TOGETHER NORTH JERSEY.


# TNJ Guidebook for Transit Hub Planning.

Connecting People, Places, and Potential

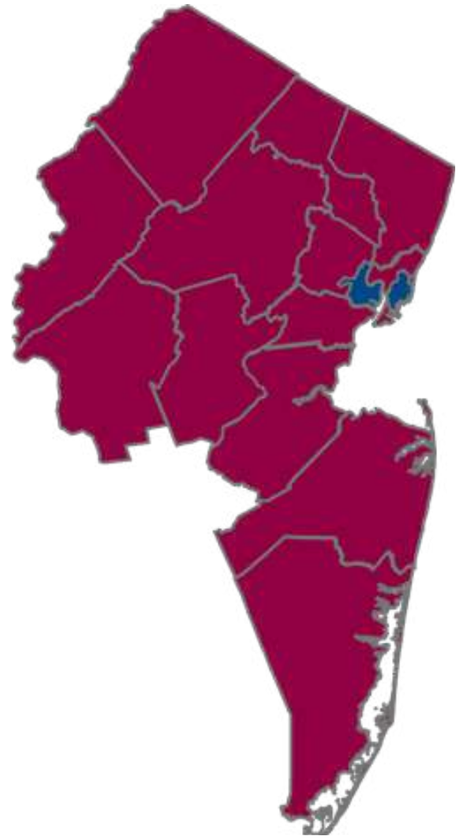
## Together North Jersey

Together North Jersey (TNJ) was created in 2011 to develop the first comprehensive plan for sustainable development for North Jersey. Funded by a $5 million federal Sustainable Communities grant and nearly $5 million in leveraged funds from members, the TNJ planning effort brought together a coalition of nearly 100 diverse partners – counties, municipalities, educational institutions, nonprofits, businesses and other stakeholders – to develop the TNJ regional plan.

The TNJ planning process identified a shared vision for a sustainable future for North Jersey consisting of four themes: Competitive, Efficient, Livable, and Resilient.

The Plan was issued in November 2015. Since then, TNJ partners have reconvened to advance implementation of the Plan. The North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) and the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University (VTC) currently coordinate the TNJ 2.0 Forum and Task Forces, with each of the four Task Forces dedicated to furthering one of the Plan's four themes.

The TNJ planning region consists of the 13 counties in the NJTPA planning area: Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union and Warren.



## TNJ Efficient Taskforce

Four Task Forces – Competitive, Efficient, Livable and Resilient – lead the TNJ implementation effort. The Task Forces convene to strategize, plan and evaluate implementation of the TNJ Plan Focus Area that falls under their purview. The Task Forces recommend projects and studies – to be carried out with assistance from NJTPA and the VTC – that further recommendations of the TNJ plan and enhance the knowledge of local communities. The Efficient Task Force works to ensure the North Jersey region makes the most of past investments, reduces the cost of public services, uses natural resources wisely and provides convenient, safe, reliable and energy-efficient transportation systems.

# Acknowledgements

The *TNJ Guidebook for Transit Hub Planning* was prepared by the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University with guidance by the Together North Jersey Efficient Task Force and the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority. It incorporates research from successful transit-friendly planning efforts in New Jersey and elsewhere, including lessons from the TNJ Efficient Task Force Transit Hub Pilot Program.

The following are recognized for their contributions to the development of this publication:

- Together North Jersey – Co-chairs, Efficient Task Force members and staff and TNJ Institute staff
- North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
- NJ TRANSIT
- American Planning Association New Jersey Chapter
- The Township of Bloomfield
- Borough of Dunellen
- City of Passaic
- Borough of Somerville
- Town of Morristown
- TANTUM Real Estate

Special thanks to the American Planning Association New Jersey Chapter and its Community Planning Assistance Program, whose volunteers served on the project teams for the Transit Hub Pilot Program and contributed valuable experience. NJ TRANSIT participation was also invaluable, and the agency's numerous transit-friendly planning efforts over the past two decades are an essential foundation for this work.

Finally, a special thank you to the many communities that submitted proposals for participation in the Transit Hub Pilot Program. This guidebook is for you.

**JUNE 2019**

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# ABOUT THE GUIDE

**Planning vibrant communities around transit is a challenging endeavor.**
It requires coordinating stakeholders, navigating competing interests and thoroughly understanding opportunities and challenges. This guidebook takes you through a set of strategic steps that covers the entire transit hub planning process. By effectively implementing the practices presented in this document, a community can develop a shared vision that spurs and guides transit-friendly development.

This guidebook is organized into three sections:

1

## Transit Hubs and Your Community

Provides an overview of the transit hub concept, addressing the core principles and benefits of transit-friendly planning and highlighting examples of successful planning and implementation efforts.

2

## Developing a Transit Hub Strategic Plan

Lays out a set of strategic planning steps organized by four simple questions: “Where are we today?”, “Where do we want to go?”, “How do we get there?”, and “How do we implement?” It also provides "planning tips" and highlights "North Jersey Special Concerns."

3

## The North Jersey Transit Hub Toolkit

Provides information on transit hub strategies, planning tools, funding and technical assistance programs and guidance literature a community can use to support transit hub planning.

You can read the guide cover-to-cover or choose to focus on specific steps in the planning process relating to challenges your community is facing. You may find it useful to focus on presented information as appropriate for the role you wish to play in the planning process or the scale of the effort, which might range from a brief community presentation to an in-depth report and action plan.

There have been many efforts in the North Jersey region to orient groth and development around transit stations and stops. Using examples of transit-friendly development and lessons learned from the Together North Jersey (TNJ) region, this guidebook outlines principles and planning steps relevant for communities throughout New Jersey and beyond, whether in urban, suburban or rural areas.



# If you are...

**A resident or business owner,** you can use this guide to discover the economic and quality of life benefits associated with transit hubs. Learn how other municipalities have employed planning processes to craft a vision addressing local needs and preferences.

**A community-based organization,** you can use this guide to learn how to use transit hub strategies to further your organization’s mission, develop planning partnerships, implement approaches for engaging constituents and foster equity in transit hub development.

**A developer,** you can use this guide to explore successful development types, community concerns and priorities and the opportunities and challenges associated with transit hub development in North Jersey.

**A municipal staff member,** you can use this guide to understand the importance of community-driven planning and learn about regulatory and redevelopment tools, partnering opportunities and other transit hub strategies. Become familiar with available funding, technical assistance and other resources available to further implementation.

**An elected official,** you can use this guide to learn about approaches for gathering constituent input on priorities for transit hub development and addressing community concerns.

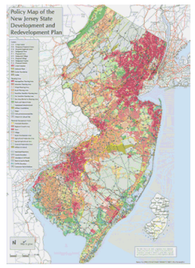
# TRANSIT HUB PLANNING AND YOUR COMMUNITY

## What is a Transit Hub?

A transit hub is an area surrounding a transit station–bus, train, light rail or ferry–that contains diverse land use, a variety of activities, and multi-modal transportation connections that are fully integrated with that station. Transit hubs are walkable, vibrant, culturally interesting places, with lively, active public spaces and a rich mix of amenities. In these locations, people have a wide variety of seamlessly connected options for getting from place to place. The station area is designed to meet the needs of local residents, as well as other station users. Transit hubs can be located in urban, suburban, or rural communities.


## Timeline: Transit-Friendly Planning and Policy in New Jersey

**1992**




Adoption of the first State Development and Redevelopment Plan

**1994**


Release of Planning for Transit-Friendly Land Use: A Handbook for New Jersey Communities (NJ TRANSIT)

**1999**

Creation of the Transit Village Initiative (NJ TRANSIT and NJDOT)

TRANSIT VILLAGE INITIATIVE

**2003**


Release of Building a Transit-Friendly Community (NJ TRANSIT)

**2015**


Release of the Together North Jersey Regional Plan

## History of Transit-Friendly Planning in New Jersey

In the 1980s, increasing traffic congestion, loss of open space and concerns related to "sprawling" development prompted passage of the 1982 New Jersey State Planning Act and adoption of New Jersey's first State Development and Redevelopment Plan ten years later. The plan called on New Jersey municipalities and developers to embrace "center-based" development, encouraging the compact, mixed-use, walkable and transit-focused development patterns traditional to New Jersey.

In 1994, NJ TRANSIT released Planning for Transit-Friendly Land Use: A Handbook for New Jersey Communities. The handbook presented a range of strategies, techniques and tools that could be used by elected and appointed officials, residents and other local leaders to create more vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, economically vital communities that promote travel by non-auto modes. This was followed by Building a Transit-Friendly Community which documented findings from NJ TRANSIT's "Transit-Friendly Communities for New Jersey" pilot community planning assistance program. Following the handbook and pilot project, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) partnered with NJ TRANSIT to create the Transit Village Initiative. Since 1999, the program has offered incentives to municipalities to redevelop or revitalize station areas according to transit-friendly design standards. Currently, there are more than 30 New Jersey municipalities designated as Transit Villages through the program.

During the last decade, similar transit-friendly planning efforts have gained additional relevance due to significant changes in lifestyles and preferences. The millennial generation, as well as aging baby boomers looking to downsize, have a well-documented preference for walkable and culturally interesting places that provide a range of amenities and transportation options. Professionals looking for flexible work-live settings are seeking out well-connected neighborhoods with amenities, services and business opportunities close at hand. The typical household is no longer the nuclear family and is smaller than in the past. These demographic changes and the rising cost of housing in the North Jersey region is driving demand for varied housing types, including apartments, condos and town homes.

Transit-friendly planning, which includes developing transit hubs, will be key to North Jersey's success in meeting this demand, while at the same time achieving efficient land use patterns and reducing dependence on cars. In 2015, Together North Jersey (TNJ) released the TNJ Regional Plan intended to guide the North Jersey region toward a competitive, livable, efficient and resilient future. The region's public transit system plays a central role in achieving the Plan's vision.

# TNJ Transit Hub Pilot Program

Transit hub planning efforts are a first step in capitalizing on the tremendous potential of New Jersey's public transportation system – and realizing the vision of a sustainable North Jersey. From 2018 to 2019, the NJTPA, through TNJ, sponsored the Transit Hub Pilot Program, which enlisted volunteer planners to lead efforts in three station areas. Lessons learned from these planning efforts informed the recommended planning process presented in this guidebook. The "planning tip" text boxes found throughout this document highlight effective planning activity examples successfully employed by the pilot project teams as well as lessons learned from other transit-friendly planning efforts in the region.

## NJ TRANSIT Watsessing Avenue Rail Station (Bloomfield)

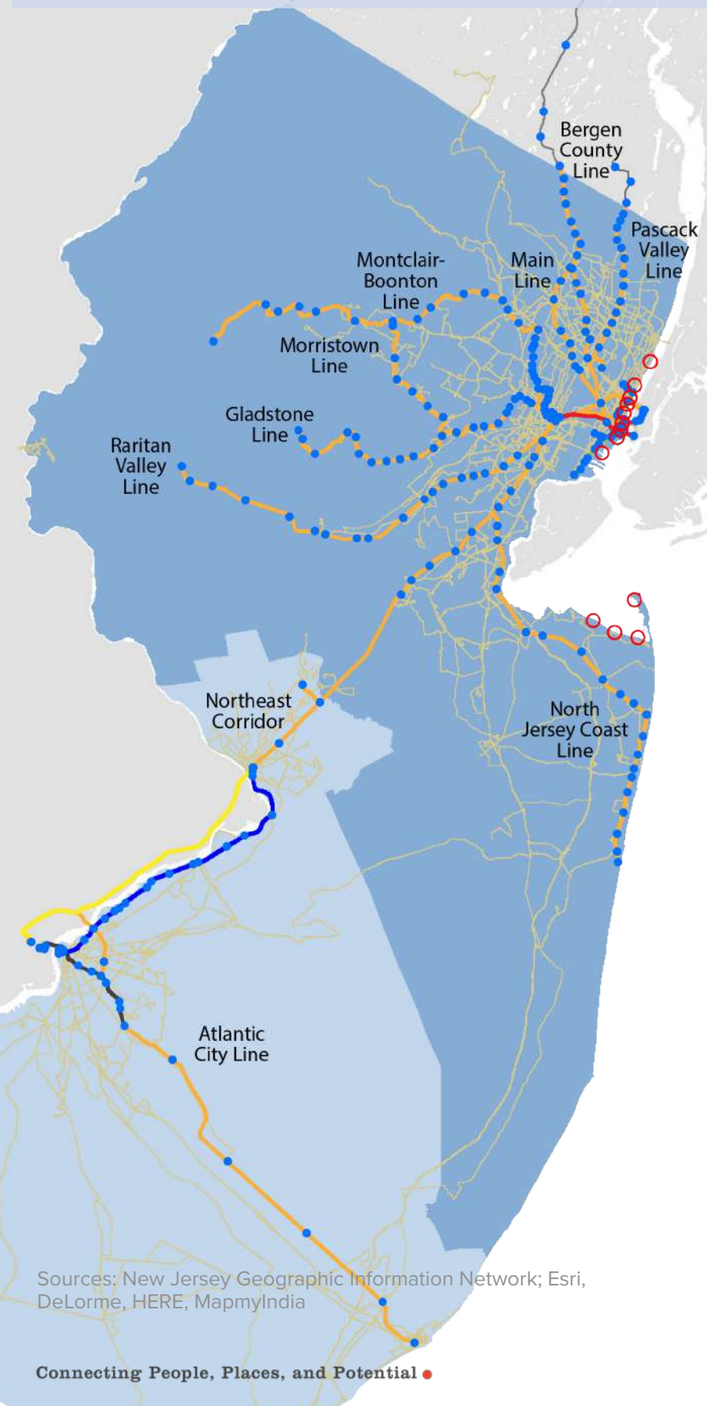

## NJ TRANSIT Dunellen Rail Station

## NJ TRANSIT Passaic Main Avenue Bus Terminal




# New Jersey Transit Network

New Jersey's extensive transit network offers an excellent environment for the development of transit hubs. The state's transit system, one of the most extensive in the country, provides North Jersey easy access to New York and Philadelphia.




