

### **West Collingswood Neighborhood Core**

*A historic retail area in need of investment.*

Located across from Historic Fairview in Camden, this core has a similarly historic flavor. Many of the buildings were constructed in the late 1800s and arranged as a traditional Main Street, lining the sidewalk. The historic architecture and small blocks, abbreviated by Crescent Boulevard, make this core unique among the others along Black Horse Pike. These historic structures, as well as more recently developed structures, contain a wide range of community-serving retail uses, ranging from restaurants and a pharmacy to tire sales and a radio station. Most of the buildings in this core were constructed on blocks that are framed between Collings Avenue, Mt. Ephraim Avenue, and Route 130. With Route 130 divided by a Jersey barrier, Collings Avenue becomes an important street, permitting motorists and pedestrians from nearby neighborhoods to reach this core from points east. Sidewalks have been paved over to be an extension of parking areas.

- **Land uses** should continue to be primarily community-serving retail that caters to both walk-up and automobile customers. Additional auto-related retail stores should not be located along Mt. Ephraim Avenue in this core.
- **Circulation** interventions should restore the pedestrian walkway, create better accommodations for pedestrians at major crossing locations, and improve navigation at the Route 130 mixing bowl.
- **Design**-related decisions and investment should preserve, enhance, restore, and reveal this core's architecture and built form. Furthermore, while a municipal boundary separates West Collingswood Neighborhood Core from Fairview, design-related decisions and investments in this core should be made in the broader context of Fairview.

### **Audubon Park Neighborhood Core**

*A part of a planned community with potential for new development.*

Audubon Park is a unique place. A mutual housing corporation, its homes were constructed in the 1940s to house workers of New York Shipbuilding. Its trademark homes of white siding can only be partially seen from the Black Horse Pike. Although located next to a part of Black Horse Pike that resembles a highway in character, Audubon Park is buffered by rows of trees and large, open lawns. There is interest in developing parts of these open lawns for senior housing.

- New **land uses** should be selected carefully based on Audubon Park's status as an almost entirely residential community, with age-restricted housing being the most appropriate new use to introduce into the community. A small retail or medical office component should be permitted as well in any new development.
- **Circulation**-related investments and decisions should improve pedestrian safety across Black Horse Pike and optimize signal timings.
- **Design**-related decisions and investments should complement the traditional architecture and built form of Audubon Park.

### **Audubon Center Commercial Node**

*A recently-transformed regional destination for shopping.*

This node consists of retail stores and restaurants that draw customers from throughout the region, the most recognizable of which might be Barb's Harley-Davidson and Wal-Mart. This node has a unique geometry created by the intersections of the Pike, Nicholson Road, the utility right-of-way, municipality boundaries, and the creeks. This geometry interrupts the traditional block pattern and makes possible large tracts of land for development. The Audubon Commons/Crossings shopping center and ACME are two examples of such developments. ACME's orientation toward southbound traffic along the Pike sets up an interesting vista for southbound travelers, but it stands behind a vast parking lot.

Roads and driveways are clearly designed to facilitate vehicular movements, with barely any accommodations for pedestrians and bicyclists. Signs were designed to draw motorists' eyes from afar.

- **Land uses** should focus on regional-serving retail establishments, with some consideration for housing along the water.
- **Circulation**-related decisions and investments in this node should improve accommodations for pedestrians, bicyclists, and bus passengers.
- **Design**-related decisions and investments should improve the sense of place of this node and reinforce it as a gateway into Black Horse Pike.

### **Mount Ephraim Village Core**

*An emerging small town downtown.*

Mt. Ephraim is a “village at the crossroads.” This village contains a diverse mix of land uses: commercial, residential, and civic. The intersection of Black Horse Pike and King’s Highway, which historically was a popular meeting place, is where suburban commercial corridor meets small town downtown. Recent streetscape investments along King’s Highway, some of which also wrap around onto Black Horse Pike, have further defined King’s Highway’s identity as Mt. Ephraim’s central business district. A new housing development at junction of Station Avenue and King’s Highway will add new energy to this core.

The Borough recently adopted a redevelopment plan that sets design standards for site development and streetscape that would preserve the village character of the redevelopment area. For example, the redevelopment plan creates a new Central Business District Zone that mandates at least 65% of a building’s frontage to be built within 0’ and 10’ of the right-of-way and sets a maximum front yard of 10’.

