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# 2012 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT

## Borough of Ringwood
## Passaic County, New Jersey

## MAY 14, 2012

**In consultation with:**
**The Borough of Ringwood Planning Board**
**The New Jersey Highlands Council**

**Prepared by:**


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The original of this document has been signed and sealed pursuant to N.J.A.C. 13:41-1.3

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## Introduction

The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), at N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89 includes the following statement relative to the periodic examination of a municipal Master Plan:

> *"The governing body shall, at least every ten years, provide for a general reexamination of its master plan and development regulations by the planning board which shall prepare and adopt by resolution a report on the findings of such reexamination, a copy of which report and resolution shall be sent to the county planning board and the municipal clerk of each adjoining municipality. The first such reexamination shall have been completed by August 1, 1982. The next reexamination shall be completed by August 1, 1988. Thereafter, a reexamination shall be completed at least once every 6 years from the previous reexamination."*

The Borough of Ringwood Planning Board adopted the most recent Periodic Reexamination on June 12, 2006. Prior that that, a reexamination report was completed on June 8, 1998 and amended on April 12, 1999. In addition, the Ringwood Borough Planning Board adopted a Land Use Plan in June 2007, a Housing Plan Element and Fair Share Plan in 2005 and 2010 to address the Third Round COAH regulations.

The impetus for this report is to meet the requirements of the Borough of Ringwood's Plan Conformance to the Highlands Regional Master Plan and as such has included the language provided by the Highlands Council into this Reexamination Report. The Municipal Land Use Law requires consideration of five areas (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89a-e) within the Reexamination Report, which are discussed below:

a. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.

b. The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.

c. The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies, and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition, and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives.

d. The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.

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e. The recommendations of the Planning Board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law," into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

***C. 40:55D-89a "The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report."***

The 2006 Reexamination report provided an updated set of goals and objectives based upon a review of the Master Plan, Land Development Ordinance, and issues raised but the Planning Board and an advisory committee (see Appendix A). Many of these goals and objectives focused on protection of natural resources and community character, providing diverse housing, promoting redevelopment and economic development and creating a more comprehensive and multi-modal circulation plan.

The Planning Board's 2006 Periodic Reexamination Report identified that a significant number of changes in regulations, State law, regional and State planning initiatives, and local assumptions had occurred which would significantly influence the master plan and development regulations, particularly the Conservation Plan and the Land Use Plan element, including:

- State Development and Redevelopment Plan;
- Passaic County Strategic Growth Revitalization Plan;
- Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act;
- Third Round COAH rules;
- NJDEP Stormwater Management regulations.

The 2006 reexamination report furthered that:

> "The Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act is probably the most significant, since the Borough is entirely within the preservation area, and will be required to conform to the policies of the Highlands Regional Plan and its regulations. The Planning Board should closely monitor the Highlands Council's activities." (page 24)

At the time of the 2006 reexamination report, the revised COAH rules for the third round of affordable housing required changes to the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan to address Ringwood's anticipated fair share obligation. The Borough adopted a Housing and Fair Share Plan in 2008 to address these revisions as well, as provided additional amendments through 2010.

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In preparing for the 2006 Reexamination Report, the Planning Board members completed a questionnaire designed to address the statutory directives in NJSA 40:55D-89, from which were compiled a list of issues of concern and included:

