

**TOWNSHIP OF HOPE LAND USE BOARD
WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

**RESOLUTION OF THE LAND USE BOARD OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HOPE, COUNTY
OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY ADOPTING THE FOURTH ROUND
HOUSING ELEMENT AND FAIR SHARE PLAN PREPARED BY HEYER, GRUEL &
ASSOCIATES DATED FEBRUARY 2026 AND AMENDING THE HOUSING ELEMENT
OF THE MASTER PLAN OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HOPE**

WHEREAS, the Township of Hope (hereinafter the "Township") has a demonstrated history of voluntary compliance regarding its affordable housing obligation as evidenced in its Third Round Record; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:96 and N.J.A.C. 5:97, 221 N.J. 1 (2015) (Mount Laurel IV), on January 23, 2015, the Township of Hope filed a Declaratory Judgment Complaint in the Superior Court, Law Division, seeking, among other things, a judicial declaration that its Third Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, to be amended as necessary, satisfied its "fair share," of the regional need for low- and moderate-income housing pursuant to the "Mount Laurel doctrine," and,

WHEREAS, that culminated in a Court approved Third Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan and a Final Judgment of Compliance and Repose entered on September 30, 2022, which precluded all Mount Laurel lawsuits including builder's remedy lawsuits until July 1, 2025; and,

WHEREAS, the Township continues to actively implement the Court approved Third Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan; and,

WHEREAS, on March 20, 2024, Governor Murphy signed into law P.L. 2004, c.2 which amended the 1985 New Jersey Fair Share Housing Act (N.J.S.A. 25:27D-301, et seq.) (hereinafter the "Amended FHA"); and,

WHEREAS, the Department of Community Affairs ("DCA") issued a report on October 18, 2024 (hereinafter "DCA Report") wherein it reported its estimate of the Fourth Round Affordable Housing obligations for all municipalities; and,

WHEREAS, the DCA Report calculates the Township's Fourth Round (2025-2035) obligations as follows: a Present Need (Rehabilitation) Obligation of 0 and a Prospective Need Obligation (New Construction) of 31; and,

WHEREAS, the Township adopted a binding Resolution accepting the DCA's calculated present need and prospective need as required by the Amended FHA on January 22, 2025, establishing the Fourth Round present need obligation at 0 and the prospective need at 31; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Amended FHA and the Administrative Office of the Court's Directive #14-24, the Township filed a timely Fourth Round Declaratory Judgment Complaint ("DJ Complaint") with the Affordable Housing Dispute Resolution Program (the "Program") along with its binding Resolution on January 23, 2025; and,

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

WHEREAS, the Township did not receive any objections to its present or prospective need numbers by February 28, 2025, resulting in a statutory presumption of validity of the Township's Fourth Round obligation on March 1, 2025; and,

WHEREAS, on March 25, 2025, the Court entered an Order establishing the Township's Fourth Round present need of 0 and prospective need of 31; and,

WHEREAS, the Amended FHA requires that the municipality adopt a Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan by June 30, 2025; and,

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Amended FHA, the Township's affordable housing planner, Mr. Michael Davis, of Heyer, Gruel & Associates drafted the Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan; and,

WHEREAS, upon notice duly provided pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D -13, the Land Use Board held a public hearing on the Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan on June 17, 2025; and,

WHEREAS, the Land Use Board determined after hearing testimony from its Planner and the public, that the Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan was consistent with the goals and objectives of the Township's current Master Plan as well as in compliance with the "Fair Share Housing Act," P.L. 1985, c.222 (C.52:27D-301 et al.) and the Mount Laurel doctrine, and that adoption and implementation of the Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan is in the public interest and protects the public's health and safety and promotes the general welfare; and

WHEREAS, a challenge to the Township's Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan dated August 31, 2025, was filed by Fair Share Housing Center on August 31, 2025, with a filing date of September 2, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Township has settled the challenge with Fair Share Housing Center, which settlement requires certain amendments to the Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Township's affordable housing planner, Mr. Michael Davis, of Heyer, Gruel & Associates prepared the Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan dated February 2026, which incorporates the modifications pursuant the settlement agreement; and

WHEREAS, the Land Use Board determined after hearing testimony from its Planner and the public, that the Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan dated February 2026, was consistent with the goals and objectives of the Township's current Master Plan as well as in compliance with the "Fair Share Housing Act," P.L. 1985, c.222 (C.52:27D-301 et al.) and the Mount Laurel doctrine, and that adoption and implementation of the Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan dated February 2026, is in the public interest and protects the public's health and safety and promotes the general welfare;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, on this 15 th day of March 2026, by the Land Use Board of the Township of Hope, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, that it hereby adopts the Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan dated February 2026 attached hereto as Exhibit A and further amends the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan of the Township of Hope's Master Plan so as to incorporate such recommendations and conclusions as contained therein.

Motion to adopt: Mayor McDonough

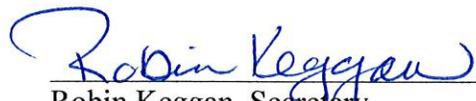
Second: Ms. Marie

Roll call: Gabel – yes; Kruk – yes; McDonough – yes; Marie – yes; Patton – yes; Larena - yes

Adopted: March 15, 2026

CERTIFICATION

I, Robin Keggan, Secretary of the Township of Hope Land Use Board, County of Warren, do hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution is a true and exact copy of a resolution adopted by the Township of Hope Land Use Board on March 15, 2026.


Robin Keggan, Secretary
Township of Hope Land Use Board

FOURTH ROUND HOUSING ELEMENT AND FAIR SHARE PLAN

Township of Hope
Warren County, New Jersey

Prepared February 2026

Adopted by the Land Use Board on

March 15, 2026

Prepared By:



Heyer, Gruel & Associates
Community Planning Consultants
236 Broad Street, Red Bank, NJ 07701
(732) 741-2900

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The original of this report was signed and
sealed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 45:14A-12

Michael Davis, AICP, P.P. #6533

With contributing content by Brooke Schwartzman

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan has been prepared for the Township of Hope in the County of Warren in accordance with the Fair Housing Act as most recently amended (P.L.2024, c.2).

Hope Township is an 18.29 square mile community located in northwest New Jersey, within the northern half of Warren County. The Township shares municipal boundaries with Blairstown Township and Frelinghuysen Township to the north, Knowlton Township to the west, White Township and Liberty Township to the south, and Independence Township to the east. Primary roadways, including Interstate Highway 80, and Warren County Routes 611, 609, 521, and 519, run through the Township.

The Township can be characterized as a rural municipality and, according to the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP), is located in a handful of Planning Areas, including: Rural Planning Area 4; Rural Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area 4b; and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area 5. Further, it is located within the Highlands Region Preservation and Planning Areas.

According to the 2020 Census, Hope Township's population was 1,835, which represents a decrease of 6% from 2010. In 2020, the Township's median age was 49.5 years, representing a 9.5% increase from the median age of 45.2 years in 2010. The Township's average household size in 2023 was 2.41 persons, which was the same as the average at the County level.

The housing stock of the Township is predominantly single-family detached dwelling units. Approximately 50% of the housing stock was built prior to 1970, making these dwellings older than fifty years. According to the guidelines originally established by COAH, the Township is located in Housing Region 2, a region that consists of Essex, Morris, Union, and Warren counties. Based on the 2025 Regional Income Limits (released by Affordable Housing Professionals of New Jersey on May 5, 2025), the median income in Region 2 for a four-person household is \$135,300, the moderate-income is \$108,240, the low-income is \$67,650, and the very-low-income level is \$40,590.

Affordable housing obligations in New Jersey are divided into "housing rounds," as will be discussed in detail later in this Plan. Each municipality in New Jersey has a constitutional obligation to provide their fair share of the calculated regional need for affordable housing within the respective housing round. These obligations to construct new affordable housing are known as the "Prospective Need" obligation. Municipalities also have an obligation to rehabilitate units that are deemed substandard, pursuant to the criteria of the Fair Housing Act. This obligation is known as the Present Need, or Rehabilitation Share. The housings rounds are as follows: Prior Round (1987-1999), Third Round (1999-2025), and Fourth Round (2025-2035).

The Township of Hope has participated in each of the three housing rounds. In the Third Round, the Township entered into a Settlement Agreement with Fair Share Housing Center to establish the municipality's Third Round affordable housing obligation. The subsequent compliance efforts were approved by the Court in multiple Judgements of Compliance and Repose, the final JOR being dated September 30, 2022, confirming the Township satisfied its Third Round obligations.

The Township was able to fully meet its Prior Round and Third Round obligations through durational adjustments.

The Township has a Fourth Round obligation as follows:

Rehabilitation Share: 0

Prospective Need: 31

The 31-unit Fourth Round Prospective Need obligation will be addressed through a durational adjustment due to the lack of water and sewerage infrastructure in the Township.

INTRODUCTION

The need to provide a realistic opportunity for the construction of affordable housing in New Jersey, the country's most densely populated state, has been recognized for decades. In the case of Southern Burlington County NAACP v. the Township of Mount Laurel 67 N.J. 151 (1975), (commonly known as Mount Laurel I), the New Jersey Supreme Court established the doctrine that developing municipalities in New Jersey have a constitutional obligation to create a realistic opportunity for their fair share of low and moderate income housing.

In Southern Burlington County NAACP v. Township of Mount Laurel, 92 N.J. 158, 456 A.2d 390 (1983), decided on January 20, 1983 (commonly known as Mount Laurel II), the Supreme Court responded to the response of municipalities to Mount Laurel II. The builder's remedy created a mechanism for developers to sue non-compliant municipalities and force them to comply. Mount Laurel II also created the Judgment of Repose to incentivize municipalities to comply. A Judgment of Repose protected municipalities from potential lawsuits and those who would claim entitlement to a builder's remedy or other relief based upon the claim that the municipality was noncompliant.

