

1 Introduction

In the year 2001, the Township of Irvington is poised for a rebound, after nearly thirty years of hardship. Since the completion of the 1979 Master Plan, Irvington suffered from the effects of crime, poverty, abandonment, and disinvestment, not only within its own borders, but in the surrounding area. The City of Newark, adjacent to Irvington, experienced a long period of decline between the 1960's and the late 1990's, partly as a result of the shrinking of the manufacturing sector.

Then, with the economic boom of the late 1990's, the Newark region was attracting renewed interest from developers for the first time in many years. The construction of the NJ Performing Arts Center and the minor league ballpark, the clearing and reconstruction of dilapidated public housing, and new office renovations in downtown all contributed to the "Newark renaissance". Newark, when compared to Irvington, qualifies for many more state and federal dollars — particularly economic development and housing funds.

The Township has been making a concerted effort to take advantage of the upswing in the Newark economy to bolster Irvington's business climate, attract entrepreneurs, stabilize the real estate market, and build a better quality of life for residents. To this end, the actions of the Urban Enterprise Zone (UEZ) have been invaluable. The UEZ established the Springfield Avenue Corridor and Camptown Street Special Improvement Districts (SACSID and CBID) and has been working to attract new investment in the Coit Street and Olympic Park Industrial Areas. The UEZ has also provided business and property owners with technical assistance. In addition, the UEZ secured the grant funding that was used to prepare this comprehensive update of the Master Plan, and the recommendations in this Plan were closely coordinated with the revitalization efforts of the UEZ.

The completion of the new Master Plan will help the Township secure additional funding from State, federal, and foundation sources. It will also provide the Township with an up-to-date policy document that reflects needs and trends as of 2000, responds to the current concerns of residents, and provides a coordinated vision and direction for Township administration. Most significantly, this plan includes a new zone map for the Township that is intended to strengthen residential neighborhoods and business districts, while providing a framework for the revitalization of ailing areas of town.

The Township prepared the Master Plan update in 1999-2001, through the oversight of a Master Plan Task Force comprised of Township department directors and an Advisory Committee comprised of elected officials, appointed officials, and community members, and with the assistance of the consulting firm of Abeles Phillips Preiss & Shapiro. In preparing the Master Plan, the consultants collected demographic and other background information, and conducted two public meetings in summer 2000. The background information and the public comments from the meetings were used to identify problems, issues, and other areas of concern and to begin to identify potential future solutions. The resulting Master Plan is comprised of a series of goals and objectives, followed by eight elements:

- The Land Use Plan element lays out the future zoning framework for the Township and explains the major changes from the 1979 Master Plan.
- The Housing element summarizes the current condition of the housing stock and instructs the Township to develop a “fair share” plan for affordable housing that meets State requirements.
- The Economic Plan element discusses the major economic development initiatives being pursued by the UEZ.
- The Utilities, Circulation, Community Facilities, and Parks elements discuss the major needs for maintenance and new investment in water, sewer, roads, schools, police facilities, firefighting facilities, and parks.
- The Historic Preservation element identifies strategies for protecting the historic buildings and neighborhoods in the Township.

2 Goals

The goals of the Irvington Master Plan are as follows:

- Change land use patterns to promote economic and population growth and improve the overall quality of life.
- Encourage the creation of new zoning designations to maintain a better balance of land uses and densities.
- Protect residential areas from inappropriate densities and from industrial and commercial land use encroachment.
- Increase employment opportunities and the tax base by diversifying and strengthening the Township's commercial and industrial zones.
- Provide adequate affordable housing opportunities to retain existing residents and attract new residents.
- Encourage homeownership through new construction, rehabilitation, and homeowner assistance programs.
- Encourage the redevelopment of vacant land, abandoned property, buildings in poor condition, and brownfield sites.
- Establish new resources, such as a planning office with a geographic information system, to better manage planning, growth, and development.
- Ensure that the various types of infrastructure meet the needs of residents and businesses.
- Improve transportation access and circulation patterns.
- Ensure community and public facilities, such as schools, parks, fire and police services, meet the needs of the population.
- Improve the overall appearance of the Township.
- Improve and increase the amount and quality of parks and open space, especially near schools and higher density residential areas.
- Strengthen schools as neighborhood centers that serve the educational, recreational, social, and cultural needs of each community.
- Identify and increase cultural and historic resources.

Figure 2-1: Summary of Master Plan Recommendations

3 Land Use

3.1 EXISTING LAND USE

Irvington is a residential community, with a mix of single-family houses, multi-family houses, and apartment buildings. As a nineteenth-century suburb of Newark, Irvington's neighborhoods grew up around streetcar lines. Residential and commercial uses were clustered along Springfield, Clinton, Lyons, and Chancellor Avenues, areas from which workers could easily commute to downtown jobs. As the automobile gradually replaced the streetcar, outlying farms in the western parts of town were developed into new residential neighborhoods. Today, aside from a few scattered sites, there remains very little undeveloped land or open space. Existing land uses are shown on Figure 3-1.

Because the neighborhoods were developed in clusters around streetcar stops, Irvington has some typically urban characteristics that are not usually found in suburban communities. It has moderate-to-high residential densities, a large proportion of rental units, a mixed-use pedestrian-oriented downtown, mixed-use buildings and residential neighborhoods, and a compact building pattern conducive to walking. The Township also has excellent regional access from the Garden State Parkway and I-78, which were built between 1950 and 1980. The downtown Bus Terminal provides transit access to downtown Newark, Manhattan, and Newark Airport.

RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

Residential buildings in Irvington are a mix of single-family, two-family, and three-family houses, with some scattered four-family houses and apartment buildings. Most apartment buildings are two- or three-stories in height with six to ten units. Most housing was built between the late 1800's and the 1960's, and many of the older buildings have fine exterior details. Many streets have attractive Victorian or Arts & Crafts houses with mature street trees, which create a unique and charming neighborhood character. All neighborhoods have a mix of residential, retail, and office uses, as well as schools, churches, and day care centers.

On average, the neighborhoods in the East Ward have higher residential densities than the other wards. The West Ward has the lowest residential densities on average. Table 3-1 shows the range of net residential densities in each ward, based on a sample of blocks. The Township's highest-density housing is located along the major corridors (Springfield Ave, Stuyvesant Ave) and in Irvington Center (Linden Ave, Myrtle Ave). Maple Gardens, the Township's largest high-rise apartment complex, is located at the corner of Springfield and Maple Avenues.

There are many vacant and boarded-up houses and apartment buildings along Irvington's eastern edge with Newark, not only in the East Ward, but also in the South Ward. In community meetings, some residents stated that the North and West Wards were also experiencing housing abandonment.

Figure 3-1: Existing Land Uses

Due to high taxes, decreasing property values, high crime, and fear of crime, some homeowners have moved away and split their former houses into multiple rental units. Such absentee landlords are typically less attentive to property maintenance than homeowners, potentially accelerating the cycle of housing deterioration. However, as of 2000, the North and West Wards were relatively stable residential areas, compared to the East and South Wards.

Table 3-1: Approximate Range of Net Residential Densities (units per acre)

North Ward	15-30
West Ward	10-25
South Ward	10-30
East Ward	20-40

Source: Abeles Phillips Preiss & Shapiro, Inc.; based on sample of five blocks in each ward, using the land use survey conducted for the Master Plan in 2000; calculations do not include residential buildings more than three stories in height.

COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS AND NODES

In Irvington Center, there are pedestrian-oriented shops along Springfield Avenue and adjacent streets. It has the most pedestrian activity in the Township. Irvington Center (primarily along Clinton Ave and Nye Ave) has a cluster of professional office uses, including medical, dental, law, real estate, insurance, accountant, and other similar offices. Buildings are built up to the sidewalk and have entrances and windows facing the street.

Beyond Irvington Center, Springfield Avenue has a mix of auto-oriented and pedestrian-oriented shops, although the auto-oriented uses are dominant, and pedestrian activity is less than in the Center. Likewise, 18th Avenue, Lyons Avenue, Clinton Avenue and Chancellor Avenue (east of the Garden State Parkway) have a mix of pedestrian-oriented and auto-oriented uses. Many of the ground-floor retail uses along these automobile "strips" are vacant. The pedestrian activity in these areas is not strong enough to support small "mom-and-pop" stores, and the areas are ill-suited for larger retailers, because lots and buildings are too small, have too little parking, have a poor layout, or require extensive renovation.

There is a strong commercial node along Stuyvesant Avenue, at the Mill Road and Chancellor Avenue intersections, near the Union Township border. It is auto-oriented, but unlike Irvington's "strip" commercial corridors, the lots are larger, allowing the possibility for bigger stores and adequate parking. In addition to the Center, it is one of Irvington's more successful commercial areas. Community meeting participants cited property maintenance as an issue in this area.

The character of the signage varies from one commercial area to another. Irvington Center has a wide range of signage types. Many stores have eye-catching large-print wall signs and roof-

mounted signs that are oriented to pass-by motorists. In addition, many of the stores also have smaller window signs or shingle signs hanging over the sidewalk. These smaller signs are oriented to pedestrians. Along other parts of Springfield Avenue and in the Mill Road commercial area, signage tends to be large and eye-catching as well, and there is frequent use of tall free-standing signs by the side of the road, as retailers are primarily attracting customers who arrive by car. Billboards can be seen throughout Town, facing the the major arterial roadways. Many of the small neighborhood commercial areas — like the Union/Lyons and the Clinton/Florence nodes — tend to have smaller-scale, pedestrian-oriented signage.

INDUSTRIAL AND OFFICE AREAS

Irvington's major industrial district is the Coit Street Industrial Area, bounded by Coit Street, the Newark border, and the Hillside border, in the southeastern corner of the Township. The Coit Street area has a mix of storage and light manufacturing (i.e., commercial bakeries, oil distribution, furniture assembly and wholesale), with some heavy manufacturing as well (i.e., foundries, chemical production and storage). The Coit Street Industrial Area experiences heavy truck traffic, because of all the storage and distribution uses located there. Long trucks make use of older, shorter loading docks, and as a result, loading activity spills onto the sidewalks and streets.

Most buildings in the area date to the early part of the twentieth century, but there are some new office buildings as well (i.e., the Verizon facility, on Clinton Avenue at 21st Street). While many of the older buildings are still in use, some are vacant, and others are being cleared for new construction. The area is conveniently located next to I-78, which provides quick access to Newark Airport, Manhattan, and western New Jersey. Many businesses in the area have cited the location as the area's greatest asset.

On the other side of the Township, adjacent to Maplewood, the site of the former Olympic Park has a mix of storage, office and light manufacturing uses. It was developed in the 1970's under a new set of zoning regulations more consistent with contemporary building, parking, and environmental standards. It has relatively few vacancies. In the northeastern corner of Irvington, the former Pabst Brewery site has been vacant for many years. Surrounded by residential uses, Newark and Irvington are considering redeveloping the site as a mixed-use residential and commercial project.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Irvington Park, an Essex County park, is the largest park in town and a great asset to the Township. Designed by Frederick Law Olmstead — the father of landscape architecture and the designer of Central Park in Manhattan and Prospect Park in Brooklyn — it has mature trees, extensive lawns, decorative ironwork fencing, a pond, and an historic boathouse. It also has newly built playground equipment. Park entrances are situated opposite nearby cross-streets, maximizing access from the adjacent residential neighborhoods, which have a mix of apartment buildings, single-family homes, and multi-family houses. Residential buildings on the south side of the park have fine details and are in excellent condition, whereas buildings north of the park are more physically deteriorated. To the east, industrial and commercial uses border the park.

In Irvington Center, two small parks — Civic Square Park and Camptown Commons — have a great impact on the image of the community. Located opposite Township Hall, Civic Square Park takes advantage of the Elizabeth River setting, with its characteristic masonry walls built by the Works Progress Administration during the Great Depression. Camptown Commons is the only green space along the Irvington stretch of Springfield Avenue. The two parks lend Irvington a “small town” character, despite the relatively dense pattern of development.

In the residential neighborhoods, there are a several small parks and playgrounds that residents use for day-to-day recreational activity and exercise. There are also large-scale community parks that provide major recreational facilities, including a swimming pool, an indoor gym, and a running track. These parks are described in more detail in Chapter 9.

In addition, many neighborhoods have tall, mature street trees that form canopies over the street. These trees create a park-like atmosphere, and in many areas, they partially compensate for the small number of parks and the relatively small-size yards. If maintained properly, street trees also contribute to the character of a neighborhood. Identical street trees (similar age, spacing, and height) that are arranged in rows can create a sense of grandeur. Less informal arrangements of trees can create a relaxed environment.

VACANT PROPERTY

There are approximately 465 vacant or abandoned buildings and 383 vacant lots in the Township. Neighborhoods on the Township's eastern edge (East Ward and South Ward) have the most vacant property, as some deteriorated buildings have been demolished. This means that most future development will be new construction in the East and South Wards and infill in the North and West Wards.

URBAN FORM

Streets, Blocks, and Lots

Irvington's varied street grids were plotted one at a time, as farms and open space along the old streetcar lines were developed into residential neighborhoods. The street grids generally provide good connections and access between and through neighborhoods. At the same time, variations in the grid pattern help create distinct neighborhoods and provide variety in the urban form (i.e., diversity of street lengths, block shapes, and lot shapes).

The compact and small-scale blocks and lots provide opportunities for walking and biking, giving residents an alternative to driving their cars. Most older residential buildings are oriented to the sidewalk, with entrances and windows facing the street, narrow lots, front porches, small front yards, and limited off-street parking. These features give preference to pedestrian access. Houses built after 1945 are characterized by larger yards, lawns, and on-site parking.

Starting in the 1930s, some of the traditional housing stock was demolished to make way for campus-style residential blocks. This development style features an internal, off-street network of roads, parking, and common yards; housing entrances are turned to face this internal network,

rather than the public streets. Large areas were also cleared for the development of several high-rise complexes located in downtown. These campus-style and high-rise developments were designed to allow for automobile access.

Views

Irvington's low elevations provide relatively few views. However, on a clear day, a person standing in the western part of town — where the elevation can exceed 200 feet above mean sea level — can glimpse views of the Empire State Building in Manhattan, the Newark skyline, and the Appalachian ridgelines to the west.

