

Executive Summary

The Jersey City Traffic Calming Toolkit helps fulfill a major initiative of the Vision Zero Action Plan. It provides a comprehensive review and updated guidelines for enhancing traffic safety throughout the city through traffic calming measures. Traffic calming reduces the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alters driver behavior, and improves conditions for non-motorized street users through physical design and other measures on existing roads to reduce vehicle speeds.

This study identified current traffic calming measures and recommended additional ones based on federal, state, and other guidelines. The study also established a methodology for prioritizing locations for traffic calming installations and developed actionable concept designs for 12 high-priority locations. Additionally, an equity assessment was completed, heavily informing the analysis and community engagement approach.

Regional Significance

Jersey City, the state's second most populous municipality with nearly 292,000 residents, serves as a regional hub for employment, commerce, and leisure activities. This prominence attracts commuters and visitors, leading to escalating traffic volumes and heightened risks of pedestrian and vehicular crashes, some of which have been fatal. In response to these challenges, Jersey City adopted a Vision Zero Action Plan in 2019 with the ambitious objective of eliminating traffic fatalities and severe injuries by 2026.

Goals & Objectives

This study aimed to create a Traffic Calming Toolkit to replace Jersey City's guidance from the 2011 Master Plan's Circulation Element. The resulting toolkit offers traffic calming principles aligned with the City's Vision Zero Action Plan and in keeping with current traffic calming practices. It also provides specific design interventions to enhance safety for pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and transit riders, based in part on an evaluation of the effectiveness of existing traffic calming measures in the city and within the national literature.



Community Engagement

Community engagement and outreach were major components of the Jersey City Traffic Calming Toolkit, with equitable engagement throughout the study. Understanding local needs and desires was fundamental to creating recommendations that work for everyone, thereby garnering the support needed to advance proposed strategies to implementation.

The outreach process was iterative and evolved with each phase, comprising:

- » Three Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meetings
- » Three rounds of Public Meetings and Demonstration Projects (October 2023, April 2024, June 2024)
- » A series of Stakeholder Interviews (August 2023)
- » Digital Engagement (Project Website, Community Survey, and Interactive Map)

Overall, the community has a strong understanding of traffic calming and is supportive of the effort Jersey City puts into making streets safer, albeit with some concerns about specific traffic calming treatments. There is high demand for demonstration projects and generally positive

input following their implementation (particularly from those who identify primarily as pedestrians and cyclists), however, self-identified drivers were much less supportive and the removal of parking continues to be a contentious subject. Outreach through the TAC further emphasized the importance of cross-agency coordination to continue to implement improvements with buy-in from all parties, including Hudson County. Residents see the need for significant investment and improvements on County roads and do not necessarily differentiate between the City's jurisdiction and the County's, as demonstrated by most of the requested improvements being on roads outside Jersey City's control.

Methodology

The development of the traffic calming toolkit was based on understanding appropriate traffic calming strategies for the city, fitting these measures within the City's planning framework, identifying where they are most needed, selecting appropriate measures for each location, and evaluating their effectiveness. This framework included:

- » Reviewing recent plans and documents to utilize available data and understand previously identified needs and goals, and revealing that the City has the technical capacity and in-house implementation resources to achieve traffic calming goals.
- » Assessing existing traffic calming measures and recommending new measures, organized into categories: horizontal deflections and closures, vertical deflections, unsignalized intersection treatments, traffic signs and pavement markings, other visual cues, and signal control.
- » Developing tools such as:
 - » Priority Location Selection Methodology
 - » Traffic Calming Selection Criteria and Typology Framework
 - » Measures of Effectiveness Review

Equity, traffic crashes, and existing traffic calming measures were all evaluated as part of this study. These analyses informed the selection of treatment types and the selection of priority locations. The equity analysis identified clusters of underserved communities within Journal Square, McGinley Square, Bergen-Lafayette, Greenville, and The Heights neighborhoods. The results of the equity analysis were then cross-referenced with the crash analysis and existing traffic calming measures assessment.

While underserved areas were not found to have higher crash rates, a set of priority block groups were identified and considered when developing the list of priority locations. They should also be referenced in the future when identifying additional locations for traffic calming.