In the wake of Mount Laurel II, developers sued municipalities seeking builder's remedies. The wave of builder's remedy lawsuits created the impetus for legislation to protect municipalities from builder's remedies. A decision by Judge Serpentelli, one of three judges appointed by Chief Justice Wilentz to implement Mount Laurel II, increased the need for a legislative cure. More specifically, in 1984, Judge Serpentelli issued the "AMG decision" (AMG Realty Co. v. Warren Twp), which established a formula for any developer to determine the fair share obligation of any municipality.

The pressure of builder's remedy suits, combined with the ease in determining the fair share of any municipality through the AMG formula, culminated in the enactment of the New Jersey Fair Housing Act in 1985. The Fair Housing Act (FHA) is found at N.J.S.A. 52:270-301, et seq. The FHA established the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) as an administrative alternative to builder's remedy lawsuits and the concomitant jurisdiction of the courts. COAH was given the responsibility of dividing the state into housing regions, determining regional and municipal fair share affordable housing obligations, and adopting regulations that would establish the guidelines and approaches that municipalities may use in addressing their affordable housing need.

In 2008, the Legislature amended the FHA to add requirements for very low-income housing. Very low-income households are those in which the gross household income is 30% or less than the region's median household income. Low-income households are those with incomes no greater than 50% of the region's median household income. Moderate-income households are those with incomes no greater than 80% and no less than 50% of the region's median household income. Each is adjusted for household size and is in relation to the median gross income of the housing region in which the municipality is located.

FIRST AND SECOND ROUNDS

The First and Second Rounds under COAH are collectively referred to as the "Prior Round." The Prior Round obligation is the cumulative 1987-1999 fair share obligation. The First Round consists of the six-year period between 1987 and 1993 for which COAH first established a formula for determining municipal affordable housing obligations (N.J.A.C. 5:92-1 *et seq.*). Then in 1994, COAH established amended regulations (N.J.A.C. 5:93-1.1 *et seq.*) and produced additional municipal affordable housing obligations for the years 1993 to 1999. This second round of obligations is known as the Second Round. When COAH adopted regulations for Round 2, it made the Round 1 and 2 obligations cumulative for both periods.

THIRD ROUND

Housing rounds were originally established by the Fair Housing Act as six-year periods, but in 2001 the Legislature extended the rounds to 10-year periods. This should have meant that the Third Round ran from 1999 to 2009. However, COAH didn't establish new rules for the Third Round until the end of 2004 (N.J.A.C. 5:94-1 and 95-1 *et seq.*). The Third Round time period was therefore extended to 2014. The Third Round rules established a new method for calculating a municipality's affordable housing obligation, known as "growth share." This method required municipalities to project future residential and non-residential development, and then derive their obligation from that growth.

After the New Jersey Appellate Court invalidated several components of the Third Round rules, COAH released revised rules in 2008. The Third Round was once again extended to 2018 to provide municipalities with the time to apply the amended rules and establish mechanisms to meet their obligations. The revised

Third Round rules, like the initial Third Round rules, established the obligations based on a growth share approach.

On October 8, 2010, in response to numerous legal challenges to the second iteration of COAH's Third Round regulations, the Appellate Divisions ruled that COAH could not allocate obligations through a "growth share" formula and directed COAH to use similar methods to those used in the First and Second Rounds. COAH proposed Third Round regulations a third time in 2014 using a formula similar to the ones it had used in the first and second rounds. However, when COAH met to consider adopting these rules on October 20, 2014, it deadlocked.

On March 10, 2015, the New Jersey Supreme Court decided In re Adoption of N.J.A.C. 5:96 & 5:97 by the N.J. Council on Affordable Housing, 221 N.J. 1 (2015) (Mount Laurel IV), wherein it responded to COAH's failure to adopt defensible rules for Round 3. This decision changed the landscape by which municipalities are required to comply with their constitutional obligation to provide their fair share of affordable housing. The Supreme Court held that since COAH was no longer functioning, trial courts were to resume their role as the forum of first instance for evaluating municipal compliance with Mount Laurel obligations, and also established a transitional process for municipalities to seek temporary immunity and ultimately a Judgment of Compliance and Repose ("JOR") from a Court, which was the "judicial equivalent" of Substantive Certification from COAH.

On January 18, 2017, the Supreme Court decided In Re Declaratory Judgment Actions Filed by Various Municipalities, County of Ocean, Pursuant To The Supreme Court's Decision In In re Adoption of N.J.A.C. 5:96, 221 N.J. 1 (2015) ("Mount Laurel V"), which held that need having accrued during the Gap Period (1999-2015) was part of the Present Need, not Prospective Need. The Supreme Court held that there is an obligation with respect to that period for households that came into existence during that gap that are eligible for affordable housing, that are presently (as of 2015) in need of affordable housing, and that are not already counted in the traditional present need.

As the methodology and obligations from the Gap and Prospective Need had not been fully adjudicated at that time, various trial judges issued opinions on the appropriate methodology and 354 municipalities reportedly settled with Fair Share Housing Center wherein they negotiated the obligations for Round 3.

Municipal obligations were therefore broken down in Round Three Housing Element and Fair Share Plans as Present Need/Rehabilitation, Prior Round (1987-1999), and Third Round and Gap Period (1999-2015). Municipalities that received their Final Judgement of Compliance and Repose were guaranteed immunity from builders' remedy lawsuits through the end of the Third Round, June 30, 2025.

FOURTH ROUND

On March 18, 2024, the affordable housing legislation known jointly as Senate Bill S50 and Assembly Bill A4 passed both houses of the legislature. Governor Murphy signed the bill (P.L.2024, c.2) into law on March

20, 2024, establishing a new methodology for determining municipalities' affordable housing obligations for the Fourth Round and beyond. The new legislation, which comprehensively amends the FHA, overhauled the process that municipalities undertake to establish and plan for their constitutionally mandated affordable housing obligation. Most notably, this legislation formally abolished COAH while transferring its functions to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and Housing Mortgage and Finance Agency (HMFA). As a result, the legislation codified the method for calculating regional and municipal affordable housing needs and returned most of the process from the Courts to state administrative departments.

The amended FHA called on the DCA to issue a non-binding report on the new Present Need Obligation (commonly referred to as the rehab obligation) and the Prospective Need for Round 4 and subsequent rounds. The amended FHA requires the DCA to base its analysis of the obligations for each municipality based upon the standards set forth in the amended FHA. Accordingly, on October 18, 2024 the DCA released a report outlining the Fourth Round (2025-2035) Fair Share methodology and its calculations of low- and moderate-income obligations for each of the State's municipalities. The amended FHA gave municipalities until January 31, 2025, to review the obligation reported by the DCA and perform their own analysis of their obligation based on the methodology in the legislation and previously established by the Courts. If any municipality wished to commit to an obligation different from the one reported by the DCA, the amended FHA required the municipality to adopt a resolution by January 31, 2025, committing to the number that it contended was the appropriate obligation. If a municipality wished to commit to the numbers that the DCA reported, the amended FHA required the municipality to adopt a resolution committing to the DCA numbers.

The amended FHA required any municipality that wished to participate in the new process that the Act created to file a declaratory relief action within 48 hours of adopting the resolution committing to the numbers the municipality deemed appropriate.

The amended FHA gave any interested party who wished to oppose the numbers to which any municipality committed to file an Answer by February 28, 2025, which included a particularized objection to the numbers to which the municipality committed.

The amended FHA gave "the program" until March 31, 2025, to try to resolve any disputes over the fair share numbers to which a municipality committed through an "Affordable Housing Dispute Resolution Program." The program is a new entity created by the amended FHA. It is staffed with seven current or retired judges and the judges have the authority to use adjudicators to assist it in mediating disputes over the obligations of municipalities.

The amended FHA gives municipalities until June 30, 2025, to file a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan and related documents showing how the municipality will comply with its obligations. The Fourth Round

Plans will follow the same general format as they have with certain updates to their requirements dealing with various types of housing and the bonus credit calculation system. Notably, HEFSPs are required to be consistent with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) (a new draft SDRP was released in late 2024 and has yet to be adopted) and the Highlands Regional Master Plan for conforming municipalities. As part of the HEFSP, municipalities shall include an assessment of the degree to which the municipality has met its fair share obligation from the prior rounds of affordable housing (i.e. First, Second, and Third Rounds).

HOPE TOWNSHIP'S HISTORY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Township of Hope received First Round Certification on February 3, 1993. On February 23, 2001, the Township petitioned COAH for Second Round Certification, which was received and deemed valid for a period of six (6) years, to expire on December 20, 2005. Following COAH's December 20, 2004 adoption of its Third Round Methodology and Rules, Hope prepared a Third Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan (HEFSP), which was adopted by the Planning Board on December 5, 2005 and endorsed by the Governing Body on December 14, 2005. However, these initial Third Round Rules were deemed invalid by the New Jersey Appellate Court.

A development fee ordinance creating a dedicated revenue source for affordable housing was adopted by the Township on January 20, 2006 and approved by COAH on May 1, 2007. However, the Township would not begin collecting fees until years later in 2021. The most recent alteration to the trust fund and development fee legislation was conducted through the passage of Ordinance 2018-02 on February 20, 2018.

Subsequent to the release of COAH's revised Third Round Rules in 2008, the Township proceeded to prepare an amended Third Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan (2008 Plan). The Planning Board adopted the 2008 Plan and the Governing Body endorsed it on December 1, 2008. The Township petitioned COAH for substantive certification on December 31, 2008, and was deemed complete on January 16, 2009. The Township, however, did not receive substantive certification for the Third Round because a large majority of COAH's regulations were invalidated by the Appellate Division.

