



CHERRY HILL  
*Master Plan*  
2018 - 2028

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cherry Hill Master Plan  
Prepared for Cherry Hill Township by  
Group Melvin Design in partnership with  
Urban Partners

September, 2018



## INTRODUCTION

The 2018 adoption of the Cherry Hill Master Plan is unique. It goes beyond the technical requirements for a master plan document - it tells the Township's story from its beginnings as an agricultural center and continues into today and years into the future to a 21st century suburb in 2028. The Executive Summary is a short document prepared to rapidly acquaint readers with the 2018 adoption of the Cherry Hill Master Plan.

As part of the 2018 Master Plan Adoption, the following components were updated or added:

- Vision, Goals, and Objectives Element
- Land Use Element
- Economic Development Element
- Plans for Place Elements

The Demographics section was updated to reflect the most current data. A Public Outreach Executive Summary was included in the Master Plan and a full report adopted as an appendix. All other master plan elements remain valid.

## MASTER PLAN PROCESS

The adoption of the master plan was a two-year process undertaken by the master plan consultant team consisting of:

- Group Melvin Design, the Township's Professional Planner and Redevelopment Planner.
- Urban Partners, a leading economic development consulting firm in the region.
- Cherry Hill's Department of Community Development.

Assistance from other Township departments, City Council members, Planning Board members, and the public was a critical component of the success of the plan.

## Existing Conditions Analysis

The Master Plan process began with an analysis of highly accurate and up-to-date data reflecting current existing conditions in the Township. The findings of this analysis became the Existing Conditions Report, which was published by the Township of Cherry Hill as a draft on February 14, 2018. The report identified clearly, and in detail, the demographic, land use, and economic changes that have occurred in the Township over time, and how they are affecting the lived experiences of residents.

## Public Engagement

Concurrent with the preparation of the existing conditions analysis, the project team conducted an extensive public outreach effort. This process included a variety of ways for residents and other stakeholders to provide input and feedback on existing conditions and future visions for Cherry Hill. During the public outreach process, **the master plan consultant team was able to obtain feedback from over 500 persons** through

- stakeholder interviews;
- online surveys for both residents and visitors;
- outreach at two community events;
- two public open houses; and
- a public adoption process.

The Public Outreach Report, submitted as a draft on May 25, 2018, summarized the public outreach efforts and the key findings that emerged from that process. A succinct discussion of findings from the public outreach process is included within the Public Outreach Executive Summary Report.



## MASTER PLAN DOCUMENTS

The following text presents a detailed summary of the documents prepared as part of the 2018 adoption of the Cherry Hill Master Plan.

### Existing Conditions Report

The Existing Conditions report was organized into five sections: Demographics, Market Analysis, Land Use and Zoning, Trends and Considerations, and Conclusions. The first three sections identified the demographic, economic, and land use changes that have occurred in the Township. The remaining sections outlined current national, regional and local trends in land use and economics, and the potential positive and negative implications of these trends for the Township.

#### Demographics

The demographics section of the Existing Conditions Report provides an explanation of demographic patterns and building trends that have shaped Cherry Hill Township over time, such as the effects of the suburbanization of America, and the great American shopping mall. It details **how the Township grew under the principles by which the ideal post-war suburb was defined: stark separation of land uses; reliance on, and deferment to, the automobile for all of life's needs; and low-density, horizontal or sprawling development.** The section further discusses the balancing act that the Township must undertake to meet the needs of its residential population while supporting its second highest land use, commercial development.

#### Key Takeaways

- **Population growth has plateaued:** Cherry Hill has likely reached peak population growth. The population size is projected to remain roughly the same in the future.
- **A diverse population resides in the Township:** Growth in the Township since 1980 has largely been sustained by an influx of foreign-born residents, many of them from Asia.

- **Cherry Hill has well-educated residents and strong household incomes:** Cherry Hill continues to attract and retain educated residents, and family and household median incomes have been higher than that of the region since at least 1980.
- **The Township is aging, yet remains attractive to late-career adults:** The median age of Cherry Hill residents increased from 29 in 1970 to 42 today. One quarter of the population has been living in their home for 25 years or longer.
- **Household sizes are shrinking:** Family and household sizes have decreased over time. The number of single-person households grew by 36% between 1990 and 2014, and households with 3+ people decreased.

#### Market Analysis

The Market Analysis provides an explanation of both **local and national economic trends, and their impact on the market in Cherry Hill Township.** It details the economic structure of the Township, including an analysis of employment, the health of commercial corridors, commercial market trends, tax base trends, and state economic trends and conditions. The analysis concludes with a discussion of the economic opportunities and challenges within the context of employment and market trends.

#### Key Takeaways

- **Manufacturing continues to find a home in Cherry Hill:** Cherry Hill has not been as heavily impacted by a declining traditional manufacturing sector as other New Jersey communities. However, manufacturing facilities throughout the Township are struggling due to obsolescence.
- **Educational services did not grow at the same rate as other New Jersey communities:** Cherry Hill has not participated in the growth of educational services that has happened elsewhere in New Jersey, particularly for post-secondary educational services.

- **Cherry Hill has become a hub for “freelance” employment structures:** “Freelance” employment, such as contract employment, has become a more substantial player in the job market. Cherry Hill has benefited from this shift due to its large stock of office space. These offices function as administrative hubs for a variety of temporary and contract employment organizations.

