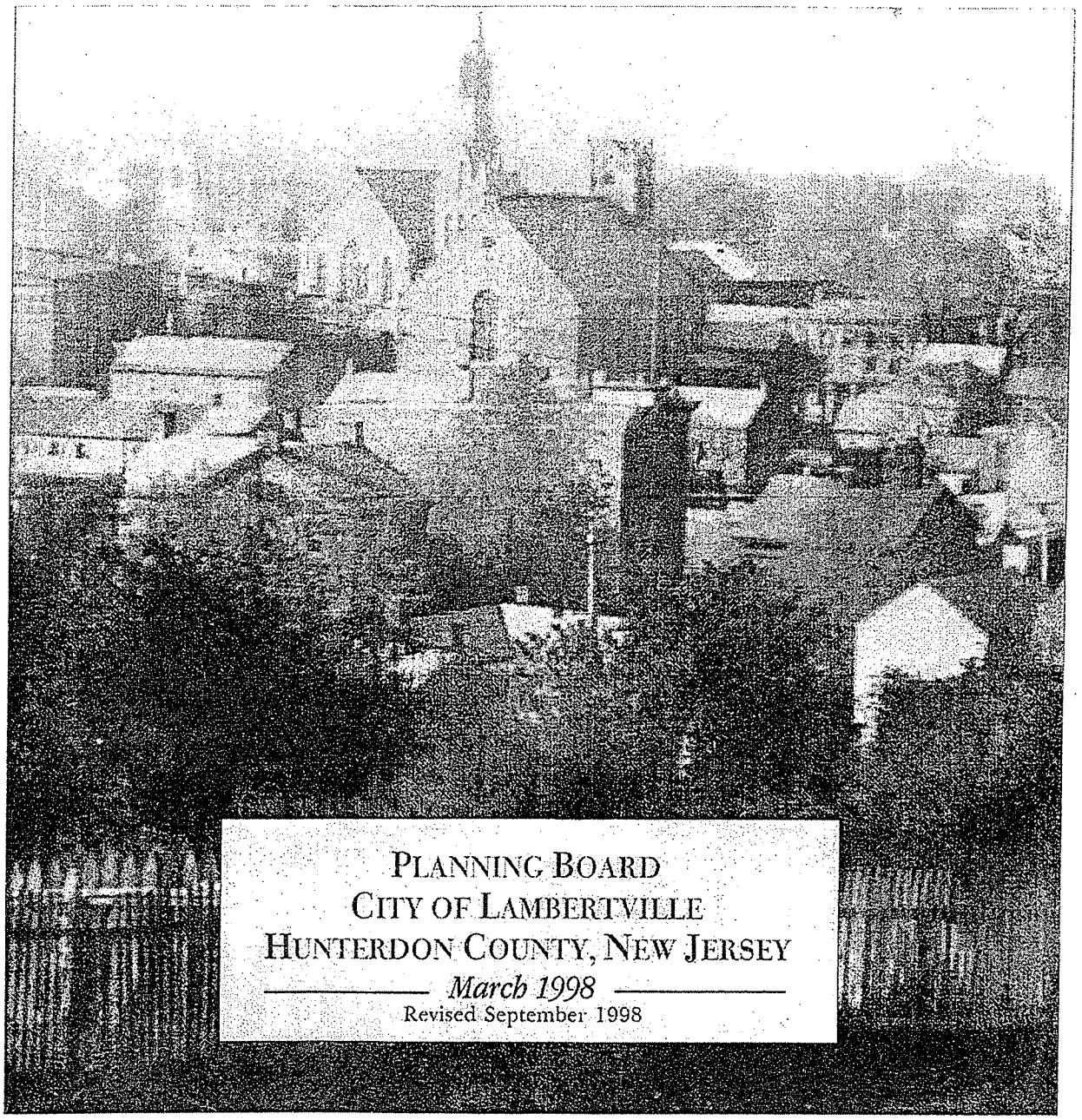
CITY OF LAMBERTVILLE

LAND USE PLAN ELEMENT

An Element of the Master Plan



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HUNTERDON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

March 1998

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Acknowledgments

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Land Use Plan Element

City of Lambertville
County of Hunterdon

Adopted by Resolution of the Planning Board

September 28, 1998

Adopted pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28
the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law

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A signed and sealed original is on file with the City Clerk's office.

LAND USE PLAN ELEMENT

A Vision for Lambertville

Nestled between the scenic Delaware River and Hunterdon County's rolling hills, Lambertville is an historic small town symbolic of the word "community". Lambertville has a strong downtown, fine residential neighborhoods, abundant natural resources and a dramatic location settled in a place of scenic beauty. Lambertville's residents are people of unusual diversity in outlook and lifestyle who share a set of values about the town - one that seeks to balance prosperity with preservation, tourism with the enjoyment of private and public property, and environmental protection with growth.

Introduction

The Land Use Element seeks to maintain a delicate balance in the quality of life for residents, business owners and the many visitors that find a special place in Lambertville. The Land Use Element is designed to encourage compatible land uses, the reuse of existing buildings, the restriction of development in environmentally sensitive areas, and careful management of growth in the downtown. By integrating these components, it is believed that the charm of the City will be maintained and the quality of life supported.

The Land Use Element is part of the City's Master Plan. Through its goals and objectives statement, a master plan describes a vision for the community in the future for its development and redevelopment. As such it is intended to guide the public and private sector in making decisions on projects involving land and buildings.

A master plan forms the legal and conceptual foundation for the zoning ordinance and zoning map. New Jersey, among a few other states, explicitly ties the planning of a community with the zoning ordinance and zoning map. These latter two documents are the local rules which govern the use of land and the location of buildings. The zoning ordinance must be substantially consistent with a municipality's master plan. In the same manner, the zoning map must be substantially consistent with the Land Use Plan found at the end of this document. In this document, Land Use Element refers to the text and Land Use Plan refers to the map that indicates the various land use categories in the City.

Lambertville's Land Use Element and Plan build on previous planning work and public forums that resulted in the adoption of the Reexamination Report, Goals and Objectives, Housing Element, and Waterfront Plan.

This Element should be read in conjunction with the Waterfront Plan. The Waterfront Plan is a sub-element of the Land Use Element and is specifically focused on the land area of the City from the Delaware and Raritan Canal westward to the Delaware River.

Existing Land Use

An existing land use survey was undertaken in the fall of 1995 by Planning Board members, Environmental Commission members, and volunteers interested in master plan issues. The intent of an existing land use survey is to find out how land is actually being used regardless of what the actual zoning regulations require. If a building was no longer being used, the last discernible use was noted and the land placed in the appropriate category. The survey results are depicted on the Existing Land Use map found on page 4. From this information, patterns can be discerned that will influence how the Land Use Plan is refined by the Planning Board. Since differences in land use may cause nuisances or conflicts, the existing land use survey may also be used to establish the basis for abatement or mitigation measures. The existing land use survey investigated how property was being utilized in the City and assigned it to one of thirteen categories. These are described as follows:

Single Family Detached Residence - A dwelling occupied by one household that is not attached to any other building.

Twin Residence - A dwelling occupied by one household attached along a

common vertical wall with one other residence.

Duplex Residence - A dwelling occupied by two households usually with one unit above another.

Single Family Attached - A dwelling occupied by one household with one or more common vertical walls attached to other residences in a row of three or more houses; rowhouse; townhouse.

Multi-Family Residence - A building occupied by three or more units; or, apartments.

Retail - A shop or store selling goods or services to the general public, including such uses as lodging, restaurants and entertainment places. If a retail store is an incidental part of an industrial enterprise, however, it is placed in the manufacturing category.

Office - A general, business, or professional office, including medical offices.

Commercial - Any other commercial enterprise including construction materials sales, gasoline stations, automobile repair, wholesale, or warehousing.

Manufacturing - Any industrial, manufacturing, assembly, or fabricating facility.

Institutional - Any government or agency use, house of worship, school, and fire house, excluding parks and recreation.

Parks and Recreation - Active and passive (hiking, bird-watching) recreation, and conservation use on land held by a government or non-profit land trust.

Transportation and Utility - Land used for transportation facilities or public utility purposes. Defined roads have been left uncolored in order to maintain the legibility of street names.

Vacant - Land with no discernible use; or, agriculture.

Lambertville is characterized by a significant proportion of mixed use buildings, particularly in the downtown area. Typically, such uses combine

retail or office uses on the first floor with apartment uses above. In such circumstances, both uses were noted in the existing land use survey. The percentage of land area has been tabulated based on the categories described above. In addition to the categories listed above, a special classification has been established for mixed uses that includes both commercial and residential uses in one building. This allows a more accurate picture of the how land is used in the City. The acreage and percentage of land area devoted to each of the existing land uses is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Existing Land Use in Lambertville.

