

2.0 Land Use

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2.1 Introduction

Every Element of the *Master Plan* relates back to the way we decide to invest in our community's future. The decision in what type of investment to make can serve many purposes such as the investment in the preservation of land to retain an irreplaceable and valuable natural system, the reinvestment in existing buildings and infrastructure that support economic development efforts, or the investment in new capital projects that spur additional economic and social benefits. Land use results from a deliberative system of tangible and intangible policy choices, done collectively and individually, influenced by public, private, and nonprofit sector investments. This *Master Plan* places many of the complicated, interdependent relationships among the various *Plan* Elements into a contextual framework to assist decision makers in determining a preferred land use preservation and/or development strategy.

Municipalities retain much of the land use decision-making ability as prescribed by New Jersey's Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL). However, there are a number of other public policy and planning efforts that considerably influence land use outcomes. This *Master Plan* Element reviews the status of land use in Monmouth County as well as describes those initiatives that have a major influence on land use outcomes. Fortunately, Monmouth County has a clear and solid foundation in existing land use policy stemming from many detailed prior studies and regional plans.

The Land Use Element works in concert with other *Master Plan* Elements to:

- Determine the appropriate location for certain types of land use resulting in anticipated outcomes

- Evaluate the alignment of public policy and investment strategies resulting in preferred land use outcomes
- Identify where conflicts may occur between growth and preservation policy at various levels of government while acknowledging that these policies sometimes must work in tandem towards a beneficial outcome
- Make municipalities aware of land use policy alignments and potential conflicts so they may better determine an appropriate course of action and investment at the local level

2.2 Historic Land Use Influences

Land use today in Monmouth County is the culmination of centuries' worth of historic factors, each building upon and in relation to one other. [Figure 2.1: Monmouth County Historic Timeline](#) displays a graphic timeline starting from 9,500 B.C. continuing to *Monmouth County Master Plan* adoption in 2016. The first primary determinant in contemporary land use was the original Native American trails along ridgelines throughout the area. These trails continue to influence us today as they have been incorporated into the fundamental alignment of our local roadway network. Other early factors included soil conditions that were the primary determinant in the location of European settler farmsteads and forest clearing activities necessary for crop production.

The establishment of mills along stream corridors first facilitated Colonial agrarian commerce and then early American enterprise. Natural resource-based industries like iron ore and marl were influential in the area but short lived, ceding to other regional and national economic demands. Agrarian commerce, the primary land use from the Colonial Era well into the 20th century, led to the establishment of business centers and communities in what are today Freehold Borough, Farmingdale, Englishtown, and Allentown ([Figure 2.2: Historic Map of Monmouth, 18th Century](#)).



Figure 2.1: Monmouth County Historic Timeline

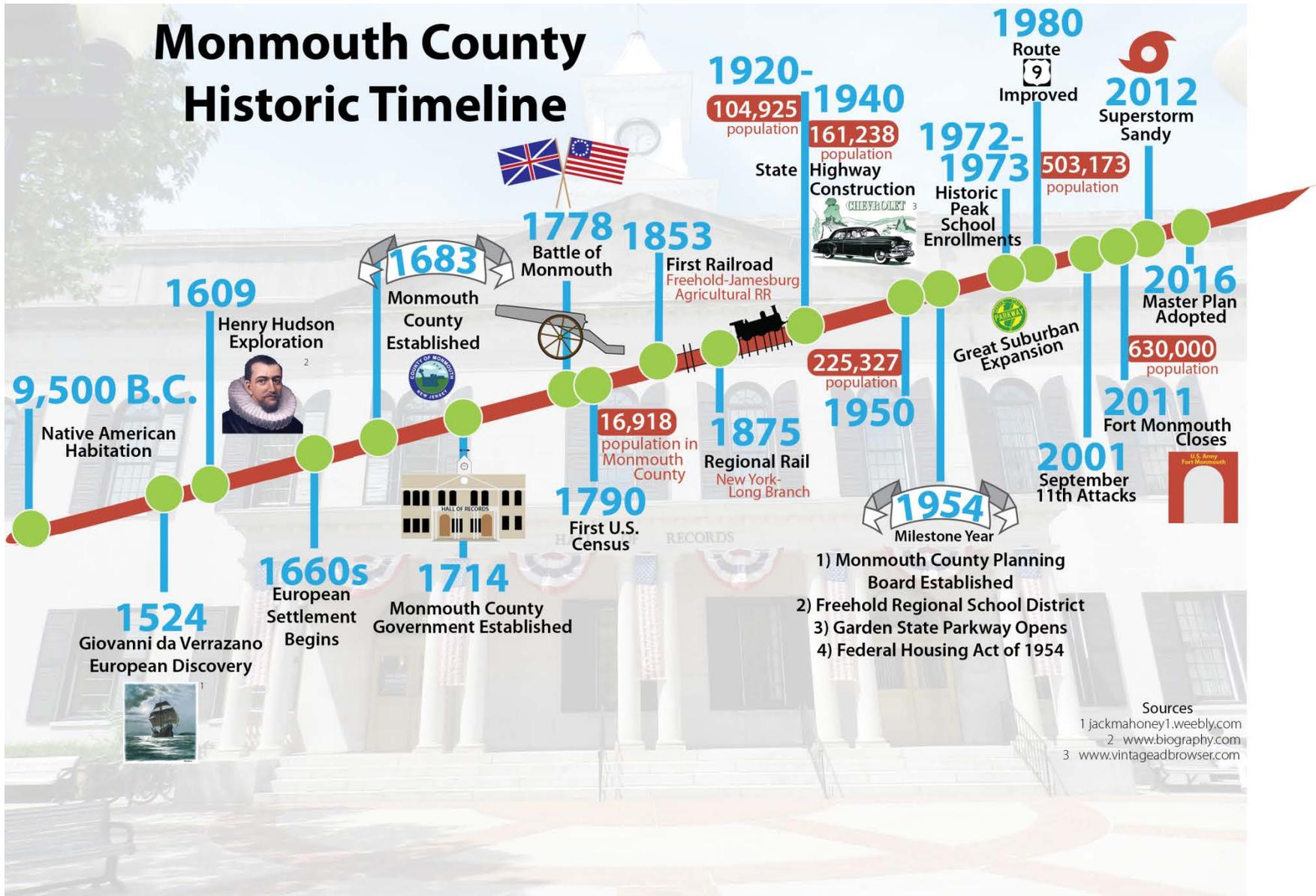
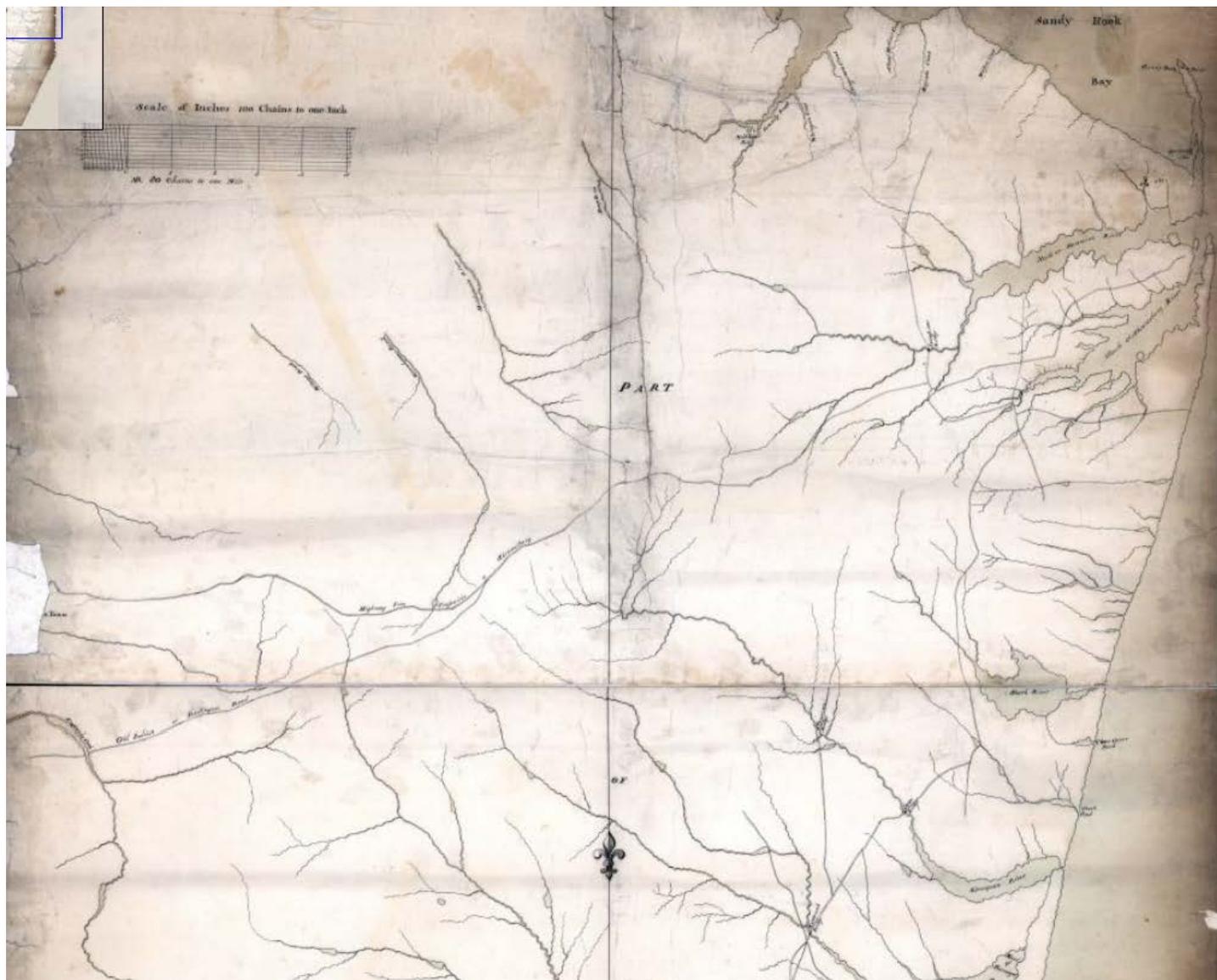


Figure 2.2: Historic Map of Monmouth, 18th Century



Construction of the first railroad in the county, the Freehold and Jamesburg Agricultural Railroad, in 1853 provided these centers access to more distant markets for locally produced goods. Prior to the completion of a railroad network, steamships were the predominant method of transport between coastal communities such as Highlands, Atlantic Highlands, Keansburg, Keyport, Red Bank, and Long Branch to and from New York City. Land speculation along the coast resulted in major railroad investment in the 1870s and 1880s that brought a new “tourism” economy to seaside locations, providing the foundation of our Victorian Era beach towns and resorts ([Figure 2.3: Driving Road Chart of Monmouth County, 1889](#)).

Beginning in the early 20th century, the automobile “fad” quickly morphed into to an automobile culture. With it came the creation of a state highway program intended to provide more convenient and reliable means of travel throughout the state such as State Route 4 (now State Route 35) and State Route 7 (now State Route 33). By the early to mid-20th century, roads began to play a more significant role than railroads in establishing land use patterns as more remote locations in the county became accessible for development and commuting became an ever more viable and enviable alternative to urban living ([Figure 2.4: Road Map of Monmouth County, 1929](#)). Commercial uses along highways such as Route 35 and Route 36 quickly responded to the needs and expectations of a seasonal tourist trade. With the advent of more convenient roadway access, many seasonal residents along the Bayshore began to winterize their vacation bungalows converting them into year-round residences.

A majority of the land in the county was developed after WWII, mostly for residential purposes interspersed with pockets of commercial development along coastal state highways. The opening of the Garden State Parkway (GSP) in the 1950s accelerated the post-war suburban housing boom and new opportunities along the Route 9 corridor in the

1960s lead to further investment in the predominate suburban land use patterns we experience today. Two development corridors evolved, one east of the Parkway with suburban infill occurring between GSP and older, established rail line coastal towns and the second along Route 9. Not until the beginning of the 21st century had the suburban development pattern ebbed; challenging us to consider alternative land use strategies as we move toward the horizon of the mid-21st century.

2.3 Historic Land Use Analysis

As stated in the first comprehensive land use study for Monmouth County, [Study of Land Use and Physical Characteristics \(1967\)](#), a land use survey is one of the most important basic elements in any comprehensive plan. This report was the precursor to the first county master plan, the [Monmouth County General Development Plan 1969-1985 \(1969\)](#). This comprehensive plan includes [Figure 2.5: Monmouth County General Development Plan Map, 1969](#). According to the 1967 land use study ([Figure 2.6: General Land Use Map, 1966](#)), only 31.9% of available land (97,416 acres) had been utilized (built) while 68.1% remained “non-urbanized” meaning either wooded, vacant, or being used for agricultural purposes. Of the remaining 207,800 acres of “non-urbanized” land, approximately 88,000 acres were considered at that time to have environmental constraints such as poor drainage or topographic limitations that limited further development. Essentially, 120,000 acres or almost 40% of all the land in the county was still considered to have “no impediments to urban development.”

Most of the developed land at this time was located in the eastern reaches of the county, with urbanized and suburbanized concentrations found along the coast and Raritan Bayshore. By the mid-1960s, single-family residential developments dominated the landscape with pockets of multi-family and commercial areas located in Red Bank, Long Branch, and Asbury Park.



