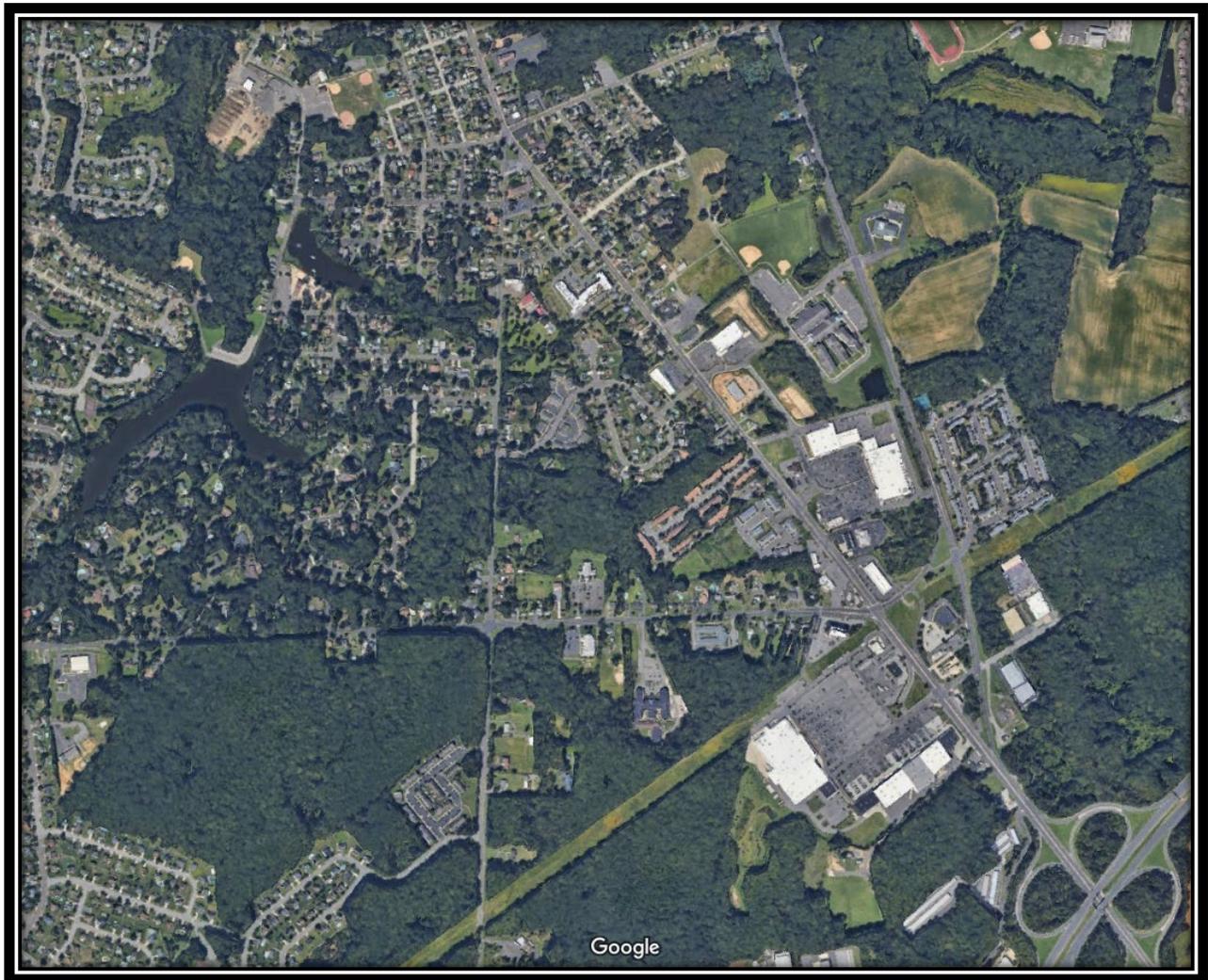


Plan Endorsement Recommendation Report for The Township of Burlington



This document is a recommendation report prepared by the Office of Planning Advocacy (OPA) as staff to the State Planning Commission (SPC) based on input of our partner agencies, Township of Burlington, Burlington County, and members of the public. OPA will post this report and other materials related to the Township's Plan Endorsement petition on our website. You can contact our office by email regarding petitions for Plan Endorsement by providing contact information, including name, organization, address, and e-mail address to osgmail@sos.state.nj.us.

