

**BOROUGH OF HILLSDALE
BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
ORDNANCE NO. 26-08
(ADOPTION)**

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 310, ARTICLE XXXIV “DEVELOPMENT FEE ORDINANCE” TO AMEND THE DEVELOPMENT FEE ORDINANCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE N.J.A.C. 5:99 REGULATIONS

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs adopted new administrative regulations, N.J.A.C. 5:99, on December 15, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Borough seeks to amend its Development Fee Ordinance to reflect the updated 5:99 regulations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Governing Body of the Borough of Hillsdale, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey as follows:

Chapter 310, “Land Use”, Article XXXIII, “Affordable Housing Regulations”, shall hereby be amended and supplemented by adding the following underlined text and removing text in ~~strikeout~~.

Article XXXIV Development Fee Ordinance

§310-163 Purpose.

This Article establishes standards for the collection, maintenance, and expenditure of development fees that are consistent with ~~COAH's affordable housing regulations developed in response to P.L. 2008, c. 46, Sections 8 and 32-38 (C. 52:27D-329.2)~~ and the Statewide Non-Residential Development Fee Act (C. 40:55D-8.1 through 8.7). Fees collected pursuant to this Article shall be used for the sole purpose of providing very-low, low and moderate income housing in accordance with an Court-approved Spending Plan.

§310-164 Basic Requirements.

- ~~A. This Article shall not be effective until approved by the Court.~~ The Borough of Hillsdale has a Third Round Spending Plan approved by the Superior Court.
- B. The Borough of Hillsdale shall not spend development fees for the Fourth Round until said expenditures are approved via a spending plan, as part of its compliance certification, by a court of competent jurisdiction or by the Department of Community Affairs. ~~the Court has approved a plan for spending such fees (Spending Plan).~~

§310-165 Definitions.

The following terms when used in this Article shall have the meanings given in this section:

AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

A development included in or approved pursuant to the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan or otherwise intended to address the Borough's fair share obligation, and includes, but is not limited to, an inclusionary development, a municipal construction project or a 100% affordable housing development.

COAH

The Council on Affordable Housing, as established by the New Jersey Fair Housing Act, or any successor agency charged with the administration of the Fair Housing Act.

COURT

The Superior Court of New Jersey, Law Division, Bergen County.

DEVELOPMENT FEE

Money paid by a developer for the improvement of property as authorized by Holmdel Builder's Association v. Holmdel Borough, 121 N.J. 550 (1990) and the Fair Housing Act of 1985, N.J.S.A. 52:27d-301, et seq., and regulated by applicable COAH Rules.

DEVELOPER

The legal or beneficial owner or owners of a lot or of any land proposed to be included in a proposed development, including the holder of an option or contract to purchase, or other person having an enforceable proprietary interest in such land.

EQUALIZED ASSESSED VALUE

The assessed value of a property divided by the current average ratio of assessed to true value for the municipality in which the property is situated, as determined in accordance with Sections 1, 5, and 6 of P.L. 1973, c.123 (C.54:1-35a through C.54:1-35c).

GREEN BUILDING STRATEGIES

Strategies that minimize the impact of development on the environment, and enhance the health, safety and well-being of residents by producing durable, low-maintenance, resource-efficient housing while making optimum use of existing infrastructure and community services.

§310-166 Residential development fees.**A. Imposition of Fees.**

- (1) Within the Borough of Hillsdale, all residential developers, except for developers of the types of developments specifically exempted below and developers of developments that include affordable housing, shall pay a fee of 1.5% of the equalized assessed value for all new residential development provided no increased density is permitted.
- (2) When an increase in residential density is permitted pursuant to a "d" variance granted under N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70d(5), developers shall be required to pay a "bonus" development fee of 6% of the equalized assessed value for each additional unit that may be realized, except that this provision shall not be applicable to a development that will include affordable housing. If the zoning on a site has changed during the two-year period preceding the filing of such a variance application, the base density for the purposes of calculating the bonus development fee shall be the highest density permitted by right during the two-year period preceding the filing of the variance application.

