

**BOROUGH OF
CLOSTER
2019 MASTER PLAN
RE-EXAMINATION
REPORT**

BOROUGH OF CLOSTER, BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

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2019 Master Plan Re-Examination

INTRODUCTION

The preparation and adoption of the Master Plan is a function of the Planning Board as described by the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL). The MLUL also requires that the governing body provide for a general reexamination of its master plan and development regulations by the Planning Board every ten years. The Closter Planning Board adopted its last Reexamination Report in March 2009 that fulfilled the periodic examination requirements contained in N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89.

Closter's Master Planning History

Since 2009, the Closter Planning Board adopted a Historic Preservation Element in April 2011, and a 2018 Housing Element & Fair Share Plan that provides housing and demographic information and addresses its affordable housing obligation. Both reports are master planning documents.

A summary of the Borough's master planning documents follows:

- January 1958: Borough's first Master Plan
- November 1981: New Land Use Plan
- February 1985: District #3 Business Area Zone Study
- July 1987: Master Plan – Traffic and Community Facilities
- September 1987: Housing Plan Element
- October 1989: Recycling Plan Element
- September 1986: Master Plan Reexamination Report
- 1998: Housing Element and Fair Share Plan
- August 2001: Revised Housing Element and Fair Share Plan
- August 2002: Master Plan Reexamination Report
- May 2005: Stormwater Management Master Plan Element
- September 2006: Revised Stormwater Management Master Plan Element
- December 2006: Housing Element and Fair Share Plan
- October 2008: Housing Element and Fair Share Plan
- October 2008: Green Plan/Sustainability Initiative
- March 2009: Master Plan Reexamination Report

Components of a Reexamination Report

The requirements of a Reexamination Report are contained in N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89. The Reexamination Report must address the following:

1. *The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.*
2. *The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.*
3. *The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives.*
4. *The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.*
5. *The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law," P.L. 1992, c. 79 (C.40A:12A-1 et al.) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommend changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.*

This 2019 Reexamination Report covers the required components and provides discussion and analyses of several planning considerations. This Reexamination Report meets the statutory requirements for the Borough's review of its master planning documents. The Planning Board is considering the preparation of a new Master Plan prior to the next required Reexamination of its Master Plan in the year 2029. The Board has chosen to analyze the implications of its affordable housing plan as outlined in the 2018 Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, as well as provide adequate time for the development and occupancy of the Closter Plaza prior to consideration of a new Master Plan. Therefore, this Reexamination Report is sufficient to guide the Borough for the next 10 years, or act as a "starting point" should the Borough decide to prepare a new Master Plan prior to that date. This report is not meant to be a master plan, but it does provide guidance and recommendations to the Closter community.

Master Plan Subcommittee

A Master Plan Subcommittee, consisting of four Planning Board members as well as the Borough Planner and Borough Engineer, was established for the preparation of this Reexamination Report. The subcommittee discussed and analyzed land use issues relative to the preparation of this report. The subcommittee was proactive; its members formulated ideas and identified issues for research and discussion.

The Subcommittee recognized that the Borough of Closter is a fully developed community. Though Closter is primarily developed with residential uses, it does also contain established commercial, business and industrial areas. It is important that the Borough's land use regulations

and master planning documents recognize and reflect the developed nature of the Borough. An overall vision for this Reexamination Report is maintaining a positive quality of life for the Borough's residents.

To assist with the analysis and preparation of the 2019 Reexamination Report, the Master Plan Subcommittee hosted a public forum on February 11, 2019 at the Tenakill School. Participants were asked general questions on what they liked about Closter and what, if anything, they might change. They also were asked specific questions on land use and planning considerations. The attendees had the opportunity to ask questions and make comments. At the public forum, many attendees articulated that Closter has a "small town feel." Others commented, both at the forum and in the submitted surveys, that the Borough has a "sense of community." Finally, many respondents commented that the Borough is family-oriented, safe and quiet. The surveys containing the questions from the public forum are found in Appendix A of this Reexamination Report.

I. MAJOR PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES IN PRIOR REEXAMINATION REPORT

The 2019 Reexamination Report starts with a synopsis of the major problems and objectives that were identified in the 2009 Reexamination Report.

Land Development Ordinance/Land Use

1. Properties have been made nonconforming by amended zoning regulations; a substantial amount have sought variances. Study the coverage regulations within the ordinance.
2. Senior housing should be provided.
3. Modify subdivision ordinances to preclude creation of "stub-type, cul-de-sac streets."
4. Amend parking standards for permitted uses in the Borough.
5. Review permitted principal uses in the Commercial and Industrial Zone districts.

Downtown

1. Study the promotion of physical improvements and better marketing of the downtown commercial center. Establish a Special Improvement District (SID).
2. Rear facades of stores should be improved and renovated.

Circulation/Parking

1. Bicycle path and pedestrian improvements.
2. Secure extension of rail passenger service to Closter.
3. Improve traffic patterns on Herbert Ave.

Property Maintenance, Paper Streets, Utilities/Facilities

1. Adoption of a property maintenance code.
2. Establish a committee on paper streets.

Reaffirmation of Closter's Land Use Plan Goals & Objectives

1. Promote/protect environmentally sensitive land, streams and reservoirs.
2. Encourage a desirable visual environment.
3. Encourage the compatibility of different land uses, to lessen cost of development and encourage the efficient expenditure of public funds.
4. Encourage best possible design for new developments.
5. Promote continued maintenance and rehabilitation of the Borough's housing stock and community facilities and utilities.
6. Protect watershed land in the Borough.
7. Encourage development of new recreation facilities in appropriate locations to serve the entire community.
8. Promote the recognition and preservation of historic sites and uses, consistent with the Smart Growth principles as articulated in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.
9. Provide limited commercial uses to serve the professional and personal service needs of the community.
10. Improve the condition and compatibility of industrially zoned land in the community.
11. Improve existing transportation routes and the construction of new roads in a safe and efficient manner.
12. Promote the efficient expansion of education and other community facilities.
13. Provide buffer zones between residential and non-residential areas.
14. Encourage the revitalization of retail uses both in the downtown and in the Closter Plaza area.
15. Prepare and adopt a plan for promoting sustainable growth and revitalization in Closter.
16. Comply with the mandates of the Fair Housing Act with respect to the provision of affordable housing, including housing for seniors.

