

# Newark Riverfront Development Framework

10/20/09



**NEWARK PASSAIC  
RIVERFRONT  
REVITALIZATION**

**City of Newark  
Department of Economic & Housing Development  
Division of Planning & Community Development**

**In Consultation With:  
HR&A Advisors, Inc. and  
Wallace Roberts & Todd**

# Riverfront Initiatives & Benefits

Keep them in mind as you consider how the Framework might address particular areas of the riverfront.

## THE FRAMEWORK

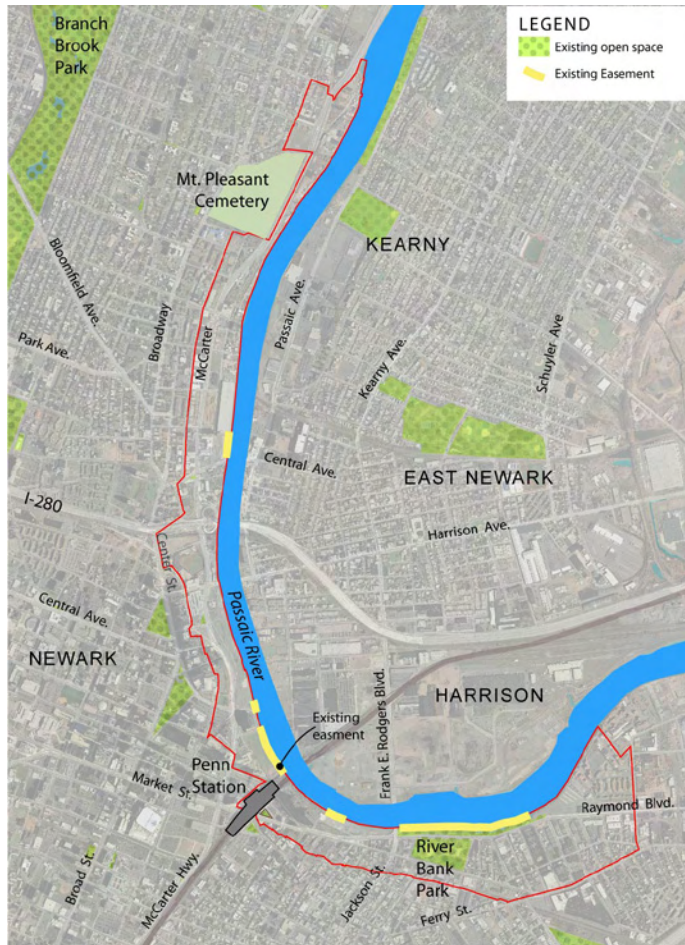
By recommending specific City actions including zoning changes and public investments, the Riverfront Development Framework will deliver public benefits and a clear and predictable framework for future private development.

Many of the potential benefits that the City of Newark might receive from its riverfront require riverfront-wide perspective and action. For example, the vision of a continuous riverfront trail is not achievable if significant gaps in the trail are allowed to occur.

The following pages describe eight concrete ways that the legal actions and public investments recommended by a Riverfront Development Framework can benefit Newarkers. Keep them in mind as you consider how the Framework might address particular areas of the riverfront.

# 1. Continuous Riverfront Trail

## Existing



Today, riverfront easements exist only in four isolated stretches.

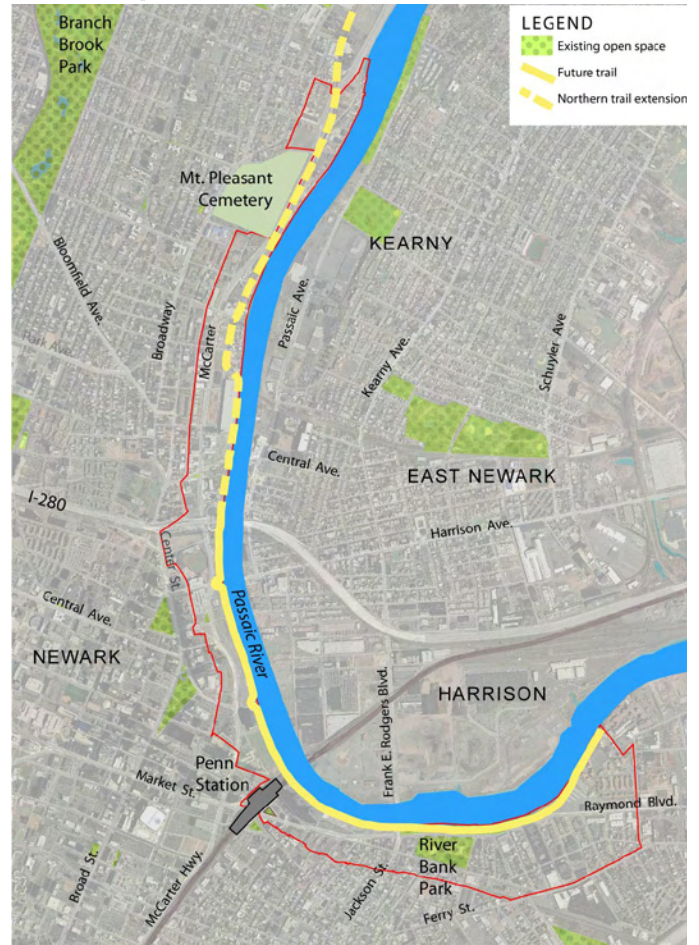
## QUICK FACTS

**A continuous riverfront trail and promenade (parallel to the river) has been supported by many past riverfront plans and discussions, at least in the Ironbound and Downtown.**

**Today, while many stretches of riverfront are owned by public agencies, most will require significant investment and construction to provide welcoming riverfront access.**

**Many stretches of the riverfront are private land, and no framework has been in put in place that requires the provision of riverfront access.**

## Contemplated



Strategic acquisitions and zoning requirements can create a continuous trail.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**If a continuous riverfront trail is a priority for Newark, the Riverfront Development Framework must require it—a single gap would make the trail discontinuous. Public investment must prioritize the construction of the access.**



# 2. Regular Upland Access

## Existing



Apart from the East Ironbound, there are very few paths that connect the upland and the riverfront.

### QUICK FACTS

A continuous riverfront trail and promenade is not worth much if it is not well-connected to the rest of Newark.

