

# ADDRESSING R-1 ZONE RECOMMENDATIONS

Phase 2 - 2021 OUR JC Master Plan Implementation



[Link to flyer](#)

## COMMUNITY MEETINGS

- Pershing Field Community Center - Sept. 7, Wed, 6pm – 8pm
- Curries Woods Community Resource Center - Sept. 14, Wed, 6pm – 8pm
- Holloway Room, City Hall Annex - Sept. 22, Thur, 6pm – 8pm

## WALKING TOURS

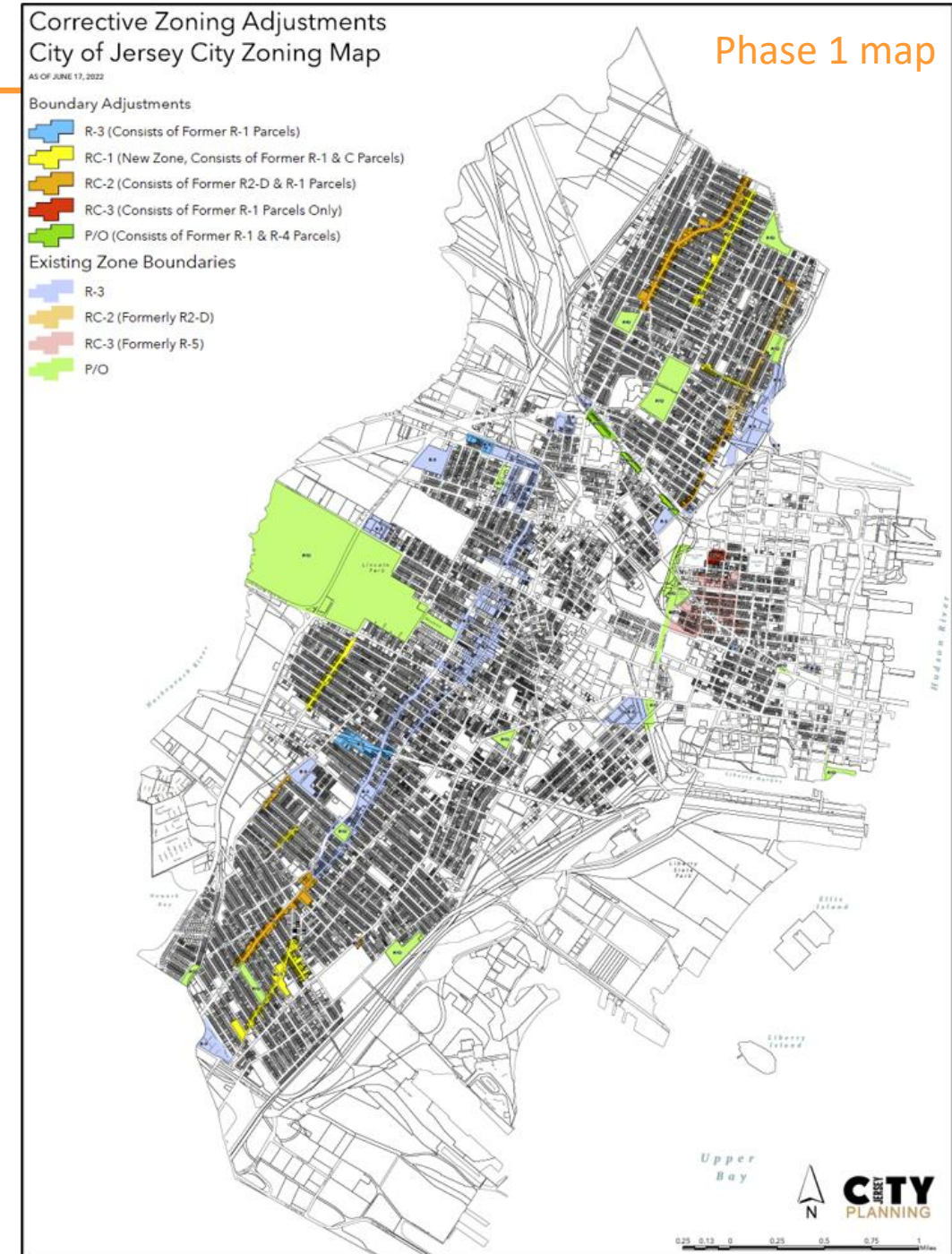
- Ward D - Sept. 27, Tue, 6pm – 8pm
- Ward B - Oct. 4, Tue, 6pm – 8pm
- Ward F - Oct. 6, Thur, 6pm – 8pm
- Ward A - Oct. 12, Wed, 6pm – 8pm
- Routes TBD

# MASTER PLAN

## ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

### OUR JC MASTER PLAN:

- Adopted in early 2022
- ~160 recommendations to maps, text, or policies were made – see Chapter 5 of Land Use Element
- City Planning is studying these recommendations and will be bringing them to Planning Board in groups or phases
- Phase 1 was focused on Corrective Zoning. An ordinance is be before City Council for possible adoption late September.
- **Phase 2** will focus on **recommendations** to the R-1 Zone and other low-rise residential zones



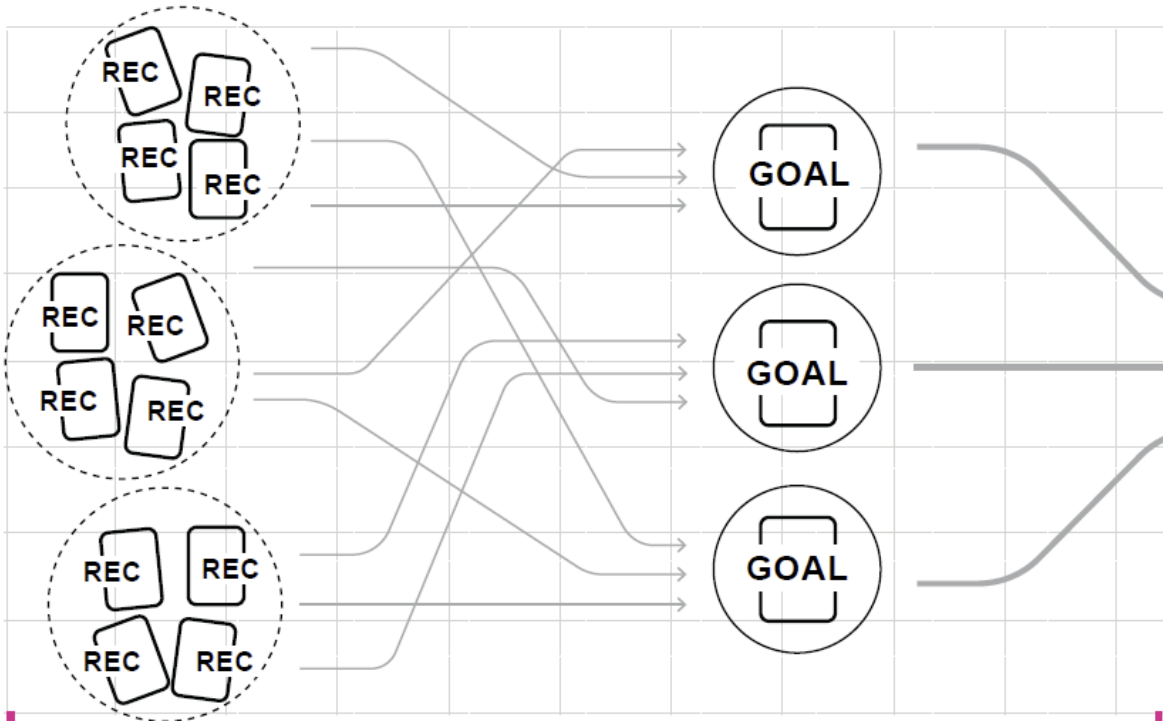
# OUR JC VISION / RECOMMENDATION FRAMEWORK

