



# City of Burlington 2045 Plan

## Burlington County, New Jersey

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Instructor Dan Levin

# WHY 2045 PLAN?

Burlington 2045 is our team's designated vision for the City's future. This timeline, spanning two decades, is grounded in a thoughtful consideration of what it takes to achieve meaningful, sustainable development. We acknowledge that true transformation—whether it be in infrastructure, community development, or environmental resilience—requires time. Twenty years offers a broad enough canvas to not only dream big but also to implement, adapt, and see those dreams take tangible shape.

## Vision Statement

This is our vision statement: In 2045, Burlington City is economically strong, climate-resilient, and has a strong sense of community. All residents enjoy a well-maintained, affordable, and diverse housing stock in connected and walkable neighborhoods. The City fosters a harmonious relationship between its historic character and future-oriented development. A highly engaged youth population ensures these qualities will endure for years to come.

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## Acknowledgments

Our team would like to extend our gratitude to the municipal & elected officials at Burlington City for their unwavering support, providing essential insights and working closely with us to develop action-able strategies for the City. Their advice and backing have been crucial.

We also want to express our heartfelt thanks to our instructor, Dan Levin, whose mentorship has been instrumental. The formulation of this plan would not have been possible without Dan's expert guidance and instruction and also have a general thanks to Erick Guerra, Kate Daniel, and the other instructors who provided feedback.



# 01

## Existing Conditions

Burlington City has a newly developed waterfront, classic main street, and mix of dense and suburban-style housing. It has a rich history and culture but, like many former manufacturing hubs, has experienced decades of population decline. Further, nearly the entire city is at risk of historic flooding, including physical and social infrastructure. Recently, the City has attracted new residents, commercial activity, and redevelopment interests. While most drive, the City has a variety of public transit options that can connect residents to green spaces and services within the City as well as opportunities throughout the region.

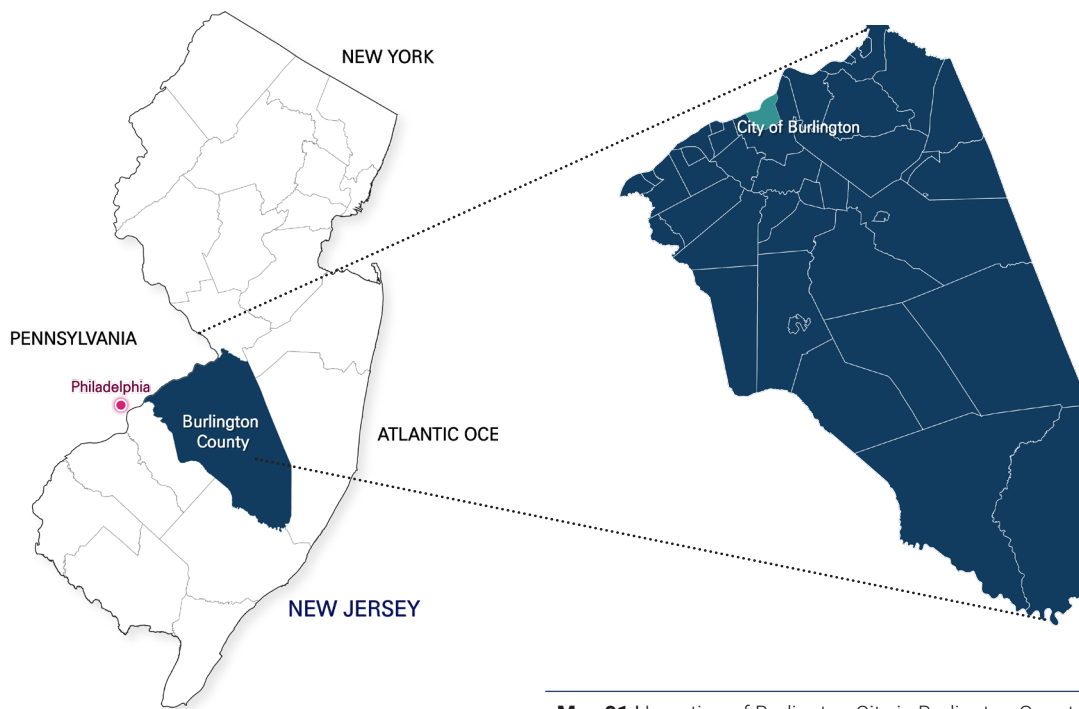


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# Introduction

## Geographic Context

Burlington City, situated in the northern part of Burlington County alongside the Delaware River, is home to about 9,800 people inside approximately four square miles. Its location along the river and proximity to Philadelphia makes Burlington a suburb in the Delaware Valley Metropolitan Area, connected to Pennsylvania via the Burlington-Bristol Bridge and the rest of South Jersey via U.S. 130. The City is bounded on three sides by Burlington Township, and by the Delaware River to the north. Unless otherwise stated, all data came from the United States Census.



**Map 01** | Location of Burlington City in Burlington County, New Jersey



**Image 01 (Left)** | Burlington Island,  
Source: Lower Bucks Times

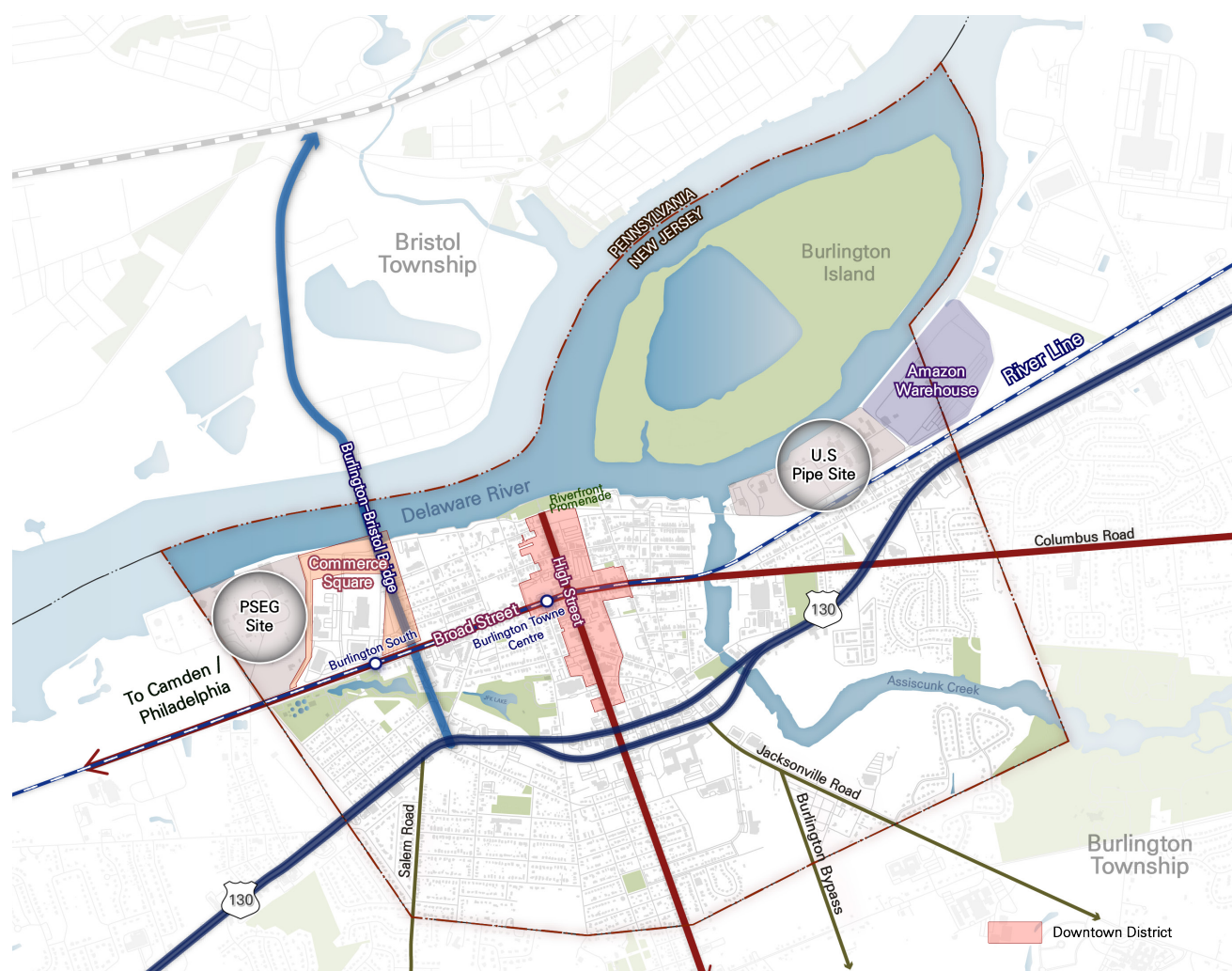


**Image 02 (Right)** | Downtown Burlington City,  
Source: Philadelphia Inquirer





Notable geographic features in Burlington include the uninhabited Burlington Island, Assiscunk Creek, and JFK lake. Major roadways within the City include U.S. 130, High Street, and Broad Street. U.S. 130 runs through Burlington, creating a physical division: suburban neighborhoods lie to the south, while more urbanized areas are located north of this major highway. Two main streets intersect the City's downtown district: High Street and Broad Street. High Street functions as the traditional Main Street, while Broad Street carries the River Line light rail system, cutting through the City's core. Large industrial sites in various stages of development line the riverfront: the U.S. Pipe Site (part abandoned and part occupied by an Amazon Warehouse) and the Public Service Electric & Gas (PSEG) Site, currently home to the Burlington Generating Station, and the partially vacant Commerce Square Site.



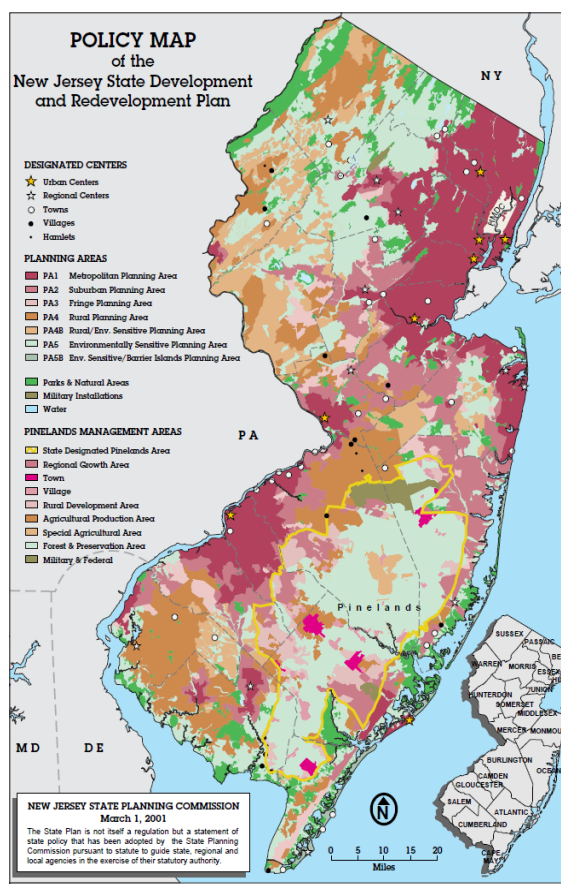
**Map 02** | Basemap of Burlington City

# Planning Context

Both state- and municipal-level planning efforts guide planning in Burlington City. Most recently, planners have sought to encourage multi-modal transportation options, promote compact development and affordable housing, preserve historical character, and confront environmental hazards.

## *The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (2001)*

The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) establishes state-level planning policy. The SDRP promotes mixed land uses in compact, pedestrian-friendly forms as well as policies that protect the character of the City's historic neighborhoods. This includes designating Burlington's three-square miles of mainland as a Town Center in a Metropolitan Planning Area (PA-1). Burlington Island is covered by a Critical Environmental Site Overlay.



**Figure 01** | Planning Areas in Policy Map of SDRP

## *City of Burlington Master Plan (2010)*

The City of Burlington adopted its most recent Master Plan update in 2010 to provide strategic direction for future land development, redevelopment, and planning initiatives. Similar to the SDRP, the Master Plan seeks to foster land use and development patterns that reinforce the City's diverse, historic, and compact character. The plan aims to improve mobility for pedestrians, cyclists, buses, light rail and cars, while reducing car dependency and improving safety. It also aims to leverage new opportunities presented by the Delaware River and Assiscunk Creek and adopt form-based code by redefining the City's districts with urban design guidelines. In 2021, the City produced a re-examination report which reinforces the recommendations from the 2010 plan.



### ***Burlington County Hazard Mitigation Plan (2019)***

The Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) provides strategies for municipalities to minimize disaster risks by identifying hazards, assessing vulnerabilities, and outlining mitigation actions. Burlington City actively participated in the 5-year update of the Burlington County Hazard Mitigation Plan. The City continues to support the plan's implementation, monitoring, maintenance, and updating. The 2019 HMP update reveals Burlington is especially prone to floods, droughts, severe storms, and harsh winters.

### ***Downtown Circulation Plan (2020)***

Burlington's Downtown Circulation Plan updates the 2010 Circulation Element of its Master Plan, with a focus on planning and making recommendations for improving safety, mobility, economic growth, bicycle infrastructure, and pedestrian accessibility.

### ***Burlington City Housing Element and Fair Share Plan Analysis (2018)***

The Housing Element and Fair Share Plan focuses on providing affordable housing for low to moderate-income families, in accordance with New Jersey's Fair Housing Act and the Mount Laurel decisions. The plan targets the Commerce Square and part of the former U.S. Pipe Site as promising locations to integrate affordable housing into the City's larger redevelopment strategy.

# Historical Context

**1677**

Founding of Burlington by English settlers, primarily Quakers



**1702**

End of Burlington serving as the capital of the province with the unification of West and East Jersey into a single Crown Colony



**1783**

Construction of the new Quaker meeting house on High Street



**1757-1758**

Organization and chartering of the Library Company of Burlington



**1784**

Incorporation by the State of New Jersey post-American independence

**1796**

Relocation of the county seat to Mount Holly Township due to population growth

**1703**

Building of St. Mary's Church, the oldest in N



**1887**

Establishment of the J.F. Budd Baby Shoe Company



**1873**

Organization of the Oneida Boat Club.



**1960s-1970s:**

Development of a waterfront park along the Delaware River due to urban renewal and flood control projects



**1988:**

Relocation of Burlington Coat Factory's corporate headquarters to Burlington Township







### ***Foundational and Early Settlement Period (1676–1702)***

The Lenape tribe controlled what is now Burlington City until the West Jersey Proprietors purchased the land in 1676. English settlers then founded the City in 1677, first settling on Burlington Island. Burlington was William Penn's first New World settlement, eight years before Philadelphia.

### ***Development and Growth Period (1703–1796)***

Burlington evolved significantly, establishing key community institutions and becoming the county seat. Notably, it played a vital role in the Underground Railroad, with landmarks like Wheatley's Burlington Pharmacy, which served as a haven for runaway slaves and a venue for anti-slavery rallies. By 1790, the area boasted the largest free Black population in the state.

### ***Incorporation and Expansion (1784–1851)***

Burlington is incorporated as a city and sees continued growth.

### ***Educational and Industrial Development (1837–1924)***

During the mid 1800s to mid 1900s, Burlington developed several schools, churches, and staple businesses including the nationwide retail chain Burlington.



St. Mary's Episcopal Church in New Jersey



**1846**  
Start of construction on New St. Mary's Church by Bishop Doane



**1845**  
The oldest continuously operating pharmacy



**2010-Now:**  
Population decline



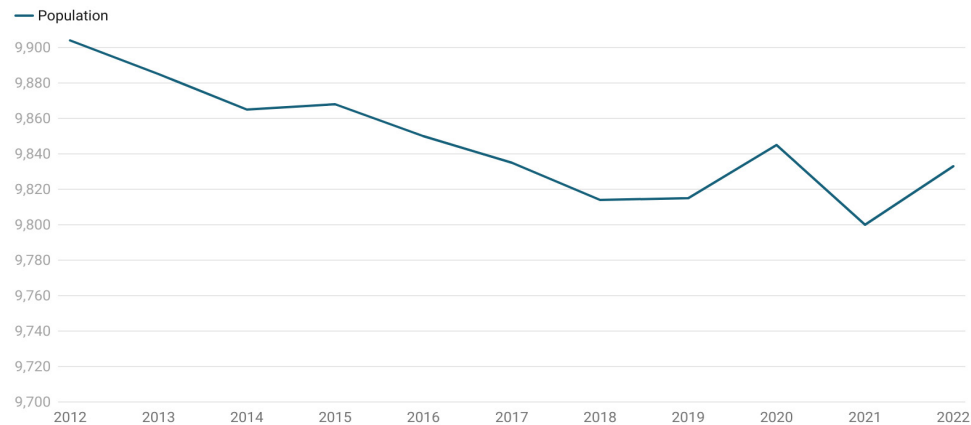
### ***Urban decline and renewal (1960s–now)***

Lastly, the urban renewal period saw the construction of a waterfront promenade for recreational and flood control uses. Like many cities in the Northeast, Burlington experienced population loss as manufacturing declined across the United States.

# Demographics

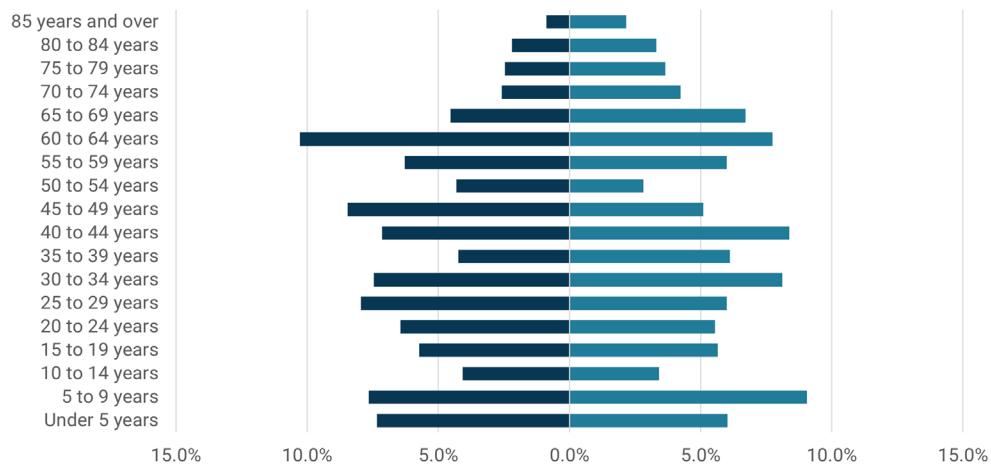
Burlington has grown younger and more diverse in the past five years, with a rise in both immigrants and children under five. At the same time, higher education attainment has increased even as enrollment has declined.

## Population



**Figure 02** | Population Changes (2012-2022)

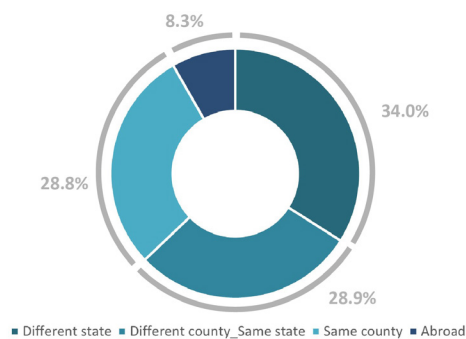
Nearly 10,000 people called Burlington home in 2022. While the number of residents declined overall between 2012 and 2022 (see fg. 2), there was a notable spike in 2020. Burlington has grown more diverse in the past five years. The share of Hispanic residents grew from 10% to 15% and the share of Black residents grew from 30% to 33%, while the share of White residents shrunk from 48% to 44%. The share of Asian and Other Residents also decreased.



**Figure 03** | Age Distribution (2022)

The median age in Burlington City has experienced a slight decrease from 40 years in 2017 to 39.2 years, slightly younger than the average median age of 41.6 years observed in both the county and state. A notable aspect of Burlington City's demographic landscape is the extremes at both ends of the age spectrum. The City has a significant presence of both children and elderly residents (see fig. 3), which could have implications for local services, infrastructure, and community planning.

## Immigration

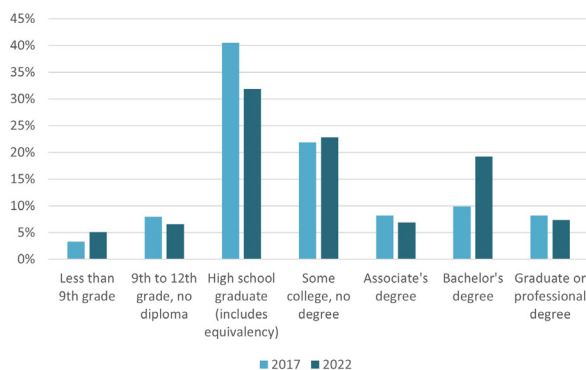


**Figure 04** | Immigration Composition (2017-2022)

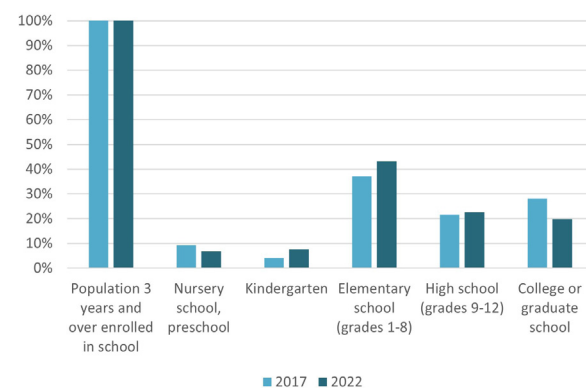
Burlington welcomed 300 foreign-born residents in 2022, a 42% increase from 2017. Meanwhile, the native population decreased both in terms of percentage and actual numbers, with a reduction of around 300 individuals.

The composition of immigrants also changed from predominantly Asian to predominately Latin American. Residents born in Latin America doubled, growing from 211 residents in 2017 to 415 residents in 2022. They now constitute the largest share of foreign-born residents at 38%. Residents born in Africa nearly tripled, rising from 80 residents in 2017 to 311 in 2022. The share of foreign-born residents born in Africa also grew from 10% to nearly 30%.

## Education



**Figure 05** | Educational enrollment (2017-2022)



**Figure 06** | Educational attainment (2017-2022))

Educational enrollment dropped by 300 and now falls slightly below the county average. Enrollment in higher education and early childhood programs declined while enrollment in elementary school increased, indicating shifting educational needs in the City (see fig. 5).

The City has a high rate of high school completion (88%), but a lower rate of higher education attainment (27%) compared to the county average (41.4%). Despite this gap, the City has seen a nearly 10% increase in residents obtaining a bachelor's degree or higher from 2017 to 2022 (see fig. 6). in Africa also grew from 10% to nearly 30%.

