

*THP, Inc.*

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# Borough of South Plainfield Master Plan

South Plainfield Borough  
Middlesex County, New Jersey

Adopted May 9, 2000

Prepared for:

Borough of South Plainfield  
2480 Plainfield Avenue  
South Plainfield, New Jersey 07080

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## INTRODUCTION

The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law authorizes each municipal planning board to prepare and adopt a master plan to guide the use of lands within the municipality. The master plan establishes the local land development policies for the community and the policy framework for the effectuation of the intents and purposes of the state law. The Master Plan is a policy guide, not a law or ordinance. It is implemented by the municipal governing body through the adoption of development regulations including zoning, subdivision, site plan and other related ordinances.

The master plan must contain a statement of "objectives, principles, assumptions, policies and standards upon which the constituent proposals for the physical, economic and social development of the municipality are based, "and a land use plan element which is related to the stated "objectives, principles, assumptions, policies and standards" of the municipality.

The land use plan must take into account and state its relationship to the housing plan element adopted pursuant to the Fair Housing Act, P.L. 1985, c. 222; (NJSA 52:27D-310) and the other master plan elements which may be adopted by the Planning Board.

The Land Use Plan and Housing Plan elements of a master plan form the foundation of the municipal zoning ordinance. The Municipal Land Use Law requires consistency between the plans and zoning ordinance as follows:

"c. 40:55D-62 Power to zone.

- a. The governing body may adopt or amend a zoning ordinance relating to the nature and extent of the uses of land and of buildings and structures thereon. Such ordinance shall be adopted after the planning board has adopted the land use plan element and the housing plan element of a master plan and all of the provisions of such zoning ordinance or any amendment or revision thereto shall either be substantially consistent with the land use plan element and the housing plan element of the master plan or designed to effectuate such plan elements; provided that the governing body may adopt a zoning ordinance or amendment or revision thereto which in whole or part is inconsistent with or not designed to effectuate the land use plan element and the housing plan element, but only by affirmative vote of a majority of the full authorized membership of the governing body with the reasons of the governing body for so acting set forth in a resolution and recorded in its minutes when adopting such a zoning ordinance."

## **HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

The Borough of South Plainfield adopted a comprehensive master plan in 1973. In 1978 the Planning Board adopted a revised plan and in April of 1985 another plan was adopted and further revised in April of 1988. The Planning Board undertook another reexamination in April of 1995 in accordance with the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law which requires each municipality to reexamine its Master Plan and Development Regulations at least every six years.

In June of 1995 the Borough adopted a revised Housing Element and Fair Share Housing Plan. This plan was reviewed by the Superior Court and was further revised in 1997 and 1998. This proposed Master Plan revision incorporates the recently revised Housing Element and Fair Share Plan as approved by the court and sets forth those additional plan elements as have been analyzed by the Planning Board during the past two years.

## STATEMENT OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following goals and objectives have been established as a guide for the preparation of the Master Plan.

1. Protect the public health, safety, and welfare through the proper use and development of all lands in the Borough.
2. Preserve the integrity of existing residential neighborhoods in the Borough.
3. Provide for a variety of housing types, tenure, and ranges of affordability as needed to accommodate the expected future resident population.
4. Provide adequate commercial uses to serve the needs of the community.
5. Provide adequate park and recreation systems.
6. Provide for adequate community facilities to serve the Borough.
7. Provide adequate light and air around buildings.
8. Promote a desirable visual environment.
9. Preserve historical sites and promote and strengthen the viability of the historic downtown area.
10. Preserve environmentally sensitive areas of the Borough, such as wetlands and flood plains, and continue the preservation and expansion, where possible, of the Highland Woods Preserve.
11. Maintain an adequate amount of industrial land use.
12. Provide an efficient and safe transportation system to move goods and people.
13. Provide adequate open space.
14. Encourage conservation of environmental resources and energy.

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The following is an overview of the characteristics of population, housing, employment and labor in the Borough. The majority of the information below is from the *Housing Element for South Plainfield Borough*, prepared by THP, Inc., in February of 1998, and has been updated where possible. Refer to the *Housing Element* for a comprehensive discussion of demographics and, in particular, housing issues in the Borough.

### Analysis of Population

#### Population Growth

As can be seen from Table 1-P below, South Plainfield experienced its largest growth period during the decade of the 1950s, gaining nearly 10,000 people. The 1960s were also a period of growth in the Borough, although at significantly lower rates than experienced the prior decade. Since the 1950s and 1960s, the Borough's growth rate declined dramatically; in fact, during the 1970s and 1980s the Borough lost a small percentage of its population. Growth rates throughout the 1990s (1992, 1994 & 1996) have remained stable at less than 1 percent, according to the US Census Bureau.

Table 1-P: Population Increase, 1940 – 1996\*

Year	Population	Increase	Percentage Increase
1940	5,379	-	-
1950	8,008	2,629	+48.9
1960	17,879	9,871	+123.3
1970	21,142	3,263	+18.3
1980	20,521	-621	-2.9
1990	20,489	-32	0.0
1992	20,560	71	+0.4
1994	20,656	96	+0.5
1996	20,682	26	+0.1

Source: US Bureau of the Census.

\*NOTE: 1992, 1994, and 1996 are Census interim estimates of population.

It is not until the year 2000, that any real increase in population is expected. The Middlesex County Planning Board anticipates an increase in population in the Borough during the decade of the 1990s of nearly 2,400 people, equating to a 12 percent gain. This would be the greatest gain in population since the 1960s. However, the interim Census estimates of population during the 1990s (see Table 1-P above) do not appear to support the County Planning Board's anticipated growth for the Borough.

**Table 2-P: Population Projections**

Year	Population Projection
2000	22,883
2010	25,277

Source: Middlesex County Planning Board: Projections 2000 & 2010

### Age Distribution

The median age (half older, half younger) of South Plainfield was 35.3 years in 1990. A little over 12 percent of the Borough's population was age 65 or older, while almost one-quarter (24.4 percent) of the population was 17 years of age or younger.

**Table 3-P: Population by Age Cohort, 1990**

Age Cohort	Distribution (%)
0 to 4	7.1
5 to 17	16.3
18-24	8.8
25-44	33.9
45-64	21.6
65+	12.3
Median Age	35.3

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990.

### Households and Families

Interestingly, while the population has remained relatively constant over the past few decades (refer to Table 1-P), the number of households has increased by 21 percent. One explanation for this phenomenon is that the household size, i.e. persons per household, has actually decreased, therefore more households are needed to accommodate the same number of people. The number of families has increased, as would be expected, but family size has also been shrinking; from 1980 to 1990, the average family size has decreased by 6.0 percent.

**Table 5-P: Households and Families, 1970, 1980 & 1990**

	1970	1980	1990
Households	5,538	6,624	6,705
Persons Per Household	3.81	3.3	3.03
Families	5,222	5,570	5,708
Persons Per Family	n/a	3.52	3.31

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1970, 1980 & 1990.



## Income

South Plainfield's average household income in 1989 was reported to be \$54,899; the mean family income was higher at \$58,468. Table 6-P below delineates the percentage of households by income category in 1989. In 1989, sixteen percent of the Borough's households had incomes less than \$25,000, thirty-one percent had incomes between \$25,000 and \$50,000, forty-six percent of the Borough's households had incomes between \$50,000 and \$100,000; and, seven percent of the households had incomes exceeding \$100,000 per year.

**Table 6-P: Households By Income, 1989**

Income	Percentage of Households
0-4,999	1.8
5,000-9,999	2.2
10,000-14,999	3.5
15,000-24,999	8.7
25,000-34,999	11.1
35,000-49,999	20.1
50,000-74,999	30.9
75,000-99,999	14.6
100,000-149,999	5.3
150,000+	1.3

*Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990.*

## Educational Attainment

As of 1990, more than half of the Borough's residents 25 years of age and older received their high school degree; an additional eight percent received their associates, sixteen percent received a Bachelor's and another eight percent went on to earn a graduate or professional degree.

**Table 7-P: Educational Attainment (Residents 25 years and older), 1990**

<i>Education</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Some High School	1,635	15
High School Degree	5,612	53
Associate's Degree	833	8
Bachelor's Degree	1,750	16
Graduate or Professional Degree	841	8
TOTAL	10,671	100

*Source: 1990 Census Of Population And Housing -Summary Tape File 3A*

## Analysis of Housing Stock

### Housing Units

As of the 1990 census, there were 6,823 housing units in South Plainfield. The vast majority of these units, 98.3 percent, were occupied. Of the 6,705 occupied housing units in the Borough, 6,089 (91 percent) were owner occupied and 616 (9 percent) were rentals. In 1990, most of the housing stock, 88.2 percent, consisted of single-family detached housing. The next most common type of housing in the Borough was single-family attached.

**Table 1-H: Housing Type Distribution, 1990**

Units in Structure	Number	Percent of Total Units
1, Detached	6,018	88.2
1, Attached	273	4.0
2	373	5.5
3 or 4	106	1.6
5 to 9	0	0.0
10-19	0	0.0
20-49	0	0.0
50 or more	0	0.0
Mobile home/trailer	0	0.0
Other	53	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,823</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: US Bureau of the Census, Prepared by THP, Inc., *Housing Element for South Plainfield*, February, 1998.

**Table 2-H: Dwelling Units Authorized, 1983 – 1998\***

Year	Single Family	2 to 4 Family	5 or more Family	Residential Demolitions	Total Added
1983	46	14	0	2	58
1984	76	14	0	5	85
1985	104	16	0	6	114
1986	135	60	0	0	195
1987	28	12	0	1	39
1988	39	14	0	2	51
1989	22	4	0	13	13
1990	8	0	0	3	5
1991	7	2	0	5	4
1992	9	0	0	0	9
1993	13	0	0	0	13
1994	8	0	0	n/a	8
1995	13	0	0	n/a	13
1996	40	0	0	n/a	40
1997	59	0	0	n/a	59
*1998	193	0	0	n/a	193
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>899</b>

*Sources:*

1983 - 1993, SOURCE: US Department of Labor Prepared by: THP, Inc., "Housing Element for South Plainfield," 2/98.

1994 - 1998, SOURCE: US Census Bureau Prepared by: New Jersey Department of Labor, 2/99

Notes: n/a – data not available.

- Preliminary data for 1998.

### Housing Value

The median value of sales housing in South Plainfield in 1990 was \$161,200, according to the Census. Almost 14 percent of the Borough's housing stock was valued at less than \$125,000, over 54 percent was valued between \$125,000 and \$175,000, and 32 percent of the Borough's housing stock was valued at greater than \$175,000

**Table 3-H : Value of Sales Housing, 1990**

<i>Value (\$)</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Less than 50,000	0	0.0
50,000-59,999	21	0.4
60,000-74,999	82	1.4
75,000-99,999	282	4.9
100,000-124,999	421	7.2
125,000-149,999	1,238	21.3
150,000-174,999	1,917	33.0
175,000-199,999	974	16.8
200,000-249,999	583	10.0
250,000-299,999	232	4.0
300,000-399,999	56	1.0
400,000-499,999	7	0.1
500,000 or more	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,813</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: US Bureau of the Census, Prepared by THP, Inc., Housing Element for South Plainfield, February, 1998.*

For rental units, the median gross rent was \$734. Table 4-H below details rent by bedroom configuration for the Borough in 1990.

**Table 4-H: Cost of Rentals by Bedroom Size, 1990**

<b>Rent(\$)</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>One</b>	<b>Two</b>	<b>Three</b>
0-199	0	0	0	0
200-299	0	0	0	0
300-499	0	0	32	17
500-749	7	96	91	66
750-999	0	10	63	89
1,000 or more	0	6	10	106
No cash rent	0	4	0	19

*Source: US Bureau of the Census, Prepared by THP, Inc., Housing Element for South Plainfield, February, 1998.*

### Characteristics of Housing

Detailed characteristics of housing as they existed at the time of the 1990 Census are shown in Table 5-H. Most of the Borough's housing was constructed in the 1950s and 1960s.

**Table 5-H: Characteristics of Housing, 1990**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Number of Persons Per Room</b>		
1.01 or more	64	1.0
<b>Plumbing Facilities</b>		
Units with Complete Plumbing Facilities	6,810	100.0
Units Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities	13	0.0
<b>Heating Equipment</b>		
Utility Gas	5,285	79.0
Bottled, tank or lp gas	7	0.0
Electricity	66	1.0
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	1,338	20.0
Coal or coke	0	0.0
Wood	9	0.0
Solar energy	0	0.0
Other Fuel	0	0.0
No fuel used	0	0.0
<b>Kitchen Facilities</b>		
Complete kitchen facilities	6,617	100.0
Lacking facilities	6	0.0
<b>Source of Water</b>		
Public system or private company	6,498	95.0
Individual well		
Drilled	316	5.0
Dug	9	0.0
Some other source	0	0.0
<b>Sewage Disposal</b>		
Public sewer	6,700	98.0
Septic tank or cesspool	123	2.0
Other means	0	0.0
<b>Telephone</b>		
With telephone	6,670	99.5
No telephone	35	0.5
<b>Year Structure Built</b>		
1989 until census	42	0.6
1985-1988	459	6.7
1980-1984	250	3.7
1970-1979	635	9.3
1960-1969	1,221	17.9
1950-1959	2,695	39.5
1940-1949	773	11.3
Before 1940	748	11.0

Source: US Bureau of the Census, Prepared by THP, Inc., *Housing Element for South Plainfield*, February, 1998.

### Characteristics of Employment/Labor

The census reports on work activity of residents 16 years and older. From this population, 6,598 of the 7,865 men (84 percent) and 5,579 of 8,370 women worked in 1989. The average commuting time of a South Plainfield worker was 24.4 minutes. As can be seen, most South

Plainfield residents worked in the private sector; local government was the distant second largest employment sector in the Borough.

**Table 1-E: Class of Worker, 1989**

Private for profit wage and salary	8,798
Private not for profit wage and salary	618
Local government	796
State government	298
Federal government	173
Self-employed	418
Unpaid family	27

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990.

An analysis of the employed (over 16) by economic sector indicates that the majority of South Plainfield workers were involved in manufacturing, retail trade and service industries. Within the service sector, 7.2 percent of the work force was involved in educational services and 6.3 percent was involved in health services.

**Table 2-E: Work Force by Sector, 1990**

Sector	Employees	Percentage of Work Force
Agriculture, forestry & fisheries	132	1.2
Mining	27	0.2
Construction	635	5.7
Manufacturing	2,262	20.3
Transportation	621	5.6
Communications & Other		
Public Utilities	500	4.5
Wholesale Trade	651	5.9
Retail Trade	1,892	17.0
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	956	8.6
Services	3,122	28.1
Public Administration	330	3.0

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990.

In 1990, 39.0 percent of South Plainfield's residents were employed in "technical, sales and administrative support" occupations. The managerial and professional occupations were also an important industry for residents of the Borough; over one-quarter of the Borough's residents worked in those occupations.

**Table 3-E: Occupational Characteristics, 1990**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Managerial and professional	2,972	26.7
Technical, sales and administrative support	4,335	39.0
Service occupations	992	8.9
Farming, forestry & fishing	99	0.9
Precision production, craft and repair occupations	1,465	13.2
Operators, fabricators and laborers	1,265	11.4

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990.

Since 1982, the Borough has experienced overall growth in employment, as measured by the Department of Labor's totals of private sector jobs covered by unemployment. There have, however, been fluctuations in the numbers throughout the years. As of 1996, the New Jersey Department of Labor reported that there were 18,976 private sector jobs in the Borough, up 7.4 percent from ten years prior (1986).

**Table 4-E: Covered Jobs**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Covered Jobs</b>
1982	14,605
1983	14,919
1984	16,662
1985	18,165
1986	17,667
1987	17,169
1988	18,715
1989	19,617
1990	20,232
1991	18,973
1992	18,839
1993	18,634
1994	18,842
1995	18,727
1996	18,976

Source: New Jersey Department of Labor, Covered Employment.

