

**Master Plan
2019**



**Borough of Somerville
Planning Board**

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Hyperlinks

http://www.somervillenj.org/filestorage/4100/4102/4153/4207/6-Historic_Preservation_Element.pdf

http://www.somervillenj.org/filestorage/4100/4102/4941/SOMERVILLE_STORMWATER_MANAGEMENT_PLAN.pdf

I. INTRODUCTION

A. General

The Borough of Somerville, incorporated in 1909, has evolved into a mature urban community, with most of its land developed and its vital community facilities in place. It now occupies an important position in the Somerset region. The borough's approximate 2.3 square miles consists of a diverse, yet stable, environment that enjoys a mixture of residential and non-residential land uses.

The emphasis is on conserving the best qualities of an established community while planning for selected redevelopment and revitalization, and encouraging sensitive infill development that is compatible with the surrounding areas.

In formulating the master plan recommendations, the Borough Planning Board has been directed by a desire to enhance those attributes that contribute to the vibrancy of the borough community, while still providing proper guidance for those influences created by changing market demands within the region.

The challenges confronting Somerville relate to preservation, revitalization and redevelopment. Before articulating specific goals and policies upon which the various master plan recommendations for the physical economic and social development of the borough are advanced, it is necessary to develop an overall development strategy for Somerville.

The comprehensive development objective for Somerville Borough is stated as follows:

Somerville Borough is a residential community and should remain committed to that purpose. Housing is a critical borough resource and should be protected. Critical resources such as the central business district, County Complex, and Medical Center also need to be preserved without sacrificing the existing character of the borough community.

Every effort should be made to preserve the existing residential amenity, while promoting the central business district; to permit office and mixed residential re-use of existing older buildings in designated areas without compromising existing residential character; to preserve the borough's historic tradition through planning; to improve the vehicular and pedestrian circulation throughout the borough; and to increase recreational opportunities for all segments of the borough's population.

Augmenting this overall development strategy for Somerville Borough, more specific goals and policies are advanced in Chapter II (Master Plan Elements).

B. Master Plan

Somerville Borough is planning for its future. It must address itself to the task of carefully combining new land uses with existing development within its boundaries. As Somerville plans, complex development issues have begun to emerge, e.g., maintaining those physical attributes which contribute to the borough's quality of life, strengthening its commercial and office land uses, protecting historic properties and existing residential development from encroachment, encouraging an increase in economic opportunities, and providing opportunities for various housing options.

The Master Plan is a guide that re-establishes and refines planning and development policies first set into motion with the borough's 1969 and 1990 Master Plans. This plan relates to the distribution and interrelationship of future uses of land, housing needs, movement of goods and people, and the expansion of community facilities and services. It supersedes all previous Master Plan documents.

The plan is a guide oriented to the year 2030 as a logical reference point to which regional, state, county, and other public or private agencies could relate their respective planning and development decisions. It sets no precise timetable for the realization of each of its component parts; rather, it is an attempt to give rational forethought to the development of these elements as the borough continues to grow over the next two (2) decades.

The plan is not a permanent or unalterable document. According to state law, it must be periodically reexamined every ten (10) years or sooner, depending upon the rate at which changes in the conditions or circumstances affect the basic assumptions upon which the Master Plan is based. Its strength, however, is predicated upon its comprehensiveness. To accept one part out of context with other parts would reduce the effectiveness of the plan. Accordingly, any subsequent change in the plan should be preceded by an investigation of its implications and effect on interrelated elements of the plan. Only in this manner can modifications be made without destroying the integrity of the Master Plan.

C. Nature of the Master Planning Process

The planning process used in developing Somerville's Master Plan involved three (3) phases of study.

The first phase dealt with the preparation of Redevelopment Plans which formed the basis for comprehensive review and appropriate revisions to the state required elements of a Master Plan for the entire borough. The special studies included:

West Main Street Redevelopment Plan

Kirby Avenue Redevelopment Plan

Eastern Central Business District Redevelopment Plan

Gaston Avenue Redevelopment Plan

Station Area Landfill Redevelopment Plan

The second phase of this planning process involves updating basic data pertinent to the Master Plan at both regional and local levels. Such background documentation has been made part of this Master Plan document.

The Master Plan, or phase three, is summarized in this report. This plan consists of refinements to the policies and goals originally established in the prior Master Plan as necessary to guide and control future development. Together with appropriate maps, proposals relating to the spatial distribution of land uses, circulation and necessary community facilities to support such future uses are advanced.

During the process of updating the plan, a series of open public sessions were held by the Planning Board.

II. MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS

A. Goals and Policies for the Future

Somerville has formulated goals and policies to guide future decision making in the borough. The goals and policies described in this section are the basis for the recommendations of the Master Plan. These goals and policies should be reviewed periodically and altered when necessary.

Housing Goal and Policies

Goal:

Provide a range of housing types to meet varied resident population's needs as well as to preserve established residential areas and promote redevelopment by establishing redevelopment areas.

Policies:

Evaluate existing regulations to ensure the preservation of established residential areas.

Locate housing in selected locations within and around the Central Business District to stimulate business and retail activity beyond traditional work hours.

Prevent the deterioration of individual structures from exerting a deleterious effect on the surrounding area by adopting reasonable regulations controlling maintenance standards. Building code standards should be actively enforced throughout the borough.

Increase the opportunities for households to obtain satisfactory housing at a variety of prices.

Encourage, where appropriate, the creation of owner-occupied housing.

Local Economy Goal and Policies

Goal:

Encourage development and improvement of non-residential uses in designated areas. A strong business community is vital to the fiscal health of the borough.

Policies:

Maintain the economic vitality of the Central Business District by improving its physical appearance and introducing new compatible revenue producing land uses.

Support the Central Business District (CBD) so that it continues to be a place of destination.

Revitalize the commercial development along North Gaston Avenue, between East Cliff Street and Union Avenue and along Union Avenue between North Gaston and Eastern Avenues by establishing the Gaston Area Redevelopment area which promotes commercial/retail development of properties fronting North Gaston and Union Avenues by encouraging mixed use pedestrian scale development (the Redevelopment Area was established, however the policy remains applicable).

Promote commercial/office use and properties located in CBD by establishment of the West Main Street, Eastern Central Business District Redevelopment plans, creation of the Arts District on Division Street and enactment B-1 and B-2 zone districts.

Encourage commercial/retail development of portions of the landfill by adoption of the Station Area Landfill Redevelopment Plan.

Open Space Goal and Policies

Goal:

Continue the creation of local park and recreation systems designed to provide a variety of passive and active recreational opportunities to all members of the borough.

Policies:

Encourage the development of the borough-wide "greenbelt", incorporating the existing park land along Peters Brook and natural areas along the Raritan River to connect various neighborhoods of the borough.

Improve borough-owned land where possible and as necessary for recreational purposes.

Provide recreation areas which are easily accessible to all segments of the population.

Maintain, improve, and expand borough parks and recreation areas in a comprehensive manner.

Development of park facilities should minimize any adverse effects on neighbors.

Continue participation in the Raritan River Greenway which connects local greenways/open space/conservation areas throughout the Regional Center (Borough of Somerville, Raritan and a portion of Bridgewater).

Enhance the connection with the Borough's open space/parks with walk/biking paths that includes a pedestrian bridge that connects Clark's Woods which is located north of Route 202/206 to the parks and recreational facilities located within the Borough. The connection of the Borough's open space is referred to the Peters Brook Greenway and this greenway also links County owned open space (located within the Borough) with Borough park land.

Provide Pedestrian connection with the Bridgewater Commons Mall with Peter Brook Greenway.

Incorporate active and passive open space within the Station Area Landfill Redevelopment area known as the "Green Seam". The "Green Seam" will provide residents and businesses located within the Redevelopment Area with direct access to walk/biking/running paths and open space located within the "Green Seam". The "Green Seam" will be connected to the Peters Brook/Raritan River Greenway with the goal of connecting these active/passive creational areas with Duke Farms. The Peters Brook greenway extends to the west side of Route 206 by way of underpass the crosses Route 206.

Circulation Goal and Policies

Goal:

Develop a coordinated road system which enables the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

Policies:

Emphasize short term road improvements, limited road widenings and key intersection improvements to increase the capacity of the existing street network and eliminate traffic hazards.

Discourage increased through traffic from impacting the residential character of the community by emphasizing (by way of signage and other techniques) the use of arterial roadways as major intra-community thoroughfares.

Seek improved access (vehicular and pedestrian) to the Central Business District, including development of off-street parking, shared parking facilities that encourage motorist to park and explore the Central Business District on foot.

Encourage connections with pedestrian and bicycle facilities and other forms of public transit.

Ensure that all routes to schools are pedestrian friendly and have enhanced crosswalks and signs.

Adopt the NJ DOT Complete Streets as guidelines for the Borough which include insuring areas within 1/4 mile of a transit stop are pedestrian friendly and that all sidewalks and road interfaces are ADA compatible.

Minimize conflicts among local, through and pedestrian traffic on Main Street, giving priority to the needs of shoppers and pedestrians.

Enhance existing pedestrian cross walks so that they are more visible and provide more warning to motorists.

Implement traffic calming measures where appropriate.

Central Business District Goal and Policies

Goal:

Improve the physical appearance and mix of businesses in the CBD to further create an attractive and diversified business area.

Policies:

Continue to concentrate businesses in the existing downtown area and avoid dispersion or linear expansion of commercial activities. The CBD should be the commercial and professional center of the borough in a compact setting.

Discourage one story structures in the CBD. Encourage residential development on upper floor spaces to prevent building deterioration while still protecting retail and service-oriented business activities on the first floor.

Provide unified landscaped parking facilities linked to business activities by attractive walkways.

Encourage architectural compatibility within the Central Business District.

Emphasize development and redevelopment opportunities in the eastern portion of the CBD that reinforces retail, service and residential functions of the downtown.

Encourage the redevelopment of under-utilized properties within the CBD according to a unified downtown revitalization plan.

Explore creative parking solutions to meet current and future parking demands.

Monitor streetscape improvements to ensure that they are functioning as intended.

Maintain the Division Street Pedestrian Mall.

Promote the expansion of the arts in the CBD.

Design Goal and Policies

Goal:

Improve the visual appearance of the business areas while protecting residential neighborhoods from encroachment and ensure improvements are made which respect the architectural character of the borough.

Policies:

Help preserve and strengthen the built environment by providing landscaping such as street trees and plant screening in public rights-of-way and within open spaces and encourage landscaping of major private facilities, such as parking lots.

Encourage attractive site appearance, consistency and good design.

Ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses and with prevailing physical features, e.g. setbacks, buffer between incompatible uses.

Develop a coordinated policy covering the location and design of public and private parking areas

County and Medical Center Expansion Goal and Policies

Goal:

Encourage county and medical center expansion opportunities to certain designated areas to limit any adverse effects of expansion on established residential neighborhoods.

Policies:

Develop Master Plan guidelines to ensure integration of Somerset County and the Medical Center expansion plans without detrimental effect on the borough's existing neighborhood fabric.

Encourage appropriate setbacks, buffers along abutting residential edges.

Encourage the County to lease space, not purchase additional property, for future expansion, to preserve the tax base.

Historical Goal and Policies

Goal:

Safeguard the historic, aesthetic, and cultural heritage of Somerville.

Policies:

Protect architecturally significant buildings that contribute to the character of the community.

Support the Historic Advisory Committee in their role to promote, protect and preserve the historic heritage, character and architecture of the Borough of Somerville by increasing public awareness of that heritage on local, regional, state, and national levels, and by creating for our citizens and our descendants resources that accentuate and emphasize the town's history.

Reinforce the historic gateways into the downtown area as part of an overall visual experience when entering a special place.

B. 1990 Master Plan Land Use Plan

The 1990 Master Plan Land Use Plan characterized Somerville as a developed community, with very little vacant land remaining for development purposes, that there was significant potential for redevelopment within selected areas of the downtown.

A "Land Use Plan Changes" map was prepared that depicted areas where land use policy changes were proposed. The map (attached) had identified 11 policy change areas. These areas are briefly described as follows;

Area 1:

This area, also known as the East Main Street area, contains the Franklin Street neighborhood. It is bordered to the north by East High Street, to the south by the railroad tracks, to the east by Veterans Memorial Drive and to the west by South Bridge Street.

The policy recommendations for this area is generalized as follows:

Encourage mixed use redevelopment, residential, office, retail in nature in this area.

The area now consists of the Eastern Central Business District (ECBD) Redevelopment Area.

Area 2:

Area 2 represents the major commercial center of Somerville. These businesses are generally oriented along Main Street with some peripheral activity located along side streets.

The center encompasses the area generally bounded by North and South Bridge Streets, West High Street, Veterans Memorial Drive, West and Mountain Avenue.

The land use policies for this area stated in the 1990 Master Plan are summarized as follows:

Landmark Mall (this is now the location of the five (5) story building on West Main Street and ShopRite) and associated parking areas should be considered for future mixed-use development rather than remaining solely as a one-story retail/service activity. Ground floor uses should be limited exclusively to retail and service uses in order to encourage a concentrated business core to remain oriented towards pedestrian shopping patterns.

Currently (2019) a significant portion of this area is part of the West Main Street Redevelopment Area.

Area 2A:

Area 2A is located on the former landfill and included the NJ Transit station. The area is now part of the Station Area Landfill Redevelopment Plan. The uses for consideration stated in the 1990 Master Plan included hotels, corporate offices, and entertainment activities.

The area is currently (2019) part of the Station Area Landfill Redevelopment Plan and the NJ Transit portion of the Redevelopment Area was recently approved for apartments and town homes with a small retail component and community center located in the immediate vicinity of the train station.

Area 3:

Area 3 is located between West High Street and West Cliff Street between Ross Street and Mountain Avenue. The area is a transition area between the downtown and established residential neighborhoods north of the CBD.

The 1990 Master Plan policy recommendations is summarized as follows;

Develop stringent bulk standards for infill development on vacant parcels and/ or parcels subject to private redevelopment.

This area currently (2019) consists of the Professional Office-Residential (PO-R) zone district.

Area 3A:

Area 3A is located between Ross Street and Ross Brook from East Cliff Street to West High Street. This area is across from the County Complex. Any redevelopment plans for this area should be designated in scale with the adjacent residential structures along East Cliff Street with modestly increasing building height in proximity to the county complex.

The current zoning (2019) for this area is Professional Office-Residential (PO-R) zone district.

Area 4:

This area is located on the western side of Route 206 between the Raritan River and the Highway. Area 4 consists mostly of environmentally constrained land; wetlands and floodplains cover the majority of this area.

The 1990 Master Plan policies for this area is summarized as follows;

Establish a Conservation Zone for the northern portion of Area 4 (Borough of Raritan parcels). Reserve a "greenbelt" strip along the Raritan River to link eventually with the existing park land in the southern portion of Somerville.

These lands are currently (2019) part of the Station Area Landfill Redevelopment Area and the redevelopment plan for this area is open space to be used for active/passive recreation.

Area 5:

Area 5 is located in the southern portion of Somerville. The area is bounded to the south by the Raritan River, to the east by Peter's Brook, to the west by South Bridge Street, and to the north by Fifth Street.

