

Buckeye Properties Redevelopment Plan

Township of Woodbridge



Prepared by:
Township of Woodbridge
Department of Planning & Development

January 2018

ENDORSED 2/07/2018 by Township of Woodbridge Planning Board

ADOPTED 2/20/2018 by Township of Woodbridge Council

Buckeye Properties Redevelopment Plan

Township of Woodbridge

Prepared by
Woodbridge Township Department of Planning & Development

Marta E. Lefsky, A.I.C.P., P.P.
License No. 05177

Eric Griffith, A.I.C.P., P.P.
License No. 33LI00622200

Chris Kesici, A.I.C.P., P.P.
License No. 33LI00618600

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
BUCKEYE PROPERTIES REDEVELOPMENT AREA ZONING STANDARDS.....	10
RELATIONSHIP OF PLAN TO THE TOWNSHIP LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE	14
BUCKEYE PROPERTIES REDEVELOPMENT PLAN RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER PLANS.....	16
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN	20

Table of Figures

<i>Figure 1: Redevelopment Area Parcel Map.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Figure 2: Redevelopment Area Aerial Map.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Figure 3: Existing Zoning.....</i>	<i>8</i>
Figure 4: Flood Map.....	9

INTRODUCTION

This Redevelopment Plan represents an opportunity to improve industrial space in the Port Reading section of Woodbridge Township. This plan will foster the transformation of properties into productive heavy industrial use. This Redevelopment Area should be a highly desirable location for a business to thrive.

The redevelopment of the Buckeye properties in Port Reading has unique challenges. In response to the physical and economic conditions in this particular area the Township Council requested that the Planning Board evaluate certain properties as a “non-condemnation area in need of redevelopment” on August 19, 2015. On September 1, 2015 the Council concluded that the Area did meet the criteria to be designated as a “non-condemnation area in need of redevelopment”.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

According to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (N.J.S.A. 40:A 12A-1, et. seq.) the Redevelopment Plan shall include an outline for the planning, development, redevelopment or rehabilitation of the project area sufficient to indicate:

- Its relationship to definitive local objectives as to appropriate land uses, density of population and improved traffic and public transportation, public utilities, recreational and community facilities and other public improvements;
- Proposed land uses and building requirements in the project area;
- Adequate provision for the temporary and permanent relocation as necessary of residents in the project area, including an estimate of the extent to which decent, safe, and sanitary dwelling units, affordable to displaced residents will be available in the existing local housing market;
- An identification of any property within the Redevelopment Area proposed to be acquired in accordance with the Redevelopment Plan;
- Any significant relationship of the Redevelopment Plan to:
 - A) The Master Plans of contiguous municipalities;
 - B) The Master Plan of the County in which the municipality is located; and;

- C) The State Development and Redevelopment Plans adopted pursuant to the “State Planning Act.”

PLANNING CONTEXT

The Township of Woodbridge is 24.2 square miles in size and located in northeastern Middlesex County. The Township of Woodbridge is bordered by Clark Township, the City of Rahway, the City of Linden, and Union County to the north; the Borough of Carteret, the Arthur Kill and the City of Perth Amboy to the east; the Raritan River to the south; and Edison Township to the west.

The Port Reading section is the eastern most section in the Township. It is generally bound by the Woodbridge Township sections of Avenel, Sewaren, and Woodbridge proper to the west, the borough of Carteret to the east, and the Arthur Kill to the south.

The Redevelopment Area is located at the intersection of Cliff Road and Milos Way in Port Reading and has extensive frontage along the Arthur Kill. This Redevelopment Plan promotes responsible, sustainable and resilient development as the Area is located within FEMA designated Special Flood Hazard Areas and areas of moderate flood risk, with most of the area mapped into AE and VE flood zones.