Land Use	Acres	% of Total
Single Family Detached Residential	202	27.8%
Twin Residential	12	1.6%
Duplex Residential	4	.5%
Single Family Attached Residential	10	1.4%
Multi-family Residential	14	1.9%
Mixed Residential and Commercial	7	1.0%
Retail	7	1.0%
Office	4	.5%
Commercial	30	4.1%
Manufacturing	15	2.0%
Institutional	43	5.9%
Parks and Recreation	63	8.6%
Transportation and Utility (1)	104	14.2%
Vacant (2)	215	29.3%
Total	730	100%

(1) - Includes all roads.
(2) - Includes 77 acres of water.

Lambertville comprises 1.14 square miles, or 730 acres. Approximately 77 acres are water bodies, including the Delaware River area to the Pennsylvania border. If the water areas are discounted from the vacant land area, approximately 138 acres of vacant land remain, which would then make it the second largest land use category. The largest land use designation is single family detached housing which constitutes more than a quarter of the land area in the City.

Population Characteristics

Lambertville's population has remained between 3,900 and 4,600 people for at least 100 years, even though the number of housing units has steadily increased. The population was stable for 50 years beginning in 1880 until 1930 when the population stood at 4,518 people. Since that time a long term decline has occurred even though in some Census periods the population increased slightly. This contrasts with Hunterdon County which has increased significantly over the same time period. Table 2 indicates the historic population of both the municipality and the county from 1930 to 1990.

Table 2. Historic Population of Lambertville and Hunterdon County.

Census Year	Lambertville Population	% Change From Prior Decade	Hunterdon Population	% Change From Prior Decade
1930	4,518	N/A	34,728	N/A
1940	4,447	-1.6%	36,766	5.9%
1950	4,477	0.7%	42,736	16.2%
1960	4,269	-4.6%	54,107	26.6%
1970	4,359	2.1%	69,718	28.9%
1980	4,044	-7.2%	87,361	25.3%
1990	3,927	-2.9%	107,776	23.4%
Average Change	-99 per decade	-1.7% per decade	12,175 per decade	21.1% per decade

Source: U.S. Census, 1930-1990.

Age Cohorts

The population of Lambertville shows a significant concentration of "baby boomers", those people born between 1946 and 1964 who would have been between 44 and 26 years old in 1990. In particular, those persons born in 1956 through 1965 are disproportionately represented in the population comprising 21.8% of the total. Table 3 depicts the distribution of population in the City.

Table 3. Age Distribution in Lambertville, 1990.

Age Cohort	Female Persons	% of Total	Male Persons	% of Total	Total Persons	% of Total
0-4 years	133	6.6	102	5.4	235	6.0
5-9 years	78	3.8	112	5.9	190	4.8
10-14 years	102	5.0	104	5.5	206	5.2
15-19 years	88	4.3	109	5.7	197	5.0
20-24 years	103	5.1	89	4.7	192	4.9
25-29 years	214	10.6	216	11.4	430	10.9
30-34 years	225	11.1	205	10.8	430	10.9
35-39 years	161	7.9	228	12.0	389	9.9
40-44 years	204	10.1	170	8.9	374	9.5
45-49 years	65	3.2	79	4.2	144	3.7
50-54 years	137	6.8	80	4.2	217	5.5
55-59 years	109	5.4	123	6.5	232	5.9
60-64 years	77	3.8	80	4.2	157	4.0
65-69 years	94	4.6	93	4.9	187	4.8
70-74 years	88	4.3	20	1.1	108	2.8
75-79 years	61	3.0	49	2.6	110	2.8
80-84 years	44	2.2	25	1.3	69	1.8
85+ years	43	2.1	17	0.9	60	1.5
Total	2,026	100.0	1,901	100.0	3,927	100.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990.

Household Income

A comparison of incomes for Lambertville City and Hunterdon County in 1989 is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Household Income Distribution in Lambertville and Hunterdon County, 1989.

1989 Income	Lambertville		Hunterdon	
	Households	% of Total	Households	% of Total
$0-$4,999	50	2.9	621	1.6
$5,000-$9,999	109	6.4	1,218	3.2
$10,000-$14,999	76	4.5	1,235	3.2
$15,000-$19,999	110	6.5	1,519	4.0
$20,000-$24,999	124	7.3	1,590	4.2
$25,000-$29,999	119	7.0	1,854	4.9
$30,000-$34,999	153	9.0	1,950	5.1
$35,000-$39,999	113	6.6	2,158	5.7
$40,000-$44,999	130	7.6	2,201	5.8
$45,000-$49,999	156	9.1	2,518	6.6
$50,000-$54,999	104	6.1	2,372	6.2
$55,000-$59,999	81	4.8	2,051	5.4
$60,000-$74,999	145	8.5	5,334	14.0
$75,000-$99,999	130	7.6	5,714	14.9
$100,000-$124,999	54	3.2	2,783	7.3
$125,000-$149,999	23	1.4	1,268	3.3
$150,000 or more	26	1.5	1,766	4.6
Total	1,703	100.0	38,152	100.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990

Median household income in Lambertville in 1989 was $39,890 or 27% less than the County median of $54,628. Particularly striking is the levels in the $60-99,000 range where Lambertville had half the percentage of households in these brackets than Hunterdon.

Housing Type

Most of the housing units in Lambertville are single family housing units. Single family detached units comprise 505 of the 1,818 1990 total, or 27.8%, of all dwellings in Lambertville. Single family attached units account for 744, or 40.9% of total units. Together single family residences equal 1,249 units, or 68.7% of all housing units. The remaining 569 units are distributed among 2 family (duplex) and multi-family buildings. A duplex refers to a building with two living units, typically with one located above another. This contrasts with a single family attached dwelling which has a common vertical wall from foundation to roof. Rowhouses and townhouses are examples of single family attached housing. Table 5 illustrates the type of housing units in Lambertville in 1990.

Table 5. Number of Units for Each Housing Type, 1990.

Type of Unit	Number of Units	Percentage of Total
Single Family Detached	505	27.8
Single Family Attached	744	40.9
Two Family	123	6.8
3 to 4 Units	193	10.6
5 to 9 Units	105	5.8
10 to 19 Units	45	2.5
20 to 49 Units	46	2.5
50 or more Units	0	0.0
Mobile Home or Trailer	0	0.0
Other Type of Unit	57	3.1
Total	1,818	100.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990

The percentage of households in Lambertville that owned their primary residence was 60% in 1990, compared to 76% in Hunterdon County.

Population Estimates and Projections

The Hunterdon County Planning Board has published population estimates and projections for its 27 constituent municipalities. An estimate is a population assessment for a given time in the past. A projection is a forecast based on an existing census that may or may not be adjusted by demographic trends. Hunterdon County's estimates are derived from information on net immigration to the County, birth and death rates, and knowledge about the level of development activity. The County has projected household sizes in Lambertville starting with the 1990 number of 2.29 persons per household. They project a reduction to 2.24 persons in the year 2000 and 2.19 persons in the year 2010. In turn these have been used, along with the other data mentioned above, to project future populations. The County has created two sets of projected numbers, the low and high series. The difference between the two is largely one of the rate of net immigration into Hunterdon from other areas. The County Planning Board has issued the following projections for the City:

Table 6. Projected Population for Lambertville City.

Year	U.S. Census Population	
1980	4,044	
1990	3,927	
Estimates and Projections	Low Series Population	High Series Population
1995	3,930	4,000
2000	4,055	4,180
2005	4,120	4,690
2010	4,190	5,040

Source: Hunterdon County Planning Board

Another way of forecasting the population is to examine the average number of housing units of a period of time and project this number into the future.

By multiplying the projected number of housing units by the expected household size, projected population may be determined. The City has been adding about 15 units of housing per year since 1980. If this pace is sustained and the County's projected household sizes are accurate, then the City's population would have been 4,067 persons in 1995, will be 4,180 people in the year 2000, 4,290 in 2005 and 4,396 in 2010. This would be reversing the more recent long term trend, however it would be within the range of population that has occurred since the rise of manufacturing industries in Lambertville began with the Civil War. These numbers are close to the low series developed by the County Planning Board.

Environmental Factors

The physical form of Lambertville was created by the meanderings of the Delaware River. Over the ages as the Delaware River carved down through the upper plain, it created the river bluffs and lowlands adjacent to the main water course. Periodic inundations have deposited silt on the lowlands or cut new channels for the river. The changeable nature of the river can be seen in place names. Where Holcombe Island, north of the Free Bridge, once was a true island, silt deposits at its north end have filled in the channel and created a peninsula. The backwater channel of Island Creek once was part of the Delaware as it cut around Holcombe Island. The potential for flood damage is always present because of the City's location. The latest flood occurred in the winter of 1995-1996.

