

## **DEP Guidance Documents - Bridgewater**

### **Natural Resource Conservation**

#### **Natural Resource Inventory**

Bridgewater Township submitted an Environmental Resources Inventory (ERI), which fulfills the requirement for a Natural Resources Inventory. The maps from the appendices were not included in the digital submittal and the Department requests that Bridgewater submit these maps prior to Plan Endorsement. The ERI has a very detailed supplement that provides additional information about environmental resources within the Township. The ERI and its supplement cover topography, soils, wildlife, water bodies, threatened and endangered species, flood-prone areas, groundwater, water resources, vegetation, wildlife, contaminated and hazardous sites, historic resources, demographics, and housing stock.

#### **Conservation Plan**

Bridgewater Township submitted a Conservation Plan, also an absolute requirement of Plan Endorsement. The Conservation Plan refers to the Township's Environmental Resources Inventory and recommends conservation via a number of instruments including: acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands, density limits and/or clustering in environmentally sensitive areas, a site plan ordinance with more specific environmental controls, additional environmental preservation ordinances, and the development of a wildlife management plan. The Department recommends that the Plan be amended to address the following:

- **Source Water Protection**

The Conservation Plan should seek to manage potential sources of contamination and threatening activities that occur within a source water protection area. Plans shall include delineation of the source water protection area, an inventory of known and potential contamination sources, a determination of water supply system susceptibility to these contaminants, public outreach and education about threats, implementation measures to prevent, reduce or eliminate threats, and contingency planning strategies to address with water supply contamination or service interruption emergencies. Source Water Protection plans are applicable to groundwater supplies of drinking water, wellhead protection areas or surface water supplies, intakes and reservoirs and their drainage.

- **Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Plan**

When a TMDL has been adopted for a local water body, the Implementation Plan must include a plan to meet these standards, or support the use designated (drinking, fishing, swimming, etc.). These measures typically include effluent limits for wastewater discharges, point source storm-water controls, best management practices for point sources of storm-water, and non-point sources of pollutants.

The TMDLs that encompasses the Bridgewater Township are non-point source driven for fecal coliform and nonpoint source driven for phosphorus. There is also a Statewide TMDL for Mercury Impairments in Fish Tissue adopted by NJDEP in June 2010. Due to the nature of the impairment there is nothing specifically identified at the municipal level that is required to meet the TMDL for mercury. The other TMDL documents were all established as amendments to the Upper Raritan Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP). DEP's TMDL Reports may be downloaded from the Division of Watershed Management's web site at [www.state.nj.us/dep/watershedmgt/tmdl.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/watershedmgt/tmdl.htm). Additional information on these TMDLs can be found in the DEP Opportunities and Constraints Analysis (OCA) report. The OCA report also identifies short- and long-term management strategies to implement the TMDLs. These strategies include a Canada Goose Management Plan and pet waste management. Both short-term and long-term management strategies that address fecal reduction related to these identified sources may be eligible for future DEP funding.

- Canada Geese Management. The USDA Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Wildlife Services program is authorized and directed by law to assist landowners, corporations, agencies, and others in resolving damage situations involving federally managed wildlife. Wildlife Services is the agency primarily responsible for handling requests regarding Canada goose damage problems in New Jersey. This is accomplished through close cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and N.J. Division of Fish, Game, and Wildlife. Assistance typically consists of providing information on control techniques, sources of bird control supplies, assistance with the permit process, and implementation of operational goose damage management activities through funded contracts. U.S. Department of Agriculture - (APHIS) Wildlife Services New Jersey office: Pittstown, N.J. (908) 735-5654 <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/>.
- Malfunctioning and Older Improperly Sized Septic Systems; Illicit Connections of Domestic Sewage