Figure 2.3: Driving Road Chart of Monmouth County, 1889

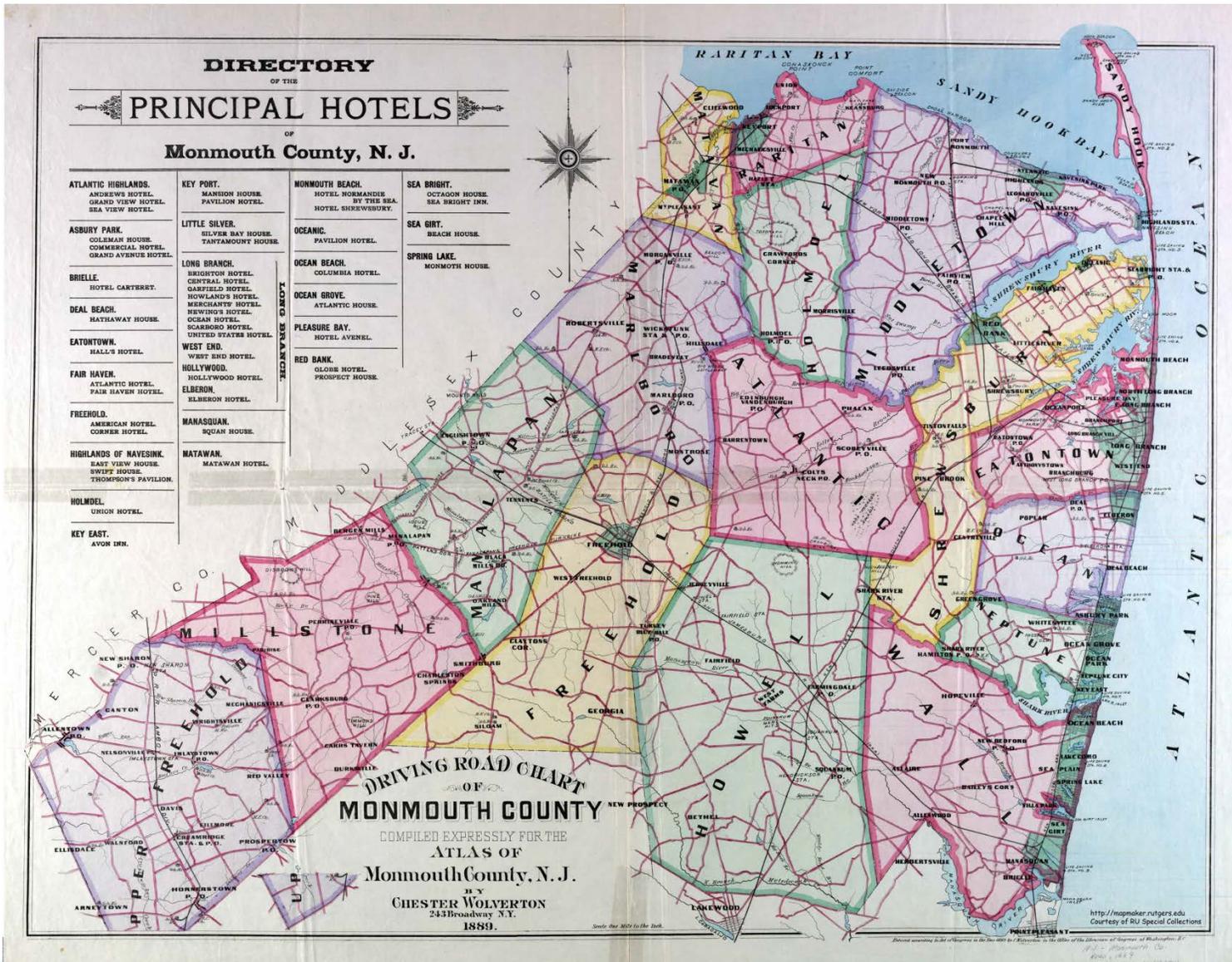


Figure 2.5: Monmouth County General Development Plan Map, 1969

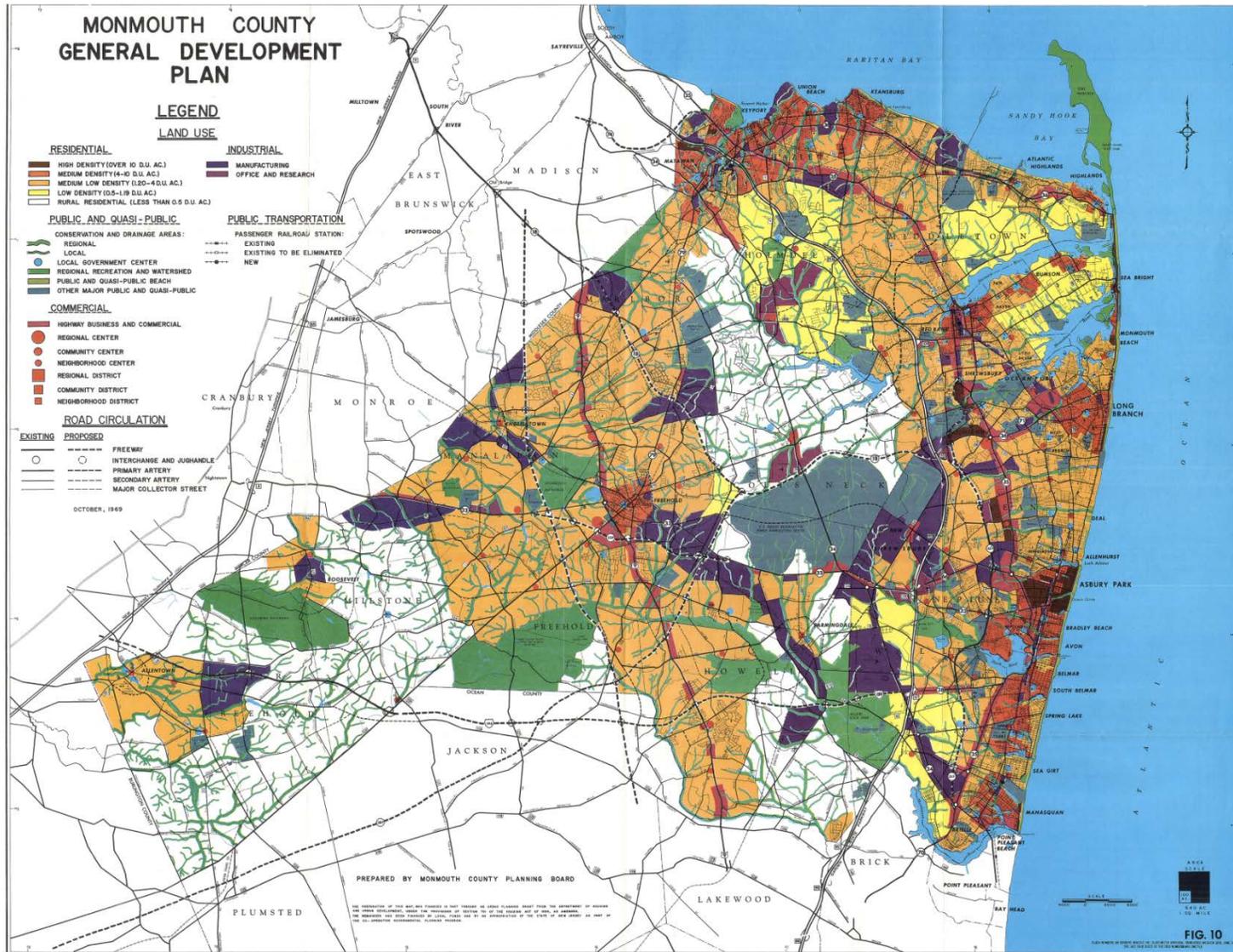
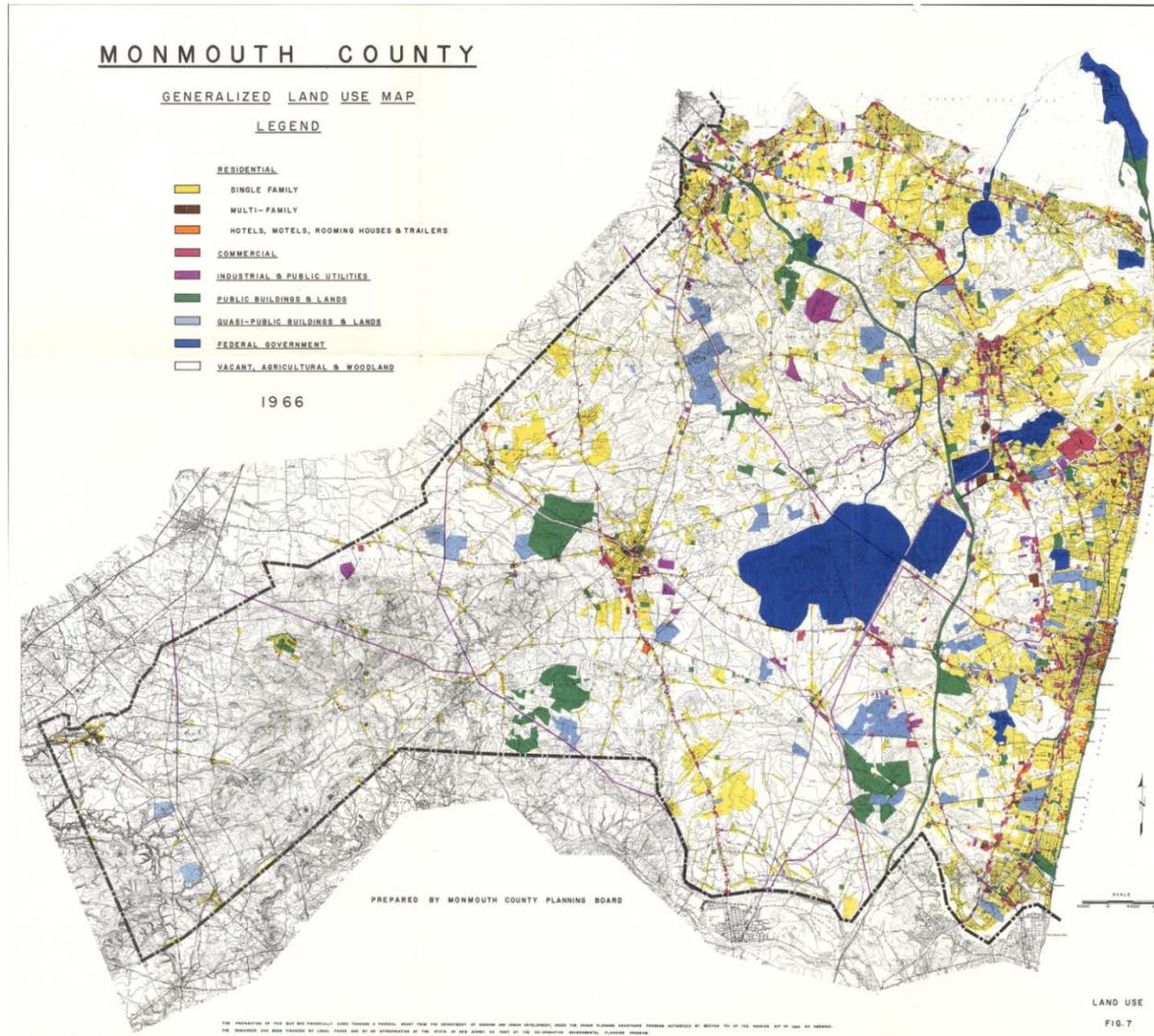


Figure 2.6: General Land Use Map, 1966



The 1967 land use study shows the beginning of development taking place along the Route 9 corridor, the largest concentration being in and around historic Freehold Borough with isolated residential developments shown in Freehold, Howell, Manalapan, and Marlboro Townships. There was virtually no new development west of Route 9, south of the Freehold and Jamesburg Agricultural Railroad, which ceased passenger service in 1960. The major land use concern at that time was how commercial development was being emphasized along major highway corridors, and how “strip developments” over time would result in lessening the carrying capacity of the highways, creating “commercial main streets with serious problems of traffic congestion and safety resulting.”

According to the [Monmouth County Growth Management Guide \(1982\)](#), developed land had grown from 97,416 acres, representing 31.9% of all land in the county in 1966, to 132,587 acres (43.5%) in 1974 and 156,549 acres (51.3%) of all land by 1980. Most of the high development activity during this time occurred in the western reaches of Monmouth County specifically in Howell, Marlboro, and Manalapan Townships proximate to Route 9. Concurrently, public open space acquisition began being emphasized as a way to protect environmental features, natural landscapes, and recreational lands necessary to accommodate a growing population. In 1965, only 5,568 acres, less than 2% of all county lands (excluding state lands) were preserved as public open space. By 1970, that number almost doubled to 10,816 acres (3.5%). A decade later, 22,852 acres were accounted for in public open space, representing 7.5% of all county land.

