

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Newark is on the move.** With a population of more than 300,000 for the first time in decades, a thriving central business district, and diverse neighborhoods – Newark is experiencing significant change at a rapid pace. Even by conservative estimates, Newark is projected to continue to grow, and become increasingly diverse.

Newark features an extensive street and transit network providing access and mobility throughout the city, connecting neighborhoods and people between where they live and where they need to travel. Principal destinations include the city's large office towers, small workspaces, more than 100 schools, five universities, numerous parks and libraries, museums, and a significant breadth of local business, shopping, dining, and entertainment establishments.

Bicycling can be a relatively inexpensive, quick, and convenient mode of travel, complimenting existing transit modes by providing critical first- and last-mile connections, especially for underserved communities and densely populated urban areas like Newark. Numerous plans and studies have explored and established the many benefits of cycling – equity and affordability, improved safety, better health and wellness, expanded transportation choices, and enhanced mobility and access to opportunity.

The time is right to rethink mobility and the use of street space in Newark to provide more sustainable, resilient, and equitable transportation choices.

## A CITYWIDE BICYCLE PLAN

Newark360, the city's groundbreaking Master Plan established safe travel and access for all Newarokers as a key priority and recommended the development of a citywide bicycle plan and network.

BIKENewark – a comprehensive, citywide bicycle plan – is the ideal mechanism to accomplish these goals. This plan is informed by inclusive and equitable community engagement, a comprehensive planning process, and data-driven needs assessment, to create a plan for a safe, convenient, and continuous bicycle network that serves all Newarokers, and prioritizes the wellbeing of underserved communities and vulnerable road users.

## INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community input was an integral component of BIKENewark, creating a plan that truly reflects Newark's unique local context, needs, and priorities. Input was collected through a multi-pronged approach to facilitate participation from residents, students, workers, visitors, and other stakeholders through both traditional and non-traditional means. Engagement methods included the plan website and social media, focus group discussions, an interactive survey and mapping tool, a virtual public open house, and in-person engagement at local pop-up events in every ward. Multilingual materials and translations were provided to engage Newark' diverse stakeholders in languages and places where they feel most comfortable.

BIKENewark outreach activities garnered over 500 engagements, demonstrating support for bicycling in Newark through a robust compendium of comments, concerns, observations, and suggestions, and providing local insight on how to improve everyday travel experiences and plan for a citywide bicycle network.

Stakeholders raised concerns about numerous issues, including safety, access, and affordability; limitations and shortcomings of Newark's current bicycle infrastructure; and the need for an expanded citywide bicycle network. Newark residents consistently expressed a strong preference for bicycle facilities that were fully separated and protected from moving traffic.

BIKENewark used an equity assessment to identify the city's underserved communities and vulnerable road users, placing their daily travel needs and safety challenges at the center of this plan. The equity assessment identified numerous underserved communities spread across the city, establishing that it was essential to actively engage and collaborate with Newark's diverse populations, stakeholders, and constituencies.

### **BIKENEWARK STRATEGIC VISION**

Equitable access to safe, affordable, effective, and efficient travel options is essential to the everyday mobility needs of Newarkers and to achieving a high quality of life, healthy lifestyles, and gaining access to opportunity.

BIKENewark is ...

- **Accessible**, reduces dependence on motor vehicle travel, and improves responsiveness to the needs of Newark's vulnerable road users
- Committed to a **Culture of Safety** by designing a transportation system that achieves a future without transportation-related serious injuries and fatalities
- **Equitable** and prioritizes the needs of Newark's underserved communities
- Committed to positive **Economic Development** that supports tourism, enhances access to Newark's businesses and educational institutions, and provides workers with reliable and efficient access to economic opportunity
- A dynamic **Living Plan designed to evolve with the city.** It will be reviewed and updated every few years to ensure it remains responsive to the needs of the community.

### **BIKING IN NEWARK TODAY**

Newark's extensive street and transit network, demographics, density of population and employment, and numerous destinations and amenities make it ideally suited for sustainable, non-motorized transportation, including bicycle travel. Measures of both existing and potential bicycle demand support this conclusion.