Documents submitted by Burlington Township can be found here:

<https://nj.gov/state/planning/plan-endorsement.shtml>

Master Plan, Reexamination Report, Zoning and Land Use Maps, etc.

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Introduction

The Township of Burlington (hereafter Burlington Township or Township) in Burlington County received Town Center designation on April 28, 1999, which was set to expire on June 30, 2020; however, the expiration had been extended through various extension approvals by the legislation, executive orders and/or State Planning Commission resolutions. Burlington Township’s center designation expired on March 31, 2023.

According to the Regional Municipal Self-Assessment Report (MSA), prepared on behalf of the Burlington County Board County Commissions by the Burlington County Bridge Commission, Department of Economic Development and Regional Planning, the Township is seeking Plan Endorsement to align its local planning goals and objectives with the State Plan and to make mapping changes consistent with resiliency and sustainable development practices and New Jersey State Planning Commission policies. The Township is also seeking Plan Endorsement in order to have a seat at the table with NJDOT so they can address some of their truck traffic concerns. Discussions with NJDOT are ongoing. The MSA report was written for the U.S. Route 130/Delaware River Corridor Regional Plan Endorsement, which includes the following 12 municipalities: Township of Florence, City of Burlington, Township of Burlington, City of Beverly, Township of Edgewater Park, Township of Delanco, Township of Willingboro, Township of Cinnaminson, Township of Delran, Borough of Palmyra, Borough of Riverton, and Township of Riverside. Receiving plan endorsement, which will extend center designation beyond 2030, will assist the 12 municipalities as they continue to implement strategies to address development and redevelopment, economic revitalization, pedestrian safety, improved circulation, stormwater management, and sustainable growth principles.

This report contains findings and conclusions concerning consistency of the Township’s plans with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan). The review of the petition is based on information submitted by the petitioner and information otherwise available to the Office of Planning Advocacy (OPA).

Adopting a resolution in support of Plan Endorsement of their plans will demonstrate that they are taking appropriate steps to plan for the sustainable future by addressing their infrastructure, economic development, housing, open space, environmental and resiliency concerns.

Background

Burlington Township initiated the Plan Endorsement process by attending a pre-petition meeting with OPA and our partner State agencies on March 10, 2020. The Township established their Plan Endorsement Citizens Advisory Committee on February 22, 2022 via resolution 2022-R-050. The Municipal Self-Assessment was authorized by the Township on March 22, 2022 via resolution 2022-R-074. OPA and our State agency partners responded with an Opportunity and Constraints Report on November 1, 2022. Burlington Township formally approved the Plan Implementation Agreement (PIA) and State Plan Policy Map on February 13, 2024 via resolution 024-R-038. The PIA included items that OPA and our State agencies believe will achieve consistency with the New Jersey Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan), as well as the updated Plan Endorsement Guidelines and amendments to the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law, which address State priorities for environmental justice and climate resiliency respectively.

Planning Milestone and Chronology

Event(s)	Date	Notes
Town Center Designation	4/28/1999	
Burlington Township Stormwater Management Plan	4/26/2006	
Master Plan	2008	Reexam in 2003,
Burlington County Wastewater Management Plan	5/24/2017	With Build-out analysis
Burlington Township Flood Control Ordinance	11/14/2017	
Burlington Township Coastal Vulnerability Assessment Report	12/2017	
Master Plan Reexamination Report	2018	
Burlington County Hazard Mitigation Plan	2019	
Pre-petition Meeting	3/10/2019	
Plan Endorsement Advisory Committee	2/22/2022	
Burlington County Route 541 Transportation and Circulation Plan	6/2020	
Municipal Self-Assessment	3/22/2022	
Plan Implementation Agreement	2/13/2024	Resolution 2024-R-038
PIC Approval	TBD	With mapping & PIA
SPC Adoption	TBD	

Public Participation

As part of the Plan Endorsement process, the Township completed their Community Visioning sessions. The Township held their local visioning on April 7, 2022 and regional visioning session with Township of Florence, Township of Willingboro, Township of Edgewater Park, and City of Burlington on July 27, 2022. During the regional visioning session, the majority of the comments included:

- Creating a regional sports complex to support local recreational programs,
- Encouraging film/movie production and media studios in the region,
- Planning for a regional hotel to accommodate visitors to the region,
- Creating multi-use connections between the communities and increasing accessibility,
- Planning for Eco-Life cemeteries,
- Expanding service along the RiverLine,
- Regional cooperation/sharing master plans/coordinating meetings/creating a Facebook page,
- Creating pedestrian links and,
- Improving access along the waterfront (for example, water taxi).