17. Continue to improve sidewalks and promote walkability throughout the community.

Downtown Revitalization

1. Complete the improvements to the south parking lot and, without substantial cost, improve the rear facades that face parking lots.
2. Enforce prohibition of unnecessary truck traffic in the downtown, except along designated truck routes.
3. Implement traffic-calming measures on Closter Dock Road.
4. Encourage shared access and new parking lots between adjacent private properties to yield more parking spaces and to limit curb cuts.
5. Allow residential apartments above ground floor retail as an inducement to improve and re-tenant ground floor retail stores.
6. Encourage downtown property owners to maintain the integrity of their historic buildings by utilizing the historic Design Guidelines when renovating or expanding.
7. Provide technical, and if available, financial assistance to downtown businesses for streetscape and facade improvements.
8. Market and promote the strengths and attractions of downtown retail stores.
9. Encourage outdoor dining.
10. Capitalize upon and strengthen the inherent qualities of Closter's downtown by continuing to implement recommendations and improvements from prior master plans and downtown studies.
11. Continue to work with the developers of Closter Plaza and Closter Commons in establishing a market-driven plan for its revitalization. Closter Plaza has experienced revitalization.
12. Adopt an SID for the downtown, Closter plaza and Closter Commons, and all of the adjacent retail and office areas.

Industrial/Residential Compatibility

1. Convene a subcommittee of residents and industrial/business owners to negotiate a fair and reasonable way of instituting improvements to benefit both sides.
2. Allow on-site overnight parking of commercial vehicles in industrial and business zones, but require site plan approval for said parking, as well as review of on-site circulation and buffering and other operational improvements.

3. Continue to prohibit and strictly enforce the overnight parking or staging of commercial vehicles on residential properties.
4. Enforce parking, zoning and other performance and environmental codes on industrial and business properties that present a nuisance or disturbance to adjacent residential properties.
5. Utilize available Borough funds and outside funding sources to institute improvements to industrial areas.

Conservation Zone

1. Designate all public-owned property that is intended for conservation and passive recreation within a Conservation Zone.
2. Include within the Conservation Zone all public, quasi-public and privately-owned properties that are so environmentally constrained as to be undevelopable.
3. Pursue funding that would permit the purchase of development rights of the Demaree property and limit its future use to agricultural purposes.
4. Pursue the outright purchase of the Watkins-Blanche Ave. property/portions thereof for open space.
5. In the absence of success of #3 and #4, reevaluate the zoning of such properties to determine if other techniques would allow for partial preservation.

Closter Green Plan

1. Implement the action items from the Green Plan to the extent practical and economically feasible.

Piermont Road Between High Street and Homans

1. Rezone the area of Piermont Road between High Street and Homans Ave. for Professional Office/Residential, allowing single-family residential use, home professional office, professional office or mixed use with ground floor office and apartments above the ground floor.

Shade Tree and Sidewalks

1. Encourage or mandate the replacement or addition of grass strips along the curb lines of all Borough streets and the addition or replacement of shade trees every 50 ft. along Borough streets. Trees should be planted within the front yard as close to the right-of-way as possible, on private property.
2. Where such improvements are mandated but cannot be met, require a payment in lieu of planting and use such funds to plant shade trees elsewhere in the Borough.
3. Prepare a sidewalk replacement/improvement plan for the Borough and apply for funding whenever such funds become available.

Undersized Lots

1. Encourage the sale of undersized lots in residential areas to adjacent property owners for consolidation and enlargement of existing lots, rather than permitting such lots to be utilized for accommodating new single-family homes.
2. Deal with applications for building new principal structures on undersized lots on a case-by-case basis.

Other Recommendations

1. Enforcement of zoning and property maintenance codes, including signage.
2. Establish bike paths to connect neighborhoods to the downtown, as well as to parks, the nature center, and if implemented, the Northern Valley Greenway system.
3. While restoration of commuter rail service with a station in downtown Closter is unlikely, continue to work with other communities on the line to lobby NJ Transit and the State for implementation.
4. Implement many of the previously recommended traffic improvements.
5. Review principal permitted uses in the Commercial and Industrial zones to determine which uses are appropriate.
6. Enforcement of maintaining properties in accordance with approved plans.
7. Provide for services in support of seniors, such as a senior transportation service. The Housing Element does not include senior or age-restricted housing.
8. Engage traffic consultants – (1) additional crossing of rail line to ease congestion in the downtown (2) safe-route to schools plan (3) designated bicycle routes linking residential areas to the downtown, parking and open space (4) rerouting the bus routes through Closter (5) Providing commuter parking or jitney services to bring residents to mass transit stops.
9. Set forth regulations and procedures for the simultaneous and integrated review of development when tree removal and soil movement are required.

II. THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES HAVE BEEN REDUCED OR HAVE INCREASED

This section first lists the goal or comment from the 2009 Reexamination Report. The 2019 response to the comment follows in *italic font*.

Land Development Ordinance/Land Use

1. Properties have been made nonconforming by amended zoning regulations; a substantial amount have sought variances. Study the coverage regulations within the ordinance.
2019 Response: This comment remains valid in that the Board of Adjustment's Annual Reports should be monitored for variance requests and recommendations. However, revisions to the coverage regulations are not recommended.

The 2017/2018 Board of Adjustment Report include the recommendations listed below. Several of these recommendations pre-date 2017. For example, recommendations (a) – (f) were also included in the 2013/2014 and 2015/2016 Board of Adjustment Reports. Recommendations (g)-(j) were also included in the 2015/2016 Annual Report.

- a) Modernize permitted uses in the Business Zones.
- b) Require land use approval for building code change of use applications.
- c) Regulate rear yard coverage
- d) Adopt a better definition of impervious coverage.
- e) Strengthen escrow requirements.
- f) Standardize engineering requirements for site improvements.
- g) Implement site improvements for partial tear-downs and complete tear-downs.
- h) Include notification language in soil movement permit approvals relative to maximum building coverage and site improvement coverage.
- i) Establish an "advisory" architectural review committee
- j) Recommend an ordinance requiring property maintenance.
- k) Revise the definition of floor area to include double-height ceilings.
- l) Limit the height of accessory buildings.
- m) Authorize the Board to review Soil Moving Permit applications.

Several of these recommendations are addressed in this Reexamination Report; some of the recommendations are administrative and should be addressed by the Governing Body. This Reexamination Report also recognizes the importance of property maintenance, height of accessory buildings and a thorough review of the permitted uses in the nonresidential zones (i.e Business, Commercial and Industrial Zones). This Reexamination Report does not recommend revisions to coverage regulations at this time.

2. Provide senior housing. *2019 Response:* This recommendation is no longer appropriate for Closter. As a developed community, there is a lack of available land for age-restricted housing developments. In addition, it appears that the demand for such housing is not sufficient to support an age-restricted development. This Reexamination Report does not continue the recommendation of providing senior or age-restricted housing.
3. Modify subdivision ordinances to preclude creation of "stub-type, cul-de-sac streets."
2019 Response: This recommendation has been addressed by ordinance revisions.
4. Amend parking standards for permitted uses in the Borough. *2019 Response:* This recommendation is no longer applicable. The Borough has conducted a study of its

parking requirements. The study concluded that the parking standards were sufficient and that no revisions were needed.