The Middlesex County Planning Board has projected employment for the County and each of its municipalities. These projections denote increasing levels of employment in the Borough in the future: A seven percent increase in employment from 1990 to 2000, and another six percent to year 2010, is anticipated by the County Planning Board.

**Table 5-E: Employment Projections**

<b>Year</b>	<b>South Plainfield</b>
2000	21,563
2005	22,188
2010	22,813

*Source: Middlesex County Planning Board*



## **EXISTING LAND USE**

The existing land use inventory and analysis updates the land use study which was conducted in 1970 and revised in 1985 as part of the Master Plan program. The survey and analysis of existing land uses within a community provides the basis for understanding development trends and forms a fundamental step in the planning process.

The Existing Land Use Map is a graphic presentation of existing developed and undeveloped land within the Township. It shows potential development area, existing land use conflicts and the overall land use relationships, which will be preserved, encouraged, or modified to fulfill the objectives of the Master Plan. The Existing Land Use Map is a valuable tool and should be utilized for purposes not limited to the preparation of the Master Plan. Township officials will find the Land Use Map can be a valuable reference regarding zoning, land development, public facilities and other everyday decisions.

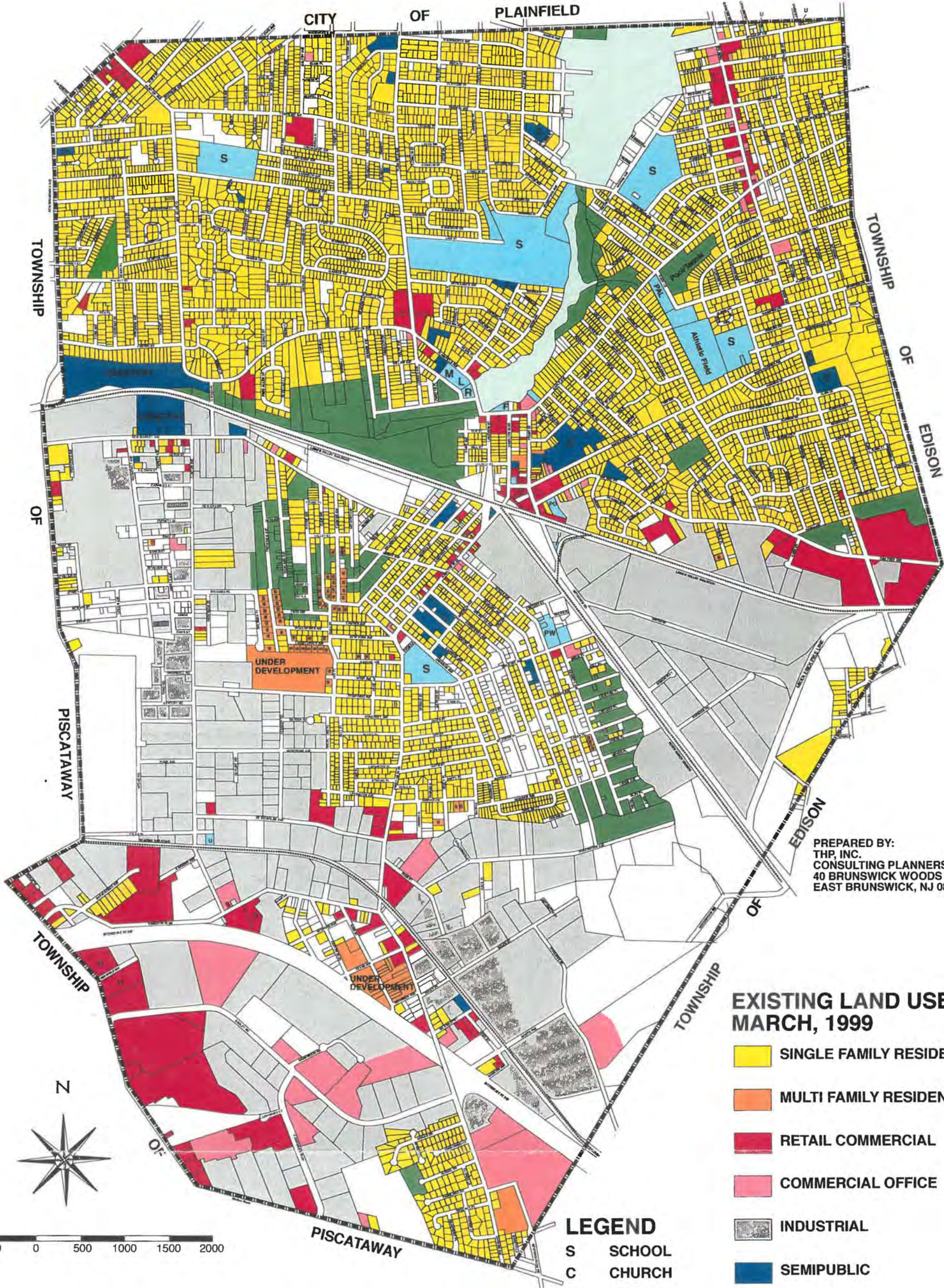
The Borough of South Plainfield encompasses a total area of 8.31 square miles or approximately 5,320 acres. Of this total, 3,450 acres or 65% of the total land area is developed. The remaining 35% is divided between streets, lakes, railroads (21.06%) and vacant land (10.17%). The Borough contains a unique blend of older suburban and newer residential homes (30.91%) and a large industrial base (21.40%). The remaining uses include a small office base of 2.44% and retail component of 4.77%. The existing land uses in South Plainfield have been broken down into twelve-land use categories. These categories, along with the corresponding acreages and percentages of the Borough's total land are shown on the Existing Land Calculations Comparison Table and Pie Chart located in the rear of this section.

### **Residential**

The breakdown of land use shows that residential land uses account for 1,644.35 acres, or about 30.91% of the total area of South Plainfield. The highest residential land use is single family, which occupies 1,595.66 acres or 29.99%. Two-four family land uses/multi-family occupy 48.69 acres or 0.92%.

The percent of land occupied by residential uses in South Plainfield increased approximately five percent during the past 30 years. According to the 1985 Master Plan, residential uses occupied 26.1% of the Borough's total land area in 1970, and 28.05% in 1985. Recent housing has been built in the middle of town along Kenneth Avenue, Spicer Avenue, and Delmore Avenues between Belmont Avenue and Green Place, as well as along Hogan Drive and Jankowski Court adjacent to Durham Avenue. In addition, construction is ongoing for affordable and attached dwellings at Pomponia Avenue and Christopher Street and near Route 287 at Bushwick Avenue and Texas Avenue.

CITY OF PLAINFIELD

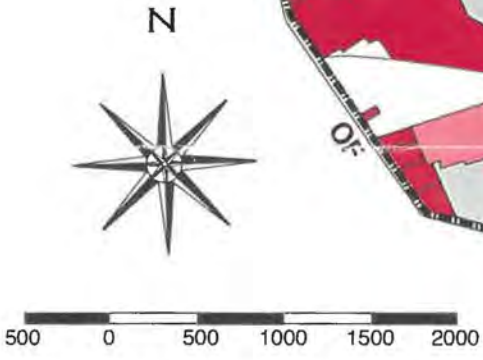


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**EXISTING LAND USE  
 MARCH, 1999**

- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MULTI FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- RETAIL COMMERCIAL
- COMMERCIAL OFFICE
- INDUSTRIAL
- SEMIPUBLIC
- PUBLIC
- PARK/RECREATION AREA/  
OPEN SPACE

- LEGEND**
- S SCHOOL
  - C CHURCH
  - H HOTEL
  - R RESCUE SQUAD
  - L LIBRARY
  - M MUNICIPAL
  - U UTILITY
  - PW PUBLIC WORKS
  - PO POST OFFICE



**SOUTH PLAINFIELD  
 EXISTING LAND USE**

## Commercial

### **Retail Commercial**

Commercial land uses in South Plainfield occupy 7.21% of the land area in the Borough, or 383.61 acres. This category is divided into two sub-groups, retail commercial and office commercial. Retail commercial generally comprises the sale of goods where office commercial generally comprises the provision of services such as real estate, banks, and insurance.

This analysis shows that commercial centers developed along major Borough roads and intersections. Specifically, commercial areas are located along Park Avenue, South Plainfield Avenue, and Plainfield Avenue. A larger commercial center is located along Stelton Road in the vicinity of Hadley Road, and two centers at the intersection of Oak Tree Avenue and Park Avenue.

### **General and Professional Office**

General and professional office uses and business offices such as corporate headquarters, occupy 129.68 acres or 2.44% of the total land area in the Borough. Most of the professional offices are located along Park Avenue while the larger corporate offices are located in the vicinity of Hadley Road.

## Industrial

Industrial uses make up 1,138.28 acres, or 21.40% of the land area in the Borough. There are two subgroups of industrial uses; heavy industrial, such as large trucking terminals or the manufacturing of heavy machinery; and light industrial, such as warehouses or research laboratories.

Industrial uses are located primarily in the southern half of the Borough where access to the railroads and Route 287 is convenient. The majority of heavy industrial uses have access to one of the two railroads, while the light industrial uses tend to utilize the street system.

The 1973 Master Plan indicated a total of 11.2% of the land being used for industrial purposes with an 87% increase by 1985. However, over the past fourteen years, industrial growth has stabilized with only a 0.44% increase.

## Public And Semi-Public

Public and semi-public lands account for a total of 492.32 acres or 9.25% of the Borough's land area. Public uses occupy 384.74 acres of 7.23%, and semi-public uses occupy 107.59 acres or 2.02 % of the total land area.

Semi-public uses include property such as churches, cemeteries, parochial schools, and clubs. Public lands are lands owned by the Borough, County, State, or Federal governments and presently being used for a public purpose such as municipal buildings, parks, open space or schools. The majority of public uses are owned by South Plainfield and Middlesex County, with ownership of land by the State and Federal Governments being minimal.

The 1985 Master Plan shows a total of 5.4% of the land being used for public and semi-public purposes with a 78% increase by 1985. Public uses have only increased minimally or 0.66%. However, a small decline in semi-public uses has occurred with a decrease of 1.08%.

### **Streets, Lakes, And Railroads**

This use category covers all uses which cannot be classified in the aforementioned developed land use categories, but also cannot be considered vacant. These uses total 1120.37 acres or 21.06% of the total land area in the Borough.

The 1985 Master Plan indicated a total of 16% of the land was being used for this purpose with a 10% increase by 1985. With the recent development of new residential and commercial structures, an additional increase of 3.39% has occurred.

### **Vacant And Farm**

The remaining 541.06 acres, or 10.17% of land area, consists of vacant land and farms. This land is interspersed through the Borough, with a majority of it being located south of the Lehigh Valley Railroad. A total of 120.98 acres, or 2.27% of the Borough's total land, is presently used as farmland. The remaining 420.08 acres, or 7.90%, is vacant.

The 1985 Master Plan shows a total of 39.5% of the land being vacant or farm. This percentage decreased by 56% in 1985 and since then an additional 7.31% decline has occurred.

### **Summary**

In assessing the character and location of existing land uses and developing the relationship between these uses, it is best to examine the Borough in its entirety and compare the existing land uses to their neighboring uses.

An examination of the borough's land uses shows that the overwhelming majority of residential uses exist to the north of the Lehigh Valley Railroad. A large residential area is also located to the south of the railroad on either side of Hamilton Boulevard.

The character and distribution of commercial development is also worth noting. The pattern indicates strip development along Plainfield and Park Avenues and various neighborhood centers scattered through the Borough. The central business district, located at the intersection of South

Plainfield Avenue and Front Street, which at one time was the major commercial area in the Borough, is still viable but now serves as a neighborhood commercial area. A major regional commercial center is located at the southwestern border of the Borough on Stelton Road.

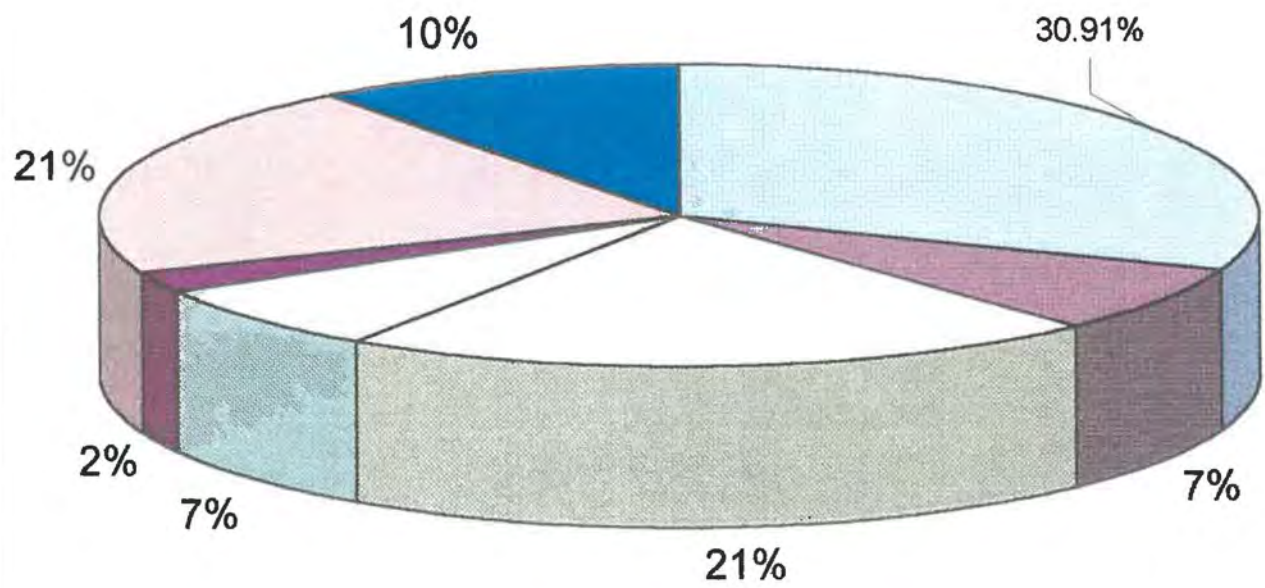
Industrial development is located predominantly in the southern part of the Borough where access to Route 287 and the Lehigh Valley Railroad is convenient.

Overall, existing land use within South Plainfield is a mixture of uses which have established definite patterns in most areas of the Borough. These established patterns will lay the framework for future land use and development in the Borough.