B. Eligible Exactions, Ineligible Exactions and Exemptions for Residential Developments

- (1) Affordable housing developments and/or developments where the developer has made a payment in lieu of on-site construction of affordable units, if permitted by Ordinance or by Agreement with the Borough of Hillsdale, shall be exempt from the payment of development fees.
- (2) Developments that have received preliminary or final site plan approval prior to the adoption of this Article shall be exempt from the payment of development fees, unless the developer seeks a substantial change in the original approval. Where site plan approval is not applicable, the issuance of a Zoning Permit and/or Construction Permit shall be synonymous with preliminary or final site plan approval for the purpose of determining the right to an exemption. In all cases, the applicable fee percentage shall be determined based

upon the Development Fee Ordinance in effect on the date that the Construction Permit is issued.

- (3) Residential development fees shall not be imposed and collected when an existing structure is expanded or undergoes a change, except for the following: when there is the removal and replacement of 50% or more of the sum of the area of all floors of the existing building, excluding a basement or cellar area. The development fee shall be calculated on the increase in the equalized assessed value of the improved structure.
- (4) Developers of residential structures demolished and replaced in-kind as a result of a natural disaster shall be exempt from paying a development fee.
- (5) Non-profit organizations that have obtained tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code will be exempt from paying a development fee, provided they submit current evidence of that status to the municipal clerk, along with a certification indicating that the organization offers services at reduced rates to individuals who demonstrate an inability to pay the existing charges.

§310-167 Non-Residential development fees.

A. Imposition of Fees.

- (1) Within all zoning districts, non-residential developers, except for developers of the types of developments specifically exempted below, shall pay a fee equal to 2.5% of the equalized assessed value of the land and improvements, for all new non-residential construction on an unimproved lot or lots.
- (2) Within all zoning districts, non-residential developers, except for developers of the types of developments specifically exempted below, shall also pay a fee equal to 2.5% of the increase in equalized assessed value resulting from any additions to existing structures to be used for non-residential purposes.
- (3) Development fees shall be imposed and collected when an existing structure is demolished and replaced. The development fee of 2.5% shall be calculated on the difference between the equalized assessed value of the pre-existing land and improvements and the equalized assessed value of the newly improved structure, i.e. land and improvements, and such calculation shall be made at the time a final Certificate of Occupancy is issued. If the calculation required under this section results in a negative number, the non-residential development fee shall be zero.
- (4) A developer of a mixed-use development shall be required to pay the non-residential development fee relating to the non-residential development component of a mixed-use development subject to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 52:27D-329.1 et seq.

B. Eligible Exactions, Ineligible Exactions and Exemptions for Non-residential Development.

- (1) The non-residential portion of a mixed-use inclusionary or market rate development shall be subject to a 2.5% development fee, unless otherwise exempted below.
- (2) The 2.5% development fee shall not apply to an increase in equalized assessed value resulting from alterations, change in use within the existing footprint, reconstruction, renovations and repairs.
- (3) Non-residential developments shall be exempt from the payment of non-residential development fees in accordance with the exemptions required pursuant to the Statewide Non-Residential Development Fee Act (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-8.1 through 8.7), as specified in Form N-RDF "State of New Jersey Non-Residential Development Certification/ Exemption". Any exemption claimed by a developer shall be substantiated by that developer.

- (4) A developer of a non-residential development exempted from the non-residential development fee pursuant to the Statewide Non-Residential Development Fee Act shall be subject to the fee at such time as the basis for the exemption no longer applies and shall make the payment of the non-residential development fee, in that event, within three years after that event or after the issuance of the final Certificate of Occupancy for the non-residential development, whichever is later.
- (5) If a property which was exempted from the collection of a non-residential development fee thereafter ceases to be exempt from property taxation, the owner of the property shall remit the fees required pursuant to this section within 45 days of the termination of the property tax exemption. Unpaid non-residential development fees under these circumstances may be enforceable by the Borough of Hillsdale as a lien against the real property of the owner.