5. Review permitted principal uses in the Commercial and Industrial Zone districts. 2019 Response: *This remains an appropriate goal. Reviewing permitted uses in the nonresidential zones is an important recommendation for the Borough. A thorough study, and potential revisions, of the uses permitted in each district is recommended to confirm that the permitted uses are relevant and appropriate. The Board of Adjustment's annual reports also recommend a "modernization" of the permitted uses in the business zones.*

Downtown

1. Study the promotion of physical improvements and to better market the downtown commercial center. Establish a Special Improvement District (SID). 2019 Response: *The first part of the recommendation remains valid, but the establishment of a Special Improvement District is no longer recommended.*
2. Rear facades of stores should be improved and renovated. 2019 Response: *This remains an appropriate goal. Property maintenance enforcement is encouraged to achieve this goal.*

Circulation/Parking

1. Bicycle path and pedestrian improvements. 2019 Response: *The Borough supports bicycle path and pedestrian improvements as part of the Complete Streets Initiative. The National Complete Streets Coalition describes Complete Streets as, "Complete Streets are for everyone. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users... [so that] pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transportation users of all ages and ability are able to safely move along and across [the street]."*
2. Work with NJ Transit to secure extension of rail passenger service to Closter. 2019 Response: *This may no longer be possible due to the proposed Northern Valley Greenway project. The Borough should continue to work with NJ Transit to secure alternative transit options, including bus and jitney service.*
3. Improve traffic patterns on Herbert Ave. 2019 Response: *This remains an appropriate goal that may be easier to implement due to the decommissioning of the rail line.*

Property Maintenance, Paper Streets, Utilities/Facilities

1. Adoption of a property maintenance code. 2019 Response: *Closter has a local property maintenance code that should be reviewed. Enforcement is important to maintain the Borough's character and positive quality of life.*

2. Establish a committee on paper streets. 2019 Response: This goal is no longer appropriate for Closter due to the minimal number of remaining paper streets. Rather, the recommendation is to vacate streets as necessary and on a case by case basis.

Reaffirmation of Closter's Land Use Plan Goals & Objectives

1. Promote/protect environmentally sensitive land, streams and reservoirs. 2019 Response: Reaffirm and continue this goal. NJDEP regulations require buffers around C-1 waters; all of Closter's regulated waterways are classified as C-1 waters.
2. Encourage a desirable visual environment. 2019 Response: This remains an appropriate goal in 2019. Consideration of design standards within the ordinance is recommended. Buffers between residential and nonresidential uses should be maintained as required by ordinance. Landscape plantings are recommended to mitigate the impact of different uses.
3. Encourage the compatibility of different land uses, to lessen cost of development and encourage the efficient expenditure of public funds. 2019 Response: This goal should be revised. The Borough only encourages mixed-use development as identified in its 2018 Housing Element & Fair Share Plan and as is presently permitted by zoning ordinance.
4. Encourage best possible design for new developments. 2019 Response: This goal is appropriate assuming that new developments are proposed in conformance with current zoning requirements.
5. Promote continued maintenance and rehabilitation of the Borough's housing stock and community facilities and utilities. 2019 Response: This continues to be a valid and important goal for Closter.
6. Protect watershed land in the Borough. 2019 Response: The Borough has implemented this goal with the adoption of the Conservation Zone.
7. Encourage development of new recreation facilities in appropriate locations to serve the entire community. 2019 Response: This goal should be revised to encourage maintenance, updating and connecting of the Borough's recreation facilities. Many at the public forum indicated that Closter has adequate recreation facilities. The exception is the swim club, which needs to undergo environmental clean-up and then should be an open space or recreation use. The swim club property could also provide a connection to other passive recreation sites.

The Borough's tax levy includes an open space component. Since the 2009 Reexamination Report, appropriations from the open space tax levy have funded approximately 20 projects, ranging from property acquisition to environmental studies, lighting improvements and deer fencing.

8. Promote the recognition and preservation of historic sites and uses, consistent with the Smart Growth principles as articulated in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. 2019 Response: *This has been done and the Borough adopted a Master Plan Historic Preservation Element in 2011.*
9. Provide limited commercial uses to serve the professional and personal service needs of the community. 2019 Response: *This goal has been met through the revitalization of Closter Plaza. The Planning Board recognizes the successful revitalization of the Closter Plaza since the last Master Plan Reexamination Report. The Plaza serves retail, athletic, service and entertainment needs for both the local population as well as Northern Valley. The remainder of the business and commercial areas also serve the local community's professional and personal service needs.*
10. Improve the condition and compatibility of industrially zoned land in the community. *This goal remains relevant. 2019 Response: The industrial zones' visual condition and compatibility with adjacent uses remains an important goal. Buffers are important between industrial and residential uses. However, much of the industrial areas are developed, which results in limited opportunities for buffers. Any new development should incorporate buffer areas. In addition, enforcement is needed to confirm that land use board approvals and conditions of approval are being followed. Property maintenance for both residential and nonresidential properties remains a quality of life issue for the Borough and its residents. Finally, restrictions on fencing in nonresidential zones is recommended, especially when an industrial or commercial use abuts a residential zone or use.*
11. Improve existing transportation routes and the construction of new roads in a safe and efficient manner. 2019 Response: *Maintain the existing roadway network so that all modes of transportation function in a safe and efficient manner.*
12. Promote the efficient expansion of education and other community facilities. 2019 Response: *This remains a valid goal. The library has been expanded since the last Reexamination Report and also provides many community services to residents of Closter.*
13. Provide buffer zones between residential and non-residential areas. 2019 Response: *This remains an important quality of life goal for the Borough. Landscape plantings should be used where possible to help with buffering, and all landscape plantings should be properly maintained. Again, enforcement is needed to confirm that all land use board approvals are being followed.*
14. Encourage the revitalization of retail uses both in the downtown and in the Closter Plaza area. 2019 Response: *Since the last Reexamination Report, the Closter Plaza has been completely remodeled and is now occupied by a variety of retail, service and entertainment establishments. The Plaza contains mostly experiential uses, which are a popular option for "brick and mortar" retail areas. In addition, the Borough recently adopted an ordinance permitting mixed use (commercial and residential) in the western section of the Business "B" district, which should help with the revitalization of this*

section of the Business Zone. Promotion of the continued improvement of downtown Closter, in accordance with permitted uses contained in the Borough's adopted ordinances and master planning recommendations, remains an appropriate goal. Focusing on the appearance of the downtown is encouraged, as well as enforcement of the sign ordinance within the downtown and other nonresidential areas.