Suburban land use patterns along Route 9 and east of the GSP were well established by this time and began to be formalized into larger, regional land use approaches. The [Monmouth County Growth Management Guide Map, 1982 \(Figure 2.7\)](#), distinguished two general land use designations in the county, both with accompanying subcategories and specific policies, “Growth Areas” and “Limited Growth Areas.” The

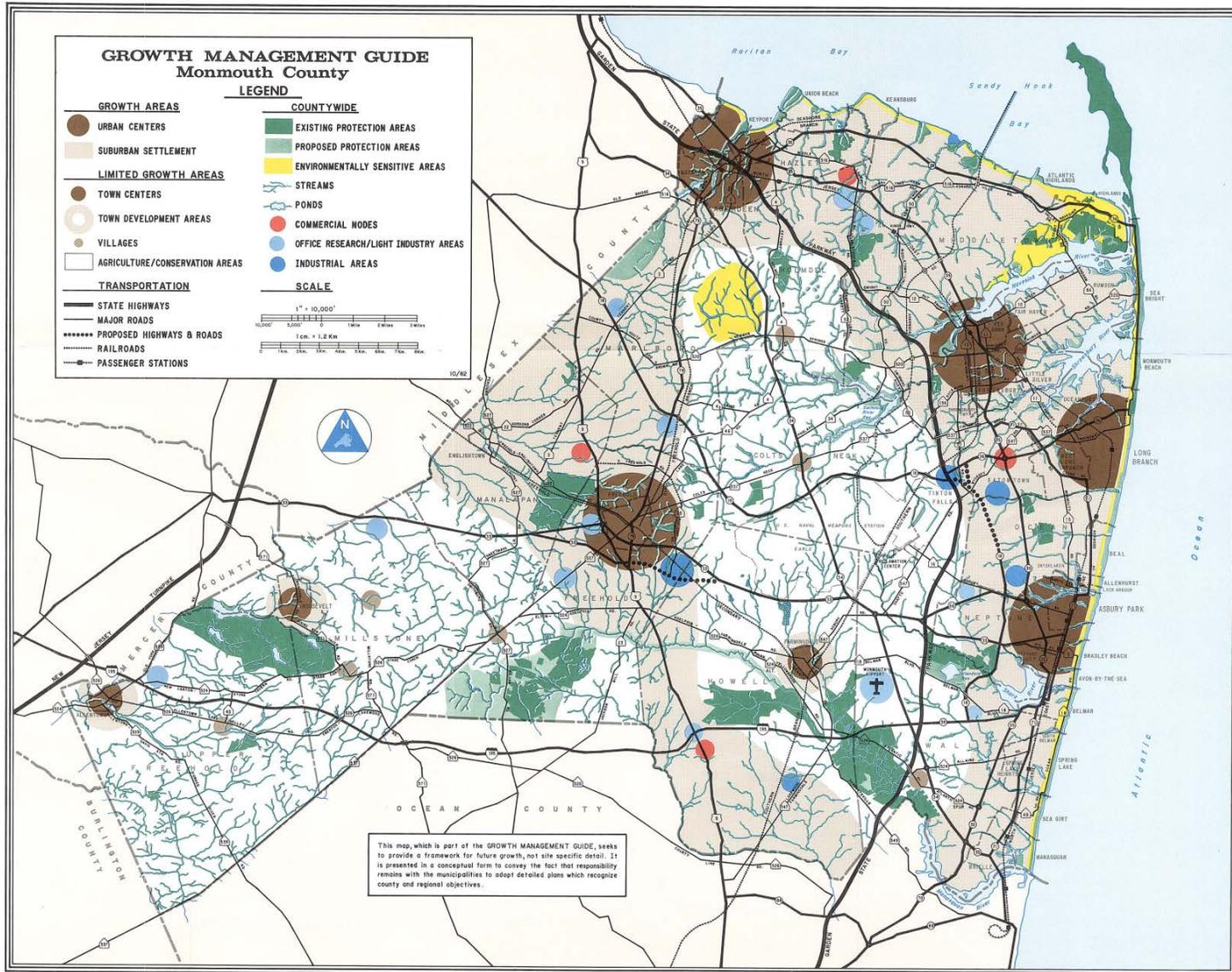
county’s “Growth Areas” represented two “Growth Corridors”, one along the coast and another along Route 9 that provided for “urban services” such as public water, public sewerage systems, transit, shopping facilities, fire and police protection, schools, employment opportunities, and road access. “Urban Centers” within “Growth Areas” were given a redevelopment and rehabilitation focus, encouraging manufacturing and wholesaling employment opportunities as well as the siting of new office facilities while suburban settlements were primarily supportive of lower density (maximum four units/net acre), single-family residential units with limited multi-family options.

The remainder of the county was located in one of two “Limited Growth Areas.” The “Central Limited Growth Area”, between the “Coastal and Central Growth Corridors”, included those areas tributary to the Swimming River Reservoir and the proposed Manasquan River Reservoir system including significant areas with prime agricultural soils. The “Western Limited Growth Area”, known today as the Panhandle, was so designated because of the presence of prime agricultural soils and a viable agricultural community. The 1982 *Monmouth County Growth Management Guide* discouraged investment in public facilities and sewer service in “Limited Growth Areas.” Rather, it supported policies such as land acquisition and cluster development options in order to retain agricultural soils and environmentally sensitive features. Town centers, town development areas, and agricultural conservation areas were also given their own policy objectives.

In general, this regional framework for land use policy remained in place for the next three decades, reinforced through county and local planning efforts as well as [The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan \(SDRP\)](#) including several *State Plan* updates through the Cross-Acceptance process. Suburban encroachment continued into undeveloped areas along the “Growth Area Corridors” while most open space acquisitions, farmland preservation, and lower density residential zoning efforts were focused in the



Figure 2.7: Monmouth County Growth Management Guide Map, 1982



Agricultural/Conservation sublocations within the “Limited Growth Area.” By 1997, it was estimated that the county’s supply of undeveloped land was as little as 51,000 acres, or 17% of the county land area (Monmouth County Open Space Plan Amendment, 1998). The [Monmouth County Open Space Plan](#) and [Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan](#) helped to advance land preservation efforts during this highly competitive time of suburban land consumption.

Prime developable land was becoming scarce in growth areas while development in the remaining rural areas was curtailed due to lower density residential zoning, environmental constraints, and limited infrastructure. It was during this period that a more serious interest in redevelopment began to emerge. The 1990s saw the beginning of downtown and urban revitalization taking hold first in places like Red Bank, Freehold Borough, Ocean Grove (Neptune Township) and Atlantic Highlands. Efforts to redevelop Asbury Park and Long Branch gained traction with Smart Growth investment and initiatives from state agencies. By the beginning of the 21st century, older established suburban town were exploring their revitalization and redevelopment opportunities including Aberdeen, Matawan, Keyport, Keansburg, Neptune Township, and Neptune City. Suburban residential development in western Monmouth reached its zenith in the middle of the first decade while at the same time, a substantial number of new construction units in the county could also be attributed to redevelopment in urban locations. Large-scale sites such as Fort Monmouth (Eatontown, Oceanport, Tinton Falls), Bell Works formerly Alcatel-Lucent (Holmdel), Pier Village (Long Branch), and Fort Hancock (Sandy Hook) remain a relevant focus of redevelopment today second only to the enormous rebuilding effort still currently underway in the wake of Superstorm Sandy.

2.4 Current Land Use

Before further discussion, there needs to be a clarification between the terms “land use” and “land cover” as they are often mistakenly

interchanged with one another. Land cover is the physical composition of the landscape. Natural systems are typically identified by terms such as forested, fields, grasslands, wetlands (forested wetlands), water, barren, desert, beach, etc. The built environment is often given a general characterization such as “built” or “urban.” Categorizing all developed land as “urban” can be problematic as the term itself inherently implies an associative high intensity of use or impervious coverage that may not necessarily exist on the ground. This terminology may lead to the misrepresentation of data and misinterpretation of analytical results. Land use, on the other hand, is how people utilize land, often through manipulation of the natural environment. Uses are identified first in general terms such as urban, wetland, agriculture, forest, water, and barren. From there, more specific classifications are derived within each land use category such as residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, forestland, cropland, etc. Subcategorization goes even further to include density and intensity of land use.

2.4.1 New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Land Use/Land Cover (LU/LC)

According to the NJDEP, the initial geographic information system (GIS) LU/LC layer was based on aerial photography captured in the spring of 1986. Subsequent LU/LC data were extrapolated from photos taken in 1995, 2002, and 2007 with the most current in 2012. For each of these years data layers were produced through the visual interpretation of color infrared photography. Photo interpreters examine each image, and based on their knowledge of photo signatures, classify the image into various LU/LC categories. The classifications are converted into a LU/LC GIS digital file. All four LU/LC data sets contain important data used in a wide variety of environmental analyses (NJDEP website, 2014). Details on NJDEP’s LU/LC classification system can be found on the NJDEP GIS Bureau’s [NJ-GeoWeb](#).

Freshwater wetlands were first mapped under the New Jersey Freshwater Wetlands Mapping Program and incorporated into the



LU/LC datasets. The wetlands delineations in these data are for screening purposes. The Land Use Regulatory Program (LURP) of the NJDEP determines the extent and final determination of wetlands on a case-by-case basis (NJDEP website, 2014).

A comparison of land use data between 1986 and 2012, shown in Figure 2.8, indicates that the largest change can be attributed to residential uses (+6.7%) which accounts for 32.5% of all land use in the county.

Residential growth during this period occurred mostly at the expense of Agriculture (-6.4%), which declined from 17.3% in 1986 to 10.09% in 2012. It is interesting to note that wetlands (20.8%) and Upland Vegetation (16.6%) remain the second and third largest land use categories in 2012. Data collection methods often change through time so there is not always an exact match between categories. This accounts for some of the data anomalies seen in the table.

The [Land Use Map Series 1986, 1995/97, 2002, 2007 \(Figure 2.9\)](#) and the [Land Use Map, 2012 \(Figure 2.10\)](#), offer a visual display of land use by category for each data year. [Figure 2.11: Land Use Change Map \(1986-2012\)](#) provides a geographical representation of the physical change in land use as presented in Figure 2.8: Land Use Table, 1986-2012. This map confirms that most of the change in land use can be attributed to residential development that occurred in the western reaches of Monmouth County, particularly in the Panhandle and along the Route 9 corridor.

Although NJDEP LU/LC data provides provocative insight into the changing landscape through time, it cannot be used to discern which lands have been permanently preserved (parks, open space, conservation areas, and preserved farm lands) or which lands are no longer subject to either further development (deed restricted) or further development intensity. According to the Monmouth County Park System and the Farmland Preservation Program, the amount of

county preserved farmland and open space, exclusive of local, state, and federal lands, increased from approximately 5,400 acres in 1986 to approximately 32,500 acres in 2014.

LU/LC data is particularly useful in helping quantify change and impact to natural systems including the encroachment of incompatible, adjacent uses. Data from other sources such as zoning and parcel data must be used in combination with NJDEP LU/LC data in order to determine the future development potential of remaining land in the county. Details on NJDEP's LU/LC classification system can be found on the NJDEP GIS Bureau's [NJ-GeoWeb](#).

2.4.2 Parcel and Tax Data

Another way to view land use is through tax assessment data. Each parcel of land is assessed for tax purposes and assigned a real property tax code based on its use. Unlike LU/LC data, property data does not provide information on various environmental features nor does it differentiate between the various built and natural features on a particular site. It is, however, useful in identifying the location of existing uses as well as the location of remaining vacant parcels available for future development and the amount of tax revenue generated by a particular site or use on a property. It is also timelier than LU/LC because tax assessment information is updated annually and can show incremental year-to-year land use changes. Planners often use parcel and tax data to determine appropriate zoning, land use suitability as well as compatibility and potential conflicts with adjacent land uses.

Unlike municipal zoning categories that are often unique at the local level, parcel and tax data is categorized the same throughout the state allowing for easy and straightforward interpretation at either the local or regional level. Figure 2.12: Land Use by Tax Classification Table, 2015, shows total acreage by land use type as identified by the tax parcel map while [Figure 2.13: Land Use by Tax Classification Map, 2015](#), illustrates



Figure 2.8: Land Use Table, 1986-2012

Year	1986		1995/97		2002		2007		2012		Change 1986 - 2012	Change 1986 - 2012
Map Category	Acres	Percent Change										
Residential	78,332.3	25.78	85,343.8	27.5	94,400.1	30.4	99,725.0	32.1	101,019.5	32.5	22,687.2	6.7
Commercial and Services	9,732.8	3.20	10,050.8	3.2	11,094.0	3.6	12,020.7	3.9	12,393.3	4.0	2,660.5	0.8
Military	2,570.2	0.85	1,825.7	0.6	2,179.0	0.7	2,073.7	0.7	1,931.6	0.6	-638.6	-0.2
Former Military	0.0	0.00	33.4	0.0	32.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	140.7	0.0	140.7	0.0
Transportation, Communication, and Utilities	4,759.3	1.57	4,379.4	1.4	6,811.5	2.2	7,636.2	2.5	7,796.7	2.5	3,037.4	0.9
Mixed Urban or Built-Up Land	0.0	0.00	32.8	0.0	43.5	0.0	56.2	0.0	55.5	0.0	55.5	0.0
Other Urban or Built-Up Land	6,297.2	2.07	10,151.8	3.3	8,086.1	2.6	9,196.1	3.0	8,777.3	2.8	2,480.1	0.8
Recreational Land	7,070.0	2.33	7,808.3	2.5	9,492.0	3.1	10,239.2	3.3	10,544.7	3.4	3,474.7	1.1
Agriculture	52,566.0	17.30	45,838.2	14.7	38,444.6	12.4	34,682.0	11.2	33,833.3	10.9	-18,732.7	-6.4
Upland Vegetation	57,443.0	18.91	56,833.6	18.3	53,980.2	17.4	51,710.1	16.6	51,660.3	16.6	-5,782.7	-2.3
Water *	3,528.2	1.16	11,278.2	3.6	11,067.9	3.6	11,937.0	3.8	11,901.1	3.8	8,372.9	2.7
Wetlands **	73,359.9	24.14	70,039.0	22.5	66,355.4	21.3	64,992.5	20.9	64,582.8	20.8	-8,777.2	-3.4
Barren	4,528.1	1.49	4,497.4	1.4	6,076.4	2.0	3,878.3	1.2	3,464.5	1.1	-1,063.6	-0.4
Total	303,835.5	100.00	310,840.6	100.0	310,840.6	100.0	310,840.6	100.0	310,840.6	100.0		

Notes: *The Shrewsbury, Navesink, and Shark Rivers were not mapped in 1986.
 ** Any category with a Class I designation as Wetlands is included in this category.



