



2009 Plan Conformance Grant Program
Module 7.
Municipal Self-Assessment Report :
Glen Gardner Borough

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

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MODULE 7: MUNICIPAL SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

PLAN CONFORMANCE GRANT PROGRAM MODULE 7: MUNICIPAL SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR GLEN GARDNER BOROUGH

Introduction

The purpose of this Municipal Self-Assessment (MSA) Report is to provide municipalities with a template for the narrative portion of the MSA Report described in the Module 7 Instructions (Section B. 9). The MSA Report summarizes all draft changes to the municipal planning and regulatory programs to date (based at a minimum on the results of Modules 2 through 6 of the 2009 Plan Conformance Grant Program) and all changes that will remain necessary after Basic Plan Conformance to achieve Full Plan Conformance with the Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP). The MSA Report should consist of a brief narrative only, with the assessment reliant substantially upon inclusion of completed checklists for the MSA Report and the draft Highlands Implementation Plan and Schedule, which were provided as Appendix A with the Module 7 Instructions.

The MSA Report Checklist provides a list of Basic Plan Conformance submission items for the municipal Petition for Plan Conformance. The MSA Report below follows the sequence of the checklist and provides narrative to assist municipalities in completing this MSA Report and the Checklist. The MSA Report Checklist asks the municipality to indicate if the level of preparation of the submission item addresses Basic or Full Plan Conformance. Items denoted by the checkmark box indicate those required to achieve Basic Plan Conformance unless otherwise noted.

Each item in the MSA Report asks for a Status update, as does the MSA Report Checklist. The status in the MSA Report should indicate for each item, whether it is complete as provided in the petition, or will require additional work under Full Plan Conformance. It should also indicate whether an existing document has been included as a substitution for a Module or section of any Module. This would apply for example, if the municipality provided an existing Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI) with edits to achieve consistency with the RMP instead of the Highlands Module 4 ERI. Another example would be where a municipality provides existing municipal regulations for a specific natural resource, such as steep slopes, as a substitute for the Module 6 model Highlands Land Use Ordinance provisions relative to the natural resource. This should be noted as appropriate in the MSA Report and in the status column of the MSA Report Checklist.

The Highlands Implementation Plan and Schedule Checklist includes all tasks that are not required for Basic Plan Conformance and are not indicated as having been completed in the MSA Report Checklist. For each of these tasks, the Highlands Implementation Plan and Schedule Checklist ask for an “anticipated completion date.” The anticipated completion date shall be calculated based on the date of the Highlands Council’s approval of the Petition for Plan Conformance. For example, if the approval of the Petition for Plan Conformance is granted on April 1, 2010, the anticipated completion date for tasks on the Highlands Implementation Plan and Schedule for the requirements of Full Plan Conformance would begin after April 1, 2010. The anticipated completion date for most of these tasks should fall into the range of six (6) to fifteen (15) months from the approval of the Petition for Plan Conformance. However, some tasks (e.g., Water Use and Conservation Management Plans) may require a longer timeframe. The Highlands Implementation Plan and Schedule submitted with the Petition is considered a draft to be finalized only after discussion between the Highlands Council staff and the municipality prior to the Highlands Council approval of the Petition. The final Implementation Plan and Schedule will not only guide the municipality’s Full Plan Conformance activities, but will identify the need for future Plan Conformance grant funding.

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1. Modules 1 and 2: Highlands Municipal Build-Out Report

The final Highlands Municipal Build-Out Report and supporting documents and files were prepared by the Highlands Council, provided to the municipality, and posted on the Highlands Council website. The Report may be incorporated by reference in the petition. The Highlands Council is providing these reports, so the status in the MSA Report Checklist is complete except where this report is still in development. If relevant, provide comments in the narrative to supplement the final Report.

Status: Glen Gardner has completed Modules 1 and 2 and a final Highlands Build-Out Report was issued.



2. Module 3: Housing Element and Fair Share Plan

The Highlands Council has developed a timeline for the preparation and submission of petitions for substantive certification based on the COAH deadline extension of June 8, 2010. At minimum, the December 8, 2009 petition must include the following: a. Summary of Housing Obligations, b. Summary and Consistency Review of Proposed Prior Round Sites, and c. Housing Partnership Program narrative (including proposed participation in the Regional Affordable Housing Development Partnership Program or RAHDPP, where applicable). The Module 3 Instructions provide narrative on these submission requirements. The municipality should provide status comments in the narrative to supplement submission items a. through c. as appropriate. [NOTE: Additional submittals are required as of March 1, 2010 (due: draft Housing Element and Fair Share Plan) and June 8, 2010 (due: final versions of each), resulting in submittal of an adopted Housing Element and completed Fair Share Plan by the latter date.]