New Jersey transit assets include:

- 12 NJ TRANSIT commuter rail lines serving 166 stations in 116 municipalities
- 3 NJ TRANSIT light rail lines serving 62 stations in 22 municipalities
- 252 NJ TRANSIT bus lines with more than 16,100 stops
- Port Authority Trans Hudson (PATH) service linking Essex and Hudson County with Lower and Midtown Manhattan
- Private ferry service connecting Essex, Hudson and Monmouth County with Lower and Midtown Manhattan

On a given weekday in 2017, more than half a million trips were taken on NJ TRANSIT buses and almost 400,000 trips on commuter and light rail, while more than 266,000 trips were taken from New Jersey PATH stations. Private commuter buses and ferries and, in some locations, county and municipal shuttle services complement NJ TRANSIT services.

**LEGEND**

- NJ TRANSIT Commuter Rail
- Hudson Bergen Light Rail
- Newark Light Rail
- Riverline
- PATH
- PATCO
- SEPTA
- NJ TRANSIT Bus Routes
- Rail Stations
- Ferry Terminals

Sources: New Jersey Geographic Information Network; Esri, DeLorme, HERE, MapmyIndia

Connecting People, Places, and Potential

# *Transit-Friendly Communities in North Jersey*

The presence of a transit station, whether bus, train, light rail or ferry, is a significant asset for a community. Transit stations serve as a local landmark, serve as a gateway into the community for regional commuters and visitors and provide access to important job centers within and outside the North Jersey region. The connectivity and development potential of transit stations can be realized through transit hub planning. Pursuing a community-driven planning process can help to ensure that the transit hub will serve the needs of existing residents and others and result in a vibrant, culturally-rich, well-connected place to live, work and play. Developing a comprehensive vision for a station area also advances municipal efforts to secure designation as a Transit Village and take advantage of the technical assistance and funding opportunities the initiative could provide.

Numerous North Jersey communities have taken advantage of their transit assets to pursue transit-friendly development. The following two pages present just a handful of the diverse communities across the region that have made major progress in developing around transit assets.

## Morristown

Though at a distance from North Jersey's urban core, Morristown's downtown has gained a reputation for offering high-quality urban living. The city has attracted more than $1 billion in new construction and conversions around the historic Morristown Green, the NJ TRANSIT rail station and other downtown areas. Popular local dining as well as arts, culture and entertainment venues have helped the city become a regional destination.

## Fanwood

In 2000 Fanwood's station area was suffering from store vacancies and outdated building designs that needed a makeover. Today, Fanwood's downtown is a lively, mixed-use, walkable, community-oriented town center. New buildings and upper-floor additions to existing buildings are a nod to the town's Victorian architecture and provide increased housing opportunities and street-level commercial space. Pedestrian walkways and alleys provide safe and convenient access among buildings and parking facilities.

## Harrison

Once a center of heavy industry, Harrison's environmental cleanup and redevelopment efforts have resulted in the construction of the Red Bull Arena and numerous mixed-use residential and retail projects. Development is centered on an upgraded PATH station which serves 2.2 million riders annually and provides direct and frequent service to lower Manhattan, Newark, Jersey City and Hoboken.


## New Brunswick

Since completion in 2011 of the mixed-use, high-rise Gateway Transit Village next to the NJ TRANSIT train station, the City of New Brunswick has continued to see significant downtown investment. Projects such as new Rutgers University facilities, a performing arts center, and a fitness and wellness center, have transformed the college town into a bustling regional hub.

## Cranford

Cranford's town center has seen the addition of several residential and mixed-use developments clustered around the Cranford rail station. This new development and streetscape improvements have added to the historic, small-town charm of Cranford's station area, where local residents and visitors enjoy a mix of cafes, restaurants and parks and plazas.


## Somerville

The transformation of downtown Somerville began with the 2005 Somerville Visioning Project. This and other transit hub planning efforts have led to Main Street revitalization and expansion of housing options. Division Street, once an uninviting road with narrow sidewalks leading to the train station, is now a bustling, pedestrian-only thoroughfare lined with cafes, restaurants and retail establishments.

# Why Plan for Transit Hubs?

There are numerous (and often interrelated) benefits that accrue from successfully planned and implemented transit hubs. Though they are built around transportation and mobility, transit hubs produce benefits that extend to all aspects of life, are enjoyed by all community members and are sustainable over the long-term.

## Efficiency

Higher-density development with a mix of uses (residential, retail, office and public open space) built around transit stations results in more efficient land use  and reduces the cost of providing infrastructure. Residents in the station area can meet most of their daily needs with a short walk or bike ride, reducing household transportation expenditures and the need for longer trips by personal vehicle. These efficiencies can reduce regional traffic congestion and enhance the sustainability of the transit system by boosting ridership and revenue.

## Community

Well-planned transit hubs foster an enhanced sense of community identity. They provide opportunities for neighbors and friends and families to relax, chat and participate in community events in plazas, parks, and streets designed for people rather than for cars. Transit hubs also contribute to a greater sense of security—the result of well-maintained public spaces and more activity in the station area.

## Environmental Sustainability

Transit hubs can help direct new development away from natural and agricultural lands to areas with existing infrastructure. By reducing personal vehicle travel, transit hubs can help reduce emissions and improve regional air quality.

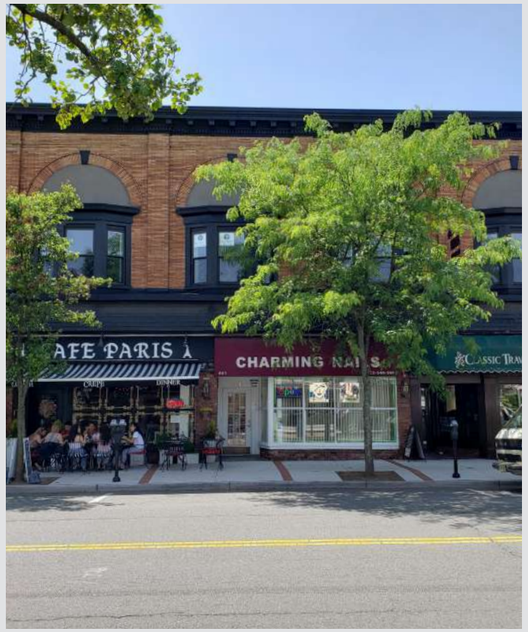


## Economic Prosperity

Transit hub planning creates opportunities for attracting residential and commercial development, spurring revitalization of economically distressed or blighted areas, expanding housing options and providing affordable housing. Transit hubs can attract talented workers and the businesses seeking to employ them locally, fostering a more prosperous and sustainable local economy. Increased foot traffic in the station area benefits local businesses. Local governments can capture revenue generated by any rise in land values and business activity.

## Mobility & Access

Residents, workers and visitors enjoy proximity to a variety of amenities and services around transit hubs and enjoy the convenience and flexibility of multiple transportation modes that suit the needs of different users and trip purposes. They benefit from mobility options that connect them to the transit facility without the need to drive (first/last mile links).




## Health

Reduced dependence on automobiles can help make communities healthier. Transit hubs offer opportunities for more active lifestyles by accommodating pedestrians and bicyclists and providing areas such as parks for recreation.

# What is a Successful Transit Hub?

There is no single transit hub planning model that fits all. A transit hub plan must respond to the unique characteristics and needs of the community. However, as a community advances through the planning process, several principles should guide public discussions, identification of opportunities and challenges, and selection of strategies.

## Placemaking

Transit hubs should be places where people enjoy spending time. They are visually and culturally interesting and set station areas apart as unique and memorable places. They are built for people rather than cars and provide opportunities to socialize and conduct business.

## Multi-modal connections

In an effective transit hub, the station serves as an essential part of a rich mix of ways to move around the station area, as well as abundant and varied connections to areas outside the transit hub (first mile/last mile connections). Transit hub users should be able to easily transfer between different modes of transportation and safely navigate their way to a highly visible transit station or stop. An integrated transit network that is accessible to pedestrians and cyclists allows travelers to reduce their dependence on personal vehicles and connects a transit hub with the regional transportation network.

## Economic development

Transit hub communities should work to understand development opportunities in the station area, taking into account regional and local market conditions, and adopt or revise land use regulations accordingly. Successful transit hub planning is geared toward helping new businesses start up and existing businesses thrive and grow. Improvements to the public realm, such as traffic calming, attractive streetscapes and welcoming parks, also help spur economic development by making a transit hub a more appealing place for shopping, entertainment, and doing business.

## Equity

Transit hubs should expand opportunities for people of all backgrounds to access transit and live close to amenities and services. Communities should consider how the station area will accommodate different modes of transportation, such as bus, paratransit, walking and biking, that are important to people of varying abilities and financial means. The transit hub should provide housing options that ensure lower-income households are located near the station area and transit connections to the surrounding region.

## Accessibility

Public facilities in transit hubs should be accessible and safe for everyone. This can be accomplished through the building of ADA-compliant infrastructure and the provision of wayfinding tools that can be used by all persons, regardless of language barriers or visual impairment. Accessible design helps ensure that all potential users benefit from what a transit hub has to offer.

# Transit Hub Design Elements

Whether in a major downtown or a rural hamlet, a successful transit hub must consist of lively, mixed-use places where people want to linger as well as mobility networks that transport people safely and efficiently. Some of the key design priniciples used in transit hub planning are shown below.


Source: "Rutherford and East Rutherford." 40°49'45" N and 74°05'57" W. Google Earth. Accessed April 16, 2019.

**1**

**TRANSIT FACILITIES:**

- Are visible community landmarks
- Are easily accessible for pedestrians and bicyclists, and automobiles as appropriate
- Are well-lighted, well-maintained and provide safe and comfortable waiting areas
- Provide convenient connections to multiple transportation modes
- Have a layout, ADA features and wayfinding signage that facilitate navigation for all users
- Provide information on transit schedules and arrival times and local destinations

**2**

**PARKING:**

- Minimizes amount of land devoted to parking
- Is shared among facilities
- Is located behind buildings (surface lots) or contained in buildings (structured facilities)

**3**

**BUILDINGS:**

- Are clustered to offer many and varied destinations accessible by foot
- Provide a variety of uses and sufficient concentration of activities to generate foot traffic and transit use throughout the day
- Are architecturally varied and interesting and sensitive to the character of the local community
- Are oriented toward the sidewalk

**4**

**STREETS:**

- Form a well-connected network with block sizes appropriate for pedestrian circulation.
- Safely accommodate all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders
- Better separate people from traffic with trees, street furniture and on-street parking
- Are visually pleasant and make walking enjoyable
- Are well-lighted and orient people to the transit station and nearby buildings and activities

**5**

**PUBLIC SPACES:**

- Create pedestrian pathways between streets, transit facilities and buildings
- Have distinctive design features such as public art or fountains
- Serve as places to linger, socialize and relax and/or community gathering spaces with regular organized events/programs

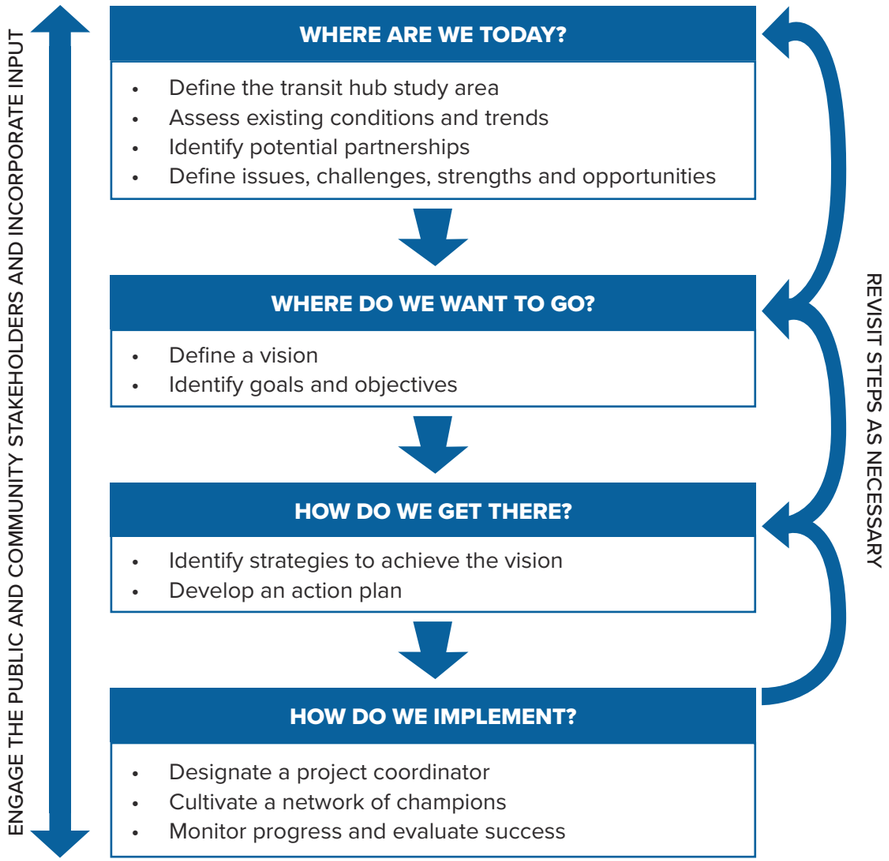
# DEVELOPING A TRANSIT HUB STRATEGIC PLAN

## The Planning Process

The transit hub planning process is an opportunity for community leaders, businesses and the public to envision a vibrant and well-connected area around a station, stop or terminal. The process is led by a planning team consisting of a champion, professional planners and partnered stakeholders. **Figure 1** shows a basic planning process framed around four simple questions. This section of the guidebook explains the activities that are necessary for answering each question.

A transit hub planning effort may not have the resources to implement every step in the process recommended here. In some cases, a limited effort resulting in a set of goals and associated strategies that focus on a particular aspect of transit hub development may be a useful starting point. It can augment other ongoing planning efforts or serve as a stepping-stone to a more in-depth process.

**Figure 1: Transit Hub Strategic Planning Process**




## Engaging the Public and Stakeholders

Public and stakeholder engagement should begin early and happen often, regardless of the scale of a transit hub planning effort. Engagement activities should keep the community informed and provide opportunities for meaningful input throughout the planning and implementation process. Community buy-in to the vision and goals that will guide transit hub development over time is key to success. Inclusive public engagement can help ensure that the plan reflects community values and promotes a vision for equitable and inclusive development.

**Planning Tip #1** presents a set of guiding principles that can help to ensure engagement efforts are successful. The transit hub planning team should speak with residents and other stakeholders to make sure the results make sense locally and reflect the community's priorities. Public engagement activities are also an opportunity for the planning team to inform and educate the public on the potential benefits of creating a vibrant and accessible transit hub.