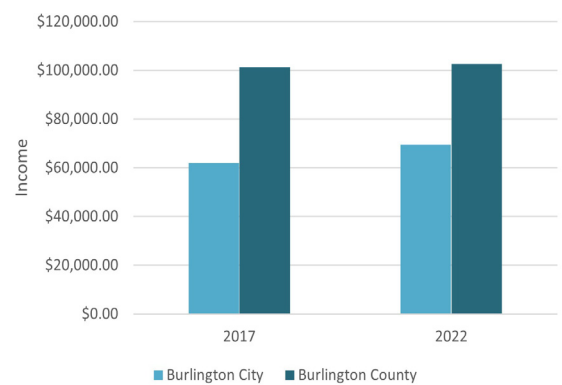


# Local Economy

Burlington's economy has grown in recent years. Incomes have been rising and the transportation and warehousing sector has taken advantage of the City's large redevelopment sites. The City also boasts a strong local retail community, bolstered by business groups like Main Street Burlington. However, residents still earn less than their counterparts in the county, while local businesses face multiple economic hurdles.

## Income and Labor Force

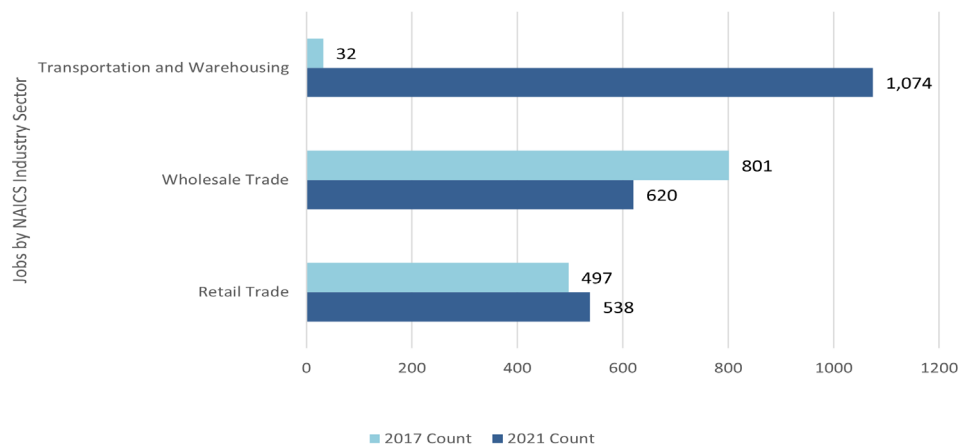
The economic conditions of Burlington residents are improving, but still lag behind those of the county. The median yearly income rose from around \$50,000 in 2017 to nearly \$70,000 in 2022 (inflation-adjusted), though it is still about \$30,000 less than the county. The unemployment rate dropped somewhat since 2017 to 9.7%, though this rate is still nearly double the county rate. Around 7% of all families and 12.5% of all people lived at or below the poverty rate, also nearly double the county rate.



**Figure 07** | Income Changes (2017-2022)

## Industries

The local economy is driven by transportation and warehousing, which has become the largest sector, accounting for 25.4% of local jobs and adding over 1,000 new jobs between 2017 and 2021. This growth has been partly fueled by the opening of an Amazon fulfillment center in 2019. Wholesale and retail trade is the second-largest sector, comprising 12.7% of local employment, but it saw only a slight increase of 41 new jobs from 2017 to 2021. Local initiatives like Main Street Burlington are focused on supporting retail and small businesses.



**Figure 08** | Top 3 Industries (2017-2022)



Wholesale Trade made up the second largest share of employment in 2021. Wholesale Trade declined by 22%, or 181 jobs, likely due to Covid-19. Juniors Cheesecake Bakery Outlet, which moved to the City from Brooklyn, New York in 2015 (McGeehan, 2015) furloughed employees at the height of Covid-19 (Stankiewicz, 2020). By 2021, however, the company was able to employ 140 full-time employees in Burlington City (Smith, 2022), or 22% of total Wholesale Trade jobs. The number of full-time employees grew to 229 in 2022 (Smith, 2022).

Retail Trade grew by 8%, adding 41 jobs. Accommodation and Food shrunk in absolute jobs and share of total jobs, likely as a result of Covid-19. The Pearl Pointe Apartment development brought new commercial space near the waterfront and received its first commercial tenant, Evermore Coffee Roasters in 2022 (Comegno, 2022).

## Commercial Corridor and Business Community



Map 03 | Basemap of Commercial corridor



Locally owned businesses provide a sense of community and help give Burlington its character. A mix of brick-and-mortar retail, offices, community services, and cultural destinations line High and Broad streets, leading up to the waterfront park and give the City a classic main street feel. Some notable local businesses include Glassy Brown Cookies and Third State Brewery. Glassy Brown Cookies is a black- and woman-owned bakery on High Street, offering cookie making classes to youth and community members with special needs as well as consultations for other small businesses. The shop has also appeared on the Jennifer Hudson Show, earning national attention for Burlington City. Third State Brewery, which made it on the Best of New Jersey list, was opened in 2015 by three Burlington locals. Through Friends of Third State, the brewery hosts fundraiser events like the Burlington Hops & Rocks and the Annual Golf Tournament that have raised enough money to donate \$5,500 to local groups including Colonial Burlington Foundation, The Opportunity League, and Burlington City Garden Club ("Festival," 2023).



**Image 03** | Glassy Brown Cookie  
Source: Google Maps Review

However, local businesses face challenges on multiple fronts, and vacancy signs dot a few of the storefronts in the commercial corridor. City planning documents and local press coverage indicate concern that the commercial corridor has struggled to compete with "modern highway commercial areas" (City, 2010) and local area newspaper The Courier Post has noted the City's struggle to attract and keep businesses, especially amid the Covid-19 pandemic (Comengo, 2023).

According to City, flood mitigation requirements have also added an extra barrier for businesses looking to either modernize their storefronts or set up shop. Members of Main Street Burlington have called for more coordinated efforts from the City to bolster local business as well as the reunification of the Burlington Tourism Council (Riordon, 2023). Established in 1978, the Burlington Tourism Council coordinated tourism-related functions including planning marketing materials, events, and tours (Tourism, 2013).

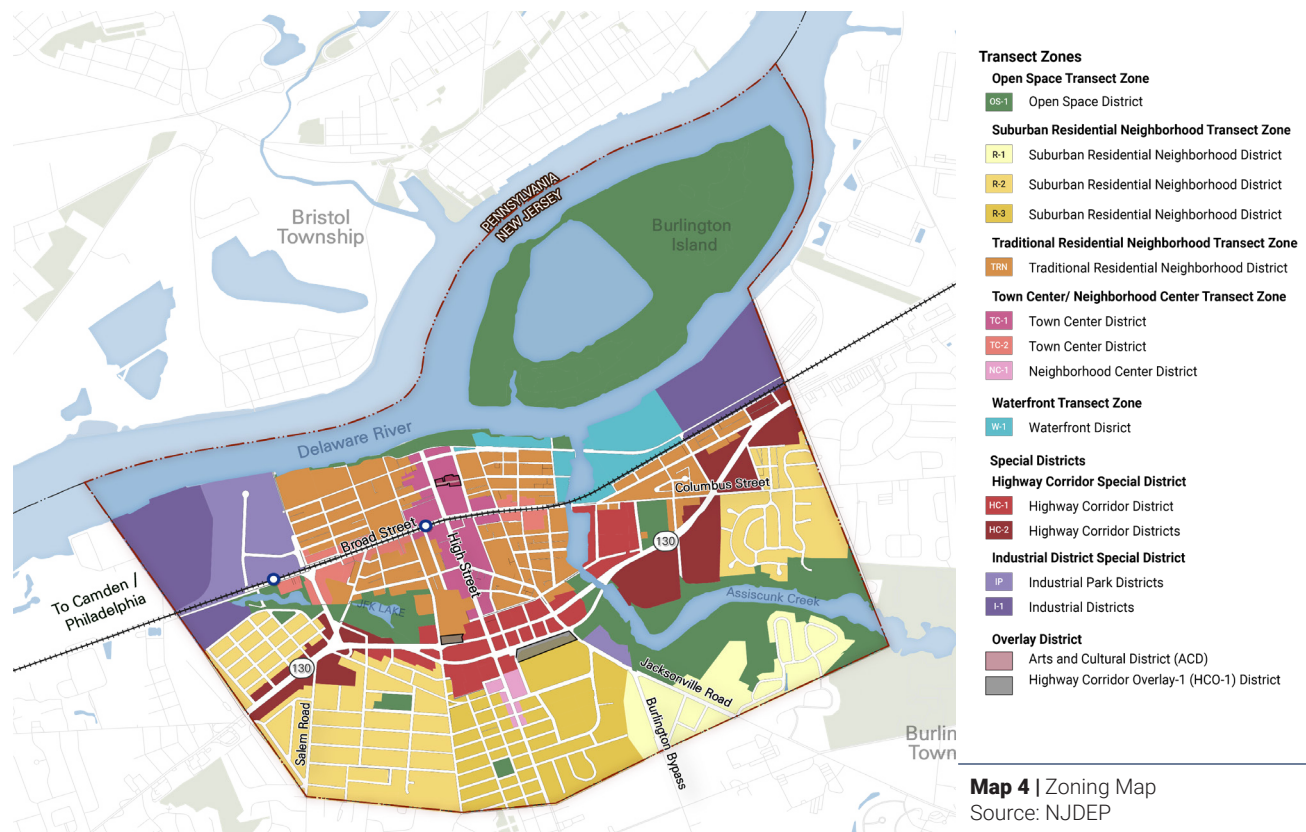
# Land Use

Zoning and existing land use determine development possibilities, with certain districts dedicated to priorities such as environmental preservation, mixed use development, or arts and culture.

## Zoning

Burlington has adopted a form-based zoning code to organize the City into specific areas for planned growth and preservation. This includes five Transect Zones that vary from low to high-density neighborhoods, two Special Districts, and two Overlay Districts with goals ranging from industrial management and arts economy promotion to the enhancement of the U.S. 130 corridor.

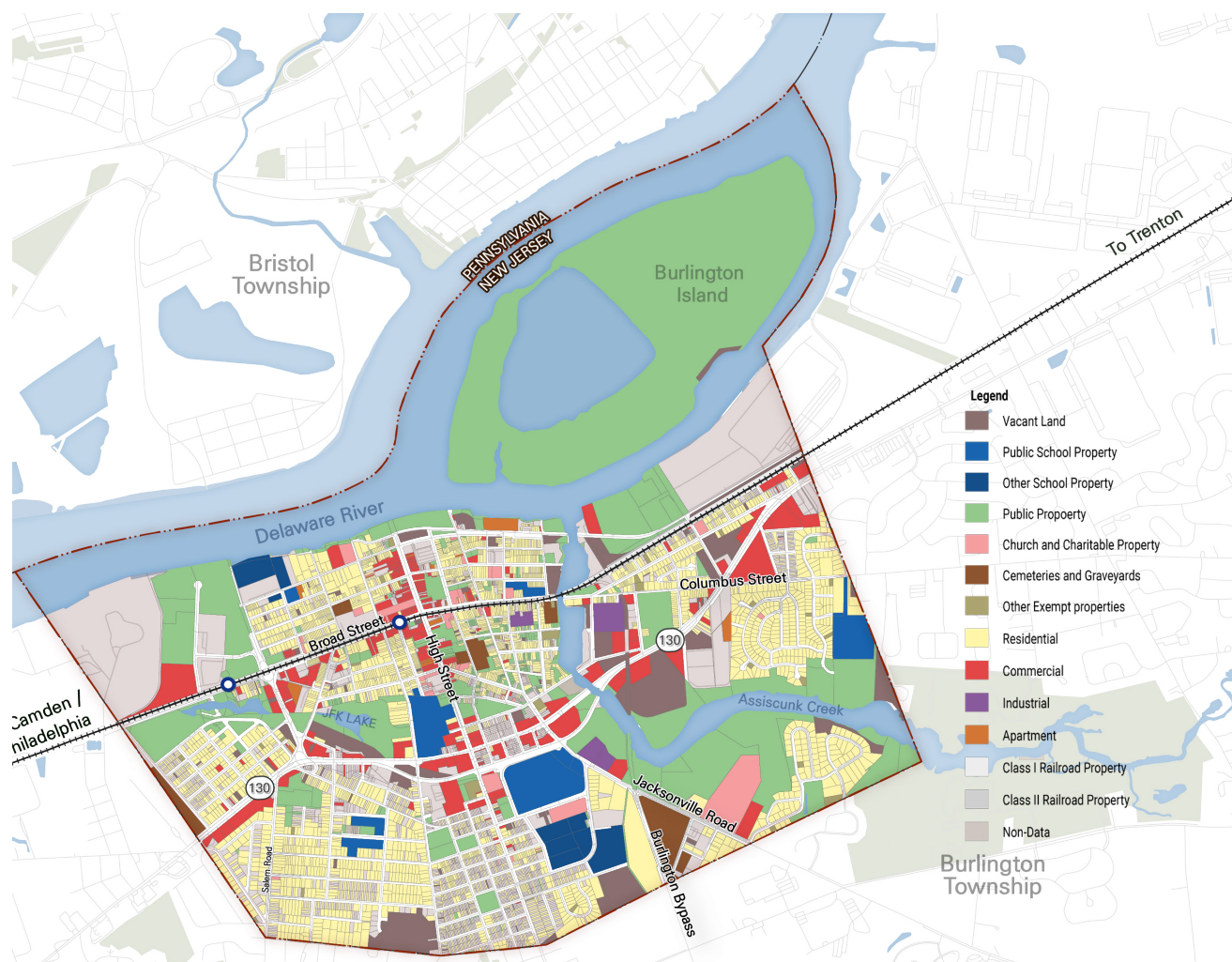
Open Space Districts covering Assiscunk Creek and Burlington Island focus on preservation, while residential zones vary from low-density suburban areas to historic neighborhoods. The Town Center District aims for a mixed-use, small-town feel around the River Line station, and the Waterfront District encourages redevelopment for public waterfront access. The Highway Corridor and Industrial Districts promote commercial activities and industrial development, respectively, aiming to balance urban growth with environmental and historical preservation. The Arts and Cultural District Overlay aims to expand the arts and culture business landscape and diversify the local economy. Additionally, the Highway Corridor Overlay-1 facilitates opportunities for educational infrastructure and eases regulations for upgrade approvals.





## Existing Land Use

Burlington contains substantial protected environmental habitats and already built-out land use patterns, meaning opportunities for new development in the City are limited. Land use analysis shows that public property occupies the largest share of land use at 41.7%. Included in this are wetlands and waterways, which encompass approximately 26% of Burlington City's 4 square miles. Public property is followed by residential (20.9%) and commercial uses (5.9%), while just 5.1% of the City's land area remains vacant. Notably, all local parks, as well as Burlington Island, are owned by the City. Burlington Island can be accessed by the public for fishing, though this requires two permits from the City.



**Map 5 | Land Use Map**  
Source: NJGIN

# Transportation

Driving is the predominant mode of transportation of Burlington, and the City has a well connected roadway network. Despite this, the City also has extensive public transit connections and many walkable and bikeable streets.

## Travel Behavior

Burlingtonians experience an average commute of 30 minutes, in step with county averages.

About 88% of working residents commute by private car, consistent with 2017 habits. Within this figure, however, the share of carpooling has more than doubled since 2017 (5.7% to 13.7%). The share of working from home has also doubled (2.2% to 6.2%), likely due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Transit usage, walking, and cycling were already low in 2017 and fell further in 2022. Two percent of residents commute by public transit, slightly lower than in the county (see fg. 09 ). While City residents are 2.4x more likely to walk and 9x more likely to bike to work than residents across the county, walkers and bikers only make up around 3% of all commuters in the City.

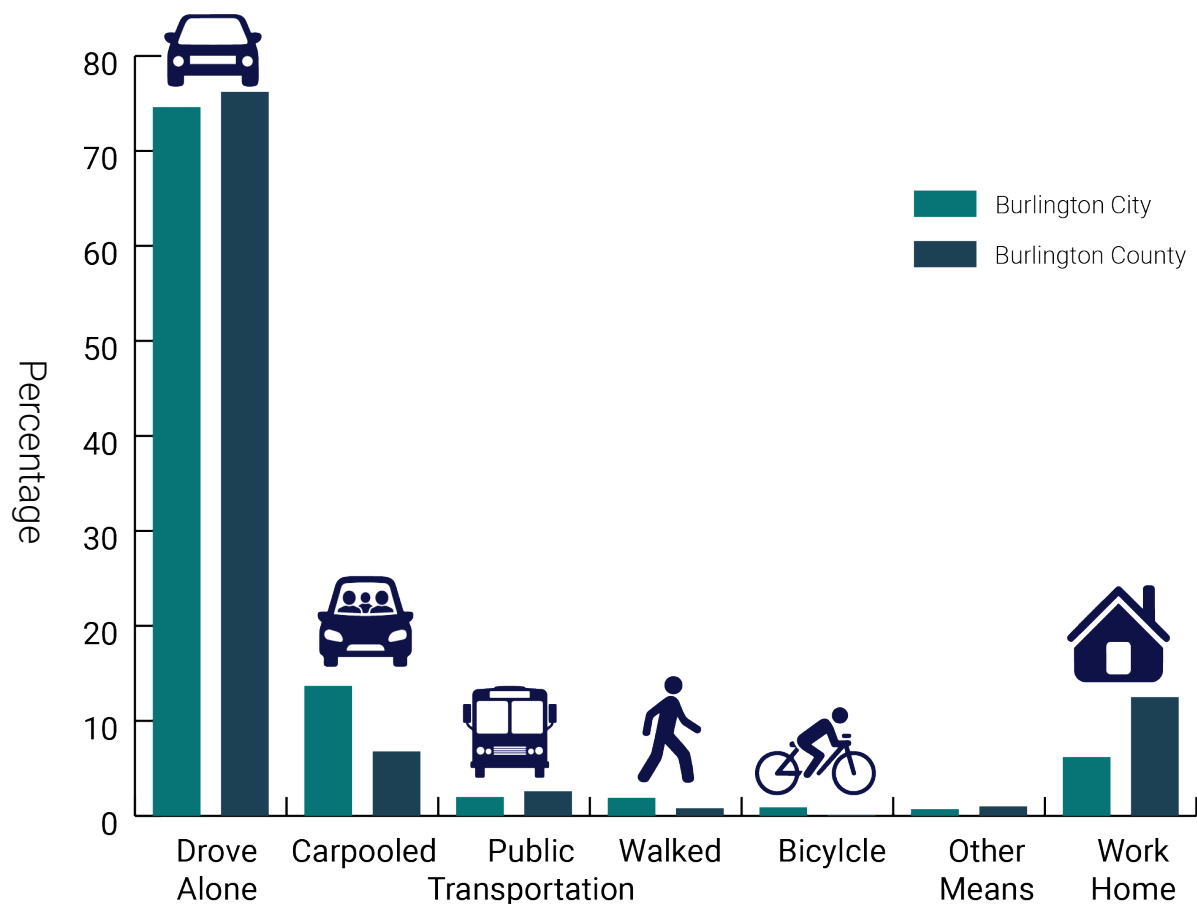
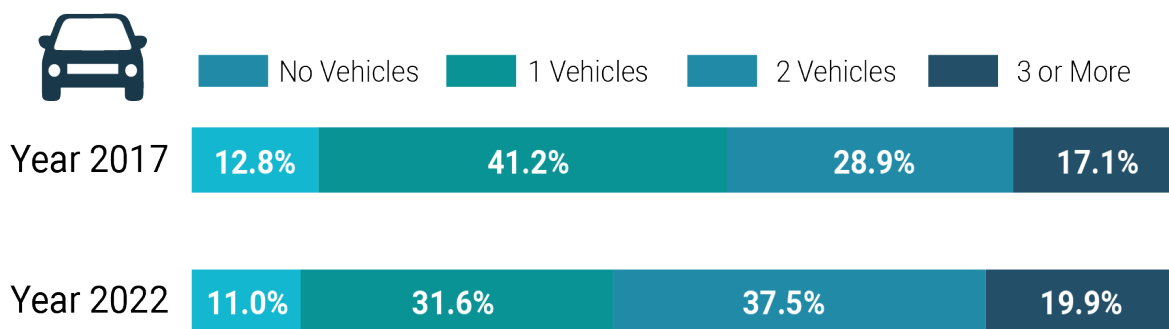


Figure 09 | Commute Modal Split (2022)



## Vehicle Ownership

Nine in ten households in Burlington have one or more vehicles available, lower than the county rate of 95.2%. This rate varies greatly with home ownership in Burlington City: while 96.1% of owner-occupied households have access to at least one vehicle, only 76.3% of renter-occupied households do. Since 2017, car ownership has risen with incomes, with a decline in 0-1 car households and rise in 2+ car households (see fg. 10).