Status: Glen Gardner Borough has completed a summary of housing obligations, summary and consistency review of proposed prior round sites and discussion of the mechanisms to be used in fulfillment of its third round obligations. At this time, the Borough is not seeking to participate in an affordable housing transfer program.



3. Module 4: Highlands Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI)

The requirements for Basic Plan Conformance include supplementing a municipality's existing ERI to include all Highlands resource information (or adopting a new ERI if none exists). The Highlands Council provided a model Highlands ERI along with tabular data, which may be used as either a supplement to an existing municipal ERI or as a stand-alone ERI, where the municipality has not previously adopted one. Please indicate in the narrative below whether the Highlands Model will be incorporated into an existing ERI or Natural Resource Inventory, or will be used as a stand-alone document. For municipalities that have already submitted a draft ERI, please indicate whether Highlands Council staff comments and edits have been addressed in the final draft ERI or if outstanding issues need consideration.

Status: Glen Gardner Borough did not have an ERI prior to preparation of the Highlands ERI, although its 1989 Master Plan contains a background report on natural resources. The draft Highlands ERI will serve as the Borough ERI. For Full Plan Conformance, it will be supplemented with more locally specific information and discussion. Also, relevant maps changed through RMP Update process will be included in ERI.

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Master Plan

The requirements for Basic Plan Conformance include revisions to municipal master plans that will bring them into alignment with the Highlands RMP. The Highlands Council provided a Model Municipal Master Plan “Highlands Element” to assist municipalities in addressing the mandatory master plan requirements necessary to achieve Basic Plan Conformance. The Highlands Element is intended to be used as a supplement to existing municipal master plans for application to land use and development in that portion of the municipality for which Plan Conformance is sought. Each section of the Highlands Element is referenced below, and it is noted in the narrative if requirements are for Basic or Full Plan Conformance. For municipalities that have already submitted a draft Highlands Element, please indicate whether Highlands Council staff comments and edits have been addressed in the final draft Highlands Element or if outstanding issues need consideration. **[NOTE: Under 4.a through 4.l below, where an item is listed as a “Basic Plan Conformance requirement” all of the necessary information has already been provided to the municipality as part of the Model Highlands Element prepared by the Highlands Council. Inclusion of the text in the draft municipal Highlands Element submitted with the petition constitutes completion of the requirement.]**

- a. **Statement of Policies, Goals and Objectives:** Basic Plan Conformance requirement.
- b. **Land Use Plan Element:** Basic Plan Conformance requirement. However, an up-to-date Land Use Inventory (inventory) is not a requirement for Basic Plan Conformance. The municipality should submit their most current inventory. If the inventory requires updates it will be a Full Plan Conformance requirement. If an up-to-date inventory has been completed and submitted with the petition; it should be noted as “Full” in the level of preparation column in the MSA Report Checklist.
- c. **Housing Plan Element:** Included in the Module 3 submission.
- d. **Conservation Plan Element:** Basic Plan Conformance requirement.
- e. **Utility Services Plan Element:** Basic Plan Conformance requirement.
- f. **Circulation Plan Element:** Basic Plan Conformance requirement. This Plan supplements an existing municipal Element, as applicable to goals and objectives for the Highlands Area. Where no Plan exists; one will be developed and adopted as a Full Plan Conformance task.
- g. **Land Preservation and Land Stewardship Plan Element including updated preserved land inventory and map:** Basic Plan Conformance requirement. This Plan supplements an existing municipal Element, as applicable to goals and objectives for the Highlands Area. Where no Plan exists; one will be developed and adopted as a Full Plan Conformance task. The updated preserved land inventory and map is a Full Plan Conformance task.
- h. **Agriculture Retention/Farmland Preservation Plan Element (if applicable) including updated preserved land inventory and map:** Basic Plan Conformance requirement. This Plan supplements an existing municipal Element, as applicable to goals and objectives for the Highlands Area. Where no Plan exists; one will be developed and adopted as a Full Plan Conformance task. The updated preserved farmland inventory and map is a Full Plan Conformance task.
- i. **Community Facilities Plan Element:** Basic Plan Conformance requirement. This Plan supplements an existing municipal Element, as applicable to goals and objectives for the Highlands Area. Where no Plan exists; one will be developed and adopted as a Full Plan Conformance task.
- j. **Sustainable Economic Development Plan Element:** Basic Plan Conformance requirement.
- k. **Historic Preservation Plan Element:** Basic Plan Conformance requirement. This Plan supplements an existing municipal Element, as applicable to goals and objectives for the

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Highlands Area. Where no Plan exists; one will be developed and adopted as a Full Plan Conformance task.