15. Prepare and adopt a plan for promoting sustainable growth and revitalization in Closter. 2019 Response: *The Borough has adopted a Sustainable Initiative, also known as the Green Plan as part of its Master Plan. Consideration of sustainable development, based on its economic feasibility, is recommended.*
16. Comply with the mandates of the Fair Housing Act with respect to the provision of affordable housing, including housing for seniors. 2019 Response: *The Borough has actively and successfully participated in the affordable housing process. However, the 2018 Housing Element and Fair Share Plan did not include age-restricted affordable housing due to restrictions on such housing.*
17. Continue to improve sidewalks and promote walkability throughout the community. 2019 Response: *This remains a valid goal; this report recommends the continued improvement of both sidewalks and curbs, as well as promoting walkability throughout the community.*

Downtown Revitalization

1. Complete the improvements to the south parking lot and improve the rear facades that face parking lots. 2019 Response: *This remains an appropriate goal. Improvement of rear facades is a property maintenance and quality of life issue. Improvements to the South Parking Lot and the rear facades that face parking lots presents challenges due to the need for negotiations with individual property owners.*
2. Enforce prohibition of unnecessary truck traffic in the downtown, except along designated truck routes. 2019 Response: *This remains an appropriate goal.*
3. Implement traffic-calming measures on Closter Dock Road. 2019 Response: *This remains an appropriate goal.*
4. Encourage shared access and new parking lots between adjacent private properties to yield more parking spaces and to limit curb cuts. 2019 Response: *This remains an appropriate goal for nonresidential uses. In addition, shielded parking is encouraged so that parking areas are less visible in the downtown area.*
5. Allow for residential apartments above ground floor retail as an inducement to improve and re-tenant ground floor retail stores. 2019 Response: *This has been accomplished through zoning revisions adopted in December 2018, in response to recommendations in the 2018 Housing Element and Fair Share Plan. Any development should be in accordance with the permitted uses included in the adopted zoning ordinance.*

6. Encourage downtown property owners to maintain the integrity of their historic buildings by utilizing the historic Design Guidelines when renovating or expanding. 2019 Response: *The Borough adopted an Historic Preservation Element in 2011 and utilizes design guidelines in its review of land use applications for historic buildings. The Borough has a very active Historic Preservation Commission, which reviews all historic building renovation plans.*
7. Provide technical, and if available, financial assistance to downtown businesses for streetscape and facade improvements. 2019 Response: *This remains an appropriate goal.*
8. Market and promote the strengths and attractions of downtown retail stores. 2019 Response: *This remains an appropriate goal. Several participants at the public forum recommended using marketing or "branding" to improve the visual appearance of the older commercial area. Signage and color schemes could be utilized to unite the downtown area.*
9. Encourage outdoor dining. 2019 Response: *This goal has been achieved; outdoor dining is now permitted by ordinance in Closter.*
10. Capitalize upon and strengthen the inherent qualities of Closter's downtown by continuing to implement recommendations and improvements from prior master plans and downtown studies. 2019 Response: *The Borough has accomplished this goal with the revitalization of Closter Plaza.*
11. Continue to work with the developers of Closter Plaza and Closter Commons in establishing a market-driven plan for its revitalization. Closter Plaza has experienced revitalization. 2019 Response: *Since the time of the last Reexamination Report, the Closter Plaza has been completely rebuilt and revitalized. This Reexamination Report recommends establishing a connection and potentially shared parking between the Plaza and the adjacent Commons to help with improvement of the Commons retail space. A cross-easement between the two properties was included in the Closter Plaza approval.*
12. Adopt an SID for the downtown, Closter Plaza and Closter Commons, and all of the adjacent retail and office areas. 2019 Response: *This no longer remains a valid recommendation or goal for the Borough.*

Industrial/Residential Compatibility

1. Convene a subcommittee of residents and industrial/business owners to negotiate a fair and reasonable way of instituting improvements to benefit both sides. 2019 Response: *This has not been done but remains an appropriate recommendation. However, implementation is challenging due to the fact that the Chamber of Commerce was dissolved in 2017.*
2. Allow on-site overnight parking of commercial vehicles in industrial and business zones, but require site plan approval for said parking, as well as review of on-site circulation and

buffering and other operational improvements. 2019 Response: *This no longer remains a valid goal for the Borough.*

3. Continue to prohibit and strictly enforce the overnight parking or staging of commercial vehicles on residential properties. 2019 Response: *This remains an appropriate recommendation due to its impact on quality of life for residents.*
4. Enforce parking, zoning and other performance and environmental codes on industrial and business properties that present a nuisance or disturbance to adjacent residential properties. 2019 Response: *This remains an important recommendation due to its impact on quality of life issues for residents.*
5. Utilize available Borough funds and outside funding sources to institute improvements to industrial areas. 2019 Response: *This no longer is a valid goal for the Borough. Improvements in the Industrial areas that are in accordance with adopted zoning regulations are acceptable, but the comments about Borough funds and outside funding sources are no longer valid.*

Conservation Zone

1. Designate all public-owned property that is intended for conservation and passive recreation within a Conservation Zone. 2019 Response: *This goal has been accomplished.*
2. Include within the Conservation Zone all public, quasi-public and privately-owned properties that are so environmentally constrained as to be undevelopable. 2019 Response: *The Conservation Zone includes public properties.*
3. Pursue funding that would permit the purchase of development rights of the Demaree property and limit its future use to agricultural purposes. 2019 Response: *This recommendation remains valid.*
4. Pursue the outright purchase of the Watkins-Blanche Ave. property/portions thereof for open space. 2019 Response: *The Watkins- Blanche Ave. property has been sold and is now owned by another private entity. However, the property remains an important potential connection between Blanche Ave. and the Closter Nature Center. A future purchase of this site, or another site that also helps to connect the Nature Center to other public properties could be accomplished with funds from Closter's Open Space Trust Fund.*
5. In the absence of success of #3 and #4, reevaluate the zoning of such properties to determine if other techniques would allow for partial preservation. 2019 Response: *This no longer remains an appropriate goal; this report does not recommend cluster zoning in Closter. This report does encourage property acquisition for the sites referenced above.*

Closter Green Plan

1. Implement the action items from the Green Plan to the extent practical and economically feasible. *2019 Response: Consideration of sustainable development, based on its economic feasibility, is recommended.*