The 1990 Master Plan envisioned that consideration and analysis be devoted to the possibility of additional public service type facilities.

Currently (2019) this area is zoned R-2 and I-2. The residential areas are zoned R-2, the Industrial areas I-2, redevelopment of this area is not currently envisioned.

Area 6:

Area 6 can be described best as an area with no land use pattern. This area, which is bordered by the railroad tracks, Second street, Hamilton Street and apartment complex on South Bridge Street, consists of residential, neighborhood commercial, and light industrial uses.

The 1990 Master Plan policy recommendations for this area is summarized as follows:

This area should become integrated with the existing residences in the surrounding area through the introduction of multi-family residential redevelopment opportunities.

Currently (2019), except for retail properties located along South Bridge Street the area is zoned as R-3 which permits single and multi-family dwellings.

Area 7:

Area 7 is located in the eastern portion of Somerville. The area is bordered by Loeser Avenue to the west, East Main Street to the north, the railroad tracks to the south, and Haynes Street to the east.

The 1990 Master Plan land use policy recommendations for this area is summarized as follows:

Maintain single family residential character of the area and introduce limited multi-family development south of Fairview Avenue.

The area is now (2019) comprised as the Kirby Avenue Redevelopment Area and the redevelopment plan allows for multi-family dwellings on parcels that adjoin the railroad tracks with minor retail allowed on Loeser Avenue. Two (2) multi-family redevelopment projects were approved and one of the projects is currently under construction.

Area 8:

Area 8 consists primarily of the frontage properties along North Gaston Avenue between Union Avenue and East Main Street.

The 1990 Master Plan policy recommendations is summarized as follows;

Develop stringent bulk standards for any infill development or redevelopment of existing properties. Permit office conversions of principal buildings that do not increase the existing floor area.

The northern portion of this area (north of East Cliff Street) is now (2019) the Gaston Area Redevelopment Area. The area to the south of East Cliff Street is zoned as the Professional Office Residential Zone (PO-R). The Gaston Avenue Redevelopment Plan generally allows for mixed use developments that is scale with the surrounding buildings.

Area 9:

Area 9 is located around the Somerset Medical Center and extends from Union Avenue to East Main Street. The zoning in this area is R-1 and R-2 residential with the frontage properties along Main Street zoned for professional offices.

The 1990 Master Plan policies seek to promote this land use pattern and is summarized as follows:

Create a Hospital Service Zone that incorporates and integrates the existing hospital facilities with future hospital expansion.

Currently (2019) the Hospital Zone District exists to address Area 9.

Area 10:

Area 10 is best described as an area with historical sites. The Dutch Parsonage and the Wallace House are two historically important structures in this area as evidenced by their National Register status. It is envisioned that the parcels should be maintained as historic sites.

Area 11:

Area 11 boundaries include Altamont Street to the north, Mountain Avenue to the east, Cornell Boulevard to the west, and Somerset Street and Bell Avenue to the south.

Residential, professional office, service related, and public uses are located in the area. Zoning for the area consists of Professional Office, Residential, and Business Zones.

The 1990 Master Plan policy recommendations for this area is summarized as follows:

Permit office and residential conversions of a principal building that do not increase the existing floor area.

To address the above stated goals, the properties fronting on West End Avenue, from Mountain Avenue to Cornell Boulevard are currently zoned (2019) PO-R zone district. The PO-R zone district allows for both residential of professional office use of the buildings.

C. Land Use

As briefly mentioned in the previous land use section the Borough has adopted redevelopment areas. These areas are the following; Station Area Landfill Redevelopment Plan; West Main; Eastern Central Business District; Gaston Avenue and Kirby Avenue. The purpose of the redevelopment zones is to encourage redevelopment and revitalization of these areas. The goals of each redevelopment area are stated below. The redevelopment plans can be accessed through the Borough's website.

1. Station Area and Landfill Redevelopment Area

The goals and objectives for this area is as follows:

- To remediate and close the municipal landfill in such a manner consistent with the intended uses of the Plan.
- To provide for a variety of land uses that will enhance the Borough tax base, promote economic development and growth opportunities, and serve the needs of the community.
- To provide for a mixed-use development pattern complementary with the Borough that should also complement the existing historic character of Somerville.
- To reinforce the regional significance of Somerville consistent with Somerville's designation as a Regional Center in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.
- To develop a critical mass of new housing adjacent to the existing NJ Transit rail station, encouraging greater transit ridership and mode choice.
- To embrace the NJ Transit rail station as an anchor and focal point, as well as a catalyst for redevelopment.
- To enhance the market base and economic viability of downtown Somerville by placing a significant number of new households within a short walk of downtown commercial uses.
- To create a compact, pedestrian-friendly extension of the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, through the use of Smart Growth planning and design techniques and to achieve the green site design and green building design requirements enumerated within the Redevelopment Plan. This will work to enhance the environmental integrity of the site and achieve a model for sustainability and smart growth.
- To create a vibrant gateway to downtown Somerville from Route 206.

- To create a new street network that will facilitate and enhance vehicular and pedestrian circulation in and around the Redevelopment Area, including downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods.
- To provide for a greater variety of housing opportunities and choices within the Borough.
- To provide a network of open spaces for Somerville residents, connecting active and passive recreation areas between the Raritan River and the downtown core, including existing community resources such as the Peter's Brook Greenway and the Old Dutch Parsonage. The Redevelopment Plan can be viewed on the borough's website.

2. Gaston Avenue

The goals and objectives of this redevelopment plan are as follows:

- Return unproductive and underutilized land to productive use consistent with the vision of the Stakeholders.
- Increase property values and tax revenues by providing development that enhances the Borough economic vitality and serves the needs of the community.
- Support the adjoining residential neighborhoods by encouraging boutique retailers to open within a short distance to these neighborhoods.
- Create an environment that invites interaction between residents, encourages, outdoor living and is aesthetically attractive on a pedestrian scale.
- Ensure that new development does not adversely impact the exiting residential streets by requiring traffic impact studies be performed on development projects.
- Provide for a greater variety of housing opportunities and choices within the Borough.
- Bolster the surrounding residential community by adding a new diverse mixture of residential dwellings.
- Embrace the principles of smart growth and sustainability by creating a compact moderate density development that is pedestrian friendly and consistent with the Metropolitan Planning Area "PA1" and regional center designation in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The Redevelopment Plan can be accessed on the borough's website.

3. Eastern Central Business District

The goals and objectives of the plan include the following:

- To reinforce and support the retail base of the central business district through general redevelopment of the area, promoting an appropriate mixture of retail, service, office and residential uses, prohibiting inappropriate uses, providing additional parking for shoppers, employees and residents, and encouraging aesthetic improvements.
- To eliminate conflicts between various existing land uses either by removal or alteration of such uses. When elimination of such conflicts is not possible, the plan seeks to mitigate such conflicts through use, bulk and buffer regulations.
- To provide improved housing conditions through the development of new dwelling units, including both market-rate and affordable housing.
- To improve vehicular traffic flow and safety by reducing the number of driveway openings and inappropriate on-street parking spaces, by planning for various street improvements, and by promoting transit-oriented development within walking distance of the Somerville rail station and local bus routes.
- To encourage the assembly of undersized parcels in order to accommodate improved use, layout and design of buildings and other improvements.
- To provide incentives for fuller utilization of vacant or under-developed properties.
- To reduce overcrowding of buildings and pavement on undersized lots.
- To promote the creation of additional off-street parking to serve existing and new development within the area.
- To enhance the streetscape through pedestrian improvements such as upgraded pavement, lighting, street trees and planters, benches and similar improvements, and through the installation/relocation of electric, telephone and cable television lines underground
- To increase property values and tax revenues in the area through general redevelopment of the area.
- To improve the aesthetic appearance of the area through general redevelopment, upgraded design, increased landscaping, buffers and screening of unattractive areas.

- To provide incentives for the remediation of existing soil and/or groundwater contamination in the area through redevelopment of contaminated properties.
- To mitigate impacts from flooding by increasing open space along Peter’s Brook and through the redesign and redevelopment of flood-prone areas. The Redevelopment Plan can be viewed on the borough’s website.

4. Kirby Avenue

The goals and objectives of this redevelopment plan are as follows:

- Return unproductive and underutilized land to productive use consistent with the vision of the Stakeholders.
- Increase property values and tax revenues by providing development that enhances the Borough economic vitality and serves the needs of the community.
- Support the downtown businesses by placing a significant number of new households within a short distance of the downtown business district.
- Create an environment that invites interaction between residents, encourages walking, outdoor living and is aesthetically attractive on a pedestrian scale.
- Improve traffic and pedestrian circulation in and around the area by creating a new street network that is seamless with the existing street network.
- Provide for a greater variety of housing opportunities and choices within the Borough.
- Remediate the Litgo site (now referred to as 40 Haynes Street) in a manner consistent with the intended use of the site and with NJDEP regulations.
- Bolster the surrounding residential community by adding a new diverse mixture of residential dwellings.
- Support the Medical Center by providing an option to construct medical offices (on Block 50, Lot 1) which is within a few blocks of the hospital. *While this objective is stated herein since it is stated in Redevelopment Plan, this objective will be omitted when revisions are performed to the Redevelopment Plan.*
- Embrace the principles of smart growth and sustainability by creating a compact moderate density development that is pedestrian friendly and consistent with the Metropolitan Planning Area “PA1” and regional center designation in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The Redevelopment Plan can be viewed on the borough’s website.

5. West Main Street

The “local objective” is the revitalization of Main Street’s western end. The Redevelopment Plan is intended to assist in accomplishing this objective.

Other Land Use Policy Recommendations

The policy recommendations for existing zone districts is as follows:

- The PO-R zone district should encourage, where possible, the adaptive re-use of existing housing stock so the buildings can be used for multiple uses so that they are fully utilized.

D. Circulation Analysis

1. General Survey

In a developed community such as Somerville, circulation proposals need to recognize the constraints imposed by an established pattern of roadways. To a large extent, with the exception of the Veterans Memorial Drive (formerly called Urban Drive) Extension and the South Davenport Street extension, the thrust of Somerville's circulation plan is geared toward operational improvements designed to increase capacity of the existing road network. Such improvements include upgrading intersections, new or revised signalization, turning lane additions, road closures and the possible introduction of one-way street systems in limited locations.

Various traffic reports were reviewed in the context of preparing this updated circulation plan. Also, from a regional perspective the county's circulation plan studies were examined. The “Road Classification Map” depicts the various street classification throughout the Borough.

2. Vehicular Transportation

Today, the primary means of transportation in Somerville are cars and trucks. The 2015 American Community Survey Five (5) Year Estimates reported that over 86% of Somerville Borough's workers drove to work or utilized car pools. In addition to local workers, persons from other municipalities pass through the borough on their way to work in other parts of the region. Most of the commercial establishments in Somerville are dependent on trucking for shipment of materials and goods. Also, the borough is surrounded by routes which carry regional truck and automobile traffic. The highway system is a vital transportation facility for the borough.

3. Traffic Circulation Concept

The current traffic circulation pattern within the Borough of Somerville is focused on Main Street for east-west travel and Bridge Street for north-south travel. Other parallel streets, such as High Street, Veterans Memorial Highway (formerly known as Urban Drive), Mountain Avenue, Grove Street and North Gaston Avenue serve as alternates, but their effectiveness is diminished by the fact that they tie back to either Main Street or Bridge Street.

The intersection geometry and levels of congestion along either corridor then dictate the effectiveness of the alternate routes to serve as east-west or north-south by-passes.

Several key roadway links and extensions have been studied previously and roadway improvements have been identified which will benefit the borough's downtown area. These include the following proposed improvement:

- The connection of Veterans Memorial Drive and U.S. 206 through a proposed roadway extending from South Davenport Street.

These improvements will provide additional roadway capacity at locations away from the core area of Main and Bridge Streets. They will serve as new or upgraded alternate routes for through traffic as well as that destined to specific sections of the downtown area.

The concept of pulling through traffic from the core area and orienting it to a perimeter system should continue to be a primary objective of the borough's overall circulation plan. By making it easier for through traffic to by-pass the downtown's core area, the Main Street and Bridge Street corridors can be oriented to improving access for shopping and work destinations in the main commercial center of the borough. Such a perimeter access is similar to a loop road serving a major shopping mall whereby traffic can easily circulate about the downtown and enter main activity nodes at designated internal access locations. This traffic pattern will ease traffic congestion within the core area and enhance the area's economic marketability.

Other roadway and intersection improvements to support and complement this perimeter traffic concept have also been identified and are discussed in below (Roadway Improvement Proposals). Although they deal with more site-specific actions, when considered in total they represent a significant contribution to the overall circulation concept.

In practical application within a developed community, it is not possible in all instances to achieve such a circulation principle; however, a close approximation is possible in Somerville. With respect to right-of-way designation, due to the built environment and historic resource sensitivities that may be adversely affected if a direct application of the roadway classification system were to occur, adjustments in the roadway design criteria will be necessary on a case by case basis where existing conditions dictate such modification.

4. Roadway Improvement Proposals

Described below are the various functional roadway classifications which are illustrated on Map; "Road Classification Map." They have been advanced in recognition of future traffic volumes potentially possible from the various land use and redevelopment proposals contained in other sections of this report.

State Roadways - These roadways link important population centers with one another or with other regional roadways.

The state roadways in Somerville include Route 206, a small portion of Route 202 in the northwestern corner of the borough, and Route 28 which consists of Main Street to Gaston Avenue to Union Avenue. These roads carry heavy traffic volumes and serve to carry commuter traffic. Route 22 is on the northern border with the borough. Road rights-of-way are as defined by the state for the particular road way maintained in their jurisdiction. They range from 80-120 feet.

County Arterial Roads - These roads include Mountain Avenue from Somerset Street to Route 22, East Main Street from Gaston Avenue to Bridgewater Township line, and Somerset Street from Main Street to Route 206. County arterials carry medium to heavy volumes of traffic and direct traffic onto the regional roadway network.

A signalized intersection at East Main Street and Adamsville Road is recommended to alleviate excessive queuing that occurs from motorists trying to enter East Main Street from the residential side streets.

Borough Arterial Roads - The majority of Somerville's major roads are in this category. Due to the developed nature along most of the roads, the typical right-of-way (ROW) suggested ranges from 60 to 66 feet. Cartway widths would vary depending on existing conditions. However, a cartway width for these roads should be a minimum of 30 feet. However, widths do vary to 40 feet. Borough arterial roads should be designed to carry medium to heavy volumes of traffic through the borough and connect into the regional road network. Borough arterial roadways include: Urban Drive and Extension Road (now called Veterans Memorial Drive), Bridge Street, Cliff Street, High Street, Park Avenue, Somerville and Grove Street from East Main Street to Route 22.

