



MASTER PLAN 2009 Statement of Objectives



STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Introduction

Englewood is in an enviable position. Since 1995, the city has prospered and emerged as a model of downtown revitalization. The concentration of restaurants and shops has made downtown Englewood a commercial magnet in Bergen County. The city has strong residential neighborhoods with a variety of housing types and distinguished buildings from every era since Dutch colonial settlement. The proximity to New York City and historic residential neighborhoods makes Englewood one of the most attractive communities in the metropolitan area.

The city boasts a diverse population, a major cultural center, the BergenPac Theater, and attractive recreational facilities, notably MacKay Park. It also has an impressive track record in stimulating economic development, rehabilitating housing, and revitalizing blighted areas. It is no surprise to her fiercely loyal residents that Englewood has emerged as a model city and that national and state organizations have recognized her as an urban success story.

But Englewood also faces serious challenges. The national economic condi-

tions have begun to impact Englewood. The downtown remains intact, however, businesses are experiencing difficulty. The town is overly reliant on residential property taxes to support education and other critical municipal activities and redevelopment efforts have slowed considerably in the past two years. Finally, the demolition of an increasing number of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century houses threatens the distinctive character and identity of Englewood, whose rich history is embodied in its impressive stock of buildings.

In accordance with New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law, the Englewood Planning Board must re-examine and revise or rewrite the Master Plan every six years. As a result of substantial changes both in Englewood and in advanced planning ideas over the past six years, the Planning Board deemed it necessary to rewrite the city's master plan. The previous master plan was written in 2003 and much of that Master Plan finds itself repeated in this one. The preparation of a new master plan presented an opportunity to engage the public once again in the planning process and to translate the shared vision of the community into a set of land use and design controls.



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The Planning Board recognizes that Englewood has undergone much new development since 2003 and continues to experience meaningful change. It is also noted that there are many planning

and zoning issues that will need further examination, some of which are under study at this time and other issues that will need to be carefully examined in the near future. While municipal land use law requires that a Master Plan be reexamined every six years, there is nothing to preclude the Master Plan from being

re-examined in the near future. With this in mind, the Planning Board recommends that public hearings be held to generate more input from both the public regarding future development in Englewood, the disposition of Liberty School and the Skating Rink and the future and the impact of light rail in the City and that these hearings be held in a timely manner.



The Board held ten public hearings in 2009 (January 27, February 5, February 24, March 24, May 7, June 4, August 25, October 1, October 29 and November 24), each reviewing drafts of sections of the plan. On August 25, 2009, the Planning Board held a public hearing on the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan and the Board adopted this element of the Master Plan. On November 24, 2009, the Board adopted a Master Plan subject to certain conditions.

A draft versions of the text was made available for public review prior to November 24, 2009, and were posted on the City of Englewood website:

www.cityofenglewood.org,

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which was created for the express purpose of promoting public involvement in all aspects of City government including the planning process. Draft versions were made available at City Hall for wide distribution.

The Board has developed a Statement of Objectives which appears below.

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The Master Plan frames a vision of Englewood in terms of land use control and urban design principles. The goals of the master plan are as follows:

- Preserve the character of the residential neighborhoods.
- Support residential neighborhoods to stabilize property values.
- Encourage residential development in the Central Business District.
- Improve circulation in the downtown area through new technology and a wayfinding system and improve parking enforcement to create greater access to metered parking spaces.

- Promote public transportation and trolleys, to ease traffic congestion, encourage use of peripheral parking lots, and provide access to the Central Business District from outlying areas.
- Develop pedestrian walkways and bicycle paths as the connective tissue in the city, providing access from residential areas to major community resources, including the public library, town hall, Depot Square, Mackay Park, playgrounds, parks and shopping areas.
- Design and implement a landscape plan at Veterans Memorial Park to enhance the intersection of Demarest and Dean Streets to serve as an appropriate gateway to downtown Englewood.
- Encourage mixed-use development in targeted areas, in particular the Office-Industrial Zone where land continues to be underutilized.
- Protect historic neighborhoods.
- Modify the Service Business District to encourage service-oriented retail uses in and near residential neighborhoods and limit incompatible uses in close proximity to residential uses.
- Nurture pride in our community and a sense of civic identity by setting high standards for urban design and protecting the quality of our built environment.
- Take full advantage of open space resources, in particular by redesigning Depot Square as a site of community activities, with a landscaped park, an open channel with natural banks, and facilities for an open-air market.
- Develop municipal and public initiatives to support sustainability in Englewood including waste reduction, energy conservation, water and wastewater conservation, recycling and reuse.