## Land Use and Zoning

The Land Use and Zoning section provides an explanation of the current land uses within the Township, and the **key issues faced by the Township related to land use and zoning**. It also provides an analysis of key land use nodes within the Township. The section also summarizes zones in relation to potential goals and objectives, and the administrative functionality of current standards and regulations within the zoning ordinance. Further, it provides a basic review of specific zones which may pose challenges for the Township, either because current zones no longer function as intended for the Township, or major trends and considerations may directly impact the zone in the future, such as the future of brick and mortar retail.

## Key Takeaways

- **Almost half of the land in Cherry Hill Township is dedicated to single-family residential uses:** Residential uses of 4-units or less per acre comprise almost half of all land in the Township (49% of all land). Only 1.5% of all land in the Township is dedicated to multi-family housing.
- **Post-WWII suburban principles define the built environment in the Township:** The residential and commercial characteristics of Cherry Hill are typical of post-World War II developed communities, with large lot residential uses hidden behind commercial uses clustered along main roads.
- **Traffic congestion is a bi-product of the growing region:** A growing job market in Philadelphia and Camden, growing commercial and retail

opportunities in Cherry Hill, and increased residential development in suburbs surrounding Cherry Hill have increased congestion on major thoroughways, leading to neighborhoods being used as cut-throughs by vehicles looking to avoid traffic.

- **The Zoning Ordinance is in need of updates:** The existing zoning ordinance for the Township of Cherry Hill has been periodically updated. However, many of the zones have not been significantly modified since the 1950s.
- **The character of zones has changed over time:** Multiple zones have substantially changed since the adoption of the last Master Plan. As the zoning regulations continue to be enforced, these areas are beginning to less closely resemble the original intent of the zone.
- **Unresolved regulatory issues result in an additional burden on the zoning board of adjustments and planning staff:** Smaller issues, such as parking standards in certain zones or the lack of appropriate definitions for certain types of uses or structures remain unresolved, and result in additional work load for the zoning board of adjustment
- **Commonly cited administrative issues burden planning staff:** Administrative problems cited by stakeholders and Township officials have placed a large burden on planning staff, which slows the ability of streamlined development to occur throughout the Township.

## Trends and Considerations

The Trends and Considerations section presents the major trends that may directly impact land use decisions moving forward. These trends include the future of retail, the rising costs of transportation, the renaissance occurring in both Camden, NJ and Philadelphia, PA, the rise of the millennial, the growth in the education and medical economic sectors, and innovations in driverless transportation technology.



## Key Takeaways

- **The future of retail is unknown:** Cherry Hill's retail market is solid, and growing stronger by the day. On a national scale, the retail market is shifting to adapt to recent growth in online sales, and retail within Cherry Hill may need to adapt in the future.
- **Transportation costs are rising:** The average Cherry Hill household spends \$12,900 on transportation each year, higher than the national average. Even small increases in gas costs would have a significant impact on families' annual transportation costs. This would constitute a decrease in residents' spending power. Furthermore, it could detract from the attractiveness of regional retail, as potential consumers decide to shop closer to home to save money. However, increased public transit options, last-mile services, and transit-oriented development could off-set the reliance on personal vehicles and reduce the impact of rising gas costs on residents.
- **Catalytic development is underway in Philadelphia, increasing the desirability of the city and region:** The population of Center City Philadelphia and surrounding neighborhoods has been steadily increasing. Overall, this is positive for Cherry Hill. As the region continues to grow in popularity and economic strength, some of that growth will directly benefit Cherry Hill. New residents to the region may also be attracted to the Township.
- **State economic investment in the City of Camden is at an all-time high:** Private investment and public economic investment is at a record high in Camden. This is both a challenge and an opportunity for Cherry Hill. Cherry Hill may prove appealing for its housing stock for those whose jobs are being relocated to Camden, especially if public transit options improve.
- **The millennial generation is causing significant market shifts with different life-style priorities than prior generations:** Millennial life-style preferences may have implications for suburban communities as they compete with urban areas. Millennials tend to prefer smaller households with more opportunities to rent, flexible employment arrangements, easily-accessible retail and exercise facilities, and life-style support through a variety of services. Cherry Hill is not currently designed to provide these types of residential and retail options, however zoning changes could help change this.
- **Education and Medical Services Industries (Eds and Meds) have had a strong economic impact on Cherry Hill, and the Nation:** The growth in medical services has benefited Cherry Hill in the past several years as health care providers are redeveloping older facilities and constructing new facilities in order to provide consumers with state-of-the-art services. However, as compared to the nation and the State of New Jersey, Cherry Hill has not participated in the employment expansion experienced in educational services, particularly post-secondary services. However, the Township may attract a post-secondary institution in the future. This would provide not only an economic benefit, but would provide an additional amenity and educational opportunity for residents.

## Conclusions

The Conclusions section relates the findings from the Existing Conditions analysis to the Future Trends and considerations section to pin-point shifts that may be necessary to consider when the Township makes future land use decisions. It examined topics such as demographic shifts that may result in issues such as housing mismatch, and commercial development and redevelopment. The conclusions section also discusses how Cherry Hill may become a model sustainable suburb in the future by implementing sustainable principles, such as smart growth, and discusses the lack of a true downtown in Cherry Hill and the impact that this has had on the community.