- **Land uses** are currently regulated by the Redevelopment Plan, the objective of which is to provide opportunities for infill commercial, mixed-use, and townhouse development.
- **Circulation**-related decisions and investments are guided by the Redevelopment Plan, which calls for pedestrian safety measures at the intersection of King’s Highway and Black Horse Pike, coordinated off-street parking, and recreational access to the railroad right-of-way.
- **Design**-related decisions and investments should reinforce the walkable, village character of this core and should take advantage of the topography, which puts the intersection of King’s Highway and Black Horse Pike at a high point that stands out from afar.

### **Prospect Ridge Neighborhood Core**

*A multi-municipal, mixed use district serving the community*

This core is bisected by a municipal boundary. The west side of the street, which features an atypically long block and several smaller blocks of varying sizes, is Mt. Ephraim. The east side, which consists of a series of short, rectangular blocks, is Haddon Heights. With the buildings fronting the Pike having varying setbacks orientations to the street, this core appears disorganized. The center of this core is the signalized intersection of Black Horse Pike and Prospect Ridge Boulevard. The McDonald's is aligned to face oncoming traffic along Prospect Ridge Boulevard, which sets up an interesting vista for motorists and pedestrians heading west on this street. In terms of land use, this core is a mixed use neighborhood, but in form it is a commercial corridor. Mount Ephraim's municipal building is located here. This core also contains small offices, community-serving retail stores, and apartment buildings. Curb cuts are numerous, setting up precarious turning movements in this core. Many motorists use Glover Avenue and James Avenue as a shortcut to Bell Road and Route 42, which presents opportunities as well as challenges for the homes along this route.

- **Land uses** should continue to focus on smaller-scale community-serving retailers and offices. Mixed use buildings, with upper floor residential are also appropriate in this core. Along James Avenue permitting home-based businesses should be considered given the shortcut traffic. Zoning along both sides of the road should be coordinated.
- **Circulation**-related decisions and investments should focus on consolidating access from properties to Black Horse Pike, rethinking the roadway configuration to make left turns into and out of properties less precarious, and providing more accommodations for pedestrians at the intersection of Prospect Ridge Boulevard and along side streets.
- **Design**-related decisions and investments should soften the contrast between the commercial areas and nearby residential areas. The orientation and designs of buildings, signs, and parking areas should appeal to pedestrians as well as motorists.

**Bellmawr/I-295 Interchange Core**

*An underperforming commercial strip located south of I-295.*

From a visual standpoint, this core appears to be the least economically successful within the region. There are few signs of recent investment in property improvements. Except for the TD Bank, most properties lack basic landscaping. Incidentally, this core experiences significant tractor-trailer traffic, which might make it a less desirable place to run a business. For traffic coming off of the Interstate this core is the *de facto* gateway into Black Horse Pike.

- Given the considerable truck traffic in this core, **land uses** should remain commercial and light industrial.
- **Circulation**-related decisions and investments should improve pedestrian safety at highway ramps and eliminate precarious turns from streets intersecting with Black Horse Pike.
- **Design**-related decisions and investments in this core should, at a minimum, make this core appear neater, cleaner, and newer.

### **Browning Road Crossing Neighborhood Core**

*A busy crossroads hosting a mix of government, commerce, and community.*

This core has all the ingredients of a town center in terms of land use, but its form is far from that. Most buildings are not situated in such a way that adds up to a distinct place. As a result, this core appears disorganized. Homes seem to bump up against commercial buildings. In addition, several parcels are devoid of any landscaping and do not have any visible buffer between them. Where one property begins and one ends is hard to determine, except for variations in the color of the pavement. The placement of the photography studio at the northwest corner of Black Horse Pike and Browning Road plus the landscaped area on the northeast corner help to enhance this important intersection's appearance and appeal. This can provide a starting point from which to make investment decisions.

- **Land uses** should be consist primarily of commercial or institutional uses. Single-family homes should not be located within this core.
- **Circulation**-related decisions and investments should permit safer pedestrian crossings.
- **Design**-related decisions and investments should continue to reinforce, define, both property lines and the intersection, especially through landscape improvements.

