

REEXAMINATION OF THE CITY OF JERSEY CITY
MASTER PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

November 3, 2004

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28, the City of Jersey City Planning Board adopted a new Master Plan in August of 2000. In the little more than four (4) years since the new Master Plan was adopted by the Planning Board, there has continued to be dramatic growth and changes in the development pattern in the City. As has been the case for the past two decades or more, the Hudson River Waterfront has been the main catalyst for development. However, there has been increased interest in development sites elsewhere in Jersey City as waterfront land has become in shorter supply.

As development and redevelopment has moved inland from the waterfront, the primary focus of this development appears to be centered around the PATH Stations. Moving west from the Jersey City Waterfront, the two PATH Stations in Jersey City are the Grove Street Station and Journal Square. The Journal Square Station also includes an enclosed bus terminal as part of the Journal Square Transportation Center.

In the course of the last four years, a new high-rise mixed use commercial and residential development has been approved just to the east of the Grove Street PATH Station which will include a new entrance to the PATH Station. In addition, a new redevelopment plan was approved that will permit the construction of another primarily residential high-rise mixed-use building immediately adjacent and to the north of the Grove Street PATH Station.

Journal Square has also seen renewed interest in redevelopment of properties in and around Journal Square. Amendments to the Journal Square Redevelopment Plan were adopted in _____ and a new primarily residential mixed-use building is now under construction on the site of the former State Theater. Plans have also been approved for the conversion of the former Mueller's Factory at 180 Baldwin Avenue into a primarily residential mixed-use development with approximately 600 dwelling units and ground floor commercial uses along Baldwin Avenue.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89, the Planning Board is not obligated to conduct a reexamination review until 2006. However, the Planning Board may adopt or amend the Master Plan, or any of the component parts thereof, at any time. Section 40:55D-28 of the Municipal Land Use Law (M.L.U.L.) states that: "The planning board may prepare and, after public hearing, adopt or amend a master plan or component parts thereof, to guide the use of lands within the municipality in a manner which protects the public health and safety and promotes the general welfare".

In light of the continuing and ever increasing development activity within the City, it is appropriate that the Planning Board review planning and development issues as they arise. A Master Plan is not a static document. It is important that the Master Plan be reviewed as needed, or that at least specific sections be reviewed, so that the Master Plan can remain current and responsive to the needs of the community.

The renewed interest in Journal Square and the areas surrounding Journal Square is of particular significance. Journal Square is the traditional center and heart of Jersey City. Therefore, it is the purpose of this Master Plan Review to examine the areas surrounding Journal Square in order to identify opportunities for residential and mixed-use development that can be physically linked to Journal Square in order to increase the level of street activity and foot traffic in the district, especially in the evening, and provide opportunities for ground level neighborhood retail to serve residents in the surrounding area; so as to maintain Journal Square as a center of commerce and civic activity. Specific recommendations for changes to the Master Plan and development regulations, if any, will be made, including underlying objectives, policies and standards.

REPORT STRUCTURE

As provided for in the Municipal Land Use Law, this Master Plan Review Report will follow the format as outlined in N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89, paragraphs a. through e. as follows:

- a. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.
- b. The extent to which such problems and objectives have increased or been reduced to such date.
- c. The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last revised.
- d. The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether new development regulations or plan elements should be prepared.
- e. The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law",

P.L. 1992, c.79 (C.40A12A-1 et al.) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

SCOPE OF THE REEXAMINATION REPORT

The scope of this report is geographically limited to the area surrounding Journal Square. More particularly, this report is limited to those districts which can contribute to the vitality of the surrounding area and foster the development of a vibrant and accessible central business district; by improving the connectivity between these districts and Journal Square so as to capitalize on Journal Square's function as a transportation hub, by providing for complimentary uses and increasing levels of activity in these districts, and by encouraging higher density residential development in these districts to further support business and entertainment uses in Journal Square.

Clearly, the Central Business District will be reviewed; but more for the purpose of identifying the goals, objectives, purpose and recommendations for the district in order to determine how the best the surrounding districts can be modified to support the Journal Square area.

The Office/Residential District will be reviewed in the greatest detail since it is primarily located on the periphery of Journal Square and its primary purpose is to provide opportunities for office, residential and neighborhood retail in close proximity to Journal Square.

There are also two Industrial Districts in close proximity to Journal Square. A portion of one of these districts was included in the new Office/Residential District as part of the last Master Plan process. These two Industrial Districts will again be reviewed to determine if it would be appropriate to further amend the boundary of these districts to provide additional opportunities for mixed-use development in light of more recent development activity.