## Key Findings

- **National Housing Markets are adapting to changing consumer needs, particularly that of Millennials:** The role of the suburbs is undergoing massive change, and the desirability of these areas is under question. In Cherry Hill, the median age of residents has increased from 29 to 42 since 1970. Many of the homes in the Township are occupied by retirees and seniors whose children have left home.

Steps have already been taken in the Township toward “smart growth,” a set of principles which advocate for creating places with a mix of building types and uses, diverse housing and transportation options, development within existing neighborhoods, and community engagement. These types of developments better suit consumer preferences, increase the desirability of suburban living, and support sustainable development practices.

- **Changing Mobility/Transportation preferences and technologies are driving innovations in land use:** How people get to and from where they live, work, and shop has an effect on the form and character of their communities. At this point in time, limited transportation options have restricted the variety of housing and commercial development that the Township can attract. Further, the Township’s auto-centric development limits the attractiveness of these areas to current and future residents. Cost-effective transportation networks, such as public transportation, are a key piece of this puzzle, particularly as younger generations are choosing to be car-free or single-vehicle households.

Cherry Hill also faces the challenge of upgrading/ updating aging retail concentrations. Potential state investment in walkable communities and transit-oriented development could provide Cherry Hill with the tools to effectively connect adjacent single-family neighborhoods with retail concentrations and transit facilities via new mixed-use residential/business development.

- **Economic & Employment Trends Are Evolving:** Cherry Hill’s economic position has been and remains strong. The Township has seen growth in health care, accommodations & food services, and professional, scientific & technical services. However, growth in educational services that occurred elsewhere in New Jersey has not appeared in Cherry Hill. Post-secondary educational services offered by a local university could be a significant opportunity for economic growth in the Township, both to expand the technical workforce and to provide an innovation hub to support new business development.

Another key economic factor impacting Cherry Hill is the millennial workforce and the Township’s access to it, especially the growing technical workforce living in Center City Philadelphia. Easing the commute to Cherry Hill and creating housing environments attractive to the millennial workforce will help the Township exploit its position as a Metropolitan Subcenter.

## Public Outreach Report

The Public Outreach Report details the public outreach process undertaken throughout the entire master plan adoption process, and summarizes the key findings that emerged. The report summarizes the feedback **received from over 500 people** who participated in the following ways:

- Providing comments at the master plan booth during two community events
- Participating in an online survey that was completed by **approximately 460 people**
- Participating in stakeholder interviews conducted with Township staff from various departments
- Attending two public open house events that were attended by **approximately 88 people**

The outreach findings were particularly important to thoroughly understanding the values, concerns, and hopes of the public. Several topics were broached continuously by participants throughout the outreach

process. These were discussed in a Summary of Findings within the *Public Outreach Report*, and further expanded upon within the *Public Outreach Report Executive Summary*.

## THE MASTER PLAN

### Vision, Goals and Objectives

Cherry Hill Township undertook a robust public outreach effort to review the master plan’s vision, goals, and objectives during the public outreach process. The vision statement for the Township was updated to reflect feedback from that process. It expressed a commitment to

- balancing commercial and residential development;
- maintaining and improving the character and quality of commercial and housing development;
- embracing modern land use planning techniques such as smart growth and transit-oriented development; and
- fortifying Cherry Hill’s position as a regional economic powerhouse.

The Land Use Element and Economic Development Element goals and objectives for the Township were updated. The public overwhelmingly stated that the goals for housing, natural resources & conservation, transportation, community facilities and utilities, and historic preservation accurately reflected their vision for the Township and only minor changes were made to those goals and objectives to improve clarity.

The goals for the Township read:

#### Population and Housing:

- Provide a variety of safe and sanitary housing types and residential development to accommodate the different needs and desires of the population.

#### Natural Resources and Conservation:

- Preserve the natural land, water, and air resources required to maintain the unique characteristics of

the community.

#### Transportation

- Facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people, goods, and services throughout the Township and region with minimal conflict.

#### Community Facilities and Utilities

- Provide excellent community facilities and utilities to meet the need of all Township residents and businesses, as well as enhance the overall community.

#### Historic Preservation

- Preserve & enhance the cultural, historical, and archeological resources that reflect significant elements of the Township.

#### Land Use

- Create a 21st century suburb where diverse residents enjoy high-quality neighborhoods, vibrant commercial areas, and multi-modal access to land uses Township-wide.

#### Economic Development

- Expand and diversify the economic growth of the Township within the region in a way that is consistent with the natural capacity of the land and infrastructure and supports the evolving needs of its employers and residents.

### Land Use Element

The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) requires all communities who wish to engage in zoning to have a land use element as part of their master plan; the element is intended to guide development, redevelopment, and land use policies. The Land Use Element prepared for the 2018 Master Plan for Cherry Hill Township is comprised of five sections that are detailed below.





## Executive Summary, Existing Conditions Report

The first piece of the land use element is the executive summary of the existing conditions report. This document is included to clearly lay out for readers the existing demographic, land use, and economic changes that have occurred in the Township.

## Statement of Strategy

The Statement of Strategy is new for the Land Use Element. The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) was amended in 2017 to require that the land use element of a municipal master plan includes a statement of strategy. The Statement of Strategy must include: smart growth, including consideration of potential locations for the installation of electric vehicle charging stations; storm resiliency with respect to energy supply, flood-prone areas, and environmental infrastructure; and environmental sustainability.