Today, the public streets and sidewalks that lead to the riverfront are few and far between.

Regular upland access refers to the creation of frequent paths that bring people to the riverfront from the city.

## Contemplated



Through park creation and public access requirements, many more paths can be created.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The Riverfront Development Framework must set a standard for the provision of upland public access to the riverfront—how streets and sidewalks might be extended, and how private property owners should be required to provide passages across their property for riverfront access.



# 3. New Riverfront Parks

## Existing



Today, the only park at the riverfront is in the Ironbound.

## QUICK FACTS

All past plans and discussions of Newark's riverfront have included ideas for new public open spaces.

The City of Newark and Trust for Public Land are well on the way to realizing Newark's first true riverfront park near the Jackson Street Bridge.

## Contemplated



Through public investment and public space requirements, a network of parks along a trail can be created.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The Riverfront Development Framework must set out a vision of riverfront open spaces, and must prioritize how they are developed, whether through public construction or through private development projects.



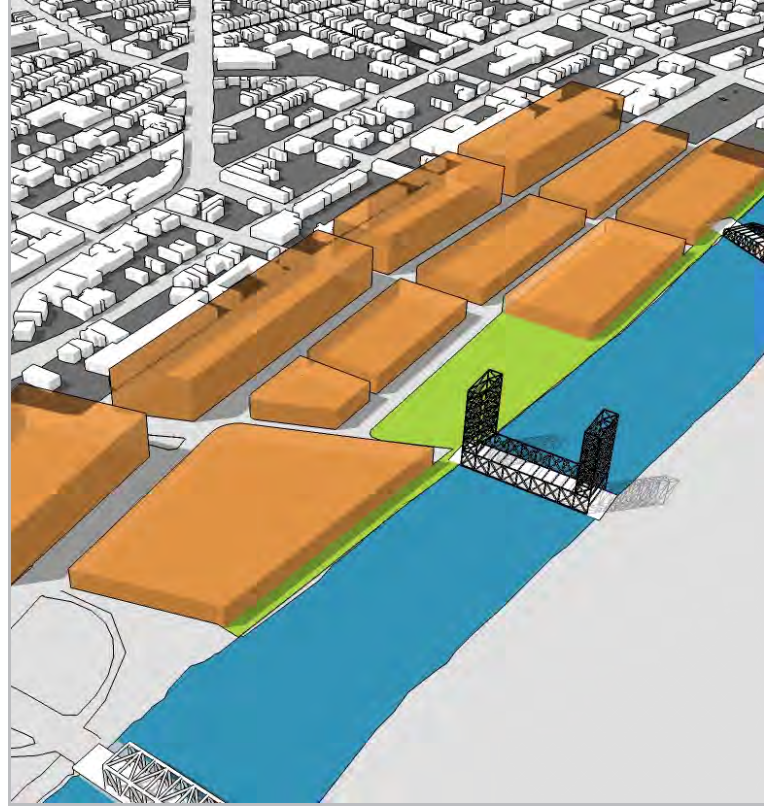
# 4. Density Controls

## Existing



View from the Ironbound towards the river.

## Contemplated



Zoning can help control the urban fabric by prescribing the intensity of development, the transparent boxes represent an illustration of the type of zoning envelope that could be adopted through this plan.

## QUICK FACTS

Beyond the creation of public riverfront access and park spaces, the Riverfront Development Framework will set the guidelines for future private developments on and near the riverfront.

These guidelines will address the allowable density of future developments and set out which areas present the best opportunities for more intense development—like areas near major transportation facilities—and which should be targeted for lower-scale construction.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Density controls can help connect neighborhoods to the river by creating a continuous urban fabric or by helping channel development to where it is most productive. While dense uses can help create vibrant and dynamic places, they are not well suited for all locations. The Riverfront Development Framework must set a vision for the density of future development for decades



# 5. Use Controls

## Existing



Today, a majority of the riverfront is in the I-1 Industrial Zone (shown here in lavender), which allows basically any use.

### QUICK FACTS

Along with density, the Riverfront Development Framework will set the guidelines for the uses that will be allowed in future private development on and near the riverfront. Today, the great majority of the riverfront has few guidelines for allowed uses.

While the determination of future uses in many areas might best be left to their developers, in some areas there may be significant benefits to strong guidelines.

## Contemplated



Destination uses like restaurants and retail, like those in Baltimore's Inner Harbor, might be created through use controls.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

#### Use guidelines can help:

- + Create a dynamic, well-used, public riverfront by requiring "destination" uses.
- + Capitalize on unique opportunities for regional retail.
- + Phase out uses that are in conflict with the future vision of a community.
- + Require specific levels of affordability for future housing development.

# 6. Design Controls

## Existing



This Newark riverfront building, with few windows and a large setback, resembles a bunker.

### QUICK FACTS

Many existing buildings on Newark’s riverfront turn a blank face to the river. If future riverfront developments are to contribute to a welcoming and vibrant public realm, drawing people from the city to the river, a strong vision of basic design principles can help.

For example, design controls can encourage buildings that promote activity on both their river side and on city side, buildings that sit close to streets instead of pull away into privacy, or buildings that prioritize pedestrians instead of vehicles.

## Contemplated



Riverfront design controls in Pittsburgh required the Alcoa building to provide a public riverfront esplanade.

