

# City of Beverly

## 2014 Master Plan Reexamination Report

**Prepared for:**

Planning Board  
City of Beverly  
Burlington County, New Jersey

**Prepared by:**

Burlington County Bridge Commission  
Department of Economic Development and Regional Planning  
Adopted: December 17, 2014

Edward E. Fox, III, AICP, PP, *Regional Planning Coordinator*  
New Jersey Professional Planner  
License No. 33LI00510400

The following staff contributed to the completion of this study:

Mark A. Remsa, AICP, PP, LLA, ASLA, *Director*  
Jason M. Miller and Linda Wong, *GIS Specialists*

*An original copy of this document is signed and sealed and filed with the municipal clerk.*

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

**STATUTORY REEXAMINATION OF MASTER PLAN**

The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et seq., requires all municipalities to reexamine their Master Plans at least every ten years. The purpose of this requirement is for municipalities to have regular, periodic reviews of current information and changing conditions within the municipality in the interest of keeping long-range planning as up-to-date as possible. The Joint Land Use Board last updated the Master Plan's Land Use Plan Element in 1999.

In section 40-55D-89 of the MLUL, the regulations specify:

*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 following report contains the Joint Land Use Board's response to the MLUL's ten-year Master Plan Reexamination Report requirements.

**A. REVIEW OF PAST CONDITIONS**

Section 40:55D-89a of the MLUL provides that the Master Plan Reexamination Report shall review:

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

**1. Major Problems**

The 1999 Master Plan Re-Examination Report did not identify any major problems. During the course of the 2014 re-examination, however, the Joint Land Use Board identified several major concerns that dated back to 1999. There were:

Critical Problems

- a. High residential property taxes due to limited commercial and industrial ratables,
- b. High number of abandoned and dilapidated housing units,
- c. High number of vacant and under-utilized downtown commercial units
- d. Overall poor physical appearance of Downtown district,
- e. Poor maintenance of rental housing and slow legal system of correcting problems,
- f. Overall poor physical appearance of Waterfront neighborhood,
- g. Downtown and neighborhoods designed and built without sufficient off-street parking,
- h. High percentage of rental housing (32%) almost all of which in individually managed units,

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

General Problems

- a. Continued population loss and increase in older population,
- b. Underutilized waterfront due to Army Corps of Engineers' dredging program, sewerage plant and buffering, public housing, etc.,
- c. Lack of defined "gateways" to welcome one to the City and the Waterfront,
- d. Slow clean-up of Cosden superfund site,
- e. Underutilized and potentially contaminated industrial properties along railroad,
- f. High number of tax-exempt, charitable and religious properties with major land holdings,
- g. High number of two-family and multi-family units in houses designed for one family,
- h. Zoning ordinance requires many use, bulk and parking variances to do redevelopment,
- i. Narrow, confining and main street with no building setbacks, little vegetation, narrow sidewalks, limited parking, etc.,

Potential Problems

- a. Much of waterfront in floodplain; must be raised during redevelopment in conformance with federal floodplain management requirements ,

- b. Limited funds and professional staffing to follow-up on housing / community development other recommendations.

**2. Major Planning Goals**

The following 2014 municipal planning goals are essentially the same as the 1999 Master Plan Update's goals with some minor adjustments:

- a. To plan for a variety of residential and non-residential uses which will encourage an enhancement of the City of Beverly as a quality residential community supported by business and recreational areas for western Burlington County.
- b. To protect and enhance the environmental quality of the City.
- c. To consider and evaluate innovative development proposals which would enhance and protect environmental features, minimize energy usage and encourage development densities consistent with existing patterns of development.
- d. To encourage commercial, office, recreational and service development within the City which will provide employment for residents and contribute to a balanced economic and ratable base for the City.
- e. To allow use of the riverfront by the City's residents while encouraging its commercial development.
- f. To propose development consistent with the State

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

Development and Redevelopment Plan as an Existing Center within the Metropolitan Planning Area (PA-1).

- g. To prioritize strengthening and diversifying the economic composition of the City. Opportunities for redeveloping vacant and underutilized commercial sites should be identified, and the mixing of compatible uses, i.e., residential, commercial and office with appropriate buffering and parking, should be explored. Upon identifying appropriate mixed uses for specific areas, innovative zoning in the form of overlay zones with conditions should be established.
- h. To prioritize improvement of inter- and intra-city circulation, inefficient road intersections and inadequate parking in the downtown business district.
- i. To enhance Beverly's river frontage, which provides many passive recreational opportunities, i.e., fishing, hiking and enjoyment of wildlife and the natural environment, and to maintain and enhance public access to the riverfront.
- j. To retain and carefully rehabilitate Beverly's housing stock, which is considerably old, to preserve the small town character of the City and to make the City an attractive place in which to live.

