NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BOROUGH OF BOUND BROOK PLANNING BOARD ON THE MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Planning Board of the Borough of Bound Brook, Somerset County, New Jersey ("the Planning Board"), at its regular meeting on September 24, 2026, at 7:30 pm, and thereafter on such other dates as such hearing may be continued, will hold a **virtual** public hearing on the proposed Master Plan Reexamination Report dated September 10, 2026 and prepared for the Planning Board by Heyer, Gruel & Associates.

Access information for these meetings is as follows:

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.
https://meet.goto.com/434777981
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A full copy of the proposed Master Plan Reexamination Report will be on file, at least ten days prior to the public hearing, with the Borough Clerk and the Planning Board Secretary at Borough Hall, 230 Hamilton Street, Bound Brook, NJ 08805, and may be inspected and copied during normal Borough business hours.

At the time of the public hearing, any interested persons may appear, either personally or through their attorney, in accordance with the rules of the Board and/or the provisions of the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law, to ask questions and present comments in support of, or in opposition to, the proposed Report. The Borough Planning Board may act on the Report at the close of the public hearing on September 24, 2026, or may continue the hearing to another date.

BOROUGH OF BOUND BROOK
PLANNING BOARD

2026 Master Plan Reexamination Report

Borough of Bound Brook | Somerset County | New Jersey



September 10, 2026

Prepared by Heyer, Gruel & Associates

MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT

Borough of Bound Brook

Somerset County, New Jersey

Date: September 10, 2026

Prepared for:
Borough of Bound Brook Planning Board

Prepared by:
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The original of this report was signed and sealed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 45:14A-12.

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INTRODUCTION

The Borough of Bound Brook ("the Borough"), a small town with deep historical roots, has evolved significantly in recent years through ongoing redevelopment and community investment. While progress can bring about positive impacts, it also highlights the need to identify the characteristics and assets of the community to preserve and protect. This Master Plan Reexamination Report serves to determine how the Borough can utilize its planning tools to continue to thrive, address issues, and chart a course for the future.

The Borough of Bound Brook is approximately 1.7 square miles and is in east-central Somerset County, New Jersey. It is bordered to the north and west by Bridgewater Township, to the east by Middlesex Borough, and to the south by South Bound Brook. The Borough is predominantly zoned residential, with commercial, open space, and other uses throughout the community. Bound Brook is characterized by its connection to the Raritan River and its tributaries, with the Raritan River running along the Borough's southern border, Middle Brook to the west, and Green Brook to the east, which bisects the Borough south of Route 28. The Borough is well connected to the region via a major train line and several state and county roadways. The New Jersey Transit Raritan Valley Line to Newark Penn Station runs through Bound Brook Station. Main roadways in the Borough include Route 28, which bisects the Borough from east to west, and County Routes 525, 527, and 533. Interstate 287 is accessible via Route 28 in neighboring Bridgewater Township.

All municipalities in New Jersey are required to maintain an updated Master Plan and associated land use development regulations. The Borough has undertaken this comprehensive review of its planning documents and related actions in accordance with the Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89), which requires, at least every ten (10) years, a reexamination of the Master Plan and development regulations by the Planning Board. The last Master Plan Reexamination was completed in 2017, with an update in 2019; therefore, this report will summarize the changes that have taken place at the local, regional, and state levels over the past nine years and recommend actions to clarify these changes and address other priorities of the Borough.







MAP 1: LOCATION OF THE BOROUGH OF BOUND BROOK IN NEW JERSEY

PERIODIC REEXAMINATION

New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89) requires the Reexamination Report to contain the following:

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 been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date,

C. The extent to which there have been significant changes in assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the Master Plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition, and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, County and Municipal policies and objectives,

D. The specific changes recommended for the Master Plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared, and

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.40A: 12A-1 et seq.) 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.

F. The recommendations of the planning board concerning locations appropriate for the development of public electric vehicle infrastructure, including but not limited to, commercial districts, areas proximate to public transportation and transit facilities and transportation corridors, and public rest stops; and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary or appropriate for the development of public electric vehicle infrastructure.



A & B MAJOR PROBLEMS & OBJECTIVES

This section outlines the Major Problems and Objectives relating to land development in Bound Brook as described in the 1988 Master Plan and subsequent revisions. Several updates have been made since then, most recently including a Statement of Goals and Objectives adopted in June of 2018, a Land Use Element adopted in March of 2019, and an overall Master Plan Reexamination Report adopted in July of 2019.

PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED IN THE 1988 MASTER PLAN

The problems identified in the 1988 Master Plan and subsequent discussion are provided below. The identified problems from the 1988 Plan have been paraphrased but are reflective of the original text.

1. There are areas subject to frequent flooding along the Middle Brook, Green Brook, and the Raritan River. These areas are identified as having floodways and floodplains. These waterways, as well as associated wetland areas, are frequently inundated to varying degrees depending upon precipitation in the watersheds.

   Current Status: *Since the completion of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Green Brook Flood Control Project, the Borough is served by a comprehensive system of levees, floodwalls and floodgates that constitute a very significant investment in public flood prevention infrastructure. These facilities are maintained by Somerset County and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). However, there are still areas of the Borough that flood due to heavy rain events.*

2. Within the development of the Borough, conversions of single-family homes into multiple-family dwellings and offices have continued.

   Current Status: *The Borough's Land Use Ordinance has been revised over the years to permit higher densities in appropriate areas; however, illegal conversions of basements into apartments and renting bedrooms as individual units are an ongoing concern.*

3. The 1967 Property Maintenance Code is not effective, and overall housing conditions have not improved.

   Current Status: *Through the adoption of several Redevelopment Plans, the Borough has redeveloped several vacant, contaminated, and otherwise underutilized properties and has additional sites in various stages of improvement. Improving zoning enforcement and property maintenance remains a priority.*

4. Adverse traffic conditions include arterial traffic, insufficient pavement widths, traffic congestion in the business district, and inadequate storm drainage on certain streets.

   Current Status: *Circulation within the Borough is relatively smooth; however, there is still traffic around West Union Avenue and Tea Street, East Union Avenue and Mountain Avenue, and Columbus Place and Main Street. The segment of Talmage Avenue that begins on the eastern border of the Borough also experiences congestion. Storm drainage has improved as roadway design standards have evolved, and the Borough integrates stormwater management improvements when roadway projects are planned and implemented.*

5. The commercial core is experiencing signs of deterioration of individual structures.

   Current Status: *The Borough designated extensive areas "in need of redevelopment" in the southern part of the Borough. Redevelopment Plans for Areas 1 and 2 were adopted in 2000, substantially changing the planning framework in those areas. Both Redevelopment Plans have been amended over the years; however, a primary purpose of the plans is still to create mixed-use corridors with commercial uses that transition to residential neighborhoods.*

6. Collection and disposition of trash is an issue.

   Current Status: *Collection of refuse has since been addressed by the Borough.*

7. The Police Department requires adequate quarters.

   Current Status: *The Police department has adequate quarters.*

8. A high portion of renter-occupied housing was considered to be an unfavorable existing condition.

   Current Status: *54% of occupied units in the Borough are renter-occupied. This is not considered unfavorable per say, but identifying opportunities for condominium-style buildings or a mix of rental and condo-units should be encouraged.*



VACANT BUILDING WITHIN REDEVELOPMENT AREA 1



MIDDLE BROOK



MIXED-USE BUILDING ON TALMAGE AVENUE



RESIDENTIAL TO COMMERCIAL CONVERSION

2018 MASTER PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES

In 2018, a new list of Goals and Objectives was adopted to "provide more contemporary, sound, and place-based underpinnings to the updated land use plan element." The following list includes the goals and objectives adopted on May 24, 2018, and memorialized on June 14, 2018, by the Borough. The document is organized by topic area, and a discussion of the status of each goal is provided.

POPULATION

1. Support diversity in all its manifestations

   This objective remains valid. *As discussed in Section C under local demographics, the Borough remains a diverse community.*

2. Facilitate the creation of places that encourage and support active, healthy living behaviors; functionally support all age groups and physical conditions; encourage social and cultural interactions; and encourage life-long learning and creative pursuits.

   This objective remains valid.



BOUND BROOK MEMORIAL LIBRARY CURRENTLY UNDERGOING RENOVATIONS



PLAY AREA AND NEW MURAL CODRINGTON PARK

LAND USE

1. Ensure appropriate levels of privacy for all residential uses and continue to maintain adequate light, air and open space.

   This objective remains valid. *The Borough is considering expanding the requirements for landscaped buffers between residential and non-residential uses. The recommendations section of this report provides further discussion.*

2. Encourage new, context-sensitive buildings that reflect the scale and character of Bound Brook.

   This objective remains valid. *The Downtown Urban Design Plan, adopted in 2011, established a framework for redevelopment in and around downtown, anticipating the completion of the USACE Green Brook Flood Control project, which was completed in 2016. The plan provided the impetus for the comprehensive rezoning of downtown in 2014 and for the total overhaul of the redevelopment plans, which now govern downtown's zoning. Downtown Bound Brook continues to transform as a result of these planning efforts.*

3. Facilitate mixed-use buildings and neighborhoods with multiple building types in designated locations.

   This objective remains valid.

4. Facilitate the repurposing of existing buildings and the redevelopment of vacant lots with appropriate new uses and structures.

   This objective remains valid. *There are three redevelopment areas in the Borough. Redevelopment Areas 1 and 2 encompass downtown and the Talmage Avenue corridors. The associated redevelopment plans for these areas, adopted and amended between 2017 and 2023, identify vacant parcels and promote new development, renovation, and reuse of existing structures, as well as the preservation of historically and architecturally significant buildings.*

5. Ensure the highest level of consistency between the land use framework in the master plan, the Borough's zoning and land development regulations, and the adopted redevelopment plans.

   This objective remains valid.

6. Adopt a land use framework that maximizes synergies and minimizes conflicts between different uses and activities.

   This objective remains valid. *However, this objective repeats a previous point and should be consolidated.*

7. Seek to create interesting, lively places that strengthen the community by facilitating both business transactions and social interaction.

   This objective remains valid. *The Borough completed a vision plan for the train station and Hamilton Street in 2018 and has since entered the final design phase for a pedestrian plaza on Hamilton Street. In partnership with the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), the pedestrian plaza will include streetscape improvements, will enhance pedestrian safety, and ultimately support local businesses and promote social interaction. The Borough continues to identify similar opportunities.*

8. Encourage new community-oriented service uses in designated locations.

   This objective remains valid.

9. Locate larger scale and higher intensity uses along the Main Street / Talmage and Union Avenue (West of Livingston Street) corridors, in proximity to transit, goods and services.

   This objective remains valid. *However, this objective translates to a recommendation and will be further discussed in the recommendations section of this report.*

10. Carefully evaluate the consequences of every development decision in terms of whether it encourages walking, biking and transit use.

This objective remains valid. *The Borough adopted a Complete Streets Policy in 2015; however, updates are needed.*

11. Carefully evaluate land development procedures and eliminate any unnecessary and counter-productive administrative barriers, while maintaining appropriate oversight.

    This objective remains valid.



REDEVELOPMENT AREAS ABUTTING EXISTING USES



MIXED-USE AREA IN DOWNTOWN

NATURAL RESOURCES

1. Adopt stricter standards to reduce and mitigate stormwater runoff wherever possible.

   This objective remains valid. *However, this objective translates to a recommendation and will be further discussed in the recommendations section of this report.*

2. Encourage land development and building practices that reduce energy and water consumption.

   This objective remains valid. *The Borough's redevelopment plans include sustainable building requirements.*

3. Seek to improve water quality in the Borough's water bodies such that they support recreation, as well as indigenous plant species and wildlife.

   This objective remains valid.

4. Encourage the replanting of flood-prone lands with appropriate habitat-creating vegetation.

   This objective remains valid.

5. Facilitate the remediation of contaminated lands within or adjacent to railroad rights-of way as well as located elsewhere in the Borough.

   This objective remains valid. *The Borough continues to use redevelopment as a tool to remediate contaminated or underutilized properties. Additionally, with guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Bound Brook Industrial Park has undergone remediation through the removal of contaminated soils and groundwater monitoring is ongoing.*

6. Encourage community-based volunteer cleanup efforts of the stream corridors, the riverfront and vacant lands and pursue grant opportunities to support such efforts.

   This objective remains valid.

7. Facilitate the continued expansion of the Borough's tree canopy by requiring the planting of replacement trees when existing trees die or are cut down, and the planting of an appropriate number of new trees, in both the public right-of-way, in parking lots and in private open space when sites are developed or redeveloped.

   This objective remains valid. *The Bound Brook Shade Tree Commission is an appointed board that oversees the planting and maintenance of street trees in all public rights-of-way and on Borough property. Commissioners inspect trees and coordinate with the Department of Public Works for pruning or removal of street trees, as needed. In Spring and Fall, the Commission arranges for the planting of new/replacement street trees. An inventory of the Borough's shade trees was completed in 2022.*

8. Encourage a way-finding and signage program for all public lands or publicly accessible open lands in the Borough.

   This objective remains valid. *However, this objective is more appropriate under the Mobility section.*

9. Facilitate public access to the riverfront and to other preserved areas.

   This objective remains valid. *A kayak launch beneath Queen's Bridge opened in May 2018. The recommendations section of this report addresses public-access planning.*



TREE CANOPY COVERING A RESIDENTIAL STREET



KAYAK LAUNCH AREA UNDER QUEEN'S BRIDGE

HOUSING

1. Provide opportunities for housing, including affordable housing, appropriate to all relevant demographic profiles, economic capabilities and housing and lifestyle preferences.

   This objective remains valid. *The Borough adopted its Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan (HEFSP) in February 2026, which led to the adoption of an Affordable Housing Ordinance, a Development Fee Ordinance, and amendments to Redevelopment Areas 1 and 2 that require a 25% set-aside for projects with 5 or more residential units.*

2. Continue to encourage the location of higher density housing in close proximity to transit options, goods and services.

   This objective remains valid.

3. Continue to encourage the necessary maintenance and upgrading of the housing stock, both detached and attached, and both owner-occupied and renter-occupied, and explore potential new incentives for reinvestment by property owners.

   This objective remains valid.



NEW TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT



RESIDENTIAL HOMES ON TALMAGE AVENUE

MOBILITY

1. Ensure that the Borough's sidewalk network is complete, well maintained and free from obstacles.

   This objective remains valid. *The 2024 Circulation Element confirmed that 98% of the Borough has sidewalks but recommended future maintenance. Additionally, a complete streets ordinance was adopted in 2015, and several related studies were subsequently completed, as discussed in detail in this report.*

2. Seek to upgrade all crosswalks with depressed curbs and adequate pedestrian cycles at signalized intersections.

   This objective remains valid. *The Borough has completed several studies addressing pedestrian access. For example, Bound Brook participated in the 2022-2023 New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) Complete Streets Technical Assistance Program, created to assist municipalities in implementing Complete Streets. Bound Brook requested a Walkable Community Workshop on West Maple Avenue and Vosseller Avenue, which was held on October 3, 2022. Municipal employees and stakeholders, including area residents, participated in the workshop. The report recommends installing and improving high-visibility and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant crosswalks, developing bicycle infrastructure, adopting an updated Complete Streets ordinance, and addressing parking violations.*

3. Develop a Borough-wide bicycle plan, including both dedicated bicycle lanes and shared streets. The intention is to create an integrated network linking all of the Borough's neighborhoods and taking advantage of off-road opportunities provided by the paths on the top of the levees, abandoned railroad rights-of-way, parks, cemeteries and other open space elements.

   This objective remains valid. *A Circulation Master Plan Element was adopted in 2024 and includes recommendations addressing bike lanes.*

4. Seek to locate adequate bicycle parking at all major destinations.

   This objective remains valid.

5. Facilitate the installation of dignified bus shelters.

   This objective remains valid. *Conditions at bus stops vary across the Borough. Some bus stops have well-maintained shelters, while others are dilapidated.*

6. Facilitate the continued upgrading of pedestrian and bicycle access routes to the train station and its platforms.

   This objective remains valid.

7. Develop and implement an up-to-date, comprehensive parking management strategy for the downtown.

   This objective remains valid.

8. Encourage a Borough-wide way-finding program showing major destinations: parks, recreation, the waterfront, civic buildings, historic locations, food and beverage, train station and other key destinations.

   This objective remains valid. *The North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) funded a wayfinding study for the Borough. The Study was completed in 2020, and the Borough is working to address and implement the recommendations.*



PEDESTRIAN WALKING ALONG MAIN STREET


BUS SHELTER AT BOUND BROOK HIGH SCHOOL

ECONOMIC AND FISCAL BASE

1. Facilitate the continued diversification of the fiscal base with new revenue-generating businesses in clean industries capable of sustained growth.

   This objective remains valid.

2. Support local entrepreneurs and facilitate the creation of new local employment opportunities in creative industries, arts and culture, hospitality, food and beverage, artisanal manufacturing, recreation, eco- and historic tourism, and other currently under-represented economic activities.

   This objective remains valid. *The downtown Special Improvement District (SID), "Downtown Bound Brook," was established in 2015. The "Bound Brook Revitalization Partnership" aims to enhance the*

economic potential of all businesses in the SID by providing a safe, clean, and attractive downtown that meets the needs of residents, customers, owners, and employees.

3. Facilitate the creation of employment incubators, shared workspaces and home-based businesses.

   This objective remains valid.

4. Support the Borough's efforts targeting abandoned properties.

   This objective remains valid.

5. Support the repurposing of vacant or under-utilized Borough-owned properties.

   This objective remains valid. *However, this should be consolidated with the previous objective.*



DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES



LOCAL SHOPS ON UNION AVENUE

PUBLIC SPACE

1. Facilitate the creation of dignified new public gathering spaces, as well as the repurposing of existing public spaces, to strengthen community interaction and as venues for cultural activities.