The multimodal transportation network is extensive — moving people and freight within and across Newark, Essex County, and the greater NJTPA and metropolitan region. Travel by bicycle supports the reach and scope of transit by

creating new first- and last-mile connections. between transit stations and stops, and Newark's great diversity of destinations.

However, barriers in the form of stressful travel conditions, safety concerns, and limited availability of bicycle infrastructure can discourage many from bicycling. Newark's built environment and neighborhoods are frequently divided by its many wide roadways and several of New Jersey's busiest highways, isolating neighborhoods, and resulting in travel speeds incompatible with the walkable and bike-friendly character that makes many urban environments successful and desirable. And between 2017 and 2022, there were 6 fatal bicycle-related crashes, and 37 serious-injury bicycle crashes in Newark.

Newark's existing bicycle network is limited in scope and breadth, with few north-south routes and lacking any significant east-west connections. Currently, there are 13.4 miles of bicycle facilities in Newark, including 10.1 miles on-street and 1.3 off-street miles of the recently approved Essex-Hudson Greenway passing through the North Ward near Belleville. None of Newark's existing on-street bike lanes offer the desired separation and protection from moving traffic.

### **BUILDING THE FUTURE BICYCLE NETWORK**

Building a comprehensive, citywide bicycle network is a data-driven and community-led process, using proven measures of travel conditions and safety, existing bicycle and scooter share data, potential future bicycle demand, and consistent with the local context and conditions.

Bicycle facility selection for BIKENewark leverages the plan's extensive data resources to evaluate feasibility of candidate bicycle improvements. The goal is to develop a citywide bicycle network that addresses safety and equity; meets bicycle demand and accessibility needs; enhances local context, neighborhoods and local business; and that fits within the street cross-sections and available right-of-way. Each proposed bicycle facility is based on the standardized design treatments developed for **BIKE**Ironbound and consistent with state-of-the-practice design guidance and published standards.

Given the prevalence of high crash occurrence and severity, the preference for separation from moving traffic, persistent vehicle encroachment in bicycle facilities, aggressive driving behaviors, and high travel speeds, BIKENewark emphasizes "protected" bicycle facility designs to make biking safe and accessible, and achieve the potential for Newark to become a successful and sought-after cycling destination.

All proposed bike routes will require further analysis and input from the public, whether they are on city-, county-, or state-owned roadways. Furthermore, in collaboration with Essex County, the candidate bike routes along County roadways will require further study and analysis prior to authorization for construction

BIKENewark proposes to add 74 miles to the existing bicycle network 87.4 miles of dedicated on-street bicycle facilities, an eight-fold increase.

The bicycle network is presented in three groups, based on current known status and feasibility issues

- Existing – includes all existing bicycle infrastructure in the City of Newark plus projects that are approved for construction, including the 1.3 mile section of “The Greenway” in Branch Brook Park in the North Ward.

- Proposed – “Proposed” bicycle improvements fit within the existing roadway width. Each, however, would still be subject to further review by the roadway owner.
- Potential – Future additions labeled as “Potential” provide some measurable benefit to biking in Newark, but require additional study beyond the scope of this plan to determine feasibility.

Bicycle Facility Miles	
<b>Total Existing Facilities</b>	<b>13.4 miles (10.1 miles on-street)</b>
Shared Use Paths	3.3
Bike Lanes	6.7
Sharrows	3.4
<b>Total Proposed Facilities</b>	<b>74 miles (on-street)</b>
Shared Use Paths	0.0
Protected 2-way Bike Lanes	15
Protected 1-way Bike Lanes	36
Bicycle Boulevard	17
Standard Bike Lanes	6
Sharrows	1
<b>Total Existing + Proposed Facilities</b>	<b>87.4 miles (on-street)</b>
Potential (needs detailed study to determine feasibility)	15
<b>Total Existing + Proposed + Potential Facilities</b>	<b>102.4 miles (on-street)</b>

## **SUPPORTING POLICIES, PLANS, AND STRATEGIES**

Experiences of cities and towns across New Jersey and the U.S. demonstrate that new bike facilities, signing, and striping alone are not enough to achieve the ambitious bicycle safety and mobility goals of the City of Newark.