**Figure 10** | Change in Household Vehicle Access (2017-2022)

## Roads

Burlington contains about 42.7 miles of public roadway. Major arterial roads include:

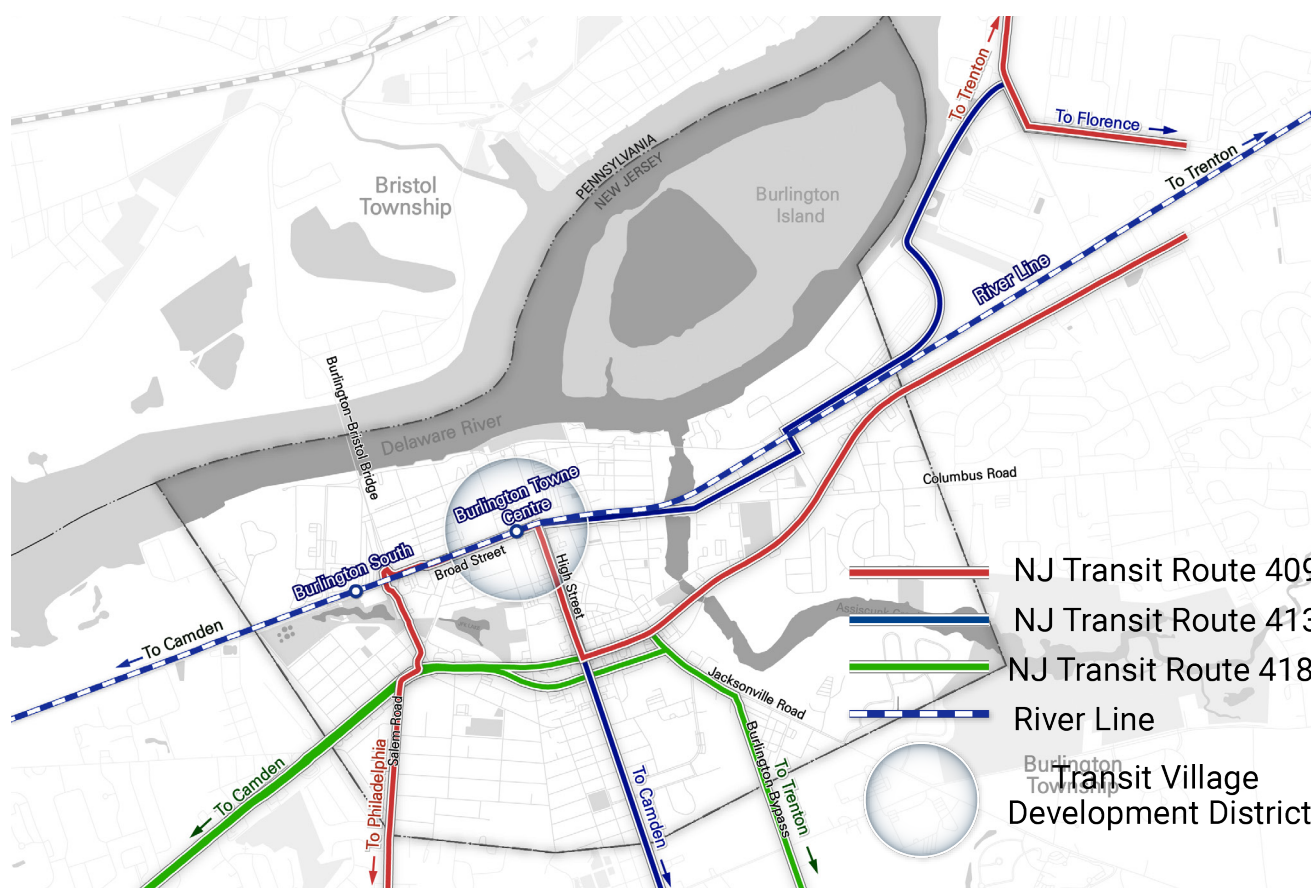
- U.S. 130, which roughly bisects the City from southwest to northeast
- New Jersey Route 413, which connects U.S. 130 with the Burlington-Bristol Bridge
- The southern section of High Street/County Route 541, which connects the City with I-295, and Mott Ave

U.S. 130 is crucial for Burlington trucking and shipping needs. The Burlington-Bristol Bridge is a two-lane lift bridge that connects Burlington with Bristol in Bucks County, Pennsylvania across the Delaware River.

## NJ Transit

NJ Transit is the main operator of public transportation in Burlington. The River Line is a 34-mile light rail line operating between Camden and Trenton running along the Delaware River. In Burlington, the service runs along Broad Street at-grade, making two stops: Burlington Towne Centre and the Burlington South park-and-ride.

From Burlington Towne Center, the trip to the Trenton Transit Center takes 25 minutes, where riders can transfer to the NJ Transit trains to New York City, Amtrak, and the SEPTA Trenton Line which stops in Bucks County, PA. A 25-minute ride to the Walter Rand Transportation Center in Camden allows riders to transfer to the PATCO train into Center City Philadelphia. Trains run every 15 minutes during rush hour. Three NJ Transit bus routes also operate in Burlington. Route 409 runs between Trenton and Center City Philadelphia, roughly parallel to the River Line. Route 413 runs between Florence and Camden via a more southerly route through Mount Holly and Cherry Hill. Both have weekday frequencies varying from 25 minutes to 1 hour and 25 minutes. Route 418 is an express bus between Trenton and Camden running largely along I-295. It makes a single daily round trip to Trenton and back, indicating a focus on state government employees.



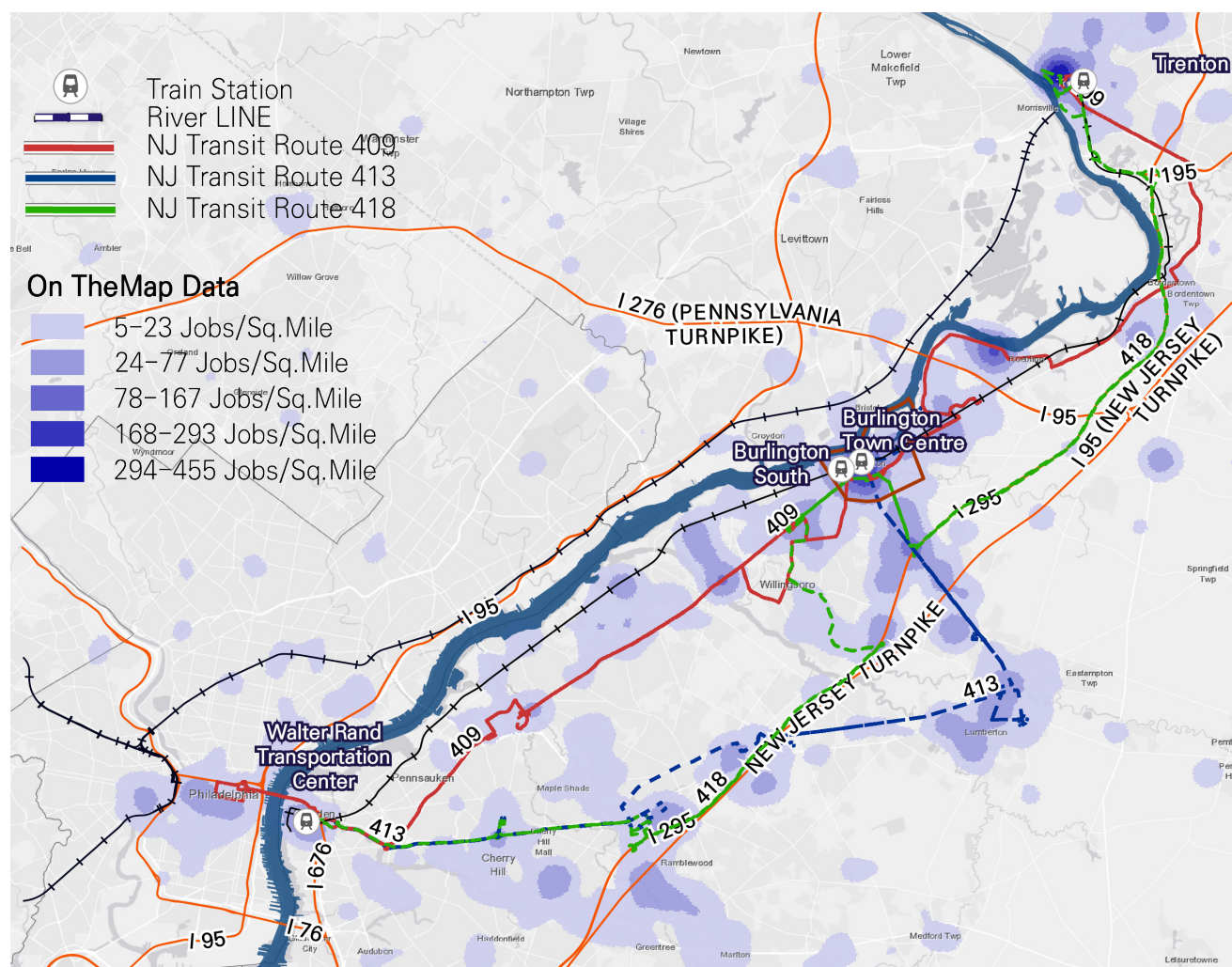
**Map 06** | Public Transit of Burlington City,  
Source: NJ Transit

## Transit Village District

NJDOT designated the area within a ¼-mile radius around the Towne Centre River Line Station a "Transit Village" in 2007. The Transit Village program involves grants, incentives, and state assistance to improve pedestrian and cycling facilities, implement placemaking, and promote redevelopment near transit stations (NJDOT 2007). The transit village designation has spillover effects as well as incentives building housing near transit, such as the Pearl PointeW development.

## Transit Service

OnTheMap data (see map 7), shows that Burlington's transit services connect to many job centers where residents work. Despite this, transit commuting remains low.

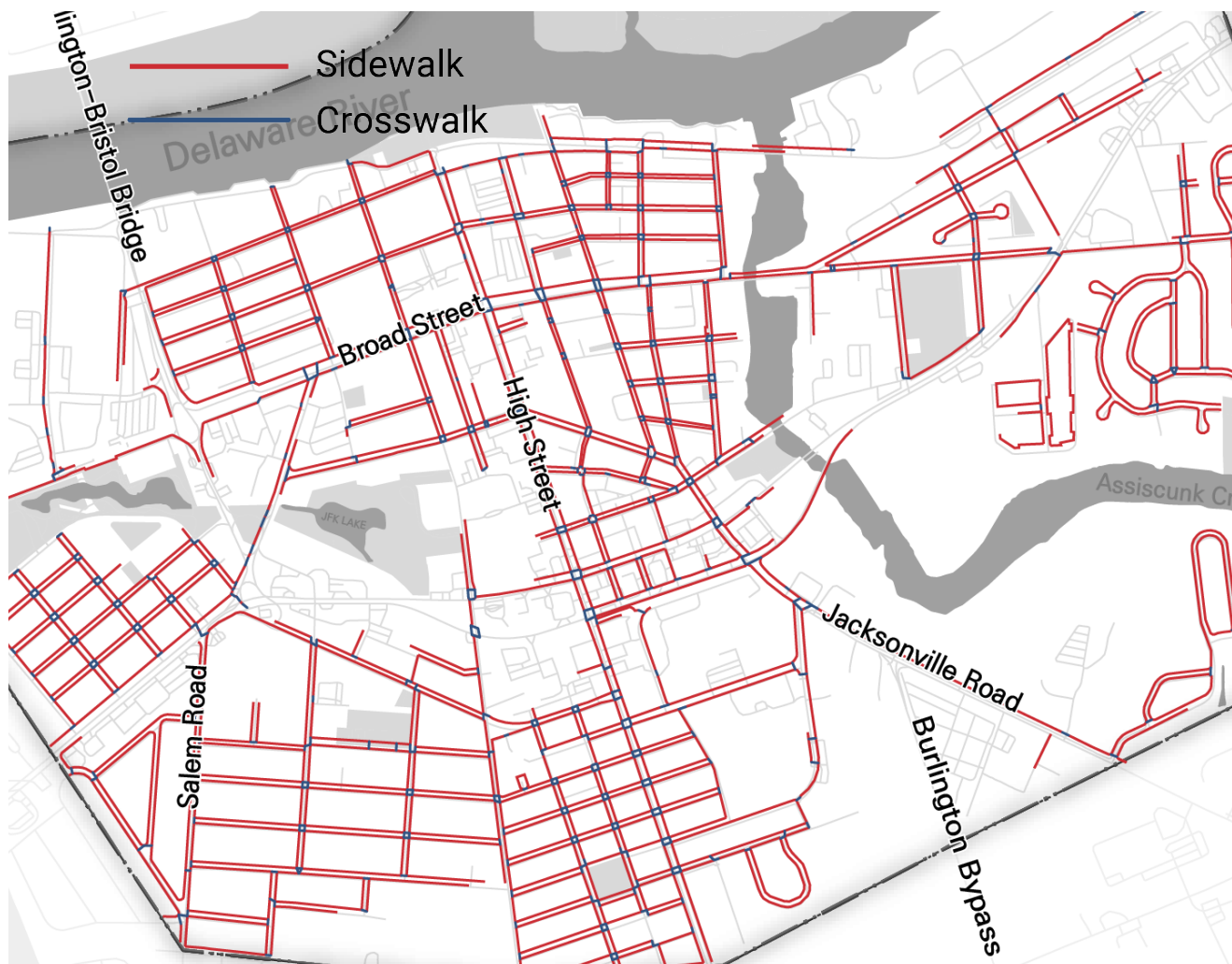


**Map 07 | OnTheMap Employment,**  
Source: OnTheMap, NJ Transit



## Pedestrian

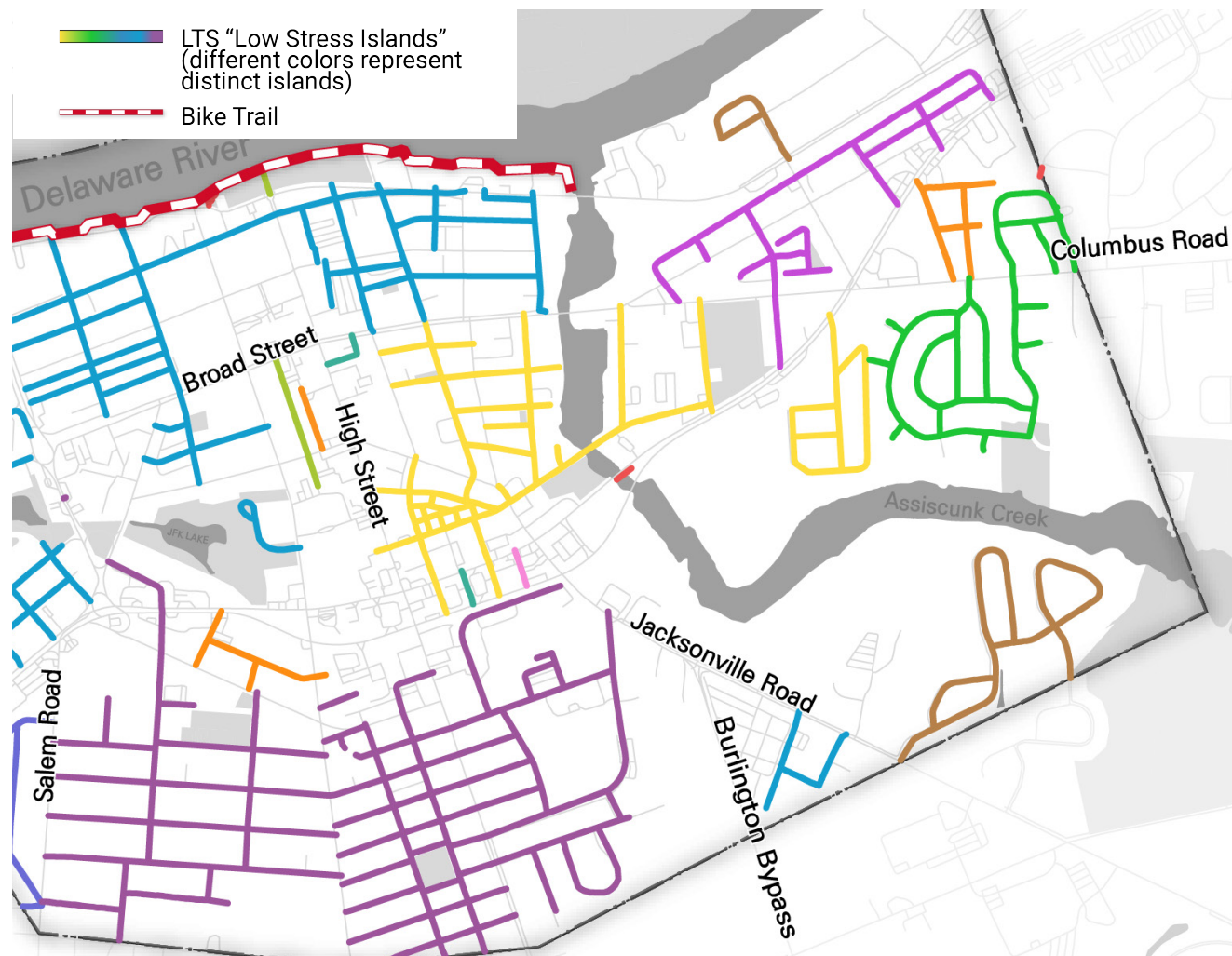
As a compact and historic city, Burlington is pedestrian friendly, boasting a Walk Score of 72, or “Very Walkable” from WalkScore.com. The pedestrian network published by the DVRPC shows pedestrian infrastructure of sidewalks and crosswalks well distributed throughout the City (see map 8), with a major exception being along U.S. 130, which forms a major barrier to connectivity.



**Map 08** | Pedestrian Network Map,  
Source: DVRPC

## Bicycle

Cycling infrastructure in Burlington is limited. The only major dedicated bicycle facility in the City is the Delaware Valley Heritage Trail, a mixed-use trail that runs mostly along the riverfront. The DVRPC Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) analysis identified many low-stress roadway segments in the City. The LTS rating is a factor of road size, vehicle speed, and existence of bicycle facilities on the road segment. These low stress routes tend to form isolated networks lacking connectivity across major corridors like U.S. 130, Broad Street, and High Street (see map 9).



**Map 09** | Cycling Network Map,  
Source: DVRPC

## Parking

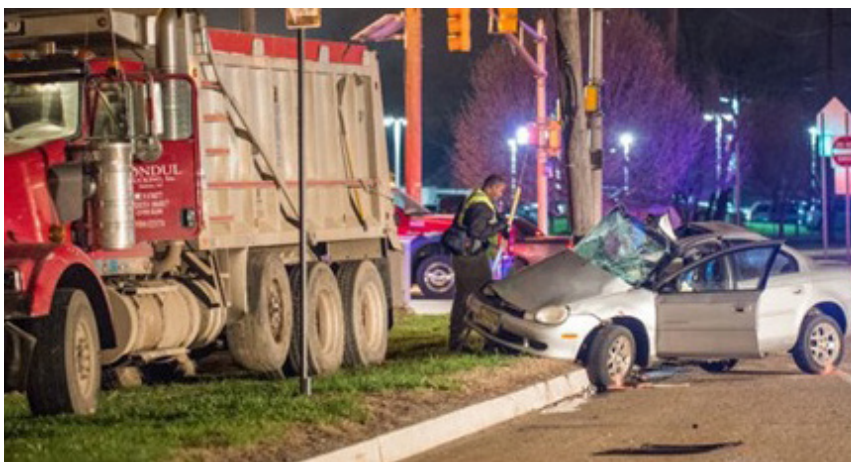
Conversely, Burlington's parking facilities are not strained. The downtown area has several free public lots. Commercial blocks have time limited street parking though no meters. Ample on-street parking was noted throughout on the site visit.

## Transportation Safety

Heavy car usage corresponds with negative health outcomes in Burlington City. Cars, trucks, and other on road sources of air pollution was the top contributor to cancer in the City in 2022 ("2022 Healthy", 2022). The New Yorkshire neighborhood is particularly exposed to traffic-related health concerns (EJScreen, 2024). While New Jersey suppresses asthma data at the city level, proximity to highways like U.S. 130 are typically associated with higher rates of childhood asthma and can lead to premature deaths (Myers, 2024).

Traffic violence poses another transportation-related health concern. While traffic collisions are common in Burlington, they are less deadly than in the county as a whole. In the five years from 2016 to 2020, NJDOT reported 1,942 crashes in Burlington City, at a rate of about 45 per roadway mile (DVRPC Crash Summary). This is about twice the rate of Burlington County, reflecting the City's density. The rate of fatal crashes is somewhat lower in the City though, with 0.31% of crashes resulting in a fatality, compared to 0.37% in the county from 2016-2020. Crashes in Burlington are much less likely to result in injury, with 13.4% of crashes causing injury, compared to 20.4% in the county from 2016 to 2020.

Pedestrians are also less likely to be killed in Burlington City. From 2016 to 2020, 31 crashes involving pedestrians were reported, in which 2 were killed for a fatality rate of 6.5% (DVRPC Crash Summary). This is just over half the county rate, reflecting the urban density and slower driving speeds in Burlington City relative to the rest of the county. There were no cyclist deaths reported in this period (DVRPC Crash Summary).



**Image 04** | Car Crash On U.S. 130,  
Source: Burlington County Times



# Flooding

The City of Burlington has been susceptible to extreme precipitation and significant flooding events in its history but the effects and damages to the City have been minor. Flood insurance and its effects on housing affordability have been noted by the Mayor and City Council as the key issue of the City.

## Context

The City's location along the riverfront gives it a low lying, concave, and bowl shaped topography. Its lowest point of elevation is at John F. Kennedy Lake in Greenlanders Park at zero feet above sea level, while land by the riverfront promenade and Assiscunk Creek is 5 to 10 feet above sea level (DVRPC 2017). This topography makes the City prone to the effects of flooding along tidal portions of the Delaware River shoreline.

## Recent and Historic Flooding Events

Major storm events like Tropical Storm Lee and Hurricane Irene in August 2011 flooded some of the major streets in the City and a major loop connector to the Burlington Bristol Bridge. As noted by the Coastal Vulnerability Assessment (CVA), the hydrographic data obtained from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the highest water level experienced in Burlington City was during the storm surge of Superstorm Sandy in October 2012 where the flood height reached approximately 7.7 feet above average sea level (DVRPC 2017).

In recent years, Burlington City recorded one city-wide torrential rainstorm flash flooding event on August 03, 2017, where the severe flooding concentrated along High Street (the Historic District) and U.S. 130 in low-lying areas damaging homes, flooding basements, and resulting in road closures. Reported damage from flooding in the City has not been "extreme" (City of Burlington Hazard Mitigation Plan 2019).



