brownfield sites that may be appropriate for local and regional economic development initiatives.

Objective 8A4b: A long-term Economic Tracking Program as a means to continually assess the long-term economic progress of the Region through specified economic indicators in order to establish Highlands trends and to support municipal economic plan elements.

Policy 8A5: To advocate for appropriate public investment in the Highlands Region through the strategic location of public facilities and institutions that will spur sustainable and appropriate economic activity.

Policy 8A6: To require that conforming municipalities develop an economic plan element that provides strategies for achieving sustainable and appropriate economic development consistent with local desire and identifies any development, redevelopment, and brownfield opportunities.

Objective 8A6a: Coordinate with municipalities and counties as local and regional strategies are developed to improve the tax base and to create jobs and economic opportunities consistent with the policies and objectives of the RMP.

Consistency Statement for Goal 8A: The economic development recommendations outlined in this report focus on public-private partnerships to attract visitors and customers and to support the growth of both small businesses and larger enterprises. Netcong's downtown special improvement district, existing major businesses, and Borough leadership will work with the Morris County Chamber of Commerce and the Morris County Alliance to strengthen the economic environment in Netcong. These groups will work collaboratively to promote key attractions including the Morris Canal Greenway, The Growing Stage Theater, and Lake Musconetcong, as well as special events, to attract visitors to the area. This will help existing businesses to make improvements, expand operations, and create new jobs while also attracting new business starts to Netcong.

Goal 8C: Expansion of compatible and sustainable tourism and recreation within the Highlands Region.

Policy 8C1: To promote recreation and tourism based economic initiatives, which derive economic benefit from sustainable use of the natural resources of the Highlands Region.

Objective 8C1a: Identification of specific economic development initiatives which would encourage and promote eco-, agri- and heritage tourism in the Highlands Region.

Policy 8C2: To enhance the Region's tourism infrastructure in order to increase visitors to the Highlands Region.

Objective 8C2a: Encourage the development of overnight accommodations and other services to support recreation and tourism attractions in the Highlands Region, where appropriate and permitted by Land Use Capability Zone.

Objective 8C2b: Encourage transit-oriented recreation and tourism connections.

Policy 8C3: To promote public and private tourism attractions in the Highlands Region through the marketing of natural resources, the arts, cultural, historic, scenic, agricultural, and recreational resources, urban amenities, and accommodations.

Policy 8C4: To support local, state, and federal eco-, agri- and heritage tourism programs.

Policy 8C5: To advocate for state and federal funding of recreation and tourism initiatives in the Highlands Region.

Consistency Statement for Goal 8C: This report set forth a plan for Borough leadership and the downtown special improvement district to leverage the resources of the Morris County Alliance and Chamber of Commerce to promote primary assets, including The Growing Stage Theater, the Morris Canal Greenway, and Lake Musconetcong, as well as special events. This report also outlines plans for improving Greenway trail and wayfinding. These activities will help advance Netcong as an important designated Center and driver of economic development within the Highlands Region. The Borough will report any economic development indicators to the Highlands Council as requested.

NEW JERSEY HIGHLANDS WATER PROTECTION AND PLANNING COUNCIL
Netcong Borough Petition for Plan Conformance
Draft Consistency Review and Recommendations Report

APPENDIX B

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND SCHEDULE
Borough of Netcong, Morris County**

DRAFT
Borough of Netcong
Implementation Plan and Schedule

Amended Grant Agreement Task #	PLAN CONFORMANCE TASK	Proposed Cost Fiscal Year 2025	Future Projects (requires future HC Approval)	Status and Comments
1	Housing Element and Fair Share Plan	\$ 25,000.00		Affordable Housing Round IV Tasks (inclusive of Housing Element and Fair Share Plan)
	Adoption of Implementing Ordinances		\$ 5,000.00	Adoption of ordinances required as per the Fair Share Plan
2	Highlands Interactive Environmental Resource Inventory	\$ 3,000.00		Review Highlands Interactive ERI, propose amendments as necessary, and adopt.
3	Center Planning	\$ 30,000.00		Netcong Borough will undertake the appropriate center planning steps to develop a land use plan specific to the relevant needs and regional opportunities within Netcong. The center planning will be community driven and incorporate extensive public outreach.
	Municipal Master Plan Elements (as applicable)			
	a. Land Use Plan Element			
	b. Land Preservation and Land Stewardship Plan Element			
	c. Sustainable Economic Development Plan Element			
	d. Historic Preservation Plan Element			
	e. Circulation Plan Element		\$ 40,000.00	Prepare circulation study and develop municipal circulation plan element.
	Adoption of Highlands Center Ordinance			
	Update Municipal Land Use Ordinances			
	Zoning Map Update			Update municipal zoning map as necessary
	Resource Management Plans and Programs			
4	a. Hydrogeological Study	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 47,000.00	2-Phase Study: Borough-wide groundwater assessment for new well location and Design study for replacement production well.
5	b. Infiltration and Inflow Study	\$ 35,000.00		I&I study to improve system capacity and accommodate future growth.
	c. Water Use and Conservation Management Plan			Funding available upon signed tri-party agreement & municipal scope of work
	d. Wastewater Management Plan			
	e. Municipal Stormwater Management Plan			
	f. Regional Stormwater Management Plan (if applicable)			
	g. Forest Stewardship Plan			
	Board of Health Ordinances			
	a. Septic System Maintenance			
	b. Potential Contaminant Source Management			
	Implementing Ordinances for Management Plans and Programs			
	Redevelopment and Brownfields Opportunities			
	a. Highlands Redevelopment Area Planning			
	RMP Updates			
	Attendance at Highlands Council Training Sessions			
	a. Municipal Exemption Determinations		\$ 500.00	Adopt Municipal Exemption Determination Ordinance
	b. Ordinance Administration: Application Procedures, Implementation, Enforcement			
	Estimated Subtotal	\$ 123,000.00		

