

BOROUGH OF GLASSBORO

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN

FEBRUARY 23, 2021



INTRODUCTION

The Borough of Glassboro, New Jersey partnered with PennPraxis—the center for applied research, outreach, and practice at the University of Pennsylvania's Weitzman School of Design—to develop a Growth Management Plan. The planning process brought Glassboro residents old and new together to determine their vision for a future Glassboro and chart a course to get there. The resulting plan lays out a set of mutually beneficial strategies to support targeted growth, economic development, and an enviable quality of life for all Glassboro residents, ultimately working to make the borough a community of choice in the region.

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PROJECT BACKGROUND

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Photo: Borough of Glassboro

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Glassboro is a vibrant borough of Gloucester County, New Jersey with a population of around 20,000 permanent residents (Figure 1). Historically known for glass manufacturing, today a defining attribute of the borough is Rowan University. Rowan is a public research university that has experienced significant growth in last decade, making it an important community partner. While Glassboro ultimately recognizes Rowan University as an asset, its rapid growth has highlighted a number of community concerns and prompted a comprehensive Growth Management Plan that will aid Glassboro and Rowan University in strengthening their existing relationships and supporting a prosperous, symbiotic future.

As of 2019, Rowan had already reached its projected full-time enrollment for 2024 of 14,000 undergraduate students, as outlined in the 2016 Housing Master Plan Update. The rapid increases in Rowan's student population (around 80% in total enrollment over the last decade) has led to an increase in traffic congestion and once single-family homes being converted into student rentals. There is currently no stated plan to cap student growth through a formal policy; however, it is expected that the University's carrying capacity of on-campus housing, academic buildings, faculty, and administrative support—coupled with a growing academic reputation that enables Rowan to be more selective about applicants—will cause enrollment to level off. Additionally, higher education is predicting a nation-wide "cliff" of student enrollment by 2025 due to the 2008 recession which spurred lower birthrates and the perceived devaluation of college degrees based on available careers and the ever-rising cost of tuition. It must also be noted that the unexpected and unprecedented disruption the COVID-19 pandemic has

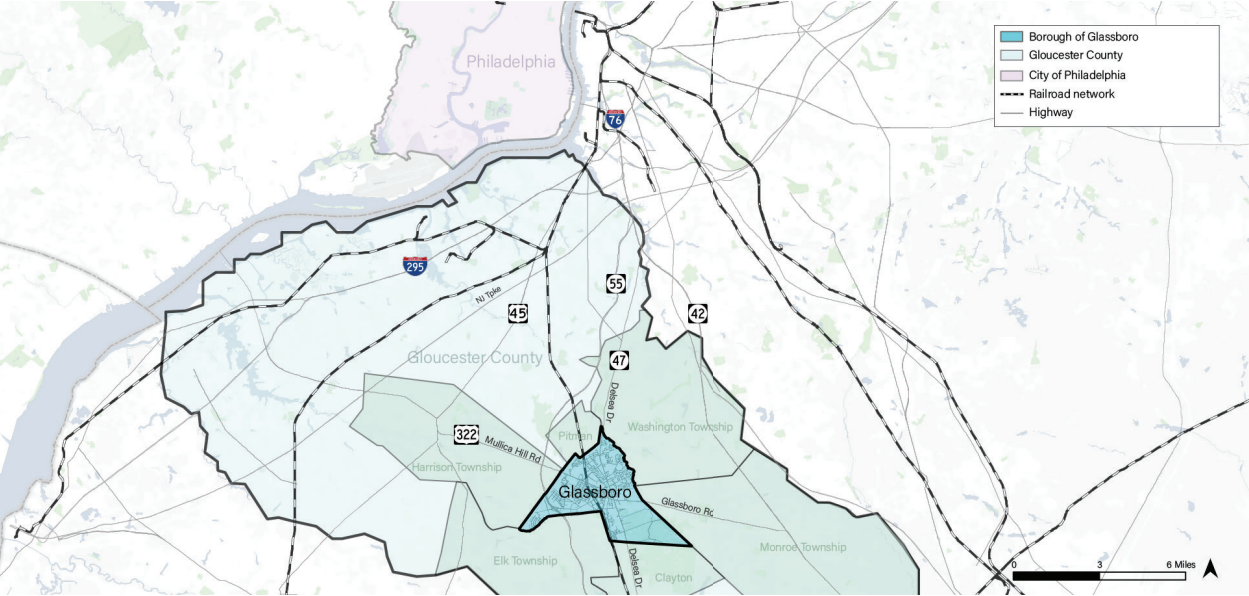


Figure 1. Regional context for Glassboro, New Jersey.

had and will continue to have on higher education institutions remains unknown. As more is understood and communities are able to move forward, COVID-19 repercussions and recovery efforts will need to be jointly addressed by the Borough and University. The newly established and fortified lines of communication developed between the Borough and University during the ongoing pandemic will be invaluable for achieving this.

Friction between students and residents revolve around issues of noise, trash, parking, and a dissolution of community cohesion. Large concentrations of student rental properties have resulted in an overall erosion of Glassboro's residential neighborhoods as they transition from serving families to transient student populations (Figure 2). This shift has prompted many residents (both renters and owners, longtime and perspective) to seek out alternative communities in which to live. Rowan offers an Employee Housing Incentive Reimbursement program through which new and current full-time or permanent employees of Rowan University are encouraged to purchase and reside in Glassboro homes.

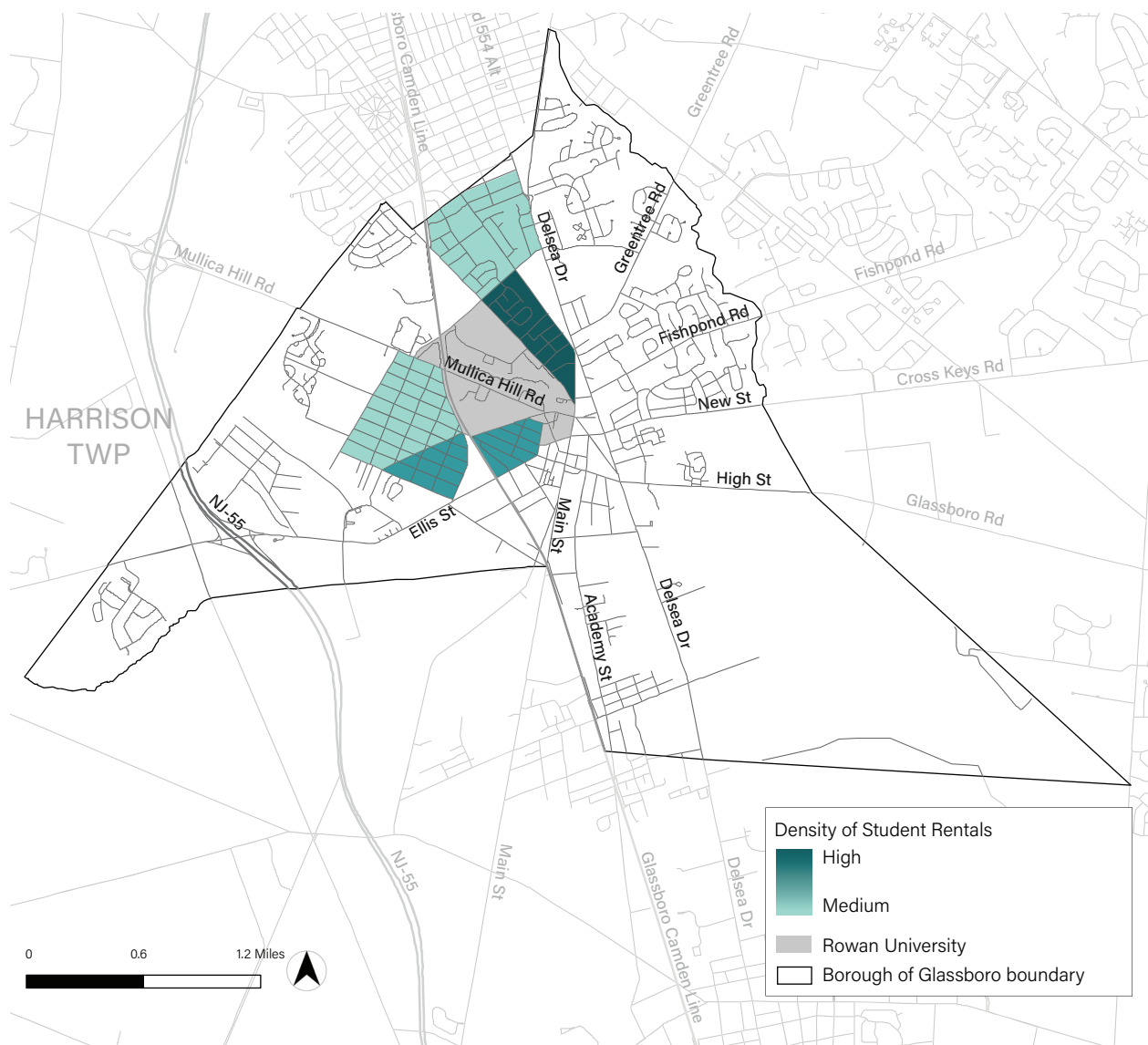


Figure 2. The growing student population of Rowan University has resulted in an increase of single-family homes being converted into student rentals, causing an erosion of Glassboro's residential neighborhoods. The above map shows the density of recent conversions in key areas neighboring the University.



Rowan's rapid growth has amplified tensions between Borough residents and the University, particularly around issues associated with off-campus housing. Due to demand, many of Glassboro's single-family homes have been converted into student rentals causing an increase in nuisance activity often associated with a concentration of young adults. (Photo: Rowan University)

However, due to a lack of available quality housing and the rampant studentification of Glassboro neighborhoods, many Rowan employees choose to forgo the offered incentives and instead find homes outside the borough. As previously mentioned, traffic congestion within the Borough has increased substantially. This is in part due to Rowan's rapid expansion, which has overloaded the modestly size borough's existing road network and creates gridlock during certain times of the day and week. The lack of adequate infrastructure for alternative modes of transportation—safe sidewalks, street crossings, bike lanes, and reliable public transportation—compounds these problems.

Despite growing pains and the strain students put on some residential areas, many community members are quick to acknowledge the positive contributions—economic potential chief among them—that Rowan brings to Glassboro. At the most basic level of economic support, when school is in session students, faculty, and staff double the population of Glassboro; they patronize businesses and help the community thrive. Rowan Bucks, which allow students to spend money stored on their student ID at local businesses, contributes substantially to the economic base of Glassboro. During the first half of the 2020 fiscal year (July 2019 to January 2020), Rowan students spent more than \$2.7 million in Rowan Bucks alone at local businesses—a fraction of what they are likely spending through other means. A 2015 Econsult Solutions study showed that the presence of Rowan students contributed to an annual impact of \$108 million, supporting more than 1,000 jobs; over the past five years this number has undoubtedly grown. Of concern, however, is the fact that sales plummet when students are away from campus, putting a strain on local business owners. Understanding how to manage the growth of Rowan University, while

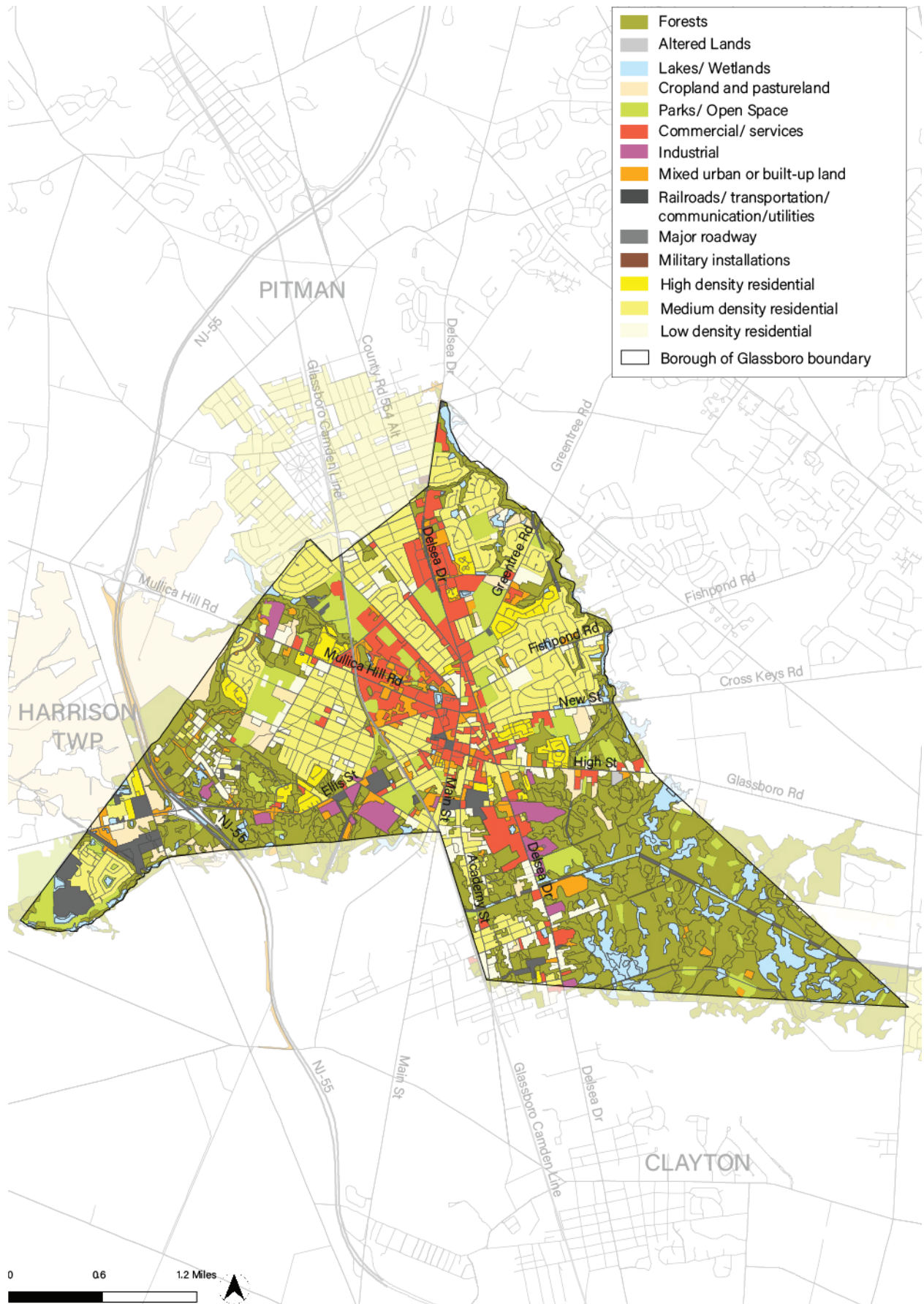
harnessing the potential it brings to the Borough, with benefits for all residents, is a key objective of the Growth Management Plan.

