

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO NEWARK'S LAND USE ELEMENT OF THE MASTER PLAN

1.1.1 Purpose and Contents of a Master Plan

The Master Plan is a comprehensive guide for future growth and development of a community. In New Jersey, under the State's Municipal Land Use Law, the Master Plan must include a statement of objectives, a land use plan element, and may include other elements such as a housing plan or circulation plan, utility service plan, a recreation plan, a conservation plan, an economic plan, a historic preservation plan, a recycling plan and other plan elements to meet the community needs.

1.1.2 The Purpose of the Land Use Element

The Land Use Element of the Master Plan for the City of Newark is the most important and central element of the City's Master Plan, one which sets the framework for and incorporates the land use implications for all of the other elements of the Master Plan. It is also the basis upon which the City's zoning ordinance and other land use regulations must be based. In Newark's case, a full revision to the Master Plan—last prepared in 1990 and reexamined in 1999—is to be prepared in the near future. However, the Land Use Element is being prepared first, for a number of reasons.

First, under New Jersey law, it is the one mandatory element of the master plan.

Second, a community's zoning ordinance must be consistent with its master plan. Since Newark intends to comprehensively amend its zoning in the very near future, the land use element of the master plan must be prepared as a basis upon which the new zoning can be adopted.

Third, both the master plan and zoning ordinance of Newark are very much outdated. The last inventory of land uses was undertaken in Newark in the 1950s; the last comprehensive revision of the zoning predates the inventory. To undertake a fully comprehensive revision of the zoning ordinance and to bring it in line with modern techniques of land use control and to address all of the land use regulatory issues in one step is a monumental task. To accomplish this in the most cost-efficient and expeditious manner, the first step is to provide a land use element which serves as a citywide framework for more detailed neighborhood-level planning efforts, and for undertaking the other elements of the master plan in a coordinated and comprehensive manner. Completing the Land Use Element first

and amending the zoning ordinance now will allow the land use regulations of the City to be significantly updated to guide decisions on current development rather than leaving the older existing zoning in place until the entire master plan is completed.

Fourth, because Newark's zoning has been outdated for some time, in the last three decades most development projects in the City were undertaken through Redevelopment Plans or by variances, i.e., by circumventing the zoning ordinance. Development decisions had to be made on an individual, ad hoc basis without proper consideration as to how such projects would affect the City as a whole, and without determining the interrelationship between one development and another. The continued absence of an updated zoning ordinance at a time when Newark is experiencing a development boom could lead to irreversible and harmful land use decisions that must be addressed without delay.

Fifth, while the other elements of the master plan have not yet been fully prepared, this Land Use Element is cognizant of the issues related to them, and reflects and incorporates such considerations into the Land Use Plan. This includes such issues as planning for and providing for schools, parks and other community facilities; promoting economic development; providing for recreation, conservation and historic preservation; and for providing adequate circulation and utility infrastructure. While more detailed planning at the neighborhood level is warranted to fully plan and provide for the needs of the community in the future, these elements cannot be completed without a revised Land Use Element and updated Zoning Ordinance.

1.1.3 Preparation of the Land Use Element

The preparation of the Land Use Element commenced with a detailed inventory of all land uses in the City on a lot-by-lot and block-by-block basis. Population, employment and housing trends and changes going back to 1980 were analyzed. The history of Newark, and the effect of such history on the City's built form, was analyzed. Meetings, interviews and focus groups with staff, community leaders, developers and other City stakeholders were then held to discuss issues and opportunities related to new development and redevelopment in Newark, and to formulate goals and a direction for change in Newark's master plan and land use regulations. A master plan task force was convened, representing a broad range of interests, to help guide the City's master plan reexamination, and to specifically provide feedback and direction on the Land Use Plan. A series of monthly meetings, held over a period of one year, were convened to solicit public input on the Land Use Element and other elements of the master plan reexamination. More recently, major studies and policy initiatives which have implications for Newark's future, particularly with respect to land use development, were ana-

lyzed, along with recent trends in development. All of these studies and input were channeled into drafting, amending and refining the Land Use Plan for the City of Newark, culminating in this revised draft Land Use Element.

1.2 LOCATION AND NATURAL CONDITIONS

1.2.1 Location

The City of Newark is located in the northeastern segment of the State of New Jersey, on the Passaic River, 10 miles west of New York City and east of the Watchung Mountains.

