

Redevelopment Plan

Western Gateway District South Avenue

Cranford Township
Union County, New Jersey

September 1, 2005

Adopted on _____ by the Cranford Township Committee

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The original of this document has been signed and
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INTRODUCTION

In April 2005, T&M Associates presented to the Cranford Township Committee and Planning Board the results of a land use planning analysis of the South Avenue Corridor. The South Avenue Corridor Planning Study included a vision statement and land use planning recommendations for the future development and redevelopment of the South Avenue corridor in the Township. The study was funded by a Smart Future Planning Grant awarded to Cranford by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and the Office of Smart Growth (OSG). Consistent with the requirements of the Smart Future Planning Grant, recommendations incorporated the smart growth planning principles enumerated in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP).

The primary objective of the planning analysis was to provide recommendations for a zoning and/or redevelopment strategy along South Avenue complimentary to and supportive of the Township's other smart growth planning initiatives, including the implementation of the Township's transit village program and the revitalization and redevelopment of Cranford's downtown commercial district. Recommendations were consistent with the Township's vision for its downtown and support the Township's goals and efforts toward smart growth, transit-oriented development, and economic revitalization.

As noted in the Corridor Study, the area along South Avenue from the western Special Improvement District (SID) boundary to the municipal border with Garwood Borough serves as an important gateway into the Township and its downtown. As stated in the report:

"Given its importance as a gateway, the design and development in this area is critical. However, the existing uses and variation in building types, scale, setbacks and vacant properties makes the establishment of a coordinated land use planning approach and design in this area a particular challenge. A particularly significant parcel is the former Bradley Corrugated Box Company site. This 2.39 acre site is currently zoned ROI-2, which permits a variety of industrial, manufacturing and warehouse uses. New and used car dealerships are conditionally permitted as well.

In particular, efforts should focus on limiting continued expansion of traditional strip commercial development, particularly on the northern side of the corridor. New construction in this area should recognize the importance of good building design and incorporate gateway treatments." (South Avenue Corridor Study, p. 6.)

To implement these approaches, the study recommended that the existing ROI-2 District encompassing the Bradley Box factory should be rezoned to a new Gateway Commercial District to permit non-residential uses with a greater emphasis on commercial services and office uses that do not compete with the downtown and enhanced design standards. New development should continue the traditional pattern of development close to the street edge with parking on the sides or rear of buildings.

In addition, the plan also envisioned a new mixed-use "signature" building at the northeastern corner of South and Lincoln Avenues West with a "signature" architectural design feature. As stated in the report:

"Given its prominent position at the Township's western gateway, the architectural design of the building will be critical. To create a visual focal point for the gateway, the building should have a vertical design element, such as a clock tower or similar feature, at its southwest corner near the intersection." (South Avenue Corridor Study, p. 6.)

Options for implementing the recommendations for the Western Gateway were presented in the report. Among these was the possible designation of the area in need of rehabilitation and the adoption of a redevelopment plan for the area in accordance with the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL) (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq.). The Township Committee concurred with this approach and has determined that one of the most effective planning and implementation strategies for implementing the recommendations presented in the study is to use the redevelopment process in accordance with the LRHL.

In accordance with the procedures specified in the LRHL, the Township Engineer certified the infrastructure of South Avenue West was more than 50 years old and in need of repair making the area eligible for a rehabilitation designation. The Township Committee resolution designating the area in need of rehabilitation was sent to the Cranford Planning Board on May 24, 2005. The Planning Board reviewed the matter on June 1, 2005 and passed a resolution favoring the designation. That resolution was sent to the Township Committee.

The Township Committee passed a resolution on June 14, 2005 declaring the north side of South Avenue West (Western Gateway) from SID boundary to Lincoln Avenue an Area in Need of Rehabilitation. (See Appendix A.) The resolution was sent to the Commissioner of the NJ Department of Community Affairs for review and approval pursuant to the LRHL and has been confirmed as being consistent with the state's growth policies.

The designation of the area as being in need of rehabilitation and the adoption of this redevelopment plan implements the recommendations contained in the South Avenue Corridor Study and support the Township's Smart Growth and other planning initiatives (e.g. SID, Transit Village, redevelopment plans) and further the planning goals specified in the Vision Plan and 2005 Master Plan Reexamination Report.

REDEVELOPMENT AREA DESCRIPTION

The Western Gateway Redevelopment District is approximately 3.6 acres and consists of three (3) properties, Block 400, Lots 1 and 2.01, and Block 474, Lot 1. (See Figure 1.) The Area is located between South Avenue and the New Jersey Transit railroad right-of-way from the SID boundary to Lincoln Avenue West. The Area is a short walk to the downtown and two major mixed-use redevelopment projects, Cranford Crossing (under construction) and Riverfront Redevelopment.

The Area has a linear development pattern and limited lot depths. Development includes a series of existing and former industrial uses, including the Bradley Box factory.

The area is currently zoned ROI-2: Selected Research, Office and Industrial District. The district permits business, administrative, executive and professional offices, industrial and manufacturing uses, car dealers as a conditional use, hotels and motels, research laboratories and warehouses.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

This Redevelopment Plan is written pursuant to Section 7 of the LRHL (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-7), which provides that "no redevelopment project shall be undertaken or carried out except in accordance with a redevelopment plan adopted by ordinance of the municipal governing body." Pursuant to the requirements of the LRHL, the redevelopment plan shall include an outline for the planning, development, redevelopment, or rehabilitation of the project area sufficient to indicate:

- (1) Its relationship to definite 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.
- (2) Proposed land uses and building requirements in the project area.
- (3) 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 to them in the existing local housing market.
- (4) An identification of any property within the redevelopment area which is proposed to be acquired in accordance with the redevelopment plan.
- (5) 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 Plan adopted pursuant to the "State Planning Act," P.L. 1985, c.398 (C.52:18A-196 et al.).