Figure 2.9: Land Use Map Series, 1986, 1995/97, 2002, 2007

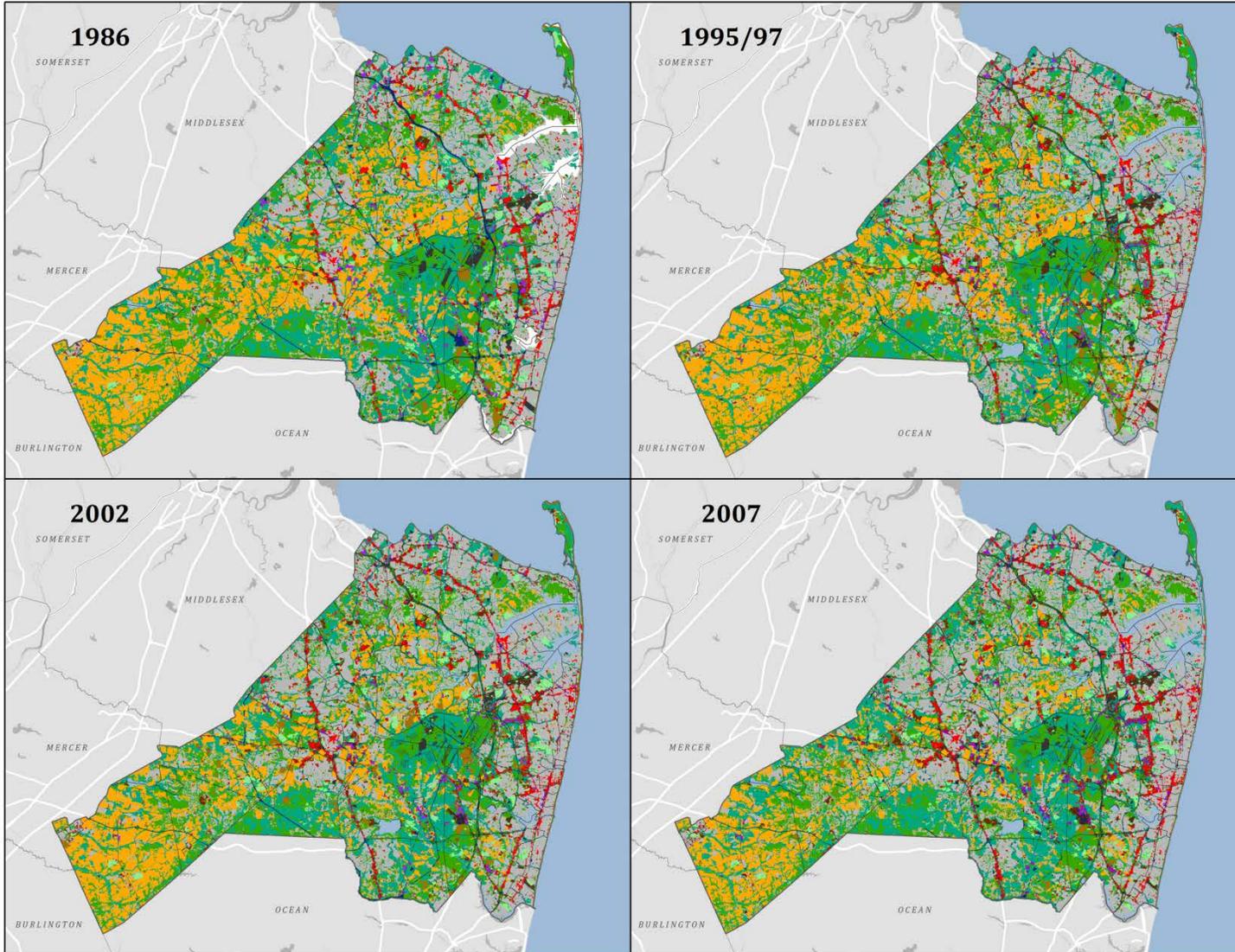
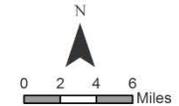


FIGURE 2.9
Land Use Map Series
1986, 1995/97, 2002, 2007
Monmouth County
Master Plan
 May 2016

- Residential
- Commercial & Services
- Military
- Industrial
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- Mixed Urban or Built-Up Land
- Other Urban or Built-Up Land
- Recreational Land
- Agriculture
- Forest
- Water
- Wetlands
- Barren

This map was developed using Monmouth County Digital Data from the Monmouth County Division of Planning GIS Section, and the New Jersey Office of GIS. Land Use classifications were derived from the NJDEP 1986, 1995/97, 2002, and 2007 Land Use/Land Cover Dataset.



This map was created using GIS digital data supplied by county and external resources. Data accuracy is limited by the accuracy and scale of the original source. The digital data herein is for consultative and deliberative purposes only. Site specific conditions should be verified.

This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by NJDEP and is not state-authorized.



Figure 2.10: Land Use Map, 2012

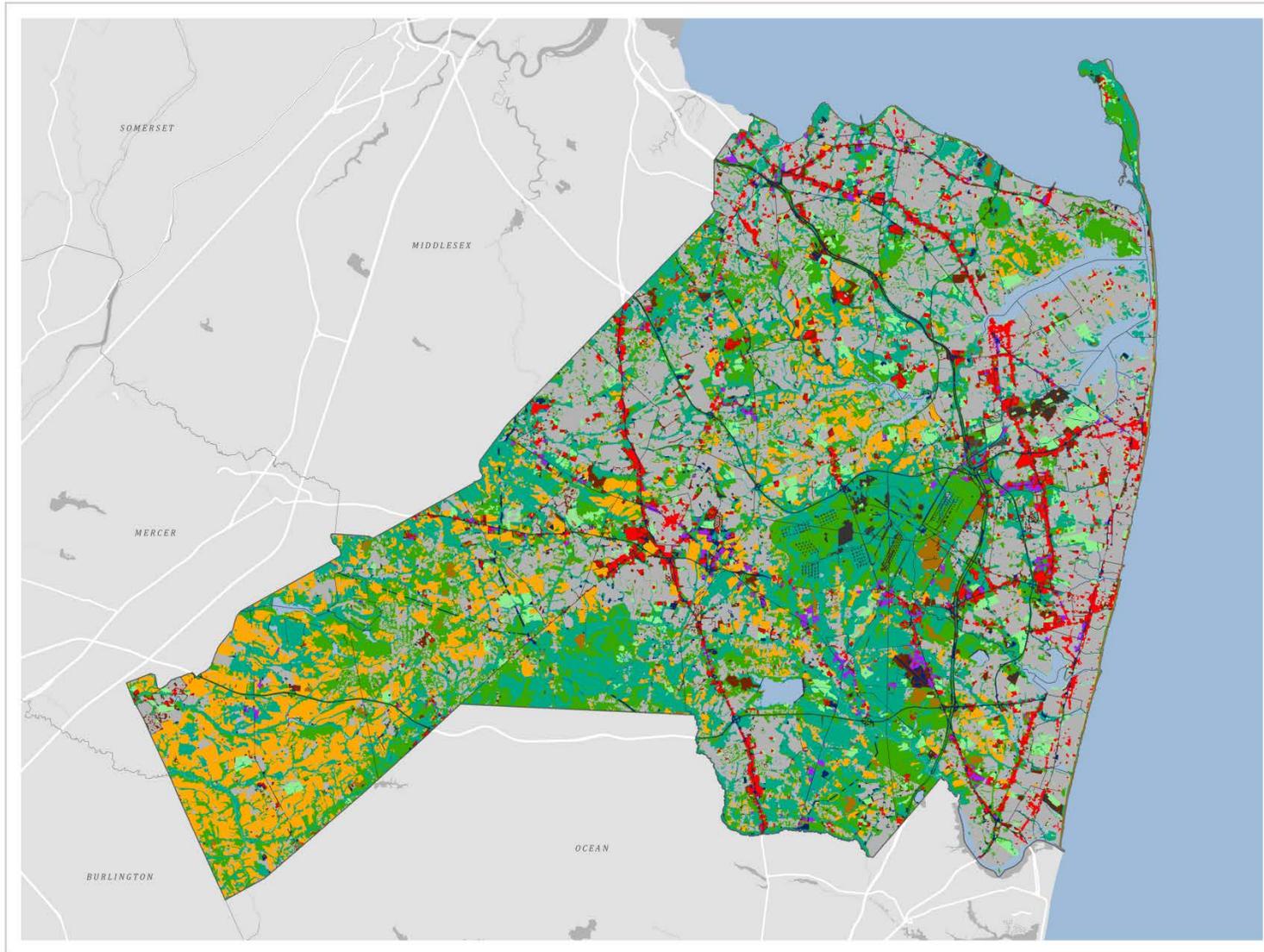
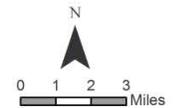


FIGURE 2.10
Land Use Map, 2012
Monmouth County
Master Plan
 May 2016

- Residential
- Commercial/Services
- Military
- Former Military
- Industrial
- Transportation, Communication, Utilities; Airport Facilities
- Mixed Urban or Built-Up Land
- Other Urban or Built-Up Land
- Recreational Land
- Agriculture
- Forest
- Water
- Wetlands
- Barren Land

This map was developed using Monmouth County Digital Data from the Monmouth County Division of Planning GIS Section, and the New Jersey Office of GIS. Land Use classifications were derived from the NJDEP 2012 Land Use/Land Cover Dataset.



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Figure 2.11: Land Use Change Map, 1986-2012

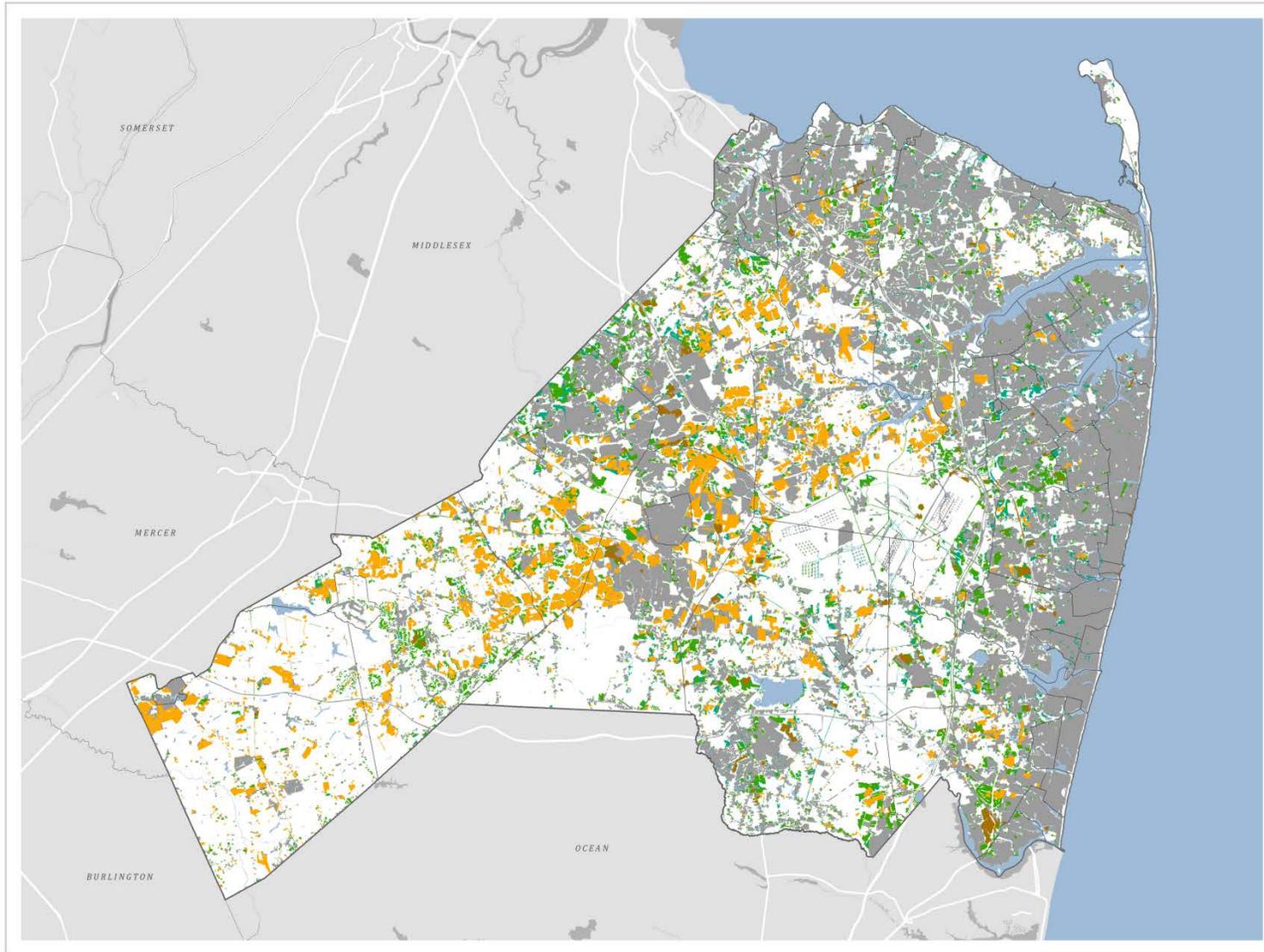
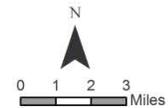


FIGURE 2.11
Land Use Change Map
(1986-2012)

**Monmouth County
Master Plan**
May 2016

- Urban
- Urban, Formerly Agriculture
- Urban, Formerly Barren
- Urban, Formerly Forest
- Urban, Formerly Water
- Urban, Formerly Wetlands

This map was developed using Monmouth County Digital Data from the Monmouth County Division of Planning GIS Section, and the New Jersey Office of GIS. Land Use urban comparisons were derived using the NJDEP 1986 & 2012 Land Use/Land Cover Dataset.



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the current land use by tax classification for all real property in Monmouth County.

According to tax records, in 2015, the largest land use category in Monmouth County remains “Residential” at 34.58% followed by “Public Property” at 20.85% and “Farm” at 18.70%. Of the estimated 52,300 acres of farmland remaining in Monmouth County, approximately 14,800 acres have been permanently preserved or almost 28.3% of remaining farmland. This number does not account for farmland held in ownership by the Monmouth County Park System that is considered parkland for classification purposes.

Since calculating land use using tax parcels does not include features such as streets, roads, and bodies of water, the total area in acres shown in the tax parcel data (Figure 2.12) is considerably smaller than the total area shown in the land use/land cover data (Figure 2.8) which accounts for all land forms in the county. Also, types of land uses may be overstated or understated depending on the photographic interpretation used by NJDEP for land use/land cover in comparison to the actual tax classification assigned to a parcel of land. For example, a small 6-acre farm qualified property on the local tax records may be categorized as “residential” on the NJDEP land use/land cover layer. This accounts for the discrepancy in both land use types and quantities found in Figures 2.8 and 2.12. Because of this, each data set should be used independent of one another for analysis and comparative purposes.