1.2.2 Topography

The topography of Newark begins near sea level in the east and rises to an elevation of more than 230 feet at the western edge of the city. Much of the City's eastern side has a ground elevation of from 5 to 20 feet.

Two ridges run southerly through Newark paralleling the Passaic River. These two ridges are more pronounced in the mid-northern and mid-southern sections of the city. Moving westerly from the Passaic River, the first ridge is formed by an increase in elevation from 20 to 50 feet. The terrain then rises moderately to 80 feet, where the second ridge rises to 120 feet. A high point of more than 160 feet is reached in the west Newark section and then slopes gently away to the city boundary on the north and west and to an elevation of 120 feet to the south near the center of Newark.

In the southern section of the city, a ridge rises from an elevation of 30 feet to an elevation of 80 feet.

An elevation of approximately 230 feet is reached near the western edge of the city. From this high point the topography slopes gently downward to the north, south and west, rising again to 220 feet in the extreme western portion of the Vailsburg neighborhood.

1.2.3 Soils

There are two types of soils in the Newark area—organic and mineral. Organic soils are the accumulation of the partially decayed remains of plants that grow in shallow water which have gradually built

up thick deposits of peat and muck. Mineral soils are formed by the erosion of many types of rock material.

The soils in central and west Newark are composed of moranic till (Wisconsin glacier) made up of clay, silt and sand with gravel, cobbles and boulders. Portions of the central Newark area are underlain at shallow depths by red sandstone and in west Newark by red shale.

In southwest Newark, and in the extreme northern part of Newark, the soils are made up of silty sands, gravels and gravelly sands. Sandstone particles are most prevalent.

The remainder of the area, excluding the low-lying eastern area, is composed of non-residual materials deposited by the Wisconsin glacier. The soils are relatively homogeneous with silty sands, sandy gravels and gravelly sands.

The low-lying eastern areas have soils which are made of decomposed organic matter from two to five feet deep composed of silt and clay. The record left by the clays beneath this area shows that thousands of years ago a glacial Lake Hackensack existed as a freshwater lake over the Meadows. Since that time, the area has been covered by a great marsh, then a forest which was destroyed by the rising sea level only a few hundred years ago.

1.2.4 Drainage and Flooding

The internal drainage characteristics of the soils throughout the Newark area are generally "imperfect." This type of internal drainage is characterized by slow or sluggish water absorption. Only in the Weequahic Park area is internal drainage rated as good to excellent. Drainage near the Passaic River is rated imperfect to good.

Surface drainage throughout the Newark area is generally dependent on surface slope. Because of the "imperfect" absorption qualities of Newark's soil, the amount of surface runoff is considerable, sometimes resulting in temporary flooding in various parts of the City.

1.3 Brief History of Newark

Founded in 1666 by European settlers who arrived on the banks of Passaic River in what is now the Central Business District, Newark has been known as an industrial and trade center for more than two

centuries. As early as the first years of the 19th century, Newark had port facilities, establishing a working waterfront that exists to this day. Freight railroads ran through the northern part of the City and around the Ironbound (hence the neighborhood's name), allowing industries to be built away from the waterfront. The older industrial areas near Verona Avenue, west of Branch Brook Park, and around Central Avenue are remnants of this industrial expansion. With industrial expansion came population growth.

In the late 19th Century, Newark annexed the areas known as North Newark and Weequahic. Vailsburg was annexed in 1905, establishing Newark's distinctive silhouette.

The first part of the 20th Century was a period of immense economic and population growth for Newark. From 1900 to 1920, the City's population grew by 68 percent. In 1915, Port Newark was created, and in 1929, Newark Airport was developed, strengthening Newark's status as a center for moving as well as producing goods. The Port and the Airport are still amongst the most significant generators of economic growth in the City. More industries were built or expanded, thanks to improved production methods and a growing labor pool of newly arriving immigrants to the US. At a time when few middle-class residents had cars, downtown Newark became a major shopping center for Essex County residents. Several major companies and utilities established their headquarters in Newark through the mid-part of the century, including Prudential Insurance Company, and Public Service Electric & Gas.