**Image 05 (Left)** | August 2017 Flash Flood Event,  
Source: 6abc Philadelphia

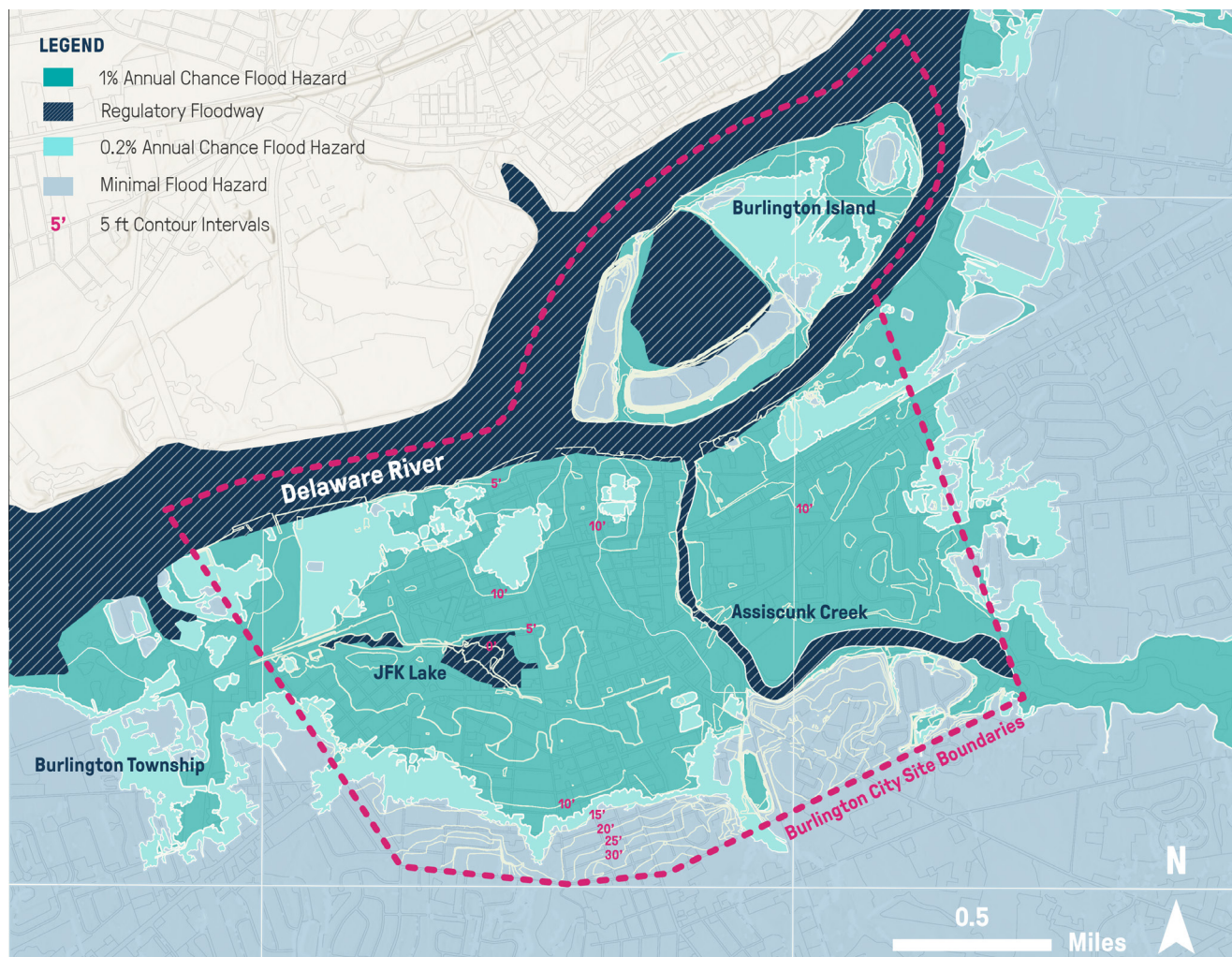


**Image 06 (Right)** | August 2011 Hurricane Irene U.S. 130 North by Lincoln,  
Source: Burlington County Times

## Coastal Vulnerability

According to FEMA, 75% of the City falls within the 100-Year floodplain, which means there is a 1% chance of a major flood in any given year. Should such an event occur, Burlingtonians could lose an estimated \$2.2 billion in building stock (City of Burlington, Hazard Mitigation Plan 2019).

Any risk ranking score over 31 suggests a high probability of impact. Burlington's risk ranking score is 54. The intensity of frequent flood events, precipitation and accelerating sea level rise caused by climate change exposes the City of Burlington to high risk of vulnerability.

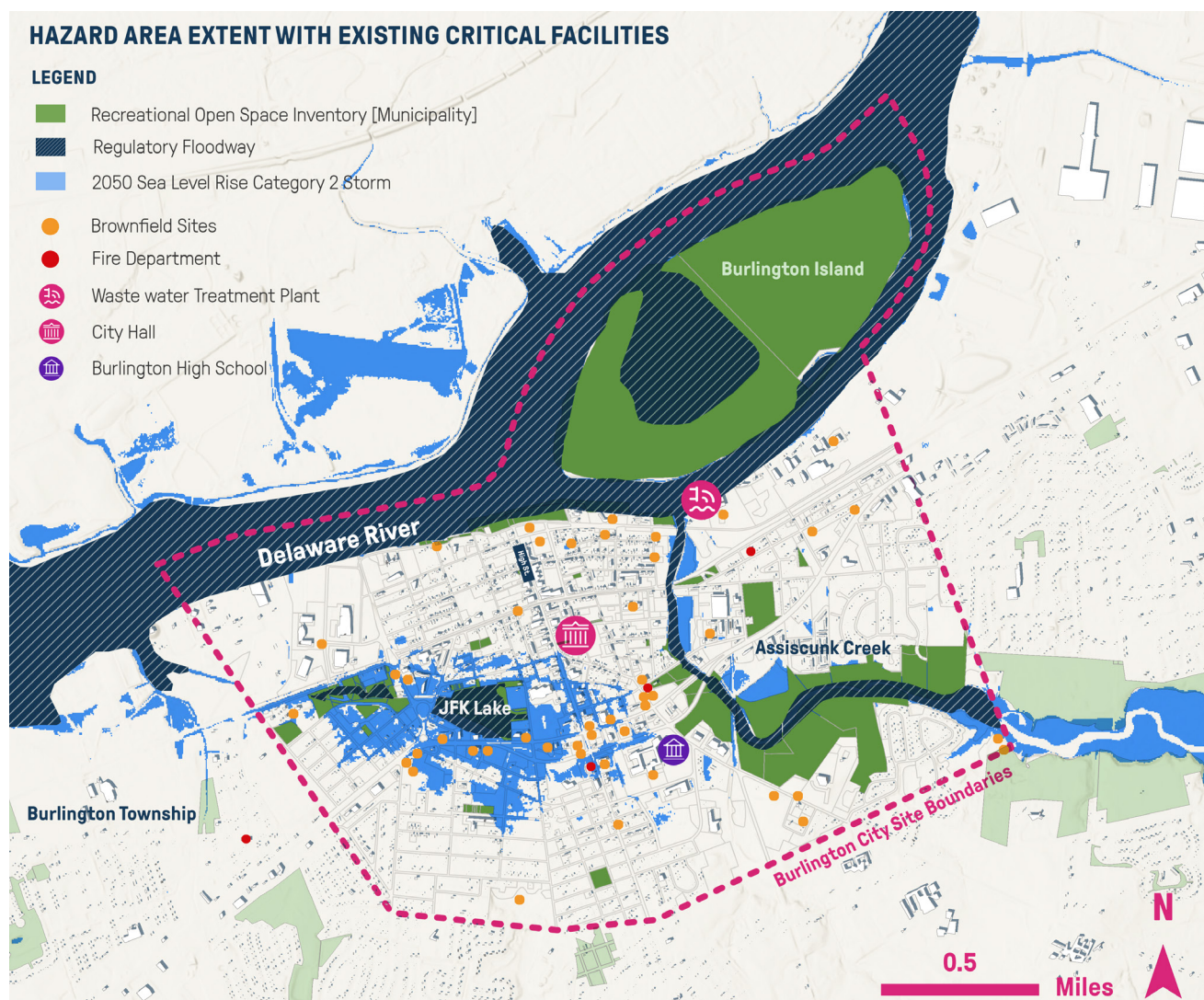


**Map 10** | Burlington City Floodplain Hazard Map,  
Source: City of Burlington, Hazard Mitigation Plan 2019



According to the CVA, there are 97 major assets in total in Burlington, these include infrastructure, natural resources, and properties crucial to the function of the Burlington City and the community. Within the 97 assets identified, a total of 17 assets were categorized by the CVA to be extremely vulnerable to flooding events (DVRPC, 2017).

The DVRPC Coastal Vulnerability Report also predicts significant flooding of major roadways (including evacuation routes) during future storms based on projected sea level rises (DVRPC, 2017).



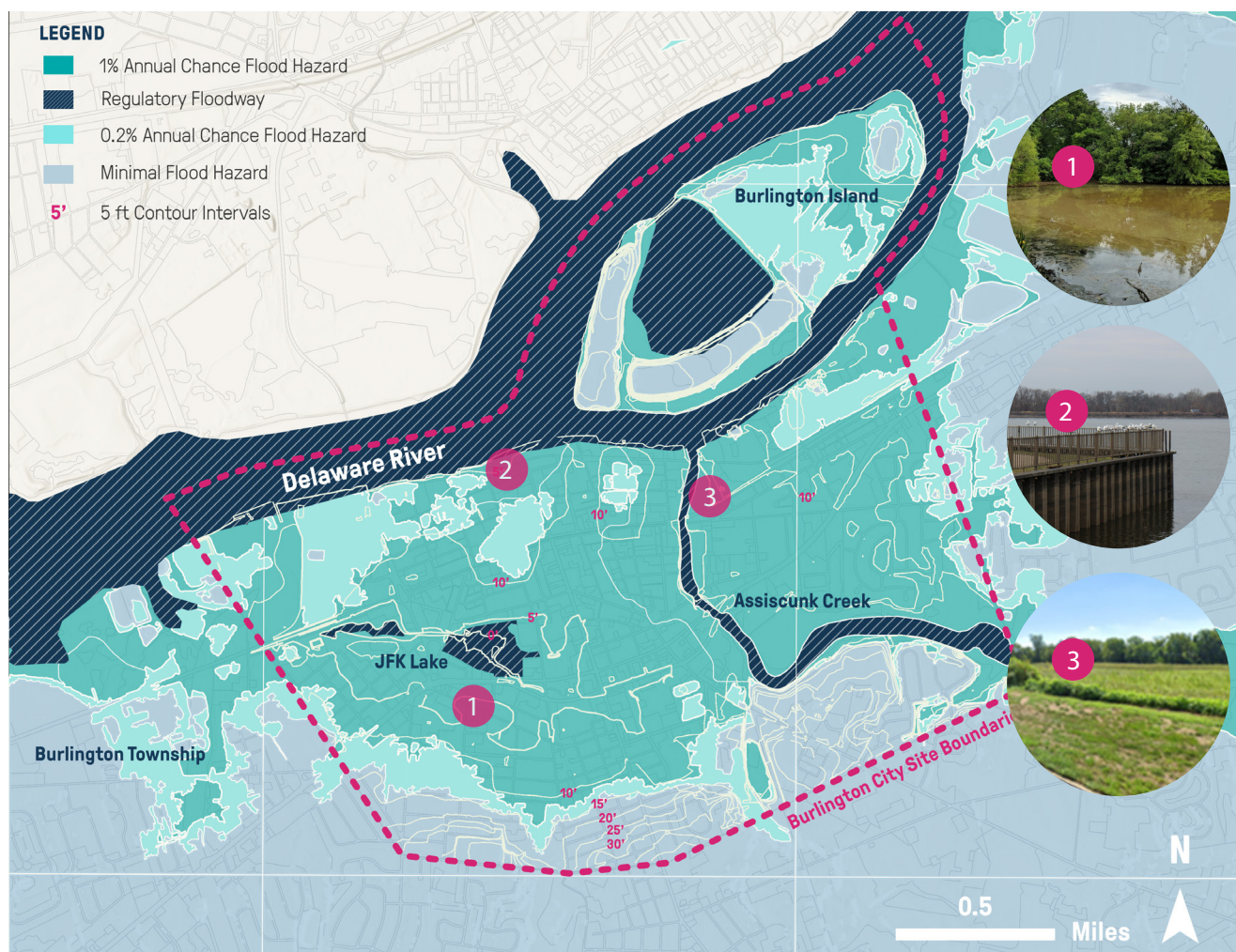
**Map 11 | Burlington City Existing Critical Facilities + Sea Level Rise**  
Source: City of Burlington, Hazard Mitigation Plan 2019



## Existing Flood Control Structures

Burlington has implemented three major flood mitigation construction efforts:

1. John F. Kennedy Lake in Greenlanders Park acts as a retention basin and holds water during storms.
2. Bulkheads built in the 1960s along the Delaware Riverfront promenade protect the historic district and commercial corridor of Burlington City as well as the New Yorkshire neighborhood from riverine flooding.
3. Levees constructed at higher elevations by Assiscunk Creek hold back water from Columbus Park and apartment complexes in the residential neighborhood as well as the commercial strip along U.S. 130 and U.S. 130 itself.



**Map 12** | Existing Flood Control Structures,  
Source: City of Burlington, Hazard Mitigation Plan 2019

# Public Health

**Burlingtonians appear to have high access to insurance and public health facilities, however they experience above average rates of cancer and cancer-related deaths. Public health concerns are tied primarily to legacy pollution indicators and transportation indicators.**

## Overview

Nine in every ten Burlingtonians had health insurance as of 2022. According to New Jersey's 2022 Healthy Community Planning Report, Burlingtonians have access to a number of public health facilities, including hospitals and nursing homes ("2022 Healthy", 2022). Compared to the county, however, the City had above average rates of:

- low birth rates
- COPD (Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- cancer deaths
- lung-related cancers
- smoking



**Image 07 | Burlington City Health Center,**  
Source: SJFMC

## Contaminated Sites

Superfund sites refer to the most polluted properties in the country (Rawlins, 2022). New Jersey had 115 active Superfund sites as of 2017—more than any other state in the country (Sullivan, 2017). These highly contaminated sites are particularly concentrated in Burlington City. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, sections of the City are in the 95-100th percentile of the state for Superfund Proximity. The EPA's Environmental Justice Screening map indicates the area around Commerce Square, a site posed for redevelopment, has extremely high levels of Superfund Proximity and Proximity to Risk Management Program facilities, or facilities that produce, handle, or store high levels of known toxins (EJScreen, 2024). When factoring in the concentration of community vulnerability<sup>1</sup> or demographic data relevant to environmental justice<sup>2</sup>, the New Yorkshire neighborhood is particularly at risk.

Flood risk compounds the risk of contaminated sites. Should flooding occur over contaminated sites, it could threaten pollution-containment methods and transport legacy contaminants into surrounding soils and waterways. Both would put the health and safety of urban ecosystems and residents at risk (Rawlins, 2022).

<sup>1</sup> Defined by the percentage of low income, unemployed, limited english speaking, less than high school education, and low life expectancy  
<sup>2</sup> Defined by the traffic indicator, the low-income population, the people of color populations



**Map 13** | Contaminated Site Location



# Housing

**Nearly half of Burlington City's housing stock was built more than 75 years ago, adding to the City's historic character but also the need for modernization. Further, a low vacancy rate, slowed housing production, and costly flood measures have led to housing affordability issues.**

## Affordability and Availability

Burlingtonians are about twice as likely to own than rent. Owners saw their property values rise from \$159,400 in 2017 to \$195,200 in 2022, exceeding county-wide trends. Median home values in the county were still about \$100,000 higher than the City in both 2017 and 2022. The median rent also rose, to \$1,382 in 2022, a nearly 50% increase. Though rental units are affordable compared to the county, residents face high rents relative to their incomes. Almost half of Burlington renters are considered rent burdened by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, meaning they pay more than 30% of their income on rent. A majority of the City's homeowners, on the other hand, pay less than 20% of their income on their mortgage. Burlington City offers a variety of programs to promote affordability, including through the Burlington Housing Authority. The housing authority states they are not a housing choice voucher provider.

### Median Home Value

2022

Burlington

**\$195,200**

Burlington County

**\$304,600**

### Median Rent Cost

2022

Burlington

**\$1,382**

Burlington County

**\$1,575**

### Pay over 35% of income on Rent

2022

Burlington

**44.8%**

Burlington County

**39.6%**

**Figure 11** | Comparison Between Burlington and Burlington County

## Housing Stock

Burlington has 4,235 total housing units, half of which were built before 1950. Burlington City has a denser housing stock than the county, with 15% fewer single unit, detached homes. However, single unit, detached homes still make up nearly half of all houses in the City. More than a quarter are apartments.

The City lost nine percent of its housing units between 2017-2022. Rental options decreased as well, with the rental vacancy rate falling to 3.6%, half of what it was in 2017.



**43% Houses Built Before 1935**



**48.9% Single Unit Detached Homes**



**3.6% Rental Vacancy Rate**



#### Image 08| Different Housing Typologies

**(Top Left)** | Multi-family Apartments,  
Source: Jeffery Tseng

**(Top Right)** | Single-family Attached  
Housing,  
Source: Jeffery Tseng



**(Middle Left)** | Single-family  
Detached Housing,  
Source: Jeffery Tseng

**(Middle Right)** | Luxury Apartments,  
Source: Google Street View



**(Bottom Left)** | Apartments,  
Source: Jeffery Tseng

**(Bottom Right)** | Affordable Housing,  
Source: Jeffery Tseng

## Special Considerations

As a fully-built out municipality, Burlington City may only add housing through infill, such as building homes between existing buildings, and redevelopment, such as through conversion of vacant or abandoned land. As previously mentioned, the City has identified the former U.S. Pipe facility and Commerce Square as potential sites for affordable housing development.

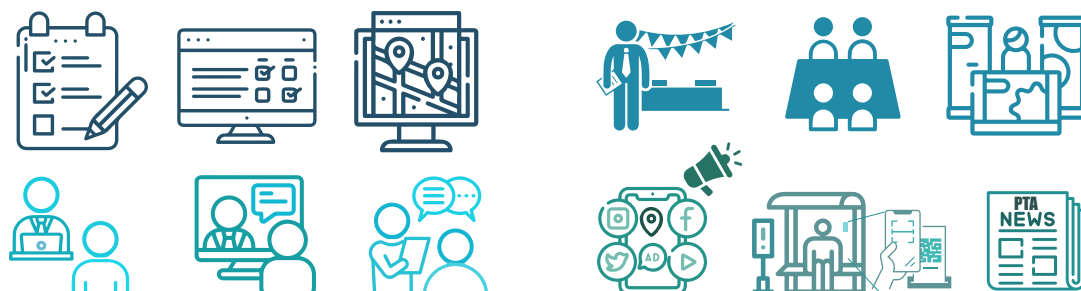
Flood hazard mitigation regulations directly influence housing because 75% of the City falls within the 100-year floodplain. The National Flood Insurance Program requires that residential buildings build their lowest floor or basement above the Base Flood Elevation (Residential Buildings, 2023). The state's more stringent regulations effectively force homeowners to fill in their basements and move their mechanical equipment to a higher floor whenever renovations or construction equals or exceeds 50% of the assessed value of the property. The regulations have disincentized repairs because residents do not wish to reduce the square footage and thus value of their homes (BC Professionals meeting, March 7, 2024).

# Community Engagement

Burlington City has a dedicated city council and active community of business and nonprofit leaders whose input will make any recommendations for the City stronger. Our multi-pronged community engagement strategy seeks to educate the public on the decision to plan for 2040, solicit their input, provide avenues for collaboration, and build trust.

## Engagement Strategy

To collect ongoing information from stakeholders around the area, the team will create a survey that can be administered online or on traditional paper as well as a collaborative digital mapping tool. The team will also host discrete outreach events for the general public, including tabling events at the Farmers' Market and pop-ups at the local schools and libraries. Additionally, the team will schedule more formal interviews and focus groups with City leaders, business owners, nonprofit stakeholders, and school officials. Finally, the team will publicize our efforts through geo-fenced ads on social media, outdoor advertising such as QR-coded flyers, and through partner organizations, such as the Parent Teacher Alliance.



## Special Considerations

Knowing that kids and seniors are growing populations in Burlington, open houses will be held at each of the four public schools, the library, and senior centers like The Daniel Keegan Center.

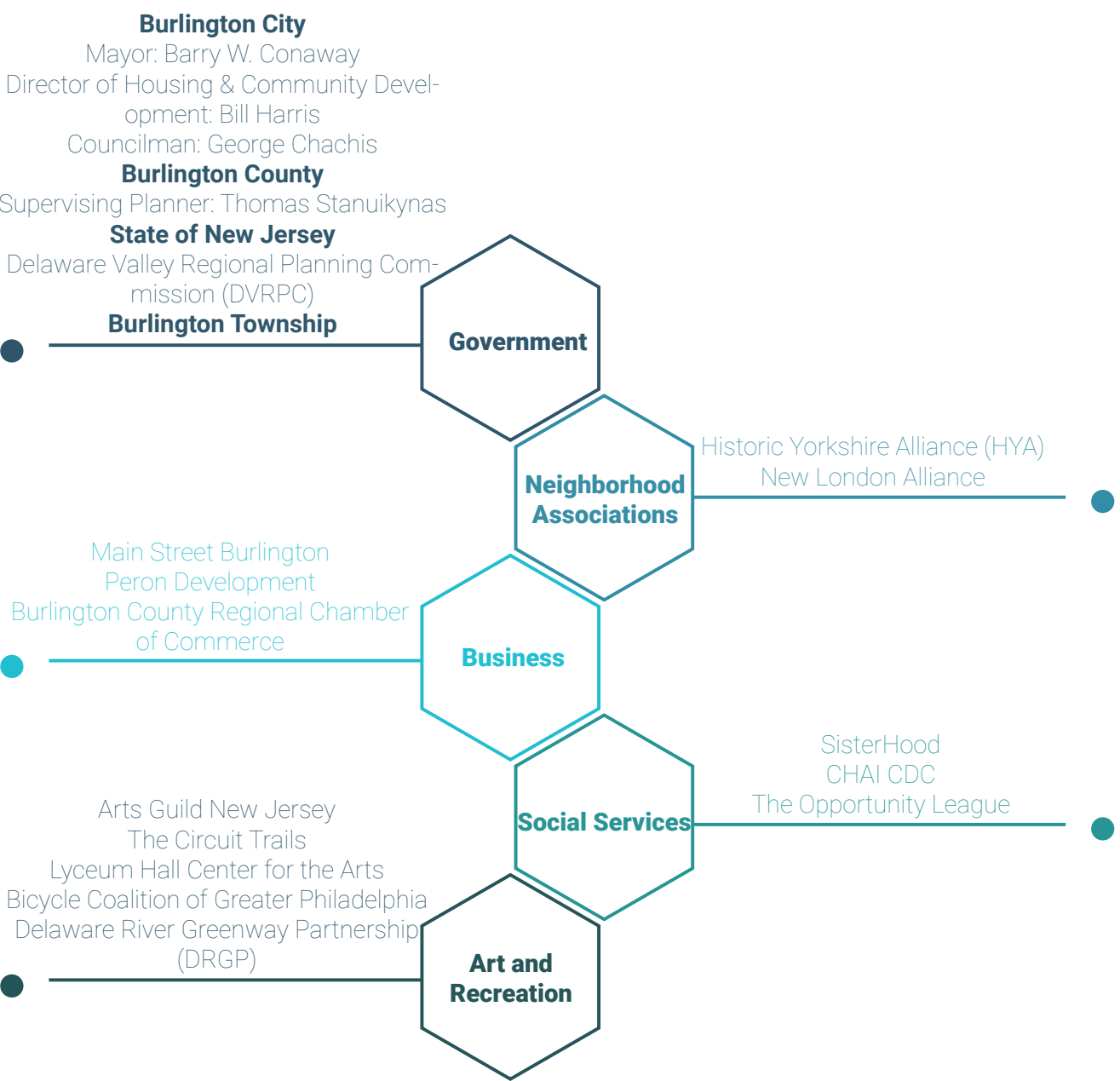
Considering the influx of immigrants from Latin America, events, interviews, and hand-outs will be offered in Spanish.