Malfunctioning and older improperly sized septic systems contribute to fecal coliform loading in two ways: the system may fail hydraulically, where there is surface break out; or hydrogeologically, under conditions when soils are inadequate to filter pathogens. Specific management measures include the implementation of the NJPDES Municipal Stormwater Regulation Program, Sanitary Surveys, Septic System Management Programs and future sewer service area designations for service to domestic treatment works. Sanitary surveys are conducted in an effort to evaluate the water quality of natural surface waters and identify those components that affect water quality, including geographic factors and pollution sources. The focus of the sanitary survey is to identify nonpoint and stormwater source contribution of fecal coliform within the watershed. It is accomplished by sampling for various types of fecal indicators (fecal coliform, enterococcus, fecal streptococcus, *E. coli* and coliphage) during wet and dry weather conditions. Where potential problems with septic systems are identified, as described below, a trackdown study may be warranted. This could lead to an analysis of alternatives to address any identified inadequacies, such as

rehabilitation of septic systems or connection to a sewage treatment system, as appropriate.

In 2006 the Department adopted changes to the SWQS to replace the fecal coliform criteria for those waters designated for primary contact recreation (FW2, SE1 and SC) with enterococcus (SE1 and SC waters) and *E. coli* as pathogen indicators (FW2 waters), respectively. The United States EPA recommends the use of *E. coli* and enterococcus as pathogen indicators for fresh waters and enterococcus for marine waters. Thus, the Department now monitors these parameters to determine if the specific designated use for recreation is being attained for the impaired waterbodies.

- **Stormwater Detention Basins and Impoundments**

Stormwater detention basins may act as sources of fecal coliform due to the accumulation of geese and pet waste in basins. Under certain conditions, coliform will increase in numbers in basins. As a result, significant quantities of fecal coliform can be discharged during storm events. Impoundments created by small dams across streams have been a measure commonly used for flood control by municipalities in New Jersey. In addition to flood control, the impoundments were often incorporated into public parks in order to provide recreational opportunities for residents. Many of the impoundments are surrounded by mowed turf areas, which in combination with open water serve as an ideal habitat for geese and an attraction for pet walking. Bridgewater Township is required to adopt a Stormwater Management Plan and a number of associated ordinances, which are discussed in more detail in the Stormwater section of this document.

- **Pet Waste**

Specific management measures to reduce pet waste include: adoption of pet waste disposal, i.e., pooper scooper ordinances; signage in parks and other public recreation areas; providing plastic bag dispensers in public recreation areas.

DEP is working on a Nutrient TMDL for the Raritan River basin which will encompass Bridgewater Township. The TMDL will identify overall nonpoint source reductions that will be required and how many pounds of phosphorus will need to be reduced from the basin from both point sources and NPS. In addition to the requirements of each municipality through their MS4 storm water permit, the TMDL implementation plan will encourage all Raritan River Basin municipalities to avail themselves of funding opportunities to mitigate NPS pollution e.g. through stream bank restoration projects and/or to continue to work with partners such as NJ Water Supply Authority and Rutgers who are already performing NPS projects throughout the Basin.

### Implementing Ordinances

In order to address the natural resource concerns identified above, **Bridgewater Township shall adopt a suite of resource conservation ordinances.** These ordinances are absolute requirements of Plan Endorsement. Some of these ordinances are required by existing DEP regulations and must be adopted regardless of the Plan Endorsement process. These ordinances are identified as such. The following list also identifies those

ordinances that must be adopted prior to Plan Endorsement, whereas others will be based on resource-specific plans not yet developed. Example ordinances are available on the DEP website at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/opsc/envcbp.html#model>. Bridgewater Township shall adopt the following ordinances:

- Water Conservation ordinance

This ordinance sets water conservation guidelines that protect the community's drinking water supply, industrial and agricultural needs, recreational activities, and the natural systems that rely on specific water levels. DEP will provide technical assistance in making appropriate modifications to the example ordinance. **As an absolute requirement, this ordinance should be adopted prior to Plan Endorsement.** A model Water Conservation Ordinance is available through Sustainable Jersey at:

[http://www.sustainablejersey.com/actiondesc.php?arr\\_num=94&id\\_num=11115](http://www.sustainablejersey.com/actiondesc.php?arr_num=94&id_num=11115).