§310-168 Collection Procedures.

- A. Upon the granting of a preliminary, final or other applicable approval for a development, the approving authority or entity shall notify or direct its staff to notify the Construction Official responsible for the issuance of a Construction Permit.
- B. For non-residential developments only, the developer shall also be provided with a copy of Form N-RDF "State of New Jersey Non-Residential Development Certification/ Exemption" to be completed as per the instructions provided. The developer of a non-residential development shall complete Form N-RDF as per the instructions provided. The Construction Official shall verify the information submitted by the non-residential developer as per the instructions provided in the Form N-RDF. The Tax Assessor shall verify exemptions and prepare estimated and final assessments as per the instructions provided in Form N-RDF.
- C. The Construction Official responsible for the issuance of a Construction Permit shall notify the Borough Tax Assessor of the issuance of the first Construction Permit for a development which is subject to a development fee.
- D. Within 90 days of receipt of such notification, the Borough Tax Assessor shall prepare an estimate of the equalized assessed value of the development based on the plans filed.
- E. The Construction Official responsible for the issuance of a final Certificate of Occupancy shall notify the Borough Tax Assessor of any and all requests for the scheduling of a final inspection on a property which is subject to a development fee.
- F. Within 10 business days of a request for the scheduling of a final inspection, the Borough Tax Assessor shall confirm or modify the previously estimated equalized assessed value of the improvements associated with the development; calculate the development fee; and thereafter notify the developer of the amount of the fee.
- G. Should the Borough of Hillsdale fail to determine or notify the developer of the amount of the development fee within 10 business days of the request for final inspection, the developer may estimate the amount due and pay that estimated amount consistent with the dispute process set forth at N.J.S.A. 40:55D-8.6.b. ~~in Subsection b of Section 37 of P.L. 2008, c.46 (C.40:55D-8.6).~~
- H. Except as provided in Section 167A.(3) hereinabove, 50% of the initially calculated development fee shall be collected at the time of issuance of the Construction Permit. The remaining portion shall be collected at the time of issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy. The developer shall be responsible for paying the difference between the fee calculated at the time of issuance of the Construction Permit and that determined at the time of issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy.
- I. Appeal of Development Fees.
- (1) A developer may challenge residential development fees imposed by filing a challenge with the County Board of Taxation. Pending a review and determination by the Board, collected fees shall be placed in an

interest bearing escrow account by the Borough of Hillsdale. Appeals from a determination of the Board may be made to the tax court in accordance with the provisions of the State Tax Uniform Procedure Law, R.S. 54:48-1, et seq., within 90 days after the date of such determination. Interest earned on amounts escrowed shall be credited to the prevailing party.

- (2) A developer may challenge non-residential development fees imposed by filing a challenge with the Director of the Division of Taxation. Pending a review and determination by the Director, which shall be made within 45 days of receipt of the challenge, collected fees shall be placed in an interest bearing escrow account by the Borough of Hillsdale. Appeals from a determination of the Director may be made to the tax court in accordance with the provisions of the State Tax Uniform Procedure Law, R.S.54:48-1, et seq., within 90 days after the date of such determination. Interest earned on amounts escrowed shall be credited to the prevailing party.

§310-169 Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

- A. There is hereby created a separate, interest-bearing Affordable Housing Trust Fund to be maintained by the Chief Financial Officer of the Borough of Hillsdale for the purpose of depositing development fees collected from residential and non-residential developers and proceeds from the sale of units with extinguished controls.
- B. The following additional funds shall be deposited in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and shall at all times be identifiable by source and amount:
- (1) Payments in lieu of on-site construction of a fraction of an affordable unit, where permitted by ordinance or by agreement with the Borough of Hillsdale;
 - (2) Funds contributed by developers to make 10% of the adaptable entrances in a townhouse or other multistory attached dwelling unit development accessible;
 - (3) Rental income from municipally operated units;
 - (4) Repayments from affordable housing program loans;
 - (5) Recapture funds;
 - (6) Proceeds from the sale of affordable units; and
 - (7) Any other funds collected in connection with Hillsdale's affordable housing program.