**3. Major Objectives**

The 1999 Master Plan Update identified the following objectives, all but one of which, are still applicable in 2014. The one non-applicable objective is for industrial development along Railroad Avenue. The Joint Land Use Board has determined that industrial development along this corridor is no longer sustainable given the relatively small lot sizes and circulation difficulties in that area. Instead, the Board foresees the corridor redevelopment for a mixture of retail, office and residential uses.

- a. Residential Objective – Evaluate existing land use patterns and develop appropriate zoning that respects neighborhood residential densities and predominant lot sizes and preserves the small-town character of the City. Except in the case of an approved redevelopment plan, residential densities should not be increased above current levels in order to provide adequate air, light and open space.
- b. Commercial Objective – Facilitate redevelopment of the City's downtown business district along Warren and Cooper Streets and the area around the New Jersey Transit light rail transit station stop at Cooper Street with commercial development, and with mixed uses along Railroad Avenue.
- c. Waterfront Development Objective – Facilitate the redevelopment of the City's waterfront as a mix of public open space, residential and commercial development.

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

**B. REVIEW OF CHANGING CONDITIONS**

Section 40:55D-89b of the MLUL provides that the Master Plan Reexamination Report shall state:

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

**1. Major Problems**

The 1999 Master Plan Re-Examination Report did not identify any major problems. During the course of the 2014 re-examination, however, the Joint Land Use Board identified several major concerns that dated back to 1999. The current status of these problems is:

Critical Problems

- a. High residential property taxes due to limited commercial and industrial ratables – Problem increased.
- b. High number of abandoned and dilapidated housing units– Problem increased.
- c. High number of vacant and under-used downtown commercial units – Problem increased.
- d. Overall poor physical appearance of Downtown district – Problem increased.
- e. Poor maintenance of rental housing and slow legal system of correcting problems – Problem decreased with revised administrative and legal procedures.

- f. Overall poor physical appearance of Waterfront neighborhood – No change in problem.
- g. Downtown and neighborhoods designed and built without sufficient off-street parking – No change in problem.
- h. High percentage of rental housing (32%) in individually managed units – No change in problem.

General Problems

- a. Continued population loss and increase in older population – No change in problem.
- b. Underutilized waterfront due to the Army Corps of Engineers' dredging program, sewerage plant and buffering, public housing, etc. – No change in problem.
- c. Lack of defined "gateways" to welcome one to the City and the Waterfront – No change in problem.
- d. Slow clean-up of Cosden superfund site – Problem decreased with remediation being completed.
- e. Underutilized and potentially contaminated industrial properties along railroad – No change in problem.
- f. High number of tax-exempt properties with major land holdings – No change in problem.

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

- g. High number of two-family and multi-family units in houses designed for one family – No change in problem.
- h. Ordinance requires many use, bulk and parking variances to do redevelopment – Problem decreased with many recommended ordinance amendments adopted.
- i. Narrow, confining and main street with no building setbacks, little vegetation, narrow sidewalks, limited parking, etc. – No change in problem.

Potential Problems

- a. Much of waterfront in floodplain; must be raised during redevelopment – No change in problem.
- b. Limited funds and professional staffing to follow-up on housing / community development and other recommendations – Problem decreased with new administrative procedures.

Since 1999, two new potential problems have arisen

- a. High number of tax liens and weak market to purchase properties, and
- b. Closed parochial school in center of community.

**2. Major Issues**

The 1999 Master Plan Update identified seven major issue / problem categories related to land development in Beverly. The following summarizes local changes since the Joint Land Use Board approved the 1999 update.

- a. Sound Planning Practices – Beverly revised its Zoning Ordinance and zoning map in 2001 to provide for a variety of residential and non-residential uses, which will encourage an enhancement of the City of Beverly as a quality residential community supported by business and recreational areas for western Burlington County. To prioritize planning for that part of the City with the most potential for change, Beverly adopted a redevelopment plan with design standards in 2007 to encourage this type of growth. For a number of reasons, including the national economic downturn, the City has not realized the planned redevelopment.
- b. Environmental Quality – Beverly has encouraged the remediation of the Cosden superfund site located west of Manor Road between the railroad and Cherry Street. The remediation is now almost completed. The 2007 Redevelopment Plan recommended that this area be converted to a city park to replace some of the waterfront park areas that would be redeveloped for residential and commercial uses. The future use of this site should be reconsidered in light of its final remediation restrictions.
- c. Sustainable and Compatible Development – The 2001 Zoning Ordinance amendments and the 2007 Redevelopment Plan provide a framework for innovative development proposals, which would enhance and protect environmental features, such as along the waterfront, and encourage development densities consistent with existing patterns of development. These land use and design standards do not yet include provisions for energy efficient or “green”

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

development, but are now being reviewed as part of future redevelopment plan amendments.