Alongside increasing cooperation and collaboration with Rowan, the Borough must also work to fortify its own identity, outside of its association with a university. A strategic opportunity for this is to carefully consider the interface between new development, extant buildings, and the public realm along Glassboro's commercial corridors. Presently, these corridors (primarily High Street and Delsea Drive) lack cohesion and have prioritized vehicle traffic over pedestrian (Figure 3). Longtime Glassboro residents and Rowan students alike have been vocal about their desire for a more diverse and vibrant downtown that integrates safe pedestrian and bicycle access. By utilizing existing businesses as anchor points, implementing zoning changes, thoughtfully designing public edges, and capitalizing on the downtown's historic assets, Glassboro will be poised to bring about these changes and secure its place as a regional hub.



High Street (left) and Delsea Drive (lower right) are crucial corridors in which to invest in order to better connect Rowan University (upper right) to the rest of the borough, cultivate new economic opportunities, and develop transit alternatives that can alleviate automobile congestion. (Photos: PennPraxis)

Figure 3. Existing Land Use Map



THE PLANNING PROCESS

A Growth Management Plan is a series of recommendations and policies that guide investments and development; it is a form of proactive planning. In order to develop a comprehensive and effective Growth Management Plan, a series of community engagement and research initiatives were first conducted. The PennPraxis team surveyed borough assets, interviewed stakeholders, held community outreach and engagement opportunities, issued surveys at the beginning and end of the process, and conducted extensive research to capture as much public input and information as possible. Every stage of the planning process was aimed at developing an authentic, realistic—but still ambitious—understanding of what stakeholders want for the future of Glassboro, the ensuing Growth Management Plan is the road map to get there.



At the Boro in Lights community visioning event stakeholders created ornaments while sharing their thoughts on Glassboro's issues and opportunities. (Photo: PennPraxis)

Starting in the fall of 2019 Praxis began collecting data through community surveys and interviews. This initial stage of the planning process allowed our team to gain an understanding of existing conditions in Glassboro. Following this step, Praxis engaged with a wide array of residents, students, and other community stakeholders to discuss issues and opportunities within the borough. Two visioning exercises in conjunction with Borough scheduled events: the Boro in Lights on December 6, 2019 and a Neighborhood Preservation Program community meeting on January 21, 2020 gave an opportunity to meet with community members directly. From December through February 2020, Praxis also circulated an online survey which captured the input from more than 650 invested community members—including both Glassboro residents and business owners, as well as Rowan University students, staff, and faculty. The major themes heard from these engagement efforts have been turned in a vision statement and set of community goals which form the foundation for Glassboro's Growth Management Plan.

a great place
to raise a
family.

Farmers Market
with local vendors

buzz on
high street

Connect with
Rowan in a
mutually beneficial
way!

WALKABILITY!
and other
transportation
alternatives...
FEWER CARS!

A rail line to
Philly!
(+trenton + NYC)

Mixed Use
Neighborhood
development.

MORE
ARTS + CULTURE
EVENTS!

During the January community visioning exercise, PennPraxis asked participants asked "What do you want for Glassboro's future?" Responses were used to guide the Growth Management Plan.





Photos: Borough of Glassboro, Rowan University

A COMMUNITY VISION STATEMENT FOR GLASSBORO

The vision statement captures community desires for the Borough, describing what residents and stakeholders aspire for their community in the future. It is the backbone of the Growth Management Plan and will guide programming, policy-making and development in the Borough. Input was taken from the first Community Survey, the two visioning exercises, and approved by the Borough in Spring 2020.

The residents and stakeholders of Glassboro are proud of the borough's **SMALL-TOWN** and **FAMILY-FRIENDLY** feel, its **HISTORY, DIVERSITY**, and the wealth of **COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**—including robust programming during the summer and holiday season, and amenities such as parks, playgrounds, and other **PUBLIC SPACES**.

ROWAN UNIVERSITY is a point of pride for residents, as it distinguishes the borough from its neighbors, and brings promise of future development and long-term prosperity.

In the future, residents and stakeholders imagine Glassboro to retain these great elements and offer more amenities and demonstrate a **BALANCED, COMMUNITY-INFORMED** approach to development.

A future Glassboro will welcome and support **ROWAN FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS** while also making its neighborhoods a safe and comfortable place to live for **FAMILIES AND LONG-TERM RESIDENTS**.

The community is **SAFE FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS**, with strengthened connections to other regional hubs, like Camden and Philadelphia, through **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**.

The **HISTORIC CHARACTER** of the downtown is retained, complemented by **NEW MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT**, with exciting offerings for entertainment, arts, and small and local businesses that showcase the **UNIQUE TALENTS AND CULTURE** of Glassboro, including Rowan students, faculty and staff, and their families.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT POLICIES

*Targeted recommendations
and strategies to achieve
community goals*

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GOALS FOR GROWTH MANAGEMENT AND BOROUGH PROSPERITY

Based on community feedback, the overarching goals of the Glassboro Growth Management Plan are coordinated development, quality residential neighborhoods, economic opportunities, and community identity. The detailed policies in the following sections will help Glassboro achieve these goals as they are accepted and implemented over the next decade and beyond.

1. Coordinated Development

New development in Glassboro, either by Rowan University, private developers, or the Borough is thoughtful, synchronized, and informed by community input. New development is coordinated with infrastructure upgrades that prioritizes alternative approaches to mobility and enhances, rather than impedes, circulation.

2. Quality Residential Neighborhoods

Glassboro is home to a diversity of high-quality housing options, including single-family homes suitable for families of various types and sizes, and multi-family options for smaller households, professionals, and students looking to build a home in Glassboro.

3. Economic Opportunities

Glassboro is a friendly place to do business, open small businesses, find living-wage employment, and have access to quality entertainment and shopping options throughout the year, and across seasons. Incentives support homeownership and economic development, which aid in retaining residents and enable businesses to cater to a variety of tastes.

4. Community Identity

Glassboro is distinguished from its neighbors and peer communities as a community of choice within the region, where people can live, work, attend schools, shop, and recreate in Glassboro's wealth of community assets and welcoming Downtown.



Photo: Rowan University



Photo: Rowan University

1. COORDINATED DEVELOPMENT

Conversations with stakeholders highlighted sometimes lacking communication and organization between Borough managers and Rowan University decision-makers. While both the Borough and University are working towards the same ends—a revitalized, thriving, diverse community—they are still in the process of developing a symbiotic partnership. Presently, the coordination that occurs is only as needed. For example, due to Rowan’s status as a state university it is not required to go before Borough administration or residents for permitting requirements. And while “Good Neighbor” meetings currently exist as an opportunity to discuss university-related issues with the Borough, they are organized as open forums for residents to express grievances and do not provide clear pathways for constructively turning issues into solutions or sharing meaningful updates. Practices such as these have contributed to a palpable “us vs them” mentality between many longtime community members and those affiliated with the university. Establishing clear and consistent lines of communication between these pivotal stakeholders can diminish feelings of mistrust or animosity, foster collaboration, and assist Glassboro in realizing cohesive goals. It should be noted that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic necessitated an increase in communication between the Borough and the University. By all accounts this strengthening of coordination and communication has been a success and should be used as a foundation for reorganizing existing and solidifying new channels of communication.

Much community concern in Glassboro stems from the rapid growth of the university. Per the 2016 Housing Master Plan Update, Rowan has already reached its projected full-time enrollment for 2024 of 14,000 undergraduate students. The rapid increases in Rowan’s student population (around 80% in total enrolment over the last decade) has led to an increase in traffic congestion and once single-family homes being rented out to students. There is currently no stated plan to cap student growth through a formal policy; however, it is expected that the University’s carrying capacity of on-campus housing, academic buildings, faculty and administrative support, coupled with an growing academic reputation will enable Rowan to be more selective about applicants, and enrollment will level off. Additionally, higher education is predicting a “cliff” of student enrollment, affecting schools nationwide, by 2025 due to lower birth rates and downwards trends based on preferences and the cost of tuition. This was further exacerbated by the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the long-term effects of which are still being evaluated.

As stated in the Existing Conditions section, Rowan’s economic impact to the Borough is undeniable. However, the strain that rapid growth has put on the community is evident. Nearly all survey respondents and stakeholders interviewed agree that traffic congestion has increased substantially within the Borough, creating gridlock during certain times of the day and week. The lack of adequate infrastructure for alternative modes of transportation (safe sidewalks, street crossings, bike lanes, and reliable public transportation) compounds these problems. Rowan’s campus is brimming with bikes, but both the campus and the borough lack consistent, designated bike networks. As a result, students were observed riding on sidewalks and vying for space along speeding vehicles throughout town. Based on these conditions, the vast majority of survey respondents did not view Glassboro as a safe place for pedestrians and cyclists.

1.1 Enhance coordination between the University and the Borough in development and land use decisions

University-Borough relationships must continue to extend beyond the informal and inconsistent structure typically observed in Glassboro. Residents understand the benefits Rowan brings to their community, but they are also grappling with very valid concerns surrounding negative impacts (loss of identity, degradation of residential neighborhoods, traffic congestion, pedestrian safety, etc.). A greater level of collaboration between the Borough and University will help to reconcile these opposing narratives. Integration of financial, planning, and community development departments is crucial for unity and progress, as is regional thinking. Given Glassboro's unique geographic situation (a small, but relatively built-out borough surrounded by other populous communities), the fact that Rowan is a State school expanding to multiple campuses, and the possibility of a new light-rail line, regional thinking should be considered a priority. Successful Town-Gown relationships require patience and a level of give and take from both sides; these strategies will need time to evolve and take root.

Strategies

1.1.1 Work with Rowan to establish an Office of Off-Campus Housing and Neighborhood Relations and/or Community Partnerships, staffed by representatives of both the University and the Borough. This centralizes University-Borough relations and holds each part accountable for checking in with the other. Such office can:

- Manage student and resident engagement (See Recommendation 1.2).
- Promote and support the formation of Neighborhood Associations for Glassboro's residential communities. These are ideal community level groups to be in communication with this new office and give residents a unified voice to advocate for their neighborhoods and designated point-people to disseminate information. (See Strategy 4.1.2)
- Utilizes AmeriCorps positions to help staff this new community focused office.
- Map and understand student rentals on a regular basis (See Strategy 1.3.1).
- Manage and strengthen the established process for tracking citations given/ police reports filed for Rowan students and notifying the Dean of Students of such instances.

1.1.2 Establish a system where Rowan University submits regular updates to a campus master plan that addresses the University's interface with the Borough and incorporates input from both Glassboro and Gloucester County officials as part of the planning process.

1.1.3 Create a taskforce to address concerns about increasing demands on borough fire and police services and enhance existing municipal service agreement to provide added support in off-campus student communities. Such taskforce should continue to work with the Dean of Students to better understand processes for student accountability and collectively devise needed changes or additional messaging.

1.2 Strengthen programs to directly engage Rowan students as members of the wider Glassboro Community

Students are typically considered temporary residents in Glassboro; present for only a portion of each year and prone to frequent moves. This temporary status leads to animosity between students and permanent residence. Students, many of whom are first time renters, may be unmotivated to take on or even unaware of the responsibility of a good neighbor. Permanent residents, who weather cycle after cycle of uninvested students, grow frustrated with unresolved problems and nuisances. By



Rowan already provides various ways for students to become involved within the greater Glassboro community; however an office dedicated to Neighborhood Relations would support more consistent, targeted initiatives that build long-term partnerships between the Borough and the University. (Photo: Rowan University)

directly engaging Rowan students the Borough can take a proactive approach to educate students about residential responsibilities, promote civic engagement, and facilitate positive student-neighbor relationships before problems arise. Ideally, these strengthened programs and initiatives will be managed by the newly created Office of Off-campus Housing and Neighborhood Relations (See Strategy 1.1.1).

Strategies

1.2.1 Create a dedicated program to address and reduce common sources of conflict in the borough: noise, parking, trash and the upkeep of rental property. (See Case Study: A Collaborative Town-Gown Effort, page 26).

- Work with the University to identify and secure representatives from a variety of key student demographics: Greek life, sports and clubs, student council, undergraduate and graduate students, etc. Work with Rowan to set up a structure that sustains participation.

CASE STUDY: A Collaborative Town-Gown Effort

Achieving Community Together (ACT), is a collaborative effort between Texas State University and the City of San Marcos designed to manage student related issues in town. San Marcos had previously been dealing with the large number of students living off campus through an over reliance on police enforcement. Not only was this a financial weight on the city, it also cultivated a poor relationship with students. ACT enabled students and community members to learn from each other, set aside assumptions, and establish expectations for the overall quality of life in university adjacent neighborhoods.

ACT is overseen by a joint committee, comprised of representatives from the university, city, and community. The ACT Committee includes the Vice President for Student Affairs, Dean of Students, Director of Housing and Residential Life, offices of Off Campus Living, the City of San Marcos Assistant Chief of Police, as well as representatives from the Community Liaison, Code Enforcement and Neighborhood Services offices.