Figure 2.12: Land Use by Tax Classification Table, 2015

Property Class	Description	Area (acres)	%
1	Vacant Land	20,020	7.21%
2	Residential Property (1-4 Family)	96,057	34.58%
3A	Farm (House)	3,421	1.23%
3B	Farm (Qualified)	48,529	17.47%
4A	Commercial	17,068	6.14%
4B	Industrial	2,958	1.06%
4C	Apartment	1,762	0.63%
5A	Railroad Class I	292	0.11%
5B	Railroad Class II	10	0.00%
15A	Public School Property	4,131	1.49%
15B	Other School Property	684	0.25%
15C	Public Property	57,917	20.85%
15D	Church and Charitable Property	1,797	0.65%
15E	Cemetery and Graveyards	1,177	0.42%
15F	Other Exempt	9,624	3.46%
N/A	No Classification	12,319	4.44%
Total		277,766	100%

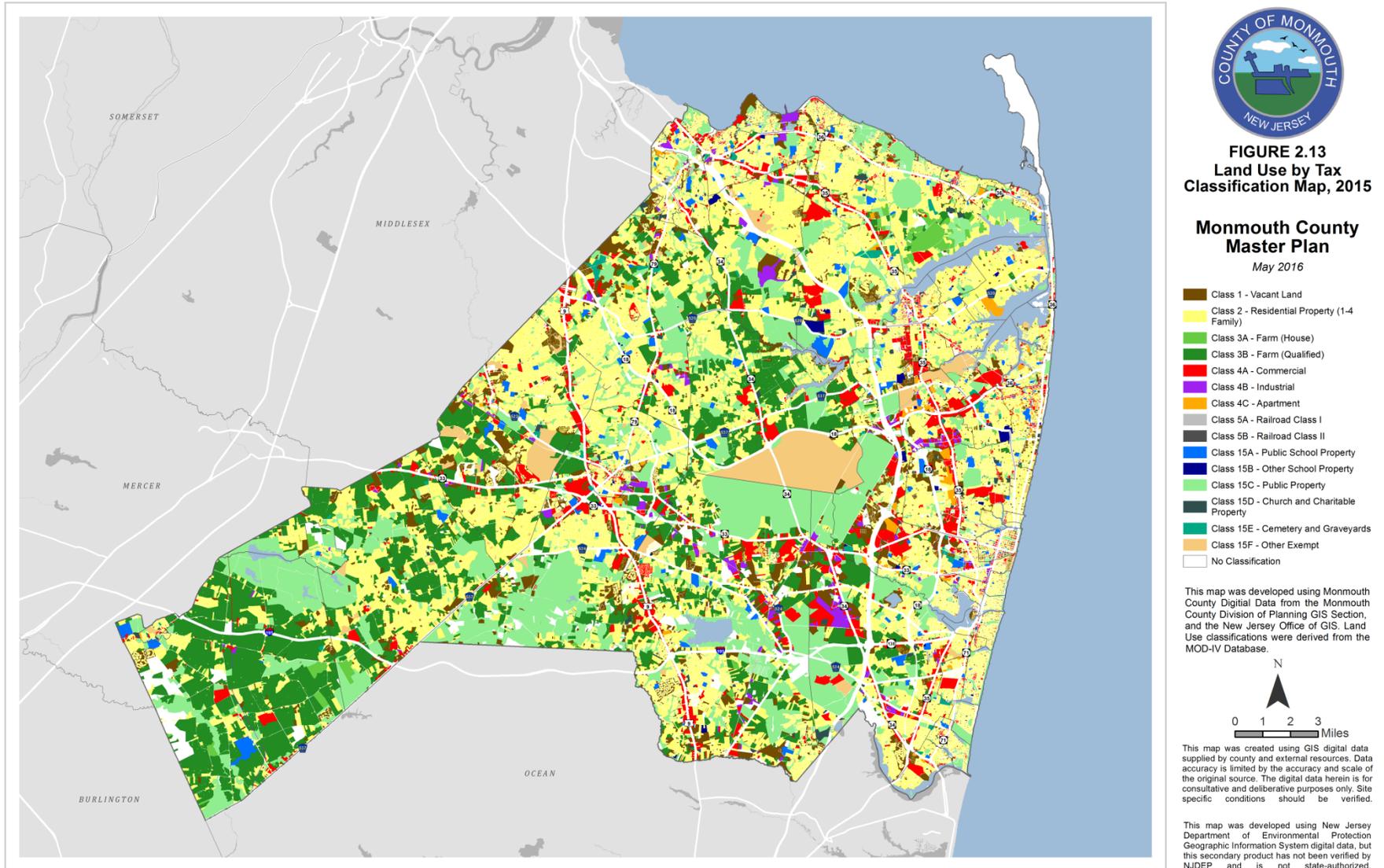
2.5 Build-out Analysis

In August 2012, the Monmouth County Division of Planning completed a countywide build-out analysis using a model builder application provided by the NJDEP as part of the *Wastewater Management Plan (WMP) for Monmouth County*. This GIS-based model was designed to determine residential and commercial build-out for small communities at the municipal level. Upon exploration of the model, it became apparent that some of the data was outdated, the directions were incomplete, and accurate quality control measures would be necessary to achieve accurate results. Division of Planning staff refined the model by enhancing inputs and data as well as the model’s methodology resulting in findings that are more accurate.

According to the [Monmouth County White Paper on NJDEP’s WQP Build-out Model \(2012\)](#), countywide results show a residential development potential of up to 12,600 new units on remaining, undeveloped land based on zoning at that time. Towns with the largest remaining residential development potential include Howell, Marlboro, Upper Freehold, Middletown, and Freehold Township that account for approximately 59.3% of future residential development. Nonresidential development was also calculated. Manalapan, Wall, Millstone, Tinton Falls, and Howell account for approximately 53.8% of the remaining 1,774 nonresidential acres. Detailed results can be found in the study’s white paper.



Figure 2.13: Land Use by Tax Classification Map, 2015



NOTE: Results from the NJDEP wastewater estimator model should not be considered absolute but allotted to a flexible range of possible outcomes which are dependent upon numerous variables such as source, type, and accuracy of data utilized, pace of development, municipal zoning changes, and implementation of redevelopment proposals, as well as other inestimable factors. One of the major limiting factors of the NJDEP model is the exclusion of redevelopment areas in the analysis. This is important because most of the future development in the eastern portions of the county will result from redevelopment, especially in more urban areas and as anticipated from Fort Monmouth.

2.6 Land Use Influences

A complex network of laws, rules, court rulings, regulations, policy decisions, financial structures, and market forces all influence land use development patterns that affect regional growth and preservation efforts. There are numerous policy guiding documents and programs that municipalities must contend with on a daily basis when dealing with land use policy decisions and implementation issues.

2.6.1 State and Federal Policy Influences

New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP): The State Planning Act of 1985 (N.J.S.A. 52:18A-196 et seq.) created the New Jersey State Planning Commission and the Office of State Planning. The Act requires the commission to prepare and adopt a *State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP)*. The most current adopted plan, [The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan \(2001\)](#), sets forth a vision for the future of our state along with strategies to achieve that vision. One of the major concerns raised by Monmouth County during Cross-Acceptance process was the classification of many of our coastal and Bayshore towns as Metropolitan Planning Areas (Planning Area 1), the same classification given to the state's largest and densest urban centers.

The *2001 SDRP's* reliance on maps had been a point of both contention and distraction for many municipalities as state agencies attempted to use the State Plan Policy Map for regulatory means. Although the Cross-Acceptance process was a helpful exercise in aligning local, county, and state plans and policies, there had been considerable consternation regarding the cost and length of the process as well as the unrealized benefit for communities engaged in Plan Endorsement. According to the [Proposed Final Draft - State Strategic Plan: New Jersey's State Development & Redevelopment Plan \(Draft Date 10/11/2011\)](#),

"There is no escaping that this process was mired in starts and stops and paralyzed by competing public interests related to, for example, environmental protection and affordable housing."

Since 2010, the [Office of Planning Advocacy \(OPA\)](#) has been working on developing a new *State Strategic Plan*, one that is more streamlined than previous versions. As stated by the OPA, the new plan will provide,

"...opportunities for responsible growth and redevelopment in New Jersey and create a strategic implementation plan that capitalizes on these opportunities by better coordination of capital improvement investments and regulatory regimes of state agencies. A sustainable framework requires that we balance environmental stewardship, economic growth and social equity." (Department of State, 2012)

On October 19, 2011, the [State Planning Commission](#) released a proposed final draft report entitled the [State Strategic Plan: New Jersey's State Development and Redevelopment Plan](#). As stated in the document itself,

"This State Strategic Plan is New Jersey's revised and readopted State Development and Redevelopment Plan, designed to meet the statutory charge of representing — a balance of



development and conservation objectives best suited to meet the needs of the state.”

The *State Strategic Plan (final draft)* has refocused its policy efforts by eliminating the predominance of the State Plan Map in planning efforts, instead relying on a set of goals and series of “Garden State Values” that better articulated a smart-growth philosophy of development and preservation. The proposed plan establishes a set of criteria to determine areas for different types of growth and preservation, which could guide where various kinds of public investments would be made ([NJ Spotlight, 2013](#)). The four primary goals with accompanying strategies to meet this mission include:

Goal 1: Targeted Economic Growth: Enhance opportunities for attraction and growth of industries of statewide and regional importance.

Goal 2: Effective Planning for Vibrant Regions: Guide and inform regional planning so that each region of the state can experience appropriate growth according to the desires and assets of that region.

Goal 3: Preservation and Enhancement of Critical State Resources: Ensure that strategies for growth include preservation of our state's critical natural, agricultural, scenic, recreation, and historic resources, recognizing the role they play in sustaining and improving the quality-of-life for New Jersey residents and attracting economic growth.

Goal 4: Tactical Alignment of Government: Enable effective resource allocation, coordination, cooperation, and communication among those who play a role in meeting the mission of this plan.

Council on Affordable Housing (COAH): This council was charged with adopting substantive rules for each six-year “housing cycle” which outlined how each municipality’s fair share housing obligation is calculated and the manner in which a municipality must address its obligations during that round. In an attempt to simplify the process for

the Third Round “housing cycle” regulations, COAH turned to a growth share methodology. Subject to litigation, the New Jersey Supreme Court sustained parts of the regulations, declared some parts invalid, and remanded it back to the COAH for revisions. The State Appellate Division offered additional guidance along with its decision about many of the assumptions used in the methodology as well as on rules governing set-asides for affordable housing, developer incentives and compensation, age-restricted housing, Regional Contribution Agreements (RCAs), and COAH’s systems of credits and bonuses.

On February 9, 2010, Governor Christie signed an Executive Order immediately suspending the operation of the Council on Affordable Housing and appointing a panel to study the issue of affordable housing. In March 2012, the State Appellate Court determined that the Governor had exceeded his authority when he abolished COAH and transferred affordable housing functions to the Department of Community Affairs. In September 2013, the State Supreme Court directed the state to promulgate third round rules by May 1, 2014.

In response to a lack of progress on the September 2013 directive, the New Jersey Supreme Court established a new timeframe for the Council on Affordable Housing to adopt new rules to implement the Mount Laurel Doctrine, setting November 17, 2014 as the date by which new rules must be in place. This order rejected the state’s request to have an open-ended period of time to adopt rules, while allowing the state more time to comply with the Supreme Court’s September 26, 2013 decision (Fair Share Housing Center, 2014).

Due to inaction by the state to remedy the situation by promulgating new third round rules, the Supreme Court handed down a decision on March 10, 2015 that conceded municipalities would no longer have to rely on COAH to comply with the Mount Laurel Doctrine. In essence, the Courts nullified the state’s administrative remedy to the Fair Housing Act of 1985 and replaced it with a court remedy for affordable housing



compliance. The Supreme Court directed municipalities to appear in trial courts beginning on June 8, 2015 to show how they intended to provide their fair share of their region's need for affordable housing.

Environmental Regulatory Considerations: Although there are many different types of regulatory constraints required by the [New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection \(NJDEP\)](#), the following are the most prevalent and have the greatest influence on site-specific land development considerations:

Freshwater Wetlands: Freshwater wetlands are vital components of our ecosystem and essential to the socioeconomic well-being of our community. Their existence protects drinking water by filtering pollutants, retaining runoff from heavy rains and snowmelt, and providing habitat for fish and wildlife. They are protected through numerous state regulations including the New Jersey Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act (N.J.S.A. 13:9B) which provides for their protection and mitigation of disturbances.

Riparian Zone and Flood Hazard Areas: Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) are regulated through the Flood Hazard Area (FHA) Control Act Rules (N.J.A.C. 7:13) which implement the New Jersey Flood Hazard Area Control Act (N.J.S.A. 58:16A-50 seq.). Structures developed within these areas are required to incorporate more stringent standards to better mitigate the impacts caused by flooding and severe storm events. The NJDEP also regulates stream corridors (riparian zones) to reduce the adverse effects on water quality caused by erosion associated with new development. The riparian zone is the land and vegetation within regulated water and extending either 50 feet, 150 feet, or 300 feet from the top of bank along both sides of the regulated water, depending on the environmental sensitivity of the water (NJDEP website, 2016).

Coastal Area Facilities Review Act (CAFRA): The CAFRA is the law that regulates certain types of residential, commercial, public, or industrial development activities within a defined area (refer to the [Environmental Regulatory Features Map](#) in 3.0 Natural Resources). Any development located on a beach or dune is subject to regulations, as well as structures between the mean high water line and a point 150 feet landward. Within the CAFRA area, residential developments having 25 or more dwelling units or commercial developments having 50 or more parking spaces are subject to review.

Coastal Zone Management Rules (CZM Rules): CZM Rules at N.J.A.C. 7:7E define Special Areas of environmental interest, details requirements for development projects, and sets forth the compliance criteria for permit approval. Certain general permits require compliance with specific sections of the CZM Rule, for example "dunes," "tidelands," or "shellfish habitat." Individual permit applications must address and demonstrate compliance with each applicable component of the CZM Rules for the specific site and regulated activity to be approved. (NJDEP website, 2014)

Other State Agency and Regional Entities

Land use in Monmouth County is also influenced by an array of additional state agencies and regional entities:

New Jersey Transit (NJ TRANSIT): NJ TRANSIT is New Jersey's public transportation corporation providing bus and rail service to many communities in Monmouth County. In recent years, the agency has taken an active role in both sponsoring and partnering in Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) land use studies. NJ TRANSIT has been an active member in the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) and the NJTPA's Together North Jersey (TNJ) Regional Plan Steering Committee. Through this U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) initiative, NJ TRANSIT sponsored a Local



Demonstration Project in the county, [Connecting Community Corridors Study \(2014\)](#), a strategic plan for connectivity and mobility in portions of Asbury Park, Bradley Beach, and Neptune Township. System-wide ridership, capacity, and operational issues for both bus and rail passengers can affect interest in development and redevelopment in locations dependent upon NJ TRANSIT services.

