

# 2025 FOURTH ROUND HOUSING PLAN

HOUSING ELEMENT & FAIR SHARE PLAN  
LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP  
MERCER COUNTY  
NEW JERSEY

ADOPTED BY THE PLANNING BOARD

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## **INTRODUCTION & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Since the 1975 New Jersey Supreme Court decision known as “Mount Laurel I,” New Jersey municipalities have had a constitutional obligation to provide opportunities for creation of low and moderate homes. This 1975 decision led to a body of case law, legislative changes and rulemaking by a state agency that, collectively, is now referred to as the “Mount Laurel Doctrine”. Through these actions, New Jersey municipalities have been assigned a specific number of affordable homes that must be created or planned for creation to have “satisfied” their constitutional obligation, referred to as their affordable housing obligation. The purpose of this Housing Element and Fair Share Plan (hereinafter the “Plan”) is to present how Lawrence Township will satisfy its constitutional obligation.

Affordable housing in New Jersey is defined as homes which are reserved for households with incomes not more than 80% of the regional median income. Each affordable home, depending on the age and type of housing, must remain reserved for low and moderate income households for up to 40 years and it is typically enforced by a deed restriction. Each affordable home is eligible for one “credit” against the obligation and certain homes are eligible for “bonus credits,” which provide more than one credit per home. In addition to providing the minimum number of credits, municipalities must ensure diversity in the home type (at least half of the homes must be available to families and the remaining may be reserved for seniors and those with special needs), diversity in the level of affordability (very low, low and moderate income homes), and diversity in the size of affordable homes (one, two and three bedroom homes).

Participation in this process, and therefore satisfaction of the affordable housing obligation, can be achieved voluntarily or involuntarily. However, voluntary compliance is heavily incentivized. Municipalities that do not successfully participate may be vulnerable to exclusionary zoning litigation, which is defined as litigation based on alleged noncompliance with the Fair Housing Act, or the Mount Laurel doctrine, and includes builder’s remedies. A builder’s remedy is a litigation tool that grants a developer the right to construct what is typically a multi-family development on land that was not zoned to permit the use or the residential density desired by the developer, provided a “substantial” percentage of the homes are reserved for low and moderate income households. Lawrence seeks to avoid this possibility and has already taken substantial steps to do so.

This Plan supersedes all previously adopted housing plans and will serve as the foundation for the Township’s application filing with the New Jersey Affordable Housing Dispute Resolution Program and the request for a Compliance Certification.



As detailed in this Plan, the Township – like all New Jersey municipalities – has four components of its affordable housing obligation. Each component of the Township’s obligation is identified below.

- Rehabilitation Obligation: 68  
The rehabilitation obligation can be defined as an estimate of the number of deteriorated homes existing in Lawrence that are occupied by low- and moderate-income households. This component is also referred to as the “present need”.
- First & Second Rounds Obligation: 891  
The first and second rounds obligation can be defined as the cumulative 1987 through 1999 new construction affordable housing obligation. This component is also referred to as the “prior round” obligation.
- Third Round Obligation: 1,110  
The third round obligation can be defined as the 1999 through 2025 new construction affordable housing obligation.
- Fourth Round Obligation: 310  
The fourth round obligation can be defined as the 2025-2035 new construction affordable housing obligation. The current round of affordable housing, now the fourth round, is also referred to as the “prospective need”.

The Township fully satisfies the rehabilitation obligation through its Home Improvement Program.

The Township satisfies the first and second rounds with constructed affordable homes.

The Township’s vacant land adjustment for the third round resulted in an RDP of 702. The RDP for the fourth round is 56. Vacant land adjustments are a compliance tool for municipalities whose obligations are outsized as compared to the availability of developable land. The Township received a vacant land adjustment for each previous round and continues the adjustment in the fourth round. The adjustment results in a realistic development potential (hereinafter “RDP”) and an unmet need. The RDP represents the portion of the new construction affordable housing obligation that can theoretically be addressed with inclusionary development (defined as a mix of market and affordable homes) on lots identified as being developable in the vacant land analysis. The unmet need is calculated as the difference between the total obligation and the RDP.

The Township’s first, second, third and fourth round RDP will be satisfied with a variety of affordable housing developments, the majority of which are constructed inclusionary family developments. The unmet need is satisfied with zoning throughout the Township that promotes inclusionary development.

Adoption of this Housing Element and Fair Share Plan and complete implementation of the strategies described above to meet the affordable housing obligation will yield a Compliance Certification and protect the Township from builder’s remedy litigation through July 2035, the maximum time available.



## AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN NEW JERSEY

In its landmark 1975 decision, now referred to as “Mount Laurel I,” the NJ Supreme Court ruled that developing municipalities have a constitutional obligation to provide variety and choice of housing types affordable to low- and moderate-income households. In its 1983 “Mount Laurel II” decision, the NJ Supreme Court extended the regional fair share obligation to all municipalities with any “growth area” as designated in the State Development Guide Plan (NJDCG 1978) and determined that each municipality would have to establish its fair share obligation and provide zoning strategies to create a realistic opportunity for fulfillment of the fair share obligation. Mount Laurel II also gave developers, under appropriate circumstances, the opportunity to secure a builder’s remedy. A builder’s remedy is a litigation tool that grants a developer the right to develop what is typically a multi-family development on land that was not zoned to permit the use or the residential density desired by the developer, provided a “substantial” percentage of the homes are reserved for low and moderate income households. Lawrence seeks to avoid this possibility and has already taken substantial steps to do so.

In 1985, the Legislature enacted the Fair Housing Act in response to Mount Laurel II. The Fair Housing Act created the Council on Affordable Housing (hereinafter “COAH”) as an administrative alternative to compliance in a court proceeding. The Legislature conferred “primary jurisdiction” on COAH and charged COAH with promulgating regulations to establish housing regions, to estimate the state’s low- and moderate-income housing needs, set criteria and guidelines for municipalities to determine and satisfy their affordable housing obligation, and to create a process for the review and approval of appropriate housing elements and fair share plans. Approval of a municipal housing element and fair share plan by COAH was referred to as “substantive certification” and it provided protection from builder’s remedy litigation during the period which the housing element and fair share plan addresses (i.e. the round).

COAH created the criteria and guidelines for municipalities to determine and address their respective affordable housing obligation. COAH originally established a formula for determining municipal affordable housing obligation for the six-year period between 1987 and 1993 (*N.J.A.C. 5:92-1 et seq.*), which became known as the “first round.” These rules established the first round rehabilitation obligation (also referred to as the “present need”) and the first round new construction obligation.

The first round formula was superseded by COAH regulations in 1994 (*N.J.A.C. 5:93-1.1 et seq.*). The 1994 regulations recalculated a portion of the first round 1987-1993 affordable housing obligations for each municipality and computed the additional municipal affordable housing need from 1993 to 1999 using 1990 U.S. Census data. The regulations COAH adopted in 1994 to identify a municipality’s “cumulative” obligations for the first and second rounds are known as “the second round” regulations. Under regulations adopted for the third round, the obligation of municipalities to create new affordable housing for the first and second rounds was referred to as the “prior round” obligation.

On December 20, 2004, COAH’s first version of the third round rules became effective some five years after the end of the second round in 1999. At that time, the third round was defined as the time from 1999 to 2014 but condensed into an affordable housing delivery period from January 1, 2004 through





January 1, 2014. The third round rules marked a significant departure from the methods utilized in COAH's earlier rounds by creating a "growth share" approach that linked the production of affordable housing to residential and non-residential development within a municipality.

The growth share approach and the rules in which it was created, was the subject to significant litigation and was ultimately overturned by the New Jersey Appellate Court. On January 25, 2007, the New Jersey Appellate Court decision, In re Adoption of N.J.A.C. 5:94 and 5:95, 390 N.J. Super. 1, invalidated key elements of the first version of the third round rules, including the growth share approach. COAH issued revised rules on June 2, 2008 (as well as a further rule revision effective on October 20, 2008). Included in the 2008 rules was a recalculation of the cumulative first and second rounds obligation to account for updated data addressing secondary sources (filtering, demolitions, and residential conversions). Just as various parties challenged COAH's initial third round regulations, parties challenged COAH's 2008 revised third round rules. On October 8, 2010, the Appellate Division issued its decision, In re Adoption of N.J.A.C. 5:96 and 5:97, 416 N.J. Super. 462, with respect to the challenge to the second iteration of COAH's third round regulations. The Appellate Division upheld the COAH regulations that assigned rehabilitation and first and second rounds obligations to each municipality but invalidated the regulations by which the agency assigned housing obligations in the third round, finding that the Agency continued to utilize a growth share approach, albeit an amended approach.

COAH sought a stay from the NJ Supreme Court of the deadline to issue new third round housing rules set forth by the Appellate Division. Additionally, there were various challenges to the Appellate Division's 2010 decision. On September 26, 2013, the NJ Supreme Court upheld the Appellate Court decision in In re Adoption of N.J.A.C. 5:96 and 5:97 by New Jersey Council On Affordable Housing, 215 N.J. 578 (2013), and ordered COAH to prepare the necessary rules. Subsequent delays in COAH's rule preparation and ensuing litigation led to the NJ Supreme Court, on March 14, 2014, setting forth a schedule for adoption.

Although ordered by the NJ Supreme Court to adopt revised new rules on or before October 22, 2014, COAH deadlocked 3-3 at its October 20th meeting and failed to adopt the draft rules it had issued on April 30, 2014. In response, Fair Share Housing Center (hereinafter "FSHC") filed a motion in aid of litigant's rights with the NJ Supreme Court.

On March 10, 2015, the NJ Supreme Court issued a ruling on the Motion In Aid of Litigant's Rights (In re Adoption of N.J.A.C. 5:96 & 5:97, 221 NJ 1, aka "Mount Laurel IV"). This long-awaited decision provided a new direction for how New Jersey municipalities were to comply with the constitutional requirement to provide their fair share of affordable housing. The Court transferred responsibility to review and approve housing elements and fair share plans from COAH to designated Mount Laurel trial judges. The implication was that municipalities were required to apply to Superior Court with a Declaratory Judgement Action, instead of to COAH, if they wished to be protected from exclusionary zoning litigation, including builder's remedy. These trial judges, with the assistance of an appointed Special Adjudicator to the Court, reviewed municipal plans much in the same manner as COAH previously did.

While the NJ Supreme Court's decision set a process in motion for towns to address their third round obligations, it did not assign those obligations. Instead, the task was completed by the trial courts.



However, the NJ Supreme Court did direct that the method of determining municipal affordable housing obligations were to be “similar to” the methodologies used in the first and second round rules and municipalities should rely on COAH’s 1993 second round rules (*N.J.A.C. 5:93*) and certain components of COAH’s 2008 regulations that were specifically, as well as the Fair Housing Act (*N.J.S.A. 52:27D – 301 et seq.*), in their preparation of third round housing elements and fair share plans.

FSHC, a public interest advocacy organization in New Jersey devoted exclusively to promoting the production of housing affordable to low and moderate income households, was permitted to serve as an interested party in every municipal Declaratory Judgment Action. In this role the organization calculated municipal affordable housing obligations and offered to settle with municipalities. Such settlements addressed the municipal affordable housing obligation, compliance strategies and other terms intended to promote affordable housing production. Most municipalities that filed a Declaratory Judgment Action settled with FSHC, finding it to be in their best interest. The typical alternative to settlement with FSHC was conducting a trial in Superior Court to determine the municipal affordable housing obligation.

In addition to the State agency activity and judicial decisions through 2015, the New Jersey Legislature amended the Fair Housing Act in 2008 (P.L. 2008, c. 46, often referred to as the “Roberts Bill”, or “A500”). This amendment established a statewide 2.5% nonresidential development fee, prohibited new regional contribution agreements (hereinafter “RCAs”), required that 13% of all new affordable homes be restricted to very low income households (30% of median income), and added a requirement that municipalities had to commit to spend development fees within four (4) years of the date of collection. Additionally, the Fair Housing Act was amended in 2013 (P.L. 2013, c. 6) to permit municipalities to enter into an agreement with a developer or development owner to provide a preference for veterans who served in time of war or other emergency to occupy up to 50% of the affordable homes in a particular development. The preference is applicable to the first 90 of the 120 days of initial marketing and thereafter may on a special waiting list for future available affordable homes in the development. These amendments to the Fair Housing Act are not promulgated in any valid COAH regulations.

On March 20, 2024, an amendment to the Fair Housing Act was adopted (P.L. 2024, c.2.). This amendment creates significant changes to the fourth round of affordable housing, and all subsequent rounds. Such changes include the process in which municipalities obtain protection from builder’s remedy litigation – including but not limited to the elimination of COAH and the creation of the Affordable Housing Dispute Resolution Program, the methodology to calculate municipal prospective need obligations, and the administration of affordable homes. However, the Fair Housing Act does not create or direct the creation of new rules that would provide further guidance, instead it states municipalities shall rely on rules adopted by COAH, unless contradicted by statute or binding court decisions, for municipal crediting, adjustments and compliance strategies. One notable example of contradiction is the generation of and use of bonus credits. See the sections that follow for additional information regarding this amendment to the Fair Housing Act.

The Affordable Housing Dispute Resolution Program (hereinafter the “Program”) is a program within the judiciary made up of an odd number of Judges with a minimum of 3 and not to exceed 7. The Program,





in its discretion and in accordance with Rules of Court, may consult or employ services of one or more special adjudicators or staff to assist it in rendering determinations, resolving disputes, and facilitating communication among municipalities and interested parties. The Program is responsible for reviewing municipal affordable housing obligations, housing plans, and conducting mediation. However, final determinations of compliance, disputes, and other issues, as well as Court orders may only be issued by a County-level housing judge.

In addition to changes addressing the compliance process and elimination of COAH, the amendment also revised minimum affordability controls for rental homes from 30 years to 40 years and those for extension of affordability controls from 30 years to as little as 20 years, provided the total control period is not less than 60 years. It also created new roles for the Department of Community Affairs (hereinafter “DCA”), including calculation of non-binding rehabilitation and prospective need affordable housing obligations, oversight and adoption of rules regulating municipal affordable housing trust funds, municipal housing liaisons and affordable housing administrative agents, as well as oversight of affordable home administration. The amendment also directed the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage agency to revise the Uniform Housing Affordability Control Rules (*N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.1 et seq.*).

## **The Compliance Process**

The first step in a municipality’s compliance process is to establish the affordable housing obligation. The first, second and third round obligations are already established by COAH or Superior Court, as applicable. Only the rehabilitation obligation and current prospective need, the fourth round obligation, are subject to the determination.

The methodology and formulas each municipality must rely upon to determine its rehabilitation, and fourth round obligation (as well as subsequent round obligations) are set forth within *N.J.S.A. 52:27D-304.1* thru *-304.3* of the Fair Housing Act. The March 8, 2018 unpublished decision of the Superior Court, Law Division, Mercer County, *In re Application of Municipality of Princeton* (“Jacobson Decision”) is also to be referenced as to datasets and methodologies that are not explicitly addressed in *N.J.S.A. 52:27D-304.3*. Notwithstanding the methodology set forth in the Fair Housing Act, the Act also required the DCA to release a non-binding report calculating obligations for each municipality in the State.

The following provides an overview of the process and deadlines associated with the fourth round.

- Establishing the Affordable Housing Obligation
  - October 20, 2024: DCA Regional and Municipal Fair Share Obligation Report Issued.
  - January 31, 2025: Deadline for municipalities to adopt a binding resolution committing to the affordable housing obligation and seeking a Compliance Certification through participation in the Program.



- February 28, 2025: Deadline for an interested party to challenge the municipality's determination of its obligation to the Program. It shall apply "an objective assessment standard".
- March 1, 2025: The municipality's determination of its obligation will be established by default if no challenge.
- March 31, 2025: The Program must issue a decision on the obligation challenge.
- Obtaining a Compliance Certification
  - June 30, 2025: Municipality shall adopt a Housing Plan and propose drafts of ordinances and resolutions to implement the plan.
  - August 31, 2025: Deadline for an interested party to file a challenge of the Housing Plan with the Program. If no challenge by this date the Program will begin review of the Housing Plan for consistency with the FHA.
  - December 31, 2025: Deadline for a municipality to settle any challenge or provide an explanation as to why it will not make all, or some of the changes brought by the challenge.
  - March 15, 2026: Municipality to amend the Housing Plan and implement the agreed upon revisions resulting from a challenge and adopt all pertinent ordinances. The Housing Plan and adopted ordinances shall be immediately filed with the Program.
- Ongoing Compliance
  - Midpoint (2030): Action by municipality or interested party filed to seek a realistic opportunity review of any developments that have not moved forward.

### **Affordability Requirements**

Affordable housing is defined under New Jersey's Fair Housing Act as a dwelling, either for sale or rent, that is within the financial means of households of low- or moderate-income, as is measured within each housing region. Lawrence is in Region 4, which includes Monmouth Ocean and Mercer counties. Moderate-income households are those with annual incomes greater than 50%, but less than 80% of the regional median income. Low-income households are those with annual incomes that are 50% or less than the regional median income. Very low-income households are a subset of "low-income" households and are defined as those with incomes 30% or less than the regional median income.

The Uniform Housing Affordability Controls (hereinafter "UHAC") at N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.3(d) and (e) requires that the maximum rent for a qualified home be affordable to households with incomes 70% or less than the median income for the region, provided the development includes 13% or more very low income homes. The average rent must be affordable to households with incomes no greater than 52% of the median income. The maximum sale prices for affordable homes must be affordable to households with



incomes 70% or less than the median income. The average sale price must be affordable to a household with an income of 55% or less than the median income.

The regional median income is defined using the federal income limits established by Department of Housing and Urban Development (hereinafter “HUD”) on an annual basis. In the spring of each year, HUD releases updated regional income limits, and it is from these income limits that the rents and sale prices for affordable homes are derived. The following table reflects the 2025 affordable housing regional income limits for Region 4.

<b>2025 Income Limits for Region 4 (Mercer, Monmouth and Ocean counties)</b>					
<b>Household Income Levels</b>	<b>1-Person Household</b>	<b>2-Person Household</b>	<b>3-Person Household</b>	<b>4-Person Household</b>	<b>5-Person Household</b>
Median	\$94,300	\$107,700	\$121,200	\$134,600	\$145,400
Moderate	\$75,440	\$86,160	\$96,960	\$107,680	\$116,320
Low	\$47,150	\$53,850	\$60,600	\$67,300	\$72,700
Very Low	\$28,290	\$32,310	\$36,360	\$40,380	\$43,620
<i>Source: UHAC 2025 Affordable Housing Regional Income Limits by Household Size, Last updated May 5, 2025, by New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (NJHMFA).</i>					

## **Overview of Compliance Requirements**

There are extensive requirements that municipalities must ensure their affordable housing strategies satisfy to be eligible for a Compliance Certification. Furthermore, those requirements vary by round. The following provides a *brief and summarized* overview of the requirements.

