

## **Burlington County Route 130 Corridor Riverside Township Questionnaire**

### **1. VISIONING**

Does Riverside Township have a vision statement for its future? Please share it here:

*Riverside Township has incorporated the "Riverfront Sub-Corridor" vision statement as its own, as applicable for the Township:*

The vision for the Corridor contemplates revitalized downtowns surrounded by stable, traditional residential neighborhoods located along the Delaware River. From 19th and early 20th century industrial employment centers, the riverfront communities have transformed into social, cultural and entertainment centers, capitalizing on their rich cultural heritage and waterfront resources.

Based on this vision, the downtown areas are once again bustling with activity, where convenient goods and services are provided by a mix of retail, commercial, professional and governmental facilities and establishments. Buildings and streets are renovated to accommodate existing and new businesses. Patrons arrive to downtown areas via automobile and light rail transit. On-street parking and carefully-planned parking lots are plentiful. The downtown streets are pedestrian friendly, improved with shade trees and period street furniture and lighting. Driving speeds along major thoroughfares have been reduced to increase pedestrian safety. In essence, the downtown areas are comfortable, safe, convenient places in which to shop, to visit and to live.

Some of the downtown areas have a thriving nightlife supported by patrons attracted to a variety of theaters, restaurants, nightclubs, specialty shops and studios and other forms of entertainment and recreation. In some instances the downtown areas extend to the waterfront. Boaters dock at public facilities and nearby marinas to shop and eat at riverfront stores and cafes. Visitors and the locals frequent riverfront walkways and trails, which link the communities and downtown areas together in the Corridor. Fairs and festivals infuse new life into the downtown and waterfront areas.

Integrated into these business hubs are traditional townhomes and apartments, some of which are free-standing and others are incorporated into the upper floors of commercial buildings. Vacant former industrial buildings and sites are now productive, reborn as housing, retail, and office space, or flexible light industrial incubators. Housing and places of employment coexist harmoniously.

Surrounding the downtown areas are stable, compact residential neighborhoods with tree lined streets. Residential infill development is compatible with existing neighborhoods. Parks, open space and recreational areas are woven into the neighborhoods. Children walk to elementary schools, and high school students ride light rail transit to schools in neighboring communities to attain their secondary level education. Commuters have a convenient walk or drive to downtown light rail stations.

Neo-traditional neighborhoods have developed on vacant lands located along the light rail line. These neighborhoods consist primarily of single- and two-family dwellings located on compact lots which mirror existing neighborhoods found in nearby communities, i.e., Riverton, Delanco, and others. A small neighborhood commercial component, which provides convenient sales and services, is located within the neighborhoods along a major thoroughfare and centered around a light rail station.

Growth in residential dwelling units is limited to the adaptive reuse of non-residential buildings, i.e., vacant factories, the redevelopment of deteriorated, obsolete residential structures and infill development of vacant lands. The scale, character and densities of the existing communities have been retained. The population of the Riverfront Sub Corridor has increased modestly due to

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an influx of young, growing families that occupy residences formerly inhabited by elderly residents and new residents living in neo-traditional infill development. Some of the senior citizens have moved into the newly built age-restricted dwellings in the sub-corridor.

One reoccurring theme which is interwoven throughout the vision for the Corridor is use of the waterfront" the Delaware River and Rancocas Creek. The waterfront is viewed as a major asset to the Corridor - a key component for economic revitalization of downtown areas and the primary amenity for nearby residential neighborhoods and communities. At the present the waterfront's potential has not been fully realized. The vision for the Corridor is aimed at tapping this valuable resource.

The waterfront offers opportunities for tourism and recreational development. A trail linking together a series of open space areas, natural preserves, historic communities and features, and passive and active parks is envisioned for the waterfront. The trail and associated amenities are an attraction for residents of the Corridor and for visitors to the Corridor.

The waterfront is further enhanced by the development of carefully designed housing projects which are sensitive to the environment and include open space preservation. Deteriorated residential and industrial areas are redeveloped into new mixed housing, commercial and open space developments.

Another asset recognized in the vision for the Corridor is the Corridor's location. In addition to being located along the beautiful Delaware River and Rancocas Creek, the Corridor is within easy commuting distance to many employment centers, i.e., Philadelphia, Camden, Trenton, etc., and many amenities and places of interest, i.e., the Jersey shore, the Poconos, the Pinelands, New York City, Philadelphia, Camden, Trenton, Baltimore, etc.