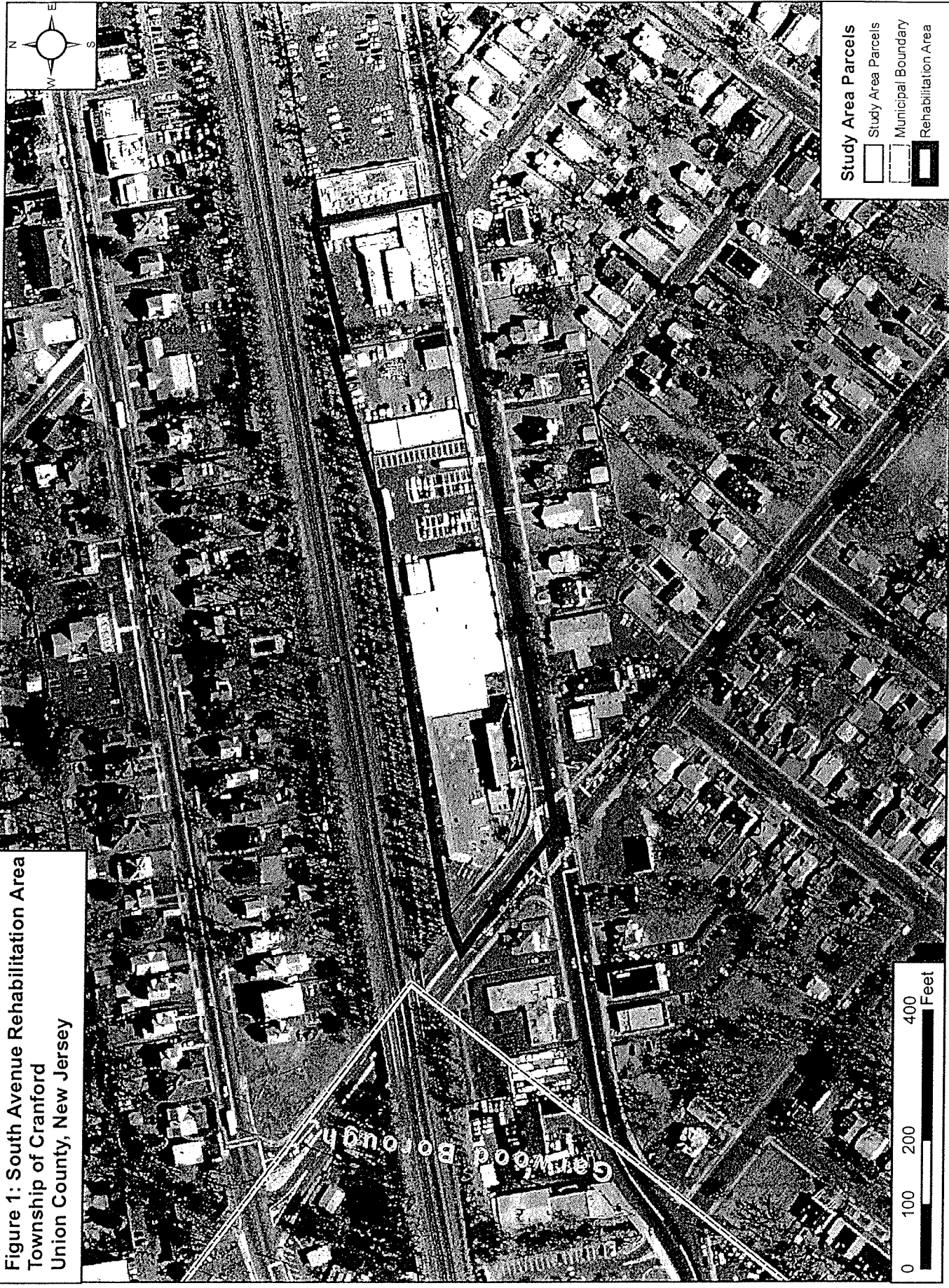
This Redevelopment Plan has been designed to meet these requirements as described in the following sections of the plan.

REDEVELOPMENT PLAN OBJECTIVES

The goals and objectives of the Western Gateway Redevelopment Plan include the following:

- Protect the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Cranford Township by redeveloping the area in a manner that contributes to the economic well-being of the Township and its quality of life;
- Create an aesthetically pleasing gateway entrance to the Township at the corner of South Avenue West and Lincoln Avenue West.
- Promote the overall economic and redevelopment objectives of the Township's Master Plan, Reexamination Reports, and related planning documents;
- Improve the aesthetic image of the Township;
- Support the development and utilization of land effectively and efficiently for community benefit;
- Improve business opportunities through promotion of new economic activities;
- Minimize strip retail development and prohibit surface parking in front of buildings;
- Encourage use of space above first floor retail for retail services and offices;
- Create a pedestrian oriented environment with a connection to the SID; minimize opening or gaps in the streetscape;
- Improve streetscape through street furniture, paving, lighting landscaping, pedestrian linkages;
- Transition from the industrial uses currently permitted in the area;
- Promote the Smart Growth objectives of the SDRP;
- Ensure that the redevelopment of the area is consistent with and supportive of Cranford Township's other planning initiatives (e.g. SID, Transit Village, redevelopment plans); and
- Improve the overall image of the corridor through design standards that address building heights, scale and massing of buildings, signage, relationship to the street edge and effective screening of on-site parking.