- **Rental Obligation.** Not less than 25% of affordable homes addressing the obligation of a round must be for rent.
- **Family Obligation.** Not less than 50% of affordable homes addressing the obligation of a round must be available to families, meaning they are not restricted to a particular population. This obligation does not apply to the first and second rounds.
- **Family Rental Obligation.** Not less than 50% of the homes meeting the rental obligation of a round must be available to families, meaning they are not restricted to a particular population. This obligation does not apply to the first and second rounds.
- **Senior Maximum.** Up to 30% of affordable homes addressing the obligation of a round may be reserved for seniors. The maximum was 25% for the first, second and third rounds.
- **Income Distribution of Affordable Homes**



- Very Low Income Obligation. Not less than 13% of affordable homes created or approved on or after July 1, 2008 must be reserved for very low income households (30% or less than the regional median income). Very low income homes are a subset of low income homes.
  - Family Very Low Income Obligation. Not less than 50% of the homes meeting the very low income obligation must be available to families, meaning they are not restricted to a particular population.
  - Low Income Obligation. Not less than 50% of affordable homes in any development must be reserved for low income households (50% or less than the regional median income, which includes very low income households). The remaining may be available to moderate income households (51-80% of regional median income).
- Bedroom Distribution of Affordable Homes
  - The total bedrooms within the affordable homes in any development must be not less than twice the number of affordable homes. This requirement does not apply to the first, second or third round.
  - Studio and 1-bedroom Homes. Not more than 20% of homes in any development.
  - 2-bedroom Homes. Not less than 30% of homes in any development.
  - 3-bedroom Homes. Not less than 20% of homes in any development.
  - The above requirements do not apply to special needs housing or senior housing.
  - Senior developments are subject to a modified bedroom distribution such that the total bedrooms within the affordable homes must be not less than the number of affordable homes.
  - Senior and supportive housing developments with 20 or more affordable homes shall have not less than 5% 2-bedroom and 3-bedroom affordable homes. This requirement does not apply to the first, second or third round.
- Bonus Credits
  - No more than 25% of the obligation for each round.
  - Only one type of bonus credit may be applied to a home.
  - Rental bonus credits (1.0) are only applicable to the first, second and third rounds.
  - The following development and home types are eligible for 1.0 bonus credit in the fourth round.
    - Supportive and special needs. Note that special needs often receive credit for each bedroom.



- Market to affordable (conversion of a market rate home to an affordable home).
- 100% affordable developments: Homes within 100% development provided the municipality the land or a minimum of 3% of the development costs.
- The following development and home types are eligible for 0.5 bonus credit in the fourth round.
  - Partnership with non-profit.
  - Proximity to transit: homes within ½ mile of transit (rail, bus, ferry).
  - Senior: limited to 10% of the affordable age-restricted homes provided which is capped at 30% of the obligation.
  - Homes with at least three bedrooms above the minimum number required by the bedroom distribution.
  - Redevelopment for homes on land that was previously utilized for retail, office or commercial use.
  - Extension of affordability controls on rental housing only, provided the municipality funds the cost for the preservation.
  - Very Low-Income homes above the 13% required.

## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN LAWRENCE**

Lawrence Township has demonstrated a long-standing commitment of voluntary compliance with its Mount Laurel fair share obligations. The municipality voluntarily addressed its constitutional affordable housing obligation in response to the FHA and COAH's First Round, Second Round, and Third Round regulations (both adopted iterations from 2004 and 2008). As described below, the Township received substantive certification from COAH for its first, second and third round housing plans.

### **First and Second Rounds**

In the First Round, Lawrence Township petitioned COAH for first round substantive certification in 1987, and COAH granted the Township first round substantive certification on October 19, 1987. To address COAH's Second Round regulations, Lawrence Township adopted a housing element and fair share plan to meet its Second Round cumulative obligation and received Second Round substantive certification from COAH on December 4, 1996.

On September 6, 2000 the Township received substantive certification from COAH for an amended Second Round housing element and fair share plan. On March 3, 2004 an additional amendment to the Township's



Second Round plan was approved by COAH. During the second round, Lawrence has the distinction of being the only municipality in the State to be both a sender and receiver of RCAs.

Like many other municipalities, Lawrence Township received an extension of its Second Round substantive certification from COAH as the agency finally issued Third Round rules. The extension was granted on April 13, 2005 for a period “up to one year after the effective date of the adoption of the Council’s Third Round methodology and rules,” or December 20, 2005.

### **Third Round**

COAH’s third round rules marked a significant departure from the affordable housing formulas utilized in COAH’s two earlier rounds. Previously, COAH assigned an affordable housing obligation as an absolute number to each municipality. The new third round rules in 2004 implemented a “growth share” approach that linked the production of affordable housing with future residential and non-residential development within a municipality. The Township petitioned for Third Round substantive certification on December 20, 2005. However, prior to COAH’s review of the Township’s Third Round Housing Plan, the 2004 COAH rules were overturned by the Appellate Court. COAH only granted substantive certification to three municipalities of the hundreds of petitions made to the agency prior to the decision.

Lawrence adopted a revised Third Round Housing Plan, dated December 1, 2008, addressing its cumulative third round (1987-2018) obligation. On December 30, 2008 Lawrence Township petitioned COAH for substantive certification for the third round pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:96 and 5:97. On April 2, 2009, Lawrence was the first municipality in New Jersey to receive third round substantive certification from COAH.

To comply with the March 10, 2015 Mt. Laurel IV decision, Lawrence petitioned the Superior Court for a Declaratory Judgment and temporary immunity from builder’s remedy suits. This action entered the Township into the process of determining its affordable housing obligation and how it would be satisfied. Additionally, the Township received immunity from builder’s remedy litigation while doing so. To avoid a lengthy trial on the Township’s affordable housing obligation and, potentially, a second trial on how that obligation would be satisfied, Lawrence and FSHC came to terms in an April 28, 2017 Settlement Agreement. The Settlement Agreement set forth the Township’s affordable housing obligation and how it would be satisfied. An order approving the Settlement Agreement was issued on June 15, 2017 by the Hon. Mary Jaconson, J.S.C. The Township adopted a third round housing plan that implemented the terms of the Settlement agreement on August 28, 2018. This Housing Plan was subsequently approved by Superior Court via an Order issued on September 26, 2018 by the Hon. Mary Jaconson, J.S.C.

The Township executed a *First Amendment to the Settlement Agreement* with FSHC on April 20, 2021. This Settlement Agreement reflected the *First Amendment to the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan* adopted on July 20, 2020 and the *Second Amendment to the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan* adopted on November 2, 2020. These amendments to the Settlement Agreement and Housing Plan adjusted the Township’s vacant land adjustment and affordable housing sites. Additionally, the Township executed a





*Second Amendment to the Settlement Agreement* with FSHC on June 15, 2021 and adopted the final Amended Third Round Housing Plan to implement the 2021 Amended Settlement Agreement on July 19, 2021. The Township received its final third round Judgment of Repose on July, 21, 2021.

## **Fourth Round**

The Township adopted a resolution committing to the rehabilitation and fourth round obligations of 68 and 320, respectively, calculated by DCA on January 21, 2025. Superior Court subsequently issued an order finding in favor of the Township's identified affordable housing obligation and authorizing the Township to proceed with preparation and adoption of a fourth round housing plan by June 30, 2025.

## **CONSIDERATION OF LANDS MOST APPROPRIATE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

As part of this Plan, the Township considered land that is appropriate for the construction of low- and moderate-income housing. Lawrence has limited capacity for future development due to its built-out conditions. Notwithstanding, a few developers contacted the Township to offer their property for inclusion the Township's fourth round housing plan. Each of these developers and their properties are identified below, along with the status of the property as per this housing plan.

1. *3641 Lawrenceville Road (Block 6601, Lot 2), located at the corner of Lawrenceville Road (S.H. 206 and Princeton Pike):* The developer contacted the Township seeking zoning that permits inclusionary development as high as 23.2 du/ac on the 6.45 acre property. The property is developed with a vacant single-family home and is within the Environmental Protection 1 (EP-1) district, which permits single-family residential uses on lots of 2 acres (cluster and lot size averaging is permitted on larger tracts). The Township found the requested density and the resulting combination of setbacks, height and building size, was unable to be accommodated on the site in a manner that is appropriate for the location. Contributing to these findings are the Kings Highway Historic District along the Lawrenceville Road frontage, the 30 foot conservation easement at the rear of the property, and the low density single-family character surrounding the site. While the site is adjacent to a large corporate office complex, that complex has limited visibility from Lawrenceville Road and Princeton Pike since the buildings and parking are setback approximately 1,250 feet and 700 feet from each road, respectively. Notwithstanding, the property is included in the fourth round RDP as well as serving as an RDP strategy.
2. *ETS – 660 Rosedale Road (C.R. 604) (Block 7801, Lot 21), located at the corner of Rosedale Road and Carter Road:* The developer contacted the Township seeking zoning that permits redevelopment of a portion of the campus. The property is developed with a corporate campus, consisting of office buildings, hotel with conference center, substantial parking, on-site wastewater treatment facility, and several other improvements. The property is 355.36 acres; however, substantial portions of the property are environmentally constrained with a Category 1



stream (the Stony Brook), wetlands, vernal pools, flood hazard areas and more. The developer seeks to retain a significant portion of the existing office buildings, as well as the existing hotel and conference center. The portion for which redevelopment is proposed is predominantly located north of the “ring road”; developed areas south of the “ring road” are planned for retention. The developer requested 900 homes on the property as well as 40,000 s.f. of commercial space. The Township found the requested density exceeded what could be accommodated on the site given the environmental constraints in the area proposed for redevelopment. Notwithstanding, the property is included in the fourth round as an unmet need strategy.

3. *3450 Princeton Pike (Block 5101, Lot 22.01), located at the corner of Princeton Pike and Lenox Drive*: The developer contacted the Township seeking zoning that permits inclusionary development. The 10.2 acre property is occupied by an office building. The property is included in the fourth round unmet need.

A portion of Township’s housing stock may be appropriate for conversion or rehabilitation for affordable housing. The Township’s varied home sizes and types, ranging from single-family detached, to attached and to multi-family homes, offer opportunity for conversion to affordable housing as well as rehabilitation. Additionally, group homes may be appropriate for Lawrence single-family homes and attached, and multi-family affordable and inclusionary development may be appropriate where new opportunities for such development or redevelopment arises. The Township’s mandatory set-aside ordinance will capture such opportunities.

## **OPPORTUNITY FOR MULTIGENERATIONAL HOUSING**

The Fair Housing Act requires “an analysis of the extent to which municipal ordinances and other local factors advance or detract from the goal of preserving multigenerational family continuity as expressed in the recommendations of the Multigenerational Family Housing Continuity Commission”. As of the date of this Housing Plan there have been no recommendations by the Multigenerational Family Housing Continuity Commission in which to provide an analysis. However, the Commission has the primary goal of enabling senior citizens to reside at the homes of their extended families, thereby preserving and enhancing multigenerational family continuity. Township land use policies are not in conflict with this goals and much of the Township’s housing stock is large enough to accommodate multigenerational living.

## **DEMOGRAPHIC, HOUSING & EMPLOYMENT ANALYSIS**

See Appendix 1 to the Housing Plan for this analysis.



## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING OBLIGATION & SATISFACTION**

Fourth round housing plans must address four components of a municipality's affordable housing obligation. These include the rehabilitation obligation to improve substandard housing occupied by low- and moderate-income households, the first and second round obligation of new construction from 1987 to 1999, third round obligation of new construction from 1999 to 2025, and the fourth round obligation of new construction from 2025 to 2035.

### **Rehabilitation Obligation & Satisfaction**

The rehabilitation obligation can be defined as an estimate of the number of deteriorated homes existing in Lawrence that are occupied by low- and moderate-income households. The Fair Housing Act, *N.J.S.A. 52:27D-304.3.b.*, describes present need as being determined by "estimating the existing deficient housing units currently occupied by low- and moderate-income households within the municipality, following a methodology comparable to the methodology used to determine third round present need, through the use of datasets made available through the federal decennial census and the American Community Survey, including the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy dataset thereof." The DCA calculated municipal present need obligations in *Affordable Housing Obligations for 2025-2035 (Fourth Round) Methodology and Background*, released on or about October 18, 2024. This DCA Report calculated a rehabilitation obligation of 68 for the Township. This obligation was assigned to the Township by Superior Court.

The Township will address this obligation through its existing Home Improvement Program operated by the affordable housing administrative agent. The program, which is available to owner- and renter-occupied homes, provides no-interest loans to income-eligible households to repair major systems. The loans are forgiven if the home is not sold within the 10 year affordability period. All rehabilitated homes will comply with the definition of a substandard home in *N.J.A.C. 5:93-5.2(b)*, which states, "a unit with health and safety code violations that require the repair or replacement of a major system." Major systems include weatherization, roofing, plumbing, heating, electricity, sanitary plumbing, lead paint abatement and/or load bearing structural systems. All rehabilitated homes shall meet the applicable construction code. Additionally, all rehabilitated homes shall be occupied by low- or moderate-income households and subject to affordability controls of not less than 10 years, which shall be placed on the property in the form of a lien or deed restriction. The average hard cost will be at least \$10,000.

### **First & Second Rounds Obligation & Satisfaction**

Lawrence Township's first and second rounds new construction obligation, also referred to as the first and second rounds obligation, is 891. This obligation is defined as the cumulative new construction obligation from 1987 through 1999 (1987-1993 is the first round; 1993-1999 is the second round). The Township's obligation was published by COAH in 2008 and originally calculated in 1993-1994 pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 5:93*.



### ***Satisfaction of the First & Second Rounds Obligation***

The Township has addressed the entirety of its 891 first and second rounds obligation with a combination of RCA's, 100% affordable developments, alternative living arrangements, inclusionary housing developments and rental bonus credits. All developments are constructed.

<b>Satisfaction of the 891 First and Second Rounds Obligation</b>				
<b>Development Name</b>	<b>Development Type</b>	<b>Homes</b>	<b>Bonus Credits</b>	<b>Credits</b>
RCA - Trenton (Avalon Bay)	RCA	62	0	62
RCA - Trenton (Yorkshire Village)	RCA	88 (of 98)	0	88
Allies, Inc.	100% Affordable Special Needs Rental	6	6	12
The ARC Mercer (Lawrence Rd.)	100% Affordable Special Needs Rental	6	6	12
The ARC Mercer (Vanderveer Dr.)	100% Affordable Special Needs Rental	4	4	8
The ARC Mercer (Darrah Lane)	100% Affordable Special Needs Rental	4	4	8
Community Options, Inc. (Federal City Rd.)	100% Affordable Special Needs Rental	3	3	6
Community Options, Inc. (Texas Ave.)	100% Affordable Special Needs Rental	3	3	6
Service Center of New Jersey	100% Affordable Special Needs Rental	4	4	8
Brookshire (24 of 117)	100% Affordable Special Needs Rental	24	0	24
Lawrence Plaza	100% Affordable Senior Rental	161	0	161
Avalon Run	Inclusionary Family Rental	64	64	128
Avalon Run East	Inclusionary Family Rental	31	31	62
Eagles Chase	Inclusionary Family Sale	40	0	40
Lawrence Square Village	Inclusionary Family Sale	159	0	159



Satisfaction of the 891 First and Second Rounds Obligation				
Development Name	Development Type	Homes	Bonus Credits	Credits
Steward's Crossing	Inclusionary Family Rental	36	36	72
Stonerise	Inclusionary Family Sale	12	0	12
Tiffany Woods	Inclusionary Family Sale	23	0	23
<b>Total</b>		<b>730</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>891</b>

#### Avalon Bay Regional Contribution Agreement

The AvalonBay development was approved for 312 market-rate residential homes with a 62 RCA with the City of Trenton. This site is located on Block 4201, Lot 11.01, a 108-acre site. These credits were transferred for a price of \$25,000 for each RCA credit for a total cost of \$1,550,000, which was made in three payments. COAH approved the RCA on March 3, 2004. The Township's Second Round Housing Plan originally included 53 on-site affordable homes in this development; these were later replaced by the 62 credit RCA as part of the Township's Second Round amended Fair Share Plan. The RCA contributes 62 credits toward the first and second rounds obligation. This site was previously approved by COAH as well as well as by the third round Judgment of Repose for credits toward the first, second and third rounds obligations.

#### Yorkshire Village Regional Contribution Agreement

The Yorkshire Village development is a 490-home residential development that funded a 98 RCA with the City of Trenton at a per-credit price of \$20,000 and a total cost of \$1,960,000. COAH approved the RCA on September 6, 2000. Yorkshire Village was first included in the Township's Second Round Amended Housing Plan and was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose. This development is located on a 145-acre tract in Block 5201 now containing a myriad of subdivided lots. All funds have been paid to the City. The Township is utilizing 88 credits toward the first and second rounds obligation from the RCA. Ten credits will be used to address the third round RDP.

#### Allies, Inc.

This alternative living facility is located at 746 President Avenue on Block 1606, Lots 27-30. It contains six bedrooms for rent to low-income residents. The facility has 20-year affordability controls and received a final certificate of occupancy in May 2000. The property is a 0.40-acre lot in the R-4 district. The site is not located in a workforce housing census tract. The facility is administered by the provider. The site was approved by COAH as part of the Township's certified 2008 housing plan, as well as the third round



Judgment of Repose. This project will contribute one credit for each of the six bedrooms and is also eligible for six rental bonuses.

#### The ARC of Mercer (Lawrence Road)

This alternative living facility is located at 2013 Lawrence Road and contains six bedrooms. The property, Block 2801, Lot 25, is a 0.46-acre lot in the R-2B district. The site is not located in a workforce housing census tract. The facility has been in place since 1997 and has 20-year affordability controls. The affordable homes are administered by the provider. The site was approved by COAH as part of the Township's 2008 housing plan, as well as the third round Judgment of Repose. This project will contribute one credit for each of the six bedrooms and is also eligible for six rental bonuses for the first and second rounds obligation.

#### The ARC of Mercer (Vanderveer Drive)

This group home is an ARC alternative living facility located at 8 Vanderveer Drive, on Block 3201, Lot 11 and was formerly known as St. John's Community Center. The facility has four bedrooms for rent to low-income individuals and has been occupied since August 1, 1987 (date of certificate of occupancy). The site was approved by COAH as part of the Township's 2008 Third Round housing plan, as well as the third round Judgment of Repose. This project will contribute one credit for each of the four bedrooms and is also eligible for four rental bonuses for the first and second rounds obligation.

#### The ARC of Mercer (Darrah Lane)

This alternative living facility is located at 19 East Darrah Lane and contains four bedrooms. The property is also known as Block 3201, Lot 1. The site is a quarter-acre lot in the R-3 district. The property has 20-year affordability controls in place and was approved by COAH as part of the Township's certified Third Round Housing plan, as well as the third round Judgment of Repose. The facility is administered by the provider. This project will contribute one credit for each of the four bedrooms and is also eligible for four rental bonuses for the first and second rounds obligation.

#### Community Options (Federal City Road)

This alternative living facility has three low-income rental homes located at 137 Federal City Road on Block 2005, Lot 8, a 0.69-acre site. The facility was occupied on June 23, 1992 (date of final certificate of occupancy). This site was included in the Township's previously certified Second and Third Round Housing Plans, as well as the third round Judgment of Repose. This project will contribute one credit for each of the three bedrooms and is also eligible for three rental bonuses.

#### Community Options (Texas Avenue)

This alternative living facility has three low-income rental homes located at 50 Texas Avenue on Block 2005, Lot 14.01. The facility was occupied on August 7, 1996 (date of final certificate of occupancy). The site was certified in the Township's Second Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan for three homes,





as well as the third round Judgment of Repose. This project will contribute one credit for each of the three bedrooms and is also eligible for three rental bonuses for the first and second rounds obligation.

#### Service Centers of New Jersey

This alternative living facility contains four bedrooms. It is located at 138 Darrah Lane on Block 3004, Lot 133. The site is not located in a workforce housing census tract. The property is 0.71 acres and is in the R-3 district. The facility is administered by the provider. The property has 20-year affordability controls in place and was approved by COAH as part of the Township's certified Third Round Housing plan as well as the third round Judgment of Repose. This project will contribute one credit for each of the four bedrooms and is also eligible for four rental bonuses for the first and second rounds obligation.

#### Brookshire Senior Apartments

This project consists of 117 affordable age-restricted rental homes. The site is located on Block 3301, Lot 2.01, an 8.39-acre tract at 3 Forest Ridge Drive. The final certificate of occupancy was issued for this development on June 10, 2004. The homes consist of 59 low-income homes (9 efficiencies, 50 one-bedroom) and 58 moderate-income homes (8 efficiencies, 50 one-bedroom). Thirty-year affordability controls are in place.