## PREVIOUS PLANNING ELEMENTS

STEP I: Identify goals & recommendations

STEP II: Consolidate similar goals & recommendations

**INPUTS**

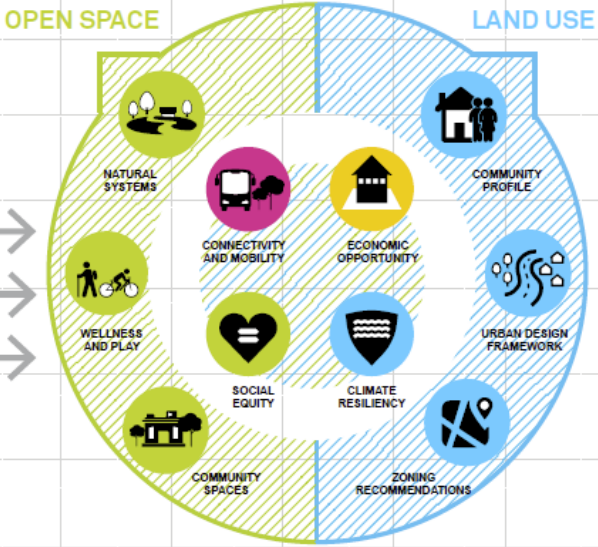


PLANNING ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS & GOALS

## MASTER PLAN LENSES

STEP III: Filter goals & recommendations

**VISION**

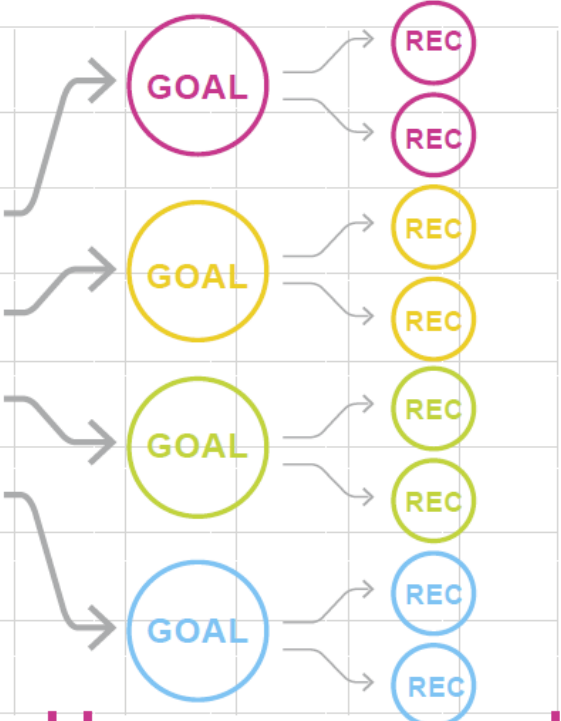


MASTER PLAN LENSES

## MASTER PLAN VISION

STEP IV: Prioritize goals & recommendations

**OUTPUTS**



GOALS

RECOMMENDATIONS

# Housing Policy **is** Transit Policy **is** Climate Policy



Enhance our residential neighborhoods



Celebrate and beautify the public realm



Prioritize reinvestment in environmental Justice Communities



Accommodate a diversity of uses and needs beyond recreation



Accommodate population growth and address changing needs



Make our City more transit friendly



Connect our parks and neighborhood



Improve access between Jersey City and the greater region



Expand City-wide green infrastructure and stormwater management



Protect & restore environmental assets and plan for sustainability

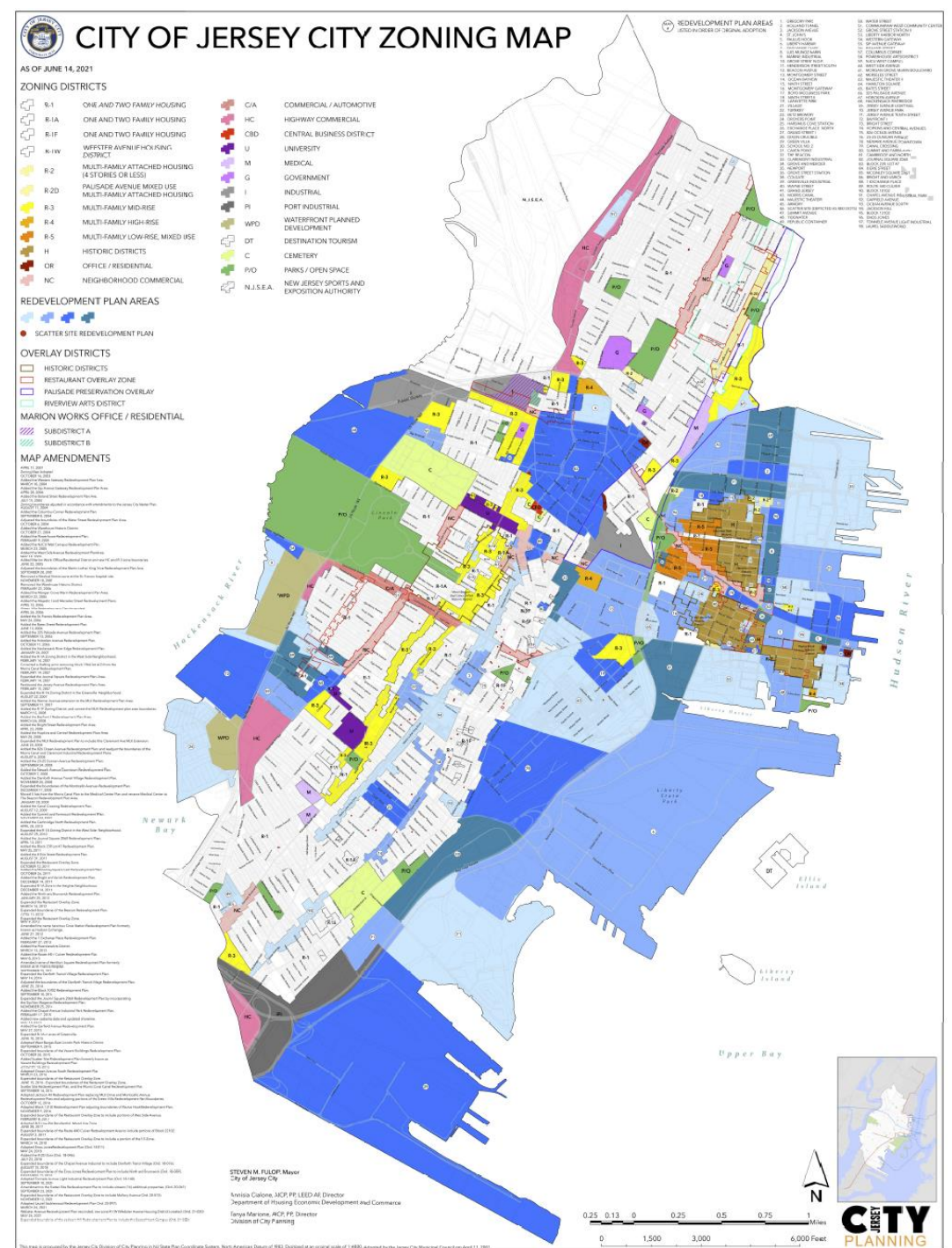


Improve climate mitigation efforts

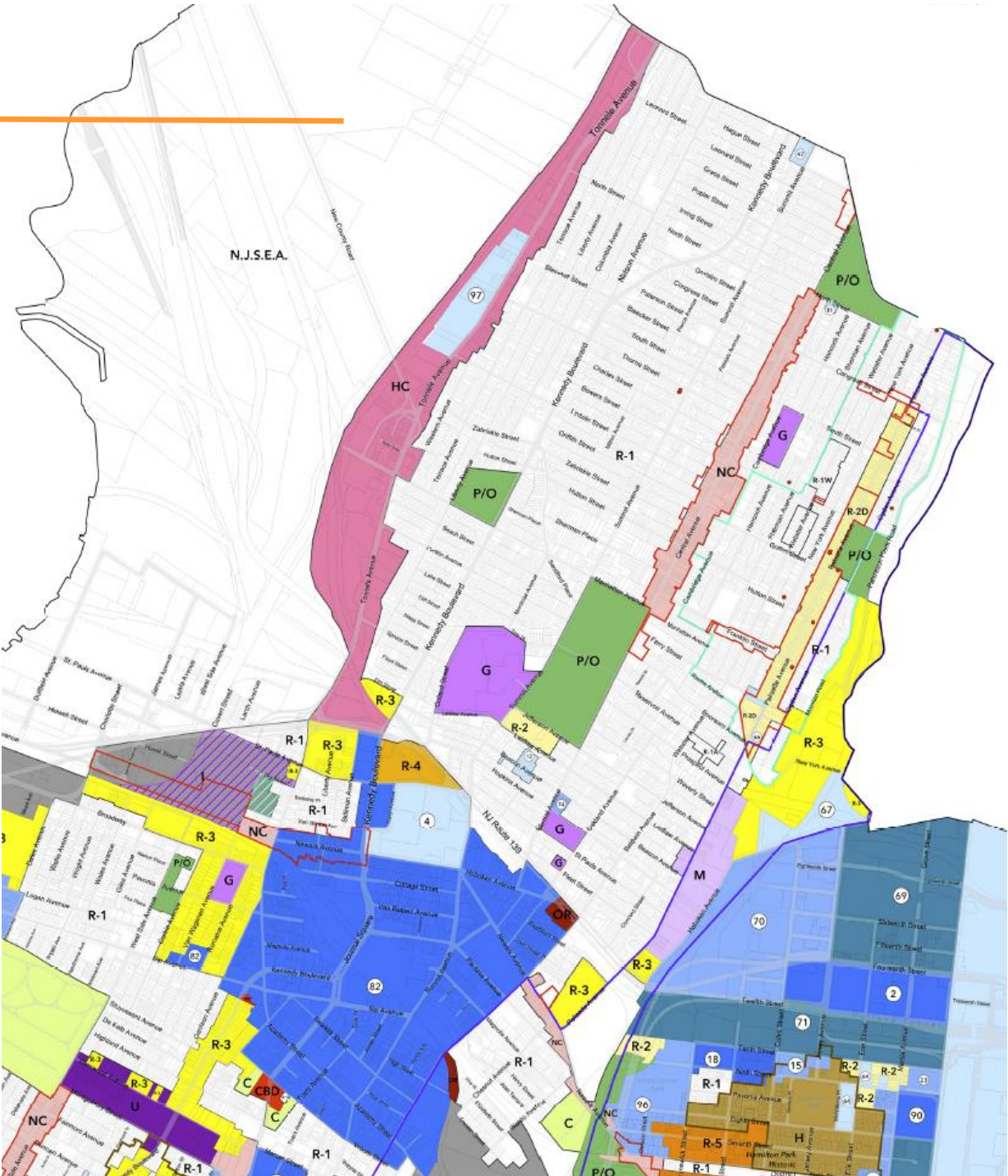


**WHAT IS R-1 ZONING?**

- Largest Zone in Jersey City
  - roughly 30% of all JC land
  - roughly 40% of all JC tax parcels
- 2-unit, 3-story residential zone
  - maximum two (2) units, regardless of lot size
- Last major overhaul done in 2001

