

# Watsessing Avenue Station Transit Hub Plan

Bloomfield, New Jersey  
February 2019



Connecting People, Places, and Potential.



American Planning Association  
**New Jersey Chapter**

*Making Great Communities Happen*



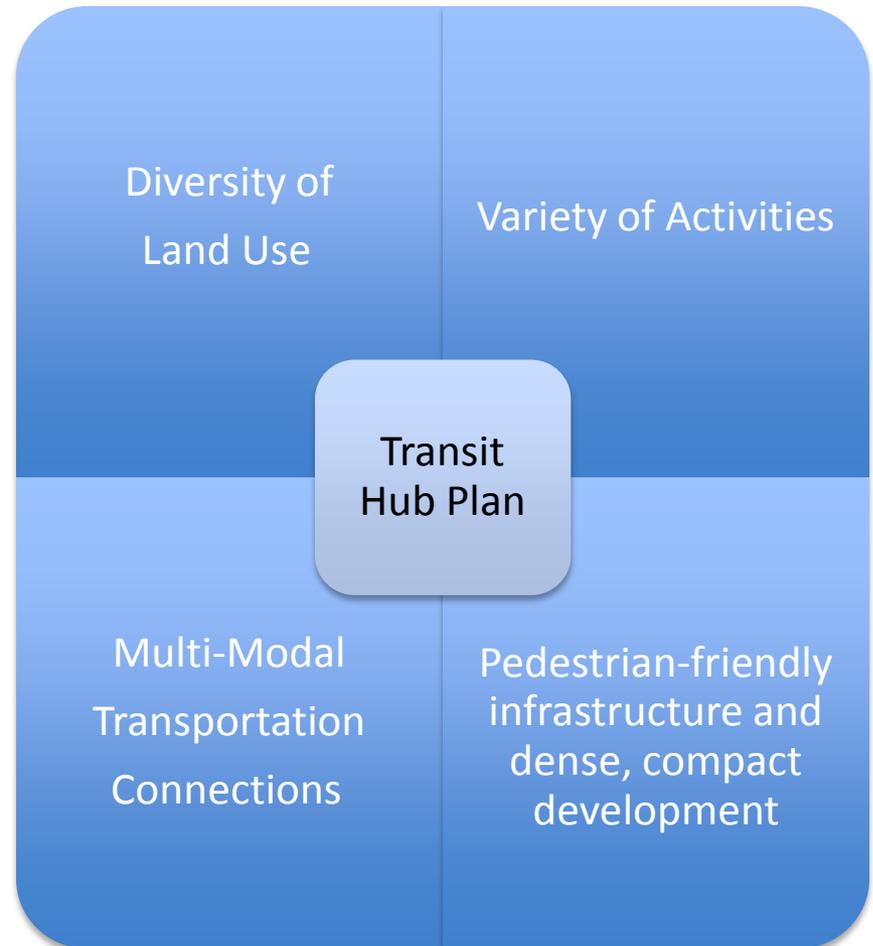
# Project Team Members

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

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

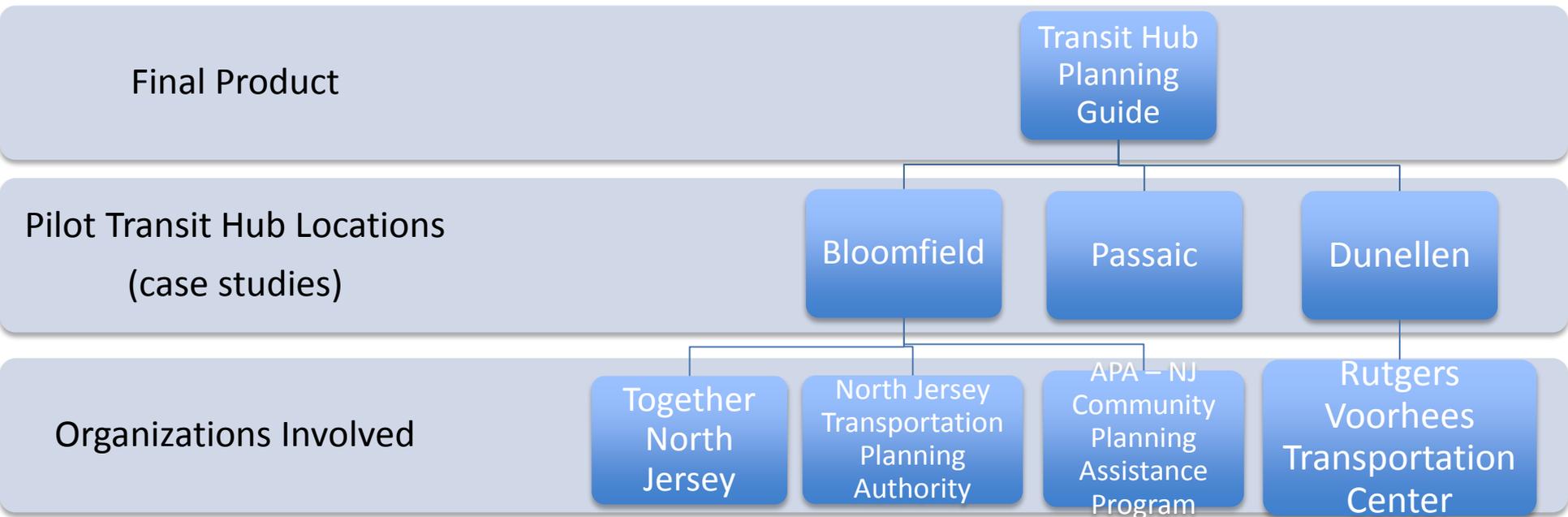
# Transit Hub Plan – Strategic Analysis

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



# Transit Hub Planning Guide

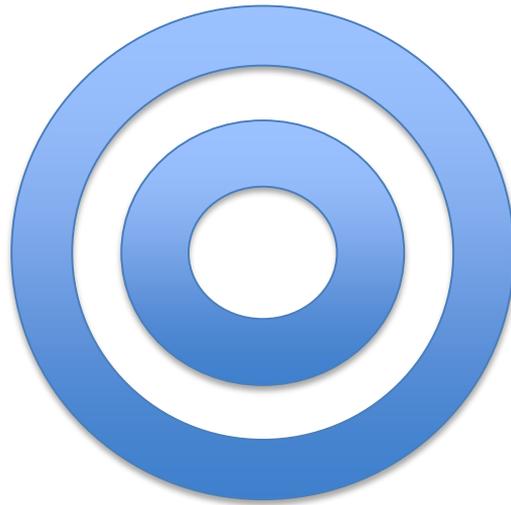
The following organizations and towns were involved in the creation of a future Transit Hub Planning Guide for municipalities in New Jersey