In order to achieve the goal of more sustainable, resilient, and equitable transportation choices, Newark must address affordability, rethink the use of its streets, and build concepts of slower speeds, and safer travel behaviors into each street, neighborhood, new development and redevelopment project, and across all five city wards. Policy initiatives can advance these goals.

BIKENewark is therefore structured as a *living plan* with a diverse and innovative program of candidate bicycle projects, policies, community events, and education and safety initiatives. It is recommended that Newark evaluate progress of plan implementation and attainment of the BIKENewark vision and goals on a yearly basis.

### **Expand and Enhance Bike and Scooter Share Access, Use, and Affordability**

- Evaluate affordability and equity to improve access to bike and scooter share services for daily travel needs
- Align hubs and docking locations with new bicycle facilities as they are built
- Increase awareness and promotion of micromobility shared services
- Promote bicycle safety and provide education of safe riding behaviors

### **Leverage Newark's SS4A Grant for Bicycle Lanes Implementation and Demonstration Project Opportunities**

- Refine the bicycle recommendations towards implementation, with the goal of improving safety. This may include additional engineering evaluations
- Provide opportunities for additional stakeholder and public input which may include additional input on BIKENewark recommendations
- Conduct Road Safety Audits at high crash occurrence and high crash severity hot spots
- Implement demonstration projects and pop-up events
- Plan and conduct the proposed Safe Routes to Healthy Foods demonstration project event at Halsey Street

### **Expand safe, secure, and accessible parking and storage for bicycles and scooters**

- Review and update zoning for bicycle parking
- Expand municipal-sponsored bicycle parking
- Explore bike locker programs at high demand locations

### **Improve parking utilization and enforcement of bike lane encroachment**

- Develop and implement standards for restaurant loading zones
- Enhance enforcement of vehicle parking and encroachment in bike facilities

**Build on successes and recommendations from recent plans including Newark360, Essex 2045, BIKEIronbound, Newark Downtown Circulation Improvement Study, and others**

