

Watsessing Avenue Transit Hub Plan

Bloomfield, New Jersey
February 2019

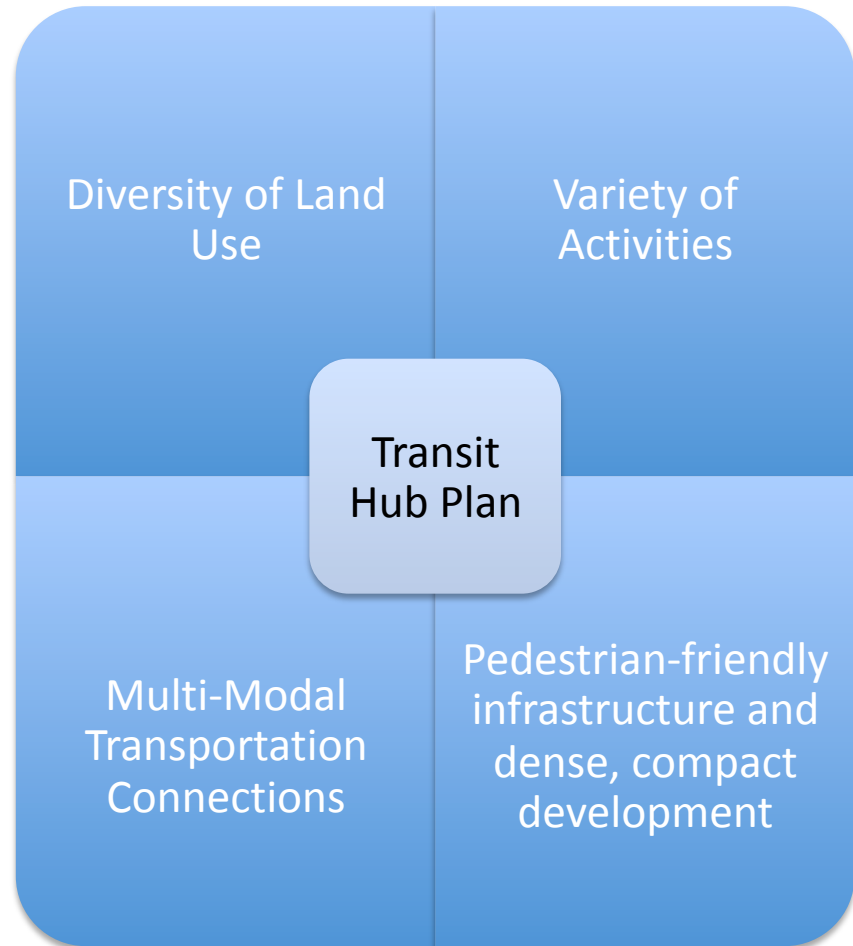
Project Team Members

Our team of professional volunteers includes individuals with expertise in urban planning, transportation, and community development:

- Nadia Mian, PhD
- Walter Franks
- Brett Muney
- Darrel Caine
- Devon McGuinness