The low and medium density residential districts, commonly referred to as the R-1 and R-3 Districts will not be reviewed because these districts generally encompass stable lower and medium density communities.

REEXAMINATION REPORT

The Planning Board of the City of Jersey City adopted a comprehensive Master Plan in August 2000. This is the first Reexamination Report prepared since the adoption of the Master Plan. Therefore, the reexamination will be done relative to the goals, objectives, issues and/or problems raised in the current Master Plan rather than any previous Reexamination Report.

N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89 A. - THE MAJOR PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES RELATING TO LAND DEVELOPMENT IN THE MUNICIPALITY AT THE TIME OF THE ADOPTION OF THE LAST REEXAMINATION REPORT.

A. Central Business District / Journal Square

Purpose of the District

The purpose of the central business district is to foster the development of a vibrant and accessible citywide activity district that is a center of commerce and civic activity. It functions as a local and regional destination for business, retail, education, government services, entertainment and transportation.

Issues

1. Consolidating the central business district to create a viable core area, increase the mix of uses and intensify the level of activity.
2. Strengthening and reinforcing Journal Square as the central business district through an increased mix of uses and additional development of retail, office, business service, County and college uses.
3. Establishing and promoting a new identity for the central business district as the primary City-wide activity district.
4. Creating linkages between the central business district and adjacent activity districts such as the Hudson County government complex, McGinley Square and Newark Avenue that support and complement the uses and activities in Journal Square.
5. Enhancing the appearance of the central business district to promote an increased level of activity, additional commercial redevelopment and improved public safety.

6. Providing adequate off-street parking to serve existing commercial development and support future projected commercial development.
7. Recognizing and capitalizing on the dual function of Journal Square as a central business district and transportation hub.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Reduce the boundaries of the central business district to coincide with those of the SID known as the Journal Square Restoration Corporation.
2. Determine whether the entire central business district is an "area in need of redevelopment" and, if so, prepare and adopt a redevelopment plan that provides for a full range of retail, office and business service uses.
3. Plan for and capitalize upon the presence of major institutional uses in and around the central business district including the Hudson County Community College, Loew's Theater, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the Hudson County government complex.
4. Support the efforts of the Jersey City Economic Development Corporation and the Journal Square Restoration Corporation to enhance the appearance and marketing of the central business district.
5. Plan for high-profile destination uses that establish the central business district as a center of City- wide and regional significance.
6. Improve the connection between the central business district and adjacent activity districts through streetscape improvements, providing for complementary uses and increasing the levels of activity.
7. Enhance the appearance of the central business district through aesthetic improvements to existing structures, high quality design in new development, streetscape improvements including street furniture and additional pedestrian amenities.
8. Encourage high-rise residential development on the periphery of the District.
9. Capitalize on the central business district's function as a transportation hub by

encouraging high density development that is served by mass transit and promoting uses that serve the large commuter population that passes through Journal Square daily.

B. Office / Residential District

Because the Office/Residential District provides the greatest opportunity to support the Journal Square Central Business District, it is important to not only review the Purpose, Issues and Recommendations identified in the Master Plan, but also the Existing Conditions and Existing Zoning that were observed as part of the development of the current Master Plan.

Existing Conditions

The City of Jersey City has an office/residential district located on the periphery of the central business district. This district is physically and economically linked to Journal Square but lacks the mix of uses and intensity of activity that characterize the central business district. The office/residential district has a preponderance of government and office uses interspersed with residential uses and ground level retail and has a low- to mid-rise character. The district functions as a transition area between the central business district and residential areas to the north, east and west.

Existing Zoning

Jersey City's office/residential district is currently governed by several zones, including C-2, C-1 and R-2. A mix of uses is permitted in these districts including office, retail, low and medium density residential, auto sales and service, theaters and recreation facilities and parking garages. It is recommended that the zoning be amended to consolidate this district into one zone. It is also recommended that inappropriate uses such as garden apartments, auto sales and service and automatic amusement device arcades should not be permitted in the new zone in order to preserve and reinforce the existing pattern of development.