The Redevelopment Area consists of these parcels:

Block	Lot
756	3
756.01	2
756.02	1
757	1
760	6
760.01	2
760.01	3
760.01	8.012
760.02	1
760.02	2
760.02	3
760.02	23.03
1095.01	6
Smiths Creek	Smiths Creek

Figure 1: Redevelopment Area Parcel Map

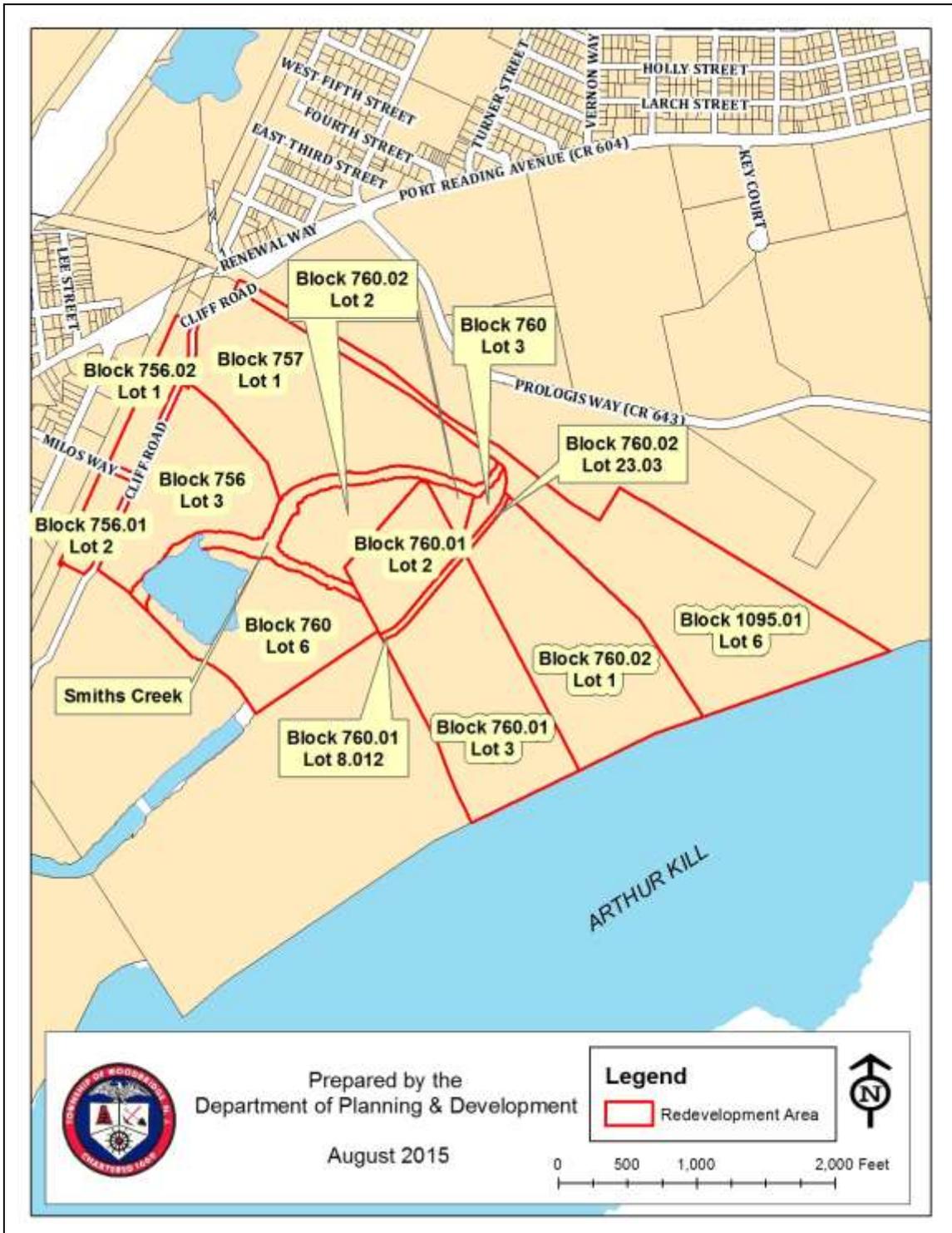


Figure 2: Redevelopment Area Aerial Map



January 2018 Updated Map

HISTORY OF PORT READING

The Port Reading section of Woodbridge Township has a long history as an area of industry. In 1890, the Reading Railroad established a terminal for shipping coal on the Arthur Kill. A community soon developed around the port and the area became known as “Port Reading.” Housing, as well as community facilities, such as St. Anthony’s Roman Catholic Church and School # 9 were built for terminal workers and their families. Surviving from the terminal is the McMyler Coal Dumper, an enormous device used to collect coal from hopper cars and dump it onto barges.