# Bloomfield Township's Goals for Watsessing Transit Hub



Economic  
Development



Safety

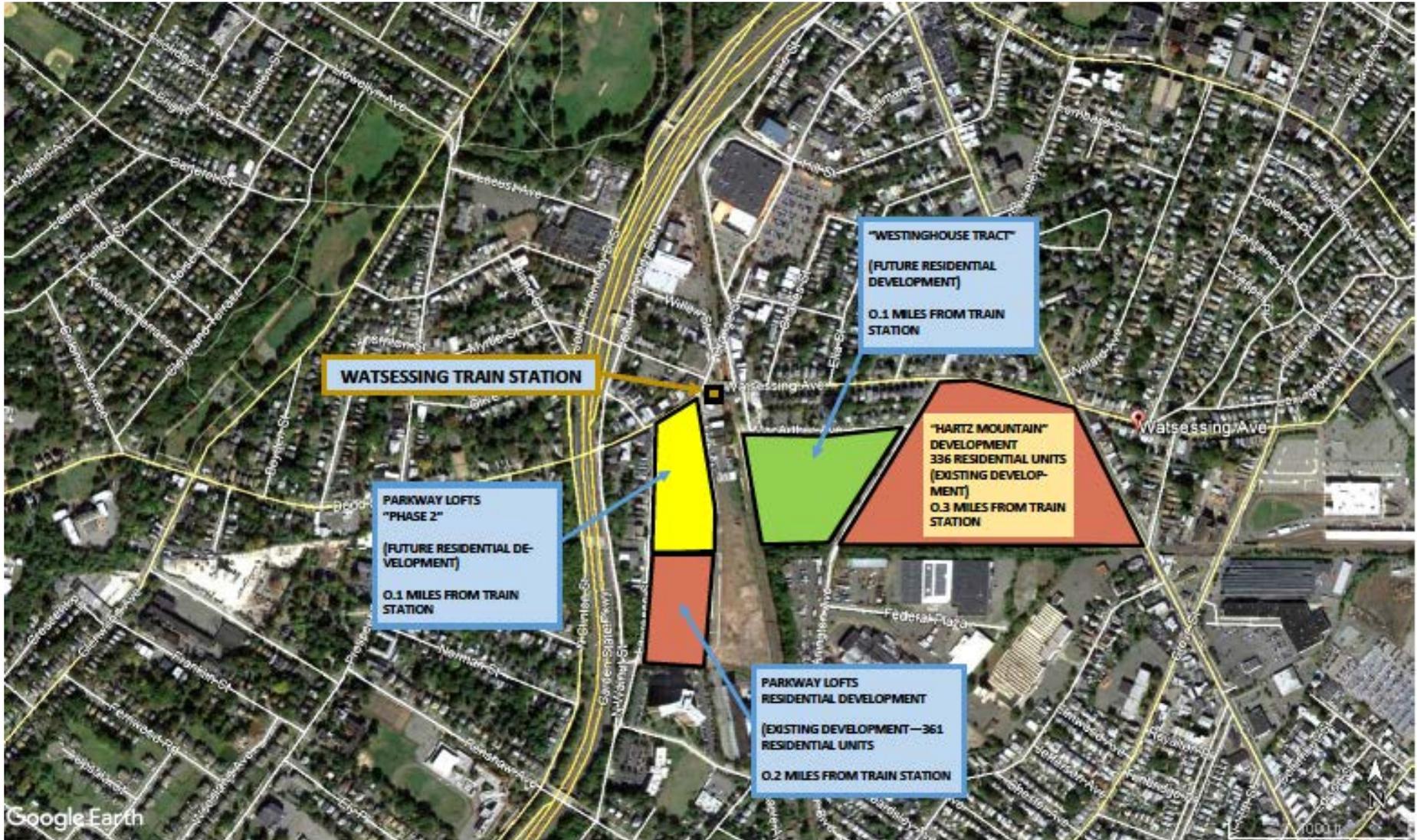


Sense of Place

# Process



# Project Area



# Field and Walking Assessment Observations



## Retail and Commercial Development

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



## Traffic

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



## Sense of Place

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

# Field and Walking Assessment Observations



## Safety concerns in station

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



## Outside of station needs facelift

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



## Streetscape

- Sidewalks are cracked, lack of lighting
- No benches, trash cans or greenery
- Crosswalks need to be defined

