
**Creating Places to Age:
Land-Use Analysis of Age-Friendliness for Garfield, New Jersey**



June 2016

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Introduction

The demands of an aging population will require New Jersey municipalities to re-examine how they manage the built environment.

In 2007, the World Health Organization published *Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide*, which encourages cities to “become more age friendly ... optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security”. The WHO calls upon cities to adapt structures and services to be more accessible to and inclusive of older people, who have differing needs and capacities. The guide considers important aging issues, including transportation, housing, outdoor spaces, and social inclusion.

The WHO’s findings and guidelines are very significant for the communities and residents of the U.S. and, in particular, New Jersey. The percent of the national population aged 55 or older has grown appreciably since 1990. More than 2.3 million New Jersey residents – 26.6 percent of the state’s population – were at least 55 years old in 2012, with more than half of that total over the age of 65 and nearly 200,000 aged 85 or older.

Given this trend, towns must start thinking about how to adapt and accommodate the needs and preferences of this large cohort of adults. This is particularly true as a growing segment of this population may opt to remain independent longer, rather than move in with younger relatives or into institutional living quarters. Successful places to age will need to be safe, affordable and comfortable, offer living arrangements that suit the needs of older people, provide access to transportation and mobility, enable economic opportunity and allow seniors to be financially secure. Communities that can meet these

needs will be in a better position to support and retain this demographic than communities that fail to act.

Fortunately, municipalities have the ability to shape community design and character through their local planning, zoning, subdivision and land development regulations, as well as redevelopment and revitalization plans. If this is done thoughtfully, it can create rather than limit options for development to meet the demands of an increasingly older populace.

This report summarizes an analysis for aging-friendly characteristics in land-use and planning for the City of Garfield, New Jersey. Located in the northeast region of the state in Bergen County, Garfield is bounded by NJ Route 21 to the west and US Route 46 to the east. The city is little more than two square miles in geographic size, and has a population of just over 30,000. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Garfield’s older-than-65 population was 10.3 percent of the total population, which is lower than Bergen County’s 15.2 percent and the State of New Jersey’s 13.5 percent.

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Executive Summary

Garfield, with its two NJ TRANSIT stations, numerous bus stops and compact pattern of development, clearly has strong bones for creating a walkable, engaging place to age.

The rehabilitation and redevelopment plans under way for the area around the Garfield train station and the Passaic Street corridor present an excellent opportunity to weave in best practices for meeting the needs of an aging population. It will be critical to establish and adopt design standards for new development in this area that encourage a mix of uses and walkability, including additional residential development. The current zoning that is in place does not go far enough to advance these priorities.

Garfield's housing stock is very diverse, especially as compared to Bergen County and the state as whole. There is a mix of housing types, from single-family detached to multi-family units, and the units tend to be smaller, making them potentially more manageable and affordable to older residents. It is important to note that the level of housing cost-burden in Garfield is high relative to the county and the state numbers, most likely due to lower median income levels overall. For this reason, opportunities to address housing affordability through subsidy programs may be important to consider in tandem with a market-based strategy. Plans should consider whether the market conditions allow for inclusionary affordable housing as part of new development in the area. If the economics do not work now, they could in the future.

Garfield is rich with transportation options – from NJ TRANSIT regional rail to New York City to local bus service to highways down to the presence of sidewalks. The non-automotive options are a key to Garfield's future age-friendliness, as they offer critical access to goods and services without needing to be able to own and drive a car. Garfield should foster pedestrian and bicycle connections throughout the community, but in particular it should foster those connections to the area surrounding the Garfield train station. An audit of pedestrian and bicycle conditions and possibly a plan might be in order, particularly as redevelopment and rehabilitation plans for the area come online.

Garfield has numerous public facilities and amenities, including recreational fields, a county park, several neighborhood playgrounds and even a new Riverfront Park along the Passaic River. It also has an active senior and health center that provides activities and services tailored to the needs of older residents. By and large, these facilities are accessible by sidewalk and local public bus as well as by car; however, the location of these facilities may not serve the community equally. In particular, the area within a quarter- to a half-mile of the Garfield train station does not have easy walking access to these facilities. This should be addressed as part of the overall rehabilitation and redevelopment strategy for the area.

Methodology

The analysis that follows builds from New Jersey Future’s 2014 guide titled *Creating Places to Age: A Municipal Guide to Best Land-Use Practices*. With this iteration, more detail and specificity are added to the age-friendly criteria and they have been applied specifically to the City of Garfield. A combination of demographic data, site visits and interviews as well as a review of municipal planning and zoning documents was used to complete the analysis. It should be noted that while the focus of the analysis is on how friendly the city is to older adults, these same attributes make a community more livable for all age groups.

New Jersey Future divided the analysis into four major categories:

I. **Mixed-Use Centers**

Mixed-use centers afford the opportunity for people to live in close proximity to commercial centers, reducing the need for an automobile to accomplish everyday tasks, while also permitting residents to remain socially connected to their community. Putting homes, stores, offices, and civic buildings near to each other allows for those with limited mobility – or with limited desire to drive – to maximize their trip-making by minimizing the distances among different types of destinations. This benefits an aging population, but also creates a vibrant community for all.

II. **Housing**

Providing a variety of housing options beyond single-family detached homes helps to accommodate the different preferences, budgets and access needs of all residents, including older adults. Locating new residential development near mixed-use development goes one step further by offering the additional benefit of pedestrian access to a variety of destinations. Communities may be undersupplied with the types of housing that older residents want or need – for example, homes with smaller yards, fewer bedrooms, or only one story. Some communities may also have high housing prices in general, putting them out of the range of affordability for many. Land-use policy that allows for a variety of housing types benefits older adults in terms of manageability, affordability, accessibility and safety.