**Image 09** | Congressman Kim Speaks with Students at Burlington City High School About School Safety and Gun Violence Prevention  
Source: Congressman Andy Kim NJ 03



# Key Stakeholders



**02**

## **Issues & Opportunities**

## **Issues**

Risk of Flooding  
Housing Conditions  
Automobile Centric Design  
Limited Physical Growth

## **Opportunities**

Main Street  
Waterfront Redevelopment  
Multimodal Transportation  
Youth Population & Diversity  
Cultural Heritage  
Funding



# Issue 01

## Risk of Flooding

**The risk of flooding introduces threats to the environment and public health, while mitigation efforts create financial barriers to developers and homeowners.**

Due to its low-lying position along the tidal Delaware River, Burlington and its residents are especially threatened by future flooding. The majority of the City's land and people are vulnerable to a 100-year flood event (see Map 01). Such a disaster would impose heavy financial costs on the City, damaging homes, businesses, and important public infrastructure assets. The cost of floodproofing and mitigation presents a major burden to Burlington homeowners and small business owners as well, who may not have the required funds. Additionally, the presence of many contaminated sites in the City means that severe flooding could threaten public health by further spreading toxic materials. In 2017, a torrential rainstorm caused massive flooding in the city, particularly in the low-lying areas along High Street and U.S. 130. The flooding resulted in significant damage to homes and basements (ABC6, 2017), underscoring the



**75%**

City of Burlington within 100-year Floodplain



**77%**

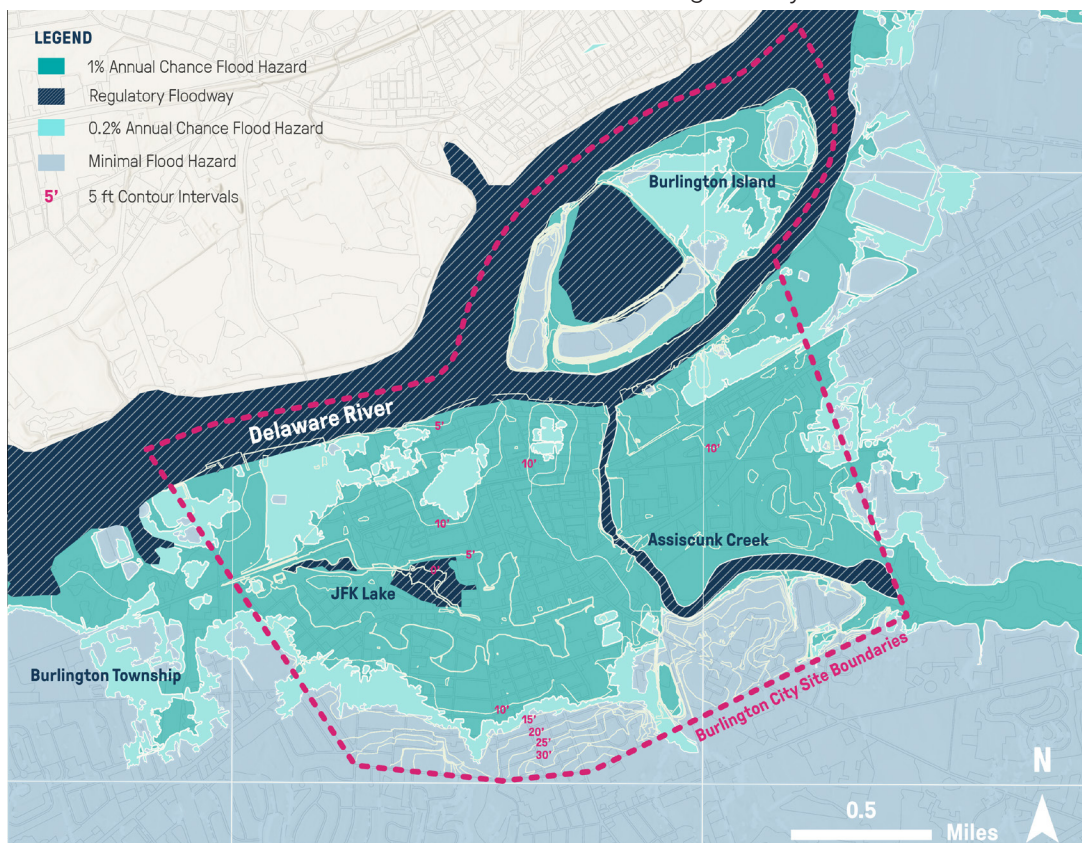
Of City Population lives within 100-Year Floodplain



**\$2.2**

Billion Potential Dollar loss of building stock—100 Year Flood

tremendous impact that flood events can have on the city. This event highlights the pressing need for better preparation and planning to mitigate the effects of future flood events in Burlington City.



# Issue 02

## Housing Conditions

**Several systemic factors are contributing to current and future housing affordability issues: rising rent, low vacancy rate, and aging housing stock leading to expensive repairs.**

Median rent in Burlington City has increased by 49% over the last five years - about double the rate of the county. At the same time, Burlington City lost 9% of its housing stock and saw vacancies cut in half. This has led to a tight rental market which can create cost burdens. Finally, about 43% of Burlington's houses were built before 1939, a rate much higher than the county's average of about 10%. These older homes often lack modern construction technologies and repairs can become expensive for homeowners.



**49%**

Median Rent Increased from 2017-2022



**45%**

Renters spend 35% of their income



**43%**

Built before 1939



**Image 01 (Top)** | Multi-Family Housing, Source: Jeffery Tseng

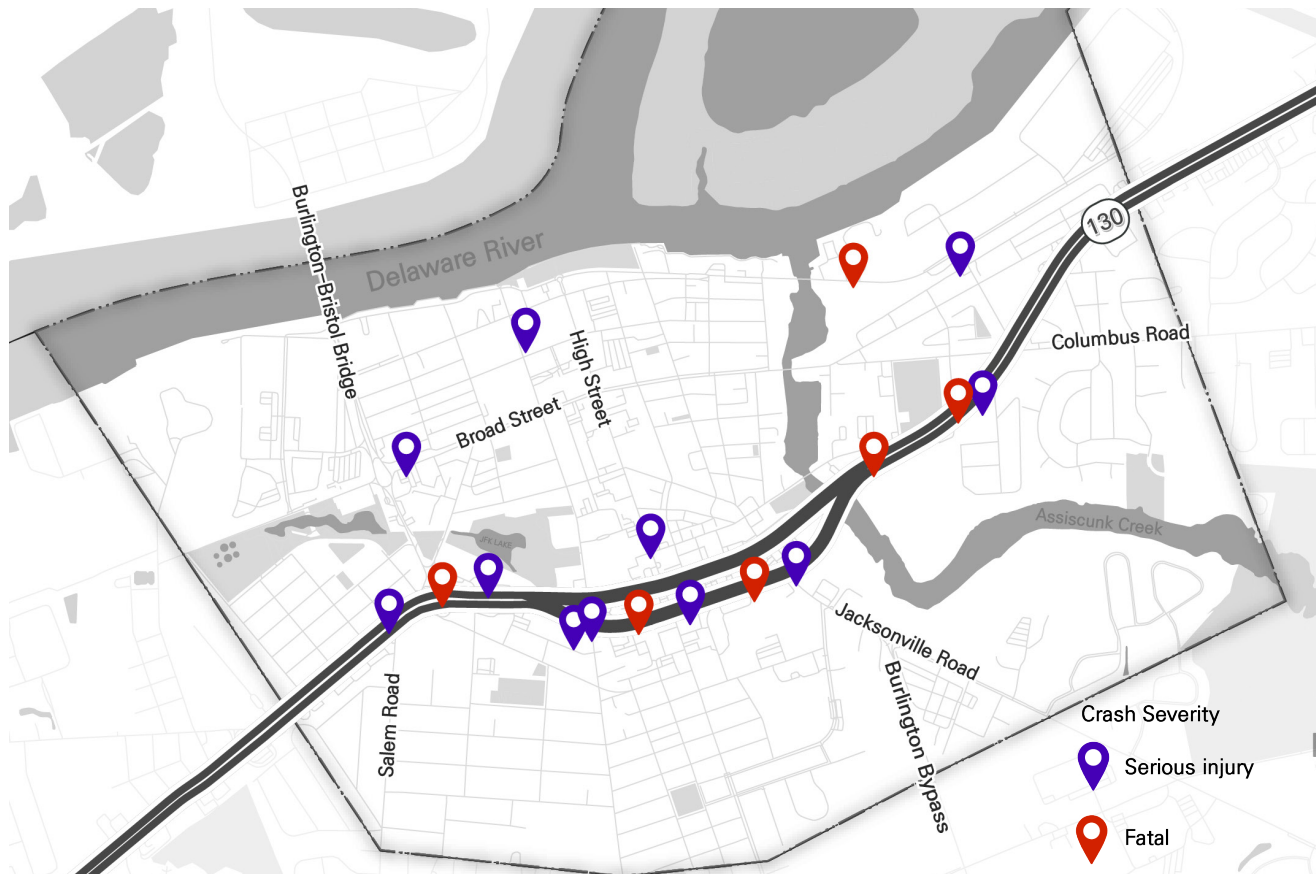
**Image 02 (Bottom)** | Lost housing, Source: Google Street View



# Issue 03

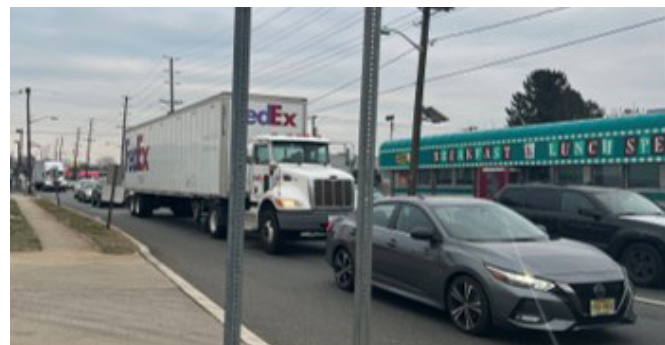
## Automobile Centric Design

Automobile-centric design creates safety hazards, physical and psychological barriers, and discourages alternative modes of transportation.



**Map 02** | Serious Traffic Crashes, 2014-2022,  
Source : DVRPC

The automobile is the most common form of transportation in Burlington City, with almost 90% of workers commuting in a private automobile. Design centered on automobility can have serious negative outcomes. This is most evident in U.S. 130 through Burlington City. Car accidents are common along U.S. 130, especially those that involve pedestrians. The U.S. 130 corridor is the largest contributor to traffic violence in Burlington, being the site of more than half of all traffic deaths and serious injuries between 2014 and 2021 (see Map 02), making it unsafe for all road users.



**Image 03** | US Route 130, Major Traffic Route

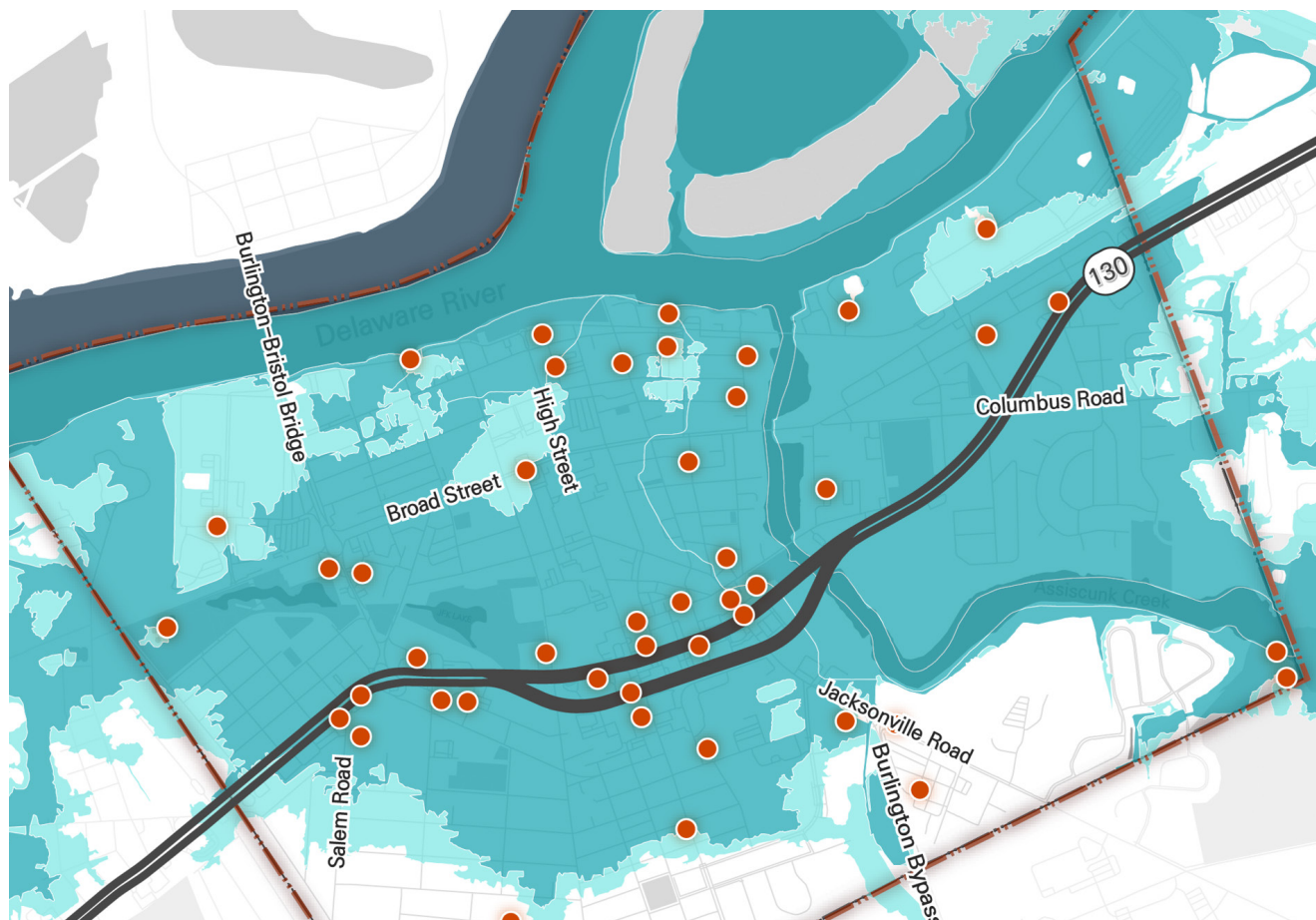






# Issue 04

## Development Constraints

**Physical growth in Burlington is limited to environmentally challenging sites and in-fill development.**

Burlington City has a substantial share of protected environmental habitats, including large sections of wetlands and bodies of water which alone take up 26% of the City's land area (NJDEP, 2023). Developable land is largely built-out, with only 5.1% of land lying vacant, meaning new development opportunities are limited (NJDEP, 2023). Additionally, the City has many contaminated sites (see Map 03), which could become environmental and public health hazards during the redevelopment process. Due to its large protected areas, built-out nature, and potential hazards, redevelopment in Burlington is challenging, though not impossible.



-  Brownfield Sites
-  Regulatory Floodway
-  1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard
-  0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard

**Map 03** | Contamination Site Location Map

# Opportunities 01

## Main Street - Business Environment

**By tapping into its engaged business community and New Jersey's business-friendly reforms, the City could spur economic development.**

CNBC named New Jersey the most improved state for business in 2023 (Cohn, 2023). An example of this is relaxed regulations on breweries, which can now serve coffee, coordinate with food trucks, host more than 25 events a year, and broadcast a football game without alerting the City 10 days in advance (Lubrano, 2024). Further, City officials stated to us they would like the City to become a restaurant destination, so the breweries could contribute to Burlington's potential as a hub of gastronomy.



**Image 04 (Top)** | Food Truck Rally, Source: Inquirer

**Image 05 (Bottom Right)** | Glassy Brown Cookies, Source: glassybrowncookies.com

**Image 06 (Left)** | Amazon Warehouse, Source: W&M Associates/PROLOGIS



# Opportunities 02

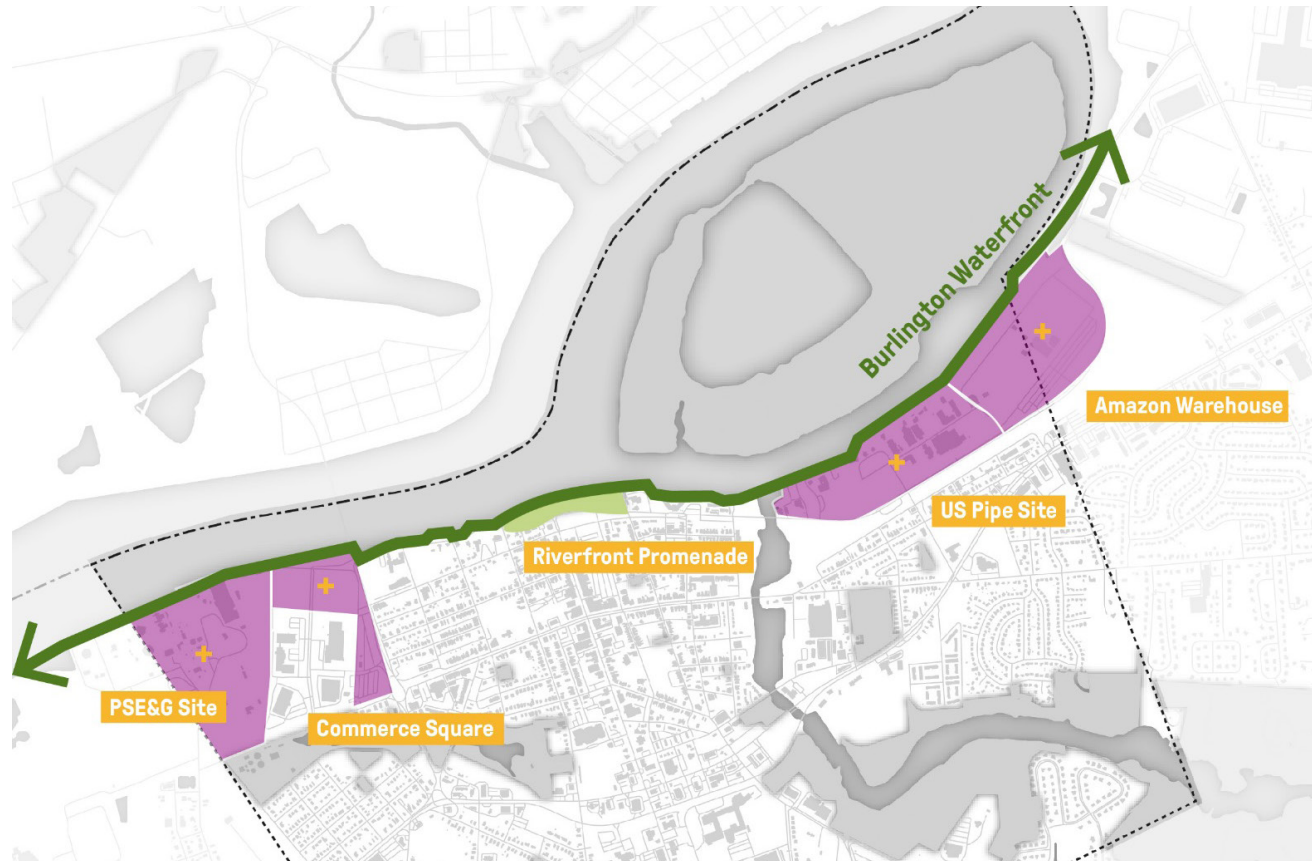
## Waterfront Redevelopment

Transforming the waterfront could create a highly desired commercial, residential, and community space.

Burlington’s waterfront could be redeveloped to create a highly desired commercial, residential, and community space. The waterfront area is packed with valuable assets, including beautiful landscapes and great views, making it very ideal for development. However, because of Burlington Island’s limited accessibility and very restrictive development regulations, it cannot be included in the redevelopment initiative. On the other hand, the City has identified three redevelopment sites that each offer waterfront views, connections to the Promenade trail, and space for various development opportunities (see Map 04).

Opportunities	Description
US Pipe Site	The 135-acre U.S. Pipe Site has drawn significant attention from developers over the years, including a proposal to convert the space into a waterpark resort. The City remains open to ambitious ideas.
Public Service Electric & Gas (PSEG)	The Public Service Electric & Gas (PSEG) site has a strong architectural foundation that could aesthetically and emotionally bridge the gap between the City’s heritage and modern development.
Commerce Square	Commerce Square, is adjacent to Burlington South Station and a bike trail, making it an ideal site for transit-oriented development.

Map 04 | Waterfront Redevelopment Site





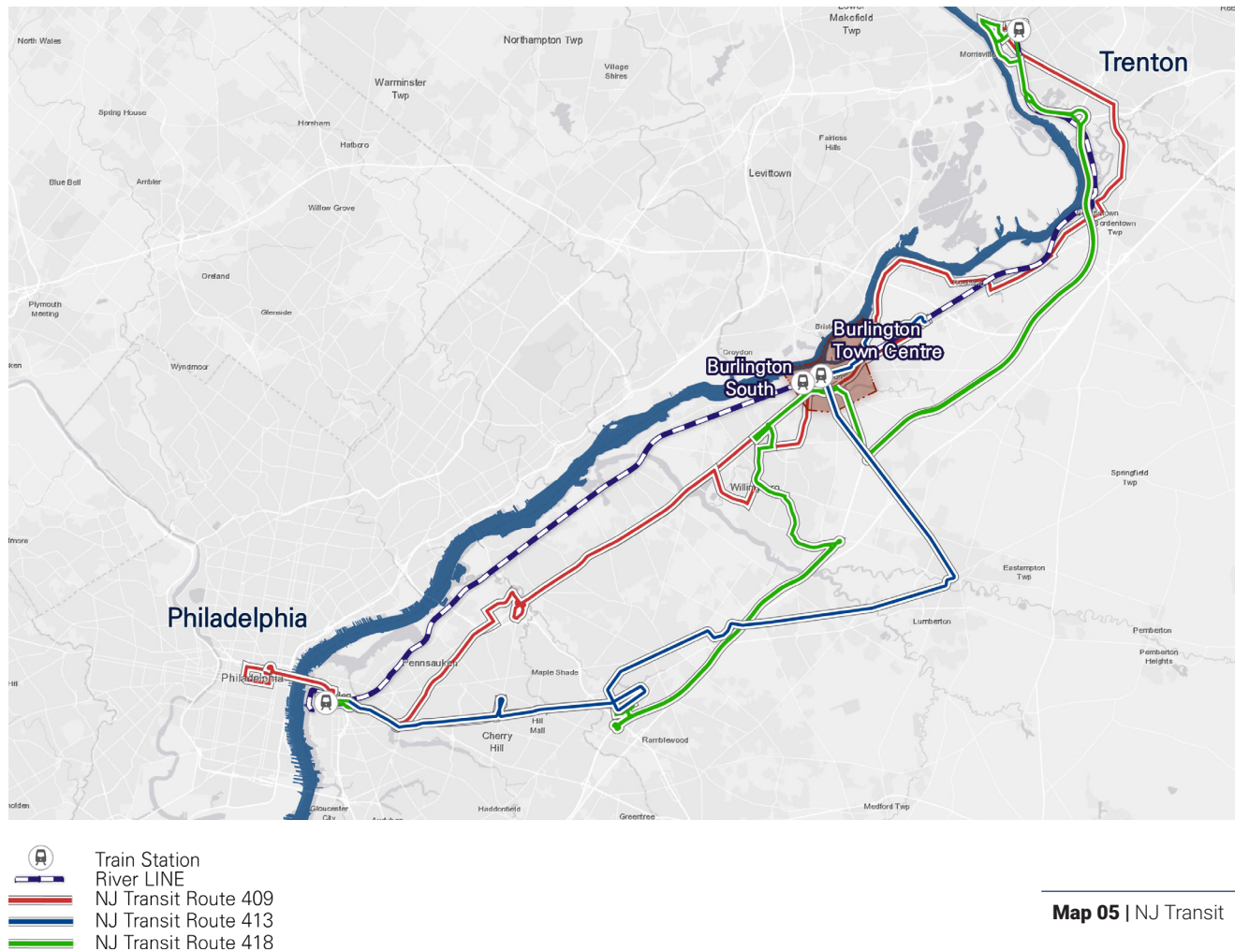
# Opportunities 03

## Multimodal Transportation Options

**The City could capitalize on its multimodal transportation options.**

While driving is the dominant form of transportation right now, Burlington has various centrally-located transit options, as well as a well-connected system for pedestrians and cyclists. In the meeting with City officials, Mayor Conaway pointed out that the City's strong public transit connections are a major point of pride for him as a lifelong Burlingtonian and a major asset for the city, representing political will for improved public transit access policies.