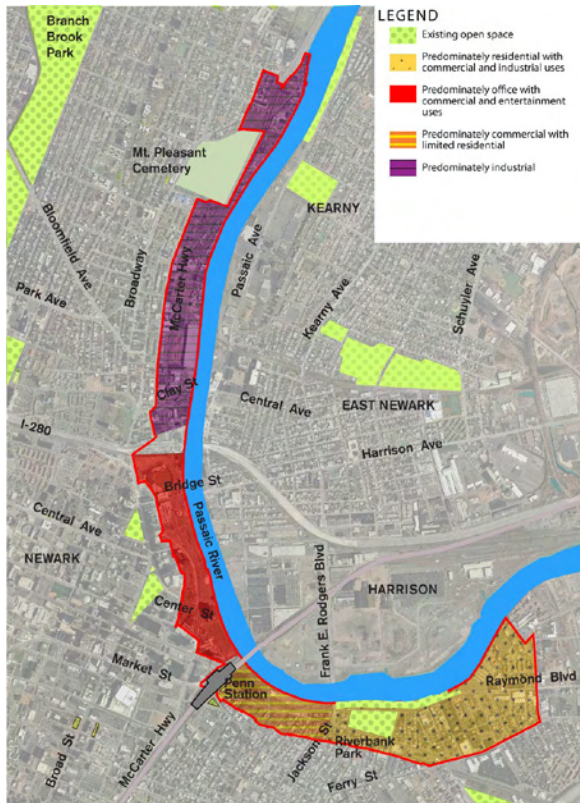
### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**The Riverfront Development Framework must set a vision for the public realm on and near the riverfront and translate its ambitions into clear and predictable design controls.**



# 7. Opportunities for New Development

## Existing

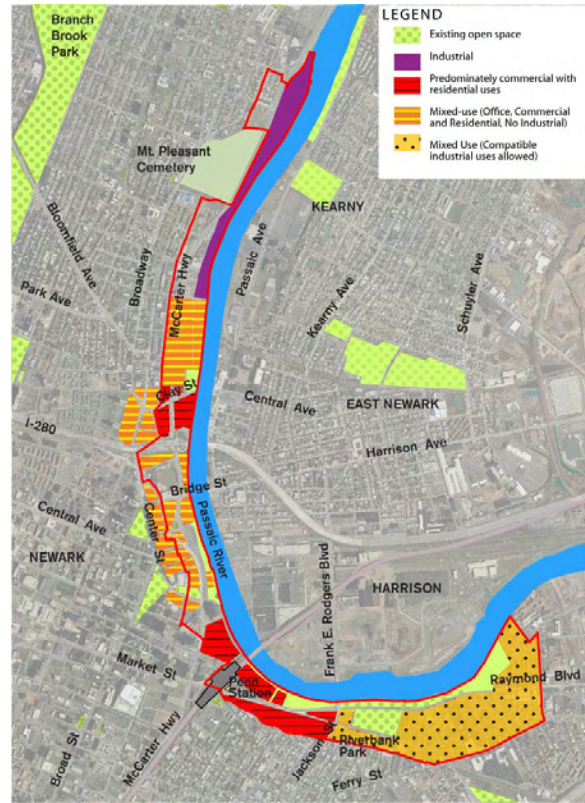


There is significant vacant land on the riverfront.

### QUICK FACTS

There are over 100 acres of vacant and underutilized parcels within the study area.

## Contemplated



With a clear vision of how new development can support the goals of riverfront revitalization, the City can foster new investment in strategic locations.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

These vacant parcels represent a great opportunity for new developments that capitalize on a waterfront location.

# 8. Things to Do

## Existing

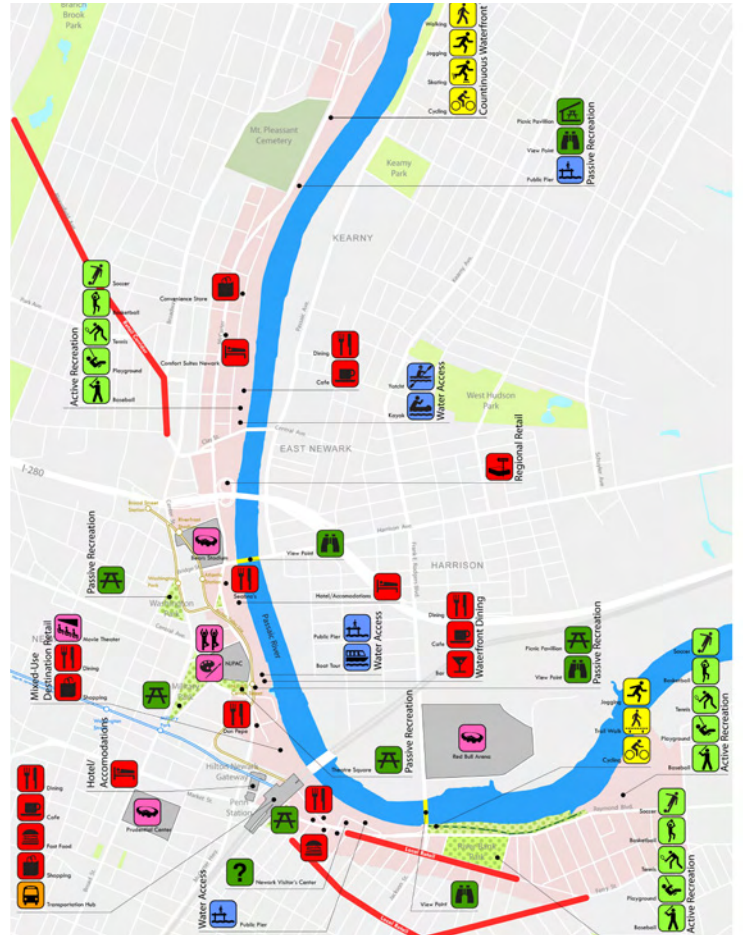


Today there are not enough reasons large numbers of people to venture to the Newark Riverfront.

## QUICK FACTS

Although the City of Newark has five miles of riverfront that border a number neighborhoods, many city residents are unaware that they are only a few miles from the edges of the Passaic River.

## Contemplated



A successful riverfront requires more activity and more people. Through public programs and partnerships, ways must be found to increase the life along and in the river, which will fortify public and private investment.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Many cities across the country have been successful in turning their waterfronts into dynamic destinations through programs and events that target a broad spectrum of residents and visitors.





**NORTH WARD**

1. NEW PARKS
2. LAND USE
3. PUBLIC ACCESS

# 23 RIVERFRONT DECISIONS

**LOWER  
BROADWAY**

4. NEW PARKS
5. LAND USE (NORTH)
6. LAND USE (SOUTH)
7. DENSITY
8. PUBLIC ACCESS

**DOWNTOWN**

9. NEW PARKS (NORTH)
10. LAND USE (NORTH)
11. DENSITY (NORTH)
12. PUBLIC ACCESS (NORTH)
13. NEW PARKS (SOUTH)
14. LAND USE (SOUTH)
15. DENSITY (SOUTH)
16. PUBLIC ACCESS (SOUTH)

**IRONBOUND**

17. NEW PARKS (WEST)
18. LAND USE (WEST)
19. DENSITY (WEST)
20. PUBLIC ACCESS (WEST)
21. NEW PARKS (EAST)
22. LAND USE (EAST)
23. DENSITY (EAST)



IN MAKING THE DECISIONS THAT FOLLOW, HOW CAN NEWARK BEST SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITIES OF THE NORTH WARD RIVERFRONT?