III. **Transportation**

Interconnected transportation networks give people options; getting from Point A to Point B does not then necessitate highway driving and allows people to opt for secondary roads, sidewalks or mass transit. Compact and walkable development patterns also create the opportunity for “unplanned encounters” with neighbors and strangers, the kinds of personal interactions that are important for creating and maintaining social cohesion. For older residents who are no longer interacting with coworkers or immediate family members on a daily basis, these types of interactions are an important safeguard against social isolation. Transportation choices mean residents who do not own a car or who choose not to drive will still be able to maintain their mobility.

IV. **Public Spaces and Amenities**

Public spaces such as parks, plazas and trails help to hold a community together. They provide opportunities for exercise and a place for social interaction, help to maintain neighborhood stability and even improve psychological health. They can also provide environmental services, including storm water runoff controls, and help to remediate the effects heat and air pollution, through the installation of trees and shrubbery. Amenities such as community centers also help meet the needs of residents, particularly older adults, by offering programming to address such needs as nutrition, entertainment and intellectual enrichment. Like public spaces, they can also provide opportunities for seniors to socialize outside their homes.

I. Mixed Use Center

Is there currently a mixed-use center and/or are the necessary policies in place to foster development of that center or create a new one in the future?

PRESENCE OF A CENTER	
<p>Is there a central business district or other community center that includes a mix of uses?</p> <p>Mixed-use centers afford the opportunity for people to live within close proximity to commercial and business areas, reducing the need for an automobile to accomplish everyday tasks, while also permitting residents to remain socially connected to their community.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> a center or centers with homes, stores, offices, and civic buildings in close proximity</p>	<p>The area surrounding the Garfield train station that includes the Passaic Street commercial corridor (between River Drive and Lincoln Place) near Garfield’s southern boundary has the characteristics of a mixed-use center. This area contains a mix of residential and commercial uses. The form of development in the area is largely one- to two-story buildings, built in the late 19th to mid-20th centuries. Many of these buildings themselves are mixed-use with commercial/retail on the first floor and residential or other uses on the second floor.</p> <p>Given the presence of the Garfield train station adjacent to the Passaic Street commercial corridor, New Jersey Future will consider the area within a quarter- to a half-mile of the train station as Garfield’s unofficial mixed-use center, and will focus on that area for this analysis.</p> <p>See Exhibit: Garfield Station Transit Area Map with Zoning, pg. 22.</p> <p>New Jersey Future did give consideration to the area within a quarter- to a half-mile of the Plauderville station as a possible second mixed-use center; however, the area is mostly residential and has less of a traditional downtown feel. That said, the train station is an asset and this area could be studied further to see how it might function with more walkable, mixed-use development in the future.</p>
<p>Net Activity Density (NAD)</p> <p>Net activity density is a calculation of municipal population plus employment divided by its developed area in square miles. By capturing both residents and businesses, this calculation provides a picture of the range of activities – and the buildings they occupy – that can be found in the municipality. NAD can be thought of as a proxy for building density; i.e., what a place physically looks like when experienced at the ground level.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> a high NAD, which is a strong indication of an active mixed-use center</p>	<p>Garfield has a net activity density of 16,995 people and jobs per square mile. This is more than double the NAD of Bergen County overall (about 7,750) and is comparable to the towns of Edgewater, Lyndhurst, Rutherford, Lodi, and Wallington.</p> <p>Adding additional residential and commercial development in Garfield will raise the overall NAD, indicating a vibrant, mixed-use center of activity.</p>

POLICIES and PROGRAMS that encourage compact, mixed-use development	
<p>Special Improvement District</p> <p>Special Improvement Districts are authorized by state law and created by an ordinance of the local government. They work by collecting a special assessment on the commercial properties in a designated district, which supports initiatives that drive business activity, increase property values, and support marketing and branding efforts.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> formally established SID</p>	<p>Garfield currently does not have a Special Improvement District.</p> <p>Garfield should consider the establishment of a SID as plans for rehabilitation of the Passaic Street corridor progress and/or redevelopment plans move forward. The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs can provide information on the establishment of improvement districts..</p>
<p>Main Street Community Designation</p> <p>Main Street New Jersey is a division within the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. It provides on- and off-site technical assistance and training in downtown revitalization and management.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> MSNJ designation</p>	<p>Garfield is not currently a designated Main Street community.</p> <p>Garfield should look into the Main Street New Jersey program as a possible complement to the rehabilitation efforts under way in the Passaic Street corridor area. Designations occur every two years and there are two levels available – traditional designation or affiliate status.</p>
<p>Transit Village Designation</p> <p>The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) and NJ TRANSIT spearhead a multi-agency partnership known as the Transit Village Initiative. The Transit Village Initiative creates incentives for municipalities to redevelop or revitalize the areas around transit stations using design standards of transit-oriented development (TOD). TOD helps municipalities create attractive, vibrant, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods where people can live, shop, work and play without relying on automobiles.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> Garfield’s participation in the Transit Village Designation program.</p>	<p>It appears that Garfield is looking into participation in the Transit Village program.</p> <p>Garfield should continue to look into designation. It will have to the Transit Village Criteria and complete a Transit Village Application. New Jersey Future’s age-friendliness analysis complements this effort at there is a significant amount of planning and zoning work that goes into designation.</p>