Access to these places from the Corridor is made possible by the excellent road network that serves the Corridor. The Corridor is served by numerous inter- and intra-state highways, i.e., Interstate 295 and Routes 130 and 73, the New Jersey Turnpike and the soon-to-be constructed Turnpike interchange at Route 130. The Corridor has excellent freight rail service and the potential for a deep water port. The existing riverfront rail line is a valuable resource for adding passenger rail service to the Corridor which serves Burlington County. These superior modes of transportation available in the Corridor are viewed as important assets and key components for achieving the vision.

An omnipresent concern is the loss of businesses and employment in the Corridor, validated by the preponderance of vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial sites and facilities throughout the Corridor. The vision grapples with this concern, recommending a new direction for many of the obsolete and deteriorated sites. In some instances, the vision recommends the adaptive reuse of industrial and commercial buildings as residential and mixed residential and commercial uses. In other cases, the vision recommends capitalizing on the use of existing structures and associated utilities and improvements by reusing vacant and underutilized commercial buildings, which are located in areas of the Corridor where large scale retail operations are no longer viable, as flexible light industrial facilities which bring new employment to the Corridor. The total razing of some sites and constructing neo-traditional villages with smaller scale commercial and office components in their place are envisioned. In essence, new residential and mixed developments will bring new patronage to businesses in the Corridor.

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The vision recommends retaining viable businesses and finding ways to upgrade and improve them. The vision also recommends attracting new businesses that want to locate in the Corridor based on the strengths of the Corridor, Burlington County, the region and New Jersey.

A highly prized and closely guarded asset of the Corridor is the number of stable, close-knit neighborhoods existing throughout the Corridor. Preservation of these neighborhoods is a primary goal of the vision. The vision focuses on upgrading and improving physical and social aspects of the neighborhoods and communities in which they are located. One concern is to improve the quality of education and community services to attract new residents and retain existing residents in the Corridor communities.

The vision emphasizes that the qualities which give the Corridor its quiet, "small-town" character be retained and stresses that the Corridor needs to change in order to correct the problems which contributed toward the Corridor's decline. The solution embraced in the vision endeavors to balance the needs for retaining the positive qualities of the Corridor and eliminating the negative aspects of the Corridor.

If so, when was it last affirmed? / Through what process? / Who participated?

*The Vision Statement was last affirmed in 1998 during the Delaware River / Route 130 Strategic Revitalization Plan across-acceptance process.*

What matters most to Riverside Township?

*Riverside strives to be an affordable community that offers its residents all of the most important amenities necessary to raise a family and to enjoy a rewarding and fulfilling quality of life. (This is what Edgewater Park Township has.)*

Has Riverside Township thought about its sustainability? Its contributions to Green House Gases (GHG)? How to reduce its GHG contributions?

*The Township's Land Use Board has not formally discussed sustainability and GHG issues. It hopes to review this issue during the current master plan re-examination process, which began in September 2021.*

## **2. RESILIENCY**

Has Riverside Township started planning for resiliency to climate change and sea level rise? If so, please attach any planning documents.

*The Township's Land Use Board has not formally discussed resiliency for climate change and sea level rise issues. It hopes to review this issue during the current master plan re-examination process, which began in September 2021.*

Who has been engaged in the discussions?

*See above.*

Have you identified Riverside Township's risks? (Flooding? Erosion? Heat island effect? Increased storms? Disease?

Other?

*The Township has worked with the County Office of Emergency Management to develop its chapter of the County Hazard Mitigation Plan. The plan ranked floods, landslides, severe storms, and severe winter weather as high hazard risks. The plan (Section 9.31 Page 4) identified three critical facilities that are potentially exposed to 1% annual chance flood event: Riverside American Legion Post*

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*No146; PSE&G Substation; and the Riverside Sewerage Treatment Plant. Heating island effect and disease risks were not identified as risk concerns.*

Has Riverside Township assessed vulnerable populations?

*The Township knows it has problem flooding areas within the Township, particularly in the Swamp-poodle and Reeder Tract neighborhoods; however, it has not assessed flood risks for individual properties.*

Does Riverside Township have an inventory of community assets? (Schools, emergency buildings, senior care, churches, businesses, infrastructure, transportation, energy, communications, health & medical facilities, hazardous materials; food water & shelter; safety & security, natural areas, parks, other?)