The site was originally approved by both the Township and COAH for an inclusionary age-restricted development that would have included 15 affordable age-restricted homes. However, in 2001 the Zoning Board approved a use variance and amended site plan converting the project to a 100% affordable development consisting of 117 age-restricted rental homes. The change was a result of the developer receiving 4% tax credits through the New Jersey Housing Mortgage and Finance Agency ("HMFA"). This site was previously approved by COAH as well as by the third round Judgment of Repose for the first and second rounds obligation.

Due to the maximum number of age-restricted homes that may be used to satisfy the first and second rounds obligation, only 24 of the homes in this project will be used in the first and second rounds; the remaining 93 homes will be utilized in the third round. Each of these 24 homes will contribute one credit towards the first and second rounds and the rental obligation.

#### Lawrence Plaza

This project is a 161-home low- and moderate-income senior rental housing development located on Block 2001, Lot 17, a 7.57-acre lot at 2350 Princeton Pike next to the Lawrence Shopping Center. The development consists of 145 one-bedroom low-income homes and 16 two-bedroom low-income homes. The site was financed by the HMFA with project-based Federal Section 8 rental subsidies. The final certificate of occupancy was issued in July 1980. Forty-year affordability controls are in place, effective November 1980. This site was previously approved by COAH as well as by the third round Judgment of Repose for the first and second rounds obligation.



### Avalon Run

Avalon Run, previously known as TCR-Town Run West, is located on Block 4201, a 19.62-acre tract on Grovers Mill Road across from the Quaker Bridge Mall. There are a total of 426 homes on the site, with 64 affordable homes. Thirty-seven of the affordable homes are low-income homes, including 17 one-bedroom homes, 15 two-bedroom homes, and five three-bedroom homes. The remaining 27 homes are moderate-income homes consisting of 15 one-bedroom homes, seven two-bedroom homes, and five three-bedroom homes.

The first certificate of occupancy was issued for this development on February 28, 1994 and the last was issued on January 23, 1995. This project was included in the Township's previously certified Housing Plan. Affordability controls had been in place for this development for 20 years but expired in 2014. This project will contribute 64 homes plus 64 rental bonuses for a total of 128 credits and bonuses to help address the first and second rounds obligation. This site was previously approved by the third round Judgment of Repose for first and second rounds credits.

### Avalon Run East

Avalon Run East, previously known as TCR-Town Run East, was approved for 312 homes, of which 31 are affordable family rental homes. There are 11 low-income homes and 20 moderate-income homes. Of the low-income homes, four have one bedroom, five have two bedrooms and two have three bedrooms. Ten of the moderate-income homes have one bedroom, six have two bedrooms, and four have three bedrooms. The site is located at Block 4201, Lot 10.62, a 27.13-acre lot on Quakerbridge Road. The first certificate of occupancy was issued for this development on May 8, 1996 and the last was issued on November 12, 1996. This site was previously approved by COAH as well as well as by the third round Judgment of Repose for first and second rounds credits.

Twenty-year affordability controls were in place for this development and have now expired. Each of the 31 affordable homes in the development will contribute one credit plus one rental bonus toward the first and second rounds obligation for a total of 62 credits and bonuses.

### Eagles Chase

Eagles Chase, formerly known as Levitt Homes, was approved for 204 homes, of which 41 were affordable homes. However, the development lost one affordable home due to foreclosure, resulting in credits being sought for 40 affordable homes. This site was part of the Township's earlier housing plans, as well as its certified 2008 Third Round Housing Plan. It is located on Block 3902, Lot 1, a 20.46-acre site. All homes are family for-sale homes, of which 20 are for low-income and 20 are for moderate-income households. Within the low-income homes, there are three one-bedroom homes, 11 two-bedroom homes, and six three-bedroom homes; and within the moderate-income homes there are three one-bedroom homes, three two-bedroom homes, and 14 three-bedroom homes. The construction of affordable homes was completed in 1991. Twenty-year affordability controls were in place for this development. The development contributes 40 affordable homes toward the first and second rounds obligation. This site



was previously approved by COAH as well as well as by the third round Judgment of Repose for first and second rounds obligation.

#### Lawrence Square Village

This development, located on Block 4103 and 4104, contains 820 homes, of which 159 are affordable family for-sale homes. The date of the first certificate of occupancy was October 29, 1986 and the date of the final certificate of occupancy was January 8, 1988. Twenty-year affordability controls were in place for this development. This development received credit in earlier housing plans and the 2008 housing plan for the first and second rounds as well as the third round Judgment of Repose.

#### Steward's Crossing

This development is located on a 24.44 acre tract known as Block 2701, Lot 32.01. The development contains 240 total homes, of which 36 are affordable family rental homes. There are 18 low-income and 18 moderate-income homes. For both the low- and moderate-income categories, nine homes each have one bedroom, six homes each have two bedrooms and three homes each have three bedrooms. The date of the first certificate of occupancy was August 31, 1990 and the date of the final certificate of occupancy was January 29, 1992. Twenty-year affordability controls had been in place for this development. The Township seeks 36 credits for homes and 36 rental bonuses from this site, for a total of 72 credits and bonuses applied toward the first and second rounds obligation. This site was previously approved by COAH as well as well as by the third round Judgment of Repose for first and second rounds obligation.

#### Stonerise

This development contains 84 homes, of which 12 are affordable family for-sale homes. The site is 7.65 acres and is located on Gordon Avenue at Block 6301, Lots 76, 78, 81, 82, Block 5701, Lot 1, and Block 5703, Lot 1. This project was included in the Township's previous housing plan. All affordable homes are for low-income households and contain two bedrooms. The construction of affordable homes was completed on April 17, 1990. Affordability controls were in place for 20 years. All 12 homes in this project have been applied toward satisfaction of the first and second rounds obligation. This site was previously approved by COAH as well as well as by the third round Judgment of Repose for first and second rounds obligation.

#### Tiffany Woods

Tiffany Woods was approved for 120 homes, of which 23 are affordable family for-sale homes. This site was originally approved for 24 affordable homes; however, one affordable home was lost due to foreclosure, resulting in 23 affordable homes. This development is in Block 201 and 202 and has an area of 10.20 acres. Of the 23 affordable homes, 12 are for low-income households and 11 are for moderate-income households. Of the low-income homes, seven are two-bedroom and five are three-bedroom homes; of the moderate-income homes, all 11 contain three bedrooms. The length of affordability



controls for this project is 30 years. This site was previously approved by COAH as well as well as by the third round Judgment of Repose for first and second rounds obligation.

### ***Distribution of First and Second Round Affordable Homes***

In addition to meeting the total 891 obligation, the Township must also meet a rental obligation, maximum senior homes and maximum bonus credits.

Minimum Rental = 223 homes

- $.25 \text{ (obligation)} = 223 \text{ homes} \quad | \quad .25 \text{ (891)} = 222.75, \text{ rounded up to } 223$
- This obligation is exceeded with 30 special needs rental homes, 185 senior rental homes and 130 rental homes in inclusionary developments.

Maximum Senior = 185 homes

- $.25 \text{ (obligation - RCA's)} = 185 \text{ homes} \quad | \quad .25 \text{ (891-150)} = 185.25, \text{ rounded down to } 185$
- The Township uses 185 homes at the Brookshire and Lawrence Plaza developments.

Minimum Bonus = 161 homes

- Homes equal to the rental obligation, except that senior homes may only meet half of the rental obligation and are eligible for .33 bonus credits  $| \quad 161 \text{ credits}$
- The Township uses 161 bonus credits, none of which are attributed to senior homes.

### **Third Round Obligation & Satisfaction**

This obligation of 1,110 is defined as the new construction obligation for 1999-2025. The third round obligation was determined in the April 28, 2017 Settlement Agreement with FSHC, stating it is a downward reduction from the obligation calculated in a report prepared by Dr. David N. Kinsey, PhD, FAICP, *New Jersey Low and Moderate Income Housing Obligations for 1999-2015 Calculated Using the NJ COAH Prior Round (1987-1999) Methodology*, dated May 2016. The Settlement Agreement set forth the Township's affordable housing obligation and how it would be satisfied. An order approving the Settlement Agreement was issued on June 15, 2017 by the Hon. Mary Jaconson, J.S.C.

### ***Vacant Land Adjustment***

Municipalities, such as Lawrence, that do not have adequate capacity of developable land to fulfil the entirety of the affordable housing obligation are eligible for a vacant land adjustment. A vacant land adjustment is available to those municipalities, such as Lawrence, that cannot satisfy their entire affordable housing obligation using inclusionary housing due to a lack of vacant and developable land. The



adjustment process is set forth in COAH's rules and is supplemented by related case law. More specifically, it is a downward adjustment of the obligation to reflect the number of affordable homes a municipality could theoretically create through new inclusionary development on vacant or underutilized land, presuming a density and set-aside consistent with COAH's rules.

The downward adjusted obligation is known as the realistic development potential, or "RDP". Requesting this adjustment does not require the municipality to zone or build on the land identified as developable. Notwithstanding, the municipality's Housing Plan must identify compliance strategies that can produce enough affordable homes and bonus credits to satisfy the RDP. The difference between the RDP and the calculated new construction obligation is referred to as the unmet need. COAH's rules, *N.J.A.C. 5:97-5.4(b)* or *N.J.A.C. 5:93-4.2(h)*, do not require any specific unmet need strategy. Instead, they state one or any combination of strategies may be required and do not provide a required quantity of strategies or affordable homes. The strategies cited include accessory apartments, market to affordable, overlay zoning, redevelopment with affordable housing and adoption of a development fee ordinance. Unlike the RDP, the unmet need does not need to be fully satisfied; instead, the Township must create adequate opportunities for future affordable housing.

The Township received a vacant land adjustment during the third round and received approval of it in the Judgment of Repose. The RDP was adjusted by the Township's Amended Third Round Housing Plans. The 2021 Third Round Housing Plan and 2021 Judgment of Repose calculated a 702 third round RDP.

### ***Satisfaction of Third Round RDP***

The Township satisfies this RDP with a variety of carryover RCA, special needs homes, 100% affordable senior homes, family and senior inclusionary developments, and extension of expiring controls.

<b>Satisfaction of the Third Round 702 RDP</b>				
<b>Development Name</b>	<b>Development Type</b>	<b>Homes</b>	<b>Bonus Credits</b>	<b>Credits</b>
RCA - Trenton (Yorkshire Village)	RCA	10 (of 98)	0	10
CIFA III	100% Affordable Special Needs Rental	4	4	8
Eden Acres, Inc.	100% Affordable Special Needs Rental	3	3	6
Hillcrest Group Home, Inc.	100% Affordable Special Needs Rental	5	5	10
Homefront-TLC, Inc.	100% Affordable Special Needs Rental	6	6	12
Mercer Alliance	100% Affordable Special Needs Rental	3	3	6



Satisfaction of the Third Round 702 RDP				
Development Name	Development Type	Homes	Bonus Credits	Credits
Project Freedom	100% Affordable Special Needs Rental	54	54	108
Brookshire	100% Affordable Senior	93 (of 117)	12	104
Berk's Walk	Inclusionary Family Rental	2	2	4
Carriage Park	Inclusionary Senior Sale	21	0	21
Carriage Park	Inclusionary Senior Rental	1 (of 16)	0	1
The Gatherings	Inclusionary Senior Sale	22	0	22
Liberty Green	Inclusionary Family Sale	64	0	64
Morris Hall/St. Mary's	Inclusionary Senior Rental	10	0	10
Traditions at Federal Point	Inclusionary Senior Sale	28	0	28
Brandywine	Inclusionary Family Rental	42	42	84
Nexus Properties	Inclusionary Family Rental	22	22	44
Quakerbridge Mall	Inclusionary Family Rental	54 (of 70)	0	55
Extension of Expiring Controls	Extension of Control Sale	105	0	105
<b>Total</b>		<b>549</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>702</b>

The 2021 third round housing plan identified a total of 715 credits contributing toward the 702 RDP, creating a surplus of 13 (715-702=13). This housing plan transfers the surplus credits to the fourth round. Additionally, the affordable homes at Traditions at Federal Point were inadvertently not fully reflected in the Housing Plan, also contributing to a surplus for the fourth round.

#### Yorkshire Village Regional Contribution Agreement

Ten of the 98 RCA credits contribute toward the third round RDP; the remaining credits satisfy the first and second rounds obligation. See the first and second rounds discussion of this development for more information. These credits were approved by the third round Judgment of Repose.

#### CIFA III

This alternative living facility is located at 6 Wilk Court and contains four bedrooms for very low-income individuals. The site is located on Block 6201, Lot 29, and houses individuals that are mentally ill and/or developmentally disabled. The property is 0.50 acres in the R-2B district. The site received a certificate of





occupancy on June 15, 1996 and has 40-year affordability controls in place from that date. The facility is administered by the provider. All four homes/credits from this site plus four rental bonuses (a total of eight credits and bonuses) will be applied to the third round obligation. This ALA project was previously included in the Township's certified Third Round Housing Plan and was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose.

#### Eden Acres (Lawrenceville-Pennington Road)

This alternative living facility is located on Block 5602, Lot 13, at 80 Lawrenceville-Pennington Road. The facility contains a total of five homes, of which three are low-income affordable rental homes, and two (2) are market homes. The site is 0.40 acres. The length of affordability controls for this facility is 99 years. This site was included in the Township's previously certified Second Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan and was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose. This project will contribute one credit for each of the three low-income bedrooms as well as three rental bonuses for a total of six credits.

#### Hillcrest Group Home

This alternative living facility is operated by Mercer County ARC and contains five bedrooms for rent to low-income households. The facility is located on a 0.336-acre site known as Block 2320, Lot 1, at 99 Hillcrest Avenue. It received its final certificate of occupancy on May 25, 1996 and has 40-year affordability controls. This site was included in the Township's previously certified Second and Third Round Housing Plans and was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose. This project will contribute one credit for each of the five bedrooms as well as five rental bonuses for a total of 10 credits.

#### HomeFront-TLC, Inc.

HomeFront-TLC operates a six-home transitional housing site at 1703 Lawrenceville Road on Block 2801, Lot 58, a half-acre lot. The site was funded with \$300,000 HOME grant received in March 2008, the agreement for which requires the site's six homes to remain affordable to low- and moderate-income households from April 11, 2005 to April 11, 2030. The site is eligible for six homes and six bonus credits. The development was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose.

#### Mercer Alliance for the Mentally Ill (Catholic Charities)

This alternative living facility has three low-income rental homes located at 13 Titus Avenue on Block 5704, Lot 4, a 0.17 acre site. The facility was occupied on December 20, 1994 (date of final certificate of occupancy) and has a 40-year affordability control. This site was included in the Township's previously certified Second Round Plan and was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose. This project will contribute one credit for each of the three low-income bedrooms as well as three rental bonuses for a total of six credits.



### Project Freedom

Project Freedom is a 54-home rental facility for people (and their families if applicable) with physical disabilities that was included in the Township's previously certified plans and was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose. The project received Low Income Housing Tax Credits, as well as other sources of funding. All homes are built and are only occupied by low-income households, unlike most tax credit developments. Forty-four homes are one-bedroom, and 10 homes are two-bedroom. The site is a 13.51-acre parcel located at Block 801, Lots 1, 22, 23, and 40. The last certificate of occupancy was issued on December 13, 2003 and the project is fully occupied. This project will contribute one credit and one rental bonus for each of the 54 bedrooms for a total of 108 credits.

### Brookshire

Ninety-three of the 117 homes in this development contribute toward the third round RDP. The affordable homes generate 12 bonus credits (.33 bonus credits for 35 homes). See the first and second round description for additional information. This development was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose.

### Berk's Walk (formerly Lawrenceville Gardens)

The property, which is 12.32 acres, is located on Franklin Corner Road (Block 3901, Lot 10). The property already consists of 166 garden apartment market rental homes constructed in the 1960s. On June 17, 2015, Berk-Cohen Associates, the owner, received zoning board approval for a development consisting of eight townhouse homes with the provision that two affordable homes in the existing complex would be deed-restricted. The property is in the AT Apartment Townhouse district, which has been in place since at least 1979. The maximum density permitted is 10 homes per acre. The existing density is 13.5 homes per acre and with the addition of eight homes, the density is 14.1 units per acre. The zoning board granted a density variance for the development predicated in part on the development of the two affordable homes. These have been created from vacancies in the existing garden apartment portion of the complex. Both are two-bedroom homes; one home is low-income and the other moderate-income. This development was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose.

### Carriage Park

Carriage Park was approved by the Planning Board on March 4, 2002 for 210 age-restricted homes with a 20% (42 homes) set-aside of affordable age-restricted for-sale homes. This site is located on a 14.4-acre site known as Block 3401, Lots 3 and 4, at the intersection of Allen Road and Business Route 1 (Brunswick Pike). The project was approved with two buildings having 21 for-sale homes each, except that if the developer constructed rental homes, the affordable home requirement per building would be reduced to 16 affordable homes (a 15% set-aside). The previous developer, Kallan Companies, constructed the first building as a for-sale development including 21 affordable homes. During the Great Recession, the original developer could not continue the project and a new developer, PK Developers, Inc., took over its completion. Responding to changed market conditions, the new developer repurposed the not-yet-



started second building as a rental building. The second building is completed, and occupancy began in October 2018. As a result of the change in tenure, Carriage Park includes 37 affordable senior homes – 21 for sale homes and 16 rental homes. All 21 senior for sale homes and one senior rental home contribute to the third round obligation, the remaining 15 senior rental homes contribute toward the fourth round obligation due to the maximum senior homes permitted in the third round. This site has previously been approved by COAH for affordable housing credit and the third round Judgment of Repose.

### The Gatherings

The Gatherings, formerly referred to as the Milestones at Lawrenceville, was approved by the Planning Board on March 3, 2003 and has been constructed. This development consists of 108 age-restricted for-sale homes, of which 22 (20%) are affordable. The affordable homes are evenly split between low-income and moderate-income homes. Of the low-income homes, three are one-bedroom and eight are two-bedroom. All the 11 moderate-income homes have two bedrooms. The site is 53.18 acres originally located on Block 3901, Lot 13, in between Princess Road and Franklin Corner Road. This site was added to the Township's affordable housing program as part of the second amendment to the Second Round Housing Plan and it was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose. This project will contribute 22 credits toward the third round obligation.

### Liberty Green

Liberty Green, originally known as South Village, was approved for 320 homes, of which 64 are affordable family for-sale homes. The affordable homes are in Block 4201, along Fountayne Lane, which is a loop road connecting to Lawrence Station Road. The neighborhood is proximate to Avalon Run and Avalon Run East. The development contains 28 low-income homes, of which one is one-bedroom, 12 are two-bedroom, and 15 are three-bedroom homes. The remaining 36 homes are moderate-income, consisting of four one-bedroom, 14 two-bedroom, and 18 three-bedroom homes. Construction of this site, including the issuance of all the certificates of occupancy for affordable dwellings, was completed in 2001. The project has 30- year affordability controls in place. This project will contribute 64 credits toward the third round obligation and will satisfy a portion of the family obligation. This development was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose.

### Morris Hall (St. Mary's Assisted and Residential Living)

Morris Hall, a residential health care facility, contains a total of 70 assisted living homes, of which 10 homes are affordable age-restricted rental homes. The facility is located at 1 Bishop Drive, on Block 4801, Lot 3, a 35.3-acre site that also contains a rehabilitation facility, skilled nursing and congregate living for retired Roman Catholic priests. The site is just north of the Interstate 95 interchange, on the west side of Route 206. The facility has been occupied since August 24, 1994 (date of final certificate of occupancy). This site was included in the Township's previously certified Second and Third Round Housing Plans and was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose. This project will contribute one credit for each bedroom for a total of 10 credits.