**Existing Land Use Calculations  
Comparison Table**

	1999 Calculations			1985 Calculations		Change
	Square Footage	Acreage	Percentage	Acreage	Percentage	
<b>Residential</b>						
Single Family	69507057.0400	1595.6625	29.99%			
Two-Family/Multi-Family	2120845.3600	48.6879	0.92%			
<b>Total:</b>	<b>71627902.4000</b>	<b>1644.3504</b>	<b>30.91%</b>	<b>1492.06</b>	<b>28.05%</b>	<b>2.86%</b>
<b>Commercial</b>						
Retail Commercial	11061157.5800	253.9292	4.77%			
General, Professional, Commercial Office	5648932.3200	129.6816	2.44%			
<b>Total:</b>	<b>16710089.9000</b>	<b>383.6109</b>	<b>7.21%</b>	<b>328.16</b>	<b>6.16%</b>	<b>1.05%</b>
<b>Industrial</b>						
<b>Total:</b>	<b>49583485.1000</b>	<b>1138.2802</b>	<b>21.40%</b>	<b>1115.52</b>	<b>20.96%</b>	<b>0.44%</b>
<b>Public</b>						
Municipal Services	5960701.2000	136.8389	2.57%			
Parks and Recreation	2504098.1200	57.4862	1.08%			
Vacant - Borough Ownership	8294352.732	190.412138	3.58%			
<b>Total:</b>	<b>16759152.0520</b>	<b>384.7372</b>	<b>7.23%</b>	<b>349.52</b>	<b>6.57%</b>	<b>0.66%</b>
<b>Semi-Public</b>						
<b>Total:</b>	<b>4686502.7400</b>	<b>107.5873</b>	<b>2.02%</b>	<b>164.68</b>	<b>3.10%</b>	<b>-1.08%</b>
<b>Streets, Lakes, Railroads</b>						
<b>Total:</b>	<b>48803444.3000</b>	<b>1120.3729</b>	<b>21.06%</b>	<b>940.1</b>	<b>17.67%</b>	<b>3.39%</b>
<b>Vacant and Farm</b>						
Vacant - Private Ownership	18298540.98	420.0766983	7.90%			
Qualified Farm	5270082.52	120.9844472	2.27%			
<b>Total:</b>	<b>23568623.5</b>	<b>541.0611455</b>	<b>10.17%</b>	<b>929.64</b>	<b>17.48%</b>	<b>-7.31%</b>
<b>Total Area:</b>						
<b>Total Area:</b>	<b>231739200</b>	<b>5320</b>	<b>100.00%</b>			<b>100.00%</b>

# Existing Land Use Percentages



- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public
- Semi-Public
- Streets, Lakes, Railroads
- Vacant and Farm

## **CIRCULATION PLAN**

The objective of circulation planning is to foster the safe and efficient movement of people and goods within a community and throughout the region. Thanks to a regional network of highways, railroads and bus routes, the Borough of South Plainfield is linked to major regional centers such as New York City, Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., major manufacturing centers in western Pennsylvania and Ohio, as well as resort areas such as the Jersey Shore and the Pocono Mountains. The Borough's accessible location, its role in the region as a significant population and employment center, and its diversity of land use are all factors that justify a careful consideration of circulation issues. This Circulation Plan Element summarizes existing circulation facilities and patterns, highlights existing transportation issues, recommends specific improvements, and encourages circulation policies that may ameliorate or prevent current problems.

### **Streets and Roadways**

Vehicular circulation within the Borough of South Plainfield is achieved primarily through a system of county and local streets and roadways, although an interstate highway also traverses the southern end of the Borough.

### **Functional Classification System**

The capacity and efficiency of a municipality's roadway system can be evaluated more readily if the individual streets are classified in terms of function. Functional classification serves as a tool for identifying deficiencies in the existing network, projecting the need for future upgrades and expansions, establishing design standards, and prioritizing planned improvements.

South Plainfield's streets have been classified according to the widely used functional classification system of the Federal Highway Administration. The classifications assigned in the 1985 Master Plan are still valid in terms of road function, but the terminology used below has been updated to reflect common planning practice. The attached map entitled "Functional Classification" identifies the Borough's roadway system.

### **Freeways**

Freeways are high-speed, high-capacity limited access highways devoted entirely to the movement of motor vehicles. They provide no direct access to abutting properties. They generally traverse large areas and provide for interregional traffic.

Design features of freeways include the separation of opposing traffic lanes by a continuous center barrier or median strip and full access control with grade separations at intersections which are generally widely separated. Freeways generally have right-of-way widths of at least 300 feet, carry multiple lanes of traffic in each direction, and usually have a capacity of between 1,000 and 1,500 vehicles per lane per hour.



The only freeway in South Plainfield Borough is Interstate Route 287, a regional six-lane highway that traverses the southern end of the Borough in an east-west direction. There is an interchange at Stelton Road and a partial interchange at Durham Road. According to the Middlesex County Transportation Plan, one-way traffic volumes for this freeway range from 30,000 to 50,000 vehicles per day. I-287 intersects the New Jersey Turnpike (Interstate 95), the Garden State Parkway, U.S. Route 1, U.S. Route 9, U.S. Route 22, and U.S. Route 78.

### **Primary Arterials**

Primary arterial roads usually have four or more traffic lanes and may provide direct access to abutting properties, a secondary function which interferes with the flow of traffic.

Timed traffic signals, jug-handle intersections, and grade-separated interchanges are used to control traffic at intersections. Center barriers and painted markings are often used to facilitate traffic flow. The recommended minimum right-of-way width for primary arterial roads is typically between 100 feet and 110 feet.

There are no primary arterials in the Borough of South Plainfield.

### **Secondary Arterials**

Secondary arterials carry less traffic at slower speeds than do primary arterials. Recommended minimum right-of-way widths range from 72 feet to 80 feet, depending on traffic volumes.

Stelton Road, or County Route 529, is classified as a secondary arterial street in South Plainfield.

### **Major Collectors**

Major collectors provide through traffic movements between local municipalities and serve commercial, industrial, and residential properties along their routes, which tends to interfere with the flow of traffic.

Typically, major collectors provide for two lanes of traffic plus parking on either side of the street. They often have signalized intersections. The minimum right-of-way width should be 66 feet.

The following streets in South Plainfield are classified as major collectors:

- Durham Road
- Hadley Road
- New Durham Road\*
- Hamilton Boulevard\* (Stelton Road to Lakeview Avenue)
- Lakeview Avenue\*
- Plainfield Avenue\* (Maple Avenue to Sampton Avenue)

Plainfield Avenue\* (Sampton Avenue to Borough line)  
Maple Avenue\*  
Park Avenue\*  
New Market Avenue  
Coolidge Street  
Clinton Avenue\* (New Market Avenue to Hamilton Boulevard)  
West 7<sup>th</sup> Street\*  
New Brunswick Avenue (W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street to New Market Avenue)  
New Brunswick Avenue (New Market Avenue to Stelton Road)  
Oak Tree Avenue\* (Park Avenue to Woodland Avenue)

\*County Route

### Minor Collectors

Minor collector streets provide access to abutting properties, collect traffic from local streets, and carry that traffic from neighborhoods to arterial roads and major collectors.

The recommended minimum right-of-way of 60 feet accommodates one moving lane of traffic in each direction.

Minor collectors in South Plainfield are the following:

Clinton Avenue\* (W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street to Sampton Avenue)  
Clinton Avenue\* (Sampton Avenue to New Market Avenue)  
Sampton Avenue\*  
Cedarbrook Avenue  
Kenyon Avenue (Cedarbrook Avenue to Marsh Avenue)  
Tomkins Avenue  
Franklin Avenue  
Woodland Avenue  
Grant Avenue (Wadsworth Avenue to Franklin Avenue)  
South Plainfield Avenue  
Oak Tree Avenue (Metuchen Road to Park Avenue)  
Front Street (Oak Tree Avenue to South Plainfield Avenue)  
Hamilton Boulevard (South Plainfield Avenue to Church Street)  
Church Street (Hamilton Boulevard to Lakeview Avenue)  
Metuchen Road  
Belmont Avenue  
St. Nicholas Avenue  
Ryan Street  
Hollywood Avenue  
Helen Street  
Corporate Boulevard

\*County Route

## Local Streets

Local streets provide direct access to all abutting properties and connect with minor collector streets and some major collector streets. They are usually residential in nature.

Local streets should have a right-of-way width of 50 feet.

Those streets in South Plainfield Borough that are not listed above under freeway, arterial, or collector classifications are considered local streets.

## Traffic Volumes

South Plainfield Borough is within one of the County's major job centers, as approximately 63,505 people regularly commute into the northwest region of Middlesex County. Of the 19,090 commuters working in South Plainfield in 1990, over 96% commuted by automobile – about 82% in single-occupancy vehicles. These factors, along with the truck traffic servicing the Borough's industrial areas, contribute to heavy volumes of traffic and severe problems of congestion in South Plainfield.

The Middlesex County Transportation Plan identifies two corridors in the Borough that “are especially prone to congestion”: I-287 and Stelton Road (CO-529). Other heavily traveled corridors within South Plainfield are Durham Avenue, Hamilton Boulevard, Hadley Road, Plainfield Avenue, Belmont Avenue, Metuchen Road, Park Avenue, and Oak Tree Avenue.

As the following traffic counts indicate, the greatest volumes of traffic within the Borough are handled by Interstate 287. The NJDOT counts are not all recent (primarily from 1991) but give some sense of relative volumes:

Volumes per NJ Department of Transportation, Bureau of Data

Location	Year	Weekday Volume Both Directions
I-287 between Talmadge Road and Moscow Avenue	1994	92,630
I-287 about 0.5 mile south of Rte. 529	1994	86,340
Durham Avenue between McKinley Street and Helen Street	1991	24,950
Durham Avenue between Helen Street and Hadley Road	1991	24,180
Hadley Road between Durham Avenue and Cragwood Road	1991	14,720
Durham Avenue between Hadley Road and Yurgel Drive	1991	12,390
I-287 ramp (from Durham Avenue to southbound ramp)	1991	11,270
I-287 ramp (onto Durham Avenue)	1991	6,020
Park Avenue @ bridge over RR	1998	3,450
McKinley Street between Durham Avenue and West Street	1991	2,090

Additional volume statistics were compiled in 1998 during the Helen Street Extension Study. These are recent counts but are limited to the Helen Street vicinity:

Location	Year	Average Daily Two-way Traffic Volume
Durham Avenue north of Helen Street	1998	19,062
Hamilton Boulevard north of Ryan Street	1998	18,214
Park Avenue north of Oak Tree Avenue	1998	15,115
Park Avenue south of Oak Tree Avenue	1998	13,700
Belmont Avenue east of Hamilton Boulevard	1998	13,413
Metuchen Road north of Belmont Avenue	1998	12,427
Oak Tree Avenue west of Park Avenue	1998	11,800
Ryan Street east of Hamilton Boulevard	1998	3,751
Helen Street east of Durham Avenue	1998	3,437

Heavy truck traffic characterizes some South Plainfield roadways in the vicinity of industrially zoned land. This problem was recognized in the previous Master Plan and remains an issue. At present, trucks wishing to access the industrial areas within the southeastern portion of the Borough tend to use Durham Road, Hamilton Boulevard, and Belmont Avenue, which include hazardous intersections and border residential neighborhoods and local business zones. Statistics from a recent traffic study report (Helen Street Extension, September, 1998, Frederic R. Harris, Inc.) verify that truck traffic is prevalent in that area. In fact, the percentage of truck involvement in accidents is much higher than the statewide average of 5.9% on these roadways:

- Durham Avenue from I-287 to Hamilton Boulevard (15%)
- Hamilton Boulevard from Durham Avenue to Belmont Avenue (13%)
- Belmont Avenue from Hamilton Boulevard to Metuchen Road (11%)
- Metuchen Road from Harmich Road to Oak Tree Avenue (35%)

### Traffic Generators

Land uses that generate large amounts of traffic can substantially impact the circulation patterns of a community and certainly should be taken into consideration when planning for future development. In South Plainfield, most of the significant traffic generators are located in the lower half of the Borough where there are high concentrations of commercial and industrial uses. Schools and recreational facilities generate high volumes of traffic in the northern residential areas. The major traffic generators are shown on the map entitled "Existing Conditions", and include the following:

- Stelton Road/Hadley Road commercial area (Middlesex Mall, Hadley Shopping Center, corporate office development)
- Helen Street Industrial area off Durham Avenue
- Ryan Street/Hollywood Avenue industrial center off Hamilton Boulevard
- Industrial area along St. Nicholas Avenue and Clinton Avenue
- Old and new shopping centers at intersection of Oak Tree and Park Avenues

Retail corridor along Park Avenue, north of Maple Avenue.  
Downtown area comprised of South Plainfield Avenue/Front Street/Hamilton Boulevard/Oak Tree Avenue

**Commercial area at the intersection of Plainfield and Sampton Avenues**

High School/Middle School on Plainfield Avenue

Spring Lake Park and recreational complex on Maple Avenue (swimming pool and PAL Center)

Centennial Square mall in Piscataway (opposite Hadley Road in Piscataway on Centennial Avenue)

**Hazardous Intersections**

Problem areas can often be identified through accident records. The Borough Police Department provided a "Top Ten" list of vehicle collision sites for 1996, 1997, and 1998. The following intersections are those on the lists that are still considered hazardous, despite improvements in some cases:

Stelton Road & Hadley Road  
Stelton Road & Hamilton Boulevard  
Stelton Road & 287 Ramps  
Lakeview Avenue/Maple Avenue/Plainfield Avenue  
Park Avenue & Maple Avenue  
Plainfield Avenue & Sampton Avenue/Lowden Avenue  
Stelton Road & New Durham Road  
New Market Avenue & Hamilton Boulevard  
Oak Tree Avenue & Front Street  
Hamilton Boulevard & Ryan Street  
Oak Tree Avenue & Park Avenue  
Stelton Road & Hadley Center entrance  
Clinton Avenue & W. 7th Street  
Durham Road & McKinley Street/287

As noted below, improvements are underway or planned for some of these intersections. New circulation patterns – e.g., such as the proposed Helen Street extension - should also help to reduce traffic volumes at some intersections, thereby reducing existing hazards.

**Planned and Recommended Roadway Improvements**

There are numerous roadway improvements either planned or recommended for the Borough of South Plainfield. The proposed changes are illustrated on the attached map entitled "Circulation Plan."

The following improvements are either underway or authorized by the Borough or the County:

1. Milling and Resurfacing (Inter-Local Agreement between Borough and County):

- Ada Place
- East Crescent Parkway
- Frase Street
- Gubernat Drive
- Herbert Place
- Hillside Avenue
- Jerome Avenue
- Kennedy Road
- May Avenue
- Merchants Avenue
- Muglia Place
- Pine Street
- St. Nicholas Avenue
- S. 10<sup>th</sup> Street
- West Crescent Parkway
- Wexler Place
- Wickford Avenue

2. Other Planned Improvements:

- Widening and resurfacing of Front Street (underway)
- Resurfacing of Montrose and installation of handicapped ramps (planned completion in 1999 – grant money available)
- Oak Tree Avenue and Park Avenue (recently improved – County also to add third lane on northbound side for through traffic and right turns)
- Oak Tree Avenue and Front Street (road widening and turning lane scheduled – stop sign to remain)
- Maple Avenue and Lakeview Avenue (County doing minor functional improvements, e.g., proper line painting and signal updating)
- Stelton Road and Hamilton Boulevard –(proposal to add second left-hand-turn lane onto Stelton)

Recommended improvements include the following:

1. Resurfacing:

- Walnut Street
- St. Nicholas Avenue from Hamilton Avenue to Kennedy Road
- Hollywood Avenue (western portion)
- Side streets off of Belmont Avenue, including Kenneth and Spicer Avenues
- Arlington Avenue between Hamilton and Belmont
- Moose Avenue

Amboy Avenue  
Elsie Avenue  
Carmine Avenue  
Oxford Avenue  
Linden Avenue  
Audobon Avenue  
Selene Avenue  
Terrace Avenue  
East Golf Avenue (between Park and Woodland)  
Kenwood Avenue  
Mildred Street  
Norman Street  
Carlisle Street  
Teneyck Street  
Oak Manor Parkway  
Schindler Drive  
Vakarich Place  
Surrey Road  
Devon Lane  
Dorset Drive  
Sussex Street  
Hudson Street  
Atlantic Street  
Cumberland Street  
11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Meister Street  
Jacobus Street  
Irving Street  
Day Street  
Trinity Street  
Palmer Avenue  
Mahar Avenue  
Morton Avenue  
Baker Avenue between Thompkins and Dumas  
Maltby Avenue

2. Reconstruction:

Woodland Avenue from Maple Avenue to Plainfield boundary  
New Brunswick Avenue from West 7<sup>th</sup> to New Market  
Kennedy Road  
Shevchenko Avenue  
Hollywood Avenue (eastern portion)  
Roosevelt through Sage (two-thirds already done by private businesses)  
Sage from Roosevelt to Penske property (about 300')  
Garfield Avenue

### 3. Other Recommended Roadway Improvements:

Centennial Avenue and Hadley Road (intersection improvement per Middlesex County Transportation Plan)

I-287 at Durham Road (ramp realignment and widening per Middlesex Transportation Plan)

### 4. Helen Street Extension

In an effort to remove truck traffic from congested roadways and residential neighborhoods, the Borough of South Plainfield initiated a proposal to extend Helen Street from Antonette Street to Metuchen Road. Although a specific alignment has not been selected to date, the concept has been endorsed by Middlesex County and included in the NJTPA Scoping Program. As noted in a March 21, 1996, letter from a transportation planner with the Middlesex County Planning Board:

*...The current truck route which passes through residential neighborhoods and local business zones, is reducing traffic service levels to failure. The completion of Helen Street to Metuchen Road will improve levels of service and provide trucks with direct access to industrial zones without going through residential areas. There will be a major gain in the safety and efficiency of traffic movement when the improvement is completed for both trucks and automobiles.*

The Borough has also petitioned for a further extension to Park Avenue and possibly a connection between Metuchen Road and Park Avenue via a Kentile Road extension. A generalized representation of these proposed connections is shown on the Circulation Plan Map. Appropriate studies have been completed to evaluate the impact of this new circulation pattern on existing features in the area, e.g. public utilities, railroad rights-of-way, wetlands, and other environmental constraints.