*The Township does not have a formal comprehensive list of community assets and contact information.*

### **3. EQUITY**

Does Riverside Township have issues of environmental justice or other concerns about equity in the community? If so, list communities/neighborhoods that have borne an outsized burden of pollution, traffic and or other considerations that impact the quality of life.

*The Township's Land Use Board has not formally discussed resiliency for climate change and sea level rise issues. It hopes to review this issue during the current master plan re-examination process, which began in September 2021.*

What is the status of Riverside Township's affordable housing agreement and implementation?

*The Township's 2015-2025 Housing Plan Element and Fair Share Plan was endorsed by Committee resolution 2015-16 and has been filed with the Superior Court. The Township is proceeding with its*

### **4. COMMUNITY CHARACTERIZATION**

If not identified in the earlier questions, what are the key elements that define Riverside Township's community?

- 1. Developed in 1852 as the planned industrial suburb of "Progress, NJ", Riverside has always been a center of industry, commerce, and residential neighborhoods focused on the railroad.*
- 2. Riverside has nourished and maintained its historic, small-town community character from then into the present.*
- 3. Riverside strives to redevelop its former industrial sites and its downtown mixed-use district sustainably with diversified housing choices, mixed-use buildings, and transit-oriented development.*

### **5. MAPPING**

Please attach a file with Riverside Township's zoning map in GIS format (shape files).

*Zoning Map is on file with Burlington County Bridge Commission.*

If you have Riverside Township's community assets and vulnerabilities mapped, please include them as well.

*Unavailable at this time.*

Who is Riverside Township's municipal contact for GIS mapping?

*Municipal Engineer Rakesh R. Darji, PE PP CME CFE, 856-235-7170, [rdarji@erinj.com](mailto:rdarji@erinj.com)*

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**6. STATE PLAN CONSISTENCY**

Please review the 8 goals of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan) and address how Riverside Township's master plan and vision for Riverside Township's community is (or is not) consistent with these goals, policies, and indicators.

*According to the State Plan Policy Map, Riverside is located within the most developed planning area, which is known as the Metropolitan Planning Area (PA-1). Most of the Township is located within the designated Riverside-Cambridge center, shared with Delran Township.*

***State Plan Goals:** Since 1998, with the support of state and county agencies and other corridor municipalities, Riverside Township has endeavored to maintain consistency of its general plans, policies, and projects with the State Plan's 2001 general goals, e.g.:*

- 1. Revitalize the State's Cities and Towns Strategy*
- 2. Conserve the State's Natural Resources and Systems*
- 3. Promote Beneficial Economic Growth, Development and Renewal for All Residents of New Jersey*
- 4. Protect the Environment, Prevent and Clean Up Pollution*
- 5. Provide Adequate Public Facilities and Services at a Reasonable Cost*
- 6. Provide Adequate Housing at a Reasonable Cost*
- 7. Preserve and Enhance Areas with Historic, Cultural, Scenic, Open Space and Recreational Value*
- 8. Ensure Sound and Integrated Planning and Implementation Statewide*

**State Plan Policy Objectives:** The Township's consistency with the Metropolitan Planning Area (PA-1) policy objectives are in *italics* below.

- 1. Land Use:** Promote redevelopment and development in Cores and neighborhoods of Centers and in Nodes that have been identified through cooperative regional planning efforts. Promote diversification of land uses, including housing where appropriate, in single-use developments and enhance their linkages to the rest of the community. Ensure efficient and beneficial utilization of scarce land resources throughout the Planning Area to strengthen its existing diversified and compact nature.

*Riverside Township has continued to abide by this PA-1 policy objective, which is reinforced in its master plan and land use plan element.*

- 2. Housing:** Provide a full range of housing choices through redevelopment, new construction, rehabilitation, adaptive reuse of non-residential buildings, and the introduction of new housing into appropriate non-residential settings. Preserve the existing housing stock through maintenance, rehabilitation and flexible regulation.

*Riverside Township has continued to abide by this PA-1 policy objective, which has been implemented through its redevelopment and affordable fair share housing plans.*

- 3. Economic Development:** Promote economic development by encouraging strategic land assembly, site preparation and infill development, public/private partnerships and infrastructure improvements that support an identified role for the community within the regional marketplace. Encourage job training and other incentives to retain and attract businesses. Encourage private sector investment through supportive government regulations, policies and programs, including tax policies and expedited review of proposals that support appropriate redevelopment.