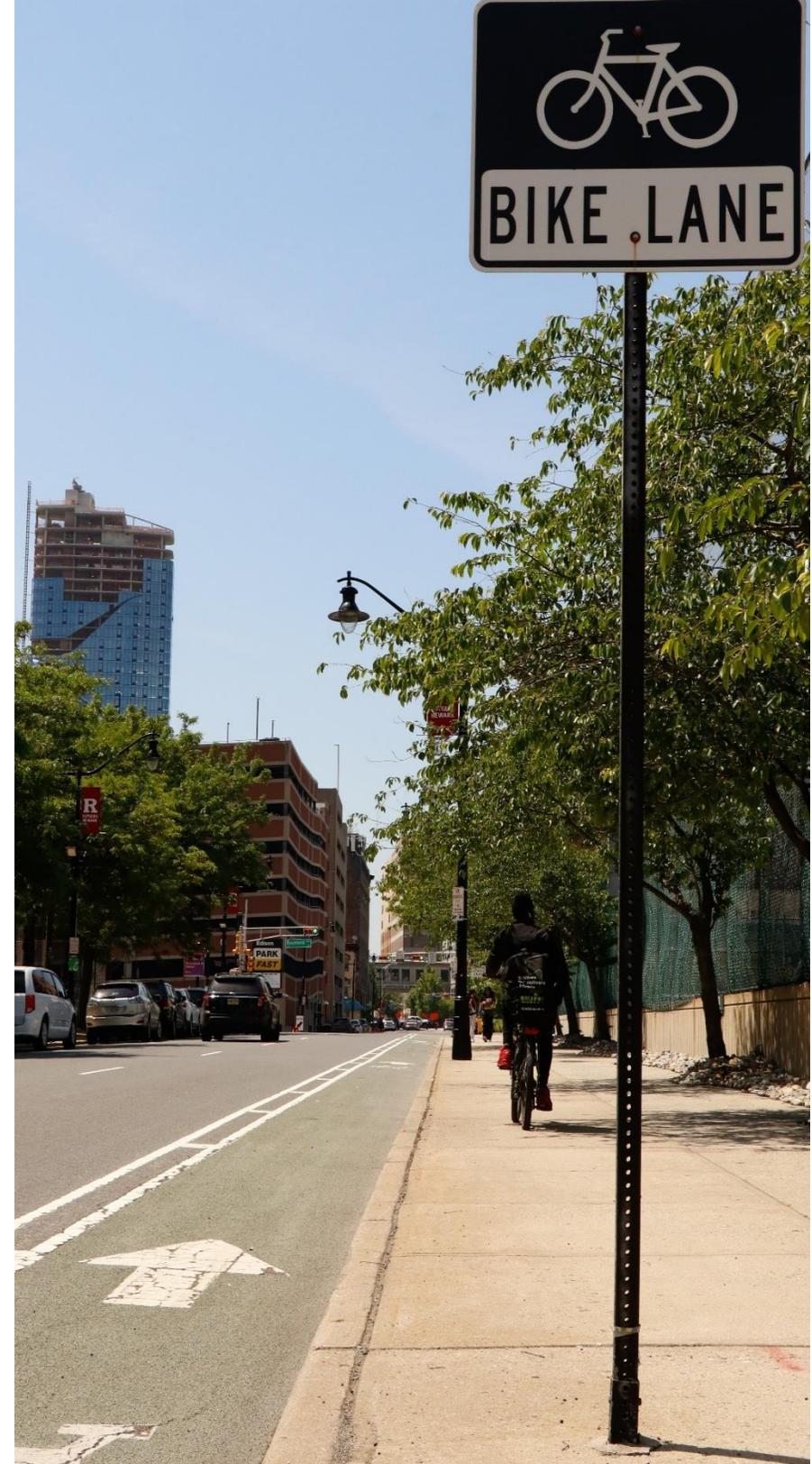
- Continue to prioritize Road Safety Audits and Safe Route to School Travel Plans
- Expand on Essex 2045 Road Diet case studies
- Standardize traffic calming to slow traffic, and emphasize safety and accessibility for vulnerable road users

**Develop and adopt citywide Vision Zero Action Plan and strategic emphasis on equity and safety**

- Create 20 MPH residential speed zones
- Targeted use of “No Turn on Red” at intersections
- Develop citywide street design templates based on context to align road design with local use and context
- Adopt Complete Streets, traffic calming, and Green Infrastructure as standard design elements
- Integrate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) approach into planning and design standards to create safe and accessible communities

**Provide multimodal accommodations on all regional bridge connections to neighboring municipalities**

**Collaborate with plan partner Essex County to explore suitability of Branch Brook Park Drive for dedicated bicycle improvements**