Edges

The edges of the Township are not distinct; in most areas, the streets and neighborhoods of Irvington blend into the street and neighborhoods of Newark, Maplewood, Hillside, and Union. This is not a problem at all. In fact, it suggests that neighboring land uses and neighborhoods are compatible with Irvington.

The Coit Street Industrial Area, combined with the change in elevation and the presence of I-78, creates a distinct border with Newark south of Springfield Avenue. There is an abrupt change from industrial to residential uses on the other side of the Newark border. Likewise, Hillside has an industrial park along the Irvington border, creating sudden transitions between some of Irvington's residential areas and Hillside's industrial and office uses.

3.2 RELATIONSHIP OF EXISTING LAND USES TO THE ZONE PLAN

As of 2001, the Township's zoning map generally reflected the actual land use pattern. However, there were several inconsistencies that resulted in a large number of non-conforming uses. In addition, some areas — including the Garden State Parkway, I-78, the Lehigh Valley/ Conrail line, and some parks — were not assigned to any zoning district. These inconsistencies and omissions were taken into account in developing the future land use plan, which is discussed in the next section of this chapter.

RESIDENTIAL ZONES

Generally, residential zones have not been infiltrated with commercial or industrial uses. However, substantial areas of the R-1 zone have been converted to two-, three-, and four-family dwellings. Also, some apartments and townhouses have encroached into the R-1 and R-2 zones. In the public workshops conducted for the Master Plan, residents expressed concern about these illegal conversions, because they strain the Township's infrastructure (sewers, roads) and amenities (schools, parks).

Density transitions between adjacent zones are another issue. The R-5 zone allows buildings up to 15 stories tall, a big jump from the R-4 zone, which limits buildings to two- and three- stories. As a result, there are sharp changes in intensity around the edges of some R-5 zones. Similarly, there are sharp contrasts in building type and density between R-3 and R-4 zones. Whereas the

former allows three- to five-family houses, the R-4 zone allows campus-style garden apartments, which are oriented to off-street parking lots and courtyards and can accommodate a larger number of dwelling units.

COMMERCIAL ZONES

Irvington Center is designated B-1, which allows a mix of shops, offices, banks, and other similar uses. The district also allows intensive development and 100 percent lot coverage. These provisions are consistent with the historical land use pattern and pedestrian-oriented, compact scale of downtown. However, in order to accommodate on-site parking, some of the new retail stores have large front-yard parking lots and thus have a weaker pedestrian connection between the building entrance and the sidewalk.

Commercial corridors — such as Springfield Avenue, Chancellor Avenue, and Clinton Avenue — are zoned B-2. These corridors have a mix of pedestrian-oriented and auto-oriented shops, serving both local residents and pass-by motorists. However, these long commercial zones serve neither pedestrians nor motorists very well. They have small lots that are ill-suited to contemporary auto-oriented commercial development, and the surrounding residential areas do not provide enough pedestrian traffic to support more than a few convenience stores. As a result, many of the storefronts along the corridors are vacant or have been converted to residential, office, or other uses.

INDUSTRIAL ZONES

Industrial zones are found in two parts of the Township: the Coit Street Industrial Area and Olympic Park. These are almost exclusively made up of industrial and warehouse uses, although there has been some retail incursion, particularly along Lyons and Chancellor Avenues east of Coit Street, which take advantage of the adjacent access to -78.

M-1 zones allow heavy industrial production, while M-2 zones are more restrictive. The M-2 zone provides a transition between the residential areas west of Coit Street and the M-1 areas to the east. However, residents in the Coit Street area still complain of potential adverse impacts from industrial pollutants, suggesting that the M-2 zone has not served as an adequate buffer. The S-1 zone, which is applied to Olympic Park, has more restrictive environmental standards. Because the area was developed after environmental standards were already in place, the Olympic Park area has experienced far less environmental degradation, whether within the business park itself or in adjacent residential areas.

OPEN SPACE ZONES

Currently, the O-1 zone serves as a "catch-all" for open space, parks, schools, recreational facilities, and other public sites. Both Township-owned parks and County-owned park space are

protected under deed restrictions via Green Acres¹. This Element makes recommends that parks and other public or institutional uses be separated out into separate zones. The parks designation confirms that those parcels will be permanently used for park space, as required by the Green Acres deed restrictions.

3.3 FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The land use plan, shown on Figure 3-2, is intended to serve as the Township's long-range plan for future development and redevelopment. It was designed to fulfill the goals and objectives listed in Chapter 2. The goals were based on a detailed analysis of existing land uses, zoning regulations, demographic trends, economic conditions, other plans and programs, and the comments of residents and local stakeholders who attended the two public meetings held in summer 2000.

The new land use designations shown on the map correspond to the descriptions in this section and the density chart in Table 3-2. The map and these new designations are intended to serve as the basis for zoning amendments, redevelopment planning, and permit approvals. Changes from the previous land use plan are described at the end of this section.

Figure 3-2: Future Land Use Plan

¹ The Green Acres Program serves as the real estate agent for the Department of Environmental Protection, acquiring land that becomes part of State parks, forests, natural areas, and wildlife management areas. Green Acres also purchases land easements to ensure the permanent preservation of open space under the ownership of another entity.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

In order to protect neighborhoods from incompatible land use changes, the residential designations are intended for residential use exclusively; all commercial, industrial, and institutional uses are strictly prohibited. However, low-impact community-oriented land uses, such as home day care, places of worship, community centers, and parks are permitted in order to provide essential facilities and services in proximity to the places where people live.

Single-Family Residential, Low-Density (R-1-Low Density)

This designation allows only one single-family house to be developed per lot. The maximum permissible residential density is 8 units per net acre² (approximately 5,000 square foot lots).

Table 3-2. Permitted Intensities in Future Land Use Designations

Residential	
Single-Family Residential, Low Density	8 units/net acre
Single-Family Residential	16 units/net acre
Two-Family Residential	20 units/net acre
Four-Family Residential	26 units/net acre
Garden Apartments	33 units/net acre
High-Rise Apartments	60 units/net acre
Commercial	
Neighborhood Business	0.60 F.A.R. (ground floor only)
Shopping Center	0.45 F.A.R.
Limited Business	0.40 F.A.R.
General Business	0.40 F.A.R.
Big Box	0.35 F.A.R.
Office	
Residential Character Office	0.40 F.A.R.
Mixed Use	
Downtown Mixed Use	2.00 F.A.R.
Industrial	
Special Industrial	0.50 F.A.R.
Light Industrial	0.50 F.A.R.
Heavy Industrial	0.60 F.A.R.

² "Per net acre" density calculation excludes roadways and other public land from the land area total.

Single-Family Residential (R-1)

The designation is identical to the Single-Family Residential, Low-Density designation, except that the maximum residential density is 16 units per net acre (about 2,500 square foot lots), allowing a more compact pattern of development.

Two-Family Residential (R-2)

The Two-Family Residential designation allows both one- and two-family houses at maximum densities of 20 units per net acre. Two-family houses can be designed as townhouses (with attached or semi-attached units) or as flats (with one unit on the lower floor and one on the upper floor). The minimum lot area per household is set at 2,000 square feet, requiring larger lots for houses with two units. That is, it would be possible to build a single-family house on a 2,000-square foot lot or a two-family house on a 4,000-square foot lot. This sliding-scale regulation helps maintain maximum densities.

Four-Family Residential (R-3)

This designation allows one-, two-, three-, and four-family houses. Residences can be designed in a variety of configurations, such as townhouses, flats, "perfect fours",³ and small apartment houses with common interior corridors. The maximum permissible density is 26 units per net acre, and the minimum lot area per household is 1,500 square feet. Despite that the R-3 designation allows more units per building and a higher net density than the Two-Family Residential designation, this district is intended to have a small-scale, walkable, neighborhood character. Basic design requirements can be adopted to help ensure that new houses are consistent in scale, bulk, and character with older residences.

Garden Apartments (R-4)

In addition to one-, two-, three-, and four-family houses, this designation also allows garden apartment complexes. The maximum density is 33 units per net acre, and the minimum lot area per household is 1,200 square feet. Garden apartments are typically designed as townhouses or apartment buildings. In addition, a garden apartment complex can be designed as a campus, with housing entrances oriented to a private, off-street roadway network.

High-rise Apartments (R-5)

This designation would allow only garden apartment complexes and high-rise apartment buildings. Single-family and multi-family houses are incompatible with higher-density housing, which creates larger shadow, sight-line, and traffic impacts. The maximum density and minimum

³ Residential buildings with two units on the ground floor and two identical units on the second floor, arranged symmetrically in the building. Each unit runs from the front of the building all the way to the rear, and each has a separate outdoor front entrance.

lot area for garden apartments are the same as in the Garden Apartments designation. High-rise apartments have a maximum density of 60 units per net acre and a maximum height of 8 stories.

COMMERCIAL LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Neighborhood Business (B-1)

The purpose of this designation is to allow conveniently located corner stores, small shops, personal services, and professional offices in small nodes in residential neighborhoods. Permitted uses include convenience stores, food stores, bakeries, restaurants, cafes, ice cream parlors, hair salons, laundries, dry cleaners, florists, funeral parlors, medical offices, and small professional offices. Small-scale institutional and educational uses — such as day care facilities, clinics, and police substations — are also permitted. Consistent with some existing neighborhood retail areas, professional offices and residences would be permitted on the upper floors, but only as conditional uses. Bars, taverns, liquor stores, live entertainment, and drive-through uses (typically restaurants or banks) would be prohibited.

Commercial establishments are limited to an F.A.R. of 0.60 percent (for ground floor only), in order to be consistent with the scale of the residential neighborhood. They can only be located on the ground floor of a building. Walking is envisioned as the primary mode of access, and therefore, off-street parking is limited, and buildings must be built up to the sidewalk and have the main entrance off the sidewalk.

Shopping Center (B-2)

This designation is intended to provide residents with basic convenience shopping and services, particularly groceries, household items, and personal products. It allows for small- and moderate-sized stores in a shopping center configuration, which typically includes one large grocery store as an anchor and a series of associated smaller shops, such as drug stores, banks, and video rental stores. Parking is provided on-site and is typically located in front of the store entrances, for maximum convenience. The maximum permissible F.A.R. is set at 0.45. In order to prevent small, free-standing commercial uses from occupying land that could be used for a shopping center, a minimum building size of 10,000 square feet per acre is established.

Limited Business (B-3)

This district provides shopping opportunities in highly visible and accessible locations, particularly on major arterial roads. However, uses in this zone should still be compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhoods. To that end, auto uses (car dealerships, car washes, repair shops, gas stations) would be prohibited, because they are associated with noxious odors, engine noise, and storage of flammable materials. In addition, bars, taverns, and live entertainment would be prohibited. Drive-through windows would be permitted. The Maximum FAR is set at 0.40.

General Business (B-4)

The General Business designation is identical to the Limited Business designation, except that it also allows auto uses, bars, taverns, and live entertainment. Both shopping centers and small-scale commercial uses are permitted, and drive-through windows (commonly used for banks and fast-food restaurants) are allowed to provide drive-by motorists with quick, convenient service. The maximum permissible F.A.R. is 0.40.

Big Box Center (B-5)

The Big Box Center designation allows for large-footprint warehouse or outlet stores, as well as traditional warehouses (i.e., used for storage, shipping, or wholesale). Minimum allowable building size is 100,000 square feet, which is the smallest size typically needed for warehouse and outlet stores. The maximum FAR would be set at 0.35, with most of the remaining land area set aside for parking. A combined 100,000 square foot minimum building size and 35 percent F.A.R. suggest that a minimum six- to seven-acre site would be needed. Some lot assembly may be required in order to create a buildable site in the area designated for Big Box Center uses.

OFFICE LAND USE DESIGNATION**Residential-Character Office (O-1)**

The purpose of this designation is to provide office space for local professionals, such as doctors, dentists, lawyers, accountants, real estate agents, insurance agents, and travel agents. This new designation is assigned to areas where older houses have been converted into professional offices, particularly Sanford Avenue between Springfield and Clinton. In order to save the historic building stock in these areas, buildings converted from residential to office use are required to maintain their residential scale and character. New office buildings must be built to resemble the other homes along the street in their residential scale and character.

MIXED USE LAND USE DESIGNATION**Downtown Mixed Use (CBD)**

This designation allows a variety of compatible land uses, including retail shops; financial, business, and personal services; offices; apartments and townhouses; and schools and institutions in a compact, pedestrian-oriented setting. Auto-oriented land uses (gas stations, car dealerships, car washes, and auto repair shops) and drive-through establishments are prohibited. Restaurants would be permitted, but no drive-through windows would be allowed. Bars and live entertainment would be allowed only as accessory uses to restaurants.

The recommended F.A.R. is 1.5 to 2.0, which would allow two- to three-story buildings to be built, consistent with downtown's historic building pattern. Buildings would be subject to basic design requirements and special development standards (for signs, parking, and placement of doors and windows), in order ensure that the building fits into the well-established pedestrian-

oriented format of downtown. Lower parking requirements would be in place, in order to allow more compact development.

INDUSTRIAL LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

The three industrial districts on the future land use plan are distinguished by their levels of environmental impact. The Special Industrial district has the cleanest activity; the Light Industrial district has moderately clean activity; and the Heavy Industrial district has more heavily polluting activity that should be kept away from residential neighborhoods. All uses in the industrial districts are subject to stringent performance standards with respect to the storage of hazardous materials, radioactivity, emissions, odor, vibration, noise, and glare. In addition, all new development would be required to have off-street parking and loading facilities, in order to reduce the impact of trucking on Irvington streets.

Special Industrial (I-1)

This district is intended to provide locations for "clean" industry, which provide jobs and tax revenue with limited environmental impacts on the community. Industrial services and the manufacture of finished parts or products from previously prepared components are permitted. These types of activities include commercial bakeries, dry cleaning plants, commercial printers, and other businesses engaged in processing and assembly. However, basic processing from raw materials (i.e., paper mills, oil refineries, food processing) is prohibited. Retail sales are prohibited as well. Other permitted uses include laboratories, offices, contractor's shops and offices, and craft/artisan activities employing hand tools and small-scale equipment. The maximum F.A.R. would be 0.50.