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*Riverside Township has continued to promote economic development, as identified in the first sentence above. The remaining economic development policies are county and state-oriented objectives.*

- 4. Transportation:** Maintain and enhance a transportation system that capitalizes on high-density settlement patterns by encouraging the use of public transit systems, walking and alternative modes of transportation to reduce automobile dependency, link Centers and Nodes, and create opportunities for transit oriented redevelopment. Facilitate efficient goods movement through strategic investments and intermodal linkages. Preserve and stabilize general aviation airports and, where appropriate, encourage community economic development and promote complementary uses for airport property such as business centers.

*Riverside Township is currently reviewing opportunities for higher-density mixed-use redevelopment connected to its NJ Transit light rail station. Maintaining neighborhood walkability and improving Downtown pedestrian orientation are very important to the Township. The Township is outside the County's core freight goods movement centers and does not have a local airport.*

- 5. Natural Resource Conservation:** Reclaim environmentally damaged sites and mitigate future negative impacts, particularly to waterfronts, scenic vistas, wildlife habitats and to Critical Environmental Sites, and Historic and Cultural Sites. Give special emphasis to improving air quality. Use open space to reinforce neighborhood and community identity, and protect natural linear systems, including regional systems that link to other Planning Areas.

*Riverside Township endeavors to mitigate and reclaim environmentally-damaged sites regardless of their location. Most of the Township's remaining natural areas are Rancocas Creek tidal flats and freshwater wetlands that state regulations protect from future development. Riverside continues to work on improving pedestrian access and observation areas along its waterfront. The Township does not have the legislative ability to control or improve air quality of private development. The Township supports completion of the Delaware River Heritage Trail.*

- 6. Agriculture:** Use development and redevelopment opportunities wherever appropriate and economically feasible, to meet the needs of the agricultural industry for intensive agricultural production, packaging and processing, value-added operations, marketing, exporting and other shipping. Provide opportunities for farms, greenhouses, farmers markets and community gardens.

*Riverside Township is a fully-developed community outside the County's core agricultural industry support centers. It does not support an urban farmers market or community garden.*

- 7. Recreation:** Provide maximum active and passive recreational opportunities and facilities at the neighborhood, local and regional levels by concentrating on the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing parks and open space while expanding and linking the system through redevelopment and reclamation projects.

*Riverside Township is proud of the individual and group volunteers that provide a variety of active and passive recreation programs. Its parks are neighborhood-focused and additional athletic fields are located on American Legion Drive. Due to its fully-developed nature, Riverside does not have large passive open space areas; however there are many accessible nature observation areas along the Rancocas Creek. Amico Island County Park in Delran and Hawk Island Township Park in Delanco are less than 1 mile from the light rail station.*

- 8. Redevelopment:** Encourage redevelopment at intensities sufficient to support transit, a broad range of uses and efficient use of infrastructure. Promote design that enhances public safety, encourages pedestrian activity and reduces dependency on the automobile.

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*Riverside Township's main redevelopment focus has been to bring pedestrian-oriented, higher density, inclusionary affordable housing to three former mill properties and a former hospital site within walking distance of the light rail station.*

- 9. Historic Preservation:** Encourage the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic or significant buildings, Historic and Cultural Sites, neighborhoods and districts in ways that will not compromise either the historic resource or the area's ability to redevelop. Coordinate historic preservation with tourism efforts.

*Riverside Township encourages the maintenance, preservation, and adaptive re-use of its few remaining historic commercial and industrial sites in its redevelopment areas and Downtown district along St. Mihiel and Scott streets and Pavilion Avenue. It is committed to adaption re-use of the landmark Keystone Watchcase Building and the former railroad station and has worked with the redeveloper of the former Taubel Mills site to construct multi-family housing reminiscent of the brick textile buildings once located there. The Township supports tourism projects in the Downtown, but does not have the ability to implement such projects with its limited resources.*

- 10. Public Facilities and Services:** Complete, repair or replace existing infrastructure systems to eliminate deficiencies and provide capacity for sustainable development and redevelopment in the region. Encourage the concentration of public facilities and services in Centers and Cores.

*Riverside's Public Works Department and its Sewerage Authority continued to abide by this PA-1 policy objective.*

- 11. Intergovernmental Coordination:** Regionalize as many public services as feasible and economical to enhance the cost-effective delivery of those services. Establish multijurisdictional policy and planning entities to guide the efforts of state, county and municipal governments to ensure compatible and coordinated redevelopment.