1. Land Use Element
   - Redevelopment and rehabilitation should be an objective of the Land Use Element.
   - Area requirements in the Industrial zone need to be examined so as to meet the Borough's environmental objectives.
   - Flag lots have become commonplace in new developments. The relaxation of the prohibition has increased the number of flag lots.
   - Design standards are needed for commercial facilities.
   - The steep slope regulations in effect in the Borough need to be examined and a comprehensive steep slope ordinance needs to be created and implemented to cover development on steep slopes wherever they occur in the Borough.
   - Protection of existing neighborhood character requires the examination of zoning requirements and bulk standards. Ordinances to impose FAR and/or volume ratios, to reexamine height limitations, to impose design guidelines and to create different zones from the existing R-20 district should be considered in order to limit the adverse impact of oversized dwellings in established neighborhoods, and the loss of lake views by existing homeowners, as new larger houses are constructed. .
   - Bed and Breakfast uses and Country Inn uses are allowed in the GB-80W Zone by Ordinance 1997-#01. That ordinance should be examined and consideration should be given to extending those uses to other zoning districts as permitted or conditionally permitted uses. .
   - Lake front communities in the Borough contain lots that are non-conforming. Amendments to the Zoning ordinance should be considered to address these lots.
   - Senior housing is much needed in the community, but it should be affordable housing. Special attention needs to be paid to this issue, and a realistic plan developed.
   - Golf courses are a conditional use the C-200, R-40V, GB-80, 1-120 and RT-40 districts. Golf courses require a substantial amount of land and resources, which may no longer be viable in the Borough given recent regulations. The conditional use provision referring to golf courses should be reviewed to determine the appropriateness of continuing this type of use in the Borough.

2. Housing Element
   - Determine growth share for affordable housing obligation.
   - Completion of I-287 has increased housing values and new development.

3. Conservation Element
   - To address steep slope protection, ridgelines, soils, water quality, surface water, groundwater, habitat, scenic vistas, forests and wetlands.

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4. Utilities Element
   - Investigate septic management plan.
   - Conduct groundwater assessment.

5. Circulation Element
   - Traffic congestion and traffic safety are increasing problems, particularly on Skyline Drive, which is an artery for residents of neighboring West Milford, and to some extent Wanaque.
   - Traffic calming measures should be examined in the lakes area.
   - Intersection improvements should be considered at Erskine Road and Skyline Drive (St Catherine of Bologna).

6. Economic Plan Element
   - Develop Eco-tourism policies and strategies.

7. Open Space and Recreation Plan
   - Amend Action Plan to identify a municipal park for Borough functions.
   - Amend Action Plan to identify location for indoor recreation facility.

8. Recycling Plan Element
   - Set goals to increase the amount that is recycled.
   - Establish more opportunities for residents to recycle.
   - Develop opportunities for public information and education.

9. Stormwater Management Plan
   - Pursue County approval of the Stormwater Management Plan and Stormwater Management Ordinance adopted by the Council.

## *C. 40:55D-89b "The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date".*

Since the time of adoption of the last reexamination, the assumptions, policies, and objectives upon which the Master Plan is based have changed by virtue of: a) the enactment of the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act ("Highlands Act," N.J.S.A. 13:20-1 et seq.) by the State Legislature on August 10, 2004; b) the adoption of the Highlands Regional Master Plan by the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council ("Highlands Council") on July 17, 2008, which became effective on September 8, 2008; c) the requirement of the Highlands Act that municipal Master Plans and regulatory provisions be brought into alignment with the Highlands Regional Master Plan for lands located within the Highlands Preservation Area; and d) the affirmative decision of the Borough of Ringwood Governing Body to conform to the Highlands Regional Master Plan for municipal lands located in the Preservation Area.

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The inclusion of Ringwood Borough fully in the Preservation Area of the Highlands Region directly impacted many of the goals and objectives set out in the 2006 reexamination report. The Borough's commitment to natural resource protection, retention of historic and unique landscapes, provide affordable housing opportunities, create and enhance existing circulation patterns to the needs of the Borough, provide economic development and promote balanced recreation and open space areas for both human use and natural resource protection remain valid and dovetail with the overarching goals of the Highlands Regional Master Plan. However, given the Highlands Plan Conformance process, the Borough is still working toward achieving these local goals through ordinance.

In particular, upon completion of the 2006 Reexamination report, the Borough prepared and adopted the 2007 Land Use Plan, which provided additional recommendations to address land use in the Borough; however, these were not acted upon based on the adoption of the Highlands Regional Master Plan and the expected Plan Conformance Process. Recommendations included:

***Regulatory Techniques***

***Floor Area Ratio (FAR)*** limitation on residential uses in order preserve community character and the scale of buildings within neighborhoods.