Borough Collector Roads - Collector roads provide connection between local residential development, employment centers and downtown commercial center and higher order roads such as Route 206, Route 22, and county and borough arterial roads. Typically, these roads have only two lanes of varying rights-of-way carrying low to moderate volumes of traffic at moderate speeds. Because of the grid pattern of Somerville, local traffic is spread evenly throughout the borough. Collector streets in the borough are: Rehill Avenue, Loeser Avenue, William Street, Green Street, Davenport Street, Mercer Street, Cornell Boulevard, and Hamilton Street. Rights-of-way range from 50 to 60 feet with corresponding variation in cartway widths from 24 to 36 feet.

Local Streets - The remaining town roads fall within this classification. These streets are residential streets designed to provide direct access to properties and are expected to carry low volumes of local traffic to higher order roadways. Rights-of-way are typically 50 feet with 30-foot cartway widths.

E. Community Facilities Plan

Community facilities such as parks, conservation areas, schools, libraries, firehouses, and municipal buildings provide services vital to Somerville's needs as a regional service center. These are also essential ingredients of a community that enhance the quality of life in the borough. In order to strengthen the image of Somerville as a major service center, the borough's Community Facilities Plan is generally oriented toward:

The recognition of the Medical Center and County Complex as beneficial facilities to borough residents and the region;

The provision of new facilities to service residents in parts of the borough where there are deficiencies;

The relocation of certain existing community facilities into parts of the borough best suited for those particular facilities.

Major facility proposals are depicted on the map "Generalized Community Facilities Plan." A summary of these proposals is highlighted below.

1. Recreation/Conservation

Included in the Recreational Element is a detailed inventory and evaluation of the borough's existing recreational facilities. Detailed recommendations are included in the Recreation Element. The key recommendations include:

Creation of a new community park facility at Southside Avenue/Loeser Avenue.

Key pedestrian walkway linkages between schools, the municipal building and downtown shopping areas are also suggested. These are recommended to be specially landscaped walkways (trees, shrubs, signs, street furniture) primarily utilizing selected existing sidewalks.

Suggested for conservation are major environmentally sensitive areas. These are located along the Raritan River and encompass recognized flood hazard and national wetland areas.

Coordination of recreation usage of Vanderveer School recreation facilities with borough facilities is also advanced to maximize the benefit that sharing of such existing facilities can provide.

New recreation facilities in the eastern and northwestern portion of the borough are seen as mini-park additions to serve the surrounding neighborhoods.

A comprehensive street shade tree program along major roadways within the borough, such as Union Avenue, Bridge Street, and North Gaston Avenue, in order to enhance the image and environmental quality of these road corridors is recommended.

Connection of the trails/paths in the landfill (i.e. "Green Seam") with trail/path that connects the Borough & County open space.

Promote complete streets whereas the streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

Promote the arts overlay district on Division Street and arts throughout the borough including integrating sculptures and murals in parks/open space and along trails/paths located within the borough.

2. Public Facilities

Since the last Master Plan completed for the borough in 1990, the public library was integrated into the Somerset County library system, school expansions were conducted at Van Derveer elementary school, the high school was expanded, the preschool program was moved to Van Derveer, a pedestrian mall was created in the heart of the CBD (i.e. Division Street) and renovations were completed on the Municipal Building, two splash parks were constructed, and land was purchased on North Gaston Avenue for construction of a new emergency services complex. These facility improvements including the future construction of the emergency services building will be adequate to serve the expected borough population for at least the next decade.

Other public/semi-public facilities of the town shown on the Community Facilities Plan Map to include firehouses, Rescue Squad, senior citizen center, YMCA, Fire Museum, and Post Office are encouraged to continue as valuable assets to community life in Somerville.

Over time, consideration should be given to providing a community facilities center to provide social services and indoor recreation/ craft activities for segments of the borough's population requiring such services.

In 2002, a detailed Needs Assessment and Existing Facilities Analysis of the Borough's current emergency services facilities was performed. The findings of this analysis included a recommendation to create a new Emergency Services Complex. To construct the emergency services complex, the Borough purchased property located on North Gaston Avenue. It is recommended that this facility be constructed in the near future and the recommendations stated in the Emergency Services Master Plan be considered.

3. Other Community Facilities

Certain key facilities which add to the community structure of Somerville are not provided by municipal government: Medical Center, and various county legal, social service and judicial functions. These facilities also serve the regional population.

This Master Plan supports the continuation and intensification of such facilities and services with the borough as they contribute to the importance of its regional service center role. As specific expansion plans are prepared for such facilities, they should be cooperatively reviewed to ensure compatibility with other aspects of this plan, so that their integration within the community fabric is accomplished in a harmonious fashion. Other sections of this plan provide policy guidance with respect to the future expansion of these facilities.

Also noted are certain special facilities which include cemeteries, federal and state historic structures.

F. Housing Element

The current Housing Element of Somerville Borough Master Plan was prepared in 2009. This Housing Element, once adopted, will supersede the existing Housing Element. A Housing Element is technically an optional element of a master plan but a municipality may not pass a zoning ordinance until the housing plan element of the Master Plan is adopted (as set forth by N.J.S.A. 40:55D-62a). The required elements of the housing plan are set forth in N.J.S.A. 52:27D-310 and the rules are at N.J.A.C. 5:94-2.3. These requirements are as follows:

- A. An inventory of Borough's housing stock by age, condition, purchase or rental value, occupancy characteristics, and types including the number of units affordable to low- and moderate-income households and sub-standard housing capable of being rehabilitated;
- B. A projection of the Borough's housing stock, including the probable future construction of low- and moderate-income housing, for the next six years;
- C. An analysis of the Borough's demographic characteristics, including but not necessarily limited to household size, income level, and age;
- D. An analysis of the existing and probable future employment characteristics of the Borough;
- E. A determination of the Borough's present and prospective fair share for low- and moderate-income housing and its capacity to accommodate its present and prospective housing needs, including its fair share for low- and moderate-income housing;

- F. A consideration of the lands that are most appropriate for construction of low- and moderate-income housing and of the existing structures most appropriate for conversion to, or rehabilitation for, low- and moderate-income housing, including a consideration of lands of developers who have expressed a commitment to provide low- and moderate-income housing;
- G. The household and employment projections for the municipality as provided by N.J.A.C 5:97 Appendix F;
- H. The municipality's prior round obligation provided by N.J.A.C. 5:97
- I. The municipality's rehabilitation share provided by N.J.A.C. 5:97 Appendix B.

The Borough of Somerville believes it meets its affordable housing obligation given the existing affordably priced housing stock. The following demographic overview analyzes the Borough's housing stock along with the demographic and employment characteristics.

Population

The population trends experienced in Somerville Borough, Somerset County, and the State of New Jersey from 1930 through 2015 are shown below from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey. The County continued to experience steady growth from 1930 to 2015, with its largest increase from 1950 to 1960 (45% increase) and from 1960 to 1970 (38% increase). The Borough, however, experienced its largest growth from 1940 to 1950 (32.69% increase), and then never again achieved that high of a growth rate.

The most significant population change was in the Borough from 1970 to 1980, a loss of 1,679 people (-12.3 % change). During the same decade, the County only experienced a 2% increase. After 1980, Somerville would only experience population increases from 1990 to 2000 (6.8% increase) and only very slightly from 2010 to 2015 (.2% increase).

Population Trends									
Year	Somerville			Somerset County			New Jersey		
		Change			Change			Change	
1930	8,255			65,132			4,041,334		
1940	8,720	465	5.63%	74,390	9,258	14%	4,160,165	118,831	2.9%
1950	11,571	2,851	32.6%	99,052	24,662	33%	4,835,239	675,074	16.2%
1960	12,458	887	7.67%	143,913	44,861	45%	6,066,782	1,231,543	25.5%
1970	13,652	1,194	9.58%	198,372	54,459	38%	7,171,112	1,104,330	18.2%
1980	11,973	-1,679	-12.3%	203,129	4,757	2%	7,365,011	184,899	2.7%
1990	11,632	-341	-2.85%	240,279	37,150	18%	7,730,188	365,177	5%
2000	12,423	791	6.80%	297,490	57,211	24%	8,414,350	684,162	8.9%
2010	12,188	-235	-1.89%	323,444	25,954	9%	8,721,577	307,227	3.7%
2015	12,212	24	0.20%	330,604	7,160	2%	8,904,413	182,836	2.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and the N.J. Department of Labor

Population Composition by Age

Somerset County	2000		2010		2015		Percentage Change
Total population	297,490		323,444		330,604		
SELECTED AGE CATEGORIES	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Under 5 years	22,207	7.5%	19,237	5.9	18,412	5.6%	-17.1%
5 to 14	43,337	14.6%	46,656	14.4%	44,928	13.6%	3.7%
15 to 24	27,962	9.4%	35,998	11.1%	39,538	12%	41.4%
25 to 34	42,367	14.2%	36,425	11.3%	36,137	11%	-14.7%
35 to 44	58,297	19.6%	48,863	15.1%	46,021	14%	-21.1%
45 to 54	43,861	14.7%	57,513	17.8%	56,752	17.2%	29.3%
55 to 64	26,078	8.8%	38,755	12%	43,702	13.2%	66%
65 and over	33,381	11.2%	40,002	12.4%	45,114	13.6%	35.1%
Median age (years)	37.2		39.7		40.8		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Somerville Borough	2000		2010		2015		Percentage Change
Total population	12,423		12,188		12,212		
SELECTED AGE CATEGORIES	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Under 5 years	869	7%	777	6.4%	949	7.8%	9.2%
5 to 14	1,437	11.6%	1,483	12.2%	1,337	10.9%	-7%
15 to 24	1,336	10.8%	1,422	11.7%	1,106	9.1%	-17.2%
25 to 34	2,210	17.8%	2,136	17.5%	2,309	19%	4.5%
35 to 44	2,237	18%	1,976	16.2%	1,958	16%	12.5%
45 to 54	1,445	11.6%	1,835	15%	1,624	13.3%	12.4%
55 to 64	951	7.7%	1,093	9%	1,357	11.1%	43%
65 and over	1,738	14%	1,466	12%	1,572	12.9%	-10%
Median age (years)	35.6		36.1		36.5		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The median age of the residents of Somerville Borough in 2015 was 36.5, compared to 35.6 in 2000. Regionally, the population is much older as the median age for Somerset County was 35.6 in 2000 and 36.5 in 2015. Analysis of age group characteristics provides detailed insight into the population changes. This breakdown helps determine the impact these changes have on housing and community facilities.

Proportionally, the only consistent population increases in Somerville (43%) and Somerset County (66%) for age groups from 2000 to 2015 are within the 55 to 64-year-old cohort. The group to experience the most loss of population in Somerville is the 15 to 24-year-old cohort, -17.2%. In Somerset County, the group experiencing the most loss is the 35 to 44-year-old cohort -21.2%.

Ethnicity and Race

The racial and ethnic make-up of both Somerville and Somerset County are similar. They are both majority white, 73% in Somerville and 70% in Somerset County. The next largest group is Asian, with 13% in Somerville and 17% in Somerset County. Somerville has a 12% Black or African American population, and Somerset County has a population of 10%. 23% of residents in Somerville identify as Hispanic, whereas only 14% of the population within Somerset County identify as Hispanic.

Race/Ethnicity 2015	Somerset County, New Jersey		Somerville borough, Somerset County, New Jersey	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
RACE				
Total population	330,604	330,604	12,212	12,212
One race	324,003	98.0%	11,967	98.0%
Two or more races	6,601	2.0%	245	2.0%
Race alone or in combination with one or more other races				
Total population	330,604	330,604	12,212	12,212
White	230,793	69.8%	8,888	72.8%
Black or African American	33,298	10.1%	1,455	11.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1,424	0.4%	7	0.1%
Asian	56,214	17.0%	1,554	12.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	80	0.0%	29	0.2%
Some other race	15,956	4.8%	565	4.6%
HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE				
Total population	330,604	330,604	12,212	12,212
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	46,148	14.0%	2,804	23.0%
Mexican	5,450	1.6%	781	6.4%
Puerto Rican	8,544	2.6%	510	4.2%
Cuban	1,860	0.6%	134	1.1%
Other Hispanic or Latino	30,294	9.2%	1,379	11.3%
Not Hispanic or Latino	284,456	86.0%	9,408	77.0%
White alone	196,255	59.4%	6,535	53.5%
Black or African American alone	28,993	8.8%	1,276	10.4%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	345	0.1%	7	0.1%
Asian alone	52,905	16.0%	1,415	11.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	10	0.0%	0	0.0%
Some other race alone	765	0.2%	0	0.0%
Two or more races	5,183	1.6%	175	1.4%
Two races including Some other race	651	0.2%	5	0.0%
Two races excluding Some other race, and Three or more races	4,532	1.4%	170	1.4%

Households

The Census defines a household as one or more persons, either related or not, living together in a housing unit. A family household includes a householder and one or more people living in the same household who are related by birth, marriage or adoption. A non-family household is a householder either living alone or where the householder shares the home only with people they are not related to. A householder is a person, or one of the people, in whose name the home is owned or rented. Studying household data can help refine to the needs, services, and of the population.

Most of the households in both Somerville and Somerset County are “Married-couple family household,” 48.3% in Somerville and 60.6% in Somerset County. The next largest household type is the “Nonfamily household,” 36% in Somerville and 26.8% in Somerset County. Additionally, the average household and family size are also relatively the same, 2.6 and 3.28 respectively for Somerville and 2.81 and 3.34 in Somerset County. The most striking difference is in the “Male householder, no wife present, family household with one or more people under 18 years.” 44.8% of the male householder, with no wife present, families in Somerset County have one or more people under 18 years, and only 25.3% of those households are present in Somerville. The same household type but with people 60 years and over has the same relationship, Somerset County has 32.4% and Somerville has 15%.

Household and Family Size and Type	Somerville borough, New Jersey				
	Total	Married-couple family household	Male householder, no wife present, family household	Female householder, no husband present, family household	Nonfamily household
Total households	4,548	2,201	225	483	1,639
		48.3%	4.9%	10.6%	36%
Average household size	2.60	3.45	3.02	3.09	1.26
FAMILIES					
Total families	2,909	2,201	225	483	(X)
Average family size	3.28	3.42	2.75	2.88	(X)
HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE					
Households with one or more people under 18 years	30.7%	48.8%	25.3%	53.6%	0.4%
Households with one or more people 60 years and over	34.0%	29.8%	15.1%	24.0%	45.1%
Householder living alone	29.8%	(X)	(X)	(X)	82.7%
65 years and over	11.6%	(X)	(X)	(X)	32.2%

Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Household and Family Size and Type	Somerset County, New Jersey				
	Total	Married-couple family household	Male householder, no wife present, family household	Female householder, no husband present, family household	Nonfamily household
	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Total households	115,998	70,368	3,419	11,179	31,032
Average household size	2.81	3.42	3.42	3.28	1.21
FAMILIES					
Total families	84,966	70,368	3,419	11,179	(X)
Average family size	3.34	3.39	3.07	3.11	(X)
HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE					
Households with own children of the householder under 18 years	40,645	33,629	1,265	5,751	(X)
Households with one or more people under 18 years	36.8%	49.0%	44.8%	57.6%	0.7%
Households with one or more people 60 years and over	36.1%	32.2%	32.4%	30.0%	47.7%
Householder living alone 65 years and over	22.9%	(X)	(X)	(X)	85.6%
	9.2%	(X)	(X)	(X)	34.5%

Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Income

In 2015, Somerville had a \$30,000 lower median household income than Somerset County, but was roughly only \$2,000 less than the State median income. The households with incomes \$200,000 or more are 13% higher in Somerset County than Somerville.