Like many centralized urban areas throughout the US, a decline in population and employment which Newark had already begun to experience in the 1930s accelerated in the years following World War II due to suburbanization. With interstate highways opening Essex and Union Counties to development, many families moved to these growing suburbs. This trend accelerated in the aftermath of the 1967 civil disturbances in the City. Malls and suburban shopping centers outside of Newark drew retail dollars from the Newark's Central Business District. Beginning in the late 1950s, many industries of longstanding in Newark moved to the southern states and overseas to take advantage of cheaper labor and the absence of trade unions. The population, which peaked at almost 442,000 in 1930 had declined to 275,000 by 1990. It fell somewhat further in the early 1990s and then increased over the latter part of the decade, to equal the population of 1990.

In the 1980s, corporate and legal office development centered in Newark's Central Business District. This was followed in the 1990s with a more widespread renaissance in the industrial and housing sectors, with thousands of units of new housing, a revived downtown with new cultural and entertainment

related uses, and new airport-related uses such as hotels, around Newark Airport. By the mid-1990s Newark was experiencing growth in both population and employment, and had begun to reverse the urban decline that had occurred in the City over the previous 60 years.

1.4 THE POPULATION OF NEWARK

1.4.1 Historic and Recent Population Changes

Newark's population growth in the early part of the century followed by a decline in the latter part of the century has followed a classic American urban pattern. With the growth of immigration and burgeoning industrial production up through the Second World War and air travel in the first half of the century, Newark saw steady growth through the 1930s, when its population peaked at 442,000. The City's population remained more or less stable for the next 20 years with only a slight decline in population. However, in the post World War II years, Newark saw a steady decline in population and employment. The building of major highways which linked Newark with the suburbs allowed employees to commute to Newark's downtown and other places of employment. Civil unrest and racial tensions in the 1960s and 1970s accelerated this decline. By 1970, Newark's population had declined to 382,000 residents, a 14% decline over 20 years. Globalization and the availability of inexpensive labor in the southern and western United States and overseas through the 1970s and 1980s led to further declines in industrial employment in Newark. Finally, advances in office automation, and a shift in the US economy (particularly in the northeast US) towards the service as opposed to manufacturing sectors of the economy, and the completion of the US highway interstate system saw the development of suburban office parks outside of the central cities. With fewer available jobs, residential population continued to decline. By 1990, the City population was down to 275,000 residents, a further decline of 28% over 20 years. This decline slowed through the middle of the decade and by 1996, when this decline finally halted, Newark had a population of 269,000 residents. The population has increased since then, and in 2000 had climbed to 273,000.

In the latter half of the 1990s, the trend of declining population reversed, thanks to a stronger regional and national economy, and various housing and economic initiatives undertaken by the City, community groups and private investors. An increase in employment and shopping opportunities in the City, along with the replacement of deteriorated and substandard housing for a large proportion of the population, as well as the presence of new cultural and entertainment-related facilities began to restore Newark's image as a desirable place to live, work and play. A significant portion of the population growth that has occurred in the recent past is attributable to immigration. According to the Cen-

sus Bureau, between 1990 and 1995, 6,300 people moved into the City. In contrast, 37,000 of the City's residents had moved out of Newark in the first half of the decade.

Newark's population reached 273,000 by the year 2000, an overall decrease of 1% from the 1990 population. By the year 2010, the City is expected to increase by 22,000 additional persons for a projected population of 295,000. By the year 2020, there are expected to be 300,000 residents in the City. (Table 1 and Figure 1 illustrate Newark's actual and projected population.)

Table 2 provides a breakdown of demographic characteristics and changes between 1980 and 2000. The number of households in Newark in 2000 is very similar to that in 1990; the ratio of male to female is also almost unchanged; the median age has increased slightly from 29 to 31; and the racial makeup has also changed slightly. Fewer whites and African-Americans reside in the City now than in 1990, with a greater percentage of the population being of Hispanic or Asian descent.

The total number of housing units has decreased by over 2,000, but this is probably attributable to the demolition of public housing units which were already vacant and unoccupied, since the number of occupied housing units is almost the same. Other positive housing trends include a higher percentage of home ownership and a decreasing vacancy rate.