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APPENDIX C

HIGHLANDS RESOURCE MAPS
Borough of Netcong, Morris County

Exhibit 1: Highlands Area and Highlands Land Use Capability Zones

Netcong Borough

- Land Use Capability Zones**
 - Protection Zone
 - Conservation Zone
 - Existing Community Zone
- Land Use Capability Sub-Zones**
 - Wildlife Management Area Sub-Zone
 - Conservation Environmentally Constrained Sub-Zone
 - Existing Community Environmentally Constrained Sub-Zone
 - Lake Community Sub-Zone
- Municipal Boundary**
 - Land Use Capability Sub-Zone
 - Lakes Greater Than 10 Acres
 - Parcel Boundaries
- Roads**
 - Interstates
 - US Highways
 - State Highways
 - County Highways
 - Local Roads
 - Alleys
 - Interstate Ramps

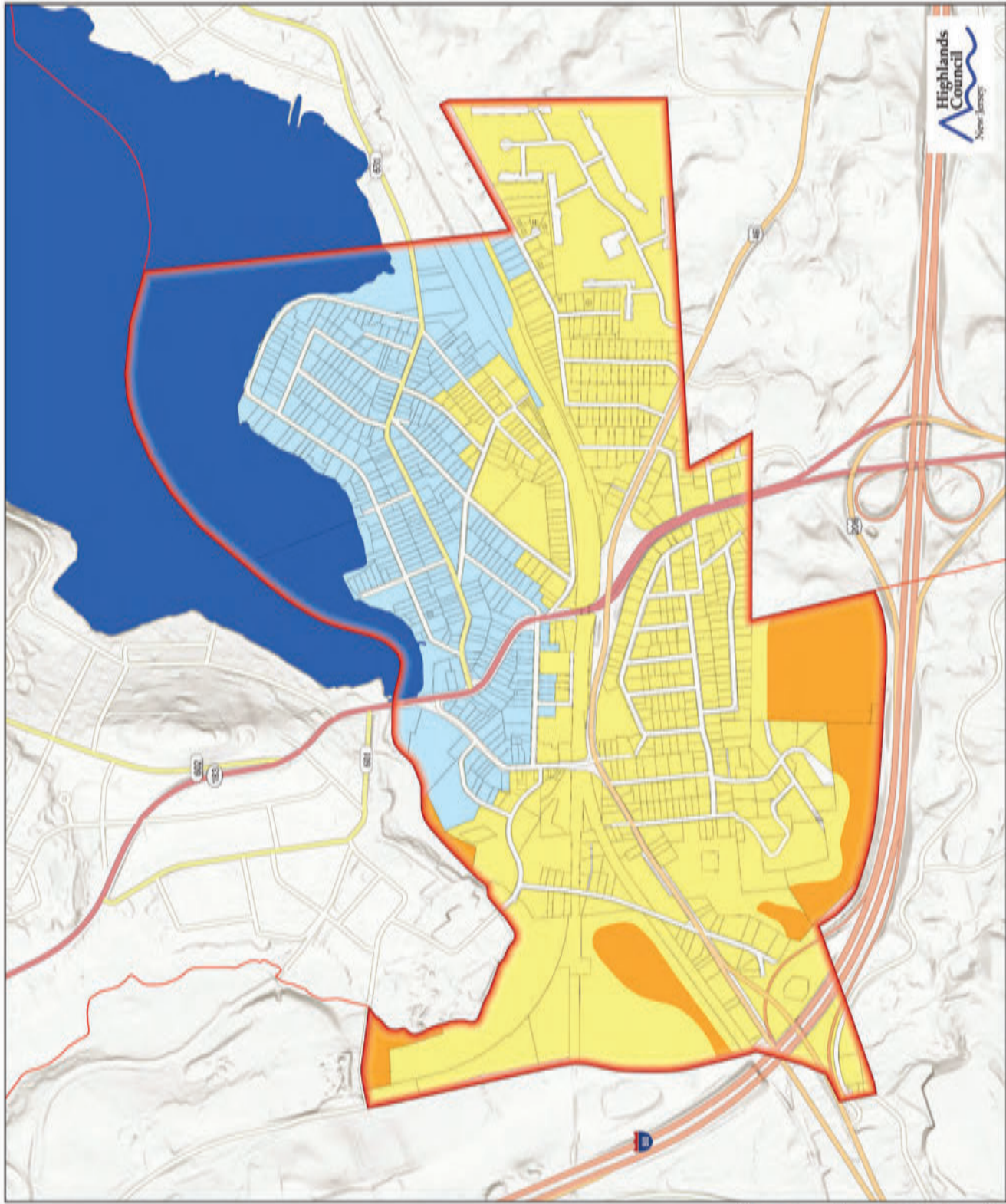


Exhibit 2: Wellhead Protection Areas

Netcong Borough

Wellhead Protection Areas

- Tier 1 (2 - Year)
- Tier 2 (5 - Year)
- Tier 3 (12 - Year)
- Municipal Boundary
- Lakes Greater Than 10 Acres
- Parcel Boundaries

- ### Roads
- Interstates
 - US Highways
 - State Highways
 - County Highways
 - Local Roads
 - Alleys
 - Interstate Ramps