The office/residential district can be further strengthened by improving its physical connections to the central business district. This connection is necessary to overcome the barrier created by the PATH right- of-way and provide office tenants and residents with access to shopping, services and mass transit in Journal Square. Conversely, the improved physical connections are necessary to make the office/residential district more accessible to those visiting the Hudson County government complex, professional offices and residents from Journal Square. The improved connections will also increase the level of street activity in the office/residential district, which is relatively quiet during the evening due to the large government presence. This will benefit the neighborhood retail uses in the district, which depend upon walk-in traffic for a significant portion of their business.

Future development in the office/residential district is anticipated to consist of in-fill projects and selective redevelopment. The juxtaposition of office uses with residential uses in this district creates a need for careful site planning and appropriate screening and buffering of commercial structures and off-street parking areas from residential uses.

Purpose of the District

The purpose of the office/residential district is to accommodate government office and professional office uses in close proximity to Journal Square as well as low rise and mid rise residential uses and neighborhood retail.

Issues

1. Enhancing the physical connection between the district and the central business district.
2. Increasing the level of street activity and foot traffic in the district, especially during the evening.
3. Providing opportunities for ground level neighborhood retail in the office/residential district to serve workers and residents.

Recommendations

1. Improve the physical connection among the office/residential district, the Hudson County government complex, and the central business district by implementing streetscape improvements. Such improvements should include wayfinding or directional signage.
2. Promote the development of more neighborhood commercial uses, including restaurants, night clubs and bars, that generate street activity during the evening and are compatible with the office and residential uses that predominate in the district.
3. Provide more incentives for the development of ground level neighborhood retail to serve workers and residents of the office/residential zone by eliminating the requirement for off-street parking and utilizing on-street parking for first floor retail only.
4. Provide adequate parking in the district through a combination of public lots, structured parking and residential parking on site.

C. Industrial District

There are industrial districts located in several different areas of the City of Jersey City. Two of these locations are relevant to this reexamination report. The remainder are remote from the Journal Square Central Business District. Therefore the discussion of the *Existing Conditions/Zoning* will be limited to these two areas.

Existing Conditions/Zoning

1. A portion of the industrial district, the area east of Conrail's Northern Branch Line and south of the Pulaski Skyway is outside the HMDC and contains manufacturing, warehousing, and trucking uses. The majority of this area is within Jersey City's I-2 Intensive Industrial zone which permits warehousing, manufacturing, terminal facilities and scrap metal processing. These uses are proposed to continue, however, careful site planning is required to adequately screen industrial activity and buffer adjacent residential and commercial districts.
2. Another area of existing industrial uses is north of Montgomery Street and east of Baldwin.

Purpose of the District

The City has established a general industrial district to acknowledge areas where there is an existing concentration of industrial activity or where future industrial activity is planned. The purpose of this district is to accommodate a broad range of industrial uses in appropriate locations with enhanced provisions for screening and buffering to protect nearby development.

Issues

1. Coordinating with the HMDC to ensure appropriate industrial development in the Hackensack Meadowlands District.
2. Preserving desirable industrial uses subject to development standards that protect adjacent residential and commercial uses and future tourist destination uses.
3. Providing opportunities for the development of industrial uses in appropriate locations where Jersey City has a competitive advantage, such as printing, apparel, warehousing and distribution.

4. Coordinating public transportation linkages to industrial employment locations within the HMDC.
5. Addressing noise, emissions and truck nuisances in areas where industrial uses are in close proximity to existing and planned residential uses.

Recommendations

1. Continue frequent consultation with the HMDC about planning issues and development within the Hackensack Meadowlands District. Ensure that the HMDC Special Area Management Plan is consistent with the Jersey City Master Plan in those areas where jurisdictions overlap and abut each other.
2. Evaluate the findings of the Industrial Retention Study prepared by the Rutgers University Project on Regional and Industrial Economics and implement its recommendations, where feasible and appropriate.
3. Amend the zoning ordinance to provide enhanced requirements for performance standards, urban design, screening and buffering and vehicular access in conjunction with industrial development. Consider the selective acquisition of industrial properties to eliminate inappropriate uses and adverse nuisance impacts.
4. Preserve existing industrial uses and promote the development of desirable industrial uses where Jersey City has a competitive advantage by assisting in land assembly and acquisition, participating in job readiness and skills training for workers, improving public infrastructure and promoting the remediation of contaminated sites.
5. Add automotive service stations (excluding bus and truck repair facilities) as a permitted use.

N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89 B. - THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES HAVE INCREASED OR BEEN REDUCED TO SUCH DATE.

The issues and recommendations of the Master Plan identified in the previous section have been reiterated below with a response as to how they have been reduced or increased since the adoption of the Master Plan.