Light Industrial (I-2)

Mapped as a buffer zone between Heavy Industrial and residential districts in the Coit Street area, this district is intended to protect neighborhoods from some of the impacts of heavy industrial activity. The district allows a wider range of manufacturing activities than in the Special Industrial district, while still prohibiting the most noxious and dangerous uses. In addition to land uses permitted in the Special Industrial district, the district allows wholesale establishments, warehouses, freight forwarding and packaging facilities, self-storage facilities, and manufacturing activities that meet performance standards. Examples of prohibited uses include acetylene gas manufacturing, foundries, junkyards, oil refining, and stone crushing. The maximum F.A.R. would be 0.50.

Heavy Industrial (I-3)

The Heavy Industrial district would allow most warehouse and manufacturing uses, provided that any potentially noxious or dangerous impact can be diverted away from residential areas. Public utilities would also be permitted. Any use that would create an unavoidable, unmitigable impact on a residential area would not be permitted. The maximum F.A.R. would be 0.60.

PUBLIC AND QUASI-PUBLIC LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Parks (P-1)

This designation includes all sites that are used for passive or active recreation, are open to the general public, and are not operated for commercial enterprise. It includes parks, playgrounds, and indoor recreational facilities. While recreational facilities may be built on these sites, non-recreational institutional buildings and private development are prohibited. Pedestrian entrances should be oriented to and lined up with surrounding streets, in order to maximize accessibility. Cemeteries are also allowed by conditional use permit, but existing parkland cannot be converted into burial grounds.

Institutional (P-2)

This designation allows for all institutional buildings, which provide services to the community. Permitted uses include municipal offices, garages, and storage; public and private schools; libraries and community centers; police stations, fire stations, and emergency-response facilities; and hospitals and clinics. Public utilities — including wastewater, power, telephone, solid waste and recycling — are prohibited, due to their potentially harmful impacts on residential areas and institutional workers and users, particularly school-age children. To the greatest possible extent, parking lots should be located off of major streets rather than residential streets, and pedestrian entrances should be oriented to and lined up with surrounding streets.

CHANGES IN THE LAND USE PLAN

Several significant changes in the land use plan were made from the 1979 Master Plan. The future land use plan recognizes the existence of functional and appropriate land uses that were non-conforming, by changing their land use designation so that they become conforming. In other instances, where the existing use was non-conforming and the continuation or expansion of the use would have deleterious land use impacts, the land use designation was not changed. The land use plan also defines new land use designations so as to encourage new development or redevelopment that may be desirable but is different from that which is presently allowed.

Because of the changes to the land use plan, some uses that are currently in keeping with Township regulations will become non-conforming under the new zoning framework. All such land uses would be "grandfathered." This means that the use would be allowed to continue, provided that it is not expanded or intensified. An intensification or expansion of the use would require a variance. If the use were abandoned for one year or more, the use could not be reestablished, and the site would have to comply with the new zoning regulations.

Residential Areas

In the public workshops held in summer 2000, community members expressed the desire to reduce the permitted residential densities in Irvington, to halt the conversion of single-family houses into apartments, and to prevent further housing abandonment and neighborhood decline.

Housing may be abandoned for a variety of reasons, including high mortgage payments or property taxes, inability to sell or lease a property, and decreasing property values. While the Master Plan cannot control mortgage or tax rates, it can help bolster property values and in doing so, help make properties easier to sell or lease.

The following changes are being made to the residential zoning in Irvington's neighborhoods. They are designed to help stabilize residential property values and reduce housing abandonment, which can improve the overall quality of life in Irvington's neighborhoods:

- Single-family residential areas with large lots are being protected from subdivision through an increase in the minimum lot size from 4,000 square feet to 5,000 square feet.
- The maximum permitted residential densities have been reduced in all districts, as shown in Table 3-3. The largest density decreases were made in the garden apartments and high-rise apartments designations, which allowed very high densities in excess of 70 units per net acre. In addition, maximum building heights in the high-rise apartment designation were reduced from 15 to 8 stories, to be more in keeping with the low-rise character of Irvington's neighborhoods.

Table 3-3. Changes in Residential Density (units per net acre)

		<i>Permitted Maximum Density</i>	
		<i>Existing¹</i>	<i>Future</i>
R-1		10	R-1-Low Density, 8 R-1, 16
R-2		20-26	20
R-3		26-33	26
R-4	1- to 5-family houses, 33-39 Garden apartments, 71		33
R-5	Garden apartments, 71 High-rise apartments, 98		60

1. Estimate based on maximum lot coverage and minimum lot area per family required by zoning.

- Single-family residential areas that have experienced illegal conversions to multifamily houses are being protected from further change by confirming their single-family residential designation. However, single-family areas that have been extensively converted into multi-family houses are being changed to either two-family residential or four-family residential designations, depending on the extent of the apartment conversions. These neighborhoods are unlikely to change back to single-family, so the new designation confirms the direction in which the neighborhood was already headed.
- Areas designated for single-family residential have been expanded. Many areas that were previously zoned for two-family, four-family, or garden apartments actually included pockets of single-family homes. These areas were changed to the single-family

- residential designation in order to prevent apartment conversions or housing abandonment.
- Land areas zoned for garden apartments and high-rise apartments were significantly reduced, in order to prevent campus-style redevelopment and protect the compact scale and moderate density of Irvington's residential neighborhoods.

Business Areas and Downtown

Irvington has two vital commercial centers (Irvington Center and the Mill Road area), but the Township's other commercial corridors have many vacant storefronts. The following changes, which have been made to the land use plan, were designed to bolster Irvington Center and the Mill Road area and to improve the commercial viability of the commercial corridors, while protecting residential areas from the impacts of commercial activity:

- A wider range of commercial land use designations has been created. The former B-1 and B-2 districts were not enough to deal with the many different types of commercial areas in Irvington, each of which has its own unique building stock, retail mix, and parking. A commercial designation was created for each type of commercial area:
 - Neighborhood Business for the small corner stores and local shops;
 - Shopping Center for community-wide shopping areas;
 - General Business and Limited General Business for corridors, and
 - Big Box for regional shopping attractions.
- Auto-oriented uses — like gas stations, car dealerships, and auto repair shops — are being confined to a few limited areas. Currently, some auto-oriented uses (new car dealerships and automobile service stations) are permitted in Irvington Center, and gas stations are permitted as conditional uses in all of the Township's other commercial areas. The new land use plan limits these uses to the General Business designation, with the intention of keeping new auto-oriented uses away from residential neighborhoods and pedestrian-oriented shopping areas. Areas that were designated General Business were areas that already had a large number of auto-oriented uses.
- A special mixed-use district was created for Irvington Center. The district is designed to protect the land use mix, character, and scale of the downtown area. It allows compact development, with shops and offices built up to the sidewalk, and prohibits auto-oriented uses and drive-through windows. However, maximum coverage should be reduced from 100 percent (as currently permitted) to not more than 75 percent, in order to allow adequate space for outdoor loading, garbage disposal, landscaping, and buffers next to residential areas.
- A new land use designation, Residential-Character Office, was created to accommodate residences that have been converted into professional offices. A long stretch of houses along Sanford Avenue has undergone conversion, for example. Such conversions are acceptable, as long as the buildings maintain a residential character that fits in with the neighborhood.

- Commercially zoned corridors have been reduced in size. Many storefronts along these corridors lie vacant, because they are too small and poorly located to be commercially viable. Some of these sites can be converted to residential or other uses.
- In a few select areas along the commercial corridors, the business zoning has been expanded to create larger potential development parcels. Modern-day retailers seek out large sites for stores in excess of 15,000 square feet in size. Parcels need to be about one acre in size in order to accommodate that size store and the necessary parking. The lack of large sites has been a deterrent for commercial development in Irvington, and the creation of larger commercial areas can create the potential for commercial redevelopment, eliminating many of the vacant storefronts and marginal stores along the corridor. To prevent encroachment into healthy residential areas, commercial expansion was targeted in areas with vacant, abandoned, or dilapidated buildings.

Industrial Areas

The Coit Street Industrial Area is a proposed Redevelopment Area, where the Township hopes to attract new investment and revitalization and spur the reuse of abandoned factories and vacant lots. The industrial area provides important tax revenue for the Township and can become an engine for future growth. The area is bordered by residential neighborhoods to the west, and in the public workshops, residents expressed concern about pollution from industrial uses.

Almost all areas currently zoned for industrial uses were confirmed and maintained as such, in order to preserve the potential for industrial redevelopment. However, to recognize the need to protect adjacent residential neighborhoods, the existing buffer area between the residences west of Coit Street and the heavy industrial uses to the east was expanded. This buffer area would still allow manufacturing activities, but would prohibit some of the heaviest polluters and would require businesses to meet the same stringent environmental standards as required in the Special Industrial district.

One other change to the industrial area was made. The Valley Fair and Pathmark sites were changed to Big Box designation, in order to allow a large retailer to take advantage of the good visibility and highway access of those properties. This change is consistent with the existing retail stores that have entered the area already to take advantage of the good location.

Public Uses

All existing public uses in Irvington have been specifically zoned for public uses, in order to protect them from future development pressure. Moreover, different public uses have been separated into different land use designations: one for parks; and the second for institutions like municipal offices, libraries, and schools. These changes are intended to confirm the permanent use of the Township's parks, recreational facilities, school sites, and municipal land for public use.

3.4 RELATIONSHIP TO MASTER PLANS IN ADJACENT JURISDICTIONS

Irvington Township shares boundaries with four other municipalities: the City of Newark to the north and east, Maplewood Township to the west, and Union and Hillside Townships to the south. Irvington shares the longest boundary with Newark, which surrounds the pointed northern end of the Township. The land use designations for areas adjacent to Irvington are shown on Figure 3-3.

Figure 3-3: Land Use Designations of Adjacent Jurisdictions, As Compared to the Future Land Use Plan

CITY OF NEWARK

Vailsburg

Generally, the Vailsburg part of Newark, north of Irvington, has compatible land use designations and existing development. These areas are predominantly zoned for R-1 First Residence (about 9 units per net acre) and R-2 Second Residence (about 29 units per net acre). These densities are generally compatible with the residential densities that are permitted on the Irvington side under the future land use plan. Major commercial corridors in this part of Newark, including Sanford Avenue, Stuyvesant Avenue, 18th Avenue, and South Orange Avenue are zoned B-2 Second Business. These zones allow not only retail uses, but also manufacturing uses that could negatively impact adjacent residential areas in both Newark and Irvington.

At the northern tip of Irvington, Vailsburg Park, the Garden State Parkway right-of-way, and the Pabst Brewery site are zoned P-1 Public, and these sites would be expected to impose little impact on Irvington. In fact, the park provides a great amenity to adjacent Irvington residents. As of January 2001, the Pabst Brewery site is undergoing a redevelopment study, and the preliminary recommendation is to create a mixed-use neighborhood center, with rental units, for-sale housing, and neighborhood retail.⁴ This sort of development would be compatible with existing uses and zoning designations in Irvington.

Pabst Brewery to Clinton Avenue

Alongside the East Ward, areas between the Pabst Brewery and Clinton Avenue in Newark have intensive residential zoning that could pose potential conflicts with Irvington's East Ward. Newark's R-3 Third Residence or District zoning allows multi-family residential development at densities of more than 180 units per net acre or townhouses, two-family houses, and three-family houses at densities of 36 to 109 units per net acre. These figures suggest a far greater potential residential density than on the Irvington side, where the R-3 and R-4 zones would allow 26 to 33 units per acre under the future land use plan. Higher density housing could impose additional traffic, drainage, and crime impacts on this part of the Township, which already suffers from such problems.

The South Orange Avenue, 16th Avenue, Springfield Avenue, and Clinton Avenue corridors in this area are zoned B-2, B-1, and B-3, and B-2 respectively on the Newark side. While the B-1 zone permits exclusively retail uses and is compatible with residential areas, both B-2 and B-3 allow manufacturing uses that could negatively impact the places where people live.

⁴ Newark Economic Development Corporation and Township of Irvington Urban Enterprise Zone, *PABST Brewery Redevelopment Report and Action Plan*, Working Draft, March 2000.

Clinton Avenue to Hillside Border

From Clinton Avenue south to the Hillside border, designations create land use incompatibilities. While areas on the Irvington side are zoned for and have been built with industrial and warehouse uses, areas on the Newark side are zoned for residential uses, including R-2, R-3, and R-4, with potential residential densities as high as 180 units per net acre. The high potential densities in these areas suggest that large populations would potentially be subject to the off-site impacts of Irvington's adjacent industrial activities.

The Chancellor Avenue, Lyons Avenue, and Hawthorne Street commercial corridors are zoned B-2 and would potentially contain some industrial and warehouse uses that would be compatible with industrial areas in Irvington. Two small areas adjacent to the Irvington border are zoned I-2 Second Industrial, which allows a wide range of heavy industrial uses, like the adjacent I-3 district in Irvington.

MAPLEWOOD TOWNSHIP

Maplewood Township, on the western side of Irvington, has very compatible land use designations with Irvington's future land use plan. Immediately north of the Union Township border, Maplewood is zoned for R-2-4 Residential Two-family and RGA Residential Garden Apartments. These moderate-density residential areas are consistent with the retail uses permitted on Stuyvesant Avenue. In fact, they provide a potential market for the Stuyvesant Avenue/Mill Road shopping area. The Maplewood side of Olympic Park has virtually identical light industrial zoning as Irvington, as a result of a joint effort by the two municipalities to develop the business park in the 1970's. The HB Highway Business designation north of Olympic Park is compatible with the general commercial uses on the Irvington side of Springfield Avenue.

On the north side of Springfield Avenue, Maplewood is zoned RO Research Office, and a NJ Transit bus facility was built on that site in the 1990's. This designation and land use is incompatible with the adjacent residential neighborhood and the Springfield commercial area west of Elmwood Street in Irvington. Farther north, Maplewood is zoned mostly R-2-4 and RGA, and a small commercial node at Clinton and Parker is zoned NB Neighborhood Business. These designations are compatible with the proposed R-2 and B-1 zoning on the Irvington side. Irvington's R-2 zoning could result in densities of about 20 units per net acre, compared to about 10 to 18 per net acre for the R-2-4 zone and 12 to 15 units per net acre for the RGA zone in Maplewood. The lower densities in Maplewood suggest that new residential development in that area would have little or no impact on Irvington neighborhoods.