# Economic Development

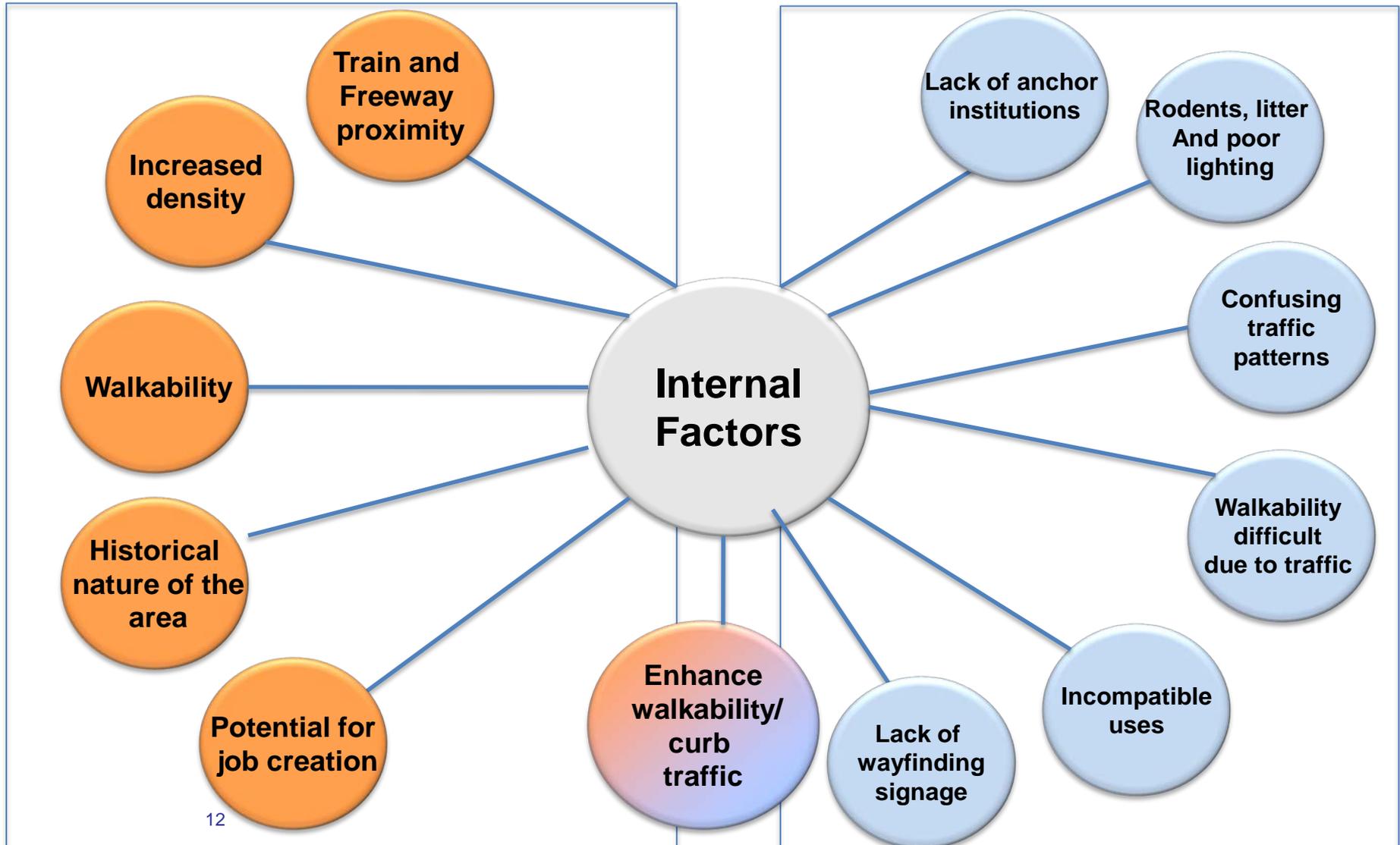
# SWOT Analysis

- A SWOT analysis focusing on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the retail corridor surrounding Watsessing Station was held on 12/11/2018.
- Mayor Michael Venezia, Council members Sarah Cruz and Rich Rockwell, and Township Administrator, Matthew Watkins, were in attendance
- Approximately 10 business owners, landlords, as well as members of the public were in attendance