In response to Mount Laurel IV, Hope Township filed a Declaratory Judgment action on July 9, 2015, seeking a declaration of its compliance with the Mount Laurel doctrine and the Fair Housing Act of 1985, N.J.S.A. 52:27D-201 et seq. Due to the uncertainty surrounding the appropriate manner by which to calculate municipal obligations throughout New Jersey at that time, the Township and the Fair Share Housing Center ("FSHC") agreed that a settlement was in the best interest of the Township and its residents. The Township professionals and representatives of the FSHC entered into negotiations to settle the Township's Declaratory Judgment action and seek Court-approval for an accepted fair share obligation

for the Township. The settlement agreement was executed by the Township and FSHC on September 25, 2017.

A Fairness Hearing was held on October 23, 2017, and in an Order from that same day, the Court approved the settlement agreement, and determined that the agreement is “fair and reasonable to the interests of low and moderate income households...” Pursuant to the Court Order, the Township had 120 days from October 23, 2017 to prepare a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan and Spending Plan that reflected the terms of the settlement agreement. The resulting HEFSP was adopted January 29, 2018 (“2018 Plan”) by Resolution.

Another Fairness Hearing was conducted on April 19, 2018. By result, the Honorable Judge Thomas C. Miller granted a conditional JOR on January 10, 2019. The Township was given several orders including, but not limited to, adopting the spending plan that had been produced earlier that year, passing an accessory apartment ordinance, and partnering with the Warren County Housing Program to address the municipality’s rehabilitation need. Upon meeting the outlined conditions, Hope was granted a final JOR on September 30, 2022 by Honorable Robert A. Ballard Jr.. This order bestowed upon the Township immunity from builder’s remedy lawsuits until July 8, 2025.

On January 22, 2025, in accordance with the standards established by the amended FHA and described above, the Township adopted Resolution 2025-20. This resolution maintained the Fourth Round DCA-generated Prospective Need obligation of 31 and Present Need obligation of 0 and thus guaranteed protection from builders’ remedy suits (Appendix G).

This Fourth Round HEFSP sets forth mechanisms implemented to address the Township’s affordable housing obligations and has been prepared in accordance with the Fair Housing Act as most recently amended (P.L.2024, c.2).

PLANNING FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Pursuant to both the FHA (N.J.S.A. 52:27D-310, et seq.) and the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28), municipalities in New Jersey are required to include a housing element in their master plans. The principal purpose of the housing element is to describe the specific, intended methods that a municipality plans to use in order to meet its low- and moderate-income housing needs. Further, the housing element is meant to demonstrate the existing zoning or planned zoning changes that will allow for the provision of adequate capacity to accommodate household and employment growth projections, to achieve the goal of access to affordable housing for present and future populations. The statutorily required contents of the housing element are:

-
- a. An inventory of the municipality's housing stock by age, condition, purchase or rental value, occupancy characteristics, and type, including the number of units affordable to low and moderate-income households and substandard housing capable of being rehabilitated;
 - b. A projection of the municipality's housing stock, including the probable future construction of low- and moderate-income housing, for the next ten years, taking into account, but not necessarily limited to, construction permits issued, approvals of applications for development and probable residential development of lands;
 - c. An analysis of the municipality's demographic characteristics, including but not necessarily limited to, household size, income level and age;
 - d. An analysis of the existing and probable future employment characteristics of the municipality;
 - e. A determination of the municipality's present and prospective fair share for low- and moderate-income housing and its capacity to accommodate its present and prospective housing needs, including its fair share for low- and moderate-income housing, as established pursuant to section 3 of P.L.2024, c.2 (C.52:27D-304.1);
 - f. A consideration of the lands that are most appropriate for construction of low- and moderate-income housing and of the existing structures most appropriate for conversion to, or rehabilitation for, low- and moderate-income housing, including a consideration of lands of developers who have expressed a commitment to provide low- and moderate-income housing;
 - g. 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, adopted pursuant to paragraph (1) of subsection f. of section 1 of P.L.2021, c.273 (C.52:27D-329.20);
 - h. For a municipality located within the jurisdiction of the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council, established pursuant to section 4 of P.L.2004, c.120 (C.13:20-4), an analysis of compliance of the housing element with the Highlands Regional Master Plan of lands in the Highlands Preservation Area, and lands in the Highlands Planning Area for Highlands conforming municipalities. This analysis shall include consideration of the municipality's most recent Highlands Municipal Build Out Report, consideration of opportunities for redevelopment of existing developed lands into inclusionary or 100 percent affordable housing, or both, and opportunities for 100 percent affordable housing in both the Highlands Planning Area and Highlands Preservation Area that are consistent with the Highlands regional master plan; and

-
- i. An analysis of consistency with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan, including water, wastewater, stormwater, and multi-modal transportation based on guidance and technical assistance from the State Planning Commission.

PART 1: HOUSING ELEMENT**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS****Population**

Table 1 below depicts the population trends experienced in Hope Township, Warren County, and the State of New Jersey in the 93-year period between 1930 and 2023. In 2023, there were 1,837 residents in Hope Township, which indicates an increase of 2 people (0.1%) from 2020. Hope Township has experienced steady growth over the past 93 years, with just one minor decrease of 117 residents (-6.0%) between 2010 and 2020. Overall, the Township has seen a growth of 1,284 residents during this time frame, reflecting a 232.2% increase in its population. Proportionally speaking, the Township's most significant period of growth occurred in the decade between 1960 and 1970 when the Township saw a 36.9% increase in its population. These trends are reflected at the County and State level, as well, which saw a similarly significant increase in population throughout the 1960s. While population growth has been steady during this time period in Warren County and the State of New Jersey as a whole, the Township's overall growth (232.2%) has proportionally exceeded that of the County (123.5%) and State (129.2%).

Table 1: Population Trends, 1930-2023 Hope Township, Warren County, and New Jersey									
Year	Hope Township			Warren County			New Jersey		
	Population	Change		Population	Change		Population	Change	
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
1930	553	-	-	49,319	-	-	4,041,334	-	-
1940	646	93	16.8%	50,181	862	1.7%	4,160,165	118,831	2.9%
1950	681	35	5.4%	54,374	4,193	8.4%	4,835,329	675,164	16.2%
1960	833	152	22.3%	63,220	8,846	16.3%	6,066,782	1,231,453	25.5%
1970	1,140	307	36.9%	73,960	10,740	17.0%	7,171,112	1,104,330	18.2%
1980	1,468	328	28.8%	84,429	10,469	14.2%	7,365,011	193,899	2.7%
1990	1,719	251	17.1%	91,607	7,178	8.5%	7,730,188	365,177	5.0%
2000	1,891	172	10.0%	102,437	10,830	11.8%	8,414,350	684,162	8.9%
2010	1,952	61	3.2%	108,692	6,255	6.1%	8,791,894	377,544	4.5%
2020	1,835	-117	-6.0%	109,632	940	0.9%	9,288,994	497,100	5.7%
2023	1,837	2	0.1%	110,238	606	0.6%	9,267,014	-21,980	-0.2%
Total Change	-	1,284	232.2%	-	60,919	123.5%	-	5,225,680	129.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census and 2023: ACS 5-Year Estimates Table S0101

Population Composition by Age

The median age of the residents in Hope Township in 2020 was 49.5 years, which shows a 9.5% increase from the 2010 median age of 45.2 years. Analysis of age group characteristics provides insight into the actual changes in population. This comparison is helpful in determining the impact these changes have on housing needs, community facilities and services for the municipality. As detailed in Table 2 below, the entire composition of Hope Township experienced notable shifts in the years between 2010 and 2020. The most significant shift occurred in the population aged 65 and over, which collectively saw a 124-person (43.2%) increase. Simultaneously, the Township experienced a significant decrease in its population ages 5 to 14 years old (-38.4%) and between the ages 35 to 54 (-30.6%). This data suggests that a larger portion of the Township's residents are transitioning into the senior citizen age range, which will require the Township to consider planning tools and approaches that encourage aging-in-place.

Table 2: Population by Age, 2010 to 2020						
Hope Township						
Population	2010		2020		Change (2010 to 2020)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 5 years	89	4.6%	81	4.4%	-8	-9.0%
5 to 14	268	13.7%	165	9.0%	-103	-38.4%
15 to 24	219	11.2%	211	11.5%	-8	-3.7%
25 to 34	138	7.1%	182	9.9%	44	31.9%
35 to 44	255	13.1%	189	10.3%	-66	-25.9%
45 to 54	382	19.6%	247	13.5%	-135	-35.3%
55 to 64	314	16.1%	349	19.0%	35	11.1%
65 and over	287	14.7%	411	22.4%	124	43.2%
Total population	1,952	100.00%	1,835	100.00%	-117	-6.0%
Median Age	45.2	-	49.5	-	4.3	9.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, Tables DP1, P12 and P13

Warren County experienced population fluctuation as well. The County also saw the greatest shift of roughly 33% in its population aged 55 and over, which was proportionally slightly lower than the increase experienced at the Township level. The County experienced rather significant decreases in its population aged 14 and below (16.9%) as well as those aged 35 to 54 (19.3%), directly mirroring shifting age trends occurring in the Township. This data is displayed in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Population by Age, 2010 to 2020						
Warren County						
Population	2010		2020		Change (2000 to 2010)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 5 years	6,084	5.6%	4951	4.5%	-1,133	-18.6%
5 to 14	14,725	13.5%	12507	11.4%	-2,218	-15.1%
15 to 24	13,434	12.4%	13,220	12.1%	-214	-1.6%
25 to 34	10,671	9.8%	12281	11.2%	1,610	15.1%
35 to 44	15,484	14.2%	12,551	11.4%	-2,933	-18.9%
45 to 54	19,174	17.6%	15413	14.1%	-3,761	-19.6%
55 to 64	13,828	12.7%	18,054	16.5%	4,226	30.6%
65 and over	15,292	14.1%	20,655	18.8%	5,363	35.1%
Total population	108,692	100.0%	109,632	100.0%	940	0.9%
Median Age	41.5	-	44.4	-	2.9	7.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, Tables DP1, P12 and P13

Households

A household is defined as one or more persons, either related or not, living together in a housing unit. In 2020 there was a total of 743 households in Hope Township. Over half of the Township's households comprised two or less people. In fact, Two-person households were the most common household size at both the Township (39.3%) and County (33.5%) levels, followed by one-person households. The average household size of the Township in 2020 was 2.41, which was the same as the County's average.