Location and Regional Context

The Route 130/Delaware River or River Route Corridor lies in the western portion of Burlington County. The Corridor is located along U.S. Route 130 and the Delaware River and extends approximately 16 miles from Township of Cinnaminson in the South to Township of Florence in the north. The combined area of the 12 municipalities is approximately 64 square miles. The Corridor is strategically located 20 minutes from Center City Philadelphia and an hour and a half from Midtown Manhattan. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the population of the Corridor was 142,714 in 2010. The Corridor contains approximately 32% of the population of Burlington County yet accounts for less than 8% of the total land area.

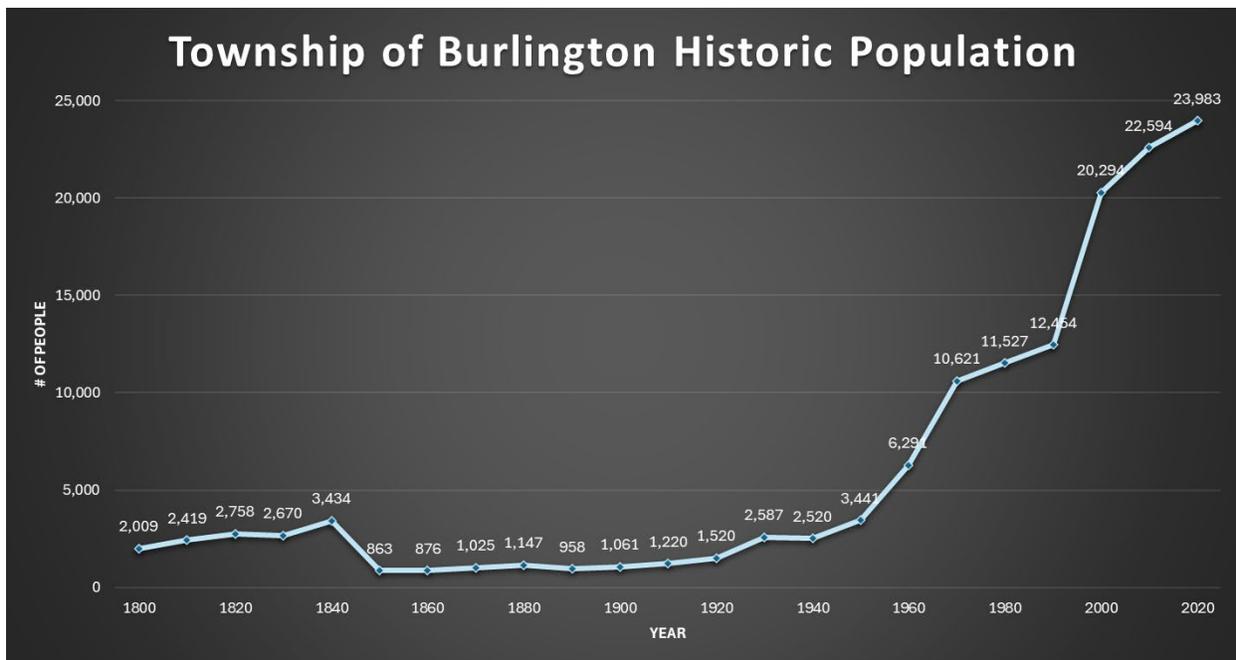
Burlington Township is approximately 14.08 square miles, which includes 13.5 square miles of land and .58 square miles of water. The Township borders the City of Burlington, Township of Edgewater Park, Township of Florence, Township of Springfield, Township of Westampton, and Township of Willingboro in New Jersey and borders Bristol, and Bristol Township in Pennsylvania across the Delaware River.