### **NJ Turnpike Exit 3 Interchange Node**

*An agglomeration of businesses leveraging access to the Turnpike.*

This node consists primarily of industrial-related businesses that rely on easy access to the New Jersey Turnpike. As a result, the form of development in this node is different from that of the other cores and nodes in this region. There are few gridded blocks in this node. Benigno Boulevard snakes its way from Black Horse Pike toward Route 42. Several streets extend from Benigno and end in cul-de-sacs. Buildings are arranged along these curving streets, which are appropriate for accommodating truck traffic. Plans are underway to transform Benigno Boulevard as a connection between Black Horse Pike and Route 42.

- **Land uses** should serve regional clientele, particularly motorists traveling on the interstate. Hospitality-related businesses are appropriate along Black Horse Pike, while industrial uses should continue to be focused along Benigno Boulevard.
- **Circulation**-related decisions and investments should provide better accommodations for truck traffic, without sacrificing pedestrian comfort and safety. South of the highway ramps, the environment for pedestrians should be preserved and improved, and precarious turning movements from driveways onto the Pike reconsidered.
- **Design**-related decisions and investments in this node along Benigno Boulevard should contribute to a more unified identity for this industrial area. Along Black Horse Pike, especially south of the NJ Turnpike, design-related decisions and investments should complement the existing residential architecture and landscape of multi-family buildings and single-family units.

### **Runnemedede Downtown Core**

*A small town downtown undergoing significant investment.*

Runnemedede is unique in that the cross section of Black Horse Pike transitions into two travel lanes with on-street parking. These attributes, combined with the siting of buildings close to the sidewalk, invite drivers to slow down and make pedestrians feel comfortable walking from one place to another. There are, however, some lapses where parking lots instead of buildings are located at important corners, and where signs are excessively tall for a downtown setting.

The intersection of Clements Bridge Road and Black Horse Pike is an important crossroads, both historically and today. The building at the northeast corner of this crossroads frames the intersection. However, the siting of buildings on the remaining three corners to maximize automobile access and parking has left these corners incomplete. The owner of the pizzeria on the northwest corner invested in a pleasant outdoor piazza with tables and chairs. But the orientation of the building is geared to facilitate vehicular access; it sits at an odd angle and is disproportionately smaller than the parcel on which it was built.

With the Phily Diner expanding into a sports bar, and with upcoming streetscape improvements, Runnemedede will be livelier than ever.

- **Land uses** should remain a mix of community-serving retail stores and public-serving uses with consideration for ways to incorporate more public uses into downtown.
- **Circulation** decisions and investments should improve pedestrian comfort and safety.
- **Design**-related decisions and investments should serve to reinforce this place as a walkable business district. It should be clear that this is an environment that is safe for pedestrians to travel. Buildings should reinforce and use the corner, similar to the Classic Camera building, and setbacks should be carefully regulated to maintain a street wall. In addition, building facades and signs should be improved to be more vibrant and colorful.

**Brooklawn Route 130 Commercial Node**

*A concentration of businesses and parking lots at the crossroads of Route 130 and King’s Highway.*

Crescent Boulevard is one of the most prominent physical features of this node. A four-lane road separated by a Jersey barrier, Crescent Boulevard functions more like a highway than a boulevard. To the north, this highway connects Brooklawn to I-76, Burlington County, and destinations farther north. To the south, this highway connects Brooklawn with I-295. There is very little relationship between this roadway and surrounding neighborhoods except that some homes happen to front Crescent Boulevard.

Asphalt is another prominent feature of this node. Buildings appear to be swimming in a sea of parking areas, especially in the Brooklawn Shopping Center. The Kmart and Shop-Rites appear to have been the first to be developed, followed by a string of “pad sites” developed along the periphery of the lot, each with their own parking spaces.

Taken together, the commercial development within this node appears in stark contrast to the surrounding residential neighborhoods, which appear orderly, verdant, and laid out in a predictable, rectilinear pattern.

A Redevelopment Plan for several sections of this node permits and encourages age-restricted residential uses, mixed use (retail/office/residential) and professional and service-oriented uses. It also calls for better use of Brooklawn Shopping Center space by encouraging development of individual retail pad sites.