*Riverside Township participates in several shared service programs with neighboring municipalities. The Township wishes to maintain its plan endorsement status and State Plan center and employment node designations from the State Planning Commission with other River Route corridor municipalities, with support from Burlington County.*

**State Plan Indicators**

*Respectfully, Riverside Township believes that it is the responsibility of the State Planning Commission and its staff to report on the status of these statewide Key Indicators and Additional Indicators listed on pages 262 through 276 of the 2001 State Plan.*

**9. STATE REQUESTS**

Please list any 'asks' that you have of the state including OPA, DEP, DOT, DCA, BPU or any other state agencies. OPA is committed to bringing them to the table, though we can't guarantee exactly the resolution that you're looking for.

State Department / Division	Project Assistance
<b>Agriculture</b>	
Commissioner	Support development of an outdoor seasonal downtown urban farmers market with NJ Transit, using excess NJ Transit parking areas.
<b>Banking &amp; Insurance</b>	
None applicable	

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**Children and Families**                      None applicable

**Community Affairs**

Hsg & Community Resources	Support floodplain acquisition education program for local homeowners, with support of NJ Dept of Environmental Protection Blue Acres.
Hsg & Community Resources	Support discussion of regionalizing / enhanced shared services recreational facilities/services among Beverly, Delanco, Edgewater Park, & Riverside.
Fire Safety	Support discussion of regionalizing / enhanced shared services fire and emergency facilities and services among Beverly, Delanco, Edgewater Park, & Riverside.
Main Street NJ	Support discussion of regionalizing / enhanced shared services of Main Street NJ programming with River Route Corridor municipalities, with assistance from NJ Dept of State Travel & Tourism & the Burlington County Bridge Comm., as few towns can handle this on their own.

**Corrections**                                      None applicable

**Education**

Commissioner	Support discussion of redefining public high school district boundaries for Edgewater Park Township are other smaller municipalities west of US Route 130 so that Edgewater Park does not need to bus its students to Burlington City, Beverly to Palmyra, Delanco to Riverside, etc.
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**Environmental Protection**

Site Remed. & Waste Mgmt.	Support environmental remediation of potentially contaminated former industrial sites in the railroad corridor redevelopment area.
Blue Acres	Support floodplain acquisition education program, with support of NJ Dept of Community Affairs Housing & Community Resources.
Green Acres	Support development of a creekside greenway & walking trail along River Drive and Harrison Street.
Green Acres	Support completion of Delaware River Heritage Trail.
Flood Control	Support relocation of PSEG's Lincoln Ave. substation out of the floodplain and conversion of Block 402 to a Twp. stormwater basin to reduce local flooding, with NJ Dept of Environmental Protection support.
Water Resources Mgmt.	Support funding of sewer pump station upgrades.

**Health**    None applicable

**Human Services**                                None applicable

**Labor & Workforce Dev.**                    None applicable

**Law and Public Safety**

NJ State Police	Support expansion of crime prevention facilities and services at light rail station, with support of NJ Transit and Burlington County Sheriff.
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Board of Public Utilities	Support relocation of PSEG's Lincoln Ave. substation out of the flood-plain and conversion of Block 402 to a Twp. stormwater basin to reduce local flooding, with NJ Dept of Environmental Protection support.
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<b>Military &amp; Veterans Affairs</b>	None applicable
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**State**

Travel & Tourism	Support discussion of regionalizing / enhanced shared services of Tourism programming with River Route Corridor municipalities, with assistance from NJ Transit, NJ Dept of Community Affairs' Main Street NJ & the Burlington County Bridge Comm., as few towns can handle this on their own.
Travel & Tourism	Support discussion of regionalizing / enhanced shared services of Main Street NJ programming with River Route Corridor municipalities, with assistance from NJ Dept of State Travel & Tourism & the Burlington County Bridge Comm., as few towns can handle this on their own.

**Transportation & NJ Transit**

Capital Improvements	Support redevelopment of the northwest corner of Scott and Middleton streets for a municipal parking facility.
Transit	Support expansion of crime prevention facilities and services at light rail station, with support of NJ State Police and Burlington County Sheriff.
Transit	Support development of an outdoor seasonal downtown urban farmers market with NJ Dept of Agriculture, using excess NJ Transit parking areas
	Support discussion of regionalizing / enhanced shared services of Tourism programming with River Route Corridor municipalities, with assistance from NJ Transit, NJ Dept of Community Affairs' Main Street NJ & the Burlington County Bridge Comm., as few towns can handle this on their own.

<b>Treasury</b>	None applicable
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