The 2001 Zoning Ordinance amendments and the 2007 Redevelopment Plan ensure that the Beverly's future development and redevelopment will be compatible with that in nearby municipalities and with the center-based principles of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

- d. Job Creation - The 2001 Zoning Ordinance amendments and the 2007 Redevelopment Plan provide a framework for encouraging commercial, office, recreational and service development within the City which will provide employment for residents and contribute to a balanced economic and ratable base for the City.
- e. Waterfront Access and Recreation - The 2007 Redevelopment Plan provides a framework to allow use of the riverfront by the City's residents while encouraging its residential and commercial development. The 2007 Redevelopment Plan also provides for a waterfront park and trail system, which will offer passive recreational opportunities, i.e., fishing, hiking and enjoyment of wildlife and the natural environment. There has been no movement on a planned community center, to date, because the State has informed the City that the Dunes dredge spoils area is off-limits for future recreation or redevelopment uses.
- f. Circulation Efficiency – Since 1999, the downtown Five Points intersection has been improved with pedestrian crosswalks and other improvements to make local and

through traffic safer and more efficient. Downtown parking issues have not yet been addressed, but there has no impetus to do so.

- g. Housing Rehabilitation – Since 1999, the City has actively engaged a code enforcement program to reduce problems.

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

**C. REVIEW OF CHANGING ASSUMPTIONS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

MLUL section 40:55D-89c provides that the Master Plan Reexamination Report shall state:

*The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, objectives and policies 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.*

**1. Major Assumptions and Changes**

The 1999 Master Plan Update included seven major assumptions. One of the major assumptions, re-introduction of passenger train service, is no longer necessary since it has been realized. All but one of these are still valid, to one extent or another, although they have not yet been realized by 2014.

1. It is assumed that Beverly's population will continue to grow as more infill development occurs and vacant housing units are rehabilitated. *(Beverly actually lost another 396 residents between 1990 and 2010 due to changes in household size and an increase in housing vacancies. Population stabilization will occur with new housing construction.)*
2. As residents age, a turnover in occupancy from older and smaller households to younger and larger households is expected for the years 1999 to 2005. *(The*

*median age actually increased from 35 in 2000 to 39 in 2010, and the average household size shrank from 2.77 to 2.57 in the same period.)*

3. It is assumed that there is a need to continue monitoring home-based occupations to ensure adequate regulatory controls are established to promote appropriate home-based occupations in Beverly and to protect surrounding residential uses and neighborhoods from potential negative impacts. *(This assumption is still valid.)*
4. There is a need to upgrade the appearance, safety and function of the downtown area located along Warren and Cooper Streets. Strategies are needed to enhance the economic viability of the City's downtown area. Vacant stores and buildings need to be rehabilitated and reused. *(This assumption is still valid.)*
5. The Route 130/Delaware River Corridor Strategic Plan (Corridor Plan), which consists of twelve municipalities of which Beverly City is one, will be endorsed by the New Jersey State Planning Commission in 1999. Such endorsement will bring benefits to the City which are similar to a "centers" designation, i.e., priority status granted by the State for state discretionary funds, etc. State endorsement is particularly important for the redevelopment efforts initiated by the City. *(The State Planning Commission did endorse the Corridor Plan, Beverly was endorsed as a center, and the City did receive priority status for discretionary funds.)*
6. It is assumed that through developing a creative vision

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

and implementation process, Beverly can facilitate the improvement and enhancement of the City, including its waterfront, existing industrial areas, downtown business area and residential areas. *(The 1999 Master Plan Update included this vision, which was carried over to the 2007 Redevelopment Plan.)*

Beverly City has used the 2007 Redevelopment Plan, which overlays the Zoning Ordinance, as the major master plan implementation tool. The goals and objectives of the Redevelopment Plan are the same as those in the master plan. The 2007 Redevelopment Plan, however, is based on a number of assumptions, some of which may no longer be valid. The following is a discussion of the necessary changes to those assumptions, which should be considered in a future land use element, redevelopment plan or both.

- The City should assume that it does not have the funds to relocate and build a new sewage treatment plant within the near future. The sewerage authority, however, does have land that could be redeveloped for residential development.
- The City should not assume that the State will release the "Dunes" property north of Second Street and west of Manor Road (Block 101, Lots 1.01, 1.03, 2.02, 2.03, 3.02), now used by the US Army Corps of Engineers for dredge spoils, to build the new sewage treatment plant and waterfront active recreation center, as prescribed in the Redevelopment Plan.
- The Redevelopment Plan recommends the relocation of 72 households in the Delacove public housing apartment community, subsequent demolition of the community, and rebuilding the area at the same density, 15 units per acre. The City should not assume that this recommendation is feasible or cost effective and should assume that the public housing properties on Blocks 210 and 220 will remain.
- The City should assume that there will be no significant change in the use of tax-exempt religious or quasi-public properties, such as downtown churches or the American Legion property, and that any unforeseen changes in use will be consistent with the Redevelopment Plan or Zoning Ordinance.
- The City should assume that most future property owners will develop or redevelop their properties to achieve the most intensive type of use permitted in their zoning district, assuming there is sufficient off-street parking. This means that, over time, most of the properties in the C-2 (Central Business District) will be converted to retail or office uses with residential apartments above only when the City facilitates the strategic development of off-street public or shared parking sites or if the site has sufficient off-street parking.
- The City should assume that only some of the larger properties fronting on Cooper Street in the current R-2 Single-Family residential zoning district will be redeveloped into multi-family dwellings, regardless of the recommendations in the 2007 Redevelopment

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

Plan. The Cooper Street properties, which the state historic preservation office recognizes as architecturally and historically significant, hold great potential for conversion to multi-family homes within walking distance to the light rail. The redevelopment plan should be amended to provide certain conditions that would allow for compatible housing conversions while protecting the streetscape's architectural integrity.