A. Central Business District / Journal Square

Issues

1. Consolidating the central business district to create a viable core area, increase the mix of uses and intensify the level of activity.

Response: The Jersey City Land Development Ordinance (LDO) was amended to consolidate the central business district to coincide with the boundaries of the Journal Square Special Improvement District.

2. Strengthening and reinforcing Journal Square as the central business district through an increased mix of uses and additional development of retail, office, business service, County and college uses.

Response: The City continues to attempt to attract new businesses to Journal Square and to accommodate County and Hudson County College uses in and around Journal Square.

3. Establishing and promoting a new identity for the central business district as the primary City-wide activity district.

Response: The City and the SID have undertaken an extensive streetscape improvement program to improve the image of Journal Square. The SID is also responsible for marketing and promoting Journal Square.

4. Creating linkages between the central business district and adjacent activity districts such as the Hudson County government complex, McGinley Square and Newark Avenue that support and complement the uses and activities in Journal Square.

Response: The improvement of the physical linkages to Journal Square has not yet been realized. In addition, it would appear to be important to also improve linkages to areas of high density residential development or areas with the potential to accommodate high density residential in order to increase the "built-in" potential market for Journal Square".

5. Enhancing the appearance of the central business district to promote an increased level of activity, additional commercial redevelopment and improved public safety.

Response: The City and the SID have undertaken an extensive streetscape improvement program to improve the image of Journal Square. The City has also approved [an](#) amendment to the Journal Square Redevelopment Plan which has resulted in the construction of a new mixed-use high-rise residential structure with ground floor commercial uses on the site of the former State Theater.

6. Providing adequate off-street parking to serve existing commercial development and support future projected commercial development.

Response: The amendment to the Journal Square Redevelopment Plan approved by The City provides for additional shoppers and business parking to be included within the new mixed-use high-rise residential structure on the site of the former State Theater.

7. Recognizing and capitalizing on the dual function of Journal Square as a central business district and transportation hub.

Response: The City continues to work with the Port Authority, NJ Transit and the bus companies to enhance Journal Square's function as a transportation hub, which in turn also adds to the Square's appeal as a business, entertainment and civic center.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Reduce the boundaries of the central business district to coincide with those of the SID known as the Journal Square Restoration Corporation.

Response: This was accomplished with the adoption of the new Jersey City LDO in 2001. However, it should be noted that the boundaries of the Journal Square SID were later expanded to include the properties along Newark Avenue from Kennedy Boulevard to Tonnele Avenue.

2. Determine whether the entire central business district is an "area in need of redevelopment" and, if so, prepare and adopt a redevelopment plan that provides for a full range of retail, office and business service uses.

Response: A determination of the entire CBD as an "area in need of redevelopment" has not been done and would appear to be an overreaction. However, the existing Journal Square Redevelopment Plan has been amended and has resulted in the construction of a new high-rise mixed use commercial/residential building on the former State Theater site. Additional revisions or expansion of the existing redevelopment plan should be

considered to address specific issues as they arise.

3. Plan for and capitalize upon the presence of major institutional uses in and around the central business district including the Hudson County Community College, Loew's Theater, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the Hudson County government complex.

Response: This recommendation continues to be relevant.

4. Support the efforts of the Jersey City Economic Development Corporation and the Journal Square Restoration Corporation to enhance the appearance and marketing of the central business district.

Response: This recommendation continues to be relevant.

5. Plan for high-profile destination uses that establish the central business district as a center of City- wide and regional significance.

Response: This recommendation continues to be relevant. Work on the renovation of the Lowes Theater continues in this regard.

6. Improve the connection between the central business district and adjacent activity districts through streetscape improvements, providing for complementary uses and increasing the levels of activity.

Response: This recommendation continues to be relevant. Work should continue on the streetscape improvements, extending the improvements to other areas of activity that can help to support Journal Square.

7. Enhance the appearance of the central business district through aesthetic improvements to existing structures, high quality design in new development, streetscape improvements including street furniture and additional pedestrian amenities.

Response: This recommendation continues to be relevant. Tremendous improvements have already been made to the Journal Square pedestrian environment. However, work should continue to extend and maintain the streetscape improvements.

8. Encourage high-rise residential development on the periphery of the District.

Response: This recommendation continues to be relevant. However, because the boundaries of the CBD were reduced in response to Recommendation # 1 above, the most likely place for this to occur is within the O/R District or within industrial districts located in proximity to Journal Square. Locations within the O/R, or in a modified Industrial District should be

identified for higher intensity Mixed –Use and or high-rise residential development.