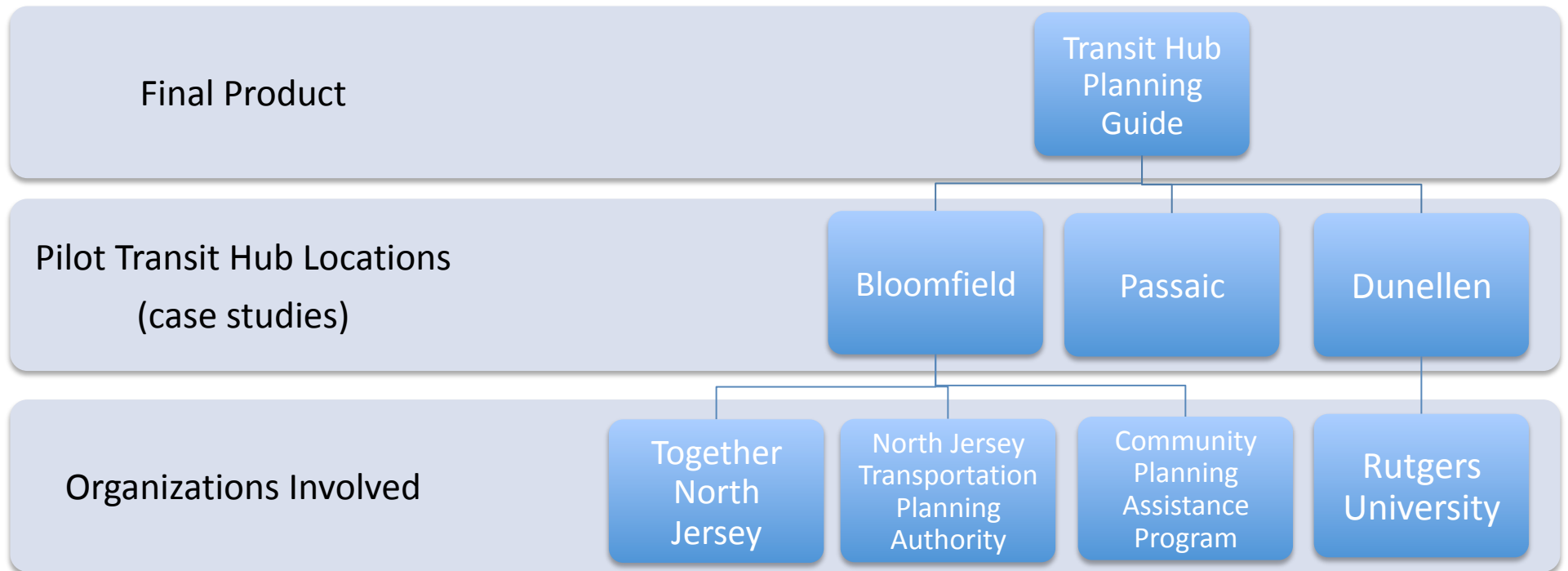
Transit Hub Plan – Strategic Analysis

- Bloomfield Township was selected as one of three locations to participate in a transit hub planning program.
- The overall objective is to create a guiding document for future transit hub planning efforts.
- A transit hub is an area surrounding a station that contains a diversity of land use, activities, and modes of transit that are integrated with the station.



Transit Hub Planning Guide

The following organizations and towns were involved in the creation of a future Transit Hub Planning Guide for municipalities in New Jersey