Port Reading underwent significant redevelopment in the early 1970’s as Woodbridge Township implemented “Project Bowtie,” an urban renewal project. Project Bowtie resulted in the rehabilitation of 225 housing units; 34 new single family homes; new community facilities, such as a new pool, post office, firehouse, library, parks, and a new School # 9. The project also included many new infrastructure improvements, such as new streets, curbs, and public utilities.

In 2003, the Prologis Corporation purchased a former 235-acre PSE&G site, brownfield site fronting Port Reading Avenue, Port Reading’s main commercial road. The multi-building warehouse facility , is known as the Port Reading Business Park, commenced its building in November 2007. As part of the Prologis development, in December 2007 an extension of Industrial Highway opened, diverting an estimated 1,200 trucks from Port Reading Avenue.

The Buckeye properties in the redevelopment area were owned and operated by the Hess Corporation. The site was primarily used to refine crude oil and store oil in above ground storage tanks. The oil refinery was built in 1958. Visible from miles away, the red-lettered-lighted smoke stack of the Hess refinery was an iconic image for generations. During its operation, the facility employed over 2,000 people and produced 70,000 barrels of product per day. As the Hess Corporation sold off assets and restructured, the facility was purchased by Buckeye Port Reading Terminal, LLC.

MASTER PLANNING AND ZONING DESIGNATION HISTORY

The Township Master Plan recognizes that the current land use for this area is industrial. The Master Plan's Land Use Plan map proposes this area be zoned M-2 Heavy Industrial

PLAN GOALS

The overall goal of this Redevelopment Plan is to address the existing conditions that have negatively impacted the Area and comprehensively upgrade the area for redevelopment. The Township aims to reach the following goals:

- To stimulate economic investment in the Area;
- To promote the effective use of all the Redevelopment Area properties and to increase property tax base;
- To develop a safe and modern industrial site;
- To improve the physical appearance of the Area.