**2. Planning Studies and Plan Revisions**

The following studies and plan revisions have occurred since 1999:

- The Joint Land Use Board adopted Beverly's last the Master Plan Update in 1999. In 2001, City Council updated the Zoning Ordinance in response to the 1999 Master Plan Update.
  
- The City Council adopted a redevelopment plan for the central portion of the City, roughly between Manor Road and Van Kirk Street north of Warren Street and between Broad Street and Parker Street south of Warren Street in 2000.
  
- In 2002, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) studied redevelopment opportunities within one-quarter mile of the City's train station area, which it shares with Edgewater Park.
  
- In 2004, the City participated in a Waterfront Park Design and Transit Oriented Development (TOD Study.)

- Portions of the analyses and recommendations from the 2002 DVRPC study and the 2004 Waterfront Park Design and TOD study were included in a new 2007 Redevelopment Plan, which superseded the 2000 Redevelopment Plan. The 2007 Redevelopment Plan covered the same area as the 2000 plan, but expanded it northwestward to include the "Dunes" dredge spoils area west of the sewage treatment plant.
  
- In 2005, the City Council adopted a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan in response to the third round of certification for the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH). The plan was revised and submitted to COAH in 2008. COAH certified it in 2009.
  
- In 2006 and 2009, the City Council adopted a Stormwater Management Plan and implementation ordinances.

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

**D. RECOMMENDED PLANNING AND REGULATORY CHANGES**

MLUL section 40:55D-89d provides that the Master Plan Reexamination Report shall state:

*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 Joint Land Use Board makes the following recommendations for the following Master Plan-related issues:

**1. General Provisions**

Many zoning ordinances contain a section that itemizes the types of uses that are prohibited within the municipality. These often include junkyards, certain industrial operations or may not meet “community standards,” such as massage and tattoo parlors. By providing such a prescription in the ordinance, applicants requesting a use variance for an itemized prohibited use have a much harder case to prove before the Board. An alternative method is to have a section that states that “all uses not specifically permitted or conditionally permitted are prohibited.” Beverly’s ordinance does not provide either of these protections, other than a short and vague prohibition of “hazardous” or “detrimental.”

Recommendations:

1. The City should consider amending §20-4. Compliance by adding a sub-paragraph that indicates that all uses not expressly permitted or conditionally permitted within a zoning district are prohibited.

**2. Land Use Plan**

During the re-examination planning process, the Joint Land Use Board identified that it had changed many of its basic 1999 assumptions for redevelopment of its strategic land use areas, such as the waterfront, downtown Five Points area, southern half of the existing R-3 district, and the Railroad Avenue and Cooper Street corridor districts. Due to the significance of these changes, it has decided that is necessary to completely update and revise its Master Plan Land Use Plan element. When completed, this element will form the basis for a revision to the adopted 2007 Redevelopment Plan.

Recommendations:

1. The Joint Land Use Board should work with the Burlington County Bridge Commission's Economic Development and Regional Planning Department to update the City's Land Use Plan element of its Master Plan.

**3. Economic Development**

Due to its size, the City does not have the resources to complete a separate Economic Development Plan element for the Master Plan. About one-half of the problem statements itemized earlier in this Master Plan Reexamination report concern economic development-related issues. Instead of repeating the problems, the Joint Land Use Board has chosen to identify the desired outcomes of its economic development planning and implementation measures. Below is a list of those outcomes, recommendations for public-sector leverage and next steps the City can take to move forward. Financial and technical assistance for some of these

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

projects may be available from a variety of local and state agencies, including the Burlington County Bridge Commission, the Burlington County Engineer, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and the State Department of Transportation (NJDOT), State Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), State Department of Community Affairs (NJCA) Local Planning Services office and the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA).