### Railroad System

Two major freight rail lines service the Borough of South Plainfield. The Reading Railroad runs roughly parallel to Interstate Route 287 in the southern end of the Borough. The Lehigh Valley Railroad traverses the heart of South Plainfield in an east-west direction, physically separating the predominantly residential areas to the north from the expansive non-residential uses to the south. The Perth Amboy Branch is a spur to the Lehigh Valley Line that runs along Metuchen Road. These regional lines provide excellent freight service to the Borough.



Passenger rail service is available to South Plainfield residents but is not directly accessible within the Borough proper. Stations along the Northeast Corridor Line, which provides local (New Jersey Transit) as well as regional (AMTRAK) service for the entire eastern coast, are located in several neighboring communities including Edison, Metuchen, and Metropark. Metuchen station is linked to South Plainfield via the M19 bus line (see below). The Raritan Valley Line, which links High Bridge to Newark's Penn Station and also Penn Station in New York City, stops in the nearby community of Dunellen.

Despite the availability of rail service, only 2.3% of South Plainfield residents and 0.4% of those working in the Borough commute by train according to a modal split analysis undertaken by Middlesex County in 1990. These figures suggest the need for better connections between commuter rail lines and South Plainfield employment centers through improved or expanded bus service, shuttle vans, park and ride facilities, or other transportation alternatives such as bike routes.

### Bus System

Two local bus lines offer service within South Plainfield. New Jersey Transit runs the M19 route which links the Borough with Piscataway, Plainfield, and Metuchen. The route, as illustrated on the following page, includes stops at the Municipal Building, the Middlesex Mall, Clinton and New Market Avenues, and Plainfield and Sampton Avenues. The M19 line runs from about 6:45 in the morning to 7:00 at night and provides connecting bus and rail service in Plainfield and Metuchen.

A Suburban Transit line offering service to the Port Authority Terminal in New York City stops at Front Street and Oak Tree Avenue in South Plainfield. It provides peak hour service on weekdays only.

A connection to the Dunellen railroad station from the Middlesex Mall is also provided by Suburban Transit. Operating only during morning and afternoon hours, this route serves Kendall Park and Princeton as well.

Bus ridership in South Plainfield is quite low among both resident and non-resident commuters. Middlesex County's 1990 modal split analysis indicates that less than 1% of workers commuting from home or to work in the Borough use buses (0.6% and 0.7%, respectively). Incentives to increase public transportation are clearly needed. In its Transportation Plan, the County suggests "intermodal centers" as a means of promoting transportation options. In South Plainfield, such a center is envisioned in the vicinity of Sampton Avenue, where the concentration of various activity centers such as local downtown retail areas, the town hall, recreational areas, and other community facilities may foster transportation alternatives. Expanded transit opportunities and enhancements are recommended for this area.

## Bikeways

Bikeways are often viewed only in terms of their recreational function. In a community such as South Plainfield, where traffic volumes are heavy and congestion is prevalent, bikeways should also be encouraged as an alternative means of transportation. The Middlesex County Open Space and Recreation Plan (1995) envisions a greenway/bikeway system that extends into South Plainfield and links not only recreational areas, but also residential areas and community facilities with major transit centers and park and ride facilities. The Borough's Reexamination Report, prepared in 1995, recognizes the need to accommodate bicycles in South Plainfield. It recommends that future road widening or construction include plans for bike lanes. The existing bike paths within Spring Lake Park provide a core system that could be extended to neighboring municipalities along existing stream corridors, as indicated on the Circulation Plan's Existing Conditions Map. The possibility of bicycle routes along other roadways within the Borough should also be considered in conjunction with other needed improvements.

## Summary

Several fundamental problems characterize circulation within South Plainfield Borough:

- Congestion caused by high traffic volumes, undesirable traffic patterns, and inadequate roadways
- Safety issues stemming from design deficiencies and heavy truck traffic
- High dependency on single-occupancy vehicles paired with low public transportation usage
- Need for additional transportation alternatives

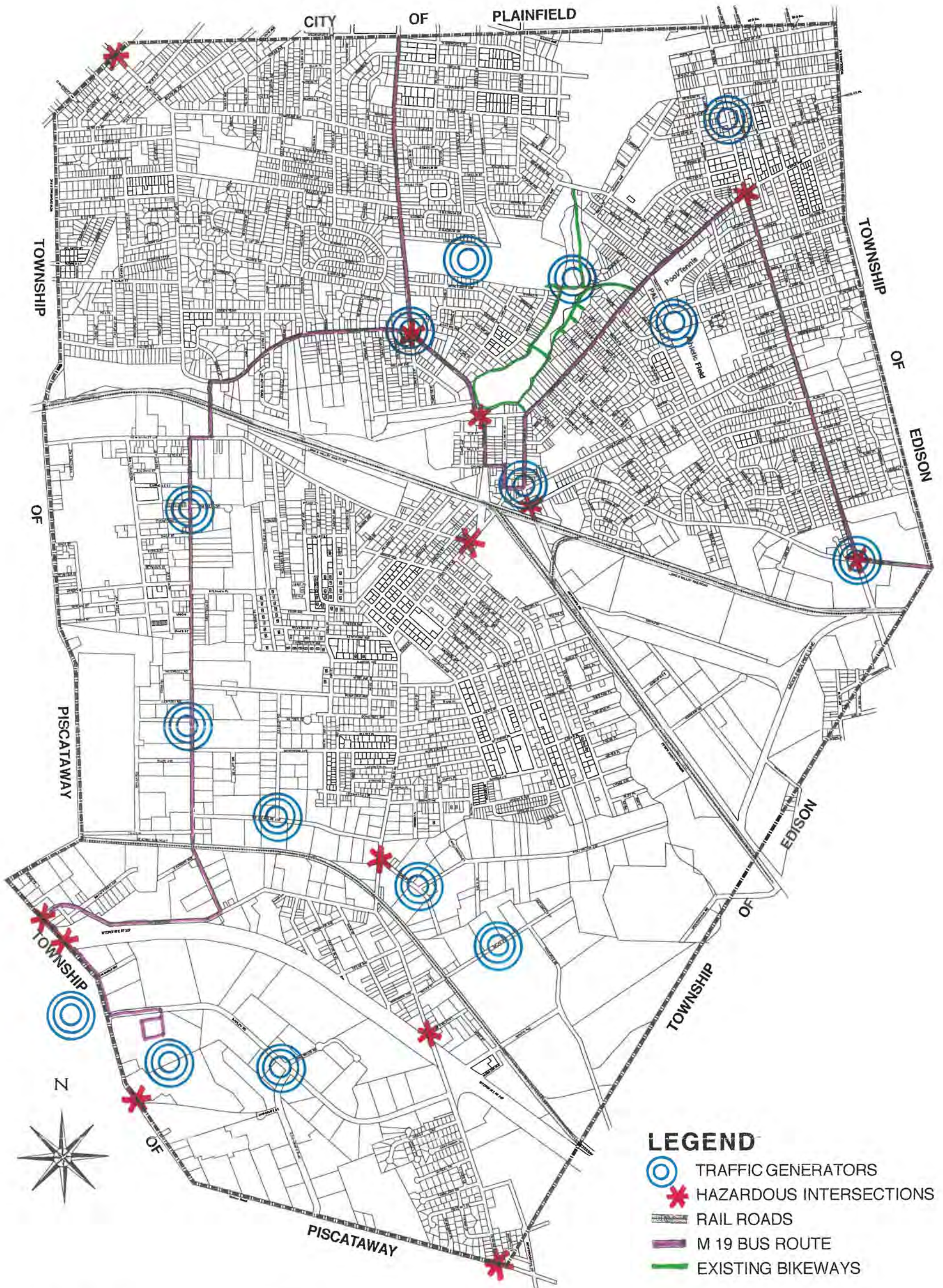
Some of these problems are typical of a community that has developed more quickly and intensely than anticipated when its original circulation system was designed. For this reason, the Borough of South Plainfield must continually maintain and upgrade its current roadway system to accommodate the traffic volumes resulting from new and expanded development. Safety issues also generally stem from a mismatch of design and function. By keeping a log of needed and prioritized improvements, the Borough will be ready to undertake them as budget and funding opportunities allow.

Other circulation issues require a more proactive approach by the municipality. These include incompatibility problems. South Plainfield's concerns regarding truck traffic in residential areas cannot be addressed through roadway upgrades alone. In this instance, an altogether new pattern of circulation is warranted – thus the need for the Helen Street and Kentile Road extensions..






Many of the circulation problems experienced by the Borough simply stem from behavioral factors. The choice of commuters to drive to work in automobiles rather than by bus, train, or other mode of travel is a primary cause of heavy traffic and congestion. Other transit options are available in the region, but their accessibility and/or convenience is apparently not sufficient enough to lure people from their cars. Given the severity of the problem however, South Plainfield has an obligation to foster options such as those advanced by Keep Middlesex Moving, Inc. (KMM), Middlesex County's transportation management association. These include initiatives such as:

Staggered working hours  
Employer-operated shuttle vans  
Ridesharing  
Improved and extended regional transit  
Park and ride facilities  
Intermodal transportation centers

Although each program by itself may not dramatically alter the circulation characteristics of South Plainfield Borough, their cumulative impact could be significant. By providing more transportation options, upgrading service levels, and improving inter-connections, the Borough may convince its residents and commuters that there are many acceptable – even desirable - alternatives.