Figure 3: Existing Zoning

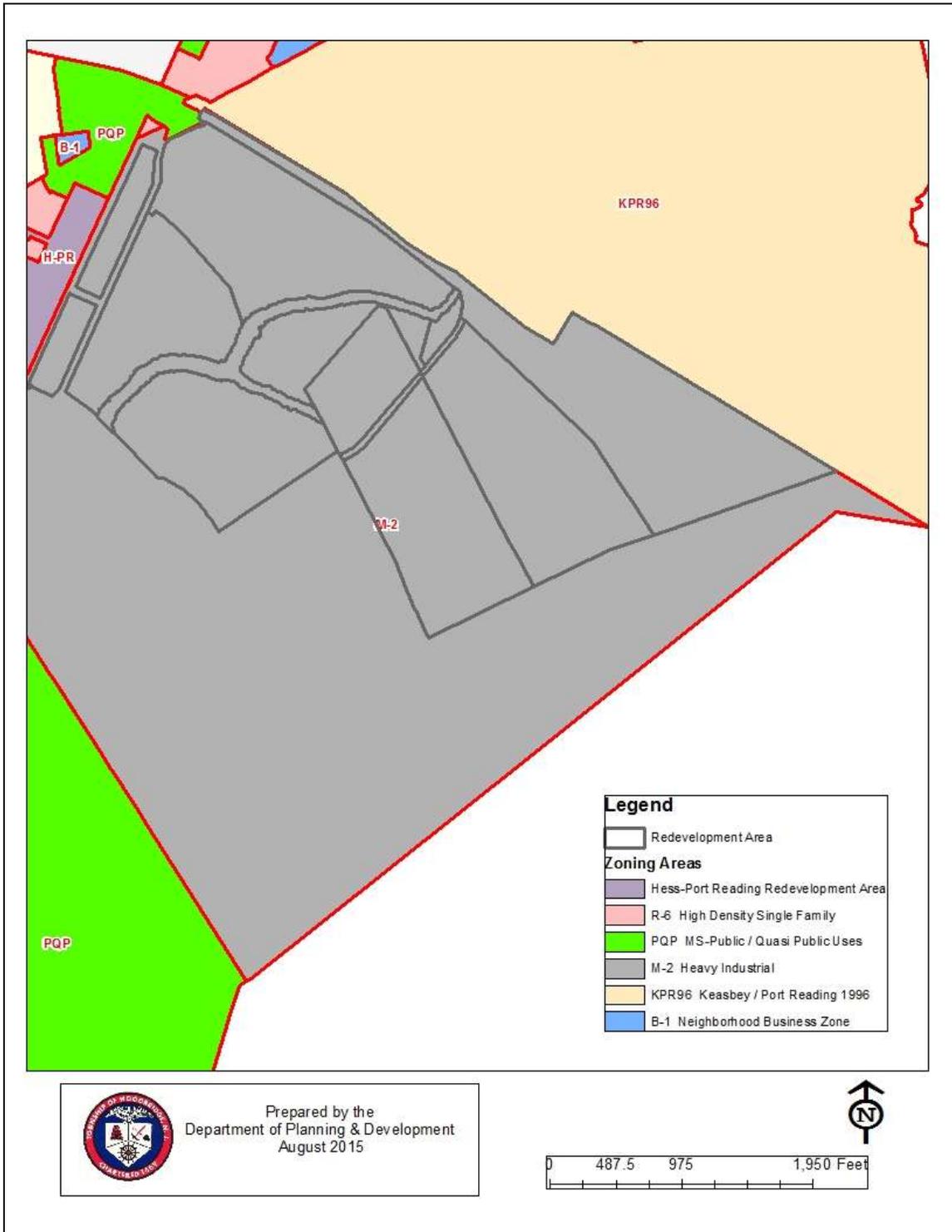
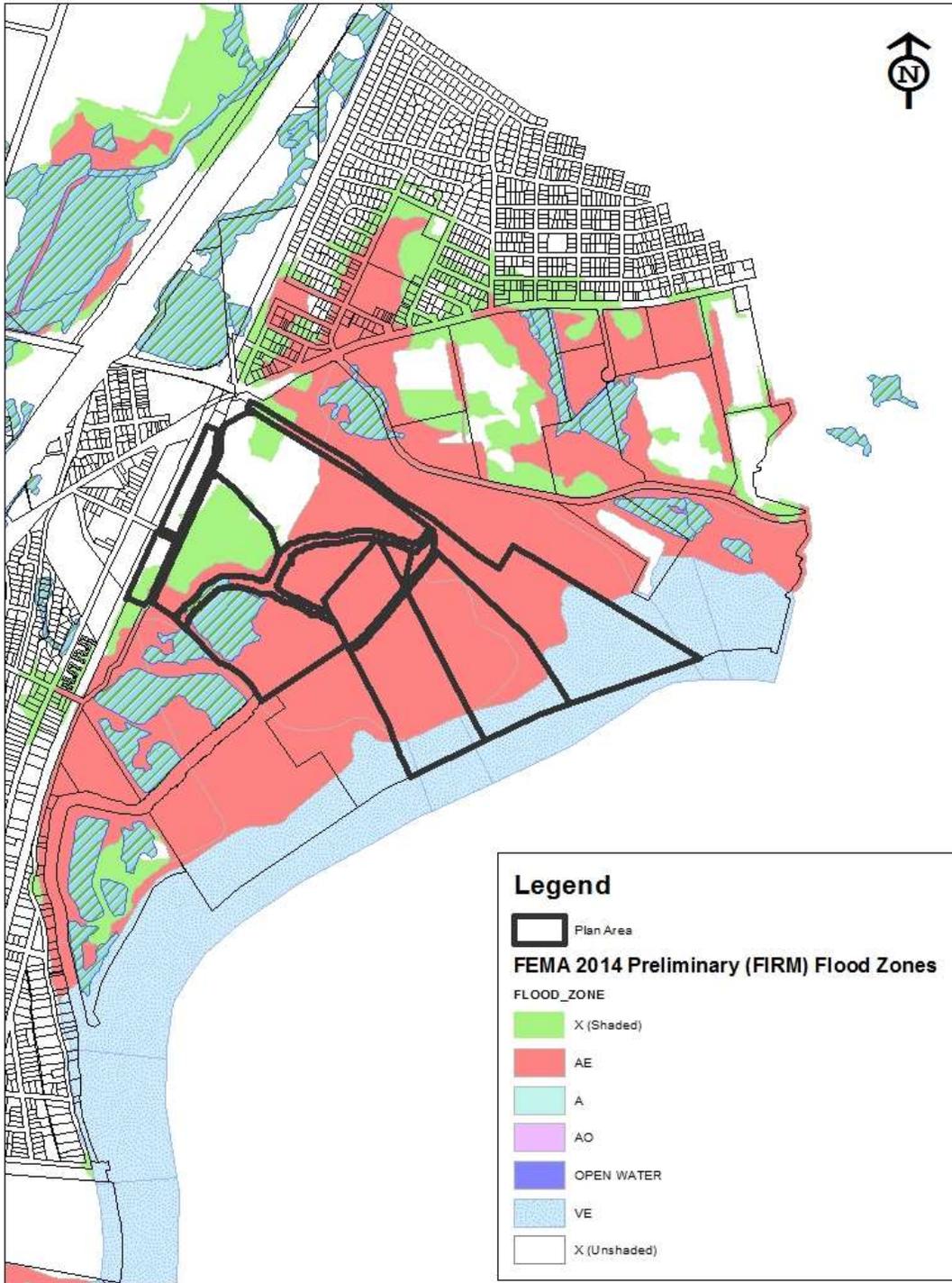