- Stream Corridor/Riparian Protection ordinance

Riparian lands adjacent to streams, lakes, or other surface water bodies that are adequately vegetated provide an important environmental protection and water resource management benefit. This ordinance seeks to protect and maintain the beneficial character of riparian areas by implementing specifications for the establishment, protection, and maintenance of buffers along the surface water bodies. This ordinance is a requirement of the Water Quality Management Planning Rules N.J.A.C. 7:15 and shall be consistent with those requirements. **This ordinance shall be submitted as part of the Somerset County Wastewater Management Plan.** A model ordinance is available at:

<http://nj.state.us/dep/watershedmgt/rules.html>

- Steep Slope ordinance

Disturbance of steep slopes should be restricted or prevented based on the impact disturbance of steep slopes can have on water quality and quantity, and the environmental integrity of landscapes. This ordinance shall be **completed as part of the Somerset County Wastewater Management Plan** process consistent with the Water Quality Management Planning Rules N.J.A.C. 7:15.

- Environmental Assessment ordinance

The Department notes that Bridgewater Township has received Sustainable Jersey points for its existing environmental assessment ordinance. **The Department recommends that this ordinance be amended to include, at a minimum, performance standards for vegetation and landscaping, and wildlife habitat to protect critical natural resources.** The example ordinance is available on the DEP website at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/opsc/envcbp.html#model>. The Township may tailor this ordinance to apply to only specific environmentally sensitive areas, based on a comprehensive NRI. The Township may also modify the scope of this ordinance to only apply to projects of a certain size (ex. level of disturbance, subdivision, major site plan). Should the Township make such modifications to modify the applicability of the ordinance, DEP recommends that the ordinance also make clear that its requirements may not be waived.

▪ Pet Waste Management ordinance

As noted in DEP's OCA report, pet waste management is a strategy to implement Fecal TMDLs. This ordinance establishes requirements for the proper disposal of pet solid waste. As a Tier A Stormwater municipality, a pet waste ordinance is required. **This ordinance may be adopted post-Endorsement, as part of the Plan Implementation Agreement**, if it hasn't been already. A model ordinance is available at:

[http://www.njstormwater.org/tier\\_A/pdf/pet%20waste%20ordinance.pdf](http://www.njstormwater.org/tier_A/pdf/pet%20waste%20ordinance.pdf)

▪ Fertilizer Ordinance

On January, 2011 Governor Christie signed a new fertilizer law, A2290. This new fertilizer law is more detailed in its requirements than the model ordinances that DEP previously recommended. In addition to the requirements of the model ordinances, this new law decreases the total amount of nitrogen in fertilizer and increases the amount of slow release nitrogen that may be used, phases in a prohibition of phosphorous-containing fertilizers under most circumstances, and prohibits the use of fertilizers containing phosphorous to a limited set of conditions. Moreover, the law establishes the circumstances in which a professional fertilizer applicator must be used and establishes the procedure by which one becomes certified to apply fertilizer.

Because the new law explicitly preempts all municipal, county, and local health agency ordinances and resolutions concerning the application of fertilizer to turf. DEP no longer requires a Fertilizer Application Ordinance during the Plan Endorsement process. Municipalities should continue to educate residents about the importance of adhering to this law.

**Natural Resource Conservation Requirements/Recommendations**

1. Bridgewater Township shall amend its Conservation Plan Element of the Master Plan to include source water protection, and TMDLs. This action may be completed post-Endorsement, as part of the Plan Implementation Agreement.
2. As part of the Conservation Plan, Bridgewater Township shall contact the USDA Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Wildlife Services program to identify and implement appropriate Canada Geese Management strategies. This action may be completed post-Endorsement, as part of the Plan Implementation Agreement.
3. Bridgewater Township shall adopt a suite of resource conservation ordinances, including:
  - Water Conservation ordinance (prior to Plan Endorsement);
  - Stream Corridor/Riparian Protection ordinance (WQMP requirement);
  - Steep Slopes ordinance (WQMP requirement);
  - Environmental Assessment ordinance (Plan Implementation Agreement);
  - All required TMDL ordinances (TMDL ordinance/Plan Implementation Agreement);

- All required stormwater ordinances (see Stormwater section of this document)
4. Bridgewater Township shall update and codify its zoning ordinances as necessary to be consistent with the ERI and Conservation Plan.