Table 4: Household Size of Occupied Housing Units, 2020				
Hope Township and Warren County				
	Hope Township		Warren County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1-person household	164	22.1%	11,741	27.1%
2-person household	292	39.3%	14,511	33.5%
3-person household	109	14.7%	7,024	16.2%
4-person household	102	13.7%	5,829	13.5%
5-person household	42	5.7%	2,583	6.0%
6-person household	22	3.0%	1,060	2.4%
7-or-more-person household	12	1.6%	579	1.3%
Total Households	743	100.0%	43,327	100.0%
Average Household Size (2023)	2.41		2.41	

Source: US Census Bureau 2020, H9 and 2023 ACS 5_year Table S1101

According to the United States Census, family households are defined as two or more persons living in the same household, related by birth, marriage, or adoption. As shown in Table 5, a majority (73%) of all households in the Township in 2023 were categorized as family households. Households in Hope containing a married couple with children only accounted for 15% of all households in the Township. Data for 2023 includes the sub-groups of non-traditional households, including “Other Family” and “Non-Family” households. “Other Family” households accounted for 19% of all households, broken down into 9% female householders with no spouse or partner present and 10% male householders with no spouse or partner present. “Non-Family” households are defined as those that consist of a householder living alone or sharing the home exclusively with people to whom he/she is not related. Non-family households comprised approximately 27% of all households in the Town.

Table 5: Household Size and Type, 2023		
Hope Township		
	Total	Percent
Total Households	762	100%
Family Households	560	73%
Married couple family	415	54%
With children	115	15%
Without children	300	39%
Other Family	145	19%
Male householder, no spouse	78	10%
With children	43	6%
Without children	35	5%
Female householder, no spouse	67	9%
With children	28	4%
Without children	39	5%
Nonfamily household	202	27%
Male householder	100	13%
Living alone	74	10%
Not living alone	26	3%
With children	0	0%
Female householder	102	13%
Living alone	70	9%
Not living alone	32	4%
With children	0	0%

Source: 2023 ACS 5-Year B11005 and B11010

Income

As measured in 2023, Hope Township had a higher median household income compared to Warren County and the State of New Jersey. The median income in Hope Township was \$106,212, which was roughly \$6,700 greater than that of the County and \$5,100 greater than that of the State. The per capita income in Hope Township was comparable to that of the County and State. This data is outlined in Table 6 below.

	Per Capita Income	Median Household Income
Hope Township	\$49,405	\$106,212
Warren County	\$48,232	\$99,596
New Jersey	\$140,299	\$101,050

Source: 2023 ACS 5-year Estimates, Tables S1901 and B19301

In 2023, roughly 78% percent of all households in the Township earned an income of \$50,000 or more, as compared to roughly 77% of households in the County. The income range that accounted for the most Township households was the \$100,000 to \$149,999 bracket, which comprised nearly 23% of households in Hope; this was also the case across Warren County as a whole. The second largest income bracket in the Township was \$200,000 or more, comprising 16.3% of households. At the County level, the second largest income bracket was \$50,000 to \$74,999. This suggests that the Township's household income distribution is slightly skewed toward these higher income brackets as compared to the County, which may at least partially help explain the stark difference between the median income reported at the Township (\$106,212) and County (\$99,596) levels.

	Hope Township		Warren County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than \$10,000	48	6.3%	1,663	3.7%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	0	0.0%	944	2.1%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	21	2.8%	2,382	5.3%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	15	2.0%	2,292	5.1%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	81	10.6%	3,236	7.2%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	90	11.8%	6,697	14.9%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	89	11.7%	5,348	11.9%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	173	22.7%	10,472	23.3%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	121	15.9%	5,753	12.8%
\$200,000 or more	124	16.3%	6,157	13.7%
Total Households	762	100.0%	44,943	100.0%
Median Household Income	\$106,212		\$99,596	

Source: 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table S1901

Poverty Status

Of the 1,834 people in Hope Township for which poverty status was determined, 149 (8.1%) individuals lived in poverty in 2023; this was the same rate as that at the County level. Of Hope Township's population that fell below the poverty level in 2023, most were between the ages of 18 to 64; this trend was mirrored at the County level as well. Proportionally, the Township had lower rates of children and elderly living in poverty than Warren County as a whole. This data is presented in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Poverty Status, 2023				
Hope Township and Warren County				
	Hope Township		Warren County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total persons	1,834	100.0%	108,645	100.0%
Total persons below poverty level	149	8.1%	8,827	8.1%
Under 18	12	0.7%	2,119	2.0%
18 to 64	124	6.8%	5,381	5.0%
65 and over	13	0.7%	1,327	1.2%

Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, Table S1701

Household Costs

Tables 9 and 10 below show the expenditures for housing as a percentage of household income for those who own and rent in Hope Township and Warren County. In 2023, a majority of Township residents lived in homes they owned, which was the same at the County level as well. General affordability standards set a limit at 30% of gross income to be allocated for owner-occupied housing costs and 28% of gross income to be allocated for renter-occupied housing costs. Approximately 31.2% of Township residents who owned the units they occupied spent 30% or more of their household income on housing, as compared to 14.8% of Township residents who rented the units they occupied. These figures were the opposite of trends found at the County level, with renters usually spending a higher percentage of their gross income on housing compared to owners.

Table 9: Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income, 2023				
Hope Township and Warren County				
	Hope Township		Warren County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Owner-Occupied Housing Units	647	100.0%	33,386	100.0%
Less than 20.0%	259	40.0%	16,372	49.0%
20.0 to 24.9%	95	14.7%	4,916	14.7%
25.0 to 29.9%	91	14.1%	3,503	10.5%
30.0 to 34.9%	52	8.0%	1,858	5.6%
35.0% or more	150	23.2%	6,604	19.8%
Not computed	0	0.0%	133	0.4%

Source: 2023 American Community 5-Year Estimates, Table DP04

Table 10: Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income, 2023				
Hope Township and Warren County				
	Hope Township		Warren County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Renter-Occupied Housing Units	115	100.00%	11,557	100.00%
Less than 10%	0	0.0%	481	4.2%
10.0 to 14.9%	23	20.0%	1,049	9.1%
15.0 to 19.9%	23	20.0%	1,593	13.8%
20.0 to 24.9%	0	0.0%	1,361	11.8%
25.0 to 29.9%	16	13.9%	1,159	10.0%
30.0 to 34.9%	17	14.8%	1,036	9.0%
35.0 to 39.9%	0	0.0%	639	5.5%
40.0 to 49.9%	0	0.0%	802	6.9%
50% or more	0	0.0%	2,648	22.9%
Not computed	36	31.3%	789	6.8%

Source: 2023 American Community 5-Year Estimates, Table B25070

EXISTING HOUSING CONDITIONS**Housing Unit Data**

Hope Township's housing stock is largely comprised of structures built prior to the year 1990. In 2023, Hope Township had a total of 762 occupied housing units, roughly 84.9% of which were owner-occupied and 15.1% of which were renter-occupied. The Township experienced a housing boom in the 1950s up until the 1990s, during which approximately 54.5% of the Township's housing structures were constructed. According to 2023 American Community Survey Estimates, the Township has seen very few housing structures built between 2010 and 2020. The median year of construction for the housing stock in Hope Township is 1970. This data is outlined in Tables 11 and 12 below.

Table 11: Housing Data, 2023			
Hope Township			
	Number	% of Total Housing Units	% of Occupied Housing Units
Total Housing Units	858	100.00%	-
Occupied Housing Units	762	88.8%	100.00%
Owner Occupied	647	75.4%	84.9%
Renter Occupied	115	13.4%	15.1%
Vacant Housing Units	96	11.2%	-

Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP04

Table 12: Year Structure Built, 2023		
Hope Township		
	Number	Percent
Total Housing Units	858	100.00%
Built 1939 or earlier	183	21.3%
Built 1940 to 1949	52	6.1%
Built 1950 to 1959	107	12.5%
Built 1960 to 1969	86	10.0%
Built 1970 to 1979	128	14.9%
Built 1980 to 1989	147	17.1%
Built 1990 to 1999	83	9.7%
Built 2000 to 2009	68	7.9%
Built 2010 to 2019	4	0.5%
Built 2020 or later	0	0.0%
Median Year Structure Built	1970	

Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Tables B25034 and B25035

According to the 2023 Census, Hope Township has a high occupancy rate, with very few of their housing units vacant. Of Hope Township's 858 housing units, 762 (88.8%) were occupied and only 96 (11.2%) were vacant. Nearly three-quarters (72.9%) of vacant units could be attributed to the "Other Vacant" category, with "For Sale Only" and "For Migrant Workers" accounting for the remaining 27.1%. This data is represented in Table 13 below.