PLANS that encourage compact, mixed-use development	
<p>Master Plan</p> <p>The municipal Master Plan is a formally adopted document that states the goals, objectives and policies upon which proposals for the physical, economic and social development of the municipality are based.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> land-use element of the master plan to encourage compact, mixed-use, center-based development</p>	<p>The Land-Use Element of the City of Garfield’s 2002 Master Plan does address aspects of center-based development. Goal no. 3 addresses revitalization and redevelopment efforts for the Passaic Street corridor. Objectives include adopting streetscape and design guidelines to promote “Main Street” appeal, and promoting the train station as the “catalyst for the revitalization” of the corridor.</p> <p>The Land-Use Plan Categories section sets forth a “Neighborhood Retail” designation that seeks to “promote the Passaic Street corridor as the downtown district of Garfield, reconnect it with the train station, and capitalize on the existing streetscape improvement program.” The section recommends pedestrian-oriented and mixed-use strategies, as well as seeking assistance from NJ TRANSIT for train station improvements and pursuing transit-oriented redevelopment.</p> <p>Garfield should give consideration to updating the Master Plan with a goal of encouraging mixed-use, transit-oriented development in the area surrounding the Garfield train station, including the Passaic Street corridor.</p>
<p>Redevelopment or Rehabilitation Plan</p> <p>Redevelopment and rehabilitation plans are adopted by the governing body to guide development within designated areas formally designated as being in need of redevelopment or rehabilitation. These plans define the vision for the area and control its implementation through very specific building type and design requirements.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> redevelopment or rehabilitation plan that encourages compact, mixed-use, center-based development</p>	<p>The 2003 Kalama Redevelopment Plan is within the quarter- to half-mile radius of the Garfield station. The site is located on River Drive between Monroe Street and Hudson Street, and is a US EPA-designated Superfund site (https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/cursites/csitinfo.cfm?id=0206317). The plan allows for a mix of commercial and institutional uses; however, residential does not appear to be a permitted use.</p> <p>The adopted 2010 Garfield Neighborhood Revitalization Plan was a study of a 29-block neighborhood bounded by Monroe Street to the north; Passaic Street to the south; Atlantic/Midland Avenue to the east; and River Drive to the west, all within the quarter- to half-mile radius of the Garfield train station. Special emphasis is placed on Passaic Street and promotes rehabilitation of existing buildings as well as the eventual redevelopment of the Kalama property, which is within its borders.</p> <p>Work is under way to adopt rehabilitation plan for Passaic St. corridor and there are areas in need of redevelopment investigations underway for targeted sites in the Garfield train station area.</p> <p>The forthcoming rehabilitation and redevelopment plans have the potential to shape the form and type of development in the area, and should work together to promote walkable, mixed-use development. Garfield might consider revisiting the Kalama Plan as part of this effort to make sure they work together.</p>

LAND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS that encourage compact, mixed-use development	
<p>Permitted uses</p> <p>Permitted uses define the types of land uses allowed as of right within a particular zoning district.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> a mix of uses within the center area or district that promotes walking and encourages visitor activity</p>	<p>The current zoning within a quarter- to a half-mile of the Garfield train station is a combination of the B-1, R-2 and LM districts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The B-1 district lines the Passaic Street corridor and allows for retail, restaurant, non-commercial bakeries, business, office, financial institutions and tattoo parlors. Residential is allowed only in areas shown as residential on the Master Plan or by special permit and “in no case shall the establishment of a dwelling be part of a structure which contains a business or industrial use” (341-19F). • The R-2 district runs north and south of the B-1 district along Passaic Street and allows for one-, two- and multi-family dwellings. The R-2 district is strictly residential. • The LM district runs along the west and east side of the rail line from Monroe St. to Willard St. and allows for commercial and manufacturing uses, but precludes housing. <p>Garfield should consider permitting (and encouraging) residential development in the upper floors of buildings along Passaic Street. The restriction on residential development in the LM district area should be revisited as part of the overall rehabilitation plan.</p>
<p>Prohibited Uses</p> <p>Prohibited uses are the types of land uses not allowed within a particular zoning district.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> uses that conflict with goals for a center area or district, in particular uses that do not support walkability and livability</p>	<p>The zoning code prohibits or limits motor vehicle sales, auto body repairs, sanitation truck storage, billiard halls, entertainment theaters, and gaming machine centers throughout the City of Garfield. The first three auto-related uses do not make sense for a center area; however, these prohibitions date back 50-plus years and all might merit reconsideration.</p> <p>The code is silent on drive-thru businesses (banks, coffee shops, etc.). Strong consideration should be given to eliminating these uses in the area within a quarter- to a half-mile of the train station, as they work against walkability and do not contribute to the streetscape.</p>
<p>Building setbacks</p> <p>Building setbacks are requirements dictating the distance a building is placed from the front property line.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> limited setbacks in downtown, mixed-use center areas and districts in order to create greater street activation, allowing a more active, inclusive, pedestrian-friendly environment</p>	<p>The current zoning within a quarter- to a half-mile of the Garfield train station is a combination of B-1, R-2 and LM districts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the B-1 district, the minimum front-yard setback is 10 feet. There are no sideyard setbacks, which is appropriate for this district. • In the R-2 district, the minimum front setback is 20 feet, which is typical for residential areas of this type. • In the LM district, the minimum setback is 35 feet for commercial uses and 20 feet for manufacturing, which is not conducive to creating an interesting, walkable streetscape. <p>Garfield should consider eliminating this setback and/or set a maximum of five feet from the property line in the B-1 and LM districts, with an exception for street corners, where a 10-foot setback might be warranted. It is worth noting that the Schedule of Regulations does set forth some additional requirements for lots adjacent to the railroad station. Those should be reviewed to ensure they promote the goals for the transit area.</p>