The action of the Delaware River has created many areas of steep slope in Lambertville. Portions of these slopes have been eroded to an even steeper profile by the streams that drain the highland areas, such as Swan Creek, Ely Creek and several other unnamed tributaries. The other main stream, Alexauken Creek, drains areas on the north side of the City and creates the boundary with Delaware and West Amwell Townships. The streams support wetlands habitats on their banks and together provide an important environmental resource for plants and wildlife. Certain other areas have also been identified as freshwater wetlands by State mapping, for example on Cottage Hill near the West Amwell border.

These three major environmental factors, floodplains, steep slopes, and freshwater wetlands, are worthy of natural resource protection because of their benefits to the ecology of the City. From a development perspective, these natural resources are also constraints which are protected by state and local

law. Nearly all of the vacant land in the City includes one or more of these major environmental factors that constrain its use for other than conservation purposes.

Floodplains

Approximately a third of the land area in Lambertville is located within the 500-year floodplain. The extent of floodplains is determined by hydrologic study and expressed as a probability. A 500-year floodplain is the area covered by water that has a 1/500 chance of occurring in any given year or 100% chance of occurring in 500 years. Slightly less area is covered by the 100-year floodplain. As may be expected, the hill areas of the City are located out of the 500-year floodplain, however, a significant portion of the lowlands are also above this elevation. The area from Ferry Street north to Elm Street between Clinton Street and N. Main Street is generally free from the 100- and 500-year floodplains.

Flooding from the Delaware River and its tributaries should be distinguished from localized flooding that may occur from capacity constraints in the storm water management system. Flooding of the Lambertville Elementary School that has occurred twice in the past several years was mainly the result of capacity constraints in the culverts under Rt. 29 rather than the size of the storm. However, should development upstream of the school occur with no improvements to the storm drainage system under state jurisdiction, it could be expected that flooding would increase in frequency. In the application review process, the amount and release of storm water retained on the tract proposed for development will need to be examined strictly for downstream effects.

Floodplains serve a number of important functions, including: slowing of the rate of flow during flood episodes, recharging of underground aquifers, and reducing flood effects from smaller tributaries or downstream. Channelization of streams, which has occurred in Lambertville in the past, increases flood velocities and the erosion of soil. Lambertville's floodplain is partially developed. Those portions of the City north of Elm Street, along Main Street, south of Ferry Street and at the Rock Creek Woods development subject to the likeliest flooding. Fortunately, the City has undeveloped stretches of land along the river in the floodplain, including Holcombe Island and the state park south of Swan Creek, that permit the Delaware to function naturally, unlike the developed frontage in New Hope. The Waterfront Plan earmarks three-quarters of the river frontage for open space purposes and proposes very low

densities where land is held privately. To the extent that development encroaches on the 100-year floodplain, it is regulated by the state.

Steep Slopes

The City instituted a steep slope ordinance in 1993 in order to implement one of the recommendations of the 1989 Master Plan. The steep slope ordinance regulates the disturbance of slopes in excess of a 15% gradient and prohibits it altogether when slopes exceed 30%. The City has significant changes in elevation over short distances. Slopes in excess of 30% gradient are common at the interface between the bluffs and the lowlands. Lambertville's elevation ranges from a highpoint in the southeast corner of the municipality of 340 feet to the Delaware River at its low elevation of about 47 feet.

The development of steep slopes has many impacts. Prior to development, hillside vegetation protects the slope from erosion and permits the percolation of water into the soil. The type of vegetation, soil, and the slope interact to determine the amount of natural runoff from a hill. This in turn supports the quality and quantity of vegetation that grows. Different types of vegetation will support different wildlife species.

The amount of runoff determines the characteristics of soil, plants, and stream corridors located below the hill. When development occurs, this protective cover is removed to a greater or lesser extent. Grading around buildings will change the natural patterns of runoff and will in turn affect the amount of water in downhill areas. This process may change the local ecology sufficiently to alter the existing plant life and hence the quantity and type of wildlife. During the construction process, soil erosion can occur even with the use of control measures and has the potential to create stream siltation. This process may lead to habitat destruction, especially to wildlife in the stream and alongside its banks.

The City's steep slope ordinance, which was incorporated into the zoning ordinance, permits the clustering of dwellings to avoid the steepest parts of a tract of land. Clustering is a planning technique that allows an equal number of residences to be concentrated on the most developable land instead of in areas of critical environmental sensitivity.

Freshwater Wetlands

Freshwater wetlands are the third major environmental factor. The City's Natural Resource Inventory and state mapping indicate that most wetlands are located along stream corridors or are alluvial deposits adjacent to the Delaware River. Several pockets of wetlands are also found on higher ground as previously noted. Wetlands are important natural resources. They serve to provide storage for flood waters, help filter out pollutants from storm water runoff, stabilize the soil, and provide habitats for fish and wildlife. Wetlands habitats are now understood to be the most biologically productive land areas. Wetlands also harbor to an unusual extent threatened and endangered species. Wetlands provide an important link in the food chain between higher and lower species.

In New Jersey, freshwater wetlands are protected at the state and federal levels. New Jersey has been delegated nearly all federal powers relating to wetlands and open waters. Part of the protection of wetlands is found through the requirement for transition buffers - upland areas that border wetlands. Transition buffers provide additional land area to prevent construction and other man-made activities from harming the biological functions of the wetlands. The transition area ranges up to 150 feet in width depending on the ecological importance of the wetland.

These three major environmental factors serve to effectively limit the developable portions of the remaining vacant land in the City. Of the three factors, steep slopes constrain the largest land area.

Land Use Issues

Tourism

Lambertville's emergence as a tourist destination is the single most profound change since the previous Master Plan was adopted. Though it was evident in the 1980's that the City was undergoing a transformation from a manufacturing to a service economy revolving around tourism, Lambertville had yet to emerge from the shadow of New Hope. In the ensuing time, Lambertville has further evolved its tourist industry to become a destination by itself. Lambertville and New Hope are not necessarily competing entities. Because of their close proximity and similar development, tourists typically visit both places.

Tourism is a two-sided coin. Tourism brings money directly to town and supports a wider range of services and goods than would otherwise be available for a town of 4,000 people. Indirectly, tourism supports other people when shop owners in turn employ people and buy goods and services in the City, a phenomenon called an 'economic multiplier effect'. Tourism supports property values by creating a ready market for more stores and homes for the people that own and work in them. Tourism is behind many efforts to preserve the historic nature of the City.

On the other hand, tourism brings traffic congestion and crowds. The crush of traffic and people may seriously affect the quality of life for residents. Tourism often adversely affects the ability to provide municipal services. The structure of taxation in the state does not easily provide a method for capturing a portion of the money spent by tourists to use in providing services necessitated by their presence.

Tourist uses are concentrated in the central business district. Though the central business district is conceived as a mixed use area, the higher values associated with commercial uses will tend over to time to displace purely residential ones. Limiting the extent of the central business district will restrict the number of establishments and will indirectly control traffic congestion and overcrowding.

There is an interdependence between business and residents' interests in preserving the City's quality of life. Business owners also have a strong interest in controlling the impacts that come from tourism. If visiting Lambertville becomes no longer enjoyable, tourists will go elsewhere. But like the farmer that adds one more cow to the commons and ruins the pasturage for everyone, suitable limits must be established. The management of tourism is essential to the quality of life in the City of which this document is only a part.

The effects of tourism are not confined to the City's limits. Lambertville and New Hope are linked together as a tourist destination. New Hope is struggling with many of the same issues as Lambertville such as circulation and the mix of shops in the central business district. New Hope, and to some extent Lambertville, is in competition for tourist dollars from outlet centers in Lahaska and Flemington which can offer a wider variety of goods supported by national brands in a setting with easy parking. Lambertville and New Hope can offer an authentic experience for the tourist in comparison to the cartoonish "villages" of the outlet centers. This argues for both Lambertville

and New Hope to concentrate on higher value and rare products instead of cut price retail. Another emphasis should be to encourage longer stays for two- and three-day weekends instead of catering to the day tripper. This would also help to control parking and traffic congestion since exploration on foot is easily accomplished from both central business districts. The recent reopening of the Lambertville House is an example of promoting higher end retail and adding more accommodation for tourists.

Outlet centers have one other advantage over a central business district. The centers are managed by a single entity that determines the mix of shops, handles consumer complaints, and sees to a host of everyday details. Central business districts have these functions separated between the public and private sectors. No single entity has overall control of these functions. Though not recommended for Lambertville, other towns have needed an overall entity to manage their downtowns either through special improvement districts that impose an additional property tax for use in the CBD or by joining the Main Street program established by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and supported by the NJ Department of Community Affairs.