   This objective remains valid. *With funding support from the Preserve New Jersey Historic Preservation Fund, the Borough is actively renovating the Bound Brook Memorial Library. Asbestos abatement activities were successfully completed in January 2026. In May 2026, the Borough Council awarded a construction contract for the alteration phase of the library restoration project, which will restore the reading room, the main level, and both mezzanine levels. Additionally, in 2024, the Brook Arts Center, commonly known as the Brook Theatre, was awarded $150,000 to prepare a Historic Structures Report. This report will benefit the site in all future restoration and planning efforts.*

2. Encourage community-based cultural and arts initiatives in public spaces.

   This objective remains valid. *In 2019, the Borough passed a resolution requiring a public art contribution in Redevelopment Areas 1 and 2. In 2023, with support from the Cultural Arts Committee, students from Raritan Valley Community College painted a mural in the tunnel that provides cross-platform access at the train station. The Borough continues to leverage the Cultural Arts Committee's dedication to identify additional opportunities for public art installations. Additionally, in 2026, the Committee organized the installation of a new mural at Codrington Park.*

3. Facilitate temporary uses, "pop-up" activities and mobile uses and streamline regulatory oversight.

   This objective remains valid.

4. Pursue opportunities for public art installations in appropriate locations.

   This objective remains valid. *However, it should be consolidated with a prior objective.*

5. Maintain and enhance local recreational facilities.

   This objective remains valid. *The Borough continues to maintain and enhance local recreational facilities. The Borough invested in Codrington Park, adding a new community pool, a splash pad, a new mural, and other upgrades. Additionally, the Tea Street Sport Complex now features a new 5v5 outdoor soccer field.*



MURAL IN TRAIN STATION TUNNEL



TEA STREET SPORTS COMPLEX 5V5 FIELD

ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN DESIGN

1. Require building design to provide articulated facades, ample fenestration, quality materials and compelling design features.

   This objective remains valid. *The recommendations section of this report offers further discussion.*

2. Encourage the installation of murals and/or other art displays on prominent walls of both private and public structures.

   This objective remains valid. *In 2019, the Borough amended Redevelopment Areas 1 and 2 to require a public art contribution.*

3. Discourage surface parking lots where possible, and require vegetative or other devices that are effective in concealing direct views of such facilities from the public realm.

   This objective remains valid.

4. Require a high-quality public realm with appropriate street furniture such as benches, trash receptacles and pedestrian-scale lights, as well as street trees, planter boxes and other street-appropriate vegetation without compromising accessibility and pedestrian circulation.

   This objective remains valid.

5. Explore more lively and diversified hardscapes using colors and durable materials.

   This objective remains valid. *The 2018 Hamilton Street & Van Horne Plaza vision plan recommends paving materials of either cast-in-place concrete or unit pavers, with figural elements comprising the abstracted river graphic, the stepped seating, and planters.*



DOWNTOWN STREET FURNISHINGS



PARKING LOT SCREENING ON UNION AVENUE

SUSTAINABILITY

- Promote and facilitate best practices in energy conservation and in local renewable energy production.

  This objective remains valid.

- Promote and facilitate best practices in stormwater management, such as pervious pavements, green roofs, cisterns, rain gardens and bioswales.

  This objective remains valid.

- Support the recycling of construction materials, and office and residential waste.

  This objective remains valid.

- Support domestic composting.

  This objective remains valid.

- Support sourcing of local goods and services.

  This objective remains valid.

- Develop and adopt standards for electric vehicle charging stations and require these in all new major development projects.

This objective remains valid. *However, Senate Bill 3223, enacted in 2021, requires all municipalities to treat EVSE or "Make-Ready" parking spaces as an as-of-right use across all zoning districts and to require certain developments to provide Make-Ready parking spaces. The Department of Community Affairs developed a model ordinance shortly after the legislation was enacted. The Borough is working to ensure compliance with these requirements.*

- Encourage the Borough and school district to adopt sustainability best management practices with respect to their facilities.

  This objective remains valid.

- Encourage the systematic removal of unnecessary impervious coverage as part of both public and private redevelopment projects.

  This objective remains valid.

- Encourage the retrofitting and upgrading of older residential and commercial structures for greater efficiencies in energy and water consumption, as well as the application of renewable energy sources.

  This objective remains valid.

- Facilitate the creation of community gardens on public or privately-owned lands for the enjoyment of the residents of multi-family residential buildings and of smaller lot detached structures.

  This objective remains valid. *The Bound Brook Community Garden opened in 2018 at Mariposa Park and was funded by a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's "Building Bridges to Health" program. The garden remains active.*

- Require the reduction of stormwater runoff in all redevelopment projects.

  This objective remains valid. *However, this is repetitive of an earlier objective and should be consolidated.*



COMMUNITY GARDEN AT MARIPOSA PARK



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AREA ADJACENT TO MIDDLE BROOK



C. SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE ASSUMPTIONS, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES FORMING THE BASIS FOR THE MASTER PLAN OR DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Since the Borough adopted its 2019 Master Plan Reexamination Report, demographic, policy, and regulatory changes have occurred in the Borough, Somerset County, and at the state level. These changes affect the assumptions, policies, and objectives that underpin the Master Plan.

Several major policy changes since 2019 have affected demographic characteristics, housing, and other key aspects of land-use development in New Jersey. This section summarizes changes that affect the Borough of Bound Brook and inform subsequent recommendations in this report.

STATE POLICY CHANGES

Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) Updates:

Performance and Maintenance Guarantees (2017)

An amendment to the MLUL in 2017 modified the scope of improvements eligible for performance and maintenance guarantees. A performance and maintenance guarantee can be required only for improvements within a public right-of-way and those affecting adjacent properties, such as buffer areas.

Smart Growth (2017)

The 2017 MLUL amendment also requires the Land Use element of a municipality's Master Plan to address "smart growth, which, in part, shall consider potential locations for the installation of electric vehicle charging stations, storm resiliency with respect to energy supply, flood-prone areas, and environmental infrastructure, and environmental sustainability issues."

Municipal Public Access Plan as Optional Master Plan Element (2019)

A 2019 amendment to the MLUL added the Municipal Public Access Plan as an optional Master Plan Element: "A public access plan element that provides for, encourages, and promotes permanently protected public access to all tidal waters and adjacent shorelines consistent with the public trust doctrine, and which shall include a map and inventory of public access points, public facilities that support access, parking, boat ramps, and marinas; an assessment of the need for additional public access; a statement of goals and administrative mechanisms to ensure that access will be permanently protected; and a strategy that describes the forms of access to satisfy the need for such access with an implementation schedule and tools for implementation."

Electric Vehicles (EVs) (2019)

In 2019, Senate Bill 606 amended the MLUL to require Master Plan Reexaminations, Land Use Elements, Circulation Elements, Green Building Elements of Master Plans, and Redevelopment Plans to include an evaluation of potential locations for public EVs. Senate Bill 3223, enacted in 2021, requires all municipalities to consider EVSE or "Make-Ready" parking spaces as an as-of-right use across all zoning districts and establishes requirements for certain developments to provide Make-Ready parking spaces. The Department of Community Affairs developed a model ordinance shortly after the legislation was enacted.

Climate Change-Related Hazard Vulnerability Assessments (CCRHVAs) (2021)

In 2021, New Jersey enacted Senate Bill No. 2607, amending the MLUL to require municipalities to include a "climate change-related hazard vulnerability assessment (CCRHVA)" in the Land Use Element of their Master Plans. The CCRHVA examines "current and future threats to, and vulnerabilities of, the municipality associated with climate change-related natural hazards, including, but not limited to, increased temperatures, drought, flooding, hurricanes, and sea-level rise" and must "rely on the most recent natural hazard projections and best available science provided by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection."

Public Notice Requirements (2025)

On June 30, 2025, Governor Murphy signed P.L. 2025, c. 72, substantially revising New Jersey's statutory framework for publishing legal and public notices. The legislation shifts publication requirements from traditional print newspapers to online platforms. Public entities, such as Planning Boards and Zoning Boards of Adjustment, will meet legal notice requirements by posting notices on official websites. Non-public entities, such as businesses, individuals, and other non-governmental entities, are required to publish or advertise a legal notice, and publication must be made in an "eligible online news publication."

Other State Policy Changes:

Short Term Rental Regulations (2017-2019)

In June 2017, the New Jersey Legislature passed a bill to tax short-term rentals (AB 4587). The bill proposed extending the state sales and use tax and the hotel and motel occupancy fee to "transient accommodations." It defined "transient accommodations" as "room, group of rooms, or other living or sleeping space for the lodging of occupants, including but not limited to residences or buildings used as residences." Renters would be responsible for paying the taxes and fees. However, Governor Christie vetoed the bill.

In July 2018, P.L. 2018, Chapter 49 was approved, allowing municipalities to impose the following taxes and fees on transient accommodations, where applicable: the municipal occupancy tax, the sports and entertainment facility tax - Millville, the Atlantic City luxury tax, the Atlantic City promotion fee, the Cape May County tourism tax and assessment, and the hotel occupancy tax. The law mandates that transient space marketplaces, such as Airbnb, collect and pay the tax on behalf of the property owner.

In response to rising concerns about P.L. 2018, C. 49, Governor Murphy signed Assembly Bill 4814/4520, which applies to "rentals of professionally managed units and rentals obtained through a transient space marketplace or travel agency, as long as the transient space marketplace or travel agency does not exclusively offer transient accommodations owned by the marketplace or travel agency." This effectively excludes transactions made directly between property owners and renters.

Ride Share Programs (2017)

In 2017, New Jersey adopted regulations that set statewide standards for ridesharing companies such as Uber and Lyft. The law includes procedures to protect consumers, such as criminal background checks for drivers and insurance coverage standards.

COVID Permit Extension Act (2020)

The year 2020 saw the emergence of the COVID-19 global pandemic, which led to a temporary shutdown of many government services. On July 1, 2020, Governor Murphy signed the Permit Extension Act of 2020, P.L. 2020, c.53 ("Chapter 53"), into law in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The law relaxed requirements for municipal deadlines under the MLUL. Chapter 53 extended the terms of all governmental permits, approvals, and deadlines that were due to expire on March 9, 2020, until at least six (6) months after the end of the public health emergency (the "COVID-19 Extension Period"). The suspension applied to state and local permits and approvals, including New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) land use approvals, municipal land use approvals, flood hazard permits, water supply permits and certifications, water quality management plan approvals, and other environmental approvals. On June 4, 2021, Governor Murphy signed law A.5820 and Executive Order EO244, which terminated the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, marking the end of the COVID-19 Permit Extension Act.

New Jersey Environmental Justice Law (2020)

The New Jersey Environmental Justice Law requires the NJDEP to evaluate the environmental and public health impacts of certain facilities on overburdened communities when reviewing permit applications. The law allows the NJDEP to deny permits for any proposed facility that has a disproportionately negative impact on an overburdened community. The law defines an overburdened community as a census block group where at least 35% of households are low-income (at or below twice the poverty threshold), at least 40% of residents identify as minority or as members of a state-recognized tribal community, or at least 40% of households have limited English proficiency. The law requires that certain facility permit applications in overburdened communities be reviewed for their impact. The Borough of Bound Brook is considered an overburdened community (OBC) under the NJDEP criteria.

Marijuana Decriminalization and Cannabis Legalization (2021)

In 2021, bills altering the legal status of marijuana in New Jersey were signed into law. This created both challenges and opportunities for municipalities to update their zoning regulations. Assembly/Senate Bill 21 was introduced on November 5, 2020, adopted by both houses on December 17, 2020, and signed by the Governor on February 22, 2021. The bill legalized personal use of cannabis for certain adults, subject to state regulation; decriminalized possession of small amounts of marijuana and hashish; and removed marijuana from Schedule I. The bill defines six (6) classes of license based on different operational aspects.

Section 31 allows municipalities to adopt Municipal Regulations or Ordinances that permit or prohibit one or more classes of license within the municipality and that regulate time, manner, place, and quantity. Section 40 permits municipalities to levy an optional Cannabis "Transfer Tax and User Tax" capped at 1% of wholesale activities and 2% of cultivation, processing, and retail activities. Ordinances that prohibit or otherwise regulate cannabis that predate the Act are invalid; a new ordinance must be adopted within 180 days of the Act's passage. If an ordinance regulating one or more classes of license is not adopted within 180 days, any class not prohibited will be deemed permitted in the following locations:

1. Classes 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 will be permitted in all Industrial Zones;
2. Class 5 will be permitted in all Retail / Commercial Zones.

After 180 days, if a municipality does not prohibit one or more classes, it must wait five (5) years before adopting an ordinance that prohibits cannabis uses. At that time, the ordinance would be prospective and would not apply to any lawfully existing businesses that opened during the five-year period.

NJ Protecting Against Climate Threats (NJ PACT)

In 2020, Governor Murphy issued Executive Order No. 100, directing the NJDEP to implement a series of regulatory changes known as New Jersey Protecting Against Climate Threats (NJ PACT) to help the state adapt to climate-related hazards.

Inland Flood Protection (IFP) Rule (2023)

The IFP Rule, effective July 2023, is the first phase of the NJ PACT regulatory updates. It requires the first floor of new buildings and roadways in the fluvial (non-tidal) flood zone to be raised three (3) feet above current standards. Future projected rainfall must be used to determine flood levels and to design stormwater management infrastructure.

Pending Resilient Environments and Landscapes (REAL)

In 2024, the NJDEP proposed phase 2 of NJ PACT, called the Resilient Environments and Landscapes (REAL) rule. The REAL rule further amends the flood hazard regulations by expanding the inland flood hazard area to

address sea level rise. As currently proposed for 2025, new and rebuilt structures will need to be elevated four (4) feet above existing standards. The update also includes revisions to stormwater management rules and wetlands regulations. On June 1, 2026, the Department proposed extending the legacy period by one year, until July 20, 2027. During that period, the Department will hold another public comment period before issuing an updated rule proposal.

Affordable Housing (2024)

On March 18, 2024, the affordable housing legislation, jointly known as Senate Bill S50 and Assembly Bill A4, passed both houses of the legislature. Governor Murphy signed the bill (P.L.2024, c.2) into law on March 20, 2024, establishing a new method for calculating municipalities' affordable housing obligations. Later that year, the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) released non-binding estimates of the number of affordable housing units municipalities needed to build or rehabilitate by 2035 (the Fourth Round). The Borough of Bound Brook has a Fourth Round prospective need (new units) of 35 units and a present need (rehabilitation) obligation of 91 units. To address the Fourth Round and prior-round obligations, Redevelopment Plans 1 and 2 have been amended to require a 25% set-aside for all Sub-Areas. Additionally, the Borough enacted an Affordable Housing Trust Fund to fund the rehabilitation of existing qualifying housing units and to provide affordability assistance to residents. The Borough is also exploring opportunities for senior/age-restricted housing.

STATE STUDIES AND GUIDELINES

NJ Climate Change Resilience Strategy (2021)

Governor Phil Murphy signed Executive Order 89 in October 2019 to establish the Interagency Council on Climate Resilience. The council brings together seventeen agencies responsible for addressing climate-related hazards. The executive order also created the position of Chief Resilience Officer for New Jersey and tasked the role with delivering the state's first Climate Change Resilience Strategy and Coastal Resilience Plan. The state released the Climate Change Resilience Strategy in April 2021. The strategy outlines six priority areas and corresponding approaches for how state, regional, and local planning efforts can address climate change. These include building resilient and healthy communities, strengthening the resilience of the state's ecosystems, promoting coordinated governance, investing in information, promoting climate-informed investments, and developing a coastal resilience plan. The Coastal Resilience Plan is integrated into the Climate Change Resilience Strategy.

Distribution Warehousing and Goods Movement Guidelines (2022)

The New Jersey State Planning Commission adopted warehouse siting guidelines for municipalities in September 2022 to address the increased demand for warehouse and industrial space statewide. The guide aims to:

- Facilitate a proactive, rather than a reactive, approach; and
- Provide municipal factors to consider and balance when developing or updating a Master Plan and reviewing applications, land use, and development requirements; and
- Encourage a regional approach to planning, siting, and facilitating the logistics facilities.

NJ State Development and Redevelopment Plan (2025)

In December 2025, the New Jersey State Planning Commission adopted the updated New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan ("the State Plan"). The revised State Plan addresses persistent, relevant issues facing New Jersey, including affordable housing, protection from the impacts of climate change, natural resource and open space preservation, redevelopment of underutilized areas, economic growth, and equitable planning. The plan's goals and policies provide a comprehensive vision to guide New Jersey's growth over the next 50 years. The Borough of Bound Brook is within the Metropolitan Planning Area (PA1).

The State Plan's intent for the Metropolitan Planning Area (PA1) is to:

- Provide for much of the state's future growth in compact development and redevelopment;
- Revitalize cities, towns and neighborhoods, and in particular overburdened neighborhoods;
- Address existing legacy issues such as air pollution, urban heat islands, lead contamination, brownfields, urban highways, and combined sewer systems;
- Prevent displacement and gentrification;
- Promote growth that occurs in centers, other appropriate areas that are pedestrian friendly, and in compact transit-oriented forms;
- Rebalance urbanization with natural systems;
- Promote increased biodiversity and habitat restoration;
- Stabilize and enhance older inner ring suburbs;
- Redesign and revitalize auto-oriented areas; and
- Protect and enhance the character of existing stable communities.

The State Plan Policy Map, the geographic manifestation of the State Plan's policies, is being revised to reflect the updated goals and policies as they apply to New Jersey's current physical and social landscape. Until the revised map is released, the State Office of Planning Advocacy Locator Map provides the most current version of the Policy Map.