Bloomfield Township's Goals for Watsessing Transit Hub



Economic
Development

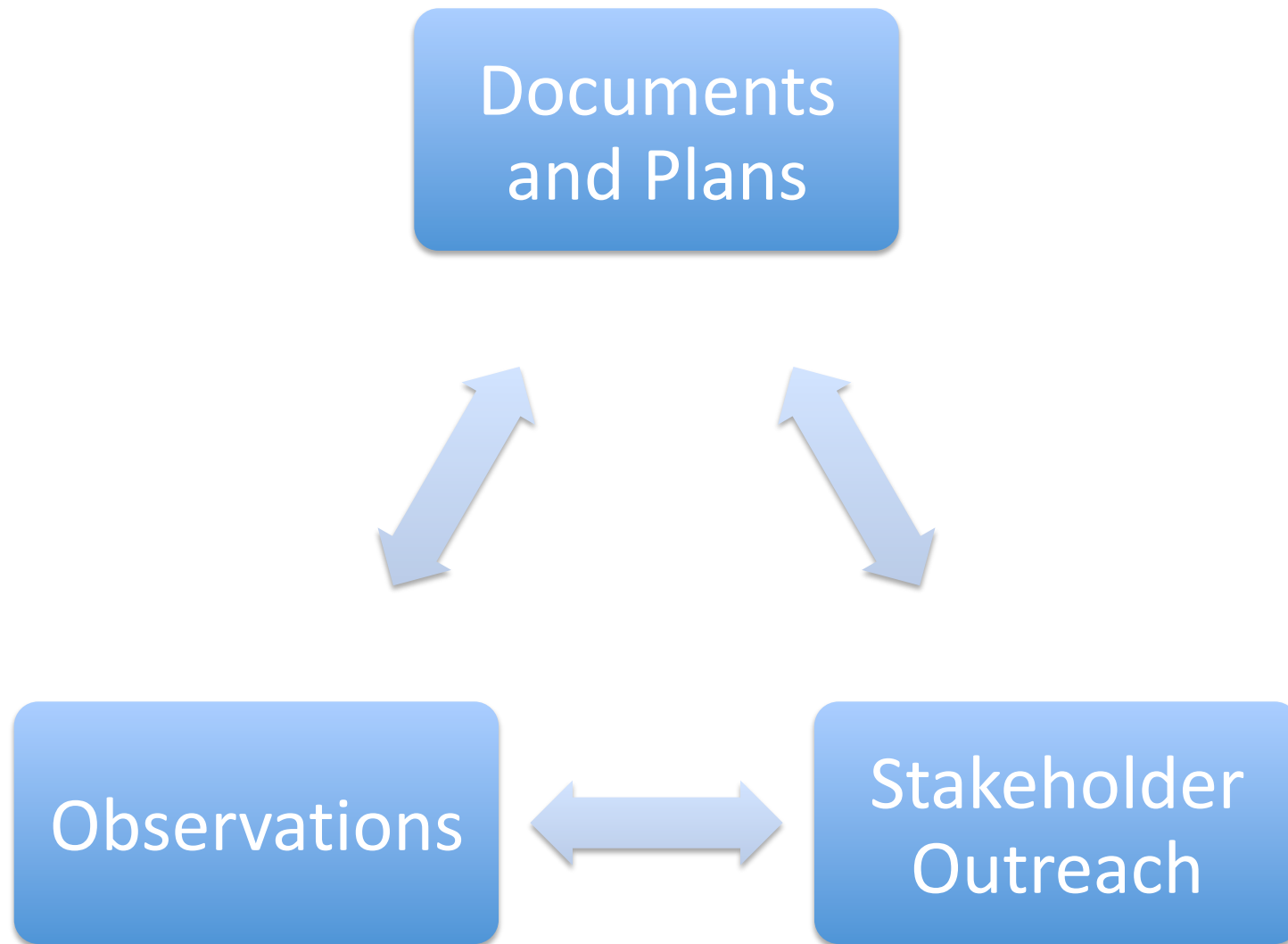


Safety

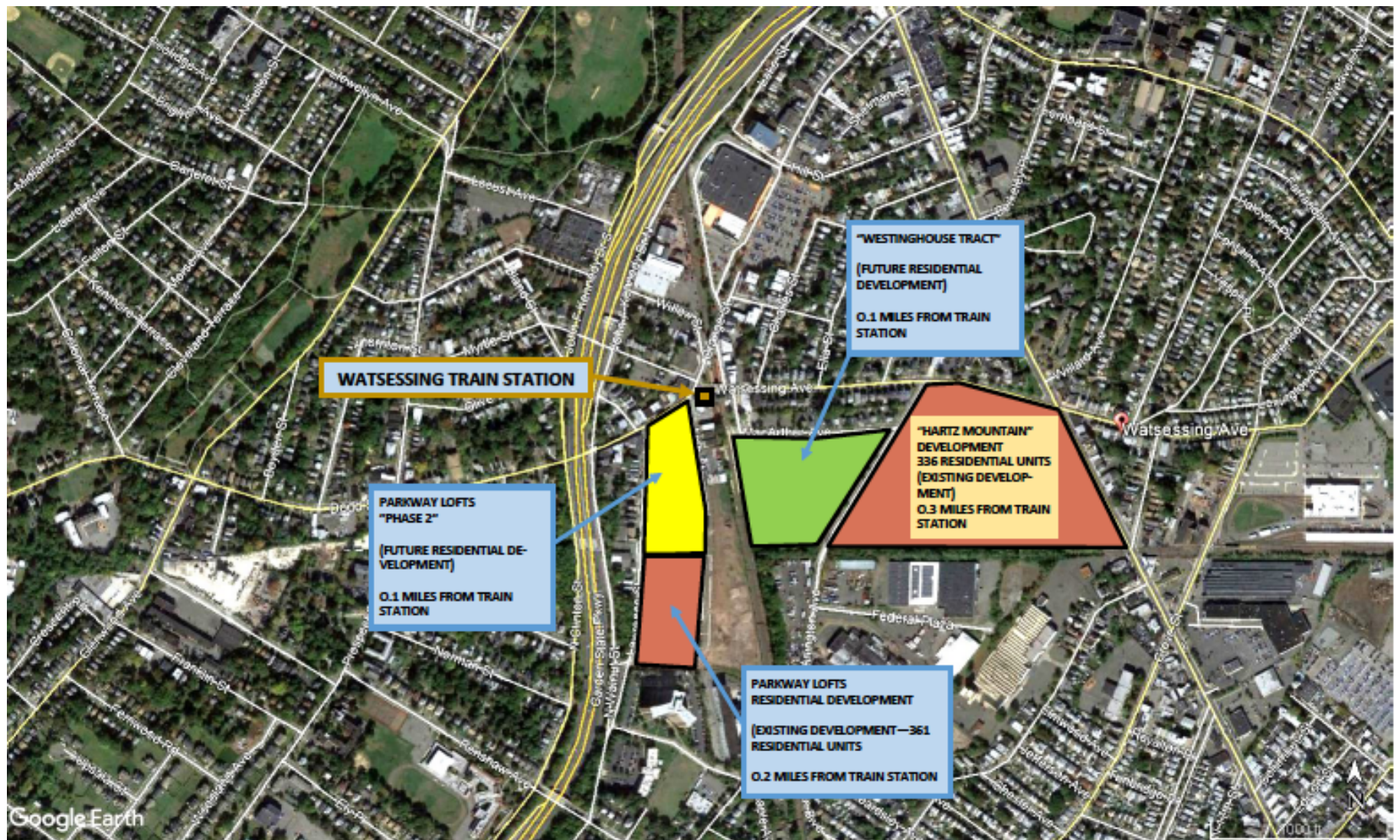


Sense of Place

Process



Project Area



Field and Walking Assessment Observations



Retail and Commercial Development

- Large number of vacancies
- Signage is vague
- Windows are covered



Traffic

- Narrow traffic lane close to sidewalk and train entrance
- Traffic patterns are confusing



Sense of Place

- Underutilized park across from station
- No events or reasons for people to stay outside and enjoy the area

Field and Walking Assessment Observations



Safety concerns in station

- Lack of lighting, and mirrors in stairwells
- No video cameras or other security measures



Outside of station needs uplift

- No benches for sitting
- No maps or proper signage outside station
- No parking for bicycles



