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INTRODUCTION

Land Use Element Overview

The Land Use Element, an Element of the municipal master plan, is a City-wide land use policy guide adopted by the Planning Board. This Element illustrates the current and historic pattern of Jersey City's built and natural environments, and makes recommendations to help the City grow in a manner that is smart, equitable, sustainable, and resilient. It does not contain laws or mandates, but informs zoning and decisions about City initiatives and capital investment.

The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) dictates the role of planning when it comes to land development. For one, a prerequisite of the exercise of zoning power is the preparation and adoption of a master plan. Furthermore, "all of the provisions of such zoning ordinance or any amendment or revision thereto shall either be substantially consistent with the land use plan element and the housing plan element of the master plan, or designed to effectuate such plan element." (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-62). In essence, the Land Use Element provides the foundation for zoning changes.

Jersey City has experienced significant land use changes since the adoption of its last complete Master Plan in 2000, reflecting its transformation from an industrial and transportation hub to a dynamic commercial, residential, and office center. The changes include dramatic development along the Hudson River waterfront and Downtown, the growth of office and retail activity, the contraction of manufacturing uses, the abandonment of large areas containing railroad facilities and rights-of-way, the remediation of formerly industrial areas, and the stabilization of many residential neighborhoods. Recent trends show a population that is generally getting older, wealthier, and more highly educated. Yet, alongside such metrics exist other realities: poverty rates have not decreased, and social inequities are more pronounced in certain areas.
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Jersey City’s historical development has contributed to a dense and complex urban fabric where land uses, densities, access to resources, and socioeconomic conditions can vary from one neighborhood to the next. In order to touch upon all areas of the City, the Land Use Element addresses issues at the City-wide, mid-level, and local scales. The figure below shows examples of topics that fall into each of these scales.

The City-wide scale looks at conditions that occur throughout Jersey City and should be addressed through comprehensive zoning changes or capital improvements. The mid-scale recognizes that some issues occur in multiple areas of the City, based on different types of development patterns. For example, low-density residential neighborhoods in the Heights and Greenville are at opposite ends of Jersey City, but are experiencing many similar issues that can be addressed in similar ways. The Urban Design Framework in this Land Use Element identifies many of these commonalities and presents recommendations based on development type. Finally, at the local scale, this planning process included the development of three Small Area Vision Plans (SAVPs) for specific geographic areas of the City. These plans address community concerns and provide an opportunity to demonstrate how City-wide recommendations can be implemented at the neighborhood level. In this way, these neighborhood plans serve as templates for how to implement the Land Use Element across the City and serve as a model for the creation of neighborhood plans.

This Land Use Element takes a wide-ranging look at Jersey City’s overall land use patterns, its regulatory context, and makes recommendations to bring development in line with the community’s vision and respond to socioeconomic changes. The document reflects the community’s vision, regional needs, substantial research and analysis, collaboration with City Planning staff, and a robust public engagement process. However, it is important to note that the Land Use Element is not intended to “solve” every issue related to the City’s built environment. Jersey City is a geographically large and extraordinarily diverse city, with complex land use conditions that vary widely. Even within many neighborhoods, land use conditions are constantly changing. It would be impossible for any planning document to resolve every issue or predict every potential scenario. The recommendations in this Land Use Element are just that: recommendations. In the future, there likely will be situations that arise in Jersey City’s land use and development picture that were not anticipated, or changes in circumstances that require implementation of the Land Use Element to vary somewhat from specific recommendations.

Planning Process and Master Plan Vision

The Land Use Element was developed over a nearly two-year process beginning in late February 2020, and culminating with its adoption by the Planning Board in November 2021. Concurrently, the City also prepared an Open Space and Community Facilities Element, and a larger Master Plan Vision.
The municipal Master Plan serves as a blueprint for current conditions and guides future growth, transformation, and development through a consistent framework. State law requires that each municipality update or “re-examine” its master plan every 10 years. In addition to these regular reexaminations, the City has conducted targeted updates of discrete elements of the Master Plan, to address specific goals and objectives. Jersey City’s current Master Plan consists of several elements, with the most recent adoption or updates as indicated:

- Housing Plan (2019)
- Circulation Plan (2011)
- Bike Plan (2020)
- Resiliency Plan (2019)

This Land Use Element planning effort was led by the Jersey City Department of Housing, Economic Development and Commerce (HEDC). The Land Use Element consultant team, led by BFJ Planning, met with HEDC staff on a regular basis to review project materials, discuss issues and opportunities relevant to the study, and to plan for public engagement events. The consultant team also met regularly with a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) representing areas of expertise relevant to land use planning, as well as a committee of the City Council members and their representatives (the “CCR Committee”). The process also included meetings with AECOM, who managed the Master Plan Vision effort, and with Agency Landscape + Planning, who prepared the Open Space and Community Facilities Element.
Community Engagement

Every Master Plan Element should be reflective of the community’s vision and grounded in a robust and thoughtful community engagement process, and this Land Use Element is no different. However, within two weeks of the project’s launch, the COVID-19 pandemic forced a shutdown of City offices, schools, public transportation, and many businesses.

Conducting long-range planning within these constraints required flexibility and creativity. The project team endeavored to use a combination of digital tools and in-person engagement – as practicable – to reach stakeholders from a broad cross-section of interests and backgrounds, in a variety of different settings. The community engagement process for this Land Use Element, which was conducted in tandem with both the Open Space and Community Facilities Element and the Master Plan Vision, incorporated the following components:

• Three-part online survey seeking input on overall Master Plan vision, neighborhood planning issues, and parks and open space issues (2,762 responses)
• Two online public workshops and one in-person workshop
• City-conducted survey of local business owners
• Eight focus group meetings with City department heads, boards and committees, and other stakeholders, covering:
  ○ Arts, Culture, & Community
  ○ Economic Development
  ○ Housing
  ○ Infrastructure and Utilities
  ○ Open Space, Public Facilities, Recreation, and Environment
  ○ Planning and Development
  ○ Special Improvement Districts (SIDs)
  ○ Transportation and Parking
• Joint meetings with representatives of the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment, and Historic Preservation Commission
• Three Online On-Demand Workshops (one for each Small Area Vision Plan)
• Six Small Area Vision Plan Charrettes (two for each Small Area Plan.)
• Public hearing of the Planning Board

• Meetings with representatives of Saint Peter’s University and New Jersey City University
• Interviews with nearly 20 real estate developers who are active in Jersey City.

Additional outreach was conducted as part of the wider Master Plan Vision. Members of the public also had the opportunity to review interim and final drafts of the Land Use Element and its components via the Master Plan Vision website.
Prior Planning Efforts

The data and analysis in this Land Use Element represent a snapshot in time, reflecting available information as the document was developed. This Element utilizes information from many planning documents which have been completed by the City, Hudson County, and other agencies, including the following:

Jersey City Master Plan Reports
• 2000 Jersey City Master Plan and Related Documents
• Climate and Energy Action Plan (CEAP, 2021)
• Housing Element Update (2019)
• Historic Preservation Element (Amended 2015)
• Land Use Element (2000 Master Plan, 2011 Amendment)
• Circulation Element (2009)
• Jersey City Recreation and Open Space Master Plan (2008)

Resiliency Plans
• Resilient Jersey City: A Summary of City-Wide Resiliency and Climate Change Adaptation Plans (2019). This summary addresses the Resiliency Master Plan, Adaptation Master Plan, and Urban Environmental Green Infrastructure Design Plan.
• Inventory of Communitywide Greenhouse Gas Emissions (2016)
• Sandy Recovery Strategic Planning Report (2014)

Transportation Plans and Studies
• Jersey City Parking Plan (2020)
• Let’s Ride JC Bicycle Master Plan (2019)
• Vision Zero Action Plan (2019)
• Morris Canal Greenway Corridor Study (2018)
• JC Walks Pedestrian Enhancement Plan (2018)
• Plan 2045: Connecting North Jersey – NJTPA Regional Transportation Plan (2017)
• Route 440/Routes 1&9T Multi-Use Urban Boulevard and Trough Truck Diversion Concept Development Study (2011)

• Waterfront Access and Downtown Circulation Study (2007)

Environmental Resources
• Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission Regional Long-Term Control Plan (2020)
• Green Infrastructure Feasibility Study (2017)
• Environmental Resource Inventory (2017)
• Tree Canopy Assessment (2015)
• Jersey City Stormwater Management Plan (2005)

Hudson County Plans
• Hudson County Master Plan Re-examination Report (2016)
• Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS): Hudson County, New Jersey (2016)

Community/Neighborhood Plans
• Greenville Community Plan (2012)
• Bergen Communities United Neighborhood Plan (2012)
Land Use Element Organization

The City has sought to organize the Land Use Element in a format that is user-friendly and can be easily understood by all readers. This report contains the following chapters:

Introduction

Overview of the Land Use Element and its place within the 2021 Master Plan, prior planning efforts, and the community engagement process.

Community Profile

Summary of recent trends, issues, and accomplishments related to demographics, land use and development, open space and public facilities, infrastructure, and community facilities. This section focuses on how the City has changed both since 2000, the year of the most recent full Master Plan, as well as the last decennial census (2010). The data and analysis was a snapshot in time, reflecting available information as the document was developed in 2020, and identifies key themes apparent from the analysis.

Existing Land Use and Zoning

Explanation of how existing land uses (residential, commercial, industrial, utility, parks and open spaces, natural features, etc.) and historic resources are distributed throughout the City. It also covers the existing regulations that govern development today, including the City’s zoning districts, redevelopment plan areas, and historic districts.

Land Use Principles

Based on the extensive data analysis, review of previous plans and studies, and substantial public input (e.g., focus groups, public meetings, surveys, and social media) an overarching approach to future land use emerged. This approach is supported by a series of goals intended to guide the arrangement of land uses, and how land use patterns could change in the future to fulfill City objectives. The broad themes included in the land use approach are shown on the page to the right.

Urban Design Framework

Addresses the physical form of the City and suggests development/redevelopment strategies that can influence the quality of the City’s urban environment. The chapter identifies major types of development patterns that can be found in Jersey City based on scale, use, adjacencies, and the built environment. The purpose of this analysis is to reveal areas that are experiencing potential land use
LAND USE PRINCIPLES

Housing and Neighborhoods

- Continue efforts to enhance residential neighborhoods
- Ensure the City’s housing supply is balanced and meets the needs of all current and future City residents

15-Minute City

- Make the City More Transit Friendly, Walkable, and Less Reliant on the Car
- Strengthen Neighborhood-Oriented Commercial Areas

Economy

- Promote the Development of a Diversified Economy
- Promote Innovation and Industrial Activity that is Cleaner, Greener, and Job Creating
- Provide Flexibility that Allows Large Format Retail to Adapt

Community Facilities

- Celebrate and Beautify the Public Realm
- Improve Open Space and Public Facility Assets and Connect them to each other and into the Community.
- Recognize and Promote the Richness and Diversity of the City’s Historic and Cultural Assets

Environment and Sustainability

- Protect and Restore Environmental Assets and Plan for Sustainability
- Upgrade Community Facilities and Infrastructure to Accommodate Population Growth and Address Changing Needs.
conflicts. The chapter also offers recommendations for five selected typologies to address these conflicts and direct growth.

**Land Use and Zoning Recommendations**

This chapter discusses how recent development trends, issues, and opportunities that have spurred the need for changes to the City’s regulatory approach. Specific changes to zoning and other regulations, and to administrative processes, are identified for the City to consider. Some recommendations are supported by previous plans or documents, while others will require further study to determine a specific course of action.

**Small Area Vision Plans (Summary)**

As part of the Land Use Element, three small areas were selected to conduct vision planning: the Junction, West Side Avenue Station Area, and the Lower Heights (see study areas below). These areas were selected because they contained a mix of factors that City residents identified as important, because they have not had extensive planning work done in the recent past, and because they are home to residents who have not historically received planning attention. The vision plans identify: local goals and objectives, improvements to public infrastructure, potential changes to zoning and redevelopment plans, and programs and policies to advance the goals. The full SAVPs can be found in the Appendix.

**Appendix A: Small Area Vision Plans**

**Appendix B: Supplementary Inventory: Zoning Districts and Redevelopment Plan Areas**

Chapter 2 provides an overview of Jersey City’s regulatory context, which includes 24 traditional zoning districts and 97 redevelopment plan areas. This appendix can be used to reference the detailed allowable uses and bulk/area controls for each district.

**Appendix C: Climate Change-Related Hazard Vulnerability Assessment Reference Documents**

On February 4, 2021, the State Assembly passed a bill (NJ S2607), requiring the land use plan element of a municipal master plan to include a climate change-related hazard vulnerability assessment. This assessment must consider environmental effects associated with climate change and extreme weather-related events including temperature, drought, and sea-level rise, and contain measures to mitigate reasonably anticipated natural hazards such as coastal storms, shoreline erosion, flooding, storm surge, and wind, following best management practices recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

This element’s assessment of climate change-related hazards is provided in Chapter 2. The analysis incorporates recommendations and goals from the City’s 2021 Climate and Energy Action Plan (CEAP), which has been adopted as an appendix to this Element. This element also incorporates analysis and recommendations from other resiliency plans, including Resilient Jersey City: A Summary of City-Wide Resiliency and Climate Change Adaptation Plans (2019). Both the CEAP and the Resilient Jersey City Document are included in Appendix C as reference documents.
Chapter 6: Small Area Vision Plans

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Since the 2000 Master Plan, population and socioeconomic changes in Jersey City have resulted in a more densely populated environment that is home to an increasing diversity of communities. Overall, in the past 20 years, the City's residents have become older, wealthier, and more highly educated. Yet, alongside such metrics exist other realities: poverty rates remain similar to 2000 levels, and social inequities are more pronounced in certain areas. Demographic analysis provides an initial context for the range of population needs, activities, and social arrangements within Jersey City. This summary presents key considerations that informed the planning process and ultimately guided land use recommendations with all residents in mind.
Chapter 1: Community Profile

Since the 2000 Master Plan, population and socioeconomic changes in Jersey City have resulted in a more densely populated environment that is home to an increasing diversity of communities. Overall, in the past 20 years, the City's residents have become older, wealthier, and more highly educated. Yet, alongside such metrics exist other realities: poverty rates remain similar to 2000 levels, and social inequities are more pronounced in certain areas. Demographic analysis provides an initial context for the range of population needs, activities, and social arrangements within Jersey City. This summary presents key considerations that informed the planning process and ultimately guided land use recommendations with all residents in mind.
POPULATION AND HOUSING TRENDS

Jersey City’s population has increased significantly, and growth will continue

Since 2000, Jersey City’s population has grown 9% to a total of 261,746 residents. Much of this growth occurred in the recent portion of this time period. On an average annual basis, the 2010 to 2018 span saw a growth rate over double of what occurred during the 2000 to 2010 decade (0.71% versus 0.31%). In terms of total population numbers, the past two decades of population growth trends have been paralleled by Hudson County as a whole.

Population projections from the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) estimate that Jersey City will continue to grow through 2040 at a higher annual rate than what has occurred since 2000. By 2040, it is estimated that the City will have 356,000 residents, which is a 36% percent increase from 2018 population estimates.1

An increasingly diverse city is marked by broadening, shifting demographics

By some accounts, Jersey City is the most diverse City in the United States.3 The City’s diversity has many contours along the lines of race, ethnicity, languages spoken, and residents’ birthplace origin. Roughly three out of every five residents identify as non-white. Just over half of residents speak a language other than English at home.

The foreign-born population has also been increasing. As of 2018, 41% of the population was born in a different country. One of every three foreign born residents in Jersey City has moved to the City since 2010.

Population shifts from 2000 and 2018 resulted in a decrease of Black or African American residents (-11%) and a sharp increase in the Asian population (+69%). Hispanic/Latino residents have been the most represented group since 2000 and have remained fairly constant as a percentage of the total population. The share of white residents has decreased since 2000.

Today more than one out of every 10 residents in Jersey City identifies as Asian Indian by ethno-racial origin. With significant population increases, portions of the Indian-identified community have continued to establish and utilize key cultural districts such as India Square.

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1 https://www.njtpa.org/NJTPA/media/Documents/Archive/Planning/Plan%202040/Plan2040Appendices_approved_draft.pdf
2 With 2010 serving as the base year of population projection data, it is noteworthy that the annual growth rate compared to 2018 ACS data is below NJTPA’s corresponding estimate. If this trend continues, population growth will be less than anticipated by 2040.
The population is aging, with an increasing retiree presence

The median age of Jersey City residents is 34.2 years, which is a nearly two-year increase from 2000. From 2000 to 2018, this rise in median age was driven by an increased share of residents aged 50 and over and a declining share of the youth (ages 0-17) population. The percentage of households with residents 65 years of age and over increased from 18% in 2010 to 26% in 2018. These trends are consistent with county-wide demographic shifts. Since 2010, the 65 and over age cohort has experienced the greatest population share increase as the “Baby Boomer” generation ages in place. The housing and household implications of a population aging in place are considerable, including health and community facility needs and access to public transportation.

The decrease in the youth population (ages 0-17) can be seen in lower enrolment in the Jersey City Public School System. Compared with 2008, district-wide enrolment has decreased by nearly 4%.

There has been substantial growth in housing development

In 2018, there were 112,480 total housing units in Jersey City, an increase of 20% from the 2000 Census figure of 93,648. According to City data, approximately a quarter of the City’s housing stock was built in the past two decades. Similar to the experience of Hoboken, this continuous growth in residential development reflects the high demand for housing that is in close proximity to New York City, often at more affordable rates. From the period from 2004 to 2018, multi-family housing has been the leading type of residential development, versus 1- and 2-family and mixed-use housing. In 2018, 90% of the 3,850 building permits issued in Jersey City were associated with multi-family housing units.

New multi-family developments are mainly in redevelopment plan areas, with a high concentration built Downtown, followed by Bergen-Lafayette and Journal Square. Generally, they are strategically located within walking distance to public transportation, primarily light rail, and PATH stations.

Note that listed here are Asian and Hispanic/Latino ethno-racial groups that constitute more than 2% of the total Jersey City population per 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates.
Housing prices and costs have increased

With a high demand to live in Jersey City combined with a short supply of housing that cannot keep pace with this demand, the City has seen an increase in the cost of living, especially with its prime location adjacent to New York City. As of October 2020, according to Zillow, a popular real estate listing website, Jersey City has a median home value of $545,000, which is higher than both the state and county. All six wards experienced a gradual increase in median home value since 2013 after the financial crisis of 2008. Downtown saw a similar increase but reached its peak in 2018 and has since declined. While home values have increased across the board, there is a range in values. Greenville has the lowest median home value at $421,000, while Downtown has the highest median home value at $867,000, about two times that of Greenville’s value. It is worth noting that this data point was taken during the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly affected other real estate activity. Early indications are that urban markets such as Jersey City and Hoboken were most affected in New Jersey, as buyers and renters sought less dense environments in the short-term.

Jersey City has a homeowner vacancy rate of 2.2% and a rental vacancy rate of 4.4%. Both vacancy rates have decreased since 2010, while the amount of housing units increased. Lower vacancy rates indicate that the Jersey City’s housing market is tight rather than oversupplied.5

While the increase in housing costs is good news for homeowners, it has also raised the cost of living for many residents. The majority of housing units in Jersey City are renter-occupied (71%). Currently, the City’s housing cost-burdened owners and renters (those who spend more than 30% of their monthly income on housing) represent 42% of the total population.

Residential growth has attracted non-family households

Since 2000, the significant apartment construction, especially Downtown, has attracted non-family households (unmarried couples, students, and young professionals). From 2000 to 2018, the share of non-family households with two or more people saw the highest growth rate of all household types. While there has been growth in married-couple families, the share of married-couple households with children fell from 49% in 2000 to 45% in 2018. These trends are backed by the overall decline of both average household size (2.67 to 2.56) and average family size (3.37 to 3.19) from 2000 to 2018. Despite growth of non-family households, married-couple family households maintain the greatest share (39%) of all households as of 2018.

Data on recent development activity show a trend toward smaller units. While most housing unit types saw a large percentage increase in the past 20 years, 4+ bedroom housing units saw the lowest increase, at 1.2%, and this unit type makes up just 7% of total housing units. With the growing trend in multi-family housing since 2000 and more multi-family developments in the pipeline, there is great need to preserve and create a diversity of housing options at income levels that serve the full range of the City’s residents. The City’s 2015-2019 Five-Year Consolidated Plan notes there is a lack of affordable housing options for the elderly, low- to moderate-income households, and people with disabilities.

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5 American Community Survey 2014-2018 Five-Year Estimate

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Chart 4: Jersey City Median Home Value

Source: Zillow Home Value Index.

Chart 5: Household Composition

Household income and educational attainment are steadily rising

In the past 10 years, Jersey City has seen a substantial increase in corporate office space with high-paying jobs as well as market-rate apartments catering to workers in the City or commuters to New York City. This growth is indicated in the median household income, which rose by 15% between 2000 and 2018, considerably higher than the 9% growth rate for Hudson County during the same period.\(^6\) Notably, gains in median income were largely concentrated in the number of households earning over $100,000. The number of households earning less than $100,000 has remained relatively steady. As seen in the chart to the right, higher median household incomes, frequently over $100,000, are generally concentrated in the Downtown and waterfront areas.

As the population’s total and household median incomes have grown in Jersey City, so has educational attainment. The high school graduation rate increased from nearly 73% in 2000 to almost 87% in 2018, while the share of the population with a bachelor’s degree or higher rose from nearly just over one in four residents to nearly half (46%) during this same period.

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Economic advancements have not been shared equally

Although new housing developments and growth of a vibrant Downtown office district have aided in a growing population with access to new opportunities, income and related quality-of-life are not experienced the same across all neighborhoods. While the Downtown and waterfront areas have generally higher median incomes, the central spine of the City (including Bergen-Lafayette, McGinley Square, and Greenville) tends to have lower household median incomes as well as higher concentrations of non-white residents.

Despite a significant rise in median household income in the past 20 years, the percentage of the population living in poverty has remained level. As of 2018, 18% of the total population and 26% of children live below the poverty level.

Disparities in equity and health persist

Public health among the City’s neighborhoods varies widely. The data points below demonstrate general challenges of equity and portray worse-than-average health conditions/outcomes for Jersey City compared with other cities by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC): 7

- The City had a racial/ethnic segregation score of 16.5, compared with an average of 10.9 across the Dashboard cities. This means that racial/ethnic segregation is more pronounced in Jersey City as compared with most cities in the United States.
- A total of 10.6% of Jersey City’s adults reported having diabetes, compared with an average of 10% across the Dashboard cities. Notably, census tract 44, on the border of Wards B and F, has a diabetes prevalence rate of 21.3%.
- Some 31.4% of Jersey City’s adults reported being physically inactive in the past 30 days, compared with an average of 26.2% across the Dashboard cities.
- Jersey City had an annual average PM2.5 (particulate matter) 8 concentration of 8.9, compared with an average of 8.5 across the Dashboard cities. This portrays the presence of solid and liquid matter in the air which is an environmental risk that contributes to higher rates of asthma. 9

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7 https://www.cdc.gov/500cities/index.htm
8 PM2.5 refers to solid and liquid particulate matter that is 2.5 micrometers and smaller.
9 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Public Health Services. Needs Assessment weight the hospital’s primary service area which falls entirely within Jersey City, but analysis also considers data from the hospital’s secondary service area (including nearby zip codes outside of Jersey City), a community health survey, and key informant interviews with community stakeholders.
Residents also cited the need to address key community challenges such as the supply of safe/affordable housing, persistence of interpersonal violence, and creation of new job opportunities.\textsuperscript{11}

**Many residents lack resources to cope with external stresses such as COVID-19 and impacts of climate change**

Not all residents with the City have the resources to adequately cope with external stresses, such as the impacts of natural or human-caused disasters, or disease outbreaks. This is especially relevant given the current COVID-19 crisis which has placed an unprecedented stress on society as a whole.

Many of the City’s varying quality-of-life conditions can be illuminated through a community resiliency framework. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) portrays such conditions across populations. This dataset aggregates metrics that depict the resilience of communities when confronted by external stresses on human health, such as natural or human-caused disasters, or disease outbreaks.\textsuperscript{12} Population characteristics in this dataset include metrics such as poverty status, lack of vehicle status, crowded housing, unemployment, and minority status. Figure 4 shows areas that experience the highest levels of CDC-defined social vulnerability.

In 2018, 13% of Jersey City residents were uninsured, significantly higher than the statewide rate of 8%. Census tracts in neighborhood areas that include Greenville and Bergen-Lafayette reported rates of uninsured residents at over 20%.\textsuperscript{13} Such trends in health insurance coverage are one determinant of many that produce population health outcomes.

**Jersey City is safer overall**

In the past 20 years, Jersey City has become a safer city, as crime rates that have steadily fallen. In 2000, the crime rate was 50.6 crimes per 1,000 residents, whereas the rate in 2017 had fallen by more than half, at 23.6 per 1,000 residents. There has been a significant decline in both violent and non-violent crimes.

\textsuperscript{12} https://svi.cdc.gov/
\textsuperscript{13} American Community Survey (2014-2018 5-Year Estimates)
Access to the Internet has generally improved but there is still a digital divide

Access to computers and the Internet has become increasingly important to participate in many economic, political, and social aspects of society, which became clear as many people worked or attended school remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. The digital divide results in population inclusion or exclusion based on who has access to technology. Households without computer or Internet access are impacted differently, but the challenges are pronounced for the school-age population. In Jersey City, 79% of households have a desktop or laptop, which is similar to the rate for Hudson County but lags behind the statewide rate of nearly 82%. There remains an imperative for Jersey City to close the “digital divide” to help equalize this quality-of-life measure across the City.

Although the functionality of smartphones is limited in comparison with other computing devices, they provide significant connectivity and have become an essential platform for consuming media and other information. While smartphones are typically used on an individual basis, 81% of households have access to a smartphone in Jersey City, compared with 78% of households in the state overall.

Source: Jennifer Brown / City of Jersey City.
EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS TRENDS

The City's economy has expanded and is generally healthier than it was 20 years ago

Jersey City has experienced broad-based economic growth since 1980, accompanied by employment and income gains and significant commercial redevelopment. At the time of the prior Master Plan in 2000, the City was in the midst of a period of strong economic growth. The development surge that grew through the early- and mid-2000s deflated significantly in 2008-2009; however, the City has rebounded from the Great Recession with a strong housing market, a robust development pipeline, and significant employment gains.

The City’s employment has reached a high point, reflecting the successful transition from a manufacturing base to a service-based economy. In 2017, there were 128,760 jobs located in the City, an increase of 23,902 jobs, or 23%, over 2010 employment, and growth of 29% over 2002 employment. Thus, the majority of employment growth since 2002 has occurred in the latter half of the period.

Jersey City has established itself as a center for professional services

The City’s employment growth has been fueled by the expansion of existing employers and the relocation of large employers from throughout the region, especially from New York City. As of the 2000 Master Plan, the City had already begun to transform from a center of manufacturing and transportation into a hub of finance, retail, and services. This trend has continued in the past 20 years. Figure 5 shows how jobs are concentrated in the Downtown and Journal Square portions of the City, two areas which have seen a significant amount of office development since 2000.

The majority of industry sectors saw some amount of job growth between 2002 and 2017. The three industries that have grown the most in total jobs since 2002 are Finance and Insurance (+11,420 jobs), Retail Trade (3,771 jobs), and Administration and Support (+3,185 jobs). The finance/insurance/real estate (FIRE) sector now represents 28% of jobs in Jersey City. Many of the largest employers in the City are in the FIRE sector, including a quarter of businesses with more than 100 employees, half of businesses with more than 500 employees, and all of the businesses with greater than 1,000 employees. This sector has benefited from the City’s proximity to the Lower Manhattan financial district. Most of these businesses located along Jersey City’s Hudson River waterfront, from Exchange Place to Newport, which has seen tremendous growth in Class A office space in the past 20 years.  

Figure 5: Location of Jobs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Employed Residents</td>
<td>95,165</td>
<td>100,981</td>
<td>122,332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worker Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 29 or younger</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 30 to 54</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 55 or older</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earnings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,250 per month or less</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,251 to $3,333 per month</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than $3,333 per month</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Economic Profile of Employed Residents

15 2002 is the earliest data available for the U.S. Census LEHD On the Map analysis. As a result, the year 2002 is used as a baseline for economic data that utilizes that data source. 2017 is the most recent data available for Primary Jobs located in Jersey City as provided by LEHD.
While the number of jobs in the City has increased, many residents commute elsewhere

Since the early 2000s, Jersey City’s share of residents who work outside of the City has grown significantly. Roughly four out of every five employed Jersey City residents work elsewhere, with nearly two out of every five residents specifically working in New York City. Most recent data from 2017 show that the live-work population share is still lower than 2000 rates but it has increased slightly since 2010. A growing population further provides opportunities to plan for more residents who will live and work in Jersey City, as well as continued high volumes who will commute to and from New York City and other regional locations.

Most businesses in Jersey City are small

In 2017, there were 4,967 businesses in Jersey City. As seen in Chart 10, the vast majority of businesses are small; 85% of businesses have fewer than 20 employees. These data suggest that small businesses play a large part in Jersey City’s economy. Smaller businesses are also at a higher risk (compared with larger businesses) to economic stress, such as what was seen during Hurricane Sandy and COVID-19. It is important for Jersey City to support and encourage the development of small businesses, including minority and women-owned businesses and disadvantaged business enterprises. Greater employment opportunities and resources for small businesses here will attract new residents, including families, younger people, and persons with unique experience, knowledge, skills, and expertise.

Opening of Baonanas

Source: JCTV

Table 3: Economic Profile of Employed Residents


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Live-work in Jersey City</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live in Jersey City, work elsewhere</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>81.4%</td>
<td>80.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Chart 10: Businesses grouped by Size (Number of Employees)


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18 Note that these data utilize total Primary Jobs to portray total employed residents and predominant commuting patterns.
Jersey City’s labor force has increased and unemployment has declined

Jersey City’s labor force (workers that live in the City) has benefited from the City’s economic revitalization since 1980. The number of employed residents grew by 29% between 2002 and 2017, fueled by recent employment and population increases associated with redevelopment, especially along the Hudson River waterfront. The total number and percentage of employed residents has increased, showing that the City’s economy has expanded and is healthier in 2017 compared with 2002. Unemployment across Hudson County has dropped to lows not seen in decades. In March 2020, the unemployment rate for the City was at 3.6, which was slightly higher than Hudson County (3.5%), but lower than the State (3.8%). This is a significant decline from a high of 11.9% in Fall 2009. Clearly, the current COVID-19 pandemic has drastically affected employment levels in Jersey City, as it has throughout the country; long-term employment impacts of the situation are not yet clear.

As seen in Chart 12, the most common jobs held by Jersey City residents, by number of employees, are those in the FIRE (finance, insurance, and real estate), Health Care, and Retail Trade sectors. The first two sectors often require a college education and high skill levels as a prerequisite for employment. Compared with other places, Jersey City has an unusually high number of residents working in Computer & Mathematical occupations (3.1 times higher than expected), Business & Financial Operations occupations (1.95 times), and Legal occupations (1.89 times).

Census data show that in 2017 approximately 44% of jobs located within Jersey City were classified as “low income” or earning below $40,000 per year; this represents a significant decrease from 2002, where 71% of jobs were classified as low income. These data are consistent with the increases in median household income (presented earlier in this chapter) over the same period. The numbers do not take include recent drops in employment due to the impact of COVID-19.

Chart 11: Unemployment Rate

Chart 12: Most Common Industries for Residents
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate.

19 Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics and Census Bureau 2018 ACS 5-year Estimate
20 Source: https://datausa.io/
21 The U.S. Census classifies earnings into three categories: earnings of $1,250 per month or less, earnings $1,251 per month to $3,333 per month, and earnings greater than $3,333 per month. Earnings of $3,333 per month or less ($40,000 or less, annually) are considered low-wage jobs and workers.
TRANSPORTATION TRENDS

Public transportation is an essential part of Jersey City life

Situated in the heart of the New York City metropolitan area, Jersey City is a crossroads of local, regional, national, and international travel. Providing a robust transportation system has always been a central strategy for the City to enhance the quality-of-life experienced by residents and support the continued development of regional economic engines.

Almost half of workers in the City use public transportation, which is the second-highest percentage of public transit riders of any city with a population of 100,000+ in the United States, behind only New York City and ahead of Washington, D.C. The second-most popular means of commute is by car alone. About 8% of the population walks to work. The rate of low-income residents that walk to work (15%) is more than twice as high as the rest of the population (7%).

The number of workers that commute into Jersey City ("inflow") and the number of workers leaving the City to work in other places ("outflow") are relatively comparable, at just over 100,000 people each. About 38% of residents commute to New York City, and 20% of employed residents stay in Jersey City. Despite the fact that both total employment and the residential population has grown, the number of people that both live and work in the City has stayed level between 2002 and 2017. This suggests that there is an unmet opportunity to capture more workers in the City as residents.

It is acknowledged that the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted commuting patterns in the near-term and potentially beyond. Public transit use has been down and in the future, as things begin to normalize, there remains the potential for workplace changes, where some may shift to a hybrid work from office/home model. The City should continue to monitor these workplace trends as it plans for transportation improvements.

Jersey City’s rail transit network continues to expand

Jersey City’s intermodal transportation system has been under continuous development and refinement since its inception. In the mid- to late-19th century, railroads were built with terminals along the Hudson River waterfront. In the early 20th century, the City’s first modern mass transit system opened, linking Jersey City to Lower Manhattan. This service would later become the PATH.

22 Source: American Community Survey (2018) Commutation to work by Poverty Status in the last 12 Months. Low income is defined as population below 150% of the poverty level.
Transportation infrastructure continued to develop into the 21st century, including the addition of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR), which connects nearby communities on the west side of the Hudson River. Planned growth of this service will continue to increase Jersey City’s importance as a regional hub. Both the City and surrounding communities have seen a significant amount of development around this system, which has resulted in increased ridership. During the first year of service in 2000, the HBLR system’s average weekday ridership was 3,800 daily riders. Today, average weekday ridership often exceeds 50,000 daily riders. HBLR is widely recognized as a tremendous success. Consequently, there have been proposals to expand services, such as the expansion of the West Side Avenue Branch to a new station on the west side of State Route 440. The approximately 3,700-foot route extension will support Jersey City’s planned Bayfront development on the Hackensack waterfront. In addition, there is a planned expansion of HBLR services from the northern terminus in Union City. This will most likely lead to additional Hudson County passengers using the system to access the PATH, Hoboken Terminal, ferry services, and jobs in Downtown Jersey City. To further improve HBLR services, New Jersey Transit could make improvements to the rail system to make the HBLR operate faster such as utilizing transit signal priority.

The roadway system is at capacity

Jersey City’s roadway system includes several major routes of regional importance. Collectively, these roadways connect the City with Manhattan via the Holland Tunnel to the east, as well as destinations to the north, south, and west. Because the City is located along a major nexus of the regional roadway system, it experiences a high degree of through-traffic and congestion, which often overflows to its local street network. While the local roadway network is quite extensive, most roads were designed to accommodate traffic conditions of an earlier era and lack adequate capacity for current traffic volumes. This results in excessive traffic congestion that reduces mobility, impedes access to activity centers and impacts quality-of-life. Recent and anticipated growth of the Hudson River waterfront in Jersey City has raised the importance of ensuring mobility and access for the 40,000 employees and 30,000 residents in the waterfront area. The density of both residential and office uses in the area has the potential to add a substantial amount of traffic to the roadway system.

At a regional level, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) is implementing a series of independent projects that will improve access to and between the Newark-Elizabeth Air/Seaport Complex,
intermodal rail facilities, trucking and warehousing/transfer facilities, and the regional surface transportation system.

On local roads, since there is limited opportunity to increase roadway capacity, the City has focused on improvements to maximize the efficiency of the existing network, eliminate “missing links,” and increase mass transit usage and bike/pedestrian opportunities. As the City and region’s population continues to grow, mitigation of traffic congestion will remain important.

The popularity of ridesharing services (Uber, Lyft, etc.) has sharply grown since 2010. These services make it easier to live in the City without owning an automobile, but they also appear to be contributing to increased traffic on the roadways.

**Automobile ownership rates remain high**

Despite Jersey City’s extensive transit network, not all residents have convenient access. While bus service provides coverage throughout the City, many of the routes are oriented toward commuters and are less reliable for intracity trips. Personal automobiles remain an important means of transportation for many residents, with 38% of residents driving to work and 62% of households owning at least one car. As shown in Figure 8, aside from the core Downtown and Journal Square areas, most areas of the City have more than 1.5 vehicles per household.

Parking is another issue related to automobile ownership. Many residents have identified parking availability as a significant issue, both in residential neighborhoods and in destination commercial districts. In 2020, the City, in coordination with NJTPA, completed a year-long Parking Management Plan to address the emerging issues around parking in Jersey City that residents, workers, and visitors alike encounter. The study seeks to optimize the use of current parking supply City-wide and identify parking management strategies to inform zoning and policy decisions.

**The transportation network has become more flexible**

With limited opportunity to increase roadway capacity and parking options, the City has focused on strategies to provide a more balanced multi-modal transportation system that both accommodates the automobile and supports alternatives to reduce automobile use, such as ridesharing partnerships and improving pedestrian and bicycle connections.
Jersey City has formed a partnership with VIA, a transportation provider that offers on-demand bus service. The system augments the existing public transit network by creating a more flexible bus system with virtual bus stops (pick up locations which travelers walk to). The VIA system launched in February 2020. Data collected in the summer of 2021 indicates that there has been an average of 9,000 - 10,000 rides per week. It is worth noting that this data was partially gathered during COVID-19. It can be assumed that ridership was somewhat depressed due to the pandemic.

Improving conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists is a high priority

On average, nine people every year lost their lives in traffic crashes in Jersey City between 2008 and 2017. During the period, there were 92 fatal crashes resulting in 96 deaths, of which 41 were pedestrians. In addition, there were almost 200 serious injury crashes, almost half of which involved a pedestrian.24 The City’s 2019 Vision Zero Action Plan found that 68% of crashes and 80% of fatal crashes were concentrated on just 16% of the roadway network in Jersey City. Street segments with a high incidence of fatal and serious injury crashes were combined to create a High Injury Network, which is shown in Figure 9 on the previous page.

According to the Vision Zero Plan, while only 4% of all traffic crashes involve pedestrians, they are involved in 43% of fatal crashes and more than 40% of serious injury crashes. Bicyclists and motorized two-wheelers each comprise 1% of all crashes but are involved in 9% and 14% of fatal crashes, respectively.

The Vision Zero Action Plan encourages a range of programmatic and educational elements, with the goal of reaching zero traffic deaths and severe injuries on City streets by 2026. The plan proposes a broad traffic calming program that prioritizes major safety engineering projects on the High Injury Network, and increasing the visibility of pedestrian crossings. The plan recommends the City develop a street design guide reflecting international best practices, update development regulations and design standards to reflect Vision Zero principles, and improve data collection and analysis.

Bicycling has become more popular

Jersey City has a rapidly growing network of bike lanes (protected and unprotected) that connect parks, transit hubs, commercial centers and other major destinations throughout...
the City. There is also a growing network of off-street bike paths within Lincoln and Liberty State Parks and the future Morris Canal Greenway. Recently, the City implemented its first protected bike lane along Grove Street. To date the City has completed over 10 miles of protected lanes along thoroughfares like Washington Boulevard, Bergen Avenue, Montgomery Street, Grand Street, Hoboken Avenue and Merseles Street. Plans are underway to add approximately 7 miles of additional protected bike lanes along Johnston Avenue, Columbus Drive, Newark Avenue, Marin Boulevard, Washington Boulevard, Greene Street, and Baldwin Avenue. The City will continue to build out the priority protected bike lane network as outlined in the Jersey City Bicycle Master Plan. Collectively, these bike facilities form a network that not only provides a valuable means for recreational activity and social interaction, but also creates a safe and eco-friendly transportation option to link the City’s diverse neighborhoods and connect it with nearby communities.

The City’s Let’s Ride JC Bicycle Master Plan, prepared in 2019, represents a major commitment to improving bicycle infrastructure throughout the City. The plan notes that, currently, 1% of trips within Jersey City are made by cycling, and identifies measures to increase this number to 5% by 2026. It provides street-by-street recommendations to increase the City’s on-street bikeway network from 16% to 55% of the total network. The plan also looks at street segments identified in the Vision Zero Action Plan that have a high incidence of crashes and have also seen a decrease in traffic volumes (since 2017). These segments may be opportunities to reallocate some of the roadway for more efficient and safe modes of transit.

Increasing bicycle use can be seen in the popularity of Citi Bike, an extension of the bike-share system operating in New York City. There are 50 Citi Bike stations in the City, with half of these located Downtown. According to data from Motivate, the operator of Citi Bike, roughly 354,000 trips were taken in 2018, a year-over-year increase of approximately 20%. The data show that during the week, the average rider is typically a commuter going to and from public transit, as the most commonly traveled routes during the week are to and from PATH stations and during peak commuting hours. On weekends, some riders may still use their bike for commuting, but a larger proportion are using the service for other purposes such as running errands, getting around town, and recreational rides.

In 2018, Motivate closed eight stations, citing low usage. Closures were primarily in the southernmost neighborhoods of Jersey City, and service was expanded in areas with higher ridership levels, which correlates to the most affluent parts of the City.

### Streets need to be designed for all users

In policy and practice, Jersey City works to ensure its streets are “complete streets,” defined as roadways that enable safe and convenient access for all users, including bicyclists; children, persons with disabilities, or seniors; motorists; movers of commercial goods; and users of public transit. In 2011, Jersey City established a Complete Streets Policy, requiring that all new public street construction and reconstruction undertaken by the City must be designed and constructed as “complete streets” whenever feasible to improve safety conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit users, and motorized vehicle passengers. Special priority in designs is given to pedestrian safety. Providing more green infrastructure in streetscape redesigns can also help to mitigate stormwater runoff issues.

The City developed the JC Walks Pedestrian Enhancement Plan in 2018 to identify specific measures to enhance the pedestrian experience through improvements to safety and aesthetics of streets, and the promotion of placemaking. The plan used data analysis and extensive public engagement to select six priority corridors - one in each ward.

### Opportunities remain to expand waterfront access and transform the system of multi-purpose trails

Jersey City’s multi-purpose trail system enriches the lives of residents and visitors through the promotion of good health and social interaction. It consists of a series of walkways, greenways, and trails that provide the public with eco-friendly transportation alternatives and recreational opportunities. Two of the major efforts include developing continuous walkways along both the Hudson River and Hackensack River waterfronts. The Hudson River Walkway is nearly complete, while major portions remain to be built along the Hackensack River.

Beyond these two efforts to improve waterfront access, advocacy has built traction over the last two decades to repurpose former transportation infrastructure into parks and open space areas. Three ongoing adaptive reuse efforts that would ultimately increase the amount of park land and open space are the Morris Canal Greenway, the Bergen Arches, and the Sixth Street Embankment. Beyond the benefits of newly accessible open space for the public, each of these projects would also serve to improve overall neighborhood connectivity and circulation for pedestrians and cyclists.

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With added density comes a greater need for quality green space

The availability and quality of parks, open spaces, and public facilities are inextricably tied to residents’ quality-of-life, the cohesion of the public realm, and the coordination of resiliency efforts in light of climate change. Although roughly 96% of residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park, this metric is complicated by the reality that parks vary greatly in terms of their quality of green space and amenities. As the population density of Jersey City has increased, so has the urgency for parks and green spaces that maximize both physical and social health.

Previously established goals and strategies in the 2000 Master Plan and the 2008 Jersey City Recreation and Open Space Master Plan created momentum for more parks, open spaces, and public facilities. The broad strategies that remain relevant include goals to:

- Obtain new land for parks across the City with a focus on neighborhoods with the greatest needs.
- Increase community waterfront access on the Hackensack and Hudson Rivers.
- Promote open space connectivity through the establishment of greenways.

In recognition of the scarcity of available land in Jersey City, the 2008 Recreation Master Plan recommended that obtaining new land for parks should realistically strategize sites where environmental remediation is necessary, as well as leverage private development community benefits agreements to provide new parks and recreation areas where feasible.

With a scarcity of readily available land to locate new parks in Jersey City, greenways and walkways have gained interest and investment over the last 20 years. Opportunities for greenway and walkway projects are defined by two distinct City features: decommissioned and historic infrastructure that can be adaptively reused, and a geography bounded by two rivers where maximizing public access has long been sought.

Figure 11: Walk Access to Parks

Source: City of Jersey City Open Data, 2018; Walk Access to Park – UrbanFoot Walk and Transit Accessibility module using OpenStreetMap walk path data (Exported from UrbanFootprint).

Jersey City has a vibrant arts community

As one of the most culturally diverse cities in the nation, Jersey City has an exciting and vibrant art and culture scene that grows stronger and larger each year. From numerous art fairs, ethnic festivals and flag raisings, to local theater, film, and performing arts, the City’s cultural offerings...
continue to expand. Additionally, the Jersey City Art and Studio Tour draws thousands from across the Tri-State area every Fall.

One recent success is the Jersey City Mural Arts Program, initiated in 2013 by a Mayor’s Office Initiative. The program links established and emerging mural artists with property owners City-wide as part of an innovative arts initiative that strives to engage local residents. As of 2021, the Mural Arts Program has created 218 with more in the pipeline. 152 artists have collaborated on murals in the City, and each year roughly 20 youth participate in research and community engagement. Figure 12 shows locations of completed murals as well as mural sites that are pending/in progress.

In recognition of the catalytic social value of arts and culture, the Jersey City office of Cultural Affairs, in collaboration with New Jersey City University, launched an initiative in 2018 to document and strategize cultural resources. An outcome of this process is a two-year roadmap that considers where future investments would have the greatest impact in supporting existing artists and arts organizations. Particular recognition in this effort has been afforded to equitable distribution of cultural resources across wards. While shorter-term goals include supporting existing non-profits, creating a directory of resources, and hosting capacity building workshops, longer-term goals such as the identification of funding that can support new arts projects and opportunities to build and promote cultural corridors and hubs in tandem with new development opportunities.

**Utility infrastructure has grown and needs to continue to expand to serve existing residents and anticipated growth**

Since the 2000 Master Plan, Jersey City has undertaken many efforts to improve and expand community infrastructure to support both current and future residents. Continued efforts to repair and expand the City’s infrastructure is essential, as there continues to be infrastructural issues present. The City’s drinking water and sewerage system is undergoing repair of existing piping and installation of new piping to prepare for future development.

As of June 2020, the Jersey City Municipal Utilities Authority (JCMUA) has embarked on major projects, to be completed in phases, to improve the City’s aging drinking water and sewer infrastructure. These include catch basin replacement, environmental protection and restoration, and repair and replacement of sewer pipes. JCMUA has submitted a Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) proposing large water infrastructure projects to reduce and/or eliminate combined sewer overflows (CSOs). As of October 2020, the plan is under review by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and will be finalized in 2021.

![Figure 12: Mural Locations, Jersey City Mural Arts Program](image)

*Source: Jersey City Mural Arts Program.*

**Figure 12: Mural Locations, Jersey City Mural Arts Program**

*Source: Jersey City Mural Arts Program.*

![Keep Pushing Mural by Brandan Odums in Jersey City](image)

*Source: Jersey City Mural Arts Program.*
SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE TRENDS

Jersey City must become more resilient to flooding

Jersey City is a peninsula with low-lying areas surrounded by the Hackensack River and Newark Bay on the west and the Hudson River and Upper New York Bay on the east. As a coastal city, it is vulnerable to natural disasters such as flooding and storm events. Approximately 40% of the City’s total land area is located within FEMA’s Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA).