- 9, Capitalize on the central business district's function as a transportation hub by encouraging high density development that is served by mass transit and promoting uses that serve the large commuter population that passes through Journal Square daily.

Response: This recommendation continues to be relevant. The transportation advantages of Journal Square will be an important factor in attracting new high-rise residential development to the periphery of Journal Square.

B. Office / Residential District

Assumptions

Existing Conditions - The City of Jersey City has an office/residential district located on the periphery of the central business district. This district is physically and economically linked to Journal Square but lacks the mix of uses and intensity of activity that characterize the central business district. The office/residential district has a preponderance of government and office uses interspersed with residential uses and ground level retail and has a low- to mid-rise character. The district functions as a transition area between the central business district and residential areas to the north, east and west.

Response: The analysis of the existing conditions accurately portrays the mix of residential, commercial and government uses within the area which became the O/R District. However, there were also several locations where industrial uses existed within the periphery of Journal Square in what has become the O/R District. This would include properties along Hoboken Avenue and Baldwin Avenue.

Existing Zoning - Jersey City's office/residential district is currently governed by several zones, including C-2, C-1 and R-2. A mix of uses is permitted in these districts including office, retail, low and medium density residential, auto sales and service, theaters and recreation facilities and parking garages. It is recommended that the zoning be amended to consolidate this district into one zone. It is also recommended that inappropriate uses such as garden apartments, auto sales and service and automatic amusement device arcades should not be permitted in the new zone in order to preserve and reinforce the existing pattern of development.

Response: The analysis of the existing zoning accurately portrays the mix of C-2, C-1 and R-2 zones within the area which became the O/R District. However, a significant portion of the

Industrial District that existed along Baldwin Avenue at the periphery of Journal Square was also included in what has become the O/R District.

Issues

1. Enhancing the physical connection between the district and the central business district.

Response: This issue mirrors one of the issues also raised in the Central Business District / Journal Square section. The improvement of the physical linkages to Journal Square continues to be an issue. In addition, it would appear to be important to also improve linkages to areas of high density residential development or areas with the potential to accommodate high density residential in order to increase the “built-in” potential market for Journal Square”.

2. Increasing the level of street activity and foot traffic in the district, especially during the evening.

Response: This recommendation continues to be relevant. Increased street activity and foot traffic is important to creating a safe pedestrian environment.

3. Providing opportunities for ground level neighborhood retail in the office/residential district to serve workers and residents.

Response: This recommendation continues to be relevant. While Journal Square should be the business and civic center and be supported by the surrounding O/R District and other locations of higher intensity mixed use and/or residential neighborhood services and shopping needs should be addressed on the ground floor of mixed-use buildings.

Recommendations

1. Improve the physical connection among the office/residential district, the Hudson County government complex, and the central business district by implementing streetscape improvements. Such improvements should include wayfinding or directional signage.

Response: This recommendation continues to be relevant. In addition, the gateways to Journal Square should be addressed in particular, including Kennedy Boulevard, Bergen Avenue, Tonnele Avenue and Sip Avenue.

2. Promote the development of more neighborhood commercial uses, including restaurants, night clubs and bars, that generate street activity during the evening and are compatible with the office and residential uses that predominate in the district.

Response: This recommendation continues to be relevant. Neighborhood commercial uses should continue to be promoted within the O/R District.

3. Provide more incentives for the development of ground level neighborhood retail to serve workers and residents of the office/residential zone by eliminating the requirement for off-street parking and utilizing on-street parking for first floor retail only.

Response: This recommendation continues to be relevant. However, when opportunities to provide on-site parking exist, appropriate parking should be provided.

4. Provide adequate parking in the district through a combination of public lots, structured parking and residential parking on site.

Response: This recommendation continues to be relevant.

C. Industrial District

Issues

1. Coordinating with the HMDC to ensure appropriate industrial development in the Hackensack Meadowlands District.

Response: This recommendation is generally relevant, but not germane to the Journal Square area.

2. Preserving desirable industrial uses subject to development standards that protect adjacent residential and commercial uses and future tourist destination uses.

Response: This recommendation is relevant, but is particularly difficult to relate to the Journal Square area because of the high degree of development of residential and commercial uses in the area and high level of business office, retail and residential traffic and the adverse impact of additional industrial truck traffic on the local street network.