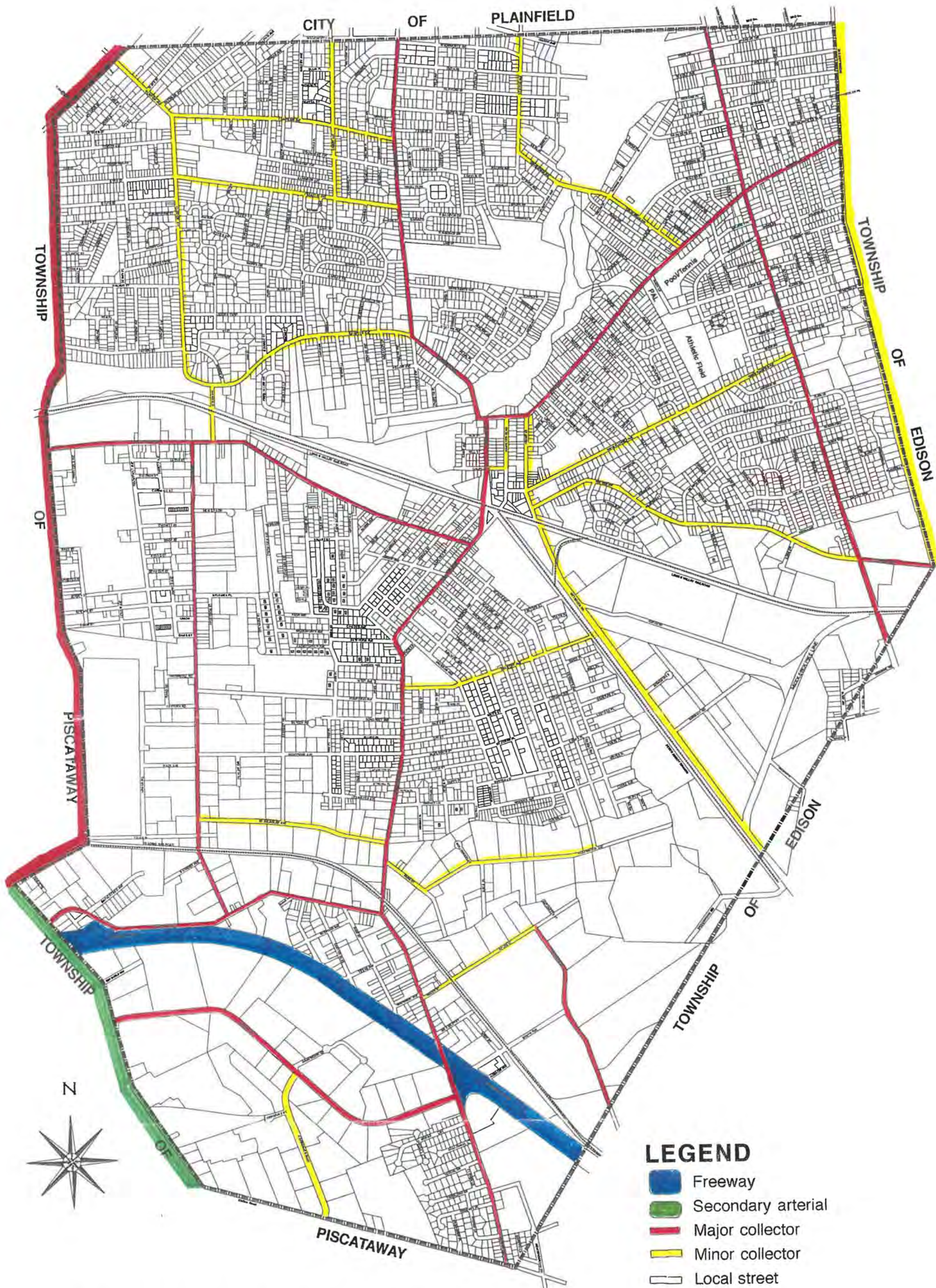
**LEGEND**

-  TRAFFIC GENERATORS
-  HAZARDOUS INTERSECTIONS
-  RAIL ROADS
-  M 19 BUS ROUTE
-  EXISTING BIKEWAYS

**SOUTH PLAINFIELD**

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

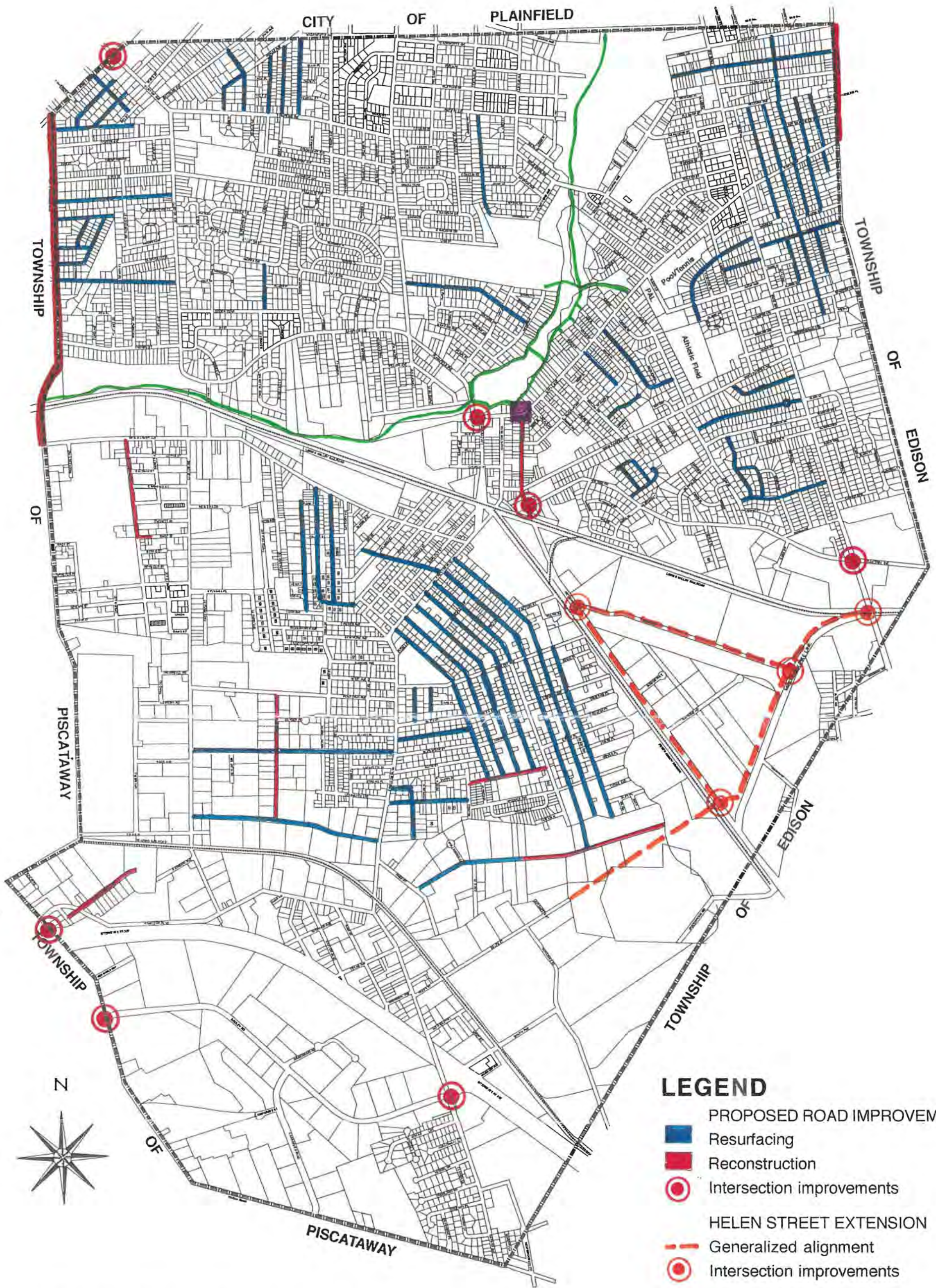
PREPARED BY:  
 THP, INC.  
 CONSULTING PLANNERS  
 40 BRUNSWICK WOODS DR  
 EAST BRUNSWICK, NJ 08816



# SOUTH PLAINFIELD

## FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

PREPARED BY:  
 THP, INC.  
 CONSULTING PLANNERS  
 40 BRUNSWICK WOODS DR  
 EAST BRUNSWICK, NJ 08816



**LEGEND**

- PROPOSED ROAD IMPROVEMENTS  
 Resurfacing
- Reconstruction
- Intersection improvements
- HELEN STREET EXTENSION  

 Generalized alignment
- Intersection improvements
- PROPOSED BIKEWAYS
- PROPOSED INTERMODAL CENTER

**SOUTH PLAINFIELD**

**CIRCULATION PLAN**

PREPARED BY:  
 THP, INC.  
 CONSULTING PLANNERS  
 40 BRUNSWICK WOODS DR  
 EAST BRUNSWICK, NJ 08816

## RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN

### Introduction

Open space is an intricate system serving a variety of functions, often concurrently, which are essential in sustaining and enhancing New Jersey as a desirable place to live and work. Open space can protect the quality and quantity of surface and groundwater resources; guide development and growth; preserve natural and historic resources; shape community character, and provide land for outdoor recreation. Additionally open space often provides economic value and benefits to surrounding properties such as increasing the value of adjacent properties and generating revenue from recreational activities to reducing the costs for public services. Recreation satisfies the basic human need to play and is associated with one's physical and mental well being.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, public recreation has become an increasingly important consideration when planning decisions are made in communities such as South Plainfield. Growing pressure upon people, coupled with shorter working hours and more leisure time, have increased the need for recreation. Various types of transportation, public and private, have augmented the use of recreational facilities by increasing their accessibility. However, in certain areas, the lack of public transportation and the inability of residents to utilize private transportation creates the need for specialized local recreational facilities. In addition, the presence of an expanding population, with a rapidly decreasing amount of vacant open space, points out the need for accurate planning for the recreation needs of future populations.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the existing recreational system in the Borough of South Plainfield, and determine future needs based on the future population as projected and distributed in the Demographic Profile of this Master Plan. In addition, it is important to recognize and develop goals consistent with the objectives outlined by the 1994-1999 New Jersey Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Plan. The state plan outlines the following six objectives:

1. To preserve sufficient amounts of open space for current and future public use and to utilize the environmental protection amenities of open space to protect important natural and historic resources for the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of life in New Jersey.
2. To offer a variety of recreation opportunities, experiences, and facilities for New Jersey residents and visitors.
3. To present accurate, current information on the supply, demand, and need for outdoor recreation facilities and open space in New Jersey.

---

<sup>1</sup> New Jersey's Common Ground (1994-1999) Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Plan Summary, Green Acres Program.

4. To coordinate open space and recreation planning at all levels of government and with private sector providers.
5. To implement open space and recreation planning policies and projects that are consistent with the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan.
6. To effectively use funds from the Green Acres Bond Acts, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Forest Legacy Program, Pinelands Section 502 Program and other sources of funding which may become available.

### **Categories of Recreation and Open Space Facilities**

The recreational needs of communities are met by four categories of recreational facilities: regional, district, community, and neighborhood. A fifth category, playfields, is specialized only in conjunction with junior and senior high schools. These types of facilities differ from one another in many respects, including size, area served, and types and numbers of facilities available.

#### **Regional Parks**

Regional parks are usually large, over 500 acres, and are managed by State or Federal government agencies. Recreational activities at these parks are generally informal - individual activities such as hiking, camping, boating, etc. Access is usually by private vehicle, although sometimes other means of access such as public transportation, boats, or aircraft are used. Topography is varied and often determines the recreational activities the facility offers. There are no regional parks in South Plainfield.

#### **District Parks**

District parks vary in size, 200 acres being considered an ideal size. They serve areas with a radius of up to five miles. County agencies usually manage district facilities. Activities included vary from formal to informal and range from picnicking, playground areas and water sports, to baseball, football and other organized sports. Topography is varied, although quite often altered to suit the desired activity. Access is gained almost exclusively by private vehicle and most district parks are located in close proximity to major roadways to accommodate the vehicular traffic.

#### **Community Parks**

Community parks have a recommended minimum size of 35 acres and serve all of the population within the municipality. Community parks are almost always managed by the municipality involved. Recreational activities are similar to those in district parks, although the limited space



dictates that less emphasis be placed on the informal activities. Access is usually by private auto, although it can also be gained by bicycle or foot; consequently, many community parks are located along well-traveled roadways. Topography is not as varied as in district parks due to the more formal nature of the activities. Quite often the natural topography is altered to suite the desired activity. Community parks are often combined with school sites for economical and practical reasons provided that conflict between school functions and recreational functions can be avoided through proper design.

### **Neighborhood Parks**

Neighborhood parks are managed by the municipality and are divided into two categories; playgrounds, and playlots. Playgrounds have a recommended minimum size of five acres and serve a maximum radius of one-half mile. They should include a balance of active and passive recreational activities. The emphasis of these parks is geared towards pre-school and elementary school children and teenagers although adult activities and an area for senior citizens should be included. Playlots have a minimum recommended size of one-half acre and serve a maximum radius of one-quarter mile. They are geared towards pre-school and elementary school children. Access to neighborhood facilities is usually gained by foot or bicycle so that these parks should be located in residential neighborhoods on lightly traveled roads. Like community parks, neighborhood parks can also be combined with school sites.

### **Playfields**

Playfields of approximately 25 acres in size should be provided in conjunction with junior and senior high schools and should provide active facilities for teenagers and adults. Activities open to the public should include a running track, baseball and football fields, tennis courts, etc.

### **Open Space**

Although not for active recreation, open space is often used to serve the purpose of making available suitable land for passive recreation (walking, hiking, picnicking, and nature study), or just left in its natural state to separate uses. Other purposes which these lands may serve are water retention areas, areas of aesthetic beauty and areas subject to flooding or stream overflow.

## **Existing Recreational Facilities**

### **District Parks**

#### **Spring Lake Park**

Spring Lake Park is the sole County run park in South Plainfield. The park runs along the Cedar Brook from Cedarbrook Avenue to the confluence with the Bound Brook, and westward along the Bound Brook to the Piscataway boundary line. The park is accessible from Lakeview Avenue, Maple Avenue, and from Pearl Street off Lane

Avenue, as well as from the High School athletic fields. The park consists of 121 acres, of which approximately 50 acres are formally developed. The remaining 71 acres are left in their natural state to protect the flood plain areas of the Cedar Brook and the Bound Brook. The developed portion of the park is located between Cedarbrook Avenue and Plainfield Avenue and predominantly occupies the site of what was previously known as Mill Pond, South Plainfield Lake, or Spring Lake. It contains 15 acres of informal playing fields, 3 full court basketball courts, 4 tennis courts, a playground area with 7 pieces of play equipment, a 5 acre lake for fishing or ice skating, 1 1/2 miles of jogging and/or bicycle paths, benches, a pavilion, and two comfort stations. This part of the site is surrounded by residences, schools and some commercial uses. There is ample parking and County park police patrol the area. However, beginning August 1, 1999, the County is relinquishing police patrol directly to the Borough.

Due to its size and location, Spring Lake Park functions more as a community park than a district park.

### **Cedarbrook Park**

Cedarbrook Park is a large district park located in Plainfield on the South Plainfield border. A small portion of the park is located in South Plainfield, but no access is available at that point. The park has a number of facilities, including a pond, playing fields, a large playground, paths, and several buildings. This park is owned and maintained by the Union County Parks Department.

## **Community Parks**

### **South Plainfield Little League and Pop Warner Fields**

These little league fields are located on Kenneth Avenue between Birch Place, Lorraine Avenue, and the Borough's recycling/compactor facilities. The site is owned by the Borough and operated by the South Plainfield Little League. The 14.04 acre site consists of six (6) baseball fields with dugouts and bleachers, and two (2) Pop Warner football practice fields. Presently, one of the baseball fields is not usable. Four of the baseball fields are "small fry" and the remaining two are regulation. In addition to the ball fields, there is a refreshment stand, storage facilities, a small play area with several pieces of play equipment, and bicycle racks. There is adequate parking for all the fields. Also behind the baseball and football fields are two soccer fields. However, they are currently not in use due to the lack of an irrigation system.

### **Community Pool**

The 6.4 acres pool site is located on Cady Lane, off Maple Avenue. The facility includes a basketball court, 2 shuffleboard courts, 1 large pool, 1 kiddy pool, 1 bath house, 2

restrooms, a picnic area, tables, parking and storage. Access is gained mainly by automobile. A fee is charged for pool membership. Although the pool received major repairs in 1998, leaks still remain a problem.

## **Neighborhood Parks**

### **Veterans Memorial Park**

Veterans Memorial Park is located off Lakeview Avenue at the end of Elm Street. It is bordered by several residences and a portion of the undeveloped section of Spring Lake Park. This park is formerly known as Borough Park and occupies 9.0 acres of floodplain in the angle formed by the confluence of the Cedar Brook and the Bound Brook. The park is built on fill. The equipment and facilities include a football field with goal posts and lights, a baseball field with lights, 2 tennis courts which require resurfacing, 1 full court basketball court, 20 pieces of play equipment, a pavilion, benches, picnic tables, 5 barbecue grills, storage facilities and a restroom. The baseball field currently requires a new backstop and the chain link fence along the western boundary requires repair. Access to the park is gained by foot or automobile, with a limited parking area. In 1988, the Environmental Commission developed a nature trail which begins in the park and extends into the County Green Acres land (the undeveloped portion of Spring Lake Park). The trail follows the Cedar Brook from the end of the log fence just past the parking lot.

### **Cotton Street Park**

The Cotton Street Park is a neighborhood park of 5.05 acres, located at the end of Cotton Street and lies between thoroughfares South Plainfield and Oak Tree Avenues. An asphalt walk provides continuity from one side of each bisected street to the other. There is also access to the park from the Dorset Drive cul-de-sac via a paved walkway. It is accessible by bicycle, foot or car, however the lack of formal parking limits auto access. The facilities at the site include: two (2) basketball courts, pedestrian/bicycle paths, and ten (10) pieces of play equipment. This park serves the needs of the neighborhood by providing a large playground for both young children and teenagers in the area.

### **Pitt Street Park**

This 6.14 acre park is located at the intersection of Amboy Avenue and Pitt Street. Facilities at the park include three softball fields with three fenced diamonds with benches and bleachers. There also exists a paved area that was formerly a basketball court, but has no backboards. There is no playground equipment at the site.

Recently, Block 315, Lots 47 and 51 were added to the expansion of Pitt Street Park as part of a Green Acres Project. In addition, adjacent lots totaling 23.03 acres in Blocks 308, 310, 311 and 315 have been acquired for the Highland Avenue Woods Environmental Education Reserve.

### **Walnut Street Park**

Walnut Street Park is a 6.67 acre park with frontage on Walnut Street and Clinton Terrace. A small portion of the park at the end of Clinton Terrace is developed. The limited facilities consist of 5 pieces of play equipment, a sand area, and benches. The remainder of the park is in its natural state. This park functions only as a playlot.

### **Putnam Park**

Putnam Park, at the junction of Oak Tree Avenue and Putnam Avenue, is a neighborhood park consisting of 4.2 acres. Three sides of the park are bordered by residences, while the fourth side is bordered by Oak Tree Avenue. The site's facilities include a baseball field with bleachers, 2 tennis courts with lights, a volley ball court, 1 full court basketball court, a sand area, 7 pieces of play equipment, a handball wall (suitable for tennis or paddleball), and a small parking area. The park can be reached by car or foot. Due to the recent acquisition of a million dollar grant, Putnam Park has been improved significantly for passive recreation including acquisition of surrounding parcels, new benches, etc.

### **Shadyside Park**

Shadyside Park is a small neighborhood park with 2.26 acres of recreational space located at the end of Yurgel Drive. It serves a small residential development which is surrounded primarily by industrial land uses. The facility includes a small pavilion, 1 full court basketball court, a volleyball court, 9 pieces of play equipment, benches, and a bicycle rack. There is no on-site parking. Access to the park may be by either foot, bicycle or car. If the surrounding Coppola Farms property becomes developed, it is important to expand and improve this area.

### **Willow St. Park**

This .58 acres site previously contained 5 tennis courts, which needed resurfacing, situated behind the municipal building. The area has been reconstructed as three roller skating courts for inline skating. Parking is available at the municipal building parking lot. Possible improvements for the future include removal/condemnation of the PBA 1 story building and the addition of a storage/bathroom facility.

A summary of the facilities is provided in the attached table entitled "Parks/Recreation Facilities Description".

