

Requirements for Municipal Initial Plan Endorsement Consistency

Introduction

This document complements the Plan Endorsement Guidelines for Initial Plan Endorsement to provide a framework on how petitions will be assessed for consistency with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. Unless otherwise indicated, the items discussed in the Plan Endorsement section must be addressed in the petition prior to OSG recommendation for endorsement.

Consistency Requirements

General Note: Any references to external documents made within a petition report or any narrative statement must be specific with page references and/or direct quotations.

Statement of Community Vision and Public Participation

- This section may include the full Community Vision or refer to other documents. If the referenced document is not a stand-alone Community Vision, then the petition must provide a cohesive statement supported by specific references (including page numbers) from the relevant documents.
- OSG will provide model vision statements as examples to follow. The vision statement should look to the long-term future (e.g. a 20-year horizon) of the municipality with regard to major planning issues such as land use, housing, economic development, infrastructure and services, and environmental protection. OSG will provide technical assistance if necessary so that the petitioner can articulate an appropriate vision.
- This section should include a description of public participation that has occurred in visioning, master planning, and other planning activities, including the preparation of the Plan Endorsement petition. It should contain specific references to meeting notices, minutes and/or summary reports.

Up-to-date Master Plan/Re-examination Report

- Land Use Plan Element
 - The Land Use Plan Element must generally correspond with the State Plan and Policy Map, including the delineation criteria and policy objectives for Centers, Planning Areas, and Critical Environmental Sites as outlined in the State Plan.
 - The Land Use Plan Element shall reflect the boundaries of State Plan centers and planning areas.
 - The Land Use Plan Element should be completed with consideration of information from the NRI so that land uses are compatible with natural resources and environmental features.
 - The Land Use Plan Element should incorporate information and/or concepts from relevant state or regional efforts (e.g. Cape May water supply buildout study,

NJDOT corridor study) as much as is possible depending on the progress of those efforts and their connections to land use.

- If changes are made to this element through the Plan Endorsement process and existing development regulations (including zoning map, land use inventory) do not correspond with these changes, then such regulations will need revision as early action items in the PIA (also see CAFRA section).
- The Land Use Plan Element or re-examination must be up to date per the 6-year review timeframe outlined in the Municipal Land Use Law.
- Optional Elements
 - The petition must include other elements of a Master Plan if they exist.
 - The petition should include a narrative statement that describes the relevance and status of optional elements.
 - Updates to optional elements of a Master Plan (Housing, Circulation, Community Facilities, Recreation/Open Space, Utility Service, Farmland Preservation, Historic Preservation) may be required as part of the PIA if those issues are pertinent to the municipality's future planning and development activities.

Community Facilities Plan

- A community facilities map must be submitted identifying the location of facilities and services.
- A Community Facilities Plan will need to be created or updated through the PIA if the petition proposes significant growth will generate demand for facilities not addressed in an existing plan.

Board of Education Five Year Facilities Plan

- The petition must include a five-year facilities plan if it exists.
- A five-year facilities plan will need to be created and/or updated through the PIA if the petition proposes significant growth that is not addressed in an existing plan.

Adopted Capital Improvement program

- The petition must include a CIP if it exists.
- A CIP will need to be created and/or updated through the PIA if the petition proposes significant growth that will generate demand for services and facilities not addressed in an existing CIP.

Stormwater Management Plan

- The petition must include a stormwater management plan, which is adopted by ordinance to implement the plan pursuant to NJSA 40:55D-93 et seq and NJAC 7:8-11. The plan must incorporate all elements and the design and performance standards set forth in the Stormwater Management Rules.

Statement of Planning Coordination

- The Office of Smart Growth looks for both external and internal consistency. External consistency primarily signifies the consistency of local plans with the State Plan goals, policies and mapping criteria, and that the local plans support the state in achieving the State Plan indicators and targets. In addition, external consistency includes consideration

of cross-acceptance reports, plans from neighboring municipalities, regional and county plans and other relevant documents. The petition must also be internally consistent, in that the petitioner's planning documents and relevant ordinances are consistent with one another.

- For Initial Plan Endorsement, OSG expects at the very least that the Community Vision and Master Plan are generally aligned internally and with the State Plan. Inconsistencies in development regulations can be addressed as early action items in the PIA, as long as the Land Use Plan Element provides clear guidance for amendments to regulations. The report should describe existing consistencies and inconsistencies, why inconsistencies exist, and how the petitioner will address them in the Plan Endorsement process and through the PIA.

Population, Household and Employment Data

- Current data.
- Twenty-year projections: If projections are at variance from MPO data, the petition should explain why this is so. For example, varying local projections may be justified according to the existence or lack of sufficient capacity; recent federal, state or county investments that support growth and preservation; an appropriately dense mixed-use development format; socioeconomic or development trends; availability of land; and/or other factors.
- If the petitioner has a COAH petition, the projections used for that process should be consistent with the Plan Endorsement petition.