Data Centers (2026)

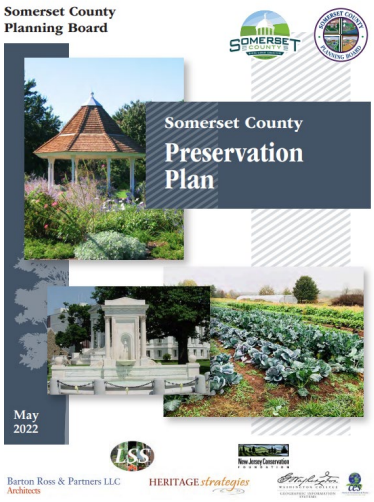
The land use regulation of data centers has become a widespread topic of discussion across many municipalities in the State and is currently the subject of legislation in New Jersey and throughout the country. The Governor's office announced a comprehensive statewide data center plan on May 27, 2026, which aims to mandate reporting, improve transparency in energy use, create new jobs, and establish standards for effective Community Benefits Agreements between data center developers and municipalities. Three (3) data center-related bills have recently been considered by the state legislature:

- New Jersey Governor Mikie Sherrill signed Bill S731/A796 into law, establishing a dedicated rate class for large-load data centers (50 MW or more). The bill requires facilities to cover their own utility and grid infrastructure costs.
- S3379/A4096 requires data center owners and operators to submit semi-annual water and energy usage reports to BPU detailing their energy and water consumption for three (3) years. This bill was approved by the Senate on June 30, 2026.
- S4390: Entitled the "End Data Center Tax Credits Act," this bill would eliminate the remaining $250 million in state tax incentives set aside for certain AI and data center projects through the Next New Jersey Program. This bill was approved by the Senate on June 30, 2026.

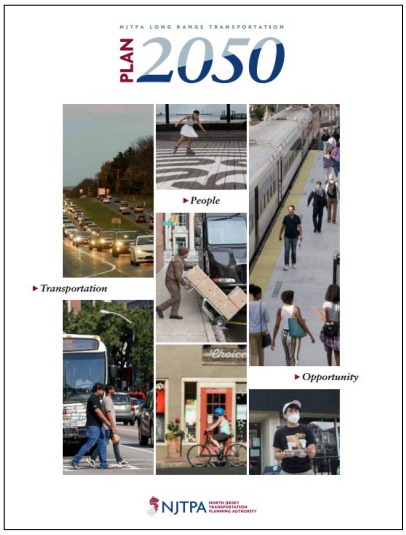
As cited in New Jersey legislation, and in that of other states, one of the primary issues with data centers is that they are a relatively new land use that has not been specifically addressed through zoning. Legislation in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and California all cite a desire to establish more concrete regulations for data centers, and to require more usage reporting and community benefit programs.

COUNTY & REGIONAL STUDIES

The following plans were completed at the County or Regional level and include the Borough of Bound Brook in their study areas.







Walk Bike Hike (2019)

"The Walk Bike Hike: Connecting Vibrant Communities Plan was finalized in July 2019 and serves as a Framework Strategy to improve multimodal mobility and safety for Somerset County travelers of all ages and abilities. The findings and candidate improvements of the Framework Strategy will guide the development of convenient, equitable, and interconnected travel routes, facilities, and networks over time and in a collaborative manner. It includes more than 220 candidate walk, bike, and hike improvements, totaling almost 275 miles of new facilities across Somerset County."

Along with the Framework Strategy is the WalkBikeHike Design Book. The Design Book was developed to share practical solutions for pedestrian and bicyclist mobility and recreation in Somerset County. It supplements the Somerset County WalkBikeHike Framework Plan and serves as a resource for Somerset County Planning, Engineering, and Parks, elected officials, municipalities, planning partners, and the public.

NJTPA Long Range Transportation Plan (2021)

The North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority adopted its Long-Range Transportation Plan ("Plan 2050") on September 13, 2021. The Plan outlines the State's transportation network's current conditions, including context, trends, and performance. It also considers several environmental factors that pose challenges for future transportation planning as North Jersey continues to face development pressures, including climate change, air quality, environmental mitigation, water quality, open space, wildlife habitats, and cultural and historic resources.

Somerset County Roadway Safety Study (2021)

Funded by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority's (NJTPA's) subregional studies grant program, the Somerset County Roadway Corridor Safety Analysis study conducted Road Safety Audits (RSAs) on five County roadway corridors and developed recommendations to improve safety for all roadway users, whether walking, biking, driving, or traveling by transit. Intersection and corridor crash rankings from the NJTPA Network Screening List (NSL), an equity analysis to identify underserved communities, and comprehensive public and stakeholder outreach informed the selection of the five corridors. Although the five corridors are not primarily located in Bound Brook, the study included several recommendations and public engagement feedback for the Borough. For example, Talmage Avenue was cited as unsafe for biking, and the plan recommended adding more bike lanes to connect people between Bound Brook, Manville, and Somerville.

Somerset County Preservation Plan (2022)

The Preservation Plan was adopted in 2022 as a component of the Somerset County Master Plan and includes three individual preservation plans: the Open Space Preservation Plan, Farmland Preservation & Agricultural Development Plan, and the Historic Preservation Plan. The combined approach is intended to address these different types of preservation more comprehensively. In doing so, it creates more opportunities to use preservation funds to support multiple preservation efforts. The plan analyzes resources and issues through a streamlined framework, sets goals and strategies that make the most of the County's capacities, establishes priorities, and encourages collaboration and partnership to achieve them.

Keep Somerset Moving Transportation Plan 2045 (2024)

Keep Somerset Moving is an update to the County's previous circulation plan, "Making Connections." The plan was developed to ensure the transportation network continues to meet the County's diverse needs. It aims to support the development of a safe, accessible, and equitable transportation network that serves people of all ages and abilities. The Plan outlines policies, strategies, and recommendations for improvements and additional actions. Keep Somerset Moving recommends 42 roadway corridor projects, intersection and highway interchange improvements, and bridge repairs and replacements.

County Hazard Mitigation Plan (2025)

The Somerset County Hazard Mitigation Plan was adopted in June 2025 and will expire in December 2030. The Borough of Bound Brook profile is included as Jurisdictional Annex 6. The Borough adopted the HMP by resolution 2025-361 in June 2025. The Plan notes that flooding impacts are more significant than those of other hazards. The Borough has numerous National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Repetitive Loss (RL) and Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) properties. The southern portion of the Borough experiences the most frequent flooding; however, flood control measures are now in place to protect the Borough from damaging floodwaters from the Raritan River. The flood levee is expected to provide protection from 150-year floods.

Somerset County Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging and Suitability Analysis (ongoing)

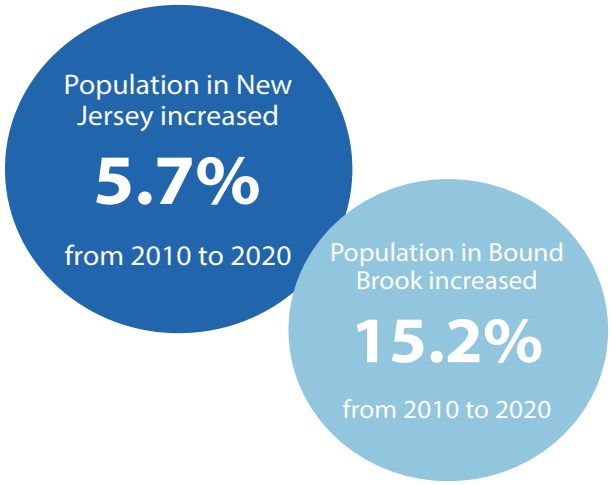
As a leader in EV adoption, Somerset County's EV Charging and Suitability Analysis aims to develop comprehensive guidelines for the County's EV fleet conversion. The Analysis will identify optimal locations for deploying electric vehicle supply equipment. The objectives of the project include:

1. Develop County Fleet Transition Plan
2. Identify and Analyze Secondary Electric Vehicle Charging Corridors
3. Identify Public Charging Locations on County-Owned Sites

The project is ongoing, and the Final Report is expected to be completed later in 2026.

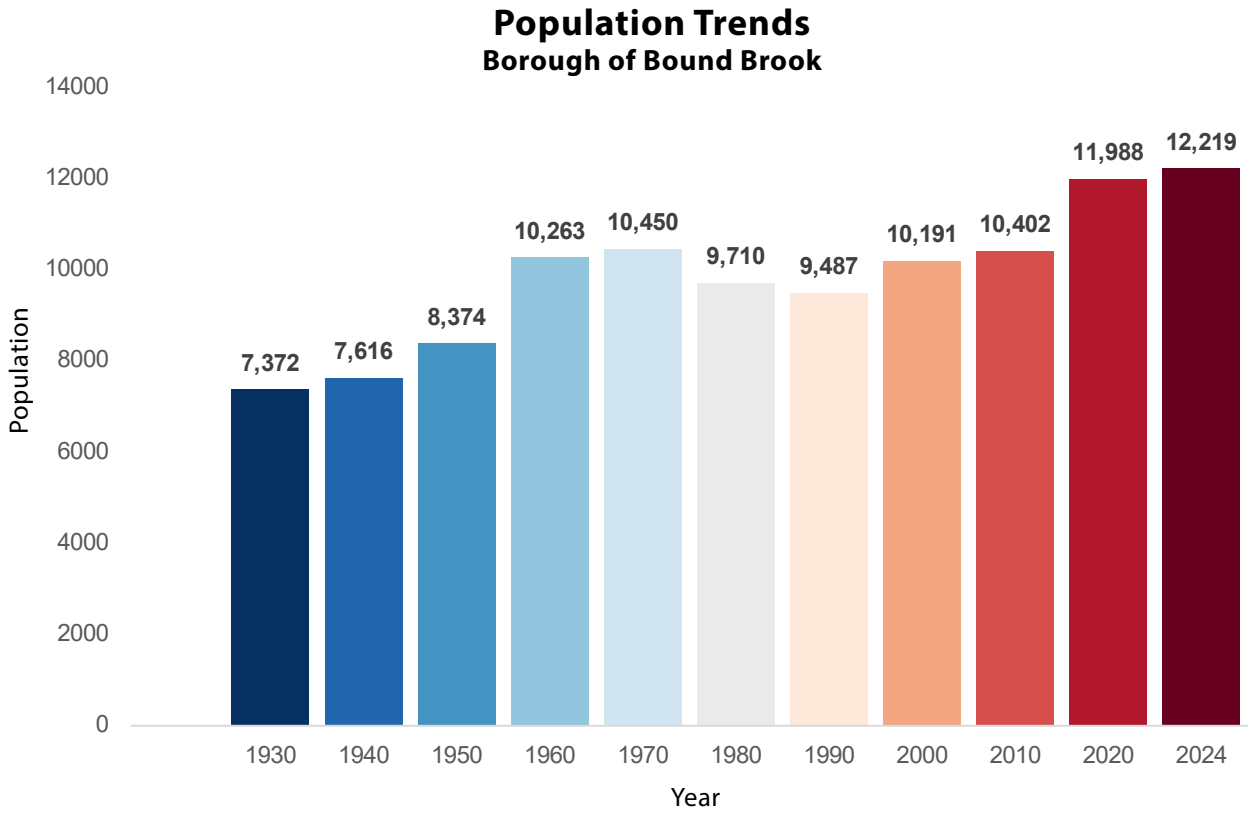
CHANGES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Demographic Characteristics

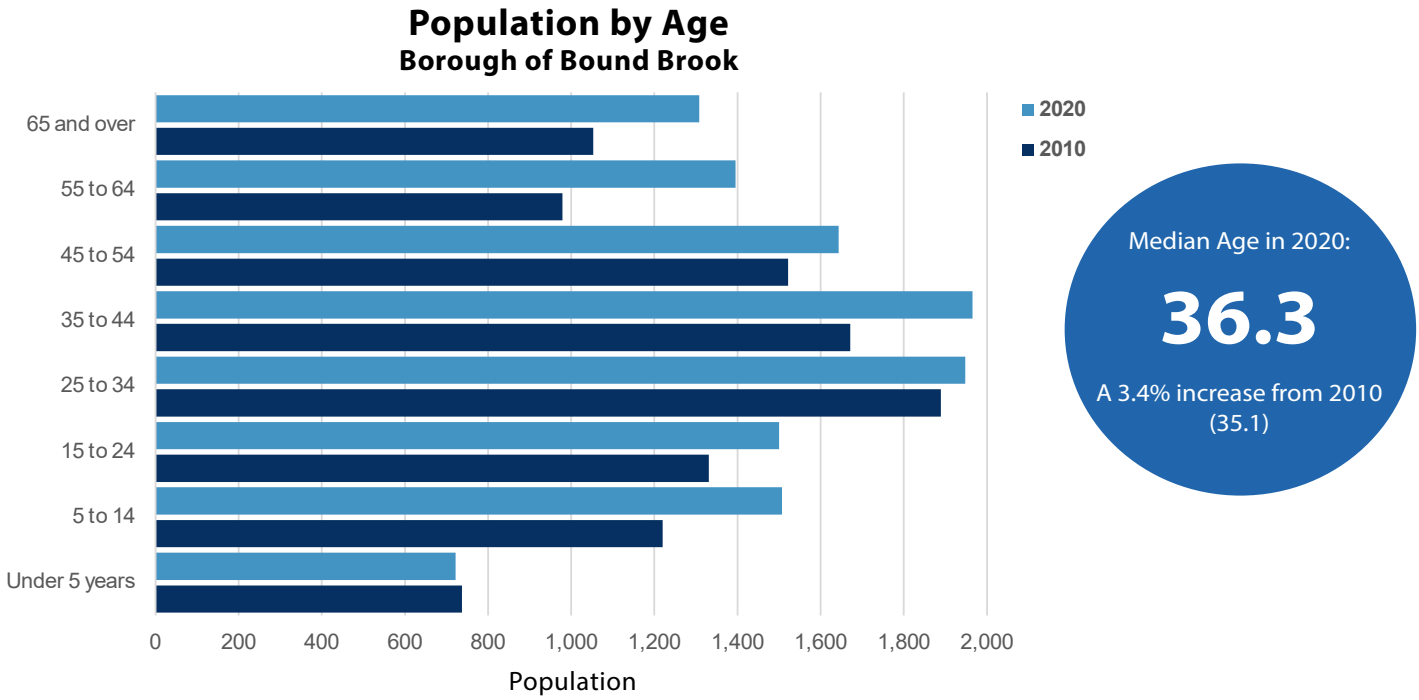


The Borough of Bound Brook has experienced notable population growth over the past decade. Chart 1 below shows the population change for Bound Brook from 1930 to 2024, based on data from the US Census Bureau Decennial Census and ACS 5-Year Estimates. Notably, Bound Brook saw a 15.2% increase in population from 2010 to 2020, compared to a 5.7% increase in population at the State level. The trend continued from 2020 to 2024, and Bound Brook saw higher growth rates than both the County and the State.

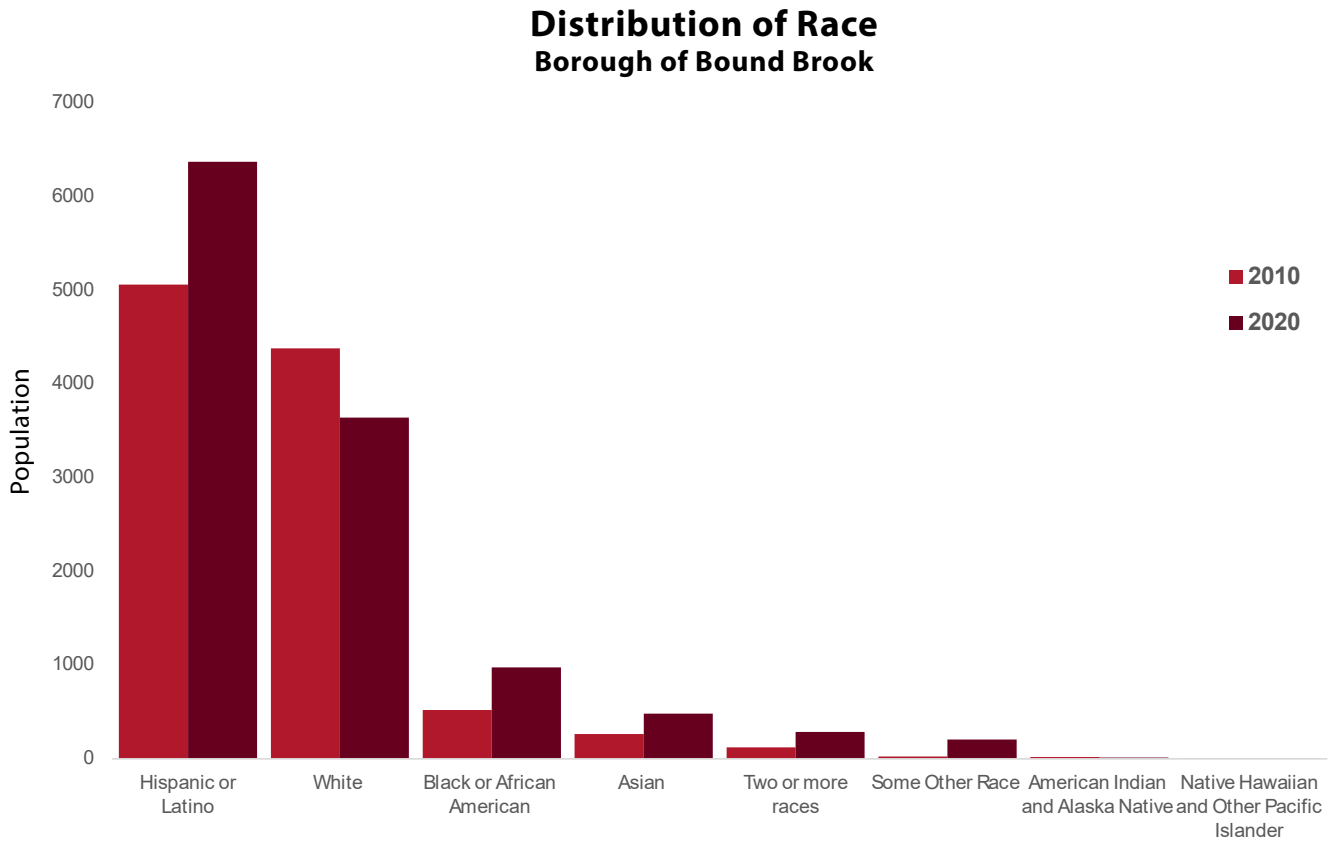
The age distribution of Bound Brook's residents is included in Chart 2, and changes from 2010 to 2020 are depicted. The median age in Bound Brook is 36.3, slightly above the median age of 35.1 in 2010. This is significantly lower than Somerset County's median age in 2010, which was 40.2, and is now estimated at 42. In the Borough, the population aged 55 and older increased significantly from 2010 to 2020, while the population under 5 decreased, suggesting an aging population within the Borough.