***Maximum Building Size/Width*** provides a maximum building size requirement to prevent individual buildings from becoming out of scale with their surroundings, when properly gauged to neighborhood character.

***Building Placement*** - requires that new dwellings be built at a comparable front yard setback, creating a relationship where front yards are fairly consistent across a block and rear yard areas are preserved throughout the neighborhood for those activities more appropriate to rear yards.

***Lot-of-Record Restrictions*** - Restrictions on the use of lots-of-record are intended to prevent the combination of lots into larger parcels for larger development opportunities. While the assembly of parcels is not universally undesirable, it generally has a negative impact on neighborhood character, as it results in fewer buildings of larger size.

***Resource Conservation Factors/Lot Yield*** - As recommended in the Reexamination Report, resource restricted lands (steep slopes, wetlands, floodplains, etc.) should be deducted from total tract area for purposes of calculating permitted residential development yield, or improvable lot area.

***Lot Circle*** - Ringwood should consider utilizing a "lot circle" as a shaping feature. This requires that lots be shaped so that a circle of a minimum diameter can be inscribed within the lot lines or setback lines. Another useful lot shaping mechanism is a requirement for a minimum area within a minimum depth of

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measure. This requires that each lot can provide a minimum area within proximity of the street providing access.

***Flag Lot Limitations*** - Flag lots, which can use narrow flag stems to access remote lands, are frequently a key feature in further subdivision of lands previously passed over for development or otherwise inaccessible. Ringwood may wish to prohibit or limit flag lots.

The 2007 Land Use Plan also recommend a consolidation of the existing zone districts more in line with the Borough unique character and extensive natural constraints, including:

- RR – Rural Residential
- C – Conservation
- LC – Lake Community
- CR – Commercial/Retail
- I - Industrial
- NC-15 – Neighborhood Commercial
- NB–15 – Neighborhood Business

In addition, the 2007 Land Use Plan encouraged the investigation and promotion of redevelopment, economic development and the future redevelopment of the Quarry. All of these issues outline in the 2007 Land Use Plan remain long-term planning goals of the Borough.

***C. 55D-89c "The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives."***

**Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act**

Since the 2006 Reexamination Report, the passage of the Highlands Act, adoption of the Regional Master Plan by the Highlands Council, and the adoption by the Governing Body of its resolution to conform the municipal planning documents to the Regional Master Plan, have significantly altered and increased the objectives that must be addressed in the Ringwood Borough Master Plan, including but not limited to incorporating a variety of Highlands Resource protections, providing an emphasis on infrastructure and environmental carrying capacities, and initiating a substantial modification to the methodology to be used in determining permitted densities of development within the municipality.

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## State Strategic Plan: New Jersey's State Development & Redevelopment Plan (SSP)

In response to Governor Christie's Executive Order No. 78 issued October 19, 2011, the State Planning Commission (SPC) voted on November 14, 2011 to adopt a final draft of the State Plan which differs significantly from the existing *State Development and Redevelopment Plan* (SDRP). Following a series of public hearings and revisions if required, the SPC will consider approving the new plan, entitled *Proposed Final Draft – State Strategic Plan: New Jersey's State Development & Redevelopment Plan* (SSP).

The new SSP does away with the State Plan Policy Map which divides the State into Planning Areas to delineate growth and preservation areas. The SSP also eliminates the Plan Endorsement process and Center designation opting for "*priority industry clusters...complemented with a local agenda...*" to determine where development and redevelopment can be supported by existing, expanded and new infrastructure. A primary goal of the SSP seeks to achieve better inter-agency coordination of such efforts in contrast with the experience under the SDRP. At the other end of the spectrum the SSP proposes "*priority preservation investment areas*".

The goals of the SSP include:

1. Targeted Economic Growth. Enhance opportunities for attraction and growth of industries of statewide and regional importance.