Providing opportunities for meaningful public engagement and attracting robust participation are frequently cited challenges of many community planning processes.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT**

- **Engage early and often.** Involve community members in the early stages of the project and during each step of the planning process.
- **Consider accessibility.** Ensure that your engagement activities take place at times and locations that are easily accessible by community members, regardless of age, ability, language or background.
- **Go to them.** Rather than expecting community members to come to your meeting room, take your public engagement activities to local events, places of worship or community centers. Setting up on the sidewalk or a plaza near the transit hub is a great way to get feedback from users.
- **Be proactive and creative.** Identify potential barriers to public involvement and develop ways to overcome them. Tailor outreach efforts to the characteristics and needs of the community's populations as well as local issues.
- **Be inclusive.** Work to involve broad and representative segments of all stakeholders and take steps to reach traditionally under-represented populations. Welcome participation from people who are wary of or opposed to change.
- **Be responsive.** Listen and respond to the community's concerns. Let participants know how their input was incorporated into the plan.

planning tip #1

# North Jersey Lessons Learned

Since the NJ TRANSIT Planning for Transit-Friendly Land Use handbook was published in 1994, many North Jersey municipalities have succeeded in crafting and implementing community-driven transit hub plans. Though the planning process should be tailored to local context, communities should learn from the experience of places with successful transit hubs. Some common lessons learned are:

- **Get the word out.** Use all available media outlets including online and social media to spread information about the project and engage members of your community.
- **Engage the community.** Engage all members of the community, especially commuters, infrequent transit users and under-represented individuals who often don't participate in the planning process.
- **Empower the community.** Allow the planning process to be guided by those who live in the community. Work collaboratively with residents to ensure that the overall project vision reflects the values, and meets the needs, of the local community.
- **Cultivate political support.** Win the support of your local elected and appointed officials early in the process.
- **Build partnerships.** Identify local organizations and community groups who can lend support to the project and assist throughout the planning and implementation process.
- **Understand the place.** Examine how the assets in your community (public places, streets, buildings, transit) are being used by those who live there.
- **Know your planning tools.** Understand the tools at your disposal, such as zoning ordinances, public surveys, or traffic studies.
- **Assess opportunities and challenges.** Investigate what already exists in your study area and identify both assets and potential challenges.
- **Engage other levels of government.** Make sure to include county and state government in the planning process, as government agencies often have jurisdiction on what can and cannot be implemented.
- **Manage expectations.** It is important for the community to understand that significant changes to the station area will take time, hard work and likely will require making trade-offs.
- **Score quick successes.** Accomplish something tangible early in the process. This gives the project credibility, generates enthusiasm, and creates the momentum needed to keep moving forward. Tactical urbanism pilot projects are a great way to demonstrate potential improvements.



# First Things First: How do I Start a Transit Hub Planning Effort?

**THE TRANSIT HUB CHAMPION.** Every planning effort needs at least one individual who will have the vision and energy to push it forward. This “champion” should be somebody established in the local community who can devote a sufficient amount of their time. It might be an elected official, a local resident, a member of the business community, a non-profit or advocacy group representative or representative of an institutional stakeholder (such as a university or hospital). The champion will promote the effort, help foster partnerships and community engagement, and also work with partners to identify required resources and expertise to get the planning process started (and see it through to completion). To launch a planning process, a transit hub champion should consider the following questions:

- Where will your efforts be focused?
- What do you hope to accomplish and on what timeline?
- Who are your potential allies and champions for specific aspects of the planning effort?
- Who should be part of the planning team?
- What resources do you already have to support the planning process?
- Who else should be involved in the process?
- How can you cultivate community support?

The planning partners should revisit these questions throughout the planning process, as more information is gathered and stakeholders are identified.

**ENGAGING PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS.** The champion must assemble a team of planning professionals to carry out the required technical work. While there is no substitute for local knowledge and vision, professional planners are needed to provide technical expertise and facilitate community conversation. Technical assistance resources are available to communities wishing to plan a transit hub, such as:

- American Planning Association New Jersey Chapter Community Planning Assistance Program (CPAP)
- New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Local Planning Services
- New Jersey Department of Transportation Transit Village Program
- NJ TRANSIT Transit-Friendly Land Use Program
- NJTPA Planning for Emerging Centers Program
- Rutgers University Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy
- New Jersey Institute of Technology New Jersey School of Architecture

planning tip #2

**INITIAL SCOPING MEETING: DUNELLEN**

An important first step is an initial scoping meeting involving local champions, municipal officials and other stakeholders. This meeting can help define what the community hopes to accomplish during the planning effort. Participants can share local knowledge and findings from previous planning efforts to determine objectives and identify the study area’s geographic focus. For example, the Dunellen planning team held a scoping session with the municipal administration and planning department, council members, and representatives of the Dunellen Public Library, the Dunellen Parking Authority, the Dunellen Arts & Culture Commission and other key stakeholders. The facilitated discussion helped participants define the general study area, identify key issues and determine what could be accomplished given available resources and the team’s expertise.

# WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

## Define the Transit Hub Study Area

One of the first steps in the transit hub planning process is to determine what area should be the focus of the plan. People are generally willing to walk for about 10 minutes to access a transit station, which for most people is the equivalent of about half a mile. Therefore, a common approach to identifying the study area is to draw a half-mile linear radius around the transit station that will serve as the transit hub focal point, or by tracing a half mile along streets and sidewalks. These are two ways to define what is sometimes referred to as the “walkshed” of a transit station or stop.

However, conditions might differ greatly in this half-mile area. The planning team should work with community partners to refine the study area boundary to address local conditions. Some common factors to consider when selecting the study area are:

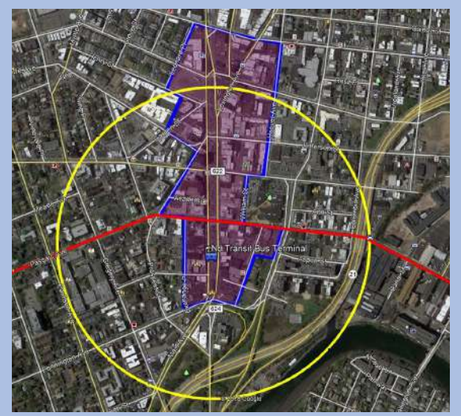
- Scope of the planning effort and issues likely to be addressed
- Natural barriers such as lakes, rivers or steep hills
- Infrastructure barriers like busy roads, highways, incomplete sidewalks or irregular street patterns
- Political and jurisdictional boundaries
- Land ownership
- Land use, including parcel shape and size
- Presence of facilities such as parks or community centers
- Presence of vacant lots or sites with potential for redevelopment
- Areas that are fundamentally different from surrounding areas in terms of development density, building scale, urban design character or development potential
- The level of mobility of community members (e.g., seniors, children, disabled)

It is useful to draw the boundaries of the transit hub study area along existing streets or parcel lines to avoid ambiguity. During the early stages of the planning process, a combination of mapping, field observations, and stakeholder engagement will help determine appropriate study area boundaries.

planning tip #3

**DEFINING A STUDY AREA: PASSAIC**

In Passaic, the TNJ Transit Hub Pilot planning team defined a study area around the NJ TRANSIT Passaic Main Avenue Bus Terminal. The planning team and local stakeholders determined that the study area should focus on the core commercial corridor around the station (marked in blue), which extends mostly to the north of the station and out of the walkshed radius (marked in yellow). Note that a highway (Route 21) and the Passaic River intersect the walkshed to the south and east. These are examples of barriers to pedestrian access that sometimes define the extent of a study area.



## Assess Existing Conditions and Trends

To answer the question “Where are we today?” the planning team gathers data on current conditions and trends in the proposed transit hub area. Every community is unique. The assessment allows the community to develop a vision tailored to local issues, opportunities and needs. The findings that result from the assessment serve as the building blocks for formulating a vision and goals for the transit hub and recommending strategies for implementation.

The assessment should include both “hard data," such as population estimates, traffic counts, transit ridership, etc., as well as information gathered through background research, field observations, and public and stakeholder input. Community members can provide valuable local knowledge and perspectives that might not emerge from more technical analyses. Planning partners should review existing plans for the area, including the land use and circulation elements of the municipal master plan, redevelopment plans, and other plans and studies as relevant to identify existing visions, recommendations and regulations and policies.

The series of tables on the following pages presents some key questions that should be considered when assessing existing conditions and trends. The list of questions in each table is not exhaustive, but covers issues that are important to most transit hub planning efforts. In some instances, it may be appropriate to gather data for an area that extends beyond the transit hub study area. For example, household size throughout the municipality or region, rather than only within the station area, might be more relevant for determining what types of housing developments would attract new residents into the transit hub.

planning tip #4

**BUSINESS CANVASSING: WATSESSING AVENUE**

The Watsessing Station pilot project team visited local businesses and spoke with owners and managers in person early in the planning process. These initial one-on-one conversations helped the team gather information on businesses’ concerns and made it easier to recruit the business owners and managers to participate in engagement activities later on in the process.

# Community Conditions

It is important to understand the characteristics of the population residing in the study area and what community resources are present. One way to understand these conditions is to create a community profile, which can be used to tailor the transit hub plan to the needs of the existing community and to effectively target public engagement efforts. In addition to presenting data and statistics, the profile should also highlight the culture, values, experiences and history of the place and people who live there. These factors may determine how individuals perceive proposed changes in the transit hub area.

| | |
|---|---|
| Population and Socio-Economic Background | • What does population and household growth during the past 10 years tell us about the trajectory of the community and potential for development?<br>• What does the age distribution of the area tell us about housing needs or lifestyle preferences?<br>• What are the needs of any potentially disadvantaged and under-represented populations in the study area (such as low-income residents or those with disabilities)?<br>• What is the racial and ethnic composition of the local population? |
| Cultural and Historical Factors | • Are there traditionally under-represented local populations, such as racial or ethnic minorities, low-income residents, people with disabilities, Limited English Proficiency populations or immigrants?<br>• What local political dynamics, cultural values, local history or issues of importance may have a bearing on the planning process? |
| Community Resources | • Are there any facilities that are important to the local community, such as community centers, schools or parks?<br>• Does the station area host any public events, such as festivals or markets?<br>• What local social service or other non-profit organizations serve the community? |



# Economic Conditions

The transit hub profile should include information on development trends, employment and other market conditions to help understand the potential for development projects and economic growth. Local fiscal conditions should be examined. The planning partners should use data as well as input from local stakeholders to understand economic and fiscal challenges facing the community. The assessment should also document any ongoing economic development efforts or organizations in the area.

| | |
|---|---|
| Local Market Dynamics | • What does the size, income, and make-up of households in the station area tell us about housing needs or lifestyle preferences?<br>• What does the real estate market in the surrounding region tell us about potential for development in the station area?<br>• Do current residents spend a significant portion of their income on housing?<br>• Are there any planned, ongoing, or recently completed residential, office, retail or other development projects in or near the station area? |
| Public Finances | • What factors are negatively or positively impacting local fiscal conditions? Are they tied to land use, infrastructure or other issues relevant to transit hub development?<br>• What are local property tax rates? How might they impact the ability of the community to attract development and other forms of investment? |
| Employment | • Are there a large number of jobs concentrated in the project area? What types of jobs?<br>• Are there any major employers, such as hospitals or universities, present? |
| Economic Development | • What types of economic development programs exist?<br>• Is there a Special Improvement District or business committee operating in the study area?<br>• Are there state designated areas related to economic development in the study area, such as Urban Enterprise Zones or Opportunitiy Zones? |

# Transportation and Safety Conditions


It is important to understand how people move within and through the study area. The assessment can reveal challenges and issues to circulation and opportunities for leveraging existing transit and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to encourage alternatives to driving. The assessment should consider pedestrian and bicycle safety, as well as personal safety issues, which can negatively impact quality of life and perceptions of the area, inhibit investment and discourage people from using non-auto transportation modes, public spaces and other amenities in the station area.

| | |
|---|---|
| Transit Facilities and Services | • What transit services are provided at the station?<br>• How frequent is service at the transit station? How many riders board and disembark at the station?<br>• Does the transit facility connect the community to one or more major regional employment centers? Are transfers necessary?<br>• Who uses the transit station? Local residents, out-of-town commuters?<br>• How far do people travel to get to the station? By what modes of transportation?<br>• Do drop-offs and pick-ups at the station or other areas of the transit hub cause congestion or safety concerns? |
| Multi-modal Connections | • What transit services are available in the station area? Are connector services (e.g., shuttles) available at the station?<br>• Does pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure allow for easy and safe movement and connect directly to the transit station?<br>• Is the pedestrian network and transit station accessible for people of all abilities and ages? Are they ADA-accessible?<br>• What non-auto travel options are available?<br>• Are there any physical barriers, such as a highway, that impede local circulation or access to the station? |
| Travel Patterns | • Is transit a commonly used mode of transportation among local residents? Driving?<br>• What is the household car ownership rate?<br>• How might vehicular traffic patterns in the station area affect pedestrian and bicyclist circulation and access by all modes to the station? |
| Safety | • Are there intersections or other areas where bicycle and pedestrian crashes are clustered?<br>• Is the station well-lighted and visible from the surrounding area? Is the station area well-lighted and arranged to allow for “eyes on the street”?<br>• What is the crime rate in the area? Are there any locations where personal safety is a major concern? |

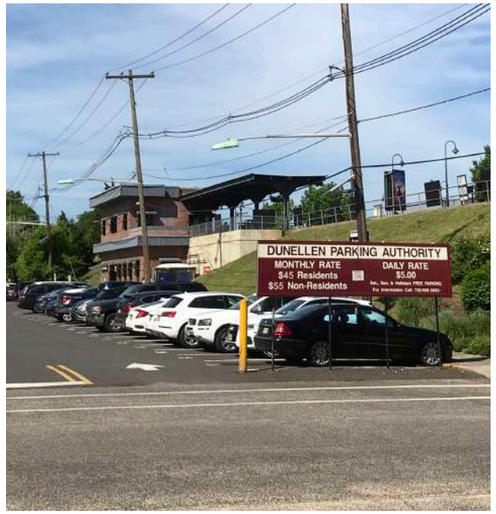


# Land Use and Built Environment Conditions

Examining current land use patterns, urban design and infrastructure can help clarify opportunities for development and infrastructure improvements. By analyzing zoning ordinances and other land use and design regulations, the planning team can determine what regulatory changes may be needed to support transit hub improvements and development. Existing plans, including the municipal master plan, should be examined to ensure the transit hub proposals are in line with the existing vision for the area or to recommend changes to existing plans.