ACT Ally, a component of the wider ACT initiative, connects students to the rental housing industry through Members and Affiliates who promote a healthy living environment, and also demonstrate a pattern of fair and equitable business practices in the delivery of affiliated services and products. As a participant in the ACT Ally program, an apartment complex, rental property, product or service provider is included in a select group to help students and parents make more informed decisions when choosing off campus housing. In addition, each year a peace officer performs a crime prevention survey at participating properties checking the quality of doors, locks, windows, lightning, and grounds maintenance.

After the creation of ACT, from 2008-15 noise complaints dropped 34% and student arrests and citations dropped 64%. At the time ACT was created the total student population of Texas State University was around 30,000 and the residential population of San Marcos approximately 44,000.



- This program should also help educate students, not only on their responsibilities but also their rights as tenants. Empowering students to raise flags about unethical landlords can help mitigate some neighborhood nuisances.

1.2.2 *Be proactive, not reactive, to student parties and nuisance activities.*

In addition to activities undertaken by Rowan, the Borough can be proactive in engaging students to aid in managing nuisance activities. For instances where versions of suggested programs already exist, work with Rowan to enhance their effectiveness and reach.

- Host back to school walk-about/ neighborhood block parties that can be used as a venue to provide key information about community services, allow students and neighbors meet each other in a positive setting, allow Borough and University officials to interact informally with students and residents and identify themselves as resources should problems arise.
- Create entertainment competition in town (See Recommendation 3.1). Throughout the community outreach process students brought up the lack of entertainment options available to them in town, particularly for those under 21 years of age.
- Promote party registrations where off-campus party hosts might receive donated water and snacks and a pass from the police on their first violation in exchange for preliminary training in health and safety measures.
- Before big party weekends or at the start of the semester, go door to door reminding students of the fines they can incur if their parties get out of control. This can be organized by the newly created Neighborhood Relations office and carried out by Neighborhood Associations and or members of the above recommended program (See Strategy 1.1.1).
- Organize post party clean up groups and require one weekend of service for all students, or at least those registered as living in residential communities.

1.3 Create residential districts that support student living and concentrate off-campus student rentals

Rowan students are required to live on campus as freshmen and sophomores, many upper-classmen (including the increasing population of the student body who come to Rowan as transfers) choose to live off-campus in Glassboro's residential neighborhoods. The average percentage of the total student body housed by Rowan is around 30%. Rowan has a limited capacity to house its growing student body, and while the University is developing new student housing options, these projects are designed to act as one-to-one replacements for older dorms slated for demolition. Friction between students and residents revolve around issues of noise, trash, parking, and a dissolution of community cohesion. Single family homes are increasingly being converted to student rentals because such housing is affordable/ desirable for students and lucrative for landowners. By creating new residential districts that concentrate student rentals, the Borough better support student needs while also creating the opportunity and space to reinvest in quality non-student housing elsewhere.

Before districts can be designated, the Borough must improve its data collection and management processes to develop a clear and accurate picture of residential neighborhoods and student habitation

patterns. This necessitated that Rowan also implements better data collection practices—tracking and mapping where their students live within Glassboro each year. Presently Rowan only tracks on-campus students with such detail; all other students are grouped into the category of commuter—regardless of if they live in Glassboro—and are not spatially tracked. The University and the Borough should embark on this task together, openly exchanging information, to more accurately understand their shared resources and community.

Strategies

1.3.1 Devote a staffer to GIS/ data management to ensure data is updated, accurate, and readily available. This role should be associated with the new Off-Campus Housing and Neighborhood Relations Office (see Strategy 1.1.1) and can even be an internship opportunity to involve a local planning student.

- Michigan State University collects data annually on student population and makes mapped versions of it accessible to the wider community so planners and other officials can process it. This helps accurately understand the town-university relationship.

1.3.2 Implement student rental licensing requirements and use this as a way to accurately track types of rental properties within the Borough.

Such requirements can be folded into existing processes to secure a rental license in Glassboro and the resulting register of student rentals can be provided the new Off-Campus Housing and Neighborhood Relations Office for management (see Strategy 1.1.1).

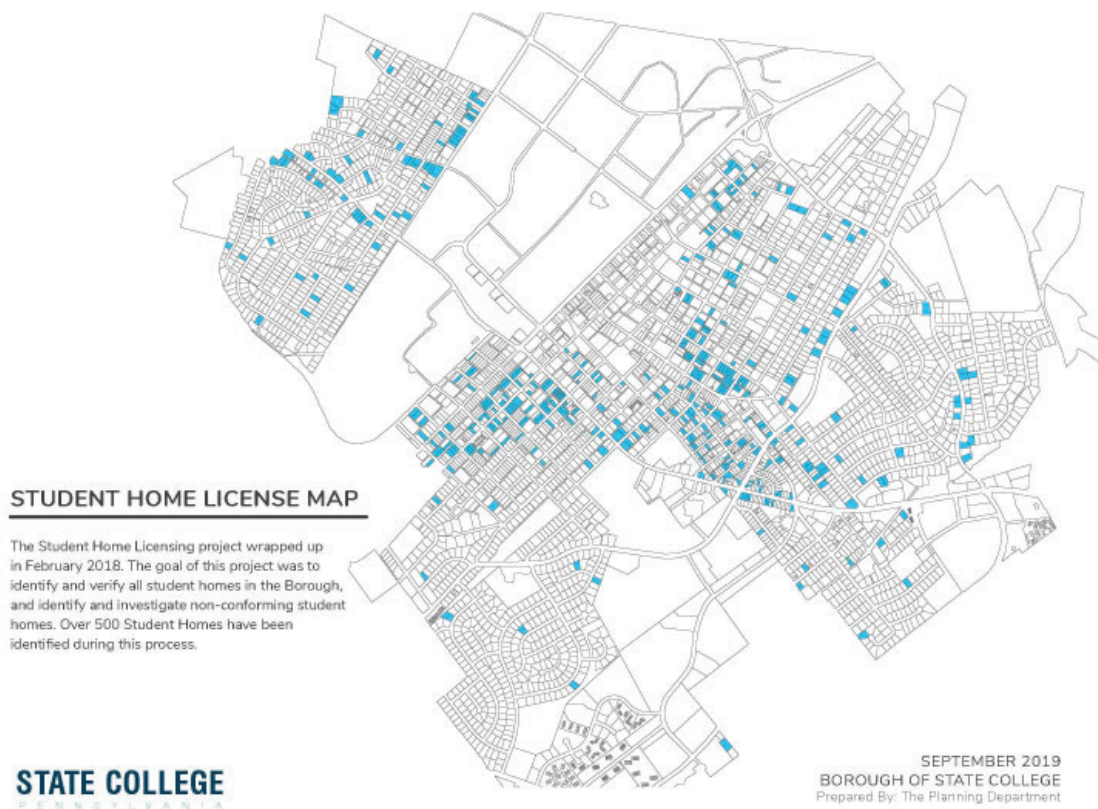


Figure 4. Through a student rental license requirement, State College was able to verified and mapped student rentals, allowing the borough to better understand neighborhood trends. (www.statecollegepa.us/2400/Registered-Student-Homes)

Suggested requirements for property owners looking to rent to students:

- Secure a Student Rental License (with fee and renewed annually) in addition to traditional rental license
- Notify all neighboring property owners of desired use as a student rental
- Notify any neighborhood associations within which the property is located
 - In 2013 the borough of State College adopted a student rental ordinance that outlines the above requirements. The student rental ordinance has helped State College to better manage and track student rentals within the municipality and data collected is made publicly available through their website (Figure 4).

1.3.3 Create student districts with appropriate zoning requirements.

- Waive/ re-write zoning requirements (setbacks, parking minimums, height, lot coverage etc.) in student districts to promote density and student-oriented development. (see Recommendation 2.1)
- Prioritize public lighting, wayfinding, and improved pedestrian and bicycle access in these areas to create desirable student neighborhoods that promote safety and alternative transportation options.
- Utilize opportunity zones, redevelopment areas, etc. (see Recommendation 3.3) to offer incentives and quickly secure new development initiatives.

1.4 Reduce traffic congestion through Borough-University coordination of land use planning and parking management

Traffic congestion in Glassboro is worsening, there is universal agreement among stakeholders of all backgrounds about this issue. Without thoughtful improvements to a multi-modal transportation system, this issue will only continue to worsen. The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) 30-year estimates project population growth for Glassboro and Gloucester County to be 31% and 29%, respectively; this is by far the fastest growth projection for the region. In order to effectively and sustainably reduce congestion more substantial actions, beyond simply changing regimes of on-street traffic management or expanding road infrastructure, must be undertaken.

Many factors contribute to traffic volume—location of amenities, supply and demand for parking, demand for goods and services, and the travel preferences of many different individuals. Reducing congestion is therefore a complex task. By coordinating land use policy, parking management, and multi-modal transportation initiatives, Glassboro and Rowan University can collaboratively work to reduce congestion and provide environmental benefits along the way. For example, Rowan's Master Plan and parking studies call for excess parking to reduce "cruising" during peak times, but this induces demand. Manipulating supply and pricing can better achieve the desired effects if alternative modes of transportation are available and easily accessible. If the parking supply is priced correctly, the University could instead develop excess parking areas for more productive use and further sustainability goals by reducing impermeable surface and runoff. Additionally, if Glassboro is linked to Philadelphia and Camden

via rail, this coordination will be vital to any effort to boost ridership and tailor land use to suit “transit-oriented development.”

Strategies

1.4.1 Work with Rowan to create a more efficient parking management system and assorted transportation alternatives. Rowan should consider the implementation or improvement of several programs (see Strategy 1.1.2).

- Create local shuttle service on regular schedule and door-to-door transit options for night-time hours servicing student rental areas of Glassboro and higher density residential zones
- Increase the cost of parking permits for students by lot, making more desirable lots more expensive or changing from a blanket permit policy to a pay-per-park model to discourage excess driving. Adjust prices as needed to get the price right for each lot – a price that corresponds to 20-30% availability at peak times. In practice this increases availability and increases revenues. While Rowan already implements varied pricing for some parking permits (cheaper rates for the Ellis lot that is serviced by a shuttle, and more expensive rates for garages on Rowan Blvd.), a steeper and more nuanced scale for the cost of parking permits could aid in easing congestion on and around campus.
- Allow faculty and staff to opt-out of their “free” parking and receive a subsidy and guidance about alternatives. This would encourage some car-pooling, transit or shuttle use or infrequent use of pay-per-use parking. This has effectively been done at many institutions of higher education. It is understood that “free” parking is granted to a majority of Rowan staff and faculty through collective bargaining agreements, consider re-evaluating and re-negotiating these agreements over time. In actuality parking is never free. Blanket “free” parking obscures its true costs, making individuals who don’t park every day still pay for the service and discouraging carpooling or other climate-sensitive transportation alternatives.
- Offer a subsidy to students for using alternative modes of transportation.

1.4.2 Implement Land Use policies and improvements to local infrastructure to incentivize commuting to campus or downtown by means other than personal automobile.

- Rezone areas close to campus to reflect current usage and incentivize reduced car travel (see Recommendation 2.1). These zones should have reduced parking minima and allow for multi-family zoning or commercial mixed-use zoning.
- Sponsor sidewalk improvements to encourage walking
- Create a route of interconnected, clearly marked bike lanes designed to encourage non-motorized transit to campus from student areas. Create and post maps and informational signage advertising their use.
- Consider cross-subsidy of Rowan transportation initiatives (perhaps alongside neighboring municipalities) that produce a net benefit for the Borough.



Figure 5. An imagined rendering of what Transit Oriented Development could look like around the proposed terminus of the Gloucester-Camden line in downtown Glassboro.

1.4.3 In the event the Gloucester-Camden Transit Expansion is built, the Borough and the University should coordinate transit-oriented development schemes and multi-modal mobility strategies. (Figures 5 and 6)

- Create vision plans and master plans for station districts.
- Centralize relatively higher density development in the areas near potential station locations identified in the 2012 Gloucester County Transit Expansion Framework Study, which contains studies of existing conditions to help a municipality guide decisions regarding the location of station stops and the potential for development or redevelopment around those stations, and the 2020 Environmental Impact Statement that has updated proposed alignments for the project.
- Proposed stops include a walk-up station on Rowan's campus, as well as a terminal stop adjacent to downtown Glassboro. The terminal stop can be a park-and-ride destination for commuters taking the line north towards Camden and Philadelphia. This must be considered when planning for the station.
- Implement multi-modal transit connectivity improvements with linkages to potential shuttle, bike and pedestrian routes and networks identified elsewhere in this plan.

Figure 6. Existing transportation infrastructure for Glassboro and the surrounding area.



CASE STUDY: Transit Oriented Development in Arlington, VA

Arlington County was linked to Washington, D.C. via Metrorail in 1978. Although the proposed Gloucester-Camden Transit Expansion doesn't have the same level of connectivity to the metropolitan area's center that Metrorail offers, the prime similarity between the two scenarios is the two-way travel flow of the Arlington transit corridor. In Arlington County, once-rural towns like Falls Church, Tysons Corner and others have significant commercial centers and attract commuters. This mirrors the anticipated set-up for the Gloucester County line—with Camden and Philadelphia on one end, and Rowan University on the other. Though the effect of transit coming to Glassboro is likely to be far more understated than it was in Virginia, the effectiveness of the development approach is a useful lesson.

By developing retail, housing, and commercial space in dense clusters near stations in Transit Oriented Development (TOD) schemes, Arlington County has added tens of millions of square feet of

office space and tens of thousands of housing units since 1978 at a fraction of the density of normal suburban development. Areas in the Metrorail corridor boast transit ridership of twice the county average as those who desire a less car-dependent lifestyle have chosen these locations because of the transportation access, housing stock, and local amenities.

This once-rural area was developed densely as the new rail line linked existing town centers. This development was carefully shaped according to prepared area plans. Policy and financing tools were targeted to shape the areas around stations (zoning overlays, design requirements) and attract developers (targeted incentives and financing). This created mixed-use, walkable areas which accommodated commuting and shopping with reduced car travel. Re-design of circulation systems to accommodate park-and-ride commuters and retail shoppers eased concerns often raised with TOD regarding the introduction of new congestion.