Statement of Proposed Changes to Policy Map

- Proposed map changes must conform to OSG's mapping criteria in terms of methodology. Petitioners should work with OSG's GIS Unit to ensure conformance.
- Proposed map changes must be justified according to Appendix 6.2 of the Plan Endorsement Guidelines.
- Proposed map changes must be justified according to delineation criteria and policy objectives for Centers and Planning Areas described in the State Plan. The petition must explain any inconsistencies with the criteria.
- The petition should provide general design concepts for Centers, ideally in a visual format or at least through a detailed description. This narrative should also describe major projects in the development pipeline and how they support the center concept.

Transportation

- The petition should provide a detailed statement describing how existing or planned transportation infrastructure will be able to accommodate anticipated growth and development.
- The petition should demonstrate how the municipality's planning efforts support an efficient transportation network with regard to road networks as well as inter-modal linkages for all relevant transportation modes including transit (bus, rail, light rail, ferry), bicycle, pedestrian, goods movement (truck and rail freight), air and waterborne.
- Compliance with the State Highway Access Management Code, including zoning, will be addressed through the PIA and must be completed within two years of the date of endorsement.

- Compliance with the Airport Safety and Zoning Act is required if the municipality contains or is affected by a public use airport.

Infrastructure

- The petition should provide a detailed statement describing how existing or planned infrastructure will be able to accommodate anticipated growth and development. These infrastructure systems include water supply, wastewater management, transportation systems, and utilities.

Housing

- The petition should discuss how and where housing, especially affordable housing, is to be located, with respect to environmental resources and available infrastructure. Prospective housing sites should not be encumbered by environmental constraints, and should be in areas served by water and wastewater infrastructure. This information should be reflected in the Land Use Plan Element.
- The petition should discuss how the municipality will provide housing that is appropriate to the scale and resources of the area and accessible to services and other neighborhoods (e.g. sidewalks, bicycle paths). Considerations for design, access and capacity need to be reflected in a separate statement or in the Land Use Plan Element and/or, if deemed necessary, the Housing Element. Regulatory changes to fulfill these objectives should be part of amendments to development regulations called for by the PIA.
- COAH Housing Element and Fair Share Plan must be provided if available.
- If a COAH-standard plan is not available, the petition must include a Housing Element.
- A revised Housing Element, at least a full draft form, will be required if there exist significant concerns not addressed in a COAH plan or Housing Element about any of the following:
 - rapid pace of residential development
 - high volume of prior-round affordable housing obligations
 - potentially high growth share due to high level of projected residential and/or commercial development
- The revised Housing Element shall be consistent with the Land Use Plan Element and be adopted through the PIA, if not earlier. Changes must be reviewed by state agencies; substantive changes, if inconsistent with the agreements reached through Plan Endorsement, will have a negative impact on the periodic review.

Natural Resource Inventory

- OSG and DEP will provide model examples of the NRI. DEP will provide technical assistance if necessary so that the petitioner can produce a suitable NRI. The NRI should be a stand-alone document that provides text and visual information about the natural resource characteristics and environmental features specific to a municipality. The NRI should be adopted by the local planning board as part of the master plan, either as an appendix or as part of a conservation element

Environmental Justice Inventory

- Environmental Justice Communities are defined as communities where minority and/or low-income populations are exposed to a disproportionate amount of industrial pollution

or other environmental hazards as compared to the rest of the community. DEP will provide municipal petitioners with an inventory of sites within their community that are known to either emit pollution or be contaminated for reference, review and consideration during comprehensive planning efforts. Municipal petitioners are encouraged to review this information and consider whether population, demographic and pollution discharge information reveals a potential for environmental justice issues.

Redevelopment Plans

- Any redevelopment plans will be considered in a manner similar to the Land Use Plan Element in terms of State Plan consistency and consideration of other relevant planning efforts and NRI data.
- Redevelopment plans should be incorporated into the Land Use Plan Element in the Plan Endorsement process and/or amended in the early phases of the PIA.

Farmland Preservation and Agriculture Retention Plans

- These documents must be submitted if they exist. Where agriculture is a significant part of a municipality and such plans do not exist, the petition must include a status report that outlines the initiatives that encourage the retention and viability of the local agricultural industry.
- Where relevant, these plans may be created and/or updated through the PIA.

Emergency Planning

- Where a municipality is sensitive to risks of flooding, nuclear hazards or other disasters, the petition should include formal evidence that the municipality has an Emergency Operating Plan approved by the NJ State Police.

Planning and Implementation Agreement

- The PIA must be date-specific.
- Where a PIA is front-loaded to address some of the above issues, OSG will recommend to the SPC that the first biennial review be moved up to a year after endorsement.
- The petitioner should be vigilant in ensuring that the PIA timetable is manageable. A repeated pattern of significant delay in achieving PIA tasks, in particular if state agencies have kept to their timetables, will be considered in an ongoing fashion and may result in a revocation of endorsement during the biennial review process.