Map Created: 1/29/2025

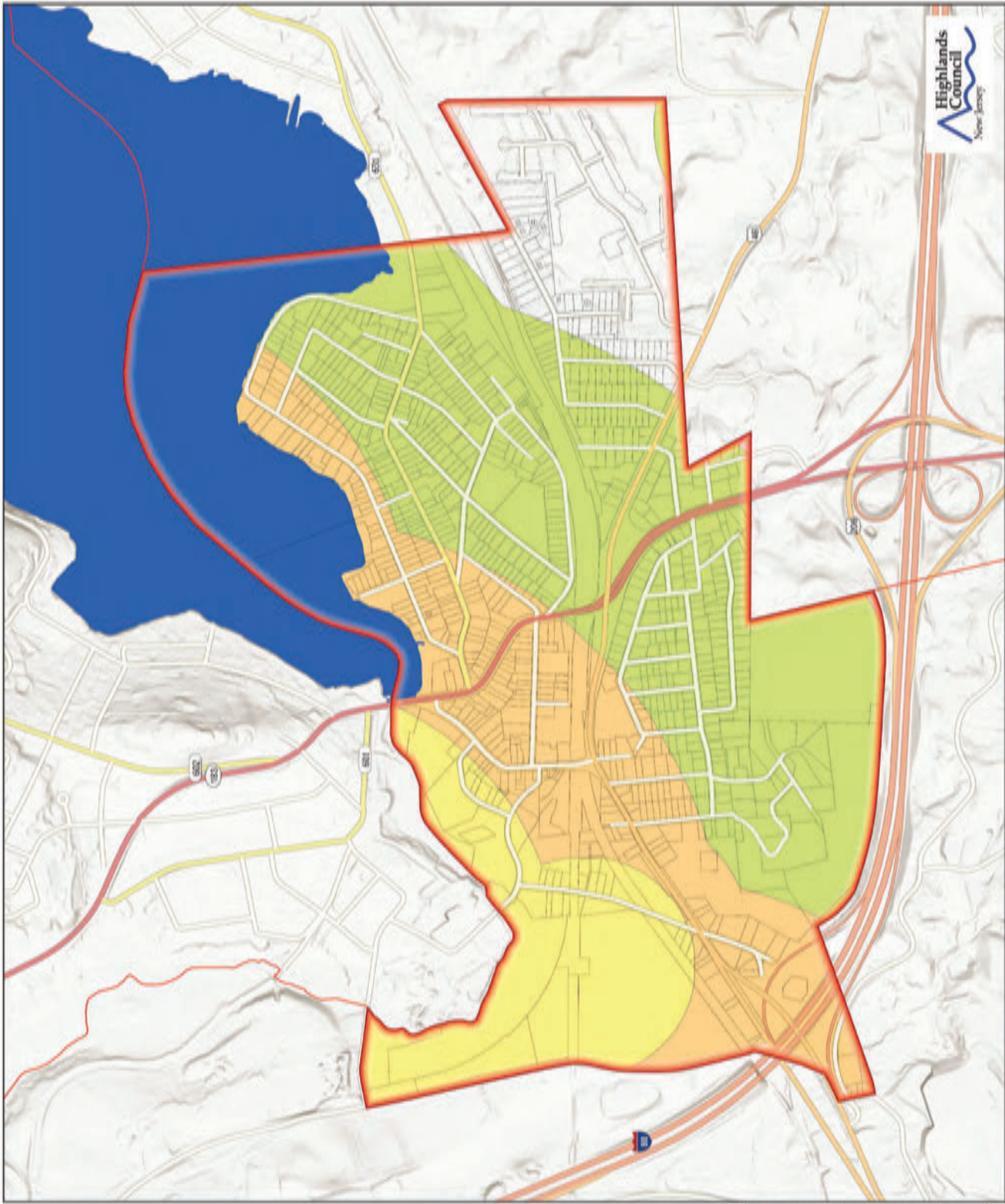








Exhibit 3: Highlands Open Waters and Buffers

Netcong Borough

-  Streams
-  Lakes & Ponds
-  Wetlands
-  Highlands Open Water Buffers (300ft)
-  Municipal Boundary
-  Parcel Boundaries

Roads

-  Interstates
-  US Highways
-  State Highways
-  County Highways
-  Local Roads
-  Alleys
-  Interstate Ramps