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

## Strengths

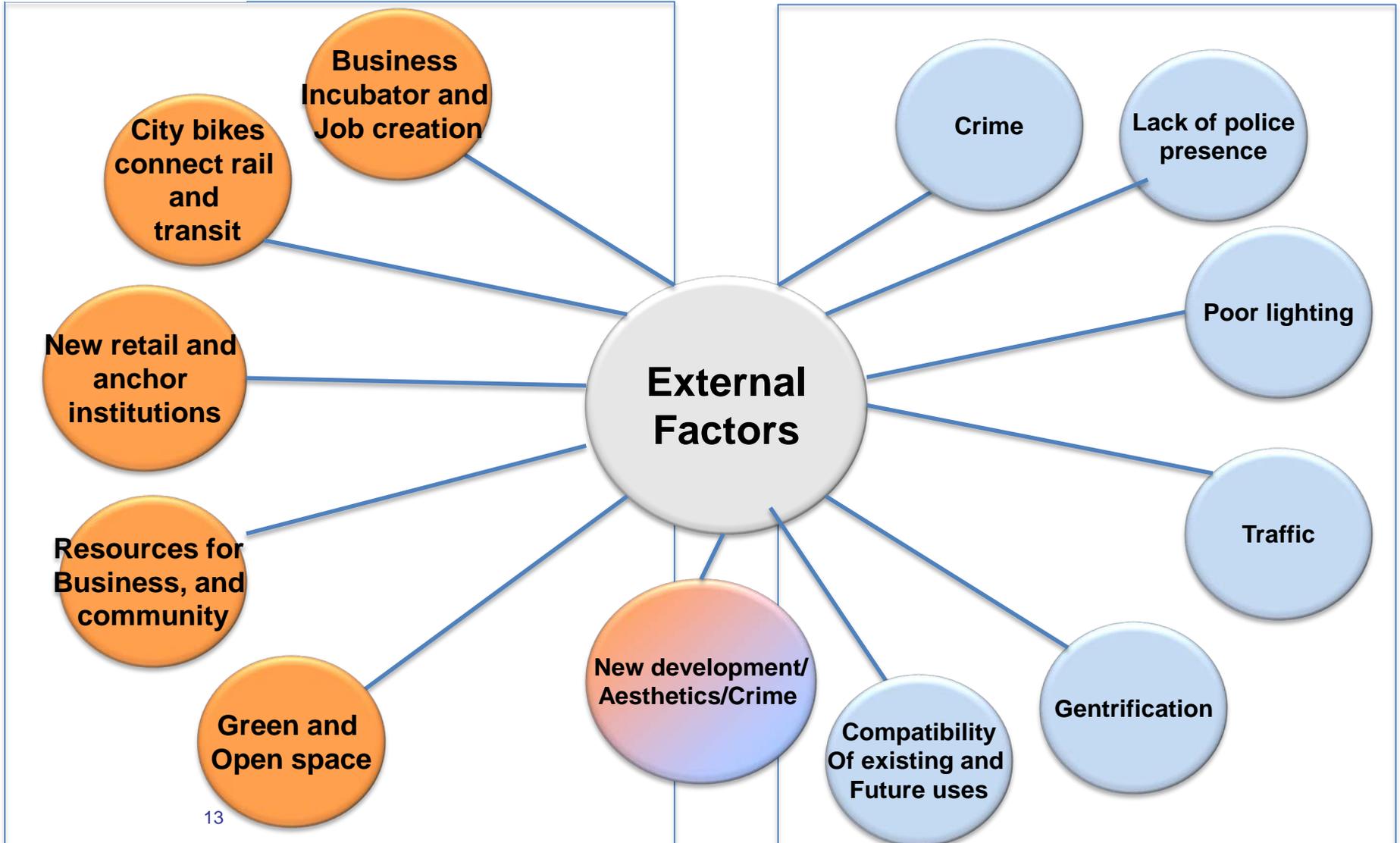
## Weaknesses



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

### Opportunities

### Threats



# Recommendations

## Create an Economic Development Strategic Plan

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

## Establish an Economic Development Advisory Committee

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

## Hire a Leasing and Management Agency

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

# Recommendations

## Streamline Permit Review Process

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

## Create a Pedestrian Friendly Environment

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

## Pursue New Jersey Main Street Designation

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

# Public Art

## Placemaking

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

## Example

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

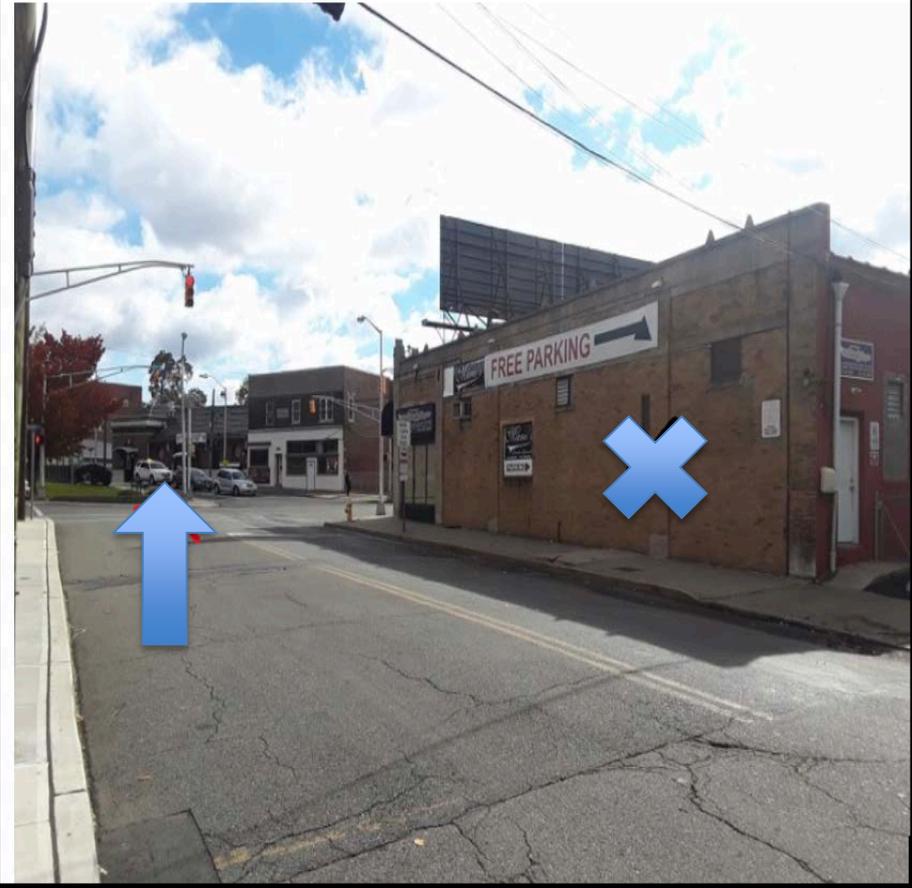
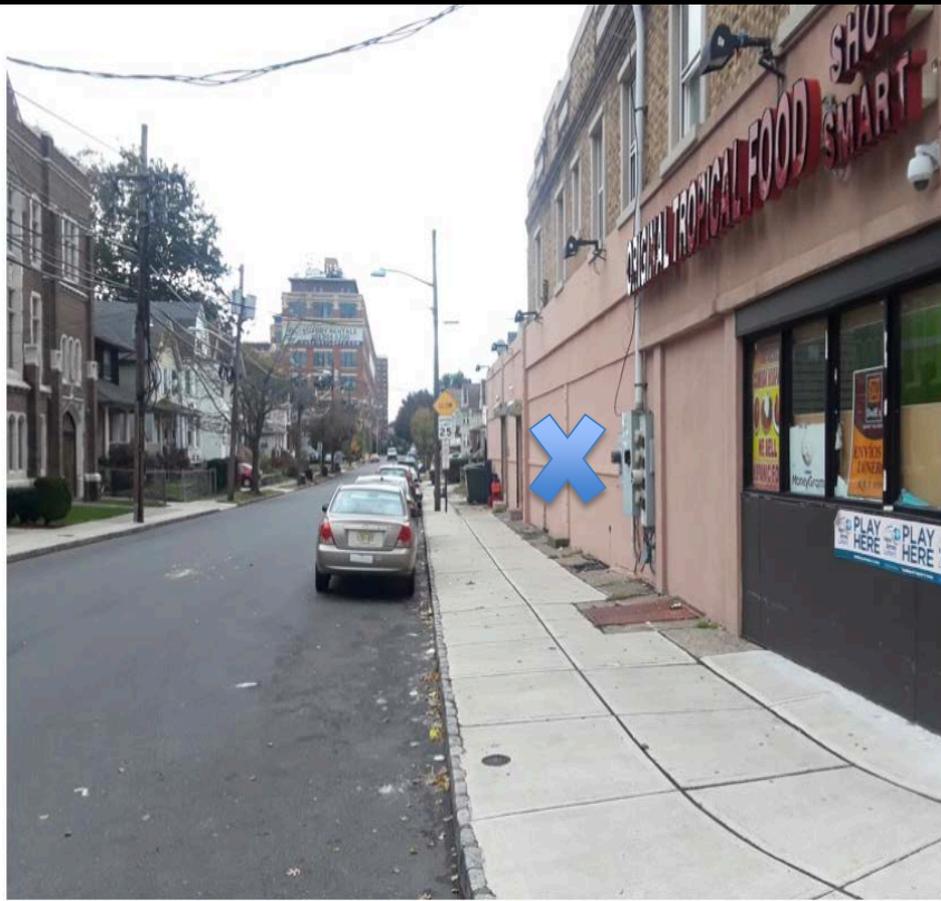
## Location