## Policy Toolkit

Following the Statement of Strategy is the Policy Toolkit, which details the recommendations for land use in the Township in the form of strategies, policies, and actions. The Policy Toolkit is organized around policy statements. Each policy statement defines a course toward an ideal future condition. Within each policy are actions that should be taken by the Township to progress toward the ideal future condition. The policies are:

### ***Policy 01: Make Cherry Hill's Commercial Centers as Attractive as Its Residential Neighborhoods***

Cherry Hill is a quintessential American suburb. Its residential developments grew rapidly in the years between 1950 and 1970 and have since become established neighborhoods with their own unique characters. They are places that residents clearly love and have a deep connection with.

Cherry Hill is also a premier regional commercial destination. However, residents note that many commercial areas of the Township **lack unique identities** and have not updated to keep pace with

more modern development. Residents have little affinity for these spaces, despite being important venues where they regularly interact and socialize.

**This phenomenon is typical throughout suburban America and is often called “placelessness.”**

In the past, the diversity and concentration of commercial offerings in Cherry Hill and the presence of the Cherry Hill Mall have allowed it to overcome these barriers and maintain its status as a major regional commercial hub. However, changing consumer habits could begin to slowly erode Cherry Hill's commercial dominance unless it upgrades and diversifies some of its declining retail centers.

**Retailers are increasingly focusing on how they can give shoppers a unique experience.** The following actions provide a comprehensive set of tools that the Township can leverage to make Cherry Hill's commercial areas **more meaningful and attractive** places.

Ten actions accompany this policy:

- **Action 1:** Create a Commercial Center Improvement Program
- **Action 2:** Create and Distribute a Commercial Center Improvement Handbook
- **Action 3:** Allow for “Reduced Parking Allocation Approval”
- **Action 4:** Support “Tactical Placemaking” through Education and Quick Approvals
- **Action 5:** Create a Commercial Centers Public Art Program
- **Action 6:** Create Commercial Center Improvement Design Guidelines
- **Action 7:** Designate Some Commercial Centers as Areas in Need of Rehabilitation
- **Action 8:** Provide Support Incentives
- **Action 9:** Continue Redeveloping Failing Commercial Centers
- **Action 10:** Create Commercial Center Redevelopment Guidebook



## **Policy 02: Make Major Corridors More Attractive and Habitable**

The major commercial corridors of Cherry Hill (Route 70, Route 38, and Haddonfield Road) are the first, and often only, impression that non-residents have of the Township. While these corridors provide the Township with **great benefits in terms of ratable income**, in many locations, they **detract from the perception of the Township as a lush garden suburb**. Issues include inconsistent front yards, wide curb cuts, and narrow or no sidewalks, among others.

This creates a disjointed condition which make the corridors difficult to understand and feel cluttered and sometimes unwelcoming to users. For those unfamiliar with the Township, this gives the false impression that this condition is ubiquitous in Cherry Hill. It also reduces individual property owners sense of responsibility to undertake the types of improvements necessary to support an improved public realm and a multi-modal transportation network because inconsistent standards have been applied to the corridor. Overall, this makes **the corridors less safe** and less attractive areas to walk, bike, or wait for public transportation.

The character of these corridors is shaped both by what happens within the right-of-way, and the land uses along it. Route 38 and 70 are State roads and are thus governed by the rules and regulations of the New Jersey Department of Transportation (DOT). Haddonfield Road is a county road. Thus, forming strong extra-jurisdictional partnerships will be critical to the transformation of these corridors. At the same time, there are hundreds of individual property owners along these corridors who have an important stake in how the corridor looks and functions. These owners must be involved in the transformation of the areas as well.

Nine actions accompany this policy:

- **Action 1:** Create Corridor Plans
- **Action 2:** Adopt frontage standards within the zoning ordinance as an overlay along major commercial corridors

- **Action 3:** Create a Sidewalk and Bicycle Infrastructure Improvement Program
- **Action 4:** Add corridors to the prioritized pedestrian improvement list identified in the Cherry Hill Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
- **Action 5:** Implement Payment-in-lieu of Sidewalk Construction program
- **Action 6:** Install Gateway Elements at major gateways into the township
- **Action 7:** Create a Pattern Book/Guidelines for Signage
- **Action 8:** Write New Sign Standards
- **Action 9:** Establish A Signs Technical Advisory Committee

## **Policy 03: Implement a Comprehensive Housing Strategy that Preserves Strong Neighborhoods, Guides Transformation of Changing Neighborhoods, and Identifies Locations for New Residential Development**

Cherry Hill's neighborhoods are plentiful and diverse. Generally speaking, they can be organized into three categories Pre-War Neighborhoods, Mid-Century Neighborhoods, and Late-Century Neighborhoods (more detailed definition and location of these neighborhoods is provided in the policy).

These neighborhoods, constructed to meet the needs of residents of their era, **have evolved in response to changes in demographics**. Most of the late-century neighborhoods continue to be stable communities. Changes in the pre-war and mid-century neighborhoods include

- an increase in renter population;
- an increase in multi-generational housing;
- an increase in the number of non-family members occupying the same house;
- limited investment in repairs and modernization;



- encroachment of commercial areas into neighborhoods;
- subdivision of residential lots;
- subdivision of homes; and
- new construction.