[New Jersey Department of Transportation \(NJDOT\)](#): This state department provides funding for capital improvements for roads, highways, and bridges. Maintaining and improving our existing roadway infrastructure network is an essential element in our regional economic competitiveness. Similar to NJ TRANSIT, NJDOT is also a member of the state's interagency Transit Village Task Force. Municipalities with Transit Village Designation receive additional technical assistance and funding benefits from state agencies.

[North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority \(NJTPA\)](#): NJTPA is the federally authorized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the 13-county northern NJ region. Each year, the NJTPA oversees more than \$2 billion in transportation improvement projects and provides a forum for interagency cooperation and public input. It also sponsors and conducts studies, assists county planning agencies, and monitors compliance with national air quality goals. (NJTPA website, 2014)

On September 10, 2013, the NJTPA Board of Trustees approved [Plan 2040](#), the latest update to the NJTPA's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for northern New Jersey. *Plan 2040* carries forward key components of [Plan 2035](#), including a [Regional Capital Investment Strategy](#) and serves as a transportation investment guide for the region. (NJTPA website, 2016)

In 2011, HUD awarded the NJTPA \$5 million through the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program to develop a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development (RPSD) for the 13-county region to

improve economic competitiveness and address issues such as housing, jobs, schools, and transportation. In 2012, Monmouth County began participation as part of the [Together North Jersey](#) consortium on the development of a regional plan for North Jersey. As stated on their website, "The plan will be both "place-based" and "issue-based" and will use sustainability, transit system connectivity, and Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) as the central framework for integrating plans, regulations, investments, and incentive programs at all levels of government to improve economic and environmental conditions, while promoting regional equity and resource efficiency. The outcome of plan implementation will be a more sustainable future for the region that invests in existing communities where housing, jobs, educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities are made more easily accessible" (NJTPA, 2014). The public review period for comment on *The Plan. 2015* took place from April 15, 2015 to May 15, 2015. After three years of extensive planning activities, [The Plan. 2015](#) was released in November 2015.

[U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\)](#): This department's mission is "to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities, and quality affordable homes for all" (HUD website, 2014). Their emphasis is on providing quality and affordable housing free from discrimination. HUD's influence affects nearly every aspect of housing in America. Some of the many HUD programs that influence land use include:

- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- Oversees the Federal Housing Administration (insuring mortgages)
- Housing and rental assistance for the homeless and disabled
- Grants to state governments to implement plans to increase home ownership and affordable housing for low income residents (HOME Program)



- Tax incentives to locate businesses in, and hire workers from, areas of high poverty
- Insure mortgage loans for low-income families and disaster victims
- Funding for public housing authorities
- Rental assistance to very low-income families (Section 8)
- Enforcement of the Fair Housing Act
- Funding to conduct planning studies
- Mortgaged backed securities
- Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI)
- Promote policies that influence the location and development of affordable housing outcomes in local communities

On July 16, 2015, HUD released a final rule on Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing. This follows a U.S. Supreme Court decision in June 2015 regarding disparate impacts of fair housing. The new rule is intended to equip communities that receive HUD funding with the data and tools that will help them to meet long-standing fair housing obligations in their use of HUD funds. HUD will provide publicly open data for grantees to use to assess the state of fair housing within their communities and to set locally-determined priorities and goals. The rule responds to recommendations of the Government Accountability Office and stakeholders for HUD to enhance its fair housing planning obligations by providing greater clarity and support to jurisdictions receiving HUD funding, and facilitating local decision-making on fair housing priorities and goals. (HUD, 2015)

2.6.2 Monmouth County Policy Influences

Monmouth County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS): In 2012, Monmouth County received a Planning Investment Grant from the U.S. Economic Development Agency (USEDA) to support the process of establishing a *CEDS*. Participants from the county's public, nonprofit, and private sectors provided information and input

throughout the process to conduct and develop an industry analysis establishing a solid path for future economic development within the county.

Monmouth County Water Quality Management Planning: The state's Water Quality Planning Act, N.J.S.A. 58:11A-1 et seq., authorizes the Governor to administer the Statewide Water Quality Management Planning rules and designates 12 areawide planning agencies for the purpose of developing, adopting, updating, and amending Areawide Water Quality Management Plans (AWQMPs). In 1997, the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders became the Designated Planning Agency for Monmouth County (Governor Whitman Executive Order 67). The Board of Chosen Freeholders delegated operational responsibilities to the Monmouth County Planning Board (MCPB), which in turn created the Amendment Review Committee (ARC) to process and review proposed changes to the Monmouth County AWQMP in order to increase the speed and efficiency with which amendments could be processed. There are several aspects to areawide water quality management planning. The focus in Monmouth County has primarily been wastewater and stormwater management planning.

Monmouth County submitted a draft *Wastewater Management Plan (WMP) for Monmouth County* to the NJDEP in 2003, 2006, and lastly in 2011 for their review and approval based on existing and future sewer service areas (SSAs) as well as discussions with municipalities, sewerage authorities, and other stakeholders. As part of this inclusive planning process all existing utility authority and town wastewater plans in the county were reviewed and incorporated into the *WMP*. Changes to the state legislation allowed for the [Monmouth County Future Wastewater Service Area \(FWSA\) Map Viewer](#), which includes programmed and planned sewer service areas throughout the county, to be adopted by the NJDEP on April 1, 2013. Meanwhile, work on a new draft *WMP* for the county is proceeding slowly while the wastewater community awaits adoption of the proposed rule changes.



Planned and programmed sewer service areas remain the most influential determinants in the location and intensity of growth and development. Since the 1982 *Monmouth County Growth Management Guide*, the county, along with the state and municipal partners, have strived to align growth and preservations policies and strategies with programmed sewer service. These efforts include working within the context of the goals and objectives of the *State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP)* as well as facilitating ongoing dialogue between the state and municipal partners and stakeholders during *SDRP* updates (Cross-Acceptance). The county's four regional plans (2004-2011) also contributed to better alignment between municipal land uses, local zoning, State Planning Areas, and Monmouth County's *WMP* maps.

Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan: The [Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan](#) last updated in 2008 guides the county's efforts in preserving its remaining farmland and maintaining a viable agricultural industry. The plan sets preservation goals in 1, 5, and 10-year increments and identifies Agricultural Development Areas (ADAs) that will be the focus of preservation efforts. Programmed sewer service locations should be limited in ADAs so as not to encourage higher impact development in targeted farmland preservation locations.

Monmouth County Open Space Plan: The [Monmouth County Open Space Plan \(2006\)](#), developed by the Monmouth County Park System and adopted by the MCPB (Resolution #06-38), is an element of the *Monmouth County Growth Management Guide (1982)*. The *Monmouth County Open Space Plan* provides a framework for preservation and acquisition of public open space to serve the needs of the county residents now and in the future. The current plan identifies seven different categories of parks including Regional Parks, Recreation Areas, Special Use Areas, Golf Courses, Greenways, Open Lands, and Unclassified Areas. Work on an update is set to begin in 2016.

Monmouth County Scenic Roadway Plan: The MCPB adopted [The Monmouth County Scenic Roadway Plan \(2001\)](#) on September 17, 2001 as an element of the *Monmouth County Growth Management Guide*. The purpose of the plan was to identify those county roadways, or sections of county roadways, that possess a high degree of visual quality. Driving, biking, or walking along these roadways is a pleasurable and enjoyable experience. The county uses the plan when assessing the need for enhanced landscaping along a scenic roadway during the development review process. Towns are encouraged to strengthen their own design guidelines and land use regulations in an effort to retain the aesthetic appeal experienced along these roadway corridors.

Monmouth County Road Plan: The original *Monmouth County Road Plan* was adopted on June 17, 1996 as an element of the *Monmouth County Growth Management Guide*. The most recent [Monmouth County Road Plan \(2012\)](#) was adopted by the MCPB on October 12, 2012. It includes a map and a listing of all the roads under county jurisdiction. The plan includes information such as the County Route number, road name, length, and right-of-way width. Desired typical sections for county roads in urban, suburban, and rural settings are also part of the plan.

Monmouth County Regional Planning Studies: Since 2004, with funding provided by the Office of Smart Growth, the Monmouth County Division of Planning conducted four regional land use studies including:

- [Route 9/Western Monmouth Development Plan \(2004\)](#)
- [Bayshore Region Strategic Plan \(2006\)](#)
- [Coastal Monmouth Plan \(2010\)](#)
- [Panhandle Region Plan \(2011\)](#)

These studies provide a regional context for land use decisions focusing on specific issues unique to each study area. Each plan was developed through extensive outreach with municipalities and state agencies. The plans have been instrumental in assisting municipalities identify local



planning issues of regional significance and providing an implementation framework for each study through a Planning Implementation Agenda (PIA). The PIA is a summary table that presents alternatives for each identified need in the plan and recommends a pallet of alternative strategies to achieve objective outcomes. All four regional plans are considered *Consultative and Supportive Documents* to this *Master Plan* as identified in the Planning Services, Outreach, & Coordination Element (14.0).

2.6.3 Municipal Master Plans and the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL)

“Home Rule” is the power granted either by the U.S. Constitution or Legislature or both to municipal governments to organize themselves to carry out a range of governmental activities under their own authority, and to preserve health, safety, and general welfare (New Jersey League of Municipalities, 2015). In NJ, a strong approach to “Home Rule” is established in both the State Constitution Article IV, Section VII (11) and the Home Rule Act of 1917 N.J.S.A. 40:42 et seq. Key to those powers prescribed is that each municipality has control over its own master plans and land use regulations including the ability to plan and zone.

As stated on the official Colts Neck municipal website, “The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) is the legislative foundation of Planning Boards and Zoning Boards of Adjustment in the State of New Jersey. It defines the powers and responsibilities of boards and is essential to their functions and decisions” (Colts Neck, 2012). Within the MLUL, a master plan is the overall policy document that provides guidance on the physical, economic, and social development of the municipality. The municipal zoning ordinance relates “to the nature and extent of the uses of land and of buildings and structures thereon” and “shall be drawn with reasonable consideration to the character of each district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses and to encourage the most appropriate use of land” (New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law, 2008).

According to the New Jersey MLUL, a master plan must contain, “a statement of objectives, principles, and assumptions, policies and standards upon which proposals for development of the municipality are based” and a land use element. A municipality may also include numerous optional elements in their master plan. By law, the master plan is to be reexamined once every ten years from the previous reexamination. The reexamination report requirement’s purpose is to identify any issues that require revision or adjustment for the master plan and development regulations to meet municipal needs. This includes not only revisiting the current master plan and ordinance codes, but also suggesting the addition of new plan elements that respond to changes to the municipality’s goals and objectives.

2.6.4 Other Considerations

Utilities and Infrastructure: Both the location and design capacity of utilities and infrastructure such as natural gas, electricity, public water, and sanitary sewers facilitate the siting and potential intensity of land use development. Municipalities provide appropriate service locations for these types of provisions through their master plans and often coordinate closely with local or regional utility authorities that are often responsible for providing necessary and reliable utility service. Locations without access to sewer service should look to develop within the confines of the natural carrying capacity of land.

As our society becomes more dependent upon the internet for communication, entertainment, and commerce, there is growing discussion about broadband being viewed as a utility. Those communities with faster connection speeds and Wi-Fi availability gain a competitive advantage in the commercial marketplace. A growing number of public-private partnerships have been created throughout the county to foster broadband investment in local areas. These types of partnerships have begun to realize how fundamentally important accessibility of broadband is for emerging economies to succeed.



Property Tax Structure and Fiscal Impacts: Each year school districts, municipal governing bodies, and county governing bodies notify the Monmouth County Tax Board of their budgetary requirements through submission of adopted budgets. The various levies are totaled to represent the “amount to be raised by taxation” for each taxing jurisdiction (NJ League of Municipalities website, 2014).

The tax levy is divided by the total assessed value of all taxable property within the municipality—or the tax base—to determine the general tax rate. The general tax rate is then applied to the assessed value of each individual parcel of property to determine the property owner’s tax liability. Local budgets, assessed value, and the availability of other revenues, then, are the prime determinants of each taxpayer’s burden. The rate is annually adjusted to account for these factors. Because of this, one will see their property tax referred to as a “residual tax” (NJ League of Municipalities website, 2014).

Because of their primary reliance on property taxes to fund local budgetary requirements, municipalities in NJ often find themselves in what is commonly referred to as the “ratable chase” whereby a town seeks to attract development it perceives as paying more in property taxes (revenue) than it requires in municipal services (costs). Development tends to incur costs associated with accommodating increased traffic (road maintenance and repair), policing, emergency services, utilities/infrastructure, social programs, and schools. Of course, various types of development have varying degrees of impact and costs on municipal services. Although NJ case law prohibits zoning based purely on a fiscal basis to stabilize the tax rate by excluding certain types of development, it is important for policy and decision makers to understand the financial impact development has on the municipal budget while planning for a community.

Overall, the total 2015 assessed value of Monmouth County municipalities was just over \$100 billion. The total tax levied against

that value was just over \$2 billion. This equates to a unified theoretical tax rate of \$2.07 per hundred dollars of assessed value. While each of our fifty-three towns has gone about developing in a distinct individual way, a look at the General Tax Rate in each shows that most are quite close to \$2.00 or somewhat below it.

There are seven classes and subclasses and each comes with its own set of benefits and costs. The information provided herein is a summary at the county level. More details may be found in the [Monmouth County Board of Taxation Abstract of Ratables \(2015\)](#).

Property Class 1: Vacant Land
 11,361 parcels
 \$1,599,466,850 assessed value

Vacant land is typically held in private ownership as an investment property. The development potential is due to numerous colluding factors including location, market demands, zoning, and environmental constraints just to name a few. Vacant (undeveloped) land still generates tax revenue for a community, albeit less than a similarly improved (developed) tax assessed property.