Figure 4: Flood Map 2014



BUCKEYE PROPERTIES REDEVELOPMENT AREA ZONING STANDARDS

It is the intent of this Plan to encourage the redevelopment of the Area by improving current infrastructure to existing businesses and protect environmentally sensitive land. This Redevelopment Plan promotes responsible, sustainable and resilient development as the Area is located within FEMA designated Special Flood Hazard Areas and areas of moderate flood risk, with most of the area mapped into AE and VE flood zones.

The following standards contain information pertaining to the purpose of the district; the permitted and accessory uses; bulk standards; and other district-specific standards. The general design standards apply to all zones. The evaluation of any proposal submitted under the Redevelopment Plan shall be based upon sections of this Redevelopment Plan entitled Relationship of Plan to the Township Land Development Regulations including District and Design Standards.

Purpose: The purpose of this Redevelopment Zone is to enhance current industrial properties.

Permitted Uses:

A building may be erected, altered or used and a lot or premises may be occupied and used for any of the following purposes:

- Manufacturing of light or heavy machinery
- Manufacturing of food products
- Manufacturing of spirituous liquors
- Manufacturing of concrete or plastic products
- Laboratories, including manufacturing, but not clinics, comprising any of the following: biological, chemical, dental, pharmaceuticals and general research.
- Petroleum refining, oil storage for wholesale purposes or accessory to a plant for the refining of crude oil or the manufacture of petroleum products, including pipelines for the transportation of oil and refined products accessory to such storage, refining or manufacturing uses
- Railroad classification, freight or storage yards, railroad shops and all appurtenances thereto
- Chemical manufactures not involving noxious odors or danger from fire or explosives

- Concrete central mixing and proportioning plants
- Electricity production plants
- Manufacturing of metal and metal products, processing, fabrication and assembly
- Warehouses, wholesale sales, storage and distribution
- In addition to any of the above, any industry not inconsistent with the above that is totally similar in purpose, function, character and effort

Accessory Uses:

- Offices connected to the principal use; private garage space for the storage of vehicles operated exclusively as part of a permitted use; signs, fences and hedges, parking and other customary accessory uses and structures which are clearly incidental to the principal structure and use
- Infrastructure constructed in support of any of the permitted primary uses

Bulk Standards:

Principal Building:

- Minimum lot size: 100 acres of contiguous lot area
- Minimum lot width: 100 feet
- Minimum lot depth: 150 feet
- Minimum front yard setback (measured from the future street right-of-way): 60 feet
- Minimum rear yard setback: 50 feet
- Minimum side yard setback: 30 feet
- Minimum total side yard setback: 50 feet
- Side and rear yard setbacks may be reduced as follows: No side or rear yard shall be required when the boundary line is a railroad right of way.
- Maximum structure coverage: 70%
- Maximum impervious coverage: 90%
- Maximum building height: 70 feet
- Maximum accessory infrastructure height: 85 feet

Accessory Buildings and Structures:

- Accessory buildings, infrastructure, and uses, shall meet all the setback requirements of a principal building

Additional Standards:

Off-street parking and loading is required subject to the following conditions:

- Manufacturing, research, industrial, warehouses, wholesale or laboratories – one (1) parking space for each employee employed at one (1) time on maximum shift, plus ten percent 10% of the employee spaces for visitors, not to exceed (40)
- Offices, office buildings, office research buildings: one (1) parking space for each three hundred (300) square feet of net floor area (not including common areas)

Loading and Unloading:

- Loading and unloading shall be provided according to the following schedule:

GROSS FLOOR AREA	SPACES REQUIRED
4,000 to 25,000	1
25,001 to 50,000	2
50,001 to 75,000	3
75,001 to 100,000	4
Each Additional 50,000	1 Additional

Screening:

- Loading facilities open to public view shall be screened from public view by a solid fence and evergreen shrubs not less than six (6) feet high

Landscaping:

- Site considerations – Natural site features, such as existing trees, streams, rock outcroppings etc, shall be preserved wherever possible. Whenever such

natural features are absent or insufficient or have been destroyed during the development of the site, additional new plantings of a sufficient size as determined by the municipal agency shall be established to provide environmental protection to beautify the buildings and grounds and to provide privacy, shade and the screening out of objectionable features created on the site

- All street trees and on-site deciduous shade trees shall not be less than 2 ½ inches in diameter, measured one (1) foot above the root crown
- All trees to be removed shall be done so in compliance with the Replacement of Trees section of the Township's Land Use and Development Ordinance

Outside Storage:

- No outside storage of materials, raw or finished, shall be stored in any yard or open area unless as part of site plan review before the Planning Board, the designated Redeveloper/Applicant presents a landscape screening plan that appropriately addresses the Township's aesthetic concerns
- All outside agency rules and regulations must be complied with, including but not limited to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

Circulation:

- Efforts shall be made to improve vehicular circulation and the obsolete layout and design of the existing site.

RELATIONSHIP OF PLAN TO THE TOWNSHIP LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (APPLICATION & PROCESS)

The Redevelopment Areas shall be redeveloped in accordance with the standards detailed in this Redevelopment Plan. This Plan supersedes the use and bulk provisions of the Township Land Use and Development Ordinance (Chapter 150) for the Redevelopment Area unless specifically referenced. Other Township regulations affecting developments that are in conflict are superseded by this Plan; however, existing engineering standards, performance standards and definitions shall apply.

In connection with site plan or subdivision applications, the Planning Board may grant deviations from the regulations contained within this Redevelopment Plan where by reason of exceptional narrowness, shallowness or shape of a specific piece of property or by reason of exceptional topographic conditions, pre-existing structures or physical features uniquely affecting a specific piece of property, or by reason of an extraordinary and exceptional situation uniquely affecting a specific piece of property or the structures lawfully existing thereon, the strict application of any provision of, or regulation adopted pursuant to this Redevelopment Plan would result in peculiar and exceptional practical difficulties to, or exceptional or undue hardship upon, the developer or redeveloper of such property. The Planning Board may also grant a deviation from the regulations contained within this Redevelopment Plan related to a specific piece of property where the purposes of this Redevelopment Plan would be advanced by such deviation from the strict application of the requirements of this Plan and the benefits of granting the deviation would outweigh any detriments. In connection with site plan or subdivision applications, the Planning Board may grant deviations from the regulations contained within this Redevelopment Plan, pursuant to the criteria of N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70c(1) and (2) for bulk variances, and such deviations shall not be considered an amendment to this Redevelopment Plan. No deviations may be granted under the terms of this section unless such deviations can be granted without resulting in substantial detriment to the public good and will not substantially impair the intent and purpose of the Redevelopment Plan.

The Planning Board may grant exceptions or waivers of design standards from the requirements for site plan or subdivision approval as may be reasonable and within

the general purpose and intent of the provisions for site plan review and/or subdivision approval within the Plan, if the literal enforcement of one or more provisions of the Plan is impracticable or would exact undue hardship because of peculiar conditions pertaining to this site. No deviations may be granted which will result in permitting a use that is not a permitted use within this Redevelopment Plan. Any deviations from standards of this Plan that results in a “d” variance pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70d shall be addressed as an amendment to the Plan rather than via variance relief through the Township’s Zoning Board of Adjustment. An application requesting a deviation from the requirements of this Redevelopment Plan shall provide public notice of such application in accordance with the public notice requirement set forth in N.J.S.A. 40:55D-12. All development must be approved by the Planning Board and shall be submitted through the normal site plan and subdivision procedures as identified as N.J.S.A. 40:55D, et seq.

Final adoption of this Redevelopment Plan by the Township Council shall be considered an amendment to the Township of Woodbridge Land Use and Development Ordinance and Zoning Map. Unless otherwise defined in the Plan, terms used in this Plan shall have the same meaning as defined in the Township’s Land Use and Development Ordinance.