Fifteen neighborhoods were identified that are experiencing one or more of these characteristics. They have been grouped into two categories: Heterogeneous pre-war, which were often designed before World War II, and Homogeneous post-war. Because of the conditions that define neighborhoods within each group, these terms are useful shorthand for understanding where actions in this Policy should be applied. However, no neighborhood is exactly like another and a table located at the end of the policy should be used to work with residents of these neighborhoods to identify which actions, if any, are appropriate for each of the sixteen identified neighborhoods.

Ten actions accompany this policy:

- **Action 1:** Develop A Cherry Hill Neighborhood Pattern Book
- **Action 2:** Highlight the mid-century neighborhood character of Cherry Hill
- **Action 3:** Advertise a 5-year Residential Abatement Program
- **Action 4:** Consider Area in Need of Rehabilitation Designation
- **Action 5:** Discourage commercial encroachment
- **Action 6:** Provide transportation alternatives that reduce traffic impacts on local streets
- **Action 7:** Continue to enforce current restrictions on the subdivision of homes and boarding houses
- **Action 8:** Examine the Possibility of Alternative Multi-Unit Development Types for Some Neighborhoods

- **Action 9:** Evaluate the need for a multi-unit development guidebook
- **Action 10:** Use form-based codes

**Policy 04: Unify Land Use and Transportation Policy**

Transportation connects us to our destinations: our homes, workplaces, entertainment, dining, retail, and medical services. **Unified land use and transportation policies are crucial for creating high-quality places** because one cannot function without the other. We cannot reach our destinations without the use of transportation networks, and we cannot construct easily accessible places if we do not first identify the transportation repercussions.

A unified land use and transportation policy should focus on how **the location of land uses can create maximum functionality and accessibility using existing and planned transportation systems.** Transit-oriented development (TOD) will be one tool. Using TOD principles, the Township of Cherry Hill can lessen the burden on existing transportation systems by providing better options for alternatives to personal vehicles by locating housing, shopping, and offices near other transportation networks such as bus lines or the PATCO high-speed rail.

Connecting land uses and transportation will also have the largest impact on creating a sustainable future for Cherry Hill. The transportation systems that the Township relies upon are necessary because uses are spread apart: homes are far from businesses, and workplaces are far from shopping, dining, and entertainment. By adopting land use patterns that support walking, biking, bus, and other alternative modes of transportation, the Township can lessen residents' reliance on vehicles and create a safer and cleaner environment.

Seven actions accompany this policy:

- **Action 1:** Encourage Transit Oriented Development
- **Action 2:** Continue Implementing the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

- **Action 3:** Connect Commercial Areas and Residential Neighborhoods
- **Action 4:** Connect commercial areas to multi-modal transportation
- **Action 5:** Improve multi-modal connections between large commercial areas and the region
- **Action 6:** Improve coordination between land uses and transportation infrastructure along major corridors
- **Action 7:** Undertake a Township Wide Traffic Study

**Policy 05: Embrace “Garden” Suburb History as a Foundation for making Cherry Hill a Sustainable Suburb**

Cherry Hill is filled with quintessential residential communities that embody many of the principles of the romantic suburb, neighborhood planning, and garden city planning that came to define suburban communities of the Pre-war era. One of the key provisions of each of these planning movements is the **integration of landscaping into the fabric of the community**. In fact, the design of many of the neighborhoods in Cherry Hill is rooted in the work of Frederick Law Olmsted who designed the first “model suburban neighborhood” in Riverside, Illinois.

In Cherry Hill, high-quality lush green spaces were integrated throughout the fabric of the Township: streets were lined with trees, front and back yards were ample, and neighborhoods were often anchored by schools, parks, or other municipal amenities. This ample provision of vegetation and green space was one the Township’s major attractions.

The planning principles that Cherry Hill was founded upon were all attempting to **establish a better relationship between the city and nature**. Cherry Hill should embrace this history, and work to reinterpret what it means in the 21st century to have a suburb that supports and is supported by its natural environment.

Five actions accompany this policy:

- **Action 1:** Continue to implement the “Roadmap to our Future”
- **Action 2:** Encourage Compact Development Near Transit
- **Action 3:** Create a Blacktop to Landscaping Program
- **Action 4:** Require A Green Design Checklist to be Submitted as Part of the Development Application
- **Action 5:** Develop More Sustainable Parking Lot Design Standards

**Policy 06: Continue to Ensure Equal Access to Municipal Services**

Cherry Hill covers almost 24 square miles of Camden County, and during peak traffic times it can take thirty to forty-five minutes to drive across the municipality. This requires that careful planning of community facilities be done to ensure that residents have access to the services they need. As noted in the Community Facilities Element of the Master Plan, the Township’s overall goal is to “provide community facilities and services for all areas of the community.”

While ensuring facilities are provided throughout the community is an important task, the Township should also consider consolidating civic and recreational facilities in a centralized location. This can reduce maintenance and upkeep costs as older facilities deteriorate. Thus, a **“Plan for Place”** has been dedicated to the design of a new municipal center on Kings Highway. This municipal center meets a currently unfulfilled need for more space and upgraded facilities for municipal offices, court functions, and police. The Kings Highway Office Park provides the space for constructing new facilities for various departments such as public works and police, a separate building for municipal court, and a community center or other recreational opportunity. The centralized location on Kings Highway will be more easily accessible to residents and should be reachable by many different types of transportation

options. The municipal complex would also directly connect to the existing public library. For the full proposal, see the *Kings Highway Office Park Plan* within the *Plans for Place Element*.