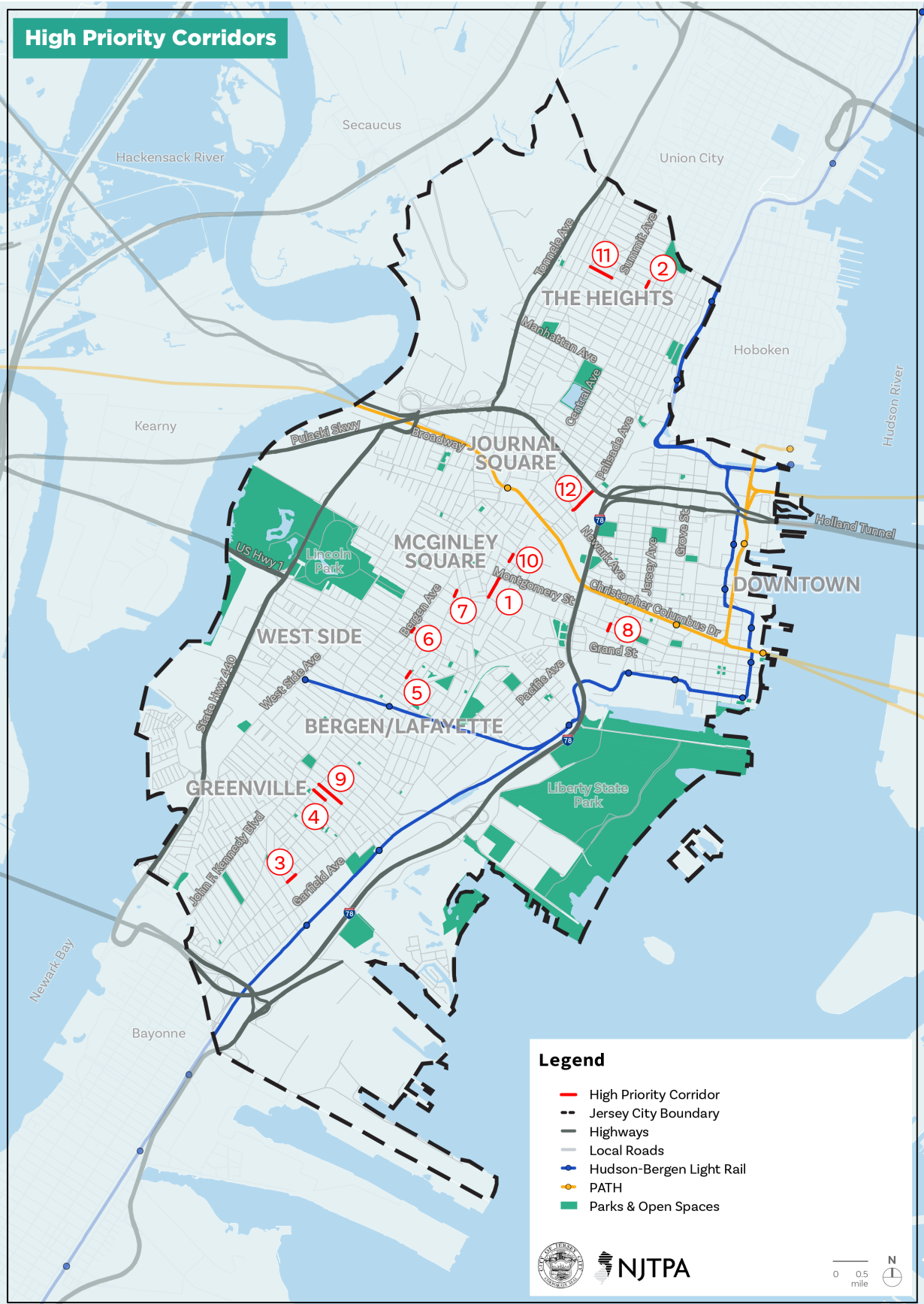
However, the data does show that traffic calming measures have disproportionately been implemented in better-off communities and underserved areas may not have received a “fair share” of traffic calming measures to date.

Key Outcomes

This study includes a Traffic Calming Measures Selection Matrix and Typology Framework to assist the City in identifying appropriate improvements by location type. Conceptual designs were developed for 12 priority locations to improve safety. Nine evaluation metrics were used to help prioritize the City's roadway segments for the future deployment of traffic calming measures, either through a demonstration project or for a permanent installation. (See Section 5 of this report for additional information on the metrics.) The evaluation identified the following priority locations:

1. Baldwin Avenue – Clifton Place to Montgomery Street
2. Central Avenue – South Street to North Street
3. Ocean Avenue – Cator Avenue to Sheffield Street
4. Fulton Avenue – MLK Drive to Rose Avenue
5. MLK Drive – Communipaw Avenue to Welsh Lane
6. Bergen Avenue – Harrison Avenue to Welsh Lane
7. Monticello Avenue – Fairview Avenue to Storms Avenue
8. Monmouth Street – Montgomery Street to Grand Street
9. Dwight Street – MLK Drive to Van Cleef Street
10. Baldwin Avenue – Montgomery Street to Vroom Street
11. Bleecker Street – JFK Boulevard to Pierce Avenue
12. Palisade Avenue – Newark Avenue to 139 Upper

Prioritized Roadway Segments



A Traffic Calming Toolkit was also created for use by Jersey City staff to improve road safety and as an educational resource for members of the public.

By taking these next steps, Jersey City can build on the foundation laid by this study and continue to make meaningful progress towards creating safer, more sustainable streets for all residents and visitors.

Next Steps

Moving forward, Jersey City should consider the following steps to build on the findings and recommendations of this study:

- » **Implementation of Traffic Calming Measures:** Work towards implementation of traffic calming measures at the prioritized locations per year. Subsequently, Jersey City can identify a new set of locations, prioritizing the block groups with high equity scores and lower traffic calming investment identified as part of the Equity Assessment, for annual targeted investment.
- » **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Continuously monitor the effectiveness of implemented traffic calming measures using the identified MOEs. This will provide valuable data for future decision-making and refinement of traffic calming strategies. City should conduct at least 2 full evaluations of a traffic calming installation and publish the report/findings.
- » **Community Engagement:** Maintain ongoing engagement with the community, specifically the equity communities, to align with local needs and priorities and gain support for future traffic calming efforts. Target communities with high-priority roadway segments for outreach and cooperation.
- » **Regular Updates to the Traffic Calming Toolkit:** The Traffic Calming Toolkit should be updated on a regular basis (every 3-4 years) to incorporate new research, best practices, and lessons learned from implementation.
- » **Collaboration with Regional Partners:** Work collaboratively with regional partners, including neighboring municipalities, the County, transportation agencies, and advocacy groups, to share best practices and coordinate efforts to improve traffic safety across the region.