UNION TOWNSHIP

Land use designations in Union Township are compatible with those in Irvington. Located south of Irvington, the Union Township border runs between the western edge of the Township and the Elizabeth River, which resurfaces on the west side of the Garden State Parkway in the southern part of Irvington. This part of Union Township is zoned for a mix of single-family and multi-family residential development (RA One-family at about 8 units per net acre, RC Multi-

family at about 20 units per net acre, and RM Multi-family at about 18 units per net acre). The Union portion of the Stuyvesant Avenue retail corridor is zoned for BB Retail Business.

These zones are consistent with the residential designations and land uses on the Irvington side. Irvington's R-4 zone allows residential development at densities of about 26 units per net acre, which is more intensive than Union, creating potential traffic or visual impacts on Union Township. Union's business zoning is consistent with the business designation and existing shops on the Irvington side

HILLSIDE TOWNSHIP

The Hillside area immediately south of Irvington is zoned entirely for HI Heavy Industrial. This is compatible with the industrial zoning and land uses that are located and planned east of Coit Street. On the west side of Coit Street, Irvington's residential areas are exposed to Hillside's industrial park. Although a light industrial zone buffers the Hillside industrial area in two small areas, Irvington's residential areas extend right up to the Hillside border. Heavy industrial activity in Hillside generates pollution, truck traffic, visual incompatibilities that negatively impact adjacent Irvington neighborhoods.

3.5 RELATIONSHIP TO STATE AND COUNTY PLANS

STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) of New Jersey was adopted by the State legislature in 1992 and updated in 1997 and 2001 to serve as a framework for guiding future growth and development. While the SDRP does not control land use or development, it provides a regional and statewide perspective on growth and conservation issues and serves as a basis for coordination among local jurisdictions and government agencies.

The SDRP divides the State geographically into five Planning Areas, ranging from Metropolitan Planning Areas (Planning Area PA-1) to Environmentally Sensitive Areas (PA-5). The PA-1 includes all major cities, including Newark, Trenton, and Camden, and the densely developed suburbs of the New York City and Philadelphia metropolitan areas. Irvington — as an intensively developed inner-ring suburb of Newark — falls into the PA-1 category.

In the Metropolitan Planning Area, the SDRP establishes the goal "to revitalize cities, stabilize older suburbs, redesign areas of sprawl, and protect the existing character of stable communities" through infrastructure improvements, job growth, housing upgrades, and brownfield redevelopment. There are several major policy objectives for PA-1. These objectives, which were revised slightly in the 2001 update, did not change significantly from the 1992 or 1997 versions:

1. *Land Use*. Promote redevelopment and development in Cores and Neighborhoods of Centers and in Nodes that have been identified through cooperative regional planning efforts. Promote the diversification of land uses, including housing where appropriate, in single-use developments, and enhance their linkages to the rest of the community.

- Ensure efficient and beneficial utilization of scarce land and resources throughout the Planning Area to strengthen its existing diversified and compact nature.
2. *Housing.* Provide a full range of housing choices through redevelopment, new construction, rehabilitation, adaptive reuse of non-residential buildings, and the introduction of new housing into appropriate non-residential settings. Preserve the existing housing stock through maintenance, rehabilitation, and flexible regulation.
 3. *Economic Development.* Promote economic development by encouraging strategic land assembly, site preparation and infill development, public/private partnerships, and infrastructure improvements that support an identified role for the community within the regional marketplace. Encourage job training and other incentives to retain and attract business. Encourage private sector investment through supportive government regulations, policies, and programs, including tax policies and expedited review of proposals that support appropriate redevelopment.
 4. *Transportation.* Maintain and enhance a transportation system that capitalizes on high-density settlement patterns by encouraging the use of public transit systems, walking, and alternative modes of transportation to reduce automobile dependency, link Centers and Nodes, and create opportunities for transit oriented redevelopment. Facilitate efficient goods movement through strategic investments and intermodal linkages. Preserve and stabilize general aviation airports and, where appropriate, encourage community economic development and promote complementary uses for airport property such as business centers.
 5. *Natural Resource Conservation.* Reclaim environmentally damaged sites and mitigate future negative impacts, particularly to waterfronts, scenic vistas, wildlife habitats, and to Critical Environmental Sites and Historic and Cultural Sites. Give special emphasis to improving air quality. Use open space to reinforce neighborhood and community identity, and protect natural linear systems, including regional systems that link into other Planning Areas.
 6. *Agriculture.* Use development and redevelopment opportunities wherever appropriate and economically feasible to meet the needs of the agricultural industry for intensive agricultural production, packaging and processing, adding value operations, marketing, exporting, and other shipping. Provide opportunities for farms, greenhouses, farmers markets and community gardens.
 7. *Recreation.* Provide maximum active and passive recreational opportunities and facilities at the neighborhood, local and regional levels by concentrating on the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing parks and open space while expanding and linking the system through redevelopment and reclamation projects.
 8. *Redevelopment.* Encourage redevelopment at intensities sufficient to support transit, a broad range of uses and efficient use of infrastructure. Promote design that enhances public safety, encourages pedestrian activity and reduces dependency on the automobile.
 9. *Historic Preservation.* Encourage the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic or significant buildings, Historic and Cultural Sites, neighborhoods and districts in ways that

will not compromise either the historic resource of the area's ability to redevelop. Coordinate historic preservation with tourism efforts.

10. *Public Facilities and Services.* Complete, repair or replace existing infrastructure systems to eliminate deficiencies and provide capacity for sustainable development and redevelopment in the region. Encourage the concentration of public facilities and services in Centers and Cores.
11. *Intergovernmental Coordination.* Regionalize as many public services as feasible and economical to enhance the cost-effective delivery of those services. Establish multi-jurisdictional policy and planning entities to guide the efforts of State, county and municipal governments to ensure compatible and coordinated redevelopment.

The Master Plan of Irvington Township endorses these policy objectives. Through the efforts of the UEZ, the Township has worked to implement this progressive vision for revitalization and improved quality of life. Some examples include the Transit Gateway project, identification of hazardous discharge sites, establishment of the Springfield Avenue Corridor and Camptown Street Special Improvement Districts (SACSID and CBID), and the proposed redevelopment of the Coit Street Industrial Area and the Pabst Brewery site.

Irvington is fortunate in that it has a traditional (compact, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented) pattern of buildings and land uses, which the State has identified as a highly sustainable and efficient pattern of residential development. It promotes walking, biking, and transit use, and it allows development of a variety of housing types that can accommodate people of all income, ages, and lifestyles. The key challenge is to ensure that revitalization efforts preserve and enhance this traditional pattern, rather than eliminating it to make way for sprawl-style development.

ESSEX COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Solid Waste Management Plan was last updated in 1987. In Essex County, municipalities are responsible for waste collection, and the County is responsible for disposal. The plan makes recommendations for both recycling and disposal.

Recycling

The plan establishes a recycling goal of 25 percent of the total municipal solid waste stream. Recycling of white office paper is required for all municipalities in the County, but this is not currently done in Irvington. In addition, urban municipalities — including East Orange, Irvington, Newark, and Orange — are required to recycle three out of four additional materials: newsprint, glass, metals, and plastics. Irvington recycles the first three of these, and plastics remain part of the waste stream. They have the choice of either conducting curbside pick-up, setting up a buy-back center collection, or doing a combination of both. Leaf and vegetation composting is strongly recommended. The County also calls for waste reduction practices, such as the use of recyclable/recycled materials, elimination of hidden recycling disincentives in County policy, promotion of recycling practices, and publicity and education.

Disposal

In the 1980's, a new Energy Recovery Facility was being planned in Newark, as the Hackensack Meadowlands Landfill was scheduled to become unavailable for solid waste generated in the County. Until the recovery facility was completed, out-of-state shipment of solid waste was proposed. In the early 1990's, the new facility was completed and opened, and it is expected to serve the County's needs for many years to come. Implementation of this Master Plan is not expected to increase the Irvington population significantly, meaning that there would be little — if any — resulting increase in waste disposal.

3.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

3-1: Update the Township's zoning code and zoning map to reflect the Future Land Use Plan (Figure 3-1) and the land use designations discussed in this chapter. The zoning code should include the following updates:

- *3-1-A: Protect single-family residential areas with large lots from subdivision by increasing the minimum lot size from 4,000 square feet to 5,000 square feet.*
- *3-1-B: Reduce maximum permitted residential densities in all residential districts, as shown in Tables 3.2 and 3.3.*
- *3-1-C: Reduce the maximum permitted height of development in the R-5 High-rise Apartments zone, to better fit into the low-rise character of Irvington's neighborhoods.*
- *3-1-D: As shown on Figure 3-2, rezone single-family areas that have been extensively converted into multifamily houses into either R-2 Two-family Residential or R-3 Four-family Residential designations, depending on the extent of the apartment conversions.*
- *3-1-E: As shown on Figure 3-2, expand land areas zoned for R-1 and R-1-L Single-Family Residential.*
- *3-1-F: As shown on Figure 3-2, reduce land areas zoned for R-4 Garden Apartments and R-5 High-rise Apartments.*
- *3-1-G: As discussed in this chapter, create a wider range of commercial land use designations, to reflect the different types of commercial areas in Irvington.*
- *3-1-H: As shown on Figure 3-2, confine auto-oriented uses — like gas stations, car dealerships, and auto repair shops — to limited areas along major vehicular corridors, away from residential neighborhoods and pedestrian-oriented shopping areas like Irvington Center.*
- *3-1-I: As shown on Figure 3-2, rezone Irvington Center as a special mixed-use district, which protects the existing land use mix, character, and scale of the area and encourages compatible development in the future.*
- *3-1-J: Establish a new land use designation, Residential-Character Office, to accommodate residences that have been converted into professional offices and to allow such conversions to continue.*
- *3-1-K: As shown on Figure 3-2, reduce the land area zoned for commercial development along the Township's major vehicular corridors.*

- *3-1-L: In a few select areas along the Township's commercial corridors, as shown on Figure 3-2, expand the land area zoned for commercial development, in order to create larger potential development parcels.*
- *3-1-M: As shown on Figure 3-2, maintain industrial zoning in the Coit Street Industrial Area, but expand the existing buffer area between residential and industrial uses.*
- *3-1-N: As shown on Figure 3-2, rezone the Valley Fair and Pathmark sites for Big Box, in order to allow a large retailer to take advantage of the good visibility and highway access of those properties.*
- *3-1-O: As shown on Figure 3-2, rezone all sites open to the public (Township facilities, public parks, schools, hospitals, etc.) so that they are specifically zoned for public use.*

3-2: Increase enforcement of zoning regulations, particularly illegal uses and illegal conversion of single- and two-family residences into multiple dwellings.

3-3: Work with adjacent municipalities to ensure a smooth transition between adjacent land uses and development intensities along the Irvington borders.

3-4: Continue to strive toward the policy objectives established for Irvington in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

3-5: Continue to adhere to recycling parameters outlined in the County's Solid Waste Management Plan.

3-6: Strengthen zoning provisions regulating commercial signage, such that signage does not contribute to visual clutter or blight, and such that the size, scale, and design of signs are in keeping with the character of the surrounding commercial and residential areas.

- *3-6-A: Prohibit roof-mounted signs and billboards in all commercial districts.*
- *3-6-B: Explore the feasibility of amortizing existing roof signs and billboards throughout the Township.*
- *3-6-C: Prohibit large, roadside free-standing signs in the CBD and B-1 zones.*

3-7: Add Urban Design Guidelines to the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that all new construction fits in as well as reflects the physical context (building form and character) of the surrounding area.

4 Housing

In 1985, the New Jersey Legislature enacted the *Fair Housing Act*. This law was a response to the various *Mount Laurel* court decisions that held that all New Jersey municipalities must provide a realistic opportunity for the construction of low- and moderate-income housing. The State's Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) was created by the *Fair Housing Act* to provide a regulatory framework for this constitutional obligation. Located in the southern part of Essex County, Irvington lies within the Northwest Housing Region of New Jersey as determined by COAH. This region includes Essex, Morris, Union, and Warren Counties.

The objective of this Housing Element is to demonstrate how the Township of Irvington has provided for its fair share of affordable housing in accordance with the intentions of the New Jersey Supreme Court in the *Mount Laurel* decisions as implemented by the *Fair Housing Act*. This element provides an inventory of Irvington's housing and population and describes how the Township has addressed its fair share obligation.

4.1 HOUSING, DEMOGRAPHIC, AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

INVENTORY OF HOUSING STOCK

Detailed housing information from the 2000 census was not available as of September 2001. Thus, this Element primarily presents information from the 1990 U.S. Census and supplements that information with some figures from the 2000 Census, as well as State and County sources, wherever additional data was available. Because there was little residential development in the Township between 1990 and 1999, information from the 1990 U.S. Census provides a generally up-to-date picture of the housing stock in 2000.

Irvington has relatively old housing. According to the 1990 Census, more than 90 percent of the housing stock was built before 1970, as shown in Table 4-1. After 1970, housing construction dropped off considerably, primarily because of the lack of vacant land, but also because of the changing demographic and development patterns. Although housing construction slowed down, it did not stop altogether. Between 1990 and 2000, the total number of housing units increased by 324. This number is *not* the same as the total number of housing units that were built in the 1990s. The number built must have been even greater, in order to offset the number of the housing units that were demolished since 1990 as well. Assuming that 25 to 75 units were demolished, based on Township estimates, the number of new dwelling units built between 1990 and 2000 was approximately 350 to 400 dwelling units.

From 1990 to 1999, 84 residential construction permits were issued in the Township, as shown in Table 4-2. Of this total, only 62 permits were for single-family development. This suggests that the remaining dwelling units built in the 1990s (about 290 to 340 units) were multi-family units. Development of such multifamily housing is consistent with the Township's current mix of dwelling types.

Table 4-1: Age of Housing Stock Township of Irvington, New Jersey, 1990

<i>Year Unit Constructed</i>	<i>Number of Units</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1939 or earlier	7,044	29.6%
1940-1949	4,236	17.8%
1950-1959	5,998	25.2%
1960-1969	4,378	18.4%
1970-1979	1,442	6.1%
1980-1989	694	2.9%
Total, 1990	23,792	100.0%
Total, 2000	24,116	

Sources: U.S. Census, 1990 and 2000.