Piermont Road Between High Street and Homans

1. Rezone the area of Piermont Road between High Street and Homans Ave. for Professional Office/Residential, allowing single-family residential use, home professional office, professional office or mixed use with ground floor office and apartments above the ground floor. *2019 Response: Remove reference to mixed use with ground floor office and apartments above the ground floor. Mixed use has been identified as appropriate in one section of the Business District and is neither appropriate nor in character with Piermont Road between High Street and Homans. The Corner Farm, which is located near this study area, was rezoned to permit quadruplex buildings (residential buildings containing four dwellings) as recommended in the 2018 Housing Element and Fair Share Plan. Although the Zoning Board of Adjustment recently approved a use variance for a day care center in this area; however, day care centers, schools and commercial uses are not recommended for the referenced section of Piermont Road. The remainder of the recommendation remains appropriate.*

Shade Tree and Sidewalks

1. Encourage or mandate the replacement or addition of grass strips along the curb lines of all Borough streets and the addition or replacement of shade trees every 50 ft. along Borough streets. Trees should be planted within the front yard as close to the right-of-way as possible, on private property. *2019 Response: This goal is being met in the Borough; tree planting does not occur within the right-of-way. Finally, preservation of the Borough's mature trees is a priority that enhances Closter's environment and quality of life. The Borough's tree removal regulations should be reviewed to confirm that preservation of mature trees remains a top priority.*
2. Where such improvements are mandated but cannot be met, require a payment in lieu of planting and use such funds to plant shade trees elsewhere in the Borough. *2019 Response: This goal is being met in the Borough per ordinance requirements.*
3. Prepare a sidewalk replacement/improvement plan for the Borough and apply for funding whenever such funds become available. *2019 Response: This remains a valid goal in the Borough. Closter has improved sidewalks near Tenakill School; continued improvements are recommended.*

Undersized Lots

1. Encourage the sale of undersized lots in residential areas to adjacent property owners for consolidation and enlargement of existing lots, rather than permitting such lots to be

utilized for accommodating new single-family homes. 2019 Response: *This remains an appropriate goal.*

2. Deal with applications for building new principal structures on undersized lots on a case-by-case basis. 2019 Response: *The Land Use Boards have followed this recommendation, which remains appropriate. Generally, the Borough does not encourage the formation of undersized lots via subdivision approval. The following language from the prior Reexamination Report remains valid, "To this end, this Reexamination strongly discourages the building of new homes or buildings on substantially undersized lots, while at the same time recognizing that a real hardship may warrant variances, to the extent that the requirements of the Municipal Land Use Law relating to the grant of variances, both the affirmative proofs and negative criteria, can be satisfied."*

Other Recommendations

1. Enforcement of zoning and property maintenance codes, including signage. 2019 Response: *This remains an appropriate recommendation.*
2. Establish bike paths to connect neighborhoods to the downtown, as well as to parks, the nature center, and if implemented, the Closter greenway or railway system. 2019 Response: *This goal is appropriate with respect to the proposed Northern Valley Greenway system and the Complete Streets Initiative. A creative solution is needed to provide the bicycle paths considering the Borough's existing roadway system and limited space.*
3. While restoration of commuter rail service with a station in downtown Closter is unlikely, continue to work with other communities on the line to lobby NJ Transit and the State for implementation. 2019 Response: *It is recommended that the Borough continue to work with NJ Transit on alternative transit options, including additional bus service and jitney service. In the event that the Northern Valley Greenway initiative does not come to fruition, the Borough can reconsider potential commuter rail service. The Borough can also consider discussions with NJ Transit on restoring commuter rail services to the CSX rail line; however, this is an unlikely proposal due to costs, and the fact that NJ Transit does not own the rail line.*
4. Implement many of the previously recommended traffic improvements. 2019 Response: *This remains an appropriate recommendation.*
5. Review principal permitted uses in the Commercial and Industrial zones to determine which uses are appropriate. 2019 Response: *This remains an appropriate recommendation. In particular, retail and commercial uses have changed due to the increased popularity of online shopping. Commercial areas need to be destinations by offering restaurants, services and experiential activities. These recommendations will be discussed in a later section of this Reexamination Report.*

6. Enforcement of maintaining properties in accordance with approved plans. 2019 Response: *This impacts quality of life issues and remains an appropriate recommendation.*
7. Provide for services in support of seniors, such as a senior transportation service. The Housing Element does not include senior or age-restricted housing. 2019 Response: *However, the provision of transportation and recreation services for the senior population remains an appropriate goal. The Borough should continue the shared senior bus service and providing recreation activities for the senior citizen population. Consideration should be given to expanding transportation services for the senior population where possible. More than 25% of the Borough's population was 55 or older per the 2010 Census.*
8. Engage traffic consultants to study the (1) additional crossing of rail line to ease congestion in the downtown (2) safe-route to schools plan (3) designated bicycle routes linking residential areas to the downtown, parking and open space (4) rerouting the bus routes through Closter (5) Providing commuter parking or jitney services to bring residents to mass transit stops. 2019 Response: *Item #1 is no longer valid because the rail line is decommissioned. Item #2 has been completed. Item #3 remains valid, and should include linkage to bus transit. Items #4 and #5 are appropriate goals although traffic consultants may not be necessary.*
9. Set forth regulations and procedures for the simultaneous and integrated review of development when tree removal and soil movement are required. 2019 Response: *This goal has been accomplished via ordinance revisions for soil movement. At the time of preparation of this report, a tree preservation ordinance is under consideration. Preservation of mature trees is a priority of this Reexamination Report.*

Historic Preservation

In April 2011 the Closter Planning Board adopted an Historic Preservation Plan. The Plan provides a history of Closter, outlines the importance of historic preservation, and lists the Borough's historic preservation efforts to date. The Plan provides a listing of designated landmarks in Closter. The Plan provides the following eight policies to guide historic preservation in Closter:

1. Preserve and protect historic, architectural, cultural, archaeological and aesthetic resources and the spatial relationships of these resources.
2. Cultivate education, understanding, appreciation and civic pride in the beauty and accomplishments of the Borough's past and promote use of the historic area for education, pleasure and welfare of the public.
3. Promote heritage-based economic growth that furthers historic preservation goals in Closter.

4. Identify, designate and regulate Historic Districts and Historic Sites to preserve their intrinsic value.
5. Maintain cohesive historic neighborhoods, ensure a compatible and harmonious context for historic buildings, structures, sites and districts while respecting scale and existing footprints, and prevent new construction that would be destructive of neighborhood character.
6. Prevent unwarranted demolition, destruction or other actions disruptive to historic resources and encourage sensitive rehabilitation of these buildings and structures.
7. Pursue smart and sustainable approaches, where possible, to accomplish these goals.
8. Engage, involve and communicate with stakeholders and all citizens about the importance of preserving historic resources.