As seen with Hurricane Sandy, coastal flooding brings in high volumes of water with a powerful force capable of damaging buildings and infrastructure. Stormwater flooding occurs more regularly, as rain events cause runoff along the City’s large percentage of impervious surfaces, causing flooding in areas that normally would not. With flooding expected to occur more frequently – combined with an increase in average annual temperature, increase in rainfall, and rise in sea level due to climate change – the number of residents and businesses threatened by flooding will continue to grow.

Jersey City’s Tree Canopy Assessment, completed in 2015, found that 62% of its total land area is comprised of impervious surfaces, which includes buildings, parking lots, roads, and sidewalks. With the majority of surfaces being impermeable, Jersey City is more prone to local flooding and polluted waterbodies with more frequent intense storms and further impacts due to climate change in the future.

In the past eight years, Jersey City has undertaken climate change adaptation and resiliency planning to mitigate and adapt to future intense storms and anticipated natural disasters due to climate change. In 2018, the City prepared a Resilient Design Handbook to guide residents and businesses on the fundamentals of the existing sewer system, the impacts of flooding, the importance of green infrastructure, and the need to alter existing building design. In 2019, the City adopted the Resiliency Master Plan, Adaptation Master Plan, and Urban Environmental Green Infrastructure Design Plan. These reports build on previous efforts to understand how future planning will need to consider climate change and future population growth, especially in the most vulnerable areas near the waterfronts. The City is also trying to reduce the amount of impervious surfaces through the creation of new parks, introduction of green infrastructure, preservation of the tree canopy, and renovation of existing parks. These strategies will result in both improved quality-of-life for residents and reduced negative environmental impacts.

Sea level rise is an imminent threat

While global sea levels have risen 0.8 inches since 1900, New Jersey has seen a 1.4-foot rise in sea level within this same time period. The state is seeing a greater increase because its land is sinking and is expected to continue doing so. Historically, New Jersey was situated upon a large ice sheet that no longer exists, and the ground plane is naturally moving downward. Factors caused by climate change exacerbate the situation. By 2050, Rutgers University researchers predict that New Jersey could experience a 1- to 2-foot increase in sea level rise, with levels increasing anywhere from 2 to 8 feet or more by 2100. Sea level rise is also dependent on the amount of greenhouse gas emissions released and the amount of ice glaciers that are melting; therefore these values are an estimate.

Figure 13 illustrates Jersey City’s potential future with a 3-foot rise in sea level. A small portion of Greenville’s eastern waterfront will experience the deepest potential inundations, specifically affecting the Porte Liberté.
residential development and the industrial area surrounding Greenville Yard. The majority of the remaining inundated areas are predominantly located in industrial areas under the jurisdiction of the NJ Sports and Exposition Authority (NJSEA), residential or mixed-use areas in Downtown, and sections of the riverfront parks, Liberty State Park and Lincoln Park.

**Jersey City is becoming more sustainable**

Jersey City has made strides toward becoming a more sustainable city and a healthy place to live and work for current and future generations. In 2017, the City was awarded Sustainable Jersey’s Silver Certification Level, recognizing the City’s commitment to sustainability practices. In 2018, Jersey City established the Office of Sustainability, with responsibility to research, identify, and implement best practices for sustainability.

The City is seeking to shift energy use in all sectors from non-renewable to cleaner renewable energy sources. In 2018, Jersey City joined the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, making a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 80% by 2050. To reach this milestone, the City adopted its first Climate and Energy Action Plan in 2021. The plan will guide City policies on actions needed in all sectors to successfully reduce GHG emissions and climate change impacts. Improvements to waste management have been dedicated to reducing the amount of waste ending up in landfills, including the City-wide ban on plastic bags, the addition of proper recycling guides, and the introduction of food composting. Jersey City is the largest municipality in the state to enact a City-wide ban on plastic bags.

Figure 14: Sea Level Rise

Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, August 2019 (Exported from UrbanFootprint).

![Tree Planting Event](image)
Jersey City is becoming more sustainable

Jersey City has made strides toward becoming a more sustainable city and a healthy place to live and work for current and future generations. In 2017, the City was awarded Sustainable Jersey’s Silver Certification Level, recognizing the City’s commitment to sustainability practices. In 2018, Jersey City established the Office of Sustainability, with responsibility to research, identify, and implement best practices for sustainability.

The City is seeking to shift energy use in all sectors from non-renewable to cleaner renewable energy sources. In 2018, Jersey City joined the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, making a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 80% by 2050. To reach this milestone, the City adopted its first Climate and Energy Action Plan in 2021. The plan will guide City policies on actions needed in all sectors to successfully reduce GHG emissions and climate change impacts. Improvements to waste management have been dedicated to reducing the amount of waste ending up in landfills, including the City-wide ban on plastic bags, the addition of proper recycling guides, and the introduction of food composting. Jersey City is the largest municipality in the state to enact a City-wide ban on plastic bags.
This chapter provides an overview of existing land uses, zoning districts, and historic districts. Zoning powers are the primary control for development and redevelopment of land. The role of the zoning code is to regulate which types of land use are permitted in specified areas of the City. Zoning also controls density, scale, and design of buildings. This chapter provides general information about the intent for each of the zoning districts. It also provides an overview of the nearly 100 Redevelopment Plan Areas in the City. Details on zoning regulations can be found in Appendix A as well as on the City’s website. The municipal code should be referred to for definitions and regulations pertaining to zoning.
CHAPTER 2: EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING

This chapter provides an overview of existing land uses, zoning districts, and historic districts. Zoning powers are the primary control for development and redevelopment of land. The role of the zoning code is to regulate which types of land use are permitted in specified areas of the City. Zoning also controls density, scale, and design of buildings.

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HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Historical Development

Situated in the heart of the New York City metropolitan area, Jersey City is a crossroads of local, regional, national, and international travel. The City is strategically located in the center of the Northeast Corridor, with frontage along the Hudson River opposite Manhattan. As a result, Jersey City has historically functioned as a gateway through which people and goods travel on their way to New York City, interior regions of the U.S., and destinations overseas. It is also a densely populated city, with a population over 290,000 residents (as of 2020 Census) and approximately 26.6 million square feet of office space within its 15 square miles.

The current built environment of Jersey City reflects the City’s historical development from two separate municipalities, the City of Jersey City and Greenville Township, and further development into an industrial and transportation hub with the addition of industrial factories and railroad lines in the mid-19th century. Historical development by year is shown in Figure 15 on the following page.

Transportation System

In its earliest days, the City was an important center of maritime activity due to its prime waterfront location. The Morris Canal was constructed in the 1830s, linking the City to the Delaware River and solidifying its central role in waterborne transportation. Later, Jersey City became the nation’s “Golden Door” as it welcomed new Americans at Ellis Island.

Transportation infrastructure has always been a critical element to the growth of Jersey City. In the mid- to late-19th century, railroads were built with terminals along the Hudson River waterfront. In the early 20th century, the City’s first modern mass transit system opened, linking Jersey City to Lower Manhattan. This service, originally known as the Hudson and Manhattan Railroad, would later become the PATH. The City saw significant highway construction from the 1920s through the 1960s as the automobile became the dominant mode of travel. Major facilities opening in this period include the Holland Tunnel, the Pulaski Skyway, and the New Jersey Turnpike Hudson County Extension.

Transportation infrastructure continued to develop into the 21st century, including the addition of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR), which connects nearby communities on the west side of the Hudson River. Planned growth of this service will continue to increase Jersey City’s importance as a regional hub. Both the City and surrounding communities have experienced a significant amount of development around this system, which has resulted in increased ridership.
**19th Century**

Jersey City’s existing built environment has remnants of historic homes dating back pre-19th century, which make up about 15% of the total housing stock. In the early 19th century, the City was part of Bergen Township and located in Bergen County. It became part of the newly created Hudson County in 1840. At this point, Jersey City was comprised of five out of the six current wards: Bergen-Lafayette, Downtown, Journal Square, the Heights, and West Side. Due south of the City was Greenville Township, which was originally part of Bergen Town. Pollock Avenue/Myrtle Avenue marked the east-west boundary between Jersey City and Greenville. In 1873, the municipalities merged when Greenville became part of the City, forming the present-day municipal boundary.

With Jersey City’s proximity to New York City, three major railroad companies, Pennsylvania Railroad, Central Railroad of New Jersey, and Erie Railroad, built new rail lines along the perimeter of the City’s Hudson River waterfront in the late 19th century. The development of the railroad system required the expansion of Jersey City’s eastern boundary to extend into the Hudson River, which resulted in filling low-lying wetlands as seen in Figure 16.

This historic area of fill accounts for a large portion of the City’s total land acreage.

**20th Century to Present Day**

The railroad industry boom spurred the creation of infrastructure to support rail and water transportation, such as piers and terminals, and industrial land uses, such as factories and warehouses. The early 20th century saw a thriving industrial presence as companies like Colgate-Palmolive, Dixon Ticonderoga, and Lorillard Co. moved into Jersey City because of its vast amounts of land, strategic waterfront location, and large workforce population. However, by the 1970s, the City had experienced an urban decline with the closure of factories, the abandonment of railroad infrastructure, and the shift of middle-class residents to suburban areas. Beginning in the 1980s, Jersey City reemerged into a period of renaissance with the transformation of the waterfront area from dilapidated rail yards, piers, and factories to new high-rise office buildings and housing developments.

New neighborhoods developed from former rail yards along the Hudson River. Starting from the north in the current Downtown ward, the Erie rail yard was developed into...
Newport, a planned neighborhood with offices, apartments, and destinations for food and entertainment. Directly south, the rail yards of Pennsylvania Railroad, now known as Exchange Place, became Jersey City’s financial district – sometimes referred to as “Wall Street West” – with high-rise office buildings and a waterfront park. The last former rail yard, Central Railroad of New Jersey, was located in the current Bergen-Lafayette ward, and was incorporated into Liberty State Park. While its historic railroad terminal has been restored, the adjacent rail yard beds remain unimproved.

As illustrated in Figure 15 on the previous page, the largest percentage of developments throughout Jersey City occurred in the early 20th century (1900 to 1940) followed by recent developments from the past two decades, generally located along the Hackensack and Hudson Rivers. This recent development pattern is also prevalent in sections of Bergen-Lafayette, Greenville, and the Heights.
DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Building Heights

Figure 17 illustrates the building height pattern in stories throughout Jersey City. The vast majority of the City, from the Heights in the north to Greenville in the south, is generally low-scale, with buildings ranging from 1 to 2.5 stories. Areas with medium- to high-scale buildings are found scattered in Bergen-Lafayette, Greenville, and Journal Square (1 to 4.5 stories more common, 7-40 stories less common).

Downtown has a different building height typology, ranging from low- to high-scale. To the west of Marin Boulevard, most of this section is filled with low- to medium-scaled buildings from 1 to 9.5 stories. To the east, the building typology transitions into high-rise buildings of 20 stories and above, seen predominantly along the river’s edge.

Vacant Buildings

Vacant buildings can be found throughout Jersey City, with a higher concentration located south of Montgomery Street in Bergen-Lafayette, Greenville, and the West Side as seen in Figure 18.

The City has worked to document and monitor vacant buildings through its vacant building inventory; there are approximately 890 vacant buildings documented by the Division of City Planning. In 2011, Jersey City implemented a Vacant Building Registration Fee Ordinance, which requires property owners to pay annual fees for as long as their buildings remain vacant. This procedure allows the City to keep records of registered vacant buildings and property owner information, and to collect revenue to pay for monitoring these buildings. The ordinance is meant to encourage property owners to activate their vacant buildings into a proper use based on their location. By September 2012, less than a year after the ordinance was adopted, over 300 properties were removed from the Vacant Building Inventory, some of which became housing and others which were demolished. Jersey City’s Quality of Life Task Force is a team of municipal departments and private organizations, such as PSE&G and United Water, which continue to address the quality-of-life issues prevalent due to vacant buildings.  

Figure 17: Building Heights
Source: City of Jersey City, 2020.

Figure 18: Vacant Building Inventory
Source: City of Jersey City, Open Data, City Planning Division December 2018.
Recent and Anticipated Development

As of 2018, development in Jersey City has represented 48% of all construction costs in Hudson County, easily surpassing Bayonne and Hoboken, which accounted for 9.6% and 10% percent, respectively. Since the 2000 Master Plan, the City has experienced significant growth in housing development, except for a short-term lull related to the Great Recession. Chart 16 shows that Jersey City had more residential building permits per 100,000 population in 2018 compared with Hudson County and New Jersey overall. That year, the City made up 57% of Hudson County’s total non-residential and multi-family building permits. Although commercial uses are also growing, that growth is generally not as strong as residential uses.

New multi-family developments are mainly located in redevelopment plan areas, with a higher concentration built in Downtown, followed by Bergen-Lafayette and Journal Square. In general, these new developments have been strategically located within walking distance to public transportation, primarily light rail, and PATH stations. According to housing development data from Jersey City’s Division of City Planning, the City has 30,071 units planned and 7,955 units currently under construction in Journal Square, Downtown, and Bergen-Lafayette (as of March 2020). From 2004 to 2018, the City has seen the completion of 27,875 units in these three areas. Jersey City’s thriving residential development activity suggests a continuous upward trend in the City’s current housing inventory.

Development Hotspots

To better understand recent development trends and anticipated development, development activity from the last five years and anticipated development (approved or planned as of March 2020) were analyzed. The data were supplemented by nearly 20 individual developer interviews to better understand which neighborhoods are seen as investment opportunities both currently and in the future.

Projects completed within the last five years and currently under construction total nearly 12,600 residential units, 7,400 parking spaces, and 294,000 square feet of retail space. Nearly half of these projects were mixed-use residential, with ground-floor retail and parking. Developer

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38 NJ Department of Community Affairs: Certified Non-residential and Multi-family Development Data for 2018. Construction costs are based on building permits.
interviews revealed that factors impacting their interest in a location were mass transit access, density of development, existing residential amenities, pedestrian friendliness, access to recreation and open space, and potential views.

In the past five years, the five most active development areas were:

1. Powerhouse Arts/Harsimus Cove Station;
2. Liberty Harbor North/Grand Jersey (Medical Center);
3. Jersey Avenue/Jersey Light Rail/Holland Tunnel;
4. Journal Square; and

The charts below present data by use and location for the 55 projects recently completed or under construction and the 93 approved/planned projects that were identified in these five areas.

Approved and planned projects could add more development to these locations than has occurred in the last five years. All but one location has more residential units, parking spaces, and retail square footage planned than was recently added, illustrating that there remain significant development opportunities in these most active neighborhoods within the City. Given these opportunities, attracting development to less established locations in Jersey City may be challenging or require public-sector encouragement through zoning and other types of incentives.

While major development is still anticipated in the Powerhouse/Harsimus/Exchange North area, Journal Square includes some large multi-phase proposals that could be equal to or greater than recent and future development of the Hudson waterfront. Otherwise, relative development levels among the five locations is similar to the order in the recent activity.

While only 46,000 square feet of office development recently occurred in the five locations (in Journal Square and Bergen-Lafayette), a larger amount of multi-tenant office space has been approved or planned.

Due to their excellent mass transit access, over 2 million square feet of office space is approved and/or planned in the Powerhouse/Harsimus/Exchange North and Journal Square areas. However, developers indicate that obtaining a large enough tenant to secure project financing in Jersey City will require State incentives that are unlikely in the near- to mid-term. Other projects planned for Journal Square and Bergen-Lafayette do include smaller amounts of office space, but will likely accommodate local professional offices providing legal, accounting, investment, real estate,

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*Please note that data on housing units and parking spaces refers to the vertical axis on the left, with retail square footage referring to the vertical axis on the right.

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The approximately 1,500 unit Garfield development project by Boraie Development is not included on the JC Bergen Lafayette Map, which would result in a significant increase for Bergen Lafayette as well.
and wellness/medical services to nearby residents. These types of tenants do not require State incentives, and demand may grow with population increases in these neighborhoods. A more detailed description of development trends in the top five areas is provided in the subsequent sections.

1 – Powerhouse Arts/Harsimus Cove/Exchange Place North

During the last five years, the Powerhouse Arts/Harsimus/Exchange North area and has been the fastest growing location in the City. This neighborhood has excellent mass transit access via the light rail stations at Harsimus Cove and Harborside and to the PATH and ferry services, providing access to job centers, entertainment, and cultural institutions in New York City and throughout the region. Open space and recreation is available along the Hudson waterfront, and many buildings in this area have views of New York City. The streetscape is increasingly pedestrian friendly, as vacant lots and underutilized structures are developed, and the area continues its transition from industrial to residential use. Restaurants, services, and shops are available along some streets, with larger-scale retail also available at the Newport Mall directly north of this area.

As there remain significant development opportunities here, companies that control development parcels will likely focus on this area in the future, especially if market conditions deteriorate in particular due to COVID-19, and render other locations more risky. This area is viewed as a more price-competitive alternative to New York City for both young professionals and empty nesters.

Discussions with developers indicate that high-rise rental apartment development will continue as the dominant land use, with ground-floor retail and parking based on unit mix, location, and street frontage. While office space is planned here, obtaining an anchor tenant (and therefore project financing) likely requires large State incentives, and is therefore unlikely in the short- to mid-term. Although many have considered adding some portion of affordable housing, developers indicate that the high cost of construction and site acquisition renders projects unfeasible without State and local incentives.

Recent Development/Under Construction

Between August 2015 and March 2020, 19 projects were developed here, adding nearly 6,600 residential apartments, 683 condominiums, and 434 hotel rooms. Fifteen of the 19 projects were mixed-use, with retail space totaling nearly 149,000 square feet; 14 buildings included over 4,000 parking spaces.

The most densely developed of the five areas, all projects were high-rise construction with a minimum height of 12 stories. Rental apartment buildings were large, ranging in size from 300 to over 630 units, but most were concentrated between 400 and 450 units. The area will soon see three new performance spaces including a blax box theater at 184 Morgan, a theater as part of Provost Square Phase 3, and the Lively Theater which is built and open. Recent development activity here also included two hotels totaling 434 guest rooms. There were no hotels developed or planned in the other four locations.

Approved/Proposed Development

While density here is high compared to the other areas, the Powerhouse/Harsimus/Exchange North area also includes blocks of vacant land that are currently used as surface parking lots. As such, the 18 projects approved and proposed is only slightly below recent levels. Project data (number of units, parking spaces, retail, etc.) was not available for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>OFFICE SPACE (IN SF)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Powerhouse/Harsimus/Exchange N.</td>
<td>1,607,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal Square</td>
<td>454,541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bergen Lafayette</td>
<td>1,427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,063,268</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Approved/Planned Office Space by Location
four, but the remaining projects will include nearly 6,800 residential units, over 1.6 million square feet of office space, nearly 124,000 square feet of retail, and nearly 5,100 parking spaces.

2 – Liberty Harbor North/Grand Jersey

This area is generally bounded by Grand Street to the north, Van Vorst Street to the east, the Morris Canal and Audrey Zapp Drive to the south, and I-78 to the west. It includes the Liberty Harbor North and Grand Jersey redevelopment areas. The Liberty Harbor North/Grand Jersey area features excellent mass transit via the Jersey Avenue and Marin Boulevard light rail stations, and ferry service at Liberty Harbor/Marin Boulevard. Development densities are lower here, with maximum building heights of less than 20 stories. While the area is pedestrian friendly, it does not yet offer the residential amenities found in other more established Jersey City locations. The Liberty Harbor North/Grand Jersey area also benefits from its proximity to the Hudson waterfront and Liberty State Park. Vehicular access to the Park is currently being enhanced via the Jersey Avenue extension.

Recent Development/Under Construction

Approximately eight projects were developed in this area over the past five years, including nearly 2,400 residential units, 1,500 parking spaces, and 71,000 square feet of retail space. Development here was primarily high-rise, but at lower densities than in the Powerhouse/Harsimus/Exchange North area. All projects completed here were mixed-use and ranged in size from 90 to 550 apartments. Half of the projects included parking components.

Approved/Proposed Development

Nearly half the land here is vacant or under improved, so significant new development with over 2,400 residential units, 2,200 parking spaces, and 123,000 square feet of retail are approved or planned. These future projects are concentrated south of the light rail and to the south and west of the Medical Center.

3 – Journal Square

This area is generally bounded by Newark and Hoboken Avenues and Route 139 to the north, Baldwin Avenue to the east, Vroom Street to the south, and Tonnelle Avenue to the west, and includes the Journal Square 2060 Redevelopment Area.

Journal Square has excellent mass transit service. The focal point of the neighborhood is the Journal Square Transportation Center, offering PATH service to both 33rd Street and the World Trade Center, and connections to NJ Transit, private bus lines, and taxis. The neighborhood has an active and dense core that includes offices, retail and service businesses, court buildings, educational institutions, and high-rise residential buildings, but also has blocks with much lower densities characterized by low-rise two- and three-family homes.

While the transit service, mix of uses, high permitted densities, and retail amenities attract residential developers to Journal Square, the lack of open space and relative pedestrian unfriendliness (large blocks, irregular street grid, below grade rail lines bisecting the neighborhood) could negatively impact future development.
As in the Powerhouse Arts/Harsimus/Exchange North location, some of the office space planned for Journal Square is in projects that would likely require State incentives to obtain an anchor tenant. However, projects including smaller amounts of office are also proposed here, and these may attract professional service firms catering to local residents, medical offices, or other tenants already in the market. For example, Englewood Health recently agreed to lease 53,000 square feet of space at the 2 Journal Square project for medical offices, an on-site urgent care facility, screening and imaging services, and a laboratory.

**Recent Development/Under Construction**

Recent development in Journal Square includes 15 projects totaling nearly 2,300 residential units, 750 parking spaces, over 34,000 square feet of retail, and nearly 38,000 square feet of office. Projects here ranged the most broadly of the five locations, from an 8-unit walk-up building to a 700-unit high-rise elevator building with 18,000 square feet of retail and 522 parking spaces.

As in the other locations, the majority of the projects were mixed-use buildings that included residential, retail, and in two instances, office space. However, Journal Square had the highest proportion of purely residential buildings, without parking or commercial components, primarily due to proximity to the PATH.

**Approved/Proposed Development**

As stated previously, Journal Square has the most approved and proposed activity of the five locations. In total, the 41 projects planned here could contain nearly 9,100 residential units, 4,100 parking spaces, 211,000 square feet of retail, and 455,000 square feet of office space. Approved and planned development in Journal Square also ranges widely in size, from a 3-unit walk-up building to a multi-phase high-rise project with over 1,700 apartments, 910 parking spaces, 89,000 square feet of retail, and 127,000 square feet of office. The Pathside Building will be transformed into the home of a new Jersey City Museum and community center, and the Loew’s Theater is also slated for an extensive renovation.

**4 – Jersey Avenue Park/Jersey Avenue Light Rail**

This area is bounded by New York Avenue and the NJ Transit rail tracks to the north, Marin Boulevard to the east, 12th Street to the south, and Hoboken Avenue and the Palisades to the west. It includes the Jersey Avenue Park, Jersey Avenue Light Rail, and Holland Tunnel redevelopment areas. Development in the Jersey Avenue/Light Rail/Holland Tunnel area has lagged other locations in Jersey City east of I-78. There is currently no rail or light rail access, and existing buildings provide complimentary shuttle service to the Hoboken PATH station. However, a new station along the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail is proposed near 18th Street that would be within a half-mile radius of most of the neighborhood.

Given its Hoboken adjacency, street improvements are planned to improve vehicular and pedestrian linkages between the two areas, which should also help support future development in the area.

Like other sections of Jersey City, the Jersey Avenue/Light Rail/Holland Tunnel neighborhood is transitioning from commercial use to higher-density residential use. To facilitate this transition, recreation, entertainment, and cultural uses are being added. A new 1.5-acre, $2 million park is planned on the west side of Coles Street between 16th and 18th Streets, and will include passive and active recreation areas and an outdoor performance venue. The park is being financed by the developer of the Emerson Lofts through a redevelopment agreement.

While transit, access, and recreation/entertainment improvements will support future development here, progress may stall if there are long-term economic difficulties, with developers focusing on less risky and more mature locations in Jersey City.
Recent Development/Under Construction

Recent activity here includes four projects with over 600 apartments, nearly 30,000 square feet of retail, and nearly 800 parking spaces in mid- and high-rise structures. Most of the projects included parking and retail, reflecting the lack of mass transit and the more nascent and isolated character of the neighborhood, requiring developers to build more supporting retail to provide residential amenities. Projects here include larger and more family-sized apartment units, with developers indicating that families in Jersey City generally require a parking space due to more limited transit access in some areas.

Approved/Proposed Development

Nine projects have been approved and proposed in this area, with activity concentrated west of Jersey Avenue. Seven projects with over 2,100 apartments, over 57,000 square feet of retail space, and over 1,000 parking spaces are anticipated, but data on two projects was not available. All projects are mixed-use, with most ranging in size from 150 to 340 units. One multi-phase project here will contain 928 units, nearly 24,000 square feet of retail, and 309 parking spaces at full build-out. While proposed structures are nearly all high-rise, building heights are much lower than in the Powerhouse Arts/Harsimus/Exchange North area.

In addition to these projects, Coles Street Park is under construction, along with adjacent roadway infrastructure that will help to reconnect the roadway grid.

5 – Bergen-Lafayette

This area is generally bounded by Fairmount Avenue and Grand Street to the north, I-78 to the east, the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail tracks and I-78 to the south, and Randolph and Cornelison Avenues to the west, and includes the Morris Canal and Lafayette Park redevelopment areas.

Bergen-Lafayette is an established residential neighborhood with underutilized commercial properties to the south that are transitioning to residential use. Two- and three-family homes and small walk-up apartment buildings dominate in the neighborhood, with retail concentrated along Communipaw Avenue and a few other streets. Recently, vacant commercial properties and land in the southeast was developed with mid-rise apartment buildings, a higher density than in the rest of the neighborhood but reflecting these sites’ proximity to the Liberty State Park light rail station.

Bergen-Lafayette has good mass transit via the Hudson-Bergen Light rail stations at Liberty State Park and Garfield Avenue. Other factors attracting developer interest here include recent park improvements, proximity to Liberty State Park, neighborhood-oriented retail, and its more moderate density (especially in a post-COVID-19 market). While Bergen-Lafayette does not have the number of development sites available in other locations, sizable vacant and underutilized lots are located just south the light rail tracks and east of Garfield Avenue.

Recent Development/Under Construction

Recent development in Bergen-Lafayette included 9 projects with nearly 730 residential units, 360 parking spaces, 10,000 square feet of retail, and 8,000 square feet of office. More than half of the projects here were mixed-use, containing apartments, retail, and parking, with one project also containing office space. Projects ranged in size from 20 to 308 units; however only one was larger than 105 units. As such, Bergen-Lafayette had the smallest average project size of the five locations.

Approved/Proposed Development

Fourteen projects totaling nearly 700 apartment units with 80 parking spaces, 13,600 square feet of retail and 1,400 square feet of office are approved or proposed. While this reflects a similar volume to recent activity, the City’s development maps do not reflect the approximately 1,500 unit Garfield development project by Boraie Development. This mid-rise stick-built project will also include significant amounts of retail and parking and a significant affordable housing component. Including this project would mean a 200% increase in residential units approved and planned compared with recent development activity.
EXISTING LAND USE

Jersey City has a long history serving Hudson County and the surrounding region, once as an active industrial and transportation hub and more recently as a commercial, office, and residential center. The City’s existing land use pattern, shown in Figure 20 on the next page, reflects its historical background along with current development trends. The City has a total land area of approximately 9,485 acres, excluding underwater lands.

Each of the six wards in Jersey City has its own unique land use pattern, but they also share similar characteristics. The residential and apartment land use categories make up the largest amount of Jersey City’s total land area and run through the inner core of the City. Key commercial corridors are located within each ward, serving their constituents with local businesses that provide basic everyday necessities including mini markets, pharmacies, and restaurants. These active commercial corridors provide a healthy living balance with ground-floor commercial spaces and residential upper floors. The remaining industrial uses in Jersey City are primarily located along the northern section of the Hackensack River waterfront and the southern part of the Hudson River waterfront. A variety of community facilities are located throughout the City. Jersey City is known for its two largest parks, Lincoln Park (a Hudson County park) and Liberty State Park, and the array of smaller parks found in each of the wards. Lastly, railroad property is generally located along both waterfront areas and in the center of Jersey City in Journal Square. Below is a summary of each of the City’s land use categories.

Residential Uses

Although Jersey City was historically an industrial and transportation hub, the City’s predominant land use now is residential. Its existing housing stock is comprised of low- to mid-rise multifamily residential buildings, public housing, and one- and two-family attached and detached structures with front yard gardens or patios found predominantly in the inner core. Jersey City’s housing unit density is reflective of its historical development as a dense urban environment, with residential areas highly concentrated in the inner core, while industries developed along both water fronts.

In Downtown, there is a range of building typologies from row houses to high-rise residences along the Hudson River. In the past 20 years, there has been a dramatic increase in high-rise development near the Hudson River waterfront from Paulus Hook to Newport. Both the Hackensack and Hudson River water fronts have seen the development of a few gated residential communities, including Port Liberté, Society Hill, and Avalon Cove.

The central spine of the City, which runs from the Heights in the north to Greenville in the south, generally consists of low- to medium-density housing from 1 to 4.5 stories in height. Some sections of Bergen-Lafayette, Greenville, and Journal Square have taller structures from 10 to 19 stories or more. Along major commercial corridors such as Newark Avenue and Martin Luther King Drive, the general building typology consists of mixed-use developments with ground- floor commercial and residential upper floors.

Dwelling Units by Type

Jersey City has a variety of housing unit types, ranging from one to 100 or more units. The City’s inner residential core has a higher concentration of one- to two-dwelling units built before 1939. These residences are generally 1 to 2.5 stories and situated on smaller parcels with small front yards containing an entry staircase and garden or patio, or off-street parking. Larger multi-family housing developments with 10 or more units are located in pockets throughout the City including Bergen-Lafayette, Downtown, and Journal Square. Parts of Greenville and the Heights have buildings with 20 or more units scattered in a few locations.
few gated residential communities, including Port Liberté, from Paulus Hook to Newport. Both the Hackensack and high-rise development near the Hudson River waterfront row houses to high-rise residences along the Hudson River.

while industries developed along both waterfronts.

with residential areas highly concentrated in the inner core, its historical development as a dense urban environment, and one- and two-family attached and detached structures

transportation hub, the City's predominant land use now is Residential Uses.

Jersey City in Journal Square. Below is a summary of each and Liberty State Park, and the array of smaller parks found its two largest parks, Lincoln Park (a Hudson County park)

Hackensack River waterfront and the southern part of the are primarily located along the northern section of the

upper floors. The remaining industrial uses in Jersey City

active commercial corridors provide a healthy living balance

residential and apartment land use categories make up

use pattern, but they also share similar characteristics. The

acres, excluding underwater lands.

trends. The City has a total land area of approximately 9,485

pattern, shown in Figure 20 on the next page, reflects its

transportation hub and more recently as a commercial,

the surrounding region, once as an active industrial and

Jersey City has a long history serving Hudson County and

Dwelling Units by Type

below.

and Journal Square. Parts of Greenville and the Heights
devotions with 10 or more units are located in pockets

to 2.5 stories and situated on smaller parcels with small

front yards containing an entry staircase and garden or

from one to 100 or more units. The City's inner residential

Jersey City has a variety of housing unit types, ranging

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Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Smart Location Database, 2013

Note: The map accounts for all publicly and privately owned properties within Jersey City, but it does not include land dedicated for the street network or underwater lands.

Figure 20: Land Use

Source: City of Jersey City, 2020.
While there is a mix of housing units, most of the City’s housing inventory is mostly comprised of either 1-2 family unit buildings or apartment buildings with 10 or more units. Together, these housing unit types make up 75% of the total housing inventory.

**Housing Unit Mix**

While there has been substantial growth in housing development since 2000, there continues to be an uneven supply of housing units based on number of bedrooms, as seen in Figure 21. In 2018, two-bedroom units made up 43% of total housing units, followed by one-bedrooms (28%) and three-bedrooms (23%). Since 2000, two- and three-bedroom housing units have seen the highest percentage growth, 25% and 29% respectively, which is similar to Hudson County. Studios, the smallest portion of the City’s total housing units, saw a 24% increase from 2000-2018, higher than Hudson County with 15% for the same period.

While most housing units saw a large percentage increase, four or more housing units saw the lowest increase, at 1.2%, and this bedroom mix makes up just 7% of total housing units. Recent luxury residential developments in Downtown cater to couples, small families, and young professionals with higher income levels. With the growing trend in multi-family housing since 2000 and more multi-family developments in the pipeline, there is great need to preserve and create a diversity of housing options at income levels that serve the full range of the City’s residents. As noted, the City’s 2015-2019 Five-Year Consolidated Plan indicates that there is a lack of affordable housing options for the elderly, low- to moderate-income households, and people with disabilities.
The majority of housing units in Jersey City are renter-occupied (71%). From 2000 to 2018, the shares of both owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing units in Jersey City have grown at a similar rate, 16% and 13% respectively. According to data from the American Community Survey 2014-2018 Five-Year Estimate, Jersey City has a homeowner vacancy rate of 2.2% and a rental vacancy rate of 4.4%. Both vacancy rates have decreased since 2010, while the amount of housing units increased. Lower vacancy rates indicate a tight housing market in Jersey City.

### Affordability

#### Public Housing/Jersey City Housing Authority

The Jersey City Housing Authority (JCHA), the second-largest housing authority in the state, provides affordable housing for low-income families, persons with disabilities, and senior citizens who reside in the City. The JCHA manages approximately 7,100 housing units, of which 4,600 are Housing Choice Vouchers (formerly Section 8) and 2,500 are public housing units. The JCHA also participates in the Section 8 and Self-Sufficiency Programs. Figure 22 illustrates where JCHA public housing units (depicted as blue dots) and affordable housing units (depicted as pink dots) are located in the City. Generally, public housing options are concentrated in Bergen-Lafayette and Greenville. Additional public housing options are found in Downtown and West Side, with no units available in the Heights. Many older, high-rise public housing complexes have been replaced since 2000 by lower-scale residences, primarily through the federal Hope VI program.

#### Table 6: Housing Bedroom Mix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNITS</th>
<th>TOTAL NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS (2018)*</th>
<th>TOTAL % OF HOUSING UNITS (2018)*</th>
<th>CHANGE, 2000-2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JERSEY CITY</td>
<td>HUDSON COUNTY</td>
<td>JERSEY CITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio</td>
<td>7,305</td>
<td>15,987</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 BR</td>
<td>31,722</td>
<td>76,041</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 BRs</td>
<td>39,990</td>
<td>102,989</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 BRs</td>
<td>25,804</td>
<td>66,409</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4+ BRs</td>
<td>7,659</td>
<td>18,236</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>112,480</td>
<td>279,662</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Affordable Housing

The City’s Division of Community Development manages Jersey City’s affordable housing inventory and works to preserve as well as increase the affordable housing stock throughout the City. Jersey City defines affordable housing as housing set aside for households whose combined annual income does not exceed 80% of the area median income (AMI) level for Hudson County, as adjusted for households of the same size as established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The City works closely with private and non-profit developers to track projects that are receiving funding to develop affordable housing including Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF) subsidies, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG), the HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME), and the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program.

The City is also currently working on an Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance, which would address requirements for new residential projects. Details on any proposed regulations were not available at the time this Land Use Element was adopted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inventory of Public Housing Developments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managed by JCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conventional Public Housing Development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booker T. Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curries Woods*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwight Street Homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland Gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hudson Gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marion Gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing Developments for Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berry Gardens*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas J. Stewart Apartments*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Federal Affordable Housing Developments</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>254 Bergen Avenue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arlington Gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Privately Managed HOPE VI Developments</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Place Terrace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glennview Townhouses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloria Robinson Court Homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lafayette Senior Living Center*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lafayette Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mill Creek Gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocean Pointe East &amp; West*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodward Terrace</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes Senior Citizen Housing

Table 7: Public Housing Developments

Source: Jersey City Housing Authority.
Commercial and Industrial Uses

Commercial Uses

Jersey City’s six wards have distinct commercial corridors that serve the community with local, small businesses providing everyday household goods and services such as grocery stores, delis, laundromats, restaurants, nail salons, and barbershops. These key commercial corridors include Kennedy Boulevard and Ocean Avenue in Greenville, West Side Avenue in West Side, the area surrounding the Journal Square Transportation Center and India Square (Newark Avenue) in Journal Square, Central Avenue and Kennedy Boulevard in the Heights, Newark Avenue in Downtown, and Martin Luther King Drive in Bergen-Lafayette. Another major commercial corridor is the segment of Montgomery Street located within McGinley Square primarily serving residents who live in Bergen-Lafayette, Journal Square, and West Side. The building typology of the commercial corridors consists of mixed-use buildings with ground-floor commercial spaces and upper-floor residential housing. Downtown, Greenville, and West Side have additional commercial nodes consisting of mall developments containing big box stores, fast-food chain restaurants, and larger grocery store establishments. Journal Square is considered the Central Business District of Jersey City, whereas Exchange Place in Downtown is the financial center and Newport is a secondary business and financial district.

Industrial Uses

Jersey City continues to see remnants of its industrial past, predominantly in the northwest and southwest portions of the City along the Hackensack River and in the southeast portion along the Hudson River. The building height is typically low-scale with one to two stories in height. Common industrial uses are storage facilities, utilities, metal yards, moving companies, and warehouses. Some pockets of industrial uses can be seen within residential areas such as Bergen-Lafayette and Downtown. South of Liberty State Park in Bergen-Lafayette, Jersey City will soon welcome two film studios at 14-16 Burma Road and 150 Theodore Conrad Drive. This area is also home to the City’s only distillery.

Port Facilities

With its access to Upper New York Bay, Jersey City is at the heart of the Port of New York/New Jersey, the largest port on the East Coast of North America. The Port of New York/

Community and Public Facilities

Community facilities in Jersey City play an important role in providing essential services and civic spaces that can enable healthier and well-connected neighborhoods.

New Jersey is comprised of several complexes throughout the region. Jersey City and Bayonne host the Port Jersey Marine Complex, which has a competitive advantage among other complexes in that it is the closest complex to the entrance of New York Bay, thereby saving vessels approximately four hours of travel time as compared with Port Newark/Elizabeth. There are two major facilities located within the Port Jersey Marine Complex: the Global Marine Terminal and the Auto Marine Terminal. Also located within the Port Jersey Marine Complex are the Intermodal Container Transfer Facility at Greenville Yards and numerous warehousing and logistics businesses that support Port activity.

Community and Public Facilities

Community facilities in Jersey City are located within the Port Jersey Marine Complex. The Port is comprised of several complexes throughout the region. Jersey City and Bayonne host the Port Jersey Marine Complex, which has a competitive advantage among other complexes in that it is the closest complex to the entrance of New York Bay, thereby saving vessels approximately four hours of travel time as compared with Port Newark/Elizabeth. There are two major facilities located within the Port Jersey Marine Complex: the Global Marine Terminal and the Auto Marine Terminal. Also located within the Port Jersey Marine Complex are the Intermodal Container Transfer Facility at Greenville Yards and numerous warehousing and logistics businesses that support Port activity.
Schools

Primary Education (K-12)

Jersey City Public Schools

The Jersey City Public School (JCPS) system’s building portfolio includes seven high schools, one combination middle school/high school, 14 Pre-K through 8th grade schools, 12 elementary schools, and two early childhood centers.

During the 2018-2019 school year, the JCPS system had an enrollment of 26,785 students, which was the lowest in recent history. Compared with 2008, enrollment has decreased by nearly 4%, reflecting broad population changes for the 0-17 age cohort. However, based on recent census data, it is expected that enrollment will grow as a more recent increase in the number of young children in Jersey City enter the school system.

Charter Schools

Similar to regional and national trends, the presence and role of community charter schools has grown in Jersey City over the last two decades. Currently, there are 12 charter schools across the City, found in each ward. As the presence of charter schools has grown, so has their allocation of funding from the Jersey City Board of Education.

Parochial Schools

Within the umbrella of private schools, parochial schools are commonly found across the Jersey City. As an alternative to public and charter schools, the major parochial schools include Hudson Catholic Regional High School, St. Peter’s Prep High School, St. Dominic Academy High School, Our Lady of Czestochowa (pre-K through 8th grade), Sacred Heart School (Pre-K through 8th grade), St. Aloysius Elementary and High School, St. Anne’s Elementary School, and St. Nicholas Elementary School.

Colleges & Universities

Hudson County Community College (HCCC)

Established in 1974, Hudson County Community College now offers more than 60 degree and certificate programs. Since 2004, HCCC has built or completely renovated all 12 of its buildings at its Journal Square campus. A second, smaller North Hudson Campus opened in 2011 in Union City, followed by the Secaucus Center which is expected to open in 2021.

**New Jersey City University (NJCU)**

New Jersey City University is a public liberal arts university with a main campus located on Kennedy Boulevard in the West Bergen section of Jersey City. The university offers 47 undergraduate degree programs and 30 graduate programs. Other NJCU campuses include the School of Business at Harborside Plaza 2 at Exchange Place, a campus in Monmouth County, and the West Campus which is currently in its buildout phase and located less than a mile from the Main Campus.

The West Campus marks a significant capital expansion program for the university that has leveraged revenue bonds issued by the New Jersey Education Development Authority, as well as tax abatements for developers to incentivize the project. In total, 21 acres were acquired for the buildout of West Campus for uses that will serve both university and community purposes. Planned projects include student and market-rate housing, academic facilities, and a recently announced performing arts center.

Currently, the vast majority of NJCU’s student body commutes, but new West Campus developments are expected to further shape a residential community for students.

**Saint Peter’s University**

Saint Peter’s University is located just west of McGinley Square on a 30-acre campus. It is the second-largest university in New Jersey, with over 50 undergraduate programs and 13 graduate programs. The private institution caters to both a residential campus as well as online programs. While traditionally focused on commuter students, of the 2,423 students in the Fall 2019 Undergraduate class, 29% of students lived on campus. Over half of the student body of Saint Peter’s are first-generation college students, which speaks to the educational importance of the institution in Jersey City and the region at large.

**Community and Senior Centers**

**Public Libraries**

The Jersey City Free Public Library system includes branches that serve different scales of population: the Priscilla Gardner Main Library in the Downtown, six regional branches, and three neighborhood branches that operate out of smaller storefront spaces. The library system also operates a travelling Book Mobile, which has been a staple for greater access and programming since 1954.

30  [https://www.njcu.edu/about](https://www.njcu.edu/about)
32  Note that Saint Peter’s University received University designation in 2012 and was previously known as Saint Peter’s College.
Community Centers

There are eight public community centers in Jersey City, which provide services, after-school programs, community meetings, sharing of public information, and general social support. Depending on the particular facility, community centers focus on serving the neighborhood population or can serve as a broader City-wide resource. In either case, the quality and flexibility of facilities can allow for a greater diversity of uses.

Many designated community centers in Jersey City are located within public housing complexes and fall within the purview of the Jersey City Housing Authority (JCHA). At these sites, the community centers most often focus on programming needs for on-site residents.

Senior Centers

Jersey City’s Office of Senior Affairs operates two Senior Citizen Centers: the Joseph Connors Senior Center and the Maureen Collier Senior Center. Both offer programming, lunch, and cultural activities for residents 60 and over. Due to demand, these spaces are often used by other groups such as after-school youth programming in the evenings.

Public Health and Hospitals

Jersey City Medical Center

Located on a 15-acre campus just north of Liberty State Park, Jersey City Medical Center (JCMC) serves as City’s premier non-profit teaching hospital and is part of the Robert Wood Johnson Barnabas Health System. The campus includes three primary facilities: the Wilzig Hospital, the Provident Bank Ambulatory Center, and the Christie Kerr Women’s Health Center. Proximity to the HBLR line ensures that the campus is locally and regionally accessible. In 2019, JCMC opened a satellite primary care facility, known as the Jersey City Medical Center at Greenville, at the location of the former Greenville Hospital.

Christ Hospital

Located in the southern section of the Heights, Christ Hospital is a safety-net, Medicaid-driven, for-profit facility. Fiscal challenges in 2012 led to Care Point Health gaining operations through a deal made in bankruptcy court. As of early 2020, ongoing fiscal challenges re-engaged community healthcare advocates, Christ Hospital staff, and the City to call for immediate action from the State for financial assistance to prevent the hospital from closing. During the current period of uncertainty for the hospital’s future, the COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the critical role that it plays as an essential healthcare resource for local residents.

Jersey City Health and Human Services

As part of Jersey City government’s opening of the City Hall Annex in Bergen-Lafayette in 2017, the Department of Health and Human Services now houses all of its services in one location. Central to the Department’s direct public health services, this location provides the City’s only public clinic, with key services limited to testing, immunizations, and healthcare referrals.

Community Gardens

Jersey City’s Adopt-a-Lot initiative supports the role of community gardens in enabling healthier neighborhoods by allowing community organizations or groups to gain access to City-owned land for gardening. The health impacts of community gardens are numerous, but their value as food-producing sites for local communities are an incredible asset. The Adopt-a-Lot initiative is managed by the Jersey
City Department of Public Works and the Department of Health and Human Services.

There are currently 13 food-producing community gardens in Jersey City that exist within open spaces and formerly vacant lots. The greatest concentration of community gardens is found in neighborhoods near Downtown, such as Hamilton Park and Harmsimus Cove. While there are no steadily maintained community gardens in the southerly neighborhoods of Jersey City, there are two in the vicinity of Bergen-Lafayette.

**City-Owned Property**

Jersey City owns 561 parcels dispersed throughout all six wards. These properties include important civic institutions such as City Hall, fire stations, libraries, parks, and police stations, as well as rights-of-way and vacant lands.

City-owned parks located throughout all wards comprise 86 parcels. Most of the City-owned parcels are considered vacant land, accounting for 313 parcels, or just over 50% of City-owned properties, excluding municipal parking lots. Several City departments manage these properties, including the Jersey City Economic Development Corporation, Jersey City Redevelopment Agency, and Jersey City Municipal Utilities Authority (JCMUA).

**Community Infrastructure**

**Drinking Water**

Jersey City receives its drinking water from Boonton Reservoir and Splitrock Reservoir, located in the Rockaway River Watershed. From the reservoirs, the water travels to the Jersey City Water Treatment Plant located in Parsippany-Troy Hills, which can handle 50 million gallons on an average day. Once treated, the drinking water travels 23 miles to storage tanks in Jersey City. JCMUA has a contract with SUEZ (formerly United Water) for operation, maintenance, and management of the City’s water supply system.

**Wastewater**

The vast majority of Jersey City’s sanitary sewer system is serviced by a combined sewer system that is operated and maintained by JCMUA. In a combined sewer system, wastewater combines with stormwater runoff and travels to a wastewater treatment plant where the water is treated. In Jersey City, the combined sewer system pumps the wastewater directly to Newark, where the Passaic Valley

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**Figure 25: Community Garden Locations**

*Source: City of Jersey City, Open Data, February 2019.*

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**Figure 26: City-Owned Property**

*Source: City of Jersey City Open Data, November 2018.*
Sewage Commission treats the wastewater in the Newark Bay Treatment Plant. Once the treatment process is complete, the treated water is released into the Passaic River. Along Jersey City’s waterfront in Downtown and Greenville, there are a few sewer lines containing only stormwater runoff that directly drain out to the Hackensack and Hudson Rivers.