Table 4-2: Building Permits Issued Township of Irvington, New Jersey, 1990-1999

<i>Year</i>	<i>Single-Family</i>	<i>Multi-Family</i>	<i>Total</i>
1990	5	0	5
1991	8	2	10
1992	8	8	16
1993	19	8	27
1994	1	2	3
1995	6	2	8
1996	0	0	0
1997	13	0	13
1998	2	0	2
1999	0	0	0
Total	62	22	84

Source: New Jersey Department of Labor, Office of Labor Planning and Analysis

Irvington has a varied mix of dwelling types. As shown in Table 4-3, the majority of the dwelling units in the Township are found in small apartment buildings of three or more units. According to the 1990 Census, about 16 percent of the housing units were single-family detached dwellings, 3 percent were single-family attached dwellings (i.e., townhouses), and 22 percent were in two-family homes, but a whopping 58 percent were in buildings with three or more units. Since most units built in the 1990s were classified as "multi-family", and since so few units were built in that period, this general pattern did not change significantly between 1990 and 2000.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, about one-quarter of all the occupied dwelling units in Irvington are owner-occupied. As shown in Table 4-4, this percentage dropped slightly from 1990 to 2000, while the number of renter-occupied units increased. Many residents have continued to move out of the Township, renting out their former homes, reflecting the ongoing

pattern of disinvestment. The vacancy rate remained relatively constant between 1990 and 2000, hovering at just less than 9 percent.

Table 4-3: Distribution of Housing Units by Type Township of Irvington, New Jersey, 1990

<i>Units in Structure</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1 unit - detached	3,800	16.0%
1 unit - attached	641	2.7%
2 units	5,251	22.1%
3 to 4 units	5,170	21.7%
5 to 9 units	1,868	7.9%
10 to 19 units	2,300	9.7%
20 to 49 units	2,145	9.0%
50 or more units	2,312	9.7%
Other	305	1.3%
Total	23,792	100.0%

Source: 1990 U.S. Census

Table 4-4: Housing Characteristics Township of Irvington, New Jersey, 1990-2000

	<i>1990</i>		<i>2000</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Occupied Housing				
Owner-Occupied	7,061	29.7%	6,552	27.2%
Renter-Occupied	14,632	61.5%	15,480	64.2%
Vacant Housing Units	2,099	8.8%	2,084	8.6%
Total Housing Units	23,792	100.0%	24,116	100.0%

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

The 1990 median dwelling unit value in the Township is significantly lower than that in Essex County as a whole, but median contract rent was somewhat higher, as shown in Table 4-5. The table shows data from 1990. As of September 2001, the U.S. Census Bureau had not reported on unit values and contract rents from the 2000 census. However, there is some anecdotal evidence that housing values and rents remain quite low in Irvington. Currently, there are single-family houses with 2 to 3 bedrooms available for rent in Irvington for about \$1,000 per month. Asking prices for some single-family houses range from about \$100,000 and \$150,000, and final selling

prices for many houses are less than \$100,000, which is considered extremely low in comparison to the county as a whole, the state, and New York metropolitan region.⁵

Table 4-5: Median Unit Value and Median Contract Rent, 1990

	<i>Irvington</i>	<i>Essex County</i>
Median Unit Value	\$117,000	\$196,100
Median Contract Rent	\$501	\$461

Source: 1990 U.S. Census

The condition of Irvington's housing stock is variable. There are areas of the East Ward and the South Ward that have suffered extreme abandonment and disinvestment, resulting in severely dilapidated housing. Many of the houses in those two wards, particularly in the area adjacent to the Newark border, have become so badly deteriorated that they are fire hazards. The Township has been working to board up those structures and to demolish them. Many areas of the Township, however, have very attractive and well-maintained homes, not only in the West and North Wards, but also in areas of the East and South Wards.

According to a buildings survey conducted in 2000, the Township determined that there were 275 abandoned buildings in all four wards. Of these, 138 (about half) were determined to have "dangerous" or "hazardous" conditions. These figures include both commercial and residential buildings, but based on field surveys of the Township, the majority of dilapidated buildings were originally residential in use. Abandoned and dilapidated housing also has the potential for degrading the quality of adjacent homes, because they attract criminal activity and accumulate garbage, which attracts rodents and vermin. In addition, housing abandonment in one part of the block or neighborhood depresses the values of occupied housing in other parts of the block or neighborhood. Housing abandonment is one reason why housing values and rents in the Township are generally so low, compared to other towns.

Nevertheless, despite the severity of the abandonment problem, the number of vacant and dilapidated housing was lower in 2000 than in 1995. The number of vacant buildings was reduced by about 25 percent between 1995 and 2000, and the number of "hazardous" and "dangerous" buildings was reduced by about 13 percent. There are several reasons for the improvement. First, a number of houses and apartment buildings have undergone rehabilitation. Second, some of the buildings listed as "hazardous" or "dangerous" in 1995 were demolished. Third, the booming economy in the late 1990's slightly bolstered the rental market in the Township. This effect was not enormous — vacancy rates and numbers of abandoned housing remained extremely high — but it did contribute to the trend of less abandonment.

⁵ Informal search of classified ads in the *The Star-Ledger*, September 20, 2001

Irvington's housing stock has experienced a great deal of turnover in recent years. That is, many residents have recently moved into their homes. Table 4-6 shows that in 1990, about 50 percent of the households had moved into their units over the course of the prior 10 years. As of September 2001, information on housing tenure was not yet released from the 2000 U.S. census. It is unknown whether or not this trend continued through the 1990s. It is unclear what factors were causing this rapid turn-over of housing units, but it may partially reflect the trend of housing abandonment and disinvestment. As neighborhoods in the East and South Wards were afflicted by crime and abandonment, some residents living in those neighborhoods may have moved into other parts of the Township. As homeowners are replaced by renters, moreover, turnover tends to increase, because renters are more likely than homeowners to move from one year to the next.

Table 4-6: Households by Tenure, 1990

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Moved in 1969 or Earlier	2,781	12.8%
Moved in 1970 to 1979	3,887	17.9%
Moved in 1980 to 1988	11,095	51.2%
Moved in 1989 to March 1990	3,930	18.1%
Total	21,693	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census, 1990

PROJECTION OF HOUSING STOCK

Irvington has no large tracts of vacant land available for new residential development. A significant amount of the Township's residential development over the past few decades has been the result of infill development and the demolition/replacement of existing development. Future building activity will be limited to this type of development as well. As is shown by the figures in Table 4-2, the number of residential building permits issued in Irvington in the 1990s was significantly lower than the number of dwelling units in the Township that were constructed in the 1970s or 1980s. There are limited opportunities for new residential construction. With the exception of the rehabilitation of existing vacant dwelling units, the Township's housing stock is unlikely to undergo any significant changes in the coming years.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

As shown in Table 4-7, the population of Irvington Township increased minimally between 1990 and 2000, from 59,744 to 60,695. There was a similarly small increase in the number of households in the Township between 1990 and 2000. The average household size decreased minimally from 2.76 to 2.75.

Table 4-7: Population, Households and Household Size Township of Irvington, New Jersey, 1990-2000

	<i>Population</i>		<i>Change, 1990-2000</i>	
	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Total Population	59,774	60,695	921	1.5%
Number of Households	21,693	22,032	339	1.6%
Average Household Size	2.76	2.75	-0.01	-0.4%

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Table 4-8 shows that the population cohorts with increases between 1990 and 2000 were children under 5 years old, children 5 to 14 year old, and adults 45 to 64 years old. The largest percentage increase was among residents aged 45 to 64, who increased by over 27%. These trends reflect the aging of the baby boom generation into late middle age, and the maturation of their children into teenagers. The largest percentage decrease was in the number of residents aged sixty-five (65) and older, suggesting that elderly people are moving out of town when they reach retirement.

Table 4-8: Age Distribution of the Population Township of Irvington, New Jersey, 1990-2000

<i>Age Cohort</i>	<i>1990</i>		<i>2000</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Under 5	4,559	7.6%	4,891	8.1%
5 to 14	8,648	14.5%	9,488	15.6%
15 to 24	9,143	15.3%	9,100	15.0%
25 to 44	21,527	36.0%	19,618	32.3%
45 to 64	10,250	17.1%	13,022	21.5%
65 to 84	4,994	8.4%	4,069	6.7%
85 and older	653	1.1%	507	0.8%
Total	59,774	100.0%	60,695	100.0%

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Also, there were slightly more women than men in the Township in 2000 (53 percent female, versus 47 percent male). This is virtually identical to national and statewide breakdowns. The slightly larger proportion of women is largely explained by the shorter life expectancy among men.

As shown in Table 4-9, the median household income in Irvington in 1990 was \$30,580, and in 2000, the estimated median income was \$40,922. When accounting for inflation, the Township's median household income decreased slightly between 1989 and 1999. However, per capita income increased slightly, because of slightly smaller household sizes.

Table 4-9: Median Household Income and Per Capita Income, 1989-1999

	1989	1989 <i>adjusted</i>	1999
Median	\$ 30,580	\$ 41,077	\$ 40,922
Per Capita	\$ 12,998	\$ 17,459	\$ 18,211

Source: 1990 U.S. Census and Claritas, Inc.

Table 4-10 shows that in 1999, about 60 percent of the Township's households had incomes of less than \$50,000. On average, there are about 2 to 3 persons in each household in Irvington. Households of that size, based on Table 4-11, have COAH moderate income limits of \$ 47,360 to \$53,280. Thus, as much as 60 percent of all households in the Township could fall into COAH's definition of a low- or moderate-income household, assuming a household size of 2 to 3 people.

Table 4-10: Households by Household Income Levels, 1999

<i>Household Income</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Less than \$10,000	2,137	9.7%
\$10,000 to \$19,999	2,754	12.5%
\$20,000 to \$29,999	2,798	12.7%
\$30,000 to \$49,999	5,684	25.8%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	4,517	20.5%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	2,115	9.6%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	1,476	6.7%
\$150,000 and Higher	529	2.4%
Total	22,032	100.0%

Source: Claritas, Inc.

Table 4-11: Income Limits for Low and Moderate Income Households in COAH Region 2 (Essex, Morris, Union, and Warren Counties)

	<i>Median</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Low</i>
1 person	\$ 51,800	\$ 41,440	\$ 25,900
1.5 person	\$ 55,500	\$ 44,400	\$ 27,750
2 person	\$ 59,200	\$ 47,360	\$ 29,600
3 person	\$ 66,600	\$ 53,280	\$ 33,300
4 person	\$ 74,000	\$ 59,200	\$ 37,000
4.5 person	\$ 76,960	\$ 61,568	\$ 38,480
5 person	\$ 79,920	\$ 63,936	\$ 39,960
6 person	\$ 85,840	\$ 68,672	\$ 42,920
7 person	\$ 91,760	\$ 73,408	\$ 45,880
8 person	\$ 97,680	\$ 78,144	\$ 48,840

Maximum Increase	
Rents	3.6%
Sales	4.8%

Source: Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) 2001 Regional Income Limits, Adopted May 2, 2001, <www.state.nj.us/dca/coah/>.

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

According to Table 4-12, more than 70 percent of Irvington's residents over the age of fifteen were in the labor force according to the 1990 Census, while the Township's unemployment rate was about 6 to 7 percent. The unemployment rate dropped from 7.1% to 6.3% between 1990 and 1998, reflecting the economic boom of the late 1990s. However, Irvington still had higher unemployment than Essex County, the State, and all the adjacent municipalities except Newark.

Table 4-12: Characteristics of the Labor Force Township of Irvington, New Jersey, 1990

Number of Persons 16 and over	45,768
Labor Force Participation Rate	70.8%
Not in Labor Force	13,372
In Civilian Labor Force:	32,396
- employed	29,191
- unemployed	3,205
Unemployment Rate	7.1%

Source: 1990 U.S. Census

As shown in Table 4-13, more than one-third of employed residents were employed in technical, sales, and administrative support occupations. A significant number of residents also worked as machine operators, fabricators, or laborers, as well as managers and professionals. Also, most employed residents worked in the services (46%), manufacturing (18%), and retail (13%) sectors of the economy.

Table 4-13: Occupation of Employed Persons (16 Years and Older) in the Township of Irvington, New Jersey, 1990

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Managerial and Professional	5,308	18.2%
Technical, Sales and Administrative Support	10,383	35.6%
Service	4,712	16.1%
Farming, Forestry and Fishing	128	0.4%
Precision Production, Craft and Repair	2,628	9.0%
Machine Operators, Fabricators and Laborers	6,032	20.7%

Total	29,191	100.0%
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Source: 1990 U.S. Census

4.2 DETERMINATION OF TOWNSHIP'S FAIR SHARE OBLIGATION

New Jersey's *Fair Housing Act* of 1985 requires that each municipality prepare a Housing Element as part of its Master Plan. This element must include a determination of the municipality's present and prospective fair share of low- and moderate-income housing, and its capacity to accommodate the present and prospective need.

In 1986, the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) adopted Substantive Regulations which included a methodology for calculating the fair share obligation of each municipality in New Jersey for the six-year period between 1987 and 1993. In 1993, however, COAH adopted new substantive rules and modified its methodology with respect to calculating each municipality's fair share obligation for the so-called full 12-year cycle (i.e., between 1987 and 1999). The Township of Irvington was assigned a fair share obligation of 223 units for the 1987-1999 period. The Township's fair share obligation is derived from the addition of three numbers:

1. Indigenous Need — deficient housing units occupied by low- and moderate-income households within the municipality;
2. Reallocation of Present Need — a share of the housing region's present need (deteriorated units) that is distributed to growth areas in the region (in other words, the municipality's share of excess deteriorated units in the housing region)⁶; and
3. Prospective Need — a municipality's share of future households that will be low- and moderate-income, and therefore require affordable housing.

Table 4-14 provides a calculation of the Township's fair share obligation, and shows how COAH allows adjustments to the derived number on the basis of demolition, filtering, conversions and rehabilitation. "Indigenous need" is calculated by COAH through a complex formulation of "surrogate" factors derived from the 1990 Census, including the year a structure was built, the number of persons per room (as an index of overcrowding) and the adequacy of plumbing facilities, kitchen facilities, heating, sewer service, and water supply.