~~C. In the event of a failure by the Borough of Hillsdale to comply with trust fund monitoring and reporting requirements or to submit accurate monitoring reports; or a failure to comply with the conditions of the judgment of compliance or a revocation of the judgment of compliance; or a failure to implement the approved Spending Plan and to expend funds within the applicable required time period as set forth in In re Tp. of Monroe, 442 N.J. Super. 565 (Law Div. 2015) (aff'd 442 N.J. Super. 563); or the expenditure of funds on activities not approved by the Court; or for other good cause demonstrating the unapproved use(s) of funds, the Court may authorize the State of New Jersey, Department of Community Affairs ("DCA"), Division of Local Government Services ("LGS"), to direct the manner in which the funds in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund shall be expended, provided that all such funds shall, to the extent practicable, be utilized for affordable housing programs within the Borough of Hillsdale, or, if not practicable, then within the County.~~

~~Any party may bring a motion before the Superior Court presenting evidence of such condition(s), and the Court may, after considering the evidence and providing the municipality a reasonable opportunity to respond and/or to remedy the non-compliant condition(s), and upon a finding of continuing and deliberate non-compliance, determine to authorize LGS to direct the expenditure of funds in the Trust Fund. The Court may also impose such other remedies as may be reasonable and appropriate to the circumstances.~~

If a court of competent jurisdiction finds that the Borough of Hillsdale has failed to maintain its status as a compliant municipality, the municipality may be subject to forfeiture of any or all funds remaining within their affordable housing trust fund. In the event any of the conditions described at N.J.A.C. 5:99-5.6 occur, the Department of Community Affairs shall be authorized, on behalf of the municipality, to direct the manner in which all funds in the affordable housing trust fund shall be expended.

~~D. Interest accrued in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund shall only be used to fund eligible affordable housing activities approved by COAH or the Court.~~

§130-170 Use of funds.

- A. ~~The expenditure of all funds shall conform to a Spending Plan approved by the, as part of its compliance certification, by a court of competent jurisdiction or by the Department of Community Affairs Court.~~ Funds deposited in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund may be used for any activity approved by the Court to address the Borough of Hillsdale's fair share obligation and may be set up as a grant or revolving loan program. Such activities include, but are not limited to: preservation or purchase of housing for the purpose of maintaining or implementing affordability controls; housing rehabilitation; new construction of affordable housing units and related costs; accessory apartments; a market to affordable program; Regional Housing Partnership programs; conversion of existing non-residential buildings to create new affordable units; green building strategies designed to be cost saving and in accordance with accepted national or State standards; purchase of land for affordable housing; improvement of land to be used for affordable housing; extensions or improvements of roads and infrastructure to affordable housing sites; financial assistance designed to increase affordability; administration necessary for implementation of the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan; and/or any other activity permitted by the Court and specified in the approved Spending Plan.
- B. Funds shall not be expended to reimburse the Borough of Hillsdale for past housing activities.
- C. ~~A municipality shall set aside a portion of its affordable housing trust fund for the purpose of providing At least 30% of all development fees collected and interest earned on such fees shall be used to provide affordability assistance to low- and moderate-income households in affordable units included in the municipal Fair Share Plan. One third of the affordability assistance portion of development fees collected shall be used to provide affordability assistance to those households earning 30% or less of the median income for Housing Region 1, in which Hillsdale is located.~~
- (1) ~~Affordability assistance programs may include down payment assistance, security deposit assistance, low interest loans, rental assistance, assistance with homeowners association or condominium fees and special assessments, and assistance with emergency repairs. The specific programs to be used for affordability assistance shall be identified and described within the Spending Plan.~~
 - (2) ~~Affordability assistance to households earning 30% or less of median income may include buying down the cost of low or moderate income units in the municipal Fair Share Plan to make them affordable to households earning 30% or less of median income. The specific programs to be used for very low income affordability assistance shall be identified and described within the Spending Plan.~~
 - (3) ~~Payments in lieu of constructing affordable housing units on site, if permitted by Ordinance or by Agreement with the Borough of Hillsdale, and funds from the sale of units with extinguished controls shall be exempt from the affordability assistance requirement.~~
- D. The Borough of Hillsdale may contract with a private or public entity to administer any part of its Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, including its programs for affordability assistance.
- E. No more than 20% of all affordable housing trust funds, exclusive of those collected prior to July 17, 2008 to fund an RCA revenues collected from development fees may be expended on administration, including, but not limited to, salaries and benefits for municipal employees or consultants' fees necessary to develop or implement a new construction program, prepare a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, and/or administer an