### Parks/Recreation Facilities Description

	Developed Areas (Name of Facility)	Acres	Facility Type ( <i>Mini Park; Neighborhood; Community; District</i> )	Purpose/Use	Ownership ( <i>Boro, Brd of Education; Private</i> )
1	Spring Lake Park	121	Community	3 Basketball Courts, 4 Tennis Courts, 1 1/2 Mile Path; 7 Playground Pieces; Fishing/Skating	Middlesex County
2	Cedarbrook	N/A	Community	No Access with Adjacent County	Union County
3	Pop Warner Fields	14.04	Community	6 Baseball Fields (2 Regulation); Football Practice Field; 6 Pices of Playground Equipment; Compactor Facility	Borough
4	Community Pool	6.4	Community	1 Basketball Court; 2 Shuffleboard Courts; 1 Large Pool; 1 Kiddy Pool	Borough
5	Veterans Memorial Park (Borough)	6.92	Neighborhood	1 Football Field; 1 Baseball Field; 2 Tennis Courts; 1 Basketball Court; 1 Picnic Area/BBQ	Borough
6	Cotton Street Park	5.5	Neighborhood	1 Basketball Court; 1 Pedestrian Pathway; 14 Pieces of Playground Equipment	Borough
7	Pitt Street Park	6.14	Neighborhood	3 Softball Fields; 1 Basketball Court	Borough
8	Walnut Street Park	6.67	Neighborhood	Playlot; Sand Area; 5 Pieces of Equipment	Borough
9	Putnam Park	4.2	Neighborhood	1 Baseball Field; 2 Tennis Courts; 1 Volleyball Court; 1 Basketball Court; 1 Handball Court; Playground/Sand Area; 7 Pieces of Playground	Borough
10	Shadyside	2.26	Neighborhood	1 Basketball Court; 1 Volleyball Court; 9 pieces of Playground Equipment	Borough

**Parks/Recreation Facilities Description**

	Developed Areas (Name of Facility)	Acres	Facility Type ( <i>Mini Park; Neighborhood; Community; District</i> )	Purpose/Use	Ownership ( <i>Boro, Brd of Education; Private</i> )
11	Willow Street Park	0.58	Neighborhood	5 Tennis Courts (previously) - now Roller Skating	Borough
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					

## **Public School Facilities – Playfields**

### **John E. Riley School**

The John E. Riley elementary school, fronting on Morris Avenue, occupies 19.5 acres in the northeastern portion of the Borough. The recreational area occupies 9.49 acres of the site.

The play area consists of one JV baseball field and two playgrounds for recreation, 1 soccer field, and 1 playlot with playground equipment, which includes swings, a playcenter, and climbing equipment. There is sufficient parking in the school parking lot during non-school hours with 55 parking spaces including 2 handicap spaces.

### **Grant School**

Grant School, located on Cromwell Place, is a 14.25 acre site of which 4.09 acres are reserved for the play area. It functions primarily as a neighborhood park and is near both the high school and middle school. The recreational area consists of 1 baseball field, 1 soccer field, and two playlots, which contain swings, a play center, and climbing equipment.

### **Roosevelt School**

The Roosevelt elementary school fronts on Evona Place with access to the recreational area on Jackson Avenue. The school occupies a 9.5 acre site, of which 4.78 acres are dedicated for a play area. It functions primarily as a neighborhood park. The play area includes one baseball field, and one playlot, which contains swings, a playcenter, and climbing equipment. Parking is available at the school with forty-four spaces and two handicapped spaces.

### **Franklin School**

The Franklin elementary school is located across from a large residential area on Franklin Avenue. About 9.25 acres at the elementary school are used as a park facility. Recreational activities include a baseball field, a soccer open field, and one playlot with swings, playcenter and climbing equipment. Parking is available at the school with forty-two spaces and two handicapped spaces.

### **John F. Kennedy School**

The John F. Kennedy elementary school is located on Norwood Avenue. It functions primarily as a neighborhood park. The play area is 4.23 acres of the school's 8.24 total acres. The site includes an open field, 2 basketball half courts, 6 pieces of play equipment, a new wooden structure/rope playground, bicycle racks, and parking.

### **South Plainfield High School and Middle School**

These two schools occupy a common site of 33 acres of which 22.3 acres are used for recreational purposes. The High School fronts on Lane Avenue and the Middle School fronts on Plainfield Avenue. The schools are located near the center of town and adjacent to Spring Lake Park. Both sites are accessible by vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The surrounding land uses are primarily residential. In addition to the recreation facilities located at the High School site, the Board of Education owns and operates fields located between Cady Lane and Joan Street. These 8.0 acres of formal playing fields are used for high school competition in addition to the existing facilities at the high school. While not within walking distance from the high school, the fields are near the J.F. Kennedy School, the community pool and the South Plainfield P.A.L. building.

The recreation area at the high school including the additional fields, consists of one full-size baseball field, three softball fields, two soccer fields, four football practice fields, five tennis courts, one field hockey field, one ¼ mile track, and one playlot. The high school parking lot provides for 475 parking spaces and 8 handicapped spaces. The facilities at the middle school include one baseball field, one field hockey field, and one playlot. The middle school parking lot provides for 86 parking spaces and 2 handicapped spaces. The combination of facilities at both sites makes this recreational area attractive to the entire adult-teenage community.

## **Additional Recreational Facilities**

### **Sacred Heart School**

This parochial school has 1.66 acres of open space for limited recreational purposes. Facilities at the site include 1 basketball court and a bicycle rack. The remainder of the site is open play area. Although privately owned, the play area is used by neighborhood children on a regular basis. However, for more complete facilities, residents travel to Spring Lake Park, Veterans Memorial Park or Cotton Street Park.



### Senior Center

The senior center is housed in an old bank building at the corner of Hamilton Boulevard and Plainfield Avenue near the commercial district. Indoor facilities include card playing areas, a pool table, shuffleboard, bingo games, and television. The center is maintained by the seniors and is self-sufficient and separate from the Borough's recreation department. No outdoor recreation facilities are available. A new senior citizens center is proposed at the intersection of Plainfield Avenue, Elm Street and Kaine Avenue.

### South Plainfield P.A.L.

The P.A.L. building is primarily an indoor recreational facility located on a 4.54 acre site at 1250 Maple Avenue adjacent to the community pool. The hours of the facility are 9:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M. The building includes the municipal recreation offices, a gym and weight room, a video game room, a pool table, a ping pong table, shuffle board, and cable TV. In addition there are 1.27 acres of outdoor area used for a baseball field. The borough's recreation department sponsors a variety of programs and activities including junior bowling, youth soccer, and aerobics at the PAL gym. Furthermore two (2) vans are available to residents over sixty for transportation to doctors, hospitals, banks, etc. A meal delivery service is also available to residents sixty years and older who have been recently discharged from the hospital and are homebound. An additional 13,000 square foot addition has been approved for office space and expanded recreation opportunities.

### Recreation Needs

In order to determine the recreational needs of South Plainfield, the relationship between the projected population and the available recreational land has been analyzed. The national standard for total parkland within a municipality is 10 acres per 1,000 population. This parkland should be distributed equally within easy reach of all the population, so that a neighborhood park standard of two acres per 1,000 people is also recommended. The table entitled "Recreation Needs" illustrates the shortages/deficits of various recreation facilities when compared to the National Park and Recreation Standards for a projected 2010 Borough population.

An additional consideration to the total parkland acreage that should be provided is the accessibility of these parklands. Playgrounds and equipment should be no more than one-half mile away from all pre-school and elementary school children, either in playlots or as a part of a larger playground. More active recreation such as ballfields should also not be further than one-half mile from all pre-teens, teenagers and young adults.

## Recreation Needs Comparison to National Park and Recreation Standards

Type of Facility	Standard (Facilities/Population)	1992 Population (Housing Element)	2000 Population (MCPB Projection)	2010 Population (MCPB Projection)	Existing Boro Facilities	Comparison
		20717	22883	25277		
Baseball	1/5000	4.14	4.58	5.06	7	1.94
Softball	1/5000	4.14	4.58	5.06	3	-2.06
Soccer	1/10000	2.07	2.29	2.53	0	-2.53
Football	1/20000	1.04	1.14	1.26	2	0.74
Basketball	1/5000	4.14	4.58	5.06	9	3.94
Tennis	1/2000	10.36	11.44	12.64	13	0.36
Swimming	1/20000	1.04	1.14	1.26	1	-0.26
Volleyball	1/5000	4.14	4.58	5.06	2	-3.06
Community Centers	1/25,000	0.83	0.92	1.01	0	-1.01
Golf Course - 18 hole	1/50,000	0.41	0.46	0.51	0	-0.51
Play Equipment	1/2000	10.36	11.44	12.64	39	26.36
Picnic Area	1/6000	3.45	3.81	4.21	2	-2.21
1/4 Mile Track	1/20000	1.04	1.14	1.26	1	-0.26
Field Hockey	1/10000	2.07	2.29	2.53	0	-2.53
Hardball	1/10000	2.07	2.29	2.53	1	-1.53
Playlots	1/1500	13.81	15.26	16.85	6	-10.85

Notes: MCPB - Middlesex County Planning Board

Standards: National Park and Recreation Association and Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, 1990  
PE, PA, HB, FH, Track - DVRPC (Somerville MP)  
NJ Statewide Recreation Plan, NJDEP, 1973

Facilities do not include School Property

Playlot — includes/utilizes sand area or lots where play equipment is available

Although it is more desirable to have the pre-school playlots as close as one-quarter mile from each home, it becomes a cost prohibitive program of acquisition, maintenance and operation. These radii should take into account access to a park by auto, bicycle, and on foot. The presence of physical barriers should also be considered when determining the serving area radius. Barriers can be in the form of heavily traveled streets, rivers or railroads. Access to a park by the walking public is limited by the presence of these barriers.

Therefore, the relationship between population and recreational space consists of a relationship between the available parklands and the accessibility of these parklands.

### **Future Recreation Plan**

#### **General**

In previous sections of this study, the total Borough and neighborhood needs were determined, the existing system was evaluated, and deficiencies determined.

This section will make recommendations to correct these deficiencies, both in acquisition and development.

In evaluating the existing parks, the total amount of recreation land was found to be sufficient for the present needs of the Borough as a whole, but lacking in respect to the Borough's future population and portions of several existing neighborhoods with regard to proximity of parks to the residences to be served (see attached table).

All the vacant land has been mapped and evaluated for suitability within these neighborhoods and the most suitable in regard to location, capability of development, and cost feasibility are recommended for acquisition.

The presence of open space alone does not insure satisfaction of an area's recreational requirements. To be comprehensive, a recreational plan must include a proper balance of open space and facilities. The number and types of facilities required in a neighborhood vary according to the specific characteristics of that neighborhood. Neighborhoods with high densities of senior citizens should provide facilities geared towards the elderly. Low density neighborhoods with large yards do not require picnic areas or playlot areas to the extent that a high density neighborhood would.

For the most part, recommendations in this section are general in nature. However, each site should be a properly designed facility with landscaped buffers and spectator or parent seating. It should not be constructed so that all hard surface game courts are located in one section of the site. Generally, one acre will support six well-designed basketball and tennis courts. Where possible, playlots should contain separate areas for pre-school and school-aged children. This is advantageous because of the differences in equipment available for the two groups. Where most of the existing play equipment is geared towards school-aged children, pre-school play equipment is recommended to supplement existing equipment at some parks. Existing and proposed recreation land is shown on the Community Facilities Map.

## Summary

South Plainfield has adequate recreation land to meet its current needs primarily because of Spring Lake Park. However, there are some neighborhoods in the Borough that are not within easy reach of adequate recreational facilities. In addition, the current parkland is somewhat below the national recommended standard with regard to meeting the needs of the Borough's population at saturation. This plan recommends an acquisition and development program to provide parkland and facilities within reasonable proximity to each resident's home, as well as a program to acquire floodplains and environmentally sensitive lands. It is anticipated that these programs will result in the acquisition and development of sufficient parkland to meet the Borough's needs and saturation. It should be noted however, that 50% of the Borough's existing parkland is County owned and another 25% is located on school property. It is essential that these recreational facilities remain open to the public in order for the Borough to be able to continue to meet its current and future recreation and open space needs.

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN**

As public facilities become outmoded and living standards and public expectations rise, the demand for more and better community facilities and services increases. With the increasing demand on municipal budgets that this entails, intelligent planning of facilities is essential. The needs, priorities, and standards of a wide range of public service facilities have to be determined and budgeted. This element analyzes existing community facilities, determines deficiencies, and suggests improvements which would increase the service, efficiency, and economy to the public.

### **Schools**

The New Jersey Department of Education suggests that 25 students per classroom provides a desirable maximum, and 30 students per classroom provides an absolute maximum, for adequate teaching conditions whereby students may receive a sufficient amount of individual attention. There are also school size standards that include minimum classroom space requirements. Modern educational techniques involving a greater range of subjects and increased use of special audio-visual aids require that present day school facilities be much larger than those built during the early to mid 1900's. Also, an increasing emphasis on recreation as an integral part of the education process requires that modern school sites be large enough to provide the necessary areas and facilities for outdoor recreational programs.

The school building itself should be close to the area it is serving and accordingly the following service radii standards are recommended:

- Elementary School - 1/4 - 1/2 mile
- Junior High School - 1/2 mile
- Senior High School - 1 mile

These standards are not absolutes and need to be modified according to each community.

### **Existing Facilities**

The South Plainfield Board of Education operates six schools subdivided into four elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school, and one administration building. Total enrollment as of October, 1998 was 3,467 students. Each school location is shown on the map entitled "Community Facilities Plan". Presently, South Plainfield operates a K-5, 6-8, 9-12 system. A description and analysis of each school follows:

### **Franklin School**

The Franklin School was built in 1957 and no additions have been made to the building since then. The school serves grades K-5. The October, 1998 enrollment was 415 students, including 16 special education students. The maximum functional capacity of the school is 637 students, indicating an underutilization of the facility.

There are 23 classrooms, including a music room. In addition there is a small library and a multi-purpose room/cafeteria sharing the same space. There are currently no rooms for art, science or guidance.

The building is a one story fire resistant unit. The school is located on a 9.25 acres site on Franklin Avenue.

The enrollment creates an average class size of 18.

### **John F. Kennedy School**

The John F. Kennedy School was opened in 1959 and no building additions have been made since then. The school serves grades K-5. The enrollment as of October, 1998 was 392 students, including 18 special education students. The maximum functional capacity of the school is 600, indicating under enrollment. However, enrollment has increased by 55 students since 1984.

This building is a one story unit located on a 8.25 acre site on Norwood Avenue.

Within the school structure there are 23 classrooms, including a small music room. There is a small library of 788 square feet and a multi-purpose room/cafeteria space. Presently, there are no art, science rooms, or guidance offices.

The current enrollment creates an average class size of 17.

### **John E. Riley School**

The John E. Riley School was opened in 1966 and has had no additions constructed since that time. The school serves grades K-5. The enrollment as of October, 1998 was 422 students with no special education students. This is above the maximum functional capacity of 413 students and represents an increase of 57 students since 1984.

The building is a one story unit and is located on a 19.5 acre site at Morris Avenue and Chamber Street. Within the building there are 23 classrooms, a music room and library. Similar to the other elementary schools, the John E. Riley School has a combination multi-purpose room/cafeteria. An added asset to the multi-purpose room is a stage. The elementary school also does not have an art or science room.

The current enrollment creates an average class size of 18 students.

## **Roosevelt School**

The Roosevelt School was built in 1924 and an addition was constructed in 1956 and 1991. The school serves grades K-5. The enrollment as of October, 1998 was 441 with no special education students.

The school is situated on a 9.5 acre area on Evona Place. The facility has 22 classrooms, a library and music room. The current enrollment creates an average class size of 20.0.

The age and multi-story nature of this structure make its future access to the handicapped beyond financial practicality.

Over the past years, the Board of Education has considered various alternatives and recommendations regarding the use of the school. Recent and ongoing housing construction in the southern portion of the Borough has resulted in an increase in enrollment from 253 (1978) to 441 (1998). This substantial increase justifies the existence of a school in its present area. The Board of Education currently has plans to expand the school by constructing a new K-5 school building adjacent to the existing building. No changes are proposed to the existing Roosevelt School.