This includes the River Line light rail system, which connects Burlington to Trenton, Camden, and Philadelphia with frequent service, as well as three NJ Transit bus routes. Burlington also contains a portion of the multi-use Delaware Valley Heritage Trail along the waterfront, which is part of Greater Philadelphia's Circuit Trail system and benefits from a compact, walkable downtown core. By strengthening and expanding Burlington's existing multimodal transportation options, the City can allow residents and visitors to choose how they get around while reducing harmful externalities of automobile dependency, including traffic violence and local pollution.



# Opportunities 04

## Growing Diversity & Youth Population

**Growing diversity and population of young people represents the opportunity for fostering economic growth, civic participation, new sense of community.**

One key opportunity is that Burlington is growing in both diversity and the number of total residents. Young families and immigrants, particularly those from Latin America, are driving this change. These young families have the potential to contribute to Burlington's sense of community, civic issues, and the local economy.

Burlington City has also demonstrated its desire to empower youth. For example, when young people organized to advocate for safer streets near the high school, the City helped them testify before the state congress and get a law passed (Hoover, 2017). When community members of all ages and backgrounds feel invested in the City, they can help foster the positive changes to benefit all communities in the City.

### Children Population Under 10 Years Old

City	County
<b>15%</b>	<b>10.7%</b>

Population of children under 10 years old is much higher than county's average and increased significantly in the past 5 years

<b>+300</b>	<b>2017-2022</b>
	Immigrants moving into the community.



**Image 07** | Burlington City Elementary School,  
Source: City of Burlington Public School



# Opportunities 05

## Cultural Heritage

**The City could leverage rich cultural heritage and institutions to spur economic growth and vibrancy.**

Several members of the studio group met with Burlington City officials to discuss issues and opportunities in the City. In the meeting, Mayor Conaway cited the City's shared history and abundance of historic and arts-based institutions as a major source of community pride.

Cultural institutions offer places for residents to connect, gain skills, and cultivate a strong community identity, while also attracting tourists. The Lyceum Hall for the Arts, for example, has ticketed events but also offers classes and camps for kids. Arts Guild New Jersey, located downtown, also provides grants and business support for artists and groups.



**Image 08(Top)** | Murals in Burlington City, Source: Courier Post

**Image 09 (Right)** | Entrance Mural, Source: Jeffery Tseng

**Image 10 (Bottom Left)** | Lyceum Hall for the Arts, Source: The Lyceum Hall Center for the Arts



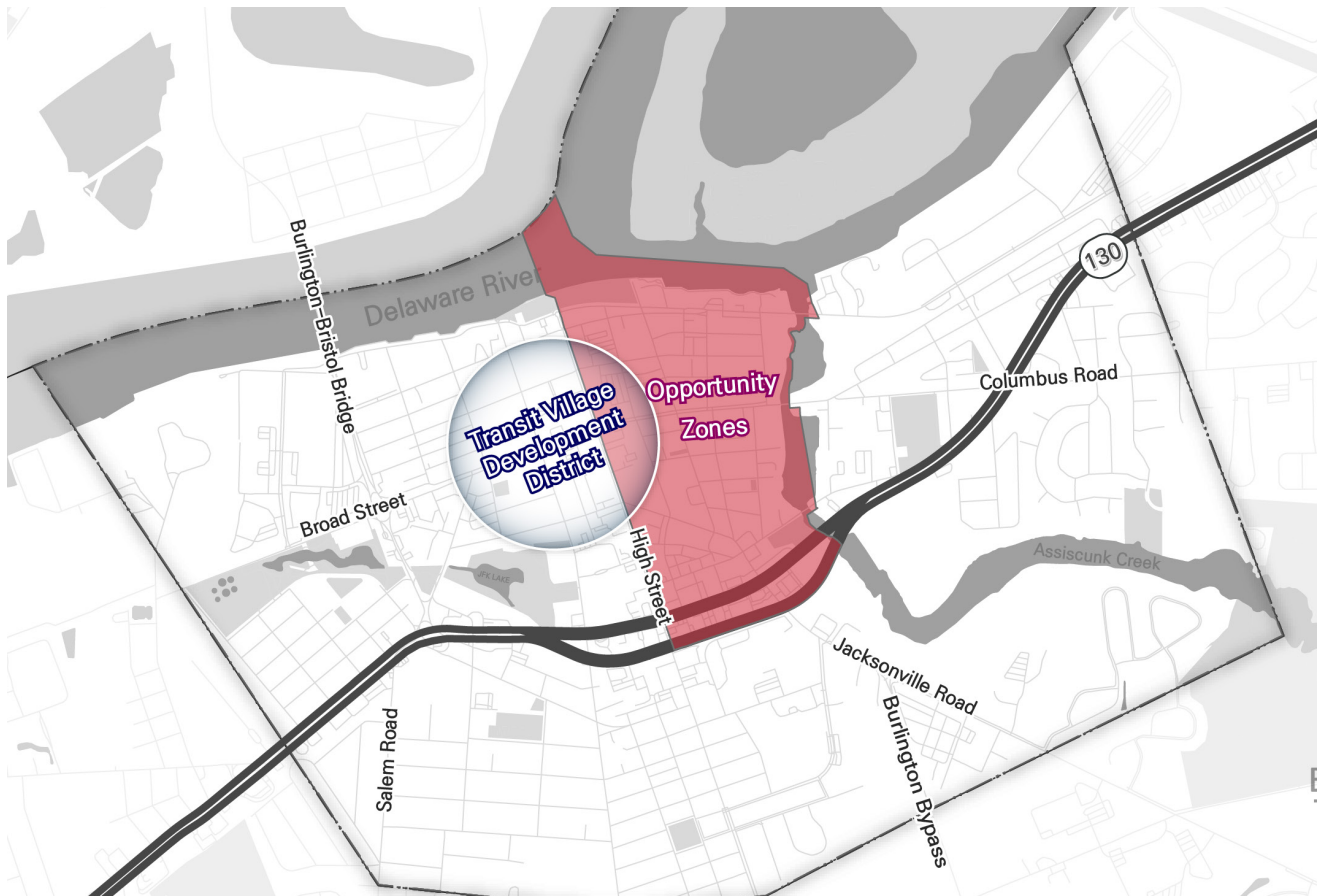
# Opportunities 06

## Potential Funding Sources

**Utilize funding sources and other incentives to support community, sustainability and commerce.**

As the City outlines goals and initiatives, it has a variety of funding opportunities it could tap in to bring those initiatives to life:

- The housing authority has a million dollars it is seeking to spend.
- The New Jersey Department of Transportation has awarded multiple grants to Burlington as part of the City's Transit Village Designation to improve and redevelop the area around the Burlington Towne Centre Station, most recently for \$250,000 (NJDOT, 2007; Comegno, 2022).
- Several properties within the City's Opportunity Zone have been cited for potential redevelopment (Broadt, 2019).
- Amazon contributed \$50,000 toward The Opportunity League, a local community and economic development non-profit (MidJersey News, 2022).
- Further, there are several federal and state funding sources the city could leverage to sustain its growth.



**Map 06** | Opportunity Zone: Provide a relatively simple approval and permitting process for any interested developer

# 03

## Goals & Objectives

The Vision Statement for Burlington in 2045 represents a compressive outlook on the City's future, ranging from its youth to its climate resiliency. To ensure that each point of this vision is adequately addressed in future plans, a detailed set of goals is needed, each of which embodies a particular component of the Vision Statement. These include the local economy, flood resiliency, community identity, housing, multimodal transportation, the City's historic character, and finally, its young population. Each goal will guide the recommendations made for Burlington to face its issues and capitalize on its opportunities.

# Goals



**1 |**

**Increase local commercial activity and economic opportunities for local residents.**



**2 |**

**Improve the City's climate resiliency and mitigate its vulnerability to the threats of flooding events.**



**3 |**

**Develop programming and spaces that support community identity and connection.**



**4 |**

**Facilitate a well-maintained, affordable, and diverse housing stock.**



**5 |**

**Support & enhance multimodal transportation options to improve neighborhood connections & the safety of all road users.**



**6 |**

**Foster a harmonious relationship between the City's historic character and future-oriented development.**



**7 |**

**Make Burlington a child and adolescent friendly city by building opportunities for play, engagement and extracurricular learning.**



# 04

## Recommendations

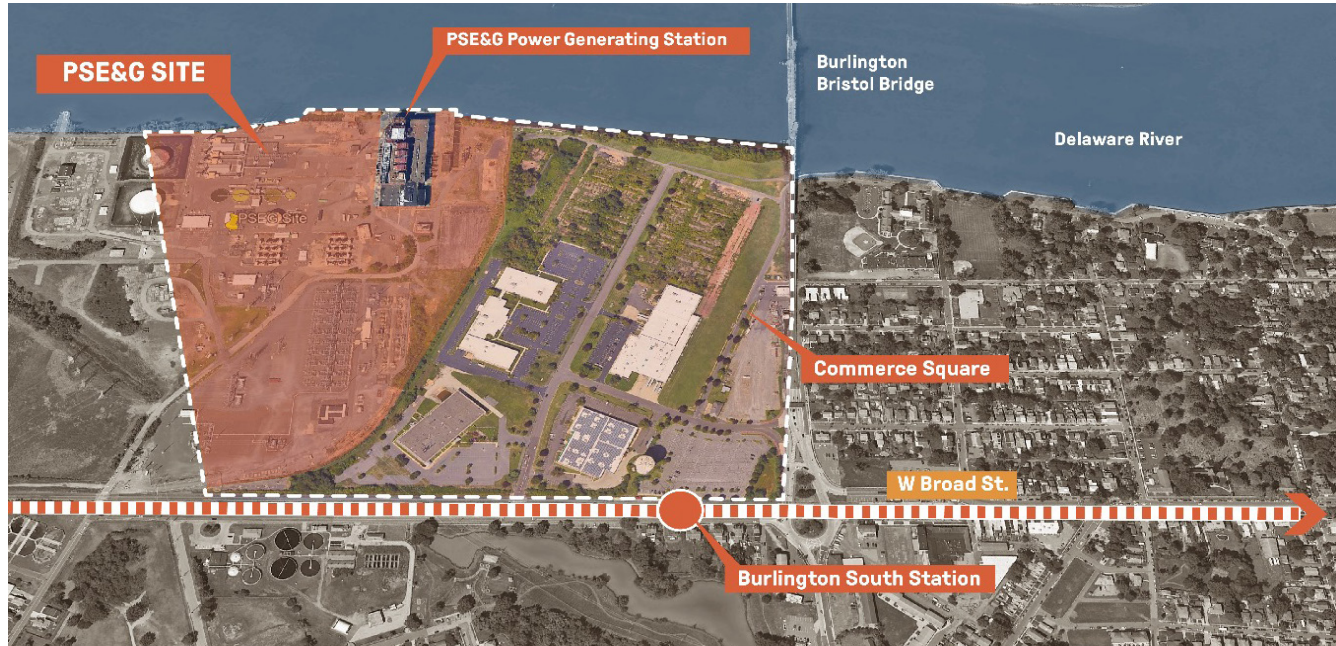
The recommendations for Burlington City were created with the issues, opportunities, and goals in mind. While these goals are meant to be high level ambitions for the City reflective of the 2045 vision statement, the recommendations are meant to realize these ambitions. Each recommendation encompasses a particular topic and addresses one or more goals. Further, each of these recommendations utilizes a set of strategies that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and bounded by time. Each strategy is presented with applicable areas for implementation, the goals it addresses, a projected cost range and duration for completion, and a list of potential agents that can carry out the strategy.

## **Recommendations**

Redevelop the PSE&G and Commerce Square Sites  
Mitigate Flood Risk  
Increase Rates of Walking and Cycling  
Enhance the Urban Amenities of High Street  
Increase Ridership on the River Line  
Create Opportunities for Teen Leadership  
Support Small Businesses Development  
Promote Weatherization of Existing Housing  
Build Community Identity and Connection  
Protect Critical Infrastructure Assets

# Site Planning | The Watermark District

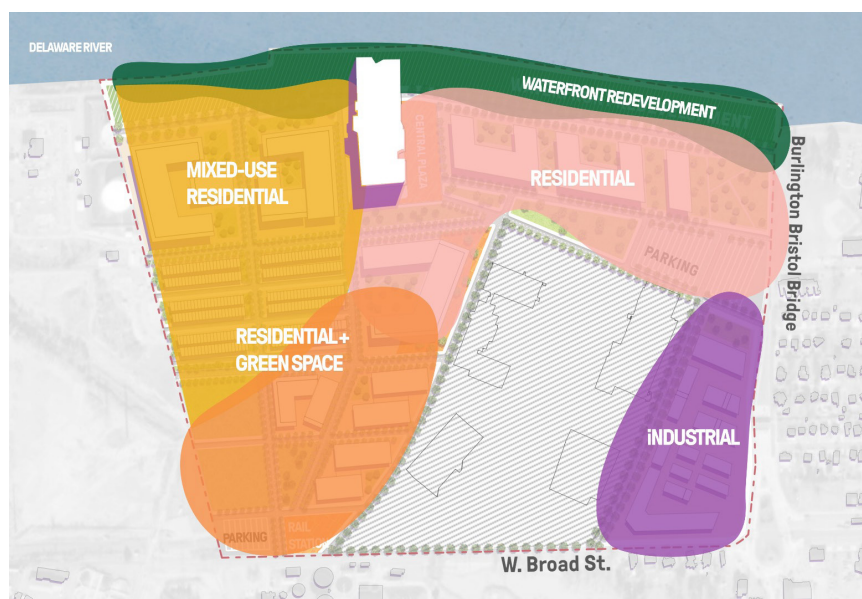
## Redevelop the PSE&G and Commerce Square Sites



Burlington City's prime waterfront real estate, once industrial, presents an opportunity amidst the City's housing shortage. While a private company focuses on the U.S. Pipe Site, there's ample room for the city to target remaining sites. The plan aims to redevelop the industrial area west of downtown, focusing on Commerce Square and the PSE&G property. This strategic move leverages its prime waterfront location near downtown and recent housing developments. A key motivation is remediation of highly contaminated land, identified by the Environmental Protection Agency, benefiting public health and mitigating flood risks.

Burlington City has the opportunity to transform the space into a mixed-use, transit-oriented development, as depicted in the bubble diagram.

The redevelopment plan includes leaving space along the waterfront for flood mitigation and public areas. Additionally, housing will be built to alleviate the tight housing market. Moreover, the plan aims to increase commercial opportunities within the area. Lastly, provisions will be made to accommodate non-motorized transportation.



Bubble Diagram of The Watermark District



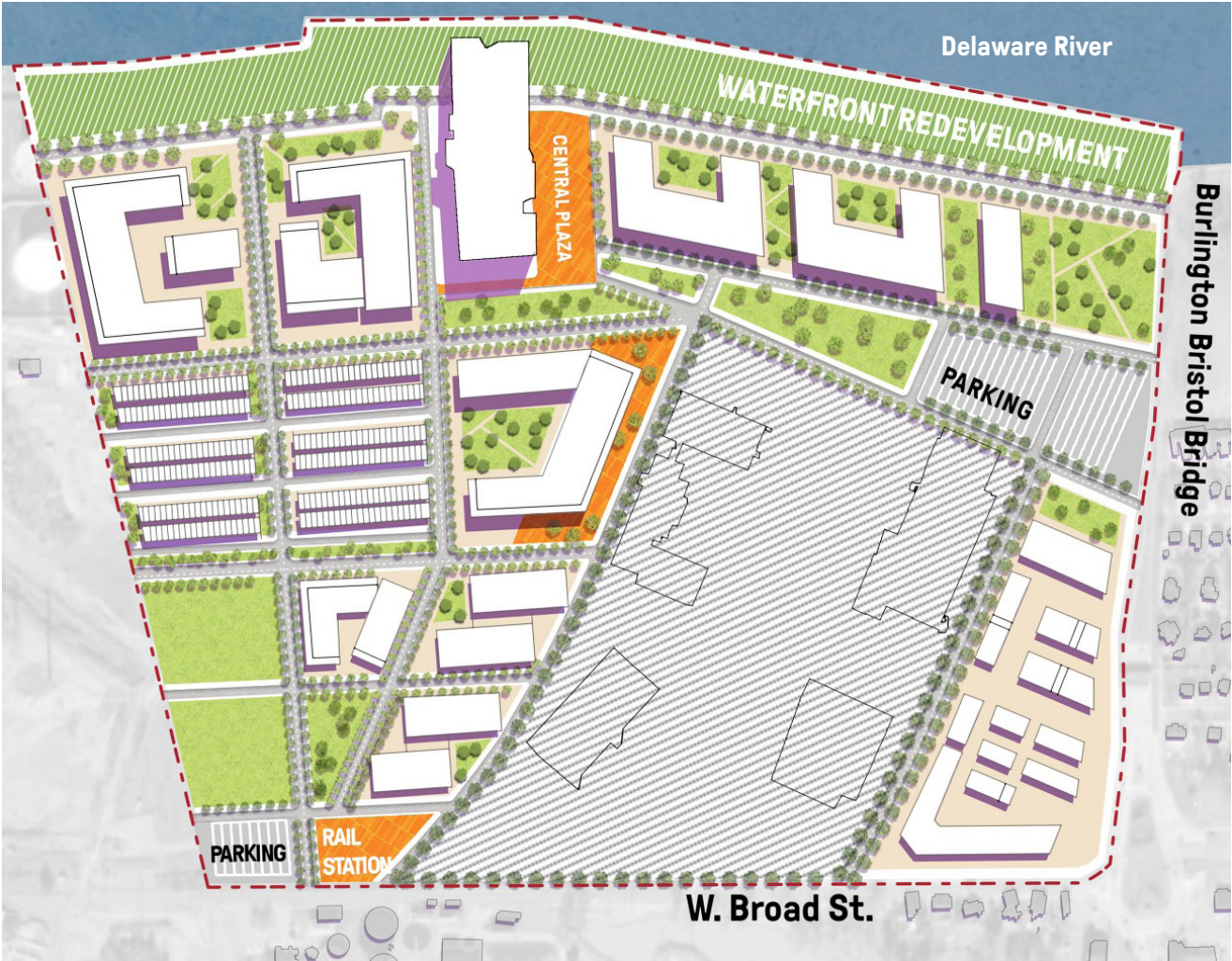
# Site Planning | The Watermark District

## Redevelop the PSE&G and Commerce Square Sites

In proposing The Watermark District, inspiration was drawn from Burlington's signature Delaware River, a nod to the geographical context and vision for this transformative endeavor.

The name "Watermark" reflects the plan's commitment to excellence and Burlington's heritage. This plan aims to create a vibrant community hub where past, present, and future converge. By preserving architectural heritage and supporting local businesses, the plan envisions a district where residents and visitors connect with Burlington's culture. The site plan addresses urban challenges, emphasizing sustainability and accessibility. Ultimately, The Watermark District represents the plan's commitment to a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable community, set to redefine Burlington's waterfront.

Type	Square Footage
Commercial	225,400 SF
Industrial	143,000 SF
Residential	1,150 Units
Open Green Space	325,500 SF
Total Site Area	4,425,000 SF



The Watermark District Site Planning

# Recommendation 01 | Phases

## Redevelop the PSE&G and Commerce Square Sites

Recommendation 1 outlines the redevelopment steps necessary to transform the PSE&G and Commerce Square Sites into The Watermark District. The entire recommendation section is divided into two main phases, with Phase 2 containing specific strategies within it.

### Phase 1: Acquire the PSE&G Building and Land

Acquiring the PSE&G building and land to the south and west of the building. The redevelopment will address environmental concerns, spur economic activity, diversify Burlington's housing stock, and help Burlington become a food destination per the goals of city officials. All of these factors align with this plan's vision for the city.

#### Applicable Areas

PSE&G building and land owned by PSE&G westward to the city line

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

City of Burlington and PSE&G

### Phase 2: Release a Request For Proposal (RFP)

Strategies to be included in the RFP are included in the next five sections.

#### Applicable Areas

PSE&G building and land owned by PSE&G westward to the city line

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Housing & Community Development of the City of Burlington, Burlington Housing Authority

# Recommendation 01 | Strategy 01

## Redevelop the PSE&G and Commerce Square Sites

### Remediate the Soil

The city should contract with a developer committed to soil remediation. Part of the motivation to redevelop this area is that remediating the land would greatly benefit public health. The Environmental Protection Agency named this area as highly contaminated and through their environmental justice screening tool warned that the pollution is most likely to impact groups that are already highly vulnerable. Should flooding occur over the contaminated sites, there's the risk that the water could transport legacy toxins into surrounding soils and waterways, risking the health and safety of residents.

