

# AMERICAN INFRASTRUCTURE™

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# *Mass Transit Investments Support*

**THIS SPREAD:** The Hudson River waterfront of Jersey City is a regional employment center that is often referred to as "Wall Street West" due to the concentration of financial concerns which have offices there.



# Continuing Growth

*Transportation has shaped Jersey City since colonial times, and modern investment in mass transportation supports low auto-utilization rates for residents and workers, supporting neighborhood vibrancy and private sector investment.*

By Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy, City of Jersey City



**J**ersey City is New Jersey's second-largest city by population and has been a hub of transportation since colonial times. The city's prime location at the confluence of the Hackensack and the Hudson Rivers, Newark Bay and Upper New York Bay, has had significant influence on the mobility of goods that few cities can compare to. Jersey City is located directly across the Hudson River from New York City and is in close proximity to major population centers in northern New Jersey, and multiple highways. Historically, Jersey City has been the eastern terminus of trans-continental railroads which corresponded to barge docks that serviced New York City.

It makes sense, then, that Jersey City's history has been accompanied by heavy investment in transportation infrastructure — an investment that continues today. Jersey City's land area is comprised of 15 square miles, an estimated population of 260,712 residents, and a highly-developed multi-modal transportation system that supports the movement of people and goods to, from and within the city.

Jersey City's vision is that by the year 2050, its extensive and sustainable development, redevelopment and neighborhood revitalization activity will have transformed the city into a bustling, "green," world-class center that will consist of a range of housing and retail choices, many employment and business opportunities and excellent recreational, entertainment and cultural amenities. As befits any such center, the city will be served by a multi-modal transportation system that is attractive, clean, safe, efficient, reliable, inclusive, affordable, accessible and user-friendly. Jersey City's comprehensive and seamless transportation network will provide options to its users and accommodate all types of trips — both local and regional in nature — to, from, and within all neighborhoods. It will run throughout the day and night and it will mitigate congestion and minimize the amount of single-occupancy vehicular traffic in Jersey City.

The city's transportation network will benefit residents, workers and visitors alike by giving people a choice in how they travel to, from, and within Jersey City. The principal features of Jersey City's transportation network will be a highly-functioning and efficient, multi-modal public transit system. The roadway network that will not only accommodate vehicular traffic but will also provide safe and efficient accommodation for bicyclists, pedestrians and a network of off-road bicycle and pedestrian paths that complement the city's parks and open spaces.

For the last several years, Jersey City has been New Jersey's fastest-growing municipality in terms of population. It has one of the highest public transit mode shares in the United States. New residential and office towers populate the city's skyline, and are accompanied by additional investment citywide. In 2010, with a down national economy, 937 new housing units were certified for occupancy in Jersey City, which was 8 percent of the new housing units completed in the state of New Jersey.

Because much of Jersey City is a built-up urban center with an interconnected grid of streets, with some historic sections laid out by Alexander Hamilton, small lot sizes and building



## The city's transportation network will benefit residents, workers and visitors alike, by giving people a choice in how they travel to, from and within Jersey City.

**ABOVE:** Services are available in Jersey City to and from New York at the following locations: Colgate Center Ferry (Exchange Place); Ferry from Liberty State Park, (Jersey City) to Pier A, Battery Park Manhattan; Ferry from Liberty Harbor Marina (Jersey City) to Pier 11, Wall Street, Manhattan; and Ferry Harborside Ferry (Jersey City).

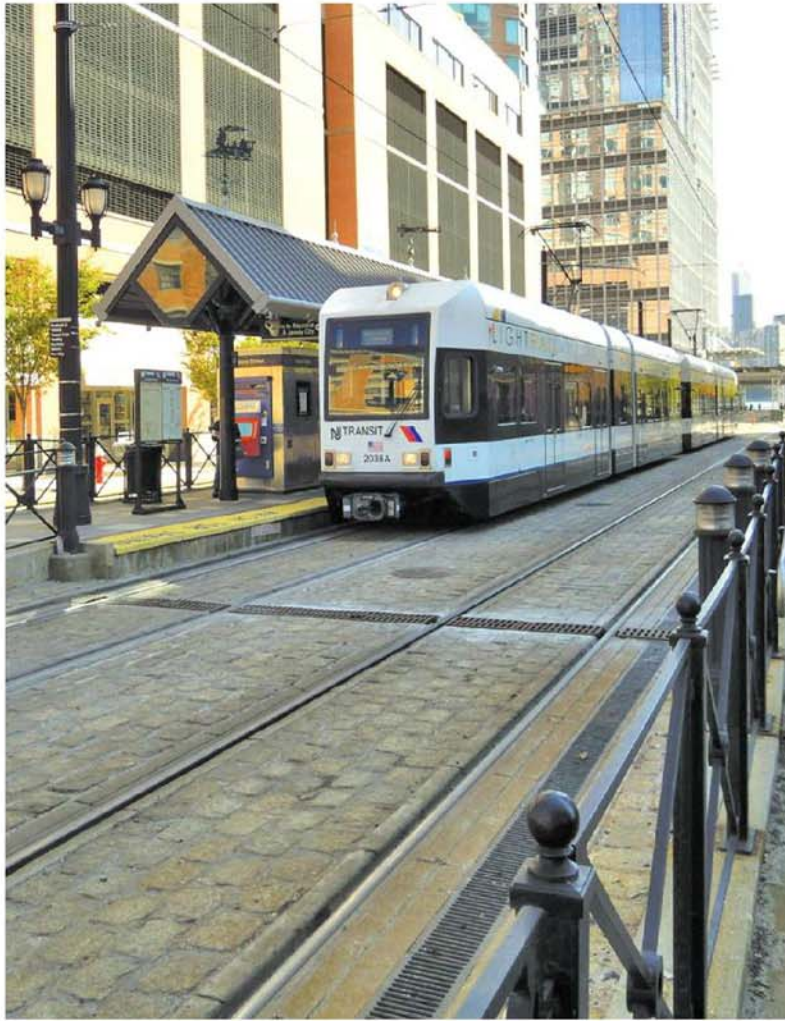
Photo credit: City of Jersey City

facades close to the sidewalk, and in many instances, right up to the edge of the sidewalk, it is a highly walk-able place. However, these characteristics also mean that for much of the city there is no space to expand existing streets. And although regional commuter highway access to Jersey City's Hudson River waterfront employment center is provided by the New Jersey Turnpike Newark Bay Extension and NJ Route 139, there is concern that an increase in highway access beyond this existing capacity will result in gridlock on local streets throughout the downtown area.