### Traditions at Federal Point

Traditions at Federal Point was approved by the Planning Board on May 21, 2001 (Planning Board Resolution 23-01) for 140 age-restricted for-sale homes, of which 28 (20%) are affordable. The first certificate of occupancy was issued on June 15, 2002 and the development was completed in 2004. The site is 36.84 acres located on Block 2701, Lot 83 just south of I-95 at its intersection with Federal City Road. The affordable homes are evenly split between low- income and moderate-income homes and each contains one bedroom. This site was added to the Township's affordable housing program during its second amendment to the Second Round and Third Round Housing Plans and was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose.

### Brandywine

This site is an undeveloped 35.22-acre portion of the Princeton Pike Corporate Center (Block 5101, Lot 18) at the east end of Lenox Drive. Lawrence Township has entered into a developer's agreement with Brandywine to construct an inclusionary multi-family housing development of up to 300 homes; the developer's agreement was later amended to reduce the total development to no more than 210 homes, including 42 affordable homes. The development is under construction and is nearly complete. This development was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose.

### Nexus Properties

This site is a 7.12- acre parcel at 1052 Spruce Street, Block 701, Lot 39. The developer received Final Major Site Plan Approval in 2022, through Resolution 12-22. The site was occupied by a one-story concrete and stucco office building. The building will be razed, and the site will be developed with 120 family rental homes, including 22 affordable homes. The affordable homes will be in multi-family buildings and composed of 4 one-bedroom homes, 12 two-bedroom homes, and 6 three-bedroom homes. This development was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose.

### Quaker Bridge Mall

The Township allows inclusionary zoning as a conditional use to the Quaker Bridge Mall that will permit as many as 350 homes with an affordable housing set-aside of 20% (70 homes) regardless of tenure. The site is 102.83 acres that include parking and circulation areas, drainage basins, the principal Quaker Bridge Mall building and a satellite building currently occupied by a Firestone automobile services. Total retail square footage is 1,084,000 sf. The zoning amendment would not affect the land development regulations pertaining to the current shopping mall use and its accessory uses. Instead, it allows for the development of the housing as an added use on a parcel of 10 to 20 acres of the mall property – a density of 17.5 – 35 du/ac. This development was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose. The site has not yet been developed. The 350 homes permitted, which is substantial in number and density, remain a realistic opportunity.



In the Township's 2006 Land Use Plan Element and Conservation Plan Element amendments, the Township discussed permitting a greater intensity of development on the Quaker Bridge Mall site on the condition that the principal owner (Simon Group) reserve a right-of-way for a bus rapid-transit route that had been the subject of a traffic mitigation study by NJ Transit and the New Jersey Department of Transportation. The study proposed to mitigate traffic congestion on Route 1 by creating a bus rapid-transit route that would run generally parallel to the highway and connect communities to shopping opportunities at Quaker Bridge Mall and to job and residential opportunities elsewhere along the route. If the bus rapid-transit plan were to be executed in conjunction with the development of inclusionary housing on the Quaker Bridge Mall property, the bus route would provide residents with an even greater access to a wide range of opportunities than is presently the case. The mall is presently served by public transit bus service.

Fifty-four of the 70 affordable homes will satisfy a portion of the third round obligation; the remaining 16 affordable homes will satisfy a portion of the fourth round obligation. The site is suitable for affordable housing pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:97-3.13, as follows:

- *“Available site” means a site with clear title, free of encumbrances which preclude development for low and moderate income housing.*

The property is not known to have any conflicts of ownership or other encumbrances that would prohibit the site from being developed with affordable housing. Like many malls, the retail anchors own the real estate under their building as well as associated parking. The main mall owner and operator is Quaker Bridge Mall, LLC, which is a subsidiary of the Simon Property Group, a real estate investment trust and largest mall operator in the United States. The owner directly controls 42.93 acres of the 102.83 acres.

- *“Developable site” means a site that has access to appropriate water and sewer infrastructure, and is consistent with the applicable areawide water quality management plan (including the wastewater management plan) or is included in an amendment to the areawide water quality management plan submitted to and under review by DEP.*

The property is within the sanitary sewer service area and has existing access to potable public water. Utilities are believed to be adequate to handle the additional development. The mall is located at the southeast intersection of Quakerbridge Road and Route 1. Interstate 95/295 is located a short distance to the south on Route 1 from the proposed housing development.

- *“Suitable site” means a site that is adjacent to compatible land uses, has access to appropriate streets and is consistent with the environmental policies delineated in N.J.A.C. 5:93-4.*

The anticipated location for such housing is in the southeast corner of the site adjacent to Grovers Mill Road. From this location Avalon Run also an inclusionary multi-family housing development completed in the mid-1990s is directly across the street. Development of housing on regional shopping centers is part of a country-wide trend to add housing to a retail environment to emulate



downtown or village center development. There are no known environmental constraints affecting the ability to develop the mall property with housing.

- *“Approvable site” means a site that may be developed for low and moderate income housing in a manner consistent with the rules or regulations of all agencies with jurisdiction over the site. A site may be approvable although not currently zoned for low and moderate income housing.*

The site appears to be developable consistent with the Residential Site Improvement Standards, N.J.A.C. 5:21. It does not contain any historic or architecturally important structures and is not within an historic zone.

- *In addition to determining whether the sites and proposed development are suitable pursuant to the above definitions, COAH’s rules, in N.J.A.C. 5:97-3.13, provide guidance as to where in the state inclusionary housing is encouraged. COAH’s rules rely on the 2001 State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) for this guidance and state Planning Areas 1, 2, and Centers are the preferred location to address municipal affordable housing obligations.*

The site is in Planning Area 2, the Suburban Planning Area. As such, its redevelopment for affordable housing is consistent with the guidance provided in N.J.A.C. 5:93-5.4.

#### Extension of Expiring Controls

The Township received 105 credits in its third round Judgment of Repose for extending the affordability controls on low- and moderate-income homes with controls scheduled to expire between 1999 and 2025. All the homes where affordability controls have been extended are family for-sale dwellings. The Township extended 62 and will execute the additional 43 extensions of controls consistent with the Judgment of Repose. Under N.J.A.C. 5:97- 6.14, the Township is entitled to one credit for each code-compliant home on which the Uniform Housing Affordability Controls are imposed for an additional 30 years from the date of expiration of the original controls will occur or has occurred, with a total time period of affordability controls ranging from 50 to 60 years depending on the time period of the original deed restriction. The Township provides a financial incentive to homeowners to apply an additional 30-year deed restriction to their property and, if needed, to bring, each property up to the current building code. The following addresses the criteria from N.J.A.C. 5:97-6.14 and how the Township’s proposal meets or requires a waiver from them in response.

- *The home meets the criteria for prior-cycle or post-1986 credits set forth in N.J.A.C. 5:97-4.2 or 4.3.*

The homes had previously gained substantive certification from COAH as eligible for Prior Cycle or post-1986 credits. The affordability controls for the homes are scheduled to expire during the 1999 through 2025 period.

As noted, all the homes’ deed restrictions have expired or will expire during the third round.





- *The municipality shall obtain a continuing certificate of occupancy or a certified statement from the municipal building inspector stating that the restricted home meets all code standards.*

Each change of ownership requires a dwelling inspection by the Construction Code Official's office. This office issues a form of COO that is called a Certificate of No Violation. If there is no repair required, a Certificate of No Violation is issued. If there is repair required, then a Certificate of Inspection is issued listing the required repairs. Once these are corrected, then the Certificate of No Violation is issued. All the extended homes have been issued the Certificate of No Violation.

- *If a home requires repair and/or rehabilitation work in order to receive a continuing certificate of occupancy or certified statement from the municipal building inspector, the municipality shall fund and complete the work. A municipality may utilize its affordable housing trust fund to purchase the home and/or complete the necessary repair and/or rehabilitation work.*

As noted, funding is available for incentives and repair work. Since the homes are generally no older than approximately years, the extent of repairs is expected to be less than will be necessary to fund the rehabilitation program that has been previously discussed in this document, which will allow for a greater incentive to be offered. Most of the existing extension-of-controls homes required no repair.

### ***Satisfaction of the Third Round Unmet Need***

As previously indicated, unmet need is the difference between the 702 RDP and the Township's 1,110-third round obligation, or 408. Lawrence provides the following compliance strategies to address the unmet need.

### **Mandatory Affordable Housing Set-Aside**

The Township adopted a mandatory set-aside ordinance that requires all residential development, excluding sites zoned to permit single-family attached and/or duplex and 2 family homes, where via use variance, rezoning, or redevelopment, shall provide 15% set-aside where the affordable homes are for rent and 20% set-aside where the affordable homes are for sale. All affordable homes shall be restricted, regulated and administered consistent with the Township's affordable housing regulations, the Uniform Housing Affordability Controls rules (N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.1 et seq.) and the New Jersey Fair Housing Act (N.J.S.A. 52:27D-301 et seq.). This shall include but is not limited to affordability controls, income distribution, bedroom distribution, and phasing.

### **Morris Hall**

Morris Hall, which is owned by the Diocese of Trenton, is a complex of buildings on both sides of Route 206. The Diocese land on the east side of Route 206, directly north of its interchange with I-95, was partially constructed with a skilled nursing care center in 2016. The remainder of this property (Block 4901, pt. Lot 1) is about 10 acres and is zoned Senior Citizen Residential at 14 units per acre. All SCR zoned



property requires an affordable housing set-aside in §410.E of the Land Use Ordinance. This would generate a maximum of 28 affordable homes towards unmet need. The site received approval for 120 skilled nursing beds, of which 60 have been constructed. This development was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose.

#### HUB City Distributing

This facility is a wholesale beer distributor located at 6 Princess Road on Block 3901, Lot 2.01, consisting of 10.52 acres (owned by Frank Banko III). The company was part of Banko Beverage, the largest beer wholesaler in the state, but was sold in spring 2017 to Kramer Beverage, a similar type of operation. Princess Road's zoning was recently changed from limited industrial to Mixed Use District 2 (MXD-2) to allow for a greater variety of uses. The site is proposed for an overlay district allowing 10 homes per acre for a total of up to 105 homes, of which up to 21 homes would be affordable. The site is not yet developed with inclusionary housing. This development was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose.

#### Capital Health

Immediately adjacent to the HUB City Distributing to the east on Princess Road is the site once contemplated for a hospital by the Capital Health System, which eventually built a hospital in Hopewell Township. The site has freshwater wetlands on its eastern side as well as a conservation easement in the extreme northeast corner of the site held by the State. The State of New Jersey also acquired the parcel to the southeast of the property, which is constrained by wetlands and floodplain. This parcel has been made part of the Delaware and Raritan Canal's holdings. Because of these constraints, the site is permitted 8 units per gross acre. Block 3901, Lot 4.01 is 30.27 acres and would allow up to 242 homes, of which up to 49 homes of affordable housing could be obtained. The site is not yet developed with inclusionary housing. This development was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose.

#### Tricone Engineers

This site is immediately south of the Quaker Bridge mall consisting of 6.93 acres at the intersection of the mall access road and Grovers Mill Road (Block 4201.01, Lot 33.03). Approximately four acres are developable. Constraints include a drainage easement and wetlands. The site is presently vacant. This site is proposed for 15 units per acre which would allow up to 103 homes, of which up to 21 would be affordable. The developer has applied for site plan approval. This development was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose.

#### Fampec, LLC

This parcel is located immediately to the west of the Tricone Engineers lot on the other side of the mall access road. The property is known as 500 Renaissance Boulevard, Block 4201.01, Lot 32.01.2, consisting of 3.62 acres. The property is proposed for an overlay district of up to 15 dwelling units per acre, or potentially up to 54 homes in total and 10 affordable homes. The site is not yet developed with inclusionary housing. This development was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose.



### Lawrence Shopping Center - RPM

The Lawrence shopping center site (Block 2001, Lots 3, 60-66, 68) is a 48-acre property located along Brunswick Pike, Texas Avenue and Princeton Pike. However, only a 4.3 acre portion of the site along Texas Avenue is being developed for affordable housing; the remaining shopping center will continue. On April 28, 2021 RPM Development, an experienced tax-credit developer of affordable, received Preliminary Major Site Plan and Preliminary and Major Subdivision approval for the development. The development received Low Income Housing Tax credits, and the Township granted a PILOT. The development is under construction and projected to be completed in Spring 2026. This development was approved by the third round Judgment of Repose.

The development will consist of 54 homes, of which 53 will be affordable. There will be 6 duplex buildings (12 homes) constructed along Texas Avenue and two multi-family buildings with 42 homes to the rear. Also planned are two outdoor amenity areas. Six of the homes will have one-bedroom, 27 will have two bedrooms, and 21 will have three-bedrooms.

### ***Distribution of Third Round Affordable Homes***

In addition to meeting the total 702 RDP, the Township must also meet a rental obligation, maximum senior homes, family obligation, and the very low income obligation.

Maximum Bonus Credits = 176

- Equal to the rental obligation, except that senior homes may only meet half of the rental obligation and are eligible for .33 bonus credits
- The Township is within the maximum with only 152 bonus credits. Twelve bonus credits are attributed to 35 senior homes.

Minimum Rental = 176 homes

- $.25 \text{ (RDP)} = 176 \text{ homes}$  |  $.25 \text{ (702)} = 175.5$ , rounded up to 176
- This requirement is exceeded with 310 rental homes in the various special needs, senior, and family developments.

Maximum Senior = 175 homes

- $.25 \text{ (RDP)} = 175 \text{ homes}$  |  $.25 \text{ (702)} = 175.5$ , rounded down to 175
- The Township is within the maximum with 175 senior homes.



Minimum Family = 275 homes

- .50 (homes meeting the RDP) = 275 homes | .50 (549) = 274.5, rounded up to 275
- This requirement is exceeded with 290 homes for families.

Minimum Family Rental: 88 homes

- .50 (rental obligation) = 88 homes | .50 (176) = 88
- The Township exceeds this obligation with 121 rental homes for families.

Minimum Very Low Income = 16 homes

- .13 (homes created or approved on or after July 1, 2008) = 19 homes | .13 (122) = 15.86, rounded up to 16
- This requirement is generated based on the affordable homes at Berts Walk, Carriage Park rental, Brandywine, Nexus Properties and Quakerbridge Mall. The Township exceeds the obligation with the various special needs developments as well as very low income homes in developments approved on or after July 1, 2008.

Minimum Family Very Low Income = 8 homes

- .50 (very low income obligation) = 10 homes | .50 (18) = 8
- This requirement is satisfied with the very low income homes in developments approved on or after July 1, 2008.

### **Fourth Round Obligation**

Lawrence's fourth round obligation (also referred to as the prospective need) is 320. This obligation is defined as the new construction obligation for 2025-2035. The Fair Housing Act, *N.J.S.A. 52:27D-304.3.b.*, describes the obligation as a "projection of housing needs based on development and growth which is reasonably likely to occur in a region or a municipality, as the case may be, as a result of actual determination of public and private entities. Prospective need shall be determined by the methodology set forth pursuant to sections 6 and 7 of P.L.2024, c. 2 (C.52:27D-304.2 and C.52:27D-304.3) for the fourth round and all future rounds of housing obligations". The methodology to calculate the obligation begins with determining the need for affordable housing in which the municipality is located. That regional need is then allocated to each municipality in the region, excluding qualified urban aid municipalities, based on an average of three factors: 1) equalized nonresidential valuation factor, which serves as a proxy for the municipal share of the region's change in employment during the previous affordable housing round, 2) income capacity factor, which is the municipal share of the region's median household income, and 3) land capacity factor, which is the municipal share of the region's developable land.



The DCA calculated municipal fourth round obligations in *Affordable Housing Obligations for 2025-2035 (Fourth Round) Methodology and Background*, released on or about October 18, 2024. This DCA Report calculated a fourth round obligation of 320 for the Township. This obligation was assigned to the Township by Superior Court.

#### ***Fourth Round Vacant Land Adjustment***

The Township continues its vacant land adjustment into the fourth round since the fourth round obligation continues to exceed the vacant and developable land available. A fourth round RDP is calculated separate from the previous rounds due to revised standards in the Fair Housing Act which are only applicable to the fourth round and subsequent rounds.

Review of approvals issued by the Planning Board and Zoning Board, anticipated development and construction permits indicate there are 3 properties that generate RDP:

- 3131 Princeton Pike: This property replaced the office development constructed on the 8.57 acre property with a mixed use inclusionary development that includes 204 homes and commercial development. Site Plan approval was granted in 2024.
- 31 East Darrah Lane: This property received site plan approval in 2017 to construct a second building on the property consisting of 12 homes. The property is 4.12 acres; however, a substantial portion consists of wetlands. The site plan approval also included a subdivision of 1.41 ac for the purpose of the new building.
- 3641 Lawrenceville Road: The property's developer contacted the Township in hopes of being included in this housing plan. The Township recognizes that this site, which is an oversized single-family home lot, is being offered available for inclusionary development, and as a result now generates RDP.

The table that follows calculates the Township's fourth round RDP of 56.

<b>Fourth Round RDP Calculation</b>					
<b>Address</b>	<b>Block / Lot</b>	<b>Total Area</b>	<b>Density</b>	<b>Total Homes</b>	<b>RDP</b>
3131 Princeton Pike	3801 / 2, 3	8.57	23.7	204	40.8
31 East Darrah Lane	3301 / 30.01	1.41	8.5	12	2.4
3641 Lawrenceville Road	6601 / 2	6.45	10.0	64	12.8
<b>Total</b>					<b>56.0</b>



### ***Satisfaction of the Fourth Round RDP***

The Township contributes 4 developments to address the RDP, 3 family developments and 1 senior development. These 4 developments produce a surplus of 33 that will be used to satisfy an increased fourth round RDP and/or the fifth round obligation, consistent with the applicable rules. Bonus credits are not assigned to the surplus; however, any increased fourth round RDP and/or the fifth round RDP (assuming continuance of the vacant land adjustment) may be eligible for bonus credits, consistent with the applicable rules.

<b>Satisfaction of the Fourth Round 56 RDP</b>				
<b>Development Name</b>	<b>Development Type</b>	<b>Homes</b>	<b>Bonus Credits</b>	<b>Credits</b>
Carriage Park	Inclusionary Senior Rental	12 (of 16)	0	12
3131 Princeton Pike	Inclusionary Family Rental	30 (of 31)	14	44
<b>Total Meeting the RDP</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>56</b>
Carriage Park	Inclusionary Senior Rental	3 (of 16)	n/a	3
3131 Princeton Pike	Inclusionary Family Rental	1 (of 31)	n/a	1
Quakerbridge Mall	Inclusionary Family Rental / Sale	16 (of 70)	n/a	16
3641 Lawrenceville Road	Inclusionary Family Sale / Rental	13	n/a	13
<b>Surplus</b>		<b>33</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>33</b>

#### Carriage Park

Fifteen of the 16 affordable senior rental homes in this development satisfies a portion of the fourth round; the remaining one home satisfies a portion of the third round. Due the maximum senior homes that may satisfy the fourth round RDP, 3 of the homes are surplus. See the description of this development in the Third Round section herein for additional information.

#### 3131 Princeton Pike

This property, Block 3801, Lots 2 and 3, is located at the intersection of Princeton Pike and Executive Park Plaza, between the Interstate 95 interchange and Franklin Corner Road. The property received site plan approval in 2004 to replace the office development constructed on the 8.57 acre property with a mixed use inclusionary development. The site is subject to the *3131 Princeton Pike Redevelopment Plan*, which regulates the Redevelopment Area designated in 2023. The development includes 204 multifamily residential homes, including 31 affordable homes (15% affordable housing set-aside), 17,510 square feet of retail space, and other associated site improvements. All affordable homes shall be restricted, regulated



and administered consistent with the Township's affordable housing regulations, the Uniform Housing Affordability Controls rules (*N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.1 et seq.*) and the New Jersey Fair Housing Act (*N.J.S.A. 52:27D-301 et seq.*). This shall include but is not limited to affordability controls, income distribution, bedroom distribution, and phasing.

#### Quakerbridge Mall

Sixteen of the 70 affordable family homes in this development satisfies a portion of the fourth round; the remaining 54 homes satisfies a portion of the third round. See the description of this development in the Third Round section herein for additional information.