Table 13: Housing Occupancy, 2023			
Hope Township			
	Total	% of Total Housing Units	% of Vacant Housing Units
Total Housing Units	858	100.00%	-
Occupied	762	88.8%	-
Vacant Housing Units	96	11.2%	100.0%
For Rent/Rented Not Occupied	0	0.0%	0.0%
For Sale Only	12	1.4%	12.5%
Sold, not occupied	0	0.0%	0.0%
For Seasonal, Recreational or Occasional Use	0	0.0%	0.0%
For migrant workers	14	1.6%	14.6%
Other Vacant	70	8.2%	72.9%

Source: ACS 5-Year DP04 and B25004

Housing Type and Size

In 2023, single-family detached housing made up the vast majority of the Township's housing stock at 98.7%. 2-unit homes were the next most common type of housing, representing 0.8% of the Township's housing stock. The median number of rooms within housing structures in the Township was 6.8, with nearly 74% of housing units having a minimum of 6 rooms and less than 5% of housing units having 2 or less rooms.

Table 14: Housing Type and Size, 2023		
Hope Township		
Units in Structure	Total	Percent
1, detached	847	98.7%
1, attached	4	0.5%
2	7	0.8%
3 or 4	0	0.0%
5 to 9	0	0.0%
10 to 19	0	0.0%
20 or more	0	0.0%
Mobile home	0	0.0%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0.0%
Total Housing Units	858	100.00%
Rooms	Total	Percent
1 room	0	0.0%
2 rooms	38	4.4%
3 rooms	13	1.5%
4 rooms	58	6.8%
5 rooms	114	13.3%
6 rooms	169	19.7%
7 rooms	113	13.2%
8 rooms	171	19.9%
9 or more rooms	182	21.2%
Total Housing Units	858	100.00%
Median number of rooms	6.8	

Source: 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Tables DP04

Housing Growth and Projections

In terms of residential growth, the issuance of building permits serves as one of the indicators that help to determine housing needs in a given municipality. Table 15 below illustrates the number of building permits that were issued over the 10-year period between January 2014 through November 2024, when the Township issued building permits authorizing the development of 12 housing units. The vast majority of the permits issued during this time frame were for single- and two-family homes, while only 2 permits were issued for mixed-use structures, and none were issued for multifamily structures. Further, throughout the same 10-year period, Hope issued permits authorizing the demolition of 4 units.

Table 15: Housing Units Authorized by Building Permits, 2014-2024				
Hope Township				
Year	1 & 2 Family	Multi Family	Mixed-Use	Total
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	2	0	0	2
2018	0	0	0	0
2019	1	0	0	1
2020	0	0	0	0
2021	3	0	0	3
2022	1	0	0	1
2023	2	0	0	2
2024	1	0	2	3
Total 2014-2024	10	0	2	12
10-Year Average				1.2
10-Year Permit Projection (2025-2035)				12

Source: State of New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Building Permits: Yearly Summary Data

Table 16: Housing Units Demolished by Building Permits, 2014-2024				
Hope Township				
Year	1 & 2 Family	Multi Family	Mixed-Use	Total
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
2018	0	0	0	0
2019	0	0	0	0
2020	1	0	0	1
2021	0	0	0	0
2022	1	0	0	1
2023	0	0	0	0
2024	0	0	2	2
Total 2014-2024	2	0	2	4
10-Year Average				0.4
10-Year Demolition Projection (2025-2035)				4

Source: State of New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Building Permits: Yearly Summary Data

Housing Values and Contract Rents

According to the 2023 American Community Survey, 66.9% of the owner-occupied housing stock in Hope Township in 2023 was valued at over \$300,000, as compared to 55% of the County's housing stock. In addition, the Township's median home value (\$399,600) exceeded that of the County (\$323,100) by an estimated \$76,500. This data is outlined in Table 17 below.

Table 17: Value for Owner-Occupied Housing Units, 2023				
Hope Township and Warren County				
	Hope Township		Warren County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	647	100.0%	33,386	100.0%
Less than \$50,000	15	2.3%	935	2.8%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	0	0.0%	694	2.1%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	50	7.7%	1,683	5.0%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	33	5.1%	2,917	8.7%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	87	13.4%	8,609	25.8%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	297	45.9%	13,850	41.5%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	136	21.0%	4,522	13.5%
\$1,00,000 and greater	29	4.5%	176	0.5%
Median Value	\$399,600		\$323,100	

Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Tables B25075 and B25077

As shown in Table 18 below, it is estimated that 384 (59.4%) of owner-occupied units in the Town were financed by a primary mortgage, contract to purchase, or similar debt. Of those units, 81.5% did not have any additional lines of credit associated with the unit, while 4.6% were associated with a home equity loan, 10.7% were associated with a home equity loan without a primary mortgage, and none were associated with just a second mortgage or both a home equity loan and second mortgage. There were slightly more owner-occupied housing units with a mortgage at the County level; more specifically, 65.9% of such units had a primary mortgage. Of those units in the County tied to a primary mortgage, 83.4% did not have any additional lines of credit associated with the unit, while 9.6% were associated with a home equity loan 2.1% were associated with a second mortgage, 0.3% were associated with both a second mortgage and a home equity loan, and 4.7% were associated with a home equity loan without a primary mortgage.

Table 18: Mortgage Status, 2023 Hope Township and Warren County						
	Hope Township			Warren County		
	Number	% of Total Units	% of Units with Mortgage	Number	% of Total Units	% of Units with Mortgage
Total Owner-Occupied Units	647	100.00%	-	33,386	100.00%	-
Housing units with a mortgage, contract to purchase, or similar debt:	384	59.4%	100.00%	21,995	65.9%	100.00%
Housing units with no second mortgage and no home equity loan	313	48.4%	81.5%	18,340	54.9%	83.4%
Housing units with multiple mortgages:	30	4.6%	7.8%	2,617	7.8%	11.9%
Mortgage with both second mortgage and home equity loan	0	0.0%	0.0%	55	0.2%	0.3%
Mortgage, with only home equity loan	30	4.6%	7.8%	2,110	6.3%	9.6%
Mortgage, with only second mortgage	0	0.0%	0.0%	452	1.4%	2.1%
Home equity loan without a primary mortgage	41	6.3%	10.7%	1,038	3.1%	4.7%
Housing units without a mortgage	263	40.6%	-	11,391	34.1%	-

Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B25081

As shown in Table 19 below, the median contract rent in Hope Township in 2023 was \$1,550, which was roughly \$330 higher than the County median rent of \$1,220. Within the Township, the highest percentage of renters paid between \$1,000 to \$1,499 for monthly rent (34.8%), followed by no rent paid (28.7%), and \$2,000 to \$2,499 (27.8%). At the County level nearly half (42.3%) of renters paid between \$1,000 to \$1,499 for monthly rent, and there was a significantly higher occurrence of renters paying less than \$1,000 for rent (26.8%). This data suggests that rent in the Township is not as affordable as it is throughout the County as a whole.

Table 19: Contract Rent, 2023 Hope Township and Warren County				
	Hope Township		Warren County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Renter-Occupied Units	115	100.0%	11,557	100.0%
Less than \$500	0	0.0%	1004	8.7%
\$500 to \$999	0	0.0%	2094	18.1%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	40	34.8%	4,892	42.3%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	10	8.7%	2,162	18.7%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	32	27.8%	727	6.3%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	0	0.0%	116	1.0%
\$3,000 or More	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
No Rent Paid	33	28.7%	562	4.9%
Median Contract Rent	\$1,550		\$1,220	

Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B25056 and B25058

Housing Conditions

Table 20 below details the conditions of the Township's housing stock in 2023. Overcrowding and age, plumbing, and kitchen facilities are used to determine housing deficiency. In 2023, over half (60.5%) of the Townships housing stock relied on fuel oil, kerosene, etc., followed by bottled, tank, or LP gas (16.4%). No occupied housing units experienced overcrowding (more than one person per room). Throughout the Township, there were no occupied housing units that lacked complete plumbing, 38 units that lacked complete kitchen facilities, and only 8 units lacked telephone service.

Table 20: Housing Conditions, 2023		
Hope Township		
	Number	Percent
House Heating Fuel-Occupied Housing Units		
Total	762	100.0%
Utility gas	15	2.0%
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	125	16.4%
Electricity	58	7.6%
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	461	60.5%
Coal or coke	3	0.4%
Wood	96	12.6%
Solar energy	0	0.0%
Other fuel	4	0.5%
No fuel used	0	0.0%
Occupants per Room – Occupied Housing Units		
Total	762	100.0%
1.00 or Less	762	100.0%
1.01 to 1.50	0	0.0%
1.51 or More	0	0.0%
Facilities – Total Units		
Total	858	100.0%
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	0	0.0%
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	38	4.4%
Telephone Service – Occupied Housing Units		
Total	762	100.0%
No Service	8	1.0%

Sources: 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates DP04, B25047, and B25051

EMPLOYMENT DATA

Tables 21, 22, and 23 below detail the changes in employment between the years 2010 and 2023 in Hope Township, Warren County, and New Jersey, respectively. Throughout this thirteen-year period, the Township saw an overall 9.4% decrease in its unemployment rate; although the Township experienced a 4.2% spike in unemployment between 2019 and 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it has rebounded to a considerably lower unemployment rate in recent years. This overall trend is mirrored at both the County and State level as well, although in comparison the Township has consistently exhibited a lower unemployment rate throughout this time period. In 2023, the Township's unemployment rate was 3.6%, which was 0.4% lower than the County (4.0%) and 0.8% lower than the State (4.4%).