# NORTH WARD

## Opportunities

- 1 JOB-INTENSIVE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT**
  - Support Existing Industry
  - Reuse City-owned property
- 2 NEW “VEST POCKET” PARKS**

Open spaces connected to upland neighborhoods
- 3 IMPROVE ACCESS to riverfront from neighborhoods**

## Trade-Offs

- 1 REQUIRED INDUSTRIAL VS UNSPECIFIED USE?**
- 2 BALANCE OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT VS OPEN SPACE?**
- 3 PUBLIC INVESTMENT TARGETS?**
  - Access from neighborhoods?
  - Open space development and maintenance?
  - Incentives for industrial development and job production?





## **NORTH WARD**

The North Ward contains some of Newark's stateliest homes and some of its most crowded neighborhoods. It is marked by rugged terrain and steep hills.

While the North Ward contains Branch Brook Park, a jewel of Newark's park system, the topography of the neighborhood makes it difficult to reach the park for all but its closest neighbors.

Like many Newark neighborhoods, the North Ward is in need of accessible job opportunities for residents.

## **NORTH WARD RIVERFRONT**

At the river, the North Ward contains a mix of active industrial uses, vacant land, and picturesque views.

Among the industrial uses are well-established facilities like asphalt plants that serve Newark and surrounding municipalities and construction companies. There are also more recent developments like a biofuel facility and a light industrial development being undertaken by the Brick City Development Corporation. Some of the industry takes advantage of water-based transportation and the nearby rail line to Paterson, which is also used as an outdoor graffiti museum.

Across McCarter Highway, there are pockets of housing as well as significant vacant land.

The North Ward is a diverse area in need of open space and job opportunities. The riverfront can play a role in meeting these needs.

We propose that the North Ward Riverfront be supported as an industrial area, especially accommodating job-intensive green businesses that take advantage of water- and rail-based transportation, along with limited but unique park opportunities.

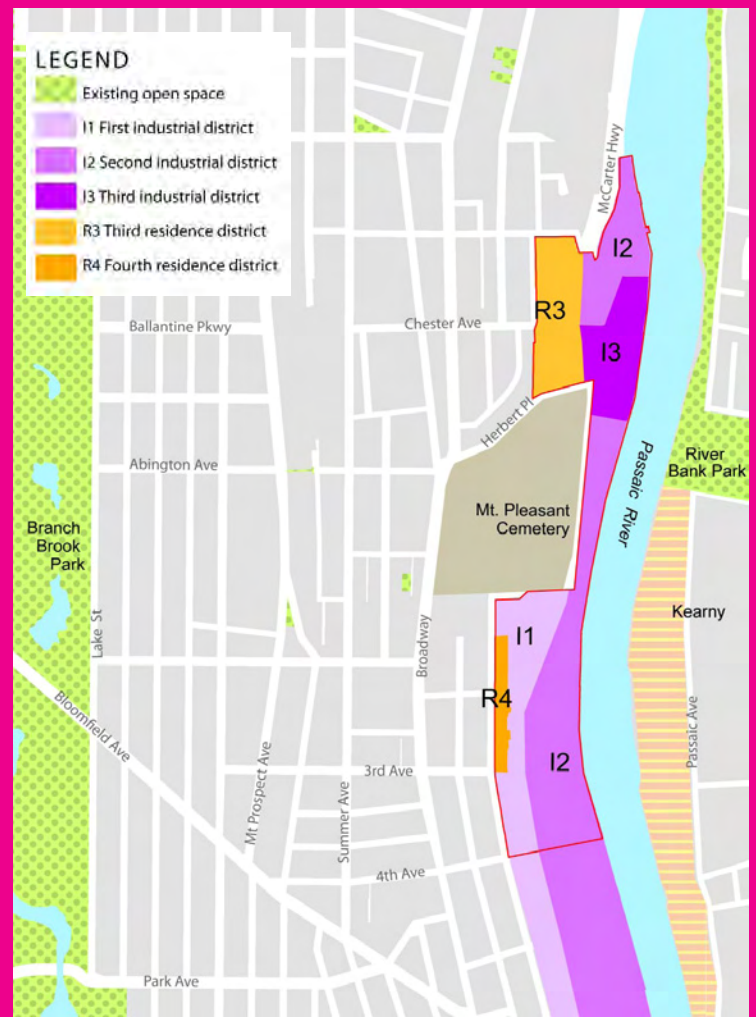


# NORTH WARD

## EXISTING CONDITIONS



**PLANNING CONTEXT**



**EXISTING ZONING**

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- + TOPOGRAPHY & HIGHWAY SEPARATE RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD
- + LIMITED RIVERFRONT ACCESS
- + NEW INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT
- + NARROW LAND PARCELS
- + SIGNIFICANT UNDERUTILIZED LANDS
- + NEAR LOWER BROADWAY

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

EXISTING ZONING IS EXCLUSIVELY INDUSTRIAL ALONG THE RIVERFRONT WITH UPLAND RESIDENTIAL.





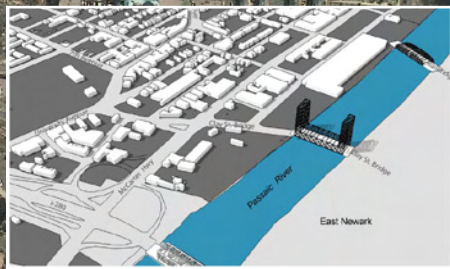








IN MAKING THE DECISIONS THAT FOLLOW, HOW CAN NEWARK BEST SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITIES OF THE LOWER BROADWAY RIVERFRONT?