Source: US Census Bureau, Dicennial Census; ACS 5-Year Community Survey



Source: US Census Bureau, Dicennial Census

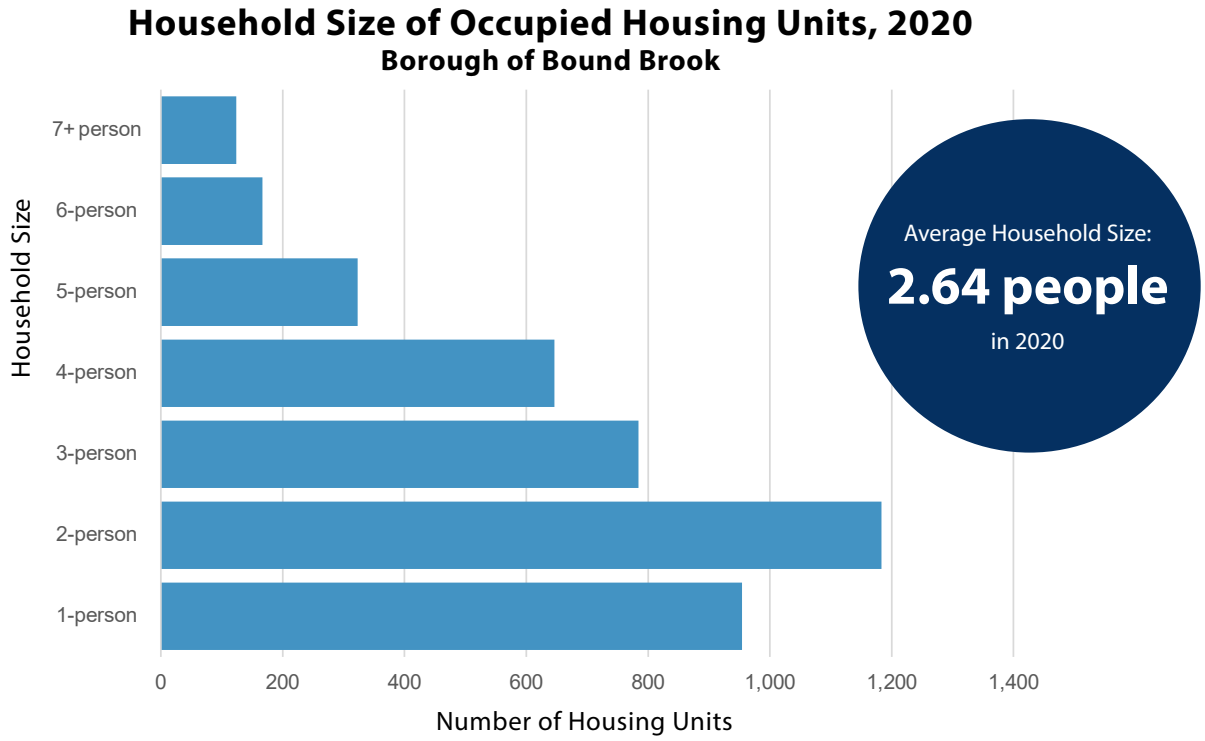


Source: US Census Bureau, Dicennial Census

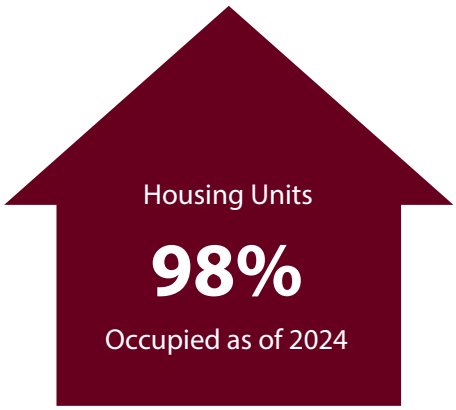
Housing Characteristics

Much of the housing construction within the Borough is well over 50 years old, with over half of housing units constructed before 1960. Housing construction remained relatively stable between 1960 and 2009, averaging 280 units per decade. The Borough saw a notable increase in construction between 2010 and 2019; however, construction has slowed in the years since. The median year of construction for existing housing units in the Borough is 1957.

According to the 2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Bound Brook has a total of 4,707 housing units. Housing tenure in the Borough is split between renters and owner-occupants, with 55.2% of units occupied by renters and 44.8% owner-occupied. Vacant units account for 2.2% of total units within the Borough. Housing structures are primarily single-unit, detached homes.

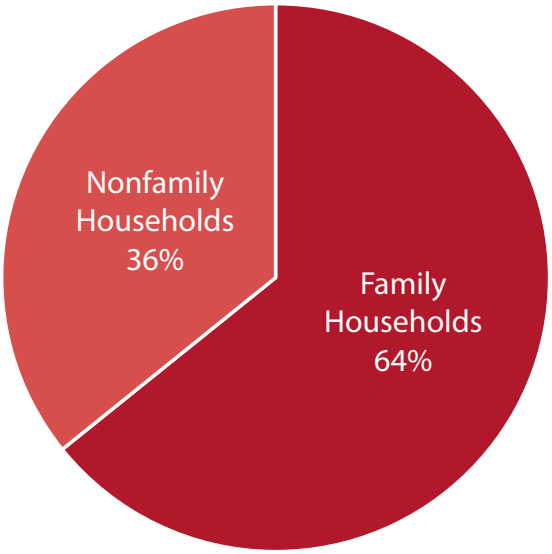


Source: US Census Bureau, Dicennial Census



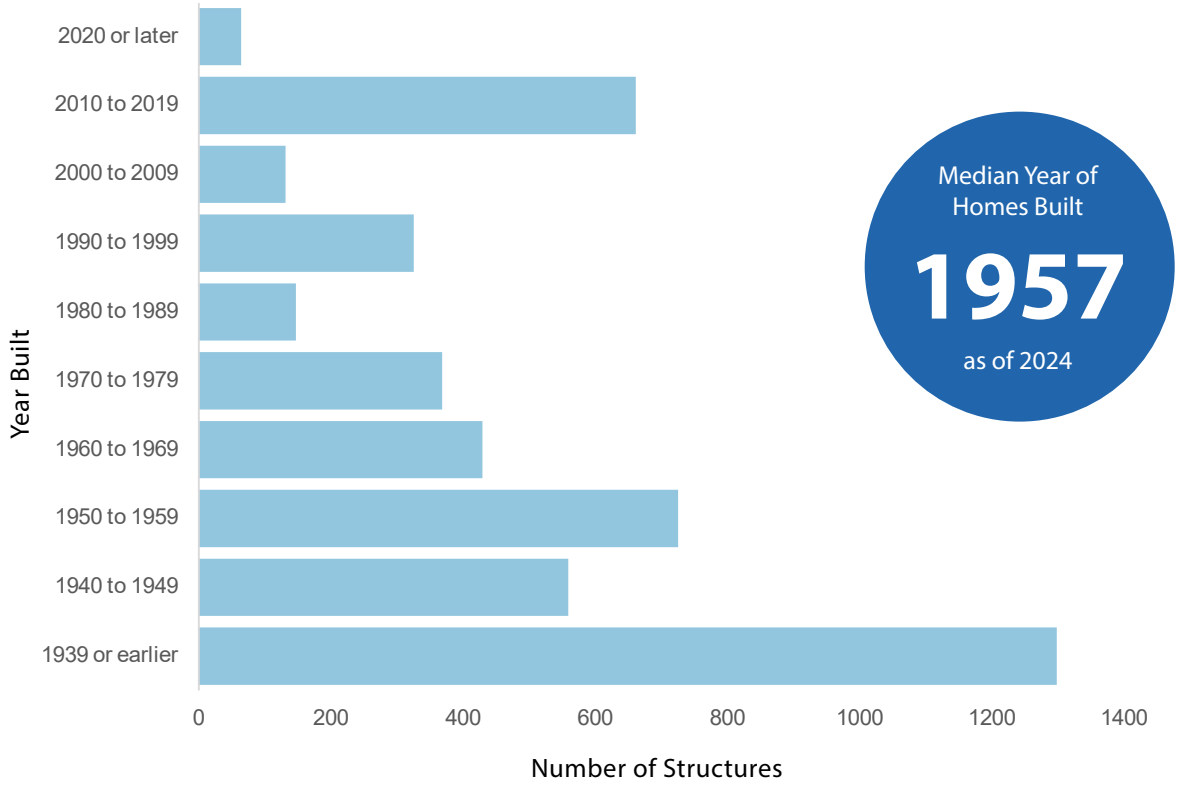
Source: 2024 ACS 5-Year Community Survey

Household Type, 2024
Borough of Bound Brook



Source: 2024 ACS 5-Year Community Survey

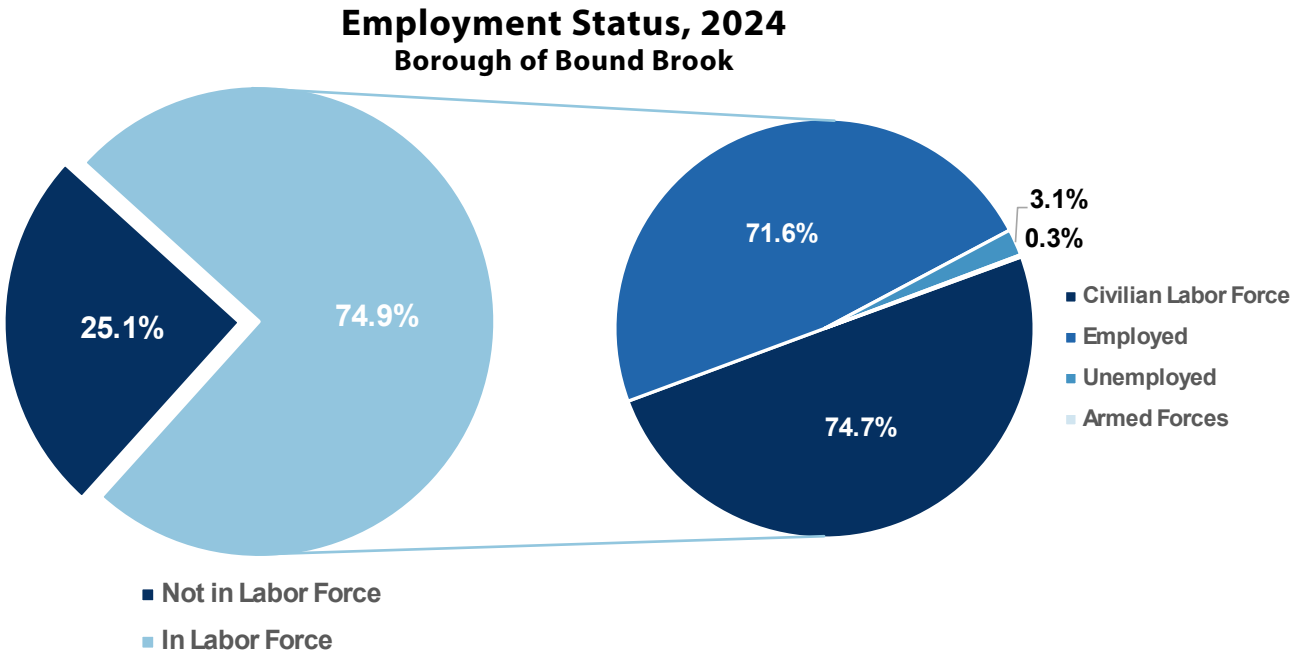
Year Structure Built, 2024
Borough of Bound Brook



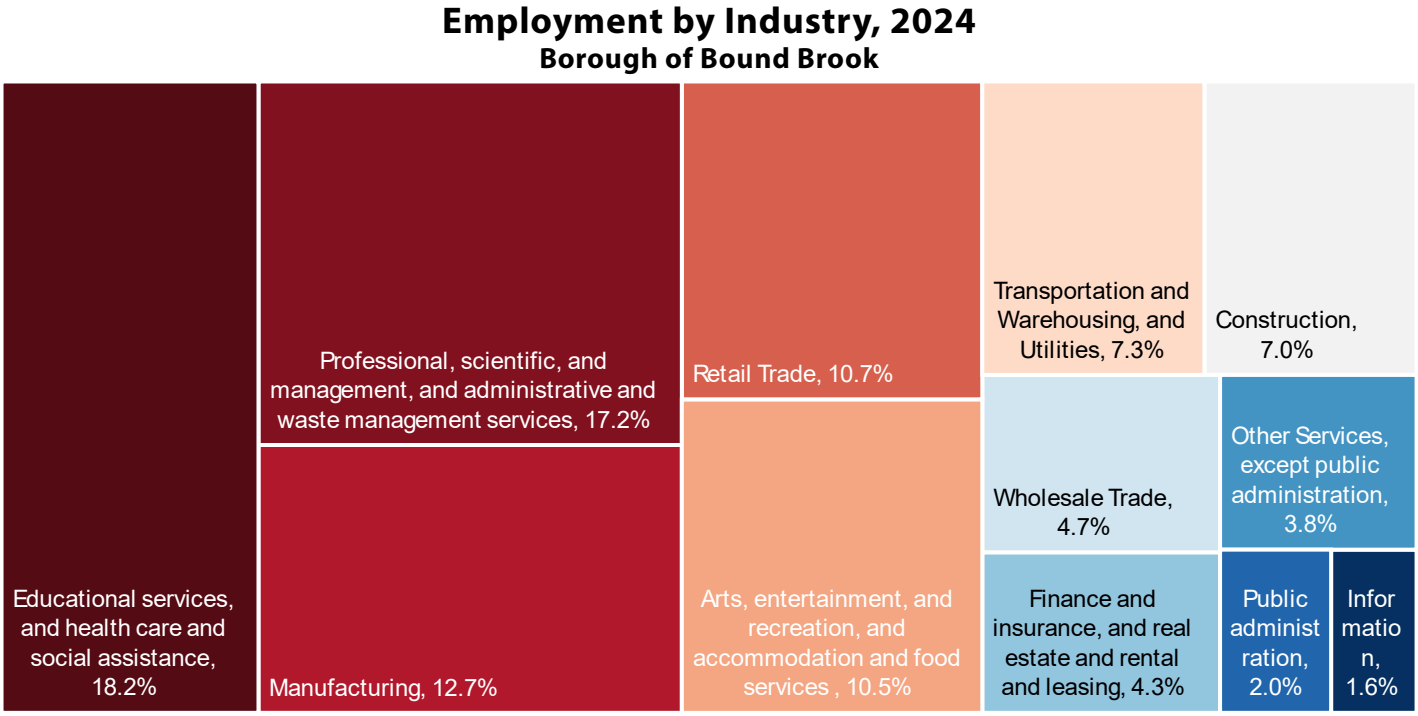
Source: 2024 ACS 5-Year Community Survey

Employment Data

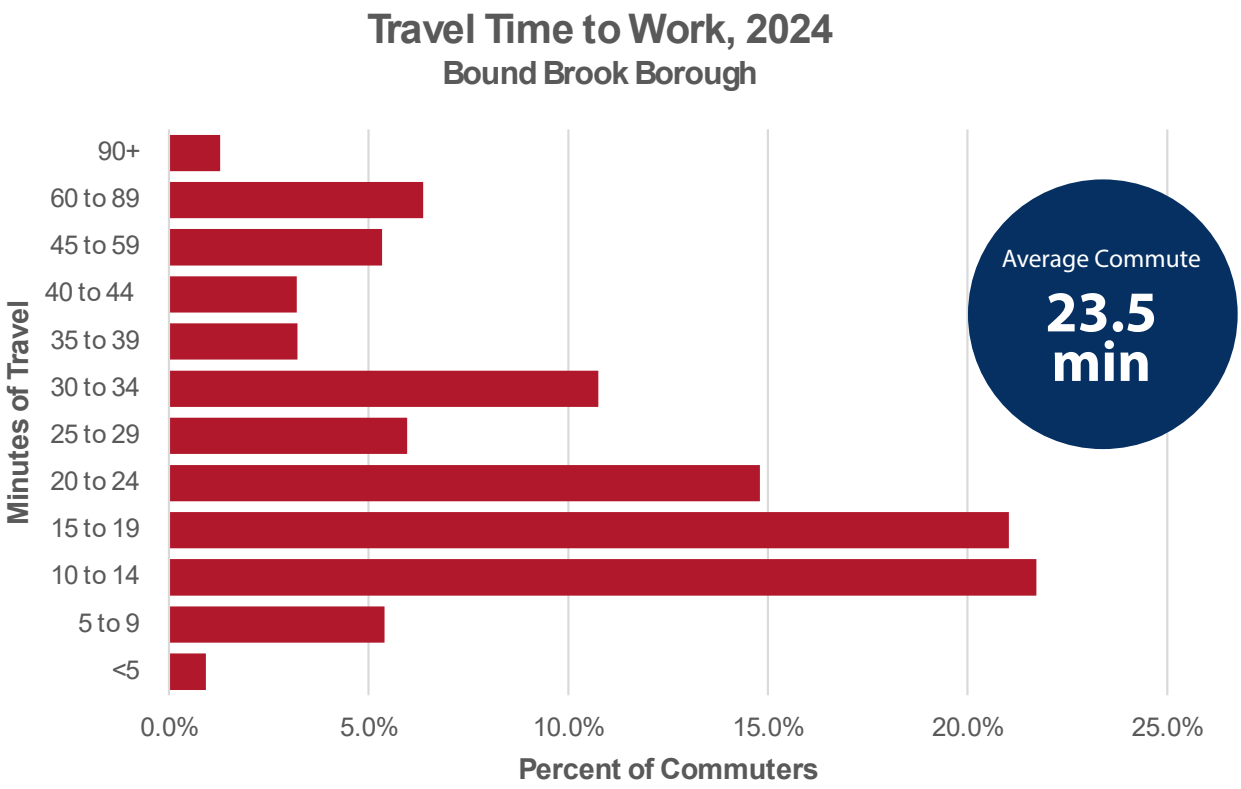
The 2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates show that, among residents aged 16 and older, 74.9% are in the labor force, while 25.1% are not. The Borough has a slightly lower share of residents not in the labor force than the County (25.1% versus 30%). The most common occupation among residents is management, business, science, and arts, followed by service occupations. The top employment sectors include educational services, health care, and social assistance, followed by professional, scientific, and administrative services, manufacturing, and retail trade. For residents who commute, the average travel time to work is 23.5 minutes. Most workers commute alone in their vehicles.