Streetscape

- Sidewalks are cracked, lack of lighting
- No benches, trash cans or greenery

Economic Development

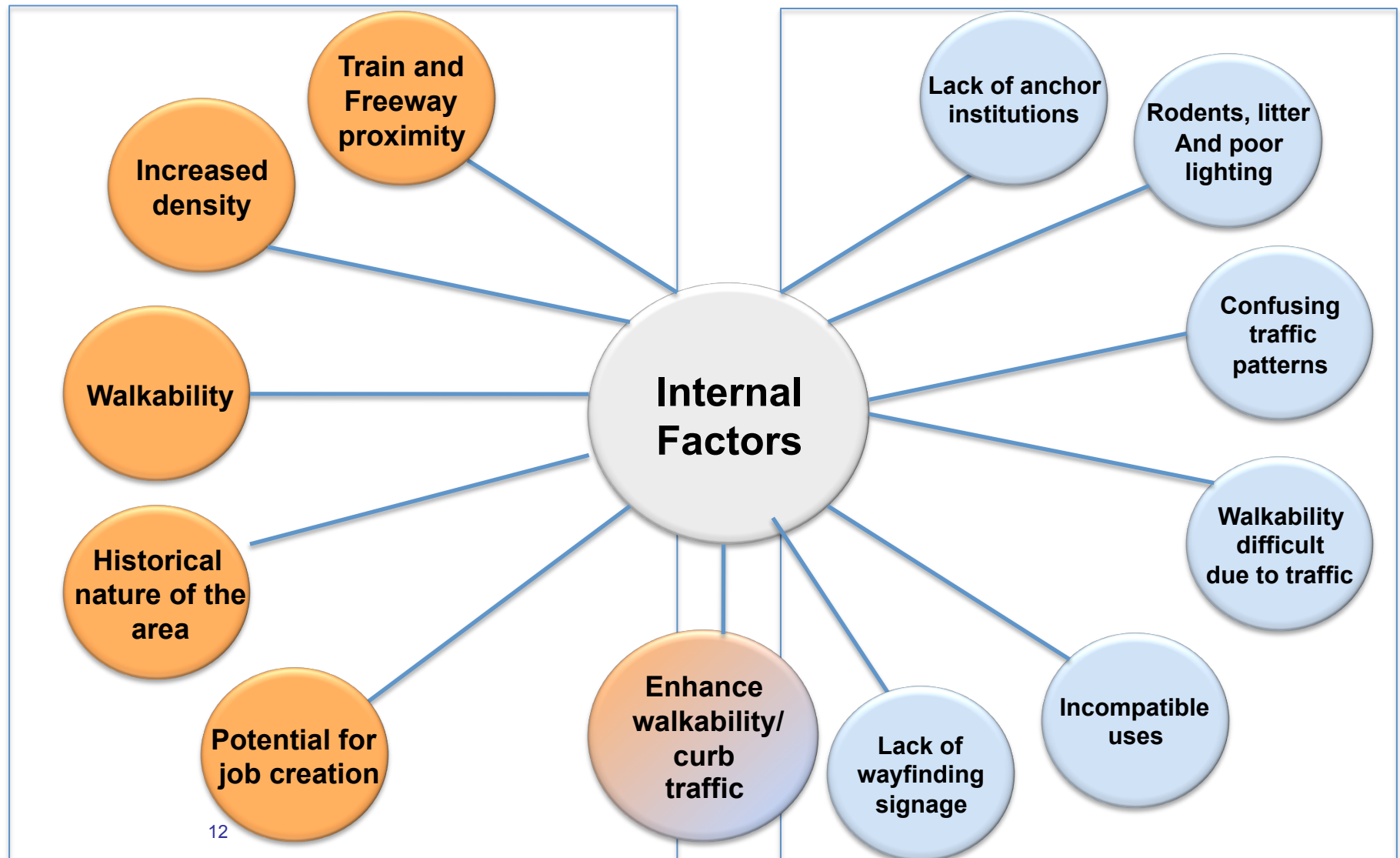
SWOT Analysis

- A SWOT analysis focusing on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the retail corridor surrounding Watsessing Station was held on December 5th, 2018.
- Mayor Michael Venezia, Council members Sarah Cruz and Rich Rockwell, and Township Administrator, Matthew Watkins, were in attendance
- Approximately 10 business owners, landlords, as well as members of the public were in attendance