| | |
|---|---|
| Existing Land Use | • What are the dominant land uses in the station area? Does surface parking constitute a significant land use?<br>• Are there vacant sites or other opportunities for redevelopment?<br>• Who are the primary property owners in the area and what are their interests or concerns?<br>• Does current building density and design encourage non-auto means of transportation?<br>• How much public space (e.g., plazas, parks, etc.) is there in the station area? Where is it located and what function does it serve? |
| Urban Design | • How has urban form in the area changed over time? What positive design features traditionally characterized the area but have been degraded? Can those features be restored?<br>• Are current street and block patterns conducive to walking and bicycling to and from the station?<br>• Is the study area divided up into many small parcels or larger parcels? Would parcels have to be assembled to develop transit-supportive buildings? |
| Land Use Plans and Regulations | • What does the municipal master plan say about land use in the study area?<br>• What land uses do current zoning ordinances permit in the study area?<br>• What do existing zoning and other land use ordinances say about requirements for density, parking, building heights and design features? |
| Major Facilities | • Are there any major facilities in the area, such as hospitals or ports? What functions do they serve and what impacts do they have on local circulation? |
| Utility Systems | • Do existing utility systems provide sufficient capacity to support higher density development? Is the station area sewered?<br>• Where are sanitary sewers, water lines, electrical grids and connections located? |

# Parking Conditions




Parking issues often pose serious challenges to the success of transit hub development. A perception among residents and businesses that there is a shortage of parking is a common obstacle to pursuing transit supportive development such as higher-density housing or replacing parking areas with other uses. Certain parking facilities may be important to some station area users (such as commuters) but not to others (such as residents). Station commuter parking may overflow into residential areas. Parking facilities can undermine access to transit stations and negatively affect pedestrian activity and urban design quality. Understanding current parking provision, policies and community perspectives is important to developing solutions that maximize benefits for users of the station area.

| | |
|---|---|
| Parking Allocation | • How much transit station and station area parking is there? Is surface parking a prominent land use in the station area?<br>• Do surface or parking structures detract from the aesthetic value or pedestrian experience of the station area?<br>• Do surface parking lots detract from pedestrian and bicycle access to transit? |
| Parking Facilities and Ownership | • What are the major parking facilities? Who owns them and what are their interests or concerns? |
| Parking Utilization | • What is the utilization rate of station parking facilities? Of on-street parking? In business corridors? Others?<br>• Who uses parking in the station area? Commuters? Local residents? Local business patrons?<br>• Are there shared parking opportunities (e.g. parking lots that remain empty most weekday working hours)? |
| Current Parking Policies and Regulations | • What strategies are currently in place to manage parking?<br>• Is on-street parking metered?<br>• Will existing municipal parking requirements disincentivize development?<br>• Does the station area contain residential permit parking?<br>• What are local attitudes toward free parking? Metered parking? Residential permit parking? |



# Identify Potential Partnerships

The transit hub planning process should be guided by engaged stakeholders that can share local insight and expertise. (See the table below for some examples of potential planning partners). They can foster trust between the community and the planning team and act as ambassadors. Stakeholder participation may take place through a formal advisory committee or consist of a few partners that meet regularly throughout the effort. Transit hub planning partners can:

- Promote the planning effort among their constituents
- Support public engagement efforts
- Help build relationships
- Provide information to support the identification of issues and opportunities
- Come to a consensus on a vision statement and accompanying goals and objectives
- Provide input on findings and recommendations
- Serve as or identify responsible parties for implementing proposed strategies

Partners should represent a broad cross-section of community interests. When pursuing partnerships, consider who will be impacted by the plan, who will identify opportunities, or who can contribute expertise or resources to support implementation. The planning team should work to include organizations that represent populations traditionally under-represented in the planning process.

### Common Transit Hub Planning Partners

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **LOCAL OFFICIALS** | • Municipal officials<br>• Local parking authority | • County transportation departments<br>• County administration |
| **DEVELOPERS** | • Private developers<br>• Local redevelopment agencies | • Non-profit developers<br>• Affordable housing developers |
| **COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS** | • Chambers of commerce<br>• Local business committees<br>• Main Street programs<br>• Special Improvement Districts | • Major employers<br>• Local businesses<br>• Community-based organizations<br>• Social service providers |
| **COMMUNITY MEMBERS** | • Major property owners<br>• Homeowner associations<br>• Universities, hospitals and other major institutions | • Local business owners<br>• Schools<br>• Places of worship |
| **NEW JERSEY STATE AGENCIES** | • Department of Transportation<br>• Economic Development Authority | • Department of Community Affairs<br>• Department of Environmental Protection |
| **TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS AND ADVOCATES** | • NJ TRANSIT<br>• Port Authority of NY & NJ<br>• Metropolitan Planning Organizations (such as the NJTPA)<br>• Shuttle service providers | • Transportation Management Associations (TMAs)<br>• Bicycling and pedestrian advocates<br>• Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) |



# Define Issues, Challenges, Strengths and Opportunities

The planning team should use the gathered data, field visits and public and stakeholder engagement to distill key findings. These findings may include community needs or concerns, challenges to development, existing assets or opportunities to transform a transit hub area. Such information will help identify what should be changed, preserved, or enhanced; it also can serve as a framework for the transit hub vision and implementation of recommendations.

**DESIGN ANALYSIS AND ENGAGEMENT.** Because design of the physical space is so important for creating a vibrant and well-functioning transit hub, design-focused analyses and activities are often effective tools in understanding issues to address and opportunities to leverage in the station area. More about community-driven design activities can be found in **Planning Tip #6**.

**SWOT ANALYSIS.** Another effective method for identifying and considering issues and opportunities is to conduct a SWOT analysis. Through this method, the planning team works with the community to identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). More information is provided in **Planning Tip #7**.

planning tip #5

**FIELD VISITS AND WALKING TOURS: DUNELLEN**

The planning team should conduct field visits to become familiar with the study area and its issues. Field visits can include municipal officials, local residents, and other stakeholders. Planning teams can ask participants what they believe are the issues and opportunities in the study area and suggest initial strategies for participant feedback.

The Dunellen pilot project team organized a walking tour of the station area. About 50 people participated following promotion of the event through social media. Participants discovered they had to  walk through parking lots to get anywhere within the station area. They also informed the planning team of what changes they would like to see.

planning tip #6

## CONDUCTING DESIGN ANALYSES AND ENGAGEMENT: PASSAIC

A transit hub must provide a vibrant and culturally interesting place where people want to linger, while also allowing users to move safely and comfortably through the station area. To help achieve these goals, the planning team may choose to develop specific designs for buildings, streets, public spaces and other elements of the proposed transit hub through visual renderings.

A community-driven planning process can employ public engagement techniques to ensure the physical layout, facilities and look and feel of the station area respond to community preferences and needs. Outreach techniques such as surveys can include questions on design, such as what design elements (e.g., building design, street furniture) are most important to residents. Planning teams can conduct walking tours to better understand the layout and character of the area and learn about community concerns and preferences.

Charrette workshops are a commonly employed tool for achieving a community consensus around design. Planners, designers, residents and officials collaborate in an intensive, usually multi-day planning session to reach a vision for development within a set time limit. This method allows participants to give immediate feedbacks to designers, who typically present alternative design options for consideration. Charrette workshops result in a plan that is crafted directly by the community.

Similar efforts can be carried out as shorter and less formal public workshops. Mapping exercises are an effective public workshop activities that allow participants to view maps of their community and identify assets or point out issues or concerns. Workshops can also be used to allow community participants to review and provide input on design alternatives.

The Passaic Main Avenue Bus Terminal study was a design-focused effort. Key issues of the planning effort included revitalization of existing multi-story buildings along the Main Avenue commercial corridor, the potential for adding levels to existing one-story commercial buildings and developing parking solutions. The planning team led a walking tour of the station area to become familiar with land use and design issues and gather input from participating stakeholders. Mapping software was then used to inventory existing buildings and a free-drawing software program helped the team create initial design concepts (such as in the image below). The planning team led a series of public workshops, some of which were streamed online through Facebook Live, using the drawing software to present "on-the-fly" designs that can be changed in real-time to present alternative design options for review and suggestions.

The NJTPA Engage! online portal provides information on numerous tools related to community-driven design activities.

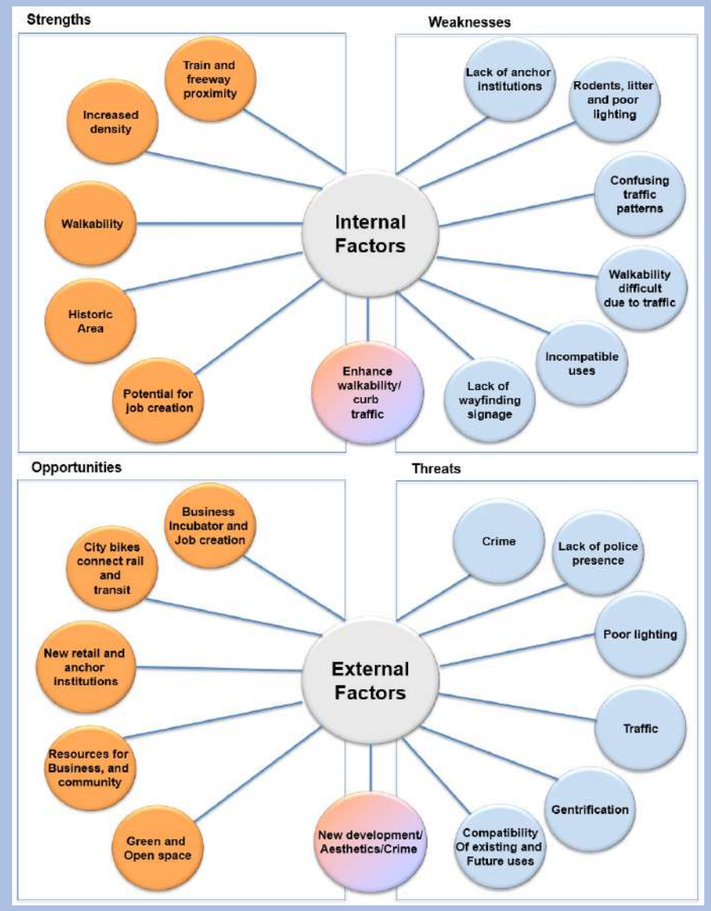


planning tip #7

## CONDUCTING A SWOT ANALYSIS: WATSESSING AVENUE

A Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis is a structured planning method used to evaluate factors that may affect project success. It involves specifying the objective to be achieved (e.g., create a transit hub around a transit station) and identifying the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieving that objective. An internal factor is one that can be directly influenced or controlled and is either favorable ("strength") or unfavorable ("weakness"). An external factor is part of the operating environment and more difficult for the community to influence or control. Favorable external factors are categorized as "opportunities" and unfavorable external factors are categorized as "threats".

The Watsessing Station Avenue planning team held a public meeting to conduct a SWOT analysis of the station area retail corridor. Elected officials, business owners, landlords and members of the public attended. The participatory SWOT analysis activity allowed the community to zero in on challenges to address and opportunities to pursue, as shown in the diagram below.



# WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?

## Define a Vision

Based on the results of the local conditions assessment and public and stakeholder engagement, the planning team should work with stakeholders and the public to develop a vision for the transit hub area. The vision should be presented in a statement that expresses the community's aspirations by describing an ideal condition. It should be a unifying statement that reminds the community of what they are striving toward.

A vision statement should:

- Be concise and easy to communicate
- Be sufficiently broad to encompass various community perspectives, but specific enough to be meaningful
- Reflect the community's values
- Inspire community members and stakeholders

Because the vision statement will guide the development and implementation of a strategic plan, it should be endorsed by the community's elected officials.





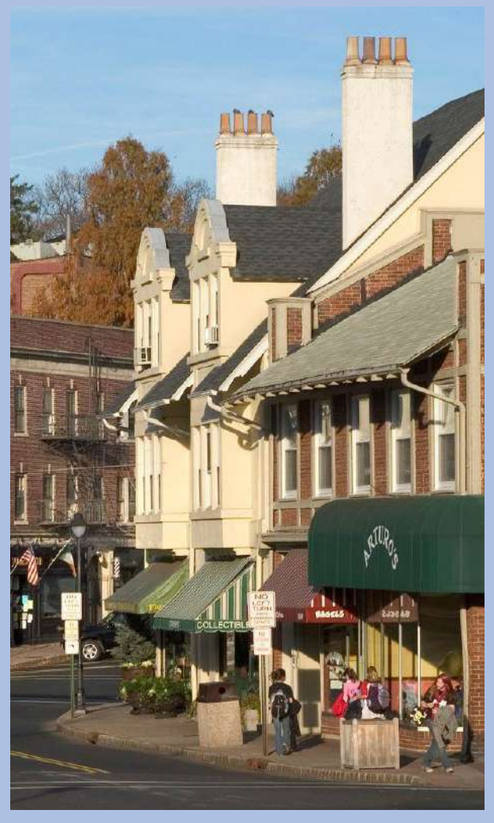


planning tip #8

### ENVISIONING DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Existing transit hubs in North Jersey differ in terms of type, scale and intensity of development. Transit hubs range from major downtown employment centers to bedroom communities that provide local shopping and services. Some North Jersey municipalities have chosen to dramatically transform their station areas to reposition their communities in the region. Others have focused on preserving and enhancing what they already have while pursuing denser housing development that conforms to the existing character of the station area. By working together to develop a comprehensive vision, a community can articulate what role it wants the station area to play locally and regionally. The level of service provided by the transit station is a key factor in determining the potential function of the station area. Communities pursuing the implementation of a transit hub should consider:

- Current and projected ridership rates for all available modes
- Frequency of service for all available modes
- Extent of geographic market served (distance riders travel to get to the station)
- Level of access to major employment centers
- The potential for changing any of the above factors




## GENTRIFICATION

Research has shown that in the New York Metro Area, the number of low-income households in walkable areas with good access to jobs is decreasing, while their numbers have increased in less walkable areas that are less accessible to jobs. The shift in location has occurred as walkable places become increasingly desirable for higher-income households. Living in less walkable areas often results in higher transportation costs, which when combined with housing costs can be a burden for low-income households. Like any improvements to an area, the development of a transit hub, especially the introduction of luxury housing next to the station, has the potential to drive up local housing prices and rents leading to displacement of existing residents and businesses. This is one reason why existing residents and local business owners should be involved in shaping the vision for the station area from the early planning stages. The planning process should consider risks of gentrification-driven displacement and employ strategies to preserve and develop affordable housing and varied housing types.[1]

## INCREASED DENSITY – "NOT IN MY BACKYARD!"

Increased housing density, which helps to achieve transit-supportive development, is a common cause for concern among some community residents. Some may worry new development will cause parking problems and increased traffic or strain on the school system. These are valid concerns to be considered during the planning process, but research has shown concerns about density are often overstated. For example, a Rutgers University study found that residents of new housing near transit stations have about half the number of school-age children as residents living in new housing farther from stations. They are also almost 60% less likely to use cars to commute to work. Residents of apartments and condominiums—typical development types in transit hubs—are also less likely to own cars than residents of other housing types.[2] In addition, solutions such as structured and shared parking can help manage parking demand.