# LOWER BROADWAY

## Opportunities

- 1 NEW RETAIL & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
- 2 CREATE NEW PARKS & TRAILS
- 3 IMPROVE ACCESS FROM NEIGHBORHOODS

## Trade-Offs

- 1 REQUIRED OR UNSPECIFIED USE?
- 2 BALANCE OF OPEN SPACE/TRAIL AND DEVELOPMENT?
3. TARGETS FOR PUBLIC INVESTMENT?
  - Incentivize retail and residential development?
  - Open space development and maintenance?





## LOWER BROADWAY

Lower Broadway is a busy neighborhood near important transportation routes: Route 280, Bloomfield Avenue, and Broad Street Station.

Lower Broadway has a strong Latino character, clearly reflected in local businesses. Like the North Ward, it is near Branch Brook Park, but steep hills make it hard to reach from much of the area.

In recent years, a wide variety of uses have developed near McCarter Highway, ranging from three-family houses to strip malls to motels. At times, this has produced conflict.

## LOWER BROADWAY RIVERFRONT

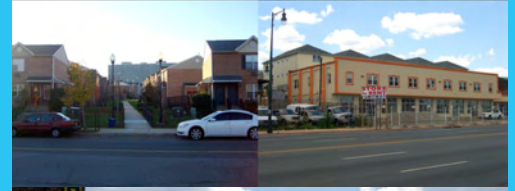
At the river, Lower Broadway contains a mix of active industrial uses and vacant land.

Also, significant properties have been assembled, creating the potential for a larger scale, more transformative development in the future.

While some of the industrial uses create significant quality jobs for Newark residents, other uses do not take full advantage of the possibilities presented by their excellent access to regional transportation networks.

**Lower Broadway is a bustling area in need of open space that also holds development potential for a regional base.**

**We propose that the Lower Broadway riverfront develop as a mixed-use district with new housing, regional retail, and open space.**



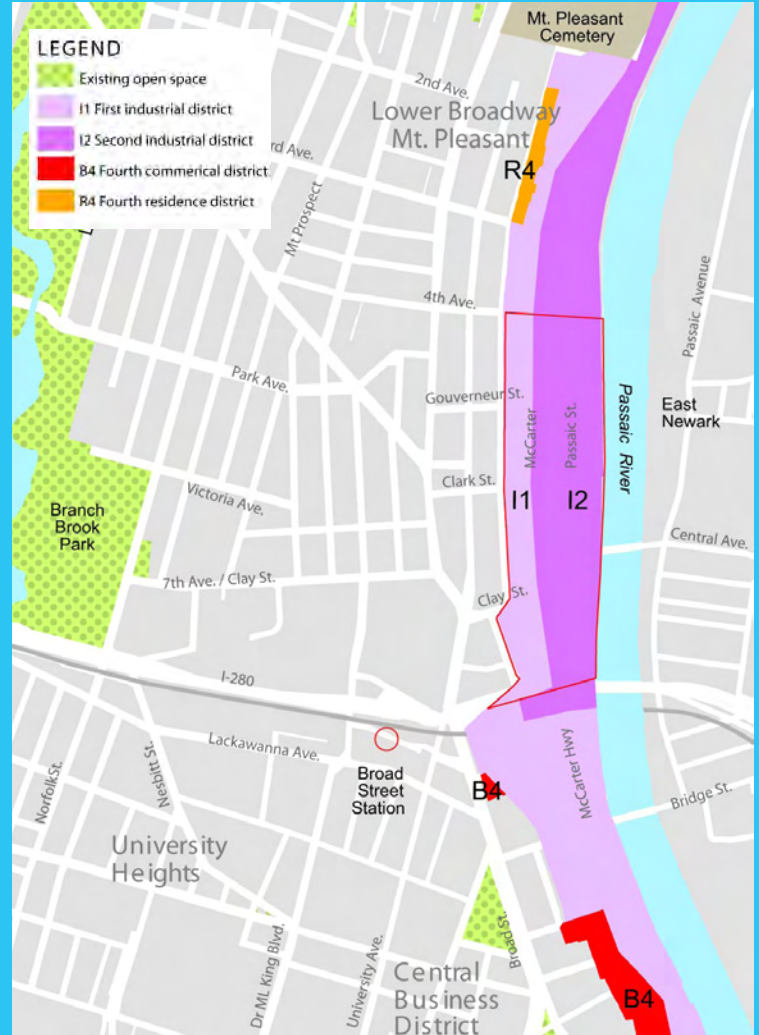
# LOWER BROADWAY EXISTING CONDITIONS



PLANNING CONTEXT

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- + REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ACCESS
- + NEAR BLOOMFIELD AVENUE
- + TOPOGRAPHY SEPARATES RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD
- + STRONG STREET GRID
- + LARGE ASSEMBLAGE



ZONING

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

EXISTING ZONING IS EXCLUSIVELY INDUSTRIAL ALONG THE RIVERFRONT. UPLAND THERE ARE FEW RESTRICTIONS.

























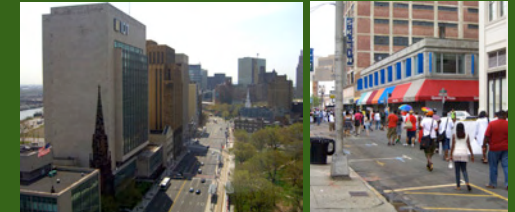
# DOWNTOWN

## Opportunities

- 1 DEVELOP UNIQUE CITYWIDE DESTINATIONS
- 2 CREATE TRAIL & OPEN SPACES
- 3 IMPROVE ACCESS TO RIVERFRONT
- 4 BRING NEWARK EVENTS TO THE RIVER

## Trade-Offs

- 1 BALANCE OF DEVELOPMENT VS OPEN SPACE/TRAIL?
- 2 REQUIRED USES VS UNSPECIFIED USE?
- 3 TARGETS FOR PUBLIC INVESTMENT?
  - Connections from Downtown?
  - Open space development and maintenance?
  - Incentivize development?