A traffic engineering study conducted in the 1980s determined that there are a maximum number of parking spaces that may be provided to support redevelopment in order to avoid overburdening highway access with commuter traffic. Zoning in the downtown area places parking space

maximums on new development, which is a practice that is lauded and emulated throughout the region.

The key to Jersey City's success is the strength of its mass transit system. Jersey City is served by an extensive local and regional bus system, Port Authority Trans Hudson (PATH) trains, Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR), commuter rail at nearby Hoboken Terminal, jitneys and taxis. Forty percent of Jersey City residents do not own or have access to a car. According to the 2005 to 2009 American Community Survey, 45 percent of Jersey City residents who work commute by mass transit. Residents also use mass transit to travel to school, shopping and recreation. A 2008 survey conducted by the city of Jersey City found that 62 percent of commuters to Jersey City from elsewhere arrive by mass transit, and that about one-third come from New York City



**ABOVE CENTER:** Owned by the New Jersey Transit, the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR) is an intercity trolley system that connects the communities of Bayonne, Jersey City, Hoboken, Weehawken, Union City and North Bergen, New Jersey. Photo credit: NJTPA

**ABOVE RIGHT:** The PATH transit bridge is a vertical lift bridge spanning the Hackensack River, surrounded by the Conrail, Newark Turnpike and Erie & Lackawanna Railroad Bridges behind it. Photo credit: Leon Yost

**RIGHT:** The Central Railroad of New Jersey Terminal historically provided an inter-modal transfer point between railroads on the west side of New York Bay and ferry service to Ellis Island and New York City to the east. Photo credit: Jim Russell

and other places east of the Hudson River.

A joint 2009 Jersey City / NJ Transit study of bus ridership found that within Jersey City there were approximately 65,000 passenger boardings on weekdays, approximately 30,000 on Saturdays and approximately 18,000 on Sundays, which amounts to approximately 19 million total bus passenger boardings in Jersey City on an annualized basis.

NJ Transit's HBLR, which was implemented with a design, build, operate and maintain (DBOM) contract, supports local and regional passenger movement, and carries commuters to work, as well as residents to various city destinations throughout the day. NJ Transit recently counted 25,932 typical weekday passenger boardings of HBLR trains at Jersey City stations, which amounts to approximately 6.7 million weekday passenger boarding annually, with additional usage on weekends.

PATH trains experienced 22,206,625 total passenger boardings from Jersey City stations in 2009 and 22,869,817 in 2010. The average weekday utilization of PATH trains from Jersey City stations has increased from 74,191 in 2009 to 78,776 through the first 10 months of 2011. PATH weekend utilization has also increased. Average Saturday ridership





**ABOVE:** Operated by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, a bi-state agency controlled by the governors of the two states, is a rapid transit railroad linking Manhattan, New York City with Jersey City, Newark, Harrison, and Hoboken, New Jersey. New cars add a third door for quicker boarding. New signals permit shorter headways and increase system capacity.

**RIGHT:** Four PATH stations within Jersey City provide both intra- and inter-city service. The Grove Street PATH station is served by the Newark-World Trade Center and Journal Square-33rd Street lines. Passengers can also connect with local NJ Transit and Coach bus lines to local areas at this station.

Photo credit: City of Jersey City



from Jersey City stations has increased from 36,109 in 2009 to 38,453 through the first 10 months of 2011, and average Sunday ridership has increased from 26,294 in 2009 to 27,980 through the first 10 months of 2011.

Jersey City's Planning Board adopted a new Circulation Element of the Master Plan in April 2009, which provides a strategic framework for implementation of multi-modal transportation improvements that move both people and

goods. The plan, which establishes a vision, goals and objectives, as well as a series of strategies and actions to implement, was awarded the "Outstanding Plan" by the American Planning Association, New Jersey Chapter. The city works with a number of regional agencies to implement the plan and expand its mass transit system for residents and commuters, and the city anticipates that it will continue to grow as a result. A recent success is NJ Transit's implementation of the Lafayette Loop bus line to Journal Square.

Current projects that are in pre-construction phases include an extension of the Hudson Bergen Light Rail to the city's western waterfront, the addition of a light rail station at Canal Crossing, and conversion of NJ Route 440 and Routes 1&9T from an expressway to a multi-use, urban boulevard and complete street.



**Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy** took office in 2004 and has been mayor of Jersey City for the past seven years. For more information, visit [www.cityofjerseycity.com](http://www.cityofjerseycity.com).

### Fast Facts:

- Jersey City's population density is over 17,000 people per square mile.
- 62 percent of commuters to Jersey City arrived by mass transit in 2008.
- 22,869,817 passenger boardings of PATH train system from Jersey City stations in 2010.
- An estimated 19 million passenger boardings of buses in Jersey City in 2009.
- An estimated 6.7 million weekday passenger boardings of Hudson-Bergen Light Rail in Jersey City in 2011.