Two actions accompany this policy:

- **Action 1:** Ensure equitable distribution of civic and recreational facilities
- **Action 2:** Connect civic and recreational facilities with multi-modal transportation opportunities

### **Policy 07: Educate Residents About Key Land Use Topics**

Less than 10% of respondents to a master planning survey were confident that they could explain any of the following terms:

- How New Jersey Affordable Housing requirements impact Cherry Hill.
- The role of the State and County in managing roads within Cherry Hill.
- How zoning is used to shape the look and feel of Cherry Hill.
- The benefits and drawbacks of using Redevelopment to further Township goals.

Between 20% and 35% were somewhat confident, depending on the topic. This was reflected in the project teams' experiences during public meetings. Residents were very well informed about what was happening in the Township. This "local knowledge" infused this master plan with a deep understanding of the lived experiences of residents. However, **many residents lacked a detailed understanding of key issues** related to legal requirements, state and county roles in shaping Township conditions, redevelopment, and the like.

This low level of familiarity with important topics is likely adding to confusion and exacerbating the amount of misinformation that is in the public discourse.

One action is associated with this policy:

- **Action 1:** Hold workshops to educate residents on key land use topics

### **Future Land Use Map**

The Future Land Use Map is a visual representation of the changes to zone boundaries or zoning of parcels in the Township made by the recommendations within the Land Use Element, including the Zoning Memorandum, and the Policy Toolkit. The recommendations made within the Future Land Use Map should ultimately be implemented through a Zoning Ordinance update.

### **Zoning Memorandum**

The Zoning Memorandum section of the Land Use Element was prepared by the Community Development Department, Division of Planning of Cherry Hill Township. The memorandum addresses zones and provides recommendations on

- revisions to zoning district standards;
- modification of zone boundaries or rezoning of portions of land; and
- text amendments to the zoning ordinance where the intent is muddled by improper language or lack of definition.

The recommendations made within the Zoning Memorandum should ultimately be implemented through a Zoning Ordinance update.

### **Economic Development Element**

The Economic Development Element is another important component of a municipal Master Plan, though not required by the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL). A new economic development element was prepared as part of the 2018 Master Plan Adoption process. The Economic Development Element is intended to guide policies related to business attraction, job growth, workforce and resident retention, and industry changes in Cherry Hill Township.





## Market Analysis

The Economic Development Element begins with the Market Analysis from the Existing Conditions Report. This section served as an introduction to the economic conditions in the Township.

## Policy Toolkit

As with the Land Use Element, the Economic Development Element next contained a “Policy Toolkit,” which described the strategies, policies, and actions that were recommended for the Township. It was again organized by policy statements and actions that should be taken by the Township to progress towards the ideal future condition.

### *Policy 01: Attract Growing Industries to Cherry Hill*

The **growth in the education and medical services industries** (“Eds and Meds”) has been a strong dynamic of the evolution of the national and state economy for the past 15 years. Cherry Hill has benefitted in the past several years from health care providers making reinvestments including the Kennedy Health System, Lourdes Health Care, Cooper University Health Care, Jefferson University, and Penn Medicine.

At the same time, however, **growth in educational services that occurred elsewhere in New Jersey over the past decade has not appeared in Cherry Hill**. Post-secondary educational services offered by a local four-year university, community college, and/or trade/technical school can be a significant opportunity for economic growth in the Township, both to expand the technical workforce and to provide an innovation hub to support new business development.

Another emerging industry with potential for Cherry Hill, particularly as it relates to post-secondary education, is “advanced manufacturing.” A post-secondary institution in Cherry Hill with an advanced manufacturing curriculum could provide a direct pipeline of employees for such an industry to emerge in the Township.

Three actions accompany this policy.

- **Action 1:** Maintain and expand relationships with existing medical institutions
- **Action 2:** Establish new relationships with/recruit prospective post-secondary educational institutions
- **Action 3:** Market developable parcels for industries with growth potential

### *Policy 02: Combine Improved Transit Service with Driverless Transportation Technology*

A key economic factor impacting Cherry Hill is the millennial workforce and the Township’s access to it, especially the **growing technical workforce living in Center City Philadelphia**. With Metropolitan Subcenter status, Cherry Hill has been **regionally prioritized for reinvestment, growth, and infrastructure investment**, potentially offering an advantage in attracting transportation investments that recognize the evolving technology of travel. As technically skilled younger workers have chosen to live in downtowns and other dense urban environments, auto-dependent suburban employers have been negatively impacted—some to the point of relocating to downtowns.

**Driverless transportation technology promises to offer a path**, coupling driverless vehicles with existing transit hubs to provide inexpensive service for the last three to five miles (informally referred to as the “last mile”). Future systems mating driverless vehicles with expanded frequency of service along existing rail lines can effectively reposition Cherry Hill to capture businesses benefitting both from the Cherry Hill location and from access to a technical workforce arriving by mass transit from Center City and other locations. In the meantime, however, ride-hailing services such as Lyft and Uber could be exploited now **to complete the first or last mile** while driverless transportation technology research and testing advance toward implementation.



Three actions accompany this policy.