Parking

Traffic studies submitted as part of the site plan review process indicate that the parking problem is primarily a weekend phenomenon beginning on Friday nights. The problem is more severe during the warmer months. A factor of traffic congestion appears to be caused by motorists circling to find a parking space. Because of the compact nature of the central business district, tourists once parked leave their vehicles to visit a number of shops instead of making another vehicle trip. This even extends to tourists visiting both New Hope and Lambertville - gauging by the amount of foot traffic over the Free Bridge. Encouraging longer stays by tourists would help ease traffic congestion provided that their vehicles remained parked for the duration of their stay.

Improvements to parking will require incremental steps. The area of greatest need is clearly in the central business district. As a measure of Lambertville's success, however, this is also the area with the least amount of available land. The creation of parking lots in the central business district is problematic. Where parking lots intersect streets, on-street parking would be lost and the unimpeded flow of pedestrians would be broken with each driveway. This is not an inconsequential concern. Studies of pedestrians have shown that driveways and other gaps in the row of stores will cause a substantial number of shoppers to lose interest in visiting shops on the opposite side.

For these reasons, parking lots in the central business district should be small, preferably fewer than 20 cars, and located towards the interior of the blocks. Access from alleys instead of streets should be favored. Careful site planning would be necessary to give pedestrians dominance where vehicles enter and exit streets.

Aside from exploiting these limited opportunities in the central business district, establishing satellite parking areas at the edges of the City is an important strategy. For example, the redevelopment of the Ben Franklin and Diamond Silver properties adjacent or near to Main Street at Cherry may provide opportunities for weekend tourist parking. Office uses on these parcels would work best in creating alternative weekend parking. The tourist trade and office use would have complementary parking demand. The main drawback for the use of these sites and others that may become available is their distance from the central business district. Shuttle service, like that provided by the Chamber of Commerce for the Shad Festival, may become necessary for other special events.

The designation of new areas for office uses in the Land Use Plan is part of the effort to diversify both the local economy and to reduce peak traffic congestion on weekends.

At the southern end of Lambertville, the state Department of Transportation has proposed narrowing the cartway of Rt. 29 in their funding request for a discretionary ISTEA[1] appropriation. The reduction in the number of travel lanes from four to two would permit the use of parallel parking spaces on the roadway. Potentially too, several sites may be used for small parking lots or shared use where offices predominate.

Two recommendations are proposed in this element. The first is to study more extensively parking and traffic issues in a Circulation Element. The second suggestion is that a single entity, perhaps a standing committee with representatives from different interests, be established by City Council to focus on these issues and make recommendations.

[1] - Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1990 - the main federal program for transportation funds.

State Development and Redevelopment Plan

The State Development and Redevelopment Plan was the culmination of a process that started with the New Jersey Legislature when the State Planning Act was passed and signed by Governor Kean in January 1986. There was a two-fold impetus for the State Plan. First was the negative effects that occurred from significant growth such as loss of the countryside, declining cities, and financial problems from paying for sprawl development. The second was the N.J. Supreme Court's *Mount Laurel II* decision that mandated a response to the proper location of affordable housing in conjunction with the growth of municipalities.

The State Development and Redevelopment Plan promotes dynamic, diverse, compact and efficient centers as an alternative to sprawl. Sprawl consumes resources in disproportion to its benefits and is increasingly beyond the ability of municipalities to supply services.

The state was divided into 5 different "planning areas". These include the Metropolitan, Suburban, Fringe, Rural, and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas. Lambertville is located in the Rural Planning Area. Certain parts of the City on the north and south ends are adjacent to a subset of the Rural Planning Area that is Environmentally Sensitive. Within each of the planning areas, centers can exist that are concentrations of population that often have a defined boundary. The types of centers include Urban Centers, Towns, Regional Centers, Villages, and Hamlets. In turn these centers can either be existing or proposed. In the first State Plan, Lambertville was identified as an existing town.

The State Development and Redevelopment Plan is undergoing a periodic reexamination with the expectation of amending the original Plan. This process is called the Cross-Acceptance Process. The first State Plan was adopted by the State Planning Commission in June 1992. Lambertville was designated as an existing town at that time. The State Plan is predisposed towards designating existing towns as "centers" which in its parlance means a compact form of development with an identifiable core and surrounding land areas. In Lambertville, the lowland area would constitute the core area and the hill areas as its surrounding, less dense, ring.

The Cross-Acceptance process provides an opportunity for designating Lambertville as a center. In the initial State Plan adoption process, centers were identified during cross-acceptance. To be accorded the official status of

being a center, however, municipalities have to petition the State Planning Commission in order to be "designated". Once a place has official status as a center, then it gains points in the rating for capital projects granted by the state. For example, funding for road reconstruction, sanitary and storm sewer projects, scenic byways, historic preservation are advanced when such projects are located in a designated centers. Being designated also provides for an expedited review process for state permits. The process of being designated a center has been simplified in this iteration of the State Plan. Municipalities will be allowed to be designated as a center as part of the Cross-Acceptance process rather than being required to undergo a second review. Lambertville already receives a substantial allocation of discretionary aid. However, this may change now that other centers are being designated and discretionary aid will be targeted to them. Designating Lambertville as a center would help to preserve the type of benefits that the municipality has received from the state.

It is recommended that the City seek designation as a center to encompass the entire land area of the municipality. The Center designation may also include The Commons area of West Amwell Township that has already been developed under similar densities as Lambertville, however, only after consultation with West Amwell officials.

Senior Citizen Uses

A number of factors have converged since the last Master Plan to bring land uses specifically designed for senior citizens to the forefront of planning. These factors include the increase in the median age of the population, significant changes in the delivery of medical and nursing services brought about by efforts to contain medical costs, a greater concentration of wealth held by senior citizens, and new types of housing to cater to senior citizens developed by the real estate industry.

The population has been aging at an increasing rate since the baby boom generation reached middle age. In 1990, New Jersey had the 14th oldest population in the country and Pennsylvania had the second oldest. In the year 2000, the leading edge of the baby boom generation will have reached early retirement age and by 2010 will be retiring in full swing. Social and land use issues for seniors will become increasingly prominent in the next 15 years. Lambertville's aged population has not experienced the same phenomenon of aging as has occurred in the state. In 1970 the population that was 65 years old and older was about 14% of the population. This decreased to 12.8% in 1980 before climbing to 13.6% in 1990. The City's population of the elderly has

been steady rather than increasing to any substantive degree.

Though the proportion of senior citizens in Lambertville has been consistent, different types of housing specifically designed for them would help to fill a need that is not currently being satisfied. The two and three story housing typical of Lambertville is not always suitable for the elderly and does not easily allow for medical or life care assistance. Elderly that need assistance with everyday tasks or meals are not well served in town. Allowing new housing types for senior citizens in suitable locations would provide for better housing and services to the elderly.

Housing for senior citizens has now been developed to create a continuum of senior citizen uses that combine various aspects of housing and medical care. These range from conventional housing that is age-restricted to skilled 24 hour per day nursing care. They may include intermediate care nursing facilities, homes for the aged offering different levels of care, continuing care retirement communities (CCRC), apartments, boarding homes, and adult retirement communities. Newer forms of housing include Elder Cottage Housing Opportunity (ECHO) mobile units, assisted living, congregate care, and residential health care facilities.

The existing density of development and the lack of vacant developable land limit the use of a number of senior citizen uses such as adult retirement communities, CCRCs and ECHO housing. Typically, adult retirement communities require at least 75 acres and CCRCs, 30 acres. There is no area of sufficient size for adult retirement communities and only one or two for CCRCs (ignoring for the moment environmental constraints). ECHO housing has greater promise. ECHO housing is a mobile unit set up in the yard area of a primary single family detached residence and attached to existing utilities. ECHO housing may be suitable if the size of the lot is at least one-half acre. In Lambertville, this would limit the unit to only the largest residential lots.

Of all of the types of senior housing possible, the most pressing need is for congregate care apartments and assisted living facilities. Congregate apartments have the fewest services, being limited mainly to community social and dining facilities with at least one hot meal per day. Assisted living provides a higher level of personal assistance and medical services. Residential health care facilities provide health maintenance services under the direction of a professional nurse. All meals and housekeeping services are performed by the staff. Nursing homes have 24 hour skilled nursing services for those people infirm enough not to be able to care for themselves yet not ill

to the point of requiring hospital care.

Congregate care apartments and assisted living facilities may be suitable on sites with two acres of developable land. Nursing homes and residential health care facilities should be on lots of at least four acres. These later two uses usually require at least 80 beds or units in order to be financially viable. Densities for these senior housing types would range from 10 to 15 units or per acre or 20 to 30 beds per acre. On a floor area ratio basis, a .5 to .75 ratio would be appropriate. The intensity of potential development should be closely related to the character of the existing land use and the purpose of the zoning district in which it is proposed.