Vacant land acquired either for public open space or reserved through easements may generate an incidental positive in terms of property tax revenue. Studies have shown that residences near preserved open space such as parks or conservation areas are often worth more than comparable properties farther removed. This proximal benefit increases assessed property value and has tax revenue implications in a community.

Property Class 2: Residential
 209,632 parcels
 \$89,295,912,975 assessed value



Residential use is the predominant land use in Monmouth County. Along with farm houses, it accounts for 84% of the county’s assessed value. It is both a significant source of revenue and a generator of cost associated with impacts on school districts.

As the population changes, the market is reshaping itself. Since the 2000’s, traditional single-family detached, market rate housing has given way to age-restricted housing developments. This type of housing now represents 53% of all the new residential development in the county.

Just as the demand for age-restricted senior housing is on the rise, so is the demand for upscale multi-family units and smaller single-family homes that meet the evolving demands of downsizing empty nesters and younger singles and couples.

With one and two person households now the majority and fewer than one third of households with children, there is a shift in preference to those places with access to amenities and transportation options making the continued development of transit villages a trend likely to continue.

Property Class 3A: Farm House
1,528 parcels
\$907,985,900 assessed value

Twenty-two of fifty-three towns have farm houses in them. This is one of the smallest classes of land use in the county, however, it is also one that is relatively high in value. This value is likely derived from the combination of factors such as proximity- often surrounded by Class 3B Farmland-relative scarcity, and location in relatively affluent communities. The value of Class 3A properties must be understood in

the context of the related Class 3B properties from which they receive indirect added value.

Property Class 3B: Farm Qualified
2,760 parcels
\$28,926,625 assessed value

These are parcels of land that are farm assessed and have no farm house on them. Twenty-five of fifty-three towns have farm qualified land with two-thirds of 3B parcels concentrated in four municipalities; Upper Freehold, Millstone, Howell, and Colts Neck Townships.

Farmland has been shown to cost less in government services than the tax revenues it generates. Farmland preservation is different from open space acquisition in that preserved farms, unless purchased outright, stay in private ownership and remain on the tax rolls. With a growing movement toward locally grown foods and the increasing scarcity of undeveloped prime agricultural land, the value of surviving farm parcels should increase.

Property Class 4A: Commercial
9,182 parcels
\$12,159,534,800 assessed value

Commercial uses are often seen as desirable because they generate taxable value without adding to the educational costs that accompanies residential uses. This can be true, especially initially, but it can become less so if the property experiences a high vacancy rate. In such cases tax appeals can erode value and with age competing newer properties can create a downward spiral of value of a commercial use that is seen as



outdated or is rendered less convenient by changes in traffic volumes, development patterns, or competing locations. Commercial uses are, nonetheless, a vital part of community development providing a location for essential local commerce and jobs for local residents.

Property Class 4B: Industrial
 498 parcels
 \$1,062,810,900 assessed value

Industrial uses span a wide range and their value has to be measured against their impact on neighboring uses. They often come with specialized requirements such as access to transportation infrastructure, waste disposal systems, or water supply. Heavier industries that involve manufacturing or the processing of raw materials may require access to rail lines and come with special permitting requirements. They can also come with the need for substantial buffering to help ameliorate negative impact on neighboring uses, particularly residential neighborhoods.

The alternative of lighter industrial uses involving product assembly, research, or warehousing may have lesser impacts or permitting requirements. With the exception of resource based industries such as sand and gravel mining, Monmouth County has attracted more light industries and continues to have opportunities for further development and redevelopment with Fort Monmouth being a specific example of opportunity. The greatest number of industrial properties is found in Wall Township with 90.

Property Class 4C: Apartments
 947 parcels
 \$2,025,914,400 assessed value

Apartments and related multi-family developments are a growing use in the redeveloping urban centers of the county. While typically smaller than single-family homes, apartments can be amenity rich with high-end appliances, materials, and fixtures that impart substantial value. Apartments may also be found in public ownership or included in state mandated affordable housing programs that can limit market value and tax revenues.

2.7 Framework for Public Investment

Monmouth County’s diversity is reflected in the variety of both its built and natural landscapes. [The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan \(2001\)](#) attempted to map and define these landscapes as “Planning Areas.” Each Planning Area had specific Policy Objectives that were intended to guide the application of the Statewide Policies. The Policy Objectives were to ensure that the Planning Areas guided development in appropriate locations where infrastructure already existing and into Centers away from protected natural Environs (*The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan, 2001*).

2.7.1 Public Investment Strategy

The *Monmouth County Master Plan (2016)* recognizes the importance of aligning planning with policy investment strategies that broadly support and reinforce the economic, cultural, physical, and natural landscapes that define our communities. Although the framework strategy is similar to the intent and approach presented in the [Draft Final State Strategic Plan \(2012\)](#) and supported by Together North Jersey’s regional plan, [The Plan. 2015](#), the criteria and definitions used by Monmouth County are modified slightly to reflect the issues, concerns, values, and priorities specific to Monmouth County.

The Monmouth County Public Investment Strategy is a composite approach based on a number of previous planning efforts including:

- [Monmouth County Growth Management Guide \(1982\)](#)



- [Monmouth County Growth Management Guide \(1995\)](#)
- [The New Jersey State Development Redevelopment Plan \(2001\)](#)
- Monmouth County's Regional Planning Studies (2004-2011) including:
 - [Route 9/Western Monmouth Development Plan \(2004\)](#)
 - [Bayshore Region Strategic Plan \(2006\)](#)
 - [Coastal Monmouth Plan \(2010\)](#)
 - [Panhandle Region Plan \(2011\)](#)
- 2003-2009 State Cross-Acceptance process
- [Monmouth County Open Space Plan \(2006\)](#)
- [Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan \(2008\)](#)
- [Monmouth County Road Plan \(2012\)](#)
- [Monmouth County Future Wastewater Service Area Map \(2013\)](#)
- Together North Jersey's regional plan: [The Plan. 2015](#)

Decades of consistent and reiterated planning efforts have resulted in a near perfect alignment of land use goals and objectives between municipalities, Monmouth County, and the state when it comes to public investment strategy. It is the county's intent is to continue coordination through open dialogue with local governing bodies and regional planning agencies to reduce any remaining inconsistencies.

2.7.2 Public Investment Areas

The draft *State Strategic Plan: New Jersey's State Development & Redevelopment Plan (2012)* recognizes four public investment areas including:

- Priority Growth Investment Area
- Alternate Growth Investment Area
- Limited Growth Investment Area
- Priority Investment Preservation Area

Similar to and supportive of the *State Strategic Plan's* approach to developing a public investment framework, the *Monmouth County*

Master Plan (2016) recognizes the following five-public investment areas, which includes two-overlay categories within the Priority Growth Investment Area (PGIA).

(I) Priority Growth Investment Area (PGIA): Areas with either existing or planned infrastructure that lend to development and redevelopment opportunities.

Public investments related to the efficient development and redevelopment of previously developed sites and optimization of existing settlement patterns should be encouraged but to a lesser extent than a Priority Growth - Reinvestment Area/Site (PG-RAS). PGIA's are considered the locations for meeting most of the county's future population and employment growth, however, the PGIA also includes many established communities seeking to maintain their existing development pattern and character.

PGIA Criteria

Land located within a current or future sewer service area as identified on the [Monmouth County Wastewater Management Plan Map \(2013\)](#).

Supports county landscapes such as:

- Urban and Regional Centers
- Shore Towns and Coastal Places
- Inland Towns and Villages
- Suburban Areas
- Historic Sites, Places, and Districts

(II) Priority Growth - Reinvestment Area/Site Overlay (PG-RAS): Areas or sites located within the PGIA where more intense or significant development, redevelopment, revitalization, and hazard mitigation investments are highly encouraged.

Public investment should encourage the productive reuse of historic, vacant, abandoned, contaminated, and underutilized sites/structures.



Revitalization is an important component in urban areas, existing neighborhoods, and commercial corridors. Redevelopment near certain transit stations and access to cultural and recreational amenities should be encouraged as well as multi-modal improvements to the existing transportation network and infrastructure. These areas are intended to accommodate much of the county’s future population and employment growth in the PGIA. Although located in a PGIA, the term “growth” as to accommodate additional population should not be implied for reinvestments made with the intent and/or purpose toward recreational enhancements, community revitalization, hazard mitigation, or historic repurposing and preservation.

PG-RAS Criteria

Located in a PGIA and includes:

- Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Authority property identified for development and/or redevelopment within the [Fort Monmouth Reuse and Redevelopment Plan \(2008\)](#) as amended and supplemented
- Other “Areas in Need of Redevelopment” or Redevelopment Sites
- “Areas in Need of Revitalization”
- Transit Stations (proper)
- Locally supported Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) initiatives
- NJDOT Certified Transit Centers
- Land owned by the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority
- Places where public investment supports the *Monmouth County CEDS*
- Specialized use locations (e.g. hospitals, medical campuses, colleges, and office/industrial parks)
- Any site or place in a Priority Growth Investment Area (PGIA) that has the characteristics and investment needs of a Priority Preservation Investment Area/Site (PPIAS) including, but not limited to:
 - Historic sites and structures

- Urban lands identified for acquisition or land identified for preservation through an open space master plan or recreation plan

Supports county landscapes within PGIA such as:

- Commercial Business Districts
- Arts, Cultural, and Entertainment (ACE) Hubs
- Commercial Corridors
- Historic Sites, Places, and Districts

(III) Priority Growth - Water Supply Watershed Areas Overlay (PG-WSWA): Locations within a Priority Growth Investment Area that contain a natural resource value pertaining to water quality and supply.

Further study would be needed to expand the definition to include aquifer recharge areas in PGIA. Because of the natural resource value, towns should support best management practices and strategies (e.g. zoning, land use techniques, and green engineering) that maximize preservation of the natural resource function. (Refer to 12.0 Sustainable Places Element)

PG-WSWA Criteria

Areas located in a PGIA that contribute to or impact the natural resource function as it relates to the public water supply.

Supports the same county landscapes identified for the PGIA.

(IV) Limited Growth Investment Area (LGIA): Areas located outside of existing or programmed sewer service areas intended for low-density residential uses, compatible rural patterns, and supportive commercial uses.



Large-scale growth should be discouraged in these locations with an emphasis on the conservation and preservation of rural and environmentally sensitive lands.

LGIA Criteria

Areas not located in either a programmed or planned sewer service area and includes:

- Developed Lands
- Areas that do not meet the criteria for a Priority Preservation Investment Area/Site (PPIAS)

Supports county landscapes such as:

- Historic Sites, Places, and Districts
- Rural and Natural Environs
- Open Space
- Vistas and Viewsheds
- Scenic Byways/Scenic Roadways

(V) Priority Preservation Investment Area/Site (PPIAS): An area or site where an investment in land preservation, agricultural development and retention, historic preservation, environmental protection and stewardship is preferred and encouraged.

Support the use of land conservation methods, techniques, and best management practices.

PPIAS Criteria

Areas not located in either a programmed or planned sewer service area and include:

- Agricultural Development Areas (ADAs)
- Environmentally sensitive lands such as Category 1 streams, threatened, and endangered species habitats.
- Permanently preserved and deed restricted land including farmland and parkland

- Land identified for preservation through an open space master plan and/or outdoor/recreation plan
- Land identified for preservation through a farmland preservation plan and/or approved Planning Incentive Grant application
- Historic districts
- Historic sites and structures
- Any site or location in a Priority Preservation Investment Area (PPIAS) or Limited Growth Investment Area (LGIA) that is significantly impacted by regional growth and has public needs similar to that of projects and programs found in a Priority Growth Investment Area (PGIA) including, but not limited to:
 - Capital improvement such as regionally impacted roadway intersections, roadway and highway improvements, bridge repair/replacements
 - County, state, and federal lands intended to accommodate regional active recreation needs
 - Scenic Byways/Scenic Roadways

Supports county landscapes such as:

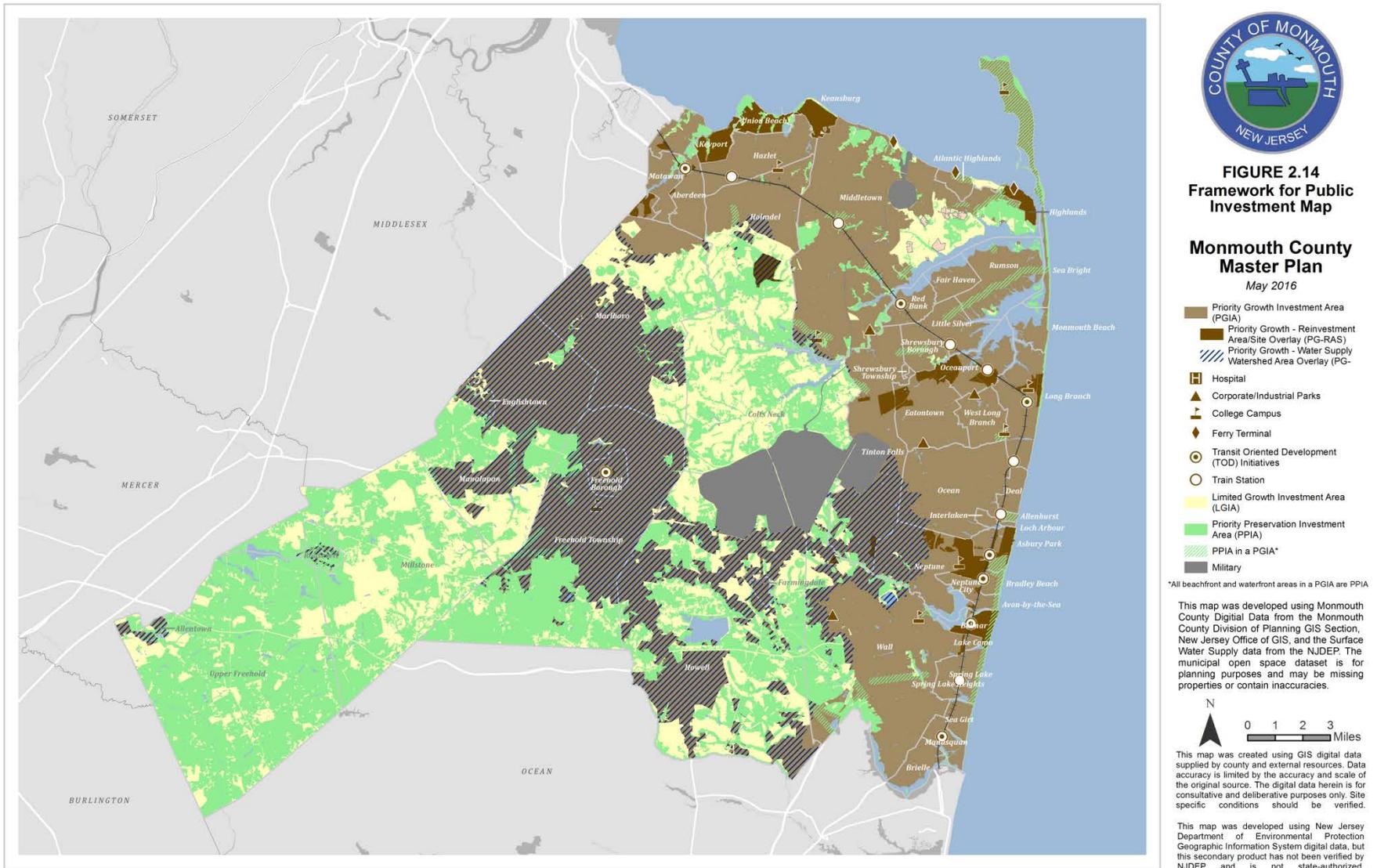
- Historic Sites, Places, and Districts
- Rural and Natural Environs
- Open Space including county, state, and federal current parklands and those intended for conservation
- Vistas and Viewsheds
- Scenic Byways/Scenic Roadways
- Beach and Waterfront

2.7.3 Framework for Public Investment Map

[Figure 2.14: Framework for Public Investment Map, 2016](#), provides an overall graphic representation of various investment areas based on Public Investment Area criteria and Community Landscapes as described in Section 2.7.2 Public Investment Areas.