#### 3641 Lawrenceville Road

The site, Block 6601, Lot 2, is in the northwest corner of the intersection of Lawrenceville Road (US 206) and Province Line Road. Totalling 6.45 acres, the site has 935' of frontage along Lawrenceville Road. At present the site contains an existing historic two-and-a-half story 5-bedroom single family residence (William Gulick House), and a detached garage, and much of the eastern half of the site is wooded. The predominant surrounding uses are single-family homes, and the character of the area is that of large-lot single family homes. While the site is adjacent to the BMS corporate office complex, that complex has limited visibility from Lawrenceville Road and Princeton Pike since the buildings and parking are setback approximately 1,250 feet and 700 feet from each road, respectively. Additionally, a dentist office is located across Lawrenceville Road; however, the site largely maintains a residential character due to the modest office that has a residential architecture style. The property is free of environmental constraints; however, Kings Highway Historic district is along the Lawrenceville Road frontage and there is a 30 foot conservation easement at the rear of the property. The property is developed with a vacant single-family home and is within the Environmental Protection 1 (EP-1) district, which permits single-family residential uses on lots of 2 acres (cluster and lot size averaging is permitted on larger tracts).

The property will be rezoned to permit residential development at 10 du/ac with a 20% affordable housing set-aside. At 6.45 acres, the site can be developed with 64 homes, including 13 affordable homes. Permitted uses include townhouses, stacked townhouses, duplexes and multi-family homes. This density is appropriate, which exceeds the minimum density of 6 du/ac, given the low-density residential character of the area, the constrained property configuration with a width that ranges from approximately 295 feet to 340 feet combined with the historic district along the Lawrenceville Road frontage and the conservation easement at the rear, and the need for affordable housing (see also the Township's unmet need mechanisms for more detail on planned affordable homes for the fourth round). Also supporting the assigned density is the fact that the site is designated by the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan) as PA-3, Fringe Planning Area, which is not a preferred area for affordable housing or growth outside centers as per the COAH rules and the State Plan, respectively. In fact, the Planning Area is described as "a predominantly rural landscape" and the intent is to "protect the Environs primarily as open lands". The density of 10 du/ac provides a proper balance between the Township's need for affordable housing and the character of the area.





All affordable homes shall be restricted, regulated and administered consistent with the Township's affordable housing regulations, the Uniform Housing Affordability Controls rules (*N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.1 et seq.*) and the New Jersey Fair Housing Act (*N.J.S.A. 52:27D-301 et seq.*). This shall include but is not limited to affordability controls, income distribution, bedroom distribution, and phasing.

The site is suitable for affordable housing pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 5:97-3.13*, as follows:

- *“Available site” means a site with clear title, free of encumbrances which preclude development for low and moderate income housing.*

The property is not known to have any conflicts of ownership or other encumbrances that would prohibit the site from being developed with affordable housing.

- *“Developable site” means a site that has access to appropriate water and sewer infrastructure, and is consistent with the applicable areawide water quality management plan (including the wastewater management plan) or is included in an amendment to the areawide water quality management plan submitted to and under review by DEP.*

The property is within the sanitary sewer service area and has existing access to potable public water.

- *“Suitable site” means a site that is adjacent to compatible land uses, has access to appropriate streets and is consistent with the environmental policies delineated in N.J.A.C. 5:93-4.*

The predominant surrounding uses are single-family homes, and the character of the area is that of large-lot single family homes. While the site is adjacent to the BMS corporate office complex, that complex has limited visibility from Lawrenceville Road and Princeton Pike since the buildings and parking are setback approximately 1,250 feet and 700 feet from each road, respectively. Additionally, a dentist office is located across Lawrenceville Road; however, the site largely maintains a residential character due to the modest office that has a residential architecture style. The property is free of environmental constraints; however, Kings Highway Historic district is along the Lawrenceville Road frontage and there is a 30 foot conservation easement at the rear of the property.

- *“Approvable site” means a site that may be developed for low and moderate income housing in a manner consistent with the rules or regulations of all agencies with jurisdiction over the site. A site may be approvable although not currently zoned for low and moderate income housing.*

The site appears to be developable consistent with the Residential Site Improvement Standards, *N.J.A.C. 5:21*. The Kings Highway Historic district is along the Lawrenceville Road frontage; however, this designation need not preclude it from being approvable for affordable housing as the site can provide a buffer to accommodate the historic district.

- *In addition to determining whether the sites and proposed development are suitable pursuant to the above definitions, COAH's rules, in N.J.A.C. 5:97-3.13, provide guidance as to where in the state inclusionary housing is encouraged. COAH's rules rely on the 2001 State Development and*



*Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) for this guidance and state Planning Areas 1, 2, and Centers are the preferred location to address municipal affordable housing obligations.*

The site is in Planning Area 3, the Fringe Planning Area. While this site is not the preferred location, the Township utilizes the site given its RDP generation and its otherwise suitability.

### ***Satisfaction of the Fourth Round Unmet Need***

Given the 56 RDP, the Township's fourth round unmet need is 264 ( $320-56=264$ ). The Township has two strategies to address the fourth round unmet need. The Township's unmet need strategies create realistic zoning for more than double that which is 25% of the fourth round unmet need ( $.25 (264) = 66$ ).

Fourth Round Unmet Need Strategies					
Program	Development Type	Area	Density	Affordable Set-aside	Affordable Homes
ETS	Mixed-use Inclusionary Family & Senior Rental / Sale	75+/- ac.	800 homes	20%	115
3450 Princeton Pike	Inclusionary Family Rental / Sale	10.2 ac	10 du/ac / 102 homes	20%	20
				<b>Total</b>	<b>135</b>

### **ETS – 660 Rosedale Road**

This site, Block 7801, Lot 21, is located at the corner of Rosedale Road (C.R. 604) and Carter Road. ETS is a long-time corporate campus in the northern section of Lawrence Township that is experiencing significant vacancies as the organization downsizes. Notwithstanding, the property owner seeks to retain a portion of the building, including a hotel and conference center. The property is developed with a corporate campus, consisting of office buildings, hotel with conference center, substantial parking, on-site wastewater treatment facility, and several other improvements. The property is 355.36 acres; however, substantial portions of the property are environmentally constrained with a category 1 stream (the Stony Brook), wetlands, vernal pools, flood hazard areas and more. There are two trails on the property – the Lawrence Hopewell Trail and the Laurie Chauncy Trail. Additionally, a sports field is located proximate to Rosedale Road.

The portion for which redevelopment is proposed consists of approximately 75+/- acres located predominantly located north of the “ring road”; developed areas south of the “ring road” are planned for retention. The Township will rezone the site to permit up to 800 homes, of which not less than 15% shall



be reserved for seniors, as well as commercial space. The affordable housing set-aside will be 20%. The redevelopment of the property will have a “town center” design that creates a walkable neighborhood that has convenient access to the commercial uses, the remaining office and hotel, and the variety of environmental and recreation features on the site.

### 3450 Princeton Pike

This site, Block 5101, Lot 22.01, is located at the corner of Princeton Pike and Lenox Drive and is occupied with an office building, as well as parking and other site improvements. The property is 10.2 acres and is free of environmental constraints. The site is surrounded by office development, although open space and townhomes are proximate to the site. The Township will rezone the site for inclusionary townhouses, stacked townhouses and multi-family homes at 10 du/ac and a 20% affordable housing set-aside.

### Mandatory Set-aside Ordinance

The Township will continue to enforce its mandatory set-aside ordinance. However, it will be revised to require a 20% set-aside in all instances. Fractional set-aside requirements shall be rounded down where the fraction is .49 or less and rounded up for those .50 or greater. All affordable homes shall be restricted, regulated and administered consistent with the Township’s affordable housing regulations, the Uniform Housing Affordability Controls rules (N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.1 et seq.) and the New Jersey Fair Housing Act (N.J.S.A. 52:27D-301 et seq.). This shall include but is not limited to affordability controls, income distribution, bedroom distribution, and phasing.

### ***Distribution of Fourth Round Homes***

In addition to meeting the total fourth round RDP, the Township must also meet a rental obligation, maximum senior homes, family obligation, very low income obligation, and maximum bonus credits, as set forth in the Fair Housing Act. These obligations may be amended should bonus credits be applied to the fourth round obligation.

Maximum Bonus = 14

- Maximum bonus credits = 25% (RDP) | .25 (56) = 14
- The proposed bonus credits are within the 25% maximum. The 14 bonus reflect .5 bonus for redevelopment of homes on land that was previously utilized for retail, office or commercial use.

Minimum Rental = 11 homes

- Minimum rental homes = 25% (homes meeting the RDP) | .25 (42) = 10.5, rounded up to 11
- All homes meeting the RDP are rental homes, and the surplus homes from 3641 Lawrence Road and Quakerbridge Mall may be for sale or for rent. None of the unmet need strategies are limited to owner-occupied homes.



Maximum Senior = 12 homes

- Maximum age-restricted homes = 30% (homes meeting the RDP) |  $.3 (42) = 12.6$ , rounded down to 12
- The Township uses 12 homes at the Carriage Park rental development; the remaining homes in this development are surplus. Up to 15% of the homes developed at ETS, an unmet need strategy, may be senior.

Minimum Family = 21 homes

- Minimum family homes = 50% (homes meeting the RDP) |  $.5 (42) = 21$
- This requirement is exceeded with the homes at 3131 Princeton Pike. The Township's unmet need strategies will create family homes, except that up to 15% of the homes at ETS may be senior.

Minimum Family Rental = 6 homes

- Minimum family rental = 50% (rental obligation) |  $.5 (11) = 5.5$ , rounded up to 6
- This requirement is exceeded with the homes at 3131 Princeton Pike. The Township's unmet need strategies will create family homes, except that up to 15% of the homes at ETS may be senior, and none of the unmet need strategies are limited to owner occupied homes.

Minimum Very Low Income = 10 homes

- Minimum very low income homes = 13% (fourth round homes created or approved on or after July 1, 2008) |  $.13 (42) = 9.66$ , rounded up to 10
- The developments contributing to this obligation include very low income units. The unmet need strategies will also provide 13% very low income homes, as is required.

Minimum Family Very Low Income = 3 homes

- Minimum family very low income homes = 50% (very low income obligation) |  $.5 (5) = 2.5$ , rounded up to 3
- This requirement is satisfied with the 3131 Princeton Pike Development.

## **CONSISTENCY WITH THE STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The Township has lands designated every Planning Area, except the Environmentally Sensitive / Barrier Island Planning Area. The Planning Areas intended to accommodate more intense development and redevelopment, PA 1 and PA 2, are generally located in the southern half of the Township. The Township's Housing Plan is consistent with the goals and policies of the 2001 State Development and Redevelopment Plan in that most of its affordable housing developments are in Planning Areas 1 and 2. In fact, Planning Areas 1 and 2 are the preferred locations for affordable housing pursuant to 5:93-5.4.



## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADMINISTRATION & AFFIRMATIVE MARKETING**

Lawrence Township's Affordable Housing Ordinance and affirmative marketing plan is in part, but will be further amended to be, consistent with the Fair Housing Act, the Uniform Housing Affordability Control Rules, *N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.1 et seq.*, and the Division of Local Planning Services Fair Housing Act Rules, *N.J.A.C. 5:99*. As of the adoption of this Housing Plan, the latter two are in the process of being amended.

The Township's Affordable Housing Ordinance, Article X of the Township Code governs the establishment of affordable homes in the Township as well as regulating the occupancy of such homes. The Township's Affordable Housing Ordinance addresses the phasing of affordable homes, the low/moderate income split, bedroom distribution, occupancy standards, affordability controls, establishing rents and prices, affirmative marketing, income qualification, etc. All newly created affordable homes, with limited exceptions, will comply with the affordability control period of 30 years for sale homes or 40 years for rental homes, as required by the Fair Housing Act and the Uniform Housing Affordability Control Rules.

The Township created the position of the Municipal Housing Liaison and appointed a staff member to the position. The consultant affordable housing administrator overseeing any affordable housing development will conduct the administration and affirmative marketing of the applicable affordable housing sites. The affirmative marketing plan will be designed to attract buyers and/or renters of all majority and minority groups, regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital or familial status, gender, affectional or sexual orientation, disability, age or number of children to the affordable homes located in the Township. Additionally, the affirmative marketing plan is intended to target those potentially eligible persons who are least likely to apply for affordable homes and who reside in the Township's housing region, Region 4 consisting of Mercer, Monmouth and Ocean counties.

The affirmative marketing plan provides regulations for qualification of income eligibility, price and rent restrictions, bedroom distribution, affordability control periods, and marketing in accordance with *N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.1 et seq.* This plan must be adhered to by all private, non-profit, and municipal developers of affordable housing and must cover the period of deed restriction or affordability controls on each affordable home.

## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND**

A development fee ordinance creating a dedicated revenue source for affordable housing was first approved by COAH on May 6, 1992 and most recently approved by Superior Court as part of the Township's 2021 Final Judgement of Compliance and Repose. The ordinance, which is Section 901 of the Township Code creates a dedicated revenue source for affordable housing in the form of residential and nonresidential development fees and establishes and regulates the affordable housing trust fund. The ordinance requires residential development fees in the amount of 1.5% of the equalized assessed value



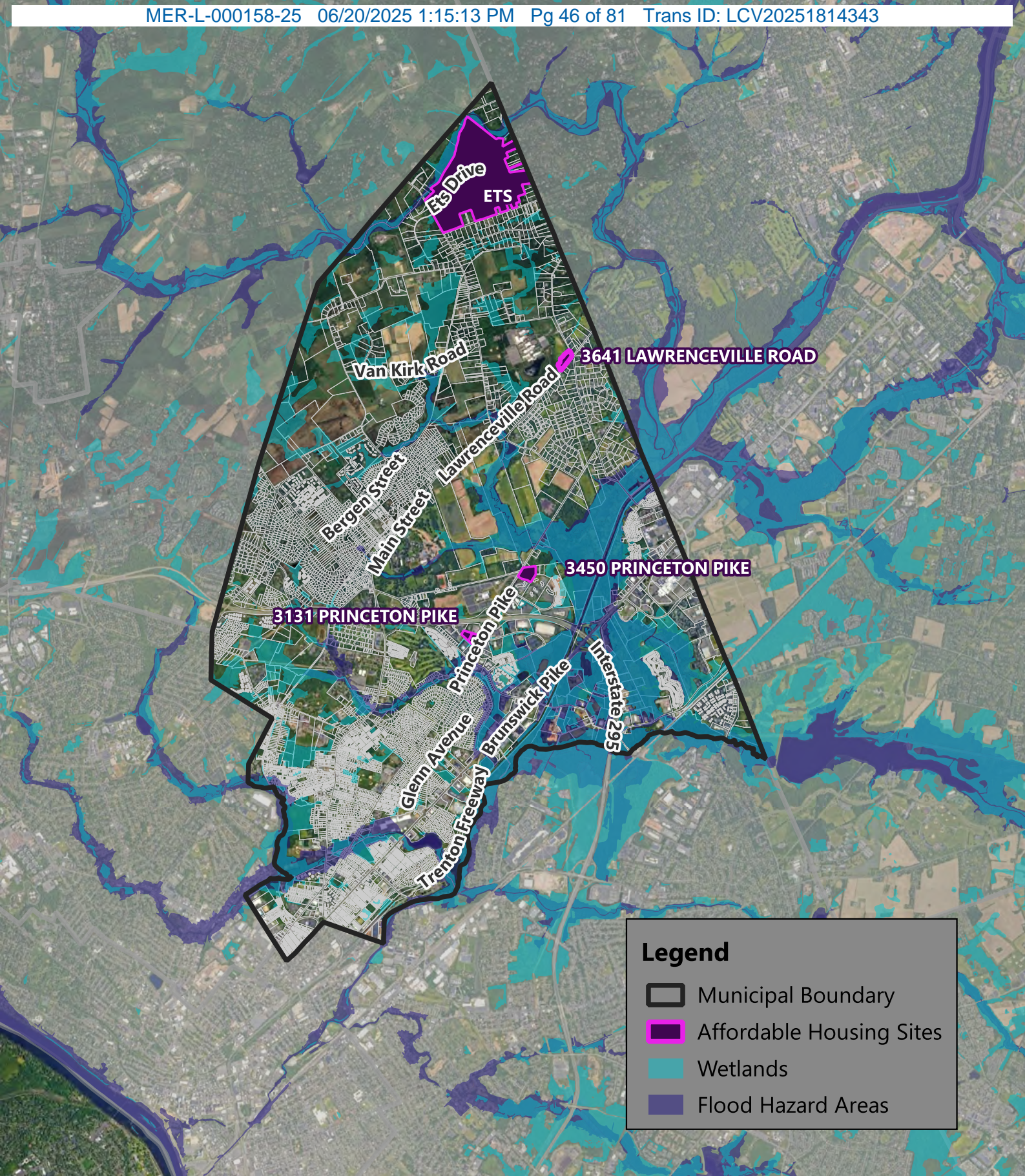
of the residential development and nonresidential development fees in the amount of 2.5% of the equalized assessed value of the nonresidential development.

The Township's Spending Plan discusses anticipated revenues, collection of revenues, and the use of revenues. Collected revenues are placed in the Township's Affordable Housing Trust fund and may dispensed for the use of eligible affordable housing activities including, but not limited to:

- Rehabilitation program activities.
- New construction of affordable homes and related development costs.
- Extension of expiring affordability controls.
- Purchase market rate homes for conversion to affordable homes.
- Extensions or improvements of roads and infrastructure directly serving affordable housing development sites.
- Acquisition and/or improvement of land to be used for affordable housing.
- Maintenance and repair of affordable homes.
- Repayment of municipal bonds issued to finance low- and moderate-income housing activity.
- Any other activity as specified in the approved spending plan.

As required by the Fair Housing Act, the Township will expend a portion of its collected development fees on affordability assistance to enhance affordability of affordable homes. Additionally, no more than 20% of the revenues collected from development fees each year, shall be expended on administration, including, but not limited to, salaries and benefits for municipal employees or consultant fees necessary to prepare or implement a rehabilitation program, a new construction program, a housing element and fair share plan, and/or an affirmative marketing program.