3. Providing opportunities for the development of industrial uses in appropriate locations where Jersey City has a competitive advantage, such as printing, apparel, warehousing and distribution.

Response: This recommendation is generally relevant, but not germane to the Journal Square area.

4. Coordinating public transportation linkages to industrial employment locations within the HMDC.

Response: This recommendation is generally relevant, especially in terms of providing additional bus service to the HMDC area from the Journal Square Transportation Center.

5. Addressing noise, emissions and truck nuisances in areas where industrial uses are in close proximity to existing and planned residential uses.

Response: This recommendation is especially relevant to the greater Journal Square area. The industrial uses at the periphery of Journal Square lie in close proximity to established residential and business areas. These industrial uses generally consist of older industrial complexes developed at a time when little attention was paid to buffers and screening of these uses. There is little opportunity to retrofit these complexes to provide adequate buffering and screening and the related truck traffic must use local streets and compete with business and residential traffic for the limited capacity of the street network.

Recommendations

1. Continue frequent consultation with the HMDC about planning issues and development within the Hackensack Meadowlands District. Ensure that the HMDC Special Area Management Plan is consistent with the Jersey City Master Plan in those areas where jurisdictions overlap and abut each other.

Response: This recommendation continues to be relevant, but is not germane to the Journal Square area.

2. Evaluate the findings of the Industrial Retention Study prepared by the Rutgers University Project on Regional and Industrial Economics and implement its recommendations, where feasible and appropriate.

Response: This recommendation continues to be relevant, but is not germane to the Journal Square area.

3. Amend the zoning ordinance to provide enhanced requirements for performance standards, urban design, screening and buffering and vehicular access in conjunction with industrial development. Consider the selective acquisition of industrial properties to eliminate inappropriate uses and adverse nuisance impacts.

Response: This recommendation continues to be relevant, and relative to the greater Journal Square area, consideration should be given to the selective re-zoning of industrial properties at the periphery of Journal Square and in close proximity to residential and commercial land uses to eliminate inappropriate uses and adverse nuisances impacts.

4. Preserve existing industrial uses and promote the development of desirable industrial uses where Jersey City has a competitive advantage by assisting in land assembly and acquisition, participating in job readiness and skills training for workers, improving public infrastructure and promoting the remediation of contaminated sites.

Response: This recommendation continues to be relevant, but is not germane to the Journal Square area.

5. Add automotive service stations (excluding bus and truck repair facilities) as a permitted use.

This recommendation continues to be relevant, but is not germane to the Journal Square area.

N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89 c. - THE EXTENT TO WHICH THERE HAVE BEEN SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE ASSUMPTIONS, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES FORMING THE BASIS FOR THE MASTER PLAN OR DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS AS LAST REVISED.

A. Central Business District / Journal Square

The purpose of the central business district is to foster the development of a vibrant and accessible Citywide activity district that is a center of commerce and civic activity. Journal Square has been the traditional heart of Jersey City. Continued development along the Hudson River waterfront has drawn many large office and shopping complexes to the eastern edge of Jersey City. However, it is critically important to the City of Jersey City and its citizens that Journal Square continue to function as a revitalized center of activity. Although the purpose of the Central Business District continues to be relevant, and it may not be necessary to change or alter this purpose in light of the significant development occurring along the Hudson River waterfront; it is appropriate to reemphasize and refocus attention on the Journal Square area.

One of the chief ways in which Journal Square can be invigorated with new vitality is to increase the number of residents in close proximity to Journal Square. These new residents will become a built in market for the retail businesses, restaurants and entertainment venues in Journal Square. The location of higher density residential development in close proximity to Journal Square is also appropriate given Journal Square's position as a mass transit hub for the local and regional bus network and the PATH system.

In fact, recommendation number 8 within the current Master Plan states: Encourage high-rise residential development on the periphery of the District. However, in order to implement this very worthwhile recommendation, land and/or buildings must be found in the districts at the periphery of Journal Square, primarily the O/R District and the Industrial District; since the boundaries of the Central Business District itself have been reduced in conformance with recommendation number 1 in the Master Plan, which states: Reduce the boundaries of the central business district to coincide with those of the SID known as the Journal Square Restoration Corporation.