- l. Relationship of Master Plan to State/Regional/Local Plans:** Basic Plan Conformance requirement.
- m. Development Transfer Plan Element:** Optional

Status: The Glen Gardner Highlands Master Plan Supplement is complete and satisfies Basic Plan Conformance requirements. For Full Plan Conformance, additional work will be done. Anticipated tasks include the following:

- a. Statement of Policies, Goals and Objectives:** *Will review, refine and integrate existing Master Plan goals with Highlands Master Plan Element GPO's.*
- b. Land Use Plan Element:** *Will update existing land use inventory. Will update land use plan map, reflecting Land Use Capability Zones and recommended land uses. As per Highlands Council direction, must undertake a comprehensive land use density/intensity analysis for future non-exempt development.*
- c. Housing Plan Element:** *See discussion of Module 3 above. The Borough is submitting all required documents needed for the December 8, 2009 deadline and will submit additional documentation necessary for the March 1 and June 10, 2010 deadlines.*
- d. Conservation Plan Element:** *Will provide additional language that is more municipal-specific in context and will draw from natural resource management plans required as part of Full Plan Conformance. Also, will review Conservation Plan Element of the 1989 Comprehensive Master Plan to determine policies and discussions that remain relevant today and consistent with the Highlands Regional Master Plan and incorporate into an updated Conservation Plan Element accordingly.*
- e. Utility Services Plan Element:** *Will incorporate relevant findings from a wastewater management plan to be completed as part of Full Plan Conformance, as well as discussion from the Water Use and Conservation Management Plan, also to be completed for Full Plan Conformance.*
- f. Circulation Plan Element:** *Will review existing Circulation Plan Element against Highlands Master Plan Element for Basic Plan Conformance and update/integrate accordingly. The outcome will be a comprehensive, updated Circulation Plan Element, including an inventory/assessment of existing transportation infrastructure; future potential needs/improvements and their relationship to smart growth principles; and criteria for determining what constitutes growth-inducing municipal projects.*
- g. Land Preservation and Land Stewardship Plan Element including updated preserved land inventory and map:** *Will prepare a Comprehensive Open Space/Recreation Plan, update preserved land inventory and map and provide Borough-specific strategies for preservation, land management and stewardship. In so doing, will review the Recreation Plan Element of the 1989 Comprehensive Master Plan to determine if/what sections are consistent with the Highlands RMP and should therefore be integrated into the updated Plan.*
- h. Agriculture Retention/Farmland Preservation Plan Element including updated preserved land inventory and map:** *Agricultural lands are limited in Glen Gardner, as are Agricultural Resource Areas. There are no preserved farms (i.e. properties deed-restricted exclusively to agricultural use) in the Borough. Thus, for Full Plan Conformance, rather than preparing a Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan, the Borough will fold key goals, policies and objectives and strategies for agriculture retention/farmland preservation into the Land Preservation and Land Stewardship Plan Element.*
- i. Community Facilities Plan Element:** *2007 Master Plan Reexamination Report states that the 1989 Master Plan Community Facilities Plan Element has yet to be updated. Will prepare a comprehensive, updated Community Facilities Plan Element, including a mapped inventory of facilities,*

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brief description of each and, potentially, applicable goals and objectives beyond those identified for Basic Plan Conformance. Also, must address principles of smart growth and will discuss green development practices.

- j. **Sustainable Economic Development Plan Element:** Will develop strategies for strengthening the local economy, within the context of a rural town. Will address issues pertaining to redevelopment in the Borough and also better define notion of sustainability.*
- k. **Historic Preservation Plan Element:** Will ensure that this Plan Element meets minimum requirements under the Municipal Land Use Law. MLUL requires that the element include an analysis of impacts of each master plan element on historic sites and districts. Will review in light of 1989 Historic Preservation Plan Element and make appropriate additions/updates to be consistent with the Highlands Regional Master Plan. This will be done by updating/integrating existing Plan Element with the Highlands Master Plan Element prepared for Basic Plan Conformance.*
- l. **Relationship of Master Plan to State/Regional/Local Plans:** Will complete this statement, describing the relationship of the municipal master plan to those of the County and surrounding municipalities, once information concerning Plan Conformance in these locations, is confirmed.*

4. **Module 6: Highlands Land Use Ordinance**

The requirements of Basic Plan Conformance include the regulation of new development through a Highlands Land Use Ordinance. The Highlands Council developed a model Highlands Land Use Ordinance, including language addressing all requirements applicable to Basic Plan Conformance. In accordance with instructions provided for Module 6; the municipality should submit an edited version of the model Highlands Land Use Ordinance and if applicable, may submit existing municipal ordinances that are more restrictive or more comprehensive with respect to certain resources. [Note: Development of additional municipal regulations concerning the prevention of pollution and public health threats from existing land uses will be required as a component of Full Plan Conformance in the years 2010 and beyond. As such, these are not included in the MSA Report Checklist, but do appear in the Highlands Implementation Plan and Schedule.]