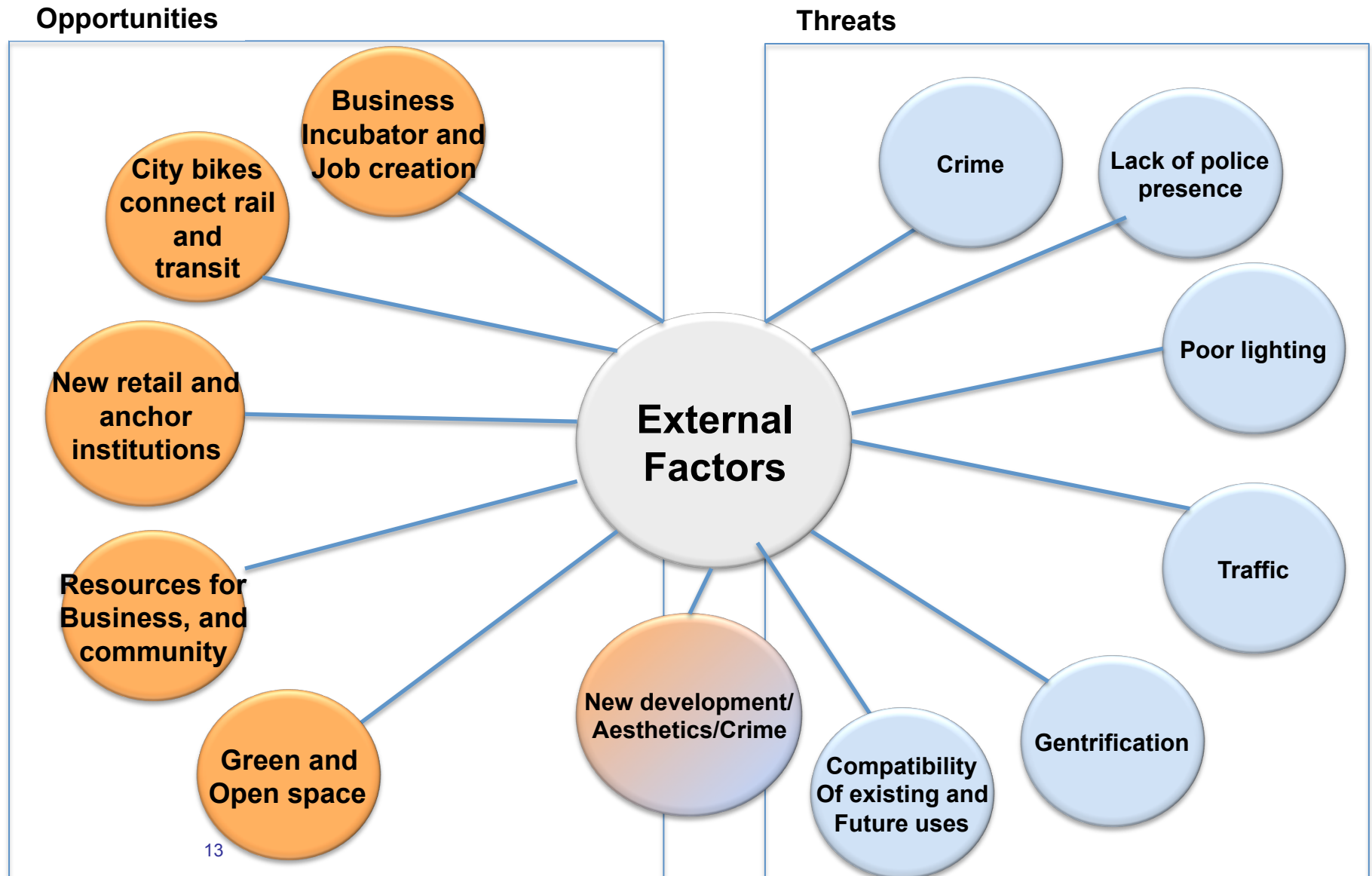
Confusing traffic patterns and traffic are hazards for increasing number of pedestrians and potential alternative modes of transportation

Strengths

Weaknesses



A disorderly appearance combined with crime may make opportunities for new retail and businesses difficult to achieve



Recommendations

Create an Economic Development Strategic Plan

- Create a strategic plan for the community
- Involve members of the public and businesses
- Possible access to federal funding to create plan
- Ensure zoning by-laws and Master Plan are up-to-date
- Opportunity to identify and create resources for businesses and community

Establish an Economic Development Advisory Committee

- Involves members of the public and businesses
- Guide the Economic Development Strategic Plan visioning process
- Promote and facilitate responsible commercial growth
- Establish partnership with Bloomfield College and other local organizations for business development

Hire a Leasing and Management Agency

- Plan and execute the street's leasing strategy, actively recruit tenants and direct them to property owners and landlords
- Attract anchor institutions like banks, pharmacies, and post office
- Attract a mix of retail and services

Recommendations

Streamline Permit Review Process

- Facilitate ease of obtaining permits for business purposes
- Online applications
- Permit tracking
- Pre-application meeting to understand requirements
- Pay online

Create a Pedestrian Friendly Environment

- Benches, lighting, fixing sidewalks, investing in greenery, and trash receptacles
- Use parklet across the street for events, such as Farmers Market that passengers can stop at
- Close down streets (like Molter Place) for placemaking events

Pursue New Jersey Main Street Designation

- Governor Murphy has allocated \$500,000 to restart and enhance the program for FY19
- Watsessing area is eligible for the program
- Main Street program will help revitalize the area and bring together the EDAC, as well as the Strategic Plan

Public Art

Placemaking

- There is the opportunity to transform and beautify the neighborhood around the Watsessing Avenue Station. Through the use of artistic murals, we can create a more vibrant and current neighborhood. The neighborhood will receive more character and distinguish it's self from surrounding areas.

Example

- Jersey City currently has a mural arts program where established and emerging local, national and international mural artists work with property owners in Jersey City to create an innovative beautification program that reduces graffiti, engages local residents and is transforming Jersey City into an outdoor art gallery. I believe we can follow their lead and create a similar program for the Bloomfield Township.