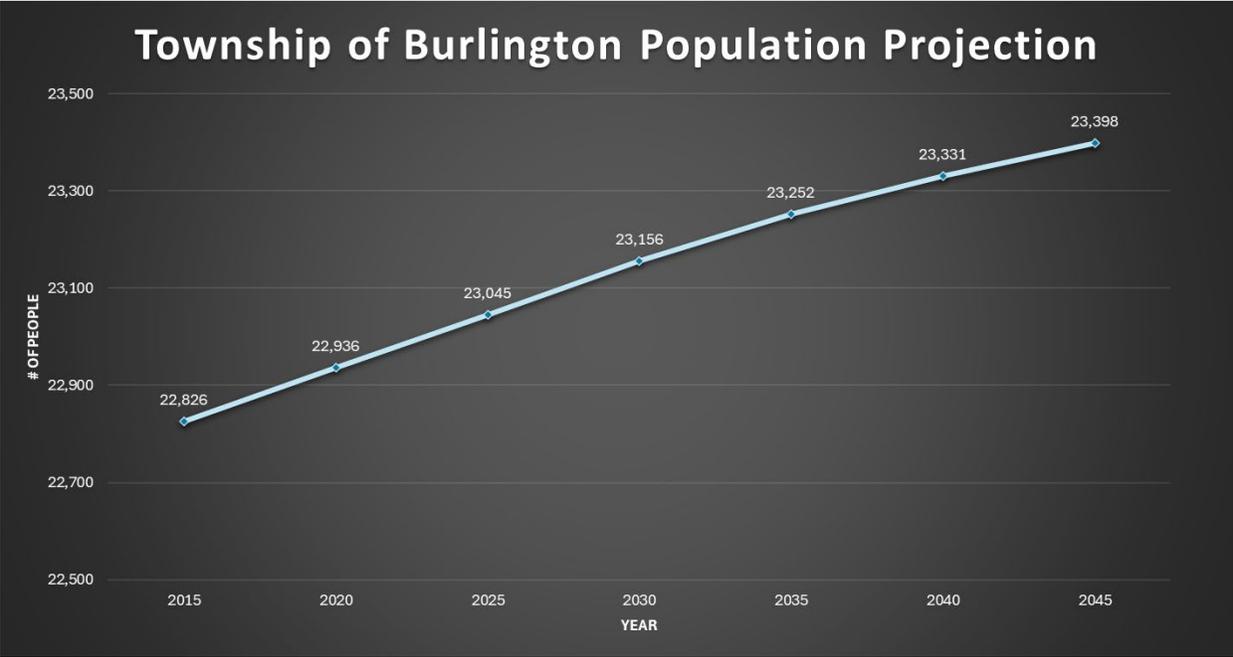
	Township of Burlington	Burlington County
Land Area (Sq. Mile)	14.08	827
Population (Persons)	23,983	461,860
Households	8,731	176,334
Average Household Size	3.31	3.15
Population Density (Persons/Sq. Mile)	1,703.33	558.47
Housing Units	8,757	184,775
Home Ownership Rate	76.7%	76.6%
Vacancy Rate	3.8%	7.3%
Median Household Income	\$98,097	\$100,478
Per Capita Income	\$32,122	\$41,804
Persons Below Poverty Rate	5.6%	6.6%
Unemployment Rate	8.3%	3.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census, 2022 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Demographics and Burlington Township’s Future

According to the Route 130 Regional Municipal Self-Assessment, by 2045, it is expected that Burlington Township’s population will reach 23,398 persons.

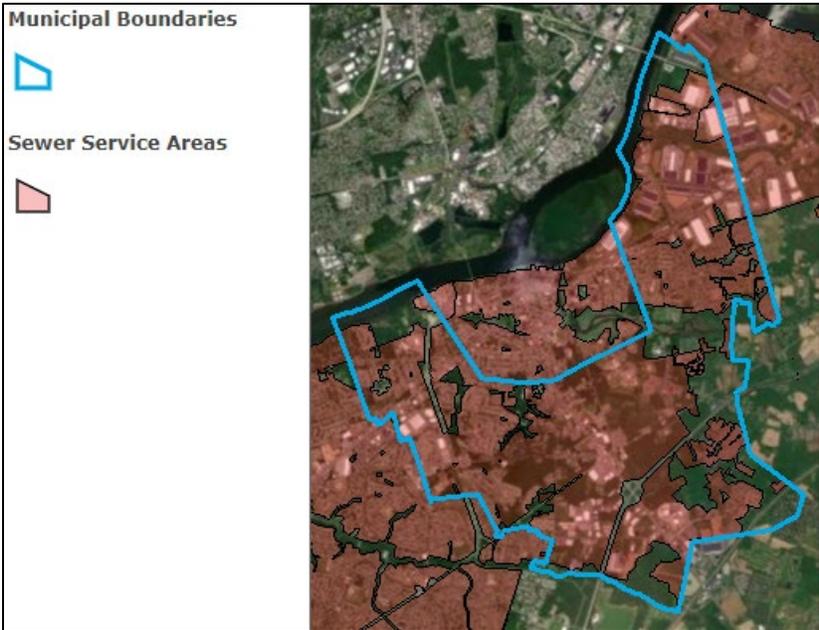




Infrastructure

Water

Willingboro, Burlington City, Burlington Township and Florence Township each operate their own water supply systems, which utilize a series of groundwater wells situated in the Potomac-Raritan-Magothy (PRM) Aquifer System. These four municipalities have interconnection agreements in place in case of emergencies. In addition, most of the communities have at least one elevated water storage tank to supplement withdraws during the summer months and periods of peak demand.