INCOME AND BENEFITS (IN 2015 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS)	Somerset County		Somerville Borough		New Jersey
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	
Total households	115,998		4,548		
Less than \$10,000	3,083	2.7%	157	3.5%	
\$10,000 to \$14,999	2,516	2.2%	220	4.8%	
\$15,000 to \$24,999	5,581	4.8%	285	6.3%	
\$25,000 to \$34,999	5,929	5.1%	316	6.9%	
\$35,000 to \$49,999	9,495	8.2%	420	9.2%	
\$50,000 to \$74,999	15,822	13.6%	1,019	22.4%	
\$75,000 to \$99,999	15,064	13.0%	690	15.2%	
\$100,000 to \$149,999	23,166	20.0%	869	19.1%	
\$150,000 to \$199,999	13,965	12.0%	338	7.4%	
\$200,000 or more	21,377	18.4%	234	5.1%	

Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Median household income (dollars)	Somerset County		Somerville Borough	
		Adjusted for Inflation		Adjusted for Inflation
2000	\$48,164	\$66,684	\$30,522	\$42,258
2010	\$97,440	\$105,093	\$69,836	\$75,321
Change	50.1%	36.5%	56.3%	44.9%
2015	\$100,667		\$70,643	
Change	3.2%	- 4.4%	1.1%	-6.6%

Poverty Status

In 2015, 6.4% of the population of Somerville was below the poverty level and 5% of the population of Somerset County was below the poverty level. The percentage of Black or African American below the poverty level, 27.5%, is 18% higher than it is in the entirety of Somerset County. The same is true of those who identified as “Two or More Races.” At the County level, Hispanic Origin and Black/African American were the highest, 10.1% and 9.5% respectively.

Poverty Status Somerville Borough and Somerset County, 2015	Somerset County, New Jersey			Somerville borough, New Jersey		
	Total	Below poverty level	Percent below poverty level	Total	Below poverty level	Percent below poverty level
Population for whom poverty status is determined	327,057	16,479	5.0%	11,948	769	6.4%
AGE						
Under 18 years	77,073	4,630	6.0%	2,638	215	8.2%
Under 5 years	18,237	1,298	7.1%	928	81	8.7%
5 to 17 years	58,836	3,332	5.7%	1,710	134	7.8%
65 years and over	43,409	2,455	5.7%	1,572	122	7.8%
SEX						
Male	159,477	7,340	4.6%	6,219	393	6.3%
Female	167,580	9,139	5.5%	5,729	376	6.6%
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN						
White alone	223,143	10,142	4.5%	8,550	332	3.9%
Black or African American alone	29,335	2,799	9.5%	1,200	330	27.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	440	0	0.0%	7	0	0.0%
Asian alone	52,966	1,392	2.6%	1,399	21	1.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	10	0	0.0%	0	0	-
Some other race alone	14,593	1,591	10.9%	547	29	5.3%
Two or more races	6,570	555	8.4%	245	57	23.3%
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	45,781	4,615	10.1%	2,771	238	8.6%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	193,988	7,232	3.7%	6,441	205	3.2%

Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Household Costs

The median mortgage payment in Somerville Borough is \$2,231 and \$2,659 in Somerset County. 40.6% of the residents in Somerville Borough pay more than 30% of their monthly income on their mortgage. Roughly 30% of the population in both Somerville and Somerset County pay less than 20% of their household income on their mortgage.

Mortgage Status for Somerset County and Somerville Borough, 2015	Somerset County		Somerville Borough	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
MORTGAGE STATUS				
Owner-occupied units	88,277		2,525	
Housing units with a mortgage	62,527	70.8%	1,892	74.9%
Housing units without a mortgage	25,750	29.2%	633	25.1%

Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Selected Monthly Owner Costs in Dollars for Somerset County and Somerville Borough, 2015	Somerset County		Somerville Borough	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Housing units with a mortgage	62,527		1,892	
Less than \$500	127	0.2%	0	0.0%
\$500 to \$999	1,530	2.4%	89	4.7%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	5,093	8.1%	149	7.9%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	9,362	15.0%	458	24.2%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	11,756	18.8%	541	28.6%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	10,686	17.1%	298	15.8%
\$3,000 or more	23,973	38.3%	357	18.9%
Median (dollars)	2,659	(X)	2,231	(X)

Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income for Somerset County and Somerville Borough, 2015	Somerset County		Somerville Borough	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Housing units with a mortgage (excluding units where SMOCAPI cannot be computed)	62,363		1,892	
Less than 20.0 percent	20,646	33.1%	551	29.1%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	10,133	16.2%	257	13.6%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	8,222	13.2%	316	16.7%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	5,900	9.5%	200	10.6%
35.0 percent or more	17,462	28.0%	568	30.0%

Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

The median rent paid in Somerville is \$1,232 and \$1,411 in Somerset County. Unlike with mortgages, 42.7% of the renter population in Somerville pay 30% or more of their monthly income. Only 13% of renters pay less than 15% of their monthly income on rent. In Somerset County 45% of renters are paying more than 30% of their household monthly income on rent.

Gross Rent in dollars for Somerset County and Somerville Borough, 2015	Somerset County		Somerville Borough	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Occupied units paying rent	26,549		1,983	
Less than \$500	1,211	4.6%	191	9.6%
\$500 to \$999	2,940	11.1%	226	11.4%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	11,015	41.5%	1,203	60.7%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	6,883	25.9%	313	15.8%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	3,033	11.4%	41	2.1%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	772	2.9%	9	0.5%
\$3,000 or more	695	2.6%	0	0.0%
Median (dollars)	1,411	(X)	1,232	(X)
No rent paid	1,172	(X)	40	(X)

Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

GROSS RENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME (GRAPI) for Somerset County and Somerville Borough, 2015	Somerset County		Somerville Borough	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Occupied units paying rent (excluding units where GRAPI cannot be computed)	26,369		1,983	
Less than 15.0 percent	3,463	13.1%	264	13.3%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	4,032	15.3%	237	12.0%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	3,688	14.0%	319	16.1%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	3,147	11.9%	317	16.0%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	1,990	7.5%	205	10.3%
35.0 percent or more	10,049	38.1%	641	32.3%

Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Existing Housing Conditions

Housing Unit Data

According to Somerville Tax Assessor, Somerville has a total of 5,119 dwelling units. According to Borough records 116 single family houses are rented. Of the 5,119 dwelling units, 2,160 are owner occupied and 2,959 rental units.

Owner occupied units account for 42% of the total number of dwelling units. In comparison, almost 3/4th of the total housing units in Somerset County are owner occupied (88,277 or 70.8%).

Housing Data, 2015	Somerset County, New Jersey		Somerville borough, Somerset County, New Jersey	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
HOUSING OCCUPANCY				
Total housing units	124,672		5,119	
Occupied housing units	115,998	93.0%	4,950	96.6%
Vacant housing units	8,674	7.0%	169	3.4%
Owner Occupied	88,277	70.8%	2,108	41.1%
Renter Occupied	27,721	22.2%	2,841	55.5%
Homeowner vacancy rate	1.5	(X)	55	2.4%
Rental vacancy rate	9.7	(X)	114	4%

Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, Somerville Borough Data based on Tax Assessor data and research performed by Planning Board

The majority of houses built in Somerville were built before 1960, 62.2%, In contrast, the largest percentage of structures built in Somerset County were built after 1970, 60%.

YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT	Somerset County		Somerville Borough	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total housing units	124,672		5,119	
Built 2014 or later	161	0.1%	204	4%
Built 2010 to 2013	1,689	1.4%	108	2.1%
Built 2000 to 2009	12,398	9.9%	21	0.4%
Built 1990 to 1999	22,051	17.7%	22	0.4%
Built 1980 to 1989	24,278	19.5%	363	7.1%
Built 1970 to 1979	14,219	11.4%	619	12.1%
Built 1960 to 1969	15,763	12.6%	620	12.1%
Built 1950 to 1959	14,089	11.3%	1,085	21.2%
Built 1940 to 1949	6,370	5.1%	665	13%
Built 1939 or earlier	13,654	11.0%	1,433	28.%

Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, percentages for Somerville Borough adjusted to reflect number of dwelling units based upon Borough Tax Assessor data.

YEAR HOUSEHOLDER MOVED INTO UNIT	Somerset County		Somerville Borough	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Occupied housing units	115,998		4,950	
Moved in 2015 or later	1,149	1.0%	64	1.3%
Moved in 2010 to 2014	25,384	21.9%	1,416	28.6%
Moved in 2000 to 2009	47,189	40.7%	1,723	34.8%
Moved in 1990 to 1999	22,963	19.8%	782	15.8%
Moved in 1980 to 1989	9,294	8.0%	327	6.6%
Moved in 1979 and earlier	10,019	8.6%	64	12.9%

Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, occupied housing units based upon information obtained by Planning Board.

Housing Type and Size

Both Somerset County, (56.8%) and Somerville Borough (45.9%) largest housing type is 1-unit detached. Somerville next most common housing types are 2 units (13.7%) and 20 or more units (12.1%). In Somerville, most of the housing units were 2 bedrooms, 31.5%, whereas in Somerset County, the majority of housing units had 3 bedrooms. 30% of the housing units in Somerville are also 3-bedrooms, so the mix between 2 and 3 bedrooms is very comparable.

UNITS IN STRUCTURE	Somerset County		Somerville Borough	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total housing units	124,672		5,119	
1-unit, detached	73,034	58.6%	2,350	45.9%
1-unit, attached	19,816	15.9%	220	4.3%
2 units	6,551	5.3%	701	13.7%
3 or 4 units	6,064	4.9%	497	9.7%
5 to 9 units	5,513	4.4%	420	8.2%
10 to 19 units	6,701	5.4%	312	6.09%
20 or more units	6,859	5.5%	619	12.1%
Mobile home	117	0.1%	0	0.0%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	17	0.0%	5	0.1%
BEDROOMS				
Total housing units	124,672		5,119	
No bedroom	1,208	1.0%	133	2.6%
1 bedroom	13,181	10.6%	1,157	22.6%
2 bedrooms	32,186	25.8%	1,612	31.5%
3 bedrooms	36,546	29.3%	1,531	29.9%
4 bedrooms	32,469	26.0%	584	11.4%
5 or more bedrooms	9,082	7.3%	10	2%

Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, number of housing units based on data obtained from Somerville Borough Tax Assessor

Within the past 10 years, the greatest number of housing units, 118, constructed in a year was in 2015. Of those 118 units, 117 of them were multi-family units. This number is substantially larger than any other number of units authorized by building permits over the 10 years. The next largest number of units by building permits in Somerville is 12 units in 2005. High number of units in Somerset County were in 2005 (1,193), 2012 (1,060) and 2013 (1,061). All the units constructed during those years were either 1 or 2 families or multi-family units.

Housing Units Authorized by Building Permits		Total	1 & 2 Family	Multi-Family	Mixed Use
2005	Somerset County	1,193	724	469	0
	Somerville Borough	12	8	4	0
2006	Somerset County	746	537	207	2
	Somerville Borough	0	0	0	0
2007	Somerset County	768	519	248	1
	Somerville Borough	9	9	0	0
2008	Somerset County	520	382	138	0
	Somerville Borough	0	0	0	0
2009	Somerset County	312	310	1	1
	Somerville Borough	1	1	0	0
2010	Somerset County	575	393	181	1
	Somerville Borough	1	1	0	0
2011	Somerset County	469	329	138	2
	Somerville Borough	0	0	0	0
2012	Somerset County	1,060	361	699	0
	Somerville Borough	0	0	0	0
2013	Somerset County	1,061	575	486	0
	Somerville Borough	1	1	0	0

2014	Somerset County	689	518	171	0
	Somerville Borough	0	0	0	0
2015	Somerset County	848	377	471	0
	Somerville Borough	118	1	117	0
2016	Somerset County	839	348	490	1
	Somerville Borough	2	2	0	0

Source: State of New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Building Permits: Yearly Summary Data

Housing Conditions

Overcrowding, plumbing, and kitchen facilities are used to determine housing deficiency. Overcrowding is defined as more than one person per room. 96.5% of occupied units in Somerville were NOT overcrowded, and 98.5% of occupied units in Somerset County were NOT overcrowded. Less than 2% of occupied units in Somerville lacked complete public and kitchen facilities. 77% of the units in Somerville used utility gas for fuel. Finally, the median value for an owner-occupied housing unit in Somerville was \$284,300.

Housing Conditions for Somerset County and Somerville Borough, 2015				
	Somerset County		Somerville Borough	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
HOUSE HEATING FUEL				
Occupied housing units	115,998	115,998	4,950	4,950
Utility gas	95,888	82.7%	3,787	76.5%
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	1,122	1.0%	6	1.2%
Electricity	10,761	9.3%	639	12.9%
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	7,644	6.6%	406	8.2%
Coal or coke	32	0.0%	0	0.0%
Wood	165	0.1%	0	0.0%
Solar energy	11	0.0%	0	0.0%
Other fuel	198	0.2%	45	0.9%
No fuel used	177	0.2%	20	0.4%
FACILITIES				
Occupied housing units	115,998	115,998	4,950	4,950
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	303	0.3%	64	1.3%
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	822	0.7%	89	1.8%
No telephone service available	1,316	1.1%	139	2.8%
OCCUPANTS PER ROOM				
Occupied housing units	115,998	115,998	4,950	4,950
1.00 or less	114,229	98.5%	4,498	96.5%
1.01 to 1.50	1,084	0.9%	121	2.6%
1.51 or more	685	0.6%	42	0.9%

Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, occupied housing units for the Borough determined by the Planning Board using local data

Housing Value for Owner Occupied Units	Somerset County		Somerville Borough	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Owner-occupied units	88,277		2,525	
Less than \$50,000	1,043	1.2%	20	0.8%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	873	1.0%	11	0.4%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	1,814	2.1%	77	3.0%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	3,244	3.7%	97	3.8%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	19,443	22.0%	1,282	50.8%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	30,693	34.8%	934	37.0%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	26,300	29.8%	104	4.1%
\$1,000,000 or more	4,867	5.5%	0	0.0%
Median (dollars)	399,000	(X)	284,300	(X)

Employment Data

The following tables detail changes in employment from 2005 to 2016 for Somerville and Somerset County. 71.2% of the population over 16 in Somerville is in the civilian labor force. Employment remained steady in Somerville from 2005 to 2008, and then the unemployment rate jumped up to over 10% in 2009 and 2010. Since that peak, the unemployment rate has consistently decreased each year. The unemployment rate for Somerville has remained higher than the unemployment rate for the County, reaching peak unemployment rates from 2009 to 2012 (over 7%). However, in 2016 the unemployment rate for both Somerville, 4.2%, and Somerset County, 4.1%, are almost identical.