As of June 2020, the JCMUA has embarked on major projects, to be completed in phases, to improve the City’s aging drinking water and sewerage infrastructure. These include catch basin replacement, environmental protection and restoration, and repair and replacement of sewer pipes. The City has provided residents with additional parking at public school parking lots while the improvements are taking place. JCMUA has submitted a Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) proposing large water infrastructure projects to reduce and/or eliminate combined sewer overflows (CSOs). As of October 2020, the plan is under review by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and will be finalized in 2021.

Energy

Public Service Electric and Gas Company (PSE&G) supplies electric and natural gas services throughout Jersey City. The City’s existing pipe infrastructure is serviceable, but requires periodic replacement due to its age. Beginning in 2020, PSE&G is repairing nearly 22 miles of aging cast iron gas pipes with new plastic/coated steel piping, on 127 street segments. PSE&G is in the progress of replacing the first 17% of piping.

Waste Management

The City’s Division of Sanitation manages City-wide garbage, recycling, and e-waste collection. Jersey City runs on a dual-stream recycling system where two bins separate (1) aluminum, glass, and plastic, and (2) mixed paper. The City provides curbside electronic waste pickup upon request.

In 2019, the City piloted the Residential Composting program, which provides residents with two ways to help reduce food waste from going to landfills: a Backyard Composting Program, for residents to compost at home, and a Community Drop Off Program, for residents to drop off food to local community gardens. Along with the Residential Composting program, Jersey City has partnered with Community Compost Company, which collects food scraps and brings them to Arrowhead Farm in the Hudson Valley, where they are transformed into compost.
**Parks and Open Space**

The Parks and open spaces account for 18% of Jersey City’s total land area. Notably, seven parks that are all under State, County, or private jurisdiction account for roughly 90% of total park space, while the remaining 10% of park land is comprised of the 60 parks owned and operated by Jersey City. Figure 28 shows that the largest open spaces are located on the periphery of the City, while central neighborhoods are often reliant on smaller City-owned parks. The small size of City parks in central neighborhoods is often compounded by conditions that lack quality green space and recreational opportunities. However, capital improvement plans over the last two decades have worked to provide amenity and recreation upgrades at targeted locations.

Jersey City’s municipal parks system is supplemented by the Hudson County Park System as well as Liberty State Park. The County park system includes Lincoln Park East and Lincoln Park West, both located in the West Side neighborhood, and Washington Park located in the Heights.

Lincoln Park West and Lincoln Park East connect via pedestrian and vehicular bridges over Route 1&9. The west portion is comprised of sports fields for baseball, cricket, and soccer; and a dog run, golf course, and nature walk. Part of the developing Hackensack RiverWalk runs along the river and will eventually run along the entire Hudson County shoreline. On the east side of the park, are additional sport fields, with tennis courts and a running track. Both parks have walking trails for pedestrians and cyclists.

The City’s largest park, Liberty State Park, is along the Hudson River and houses destinations such as the Liberty Science Center, Liberty Landing Marina, the historic Central Railroad of New Jersey Terminal, and iconic natural areas and views.

Throughout Jersey City’s six wards, parks vary in size and activities, from passive parks with walking trails like Columbia Park in Greenville to more active parks with recreational activities like Pershing Field Park in the Heights.
Recently Completed Park Projects

Berry Lane Park

In 2016, Berry Lane Park opened to the public in Bergen-Lafayette, marking the first new City-owned park in over 50 years and the largest municipal park. The park is celebrated as a major environmental remediation success, as the site was previously a brownfield with a history of environmental contamination. The park’s 17 acres provide the adjacent neighborhoods with green space and various recreational amenities including basketball courts, tennis courts, a baseball field, and a soccer field.

Morris Square Park

Opened to the public in early 2020, Morris Square Park is an example of the City’s commitment to acquire parcels of available land for the provision of parks and effective placemaking. The park, located at the foot of Grove Street, pays homage to the Morris Canal with educational signage and will eventually be a linked component to the buildout of the Morris Canal Greenway.

Mary McLeod Bethune Park

This park on Martin Luther King Drive is under construction and will feature amenities such as a canopied stage and seating, a playground, picnic area, and passive open space areas. The park will serve the Greenville and West Bergen neighborhoods.

Community Benefit Agreements

As Downtown areas such as Newport continue to develop, the provision of parks or plazas that are accessible to the public are increasingly common to find alongside large developments. Such parks are often built as part of developers’ community benefits agreements and ultimately provide additional spaces for residents, workers, and visitors to enjoy green space and amenities. General Nathanael Greene Park, Newport Town Square, and Newport Green Park are examples of such projects that have been built as part of such developers’ agreements, as is the 1.5-acre Coles Street Park is under construction in the Downtown near the Hoboken border.

Multi-Purpose Trail System

Jersey City’s multi-purpose trail system consists of a series of walkways, greenways, and trails that provide the public with eco-friendly transportation alternatives and recreational opportunities. Two of the major efforts include developing continuous walkways along both the Hudson and Hackensack River waterfronts. The Hudson River Walkway is nearly complete, while portions remain to be built along the Hackensack River.

Beyond these efforts, several adaptive reuse initiatives would increase the amount of the City’s open space and help to improve neighborhood connectivity and circulation for pedestrians and cyclists: the Morris Canal Greenway, the Bergen Arches, and the Sixth Street Embankment.
Transportation Infrastructure

Roadway Infrastructure

Jersey City’s roadway system includes several major roadways of regional importance, which connect the City with Manhattan via the Holland Tunnel to the east, as well as destinations to the north, south, and west. It is important to note that many of the regional roads including I-78 are not under the City’s jurisdiction. The system also includes a full network of local streets under the jurisdiction of either the City or Hudson County.

Railroad Property

Generally, the railroad properties are located along the Hackensack and Hudson River waterfronts. The NJSEA section of the City is home to Norfolk Southern Freight Line’s Croxton Intermodal Terminal and associated rail yards. This terminal connects Jersey City to other shipping terminals throughout the nation. Another major railroad property is the Journal Square Transportation Center, under the jurisdiction of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. The remainder of this land use category consists of property occupied by NJ Transit’s HBLR line and the Port Authority’s PATH system.

Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Service

The most significant recent transportation investment in Jersey City is the HBLR, a privately operated light rail service owned by NJ Transit. The HBLR links major transit routes, employment and population centers, bus and ferry services, and park-and-ride facilities with proposed development and redevelopment areas. The HBLR consists of three lines that connect important destinations, such as Exchange Place, Harborside Financial Center, Liberty State Park, and Newport in Jersey City, with the adjacent communities of Bayonne, Hoboken, Union City, and North Bergen, as well as nearby Weehawken.

The West Side Avenue-Tonnelle Avenue line extends from the park-and-ride lot at West Side Avenue to the park-and-ride lot located at Tonnelle Avenue in North Bergen. It serves 11 stations in Jersey City. The 8th Street – Hoboken Terminal line extends north from Bayonne to Hoboken Terminal, serving 10 stations within Jersey City. The Tonnelle Avenue – Hoboken Terminal line runs from North Bergen to the Hoboken Terminal (no stations in Jersey City). Both the West Side Avenue-Tonnelle Avenue and the Tonnelle Avenue – Hoboken Terminal lines provide access to the Heights neighborhood at the 9th Street-Congress Street station in Hoboken. The station includes an elevator to the top of the Palisades Cliffs in Jersey City. The 2nd Street station is located within Jersey City but primarily serves Hoboken, although the station is accessible to residents in the Heights via the “100 Steps,” constructed in 2013 to connect Franklin Street/Mountain Road with Paterson Plank Road.

Freight Rail

Jersey City is a major hub for freight rail. The City is the location of the Greenville Yard, Greenville Auto Terminal, and Croxton Yard, which are directly linked with the Norfolk Southern and CSX Transportation Class 12 railways and have a reach throughout North America. Additionally, the City is served by the short-line Port Jersey Railroad and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey’s rail float service, both of which aid integration between the Port of New York/New Jersey and the continental rail network.

Ferry Service

Weekday commuter ferry service to and from Jersey City is largely provided by NY Waterway, a privately owned company that operates six routes between Jersey City and Manhattan. These routes include Port Liberté – Pier 11/Wall Street, Liberty Harbor/Marin Boulevard–Pier 11/Wall Street, Paulus Hook–Midtown/ West 39th Street, Paulus Hook–World Financial Center, Paulus Hook–Pier 11/Wall Street, and Newport–Midtown/West 39th Street.

In addition to the services of NY Waterway, the Liberty Landing Marina operates the Liberty State Park Water Taxi from its marina to the World Financial Center. Recreational ferry service from Liberty State Park to Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty on Liberty Island is available throughout the year.
**HISTORIC RESOURCES**

**Historic Districts & Landmarks**

While the array of historic landmarks and historically significant places in Jersey City reflect different eras of its history, sites of industrial heritage continue to be embraced and strategized as anchors in broader planning goals. Recent initiatives that promote the preservation and reinterpretation of industrial heritage in Jersey City include:

**Whitlock Cordage Industrial Complex**

Although the project is ongoing, sections of the Whitlock Cordage industrial complex have been repurposed into an affordable housing complex with commercial uses. After over a decade of delays since the original project announcement, five buildings of the former Whitlock Cordage industrial complex in the Lafayette section of Jersey City were renovated along with the construction of new buildings on-site. Of the total 330 residential units, 230 are designated as affordable.33

**Mana Contemporary**

While not officially landmarked, the Mana Contemporary complex is another example of a recent project that has repurposed an industrial structure for a new arts and cultural use. Opened in 2011, this 2 million-square-foot cluster of former manufacturing buildings and new-build projects is located in the Marion section of Jersey City. The space is actively used by artists as workspace and exhibition space, but visitors are also able to tour the facilities. As programming and visitor traffic have increased over the years, the social footprint of Mana Contemporary is expected to grow.

**Sixth Street Embankment**

The Pennsylvania Railroad Harsimus Branch Embankment (Sixth Street Embankment) was recognized as a local landmark in 2006 which has provided additional support for efforts to preserve and repurpose the structure as a publicly accessible open space.

**Powerhouse Arts District**

The Powerhouse Arts District played an important role in the regional and national economy spanning from the post-Civil War period until the Great Depression.34 With national landmarks such as the Hudson and Manhattan Powerhouse and the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company Warehouse, site-specific preservation efforts here have worked in tandem with initiatives to bring this district’s heritage and industrial built form into a modern urban context where heavy manufacturing uses are no longer the reality.

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34 [https://clandmarks.org/resources/national-registry-nominations/warehouse-historic-district/](https://clandmarks.org/resources/national-registry-nominations/warehouse-historic-district/)
been marketed as a hub for arts and culture. Originally in the early 2000s, the City attempted to codify lasting artist live-work arrangements here by creating of a zoning overlay referred to as the Work and Live Overlay District (WALDO). Due to market challenges and other difficulties, WALDO was removed from zoning in 2007. Today’s zoning and development has allowed new residential high rise towers in the area, such as the Toll Brothers Provost Square project, that have a small portion of live-work units set aside as well as a performing arts center with retail. Other future projects, including the repurposing of former warehouse buildings, will aim to incentivize projects that provide arts and cultural facilities on ground floors with artist work spaces above.

Although the district itself does not have a state or national designation, efforts to landmark buildings continue. In 2011, local landmark designations were granted to additional warehouses such as the Butler Brothers Warehouse and the Merchant’s Refrigerating Company Warehouse. As new developments are constructed here, preservation efforts help to anchor a district-wide identity that is based on arts and cultural production.

**Morris Canal Greenway**

The Morris Canal was added to the both the State and National Register of Historic Places in the early 1970s and is a cornerstone symbol of Jersey City’s industrial and transportation heritage. As a historic landmark that spans across a diversity of neighborhoods in Jersey City and beyond, the greenway aims to reinterpret the canal’s former structure as a greenway that also educates the public about local industrial heritage.

Beyond preservation efforts of former industrial buildings and sites, other recent initiatives include:

**West Bergen-East Lincoln Park Historic District**

Adopted to the New Jersey Register of Historic Places in 2014 followed by the National Register in 2016, the West Bergen-Lincoln Park Historic District is the City’s first new historic district since the late 1980s, and the first beyond the Downtown area.

**Loew’s Theater**

The depression-era Loew’s Theater was added to the State Register of Historic Places in 1985 but has remained underutilized because of its condition. In collaboration with local historic preservation groups, the City is aiming to restore the 3,000-seat facility as an act of preservation and to reutilize the site as a destination for residents and tourists. The project is seen as an anchor that will exist alongside a larger effort to bring a stream of cultural venues to Journal Square, such as the future Centre Pompidou museum.

### Locally Designated Historic Districts and Landmarks

The City has designated five local historic districts and 13 local landmarks for protection. These Historic Districts and Landmarks are under the jurisdiction of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and Commission. Additional information on local historic regulations is provided later in this chapter.

### State and National Registers of Historic Places

Beyond local historic designations, Jersey City has historic assets deemed significant by State and National Registers. While some state and national listings are also locally designated, others are not and do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and Commission. The City has 35 listings in the State and/or National Registers. In addition, there are three national landmarks in Jersey City: the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company Warehouse, the Holland Tunnel, and Ellis Island (part of Statue of Liberty National Monument).
ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Wetlands

With Jersey City’s historical development of the waterfront, previous low-lying areas and wetlands were filled to facilitate the growing industrial, maritime, and railroad uses. The remaining wetlands serve a dual purpose, as they provide a habitat for biodiversity and protect the City from flooding. Currently, the existing wetlands in Jersey City make up about 4% of the total land area as seen in Figure 30. The wetlands are located predominantly along the Hackensack River in the northwestern portion of Jersey City and at Lincoln Park, with portions found along the Hudson River within Liberty National Golf Course and Liberty State Park.

The City is comprised of two watershed management areas: (1) Arthur Kill and (2) Hackensack, Hudson, and Passaic. Within the Arthur Kill area, there are two sub-watersheds found at the southern half of the City, Newark Bay/Kill Van Kull on the west and Upper NY Bay/Kill Van Kull on the east. The sub-watersheds within the Hackensack, Hudson, and Passaic area can be found on the northern half of the City, Hackensack River on the west and Hudson River (Lower) on the east. These sub-watersheds delineate the land area that will drain water out into the assigned waterbody it is named after. With the significant loss of wetlands through the years, Jersey City has less of a natural buffer to protect against future flooding and coastal storms. For future development approval processes, it is critical to understand where wetlands were once located because these grounds are more sensitive and less stable to build upon.

Topography

Figure 31 below illustrates the topography of Jersey City, showing that, generally, the highest elevation runs through the City’s inner core from the Heights in the north to Greenville in the south. The topography gradually tapers downward until it reaches sea level at the Hackensack and Hudson Rivers. The higher elevation points in Jersey City can be attributed to the City’s natural geographic feature as part of the Palisades Cliffs, a low mountain ridge that spans along the west side of the Hudson River from Haverstraw, NY at the north to Staten Island at the south. The City’s highest elevation level is approximately 160 feet in the northern tip of the Heights. Two other sections with relatively high elevation levels are the area surrounding Audubon Park in Greenville and the area around Journal Square.

Figure 30: Wetlands
Source: NJ Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of GIS, 2009 (Subwatersheds) and 2012 (NJ State Wetlands).

Figure 31: Topography
Source: City of Jersey City.
Flodplain

As noted, approximately 40% of the City’s total land area is located within FEMA’s Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), which is classified according to the level of flooding severity ranging from Zone A to Zone VE. Areas located in Zone A to Zone VE, also known as the 100-year floodplain have a 1% probability of flooding in any given year. The VE zone indicates properties along the rivers that are at extra risk from higher velocity wave action caused by storms. Areas within Zone X, also known as the 500-year floodplain (0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard), have a moderate flooding risk and lie outside of FEMA’s SFHA.

Contaminated Sites

Historically a thriving industrial center in the early 20th century, Jersey City now has a vast amount of former active sites with contaminated soil or groundwater at levels that are equal to or higher than applicable standards, which are referred to as Known Contaminated Sites. These contaminated sites include dry cleaners, factories, gas stations, and homes with underground storage tanks.

Types of known contaminated sites in Jersey City consist of Brownfield or Chromate Sites. Brownfield sites are former commercial or industrial properties that have or are assumed to have been exposed to toxic chemicals. Chromate sites are sites contaminated with chromite ore processing residue. In the first half of the 20th century, Jersey City was home to two chromite ore processing plants owned by AlliedSignal, Inc. on Route 440 and PPG Industries, Inc. (PPG) on Garfield Avenue. With the adoption of the Site Remediation Reform Act in 2009, Licensed Site Remediation Professionals manage the remediation of contaminated sites under NJDEP’s Licensed Site Remediation Professional Program.

Figure 32: FEMA’s Special Flood Hazard Area

Figure 33: Known Contaminated Sites
Source: City of Jersey City (Chrome and Known Contaminated Sites); NJ Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of GIS, September 2018 (Brownfield Development Areas); NJ Department of State, Office of Planning Advocacy, January 2013 (Brownfield Sites).
CLIMATE CHANGE-RELATED HAZARD VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

Introduction

In February 2021, Governor Murphy signed into law a bill requiring that land use elements of municipal master plans incorporate a climate change-related hazard vulnerability assessment. Jersey City has been active in planning to address resiliency to climate change, particularly in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, which illustrated the City’s vulnerability to many of the anticipated impacts of climate change. This Land Use Element incorporates findings and recommendations from the City’s prior climate change-related planning efforts, in particular the 2021 Climate and Energy Action Plan (CEAP) and the 2019 Resilient Jersey City: A Summary of City-wide Resiliency and Climate Change Adaptation Plans, both of which are appended to this document.

The specific requirements of the Climate Change-Related Hazard Vulnerability Assessment, as enacted in NJ S2607, are as follows:

1. Consider environmental effects and extreme weather-related events associated with climate change, including, but not limited to, temperature, drought, and sea-level rise, and contain measures to mitigate reasonably anticipated natural hazards, including, but not limited to, coastal storms, shoreline erosion, flooding, storm surge, and wind, following best management practices recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); analyze current and future threats to, and vulnerabilities of, the municipality associated with climate change-related natural hazards, including, but not limited to, increased temperatures, drought, flooding, hurricanes, and sea-level rise.

2. Include a build-out analysis of future residential commercial, industrial, and other development in the municipality, and an assessment of the threats and vulnerabilities identified above, related to that development.

3. Identify critical facilities, utilities, roadways, and other infrastructure that is necessary for evacuation purpose and for sustaining quality-of-life during a natural disaster, to be maintained at all times in an operational state.

4. Analyze the potential impact of natural hazards on relevant components and elements of the master plan.

5. Provide strategies and design standards that may be implemented to reduce or avoid risks associated with natural hazards.

6. Include a specific policy statement on the consistency, coordination, and integration of the climate-change related hazard vulnerability assessment with any existing or proposed natural hazard mitigation plan, floodplain management plan, comprehensive emergency management plan, emergency response plan, post-disaster recovery plan, or capital improvement plan.

7. Rely on the most recent natural hazard projections and best available science provided by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

Items 1, 3, 4, 5, and 7 are addressed in Jersey City’s Resiliency Master Plan, Adaptation Master Plan, and Urban Environmental Green Infrastructure Design Plan – each of which is summarized in Resilient Jersey City: A Summary of City-wide Resiliency and Climate Change Adaptation Plans, as well as in the Climate and Energy Action Plan. See the Appendix for these plans.

Regarding item 6, the assessment and analysis of climate change vulnerability, as well as mitigation and adaptation strategies, expressed in the City’s resiliency-related plans, fully integrate and coordinate related plans by the City or other agencies regarding hazard mitigation, floodplain management, emergency management and response, post-disaster recovery, and capital improvement plans. It is also the City’s policy that all future planning efforts incorporate its work on climate change adaptation and resiliency.

Build-Out Analysis

This section of the Land Use Element addresses the remaining required element of the climate change vulnerability assessment: a build-out analysis and assessment of threats and vulnerabilities related to that future development.

A typical build-out analysis identifies the amount of vacant or underutilized land available in a municipality and determines the amount of potential development (by square footage and number of residential units) that would be allowable under current land use regulations. In a municipality like Jersey City, such an analysis is extraordinarily challenging – and of limited value – for the reasons discussed below.

Jersey City, as an urban and mature community, has very little vacant land available, approximately 10% based on the existing conditions analysis of this Land Use Element. As shown in Figure 20 on page 49, vacant land area...
tends to be concentrated along the periphery of the City, in areas formerly occupied by transportation infrastructure or industrial uses located in flood zones. The largest area of vacant land is located within the jurisdiction of the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority.

Approximately half of the City’s land area is located within a designated redevelopment area. While the specific development potential (i.e. allowable density) for each redevelopment plan is found in the Appendix to this Land Use Element, the redevelopment plan provisions are not always an accurate indication of development potential. This is because the nearly 100 individual redevelopment plans vary widely in their stage of maturity. Some redevelopment areas are decades old and have been largely built out, but have the potential to be revisited with new development, while others have not advanced. Most redevelopment areas fall somewhere in between. With frequent amendments to existing plans and the creation of new redevelopment plans, it is difficult to conclusively determine the specific development potential of land covered by a redevelopment area.

The portion of Jersey City that is not in a redevelopment area, i.e., that falls under traditional zoning, is – for the most part – built out. While development does occur in these areas (which are mostly zoned for low-density residential development), it is primarily through scattered-site infill development or redevelopment. Unless undertaken on the rare vacant or underutilized lot, such development typically results in land improvements that are roughly comparable to what previously existed.

Despite the difficulty in undertaking a standard build-out analysis, it is possible to gain an understanding of potential future development in Jersey City, and its vulnerability to climate change, through other methods. City Planning staff regularly compile and update development in the pipeline for the four areas of Jersey City that are experiencing the most significant development: Downtown, Journal Square (including McGinley Square), Bergen-Lafayette, and the West Side. These four areas account for the vast majority of development in the City that is occurring, and can be expected to happen in the next 10 years.

Figure 34 shows the total development recently built, under construction, or approved in these four areas, as well as development formally proposed to the City, based on the most recent data available (January 2021). As indicated, nearly all of the projected development is located within a redevelopment area. Downtown and Journal Square have the most significant development in the pipeline, with about 48,100 units and 18,400 units, respectively, while the emerging neighborhoods of Bergen-Lafayette and West Side have far less, at 6,600 units and 4,900 units, respectively. Of these areas, only Journal Square and portions of West Side do not fall within a floodplain area. Given the amount of development that is occurring Downtown – located entirely within the floodplain – and the fact that development interest in the Bergen-Lafayette and West Side neighborhoods continues to grow – the potential climate-change related impacts associated with flooding and sea-level rise would be of particular concern and are discussed below.

Jersey City’s 2019 Resiliency Master Plan comprehensively assessed potential climate-change vulnerabilities across the City, focusing on the following types of vulnerabilities (shown in Figure 35):

- **Social**: Social vulnerabilities help to identify micro-communities that face greater difficulty in the event of a natural disaster. The Social Vulnerability Index (SOVI), which was developed for the Center for Disease Control (CDC), includes 32 variables, such as age, income, and language, illustrates areas of the City that face greater challenges in mitigating risk. It can help to identify existing vulnerable communities while also helping to streamline future development and location of civic facilities and resources.

- **Economic**: Employment centers were identified through land use mapping and recent development patterns. Identifying employment hubs (or commercial and industrial land uses in general) is critical to maintaining economic operations during storm events. Should these centers face significant damages during a storm, implications of recovery could impact the City financially or cause associated jobs to relocate outside of Jersey City permanently. Similarly, anchor institutions such as local universities or large, single-company employers, may suffer long-term if their facilities or operations are disrupted for an extended period of time. Aside from risk as an isolated factor, large properties hosting major tenants can present opportunities to accommodate flood protection interventions.
Figure 34: Recent and Anticipated Development

Source: City of Jersey City
Figure 34: Recent and Anticipated Development

Source: City of Jersey City

Figure 35: Climate Change Vulnerabilities in Jersey City

Source: 2019 Resiliency Master Plan, City of Jersey City
- Physical (Critical Infrastructure): Infrastructure such as transit lines and stations, evacuation routes, power (sub)stations, gas pipelines, hospitals, police and fire stations, hospitals, shelters, and municipal offices were mapped. These facilities and networks are crucial to everyday operations of the City and tend to require inordinate financial resources to recover from damage after a storm event. Damage to these facilities can have radiating effects, such as downed transit lines preventing people from getting to work after a storm has passed. A total of 95 critical facilities were analyzed in the Resiliency Master Plan, about 42% of which fall within the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) and 32% of which have a 1% annual chance of flooding.

As shown, the waterfront and floodplain areas of Jersey City experience vulnerabilities due to potential flooding, sea level rise, environmental contamination, and population density. Interior areas see vulnerabilities due both to population density and prevalence of socially vulnerable populations. Understanding these differing vulnerabilities is helpful in planning future land use activities. However, the presence of vulnerability does not mean that no development should occur.

For waterfront and floodplain areas, although the substantial development in the pipeline raises concerns about climate-change vulnerability, all of these areas have been previously developed, and new development creates opportunities to construct improvements that are more resilient to flooding and sea-level rise. For example, the Bayfront development on the Hackensack River is raising the grade elevation of the site as part of both climate change adaptation and environmental cleanup. The result will be a development that is substantially more resilient than what previously existed, and that enhances the resilience of adjacent properties. The City has taken a number of actions to facilitate more resilient development, including establishing the Flood Overlay Zone and developing strategies in the Resilient Design Handbook, the Urban Green Infrastructure Plan and the Adaptation Master Plan. In addition, some redevelopment plans in flood-prone areas incorporate specific measures to address flood risk. All of these strategies are important to consider in future development and redevelopment in waterfront and floodplain areas.

For the interior upland areas, the climate change focus is on ensuring access to critical infrastructure and essential services in the event of storm events and natural disasters, and on maintaining evacuation routes. These areas can also accommodate new development, given that they are not located within floodplain areas or vulnerable to sea level rise. In this regard, the recommendations in the Land Use Element to increase density around neighborhood centers and low-density transit nodes can be viewed positively from a climate-change vulnerability standpoint. It is very important to increase permeability in the upland areas to help collect and delay water before it goes to lower areas and causes flooding.

In addition to these strategies, many of the recommendations for low-density areas along the City’s internal spine – primarily located in the R-1 zoning district – focus on increasing non-vehicular access to essential services and supporting local businesses. These strategies are also beneficial in the wake of storm events or natural disasters, as socially vulnerable residents have more readily available access to necessary services within their neighborhoods.

All areas of the City will experience increasing vulnerability due to the urban heat island effect and extreme heat events, which are anticipated to increase with climate change. Portions of Jersey City with large areas of impervious surfaces and low tree canopy – such as the Route 440 corridor and large-format commercial (retail and office) uses near the Downtown – would be most vulnerable to these impacts. The City’s previous climate planning documents include strategies to mitigate the impacts of extreme heat, and this Land Use Element also includes recommendations that seek to reduce the amount of impervious coverage, plant more trees, and encourage green building techniques to decrease the urban heat island effect. In addition, redevelopment planning offers opportunities to retrofit existing buildings and infrastructure to be more resilient to extreme heat.
This section provides an overview of Jersey City’s regulatory context, consisting of the straight zoning districts, redevelopment areas, and regulation of historic districts and sites. Supplementary zoning information can be found in Appendix A. The City’s Municipal Code should always be referred to for up to date information on zoning definitions and regulations.

The City regulates land use and development in accordance with its adopted zoning regulations and Zoning Map, illustrated in Figure 1. As shown, large portions of the City are located within areas where there is a redevelopment plan adopted pursuant to the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL); in fact 46% of Jersey City’s total land area falls within a redevelopment area. As discussed below, the requirements set forth in the City’s adopted redevelopment plans supersede the provisions of the underlying zoning district.

In addition, the northwestern portion of Jersey City, comprising 873 acres, or 9.2% of the City’s total land area, is within the jurisdiction of the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority (NJSEA), the regional planning and zoning agency for the 30.4-square-mile Hackensack Meadowlands District.

Thus, more than half of Jersey City’s land area is either in a redevelopment area or under the NJSEA jurisdiction, and not subject to the City’s traditional, or “straight” zoning provisions. Of the remaining area, some 2,344 acres, or approximately 25% of the City’s land area, is within the lowest-density single-family zone, the R-1 district. No other single district totals more than 5% of total area.

### Table 10: Existing Zoning Districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning Class</th>
<th>Zone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2 Family Residential</td>
<td>R-1 One- and Two-Family Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R-1A One- and Two-Family Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R-1F One- and Two-Family Housing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R-1W One- and Two-Family Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multifamily Residential</td>
<td>R-2 Multifamily Attached Housing (up to 4 stories)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>R-2D Palisade Avenue Mixed-Use Multifamily Attached Housing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R-3 Multifamily Mid-Rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R-4 Multifamily High-Rise</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R-5 Multifamily Low-Rise, Mixed-Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial/Mixed Use</td>
<td>O/R Office/Residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NC Neighborhood Commercial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C/A Commercial/Automotive</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HC Highway Commercial</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CBD Central Business District</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>U University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M Medical</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>I Industrial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PI Port Industrial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open Space/Recreational</td>
<td>P/O Parks/Open Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C Cemetery</td>
</tr>
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<td>Specialized Districts</td>
<td>H Historic District</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WPD Waterfront Planned Development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>DT Destination Tourism</td>
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<td>Overlay Districts</td>
<td>MWORD Marion Works Office Residential</td>
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<td>PPOD Palisades Preservation Overlay District</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F Flood-Prone Overlay District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ROZ Restaurant Overlay District</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: City of Jersey City.
Redevelopment Plan Areas

Area under the jurisdiction of New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority (NJSEA)

Figure 36: Zoning Map, Excluding Redevelopment Areas and NJSEA Jurisdiction

Source: City of Jersey City, 2021.
TRADITIONAL ZONING DISTRICTS

ONE- AND TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

Jersey City has four zoning districts aimed at low-scale, one- and two-family residences. The largest of these is the R-1 zone, which is found in neighborhoods throughout the City, mainly in its central spine and parts of the Downtown. This district is meant both to accommodate existing housing and to permit infill with one- and two-family dwellings that preserve the streetscape, use on-street parking where frontages are narrow, and maintain low-rise character.

The R-1A, R-1F, and R-1W districts cover much smaller areas, and are found in the West Side and Greenville neighborhoods, the Bergen area, and the Heights, respectively. The R-1A and R1-F zones have nearly identical purposes; both are intended to preserve the pattern, quality, and architectural individuality of detached one- and two-family homes in areas where the predominant lot size is larger than the standard 25 feet by 100 feet. Both districts seek to discourage subdivision and demolition of larger homes. The R-1W zone was created in 2021 to accommodate existing housing and promote compatible infill development with one- or two-family homes, and to continue the vision of the former Webster Avenue Redevelopment Plan area, which the zone replaced.

The tables in Appendix A compare the permitted principal, accessory, and conditional uses of the four zones and their area and bulk provisions. The R-1A and R-1F districts differ only in that the R-1F zone permits three-family dwellings as a conditional use. The R-1 district provides for smaller lot sizes and a wider array of uses, while the R-1W district allows a variety of low-density residential uses at taller heights.

Figure 37: Zoning Diagrams of One- and Two-Family Residential Districts

Source: City of Jersey City, BFJ Planning.
MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

There are five multifamily residential zones in Jersey City, which differ from each other primarily by the scale of residential development, lot size, and building height. The lower-scale districts – which each promote four-story residential development – are the R-2, R-2D, and R-5 zones. The R-2 district is mapped on a public school site in the Heights south of Pershing Field and in pockets of the Downtown. It is meant to recognize the existing pattern of housing development, preserve low-rise character, and promote compatible infill development. The R-2D district, the newest multifamily zone, was established on Palisade Avenue between Griffith and South Streets. Its allowable built scale is similar to the R-2 zone, but they differ in allowable uses, as the R-2D zone is intended to promote the historic mixed use, neighborhood business district along Palisade Avenue. The R-5 district, found in the Downtown to the north and south of the Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zone along Newark Avenue, is intended to facilitate contextual development in these predominantly two- to four-story multifamily neighborhoods. Allowable lot sizes in the R-5 zone are smaller than in the R-2 and R-2D districts, and the R-5 does not allow as many non-residential uses; otherwise, the three zones are very similar.

Two other multifamily zones promote a higher scale of development. The R-3 mid-rise apartment district promotes development ranging from 3 stories to 8 stories and is found in pockets along the periphery of Journal Square; along the Palisades west of Hoboken; along portions of Kennedy Boulevard and Bergen Avenue; and in pockets of the West Side, Downtown, and Greenville neighborhoods. It seeks to provide for a broad range of multifamily housing in areas served by arterial

Figure 38: Zoning Diagrams of Multifamily Residential Districts

Source: City of Jersey City, BFJ Planning.
streets, mass transit, neighborhood commercial uses, and community facilities. The district also aims to relate buildings to the street and avoid development that centers a tower in a sea of parking. The R-4 high-rise apartment district is located in just three sites: the Grandview Terrace senior apartments north of Journal Square, the Catherine Todd senior housing complex on Montgomery Street west of Downtown, and the Clermont Cove condominiums in Paulus Hook. Its purpose is quite similar to that of the R-3 zone, except that ground-floor commercial uses are more broadly allowed, reflecting the goal of promoting 24-hour activity and pedestrian traffic characteristic of dense urban centers. However, none of the areas that are zoned R-4 currently have ground-floor commercial uses.

COMMERCIAL/MIXED-USE DISTRICTS

Jersey City has five zoning districts that provide for a commercial or mixed-use context. Three of these zones are mixed-use, incorporating both retail/office and residential uses at a range of scales. The O/R Office/Residential district – which is located in two small areas on the periphery of Journal Square and two small areas near Exchange Place – is intended to accommodate residential and office in attractive high-rise structures. Permitted building heights range from 4 stories/40 feet to 110 feet, while residential density may be regulated by building envelope or units per acre. The NC Neighborhood Commercial district covers six mixed-use, neighborhood-oriented corridors: Central Avenue in the Heights, Newark Avenue largely between Marin Boulevard and Journal Square, McGinley Square, West Side Avenue, Communipaw Avenue in the Junction neighborhood, and lower Kennedy Boulevard in

Figure 39: Zoning Diagrams of Commercial/Mixed-Use Districts

Source: City of Jersey City, BFJ Planning.
Greenville. Its purpose is to recognize the existence and importance of neighborhood business districts and promote continued effects to strengthen and revitalize them. The NC district promotes low-scale, pedestrian-oriented development, with upper-story apartments over a wide range of commercial, office, and service uses. Finally, the CBD Central Business District zone aims to foster a local and regional destination for business, retail, education, government services, entertainment, and transportation. It is very similar to the O/R district both in building scale and in permitted uses, except that the CBD zone does not restrict retail sales and services to the ground floor only. The current CBD district appears to be a remnant of an older zone that predates the establishment of the Journal Square 2060 redevelopment area, as it is mapped only in two small areas on the periphery of Journal Square: two parcels on Kennedy Boulevard near Sip Avenue, and along Bergen Avenue south of Vroom Street.

Two other commercial districts are geared toward auto travel from the larger region, both with a purpose of improving the appearance of key commercial corridors and reinforcing gateways into Jersey City. The C/A Commercial/Automotive district is located along Communipaw Avenue between Route 440 and Bergen Avenue, while the HC Highway Commercial district is along Tonnelle Avenue and portions of Route 440. A number of auto dealerships are established on Communipaw Avenue, and the C/A supports these and related uses, as well as other commercial uses, in a low-rise environment. The HC district provides for a wider array of uses and up to 6 stories.

Figure 40: Zoning Diagrams of Commercial/Mixed-Use Districts

Source: City of Jersey City, BFJ Planning.
INSTITUTIONAL DISTRICTS

Three zoning districts are in place for universities, hospitals, and governmental uses, with each zone meant to support existing uses and preserve the residential character of surrounding uses. The U University district encompasses Saint Peter’s University and New Jersey City University, two of the City’s three campus-based secondary institutions of higher learning (Hudson County Community College’s campus is within the Journal Square 2060 redevelopment area). The M Medical zone is mapped for Christ Hospital in the Heights and the former location of Greenville Hospital, now Alaris Health’s JC Medical Greenville Campus. (Jersey City Medical Center is within the Grand Jersey redevelopment area.) Lastly, the G Governmental district covers governmental facilities and schools in the City that are not in redevelopment areas.

INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS

Two zoning districts in Jersey City that mapped for industrial land uses outside of redevelopment areas. The I Industrial zone is located along the Pulaski Skyway at its intersections with Routes 1 & 9 and Tonnelle Avenue, as well as along Cornelison Avenue and Academy Street to the west of the Turnpike Extension, encompassing Hudson County offices and PATH maintenance facilities. This district is intended to accommodate a broad range of industrial uses in appropriate locations, with provisions for screening and buffering to protect nearby development. The PI Port Industrial zone is mapped at the Turnpike Extension/Route 440 interchange and includes oil tanks, an auto body shop, a commercial printer, and the City’s Department of Public Works complex off Linden Avenue East. The Port Industrial

Figure 41: Zoning Diagrams of Industrial Districts
Source: City of Jersey City, BFJ Planning.
Zone supports the service and logistical needs of the Port, which in turn supports the local and regional economies.

OPEN SPACE/RECREATIONAL DISTRICTS

The P/O Parks/Open Space district covers public parks that are not located in redevelopment areas (for example, Liberty State Park is located within the Liberty Harbor redevelopment area). This zone is intended to accommodate existing public open space and public facilities, including park amenities as well as recreational, entertainment, and educational programs. Similarly, the C Cemetery district is mapped for the City’s three major cemeteries: Holy Name Cemetery, Bay View Cemetery, and Jersey City and Harsimus Cemetery, as well as smaller cemeteries associated with houses of worship.

SPECIALIZED DISTRICTS

Jersey City has established three specialized zoning districts to achieve specific purposes. The H Historic District covers four of the City’s five designated local historic districts: Hamilton Park, Van Vorst Park, Paulus Hook, and Harsimus Cove. (The West Bergen–East Lincoln Park historic district is subject to historic district preservation review, but is not within the H zoning district. It is an overlay district subject to the underlying zoning). The WPD Waterfront Planned Development district is along portions of Route 440, including the Hudson Mall, Hudson Toyota/Hudson Nissan, and Stadium Plaza shopping center. It is meant to reflect existing conditions but encourage development of water-oriented commercial, residential, and recreation uses, including public waterfront access. The DT Destination Tourism district covers Ellis Island, which is owned by the federal government under the administration of the National Park Service. This zone is intended to promote the island as a national tourist attraction, and permitted uses reflect that purpose. The DT zone has no area or bulk regulations.

OVERLAY DISTRICTS

In addition to the above zoning districts, Jersey City has adopted several overlay districts that are targeted at purposes beyond traditional zoning: adaptive reuse, viewed protection, support for the arts, and promotion of restaurants. Each of the designated overlay districts retains the provisions of the underlying zoning district, but imposes additional standards.

The MWORD Marion Works Office/Residential overlay covers portions of the area bounded by Newark Avenue, Tonnelle Avenue, and Route 139/1&9, an area that includes the Canco Lofts, the Mana Contemporary arts complex, new multifamily development, and industrial uses. The intent of this overlay is to encourage redevelopment and conversion of older industrial structures to higher-intensity residential and mixed-use buildings, while facilitating construction of new residential and mixed-use buildings on vacant/underutilized land and incorporating public open space.

The PPOD Palisades Preservation Overlay District is mapped along the Palisades from Montgomery Street to the Union City boundary, and imposes height, setback, and performance standards in addition to the underlying zoning provisions, in order to preserve the cliff face of this significant geological resource.

The Arts District Overlay Zone, formerly known as the Riverview Arts District, is located in the Heights, east of Central Avenue, and is intended to recognize and encourage the artists’ studios and related uses that have grown in this area, which has the potential to become known as an arts enclave. In addition to uses allowable under the underlying zoning, the overlay also permits live/work artist studios and units and artist studio work space.

The Flood-Prone District Overlay Zone, applies to all properties in Jersey City located wholly or partially within a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designated VE or AE zone, as depicted on the most recent official FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) or Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps (PFIRMs). All underlying use, bulk, and parking standards apply, but the overlay zone includes additional green area ratio (GAR) requirement for green infrastructure and resilient design.

Finally, the Restaurant Overlay Zone (ROZ) is mapped throughout the City to provide for the transfer of any plenary retail consumption liquor license to any premises within the zone, without regard to the distance restrictions between licensed properties. The overlay has been established for most of the Neighborhood Commercial districts in Jersey City, as well as other locations where there are restaurant clusters, such as India Square.
REDEVELOPMENT PLAN AREAS

Redevelopment is a key land use tool in New Jersey to promote revitalization of properties facing issues that are unlikely to be addressed by existing market forces. The Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL) empowers municipalities to designate areas “in need of redevelopment or rehabilitation,” providing for various planning and financial tools to make projects more feasible and to remove deleterious conditions. A redevelopment designation may also qualify projects in the designated area for financial subsidies or other incentive programs offered by the state.

In Jersey City, the redevelopment tool has been a major part of the City’s land use regulations for over 65 years, and has played a vital role in the revitalization of much of the downtown and Hudson River waterfront. The City has nearly 100 designated redevelopment areas – ranging from vast areas covering hundreds of acres to groups of properties comprising less than an acre – as well as 50 individual sites that have been included in a scattered-site plan. In each case, the redevelopment process has complied with the LRHL provisions, which require that a study be prepared to determine whether the area meets specific statutory requirements. An area may be designated as either in need of redevelopment or rehabilitation. Once the designation is made, the City Council may adopt a redevelopment plan that governs future development in that area. The criteria for a rehabilitation designation are less burdensome to meet than for a redevelopment designation, and a rehabilitation designation does not authorize the same powers as a redevelopment designation, such as the ability to offer long-term tax abatements or the power to authorize the use of eminent domain. In Jersey City, all designations have been for redevelopment, not rehabilitation, areas.

A prime benefit of redevelopment planning is that the LRHL is more flexible than the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) and allows greater municipal control over the development of land, buildings, streets, streetscape, etc., as well as matters of design, construction phasing, and community benefits. A redevelopment plan may be adopted as a “superseding” plan or as an “overlay.” Superseding plans replace the previously existing zoning in that area, whereas overlay plans retain the underlying zoning and enable property owners to choose whether to develop under the redevelopment plan or in accordance with the underlying zoning. Most redevelopment areas in Jersey City were specifically adopted as superseding plans; in cases where the plan is not indicated as either superseding or overlay, the City’s opinion has been that they are superseding.

STATUS OF REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

With nearly 100 individual plans in place, the landscape of redevelopment planning in Jersey City is highly complex. The Land Use Element consultant team reviewed each redevelopment plan to gain an understanding of its basic content, timeframe, and status (see the Appendix). The team also met with the Jersey City Redevelopment Authority in the fall of 2020 to discuss the process for redevelopment designation and completion, and any key concerns.

Nearly all of the City’s Hudson River waterfront falls within a designated redevelopment area, and much of the development contemplated under these various plans has been completed (portions of the Newport, Harsimus Cove Station, and Liberty Harbor North areas are still being built-out). Likewise, large portions of the Hackensack River waterfront, outside of the NJSEA area, fall within a redevelopment plan area. However, with the exception of the Droyers Point redevelopment area (now Society Hill), development along this waterfront has not generally occurred as envisioned. In the interior areas of Jersey City, redevelopment areas largely consist of major swaths of formerly industrial land, major north-south corridors such as Martin Luther King Drive and Ocean Avenue, and key nodes of development opportunity such as McGinley Square or the area around the Garfield Avenue light rail station.

A significant recent redevelopment area designation is the Journal Square 2060 area, established in 2010 and amended in 2019. This 214-acre area includes the City’s primary central business district and transportation center, and presents significant opportunities for revitalization. The redevelopment plan groups the area into a series of zones, with the highest-intensity development envisioned at and adjacent to the Journal Square Transportation Center, and less intensive development radiating out toward existing neighborhoods. The plan proposes a network of new open spaces and several vehicular circulation improvements, as well as arts and cultural amenities.

Another major redevelopment area is addressed in the recently adopted Bayfront redevelopment plan, which envisions a new mixed-use neighborhood along the Hackensack River waterfront, at the former Honeywell site just north of the Society Hill development. The 124-acre area will contain new housing (including affordable and workforce housing), open spaces, waterfront access, and a new light rail stop. Other large redevelopment areas that are proceeding with new development include Morris Canal, in the Lafayette neighborhood, and Canal Crossing, covering a former industrial area west of Liberty State Park.
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

The City has designated five local historic districts and 13 local landmarks for protection, under the jurisdiction of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and Commission. The ordinance, originally adopted in 1974 and most recently revised in 2001, creates the regulatory framework for the preservation of historic resources and establishes a Historic Preservation Officer and a Historic Preservation Commission.

Except for the West Bergen-East Lincoln Park Historic District – Jersey City’s newest local historic district – the districts are located in the H Historic District, with specific provisions tailored to each district for conditional uses. Bulk standards are the same throughout the H district, and are dictated by use. The West Bergen-East Lincoln Park district is unique in that it was established via an overlay district, with the underlying zoning district (R-1, R-1A, R-3, or NC) controlling use, bulk, and similar standards, but development subject to the historic preservation standards in §345-71.

The Historic Preservation Officer and two Historic Preservation Specialists review development applications within the local historic districts and landmarks to ensure consistency with the design standards for rehabilitation and infill development, as well as zoning standards within the H districts. Larger-scale projects, or those that require Planning Board or Zoning Board of Adjustment review, are referred to the Historic Preservation Commission for review and comment. As indicated in the 2015 Historic Preservation Element, about 500 of these applications are typically processed per year. In addition, the Historic Preservation Officer and Specialists review applications for permits to demolish buildings or structures, pursuant to Chapter 105 of the City Code (“Demolition Ordinance”), adopted in 2018.

The nine-member Historic Preservation Commission recommends districts and landmarks for designation to the City Council, specifies development standards, and prescribes the process used to review development application. The Commission has the authority, via ordinance, to:

- Identify, record, and inventory buildings, sites, or landscape features of significant historical or architectural value based on the standards of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

- Advise and assist City officers, boards, and other bodies on matters that have potential impacts on landmark buildings, sites, structures, objects or landscape features or on the ambiance of a historic district.

- Recommend to the Planning Board and City Council the establishment and boundaries of additional historic districts.

- Recommend to the Board of Adjustment and Planning Board the grant or denial of development applications.

- Issue certificates of appropriateness, certificates of no effect, or notices to proceed.

STATE & NATIONAL REGISTERS OF HISTORIC PLACES AND OTHER RESOURCES

In addition to the locally designated districts and landmarks, Jersey City has 35 listings on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, as depicted on the table below. There are also three national landmarks located in the City: the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company Warehouse, the Holland Tunnel, and the Statue of Liberty National Monument.

The City’s most recent Cultural Resources Survey (dating to the late 1980s) identifies several hundred additional buildings, sites, and districts that are eligible for listing on the State and National Registers. The Historic Preservation Element recommends that these resources be prioritized for nomination to the registers and for local landmark designation.
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CHAPTER 3: LAND USE PRINCIPLES

Based on the extensive analysis of existing conditions and the input from the public, participants in stakeholder focus group meetings, and City staff, a number of key principles emerged that guide the overall land use approach. This chapter is intended to provide the policy foundation for proposed revisions to the City's Land Development Ordinance (LDO). As explained in the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), a zoning code must be based on a well-reasoned plan. Therefore, this policy discussion, and the resulting recommendations contained in Chapter 5 of the Land Use Element, should be used as a guide for making new zoning designations in the City's LDO and revising development regulations. Such regulatory changes would be the next step in the planning process and would occur after adoption of the Land Use Element. Any zoning changes would require significant public outreach before they are reviewed by the City's Planning Board and ultimately considered for adoption by the City Council.