Map Created: 1/28/2025

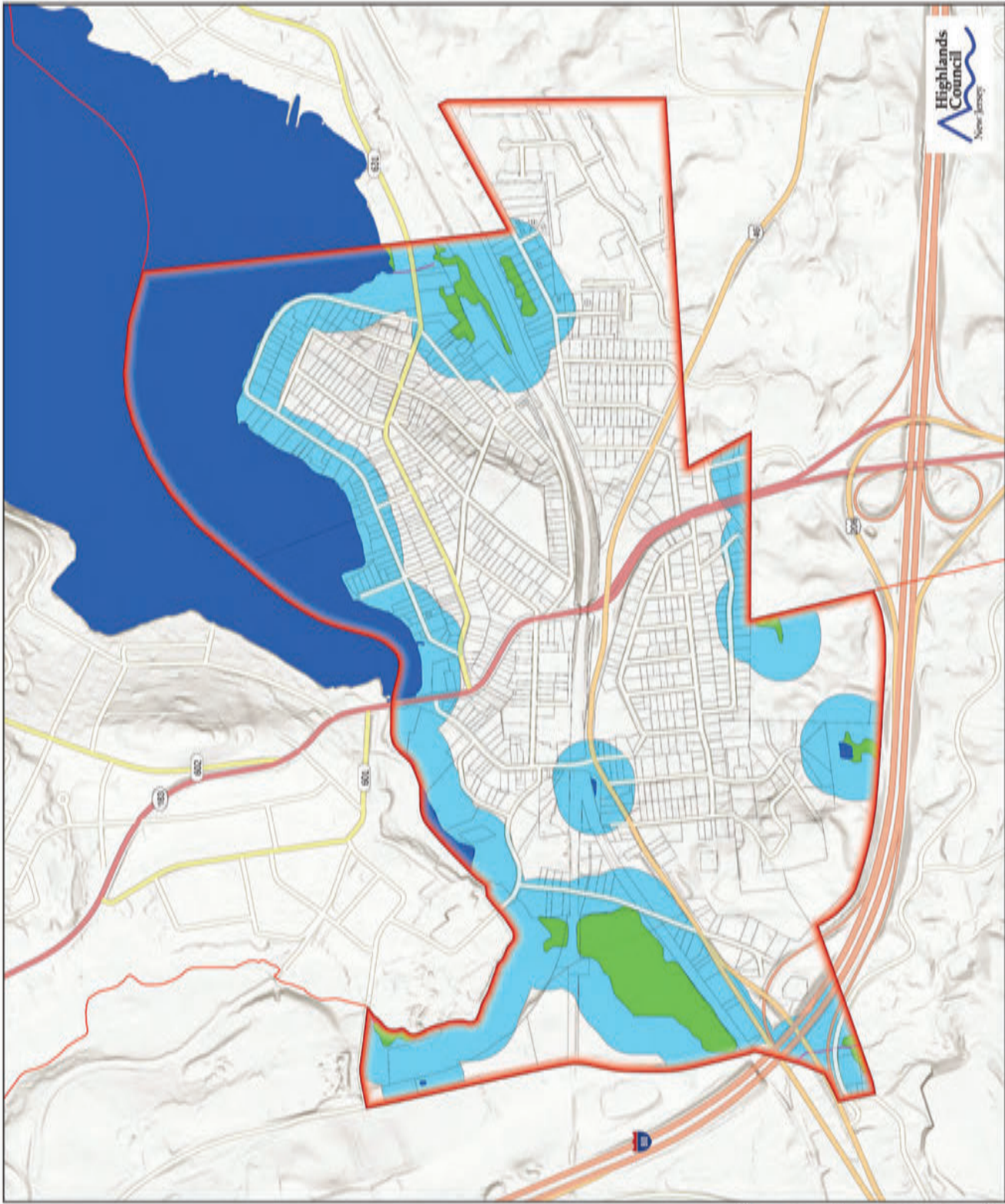









Exhibit 4: Highlands Riparian Areas

Netcong Borough

-  Riparian Area
 -  Municipal Boundary
 -  Parcel Boundaries
 -  Lakes Greater Than 10 Acres
- Roads**
-  Interstates
 -  US Highways
 -  State Highways
 -  County Highways
 -  Local Roads
 -  Alleys
 -  Interstate Ramps