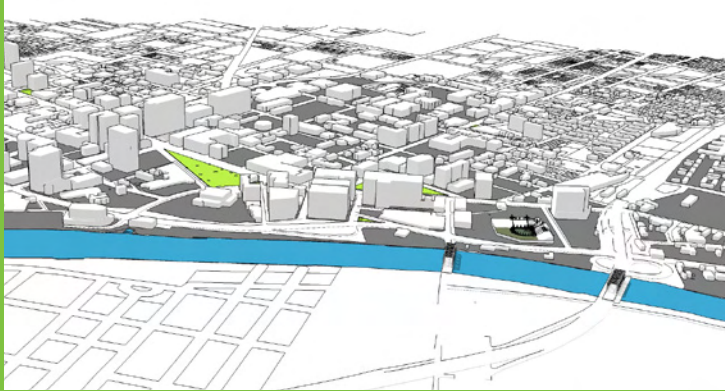






# NORTH DOWNTOWN

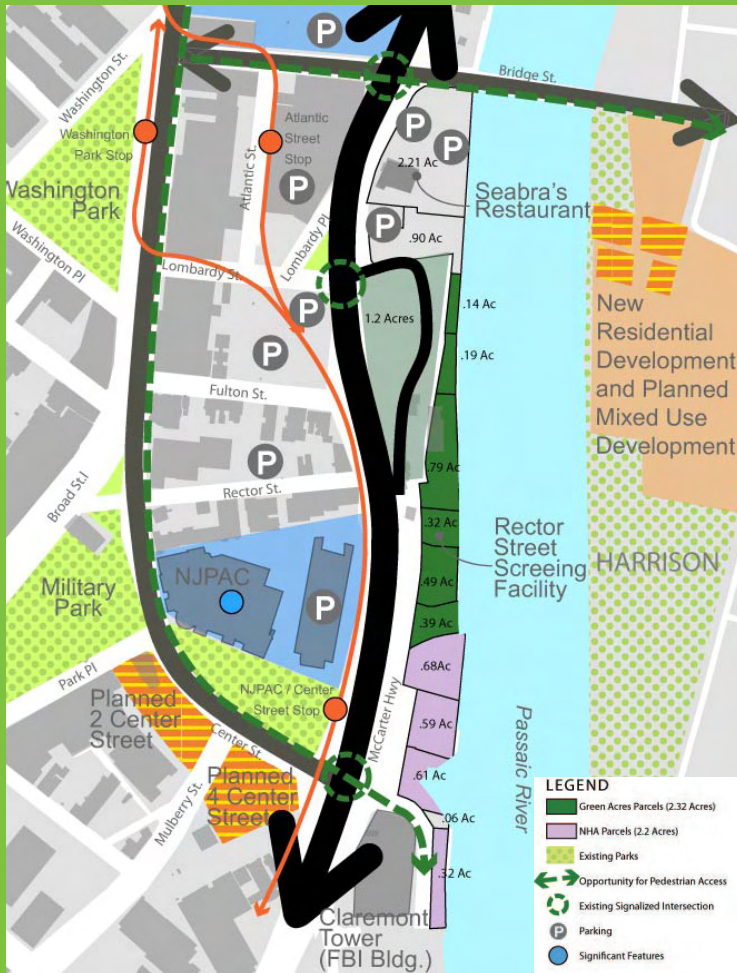
## EXISTING CONDITIONS



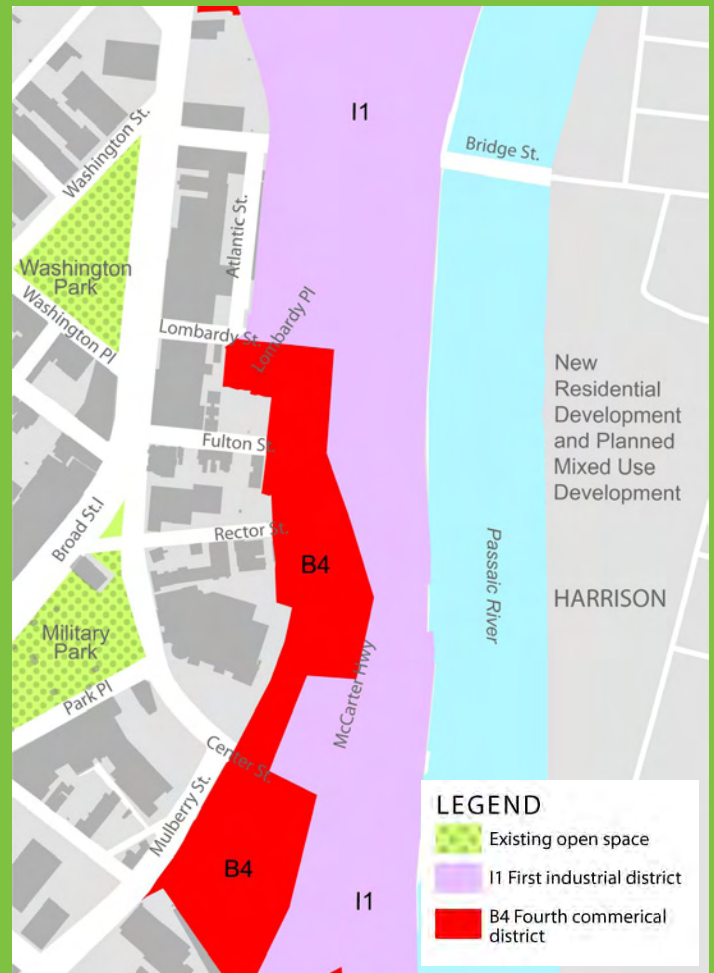
PERSPECTIVE

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- + TRANSPORTATION ACCESS
- + 50,000 WORKERS
- + UNIVERSITY DISTRICT WITH 50,000 PEOPLE
- + ENTERTAINMENT VENUES
- + BROAD STREET RETAIL
- + MCCARTER HIGHWAY
- + SIGNIFICANT UNDERUTILIZED LANDS