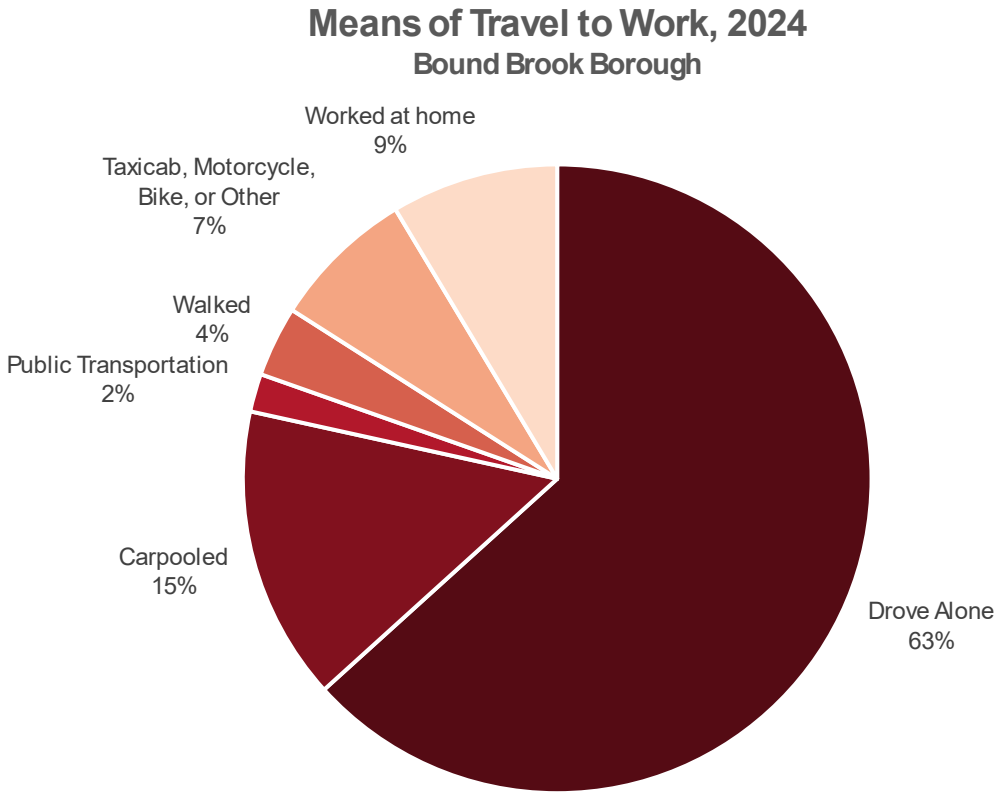
Source: 2024 ACS 5-Year Community Survey



Source: 2024 ACS 5-Year Community Survey



Source: US Census Bureau, Dicennial Census; ACS 5-Year Community Survey



Source: US Census Bureau, Dicennial Census; ACS 5-Year Community Survey

Local Studies, Ordinance Changes, and Redevelopment Plans

Since the 2017 and 2019 Reexamination Reports, the Borough has addressed many of the Master Plan goals and objectives through the adoption of Master Plan Elements, local studies, ordinance changes, and redevelopment plans.

Master Plan Updates

The following Master Plan Elements were adopted since the 2017 Master Plan Reexamination Report:

- Statement of Goals and Objectives (2018)
- Land Use Element (2019)
- Circulation Element (2024)

Plan Endorsement

Bound Brook received Plan Endorsement from the NJ Office of Planning Advocacy on March 1, 2023, for the Borough's alignment with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan's goals and policies. Notably, this occurred before the State Plan was updated in December 2025. The Borough is currently providing updates to the Office of Planning Advocacy (OPA) to inform the update to the State Policy Map.

Studies

Bound Brook Plaza: A Vision for a Revitalized Station Square and Hamilton Street (2018)

In 2018, the Borough completed a vision document to guide the redesign of the Van Horne Plaza at Bound Brook Station and a segment of Hamilton Street. The Plaza redesign includes terraced seating, shade structures, landscaping, flexible event space, and other features to enhance activity around the station. The Hamilton Street redesign leading to the Plaza includes a pedestrian promenade, planters, lighting, outdoor furniture, and other features to support existing businesses, provide programmable space, and attract new uses to the arts district. In 2021, an initial federal grant was awarded, followed by another in 2022, totaling over $2 million for the Hamilton Street phase of the project. In 2026, the Borough entered the final design phase.



VAN HORNE PLAZA RENDERING

Visual Identity and Wayfinding (2020)

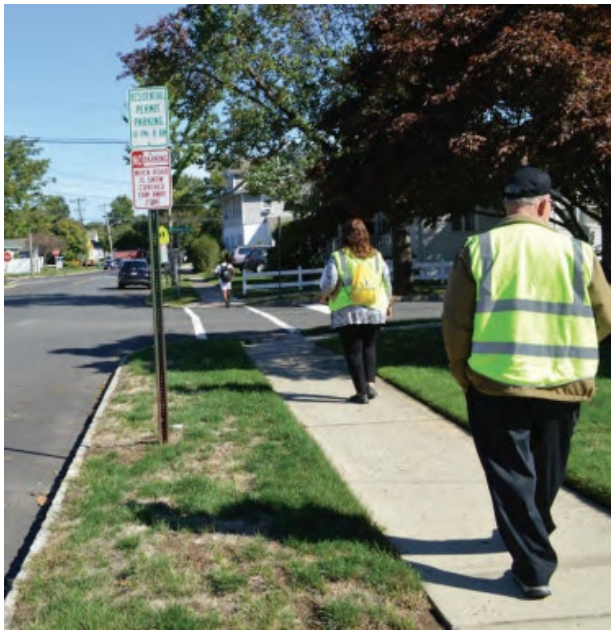
In 2020, the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University prepared a wayfinding study for the Borough. The study includes recommendations for the Borough to establish a visual identity and a wayfinding network, and to advance downtown redevelopment and revitalization efforts.



WAYFINDING SIGNAGE RENDERING

Vosseller & West Maple Avenue Walkable Community Workshop (2023)

Bound Brook participated in the 2022-2023 New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) Complete Streets Technical Assistance Program, created to help municipalities implement Complete Streets. Bound Brook requested a Walkable Community Workshop on West Maple Avenue and Vosseller Avenue, which was held on October 3, 2022. Municipal employees and stakeholders, including area residents, participated in the workshop. The workshop included training, a walk along the length of the study corridor, and a discussion of future needs. Through the workshop, several recommendations were identified. The report calls for installing and improving high-visibility and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant crosswalks, developing bicycle infrastructure, adopting an updated Complete Streets ordinance, and addressing parking violations.



WALKALONG OF STUDY CORRIDOR

Bound Brook School District Strategic Plan 2024-2029 (2024)

The 2024-2029 School District Strategic Plan aims to "foster academic excellence, social-emotional well-being, and community engagement by ensuring that all students, regardless of background, have access to high-quality learning experiences and facilities." The plan outlines four goal areas:

1. Student Experience – Creating Academic and SEL Equity for ALL
2. Facilities & Finance – Expanding for the Future
3. Communications, Community Outreach, and Engagement
4. Recruit and Retain Staff that Reflect Our Diverse Community



BOUND BROOK HIGH SCHOOL

Land Use Amendments

Between 2017 and 2023, the Borough adopted several ordinances that substantially updated its zoning framework.

Zoning Map Amendments

Ordinance #2017-28 designated the Old Stone Arch Bridge, Brook Theater, and the Bound Brook Railroad Station as Historic Landmarks and later added them to the official zoning map.

Additional ordinances rezoned properties across multiple districts, including the Industrial Park, Residential, Office Business, and Business districts, into categories such as Open Space/Civic, Railroad, Riverfront Commercial, and Mixed Use. Ordinance #2023-028 also reorganized the zoning code by eliminating the Neighborhood Business/Residential District and rezoning those properties into the Business/Residential District.

Land Use Ordinance Amendments

Between 2018 and 2022, the Borough adopted a series of ordinances that refined development standards and updated design and use regulations across zoning districts. Ordinance #2018-32 revised bulk standards for the R-2, R-3, and R-4 districts, including primary intended uses, minimum lot width, and minimum lot area. Ordinance #2021-08 introduced new regulations governing refuse container storage and building window appearance. In 2023, Ordinance #2023-028 repealed the NB/R District and incorporated it into the Business/Residential (B/R) District.

Additional amendments adjusted zoning requirements, including the minimum lot width in the R-3 district, parking standards for apartments, condominiums, and townhouses in the MU-2 District to align with New Jersey Residential Site Improvement Standards, and permitted non-residential ground-floor uses along Union Avenue in the Mixed Use 2 District. Administrative and General Provision amendments included updates to the General Provisions for accessory buildings.

Between 2017 and 2018, the definition of accessory building was amended, and new definitions for Outdoor storage/Cargo Container, PCPSF, and Two-family dwelling were adopted. In 2022, the definition of impervious coverage was amended.

Fees and Administrative Amendments

Between 2017 and 2020, amendments were made to the fees for zoning permits, residential sign permits, commercial sign permits, and applications for Certificates of Non-Conformity. Ordinance #2020-08 amended §7.2 Fees and Escrows to allow escrow funds to cover the cost of Borough employees' land use review.

Other Changes

In 2021, additional amendments to the Borough's code included replacing §21-15 Stormwater Control to comply with NJDEP regulations. The prohibition on parking vehicles in residential zones was clarified in 2023. The repeal and replacement of Article IV Fair Housing, in accordance with the Borough Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, was adopted in 2026.

Redevelopment Plans

The following amendments to the Borough's redevelopment plans were adopted since the 2019 Reexamination Report. Additional discussion is provided in Section E of this report.

Amendments to Redevelopment Area 1

- 2017: Sub-Area 1.3 amended to update objectives, permitted uses, bulk, and design standards
- 2018: Sub-Areas 1.2 and 1.4 amended to update parking standards
- 2018: Sub-Area 1.4 amended to update objectives, permitted building types, bulk standards, and infrastructure improvements
- 2019: Sub-Areas 1.2 and 1.4 amended to update objectives and bulk standards
- 2019: Sub-Area 1.6 adopted
- 2019: Plan amended to require a public art contribution
- 2022, 2023, 2024: Sub-Area 1.4 amended to adopt additional revisions to bulk and parking standards
- Sub-Area 1.2 amended for new objectives and revised parking standards
- 2026: Plan amended to require affordable housing in all sub-districts

Amendments to Redevelopment Area 2

- 2018: Sub-Areas 2.1 and 2.2 amended to update objectives, permitted building types, bulk standards, parking, infrastructure improvements
- 2019: Plan amended to require a public art contribution
- 2022: Plan amended to remove Block 1, Lot 42
- 2024: Sub-Area 2.1 amended to update setback requirements
- 2026: Plan amended to require affordable housing in all sub-districts

Land Use Board Approvals

The Borough of Bound Brook has a joint Land Use Board that considers both Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment matters. Since 2017, the Borough has considered 61 applications, of which 58 were approved and 3 were denied. Of the denials, one was a D(1) Use variance in the Business-Residential zone, and two were Major Site Plans. One Major Site Plan was in Redevelopment Area 1 and was denied for insufficient parking; the other was in the MU-2 Zone and was also denied for insufficient parking. These numbers do not include applications that were withdrawn.

5 Use variances were approved in the following zones:

- Redevelopment Area 1.2 – Temporary use for parking in the Industrial Park
- OB – Existing ground floor apartment
- RDP 2.4, NB/R – International shipping
- B-1 zone – Residential on the 2nd floor above a commercial use
- RB-1 – Commercial food laboratory

7 Certificates of Non-Conforming Uses were granted in the following zones:

- B-1 – Auto-repair shop
- Redevelopment Area 1 Sub-Area 1.4 – Apartment Building
- NB/R – Auto-repair shop
- R-4 – House of worship
- B/R – Auto-repair shop and sales
- B/R – Auto-repair shop
- B/R – Gentleman's club

Public Survey Summary

To inform the recommended changes to the Master Plan, the Borough administered an online public survey in English and Spanish. The survey included 28 questions split into five sections and received 116 responses. The majority of respondents were between 25 and 64, half have lived in Bound Brook for over 20 years, and a majority (78%) own their home, while just under a quarter (22%) rent.

A number of questions focused on downtown. Most respondents visit downtown a few times a year, with about a quarter visiting a few times per month. Responses varied in describing Bound Brook's downtown, with many describing the area as historic, diverse, and small. Many respondents also highlighted opportunities for continued improvement and untapped potential. At the same time, some noted challenges related to congestion, recent development, and maintenance. Overall, residents expressed a desire for future development to complement downtown's historic character, while also indicating that recent development has not fully met their expectations.

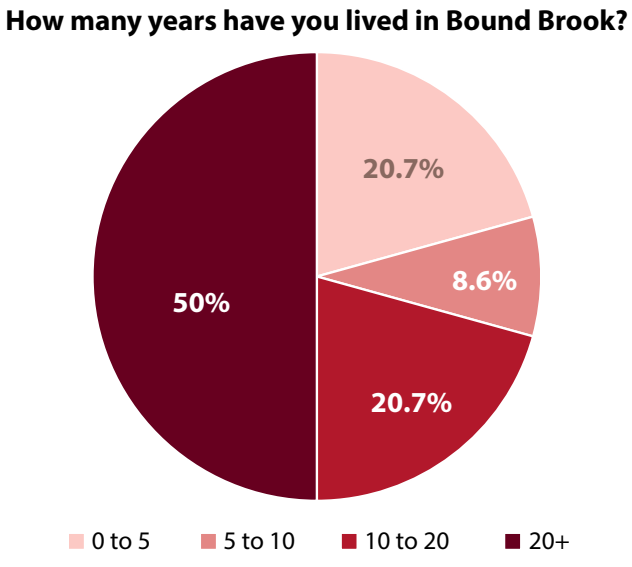
Looking toward the future of downtown, residents noted that they want to see more parks and green spaces, events and entertainment options, restaurants, retail, and murals and public art installations. Other common desires for downtown include a greater variety of shops and restaurants, outdoor dining, additional parking, family-oriented spaces, and more safety services, though concerns about the police force were also noted. Many residents say they frequently visit and enjoy downtown areas in Somerville, Westfield, Lambertville, Red Bank, Metuchen, Summit, Princeton, Rahway, New Hope, and Morristown. They say these downtown areas appeal to them because they offer a variety of restaurants and businesses, pedestrian-oriented landscapes with benches, tree-lined streets, historic venues, ample parking, street festivals, weekly events, and high levels of safety.

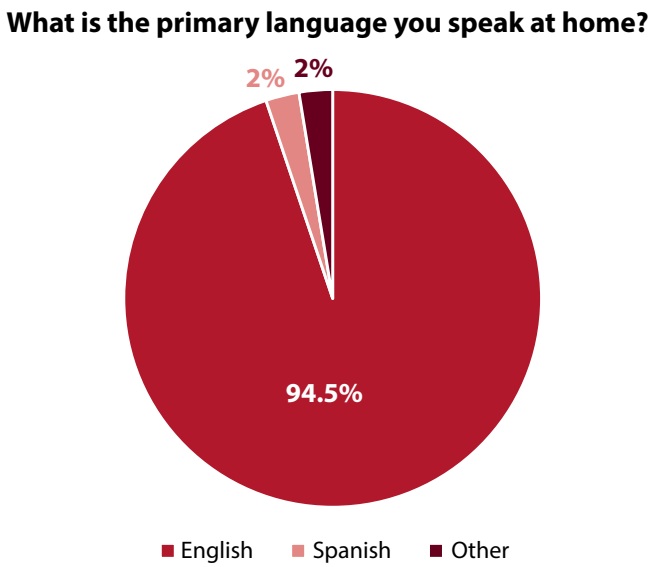
Overall, residents want to see a greater variety of entertainment options and gathering places that are accessible to all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. They noted that the Borough's natural environment is highly valued and that more recreational spaces, walking trails, and waterfront access are desired. There is also a strong desire to see the existing buildings and infrastructure utilized and repurposed, to provide more parking, and to build fewer large-scale apartment buildings in favor of smaller-scale townhouses and other residential structures.