Figure 1: South Avenue Rehabilitation Area
Township of Cranford
Union County, New Jersey



Study Area Parcels
Study Area Parcels
Municipal Boundary
Rehabilitation Area

0 100 200 400 Feet

RELATIONSHIP TO DEFINITE LOCAL OBJECTIVES

The two most recent planning documents prepared by the Township include the 2002 Master Plan Reexamination Report and the Downtown Cranford Vision Plan. Together, these documents form the vision for the Township and the downtown respectively. This redevelopment plan is a separate targeted planning effort that is complementary and supportive of both of these plans. Specifically, the planning objectives included in the plan are designed to further advance the following Township planning goals as established in the Township's 2002 Master Plan Reexamination Report and the Downtown Cranford Vision Plan:

- Conserve the economic vitality of the central business district so that the core of Cranford remains healthy and that the periphery of the CBD remains healthy.
- Encourage development and improvement of selected industrial, commercial and service uses which are geared toward realistic future growth needs.

The development and improvement of "selected industrial, commercial and services uses" was in response to a challenge characterized as follows:

"Cranford ... is a maturing community and subject to vigorous economic development pressures as the region adjusts to changes in population and work force trends. These dynamics are presently at work in Cranford, and the ability of the Township to collectively evaluate these trends and coordinate them into the basic community fabric will determine physically and socially the Cranford of future years."

The implementation of the Western Gateway Redevelopment Plan will help ensure that the periphery of the CBD remains healthy and that the new development proposed for the area is effectively coordinated into the "basic community fabric" as contemplated in the Township comprehensive plans. Such development also will be supportive of the overall economic development objectives of the Township to meet its future growth needs. However, to achieve these objectives, it is critical that the area be properly planned from conceptual stage to actual project development. The adoption of a redevelopment plan for the area will help ensure that the Township will control the form and type of development in a manner consistent with its overall objectives for the area.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE TOWNSHIP'S LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

The Area shall be developed in accordance with the standards detailed in this plan. In order to implement the Plan consistent with the goals and objectives herein, the plan supersedes the use, bulk and design standards provisions of the Township Land Development Ordinance. Other Township regulations affecting development that are in conflict are superseded by this plan; however, existing Township engineering standards, definitions and sections not covered by the plan shall apply.

Any deviations from standards of this Plan that result in a "d" variance pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70d shall be addressed as an amendment to the Plan rather than by variance relief through the Township Zoning Board of Adjustment. "C" variance relief pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70c may be addressed by the Township Planning Board and shall be submitted through the normal site plan and subdivision procedures as identified in N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et seq.

PROPOSED LAND USES

In order to implement the vision for the area, this plan shall create a Western Gateway Redevelopment District to regulate the uses and building requirements in the area.

The district's purpose is to create an aesthetic and visually appealing gateway into the Township that includes a mix of commercial uses that are both compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, supports the function of the South Avenue Corridor as a primary arterial and commercial corridor within the Township, and is supportive of the revitalization and rehabilitation efforts in Cranford's downtown. The intent is to promote development and redevelopment that will enhance Cranford's visual character, provide an aesthetically pleasing entrance to the Township, and support the economic development of the community, while simultaneously protecting surrounding neighborhoods.

Principal Permitted Uses:

These principal permitted uses are intended to encourage development of the area for commercial use and professional offices, except that such offices shall not be located on the first floor. As such, the following principal permitted, conditional and accessory uses are appropriate for the Area:

Permitted Uses	First Floor	Second Floor
1. Retail trade	✓	
2. Commercial and professional offices		✓
3. Insurance offices, banks, savings & loans and thrift institutions, except that such uses shall not be located	Only if they provide direct customer services through tellers or automated bank machines.	✓
4. Retail service, except coin-operated laundries. Provided that security and commodity brokers, insurance offices, dealers and exchanges and services; telephone services, and income tax preparation services shall not be located on the first floor	✓	✓
5. Drive-through facilities as part of a retail trade or financial operation provided the drive-through window(s) are set back a minimum of 20 feet from the property line and are designed and screened from view as prescribed in this plan. Drive-through facilities shall be designed in a manner that is complementary to the architectural characteristics and theme of the project and consistent with design requirements and standards of the redevelopment plan. Design of drive-through facilities shall be reviewed as part of the Redevelopment Entity's responsibilities set forth in the development review process described later in this redevelopment plan.	✓	
6. Professional medical offices provided that no more than 50% of the upper floor portion of the building are occupied with medical offices and adequate parking is provided.		✓

Accessory Uses:

1. Signs
2. Architectural gateway element

Prohibited Uses:

1. Residential dwellings
2. Drive-in, drive-through, fast-food restaurants
3. Individual retail uses in excess of 20,000 square feet.
4. Basement businesses
5. All uses not specifically permitted

LOT AND BUILDING REQUIREMENTS

These standards are intended to encourage development of the area for a mix of uses constituting a "gateway" commercial district that is compatible with and supportive of the standards and goals of the adjacent SID; and serve as the western gateway to Cranford and the business district. They reinforce and extend the physical, visual and spatial characteristics of the adjacent SID, including the Cranford Crossing and Riverfront Redevelopment areas in the district.