1. Regional Plan Association, (2017). Untapped Potential: Opportunities for Affordable Homes and Neighborhoods Near Transit. http://library.rpa.org/pdf/RPA-Untapped-Potential.pdf

2. New Jersey Department of Transportation Bureau of Research and U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, (2010). Eliminating Barriers to Transit-Oriented Development, Final Report. http://vtc.rutgers.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/FHWA-NJ-2010-002-Eliminating-Barriers-to-Transit-Oriented-Development.pdf





## THE ONE-SEAT RIDE

In northern New Jersey, many rail lines and bus routes provide access to jobs in New York City. Some services provide a "one-seat" commuter ride (not requiring transfers) to Manhattan. These services can be a major asset supporting transit hub development efforts. A direct connection to the metro area's largest job center is a major selling point among potential residents and investors. But a one-seat ride isn't a must. A transit hub can serve a variety of mobility purposes and can be built around a bus terminal, light rail station or ferry terminal. For some communities, a commuter rail station with limited or indirect service to Manhattan may be one among a varied and flexible set of mobility options, including micromobility options, like bike shares or e-scooters. Existing transit hub communities without a one-seat ride and located distant from the metro core have achieved success by combining their transit asset with unique public spaces, a rich mix of amenities and diverse mobility options that make the station area a great place to live, work and play. As transit hubs throughout the region continue to develop, communities can also attract passengers traveling among North Jersey communities, including larger cities such as Newark and Jersey City that are experiencing significant downtown redevelopment.

## BUS VS. RAIL

Bus routes are often considered "less permanent" than rail lines because the physical infrastructure associated with bus routes (roads and shelters) are less significant than rail tracks and stations. However, most high-frequency bus corridors in northern New Jersey have been in place for decades or longer and are not likely to be eliminated. North Jersey communities should not overlook the potential and opportunities presented by high-frequency bus corridors. Bus routes along these corridors carry millions of riders each year. Investing in bus corridor improvements along these routes, by adding amenities and improving streetscapes and public space in the surrounding area, can signal to investors that key corridors are important community assets. The City of Hackensack is pursuing implementation of a transit hub around the Hackensack Bus Terminal, which provides service to northern Manhattan, Jersey City, Newark and other North Jersey locations. Development to date includes streetscape improvements, replacement of a parking facility with a park and mixed-use residential and retail development.

# Identify Goals and Objectives

The vision statement provides a starting point for developing more specific goals and objectives.

**Goals** describe what will be achieved to advance the overall vision. They should correspond to the issues and challenges identified as part of the planning process. Goals are concise, one-sentence statements that express what the community plans to achieve.

***"Encourage economic development by fostering cooperation among local businesses."***

***"Create lively areas where residents can gather and socialize."***

**Objectives** propose distinct and measurable activities that can be accomplished in the more immediate future to achieve a particular goal. Like goals, objectives should align with the vision statement and should address the issues and opportunities identified earlier in the planning process. Objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable and relevant to the vision.

***"Pursue amendments to current zoning regulations that promote mixed-use development of an appropriate density."***

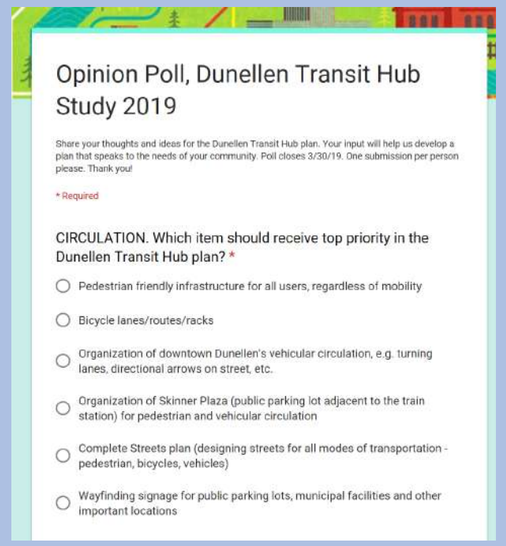
***"Ensure that both the station and infrastructure (sidewalks, crosswalks) within the station area are ADA-compliant within the next 3 years."***

Identifying goals and objectives begins the work of transforming the transit hub vision into a set of actionable next steps, clarifying what needs to be accomplished. The next steps of the process are aimed at identifying specific planning and implementation strategies to achieve the goals and objectives.

planning tip #9

### TRANSIT HUB OPINION POLL: DUNELLEN

The Dunellen Station pilot project team administered online surveys to residents and business owners. The resident survey identified community priorities for circulation, land use and other topics. It also included fill-in-the-blank statements that informed the plan's proposed vision for the area, such as "I'll know the Dunellen transit hub is a success when..." The business survey asked respondents what type of change (or lack of change) they'd like to see in the area: transform, evolve, enhance or preserve. Business owners were asked what changes would make the area more appealing to their customers.



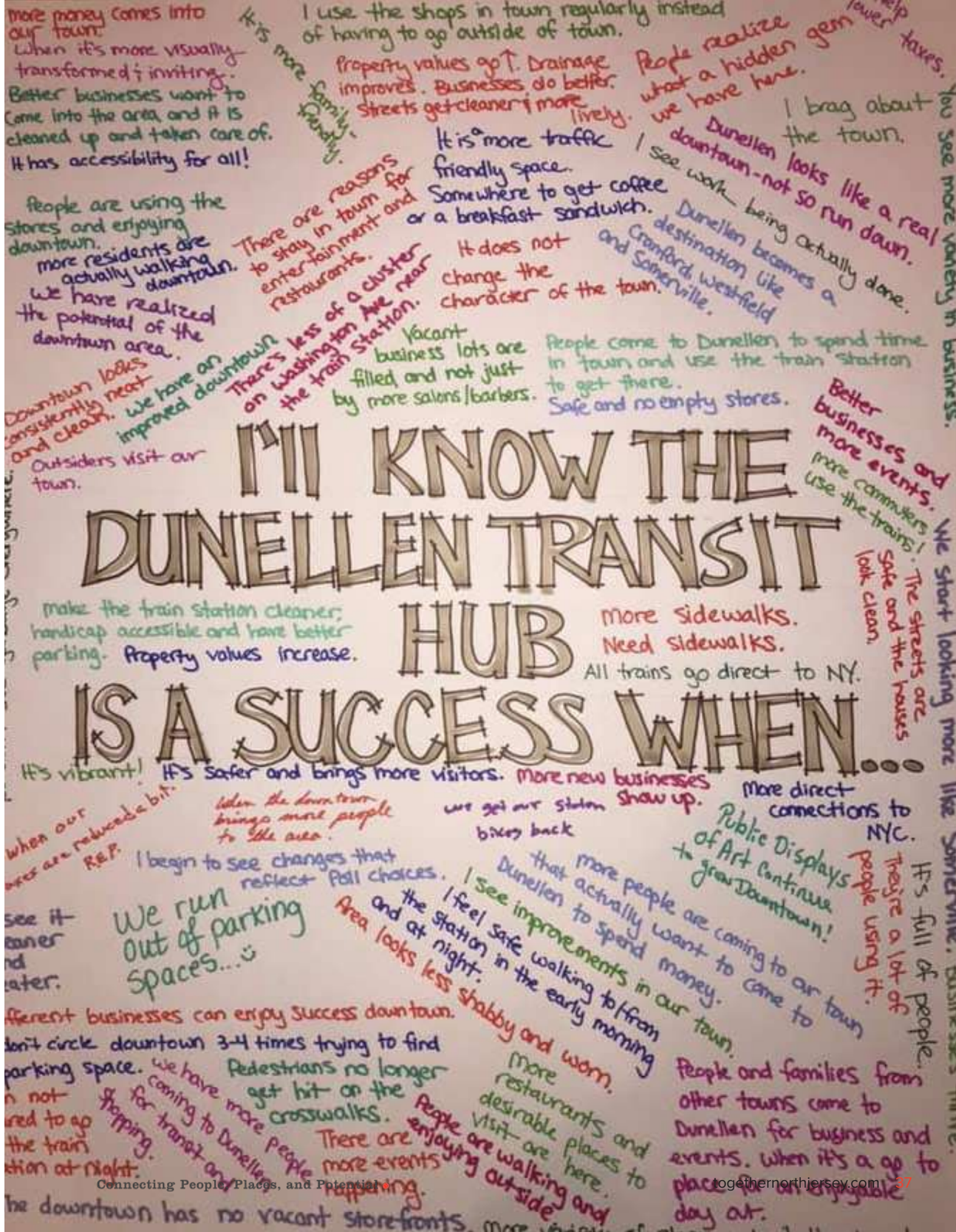
Opinion Poll, Dunellen Transit Hub Study 2019

Share your thoughts and ideas for the Dunellen Transit Hub plan. Your input will help us develop a plan that speaks to the needs of your community. Poll closes 3/30/19. One submission per person please. Thank you!

* Required

CIRCULATION. Which item should receive top priority in the Dunellen Transit Hub plan? *

- Pedestrian friendly infrastructure for all users, regardless of mobility
- Bicycle lanes/routes/racks
- Organization of downtown Dunellen's vehicular circulation, e.g. turning lanes, directional arrows on street, etc.
- Organization of Skinner Plaza (public parking lot adjacent to the train station) for pedestrian and vehicular circulation
- Complete Streets plan (designing streets for all modes of transportation - pedestrian, bicycles, vehicles)
- Wayfinding signage for public parking lots, municipal facilities and other important locations

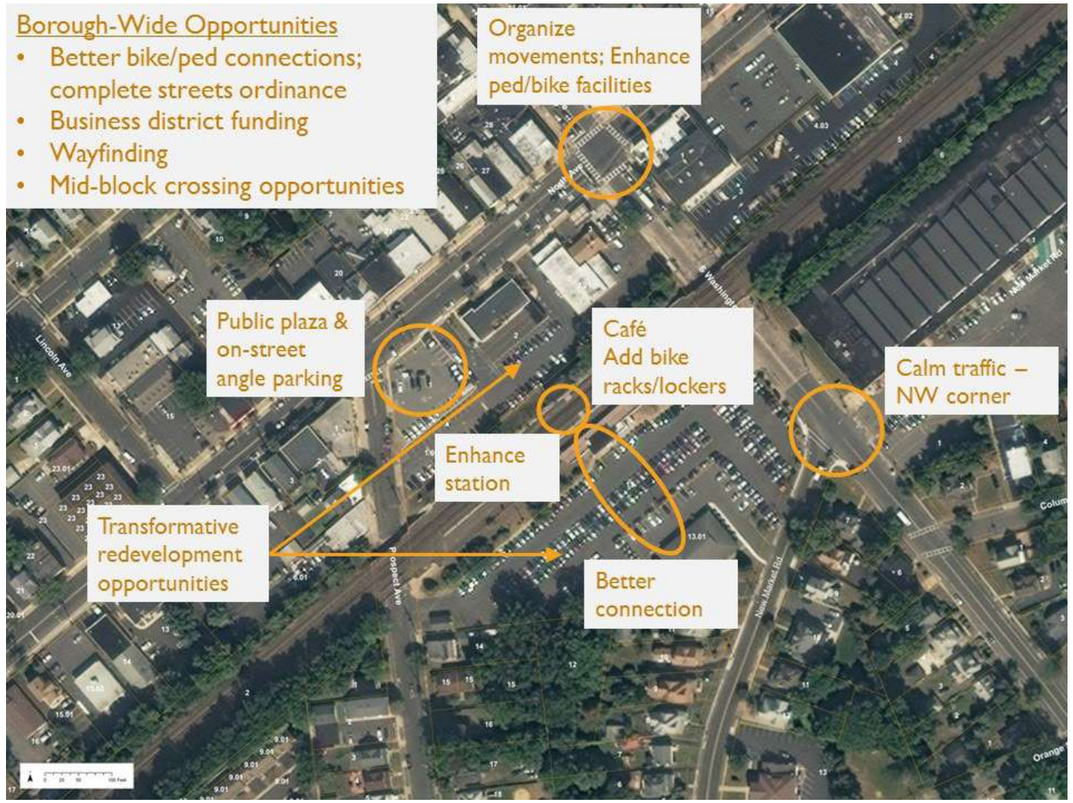


# HOW DO WE GET THERE?

## Identify Strategies to Achieve the Vision

The next step is to select strategies to achieve the identified goals and objectives for the transit hub. The strategies should address community needs and take advantage of identified opportunities, while considering constraints. The set of strategies should take a multifaceted approach to achieving the identified transit hub vision. In the transit hub Strategic Plan, the strategies can be organized around the transit hub goals or objectives. For example, one set of recommendations may relate to economic development, while another may be focused on enhancing personal safety. The planning team is responsible for assembling an initial list of strategies. Stakeholders and the public should be invited to review and provide input before the strategies are finalized.

### Dunellen Pilot Project Strategies








#### THE "MISSING MIDDLE"

Developers seeking to build in transit hubs often focus on producing luxury, high- or mid-rise residential developments adjacent to the transit facility, where land values are generally higher. While these types of development are sometimes appropriate, North Jersey communities should also consider opportunities for smaller-scale housing near the station, as well as nearby but outside the transit hub "core." "Middle housing" – duplexes through multiplexes, courtyard apartments or townhomes – achieves transit supportive densities and can often be integrated into existing residential neighborhoods through infill development (building on vacant or underused land or between existing buildings). Smaller-scale multi-family housing types can help to address the ongoing housing affordability crisis in North Jersey by providing varied housing for middle-income residents and people of different lifestyles and life stages.