## AFFORDABLE HOUSING SITES FOURTH ROUND HOUSING PLAN

TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE | MERCER COUNTY

DATA SOURCES: Basemap, Google Earth; Flood Hazard Areas, FEMA; Other GIS Data, NJ DEP

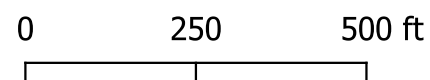




**3641 LAWRENCEVILLE ROAD**  
**BLOCK 6601 LOT 2**

TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE | MERCER COUNTY

DATA SOURCES: Basemap, Google Earth; Flood Hazard Areas, FEMA; Other GIS Data, NJ DEP







### Legend

- Affordable Housing Sites
- Wetlands
- Flood Hazard Areas
- Parcels

## 3131 PRINCETON PIKE

### BLOCK 3801, LOTS 2 & 3

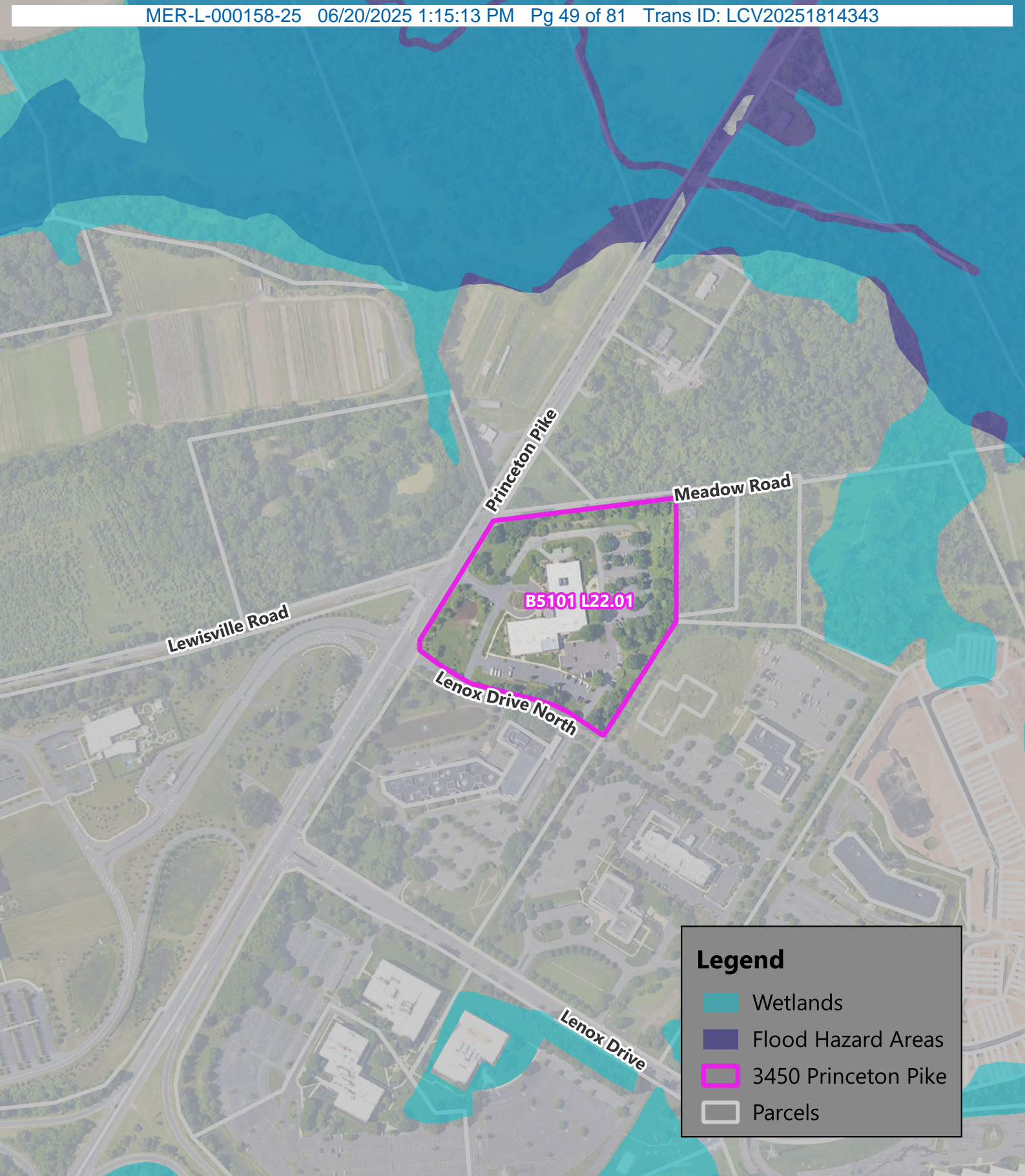
TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE | MERCER COUNTY

DATA SOURCES: Basemap, Google Earth; Flood Hazard Areas, FEMA; Other GIS Data, NJ DEP



0 500 1,000 ft





## 3450 PRINCETON PIKE

### BLOCK 5101, LOT 22.01

TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE | MERCER COUNTY

DATA SOURCES: Basemap, Google Earth; Flood Hazard Areas, FEMA; Other GIS Data, NJ DEP

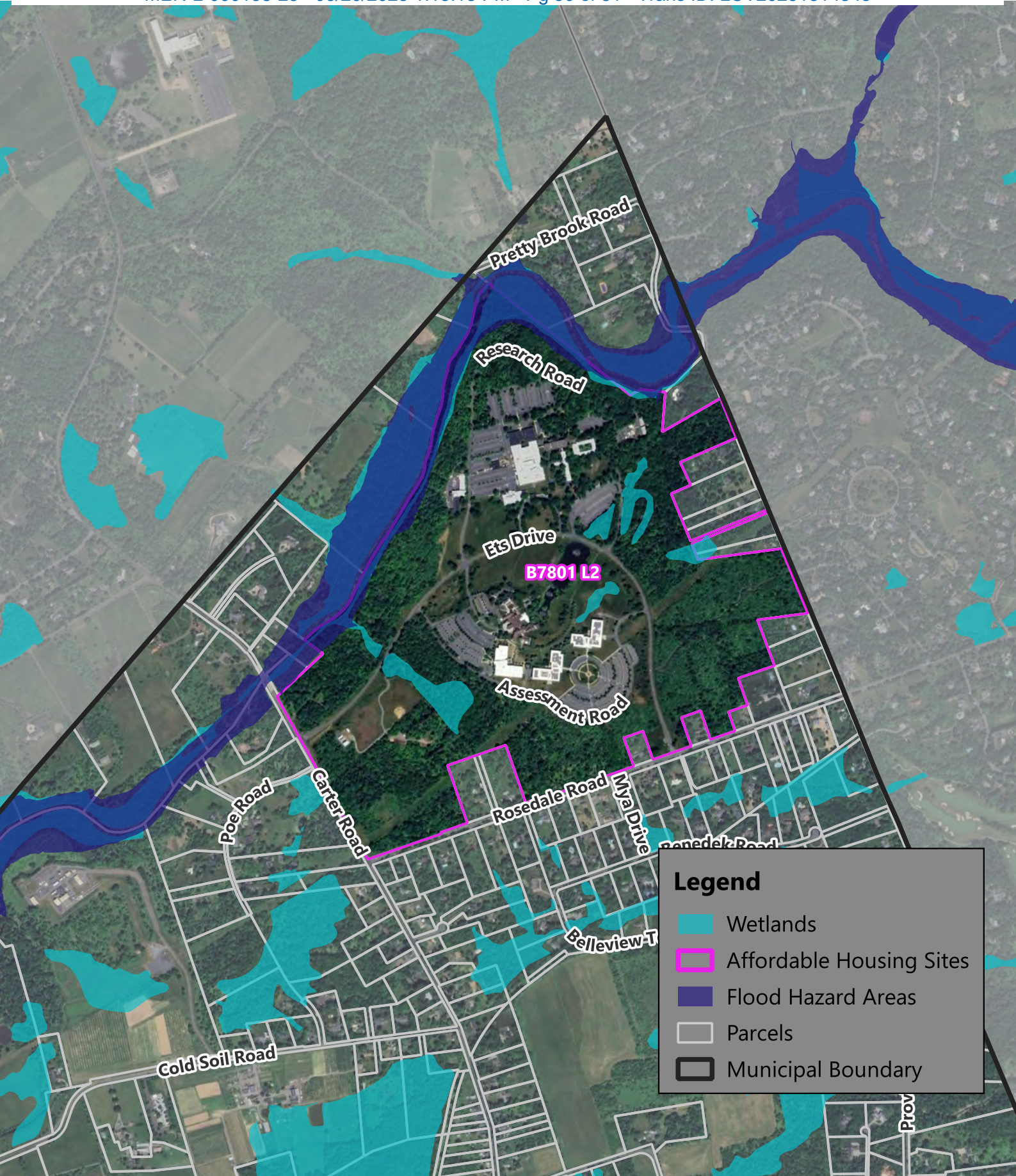


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### Legend

- Wetlands
- Affordable Housing Sites
- Flood Hazard Areas
- Parcels
- Municipal Boundary

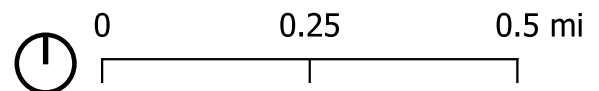


### ETS

### BLOCK 7801, LOT 2

TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE | MERCER COUNTY

DATA SOURCES: Basemap, Google Earth; Flood Hazard Areas, FEMA; Other GIS Data, NJ DEP



## **APPENDIX 1.**

# **HOUSING, DEMOGRAPHIC & EMPLOYMENT ANALYSIS**

2025 FOURTH ROUND HOUSING PLAN

HOUSING ELEMENT & FAIR SHARE PLAN

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP

MERCER COUNTY

NEW JERSEY







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## DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The population of Lawrence Township has risen sharply since 1940, when the municipality had 6,522 residents. The decade when the population increased the most by percentage was the 1950s, when the number of residents surged by 60.7% (Table 1). Growth was also swift in the 1960s when the number of residents swelled by 43.3%. Following the 1970s, when population growth stalled, the influx of new persons began anew, with the total number of residents climbing by 30.7%. The township continued to add residents over the subsequent two decades, with the population rising by 13.1% and 14.8% in the 1990s and 2000s, respectively. The Census Bureau found that the number of residents declined during the 2010s. This appears to be a statistical anomaly as the 2020 Decennial Census was carried out during the pandemic lockdown when Rider University sent students home for virtual learning. As it is, the population only declined by 1.2%, which suggests that the 2030 Census may find a significant spike in the municipality's population.

It should be noted here that, although the total population data in Table 1 is drawn from the Decennial U.S. Census survey, all subsequent Census Bureau data contained herein comes from the 2019-2023 American Community Survey (ACS), which is calculated as a 5-year estimate.

**Table 1: Population Trends (1940-2020)**

Year	Lawrence		Mercer County		New Jersey	
1940	6,522	--	197,318	--	4,160,165	--
1950	8,499	30.3%	229,781	16.5%	4,835,329	16.2%
1960	13,655	60.7%	266,392	15.9%	6,066,782	25.5%
1970	19,567	43.3%	303,968	14.1%	7,171,112	18.2%
1980	19,724	0.8%	307,863	1.3%	7,365,011	2.7%
1990	25,787	30.7%	325,824	5.8%	7,730,188	5.0%
2000	29,159	13.1%	350,761	7.7%	8,414,350	8.9%
2010	33,472	14.8%	366,513	4.5%	8,791,894	4.5%
2020	33,077	-1.2%	387,340	5.7%	9,288,944	5.7%
Source: Census Bureau, Decennial Census; NJ Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development						

Table 2 shows the population cohorts for Lawrence as of 2023. Women comprise a narrow majority of residents, 51.0%, while 49.0% of residents are men. By age, the largest population cohort consists of persons between the ages of 35 and 54, who total 25.7% of the community in all. Younger adults, those between the ages of 20 and 34, are the second largest age group, constituting 21.2% of residents. Approximately one in five residents, or 20.4%, are between the ages of 5 and 19. For their part, children under the age of 5 make up only 3.9% of the population. As for older residents, persons 55 years of age and older make up 28.8% of the population. Of this, persons 55 to 64 years of age comprise 12.7% of the population while those 65 years of age comprise 16.1%. The community is relatively young, with the median resident 39.8 years of age.

**Table 2: Population by Age and Sex**

Age Group	Total Population		Male		Female	
	Number	% of Population	Number	% of Population	Number	% of Population
Under 5 years of age	1,245	3.9%	753	4.8%	492	3.0%
5 to 19 years of age	6,603	20.4%	3,479	21.9%	3,124	19.0%
20 to 34 years of age	6,839	21.2%	3,220	20.3%	3,619	22.0%
35 to 54 years of age	8,317	25.7%	4,353	27.5%	3,964	24.0%
55 to 64 years of age	4,109	12.7%	1,876	11.8%	2,233	13.5%
65+ years of age	5,222	16.1%	2,171	13.7%	3,051	18.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,335</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>15,852</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>16,483</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Median age</b>	<b>39.8</b>		<b>38.4</b>		<b>41.2</b>	

*Source: Census Bureau, 2019-2023 5-Year American Community Survey*

While Lawrence is relatively young, the two oldest age groups are the fastest growing cohorts (Table 3). The number of seniors, commonly defined as those 65 years of age and older, grew by 10.4% between 2013 and 2023. For its part, the 55-to-64 age group expanded by 10.4%. As these older cohorts grew, the median age of the township rose by 2 years, going from 37.8 to 39.8 years of age. In each of the other age groups, the number of persons fell. Most dramatically, the number of children less than 5 years old fell by 608 persons, or 32.8%. The population of persons between 35 and 54 years of age also dropped by a sizable amount, or 11.5%. The remaining two cohorts, those 5 to 19 years of age and 20 to 34 years of age, also saw declines, by 1.3% and 0.1%, respectively.

**Table 3: Population Change by Age, 2013 to 2023**

Age Group	2013		2023		Change, 2013 to 2023	
	2013	%, Total Population	2023	%, Total Population	Total Change	% Change
Under 5 years old	1,853	5.6%	1,245	3.9%	<b>-608</b>	<b>-32.8%</b>
5 to 19 years of age	6,688	20.1%	6,603	20.4%	<b>-85</b>	<b>-1.3%</b>
20 to 34 years of age	6,844	20.6%	6,839	21.2%	<b>-5</b>	<b>-0.1%</b>
35 to 54 years of age	9,394	28.3%	8,317	25.7%	<b>-1,077</b>	<b>-11.5%</b>
55 to 64 years of age	3,720	11.2%	4,109	12.7%	<b>389</b>	<b>10.5%</b>
65+ years of age	4,729	14.2%	5,222	16.1%	<b>493</b>	<b>10.4%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>33,228</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>32,335</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>-893</b>	<b>-2.7%</b>
<b>Median Age</b>	<b>37.8</b>		<b>39.8</b>		<b>2.0</b>	

*Source: 2009-2013, 2019-2023 5-Year American Community Survey*



Overall, 11,954 households call Lawrence home. The distribution of households in the municipality by size generally mirrors the distribution for Mercer County. Even so, the average household size in Lawrence, 2.50 persons, is significantly below the average household size in the county, 2.58 persons (Table 4). Two-person households are the most numerous household size, 30.0%, with one-person households comprising 29.4% of households. In other words, one- and two-person households compose 59.4% of all households in the township, surpassing the 58.3% for the county and 57.5% of households statewide. Three-person households make up a relatively large share of the community, 18.2% of households overall, higher than the comparable shares for the county and state, 17.0% and 15.3%. Another 13.3% of households comprise four people, a lower percentage than seen at the county or state level, 15.7% and 15.3%, respectively. Households of five or more persons account for the remaining 9.0% of households in the community, the same percentage as Mercer County.

**Table 4: Household Size**

Household Size	Lawrence		Mercer County		New Jersey	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
1-person household	3,517	29.4%	40,821	28.9%	918,897	26.4%
2-person household	3,592	30.0%	41,584	29.4%	1,081,842	31.1%
3-person household	2,179	18.2%	24,043	17.0%	594,946	17.1%
4-person household	1,592	13.3%	22,268	15.7%	530,520	15.3%
5-person household	678	5.7%	7,937	5.6%	218,492	6.3%
6-person household	161	1.3%	2,786	2.0%	79,678	2.3%
7+-person household	235	2.0%	2,025	1.4%	53,980	1.6%
<b>Total households</b>	<b>11,954</b>	--	<b>141,464</b>	--	<b>3,478,355</b>	--
<b>Average Household Size</b>	<b>2.50</b>		<b>2.58</b>		<b>2.61</b>	

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year American Community Survey*

Lawrence is a place rich in family, with family households accounting for 79.0% of all households in the township (Table 5). These households consist of 3.31 persons on average. The average household size for nonfamily households in Lawrence is relatively high, 1.40 persons. In contrast, the average household size for nonfamily households is 1.22 persons in Mercer County and New Jersey overall. The presence of Rider University plays a role in the relatively large number of nonfamily households with multiple persons, given that many students live with roommates.

**Table 5: Family and Nonfamily Households**

Household Type	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Total family households	79.0%	65.7%	67.8%
Total nonfamily households	21.0%	34.3%	32.2%
Average household size, family households	3.31	3.20	3.19
Average household size, nonfamily households	1.40	1.22	1.22

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*

Residents in Lawrence have exceptionally high rates of educational attainment. Of all residents at least 25 years of age, a staggering 60.7% have at least a bachelor's degree while 29.3% have a graduate or professional degree. The rates surpass those for Mercer County, where 44.9% of residents possess a bachelor's degree and 20.6% have a graduate or professional degree. Overall, 92.3% of relevant residents have earned a high school diploma, compared to 89.9% in Mercer County. Given the strong relationship between educational attainment and income, the high levels of education play a major role in shaping the township's economy.

**Table 6: Educational Attainment**

Highest level of education	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Less than 9th grade	4.3%	4.9%	4.6%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	3.5%	5.2%	4.7%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	16.7%	24.5%	25.7%
Some college, no degree	11.2%	14.3%	15.3%
Associate's degree	3.7%	6.2%	6.7%
Bachelor's degree	31.4%	24.3%	25.8%
Graduate or professional degree	29.3%	20.6%	17.1%
<b>High school graduate or higher</b>	<b>92.3%</b>	<b>89.9%</b>	<b>90.7%</b>
<b>Bachelor's degree or higher</b>	<b>60.7%</b>	<b>44.9%</b>	<b>42.9%</b>

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*



The population of the township is relatively diverse. Three-fifths of the population is white, or 60.0%, of which 4.1% of residents are white and Hispanic while 55.9% are white and not Hispanic. Black residents comprise 13.2% of the population, including 1.1% who are Hispanic and Black. Altogether, 15.7% of residents are Hispanic. Still, Hispanics make up a smaller percentage of the population than they do at the state or county level, 21.9% and 22.2%, respectively. Asian-Americans are the largest racial minority in Lawrence, accounting for 14.3% of the population, a larger percentage than either Mercer County or New Jersey overall. Almost 1 in 10 residents is of two or more races, or 9.5% overall.

**Table 7: Race and Ethnicity**

Race and Ethnicity	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
<i>Non-Hispanic</i>	84.3%	77.8%	78.1%
White	55.9%	44.2%	51.9%
Black	12.1%	18.3%	12.3%
Asian	14.3%	12.0%	9.8%
Other Race Alone	0.2%	0.4%	0.8%
Two or more Races	1.8%	2.8%	3.2%
<i>Hispanic (All Races)</i>	15.7%	22.2%	21.9%
Hispanic, White	4.1%	5.6%	5.0%
Hispanic, Black	1.1%	0.9%	0.7%
Hispanic, Other	2.7%	9.6%	8.9%
Hispanic, Two or More Races	7.7%	6.3%	7.4%

Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS

## SOCIOECONOMIC ANALYSIS

More than a quarter of households in Lawrence have an income of at least \$200,000 (Table 8). This eclipses the relative percentage of such households in Mercer County, 20.2%, as well as in New Jersey overall, 20.7%. An additional 34.0% of households have an income of at least \$100,000. The upshot is the median household income in the township, \$119,689, is higher than in either the county or state, \$96,333 and \$101,050, respectively. All told, 59.5% of Lawrence households have an income of \$100,000 or higher. Just under 1 in 5 households in Lawrence have an income of under \$50,000. To be precise, 11.0% of households have an income between \$25,000 and \$49,999 and 8.7% of households have an income less than \$25,000.

**Table 8: Household Income**

Household Income	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Less than \$25,000	8.7%	13.9%	11.9%
\$25,000-\$49,999	11.0%	13.8%	13.3%
\$50,000-\$99,999	20.8%	23.8%	24.3%
\$100,000-199,999	34.0%	28.1%	29.7%
\$200,000 or above	25.5%	20.2%	20.7%
<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>\$119,689</b>	<b>\$96,333</b>	<b>\$101,050</b>
<b>Mean Household Income</b>	<b>\$153,665</b>	<b>\$138,732</b>	<b>\$140,299</b>

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*

The poverty rate in Lawrence is 5.6% (Table 9). This is relatively low for Mercer County, where 11.1% of persons live in poverty, though the county rate is magnified by the high rate for the city of Trenton. The poverty rate for children and seniors, two vulnerable groups for whom poverty can be especially challenging, is close to the overall rate. The township's child poverty rate is 5.4% while the poverty rate for seniors is 5.6%.