Assisted living, congregate care apartments, residential health care facilities and nursing homes are intensive uses. As such they would be best suited for non-residential and mixed use districts. However, such uses would be suitable in residential districts provided they meet a series of stringent conditional use standards to mitigate potentially adverse impacts from noise, loading, glare, and traffic.

Development on Remaining Lands

As was noted in the Environmental Factors section of the Plan, Lambertville's remaining vacant land is highly constrained by environmentally sensitive land. Development of environmentally sensitive land often leads to a degraded ecology with adverse impacts on water quality, wildlife and plant species. Vacant land is concentrated on the three hills in the western part of town, Music Mountain, Connaught's Hill and Cottage Hill. The vacant land has been zoned for residential purposes either as R-1, single family residential, or R-3, planned residential development, in the zoning ordinance. The R-1 allows single family dwellings, institutional uses, nursing homes, and governmental uses on 7,500 sf. (residential) to 15,000 sf. (non-residential) lots. Density for residential uses is about 4½ units per acre assuming 20% of the land area would be used for roads and storm water management. The R-3 district allows a variety of housing types including single family detached and attached, patio home, duplex, triplex, quadraplex, and garden apartment. Lot sizes for fee simple ownership range from 1,750 to 7,500 sf. Additionally, institutional and governmental uses are allowed. Density for residential uses is expressly limited to 4 units per acre.

The steep slope ordinance provided a method for clustering residential lots on areas with steep slopes. It allows the size of lots to be reduced to 5,000 sf. and

is designed mainly for R-1 districts where the lot size is larger. The steep slope ordinance would allow an owner to have the same yield of lots even if as much as 30% was constrained by steep slopes. The steep slope ordinance, however, does not address the underlying density of development. Now that the extent of environmentally sensitive land is known, an appropriate density may be assigned to this land area.

The soil characteristics of the three hills are reflective of their geology. Much of the soil is stony and bedrock is usually close to the surface. These characteristics present severe constraints for the use of septic systems or other means of land disposal, such as community fields or spray application. In areas where there are no sanitary sewers, large lots would be necessary to provide effective treatment of household effluent. Sanitary sewer infrastructure is either limited in area or has capacity constraints in much of the three hills area. Music Mountain has the most limited system which serves only a few homes.

In addition to steep slope and wetlands issues in the three hills areas, the effect of development on the road system must also be examined. Four main roads traverse or border the three hills area. These are Rt. 29, Rt. 179, Rt. 518 and Rocktown Road. The latter three roads all intersect Rt. 29. For any motorist to reach downtown or the bridges over the Delaware River from the hills, Rt. 29 must be traveled. Residents in the three hills area are also dependent on driving to reach basic services in the lowland area. The steepness of the slope makes walking a difficult activity even though the actual distance that is traveled is short.

Rt. 29 serves many functions. It is the main north/south route on the east side of the Delaware River and provides linkages among the river towns from Trenton north to Frenchtown. But Rt. 29 also serves as a local access street to residences and businesses. The fully developed frontage of Rt. 29 and the listing of much of the City on the State and National Registers of Historic Places precludes widening to add more vehicular capacity. Over the past two years the City Council, in conjunction with the state Department of Transportation, has worked to reduce the number of quarry trucks using Rt. 29 because of congestion, noise and vibration.

The City is also vulnerable to congestion caused by development in West Amwell Township. The three hills roads provide the only means for West Amwell residents to reach the City. Lambertville is the shopping center for goods and services to residents of this part of West Amwell.

The full development potential under the PRD and R-3 districts in the three hills would permit about 600 additional housing units compared to an existing 1,818 dwellings (in 1990). Full development would markedly increase traffic congestion without offsetting benefits. Assuming that the potential number of housing units were evenly split between single family attached and single family detached housing, one could expect an additional 4,600 trips per day generated from full development.[2] To the extent that full development is not realized, traffic congesting effects would be lessened. There is a strong and common sense link between land use and transportation demand. The more intensive the use, the greater is the demand for transportation, whether it be by automobile, bus or train. There is no effective public transportation in Lambertville that serves local residents so every motorized trip will be by personal vehicle. Since traffic congestion is a serious concern in the City, it necessitates a reduction in the permitted density in the three hills area.

This conclusion also follows from the analysis of the effects of development in environmentally sensitive areas. Since the undeveloped areas of the hills are inordinately constrained by environmental factors, a reduction in density would serve to protect these areas from development by providing sufficient room with which to cluster dwelling units on the developable portions of a tract. The underlying soil characteristics present severe constraints for the development of houses on septic systems. In vacant or grossly underutilized areas lacking sewer infrastructure, the density should be lowered because of potential pollution hazards.

Accessibility to public water is also in doubt in parts of the three hills. Providing public water may not be feasible under normal circumstances because of the need to provide standpipes, mains, and pumps.

Accordingly, it is recommended that the vacant parts of Music Mountain, Connaught's Hill and Cottage Hill be rezoned to one and three-tenths unit per acre where public water and sewer are available and one unit per 3 acres where these facilities are not available.

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[2] - Average trips per day for single family detached (9.55) and residential townhouse/condominium (5.86), from *Trip Generation*, 5th ed., Institute of Transportation Engineers, 1991.

Community Facilities

Community facilities provide for public services and functions, quasi-public buildings and cultural attractions. As the nature of the services change, so too does the need for changes in buildings and land uses to accommodate them. Lambertville's City Hall is functionally obsolete for use as a municipal building and is the most pressing community facility need. City Hall is located on the northeast corner of York and N. Union Streets and is a converted Second Empire style residence. City Hall lacks sufficient space for the needs of the government including office space, an adequate meeting room, has only rudimentary accommodations for the handicapped and has headroom shortcomings in the basement. City Hall contains all of the municipal offices and governmental functions with the exception of Public Works, which is located on Quarry Street. The City is under order from the state Department of Community Affairs to rectify building code problems with the Police Department. The Police Department is located in the basement of City Hall. City Council has explored a number of options for both the Police Department and the other governmental functions at City Hall.

The compact nature of the City means that the municipal building could be relocated to a number of places and yet remain accessible to the population. Following is a set of criteria to be used in determining the suitability of a location for City functions should the Mayor and City Council decide that relocation is the best solution:

1) The site and/or building should be large enough to accommodate the spaces needs of the municipal government.

2) The site should be mainly free of steep slopes and wetlands. A site out of the 100-year flood plain should be preferred over one that is in the flood plain.

3) Access to the site should be convenient to residents and business owners.

4) Adequate parking for all police vehicles should be available on site. A reasonable but small number of parking spaces should be available for visitors and employees within walking distance of the building.

5) The ability to expand the building should be preferred over a location that cannot be expanded.

In addition to the facility needs of the municipal government, two other community needs for youth and senior citizens are periodically voiced by residents. A community center for youth would provide an indoor recreation and leisure space. The potential activities could include arcade games, a coffeehouse, dances, skits, mentoring and peer counseling, and similar social endeavors aimed at the junior and senior high school population. A community center for senior citizens would provide different activities but would function the same as the youth center by providing a social outlet for the elderly. The two types of community center could be combined in one facility or be designed as an integral part of an expanded City Hall.

Historic Preservation

The development of Lambertville has mirrored the rise and decline of manufacturing over the past century and a half. Sufficient wealth was created from manufacturing to pay for well-designed and attractive residences and churches in many architectural styles. The decline in manufacturing occurred before much conversion or initial construction of modern styles could occur. Lambertville was spared many of the ill effects of the modernization of store fronts or the demolition of historic structures that occurred in other formerly historic towns. The transformation from a manufacturing center to a tourist oriented one has taken place at a time of increased awareness of the benefits of preservation of the City's architectural heritage. The City's inclusion on the National and State Registers of Historic Places in 1983 is testimony to its architectural quality. The National and State Registers of Historic Places generally encompass the lowland areas of the City west of Rt. 29. This is no more evident than in the central business district where individual store owners have generally renovated buildings in concert with preservation guidelines.

The City has lacked, however, a local historic district. The City's listing on the National and State Registers of Historic Places means that historic preservation guidelines must be followed for any projects involving public money but not for the purely private funding of construction. Whether or not to create an historic district at the local level has been debated for more than ten years in Lambertville. The Community Survey in 1994 that was distributed and returned as part of the development of the City's Goals and Objectives indicated strong support for the establishment of some type of local historic district. The need for a district is strongest in the CBD for several reasons. One, the CBD is the focus of tourists who visit Lambertville at least in part for its charm. The City has an economic interest in maintaining its

historic ambiance. Two, while most owners or tenants have renovated buildings which maintain the integrity of the historic fabric, some have not. Three, the City has already established a review process for change of uses in the central business district which require Planning Board approval. Review for historic preservation would be consistent with the existing process. For these reasons, a local district encompassing the CBD is recommended. These reasons do not exist to nearly the same degree in other parts of the City.