Map Created: 1/17/2025

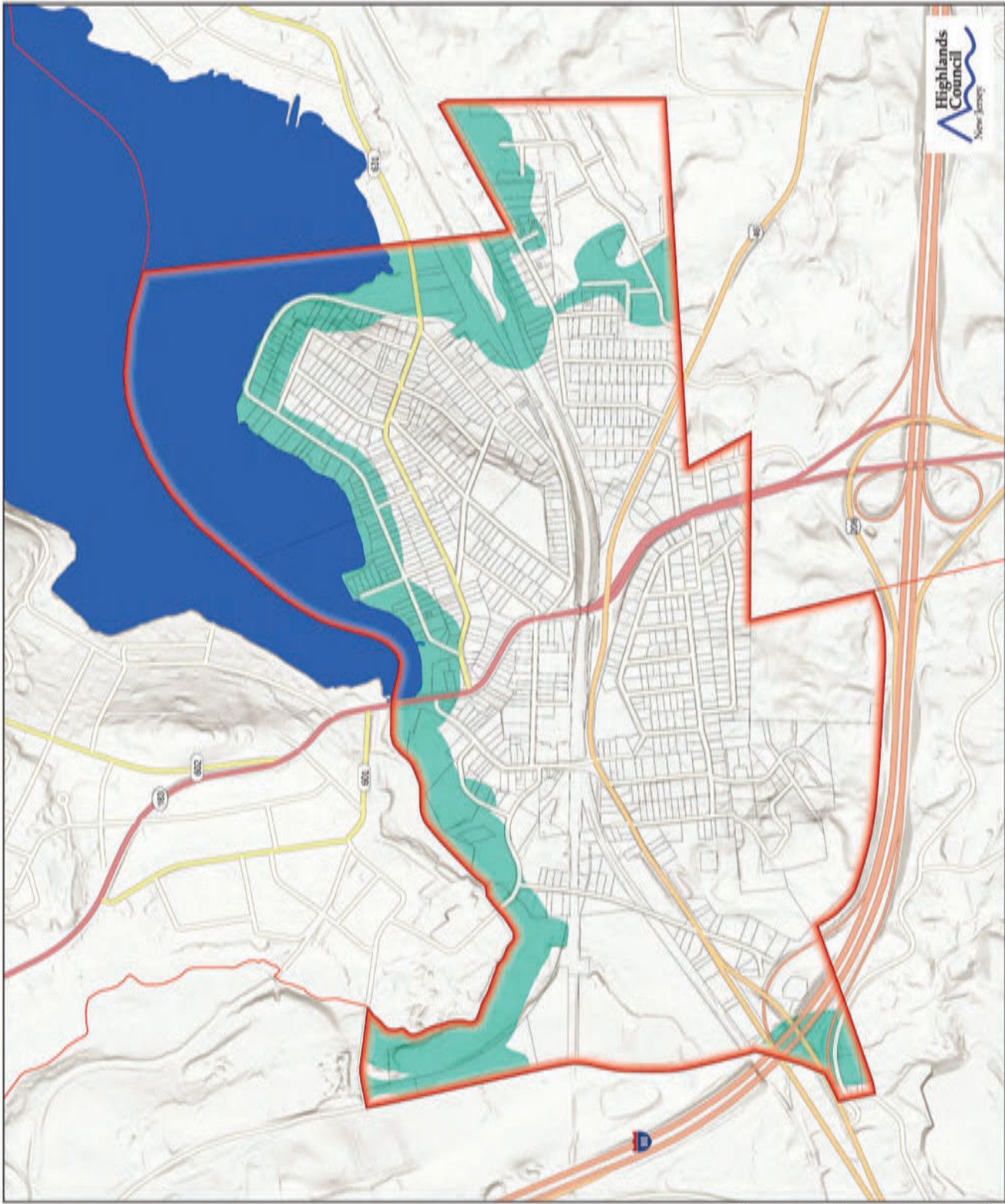


Exhibit 5: Net Water Availability

Netcong Borough

Net Water Availability by HUC14 Subwatershed (MGD)

- 0.09 - 0.39
- 0.04 - 0.09
- 0.00 - 0.04
- 0.09 - 0.00
- 0.99 - (-0.10)
- 7.11 - (-1.00)

Municipal Boundary

Parcel Boundaries

Lakes Greater Than 10 Acres

Roads

- Interstates
- US Highways
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Alleys
- Interstate Ramps

* Indicates updated data was used in for the HUC



Map Created: 1/29/2025

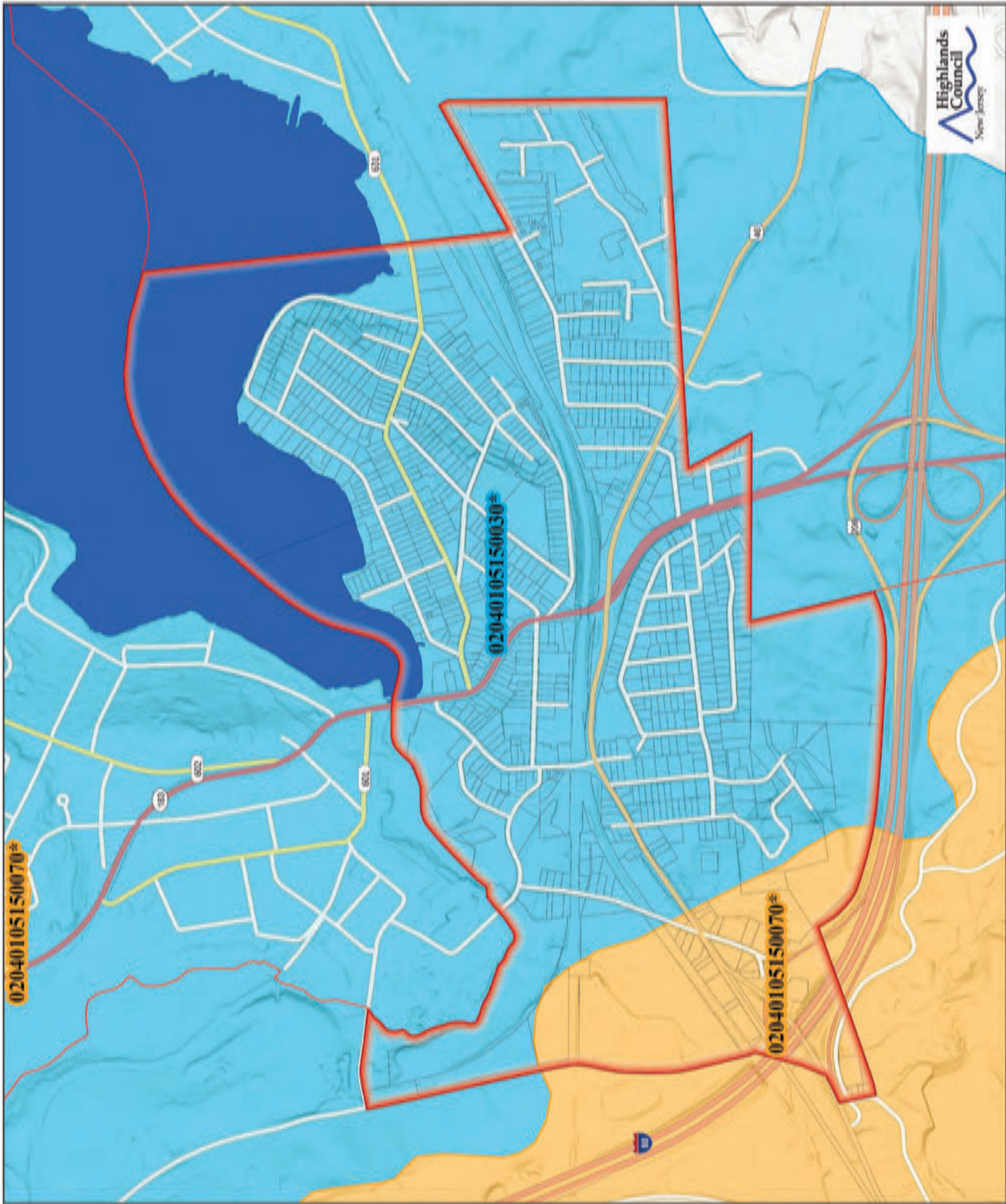


Exhibit 6: Forest Area

Netcong Borough

- Total Forest Area
 - Municipal Boundary
 - Parcel Boundaries
 - Lakes Greater Than 10 Acres
- Roads
- Interstates
 - US Highways
 - State Highways
 - County Highways
 - Local Roads
 - Alleys
 - Interstate Ramps