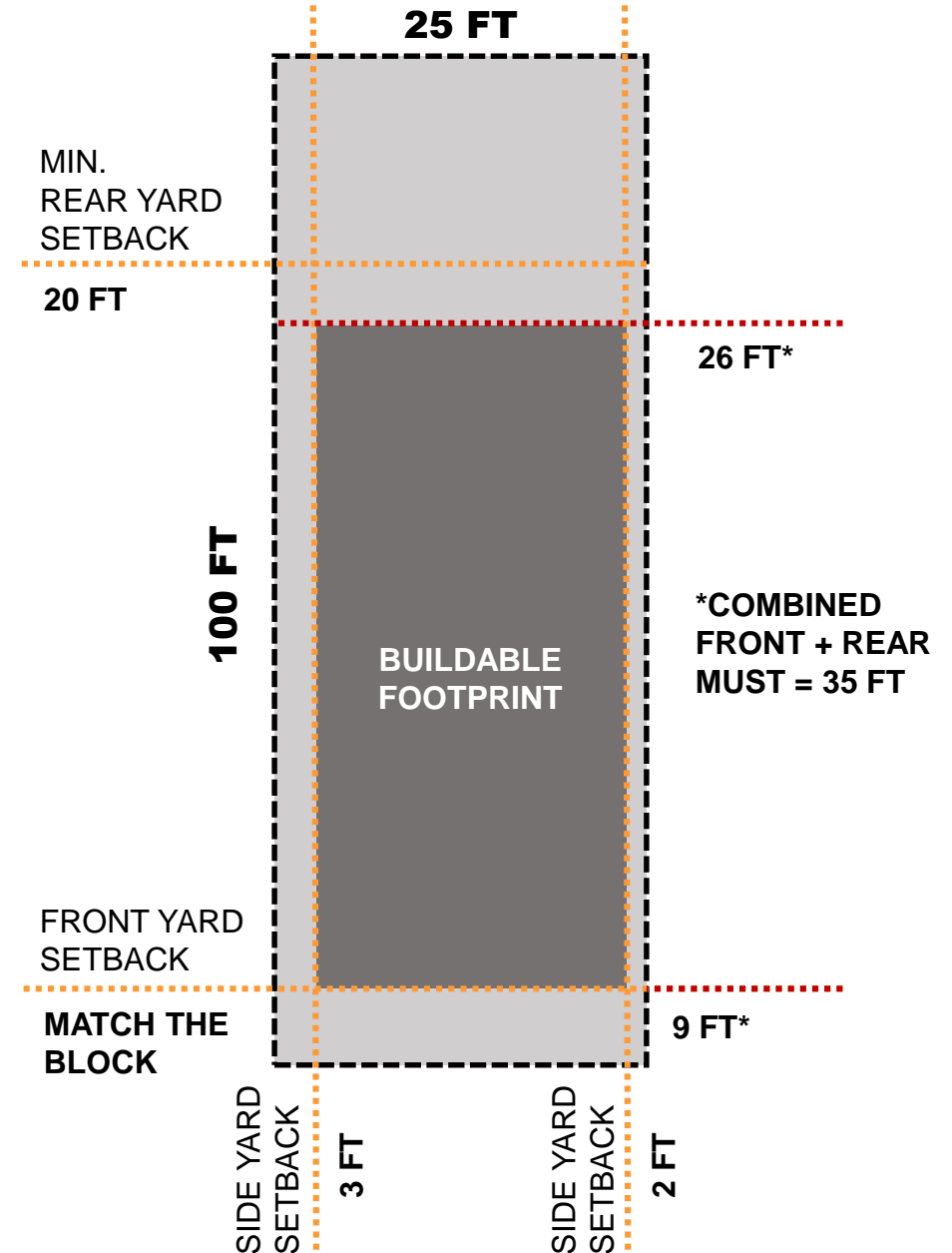


# R-1 ZONING



# R-1 ZONING

- Typical 25 x 100 ft lot
- 3 story detached buildings
- Max. height varies, 30ft – 44ft
  - >> Set by floor-to-ceiling heights
  - >> +5ft for peaked roof
- 2 car garage at ground floor
- 10ft curb cut [typically centered to lot]
- Predominant front yard setbacks
- Varying side yard setbacks [combined 5ft]
- Combined front + rear yard requirements





# R-1 ZONING EVOLUTION

## Pre-1974 Zoning Regulations

- Residential "A":
  - 2 units on a 2,500 lot
  - 20 ft setback from street line
  - 20% lot width rear yard
  - Parking not permitted in setback
  - 60 % building coverage
  - 2.5 stories, 35 ft

- Residential "B" (Largest Zone):
  - 2 units
  - Apartment houses
  - Rooming houses
  - 10 ft from street line – tied to street width
  - Parking not permitted in setback
  - Height – 1.5 x street width

## 1974 – 2000 Zoning Regulations

- R-1 Low Density:
  - 5 ft front yard/15 ft rear
  - 60% building coverage
  - Only up to 2 units a lot, minimum lot size 2,500
  - Max Height 3 stories, 35 ft
  - Allowed parking in front yard

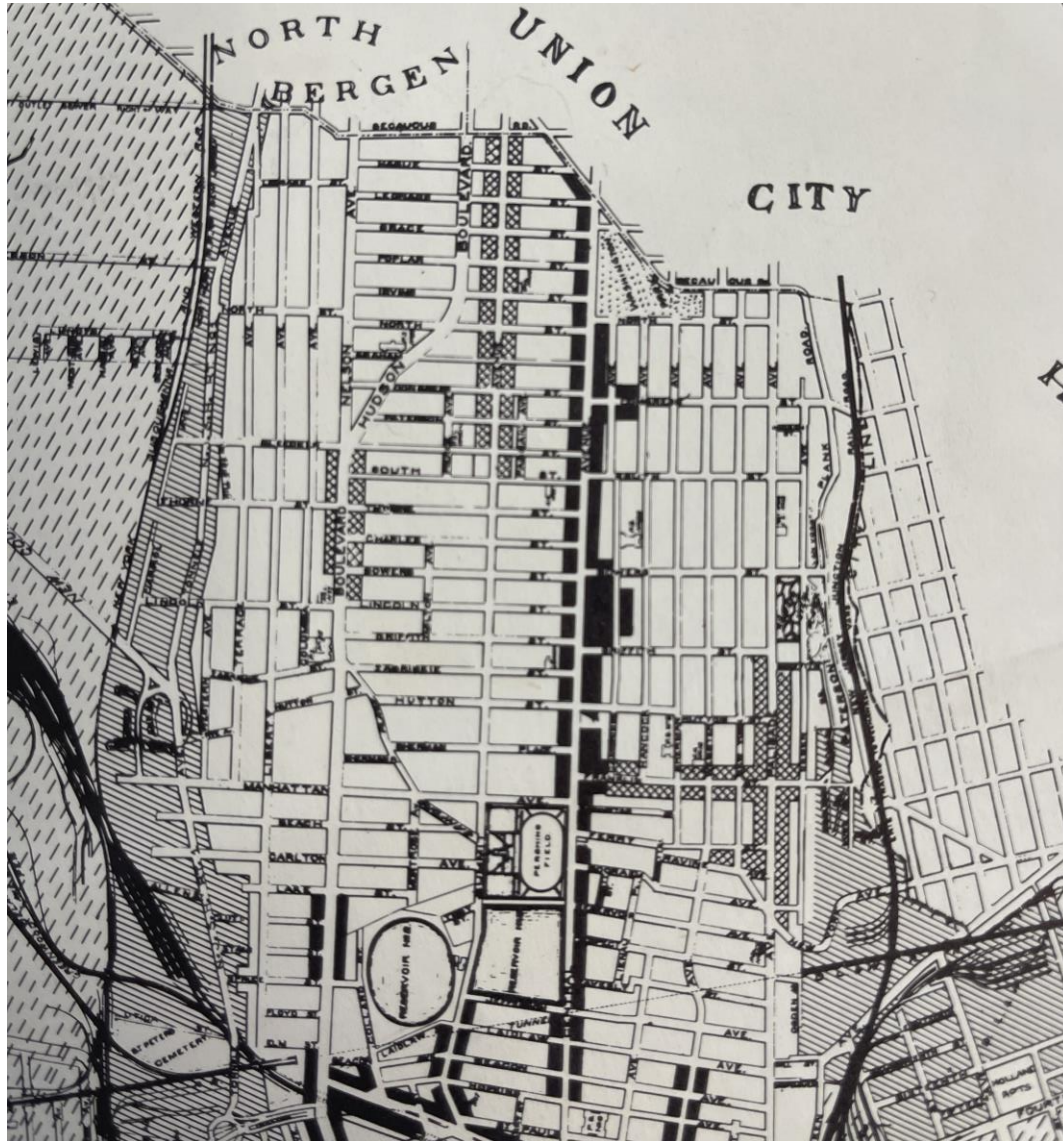
- R-2 Low Density (Prior Resi "B"):
  - 5 ft front yard/15 ft rear
  - 60% building coverage
  - Allowed for smaller "row" and "town" houses with 16 ft wide lots
  - Permitted "apartment" buildings
  - Allowed 4 stories, 40 ft height
  - Conditional use commercial
  - Allowed parking in front yard