However, before such a district may be established, an Historic Preservation Element of the Master Plan must be developed and adopted by the Planning Board in accordance with state law. Accordingly, it is recommended that this element be drafted and adopted in the near future in order to implement the local district through zoning amendment.

Home Occupations

The work force has decentralized over the past 15 years, reversing a trend begun with the industrial revolution in the 19th century. As the economy increasingly becomes service-oriented and information becomes a greater commodity, the potential for business activities based in the home also increases. Home occupations add to labor flexibility by providing a low cost method of starting a business and hence make the economy more efficient. Though generally beneficial, home occupations have the potential for creating nuisances for adjacent and nearby residents. Activities likely to create nuisances include traffic generated by the home occupation, whether from employees or deliveries; noise emanating from the residence; or heavy foot traffic. The existing home occupation requirements should be revisited to ensure that an adequate level of protection for adjacent and nearby residential uses is maintained.

Goals and Objectives

In 1995, the Planning Board adopted a set of goals for the development and redevelopment of the City. These are incorporated here to provide support for the land use classifications that follow this section and include the following:

1) Preserve the historic integrity of the City.

2) Encourage new public park areas throughout the City for passive and active recreational areas.

3) Facilitate access to a variety of housing to meet the income, aesthetic and other personal requirements of the City's present and future population.

4) Seek long term solutions to problems of parking and traffic congestion, particularly truck traffic.

5) Encourage a greater diversity of personal service retail opportunities in appropriate areas throughout the City and encourage a balance of residential as well as commercial uses in the central business district.

6) Promote commercial, light industrial and office uses in appropriate areas throughout the City.

7) Preserve and protect environmentally sensitive areas, including but not limited to, flood plains, wetlands, and steep slopes.

8) Maintain a healthy balance of land use development and open space in order to protect existing public access and encourage future public access to the riverfront while preserving its natural assets.

9) Encourage the development of a capital improvement plan.

10) Encourage tree planting and maintenance of existing trees in order to enhance neighborhood quality.

11) Strive to preserve the natural, scenic, historic, aesthetic aspects of the community and its environment.

12) Promote the development of recreational opportunities for young people.

13) Encourage the formation of cooperative agreements with the County or adjoining municipalities for the provision of needed services in the regional area.

14) Foster regional planning with adjoining municipalities to achieve common objectives in a complementary - rather than competitive - manner.

15) In accordance with the American Disabilities Act (ADA), promote equal access for all people to facilities and structures throughout the City.

16) Encourage the development of community design goals so that new development is compatible with the surrounding character of buildings, streetscape and structures, and the preservation of property values.

17) Adopt State recycling goals as City goals for recycling.

Community Design Plan

Lambertville's future vision is dependent on many factors - intelligent and capable leadership, a strong feeling of community, an ability to involve the citizenry in a shared consensus. Not the least of these are the City's physical location on the Delaware River, its architectural heritage and natural resources.

The Community Design Plan is intended to articulate policy for the physical form of the City as a complement to the statement that begins this document *A Vision for Lambertville*. The Community Design Plan envisions the future development of the City that this Element hopes to achieve or preserve.

Recommendations from the Community Design Plan are intended to be followed by more specific design guidelines and standards in the zoning ordinance. The design guidelines are intended to apply to major site plans and major subdivisions where the developer is required to submit an application for development to the approving authorities (e.g., Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment). The design guidelines would not apply to individual single family and two-family buildings. The standards will provide guidance for applicants seeking to develop or redevelop buildings and land in the City and for the approving authorities when judging the merits of applications.

When new development or building renovations occur in a community, especially one that is as developed as Lambertville, they influence neighboring uses, streets, pedestrian ways, and public spaces. They may also affect property values and change the character of an area - for better or worse. For all of these reasons, Lambertville has created the Community Design Plan and strongly supports the adoption of design guidelines in its land use ordinance to offer specific guidelines and standards on the style and manner of future growth.

The purpose of such design guidelines and standards in not to introduce obstacles in the land development review process, but rather to provide applicants with a better understanding of the preferred vision, or visual

character, of the community. The guidelines should be viewed as a starting point to inspire creative and innovative development proposals that are accepted and appreciated by the community.

The visual character of Lambertville may be summarized by noting its wide diversity of high quality architectural styles, its pedestrian-oriented downtown, and its abundance of natural resources. This physical form, defined in many ways by the legacies of the City's past, is Lambertville's vision for the future.

Lambertville has a wealth of architectural styles that spans two hundred years. As a center of manufacturing beginning with the construction of the Delaware and Raritan Canal in 1832-1834, the City was prosperous enough for its citizens to build well designed and pleasing residential, commercial, and religious buildings. The desire expressed in the Community Design Plan is to continue the virtues of well-designed buildings using traditional materials. The City's architectural diversity includes Federal and Georgian styles; Victorian, including Greek Revival, Queen Anne, Second Empire, Italianate, Romanesque Revival, Italian Villa, and Victorian Gothic; Colonial Revival and other more modern examples. The City's listing on the National and State Registers of Historic Places is a testament to its exemplary styles of historic architecture.

The central business district of Lambertville is a bustling, small town that is oriented to pedestrians while accommodating of motorists. The buildings are filled with a variety of retail stores, galleries, and apartments - even the odd single family house. Attractive signage, window displays, street furniture and the environmental features of water and trees make it a pleasurable experience to walk the streets. The combination of all of these elements gives downtown Lambertville its visual character.

The abundance of natural features, in spite of Lambertville's urban setting, makes the City a very special place. The Delaware River, Swan and Ely Creeks, the three hills serving as backdrop for the lowlands, its abundance of trees and woodlands, all contribute to the visual character of Lambertville. Natural features provide a counterpoint to the City's urban environment and need to be preserved to retain the overall balance of the City's land uses and visual character.

To preserve and enhance Lambertville's visual character, it is recommended that the following design policies be incorporated into specific guidelines and standards in the land use ordinance in the appropriate zoning district(s):

Residential

Site Planning/Architecture

- The architecture of new residential developments should use the design elements of nearby buildings as a model without imitating the past. Facade and building footprints should vary so that architectural interest is maintained. In general, the same facade should be separated by at least three differing facades.
- New housing developments should incorporate a variety of architectural elements characteristic of the historic homes in Lambertville, which include pitched roof lines, cornices, shutters, molding, porches, traditional building materials and the streetscape.
- Garages should be secondary in scale to residences. Detached garages are encouraged and should be constructed behind houses or on alleys.
- New homes should have useable private yards or patios of at least 400 square feet outside of areas that are environmentally sensitive. Environmentally sensitive lands include steep slopes greater than 30%, flood plain within the 100-year storm area, wetlands, and open waterways.
- All new homes and accessory structures that require foundations or pilings should be set back a minimum of 25 feet from steep slopes of greater than 30% and the outer edge of open waterways.

Landscaping and Natural Resource Protection

- If fences or walls are proposed in new construction, they should be built of wood, ornamental iron, brick or stone at least three feet high. Landscaping in the form of hedges may also perform this function.
- Existing natural vegetation, hedgerows, tree lines, and stone rows should be incorporated into the landscape plan of the new development.
- New development should follow the existing grade of the land to the greatest extent possible to minimize cut, fill and general alternations to the natural terrain.
- Limits of clearing should be established beyond which no soil or vegetation may be disturbed.
- Site clearing and earth removal undermines the advancement of these design principles and should be expressly prohibited prior to development.
- Landscaping should be used to soften the corners and edges of buildings.
- The open spaces resulting from clustered developments should be

designed with specific functions easily accessible to residents. Active recreation should be incorporated into larger development tracts.

Vehicle and Pedestrian Circulation

- New residential roads and streets are governed by the N.J. Residential Site Improvement Standards. Where choices for road types are allowed, it is preferred that new streets include sidewalks on both sides and that the width of the road be the minimum required to accommodate on-street parking.
- Sidewalks and/or paths should be provided to connect residences to areas with schools, parks and nearby shopping.

Commercial, Office and Industrial Uses

Site Planning/Architecture

- New development in the central business district should resemble existing buildings in the district in terms of roof shape, massing, orientation, proportion and scale, and rhythm of openings. Graphic representations of these concepts should be supplied in the zoning ordinance.
- The exterior walls of buildings should be made of natural building materials such as stone, brick, wood, or stucco.
- Blank exterior walls should be discouraged. Exterior walls should include windows, doors, pent roofs, porticos, porches, porte-cochéres, pilasters, quoins, or other similar features to relieve the monotony of a large wall.
- Awnings and canopies should be made of cloth or canvas with traditionally dyed colors in solids or stripes.
- New structures should be made of wood frame or masonry construction. Pole barns or prefabricated metal buildings should be avoided. Modular structures should only be permitted if their design follows all other recommended guidelines and standards.
- For historic buildings, defined as those buildings that are noted as "contributing sources" on the City's historic register nomination, facade renovations should minimize the disturbance to the original architectural components of the building.
- For large new structures, the facade should be modulated to reduce the potential for monotony in long structures. Techniques include staggered building setbacks; a variety of architectural elements and windows; a

variety of building materials and textures; and multiple structures instead of unified large structures.