The policy recommendations in this Land Use Element are therefore the first step in a longer-term planning process, but they provide the necessary foundation for enacting major change.

The discussion that follows is a series of interconnected principle statements, each followed by a brief discussion, that collectively serve as a broad framework for the recommendations in this Land Use Element. The foundational core for each of these principles may be found in the four “lenses” identified in the OUR JC Master Plan Vision – connectivity and mobility, economic opportunity, social equity, and climate resiliency. While the lenses below are used as the organizing framework for the larger Master Plan vision document, they also guide the overall approach and specific recommendations in this Land Use Element.
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Jersey City’s past planning efforts have led to tremendous progress, including revitalization of neighborhoods; cleanup of environmentally contaminated areas; expansion of bike, pedestrian, and transit networks; and improved public spaces. However, the City also recognizes that inequality is institutionalized in policies and regulations that have disproportionately allocated economic, social, and cultural opportunities, resulting in communities and populations being unable to share fully in these benefits. Previous planning and infrastructure decisions have also resulted in some neighborhoods being cut off from each other as well as from community-wide assets such as transit, parks, and waterfronts. Similarly, some parts of Jersey City are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, and action is urgently needed across the spectrum of land use, transportation, and the economy to address these threats.

The Land Use Principles discussed in the following pages support each of the OUR JC Master Plan lenses by seeking to ensure that Jersey City’s residents have the ability to: live in safe, affordable, and attractive neighborhoods; access to job opportunities; freedom from dependence on the automobile; access to high-quality parks and community services; protection against the effects of climate change; and access to a historic and cultural landscape that values Jersey City’s diverse communities.

### OURJC MASTER PLAN LENSES

#### CONNECTIVITY + MOBILITY

A Connected Jersey City

Jersey City will continue to provide strong links throughout the community, supporting all forms of mobility, and encouraging walking, bicycling, and future transit.

#### ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

A Prosperous Jersey City

Jersey City will continue to be one of the region’s most dynamic urban economies, where families, businesses, and neighborhoods thrive by providing a high quality of life with an abundance of opportunities to live, work, and play.

#### SOCIAL EQUITY

An Equitable Jersey City

Jersey City will have an inclusive and equitable economy, housing supply, open space system, and social services for a city that welcomes residents of all ages, backgrounds, and economic levels.

#### CLIMATE RESILIENCY

A Resilient Jersey City

Jersey City will continue to be a sustainable City and a leader in the fight against climate change through water management, brownfield remediation, decarbonisation policies, and by reducing the environmental vulnerability index for neighborhoods across the City.
Continue efforts to enhance residential neighborhoods

While Jersey City’s skyline is marked by dense high-rise development, most of its residential neighborhoods exist at a much lower-density scale. Interior areas contain a mix of detached homes, townhomes, and mid-rise apartment buildings. Land use policies should ensure that there is an appropriate transition between high-rise and low-rise development. This is particularly evident where high-rise redevelopment areas abut low-rise neighborhoods.

By geographic area, one- and two-unit housing (typically R-1 district) is the largest and most prevalent land use in the City. Many of these residential neighborhoods haven’t seen a significant amount of reinvestment, despite the rapid growth happening elsewhere in the City. This element includes policies that will strengthen the streetscape of the low-density neighborhoods, including minimizing curb cuts, eliminating front yard parking that impedes sidewalks, protecting street trees, preserving on-street parking, and retaining “green” areas in the front yard. In addition, the Element acknowledges that the character of lower-density neighborhoods is varied, with mid-rise apartment buildings and mixed-use buildings dotted throughout these districts. There are also low-rise neighborhoods that abut high-rise areas near transit hubs, which provides unique urban design challenges. This eclecticism, which often predates the zoning regulations, provides a blueprint for encouraging investment in additional housing types, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse, and neighborhood-serving businesses.

There remains a substantial number of buildings throughout the City that are either vacant or deteriorated and in need of renovation or redevelopment. The Land Use Element includes policies that will help to stabilize and upgrade neighborhoods such as Bergen-Lafayette, Greenville, and the Heights, by promoting rehabilitation of substandard units, infill development of diverse housing types, and inclusion of neighborhood-oriented commercial uses where appropriate to ensure that all residents are within walking distance to goods and services.

Residents have expressed the need for retail uses that serve everyday needs such as grocers, restaurants, cafes, convenience retail, financial services, and dry cleaners/laundromats. Allowing these small-scale neighborhood retail uses (and in the case of grocery stores, potentially larger footprints) in more locations will help to reinforce Jersey City’s residential neighborhoods by providing shopping and services within walking distance, increasing pedestrian activity and opportunities for social interaction, and adding to the vitality of the neighborhood.

The City should continue to support efforts by its staff to enforce compliance with public health, fire, and safety regulations; building codes; zoning regulations; and the conditions of approved site plans, subdivisions, and variances. Issues of cleanliness in the public realm, litter, and road debris, are also areas of concern for some neighborhoods. Given the City’s size both by population and geographic area, maintenance of high enforcement standards may require additional staffing or other measures to ensure quality-of-life, attractive business areas, and excellent residential character.

Ensure the City’s available housing is balanced and meets the needs of all current and future city residents

Jersey City has been one of the most popular municipalities in the region for families and individuals to live, grow, and prosper. It has been recognized as one of the state’s fastest growing municipalities, a trend which is likely to continue into the next decade with more residential developments and private investment. Construction of housing is booming, but cannot keep up with regional demand. While this growth has brought new investment to the City, it has furthered the transition from a majority working-class city to one with income disparity brought on by an influx of
high-income residents, and housing options marketed to that population. This trend can threaten the City’s diversity and vitality by marginalizing minority populations and low-income households, and by tipping the scale in favor of the highest and best land uses dictated by the market.

Part of the City’s distinctive character stems from the economic diversity of its residents. Housing affordability has become a major issue as real estate values have been rising in the City and the region. This need is demonstrated by the large number of rent-burdened households (nearly 36%) who pay more than 30% of their income for housing. The City should continue to advance and support policies and programs that create a diversity of housing options and programs, such as increasing permitted housing densities; establishing subsidies and provisions for affordable housing development; and strengthening housing security through right-to-counsel tenant laws, rent control, and programs that could freeze property taxes for vulnerable populations. For example, demographic trends show that the average resident is getting older. Ensuring seniors’ housing needs are met is and will be a very important priority in the future.

The City has a significant need for housing rehabilitation, since 68% of all homes were constructed prior to 1940 and 77% were built prior to 1980. Not only do older structures tend to require significant work to bring them up to modern standards and preferences, but they are at an increased risk of having a lead-based paint hazard. Homes built before 1978 are more likely to have lead-based paint. The federal government banned consumer uses of lead-based paint in 1978, though some states banned it even earlier. It is important to take into consideration areas where housing stock is substandard when determining priorities for reinvestment, particularly since this housing stock is most likely to be occupied by lower-income residents, raising issues of equity.

During focus group meetings and other public outreach events, representatives from the business and development communities expressed that the City could do more to drive local economic activity, increase employment, strengthen the tax base and protect against cyclical downturns. The City has tremendous resources to attract new industries, such as its proximity to New York City, transportation linkages, extensive infrastructure, and available labor pool. The City should continue to employ strategies that will attract and foster small businesses, and local businesses and entrepreneurs need to be supported through clear, predictable, and transparent regulations, procedures, and timelines. Jersey City’s economic development strategies should also ensure that the City and its built environment is attractive to modern office and retail users, as well as emerging growth sectors such as medical uses and biotechnology.

The City should retain existing industrial users and recruit viable commercial and industrial users to preserve the City’s industrial base. The Greenville Port is a major driver of economic activity and has continued to thrive, largely due to growth in global trade. The City should continue to support the infrastructure and other needs of a 21st century port. Land use policies should provide for sufficient land-side facilities in port areas to serve port growth and generate port-oriented development (e.g., adequate rail service, road connections and storage). Given Jersey City’s location along the highway network and proximity to New York City, there are also opportunities for last-mile distribution centers at or around highway interchanges.
The City should also encourage regional residents and tourists to visit, highlighting the historic, cultural, and recreational opportunities available. With excellent access to major draws such as the Statue of Liberty and Manhattan – and significant attractions of its own, including Liberty State Park, Ellis Island Liberty Science Center, Mana Contemporary, and commercial areas – Jersey City is uniquely suited to promote arts and culture as an economic asset with events sponsored by the City, communities, or other organizations.

**Strengthen neighborhood-oriented commercial areas**

The need for all residents to have convenient access to neighborhood commercial amenities was a consistent theme that emerged from the public outreach activities. Residents expressed support for a wider diversity in businesses within their own neighborhoods, especially small business options. There was significant interest in food options such as grocery stores, healthy food options, cafés, coffee shops, brewerries, and distilleries. Other potential uses might include commercial recreation (i.e. indoor fitness or entertainment uses), art galleries, indoor agriculture, and adult day-care.

Mixed-use residential, assisted-living and age-restricted housing should be considered in some locations (i.e. along commercial corridors and near transit stations). Jersey City’s most socially and economically vulnerable residents tend to live in areas that lack essential services and are auto-dependent. Providing neighborhood retail and services within walking distance of all residents will strengthen neighborhood vitality, and provide options for different types and scales of businesses.

**Promote innovation and industrial activity that is cleaner, greener, and job creating**

This element looks at ways to improve the health of commercially zoned corridors, including where commercial activities should be strengthened and occasionally where it should be limited to core areas. The element also identifies ways for businesses to reconnect with the streetscape and promote street activity. For example, promoting flexibility in storefronts and outdoor seating has become an essential tool in allowing businesses to continue operating during COVID-19. Formalizing these regulations will support street activity and help businesses become more adaptable to future crises.

The City acknowledges that there is a need to retain a diversity of commercial and industrial uses to foster employment and economic activity and to enhance the tax base. Most job growth in the past 20 years has been at the high-end of the income scale. There is a need to create jobs oriented to the full spectrum of income levels, including low-income jobs, so more residents can live and work within the City.

A large portion of the City’s industry is auto-oriented (auto repair, logistics/warehouses), a sector which generally creates few jobs (per square foot), and has associated negative impacts such as traffic, noise, air quality, and aesthetics. While it is important to maintain a base of local industrial uses, Jersey City should promote policies that attract modern and emerging industries. For example, the City should allow or incentivize industries that can coexist with the surrounding residential areas, such as light industry, small-scale manufacturing, brewerries/distilleries, film industry, etc. Small-scale manufacturing businesses pay higher salaries than service-sector jobs, support a more resilient and diversified economy, and provide more job opportunities for residents without college degrees.

Land Use Element policies also promote adaptive reuse opportunities and other zoning approaches (e.g., live/work space, arts district overlays, work-from-home ordinances) to protect and support the incubation of small businesses, arts, urban manufacturing, makerspace offices, and other clean industries. Thus, the City can create and protect jobs that have excellent access to surrounding neighborhoods and transit so that more residents can live and work within the City. There is also a growing acceptance and willingness,
especially from the millennial population, to live alongside commercial and industrial uses. Many of today’s most innovative companies are choosing to invest in or expand in mixed-use and walkable areas. The City should encourage adaptive reuse of obsolete buildings, especially industrial facilities for uses that include commercial and/or industrial activities, not just residential. The redevelopment of the Brooklyn Navy Yard is a successful case study, showing how modern industry can be clean, green and essential in supporting the workings of cities with homes and workspaces.

The retail environment in Jersey City and the country as a whole has shifted in recent years. Factors such as the rise in Internet sales have resulted in a general decline in traditional brick-and-mortar retail sales, nationwide. This impact is being felt in the City’s large-format commercial areas. These areas tend to be auto-oriented, with significant areas of often underutilized surface or structured parking, and little in the way of landscaping or a general sense of place. For larger stores, there has been a trend in downsizing footprints in efforts to optimize layouts and get closer to their customer base. As these large-format buildings become obsolete, they will be adapted to new uses or replaced by contemporary structures with smaller (potentially multi-story) building footprints and less impervious surface. Therefore, it is clear that the reuse and redevelopment of big-box retail areas will play a critical role in the City’s future development.

Jersey City can help to ensure that vulnerable large-format retail areas are in a good position to adapt to change by creating a flexible regulatory environment. Zoning should allow for a broader mix of tenants, including uses as diverse as recreation and community services; hospitality; healthcare, academic, and other institutions; and innovative commercial uses such as labs, technology firms, commercial kitchens, and microbusinesses. Expanding permitted uses could incentivize more retail property owners to upgrade, while aesthetic improvements in the public realm – together with strong site planning – can serve to enhance the overall look and experience of these areas and make them friendly to the pedestrian as well as the automobile. Where possible, redevelopment of superblocks should look to re-establish the street grid and correct mistakes of the past, such as the use of superblock development that blocked neighborhoods from the waterfront areas and limited pedestrian access.

COVID-19 has resulted in a dramatic shift in demand for office uses, as many employees have been forced to work from home. Some of these offices will eventually come back to life, but others may lay fallow as many jobs may become remote. While it is impossible to predict how the market will evolve, the City should consider allowing for some flexibility in office areas to allow them to adapt and repurpose office space. Some of the older office buildings may be appropriate for conversion to residential with affordable housing. Other potential uses include hospitality, medical offices, co-working (e.g. shared office space or labs), light manufacturing, and commercial kitchens.
Make the City more walkable, bikeable, transit friendly, and less reliant on the automobile

Transportation infrastructure has always been a critical element to the growth of Jersey City, and investment in high-quality transit is more important now than ever. Despite the fact that many residents have excellent access to public transportation, other areas have fewer transit options, and many residents in those neighborhoods still use cars to access jobs, goods, and services. There remains the need for infrastructure that provides safer, more convenient options for non-vehicular transportation throughout the City to connect neighborhoods to open spaces and key activity nodes such as schools, transit stations, shopping areas, and job centers. Many commercial areas are heavily biased toward the automobile (e.g. Communipaw Avenue, Route 1&9, and Route 440), making them less safe for pedestrians and bicyclists, and unattractive for residents and visitors. Even neighborhood commercial corridors that may be more walkable overall, such as Central Avenue, West Side Avenue, and portions of Newark Avenue, tend to be difficult for bicyclists and could be more inviting for pedestrians. Making streets more walkable and neighborhood-oriented will attract local businesses to help those areas become more competitive in a changing market.

Land use planning should be coordinated with the existing transportation network and planned improvements. The City should support efforts to decrease automobile use by providing safe and attractive alternatives such as providing frequent and reliable public transit, attractive streetscapes to walk on, and a wide coverage of bicycle lanes. Where possible, the City should work with partners to develop new PATH, NJ Transit rail, and HBLR stations, and coordinate smart growth land use policies around existing and new transit nodes.

There is a particular need in Jersey City to reconnect areas separated by highway and utility infrastructure or superblock development. The City should require new development to make improvements to the circulation network and streetscape that increase safety and facilitate circulation for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Jersey City supports a number of programs to keep people traveling throughout the City without having to get into their cars. The CitiBike bike-share system continues to expand, including the recent launch of a unified program between Jersey City and Hoboken. In addition, the recently implemented Via service provides subsidized access citywide, filling in the gaps of the existing transit network, with an emphasis on serving lower-income residents and areas with less access to transit, such as Greenville and the Heights. The City should continue to support tech-enabled shared transportation providers, otherwise known as “microtransit.” In addition, other opportunities to reduce vehicular use should be explored, such as bus rapid transit systems, aerial trams, etc. By strengthening these programs and the connections between them, residents may find it easier to start using existing transportation services that are an alternative to the individual automobile.

Provision of both on- and off-street parking, including minimum parking standards, has wide-ranging and significant impacts on improving the streetscape, reducing conflicts, improving safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, reducing the costs of housing production, improving air quality, and encouraging alternative modes of transit. Addressing parking is especially important on smaller lot sizes where there is limited space to accommodate driveways. While parking is essential for many residents, it must be provided in a way that minimizes impact on the streetscape (e.g. excessive curb cuts), and that recognizes the inefficiency of allocating valuable land to parking and preventing it from being used for more community-oriented uses (e.g. open space or housing). Zoning (e.g. off-street parking requirements) and other City policies should not incentivize car ownership, which is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. Rather, the City’s regulations, policies, and programs should further explore opportunities including addressing the climate crisis through decarbonisation and promoting alternative travel modes, as well as improving pedestrian and bicyclist safety through reduction in auto collisions. This Land Use Element supports recommendations provided in the Jersey City Parking Plan (2020), and that align with the Circulation Element’s goals to limit land dedicated to parking uses near transit stations while also encouraging public transit use.
The availability and quality of parks and open spaces are closely tied to residents’ quality-of-life, the cohesion of the public realm, and the coordination of efforts to adapt to climate change. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of parks and open spaces as gathering spaces and community hubs. While the City has a wide variety of parks, the amount, quality, and access to these spaces is unevenly distributed.

As noted in the Open Space and Public Facilities Element, wherever possible, the City should link existing parks and open space assets to form interconnected greenways that provide connectivity to neighborhoods, public facilities (i.e. schools and libraries) and employment areas. This network should include continued efforts to complete public access along both the Hudson and Hackensack Rivers, and leveraging opportunities to reuse legacy infrastructure for greenways (e.g. Bergen Arches, Sixth Street Embankment, and Morris Canal). Development around these areas should support the transformation of these assets for public recreational use.

In addition, this Land Use Element supports recommendations in Let’s Ride JC Bicycle Master Plan (2019), which proposes the expansion of bikeways to 50% of the street network.

Jersey City has a considerable collection of historic buildings and neighborhoods that represent significant examples of residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and transportation-related structures, some of which date to the 19th century and earlier. These historic assets form a substantial part of the City’s identity, sense of place, quality-of-life, and economic vitality, and are a source of civic pride. Recognizing their value, the City enacted in 2018 an ordinance requiring all demolition permit applications to be reviewed by Historic Preservation Commission staff. Jersey City is the most diverse city in the country, according to the annual WalletHub diversity rankings. It truly represents a melting pot of nations, ethnicities, and cultural traditions. Despite this history, multiculturalism has not always been reflected in planning for public spaces, housing, and commercial areas. The full diversity of Jersey City, including groups that have traditionally been marginalized such as communities of color, Native Americans, and immigrants—should be recognized and celebrated. This will require ongoing engagement with community partners representing marginalized populations, to help identify important historic resources and provide additional public art, design features, historic plaques and interpretive signage which celebrate Jersey City’s multicultural history. Public spaces should be located in areas where they can serve multiple communities and should be programmed with educational and cultural activities that celebrate multiculturalism.

Jersey City’s rich heritage can be showcased where possible through the installation of artwork, unique design features, and signage related to historic or noteworthy sites. The City
should work with the community to designate sites/areas that more accurately document the diversity of people, cultures, and beliefs responsible for shaping our history and better reflects who we are as a City. Extensive and ongoing community participation is critical to creating inclusive multicultural places that are welcoming.

With five locally designated historic districts, Jersey City has had success in preserving beautiful, intact neighborhoods. With this strong track record, the necessary work now turns to older areas of the City that are lesser-known from a historic preservation perspective, but are no less valuable. In some cases, this could involve creation of new historic districts where there is a significant node of historic buildings and structures. In other instances, there may be individual historic assets – whether within a historic district or not – that need to be formally designated. In either case, identification of historic assets requires completion of a new Cultural Resources Survey and Historic Preservation Element of the Master Plan. This analysis should also identify buildings and structures that may not be historically or architecturally significant, but are of cultural importance to the City.

In addition, more could be done to identify and strengthen gateways into the City as well as into individual neighborhoods. Drivers entering Jersey City along key corridors such as Routes 440 and 139 and Communipaw and Sip Avenues have little that orients them about where they are in the City and about the rich history and diversity of the neighborhoods they are passing. Gateways play an important role in creating a sense of arrival and provide residents and visitors with a first impression of an area. Improved gateway treatments, as part of a unified, citywide placemaking system, can express the history, culture or defining characteristics of a community, as well as calm traffic speeds. These improvements help to convey the identity of an area and encourage people to visit.

Jersey City’s public realm also provides an opportunity to celebrate the diversity of its residents and the richness of its arts and cultural offerings. Public art and historic markers can serve a dual purpose of beautifying the streetscape and public spaces, while also educating residents and visitors alike about the City’s diverse heritage.
Planning for the climate crisis includes strategies to promote sustainability measures, implement resiliency adaptations, and protect and restore environmental assets. Sustainable development means protecting the resources and infrastructure that support us today so that they will be accessible to future generations. Although associated most closely with the environment, sustainability is a far broader concept. As defined by the American Planning Association, sustainable development “maintains or enhances economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment upon which people and economies depend.”

In the years since the 2000 Master Plan, commitment to sustainability planning has taken a more prominent stage in the City, as it has across the region and the world. This reflects several factors, including more development pressure on a diminishing supply of land; greater awareness of the environmental impacts of human activities; reducing flood risks, and broader issues such as renewable energy and global warming. These issues of sustainability should be addressed with an integrated approach to planning for land use, open space, transportation, the environment, housing, economic development, and infrastructure. These issues were also addressed as part of the Resiliency Master Plan, the Adaptation Master Plan, the Urban Environmental Green Infrastructure Design Plan, and adoption of the Flood-Prone Overlay District.

Reducing potential impacts from flooding remains as one of the City’s most pressing needs. High volumes of surface water runoff from impervious surfaces exacerbate flooding during storm events, particularly in low lying areas. Most of the available land area has been consumed by impervious surfaces such as buildings and asphalt parking lots, leaving little room for landscaping and open space, which filters stormwater and allows for ground water recharge. This can be addressed with land use policies that promote smart growth, reduce excessive off-street parking, preserve open space, and encourage green infrastructure such as green roofs and other stormwater capture tools. The City should continue to further the recommendations of the Climate Action Plan by facilitating sustainable development policies that minimize waste and energy use, both for private developers and at City-owned facilities. This could include a whole-building approach to sustainability in the areas of site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, electrification, indoor and outdoor environmental quality, and human and environmental health. Land use policies should also promote the development of a streetscape that is more walkable, which will help to reduce automobile use.

The accessibility and capacity of community facilities and infrastructure in Jersey City is a key contributor to the quality of life in the community. Community facilities (parks, schools, libraries, community centers, police, fire, etc.) serve the medical, safety, educational, religious, and other similar social needs of the residents in the City. Specific recommendations for community facilities are provided in the Open Space and Public Facilities Element, which was prepared in tandem with this Land Use Element. In general, there is a need to provide a balance of City-wide community facilities that are accessible from every neighborhood and a core package of community facilities in every neighborhood to serve local residents. There is also a need to upgrade community facilities, particularly in underserved areas and those that are growing rapidly. This Master Plan supports efforts by the Board of Education and other private entities to improve school facilities and educational programs. Land use policies also
seek to accommodate and capitalize on the growth of the City’s colleges and universities, museums and other cultural and educational uses.

In general, planned growth should be prioritized in areas where there is existing infrastructure or in areas near transit stops, to reinforce the economic and social vitality of these centers and to keep development where infrastructure is already in place to support it. Given that Jersey City is built-out, existing transportation rights-of-way need to be carefully managed to respond to population growth and evolving shopping and lifestyle trends. Redesigning streets with dedicated bus lanes, larger sidewalks, or protected bike lanes are great ways to promote alternative modes of transportation. In addition, a curb management plan is recommended to plan for loading and delivery spaces and ride-hailing and microtransit pick-up/drop-off.

Water supply and sewage treatment infrastructure represent large investments of public resources in construction, operation, and maintenance. The City has invested in water treatment and sewage treatment facilities capable of handling much larger volumes than presently exist. However, the aging combined sanitary/stormwater sewer system with nearly two-dozen outfalls, together with more frequent and severe storm events, leads to the system reaching capacity and experiencing overflows and localized flooding. The system is continually in need of re-investment, especially in light of the climate crisis. The Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission, whose service area includes Jersey City, has submitted a Long-Term Control Plan to retrofit or expand utility infrastructure to mitigate combined sewer overflows (CSOs) and flooding to meet Clean Water Act requirements. Strategies include enlargement and replacement of pipes, storage tanks, and related infrastructure to improve capacity and reduce infrastructure problems.

With climate change, severe weather events will become a more regular occurrence, presenting additional strains on existing infrastructure. To respond to these demands, the City needs to integrate climate-related projections into planning efforts and capital improvements, as well as look inward to upgrade and expand its own facilities to better cater to residents. Recently developed plans such as the Resiliency Master Plan, the Adaptation Master Plan, the Urban Environmental Green Infrastructure Design Plan, and the Climate Action Plan offer strategies on how to plan for and mitigate storm events and other climate-related impacts.

Undertake zoning revisions to consolidate districts, clarify regulations, and address current issues.

Jersey City’s existing zoning districts consist of a patchwork of 23 conventional zoning districts and nearly 100 redevelopment plan areas. Each of the redevelopment areas were created to facilitate very specific types of development, lending a “one-off” character to the City’s zoning districts. As a result, there is an over-abundance of redevelopment plans, often written with specific guidelines that do not fully take into consideration a consistent planning framework for the City as a whole. The City should undertake a comprehensive evaluation of its redevelopment plans with the goal of streamlining them and reducing the overall number. Some plans are obsolete and do not reflect the market and land use policies of the City. Many plans are completed or substantially complete. When redevelopment areas are completed, the City should “retire” them back into conventional zoning districts, which have comparable densities and uses to the proceeding redevelopment plans. This may involve transitioning the redevelopment areas into an existing zoning district or creating a new district that accommodates the existing development pattern. For example, in 2021, the City created the R-1W zoning district to encompass the former Webster Avenue Redevelopment Plan Area.

In addition, the existing conventional zoning districts can be streamlined. In some cases, the desired future use for an area doesn’t match up with the existing zoning. In such cases, zoning map changes may be appropriate. Some of the zoning districts have minimal differences and could be combined or eliminated for greater clarity and efficiency. The Land Use Element details these proposed changes, including eliminating obsolete zones, and identifying redevelopment plan areas that should be revisited by the City. Regulations
This chapter uses illustrative examples to show how regulatory, design and development guidance provided in the following narratives might apply in different contexts. The depictions and illustrations throughout the chapter are not definitive plans and should be treated as illustrative examples that demonstrate how each recommendation can be interpreted in similar contexts and situations.

OVERVIEW

Jersey City's built environment is diverse and fast changing, offering varied experiences to its residents and visitors. Some built environments, like the Hudson River Waterfront Walkway, have transformed the City's landscape and greatly enhanced the quality of life, while others like the areas around light rail stations and key corridors, are gradually transitioning to better serve surrounding communities.

The City has made a number of investments in the public realm to support development that will revitalize major portions of Jersey City. Recent investments in public assets like a redesigned Ferris Triangle Park, planning and implementation of dedicated bike lanes, and opening of the “100 Steps” along the Palisades, will strengthen and connect neighborhoods. Major redevelopment planning initiatives such as the Canal Crossing and Bayfront will transform entire neighborhoods—and indeed the City itself—with new residences, public spaces, and infrastructure improvements. Both public realm and planning investments are vital for the City’s evolution and need to be coordinated so they support the advancement of all neighborhoods and communities more equitably.
This chapter uses illustrative examples to show how regulatory, design and development guidance provided in the following narratives might apply in different contexts. The depictions and illustrations throughout the chapter are not definitive plans and should be treated as illustrative examples that demonstrate how each recommendation can be interpreted in similar contexts and situations.

CHAPTER 4: URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

OVERVIEW

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This chapter seeks to build on these initiatives by identifying opportunities for improvements throughout the City, where the built environment can be enhanced through a combination of public realm design, ongoing planning and investments, and regulatory changes. The identified improvements are intended to support and advance other strategies in this Land Use Element, as well as the Master Plan lenses set forth in the Jersey City Master Plan Vision: Connectivity and Mobility, Economic Opportunity, Social Equity and Climate Resiliency.

**DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS**

The Urban Design Framework examines the City’s built environment and classifies it into a number of categories, or **Development Patterns**, through which one experiences and navigates the City. These include not only the buildings but also the public realm which is made up of the street right-of-way, public plazas, in between “left over” spaces, transportation infrastructure, water fronts, etc.

This chapter identifies and studies the following 10 Development Patterns, providing key findings and recommendations to guide the design and development of each:

1. Corridors
2. Neighborhood Centers
3. Transit Nodes
4. Low Density Residential areas
5. Large Format Retail
6. Commercial Cores
7. Industrial Areas
8. Legacy Infrastructure & Interstitial Spaces
9. Planned Waterfront Development
10. Legacy Neighborhoods.

These Development Patterns were determined based on several site visits and coordination with City staff, with considerations given to scale, use, typology, function and adjacencies.

The approximate locations of these Development Patterns are shown on the map of Jersey City in Figure 44. It is important to note that these Development Patterns may or may not be contiguous, and their locations are loosely defined areas rather than strictly bound parcels used in typical zoning maps. In addition, some of these areas may fall in multiple categories of Development Patterns for e.g. Canal Crossing is currently an existing industrial area that can also be categorized as adaptive reuse and mid-high-rise given its redevelopment plan. This map is therefore to be used as a guidance for approximate locations and understanding similarities in the contexts, and it is not to be mistaken as a land use plan.

Of the 10 Development Patterns studied, five -- **Regional Corridors, Neighborhood Centers, Low Density Residential areas, Large Format Retail, and Transit Nodes** -- have been given additional focus because they best advance the community’s priorities in the near-term and as set forth in the Master Plan Vision.

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*Figure 43: Images of Jersey City's Built Environment*

*Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop*
Jersey City’s built environment is diverse and fast-changing, owing to rapid growth in several neighborhoods.

This chapter seeks to build on these initiatives by identifying opportunities for improvements throughout the City, where the built environment can be enhanced through a combination of public realm design, ongoing planning and investments, and regulatory changes. The identified improvements are intended to support and advance other strategies in this Land Use Element, as well as the Master Plan lenses set forth in the Jersey City Master Plan Vision: Connectivity and Mobility, Economic Opportunity, Social Equity and Climate Resiliency.

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Of the 10 Development Patterns studied, five -- Regional Corridors, Neighborhood Centers, Low Density Residential areas, Large Format Retail, and Transit Nodes -- have been given additional focus because they best advance the community’s priorities in the near-term and as set forth in the Master Plan Vision.
ADVANCING THE MASTER PLAN VISION

A critical analysis of each Development Pattern identifies recommendations that advance the goals set forth in the Land Use Principles, and align with the four lenses set forth in the Jersey City Master Plan Vision: Connectivity and Mobility, Economic Opportunity, Social Equity and Climate Resiliency.

In addition to the in-depth existing conditions analysis presented in the previous chapters, the following evaluation of key datasets like population density, income distribution etc. in relation to each other and the City’s geography, provides a high-level, place based understanding of the opportunities that can advance these goals in the built environment.

Connectivity and Mobility

A large part of Jersey City is well-serviced by a wide range of public transportation networks including PATH, Hudson Bergen Light Rail (HBLR), a growing network of shared and dedicated bicycle lanes, and micro transit opportunities. However, these facilities currently service some neighborhoods better than others.

An overlay of population densities on the HBLR and PATH network shows that while most of the PATH trains stations have high ridership supported by surrounding population densities and uses, most of the HBLR stations to the south of Communipaw Avenue have low population and built densities, likely contributing to low ridership. There are several other factors that limit the accessibility and appeal of these HBLR stations. Some, including interconnectedness, pedestrian and bicycle networks, station area location and design, zoning, etc. have been discussed in greater detail under the Development Pattern “Transit Nodes.”

In addition to the public transit system, Jersey City’s road network is critical for both inter- and intra-City mobility, especially in low-density residential neighborhoods and areas that lie at peripheries of neighborhoods. Key roads, or “Corridors,” are a distinct Development Pattern in Jersey City, which not only transport people and goods from one place to another, but also serve as entryways, places of commerce, and linear nodes of activity. In some locations, these Corridors are emerging as neighborhood-scale service nodes for adjacent communities. The discussion of the Corridors development pattern indicates how this type of linear development can be strengthened and integrated more closely with local neighborhoods.
In addition to motorized connectivity, the City’s obsolete industrial infrastructure, areas underneath elevated highways, and developments along the waterfront, all provide opportunities to create a continuous network of non-motorized transportation infrastructure that links key neighborhood nodes and the City’s parks and open spaces. Specific opportunities are discussed under the Development Patterns, “Legacy Infrastructure & Interstitial Spaces” and “Planned Waterfront Developments.”

**Economic Opportunity**

A large part of Jersey City’s working population commutes to neighboring municipalities for work. Nonetheless, in recent decades, the City, popularly dubbed as “Wall Street West,” has continued to diversify its economic base in retail and finance, insurance, and real estate sectors, offering more live-work opportunities to its residents.

While there has been population growth in many parts of the City, economic expansion has been largely concentrated in Downtown Jersey City and Journal Square. Existing transportation infrastructure at these locations, specifically the PATH, has made their transformation more feasible as compared to other areas.

Population growth in other neighborhoods coupled with shifting trends in the retail landscape and the post COVID-19 pandemic work-from-home culture, call for investments in economic opportunity and infrastructure that can be easily accessed by the City’s wider population. Recent initiatives like “Slow Streets” temporarily address the more immediate post-pandemic impacts on residents and businesses by employing temporary closures for socially distanced outdoor activities. Building on such recent initiatives, the discussion in the Development Patterns, “Neighborhood Centers,” “Low Density Residential Areas,” “Large Format Retail,” and Commercial Cores,” illustrate more permanent interventions and strategies to build infrastructure and facilities for economic opportunity and entrepreneurship in all neighborhoods, in the long term.

**Figure 46: Areas of Rapid Growth**

Map showing Jersey City’s Population Densities by Census Block Groups and the areas that have experienced the most population growth over the last decade.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

**Legend**


**Social Equity**

Jersey City has grown at a rapid pace over the recent decades, but the pace of development in the different neighborhoods has not been the same. Some neighborhoods have easy access to amenities like parks, public transportation, retail and
services, and a diverse mix of housing options. However, there are other neighborhoods where the supply of these amenities does not support their population growth. A map overlay of population growth with existing median incomes and the location of highway commercial and restaurant overlay zones shown here reveals that the areas that have a limited supply or lack these services are areas of lower income as compared with other neighborhoods.

There are also areas in the City that are adjacent to very rapidly growing neighborhoods, e.g. the Marion neighborhood west of Journal Square, which may be at-risk for negative impacts from a sudden increase in the cost of living and a significant change in the neighborhood’s built environment. Similarly, areas that cater to more traditional industries are surrounded by residential areas which can create tensions with respect to traffic and public realm, especially at the edges where these seemingly incompatible uses meet. However, industrial areas are vital to the City’s economy, providing entry-level jobs to many, and strategies so they can co-exist with residential uses will need to be explored.

These issues and supporting recommendations have been discussed in greater detail under the Development Patterns, “Neighborhood Centers,” “Low Density Residential,” “Industrial Areas,” and “Legacy Neighborhoods.”

**Climate Resiliency**

Since Hurricane Sandy, Jersey City has extensively analyzed the impacts and future threats of flooding and has been continually investing in resiliency infrastructure to protect the City from these threats. As shown in the map, the central north-south ridge of the City, which has lower-density developments, naturally drains into the low-lying higher density neighborhoods along the Hudson and Hackensack Rivers, causing incidences of flooding in these areas. Additionally, some of the waterfront areas have high levels of contamination, which gets leached into the water along with surface runoff coming from the central ridge.
In addition to localized resiliency infrastructure at the site of impact, these issues require area- and city-wide planning at all scales, ranging from the individual property to entire waterfronts. Opportunities to build resiliency infrastructure and policy guidance for individual property development are identified and discussed under the Development Patterns, “Low Density Residential,” “Legacy Infrastructure & Interstitial Spaces,” and “Planned Waterfront Developments.”

In addition to flooding, other measures such as renewable energy infrastructure and urban heat island effect are discussed under the Development Pattern, “Industrial Areas.”

HOW TO USE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

The recommendations set forth in the Urban Design Framework not only inform the land use and zoning regulations but also provide design and development guidance to shape the built environment. The application of these goals and actions to specific situations and contexts can be hard to imagine and convey precisely. Therefore, the chapter uses illustrative examples to demonstrate how regulatory, design and development guidance provided in the narratives might apply to each Development Pattern.

The narratives, illustrations, and recommendations proposed in this chapter should not be understood as being limited to the examples being illustrated. It is also important to note that the depictions throughout the chapter are not definitive plans and should be treated as illustrative examples that demonstrate how the recommendations can be interpreted in similar contexts and situations.

It is intended that the recommendations in this chapter be applied to generalized versions of the Development Patterns being discussed, to assist residents and City agencies in better determining ways in which different parts of Jersey City could and should transform.

For example, curb management strategies are outlined in the recommendations for the Regional Corridors Development Pattern, but they can be applied to better manage all streets and roadways in Jersey City and are not limited to the geographies identified as Regional Corridors.
Given Jersey City’s location along the Northeast Corridor and across from Manhattan at the edge of the Hudson River, it developed as a conveyance hub transporting goods and people to their destinations and places of work. By the 1930s, the City was known as the “railhead of nations,” and its five-mile coastline was occupied by railroad infrastructure. However, with the manufacturing and industrial decline across the nation, the volume of railroad goods transporting decreased by the 1950s, and much of the goods movement shifted to roadways or surface transportation corridors. These corridors, given their historic purpose of moving goods, were designed for automobiles and supported auto-oriented uses and businesses.

While there are still some corridors that continue to function primarily as through-ways across the City, over the last decade, Jersey City has made a concerted effort to re-imagine and transform its roadways into streets for both people and motorists. A recent example is the transformation of Bergen Avenue with a protected bike lane connecting McGinley and Journal Squares. Looking to the future, technological advancements in automated and driverless technology will accelerate this trend toward streets that are shared more equally between people and cars. The following section delves deeper into opportunities that will support the transformation of Jersey City’s Corridors into complete streets that serve multiple types of users and functions.

The City’s Corridors have distinct characteristics depending on the places they connect and the neighborhoods they pass through. There are three main hierarchies of corridors -

Excluding highways, **Regional Corridors** are those that connect Jersey City with neighboring municipalities. Most of the Regional corridors are very auto-oriented, and the uses along them range from auto-related to high rise office and residential buildings, depending on their location.

**City Corridors** connect two neighborhoods or key destinations within the City. These are mostly mixed-use corridors with retail and neighborhood services on the street level and residential uses above.

Lastly, **Neighborhood Corridors** are those that are major streets within neighborhoods and have some mixed use character with higher densities compared with neighboring streets.
City Corridors connect two neighborhoods or key destinations within the City. These are mostly given Jersey City’s location along the Northeast Corridor and across from Manhattan at the edge of the Hudson River, it developed as a conveyance hub transporting goods and people to their destinations and places of work. By the 1930s, the City was known as the “railhead of nations,” and its five-mile coastline was occupied by railroad infrastructure. However, with the manufacturing and industrial decline across the nation, the volume of railroad goods transporting decreased by the 1950s, and much of the goods movement shifted to roadways or surface transportation corridors. These corridors, given their historic purpose of moving goods, were designed for automobiles and supported auto-oriented uses and businesses. While there are still some corridors that continue to function primarily as through-ways across the City, over the last decade, Jersey City has made a concerted effort to re-imagine and transform its roadways into streets for both people and motorists. A recent example is the transformation of Bergen Avenue with a protected bike lane connecting McGinley and Journal Squares. Looking to the future, technological advancements in automated and driverless technology will accelerate this trend toward streets that are shared more equally between people and cars. The following section delves deeper into opportunities that will support the transformation of Jersey City’s Corridors into complete streets that serve multiple types of users and functions.

The City’s Corridors have distinct characteristics depending on the places they connect and the neighborhoods they pass through. There are three main hierarchies of corridors - Excluding highways, Regional Corridors are those that connect Jersey City with neighboring municipalities. Most of the Regional Corridors are mixed-use corridors with retail and neighborhood services on the street level and residential uses above. Lastly, Neighborhood Corridors are those that are major streets within neighborhoods and have some mixed use character with higher densities compared with neighboring streets.

### LOCATIONS

The following list categorizes key Jersey City Corridors. The list is illustrative and is not meant to be an exhaustive of all Corridors in the City.

#### Regional
1. Marin Boulevard
2. John F. Kennedy Boulevard
3. Communipaw Avenue
4. Garfield Avenue
5. Paterson Plank Road
6. Tonnelle Avenue

#### City
1. Central Avenue
2. Newark Avenue
3. Jersey Avenue
4. Montgomery Street
5. West Side Avenue
6. Grand Street
7. Martin Luther King Drive/Monticello Avenue

#### Neighborhood
1. Palisade Avenue
2. Ocean Avenue
3. Mallory Avenue
4. Bergen Avenue
5. Monticello Avenue

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**Figure 50: Existing Conditions / Regional Corridor**

Illustrative example of a Regional Corridor: Communipaw Avenue, highlighting existing conditions

*Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop*
KEY FINDINGS

The following sections dive deeper into Regional Corridors and uses them as a reference to provide Key Findings and Recommendations. These Key Findings and Recommendations can be applied to other Corridors and areas with similar physical contexts and situations.

All Corridors provide regional and neighborhood amenities for residents and visitors

Given its geography, history of development, street grid, and travel patterns, there is a trend in Jersey City for both regional and neighborhood amenities to be organized linearly along corridors, making them important entryways into the City and its neighborhoods. In some cases such as Central Avenue, corridors also function as neighborhood-scale convenience centers providing services and amenities to surrounding areas.

Street design and mix of uses differentiate the three Corridor hierarchies

A few differentiating characteristics among the three types of Corridors are the mix of uses, adjacent built form, and accessibility by different modes of transportation. In general, Regional Corridors are the most auto-oriented, with wide setbacks and uses that service auto-traffic. City Corridors tend to have the greatest mix of uses and are the most pedestrian-friendly of the three. Neighborhood Corridors have a higher ratio of residential uses and support cars more than pedestrians. In some cases and depending on the development patterns, street-facing garages on Neighborhood Corridors disrupt sidewalk continuity and make less safe pedestrian environments.

Regional Corridors connect Jersey City with neighboring municipalities and for the most part function as auto-oriented throughways across the City.

As primary local routes to the City’s core, Regional Corridors are a visitor’s introduction to Jersey City. They run across the City in north-south (e.g. Kennedy Boulevard) or east-west (e.g. Communipaw Avenue) directions and are much longer local routes compared with other roadways. For the most part, the wide, speeding lanes of traffic on Regional Corridors prioritize driving and make other modes of transportation less safe. Furthermore, large front setbacks; street-facing parking lots; drive-through services; frequent curb cuts; and poorly lit, narrow, and treeless sidewalks make walking and biking an even more uncomfortable experience. In terms of land use, while housing and neighborhood commercial uses can be found in some areas along these corridors, the dominant uses are automotive and commercial with low densities and heavy reliance on extensive surface parking. These uses further encourage a “drive-through” urban environment and are prominent in areas that are zoned Highway Commercial (HC) and Commercial/Automotive (C/A).

However, as Regional Corridors pass through different parts of the City and intersect with other hierarchies of local routes and streets, they present different characteristics and opportunities for transformation. For example, at the intersection with West Side Avenue (a City Corridor), Communipaw Avenue has a few neighborhood-scale retail establishments that face its right-of-way and are built to the edge of the sidewalk. On the other hand, where Communipaw Avenue intersects with another Regional Corridor like Kennedy Boulevard, the typical Regional Corridor characteristics, like deep front setbacks and drive-through uses, are even more exacerbated. These different conditions offer distinct opportunities.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Create opportunities to develop nodes of activity and services along Regional Corridors

As the City’s commercial cores -- Journal Square, Downtown, and Exchange Place -- become saturated, development pressures will shift elsewhere, and Regional Corridors have the necessary infrastructure, location advantage and connectivity to support higher-density developments than what currently exists. Regulatory changes to land use and zoning can begin to transform key intersections along Regional Corridors into pedestrian-friendly nodes of commercial and residential activity. Incentive-based density bonuses can be used for creating new public open space, affordable housing and workspace, and increasing services and retail, making these areas more integrated and accessible to surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Determining the appropriate height, density, and uses will need consideration of surrounding densities and development patterns. Illustrative examples of two intersections: Communipaw Avenue and Kennedy Boulevard (Regional-Regional Corridor), and Communipaw and West Side Avenues (Regional-City Corridor) depict these considerations and recommendations in greater detail.

Example Regional Node 1 / Communipaw Avenue and Kennedy Boulevard:

This node at the intersection of two Regional Corridors has two gas stations, a drive-through ATM and surface parking for the adjacent grocery store, making this entire intersection a drive-through without a sense of place.

However, given its central location, connectivity to the bus network, proximity to the HBLR transit nodes and allow mixed-use developments up to five stories. In addition, at all nodes, consideration should be made to provide incentive-based density bonuses for capital improvements, affordable housing and civic amenities.

Enhance pedestrian environments and establish welcoming entryways to the City and its neighborhoods

To create a sense of place and identity at key nodes along Regional Corridors, the City should consider density, bulk and parking guidelines that will help create pedestrian friendly environments. These strategies could include establishing continuous street walls by requiring buildings to locate at the edge of sidewalks, standardizing minimum street wall heights, requiring active use along the street, prohibiting parking access from the front, or requiring parking to be incorporated within the building structure. In
addition, these areas should provide good connectivity for all modes of transportation and street design strategies that will firmly establish these nodes as entry points or gateways into adjacent neighborhoods.

Create walkable and bikeable environments and enhance curb appeal to invite pedestrians and support nearby businesses

Although the Regional Corridors will continue to serve as primary automobile thoroughfares, they have the potential to be transformed into streets that offer safety, mobility, comfort, and choice for all street users. The City should continue to implement its Complete Streets initiative through the priorities laid out in the Pedestrian Enhancement Plan, Bicycle Master Plan, and Vision Zero Action Plan, and update design standards for accommodating bicyclists and pedestrians. These design standards, illustrated in Figure 61 on page 110, include right-sizing travel lanes to reclaim any excessive width for sidewalks and bike-lanes, creating curb bump-outs at intersections where right-of-ways are wide, installing traffic lights, crosswalks and lane markings, and intersection treatments to enhance safety and organize traffic movements. Additionally, providing the necessary infrastructure such as bike parking, wayfinding, and streetscape design with landscaping and green infrastructure to manage stormwater should be included as part of street improvements included with any new construction. The varying densities and curb side uses along any Corridor require different curb side management strategies to better serve users and enhance curb appeal. These are highlighted for Low- and Medium-Density Mixed Use Areas in Figure 55, Commercial Cores and High Density Areas in Figure 58, and Low Density Residential Areas in Figure 62. Where Regional Corridors are managed by the County, making these changes will mean advocating for these improvements with the County and where possible, collaborating and cooperating to implement these at the City level.
Figure 56: Recommendations for Node at Regional-Regional Corridor Intersection

Illustrative example of regulatory recommendations and physical improvements at Regional-Regional Corridor intersection at Communipaw Avenue and Kennedy Boulevard. The recommendations aim to create mixed-use nodes of activity and services, and better integrate them with the surrounding neighborhoods.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Legend

Depictions on drawings for illustrative purposes only and do not indicate approved or definitive plans.
Different curbside uses will offer varying options to accommodate these physical improvements. These are further depicted in relation to different curbside uses, in the Street Design and Curb Management Strategies illustration on p. 110-111.