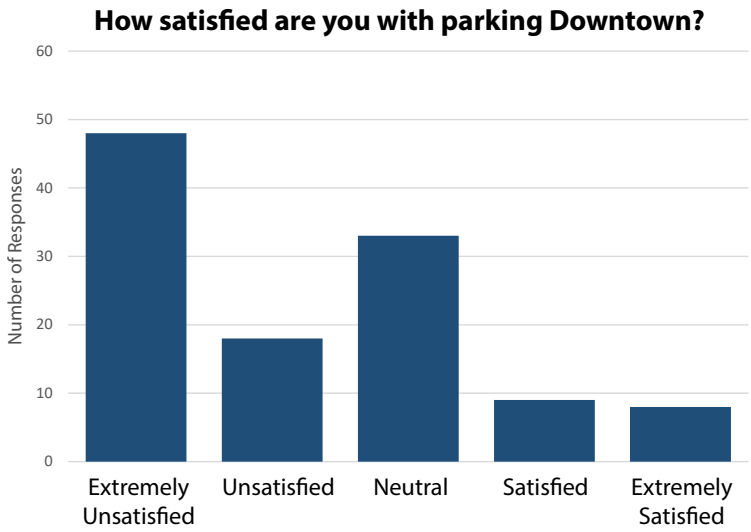
The top issues people raised about homes in their neighborhoods included a lack of parking, overall affordability, and property maintenance. Overcrowding in residential areas was also consistently mentioned. Notably, about a third of respondents said they felt there were no issues in their neighborhood.

About 85% of respondents use a car to travel within the Borough, but there is a considerable portion of the population (12%) that relies on walking to get around. That being said, half of respondents feel that the sidewalks and pedestrian areas are not safe, and significant roadway improvements are needed, especially on Talmage Avenue.

Throughout the survey, respondents expressed a need for the Borough to reopen the library. Other services respondents would like the Borough to provide include improving and expanding existing parks, more emergency services (EMS and police), roadway improvements, events, shuttles and public transportation, better bike infrastructure, improved code enforcement, and more waste collection services.

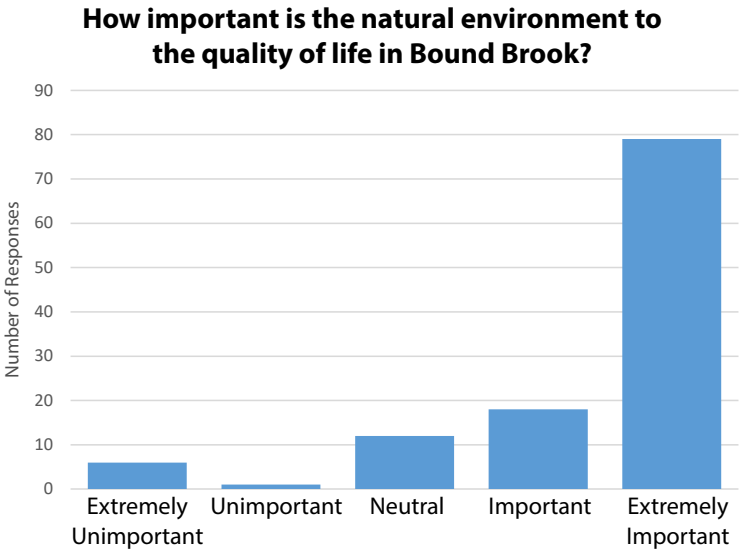

How many years have you lived in Bound Brook?
20.7%
8.6%
20.7%
50%
0 to 5
5 to 10
10 to 20
20+


What is the primary language you speak at home?
2%
2%
94.5%
English
Spanish
Other


How satisfied are you with parking Downtown?
Number of Responses
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Extremely Unsatisfied
Unsatisfied
Neutral
Satisfied
Extremely Satisfied

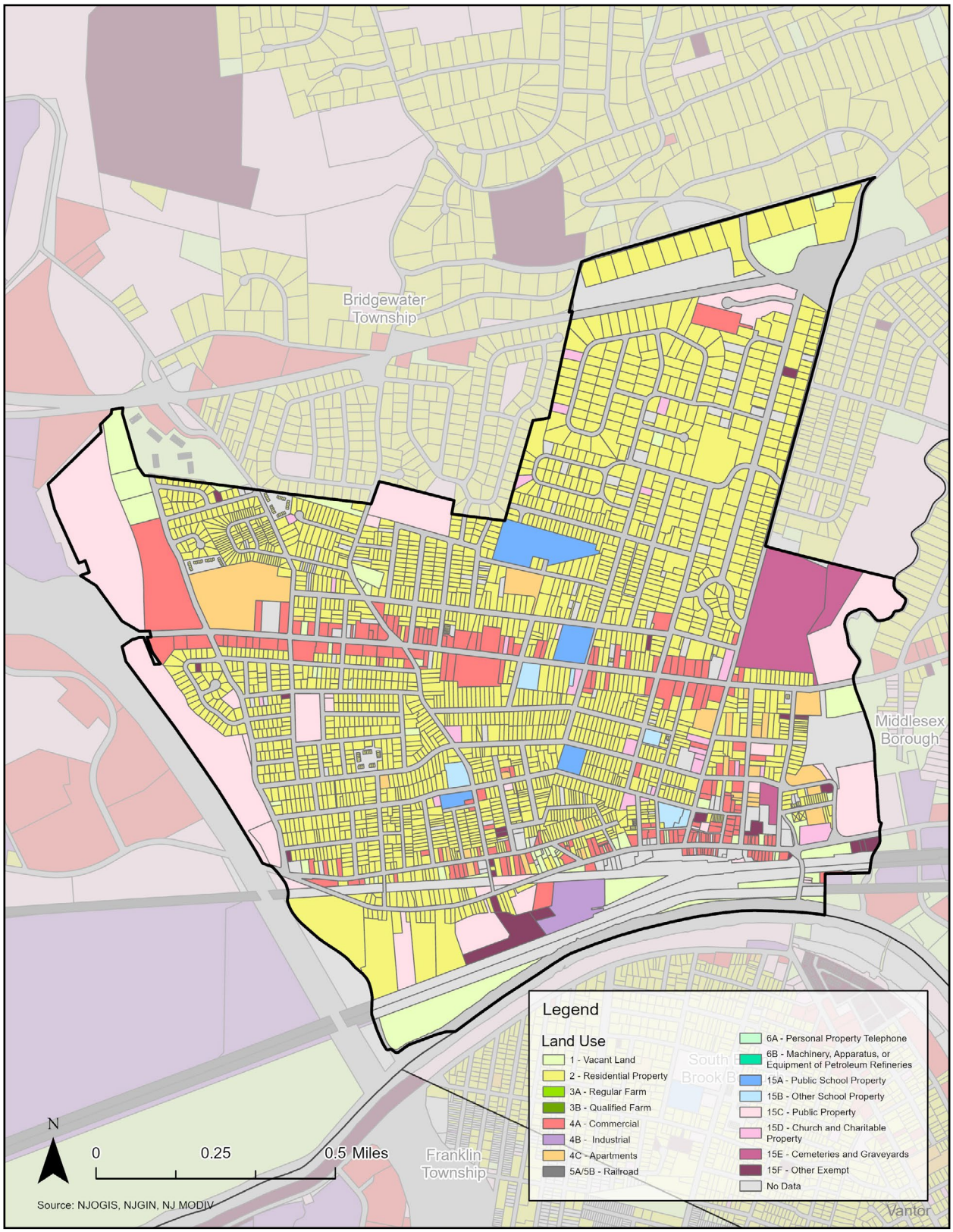




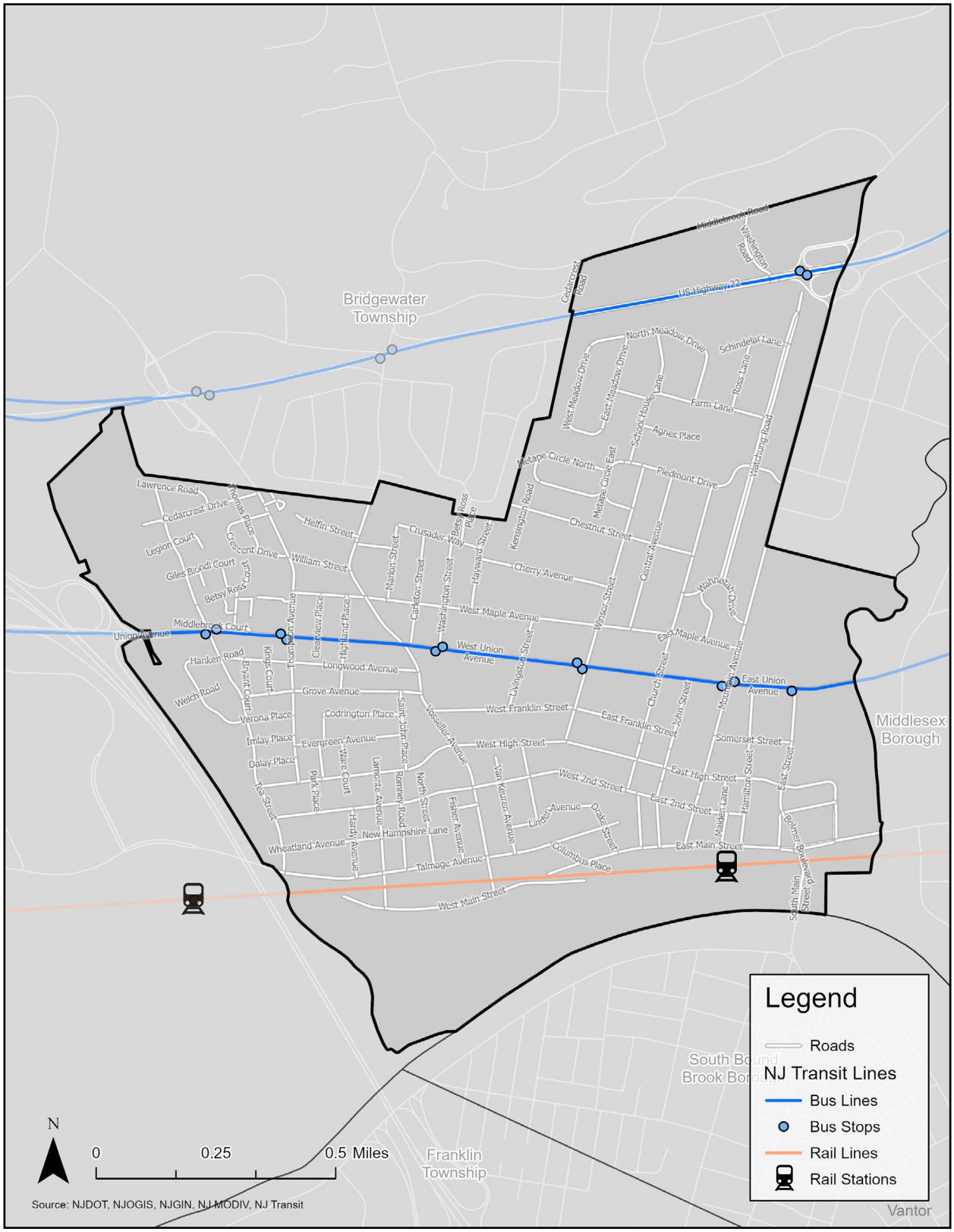

How important is the natural environment to the quality of life in Bound Brook?
Number of Responses
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Extremely Unimportant
Unimportant
Neutral
Important
Extremely Important

MAPPING

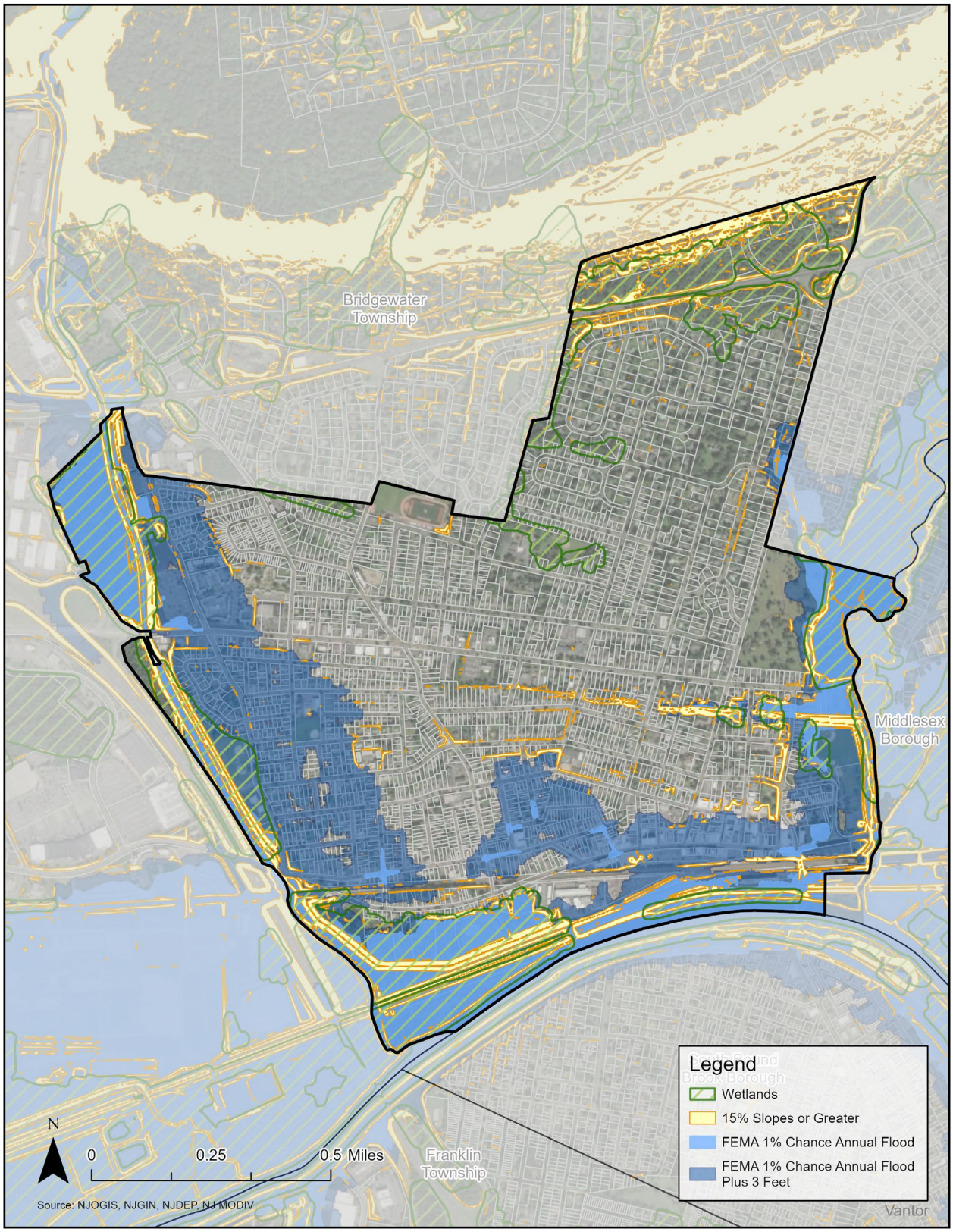
The following maps were prepared as part of the Master Plan Reexamination Process:



MAP 2: LAND USE MAP



MAP 3: TRANSPORTATION NETWORK



MAP 4: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS



D. RECOMMENDED CHANGES

The specific changes recommended for the Master Plan or development regulations, including the underlying objectives, policies, and standards, or the decision to prepare a new plan or regulations, are based on the objectives, policies, standards, and shifting trends discussed above. The following are specific recommendations for updates to Bound Brook's zoning regulations and Master Plan.

MASTER PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Inclusive of the purposes of the Municipal Land Use Law, the Borough of Bound Brook's 2026 Reexamination Report incorporates the following goals and objectives:

POPULATION

1. Support diversity in all its manifestations.
2. Facilitate the creation of places that encourage and support active, healthy living behaviors; functionally support all age groups and physical conditions; encourage social and cultural interactions; and encourage life-long learning and creative pursuits.

LAND USE

1. Ensure appropriate levels of privacy for all residential uses and continue to maintain adequate light, air, and open space.
2. Encourage new, context-sensitive buildings that reflect the scale and character of Bound Brook.
3. Facilitate mixed-use buildings and neighborhoods with multiple building types in designated locations.
4. Facilitate the repurposing of existing buildings and the redevelopment of vacant lots with appropriate new uses and structures.
5. Adopt a land use framework that minimizes conflicts between different uses and between the Land Development Ordinance and Redevelopment Plans.
6. Seek to create interesting, lively places that strengthen the community by facilitating both business transactions and social interaction.
7. Encourage new community-oriented service uses in designated locations.
8. Locate larger scale and higher intensity uses along the Main Street / Talmage and Union Avenue (West of Livingston Street) corridors, in proximity to transit, goods and services.
9. Carefully evaluate the consequences of every development decision in terms of whether it encourages walking, biking and transit use.
10. Carefully evaluate land development procedures and eliminate any unnecessary and counter-productive administrative barriers, while maintaining appropriate oversight.

NATURAL RESOURCES

1. Adopt stricter standards to reduce and mitigate stormwater runoff and improve water quality wherever possible.

2. Encourage land development and building practices that reduce energy and water consumption.
3. Encourage the replanting of flood-prone lands with appropriate habitat-creating vegetation.
4. Facilitate the remediation of contaminated lands within or adjacent to railroad rights-of-way, as well as those located elsewhere in the Borough.
5. Encourage community-based volunteer cleanup efforts of the stream corridors, the riverfront and vacant lands and pursue grant opportunities to support such efforts.
6. Facilitate the continued expansion of the Borough's tree canopy by requiring the planting of replacement trees when existing trees die or are cut down, and the planting of an appropriate number of new trees, in both the public right-of-way, in parking lots and in private open space when sites are developed or redeveloped.
7. Facilitate public access to the riverfront and to other preserved areas.