- **Action 1:** Work with NJ Transit to improve rail service to Cherry Hill Station
- **Action 2:** Coordinate and promote ride-hailing services at the Cherry Hill Station to complete the “last mile”
- **Action 3:** Monitor pick-up and drop-off areas at the Cherry Hill Station

### ***Policy 03: Create Additional Centers of Economic and Civic Activity***

A common perception of Cherry Hill is that “there is no there-there,” or that the Township doesn’t have a **defined traditional downtown or cohesive sense of place**. Unlike the nearby communities of Haddonfield and Collingswood, for example, with pedestrian-oriented main streets lined with locally-owned shops, Cherry Hill grew around the automobile and is more known for its presence of large national chain stores easily accessible by car.

Further contributing to this lack of cohesive place is a lack of a prominent center of government and civic activity, often located in a traditional downtown. The Township Municipal Building is currently hidden on a side street surrounded by a residential neighborhood. At the same time, the municipality is outgrowing its current facility, which is an inefficient and aging structure with increasing maintenance issues. A “**Plan for Place**” has been dedicated to the design of a new municipal center.

One action accompanies this policy.

- **Action 1:** Develop a New Municipal Complex

### ***Policy 04: Repurpose Declining Retail Centers***

One of the most pertinent considerations for land use and economic development in Cherry Hill is the future of brick-and-mortar retail. Although economists do not predict the total replacement of brick-and-mortar retail by online sales, the physical side of the retail market is shifting to adapt to a **growing percentage of online sales and online research prior to purchase**.

News of major anchor stores, in particular, closing physical stores and the struggle of shopping malls to remain viable in an online shopping environment is increasingly common.

As a result, beside the normal ebb and flow of retailers there will be entire portions of retail real estate that will have to be converted to alternate use. Low-quality, aging malls and shopping centers are the most vulnerable, and many will be downsized or repurposed in the next 10-20 years. Cherry Hill should expect that the trend of retailers **evolving their brick-and-mortar models** will continue in the Township. The Township will likely see an increased demand for redevelopment that includes mixed-uses as property owners face the need to replace their very large format retail stores.

One action accompanies this policy.


- **Action 1:** Position the Township to exploit likely demand for redevelopment

### ***Policy 05: Guide Housing Markets to Create Diverse Products that Appeal to New Home Buyers***

There has been extensive documentation of the evolution in lifestyle for the millennial generation. These changes to some extent underlie the urban renaissance, but they also **have implications for suburban communities** such as Cherry Hill.

Recent analysis has shown that **millennials now represent 34% of the entire home buying market** and 66% of first-time homebuyers. Fully 50% of all millennials already live in the suburbs. For Cherry Hill to regenerate its middle class, it must provide an attractive environment for millennials, particularly desirable housing. While amenity-rich, low-maintenance housing that is close to shopping, dining, entertainment, and transit is valuable to millennials, it should not only occur in the form of high-rise or high-density buildings as part of an urban-scale mixed-use development.

As an alternative, various existing single-family neighborhoods within the Township that are close



to commercial amenities and transit—even more so by ride-hailing—could be reinvented and targeted to millennials. As current owners of homes in these neighborhoods continue to age and look to sell their homes, the **potential exists for these homes to be modernized**, or “flipped” in a controlled fashion, to appeal to millennials and their lifestyle preferences.

Four actions accompany this policy.

- **Action 1:** Support the development of new housing close to transit
- **Action 2:** Encourage the repurposing of existing housing stock in strategic areas to appeal to millennials
- **Action 3:** Market diverse home ownership options to new buyers
- **Action 4:** Offer financial incentives for home-ownership in these neighborhoods

## Plans for Place

The Plans for Place Element is new to the 2018 Cherry Hill Master Plan. The Element was developed to illustrate the implementation of the policies and action recommendations within the Land Use and Economic Development Elements through explicit visions for places in the Township. The Element contains seven “plans for place.” The “places” were selected by the project team for several reasons, and included input from Township staff, stakeholders, and residents:

- The areas are facing pressure to change.
- The areas demonstrate policies applied to a variety of land uses.
- The areas represent major thoroughfares, commercial areas, and destinations.
- The areas were recommended by residents during the public outreach process.

The seven “places” chosen were: **Erlton, Batesville, the Golden Triangle, Cherry Hill Mall, Kings**

**Highway Office Park, Route 70 East Corridor, and the Springdale industrial area.** Each “plan for place” is comprised of an existing conditions analysis, a vision statement, strategies, and actions for implementing the vision. Some visions were created to be realized soon, while others were long-term 10-15-year visions for the future. The visions for each focus area are presented below.

### Erlton


Erlton will be a main street that will be both **walkable and offer accessible and plentiful parking**. Shops and restaurants will be oriented toward Route 70 and toward the building’s backs and sides, which will be home to cafés, benches, and other amenities. Restaurants and retail opportunities in the village will continue to expand as the area is marketed to local businesses and restaurateurs. Parking opportunities will be expanded through the construction of a municipal parking lot. Traffic calming and crosswalk improvements will make Route 70 safer for pedestrians to cross and the generous sidewalks along Route 70 will be improved with landscaping and planters to buffer pedestrians from fast-moving traffic.

### Batesville

Batesville will be **an extension of Haddonfield that supports walkable, human-scale development** and local businesses. The commercial and office areas in Batesville will form a strong, local, small business district that is accessible to and supported by the adjacent large commercial areas and surrounding neighborhoods and residential uses. **The Batesville neighborhood will also be conserved and supported** as an important historic asset. Connections to the underground railroad will be highlighted through public arts efforts.

