Trends in New Jersey Land Use

New Jersey Future
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Smart Growth research, policy and advocacy organization

Development that protects open space and farmland, revitalizes communities, keeps housing affordable, and provides transportation choices.
Land-Use in New Jersey: Overview

- Most developed state in the nation
- Highest population density in the nation
- Second highest rate of transit ridership
- Large portion of land is either protected open space or falls under the jurisdiction of one of three regional areas (The Pinelands, Highlands and Meadowlands)
Spreading out from the Urban Core

- Post-war suburbs (yellow and green) were built in the 1940s and 50s
- 2000 – 2010 saw the fastest growth in South Jersey
- Immigrants are repopulating some of our cities

*Moving Out, NJ Future, 2006*
“De-densification”

Percentage of NJ’s Population Living at Various Densities, 1930 to 2008

- Newly-developed acres grew 1.3 times as fast as population between 1995 and 2002 (down from 2.3 times as fast between 1986 and 1995)

*Tim Evans, New Jersey Future

- NJ more developed than anything else (30%)
- Developed footprint grown 25% since 1986

*Changing Landscapes in the Garden State, Rowan & Rutgers, 2010*
Urban Areas Have Lost People...

Figure 7
2000 Census Population as a Percent of Peak Population, by Municipality

The 297 New Jersey municipalities having fewer people in 2000 than at some time in the past together had a total 2000 population that was three quarters of a million people fewer than the sum of these municipalities’ peak populations. Much of the population growth in New Jersey’s outlying counties is clearly coming as a direct result of the depopulation of the state’s older, built-out areas.

2000 population as % of peak population
- Less than 60%
- 60 - 69%
- 70 - 79%
- 80 - 89%
- 90 - 94%
- 95 - 99%
- 100% (2000 is peak)

Data source: U.S. Bureau of the Census
Spatial data source: NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection
Map prepared by New Jersey Future
Some recent trends are encouraging

- New Jersey’s 8 “urban centers” accounted for only 3.9% percent of residential building permits issued statewide in the 1990s.

- Their share tripled to 11.8% in the 2000s.

*Built Out But Still Growing, New Jersey Future, 2010*
Transit Rich New Jersey

- 224 rail stations

- Approximately 70 percent of the New Jersey residents live within 5 miles of a train station

- 1.9 million jobs (50%) are located in towns served by rail transit

*Getting to Work, New Jersey Future, 2008*
But Jobs are Dispersing

Job losses near transit; job gains along the highway

20 largest job-gaining and job-losing municipalities, 1980-2003:

- 20 largest job losses
- 20 largest job gains

*Getting to Work, New Jersey Future, 2008
Population Density Effects Vehicle Miles Travelled, and thus GHG Emissions

Population Density vs. Per-Capita Daily Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), 2002
Residents in compact areas drive less, thanks to good transportation alternatives.

Sources: NJ Department of Transportation (VMT); US Census Bureau (population)
As Land Use Has Spread Out, VMT Has Risen Dramatically

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Growth in New Jersey
VMT growth has outstripped increases in population and registered drivers since 1970.

Sources: Federal Highway Administration, Highway Statistics 2005; US Census Bureau, 2005 Census
And VMT is Projected to Grow

**Figure 0-3**

Projected Growth in CO2 Emissions from Cars and Light Trucks Assuming Stringent Nationwide Vehicle and Fuel Standards*


Sources: VMT: EIA with 10% rebound  MPG: US Senate, Fuels: C.
How Can We Lower VMT through Land-Use?

• Density
• Design
• Connectivity of Destinations
• Transportation Options
Design

- Should encourage pedestrian activity
- Mix of uses
- Linked to transit when possible

Do: Exchange Place

Don’t: Metro Park
Other Design Factors

More of this:

And less of this:

*Transpo Group
Connectivity of Destinations

- More housing near transit stations
- Reconnecting jobs with transit centers
- Mix of uses (retail, housing, entertainment, office)
Transportation Options

- Majority of Americans want to walk, bike and take transit more if it were more available.
- More transit service
- Complete Streets
Complete Streets

Accommodate ALL Users for ALL Trips Safely & Efficiently

• Public transit users
• Bicyclists & Pedestrians
  – All ages
  – All abilities
• Motorists
About a third of Americans don’t drive

– Older people who don’t drive
– All children under 17
– Some people with disabilities
– Many low income people who cannot afford automobiles.
– Those that prefer a car-free lifestyle
Existing Streets are Inadequate

- No sidewalks for pedestrians
- Lanes are too narrow for motorists to share with bikes
- Streets are too wide, too dangerous to cross on foot
- No accommodations for people with disabilities
Incomplete Streets Are Unsafe

Pedestrians and Bicyclists...

Source: FMIS, NHTS, FARS federal databases
Many Types of Complete Streets

**CONTEXT**

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<th>Rural</th>
<th>Low Density</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Dense Suburb</th>
<th>City</th>
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Complete Streets Benefits

• Improve Safety
• Provide Connections
• Promote Healthy Lifestyles
• Create More Livable Communities
• Reduce Congestion & Greenhouse Gas Emissions
• Make Fiscal Sense
Report Recommendations

• Consider low-cost bike/ped improvements on resurfacing projects
• Reward Local Aid projects that include Complete Streets
• Reform maintenance requirements for sidewalks
• Integrate ADA compliance with Complete Streets
• Develop standards for local policies
• Exempt new sidewalk construction from DEP stormwater regulations
New Jersey State Plan

• Vision of growth in compact walkable cities, regional centers, villages & already developed areas

• Blueprint for infrastructure spending

• NJ State Strategic Plan

• Shaping NJ Recommendation
Resources

GETTING to WORK: Reconnecting Jobs with Transit

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