A / Low Density Residential Areas
[See Figure 60 andInset A on page 110]
1. Create safe drop off zones including street signage and pedestrian markings at locations where street-facing garages in R-1 districts could convert to small businesses.
2. Improve residential streetscaping with planting, adequate lighting and trash receptacles.
3. Limit curb cuts and standardize front yard uses to create safe walkable residential streets (see recommendations for Low Density Residential Zones).

B / Neighborhood Commercial and low-, medium-density mixed-use areas [See Figure 58 on page 108 andInset C on page 110]
1. Right size travel lanes and reclaim additional space to widen sidewalks that can support active storefronts, restaurants cafés.
2. Provide infrastructure for multimodal connectivity.
3. Limit parking at intersections and provide mid-block metered parking
4. Prioritize the installation of urban streetscape elements such as trash cans, lighting, signage etc. especially in dense areas.

C / Commercial Cores and High Density Areas [See Figure 58 on page 108 andInset C on page 110]
1. Create dedicated drop off zones and zones for street food vendors.
2. Prioritize planting where active uses don’t include restaurants or require outdoor seating.
3. Provide infrastructure for multimodal connectivity.
4. Prohibit curb cuts and accommodate parking within building structure.

Figure 57: Existing Conditions at Intersection of Regional-City Corridor
Illustrative example of a Regional-City Corridor intersection at Communipaw and West Side Avenues. These intersections have some established mixed-use developments along the City Corridors that have started to spread over to Regional Corridors. These nodes could support higher densities and a greater mix of uses that will need to be supported by capital improvements to create safe and welcoming pedestrian environments. Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Figure 58: Curb Management for Commercial Cores and High Density Areas
Inset B / Refer to Figure 60 on page 110 for context. Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop
Design intersection treatments to enhance safety for pedestrians and bicyclists and organize traffic movements.

To the extent possible, incorporate parking in building structures, limit curb-cuts to a minimum and restrict parking access from the street fronting face of buildings.

Standardize minimum street wall height all along City Corridors and on Regional Corridors close to the intersections.

Consider incentive-based density bonuses for affordable housing and other civic amenities.

Requires active streetfronts that are publicly accessible.

Expand NC zone to cover Regional Corridors and determine the right scale of development based on surrounding neighborhood, e.g., at intersection with West Side Avenue, allow densities up to five stories and require mixed-use developments with active street frontage.

Limit all surface parking at these smaller scale nodes and consider eliminating front yards and requiring buildings to build to the edge of sidewalks.

Figure 59: Recommendations for Node at Regional-City Corridor Intersection

Illustrative example of regulatory recommendations and physical improvements at Regional-City Corridor intersection at Communipaw and West Side Avenues. The recommendations aim to create mixed-use nodes of activity and services, and better integrate them with the surrounding neighborhoods.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Legend

Depictions on drawings for illustrative purposes only and do not indicate approved or definitive plans.
Figure 60: Street Design and Curb Management Strategies

*Street Design and Curb Management Strategies. Illustration showing various options for physical improvements, curb management and complete street design based on different curbside uses.*

*Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop*

Inset A / See Fig. 61 on pg. 111

Inset B / See Fig. 55 on pg. 106

Inset C / See Fig. 58 on pg. 108

Figure 61: Curb Management for Low Density Residential Areas

Refer to Figure 61 below for context.

*Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop*
Figure 60: Street Design and Curb Management Strategies

Street Design and Curb Management Strategies. Illustration showing various options for physical improvements, curb management and complete street design based on different curbside uses.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Figure 61: Curb Management for Low Density Residential Areas

Refer to Figure 61 below for context.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Inset A
See Fig. 61 on pg. 111

Inset B
See Fig. 55 on pg. 106

Inset C
See Fig. 58 on pg. 108
Outside of Jersey City’s core commercial areas and downtown, there are several mixed-use nodes that provide services to adjacent neighborhoods. In contrast to the surrounding predominant residential uses, these nodes have a concentration of retail, convenience services, offices and entertainment options and function as Neighborhood Centers. Neighborhood Centers may be found at the convergence of several streets (e.g. Five Corners, McGinley Square, or the Junction), or may be organized along major cross streets (e.g. Newark, Central, and West Side Avenues).

The existing scale/stage of development of Neighborhood Centers varies and depends on the scale and density of surrounding neighborhoods. Based on factors including surrounding population densities, zoning, land use, and ongoing or planned developments, these neighborhood centers can be categorized into three broad scales that have been used to guide their future development.

Small-scale Neighborhood Centers, like at Danforth Avenue and Old Bergen Road, serve areas with predominantly low densities. Mid-scale Neighborhood Centers serve medium-density areas like the one around Five Corners, and large-scale Neighborhood Centers can be found in areas that already have high-density development or where such developments are planned, like at McGinley Square. The table below summarizes the considerations used in determining the appropriate scales for these Neighborhood Centers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Uses and Development Density</th>
<th>Surrounding Population Density</th>
<th>Ongoing or Planned Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Core with some mixed-use developments surrounded by 3-5 story residential developments.</td>
<td>Up to 50 persons/acre</td>
<td>None that will significantly impact the scale and density of the core or surrounding areas.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Medium</td>
<td>Mixed-use core surrounded by medium-density (up to 8 stories) residential developments.</td>
<td>50-150 persons/acre</td>
<td>New / planned developments that can increase the area’s population and impact the scale of the core.</td>
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<td>Large</td>
<td>Existing / emerging dense mixed-use core supporting a wide range of commercial uses and surrounded by medium- to high- density developments.</td>
<td>&gt; 150 persons/acre</td>
<td>New / planned developments that are at a much higher density compared to the existing conditions and will increase the area’s population and impact the scale of the core.</td>
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NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS

Outside of Jersey City’s core commercial areas and downtown, there are several mixed-use nodes that provide services to adjacent neighborhoods. In contrast to the surrounding predominant residential uses, these nodes have a concentration of retail, convenience services, offices and entertainment options and function as Neighborhood Centers.

Neighborhood Centers may be found at the convergence of several streets (e.g. Five Corners, McGinley Square, or the Junction), or may be organized along major cross streets (e.g. Newark, Central, and West Side Avenues).

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<td>Mixed-use core surrounded by medium-density (up to 8 stories) residential developments.</td>
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<td>New / planned developments that are at a much higher density compared to the existing conditions and will increase the area’s population and impact the scale of the core.</td>
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KEY FINDINGS

Some Neighborhood Centers lack critical mass to support surrounding areas. This is especially true for the small neighborhood centers that are surrounded by predominantly low-density and single-use developments.

However, though at different scales of development, all Neighborhood Centers share some common advantages like a central open space and location at key circulation nodes. This presents the opportunity for each to develop as its neighborhood’s principal service area with commerce, housing, and local events like farmers markets and festivals that celebrate surrounding communities.

LOCATIONS

A list of Neighborhood Centers includes the following locations:

Small Scale
1. Ocean and Lembeck Avenue
2. Danforth Avenue & Old Bergen Road
3. Central Avenue
4. West Side Avenue

Medium Scale
1. Area around MLK light rail station
2. The Junction
3. Newark Avenue
4. Five Corners

Large Scale
1. Area surrounding Journal Square Commercial Core
2. McGinley Square
Neighborhood Centers are predominantly auto-oriented

Although the City has endeavored to expand its public transportation and bike networks, the design of many Neighborhood Centers in the City prioritize the car over pedestrians and bicyclists. Many of these areas are currently focused towards private automobile use, requiring on street parking versus planning for walkable cores.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Establish “market squares” as the focal point for development of Neighborhood Centers by organizing density around central open space.

Given its geography, street grid, and travel patterns, there is a trend in Jersey City for development to happen linearly versus concentrated as “centers.” This may help to explain why some of the City’s most successful neighborhood commercial areas are found along corridors, such as Newark, Central, and West Side Avenues.

There are, however, other areas that have started to formalize around a central open space versus a corridor or street. To facilitate their development and maintain the vitality of all Neighborhood Centers, the City should intentionally establish “market squares” (or streets) by organizing density around the public spaces they surround. Potential market squares in Jersey City include Ferris Triangle Park, the plaza at McGinley Square and also linear neighborhood commercial areas like Central Avenue. In order to do this, the City should maintain, and where possible expand, the central public realm space as a focal point for all visitors, businesses, and surrounding amenities.

The existing plaza provides opportunity to organize density around it and use the increased density as an incentive to develop and maintain this public open space.

The plaza can feature temporary and permanent seating installations funded by both private and public investments and develop into a vibrant neighborhood scale civic space for people living and working in the area.

On active corridors leading to this central civic space, streetscape improvements including widening of sidewalks where possible, landscaping, lighting, pedestrian markings, protected bike lanes, street wall transparency and curb extensions at the intersection can serve to greatly enhance the pedestrian environment.

Higher density development that respects the existing neighborhood scale at this wide intersection can be planned to promote and support neighborhood businesses at the street level. On upper floors, mixed-income residential units can help keep housing affordable in the areas within easy access to jobs and amenities.

Any historic fabric whether it is designated as such or not should be preserved and celebrated.

Figure 64: Urban Design Opportunities at a Large Scale Neighborhood Center

Illustrative example highlighting strategies to support the development of a large scale Neighborhood Center. McGinley Square.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Legend

Depictions on drawings for illustrative purposes only and do not indicate approved or definitive plans.
land uses. In addition to public realm improvements and urban design strategies that are described later in this section, the City should support a critical mass of densities, uses, and services to support the vitality of these market squares (and streets). While planning for the uses, densities and bulk regulations to sustain a market square, the City should also consider and respect the scale of the surrounding urban fabric.

**Small-scale Neighborhood Centers:**
Small-scale Neighborhood Centers should consider development densities up to 5 stories, and mixed-use should be a required rather than an option. These centers should support street level retail, in addition to affordable and market-rate apartments and office uses above. Industrial uses should not be permitted in these zones.

**Medium-scale Neighborhood Centers:**
Medium-scale Neighborhood Centers should consider development densities of 6 to 8 stories, with a higher overall percentage of commercial and retail uses as compared to small-scale neighborhood centers. As with small-scale neighborhoods, mixed-use developments should be required and not optional, and the street level should only include active businesses/uses.

**Large-scale Neighborhood Centers:**
Large-scale Neighborhood Centers should consider development densities up to 12 stories and support small- to medium-scale businesses and offices. Mixed-use buildings should be favored but can be optional in this area, as this scale of development will likely have a higher demand for single-use buildings e.g. office or apartment buildings. However, all buildings should have active uses at the street level that should be publicly accessible and not limited to building users. Nor should these street level uses favor building users; for example, if gym facilities in a residential buildings are permitted as an active use at street level, the facility should be accessible to building non-residents at a fee comparable to residents.

**Support local businesses and diverse populations**
As the Neighborhood Centers and streets attract new uses and businesses, the City should develop clear guidelines to create a range of affordable and market-rate housing that can support a mix of ages and income groups. This mix should reflect the needs of the surrounding communities. In addition to housing, affordable commercial and live-work spaces that support homegrown entrepreneurship, artists, makers, and small businesses should be provided. Incentive-based density bonuses should be considered to provide affordability and support the mix of housing types and income groups, and the required public capital improvements. The City should also consider promoting public-private partnerships to create incubators and accelerators that provide real estate space along with other incubation facilities education, and networking opportunities to support entrepreneurship.

**Create a safe walkable core around central open space**
While the City has been making efforts to expand its public transportation and bike networks, the design of many Neighborhood Centers in the City still prioritizes the car over pedestrians and bicyclists. To transform the central open spaces (and streets) into “market squares,” the City should strengthen safe walkable cores around them. Many of the street design and curb management principles discussed in the Regional Corridors section – including right-sizing travel lanes, intersection design, bike and public transportation infrastructure, clarifying loading zones, providing for restaurant spill-over spaces on sidewalks, and landscaping – can be applied to retail streets like Central Avenue and to street right-of-ways that lead to the Neighborhood Centers. In addition, the City should restrict parking on streets directly adjacent to the “market squares” and take measures to calm traffic and prioritize pedestrian movement. Some of these strategies have already been successfully implemented along parts of Newark Avenue pedestrian mall just west of Grove Street. Tactical Urbanism strategies including low-cost and temporary interventions similar to the ones used on Newark Avenue can be applied to test or pilot open space expansion and temporary street closures.

Additionally, design guidelines that create a sense of place and demarcate these walkable cores as separate from the surrounding traffic flows should be considered. These guidelines could include use of materials, paint, or other cost-effective ways that distinctly identify walkable cores. Where possible, façade and material guidelines for buildings surrounding the walkable core should be considered, and any historic fabric should be preserved and restored where needed. Uniformity in the street elements like signage, lighting, street furniture, and landscaping can further impart the desired identity and image to these places and make them welcoming for visitors and residents.

Lastly, the ongoing programming and maintenance of these places will increase their vitality and appeal. Local festivals, art shows, farmers markets, temporary street closures and other events that celebrate the surrounding neighborhoods, should be regularly programmed at the “market squares” and side streets. The City should empower and support Special Improvement Districts (SIDs) and local community-based or non-profit organizations to help facilitate these efforts.
Figure 65: Recommendations for a Small Scale Neighborhood Center
Illustrative example of regulatory and physical improvements at a small scale Neighborhood Center at Old Bergen Road and Danforth Avenue. The recommendations aim to create a walkable and neighborhood scale node of mixed-use activity which will provide services to surrounding neighborhoods.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Legend
Depictions on drawings for illustrative purposes only and do not indicate approved or definitive plans.
Figure 66: Recommendations for a Medium Scale Neighborhood Center

Illustrative example of regulatory and physical improvements at a medium scale Neighborhood Center at Five Corners. The recommendations aim to create a walkable mixed-use activity core which will provide services to surrounding neighborhoods.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Legend

Depictions on drawings for illustrative purposes only and do not indicate approved or definitive plans.
Figure 67: Recommendations for a Large Scale Neighborhood Center

Illustrative example of regulatory and physical improvements at a large scale Neighborhood Center; McGinley Square. The recommendations aim to create a walkable mixed-use activity core which will provide services to surrounding neighborhoods.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Legend

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3/ TRANSIT CORES

Jersey City has a well-utilized PATH and ferry network that connects it to adjacent municipalities to the east and west, and in particular to jobs in Manhattan. For movement within the City, residents primarily rely on the bus network and on the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR). The HBLR is well-used in areas where the stations are easily accessible and there is a critical density of businesses and residences to support its use (i.e., Downtown), and/or where there is substantial infrastructure in place to provide regional access (i.e., the highway access and park-and-ride facility at Liberty State Park). However, where the HBLR stations are located at peripheries of neighborhoods or in low-density areas with limited activity, they are hard to access and are not well integrated with the rest of the public transit system. This Development Pattern addresses these HBLR stations, located in the neighborhoods of Greenville, West Side, and the Heights.

A heat map of population densities overlaid with commercial services land use clearly shows that people choose to live closer to areas that offer quick access to businesses and services. Furthermore, HBLR stations with higher concentrations of commercial services within 5-minute walking distances have much higher ridership compared with areas characterized by residential or other single land use. In addition, multimodal connectivity including buses, micro-transit, bikes, private cars, and pedestrians increase the usability of the stations.

**Figure 68: Transit Core Locations and Population Densities**

*Map showing the locations of Transit Cores in Jersey City in relationship to population density. Population densities tend to be higher in locations with better access to retail, transportation options and other neighborhood services / amenities. Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop.*

**Legend**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
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</table>

| Population Densities | HBLR Transit Cores being studied |

**LOCATIONS**

Of all the HBLR stations, the ones mentioned below have the lowest ridership and can be better integrated with existing and planned development in the neighborhoods they serve.

1. Ninth and Congress Streets
2. Second Street
3. Garfield Avenue
4. MLK Drive
5. West Side Avenue
6. Richard Street
7. Danforth Avenue
KEY FINDINGS

Some HBLR stations are not well integrated with surrounding neighborhoods

HBLR stations outside of the Downtown core are either located at the peripheries of neighborhoods or in low-density areas with limited activity. In both cases, accessing these stations can be a challenge because connectivity to these stations is limited and one has to travel to peripheral areas or areas with limited development and activity which make them feel isolated and unsafe.

Station areas should offer more amenities to commuters

Most stations areas have the basic infrastructure including seating, schedules, multi-modal connectivity etc. However, areas around or at the station offer little to no amenities for commuters, e.g. mobile food vendors, newstands etc. that can enhance the trip experience for commuters. In addition, commuters don’t have a sense of how the HBLR connects with other local investments such as bike and pedestrian infrastructure that the City is making. Information such as maps and signage showing the interconnectedness of mobility networks within the City can give commuters more choices and confidence to plan their trips solely relying on sustainable transportation.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Encourage mixed-use developments at appropriate densities around Transit Cores

HBLR transit cores in Jersey City have varying densities and contexts. Some, like the areas around MLK and West Side Avenue stations, currently have low-density developments but new developments have been proposed or are in the pipeline around these station areas. Others, like the Richard Street and Danforth Street stations, are surrounded by predominantly low-density residential developments that may not be sufficient to support healthy transit use and ridership.

Based on the surrounding context and scale, the City should consider rezoning Transit Cores to support higher densities and a mix of uses. Medium-density developments between 6 to 8 stories can be supported around MLK and West Side Avenue stations, and low-density developments up to 5 stories can be supported at the other Transit Cores. In R-1 areas like Richard Street and Danforth Avenue stations, consider the existing scale and densities around the station areas to determine whether these cores can support higher densities. Encourage higher densities (lot consolidation), and neighborhood-scale businesses and retail (garage conversions) as outlined in the recommendations for Low Density Residential Zones and through other appropriate measures that respect the scale and densities around these cores.
character of these zones. Transit Cores in the Heights (2nd and 9th Street stations) are surrounded by 2- to 3-story residential and mixed use developments that are within walking distances to the train station entrances. These areas, like Franklin and Congress Streets to the east of Palisade Avenue and parts of Palisade Avenue that intersect with these streets, could support densities up to 5 stories and should be required to develop mixed-use buildings.

Provide infrastructure for multimodal connectivity at the station area and surrounding neighborhoods

Most HBLR station areas have some form of infrastructure at or around the station that supports more than one mode of transportation e.g. bike racks, parking lots etc. However, not all stations, and especially the ones that are located at the peripheries like Richard Street and Danforth Avenue, are easily accessible or well integrated with the surrounding neighborhoods. The City has completed a Bike Master Plan with an extensive network of proposed bike routes that will connect different parts of the City including the Transit Cores in the coming years. Building on this the City should also consider other options like providing micro-transit options and select bus services that operate at designated times, in areas that are remote or not well connected to these Transit Nodes. In addition to HBLR stations, this multimodal connectivity should also be planned at bus stops.

Additionally, streetscape improvements that create safe and pleasant pedestrian environments should also be considered on all streets leading to the station areas. For e.g. Franklin Street and Mountain Road leading to the 100 Steps connection to the 2nd Avenue HBLR station can use pedestrian-friendly traffic barriers, pedestrian lighting and pruning of overgrown trees and shrubs that block visibility for drivers on Mountain Road.

Advocate for investments in HBLR stations area improvements to encourage transit use

Most station areas are equipped with basic station area infrastructure like sheltered waiting areas and digital train schedules. However, in order to improve the appeal of the station areas, they can be programmed with uses like fixed concession areas and/or vending machines where space allows, temporary food trucks, digital real time schedule visible from street and an information wall with maps that show how HBLR stations are integrated with the City’s network of bikes and other modes of transportation and connect to key local destinations. In addition, the entry plazas at these stations can be significantly improved with local art, seating and landscaping. Entry plazas that might be fenced off from the street, should be opened up and integrated with the adjacent streets/sidewalks.

The City should advocate for these improvements with the concerned agencies and, where possible, the City should consider coordinating or partnering to make these updates locally.

Figure 71: Analysis of HBLR Transit Cores with Low Ridership

Diagram showing existing land uses around Transit Cores, connectivity with proposed bike networks, bus routes and surface parking areas. Residential land use is not indicated. Transit Cores with a higher mix of uses and multiple options for transportation have higher ridership. Red arrows indicate an increase or decrease in population around Transit Core over the last decade.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop
Figure 71: Analysis of HBLR Transit Cores with Low Ridership

Diagram showing existing land uses around Transit Cores, connectivity with proposed bike networks, bus routes and surface parking areas. Residential land use is not indicated. Transit Cores with a higher mix of uses and multiple options for transportation have higher ridership. Red arrows indicate an increase or decrease in population around Transit Core over the last decade.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Figure 72: Station Area Improvements [station located at bottom of cliff]

Illustrative example of 2nd Street Station access showing street improvements on Mountain Road leading to the 100 steps access point to HBLR train station.
Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Figure 73: Station Area Improvements [station located above grade]

Illustrative example of Garfield Station showing station area plaza and access improvements.
Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Additionally, public art and signage that clearly marks the route to 2nd Avenue Station and entrance to 100 Steps will make this train station more accessible. Similarly, at Garfield Avenue station, traffic light or stop sign and pedestrian crosswalks from Berry Lane Park to the station area will make pedestrian access safer. In addition to safety, landscaping and where possible active street-level uses can enhance pedestrian environments and strengthen connections to nearby neighborhoods.

Advocate for investments in HBLR stations area improvements to encourage transit use

Most station areas are equipped with basic station area infrastructure like sheltered waiting areas and digital train schedules. However, in order to improve the appeal of the station areas, they can be programmed with uses like fixed concession areas and/or vending machines where space allows, temporary food trucks, digital real time schedule visible from street and an information wall with maps that show how HBLR stations are integrated with the City’s network of bikes and other modes of transportation and connect to key local destinations. In addition, the entry plazas at these stations can be significantly improved with local art, seating and landscaping. Entry plazas that might be fenced off from the street, should be opened up and integrated with the adjacent streets/sidewalks.

The City should advocate for these improvements with the concerned agencies and, where possible, the City should consider coordinating or partnering to make these updates locally.
Figure 74: Station Area Improvements [station located at grade]

Illustrative example of MLK station area showing station area enhancements and regulatory recommendations for use and density that can also be applied to Transit Cores.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop
4/ LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Low Density Residential Zones, including R-1, R-1A, and R1-F, represent about 25% of Jersey City’s built area. The typical development pattern in these zones is one of 3-story detached or semi-attached one- to two-family homes on 25-foot by 100-foot lots, with provision for off-street car parking. These zones can be found throughout the City, notably in several neighborhoods of Greenville, the Heights and Bergen-Lafayette, and have minor differences in building configurations and lot sizes.

Borne from a robust demand for homes and cars in the booming post-war economy, this type of development was a practical approach to affordable housing for the middle class, and especially so in areas with limited or no public transportation options, encouraging people to rely on cars to get to and from their destinations.

Today, even with greater transportation choices in the City, these developments continue to encourage car ownership, discourage density, and create less walkable communities. Additionally, over the last two decades, 54% of the total variances granted by the ZBA were in the Low Density Residential Zones (R-1, R-1A, R-1F), indicating disparities among zoning regulations, market demands, and an understanding of site constraints. To address this, the City drafted a pilot ordinance in 2019 for R-1 zones with measures to preserve streetscapes, discourage curb cuts for off-street parking, and maintain the scale of these neighborhoods (see Chapter 5). Building on this pilot ordinance, these Low Density Residential Zones present several opportunities to afford residents a “suburban-urban” lifestyle with greenery, traffic safety, and private outdoor space.

**LOCATIONS**

Several neighborhoods in the Heights, Bergen-Lafayette and Greenville wards of the City can be characterized as low density residential areas. Below is an inexhaustive list of neighborhoods:

1. Western Slope
2. Heights
3. Sparrow Hill
4. Riverview
5. Waverly
6. Marion
7. McGinley Square
8. Bergen Square
9. The Island
10. West Bergen
11. West Side
12. Jackson Hill
13. Junction
14. Lafayette
15. Bergen
16. Greenville
17. South Greenville
**KEY FINDINGS**

**Generous parking and bulk regulations have led to auto oriented streets unsafe for pedestrians**

Historic regulations requiring off-street parking for all units in R-1 zones have led to frequent curb cuts along residential streets that make for unsafe pedestrian environments and limit the scope for streetscape improvements and landscaping. Furthermore, these requirements have led property owners to pave a majority, sometimes 100%, of their land adding to stormwater runoff and the heat island effect.

**Most R-1 neighborhoods are single-use residential districts with limited access to amenities**

The use and bulk regulations in the R-1 zones encourage residential uses and there is little incentive for neighborhood-scale retail and services other than at corner lots and on major streets. Access to basic amenities is, in most cases, not within walking distance and requires a car trip.

**High zoning variances reflect disparities among market demands and zoning regulations**

Over the last two decades, 54% of the total ZBA zoning variances granted in Jersey City were within R-1 zones. Of these, a majority were density variances to permit a third unit, indicating a market demand for housing options that include smaller/more affordable units.
Figure 76: Parking Conditions and Opportunities in a Typical Low Density Area

Illustrative example highlighting limited public realm, pedestrian conflicts and parking conditions on streets in Low Density Residential Zones.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Depictions on drawings for illustrative purposes only and do not indicate approved or definitive plans.

Figure 77: Parking Configurations on a Typical R-1 lot

Catalogue of off-street parking configurations in Low Density Residential Zones and on typical lots in all R-1 zoning districts including R-1, R-1A and R-1F.

Image Courtesy: All photos taken from Google Earth 2021. All drawings by MUD Workshop

Depictions on drawings for illustrative purposes only and do not indicate approved or definitive plans.

Legend

KEY FINDINGS

Generous parking and bulk regulations have led to auto-oriented streets unsafe for pedestrians.

Historic regulations requiring off-street parking for all units in R-1 zones have led to frequent curb cuts along residential streets that make for unsafe pedestrian environments and limit the scope for streetscape improvements and landscaping. Furthermore, these requirements have led property owners to pave a majority, sometimes 100%, of their land adding to stormwater runoff and the heat island effect.

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The use and bulk regulations in the R-1 zones encourage residential uses and there is little incentive for neighborhood-scale retail and services other than at corner lots and on major streets. Access to basic amenities is, in most cases, not within walking distance and requires a car trip.

High zoning variances reflect disparities among market demands and zoning regulations.

Over the last two decades, 54% of the total ZBA zoning variances granted in Jersey City were within R-1 zones. Of these, a majority were density variances to permit a third unit, indicating a market demand for housing options that include smaller/more affordable units.

In some cases, narrow driveways lead to garages in the back. However, these garage structures are often used as storage or for uses other than parking while parking continues on street.

There is an opportunity to create walkable environments based on new urbanist models that still maintain the low density character but enhance the environment quality and vitality. These could include densifying key intersections and arterials with mixed use and higher density developments that can provide neighborhood retail and services to residents within walking distance.

Legend

- Attached structure with parking in the front / facing the street
- Semi-attached structure with basement level parking / garage access in the rear
- Detached structure with wider frontage, landscaped front yard and parking access / garage in the back
- Detached structure with garage in the front / facing the street
- Detached structure with individual curb cut and parking / garage access in the rear
- Detached structure with street facing garage and wide curb cut
- Elevated detached structure with parking in the front / facing the street
- Elevated structure with basement floor and parking / garage access in the rear
- Attached structure with basement floor and no off-street parking
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following framework suggests a range of strategies that the City should consider in future work and analysis of the R-1 district. It is understood that these recommendations may need to be further refined based on additional review and localized variations both across and within neighborhoods.

**Reclaim public realm and create safe walkable environments for pedestrians and bicyclists**

Until recently, Low Density Residential Zones allowed off-street parking and garages on most residential lots, which has resulted in frequent curb cuts and an environment that favors cars over pedestrians on these blocks. These provisions, coupled with large, paved front setbacks and street-facing garages, encourage cars to take over the sidewalk for parking, further restraining pedestrian movement.

The 2019 R-1 pilot ordinance suggested strategies including restricting parking on lots under 3,500 square feet; reducing minimum parking requirements; and defining maximum widths for curb cuts, driveways, and garage doors. Building on this draft ordinance, the City should consider further reducing curb cuts by restricting off-street parking and garages as a permitted use on lots with widths less than 50 feet. Additionally, street-facing garages should be discouraged, and garage door access on larger lots should be from the rear. Furthermore, the City should consider setting a maximum limit of 7 feet for the front setback, which will further help with enforcing the current no-parking regulation in front yards.

Additionally, on lots where surface parking is a principal use, only one curb cut should be permitted. And, when off-street parking is provided on assembled lots of 100 feet or more in width, a maximum of two curb cuts should be permitted.

These additional considerations will greatly reduce curb cuts and reclaim sidewalks for safe pedestrian movement and landscaping. The City should also consider right-sizing travel lanes and parking and reclaim any additional right-of-way for bike lanes. This will afford residents with the choice to walk or bike to their destinations and to other modes of public transportation.

**Enhance neighborhood identity and appeal**

Low Density Residential Zones are characterized by a diverse set of façades, materials, building typologies, heights, and setbacks. These vary by neighborhoods and sometimes by block, contributing to the image and identity of these places. In some cases, this diversity can also create stark contrasts, especially where newer construction is found on blocks with historic building fabric e.g. Woodlawn Avenue between Kennedy Boulevard and Sterling Avenue.

The City should consider standardizing some of these variables to enhance imageability and neighborhood identity. Where historic or a desirable and predominant building fabric exists, clearer standards for context-sensitive development should be considered. Side yards other than windowed setbacks should be eliminated to promote continuous street frontage, and building heights should be standardized with a maximum limit of 35 feet. To the extent possible, new construction on each block should respect the predominant building typology: attached, semi-attached, or detached, and favor semi-attached and attached typologies over detached structures.

Furthermore, the City should consider enhancing streetscapes with planting and requiring front yards to be landscaped except where paving is necessary for entryways into homes and existing garages.

**Encourage a variety of uses and businesses to create complete neighborhoods within walking distance**

Low Density Residential Zones are predominantly single-use residential districts with limited offerings in terms of services and retail. Compared with other denser and mixed-use areas, residents in these neighborhoods have to make more frequent trips to access retail and services, often requiring the use of a vehicle. The City should consider ways to provide a greater mix of uses and services within walking distances. One such strategy would be to permit existing street facing garages to be converted into small businesses like day-care, tutoring, art studios, repair shops, home-offices, start-ups, and established businesses that need a small footprint and cause minimal increase in auto traffic. This would not only bring the much-needed amenities to these areas but also help promote local entrepreneurship in the event that the market evolves to adapt and respond to the new “work from home” reality of the post-COVID-19 era.

When making an assessment for such conversions, the City should consider and regulate the need to create safe drop-off zones on the streets for certain uses such as a day-care center.

The City could also adopt the ‘Cornerstone Commercial’ provisions in the R-1 pilot ordinance, and expand on the permitted uses as outlined above,
Additionally, on lots where surface regulation in front yards. With enforcing the current no-parking front setback, which will further help setting a maximum limit of 7 feet for the street-facing garages should be widths less than 50 feet. Additionally, garages as a permitted use on lots with parking requirements; and defining provisions, coupled with large, paved parking on lots under 3,500 square feet; reducing minimumencies for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Reclaim public realm across and within neighborhoods. Review and localized variations both be further refined based on additional range of strategies that the City should consider in future work and analysis of

**Figure 78: Bulk Recommendations for R-1 Districts**

*Bulk guidelines for lots of varying sizes in R-1 districts to create enhanced pedestrian environments and address climate resiliency. Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop*

- **Lots between 26' to 50' street frontage**
  - Typical lot depth Approx. 100'
  - Min 25' - Max 52'

- **Individual lots above 50' street frontage**
  - Typical lot depth Approx. 100'
  - Min 20'

- **Consolidated lots between 75' to 150' street frontage**
  - Typical lot depth Approx. 100'
  - Min 20'

- **Require 20% pervious surface on min lot size of 2,500 sq ft. Increase by 40% of increase in lot area for lots > than 2,500 sq. ft.**
- **Eliminate side yards except in case of windows**
- **Eliminate minimum front yard requirement and only match prevailing set back up to a maximum of 7ft**
- **Eliminate required off parking on individual lots with street frontage less than 50ft**
- **Standardize building height subject to a maximum of 35 feet throughout R-1 districts**
- **Incentivize lot consolidation and housing options by allowing higher densities**
- **Define rear yard uses and prohibit surface parking in rear yards**
- **Permit parking / parking entrance from the rear**
- **Require parking / parking entrance from the rear**
- **Permit one curb cut and no more than two on consolidated lots with off street parking. To the extent possible, consolidate curb cuts and limit to two on corner lots only**
Figure 79: Existing Conditions on a Typical R-1 Block: Streets & Public Realm

Illustrative example of existing conditions on a typical block in an R-1 districts. These low density districts are car-oriented with liberal parking allowances. Frequent curb cuts create unsafe pedestrian environments, high percentage of paved areas that create heat islands and predominantly single uses with limited access to services are characteristic of these areas.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Figure 80: Recommendations to Reclaim Streets & Public Realm in R-1 Zones

Illustrative example of regulatory and physical improvements R-1 districts. The recommendations aim to create walkable streetscapes, enhance neighborhood identity and define greener, more resilient standards on individual lots that will contribute to an overall increase in outdoor green space and improved micro-climates.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop
Figure 79: Existing Conditions on a Typical R-1 Block: Streets & Public Realm

Illustrative example of existing conditions on a typical block in an R-1 district. These low-density districts are car-oriented with liberal parking allowances. Frequent curb cuts create unsafe pedestrian environments, high percentage of paved areas that create heat islands, and predominantly single uses with limited access to services are characteristic of these areas.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Figure 80: Recommendations to Reclaim Streets & Public Realm in R-1 Zones

Illustrative example of regulatory and physical improvements in R-1 districts. The recommendations aim to create walkable streetscapes, enhance neighborhood identity, and define greener, more resilient standards on individual lots that will contribute to an overall increase in outdoor green space and improved micro-climates.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

- Allow garages to be converted to additional dwelling units (ADUs) and increase affordable housing options.
- Permit conversion of street facing garages into small businesses and retail.
- Right size travel lanes and reclaim additional right-of-way for dedicated bike lanes. Provide shared bike lanes (with traffic) on narrow right-of-ways.
- Define front yard use and design guidelines and restrict front yards to a maximum of 7 feet where they are provided.
- Permit three units as a conditional use subject to the condition that an existing curb cut on the lot be eliminated.
- Preserve historic R-1 fabric and restrict building height in the block to match historic fabric.
- Restrict curb cuts to a maximum of 10 feet for every 50 feet of lot frontage. Restrict off street parking on lots with frontage less than 50 feet.
- Define rear yard uses and restrict surface parking as a use. Require a minimum of 20% pervious surface on min lot size of 2,500 sq ft and increase by 10% of increase in lot.
and encourage buildings to build up to the lot line by eliminating front setback requirements where sidewalk widths are 6 feet or more.

**Create opportunity for a variety of housing options and affordable units**

A combination of current R-1 zoning provisions including generous building coverage, maximum height, flexible front and rear yards, and densities as low as 35 dwelling units per acre are driving the development of large housing units. These units often have oversized and independent recreation rooms that are ideal candidates for the illegal addition of a third unit, where only two units are permitted on a standard lot of 25 feet by 100 feet. These conversions also indicate that the current R-1 provisions do not offer the range and variety of housing types at price points that residents moving to this area are seeking.

Given that there are a significant number of illegal third units in R-1 zones, the City should consider permitting three units as a conditional use in R-1 zones, subject to the condition that an existing curb cut on the lot be eliminated. To maintain the street frontage on the block, the third unit should be added within the existing building footprint or via a rear or side addition only. Furthermore, the City should consider incentivizing lot consolidations by permitting densities of 62 dwelling units per acre on consolidated lots of 75 feet by 100 feet or greater in size. Bulk standards including lower building coverage and provision for an extra floor on these lots will create appropriately scaled and affordable units and a wider range of housing options: townhouses or apartment buildings. Lastly, existing ancillary structures like garages and carriage houses should be considered for conversion as accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

**Introduce standards for resiliency and greenery on individual lots**

A review of available aerial photography of Low Density Residential Zones reveals that there is a disproportionately small land area that is pervious or under green cover. This is likely an unintended consequence of the lenient curb cut and parking regulations, as well as leaving rear and front yards uses mostly undefined. As a result, there is a high incidence of cases where lot coverage exceeds the defined maximum of 85%, and individual lots are entirely paved. When aggregated over a block, neighborhood, and the City, this has significant negative impacts including increased volumes of stormwater runoff, increased urban heat capture, and distressed microclimates. This is also a missed opportunity to create greener neighborhoods where homeowners can enjoy private or semi-private green outdoor spaces.

In keeping with the guidelines outlined in the 2019 Resilient Jersey City Plan, the City should consider defining a minimum standard for pervious surfaces on each lot. A suggested minimum of 20% on a standard lot size of 2,500 square feet should be pervious, and the pervious surface should increase by 40% of the increase in area on lots larger than 2,500 square feet. This will greatly enhance the quality and experience of these neighborhoods, and mitigate some of the negative impacts on climate change. The City already has a requirement for a minimum 20-foot rear yard and should consider defining the purpose and uses of rear yards e.g. rear yards can be used for landscaping and/or parking is not permitted within the required rear setback. On smaller lots with windowed side yards and front setback requirements, it might be difficult to create 20-foot minimum rear yards while achieving a meaningful building coverage. In such cases, the City should consider eliminating front yard requirements subject to the condition that adjacent sidewalks have a minimum width of 6 feet or more.

Understandably, enforcing this requirement can be a challenge as rear yards are usually not visible from the streets. The City should consider the use of aerial imagery and other technology, such as NearMap, to enforce these standards.
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5/ LARGE FORMAT RETAIL

Jersey City has several areas characterized by large format retail, including big box stores along I-78 at the entrance to the Holland Tunnel, the Newport Centre Mall in Downtown, and the Hudson Mall and Stadium Plaza areas along Route 440. While these locations differ in terms of their retail offerings and specific design, they are all auto-oriented and rely heavily on surface and/or structured parking, with large building footprints that create a break from the surrounding City street grid and urban fabric.

Given their size and scale of operations, it is prudent for the City to work with owners of large-format retail properties to plan for their short- and long-term future, to ensure that these areas continue to thrive as active, community-serving uses. In addition, longer-term planning may explore opportunities to establish and strengthen physical connections between large-format areas and surrounding neighborhoods and streets.

The following urban design principles can guide the longer-term responsible evolution of these malls and big-boxes in the City.

LOCATIONS

Areas where these development patterns are located include:
1. Hudson Mall along Rt 440
2. Stadium Plaza Shopping Center along Rt 440
3. Newport Centre Mall
4. Newport Plaza and Target Area
5. Old Colony Square
6. Twin City Shopping Center

Figure 81: Locations of Large Format Retail Establishments

KEY FINDINGS

Large floorplates that are typical of large format retail, interrupt the city grid

Characterized by large floorplates, surface parking lots and other car-oriented infrastructure, big-box retail and malls often occupy multiple City blocks and reroute circulation to efficiently serve their retail establishments. This breaks up the City’s traditional street grid and direct connections to and between destinations.
Characterized by inward looking environments and large surface parking lots that restrict access to amenities like the waterfront.

The typical development found in these areas is auto-oriented and relies heavily on surface and / or structured parking. The building itself is usually surrounded by car parking infrastructure and has an "inward looking" layout that does not engage with the street or surrounding properties.

There is a rapid shift in retail industry towards experiential shopping/activities and online marketplaces.

Over the last few years, the retail marketplace has evolved and shifted from traditional brick-and-mortar stores to online shopping and experiential retail. Customers are seeking immersive and shareable experiences. In the coming years, this will require traditional big-box, malls and other large format retail stores to adapt and transform into places that people can engage with and want to spend time at.

These areas are easily accessible service, shopping and employment centers.

Mall areas and areas with a concentration of big box stores provide entertainment and leisure options, shopping, and a variety of services in one place for people who typically don’t shop online. These areas are within easy access via public and private transportation, to a majority of the City’s population and also provide entry level jobs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Establish uses, development densities, and design standards that will closely integrate these parcels with surrounding fabric.

Given their regional catchment, Large Format Retail establishments are usually located on major highways or arterials, e.g. Route 440 and Marin Boulevard, that can provide easy access to the entire region. These auto-oriented, wide roadways are a difficult and unpleasant frontage for many land uses, and a challenge to navigate across, even for cars but especially for pedestrians. Any future development on these sites may consider ways in which the roadways can be transformed to provide more opportunities to serve auto, pedestrian, and bike movements equally and safely. This would require street design consideration outlined under the Development Pattern, "Regional Corridors," as well as establishing density and design considerations that will allow businesses and other uses to orient their front doors along these roadways.

Future development must include successful management of the short-term viability of large-format retail centers that address tenant requirements and commitments and long-term leasehold obligations as well as broadening the range of retail and service uses permitted that keep the large-format centers viable. Furthermore, the retail tenants of these shopping centers will undoubtedly play a substantial role in serving residential developments such as Bayfront and other developments along Route 440 that will be coming online in the next few years.

Any future modifications to the layout of large-format retail areas may should respond to the existing context, with a goal to better integrate these sites with the surrounding neighborhoods. As an example, the Newport Centre Mall, which separates a historic neighborhood from newer development along the Hudson River is and frequented by residents and visitors alike, may should define ways to extend street vitality, create new public spaces, emphasize pedestrian-orientedstreets and enhance connectivity to public transportation.

Define site planning guidelines to re-establish City’s urban fabric and connections that were severed as a result of lot consolidation for large format retail.

Characterized by large floorplates, surface or structured parking, and other auto-oriented infrastructure, big-box retail and malls often occupy multiple City blocks and re-route circulation to efficiently serve their retail establishments. This breaks up the City’s traditional street grid and direct connections to and between destinations. In the case of the Hudson
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1/ Establish Continuity by Planning Movement Along Existing City Grid

Extend 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th streets and simplify Mall Drives East and West to re-establish pedestrian movement along the City’s adjacent grid.

Define primary and secondary vehicular entry points and circulation and create pedestrian entry points on all four edges of the Mall including at Marin Boulevard.

2/ Reinforce the Sequence of Parks and Plazas

Prioritize pedestrian and streetscape improvements and strengthen pedestrian connections on 8th and 9th streets to connect back to Hamilton Park.

Create new open space and plazas along these streets.

Define pedestrian connections across Washington Boulevard and along Town Square Place to City’s waterfront.

Connect any new open space or streetscape along Embankment with future modifications and developments at the Newport Mall Site.

3/ Define and Introduce Uses to Engage Surrounding Neighborhoods

In the case of future redevelopment, create bulk standards that will respect the scale of existing fabric and adjacent planned developments.

Extend street vitality through active programming at the street level that engages with surrounding neighborhoods.

Plan for affordable residential and commercial space that is integrated with new development and use incentive-based zoning where required.

Mall and Stadium Plaza Area, not only do a number of streets dead-end before intersecting with Route 440, the buildings themselves block the Hackensack River waterfront from public access. Similarly, Newport Centre Mall and nearby big-box stores also have a number of streets ending at Marin Boulevard and collectively block the continuity of street activity, bike routes, and pedestrian networks to the waterfront.

Future site modifications and any new developments on these large-format areas should encourage the subdivision of these large lots with the intent to re-establish Jersey City’s historic street grid and provide continuity to bike and pedestrian networks. Future development may should consider ways to extend existing street activity through these sites as a way of providing programmatic continuity. Guidelines may should be put in place for providing public access to the City’s waterfront (or any other natural resources that are cut off from public access). These may should include providing public upland connections, restoring the water’s edge for safe public access, enhancing climate change resiliency of waterfront areas, and activating the waterfront with public uses.

Shape development outcomes to further social equity and resiliency goals laid out in the Master Plan

As outlined above, site modifications to establish connections that were once severed and extend street vitality through programming can provide contemporary and experiential retail environments. Large retail centers can also succeed by offering a wider range of retail and service uses, some that may not be permitted under current zoning regulations or provisions of applicable redevelopment plans. For the short- to medium-term viability of the larger retail centers, greater flexibility, in uses in concert with aesthetic improvements, may should be encouraged.
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Figure 85: Potential for Reconnecting Upland Neighborhoods with Waterfront

Map illustrating potential urban and waterfront connections through and around Newport Centre. These physical and programmatic connections will better integrate this area with the City’s fabric and may be prioritized during any improvements on the site. Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop
An environmentally responsible way to achieve this goal would be to consider the re-purposing of existing structures. These structures have a great deal of embodied energy, providing another strong incentive for reuse. Along with financial considerations, the City should closely consider environmental impacts, especially energy and carbon emissions associated with the demolition and redevelopment of these large structures. Where feasible, every attempt should be made to adapt and reuse existing structures.

A number of malls and big box stores around the nation have been re-purposed with uses that serve existing communities, including reuse as public library, public sports complex, senior housing, affordable housing, and co-working spaces. In some cases, these structures are being re-purposed into office complexes for giant tenants like Google at Westside Pavilion in West Los Angeles, bringing with them greater economic opportunity and good jobs for the community.

Whether these goals are achieved through incremental site modifications, new developments, an adaptive reuse strategy, or a combination of all three, the uses at these locations can be defined in much greater detail than broad land use and zoning terms. These should be centered around the community’s needs, desires and public benefits, including new public open spaces and potential community facilities as outlined above. Additionally, as shown in Figure 87, any new developments and site modifications at the Hudson Mall and Stadium Plaza Area along Route 440, should incorporate the restoration of natural habitat including wetlands, and native and migrant species along the edge of Hackensack River. Furthermore, as illustrated in Figure 86 and 87, continuity of public access, pedestrian paths, greeways along the waterfront and upland connections should be prioritized. Every attempt should be made to connect with existing and planned public waterfront paths like the Bayfront Development, Skyway Park and Society Hill.

### 1/ Establish Continuity by Planning Movement Along Existing City Grid

Extend Claremont, Clarke, Virginia and Clendenny Avenues to re-establish the City’s historic grid and carve out redevelopment parcels at Hudson Mall and Stadium Plaza Shopping Areas. Define entry points to site at Route 440’s intersection with these avenues.

### 2/ Reinforce the Sequence of Parks and Plazas

Prioritize improvements to Claremont, Clarke, Virginia and Clendenny Avenues and establish them as upland connectors that link neighborhoods to the east with the waterfront. Restore wetlands and natural habitat along waterfront and program it with community-based uses. Consider historic shoreline and infill to do so.

Create a system of parks and plazas that creates direct pedestrian connections to the HBLR station at the planned Bayfront development.

### 3/ Define and Introduce Uses to Engage Surrounding Neighborhoods

Develop appropriate bulk and density standards to create a continuous street wall along Route 440 and graduate toward lower heights along the waterfront. Provide a good mix of community uses, affordable housing and affordable commercial space throughout the development.

Require publicly accessible active uses at street / plaza level.
An environmentally responsible way to achieve this goal would be to consider the re-purposing of existing structures. These structures have a great deal of embodied energy, providing another strong incentive for reuse. Along with financial considerations, the City should closely consider environmental impacts, especially energy and carbon emissions associated with the demolition and redevelopment of these large structures. Where feasible, every attempt should be made to adapt and reuse existing structures.

A number of malls and big box stores around the nation have been re-purposed with uses that serve existing communities, including reuse as public library, public sports complex, senior housing, affordable housing, and co-working spaces. In some cases, these structures are being re-purposed into office complexes for giant tenants like Google at Westside Pavilion in West Los Angeles, bringing with them greater economic opportunity and good jobs for the community.

