

2026 Re-Examination Report and Master Plan Update

The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (M.L.U.L., Chapter 291, Laws of New Jersey 1975) requires that every municipality in the State of New Jersey that has adopted a Master Plan and Land Development Regulations to periodically review and revise, if necessary, those documents every ten years (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89). The last revision to the Borough of Raritan's Master Plan was in 2017 as a Re-Examination of the Master Plan.

As per N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89: *"Periodic The governing body shall, at least every 10 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 Office of Planning Advocacy and the county planning board. A notice that the report and resolution have been prepared shall be sent to any military facility commander who has registered with the municipality pursuant to section 1 of P.L.2005, c.41 (C.40:55D-12.4) and to the municipal clerk of each adjoining municipality, who may request a copy of the report and resolution on behalf of the military facility or municipality. A reexamination shall be completed at least once every 10 years from the previous reexamination."*

A. Major Problems and Objectives Identified

From N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89.a:

"The reexamination report shall state: a. The major problems and objectives related to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the land reexamination report."

In the previous 2017 Master Plan Re-Examination, the Land Use Plan Element identified the following issues that limit the capacity for land development within the Borough of Raritan:

1. Parking

Parking is a known issue within the Borough of Raritan. It was understood in the 2007 Reexamination and the 2017 Reexamination that changes in land use and zoning would have an impact (positive or negative) on the parking in the Borough. It was also noted that there is a need for public, not just private, parking, and that some of the parking lots in the downtown on private land are underutilized that may be remedied by shared parking. The 2017 recommended changes to zoning to address some of these parking challenges as suggested in prior parking studies.

2. Creating a Transit Center Business District

In the 2007 Reexamination and 2017 Reexamination, there was a lack of commercial activity around the train station, and there was a push to have a section of mixed-use residential and commercial parcels close to the NJ Transit station. The intent was to help serve commuters and to redevelop the areas underutilized spaces. The B-5 Zone was created as a response to this problem in 2015. The development on Block 81, the Crossings at Raritan, was also authorized around this time. To help support this planned Transit Center, the Borough was pushing for a Wayfinding Plan by way of the NJDOT TAP Grant and other various programs.

3. Rezoning Manufacturing Districts along the Proposed Raritan River Greenway

The 2007 Reexamination recommended rezoning the Borough's three manufacturing districts along the Raritan River (M-1 Light Manufacturing; M-2 Industrial Park; and M-3 Limited Industry) to districts that would encourage opportunities to enhance the proposed Greenway Vision and would remedy conflicts between industrial and residential uses. These were addressed as a result of the 2017 Master Plan Reexamination report.

4. Creating a New Open Space & Recreation District to facilitate the creation of the Raritan River Greenway

The Borough of Raritan contains sections of the unconnected Raritan River Greenway, and the Borough (and Somerset County) have been desirous of connecting this linear parkway between the developments and the Raritan River. It was planned that more open space and recreation zones along the Greenway would help its completion along.

5. Flood Mitigation

The Borough experiences extensive flooding along the Raritan River, especially south of Orlando Drive. A handful of developments have been proposed and approved in areas above the floodplain, but the problem will persist as long as the river exists and the area remains available for development. Prior Reexaminations called attention to the importance of regional collaboration in reducing flooding impacts in the Borough.

B. Increase or Decrease of Problems and Objectives

From N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89.b:

“The reexamination report shall state: b. The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.”

1. Parking

Parking issues within the Borough persist, exacerbated by additional developments and presumed overcrowding of unauthorized multifamily housing. While redevelopment projects often provide onsite parking, given the vertical nature of those developments it is perceived that the parking is insufficient. The Borough has pushed for joining parking lots, as evidenced by the redesign of the new municipal building’s parking lot and the easements authorizing travel between private and public parking lots, but the effort is very much still ongoing.

2. Creating a Transit Center Business District

In addition to the Block 81 development, additional redevelopments around the train station corridor have been proposed, such as the Agway site which is proposed to include mixed-uses for the lot. It is understood that additional commercial uses can be woven into Thompson Street and Anderson Street to capture the movement of commuters, but the NJDOT TAP Grant has been stalled due to lack of funding and the designation of the downtown as a Rehabilitation Area has also stymied growth potential for additional mixed-use buildings.

3. Rezoning Manufacturing Districts along the Proposed Raritan River Greenway

These lots were successfully rezoned following the 2017 Reexamination, however minimal development has occurred along the corridor with the exception of the 21 Orlando Drive property. 21 Orlando Drive successfully integrated a public easement for the Greenway in its approval and is in the process of being completed at the time of this report.

4. Creating a New Open Space & Recreation District to facilitate the creation of the Raritan River Greenway

The areas south of the Borough were reserved as green space as intended, making room for the creation of the Greenway. 21 Orlando Drive’s segment is also almost complete. There remains only a few parcels that need either acquisition or special agreement through the Planning Board to facilitate the creation of the Greenway. The physical construction of the Greenway on Borough property has not commenced, and likely will not until all private segments of the Greenway are completed.

5. Flood Mitigation

The Borough has updated its stormwater control ordinance but has yet to update its Stormwater Master Plan since 2008. In a recent audit with the NJDEP it was identified that this must be corrected and is in the process of being revised in accordance with the latest templates from the NJDEP. Regional coordination is actively being attempted through collaboration with Somerville and Bridgewater at the Somerset Regional Center partnership.

C. Significant Changes in Land Use

From N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89.c:

“The Reexamination report shall state: 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 regulation as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing condition, circulation, conservation of natural resource, energy conservation, collection, disposition, and recycling of designated recyclable materials and changes in the State, County, and municipal policies and objectives.”