General Standards:

1. A written design concept statement shall be submitted as part of the design review application which identifies the significant site features, supports the reasoning behind the architecture and site plan proposed and explains how and why the site features are incorporated into the project design
2. Awnings shall not extend more than 5 feet from the façade. Stairs should be constructed inside the building footprint. Balconies should not extend more than 5 feet
3. Roof types should be flat with parapet, gable, hip or combination

Bulk Standards:

1. Minimum lot size: 28,000 square feet.
2. Minimum frontage: 160 feet
3. Lots fronting on South Avenue shall provide access in accordance with Union County road opening permit requirements, provided that a maximum of two (2) driveway openings shall be allowed for each building providing adequate street frontage. A maximum of one (1) access driveway shall be permitted on Lincoln Avenue.
4. Maximum front yard setback shall be (5) feet from the property line. The front setback from Lincoln Avenue may be extended a maximum of one hundred and ninety five (195) feet to permit off-street parking if the project incorporates the following design elements:
 - The construction of a decorative element, which may be freestanding. The Redevelopment Entity and Planning Board shall review the design of the decorative element as part of the design review process described herein. The intent is to provide a well-designed "gateway" project consistent with the architectural guidelines set forth in the plan and compatible with the style of the principle building;
 - The construction of a low landscaped three (3) to four (4) foot brick or masonry wall designed to block the view of parked cars from the street right-of-way in a manner that does not impede any required site triangles imposed by the County or Township Engineer, which shall be compatible with the freestanding design element; and
 - The construction of a small public plaza or other decorative element adjacent to intersection of South and Lincoln Avenues may be permitted in association with the freestanding design element.
5. Minimum rear yard setback shall be 10 feet from the property line
6. Maximum floor area ratio (FAR): 0.275

7. Building shall be two floors; however, these standards shall not apply to building appurtenances or accessory structures designed exclusively for ornamental purposes such as spires, cupolas or towers. Furthermore, the Township will permit false second floor as an option to a second floor that is occupied by a use provided that the same architectural features are provided that meet the design criteria of this Plan.
8. Maximum height of building appurtenances or accessory structure shall be 50 feet
9. Maximum impervious lot coverage: 85% exclusive of architectural or decorative landscape elements
10. Minimum side yard: 15 feet

Parking and Loading Standards:

1. Offices: One (1) space for each 333 sq. ft. of gross floor area
2. Dental or Medical Offices: One (1) space for each 100 sq. ft. of gross floor area except if located within a building of one (1) or more unassociated practitioners, one (1) space for each 150 sq. ft. of gross floor area.
3. Retail: One (1) space for the first 500 sq. ft. of gross floor area and one space for each additional 250 sq. ft.

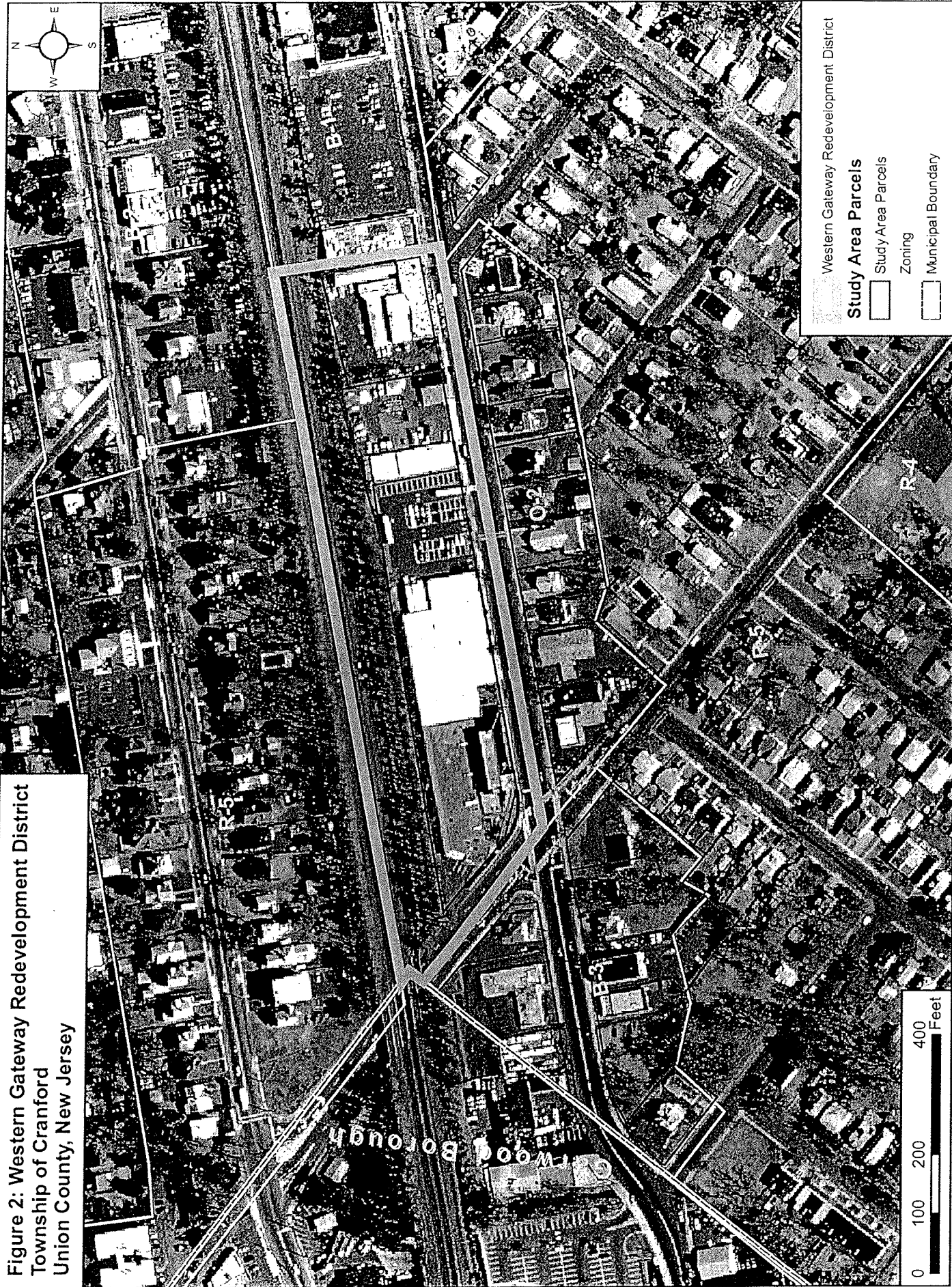
The following standards shall apply to all uses:

1. Parking lot layout, landscaping, buffering and screening shall be provided to minimize direct views of parked vehicles from the street right-of-way and sidewalks, avoid spill-over light, glare, noise, or exhaust fumes onto adjacent properties. Parking lots exposed to view shall be surrounded by a minimum of a three (3) to four (4) foot decorative wall supplemented with landscape treatments.
2. The interior of all parking lots shall be landscaped to provide shade and visual relief. At a minimum, at least one deciduous tree shall be planted for every five (5) parking spaces inside a six (6) foot wide planter or landscaped island is required. Landscaping should be utilized to soften edges of parking lots and to provide a sense of lot borders or boundaries.
3. Parking lot layout should take into consideration pedestrian movement and pedestrian crossing should be installed where deemed necessary by the Planning Board.
4. On-street parking as currently permitted directly fronting a lot shall count toward fulfilling the parking requirement.

Off Street Loading Requirements shall be as follows:

1. Office:
 - a. Less than 10,000 gross square feet: None
 - b. Over 10,000 gross square feet: 1
2. Retail:
 - a. Less than 10,000 gross square feet: One (1)
 - b. Over 10,000 gross square feet: Two (2)
3. No loading area shall be located to the front of any buildings.

Figure 2: Western Gateway Redevelopment District
Township of Cranford
Union County, New Jersey



Landscaping Standards:

1. Landscaping is to be provided as part of all developments to define entrances to buildings, parking lots, and the edges of various land uses, as well as to provide buffering between the project and the adjacent rail lines and screening loading and equipment areas.
2. Landscaping may include trees, shrubs, ground cover, berms, flowers, sculpture, art and similar materials, and shall be designed to provide aesthetic, buffering, environmental, ornamental, and other related functions. All landscaping plans shall be prepared by a New Jersey licensed landscape architect.
3. Landscaping shall permit adequate site distance for motorists and pedestrians entering and exiting a site and shall not interfere with circulation patterns.
4. Landscaping shall be provided adjacent to and within parking areas to screen vehicles from view and to minimize the expansive appearance of parking fields. Landscaping should include fast growing trees in parking lots to create summer shade.
5. Trees shall be planted within right-of-ways parallel to the street along all streets. Street tree spacing shall be determined by species type. Large maturing trees shall be planted a minimum of 40 feet and a maximum of 50 feet on center. Small and medium maturing trees shall be planted a minimum of 10 feet and a maximum of 30 feet on center.
6. Plantings in immediate proximity to buildings in front and side yards shall respect architectural lines (should be seen as extension of architectural walls).
7. All plantings shall be installed free from disease in a manner that ensures the availability of sufficient soil and water for healthy growth, and is not intrusive to underground utilities.
8. All loading areas shall be landscaped in a manner that sufficiently screens the view of the loading area and vehicles.

Sign Standards:

To underscore the function as a gateway into the Township signs shall be permitted in accordance with the standards for signs in the SID, except as set forth below:

1. Pylon and neon signs are prohibited.
2. Illuminated box signs are prohibited.
3. One sign up to 12 square feet in area and 4 feet in height announcing a future use is permitted. The sign must not be placed until a permit is issued for the use and must be removed within 15 days of completion of the main building.
4. A master sign submission is required for any building or group of buildings that contain 6 or more businesses, or for community uses with more than two signs.
5. Signs shall not be permitted on the freestanding design feature described in number five (5) in the Bulk Standards, except that a Cranford, Welcome to Cranford, or similar Township identification sign shall be permitted.
6. The area should include "wayfaring" signage directing visitors to the downtown.

ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS

Building Massing and Scale:

Scale is the relationship between the size of the new structure and the size of adjoining permanent structures. Large scale building elements will appear imposing if they are situated in a visual environment, which is smaller in scale such as surrounding properties located on the other side of South Avenue West.

Dominant structures should be broken up by creating horizontal emphasis through the use of trim, adding awnings, eaves, windows, or architectural ornamentation, use of combinations of complementary colors and landscape materials.