B. Office / Residential District

The current Master Plan described the office/residential district as being located on the periphery of the central business district. It also described the district as having a preponderance of government and office uses interspersed with residential uses and ground level retail. The Master Plan described the existing zoning of this area as being comprised of C-2, C-1 and R-2 districts. While this is true, the area which ultimately became the O/R District also included industrial land uses, including some rather large uses located along Baldwin Avenue, and a portion of the I-3 Industrial District was in fact incorporated into the O/R District. Recently, a development application was approved for one of the properties located in this former I-3 area. This property, formerly housing the Mueller Macaroni factory, was approved for the construction of approximately 600 new housing units and ground floor commercial uses along Baldwin Avenue. The project is a combination of rehabilitation/redevelopment and new construction on the site.

C. Industrial District

As illustrated above, portions of the former I-3 District were included in the O/R District. However, this was not the only industrial district in close proximity to Journal Square at the time of the adoption of the current Master Plan. An I-2 Intensive Industrial District was also located on the periphery of the Journal Square area to the north-west. This industrial area was described in the Master Plan as follows: *“A portion of the industrial district, the area east of Conrail’s Northern Branch Line and south of the Pulaski Skyway is outside the HMDC and contains manufacturing, warehousing, and trucking uses. The majority of this area is within Jersey City’s I-2 Intensive Industrial zone which permits warehousing, manufacturing, terminal facilities and scrap metal processing. These uses are proposed to continue, however, careful site planning is required to adequately screen industrial activity and buffer adjacent residential and commercial districts.”* (Emphasis added)

Two of the five issues raised in the Industrial District of the Master Plan are also relative to this location. Issue number 2 discusses – “Preserving desirable industrial uses subject to development standards that protect adjacent residential and commercial uses and future tourist destination uses”; and issue number 5 discusses – “Addressing noise, emissions and truck nuisances in areas where industrial uses are in close proximity to existing and planned residential uses”.

Given this industrial area's close proximity to adjacent residential and commercial districts, and the noise, nuisance and performance standards issues raised in the Master Plan, it is curious that this area was not considered for inclusion in the O/R District as was the east side of Baldwin Avenue. However, it is likely that the reason that this area was not considered for inclusion in the O/R District was related to the development of a new land use that was being explored relative to older industrial sites at the time of the adoption of the current Master Plan.

The new land use, known as "Cyber Hotels" or "Telecommunication Centers", was being considered as a means of re-using older industrial buildings that had high load bearing capacities. This use is relatively benign, and was projected to generate very little in the way of noise, truck traffic or other nuisance factors. The use was intended to provide high speed internet and telecommunication services to businesses in the metropolitan area. In fact, a variance was approved by the Jersey City Board of Adjustment in August of 2000, at about the same time that the Master Plan was being adopted, for a property in this I-2 District. Cyber Hotels were later included as a permitted use in the Industrial District in the new Land Development Ordinance.

However, the economic viability of "Cyber Hotels" was extremely short lived. The project that was approved by the Board of Adjustment in August of 2000 was never implemented. Other "Cyber Hotel" types of uses proposed for other industrial sections of Jersey City were likewise never constructed.

D. Summary of factors that have affected the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the master plan.

- The boundaries of the Journal Square / Central Business District were reduced. Although this reduction was in conformance with a recommendation of the Master Plan, it resulted in reducing the amount of area available to fulfill another recommendation of the Master Plan to: "Encourage high-rise residential development on the periphery of the District".
- A significant new development was approved in the O/R District resulting in the redevelopment of a former industrial property that had been in an I-3 District into a high density mixed-use residential development with ground floor commercial uses. This development demonstrates the potential of former industrial sites to be redeveloped in a manner that can support and improve the viability of Journal Square as a center of commerce and civic activity. This development also demonstrates the importance of former industrial sites in providing needed land area to advance the purpose of providing

sufficient space and land area for the development of needed neighborhood commercial uses to serve the surrounding community.

- The sudden disappearance of “Cyber Hotels” as a viable land use and potential reuse of industrial properties calls into question the continued industrial zoning of the current Industrial District (former I-2 District) in the vicinity of Tonnele Avenue and the Pulaski Skyway and east of the HMDC area, because of the potential for noise, emissions and truck nuisances in the adjacent residential and commercial districts.

N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89 D. - THE SPECIFIC CHANGES RECOMMENDED FOR THE MASTER PLAN OR DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, IF ANY, INCLUDING UNDERLYING OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND STANDARDS, OR WHETHER NEW DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS OR PLAN ELEMENTS SHOULD BE PREPARED.