Map Created: 1/22/2025

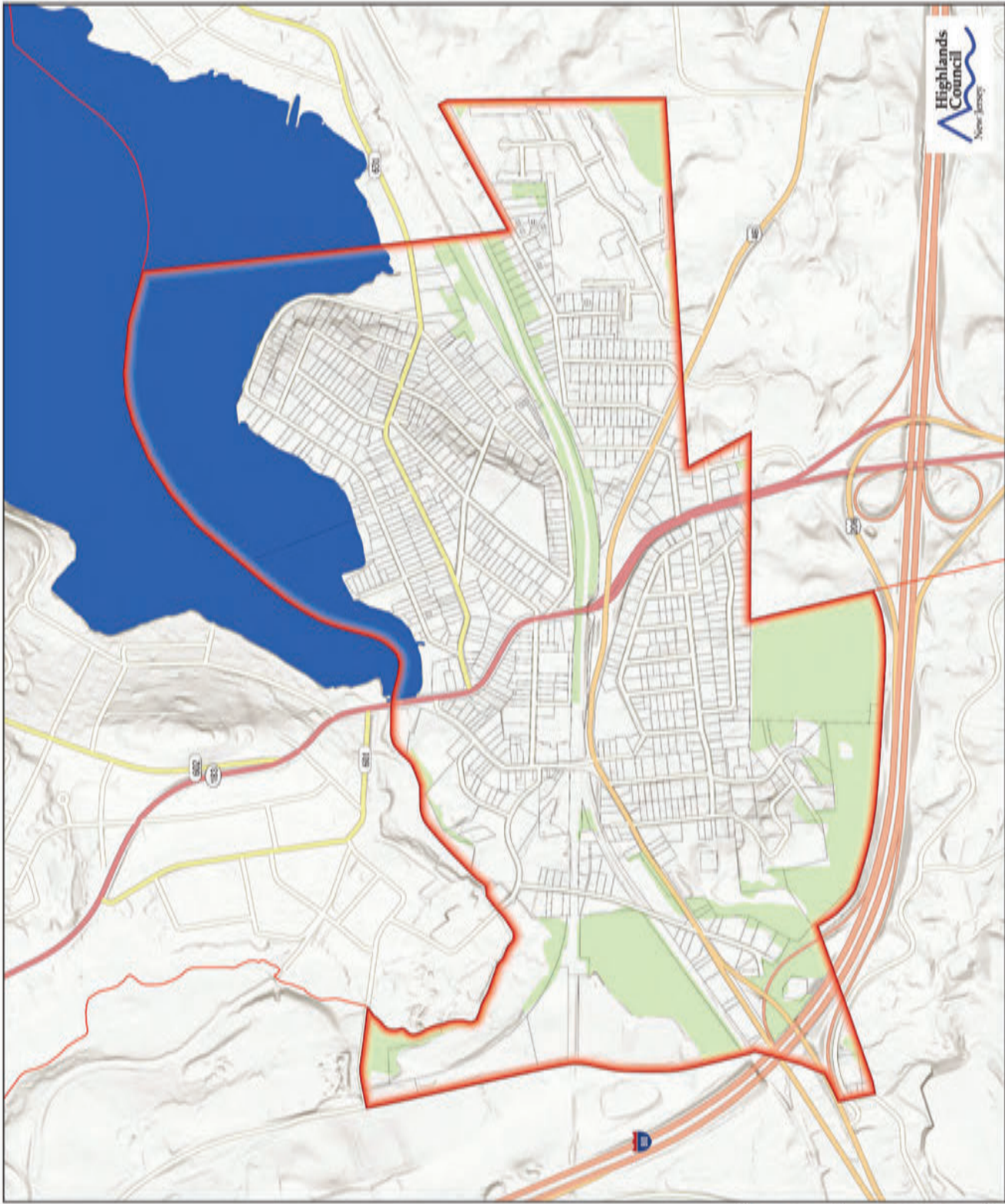













Exhibit 7: Prime Groundwater Recharge Areas

Netcong Borough

-  Prime Ground Water Recharge Areas
 -  Municipal Boundary
 -  Parcel Boundaries
 -  Lakes Greater Than 10 Acres
- Roads
-  Interstates
 -  US Highways
 -  State Highways
 -  County Highways
 -  Local Roads
 -  Alleys
 -  Interstate Ramps