Photo: Rosslyn, Arlington County



Photo: PennPraxis

2. QUALITY RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

Understanding housing trends is critical to understanding how the Growth Management Plan may develop policy solutions to help respond to community concerns and overall market trends. The total student enrollment of Rowan University has grown by nearly 80% in the past decade. This increase is the result of the University's affordability, growing prestige and academic competitiveness, absorption of new campuses, and programs that support student transfers from community colleges. The community is proud of Rowan and the opportunities and innovation the University brings to Glassboro. However, the rapid nature of this growth negatively impacts Glassboro in myriad ways; specific to housing is the number of single-family homes being converted into student rental properties.

Large concentrations of student rental properties within Glassboro's residential neighborhoods have resulted in the overall erosion of these residential neighborhoods as they transition to serving transient student populations. As outlined in the previous section, this shift has alienated non-student renters and owners and has prompted many residents (both longtime and perspective) to seek out alternative communities in which to live. Housing quality was an issue raised repeatedly during stakeholder interviews, and a lack of consensus on housing quality was revealed through the community survey where very few respondents agreed that Glassboro's housing quality is of a high caliber.

School quality goes hand in hand with housing quality. Community members have also spoken to the lagging quality and enrollment of Glassboro Public Schools, mainly correlated to the decrease in family households in the borough. Families with school-aged children are moving out in greater proportion, due in part to aforementioned nuisances caused by students, or by the competition of neighboring boroughs offering newer, larger housing stock, and better public facilities. As enrollment goes down, quality often follows, as it is harder to garner public resources to support schools. Therefore, shoring up Glassboro's neighborhoods is essential for improving schools, providing a base for supporting small businesses, and, all in all, creating a more cohesive community and quality of life.

The Borough has the power to manage growth and development within Glassboro, but this necessitates a reevaluation of current zoning and land uses. By strategizing where to locate higher density development and/or creating specified districts to encourage student conversions, certain residential focused neighborhoods can be retained/ re-cultivated as attractive places for families to purchase homes, trust in the quality of the schools, and re-invigorate the neighborhoods. Encouraging and allowing for higher density non-student developments along key downtown or other main economic corridors should also be prioritized, to offer a variety of high quality housing options. Providing a diversity of housing options will help ensure Glassboro can effectively cater to its existing residents while also attracting working professionals (including current Rowan faculty and staff) to relocate to Glassboro and support the continued revitalization of the community. Rowan already offers an Employee Housing Incentive Reimbursement program to eligible employees that seeks to support and encourage faculty and staff to purchase homes in Glassboro, but due to the perceived lack of quality housing, many choose to live elsewhere.

2.1 Modify zoning to better support growth management goals

At present, Glassboro's zoning is primarily residential with a spine of commercial extending along Delsea Drive and through the Downtown area, where the historic borough center and Rowan Boulevard are located. The zoning code includes a range of residential categories which can accommodate apartments, single-family homes on smaller lots, and sorority and fraternity houses. The Borough has made several amendments to the zoning code in recent years to allow for needed development (Rowan Boulevard is a prime example); however, more precise changes to the zoning code and map would enable better control over the type of development the Borough welcomes and ensure new investments are aligned with the specific needs and goals of the community. See the proposed zoning map (Figure 7) for recommended adjustments to the Borough's current zoning.

Strategies

2.1.1 As a part of the Master Plan update, adjust Borough zoning to promote mixed-use development and balanced residential districts. Zoning adjustments should include:

- Addition of a Mixed Use category, which could be applied in areas where higher-density development is desired, that will support greater walkability, and a density of customers to support small and local businesses, and include office jobs. Align this with multi-modal transportation planning (see Recommendation 2.4).
- Blending of High-density residential (R-3) with Garden Apartment, and removing the allowance for single-family homes within the R-3 category.
- Converting key areas designated as Office Park or Light Industrial to allow for new single-family housing developments.
- Converting key areas of Light Industrial to Office Park.
- Converting key areas of Medium-Density residential to High-Density to focus areas of student rentals and promote the creation of high-quality townhomes and multi-family housing options at a complementary scale (see Recommendation 1.3).



Thoughtfully adjusting Glassboro's existing zoning can cultivate desired development in the historic downtown, promoting greater activity and use, as seen here in Collingswood, New Jersey. (Photo: visitsouthjersey.com)

Figure 7. A proposed zoning map for Glassboro that promotes mixed-use development, while balancing residential needs.

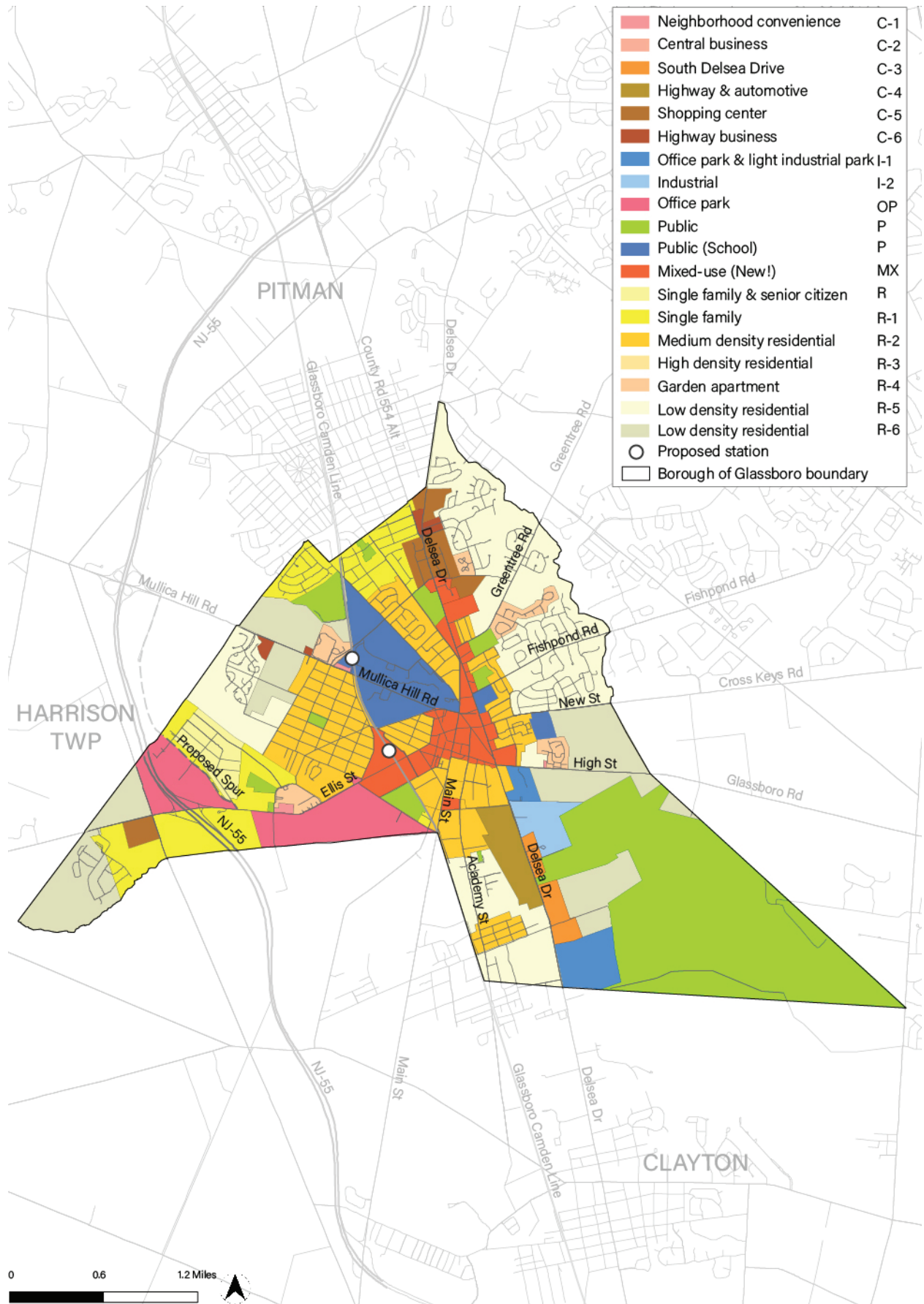


Table 1: Land Use Designations

	Land Use Designation	Density or Intensity
	Neighborhood Convenience (C-1)	Maximum 0.7 FAR
	Central Business (C-2)	Maximum 2.0 FAR
	South Delsea Drive (C-3)	Maximum 0.15 FAR
	Highway & Automotive (C-4)	Maximum 0.15 FAR
	Shopping Center (C-5)	Maximum 0.17 FAR
	Highway Business (C-6)	Maximum 0.15 FAR
	Office Park & Light Industrial Park (I-1)	Maximum 0.25 FAR
	Industrial (I-2)	Maximum 0.25 FAR
	Office Park (OP)	Maximum 0.5 FAR
	Public (P)	No maximum FAR restrictions

Table 1: Land Use Designations

	Land Use Designation	Density or Intensity
	Public (school) (P)	Maximum 1.0 FAR
	Mixed-use (MX)	Maximum 2.5 FAR of 1 non-residential FAR and 1.5 residential FAR
	Single Family & Senior Citizen (R)	40-80 units per acre
	Single Family (R-1)	3-5 dwelling units per acre
	Medium Density Residential (R-2)	6.5-12.5 dwelling units per acre
	High Density Residential (R-3)	80-150 dwelling units per acre
	Garden Apartment (R-4)	50-70 dwelling units per acre
	Low Density Residential (R-5)	5-7 dwelling units per acre
	Low Density Residential (R-6)	2-3 dwelling unit per acer

HOUSING TYPOLOGIES



SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES

For existing and future residents who see themselves living in Glassboro long-term, are excited to contribute to and invest in the community, and/or are seeking the space to raise a family. Investing in single-family homes stabilizes and preserves quality residential options for both renters and owners.



TOWNHOUSES

For young-professionals excited by convenience and location; smaller-families looking for a starter home; or empty nesters/ recent retirees who are interested in downsizing in exchange for amenities. Townhomes provide a more affordable, yet still permanent option, that attracts a diversity of residents to Glassboro.



APARTMENTS

For students, recent graduates, and young professionals who prioritized location and shared amenities over individual space. Mixed-use apartment complexes promote density along commercial corridors relieving residential neighborhoods of this burden and cultivating a culture of walkability. Apartments provide flexible and affordable housing options for the borough.

2.2 Preserve and stabilize areas of single-family homeownership

Glassboro can use a combination of tax exemptions and subsidies to incentivize homeowners to improve their properties and stay in the Borough. Historical housing transaction data showed that conversions of homes from single-family use to student rental use often followed the sale of these properties by Glassboro homeowners to out-of-town buyers. Some families move out of their homes because their budgets cannot support rising or unexpected expenses, or they cannot maintain their aging homes. Offering this class of homeowners an alternative to cashing out to avoid unforeseen housing expenses

will provide the added benefit of rehabilitated housing stock and increased property values. Offering subsidies and incentives which are not means-tested may also increase the likelihood that homeowners who are not facing financial pressure will make improvements.

Strategies

2.2.1 Continue to operate the Five Year Exemption and Abatement on improvements to existing dwellings in single family districts (Under § 422-4 of the Municipal Code).

- Promote the combination of the abatement with home improvement subsidies and consult the State of New Jersey best practices report on municipal abatements for optimization.

2.2.2 Offer financing for homeowners looking to make repairs and renovations in the form of a revolving low or no-interest loan fund or a grant program.

- The size of the loans or grants can vary; conduct an informal survey to give the Borough an idea of community needs before launching the program. Two examples of different kinds of programs:
 - University City District's (Philadelphia) Project Rehab offers a wide variety of home repair project management and financing resources for homeowners and developers and includes case management services.
 - A municipal example is the City of Philadelphia's Basic Systems Repair Program. The BSRP program is a means-tested grant program which offers up to 20K for emergency home repairs to help homeowners fix problems that pose an immediate threat to the health and safety of the persons living in the homes or community. The City dispatches contractors and manages the projects.



Glassboro already offers a robust stock of modestly-sized single family homes. Incentives and homeowner support, in tandem with new student rental policies, can preserve and stabilize these residential neighborhoods. (Photos: PennPraxis)

2.3 Promote higher-density development in key areas to concentrate growth around activity nodes, and support quality of life amenities

Historically, Glassboro has been a small town with modest residential neighborhoods and commercial corridors; however, Rowan University's recent expansion has signaled an increase in development as well as a new model for successful, higher density, mixed use formats. This growth, paired with shifting commuting patterns and lifestyle preferences places Glassboro in an advantageous position to reevaluate its development practices, aligning new projects with "smart growth" philosophies that include high-density, multi-modal, and energy efficient communities.

Ideally, higher-density development will be characterized by vertical, mixed-use developments supported by improved transit and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure that removes cars from the transportation arteries, easing congestion. Glassboro residents will continue to need and utilize cars; but, by capitalizing on more equitable and sustainable transportation policies, cars can comfortably occupy the periphery, rather than the center, of both new development and everyday life. A primary tool for achieving this is proactively directing where new development goes: ensuring that it complements the existing successes Glassboro has already achieved, removes pressure from single family neighborhoods, and coordinates growth with adequate modifications to the public realm.

As illustrated in the zoning map (Figure 7), high-density development will be concentrated in two places: Delsea Drive, and Downtown Glassboro.

Strategies

2.3.1 Convert portions of Delsea Drive to mixed use zoning to allow for higher quality development that will attract quality commercial tenants, includes residential and pedestrian-oriented design (Figure 8)

Delsea Drive is currently designated as a combination of a few zoning categories: highway commercial, shopping center, highway business, and South Delsea Drive. Many of the uses along Glassboro's main commercial thoroughfare for everyday shopping (groceries, drug stores, fast food) are outdated, unsightly, and very low-intensity with a preponderance of big box, auto-oriented establishments. In recent years, some of these parcels have undergone new development, or it is planned. Yet, this new development will result in similar uses. Rezoning portions of Delsea Drive as a mixed-use district will allow for new opportunities to emerge on this corridor. Retail and shopping for essential needs will thrive, and more land in the Borough can be allotted to high-density residential "garden apartment" style developments that are ideal for students and young families. Close proximity to Rowan and other job centers will enable residents to bike or walk, alleviating traffic congestion. The upgrading of these facilities will also attract new businesses in a variety of tenant sizes and types to take root in Glassboro, profiting from the diverse customer base.