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

## Artists

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

# Possible Locations



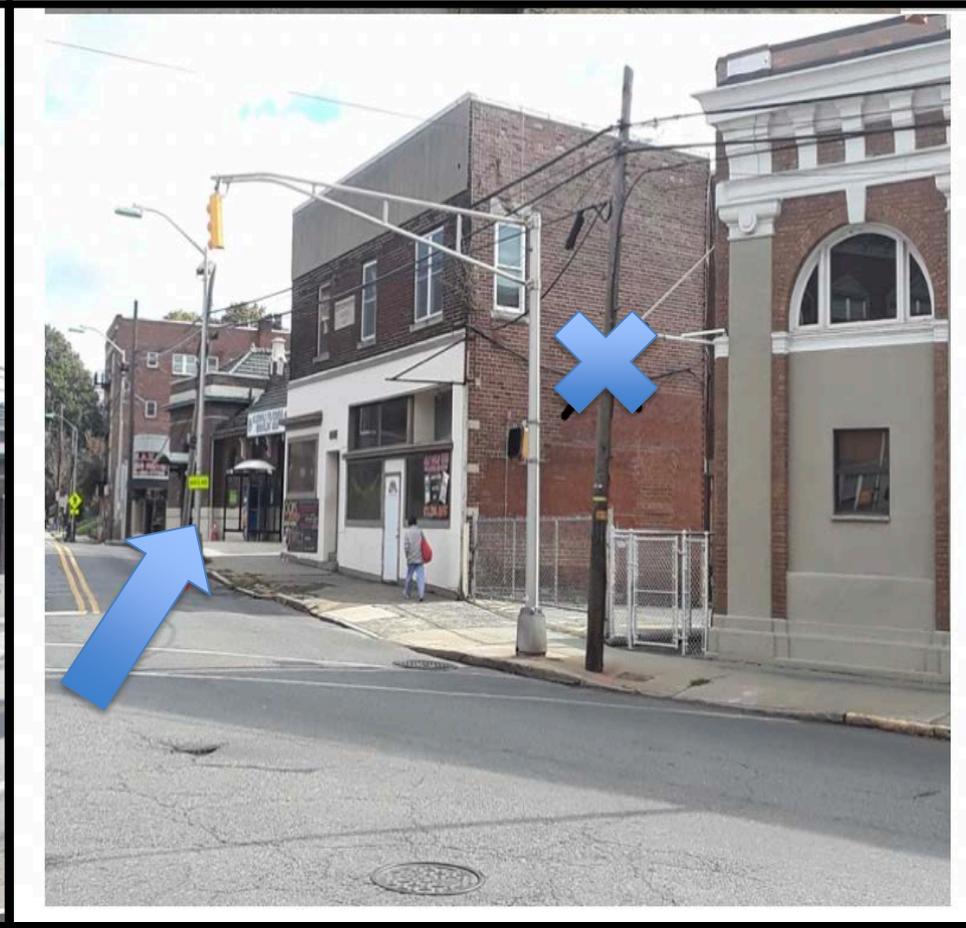
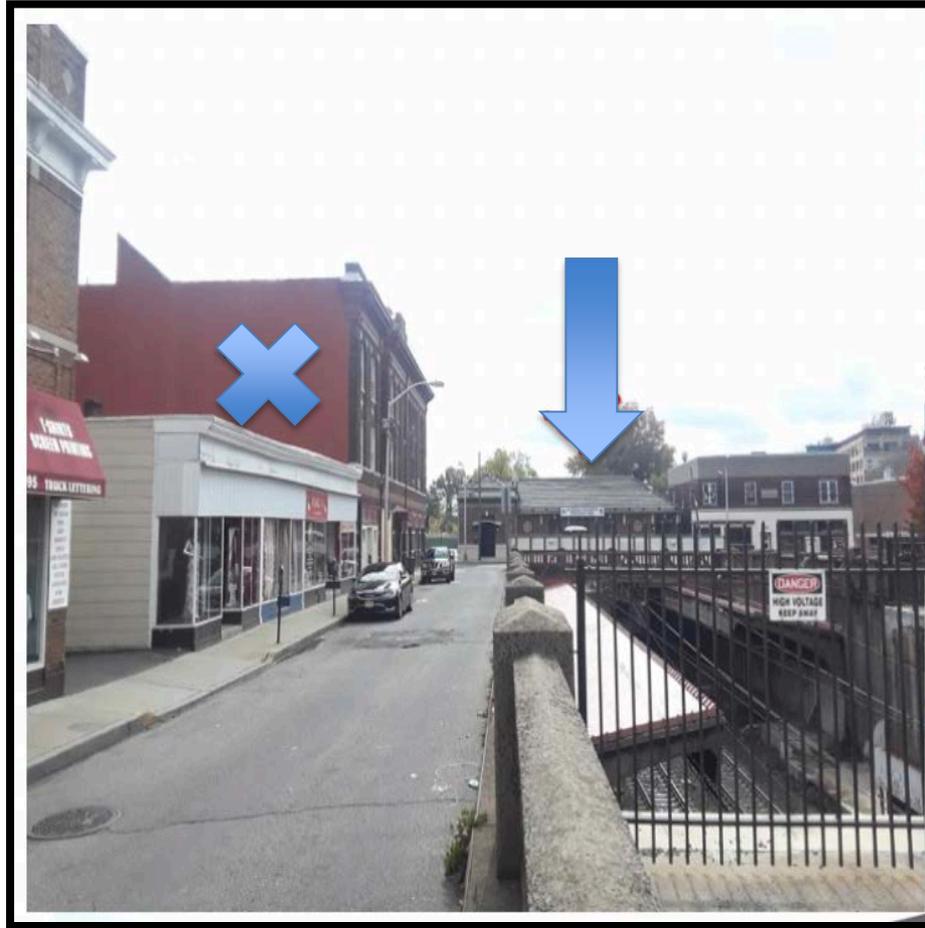
Lawrence St.

Myrtle St.