The water allocation permitting program, administered by the NJDEP’s Division of Water Supply & Geoscience (DWSG), closely reviews water diversions in Water Supply Critical Areas. The Corridor communities are situated in Water Supply Critical Area 2, which covers parts of Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Ocean and Salem Counties. The 2017-2022 New Jersey Water Supply Plan shows the public water systems in the Corridor all have a surplus supply

in relation to the currently approved potable supply.

Sewer Service System

Almost the entire Corridor is within an approved sewer service area. There are ten wastewater treatment plants in Corridor, which are operated by either the local municipality or an independent utility authority.

Water Quality Management Planning

In response to the State's new Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) rules, which became effective as of November 7, 2016, Burlington County submitted a county-wide Wastewater Management Plan (WMP) to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) for adoption into the Tri-County WQMP, which covers Burlington, Camden and Gloucester counties. The Plan includes a description of wastewater facilities and their treatment capacity, proposed actions and strategies and wastewater service area maps. Additionally, the WMP includes a detailed parcel-by-parcel zoning build-out analysis for each municipality.

On May 24, 2017 by Resolution No. 2017-00240, the Freeholders authorized submission of the Burlington County Wastewater Management Plan to DEP for adoption into the Tri-County Water Quality Management Plan. The Township of Burlington is included as part of the overall Burlington County Wastewater Management Plan.

Transportation

Circulation

Burlington Township has a total of 100.5 miles of roadways, which comprises of 78.6 municipal maintained roadways, 15 miles County maintained, 5.4 miles state maintained (NJDOT), and 1.5 miles maintained by NJ Turnpike Authority.

The Township's 2018 Master Plan Reexamination Report recommends revising the Circulation Plan Element to address the traffic and transportation impacts associated with the development of warehouses and distribution centers on the northern section of U.S. Route 130, in the vicinity of Exit 6A. Recommendations include, separating truck traffic from residential areas, implementing recommendations from the Northern Route 130 Circulation and Transportation Plan and incorporating proposed improvements along the Route 130 corridor referenced in the Burlington County River Route Corridor Study, prepared by WSP.