Figure 8. The top image shows Delsea Drive as it currently exists, the bottom image is a perspective rendering of how changes in zoning and development practices can add value to the area.



Figure 9. The top image shows High Street as it currently exists, the bottom image is a perspective rendering of how changes in zoning and development practices can add value to the area.

2.3.2 Designate the majority of Downtown Glassboro as mixed use to encourage the type of development that will complete the community's vision.

Glassboro is an ideal location for mixed-use development. Rowan Boulevard has already demonstrated this with great success. The historic bones of the downtown are ripe to continue the pedestrian-oriented nature of Rowan Boulevard, connecting adjacent historic residential neighborhoods, Borough Hall and South Main Street, and Delsea Drive. In the community input collected through both the Growth Management Plan and the NPP, residents showed overwhelming support for the type of small-scale downtown development that would be well-suited to Glassboro. Currently the area is part of a redevelopment area, with an underlying Central Business zoning. In order to achieve the type of contiguous mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development that will renew Glassboro's economic base and support balanced growth, it is recommended that all portions of downtown Glassboro be reclassified as mixed use, this would include:

- High Street, between Ellis Street and Delsea Drive
- Main Street, between Church Street and Manahath Cemetery/ Wilson Avenue
- Academy, College and New Streets as they intersect with the above
- Mick Drive, between High Street and Redmond Avenue



Increased allowances for mixed use development in Glassboro would enable more opportunities for small business development and businesses that will be attractive to long time Glassboro residents, students and those who work in and around the downtown. (Photos: Philadelphia Inquirer, Middle Child, DiBruno Brothers, Open House Philadelphia, Continuum Partners)

CASE STUDY: Mixed-use in Collingswood, NJ



Photo: New York Times, 2008

The Borough of Collingswood features small town living at its' best. It maintains a vibrant main street filled with coffee shops, restaurants, art galleries, and a public library along its main corridor, Haddon Avenue, where the town holds numerous special events, promotions, and activities for residents and visitors to enjoy.

Haddon Avenue became Collingswood's commercial center at the turn of the 20th century. In 1990, Collingswood Commercial Historic District listed as a state historic area and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The District includes 79 buildings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries owing to their value and well-preserved condition. A local historic district was also designated along Haddon Avenue, providing more protection for heritage properties on street from being altered or compromised. Adaptive reuse along the avenue includes a modern office building occupying an old school house and a seafood distributor using a restored historic gas station.

The Master Plan for Collingswood was established in 1997, and the Haddon Avenue Corridor Study and the Heart of Collingswood study were created in 2009 to guide implementation and ongoing redevelopment along the Avenue. Haddon Avenue began to rebound in 1990s after a prolonged period of disinvestment. Capital improvement and infrastructure repair programs lead to improved streetscaping and wayfinding along the avenue including: a Millennium Clock, Memorial Walk, lamp post flower baskets, pole banners, street trees, and street furniture. The Haddon Avenue Business Improvement District, which is managed by Collingswood Partners Inc., formed to facilitate commerce along the avenue and further enhance the commercial corridor.

Every year, more than 40 arts and cultural festivals take place along Haddon Avenue, including the May Fair, hosting more than 100 artists and four stages of live music.

2.4 Strengthen and advertise the pipeline for Rowan students and graduates to teach in Glassboro schools

In recent years, the Glassboro public school system has experienced a decrease in enrollment. This is due to the attrition of families with school aged children from Glassboro, as well as larger demographic shifts in the number of households having children. Glassboro has five public schools currently serving the following age ranges: Rodgers School (preschool and kindergarten), Bullock School (first - third grade), Bowe School (fourth - sixth grade), Intermediate (seventh and eighth grade), Glassboro High School (ninth - twelfth grade). Depending on the student body, shifting between these facilities occurs to accommodate the variable enrollments. The district offers two Academy 'Choice Programs' (one in Fine and Performing Arts and one in STEM) as well as STARS (Student Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarship), both of which are designed to attract high school students to the Glassboro public school system. Unfortunately, the attrition rate has already impacted the finances and services afforded to area schools.

Many residents view Rowan University as a community asset but wished for better relationships that could encourage Rowan to feel a part of the community, rather than an unplanned piece. In recent years there has been a concerted effort to cultivate greater collaboration between Rowan University's College of Education and the Glassboro public school district, which has resulted in the development of a Professional Development Schools District. Such developments engage Glassboro educators in research about their teaching and seeks to improve student performance; however, this relationship would benefit from more publicity and further collaboration.

Strategies

2.4.1 *Realign Rowan Professional Development Schools program with extra attention to Glassboro Schools, improving test results and overall school quality.*

- Rowan currently offers a wide variety of education programs, including a comprehensive BA in Education, with specialization in Early Childhood Education



Rowan's College of Education has a robust offering of undergraduate and graduate programs that can be leveraged to further enrich Glassboro's public schools, making them a more attractive option within the region. (Photo: Rowan University)

(P-3), Elementary Education (K-6), Health and Physical Education. Students are also able to specialize by subject matter, including English, Social Studies, or World Languages. At the post-graduate level, Rowan offers several masters programs in education, including counseling, education technology, reading education, special education, just to name a few. Rowan also offers a Ph. D in Education, an Ed. D in Education Leadership and a Ed. S in School Psychology. Finally, students are able to minor in a variety of education topics or complete dual degrees with other programs combined with education.

Having this amazing resource within the Borough of Glassboro presents many opportunities for enhancing the quality of Glassboro's public schools. Since 2015, Rowan has had a relationship with Glassboro's four public schools as part of their Professional Development Network (<https://education.rowan.edu/ESP/pds/index.html>) – Thomas E. Bowe School, Dorothy L. Bullock Elementary, J. Harvey Rogers School, and Glassboro High School. Professional Development Schools (PDS) are partnerships between colleges of schools that enable professional preparation of teacher candidates, faculty development, inquiry directed at the improvement of practice, and enhanced student learning. The PDS Professor in Residence attends the school 1-2 days per week, with the goals of:

- Working with school leaders to plan and implement professional development to meet the schools' needs and conduct action research projects;
- Working collaboratively with school staff to improve instructional practice and enhance student learning;
- Providing supervision and mentoring to Rowan teacher candidates in their field experiences;

This program is a great way to bring the expertise and knowledge of Rowan students into Glassboro schools; however, greater opportunities exist for using these assets to improve school quality. For example, the program could help design and advocate for curriculum that would target the specific needs of that school, include more teachers on a longer-term basis to develop relationships with parents and students, and include an evaluation program to track school improvement over time. This would help understand how the program and enhancements were making an impact in the community.

Finally, this program could be more widely marketed so that parents considering options would know about the investments of time and energy Rowan is making in Glassboro schools. This would help cultivate a more favorable perception of area schools and encourage more families to invest long term in the community.

2.4.2 Enhance connection between existing STEAM and Art programs and Glassboro schools.

- Rowan is known as an institution that excels in STEAM subjects. The Department of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM) at Rowan offers a variety of opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to pursue certification in Art, Math, Music, Science, and Health and Physical Education.

As an extension of this, Rowan offers STEAM Academy. The Academy is open to students entering grades 7 through 12, including extracurricular activities with supportive guidance from Rowan faculty. With a day-only program and two different residential programs, the three-week long program exposes high school students to college campus life while immersing them in STEAM-focused learning experiences and field trips.

A scholarship—supported by both the Borough and the University—can be established to secure a number of cost-free spots for Glassboro students each year. This would enhance performance of Glassboro schools, and provide an incentive for families to stay in or relocate to Glassboro.

Similarly, the art education program of Rowan offers a community art education program called SmART (Saturday Morning Art at Rowan University). Classes are taught by Art Education majors under the supervision of Art Education faculty with public school art classroom teaching experience. The program has been in existence since 1970 and serves all of Southern New Jersey but is only offered once a year, in the fall.

The SmART program could be enhanced to function more similarly to the STEAM program, also with designated, financially supported spots for Glassboro students..

2.4.3 Provide tuition support for Glassboro high school students who are admitted into Rowan University's College of Education and commit to working in the district upon completion of their initial teacher education program.

- The Glassboro school district can develop this pathway program for select students who complete the teacher academy already in place at Glassboro High School. This model is currently being piloted with Camden City schools.

2.4.4 Reduced housing costs for Rowan graduates or nearby institutions who will teach in Glassboro schools.

- Currently Rowan offers a homeowner incentive for university faculty and staff that choose to buy a home in Glassboro. In order to bring high quality teachers to Glassboro's public schools, the Borough could offer a portfolio of incentives for educators. This could be in the form of preferred mortgage rates, reduced real estate taxes, or reduced rent in rental properties. These incentives would be a combination of borough administration, agreements with property managers, and Glassboro Public Schools. The amounts and duration of incentives would be developed as a part of this partnership.



Photo: Borough of Glassboro

3. ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Thinking holistically about Glassboro in terms of economic development will be crucial for sustained success. In the wake of the current economic recession that is unfolding, this can not be understated. In Rowan University Glassboro has a strong anchor institution and economic partner that can help stabilize the Borough and provide a competitive edge within the region throughout the recovery period and beyond. This was already seen during the 2008 recession, when Rowan Boulevard was able to finalize development and construction.

Rowan Boulevard is largely seen as a successful achievement for the municipality; it has created new business opportunities, provided a beloved community square, and is posed to serve as a wick to pull new investments into the historic downtown. However, business attrition is occurring in and around Rowan Boulevard as rents increase, and many businesses cater primarily towards students, some going so far as to close when Rowan lets out for the summer. This causes frustration among local Glassboro residents who feel unwelcomed in these spaces and underrepresented in new development initiatives. These frustrations are likely to exasperated as the full repercussions of the COVID-19 recession are realized and students are prioritized by seasoned developers who see them as providing a reliable consumer dollar. While an economic partnership with Rowan will be even more crucial in the coming years the Borough should be vocal about its needs and advocate for community engagement, public realm improvements, and cohesive design across all development projects. Glassboro is relatively small, new development (at all scales) must be approached thoughtfully for how it interacts with and influence other valued aspects of the community.

It will be important to stay informed about new stimulus opportunities available to Glassboro that are enacted in response to the COVID-19 recession. Glassboro already possesses a State of New Jersey Opportunity Zone that occupies more than half the borough's land area. Opportunity Zones are low-income census tracts nominated by governors and certified by the U.S. Department of the Treasury that allow investors to direct capital into new projects and enterprises in exchange for certain federal capital gains tax advantages. Glassboro's Opportunity Zone is one of only three in Gloucester County, positioning the borough to be a regional hub for new development and investment. It is likely that the benefits of Opportunity Zones will be extended, or similar stimulus opportunities will be layered on top of this designated area. If managed well with foresight about the type of development that the Borough needs, this can be a tool to springboard development over the next several years. In the coming months, while economic initiatives are stalled and there remains some uncertainty about the depth of the COVID-19 recession, the best thing the Borough can do is orient thinking towards a stimulus-ready planning mindset, enabling the municipality to secure funding, projects, and jobs as they become available.

3.1 Encourage downtown development with incentives and improved connectivity

The Wall Street Journal reported a 6% increase in college closures from academic year 2015-16 to 2016-17. Across the nation, higher education is facing a student enrollment “cliff” caused by a combination of lower birthrates, the rising cost of tuition, the potentially lifelong burden of student debt, and increasing doubts about the value of a college degree. Exasperating these factors is the 2020 worldwide Covid-19 pandemic that has brought educational institutions to a halt and triggered an economic crisis. While the Borough may currently see Rowan’s growing student population as a burden, such steady streams of students (and the financial and cultural stimulation this leads too) may soon be in jeopardy; not every university will be able to weather the coming turbulence. Branding and economic development at the town level can create a desirable environment that attracts students, helping to stabilize enrollment and keep universities open. A flourishing town supports a flourishing university, and vice versa.

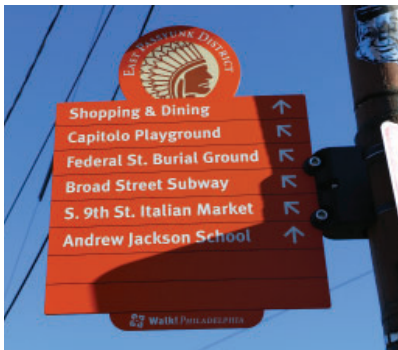
Strategies

3.1.1 Create a downtown brand for a cohesive identity that can attract new business and revitalize existing commercial enterprises.

- Utilizing the community vision statement as a guide develop cohesive branding and wayfinding that connects Rowan’s campus to Glassboro’s historic downtown. This can be communicated through banners, consistent street furnishings, directional signage, and public art installments.
- Focusing on the positives of the town-gown relationship, work with Rowan to publicize economic impact reports that encourage longtime residents to see the University in a new light and invite new investors to become stakeholders in the community.
 - Econsult made an economic impact report for Rowan in 2015 that could be easily updated and visually spruced up for community sharing/ negotiating with developers.

3.1.2 Invest in public infrastructure (see Recommendation 1.4).

- Stewardship and improvements of public infrastructure contributes to quality of life, equity, public safety, and, of course, economic development. It is important



East Passyunk Avenue in South Philadelphia is a good example of a commercial corridor that utilizes branding and wayfinding to create a cohesive identity and promote economic revitalization. Directional signs, maps, and pavement markers provide valuable information and encourage visitors to explore the full length of the corridor. (Photos: PennPraxis)

to develop a capital improvements plan—components of which should include traffic planning and street/sidewalk assessments for the Borough—in order to achieve a cohesive and effective vision. Pair capital improvements with areas of new development for strategic investments. While costly, upgraded and thoughtful infrastructure improvements should be able to save taxpayers money over time (rather than investments made reactively in the face of an immediate need) and contribute to greater suitability. Residents, businesses, visitors, and institutions

CASE STUDY: Development Opportunities in Green Hills, Nashville



Photo: PennPraxis

Green Hills is a commercial and residential area located about four miles south/southwest of downtown Nashville. Previous plans all recognized the need for alternative forms of transportation for the Green Hills Commercial area. These alternative forms of transportation (pedestrian, bike, and public transit) would perform more effectively in higher density urban environments. Therefore, an Urban Design Overlay (UDO) was proposed as a way to guide intensity, location and visual quality of any future growth.