 Potential location for art

 Station Location

# Possible Locations



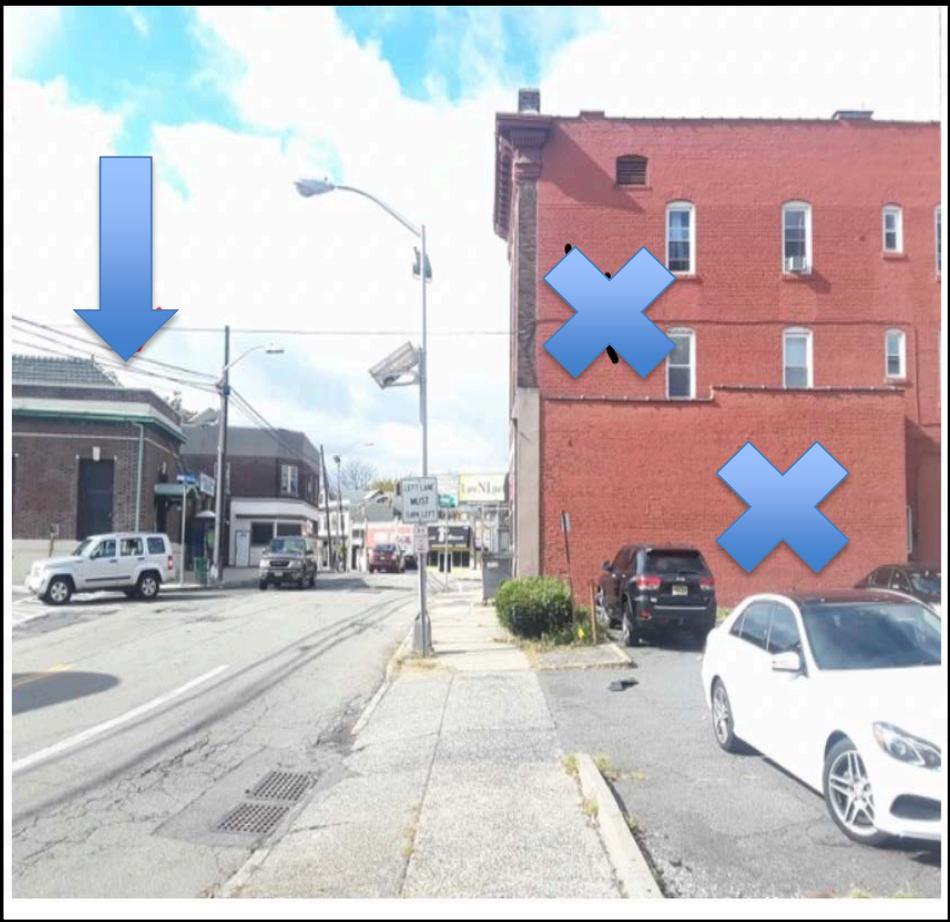
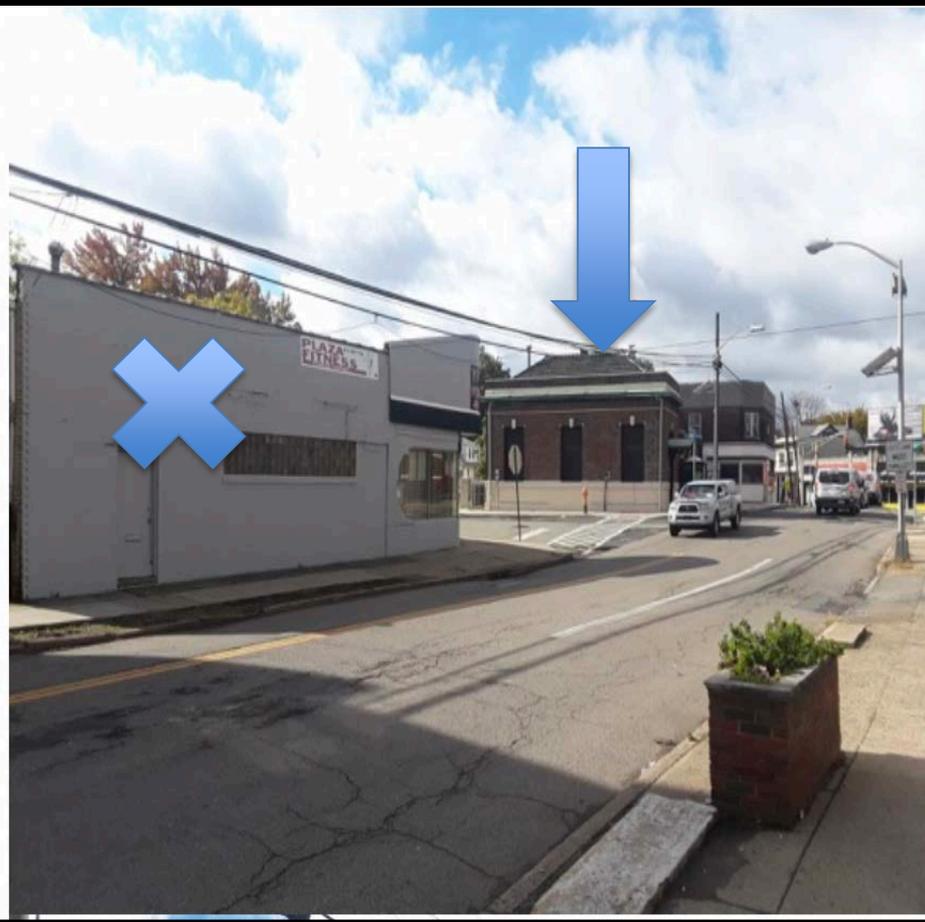
Molter Place

Watsessing Ave

 Potential location for art

 Station Location

# Possible Locations



Watsessing Ave

Watsessing Ave.