Whether these goals are achieved through incremental site modifications, new developments, an adaptive reuse strategy, or a combination of all three, the uses at these locations can be defined in much greater detail than broad land use and zoning terms. These should be centered around the community’s needs, desires and public benefits, including new public open spaces and potential community facilities as outlined above. Additionally, as shown in Figure 87, any new developments and site modifications at the Hudson Mall and Stadium Plaza Area along Route 440, should incorporate the restoration of natural habitat including wetlands, and native and migrant species along the edge of Hackensack River. Furthermore, as illustrated in Figure 86 and 87, continuity of public access, pedestrian paths, greeways along the waterfront and upland connections should be prioritized. Every attempt should be made to connect with existing and planned public waterfront paths like the Bayfront Development, Skyway Park and Society Hill.
6/ COMMERCIAL CORE

Commercial Cores are areas within the City that have a large concentration of commercial uses including retail and offices that serve the region and employ a workforce from within and outside of Jersey City. These areas are usually have much higher densities compared to surrounding areas.

LOCATIONS

The City has three main areas that act as Commercial Cores:
1. Exchange Place
2. Newport Waterfront
3. Journal Square

These locations are either built to capacity or as in the case of Journal Square, have adopted redevelopment plans that guide high density mixed-use developments.

KEY FINDINGS

Well connected by public transit and personal automobiles

Commercial Cores are easily accessible by PATH, HBLR and/or the ferry, and are also served by major arterials that connect them to the larger region. However, infrastructure for bicycles and pedestrians is limited for the level of activity/number of users and commuters to the area.

Limited public realm offerings for residents and visitors

Commercial Cores have one of the highest building densities permitted in Jersey City with some areas developed to capacity while others are in transition toward higher density developments. These high densities directly translate into a greater number of people visiting and living in the area and require a proportional investment in open spaces and the public realm. However, the current offerings in most of these areas are limited and can lead to inward facing environments and an inequitable access to amenities.

Existing roadways are auto oriented

The wide rights-of-way of the major arterials that cut through Commercial Cores are in some instances as wide as six travel lanes and include parking but minimal space for sidewalks and pedestrians, e.g. Bergen Avenue at intersections with Sip Avenue and Kennedy Boulevard. There is an opportunity here to redesign the right-of-way to slow down traffic, increase pedestrian signal timing, introduce leading pedestrian interval, expand sidewalks and create safer, more appealing pedestrian environments through planting and other streetscape elements.

Figure 88: Public Realm Improvement Strategies in a Commercial Core Area
Illustrative example highlighting potential improvements in the Journal Square Commercial Core. View shows Kennedy Boulevard looking toward PATH offices. Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Street trees, paving, signage, pedestrian lighting, which exists in small pockets in the core area can be consistently extended to every major corridor using public and private investments. Using design guidelines including build-to-lot line, active storefronts and street level transparency etc. can greatly enhance virbrancy. A mix of residential units on upper levels can serve to keep this vibrancy after office hours and on weekends. Higher densities and new developments permitted within the RDP can create a street wall [minimum building height built-to-lot line, and frame wide right-of-ways within the Commercial Cores, to provide a sense of enclosure and create safer pedestrian environments in a highly auto oriented zone. Surface parking along major corridors when accommodated within new building structure can free up space for public plazas and pocket parks.
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Provide infrastructure for bikes, pedestrians and EVs**

In addition to connectivity through public transit, Commercial Cores should cater to other sustainable means of transportation including bicycles, walking and new mobility technologies such as electric cars, scooters etc. Incorporating these would greatly improve the environmental quality and enable broader societal goals such as health, social cohesion, and equity.

**Create a sense of place by investing in streetscapes**

Given that majority of the public realm is dedicated to the street right-of-way in Commercial Cores, investing in streetscape elements such as landscaping, signage, seating, trash disposal and technology (e.g. LinkNYC with free Wi-Fi, City services, maps etc.) can greatly enhance the sense of place and identity. Further, to the extent possible, creatively carving out pockets of open spaces from right-of-ways or transforming traffic islands for seating, planting etc. can increase the much needed public space within the cores.

**Review new developments for their impact on streets and where possible, use density based incentives to create new open space**

As higher-density developments are added to the area, the City should consider a set of design guidelines to enhance the experience of public realm including streets. These could include a required street wall height to create a sense of enclosure on wide roadways, required active storefronts, street-level transparency, uniform signage guidelines, pedestrian-only crossing signals, etc. Encouraging parking within building structures can free up right-of-way area to carve out public spaces. Lastly, in addition to affordable housing, new developments should be considered for density-based incentives in exchange for new public space and capital improvements.

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**Figure 89: Key Issues in a Commercial Core Area**

*Illustrative example highlighting the limited public realm and sites susceptible to higher density developments in the Journal Square Commercial Core. View shows the area around the PATH train station. Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop*
7/ INDUSTRIAL AREAS

Industrial areas in Jersey City mostly include auto-industries, recycling, storage and logistics businesses and operations. These areas are characterized by large floorplates and are usually low-rise developments. They are often surrounded by residential development, have low land utilization and foot traffic and are not well integrated with the urban fabric. Yet, they are vital to the City’s economy and provide jobs and services to Jersey City’s rapidly growing neighborhoods.

LOCATIONS

Key locations that can be characterized as industrial areas in Jersey City include:
1. Between Rt. 9 and Hackensack River
2. Waste management, roofing and logistics east of Rt. 440 and Droyer’s Point
3. Between Hudson River and NJ Tpke
4. Recycling facilities north of Hoboken Avenue / 18th Street
5. Area Bound by Montgomery, Grand, State Streets and Cornelison Avenue
6. PATH facilities west of Rt. 78

KEY FINDINGS

Single-story buildings with large swaths of land dedicated to surface parking and heavy vehicular movement

Industrial areas are characterized by low-rise buildings with large footprints and surface parking. Most of the land in these areas is paved and impermeable contributing to stormwater runoff that carries surface pollutants typically found in areas with heavy vehicular traffic. Paved lands act as heat islands that capture and store heat during the summer months which in turn contributes to the poor microclimates in and around these areas. Land in Industrial Areas can be planned more efficiently, with greener land and building development guidelines.

Roadways that prioritize industrial operations create conflict when they intersect neighboring areas.

The typical street right-of-way in these areas prioritizes heavy/industrial vehicles and operations which can be unsafe and unappealing for pedestrians. While streets physically connect these areas to adjacent neighborhoods, there is still a sense of discontinuity because of the stark differences between an industrial landscape and mixed-use development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop guidelines that encourage green land and building development

The uniformity and large floorplates found in industrial neighborhoods make it easy and efficient to deploy green building and renewable energy technologies such as solar panels, at large scales. The City should consider a comprehensive set of sustainable...
neighborhood and building guidelines that will assist the responsible modernization of these industrial areas and enable healthier, more sustainable environments for workers and surrounding neighborhoods. These guidelines should consider renewable energy, green roofs, industrial farming, appropriate green infrastructure for stormwater treatment and should clarify circulation patterns for heavy vehicles and trucks, to eliminate excessive impervious land area and surface parking.

**Figure 91: Improvements on a Connector Street in an Industrial Area**

Illustrative example of an industrial street [Fairmount Avenue between Grand Street and Cornelison Avenue, looking towards McGinley Square] highlighting strategies to transform it as a connector between surrounding neighborhoods and the industrial area. Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Depend on the type of building and size of footprint, roofs in the industrial areas can easily be retrofitted for solar panels or as green roofs for capturing and recycling storm water. Both these investments will conserve energy and save costs in the long run. In addition, these improvements will give the industrial areas a ‘green’ identity and make them attractive to uses other than auto industries.

**Identify and redesign key connector streets to integrate industrial areas with surrounding residential neighborhoods**

Existing industrial areas can be better integrated with the surrounding neighborhoods by identifying and redesigning key connector streets to support all modes of transportation, including bicyclists and pedestrians, equally. Some improvements include pedestrian signals at loading docks to warn truck drivers of pedestrians on sidewalks, providing protected bike lanes, shortening crossing distances and tightening curb radii to improve pedestrian safety, accommodating permeable surfaces on parking and bike lanes, and including green infrastructure and trees where possible.

In addition, the City should actively consider all opportunities to carve out pockets of usable public spaces along these streets for both workers and neighboring residents.
8/ LEGACY INFRASTRUCTURE & INTERSTITIAL SPACES

LEGACY INFRASTRUCTURE

Jersey City’s rich industrial past can be seen in the remnants of railroads and other industrial infrastructure that run through some of the most well used and dense parts of the City. This infrastructure, which is being referred to as Legacy Infrastructure, is in a state of disrepair and is completely inaccessible to the public.

LOCATIONS

The two key legacy infrastructure areas are the 6th Street Embankment and the Bergen Arches.

KEY FINDINGS

Legacy infrastructure cuts through and divides the urban fabric of the city inhibiting mobility

Once planned to serve for freight transportation in a predominantly industrial area, Bergen Arches and the Embankment today cut through a tightly knit urban fabric. These are either elevated or sunken structures with continuous retaining walls that inhibit mobility across the right-of-way of these infrastructures.

Legacy infrastructure provides opportunities to link existing amenities

Both the Embankment and Bergen Arches can serve as links that connect natural and man-made blue and green networks and other areas designated as forested areas, into a continuous network of open spaces. If re-purposed to do so, they present an opportunity to serve as new civic amenities that provide open space as well as function as ecological corridors that can serve to restore natural habitat.

LEGACY INFRASTRUCTURE are marked with yellow outlines and also show Berry Lane and Morris Canal Parks; examples of obsolete infrastructure that was recently re-purposed as a civic amenity.

Figure 92: Potential Network of Interconnected Open Spaces
Illustration showing how Interstitial Spaces, Legacy Infrastructure and “forest areas” can link existing parks and amenities, greenways and waterfront walkways into an interconnected system of open spaces. Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop
Handle stormwater, reduce heat island effect in densely paved areas, and improve micro-climates around them. Furthermore, they can also function as car-free, dedicated pedestrian and bicycle corridors.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**A City-wide interconnected system of greenways and waterfront walkways that can provide continuous movement for pedestrians and bicyclists**

Figure 92 illustrates a potential network of interconnected open spaces, greenways and civic amenities including the Bergen Arches and the Embankment, that can be threaded together into a continuous and accessible pathway system. The City should consider this concept and recommendations in the Open Space and Community Facilities Element to connect its waterfront parks and greenways into a continuous loop or pathway. The City should also test the feasibility of this open space network to function as a car-free bikeway and pedestrian path which can become a unique way to experience and travel through the City.

**Re-purpose the embankment right-of-way and sidewalks adjacent to the embankment structure as a publicly accessible open space**

The area around the Embankment is naturally at a lower temperature owing to the vegetation that has taken over this infrastructure. This demonstrates that the area can be easily re-purposed as a park or forested area that could potentially be accessed along 6th Street using steps and bridges that connect the different segments of the Embankment. Over the long term, the City should test the feasibility of these concepts and engage in the clean up of this site in order to make it publicly accessible. In the short term, the City should explore the redesign of the right-of-way space directly adjacent to the Embankment as a tree-lined or planted pedestrian pathway along 6th Street. In addition to functioning as an open space, this area can also be restored as an ecological corridor with that supports natural habitats and manages stormwater.

**Re-envision the Bergen Arches as a shared use natural trail**

Over the years there have been community-led concepts that reimagine the Bergen Arches as natural trail or public park and walkway that can promote local artists and boost Jersey City’s overall cultural reputation. The City should consider testing the feasibility of these concepts and restoring the Bergen Arches as a publicly accessible bike and pedestrian pathway that has multiple access points and host public programs and activities within its right-of-way.
INTERSTITIAL SPACES

Although efficient for auto-oriented travel, Jersey City’s highways have otherwise had a drastic impact on its closely knit urban fabric. Today, as the City has grown around them, these elevated structures continue to divide neighborhoods into fragments and act as barriers between important destinations. These “interstitial spaces” can also be an environmental hazard, as they direct polluted surface runoff from elevated roadways to the streets below, exacerbating incidences of flash flooding.

LOCATIONS

The two highways that cut through the City and create interstitial spaces under their elevated structures are I-78 and Route 1 and 9 / Pulaski Skyway.

KEY FINDINGS

Elevated structures act as barriers and sever connections between neighborhoods

Elevated highways abruptly cut through the City’s fabric and have large structures that create a columnar wall along the edge of their right-of-way which acts as a barrier between neighborhoods. These structures sometimes have parking underneath and are usually fenced off from adjacent roadways. The uninviting environment these structures create on the ground can be perceived as unsafe to walk under and usually deter pedestrians and bicyclists.

New developments at key nodes along these elevated structures have made them more accessible

There are some locations adjacent to these elevated structures that are starting to see new development and activities [e.g. at Newark Avenue under I-78], making these isolated places feel more approachable and safe for pedestrians, and relinking connections that were once severed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Re-purpose and activate key nodes under elevated infrastructure with community programs, art, lighting installations etc., so that they become safe links between neighborhoods

Areas where there are already existing or planned developments or programs that bring foot traffic to the area, should be considered as connector nodes between the two neighborhoods. The City should consider coordinating with NJDOT to make these nodes pedestrian friendly through programming, public art, lighting installations and other approaches that are non-invasive for the structure.

Explore green infrastructure to manage stormwater runoff from elevated roadways

Given the volume of traffic on the elevated highways, the stormwater runoff from their surface is laden with pollutants. This is typically discharged at the street level and can cause long-term environmental problems and soil health issues. In addition to sustainable transportation and community programming under the elevated, the City should also consider green infrastructure that can naturally treat stormwater runoff and replace paved areas with greenery. This could potentially require rerouting the downspouts to areas with sunlight so as to support green infrastructure.

Figure 94: Existing Conditions at Key Nodes Under Elevated Highways
Illustrative example showing existing conditions at Newark Avenue and 7th Street, and under the Interstate 78 elevated structure. Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Figure 95: Potential Improvements at Key Nodes Under the Elevated Highways
Illustrative example highlighting strategies at interstitial spaces (day time and night time view) under the elevated structure. New developments along Newark and 7th Street bring more activity and foot traffic to the area. This provides increased opportunity for potential public programming under the elevated and co-managed by community / business groups.
Elevated structures act as barriers and sever connections between neighborhoods and places of interest. These interstitial spaces can serve as places that connect people and places of interest in different neighborhoods.

Potential programming for a community garden or other civic space where sunlight easily penetrates to the ground.

Lighting installations at select intersections can potentially keep the place secure and vibrant during the night hours.

In the long run, space under the elevated could be re-purposed as a civic amenity and place for addressing environmental issues such as polluted surface run-offs. These interstitial spaces can serve as places that connect people and places of interest in different neighborhoods.

Public art program to re-envision the columnar spaces and potentially provide public access to pedestrians over the long term, under the elevated structure.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Figure 95: Potential Improvements at Key Nodes Under the Elevated Highways
Illustrative example highlighting strategies at interstitial spaces (day time and night time view) under the elevated Interstate 78 at Newark Avenue and 7th Street looking towards Downtown.
Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Legend

- Depictions on drawings for illustrative purposes only and do not indicate approved or definitive plans.
9/ PLANNED WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

Jersey City has historically had a strong connection with its waterfronts both along the Hackensack and Hudson Rivers. Today, some of these waterfront areas have been revived as publicly accessible civic amenities and others as private and gated waterfront developments.

LOCATIONS
All developments and recreational uses along the Hackensack and Hudson Rivers.

KEY FINDINGS

Portions of Jersey City’s waterfront are not publicly accessible
While a significant part of Jersey City’s waterfront is accessible, there are parts that are limited to some users and others that cannot be access publicly. For example, Society Hill and Port Liberté are gated residential communities planned in the 1980s, that limit access to its residents and uninviting to the general public. On the other hand all new developments in the Downtown area and along the Hudson River have offered public waterfront access and amenities for all. Along the Hackensack River, a new planned waterfront development, Bayfront will offer 35% income restricted units and public waterfront access for all residents.

Shoreline along some private properties and industrial uses are in a state of disrepair and can be a hazard
Some developments, especially along the Hackensack River, have their backs turned to the waterfront and have poor, unstable shorelines. This can be a hazard in the incidence of flooding, especially in industrial areas that may have perceived or real surface and soil contamination.
Figure 96: Waterfront Developments and Publicly Accessible Shorelines

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Figure 97: Existing Conditions at Waterfront Walkway Along Hackensack Rvr.

Illustration showing the newly constructed public pathway along the rear edge of the PJP Industrial Site. The pathway has no visual or physical connection with the waterfront and has minimal amenities for visitors.

Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Depictions on drawings for illustrative purposes only and do not indicate approved or definitive plans.

Legend

9/ PLANNED WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

Jersey City has historically had a strong connection with its waterfronts both along the Hackensack and Hudson Rivers. Today, some of these waterfront areas have been revived as publicly accessible civic amenities and others as private and gated waterfront developments.

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Some developments, especially along the Hackensack River, have their backs turned to the waterfront and have poor, unstable shorelines. This can be a hazard in the incidence of flooding, especially in industrial areas that may have perceived or real surface and soil contamination.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consider waterfront zoning requiring any new developments / changes along Hackensack River to provide sufficient publicly accessible area along the shoreline for bicyclists and pedestrians

Given that a significant percentage of properties along the City’s waterfront are privately owned, the City should consider ways in which any new development or upgrades / changes can stabilize the shoreline and provide public waterfront access. Using incentives in exchange for public waterfront access, and bicycle and pedestrian trails will slowly add to the length of waterfront that is publicly accessible, and close gaps in waterfront continuity in the long run.

Work with private property owners to create a public waterfront access plan

All current and future developments along the waterfront have the potential to be threaded into a continuous green (upland waterfront connections) and blue (waterfront open spaces) networks that work together to get people to the water, reclaim waterfront as a civic amenity, restore natural habitat where possible, remediate soil pollution where necessary, and enhance natural resiliency infrastructure. The City should consider working with private property owners to create this long term “blue-green” plan equally accessible for all residents and visitors. Where space is limited OR stakeholder interests (e.g. ecology) are seemingly in conflict with waterfront access, the City should work to find optimal solutions to advance both goals.
10/ LEGACY NEIGHBORHOODS

As Jersey City continues to develop, there is a faster turnover of the businesses and residents in neighborhoods that are growing at a rapid pace. Some street networks are also being modified to make way for new connections, larger buildings and old buildings are being replaced by new, sometimes disrupting the existing urban fabric which may be worth preserving.

LOCATIONS

Areas where historic or well established neighborhoods are surrounded by recent / planned developments include:

1. Marion 5. Harsimus Cove
2. Bergen Hill 6. Van Vorst Park
3. India Square 7. Paulus Hook
4. Powerhouse 8. Sherman Place

KEY FINDINGS

Development pressures and a rapid rise in real estate costs in some neighborhoods can accelerate displacement and gentrification

Large-scale redevelopment plans such as the Journal Square 2060 RDP can bring about changes at a rapid pace and negatively impact the most vulnerable populations and businesses, pushing them out because of increasing unaffordability.

Out-of-scale or high-density development requiring lot consolidation can significantly alter existing urban fabric and disengage with the street

Out-of-scale or very high-density developments require lot consolidation which can significantly alter the historic street network / intricate or small scale urban fabric that is more successful in engaging the street and contributing to their vitality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Plan a mix of market-rate and affordable real estate to accommodate diverse income groups

All new development should be considered for their socioeconomic impact and be planned so as to mitigate displacement and unaffordability for the area’s long time residents and businesses. The City should encourage a mix of housing units that include a range of sizes and types at different price points and for the diverse demographic. Depending on the type of development, this could include (ADUs) in garages, carriage houses or other ancillary structures, smaller sized apartments in new buildings and low-rise, low-density apartments in Low Density Residential Areas.

Review new development proposals for scale, typology and architectural character

The City should consider the long-term impact of all new developments on the larger neighborhood, street life and pedestrian movement. In addition, even though some buildings / areas may not be designated as historic, every attempt should be made to preserve them and reflect their unique architectural character and scale in new developments.
Marion neighborhood urban fabric and scale (up to five stories) in contrast with the Journal Squared high rise development just east of the neighborhood.

View of high density Journal Squared development from Marion neighborhood. Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

**10/ LEGACY NEIGHBORHOODS**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Plan a mix of market-rate and affordable real estate to accommodate diverse income groups. All new development should be considered for their socioeconomic impact and be planned so as to mitigate displacement and unaffordability for the area’s long time residents and businesses. The City should encourage a mix of housing units that include a range of sizes and types at different price points and for the diverse demographic. Depending on the type of development, this could include (ADUs) in garages, carriage houses or other ancillary structures, smaller sized apartments in new buildings and low-rise, low-density apartments in Low Density Residential Areas.

Review new development proposals for scale, typology and architectural character. The City should consider the long-term impact of all new developments on the larger neighborhood, street life and pedestrian movement. In addition, even though some buildings / areas may not be designated as historic, every attempt should be made to preserve them and reflect their unique architectural character and scale in new developments.

As Jersey City continues to develop, there is a faster turnover of the businesses and residents in neighborhoods that are growing at a rapid pace. Some street networks are also being modified to make way for new connections, larger buildings and old buildings are being replaced by new, sometimes disrupting the existing urban fabric which may be worth preserving.

**LOCATIONS**

Areas where historic or well established neighborhoods are surrounded by recent / planned developments include:

**KEY FINDINGS**

Development pressures and a rapid rise in real estate costs in some neighborhoods can accelerate displacement and gentrification. Large-scale redevelopment plans such as the Journal Square 2060 RDP can bring about changes at a rapid pace and negatively impact the most vulnerable populations and businesses, pushing them out because of increasing unaffordability. Out-of-scale or high-density development requiring lot consolidation can significantly alter existing urban fabric and disengage with the street. Out-of-scale or very high-density developments require lot consolidation which can significantly alter the historic street network / intricate or small scale urban fabric that is more successful in engaging the street and contributing to their vitality.

1. Marion
2. Bergen Hill
3. India Square
4. Powerhouse
5. Harsimus Cove
6. Van Vorst Park
7. Paulus Hook
8. Sherman Place
This chapter is intended to provide the policy foundation and zoning regulations. Such zoning changes would be the next step in the planning process. Issues and recommendations are grouped into three categories: Traditional Zoning Districts, Redevelopment Plan Categories (MLUL), and a zoning code must be based on a well-reasoned set of recommendations. Should be used as a guide for making this process.

The following section outlines a series of land use and development categories: Traditional Zoning Districts, Redevelopment Plan Categories (MLUL), and a zoning code must be based on a well-reasoned set of recommendations. Should be used as a guide for making this process.
CHAPTER 5: ZONING ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section outlines a series of land use and zoning issues that were identified as part of the planning process. Issues and recommendations are grouped into three categories: Traditional Zoning Districts, Redevelopment Plan Areas, and Historic Districts.

This chapter is intended to provide the policy foundation for proposed revisions to the City’s Land Development Ordinance (LDO). As explained in the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), a zoning code must be based on a well-reasoned plan. Thus, this policy assessment, and the resulting recommendations, should be used as a guide for making necessary changes to the City’s LDO and development regulations.

Such zoning changes would be the next step in the planning process and implementation efforts should begin upon adoption of the Land Use Element. This process would involve public hearings before any zoning change is adopted.
TRADITIONAL ZONING DISTRICTS

Residential Districts and Neighborhoods

Low-Density Residential Districts (R-1, R-1A, R-1F, R-1W)

R-1 District

As discussed throughout this Land Use Element, the R-1 district is the largest zone in Jersey City. In this district, the built environment varies widely, even within neighborhoods, reflecting historical development patterns and other factors such as street typology, access to transit, and current development pressures. The difficulty of a single zone encompassing such a variety of conditions is borne out by frequent variance requests in the R-1 district.

Zoning variances are common in land development, but when some types of variances occur repeatedly, and within certain zoning districts, this indicates there may be a problem with the zoning itself. Consistent variance requests for particular zones suggest a mismatch between the development that the zoning mandates and the development that the market demands, or may be due to particular site hardships and characteristics. Even more concerning, the zoning regulations may be encouraging development that is inconsistent with the City’s policy direction.

A review of Zoning Board of Adjustment variance data from 2000 through 2019 shows that the R-1 district has a disproportionate impact on the number of variances granted. Although the R-1 district represents about 25% of the City’s total land area, data for the 20-year period show the district accounted for approximately 54% of all ZBA variances. In 2019, 68% of variances granted by the ZBA were in this district. The most common variance granted in the R-1 district is for use, with other typical variances for coverage, parking, and rear setbacks. Annual reports from the ZBA have consistently recommended that the R-1 district be analyzed for potential zoning changes, with a particular focus on parking standards for one- and two-family housing and on determining whether specific areas, such as residential areas near McGinley Square and the northern portion of Kennedy Boulevard, are appropriate for R-1 zoning. The City’s zoning officer indicates there are significant code violations in the R-1 district for illegal third units. These factors clearly indicate that the zone’s requirements are inconsistent with market demand.

Further, as more areas of Jersey City experience development pressures, the R-1 zoning provisions appear to be driving demolitions of existing housing stock and replacement with a development pattern that favors very large housing units, served by driveways and/or off-street parking that disengages the street, with limited opportunities for a range of unit sizes or stores and restaurants. While this may be desirable for some residents, such development raises major policy considerations for the City to consider, including housing affordability, equitable access to goods and services, and auto-dependency. And, as discussed in the Urban Design Framework, the significant number of individual curb cuts found along many R-1 streets disrupts the streetscape, creates safety issues for pedestrians, and reduces the potential for on-street public parking. Finally, public engagement during this planning process indicated deep concerns about the loss of existing homes and the resulting change in neighborhood character.

In 2019, City Planning staff drafted a pilot proposal to support existing housing in the R-1 district while promoting development that preserves the streetscape, uses on-street parking where lot frontages are narrow, and maintains the low-rise character. The proposal was not presented to the Planning Board or City Council.

A key element of the pilot proposal was to increase overall residential density in the R-1 district to no more than 53 units per acre, which equates to 3 units (rounded) on a 2,500-square-foot lot. Rehabilitation/restoration of historically significant structures would be allowed at 62 units per acre, or 3 units, whichever greater, subject to several conditions. The primary intent of this change was to provide more flexibility in use types, particularly to allow for smaller units, which are inherently more affordable, and to permit larger lots to accommodate development with more than 2 units.
appear to be driving demolitions of existing housing. The difficulty of a single zone to accommodate development that is inconsistent with the City's policy for R-1 zoning. The City's zoning officer indicates there are significant code violations in the R-1 district for illegal parking standards for one- and two-family housing and on determining whether specific areas, particularly focus on parking standards for one- and two-family housing and on determining whether specific areas, particularly focus on parking standards for one- and two-family housing. A key element of the pilot proposal was to increase overall development that preserves the streetscape, uses on-street parking where lot frontages are narrow, and maintains street parking where lot frontages are narrow, and maintains

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<td>121</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R-4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R-5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial/Mixed Use</td>
<td>Office/Residential (O/R)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neighborhood Commercial (NC)</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commercial/Automotive (C/A)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Highway Commercial (HC)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Business District (CBD)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>University (U), Medical (M), Government (G)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>Industrial (I), Port Industrial (PI)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space/Recreational</td>
<td>Parks/Open Space (P/O), Cemetery (C)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized Districts</td>
<td>Historic (H)</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Waterfront Planned Development (WPD)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Destination Tourism (DT)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Redevelopment Plans, Overlay Districts, districts no longer present)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1399</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes R-1A and lots split between R-1 and other zoning districts

** Includes R-1A and lots split between R-1 and other zoning districts

Table 12: Total Variances* (2000-2019)

Source: City of Jersey City – Zoning Board of Adjustment Variances from 2000-2019. Variance data from 2013 is not available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Coverage/Backset</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Parking</th>
<th>Landscape</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Variances</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes R-1A and lots split between R-1 and other zoning districts

Table 11: R-1 Variances* (2000-2019)

Source: City of Jersey City – Zoning Board of Adjustment Variances from 2000-2019. Variance data from 2013 is not available.
However, it is clear that additional work is needed for the R-1 district, and that a “one size fits all” approach for the entire city is not sufficient. It is recommended that, in addition to the recommendations in the pilot ordinance, the following R-1 changes should be made:

- Adjust bulk provisions to: allow attached housing, which can create a more pedestrian-friendly streetscape and increases available on-street parking. This would effectively prohibit curb cuts on smaller lots. Permit, as a conditional use, existing street-facing apartment buildings.
- Reduce large front yards that tend to be used for off-street parking, even if such parking is not permitted on lots of less than 3,500 square feet, and that curb cuts would only be allowable to access permitted off-street parking. This would effectively prohibit curb cuts on smaller lots.
- Require minimum permeable surface on a lot and standardize building height requirements; and consider developing design guidelines or preferred architectural features that should be used for new development, such as porches and stoops, roof architectural features that should be used for new development that is less disruptive to the pedestrian development of the neighborhood.
- Adjust conditional uses, rather than permitted uses, and would require minimum permeable surface on a lot and standardize building height requirements; and consider developing design guidelines or preferred architectural features that should be used for new development, such as porches and stoops, roof architectural features that should be used for new development that is less disruptive to the pedestrian development of the neighborhood.
- Lastly, the pilot proposal recommended making nursing home or residential care facilities easier to build by allowing the demolition of existing housing stock, reducing the number of individual curb cuts, discouraging uses of low-rise multifamily residential buildings that are not compatible with historic neighborhood building form, and removing some parking requirements. It is suggested that the City consider additional zoning provisions to protect these older homes. The City should consider developing design guidelines or preferred architectural features that should be used for new development that is less disruptive to the pedestrian development of the neighborhood.

The Demolition Ordinance enacted in 2018 helps to protect these older homes. The City should consider additional zoning provisions to protect these older homes. The City should consider developing design guidelines or preferred architectural features that should be used for new development that is less disruptive to the pedestrian development of the neighborhood.

Lastly, there are portions of the R-1 district, primarily in the West Side, next to NJCU and off Mallory Avenue; and in the North Ward, which is a two-story building with a cellar and a maximum height of 20 feet. This form-based approach could identify strategies to promote local entrepreneurship. The City could also consider developing design guidelines or preferred architectural features that should be used for new development that is less disruptive to the pedestrian development of the neighborhood.

This Land Use Element generally supports the changes proposed in the pilot ordinance, and the Urban Design Framework further identifies strategies to promote local entrepreneurship. The City should consider developing design guidelines or preferred architectural features that should be used for new development that is less disruptive to the pedestrian development of the neighborhood.
The draft zoning also included several area and bulk changes, most notably a provision that off-street parking would not be permitted on lots of less than 3,500 square feet, and that curb cuts would only be allowable to access permitted off-street parking. This would effectively prohibit curb cuts on smaller lots.

Lastly, the pilot proposal recommended making nursing homes, assisted-living facilities, and other senior housing conditional uses, rather than permitted uses, and would eliminate mortuaries as a conditional use.

This Land Use Element generally supports the changes proposed in the pilot ordinance, and the Urban Design Framework further identifies strategies to promote development that is less disruptive to the pedestrian streetscape and increases available on-street parking. These include ways to promote lot assembly and the construction of appropriately scaled townhouse and small apartment buildings.

However, it is clear that additional work is needed for the R-1 district, and that a "one size fits all" approach for the zone may not be feasible given the differing conditions across areas of the City. Any major changes to the district should incorporate targeted local engagement and analysis to ensure that new regulations do not create unintended consequences.

It is recommended that, in addition to the recommendations in the pilot ordinance, the following R-1 changes should be further explored:

- Allow three-family units as conditional uses in some or all areas of the R-1 district. Conditions to these uses could include provisions to limit or reduce the number of individual curb cuts, discourage demolition of existing housing stock, reduce impervious coverage, and promote smaller and more affordable units. It is important to note that the intent of this Land Use Element is that the R-1 zone remain predominantly a one- and two-family district.

- Permit, as a conditional use, existing street-facing garages to be converted into small businesses serving the immediate area. This recommendation is intended to broaden neighborhood access to goods and services, without requiring a vehicle, as well as to promote local entrepreneurship.

- Adjust bulk provisions to:
  - Allow attached housing, which can create a more continuous street frontage and eliminate very narrow side yards that have minimal usage and are often paved;
  - Reduce large front yards that tend to be used for off-street parking, even if such parking is not permitted;
  - Standardize building height requirements; and
  - Require minimum permeable surface on a lot and adjust coverage requirements to further reduce impervious surfaces and promote usable back yards.

- Consider developing design guidelines or preferred building typologies for the R-1 district that promote rehabilitation and new development that is compatible with historic neighborhood building stock. This form-based approach could identify architectural features that should be used for new development, such as porches and stoops, roof pitches, building articulation, and materials.

Lastly, there are portions of the R-1 district, primarily in Wards A and B, where the predominant building typology is a two-story building with a cellar and a maximum height of about 22 feet. Some examples of these areas are in the Heights, clustered along portions of Concord and Fleet Streets and just south of Leonard Gordon Park; on the West Side, next to NJCU and off Mallory Avenue; and in Greenville, along Kennedy Boulevard, between West Side and Sterling Avenues, and in parts of Country Village. These areas are distinct and would not be appropriate to consider for many of the density and bulk changes described above. The Demolition Ordinance enacted in 2018 helps to protect these older homes. The City should consider additional zoning provisions to protect this existing built scale. However, some changes recommended for the overall R-1 district – particularly those that address curb cuts and parking in the front yard – would be appropriate for these lower-scaled areas as well.

Two-story typology on Fleet Street
R-1A and R-1F Districts

These districts have nearly identical purposes. Both are intended to preserve the pattern, quality, and architectural individuality of detached one- and two-family homes in areas where the predominant lot size is larger than the standard 25 feet by 100 feet. Both districts aim to discourage subdivision and demolition of larger homes. The only difference between the two zones is that R-1F allows three-family buildings as a conditional use. The City should consider eliminating the R-1A district and replacing it with R-1F in order to address illegal conversion and frequent variance requests, and to respond to market demand for smaller, more affordable units. If the R-1A and R-1F zones are maintained as separate districts, the City should consider allowing three-family dwellings as conditional uses in both zones, and increasing allowable residential density as recommended for the R-1 district.

Neighborhood-Oriented Retail

Residents have expressed the need for convenient access to neighborhood commercial uses such as grocery stores, healthy food options, cafes, coffee shops, breweries, and distilleries. Access to resources, jobs, and conveniences is also an important need for underserved communities. Zoning policies should aim to strengthen and improve City-wide and neighborhood commercial districts as centers of employment, shopping, services, entertainment, and education. Encouraging mixed-use development can help provide sufficient density to support local businesses.

The City should explore allowing, within the R-1 zone, ground-floor commercial uses (retail sales and services and cafes) along appropriate streets of low-density neighborhoods, and near intersections, to promote the location of more goods and services within walking distance to residents. Lastly, as discussed above, certain R-1 areas should be rezoned to neighborhood-oriented business zones such as NC and R-2D. These zones promote ground floor commercial-oriented uses, while maintaining the scale of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Parking in Residential Districts

A key issue in addressing the lower-scale residential areas is parking. The compact lot sizes, closely spaced houses, and small yards make it difficult to accommodate automobiles and still preserve an attractive and walkable urban streetscape. Older homes, many of which predate the zoning ordinance, often lack off-street parking or utilize a shared narrow driveway with parking in rear yard garages. Problems arise when residents convert the front yard into a parking area and create additional curb cuts, negatively affecting the streetscape and reducing on-street parking. New development on lots over 50 feet wide, meanwhile, is required to provide off-street parking at 1 space per unit. Even on narrower lots, where off-street parking is not required, there are standards for driveways and garages that act to incentivize off-street parking. These factors result in more curb cuts and a building typology with a front-facing ground-floor garage. Not only does this type of development further break up the pedestrian environment and reduce on-street parking, but it also promotes development that is out-of-character with the traditional homes found in many low-density neighborhoods.

As discussed in greater detail in the Urban Design Framework, the City should consider revisions to parking regulations in lower-scale residential districts to not allow off-street parking on lots with less than 50 feet in frontage, restrict the creation of curb cuts, and base the required parking on bedroom mix, rather than total unit count.

Table 14 on page 160 shows zoning recommendations for parking for the various residential districts.

Consistent Bulk Standards Based on Use

A final issue with several of the residential districts is that they have different area and bulk requirements based on use. Not only does this create a lack of cohesion and clarity for development in those zones, but it fails to account for changes to a building’s use once it is constructed. The City should standardize these requirements regardless of use and create a use table that clearly indicates what is allowed where.
Mid-Rise and High-Rise Residential Zoning

Jersey City’s zoning needs to accommodate the full range of residential building types that are in place in Jersey City: low-rise housing (2- to 3-story buildings with up to 3 units), townhouses/rowhouses (3-4 stories with apartment or condo units), mid-rise apartment buildings (typically 5-12 stories), and high-rise apartment buildings (higher than 12 stories). The City’s residential districts provide opportunities for low-rise and rowhouse buildings through the R-1, R-1A, R-1F, R-1W, R-2, R-2D, and R-5 zones. However, the zoning appears to be less effective at facilitating mid-rise and high-rise apartments.

The R-3 zoning district saw about 9% of all ZBA variances granted in the last 20 years, and the percentage has grown. In 2019, nearly 13% of all variances were in the R-3 district. As in the R-1 district, common variances granted in the R-3 zone were for use, coverage, and rear setbacks, as well as height. This zone needs changes to better match the desired/allowable development.

Jersey City’s residential zoning is not effectively promoting one of the most common types of multifamily housing being developed today: the five-story, or “four-over-one” residential building. This building typology is attractive for developers because it uses standard dimensional lumber, is inexpensive and quick to construct, does not require highly skilled labor, and is feasible at a wide range of lot sizes. For the City, the five-story residential building is appropriate in neighborhoods of moderate density and can help to transition from taller buildings to low-scale areas. The NC and R-2D zones, both allow five stories, but those districts typically have ground-floor retail and are intended to promote a mixed-use context.

There appears to be a mismatch between height and density factors in the R-3 district that makes the provisions unachievable at a lower height and in effect is driving frequent variance requests in this zone. The City should adjust the graduated density requirements in the R-3 district to better correlate the allowable height with density, and to more effectively promote the four-over-one typology. These changes could also include a graduated height requirement that is calibrated with the graduated densities.

Alternatively, the City could consider creation of a new district that provides for 3-5 stories, at a proportional residential density that is comparable to the current R-3 or R-2D districts and that can be achieved given height and coverage requirements. Ground-floor retail and similar service uses could be allowable at corner lots and along wide (two-lane) roadways. With the creation of this district, the City could consider increasing the allowable height in the R-3 zone, up to 10 stories. Any height increase should only occur if a new 3-5 story district is created; if the City opts instead to enact height and density adjustments in the existing R-3 district, a height increase would not be necessary and reliance on graduated heights would remain.

Regarding high-rise residential zones, the R-4 and O/R zones are the only districts aimed at high-rise apartment buildings; however, they only allow up to 110 feet (approximately 11 stories). This means that, for developers of apartment buildings of 12 stories or more, no zone allows for that height, and redevelopment is typically used to facilitate the taller buildings. While there are cases where a redevelopment approach is appropriate, as discussed below, the proliferation of redevelopment areas has created a scattershot pattern of development. Rather than guiding the tallest residential buildings into a zone where they make sense, this can result in very tall buildings within or directly adjacent to low-rise residential areas, with no transition in scale. In order to provide a traditional zoning option for taller buildings, the City should consider increasing the allowable height in the R-4 district, perhaps to 14 stories. The revised R-4 zone could also be a receiving zone for built redevelopment plan areas to transition to straight zoning. Other changes that are needed the R-4 district (whether or not allowable height is revised) are to increase allowable building coverage (to avoid a “tower-in-the-park” typology) and to reduce the required 60,000-square-foot minimum lot size to a more urban-scaled size.

Summary of Zoning Recommendations for Residential Areas (See Figure 102)

In some locations in the City, the existing zoning districts do not reflect either the current or desired development pattern based on the existing context. Figure 102 shows these areas throughout the City. There are many instances where regional and city corridors (see the Urban Design Framework) pass through R-1 zones. These corridors have the connectivity and infrastructure to support mid-rise residential or mixed-use zones. Often, development (both existing/historic and new) in these areas is at a mid-rise scale despite the existing low-density zoning (e.g. R-1, R-1A, and R-1F). Examples of this condition can be seen along portions of Mallory and Central Avenues. In these instances, the City should consider rezoning these areas from R-1 to R-2D or R-3 to reflect the existing multifamily land use character. R-2D and R-3 would capture small neighborhood business nodes that are not as intensive as the NC district in terms of allowable height and bulk. While the R-2D zone was created for a specific area along Palisades Avenue, the scale of this district is appropriate for other places in the City, and it is suggested that its intent be broadened to incorporate these areas.
There are also several zoning districts that appear to be remnants of earlier zones that have largely been replaced. For example, the R-2 zone only exists in a few locations, and these districts could be entirely eliminated in favor of zoning that better matches actual development conditions. One example is parcels the east side of Baldwin between Washburn Street and Court House Place where existing buildings don’t match the underlying R-1 zoning. Figure 102 recommends changing the zoning to R-3 to reflect existing conditions. Also, not all of the current R-4 areas have development that matches the zoning. The City should consider incorporating the R-2 zone and portions of the R-4 zone into other districts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zoning Map Changes</td>
<td>Consider areas shown in Figure 38 where it may be appropriate to change zoning to reflect existing land use character of area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-1 District</td>
<td>Consider allowing three families as a conditional use in the R-1 district to address illegal conversion and frequent variance requests, and to respond to market demand for smaller, more affordable units.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Permit conversion of existing street-facing garages to small businesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establish a residential density that accommodates three-unit dwellings, with additional residential density to promote rehabilitation/restoration of historically significant structures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enact standards to increase pervious coverage on individual lots.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allow ground-floor category 1 &amp; 2 restaurants as conditional uses at corners and along appropriate streets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allow the conversion of garages into small businesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-1A/R-1F Districts</td>
<td>Consider merging the R-1A districts into R-1F to allow three family units in these areas as a conditional use. If separate districts are maintained, establish residential density as in the R-1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Rise Zone</td>
<td>Explore zoning approaches to recognize and protect two-story residential areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-3 District</td>
<td>Adjust the graduated density requirements and consider graduated height requirements that correlate with these densities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-4 District</td>
<td>Simplify height stepback requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consider elimination of some of these areas and incorporating them into other districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase allowable height to 14 stories (from 4-8 stories, allowable height currently dependent on use)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 13: Zoning Map Recommendations (See Figure 47)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R-1 District</td>
<td>Consider eliminating off-street parking as a permitted use for lots smaller than 5,000 square feet, and only allow a curb cut to access permitted off-street parking. This would effectively restrict curb cuts to lots that are 50 feet or more in width.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Base parking requirements on bedrooms, not total unit count (0.2 space per bedroom).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enforce prohibitions on parking in front yard*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-1F, R-1A, R-1W, R-2, R-2D, and R-5</td>
<td>Enforce prohibitions on parking in front yard*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* - Note: See parking recommendations on pages 101-103

**Table 14: Zoning Recommendations for Parking in Residential Districts**
Figure 102: Potential Zoning Map Changes in Residential Areas

Source: City of Jersey City.
Commercial and Mixed Use Areas

Neighborhood Centers and HBLR Stations

In 2019, the City implemented revisions to the NC district that expanded the permitted uses, increased and clarified the allowable building height, and limited curb cuts and off-street parking requirements. These changes appear to have addressed some ongoing issues with that zone, which made up about 6% of ZBA variances from 2000 to 2019.

A major theme of this Land Use Element is to support commercial activity outside of the downtown and Journal Square areas, so that residents of all City neighborhoods have greater access to goods and services. Neighborhood centers offer the primary opportunity for such expanded activity, including additional residential density to support local businesses. However, height and density approaches need to be tailored to the appropriate context. Some neighborhood centers would be appropriate to receive greater height and density than areas that are near or within low-density neighborhoods.

The Urban Design Framework categorizes the City’s neighborhood centers according to surrounding population density, land use, and development in the pipeline. Based on this analysis, the following types and scales of development are proposed for these areas:

- Small-Scale Neighborhood Centers – 5 stories, mixed-use (apartments over ground-floor retail)
  - Ocean and Lembeck Avenues
  - Danforth Avenue and Old Bergen Road
  - Central Avenue
  - The Junction
- Mid-Scale Neighborhood Centers – 6-8 stories, mixed-use or commercial
  - West Side Avenue (from Communipaw Avenue south to the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR) tracks)
  - Newark Avenue (west of Summit Avenue)
  - Five Corners
- Large-Scale Neighborhood Centers – 8-12 stories, mixed-use, commercial, government facilities
  - McGinley Square
  - Areas surrounding the Journal Square commercial core

New/revised zoning districts should be established to support this development pattern at these scales. Areas that are currently zoned either NC or residential should be rezoned to reflect the recommended scale (e.g. Neighborhood Commercial-S, Neighborhood Commercial-M, or Neighborhood Commercial-L). For neighborhood centers that are located within established redevelopment plan areas, the classification of small, medium, or large, and the accompanying strategies discussed in the Urban Design Framework, should be considered in any future revisions to the redevelopment plan.

A similar approach to graduated density increases to support greater activity can be taken for the City’s HBLR stations beyond the downtown and Liberty State Park. In these areas, it is appropriate to promote walkable mixed-use development to attract people and add to the vibrancy and use of the station area. Focusing growth around transit stations, i.e., transit-oriented development (TOD), capitalizes on public investments in transit and provides many benefits, including convenience retail that can serve the surrounding neighborhood and help activate the areas.

Not all areas around stations can accommodate the same amount or type of development. The future land use for each station area should be looked at individually, as their context varies greatly. For example, the West Side Avenue Station is situated in an area that has a mix of commercial, institutional, residential, and industrial uses, and can accommodate new development, particularly in underutilized and vacant lots. On the contrary, the HBLR stations in Greenville are situated within a low-density residential area. If TOD is provided for, it should be at a lower scale and only in areas in the immediate vicinity of the stations.

As with the neighborhood centers, the Urban Design Framework categorizes transit nodes outside the downtown core according to population density, land use, and planned development. The Martin Luther King Avenue and West Side Avenue station areas are comparable to small neighborhood centers today, but could easily transition into the scale of medium neighborhood centers within the next 5-10 years.
For both the neighborhood centers and transit nodes, the approach to density should be contextual, building on the established neighborhood scale to support local businesses and/or transit ridership through critical mass. For neighborhood centers, density should be focused around a public open space or mixed-use corridor, while for transit nodes, it should be focused around the HBLR station itself. Many of the areas around these resources contain buildings that contribute to the historic fabric of both the neighborhood and the City as a whole. Other areas may be near or adjacent to historic districts. Future development, even if at a greater density, should preserve these buildings, as well as protect adjacent low-density neighborhoods, by focusing on areas of surface parking or buildings that are not of historic value. For example, around McGinley Square, consideration for new development should take into account the historic, low-scale development pattern along Bergen Avenue to the south, and the proximity of the West Bergen-East Lincoln Park Historic District, as well as historically and architecturally significant buildings such as St. Aedan’s Church. In this case, increased density should be targeted to underutilized sites on Montgomery Street and Bergen Avenue north toward Journal Square.

**Gateway Commercial Zone**

Under current zoning, the City lacks a general commercial zone providing for a scale of development that accommodates vehicles but also serves pedestrians and cyclists. Such a zone would encourage a development pattern at an intensity between the auto-oriented HC district and the human-scaled NC and R-2D districts. This type of zone would recognize that some commercial areas in Jersey City may remain primarily accessible by vehicle, but that they should also ensure strong non-auto access and aesthetics. Because these commercial areas abut low-scale residential neighborhoods, zoning provisions need to be in place to buffer one- and two-family housing from non-residential uses and to improve design aesthetics at side streets that enter the neighborhoods (i.e. neighborhood gateways).