The overall goal of the Green Hills UDO area was to give three-dimensional form to the concept of the urban village as presented in the Plan. To achieve the goal, a framework for an active street life for

pedestrians was provided: multilevel mixed-use development pattern along a system of streets was promoted, shared parking and multiple transportation service opportunities were suggested, high quality open spaces for assembly, relaxation, and civic events were planned, and an inviting streetscape was designed through improvements to sidewalks, landscape, street furniture, building façade, signage, and awnings.

Incentives were proposed for mixed-use developments, increased setback for street activities, buildings facing the street, etc. The incentives include bonus floor area reduced or exempted required parking. Green Hills now features mixed-use developments, including shopping center, supermarkets, cinema, and various retail.

all benefit from high quality public infrastructure, and all should contribute to its construction, maintenance, and improvement—this need not be an undertaking of municipal government alone, though it should be prepared to lead the charge. Areas of focus should be:

- Bicycle and pedestrian access
- Public transit, including the possibility of light-rail
- Green infrastructure and renewable energy investments
- Internet and other technology based infrastructure opportunities

3.1.3 Utilize non-traditional lease agreements to reduce risk for new business and attract more foot traffic in the downtown until more permanent development projects can be secured. This type of flexibility will be particularly important as the full effects of the COVID-19 recession set in. Examples of non-traditional lease agreements include:

- Seasonal or pop-up shops in vacant commercial buildings
- Incubator and shared spaces (allowing multiple business to occupy the same space)
- Transforming vacant land into popup public spaces and or outdoor commercial uses (outdoor dining, farmers market, open air makers markets)



The above photo is Xenia, Ohio, a former railroad town with a comparable population to Glassboro that leveraged investments in bicycle infrastructure into a new identity as “the Bicycle Capital of the Midwest.” Bicycle infrastructure increases safety, reduces congestion, and encourages residents and visitors to spend more time along commercial corridors. Connecting Glassboro through a network of protected bike lanes is a particularly attractive investment considering the Borough’s small scale, the number of students who already use bikes to get around Rowan’s campus, and the Borough’s proximity to regional bike trails. (Photo: Livability.com)

3.1.4 Streamline permitting process for the downtown.

- Streamlining and prioritizing the permitting process along commercial corridors can be an attractive incentive for potential developers. Shorter permit processing times will save applicants time; they can also save costs associated with holding property until it is put to productive use. To streamline the permitting process, create a concise and clear checklist for necessary permits that is visibly available on the municipality website, have a well-managed single point of contact for all permits, stick to deadlines, and encourage digital submissions. It is also possible to offer an expedited review process to those willing to pay a fee in order to speed up important development projects.

3.2 Court businesses that are specific to Glassboro's diverse population and needs development

As the Borough seeks to grow its population, attracting younger inhabitants who will invest in the community and ideally become long-term residents is key. To give Glassboro a competitive edge, it is important to strategically invest in amenities that are considered necessary or desirable for this subset of the population. This includes shared co-working spaces, coffee shops, and a diversity of entertainment options. Pairing these commercial offerings with mixed-use developments in the downtown is ideal; securing anchor businesses like these can lead to further investment.

Strategies

3.2.1 Create a quick fact sheet that advertises the strengths and opportunities of the Borough for potential investors.

- A brief, simple, graphically appealing document that highlights key data points (economic performance; successfully completed projects; research interests, size, and spending capacity of Rowan population; available land; community vision



To attract retain Rowan alumni and young professionals Glassboro should court businesses like coffee shops and co-working spaces that give the Borough a competitive edge and support the trend of a remote workforce. (Photo: Archipreneur.com)

CASE STUDY: East Passyunk Avenue Business Improvement District



Photo: Flavors on the Avenue

Located just a few minutes from Center City Philadelphia, East Passyunk Avenue is home to over 150 independently owned businesses, ranging from unique boutiques offering hand-made wares and fashion to fine dining in a relaxed atmosphere. In 2002 the East Passyunk Avenue Business Improvement District (EPA BID) was formed to address the increasing vacancies in retail business due to the increased dependence on shopping malls, big box stores, and online shopping. Its Board of Directors meets regularly to oversee its programs, including capital and facade improvement projects, marketing and promotions, special events, business recruitment and retention, and clean and green initiatives.

EPA BID partners with community organizations, government agencies, and businesses. For example, Passyunk Avenue Revitalization Corporation (PARC), a non-profit organization, owns real estate primarily on the Passyunk Avenue retail corridor from Federal Street to McKean Street. With the income from these properties PARC provides supplementary public space maintenance and improvement services on Passyunk Avenue and on the

surrounding residential blocks. PARC's tenants pay rent which goes back into building preservation, public space improvements, and maintenance. PARC, together with EPA BID provide six-days a week cleaning along East Passyunk Avenue and along South Broad Street.

To promote business community and neighborhood along the corridor, EPA BID organizes year-round and seasonal events. Local musicians, DJs, bands, and other entertainers are invited to perform at the events and programs throughout the whole year, including the following:

- Singing Fountain Farmers Markets (Wednesday Afternoons May-November)
- Second Saturdays on East Passyunk (Year Round), Flavors on the Avenue (late April)
- Car Show & Street Festival (late July)
- Witch Craft Beer Crawl (late October)
- XMas Tree Lighting (early December)

The EPA BID website, Facebook, and Instagram accounts offer abundant information on business directory, year-round and seasonal events, business resources, business recruitment, and available property for sale and lease.

statement) can be used to attract new development, particularly the innovative and youth focused businesses Glassboro needs to become a regional hub. This fact sheet should be included with any future RFPs the Borough issues.

3.2.2 Work with Rowan to develop a student venue space (to be used for art, music, club events, etc.) on High Street.

- This can attract students to the downtown in a controlled way, providing an entertainment alternative to house parties and while encouraging students to visit other local businesses. It has the potential to become an anchor on the commercial corridor and attract other investors.

3.3 Redevelop commercial corridors with high-quality, mixed-use development

Vibrant commercial corridors are signifiers of a healthy community; they bring neighborhoods together, capture dollars for the municipality (from both local shoppers and visitors), and contribute to strong, stable property values. A reliable and cohesive framework for future development proposals along key commercial corridors ensures the full potential of private and public investments are realized.

Strategies

3.3.1 Implement design guidelines to produce high-quality development. (See sample design guidelines, pages 58-61)

- Design guidelines help to establish and maintain a unified appearance that will respect Glassboro's unique character, while also promoting high quality design and supporting economic revitalization.

3.3.2 Establish a Business Improvement District (BID).

- BIDs are discreet geographic areas traditionally centered around productive commercial corridors and created by corridors property owners and merchants. They are quasi-public entities that are established as nonprofits but funded by a city-sanctioned levy on top of existing property taxes—assessed only to property owners within the designated BID area. BIDs are used to fund cohesive improvement projects (cleaning and maintenance, uniformity, branding, programming, etc.) in addition to the base of city provided services. A successful BID has:
 - A dedicated and experienced leader
 - An abundance of community outreach
 - A detailed district plan that works in harmony with the Borough's plans but is more detailed and bespoke in regard to the area served by the BID

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Design guidelines define the attributes of architecture, urban design, and public space that make for successful projects and communities. In doing so, they support the visual and spatial harmony of designated areas, fostering targeted and meaningful investment while promoting preservation of place. Design guidelines are meant to articulate a shared vision and provide guidance for how the borough can achieve this vision over time. They outline standard protocols for new development, renovation, and public improvement project that include design aspects as small as color palette and signage, to larger concerns such as building massing and sidewalk configuration. Because design guidelines are meant to address all aspects of the public realm, partnering with other initiatives—like the Neighborhood Preservation Program or New Jersey Complete Streets—can help ensure successful implementation.

All construction projects within the area governed by the guidelines must come before the planning commission (or a dedicated committee) for review. This ensures design guidelines are being appropriately met. Once design guidelines have been ratified, they should be diligently enforced; their success is dependent on consistency and granting minimal variances.

What follows are guiding principles to anchor the borough's design choices moving forward, and examples of guidelines that could be adopted for Glassboro's High Street corridor. To successfully implement design guidelines, a more robust document should be developed from this foundation. While the High Street corridor is used as an example, other areas that could benefit from bespoke design guidelines include the Delsea Drive corridor, select residential neighborhoods, and areas that see new Transit Oriented Development.



Glassboro's High Street corridor would benefit from organized and thoughtful design guidelines to shape new development and investment. (Photo: PennPraxis)

Underlying Principles of Design Guidelines

PURSUE QUALITY + SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

All development in Glassboro should aim to achieve excellence in design; this includes using high quality materials and construction method, respecting community identity and site contexts, thoughtfully interfacing with the public realm, and minimizing environmental impacts.

PRIORITIZE PUBLIC REALM ENHANCEMENTS

In order to promote and sustain alternative modes of transportation Glassboro must invest in its public realm, which can be done so through improvements that enhance the character, comfort, and interest of the streetscape. Each building should connect visually and physically to public streets and spaces and express a human scale; this is particularly important at the ground level.

MAXIMIZE CONNECTIVITY + ACCESS

Glassboro should work to establish equitable access (pedestrian, bike, ADA, and public transit) to commercial corridors. This means both thoughtfully connecting the borough (and greater region) to Glassboro's economic centers, as well as constructing safe, accessible pathways for easily navigating these centers once there.

PROMOTE + PRESERVE COMMUNITY IDENTITY

Design guidelines should establish expectations for compatible development (materials, scale, and massing that are in step with an established community identity) while also encouraging creativity in design to reflect innovation and revitalization. Modern design techniques and creative uses of materials should be encouraged, provided new infill and renovation projects are in dialog with extant fabric and respect Glassboro's history.

ACKNOWLEDGE CONSTRAINTS

Design guidelines seek to improve urban design without significantly impacting project costs. Objectives must be balanced with a realistic sense of development costs and other constraints. To minimize costs the guidelines should be shared at the onset of the development process and provide flexible options for meeting design objectives.

DESIGN GUIDELINES



Example Guidelines for High Street Corridor

BUILDING HEIGHT

Specify both minimum and maximum building heights based on context. Currently, the tallest buildings on High Street are 4 stories, but these exist on the periphery. Encourage new construction to respect the height of the extant buildings they neighbor (2-3 stories along the stretch of High Street from Poplar to Academy) and allow for taller buildings in some specific areas if they utilize upper story setbacks.



MASSING, SCALE, AND RHYTHM

A corridor's character is expressed through the massing, scale, and rhythm (articulated openings and sections) of its buildings. As with building height, the size and proportion of new buildings should relate to that of their neighbors. For High Street, this means avoiding monolithic, uniformed buildings; larger developments can relate to historic fabric by articulating smaller masses along their facades. Appropriate forms of articulation include vertical or horizontal changes in materials, color, or depth that work to break down a large building into human scale components.



SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

Buildings should be designed to maximize energy efficiency and, where appropriate, incorporate sustainable design features including but not limited to renewable energy devices (i.e. solar panels), shading (through landscaping or other physical design elements), and energy-efficient appliances and fixtures. When possible, the reuse of existing buildings should be prioritized over demolition. Stormwater management and other greening practices should be incorporated into all building and site design.

STREETScape

A unified strategy for landscaping and placemaking along the High Street corridor can express community identity and support an increase in pedestrian activity while simultaneously enchainning safety and improving access. Wayfinding and other informational signage, public art, street greening, and high-quality street furnishings (trash cans, bike racks, lighting, benches) should be consistently installed along the corridor. New Jersey's Complete Streets Design Guide should be used as a foundational document for street improves in Glassboro.



MATERIALS

All materials used on the High Street corridor should be high quality and durable. Materials used for new construction projects should be compatible with surrounding contexts, this means maintaining a visual similarity with the more traditional materials found along the corridor and breaking down larger developments into human scale components. Create a table that outlines appropriate cladding material for the corridor, this can be broken down into primary and secondary categories where restrictions are placed on secondary materials in order to allow for flexible design but maintain the desired aesthetic of the corridor. Restrictions could include limiting the percentage of a building that secondary materials can cover or prohibiting the use of secondary material on ground floors.



WINDOWS AND DOORS

Well-articulated building openings invite pedestrian activity. Require front doors of all buildings be placed on primary streets and visibly designated (this includes entrances to residential buildings). Establish minimum transparency levels for windows on all commercial frontages to improve visibility in public areas. Encourage windows that create depth and shadow on façades for visual interest.



3.4 Leverage opportunity zones to incite development Borough-wide

Opportunity zones are designed to spur economic development by providing tax benefits to investors. Investors can defer tax on all prior gains invested in a Qualified Opportunity Fund (QOF) until the earlier of either the date on which the investment in a QOF is sold or exchanged, or December 31, 2026. If the QOF investment is held for longer than 5 years, there is a 10% exclusion of the deferred gain; if the investment is held for more than 7 years, there is a 15% exclusion. Additionally, if the investor holds the investment in the Opportunity Fund for at least ten years, they pay no taxes on any capital gains produced through their QOF investment. Due to time sensitivity for investment and stalled economic activity as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 recession, development within Glassboro's opportunity zone (Figure 9) should be prioritized. Some extensions and relaxation of requirements were made by the government in the summer of 2020 to provide investors relief during the recession, it is likely that further changes we come as the full reality of COVID-19's economic impact is realized. The Borough should continue to monitor these changes and stay poised to act on investment opportunities as soon as possible. Other strategies the Borough should consider in order to capitalize on these investment opportunities include:

Strategies

3.4.1 Target vacant lots and buildings to develop "shovel ready" sites.

- Shovel ready sites are properties that have most if not all clearances for and barriers to development (things like zoning variances, title work, environmental testing, and needed public infrastructure) settled before the property is put up for sale. This saves time and money and can be a considerable attractor for investors. Other ways to streamline development for select locations include reducing or eliminating developer fees and parking requirements.