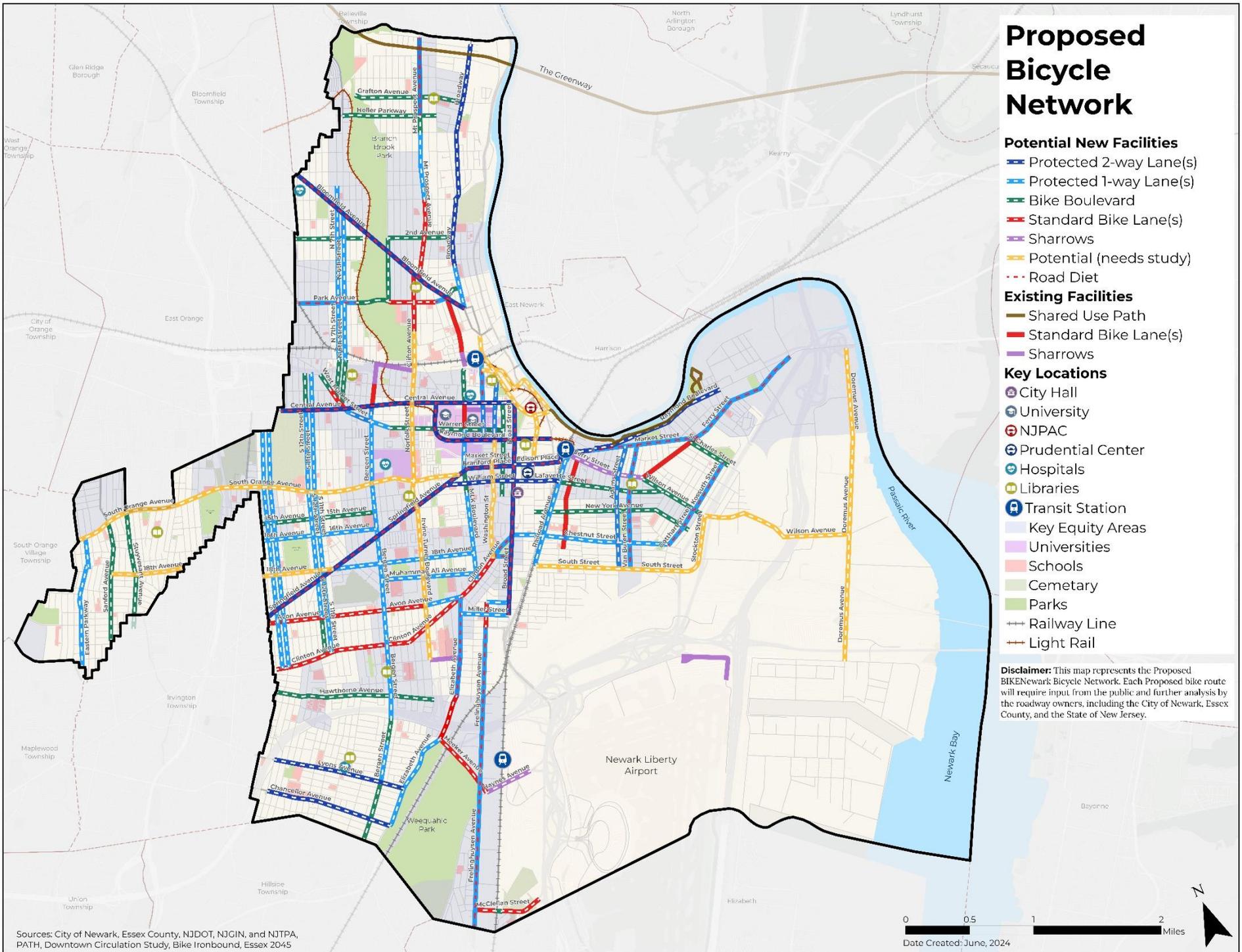
# Proposed Bicycle Network

- Potential New Facilities**
-  Protected 2-way Lane(s)
  -  Protected 1-way Lane(s)
  -  Bike Boulevard
  -  Standard Bike Lane(s)
  -  Sharrows
  -  Potential (needs study)
  -  Road Diet

- Existing Facilities**
-  Shared Use Path
  -  Standard Bike Lane(s)
  -  Sharrows

- Key Locations**
-  City Hall
  -  University
  -  NJ PAC
  -  Prudential Center
  -  Hospitals
  -  Libraries
  -  Transit Station
  -  Key Equity Areas
  -  Universities
  -  Schools
  -  Cemetary
  -  Parks
  -  Railway Line
  -  Light Rail

**Disclaimer:** This map represents the Proposed BIKENewark Bicycle Network. Each Proposed bike route will require input from the public and further analysis by the roadway owners, including the City of Newark, Essex County, and the State of New Jersey.



Sources: City of Newark, Essex County, NJDOT, NJGIN, and NJTPA, PATH, Downtown Circulation Study, Bike Ironbound, Essex 2045

0 0.5 1 2 Miles  
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