## 2001 Zoning Regulations

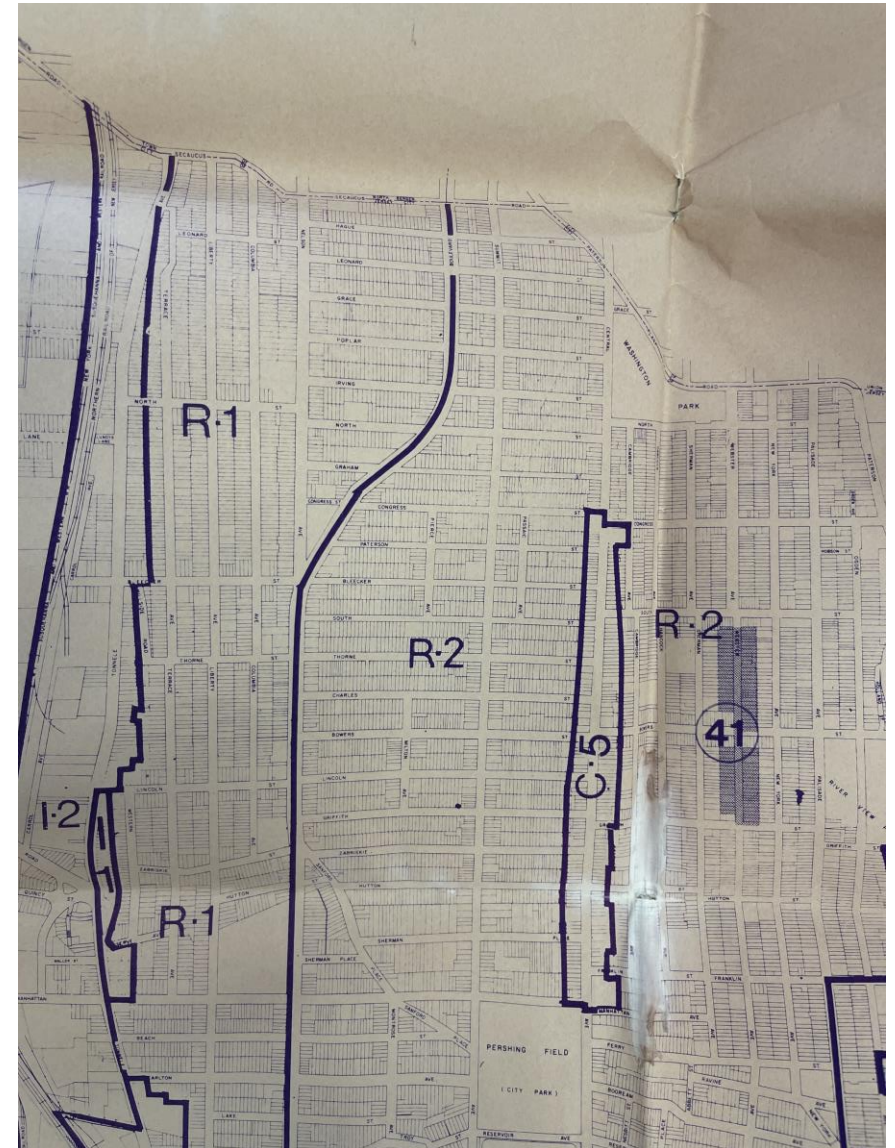
- R-1 (Prior R-1 and R-2):
  - 1 or 2 family only
  - Predominant front yard
  - 30 ft rear yard
  - 3 stories/ 35 to 44 ft
  - Conversion from commercial to residential, regardless of existing number of units
- R-2 District:
  - Townhomes
  - 4 stories
  - 55 units/acre

# R-1 ZONING EVOLUTION

1963 Use District Map



1986 Zoning Map



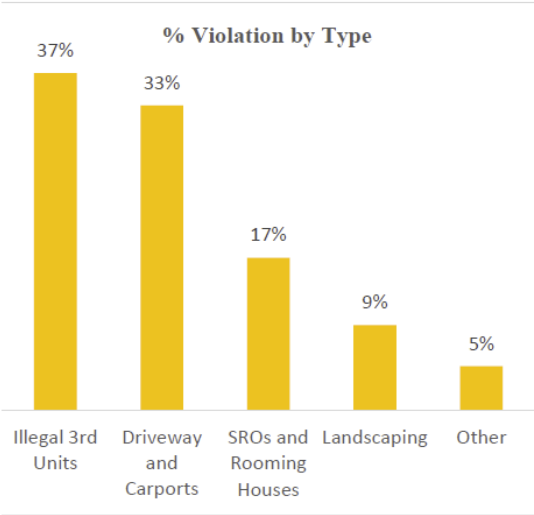
# R-1 ZONING

## Weaknesses, issues, threats

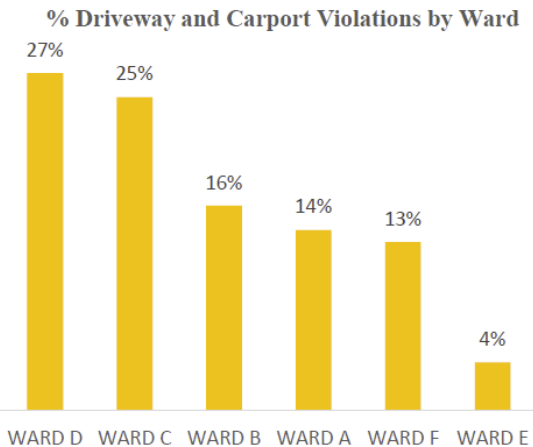
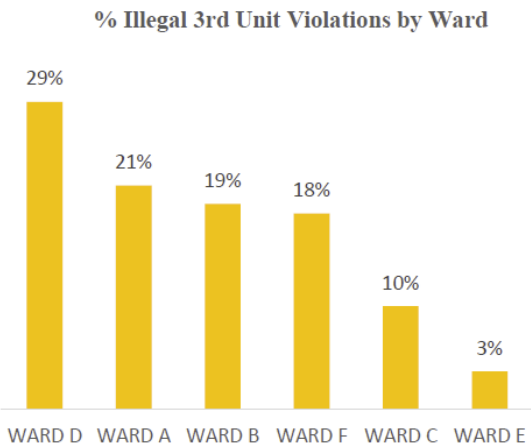
- Illegal 3rd unit = safety issues per bldg code
- Incentivizes frequent curb cuts and privatized parking
- Front yard parking blocking sidewalks
- 2-unit cap = many use variance requests
- Incentivizes demolition to create larger units

## ZONING VIOLATIONS IN 2021

A total of 385 Zoning violations were issued in 2021. The breakdown of violations by category is as follow:



Illegal dwelling units, specifically unauthorized and illegal third units, as well as driveway and carport violations were the top two most common violation types issued in 2021. Below is the breakdown of each violation type by Ward in 2021.





# R-1 ZONING

## USE VARIANCE / LARGE LOT ISSUES

- Lack of numerical density standard does not contemplate oversized lots
- Low density regulations + large building envelope yields oversized units at lower supply
  - detrimental to overall housing affordability + diversity of housing stock

Typology	District	Number	Percentage
1-2 Family Residential	R-1**	754	53.9%
	R-1A	5	0.4%
	R-1F	0	0.0%

\*Analysis represents Zoning Board of Adjustment variances only and does not include the recently adopted R-1W district.

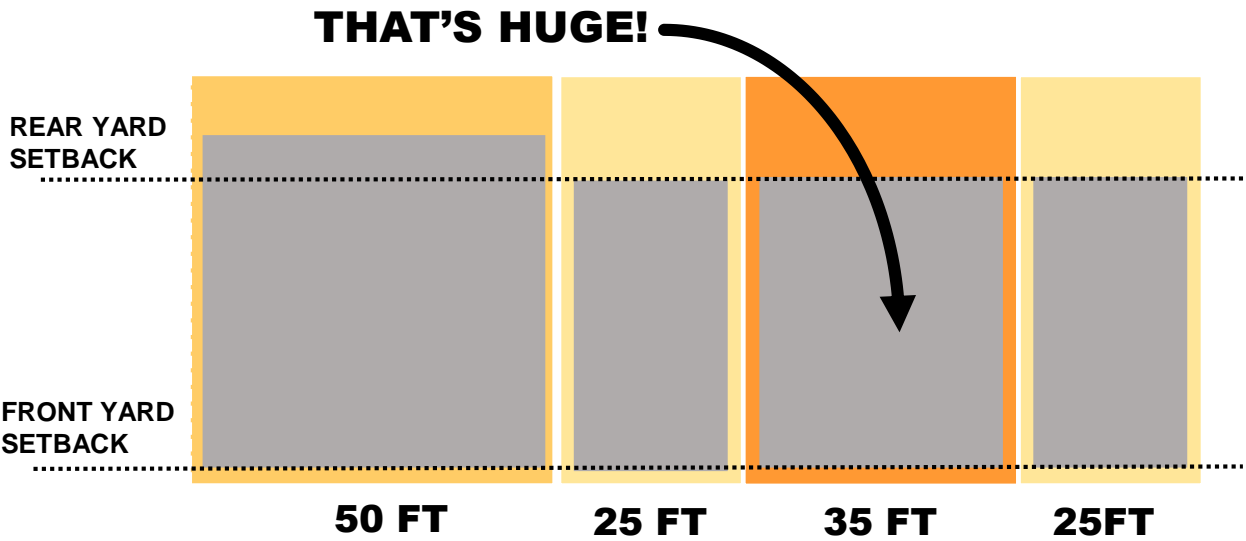
\*\* Includes R-1A and lots split between R-1 and other zoning districts

Table 12: Total Variances\* (2000-2019)

Source: City of Jersey City – Zoning Board of Adjustment Variances from 2000-2019. Variance data from 2013 is not available.