**Outcomes**

**a. Downtown occupied with a thriving number of neighborhood shops and service businesses**

Leverage - Facilitate commercial occupancy with traffic calming, sidewalk / pedestrian safety, off-street parking, streetscaping, signage, etc. improvements

Next Steps

- Visioning
- Downtown Streetscape Plan
- Downtown Parking Plan

**b. Existing commercial and industrial areas occupied with thriving commercial businesses**

Leverage - Facilitate commercial and industrial occupancy through business-friendly zoning and redevelopment powers, including short-term tax abatement; Implement realistic waterfront redevelopment plan

Next Steps

- Visioning
- Updated Zoning Ordinance

- Revised Redevelopment Plan

**c. Waterfront redeveloped with mix of active and passive recreation, utilities, housing and commercial uses**

Leverage - Implement realistic waterfront redevelopment plan

Next Steps

- Visioning
- Revised Redevelopment Plan

**d. Defined "gateways" that welcome people to City and Waterfront on Beverly, Warren, Broad and Cooper streets**

Leverage - Develop and implement gateway improvement plan with County engineer's office; Implement traffic calming and pedestrian improvements in downtown district

Next Steps

- Downtown Streetscape Plan
- Gateway Improvement Plan

**e. Redevelopment of Cosden site for future use**

Leverage - Partner with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) and the NJDEP's Brownfields task force to learn when / how site can be given green light for redevelopment

Next Steps

- NJDEP Brownfields Program

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

**f. Railroad area occupied with thriving mixed-use residential, commercial and office businesses**

Leverage - Facilitate mixed-use occupancy through business-friendly zoning and redevelopment plan powers, including short-term tax abatement; Partner with NJDEP's Brownfields task force to learn when / how sites can be given green light for redevelopment;

Next Steps

- Updated Zoning Ordinance
- Revised Redevelopment Plan
- NJDEP Brownfields Program

**g. Development of excess public and other tax-exempt lands, particularly along the waterfront**

Leverage - Partner with NJDEP, Beverly Sewerage Authority, RC Dioceses of Trenton, etc to explore future redevelopment opportunities for properties; Implement realistic Redevelopment Plan

Next Steps

- Property Owner / Stakeholder meeting
- Revised Redevelopment Plan

**4. Housing**

Most of the remaining problem statements itemized earlier in this Master Plan Reexamination report concern housing-related issues. Instead of repeating the problems, the Joint Land Use Board has chosen to identify the desired outcomes of its economic development planning and implementation measures. Below are a list of those outcomes and recommendations for municipal leverage and next steps the City can take to move forward.

Financial and technical assistance for some of these projects may be available from a variety of local and state agencies, including the Burlington County Bridge Commission, the Burlington County Community Development office, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and the State Department of Community Affairs.

**Outcomes**

**a. Well-maintained and occupied homes throughout City**

Leverage – Continue to implement rental housing and nuisance code enforcement programs; Implement Abandoned Properties Rehabilitation Plan; Implement realistic Redevelopment Plan and Rehabilitation Program; Encourage conversion of two-family and multi-family homes back to single-family units

Next Steps

- NJDCA planning and implementation assistance coordination meetings
- Abandoned Properties Rehabilitation Plan (depending on funding)
- Revised Redevelopment Plan and Rehabilitation Program with single-family conversion program

**b. Stabilized and age-diverse population with reduced overcrowding in buildings built for single-families but now multi-family occupied**

Leverage - Implement rental housing and nuisance code enforcement programs; Encourage conversion of two-family and multi-family homes back to single-family units

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

Next Steps

- NJDCA planning and implementation assistance meeting
- Designate the entire City as an “area in need of rehabilitation”
- Revised Redevelopment Plan and Rehabilitation Program with single-family conversion program

**c. Attractive and pedestrian-friendly downtown district; well-maintained occupied homes in Waterfront neighborhood**

Leverage - Implement rental housing and nuisance code enforcement programs; Encourage conversion of two-family and multi-family homes back to single-family units; Implement Abandoned Properties Rehabilitation Plan; Implement realistic waterfront Redevelopment Plan

Next Steps

- NJDCA planning and implementation assistance coordination meetings
- Designate the entire City as an “area in need of rehabilitation”
- Abandoned Properties Inventory and Rehabilitation Plan
- Revised Redevelopment Plan and Rehabilitation Program with single-family conversion program

**d. Ordinance adequately addresses existing conditions and future development needs without need for so many variances**

Leverage - Implement updated existing zoning ordinance and revised redevelopment plan

Next Steps

- Updated Zoning Ordinance
- Revised Redevelopment Plan

**e. Sufficient in-house or out-sourced capacity to address housing, community development and COAH Regional Contribution Agreement (RCA) expenditure needs**

Leverage – Partner with NJ DCA for community development planning / implementation and RCA expenditure assistance

Next Steps

- NJDCA planning and implementation assistance meeting

**5. Affordable Housing**

The Beverly’s Council on Affordable Housing (COAH)-certified Round Three Affordable Housing and Fair Share Plan is valid until December 31, 2018.

Recommendations:

1. The City should monitor COAH’s upcoming fair share planning requirements and evaluate how to proceed with the assistance of the Burlington County Bridge Commission’s Economic Development and Regional Planning Department.