The intent of the Gateway Commercial Zone would not be to drastically transform the use characteristics of these corridors. Because the corridors function as major entryways for drivers (including commuters) into Jersey City and may also be truck routes, they must retain efficient vehicular carrying capacity. In addition, some auto-oriented uses – such as gas stations, auto repair shops, and car washes – make sense along these corridors, for regional drivers and City residents alike. Transitioning these corridors to primarily residential use would push out these types of uses and could leave them with few alternatives for locating elsewhere in Jersey City. In addition, high-rise residential/mixed-use buildings could create negative impacts for adjacent neighborhoods. Rather, the Gateway Commercial Zone would seek to improve the public realm (i.e. wide sidewalks, street trees, buffers from travel lanes) to enhance the pedestrian experience, lessen nuisance impacts to nearby residential neighborhoods, and reduce the prevalence of drive-in commercial activities in favor of uses oriented to the street frontage. To accomplish these changes, a development scale of up to 5-6 stories would be appropriate, with additional allowable uses including grocery stores, office buildings, and hotels.

One candidate for a potential Gateway Commercial Zone is the C/A district found along western Communipaw Avenue (west of West Side Avenue). As noted below, the eastern
portion of the C/A district is recommended to be rezoned to NC. The western portion of the corridor includes long-time automotive uses on irregularly configured lots (including some small lots and some larger, through-lots west of Mallory Avenue) that conflict with the district’s dual function as a major east-west transportation corridor and as a gateway to the City. The western portion of Communipaw Avenue is characterized by a predominance of low-rise automotive uses including service stations, repair shops, and car sales. These uses generate significant nuisance impacts caused by a lack of screening, inadequate off-street parking, and their semi-industrial nature. Zoning for this area could be less auto-oriented and better supportive of aesthetics and treatments that will make the corridor more walkable and less impactful on adjacent neighborhoods.

Another candidate showing many similarities is the Upper Route 139 corridor west of Palisade Avenue. This is designed as a high-speed high-capacity corridor and a state route, as it provides direct access linking the Holland Tunnel to the Turnpike Extension (I-78), Route 1&9, Route 7, and points west. The major issue with this corridor is that, as designed, it is a barrier separating Journal Square from the Heights. In order to better stitch these neighborhoods together, Upper Route 139 should be rezoned to enhance walkability, aesthetics, safety, and act as a buffer between the busy road and residential area to the north.

Participants in workshops for the Lower Heights Small Area Vision Plan identified a need for substantial changes along Upper Route 139. A major area of concern was improvements that would make the areas safer for active mobility. At the same time, there was recognition that the current zoning is not consistent with the underlying land use. Participants were open to a rezoning of those lots fronting onto Route 139. As the City develops the proposed Gateway Commercial Zone, it should consider applying it along Route 139 and work with residents in the area to fine-tune the use, bulk, and parking standards, among other considerations. For more information about the potential for rezoning Route 139, see the Lower Heights SAVP.

Finally, the southern portion of Kennedy Boulevard that is currently zoned NC could be considered for Gateway Commercial zoning. While there are scattered three- and four-story mixed-use buildings along this corridor, there are also more auto-oriented uses such as gas stations, auto sales/repair, and drive-thru banks and pharmacies. These uses – as well as the significant width of the roadway – result in a lack of cohesion and pedestrian enclosure that is characteristic of a neighborhood commercial zone. Additional urban design recommendations for corridors can be found in the Urban Design Framework.

**Large-Format Commercial Areas**

As discussed in the Land Use Principles and the Urban Design Framework, the retail environment in Jersey City has shifted in recent years. Factors such as the rise in internet sales have resulted in a general decline in traditional brick-and-mortar retail sales, nationwide. This impact is being felt in all of the City’s commercial areas, including the large-scale commercial areas such as the Newport Centre Mall, and big box retail north of the Turnpike Extension and along Route 440. These auto-oriented areas are characterized by large surface or structured parking areas, limited landscaping, and a lack of pedestrian connectivity to nearby neighborhoods.

Recognizing that owners of these properties may be interested in exploring opportunities to support the long-term viability of large-format commercial areas, the City should help to ensure that these areas are poised to adapt to change by creating a flexible regulatory environment with zoning that will not present a barrier to ongoing success. Zoning and redevelopment plans should allow for a broad mix of tenants, including uses as diverse as recreation and community services; hospitality; healthcare, academic, and other institutions; and innovative commercial uses such as labs, technology firms, commercial kitchens, and microbusinesses.

In the event that the City, in coordination with property owners, considers future zoning changes, redevelopment plans, or development approvals for large-format commercial areas, the following principles should be supported:

- Identify opportunities to re-establish the street grid when redeveloping large-format commercial areas.
- Orient redevelopment toward the pedestrian and not the automobile. Buildings, and not parking, should address the street.
- Expand the range of permitted uses in large-format commercial areas, including institutional users, recreation, health-care, entertainment and arts and cultural uses.
- Leverage opportunities in future development to right-size parking, allowing for reduced impervious coverage and increased landscaping.

**Highway Commercial Areas**

Currently, the portion of Tonnele Avenue (Route 1&9) that falls within the City’s zoning jurisdiction is mapped in the HC district, which allows a range of auto-oriented commercial uses and is also found along Route 440. The HC provisions generally promote large-format uses, with required 30-foot yards on the front, side, and rear lot areas and maximum allowable height of 6 stories. Given the smaller sizes of lots
along Tonnele Avenue – and in particular, the limited depths – it is recommended that this HC area be rezoned to C/A, which is a better match both in terms of permitted bulk and in the allowable uses. The C/A district does not permit hotels, several of which are located along Tonnele Avenue, so these uses may need to be added as permitted uses to avoid creation of nonconformities.

**Waterfront Planned Development District**

In the City’s specialized zoning districts, the Waterfront Planned Development (WPD) district has not been successful in facilitating desired development along the Route 440 corridor and Hackensack River waterfront. Major development is occurring in this area, but it is happening through redevelopment planning. The WPD provisions, such as permitting warehousing and distribution facilities, are inconsistent with the larger vision for Route 440. Significant changes to the WPD district are needed to support the transformation of Route 440 and Routes 1&9T from a highway into a regional boulevard with landscaped medians and swales, bus rapid transit, local and regional travel lanes, sidewalks, regular pedestrian crossings at signalized intersections, and protected bike lanes. This could potentially be achieved through the modification of the WPD district. If this approach is chosen, the City should consider including areas zoned HC on the east side of Route 440 into the revised WPD.

A requirement should be built into the WPD zoning to require any redevelopment along the Hackensack River (whether through a redevelopment plan or conventional development) to have a publicly accessible waterfront walkway, known as the Hackensack RiverWalk. This requirement is provided for on the Hudson River as part of the NJ Coastal Management Rules, but there is nothing comparable on the Hackensack. The City should advocate with the state to establish a comparable statute that would cover the Hackensack River shoreline in a similar fashion to the Hudson River Waterfront Walkway. This requirement would address minimum widths and pavement treatments and would require coordination with other municipalities and entities, including NJSEA and Hudson and Bergen Counties. The Hudson County Department of Planning has a draft (2020) Hackensack Riverwalk report that identifies the status of each section, from Bayonne north to Secaucus, with noted issues and recommended actions.

It is recommended that a minimum of 30 feet is required for a public walkway with landscaping, which would be consistent with the Coastal Management Rules for the Hudson River Waterfront Walkway. Ideally, a bikeway would also be incorporated, which would connect with the upland network. This would require another minimum 8 feet of space along the water’s edge.

The regulatory framework for this area will have to balance the need to provide enough density to ensure that capital improvements and maintenance are paid for by development, while also guiding the bulk and massing of development to address public realm considerations like viewsheds. The City should also communicate with Hackensack Riverkeeper as necessary to understand their goals and recommendations.

**Permitted Uses in Commercial and Industrial Districts**

There is a need to retain a diversity of commercial and industrial uses to foster employment and economic activity and to enhance the tax base. The City can help to ensure that retail areas can adapt to future change by creating a flexible regulatory environment with zoning that will not present a barrier to ongoing success. This Land Use Element also supports policies that promote adaptive reuse opportunities and other zoning approaches (e.g., live/work
space, arts district overlays, work-from-home ordinances) to protect and support the incubation of small businesses, arts, urban manufacturing, makerspace, offices, and other clean industries.

All of the commercial, industrial, and mixed-use zones require a review of permitted uses to ensure they are consistent with modern standards and the current state of retail commerce. For example, some uses are defined in the LDO, but are rarely permitted in any districts, such as commercial agriculture and business incubators. Recognizing that an outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to be reduced demand for large office spaces, office zoning should better promote flexibility by allowing compatible uses such as labs, small-scale food production, and low-intensity manufacturing.

For the industrial zones, the City should promote policies that attract clean, modern, and emerging industries that support job creation at a variety of footprints and can coexist with the surrounding residential areas. Examples include small-scale manufacturing, clean recycling, breweries/distilleries, film industry, food production facilities, urban agriculture, pharmaceutical labs and manufacturing, indoor recreation, etc. There is demonstrated interest in these uses, but they are typically accommodated in redevelopment areas, not industrial zones. Industrial zones should also be reviewed to eliminate uses that require large land areas and may generate negative impacts from traffic, such as industrial parks, which are not appropriate for a densely built environment, and car washes, which are better suited for commercial areas. Auto repair and auto sales should also be limited to select corridors where auto-related uses can be accommodated without impacting the surrounding residential areas. These uses can generate significant nuisance impacts when there is a lack of screening, inadequate off-street vehicle storage, and the presence of intensive industrial uses adjacent to residential neighborhoods.

The City should continue to support industrial activity at the Greenville Port, which has thrived with growth in global trade. New warehousing and logistics uses – which are in high demand as users are priced out of Brooklyn and Queens – should be located near the port areas and highway interchanges. With very little land area available in the Port Industrial (PI) zone, additional port-related development may need to occur in the Industrial (I) district, as well as within existing redevelopment areas. Any port-related development outside the PI zone should be limited to areas with strong highway access and limited impact on residential areas.

Summary of Zoning Map Recommendations for Commercial and Industrial Areas (see Figure 103)

Table 15 and Figure 103 show a variety of potential zoning map changes discussed previously in this section. In addition to recommendations described above, there are a few zoning changes intended to consolidate districts to bring them more in line with surrounding areas that share similar characteristics. For example, there are several zoning districts that seem to be remnants of earlier zones that have largely been replaced, such as the CBD and O/R districts. These remaining areas no longer appear to be aligned with the existing development and future vision. The City should consider eliminating them in favor of zoning that better matches actual development conditions.
<table>
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<th>District</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
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| All Commercial Zones                         | - Consider zoning flexibility to allow multiple uses in one space of a building.  
- Allow auto repair uses where auto sales are permitted. Allow reuse of auto repair garages for cafes, maker spaces, and small-scale manufacturing uses.  
- Allow offices and medical offices wherever other commercial uses are permitted. |
| Neighborhood Corridors                       | - Change R-1 to NC or R-2D along key corridors and nodes, to other zones as appropriate based on existing development. See map for proposed changes along Communipaw Avenue and Kennedy Boulevard.                       |
| Neighborhood Centers and Areas Near HBLR Stations | - Consider revised zoning in neighborhood centers and around HBLR stations as appropriate based on the identified scale above.                                                                                     |
| CBD and O/R Districts                        | - Consider elimination of these areas and incorporating them into other districts.                                                                                                                              |
| Gateway Commercial Zone                      | - Consider rezoning identified areas (e.g. portions of Communipaw Avenue and Route 139 to new Gateway Commercial Zone)                                                                                          |
| Highway Commercial Areas                     | - Consider rezoning identified areas along Tonnele Ave (Route 1&9) to C/A                                                                                                                                 |
| Revise WPD Zone                              | Incorporate parcels in HC district on east side of Route 440 into a combined and revised WPD zone.  
Zoning should provide for the following:  
- Require incorporation of a public walkway (where not already required) as part of future development and plans for Route 440 Boulevard.  
- Require street improvements including landscaping, bike and pedestrian infrastructure for upland-waterfront connectors.  
- Promote development that faces Route 440 and contributes to the streetscape along the corridor with attractive buildings, signage, and landscaping:  
  ◦ Eliminate townhouses and warehousing/distribution as principal permitted uses, animal shelter as conditional use.  
  ◦ Clearly permit mixed-use  
  ◦ Standardize area/bulk provisions  
  ◦ Consider additional height (current max. is 8 stories for multifamily)  
  ◦ Ensure that large-scale housing or mixed-use is well-connected into the neighborhood fabric. In particular, do not permit gated residential projects. |
| Industrial Zones                              | - Provide for greater flexibility in office and light industrial uses (alone or in combination): Allow for shared office space (co-working), shared labs, and shared kitchens, business incubators, artisan manufacturing, labs, and small-scale food production/commercial kitchens.  
- Allow breweries/distilleries, film production, green manufacturing, urban agriculture, similar uses  
- Eliminate industrial parks, cyber hotels, and car washes as permitted uses.  
- Allow port-related uses where located close to highway access and with limited impacts on residential areas.  
- Establish buffering and landscaping requirements for technology and telecommunications infrastructure facilities. |

Table 15: Zoning Recommendations for Commercial and Industrial Districts
Figure 103: Potential Zoning Map Changes in Commercial and Industrial Areas

Source: City of Jersey City.
Institutional and Open Space Districts

Institutional Districts

The G Governmental district allows for governmental facilities and schools. The City should consider removing this district entirely, as governmental uses are already allowed in most zones. City-owned properties are exempt from zoning, and typically other public agencies are subject only to a courtesy review. A key disadvantage of the G zone is that it limits future opportunities, should the City or another institutional facility wish to sell its property.

Jersey City is a regional center of higher education with three colleges and universities – Hudson County Community College, New Jersey City University, and Saint Peter’s University – that attract students from the City, Hudson County, and northern New Jersey. The City’s colleges and universities are a unique land use that have special needs and can create planning challenges in the neighborhoods where they are located.

This Land Use Element supports policies that promote student housing and other facilities in and around the City’s colleges and universities. This requires balancing the expansion plans of the institutions to maintain their viability in an increasingly competitive higher education environment, with the desire to preserve residential stability. The U district should be reviewed to assess whether its provisions, such as maximum height, are consistent with the universities’ vision for future improvements. In addition, the use requirements for the U zone should be assessed to determine whether they provide sufficient flexibility to accommodate modern accessory uses at a college or university, such as cafes, convenience retail, co-working space, or arts and cultural uses. New Jersey City University, as a public university, is not subject to Jersey City zoning requirements pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:55D-31 (“Section 31,” which requires only that the Planning Board review the university’s plans for master plan consistency). However, this is not the case for St. Peter’s University, as a private institution, and the University has indicated that it has experienced difficulties with the U district zoning in the past. The City should consider whether the U zone is necessary for N.JCU, given the Section 31 provisions, and if revisions are needed to facilitate plans envisioned by St. Peter’s.

Beyond revisions to the U district, another zoning mechanism to explore would be the creation of an University Overlay Zone. The existing U district sets up a “line” where the campus is and where residential areas are. An overlay zone would allow the universities to continue to grow and improve facilities within a defined area surrounding the existing campus without rendering existing residential or other non-university uses non-conforming. It is conceivable that university uses could be mixed with other uses on the same site (i.e. student housing above a grocery store). This could help to create more dynamic and mutually beneficial communities by locating students in areas where they can support local businesses and by providing commercial uses which can be used by residents.

The overlay zone should include provisions to prevent disruption of the neighborhood fabric. For example, university uses would be allowed of other conditions are met, potentially including the following:

- Property is within walking distance to a campus center (0.5 miles), so as to limit the extent of sprawl from the main campus.
- Property is indicated in a campus expansion plan, pre-approved by the Planning Board. This provision encourages the City’s colleges and universities to explore the manner in which they will connect their facilities into the neighborhoods, and provides an opportunity for public review.
- Underlying bulk regulations of the existing zoning district would apply, so that any development is consistent with the surrounding built environment.

Open Space Districts

The City’s P/O district is currently completely non-commercial, allowing for recreational uses such as parks, playgrounds, athletic fields, and similar uses. In addition to the customary uses, it is recommended that the City consider other uses which can be accommodated either as a permitted accessory or conditional uses, such as buildings for food and refreshments, comfort stations within or outside of these facilities, the leasing of small boats and fishing gear, and other concessions which are compatible with the enjoyment of these areas.

In the future, the City should consider changing some open space assets to the P/O Zone such as Bergen Arches and the Sixth Street Embankment. These abandoned railroad corridors have the potential to become recreational greenways.

There is another open space district, the C Cemetery zone. No major changes are proposed for this district; however, its boundaries should be inspected for accuracy.

Summary of Zoning Map Recommendations for Institutional and Open Space Districts

Figure 104 shows locations where zoning map changes may be required to accommodate recommendations within this chapter.
Chapter 5: Zoning Issues and Recommendations

Recommended Zoning Changes

- Redevelopment Plan Areas
- Parks/Open Space Zoning Recommendations
- Institutional Zoning Recommendations

Figure 104: Potential Zoning Map Changes in Institutional and Park/Open Space Areas

Source: City of Jersey City.
**Sustainability and Resiliency**

The 2019 Resilient Jersey City report provides a summary of City-wide resiliency and climate change adaptation plans, including the Resiliency Master Plan, the Adaptation Master Plan, and the Environmental Green Infrastructure Design Plan (all three of which were completed in 2017). The Land Use Element supports the mission and recommendations behind these key plans that work in tandem and support each other.

One recent initiative is the Flood Overlay Zone, which requires new developments in FEMA-designated flood hazard zones to help control localized flooding and minimize pollution runoff into waterways by implementing green infrastructure. Strategies such as rain gardens, green roofs, bioswales, and permeable pavement can help to absorb and filter stormwater runoff and therefore avoid combined sewage overflow events where domestic sewage and other wastewater overflow and pollute local waterways. This approach assigns a point value to various stormwater mitigation and green infrastructure elements of a project. New development in any given zone must achieve a required number of points, allowing the City to target areas that are particularly susceptible to flooding or that have the potential to significantly reduce stormwater runoff, and ensuring that resiliency measures are part of all new development. If the implementation of this approach is successful, it could easily be broadened to other areas of the City.

The Green Infrastructure Plan provides a framework to incorporate sustainability principles into projects and redevelopment plans. Its Green Guide identifies a range of incentive strategies available for green development. Land use-related incentives include: providing for expedited review/streamlined permitting processes, floor area ratio and height bonuses, flexibility in setback requirements, and counting green roofs toward open space requirements.

In addition to the strategies discussed above, the City should pursue the following land use strategies:

- Implement transportation and land use actions in the Climate Action Plan.
- Consider compost requirements for large buildings.
- Consider expanding the Flood Overlay Zone approach regarding encouragement of green infrastructure to other parts of the City, as a means of reducing impervious coverage.
- Continue to identify and remediate contaminated sites, especially those sites containing chromium and lead.

- Adopt programs that will reduce energy use and reduce greenhouse gases (GHGs):
- Increase energy efficiency of buildings. Encourage new development and redevelopment to be compatible with U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) principles, or equivalent.
- Consider incentives and/or requirements to retrofit existing buildings to replace traditional heating systems (e.g. boilers) with more efficient systems, balancing historical preservation concerns in designated historic districts.
- Preserve remaining natural wetland areas, renew compromised environmentally sensitive areas, and restore habitats where feasible.
- Encourage uses and development that minimize pollution, conserve energy and efficiently utilize natural resources.
- Promote and expand recycling to reduce the solid waste stream and increase the reuse of natural resources.
- Promote and encourage a City-wide composting program to reduce the volume and cost of waste disposal.
- Ensure that zoning and building codes incorporate best practices for incorporation of solar panel roofs, cool roofs, and other sustainability measures. This could be accomplished through a sustainability checklist for site plan review for buildings over a certain square footage of gross floor area.

**Stormwater Management Regulations**

On March 2, 2021, new NJDEP standards took effect that establish minimum stormwater management requirements and controls for “major development” and require the use of green infrastructure. The rule changes replace a subjective performance standard with an objective standard, and require that stormwater management features be distributed around a site rather than centralized in one large basin.

Jersey City’s updated Stormwater Control Ordinance, incorporating the NJDEP standards, was adopted and took effect March 1, 2021. The amendments replace the previous requirement that major developments incorporate nonstructural stormwater management strategies to the “maximum extent practicable” with a requirement that green infrastructure be used to meet these same standards. In addition, the City’s ordinance imposes a stricter threshold than what is defined as major development in the amended rule to capture the unique aspects of development in Jersey City. A new definition for minor development was added,
triggered when 1,000 square feet of impervious coverage is added to a development site. These revised stormwater management standards provide increased protection for public health and safety through reduced flooding and water pollution.

Jersey City is continuing to focus on engaging the public on the City’s combined sewer system as part of the ongoing Long Term Control Plan (LTCP). The LTCP aims to evaluate sewer infrastructure and develop long-term strategies to reduce combined sewer overflows (CSOs) and improve the quality of the City’s waterways. The JCMUA hosted a series of public meetings in March 2019 to discuss the proposed alternatives. Find out more at https://www.njcleanwaterways.com/ or https://www.jcagua.com/ltcp.

**Electric Vehicle Charging Stations**

Electric vehicles provide many benefits for public health, safety, and welfare, including reducing air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and stormwater runoff contaminants; promoting savings in motor vehicle operating costs for vehicle owners; and contributing overall to sustainability goals and objectives of the City and the state. New Jersey is becoming a primary market for electric vehicles, and the accompanying demand for charging stations is projected to grow with the increase of electric vehicle models on the market. In July 2021, New Jersey adopted a Model Statewide Municipal Electric Vehicle Ordinance, which requires that EV service equipment and “make-ready” parking spaces be designated as a permitted accessory use in all zoning districts.

To supplement these regulations and support the transition to electric vehicle use, the City should consider parking regulations that further encourage or require these facilities for the construction or redevelopment of large-scale projects such as mixed-use developments, multifamily developments, and office buildings. The Climate Action Plan recommends requiring that new buildings over 25,000 square feet in gross floor area be constructed to be EV-ready. The City should also consider adding EV parking space requirements in auto-serving uses such as gas stations, auto repair businesses, and dealership service uses. In addition to these regulatory changes, capital planning for on-street charging facilities will be needed on a widespread scale to make electric vehicles a viable options for more residents.

**Parking and Curbside Management**

**Parking**

Off-street parking requirements have enormous implications on land use and human behavior. Historically in the U.S., parking has been over-regulated and over-supplied, resulting in an abundance of free parking that drives land use patterns and shifts modal choices away from what makes urban living convenient, safe, and healthy. In the last two decades, planners have acknowledged the significant repercussions of parking minimums and have begun to enact policies that address off-street parking’s substantial usage of land and its cost hurdle for developers. Regulating minimum parking standards requires the balancing of competing priorities, such as the need to accommodate some parking without incentivizing car ownership and negatively impacting the streetscape with curb cuts and front-yard driveways. Creating off-street parking maximum standards can help to limit the construction of parking lots that are larger than necessary. There are also environmental considerations to discouraging automobile ownership, such as reduction in impervious surfaces, reduced congestion, and improvement in air quality. Focusing efforts on public transportation, car sharing, and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure will help to make it less necessary for residents and workers to own a car.

In 2020, the City, in coordination with NJTPA, developed a Parking Management Plan to optimize the use of its parking supply and identify parking management strategies to inform policy and development regulations. The main objectives of the study were to create a City-wide parking inventory, present innovative parking management strategies, and develop recommendations on adjusting parking regulations in support of those strategies. The Parking Management Plan builds on the City’s recent planning efforts including the Let’s Ride JC Bicycle Master Plan, the Pedestrian Enhancement Plan, and the Vision Zero Action Plan. Parking is a shared topic addressed by all the plans.
The Land Use Element supports the Parking Management Plan’s 10 strategies listed below, each of which includes associated short-, medium-, and long-term implementation actions.

1. Modify the “Parking Zones” residential permit system
2. Expand shared parking programs and manage parking through a centralized system
3. Coordinate on-street and off-street parking prices in response to demand
4. Improve enforcement of parking regulations
5. Comprehensively manage on-street curb space
6. Shift commuter and visitor parking away from residential areas
7. Improve communications of City’s policies to residents, commuters and visitors
8. Re-examine the City’s curb cut policy
9. Re-examine parking requirements in the City’s LDO and reduce or eliminate parking minimums and institute parking maximums.
10. Implement transportation demand management (TDM) measures and expand alternative mobility options

The recommendations below summarize strategies in the Parking Management Plan that most directly relate to the Land Use Element.

**Re-examine parking requirements in the City’s Land Development Ordinance (LDO)**

These actions listed in Section 7.9 of the Parking Management Plan aim to revamp the parking requirements across the LDO to a more uniform and centrally managed system, which should make parking requirements and development rules within these areas more transparent and understandable. The first step should be to update parking requirements based on land use, location, lot size, or other policy objectives. Some of the minimum parking standards are not reflective of Jersey City’s urban and transit-oriented context. Additionally, the City can leverage its transit system to reduce parking needs and encourage transit use with transit district overlays – such overlays often include reduced parking, transportation demand management (TDM) techniques (see Strategy 10), and increased densities. These can be paired with requirements for fees-in-lieu of providing accessory parking for developers, which encourage improvement of alternate modes of transportation, including improving multimodal access to transit facilities. Focusing new development near transit hubs also supports the City’s overall sustainability goals.

The City should also consider switching from parking minimums to parking maximum requirements throughout Jersey City. As stated in the Parking Management Plan, parking minimums have been shown to increase the cost and mass of new developments, while also implicitly subsidizing and encouraging more car ownership and travel. Parking maximums aim to attenuate this effect by capping the total number of off-street parking spaces allowed for a specific use, and therefore controlling the amount of land associated with parking. The use of parking maximums could be considered City-wide, as has been done in small cities like Buffalo, NY (for developments of less than 5,000 square feet) or Hartford, CT (parking minimums eliminated across the board). Or, the City could consider removing parking minimums within certain geographic areas, such as within certain zoning districts or certain distances from transit (see the experiences of Minneapolis, MN; Cincinnati, OH; and Washington, D.C). Some cities have also eliminated parking minimums for affordable housing (as has been done in Seattle, WA and Portland, OR).

In conjunction with a change to parking maximums, the City should implement programs that will encourage City-wide alternate transportation and other TDM measures. This could include requiring building owners to participate in shared parking programs, potentially through a centralized system, and compelling developers to invest in alternate transportation modes through fees and requirements, such as the inclusion of secure bike parking in new buildings. A more detailed description of TDM strategies is provided in the Parking Management Plan.

With regard to parking requirements in redevelopment plan areas, each has its own parking requirements, creating a chaotic, seemingly ad hoc policy approach to something that requires a coordinated, City-wide planning strategy. While the diversity of districts points to the need for different approaches to parking, the differences in parking requirements among redevelopment plans is much wider and varied than typical differences among regular zoning codes. Some redevelopment plan areas have maximum parking ratios tied to their land use, while others have minimum parking ratios, and still others have both or neither. It is recommended that the parking strategy for redevelopment plan areas follow the same overall strategy as for the City as a whole. First, parking requirements should be standardized by use, and reduced to reflect urban context and proximity to transit. As the City moves from parking minimums to maximums, the same transition should occur within redevelopment plan areas.

In addition, this Land Use Element supports the Parking Management Plan’s recommendation to make developers in redevelopment districts complete a parking demand
analysis in conjunction with the required traffic study for new developments. The study would include a parking
generation analysis to determine the number of spaces required by the new development. This analysis must be based on activity, not simply square footage by use. Parking generation guidance should be obtained from the recent work by Reid Ewing, DDOT, Arlington County, VA, and Kristina Currans, or based on models such as the EPA's MXD model. Guidance provided in ITE's Parking Generation Manual is geared toward single-use, car-oriented, suburban contexts; it is poorly suited to mixed-use, medium- and high-density contexts like Jersey City.

Re-examine the City’s Curb Cut Policy

The Parking Management Plan addresses ongoing issues with curb cuts on residential streets. As discussed above, new curb cuts reduce on-street parking supply, effectively privatizing public curb space. Curb cuts also break up the sidewalk, detracting from the streetscape and creating a less safe environment for pedestrians. Removing and reducing the number of curb cuts can provide public space for community amenities like tree plantings, as well as restoring on-street parking and providing space for alternative transportation modes such as bike lanes, bus and micromobility stops, and centralized loading areas.

In addition to the recommended changes on parking and curb cuts discussed above for low-density neighborhoods, another important step to addressing excessive curb cuts, as identified in the Parking Management Plan, is to establish a baseline and freeze permits for new curb cuts while compiling an inventory of existing curb cuts. This could also include the registration of curb cuts. This database can be used to determine which cuts are permitted and to assess the impact of future curb cut applications on the same block. The City should identify any illegal curb cuts from vacant land uses to remove them to reclaim on-street supply.

Curbside Management

The rise in online shopping has created significant demand for short-term loading, while the increased popularity of ride-hailing, grocery delivery, and restaurant delivery creates more competition for curb space. This creates double-parking which can interfere with on-street parking, vehicular and bicyclist circulation, and residential quality-of-life.

To accommodate the high demand for curbside access, the City will need to identify where it may be appropriate to have flexible zones. City policies should prioritize safe vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycling infrastructure first, followed by other important uses of the curb, such as: regulated parking, delivery and pick-up areas, green stormwater infrastructure, and small public spaces.

It is recommended that the City prepare a Curbside Management Plan or program which includes the following:

- Recommended locations to implement curbside treatments such as bike corrals, ride hailing zones, and loading zones.
- Standards intended to mitigate commercial deliveries and traffic on residential streets. This would include signage, enforcement, pricing, and methods to minimize loss of on-street parking.
- Encouraging deliveries to be made by bicycle rather than automobile (when appropriate).
- Identification of a community demonstration project to test streetscape improvements desired by local communities.
- Design recommendations for significant multi-family developments to ensure that space is provided for loading areas, ride-hailing services, and short-term deliveries.

Bus and Micro-Transit

Because land use elements primarily cover the use and regulation of land, their approach to transit tends to focus on fixed-route transit, i.e. rail. This is because fixed transit remains fairly stable over time and has a direct and tangible relationship to existing and future development, whereas other forms of transit may shift their location or frequency and tend to have less influence on land development.

But this does not mean that non-fixed transit does not have a role to play in land use. As discussed in the Community Profile, Jersey City has a significant bus network that is a critical transportation resource for many residents, particularly those who lack strong access to PATH or light rail stations. Buses, as well as privately operated jitneys and microtransit options such as Via, are also important for intracity transportation (travel within Jersey City).

It is understood that the City will be undertaking a new Circulation Element in the next few years. That element of the Master Plan takes a deep dive into all forms of transportation and will certainly address bus and microtransit issues and opportunities. However, the following recommendations arose from this Land Use Element and should be considered by the City:
- Coordinate with NJ Transit and other bus providers on major new developments to ensure that bus transportation is located and timed to effectively serve new residents. Bus operators should be part of any community benefit negotiations in new or revised redevelopment plans.

- Work with NJ Transit to upgrade bus shelters and related amenities throughout the City, with a focus on socially vulnerable/environmental justice areas and areas located at least a half-mile from fixed-route transit.

- Collaborate with neighborhood groups to determine needs for operational and route changes to bus service in order to better serve residents.

- As part of the Circulation Element, explore the potential for bus rapid transit (BRT) on select corridors as appropriate. BRT systems can dramatically reduce travel times and improve quality-of-life for local residents. While true BRT requires substantial infrastructure and can be comparable to fixed-route transit, hybrid approaches can accomplish many of the same goals at a lower cost and in shorter timeframes. For example, designation of a portion or all of certain corridors for bus only can significantly increase the speed and frequency of bus service, as has been experienced on 14th Street in Manhattan.

- Continue to support and expand, as needed, the Via network to enhance transit options within Jersey City and connect neighborhoods.

**Parks and Open Space**

While the City has a wide variety of parks, the amount, quality, and access to parks is unevenly distributed. This Land Use Element seeks to strengthen the important link between quality-of-life and park/recreational access. The issues addressed include the preservation of parks and facilities; the completion of unfinished projects; the provision of new parks in underserved neighborhoods; and enhancing access to parks, the waterfront, and recreation facilities.

The Land Use Element was developed concurrently with the Open Space and Community Facilities Element, which involved a deeper look into park and open space needs. Development of the two elements was a collaborative process, ensuring that recommendations were consistent. The Open Space and Community Facilities Element provides a comprehensive list of recommendations which should be referred to directly. The list below includes those recommendations directly related to the location of new assets, which is closely linked to land use considerations. It does not include recommendations related to design, maintenance, programming, operation, marketing, and branding. Many of the recommendations from the Open Space and Community Facilities Element are echoed elsewhere in this Land Use Element.

**Theme: Connectivity**

Surround community facilities and parks with pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. Improve sidewalk accessibility, increase pedestrian-scale lighting, and increase mid-block crossings on Communipaw Avenue at Martin Luther King Drive, Bergen Avenue at Pavonia Avenue and Academy Street, Sip Avenue at Corbin Avenue and Jones Street, and along Route 139 headed downtown.

Connect proximate parks and open spaces through walking and biking infrastructure. Enhance pedestrian and bicycle facility in environmental justice, high stress locations close to community facilities and parks.

Link and invest in community resources close to existing or future transit stations and stops. Locate new transit, bus, and micro mobility stations in gap area neighborhoods.

Ensure that greenways are continuous connections that provide road transportation and creative spaces. Incentivize redevelopment and new development adjacent to greenways (existing, proposed, and future) to connect to the larger system.

Identify and establish a City-wide greenway network that is off-road wherever possible. Reclaim wide east-west rights-of-way and underutilized vacant land corridors to create a continuous protected greenway "boulevard," leveraging plans like Bergen Arches, Hackensack River
Greenway, the Harsimus Stem/ Sixth Street Embankment, and Reservoir 3, wherever possible.

**Theme: Open Space + Facilities**

*Acquire new land parcels for open space.* Prioritize new park investments and land acquisition in the Greenville, West Side, Hilltop, and Journal Square neighborhoods, where access to park space is limited.

*Balance the open space, facility, and recreation system.* Rebalance park amenities based on trends and geographic distribution (e.g. replace a percentage of softball and baseball fields with athletic fields). Reuse underutilized City-owned parcels or facility "yards" for open space/recreation. Coordinate major development projects with new open space creation.

*Prioritize reinvestment in existing parks in environmental justice communities.* Renovate a park or build a new community resource to close the community resource gap in Greenville/Ward A.

*Tie future development to expanded space (indoor/outdoor).* Craft joint-use agreements and partnership standards to incentivize developers to create needed community amenities, like recreation centers.

*Connect Police and Fire facilities and grounds with their communities.* Transform leftover outdoor spaces next to fire stations and police stations into pocket parks with native plantings and seating. This will make these spaces more welcoming and expand park access in the densest areas.

**Theme: Green Infrastructure + Buildings**

*Repurpose curb bump outs as micro pocket parks or rain gardens.* Prioritize areas in gaps, high stress areas, or near schools/libraries. Work with the Municipal Utilities Authority, Engineering Department, Department of Public Works, and other partners to support green infrastructure and address heat island in socially vulnerable neighborhoods.

*Create habitats in underutilized or interstitial spaces and along waterfront shorelines.* Foster living shorelines in waterfront parks and along river greenways.

*Adapt buildings for climate readiness and education using the metrics in the Climate Action Plan.* Upgrade HVAC systems. Invest in redundant systems and disaster preparedness for all community facilities in case of emergencies or to serve as cooling centers during the summer months.

Expand tree coverage equitably throughout the City. Adopt and follow an Urban Forest program. Maximize tree coverage in park and community facility properties and within adjacent public right-of-ways.

Reduce impervious surfaces on City-owned land. Retrofit City buildings with green roofs and porous outdoor surfaces.

Create avenues for residents to support green infrastructure on private property. Create incentives for private residents to maintain wild flora and fauna and increase pervious surfaces on private property.

**Other Recommendations**

**Affordable and Workforce Housing**

The City has a significant need for affordable housing, as evidenced by the lengthy waiting list for public housing and rental assistance. This need is further demonstrated by the large number of renters, 36%, who pay more than 30% of their income for housing. The City has made addressing the need for affordable housing a priority in order to promote residential stability.

The City should encourage the continued development of a variety of housing, ranging from affordable to moderate-income and market-rate units, through set-aside requirements in new development, designation of affordable units within existing housing stock through per-unit buy-down programs, and preservation of naturally occurring affordable units.

Existing zoning policies currently promote the development of larger unit sizes compared with smaller and more affordable units. One example of this is the R-1 and R-1A districts, which allow for 2 units within a 3-story home. Lifting restrictions on density will help to provide a more diverse mix of unit types at a wider range of price
points. In addition, the City should consider allowing accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in existing garages and carriage houses throughout Jersey City, providing further options for smaller and more affordable units that can be interspersed throughout residential neighborhoods.

Other LDO items, definitions, and standards

City staff have identified a number of LDO definitions and procedures that should be revisited, including:

• Consider and implement maximum lot sizes where appropriate;
• Clean up land use definitions and in particular address the corner lot definition;
• Consider adjusting minor site plan thresholds so that small apartment buildings don’t always have to come before a board - this could increase affordability by encouraging developers to comply with zoning standards regardless of hardships and seek ministerial approval before moving straight to permits; and
• Review and update supplementary zoning standards as zoning provisions are updated or new zones are created.

Design Guidelines for Gateway Areas

Important to the perception of any city is the design quality of its gateways. Gateways into and within Jersey City exist in a multitude of forms along the highways and rail corridors, none of which fully realizes their potential for signaling and celebrating the arrival into the City and the transition from one neighborhood to another.

There are a number of ways to improve the function and appearance of major gateways. Streetscape, landscape, and signage treatments can help to improve the public realm. For privately owned properties, designating an area as a “gateway overlay district” can also help though the provision of special area, bulk, landscaping, and design regulations which will improve the image and function of an area. Candidates for inclusion in a Gateway Overlay District include the following:

• Newark Avenue, in the gateway connecting Journal Square to Downtown. Design guidelines should promote enhanced signage, planting, banners, etc. and the development of a green gateway near the Turnpike, 6th Street, Division Street, and Mary Benson Park.
• Jersey Avenue as a potential gateway through Downtown, from 2nd Street at the north and Grand Street at the south.
• Entrances to the City at Route 440 and Communipaw Avenue, Route 440 from Bayonne, Jersey Avenue and Marin Boulevard from Hoboken, Kennedy Boulevard at either end, and Tonnele Avenue and connector streets branching therefrom.
• Access to/from the City from the Holland Tunnel (14th Street and 12th Street)

Signage

The provision of signage associated with commercial, industrial, and residential development is a significant issue with land use and urban design implications. Signage has the potential to enhance development and contribute to the streetscape, but it can have a detrimental impact if the size, height, number and design of signs is not well regulated.

A complete revision of the City’s sign regulations is recommended to ensure that high-quality, attractive and compatible signage accompanies development. Careful consideration should be given to the regulation of billboards in order to preserve important viewsheds, historic districts, and residential areas. Providing clear guidelines will provide consistent guidance to applicants, with enough flexibility to accommodate their needs. This will help to reduce staff time and resources reviewing applications.

The following needs must be addressed in the City-wide signage update:

• Create targeted design guidelines for NC and similar zones based on building context and proximity to transit.
• Revise commercial signage regulations to allow more blade signs.
• Provide guidance on storefront and billboard signage.
• Create sign guidelines for historic districts.
• Create guidelines for district identifiers used to delineate activity areas and gateways to neighborhoods.
Wireless Communication

The wireless telecommunications industry has experienced significant growth during the past decade as the demand for portable voice and data transmission has increased. This growth is projected to continue, resulting in the need for additional wireless telecommunication facilities. These facilities often have significant land use implications such as appropriate location, screening and buffering and visual impact. It is recommended that the City adopt a wireless telecommunications ordinance which regulates siting and addresses bulk, buffering, and aesthetic issues.

Cannabis Businesses

In February 2021, Gov. Philip D. Murphy signed legislation that effectively permits and regulates the use of recreational marijuana in New Jersey. The legislation imposed a deadline of August 21, 2021, for municipalities to enact regulations on the various classes of cannabis operations. Failure to adopt implementing ordinances by the deadline would trigger default provisions allowing certain classes “as of right” in commercial and industrial zones, for a five-year period.

In advance of the deadline, City Planning staff developed a series of land use regulations, which were subsequently adopted, providing that the following State-designated licenses of cannabis establishments are conditional uses:

- Class 1 – Cannabis Cultivator
- Class 2 – Cannabis Manufacturer
- Class 3 – Cannabis Wholesaler
- Class 4 – Cannabis Distributor
- Class 5 – Cannabis Retailer

Classes 1, 2, 3, and 4 are permitted in all industrial zones, light industrial zones, or industrial overlays, as well as the HC zone along Tonnele Avenue. These uses are subject to the conditions that they must be located at least 200 feet from each other and that they may not be collocated with any residential use on the same lot, as well as provisions restricting outdoor cultivation and fencing. Uses classified as microbusinesses (subject to limits on the number of employees and scale of the operation, and requiring local ownership) are permitted in C/A and HC zones, subject to the same restrictions as other Classes 1, 2, 3, and 4 establishments except the distance requirement from each other.

Class 5 cannabis establishments are permitted in the NC, R-2D, C/A, HC, WPD, CBD, and O/R zones, as well as any redevelopment plan area where retail sales of goods and services is a principal permitted use. Retail cannabis establishments are not permitted within 200 feet of a school and would be subject to distancing restrictions from each other.

At this time, the City has opted out of permitting cannabis consumption areas until local licensing provisions for these uses are promulgated by the State Cannabis Regulatory Commission (CRC).
REDEVELOPMENT PLAN ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Over the years, Jersey City has been a strong advocate for redevelopment planning, and has realized significant benefits from this land use tool. In many cases, redevelopment designation may be the best option for a particular property or area. Some examples include situations where the significant investment required for environmental remediation or infrastructure makes conventional development not viable, where varied ownership and/or title issues prevent orderly development, or where substantial community benefits may be attainable that would strengthen the development project as well as the neighborhood.

However, from a broad policy perspective, there are several reasons why the City may consider using redevelopment more sparingly in the future. Most importantly, the presence of dozens of individual redevelopment areas – each with tailored use, area and bulk, and design provisions – creates an ad hoc approach to land use planning rather than promoting holistic City-wide planning. In addition, the redevelopment process can be seen as less predictable for the public and nearby property owners than traditional zoning, as it can occur quickly at the request of the property owner rather than through a long-term planning process. The following section outlines some recommended changes to redevelopment planning for consideration.

Consistency Across Redevelopment Areas and Transition to Residential Neighborhoods

For newly created redevelopment plans or those that exist but may be amended, the language on urban design, parking, and specific use and bulk controls needs to be clearer, with potential project hurdles discussed and addressed between involved agencies in order to provide strategic guidance for the life cycle of a plan area.

The City should consider developing more uniform standards and design guidelines across redevelopment plan areas, based on the Urban Design Framework. The guidelines will help to ensure an appropriate transition through recommended graduated height and density controls along the periphery of a redevelopment area. This is particularly important when redevelopment areas abut lower-scale residential neighborhoods, such as redevelopment along the periphery of Journal Square and the industrial areas to the north of Downtown. These guidelines could also require shadow analysis on adjacent neighborhoods and greater consideration of the public realm. In addition, where development bonuses or similar incentives are part of a redevelopment plan, specific milestones should be incorporated to avoid ambiguous goals and objectives that may not be realistic to meet

Community Benefits and Open Space

The process of developing community benefit agreements should be improved so that they take into account the needs of surrounding neighborhoods as well as the provisions of other adjacent redevelopment plans. For example, rather than individual redevelopment plans being required to create public open space, multiple adjoining redevelopment plans in a neighborhood could each provide a portion of connected open space. Such a “pooling” of space could create a much more meaningful and usable area for the larger neighborhood. Specifically, the following strategies are recommended:

- Work closely with developers through the redevelopment area planning process to construct

Figure 105: Redevelopment Plan Areas
new parks and recreation areas that serve the wider area as well as the residents of new development. Where multiple individual developments are located near each other, favor an approach that promotes fewer and larger spaces rather than individual, smaller spaces. This could include a requirement in future or revised redevelopment plans to meet with the Department of Parks and Forestry to determine the recreational and open space needs within a half-mile of the redevelopment plan area and the ability of the future development to address those needs.

- Use findings from the Open Space and Community Facilities Element and its gaps analysis to make recommended changes to redevelopment plans or create new redevelopment plans.
- On the Hackensack River, incorporate a public walkway, where not already required, as part of all redevelopment with property along the river and in future plans for the Route 440 Boulevard.
- Ensure that public access does not “feel” private through signage and design treatments – this is especially important in areas of gated communities.
- Incorporate the requirement of parks and open space in large planned developments and explore opportunities to connect to nearby existing parks and greenways.
- Require that new or revised redevelopment plans within a half-mile of fixed transit (i.e. PATH or HBLR stations) that include new residential development to meet with the Port Authority and/or NJ Transit to assess the potential impact of new residents on existing infrastructure and the need for any upgrades.
- Require that new redevelopment plans within priority areas identified in the Resiliency Master Plan as vulnerable to climate change must incorporate resiliency and adaptation strategies. Existing redevelopment plans in these areas should be reviewed to reflect such strategies, including the potential to advance the specific measures for the priority areas discussed in the Adaptation Master Plan.

Duration of Redevelopment Plans and Transition to Straight Zoning

A clear outcome of the analysis of redevelopment areas in Jersey City is a recognition that there is significant ambiguity about when and how redevelopment plans can “sunset.” While most plans have an expiration date, a number of these dates have passed, which creates uncertainty about whether development can actually occur, or whether the area then reverts to its original zoning (which in some cases may no longer exist). The JCRA recommends that existing expiration dates be extended, and ideally, that specific expiration dates not be included in redevelopment plans. An alternative could be to eliminate specific expiration dates, but to provide clear milestones that must be satisfied in order for the redevelopment plan to be considered “complete” and able to sunset. This will make it easier for redevelopment plan areas to transition into traditional zoning districts, once they are determined to be complete.

As a general policy, no redevelopment designation should be eliminated unless the future zoning for the area clearly accommodates either the existing development or the desired future development. This means that if a redevelopment plan has expired and development has been completed according to that plan, its future zoning should be either in an existing zone or a newly created zone whose area and bulk standards accommodate the status quo. An example of where this has occurred is the new R-1W zoning district, which was created to incorporate the former Webster Avenue Redevelopment Plan area.

If the redevelopment previously completed under a redevelopment plan is no longer desired, then a new redevelopment designation and plan should be undertaken. An example is Gregory Park – the City’s first redevelopment plan – where development is complete, but the “tower in a parking lot” urban form does not represent the preferred development pattern and should be revisited. Another example is the Newport redevelopment plan, which has largely been built-out, but a substantial piece of which – Newport Centre Mall – faces a drastically different market than when it was constructed nearly 40 years ago. The mall portion of the redevelopment area presents an opportunity for new uses and development patterns that can only be accommodated through a new or significantly revised plan.

Similarly, if a redevelopment plan has expired and little or no development has occurred, the approach should be either to bring the area into zoning that reflects the immediately surrounding context, or to undertake a new redevelopment plan.