3.4.2 Create linkages with other local and regional tax incentives.

- By understanding how other existing economic incentives can be leveraged with the Glassboro Opportunity Zone the Borough can court a diversity of development projects and be better prepared to simulate investment during the recession. The Glassboro opportunity zone is also:
 - A Redevelopment Area
 - A Low-Income Housing Tax Credit qualifies census tract
 - A New Market Tax Credit eligible census tract
 - The area participating in the Neighborhood Preservation Program
 - A Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit eligible census tract
 - NJ Redevelopment Authority eligible (whole municipality)
 - A Smart Growth area

3.4.3 Create a branding and advertising campaign unique to the Glassboro Opportunity Zone (See Strategies 3.1.1 and 3.4.2).

- Be vocal about community assets and what sets Glassboro apart from other investment opportunities developers might have

- Work with Rowan and county representatives to promote a regional investment strategy that attracts exciting projects to Gloucester county's largest opportunity zone
- Emphasize other opportunities for return on investment and the cohesive development plans the Borough is using as a framework
- Link Opportunity Zone projects to community development goals and strategies in order to demonstrate a clear vision (See Recommendation 4.1)

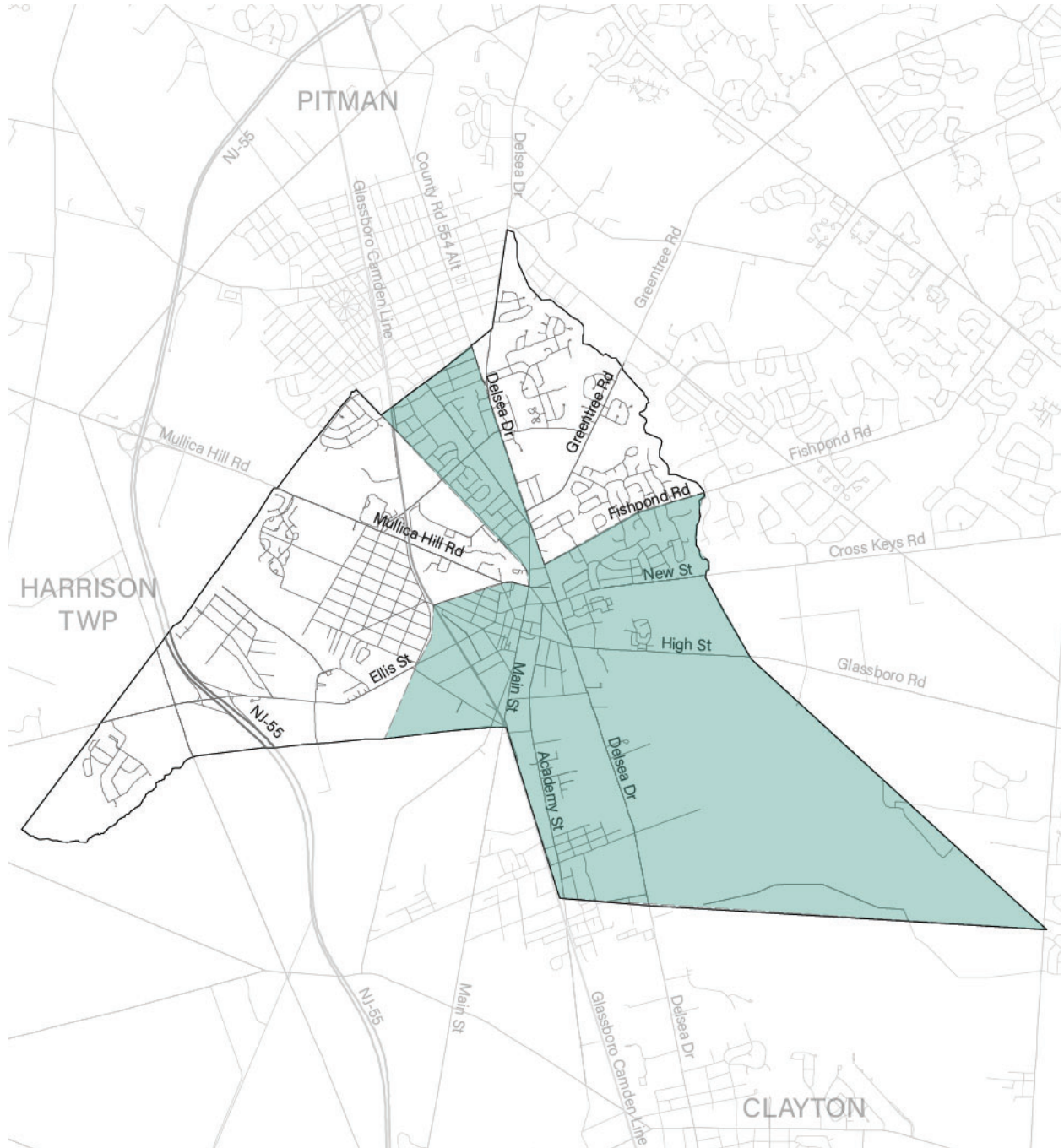


Figure 9. A large amount of Glassboro is considered an Opportunity Zone; portions of both Delsea Drive and High Street fall within this zone and should be prioritized for new development projects.



Photo: Borough of Glassboro

4. COMMUNITY IDENTITY

Thinking holistically about Glassboro, from schools, to homes, to commercial development, to future growth, will be essential to harnessing and sustaining momentum of all goals. By many accounts the newly developed Rowan Boulevard has been a triumph for the borough. It has created new business opportunities, provided a beloved community square, and is poised to serve as a wick capable of pulling new investments into the historic downtown. However, business attrition is occurring in and around Rowan Boulevard as rents increase, and many businesses suffered greatly due to the economic downturn of Covid-19, and fewer students returning to campus in subsequent terms. Already, many businesses were viewed primarily as catering to students, some going so far as to close during summer months. This causes frustration among local Glassboro residents who feel unwelcomed in these spaces and underrepresented in new development initiatives.

When asked “What makes Glassboro unique?” many residents upheld the community’s diversity as a positive attribute that set Glassboro apart from its neighbors. Indeed, Glassboro is Gloucester County’s most diverse municipality. For comparison, the three neighboring municipalities the Borough identified as its most direct competitors (Harrison Township, Mantua Township, and the Borough of Pitman) all possess populations greater than 90% white and less than 3% Latinx. Within Gloucester County, Glassboro is a pocket of vibrant diversity.

Additionally, Rowan University has been actively working to increase its own diversity. In 2009, the number of minority students enrolled at the University made up just 15% of the total student body. By 2019 this number had increased to 32%. But as both the Borough and University embrace diversity, they must also work to embrace equity and inclusion. This is an opportunity for collaboration between Glassboro’s key stakeholders. Such a partnership can build stronger relationships between students and residents while also contributing to a unique, revitalized downtown that attracts visitors from across the region.

In 2019 Glassboro was awarded a grant from the State of New Jersey Neighborhood Preservation Program (NPP)—a tangible affirmation of the great potential Glassboro’s historic downtown possesses. The NPP program provides funds for a community-driven preservation plan, developed and implemented along High Street and immediately adjacent residential neighborhoods. The NPP proposal, completed by the Borough and a community steering committee in early 2020, broadened typical NPP objectives to focus on needs that were specific to Glassboro, including homeowner assistance and bringing desired amenities to the downtown. Funds for these initiatives, to be released incrementally from 2020 through 2024, will do a great deal to contribute to the character and preservation of the historic downtown. Continuing to work with community members and stakeholders in identifying, recognizing, and preserving the community’s layered history will be an ongoing endeavor that the Borough should lead.

4.1 Enhance Diversity & Community Engagement

A primary goal of Rowan and the Borough should be maintaining and increasing diversity. Glassboro is currently the most diverse community in Gloucester County, a desirable feature to many new and existing families; however, the Borough can do more to encourage diversity and inclusion and foster a sense of community where all feel welcome. Several recommendations to accomplish this include:

Strategies

4.1.1 *Establish resident councils for each of Glassboro's neighborhoods and for Glassboro overall.*

- Ensure there is diverse representation from each of the neighborhoods, including new and long term homeowners alike, and renters. Resident councils could be geographically based or subject matter based, but would be brought in to advise on any changes in the borough so that the community would always be informed, have advanced knowledge, and that community members would be able to hear the perspectives of one another and build relationships and understanding around common goals.

4.1.2 *Engage students and young alumni on issues pertaining to Glassboro's development, events, schools, and community issues.*

- In addition to the programs that Rowan leads to encourage volunteerism, the Borough should also engage directly with Glassboro students to hear their concerns. The discussion about lack of entertainment venues in the Borough encouraged many students to become involved in the planning process for the NPP and the Growth



Photo: Rowan University

Management Plan. A sustained program to engage young people in these conversations will aid the borough in gaining insight into the types of business and features that would be appeal to students and recent graduates, thus encouraging increased enrollment, and a higher proportion of graduates wishing to stay in the Borough as residents. This program could further increase the sense of community connection between Rowan and Glassboro, and in turn, income for Glassboro businesses and tax revenue.

4.1.3 Establish comprehensive business associations to engage small businesses in plans for the borough, as well as resident and student/ alumni input.

- A business association already exists for Rowan Boulevard tenants, which is overseen by Nexus Development; however, this doesn't include businesses from elsewhere in the borough. It's important that business owners have an opportunity to share their voice, and also understand possible changes coming to the borough, including zoning, new development, transportation and infrastructure enhancements, and upcoming events. This will make business owners more invested in the community, and welcome future small businesses owners by demonstrating the wealth of resources and support that exist for them.

4.1.4 Ensure that the Borough, large businesses, and employers have Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) programs in place.

- Such programs show current and future residents from all backgrounds that there is a place for them in Borough, and that a diversity of perspectives and experiences are actively welcomed in the leadership bodies that drive decision-making and the Borough's future.

4.2 Use new preservation tactics to uplift community history

A majority of community members who participated in the Growth Management Plan survey noted the value the historic character of Glassboro—upholding it as a unique community attribute. While securing the NPP grant was an important step for preserving Glassboro's history, the grant must be bolstered with complimentary initiatives. When a multifaceted effort is taken to uphold diverse histories Glassboro's community-oriented identity will be strengthened and preserved.

Strategies

4.2.1 Work with community members to identify community assets throughout the Borough and develop actionable plans for how these assets can be leveraged, sustained, and adapted to serve Glassboro's future.

- Current preservation efforts are focused on the High Street corridor. While this is a critical area, reflecting Glassboro's history, it is important to recognize other areas within the Borough that possess unique character worthy of preservation and activation. Not all preservation efforts will have the same level of importance or significance for Borough stakeholders. This is okay, as preservation is a spectrum, there are areas beyond High Street that can benefit from investment and renewed attention, at any scale.

Rowan University is a key stakeholder to include. Not only is this an opportunity for students, faculty, and staff to learn more about Glassboro, the University is fast approaching its own centennial celebration and is undoubtedly an important component of the Borough's layered history. Including this milestone would be an opportunity for a celebration that could highlight the accomplishments of both the Borough and Rowan University.

Community members should be engaged to develop an action plan for preservation, as has been begun with the NPP. The momentum of the NPP should be harnessed and channeled into future programs and activation. Preservation activities and discussion should be integrated with other community engagement (see Recommendation 4.1).

4.2.2 Use newly created design guidelines to promote preservation of place and strengthen Glassboro's visible identity for significant commercial corridors and residential neighborhoods.

- While maintaining existing built heritage is a priority for Glassboro, and nearly any community in which historic assets are present, maintaining a consistent built form that echoes traditional development patterns, and promotes walkability and sense of place, are equally as important. The latter can be accomplished through design guidelines, which add an additional layer of development standards to underlying zoning (see Strategy 3.3.1).

4.2.3 Focus on the preservation of intangible heritage. Preservation is about more than maintaining charismatic or historic architecture, it is also about ensuring the culture, character, and people of a place are legible.

- As noted, bringing community members of diverse backgrounds together is an exceptionally powerful mechanism for gathering memories that unite people and place. It can also enable deeper community connections and appreciation for shared, or distinct, lived experiences. As part of community engagement recommendations, and preservation efforts associated with the built environment, storytelling and the collecting of histories can bring Glassboro residents and stakeholders closer together in the name of community development and a shared sense of place. Example activities could include community sharing sessions, done in conjunction with the Heritage Glass Museum, at Borough Hall, or in the town square. Programs may also be done in partnership with the Glassboro Public Library, which is slated to undergo a significant redesign. A newly-designed civic asset will be a grand invitation to allow Glassboro residents to come together and celebrate community and the exceptional amount of human capital and spirit that went into creating the multi-faceted community that exists today.



Glassboro boasts a rich history that should be amplified and preserved. Sites like the historic train station should be in dialog with new development projects, continuing to contribute to the Borough's unique identity and serving as public assets. (Photo: PennPraxis)

4.3 Invest in and celebrate public spaces

As Glassboro works to cultivate a stronger identity centered around diverse residential neighborhoods and a reactivated downtown, the Borough's public assets—including parks and the local library—should be leveraged as anchor institutions that serve the whole community. While Glassboro residents value the local library, it is unable to serve the present and future needs of Glassboro. Nearly half of survey respondents are unsatisfied with the current public spaces in the borough. Therefore activation, improvement, and diverse programming should continue to be emphasized within these spaces.

Strategies

4.3.1 Integrate library upgrades with downtown development plans and public realm improvements.

- A recent development proposal includes an agreement to upgrade the library—a desire that the community has voiced for many years. This project cannot be done in isolation. Use this investment to develop the new library space as an exemplar community anchor capable of driving more investment and having multiple community benefits (see Strategy 3.1.2).