Table 21: Employment and Residential Labor Force, 2010 to 2023 Hope Township				
Year	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
2010	1,051	914	137	13.0%
2011	1,020	909	111	10.9%
2012	1,022	956	66	6.5%
2013	1,031	953	78	7.6%
2014	1,022	955	67	6.6%
2015	1,014	960	54	5.3%
2016	1,001	957	44	4.4%
2017	1,020	978	42	4.1%
2018	1,007	974	33	3.3%
2019	1,022	992	30	2.9%
2020	1,002	931	71	7.1%
2021	1,022	963	59	5.8%
2022	1,036	1,002	34	3.3%
2023	1,052	1,014	38	3.6%

Source: NJ Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development Labor Force Estimates

Table 22: Employment and Residential Labor Force, 2010 to 2023				
Warren County				
Year	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
2010	58,695	52,833	5,862	10.0%
2011	58,746	53,411	5,335	9.1%
2012	58,588	53,441	5,147	8.8%
2013	57,636	53,144	4,492	7.8%
2014	56,922	53,337	3,585	6.3%
2015	56,748	53,749	2,999	5.3%
2016	56,584	54,012	2,572	4.5%
2017	57,634	55,277	2,357	4.1%
2018	57,109	54,975	2,134	3.7%
2019	58,154	56,256	1,898	3.3%
2020	57,587	52,883	4,704	8.2%
2021	58,190	54,760	3,430	5.9%
2022	59,058	56,933	2,125	3.6%
2023	60,052	57,624	2,428	4.0%

Source: NJ Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development Labor Force Estimates

Table 23: Employment and Residential Labor Force, 2010 to 2023				
New Jersey				
Year	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
2010	4,559,800	4,119,000	440,800	9.7%
2011	4,561,800	4,134,700	427,100	9.4%
2012	4,576,300	4,147,200	429,100	9.4%
2013	4,528,000	4,147,700	380,400	8.4%
2014	4,493,900	4,191,300	302,600	6.7%
2015	4,494,600	4,237,900	256,700	5.7%
2016	4,492,800	4,271,200	221,600	4.9%
2017	4,615,000	4,406,200	208,800	4.5%
2018	4,604,800	4,420,700	184,100	4.0%
2019	4,686,300	4,524,300	162,000	3.5%
2020	4,650,300	4,212,400	437,900	9.4%
2021	4,666,100	4,357,200	308,900	6.6%
2022	4,739,800	4,564,100	175,700	3.7%
2023	4,829,671	4,615,722	213,949	4.4%

Source: NJ Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development Labor Force Estimates

Employment Status

It is estimated that over two-thirds (70.4%) of Hope Township's population over the age of 16 was in the labor force in 2023, which was slightly lower than the County's rate of 66.6%. Of the Township's labor force, 99.9% of workers were civilians and a vast majority (95.2%) were employed. At the County level, 99.9% of workers were civilians and 94.3% of the labor force was employed, indicating that the Township and County exhibited similar trends. This data is shown in Table 24 below.

Table 24: Employment, 2023 Hope Township and Warren County						
	Hope Township			Warren County		
	Number	% of 16+ Population	% of Labor Force	Number	% of 16+ Population	% of Labor Force
Population 16 years and over	1,596	100.0%	-	91,893	100.0%	-
In labor force	1,124	70.4%	100.0%	61,167	66.6%	100.0%
Civilian Labor Force	1,123	70.4%	99.9%	61,106	66.5%	99.9%
Employed	1,070	67.0%	95.2%	57,702	62.8%	94.3%
Unemployed	53	3.3%	4.7%	3,404	3.7%	5.6%
Armed Forces	1	0.1%	0.1%	61	0.1%	0.1%
Not in labor force	472	29.6%	-	30,726	33.4%	-

Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP03

Class of Worker and Occupation

According to the 2023 American Community Survey Estimates, the majority of workers (76.4%) living in Hope Township were a part of the private wage and salary worker group. This group includes people who work for wages, salary, commission, and tips for a private for-profit employer or a private not-for-profit, tax-exempt or charitable organization. The next largest category was self-employed worker or unpaid family worker (7.9%), followed by local government workers (7.5%). This data is outlined in Table 25 below.

Table 25: Class of Worker, 2023 Hope Township		
	Number	Percent
Total Civilian Employed Workers (Age 16+)	1,070	100.0%
Private Wage and Salary Worker	817	76.4%
Private not-for-profit wage and salary workers	53	5.0%
Local Government Worker	80	7.5%
State Government Worker	14	1.3%
Federal Government Worker	21	2.0%
Self-Employed Worker or Unpaid Family Worker	85	7.9%

Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S2408

The occupational breakdown shown in Table 26 below includes only private wage and salary workers. Township residents who worked within the private wage field were concentrated heavily in Management, Business, Science, and Arts occupations as well as Sales and Office occupations. Collectively, the two fields accounted for just over 62% of the entire resident workforce over the age of 16.

Table 26: Resident Employment by Occupation, 2023 Hope Township		
	Number	Percent
Employed Civilian population 16 years and over	1,070	100.0%
Management, business, science and arts occupations	403	37.7%
Service occupations	112	10.5%
Sales and office occupations	266	24.9%
Natural resources, construction and maintenance occupations	116	10.8%
Production Transportation and material moving occupations	173	16.2%

Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP03

As portrayed in Table 27, the industry that employed the greatest number of Hope Township residents in 2023 was the Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services sector, which made up 18.9% of the workforce. The second most common industry during this time was the Educational Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance sector, which accounted for 16.6% of the Township's resident workforce.

Table 27: Employment by Industry, 2023 Hope Township		
Industry	Number	Percent
Employed Civilian Population 16 Years and Over	1,070	100.00%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, mining	29	2.7%
Construction	109	10.2%
Manufacturing	111	10.4%
Wholesale Trade	32	3.0%
Retail Trade	136	12.7%
Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities	35	3.3%
Information	8	0.7%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	82	7.7%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	202	18.9%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	178	16.6%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	63	5.9%
Other Services, except public administration	37	3.5%
Public administration	48	4.5%

Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP03

Commuting to Work

In 2023, it is estimated that just over half (56%) of the employed population that did not work from home commuted up to 35 minutes to their place of work. Approximately more than three-quarters of the township's workers commuted up to an hour, with the last quarter of the population traveling between an hour to an hour and a half to get to work. A vast majority (73.3%) of the Township's working population drove alone as their primary means of travel to work. Roughly 17.6% of workers carpooled or utilized public transportation, a taxicab, motorcycle, bike, or walked to work, while the remaining 9.1% of the population worked from home. This data is outlined in Tables 28 and 29 below.

Table 28: Travel Time to Work, 2023 Hope Township		
	Number	Percent
Workers who did not work at home	953	100.0%
Less than 5 minutes	44	4.6%
5 to 9 minutes	109	11.4%
10 to 14 minutes	27	2.8%
15 to 19 minutes	52	5.5%
20 to 24 minutes	129	13.5%
25 to 29 minutes	107	11.2%
30 to 34 minutes	67	7.0%
35 to 39 minutes	91	9.5%
40 to 44 minutes	45	4.7%
45 to 59 minutes	74	7.8%
60 to 89 minutes	179	18.8%
90 or more minutes	29	3.0%
Mean Travel Time to Work (minutes)	33.8	

Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B08303 and DP03

Table 29: Means of Travel to Work, 2023 Hope Township		
	Number	Percent
Workers 16 years and over	1,048	100.0%
Car, truck, van - Drove Alone	768	73.3%
Car, truck, van - Carpooled	125	11.9%
Public Transportation	16	1.5%
Walked	42	4.0%
Taxicab, Motorcycle, Bike, or Other	2	0.2%
Worked at home	95	9.1%

Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP03

Covered Employment

There is currently very limited information available on actual job opportunities within municipalities. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development collects information on covered employment, which is employment and wage data for private employees covered by unemployment insurance. The following table provides a snapshot of private employers located within Hope. The first table reflects the number of jobs covered by private employment insurance from 2013 through 2023.

According to data from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the highest number of jobs covered in the Township between 2013 and 2023 was in 2014 when 327 jobs were covered by unemployment insurance. Private employment has remained slowly decreased in Hope since 2013, with its largest loss occurring between 2019 and 2020 (-25.1%), and largest gain occurring between 2013 and 2014 (7.9%). The township experienced a gain of 7 jobs in 2023, representing an increase of 3.5 percent from 2022.

Table 30: Private Wage Covered Employment 2013 - 2023			
Hope Township			
Year	Number of Jobs	# Change	% Change
2013	303	-	-
2014	327	24	7.9%
2015	310	-17	-5.2%
2016	303	-7	-2.3%
2017	276	-27	-8.9%
2018	274	-2	-0.7%
2019	247	-27	-9.9%
2020	185	-62	-25.1%
2021	197	12	6.5%
2022	200	3	1.5%
2023	207	7	3.5%

Source: NJ Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development Labor Force Estimates

In-Township Establishments and Employees by Industry: 2022

Table 31 below depicts the average annual number of establishments and employees by industry sector that exist within the Township, as reported in the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) published by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDLWD). The QCEW provides a quarterly accounting of employment, establishments, and wages throughout the State of New Jersey, and accounts for over 95% of available jobs in the state. The annual municipal reports group data according to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The QCEW considers an establishment to be a single economic unit, which is located at one physical location and engaged in one

type of economic activity. The NJDLWD specifies that establishments differ from firms or companies in the sense that the latter can have multiple establishments.

In 2023, the Township had an annual average of 21 establishments employing an average of 207 people in the private sector. The local government sector had an annual average of 2 establishments employing an average of 50 people. The Construction sector was the most sector was the Township's predominant private sector in establishments, with 3 establishments and 18 persons employed.