The redevelopment analysis undertaken for this Land Use Element focused on which plans should remain in place as redevelopment proceeds, which plans may require revisions to reflect new conditions or City priorities, and which plans may be explored for closing out and transitioning to traditional or “straight” zoning. In consultation with City Planning staff, the redevelopment plans are grouped into one of these three categories. As shown in the map following the table, most redevelopment plans are
### Revise Existing Redevelopment Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gregory Park</td>
<td>Development complete; could be revisited to promote redevelopment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland Tunnel</td>
<td>Amend to promote greater north-south connectivity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John’s</td>
<td>Development complete, but could be revisited given proximity to Journal Square.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luis Munoz Marin</td>
<td>Development complete, but portions are underbuilt and provide more opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine Industrial</td>
<td>Undeveloped; amend to reflect Bayfront, Route 440 improvements, environmental issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery Street</td>
<td>Revisit for potential to combine park portion with Bates Street redevelopment plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery Gateway</td>
<td>Amend to reflect new development strategy that better connects with neighborhoods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris Canal</td>
<td>Revisit for potential to incorporate recommendations from Junction Small Area Vision Plan. In R residential zone, create a new zone to rezone to R-1, R-5, or H.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boyd McGuinness</td>
<td>Revisit for potential boundary change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claremont Industrial</td>
<td>Largely undeveloped; plan should be revisited to reflect grading and ROW issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newport</td>
<td>Development complete, but could be revisited for potential redevelopment of mall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Jersey</td>
<td>Revisit for potential changes on open space and bulk/density.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armory</td>
<td>Amend to correct boundary conflicts with McGinley Square East plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Street</td>
<td>Revisit to review bonuses and ways to maintain industrial character.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powerhouse Arts District</td>
<td>Amend to refine arts bonus language and to reflect recent development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mebaneles Street</td>
<td>Revisit for potential to consider bonuses to fund improvements to Mary Benson Park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hackensack River Edge</td>
<td>Amend to address open space, legal issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newark Avenue Downtown</td>
<td>Revisit to address ongoing height variance requests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal Square 2060</td>
<td>Amend to create additional transition zone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 440 Culver</td>
<td>Revisit to address density issues, ways to preserve industrial character.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocean Avenue South</td>
<td>Revisit to look at ground-floor commercial requirements given limited market for retail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson Hill</td>
<td>Revisit to consider potential inclusion of historic sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocean/Bayview</td>
<td>Revisit boundaries to make RDP more contiguous. Consider connecting with Ocean Avenue South RDP.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Consider Transition to Straight Zoning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jackson Avenue</td>
<td>Create new zone to reflect existing urban fabric or rezone to R-5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beacon Avenue</td>
<td>Move to adjacent zoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webster Avenue</td>
<td>Create new zone to reflect existing urban fabric.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Villa</td>
<td>Move to adjacent zoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grove and Mercer</td>
<td>Move to adjacent zoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne Street</td>
<td>Move to adjacent zoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majestic Theater</td>
<td>Move to adjacent zoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic Container</td>
<td>Move to adjacent zoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communipaw West Community Center</td>
<td>Move to adjacent zoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boland Street</td>
<td>Move to adjacent zoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majestic Theater II</td>
<td>Move to adjacent zoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>325 Palisade Avenue</td>
<td>Move to adjacent zoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopkins and Central</td>
<td>Move to adjacent zoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>826 Ocean Avenue</td>
<td>Move to adjacent zoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-25 Duncan Avenue</td>
<td>Move to adjacent zoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge and North</td>
<td>Move to adjacent zoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 239 Lot 47</td>
<td>Move to adjacent zoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Erie Street</td>
<td>Move to adjacent zoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris Canal (Only in R Residential Zone)</td>
<td>Create new zone to reflect existing or rezone to R-1, R-5 or H.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16: Suggested Action on Redevelopment Plans
Redevelopment Plan Areas

- Logo Park
- Holland Tunnel
- Jackson Avenue
- St. John's
- Pulaski Bridge
- Liberty Harbor
- Exchange Place
- Luken Marina
- Marine Industrial
- Grove Street
- Henderson Street South
- Beaver Avenue
- Montgomery Street
- Coxe-Bayley
- North Street
- Montgomery Gateway
- Boyd McGann Park
- North Street C
- Lafayette Park
- Webster Avenue
- Village
- Turnkey
- Belo Brewery
- Dryers Point
- Harmons Cove Station
- Exchange Place North
- Grove Street
- Grand Street
- Exchange Place North
- Montgomery Street
- Liberty Harbor
- Ninth Street II
- Boyd McGuiness Park
- Montgomery Gateway
- Grove Street II
- Communipaw West Community Center
- Grove Street II
- Liberty Harbor North
- Wagner Gateway
- Gans Avenue Gateway
- Basin Street
- Columbus Corner
- Powerhouse
- SLUMC West Campus
- West Side Avenue
- Morgan Grove Marine
- Memorial Street
- Majestic Theater II
- Colgate
- New Jersey Garden
- The Beacon
- Grove and Mercer
- Exchange Place
- Liberty Harbor
- Montgomery Street
- Independence

Redevelopment Plan Statutes

- Maintain Existing RDP:
  - Remain as is
  - Plans that are incomplete, not prioritized for amendments

- Opportunity to Transition Into Zoning:
  - Create New Zone
  - New Zone would be needed, based on mix of RDP uses
  - Match Surrounding Zoning
  - Potential transition could match zoning adjacent to RDP area

- Opportunity for RDP Update:
  - Revisit Plan
  - Opportunity areas for amendment(s); Next steps need to be identified

Note: This map is current as of 5/1/21 Since this map was produced the Central Avenue Block 2901 Redevelopment Plan and the Laurel Saddlewood Redevelopment Plan were adopted and the Webster Avenue Redevelopment was converted by ordinance into the R-1W - Webster Avenue Housing District.

Figure 106: Potential Zoning Map Changes in Redevelopment Plan Areas

Source: City of Jersey City.
recommended to be retained, with future development proceeding according to the provisions of each plan.¹

Any change to a redevelopment plan area—whether an amendment or a removal of the designation—will require negotiation with the affected property owners to address the significant potential legal issues involved with changing the existing development rights. Such adjustments will need to be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Overlay Zones

Because of the substantial complexities that exist in closing out redevelopment plans, the City should consider designating future redevelopment plan areas as overlay zones, rather than superseding zones. This would allow property owners the flexibility to opt in to the redevelopment plan’s provisions, but would establish predictability with underlying zoning, in the event that the redevelopment plan sunsets and the area needs to revert to original zoning.

Potential New/Revised Redevelopment Plan Areas

There are several locations where a redevelopment area designation would make sense, or where revisions to existing redevelopment plans are needed:

Hudson County Office Complex

The Hudson County office complex at Cornelison Avenue between Montgomery and Academy Streets, is characterized by significant surface parking areas that break up the street wall on Montgomery Street, isolating the NC area between Cornelison Avenue and Mercer Loop. A redevelopment plan here could facilitate a mix of office, public open space, and residential uses to serve the surrounding neighborhood and create a stronger link to McGinley Square. Future redevelopment should also enhance pedestrian and bike connections, including through re-establishing a traditional street grid with smaller, more walkable blocks.

Sixth Street Embankment

The Sixth Street Embankment is an abandoned elevated train line that stretches from Marin Boulevard to Brunswick Street. The City has long envisioned transforming this legacy infrastructure into an elevated park. While negotiations were underway with Conrail, the rail operator backed out of a deal, leaving the redevelopment plan tool as an alternative strategy to secure the area for public use. The City is in the process of investigating whether this land should be designated as an “area in need of redevelopment.” In addition to the six-block Embankment, there are various parcels to the west that could be utilized to connect the future park to the Bergen Arches and Essex-Hudson Greenway. If designated for redevelopment, only a small portion of the land would be eligible to be seized through eminent domain, according to the resolution.

Water Street Redevelopment Plan

The West Side Avenue Station Small Area Vision Plan (SAVP) identified the community’s desire to create opportunities for investment in the community through the rehabilitation and redevelopment of vacant, abandoned, and blighted properties. There was also a strong preference that new development be oriented toward public transportation and encourage non-motorized mobility options.

To accomplish these goals, the Water Street Redevelopment Plan should be updated. This update should expand the boundaries to include the area encompassed by Claremont Avenue, Kennedy Boulevard, Kearney Avenue, and West Side Avenue, as well as the parcels on the west side of West Side Avenue between Yale and Claremont Avenues. This largely light industrial and auto-oriented commercial area has the potential to be redeveloped into a moderate-density, mixed-scale residential area. Parcels that face onto West Side Avenue should be required to have ground-floor pedestrian-oriented commercial uses.

In addition to the expansion of the boundaries, the plan should be updated to require:

- The construction of a “Town Square” on the location of the current kiss-and-ride lot. The square should serve as a gateway to the community. It should have space for community gathering, include a mixture of hard and soft scape, and allow for outdoor commercial activity including café seating and pop-up events such as farmers markets and holiday fairs. The space should be designed to be inclusive of people of all ages and abilities.
- The redesign of West Side Avenue between Grant Avenue and Kearny Avenue. This redesign should include substantial streetscaping improvements that bridge the gap between the commercial district north and south of the station. Streetscaping elements

¹ This exercise excludes the Scatter-Site Redevelopment Plan, which is intended to promote the rehabilitation of vacant buildings. This plan is regularly amended (most recently in 2016) either to add designated properties or to remove properties once they are rehabilitated.
The updated plan should include, and expand on, the community-identified design recommendations as articulated in the SAVP. There should be a strong emphasis on the attraction of essential services to the area, especially high-quality grocery options. This may include specifically requiring that they be part of the development program. When updating the plan, the City should reexamine the density, use, and bulk requirements to ensure that the area can reasonably be redeveloped given current market conditions.

For more information about the potential for updates to the Water Street Redevelopment Plan, see the West Side Avenue SAVP.

Morris Canal Redevelopment Plan

The Morris Canal Redevelopment Plan should be updated to reflect the goals and objectives identified in the Junction Small Area Vision Plan. The Redevelopment Plan should expand the list of permitted principal uses on the site to include grocery stores and specifically identify pharmacies, laundromats, urgent care facilities, and hardware stores as permitted ground-floor uses. Moreover, the plan should be updated to reflect the potential for the redesign of the Grand Street, Garfield Avenue, Summit Avenue, and Communipaw Avenue network as identified in the SAVP. This should include an update to the bulk and density standards based on an analysis of the cost implications of the redesign.

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**Recommended Zoning Changes**

- Zoning Districts
- Redevelopment Plan Areas
- NJSEA
- Potential New Redevelopment Plan Areas

**Figure 107: Potential Zoning Map Changes in Redevelopment Plan Areas**
should be pedestrian-oriented and establish a strong sense of place that distinguishes this area from the surrounding road network.

- The creation of a park along the northern portion of the rail corridor that will serve as a neighborhood amenity and as a multi-modal connection between West Side Avenue and Kennedy Boulevard.

The updated plan should include, and expand on, the community-identified design recommendations as articulated in the SAVP. There should be a strong emphasis on the attraction of essential services to the area, especially high-quality grocery options. This may include specifically requiring that they be part of the development program.

When updating the plan, the City should reexamine the density, use, and bulk requirements to ensure that the area can reasonably be redeveloped given current market conditions.

For more information about the potential for updates to the Water Street Redevelopment Plan, see the West Side Avenue SAVP.

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HISTORIC DISTRICT ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2015 Historic Preservation Element notes that, at the time of the 2000 Master Plan, fears of historic designation leading to gentrification were a major barrier to preservation efforts outside of the downtown area. While gentrification does remain a concern that needs to be addressed in any new or expanded historic district, residents are increasingly seeing the benefits of historic designation. At the same time, growth in housing prices has continued to drive demand for housing throughout the City, placing significant development pressure on the areas of Jersey City whose historic resources are generally least protected. The designation of the West Bergen-East Lincoln Park Historic District reflects a recognition of both greater desire for official historic preservation and the need to respond to the threat of inappropriate renovations, teardowns, and incompatible new construction.

Potential Historic Districts

There are two areas that should be explored for designation as State and National Register as well as local historic districts: Bergen Hill and Communipaw-Lafayette. The Bergen Hill area is located just west of the Junction, and is centered on Communipaw Avenue, generally bounded by Bramhall Avenue to the south, Belmont Avenue to the north, Bergen Avenue/Sackett Street to the west, and Arlington Avenue/Cornelison Avenue to the east. This area has been determined by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) as eligible for listing on the State Register and features a mix of late 19th and early 20th century architecture, including brick rowhouses, brownstones, Queen Anne-style apartment buildings, and private homes. It also includes local, state or nationally designated landmarks such as St. John’s Episcopal Church, Fickens Warehouse, and St. Patrick’s parish.

Communipaw-Lafayette is west of the Liberty State Park light rail station and is bounded by Bramhall Avenue to the south, Lafayette Street to the north, Halladay Street to the west, and Pine Street to the east. Like Bergen Hill, this area has been determined eligible for listing on the State Register. While it does not contain individual sites listed on either the State or National Registers or designated as local landmarks, Communipaw-Lafayette contains a number of eligible sites – including former church buildings and rowhouses – that collectively establish an intact historic district.

There is also community support for a local historic district along Sherman Place in the Heights. The recommended district name is “Hudson City Historic District” which reflects the original name of the area. While SHPO has not issued an opinion of eligibility, the street contains a number of well-preserved Victorian homes, pre-war apartment buildings, and brick rowhouses. The neighborhood has hired a historic preservation consultant to explore designation, and the City could consider a local historic district designation pending the results of any analysis.

Update Historic Preservation Element, Including Cultural Resources Survey

Given the age of the existing Cultural Resources Survey and other historic preservation planning resources, the City should prepare a new Historic Preservation Element of the Master Plan, including an updated Cultural Resources Survey with particular focus on sites and structures that reflect the full diversity of its history. Specifically, the survey should identify resources that are historically important for communities of color and immigrants – groups that may not have been fully recognized in prior historic preservation or cultural recognition efforts. This effort will require cooperation with community partners and neighborhood representatives to recognize key historic resources that celebrate the City’s multicultural past.

The new Historic Preservation Element should also address recent issues that have arisen in the historic districts, including the need to revisit design guidelines for historically significant buildings in the flood zone and a review of the demolition ordinance to ensure that it is effectively balancing preservation objectives with desired new development and staff resources.

Re-Evaluate Boundaries of Existing Districts

Regarding existing local historic districts, the Historic Preservation Officers recommend that the City explore expansion of the Hamilton Park and Harsimus Cove historic districts along the western edges, where some buildings may warrant inclusion in those districts. In addition, the underlying zoning in the West Bergen-East Lincoln Park district needs to be addressed for parcels that fall in multiple zoning districts (for example the former YMCA building on Bergen Avenue). The edges of all properties in H districts should be reviewed in order to identify and eliminate split zoned lots.

Ensuring Compatible Redevelopment within Historic Districts

Both the 2015 Historic Preservation Element and the Historic Preservation Officers have noted issues with the historic preservation regulations and process. The bulk
Historic Preservation Officers have noted issues with the Historic Districts along the western edges, where some buildings have been demolished without proper review. The demolition ordinance needs to be addressed for parcels that fall in multiple zoning districts (for example the former YMCA building on Bergen Avenue). The edges of all properties need to be addressed in order to identify and protect historic resources.

The City of Jersey City has hired a historic preservation consultant to explore the designation of the West Bergen-East Lincoln Park Historic District. This area has been determined by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and is bounded by Bramhall Avenue to the east. This area has been listed as State and National Register as well as local historic districts: Bergen Hill and Communipaw-Lafayette. The recommended district is “Hudson City Historic District” which is centered on Communipaw Avenue, generally bounded by Patrick’s parish.

The 2015 Historic Preservation Element notes that, at the time, growth in housing prices has continued to drive residents to move to historic districts. While gentrification was a major barrier to preservation efforts outside of the downtown area, residents are increasingly seeing the benefits of historic designation. At the same time, growth in housing prices has continued to drive residents to move to historic districts. The recommended district needs to be addressed for parcels that fall in new or expanded historic district.

Re-Evaluate Boundaries of Existing Districts

The survey with particular focus on sites and structures that reflect the full diversity of its history. Specifically, the survey should identify resources that are historically important and celebrate the City’s multicultural past. Including Cultural Resources Survey and other historic preservation planning resources, the analysis of existing boundaries and zones. Potential Historic Districts designation of the West Bergen-East Lincoln Park Historic District.

Analyze edges of the H district, look to eliminate split-zoned lots

Figure 108: Historic District Recommendations

Source: City of Jersey City, 2015 Jersey City Historic Preservation Element; Jersey City Zoning Ordinance, as amended.
standards in historic districts need to be revised to allow for higher density, to match surrounding existing buildings, and for greater height, to incorporate the base flood elevation while matching predominant row height. Making these adjustments would ensure more compatible yet flexible development, as applications for new construction in historic districts regularly need to seek variances to allow the same bulk as adjacent existing buildings. The design standards for infill development should be supplemented with specific standards, including a requirement to meet the prevailing height and setback of adjacent structures facing the same street, as well as structures across the street. The urban design guidelines in the 2000 Master Plan remain relevant as the basis for such standards.

One way to promote appropriate development within historic districts is to facilitate adaptive reuse, so that new uses can be accommodated without losing historic structures. The 2015 Historic Preservation Element recommends that the list of permitted uses in historic districts should be reviewed, with a focus on allowing uses that lend themselves to adaptive reuse. Bed and breakfasts – which are already allowed in the Harsimus Cove, Paulus Hook, and Van Vorst Park districts – are specifically noted as such uses; however there may be others. The Historic Preservation Officers suggest consideration for allowing adaptive reuse to be considered as positive criteria for variance requests. This would provide for Historic Preservation Commission staff to be consulted in such applications, and the Department of the Interior standards for adaptive reuse to be followed.

Other Historic District Recommendations

Other recommendations from the 2015 Historic Preservation Element and City staff that should be advanced include prioritizing removal and below-grade placement of overhead utilities (except for light rail infrastructure) in all historic districts, and removal of the provision in the Paulus Hook Historic District that properties north of York Street refer to the bulk and use standards for the O/R district. The O/R standards are not appropriate to apply to these parcels, which include the historic post office on Washington Street and rowhouse structures on York and Greene Streets.

Funding and Staffing

Lastly, a key barrier to effective historic preservation is funding. The City should continue to pursue efforts to achieve designation as a Certified Local Government (CLG), which would allow the Historic Preservation Commission to receive matching grants from the federal government for historic studies and preservation efforts including planning and education projects and historic register nomination plans. The City must also provide for adequate historic preservation staffing to review development and demolition applications. Additional Historic Preservation Specialists are needed, and more staff would likely be needed with the creation of any new historic districts.
**IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX**

This Land Use Element represents not only a product of much time and effort, but also the beginning of a process that involves altering conditions, regulations, and procedures in Jersey City. Some of these changes will require further, more detailed studies and plans. Sustained public involvement is necessary to bring the items in this plan to fruition.

The summary of recommendations below identifies specific steps the City can take to carry out recommendations within this element. The matrix can be used as a “To Do” list, intended to help the City track its implementation progress. It is recommended that the City review and update this matrix yearly.

**Funding and Staffing**

Chapter 5: Zoning Issues and Recommendations | 189

**Residential Areas and Districts**

**R-1 District**

*Proposed Regulatory Changes*

**Residential Density:**

- Consider allowing three families as a conditional use. Conditions could include provisions to limit or reduce the number of curb cuts, discourage demolition of existing housing, reduce impervious coverage, and promote smaller and more affordable units.
- Establish an overall residential density in the R-1 district to accommodate 2- or 3-unit dwellings on a 25x100 lot, with additional residential density to promote restoration of historically significant structures.

**Bulk Provisions:**

- Adjust bulk provisions to:
  - Provide for attached housing, which can create a more continuous street frontage and eliminate side yards that have minimal usage;
  - Reduce large front yards that tend to be used for off-street parking;
  - Standardize building height requirements; and.
  - Increase permeable coverage on individual lots.
  - Prioritize lot width over lot depth as well as lot area.
- Consider creating design guidelines that promote rehabilitation and/or compatible new development.
- Provide that senior housing follows the same bulk controls but not necessarily same density as rest of district.

**Parking:**

- Do not permit off-street parking on lots less than 50 feet wide and restrict curb cuts to a maximum of 10 feet for every 50 feet of lot frontage. This would promote development that is less disruptive to the pedestrian streetscape and that increases available on-street parking.
- Base parking requirements on bedrooms, not total unit count (0.2 space per bedroom).
- Enforce prohibitions on parking in front yard.

**Use Provisions:**

- Allow ground-floor restaurants as conditional uses at corners and along wide streets, to promote the location of more goods and services within walking distance.
- Permit the conversion of street-facing garages into small businesses.
**Map Changes:**

- Consider rezoning areas where it may be appropriate to reflect the existing multifamily land use character or the desired development pattern based on the existing context.
- Consider creating a new zoning district or R-1 overlay zone to preserve the scale of for low-rise (2-story) areas.

**Public Realm Recommendation**

- Right size traffic lanes and reclaim additional cartway width for dedicated bike lanes. Provide shared bike lanes (with traffic) on narrow right-of-ways.

**R-1A/R-1F Districts**

- Merge the R-1A districts into R-1F to allow three-family units in these areas as a conditional use. If separate districts are maintained, establish residential density as in the R-1.

**R-3 District**

- Adjust graduated density requirements and consider graduated height requirements that correlate with these densities.

**R-4 District**

- Simplify height stepback requirements
- Consider elimination of some of these areas and incorporating them into other districts.
- Increase allowable height to 14 stories (from 4-8 stories, allowable height is currently dependent on use)

**Use Provisions for All Residential Districts**

- Standardize bulk requirements for each district regardless of use and create a use table which clearly indicates what uses are allowed. This will help to maintain cohesion and clarity for development in each zone and allow for changes to a building’s use once it is constructed.
- Allow detached garages and carriage houses to be converted to accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to increase affordable housing options.
Commercial Areas and Districts

Neighborhood Commercial Districts and Transit Nodes

**Proposed Regulatory Changes**

- Consider new zoning in neighborhood centers and around HBLR stations to promote density and commercial activity around existing infrastructure. Three scales of NC districts are proposed, each tailored to a different context. For areas that are located in redevelopment plan areas, these scales should be considered in future redevelopment plan revisions.

- NC-S: Small-Scale Neighborhood Centers – 5 stories, required mixed-use (apartments over ground-floor retail). NC-S may be appropriate for following areas:
  - Ocean and Lembeck Avenues
  - Danforth Avenue and Old Bergen Road
  - Central Avenue
  - The Junction
  - Areas adjacent to the 2nd Street, 9th Street-Congress Street, and Garfield Avenue HBLR stations

- NC-M: Medium-Scale Neighborhood Centers – 6-8 stories, required mixed-use or commercial. NC-M may be appropriate for following areas:
  - West Side Avenue (from Communipaw Avenue south to the HBLR tracks and including the station area)
  - Newark Avenue (west of Summit Avenue)
  - Five Corners
  - Martin Luther King Avenue HBLR station area

- NC-L: Large-Scale Neighborhood Centers – 8-12 stories, favored mixed-use, commercial, government facilities with required publicly accessible active street-level uses. NC-L may be appropriate for following areas:
  - McGinley Square
  - Areas surrounding the Journal Square commercial core

**Public Realm and Open Space Recommendations**

- Use bulk standards to create publicly usable plazas to create a central open space (“market square”) and support new commercial uses. Program public plazas with street furniture and other urban streetscape elements, and create zones for ongoing, programmed activities like farmer’s markets, local festivals, and street food vendors.

- Expand central public space where possible and create curb extensions at wide intersections. Create new open space by reclaiming right-of-way.

- Limit on-street parking in areas near the market square and promote non-auto transportation.

- Right size traffic lanes to reclaim additional right-of-way for bike lanes and expanded sidewalks.

- Incorporate all urban streetscape elements such as uniform signage, planting, lighting etc. to enhance the identity of the neighborhood center.

**Gateway Commercial Zone**

- Create a Gateway Commercial Zone along commercial corridors that are vehicular entry points to the City. This zone would seek to improve the public realm to enhance the pedestrian experience, lessen nuisance impacts to nearby neighborhoods, and limit drive-thru commercial activities in favor of uses oriented to the street. Consider this zone for the following areas:
  - Communipaw Avenue west of West Side Avenue (currently zoned C/A)
  - Route 139 west of Palisade Avenue (currently zoned R-1)
  - Southern portion of Kennedy Boulevard (currently zoned NC)
### Regional, City, and Neighborhood Corridors

**Proposed Regulatory Changes**

- On regional and city Corridors, consider increased density at key intersections while respecting scale of surrounding neighborhoods.
- For city corridors:
  - Standardize minimum street wall height.
  - At intersections, require buildings to build to the edge of sidewalk.
  - Limit all surface parking at these smaller scale nodes and consider eliminating front yards.

### Public Realm and Open Space Recommendations

- Design intersection treatments to enhance safety for pedestrians and bicyclists and organize traffic movement.
- Allow temporary parklets in on-street parking lots on city and neighborhood Corridors.
- In high density areas, create zones for drop-off and street food vendors. Prioritize planting where active uses don’t include restaurants or need outdoor seating. Provide infrastructure for multi-modal connectivity. Prohibit curb cuts and accommodate parking in building structures.
- In low- to medium-density mixed-use areas, right-size traffic lanes and reclaim space to widen sidewalks to support active uses. Provide infrastructure for multi-modal connectivity.
- Limit parking at intersections and prioritize installation of urban streetscape elements such as trash cans, lighting, signage etc., especially in dense areas.
- Consider density bonuses for new public open space and capital improvements.

### Large Format Commercial

- The following principles should be used when considering zoning changes, redevelopment plans, or site plan approval for large-format commercial areas.
  - Identify opportunities, including extending existing streets, to re-establish the street grid in future development or redevelopment.
  - Orient redevelopment to the pedestrian, with buildings, not parking, addressing the street.
  - Expand the range of permitted uses, including institutional users, recreation, health-care, entertainment, and arts and cultural uses.
  - Leverage opportunities in future development to right-size parking, allowing for reduced impervious coverage and increased landscaping.
  - Facilitate the restoration of wetland habitat areas along Route 440.
  - Prioritize streetscape improvements and enhanced bike/pedestrian connections to nearby transit facilities and adjacent development.

### Use Provisions for Commercial and Industrial Districts

**All Commercial Zones:**

- Consider allowing multiple uses in one space, e.g. food halls and stores that also include cafes and offer classes.
- Allow auto repair uses where auto sales are permitted.
- Allow reuse of auto garages for cafes, maker spaces, and small-scale manufacturing uses.
- Allow offices and medical offices wherever other commercial uses are permitted.
### Regional, City, and Neighborhood Corridors

- Proposed Regulatory Changes
  - On regional and city Corridors, consider increased density at key intersections while respecting scale of surrounding neighborhoods.
  - For city corridors:
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- Allow reuse of auto garages for cafes, maker spaces, and small-scale manufacturing uses.
- Allow offices and medical offices wherever other commercial uses are permitted.

#### All Industrial Zones:

- Provide for greater flexibility in office and light industrial uses (alone or in combination):
  - Shared office space (co-working), shared labs, and shared kitchens.
  - Business incubators
  - Labs
  - Artisan manufacturing
  - Small-scale food production/commercial kitchens
- Allow breweries, distilleries, film production, green manufacturing, indoor recreation, urban agriculture, and similar uses.
- Eliminate industrial parks, cyber hotels, and car washes as permitted uses.
- Allow port-related uses where located near highway access and with limited impacts on residential areas.
- Establish buffering, screening, and landscaping requirements for technology and telecommunications infrastructure facilities.
- Develop guidelines that encourage green land and building development.
- Identify and redesign key connector streets to integrate industrial areas with surrounding residential neighborhoods.

### Revise WPD Zone

- Incorporate parcels in HC district on east side of Route 440 into a combined and revised WPD zone, providing for the following:
  - Require incorporation of a public walkway (where not already required) as part of all redevelopment and future plans for Route 440 Boulevard.
  - Require street improvements including landscaping, bike and pedestrian infrastructure for upland-waterfront connectors.
  - Promote development that faces Route 440 and contributes to the streetscape along the corridor with attractive buildings, signage, and landscaping.
  - Eliminate townhouses and warehousing/distribution as principal permitted uses, animal shelter as conditional use.
  - Clearly permit mixed-use.
  - Standardize area/bulk provisions.
  - Consider additional height (current max. is 8 stories for multifamily).
  - Ensure that large-scale housing or mixed-use is well-connected into the neighborhood fabric. In particular, do not permit gated residential projects.

### Other Zoning Map Changes

#### CBD and O/R Districts

- Consider elimination of these areas and incorporating them into other districts.

#### Highway Commercial

- Consider rezoning identified areas along Tonnele Ave (Route 1&9) to C/A
### Institutional and Open Space Districts

#### Governmental (G) District
- Consider elimination of the G zone and replacing it with a residential zone as appropriate.

#### University (U) District
- Consider Overlay Zone for areas around Institutional Districts.

#### Open Space (OS) District
- Consider identified areas where OS may be appropriate.

#### Cemetery (C) District
- Evaluate C district boundaries to ensure they are appropriate and up-to-date.

### Other Land Use Recommendations

#### Sustainability and Resiliency
- Implement transportation and land use actions in the Climate Action Plan.
- Consider expanding the Flood Overlay Zone green infrastructure approach to other parts of the City.
- Continue to identify and remediate contaminated sites.
- Adopt programs to reduce energy use and greenhouse gases and increase energy efficiency of buildings. Encourage new development/redevelopment to be compatible with U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) principles, or equivalent.
- Preserve remaining natural wetland areas and restore environmentally sensitive habitat areas.
- Promote and expand recycling and composting and increase the reuse of natural resources.
- Ensure that zoning and building codes incorporate best practices for solar panels, cool roofs, and other sustainability measures. This could be done through a sustainability checklist for site plan review of buildings over 25,000 sf.
- Consider parking regulations that encourage or require electric vehicle charging stations in large-scale construction. New buildings over a certain size should be constructed to be EV-ready.
- Adopt EV charging ordinances as consistent with state legislation, and consider EV parking regulations that further encourage these spaces in large-scale projects.
Parks, Open Space, and Community Facilities

Note: These recommendations are described further in the Open Space and Community Facilities Element. See that plan for more details.

- Surround community facilities and parks with pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. Improve sidewalk accessibility, increase pedestrian-scale lighting, and increase mid-block crossings on Communipaw Avenue at Martin Luther King Drive, Bergen Avenue at Pavonia Avenue and Academy Street, Sip Avenue at Corbin Avenue and Jones Street, and along Route 139 headed downtown.
- Connect proximate parks and open spaces through walking and biking infrastructure. Enhance pedestrian and bicycle facility in environmental justice, high stress locations close to community facilities and parks.
- Link and invest in community resources close to existing or future transit stations and stops. Locate new transit, bus, and micro mobility stations in gap area neighborhoods.
- Ensure that greenways are continuous connections that provide road transportation and creative spaces. Incentivize redevelopment and new development adjacent to greenways to connect to the larger system.
- Identify and establish a City-wide greenway network that is off-road wherever possible. Reclaim wide east-west rights-of-way and underutilized vacant land corridors to create a continuous protected greenway “boulevard,” leveraging plans like Bergen Arches, Hackensack River Greenway, the Harsimus Stern/ Sixth Street Embankment, and Reservoir 3, wherever possible.
- Acquire new land parcels for open space. Prioritize new park investments and land acquisition in the Greenville, West Side, Hilltop, and Journal Square neighborhoods, where access to park space is limited.
- Balance the open space, facility, and recreation system. Rebalance park amenities based on trends and geographic distribution. Reuse underutilized City-owned parcels or facility “yards” for open space/recreation. Coordinate major development projects with new open space creation.
- Prioritize reinvestment in existing parks in environmental justice communities. Renovate a park or build a new community resource to close the community resource gap in Greenville/Ward A
- Tie future development to expanded space (indoor/outdoor). Craft joint-use agreements and partnership standards to incentivize developers to create needed community amenities, like recreation centers.
- Connect Police and Fire facilities and grounds with their communities. Transform leftover outdoor spaces next to fire stations and police stations into pocket parks with native plantings and seating.
- Repurpose curb bump outs as micro pocket parks or rain gardens. Prioritize areas in gaps, high stress areas, or near schools/libraries. Work with the Municipal Utilities Authority, Engineering Department, Department of Public Works, and other partners.
- Create habitats in underutilized or interstitial spaces and along waterfront shorelines.
- Adapt buildings for climate readiness and education using the metrics in the Climate Action Plan. Upgrade HVAC systems. Invest in redundant systems and disaster preparedness for all community facilities in case of emergencies or to serve as cooling centers during the summer months.
- Expand tree coverage equitably throughout the City. Adopt and follow an Urban Forest program. Maximize tree coverage in park and community facility properties and within adjacent public right-of-ways.
- Reduce impervious surfaces on City-owned land. Retrofit City buildings with green roofs and porous outdoor surfaces.
- Create avenues for residents to support green infrastructure on private property. Create incentives for private residents to maintain wild flora and fauna and increase pervious surfaces on private property.

Affordable and Workforce Housing

- Encourage the continued development of a variety of housing, ranging from affordable to moderate-income and market-rate units, through set-aside requirements in new development, designation of affordable units within existing housing stock through per-unit buy-down programs, and preservation of naturally occurring affordable units.
- Consider allowing accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in existing garages and carriage houses throughout Jersey City, providing further options for smaller and more affordable units that can be interspersed throughout residential neighborhoods.
- Adopt an Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance, which would address affordability requirements for new residential projects.
## Parking and Curbside Management

- Re-examine parking requirements in the Land Development Ordinance (LDO).

- Consider parking strategies within the LDO including:
  - Update parking requirements based on urban and transit-oriented use standards.
  - Consider overlay districts around transit that promote less parking and higher density.
  - Incorporate provisions for shared parking
  - Switch from parking minimums to parking maximums throughout the City.

- Implement programs to encourage alternative transportation and other transportation demand management (TDM) measures.

- Standardize parking requirements in redevelopment areas and require redevelopers to prepare a parking demand analysis as well as the required traffic study for new development.

- Freeze permits for new curb cuts to determine which are permitted vs. illegal and assess the impact of future cuts on the same block. Consider requiring registration of new curb cuts.

- Prepare a Curbside Management Plan or program including:
  - Recommended locations to implement bike corrals, ride-hailing zones, and loading zones;
  - Standards to mitigate commercial deliveries and traffic on residential streets;
  - Encourage deliveries to be made by bicycle rather than automobile; and
  - Identification of a community demonstration project to test streetscape improvements.

## Design Guidelines for Gateways

- Develop streetscape, landscaping, and signage guidelines for gateway areas including:
  - Newark Avenue (gateway connecting Journal Square to Downtown), particularly at 6th Street/Division Street/Mary Benson Park.
  - Jersey Avenue (Downtown gateway): 2nd Street at the north, Grand Street to the south.
  - Entrances to the City at Route 440 and Communipaw Avenue, Jersey Avenue/Marin Boulevard from Hoboken, either end of Kennedy Boulevard, and Tonnele Avenue.
  - Access to/from the City from the Holland Tunnel (14th Street and 12th Street).

## Signage

- Implement a City-wide update to signage regulations, including:
  - Design guidelines for NC and similar zones based on building context and transit proximity.
  - Revise regulations to allow blade signs and give guidance on storefront and billboard signs.
  - Create signage guidelines for historic districts and district identifiers.
  - Address sign rules for commercial uses in residential areas, e.g. lighting, height, materials.
Wireless Communications

- Adopt a wireless communications ordinance to address siting, bulk, and aesthetics.

Bus and Micro Transit

- Coordinate with NJ Transit and other bus providers on major new developments to ensure that bus transportation is located and timed to effectively serve new residents. Bus operators should be part of any community benefit negotiations in new or revised redevelopment plans.

- Work with NJ Transit to upgrade bus shelters and related amenities throughout the City, with a focus on socially vulnerable/environmental justice areas and areas located at least a half-mile from fixed-route transit.

- Collaborate with neighborhood groups to determine needs for operational and route changes to bus service in order to better serve residents.

- As part of the Circulation Element, explore the potential for bus rapid transit (BRT) on select corridors as appropriate. Continue to support and expand, as needed, the Via network to enhance transit options within Jersey City and connect neighborhoods.
### Redevelopment Planning

#### Consistency and Relationship to Adjacent Neighborhoods

- In new/amended redevelopment plans, provide clear language on urban design, parking, and specific use/bulk controls, with potential project hurdles discussed and addressed between involved agencies.
- Develop more uniform standards and design guidelines across redevelopment plan areas, based on the urban design typologies in the Land Use Element. These guidelines could also require shadow analysis on adjacent neighborhoods and consideration of the public realm.
- Where development incentives are used, incorporate specific milestones to avoid ambiguous goals and objectives that may not be realistic to meet within redevelopment plan timeframes.

#### Community Benefits and Open Space

- Improve the process of developing community benefit agreements to take into account the needs of the surrounding neighborhood and the provisions of adjacent redevelopment plans.
  - Work closely with developers to construct new parks and recreation areas that serve the wider area as well as residents of the new development. Where multiple individual developers are located near each other, promote fewer and larger spaces rather than individual, smaller spaces. This could include a requirement to meet with City staff to determine the recreational needs within a half-mile of the redevelopment plan area.
  - On the Hackensack River, incorporate a public walkway as part of all future redevelopment areas with riverfront property and in future plans for the Route 440 Boulevard.
  - Ensure that public access does not feel private, through signage and design treatments.
  - Incorporate a park/open space requirement in large planned developments and explore opportunities to connect to nearby parks and greenways.
  - Require that new or revised redevelopment plans within a half-mile of fixed transit (i.e. PATH or HBLR stations) that include new residential development must meet with the Port Authority and/or NJ Transit to assess potential impacts on existing infrastructure.
  - Require that new redevelopment plans within priority areas identified in the Resiliency Master Plan as vulnerable to climate change must incorporate resiliency and adaptation strategies. Review existing redevelopment plans in these areas to reflect these strategies.

#### Transition to Traditional Zoning

- Incorporate some redevelopment plan areas either into adjacent zoning or a new/existing zoning district that allows for the existing development. Revise other redevelopment plan areas to reflect current priorities.
- Consider designating future redevelopment plans as overlay zones, rather than superseding zones, to give property owners flexibility of “opting in” and ease transition to traditional zoning.

#### New/Revised Redevelopment Plans

- Consider new redevelopment designations or revisions to existing redevelopment plans for the following areas:
  - Hudson County complex at Cornelison Avenue between Montgomery/Academy Streets
  - Sixth Street Embankment
  - Water Street Redevelopment Plan (revise)
  - Morris Canal Redevelopment Plan (revise)
## Historic Preservation Planning

### New Historic Districts

- Consider the following areas for designation as local historic districts:
  - Bergen Hill
  - Communipaw-Lafayette
  - Hudson City (a.k.a. Sherman Place)

### Update Historic Preservation Element and Cultural Resources Survey

- Update historic preservation planning documents and incorporate the following:
  - Reflect diversity of Jersey City’s history, focusing on communities of color, immigrants, and other marginalized populations.
  - Revisit historic preservation design guidelines in flood hazard zones.
  - Increase development/staff resources to handle the demolition ordinance.

### Existing Historic Districts

- Consider expansion of Hamilton Park and Harsimus Cove Historic Districts along their western edges.
- Adjust underlying zoning in the West Bergen-East Lincoln Park District to address parcels in multiple zones.
- Review the edges of all H districts to identify and eliminate split-zoned lots.
- Revise bulk standards in historic districts to allow for higher density, to match surrounding existing buildings, and for greater height, to incorporate the base flood elevation while matching predominant row height. This will address regular variance requests for new buildings to achieve the same bulk as existing buildings.
- Supplement the design standards for infill development to include a requirement to meet the prevailing height and setback of adjacent structures facing the same street, as well as structures across the street.
- Review the list of permitted uses in historic districts to allow uses that lend themselves to adaptive reuse, e.g. bed and breakfasts.
- Allow adaptive reuse to be considered as positive criteria for variance requests, which would provide for Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) staff to be consulted in such applications, and the Department of the Interior standards for adaptive reuse to be followed.

### Staffing and Funding (see draft Chapter 5, p. 118)

- Continue to pursue efforts to achieve designation as a Certified Local Government (CLG), which would allow the HPC to receive matching federal grants for historic studies and preservation efforts.
- Hire at least one additional Historic Preservation Specialist to address increased workload with the creation of the West Bergen-East Lincoln Park district. Hire additional staff with the creation of any new historic district.
Chapter 6: Small Area Vision Plans

Small Area Vision Plans (SAVPs) identify community-driven goals for small geographies in the City along with specific recommendations to implement those goals.

The SAVPs allow the City to work closely with residents and stakeholders to understand neighborhood-level issues and opportunities. Based on this analysis, the SAVPs provide targeted recommendations to improve communities. At the same time, they provide an opportunity to work with communities to fine-tune city-wide policies, and illustrate how they can be implemented at a local level.

Although the plans live within the Land Use Element, they include recommendations regarding transportation, open space, historic preservation, and housing recommendations.

Small Area Vision Plans are a new component of the Master Plan. As illustrated on the following page, the 2021 Master Plan includes plans for three geographies:

- The Lower Heights
- The Junction
- West Side Avenue Station Area

It is envisioned that these Small Area Vision Plans (SAVPs) would be the first of many similar planning efforts for areas across the City.

The full text of the plans are included in Land Use Element Appendix A. The SAVPs are adopted as part of the Land Use Element and maintain the same legal status as recommendations made in the rest of the Land Use Element.
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Small Area Selection

The selection of initial small areas was based on a combination of community input, area need, and demographic representation. The selection process included two phases.

In the first phase, the City distributed a "Neighborhood Needs Survey" to identify the key issues that should guide the selection of small areas. The 14-question survey received 1,597 responses. That survey identified the top 25 issues that should guide the small area selection process as identified by residents and stakeholders.

In the second phase, the City identified three areas of the City where the resident-identified issues were most prevalent. This process began with 19 potential areas of study. The team used a combination of data from the Land Use Existing Conditions Report, staff knowledge and expertise, and demographic analysis to identify the three areas. The result was the selection of the initial three areas.

The City intends for these to be the first, not the last, areas studied. As such, the data collected during this initial area selection phase can be utilized to direct future resources to areas that also need small area planning work.

Lower Heights Small Area

West Side Avenue Small Area
THE JUNCTION

SUMMARY

In The Junction, participants want to see vacant and underutilized properties revitalized, expanded essential services, improved mobility options, and a higher-quality local environment. The specific goals within each element are listed below. The SAVP identifies several community-supported strategies to achieve these goals, including:

- Improving the road network to make it a better place to walk, bike, and park.
- Updating the Morris Canal Redevelopment Plan to expand opportunities for essential services.
- Designating Bergen Hill a historic district.

GOALS

Revitalization

1. Preserve, enhance, and highlight the area’s history.
2. Re-establish The Junction as a destination hub for the surrounding communities through equitable revitalization of vacant, abandoned, and underutilized properties.
3. Encourage development that supports, but is not limited to, small-scale locally owned businesses.
4. Identify opportunities for parking to support local businesses.

Essential Services

1. Expand local-serving essential services and amenities that (1) reflect the needs of the community and (2) are pedestrian- and bike-accessible.
2. Create community and cultural space in the area that can host local serving events, classes, and programs.

Multi Modal Mobility

1. Make the area - especially “The Junction" - a safer and more attractive place for pedestrians and bicyclists.
2. Expand public transportation access where possible.
3. Fix “The Junction” and calm traffic.
4. Ensure safe quality parking options.
5. Leverage changes to the transportation system to unlock revitalization opportunities.

Local Environment

1. Maintain a clean and attractive public realm (sidewalks, streets, and parks).
2. Place utilities underground.
3. Beautify streets - especially by adding new street trees - to make the area greener, more walkable, and more attractive to spend time in.
WEST SIDE AVENUE

SUMMARY

In the West Side Avenue Station Area, participants want to see an expansion of walkable essential services, more revitalization of vacant and underutilized properties, a higher-quality local environment, and improved active mobility options. The specific goals within each element are listed below. The SAVP also identifies several community-supported strategies to achieve these goals, including:

- Making streetscape and façade improvements along West Side Avenue.
- Expanding of active transportation options, including the construction of priority pedestrian and bicycle corridors.
- Redeveloping key sites located near the West Side Avenue station area which would include key community benefits such as a “Town Square,” new park, and mixed-use development.

GOALS

Essential Services

1. Essential services are the backbone of a community. Expand the availability of high-quality, affordable, and locally owned essential services, especially grocery stores.
2. Essential services should be pedestrian-accessible and serve the immediately surrounding community.
3. Provide a multi-generational community center in the area that serves people of all ages.

Revitalization

1. Create opportunities for investment in the community through the rehabilitation and redevelopment of vacant, abandoned, and blighted properties.
2. Encourage investments that will reduce crime and localized pollution.
3. Where rehabilitation and redevelopment occurs in neighborhoods, especially the interior of blocks, ensure that it substantially matches the density and form of surrounding development.
4. Encourage adaptive re-use and rehabilitation over demolition.

Local Environment

1. Reduce the amount of litter and ensure that streets and open spaces are clean.
2. Beautify streets – especially by adding new street trees - to make the area greener, more walkable, and more attractive to spend time in.
3. Create new open spaces and improve existing ones.

Multi Modal Mobility

1. Maintain existing sidewalks, crosswalks, and bicycle lanes.
2. Expand and/or enhance bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure along West Side Avenue.
3. Expand public transportation access, including extended hours and enhanced bus service to support existing and future residents and visitors.
4. Ensure that new development is oriented towards public transportation and encourages non-motorized mobility options.
5. Ensure adequate pedestrian-scale lighting on all streets, especially major pedestrian corridors.
LOWER HEIGHTS

SUMMARY

In Lower Heights, participants want to see an improved active transportation network, a higher quality local environment, and the establishment of community-driven development standards. The specific goals for each element are listed below. In addition to these area wide goals, the SAVP includes guiding principles for several sub-areas, including:

- Palisade Avenue
- Baldwin Avenue
- Summit and Central Avenues
- Route 139
- Interior Neighborhoods

The SAVP identifies several community-supported strategies to achieve these goals, including strategies for:

- Improving public space and expanding the amount of greenery.
- Amending the R-1 zoning.
- Expanding access to financial resources to support homeowners.
- Improving the Route 139 corridor for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Improving Baldwin, Summit, and Palisade Avenues

GOALS

Multi-Modal Mobility

1. Make the Lower Heights a safe and friendly place to walk and bike. Enhance active transportation connections to surrounding areas, especially to Downtown and Journal Square.
2. Prioritize pedestrian safety and bike lanes over vehicle throughput on key north-south corridors. Prioritize the creation of at least one north-south bicycle facility.
3. Make Route 139 and its crossings safer and more comfortable for pedestrian and bicyclists.
4. Convert the Bergen Arches to an active transportation space while enhancing natural assets.
5. Establish a connection down the Palisade Cliffs to connect Palisade and Hoboken Avenues.

Local Environment

1. Reduce the amount of litter, including dog waste, and ensure that streets and open spaces are clean.
2. Remove abandoned power lines, consolidate existing power lines, and place utilities underground when possible.
3. Beautify streets especially by adding and maintaining new street trees, protecting old growth trees, and greening front setback areas (front yards).
4. Identify opportunities for the creation of green public space.

Development Standards

1. Continue to prohibit high-rise development in the Lower Heights (larger than 5 stories).
2. Limit development to 3 stories in the interior neighborhoods.
3. Focus higher-intensity development (up to 5 stories) on north-south corridors.
4. Establish development regulations that encourage the rehabilitation of existing structures and discourage "Bayonne box" style development and front yard parking.
5. Establish development regulations that encourage housing affordability.
6. Establish front- and side-yard setbacks and lot coverage ratios to improve micro-climates and maintain access to light and air.