 Potential location for art       Station Location

## Artist Needs

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

## Costs

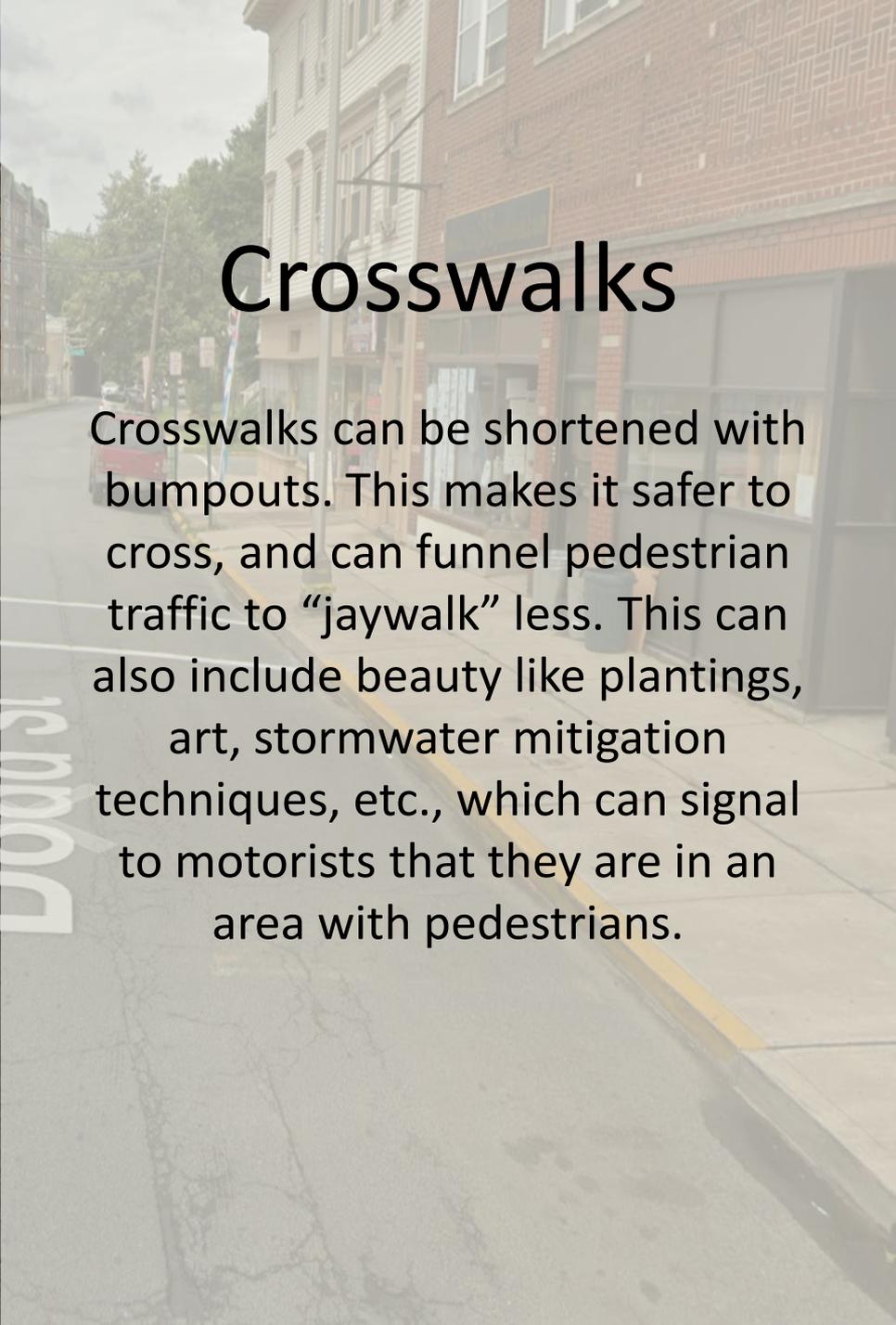
- Compensation for artist time and travel
- Ranges from \$500 a day to \$45,000 overall
- Local artists will be more affordable

Walking around Watsessing Station



# Crosswalks

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





Dodd St

STATE LAW  
STOP  
PEDESTRIAN  
CROSSING  
BEHOLD THE WALK

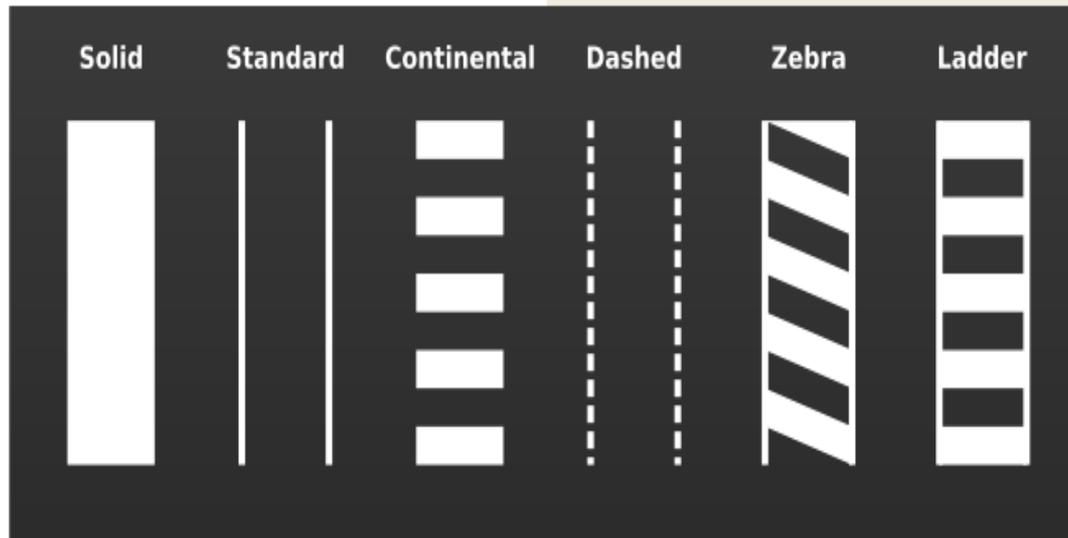


RED SIGNAGE

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



## Some Crosswalk Designs





Beautiful,  
professional  
option

A photograph of a city street featuring a crosswalk with white stripes. A yellow sign with a pedestrian symbol stands in the middle of the crosswalk. Several cars are parked along the street, and buildings are visible in the background. The scene is captured from a slightly elevated angle, showing the sidewalk and a small landscaped area in the foreground.

“Lighter,  
Quicker,  
Cheaper”  
Approach

BLOOMFIELD POLICE/EMERGENCY  
BENEVOLENT ASSN.

Way-  
faring  
Sign!