	Height	Coverage/ Setback	Use	Parking	Landscape	Other
Number of Variances	97	225	233	141	24	39
Percentage	13%	30%	31%	19%	3%	5%

\* Includes R-1A and lots split between R-1 and other zoning districts

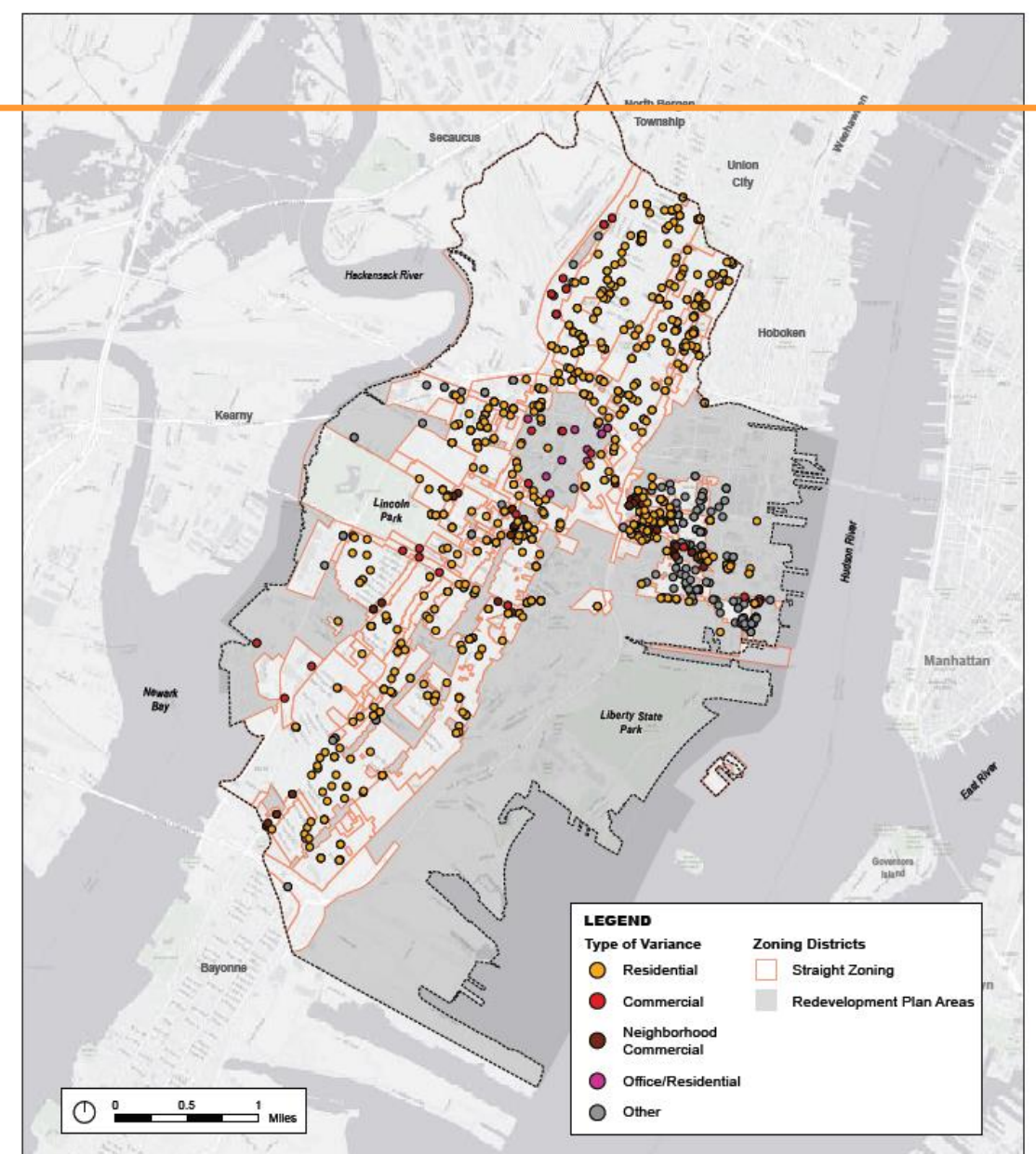




# R-1 ZONING

## R-1 USE VARIANCES

- Consistent distribution of use variances suggest inherent issues with the two-unit max as a whole
- Clusters of use variances suggest swaths of areas that are predominantly existing, non-conforming or oversized properties



**Figure 98: Variances by Use (2000-2019)**

Source: City of Jersey City – Zoning Board of Adjustment Variances from 2000-2019. Variance data from 2013 is not available; Esri.

**IS IT ZONED R-1?**

**IS IT ZONED R-1?**

*hint: they all are*













Jefferson Ave

















NO PARKING  
11AM - NOON  
MON & THURS

4 HOUR PARKING  
ALL TIMES  
MON - SAT

TOW-AWAY  
ZONE

EXPLORER

161

















Hutton St



**WHAT IS  
RECOMMENDED  
FOR R-1 ZONING?**

# RECOMMENDATION 1

*"Allow ground-floor restaurants as conditional uses at corners and along wide streets, to promote the location of more goods and services within walking distance."*





## RECOMMENDATION 1

*"Allow ground-floor restaurants as conditional uses at corners and along wide streets, to promote the location of more goods and services within walking distance."*

## DRAFT STANDARDS / NOTES

- ☐ Permit as a conditional use
- ☐ Require public meeting
- ☐ Recognizes existing pattern of development
- ☐ Limited to restaurants, cafés, retail, laundromats, offices, and medical offices
- ☐ Maximize glass windows and minimize signage
- ☐ Prior to 2000, corner commercial was a conditional use in R-1 equivalent





## EXISTING WEAKNESS

- R-1 is a residential only zone.
- The zoning puts burden on mix-use buildings
- Finding a tenant is difficult. I.e. If the business goes from restaurant to retail that small business owner will have to seek land use board approval.



## EXISTING WEAKNESS

- Current R-1 standards allow historic commercial spaces to be converted to a single residential unit on top of the maximum of 2-units.





## EXISTING WEAKNESSES

- Filling vacant commercial in R-1 zone
- Encouraging conversion of commercial to storefront residential





# RECOMMENDATION 2

*"Permit the conversion of street-facing garages into small businesses."*





## RECOMMENDATION 2

*"Permit the conversion of street-facing garages into small businesses."*

## DRAFT STANDARDS / NOTES

- Permit as conditional use / require public meeting
- Require large amount of storefront glass
- Allow for 1<sup>st</sup> floor front yard additions
- Require removal of driveway, adding street parking
- Require street tree, adding to tree canopy
- Minimal signage allowed





## COMMERCIAL CONVERSIONS

- There are many examples residential buildings adapted to ground floor commercial





1930's





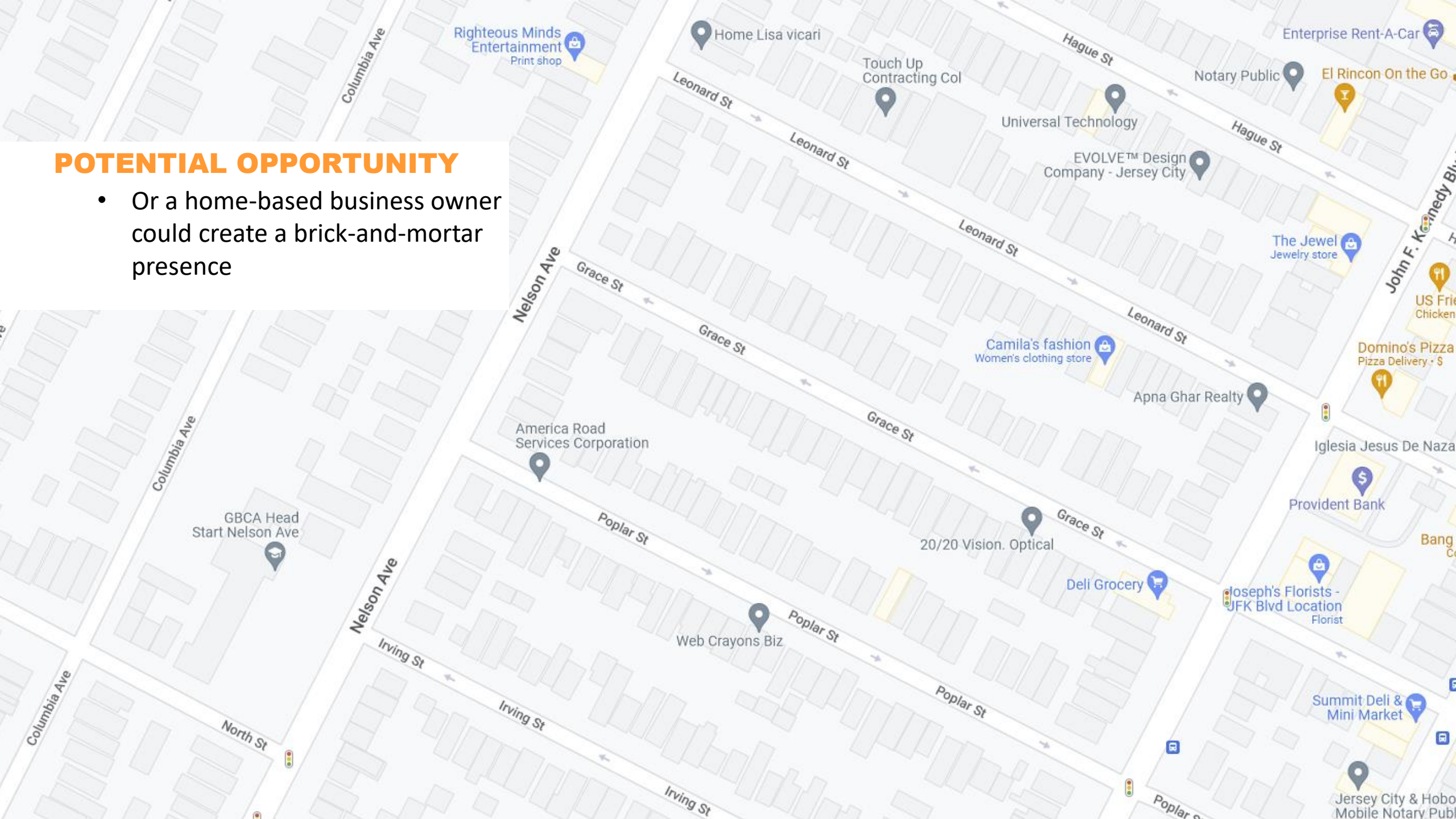
## POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITY

- One of these garages could be converted into a café to serve patrons going to/from the Reservoir Park



## POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITY

- Or a home-based business owner could create a brick-and-mortar presence





# RECOMMENDATION 3

*"Provide for attached housing, which can create a more continuous street frontage and eliminate side yards that have minimal usage."*



## EXISTING WEAKNESS

- Narrow side yards have little use
- Side yards increase impervious coverage.