III. THE EXTENT TO WHICH THERE HAVE BEEN SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE ASSUMPTIONS, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES FORMING THE BASIS FOR THE MASTER PLAN OR DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS AS LAST REVISED, WITH PARTICULAR REGARD TO THE DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND LAND USES, HOUSING CONDITIONS, CIRCULATION, CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES, ENERGY CONSERVATION, COLLECTION, DISPOSITION AND RECYCLING OF DESIGNATED RECYCLABLE MATERIALS, AND CHANGES IN STATE, COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES.

Local Changes: Demographics

The 2018 Housing Element and Fair Share Plan included a complete demographic analysis with information on population, housing and employment. The demographic analysis is incorporated herein by reference, and a few tables have been selected for inclusion in this Reexamination Report.

Table 1 shows the population trends for the Borough of Closter and Bergen County from 1930 to 2010. As shown, Closter's population increased from 1930 to 1970, decreased from 1970 to 1990 and remained fairly constant from 2000 through 2010. The greatest population increase occurred from 1950 to 1960, when Closter's population increased from 3,376 to 7,767, a growth of almost 4,400 persons or over 130 percent. The Borough's population peaked in 1970 at 8,604 persons, then declined by over 5 percent in 1980, and declined by almost 1 percent in 1990. Since then, the population increased by almost 300 persons in 2000 and then decreased by 10 persons in 2010.

Table 1
POPULATION CHANGE, 1930 TO 2010
Borough of Closter

Borough of Closter

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Change</u>	
		<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1930	2,502	-----	-----
1940	2,603	101	4.04
1950	3,376	773	29.70
1960	7,767	4,391	130.07
1970	8,604	837	10.78
1980	8,164	(440)	(5.11)
1990	8,094	(70)	(0.86)
2000	8,383	289	3.57
2010	8,373	(10)	(0.12)

Bergen County

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Change</u>	
		<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1930	364,977	-----	-----
1940	409,646	44,669	12.24
1950	539,139	129,493	31.61
1960	780,255	241,116	44.72
1970	897,148	116,893	14.98
1980	845,385	(51,763)	(5.77)
1990	825,380	(20,005)	(2.37)
2000	884,118	58,738	7.12
2010	905,116	20,998	2.38

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Closter's population by age groups for 2000 and 2010 are shown on Table 2. Increases were posted in the 15-24, 45-54, 55-64, and 85 and older age cohorts.

Table 2
POPULATION BY AGE, 2000 & 2010
Borough of Closter

	<u>2000 Population</u>		<u>2010 Population</u>	
	<u>Persons</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Persons</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Under 5	546	6.51	331	3.95
5-14	1,408	16.80	1,366	16.31
15-24	797	9.51	1,067	12.74
25-34	743	8.86	509	6.08
35-44	1,611	19.22	1,205	14.39
45-54	1,339	15.97	1,656	19.78
55-64	837	9.98	1,109	13.24
65-74	603	7.19	599	7.15
75-84	391	4.66	386	4.61
85+	108	1.29	145	1.73
TOTALS	8,383	100	8,373	100

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 & 2010.

Table 3 provides the age cohort distribution for Closter and Bergen County. As shown, the Borough and County posted increases in three of the same age groups. Both Closter and Bergen County posted increases in the 15-24, 45-54, and 55-64 age cohorts. The Borough showed an increase in the 65 and older age group while the County remained the same.

Table 3
PERCENTAGE POPULATION DISTRIBUTION, 2000 & 2010
Borough of Closter and County of Bergen

	<u>2000</u>		<u>2010</u>	
	<u>Borough</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Borough</u>	<u>County</u>
Under 5	6.5	6.3	4.0	5.6
5-14	16.8	13.1	16.3	12.8
15-24	9.5	10.3	12.7	11.6
25-34	8.9	13.3	6.1	11.6
35-44	19.2	17.3	14.4	14.3
45-54	16.0	14.6	19.8	16.3
55-64	10.0	9.9	13.2	12.7
65+	13.1	15.2	13.5	15.2
TOTALS	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Median Age	39.6	39.1	43.2	41.1

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 & 2010;
Closter Housing Element Interim Report, 2006.

As shown in Table 4, the Borough of Closter had a larger average household size than Bergen County in 2010.

In 2010 there were 2,747 households in the Borough, and 335,730 households in the County. Approximately 29% of both the Borough and the County households were two-person households, which represented the largest number of all total households.

Table 4
HOUSEHOLD SIZE, 2010
Borough of Closter & Bergen County

Household Size	<u>Closter</u>		<u>Bergen County</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1 person	354	12.89	82,745	24.65
2 person	790	28.76	99,433	29.62
3 person	593	21.59	60,126	17.91
4 person	630	22.93	55,790	16.62
5 person	269	9.79	24,512	7.30
6+ person	111	4.04	13,124	3.91
TOTALS	2,747	100.00	335,730	100.00
Avg. Household Size	3.02		2.66	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010.

In 2010, there were 2,860 housing units in Closter, of which 2,747 or over 96 percent were occupied. The County had 352,388 housing units in 2010, of which 335,730 or 95 percent were occupied.

As shown in Table 5, owner occupied housing units comprised a greater percentage of the Borough's housing stock than the County's housing stock. In 2010, approximately 84 percent of the Borough's housing stock, versus 66 percent of the County's housing stock, was owner occupied.

Table 5
HOUSING UNIT DATA, 2010
Borough of Closter, County of Bergen

	<u>Closter</u>		<u>Bergen County</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Unit Type				
Occupied	2,747	96.05	335,730	95.27
Vacant, Seasonal & Migratory	113	3.95	16,658	4.73
Total	2,860	100.00	352,388	100.00
Owner vs. Renter Occupied Units				
Owner Occupied	2,309	84.06	221,966	66.11
Renter Occupied	438	15.94	113,764	33.89
Total Occupied Units	2,747	100.00	335,730	100.00

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010.

Housing conditions in Closter are excellent. As shown in Table 6, there are no (zero) units that lack complete plumbing or kitchen facilities. Similarly, none of the housing stock contains more than one person per room, which is an indicator of overcrowding.

Table 6				
INDICATORS OF HOUSING CONDITIONS, 2016				
Borough of Closter & County of Bergen				
	<u>Borough</u>		<u>County</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>Total Occupied Units</u>	2,684		337,069	
Units Lacking Complete Plumbing	0	0.00	493	0.15
Units Lacking Kitchen Facilities	0	0.00	1,821	0.54
<u>Persons per Room, Occupied Units</u>				
1.00 or less	2,684	100.00	329,629	97.79
1.01 to 1.50	0	0.00	4,838	1.44
1.51 or more	0	0.00	2,602	0.77
Total Occupied Units	2,684	100.00	337,069	100.00
<i>Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey.</i>				

The New Jersey Department of Labor estimates Closter's 2017 labor force at a total of 3,976 persons, including 3,848 persons that are employed and 128 that are unemployed. The labor force includes the number of people who are employed plus the number of people who are unemployed but looking for work.