Public Transportation

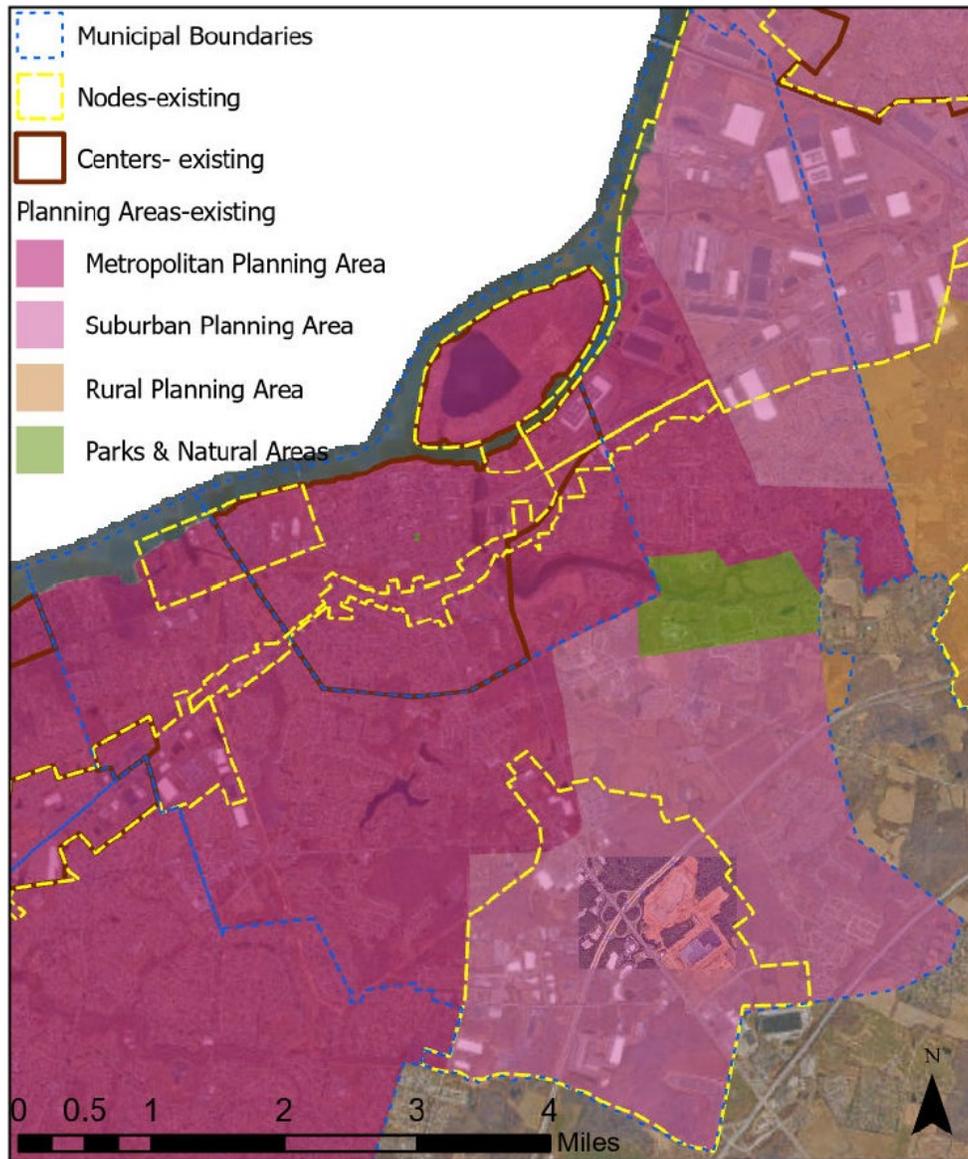
3.6% of Burlington Township commuters utilize public transportation. The RiverLine light rail runs through the Corridor and provides passenger rail service between Camden and Trenton with direct connections to Philadelphia and New York City. The RiverLine stops in Burlington City at Burlington South and Burlington Towne Center, but does not stop in the Township.

NJ Transit provides bus services on bus numbers 409, 413, and 419. The bus service provides access to and from Trenton and Philadelphia.

State Plan Policy Map

Burlington Township's 1999 Designations

In 1999, the State Planning Commission designated a Town Center shared between Township of Willingboro, Township of Edgewater Park and Burlington Township. 45.5 acres is the portion of the Town Center that was specifically within Burlington Township. The SPC also designated 3,612 acres of the Township between 5 nodes.