affirmative marketing program or a rehabilitation program.

- (1) In the case of a rehabilitation program, the administrative costs of the rehabilitation program shall be included as part of the 20% of collected development fees that may be expended on administration.
- (2) Administrative funds may be used for income qualification of households, monitoring the turnover of sale and rental units, and compliance with COAH's monitoring requirements. Legal or other fees related to litigation opposing affordable housing sites or related to securing or appealing a judgment from the Court are not eligible uses of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

§310-171 Monitoring.

The Borough of Hillsdale shall provide annual reporting of Affordable Housing Trust Fund activity pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:99-5.2, to the New Jersey DCA, COAH, LGS, or other entity designated by the State of New Jersey, with a copy provided to Fair Share Housing Center and posted on the municipal website, using forms developed for this purpose by the New Jersey DCA, COAH or LGS. ~~The reporting shall include an accounting of all Affordable Housing Trust Fund activity, including the sources and amounts of funds collected and the amounts and purposes for which any funds have been expended.~~

§310-172 Ongoing Collection of Fees.

- A. The ability for the Borough of Hillsdale to impose, collect and expend development fees shall be permitted through July 1, 2035 ~~the expiration of the repose period covered by its Judgment of Compliance~~ and shall continue thereafter so long as the Borough of Hillsdale has filed an adopted Housing Element and Fair Share Plan with the Court or Affordable Housing Dispute Resolution Program ~~with a designated State administrative agency~~, has petitioned for a Judgment of Compliance from the Court ~~or for Substantive Certification~~ or its equivalent from a State administrative agency authorized to approve and administer municipal affordable housing compliance and has received approval of its Development Fee Ordinance from the entity that will be reviewing and approving the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan.
- B. If the Borough of Hillsdale is not pursuing authorization to impose and collect development fees after July 1, 2035 ~~the expiration of its Judgment of Compliance~~, it may be subject to forfeiture of any or all funds remaining within its Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Any funds so forfeited shall be deposited into the "New Jersey Affordable Housing Trust Fund" established pursuant to Section 20 of P.L. 1985, c. 222 (C. 52:27D-320).
- C. ~~After the expiration of the Judgment of Compliance, if the Borough does not pursue or obtain continued authorization, the Borough of Hillsdale shall not impose a residential development fee on a development that receives preliminary or final site plan approval, retroactively impose a development fee on such a development, or expend any of its collected development fees.~~

In the event that any word, phrase, clause, section or provision of this Ordinance is found by any Court of competent jurisdiction to be unenforceable, illegal or unconstitutional, such word, phrase, clause or provision shall be severable from the balance of this Ordinance and the remainder of this Ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.

All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed as to such inconsistencies only.

This Ordinance shall take effect upon passage and publication as provided by Law.

Council member	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Absent	Abstain	Recuse
Camp, Christopher			X				
Colletti, Robert			X				
DeRosa, Anthony	X		X				
Mazza-Chiong, Melissa			X				
Osso, Clemente			X				
Ruocco, John		X	X				
Sheinfield, Michael							

Adoption: March 10, 2026

Attest: 
 Denise Kohan
 Municipal Clerk


 Michael Sheinfield
 Mayor