Table 31: Average Number of Establishments and Employees by Industry, 2023			
Hope Township			
Industry ID and Description		2023 Average	
		Units	Employment
11	Agriculture	.	.
23	Construction	3	18
31	Manufacturing	.	.
42	Wholesale Trade	.	.
44	Retail Trade	.	.
48	Transp/Warehousing	.	.
	Information	.	.
52	Finance/Insurance	.	.
53	Real Estate	.	.
54	Professional/Technical	.	.
56	Admin/Waste Remediation	.	.
61	Education	.	.
62	Health/Social	.	.
71	Arts/Entertainment	.	.
72	Accommodations/Food	.	.
81	Other Services	.	.
	Unclassified	.	.
	Private Sector Totals	21	207
	Local Government Totals	2	50

Source: NJ Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development Labor Force, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), Municipal Report by Sector (NAICS Based), 2022

Data have been suppressed (-) for industries with few units or where one employer is a significant percentage of employment or wages of the industry.

Probable Future Employment Opportunities

The North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) completes regional forecasts for the New York/New Jersey metropolitan area every four years for population, households, and employment. The most recent report was released in 2025, documenting projections between 2015 and 2050. The 2025 report predicts that the Township's population (0.29%) and households (0.62%) will see steady annualized growth through 2050, while employment will see a decrease (-0.17%). It is estimated that the population will see an overall 10.6% increase, while households will increase by 24.1% and employment will decrease by -5.7%.

Table 32: Population and Employment Projections, 2015 to 2050					
Hope Township					
Category	2015	2050 (Projected)	Annualized	Overall Projected Change	
			Percent Change	Number	Percent
Population	1,918	2,122	0.29%	204	10.6%
Households	741	919	0.62%	178	24.1%
Employment	463	437	-0.17%	-26	-5.7%

Source: NJTPA Municipal Forecasts, dated 9/13/2021

PART 2: FAIR SHARE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The following Fair Share Plan ("Plan") details the Hope's Prior Round (1987-1999), Third Round (1999-2025), and Fourth Round (2025-2035) Prospective Need obligations, as well as the Township's Fourth Round Present Need. This Plan proposes mechanisms by which the Township can realistically provide opportunities for affordable housing for those moderate-, low-, and very low- income households.

CURRENT STANDARDS

The amended Fair Housing Act includes a number of changes associated with the application of various categories of credits. The below walks through the current standards applicable to the Township's Fourth Round obligation.

Age-Restricted Housing

A municipality may not satisfy more than 30% of the affordable units, exclusive of bonus credits, to address its prospective need affordable housing through the creation of age-restricted housing.

Transitional Housing

Transitional housing units, which will be affordable for persons of low- and moderate-income, were not previously categorized by the Fair Housing Act as a standalone housing type. The amended legislation includes such transitional housing units as a new category which may be included in the HEFSP and credited towards the fulfillment of a municipality's fair share obligations. This is limited to a maximum of 10% of the municipality's obligations, however.

Veterans Housing

Up to 50% of the affordable units in any particular project may be prioritized for low- and moderate-income veterans.

Families with Children

A minimum of 50% of a municipality's actual affordable housing units, exclusive of bonus credits, must be made available to families with children.

Rental Units

A minimum of 25% of a municipality's actual affordable housing units, exclusive of bonus credits, shall be satisfied through rental units. At least half of that number shall be available to families with children.

Very-Low Income Requirement

At least 13% of the housing units made available for occupancy by low-income and moderate-income houses shall be reserved for low-income households earning 30% or less of the median income pursuant to the Fair Share Housing Act, N.J.S.A. 52:27D-301, et seq. Half of the very low-income units will be made available to families with children.

Low/Moderate Income Split

At least 50% of the units addressing the Township's obligation shall be affordable to very-low income and low-income households, and the remaining may be affordable to moderate-income households.

Affordability Controls

Newly created rental units shall remain affordable to low-and moderate-income households for a period of not less than 40 years, 30 years for for-sale units, and 30 years for housing units for which affordability controls are extended for a new term of affordability, provided that the minimum extension term may be limited to no less than 20 years as long as the original and extended terms, in combination, total at least 60 years.

Affirmative Marketing

The affordable units shall be affirmatively marketed in accordance with UHAC and applicable law, to include the community and regional organizations identified in the agreement as well as the posting of all affordable units on the New Jersey Housing Resource Center website in accordance with applicable law.

Uniform Housing Affordability Controls (UHAC)

All affordable units created through the provisions of this Plan shall be developed in conformance with the Uniform Housing Affordability Controls (UHAC) pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.1 et seq. as amended.

Unit Adaptability

All new construction units shall be adaptable in conformance with P.L.2005, c.250/N.J.S.A. 52:27D-311a and -311b and all other applicable laws.

Inclusionary Development Requirements

Pursuant to UHAC N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.5(b), in inclusionary developments, the affordable units shall be integrated with the market-rate units. The affordable units shall not be concentrated in less desirable locations, nor shall the affordable units be physically clustered so as to segregate the affordable units and market-rate units. Affordable units must be interspersed throughout the development, except that age-restricted and supportive housing units may be physically clustered if the clustering facilitates the provision of on-site medical services or on-site social services.

Construction of the affordable units in inclusionary developments shall be phased in compliance with N.J.A.C. 5:80-26(b)4. All inclusionary developments shall be subject to the most recent version of UHAC standards.

Bonus Credits

Bonus credits shall not exceed 25% of a municipality's prospective need obligation, nor shall a municipality receive more than one type of bonus credit for any one unit. Bonus credits may be granted on the following schedule:

Unit Type	Unit Credit	Bonus Credit
Each unit of low- or moderate-income housing for individuals with special needs or permanent supportive housing, as those terms are defined in section 2 of P.L. 2004, c.70 (C.34:1B-21.24).	1	1
Each low- or moderate-income ownership unit created in partnership sponsorship with a non-profit housing developer.	1	0.5
Each unit of low- or moderate-income housing located within a one-half mile radius, or one-mile radius for projects located in a Garden State Growth Zone, as defined in section 2 of P.L.2011, c.149 (C.34:1B-243), surrounding a New Jersey Transit Corporation, Port Authority Transit Corporation, or Port Authority Trans-Hudson Corporation rail, bus, or ferry station, including all light rail stations. ¹	1	0.5
A unit of age-restricted housing, provided that a bonus credit for age-restricted housing shall not be applied to more than 10 percent of the units of age-restricted housing constructed in compliance with the Uniform Housing Affordability Controls promulgated by the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency in a municipality that count towards the municipality's affordable housing obligation for any single 10-year round of affordable housing obligations.	1	0.5
A unit of low- or moderate-income housing constructed on land that is or was previously developed and utilized for retail, office, or commercial space.	1	0.5
Each existing low- or moderate-income rental housing unit for which affordability controls are extended for a new term of affordability, in compliance with the Uniform Housing Affordability Controls promulgated by the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency, and the municipality contributes funding towards the costs necessary for this preservation.	1	0.5
Each unit of low- or moderate-income housing in a 100 percent affordable housing project for which the municipality contributes toward the costs of the project. ²	1	1
Each unit of very low-income housing for families above the 13 percent of units required to be reserved for very low-income housing pursuant to section 7 of P.L.2008, c.46 (C.52:27D-329.1).	1	0.5
Each unit of low- or moderate-income housing created by transforming an existing rental or ownership unit from a market rate unit to an affordable housing unit. ³	1	1

¹ The distance from the bus, rail, or ferry station to a housing unit shall be measured from the closest point on the outer perimeter of the station, including any associated park-and-ride lot, to the closest point of the housing project property.

² This contribution may consist of: (a) real property donations that enable siting and construction of the project or (b) contributions from the municipal affordable housing trust fund in support of the project, if the contribution consists of no less than three percent of the project cost.

³ A municipality may only rely on this bonus credit as part of its fair share plan and housing element if the municipality demonstrates that a commitment to follow through with this market to affordable agreement has been made and: (a) this agreement has been signed by the property owner; or (b) the municipality has obtained ownership of the property.

HOPE'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING OBLIGATIONS

Hope Township's affordable housing obligations are as follows:

Prior Round Obligation	8
Third Round Obligation	70
Fourth Round Prospective Need	31
Fourth Round Present Need / Rehabilitation Obligation	0

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS ROUND COMPLIANCE

As part of any Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, a municipality shall include an assessment of the degree to which the municipality has met its fair share obligation from the previous rounds of affordable housing obligations as established by prior court approval or approval by COAH and determine to what extent this obligation is unfulfilled or whether the municipality has credits in excess of its previous round obligations. If a previous round obligation remains unfulfilled, or a municipality never received an approval from the court or COAH for any previous round, the municipality shall address such unfulfilled previous round obligation in its Housing Element and Fair Share Plan.

In addressing previous round obligations, the municipality shall retain any sites that, in furtherance of the previous round obligation, are the subject of a contractual agreement with a developer, or for which the developer has filed a complete application seeking subdivision or site plan approval prior to the date by which the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan are required to be submitted, and shall demonstrate how any sites that were not built in the previous rounds continue to present a realistic opportunity.

Prior Round Compliance 1987-1999

The Township had a Prior Round obligation of 8 units. Per the court-approved Third Round settlement agreement and the Township's Third Round JOR, Hope has met their Prior Round obligation through a durational adjustment of 8 units. The durational adjustment is due to the Township lacking the proper water and sewage infrastructure to support inclusionary development.

Third Round Compliance 1999-2025

The Township had a Third Round obligation of 70 units. As part of their Third Round compliance process, Hope received an additional durational adjustment for 70 units. Again, the adjustment was granted in response to the lack of water and sewage infrastructure within the Township.

On February 20, 2018, Hope adopted Ordinance 2018-02. Two affordable housing mechanisms were included in said ordinance:

Mandatory set-aside ordinance: Hope requires a 20% affordable set-aside for for-sale projects and a 15% affordable set-aside for rental projects consisting of 5 or more units at densities in excess of 4 units per acre.