1.4.2 Impact of Population Trends on Newark's Built Form

The major population booms and declines that have occurred in Newark's recent and past history have shaped the built landscape of the City. High demands for housing led to multi-story apartment and mixed-use buildings along Springfield Avenue, Clinton Avenue, South Orange Avenue, Bloomfield Avenue, Broadway and Ferry Street, which were served by trolley lines. Detached single- and two-family houses were built on standard lots of 25 or 50 feet wide by 100 feet deep. Because the majority of Newark's population did not own cars prior to World War II, retail uses developed along public transportation corridors, and within walking distance of housing, i.e., along the major

Table 1

**Historic and Projected Population, 1930 to 2020
City of Newark**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>
1930	442,337		
1940	429,760	(12,577)	-3%
1950	438,776	9,016	2%
1960	405,220	(33,556)	-8%
1970	381,930	(23,290)	-6%
1980	329,248	(52,682)	-14%
1990	275,221	(54,027)	-16%
1996	268,510	(6,711)	-2%
2000	273,546	5,036	2%
2010 (projected)	295,000	12,881	8%
2020 (projected)	300,959	5,959	2%

Sources: New Jersey Office of State Planning
City of Newark
New Jersey Municipal Data Book, 2003

Historic and Projected Population: City of Newark, 1930-2020

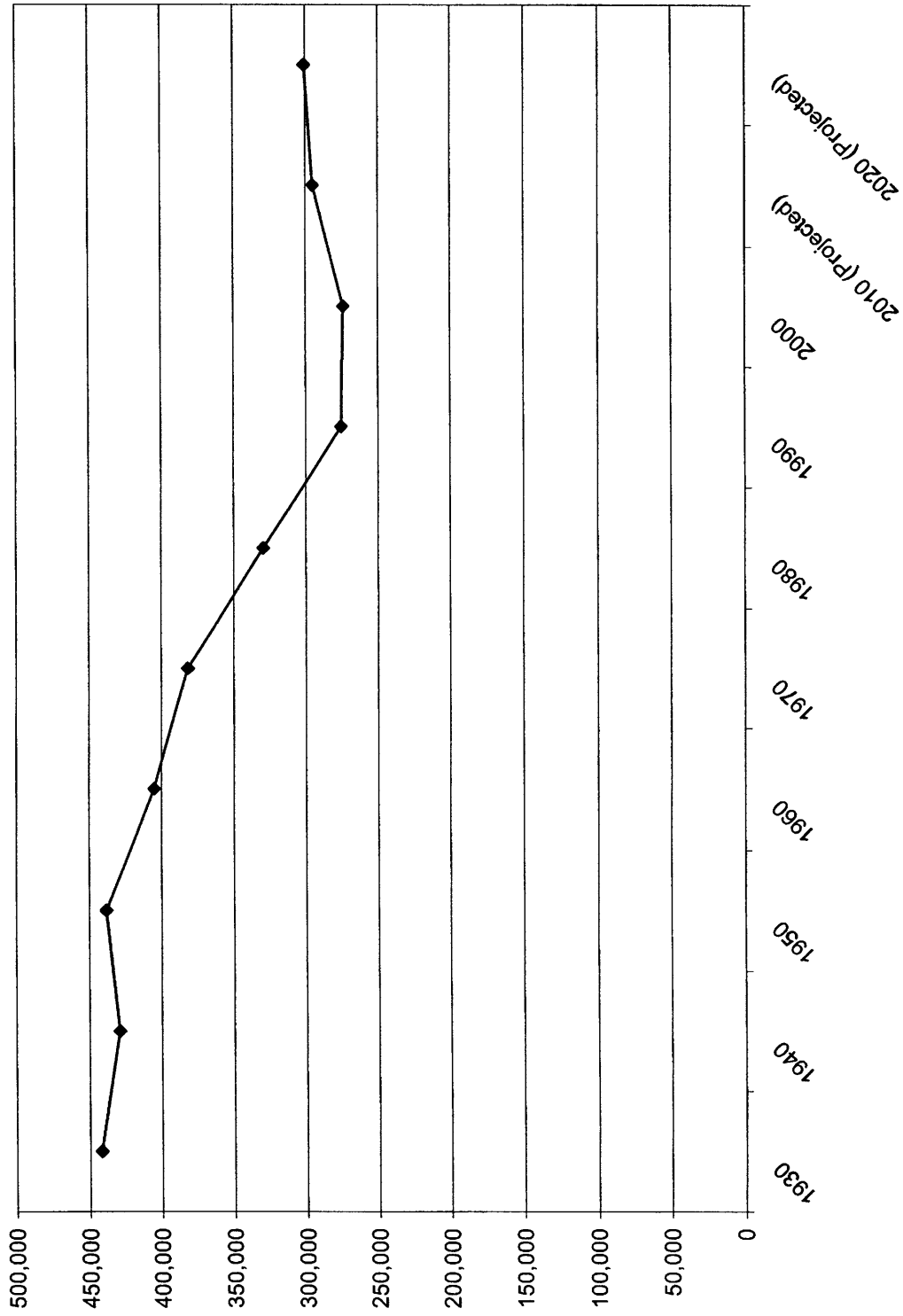


Figure 1

Sources:
New Jersey Office of State Planning
City of Newark
U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Demographic Profile

Table 2
Demographic Characteristics of the City of Newark, 1980-2000

	<u>1980</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>%</u>
TOTAL PERSONS	329,210		275,184		273,546	
FAMILIES	78,245		62,661		61,999	
HOUSEHOLDS	110,900		91,533		91,382	
AGE/SEX						
Median Age total	27		29		31	
Male	152,680	46%	131,529	48%	132,701	49%
Female	176,530	54%	143,655	52%	140,845	51%
RACE						
White (non-Hispanic)	74,597	23%	45,230	16%	38,950	14%
Black (non-Hispanic)	188,271	57%	153,666	56%	146,250	53%
American Indian, Asian or Other Race	36,088	11%	35,565	13%	55,199	20%
Hispanic	61,565	19%	71,762	26%	80,622	29%
HOUSING						
Total units	121,374	100%	102,473	100%	100,141	100%
Occupied housing units			91,552	89%	91,382	91%
Owner-occupied units			21,136	23%	21,738	24%
Renter-occupied units			70,416	77%	69,644	76%
Vacant housing units			10,921	11%	8,759	9%

Sources:

New Jersey Office of State Planning
US Census Bureau, 2000 Demographic Profile