#### Applicable Areas

PSE&G building and land westward to the city line

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Housing & Community Development  
City of Burlington, Private Developer



Treating polluted soil using bio-remediation technique, Source: AL-DHOW



# Recommendation 01 | Strategy 02

## Redevelop the PSE&G and Commerce Square Sites

### Increase The Housing Stock

In order to address Burlington City's stagnant housing construction, our recommendation is to construct at least 500 housing units. While the Burlington City Ordinance mandates that at least 5 percent of these units be set aside as affordable housing, we propose raising that rate to at least 15 percent. Many of these units should be multi-family homes, strategically spread throughout the redevelopment area. This approach will complement the newly constructed and existing multifamily properties Burlington has developed, representing efficient land use. Additionally, it will allow for more green space and amenities along the waterfront and near the proposed redevelopment of a food hall at the PSE&G building, as shown in the image below. The blue areas represent residential units, while the yellow areas denote mixed-use buildings with retail on the first floor and residential units above.

#### Applicable Areas

PSE&G building and land owned by PSE&G westward to the city line, and Commerce Square

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Burlington Housing Authority, Housing & Community Development City of Burlington, Private Developer



The Watermark District Housing Typology

# Recommendation 01 | Strategy 02

## Redevelop the PSE&G and Commerce Square Sites



Strategy: Increase The Housing Stock

### Case Study 01

#### MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT



Image 01| A rendering of mixed-use development in Gettysburg, Source: Borough of Gettysburg

#### Description

Gettysburg, PA is a similar sized city to Burlington, NJ and is building 186 apartments and 7,500 square feet of retail near its Gettysburg Transit Center. Another transit center will be built nearby and paid for as part of the project. This is an example of transit-oriented development.

# Recommendation 01 | Strategy 03

## Redevelop the PSE&G and Commerce Square Sites

### Re-locate the Burlington South River Line Station

The City of Burlington 2045 plan suggests relocating the Burlington South River Line NJ Transit stop west towards the proposed new housing and mixed-use development area. The current station serves as a lightly used park-and-ride, and is physically isolated from most of Burlington's residents due to the presence of the Burlington Bristol Bridge, industrial properties, and a large park. By moving the station, this plan aims to transform it into a more convenient, neighborhood-oriented stop. The new location is adjacent to a large trail and would offer convenient pedestrian access for new residents. This relocation not only enhances accessibility but also integrates the transit stop more seamlessly into the fabric of the community, fostering a sense of connectivity and convenience for residents.

#### Applicable Areas

PSE&G building and land owned by PSE&G westward to the city line, and Commerce Square

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

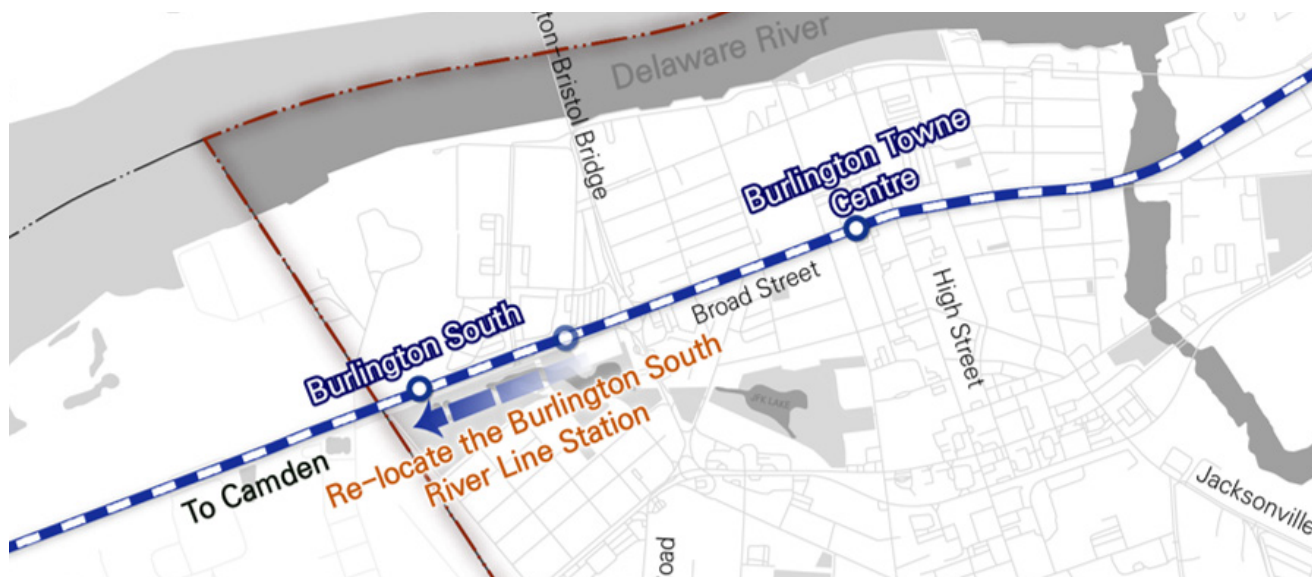
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#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

NJ Transit, Private Developer



Re-locating the Burlington South River Line Station to the West.



# Recommendation 01 | Strategy 04

## Redevelop the PSE&G and Commerce Square Sites

### Adaptively Reuse the PSE&G Building

In response to current economic trends and Burlington’s aspiration to become a hub for good food and live music, the next recommendation is to convert the PSE&G building into a dynamic Food Hall. This transformation aims to offer shared dining spaces for events like weddings, boosting demand for local businesses. Additionally, the Food Hall will house a community commercial kitchen and business incubator, supporting local culinary entrepreneurs. Leveraging Burlington’s strategic location, businesses can efficiently distribute their products. This initiative promises to stimulate economic growth and job creation, echoing the success of previous ventures like the Junior Cheesecake Bakery, which relocated to Burlington City in 2015 and saw significant job growth, from 140 full-time jobs to 229 by 2022.

#### Applicable Areas

PSE&G building

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Private Developer



Redevelopment of former industrial building to a food hall, Source: 776 Summer Street, Boston, MA

# Recommendation 01 | Strategy 04

## Redevelop the PSE&G and Commerce Square Sites

Strategy: Adaptively Reuse the PSE&G Building

### Case Study 02

#### BALTIMORE'S R. HOUSE FOOD HALL



Image 02| R. House Food Hall, Source: USA Today

### Description

The city of Baltimore partnered with a private developer to transform an abandoned auto showroom into a higher-end, fast casual food hall. The 50,000 square foot space contains 10 restaurants, 350 seats, and a large bar in the middle of the space. This meets Burlington City officials' desire to become a restaurant destination and Baltimore has a similar industrial past.



# Recommendation 01 | Strategy 05

## Redevelop the PSE&G and Commerce Square Sites

### Build a Greenhouse

The developer could also construct a greenhouse adjacent to the newly adapted Food Hall, providing both aesthetic appeal and freshly picked ingredients. This innovative approach not only enhances the overall experience but also promotes urban agriculture education. Leveraging existing programs such as the Master Gardener program run through New Jersey Cooperative Extension or the City of Burlington Garden Club, the city will develop programming around sustainable gardening practices. Adaptively reusing industrial buildings into food halls in this manner has proven successful in other cities, allowing them to honor their industrial roots while attracting visitors from both near and far.

#### Applicable Areas

PSE&G Building

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Private Developer



Greenhouse, Source: WTTW



# Recommendation 01 | Strategy 05

## Redevelop the PSE&G and Commerce Square Sites

Strategy: Build a Greenhouse

### Case Study 03

#### CHEF GROWS HIS OWN INGREDIENTS FOR HIS RESTAURANT



Image 03| Chef Quinn's greenhouse, Source: WTTW

### Description

One example of a greenhouse this plan looks to is in Chicago. Chef Devon Quinn operates a greenhouse he uses to supply to his farm to table catering and restaurant businesses. Quinn's greenhouse is 500 feet from his physical restaurant and he prides himself on rotating his menu seasonally to provide the freshest ingredients. Further, Quinn sources many of his ingredients from local farmers. Burlington could use this as a model to further grow their local food economy in a sustainable and ethical way.

# Recommendation 02 | Strategy 01

## Minimize exposure to flood risk through mitigation efforts

### Green Stormwater Infrastructure

The design and implementation of urban stormwater management infrastructure helps improve the capacity to store stormwater and manage heavy rainfall. Providing areas with stormwater storage can help delay runoff and reduce peak flows downstream during flooding events and increase green space. Green Storm Water Infrastructures include retention ponds, stormwater basins, rain gardens, planted swales, bioswales, permeable pavements, and green or blue roofs. Rain gardens can be incorporated to enhance absorption and infiltration of stormwater to the ground. This reduces runoff from impervious surfaces like roofs, main streets, and paved surfaces, reducing the risk associated with torrential rainfall flooding in the city. Bioswales along main commercial corridors, like High Street in Burlington City, capture and infiltrate runoff, integrating educational and ecological benefits. Additionally, installing green roofs on public buildings, including schools, further aids in managing stormwater effectively.

#### Applicable Areas

PSE&G Site, Commerce Square, US Pipe Stie Redevelopment

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Burlington City, Delaware River Basin Commission, NJDEP, DVRPC, Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program



DC Water Rock Creek “A” Green Infrastructure, Source: AKRF



## Recommendation 02 | Strategy 01

Minimize exposure to flood risk through mitigation efforts

Strategy: Green Stormwater Infrastructure

### Case Study 04

#### The Morton Arboretum in Lisle, Illinois



Image 04| Meadow Lake weir and flapgate systems, Source: Landscape Performance Series

### Description

The project implements stormwater management at an arboretum, significantly improving environmental conditions by retaining almost all rainfall and enhancing water quality. It educates 850,000 visitors annually, boosts visitor engagement, and reduces operational costs by about \$28,400, demonstrating a successful integration of sustainability, community involvement, and cost-efficiency.



# Recommendation 02 | Strategy 02

## Minimize exposure to flood risk through mitigation efforts

### Coastal/Riverine Barriers

The plan suggests the construction of coastal and riverine barriers like berms and levees and adapting existing bulkheads to provide a first line of defense against future flooding events, storm surges and sea level rise. Concrete structures along the shoreline protect from flooding and erosion. Construction of bulkheads along the Burlington City Promenade can be integrated into recreational greenways and create waterfront development access to its users. These will also provide contiguous public access to the riverfront park from the PSE&G site and Commerce Square to the redeveloped US Pipe Site. Concrete buffers or floodwalls can also help reinforce the shoreline by blocking water during storm surges and floodwaters in areas most susceptible to future flooding events. Raised earthen structures like Berms and Levees can be integrated with recreational boardwalk, walkways, and bike paths and their sloped sides can be populated with vegetation and plants to provide functionality to protect from flooding and aesthetic sustainability.

#### Applicable Areas

Delaware River and Assiscunk Creek shorelines, including the Riverfront Promenade

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

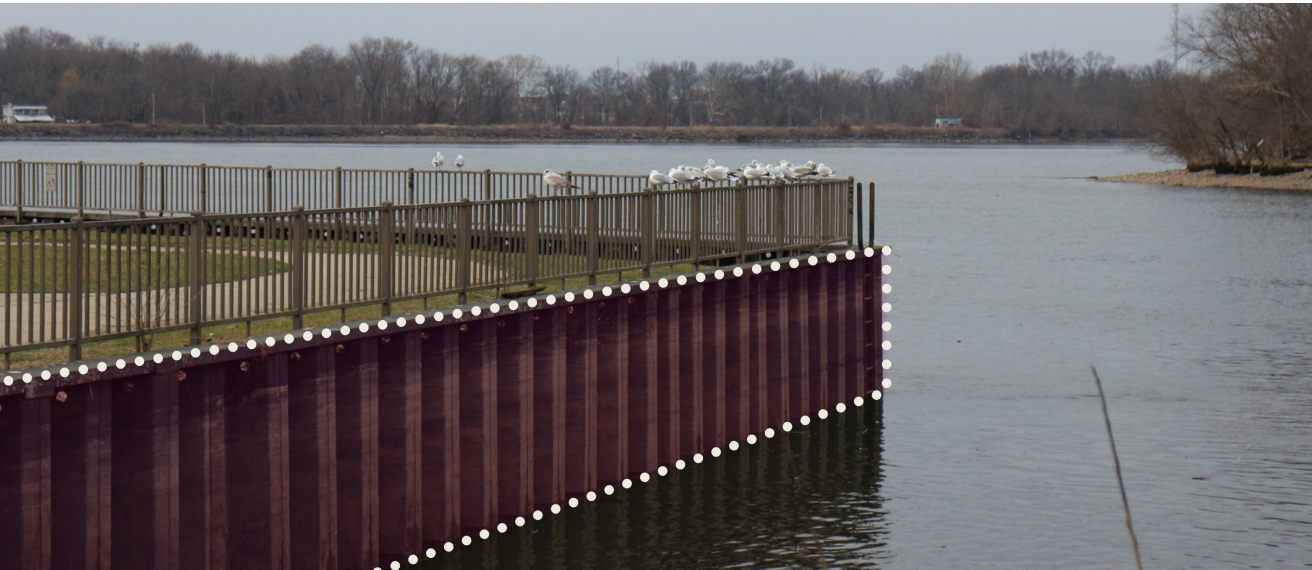
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#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Delaware River Basin Commission, FEMA, NJDEP, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Burlington Township



Bulkhead of the Riverfront Promenade

## Recommendation 02 | Strategy 02

Minimize exposure to flood risk through mitigation efforts

Strategy: Coastal/Riverine Barriers

### Case Study 05

#### Harborside Marina waterfront bulkhead repair Perth Amboy, NJ



Image 05| Bulkhead Repair Harborside Marina, Source: CITY OF PERTH AMBOY

### Description

The \$3.55 million bulkhead repair project at Perth Amboy, NJ was partially funded by a \$1.7 million grant from the DEP's Shore Protection Program. This project was crucial for restoring the areas impacted by Superstorm Sandy along the 1.5-mile section of the waterfront where the Raritan Bay and Arthur Kill meet.



# Recommendation 02 | Strategy 03

## Minimize exposure to flood risk through mitigation efforts

### Relocation

Relocate vulnerable land uses out of flood-prone areas to redirect growth to reduce flood exposure and preserve open space. The Burlington City Public Works building is currently experiencing flooding during storms. Although the city has addressed issues associated with flooding on site, the city is considering moving the facility to sites of higher elevation. The Public Works facility plays an important role in the cleanup after flooding events and houses radio towers, essential equipment for maintenance and upkeep of the city's roadways and park spaces. Burlington City can also work with Burlington Township on further relocation efforts of its critical assets and systems to prepare for future flooding events. Burlington Township resides at high elevations and is further away from the Delaware River. For example, Burlington Township holds some of Burlington City's movable infrastructure like generators and trucks.

#### Applicable Areas

Critical Infrastructure Assets and Public Facilities

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

FEMA, Burlington City Public Works Department, Burlington Township.



Source: Flood-Prepared Communities & U.S. Conservation



# Recommendation 03 | Strategy 01

## Increase Rates of Walking and Cycling

### Establish Designated Bicycle Lanes

Designated bicycle lanes should be established with complementing traffic calming measures on Broad and High Streets. The trail along the riverfront, part of the Delaware Valley Heritage Trail, is currently the only dedicated bicycle facility in Burlington and more infrastructure is needed to improve cyclist safety and connectivity. Bike lanes on High Street will improve cyclist access to the City's main commercial corridor, including from the south side of the City, and connect directly with the riverfront trail and scenic riverfront promenade. Broad Street, as it exists now, has wide travel lanes and significant space dedicated to lightly used parking. Taking advantage of this real estate, buffered bike lanes on Broad Street, accompanied by narrowed travel lanes, will make the road safer. It will also turn the thoroughfare into a true multimodal corridor, alongside the River Line train and buses that currently run on the street.

#### Applicable Areas

Broad Street and High Street

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Burlington City, DVRPC, Cross County Connection TMA



Proposed designated bike lane along Broad Street.

# Recommendation 03 | Strategy 02

## Increase Rates of Walking and Cycling

### Enhance U.S. 130 Pedestrian Crossings

U.S. 130 is a major arterial through Burlington and the site of the majority of serious traffic incidents in the City. Enhancements are needed to improve pedestrian and cycling safety and comfort when waiting at and crossing this intersection. Additionally, U.S. 130 forms a dividing line between the commercial core and waterfront of the northern half of Burlington and the more residential southern half, and these improvements will help connect these two parts by allowing residents to more comfortably walk from one side to the other. Possible interventions include installing new crosswalks, sidewalk segments, signals, curb extensions, and bike facilities, such as bike boxes and warning signs.

#### Applicable Areas

U.S. 130 at and near High Street

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Burlington City, NJ DOT



High St at U.S. 130 NB, Source: Google Street View

## Recommendation 03 | Strategy 02

### Increase Rates of Walking and Cycling

Strategy: Enhance U.S. 130 Pedestrian Crossings

#### Case Study 06 Curb Extensions



**Image 06| Curb Extensions on Bay Avenue in Ocean City, NJ.** Source: State of New Jersey Complete Streets Design Guide (2017)

#### Description

This implementation illustrates how narrowing the roadway can create safer and more efficient spaces for cyclists and pedestrians. It captures the intersection with clearly marked bike lanes and pedestrian crossings, showcasing an urban design strategy that prioritizes safety and accessibility.



# Recommendation 03 | Strategy 03

## Increase Rates of Walking and Cycling

### Organize an Open Streets Event

Organizing an open street event, often called a Ciclovía, in Burlington is one way to promote walking and cycling. In this sort of event, select local streets are closed to automobile traffic, allowing people to walk and bike freely. This not only makes active transportation temporarily safer, but promotes walking and cycling in the City going forward as it attracts people to walk or bike where they may not normally feel comfortable. Studies have shown that some Ciclovía events have led to increased everyday cycling in the aftermath (Pucher et al., 2011). This event can also include live entertainment and other activities.

#### Applicable Areas

City-wide

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost



#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Burlington City, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia, New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition



Open street event in Ithaca, NY. Source: Bike Walk Tompkins

# Recommendation 03 | Strategy 04

## Increase Rates of Walking and Cycling

### Implement Art-Based Traffic Calming Measures

By implementing art-based traffic calming measures such as painted curb extensions, Burlington could improve traffic safety while promoting local art. Crash analysis and behavior observation studies have demonstrated that these low-cost interventions are strongly correlated with improved safety benefits across observed study areas (Schwartz, 2022). The City could leverage funding from the Bloomberg Asphalt Art Initiative to offset costs and engage the newly created Youth Advisory Council to paint murals.

#### Applicable Areas

Broad Street, High Street, US 130

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Bloomberg Asphalt Art Initiative, Lyceum Hall Center for the Arts, Arts Guild New Jersey, Youth Advisory Council



Painted curb extension in Lancaster, PA. Source: Bloomberg



# Recommendation 03 | Strategy 05

## Increase Rates of Walking and Cycling

### Safe Routes to School Program

Safe Routes to School is a federal, state and local effort to support active transportation. Burlington City public schools could take advantage of this program to incorporate comprehensive bike safety education to promote safety and physical activity for students traveling to school and back.

#### Applicable Areas

City-wide

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Burlington Public Schools, NJDOT, New Jersey Safe Routes to School, Cross County Connection TMA



Safer Routes to School education, Source: Washington. D. C, Safer Routes to School.



# Recommendation 04 | Strategy 01

## Enhance the urban amenities of High Street

### Improve High Street Streetscape

The recommendation to upgrade the High Street streetscape represents a transformative initiative aimed at revitalizing the heart of the community. By enhancing street furniture, lighting, and landscaping, the goal is to craft an inviting and pedestrian-friendly environment that beckons both residents and visitors alike. This revitalization effort not only aims to elevate the aesthetic appeal of the area but also seeks to catalyze increased foot traffic, breathing new life into local businesses and fostering economic growth. Furthermore, the focus on multimodal transportation enhancements underscores a commitment to improving neighborhood connectivity and ensuring the safety of all road users. Spearheaded by Main Street Burlington in collaboration with private developers and the Burlington County Regional Chamber of Commerce, this short-term project represents a pivotal investment in the future vibrancy and sustainability of the High Street corridor.

#### Applicable Areas

Along High Street

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Main Street Burlington (Non-profit/Private Sector), Private Developers, Burlington County Regional Chamber of Commerce (BCRCC)



Hudson Square Streetscape Master Plan. Source: MNLA, ArchDaily

# Recommendation 04 | Strategy 02

## Enhance the urban amenities of High Street

### Display Public Art and Cultural Features

Introducing public art installations, murals, and cultural displays that resonate with the community’s heritage can cultivate a unique sense of place and draw visitors. To support these installations, create websites and social media posts to invite people to events that celebrate local history and culture.

#### Applicable Areas

Along High Street (street design and building decoration)

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Main Street Burlington, Property Owners, Burlington County Regional Chamber of Commerce (BCRCC), local libraries, Arts Guild New Jersey.



Kids looking at the “Spring by the River” mural. Source: Burlington County Times.



# Recommendation 04 | Strategy 03

## Enhance the urban amenities of High Street

### Designate Flexible Public Spaces

Areas along High Street can be designated as flexible public spaces that can easily transition from everyday use to event spaces. These areas should have infrastructure, such as power outlets and water access, to support vendors and outdoor dining setups. This will attract more foot traffic, encourage spending at local businesses, and attract new vendors and entrepreneurs. This economic stimulation can increase revenue for existing businesses and provide opportunities for new ones. Funding can come from the business improvement district also proposed in this plan.

#### Applicable Areas

Along High Street

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

City of Burlington, Main Street Burlington (Non-profit/Private Sector) and business owners in High Street



Source: The Philadelphia Inquirer



## Recommendation 04 | Strategy 03

### Enhance the urban amenities of High Street

Strategy: Designate Flexible Public Spaces

#### Case Study 07

#### South Park Street, Montclair, NJ.



Image 07| South Park Street, Montclair, NJ, Source: Architizer

#### Description

In the past decade, South Park Street has been transformed from a traffic cut-through into a “vibrant, pedestrian-oriented town square for gathering, shopping and hosting events” (“South Park Street Design”) thanks to a variety of streetscape improvements, as well as the introduction of flexible spaces for cafes and dining, entertainment, and art displays.

# Recommendation 05 | Strategy 01

## Increase Ridership on the River Line

### Build a New River Line Station at U.S. Pipe Site

A new River Line station can be built beside the U.S. Pipe site redevelopment and existing Amazon warehouse. This is conditional on redevelopment of the Pipe Site, currently being planned by Peron Development. A new station will improve transit access for employees of the Amazon facility and potential residents, employees, and visitors of the redeveloped U.S. Pipe Site. Furthermore, coordinating construction with the eventual developer and Amazon opens up the possibility of private funding and support that can move the project along.