The number of deteriorated units presumed by COAH to exist in Irvington is 533. COAH's rules permit any spontaneous rehabilitation, i.e., a low- or moderate-income household's own rehabilitation, to be credited against this figure. COAH's Municipal Number Summary indicates that zero units have been rehabilitated in Irvington, leaving the indigenous need for the Township at 533 units.

"Reallocated Present Need" is the portion of present need for low- and moderate-income housing in Region 2 (Essex, Morris, Union, and Warren Counties) allocated to Irvington. (The

⁶ Irvington is part of a four-county region comprised of Essex, Morris, Union, and Warren Counties known as "Region 2" (Northwest).

total present need is first calculated for the four counties and then redistributed to each municipality based upon a variety of factors, such as relative wealth, amount of vacant land, etc.) In Irvington's case, the reallocated present need is zero units, as it is a State-designated Urban Aid Municipality.

"Prospective Need" represents a projection of low- and moderate-income housing needs based on the development and growth that is likely to occur in the municipality. Again, as an Urban Aid Municipality, the projection of prospective need in Irvington for the present (1993 to 1999) cycle is zero units and its prospective need for the first cycle (1987 to 1993) is zero units. Thus, for the two-cycle period, the prospective need number is zero units.

COAH stipulates several adjustments to the reallocated present need and prospective need, zero units, to determine the total present credited need that a municipality must address. First, COAH assumes that a certain number of existing low- and moderate-income housing units will be demolished. In Irvington's case, the projected demolition is 76 units. This number must be added to the previous need number to compensate for the loss. Second, COAH assumes that the inventory of low- and moderate-income housing will increase through the process of filtering (units which heretofore are occupied by persons whose income is above 80% of the median income will filter down to low- and moderate-income families), and through conversions (units of low- and moderate-income housing created through the conversion of other buildings or uses). Since these add to the inventory of low- and moderate-income housing, they may be deducted from the reallocated present need and prospective need. COAH assumes that 222 units of low- and moderate-income housing have been created through filtering, and 158 through conversions. Also, six rehabilitated units are assumed to be added to the stock of affordable housing.

As shown in Table 4-14, the Township's adjusted, reallocated present and prospective need is -304 units. When added to the 533-unit indigenous need obligation, Irvington's total pre-credited need is 223 units.

Table 4-14: Calculation of the Township of Irvington's Pre-Credited Need, 1987-1999

	<i>Total Need</i>	<i>Pre-Credited Need</i>
Actual deteriorated units	533	
Less: Spontaneous rehabilitation	<u>0</u>	<u> </u>
Indigenous Need	533	
Reallocated Present Need	0	
Current Cycle Prospective Need	0	
Prior Cycle Prospective Need	<u>0</u>	
Subtotal	533	
Adjustments:		
Plus: Demolitions	76	
Less: Filtering	(222)	
Less: Conversions	(158)	
Less: Rehabilitation	<u>(6)</u>	

Subtotal	(304)
Adjusted Reallocated Present and Prospective Need	<u>(304)</u>
Total Pre-Credited Need	223

Source: New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing

CREDITS AGAINST IRVINGTON'S FAIR SHARE OBLIGATION

COAH permits a municipality to be credited with low- and moderate-income housing units which have been created or rehabilitated in the municipality at certain periods of time. All substandard units occupied by low- and moderate-income families that have been rehabilitated since April 1, 1980 and for which the rehabilitation work itself exceeds \$8,000 per unit (on average) can be used as a credit against the indigenous need calculation. Credits are given for units that are rehabilitated through the Comprehensive Housing Rehabilitation Program, which utilizes Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. COAH also provides credits for new housing units built for and occupied by low- and moderate-income families since April 1, 1980. COAH also allows credits for some types of senior housing and other "alternative" housing that typically caters to people of lower income groups.

PREPARATION OF THE FAIR SHARE HOUSING PLAN

Upon the adoption of this Master Plan, the Township will have to prepare a Fair Share Housing Plan in order to meet State requirements. This Element in and of itself does *not* constitute the Township's Fair Share Housing Plan. In addition to the information provided in this element, the Fair Share Housing Plan must go further in the analysis of the Township's housing obligation.

First, the Township will need to prepare an inventory of the housing units that can be credited toward its pre-credited need. The Township is not automatically required to build the 233 units of housing calculated in Table 4-14. Some of the affordable housing units in the Township that were built after 1980 can be credited toward the "need" figure, thereby reducing it. After calculating those credits and the Township's total housing obligation, the Township must also identify potential sites for the development of affordable housing.

Luckily, the Township has numerous vacant lots scattered throughout the Township, which can be used for the development of affordable housing. One obvious place to concentrate affordable housing is in the East Ward and South Ward, where many older residential buildings have been abandoned and the neighborhoods have experienced a dramatic reduction in their housing stock. The concentration of new housing in those areas would be consistent with the provisions of the Land Use Element (Chapter 3) and the Economic Plan Element (Chapter 5), which call for the redevelopment of areas near the Township's eastern border with Newark. In addition, there may be many, smaller, scattered sites throughout the Township that may be suitable for affordable housing.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

4-1: Prepare a Fair Share Housing Plan that meets all relevant State requirements and that is consistent with the provisions of this Master Plan.

4-2: Conduct an inventory of housing built after 1980 that can be credited toward the Township's fair share housing obligation.

4-3: Continue to provide adequate affordable housing for Irvington residents.

4-4: Encourage and increase homeownership through new construction, rehabilitation and homeowner assistance.

4-5: Focus the construction of new affordable housing in neighborhoods that have been depleted of their housing stock through abandonment and/or demolition, particularly in the East Ward and the South Ward.

4-6: Identify sites in all wards that could potentially be used for the development of affordable housing.

5 Economic Plan Element

Economic development is a top priority of the Township. However, the Township does not have a traditional Economic Development or Planning Department. Economic development activities are primarily handled by the Urban Enterprise Zone (UEZ) office, which was created in 1996. Consultants handle other planning-related functions. The UEZ has been working to bolster the economic viability of Irvington Center and the Coit Street Industrial Area through a number of strategies. The Township has numerous assets — an extensive transportation network, a central location in the region, a vibrant downtown, and a large industrial base — that can be used to attract businesses, create jobs, and generate additional tax revenue for the community.

The Township and the UEZ recognize that economic development is not just a matter of luring businesses throughout tax incentives and other inducements. It is also a matter of improving the Township's image, so that business leaders have confidence that Irvington is a safe, attractive, convenient, and profitable place to do business. Improving the Township's image is a multi-faceted task that requires a combination of marketing (by private business owners), improved zoning provisions for landscaping, signs, and enforcement (by the Township), and ongoing stewardship and maintenance of business districts (by both).

This chapter describes the Township's and the UEZ's major revitalization initiatives in recent years and reports on the status of those projects. Also, potential zoning proposals that can help supplement these ongoing programs are discussed.

5.1 UEZ AREAS

The Urban Enterprise Zone (UEZ) is a State designation, through the Department of Commerce and Economic Development, to foster economic development in distressed communities in New Jersey. Benefits include reduced sales tax, employment opportunities for residents, and quality of life and public safety improvements. When the UEZ was established in 1996, its area included all the commercially and industrially zoned areas in the Township, including the Coit Street Industrial Area, Irvington Center, and the areas along Springfield Avenue and other corridors. The 1999 *Strategic Vision and Revitalization Study for the UEZ* made recommendations for improving and forming a business improvement district for the Coit Street Industrial Area and the commercial areas throughout the Township. These recommendations have served as the basis for UEZ initiatives.

COIT STREET INDUSTRIAL AREA

The Coit Street Industrial Area is home to major employers that report hundreds of millions of dollars in annual sales. They create hundreds of jobs, generate critical tax revenue, and inject money into the local economy. However, the area has not achieved its full potential. It suffers from building vacancies, high crime, and a poor image. The *Study* recommends creating a non-

profit management corporation that would manage the industrial area as an industrial park. The corporation would undertake the following services and tasks:

- Nighttime security;
- Cleaning (particularly of vacant lots);
- Gateway improvements and maintenance (landscaped areas and signage);
- Trailblazing signage;
- Marketing and financial incentives for expansion and construction;

The *Study* also calls upon the Township to prepare a Redevelopment Plan, which would guide changes in circulation, land development, and other value-enhancing improvements.

IRVINGTON CENTER AND THE COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

While Irvington Center has few retail vacancies and a healthy retail market, other commercial areas suffer from vacancies, deteriorated buildings, poor visibility, poor image, and low pedestrian circulation. The *Study* found that Irvington suffers from sales leakage in all store categories except drug stores. "Leakage" means that residents living in Irvington actually leave the community to do their shopping. Furniture stores, restaurants, clothing stores, and food stores reported the greatest leakage. The *Study* outlines several strategies for improving retail areas throughout the Township, as a way of encouraging residents to do their shopping in town. These strategies are discussed in the following paragraphs.

The *Study* recommends improving the "curb appeal" of shopping areas, that is, improving the look of storefronts in order to be appealing to customers. Specific strategies include the improvement and maintenance of vacant lots; an increase in zoning enforcement; establishment of a fund to demolish abandoned and deteriorated buildings; improvement of signage and fencing standards in the zoning code (no billboards; no chain-link fencing); and graffiti-abatement and painting of solid security gates and buildings. Implementation of these goals would require a joint effort by the Township and private property owners in the business areas.

Other recommendations are as follows:

- Fill vacancies through a unified marketing program;
- Install signs advertising the 3% UEZ sales tax;
- Install pedestrian-scale lighting;
- Convert obsolete retail space to office or residential use;
- Plan and implement specific improvements for each commercial node;
- Develop "niche" markets in targeted areas, such as clothing stores in Irvington Center or antique stores in the Mill Road-Stuyvesant Avenue area;
- Continue the Township's foreclosure-auction program, which is aimed at encouraging redevelopment in tax-delinquent properties. Demand that buyers reimburse the Township for demolition costs, if applicable.

- Implement physical improvements along Springfield Avenue, including façade and sign guidelines, improved pedestrian crossings, landscaping, directional signs, a parking plan, gateway features, and a lighting plan.

CHANGES IN THE UEZ BOUNDARIES

The UEZ boundaries were originally drawn to include all of the properties in the Township zoned as either "Business" or "Industrial". Because the future land use plan (see Chapter 3) alters the boundaries of those zones, the UEZ boundaries would be altered as well. The business-zoned areas in many parts of the Township have been reduced in size, thereby removing many properties from the UEZ. The new boundaries of the UEZ are shown on Figure 5-1.

This change is not expected to cause a major disruption in UEZ efforts. Most of parcels removed from the UEZ are found in the small commercial nodes and along some of the commercial corridors outside of downtown. The areas that have been the focus of UEZ activity — downtown and the industrial area — have been minimally impacted by this change.

5.2 COIT STREET INDUSTRIAL AREA

There has been renewed business interest in the Coit Street Industrial Area in recent years. The Township has been approached by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to redevelop portions of the Coit Street Industrial Area with a variety of airport-related warehouse and commercial enterprises. Many of the individual property owners in the area have also expressed an interest in rehabilitating their buildings or expanding their operations. The Township has been working closely with these entities in order to encourage the overall revitalization of the area.

In December 2000, the Township Council determined that one part of the Coit Street Industrial Area was an "area in need of redevelopment" under New Jersey law. This area included the block bounded by Coit Street, Lyons Avenue, Chancellor Avenue and the Newark border.⁷ Designation of this superblock as a redevelopment area allows the Township to take action toward the redevelopment of the area, in cooperation with local property owners and businesses. In 2001, the Township hired a consultant to consider expansion of the redevelopment area to include the entire Coit Street Industrial Area. This proposal will be presented to the Planning Board in early 2002.

Figure 5-1: Revised UEZ Area

⁷ School DePalma for The Township of Irvington, Essex County, New Jersey, *Coit Street Industrial Area: Redevelopment Investigation: Statement of Preliminary Findings*, July 2000.

In March 2001, Irvington and Essex County entered into an Inter-Local Service Agreement to achieve joint goals and objectives to support job growth, further develop business opportunities, enhance the local tax bases, and the improve the quality of life in the Coit Street Industrial Area. The partnership is intended to maximize the availability and eligibility of financial assistance through State and Federal programs.

CAMPTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Building off of the recommendations of the 1999 *Strategic Vision and Revitalization Study for the Urban Enterprise Zone*, the UEZ assisted in establishing a Special Improvement District (SID) in the Coit Street Industrial Area, called the Camptown Business Improvement District (CBID). As shown on Figure 5-2, the CBID includes all blocks located south of Clinton Avenue, east of Grove Street (between Clinton Avenue and Welland Avenue), and east of Coit Street (south of Welland Avenue). The CBID has started to take on the tasks outlined for it in the *Study*, such as nighttime security, cleaning and image-building, improvement of gateway features, installation of directional signage, and marketing. A five percent additional tax will be levied on each property in order to pay for improvements to the industrial area.⁸ The CBID received \$200,000 from the UEZ in 2001, its first year of operation.

NEW DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

In early 2001, the Economic Development Department of Port Authority hired a consultant to develop a concept plan for the Coit Street/I-78 Industrial Area. The study, undertaken as part of Port Authority's Local Assistance Program, sought to identify the potential of Irvington's Coit Street Industrial Area for use for a variety of Port Authority activities. The Port Authority was interested in the Coit Street Industrial Area, partly because it has excellent access from I-78 and is strategically located eight miles from Newark International Airport and ten miles from the Ports of Newark and Elizabeth.

The Port Authority's draft report of September 2001 concludes that a strong redevelopment potential exists. To take advantage of Irvington's proximity to the passenger and freight hubs, the report recommends that blighted uses should be eliminated, roadway access should be improved (such as a new I-78 interchange), the existing rail line should be decommissioned, redevelopment plans be established, and contaminated sites be cleaned-up. The study is under review by the Township and the Port Authority.

⁸ Moniz, Larry, "Pushing Back Against Crime and Grime," *Business News*, June 25, 2001.