- a. Long horizontal facades should be broken down into segments having vertical orientation and tall vertically oriented facades shall be broken down into horizontal components through the use of appropriate design features.
- b. Buildings with expansive blank walls are prohibited.
- c. Buildings should be designed so that facades are the prominent architectural feature and the roofs are visually less dominant in the total design.
- d. A human scale should be achieved at ground level and along street frontages and entryways through the use of such scale elements as windows, doors, columns, plazas, awnings and canopies.

Exterior Building Design:

Buildings with exterior walls greater than 50 feet in horizontal length shall be constructed using a combination of architectural features and a maximum of three (3) building materials and landscaping near the walls. Walls which can be viewed from public streets shall be designed using architectural features and landscaping (abutting the building) for at least 50% of the wall length. Other walls shall incorporate architectural features and landscaping for at least 30% of the wall length.

Architectural Features:

Architectural features include, but are not limited to the following: recesses, projections, wall insets, arcades, window display areas, awnings, balconies, window projections, landscape structures or other features that complement the design intent of the structure and are acceptable to the Planning Board.

Building Materials:

The predominant building materials should be materials that are characteristic of traditional developments in northern New Jersey such as brick, wood, native stone, and/or glass products.

Façade Treatment:

1. Multi-tenant building shall provide uniform storefronts, doorways, windows, awnings and other design features for all ground floor tenants. Upper floors of said buildings shall at a minimum be coordinated with the ground floor through common materials and colors. Storefronts should include display windows with a sill height not more than four (4) feet from grade.
2. Awnings shall be encouraged on retail buildings. All awnings shall be constructed and installed so that the frame and fabric of the awning is integrated into the overall building design. No awning shall extend more than five (5) feet from the building façade and no awning shall be less than eight (8) feet above the ground. Awnings which project into any roadway, driveway, parking or loading area are prohibited. Awnings shall not be placed so as to conceal or disfigure an architectural feature or detail. Awning materials shall be limited to cloth, canvas and similar materials; metal and aluminum awnings are prohibited.
3. New construction should use windows of similar sizes and shapes or incorporate other façade elements that establish the same pattern of other buildings its contest.
4. Rhythms that carry through a block such as store front patterns, window spacing, entrances, canopies or awnings, etc., should be incorporated into new or renovated facades.
5. Exterior mounted mechanical and electrical equipment shall be architecturally screened.
6. The use of creative lighting schemes to highlight building facades and related areas of a site shall be encouraged, except that any such nonresidential lighting shall be shut off by 10:00 p.m. or one-half hour after the closing of such nonresidential use, whichever is earlier.
7. Fire escapes are prohibited on the principal façade(s) of a building.

8. Buildings containing a false second floor (without a tenant) but constructed to meet the architectural design guidelines of this Plan must be designed in a manner to mimic a traditional building with tenants on the second floor. For this option to be permitted, the Planning Board with the guidance of the Planning Board Subcommittee and Design Review Committee shall make a finding that such architectural design meets the intention of this Plan.
9. Finished materials shall be required on all four (4) sides of buildings.
10. Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems (E.I.F.S.) shall be prohibited as a building material.

Roofs:

Roofs should be designed to reduce the apparent exterior mass of a building, add visual interest and be appropriate to the architectural style of the building. Variations within an architectural style are highly encouraged. Visible rooflines and roofs that project over the exterior wall of a building enough to cast a shadow on the ground are highly encouraged. Overhanging eaves, sloped roofs and multiple roof elements are highly encouraged.

1. Flat with parapet, gable, hip or combination roof types are strongly encouraged.
2. The roofline at the top of the structure should incorporate offsets and jogs to reduce the monotony of any uninterrupted roof plane.
3. All roof top equipment shall be screened from public view by parapets or other materials of the same nature as the main structure. Mechanical equipment shall be located below the highest vertical element of the building.

Customer Entrances:

Clearly defined, highly visible customer entrances using features such as canopies, porticos, arcades, arches, wing walls, and integral planters are highly encouraged.

Lighting:

The lighting shall be shielded and directed down onto the site and not shine or glare onto adjacent property or streets. Light poles and/or fixtures shall not exceed 15 feet in height.

Community Amenities:

As recommended in the South Avenue Corridor Study, streetscape improvements that are consistent with the downtown streetscape in the SID portion of this corridor should be continued into this sub-area. Such improvements include street furniture and other such amenities.

LEED™ Standards:

The LEED™ (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System was originally developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) to provide a recognized standard for the construction industry to assess the environmental sustainability of building designs.

LEED™ is a point-based rating system; points are earned for building attributes considered environmentally beneficial. LEED™ differs from other rating systems in that it has quantified most of the "green credits." For example, 5% of the building materials must be from salvaged materials to earn a point for the salvaged materials credit.

This Plan encourages redevelopers to utilize LEED™ standards in their building design.

PROPERTY TO BE ACQUIRED

As the area is in need of rehabilitation, no properties are identified for acquisition. The Township plans to continue working with any property owners within the redevelopment area to promote redevelopment of the area in accordance with this plan.

RELOCATION

There are no residential properties located within the area. In addition, the Township does not contemplate the need for property acquisition in the area. However, if property is acquired by a designated redeveloper through private negotiation, the Township or its assignee will assist any existing business that may require relocation as a result of the redevelopment plan. Business property owners that may be displaced under the plan will be provided relocation assistance from the Township or designated redeveloper.