<p>Lot coverage</p> <p>Lot coverage is that portion of a zoning lot which, when viewed from above, is covered by a building. Greater lot coverage allows for greater density, a key component to a successful mixed-use center.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> allowable lot coverage percentages to be higher in center and mixed-use districts</p>	<p>The current zoning within a quarter- to a half-mile of the Garfield train station is a combination of B-1, R-2 and LM districts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the B-1 district, the maximum lot coverage is 60 percent. • In the R-2 district, maximum lot coverage is between 30 and 33 percent. This is typical for residential areas of this type. • In the LM district, the maximum lot coverage is 60 percent. <p>Garfield should consider establishing a minimum in the B-1 and LM districts that is 60 percent and a maximum closer to 85 percent, particularly near transit.</p>
<p>Building height</p> <p>Building height requirements dictate how tall the buildings in a given district can be.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> minimum building heights that encourage density within the mixed-use center area or district</p>	<p>The current zoning within ¼- to ½-mile of the Garfield train station is a combination of B-1, R-2 and LM districts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the B-1 district, the maximum height is 30 feet and two stories. • In the R-2 district, the maximum height is 27 feet and two and a half stories. This is typical for residential areas of this type. • In the LM district, the maximum height is 30 feet and two stories. <p>Garfield should consider establishing a minimum height of 30 feet in the B-1 and LM districts and a maximum of at least 45 feet or three stories.</p>
<p>Design standards</p> <p>Design standards can be used to preserve and enhance the unique visual qualities in a district, reinforcing goals such as establishing a pedestrian-friendly streetscape.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> specific design standards for buildings, infrastructure, and landscaping that promote a vibrant, walkable mixed-use center environment</p>	<p>Garfield’s land development regulations do not appear to include design standards for the mixed-use center area around the Garfield train station. The only exceptions are some requirements for signs in the B-1 district, limiting the sign area to 10 percent of the building façade and prohibiting signs that project out from the building.</p> <p>Garfield should consider establishing design standards, particularly for the B-1 district and area within a short walk of the Garfield train station. These standards could include recommendations for streetscapes (trees, pedestrian amenities, etc.), building facades (frontage requirements, window area, architectural materials) and signage (height, size, design). It should be noted that Goal 3 and Goal 5 of the 2002 Master Plan Land Use Element suggest adoption of new streetscape and design guidelines.</p>

II: Housing

Does Garfield have a supply of housing that is both affordable to older people and consistent with their needs? Does it have the necessary policies, plans and programs in place that will provide a range of housing options into the future?

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY PROFILE	
<p>Cost Burden</p> <p>A household is considered housing cost-burdened if it spends more than 30 percent of its gross income on housing. The clearest advantage that housing cost burden offers over other indicators of affordability is that the Census Bureau compiles statistics on the actual number of households that are experiencing this condition, whereas many other metrics rely on making inferences from summary statistics.</p>	<p>Percent of all HHs cost-burdened:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garfield: 54.6% • Bergen County: 44.7% • Statewide: 44.2% <p>Percent of homeowner HHs cost-burdened:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garfield: 54.7% • Bergen County: 43.4% • Statewide: 40.9% <p>Homeowner HHs 65+ cost-burdened:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garfield: 50.4% • Bergen County: 46.2% • Statewide: 43.7% <p>Bergen County tends to have higher rates of housing cost burden than the state as a whole, and Garfield has higher rates than the county.</p>
<p>Median Household Income</p> <p>Median household income gives an idea of the purchasing power of the “typical” household in an area. Places with lower household incomes will tend to have higher rates of housing cost burden, all other things being equal, because lower-income households have a harder time paying for most things, including housing.</p>	<p>Median Household Income (2006-2010 ACS):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garfield: \$51,407 • Bergen County: \$77,389 • Statewide: \$70,378 <p>Bergen County incomes tend to be higher than elsewhere in the state, but Garfield’s median income is low compared to both the rest of the county and the state. This is a likely explanation for the relatively high percent of housing cost burden in Garfield.</p>
<p>Median Residential Value</p> <p>The median value of owner-occupied housing units in a jurisdiction gives an idea of how expensive it would be for a current non-resident to buy a home in that place.</p>	<p>Median Residential Value (2014):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garfield: \$285,188 • Bergen County: \$495,378 • Statewide: \$346,457 <p>Garfield is one of the less expensive places in one of New Jersey’s most expensive counties; however, given the high rate of cost burden, affordability is still an issue for residents.</p>

HOUSING STOCK PROFILE			
<p>Type</p> <p>Housing type refers to the design of the unit, typically ranging from single-family detached homes to multi-family buildings to mobile homes. Having a range of types helps promote affordability and also provides access to more options to attract different types of residents, from singles to families to older adults.</p>	<p>Garfield:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SF Detached: 19.5% • SF Attached: 2.9% • Duplex: 50.0% • Multi-Family: 27.6% • Mobile Homes: 0.0% 	<p>Bergen County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SF Detached: 64.4% • SF Attached: 4.4% • Duplex: 12.0% • Multi-Family: 18.6% • Mobile Homes: 0.7% 	<p>New Jersey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SF Detached: 53.8% • SF Attached: 9.2% • Duplex: 9.5% • Multi-Family: 26.4% • Mobile Homes: 1.0% <p>When compared to Bergen County and the State of New Jersey, Garfield has a much more diverse housing stock in terms of type; this is especially true in the duplex and multi-family categories.</p>
<p>Size</p> <p>Size, as measured by the number of rooms in a dwelling, is another indicator of affordability and age-friendliness. For older adults, fewer rooms can be less expensive to own/rent and easier to maintain.</p>	<p>Garfield:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 to 6 Rooms: 73.7% • 9+ Rooms: 5.4% • Median # Rooms: 4.9 	<p>Bergen County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 to 6 Rooms: 40.2% • 9+ Rooms: 19.7% • Median # Rooms: 6.5 	<p>New Jersey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 to 6 Rooms: 47.8% • 9+ Rooms: 13.2% • Median # Rooms: 5.7 <p>Garfield's median number of rooms per housing unit ranks lower than that of both Bergen County and the State of New Jersey.</p>
<p>Tenure</p> <p>Tenure refers to the conditions under which land or buildings are held or occupied. For this analysis, the distinction is between owners and renters.</p>	<p>Garfield:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40.3% owner • 59.7% renter 	<p>Bergen County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 66.2% owner • 33.8% renter 	<p>New Jersey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65.0% owner • 35.0% renter <p>Garfield has a much larger share of renters than is true of the county or the state. Almost universally throughout the state, renter households are more likely to be cost-burdened than households that own their homes. This is likely due to a statewide shortage of rental housing, especially multi-family housing.</p>
<p>Subsidized housing</p> <p>Subsidized housing refers to units that are deed-restricted to low- and moderate-income households.</p>	<p>The Housing Authority owns and manages 456 units of public housing in five properties: Pulaski Court, Marzitelli Court, Daniel P. Conte Court, Belmont Gardens and Golden Tower (a senior community). Another 104 units are deed-restricted affordable through housing rehabilitations and another 36 units of affordable senior units were created using the low-income housing tax credit.</p>		