4.3.2 Ensure every residential neighborhood has access to a high quality open space or park.

- As growth continues, adding more residential areas throughout the Borough and increasing density in the downtown and commercial areas, the Borough should refine and improve upon development regulations to ensure enough

high-quality park and public space is created to serve these new areas. As a part of the updated Master Plan, better define specifications for bulk development recreation improvement requirements, including plans for equitably developing park space when developers choose to supply payments in lieu of improvements for residential developments.

Fortifying and increasing Glassboro's existing, high-quality public spaces will help attract and retain new community-oriented residents. All parks should be publicly accessible and connected by safe routes, so that residents of all ages can travel to them freely without the use of a car. Any future transportation planning should include connections to borough parks and open spaces, as well as those in surrounding boroughs, so that Glassboro residents can reach them safely.

4.4 Invest in community marketing and branding

As emphasized throughout this plan, Glassboro is already doing amazing work to secure the best and brightest future for its community; but there exists an apparent disconnect between the Borough's recent accomplishments and popular perceptions. By investing in community marketing and branding efforts the Borough can show off—to both current and prospective residents—all the positives Glassboro has to offer, including recently realized improvements and future plans that will continue to contribute to an enviable quality of life.

Strategies

4.4.1 Create a marking plan and brochure that advertises the best of Glassboro.

- The marketing plan and brochure should be as brief as possible—while still communicating substantive accomplishments, graphically oriented and branded to be recognizably "Glassboro", and include within its narrative the Borough's improved relationship with Rowan University (see Strategies 3.1.1 and 1.1.1).

The created documents can be shared with real estate agencies, used to advertise the acceptance of this Growth Management Plan/ the update of the Borough's Master Plan, highlight key initiatives once they are underway, and be rolled out with any additional marking around Glassboro's recent or Rowan's upcoming centennial milestones.

IMPLEMENTATION

*Putting policies into action
and achieving lasting
change*

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IMPLEMENTATION TABLE

The implementation table outlines a proposed plan of action for the recommendations contained within the Growth Management Plan. Each section of the Plan is made up a series of recommendations (numbered as X.X) followed by a more precise set of Strategies (numbered as X.X.X) that offer detail about how, and with whom, the recommendation will be accomplished. For each Strategy, there is a suggested timeframe, responsible entities and partners that will aid in implementation, and possible funding mechanisms. The timeframe helps manage expectations, the responsible entity and partners helps hold decision makers accountable, and the funding helps with prioritization. This table is designed to serve as a suggestive guide for implementing and tracking the Plan’s proposed recommendations in an organized and logical way, to ensure that the vision and goals of the Glassboro community can be fully realized. It is not binding, nor unalterable, but rather a starting point for the Borough and its partners.

Strategy	Timeframe	Responsible Entity + Partners	Potential Funding Mechanism	
1. Coordinated Development				
1.1 Enhance coordination between the University and the Borough in development and land use decisions				
1.1.1	Work with Rowan to establish an Office of Off-Campus Housing and Neighborhood Relations and/or Community Partnerships, staffed by representatives of both the University and the Borough. This centralizes University-Borough relations and holds each part accountable for checking in with the other.	1 year	Glassboro: Borough Council, Administrators Office; Rowan University: Office of the President	General operating funds
1.1.2	Establish a system where Rowan University submits regular updates to a campus master plan that addresses the University's interface with the Borough and incorporates input from both Glassboro and Gloucester County officials as part of the planning process.	1-3 years (initial), review and update every 5 years	Glassboro: Planning and Zoning; Rowan University: Facilities and Operations	General operating funds
1.1.3	Create a taskforce to address concerns about increasing demands on borough fire and police services, enhance existing municipal service agreement to provide added support in off-campus student communities, and work with the Dean of Students to better understand processes for student accountability and collectively devise needed changes or additional messaging.	1-2 years	Glassboro: Public Relations, Police Department, Fire Department; Rowan University: Student Affairs	General operating funds

Strategy		Timeframe	Responsible Entity + Partners	Potential Funding Mechanism
1.2 Strengthen programs to directly engage Rowan students as members of the wider Glassboro Community				
1.2.1	Create a dedicated program to address and reduce common sources of conflict in the borough: noise, parking, trash and the upkeep of rental property.	1-2 years	Glassboro: Public Relations, Health and Housing, Construction and Code Office; Rowan University: Student Affairs, Rowan Students	General operating funds; Federal work-study; AmeriCorps
1.2.2	Be proactive, not reactive, to student parties and nuance activities.	6 months	Glassboro: Public Relations, Police Department; Rowan University: Student Affairs, Rowan Students	General operating funds; Federal work-study; AmeriCorps
1.3 Create residential districts that support student living and concentrate off-campus student rentals				
1.3.1	Devote a staffer to GIS/ data management to ensure data is updated, accurate, and readily available. This role should be associated with the new Off-Campus Housing and Neighborhood Relations Office (see Strategy 1.1.1) and can even be an internship opportunity to involve a local planning student.	1 year	Glassboro: Administrators Office; Rowan University: Office of the President	General operating funds; Federal work-study; AmeriCorps
1.3.2	Implement student rental licensing requirements and use this as a way to accurately track types of rental properties within the Borough.	1 year	Glassboro: Borough Council, Health and Housing	General operating funds
1.3.3	Create student districts with appropriate zoning requirements (see Recommendation 2.1).	1-2 years	Glassboro: Borough Council, Planning and Zoning	General operating funds
1.4 Reduce traffic congestion through Borough-University coordination of land use planning and parking management.				
1.4.1	Work with Rowan to create a more efficient parking management system and assorted transportation alternatives (see Strategy 1.1.2).	1-3 years (initial), review and update annually	Glassboro: Planning and Zoning; Rowan University: Facilities and Operations, Rowan Faculty and Staff	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program; NJDOT Municipal grants; Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program
1.4.2	Implement Land Use policies and improvements to local infrastructure to incentivize commuting to campus or downtown by means other than personal automobile.	2-5 years	Glassboro: Planning and Zoning, Highway Department, Community Members; Rowan University: Facilities and Operations, Human Resources, Rowan Students	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program; NJDOT Municipal grants; Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program
1.4.3	In the event the Gloucester-Camden Transit Expansion is built, the Borough and the University should coordinate transit-oriented development schemes and multi-modal mobility strategies.	1-3 years (initial visioning), 5-10 years (implementation)	Glassboro: Planning and Zoning, Community Members; Rowan University: Facilities and Operations	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program; Economic Development Administration grants; Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program

Strategy	Timeframe	Responsible Entity + Partners	Potential Funding Mechanism	
2. Quality Residential Neighborhoods				
2.1 Modify zoning to better support growth management goals				
2.1.1	As a part of the Master Plan update, adjust Borough zoning to promote mixed-use development and balance residential districts.	1 year	Glassboro: Borough Council, Planning and Zoning	General operating funds
2.2 Preserve and stabilize areas of single-family homeownership				
2.2.1	Continue to operate the Five Year Exemption and Abatement on improvements to existing dwellings in single family districts (Under § 422-4 of the Municipal Code).	Ongoing	Glassboro: Tax and Utilities, Health and Housing	General operating funds
2.2.2	Offer financing for homeowners looking to make repairs and renovations in the form of a revolving low or no-interest loan fund or a grant program.	1 year	Glassboro: Borough Council, Health and Housing	Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Program; Neighborhood Preservation Balanced Housing Program; Small Cities Community Development Block Grant
2.3 Promote higher-density development in key areas to concentrate growth around activity nodes and amenities				
2.3.1	Convert portions of Delsea Drive to mixed use zoning to allow for higher quality development that will attract quality commercial tenants, includes residential and pedestrian-oriented design.	1 year	Glassboro: Borough Council, Planning and Zoning	General operating funds
2.3.2	Designate the majority of Downtown Glassboro as mixed use to encourage the type of development to complete the community's vision.	1 year	Glassboro: Borough Council, Planning and Zoning	General operating funds
2.4 Strengthen and advertise the pipeline for Rowan students and graduates to teach in Glassboro schools				
2.4.1	Realign Rowan Professional Development Schools program with extra attention to Glassboro Schools, improving test results and overall school quality.	1 year	Glassboro Public School District; Rowan University College of Education	General operating funds; Department of Education, Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program
2.4.2	Enhance connection between existing STEAM and Art programs and Glassboro schools.	1 year	Glassboro Public School District; Rowan University College of Education	General operating funds; Department of Education, Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program; Dodge Foundation grants
2.4.3	Provide tuition support for select Glassboro High School students who are admitted into Rowan University's College of Education.	1-2 years	Glassboro Public School District; Rowan University College of Education	General operating funds

Strategy		Timeframe	Responsible Entity + Partners	Potential Funding Mechanism
2.4.4	Reduced housing costs for Rowan graduates or nearby institutions who will teach in Glassboro schools.	1-2 years	Glassboro: Health and Housing; Rowan University College of Education	Small Cities Community Development Block Grant
3 Economic Opportunities				
3.1 Encourage downtown development with incentives and improved connectivity				
3.1.1	Create a downtown brand for a cohesive identity that can attract new business and revitalize existing commercial enterprises.	6 months	Glassboro: Public Relations, Business Development, Local Business Owners	Economic Development Administration grants; Dodge Foundation grants; New Jersey State Council on the Arts
3.1.2	Invest in public infrastructure (see Recommendation 1.4).	1-5 years	Glassboro: Planning and Zoning, Highway Department, Public Relations, Community Members	Economic Development Administration grants; NJDOT Municipal grants; Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program; Small Cities Community Development Block Grant
3.1.3	Utilize non-traditional lease agreements to reduce risk for new business and attract more foot traffic in the downtown while until more permanent development projects can be secured. This type of flexibility will be particularly important as the full effects of the COVID-19 recession set in.	6 months	Glassboro: Public Relations, Business Development, Construction and Code Office, Economic Development	General operating funds; Economic Development Administration grants
3.1.4	Streamline permitting process for the downtown.	1 year	Glassboro: Public Relations, Business Development, Construction and Code Office,	General operating funds
3.2 Court businesses that are specific to Glassboro's diverse population and needs				
3.2.1	Create a quick fact sheet that advertises the strengths and opportunities of the Borough for potential investors.	6 months	Glassboro: Public Relations, Business Development, Economic Development	General operating funds
3.2.2	Work with Rowan to develop a student venue space (to be used for art, music, club events, etc.) on High Street.	1-3 years	Glassboro: Public Relations, Business Development; Rowan University: Student Affairs, Rowan Students and Alumni	General operating funds; Economic Development Administration grants
3.3 Redevelop commercial corridors with high-quality, mixed-use development				
3.3.1	Implement design guidelines to produce high-quality development.	1-2 years	Glassboro: Planning and Zoning, Borough Council	General operating funds; Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Program
3.3.2	Establish a Business Improvement District (BID).	1 year	Glassboro: Public Relations, Business Development, Local Business Owners	General operating funds

Strategy		Timeframe	Responsible Entity + Partners	Potential Funding Mechanism
3.4 Leverage opportunity zones to incite development Borough-wide				
3.4.1	Target vacant lots and buildings to develop "shovel ready" sites.	1-3 years	Glassboro: Planning and Zoning	General operating funds; Small Cities Community Development Block Grant
3.4.2	Create linkages with other local and regional tax incentives.	1 year (initial), update annually	Glassboro: Planning and Zoning, Taxes and Utilities	General operating funds
3.4.3	Create a branding and advertising campaign unique to the Glassboro Opportunity Zone (See Strategies 3.1.1 and 3.4.2).	1 year	Glassboro: Public Relations, Business Development	General operating funds
4. Community Identity				
4.1 Enhance diversity and community engagement				
4.1.1	Establish resident councils for each of Glassboro's neighborhoods and for Glassboro overall.	6 months	Glassboro: Public Relations, Borough Council, Community Members	General operating funds; Dodge Foundation grants; New Jersey Council for the Humanities
4.1.2	Engage students and young alumni on issues pertaining to Glassboro's development, events, schools, and community issues.	6 months	Glassboro: Public Relations; Rowan University: Student Affairs, Alumni Relations	General operating funds; Dodge Foundation grants
4.1.3	Establish comprehensive business associations to engage small businesses in plans for the borough, as well as resident and student/ alumni input.	1 year	Glassboro: Public Relations, Business Development, Local Business Owners, Community members	General operating funds
4.1.4	Ensure that the Borough, large businesses, and employers have Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) programs in place.	1-2 years	Glassboro: Administrators Office, Public Relations	General operating funds
4.2 Use new tactics for preservation to uplift community history				
4.2.1	Work with community members to identify community assets throughout the Borough and develop actionable plans for how these assets can be leveraged, sustained, adapted to serve Glassboro's future	1 year	Glassboro: Public Relations, Planning and Zoning, Community Members	Economic Development Administration grants; New Jersey Historic Trust grants; 1772 Foundation grants; New Jersey Historical Commission
4.2.2	Use newly created design guidelines to promote preservation of place and strengthen Glassboro's visible identity for significant commercial corridors and residential neighborhoods.	6 month (following adoption of design guidelines)	Glassboro: Planning and Zoning	General operating funds; New Jersey Historic Trust grants

Strategy		Timeframe	Responsible Entity + Partners	Potential Funding Mechanism
4.2.3	Focus on the preservation of intangible heritage. Preservation is about more than maintaining charismatic or historic architecture, it is also about ensuring the culture, character, and people of a place are legible.	Ongoing	Glassboro: Public Relations,	New Jersey Council for the Humanities; New Jersey Historical Commission; New Jersey State Council on the Arts
4.3 Invest in and celebrate public spaces				
4.3.1	Integrate library upgrades with downtown development plans and public realm improvements.	1-3 years	Glassboro: Planning and Zoning, Parks and Recreation , Community Members	Economic Development Administration grants
4.3.2	Ensure every residential neighborhood has access to a high quality open space or park.	Ongoing	Glassboro: Planning and Zoning, Parks and Recreation , Community Members	General operating funds; State of NJ, Green Acres Program; New Jersey Health Initiatives
4.4 Invest in community marketing and branding				
4.4.1	Create a community marketing plan and brochure that advertises the best of Glassboro.	6 months	Glassboro: Public Relations	General operating funds