Location

- There are a couple of sites that would be perfect for a mural. These spots are within relative distance to the train station and can be viewed as you walk to and from the station. Working with local business owners permission, we can recreate these spaces to create a more positive and engaging neighborhood.

Artists

- We already have received interest in the project from artists that we have contacted. They are eager to participate and transform this neighborhood. They have provided possible costs, time frames and needs to create the murals. We also have the ear of **Emilio Florentine**, the Creative Co-Curator and Technical Consultant to the Jersey City Mural Arts Program. He has the experience and ability to find artists, locations and consult on the project.

Possible Locations



Lawrence St.



Myrtle St.



Potential location for art



Station Location

Possible Locations



Molter Place



Watsessing Ave



Potential location for art

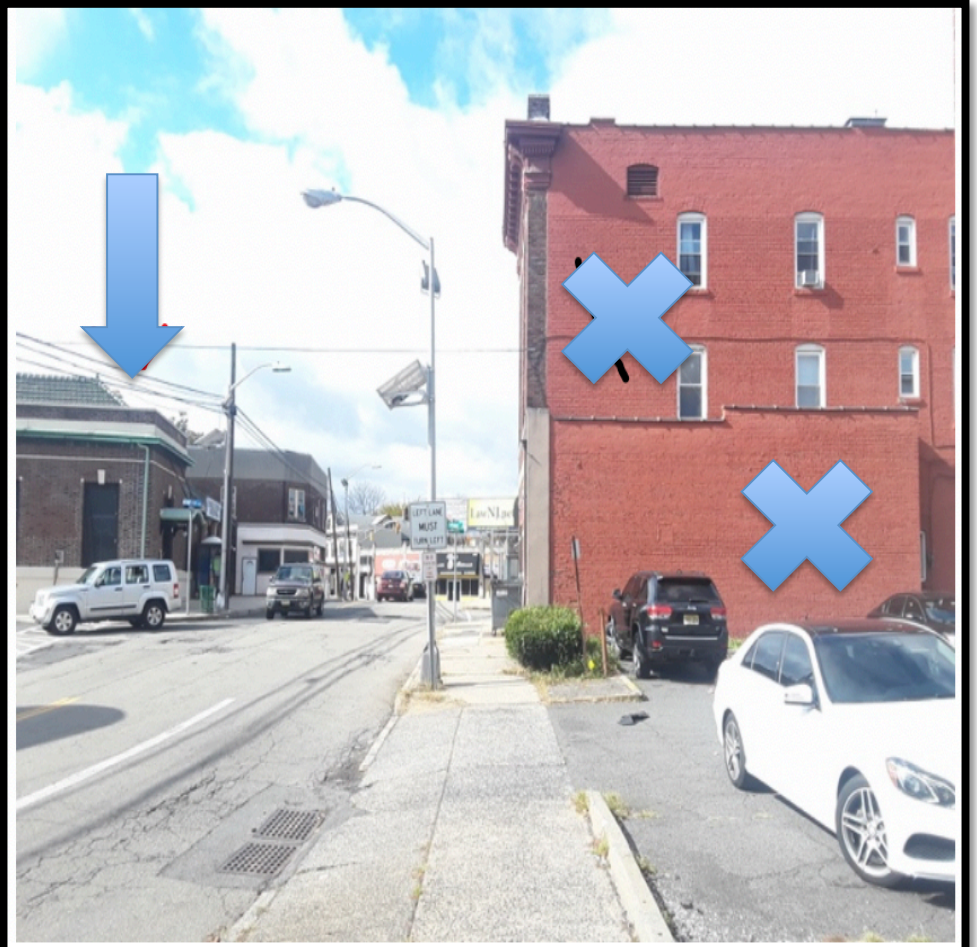


Station Location

Possible Locations



Watsessing Ave



Watsessing Ave.



Potential location for art



Station Location

Artist Needs

- Supplies such as paint, brushes, drop cloths
- Lift or ladder

Costs

- Compensation for artist time and travel
- Ranges from \$500 a day to \$45,000 overall
- Local artists will be more affordable

