

**Township of Lawrence
County of Mercer**

Resolution No. 241-25

**RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE ENDORSING THE HOUSING
ELEMENT AND FAIR SHARE PLAN ADOPTED BY THE
LAWRENCE PLANNING BOARD**

WHEREAS, on March 20, 2024, Governor Murphy signed into law P.L. 2024, c.2, which amended the 1985 New Jersey Fair Housing Act (hereinafter "FHA II"); and

WHEREAS, FHA II established a procedure by which municipalities can secure approval of a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan ("HEFSP"); and

WHEREAS, that procedure contemplated that municipalities would adopt a resolution by January 31, 2025 committing to a fair share number and filing a declaratory relief action within 48 hours from adoption of the resolution and then filing a HEFSP by June 30, 2025 and filing that plan within 48 hours with the Affordable Housing Dispute Resolution Program (the "Program"); and

WHEREAS, in accordance with this statutory procedure, the Township Council of Lawrence Township ("Township") adopted a binding resolution, Resolution No. 73-25, on January 21, 2025 committing to a Fourth Round Present Need of 68 and Prospective Need obligation of 320, subject to applicable adjustments;

WHEREAS, in accordance with the FHA and Administrative Directive #14-24, Issued by the Administrative Office of the Courts on December 13, 2024 ("Directive #14-24"), the Township filed a Complaint for Declaratory Judgment ("DJ Action"), *In the Matter of the Declaratory Judgment Action of Lawrence Township, Mercer County Pursuant to P.L. 2024, Chapter 2*, Docket No. MER-L-158-25 on January 23, 2025, identifying its present and prospective fair share obligations for the Fourth Round as set forth above, and committing to adopting and submitting a Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan ("HEFSP") as required by the FHA; and

WHEREAS, the filing of the DJ Complaint gave the Township automatic, continued immunity from all exclusionary zoning lawsuits, including builder's remedy lawsuits, which is still in full force and effect; and

WHEREAS, on March 25, 2025, the Hon. Robert Lougy, A.J.S.C., issued an Order Fixing Municipal Obligations for "Present Need" and "Prospective Need" for the Fourth Round in accordance with the obligations as set forth above, and authorizing the Township to proceed with preparation and adoption of its proposed HEFSP; and

WHEREAS, the Township's affordable housing planning consultant, Elizabeth McManus, PP, AICP, of Kyle + McManus Associates, has prepared an HEFSP to address the Township's affordable housing obligations under FHA II; and

WHEREAS, upon notice duly provided pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-13, the Lawrence Township Planning Board held a public hearing on the 2025 Fourth Round HEFSP on June 16, 2025, and adopted the HEFSP on the same day; and

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WHEREAS, the Township Council now wishes to endorse the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan adopted by the Lawrence Planning Board and seek approval of the HEFSP by the Program and Court.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Township of Lawrence, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The Township Council hereby endorses the Fourth Round HEFSP previously adopted by the Lawrence Planning Board and attached hereto.
2. The Township hereby authorizes and directs its professionals to take all actions required by N.J.S.A. 52-27D-301, et seq. and Administrative Directive #14-24, including:
 - a. Filing the HEFSP as adopted by the Lawrence Township Planning Board with the Superior Court pursuant to the Township's Declaratory Judgment action filed under Docket No. MER-L-158-25 within 48 hours of its adoption; and
 - b. Filing the implementing ordinances and compliance submissions, pursuant to the provisions of the FHA, by June 30, 2025.
3. The Municipal Attorney, Municipal Planner, and such other municipal officials as may be necessary or required are authorized to take all actions to draft and file documents necessary to comply with all Fourth Round affordable housing obligations, including an Affordable Housing Trust Spending Plan, and effectuating ordinances and resolutions.
4. The Township reserves the right to further amend the HEFSP attached hereto, should that be necessary.
5. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

CERTIFICATION

I certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted by the Council of Lawrence Township at a regular meeting held on the 26th day of June 2025.


Tonya D. Carter, Municipal Clerk

RECORD OF VOTE

COUNCIL	AYE	NAY	PRESENT	ABSENT	ABSTAIN	MOVE	SECOND
Mr. Bobbitt	✓					✓	
Mr. Kownacki	✓						✓
Ms. Perry	✓						
Ms. Santos				✓			
Mayor Farmer	✓						