### **Sustainability**

All master plan elements shall be consistent with the State Plan's vision for sustainability. Sustainable planning means incorporating policies and actions into the various elements of the master plan that will meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Bridgewater Township has not submitted the required Sustainability Statement as part of its petition for Plan Endorsement. This document should address, among other things: energy consumption, renewable energy programs, energy reduction efforts, water conservation, green purchasing programs, solid waste reduction programs, local farming initiatives, landscaping, education for property owners, equity in open space and recreation opportunities, etc. **Bridgewater Townships must submit a Sustainability Statement prior to plan endorsement. To facilitate the process, DEP recommends that all three municipalities in the Somerset Regional Center coordinate and submit the same statement.**

The Municipal Land Use Law authorizes municipal planning boards to adopt a Green Buildings and Environmental Sustainability Master Plan Element. **DEP recommends that Bridgewater Township develop and adopt such a document.**

Bridgewater Township is a certified sustainable community in the Sustainable Jersey Program, created by the League of Municipalities. **DEP recommends that Bridgewater Township continue to participate in the Sustainable Jersey program and seek higher levels of certification.** Many of the required and recommended documents for Plan Endorsement are included in the Sustainable Jersey program.

### **Sustainability Requirements/ Recommendations**

1. DEP recommends that Bridgewater Township 1) conduct energy and green house gas (GHG) emissions audits of municipal facilities and operations, at a minimum, and community-wide audits, if feasible, and 2) using the results of these audits, develop action plans for reducing municipal energy consumption and GHG emissions (using NJ's 2020 GHG emissions reduction target as a goal). The Board of Public Utilities Clean Energy Program provides funding for municipal energy audits and Bridgewater Township should take advantage of this support to pursue the above actions (<http://www.njcleanenergy.com/commercial-industrial/programs/local-government-energy-audit/local-government-energy-audit>).
2. The North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority has prepared a greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory for all areas it covers. This inventory provides county and municipal-level GHG emissions information for the various major community sectors/activities. DEP recommends Bridgewater Township acquire its local inventory data and use this information as the basis for developing a community

GHG reduction action plan, including GHG reduction targets. A number of models and case studies are available to guide this process.

3. Despite efforts to reduce global emissions of GHG, scientists anticipate that some level of climate change is inevitable. Given this reality, it is recommended that Bridgewater Township 1) evaluate its vulnerability to the most likely and relevant climate change impacts, and 2) evaluate how its various planning processes (e.g., land use, emergency preparedness) can account for and adapt to these changes. The Department of Environmental Protection can provide assistance in this assessment process.
4. Review plans and ordinances and remove impediments to, and encourage, green design throughout the Township.
5. DEP recommends that Bridgewater Township require “green buildings” (LEED, Green Globes) in redevelopment areas, to the extent practicable.
6. Develop education programs for local residents, homeowners, and property owners on ecologically sound landscaping techniques, composting, etc.
7. Develop and adopt a Green Buildings and Environmental Sustainability Master Plan Element.

Recommended Actions may be included in the PIA.

### **Historic Preservation**

Bridgewater Township is home to a number of historic resources that are listed on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places as well as a number of buildings and places that are not listed but which may have historic significance. The Township provides a list and a brief discussion of some of these historic resources in its ERI and ERI supplement; however it also notes that there is no formal protection for these resources at this time.

Using the ERI as a starting point, Bridgewater Township should work with DEP to create an Historic Preservation Plan, and a MLUL-compliant ordinance to implement the Plan. Doing so would better ensure the protection of the Township’s Historic Resources.

Based on the ERI, the Township may want to consider developing historic districts. Local districts could be subject to a zoning overlay, controlling exterior appearances. This action may be included in the PIA. This work should be done in accordance with *The Guidelines for Architectural Survey*, particularly those dealing with intensive-level regulatory surveys. This guidance is out of print, but is available on the State Historic Preservation Office's website:

<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/hpo/1identify/survarcht.htm>.