### Golden Triangle

15 years in the future, the Golden Triangle will be a **mixed-use office/tech/multi-family housing development designed using transit-oriented development principles**. This area will connect directly to surrounding amenities, such as Cooper



River Park, as well as to Philadelphia via upgraded train service at the Cherry Hill Station. Interior connectedness will also improve with a new and upgraded roadway system. Living at the Golden Triangle will not require car-ownership and will appeal to a variety of homeowners and renters. A greenway will provide residents and workers with a high-quality open space amenity, while also providing visibility to the area from Route 70 as well as the train station.

### Cherry Hill Mall

The Cherry Hill Mall will continue to be a hotspot for development and a major attraction in Cherry Hill. The **mall area could support many potential forms of future development**, for example as: a traditional mall with retail as it stands today, a town center with a residential component, or even a “new neighborhood.” A main street created along Church Road will transform the “back of the mall” area into a jewel in its own right, and plazas and park spaces will connect residential and commercial areas, giving the mall a renewed sense of place and connection to the Township.

### Kings Highway

The need for more space and upgraded facilities for municipal offices, police, and court functions has spurred discussions to relocate the municipal building from 820 Mercer Street to a more centralized location in the Township. The Kings Highway Office Park will provide an ideal location for a municipal campus, or “civic center” for Cherry Hill Township, with facilities for various departments such as public works and police, a separate building for municipal court, and a community center or other recreational opportunity. This **centralized location will be more easily accessible to residents and will be reachable by many different types of transportation options**. Entrances into the complex will be highlighted with gateway elements, and pedestrian improvements will make crossing Kings Highway to reach the complex safe for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The municipal complex will also directly connect to the existing public library and other buildings in the

area via a greenway network. The entire complex will have a lush and “park-like” feel. Parking will be nestled within a sea of green, rather than solely being the sea of parking that exists currently. The improved class B office space that will remain within the area will provide additional opportunities for retail/office/commercial and institutional uses, such as higher education.

### Route 70 East Corridor

The Route 70 eastern gateway will be **a commercial corridor improved through placemaking efforts such as art, landscaping, high-quality “front yard space,” and consistent signage**, allowing it to function as a premier gateway into the Township. There will be no ambiguity, you will know when you have arrived at Cherry Hill. Gateway signs will welcome residents and visitors, and landscaping and lighting will complement the signage. A consistent public realm on both edges of Route 70 will allow for safe multi-modal travel down the corridor and access to commercial amenities. The commercial areas themselves will be improved to be more visually appealing and have appropriate buffers from the residential uses they abut.

### Springdale Industrial

The Springdale Industrial Area will become **an Arts and Entertainment District** that caters to a variety of niche entertainment uses, such as breweries and recreation/sports facilities. The district will also support new models of office and retail such as flex spaces and business incubators. Pedestrian routes and defined roadways will make the area easy to navigate and pedestrian friendly. The area will be appropriately buffered from adjacent manufacturing uses that continue to operate.



## NEXT STEPS

The 2018 adoption of the Cherry Hill Master Plan laid out the goals for the Township, as vetted by the community and other stakeholders. The plan also recommended strategies, policies, and actions to achieve these goals. However, the adoption of the Master Plan is not the end of the Township's efforts, it is only the beginning. Once the Master Plan is officially adopted by the Planning Board, the Township should begin to take the necessary steps to pursue master plan goals through changes or additions to regulations, policies, and programs.

## Implementation

The first step for the Township of Cherry Hill following adoption of the Master Plan should be for the Department of Community Development to work closely with Township Administration, particularly the Mayor and Township Council, to prioritize policies and actions for implementation. The process should result in an Implementation Schedule. This document should list out all actions and provide:

- **A Timeframe for Implementation.** This should define when the action should begin, and if possible, completed. This may take the form of short-, mid-, or long-range categorization, or may be pinned down to a specific month and year.
- **An entity or department responsible for the action and overall policy.** A list of potential partnerships and/or collaborations that will help achieve the action should also be included.
- **A funding mechanism.** Funding mechanisms may include additions to the capital budget, or identifying other funding sources, such as county, state, or national grants.
- **An Assessment Plan:** Each action to be implemented should include a plan for how the action will be monitored and assessed over time. This may include defined measures of success. It is important for actions to be continually monitored for their success in achieving the overall goal they are tied to.

The implementation schedule may also include additional actions not included within the master plan, such as studies or investigations that may be necessary as first steps before a policy, program, or physical action can be undertaken with confidence.

## Continued Efforts

In addition to the focus on implementation of master plan recommendations, the Township should also consider the following processes to ensure that all planning and zoning documents agree.

- **Update the zoning ordinance and zoning map:** The Township should adopt the changes recommended within the future land use map and the zoning memorandum.
- **Update other Master Plan Elements:** The master plan contains several other elements in addition to the Land Use and Economic Development Elements that were updated in 2018. Some of these elements are older than others. However, all elements should be examined for their coherence with the recommendations of the Land Use Element and updated to reflect these recommendations. The Elements that should be examined include: Open Space and Recreation, Community Facilities, Historic Preservation, Circulation, and Utilities and Recycling.

## CHERRY HILL MASTER PLAN

---

Intentionally blank