Somerville Borough Employment Labor Force (In Years)	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
2005	7,014	6,657	357	5.1
2006	7,200	6,823	377	5.2
2007	7,227	6,893	334	4.6
2008	7,360	6,920	440	6.0
2009	7,505	6,716	789	10.5
2010	6,987	6,280	707	10.1
2011	7,060	6,491	569	8.1
2012	6,772	6,215	557	8.2
2013	6,594	6,147	447	6.8
2014	6,539	6,174	365	5.6
2015	6,563	6,236	327	5.0
2016	6,513	6,239	274	4.2

New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development Labor Force Estimate

Somerset County Employment Labor Force (In Years)	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
2005	174,544	168,578	5,966	3.4
2006	179,540	173,281	6,259	3.5
2007	179,245	173,688	5,557	3.1
2008	181,589	174,322	7,267	4.0
2009	182,709	169,460	13,249	7.3
2010	173,704	160,526	13,178	7.6
2011	174,610	161,730	12,880	7.4
2012	176,133	163,034	13,099	7.4
2013	173,714	162,690	11,024	6.3
2014	173,688	164,646	9,042	5.2
2015	174,100	166,131	7,969	4.6
2016	173,235	166,213	7,022	4.1

New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development Labor Force Estimate

Employment Labor Force, 2015	Somerset County, New Jersey		Somerville borough, Somerset County, New Jersey	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
EMPLOYMENT STATUS				
Population 16 years and over	262,004		9,823	
In labor force	181,037	69.1%	6,993	71.2%
Civilian labor force	181,012	69.1%	6,993	71.2%
Employed	170,172	65.0%	6,527	66.4%
Unemployed	10,840	4.1%	466	4.7%
Armed Forces	25	0.0%	0	0.0%
Not in labor force	80,967	30.9%	2,830	28.8%

84% of the civilian employed population over 16 were private wage and salary workers. The largest percentage, 38.8%, of civilian employees over 16 in Somerville worked in management, business, science and arts occupation. The largest industries that employs those workers are the Educational services and health care and social assistance, 20%, industry along with the professional, scientific, and management and administrative waste management services, 18%. In 2015, 87% of civilian workers received health care coverage, and 73% of them had it with a private health insurance company. 5% of the population under 18 years old had no health care coverage.

73% of workers in Somerville commute by car, driving alone, and 10% carpooled. 7% walked to work and 6% worked at home. The mean travel time for all commuters is 22.6 minutes, 9 minutes less than the mean travel time for commuters in Somerset County.

Occupation and Work Status, 2015	Somerset County		Somerville	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
OCCUPATION				
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	170,172		6,527	
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	86,792	51.0%	2,535	38.8%
Service occupations	21,158	12.4%	1,308	20.0%
Sales and office occupations	40,021	23.5%	1,507	23.1%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	9,401	5.5%	587	9.0%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	12,800	7.5%	590	9.0%
INDUSTRY				
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	170,172		6,527	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	519	0.3%	0	0.0%
Construction	7,464	4.4%	488	7.5%
Manufacturing	21,082	12.4%	637	9.8%
Wholesale trade	6,162	3.6%	307	4.7%
Retail trade	16,900	9.9%	632	9.7%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	7,034	4.1%	255	3.9%
Information	7,119	4.2%	205	3.1%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	18,014	10.6%	189	2.9%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	27,064	15.9%	1,187	18.2%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	37,191	21.9%	1,311	20.1%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	10,943	6.4%	655	10.0%
Other services, except public administration	6,420	3.8%	467	7.2%
Public administration	4,260	2.5%	194	3.0%

CLASS OF WORKER				
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	170,172		6,527	
Private wage and salary workers	143,703	84.4%	5,475	83.9%
Government workers	18,769	11.0%	826	12.7%
Self-employed in own not incorporated business workers	7,436	4.4%	220	3.4%
Unpaid family workers	264	0.2%	6	0.1%
HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE				
Civilian noninstitutionalized population	327,821		12,003	
With health insurance coverage	301,546	92.0%	10,425	86.9%
With private health insurance	269,624	82.2%	8,728	72.7%
With public coverage	63,104	19.2%	2,886	24.0%
No health insurance coverage	26,275	8.0%	1,578	13.1%
Civilian noninstitutionalized population under 18 years	77,755	77,755	2,693	2,693
No health insurance coverage	2,598	3.3%	138	5.1%

Commuting Status, 2015	Somerset County		Somerville	
	Number Estimate	Percent Percent	Number Estimate	Percent Percent
Workers 16 years and over	167,212		6,491	
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	131,557	78.7%	4,731	72.9%
Car, truck, or van -- carpooled	13,116	7.8%	667	10.3%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	7,877	4.7%	147	2.3%
Walked	2,917	1.7%	440	6.8%
Other means	2,139	1.3%	136	2.1%
Worked at home	9,606	5.7%	370	5.7%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	31.8	(X)	22.6	(X)

Analysis of Existing Affordable Housing

Somerville has a total of 4,950 occupied housing units and 41 % of the units are owner occupied (2,108 units), the remaining (2,841 units) are rented, based on data provided by the Somerville Borough Tax Assessor and Borough records regarding the number of single -family dwellings that are currently rented.

Using the median income level for the Borough (\$70,643, per the 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates) and the COAH income limit standards of 50%/80% for low and moderate-income limits, a low-income household would therefore have an income of \$35,321.5 or lower and a moderate-income household would have an income of \$56,514.4 or lower.

The calculation for the monthly affordable limit for housing expenses is $[(\text{annual income}/12) \times .3]$. That respectively generates a low-income household limit of \$883.03 and a moderate-income household limit of \$1,412.86.

According to the 2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, approximately 369 households are rented at rates less than \$883.03¹ and approximately 1,527 are rented at rates less than \$1,412.86².

Therefore, a total of 54% of the rental units are affordable for moderate income households and 13% are affordable for low income households

Calculating the number of affordable owner-occupied dwelling units in the Borough requires an assumption in terms of mortgage term, down payment, interest rate, and real estate taxes. For this purpose, a thirty-year mortgage, 10% down payment, 3.4% interest, and a property tax rate of 3.2% are used. In this framework, a dwelling purchased at or below \$ 210,700.00 would result in a monthly payment of \$ 1,411 and would therefore be affordable at the moderate-income level. Based on the assessed property values obtained from the Borough Tax Assessor, there are 305 dwellings assessed at values at or below \$ 210,700.00. This equates to approximately 14% of the owner-occupied housing stock would be affordable at a moderate-income level.

There are four (4) single family properties in the Borough that are assessed at or below the low-income household limit using the same calculations as performed for the moderate-income level (using a low-income household limit of \$ 883.03 per month).

Notes:

1 The data range is between \$800 and \$999, so to calculate the percentage up to \$883 to estimate was used

2 The data range is between \$1,000 and \$1,499, so to calculate the percentage up to \$1,412.86 to estimate was used

G. Regional Overview

A substantial portion of Somerville is bounded by major roadways or natural features such as the Raritan River. Since these boundaries are so defined, the effect of Somerville's future land use pattern on adjoining municipalities is somewhat negated by these buffers. The Raritan River separates Somerville from Hillsborough Township; Peter's Brook and the NJ Raritan Valley rail line separates the southern portion of the borough from Bridgewater; and Routes 206, 202 and 22 effectively buffer the western and northern portions of Somerville from Raritan Borough and Bridgewater Township.

Somerville, the county seat, is at the epicenter of the larger Somerset County Regional Center which comprises the Somerville, Raritan and portions of Bridgewater Township. "Regional Center" is a New Jersey State Plan designation that signifies the strategic role that this area plays in the future prosperity of the region. The State Planning Commission designated the Somerset County "Regional Center" in 1996 and was the first multi-jurisdictional regional center in the State to receive this designation. The Regional Center last received Plan Endorsement in 2013 and the Center Designation is effective until October, 2023. It merits this designation because of the rich concentration of resources:

- Important public and private institutions
- Transportation infrastructure – main regional highways, bus routes, Raritan Valley train line, shuttle services.
- Significant concentrations of population and employment.

The Somerset County Regional Center in turn is at the heart of Somerset County, one of the most prosperous and important parts of the larger New York Metro Region. The Regional Center consists of distinctly interconnected vibrant communities offering a unique blend of quality of life amenities which sets the Somerset County Regional Center apart from other regional areas in New Jersey. The Regional Center is a highly desirable location to live, work, play, visit and learn offering an abundance of health and wellness opportunities and resources.

The Somerset County Planning Board prepared a series of GIS-based infrastructure, community and environmental asset maps. These maps formed the basis of a "criteria-based approach" for identifying areas most suitable for growth and preservation in the county. The asset maps were used to help identify areas where infrastructure and community facilities necessary to support growth are concentrated, and where growth is supported through state, regional and local planning and land use policies. They also illustrate the location of environmentally sensitive areas and critical natural resources; and were used to identify areas where environmental protection, restoration and agriculture are supported through state, regional and local planning and land use policies. This methodology, the resultant County Investment Framework (CIF) map and associated policy recommendations were also reviewed and accepted by the county's municipalities.

The Somerset County Planning Board adopted the CIF on April 15, 2014 to serve as the geographic basis for all County planning projects and initiatives, including the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Somerset County, developed by the Somerset County Business Partnership and also adopted as an element of the County Master Plan in April 2014. The CIF is intended to support ongoing regional and local smart growth, preservation, economic revitalization, sustainability and resiliency planning initiatives; achieve tactical alignment of land use, infrastructure and preservation plans, resources, programs, policies and investment decisions; and convey a clear investment message regarding local and regional land use priorities to both public and private sectors. The NJ State Planning Commission adopted a resolution supporting the County Investment Framework and recognizing it as a model for use statewide in October 2013.

The CIF map identified the following areas; Priority Growth Investment Areas (PGIAs); Priority Preservation Investment Areas (PPIAs); Alternate Growth Investment Areas (AGIAs); Limited Growth Investment Areas (LGIAs) and Local Priority Areas (LPAs) where growth and investment are encouraged and best supported by infrastructure and utilities.

Priority Growth Investment Areas (PGIAs) are areas where primary economic growth and community development strategies that enhance quality of life and economic competitiveness are preferred; and where appropriate, growth-inducing investments are encouraged. PGIAs are areas where development and infrastructure assets are already concentrated. They are prime locations for the vibrant mixed-use, live-work environments within walking distance of transit and green space, and that many employers, workers and households desire.

Priority Preservation Investment Areas (PPIAs) are areas where agriculture and the preservation and restoration of environmentally sensitive natural resources are preferred and where investments aimed at resource restoration and protection, and farmland and open space preservation are preferred. Environmental and agricultural assets are concentrated within the County's PPIAs, as well as the County's highly-prized scenic, rural and historic landscapes. These are the areas where voluntary use of environmental/agricultural stewardship best management practices by both the public and private sectors are encouraged. PPIA Greenways are also identified. Greenways traverse all investment area categories and are places where investments that support a regional system of linked open space and conservation areas along stream corridors and ridgelines and the restoration of degraded environmental resources are high priorities. Greenways, parks and open space can be established within any of the investment area categories.

Alternative Growth Investment Areas (AGIAs) are existing substantially developed areas located within adopted sewer service areas that are not PGIAs or PPIAs, and where large-scale, growth-inducing investments are not desired. Most of the County's AGIAs consist of residential neighborhoods and include community-oriented business and service establishments. These are quiet, safe, well-maintained residential areas where investments that enhance livability and neighborhood character are preferred. Local Priority Areas (LPAs) are a subset of AGIAs. These are distinct small town and village centers, some of which have been designated by the NJ State Planning Commission, that have limited growth opportunities due to their scale, historic character, environmental and access constraints and municipal preferences. Job retention and community sustainability are high priorities within LPAs.

Limited Growth Investment Areas (LGIAs) are areas that are outside of sewer service areas and that are not shown as PGIAs, AGIAs or PPIAs. LGIAs are places where large-scale investments that may lead to additional development or change in neighborhood character are not desired. LGIAs are comprised primarily of existing low-density, residential areas that are served by on-site septic systems. They are areas that support lifestyles with strong connections to the natural environment. Investments that restore and protect environmental resources, strengthen open space linkages and enhance quality of life are preferred in LGIAs.

The entire Borough was designated by Somerset County as PGIA, which is consistent with the “Regional Center” designation.

The Somerset County Regional Center Strategic Plan (the Strategic Plan) was adopted in July, 2018. One of the purposes of the Strategic Plan is for it to be used by the three (3) Regional Center municipalities to help advance their master plans in relation to the Regional Center. The Strategic Plan consists of a Vision Statement, description of the themes that characterize the entire Background Report a list of top priorities for possible implementation in the next five years. The Background Report is a 100-page document that provides the details and depth of information to form the basis for the goals and objectives the Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan vision is summarized as follows:

- Support efforts to encourage increased pedestrian and bicycle movement
- Strengthen Regional Center resiliency and sustainability
- Continuing to support the completion of the Raritan River Greenway
- Support Somerset County and the Somerset County Business Partnership’s strategic marketing efforts of the Regional Center
- Supporting RideWise’s work to help improve mobility in Somerset County

The four (4) themes that govern the Strategic Plan are; Health and Wellness; Resiliency; Embracing the Raritan River; Job Growth and Private Sector Investment.

The Housing Element of the County Master Plan was originally adopted as part of the 1987 County Master Plan. A comprehensive update of this component of the County Master Plan was completed in 2017 and adopted by the Somerset County Planning Board on November 20, 2017. The new Housing Element calls for the provision of a broad range of housing types at all levels of affordability, and in inclusive neighborhoods and communities; in response to the County's growing and diversifying population. It supports the preservation and rehabilitation of the existing housing stock, and the enhancement of existing neighborhoods. The plan recognizes the dynamic relationship between housing supply, quality of life and the strength of the economy; and encourages the integration of workforce housing opportunities into redevelopment and infill projects, which can act as a catalyst for community and economic revitalization.

The Borough's Master Plan has been reviewed in relation to the Somerset County Master Plan, the State Development and Redevelopment Plan and the Regional Center Strategic Plan, no major inconsistencies exist with the development objectives advanced by such guide plans.

With the exception of Hillsborough Township, the adjoining municipalities (Bridgewater Township and the Borough of Raritan) are part of the Regional Center and have incorporated the goals and objectives of the Regional Center in their Master Plans. Therefore, no inconsistencies exist with the development objectives. Somerville and Hillsborough are divided by the Raritan River. This Master Plan envisions a greenbelt along the river banks that runs the length of Somerville's southern border. Adjacent to the greenbelt in Somerville is the Duke Farms in Hillsborough Township. These uses are complimentary.

A brief overview of Somerville Borough 's land use proposals in relation to its adjoining municipalities follows:

Raritan Borough - Compatible residential and mixed-use commercial/office development exist along the common boundary. To some extent, these uses are separated by Route 206, which has led to the varied land uses existing in this area.