### RECOMMENDATION 3

*"Provide for attached housing, which can create a more continuous street frontage and eliminate side yards that have minimal usage."*

### DRAFT STANDARDS / NOTES

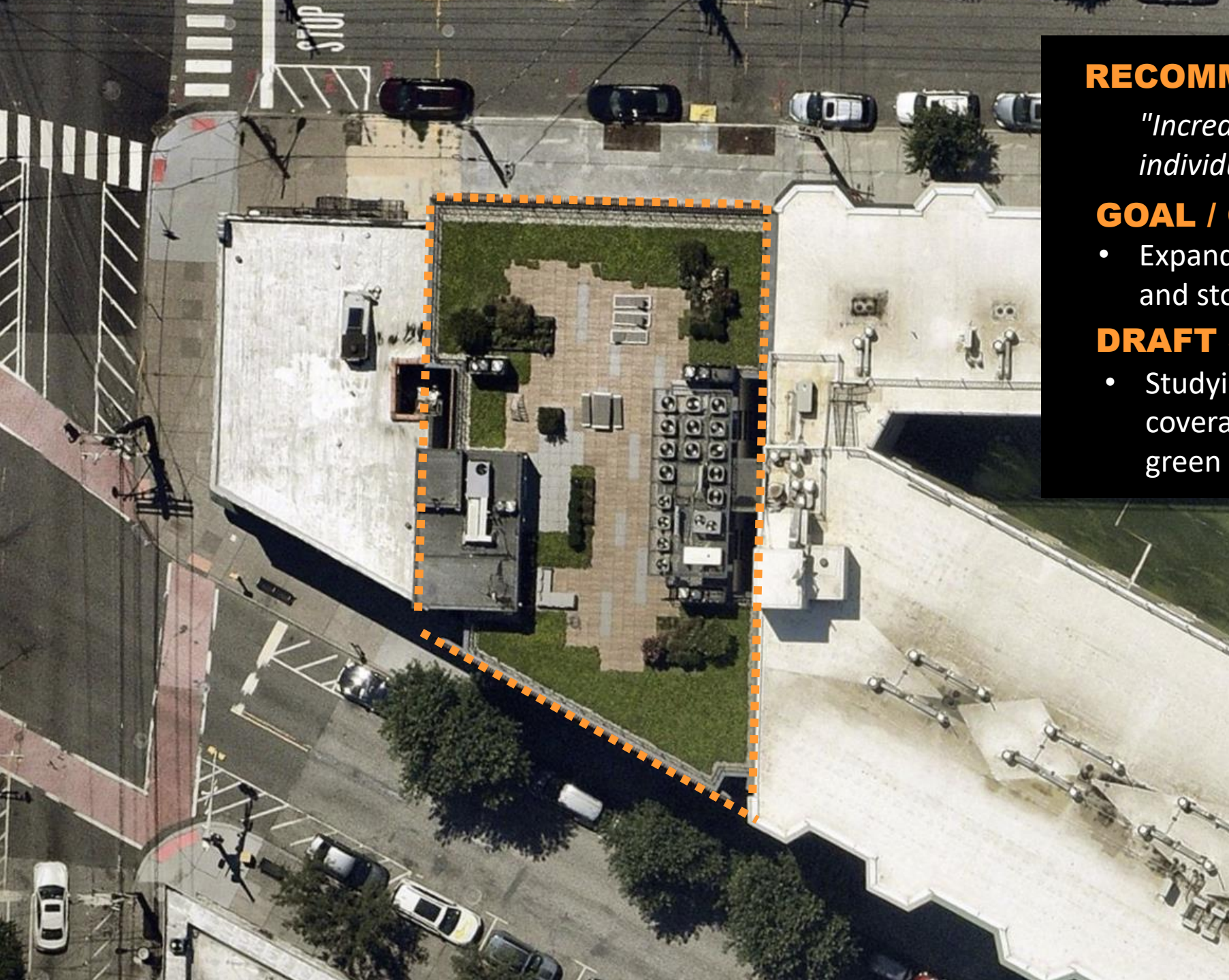
- Rely on building code for regulation.
- Attached housing is more energy efficient - less surface to insulate
- Helps improve climate mitigation
- Will help enlarge front and rear yards



# RECOMMENDATION 4

*"Increase permeable coverage on individual lots."*





## RECOMMENDATION 4

*"Increase permeable coverage on individual lots."*

### GOAL / OBJECTIVE

- Expand City-wide green infrastructure and stormwater management

### DRAFT STANDARD / NOTES

- Studying a zone wide reduction of lot coverage with an allowance to install green roofs for more coverage



Image source: <https://www.vegetalid.us/>



An aerial photograph of a large, multi-story building with a complex roof structure. Several sections of the roof are covered in green vegetation, indicating green roofs. The building has many windows and is surrounded by other urban structures and streets.

## RECOMMENDATION 4

*"Increase permeable coverage on individual lots."*

### GOAL / OBJECTIVE

- Expand City-wide green infrastructure and stormwater management

### DRAFT STANDARD / NOTES

- Studying a zone wide reduction of lot coverage with an allowance to install green roofs for more coverage



# **Stability**

i.e. Tenant protections  
Senior tax freezes

# **Subsidy**

i.e. Section 8 Vouchers  
Down Payment Grants

# **Supply**



# Stability

i.e. Tenant protections  
Senior tax freezes

# Subsidy

i.e. Section 8 Vouchers  
Down Payment Grants

# Supply

**Recommendations 5 to 9**



**2016**



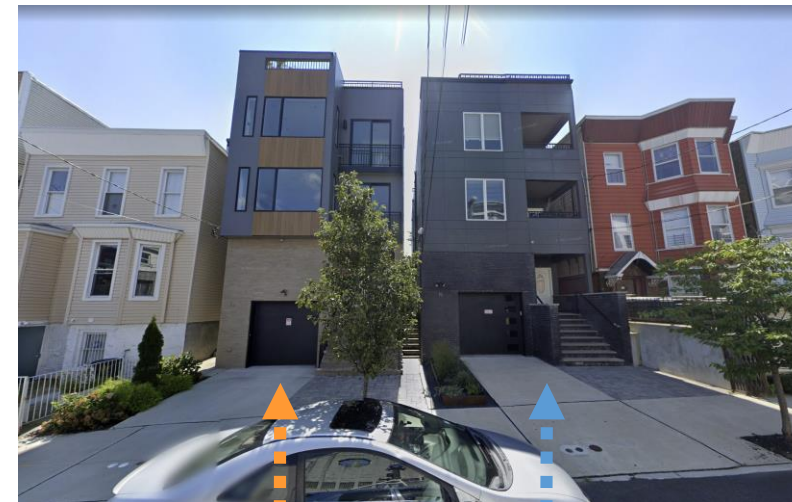
**LEFT**

**RIGHT**

**2016 - 2019**



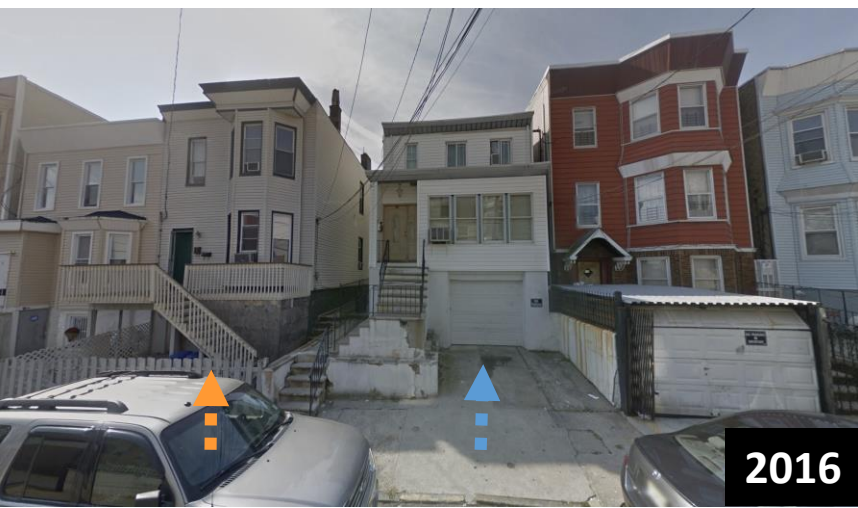
**2019 - 2022**



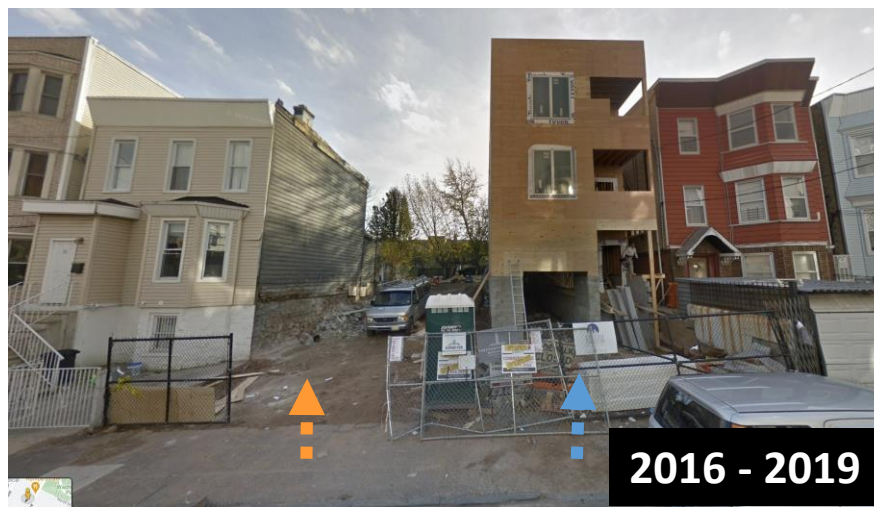
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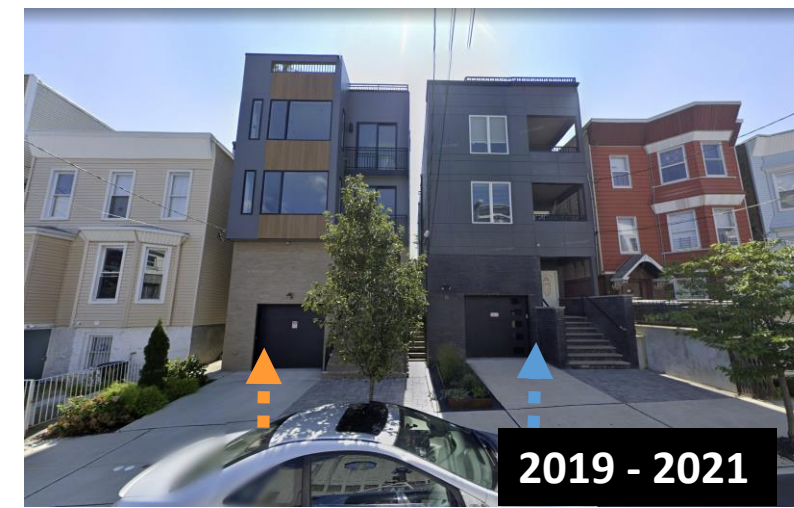