#### PRESERVING AND ADAPTING ASSETS

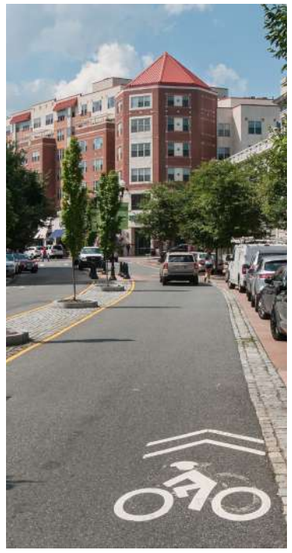
Many of our region's older towns and cities, which were built around the public transit system, have inherited assets that can be restored to a useful function. In such places, creating a transit hub need not be just a matter of new construction, but can and should also incorporate preserving and adapting what is already there. Many transit hubs in the region have successfully incorporated historic industrial and other facilities as a key part of their transit hub planning activities. For example, in the City of Orange, developers turned the F. Berg & Company Hat Factory into the Hat City Lofts. In Ridgewood, the First National Bank & Trust Company building became the FISH Urban Dining restaurant.

North Jersey also has many two- to three-story row buildings with active retail spaces on the ground floor and either vacant or outdated upper floors. This is often due to zoning ordinances restricting the upper floors to an office use that does not correspond to market demand. Rezoning these properties to allow residential housing in the upper floors is an effective means of increasing the amount and variety of housing in the transit hub area. Such strategic rezoning can be a "quick win" relative to longer-term, new-construction projects. Further, these buildings are often interspersed with single-story commercial buildings that create gaps in the traditional urban fabric. There may be opportunities to convert such commercial properties to multi-story, mixed-use buildings by amending zoning ordinances to allow for construction of upper floors.

# Transit Hub Strategies

North Jersey communities have successfully employed various strategies to make transit hubs a reality. Some are outlined briefly below; others are detailed in the North Jersey Transit Hub Toolkit beginning on page 48 of this Guidebook. The strategies presented here are effective in various place types—from small town centers to larger downtowns.

### CREATE SEAMLESS AND SAFE MULTI-MODAL CONNECTIONS



**Complete Streets** Designing streets to safely and efficiently accommodate all modes of transportation, all users, and all ability levels, with the goal of balancing the needs of drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, emergency responders, and goods movement

**Multi-Modal Connections** Effective coordination of all modes of transportation at the transit hub to create a seamless experience

**Travel Demand Management** Strategies and policies to reduce and redistribute travel demand, such as expanding transit services, providing bike share and other micromobility options and designing Complete Streets

**Wayfinding** Installing signage to indicate location or direction of mobility options and local districts and destinations and enhance station area branding

**Curbside Management** The regulation and redesign of curbside areas along streets to promote greater flexibility in use of the space, accommodating bicycling facilities, transit stops, parking, ride-hailing vehicles, goods movement and others

### ENCOURAGE TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE DEVELOPMENT

**Transit Supportive Zoning** Revising municipal zoning ordinances to allow for appropriate mixed uses and higher density development and to restrict inappropriate uses

**Density Bonuses** Incentivizing developers to include an additional community element, such as affordable units or public space, by allowing them to develop at greater densities

**Redevelopment or Rehabilitation Area** A process governed by the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law and undertaken in accordance with a redevelopment plan to transform distressed areas into economically viable and productive assets

**Joint Development** A shared effort in which a public entity, such as a transit agency, makes available property and a private developer develops transit-supportive uses and provides infrastructure improvements. Such agreements can result in new transit and shared parking facilities and sale or lease revenues or equity interest for the public entity

### MANAGE PARKING EFFECTIVELY


**Revised Parking Standards** Encouraging transit supportive development by revising parking standards for development projects, such as reducing or eliminating minimum parking requirements

**Shared Parking** Cooperative agreement among property owners to share parking facilities, where peak parking times differ among properties

**Paid Parking** Charging users for the use of parking facilities and employing smart meters and parking apps to manage demand

**Payment in Lieu of Parking (PILOPs)** A developer pays a fee to the public jurisdiction in lieu of meeting their parking requirements onsite

**Employ On-Demand Micromobility Options** Partnering with ride-hailing companies, providing micromobility options such as bike share and e-scooters and employing parking apps to reduce space devoted to parking and reduce "cruising for parking"

### CREATE GREAT PLACES

**Streetscape Improvements** Enhancing roadways, sidewalks, lighting, signage, landscaping and other elements of the public right-of-way to create a visually appealing and easily navigable public space

**Public Space Improvements** Building and enhancing plazas, parks and pedestrian only streets to accommodate a variety of community uses

**Active Public Sapces** Maintaining regular programming and special events, such as festivals and farmers' markets, in plazas, parks, streets and other public spaces

**Public Art** Installing art that serves as a focal point at the transit station or nearby public spaces

**Property Improvements** Providing incentives and supports to property owners and businesses to maintain and beautify buildings

**Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)** Modifying and activating the built environment and engaging community partners to create safe places

### GENERATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Housing Diversity** Providing a range of housing options within the transit hub core area and the surrounding area

**Housing Trust Funds** A dedicated source of funding for affordable housing

**Community Engagement** Engaging community members, including low-income residents, and using input to inform planning of new development

**Streamline the Development Process** Facilitating completion of projects that include affordable housing by expediting and streamlining the planning approval process

**Land Trusts** Acquiring land for affordable housing projects

**Incentivize New Construction** Using financing mechanisms and zoning regulations to encourage developers to include affordable housing in projects

### GROW A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY


**Branding and Marketing** Developing a distinct brand identity for the station area and marketing the station area to promote shopping, entertainment, and other attractions

**Economic Development Strategic Plan** A plan informed by local stakeholders that allows for sustainable and measurable economic growth

**Business Collaboration** Enabling a collective, organized response to problems and opportunities in commercial districts by establishing local business committees or Special Improvement Districts or participating in the Main Street New Jersey program

**Business Recruitment** Actively and continuously work to attract an appropriate mix of businesses to locate in the transit hub area

**Business Supports** Making available financial tools to support the growth of local businesses

**Streamlined Business Permitting** Reducing barriers to market entry by establishing an easily navigable business permitting process



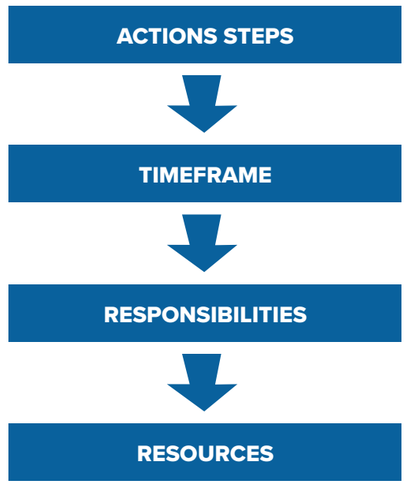
# Develop an Action Plan

A list of recommended strategies, projects and programs are just words on paper until they are put into motion. Detailed action plans help turn a plan into reality.

**ASSESS ACTION REQUIREMENTS.** Every recommended strategy, project or program should have a detailed action plan. A good action plan provides specific information on what steps need to be taken, by whom, on what timeline and with what resources, as shown in **Figure 2**. Detailed action plans can also highlight gaps that that need to be filled. The effort to answer the questions “what”, “when”, “who” and “how” will facilitate implementation, foster accountability and can contribute to the long-term success of the transit hub. The Transit Hub Toolkit section of this guide provides information on available funding and technical assistance programs for implementing transit hub strategies.

**DEVELOP TRANSIT HUB IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE.** Based on the timeframes for each individual action and other identified action requirements, the community should prioritize actions and create a timeline for overall implementation of the transit hub. Actions that can be quickly implemented as “quick wins” should be identified and pursued immediately.

**Figure 2: Action Requirements**




planning tip #10

### USING SOCIAL MEDIA: DUNELLEN

Many people rely on social media for news and community information. While transit hub public engagement efforts should not rely solely on social media, it has become an important outreach method. The Dunellen planning team made extensive and continuous use of social media during the planning effort. A designated team member administered the “Dunellen Transit Hub Study” Facebook page. The administrator regularly posted updates and public engagement results, as well as related media content from around New Jersey and the country. The Facebook page was also used to interact with community members, who commented on posts and responded to polls.

It is important to remember that not everyone has access to or relies on social media or the internet in general. Public engagement efforts should always include hard copy materials, such as surveys, as well in-person outreach opportunities.

## REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

Transit hub implementation sometimes involves the use of New Jersey's Local Redevelopment and Housing Law. Under the law, New Jersey municipalities can declare an area "in need of redevelopment" or "in need of rehabilitation" if the area meets statutory criteria related to deterioration, disinvestment or decline. Such a designation allows municipalities to develop special area redevelopment plans that supplement existing zoning, designate redevelopers to implement the adopted redevelopment plan and offer a range of tax exemptions and abatements to facilitate redevelopment in the designated area.

Some attempts to declare redevelopment areas, whether near transit stations or in other contexts, have been met with community opposition and legal action. Property owners may contest seizure of property and residents and business owners may voice opposition due to concerns over displacement. These are valid concerns that should be addressed.

The redevelopment process will be more likely to gain support when community members – especially affected residents and business and property owners – are actively engaged from the beginning in developing a vision for the area and determining a plan for relocation. The transit hub planning process may serve as an opportunity to develop a community-driven vision for already designated or potential redevelopment areas.

The municipality should clarify the rights guaranteed to displaced residents and businesses by New Jersey and federal law, such as monetary assistance, assistance in finding new locations and replacement of affordable housing. Some North Jersey communities have implemented redevelopment plans in phases so that existing businesses and residents can be relocated in the completed phases. Instead of using eminent domain or purchase, some municipalities have chosen to adopt redevelopment plans that encourage local property owners to be the redeveloper or participate in redevelopment activities such as façade improvements.


## PILOTS

Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs) are financial agreements between municipal governments and developers that allow a developer to pay a service charge instead of property taxes, typically for 30 years. PILOTs also can be granted for projects in Urban Enterprise Zones (UEZs), projects for the relocation of residents displaced by redevelopment or for low- and moderate-income housing construction. From a developer's standpoint, PILOTs offer predictability and potential cost savings.

Some North Jersey municipal governments have encountered opposition to PILOTs for several reasons. While property taxes are divided between a municipality, the county, and the local school district, most PILOT revenue goes only to the municipality. Furthermore, PILOT revenue overall is typically less than the amount that would otherwise be owed in property taxes. Community members may perceive a PILOT as a "handout" to a developer. However, PILOTs can mean the difference between realizing a transformative project and losing an opportunity. A proposed project may not be viable without a PILOT due to the high cost of land, local market conditions, high property taxes or costs associated with remediating contaminated sites. Municipalities also can enter into agreements to redistribute PILOT revenues with their county and school districts. Local PILOT policies can include community benefit requirements, such as local hiring.

It's also important to note that PILOTs are not always necessary for transit hub development. Municipalities are encouraged to consult with financial advisors to review proposed projects, require developers to conduct fiscal impact analyses, and do a thorough review of the PILOT costs and benefits. Towns should also establish a PILOT process and standards in local ordinances, share information with the public, and engage affected stakeholders in the decision-making process.

North Jersey Special Concerns

# HOW DO WE IMPLEMENT?

## Designate a Project Coordinator

Implementing a transit hub requires consideration of numerous issues and working with many local and external partners. Keeping the effort on track requires the time and energy of one or more individuals devoted to realizing the transit hub vision. Planning partners should designate a coordinator responsible for maintaining communication flows, coordinating with external partners, identifying opportunities, working to move individual projects forward, securing the necessary resources, promoting the effort and monitoring progress. The project coordinator should organize a working group and facilitate regular meetings to review progress and plan next steps. Ideally, the selected individual should be someone who can devote most of their time and resources to keeping the process moving forward over the long-term. It may be a municipal staff member or a hired consultant. When identifying a project coordinator, a community should consider:

- Skillset and expertise
- Time and resources available
- Relationship with the community
- Established communication channels with the public and stakeholders
- Scope of authority
- Institutional priorities

planning tip #11

**IMPLEMENTING TRANSIT HUB DEVELOPMENT IN SOMERVILLE, NJ**

Since it began in 2005, the Somerville transit hub effort has involved several distinct areas within the borough, including a station and landfill redevelopment area, central business district and Main Street. The role of the Somerville Director of Economic Development as a central coordinator has helped the borough maintain momentum over the long-term and across project areas. The coordinator works with developers, community stakeholders and external partners, such as NJ TRANSIT, to move projects forward, as well as to monitor and manage issues as they arise, such as parking and traffic.

## Cultivate a Network of Champions

Designated members of local government, non-profits, advocacy groups, the business community or other local stakeholders can act as champions to guide and promote transit hub development. Champions use their expertise and networks to build support and secure resources. They may be devoted to furthering specific strategies or actions, or may promote the effort within a certain geographic area (e.g., a block association working to promote the effort among local residents).

Planning partners should build a network of champions by recruiting stakeholders engaged in the transit hub planning process, and capitalize on the enthusiasm generated when developing the transit hub vision. The champions should work with local partners, such as the municipality, as well as external partners, such as transit agencies, to identify and obtain required resources.



## Monitor Progress and Evaluate Success

Measuring progress toward achieving transit hub goals is an important management tool. Developing an effective performance monitoring plan starts with selecting the right performance measures to gauge success. Performance measures should help track conditions and trends in the study area. In many cases, the results of the Current Conditions and Trends Assessment completed earlier in the process can provide “baseline” information against which to measure progress. Remember that defining success in a transit hub context will be unique to each location.

**GOAL**

***Increase retail activity in the transit hub area.***

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

- ***Retail vacancy rate***
- ***Number of retail businesses opening and closing***
- ***Number of farmers market days***

North Jersey Special Concerns

**PARKING MANAGEMENT**

As a transit hub becomes a popular destination, demand for visitor parking can increase significantly, especially in suburban or rural areas of North Jersey. There are many strategies that can help to manage parking challenges. Examples include shared parking arrangements, parking facilities, or residential permit parking. Many transit hub communities have found paid parking to be effective. Paid parking also produces revenue that a municipality can use to implement station area improvements, such as street furniture or sidewalk repairs.