## **Middle School and High School**

The Middle School was opened in 1949 as a high school, and an addition was completed in 1956. In 1974 it was converted to a middle school after the opening of the new high school. The middle school serves all of grades 6-8 in the Borough. Enrollment as of October, 1998 was 859 students including 6 special education students. Current enrollment is well below the maximum functional capacity of 1066 students.

The middle school is located on a combined 33 acre site with the high school on Lake Avenue. It is a two story structure and consists of 17 acres.

Within the school structure there are 39 academic classrooms and several supporting rooms (i.e.: music room, art room, science room, technology shop) in addition to the gymnasium (with stage), media center and cafeteria. The average class size is 22. Due to the relatively young age of the building, the school facilities are generally sufficient.

The high school serves all of grades 9-12 in the Borough. Enrollment as of October, 1998 was 928 students including 7 special education students. Within the school structure there are 42 classrooms and several supporting rooms (i.e.: music room, art room, science room) in addition to the auditorium which seats 1,100, and cafeteria. School facility needs include a lack of space for desired technology shops and one (1) media center.

## Grant School

This school was opened in 1961 as Cedarcroft Middle School and was converted to Grant Elementary School in 1974 when the new high school was completed. It currently functions as the school administration building and a pre-kindergarten facility.

This 1 story structure is situated on 14.25 acres on Cromwell Place and contains 11 classrooms and 14 offices. The Board of Education currently has plans to expand the facility by constructing a new pre-engineered building of approximately 10,000 square feet to serve as the administrative center for the Board of Education.

## Enrollment Trends

A review of past enrollment trends and the projected growth in school enrollments provides the information necessary to project future school needs.

From 1975 to 1985 there had been a substantial decline in total enrollment. The public school enrollment decreased from 4,795 students in 1975-76 to 3,322 in 1984-85; a decrease of approximately 31%. However, over the past five years there has been an increase in new housing units, which has resulted in increased enrollments. From 1994, the public school enrollment increased from 3,124 students to 3,467 in 1998. This results in 343 additional students or a 10.97% increase.

### Public School Enrollment October, 1998

Grade	Franklin	J.F. Kennedy	John E. Riley	Roosevelt	Middle School	High School	Total
Total	415	392	422	441	859	938	3467

During this period, enrollments in grades K-5 increased from 1508 to 1670, or 10.78%. Enrollments in grades 6-8 also increased from 703 to 859 or 22.19%.

Grades 9-12 have remained stabilized with enrollment increasing from 913 to 938 or only 2.74%.

The following table shows the 1993-1994 thru 1998-1999 enrollments by grade with totals for grades K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. It depicts the increase in grade school enrollments during that period.



### Total Public School Enrollment Trends By Grades

Grade	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99
K	217	271	237	239	248	232
1	281	275	324	264	297	304
2	242	267	232	309	265	273
3	247	237	270	233	301	273
4	224	254	242	274	235	309
5	239	225	257	243	284	245
Special Ed.	58	31	28	30	33	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>1508</b>	<b>1560</b>	<b>1590</b>	<b>1592</b>	<b>1663</b>	<b>1670</b>
6	230	242	222	269	252	300
7	224	227	254	240	270	270
8	218	238	224	259	242	283
Special Ed.	31	38	33	13	14	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>703</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>733</b>	<b>781</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>859</b>
9	301	264	290	217	248	238
10	183	241	195	236	222	253
11	200	163	206	202	225	226
12	226	219	186	241	204	214
Special Ed.	3	6	0	7	5	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>913</b>	<b>893</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>903</b>	<b>904</b>	<b>938</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3124</b>	<b>3198</b>	<b>3200</b>	<b>3276</b>	<b>3345</b>	<b>3467</b>

The following table shows enrollment by school and grade for October, 1998.

**Enrollment by School and Grade**  
**October, 1998**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Franklin</b>	<b>J.F. Kennedy</b>	<b>John E. Riley</b>	<b>Roosevelt</b>	<b>Middle School</b>	<b>High School</b>	<b>Total</b>
K	57	57	57	61			232
1	78	69	83	74			304
2	62	63	69	79			273
3	71	71	66	65			273
4	70	69	79	91			309
5	61	45	68	71			245
6					300		300
7					270		270
8					283		283
9						238	238
10						253	253
11						226	226
12						214	214
Special	16	18			6	7	47
<b>Total</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>859</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>3467</b>

**Summary**

The Borough of South Plainfield experienced a declining student enrollment in the previous decade. However, with the increase of new housing units and ongoing construction of various types of housing this trend is no longer occurring. The elementary and junior high level schools have experienced the most growth.

**Recommendations**

Because of the age and structural design of the Roosevelt School, the increasing enrollment, and the limited availability of land in the area, it is recommended that the Board of Education's plans to construct an additional facility adjacent to the existing building should be implemented. In addition, computer/technology programs as well as electrical upgrades are deficient and need to be replaced aggressively in each school.

## Municipal Services

### **Municipal Building**

The Borough of South Plainfield Municipal Building is located on Plainfield Avenue in the center of the Borough. It is a one story brick and stone based building. The building is located on 2.80 acres and includes the library, access and exit driveways and 79,928 square feet of parking.

Within the 12,300 square feet building, there are 27 rooms with 9 separate departments including the entire police department.

The building was originally constructed in 1961. An additional 10 rooms, with a total of 2,400 square feet, were built and occupied during 1970 and 1971. The present structure is not considered adequate for present and future Borough needs.

### **Police Department**

The Borough of South Plainfield Police Department presently has a staff of approximately 77 persons, which includes 56 sworn officers, 1 psychological/social worker, 4 clerical staff, 6 full time and 9 part time 911 telecommunications operators, and 1 manager of information systems. The department maintains 30 vehicles - including patrol cars, detective cars, K-9 cars and traffic safety cars, 2 DARE vehicles, 2 undercover cars, and 1 EMS/light truck equipment vehicle. A majority of the vehicles are on lease options. The oldest vehicle is eight years old and has approximately 135,000 miles. The department expects to make at least three (3) replacements over the next two years.

The minimum standard is 1.5 police officers per 1,000 population. The Middlesex County Planning Board (MCPB) predicts the population of South Plainfield to be approximately 22,833 persons in the year 2000. Based on the above calculation, at least 34 officers would be required. The current Borough police department therefore exceeds the minimum required for the present population. However, by the year 2005, the Police Chief indicated that the force should be staffed with approximately 60 officers to accommodate the various surge in housing developments throughout the Borough as well as assign three of the four officers to traffic duty.

The average workweek for an officer is 40 hours. Shifts vary depending on the department. The patrol division works 12 hour shifts and a 24-hour period is covered by two squads.

The police department's facilities co-exist with the municipal building and offices and are considered inadequate by the Police Chief. The entire police department occupies approximately 3,000 square feet of the 12,300 square feet building. Current building problems include overcrowding, heating and cooling energy deficiencies, and a leaky roof. In addition, there is a lack of facilities for appropriate training and community meeting rooms. The department presently uses the courtroom. Furthermore, the juvenile division is located in the school administration building separate from the rest of the department.

It is recommended that a feasibility study be undertaken to determine how to best expand or replace the facility. The Police Chief has noted two possible locations to house a new department including Corner of New Market and Lakeview/Hamilton (old gas station) and Elm Street (old garage) for the Training/Classroom Facility.

### **Fire Protection**

The main firehouse is located at 123 Maple Avenue and more than adequately covers the North end of the Borough with very little difficulty. However, the old Southside firehouse, which was constructed around 1948, and located at Hamilton Boulevard and Evona Avenue, has been condemned since 1995 due to unsafe structural conditions. Therefore, the Borough requires a second functional firehouse on the Southside of town.

The fire department has recommended that a multi-functional building to be utilized by the Bureau of Fire Prevention, Rescue Squad, and the Office of Emergency Management on a full-time basis is constructed. The new facility would meet the needs of office and storage space that the Bureau of Fire Prevention and Office of Emergency Management have as well as provide storage for hazardous material containment supplies, etc. Three possible locations noted by the Fire Chief include 1) Hamilton Boulevard and Belmont Avenue; 2) Hamilton Boulevard and Hillside Avenue; and 3) Hamilton Boulevard and Evona Avenue (see attached map submitted by the fire department).

The fire department has three full-time employees and approximately 48 active volunteers. At present the Fire Department has no secretarial services provided to them. Fire department apparatus includes:

- four vehicles (1997 Ford Expedition, 93, 89, and 87 Caprice (old police cars))
- four Engines (1949 Mack Pumper, 91 and 85 E-One Pumper, and 81 Hahn Pumper)
- one Truck (1993 E-One 95 ft Platform)
- one Rescue Vehicle (1989 American Eagle Rescue)
- two Wagons (1979 and 1964 Dodge Power Wagon)
- one 1983 GMC Command Unit
- one 1986 Boat.

The last engine that the Borough purchased was in 1991. At present the engine has logged over 42,000 miles as well as 3,000 engine hours. The need for a new engine or the refurbishment of one of the existing engines must be considered. The Fire Department has also requested the need for a new Chief's car for the past three years. Furthermore, equipment specifically suited for ice and water rescue must be purchased. The 1986 Boat is not capable of being deployed rapidly and is not designed for ice rescue should body recovery in Spring Lake be necessary.

## **Library**

The South Plainfield free public library is located at 2484 Plainfield Avenue, adjacent to the Borough Hall. The building was constructed in 1964, with a partial renovation in 1997. The library presently has a staff of approximately 8 full-time, 3 part-time and 6 volunteer employees. The first priority of the library is to ensure that the maximum number of South Plainfield residents use and enjoy the facility. The library features current, high-demand, and high-interest materials in a variety of formats for persons of all ages. Emphasis is placed on stimulating young children's interest and appreciation for reading and learning. Three weekly children's story times are provided. In addition, children's craft and special entertainment programs are provided. The library also sponsors a summer reading program and adult programming on different topics.

The 1997 renovation updated the automation system to include improved computers for the staff and public in addition to the existing photocopiers, microfilm, and microfiche machines. The library is only approximately 6,630 square feet, which is too small for the size of the population it serves. The above programs and activities are limited due the lack of space for a meeting room.

## **Rescue Squad**

The Rescue Squad was established in 1944 and remains staffed strictly by volunteers. Presently, there are approximately 40 ± active, volunteer riding members providing 24-hour coverage in the Borough. The rescue squad is located at 2520 Plainfield Avenue adjacent to the municipal/library complex. The building was constructed in 1965 and continues to be financed through residential and business donations. The squad members, cadet corps, and ladies auxillary are the only three groups which use the facility for on-going training, monthly meetings, etc. Equipment includes three ambulances (owned by the Borough) and one rescue truck (squad owned).

## **Public Works**

The Department of Public Works is divided into the following departments: buildings and grounds, and road crews. The various divisions use vehicles and motorized equipment for collection, road repair, snow removal and other department responsibilities.

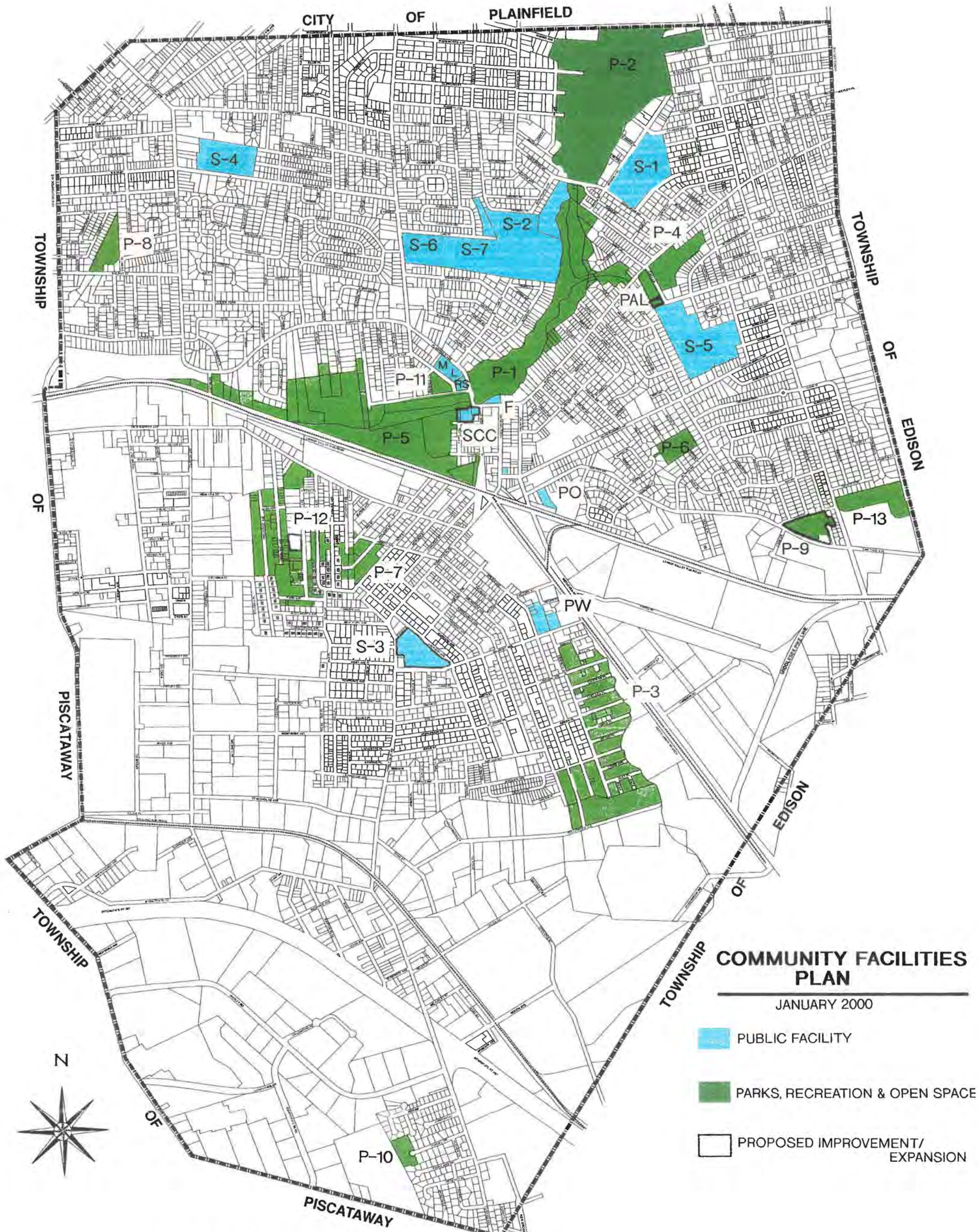
The Department of Public Works buildings and grounds crew has a variety of municipal responsibilities. Their crews maintain all Borough-owned buildings; both interior and exterior maintenance. The road crew repairs street signs, patches roads, provides snow removal, maintains/installs park equipment and sidewalks, and maintains storm sewers, inlets, sanitary sewers and four municipal pumping stations. They also run the Borough's bulk, leaf, and Christmas tree pickup programs. The mechanic crews repair and maintain all Borough vehicular equipment.

The department operates from a main office located at 405 Spicer Avenue. The current staff is comprised of 27 full-time employees, and one part-time secretary and ten part-time summer (June-September) employees for additional support. The building is 72,000 square feet and has

two 20' x 60' salt bins attached. An additional storage building of 5,040 square feet exists behind the public works building. The department's vehicles and equipment are housed on an adjacent lot. The facility was constructed around 1960. Necessary facility improvements include a new roof on the main garage (road department); a blacktop for the Borough yard; and a new butler building with heat for storage equipment. Also several dump trucks, tractors for grass, graders, and chippers are now listed on the equipment list as in poor condition.