Bridgewater Township Compatible land uses exist along the common boundary. Generally, low residential uses exist along the eastern common boundary. However, there is an industrial complex adjacent to Chambres Park. The complex is well screened and buffered from the park which lessens any negative impact on existing or proposed parks in this area. In addition, there is an industrial complex located in Bridgewater that can only be accessed by South Adamsville Road. South Adamsville Road is a residential street that is half in Bridgewater Township, half in Somerville Borough. The truck traffic on South Adamsville road is adversely impacting the residential properties and eliminating this truck traffic is the goal by both municipalities.

The northern boundary with Bridgewater Township is Route 22. Compatible mixed uses exist along Route 22.

The 2006 Regional Center Strategic Master Plan identifies the following areas along municipal borders between the three Regional Center municipalities which can be considered for possible future attention to address potential or past land use issues; e.g., lands zoned for M-1 in close proximity to lands zoned residential. The 2006 Plan discusses issues, joint planning opportunities at key locations within the Regional Center and along municipal borders that focus on how to strengthen the connections between the communities and/or resolve existing or potential land use conflicts. The following is a list of the areas along Somerville borders identified in the 2006 Strategic Plan:

Land uses and zoning along the Bridgewater/Somerville border:

- East of Route 202 and North of Route 28
- Route 202/206 and Route 22 Intersection
- North and South of Route 22
- Route 22: East of North Bridge Street to east of North Gaston Ave
- West and East of Van Buren Road
- West and East of Adamsville Road
- North and South of railroad tracks

Zoning along the Raritan/Somerville border:

- West and East of Cornell Blvd
- West and East of Route 206

The 2006 plan also identified opportunities for joint planning at the municipal borders and noted these areas for possible future attention: Neighborhood Plans (as it relates to Somerville)

- Bridgewater and Somerville –Adamsville Road area Commercial /Industrial Area Initiatives

Mixed Use Area Studies

- Northwood Avenue, Bridgewater / Cornell Boulevard, Somerville
- Van Buren Road, Bridgewater and Somerville
- Southside Avenue area, Bridgewater and Somerville
- Cornell Boulevard, Raritan and Somerville

H. Historic Element

The Purpose of the Historic Preservation Master Plan Element

The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) authorizes the planning board to prepare a master plan that contains, among other things a Historic Preservation Plan element. The initial Historic Preservation Plan Element was prepared in 2008 and the document can be viewed at http://www.somervillenj.org/filestorage/4100/4102/4153/4207/6-Historic_Preservation_Element.pdf

Among its purposes it is *“to promote the conservation of historic sites and districts”*.

The Role of the Historic Preservation Master Plan Element

The MLUL defines the role of the Historic Preservation Plan element of the master plan as follows:

1. To indicate the location and significance of historic sites and historic districts;
2. To identify the standards used to assess worthiness for historic site and district identification; and
3. To analyze the impact of each component and element of the master plan on the preservation of historic sites and districts.

Definitions for Historic Site and Historic District

The MLUL also offers the following definitions:

Historic Site means any real property, man-made structure, natural object or configuration or any portion or group of the foregoing of historical, archeological, cultural, scenic or architectural significance.

Historic District – means one or more historic sites and intervening or surrounding property significantly affecting or affected by the quality and character of the historic site or sites.

Local Regulations

The state statute allows local regulations to protect the historical resources of a community. These locally adopted ordinances are established by the municipal governing body. A variety of local regulations can be adopted to help encourage historic preservation

SOMERVILLE'S HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

Historical Significance

The period of historical significance for Somerville spans from 1751, the date of the construction of the earliest surviving building in the town, to 1950, the end of the post-World War II period, by which time the Borough was almost fully developed. The surviving street patterns and some scattered buildings, reflect earlier patterns of development reaching back to the second half of the 18th century. Most of Somerville however reached its present form in the approximately 50 years spanning the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.

The historical background of the Borough relates to three of New Jersey's state-wide historic contexts:

- 7. Initial Colonial Settlement, 1630-1775;*
- 9. Industrialization, Urban Growth, and the First Suburbs, 1790-1880; and*
- 10. Immigration and Agricultural, Industrial, and Urban Expansion, 1850-1920.*

A number of areas of significance can be defined for the Borough. Transportation was one important factor. The development of Somerville was in large part determined by its development along transportation corridors: first, an important east-west road of late 17th century origin; second, the railroad, which began service in 1842.

Two other determinative areas of significance are religion and politics/government. The decision to locate the Somerset County Court House and the First Dutch Reformed Church in Somerville made the town the political and religious center of the county.

The pull of these institutions, as well as transportation facilities, also made Somerville a commercial center. The combination of these factors led to the town's development as a residential community, another area of significance for Somerville. Industry was an area of significance for Somerville, but only in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Finally, for a brief period during the Revolutionary War, Somerville had military significance as the site of Washington's headquarters during the winter of 1778-1779

Architectural Significance

The Borough of Somerville is also significant for a range of surviving architecture that reflects its development over almost two centuries. The buildings include examples of work by nationally-recognized architects such as William Appleton Potter, George B. Post, John Russell Pope and J. Riely Gordon, as well as those known for their work in New Jersey, such as Frank V. Bodine.

The Borough contains high-style and vernacular examples of a broad range of styles, from Georgian through Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, and Richardsonian Romanesque to early 20th century Neo-Classical.

Somerville's National and State Registered Sites

Currently, there are seven (7) National and State Register historical sites in the Borough of Somerville. There are no listed historic districts. The historic sites include a variety of properties representing different important time periods in the Borough's history. They also include a variety of architectural styles. The long-term preservation of these important resources has been enhanced through the listing of these historic sites on the National and State Registers. The seven listed sites include:

- J. Harper Smith Mansion, 228 Altamont Place
- W. End Hose Co Firehouse, 15 N. Doughty Street
- St. John's Church Complex, 154-158 W. High St.
- Somerset Court House Green, Main St., Grove & N. Bridge Streets
- Somerville Borough Hall, 25 West End Avenue
- Wallace House, 28 Washington Place
- Old Dutch Parsonage, 65 Washington Place

STANDARDS AND CRITERIA TO ASSESS WORTHINESS

The U.S. Secretary of the Interior has developed a set of criteria to aid in the identification of historic sites and districts. The criteria, any one of which may be conclusive in the determination to protect a site or district, are widely utilized to assess worthiness for historic site and district identification and designation.

HISTORIC SITE AND DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

The most common and effective technique used by municipalities to protect historically significant structures and historic areas is to nominate them to the State and/or National Historic Registers. Given this fact, the Borough could encourage the additional nomination of historic sites.

Continue to Nominate Historic Sites to the National and State Registers

The Borough could encourage the additional nomination of sites to the State and National Register of Historic Places. In addition, the Borough could also encourage the nomination of any other historic sites deemed to be contributing and assessed to be worthy of listing. The nomination of a property should be undertaken with the concurrence of the property owner whenever possible.

The Borough could also consider producing a public information brochure that explains the nomination process and the various benefits of a property being listed and the rights and responsibilities of nomination and listing of historic properties. A meeting to explain the nomination process could also be convened for all potential property owners.

PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

There are a number of important considerations for a municipality in encouraging the long-term preservation of historic sites, while accounting for change and development. The two most significant matters are when changes or additions are proposed to a historic site and new construction. Significant changes to a historic site can have a permanent impact on a property and even impact the neighborhood. Similarly, new construction that is incompatible next to a historic site can drastically impact the streetscape and context of historic sites.

The Borough could consider the use of guidelines and standards as an aid in responding to change and development. The following standards and guidelines can be used by the Borough to help to provide advice to property owners proposing changes and additions or new construction.

Standards for Rehabilitation

The most prevalent preservation treatment today is rehabilitation. Rehabilitation is defined as the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property's historic character. In response to this, the Secretary of the Interior has established Standards for Rehabilitation. The Standards were originally published in 1977 and revised in 1990 as part of the Department of the Interior regulations.

The Standards pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior of historic buildings. The Standards also encompass related landscape features and the building's site and environmental as well as attached, adjacent or related new construction. The intent of the Standards is to assist the long-term preservation of a property's significance. They are intended to be used as a guide in providing advice and assistance to property owners rehabilitating their historic property.

The ten (10) Standards for Rehabilitation are presented on the following page. They could be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility. To be eligible for Federal tax incentives, a rehabilitation project must meet all ten Standards.

The Borough of Somerville could consider adopting the Standards as the municipalities design guidelines to provide advice to historic site property owners whenever rehabilitation work is proposed to be undertaken.

- A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
- The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
- Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, shall not be undertaken.
- Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historical significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
- Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
- Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive features, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
- Chemical or physical treatments, such as sand blasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
- Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be distributed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
- New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
- New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Guidelines for Infill Development

Infill development refers to the construction of new buildings within an existing historic neighborhood, or the replacement of existing buildings with new ones. Respect for the surrounding context of buildings becomes paramount.

Since it is the visual compatibility of new buildings with the historical ones that is the most important factor, exterior design principles could be established to guide the designer of a new building. The Borough could consider the use of the below mentioned guidelines whenever new construction is proposed next to a historic site.

- The massing and height of the building should be similar to the ones that make up the rest of the streetscape.
- The relationship of the building's height to width in the front façade should be proportioned to be compatible with nearby buildings.
- The elements in the facade, such as windows, doors, sidelights, and projections from it, such as porches, balconies, or porte-cocheres should be proportional in height and width both within themselves and in relationship to the supporting wall as other structures in the streetscape.
- The spacing and size of exterior wall to the elements in the facade should be compatible with adjacent and nearby buildings.
- The relationship of the new building to side yards and the setback from the street should be similar to the existing pattern of development.
- The use of building materials, their texture, and color should be visually compatible with existing building in the district.
- The shape, roofline, and slope of roofs, including dormers, chimneys, and other projections should be compatible with nearby structures.
- Landscape elements such as individual trees and tree masses, walls fencing, and other materials should continue the existing views from the street.
- The exterior features of a building, including ornamentation, should be visually compatible with the architectural era of nearby buildings.

INTERFACE WITH OTHER MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS

The MLUL requires the Historic Preservation Plan to analyze the impact of each element of the Master Plan on the preservation of historic sites. It is also important that the Historic Preservation Plan Element integrate with other elements of the Master Plan. This Historic Preservation Plan Element seeks to find a balance between the preservation, maintenance and interpretation of the Borough's key historic resources and the community's need for ongoing change.

The interaction between the Historic Element and other elements of the Master Plan are discussed below.

Circulation Plan

The Circulation Plan Element could identify the location of significant historic sites and districts. The design, improvement and maintenance of public roadways and bridges in Somerville can have a significant impact on historic properties and districts. In particular, special attention should be paid to preserving historic roadway widths, historic bridges and historic roadway intersections.

Land Use Plan

The Land Use Plan contains policies that are intended to guide the Borough's zoning and subdivision regulations. These regulations can have implications on historic preservation. Historic structures are typically located close to roadways and/or other property lines and the distance between structures is much more varied than those built to modern standards.

Some historic structures are also not readily adapted to modern needs or they were constructed for uses no longer economically viable. Variances from zoning standards and subdivision regulations which promote the preservation of historic structures and/or the historic character of an area should be considered.

The Land Use Plan also contains policies related to institutional and public utility uses. These uses can include new sewage facilities, pipelines and transmission lines and cell tower locations. Such uses can be visually prominent and incompatible with historic integrity. Consideration could be given to locations that minimize their visual impact on historic sites and districts.

Housing Plan Element

A significant amount of the Borough of Somerville's existing housing stock includes historic properties. The preservation of these properties is important in order to respond to future housing needs. The Housing Plan Element could encourage that historic buildings be saved by adapting them for workforce housing. In addition, the Borough can also consider adaptive re-use of commercial and industrial buildings for residential use.

Community Facilities

The Borough of Somerville owns and uses some historic properties as public facilities. Borough Hall is currently located in the Daniel Robert House at 25 West End Ave. This property is listed on the National and State Registers. Any future development plans for this site could be sensitive to the preservation and maintenance of the historic integrity of the property. If the Borough ever sells a historic property to a private sector entity, consideration could be given to safeguarding the property with a historic preservation covenant.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Borough should continue to nominate historic sites to the State and National Registers of Historic Places.
- The Historic Preservation Elements adopts the US Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidance for rehabilitating historic buildings to provide advice and guidance to historic property owners located in historic districts contemplating alterations or additions.
- The guidelines for infill development stated within the Historic Preservation Element will be used to provide advice and guidance to property owners proposing new construction next to a historic site or within a historic district.

I. Recreation Element

The purpose of the Somerville Parks and Recreation Element of the Master Plan is to provide an inventory of existing parkland facilities with the intent of developing a long-range plan for improvements. Recommendations of the Element include improving connections and greenway resources along Peter's Brook, Ross Brook and Raritan River and to expand Peter's Brook bank stabilization programs. And finally, needs for various facilities at the landfill site are discussed including the need for a community center.

Inventory of Current Park Facilities

In order to consider future needs and improvements, an inventory of existing facilities is necessary. The following table presents an inventory of recreational facilities within Somerville Borough. The parks listed in the following table are included in the Park and Recreation Open Space Inventory that provides additional information about each park (with the exception of the YMCA).

Borough Owned or Maintained Public Park Facilities (YMCA is included but not Borough Owned or Maintained)

Name of Park/Facility	Location	Facility Features
Carroll Pager Sports Complex	89 Green Street	Baseball Field Basketball Court Bathrooms Food Service Picnic Area Playground Soccer Field Softball Field
Chambres Park	131 Southside Avenue	Basketball Court
Clarks Woods	265 US 202/206	Soccer Field
Firehouse Field	122 Veterans Memorial Drive	Picnic Area Soccer Field
John Long Park	85 Mercer Street	Picnic Area Playground Spray Park
Kuglar Park	96 Mercer Street	Basketball Courts Picnic Area
Lepp Park	22 Park Avenue	Basketball Court-Lighted Bathrooms Pavilion Picnic Area Playground Softball Swimming Pool Spray Park
Van Derveer	51 Union Avenue	Baseball fields- Lighted Basketball Courts Playground Soccer Field-Lighted Softball Field-Lighted
Van Fleet Gardens	195 William Street	Pavilion Photo Site

Walck Park	15 Walnut Street	Basketball Court Bathrooms Pavilion Picnic Area Playground Swimming Pool
YMCA	2 Green Street	Indoor Swimming Pool
Green Seam	Route 2016	Passive Recreation

Assessment of Lands and Improvements

This section provides an analysis of the adequacy of the current open space and recreation system. It should be noted that the national standards are not being utilized as recreational agencies are all different. A one size fits all standard is not realistic when taking regional differences and local experiences and expectations into consideration. For example, very few municipalities in New Jersey provide residents with publicly owned golf, swimming pools and ice hockey facilities. Reasons for this might include climate, expense and/or a lack of widespread demand for particular facilities. On the other hand, Somerville has some unique recreational assets including two (2) municipal pools, two (2) spray parks, and a greenway bikeway/pedestrian path and park network that follows Peter's Brook.