Under the requirements of the New Jersey Relocation Assistance Law (N.J.S.A. 42:31B-1 et seq.), the Relocation Assistance Act (N.J.S.A. 20:4-1 et seq.), and regulations of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Cranford Township will be required to adopt for a Workable Relocation Assistance Plan (WRAP). The WRAP establishes the procedures and for providing financial compensation and assistance to residents and businesses displaced by the redevelopment plan. In accordance with State requirements, the WRAP must be prepared and receive DCA approval prior to the acquisition or leasing of any property delineated and the policies of the Redevelopment Plan.

MASTER PLAN RELATIONSHIPS

CRANFORD TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

The Township's Master Plan was last reexamined in 2002. As provided in the Reexamination Report, it is the Township's goal economic goal to:

Encourage development and improvement of selected industrial, commercial and service uses, which are geared toward realistic future growth needs

By implementing this redevelopment plan, the Township is making a significant contribution to the fulfillment of this goal. The redevelopment of this area will not only serve to provide new commercial space, but also to generate jobs and ratables for the Township.

ADJACENT MUNICIPALITIES

The Township of Cranford is bordered by the Borough of Roselle, the Borough of Roselle Park, the Borough of Kenilworth, the Township of Springfield, the Town of Westfield, the Borough of Garwood, the Township of Clark, Winfield Township and the City of Linden. None of these communities directly abut the area; however, the Gateway District is proximate to the Borough of Garwood. The primary goal of the Redevelopment Plan is the improvement of the aesthetic and economic viability of the South Avenue corridor. Accordingly, the implementation of the plan will have positive impact on adjoining communities and will reinforce their revitalization efforts. This is consistent with the efforts of adjacent municipalities in supporting economic growth in the region.

UNION COUNTY MASTER PLAN

The 1998 Union County Master Plan identifies neighborhood and general commercial areas throughout the County. The Plan notes that commercial areas "occur along major roadways and are clustered within town centers and center cities." The 1995 Strategic Plan for Union County specifically identifies the following goal and objective:

Goal: Recapture expanded purchasing power and retain a greater share of retail spending in Union County.

Objective: Revitalize the downtown shopping areas of Union County municipalities

The redevelopment plan is consistent with this goal and objective.

STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The proposed Town Center is located in SDRP Planning Area 1 (PA-1). As stated in the SDRP, the following objectives have been established for this planning area:

Planning Area 1 – Metropolitan

- Provide for much of the state's future redevelopment;
- Revitalize cities and towns;
- Promote growth in compact forms;
- Stabilize older suburbs;
- Redesign areas of sprawl; and
- Protect the character of existing stable communities.

In addition, the State Plan recommends "to reverse the current trend towards further sprawl and to guide both redevelopment and new development into more efficient and serviceable patterns." Based on the foregoing, it is concluded that the redevelopment plan is consistent with the policies and objectives of the SDRP.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS

AMENDING THE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Upon compliance with the requirements of applicable law, the Township Committee may amend, revise or modify the redevelopment plan in general or for specific properties within the redevelopment area, as circumstances may make such changes appropriate. The review and approval of any proposed amendments shall be undertaken in accordance with the procedures set forth in the LRHL.

DURATION OF PLAN

The Western Gateway Redevelopment Plan, as it may be amended from time to time, shall be in full force and effect upon its adoption by ordinance by the Township Committee. A redeveloper agreement may include provisions for a certificate of project completion in accordance with the redevelopment plan.

CONVEYANCE OF LAND

The Township may sell, lease, or otherwise convey to a redeveloper for redevelopment, subject to restrictions, controls and requirements of the Redevelopment Plan, all or any of the properties within the rehabilitation area that it currently owns or may acquire. The Township may also use its redevelopment powers pursuant to the LRHL to enter into other agreements with a designated redeveloper or developers in connection with the construction of any aspect of the Redevelopment Plan.

REDEVELOPER SELECTION

The following restrictions and controls on redevelopment are hereby imposed in connection with the selection of a redeveloper for any property or properties included in redevelopment plan and shall apply notwithstanding the provisions of any zoning or building ordinance or other regulations now or hereafter in force.

1. The redeveloper will be obligated to carry out the specified improvements in accordance with the redevelopment plan.
2. The redeveloper, its successors or assigns shall develop the property in accordance with the uses and building requirements specified in the redevelopment plan.
3. Until the required improvements are completed and a Certificate of Completion is issued, the redeveloper will not be permitted to sell, lease, or otherwise transfer or dispose of any interest in the property within the project area without the express prior written consent of the Township Committee or, if a redeveloper agreement has been executed, pursuant to the terms of the redeveloper agreement. This condition shall not apply to the transfers of mortgage interests in the property to any lender to the redeveloper in connection with the redevelopment plan.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

PRELIMINARY DESIGN REVIEW

All redevelopment projects in the Western Gateway Redevelopment District shall be submitted to the Redevelopment Entity for a preliminary design review prior to submission of an application to the Planning Board. Applicants are required to attend a workshop meeting with the Redevelopment Entity or its designated Design Review Committee. The meeting will be used to determine if the proposed redevelopment project is consistent with the Redevelopment Plan and conforms to the building requirements and architectural design guidelines of the redevelopment plan and provide an opportunity for comment and recommendations on the proposed project by the Redevelopment Entity and its professionals. During preliminary design review, the Redevelopment Entity and, if applicable, its Design Review Committee shall evaluate the project in relationship its consistency with the Redevelopment Plan.