**Table 9: Poverty Rate**

Indicator	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Poverty Rate, Overall	5.6%	11.1%	9.8%
Poverty Rate, Under 18 years old	5.4%	13.8%	13.3%
Poverty Rate, Seniors	5.6%	10.2%	9.5%

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*

Over the past decade, Lawrence workers have had an easier time finding jobs than their compatriots in the rest of the county and state. During this time, the municipal unemployment rate stayed consistently below the state- and countywide rates. In the 2010s, the unemployment rate trended downward, reaching a low of 2.2% in 2019. The unemployment rate subsequently shot up to 5.7% in 2020, with the advent of Covid, before tapering back down to 4.4% in 2021. Even then, Lawrence withstood the economic disruption from the pandemic better than the wider county and state, where the unemployment rate spiked to 7.2% and 9.4% in 2020, respectively. The data indicate that employment and, by extension, household finances are relatively stable.

**Table 10: Unemployment Rate**

Year	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
2013	5.8%	7.4%	8.4%
2014	4.5%	5.8%	6.7%
2015	3.7%	4.9%	5.7%
2016	3.4%	4.3%	4.9%
2017	3.0%	4.0%	4.5%
2018	2.6%	3.5%	4.0%
2019	2.2%	3.1%	3.5%
2020	5.7%	7.2%	9.4%
2021	4.4%	5.5%	6.7%
2022	2.7%	3.3%	3.9%
2023	3.0%	3.9%	4.4%

*Source: NJ Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development*

An unusually high number of not-for-profit employees live in Lawrence, accounting for 14.6% of the employed population (Table 15). This is almost double the percentage statewide, 7.6%. In contrast, a relatively modest share work for for-profit companies, 62.7%, well below the 69.2% of working residents in New Jersey. Self-employed persons also constitute a relatively large portion of the population, 10.6% of employed residents overall. This includes the 5.2% and 5.4% of working residents who either own their own business or work as a contractor. Only 12.2% of working residents are government workers, a surprisingly low share for a suburb of Trenton. In Mercer County as a whole, government workers comprise 15.2% of the employed population.

**Table 51: Class of Worker**

Class of Worker	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
For-profit company employee	62.7%	65.9%	69.2%
Not-for-profit employee	14.6%	11.0%	7.6%
Government Worker	12.2%	15.2%	14.2%
Self-employed, business owner	5.2%	3.1%	3.9%
Self-employed, contractor	5.4%	4.9%	5.1%

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*

Data for various occupation types (Table 12) reinforces how relatively skilled the Lawrence workforce is compared to overall population. Irrespective of the industry, 56.0% of the employed population of Lawrence works in a management, business, science, or arts position. These are individuals who possess the specialized level of skills and knowledge required for these roles. An additional 18.4% of residents





work in sales and office occupations, marginally higher than the share for Mercer County, 17.6% Workers in positions that require fewer skills compose a relatively small share of the working population. Only 6.0 % of Lawrence workers work in production, transportation, and moving, compared to 11.4% in Mercer County and 11.3% in New Jersey. Similarly, only 5.1% of employed residents work in natural resources, construction, and maintenance, far less than the share in the county and state, 6.3% and 6.9%, respectively. Service workers comprise a slightly smaller share of the population, 14.5%, than they do in Mercer County, 15.7%, or the larger state, 14.8%.

**Table 62: Occupation**

Occupation	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Management, business, science, and arts	56.0%	49.0%	46.9%
Service occupations	14.5%	15.7%	14.8%
Sales and office occupations	18.4%	17.6%	20.0%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	5.1%	6.3%	6.9%
Production, transportation, and material moving	6.0%	11.4%	11.3%

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*

Lawrence residents are employed in all of the major industrial sectors, but the professional, scientific, and management sector is especially critical to the local economy. This sector employs 17.5% of Lawrence’s employed population, surpassing the respective shares for the county and state, 16.1% and 15.4%, respectively (Table 13). According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, these are “activities that require a high degree of expertise and training” and encompass professions as disparate as the law, accounting, and engineering. The financial sector also figures prominently. Given that it is a college town, a considerable number of residents work in educational services, 15.6% in all. This is almost twice the percentage statewide, 8.9%. Interestingly, 7.9% of employed residents work in the arts, education, recreation, accommodation, and food sector. The information sectors also employ a relatively high percentage of persons, 3.8%, as does the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining sector, 0.6% of residents.

**Table 73: Industry**

Industry	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0.6%	0.4%	0.3%
Construction	2.9%	5.2%	6.4%
Manufacturing	7.0%	8.9%	9.8%



Industry	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Wholesale trade	3.0%	3.7%	3.4%
Retail trade	8.1%	7.3%	8.7%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	4.4%	5.9%	6.9%
Information	3.8%	2.5%	2.9%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	8.2%	9.6%	10.3%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	17.5%	16.1%	15.4%
Educational services	15.6%	11.8%	8.9%
Health care and social assistance	11.0%	12.9%	13.3%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	7.9%	4.0%	4.8%
Other services except public administration	6.1%	3.7%	3.5%
Public administration	4.0%	7.9%	5.3%
Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS			

Tellingly, more than a quarter of residents work from home, 26.6%, well above the 15.0% of workers statewide. Riders who take public transportation – and presumably use NJ Transit’s Northeast Corridor line – comprise a relatively large share of workers, 6.2%, higher than the percentage for Mercer County, 5.2%. Most Lawrence residents, though, get to work by car. Approximately 56.2% of the working population drives to work alone while another 7.2% carpool. Some workers walk to work, 2.8% in all, but not as many as in Mercer County overall, where 3.5% of employed residents walk to work.

**Table 14: Means of Transport to Work**

Means of Transport	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Drove alone	56.2%	61.5%	63.7%
Carpooled	7.2%	9.2%	7.7%



Means of Transport	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Public transportation	6.2%	5.2%	8.5%
Walked	2.8%	3.5%	2.6%
Bicycle	0.3%	0.7%	0.3%
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	0.7%	2.1%	2.1%
Worked from home	26.6%	17.8%	15.0%

Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS

The median commute to and from Lawrence is 29.1 minutes, higher than the comparable figure for Mercer County, 27.6 minutes, but less than median statewide (Table 15). Of the residents who commute, almost half have a commute of less than 20 minutes, 47.2%, while roughly two-thirds of commuter, 66.5% have a commute of less than half an hour. In comparison, 43.2% of Mercer County commuters have a commute of less than 20 minutes while 65.5% have a commute under 30 minutes. An appreciable number of commuters need at least an hour to get to work, 13.6%, more than in Mercer County, 11.3%, but less than the statewide share, 14.2%.

**Table 15: Travel Time to Work**

Travel Time	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Less than 10 minutes	10.4%	10.4%	9.9%
10 to 14 minutes	16.5%	14.7%	11.5%
15 to 19 minutes	20.3%	18.1%	13.1%
20 to 29 minutes	19.3%	22.3%	19.6%
30 to 44 minutes	12.3%	17.2%	21.9%
45 to 59 minutes	7.4%	6.0%	9.9%
60 or more minutes	13.6%	11.3%	14.2%
<b>Mean travel time to work (minutes)</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>27.6</b>	<b>30.9</b>

Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS

More than a third of Lawrence households, 36.9% have at least three cars, a higher percentage than in either Mercer County or New Jersey (Table 16). An additional 41.6% of households in the township have two automobiles. In other words, 78.5% of households possess at least two cars. To put this in context, 70.2% of New Jersey households possess two cars or more while 72.4% do countywide. The remaining 15.9% of households possess a single motor vehicle. Of the remaining households, 20.1% have only one car while 1.4% do not have a car at all.

**Table 16: Total Vehicles Available**

Total Vehicles	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
No vehicle	1.4%	5.2%	6.4%
1 vehicle	20.1%	22.5%	23.3%
2 vehicles	41.6%	40.4%	39.9%
3 or more vehicles	36.9%	32.0%	30.3%

Source: NJ 2019-2023 5-Year ACS

## HOUSING ANALYSIS

Homeownership is the predominant form of tenure in Lawrence. That is, 75.2% of residents live in owner-occupied housing units (Table 17). The remaining 24.8% of the populace are rental tenants. The percentage of Lawrence residents living in owner-occupied housing significantly exceeds the respective shares for Mercer County and New Jersey, 61.9% and 63.7%.

**Table 17: Tenure**

Tenure	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Owner-Occupied	75.2%	61.9%	63.7%
Renter-Occupied	24.8%	38.1%	36.3%

Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS

There are relatively few vacant units of housing in Lawrence or, indeed, Mercer County. In all, 5.3% of housing units in Lawrence are vacant while only 6.1% of units are vacant in the county as a whole (Figure 18). While the low vacancy rate surely boosts home values, it shows that housing in Lawrence is very hard to come by. Housing experts generally consider a vacancy rate of approximately 7% to be optimal in the sense that vacant housing units find buyers and renters in a timely manner while the cost of housing remains relatively stable.

**Table 18: Occupancy Status**

Occupancy Status	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Occupied	94.7%	93.9%	92.1%
Vacant	5.3%	6.1%	7.9%

Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS



Housing units used for recreational or seasonal use comprise almost a third of the township's vacant housing, 32.1% (Table 19). This is well above the rate reported for the county as a whole, 11.4%. Homes for sale account for 4.7% of vacant units. The remaining 63.3% of vacant units are in the uncategorized class of units vacant for other reasons.

**Table 19: Vacancy Status**

Vacancy Status	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
For rent	0.0%	18.4%	16.0%
Rented, not occupied	0.0%	1.6%	2.7%
For sale only	4.7%	6.1%	6.4%
Sold, not occupied	0.0%	0.5%	4.1%
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	32.1%	11.4%	43.7%
For migrant workers	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other vacant	63.3%	62.0%	27.1%

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*

The campus for Rider University is in Lawrence and has a signal effect on the township's housing market (Table 20). In total, 2,465 persons in the municipality live in group quarters, or housing owned by an entity or organization where individuals live together in a group arrangement. In the case of Lawrence, Rider University dormitories surely account for the preponderance or entirety of the group quarters population. The percentage of persons living in group quarters, 7.6%, is approximately four times the percentage statewide, 1.9%.

**Table 20: Group Housing**

Indicator	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Population in Group Quarters	2,465	18,675	173,579
%, Total Population	7.6%	4.9%	1.9%

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*

Single-family detached houses account for a little over half of all housing units in Lawrence, or 50.6% (Table 21). This is somewhat higher than the figure for Mercer County, 47.5%, but less than the percentage statewide, 52.7%. Single-family attached residences make up another 17.9% of housing in the municipality. Thus, one-family homes constitute over two-thirds of the housing in the township, 68.5% in all. Two-family dwellings compose 2.4% of the housing stock while three- and four-family buildings comprise 1.9%. Multifamily housing accounts for the remaining 27.2% of the community's housing. This is somewhat above the comparable share for Mercer County, or 23.0%. Buildings with between 10 to 19 units constitute the largest portion of the multifamily stock and 11.2% of all homes in Lawrence. Another



7.1% of units are in buildings of 5 to 9 units. Apartment buildings with 20 or more units comprise the remaining 8.9% of units, including 6.5% in buildings of 50 or more units.

**Table 21: Units in Structure**

Housing Type	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
1, detached	50.6%	47.5%	52.7%
1, attached	17.9%	20.6%	10.0%
2	2.4%	4.3%	8.6%
3 or 4	1.9%	4.1%	6.1%
5 to 9	7.1%	4.2%	4.7%
10 to 19	11.2%	8.0%	4.9%
20 to 49	2.4%	3.8%	4.2%
50 or more	6.5%	7.0%	7.9%
Mobile home	0.0%	0.4%	0.9%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS

Single-family housing accounts for the vast majority of owner-occupied units while rental units are largely located in multifamily buildings. Altogether, one-family dwellings make up 91.8% of owner-occupied units, with 71.3% in detached residences and 20.5% in attached residences (Table 22). Two-, three-, and four-family dwellings comprise 2.2% of owner-occupied units. The rest of the owner-occupied stock, 5.9%, is composed of multifamily units.

In contrast, one-family homes only constitute 18.6% of renter-occupied units while two-, three-, and four-family dwellings provide 8.7% of rentals. Multifamily buildings comprise the bulk of the rental stock. Or 72.3%. Almost a fifth of rentals, 19.8%, are in buildings of 50 or more units, with another 5.7% in buildings with 20 to 49 units. Approximately 3 out of 10 rental units, 29.8%, are in buildings of between 10 and 19 units, while the remaining 17.6% are in buildings of 5 to 9 units.

**Table 82: Units in Structure by Tenure**

Housing Type	Lawrence		Mercer County		New Jersey	
	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied
1, detached	71.3%	6.4%	71.9%	10.8%	77.1%	11.7%
1, attached	20.5%	12.2%	21.3%	17.9%	10.2%	8.4%
2	0.5%	6.0%	1.3%	9.0%	4.6%	15.5%
3 or 4	1.7%	2.7%	0.7%	9.5%	1.7%	13.8%



Housing Type	Lawrence		Mercer County		New Jersey	
	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied
5 to 9	2.3%	17.6%	1.2%	9.0%	1.4%	10.6%
10 to 19	1.6%	29.8%	2.1%	17.5%	1.2%	11.4%
20 to 49	0.7%	5.7%	0.8%	8.8%	1.0%	9.7%
50 or more	1.3%	19.8%	0.3%	17.1%	1.8%	18.4%
Mobile home	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.2%	1.1%	0.4%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*

As previously mentioned, most of Lawrence's population growth occurred in the second half of the twentieth century. Only 7.8% of housing units were constructed before 1940 while 10.7% overall were built prior to 1950 (Table 23). Housing construction accelerated during the 1950s, when 11.3% of units were built, after which development occurred at a steady clip. Another 13.7% of units were developed during the 1960s while 14.7% were constructed during the 1970s. The heyday of residential construction came in the 1980s when 24.9% of units were built while a further 11.5% and 10.7% of units were put up during the 1990 and 2000s, respectively. Relatively few units date, 2.5%, to 2010 or later.

**Table 93: Year Structure Built**

Year Structure Built	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Built 2020 or later	0.7%	0.5%	0.6%
Built 2010 to 2019	1.8%	4.8%	5.8%
2. Built 2000 to 2009	10.7%	8.5%	9.1%
Built 1990 to 1999	11.5%	8.3%	9.1%
Built 1980 to 1989	24.9%	12.3%	11.9%
Built 1970 to 1979	14.7%	11.9%	12.4%
Built 1960 to 1969	13.7%	13.0%	13.0%
Built 1950 to 1959	11.3%	15.4%	14.1%
Built 1940 to 1949	2.9%	6.3%	6.7%
Built 1939 or earlier	7.8%	19.0%	17.5%

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*





The housing stock is well-suited for families. Fully two-thirds of homes in Lawrence, 59.1%, have three bedrooms or more (Table 23). This slightly exceeds the percentage for Mercer County, 57.7%. Three-bedroom units constitute 28.3% of the township's housing stock while four-bedroom units comprise 23.3% of homes overall. Another 7.1% of houses have five bedrooms or more. More than two in five housing units, 40.8%, have two bedrooms or less. Of this, 28.1% of homes have two bedrooms while 9.7% have one bedroom and 3.0% do not have a separate bedroom.

**Table 24: Number of Bedrooms, Housing Stock**

Total Bedrooms	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
No bedroom	3.0%	2.8%	3.0%
1 bedroom	9.7%	13.5%	14.2%
2 bedrooms	28.1%	25.5%	25.5%
3 bedrooms	28.3%	32.1%	31.8%
4 bedrooms	23.7%	20.6%	19.7%
5 or more bedrooms	7.1%	5.5%	5.9%
Source: 2009-2013 5-Year ACS			

While the Census found no Lawrence homes that lack complete plumbing facilities, a small percentage of homes, 0.6%, lack kitchen facilities (Table 25). The community has higher-than-average share of homes with no telephone service, 1.9%. By comparison, 1.3% of homes in Mercer County lack telephone service. Overcrowding occurs in Lawrence at the same rate as the rest of Mercer County, with 3.0% of homes in both the township and county having more than one person per room.

**Table 25: Housing Quality Indicators**

Home Heating Fuel	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Utility gas	77.0%	72.1%	73.3%
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	0.3%	1.5%	2.5%
Electricity	17.7%	18.9%	15.6%
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	3.5%	6.4%	6.8%
Coal or coke	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Wood	0.0%	0.1%	0.3%
Solar energy	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%
Other fuel	0.9%	0.4%	0.5%
No fuel used	0.4%	0.6%	0.8%
<b>Lacking facilities</b>			
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%



Home Heating Fuel	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	0.6%	0.7%	0.8%
No telephone service available	1.9%	1.3%	0.9%
Occupants Per Room			
1.00 or less	97.0%	97.0%	96.3%
1.01 to 1.50	2.3%	2.2%	2.4%
1.51 or more	0.7%	0.9%	1.3%

Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS

Most Lawrence householders, 76.8%, moved into their home after the turn of the century (Table 26). About one in five householders, 20.2%, moved into their present residence between 2000 and 2009 while 21.9% moved in between 2010 and 2017. An additional 22.6% of householders moved in between 2018 and 2020 while 12.6% have moved in since 2020. To put it somewhat differently, over a third of householders, 34.6%, have moved into their dwelling since 2018, and a majority, 56.5%, have moved into their home in 2010 or later. Approximately 23.2% of householders have lived in their home since the twentieth century, with 12.2% of householders moving into their home during the 90s, while 11.0% moved into their home prior to 1990.

**Table 26: Year Moved In**

Year Moved In	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Moved in 2021 or later	12.0%	9.1%	8.3%
Moved in 2018 to 2020	22.6%	20.9%	20.6%
Moved in 2010 to 2017	21.9%	27.9%	28.6%
Moved in 2000 to 2009	20.3%	18.8%	19.2%
Moved in 1990 to 1999	12.2%	11.0%	11.4%
Moved in 1989 and earlier	11.0%	12.3%	11.9%

Source: 2009-2013 5-Year ACS

## HOUSING MARKET ANALYSIS

Approximately 67.9% of Lawrence homeowners have a mortgage while 32.1% do not (Table 27). The percentage of homeowners with a mortgage is well above the share for Mercer County, where only 62.8% of homeowners have a mortgage.

**Table 27: Mortgage Status**

Mortgage Status	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
With a mortgage	67.9%	62.8%	64.4%
Without a mortgage	32.1%	37.2%	35.6%

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*

Home values in the township are somewhat higher than those for Mercer County overall. The median home value in Lawrence is \$404,400, surpassing the Mercer County median of \$351,000, but falling short of the median statewide, \$427,000 (Table 28). Only a limited number of homes are valued at the upper end of the market, with only 2.8% of homes valued at \$1,000,000 or above, and another 2.6% valued between \$750,000 and \$999,999. In comparison, 13.2% of homes in Mercer County have a value of at least \$750,000. Overall, less than a third of homes, 31.8%, have a value of \$500,000 or more. More than two in five homes, 41.7%, are valued between \$300,000 and \$499,999. Over a quarter of units, 25.8% are valued below \$300,000, but only 1.3% are valued at under \$100,000.

**Table 28: Home Values**

Home Value	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Less than \$100,000	1.3%	7.2%	4.4%
\$100,000 to \$299,999	25.2%	33.9%	23.6%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	41.7%	29.6%	33.8%
\$500,000 to \$749,999	26.4%	16.1%	23.0%
\$750,000 to \$999,999	2.6%	7.1%	8.6%
\$1,000,000 or more	2.8%	6.1%	6.6%
Median home value	\$404,400	\$351,000	\$427,600

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*

In the five years before the pandemic, the average price of homes sold in Mercer County and, by extension, Lawrence, remained stable. In the case of the latter, average annual prices stayed in a narrow range, between \$307,347 and \$324,584 (Table 29). Prices in Mercer County remained in a relatively tight range as well, hovering between \$363,623 and \$405,154. The volume of homes sold also remained stable during this period, with the exception of a spurt of home sales that occurred in 2015. After a dip in 2020, the number of homes spiked in 2021 and reaching a peak of 367 homes sold in 2022. In the last two years, however, home sales have cratered. This is not owing to lack of demand as prices have skyrocketed. Instead, fewer homeowners are putting their homes on the market. Overall, the average sales price in Lawrence reached \$502,439 in 2024, a 155% rise since 2019. Significantly, it was the first time in ten years that the average sales price in Lawrence exceeded that of Mercer County.