PLANS that support a mix of housing options	
<p>Master Plan</p> <p>The municipal Master Plan is a formally adopted document that states the goals, objectives and policies upon which proposals for the physical, economic and social development of the municipality are based.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> land-use element of the master plan to encourage a variety of housing types and densities</p>	<p>Goal 1 of the 2002 Garfield Master Plan Land Use Element is to “promote the continued maintenance and rehabilitation of the City’s housing stock.” The 2014 re-examination report points out that funding for affordable housing is limited and will be a challenge.</p> <p>The 2002 plan also sets forth a variety of new residential land-use categories (low density, medium density, multifamily medium density, multi-family high density residential).</p> <p>Garfield should give consideration to establishing a goal of retaining a mix of housing types, based on projected changes in population, as well as promoting increased residential densities in the areas within a quarter- to a half-mile of the Garfield train station.</p>
<p>Redevelopment or Rehabilitation Plan</p> <p>Redevelopment and rehabilitation plans are adopted by the governing body to guide development within designated areas in need of redevelopment or rehabilitation. These plans define the vision for the area and control implementation through very specific building type and design requirements.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> redevelopment or rehabilitation plan that encourages a mix of housing options</p>	<p>In the 2003 Kalama Redevelopment Plan, the Land-Use Objectives section cites an interest in limiting residential development to those types that will not add to the existing pressures on the school system (pg. 7) and does not include residential among the permitted uses in the area.</p> <p>Garfield should reconsider its stance on residential development in the Kalama Redevelopment Plan area, given its proximity to the Garfield train station and the existing commercial corridor.</p> <p>The adopted 2010 Garfield Neighborhood Revitalization Plan was a study of a 29-block neighborhood bounded by Monroe St. (N), Passaic St. (S), Atlantic/Midland Aves (E), and River Dr. (W), within the quarter- to half-mile radius of the Garfield train station. Special emphasis is placed on Passaic St and promotes rehabilitation of existing buildings as well as the eventual redevelopment of the Kalama property, which is in its borders.</p> <p>The revitalization plan acknowledges the cost burden in the area and the need to address affordability issues. It cites options such as vouchers and other subsidies, increasing the density of housing units in the area to encourage developers and property owners to offer housing at lower costs, and also encouraging mixed-income housing, through which developers are willing to offer housing units at below-market rates because they make their desired profit margins from housing oriented to higher-end consumers (pg. 34).</p> <p>The redevelopment and rehabilitation plans that are under development should preserve the mix of housing types within the community as well as promote increased residential densities in the areas within a quarter- to a half-mile of the Garfield train station. The plans should consider whether the market conditions in the area allow for inclusionary affordable housing as part of new development in the area. If the economics do not work now, they could in the future.</p>

LAND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS and REGULATIONS that support a mix of housing options	
<p>Permitted housing types</p> <p>Permitted housing types are the type of housing allowed as of right within the municipality, across the various zoning districts. Having a range of types helps promote affordability and also provides access to more options to attract different types of residents, from singles to families to older adults.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> a range of housing types, from single-family detached to multi-family, with more density in the mixed-use walkable portions of town</p>	<p>Garfield’s zoning generally supports a range of housing options, from single-family detached to multi-family dwellings. There are exceptions in the R-1A zone (single-family only), the R-1 zone (one- and two-family only) and the B-2D and LM zones (no residential allowed).</p> <p>As noted in Section I, Garfield should consider loosening its restrictions on residential development in the B-1 district along the Passaic Street corridor to allow for (and encourage) residential development in the upper floors of buildings.</p>
<p>Subdivision standards</p> <p>Subdivision standards provide rules, regulations and standards to guide land subdivision. Large minimum lot sizes discourage a mix of uses, and contribute to sprawling land use patterns. Establishing large minimum lot sizes effectively prevents a mix of housing types and affordability levels within neighborhoods, which can prevent residents from remaining in their neighborhoods even as their needs and circumstances change (life cycle planning). Dictating large minimum frontage requirements contributes to sprawl.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> subdivision regulations that permit compact development, allow for a mix of lot sizes</p>	<p>Garfield’s residential zoning generally allows for a range of lot sizes, with the R-2 district within the Garfield transit station area allowing for a minimum of 5,000 square feet for one- and two-family dwellings and 10,000 square feet for multi-family dwellings. The schedule of bulk, height and other regulations is unclear as to what the minimum lot sizes are for the B-1 and LM districts.</p> <p>Garfield should consider clarifying the lot size requirements for the B-1 and LM districts, ensuring that they promote walkability, particularly in the transit district. making the lot coverage requirement in the B-1 district a minimum and establishing a maximum closer to 85 percent, particularly in those areas within a short walk of transit.</p>
<p>Inclusionary housing requirements</p> <p>These policies typically require a fixed percentage of affordable housing to be included as part of new residential development. This promotes ongoing social and economic integration.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> inclusionary housing requirement</p>	<p>Garfield does not have an inclusionary housing policy as part of its zoning. However, the relatively low median income and housing values suggest that a market-based housing strategy might be more appropriate.</p> <p>Garfield should be sensitive to market conditions that might allow for inclusionary housing as part of new development, particularly in the center area surrounding the Garfield station.</p>