**6. Circulation**

The historic section of Beverly, generally east of Magnolia Street, was developed before the invention of the

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

automobile. This has manifested itself in four primary circulation problems:

- a. Warren Street has only a 50-foot right-of-way and the buildings in the downtown Five Points area are built to the right-of-way. This makes the downtown appear and feel congested for both motorists and pedestrians and limits downtown on-street parking opportunities.
- b. There is little if no provision for off-street parking in the downtown Five Points business district, which has been a significant factor in the area's high vacancy rate.
- c. The Five Points intersection is not a standard crossroads, but requires additional channelization measures to minimize road paving and to ensure pedestrian safety.
- d. Two other narrow streets are designated as one-way streets and routing commercial through residential neighborhoods. Bridge Street, which has a 35-foot right-of-way, has been made a one-way street in the downtown. Railroad Avenue, which has a 25-foot right-of-way, is also one-way, which requires truck movements through residential areas.

In addition to the downtown parking problem, the Warren and Cooper street corridors have a poor image problem; they are not visually welcoming streets.

Due to the City's relatively small size, there is no need to complete a separate Circulation Plan for the Master Plan. Beverly can resolve its circulation problems through strategic planning and projects.

Recommendations:

1. The City should work with the County Engineer to redesign the Five Points intersection for better pedestrian and vehicular safety.
2. The City should work with the County Engineer and the Bridge Commission staff to develop and to help find financial resource to implement a "downtown streetscape plan" and a "gateway improvement plan."
3. The City should identify opportunities for off-street parking in the Five Points business district through the redevelopment process.
4. The City should explore the feasibility of making Railroad Avenue a two-way street east of Broad Street by acquiring additional right-of-way (ROW) through the redevelopment process and other measures.
5. The City should explore the potential to amend the Land Use Plan element and Zoning Ordinance to change the existing Industrial (I) district along Railroad Avenue to be a mixed-use office and residential district. These new uses would have less impact than those of the existing industrial users.

**7. Community Facilities**

The 1999 Master Plan did not include an analysis of local community facilities, such as the municipal building with police station and courts now housed in the former elementary school, or of the fire companies and the municipal library, which is a member of the County library

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

system. The 2007 Redevelopment Plan, which supersedes the 1999 Master Plan, recommended relocating the municipal offices to the Five Points area.

Since that time, the Five Points site recommended for the new municipal building has been approved for a new commercial use. There does not appear to be any space demand issues in the current municipal building, library, fire companies' buildings, or the EMS squad building. Considering the City's population has been relatively stable in the past few decades and is not planned to change substantially in the foreseeable future past its historic highs, there is no reason for any additional community facilities planning.

Recommendation:

- a. No additional Community Facility Plan Element-related planning, policy or facility changes recommended, at this time.

**8. Educational Facilities**

The 1999 Master Plan did not include an analysis or plan for local educational facilities. The Board of Education adopts its own five-year plan, which it shares with the City. City public school students attend Beverly Elementary School from pre-Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade and then Palmyra High School. The Board of Education leases office space at Beverly's former St Joseph's parish elementary school and could use more space for its increasing enrollment.

Morning and afternoon vehicular traffic is heavy around the neighborhood elementary school. Of particular issue is the

lack of off-street parking for the school's 60 or so staff, which now park on various neighborhood streets. A dedicated off-street parking lot for the school would reduce congestion. It could also double as a parking lot for the Lauinger Field recreation complex when school is not in session.

Recommendation:

- a. Identify potential sites for a dedicated school staff parking area, which would double as a recreation area parking area.

**9. Recreation**

The 1999 Master Plan included a section on "Parks and Open Space." It recommended adopting a separate Parks, Open Space and Recreation Element for the Master Plan to specifically address the needs for improving the City's waterfront parks. (Realistically, the City is too small to warrant a separate Parks, Open Space and Recreation Element.) The 1999 Master Plan also recommended that these parks be incorporated into the National Park Service's Delaware River Heritage Trail.

Since that time, the City has moved its active recreational facilities to Lauinger Field adjacent to the elementary school. Lauinger Field is owned by the City but maintained by the Board of Education. The facility has no off-street parking. Children from Beverly City are now welcomed in the youth and athletic programs in adjacent Delanco and Edgewater Park townships. The City has also designated the entire waterfront as an area in need of redevelopment,

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

including the waterfront parks between Cooper and Magnolia streets.

The adopted 2007 Redevelopment Plan, which supersedes the 2001 Zoning Ordinance, relocated the waterfront parks to the site of the existing sewer treatment plant and the Dunes dredge spoils impoundment area. The relocation of the plant and the closure of the impoundment area for City recreational uses are unlikely in the near future. For this reason, the Joint Land Use Board will be addressing plans for the future improvement of the waterfront parks and other municipal parks in a new Land Use Plan element and a revised Redevelopment Plan.

Recommendations:

- a. The Joint Land Use Board should address the planning needs for the City's recreational facilities in a new Land Use Plan element and revised Redevelopment Plan.
- b. The City should identify potential sites for a dedicated school staff parking area, which would double as a recreation area parking area.