   Objectives
   1.1 Map priority industry clusters for sectors of statewide significance
   1.2 Improve conditions for sectors of statewide significance
   1.3 Support of land and water based industries
   1.4 Align partnerships and working groups

2. Effective Planning for Vibrant Regions. Guide and inform regional planning so that each region of the State can experience appropriate growth according to the desires and assets of that region.

   Objectives
   2.1 Establish "priority growth investment area" criteria
   2.2 Increase readiness and availability of redevelopment sites
   2.3 Invest in growth infrastructure
   2.4 Influence implementation of priority growth investment area development
   2.5 Assist urban center evolve into components of healthy metropolitan areas
   2.6 Strengthen county planning role to facilitate regional collaboration

3. Preservation and Enhancement of Critical State Resources
Ensure that strategies for growth include preservation of the State's critical natural, agricultural, scenic, recreation and historic resources, recognizing the role they play in sustaining and improving the quality of life for New Jersey residents and attracting economic growth.

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Objectives
3.1 Provide for the continued success of the State's preservation programs
3.2 Coordinate functional plans related to transportation, energy and the environment with land use and economic development initiatives
3.3 Coordinate State preservation and economic development initiatives
3.4 Strengthen and expand regional and municipal land use tools

4. Tactical Alignment of Government
Ensure effective resource allocation, coordination, cooperation and communication among those who play an imperative role in meeting the mission of the Plan.

Objectives
4.1 Cohesive State government
4.2 Connect spending to the State's goals and values
4.3 Re-focus the State Planning Commission for local government coordination
4.4 Reposition the Office for Planning Advocacy

The SSP also outlines a series of growth areas to be identified through a process to determine "priority growth investment areas" which are to include:

- Major Urban Centers, as previously identified by the 2001 State Plan
- Areas identified as —Priority Industry Clusters
- SPC Designated Centers (currently or previously designated as such by the SPC)
- Port areas
- Existing Communities and/or Growth areas, as designated by Regional or County Master Plans
- Municipally designated redevelopment areas and receiving areas under Municipal Transfer of Development Rights Programs
- Areas designated by existing or future federal and/or State targeted public investment programs

To The SSP establishes what are known as the *Garden State Values* to assist in establishing the priority growth investment areas. The ten elements comprising the *Garden State Values* are:

1. Concentrate development and mix uses
2. Prioritize redevelopment, infill and existing infrastructure
3. Increase job and business opportunities in priority growth investment areas
4. Create high-quality, livable places
5. Provide transportation choice and efficient mobility of goods
6. Advance equity
7. Diversity housing opportunities

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8. Provide for healthy communities through environmental protection and enhancement
9. Protect, restore and enhance agricultural, recreational and heritage lands
10. Make decisions within a regional framework

## Affordable Housing

Ringwood Borough prepared its Third Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan (HE/FSP) in accordance with COAH's Third Round rules. A decision at the Appellate Division level invalidated substantial parts of the Third Round rules, prompting extensive revisions and delays in approval.

On October 8, 2010 the Appellate Division again issued a decision [In the Matter of the Adoption of N.J.A.C. 5:96 and 5:97 by the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing] which invalidated the "growth share" methodology along with a number of other provisions in COAH's third round rules. This matter is now pending before the New Jersey Supreme Court.

COAH has since been replaced by Governor Christie with a new entity known as Local Planning Services within the Department of Community Affairs.[1] As of this Reexamination Report there are no specific changes recommended in the HE/FSP until such time as the NJ Supreme Court issues a decision and appropriate rule changes are instituted.