OH... THAT'S  
THE WAY TO  
THE LIGHT RAIL

LawNJ.net

Restaurants



LAUNDRY





Temporarily  
Closed to Traffic

Molter Place –  
Pedestrian Space

# Car Sharing in Bloomfield

# New Jersey's Transportation Landscape

New Jersey is the densest state in the country at 1,210 people per sq mile

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

6.24 million licensed drivers in the state of NJ

71.4% of New Jersey households own two or more cars

2.12 cars per household in the State of New Jersey

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

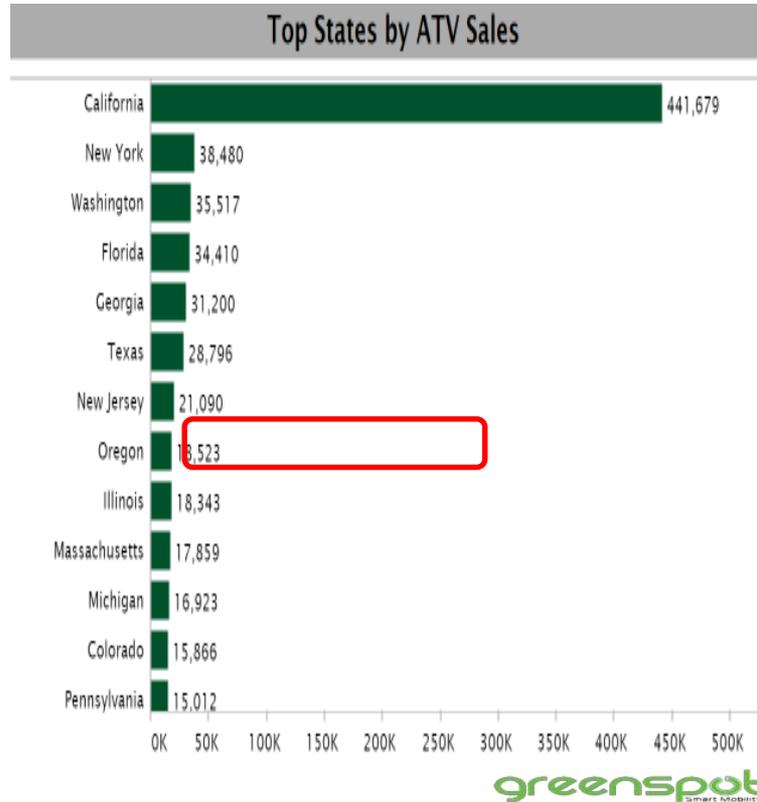
# New Jersey's EV and Shared Mobility Landscape

## New Jersey Electric Vehicle Sales

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

## Shared Mobility Throughout the State

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



# Electric Vehicles – Save Money While Saving the Environment

## New Jersey Price Per Gallon

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

## Average Grams of CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions in Zip Code 07505 - per Mile

95% of the day our cars sit idle

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

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

Gasoline only

381

Plug-In Hybrid Electric

197

Battery Electric

131

# EV car share and eBikes for Watsessing Station





# Crime and Safety

# Crime Complaints – Bloomfield Township

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

Source: Bloomfield Police Department Crime Stat Year-to-date – November 18, 2018

# Rutgers Bloustein Study

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

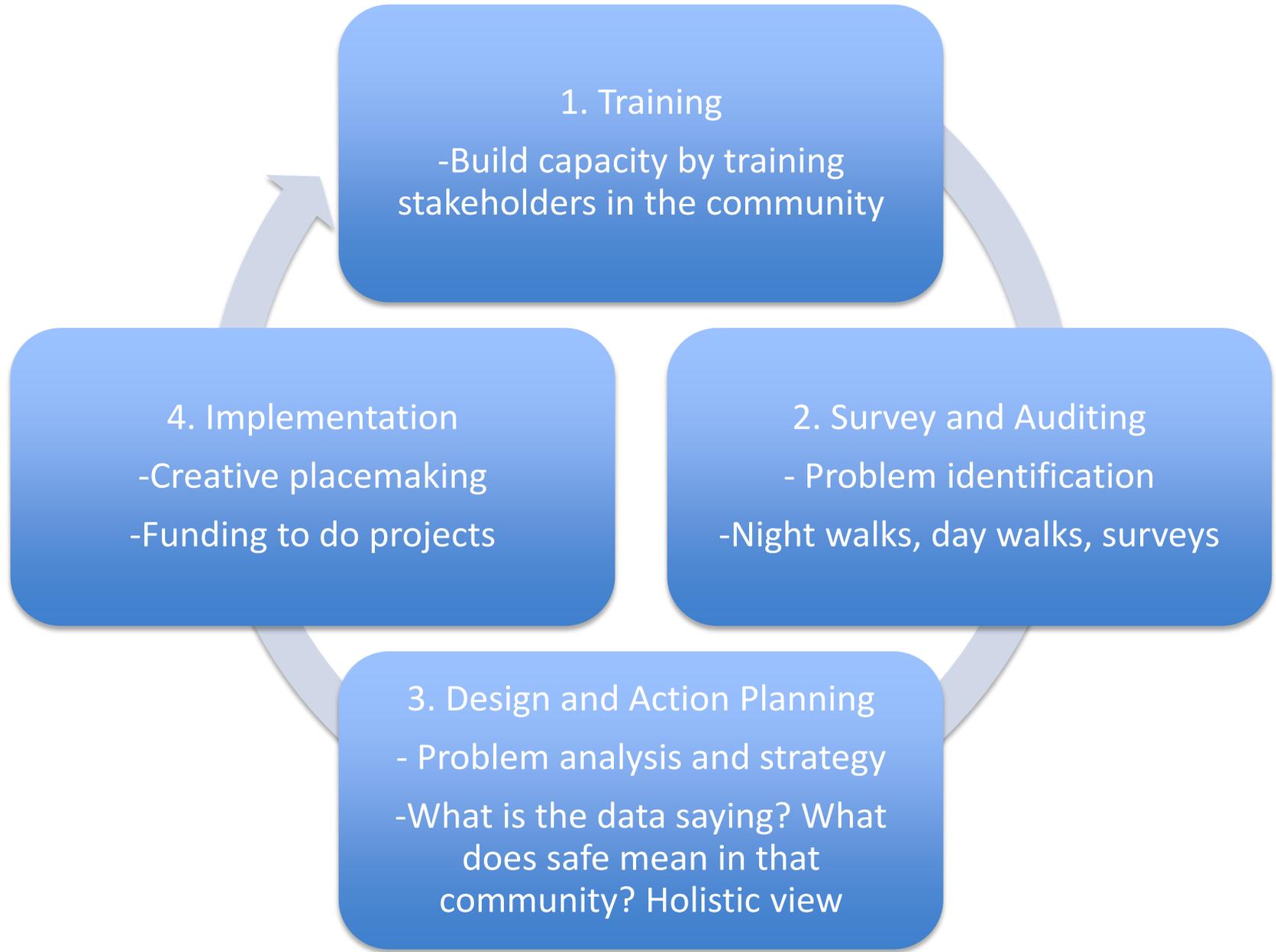
# Rutgers Bloustein Study

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

# Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

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

# CPTED Process



# Next Steps

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

# Next Steps (continued)

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

# Next Steps (continued)

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

# Appendix

# Artist interested in the project

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

# Federal Grants and Resources

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

# State Grants and Resources

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

# State Grants and Resources

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

# Other Grants and Resources

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