- Street and site furnishings should be incorporated into redevelopment within the central business district such as flower boxes, arbors, planters, benches, and waste receptacles.
- Exterior lighting should complement the architectural style of the building and be compatible with adjoining uses.
- The central business district should include highly visible public spaces within commercial areas for people to gather, rest and socialize.

Landscaping and Natural Features Protection

- Landscaped buffers between non-residential and residential uses and zones provide substantial benefits and should be more effectively used.
- Landscaping, planters, and hedges should be incorporated into new development proposals using indigenous plant material.
- Street trees should be installed where missing as part of development or redevelopment with species recommended by the Shade Tree Commission.
- Existing natural vegetation, hedgerows, tree lines, and stone rows should be incorporated into the landscape plan of new development or redevelopment.
- New development should follow the existing grade of the land to the greatest extent possible to minimize cut, fill and general alternations to the natural terrain.
- Limits of clearing should be established beyond which no soil or vegetation may be disturbed.
- Landscaping should be used to soften the corners and edges of buildings.

Vehicle / Pedestrian Circulation

- The edge of parking areas should be landscaped to soften the view of cars and paving.
- Pedestrian walkways should be provided between all commercial buildings constructed of brick, Belgian block, concrete, or a combination of these. The color of concrete sidewalks should match the color of the closest existing sidewalk.
- Parking lots should be designed as attractive elements of the site in their own right with the use of trees, other landscaping, pedestrian walkways, and various building materials and textures.

Land Use Classifications

Land within the City has been divided into eleven different land use classifications. The Land Use Plan more finely distinguishes different land uses than the 1989 Plan as a method of meeting the changed goals and objectives of Master Plan. The classifications of land use are graphically depicted on the Land Use Plan found on page 39. The land use classifications are as follows:

Low Density Residential

Low Density Residential applies to most of the undeveloped larger lots on the three hill areas, including Music Mountain, Connaught's Hill and Cottage Hill. Substantial portions are constrained for development by environmentally sensitive land. Much of the area remains unsewered though it is recommended that the land remain in the designated sanitary sewer area. Single family detached residential uses would be permitted along with municipal uses, including parks and recreation. Density is recommended to be one and three-tenths dwelling per acre where public water and sewer is available. If public water and sewer are not available, the density would be one dwelling unit for each three acres. The clustering of building lots on the lesser slopes and away from wetlands and flood areas is encouraged in this district.

Medium Density Residential

The existing developed and mostly sewered portions of the Blair Tract, Music Mountain, Connaught's Hill and Cottage Hill have been designated as Medium Density Residential. Recommended uses are for single family detached housing on lots of at least 7,500 square feet and municipal purposes. Religious and quasi-public uses would be permitted on larger lots as conditional uses. This conforms to the most common lot size and is a continuation of the previous land development and use policy for these areas. Most lots are conforming under this designation. Incremental development on infill lots would continue to occur under this policy adding a few houses per year for the next 10 years.

High Density Residential

High Density Residential encompasses most of the remaining residential areas in the City. Lambertville's residential areas include a fair level of other uses that are non-conforming (*see* Existing Land Use). Zoning, which tends to

separate land uses, was introduced later in Lambertville than most other communities in the state which allowed for a greater variety of land uses to be interspersed. This district is proposed to include a variety of housing types, single family detached, single family attached (rowhouse), and semi-detached dwellings. Municipal uses would be permitted by right. In addition to these uses, religious, quasi-public, fraternal and social clubs, funeral homes, senior citizen apartments, and bed and breakfast uses limited to 5 rooms or less would be permitted by conditional use. Lot sizes for residential uses would range from 1,260 to 2,800 square feet while non-residential uses, senior apartments and bed and breakfast uses would be on larger lots. Senior citizen apartments would be limited to 25 units to the acre. The High Density Residential area is fully developed with the exception of a few lots. Because of its developed nature, redevelopment and changes of use will be the dominant factors for land use policy in this category. The context in which redevelopment or changes of use occur will be a key element in retaining the City's quality of life. The context relates strongly to the scale and design of buildings proposed for redevelopment or reuse. Amending the zoning ordinance to take context more into account is recommended.

Multi-Family Residential

The Multi-Family Residential classification has been applied to the two modern townhouse developments in the City - Rock Creek Woods and Woodcrest and two larger garden apartment uses. The senior citizen apartments at Hibernia and on Cottage Hill have been included in the larger districts where they are located. The townhouse uses were developed under the PRD standards that permits a density of four units to the acre; however they were developed at a density of under three units to the acre. The garden apartment complexes were developed at up to 32 units per acre and are shown on the Land Use Plan solely for identification purposes. No new areas are proposed. Permitted uses would be limited to single family attached housing, garden apartments and municipal uses.

Downtown Mixed Use

The City is centered around Bridge Street and this core area contains the highest concentration of commercial enterprises. The Downtown Mixed Use classification is intended for commercial, residential and institutional uses. It encompasses the City's central business district and provides the most uses oriented to tourists. Residential uses tend to be apartments located on second and third floors, however, single family attached and even fully detached

dwellings may also be found. All of these residential uses are proposed to remain. A wide variety of commercial uses are proposed to continue with this Land Use Plan. The type of commercial uses proposed include personal sales and services to serve the every day needs of residents, restaurants, galleries and antique stores, food stores, banking and other financial services, professional offices and offices for real estate and insurance, entertainment subject to limitations on location and intensity of use, and other similar types of commercial uses. It is intended, however, to limit certain types of retail uses that would detract from the generally high quality establishments that are presently in existence in the downtown area. Institutional uses public and quasi-public buildings such as municipal uses, house of worship, public and private schools, fire houses, social and fraternal organizations, and medical clinics.

The pedestrian activity of the Downtown Mixed Use district is a key component of the City's vibrancy. Good pedestrian connections and services also are important in reducing the amount of traffic through the downtown. Once a visitor has parked, their vehicle should not need to driven again until the motorist is exiting the City. Locations for public benches should be explored. The City should look towards providing public restrooms on the northern side of the downtown.

The siting of driveways is critical to maintaining close connectivity among the commercial uses in the City. Pedestrian access to the Canal and perhaps over it should be specifically addressed in the Circulation Element.

Special emphasis on the sections of the Downtown Mixed Use district between the Delaware River and Delaware and Raritan Canal has been made in the Waterfront Plan's discussion on land use.

The boundaries of the Downtown Mixed Use area are proposed to be reduced slightly along portions of North and South Main Street where it is currently zoned Central Business District. Certain areas presently zoned Central Business District that have a distinct automobile-oriented use are proposed to be located in the Highway Commercial classification east of Main Street. Small areas to the east of Main Street that were previously Central Business District have been placed in the Medium Density Residential category since nearly all of the uses are residential. The spread of the Central Business District into areas that do not have the character of the Downtown Mixed Use classification creates pressure on the remaining residences to convert to commercial uses, either because of the impacts of the conversion or because of

the generally higher values that commercial uses command. Accordingly, the policy for the Downtown Mixed Use district is intended to concentrate pedestrian-oriented commercial development from the north side of Coryell Street to the south side of Bridge and from Main Street west to the Delaware River, excepting an extension on the west side of S. Union Street to the Swan Creek.

This land use classification is intended to become the area for a local historic preservation district once an Historic Preservation Element is adopted by the Planning Board.

Office

The Office land use classification is proposed for two areas at opposite ends of the City. Office is a new land use classification developed to limit commercial uses to general and professional offices. One of the areas is proposed in the middle of the block bounded by Cherry Street, N. Union, N. Main and Elm Street where there exist old factory buildings. Some are still being used for manufacturing purposes. If manufacturing would cease - a long term trend in New Jersey as well as Lambertville - then the buildings would be adaptable for offices. A few buildings are also being used for retail purposes but these could also be used for offices. The second area encompasses the area south of Feeder Street between the canal and Rt. 29. This area is already being used for offices.

The Office land use classification was developed because of the potential impacts that have less restrictive uses on surrounding residential uses. Retail uses would bring greater impacts on the weekend than office uses when more residents are at home. These areas have some open land that may be used for parking. The Office category recognizes the existing non-residential uses of the properties while limiting uses to those with the least impact to the most people. As a conditional use, apartments on second or higher floors would be permitted in much the same fashion as is currently allowed in the central business district.