Accessory apartment ordinance: Should the necessary water and sewer infrastructure become available, Hope will utilize \$10,000 per unit from its affordable housing trust fund to subsidize the creation of each accessory unit created. Affordability controls shall remain in effect for at least 30 years.

FOURTH ROUND PRESENT NEED / REHABILITATION OBLIGATION

Present Need was previously determined in N.J.A.C. 5:93-1.3 to be the sum of a municipality's indigenous need, the deficient housing units occupied by low- and moderate-income households, and the reallocated present need, which is the portion of a housing region's present need that is redistributed throughout the housing region. Under the Second Round rules, evidence for deficient housing included: year structure was built, persons per room, plumbing facilities, kitchen facilities, heating fuel, sewer service, and water supply. (N.J.A.C. 5:92).

The Third Round Rules (N.J.A.C. 5:97-1.1 et seq.) reduced the number of criteria of evidence of deficient housing to three: pre-1960 over-crowded units, which are units that have more than 1.0 persons per room; incomplete plumbing, and incomplete kitchen facilities. (N.J.A.C. 5:97). This reduction in the number of criteria was found to be by the Appellate Division to be within the Council's discretion and was upheld in the Supreme Court's decision in Mount Laurel IV.

The previously discussed Mount Laurel IV decision found that the reallocated need is no longer a component in the determination of Present Need. Therefore, the Present Need now equates to indigenous need, which means the obligation is based on deficient housing as determined by pre-1960 over-crowded units, incomplete plumbing, and incomplete kitchen facilities.

While the Township was assigned a 0-unit Fourth Round Rehabilitation Obligation, Hope will continue its partnership, established March 23, 2022, with Warren County's housing rehabilitation program. The Warren County Housing Program coordinates a grant-funded Affordable Housing Support Fund Rehabilitation Program, which provides financial and technical assistance for the purpose of enabling low- and moderate-income homeowners and property owners to rehabilitate substandard housing. See Appendix E for the County Housing Program's Operating Manual.-The Township may also utilize monies from the Township's Affordable Housing Trust Fund to supplement any aid received from the County's rehabilitation program.

FOURTH ROUND PROSPECTIVE NEED OBLIGATION (2025-2035)

On January 22, 2025, the Township adopted Resolution 2025-20, accepting their Fourth Round Prospective Need obligation of 31. On October 20, 2024, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (“DCA”) released a report outlining the Fourth Round (2025-2035) Fair Share methodology and its calculations of low- and moderate-income obligations for each of the State’s municipalities. The obligations were calculated in alignment with the formulas and criteria found in P.L.2024, c.2.

The amended Fair Housing Act affirms that the DCA report is not binding on any municipality and that “a municipality shall determine its present and prospective fair share obligation for affordable housing in accordance with the formulas established in sections 6 and 7 of P.L.2024, c.2...by resolution...” The 2025-20 resolution adopted by the Township determined a Rehabilitation Obligation of 0 and a Prospective Need of 31, the same as the obligations determined by DCA.

As outlined in the following sections, the Township proposes to meet its entire Fourth Round obligation.

Durational Adjustment

The Township of Hope is seeking a durational adjustment for their entire Fourth Round obligation based upon the lack of adequate sewage capacity and sewer infrastructure within the Township. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:27D-307(c)(2) a municipality can seek a durational adjustment based on a lack of infrastructure. The adjustment allows the municipality to defer its low and moderate-income housing obligation until the infrastructure required to develop additional housing is implemented. Hope lacks any sewage capacity and sewage infrastructure.

Municipal Commitment to Assist in the Provision of Public Water and Sewer: The Township shall cooperate with appropriate parties, and act in good faith, to assist any proposed inclusionary developments on sites designated for affordable housing by the Township in facilitating the provision of public water and sewer to those sites. Such cooperation shall include, but not be limited to, supporting and endorsing and if required by DEP regulations, becoming a co-applicant on:

- (a). Any application to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protections (“NJDEP”) or its agent to provide infrastructure for a site;
- (b). Any applications for the inclusion of any parcels in any appropriate sewer service area or wastewater management plan;
- (c). Any applications made to any State, county, local, or other body politic or utility authority necessary in order to provide public sewer and water service; and
- (d). Any other reasonable steps necessary or required to help facilitate the provision of public water and sewer with the exception of expending municipal funds and/or resources.

Should public water and/or sewer become available in the Township, it shall be required, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:93-4.3(c) (1), to reserve and set aside the water and/or sewer capacity, when it becomes available, for very low-, low-, and moderate-income housing on a priority basis until it has satisfied its fair share obligations.

[Development Fee Ordinance and Affordable Housing Trust Fund \(AHTF\)](#)

Pursuant to Ordinance 2018-02, developers must deposit an affordable housing development fee into the Township's Affordable Housing Trust Fund equal to 1.5% of the assessed value for residential developments or 2.5% for commercial developments. As is outlined in the appended Spending Plan, Hope projects collecting \$65,727 in development fees from June 2025 to June 2035.

[Mandatory Set-Aside Ordinance](#)

Hope requires a 20% affordable set-aside for for-sale projects and a 15% affordable set-aside for rental projects consisting of 5 or more units at densities in excess of 4 units per acre as decreed by Ordinance 2018-02.

[Accessory Apartment Ordinance](#)

In conformance with Ordinance 2018-02, for every accessory apartment created either within an existing home, through the conversion of an existing accessory structure on the same site, or created as an addition to an existing home, Hope will dispense \$10,000 from the affordable housing trust fund to assist in the creation. This initiative is contingent on whether the water and sewer infrastructure needed to support an additional unit becomes available. Affordability controls shall remain in effect for at least 30 years.

[Fourth Round Summary](#)

Hope Township's ability to provide affordable housing is hamstrung by the lack of water and sewerage infrastructure. Regardless, the Township has ordinances and initiatives in place designed to encourage the creation of affordable units should the necessary infrastructure become available. In spite of being assigned a Present Need obligation of 0, Hope remains committed to its partnership with the Warren County Housing Program.

CONSISTENCY WITH STATE PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

[STATE PLAN](#)

In accordance with the amended Fair Housing Act, Housing Elements and Fair Share Plans shall provide an analysis of consistency with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP), including water, wastewater, stormwater, and multi-modal transportation based on guidance and technical assistance from the State Planning Commission.

Sites that are located in the Metropolitan Planning Area 1 or Suburban Planning Area 2 of the SDRP, or are located in an existing sewer service area, are the preferred location for municipalities to address their fair share obligation.

The 2001 State Plan describes Planning Area 1 as "a variety of communities that range from large Urban Centers such as Newark, to 19th century towns shaped by commuter rail and post-war suburbs, such as Englewood and Cherry Hill. As the name implies, the communities in this Planning Area often have strong ties to, or are influenced by, major metropolitan centers" These communities often exhibit traits like mature settlement patterns, diminished supply of vacant land, infrastructure systems beyond or approaching their reasonable life expectancy; housing stock in need of rehabilitation; positioned for redevelopment, and the need for regionalized services.

Planning Area 1 is delineated in the 2024 Preliminary State Plan by:

- Density of more than 1,000 people per square mile.
- Existing public water and sewer systems, or physical accessibility to those systems, and access to public transit systems.
- Land area greater than one (1) square mile.
- A population of not less than 25,000 people.

The 2001 State Plan describes Planning Area 2 as "generally located adjacent to the more densely developed Metropolitan Planning Area, but can be distinguished from it by a lack of high intensity Centers, by the availability of developable land, and by a more dispersed and fragmented pattern of predominantly low-density development... [they] lack the compact settlement pattern of the older suburbs in the Metropolitan Planning Area and are almost entirely dependent on the private automobile for transportation. The pattern of scattered subdivisions and employment centers offers few if any focal points for community interaction."

Planning Area 2 is delineated in the 2024 Preliminary State Plan by:

- Population density of less than 1,000 people per square mile.
- Infrastructure systems reasonably anticipated to be in place by 2050 that have the capacity to support development that meets the Policy Objectives of this Planning Area. These systems include public water supply, sewage collection and treatment facilities, stormwater management, various modes of transportation, public schools, and parks.
- Land area greater than one (1) square mile.

A draft SDRP was approved by the New Jersey State Planning Commission December 4, 2024. This draft does not include mapping alterations. Instead, the Planning Commission is relying on municipalities to propose where Planning Areas should change. The Planning Commission has final say on whether to accept the proposed changes.

Because Hope is located in a handful of planning areas that discourage development, including Rural Planning Area 4; Rural Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area 4b; and Environmentally Sensitive Planning

Area 5, the Township is not broadly considered to be an ideal location for development. Any affordable housing created in Hope should be co-located with pre-existing pockets of development in order to leave as much land undisturbed as possible.

MULTIGENERATIONAL FAMILY HOUSING CONTINUITY COMMISSION

A previous amendment to 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, adopted pursuant to paragraph (1) of subsection f. of section 1 of P.L.2021, c.273 (C.52:27D-329.20).” 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.

HIGHLANDS REGIONAL MASTER PLAN COMPLIANCE

The Highlands is an 800,000 square acre region that provides drinking water to over half of New Jersey households. Its preservation is critical in ensuring a potable water supply for generations to come. The land within the Highlands region is divided between Planning Areas and Preservation Areas. Preservation Areas are undisturbed lands protected from development. Planning Areas are all other portions of the Highlands Region that fall outside of the preservation zone. They follow enhanced development standards as set forth by the Highlands Regional Master Plan which promotes growth management tools such as TDR and Smart Growth.

Hope Township is located in a Highlands Region Planning Area. Any affordable housing that is developed in the municipality should be co-located with pre-existing development so as to conserve as much land as possible.