Many of the underlying assumptions, policies and objectives of the Master Plan were found to be valid by this report. The major exceptions are those noted above and the possible need to modify certain district boundary locations on the Master Plan Land Use Map and Zoning Map.

The Master Plan Recommendations are as follows:

- In light of the ill-fated Cyber Hotel variance discussed above, review the boundaries of the Industrial District at the periphery of Journal Square to the north-west (generally bounded by St. Pauls Avenue, Tonnele Avenue, Newark Avenue and the Pulaski Skyway. to determine which properties are most suitable for conversion to uses similar to those permitted in the O/R District. At the present time, the buildings within this area are at various levels of use and occupancy. Therefore, it would be most appropriate to address the transition from industrial to residential and office use by creating an overlay district that would permit O/R District type of development. At the very least those portions of this area in proximity to residential and commercial areas and districts should be considered for inclusion in the O/R-Office/Residential District . The Marion Junction railroad connection would appear to be a logical location for the western boundary of the proposed O/R District at this time. Properties within the recommended overlay district include the former Marion Works of the Western Electric Company and the former American Can Complex. A map indicating the recommended O/R Overlay District is appended to this report.
- Industrial buildings and sites provide a great opportunity for innovative re-use and conversion to residential and commercial land-uses. However, part of the appeal of

these building is their unique architectural qualities. Therefore, Design standards should be developed within the O/R District Overlay to help preserve these unique architectural features; such as, skylights, water towers and smokestacks. Renovation of these buildings should be carried out in a way that respects the architectural character of the buildings in terms of the building materials, the scale of the window openings, and fenestration, and the rhythm of voids and solid portions of the façade that often create a repetition of building bays along the streetscape.

- The current Master Plan described the O/R area as having a preponderance of government and office uses interspersed with residential uses and ground level retail. The Master Plan failed to recognize the existence of former industrial structures in the area. Later, when the Land Development Ordinance was adopted, both office and residential uses were permitted interchangeably. This would appear to be appropriate in portions of the O/R District in proximity to the core of Journal Square or in proximity to the core of the County Government Complex. However, this may not be appropriate in the proposed O/R Overlay District which is made up of former industrial sites at the periphery of the Journal Square area. As such, it is recommended that the development regulations within the O/R District contain some limitation on the amount of office use within the converted industrial sites. A requirement that no more than 50% of the floor area developed on any given site pursuant to the O/R Overlay District may be dedicated to office use would seem appropriate.
- The overlay district lies in close proximity to PATH R_O_W west of Journal Square. In fact, the PATH line forms the southern boundary of the recommended O/R Overlay District. Higher intensity mixed-use and residential development is extremely consistent with and supportive of mass transit facilities. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that the City of Jersey City pursue the establishment of a new PATH station adjacent to the recommended O/R Overlay. This new station would not only help spur the redevelopment of underutilized industrial properties north of the PATH Right of Way, but also serve the existing Marion Neighborhood to the south. The circulation plan of the JC Master Plan should be modified accordingly to include this recommendation.
- The Industrial District bordered by Elm Street and Kennedy Boulevard should be amended to accommodate its Highway frontage and reflect the Board of Adjustment approval for commercial development at that location, at the base of the slope. The same Industrial District should be amended to be residential to reflect its residential frontage at the top of the slope since this area is not suitable for either commercial or industrial development. The separation of the two districts should follow the toe of the slope.

N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89 E. - THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PLANNING BOARD CONCERNING THE INCORPORATION OF REDEVELOPMENT PLANS ADOPTED PURSUANT TO THE “LOCAL REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING LAW”, P.L. 1992, c.79 (C.40A12A-1 ET AL.) INTO THE LAND USE PLAN ELEMENT OF THE MUNICIPAL MASTER PLAN, AND RECOMMENDED CHANGES, IF ANY, IN THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS NECESSARY TO EFFECTUATE THE REDEVELOPMENT PLANS OF THE MUNICIPALITY.

The City of Jersey City has long utilized the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law and has incorporated redevelopment plans so adopted into its Land Development Ordinance and Land Use Plan. It is recommended that the City continue this practice in compliance with law.

It is recommended that the City continue to monitor the condition of the properties located within the proposed O/R District and the progress of the anticipated conversion of the underutilized industrial properties to higher intensity mixed- use residential development. If conditions warrant, the City should consider the designation of the area as an area in need of Redevelopment and the creation of a redevelopment plan to help implement the recommendations of this Master Plan Review Report.