

V. Demographics

Population and employment projections for municipalities that participate in the Arthur Kill-Raritan River and Bay and Metropark Strategic Planning Areas are shown in table 1, below. Note that this data is for entire municipalities, including areas outside the SPAs.

TABLE 1

Population & Employment Change for Group I SPA Municipalities

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Population Change 2000-2020</u>		<u>Employment Change 2000-2020</u>	
	<u>Volume</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Volume</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Carteret	2,038	8.9	1,425	15.6
Edison	13,889	14.2	5,055	7.7
Metuchen	639	5.0	-396	-9.0
Old Bridge	8,842	14.6	10,048	67.7
Perth Amboy	9,650	20.4	1,905	12.5
Sayreville	9,076	22.5	1,110	13.9
South Amboy	535	6.8	409	13.0
Woodbridge	6,574	6.7	5,172	10.4

According to Table 1, the volume of population growth in the Arthur Kill SPA will be largest in Perth Amboy and Sayreville. While other large municipalities show comparable volumes of population growth, significant portions of these municipalities lie outside the SPA, as will their growth. In these same municipalities, however, the proportion of employment growth within the SPA will be greater than that for population because much of the coastline is brownfields and/or is presently zoned commercial or industrial. Thus, under current expectations, the SPA is likely to incorporate greater shares of employment than of population in the future and in this respect to become more a center of employment than population, relatively speaking. Tables 2 and 3 display levels of population and employment for the municipalities of both SPAs. The tables consist of estimates for previous periods, projections to 2020, and the volume of change over 2000-2020.

Table 4 compares the changes in persons and jobs between 1990 and 2000 for the Arthur Kill-Raritan Bay and Metropark Strategic Planning Areas. It shows that the Arthur Kill SPA is expected to grow at substantially faster rates than the smaller Metropark SPA in both employment and population. This is because the Metropark SPA is not only relatively more developed but also because its development, especially the non-residential portion, is recent and therefore not likely to see redevelopment or replacement in the near future.

By contrast, the Arthur Kill SPA not only has some vacant land but also has extensive amounts of older development that is susceptible to redevelopment. This older development is not only often dense and outmoded but sometimes is abandoned and decayed. With pressure in some suburbs to limit development, urban areas are gaining the increasing interest of developers as sites for future projects. In addition, municipalities with older facilities and development are seeking to improvement via renovation and reuse.

The developed areas in the Metropark region are mostly of recent vintage, so as yet there is little pressure for redevelopment. Instead, there remain significant developable tracts of vacant land in such municipalities as Old Bridge and Edison, and development in such areas as these is expanding onto available vacant land. In addition, some suburbs, including Edison, have used up-zoning and redevelopment to significantly expand their development. By comparison, older developed areas are active in seeking changes in the types, levels, and modernity of their existing development. For example, Carteret, Perth Amboy, South Amboy, and Sayreville have been or are seeking to implement new development on outmoded brownfield sites along shorelines presently covered by extensive disused manufacturing and processing facilities.

Buildout Based on Vacant Land

Another approach to analyzing the demographics of Smart Growth areas is a buildout analysis of population and employment, shown in Tables 5 and 6. This analysis is based on vacant land only (see Map 4). This is an important qualifier, for much of the development for more developed municipalities will come not from vacant land but from redevelopment of land already occupied by prior development. The buildout estimates based on vacant land combine developable vacant land, multipliers for population and employment, and a composite of local zoning to project how much development may be expected in a region under current conditions strictly from vacant land.

An important assumption behind this analysis is that it is based on what were termed above “current conditions,” for many of the factors that may affect future development levels are highly variable. For example, household size, family size, and the type and density of development allowed by zoning are all parameters governing vacant land that may fluctuate widely in the future.

Nevertheless, this type of analysis allows a general overview of how much development is possible on vacant land under current conditions. More importantly, comparing present development capacity based on vacant land to desired or expected levels of development reveals whether future population and employment levels may be absorbed under current conditions. If not, continued future development, including centralizing development in Smart Growth areas, becomes reliant on two things: 1) changing the parameters that accommodate development on vacant land, and 2) redevelopment of existing occupied lands. As to point 2), note that all the parameters that can change development levels on vacant land can also affect redevelopment in the same way.

As to development levels on buildable vacant land in the Arthur Kill SPA, projected levels of population are substantially greater than vacant land will permit. In this SPA, the remaining population vacant land buildout capacity of its municipalities (taken as wholes) is 29,062 persons, but these municipalities are projected to receive 50,604 persons by 2020. In simple terms, 21,542 more people are expected in the SPA's municipalities than they may be expected to contain under current development constraints on buildable vacant land. Further, if much of this growth is expected to be channeled into the SPA portions of the Arthur Kill municipalities, the challenge is even greater, for the vacant land buildout capacity for population of this SPA is only 7,433 persons. The situation is similar but less extreme in the Metropark SPA. The population buildout capacity of Metropark municipalities is 9,459 persons against an expected increase of 21,102 persons by 2020, for a capacity deficit of 11,643 persons. But the population buildout capacity for the Metropark SPA alone is only 2,481 persons. If these levels are to be reached, the excess expectations must be realized through redevelopment.

There are also deficits in employment capacity for buildouts based on vacant land. Taking Arthur Kill municipalities as wholes, there is a fairly close match between their 2020 expected growth of 50,604 jobs and their total buildout capacity of 46,245 jobs. This means a deficit of only 3,759 jobs by 2020. But the employment buildout capacity of the SPA portions of these municipalities is only 22,447 jobs. This is 28,157 fewer jobs than the total projected increase for SPA municipalities as wholes. If much of the projected future increase in jobs in this region is to be contained in the Arthur Kill SPA, changes will be needed in both the way buildable vacant land is developed and developed land is redeveloped.

What, then, will allow the SPAs to absorb a significant proportion of expected future growth in population and employment? Primarily, two things: 1) redevelopment at higher than existing densities and 2) development of vacant buildable land at higher densities than called for by current development standards. Thus, changes to zoning and permitted development types can greatly alter the carrying capacity of vacant and developed land. For example, commercial and office development has a significantly higher density of jobs than warehousing and distribution facilities. Even when types of land use are unchanged, levels of employment and population can vary widely with differences in the density of development. Increases in the efficiency of land use -- for example, underground parking, increased use of mass transit, smaller residential lot sizes, multi-unit housing, and expanded height limits on residential and commercial structures -- also allow greater development in a given area.

Another redevelopment stratagem is that, rather than using traditional zones devoted exclusively to one type of development, land uses may be combined within a single zone. Mixed use zoning allows increases in development on both developed land and buildable vacant land through such approaches as placing residential and office development above commercial space. This effectively layers a variety of development types on the same land area. Other zoning changes can increase employment or population. These may be small; for example, changing the amount and types of home occupations allowed in residential zones. Or large, such as rezoning residential land to denser residential zones or to industrial or commercial uses.

Insert Table 2

POPULATION PROJECTIONS BY MUNICIPALITY, 2005-2020

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Insert Table 3

EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS BY MUNICIPALITY, 1990- 2020

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Insert Table 4

STRATEGIC PLANNING AREA DEMOGRAPHICS, 1990, 2020

Insert Table 5
BUILDOUT POULATION LEVELS BY MUNICIPALITY

Insert Table 6

BUILDOUT EMPLOYMENT BY MUNICIPALITY