<p>Accessory apartments</p> <p>An accessory apartment (sometimes called an in-law suite) is a separate independent dwelling unit installed as part of a single-family home, converting the home into two units. The accessory unit is a full, self-contained dwelling unit (i.e., it includes a kitchen) and is typically smaller than the “primary” part of the home. For the occupants of both units, this housing arrangement allows privacy and independence, which is a major preference of individuals of all ages. For homeowners who have relatives with aging-related or other disabilities, this arrangement substantially supports their ability to provide assistance for those relatives. For older homeowners, accessory apartments mean they can afford to remain in their home as landlords, or as tenants in these units.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> accessory apartments as a permitted use</p>	<p>Garfield does not currently permit accessory apartments in any districts.</p> <p>Garfield should consider allowing accessory apartments by right in the R-1A and R-1 districts, subject to conditions that limit the impact on the surrounding community. Conditions might include: 1) a limit of one accessory apartment per lot; 2) a requirement that the principal dwelling or accessory apartment unit be owner-occupied; 3) a minimum lot size or house size; a limit on the size of the accessory apartment to no more than a percentage (ex. 30%) of the gross floor area of the house; and/or restricting new entrances to the side or rear of the home.</p>
<p>Universal design</p> <p>Universal design is the concept of designing all products and the built environment to be aesthetic and usable to the greatest extent possible by everyone, regardless of their age, ability, or status in life. Universal design provides even surfaces, passages wide enough for wheelchairs, and appropriately designed bathrooms and kitchens, particularly for older adults.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> universal design policy or program</p>	<p>Garfield does not have a universal design standard or policy; however, this is a relatively new concept that has not yet been formally adopted by many communities.</p> <p>Garfield should consider adopting a universal design approach, particularly for new development occurring in the Passaic Street corridor area.</p>

III: Transportation

Does Garfield have the transportation infrastructure, policies and plans in place to address the transportation needs of older residents by encouraging multi-modal options and walkability?

WALKABILITY	
<p>Walk Score</p> <p>Walk Score is an organization whose mission is to promote walkable neighborhoods. It aggregates data to assess the walkability of a specific address or town in order to help market those locations to new residents and businesses.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> very walkable rating, greater than 70</p>	<p>Garfield has an overall Walk Score of 76, which is considered very walkable. The area around the Garfield station has a score of 82. The Walk Score rating criteria are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90-100 “Walker’s Paradise”- Daily errands do not require a car • 70-89 “Very Walkable”- Most errands can be accomplished on foot. • 50-69 “Somewhat Walkable”- Some errands can be accomplished on foot. • 25-49 “Car Dependent”- Most errands require a car. • 0-24 “Car Dependent”- Almost all errands require a car. <p>Garfield should consider using its Walk Score to help market the town as a walkable, mixed-use center, particularly as it promotes redevelopment and rehabilitation in the Garfield train station area.</p>
<p>Sidewalks</p> <p>Sidewalks provide many benefits, including pedestrian safety and mobility, and they encourage healthier lifestyles</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> 1) the presence of sidewalks that connect people with area destinations, particularly transit; 2) development regulations that require that sidewalks be installed along the frontage of all public streets; 3) sidewalks that accommodate those with disabilities.</p>	<p>Most streets in Garfield currently have sidewalks, including in the center area within a quarter-to a half- mile of the Garfield train station. Sidewalks in the Passaic Street commercial area are generally good; however, on some side streets there are some walkways that are heaved and cracked, which is typical in older communities.</p> <p>Garfield’s land development regulations appear to be silent on the requirements for sidewalks.</p> <p>Garfield should consider establishing basic minimums for installation of sidewalks and specific widths for various districts in the transit center area, which would be consistent with its existing Complete Streets policy.</p>
<p>Crosswalks</p> <p>Crosswalks at intersections provide are a way to make drivers more aware of and deferential to pedestrians. They should also easily accommodate person with disabilities.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> 1) highly visible crosswalks; 2) street light timing that favors pedestrians of various abilities, including timed pedestrian signals; and 3) safe spaces in the median for larger crossings.</p>	<p>There appears to be safe passage conditions at intersections for pedestrians in the Garfield train station area. Intersection features include marked crossing paths, timed pedestrian signals, and a curb radius of 15 feet.</p> <p>Garfield’s land development regulations appear to be silent on the requirements for crosswalks.</p> <p>Garfield should consider establishing basic standards for crosswalks in the transit center area, especially as part of the forthcoming redevelopment and rehabilitation plans. This would be consistent with its existing Complete Streets policy.</p>

<p>Driveways</p> <p>Driveways provide vehicular access, typically to the rear of a building. This reduces conflicts with pedestrians and promote walkability</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> 1) limited driveways and curb cuts across sidewalks in center areas and districts and 2) development regulations that limit curb cuts</p>	<p>Curb cuts for driveways along the Passaic Street corridor are limited; however, Garfield’s zoning ordinance appears to be silent on the issue of driveway placement. This might become an issue as new development projects come on line.</p> <p>Garfield, particularly in the Garfield station center area, should consider establishing a policy of avoiding sidewalk curb cuts whenever an alternative point of access is available or can be created. Shared access agreements should be encouraged.</p>
<p>PLANS and POLICIES that support a mix of transportation options</p>	
<p>Complete Streets Policy</p> <p>Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. People of all ages and abilities are able to move safely along and across streets in a community, regardless of how they are traveling.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> adopted Complete Street policy or ordinance</p>	<p>Garfield adopted a Complete Streets policy in 2014. It is unclear as to what is underway in terms of implementation.</p> <p>Garfield should look at the Sustainable Jersey Institute Complete Streets action for ideas on how to move implementation forward. Garfield should consider reaching out to its local Transportation Management Association, Meadowlink, to see if there is assistance that can be offered.</p>
<p>Transportation or Circulation Plan</p> <p>A transportation element in the master plan articulates a how a community should maintain and enhance mobility for residents and businesses, through the creation and maintenance of a balanced system of transportation alternatives.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> A transportation element that: 1) provides a wide range of travel choices, including pedestrian and bike options; 2) supports the land-use goals of the community; and 3) seeks to reduce overall dependency on automobiles.</p>	<p>Garfield does not have a transportation or circulation element in its Master Plan.</p> <p>Garfield might want to consider developing this element in conjunction with its next Master Plan update, particularly to address potential multi-modal transportation issues that may arise as part of the redevelopment plans around the Garfield train station.</p>
<p>Bicycle or Pedestrian Plan</p> <p>A bicycle or pedestrian plan is a means of setting forth and advancing specific goals for promoting safe and efficient bicycle and pedestrian activity in a community. It is recommended that these plans be adopted as part of the municipal master plan.</p>	<p>Garfield does not have an adopted bicycle or pedestrian plan.</p> <p>Garfield should consider investing in a bicycle or pedestrian plan as part of its efforts to encourage redevelopment and rehabilitation around the Garfield station area. As part of this effort, an assessment of current conditions and needs should be conducted, which will bring to light any existing gaps in the bicycle and pedestrian network and any dangerous conditions that might exist, particularly for older residents. This plan could be adopted into the municipal master plan.</p>