Bridgewater Township should review the NJ Historical Commission’s (NJ Department of State) grant program at <http://www.nj.gov/state/divisions/historical/grants/> for the possible funding to support their historic preservation efforts.

### **Historic Preservation Requirements/Recommendations:**

1. Bridgewater Township shall develop an Historic Preservation Plan and implementing ordinance. This may occur post-Endorsement, as part of the Plan

Implementation Agreement. This work should be done in accordance with *The Guidelines for Architectural Survey*, particularly those dealing with intensive-level regulatory surveys. This guidance is out of print, but is available on the State Historic Preservation Office's website:

<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/hpo/1identify/survarcht.htm>.

2. The Somerset County Regional Center Strategic Plan recommends that Bridgewater Township establish an historical commission or committee to advise the governing body on historic preservation issues. DEP supports this recommendation.

## **Recycling**

Bridgewater Township did not submit a Recycling Statement of Consistency or Municipal Recycling Ordinance, both of which are absolute requirements for Plan Endorsement. **Bridgewater Township shall submit both the Statement of Consistency and Municipal Recycling Ordinance prior to Plan Endorsement.** DEP encourages municipalities to go beyond the basic recycling requirements and encourage innovative ways for citizens to reduce the quantity of waste sent to landfills. Possibilities include providing education on household composting, product re-use, use of recycled materials in construction, and minimizing excess packaging material.

### **Recycling Requirements/Recommendations:**

- Bridgewater Township shall submit both the Statement of Consistency and Municipal Recycling Ordinance prior to Plan Endorsement.
- DEP recommends that the Township consider innovative ways to reduce waste and promote recycling. DEP will provide technical support toward these efforts. Such methods may include with schools and small businesses in the community on recycling education program, and; investigate opportunities to recycle additional materials beyond what is required by the county plan.

## **Open Space**

Bridgewater Township submitted a thorough Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan. The Township's goals and objectives are consistent with requirements of the Plan Endorsement process – aiming to improve access to open space where it is limited and seeking the assistance of non-profit and private organizations in improving access to open space. The Plan places particular emphasis on the development of the Raritan River Greenway. DEP supports expanding access to open space and offers its assistance in developing priority acquisition plans as well as any proposals to address stream encroachment, restoration, habitat preservation or contamination.

### **Open Space Recommendations/Requirements**

1. DEP is working with OPA and Somerset County to discuss the proposed greenway and how it is impacted by the Flood Hazard Area Control Act and its implementing rules. Bridgewater Township should note that the Flood Hazard Rules will impact what improvements are possible along the Raritan River.



## **Contaminated Areas**

There are a number of Known Contaminated Sites in Bridgewater Township, which were listed within the DEP OCA report. It is important that the contamination from these sites is monitored and remediated, as needed, on an ongoing basis. The Township will need to work closely with Responsible Parties and DEP to ensure that all redevelopment and remediation activities are closely coordinated. Failure to closely coordinate these activities can hinder remediation and lead to costly delays. Based on the information submitted within the Regional Center's Strategic Plan and within Bridgewater Townships planning documents, it is apparent that the governing bodies are aware of the remediation challenges that exist in Bridgewater Township and are actively working towards their resolution.

### **Contaminated Areas Requirements/Recommendations:**

1. Bridgewater Township should continue to work closely with Responsible Parties and DEP to ensure that development and redevelopment plans are consistent, and coordinated, with the remediation being conducted at contaminated sites.

## **Hazard Planning**

Somerset County has developed a comprehensive All Hazards Mitigation Plan, pursuant to the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. Bridgewater Township, like other municipalities in the County, has its own subchapter. DEP recommends that the Township incorporate the All Hazards Mitigation Plan into all other local planning efforts to ensure consistency between the two. DEP also recommends that the Township participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), if it is not already. Participation in NFIP requires that in all cases it must enforce and maintain a flood damage prevention ordinance in order to remain in good standing. In order to be eligible to apply for hazard mitigation (including but not limited to flood mitigation) grants from FEMA, communities must have a FEMA-approved All Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan. The Flood Mitigation Plan should be a component of the All Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan. In the past, communities were eligible to apply for some FEMA grants with only a Flood Mitigation Plan; however, this is no longer the case and a FEMA-approved All Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan is now required for application eligibility.