National Recreation and Park Association Benchmarks

One method to assess the amount of park and recreation areas a community has is through the benchmarks contained in the 2018 National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Agency Performance Review. This document summarizes the finding of the NRPA Park Metrics. The NRPA Park Metrics (formerly PRORAGIS) is a comprehensive source of data standards and insights for park and recreation agencies. The data is self-reported from recreation/park agencies throughout the Country. The 2018 NRPA Agency Performance Review provides guidance for developing public parks for local close to home recreation uses. The Agency Performance Review presents data with medians along the lower and upper 25 percent and provides insight as to where the Borough of Somerville Recreation Department compares to typical agencies (median values) but also to agencies on the high and lower ends. The median value for neighborhood and community public park and recreation areas provided to local residents at an average of 10.1 acres of parkland per 1,000 people with the lower and upper quartile being, respectively 5.1 and 17.4 acres of parkland per 1,000 people. It should be noted that approximately half of the Borough's parklands are in Bridgewater Township (Clark's Woods and Arthur Chambres).

Median System Calculation

Average Ratio = 10.1 Acres of local park space per 1,000 people

Year	Population	Acres
2000	12,423	125.44
2010	12,188	123.02
2015	12,212	123.32

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and the N.J. Department of Labor

Based on the existing 122.8 acres of parkland and the 2015 population, the Borough is providing a ratio of 10 acres per 1,000 people which is essentially the national average.

Performance Benchmarks

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has developed comprehensive park and recreation benchmarks. These benchmarks provide guidance that allow informed decisions on the optimal set of service and facility offerings, comprehensive data that demonstrate the broad offerings and programming that meet the definition of parks and recreation. The NRPA Agency Performance Review helps identify the optimal mix facilities and programming for the municipality. The benchmarks serve as guidelines that is based on needs, facilities and land in order to assist communities in establishing their own recreation, park and open space guidelines. Involvement of the community is the essential aspect of this process.

As stated in the 2018 NRPA Agency Performance Review executive summary the term “national standards” is not used. The departure from previously used “national standards” is because “different agencies serve different residents with unique needs, desires and challenges. Agencies also have a dissimilar funding mechanism. For example, just because your agency may have more workers for 1,000 residents relative to the typical agency does not necessarily mean that your agency should shed staff. It is possible that an agency with more staff offers more hands-on programming because of the unique need of the population it serves. As communities vary in population and their ability/willingness to fund park and recreation amenities, so too should their park and recreation agencies. A successful agency is one that tailors its service to meet the needs and demands of its community. Knowing who uses your agency’s resources and the characteristics of the residents who may use those resources in the future (including age, race and income trends) are also factors in shaping the optimal mix of the facilities and services offered” (quoted from page 4 of the 2018 NRPA Agency Performance Review).

A survey and series of workshops was conducted in 2005. It is recommended that another survey and workshops be performed in the near future to guide the mission and objectives of the park and recreation commission.

Facilities Assessment

Based on a survey and a series of workshops conducted in 2005, the general condition of Somerville's parks is good and the Borough has a number of facilities that are unique for a community of its size. The Borough maintains two (2) pools, two (2) spray parks and a bicycle/pedestrian network that parallels Peter's Brook from the northwest corner to the southwest. An additional park system is situated along Ross Brook and a canoe launch is provided at the Raritan River.

The following chart identifies median number of residents per facility type, the number of facilities needed based on the average and the number Somerville provides.

<i>Facility Type</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Number Based on Average</i>	<i>Number Provided</i>	<i>Location</i>
Full Basketball Courts	1 per 3,572	3	1	Arthur Chambres Park
			2	Kuglar Park
			1	Michael Lepp-
			1	Lighted Van derveer Field Claude Walck
Baseball-Youth	1 per 7,770	2	1	Carol Pager Sports Complex
			1	Van derveer-Unlighted
Play Grounds	1 per 3,572	3	1	Carol Pager Sports Complex
			1	Lepp Park
			1	John Long
			1	Kuglar Park
Football Fields	1 per 35,453	0	0	
Swimming Pools	1 per 40,218	0	1	Lepp Park
			1	Walck Park
¼ Mile Running Track	Not Stated	NA	1	Brooks Field (Board of Education)
Youth Soccer Facilities	1 per 8,773	1	1	Clark's Woods
			3	Van derveer
			1	Field Carol Pager Firehouse Field
Youth Softball Fields	1 per 12,121	1	1	Michael Lepp Park
			1	Van Derveer Field-Lighted
Tennis	1 per 4,578	3	0	
Spray Park	Not Stated	NA	1	John Long Park
			1	Lepp Park

Characteristics of Population

Trends in age should also be considered in providing recreational facilities to groups of all ages, now and into the future. These numbers are provided for planning purposes and to show that in Somerville, demographic characteristics of age have not substantially changed between 2000 and 2015 (with the exception of 55 to 64 age category).

Population Trends Somerville Borough, NJ

Somerville Borough	2000		2010		2015		Percentage Change
Total population	12,423		12,188		12,212		
SELECTED AGE CATEGORIES	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Under 5 years	869	7%	777	6.4%	949	7.8%	9.2%
5 to 14	1,437	11.6%	1,483	12.2%	1,337	10.9%	-7%
15 to 24	1,336	10.8%	1,422	11.7%	1,106	9.1%	-17.2%
25 to 34	2,210	17.8%	2,136	17.5%	2,309	19%	4.5%
35 to 44	2,237	18%	1,976	16.2%	1,958	16%	12.5%
45 to 54	1,445	11.6%	1,835	15%	1,624	13.3%	12.4%
55 to 64	951	7.7%	1,093	9%	1,357	11.1%	43%
65 and over	1,738	14%	1,466	12%	1,572	12.9%	-10%
Median age (years)	35.6		36.1		36.5		

Recommendations

The recommendations for future enhancements of the Borough's park and recreational facilities are as follows;

- **Create Pedestrian Links Between Peters Brook Greenway Path and the Duke Farms**

Connect the Peters Brook Greenway path to the nearby Duke Farms by constructing a pedestrian Route 206 overpass that will link the Borough's open and recreational space with Duke Farms. Pedestrian and bicycle routes should continue to be important features and be maintained and expanded, as feasible to provide comfortable access to commercial areas, parks and residences.

- **Provide Passive Sitting Areas Overlooking Waterways**

The Borough should explore opportunities to enhance and protect buffers along the waterways while providing scenic overlooks.

- **Provide Solar Lighting in Parks and Greenways**

Both the list of suggestions for parks and the visual survey indicated that lighting, specifically solar lighting was an important feature to be added to parks and Greenways.

- **Provide Canoe/Water Access**

The visual survey ranked high in photos with canoe and water access. It is recommended that the Raritan River canoe access trail be considered for improvements to make the river more accessible.

- **Continue to Enhance ADA Accessibility to the Parks & Recreation Facilities.**

The parks and recreational facilities are accessible, however playground equipment, picnic areas, benches, where possible, should be enhanced to accommodate the disabled.

- **Provide Deeper Pool and a Community Center**

The size and depth of the two (2) swimming pools does not allow for swim meets to be held. In addition, the Borough does not have a Community Center. In addition, longer pool hours and swimming programs and lessons were also recommended.

- **Provide Natural Plantings Adjacent to Waterways to Protect them from Erosion and Provide Wildlife Habitat**

Bank erosion is occurring along all the waterways. Corrective actions should involve natural stabilization, however, the magnitude of this is great and costs will be extensive. It is recommended that the Borough continue to provide natural edges along streams instead of mowing to the edge and pursue programs and grants to provide stabilization in areas most susceptible to erosion.

- **Provide more Landscaping and Trees**

Continue to plant trees along the walk/bicycle paths and throughout the Borough.

- **Provide Restrooms**

Some of the active recreational areas do not have public restrooms and (ideally all active recreational areas should have public facilities.

- **Integrate Works of Art with Parks with Recreational Areas**

The recreational areas and parks should be enhanced with sculptures, murals, and works of Art as this will help promote and enhance both venues.

- **Continue to Work with the School Board on Shared Services**

To fully utilize all public assets the shared service agreement between the Board of Education and Borough is needed. n Drive and/or South Bridge Street; and a gateway under the railroad to Chambres Field;

- **Connect the Landfill Green Seam with Peters Brook Greenway**

The landfill was recently remediated and contains an open space that will contain a path. The area will be used for passive recreation and is known as the "Green Seam". The "Green Seam" should be connected to the Peters Brook path.

- **Redevelop Parks to Meet Needs of Changing Demographics & Trends**

The Borough should take advantage of grant programs to add amenities and redevelop existing parks, where needed. The Borough is encouraged to study the feasibility and demand for the improvements and amenities identified. Particular age groups were identified as needing more facilities and activities, including children, teens and seniors.

- **Conduct a Survey and have Stakeholders Meetings**

The last community survey regarding parks and recreation was conducted in 2005. Another community survey and stakeholders meeting should be held to determine the community priorities regarding recreation areas and parklands. It is recommended that a survey and visioning be performed at a minimum every 10 years.

- **Construct Multi Sport Game Courts**

Multi-sport game courts for that can be for tennis, volleyball, basketball, kickball, badminton, hockey, etc. are needed. Due to limited financial resources, outdoor multi-sport game courts that can be used in the spring, summer and fall is a priority for the Recreation Department.

J. Storm Water Management

The accordance with NJAC 40:55D-94, the storm water management plan shall be integral part of the master plan. The storm water management plan was prepared by Somerset County on behalf of Somerville and the Planning Board adopted the storm water management plan as part of the master plan on April 4, 2005. The storm water management plan can be viewed at the following link;

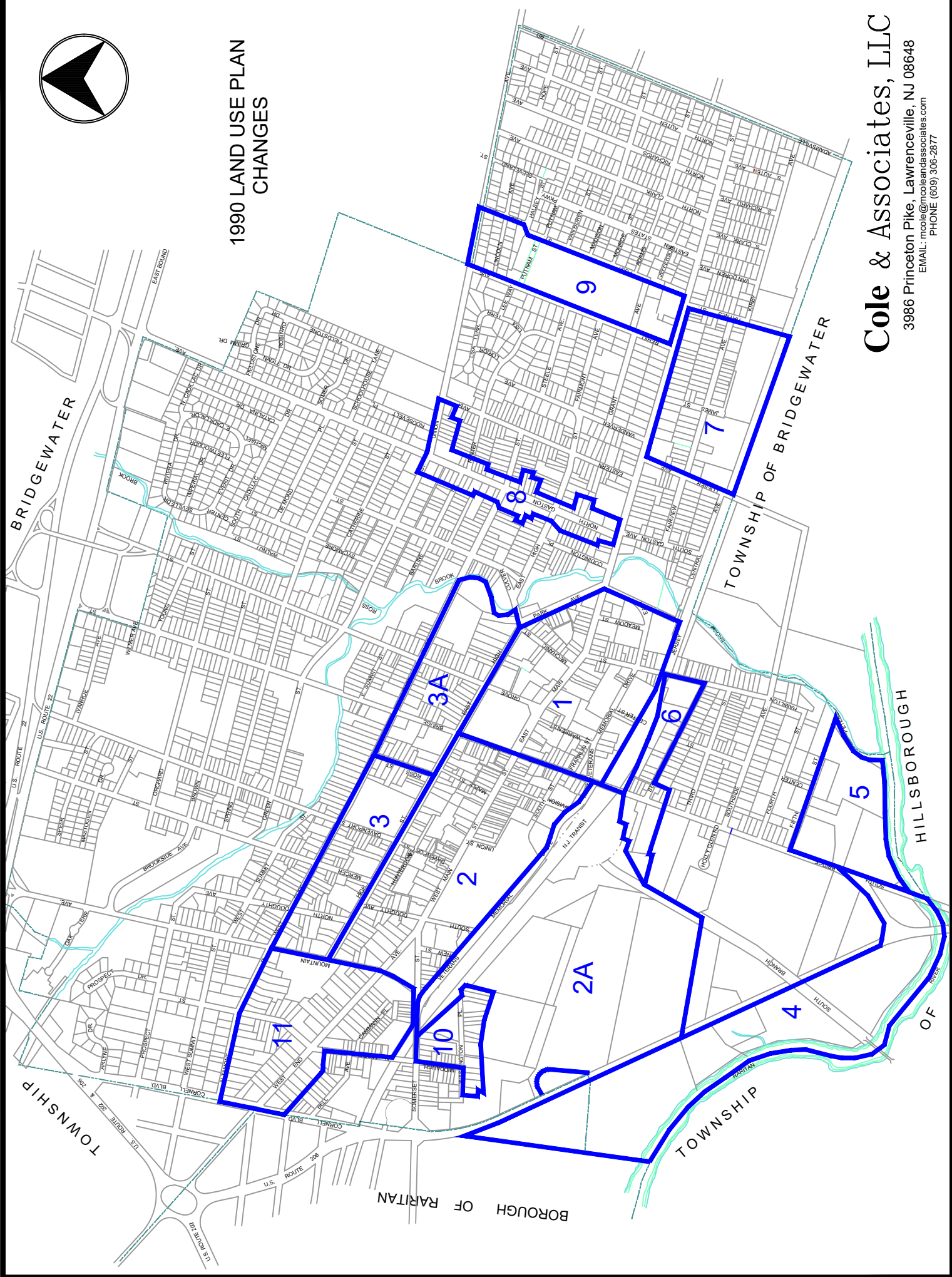
http://www.somervillenj.org/filestorage/4100/4102/4941/SOMERVILLE_STORMWATER_MANAGEMENT_PLAN.pdf

The above stated storm water management plan is included as an integral part of this Master Plan.