PARKING	
<p>On-street parking</p> <p>On-street parking provides additional protection to pedestrians on sidewalks as well as convenient access to destinations.</p>	<p>Garfield has on-street parking available throughout the Garfield station center area and along Passaic Street as it does throughout the community.</p> <p>The availability of on-street parking should be maintained as redevelopment and rehabilitation plans get implemented over time.</p>
<p>Parking requirements</p> <p>Parking requirements dictate the amount of parking that must be provided with new development. In center areas, too much parking can have a negative impact on walkability and requiring it can be a deterrent for mixed-use development. Requirements should also take into consideration available transit options, including bus and rail, which might allow for a reduction (or elimination) of parking requirements.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> techniques such as lowered parking minimums, on-street parking, off-site parking, fee-in-lieu of parking and shared parking provisions in center areas</p>	<p>The identified mixed-use center area around the Garfield train station has on-street parking available. Garfield sets a minimum standard for the provision of parking spaces as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R-2 district: 1.5 per dwelling unit, plus 1 for each 4 units • Retail store exceeding 2,000 square feet: 1 for each 200 square feet • Service establishment exceeding 1,000 square feet: 1 for each 400 square feet • Bank: 1 for each 400 square feet • Office: 1 for each 400 square feet • Restaurants with a seating capacity in excess of 20: 1 for each 2 seats in excess of 20 • Bowling alleys: 1 per alley <p>Garfield does allow for the provision of parking off-site provided a permit is granted by the planning board or zoning board of adjustment. Garfield has established a parking authority.</p> <p>Garfield should consider conducting a parking study of the center area around the Garfield train station and creating a parking overlay district for the area that takes into consideration the redevelopment and rehabilitation plans that are forthcoming. Consideration must be given to NOT overprescribing parking with the new development, so establishing parking maximums might be a way to accomplish that. In addition, consideration should be given to developing structured parking in the area as part of the new plans as well as establishing a shared parking policy that allows different types of users to share parking spaces at different times of the day. The role of the parking authority should be explored further as part of plans for this area.</p>
<p>Parking design</p> <p>Parking lot design is critical to walkability in a downtown or center area. Parking areas should be designed to get people – in addition to cars – in and out safely and should be made aesthetically appealing</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> surface parking in rear of buildings, ingress and egress from side streets/alleys where possible, landscaping, pedestrian walkways and connections, structures designed with active first floor and compatible with adjacent buildings and architecture</p>	<p>With the exception of the Walmart parking lot on Passaic St., Garfield does not have many (if any) surface parking lots that face the street. There is no parking design standard articulated at this time; however, the municipal code indicates a new chapter, Chapter 325: Vehicles and Traffic, to regulate traffic and parking in the City of Garfield is currently in process.</p> <p>As Garfield develops its regulations, special consideration should be given to the downtown or mixed-use center area within a short walk of the Garfield train station. In particular, surface parking should be encouraged in the rear of buildings with ingress and egress from side streets/alleys if possible; pedestrian walkways and connections should be made a priority along with landscaping features that improve the areas. Structured parking should be designed in a way that activates the first floor to and be compatible with adjacent buildings and architecture.</p>

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION	
<p>Local Bus Service</p> <p>Local buses function as a means for people to travel to important destinations within a place or in neighboring places. This service is critical for people who do not or cannot drive, as it connects them to necessary shopping and services in a way that regional bus and rail cannot.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> high number of bus stops per square mile of developed land</p>	<p>Garfield has 40.4 bus stops per square mile of developed land, which is extremely high. Garfield's density of local bus stops is the 20th-highest among all 565 municipalities in the state and the sixth highest in Bergen County, after Edgewater, Cliffside Park, Ridgefield Park, Fort Lee, and Fairview.</p> <p>Garfield should consider doing an assessment of its busiest bus stops to see if there is sufficient seating and lighting for older residents.</p>
<p>Rail</p> <p>Rail transit offers access to regional destinations to which older residents might not otherwise travel if driving were the only option.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> presence of rail station</p>	<p>Garfield is home to two NJ TRANSIT train stations: Plauderville and Garfield, both with short commute times into New York City.</p> <p>Garfield should continue to use existing rail service as a catalyst for new development opportunities, particularly in the Garfield station area. Garfield should work with NJ TRANSIT to improve amenities at the Garfield station, including improved seating and wayfinding, as well as continue to explore becoming a NJDOT-designated Transit Village community.</p>
STREETS	
<p>Connectivity</p> <p>A well-connected local street network offers multiple options and shorter distances for traveling between destinations. Without this connectivity, high density and mixed use can end up meaning that you can see your destination out your window but have to walk or drive a mile to get to it. Local road density (miles of local road per square mile) is one measure of how fine-grained the local street network is and thus of how long the average local trip is likely to be.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> high local road density, greater than 10 miles of road per square mile</p>	<p>Garfield has 22.2 route miles of road per square mile - the 30th highest local road density among all 565 municipalities in the state. This is a very high rating as the median over all municipalities is only 9.8 route-miles per square mile.</p> <p>As new development occurs, care should be given to maintaining this efficient network of streets, particularly within the quarter- to half-mile radius of Garfield station.</p>
<p>Vehicle Lanes</p> <p>The number of vehicle lanes of traffic has an impact on walkability.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> reduced vehicle lanes, particularly in center areas to promote walkability</p>	<p>The Garfield station center area generally has no more than three lanes (two through, one left turn lane).</p> <p>Garfield should consider limiting the number of vehicle lanes, particularly in the center district, so as not to make pedestrian crossings difficult.</p>

