



NEW JERSEY HIGHLANDS COALITION

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Redevelopment in the Highlands Region

A Guide for Landowners and Municipalities

What Does the Highlands RMP say about Redevelopment?

Redevelopment—conversion of grayfields (abandoned or underutilized commercial or industrial facilities) and brownfields (grayfields with suspected or known contamination) into new land uses that are consistent with smart growth strategies and low impact development—is encouraged in the Highlands Regional Master Plan.

What Areas qualify to be “Highlands Redevelopment Areas”?

Within the **Preservation Area**, sites with 70% or greater impervious surfaces, brownfield sites designated by NJDEP, or sites issued an exemption by NJDEP, may be considered for redevelopment by the Highlands Council. In the **Planning Area**, redevelopment will be encouraged if the site meets the resource protection standards with respect to the site’s LUC zone plus specific criteria for water availability, wastewater capacity, and transportation infrastructure. Redevelopment in the RMP is not confined to residential or commercial re-use of a site—also included is the conversion of a brownfield to a public park or open space.

What is required from Conforming Municipalities with regard to Redevelopment Areas?

Conforming municipalities must identify any development, redevelopment and brownfield opportunities in the local Land Use Plan element of their Master Plans; adopt RMP definitions for *redevelopment*, *brownfield* and *grayfield*; adopt by reference the RMP Redevelopment Policies; perform a “Land Use Capability Analysis” and “Limiting Factor Analysis” and utilize the “Highlands Build-Out Model” to determine land use capability and capacity that is consistent with the RMP.

Why establish a “Highlands Redevelopment Area”?

Redevelopment is less land consumptive than “greenfield” development and can reinvigorate abandoned and underutilized sites within the community.

Technical and financial assistance is available for conforming municipalities to establish “Highlands Redevelopment Areas.” The Highlands Council will coordinate with other state agencies and programs to help provide conforming municipalities with planning and financial resources for Redevelopment Area site designation.



How can my municipality apply to have a “Highlands Redevelopment Area”?

In the Existing Community Zone of the Planning Area, a Conforming Municipality is not required to seek specific approval for a redevelopment project. However, the Highlands Council has the discretion to “call up” a project to ensure that the project is in conformance with the RMP.

In the Protection and Conservation Zones of the Planning Area, Redevelopment Areas must be approved by the Council during Conformance or by petition for a “Redevelopment Area Designation (see below).



In the Preservation Area, the following procedures are required for **Redevelopment Area Designation**:

Applications may be received by the Highlands Council from:

- One or more individuals proposing a Redevelopment Area on one or more contiguous properties that they control;
- A municipality proposing multiple contiguous properties for a proposed Redevelopment Area;
- A municipality partnering with a landowner or landowners to identify a Redevelopment Area.

The formal process for establishing a Redevelopment Area includes:

- Submission of petition;
- Staff review by Highlands Council;
- Staff recommendations by Highlands Council;
- A Highlands Preservation Area Approval with Redevelopment Waiver from NJDEP
- Final determination by Highlands Council.

Can my municipality’s Highlands Redevelopment Area become a TDR Receiving Area?

- Any Highlands Redevelopment Area in any zone of the Preservation or Planning Areas may become a TDR receiving area, but only at the request of the municipality and with the approval of the Council.

How will brownfield (contaminated) Redevelopment Areas be restored?

- The RMP supports the restoration and open space use of contaminated sites
- Municipalities will coordinate with NJDEP on Highlands Brownfield designations and utilize support mechanisms that facilitate remedial activities. Grants and low interest loans are available from the New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust and the New Jersey Economic Development Authority/NJDEP Hazardous Discharge Site Remediation Program.