## Renewable Energy

A number of statutory changes to the MLUL have been adopted concerning wind and solar energy facilities. Wind, solar and photovoltaic systems are now defined in the MLUL:

> "Wind, solar or photovoltaic energy facility or structure" means a facility or structure for the purpose of supplying electrical energy produced from wind, solar, or photovoltaic technologies, whether such facility or structure is a principal use, a part of the principal use, or an accessory use or structure." [40:55D-7]

In addition, the definition of "Inherently beneficial use" in the in the MLUL has been amended and reads as follows:

> "means a use which is universally considered of value to the community because it fundamentally serves the public good and promotes the general welfare. Such a use includes, but is not limited to, a hospital, school, child care center, group home, or a wind, solar or photovoltaic energy facility or structure." [40:55D-4]

[1] The Appellate Division issued a decision on March 8, 2012 finding that the abolition of COAH by the Governor's Reorganization Act is invalid.

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Wind, solar and photovoltaic systems, under the MLUL, are accorded permitted use status in any industrial zone district on a parcel consisting of at least 20 acres. In terms of solar panels, local ordinances cannot include solar panels when calculating impervious coverage limits, although the base of such structures does count towards impervious coverage.

Small wind energy systems can be regulated by municipalities subject to certain limitations, which are set forth in the MLUL. The ordinance cannot impose unreasonable limits or hinder the functional ability of such facilities by prohibiting them in all zone districts and it must account for the type of towers associated with wind turbines when setting height restrictions. It cannot require setbacks from property boundaries greater than 150 percent of the system height while restrictions on noise levels cannot be set below 55 decibels.

## ***C. 40:55D-89d.The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.***

The Planning Board recommends that specific changes to the Borough of Ringwood Master Plan be considered, including modifications to the underlying objectives, policies and standards, all as outlined in detail, in the "Highlands Preservation Area Master Plan Element" approved by the Highlands Council as part of the Borough of Ringwood's Petition for Plan Conformance.

In addition, the Borough's 2007 Land Use Plan addressed many of the issues outlined in the 2006 Reexamination Report. While many of the land use regulations identified in both documents were entered into the Borough's long-term planning goals and objectives, land use regulations by ordinance have not been prepared in anticipation of the Plan Conformance process. The Borough retains these goals and objectives, land use policies and potential development regulations as part of the long-term planning strategy for the Borough, with the following additions and revisions:

- Review all conditional use standards in the current Borough of Ringwood Land Development Ordinance for appropriateness.
- Investigate and encourage alternative renewable energy sources and provide recommendations for any associated ordinance revisions.
- Explore and evaluate Highlands Redevelopment Area Designation and other available strategies for all nonresidential areas and zones to facilitate development, renewal and revitalization of these areas.
- Explore and promote opportunities for economic development that contribute to the Borough's tax base and provide residents with more local services and broader opportunities for business development (See also Appendix A 2006 Reexamination Report Economic Development Goals and Objectives).

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***<u>C. 40:55D-89e</u> The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law," P.L. 1992, c. 79 (C.40A: 12 A-1 et seq.) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality."***

To date, Ringwood Borough has not prepared or adopted any redevelopment plans for any areas of the municipality in accordance with the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law cited above.

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# APPENDIX A

## The goals and objectives of the Master plan identified in the 2006 Reexamination Report:

### Land Use and Management

- To exercise stewardship over the lands and waters of the Borough of Ringwood to ensure that these resources are available for the sustenance and enjoyment of present and future generations.
- To protect and maintain the prevailing character and unique sense of place of the Borough, including diverse neighborhoods, historic settlements and scenic landscapes, which result from the natural topography, woodlands and water bodies and courses.
- To promote the goals and objectives of Ringwood through the incorporation of local policies and strategies that respond to the basic premises, intent and purposes of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan and [eventually] the Highlands Regional Master Plan.
- To provide a future land use pattern that preserves large contiguous areas of open lands.
- To continue and expand upon land use policies that promote controlled development at suitable locations and appropriate intensities by discouraging the extension of growth-inducing infrastructure into areas of fragile environmental resources.
- To establish development densities and intensities at levels, which do not exceed the current planning capacity of the natural environment and available infrastructure, based on the sensitivities and limitations of these systems.
- To encourage the best possible design for new developments, and to protect established neighborhoods and utilities.