**2016**



**2016 - 2019**



**2019 - 2021**

## LEFT PROPERTY

	Sales Price	Approx. Living Area	# of Units	# of Parking
Prior to Demo	\$230,000 (or \$115,000 / unit)	1,750 sf	2	0
New Construction	\$665,000 and \$720,000	2,650 sf	2	2-3
Difference	+\$1,155,000 <b>502% value increase</b>	+900 sf more living space (roughly 2 to 3 adtl. bedroom)	0 adtl. units	2-3 more spaces

## RIGHT PROPERTY

	Sales Price	Approx. Living Area	# of Units	# of Parking
Prior to Demo	\$160,000 (or \$80,000 / unit)	1,460 sf	2	2-3 spaces
New Construction	\$648,000 and \$680,000	2,970 sf	2	2-3 spaces
Difference	+\$1,488,000 <b>730% value increase</b>	+1,510 sf more living space (roughly 4 adtl. bedrooms)	0 adtl. units	0 more spaces



# RECOMMENDATION 5

*"Additional residential density to promote restoration of historically significant structures."*



## RECOMMENDATION 5

*"Additional residential density to promote restoration of historically significant structures."*

**2016 - today**





## RECOMMENDATION 5

*"Additional residential density to promote restoration of historically significant structures."*

## DRAFT STANDARDS / NOTES

- Permit as conditional use and require that property was either denied demolition permission or it was determined to historical significance.
- Intent is to preserve significant buildings and avoid demolition by neglect.
- Studying densities from 55 du/ac to 75 du/ac

**2014 / 2015**





# RECOMMENDATION 6

*"Prioritize lot width over lot depth as well as lot area."*



## RECOMMENDATION 6

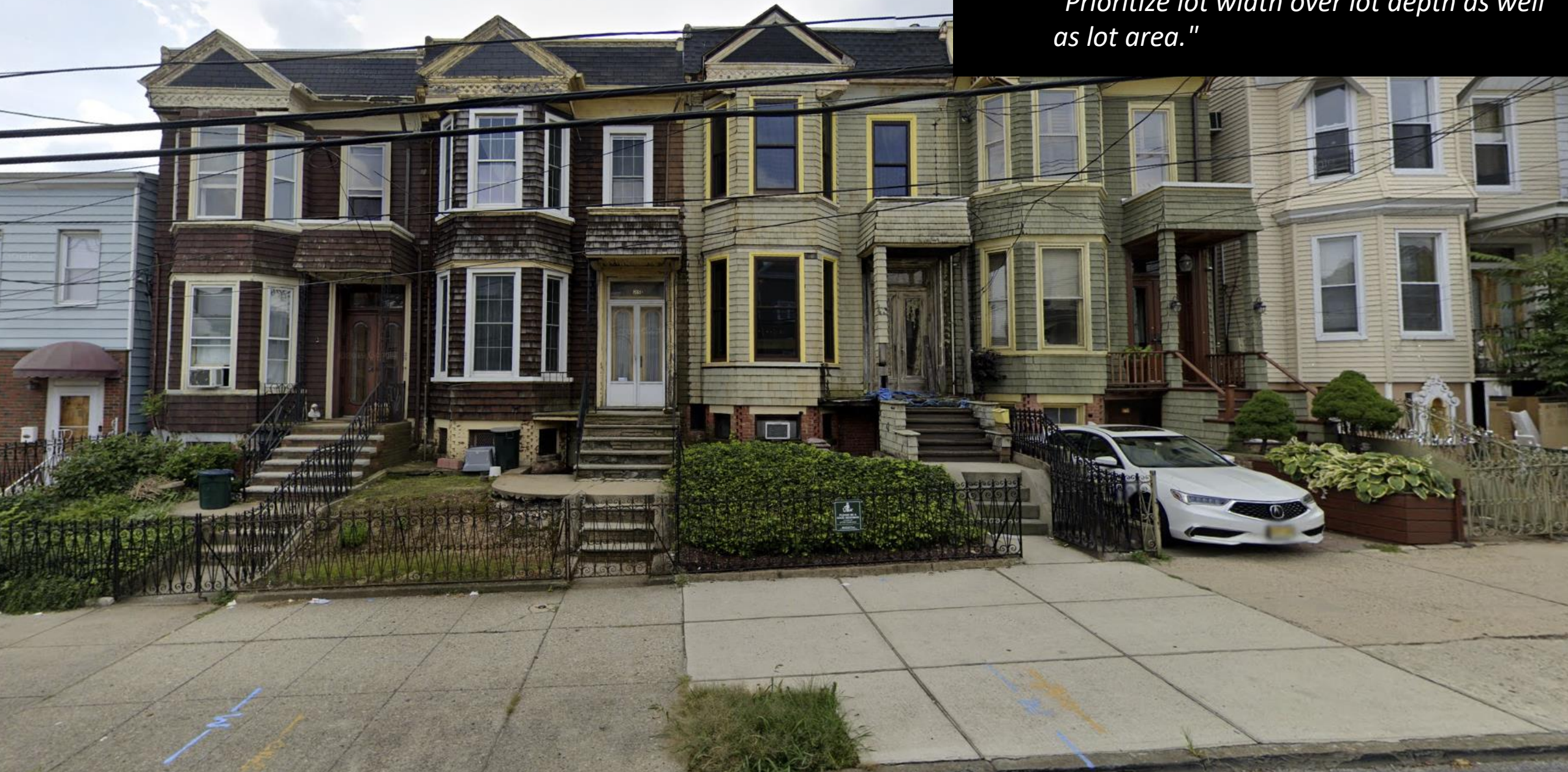
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*"Prioritize lot width over lot depth as well as lot area."*

### DRAFT STANDARDS / NOTES

- Recognize existing patterns of narrow lot development.
- Studying reduction to eighteen (18) wide lots and a minimum lot area of 1,800 square feet.
- Also, studying provision to allow subdivisions with a reduced minimum lot area for a group of lots on contiguous land not less than 5,000 square feet. Concept taken from 1963 zoning ordinance.



# RECOMMENDATION 7

*"Allow detached garages and carriage houses to be converted to accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to increase affordable housing options."*





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### DRAFT STANDARD / NOTES

- AKA Carriage Houses
- Definition drafted
- Proposing to permit 1 additional unit in an accessory (separate) structure.
- Building code will make it difficult to widely use





## **RECOMMENDATION 7**

*"Allow detached garages and carriage houses to be converted to accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to increase affordable housing options."*

### **DRAFT STANDARD / NOTES**

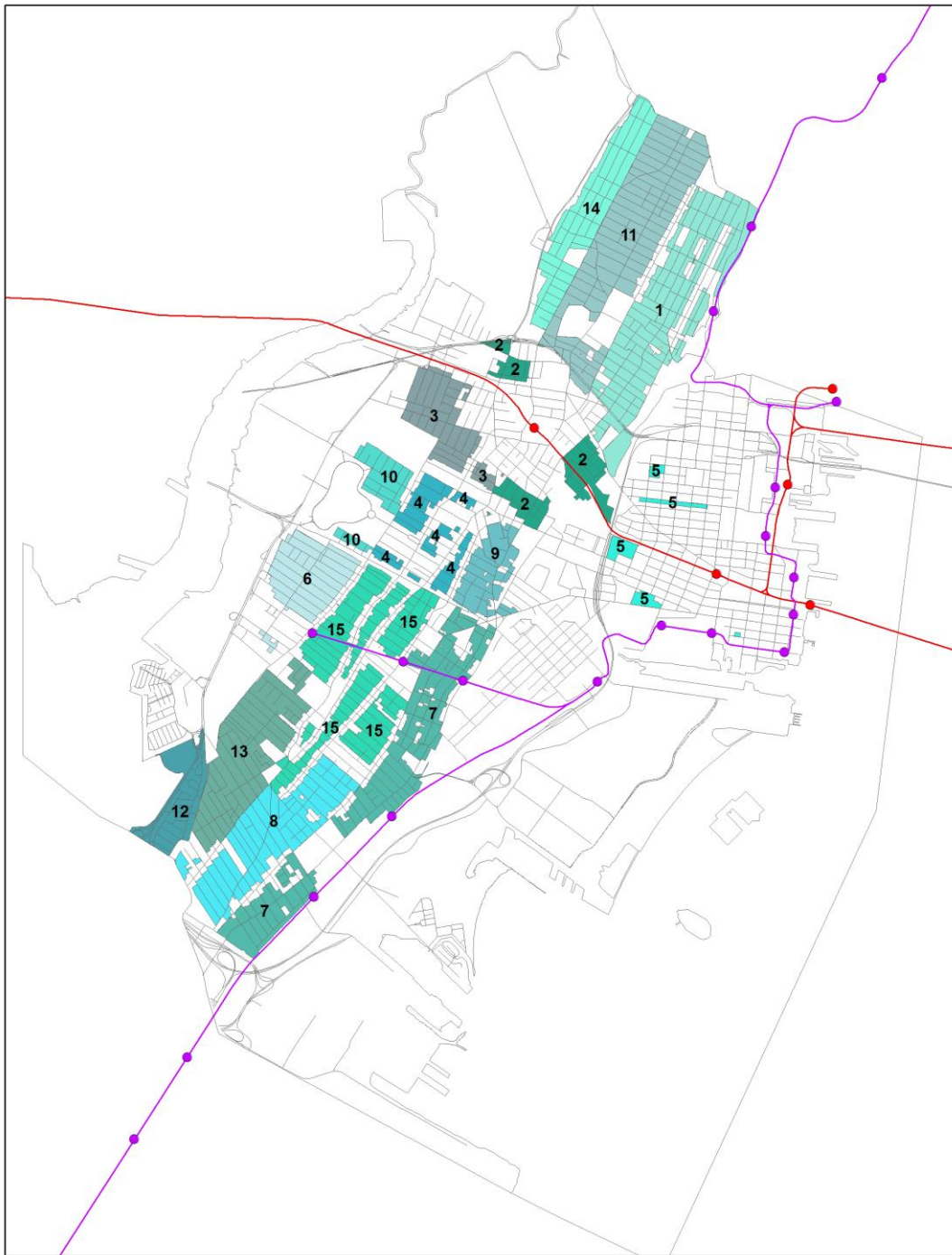
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# RECOMMENDATION 8