Highway Commercial

Three areas are proposed for a Highway Commercial classification. The first of these is located at the intersection of Rt. 29 and Cherry Street. The second is centered around the intersection of Bridge Street and Route 179 and the third is on the west side of Rt. 29 at the southerly boundary of the City and

West Amwell Township. Existing land uses include most of the automobile-oriented commercial development in the City such as gasoline and repair stations. A number of the commercial uses have off-street parking which distinguishes this district from the Downtown Mixed Use district. Because of its automobile orientation, the Highway Commercial land use category has a more suburban character. This character should be changed to a more urban character when properties are redeveloped by applying design standards to improve the view from the street, particularly of the large areas of paving associated with many of the uses. Limits in the amount of development permitted should also be explored in the land use ordinance by granting higher floor area ratios for two-story buildings. This would encourage the construction of taller buildings that would be more in keeping with the Downtown Mixed Use character for the center area and the City in general. The uses in the Highway Commercial class are proposed to be concentrated on retail and office uses, however, apartments would be permitted on second or higher floors to encourage the construction of two-story buildings. Automobile uses would also be restricted to the Bridge Street area rather than permitted at the gateways to the City. In this regard, such uses would be by conditional use only. Fast food restaurants and other similar services utilizing drive-thru facilities are intended to be prohibited.

General Commercial

The General Commercial land use classification is for more intensive commercial uses that at one time required access to rail and may potentially again. This category would include sales of bulk materials, such as building supplies and fuel oil, warehousing and general office uses but would not include personal sales and services or other day-to-day needs. Outdoor storage would be permitted subject to certain performance standards to be developed in the land use ordinance that would be expected to help mitigate adverse impacts on neighboring uses. Only one area is proposed for the General Commercial district generally on the west side of N. Union Street from Buttonwood Street including the North Union pumping station and existing industrial building on the opposite side of the street.

Institutional

This land use category, Institutional, has been applied to larger parcels devoted to public or quasi-public uses to distinguish them from residential areas. They include the two cemeteries, the public works garage, the rescue squad building, the Phillips-Barber health care facility, and the elementary

school, among others. Institutional uses may also be found in any of the other land use districts but on generally smaller sites than those listed. In the land use ordinance, a separate zoning district is not contemplated but would be allowed either by right or by conditional use, depending on the character of the zoning district.

Conservation

Parts of Holcombe Island and the Alexauken Creek flood plain have been placed in the Conservation land use classification. On Holcombe Island, this land use category is intended to allow- low residential densities consistent with the severe environmental and access constraints present on the land, which include a high flooding potential, alluvial soils, and problematic connections to the street network. See the Waterfront Plan for a more detailed discussion of the application of the Conservation district classification for this area.

The Alexauken Creek flood plain presents many of the same severe environmental constraints found on Holcombe Island. Most of this area is undeveloped and is owned by an utility company for high voltage transmission lines. The flood hazard and the presence of the transmission lines precludes virtually all potential development.

A low density residential use with a three acre lot minimum is recommended for this district. Within a three acre lot, the spot with the least environmental constraint would be chosen for the development of a residence and ancillary structures.

Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation land use classification is a public or quasi-public use category for lands held by a public entity for active and passive recreation. It has been applied to Ely Field; the Delaware and Raritan Canal Park; Mary Sheriden Park, which includes the Civil War Memorial; and Cavallo Park. No new areas are proposed for parks and recreation.

Statement of Consistency with Other Planning Documents

In this section, the Land Use Plan is compared for consistency with other planning documents at the local, county and state level. The consistency of Lambertville's land use policies with the goals and objectives of the Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic River Management Plan are discussed in the Waterfront Plan. In that document, the goals and objectives of Lambertville's policies were found to have excellent agreement with those of the federal plan.

Delaware Township

Delaware Township adjoins Lambertville's boundary on the north end of the City. Delaware's common border lies between the Delaware River and the Black River and Western Railroad. The Township's land use classification for this area is Agriculture. The intended uses are, as may be expected, agriculture and associated farmsteads. The Township also operates a nearby composting facility between the Delaware River and the Canal, which provides soil products used in cropland applications and nursery use. Lambertville's Land Use Plan proposes Conservation uses bordering this area which would be similar to fallow farm fields. Both sides of the boundary are proposed for very low density residential uses. Accordingly, Lambertville's land use policy is consistent with Delaware Township's.

West Amwell Township

West Amwell surrounds the remainder of Lambertville from the Black River and Western Railroad to the north circling eastward, south and west to the Delaware River. West Amwell, like Delaware Township is a rural municipality. On the north along the Alexauken Creek corridor, West Amwell has established a single family residential and agricultural classification at a density of one unit per three acres. On the eastern side of Lambertville, the adjoining land is classified as follows:

- From Rt. 202 to Rt. 179, single family detached and agriculture uses at one unit per two acres.
- The Commons area on Connaught's Hill, single family detached uses on 9,375 sf. lots with public sewer and water.
- The remainder of Connaught's Hill and the south side of Rocktown Road (Quarry Street in Lambertville), single family detached residential at

one unit per two acres.

- The remainder of the boundary with Lambertville is classified for single family detached uses at one unit per three acres.

The land use classifications in West Amwell are in good agreement with the policies proposed in this Land Use Plan Element. In the north, Lambertville proposes a similar one unit per three acres designation for this unsewered area adjacent to the Alexauken Creek. The areas with the largest lot size disparities are the Blair Tract and the developed portion of Music Mountain, which allows lots of 7,500 sf. compared to the two acre requirement in West Amwell. However, the uses allowed are the same and present no conflict. The distinction is that in Lambertville, the land area is within the sanitary sewer service area and in West Amwell, their land is not. The Low Density Residential land use classification in Lambertville distinguishes between development with public water and sewer, and those that do not. With public sewer and water, the density would be 1.3 units per acre on lots as small as 10,000 sf. Without public sewer and water, the density would be one unit per three acres with lots as small as two acres. Again the uses are the same and would not present a land use conflict.

In the Commons area, a similar density of single family detached housing where public and sewer is present on both sides of the boundary. The density is based on lots of 9,375 sf. in West Amwell and 7,500 sf. in Lambertville.

The remaining boundary with West Amwell is classified in their Reexamination Report as very low density residential and permits single family detached uses and agriculture on lots of three acres and larger. For most of Lambertville's boundary, the use is for single family detached in its Low Density Residential district. Both the Rock Creek Woods and Woodcrest multi-family developments, however, abut the municipal boundary. Potentially, there could be land use conflicts in the intensity of development. However, in Lambertville, the density of the multi-family uses is less than that allowed in the single family detached Medium Density Residential district, e.g. three units per acre. Further, Lambertville's land development regulations require a significant tract perimeter setback and buffering that would alleviate any potential land use conflicts.

At the extreme southern end of the City, a Highway Commercial designation is proposed for the area to the west of Rt. 29, including the Lace Works building and other highway oriented uses southward. Though the land is

immediately adjacent to West Amwell's very low density residential classification, no conflict would exist. In West Amwell, severe development constraints and state ownership of the nearby D&R Canal render this land undevelopable for residential or most other uses.

To summarize, only minor potential land use conflicts exist and are reflective of the developed status of the City and the extent of its sanitary sewer service area compared to the rural nature of West Amwell.

Hunterdon County

Hunterdon County is in the process of updating its 1986 Growth Management Plan. Beginning in 1993, the County Planning Board has undertaken a survey, met with many citizens and local officials, and has issued some talking papers on growth management issues. Four task groups were established to tackle issues on rural character and the environment, residential development, transportation, and non-residential development. The County Planning Board has issued a final draft of their document, entitled, *Strategies for Managing Growth in Hunterdon County*. Their Plan proposes a number of policies to maintain the quality of life in Hunterdon as the county grows. The overall focus of their Plan is the retention of the agricultural base of the County and by extension its rural character. Since Lambertville is a developed town with relatively little vacant land, only a limited number of policies are relevant to the City. The County Plan promotes sensitive expansion of existing villages and hamlets, and the creation of new villages and hamlets as the preferred method of accommodating growth.

In policies on *Open Space and Land Development Patterns*, the County seeks to preserve unique viewsheds, ridge lines, and stream corridors; preserve open space around historic areas; minimize adverse effects of growth such as traffic and air pollution. Lambertville's Land Use Plan is consistent with these goals. The City seeks to preserve views to and from the river by limiting the height of buildings, retain the wooded edge of Lambertville along the Delaware River, keep development from encroaching on the steep slopes at ridge lines, proposes to preserve stream corridors through setbacks, purchase of land, and easements; and minimize traffic through an appropriate density of development. The Land Use Plan seeks to retain an open space setting, particularly along the Delaware River to contrast with the historic character of the flat lands of the City. The City is also fortunate to have the Delaware and Raritan Canal, an historic feature in its own right, as a linear park.