BUCKEYE PROPERTIES REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER PLANS

RELATIONSHIP TO THE TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

The Township of Woodbridge's last comprehensive Master Plan was prepared in February 2009 and reexamined in 2016. The Master Plan recommended this area be devoted to M-2 Heavy Industrial.

The Master Plan adopted the following goals that are relevant to this Plan:

- To control industrial development:
 - By limiting industrial development to land suitable for industrial use, including sites with flat topography, good drainage and access to arterial and primary roadways.
 - To exclude residential uses from industrial areas
- To expand and protect the Township's ratable base through the attraction and retention of nationally known and respected companies

For all these aforementioned reasons, this redevelopment plan is consistent with the Township Master Plan.

MASTER PLANS OF ADJACENT MUNICIPALITIES

The Buckeye Properties Redevelopment Area is located along Cliff Road and Milos Way in Port Reading. It is not near any neighboring municipality. This plan is not expected to have any adverse impact on adjacent municipalities.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY PLANS

Middlesex County Growth Management Strategy

Between 1990 and 1995, Middlesex County prepared phased Growth Management Strategy to address infrastructure need, regional design and growth management

strategies. The County was subdivided into four regions. Woodbridge Township is located in the northeast region, as were all neighboring municipalities.

Phase I of the plan found that large levels of public & private investment were necessary to maintain infrastructure with the highest cost items being maintenance and improvement to sewers, parks and roads.

Phase II of the plan focused on managing actual growth pertaining to five specific case studies. None of the case studies focused on areas of Woodbridge.

In Phase III of the study, three primary recommendations were made as part of the Metropark Case Study:

- Traffic congestion inhibits growth in the area. Access to Metropark is limited by the narrow rail underpasses and New Jersey Transit's parking expansion will place an even greater burden on local roads. Transportation management measures should be implemented intensively for this area;
- The NJ Transit parking deck project includes the construction of space for retail facilities to better serve commuter needs. Additional retail development to serve nearby office workers should be evaluated;
- Growth in this study area is limited by increasingly scarce buildable land and the need for increased sewage capacity in the Township. A stormwater management plan should be developed for the entire South Branch of the Rahway River drainage area in order to determine the most effective stormwater control measures.

This Redevelopment Plan is consistent with the recommendations discussed in the Middlesex County Growth Management Strategy and will serve to offer some of "the retail development" contemplated for neighboring office workers.

Consistency with Middlesex County Master Plan

The Buckeye Properties Redevelopment Area is generally consistent with the elements of the Middlesex County Master Plan, a document that addresses sprawl and sustainability in the region. The Buckeye Properties Redevelopment Plan relates directly to the goals, values and objectives of the Middlesex County Master Plan which aims to:

- Make fuller use of existing transportation lines and facilities. The County Plan anticipated that public transportation would achieve greater significance as a necessary alternative to the private automobile, with its attendant problems of pollution, energy availability, and congestion;
- Find a more feasible alternative to the present situation of “strip” commercial development found on major roads, and single-family homes on unnecessarily large lots;
- “Cluster” future growth around definable town centers and transportation facilities to include commercial and office employment as well as residential, with land use intensity decreasing as distance from the town center increases.

New Jersey State Development & Redevelopment Plan

The Buckeye Properties Redevelopment Plan is consistent and would effectuate the plans and policies of the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP), adopted in 2001. The SDRP is a unique document that guides State-level development and redevelopment policy as well as local and regional planning efforts. This Plan is consistent with the following statewide goals in the SDRP.

- Revitalize the State’s cities and towns;
- Promote beneficial economic growth, development and renewal for all residents of New Jersey;
- Protect the environment, prevent and clean up pollution;
- Provide adequate public facilities and services at a reasonable cost;
- Preserve and enhance areas with historic, cultural, scenic, open space, and recreational value;
- Ensure sound and integrated planning and implementation statewide.

The SDRP also includes a State Plan Policy Map, which divides the state into regions, known as Planning Areas, and includes specific goals for each area.

The Policy Map also identifies “Centers”, locations into which development is to be directed, “Environs,” areas to be protected from future growth. The Township of

Woodbridge falls in the ‘Metropolitan Planning Area’ (PA1). The State Plan recognizes that all communities in this planning area are essentially fully developed; hence much of the change in land uses will occur as redevelopment.