HOUSING

1. Provide opportunities for housing, including affordable housing, appropriate to all relevant demographic profiles, economic capabilities and housing and lifestyle preferences.
2. Continue to encourage the location of higher density housing in close proximity to transit options, goods and services.
3. Continue to encourage the necessary maintenance and upgrading of the housing stock, both detached and attached, and both owner-occupied and renter-occupied, and explore potential new incentives for reinvestment by property owners.

MOBILITY

1. Ensure that the Borough's sidewalk network is complete, well maintained, and free from obstacles.
2. Seek to upgrade all crosswalks with depressed curbs and adequate pedestrian cycles at signalized intersections.
3. Develop a Borough-wide bicycle plan that includes dedicated bicycle lanes and shared streets to create an integrated network linking all of the Borough's neighborhoods, taking advantage of off-road opportunities provided by paths atop the levees, abandoned railroad rights-of-way, parks, cemeteries, and other open space elements.
4. Seek to locate adequate bicycle parking at all major destinations.
5. Facilitate the installation of dignified bus shelters.
6. Facilitate the continued upgrading of pedestrian and bicycle access routes to the train station and its platforms.
7. Develop and implement an up-to-date, comprehensive parking management strategy for the downtown.
8. Encourage a Borough-wide way-finding program showing major destinations: parks, recreation, the waterfront, civic buildings, historic locations, food and beverage, train station and other key destinations.

ECONOMIC AND FISCAL BASE

1. Facilitate the continued diversification of the fiscal base with new revenue-generating businesses in clean industries capable of sustained growth.
2. Support local entrepreneurs and facilitate the creation of new local employment opportunities in creative industries, arts and culture, hospitality, food and beverage, artisanal manufacturing, recreation, eco- and historic tourism, and other currently under-represented economic activities.
3. Facilitate the creation of employment incubators, shared workspaces and home-based businesses.
4. Support the Borough's efforts to target abandoned properties and repurpose vacant or under-utilized Borough-owned properties.

PUBLIC SPACE

1. Facilitate the creation of dignified new public gathering spaces, as well as the repurposing of existing public spaces, to strengthen community interaction and as venues for cultural activities.
2. Encourage community-based cultural and arts initiatives in public spaces and pursue opportunities for public art installations in appropriate locations.
3. Facilitate temporary uses, "pop-up" activities, and mobile uses and streamline regulatory oversight.
4. Maintain and enhance local recreational facilities.

ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN DESIGN

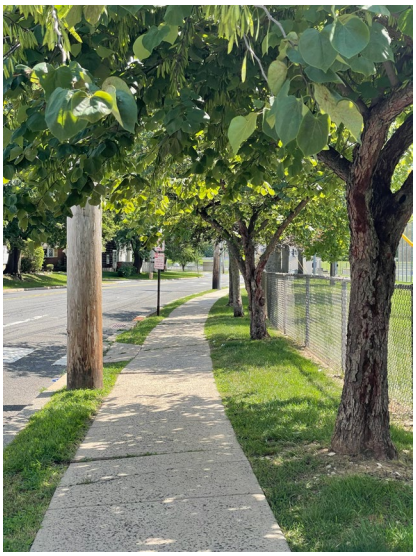
1. Require building design to provide articulated facades, ample fenestration, quality materials, and compelling design features.
2. Encourage the installation of murals and/or other art displays on prominent walls of both private and public structures.
3. Discourage surface parking lots where possible, and require vegetative or other measures that effectively conceal direct views of such facilities from the public realm.
4. Require a high-quality public realm with appropriate street furniture such as benches, trash receptacles, and pedestrian-scale lights, as well as street trees, planter boxes, and other street-appropriate vegetation without compromising accessibility and pedestrian circulation.
5. Explore more lively and diversified hardscapes using colors and durable materials.

SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

1. Promote and facilitate best practices in energy conservation and in local renewable energy production.
2. Promote and facilitate best practices in stormwater management, such as pervious pavements, green roofs, cisterns, rain gardens, and bioswales to reduce stormwater runoff in all development and redevelopment projects.
3. Support the recycling of construction materials and office and residential waste.

4. Support domestic composting.
5. Support sourcing of local goods and services.
6. Encourage the Borough and school district to adopt sustainability best management practices with respect to their facilities.
7. Encourage the systematic removal of unnecessary impervious coverage as part of both public and private redevelopment projects.
8. Encourage the retrofitting and upgrading of older residential and commercial structures for greater efficiencies in energy and water consumption, as well as the application of renewable energy sources.
9. Facilitate the creation of community gardens on public or privately-owned lands for the enjoyment of the residents of multi-family residential buildings and of smaller lot detached structures.









RECOMMENDED UPDATES TO THE LAND USE ORDINANCE

1. Prepare and adopt a comprehensive revision to the Borough's Land Use Ordinance.

The last comprehensive Land Use Ordinance was adopted in 2012 and has been amended several times since then. It is recommended that the Borough complete a comprehensive revision of the ordinance.

- All uses listed in the Land Use Ordinance should be reviewed and amended or supplemented as needed. Since the current ordinance took effect, some land uses have become more popular, while others have become less popular. The Borough should consider which additional uses would benefit the community, which should be explicitly prohibited, and include provisions for these uses in the zoning regulations.
- The definitions should be reviewed and amended or supplemented as needed to include new land uses not previously covered by the ordinance. Additional terms require clarification, including but not limited to patios, hot tubs, and other structures that are not clearly defined in the ordinance. Additionally, all definitions should be consolidated under one section.
- The Borough's Land Use Ordinance should be comprehensively reorganized to improve clarity, usability, and consistency across districts. Currently, zoning standards are scattered across use tables, bulk regulations, and supplemental provisions, making administration and interpretation difficult.
- A comprehensive Schedule of Lot, Height, and Yard Requirements should be created.
    - » Specifically, the Borough should evaluate and update its impervious coverage standards to ensure they accurately reflect existing development conditions and modern stormwater management objectives. Introducing a separate building coverage standard, in addition to overall impervious surface coverage, will allow the Borough to set a clear cap on the physical footprint of structures.
- The "When Site Plan Review and Approval Required" section should be reviewed and amended or supplemented as needed. This section should address the following:
    - » Currently, any change in ownership or tenancy of a lot or structure requires Planning Board approval. The Borough should review this requirement to determine whether Planning Board review is necessary for all such changes, particularly when no physical improvements or changes in use are proposed. Where appropriate, streamlining these requirements could reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens and support the Borough's goal of creating a more business-friendly environment for new and existing businesses.
    - » A procedure for amended applications should be established.
    - » This section should be reviewed for consistency with the definitions of major and minor site plans and subdivisions.
- The fee schedule and development application checklists should be reviewed and updated as needed. The update should ensure that all application types, including amended applications, are included. Additionally, the list of required documentation and fees for all application types should be clear.
- A "how-to" guide explaining the review process for projects, especially smaller projects like "c" variance applications for homeowners, should be created.

2. *Update the Zoning Map*

There are inconsistencies among the Zoning Map, the Land Use Ordinance, and the Redevelopment Plans. The Zoning Map should be updated as needed.

- The Borough should explore eliminating underlying zones for properties within a Redevelopment Area. This would eliminate redundancies and establish a clear vision for the development of such properties.

3. *Historic Preservation Requirements*

Currently, Historic Preservation standards are in Chapter 24, separate from the Land Use Ordinance (Chapter 21). Additionally, Chapter 24 designates historic landmarks that do not align with the Land Use Ordinance and Zoning Map. The Borough should incorporate Chapter 24 into Chapter 21 and update provisions as necessary to encourage the preservation of historic properties and structures.

4. *Corner and Through Lots*

Currently, under the Land Use Ordinance, corner lots must meet front yard setback requirements on both sides fronting a street. It is recommended that the definitions and standards be reviewed and amended or supplemented as needed to ensure that the available building area is not significantly reduced. The Borough may consider adopting separate standards for a "primary front yard" and a "secondary front yard" to reduce setback requirements that may be unnecessarily limiting. Additionally, the current Land Use Ordinance does not define through lots, which, unlike corner lots, have frontage on two non-intersecting streets, nor does it provide definitions for irregularly shaped lots, such as triangular lots or lots with frontage on more than two streets. Definitions and yard requirements should be evaluated and clarified.

5. *Update Parking and Loading Regulations*

Parking and loading standards for all uses should be reviewed, and the ordinances amended or supplemented as needed.

6. *Landscaping, Buffering, and Fencing Regulations*

A review of the Borough's existing landscaping, buffering, and fencing standards is recommended to determine whether additional specificity is needed to adequately protect the privacy of residential properties adjacent to non-residential uses, enhance stormwater management, protect natural areas, and minimize light and noise.

Currently, screening requirements apply in the Business/Residential (B/R) District, including a 10-foot setback where a business's side yard abuts a residential use and a 30-foot setback for rear yards. The provision also requires plantings or other screening devices that effectively protect the privacy of the adjacent residential property. While the intent of this provision is appropriate, the ordinance could be strengthened by providing more detailed standards for the type, quantity, size, and placement of required screening. For example, the Borough could establish standards for evergreen or other appropriate plant materials, minimum planting heights and spacing, and the use, height, opacity, and materials of fencing or other screening devices. More specific requirements would provide greater clarity for property owners and applicants, promote consistent application of the ordinance, and ensure that screening is effective in maintaining privacy and minimizing potential visual impacts between commercial and residential uses.

7. Explore Opportunity Sites for Age-Restricted/Senior Housing

Providing appropriate, accessible housing options for the Borough's senior population should remain a priority. The Borough should explore ways to encourage the development of age-restricted and other housing options that enable seniors to remain in the community while meeting their changing housing needs. This effort should include identifying suitable sites for senior housing, reviewing and updating zoning and development standards as appropriate, and evaluating alternative housing models, including accessory dwelling units (ADUs), that may offer greater flexibility and affordability.

The Borough should also consider opportunities to leverage its Affordable Housing Trust Fund to support the development of affordable housing for seniors. In coordination with property owners, developers, regional partners, and other stakeholders, the Borough should evaluate potential sites and funding mechanisms and identify regulatory changes that could facilitate the creation of a diverse range of housing options for the Borough's aging population.

8. EV Ordinance and E-Mobility Standards

Currently, electric vehicles are addressed in Chapter 7 of the Borough code. Specifically, §7-40.7 regulates electric vehicle charging stations in the municipal parking lot on Main Street. A Model Statewide Municipal Electric Vehicle (EV) Ordinance, published by DCA on September 1, 2021, was developed with support from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) to comply with P.L. 2021, c. 171, which Governor Phil Murphy signed into law on July 9, 2021. The law requires that Electric Vehicle Supply/Service Equipment (EVSE) and Make-Ready parking spaces be designated as a permitted accessory use in all zoning or use districts and establishes associated installation and parking requirements for EVSE. It is recommended that the Borough integrate these State requirements into the Land Use Ordinance of the Borough of Bound Brook. With the growing popularity of e-mobility, standards should also be developed for adequate and accessible storage of e-bikes and scooters in new developments.

9. Outdoor Dining

Outdoor dining has grown in popularity and is now an important part of commercial activity and the pedestrian environment. The Borough should review and, as appropriate, amend or supplement its zoning and land use regulations to identify suitable locations for outdoor dining, including sidewalk cafés and dining areas in other outdoor spaces. Clear standards should be established to address considerations such as pedestrian circulation, accessibility, seating areas, hours of operation, parking, landscaping, lighting, noise, signage, and the relationship between outdoor dining areas and adjacent properties.

The Borough should also develop clear guidance and an efficient approval process for restaurants seeking to expand dining onto sidewalks, plazas, private outdoor areas, or other appropriate spaces. This guidance should be developed in coordination with the Special Improvement District (SID) to ensure that regulations are practical, consistent, and supportive of the Borough's business community while preserving safe, attractive public spaces.

10. Complete and Green Streets Policy

It is recommended that the Borough update its Complete Streets Policy in accordance with best practices. The New Jersey Bicycle and Pedestrian Resource Center compiled a Model Policy and Guide in partnership with NJDOT. The updated policy should address improved bicycle and pedestrian safety, stormwater management, and related issues. The policy should also include a checklist for new development projects.

11. Stormwater Management

The B/R zone includes measures that developers could consider in order to reduce impervious surfaces in parking lots. These recommendations could be treated as requirements and could potentially be expanded to other zones.

The Borough should amend its Stormwater Control Ordinance to ensure consistency with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Stormwater Management Rules, N.J.A.C. 7:8, and with applicable NJDEP Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit requirements. The amended ordinance should incorporate the most current NJDEP standards, including requirements associated with the 2026 NJPACT rule and the updated New Jersey Stormwater Best Management Practices Manual.

12. Address Emerging Planning Trends

Since the last Reexamination Report, several emerging planning and land-use topics have become increasingly relevant to the Borough, including commercial recreation, data centers, warehouses and distribution facilities, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and other evolving land uses. In some cases, these uses have highlighted gaps, inconsistencies, or conflicts in zoning standards and development regulations. Changes in development trends, technology, market conditions, and community needs further underscore the importance of periodically evaluating the Borough's regulatory framework.

The Borough should review its Land Use Ordinance to determine whether it adequately addresses these emerging uses and provides clear, predictable standards for their location, scale, design, operation, and potential impacts on surrounding properties and the community.



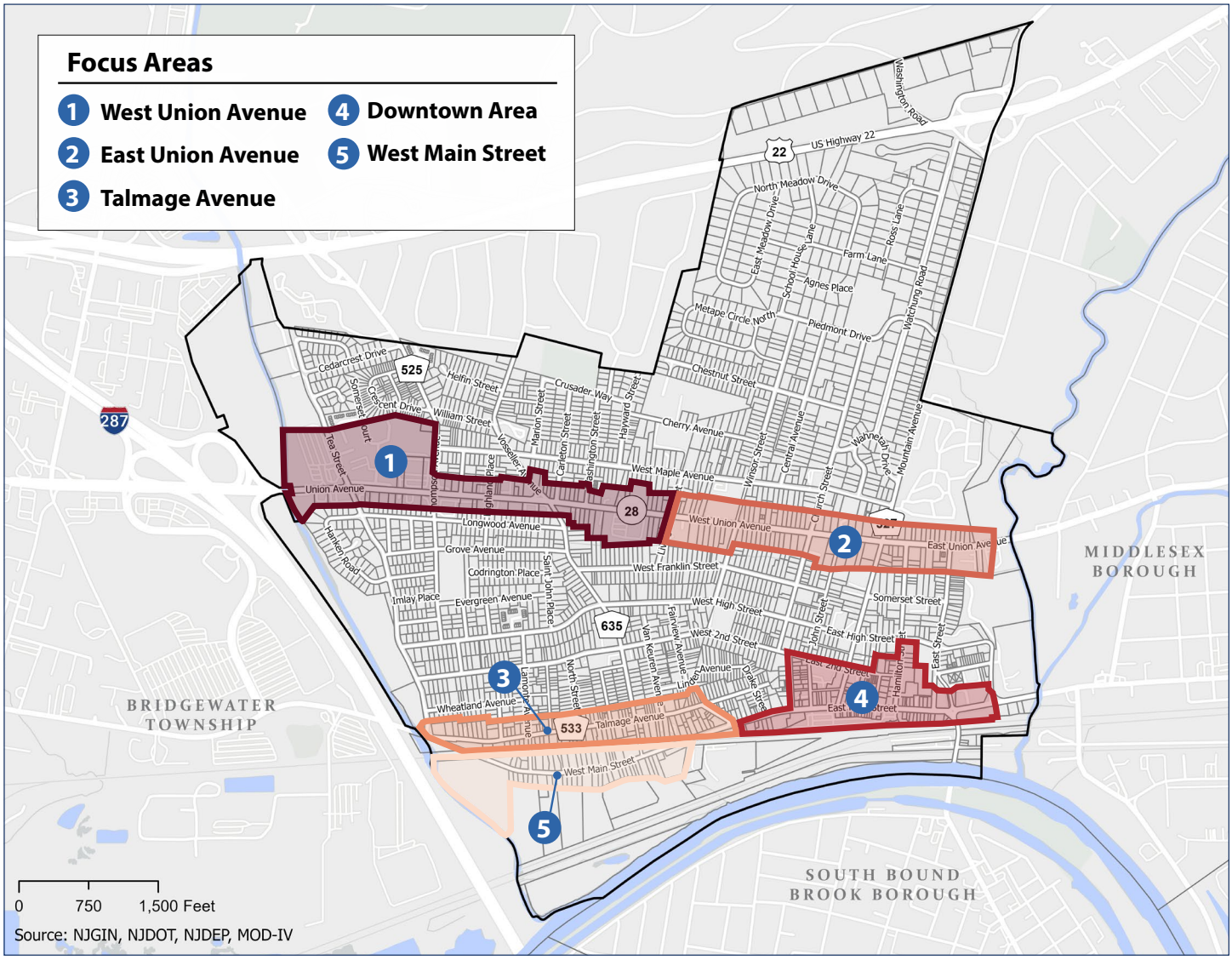
POTENTIAL SPACE FOR OUTDOOR DINING ON UNION AVENUE



POTENTIAL FOR BIKE LANES ON TALMADGE AVENUE

FOCUS AREAS

To support a more nuanced understanding of land use, development patterns, and planning opportunities throughout the Borough, the following focus areas provide a framework for evaluating distinct parts of Bound Brook. These areas reflect differences in land use, development character, community assets, opportunities, and areas for improvement, and are intended to help guide discussion and identify place-specific planning considerations. The focus areas do not correspond to officially designated boundaries within the Borough and are provided solely for general planning and analytical purposes. They should not be interpreted as official zoning districts, municipal boundaries, or regulatory areas, nor should they be used to determine zoning compliance.