### Community Design

- To develop standards to ensure good visual quality and design for all land use categories.
- To ensure that new development is visually and functionally compatible with the physical character of the Borough.
- To provide for a proactive approach to physical design and community planning so that adjacent land uses function compatibly and harmoniously in terms of scale and location.
- To improve the visual and physical appearance of developed areas through the implementation of design standards for features such as signs and buffering and protect neighborhoods from encroachment by incompatible uses.
- To retain to the greatest extent practicable attractive vistas from public rights-of-way, including views of hills, valleys, ridgelines, woodlands, lakes, stream corridors, flood plains and other natural areas.
- To encourage improvement of the appearance of existing commercial development to provide for eco-tourism related shopping and dining services.

**Natural Resources**

- To protect environmental resources which contribute to the environmental character of the Borough, including but not limited to steep slopes, ridgelines, lakes, streams, wetlands, potable water supplies, watersheds, aquifers, viewsheds, forests and other vegetation, habitats of threatened and endangered species and unique natural systems.
- To limit the intensity of development, in areas relying on groundwater supplies and on-site sewage disposal, based on conservative estimates of available water resources and the ability of the soil and ground water to sustain on- lot disposal systems without degrading or impairing the water quality.
- To promote the protection of biological diversity through the maintenance of large contiguous tracts and corridors of recreation, forest, flood plain and other open space lands.
- To continue the acquisition of important open space through the use of the Borough's open space tax and other sources of funding.
- To promote land use and management policies that provide for clean air and protection from noise and light impacts.
- To promote the development and adoption of resource management standards to manage land use activities in a manner that protects and maintains natural resources for the future use and enjoyment of generations to come.
- To identify and manage stream corridor buffer areas by maintaining undisturbed vegetation in order to protect and improve water quality, wildlife corridors and opportunities for passive and active recreation.
- To limit the amount of disturbance in development involving steep slopes.
- To require the protection of ridgelines.
- To protect groundwater supply and quality through the adoption of aquifer management programs, including relevant standards for wellhead protection programs, and standards to protect groundwater recharge areas, such as impervious coverage limitations.
- To recognize and protect the watershed lands and the drainage basin of the reservoir lands in the Borough as an important regional source of potable water.

**Housing**

- To promote and support the development, redevelopment and rehabilitation of affordable housing intended to address the Borough's fair share of the region's lower income housing.
- To provide a range of housing opportunities within the Borough.
- To develop housing strategies to address the needs of various age groups, including affordable housing for senior citizens.
- To provide for residential densities and lot sizes that do not exceed the capabilities and limitations of natural systems and available infrastructure.

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**Transportation**

- To create a circulation plan sufficient to accommodate planned development, while retaining the unique and scenic features of the road network.
- To coordinate with other municipalities and governmental bodies for a regional approach to transportation that respects and enhances the character of the community.
- To establish transportation policies and programs that improve connections among housing, employment and commercial uses, including provisions for vehicular and pedestrian travel and bicycle paths.
- To control development so that traffic will not exceed the capacity of the existing road network to provide safe, efficient and convenient traffic movements, based on rural road service standards designed to maintain the character of the community.
- To recognize that roadways are public lands that deserve aesthetic design consideration as well as efficient movement of vehicles, and to carefully plan entrances to the Borough because they represent a visitor's first impression of the Ringwood.
- To encourage transportation funding for maintenance of the existing transportation system, rather than encouraging the development of new systems in the Borough or the region.
- To minimize the impacts of transportation systems on the environment, including air and noise pollution.