Status: Glen Gardner has prepared and enclosed with this Petition a draft Land Use Ordinance satisfying Basic Plan Conformance requirements. References to clustering provisions have been removed from the draft Ordinance. The Borough will request a waiver from cluster requirements due to the lack of opportunity for clustering to occur in compliance with Preservation Area requirements. References to resources that are not present in the Borough (including but not limited to Special Environmental Zones, Carbonate Rock Areas, Lake Management Areas) have also been removed from the text. Items such as integration of definitions with existing ordinances, use regulations; density/intensity provisions; completion of application review procedures and requirements provisions must be accomplished for Full Plan Conformance. Septic system design and maintenance provisions should be compared to existing ordinances to ensure consistency and standards should be integrated. As noted above, additional regulations governing pollution prevention and prevention of public health threats will need to be adopted for Full Plan Conformance. The Highlands Council requires adoption of a tree clearing ordinance. The Highlands Area Land Use Ordinance for Basic Plan Conformance contains a section on clear cutting of Forest Resources (Section 6.1.4). Assuming the Council expects a police power tree clearing ordinance in addition to the aforementioned regulation, this will be pursued by Glen Gardner, with additional guidance on minimum standards provided by the Highlands Council.

5. Redevelopment and Rehabilitation Plans (Adopted or Proposed)

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Redevelopment and Rehabilitation Plans are not a requirement of Basic Plan Conformance. The municipality may choose to incorporate narrative on adopted or proposed redevelopment and rehabilitation plans to supplement the Petition for Plan Conformance.

Status: Glen Gardner does not presently have any pending or approved redevelopment and rehabilitation plans. The Borough will examine opportunities for redevelopment, and if deemed appropriate, will pursue redevelopment planning as part of Full Plan Conformance.

6. Management Plans and Ordinances

Management plans and ordinances are not a requirement for Basic Plan Conformance. The municipality may wish to supplement their Petition for Plan Conformance with available draft plans or ordinances, such as a Wastewater Management Plan or a Stormwater Management Plan.

Status: Management Plans itemized in the Checklist & MSA Status will be completed in satisfaction of Full Plan Conformance.

7. Discretionary Items, List (Optional)

Discretionary items are not a requirement of Basic Plan Conformance. These are additional materials beyond those required for a Petition for Plan Conformance that the municipality believes will support the petition. For example, a draft or adopted municipal ordinance that supports the Petition for Plan Conformance.

Status: Glen Gardner will pursue RMP Updates to accurately delineate preserved lands and parcels served by public water.

Draft Highlands Implementation Plan and Schedule Checklist – Full Plan Conformance Tasks

Municipalities shall also include a draft Highlands Implementation Plan and Schedule Checklist, which provides a listing of items from the MSA Report Checklist that are not required for Basic Plan Conformance and are not indicated by the municipality as having been completed. To the extent known, the municipality should insert a brief narrative below indicating the anticipated approach (not including budget estimates) to achieving the tasks listed in the draft Highlands Implementation Plan and Schedule Checklist. For example: preparation of incomplete portions of the Highlands Element will be developed by the municipality's professional planner; conservation management plans will be developed following receipt of guidance from the Highlands Council, with assistance from professionals having specialized expertise in each area. The municipality may prioritize Full Plan Conformance tasks based upon municipal interest and the Highlands Council will work to assist in addressing those priorities.

The actual schedule for Full Plan Conformance will be developed by the municipality and the Highlands Council during the review of the Petition for Basic Plan Conformance.

Status: Glen Gardner anticipates completion of Full Plan Conformance activities within four years of obtaining Basic Plan Conformance. While this may appear as an extensive time frame, there is much that needs to be accomplished. In reality, this may not be sufficient time to accomplish all that must be done for Full Plan Conformance. Continued financial and technical assistance from the Highlands Council will be integral to remaining on schedule and completing tasks.

Consultant services will be required to complete necessary documentation for Full Plan Conformance. This includes engineering services, planning services and environmental planning services. Please note that the Borough appreciates past financial and technical assistance provided by the Highlands Council. As noted above, it fully anticipates continued financial assistance, as well as ongoing technical assistance, in support of the ambitious workload presented in this Petition.

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Priority items indicated in the Implementation Plan and Schedule Checklist are those to be completed in 2010. These include the Housing Element & Fair Share Plan, an updated Environmental Resource Inventory, Land Use Plan Element, Community Facilities Plan Element, Zoning Map and Schedule of Requirements, Wastewater Management Plan, Septic System Management/Maintenance Plan, Updated Stormwater Management Plan, and RMP Updates. Clearly, this is a very ambitious agenda, one that can only be expedited with continued Highlands Council technical and financial resources.