Further, “micromobility” options, such as bike shares and e-scooters, can also help reduce the number of vehicles in the station area. However, parking demand is likely to change over time; transit hub communities should continuously monitor parking issues to ensure a proper balance between existing and emerging transportation options. Parking authorities, districts and utilities can be important partners to engage throughout the transit hub planning process.

Measuring progress will require the collection and analysis of data, which will come from various sources:

- Information collected and reported by others (vacancy rates, transit ridership or population growth)
- Compiled by municipal departments (number of business permits or certificates of occupancy issued or local crime statistics)
- Collect your own data (number of people using a new public plaza, resident satisfaction with new development and businesses). This may require conducting a survey or polling residents at community events.

Monitoring progress should be an ongoing effort that starts early in the process. Progress evaluation and reporting should happen at least once for each year, and more often as needed. Implementation partners will need to balance the level of effort needed to collect and analyze performance data, as well as the frequency of reporting needed to keep things moving forward. Results of progress monitoring should be shared with all community stakeholders and used to revisit the transit hub plan and make adjustments as necessary.

# NORTH JERSEY TRANSIT HUB TOOLKIT

The following section presents information on strategies and resources for implementing North Jersey transit hub planning and implementation efforts. The tables in this section display the following:

**Transit Hub Strategies** are regulatory, redevelopment and public investment strategies a community may employ to realize a transit hub vision. The list is not exhaustive, but includes tools frequently implemented in New Jersey transit hubs and effective in various place types—from small town centers to larger downtowns.

**Planning Tools** are free and available to the public for use in the planning process to view demographic, economic and land use data, review existing plans and planned transportation investments, and engage members of the public.

**Funding and Technical Assistance Programs** are available to support transit hub planning and implementation efforts. Information on additional funding and resources can be found on the Together North Jersey Funding and Resources Database.

## Transit Hub Strategies

### CREATE SEAMLESS AND SAFE MULTI-MODAL CONNECTIONS

| Transit Hub Tool | Strategies | Benefits | Supporting Conditions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Complete Streets**<br>Streets designed to safely and efficiently accommodate all modes of transportation, all users, and all ability levels, with the goal of balancing the needs of drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, emergency responders, and goods movement | • Adopt a Complete Streets policy<br>• Allocate capital funding for bicycle, pedestrian and transit facility improvements, designated bus lanes, traffic calming measures and other Complete Streets measures<br>• Reduce vehicular speed limits<br>• Educate members of the public on pedestrian and bicyclist safety | • Expands mobility options<br>• Encourages use of active transportation<br>• Improves safety<br>• Facilitates access and mobility for people of all ability levels<br>• Increases foot traffic, creating a lively public realm and generating revenue for local businesses<br>• Facilitates access to the transit station | • Successful implementation is facilitated by adoption of a Complete Streets policy<br>• Must be complemented by pedestrian friendly building design<br>• Improvements must be compatible with road function |
| **Multi-Modal Connections**<br>Effective coordination of all modes of transportation at the transit hub to create a seamless experience | • Promote coordination of transit scheduling between service providers<br>• Provide live travel information at the station and in non-transit facilities (apartment buildings) in the station area<br>• Install bus shelters or improve stops<br>• Install bicycle facilities, such as bicycle depots, at transit station | • Allows for more efficient commutes and shorter transfer times<br>• Enhances appeal of transit use<br>• Facilitates first mile/last mile connections | • Cooperation between service providers<br>• Existing bus service<br>• Complete Streets |
| **Travel Demand Management (TDM)**<br>Strategies and policies to reduce and redistribute travel demand | • Provide facilities that encourage alternatives to personal vehicle, such as bike share, bike depots, and carshare parking spots at the transit station and station area<br>• Require or incentivize developers to provide amenities for alternatives to personal vehicles, such as bike racks and carsharing vehicles | • Reduces congestion<br>• Reduces parking demand<br>• Expands mobility options<br>• Encourages residents to use active transportation<br>• Provides first-mile/last-mile connections | • Ordinances that require or incentivize (e.g., through density bonuses) TDM features<br>• Complete Streets |
| **Wayfinding**<br>Install signage to indicate location or direction of mobility options and local districts and destinations | • Include wayfinding in circulation element of municipal master plan<br>• Secure grants or allocate local funding to designing and installing branded wayfinding signage | • Helps orient residents and visitors<br>• Raises awareness of available mobility options and local amenities<br>• Contributes to creating a sense of place | • Pedestrian and bicycle-friendly streets<br>• Partnership with transit agency |
| **Curbside Management**<br>The redesign of curbside areas along streets to promote greater flexibility in use of the space | • Implement flexible curbside usage based on time of day and community needs | • Reduces congestion<br>• Accommodates multiple modes of transportation and freight | • Sufficient road space and appropriate configuration adjacent to transit station |
| | • Designate ride-hailing drop-off/pick-up zones at station and in station area | • Reduces congestion<br>• Improves traffic safety | |

## ENCOURAGE TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE DEVELOPMENT

| Transit Hub Tool | Strategies | Benefits | Supporting Conditions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Transit Supportive Zoning**<br>Revising municipal zoning ordinances to allow for appropriate mixed-uses and higher density development and to restrict inappropriate uses | • Revise zoning regulations to allow for mixed-use and higher densities | • Creates opportunity for higher-density, mixed-use development that is transit-supportive<br>• Encourages redevelopment of blighted properties or properties that are not transit-supportive or pedestrian friendly | • Sufficient market demand for the types and intensities of uses allowed<br>• Current property owners willing to take advantage of opportunity to redevelop<br>• Political support for necessary zoning ordinance revisions<br>• Requires governing body approval |
| | • Establish overlay zone | • Adds zoning regulations in a particular area conducive to mixed use development | |
| | • Adopt form-based codes or design guidelines that regulate building mass and form in relation to other buildings and the public realm and the scale and types of streets and blocks, with an emphasis on form over use | • Grants greater control over and predictability of building and public realm design<br>• Flexibility allows existing and new development adapt to changing market realities<br>• More effective in conveying community preferences than traditional zoning ordinances | • Requires governing body approval<br>• Requires a market for new development to realize benefits |
| **Density Bonuses**<br>Incentivize developers to include an additional community element, such as affordable units or public space, by allowing them to develop at greater densities | • Establish density bonuses for new development in municipal zoning ordinance | • Provides community assets without direct financial investment | • Public support for increased density<br>• Requires a market for new development to realize benefits |
| **Redevelopment or Rehabilitation Area**<br>A process governed by the state Local Redevelopment and Housing Law and undertaken in accordance with a redevelopment plan to transform distressed areas into economically viable and productive assets | • Identify areas within the proposed transit hub area that are candidates for redevelopment or rehabilitation<br>• Declare an area in need of redevelopment or rehabilitation<br>• Develop a plan for current property owners to redevelop or rehabilitate their properties | • Enables municipality to assemble land under dispersed ownership into a parcel appropriate for transit-supportive development<br>• Authorizes a municipality to employ financial and other redevelopment tools, such as eminent domain, Payments-in-Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs), and revenue bonds | • Requires public support, especially if eminent domain is exercised<br>• A local redevelopment plan must be adopted by the municipality and should be based on a community-driven vision |



| Transit Hub Tool | Strategies | Benefits | Supporting Conditions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Joint Development**<br>A shared effort in which a public entity, such as a transit agency, makes available property and a private developer develops transit-supportive uses and provides infrastructure improvements | • Initiate a joint development inquiry with NJ TRANSIT<br>• Pursue public-private partnerships to develop shared parking structures or other infrastructure | • Can increase transit ridership<br>• Makes use of publicly-owned assets<br>• Allows public entities to combine their resources with the expertise of developers<br>• May produce sale or lease revenues or equity interest for public entity<br>• Creates opportunities to implement infrastructure improvements such as new stations or stops and parking facilities | • Availability of public property<br>• Expertise and capacity to effectively negotiate joint development agreements |

## MANAGE PARKING EFFECTIVELY

| Transit Hub Tool | Strategy | Benefits | Supporting Conditions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Revised Parking Standards**<br>Changing parking standards for development projects to encourage transit-supportive development | • Reduce or get rid of minimum parking requirements<br>• Establish parking maximums | • Can incentivize development by reducing cost imposed by parking provision<br>• Makes land available for more transit-friendly uses | • Understanding among community members that standard minimum parking requirements are excessive for transit hub type development |
| **Shared Parking**<br>Cooperative agreements among property owners to share parking facilities | • Work with area property owners, transit agency, and parking authority to establish shared parking agreements | • Shared parking facilities are often financed by multiple groups rather than one individual entity<br>• Reduces need for parking among properties where peak parking times differ | • Parking standards amendment<br>• Engaged property owners<br>• Peak parking demand occurs at different time for the different facilities present |
| **Paid Parking**<br>Charge users for the use of spots to manage demand | • Revise or adopt parking ordinances requiring payment for on-street parking<br>• Develop shared, paid parking structures<br>• Employ smart meters and parking apps | • Balances the supply and demand of parking in key areas<br>• Reduces congestion caused by motorists cruising for parking<br>• Encourages alternatives to driving<br>• Reduces parking utilization among commuters and station area visitors<br>• Produces revenue to fund station area infrastructure | • Where present, parking authority must be willing partner<br>• Must have community support |

| Transit Hub Tool | Strategies | Benefits | Supporting Conditions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Payment in Lieu of Parking (PILOP)**<br>A developer pays a fee to the public jurisdiction in lieu of meeting their parking requirements onsite | • Adopt a PILOP policy | • Reduces amount of space devoted to parking in new development<br>• Gives developers flexibility<br>• Provides funding to develop public parking structures | • Requires the municipality to adopt a an ordinance |
| **Employ On-Demand Mobility Options**<br>Provide micro-mobility options, partner with ride-hailing companies and employ parking apps to reduce parking demand | • Provide micro-mobility options such as bike share and e-scooters<br>• Partner with ride-hailing companies to provide discounted trips for transit riders with station parking passes<br>• Employ parking apps | • Reduces congestion caused by "cruising for parking"<br>• Reduces need for station parking<br>• Micromobility options provide non-auto first/last mile connections to transit facility | • Transportation Management Companies (TMCs) willing to partner<br>• Sufficient municipal staffing capacity to manage relationships with private sector partners |

## CREATE GREAT PLACES

| Transit Hub Tool | Strategies | Benefits | Supporting Conditions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Streetscape Improvements**<br>Enhancing roadways, sidewalks, lighting, signage, landscaping and other elements of the public right-of-way to create a visually appealing and easily navigable public space | • Include in local capital programming: pedestrian lighting, landscaping, street furniture, colored and patterned sidewalks and crosswalks and other streetscape improvements<br>• Place utility lines underground | • Enhances pedestrian experience and safety<br>• Advances Complete Streets<br>• Encourages private investment in station area | • Availability of capital funding resources |
| | • Install Green Infrastructure (natural systems that capture, filter, absorb and reuse water) | • Effectively manages stormwater<br>• Enhances streetscape<br>• Improves air quality<br>• Reduces heat island effect | • Appropriate sites for Green Infrastructure present<br>• Know-how and resources for implementation and maintenance available<br>• Opportunities for community input |
| **Property Improvements**<br>Provide incentives and supports to property owners and businesses to maintain and beautify buildings | • Establish a program to provide loans or matching grants to businesses and property owners for façade improvements | • Enhances the pedestrian experience<br>• Fosters a sense of place and civic pride<br>• Encourages investment in the station area | • Resources to fund and administer program<br>• Active Main Street program<br>• Presence of SID or BID |

| Transit Hub Tool | Strategies | Benefits | Supporting Conditions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Public Space Improvements**<br>Build and enhance plazas, parks and pedestrian-only streets to accommodate a variety of community uses | • Identify suitable sites for new public spaces, including underutilized sites<br>• Prioritize and program public space enhancements into municipal infrastructure budgets<br>• Install temporary improvements to demonstrate benefits and gauge community response<br>• Convert street space into pedestrian walkways and plazas<br>• Require, negotiate or incentivize provision of public space for new development | • Provides spaces for people to relax, socialize and engage in community events<br>• Improves pedestrian experience<br>• Contributes to a unique sense of place<br>• Makes productive use of vacant parcels and other underutilized spaces<br>• Creates "catalyst spaces" that attract investment | • Availability of land<br>• Completion of community visioning process for public spaces<br>• Completion of "Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper" trials<br>• Support from nearby businesses and property owners |
| **Activate Public Spaces**<br>Maintaining regular programming and special events, such as festivals and farmers markets, in plazas, parks, streets and other public spaces | • Hold farmers markets, art fairs and other public events in public spaces<br>• Provide seating in public spaces<br>• Provide Wi-Fi in public spaces<br>• Temporarily close off streets to vehicular traffic to hold community events | • Contributes to a sense of a unique place<br>• Provides local amenities<br>• Builds community | • Quality public spaces<br>• Engaged community<br>• Multiple and varied local partners interested in holding events |
| **Public Art**<br>Installing art that serves as a focal point at the transit station or nearby public spaces | • Commission local artists to create public art installations<br>• Install temporary artwork as a trial<br>• Install public art at the transit station<br>• Establish a mural program | • Adds to a unique sense of place<br>• Creates a focal point of interest<br>• Fosters civic pride and engagement<br>• Expresses local community values | • An active arts community<br>• Community input |
| **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**<br>Modifying and activating the built environment and engaging community partners to create safe places | • Hold stakeholder workshops to identify and develop recommendations for safety issues<br>• Conduct CPTED safety audits and site assessments<br>• Revise land use and design regulations, invest in public improvements, conduct clean-up campaigns, reclaim vacant and abandoned properties and take other actions to reduce crime | • Enhance safety and perception of safety<br>• Encourage pedestrian activity<br>• Foster community relationships around safety issues | • Willingness of various stakeholders to partner around safety issues<br>• Resources available to implement regulatory and built environment changes |

## GENERATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

| Transit Hub Tool | Strategies | Benefits | Supporting Conditions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Housing Diversity**<br>Providing a range of housing options within the transit hub core area and the surrounding area | • Call for housing diversity in municipal master plan<br>• Rezone to allow for duplexes, multiplexes, townhouses and other diverse housing types<br>• Rezone to allow for accessory dwelling units | • Generates housing for a diverse range of people of different incomes, lifestyles and life stages | • Permitted by zoning regulations<br>• Public support for permitting diverse housing types<br>• Appropriately sized parcels |
| **Housing Trust Funds**<br>A dedicated source of funding for affordable housing | • Create a local housing trust fund | • Provides a fund administered by the city to develop affordable housing | • Collaboration with state agencies and establishment of financial program |
| **Community Engagement**<br>Engaging community members, including low-income residents in discussions around affordable housing and gentrification-driven displacement | • Engage communities in a comprehensive planning process for neighborhoods in and around transit hubs | • Clarifies community needs and preferences concerning commercial and retail shops and preserving and building affordable housing near transit hubs.<br>• Allows community to play role in ensuring delivery of equitable development. | • Engaged community members<br>• Robust non-profit and advocacy community representing low-income populations |
| **Streamline the Development Process**<br>Facilitating completion of projects that include affordable housing by expediting and streamlining the planning approval process | • Establish “green tape zones” in station area<br>• Have permitting staff work with developers to ensure all required paperwork and applications are in order before submission | • Encourages development of affordable housing by expediting the approval process<br>• Provides incentive for development without committing significant financial resources | • Efficient municipal administration<br>• Sufficient municipal staffing capacity |
| **Land Trusts**<br>Acquiring land for affordable housing projects | • Establish non-profit land trusts to lease to affordable housing developers, possibly at a discounted rate | • Ensures land is available for affordable housing development<br>• Can be used to reduce the cost of building new affordable housing<br>• Land trust can hold the land until the developer has assembled funding and is ready to purchase the property | • Willing partner to act as land trust holder<br>• Affordable housing developers operate in community<br>• Public support |



| Transit Hub Tool | Strategies | Benefits | Supporting Conditions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Incentivize New Construction**<br>Using financing mechanisms and zoning regulations to encourage developers to include affordable housing in projects | • Provide Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) to developers of affordable housing | • Is often a necessary support for affordable and mixed-income housing projects | • Established, transparent process for providing financial incentives<br>• Developer willing to engage in complex projects |
| | • Incentivize inclusion of affordable housing units in a market rate project by providing density bonuses | • Generate affordable housing units with little or no commitment of public funding | |

## GROW A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY

| Transit Hub Tool | Strategies | Benefits | Supporting Conditions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Branding and Marketing**<br>Developing a distinct brand identity for the station area and market the station area to promote shopping, entertainment and other attractions | • Develop branding for the station area<br>• Create and implement a marketing plan | • Creates a cohesive brand identity and promotes the transit hub area as a unique destination<br>• Encourages shopping and economic investment in the station area | • Engaged local business community<br>• Station area contains rich mix of amenities, cultural venues and public spaces |
| **Economic Development Strategic Plan**<br>A plan informed by local stakeholders that allows for sustainable and measurable economic growth | • Engage economic development specialist to coordinate development of economic development plan<br>• Establish an economic development advisory committee<br>• Engage members of the public, local businesses and major employers | • Opportunity to identify and create resources for businesses and community<br>• An advisory committee can serve to guide the economic development planning process | • Engaged business community and stakeholders<br>• Availability of economic development expertise<br>• The existence of Special Improvement or Business Improvement Districts or participation in Main Street program |
| **Business Recruitment**<br>Actively and continuously work to attract an appropriate mix of businesses to locate in the transit hub area | • Hire leasing and management agency to recruit tenants<br>• Use Main Street program or Special Improvement Districts to recruit tenants<br>• Attract anchor institutions like banks, pharmacies, and post offices, attract a mix of retail and services | • Combination of anchor institutions and diverse tenants creates a strong and resilient real estate market<br>• Variety of business types attracts more customers to the commercial district | • Infrastructure able to support a variety of businesses<br>• Cooperation between landlords and tenants<br>• Participation in Main Street program or existence of improvement district |
| **Business Supports**<br>Making available financial tools to support the growth of local businesses | • Provide business development loans and grants<br>• Raise awareness of municipal, county and state financial supports | • Helps cover gaps in traditional financing options<br>• Can be targeted to distressed areas | • Dedicated source of funding for business supports |

| Transit Hub Tool | Strategies | Benefits | Supporting Conditions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Business Collaboration**<br>Enabling a collective, organized response to problems and opportunities in commercial districts | • Pass a municipal ordinance to create an improvement district within the transit hub area that uses special tax assessments to fund district projects | • Provides an additional funding mechanism<br>• Provides opportunities for infrastructure improvements, placemaking and programming<br>• Makes possible district-wide branding and marketing efforts<br>• District management corporation may serve as an effective partner in local planning processes | • Local support for creation of an improvement district<br>• Coordination and willing participation among local business community |
| | • Establish a local business committee | • Enables a collective response to shared problems and opportunities in the district without imposing a special assessment | • Engaged business community willing to commit time |
| | • Gain Main Street New Jersey designation to pursue revitalization of traditional business districts | • Makes possible district-wide branding and marketing efforts<br>• Coordinating organization may serve as an effective partner in local planning processes<br>• Become eligible for free, ongoing State technical assistance | • Existence of well-defined traditional commercial district<br>• Active volunteer community<br>• Willingness to provide long-term local funding<br>• Commitment to historic preservation |
| **Streamlining Business Permitting Process**<br>Reducing barriers to market entry by establishing an easily navigable business permitting process | • Create a one-stop online permit portal for applications and payments<br>• Establish transparent permit tracking process<br>• Hold pre-application meetings with applicants to explain process and requirements | • Creates a predictable, consistent, and efficient permitting process that contributes to a positive business environment | • Availability of necessary staffing resources<br>• Resources to maintain user-friendly website |



# Planning Tools

| Name | Source | Description | Link |
|---|---|---|---|
| Access to Jobs and Workers Via Transit Tool | U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) | A free geospatial data and web mapping tool for comparing the accessibility of neighborhoods by public transit service. Also indicates accessibility by population, workers and households. | https://19january2017snapshot.epa.gov/smart-growth/smart-location-mapping_.html#Trans45 |
| AllTransit | Center for Neighborhood Technology | An online tool that maps and scores transit access at the block group level for counties and municipalities, including an Overall Performance Score, Transit Connectivity Index, number of jobs and workers accessible, and others. | https://alltransit.cnt.org/ |
| CrowdMap | Ushahidi | Interactive and multilingual platform that allows any user to build a map that helps tell a story or collect stories around a common theme. Users can find a map near them, or start a new one. When accessing a map, users can plot a point or see points that other users have plotted, and view stories and photos that go with that point. Maps can be used for cultural, educational, or planning purposes. | https://crowdmap.com/welcome |
| Engage! | NJTPA | Online public engagement portal that offers a comprehensive online database of public engagement techniques with descriptions and examples of hundreds of specific engagement approaches and strategies. Users can filter by audience, scope geography, type of tool and timeframe. | https://www.njtpa.org/get-involved/public-engagement-toolkit |
| NJLUTRANS | Rutgers University, NJ TRANSIT | An online application that allows users to map, report, and download a range of land use, travel, public transit, demographic, and development data. It offers a downloadable data report for municipalities, counties, and transit areas around transit facilities. | http://njlutrans.org/ |
| NOTIS (NJTPA Online Transportation Information System) | NJTPA | An online interactive tool that displays information on state and federal transportation investments in the North Jersey planning region. The searchable, map-based interface displays the location of projects and provides information on cost and timeframe. | http://notis.njtpa.org/ |
| LEHD OnTheMap | U.S. Census Bureau | Displays data on the location of where people work and where workers live and the distance and direction workers travel by race/ethnicity, wage level and other categories. The tool offers an easy-to-use interface for creating, viewing, printing and downloading workforce related maps, profiles and underlying data. | https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/ |
| PRIME | NJTPA | Provides a central online application to manage, maintain and distribute planning study documents and findings. NJTPA subregions or partner agencies can use PRIME to search study content and identify relationships among study findings, generate customized reports, and access reporting tools to support collaborative discussions. | https://www.njtpa.org/data-maps/tools/prime |

| Name | Source | Description | Link |
|---|---|---|---|
| SALUIT (Small Area Land Use Impact Tool) | NJTPA | A computer model for analyzing and visualizing the anticipated impacts of changes to local land use. The model estimates impacts of alternative scenarios using measures important to local communities and to the northern New Jersey region as a whole. The results of SALUIT analyses can be used to inform decision makers considering land use changes and in local economic development efforts. | https://www.njtpa.org/data-maps/modeling/land-use-impact-model |
| StreetMix | Code for America, Lyft, Mozilla | StreetMix is a user-friendly tool that allows citizens to design and modify neighborhood streets as suggestions for planners using simple drag-and-drop features. Users can add, subtract or modify features such as travel lanes, bike lanes, and sidewalks. The tool can be used to make suggestions or gather input from the public. | https://streetmix.net/-/867026 |
| VizTools | NJTPA | An online platform visualizes North Jersey data on transportation and quality of life through maps, charts, images and interactive technology. It is intended to make technical knowledge of planning agencies more accessible to the general public. The data is available for municipalities, counties and the region. The platform's features also allow users to view forecasts and to sketch future scenarios by adjusting transportation investment and planning inputs. | http://viztools.njtpa.org/ |



# Funding and Technical Assistance Programs

| Name | Source | Description | Eligibility | Link |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community Planning Assistance Program (CPAP) | American Planning Association New Jersey Chapter (APA-NJ) | This program pairs volunteer planning professionals with communities in need of technical expertise. CPAP volunteers assist municipalities and community-based organizations in New Jersey develop local plans and conduct studies. | Municipalities and community-based organizations | https://www.planning.org/communityassistance/teams/ |
| Complete Streets Technical Assistance | New Jersey Bicycle and Pedestrian Resource Center | The New Jersey Bicycle and Pedestrian Resource Center provides resources and assistance to municipalities and counties that wish to develop a Complete Streets policy or seek assistance with implementation efforts. | Counties and municipalities | http://njbikeped.org/2012-regional-complete-streets-workshops/ |
| Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Initiatives Program | NJTPA; NJ TRANSIT | Provides funding for readily implementable surface transportation projects that help improve air quality and reduce congestion, such as shuttle services and bicycle and pedestrian projects. | NJTPA regional and subregional partners, municipalities, and railway companies | https://www.njtpa.org/project-programs/mobility-programs/cmaq-local-mobility |
| Local Planning Services | New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) | Provides technical assistance to municipalities to achieve local land use and planning goals. The professional planning staff offer comprehensive planning services at no cost to municipalities for activities such as redevelopment plans, economic development plans and others. | Municipalities | https://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/lps/ |
| Main Street Program | New Jersey Department of Community Affairs | Encourages and supports the revitalization of downtowns throughout the state. The DCA designates selected applicants to join the program. These communities receive technical support and training to assist in restoring their Main Streets as centers of community and economic activity. The Fiscal Year 2019 State Budget authorizes $500,000 to restart and enhance the Main Street New Jersey program. | Municipalities | https://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/lps/msnj.html |
| New Jersey Bicycle and Pedestrian Resource Center Help Desk | New Jersey Bicycle and Pedestrian Resource Center | The Center's help desk provides on-call staff to answer community questions on bicycle and pedestrian planning issues. | No Restrictions | http://njbikeped.org/contact/ |

| Name | Source | Description | Eligibility | Link |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| New Jersey Department of Transportation Municipal Aid Program | NJDOT | This program offers funding to municipalities for transportation-related projects in the following categories: bikeway, bridge preservation, mobility, pedestrian safety, quality of life, roadway preservation and roadway safety. | Municipalities | https://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid/municaid.shtm |
| New Jersey Transportation Infrastructure Bank | New Jersey Infrastructure Bank (I-Bank); NJDOT | Provides low interest loans to offset the cost of certain local transportation infrastructure projects, the expenses of which could not be covered normally under grants from NJDOT's Local Aid programs. | Counties, Municipalities, Regional Authorities and Water Purveyors | https://www.njib.gov/njtib |
| Planning for Emerging Centers | NJTPA | Provides consultant and staff support to municipalities to conduct various planning studies in support of efforts to create more sustainable, transit-supportive and walkable communities as well as comprehensive approaches to strategic planning at the local level. | Counties and Municipalities | https://www.njtpa.org/planning/regional-studies/emerging-centers |
| Project for Public Spaces services | Project for Public Spaces (PPS) | PPS offers a variety of services to communities aimed at placemaking, including place evaluation, programming assistance and design review in the areas of public space, public markets and transportation planning. | Local communities | https://www.pps.org/services |
| Safe Streets to Transit | NJDOT | Provides funding to counties and municipalities to improve safety and accessibility for mass transit riders walking to transit facilities, encourage mass transit users to walk to transit stations and facilitate the implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety in the vicinity of transit facilities | Counties and Municipalities | https://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid/safe.shtm |
| Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) | FHWA | This program provides flexible funding for states and localities for projects aimed at improving any Federal-aid highway, bridge and tunnel project on any public road, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and transit capital projects. | States, Counties and Municipalities | https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/specialfunding/stp/ |
| Together North Jersey Institute | Together North Jersey, NJTPA | Organizes series of technical assistance and training activities designed to enhance the capacity of counties, municipalities, nonprofits and others within the region to advance implementation of the strategies and actions recommended in the Together North Jersey Plan. | No Restrictions | https://togethernorthjersey.com/?page_id=25004 |

| Name | Source | Description | Eligibility | Link |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Together North Jersey Technical Assistance | Together North Jersey, NJTPA | In coordination with the NJTPA, the Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University provides direct technical assistance to support the advancement of recommendations included in the final reports developed by local partners during the 2012-2015 TNJ planning phase. | Grantees of the TNJ Local Demonstration Project Program, NGO Micro-Grant Program and the Local Government Capacity Grant Program | https://togethernorthjersey.com/?page_id=25243 |
| Transit-Friendly Planning, Land Use and Development Program (TFPLUD) | NJ TRANSIT | Provides planning assistance to interested communities through on-call consultants to assist communities in developing consensus-based, transit supportive land use "vision plans" to guide development and redevelopment at and surrounding existing or proposed transit facilities. | Municipalities | https://www.njtransit.com/tm/tm_servlet.srv?hdnPageAction=CorpInfoTo#Handbook |
| Transit Village Initiative | NJDOT; NJ TRANSIT | Creates incentives for municipalities to redevelop or revitalize areas around transit stations using design standards of transit-oriented development. Municipalities that secure a Transit Village designation by meeting defined criteria are eligible for technical assistance, funding priority and NJDOT grants. | Municipalities | https://www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/village/ |

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