Since adoption of the 2017 Master Plan Reexamination, the following major changes have been identified:

1. Changes at the Local Level

Additional redevelopment plans provide new traffic patterns and additional demand on local utilities. The Borough’s changes to its capital improvement plan, coordinated by the Department of Public Works and in collaboration with various utility companies has allowed the Borough to resurface most of the roadways within the Borough. Recent and ongoing construction projects nearby the Borough in adjacent municipalities have also caused additional, unanticipated traffic within Raritan. The flooding experienced during Tropical Storm Ida brought flooding to the forefront of residential attention. The population continues to increase, as does the demand on the schools.

2. Changes at the County Level

Somerset County has been rolling out additional programs for recreation and transportation, with its Transportation Master Plan reaching its final stages at the time of this report. Raritan’s connectivity to the train corridor and infrastructure around county highways are important in the County plan. Similarly, the Hazard Mitigation Plan for the County was approved in 2025 with sections associated with the Borough of Raritan. The Somerset Regional Center provided additional studies that helped identified obstacles and opportunities for development and changes to land use in Raritan and the surrounding municipalities.

3. Changes at the State Level

The State of New Jersey recently adopted a new State Redevelopment Plan in late 2025. This is an important step for Statewide coordination of planning initiatives, however it is noted that little has changed with the mapping boundaries for Raritan Borough specifically. This will continue to be monitored and responded to accordingly. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) passed both the Inland Flood Protection Rules (July 2023) and the NJ PACT REAL Rules (January 2026) that greatly modify the stormwater control ordinances for all municipalities as well as update the heights of the flood hazard areas. Additionally, in 2025 New Jersey entered its Fourth Round of affordable housing, and the Borough is responsible for 99 additional units of affordable housing, corroborated by the 2025 Housing and Fair Share Plan.

D. Recommendations for the Master Plan

From N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89.d:

“The reexamination report shall state: d. The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, polices, and standards, or whether or a new plan or regulations should be prepared.”

Based on the review of the above information, the following items serve as recommended actions for the Borough of Raritan Land Use Board and Council:

1. The Borough’s Stormwater Management Plan and associated stormwater control ordinances shall be updated using the latest guidelines by the State. This should be coordinated alongside updates to the Borough’s Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.

2. The recommendations contained within the Amended 2025 Fourth Round Housing Plan that enable compliance with the State-wide affordable housing mandate, specifically:
 - a. Bespoke Realty – Block 80, Lots 17-20, 20.01 and 2.02
A zoning overlay should be provided for this area enabling the increased density agreed upon during mediation to provide 4 affordable housing units.
 - b. Former Aqway Site – Block 61, Lot 3.01
A redevelopment plan should be adopted on this parcel to enable the 15 units listed in the Amended 2025 Fourth Round Housing Plan. This area has already been designated as an Area in Need of Redevelopment and has been introduced to the Governing Body at the time of this report.
 - c. Busky Lane – Block 116.01, Lot 26
A zoning overlay should be provided for this area enabling the 6 units listed in the Amended 2025 Fourth Round Housing Plan. This area has already been designated as an Area in Need of Redevelopment, however a formal submission to the Borough has not been received, nor has a proposed redeveloper attended a Redevelopment Advisory Committee meeting to discuss potential development to the Borough’s satisfaction at the time of this report.
3. The Borough should consider a formal revision and update to the pre2 Master Plan, complete with public engagement, visioning sessions, and other planning implements to better analyze the Borough’s land use development trajectories.
4. The Borough should prepare a formal Climate Change Related Hazard Vulnerability Assessment in conformance with the latest regulations outlined in the Municipal Land Use Law.
5. The Borough should study its existing land use plans to determine the best locations for electrical vehicle infrastructure and prepare a map in accordance with said study’s findings.
6. Raritan should continue to examine and evaluate land use patterns within the Borough locally and regionally to ensure its zoning ordinances and associated plans remain in conformance with current trends. It should further consider a proper overhaul to the Master Plan which has not been completed in over 20 years.

E. Recommendations for Redevelopment Plans

From N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89.e:

“The reexamination report shall state: e. 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:12A-1 et al.) 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.”

The Borough has the following Areas in Need of Redevelopment:

- Tillman Street, Block 53, Lots 1+2 | Status: Redevelopment Plan Adopted, No Activity
- Raritan Mall, Block 116.01, Lot 11.01 | Status: Redevelopment Plan Adopted, Site Plan Pending
- LaGrange Street, Block 93, Lots 1+2 | Status: Redevelopment Plan Adopted, Site Plan Pending
- Raritan Crossing, Block 116.01, Lots 25, 26.01, 27, 27.01, Block 112, Lot 3 | Status: Redevelopment Plan Adopted, Site Plan Approved, Construction Pending
- Former Aqway Site, Block 61, Lot 3.01 | Status: Redevelopment Plan Pending
- Busky Lane, Block 116, Lot 26 | Status: No Redevelopment Plan Pending at time of Reexamination

No action is recommended at this time.

F. Electrical Vehicle Siting

From N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89.f:

“The reexamination report shall state: f. The recommendations of the planning board concerning locations appropriate for the development of public electric vehicle infrastructure, including but not limited to, commercial districts and, areas proximate to public transportation and transit facilities and transportation corridors, and public rest stops; and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary or appropriate for the development of public electric vehicle infrastructure.”

There are currently no public electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) stations located within the Borough of Raritan. The new municipal building located at 9W Somerset and the former municipal building at 22 First Street have areas that could be improved with EVSE. Additionally, there are public parking lots that may benefit from this infrastructure. However, no formal study has been done at this time.

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