Walking around Watsessing Station



Crosswalks

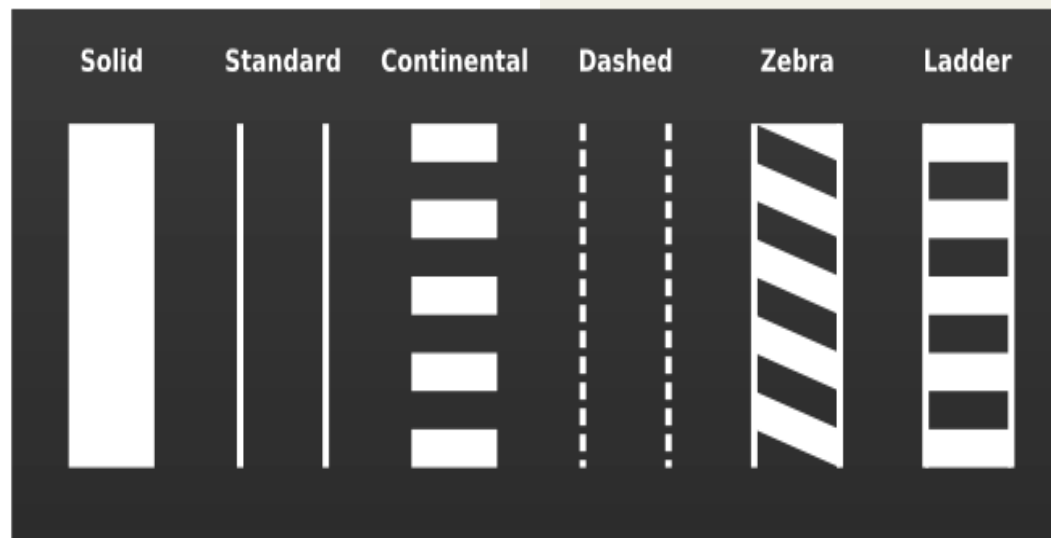
Crosswalks can be shortened with bumpouts. This makes it safer to cross, and can funnel pedestrian traffic to “jaywalk” less. This can also include beauty like plantings, art, stormwater mitigation techniques, etc., which can signal to motorists that they are in an area with pedestrians.



Crosswalks use only standard markings, instead of a more visible design (increasing awareness of pedestrians crossing). Consider “Pedestrian Islands”, either through construction, plantings, or paint. Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper methods can be used to build temporary pilot Pedestrian Safety Islands.



Some Crosswalk Designs





Beautiful,
professional
option



“Lighter,
Quicker,
Cheaper”
Approach





Molter Place —
Pedestrian Space

Car Sharing in Bloomfield

New Jersey's Transportation Landscape

New Jersey is the densest state in the country at 1210 people per sq mile

Bloomfield's density is 8,920 people per sq mile, 737% higher than the NJ average

6.24 million licensed drivers in the state of NJ

71.4% of New Jersey households own two or more cars

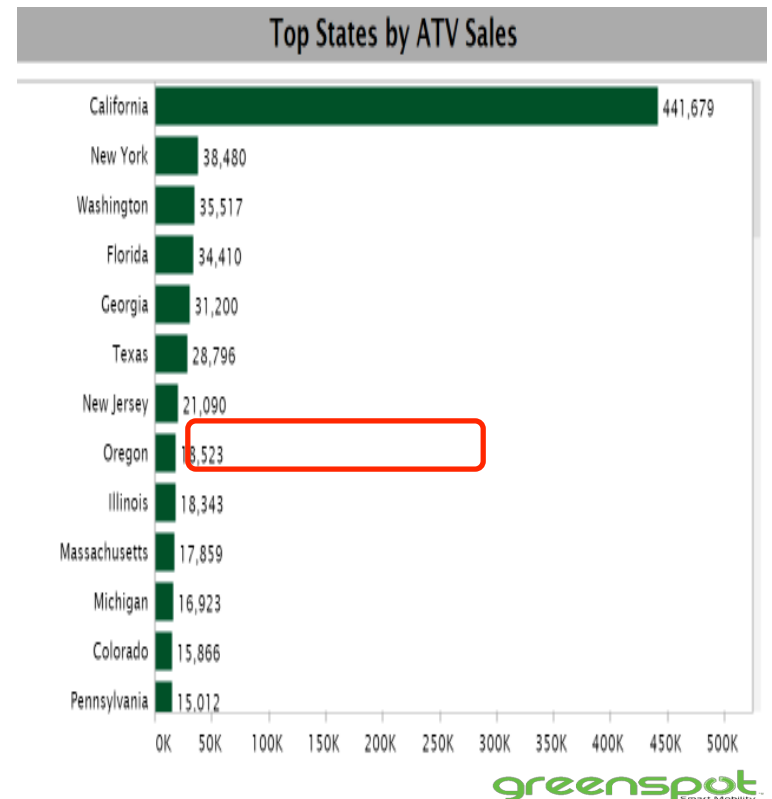
2.12 cars per household in the State of New Jersey

What effect will an increase in population mean for Bloomfield, New Jersey's roads?

New Jersey's EV and Shared Mobility Landscape

New Jersey Electric Vehicle Sales

- New Jersey is a **top seven state** in total EV operations and growth in the United States
- **21,090** electric vehicles sold between January 2011 and August 2018
- **266** public charging stations throughout the State
- **79.3** EVs per public charging station



Shared Mobility Throughout the State

- Car sharing market is expected to experience **35% year-over-year growth** from 2016-2024
- Over **90% of New Jersey's** population lives in **urban areas**; this number is expected to increase (ISU)

Electric Vehicles – Save Money While Saving the Environment

New Jersey Price Per Gallon

- Regular Gasoline: \$2.39
- Electric eGallon: \$1.36

Average Grams of CO₂ Emissions in Zip Code 07505 - per Mile

95% of the day
our cars sit idle

67% reduction in
emissions by driving
EV compared to
Internal Combustion
Engine Vehicle in
Sleepy Hollow

>85% reduction in
carbon emission by
implementing an
electric & shared
mobility solution