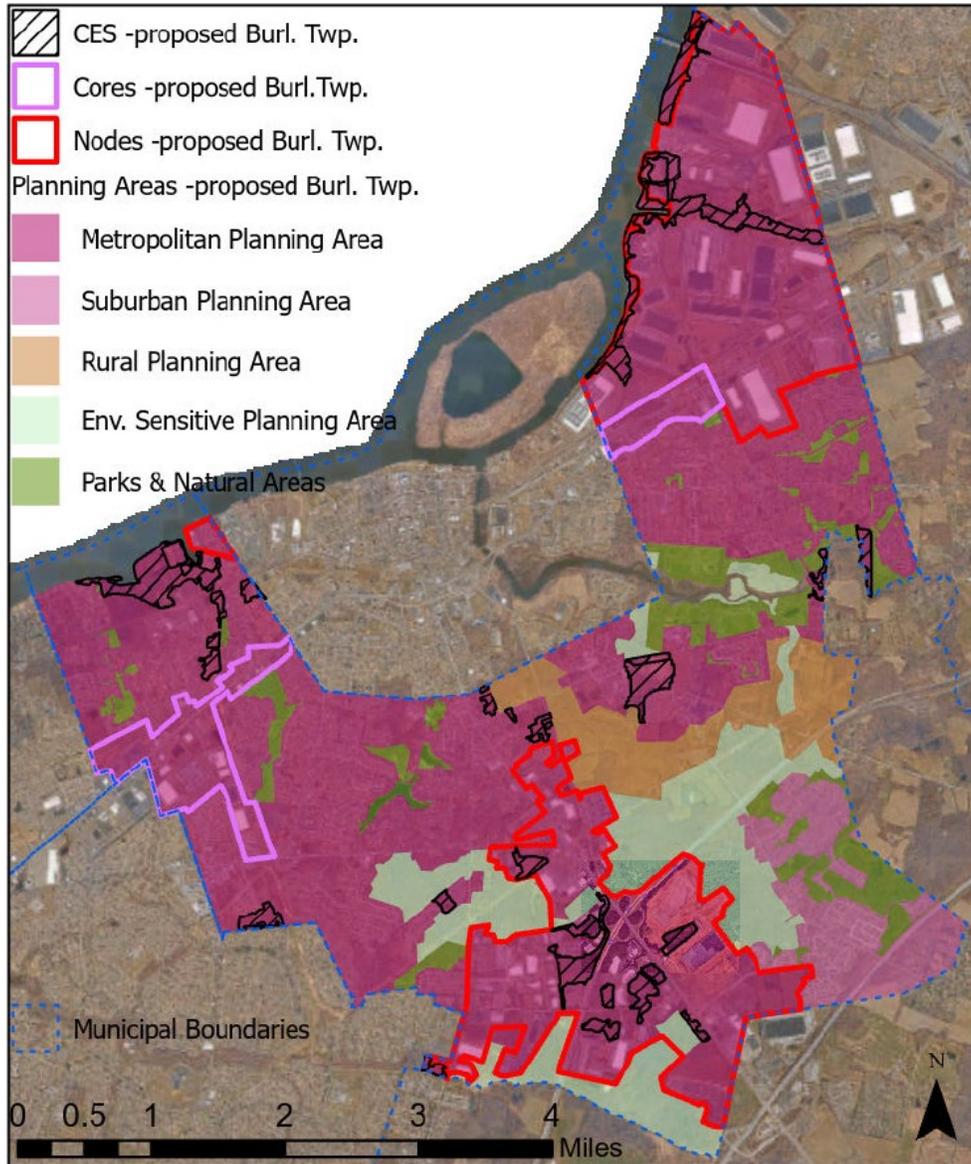


Current Designations and Mapping

On March 31, 2023, the previous center and node designations expired. This expiration led to the removal of the center and node designations from the State Plan Policy Map. The Planning Areas were not affected by the expiration.

Proposed Mapping

The following map shows the proposed map amendment for the Burlington Township portion of the State Plan Policy Map.



Summary of Proposed Map

Planning Area	Label	Existing Acreage	Proposed Acreage
PA 1	Metropolitan	3,710.86	6,114.77
PA 2	Suburban	4,668.97	471.79
PA 4	Rural	34.40	456.50
PA 5	Environmentally Sensitive	0	1,050.63
Parks & Open Space	Parks & Open Space	304.84	581.31
CES	Critical Environmental Site	0	405.94
Center Designation	Existing Acreage	Proposed Acreage	Change in Acreage

Center(s)	45.51	0	- 45.51
Core(s)	0	362.49	362.49
Node(s)	3,612.19	2,576.48	- 1,035.71

State Plan Goals and Review

Goal #1: Revitalize the State’s Cities and Town

The vision for the Corridor contemplates revitalized downtowns surrounded by stable, traditional residential neighborhoods located along the Delaware River. Communities are actively coordinating with multiple State agencies and the Burlington County Economic and Regional Planning Department to find and attract investments to their community and focus development efforts in areas designated for redevelopment. Planning Area 1 provides for much of the state’s future redevelopment; revitalize cities and towns; promote growth in compact forms; stabilize older suburbs; redesign areas of sprawl; and protect the character of existing stable communities.

Goal #2: Conserve the State’s Natural Resources and Systems

As part of the 2018 Master Plan Reexamination report, Burlington Township included a Natural Resources Conservation Plan Element in order to preserve and protect Burlington Township’s natural resources critical to the quality of life, public health, and general welfare of all of the Township’s residents, both present and future. The Element includes:

- Minimizing the maximum intent practicable, development in environmentally sensitive areas.
- Controlling environmental degradation and adverse impacts such as noise and air pollution to improper use of land.
- Encouraging land development which preserves natural amenities and addresses drainage concerns.
- Encouraging preservation of wildlife habitat and woodland areas.
- Protecting the quality of surface bodies of water and groundwater.