PLANNING CONTEXT



ZONING







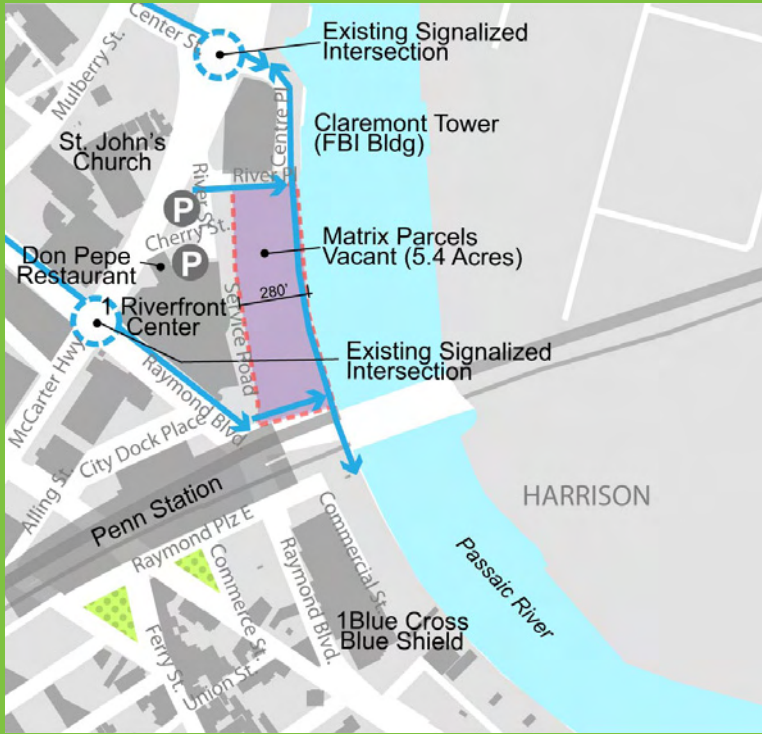








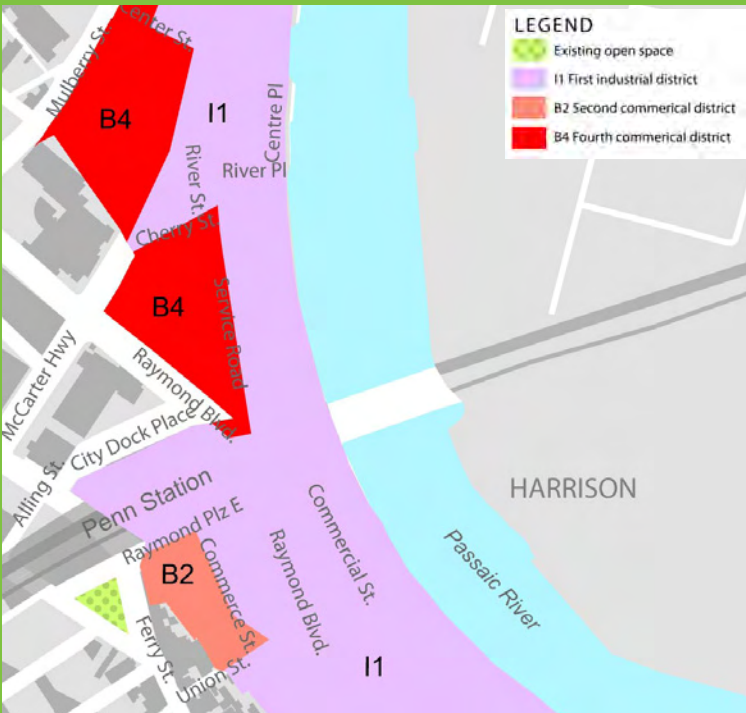
# SOUTH DOWNTOWN EXISTING CONDITIONS



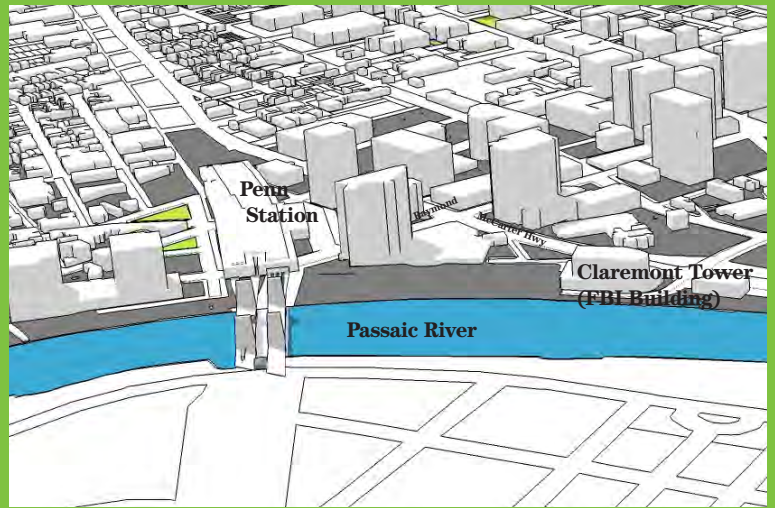
## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- + TRANSPORTATION ACCESS
- + 50,000 WORKERS
- + UNIVERSITY DISTRICT WITH 50,000 PEOPLE
- + ENTERTAINMENT VENUES
- + BROAD STREET RETAIL
- + MCCARTER HIGHWAY
- + SIGNIFICANT UNDERUTILIZED LANDS

## PLANNING CONTEXT



## ZONING



## PERSPECTIVE















HOW CAN  
NEWARK BEST  
SEIZE THE  
OPPORTUNITIES OF  
THE IRONBOUND  
RIVERFRONT?

WEST

EAST

# IRONBOUND

## Opportunities

- 1 CREATE OPEN SPACE**  
for the passive, active, and  
educational uses, including a  
trail
- 2 IMPROVE ACCESS** from  
neighborhood
- 2. FOSTER DEVELOPMENT**
  - Residential and commercial
  - Grow neighborhood to the river

## Trade-Offs

- 1 IT'S A BALANCE!**  
More Trails means Less  
Development?
- 2 WHAT SHOULD NEWARK  
INVEST IN?**
  - Public realm?
  - Open space development  
and maintenance?
  - Public programs?
  - Incentives for  
development?





# IRONBOUND

The Ironbound is a densely populated, dynamic mixed-use community. It is a regional destination for its Spanish, Portuguese, and Brazilian restaurants.

Because the Ironbound has also become a destination for immigration, it is known for its distinct cultural flavor, seen in its civic associations, festivals, and local businesses.

The built environment of the Ironbound is marked by its industrial history, when people often lived very near to the factories where they worked.

# IRONBOUND RIVERFRONT

At the River, between Newark Penn Station and the Jackson Street bridge, the riverfront is either used for parking or is vacant and fenced. East of Jackson Street Bridge, there is an open green space that leads down to a decayed bank, as well as fenced vacant land. Across the river in Harrison, the new Red Bulls stadium is under construction.