### **Hazard Planning Requirements/Recommendations:**

1. DEP recommends that Bridgewater Township evaluate all land-use planning efforts against the All Hazards Mitigation Plan to ensure consistency between the two.
2. DEP strongly recommends that Bridgewater Township participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), if it is not already.
3. DEP recommends that the Township create and adopt a Flood Prevention Ordinance.

## **Stormwater**

The Stormwater Management rule at N.J.A.C. 7:8-4.2(c)8 requires municipalities to evaluate the extent to which the municipality's entire Master Plan, official map and development regulations (including the zoning ordinance) implement the principles of nonstructural stormwater management strategies. In order to promote the use of low impact development, Bridgewater Township shall, if it has not already done so, identify the portions of the master plan that need to be amended to incorporate nonstructural strategies and include a time frame for incorporation of amendments to the master plan and/or land use and zoning ordinances.

Bridgewater Township's Stormwater Management Plan and Ordinance were approved by the Somerset County Planning Board in April of 2007.

As a Tier A Stormwater Permit Municipality, Bridgewater Township is required to have a number of ordinances in place, including Pet Waste, Litter Control, Improper Disposal of Waste, Wildlife Feeding, Containerized Yard Waste, Yard Waste Collection Program, and Illicit Connections. Guidance on these ordinances is available on the DEP website at [http://www.state.nj.us/dep/dwq/tier\\_a\\_guidance.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/dwq/tier_a_guidance.htm).

### **Stormwater Requirements/Recommendations:**

1. Bridgewater Township shall continue to implement and enforce its existing Stormwater Management Plan and ordinances.

## **Wastewater Treatment**

As DEP noted in its Opportunities & Constraints Assessment Report, there are two DEP-regulated wastewater facilities serving Bridgewater Township - Somerset Raritan Valley Sewage Authority (SRVSA) and Middlesex County Utilities Authority (MCUA). Most of Bridgewater Township is located within the currently adopted sewer service area.

The County of Somerset is working with the DEP to develop a Wastewater Management Plan for the County that covers Bridgewater Township. The Township should continue to work with the County to develop build-out/wastewater capacity projections and provide information regarding agreements with SRVSA and MCUA to determine if capacity exists for the Township to expand and grow within its redevelopment areas.

### **Wastewater Management Plan Requirements/Recommendations:**

1. Bridgewater Township should continue to work with Somerset County to ensure that it is properly represented in the proposed Somerset County Wastewater Management Plan.
2. Bridgewater Township shall continue to provide sufficient and appropriate data (zoning, treatment plant data, projections etc.) to Somerset County to assist in development of the Somerset County Wastewater Management Plan.

## **Water Availability and Conservation**

As identified by the Deficit/Surplus table, as of December 2010, the New Jersey American Water Company – Raritan System has a Firm Capacity surplus of 59.982 MGD; along with a water supply surplus according to their Water Allocation Permit of 871.851 MGM and 9531.354 MGY. The Deficit/Surplus table may be found at <http://www.nj.gov/cgi-bin/dep/watersupply/pwsdetail.pl?id=2004002>.

#### **Water Availability Requirements/Recommendations:**

1. DEP will provide assistance, at Bridgewater Township's request, in identifying potential financial sources for water system projects that may also result in water conservation. DEP recommends the Township review the information at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply/loanprog.htm>.
2. Bridgewater Township should adopt a Water Conservation Ordinance, which is an absolute requirement of Plan Endorsement. A model Water Conservation Ordinance is available through Sustainable Jersey at [http://www.sustainablejersey.com/actiondesc.php?arr\\_num=94&id\\_num=11115](http://www.sustainablejersey.com/actiondesc.php?arr_num=94&id_num=11115).