IV: Public Spaces and Amenities

Does Garfield provide access to public spaces, amenities and programs for older residents?

PUBLIC SPACES, FACILITIES	
<p>Community Centers</p> <p>Amenities such as recreation centers, senior centers and libraries provide access to learning, information, entertainment, exercise and socializing opportunities, which are critical to healthy aging.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> community centers and libraries with walking access</p>	<p>The Garfield public library, recreation and senior centers are located on Midland Avenue between Elizabeth and Krakow streets. There are sidewalks that connect these facilities to neighboring residential areas and there is a bus stop across the street, adjacent to the county park. Midland Avenue is a fairly wide two-lane road with parking on the opposite side of the street adjacent to the county park. The health center is located a few blocks away on Elizabeth Avenue.</p> <p>Each of these facilities offers programming for older adults, ranging from book clubs to free and discounted meals to regular walking excursions, among others.</p> <p>Garfield should consider surveying older residents to assess whether these centers are easy to get to, especially for individuals with limited mobility and access to cars. A pedestrian audit of the area might also be in order to evaluate safety conditions for older residents and children.</p> <p>In addition, as plans for the area within a quarter- to a half- mile of the Garfield station take shape, Garfield should consider opportunities to relocate community facilities that serve older residents. A proposal for a cultural center, called “Green Generation,” that would combine sustainable agriculture, intergenerational (youth, adult and senior) programming and educational opportunities, is worth exploring further.</p>
<p>Public Street Furniture</p> <p>Street furnishings provide opportunities to rest during the course of business, and offer opportunities for interpersonal connection.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> public furnishings in and along the way to public facilities</p>	<p>Based upon a brief visual survey, Garfield appears to provide benches along the Passaic Street commercial corridor and in area parks.</p> <p>Garfield should consider a survey of street furniture as part of a broader audit of walking conditions, particularly in those areas frequented by older adults, such as the senior center. There should be furniture at and along the way to these public facilities and at bus stops, to ensure safe walking conditions for older residents.</p>
<p>Joint Use of Facilities</p> <p>Joint use of facilities offers additional locations for providing services and a way to leverage taxpayer money. Joint use is typically governed by a formal agreement, setting forth the terms and conditions for shared use of public property or facilities.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> joint use of community facilities</p>	<p>Garfield’s Neighborhood Revitalization Plan mentions the possible use of the Abraham Lincoln School as a multi-use community facility.</p> <p>Joint use opportunities at the Abraham Lincoln School and others should be explored as the redevelopment and rehabilitation plans are developed for the area around the Garfield train station.</p>

OUTDOOR, GREEN SPACE	
<p>Parks/Green Spaces/Trails</p> <p>Open space in towns and cities provides many advantages: formal and informal sport and recreation, preservation of natural environments and the provision of green space, which helps improve air and water quality, and improves mental health. This is a benefit to residents of all ages.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> parks and outdoor spaces that are accessible on foot</p>	<p>Garfield has several athletic fields and playgrounds throughout the community. A county park across from the senior and recreation centers offers some passive recreational opportunities. None of these facilities is within the quarter- to half-mile radius of the Garfield train station. There are plans to extend southward the Riverfront Park that currently runs along the Passaic River between Kipp Avenue and Outwater Lane, which would bring an outdoor amenity closer to this commercial district. Garfield also hosts several community gardens.</p> <p>Garfield’s Neighborhood Revitalization Plan includes a goal to “provide more open space/recreation uses” in the study area and sets forth strategies for doing so along with a map of potential park/open space development areas (p. 51). Garfield should follow up on this work as redevelopment and rehabilitation plans are developed for the area.</p>
<p>Green infrastructure</p> <p>Green infrastructure is the use of natural systems and natural design, rather than storm sewers, to manage rainwater and snowmelt. Examples include street trees, pervious pavement, rain gardens, rain barrels, green roofs, vegetated swales and bio-retention basins. Green infrastructure helps to reduce flooding, improves public health, provides jobs, raises property values, beautifies neighborhoods and “downtowns” and supports wildlife.</p> <p><i>Looking for:</i> municipal policy or ordinance that encourages installation of green infrastructure</p>	<p>Garfield does not appear to have a policy in place regarding the installation of green infrastructure.</p> <p>Garfield should consider updating its stormwater management regulations to encourage the use of green infrastructure, particularly as it contemplates redevelopment plans for the area around the Garfield train station. The Water Resources Program at Rutgers Cooperative Extension is a good source of information and technical assistance.</p>

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About New Jersey Future

New Jersey Future promotes growth that fosters vibrant cities and towns, protects natural lands and waterways, enhances transportation choices, provides access to safe, affordable and aging-friendly neighborhoods and promotes a strong economy. The organization does this through original research, innovative policy development and advocacy, strong partnerships and hands-on technical assistance. www.njfuture.org

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Exhibit: Garfield Station Transit Area Map with Zoning