AREA 1: WEST UNION AVENUE

Current Conditions

The West Union Avenue focus area serves as a western gateway into Bound Brook. It is primarily commercial and located within the B-1 Zone. The standards of this zone are designed to promote commercial development at a scale compatible with adjacent residential land uses. Goals of this zone include promoting a safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle network, providing access to public transportation, supporting greening initiatives (street tree plantings, rain gardens, etc.), retrofitting existing buildings, and protecting the privacy of residential neighbors, while also offering a wider variety of goods and services within short walking distance. Below is a breakdown of the current uses and bulk standards of this district. Design standards for structures in this district are also included in §21-10.14f.



SHOPPING CENTER ON UNION AVENUE



SHOPPING CENTER ON UNION AVENUE



SIDEWALKS ON UNION AVENUE

General Business (B-1) Zone	
Permitted Uses	Retail, including grocery stores; Office; Personal, professional, business services; Art galleries, studios, and art-related enterprises; Hotel and hospitality; Civic and governmental; Educational; Houses of worship; Recreational, health and fitness; Movie theaters, live performance theaters, and performing arts facilities; Food establishments (full-service, take-out, retail)
Other Permitted Uses	Outdoor cafes; Rooftop renewable energy facilities; Mobile uses (food trucks); Temporary uses (farmers market, art fairs)
Non-Permitted Uses	Drive-throughs

Bulk Standards: All Building Types	
Minimum Lot Area	N/A
Minimum Lot Width	N/A
Front Yard Setback from Curbline	Minimum: 15 ft / Maximum: 20 ft
Side Yard Setback from Lot Line	Minimum: 10 ft
Rear Yard Setback from Lot Line	Minimum: 20 ft
Maximum Impervious Coverage	85%
Maximum Building Height	20 ft / 2.5 stories

Recent and Upcoming Projects

- NJDOT will implement roadway improvements along Union Avenue as part of a safety enhancement initiative. This includes adding left-turn lanes at Tea Street, with two through lanes. Additionally, median treatments are being considered on Union Avenue west of Tea Street to improve traffic safety in this area and enhance the appearance of the entrance to the Borough.



INTERSECTION OF UNION AND VOSSELLER

Recommendations

- Improve wayfinding by increasing signage and implementing some of the recommendations from the 2020 NJTPA study, "Visual Identity and Wayfinding".
- Implement improvements to position this area as a "gateway" into the Borough.
- Explore permitting residential as a conditional use.
- Explore opportunities for senior/age-restricted housing.

AREA 2: EAST UNION AVENUE

Current Conditions

The East Union Avenue focus area serves as an eastern gateway to the Borough. It is a lower-density commercial area with several residential-to-office conversions along the street. Notable properties in this area include Bound Brook High School. East Union Avenue lies almost entirely within the Office Building (O-B) District. The standards of this zone are designed for offices of businesses, executive or administrative purposes, and professional offices, such as those for physicians, dentists, accountants, and attorneys. Single-family structures are also permitted in this district. Below is a breakdown of the current uses and bulk standards.



LOCAL BUSINESSES ON UNION AVENUE

Office Building (O-B) Zone	
Permitted Uses	Professional Offices; Public Parks and Playgrounds; Public Buildings; One-Family Structures; Funeral Homes; One dwelling unit above a nonresidential ground floor use
Accessory Uses	Private garages; Parking and parking facilities; Signs; Accessory uses customarily incidental to above uses



SIDEWALKS AND BUS STOP

Bulk Standards: Office Buildings & Funeral Homes	
Minimum Lot Area	11,250 sf
Minimum Lot Width	75 ft
Minimum Front Yard	30 ft
Minimum Side Yard	10 ft, 20 ft total
Minimum Rear Yard	50 ft
Maximum Impervious Coverage	65%
Maximum Building Height	45 ft, 3 stories
Parking Area	Not permitted in front yard; 10 ft from property line
Screening	Landscaping provided between parking or refuse area and property line

Bulk Standards: Single-Family Dwellings	
Minimum Lot Area	11,250 sf
Minimum Lot Width	75 ft
Minimum Front Yard	30 ft
Minimum Side Yard	10 ft, 20 ft total
Minimum Rear Yard	50 ft
Maximum Impervious Coverage	50%
Maximum Building Height	45 ft, 3 stories

Recommendations

- The current standards allow for one residential unit above nonresidential uses. Current height requirements allow for a maximum of three stories. The Borough should consider allowing a second residential unit above a nonresidential use to provide more housing options without disrupting the current height standards.
- Explore opportunities for senior/age-restricted housing.
- Consider conducting redevelopment studies or revisiting existing standards for vacant or underutilized parcels near the Borough's eastern entrance. For example, Sub-Area 1.5 in Redevelopment Area 1 has several environmental constraints on the property; therefore, the standards should be revisited to create a more specific vision for the property.
- The Borough should explore improvements to position this area as a "gateway" into the Borough.



LOCAL BUSINESS WITH RESIDENTIAL UNIT ABOVE


RESIDENCE ON UNION AVENUE

AREA 3: TALMADGE AVENUE

Current Conditions

The Talmadge Avenue focus area includes the southwestern gateway into the Borough and is directly connected to downtown. It is adjacent to the NJ Transit right-of-way to the south. The area lies within Redevelopment Area 1, Sub-Areas 2.2 and 2.3. According to the zoning map, the Talmadge Avenue focus area is entirely within the Business Residential (B/R) District; however, this conflicts with the Land Use code text, which cuts off the B/R District just before Talmadge Avenue.



UNEVEN SIDEWALK CONDITIONS WITH PLANTERS

Recent and Upcoming Projects

- A Local Safety Plan (LSP) report, led by NJTPA and Somerset County, was completed in September 2020. The LSP report covers the area along Main Street and Talmage Avenue from Tea Street eastward across the entire Borough. Recommendations included signal upgrades, sidewalk replacement, high-visibility crosswalks, pedestrian refuge islands, rectangular rapid-flashing beacons, new curb ramps, and curb extensions.
- In March 2023, Somerset County secured $7.7 million in federal funds to implement several recommendations from the Local Safety Plan and Road Safety Audit. The improvements will be made along Talmage Avenue, Columbus Place, and Main Street, spanning the full length of Bound Brook from Tea Street to the Queen's Bridge.



CYCLIST NAVIGATING AROUND PARKED CARS

Recommendations

- Improve wayfinding by increasing signage and implementing some of the recommendations from the 2020 NJTPA study, "Visual Identity and Wayfinding."
- Increase the number of shade trees and other streetscape improvements to improve the pedestrian environment.
- Identify opportunities for the development of townhouse-style development and update Redevelopment Plan 2 to permit residential on the ground floor, where appropriate.
- Address parking and circulation issues along Talmage Avenue.
- Explore opportunities for senior/age-restricted housing.



NARROW, UNEVEN SIDEWALKS ADJACENT TO CONSISTENT VEHICLE TRAFFIC

AREA 4: DOWNTOWN

Current Conditions

The downtown focus area includes the Borough's main street, cultural sites, and a number of retail and entertainment options. It sits within the Business/Residential (B/R) Zone, which includes the Arts District, Main Street District, and Downtown Residential District, collectively known as the "character districts." These districts have individual zoning standards and special requirements that can differ from those of the wider B/R Zone. Further, the historic downtown is within Area 1.4 of the Area 1 Redevelopment Plan, which provides additional requirements and specific zoning standards that differ from the underlying zoning. Generally, the area provides for a mix of uses, and the standards are intended to promote a vibrant, walkable, mixed-use, and sustainable environment in the downtown area.



VOORHEES BUILDING ON MAIN STREET

Recent and Upcoming Projects

- In February 2026, a resolution was adopted to authorize funding for the final design of the Hamilton Street pedestrian plaza project.



LOCAL STOREFRONTS ON MAIN STREET

Recommendations

- In partnership with the BID, a Downtown Strategic Plan should be completed to guide future redevelopment standards and public realm improvements.
- Land use standards should be evaluated and amended. There is a mix of development standards at very small scales that are not straightforward and sometimes conflicting, resulting in an inconsistent and difficult review process for development and redevelopment in the area. As previously recommended, the Borough should consider simplifying the language and consolidating the standards for this area.
- Many residents provided feedback in the community survey that parking downtown was a significant inhibitor for visiting the area. The Borough should consider ways to improve parking and access to downtown.
- The Borough should evaluate the potential for developing "Sausage Aly" as a pedestrian connector street from Maiden Lane to Mountain Avenue.
- The Borough should identify opportunities to expand public arts in this area. For example, a new set of standards for the Redevelopment Area Sub-Area should be established, or a separate Arts District Redevelopment Plan should be developed.



SAUSAGE ALY

- Identify opportunities for the development of townhouse-style development and update Redevelopment Plan 1 to permit residential on the ground floor, where appropriate.
- Incentivize the rehabilitation of vacant or dilapidated structures.

AREA 5: WEST MAIN STREET

Current Conditions

The West Main Street focus area lies within the R-4 One- and Two-Family Residential District and the West Main Street Rehabilitation Area. It is directly adjacent to the Railroad District, which separates this area from the rest of Main Street. The standards of this zone are intended for residential uses.

Recent and Upcoming Projects

- The Bound Brook Community Garden opened in 2018 at the corner of West Main Street and Vosseller Avenue.
- In 2019, the West Main Street Rehabilitation Area was designated.

Recommendations

- In 2019, the West Main Street Rehabilitation Area was designated. However, there are no clear standards for rehabilitating this corridor. The Borough should undertake a neighborhood planning process for this area to create a vision that preserves the neighborhood's character while improving underutilized properties, implementing streetscape improvements, and connecting the neighborhood and surrounding area to the Raritan River.
- The Borough should explore opportunities for public access within and around the Green Brook Flood Control project easements and access roadways to connect residents to the river and continue developing parks and open space.
- Explore opportunities for senior/age-restricted housing.



OPPORTUNITY FOR SHARED-USE PATH



FREE LIBRARY OUTSIDE COMMUNITY GARDEN



TWO-FAMILY HOME

RECOMMENDED UPDATES TO THE MASTER PLAN

1. ***Update the Land Use Element***

   Given the MLUL revisions that require the Land Use element of a municipality's Master Plan to address "smart growth" and include a Climate Change-Related Hazard Vulnerability Assessment (CCRHVA), it is advisable to review and amend or supplement the Land Use element as needed. It is recommended that the Borough conduct a CCRHVA to evaluate the impact of natural hazards, especially flooding, on the Master Plan and to develop strategies for addressing climate change-related natural hazards.

2. ***Prepare a Public Access Element***

   It is recommended that a Public Access Plan be prepared to expand recreational opportunities along the Raritan River. The NJDEP provides a map of public access points across New Jersey and a model Public Access Plan for municipalities. In addition to a map of public access points, the plan should include public facilities that support access, such as parking, boat ramps, and marinas; an assessment of the need for additional public access; a statement of goals and administrative mechanisms to ensure that access will be permanently protected; and a strategy that describes the forms of access to satisfy the need for such access, with an implementation schedule and tools for implementation.

   In 2014, the Bound Brook Planning Board adopted, as part of the Borough's Master Plan, the Riverfront Access for Pedestrians and Bicyclists, a more refined plan to reconnect the community to the Raritan River and establish a network of walking and bicycling trails along the lands along the borough's southern border, adjacent to the river.

3. ***Update the Open Space Element***

   To evaluate existing parks, open space, and recreation programs in the Borough, an Open Space and Recreation Plan should be prepared in accordance with Green Acres requirements.

4. ***Update the Historic Preservation Element***

   The last comprehensive update to the Historic Preservation master Plan Element was in the 1980s. With guidance from the Historic Preservation Commission, a Plan update should be prepared.

5. ***Prepare a Downtown Strategic Plan***

   A Downtown Strategic Plan would provide an in-depth analysis of current downtown conditions and potential improvements, including updates to zoning, redevelopment standards, and other initiatives through City programs and partnerships.

6. ***Prepare a Downtown Parking Study***

   To address the growing population and downtown parking shortages, a parking study should be completed. The study should evaluate the utilization of public and private parking garages and surface lots, as well as on-street parking. The study would guide future amendments to parking requirements and identify potential locations for additional public parking.



E. REDEVELOPMENT PLANS

This section offers recommendations regarding the integration of redevelopment plans adopted under the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law," P.L.1992, c. 79 (C.40A: 12A-1 et seq.) into the land use plan component of the Municipal Master Plan. It also suggests necessary changes in the local development regulations to implement the Borough's redevelopment plans.

ESTABLISHED REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

- **Redevelopment Area 1**
  - » Redevelopment Sub-Areas 1.1-1.5
  - » Redevelopment Sub-Area 1.6 contains four parcels, located on the southern side of the block bounded by Mountain Avenue, East Second Street, and Maiden Lane. Sub-Area 1.6 was adopted as a separate Redevelopment Planning Document.
- **Redevelopment Area 2**
  - » Redevelopment Sub-Areas 2.1-2.3
- **Redevelopment Area 3**
  - » Also known as the Tea Street/Middle Brook Redevelopment Plan, is largely built out, with a shopping center on the corner of West Union Avenue and Tea Street and a newer multi-family residential development located to the north of the commercial area, between Tea Street and the Middle Brook.

RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS TO REDEVELOPMENT PLANS

As outlined in Section D, the Borough's Land Use Ordinance should undergo a comprehensive update to remove conflicting standards, adopt consistent formatting throughout the sections, and incorporate the relevant recommendations of this Reexamination Report, including eliminating the underlying zoning for the Redevelopment Areas. Removing the underlying zoning would require a comprehensive update to Redevelopment Areas 1 and 2 to ensure that permitted uses, bulk standards, design standards, and other requirements are integrated into the plan language. As part of the comprehensive update, the following amendments should be considered:

- All amendments to Redevelopment Areas adopted by ordinance should be incorporated into the Redevelopment Plans. For example, the affordable housing set-aside requirement should be included in the plan document.
- The architectural design standards for redevelopment areas should be reviewed and, as needed, amended or supplemented.
- While an arts contribution is required in Redevelopment Areas 1 and 2, the Borough should consider amending bulk and density standards to include a bonus provision that incentivizes public art and open space. For example, additional dwelling units may be permitted if a higher financial contribution to the public art fund is made.
- To support more townhome-style development, the permitted uses and bulk standards should be evaluated to incentivize or require such building types. Specifically, residential uses could be explicitly or conditionally permitted on the ground floor.
- An updated process for designating a redeveloper before Planning Board approval should be outlined in Redevelopment Plans.

- Due to downtown parking concerns, minimum parking requirements should be reviewed and amended or supplemented as needed. Additionally, redevelopment plans should specify that residents of buildings with parking structures are not eligible for a Borough parking permit.
- To support biking, both public and private bike-parking facility requirements should be reviewed and amended or supplemented as needed.

DESIGNATED REDEVELOPMENT AND REHABILITATION AREAS

The following areas have been designated as needing rehabilitation or redevelopment. Redevelopment plans should be drafted and adopted.

- In 2019, the West Main Street Rehabilitation Area was designated as an area in need of rehabilitation. However, although it is shown on the zoning map and within Redevelopment Area 1, there are no clear standards for rehabilitating this corridor.

POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

The Borough is actively investigating the following study areas as areas in need of redevelopment:

» Block 1, Lot 3

» Block 6, Lots 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12

If these areas are formally determined to meet the criteria for qualifying as an "area in need of redevelopment" and are designated by the Borough Council, redevelopment plans should be drafted and adopted.

Additionally, the Focus Areas, or parts thereof, discussed in Section D should be considered as potential redevelopment or rehabilitation areas.



POTENTIAL LOCATION FOR MURALS ON HAMILTON STREET



F. DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE

This section provides recommendations for locations suitable for developing public electric vehicle infrastructure, including commercial districts, areas near public transportation and transit facilities, transportation corridors, and public rest stops. It also outlines recommended changes, if any, to local development regulations that are necessary or appropriate to establish such infrastructure.

The Borough should prioritize locations that offer convenient access to charging while complementing existing land uses and transportation infrastructure. Site selection should consider factors such as parking availability, proximity to major roadways and destinations, pedestrian and bicycle access, anticipated EV demand, electrical infrastructure and grid capacity, potential impacts on surrounding properties, and opportunities to serve areas with limited access to at-home charging. The State has identified expanded access to EV charging infrastructure as an important component of its transportation and clean-energy objectives, including efforts to provide charging in community locations, travel corridors, and public spaces.

According to the most recent NJDEP Alternative Fuel Vehicle Report, published in December 2025, 107 plug-in electric vehicles were registered in Bound Brook. This aligns with the broader statewide trend of rising electric vehicle ownership across New Jersey.

Suitable locations include:

- Bound Brook Station Parking Lots
    - The parking area's proximity to public transportation, including both the train station and several bus stops, along with its central downtown location, makes it an ideal location for public EV charging infrastructure.
- Union Avenue West Shopping Area
    - This area of the Borough includes several large parking lots associated with the retail area, including stores like Shoprite and Goodwill, and it represents another centralized location that is frequently visited by residents and visitors. Because of the high frequency of patrons at this site, along with its location near one of the main gateways into the Borough to the west, providing EV charging infrastructure here is likely to ensure greater accessibility and utilization.
- Recreational Areas: Tea Street Sports Complex and Billian Legion Park
    - The sports complex and park serve as gathering places for community events and recreational activities. Providing EV charging infrastructure at either location would give residents a convenient way to charge their vehicles while exercising, playing sports, and enjoying the Borough's recreational amenities.

Additionally, Somerset County is developing an **Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging and Suitability Analysis,** expected to be completed in 2026. The Borough should revisit these recommendations upon completion of the County's analysis to ensure alignment with the County's findings and recommendations.