Map Created: 1/22/2025

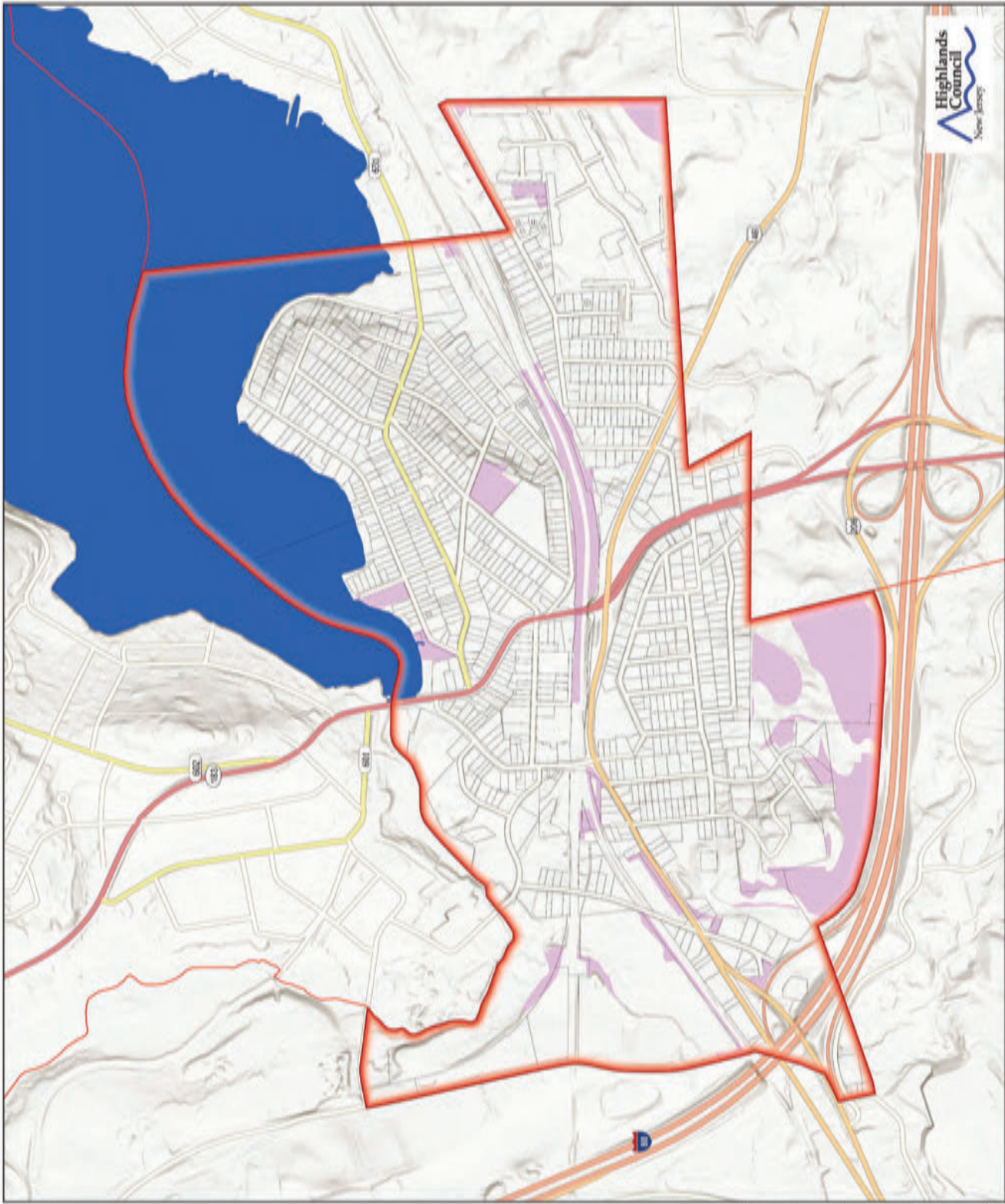


Exhibit 8: Steep Slope Protection Areas

Netcong Borough

- Steep Slope Protection Area
 - Moderate
 - Severe
- Municipal Boundary
- Parcel Boundaries
- Lakes Greater Than 10 Acres
- Roads
 - Interstates
 - US Highways
 - State Highways
 - County Highways
 - Local Roads
 - Alleys
 - Interstate Ramps