Preliminary design review shall focus on how the proposed project relates to and coordinates other elements and phases of the redevelopment plan and how the uses and structures are integrated with and contribute to the quality and function of the Western Gateway district and neighborhood as presented in the Redevelopment Plan. Prior to the approval of a redevelopment project by the Planning Board, the Design Review Committee and Redevelopment Entity shall provide its findings to the Planning Board and confirm that the proposed project is consistent with the redevelopment plan and adequately addresses the design guidelines contained in the plan.

PLANNING BOARD REVIEW

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-13, all development applications for development of sites governed by the Western Gateway Redevelopment District shall be submitted to the Township's Planning Board for review and approval. As part of the redevelopment process, a workshop meeting consisting of the Planning Board Subcommittee (as appointed by the Planning Board Chairperson) will review the development design of the proposed redevelopment project in accordance with the Design Review Process. The following provisions shall govern review of any proposed redevelopment and rehabilitation projects for these sites:

1. No building permit shall be issued by the construction or zoning official for any work resulting in a change of intensity of development or change of use for any properties or buildings within the area of the Western Gateway Redevelopment District without prior review and approval of the work by the Planning Board.
2. Regular maintenance and minor repair shall not require Planning Board review and approval.
3. The Planning Board shall conduct site plan and subdivision review, if applicable, pursuant to the Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et seq.) and Cranford Township's Zoning Ordinance.

4. As part of site plan approval, the Planning Board may require the redeveloper to furnish performance guarantees pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-53 and the Cranford Zoning Ordinance. The performance guarantees shall be in favor of the Township of Cranford, and the Township Engineer shall determine the amount of any performance guarantees.
5. Any subdivision of lots or parcels of land within the Western Gateway Redevelopment Plan area shall be in compliance with the Redevelopment Plan and reviewed by the Planning Board pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law and Municipal Land Use Law.
6. Once a property has been redeveloped in accordance with the Western Gateway Redevelopment Plan, it may not be converted to any use not expressly permitted in this redevelopment plan. No non-conforming use, building, or structure may be expanded or made more non-conforming in nature after adoption of this Redevelopment Plan. A use or structure not conforming to the requirements of this Redevelopment Plan may not be reconstructed in the event of its destruction. The Planning Board shall determine the issue of whether the non-conforming use or building structure has been "destroyed."
7. No variances, deviations, or waivers may be granted by the Planning Board which will result in permitting a use prohibited or not expressly permitted within this Western Gateway Redevelopment Plan or which will result in a density that exceeds the densities permitted in this plan.
8. The regulations and controls of this Western Gateway Redevelopment Plan shall be implemented, where applicable, by appropriate covenants, or other provisions, or through agreements for land disposition and conveyance between the redeveloper and municipality pursuant to Local Redevelopment and Housing Law at N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-8 and 40A:12A-9.
9. Any and all definitions contained within the Western Gateway Redevelopment Plan shall prevail. In the absence of a definition, the definition found within the Cranford Township's Zoning Ordinance shall prevail. Any and all definitions shall be consistent with the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law.
10. A redeveloper shall be required to pay all applicable escrow fees and other required charges in accordance with applicable provisions of the Cranford Township's Land Development Ordinance and New Jersey law. Additionally, a redeveloper may be required to pay for their proportional share of the cost of any studies, plans, reports, or analysis prepared by the Township or its designated redevelopment entity as part of the Western Gateway Redevelopment Plan. Any such payments required to reimburse the Township or the redevelopment entity shall be specified in the redeveloper agreement.

The above provisions are all subject to approval by ordinance and/or resolution according to law. If a Court of competent jurisdiction finds any word, phrase, clause, section, or provision of the Western Gateway Redevelopment Plan to be invalid, illegal, or unconstitutional, the word, phrase, clause, section, or provision shall be deemed severable, and the remainder of the Redevelopment Plan and implementing ordinances shall remain in full force and effect.

Appendix A
Governing Body Resolution
Designating Area in Need of Rehabilitation

TOWNSHIP OF CRANFORD
CRANFORD, NEW JERSEY

RESOLUTION NO. 2005-193

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford authorized a study of the South Avenue Corridor to be conducted by T & M Associates; and

WHEREAS, said study, entitled "South Avenue Corridor Study," dated April 2005, was prepared by Stan Slachetka, AICP, P.P. and Paul N. Ricci, P.P., AICP, of T & M Associates; and

WHEREAS, said study recommended, as an alternative approach, designating the area described as the "Western Gateway" as an area in need of rehabilitation, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1, et seq., and specifically N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-12, et seq.; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee has determined to consider whether a certain delineated area within the "Western Gateway" area, and specifically Block 400, Lot 1, Block 400, Lot 2.01 and Block 474, Lot 1, all located on the north side of South Avenue West, should be determined to be an area in need of rehabilitation; and


WHEREAS, the Township Engineer has certified that a majority of the water and sewer infrastructure in the delineated area is at least fifty years old and is in need of repair or substantial maintenance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford that the Township Committee hereby finds and determines that, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-14, a majority of the water and sewer infrastructure in the delineated area known and designated as Block 400, Lot 1, Block 400, Lot 2.01 and Block 474, Lot 1, is at least fifty years old and is in need of repair or substantial maintenance; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Committee finds that a program of rehabilitation, as defined in N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-3 may be expected to prevent further deterioration and promote the overall development of the community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the aforementioned delineated area be and is hereby determined by the Township Committee to be an area in need of rehabilitation.

Certified to be a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Township Committee of Cranford at a meeting held June 14, 2005.


Rosalie Hellenbrecht, RMC
Township Clerk

Dated:

6/15/05