**10. Capital Improvements**

Beverly is a small town, and its City Council and Joint Land Use Board are in frequent communication. The City Council does not provide a copy of its Capital Improvement Plan to the Joint Land Use Board for its review. Given the relatively small size of the City, as well as the presence of the mayor and a council person on the Joint Land Use Board, this is not a substantial issue. If there were a substantial capital improvement issue that potentially would affect land use

issues in Beverly, it is anticipated that the City Council would keep the Joint Land Use Board directly involved.

Recommendation:

- a. The City should continue to involve the Joint Land Use Board on capital improvement issues, as they arise.

**11. Conservation**

With the exception of the Dunes dredge spoils area on the northwest side of the City next to Delanco, most of Beverly has been developed. There is no need for Beverly to prepare a Conservation Plan Element for its Master Plan. NJDEP has advised Beverly that its section of the Dunes site is off-limits for any recreational or redevelopment purposes.

Access to the Delaware River is a critical part of Beverly's conservation and redevelopment planning. The City has also been in discussions with NJDEP about the historic bulkhead line and potential for infill to build a 25-foot wide promenade along the riverfront. The State agency indicated that it would facilitate this type of project as part of a future waterfront redevelopment project.

Recommendation:

- a. The City should explore the potential to reclaim the City's historic bulkhead and development of a riverfront promenade as part of future waterfront redevelopment.

**12. Farmland Preservation**

Beverly does not have a Farmland Preservation Plan element for its Master Plan. The Joint Land Use Board does

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

not recommend investing in one due to the lack of agricultural land uses in the City.

Recommendation:

a. No additional Farmland Preservation Plan Element-related planning or policy changes recommended.

**13. Development Transfer**

Beverly does not have a Development Transfer Plan Element for its Master Plan. The Joint Land Use Board does not recommend investing in one due to the impracticality of using a transfer of development rights (TDR) program to preserve farmland or open space in a developed community, such as Beverly.

Recommendation:

a. No additional Development Transfer Plan Element-related planning or policy changes recommended.

**14. Historic Preservation**

Beverly is a historic waterfront community, which played a significant part in the County's 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Industrial Revolution at the turn-of-the-19<sup>th</sup>-century. Many of its older structures from that period are located east of Magnolia Street. Among them is one property on the State and National Register of Historic Places: St. Stephen's Episcopal Church (ID#106) at Warren and Wilmerton streets. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has determined that six other areas also potentially meet the State Register of Historic Places criteria:

- Beverly Riverbank Historic District (ID#746) -Along the Delaware River from Beverly City's northern border to Van Kirk Street
- Beverly Manor Historic District (ID#3803) - Manor (Mt. Holly) Road and Melbourne Avenue
- Camden and Amboy Railroad Main Line Historic District (ID#2970) - Camden and Amboy Railroad right-of-way
- Cooper Street Historic District (ID#309) - Cooper Street between Warren and Railroad
- Steamboat Wharf Complex [Site] (ID#747) – Delaware River at foot of Broad Street
- Warren Street Streetscape (ID#748) - Warren Street from Beverly City's northern border to Van Kirk Street

Beverly's collection of historic homes and other buildings is not as numerous as that in Bordentown City or Burlington City, which have local historic district ordinances and rehabilitation guidelines. Because of this and the inability of many of the City's residents with the financial capacity to restore their structures, Beverly's historic preservation strategy should not include the same regulatory measures used by those communities. The Joint Land Use Board encourages the City to develop a policy of local historic preservation education and encouragement, perhaps with the assistance of other municipal and county partners in the River Route strategic regional planning effort.

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

Recommendations:

1. The City should reach out to other municipal and county partners in the River Route to assist in developing programs to help educate people about their, and their neighbors', historic properties how to maintain and rehabilitate them, to offer incentives to help them undertake these projects, and then to recognize their successful efforts along the way and upon completion.
2. The Redevelopment Plan should be amended to consider rehabilitation of Cooper Street's historic facades as part of any change of use or density program.

**15. Solid Waste Management and Recycling**

Beverly periodically updates its solid waste and recycling measures to be in compliance with the County's solid waste and recycling district plan.

Recommendation:

1. The City should continue to implement its solid waste management and recycling ordinance and other implementation measures and ensure that redevelopment projects use best management practices to handle waste and recycling.

**16. Stormwater Management**

The Joint Land Use Board adopted and the City Council approved the State-required Stormwater Management

Plan element and ordinances in 2006 and 2007. The City continues to update and implement its approved plan, as required.

Recommendation:

1. The City should continue to implement the City's Stormwater Management Plan and ensure that redevelopment uses best management practices to handle stormwater runoff.

**17. Utility Services**

The City's receives its water supply from New Jersey American Water Company. Its supply and infrastructure are sufficient for existing and future needs. The company is now examining the well's pressure capacity in light of a 2013 industrial fire in Delanco. The company's former wellhead properties on the City waterfront have been closed and are now owned by the City and function as Veteran's Park. The City has targeted them for redevelopment.