Goal #3: Promote Beneficial Economic Growth, Development and Renewal for All Residents of New Jersey

There are several initiatives in Burlington County charged with promoting beneficial economic growth, development and renewal in the County. For example, the Economic Development and Regional Planning Department supports economic development within the County through a variety of programs. The Burlington County Route 130/Delaware River Corridor Economic Development Fund Revolving Loan Program is for businesses and business owners located in Burlington County, along the Route 130 Corridor. Three zero-interest loans are offered to businesses expanding in or relocating to the Route 130 Corridor.

Burlington Township’s 2018 Reexamination Report includes a vision for the municipality that states, “Burlington Township fulfills its strategic planning commitments by planning effectively for the future of the Township, facilitating a robust economy by actively supporting economic development in the commercial and industrial sectors that create employment opportunities, and contributing to regional

smart growth.” One of the key issues listed in the report is the redeveloping and revitalizing of the Township’s section of the Route 130 Corridor.

Goal #4: Protect the Environment, Prevent and Clean Up Pollution

Revitalizing vacant and obsolete industrial and commercial sites is a prominent goal of the County Strategic Plan, which recommends that the County prepare a comprehensive inventory of vacant, abandoned and underutilized buildings and brownfield sites in the Corridor. In 2014 the County Department of Economic Development and Redevelopment Planning identified the US Pipe Foundry in Burlington City and Burlington Township as a targeted project for redevelopment.

As stated above in Goal #2, the Township’s Natural Resources Conservation Plan Element has language that aligns itself with this goal.

Goal #5: Provide Adequate Public Facilities and Services at a Reasonable Cost

The Township has schools within its municipality. Burlington Township also has a police department, fire department, water and sewer department, respectively, and a municipal building located at 851 Old York Road. The recreation department also provides pavilions for rent and many recreational fields/facilities.

The 2018 Master Plan Reexamination Report includes a Community Facilities Plan Element, which includes:

- Promoting facilities for community groups allowing them to meet and work together,
- Facilitating appropriate public and private partnerships,
- Encouraging community assistance for those having special needs,
- Maintaining compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in public places and,
- Identifying the most efficient and effective means of providing municipal services while minimizing operating costs and capital expenditures.

Goal #6: Provide Adequate Housing at a Reasonable Cost

The Township has a settlement agreement with the Fair Share Housing Center that is Court approved (order on fairness hearing issued on March 13, 2020). The Township’s Housing Element and Fair Share Plan was reviewed by the Planning Board on December 3, 2020 and adopted by the Governing Body before the end of that year.

Goal #7: Preserve and Enhance Area with Historic, Cultural, Scenic, Open Space, and Recreational Value

The 2018 Master Plan Reexamination Report includes an Open Space and Recreation Plan Element that provides for ample recreation facilities and opportunities that meet the active and passive recreation needs of the Township’s residents of all ages and interests including accessible active and passive recreational opportunities. This Element includes:

- Maintaining Assicunk Creek Park as the centralized and dominant municipal park in the Township,
- Protecting natural resources and conservation areas as part of the open space inventory for passive enjoyment,
- Maximizing utilization and preservation of the natural character of the land,

- Protecting areas with natural qualities and features which provide the aesthetic and environmental character of Burlington, as well as buffering, recreation, drainage, stormwater recharge, and flood and erosion control benefits,
- Recognizing present and future benefits associated with agricultural and the changing nature and definition of "farming" (example: Agritourism),
- Protecting surface and subsurface water supplies by promoting control of nonpoint source pollution and well head protection,
- Providing strong support for our varied natural resources including forested areas, streams and river frontage which provide many passive recreational opportunities, i.e., fishing, hiking and enjoyment of wildlife and the natural environment,
- Promoting empowerment of Township residents to better understand and value our natural resources, and assume environmental responsibility,
- Promoting stormwater management practices impacting aquifer recharge areas, flood plains, wetlands, waterways, and properties abutting waterways, and
- Promoting lake management to support aesthetic benefits, environmental integrity, and good water quality.

Goal #8: Ensure Sound and Integrated Planning and Implementation Statewide

Burlington Township is pursuing Plan Endorsement in order to have consistency with the State's goals and policies and County plans. The Burlington Township Governing Body approved the Planning & Implementation Agreement (PIA) on February 13, 2024 via resolution 2024-R-038, which includes the Township completing the items listed in a timely manner.

Staff Recommendation

Based on the work the Township of Burlington has supplied, actions taken and committed to complete, it is OPA's recommendation that the State Planning Commission adopt the Resolution for Plan Endorsement.

Planning and Implementation Agreement

See attached PIA.