Figure 5-2: Camptown Business Improvement District

FOREIGN TRADE ZONE

The business community within the Coit Street Industrial Area and members of the CBID started to discuss the feasibility of having the industrial area designated a Foreign Trade Zone, which are zones designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce and operated under the supervision of the U.S. Customs Service. Foreign Trade Zones are treated as though they are located outside U.S. Customs Territory. Import duties on merchandise, while in these zones, can be deferred, reduced, or in some cases eliminated. Therefore, there is substantial savings to be realized through zone usage. Irvington's proximity to Newark International Airport, the Ports of Newark Elizabeth, and I-78 makes the Coit Street Industrial Area an excellent location for a Foreign Trade Zone.

5.3 IRVINGTON CENTER AND SPRINGFIELD AVENUE

In addition to designating Irvington Center and Springfield Avenue as UEZ areas, the Township and the UEZ have put forth numerous proposals for improving the business climate in Irvington Center and along Springfield Avenue. The improvements are intended to improve the accessibility and attractiveness of the center and corridor as shopping destinations. Recommendations include improving facades and landscaping and systematizing circulation patterns, access, and parking.

SPRINGFIELD AVENUE CORRIDOR BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

The Springfield Avenue Corridor Business Improvement District (SACBID) was established in 1997 and includes businesses fronting on Springfield Avenue, Clinton Ave, Nye Ave, and nearby side streets in the downtown area. Properties included in the SACBID are shown on Figure 5-3. The SACBID was established in order to bring business owners together to join forces with the Township in improvements to the Springfield Avenue corridor.

The SACBID is playing a critical role in the physical redevelopment of downtown. It has the authority to fund the rehabilitation of commercial properties in the SACBID and to accept, purchase, rehabilitate, sell, lease, or manage property in the SACBID. The SACBID can also undertake physical improvements to landscaping, parking, and recreational facilities. The SACBID is able to manage the downtown area as if it were a shopping mall, developing the business climate, marketing the stores and their products, and providing a safe, convenient, and attractive shopping experience for customers. More specifically, the SACBID can provide supplemental security, sanitation, and other services; coordinate publicity; recruit new businesses; and organize special events.

Figure 5-3: Springfield Avenue Corridor Business Improvement District

PARKING IMPROVEMENTS

The *Springfield Avenue Corridor Parking Study* was completed in 1998 and addressed the parking issue in Irvington Center. The availability of parking is critical to the health of downtown businesses, because customers are highly sensitive to the availability (or lack of) parking. Customers are often unwilling to walk more than 300 feet from their parking space to the front door of their destined store. If a potential customer experiences any difficulty finding parking in close proximity to their commercial destination, they are much less likely to return in the future.

The *Study* made several observations about the current state of parking in the downtown area. Parking meters located on-street and in municipal lots were removed in the mid-1990's due to vandalism problems. The unforeseen result of their removal was that the on-street parking in downtown had low turnover, as they were used by business owners and employees. Also, the unmetered lot adjacent to the bus terminal was occupied most of the day by park-and-ride commuters, experiencing similarly low turnover. Meanwhile, the municipal lots off of Orange Street and Washington Street seemed to experience a great deal of turnover, suggesting the customers were using them for shopping and other personal trips. The Civic Square parking lot also had a high turnover rate, as they were used by both downtown customers and visitors to the municipal buildings in Civic Square.

Ever since parking meters were reestablished in 2000, the on-street spaces have experienced far more turnover. This is good for business, because it allows potential customers to park right in front of the store and make quick shopping trips. When customers were forced to park in the municipal lots, they could easily reach the shops located near those parking lots, but had a harder time reaching the shops farther away. The use of meters opened up on-street parking spaces throughout the entire downtown to customers.

The parking study also found that the Nye Avenue Parking Garage is highly underutilized. This pattern continues even now that the meters have been reinstalled. The parking garage suffers from poor location; poor lighting; inconvenient pedestrian connections to the shopping areas; a low sense of safety; and poor access and signage. To encourage greater use of the garage, the *Study* recommended the creation of a Nye Ave Parking Garage task force; and the establishment of a police presence and security improvements at the garage. In addition, the *Study* recommended installing directional signage to parking lots and establishing a shuttle to link the garage to retail areas along Springfield Avenue.

TRANSIT GATEWAY PROJECT

The Transit Gateway Project was envisioned as a way to improve bus circulation and to strengthen the connection between the bus terminal and the rest of downtown. The major goals of the Gateway Project were to improve passenger waiting areas; improve pedestrian circulation; to incorporate new retail uses in the terminal area; to increase the amount of space for bus circulation; to create a central plaza; to reduce the size of the parking lot; and to use the Nye

Avenue parking garage for spill-over parking. Three potential schemes were outlined in the report:

- Scheme A: Renovation of existing building; elimination of interior waiting area; addition of cantilevered canopies over the boarding area for outdoor waiting.
- Scheme B: demolition of existing structure; construction of new structure with indoor and outdoor waiting areas, indoor and outdoor retail, kiosks, and a clock tower.
- Scheme C: demolition of existing structure; construction of new building with outdoor waiting areas.

As of September 2001, no decision was reached as to the future of the gateway project.

SMART GROWTH GRANT

In 2000, the Township of Irvington joined forces with Newark — under the auspices of the Newark Economic Development Corporation and the Newark and Irvington Urban Coordination Councils — to apply for a State smart growth grant for the Springfield Avenue corridor. A grant in the amount of \$50,000 was awarded in 2001. The purpose of the grant is to create a "smart growth" handbook for property owners and merchants along the Springfield Avenue corridor, from Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in Newark to Stuyvesant Avenue in Irvington. The second draft of the handbook was completed in September 2001 and took into account the draft proposals for the Master Plan, first drafted in mid-2001, which were later incorporated into this document.

The draft handbook makes recommendations for improving commercial and residential development along the corridor, in such a way that it serves both the nearby residents and the pass-by commuters. One major recommendation is to create an "East Ward Neighborhood Center" on the triangular-shaped block bounded by Springfield Avenue, Maple Avenue, and Eastern Parkway. Building off of the existing retail stores on the site, the proposal calls for retail pedestrian-oriented retail shops along both Springfield Avenue and Maple Avenue, with improved pedestrian connections across Springfield and new connections to the adjacent Maple Gardens apartment complex. Another major recommendation is to build off of NJ Transit's conceptual plans for the upgraded Bus Terminal by improving pedestrian connections between the terminal, the Nye Avenue Parking Garage, the shops along Springfield Avenue, and Civic Square. In the non-commercial parts of the corridor, the handbook calls for additional residential development that faces Springfield Avenue, with wide front yards and connections to side streets. These residential areas should have trees lining the street.

5.4 REDEVELOPMENT SITES

There are several areas throughout the Township that have been determined to be "Areas in Need of Redevelopment" and many other areas that are being considered for redevelopment designation. The majority of these sites are found in the East Ward, the South Ward, the Coit Street Industrial Area, and the Mill Road commercial area.

DESIGNATED AREAS IN NEED OF REDEVELOPMENT

As of October 2001, two areas were designated "Areas in Need of Redevelopment" under State law, as shown in Figure 5-4. The first one is in the Coit Street Industrial Area (Blocks 183-186 and 195-197), which was designated in February 2001. The second one is in the East Ward (Blocks 142-143; the east and west sides of 21st Street) and was designated in August 2001. The Township intends to expand both areas subject to the outcome of current studies. The Township Council has authorized three additional areas to be investigated to determine if they are in need of redevelopment: Mill Road, portions of the East Ward, and the entire Coit Street Industrial Area.

- In March 2001, the Township authorized the Planning Board to undertake a redevelopment investigation of the area along Springfield Avenue, between the Garden State Parkway and the Newark City Line
- In March 2001, the Planning Board was authorized to investigate the commercial sites near the Mill Road/Stuyvesant Avenue intersection, including the Getty Gas Station, Village Diner and C-Town Market (Block 38, Lots 24, 25 and 26).
- In June 2001, the Township authorized the Planning Board to undertake an investigation of the entire area between Springfield Avenue and 18th Avenue and between South Grove Street and the Newark City Line (Blocks 135-141, Blocks 144-145).
- In July 2001, the Township authorized the Planning Board to undertake a redevelopment investigation of the Coit Street Industrial Area (Blocks 187-190, 172-177, 178-182, 222-223, and 199-203), which served as an expansion to the "Area in Need of Redevelopment" that was approved by the Council in February 2001.

The results of the investigation for expanded East Ward and the Coit Industrial area investigation are scheduled to be brought before the Planning Board in early 2002 and before the Township Council in mid 2002.

Aside from the Pabst Brewery site, which is described in more detail below, other redevelopment sites that should be studied further include 18th Avenue between Myrtle Avenue and Vermont Avenue and Chancellor Avenue between Rutgers and Temple Place.

Figure 5-4: Redevelopment Areas

5.5 PABST BREWERY REDEVELOPMENT

Redevelopment of the Pabst Brewery, which has been vacant and abandoned for many years, has long been a goal of both Newark and Irvington. The *March 2000 Working Draft Report and Action Plan* was prepared by the Newark Economic Development Corporation and the Irvington UEZ. The major goal of the proposal was to redevelop and/or reuse the buildings and parking lots on the Pabst Brewery site for a combination of commercial and retail uses. The new shops and residences were intended to be integrated into the surrounding residential area and the existing shopping area along South Orange Avenue.

One of the major constraints in planning for the Pabst Brewery site is its ground contamination. A total of 10 underground storage tanks (USTs) were present on the site at one time, some of which were subsequently removed, but a few of which still remain. Tank leakage (Dense Non Aqueous Phase Liquids or DNAPLs) has contaminated the soil and shallow groundwater, but the amount of discharge is not large enough to warrant a large remediation project, according to the *Draft Report*. A 1950s-era print shop may also have contaminated the soil and groundwater. Typical contamination associated with print shops includes on-site dumping or disposal of solvents, cleaners, washes, and paste cleaners.

How to deal with the existing buildings on the site was another issue. The *Report* determined that the reuse of the buildings would require extensive, costly renovations and thus, demolition and reconstruction would be more sensible. The Stock House and Bottling Plant have experienced extensive water damage and freeze-thaw damage. An adapted lateral support system would be required to meet modern seismic lateral load requirements. Asbestos would need to be removed.

The recommended approach is the creation of a mixed-use neighborhood center, with rental units, for-sale housing, and shops. This center would be integrated with surrounding uses, creating beneficial spill-over effects on the surrounding neighborhood. Alternatively, big box retail is being considered. Fewer beneficial spill-over effects would be expected with big-box retail, and poor highway access would make big-box, industrial, or warehouse uses less attractive for the site. Trucks would have to reach the site from I-78, since the Garden State Parkway allows only passenger vehicles. The *Draft Report* must be approved by the Irvington Planning Board and the Newark Central Planning Board. This action is still pending.

5.6 URBAN COORDINATING COUNCIL

In December 1998, a portion of the Township's East Ward was designated an Urban Coordinating Council (UCC) neighborhood. The UCC designation is a program that promotes community-based planning through partnerships between community organizations, government, and private sector corporations to ensure access to resources for neighborhood revitalization. The UCC consists of representatives from each of the State's departments, which is structured to better respond to the critical issues facing New Jersey's urban communities. Some of the UCC benefits include:

- Priority consideration in applications for grants;

- Services and technical assistance from State departments;
- State assistance in coordinating government, private sector, and non-profit resources; and
- A community director who serves as an on-site manager

To date, the UCC has undertaken a number of initiatives. In January 2001, the Township, the Irvington UCC, and the New Jersey Redevelopment Authority (NJRA) began hosting monthly meetings with State agencies, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), and private lending institutions to discuss potential redevelopment projects in the UCC area (the East Ward). The meetings were used to identify opportunities for site assembly, demolition, and property acquisition.

In June 2001, the Township Council authorized the Planning Board to undertake an investigation as to whether portions of the East Ward qualify as "Areas in Need of Redevelopment", as discussed in Section 5.4. The NJRA funded the \$10,000 study and is planning to fund the eventual plan as well. The NJRA is the leading agency for the UCC and is working to ensure that redevelopment is taking place in UCC neighborhoods.

5.7 HAZARDOUS SITE DISCHARGE REMEDIATION

As of October 1999, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection identified 28 sites as having potential hazardous discharge, of which 10 were acquired by the Township by foreclosure or abandonment. These sites are listed in Table 5-1. These sites — commonly referred to as "brownfield" sites — are scattered throughout the Township. Most are old gas stations or factories, and most are less than one acre in size. In addition, soil contamination was discovered on the Pabst Brewery site, as part of the *Pabst Brewery Redevelopment Report and Action Plan*.⁹ The State requires the clean-up of brownfield sites prior to reuse.

The Irvington UEZ has been aggressively pursuing the clean-up of these contaminated sites. Soil contamination tends to deter investment, because the clean-up costs can be formidable. To the extent that the UEZ can sponsor or aid the remediation effort, it can remove one of the largest barriers to business investment in the Township's industrial and commercial areas.

Table 5-1: Hazardous Discharge Sites

<i>Block</i>	<i>Lot</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Lot Area (sq ft)</i>	<i>Use</i>	<i>Clean Up Status</i>
NORTH WARD					
186	1	467 Chancellor Ave.	15,000	Auto repair	MOA cancelled,

⁹ Newark Economic Development Corporation and the Township of Irvington Urban Enterprise Zone, *Pabst Brewery Redevelopment Report and Action Plan*, Working Draft, March 2000.

Table 5-1: Hazardous Discharge Sites

<i>Block</i>	<i>Lot</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Lot Area (sq ft)</i>	<i>Use</i>	<i>Clean Up Status</i>
					property sold.
<u>WEST WARD</u>					
351	31	919 Stuyvesant Ave.	10,000	Auto repair	No access
339	20	1239 Springfield Ave.	7,000	Auto repair	No access
<u>EAST WARD</u>					
95	14	252 Myrtle Ave.	10,000	Gas Station (vacant)	PA complete, Phase II requested.
113	7	433-439 14 th Ave.	6,100	Used car sales	No access
142	14	645-647 18 th Ave.	1,800	Gas station (vacant)	No access
<u>SOUTH WARD</u>					
167	11	484-486 21 st St.	6,200	Industrial	PA complete, Phase II requested.
167	28	121 Montgomery St.	2,800	Parking Lot	PA complete, Phase II requested.
172	13	23-39 South 20 th St.	18,700	Warehouse	No access
172	16	55-93 South 20 th St.	43,200	Wholesale	No access
172	17	335 Nye Ave	16,200	Use car sales	No access
173	3	38 South 20 th St.	22,000	Bus Garage	No access
185	2	492 Lyons Ave.	27,000	Warehouse	No access
186	5 & 6	42-46 Cordier St.	18,800	Industrial	PA complete, Phase II grant awarded.
186	9	14-24 Cordier St.	37,600	Warehouse	No access
201	12	605 21 st St.	56,800	Industrial	PA complete, Phase II requested.
205	19	35 Ellis Ave. (rear)	5,600	Garage	PA complete, Phase II requested.
206	14	841 Springfield Ave.	11,000	Vacant	PA complete, under review by NJDEP
206	15	839 Springfield Ave.	2,500	Vacant	PA complete, under review by NJDEP
206	16	837 Springfield Ave.	2,500	Vacant	PA complete, under review by NJDEP
206	17	831 Springfield Ave.	7,500	Vacant	PA complete, under review by NJDEP
<u>SOUTH WARD (continued)</u>					
210	35	849-853 Springfield Ave.	1,200	Vacant	PA complete, Phase II requested.