Gasoline
only

381

Plug-In
Hybrid
Electric

197

Battery
Electric

131

EV car share and eBikes for Watsessing Station





Crime and Safety

Crime Complaints – Bloomfield Township

Crime	2018	2017	%Change
Murder	2	0	200%
Rape	1	0	100%
Robbery	19	25	-24%
Agg. Assault	25	28	-11%
Burglary	63	76	-17%
Theft	430	573	-25%
Auto Theft	79	73	8%
Total	619	775	-20%

Year-to-date – November 18/2018

Bloustein Study

- Bloustein Study was conducted in 2017 on the impact of crime on walking in low-income and minority communities
- Two focus groups were conducted with residents in Bloomfield that were recruited through CDCs
- Findings revealed that Bloomfield residents were not as concerned with crime, and felt comfortable walking.
- Residents were concerned about traffic and traffic safety, and residents trusted police and neighbors

Rutgers Study

- Residents recommended the following:
 - Better lighting
 - Greater Litter control
 - Managed greenery
 - More Security cameras
 - Build community-based leadership capacity

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

- Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) aims to prevent crime by designing the physical environment in a way that influences human behaviour.
- The theory is based on the principles of territoriality, surveillance, access control, image management, and networks.
- Residents are used as experts who have a greater understanding of crime hot spots and invisible lines (like gang lines)
- Residents work alongside police officers to build capacity and collaborate on design and planning

CPTED Process



Next Steps

- Begin planning community events to bring together new and existing residents (farmer's market, festival, placemaking projects)
- Create DIY placemaking projects (street art installations, projects celebrating Bloomfield)
- Support local arts and culture
- Involve the public in the planning process. Create opportunities for residents to engage in a variety of ways (online surveys, email suggestions)

Next Steps (continued)

- Pursue Main Street New Jersey designation
- Establish a Director position to work with the leasing and management agency, as well as fulfill Main Street requirement
- Hire a leasing and management agency to manage and cultivate Main Street
- Establish an economic development advisory board
- Create an economic development strategic plan

Next Steps (continued)

- Support historic nature of the community, and architectural integrity of the station by creating regulatory and design guidelines to govern new and existing buildings
- Ensure all zoning by-laws are up-to-date (particularly signage)
- Study parking requirements and drop-off near the station

Appendix

Artist interested in the project

Name	Email
Fathima	fathima@thedomino.org
Emilio Florentine	hello@emilioflorentine.com
Gaia Street	gaia.streetart@gmail.com
Antonio Segura Donat	info@dulk.es
Picel Panch	pixelpanchostudio@gmail.com
Alice Pasquini	info@alicepasquini.com
"Peeta"	peeta.sales@gmail.com
Mark Samsonovich	mark@samsonovich.com
Beau Stanton	beaustanton@gmail.com
Mike Maka	info@makatron.com

Federal Grants and Resources

Grant/Resource	Contact Information	Notes
U.S. Economic Development Administration	eda.gov	Funds projects related to: Public Works, Economic Adjustment, Regional Innovation Strategies, Planning, Research & National Technical Assistance, Local Technical Assistance, and Economic Development Integration
U.S. Dept. of Transportation	transportation.gov	
Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD program)	https:// www.transportation.gov/ BUILDgrants	Funds projects related to: Road, rail, transit, and port infrastructure projects across the country, with a focus on State projects

State Grants and Resources

Grant/Resource	Contact Information	Notes
Division of Local Aid & Economic Development	state.nj.us	Funds projects related to: Complete Streets
Main Street New Jersey	NJ Department of Community Affairs Jef Buehler Jef.buehler@dca.nj.gov	Main street program provides funding for economic development for historic main streets
New Jersey Historical Commission	https://nj.gov/state/historical/his-grants.shtml	Grants to encouraging the use of new strategies for assessing audience engagement, and deep thinking about current and potential audiences. Potential opportunity for engaging public audience around first Bloomfield Market Site or Westinghouse's contribution to Manhattan Project

State Grants and Resources

Grant/Resource	Contact Information	Notes
New Jersey Business Portal	https://www.nj.gov/njbusiness/	Funds projects related to: Culture and Arts, Environmental, Urban Redevelopment, Job Creation and Retention, Real Estate, Small- to Mid-Size Businesses, and Technology and Life Sciences
New Jersey Business Action Center	https://www.nj.gov/state/bac.shtml	Free consulting services to NJ businesses, start-ups, and non-profits

Other Grants and Resources

Grant/Resource	Contact Information	Notes
FedEx Small Business Grant Contest	http://smallbusinessgrant.fedex.com/	
US Small Business Association	https://www.sba.gov	
The Eileen Fisher Women-Owned Business Grant Program	https://www.eileenfisher.com/grants/women-owned-business/grant-program-guidelines/	
Zions Bank Smart Women Grants	https://www.zionsbank.com/learning-center/swsm-grant.jsp	
The Amber Grant for Women	https://ambergrantsforwomen.com/get-an-amber-grant/	
MillerCoors Urban Entrepreneurs Series	https://mltapthefuture.com/	
Minority Business Development Agency	http://www.mbda.gov/main/grantcompetitions	