### Summary

The Borough's public facilities and services have been analyzed as they relate to the Borough's present and future needs. It has been determined that fire protection facilities and the existing municipal building/police headquarters/library complex are inadequate. It is recommended that a study be undertaken concerning the expansion of the municipal complex and the recommendations of that study be implemented to correct the deficiencies currently existing at the municipal complex as well as implementation of a second fire station and separate facility for police headquarters.



**COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN**

JANUARY 2000

- PUBLIC FACILITY
- PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE
- PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT/ EXPANSION

**BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD**  
**MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

Prepared By:  
**THP, Inc.**  
 CONSULTING PLANNERS  
 40 Brunswick Woods Drive  
 East Brunswick, New Jersey 08816

REFERENCE: List of Community Facilities.

List of Community Facilities

	<u>Map No.</u>
<b>Parks</b>	
Spring Lake Park	P-1
Cedarbrook Park	P-2
South Plainfield Little League and Pop Warner Fields	P-3
Community Pool	P-4
Veterans Memorial Park	P-5
Cotton Street Park	P-6
Pitt Street Park	P-7
Walnut Street Park	P-8
Putnam Park	P-9
Shadyside Park	P-10
Willow Street Park	P-11
Highland Avenue Woods Environmental Education Reserve	P-12
Krame Open Space	P-13
<b>Schools</b>	
John E. Riley School	S-1
Grant School	S-2
Roosevelt School	S-3
Franklin	S-4
John F. Kennedy	S-5
South Plainfield Middle School	S-6
South Plainfield High School	S-7
<b>Other Public Facilities</b>	
Library	L
Rescue Squad	RS
Municipal Building	M
U.S. Post Office	PO
Proposed Senior Citizen Center	SCC
Fire Department	F
Public Works	PW
PAL Building	PAL



## RECYCLING PLAN

One of the stated purposes of the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) is “to promote the maximum practicable recovery and recycling of recyclable materials from municipal solid waste through the use of planning practices designed to incorporate the State Recycling Plan goals and to compliment (sic) municipal recycling programs.” (C.40:55D-2.o) Article 3 of the MLUL states that a municipality’s master plan may include:

*A recycling plan element which incorporates the State Recycling Plan goals, including provisions for the collection, disposition and recycling of recyclable materials designated in the municipal recycling ordinance, and for the collection, disposition and recycling of recyclable materials within any development proposal for the construction of 50 or more units of single-family residential housing or 25 or more units of multi-family residential housing and any commercial or industrial development proposal for the utilization of 1,000 square feet or more of land. (40:55D-28b(12))*

The Borough of South Plainfield has implemented a recycling plan that is consistent with the recycling goals of both the State of New Jersey and Middlesex County. This technical summary reviews the basic recycling objectives of the state, county, and Borough.

### State Recycling Plan

According to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), “the ‘State Recycling Plan’ can best be described as the sum of the policies on recycling as contained in the Solid Waste Management Act, NJSA 13:1E-1 et seq, and specifically that portion of the SWMA entitled “The New Jersey Statewide Mandatory Source Separation and Recycling Act”, NJSA 13:1E-99.11 et seq.”<sup>2</sup> (See Appendix A for specific objectives as outlined under NJSA 13:1E-99.13 of the Act.)

The Mandatory Recycling Act became law on April 20, 1987. It requires that each county’s Solid Waste Management Plan be amended to include a formally adopted Recycling Plan.

Among the recycling goals outlined in the Act are the following municipal and countywide “recovery targets”:

*The recycling of at least 15% of the total municipal solid waste stream by December 31, 1989;*

*The recycling of at least 25% of the total municipal solid waste stream by December 31, 1990; and*

*The recycling of at least 50% of the total municipal solid waste stream, including yard waste and vegetative waste, by December 31, 1995.*

*The recycling of at least 60% of the County’s total solid waste stream by December 31, 1995.*

<sup>2</sup> Guy Watson, via email, April 7, 1999

## Middlesex County Recycling Plan

The Middlesex County Recycling Plan, as revised in the Spring of 1994, was approved by the Board of Chosen Freeholders in June of 1994 and certified by the NJDEP on October 3, 1994. Section 4 of this Plan summarizes the County's "Recycling Goals":

*In order to assure that Middlesex County complies with the requirements of the Recycling Act, the County and each municipality in the County should have achieved the following rates of recycling:*

- *At least 60% of the current year's total solid waste stream by December 31, 1995*
- *At least 50% of the current year's municipal waste stream (Types 10 & 23) by December 31, 1995. (Note: Type 10 is household waste, type 23 is vegetative waste.)*

Middlesex County's recycling program is managed by the Middlesex County Improvement Authority (MCIA), which hires a private contractor for residential curbside pickup. Recyclables are taken to a main site for sorting and marketing. The economies of scale resulting from combined municipal collections have reduced the cost of recycling at the municipal level.

### Borough of South Plainfield

The Borough of South Plainfield joined the County program on May 30, 1991, with the enactment of Ordinance No. 1240, which was later amended in its entirety on May 25, 1995, by Ordinance No. 1399. According to County officials, South Plainfield is currently in compliance with State and County objectives.<sup>3</sup> The Borough recycled 62.7% of all waste and recyclables for the last reporting year of 1996.

The recycling program is administered by the Recycling Commission, under the direction of its Coordinator, Alice Tempel. The residents of South Plainfield are required to recycle "at the point of generation" the following items: newspaper, aluminum cans, glass containers, corrugated cardboard from residential and commercial sources, steel cans, plastic containers, paper, textiles, leaves, motor oil and brush and "such other recyclable materials to be added or deleted as designated recyclables by the County of Middlesex pursuant to a duly adopted amendment to the County Plan approved by the DEP."

MCIA-collected recyclables are collected on a bi-weekly basis for all single family or duplex residential locations and all multi-family dwellings with four (4) or fewer units. All multi-family dwellings with five (5) or more units, public schools, public buildings, hospitals and other institutions are required to deposit the MCIA-collected recyclables in on-site containers to be provided by the contractor. The regulations adopted by South Plainfield for Commercial, Industrial and Institutional Requirements follow the County guidelines.

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<sup>3</sup> Fred Stanger, Department of Planning/Division of Solid Waste Management

In addition to Middlesex County's curbside collection program, South Plainfield offers its residents a Recycling Drop-off Center on Kenneth Avenue. All materials collected curbside are accepted at the drop-off, and used motor oil, metal scrap and appliances are also accepted. South Plainfield is responsible for motor oil recycling, white goods (refrigerators, dryers, etc.) and textiles, and the Borough does its own marketing for these items. There is also the Middlesex County Paint Drop Program and the Middlesex County Tire Recycling Program (at the Metuchen Recycling Center), and South Plainfield residents may bring all type of household batteries to the South Plainfield Recycling Center.

The Borough of South Plainfield maintains a Recycling Hotline<sup>4</sup> and distributes a brochure outlining recycling services, locations and hours of operation, and descriptions of the types of recyclables accepted. Additional information can be found online at [www.southplainfieldnj.com/sp5d.htm](http://www.southplainfieldnj.com/sp5d.htm).

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<sup>4</sup> (908) 226-7620

## THE LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan illustrates the proposed location and extent of land to be developed for residential, commercial, industrial, public and other uses. The Land Use Plan provides the basis upon which the Borough can make rational decisions regarding zoning, land subdivision and other implementation regulations.

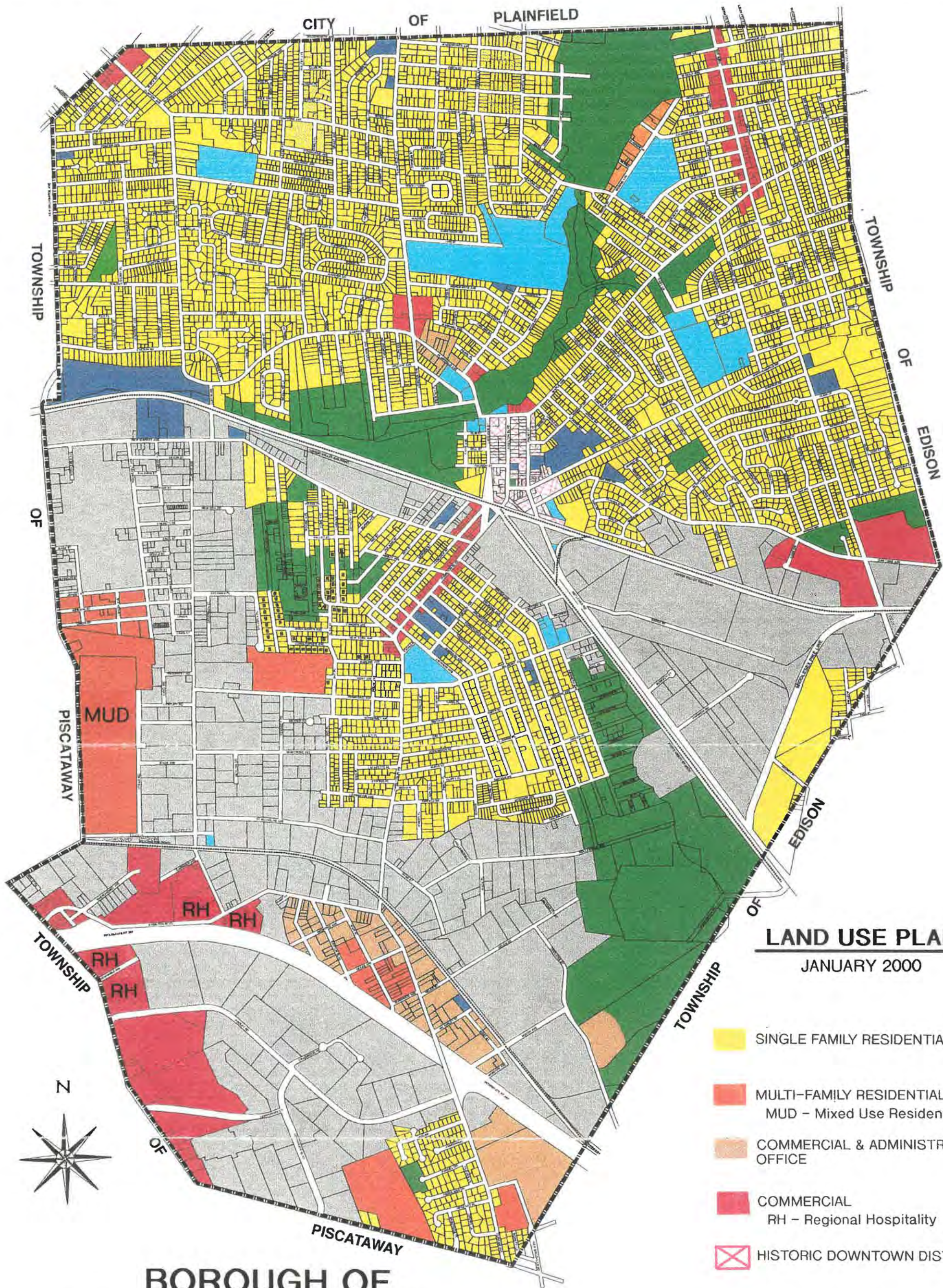
The Borough's year 2000 Land Use Plan revision continues the various land use categories contained in the prior Master Plans and includes additional categories recognizing the court approval of the Fair Share Housing Plan in 1997, the continued growth and change of regional employment within the Interstate 287 corridor, the Borough's desire to strengthen the Historic Downtown Retail district, and the revised state environmental regulations relative to wetland legislation.

The Land Use Plan Element is intended to address the stated goals and objectives of the Master Plan as set forth at the beginning of this document and has been developed after analysis of the previous elements as presented. The plan recognizes the existing land use patterns within the Borough with single family residential development predominantly located within the central and northern portions of the Borough and multi-family residential, commercial retail, office and industrial development located primarily within the central and southern portions of the Borough.

Revisions to the year 2000 Land Use Plan include the various amendments which occurred during the superior court review of the Borough's Fair Share Housing Plan. These revisions include designation of the seven acre site known as the Metuchen Diocese Tract on Tompkins Avenue as single family residential, designation of the recently completed shopping center at the intersection of Park Avenue and Oak Tree Avenue as commercial and open space lands, inclusion of the "Elderlodge" property within the newly created "Historic Downtown District," recognition of the multi family development presently under construction along Hamilton Boulevard and the designation of the Universal Avenue tract to single family residential.

The year 2000 Land Use Plan includes the provision for hotels within the Borough's borders for the first time by designating five commercial tracts as Regional Hospitality. Three existing hotel facilities are located within these areas. The continued growth of regional employment and the need for hotel facilities to serve this additional growth have been clearly demonstrated through numerous applications before the Borough. Two to three additional hotel facilities are envisioned within the designated RH districts, all located within close proximity to the Stelton Road/Interstate 287 interchange.

The Land Use Plan revision includes a major change for the land use designations of those tracts located between Interstate 287 and Hamilton Boulevard. Those lands formerly designated for commercial retail development and zoned OBC-3 are now designated for office development in accordance with the Borough's existing OP-A-1 zoning designation. This revision recognizes the need to limit commercial retail development not located within the Historic Downtown District, the existence of the regional shopping areas already located to the south and west within the



**LAND USE PLAN**  
JANUARY 2000

- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL  
MUD - Mixed Use Residential
- COMMERCIAL & ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
- COMMERCIAL  
RH - Regional Hospitality
- HISTORIC DOWNTOWN DISTRICT
- INDUSTRIAL
- SEMI-PUBLIC
- PUBLIC
- PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

**BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD**  
MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

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Borough and neighboring Piscataway Township, and the goal of improved aesthetics and traffic flow within this gateway area.

Additional land use amendments incorporated within the plan include the designation of large wetland areas as open space in the eastern section of the Borough adjacent to Edison Township and smaller undeveloped parcels throughout the Borough. Additionally, an industrially designated parcel occupied by Home Depot has been designated for retail commercial use.

Finally, the Historic Downtown District has been established and incorporates those parcels currently zoned MF-1, R-7.5, OBC-2 and M-3. The proposed zoning for the HDD will incorporate a mix of commercial and residential uses, a relaxation of some parking requirements for retail uses and the incorporation of design standards encouraging uniformity, additional landscaping and other aesthetic improvements.

### **Relationship to Other Area Master Plans**

The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (NJSA 40:55D-28(d)) requires the inclusion of a policy statement indicating the relationship of the proposed development of the borough as set forth in the Master Plan to (1) the master plans of contiguous municipalities, (2) the County Master Plan, (3) the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan, and (4) the district solid waste management plan.

### **Municipal Master Plans**

Piscataway Township lies adjacent to the western and southern borders of the Borough. The majority of contiguous lands are developed with a mixture of residential, light industrial and regional commercial uses. No major land use conflicts are evident along the municipalities common borders.

Edison Township lies adjacent to the Borough's eastern border. The Edison Township Master Plan and the Borough's Master Plan are now consistent in all respects with the inclusion of the open space designation in the vicinity of Coolidge Street and Metuchen Road.

The City of Plainfield is located adjacent to the Borough's northern border. The land in this area is completely developed with the exception of parklands in both municipalities. The land use plans of both municipalities are compatible.

### **Middlesex County**

The Borough Land Use Plan Revision is compatible with the Middlesex County Master Plan and consistent with the policy objectives, principles and goals set forth in the county plan.

### **The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan**

The Borough of South Plainfield has participated in the cross acceptance process advanced by the New Jersey State Planning Commission and facilitated through the Middlesex County Planning Board. This process has been used to coordinate the land use policies and objectives among the municipalities and the state as a whole. The Planning Area and Environmentally Critical area designations of the New Jersey Development and Redevelopment Plan are consistent with the policies and objectives of the Borough's Master Plan.

### **County Solid Waste Management Plan**

The Borough of South Plainfield enacted a mandatory recycling ordinance in 1991 which was last amended in May of 1995. As noted in the Recycling Plan Element, the comprehensive recycling program is consistent with state objectives and the Middlesex County Solid Waste Program.