**Economic Development**

- To provide for desirable non-residential development in appropriate areas of the Borough that will complement the existing character of the community and aid in broadening the local tax base.
- To promote the redesign of existing commercial sites to provide a more efficient land use pattern through such approaches as reduced curb cuts, interconnecting driveways, improved pedestrian and bicycle linkages and enhanced landscaping and aesthetics.
- To provide for new commercial areas in compact forms in areas with utilities in order to concentrate businesses and provide a variety of services.
- To coordinate such items as architectural design, access, landscaping, adequate parking, lighting, signs and similar design features to produce visually and functionally compatible economic development.
- To promote better utilization of existing industrially zoned lands to support local employment and broaden the local tax base.
- To utilize the natural resources of the Borough to attract visitors that wish to explore and view its beauty.

**Historic and Cultural Resources**

- To safeguard and conserve the heritage of the Borough by preserving those resources that have historic, archaeological, social, cultural, economic and

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architectural significance, based on national, state and local importance and criteria.

- To discourage encroachment on historic structures and sites by uses and buildings that is incompatible or detracts from the design of the historic features.
- To encourage the preservation, rehabilitation or adaptive reuse of historic buildings and structures that protects their architectural integrity and preserves their context within the historic landscape.
- To encourage the development of land use regulations which acknowledge and permit special treatment for historic landscapes, districts, sites, and structures including set back community facilities through the payment of the fair share of any off-tract improvements for community facilities to the extent permitted by law.
- To encourage the coordination of facilities between the Borough and local School District so that the schools serve as multi-age facilities for the community.

**Recreation and Open Space**

- To promote the provision of appropriate and balanced public open space and recreational facilities through public action and to some extent the development review process.
- To update and maintain a recreation and open space master plan to establish and enhance recreational lands and public open space; to establish linkages of public spaces through the use of greenways, hiking trails, waterways, paths and bikeways; and, to establish as the highest priority for public acquisition, areas of unique recreational, scenic or environmental value.
- To encourage the public acquisition of areas of exceptional recreational or scenic value, or environmental sensitivity, at all levels of government, with consideration given to acquisition of land to meet present and future demand for active and passive recreation.
- To support passive recreation in the Skylands Region as a sound method of helping preserve environmentally sensitive lands
- To encourage the development of new private and public recreation facilities in appropriate locations serving the different residential neighborhoods in the community.

1. **<u>The Master Plan should be updated by preparing or refining the following elements</u>**:

   a. A Land Use Plan based on updated goals and vision statement, a build-out analysis and an updated Natural Resource Inventory, addressing residential and non-residential zoning;
   b. A Conservation Plan based on updated goals, a build-out analysis and an updated Natural Resource Inventory including policies and programs addressing energy and air quality, forest resources and native vegetation, groundwater, scenic resources, steep slopes, stream corridors, surface water, threatened and

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endangered plant and animal species, wetlands and relationship to the Land Use Plan;

c. An Economic Plan addressing natural resource-based assets for such activities as ecotourism and outdoor recreation;
d. A Utilities Plan;
e. A Circulation Plan, addressing congestion and traffic safety concerns;
f. An Open Space Plan addressing the need and opportunities for municipal parkland and recreation improvements, including indoor recreation; and
g. A statement indicating the relationship of Ringwood's master plan to (1) the master plans of contiguous municipalities, (2) the master plan of the county in which the municipality is located, (3) the State Development and Redevelopment Plan and (4) the district solid waste management plan (5) the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act and associated regional master plan.

2. **<u>The Planning Board recommends revisions to the Land Use Book addressing the following issues</u>**:

a. Steep slope protection,
b. Ordinances to impose FAR and/or volume ratios, to reexamine height limitations, to impose design guidelines and to create different zones from the existing R-20 district should be considered in order to limit the adverse impact of oversized dwellings in established neighborhoods, and the loss of lake views by existing homeowners, as new larger houses are constructed,
c. Updated cell tower regulations,
d. Ridgeline and scenic vista protection,
e. Stream buffers,
f. Threatened and endangered species and their habitats,
g. Design standards to protect community character and enhance commercial and residential areas,
h. The existing ordinance on bed and breakfasts and country inns should be examined and consideration should be given to extending those uses to other zoning districts as permitted or conditionally permitted uses,
i. Removal of golf course conditional use provisions.