The occupational characteristics of the Borough and County's residents are shown on Table 7. This data is from the American Community Survey, therefore the discrepancy with the State's labor force information.

The largest occupational group in the Borough is the management and business occupation, representing over 57 percent of resident employment. The second largest group is sales and office occupations, which represents approximately 25 percent of resident employment.

The largest grouping by industry for both the Borough and County is educational services, health care and social assistance, which represented approximately 26 percent of the Borough, and 24 percent of the County's employment. The second largest grouping was professional, scientific, management, and administrative and waste management services.

Table 7				
OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS, 2016				
Borough of Closter and County of Bergen				
	<u>Closter</u>		<u>Bergen County</u>	
<u>Occupation Group</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Management, Business, Science & Arts	2,289	57.10	221,713	47.60
Service Occupations	338	8.43	62,780	13.48
Sales & Office Occupations	1,024	25.54	115,845	24.87
Natural Resources, Construction & Maintenance	156	3.89	29,283	6.29
Production, Transportation & Material	202	5.04	36,200	7.77
TOTAL	4,009	100.00	465,821	100.00
<u>Industry</u>				
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	0	0.00	551	0.12
Construction	159	3.97	24,636	5.29
Manufacturing	290	7.23	38,253	8.21
Wholesale Trade	247	6.16	20,841	4.47
Retail Trade	321	8.01	52,479	11.27
Transportation and Warehousing	61	1.52	22,474	4.82
Information	152	3.79	15,444	3.32
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	551	13.74	43,407	9.32
Professional, Scientific, Management	609	15.19	63,523	13.64
Educational Services, Health Care/Social Assist.	1,045	26.07	113,382	24.34
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Food Services	347	8.66	34,734	7.46
Other Services, Except Public Administration	153	3.82	22,324	4.79
Public Administration	74	1.85	13,773	2.96
	4,009	100.00	465,821	100.00
<i>Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey.</i>				

Finally, Table 8 provides land use information for the Borough; all data is from assessment records. As shown, the predominant use in the Borough is residential. The Borough contains few vacant lots and does include established nonresidential uses.

As explained in Closter's 2018 Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, Closter lacks available vacant land. Most of the vacant parcels indicated in the table are very small and/or constrained with wetlands, Category One (C1) Waters, riparian buffers, or other environmental factors. The Borough received a Vacant Land Adjustment to address its affordable housing obligation. As part of that analysis, it was shown that the vacant and developable properties in Closter total less than four acres.

Table 8
Land Use - Tax Assessor Data
Borough of Closter

<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Number</u>
Residential	2,700
Commercial & Industrial	143
Farm/Farm Assessed	5
Apartments (5+ families)	0
Vacant Lots	57
Exempt	<u>156</u>
TOTALS	3,061

Source: NJACTB, 2019.

State Changes: Affordable Housing

Perhaps the most significant change in state policies since the 2009 Reexamination Report has to do with affordable housing.

In 2005 and 2008 New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing (C.O.A.H.) adopted Third Round affordable housing rules; both sets of these rules were found invalid by the courts. COAH prepared new rules in 2014, but failed to adopt them. In response, a motion was filed with the New Jersey Supreme Court to enforce litigant's rights in response to COAH's lack of action. On March 10, 2015 the Supreme Court issued its decision to enforce litigant's rights and established a procedure for municipalities to transition their COAH applications to the Courts. The Supreme Court established a new procedure that requires participating towns, such as Closter, to submit a Declaratory Judgment action. Closter filed its action of Declaratory Judgment with the Court on July 7, 2015 to declare the Borough's Housing Element and Fair Share Plan as constitutionally compliant.

The Fair Share Housing Center (FSHC), a nonprofit affordable housing advocacy group, is considered an "interested party" in all municipal Declaratory Actions. The FSHC and the Borough engaged in a mediation process under the supervision of the court-appointed Special Master. In addition, one party objected to the Borough's action of Declaratory Judgment. The Borough reached settlement with the Fair Share Housing Center and the intervenor in June 2018, and a Fairness Hearing was held on July 24, 2018. At that hearing, the courts ruled that the Settlement Agreement created a realistic opportunity for the satisfaction of the Borough of Closter's affordable housing obligation.

The Closter Planning Board adopted a Housing Element & Fair Share Plan on November 1, 2018 that addressed the Borough's affordable housing obligations in conformance with the Settlement Agreement. The Closter Governing Body then endorsed the Plan and adopted the necessary ordinances to implement the Plan. Thus, the Borough of Closter has proactively planned for its affordable housing obligation through the Third Round, which ends in July 2025.

Other State Initiatives

New Jersey adopted its current State Development and Redevelopment Plan in 2001 pursuant to the State Planning Act. Since that time, drafts have been prepared but have not been adopted. In 2011 the New Jersey Office for Planning Advocacy initiated a State Strategic Planning Process. A draft State Strategic Plan was prepared but not adopted. In November 2012 the State Planning Commission voted to table the adoption of the State Strategic Plan until amendments could be made to address the impacts of Hurricane Sandy.

Land Use Plan Requirements

The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) was revised in January 2018 to require that a new Land Use Element of the Master Plan include a "statement of strategy" on the following:

1. Smart growth, including locations for the installation of electric vehicle charging stations.
2. Storm resiliency with respect to energy supply, flood-prone areas, and environmental infrastructure.
3. Environmental sustainability.

Local Redevelopment & Housing Law

In 2013 the Local Redevelopment & Housing Law was revised to permit municipalities the option to specify whether or not it will utilize its eminent domain powers on an area in need of redevelopment. The resolution authorizing the Planning Board to undertake the preliminary investigation shall state if the redevelopment area designation will authorize the municipality to utilize eminent domain.

Although this is an important change in the Redevelopment Law, it will not impact Closter based on the findings contained in this Reexamination Report (see last section of the Reexamination Report).

IV. THE SPECIFIC CHANGES RECOMMENDED FOR THE MASTER PLAN OR DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, IF ANY, INCLUDING UNDERLYING OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND STANDARDS, OR WHETHER A NEW PLAN OR REGULATIONS SHOULD BE PREPARED.

As previously referenced, the Borough is considering preparation of a new Master Plan within the next ten years. Closter wants to review the impact of its affordable housing plan as well as the development of the Closter Plaza before a new Master Plan is considered.