The State Plan’s planning objectives for the ‘Metropolitan Planning Area’ includes:

- Providing for much of the state’s future redevelopment;
- Revitalizing cities and towns;
- Redesigning areas of sprawl;
- Protecting the character of existing stable communities.

As of the writing of this Plan, a new State Plan is being developed, called “The State Strategic Plan: New Jersey’s State Development and Redevelopment Plan.”

This Plan will serve to meet each of these goals for the designated area.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

REDEVELOPMENT ENTITY

The Woodbridge Township Redevelopment Agency will serve as the Redevelopment Entity.

Phasing:

- Projects may be developed in phases;
- The phasing may include phased start and completion dates among the various land use components, as well as internal phasing schedules within sections, subject to specific provisions in the redevelopment agreement.

Relocation:

- There is no relocation that will be required to implement this plan.

SELECTION OF DESIGNATED DEVELOPERS

Potential redevelopers will be required to submit to the Redevelopment Entity for review and approval prior to the designation of a redeveloper(s) at a minimum:

- Financial responsibility and capability;
- Estimated development cost;
- Estimated time schedule;
- Conceptual site plans including elevations;
- Fiscal impact analysis.

APPOINTMENT OF A DESIGNATED REDEVELOPER

The Redevelopment Entity may select one or more redevelopers to participate in the implementation of the Redevelopment Plan.

As part of the process to be designated a redeveloper, the Redevelopment Entity will negotiate a formal Redevelopment Agreement.

Designation of a Redeveloper(s) by the Redevelopment Entity shall be subject to the execution of an appropriate Redevelopment Agreement.

A person or entity that owns or controls the parcels within the Redevelopment Area shall be given priority in the designation of Redeveloper, provided such person or entity has appropriate development experience and financial resources, as this would minimize acquisition costs and delay.

CONDITIONS IN REDEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT(S)

Each Redevelopment Agreement will be contingent upon the following conditions, restrictions, and/or requirements.

1. Each Redevelopment Agreement will incorporate the pertinent aspects of the selected redeveloper's proposal and will address financial considerations, planning, phasing, development and such other issues as deemed appropriate and/or as required according to state law in order to implement the Redevelopment Plan.
2. A designated redeveloper will be obligated to complete on-site improvements as approved, together with any specified off-site improvements, as may be required in accordance with the Redevelopment Plan and the Redevelopment Agreement.
3. Any necessary deed of conveyance shall include a restriction that the designated redeveloper and his successors or assigns shall devote land to the uses specified in the Redevelopment Plan and shall not devote such land to any other uses.
4. No designated redeveloper will be permitted to dispose of property until the issuance of the Certificate of Completion, unless the prior written consent of the Redevelopment Agency has been obtained other than as may be provided in the Redevelopment Agreement.
5. No covenant, agreement, lease, conveyance, or other instrument shall be effective or executed by the Township of Woodbridge and the Redevelopment Entity or by the purchasers or lessees from them, or by any successors in interest of such purchasers or lessees, by which land in the Redevelopment Area is restricted as to sale, lease, or occupancy upon the basis of race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, or marital status.

6. The Redeveloper(s) shall pay to the Redevelopment Entity an application fee for consideration of redeveloper as a designated redeveloper and will fund an escrow for the Agency's costs in implementing redevelopment.
7. The Redevelopment Entity and the Township of Woodbridge reserve the right to terminate any Redevelopment Agreement with a designated redeveloper subject to the terms and conditions of the Redevelopment Agreement.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

An application for preliminary and/or final site plan approval for uses authorized in this Plan may be filed by: (i) a redeveloper designated by the Redevelopment Entity; or (ii) an assignee of the redeveloper as approved by the Redevelopment Entity. In addition to any requirements of the Redevelopment Entity, preliminary and/or final site plans and/or subdivisions, with details sufficient to comply with the Municipal Land Use Law and Local Ordinance, shall be submitted for Planning Board review and approval for each development parcel, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et seq.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Any development must be provided in accordance with the Township's Affordable Housing section of the Land Use and Development Ordinance.

AMENDING THE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

This Redevelopment Plan may be amended from time to time in compliance with the requirements of law, and subject to the terms of any Redevelopment Agreement.