*"Establish an overall residential density in the R-1 district to accommodate 2- or 3-unit dwellings on a 25x100 lot."*



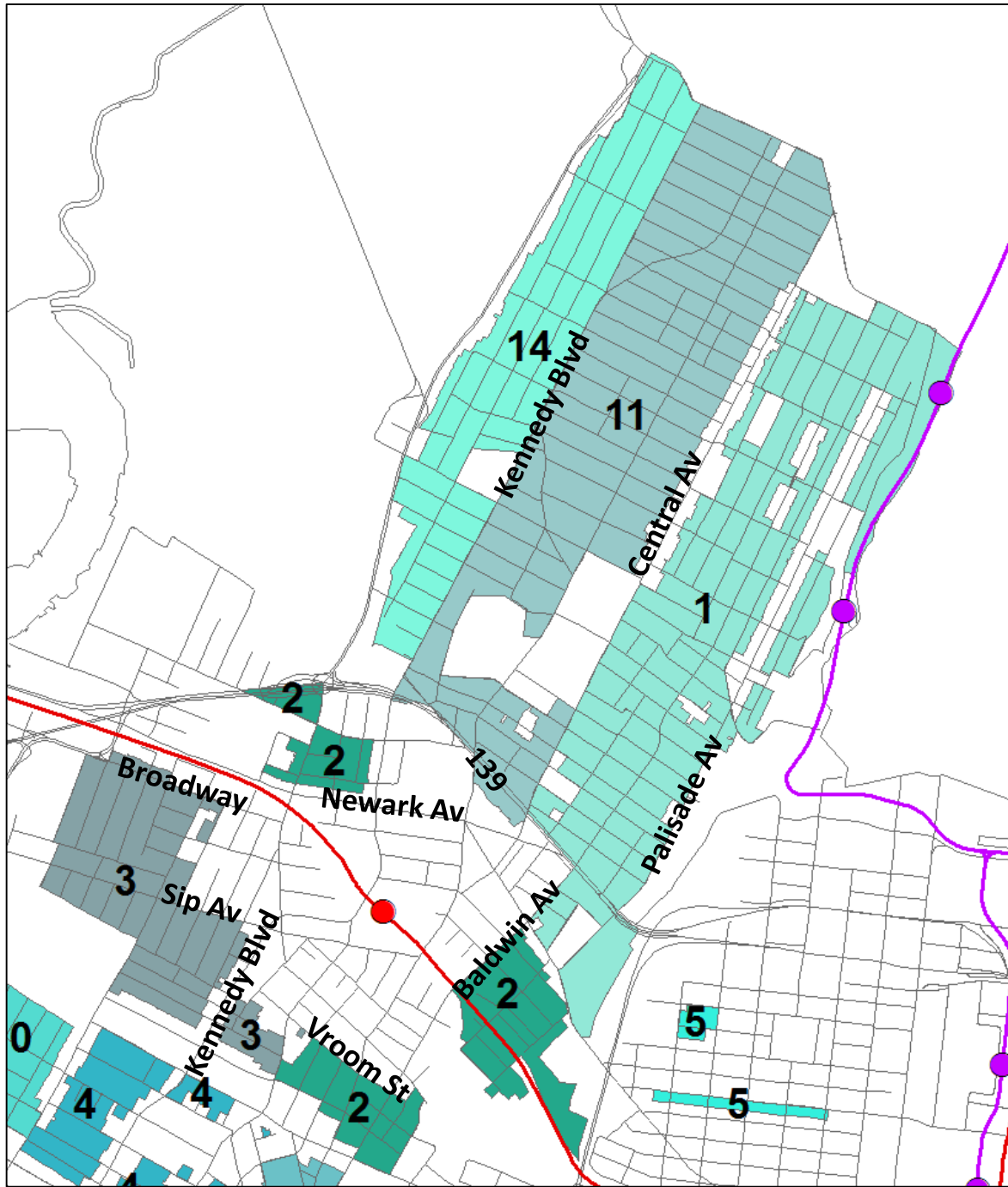


## RECOMMENDATION 8

*"Establish an overall residential density in the R-1 district to accommodate 2- or 3-unit dwellings on a 25x100 lot."*

R-1 Areas	Map #	Average Lot Area (sf)	Average Lot Width (feet)	Average Number of Units	Average Density (DU/AC)	Number of Lots in Map Area
Heights East	1	2,496	26	3	47	2,595
Hilltop / India Square / JSQ	2	2,559	26	3	49	686
Marion / Highland	3	2,558	26	3	44	1,017
West Bergen	4	3,023	26	3	33	656
Downtown	5	2,518	25	3	52	7
West Side	6	2,432	26	2	37	1,261
Bayview GRACO Arlington	7	2,712	27	2	35	2,433
Greenville Central	8	2,763	28	2	36	1,848
Bergen Hill	9	2,509	24	3	46	676
Lincoln Park / West Side	10	2,647	26	2	35	520
Heights Central	11	2,596	26	3	42	2,588
Country Village	12	2,877	32	2	27	522
Greenville West	13	2,695	28	2	31	2,252
Heights West / Western Slope	14	2,668	27	2	34	1,486
Bergen / Jackson Hill	15	2,654	25	2	36	2,359





# RECOMMENDATION 8

*"Establish an overall residential density in the R-1 district to accommodate 2- or 3-unit dwellings on a 25x100 lot."*

## DRAFT STANDARD / NOTES

- Permit 42 dwelling units / acre. This amount results in two (2) units on a 25x100 lot.
- Density standard will allow for multi-unit buildings on larger lots in the R-1.

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# RECOMMENDATION 9

*"Consider rezoning areas where it may be appropriate to reflect the existing multifamily land use character or the desired development pattern based on the existing context."*





## **NO REZONING NECESSARY**

- There are many multi-unit buildings but they are often distributed throughout the R-1 rather than discernable pockets or nodes.





## RECOMMENDATION 9

*"Consider rezoning areas where it may be appropriate to reflect the existing multifamily land use character or the desired development pattern based on the existing context."*

### DRAFT STANDARD / NOTES

- Instead of rezoning, staff is proposing a 4-story height limit on large lots (7,500 sf and up) in the R-1



# WHAT IS A LARGE LOT ?

- Staff studied Apartment buildings by lot size in R-1 and found the following:
  - The median apartment building is 3 stories, has 6 units, a 33-foot lot width and is around 3,200 square feet in area.
- These numbers change for larger lots:
  - On lots 5,000 sf or more, the average apartment building is 4 stories, has 17 to 28 units, density at 110 to 135 units per acre, and a lot area between 6,000 and 9,500 square feet.

All R-1 Areas	Median						Lots Evaluated	Share of Total R-1 Lots evaluated
	Lot Width	Units	Stories	Lot Depth	Lot Area Sq. Feet	Density DU/AC		
4 or less unit buildings (class 2)	25	2	2	100	2,500	34	19,522	93%
Apartment (class 4c)	32.5	6	3	100	3,234	104	944	5%

\*2% is other – vacant lots, exempt properties, commercial, mix-use, industrial, etc.



# R-1 Handout & Walking Tour

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## R-1 Handout

- Summary of tonight's presentation and includes other recommendations under review
- Provides QR code to where we will be publishing this presentation, handout and other related documents
- Provides QR code to flyer for upcoming events

## Walking Tour Ward D

- September 27, Tuesday, 6pm to 8pm
- Starts at intersection of Summit Ave and Griffith St
- Route just over 1 mile. Plan accordingly.





# THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING

Image courtesy of: Paul Martin for Surati for Performing Arts

## Draft and Comment Period:

- Staff intends to finalize a Draft R-1 Zone which incorporates Master Plan Recommendations in October. After publishing the draft, Planning staff will accept public comments for two to three weeks via email.

## Questions or Comments:

- Email to Tanya Marione at [tanyam@jcnj.org](mailto:tanyam@jcnj.org) and/or Matt Ward at [mward@jcnj.org](mailto:mward@jcnj.org)

# Q&A