arterials traversing Newark's neighborhoods. Such retail areas served residents on foot, or those who utilized the bus and trolley lines rather than those who owned automobiles. Because jobs were concentrated in the Central Business District and in the Down Neck and Port Newark areas, housing in the neighboring communities which served people working in these areas were built at higher densities. Neighborhoods such as Upper Vailsburg and Forest Hill, which contain a higher proportion of single-family detached houses on larger lot sizes, served populations that commuted elsewhere for work and those who were able to afford automobile ownership. The period following World War II in particular Newark saw a decrease in population and housing density.

In the past ten years, many of the high-rise housing complexes which had been built to accommodate families with moderate incomes have been torn down, and others have been slated for demolition. Residents from these housing complexes have been relocated to lower-density infill housing located throughout the City. Both the decline of population concentrations in the neighborhoods through which the traditional retail corridors passed, as well as more widespread automobile ownership, eroded the economic base of the retail corridors. The development of shopping centers and malls, many of which were developed outside of the City's borders has further weakened many of these retail corridors. While scattered retail enclaves remain, in general these retail areas are substantially weaker than they were 30 and 40 years ago.

1.5 EMPLOYMENT IN NEWARK

For most of this century, Newark has been one of the region's most vital centers of manufacturing, air passenger and waterborne cargo handling, and headquarters for the insurance industry. Similar to trends in population, Newark's job base and economic activity peaked in the 1950s, and declined steadily up through the early 1990s. Private sector employment reached an all-time high of roughly 210,000 in 1953, and dropped to almost half that amount by 1991. That year, private sector employment was down to 111,000 (see Table 3). However, employment and economic activity has also seen a slight upswing since the mid-1990s, and now combined private and public sector employment in Newark is almost 135,000.

As late as the mid-1980s, manufacturing was the backbone of Newark's economy, accounting for the largest sector of employment in the City. All the same, it has fallen steadily since the 1960s, and now represents little more than 10 percent of the city's employment base. This trend has followed and at the same time lagged somewhat behind a statewide and regional trend, where manufacturing peaked earlier and declined more quickly than the State and region as a whole. Industrial uses (including