**Table 29: Home Sales**

Year	Lawrence		Mercer County	
	Total Sales	Avg Sales Price	Total Sales	Avg Sales Price
2015	293	\$316,679	2,660	\$376,103
2016	262	\$307,347	2,452	\$405,154
2017	314	\$323,045	2,999	\$375,151
2018	337	\$324,584	3,094	\$363,623
2019	305	\$324,023	2,578	\$372,131
2020	261	\$335,214	2,891	\$357,424
2021	327	\$355,907	3,484	\$398,975
2022	367	\$392,604	4,325	\$417,251
2023	190	\$439,235	2,876	\$454,829
2024	165	\$502,439	2,514	\$500,349

*Source: NJ Division of Taxation, NJ Treasury*

The spike in home values has not filtered down to residential tax assessments as of yet (Table 30). The average home assessment, \$285,787, is barely above the level set in 2016, \$283,906. In fact, home assessments actually declined marginally between 2016 and 2020. A similar pattern has played out in the rest of the county, where the average assessed value has increased only marginally, from \$273,152 to \$285,917.

**Table 100: Residential Tax Assessments**

Year	Total Lots, Lawrence	Average Assessment	Total Lots, Mercer County	Average Assessment
2016	9,922	\$283,906	108,291	\$273,152
2020	9,915	\$283,184	108,531	\$283,712
2024	10,005	\$285,767	108,319	\$285,917

*Source: NJ Division of Taxation, NJ Treasury*

Lawrence residents are somewhat better situated to meet the cost of housing than their peers in the rest of Mercer County. A sizable percentage of households, 42.2%, spend less than 20% of their income on housing costs, compared to 41.2% in Mercer County as a whole (Table 31). An additional 23.7% of households spend between 20% and 29% of their income on housing while 32.7% of households are what is considered cost-burdened, or spending at least 30% of household income on housing costs. Even so, the percentage of cost-burdened households in Lawrence is lower than the percentage in Mercer County, 35.2%, and New Jersey, 36.8%.

**Table 31: Burden of Housing Costs, All Households**

Housing Costs as % of Household Income	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Less than 20% of household income	42.2%	41.2%	39.3%
20 to 29% of household income	23.7%	22.7%	22.9%
30% or more of household income	31.6%	33.8%	35.7%
Zero or negative income	1.1%	1.4%	1.1%
No cash rent	1.4%	0.9%	1.1%

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*

Homeowners are under less financial strain than renters. Of all homeowners, 26.6% spend at least 30% of their income on housing (Table 32). This is marginally higher than the percentage in Mercer County, 25.0%, but less than percentage statewide, 28.5%. Another 23.1% of households expend between 20 to 29% of their income on housing while just under half of households, 49.8%, expend less than 20% of their income on housing costs.

**Table 112: Burden of Housing Costs, Owner-Occupied Housing**

Housing Costs as % of Household Income	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Less than 20% of household income	49.8%	51.0%	48.1%
20 to 29% of household income	23.1%	23.4%	22.7%
30% or more of household income	26.5%	25.0%	28.5%
Zero or negative income	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*

In terms of monthly costs, 43.8% of households with a mortgage pay \$3,000 or more on housing. This surpasses the share for Mercer County, or 36.9%. Another 38.9% of households in owner-occupied housing spend between \$2,000 and \$2,999 on housing costs every month. In other words, 82.7% of Lawrence households spend at least \$2,000 on housing costs every month. In comparison, 71.5% of Mercer County homeowners have housing costs of at least \$2,000 per month. Overall, the median household in Lawrence spends \$2,840 every month on housing costs. Exorbitant housing costs are a concerning issue for all of New Jersey, where the median monthly cost for homeowners with a mortgage is \$2,767. Countywide, the median cost for homes with a mortgage is \$2,840 per month.

**Table 33: Monthly Costs, Homeowners with a Mortgage**

Monthly housing costs	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Less than \$500	0.0%	0.3%	0.4%
\$500 to \$999	1.6%	2.0%	1.8%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	5.0%	8.8%	6.6%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	10.7%	17.2%	13.7%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	19.6%	19.3%	17.7%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	19.3%	15.5%	17.0%
\$3,000 or more	43.8%	36.9%	42.7%
<b>Median monthly housing cost</b>	<b>\$2,840</b>	<b>\$2,577</b>	<b>\$2,787</b>

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*

Monthly housing costs are necessarily lower, if relatively high for those households without a mortgage. These expenditures go towards taxes, insurance payments, utilities, and other fees. In all, 62.8% of Lawrence households without a mortgage pay \$1,000 per month or more in housing costs (Table 34). This exceeds the countywide share of 59.3%. but is less than the percentage statewide share, or 67.1%. For Lawrence homeowners without a mortgage, the median monthly housing cost is \$1,141. This is slightly higher than the comparable figure for Mercer County, \$1,114. In addition, 18.2% of homeowners without a mortgage spend between \$800 and \$999 per month on housing while 15.1% of such households spend between \$600 and \$799 per month. The remaining 3.8% of households have monthly housing costs of less than \$600.

**Table 34: Monthly Costs, Homeowners without a Mortgage**

Monthly housing costs	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Less than \$250	1.0%	1.3%	1.9%
\$250 to \$399	0.0%	2.8%	2.6%
\$400 to \$599	2.8%	7.2%	5.0%
\$600 to \$799	15.1%	12.3%	8.8%
\$800 to \$999	18.2%	16.7%	14.6%
\$1,000 or more	62.8%	59.6%	67.1%
<b>Median monthly housing cost</b>	<b>\$1,141</b>	<b>\$1,114</b>	<b>\$1,205</b>

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*

Housing costs put a greater financial strain on renters, with 43.0% of households in renter-occupied housing spending at least 30% of their income on housing (Table 35). While renters in Lawrence are more likely to be cost-burdened than their homeowner neighbors, they are comparatively less cost-burdened than renters in Mercer County overall, where 48.1% of households that rent set aside at least 30% of their



income towards housing costs. Roughly a quarter of renters in Lawrence, 25.1%, spend between 20% and 29% of their income on housing while a similar percentage, 25.1%, spend less than 20% of their income on housing. It's important to note that 2.1% of households in renter-occupied housing have zero or negative income and, presumably, use savings to pay for the cost of housing.

**Table 35: Burden of Housing Costs, Renter-Occupied Housing**

Housing Costs as % of household Income	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Less than 20% of household income	25.1%	25.3%	23.8%
20 to 29% of household income	25.1%	21.5%	23.1%
30% or more of household income	43.0%	48.1%	48.3%
Zero or negative income	2.1%	2.7%	1.9%
No cash rent	4.7%	2.4%	2.9%

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*

The median gross rent in Lawrence, \$1,952 is relatively high compared to the rest of Mercer County, where the median rent is \$1,515 (Table 36). Rental housing in college towns can be more expensive as students are willing to pay higher rent in order to live close to campus. Interestingly, there are relatively few units in Lawrence at the upper end of the rental market as only 5.8% of households in renter-occupied housing have a rent of at least \$3,000. Another 13.2% of households, however, have a rent between \$2,500 and \$2,999 while 28.1% spend between \$2,000 and \$2,499 on gross rent. To put this in perspective, 47.1% of households that rent housing in Lawrence have a gross rent of at least \$2,000, far more than the 23.5% in Mercer County as a whole. Another 30.9% of households that a rent between \$1,500 and \$1,999. Only 22.1% of households in renter-occupied housing have a rent of less than \$1,500, compared to 49.2% of such households countywide.

**Table 36: Gross Rent**

Gross Rent	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
Less than \$500	4.3%	8.7%	6.3%
\$500 to \$999	1.7%	10.3%	8.7%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	16.1%	30.2%	26.3%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	30.9%	27.4%	28.5%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	28.1%	11.7%	15.9%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	13.2%	5.2%	6.7%
\$3,000 or more	5.8%	6.6%	7.6%
<b>Median rent</b>	<b>\$1,952</b>	<b>\$1,515</b>	<b>\$1,653</b>

*Source: 2019-2023 5-Year ACS*





## DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

In the last 20 years, Township staffers have approved building permits on average for the construction of 45 housing units annually. On an average basis at least, the rate at which permitting has occurred has slowed down somewhat over the last decade, with building permits for 34 housing units approved on average annually. The ten-year average is boosted by the rate of permitting in 2016 and 2023, when over 100 units were permitted. The median permits per year, a more balanced metric, is 28.5 units per year for the last decade.

**Table 37: Total Housing Permits Issued Per Year, 2004-2023**

Year	Lawrence	Mercer County	New Jersey
2004	96	1,640	39,238
2005	232	1,463	39,688
2006	42	901	32,048
2007	21	546	25,948
2008	121	707	16,338
2009	3	336	11,145
2010	2	648	11,885
2011	1	422	11,882
2012	4	447	15,270
2013	5	862	18,795
2014	8	280	22,896
2015	2	708	19,503
2016	104	913	24,170
2017	4	439	25,961
2018	44	439	26,048
2019	41	423	30,770
2020	32	729	26,680
2021	11	404	30,044
2022	25	952	31,792
2023	100	740	21,682
<b>10-Year Average</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>25,304</b>
<b>20-Year Average</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>24,089</b>

*Source: NJ Dept. of Community Affairs*

The construction of one- and two-family homes is responsible for most of the homes permitted in Lawrence during the last two decades. Since 2004, an average of 26.2 one- and two-family units per year



were permitted in Lawrence, compared with 18.8 multifamily units on average (Table 38). In the wake of the housing crisis, homebuilding went through a prolonged drought. Fewer than 10 one- and two-family homes were permitted every year between 2008 and 2017. Multifamily construction is relatively infrequent. Building permits have been approved for multifamily units in only three of the last twenty years on record, with the exceptions coming in 2008, 2016, and 2023.

**Table 38: Total Housing Permits Issued by Type, 2004-2023**

Year	Lawrence			Mercer County			New Jersey		
	1-2 Units	Multifamily	Mixed-Use	1-2 Units	Multifamily	Mixed-Use	1-2 Units	Multifamily	Mixed-Use
2004	96	0	0	909	728	3	39,238	27,103	11,383
2005	122	110	0	1,055	408	0	39,688	26,715	12,687
2006	42	0	0	622	264	15	32,048	20,090	11,760
2007	21	0	0	533	11	2	25,948	14,235	11,553
2008	9	112	0	332	374	1	16,338	8,960	7,102
2009	3	0	0	245	90	1	11,145	6,776	4,309
2010	2	0	0	241	407	0	11,885	6,934	4,733
2011	1	0	0	173	249	0	11,882	6,236	5,184
2012	4	0	0	134	311	2	15,270	6,700	8,527
2013	5	0	0	164	696	2	18,795	9,666	8,998
2014	8	0	0	221	58	1	22,896	10,678	11,909
2015	2	0	0	171	537	0	19,503	9,470	9,989
2016	3	101	0	176	737	0	24,170	8,885	15,217
2017	4	0	0	176	263	0	25,961	9,201	16,146
2018	36	8	0	215	224	0	26,048	9,026	16,811
2019	41	0	0	160	263	0	30,770	8,954	21,762
2020	32	0	0	190	536	3	26,680	8,673	17,950
2021	11	0	0	183	221	0	30,044	10,479	19,471
2022	25	0	0	135	817	0	31,792	9,163	21,913
2023	56	44	0	312	428	0	21,682	9,552	11,538
<b>10-Year Average</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25,955</b>	<b>9,408</b>	<b>16,271</b>
<b>20-Year Average</b>	<b>26.2</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>24,089</b>	<b>11,375</b>	<b>12,447</b>

*Source: NJ Dept. of Community Affairs*

Table 40 contains the data for demolition permits for the last ten years. Since 2014, Lawrence has approved an average of 2.7 demolition permits for homes a year, all of which were one- and two-family homes. This is a slight decrease from the preceding decade when demolition permits were approved for



3.4 housing units per year on average. The vast majority of demolition permits since 2004 have been for one- and two-family housing while no demolition permits have been approved for multifamily housing. In addition, permits were approved for the demolition of eight housing units in mixed-use buildings between 2004 and 2006.

**Table 120: Demolition Permits, 2004-2023**

Year	1-2 Family	Multifamily	Mixed-Use
2004	3	0	1
2005	3	0	1
2006	1	0	6
2007	4	0	0
2008	2	0	0
2009	0	0	0
2010	2	0	0
2011	3	0	0
2012	7	0	0
2013	1	0	0
2014	7	0	0
2015	3	0	0
2016	2	0	0
2017	2	0	0
2018	5	0	0
2019	3	0	0
2020	1	0	0
2021	1	0	0
2022	2	0	0
2023	1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>10-Year Average</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>20-Year Average</b>	<b>2.65</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.4</b>

*Source: NJ Dept of Community Affairs*



Adjusting for demolition, the municipality has permitted, on net, an average of 41.9 housing units annually since 2004 and 34.4 housing units annually since 2014 (Table 41). In the last ten years, Lawrence has permitted an average of 19.1 one- and two-family homes and 15.3 multifamily homes annually on net.

**Table 131: Net Housing Permits, 2004-2023**

Year	1-2 Family	Multifamily	Mixed-Use	Total
2004	93	0	-1	92
2005	119	110	-1	228
2006	41	0	-6	35
2007	17	0	0	17
2008	7	112	0	119
2009	3	0	0	3
2010	0	0	0	0
2011	-2	0	0	-2
2012	-3	0	0	-3
2013	4	0	0	4
2014	1	0	0	1
2015	-1	0	0	-1
2016	1	101	0	102
2017	2	0	0	2
2018	31	8	0	39
2019	38	0	0	38
2020	31	0	0	31
2021	10	0	0	10
2022	23	0	0	23
2023	55	44	0	99
<b>Total</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>-8</b>	<b>837</b>
<b>10-Year Average</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>34.4</b>
<b>20-Year Average</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>18.75</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>41.85</b>

*Source: NJ Dept of Community Affairs*

Over the past two decades, a tremendous amount of nonresidential development has occurred in Lawrence. On average, building permits have been approved for 86,694 square feet of office space per year since 2004. Office construction has been so robust during that time that the township accounted for 18.2% of all office space permitted in Mercer County. That said, there are worrying signs for the commercial office market in Lawrence as the amount of office development permitted since 2019 has



slowed to a trickle, presumably in response to the rapid adoption of telecommuting during the pandemic. According to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, no new office construction has been permitted in Lawrence since 2019, with the only permits for additions to existing office developments. A similar slowdown has occurred in Mercer County overall, albeit not as severely as in the township.

Retail construction petered out much earlier, as consumers flocked to online retailers like Amazon.com. For the last twenty years, building permits have been approved for an average of 18,056 square feet of retail space per year. Unfortunately, the average is inflated by the construction of 117,261 square feet in 2004. Otherwise, retail development has been anemic. No permits have been issued for retail construction since 2016 and in only three of the last eighteen years have building permits for more than 5,000 square feet of retail space been approved on aggregate. The development trends are especially concerning for a municipality traversed by the Route 1 corridor.

To a certain extent, other types of nonresidential development are picking up the slack. The two largest years of nonresidential development, excluding office, retail, and multifamily uses, came in 2020 and 2023, with 266,314 square feet permitted in the latter year. On average, 65,218 square feet of nonresidential space were permitted annually between 2004 and 2023. In all of Mercer County, 1,590,283 square feet of nonresidential space were permitted annually in the last two decades.

**Table 142: Building Permits, Nonresidential Construction, 2004-2023**

Year	Lawrence			Mercer County		
	Office	Retail	Other*	Office	Retail	Other*
2004	71,710	117,261	86,982	377,458	506,141	1,666,976
2005	19,839	12,719	32,631	1,336,714	96,669	3,171,109
2006	114,982	4,578	23,800	818,421	106,437	1,495,624
2007	22,266	0	50,124	485,806	80,962	2,133,577
2008	17,000	21,570	25,387	1,144,286	344,080	1,421,010
2009	416	2,418	10,478	121,956	2,421	320,978
2010	21,845	0	29,182	409,524	49,678	147,118
2011	192	0	9,774	474,303	73,960	554,524
2012	154,979	0	27,244	442,392	2,898	769,754
2013	2,640	0	76,785	115,739	23,617	2,938,247
2014	107,625	27,224	99,536	516,203	29,186	939,780
2015	668,923	174,835	61,390	821,678	390,101	355,969
2016	40,341	515	14,560	212,470	55,699	2,272,165
2017	23,470	0	70,004	148,603	86,964	1,193,228
2018	88,893	0	224,297	331,641	14,273	1,329,117
2019	342,026	0	25,898	1,048,176	35,968	810,546
2020	1,529	0	150,482	33,918	9,783	1,556,756



Year	Lawrence			Mercer County		
	Office	Retail	Other*	Office	Retail	Other*
2021	9,500	0	9,744	153,245	98,403	4,917,872
2022	21,712	0	9,752	398,494	24,747	2,309,298
2023	9	0	266,314	95,812	20,400	1,502,020
<b>20-Year Average</b>	<b>86,495</b>	<b>18,056</b>	<b>65,218</b>	<b>474,342</b>	<b>102,619</b>	<b>1,590,283</b>
<i>*Note: Excludes multifamily and dormitory construction</i> <i>Source: NJ Dept. of Community Affairs</i>						

## PLANNING PROJECTIONS

Mercer County is served by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), one of New Jersey's three metropolitan planning organizations. DVRPC calculates population and employment projections to anticipate the long-range planning needs of the Greater Philadelphia Region.

The agency expects the population of the township to grow at a slower pace relative to both Mercer County, but faster than DVRPC's jurisdiction overall. Specifically, DVRPC projects that currently forecasts the township's population to rise to 35,898 residents by 2050, an 8.53% increase (Table 43). In comparison, DVRPC is forecasting the population of Mercer County to increase by 9.21% while the aggregate population of the nine counties covered by DVRPC will increase by 7.79%.

DVRPC expects household growth in Lawrence to be more robust, climbing to 14,471 households, or a 15.31% rise. This exceeds the household growth rate forecast for Mercer County, 14.03%, and is almost twice the projected population growth rate. The organization anticipates household sizes to continue their decades-long decline, and the fall will be particularly steep in Lawrence. The relatively fast household growth, should it transpire, will increase the demand for housing, with more households in need of housing units.

According to the MPO, total employment in Lawrence will increase to 35,297 workers by 2050, a 14.06% increase. This is almost twice the percentage increase projected for Mercer County, 8.44%, and also higher than the 10.05% calculated for the nine-county DVRPC region. Employment growth of this magnitude will put added pressure on the housing supply, with workers searching for housing near their place of work.



**Table 43: Long-term Population, Household and Employment Forecasts**

Metric	Lawrence	Mercer County	DVRPC
<b>2020 Population</b>	33,077	387,340	5,893,110
<b>2050 Population</b>	35,898	423,029	6,351,894
<b>% , Population Change, 2020-2050</b>	<b>8.53%</b>	<b>9.21%</b>	<b>7.79%</b>
<b>2020 Household</b>	12,550	139,361	2,269,002
<b>2050 Household</b>	14,471	158,907	2,595,287
<b>% , Household Change 2020-2050</b>	<b>15.31%</b>	<b>14.03%</b>	<b>14.38%</b>
<b>2020 Employment</b>	30,947	285,579	3,546,295
<b>2020 Employment</b>	35,297	309,669	3,902,846
<b>% , Employment Change, 2020-2050</b>	<b>14.06%</b>	<b>8.44%</b>	<b>10.05%</b>

Source: NJTPA