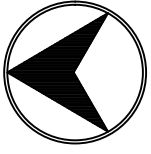
Appendices



1990 LAND USE PLAN
CHANGES

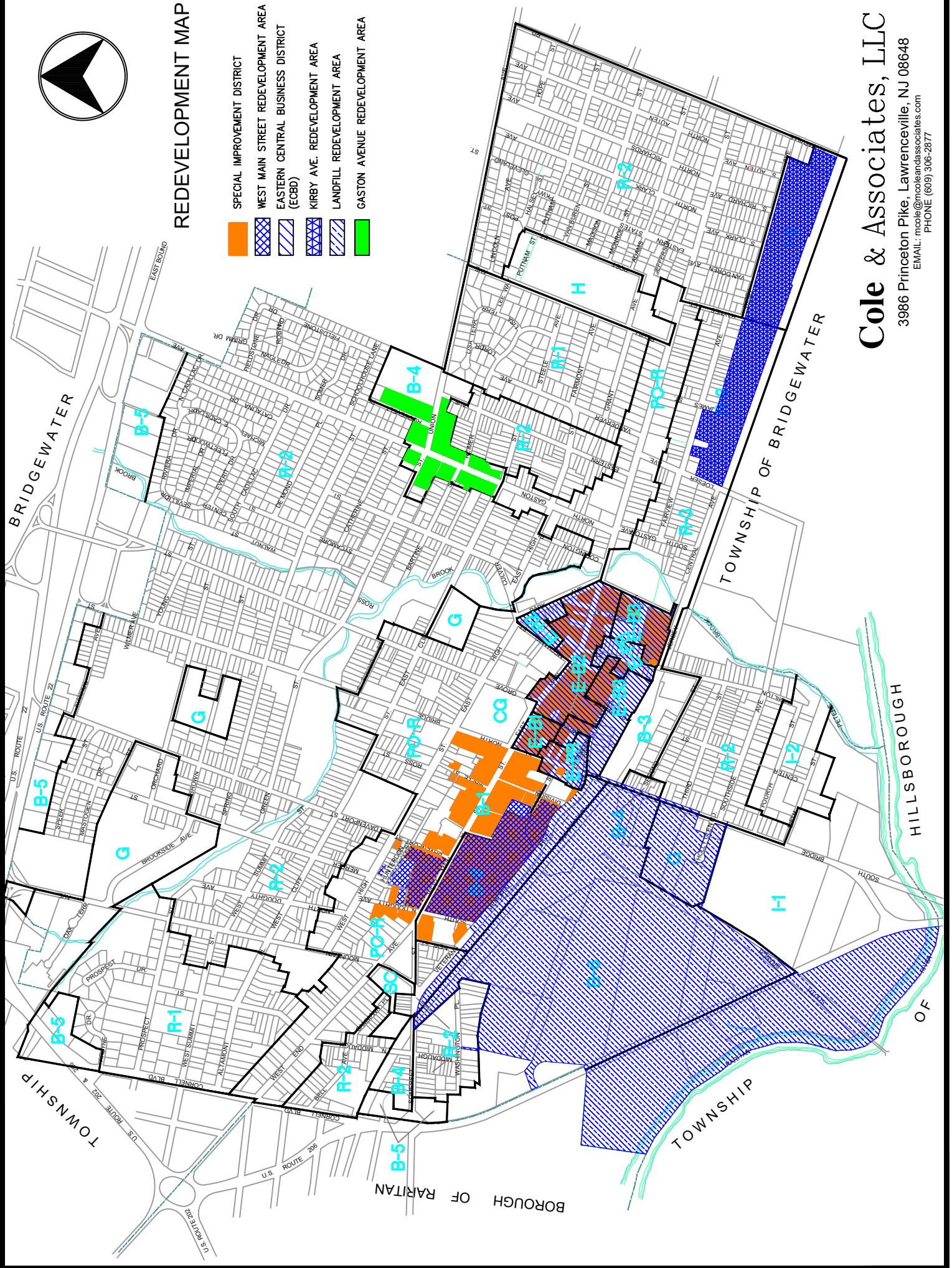


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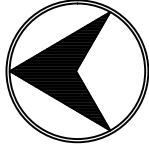
REDEVELOPMENT MAP

- SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
- WEST MAIN STREET REDEVELOPMENT AREA (ECBD)
- EASTERN CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT (ECBD)
- KIRBY AVE. REDEVELOPMENT AREA
- LANDFILL REDEVELOPMENT AREA
- GASTON AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT AREA



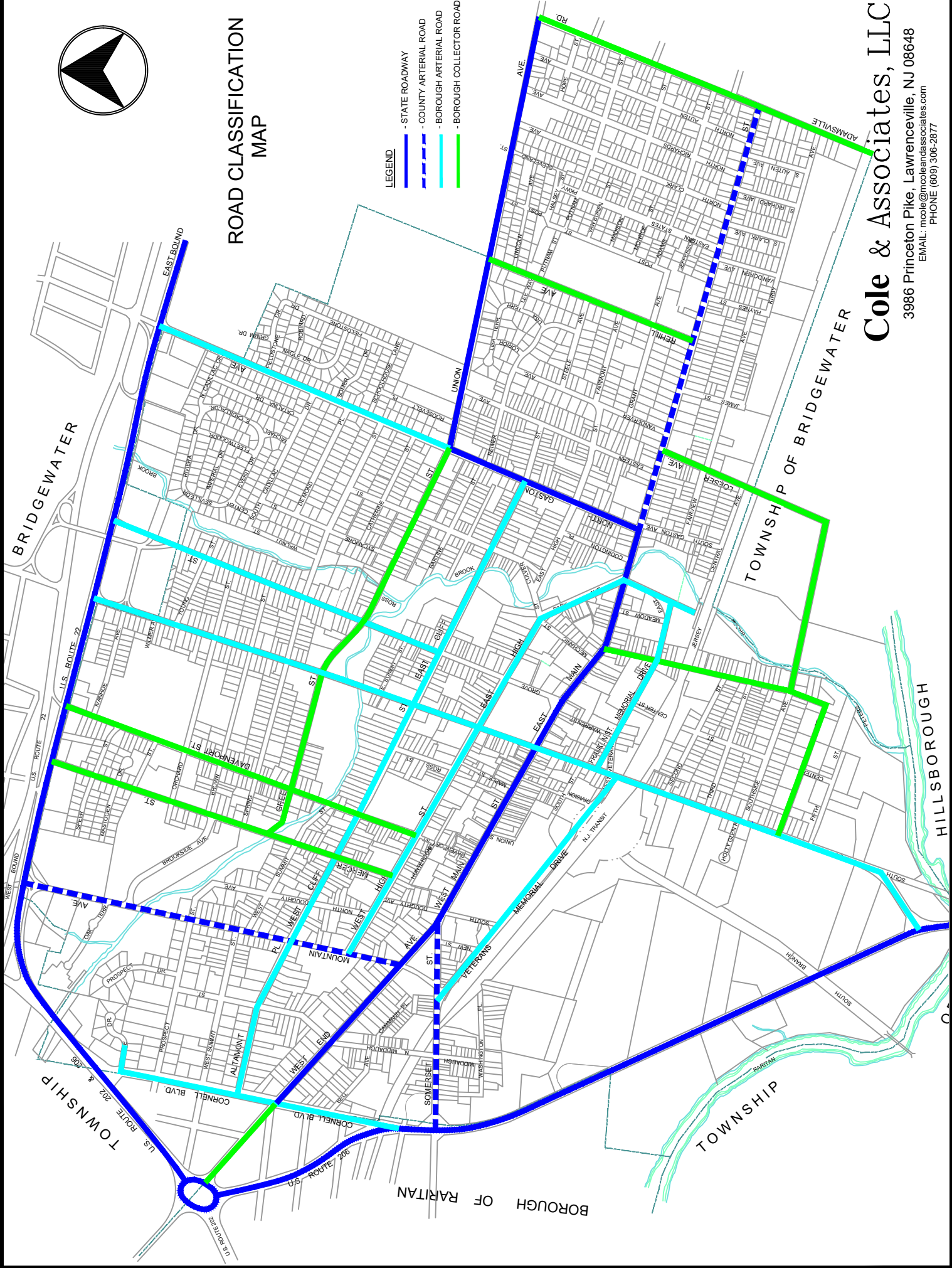
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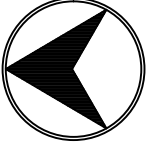


ROAD CLASSIFICATION MAP

- LEGEND**
- STATE ROADWAY
 - COUNTY ARTERIAL ROAD
 - BOROUGH ARTERIAL ROAD
 - BOROUGH COLLECTOR ROAD



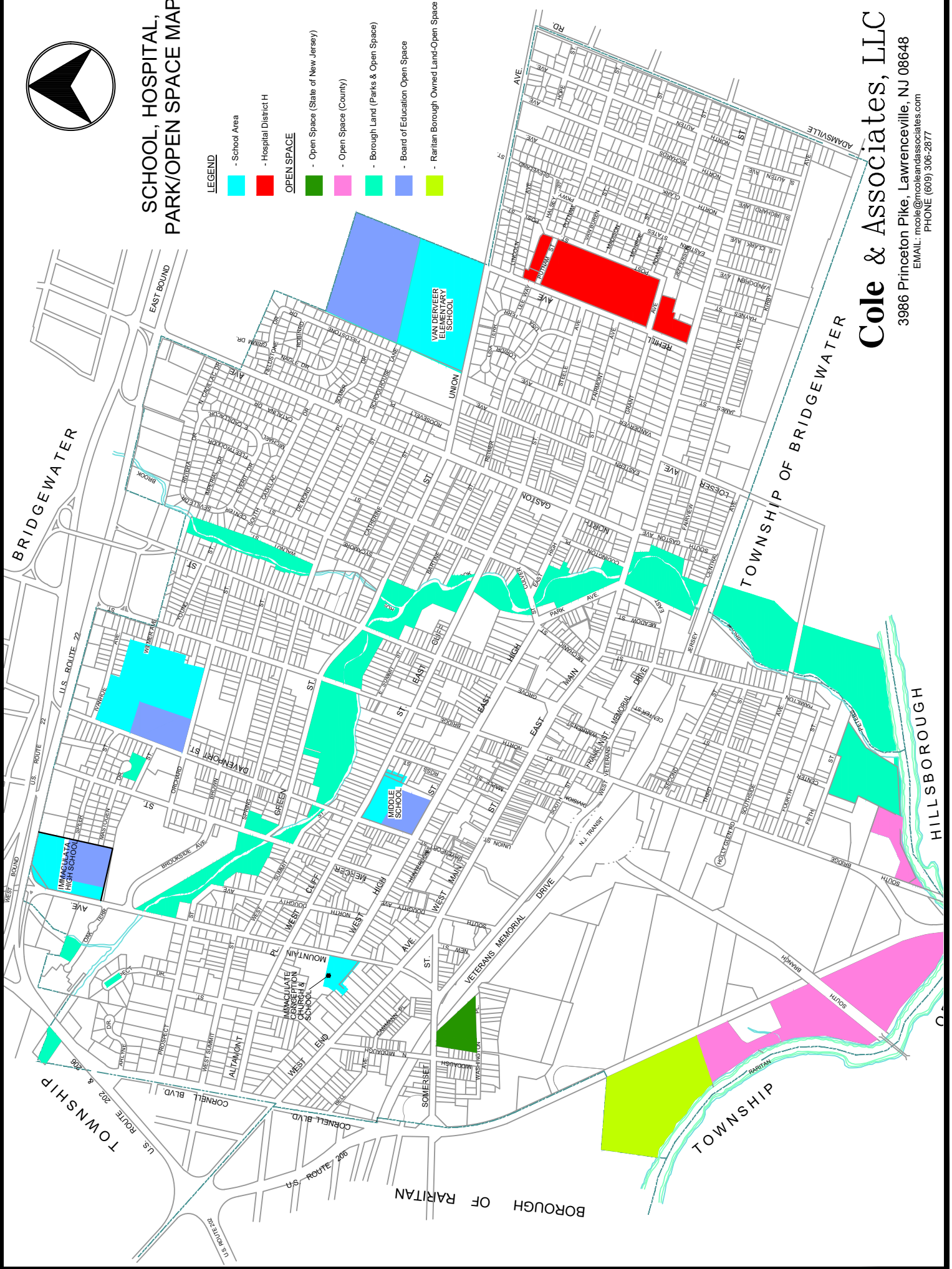
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SCHOOL, HOSPITAL, PARK/OPEN SPACE MAP

LEGEND

- School Area
- Hospital/District H
- OPEN SPACE**
 - Open Space (State of New Jersey)
 - Open Space (County)
 - Borough Land (Parks & Open Space)
 - Board of Education Open Space
 - Raritan Borough Owned Land-Open Space



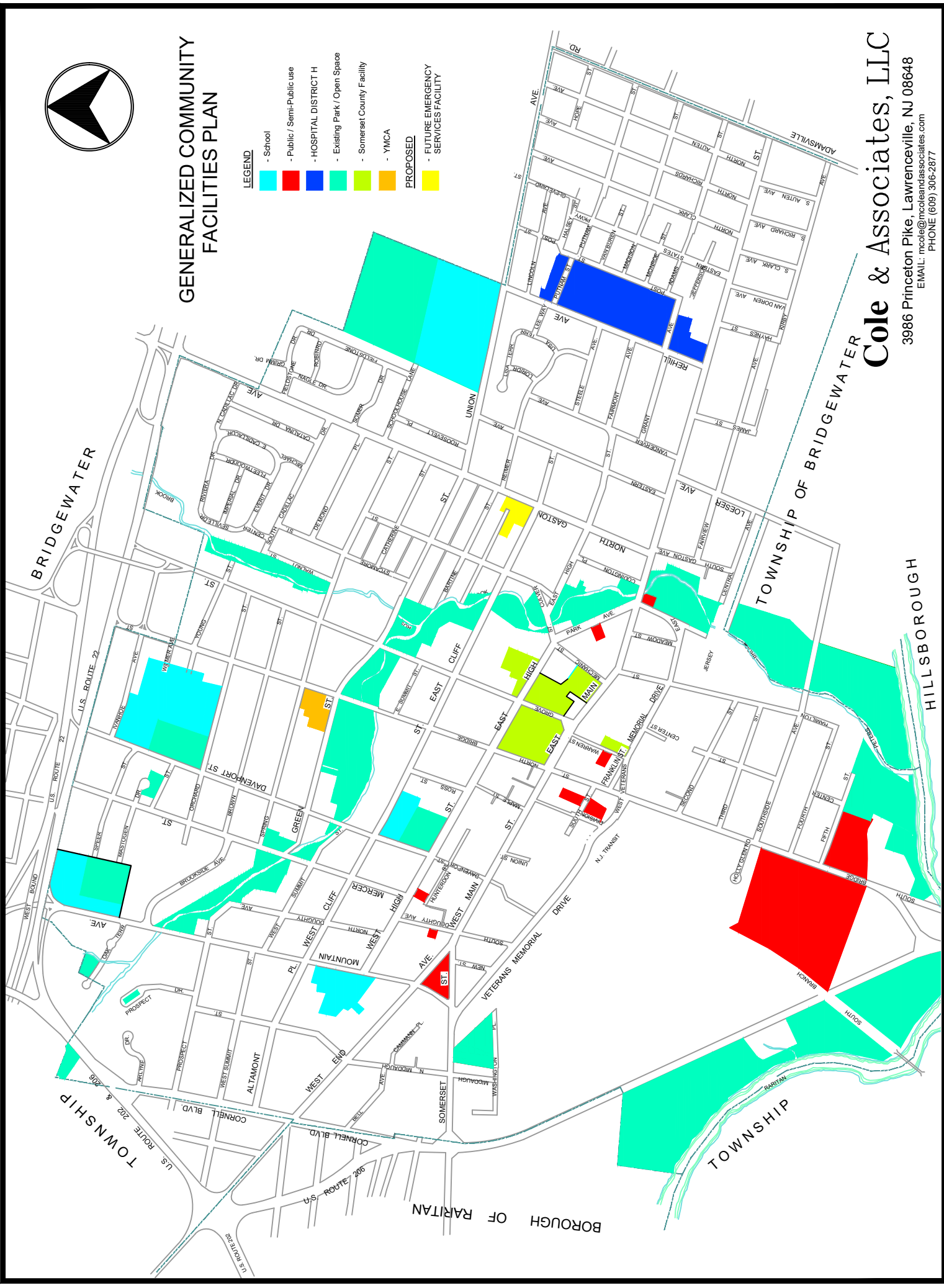
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GENERALIZED COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

- LEGEND**
- School
 - Public / Semi-Public use
 - HOSPITAL/DISTRICT H
 - Existing Park / Open Space
 - Somerset County Facility
 - YMCA
 - PROPOSED**
 - FUTURE EMERGENCY SERVICES FACILITY



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