#### **Land Use**

Bridgewater Township submitted its 1990 Master Plan and several reexamination reports. The Township experienced rapid growth in the decades leading up to its 1990 Master Plan, which led to an emphasis on environmental conservation and protection in the form of low-density residential development. The most recent reexaminations encourage the conservation of environmentally sensitive lands and limit high-density, multi-family housing to housing for senior citizens under limited circumstances. This approach is both inconsistent with the goals of the State Plan within a Metropolitan Planning area and it is inconsistent with the Township and Regional Center's stated goals of encouraging transit-oriented development and increasing transit ridership.

#### **Land Use Requirements/Recommendations:**

1. Several of the recommendations and stated aims within the master plan and reexaminations effectively encourage large lot sprawl, in areas of the Township that fall both within PA1 and the Regional Center. Discouraging high-density multi-family housing within a metropolitan planning area is inconsistent with the goals of the State Plan and the goals of the Regional Center. The Somerset County Regional Center Strategic Plan notes that a key objective shared by all three communities is to increase transit ridership throughout the Regional Center. DEP recognizes that transitioning a fully-developed suburban area to a transit-friendly design is challenging. **Bridgewater Township should carefully review its recommendations and ordinances to determine how it can accommodate development and redevelopment in a transit-friendly manner.**
2. DEP recommends that Bridgewater Township conduct a comprehensive review of its ordinances, as is recommended in the Somerset County Regional Center Strategic Plan
3. **Bridgewater Township should review its ordinances, and make necessary modifications, to ensure that green site design innovations, including**

**innovative roofing alternatives and materials, solar orientation design techniques, etc. are permitted (or required in redevelopment areas).** DEP further recommends that the Township consider providing incentives for incorporating green design principles into new developments.

## **NJDOT Guidance**

**7/14/11**

### GENERAL COMMENTS

The Township of Bridgewater, while maintaining its diverse mature suburban character, has progressed continually toward a community vision of mixed use, walkable development linked to distinctive, well-established neighborhoods, with opportunities for redevelopment, infill and reuse. The Township has shown willingness to work with its partner municipalities in the Regional Center, Somerville and Raritan, to promote smart growth patterns most conducive to efficiencies in the transportation system, and therefore, appears generally consistent with the goals and policies of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP). The Township has stated its intent to embrace the concept of shared parking and to include "Complete Streets" in roadway design.

### SPECIFIC COMMENTS

The 2010 Amendment to the Circulation Element of the Master Plan and Reexamination Report addresses all relevant modes of transportation and describes the relationship of the existing and planned land uses to the transportation network, so as to increase opportunities for biking, walking and transit. Inasmuch as the Circulation Element shows substantial consistency with the transportation goals of the SDRP, the municipality should consider the following points:

The plans emphasize the need to control and limit regional traffic on local streets. While this concern is understood, particularly regarding truck traffic in residential neighborhoods, the municipality should explore creative ways to increase connectivity within the Township and to points elsewhere in the Regional Center using the local road network where it makes sense and without compromising the efficiency of the entire system.

The amended Circulation Element addresses the State Highway Access Management Code, but does not detail how the Code specifically relates to the zoning along Routes 22, 28, 202 and 206. A further update of this Element should include a demonstration of compliance with Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) provision that zoning along the state highways conform to the State Highway Access Management Code, with the intent to insert language into the zoning ordinance such compliance. This item could be incorporated into the Planning and Implementation Agreement (PIA).

The Township may request technical assistance from the Department in determining whether any non-conforming lots currently exist, and how to assure that anticipated zoning changes will reflect conformance with the Access Code.

The amended Element discusses goods movement and encourages the use of rail freight as well as freight movement by truck. Conrail freight service is available on the same line that provides passenger service on the NJ TRANSIT Raritan Valley Line. The municipality should consider retention of industrial uses along freight-served rail lines whenever possible.

#### STATE AGENCY ASSISTANCE AND BENEFITS

The Borough can continue to submit applications on a competitive basis under Local Aid programs for which the Borough is eligible. Benefits depend upon funding availability and are subject to program guidelines.