The sewage treatment plant, which accepts waste from adjacent Delanco Township, is more than one century old but is well-maintained and compliant with all regulations. The 2007 Redevelopment Plan recommended relocating the plant to an area now used by the US Army Corps of Engineers to handle Delaware River dredge spoils. While it would be ideal to relocate the plant and redevelop the current site for a higher and better use, it is realistically infeasible at this time.

The Beverly Sewerage Authority, however, owns additional uplands areas south of the existing plant and fronting on

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

Second Street, where future redevelopment could be located.

Recommendation:

1. The City should amend the 2007 Redevelopment Plan to reflect existing conditions for the City's sewage plant.
2. The City should explore opportunities with the Beverly Sewerage Authority for redevelopment of its excess properties.

**18. Official Map**

The City Council has not adopted an Official Map for Beverly, due to the small size and developed nature of the City. The Joint Land Use Board does not recommend the need to have an Official Map, at this time. However, the Joint Land Use Board recognizes that the Redevelopment Plan for the waterfront area should recommend continuation of existing street patterns, such as the improvement of Second Street (now a paper street), the continuation of Front Street and of other cross streets, as appropriate.

Recommendation:

- a. No additional Official Map-related planning or policy changes recommended. Future street locations will be prescribed in a revised redevelopment plan.

**19. Regional Planning**

Beverly is one of the 12 communities that have endorsed the River Route regional strategic revitalization plan. The 12 municipalities have agreed to support a regional planning strategy that welcomes development, redevelopment

and conservation to revitalize the corridors along the Delaware River, NJ Transit River Line and US Route 130. The regional collaborative is managed by the Board of Chosen Freeholders' River Route Advisory Committee.

The Joint Land Use Board believes that it would be in the best interest of Beverly for the City to continue its involvement with the River Route regional planning and implementation efforts, which include assisting municipalities, such as Beverly, with their local planning needs.

Recommendation:

1. Continue participation in the Board of Chosen Freeholders' River Route Advisory Committee.

**20. Statewide Planning**

Because the twelve municipalities in the River Route region based their regional study on the region's special features and the key concepts of the 2001 NJ State Plan, the study is consistent with the State Plan.

Recommendation:

1. No additional State Plan-related planning or policy changes recommended.

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

**E. RECOMMENDED REDEVELOPMENT PLANNING**

MLUL section 40:55D-89e provides that the Master Plan Reexamination Report shall state:

*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 City of Beverly has designated redevelopment areas in several portions of the municipality, such as the waterfront, downtown Five Points district, the central R-3 zoning district and the Railroad Avenue and Cooper Street corridors, and prepared a redevelopment plan for them in 2007. A review the Redevelopment Plan finds that the plan's recommended actions are generally consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the 1999 master plan and this reexamination report.

The 2007 Redevelopment Plan, however, is based on a series of assumptions, some of which may no longer be valid:

- The City has funds to relocate and build a new sewage treatment plant;
- The State will release lands now used for dredge spoils to build the new sewage treatment plant and recreational areas; and

- The relocation of 72 Delacove public housing households, subsequent demolition of the complex, and rebuilding the area at the same density is cost effective.

The Joint Land Use Board has re-examined the feasibility of these three assumptions and recently determined that the plan's recommendations for the 61 acres north of Second Street and west of Broad Street must be modified to reflect existing conditions, which are unlikely to change, such as the location of the sewer plant and the public housing. The Board has also realized that other sections of the Redevelopment Plan, such as converting the single-family detached homes along Cooper Street to apartment buildings, is contrary to the master plan's other objectives.

The Joint Land Use Board should consider amending the redevelopment plan so that it could be more readily implemented as an overlay district and incorporated into the City's Zoning Ordinance.

In addition, the City has designated the remainder of the municipality as an "area in need of rehabilitation." This designation enables the City to offer various incentives to property owners and redevelopers to upgrade their residential and commercial properties to prevent further property deterioration and to promote the overall development of the City without any threat of eminent domain. Designating the remainder of the City as "an area in need of rehabilitation" does not conflict with the status of the existing designated "area in need of redevelopment." The two designations have different applications, depending on the types of municipal

**CITY OF BEVERLY  
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
2014 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

incentives the City may wish to offer to property owners and redevelopers.

The entire City meets Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL) criterion 2 for designation as an "area in need of rehabilitation" because more than half of the housing stock in the City is at least 50 years old.

The LRHL defines "rehabilitation" as "an undertaking, by means of extensive repair, reconstruction or renovation of existing structures, with or without the introduction of new construction or the enlargement of existing structures, in any area that has been determined to be in need of rehabilitation or redevelopment, to eliminate substandard structural or housing conditions and arrest the deterioration of that area."

A windshield and walking survey of the City in the summer of 2013 found that older homes and deteriorated housing may be found in almost every corner of the City, including those areas outside the designated "redevelopment area." A municipal program of incentivized renovation and rehabilitation of these structures' interior and exterior structural, mechanical, weatherproofing and other systems would be beneficial to the City's revitalization efforts.