Map Created: 1/22/2025

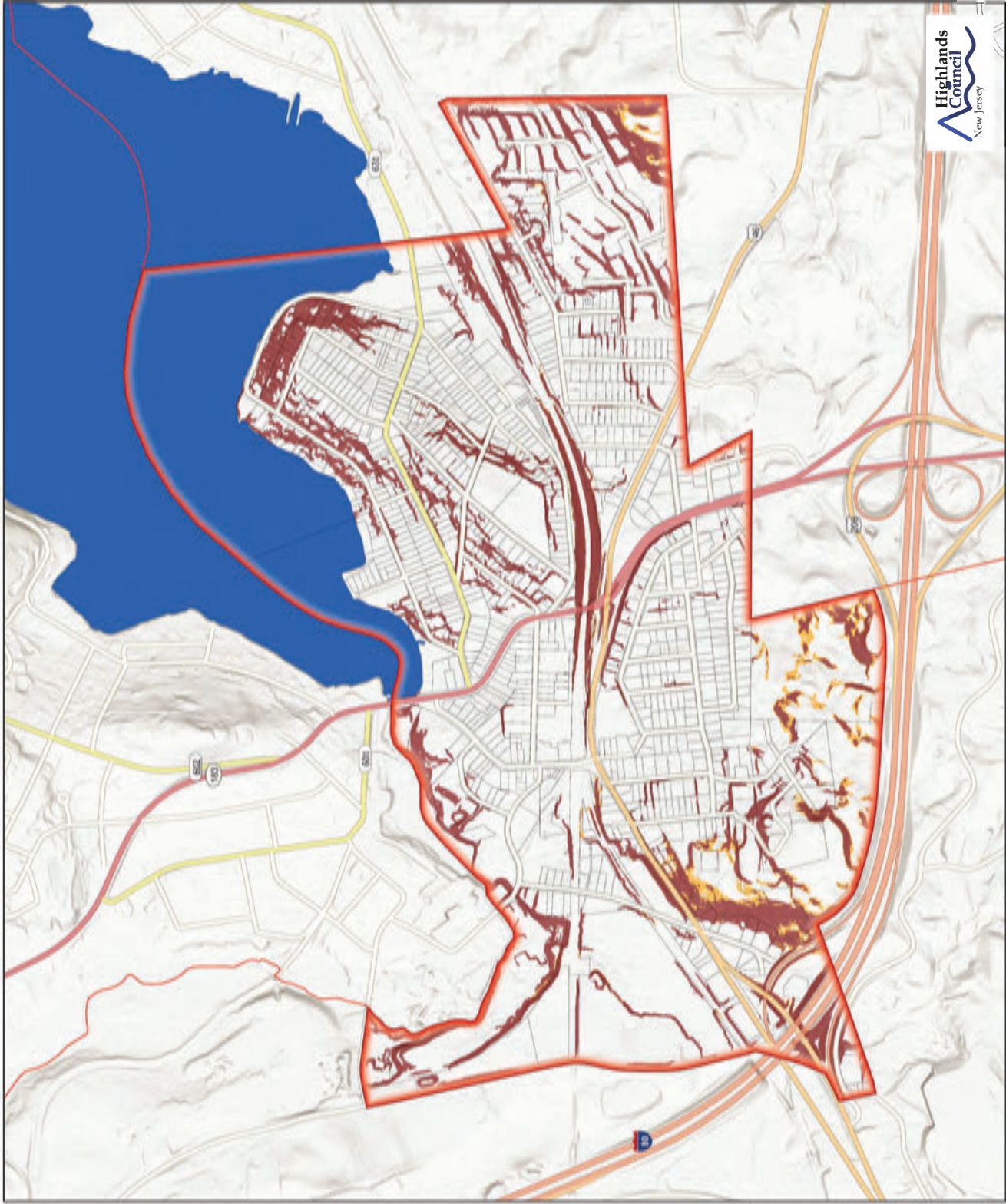


Exhibit 9: Critical Wildlife Habitat, Vernal Pools and NJDEP Natural Heritage Priority Sites

Netcong Borough

Confirmed Vernal Pool Buffer
(1,000 ft)

Critical Wildlife Habitat

Municipal Boundary

Parcel Boundaries

Lakes Greater Than 10 Acres

Roads

Interstates

US Highways

State Highways

County Highways

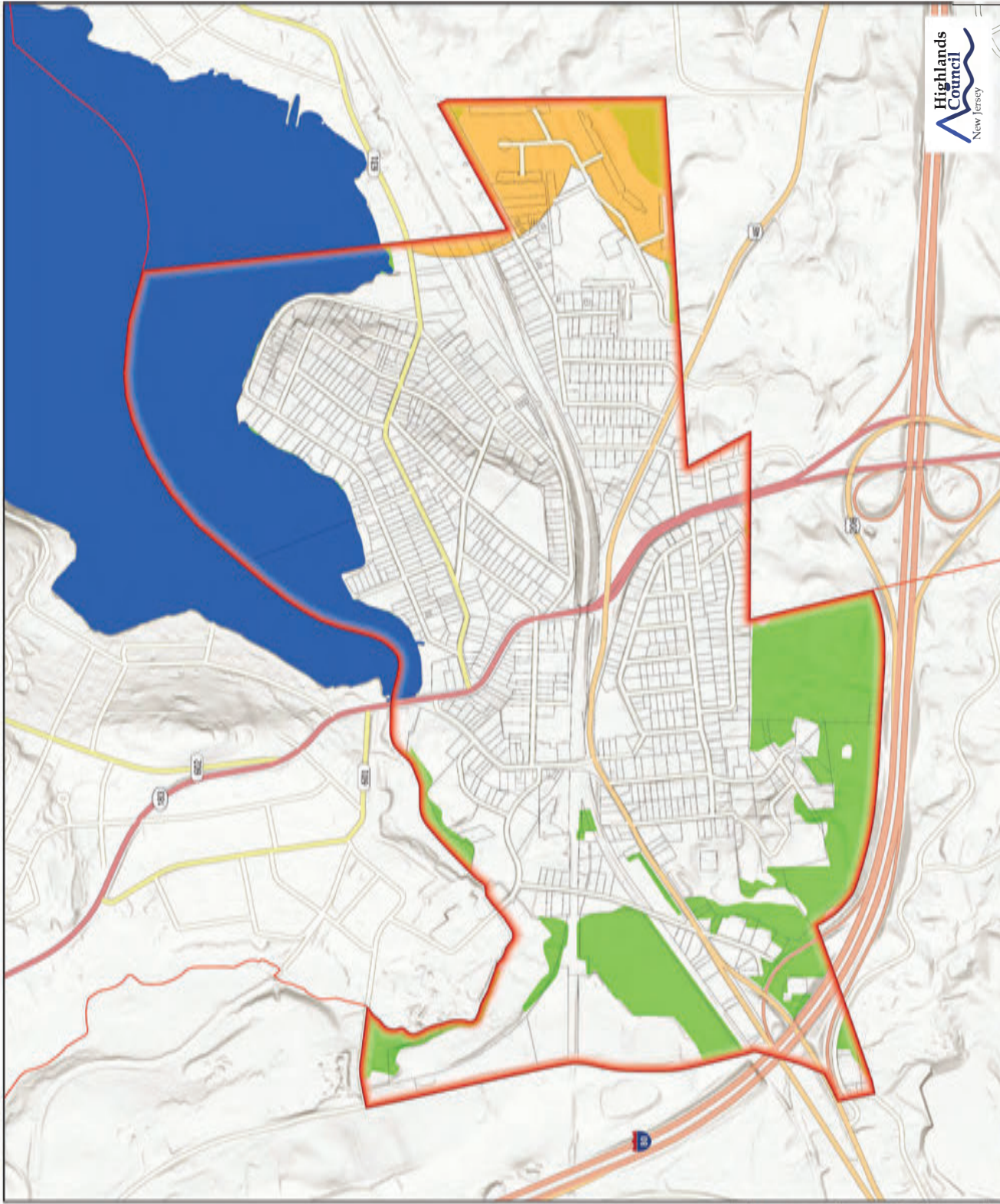
Local Roads

Alleys

Interstate Ramps



Map Created: 1/21/2025



NEW JERSEY HIGHLANDS WATER PROTECTION AND PLANNING COUNCIL
Netcong Borough Petition for Plan Conformance
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APPENDIX D

COMMENT/RESPONSE
Borough of Netcong, Morris County