Figure 2.14: Framework for Public Investment Map, 2016



2.7.4 Community Landscapes

Community landscapes provide a general description of the physical characteristics of places people may experience as they travel through the county. Landscapes are intended to be used as a planning tool to assist residents, stakeholders, and decisions makers in visualizing existing conditions and desired planning outcomes. A community can be comprised of multiple landscapes. For instance, the City of Asbury Park can be considered an Urban Center, Coastal Town, ACE (Arts Culture, and Entertainment) Hub that contains a Town Center (downtown), Commercial Corridor (Route 71 / Main Street), and Waterfront.

- **Urban and Regional Centers:** These are highly developed, walkable neighborhoods and communities with multi-modal transportation options, public services and amenities, and a range of housing stock including higher density residential uses such as apartments and high rises. They are often regarded as the historic and cultural centers of the county and provide for residents and visitors a mixed-use of services and activities. They either contain a diversified employment base and a central business district (CBD) or downtown comprised of a mix of retail and professional services. Included in this category are four municipalities: Asbury Park, Freehold Borough, Long Branch, and Red Bank.
- **Shore Towns and Coastal Places:** Commonly referred to as “the shore”, these communities are either entire towns or sections of a municipality that are highly susceptible to the effects of coastal storms due to their proximity to the ocean, bay, or estuary. Many places can be physically described as historic summer vacation towns or “pre-war” suburbs that often have a higher residential density, commercial core, are often walkable and/or offer multiple transit options. Public investment should focus on retrofitting existing infrastructure and improving the efficiency of existing systems, improving resiliency for coastal storm events, and mitigating impacts from sea level rise. Some limited TOD opportunities exist although rehabilitating existing housing stock, revitalizing existing commercial core areas, and maintaining a

heightened sense of community character is often more desirous. These places are often tourist destinations and experience a large population influx during summer months. Many host local festivals, fairs, arts and cultural events throughout the year (see ACE Hubs).

- **Interior Towns and Villages:** Interior towns and villages include Allentown, Englishtown, Freehold Borough, Farmingdale, Matawan, and Roosevelt. These noncoastal, “pre-war” communities often contain a historic central business core surrounded by well-established residential neighborhoods developed during various eras. Only Roosevelt Borough bucks this description with its own unique history as the Depression Era “Jersey Homestead.” Public investment should focus on retrofitting existing infrastructure and improving efficiency of existing systems, improving resiliency against increasingly severe storm events, rehabilitating existing housing stock, and revitalizing existing commercial core areas. Historic preservation efforts should seek to protect community character through the implementation of design elements that respect “place distinction” while allowing for a variety of compatible contemporary uses to spur private reinvestment.
- **Historic Sites, Places, and Districts:** Many historic locations throughout the county are defined by a historic site, building, estate, crossroad, or a concentration of such components as identified in the Monmouth County Historic Sites Inventory, placement on the National or State Registers of Historic Places, and/or identified in a local master plan. Examples of historic nodes and places include Holmdel Village (Holmdel), Navesink (Middletown), and Allenwood (Wall). Historic districts are those listed on the State or Federal Register of Historic Places and/or identified local master plans.
- **Beach and Waterfront:** Public investment in waterfront locations (coastal and estuarine) include coastal flood hazard mitigation projects, improvements in resiliency for waterfront commercial properties, enhanced building requirements in Special Flood Hazard Areas, and more resilient utility and infrastructure upgrades.



- **Commercial Business Districts (CBDs):** These places are often considered the center or “heart” of the community. They provide a variety of mixed-uses including residential, retail, and professional services all within a defined district within a larger community. A CBD can be found at a variety of scales from a cluster of commercial buildings to a fully built downtown. For the purpose of this *Plan*, CBDs include downtowns, town centers, village centers, main streets, and larger scale commercial nodes not found along a commercial corridor (see Commercial Corridor description). Diversification of uses, reinforcing community character, and the renovation and repurposing of abandoned or historic structures in these locations is strongly encouraged.
- **ACE (Arts, Culture, and Entertainment) Hubs:** The *Coastal Monmouth Plan (2010)* introduced the concept of ACEs. An ACE is a special designation given to a host community with a high concentration of arts and cultural activities which serves as a destination for both locals and visitors alike. They are often lively locations with an active nightlife attributed in some part to proximate cultural attractions. The five ACEs identified in the *Coastal Monmouth Plan* included Asbury Park, Belmar, Long Branch, Manasquan, and Red Bank. This *Master Plan* recognizes these five communities and adds the Boroughs of Atlantic Highlands, Freehold, and Keyport to the list of ACEs. Matawan and Allentown Boroughs are viewed as emerging ACEs as they are in the process of broadening their cultural offerings.
- **Suburban Areas:** Considered the automobile dependent “post-war” communities, these places are defined by the distinct separation of residential from nonresidential uses and limited connectivity between uses. Public investment should provide for the limited expansion of infrastructure, maintain, and improve existing infrastructure, encourage the use of greener engineering alternatives and sustainable actions, improve or maintain existing levels of public service, and diversify housing options. Communities in these locations are host to many of the county’s historic sites, places, and districts.
- **Commercial Corridors:** Commercial corridors accommodate commercial needs on a larger/regional scale providing for a mix of retail, wholesale, and professional services intended primarily for the motoring public. Investment should focus on highway revitalization and design enhancements, better onsite circulation, improved connectivity between adjacent properties and uses, traffic congestion mitigation, multi-modal enhancements, and improved vehicular and pedestrian safety.
- **Rural and Natural Environs:** Public infrastructure such as sewer and water are practically nonexistent as these areas are planned for lower residential density and lower intensity commercial development that is compatible with the natural carrying capacity of the environment. Innovative land use techniques that protect and conserve natural resources, open space, and farmland are strongly encouraged as a means to protect such resources. Public investment in the acquisition of open space for conservation purposes and farmland preservation in conjunction with the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and long-term agricultural sustainable methods is a policy priority. Many historic farmsteads, places, and districts can be found in these locations throughout Monmouth County.
- **Open Space:** These are regional (county, state, and federal) open space facilities for the intended use and purpose of conservation, active recreation, or wildlife management.
- **Vistas and Viewsheds:** The visual perspective experienced from a particular vantage point that conveys exceptional or distinct beauty, interest, or frames the historic context of a place to the observer.
- **Scenic Byways/Scenic Roadways:** A designation given to a roadway that demonstrates one or more outstanding intrinsic quality including archaeological, cultural, historical, natural, recreational, and/or scenic. Existing state scenic byways in Monmouth County



include the Upper Freehold Historic Farmland Byway (Allentown and Upper Freehold). Additional county-based scenic byways are recommended in 6.0 Arts, Historic, and Cultural Resources. Existing scenic roadways are identified in [The Monmouth County Scenic Roadway Plan \(2001\)](#).

2.7.5 Community Landscapes Map

[Figure 2.15: Community Landscape Map](#) provides an overall graphic representation of community landscapes. The *Monmouth County Master Plan (2016)* Goals, Principles, and Objectives (GPOs) support recommendations for the continuation and strengthening of the various types of landscapes found throughout the county. Any community undergoing a planning study should conduct a visualization exercise that uses landscapes to identify appropriate goals, principals, and objectives for their community.



Figure 2.15: Community Landscape Map, 2016

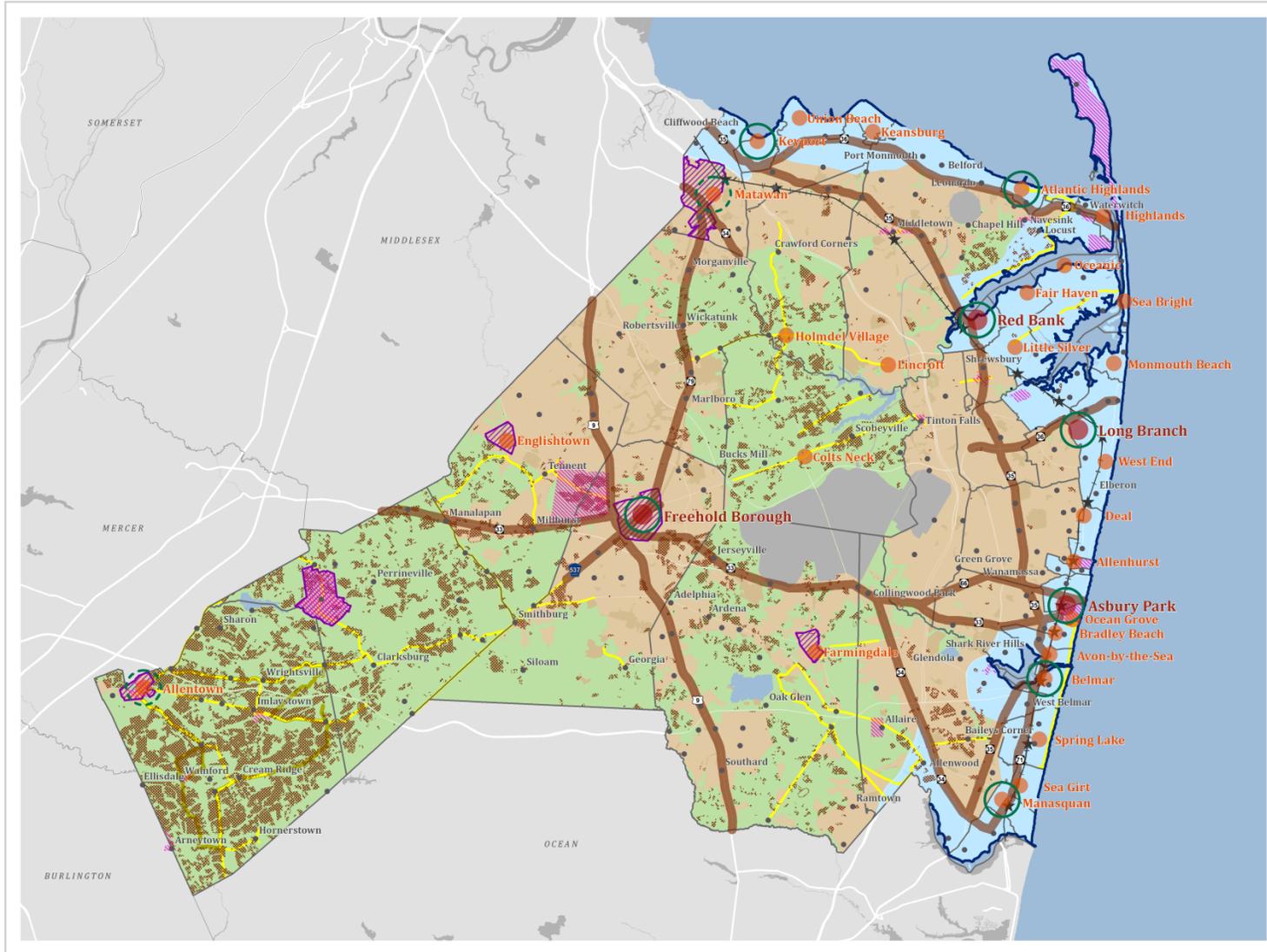


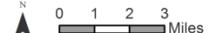
FIGURE 2.15
Community
Landscape Map

Monmouth County
Master Plan

May 2016

- Urban and Regional Center
- Commercial Business District
- Historic Village/Place
- Historic Shore Towns & Coastal Places
- Historic Town
- New Jersey and/or National Historic District
- Beach and Waterfront
- Arts, Culture, and Entertainment (ACE) Hub
- Emerging ACE Hub
- Suburban Area
- Commercial Corridor
- Rural & Natural Environ
- Agricultural Land
- Open Space
- Scenic Byway
- Scenic Roadway
- ★ Train Station
- Military

This map was developed using Monmouth County Digital Data from the Monmouth County Division of Planning GIS Section, and New Jersey Office of Planning GIS. Municipal open space was mapped using parcels and the NJDEP Green Acres Recreation and Open Space Inventory (ROSI) list. The municipal open space dataset is for planning purposes and may be missing properties or contain inaccuracies.



This map was created using GIS digital data supplied by county and external resources. Data accuracy is limited by the accuracy and scale of the original source. The digital data herein is for consultative and deliberative purposes only. Site specific conditions should be verified. This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by NJDEP and is not state-authorized.