Across the difficult-to-cross Raymond Boulevard, one finds gas stations, car washes, and more parking lots. There are also many small-scale homes. A bit beyond that is Ferry Street, the commercial main street of the neighborhood.

**The Ironbound is a vibrant & active neighborhood.**

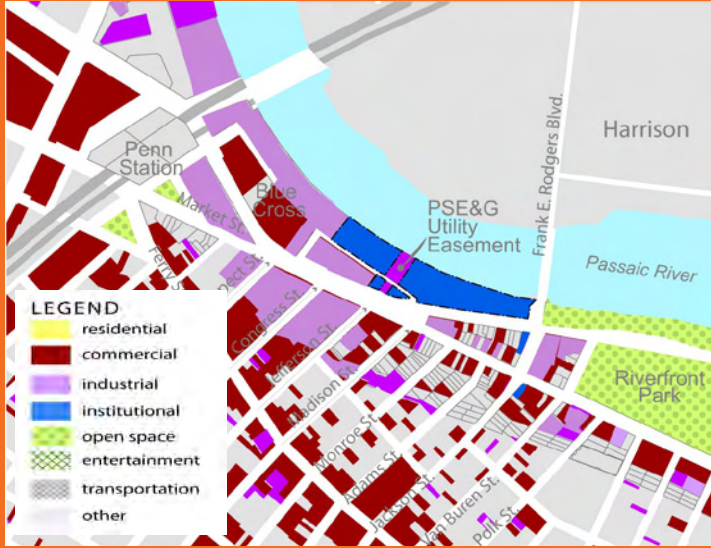
**The Riverfront can build on its successes while continuing its tradition of a diverse, mixed-income population.**

**We propose that the Ironbound Riverfront be a primarily recreational riverfront.**

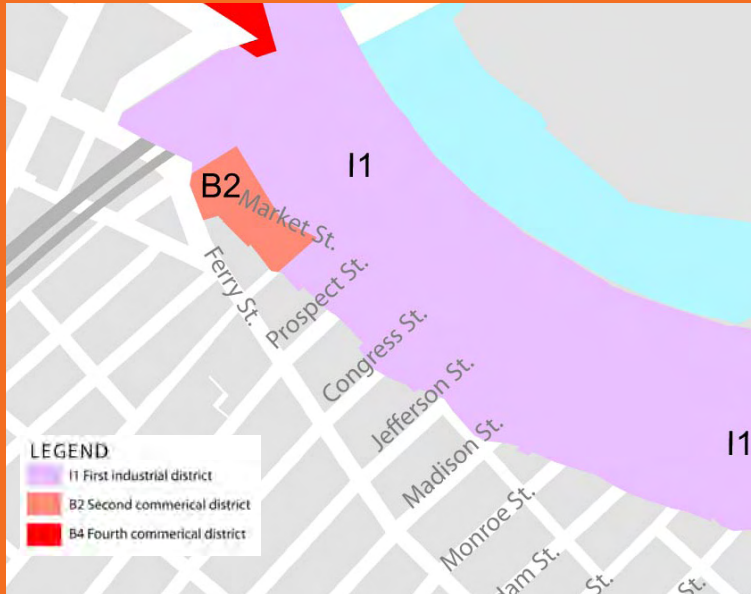
**It should support some opportunities for continued development and promoting density near Penn Station.**



# WEST IRONBOUND EXISTING CONDITIONS



PLANNING CONTEXT



ZONING



## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**+ RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD, UNDERSERVED BY PARKS**

**+ STRONG COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS**

**+ SIGNIFICANT UNDERUTILIZED LANDS ALONG RIVERFRONT**

**+ RAYMOND IS GATEWAY TO NEWARK, BUT BARRIER TO RIVER**

**+ AMBITIOUS PLANS IN HARRISON**

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**CURRENT ZONING IS PRIMARILY INDUSTRIAL WITH FEW REQUIREMENTS.**













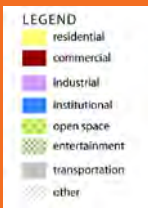


# EAST IRONBOUND

## EXISTING CONDITIONS



PLANNING CONTEXT



### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**+ RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD, UNDERSERVED BY PARKS**

**+ STRONG COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS**

**+ SIGNIFICANT UNDERUTILIZED LANDS ALONG RIVERFRONT**

**+RAYMOND IS GATEWAY TO NEWARK, BUT BARRIER TO RIVER**

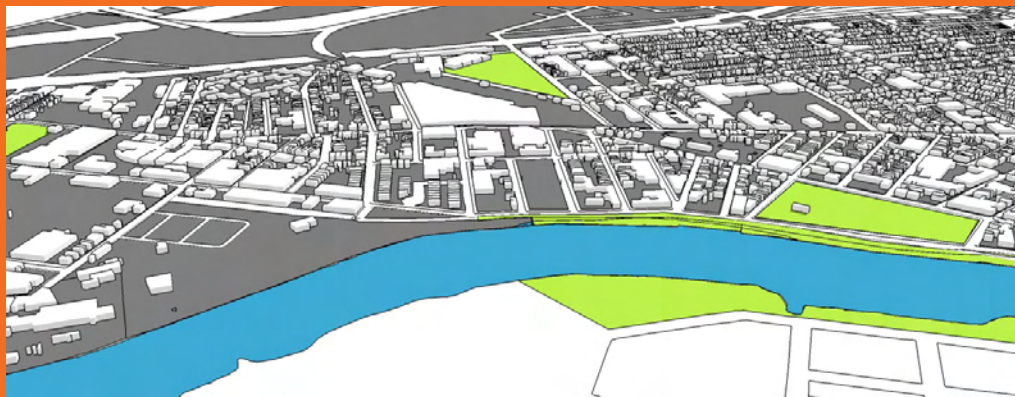
**+AMBITIOUS PLANS IN HARRISON**



ZONING

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**CURRENT ZONING IS A MIX OF EXCLUSIVELY INDUSTRIAL ZONES WITH OFFICE AND RESIDENTIAL ZONES. A LARGE PORTION OF THE AREA IS ZONE I-1, NEWARK'S MOST PERMISSIVE ZONE.**



PERSPECTIVE