#### Applicable Areas

Adjacent to U.S. Pipe Site and Amazon Warehouse

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

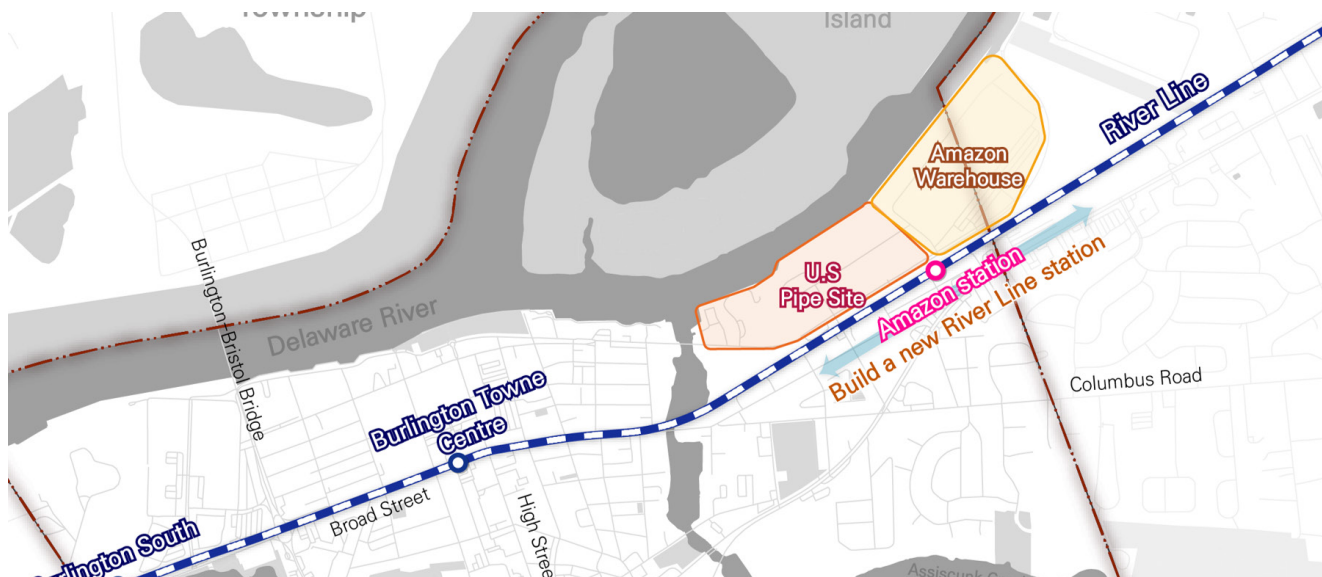
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#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

NJ Transit, Peron Development, Amazon



Proposed new Riverline Station at U.S. Pipe Site.

# Recommendation 05 | Strategy 02

## Increase Ridership on the River Line

### Install Secure Bicycle Storage at River Line Stations

Secure bicycle storage lockers should be installed at Burlington’s River Line stations. Bicycle lockers, rather than traditional bike racks, provide additional security and peace of mind for cyclists while protecting bikes from the elements. This can both encourage and improve the experience of cycling to the train. Secure bike lockers have already been installed at several NJ Transit rail stations in coordination with local Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) and the New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition (“First/Last Mile Connections”), and similar units can be installed at Burlington’s stations.

#### Applicable Areas

Burlington Towne Centre and Burlington South Stations.

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost



#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

NJ Transit, Cross County Connection TMA, New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition



Bike lockers near public transit station. Source: NJ Transit



# Recommendation 05 | Strategy 03

## Increase Ridership on the River Line

### Promote River Line Ridership

Another way to boost ridership is to foster collaboration between NJ Transit and local organizations businesses to promote River Line travel to local events, such as the Farmer’s Market and destinations, including local restaurants and arts institutions. This is a relatively low cost way to boost ridership. It can also be a benefit for Burlington’s local economy, attracting people to Burlington businesses and events who may ordinarily not visit.

#### Applicable Areas

Institutional

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

NJ Transit, Main Street Burlington, local businesses and organizations



Riverline passengers. Source: Burlington County Times.

# Recommendation 05 | Strategy 04

## Increase Ridership on the River Line

### Advocate for a Burlington-Bristol Bridge Shuttle Bus

The city should advocate for a shuttle bus service over the Burlington-Bristol Bridge from the Towne Centre River Line Station to Bristol SEPTA Regional Rail Station connecting to the SEPTA 128 and 129 buses, employment centers, and the commercial hub of downtown Bristol. This takes advantage of the strategically located bridge and would represent the first direct public transportation connection between Burlington and Pennsylvania, and the only transit connection to Pennsylvania between Camden and Trenton. It would open up employment and recreational opportunities in lower Bucks County and northeast Philadelphia to River Line riders and those without a car, as pedestrians are not permitted on the bridge.

#### Applicable Areas

Burlington Towne Centre Station to Burlington Bristol Bridge

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

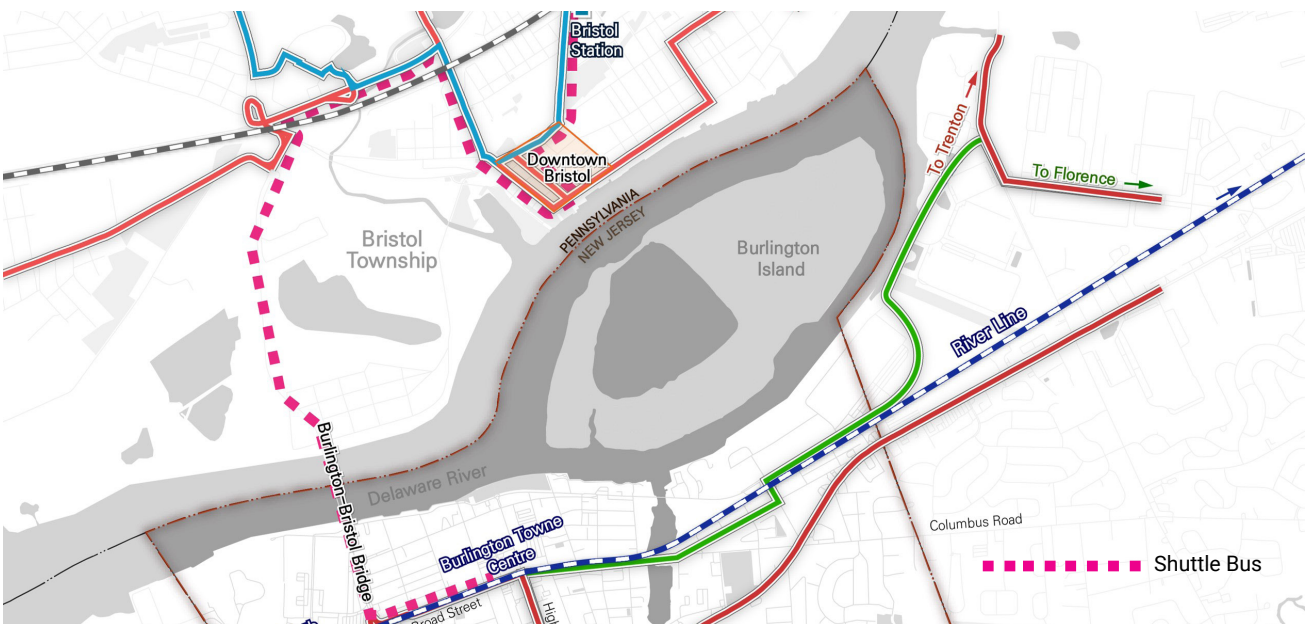
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#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

NJ Transit, SEPTA, Burlington County, PADOT, NJDOT



Proposed shuttle bus route.

# Recommendation 06 | Strategy 01

## Create opportunities for teen leadership

### Establish a Youth Advisory Council

By establishing a Youth Advisory Council, the City could give students in grades 6-12 the opportunity to learn about local government, gain leadership skills and lead community development initiatives. To support nature-based flood mitigation, the Youth Advisory Council could organize a beautification day focused on building a rain garden. As Burlington City High School students have been vocal about wanting better pedestrian safety, the Council could also inform where traffic calming should be implemented and help design the murals that form the curb extensions recommended earlier in the plan.

#### Applicable Areas

City-wide

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Burlington City Council, Burlington City High School



Members of the Evesham, NJ Youth Advisory Committee. Source: South Jersey News.



# Recommendation 06 | Strategy 02

## Create opportunities for teen leadership

### Create Youth Green Stormwater Infrastructure Programming

To foster youth leadership skills and enhance flood mitigation efforts, the Youth Advisory Council could take the lead on a number of green stormwater infrastructure projects. With help from City officials and the City of Burlington Garden Club, the Youth Advisory Council could organize beautification days focused on building and maintaining rain gardens. The events would provide opportunities for youth across the City to volunteer and learn gardening skills even if they are not directly involved in the Youth Advisory Council.

#### Applicable Areas

Downtown District

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Youth Advisory Council; Burlington City



West Philadelphia Rain Garden. Source: Philadelphia Water Department

# Recommendation 06 | Strategy 03

## Create opportunities for teen leadership

### Participate in Adopt-A-Catch-Basin Program

The Nature Conservancy runs an Adopt-A-Catch-Basin program in which any individual or group can “adopt” a catch basin, which is used to collect storm-water, for free. The Nature Conservancy provides funding for equipment and other program needs. Youth teams that adopt a catch basin will commit to ensuring it doesn’t get clogged by litter or leaves and will paint a mural around. The mural can show off local pride and make it easier for volunteers to identify it and keep it clear.

#### Applicable Areas

Downtown District

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

The Nature Conservancy



Youth show off painted catch basin in Jersey City, New Jersey. Source: Bloomberg Cities.



# Recommendation 07 | Strategy 01

## Support small business development

### Establish Business Improvement District

The Business Improvement District (BID) strategy aims to collaborate with local businesses and property owners to establish a designated area in Burlington City. Through member assessments, funds can be pooled to provide vital support services and incentives tailored to the needs of the community. Initially focusing on clean and green initiatives, safety enhancements, and beautification efforts, the BID will then expand into marketing and promotional activities. This phased approach ensures that the basic infrastructure for a thriving business environment is established first, laying the foundation for future marketing endeavors. Drawing inspiration from successful models like this approach ensures that resources are efficiently utilized to attract new businesses, facilitate networking opportunities, maintain an online presence, and organize engaging events that drive foot traffic and economic growth to the downtown district.

#### Applicable Areas

Downtown District

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Downtown businesses and property owners, Main Street Burlington, Burlington City, Burlington County Regional Chamber of Commerce



Downtown Burlington City, Source: The Philadelphia Inquirer



# Recommendation 07 | Strategy 01

## Support small business development

Strategy: Establish Business Improvement District

### Case Study 08

#### Collingswood Partners



Image 08 | Downtown Collingswood “pocket park” rendering, Source: Spiezle Architecture Group in The Philadelphia Inquirer

#### Description

Collingswood Partners in Collingswood, NJ. Collingswood Partners organizes the several business districts in downtown Collingswood. Similar in size and economics to Burlington, Collingswood also shares features of walkable streets, accessible transit, and desirable housing. This pocket park at the site of a former gas station is an attempt by Collingswood to increase foot traffic in one of its own business districts, the Haddon Avenue District.

# Recommendation 07 | Strategy 02

## Support small business development

### Promote Business Development Services and Mentorship Programs

The Business Development Services and Mentorship Programs focuses on nurturing the growth and sustainability of local businesses through targeted support and guidance. By forging partnerships with universities or business organizations, entrepreneurs and small business owners in Burlington City gain access to valuable resources, expertise, and mentorship opportunities. This comprehensive approach acknowledges the diverse needs and challenges faced by aspiring and established businesses alike, equipping them with the tools and knowledge necessary to thrive in today's competitive market. With a collaborative effort involving various governmental entities, educational institutions, and business associations, this strategy aims to foster an environment conducive to entrepreneurship and economic prosperity within the downtown district.

#### Applicable Areas

Downtown District

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Burlington County Government, NJ State Planning Commission, NJ Department of Community Affairs, NJ Transit, Burlington County Bridge Commission, Burlington City Public Schools, Burlington Business Improvement District.



Third State Brewing, Source: The Philadelphia Inquirer/ Glassy Brown Cookies, Source: glassybrowncookies.com

# Recommendation 08 | Strategy 01

## Promote weatherization of existing housing

### Expand Interest-Free Home Repair Loans program

Raising awareness about the Interest-Free Home Repair Loans program among the City residents is crucial for facilitating important housing improvements and maintenance. This valuable strategy allows homeowners to carry out essential repairs and enhancements without the financial constraints of interest, significantly easing economic stress. By taking advantage of these loans, homeowners can improve their living conditions markedly and potentially increase their property values. Furthermore, the program actively supports energy-efficient modifications in homes, which not only reduce utility bills but also contribute to environmental sustainability by decreasing energy consumption. Considering changes to the income requirements could allow a broader segment of the community to benefit. By enhancing this program, the City can help ensure that more residents benefit from improved housing while fostering a greener, more resilient community.

#### Applicable Areas

Institutional

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Burlington City, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs

### Burlington County Home Improvement Loan Program

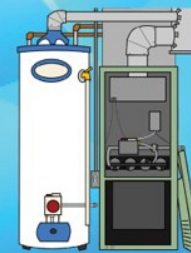


*Repair Your  
Home... Brighten  
Your Outlook.*

Sponsored by the  
Burlington County  
Board of Chosen  
Freeholders



### Burlington County Emergency Home Repairs & Heater Replacement Programs



Assistance for income-eligible residents.  
Questions? Call 609-265-5577

Burlington County Home Improvement Loan Program, Source: The Sun newspapers



## Recommendation 08 | Strategy 02

### Promote weatherization of existing housing

#### Promote State of New Jersey's Department of Community Affairs Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is set for enhancement to better serve low-income residents through improved home weatherization. This strategy aims to reduce energy bills for these families by increasing the energy efficiency of their homes, aligning with broader climate resilience initiatives. Planned enhancements to the program include sealing air leaks to reduce drafts, increasing insulation levels, and updating or replacing outdated heating and cooling systems. Additionally, the program may provide opportunities to upgrade to more energy-efficient appliances. By considering changes to the income requirements to make them more attractive, the program could reach a broader segment of the community. These measures are designed to help families lower their utility costs and contribute to environmental sustainability, supporting individual households and broader community goals.

#### Applicable Areas

Institutional

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Burlington City, U.S. Department of Energy, Department of Environmental Protection & Department of Community Affairs, New Jersey



Window Caulking, Source: osceolagenerations.org

# Recommendation 09 | Strategy 01

Develop programming and spaces that support community identity and connection

## Build Playful Learning Landscapes along the waterfront

Knowing it can be hard for kids and caregivers to reach playgrounds, KABOOM! offers grant money and technical assistance to help neighborhoods integrate playspaces throughout a downtown or existing park, encouraging kids to “play along the way.” The playspaces foster learning through play. When Play Anywhere playspaces have been independently researched, researchers have found that they improve skill learning among kids, boost active play and bring people together. Over half of playspace visitors made new friends or met new people on their visit (Gehl, 2024). The Opportunity League could take the lead on applying for the KABOOM! grant and use their local knowledge to determine what the playspace could strive to achieve.

### Applicable Areas

Waterfront

### Goals Met



### Estimated Cost

\$\$\$

### Duration



### Implementation Agents

KABOOM!, The Opportunity League



Volunteers celebrate building of new Philadelphia, Pennsylvania playground, Source: KABOOM!



## Recommendation 09 | Strategy 01

Develop programming and spaces that support community identity and connection

Strategy: Build Playful Learning Landscapes along the waterfront

### Case Study 09

#### KABOOM!



Image 09 | Kids interact with life-size puzzles in West Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Source: KABOOM!

#### Description

KABOOM! and Urban Thinkspace built a playspace next to a bus stop in West Philadelphia, improving child-caregiver interactions and creating opportunities for play. As kids maneuver through the life-size puzzle, they build spatial, math and literacy skills (Matchar, 2018).



# Recommendation 09 | Strategy 02

Develop programming and spaces that support community identity and connection

## Enhance existing historical tourism program

To enhance existing historical tourism programs in the City, the City could offer more culturally enriching events that spotlight the City's rich heritage, especially in the downtown district. Historic sites such as the waterfront promenade and other historic landmarks such as St. Mary's Episcopal Church, the City could introduce augmented historic walking tours. These tours will provide interactive experiences, allowing visitors to engage deeply with the history and stories of the City. By adding elements such as live reenactments, multimedia displays, and expert-guided tours, these enhancements will transform conventional sightseeing into a more immersive and educational experience. This approach not only attracts more tourists but also fosters a deeper appreciation and connection among residents with their city's historical roots.

### Applicable Areas

Downtown District

### Goals Met



### Estimated Cost

\$\$

### Duration



### Implementation Agents

Burlington City, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, NJ Department of State, Division of Travel and Tourism



Source: Burlington City Tours

## Recommendation 09 | Strategy 03

**Develop programming and spaces that support community identity and connection**

### Earn Sustainable New Jersey Silver Certificate

Burlington City is already registered for Sustainable New Jersey, which makes the City eligible for grant money, technical assistance, and training. The City should take advantage of this and pursue Silver Certification. Some requirements include forming a green team, which supports community cohesion and diverse representation, and implementing activities that the Plan has already recommended, such as planning for brownfield reuse, implementing green stormwater infrastructure, and participating in Safe Routes to School.

#### Applicable Areas

City-wide

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Burlington City Council



Monroe Township Earns Prestigious Silver Certification from Sustainable JerseySource: Courtesy of Monroe Township



# Recommendation 10 | Strategy 01

## Protect critical infrastructure assets

### Waterproof Electrical Substations and Power Lines

By raising transformers and switches above flood levels, the City can protect its critical electrical infrastructure from flooding. The City could also use waterproof barriers around substations, install back-flow preventers in drainage systems, and incorporate advanced monitoring systems to provide real-time data on water levels which would allow for quicker response times during flooding events.

#### Applicable Areas

City-wide, especially electricity stations

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

Burlington City, Burlington Township,  
U.S. Department of Energy, New Jersey,  
PSE&G (main electricity generator)



Burlington power restoration, Source: We Energies News



# Recommendation 10 | Strategy 02

## Protect critical infrastructure assets

### Implement dry Floodproofing

Burlington City should implement dry floodproofing, a technique used to seal building exteriors, on critical infrastructure to fully block out flood waters during flooding events. Dry floodproofing helps retain usability and existing configuration of floors located below the flood grade, such as basements. The City's critical infrastructure assets include Burlington High School, Wilbur Watts Intermediate School, City Hall, five fire departments, the police station, and the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

#### Applicable Areas

Critical Public Facilities

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

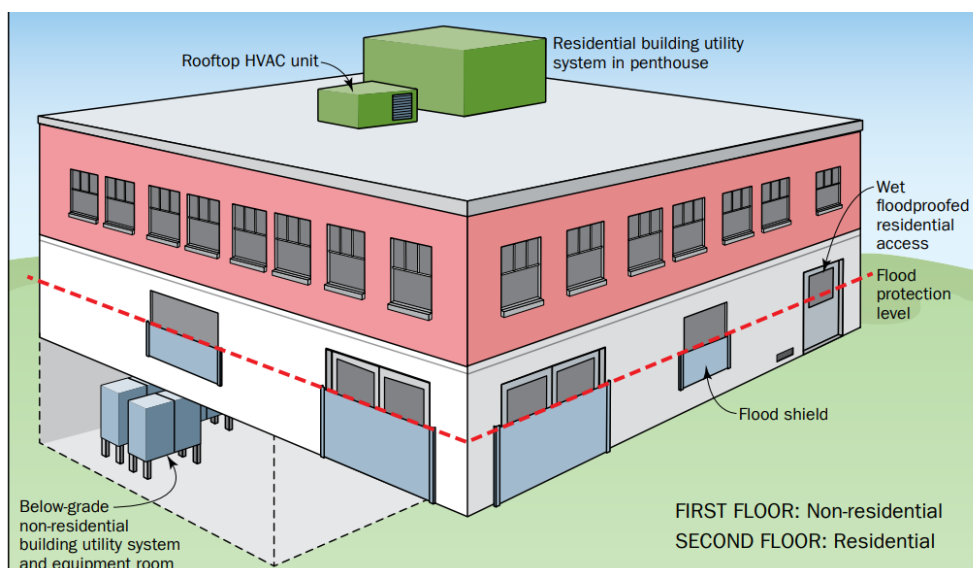
\$\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

FEMA, NJDEP, NFIP



Mixed-use building with equipment in a dry floodproofed below-grade equipment room, Source: FEMA

# Recommendation 10 | Strategy 03

## Protect critical infrastructure assets

### Create redundant Resilient Emergency Routes

Burlington City has several designated evacuation routes and gridded road systems that are prone to flooding. Designated evacuation routes include Board St (Evacuation route between East and west neighborhoods within Burlington City) , High St. (Evacuation route between North and South neighborhoods extents of Burlington City), and Jacksonville Road (Evacuation route to the south of Burlington City). These routes are expected to experience the deepest floods during severe storms. To improve mobility options when designated emergency routes fail, the City could create redundant or back-up resilient emergency routes.

#### Applicable Areas

Redundant Resilient Emergency Routes

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$\$\$

#### Duration



#### Implementation Agents

New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM), New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT)



2017 Recent Flooding Event, Source: 6abc Philadelphia

# Recommendation 10 | Strategy 04

## Protect critical infrastructure assets

### Elevate Physical Structures and Mechanical Systems

By raising physical structures above flood levels, the City can help protect its structures and critical facilities during flooding events. Ground levels of structures and facilities can also be used and adapted as storage and temporary usage. Burlington City should work with engineers, architects, and surveyors to acquire elevation certificates for critical infrastructure and community assets such as schools, helping the City prioritize floodproofing efforts. The Wastewater Treatment Plant in Burlington City was built to the 1992 flood elevation which means that it may not be sufficient in mitigating the projected flood depths of 100 year or 200 year flooding events according to FEMA. Should the Wastewater Treatment Plant need to close during severe flooding events, it would affect much of the city's ability to treat residential and commercial wastewater. In addition, the City should elevate its critical mechanical systems and components including emergency and backup generators to higher floors within structures and facilities to reduce the impacts of flooding on critical services and significantly reduce recovery times during flooding events.

#### Applicable Areas

Critical Infrastructure Asset, Wastewater Treatment Plant, Burlington City Public Works Facility

#### Goals Met



#### Estimated Cost

\$\$\$\$

#### Duration

2024



#### Implementation Agents

FEMA, NJDEP, Burlington City



Homes Elevated Since Superstorm Sandy, Source: Jersey Shore



# Conclusion

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Burlington is a city with a rich heritage and cultural identity, features that these recommendations will promote and reinforce. Furthermore, this plan recommends development that provides greater access to the waterfront and transit, as well as approaches to flood mitigation that benefit rather than burden residents. Youth engagement and community-oriented programming are also emphasized, especially given the growing number of families and young people in the City. With these recommendations and strategies, Burlington can become the thriving, resilient, accessible, dynamic, and engaged city envisioned for 2045 and beyond.

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