Table 3

**Employment and Businesses by Year for Major Industrial Sectors
1985 through 1998, City of Newark (Part 1 of 2)**

Year	1985		1990		1991		1992		
	<u>Businesses/ Agencies</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Businesses/ Agencies</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Businesses/ Agencies</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Businesses/ Agencies</u>	<u>Employment</u>	
<i>Private Sector:</i>									
Construction	271	3,325	280	4,048	311	3,564	250	2,699	
Manufacturing	695	30,804	580	22,467	596	20,935	562	19,942	
Transportation					367	17,646	328	18,688	
Communications & Utilities	364	17,787	363	24,300	23	7,214	36	6,748	
Wholesale trade	571	7,801	498	6,933	477	6,189	467	5,954	
Retail trade	1,298	14,611	1,127	11,572	1,184	11,424	1,110	11,233	
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	355	12,894	289	13,120	306	12,353	301	12,679	
Services	1,322	29,686	1,300	32,805	1,311	31,404	1,249	32,596	
Total	4,876	116,908	4,437	115,245	4,575	110,729	4,303	110,539	
Public/Gov't. Sector	-		-		-		-		
<i>Year</i>									
		1993		1994		1995		1996	
<i>Industry</i>		<u>Businesses/ Agencies</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Businesses/ Agencies</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Businesses/ Agencies</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Businesses/ Agencies</u>	<u>Employment</u>
<i>Private Sector:</i>									
Construction	366	2,207	352	2,252	358	2,360	397	2,356	
Manufacturing	593	19,208	570	18,568	525	17,844	502	16,367	
Transportation	390	20,100	404	21,612	408	22,477	424	23,286	
Communications & Utilities	38	6,354	40	5,847	43	5,710	46	4,802	
Wholesale trade	524	5,891	519	5,890	511	6,171	524	6,489	
Retail trade	1,339	10,744	1,289	9,373	1,261	9,608	1,291	9,428	
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	335	13,519	336	12,979	353	13,421	362	13,117	
Services	1,482	32,305	1,477	33,059	1,546	33,154	1,585	33,020	
Total	5,067	110,328	4,987	109,580	5,005	110,745	5,131	108,865	
Public/Gov't. Sector	-		-		-		-		

Source: New Jersey Department of Labor

Table 3

Employment and Businesses by Year for Major Industrial Sectors
1985 through 1998, City of Newark (Part 2 of 2)

Year	1997		1998	
	<u>Businesses/ Agencies</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Businesses/ Agencies</u>	<u>Employment</u>
<i>Industry</i>				
Private Sector:				
Construction	413	2,665	422	2,691
Manufacturing	484	16,521	471	15,720
Transportation	399	22,537	315	24,079
Communications & Utilities	49	4,640	50	4,835
Wholesale Trade	499	6,361	506	6,229
Retail Trade	1,342	9,681	1,336	9,650
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	367	13,245	367	13,872
Services	1,672	31,352	1,649	32,842
Total	5,225	107,002	5,116	109,918
Public/Govt. Sector		25,281		24,921

warehousing) still play a strong role in Newark's economy. More than a quarter of the city's land area is devoted to industrial uses. The two most important employers and generators of economic activity are Port Newark and Newark Liberty International Airport, both of which are operated by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

Newark's active non-industrial commercial sector is reflected in the nearly 12 million square feet of office space in the downtown. Newark is the corporate headquarters of the Prudential insurance company, Bell Atlantic, New Jersey Transit, and Public Service Electric and Gas. Employment in Newark's retail sector went into decline at the end of World War II, following the pattern of population loss throughout the City. Over the past decade, however, a number of small neighborhood shopping centers anchored by supermarkets or drug stores have developed in Newark, reflecting a growing demand for retail development in the City. The only economic sector to show significant growth in employment has been transportation, and this is primarily because of the growing demands for passenger and freight handling services in the New York City metropolitan region which has fueled the growth of Newark Liberty International Airport.

Economic conditions affecting Newark have shaped its land use patterns. For example, the land east of Route 1 & 9—more than one-fifth of Newark's land area, is devoted almost exclusively to manufacturing, warehouse and transportation-related uses. However, with the decline of manufacturing in the nation and region, many areas that were formerly dedicated to light or medium industrial uses, especially in the Lower Clinton Hill neighborhood, the North Broadway neighborhood and the South Ironbound neighborhood, have either been replaced by other non-employment related uses, become vacant or are underutilized. However, with increased activity at Newark Liberty International Airport, land adjacent to the Airport and Route 1 & 9 has seen an increasing number of airport-related uses, storage and distribution, warehousing, cargo and freight handling, flight services and hospitality services, such as hotels.