This Reexamination Report includes the following recommendations:

1. The ordinances governing accessory structures should be revised to include restrictions on height and size of accessory structures. A draft ordinance is contained in Appendix A; the Closter Governing Body has held a first reading of the proposed ordinance. Regulating size, height and bulk of accessory structures is appropriate to help maintain quality of life, in particular in a developed community. This recommendation is also contained in the 2018 Board of Adjustment annual review.
2. Review and update list of permitted uses and zone district boundary lines in the nonresidential areas. Some of the uses are outdated, such as milliner and dressmakers, videotape and equipment sales and pet shops. In particular, it is important to recognize the changing nature of "brick and mortar" retail since the last Reexamination Report. Retail uses that are experiential and cannot be provided online should be encouraged in the nonresidential zones. All commercial uses including office, retail and health services should be considered. The Borough could consider incorporating artists' space, including residential and retail uses, into the zoning regulations. An artists' district could be considered in conjunction with the new overlay zoning that permits mixed use (retail with residential apartments,

including affordable units) in the western section of the Business Zone. Finally, recreational and fitness uses should be permitted in the Industrial zones. The size of industrial buildings and ceiling height can typically accommodate such uses.

3. Presently, the Borough's nonresidential parking standards (Chapter 173-48) are contained in Article X: Design Standards for Site Plan. Due to the parking requirements location in the Design Standard for Site Plan Approval, rather than in Chapter 200, Zoning, parking insufficiencies in Site Plan applications are addressed as waivers rather than as bulk variance requests. Based on the Boards' experience with application review, this report recommends revising the Zoning Ordinance to include the parking standards.
4. One recommendation from the public forum is to use marketing or "branding" to improve the visual appearance of the downtown area. Conformance with color and signage is encouraged to unite the area.
5. Age restricted housing, also known as senior housing, is no longer recommended or encouraged within the Borough's master planning documents.
6. The Borough has extensive passive and active recreational properties and facilities, both public and privately-owned. Due to limited available land and funding, acquisition of new properties is not anticipated. This report recommends focusing on maintaining and updating the Borough's existing recreation sites. Finally, the Borough does support the establishment of the Northern Valley Greenway.
7. The municipal swimming pool site has been closed for over four years due to contaminated soils. The soil clean-up process has started with the goal of the property's return as an open space, passive or active recreation site.
8. This Reexamination Report stresses the importance of property maintenance as a quality of life issue for Closter residents and those visiting its commercial and industrial areas. Enforcement is important in this area, as well as in the appearance of nonresidential buildings and properties. Enforcement of the property maintenance ordinances will help to provide a positive visual environment in Closter. Finally, the maintenance of vacant and abandoned buildings needs to be addressed.
9. There is a perception that there is insufficient parking available in Closter's downtown area. This reexamination report recommends a parking study of available parking, with a focus on studying the available parking during specific peak days and time periods. In addition, a focus on the holiday season, when shopping levels increase, is also encouraged.
10. Consideration should be given to some recommendations from the Board of Adjustment's Annual Reports, including implementing a property maintenance ordinance, standardizing site improvements for "tear-downs" (removal and reconstruction of dwellings), and standardizing site improvements for engineering requirements.

11. Revise the zoning ordinance to include restrictions on fences in nonresidential zones. Chapter 103 of the Borough Code only addresses fences installed in residential zones. At a minimum, height limitations on fences in nonresidential zones are recommended, in particular where a commercial or industrial use is adjacent to a residential dwelling or zone district. Fencing with landscape plantings can provide a buffer between residential and nonresidential uses.

Reaffirmation of Closter's Land Use Plan Goals & Objectives

The 2009 Reexamination Report states that the Borough's master planning goals and objectives had been amended slightly over the last 25 years. The report further states that the goals and objectives should be retained and affirmed with minor exceptions. This section continues to affirm the goals and objectives, with revisions and additions provided where appropriate.

This Master Plan Reexamination Report affirms some of the prior goals and objectives. The report also revises some and adds a new goal and objective. An overall vision of this Reexamination Report is maintaining the present quality of life for the Borough's residents.

The goals and objectives of the prior master plan reexamination that are affirmed are as follows:

1. Promote and protect environmentally sensitive land, streams and reservoirs.
2. Encourage a desirable visual environment.
3. Promote continued maintenance and rehabilitation of the Borough's housing stock and community facilities.
4. Provide limited commercial uses to serve the professional and personal service needs of the community.
5. Protect watershed land in the Borough.
6. Improve the condition and compatibility of industrially zoned land in the community.
7. Provide buffer zones between residential and non-residential areas.

The goals and objectives that are recommended with revisions are listed below:

8. Encourage best possible design for new developments as permitted in conformance with existing zoning regulations.
9. Promote the efficient expansion of education and other community facilities, when it is determined that such expansion is necessary.

10. Encourage maintaining and updating of the Borough's recreation facilities to serve the entire community.
11. Promote the recognition and preservation of historic sites and uses, consistent with the Smart Growth principles as articulated in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan and with the Borough's 2011 Master Plan Historic Preservation Element.
12. Encourage the continued revitalization of retail uses in the Borough's Commercial and Business Districts.
13. Continue to improve sidewalks and curbs, and promote walkability throughout the community.
14. Implement the Borough's Sustainable Initiative where economically feasible. This document recognizes the importance of sustainable building practices, as well as the fact that some of them are in their infancy and many are cost-prohibitive.
15. Maintain the existing roadway network so that transportation functions in a safe and efficient manner
16. Continue compliance with the mandates of the Fair Housing Act and the implementation of the Borough's 2018 Housing Element & Fair Share Plan. Monitor new developments in affordable housing case law, rules and regulations.

The following goals and objectives are new and should be included

17. The Borough only encourages mixed-use development and multi-family residential development in locations stipulated in its 2018 Housing Element and Fair Share Plan and subsequently permitted by ordinance. Mixed-use development and multi-family residential development is discouraged in other locations. The required ordinances to implement the Housing Element and Fair Share plan were adopted in 2018. Both the Housing Element/Fair Share Plan and the resulting ordinances were approved by the Court as part of its Compliance Review in February 2019.

V. THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PLANNING BOARD CONCERNING THE INCORPORATION OF REDEVELOPMENT PLANS ADOPTED PURSUANT TO THE "LOCAL REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING LAW," P.L. 1992, C. 79 INTO THE LAND USE PLAN ELEMENT OF THE MUNICIPAL MASTER PLAN, AND RECOMMENDED CHANGES, IF ANY, IN THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS NECESSARY TO EFFECTUATE THE REDEVELOPMENT PLANS OF THE MUNICIPALITY.

The Borough of Closter has neither considered nor adopted any redevelopment plans since the last Reexamination Report. In addition, both the Closter Governing Body and the Closter Planning Board do not recommend consideration of redevelopment at this time. Therefore, there are no revisions to the Land Use Plan necessary relative to redevelopment plans.