Table 5-1: Hazardous Discharge Sites

<i>Block</i>	<i>Lot</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Lot Area (sq ft)</i>	<i>Use</i>	<i>Clean Up Status</i>
210	36	845-847 Springfield Ave.	4,900	Vacant	PA complete, Phase II requested.
214	7	32 Grace St.	3,800	Vacant	PA complete, Phase II requested.
222	3	123 Coit St.	4,600	Industrial	PA complete, Phase II requested.
222	4	127 Coit St.	7,500	Industrial	PA complete, Phase II requested.
222	5	1138 Grove St.	12,500	Industrial	PA complete, Phase II requested.

n.a. - not available

Source: Irvington UEZ

The UEZ has been preparing and submitting grant applications to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) for funds that are set aside for clean-up of such sites. The UEZ has submitted applications for 28 sites in all, and the NJDEP approved four of those applications as of September 2001, awarding the Township more than \$310,000 for site investigation. Other applications are still being reviewed by NJDEP. In some cases, sites that are privately owned cannot be accessed by the Township, and thus, the UEZ has been unable to perform the site investigations that are necessary to prepare the applications.

5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

5-1: Continue to seek out opportunities for retaining and attracting businesses, revitalizing vacant and abandoned sites, and cleaning up contaminated sites.

5-2: As discussed in the Land Use Element, expand the number of commercial zones from two to five, thereby strengthening the commercial activity in the Township.

5-3: Continue to ensure that UEZ plans and proposals are consistent with the Master Plan.

5-4: Prepare Redevelopment Plans immediately following the adoption of the Areas in Need of Redevelopment for the Coit Street Industrial Area, portions of the East Ward, Springfield Avenue East, and the Mill Road Area.

5-5: The Planning Board should undertake a study to determine if 18th Avenue between Myrtle and Vermont Avenues; the East Ward between 18th Avenue, 20th Avenue, Grove Street, and the Newark City Line; Clinton Avenue, east of Springfield Avenue; Chancellor Avenue between Rutgers Street and Temple Place; and the commercial node near the intersection of Lyons and Union Avenues are Areas in Need of Redevelopment. If these areas are found to be Areas in

Need of Redevelopment, the Township should prepare Redevelopment Plans to revitalize those areas.

5-6: Develop criteria or standards for developers seeking to develop or redevelop property in Irvington in accordance with standards used by the New Jersey Redevelopment Authority. The RFQ (Request for Qualifications) or SOQ (Statement of Qualifications) will ensure developers have experience, a good track record, and are qualified to undertake projects that range from small rehabilitation to large-scale development.

5-7: Undertake a planning process to petition the Office of State Planning for a Center Designation for the Township, which would amend the State Development and Redevelopment Plan's (SDRP) Resource Planning and Management Map (RPMM) to include Irvington as a Center. A Center Designation may increase the allocation of state resources to the Township.

5-8: Create a Planning Office in Municipal Building to serve the Township Departments, appointed and elected bodies, and the general public. The Planning Office should have experience in land use, zoning, economic development, demography (i.e., Census), mapping (conventional and Geographic Information Systems), and graphics.

5-9: Continue to work with Essex County under the Inter-Local Service Agreement to support job growth, develop business opportunities, and improve the quality of life within the Coit Street Industrial Area.

5-10: Strongly consider the recommendations outlined in the Coit Street/I-78 Industrial Area Plan prepared by the Port Authority that suggests improving roadway access in the industrial area; decommissioning the rail line; improving the Pathmark Shopping Center; and establishing a "brand" for the industrial area by enhancing the gateways, installing signage, and improving the physical appearance.

5-11: Strongly consider the recommendations provided in the Springfield Smart Growth Handbook that suggests better pedestrian access from the Maple Gardens complex to the Mini-Mall/Supremo Shopping Area, as well as pedestrian, streetscape, and traffic calming measures along Springfield Avenue, particularly in Irvington Center and the NJ Transit Bus Terminal Area.

5-12: Conduct an urban design study to improve the appearance of the downtown commercial area, especially the Township's most visible intersection— Clinton and Springfield Avenues. The Township should ensure that the design of this intersection takes advantage of its location, urban form, and architectural and historic character, and that the design transforms this space to promote the identity of the Township. The Township should consider removing the Police Booth and replace it with a strong design element such as a clock. The Township should examine the streets, stores, and signage that surround the intersection.

5-13: Initiate a new gateway program to upgrade all the gateways into the Township. The improvements should include new and better signs, cleaner roadways and lots, demolition of abandoned buildings, and removal of graffiti.

5-14: Continue to seek grants from the New Jersey Economic Development Agency and the Department of Environmental Protection for the Hazardous Discharge Site Remediation Fund.

5-15: Work with NJ Transit to ensure the design and layout of the new Bus Terminal helps reinforce the Township's importance as one of the key transportation nodes in the County.

- ***5-15-A: The Township should develop a business attraction plan to encourage uses to locate near the bus terminal that complement the transportation node.***
- ***5-15-B: The Township should explore links to parking facilities (i.e., the Nye Avenue Garage or another location that could serve as a park and ride for commuters.***
- ***5-15-C: The design of the new terminal should make an architectural statement by using neo-traditional design elements rather than contemporary design elements that may look outdated within a few years.***

5-16: In conjunction with the Port Authority's continuing interest in conducting port-related business in the Coit Street Industrial Area, pursue a "Foreign Trade Zone" designation for that area.

6 Utility Service

Irvington has a well-established network of utilities. The vast majority of active properties are already connected to public water, wastewater, electric, gas, and telecommunications networks. The Township provides solid waste and recycling services for all residential properties. In the future, the Township faces the ongoing issue of maintaining these services and ensuring that services function properly and reliably.

6.1 WATER SERVICE

Irvington is served by New Jersey American Water, which is a subsidiary of American Waterworks, based in Voorhees, New Jersey. In addition to Irvington, NJAWC serves many other communities throughout the state. For its service areas in northern New Jersey, NJAWC obtains water from a number of surface-water sources, including the Passaic River and the Delaware River. Domestic and industrial water supply is considered adequate. The Company's service record has been good and has the capacity to expand supply should the need arise. To the knowledge of the Township Public Works Department, there are no private wells in use in Irvington.¹⁰

6.2 SANITARY SEWER

Irvington's sewage collection system consists predominantly of 8-inch diameter vitrified clay pipes that collect wastewater flows and transmit them to the various interceptor sewers owned and operated by the Joint Meeting. Some sections of the sewer system consist of 10-, 12-, or 15-inch piping, and some parts are PVC instead of clay. In general, the collection system is in good condition. Occasional back-ups result from inadequate pipe capacity (due to the size or slope); inadequate flow velocity (due to pipe slope); excessive infiltration at joints and manholes; and differences in invert elevations at manholes where the outlet pipe is higher than the inlet pipe. Also, because the system is nearly 80 years old, some pipe segments have become cracked or clogged over time and are in need of repair or cleaning. The Township's last Storm and Sanitary Sewer Master Plan (SSSMP) was completed in 1977, and since then, there have been few improvements to the collection system.

The interceptor pipes operated by the Joint Meeting transport wastewater to the Decher Secondary Wastewater Treatment Facility in Elizabeth, where the wastewater is treated and ultimately discharged into Arthur Kill. The plant serves not only Irvington, but many of the adjacent communities as well, as shown in Table 6-1. In the 1998 update of the Wastewater Management Plan, the Joint Meeting concluded that the plant has more than enough capacity to serve Irvington and the other municipalities until 2016. Taking into account residential projections and the expected effluent from commercial and industrial sources, the Plan estimates

¹⁰ Interview with John Wiggins, Township Engineer, and Alexander Nemeth, Director of Public Works, May 8, 2001.

that the total wastewater flow will reach approximately 67 million gallons per day (MGD) by 2016. At 67 MGD, the anticipated flows will be well below the treatment plant's capacity of 85 MGD, suggesting that no treatment plant expansion would be necessary for many years to come.

Table 6-1: Wastewater Flows from Municipalities Served by the Joint Meeting of Essex and Union Counties

	1996	2016
<i>Members of Joint Meeting</i>		
East Orange (part)	2.45	2.42
Hillside	2.56	2.62
Irvington	8.66	8.62
Maplewood	3.38	3.37
Millburn	2.90	2.89
Newark (part)	4.90	4.85
Roselle Park (part)	1.54	1.57
South Orange	2.20	2.19
Summit	3.43	3.48
Union	9.85	9.99
West Orange	6.00	5.97
Subtotal	47.87	47.97
<i>Customers of Joint Meeting</i>		
Berkeley Heights (part)	0.23	0.23
Elizabeth	17.70	18.00
Linden (part)	0.01	0.01
Livingston (part)	0.12	0.12
Orange (part)	0.32	0.32
New Providence	0.93	0.97
Subtotal	19.31	19.65
Total	67.18	67.62

Source: Joint Meeting of Essex and Union Counties, Wastewater and Management Plan, Revised as of December 1998, pp. 11-14.

As shown in Table 6-1, the total 2016 wastewater flow level would be only slightly higher than the 1996 conditions. This reflects the slow population and job growth that is anticipated in the Joint Meeting area. The Plan assumed that the population in the Joint Meeting district would grow by about 1 percent between 1996 and 2016. The one percent growth rate is reasonable considering past trends.

In Irvington, flow levels are actually expected to decrease, based on the assumption that the population will shrink in the future. However, for the sake of argument, even if the population were to grow at a much faster rate, whether in Irvington or throughout the Joint Meeting area,

(even in the unlikely event of a 30 percent population increase), the treatment plant would still have enough capacity to accommodate the increased flows.

6.3 STORM SEWER

The existing storm water sewer system consists predominantly of circular reinforced concrete pipes that ultimately discharge storm water into the Elizabeth River. There are only two exceptions. The first is the piping underneath Lyons Avenue, east of Augusta Street, which discharges directly to the pond in Irvington Park, from which there is no outlet. The second is a basin in the southwest corner of the Township, which discharges into Lightening Brook.

According to Flood Insurance Rate Maps prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), 100-year flood hazard areas are found along the Elizabeth River. However, the flood channels (built along portions of the river) and the steep riverbanks (in other parts) confine the flooding to the areas immediately adjacent to the river. Moreover, because the topography slopes down to the river from the east and west, the flood hazard area is largely contained around the riverbed, creating little or no threat for most parts of town.

In a few parts of town, however, inadequacies in the storm drainage system create localized flooding problems. South of Lyons Avenue, the Garden State Parkway crosses over the Elizabeth River, a portion of which has been buried in a culvert underneath the parkway. When the culvert fills up during heavy rains or snow melting, the areas adjacent to the culvert sometimes experience flooding. In the public meetings held for the Master Plan, participants cited recurrent flooding on Maple Place as a problem. Also, the two sites in town that lack an outlet are subject to potential flooding problems during a 500-year flood.

6.4 SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING

According to the *Essex County Solid Waste Management Plan* of 1987, municipalities are responsible for waste collection, and the County is responsible for disposal. In Irvington, trash collection is the responsibility of the Department of Public Works (DPW), and via a bid process, the Township hires contractors to handle pick-up and transportation. There are two contractors — one for solid waste and one for recycling. Irvington's solid waste is delivered to the Essex County Recovery Facility in Newark. In the 1980s, the Hackensack Meadowlands Landfill was closed and replaced with the recovery facility.

Curbside collection occurs twice weekly, during which time the solid waste contractor picks up regular household waste as well as up to two bulky items per household. During the holiday season, a separate collection is scheduled for Christmas trees, and during the fall, DPW directly picks up leaves as part of their municipal leaf collection program. The trees and leaves are sent to a composting facility. Heavy trash (air conditioners, refrigerators, stoves, etc.), also known as "white goods", are collected once a week by appointment.

The County has established a recycling goal of 25 percent of the total municipal solid waste stream. All municipalities are required to recycle white paper and office paper, but this is not currently done in Irvington. Urban municipalities (East Orange, Irvington, Newark, and Orange)

are also required to recycle three out of four of the following materials: newsprint, glass, metals, and plastics. Of these, Irvington recycles newsprint, glass, and metal; plastics remain part of the waste stream.

The recycling contractor pick up newspaper and commingled glass, aluminum, and tin on alternate weeks. Recyclables are picked up on the curb. Residents are informed of the collection schedule through a calendar distributed to all households. In addition, Irvington trash is sifted by machine for additional recyclable material. While Irvington has met the County's 25 percent standard, it still throws away tons of recyclable material. According to the Department of Public Works, about 10 percent of Irvington garbage is comprised of recyclable metals. This suggests that recycling efforts could be improved even more.

The DPW periodically schedules collection days at designated sites for household hazardous waste, which are announced in the *Irvington Herald* and the *Newark Star Ledger*. Additional residential recyclable material may be dropped off at the Coit Street Garage.

6.5 GAS AND ELECTRIC SERVICE

Irvington is served by the Public Service Electric & Gas Company (PSE&G). While PSE&G is responsible for the *delivery* of both electricity and natural gas, State deregulation is now allowing customers to choose the *supplier* of the electricity and gas that they use. Until deregulation was enacted, PSE&G served as the sole supplier of electricity, and the East Jersey Gas District (EJGD), which served as the supplier of natural gas.

As a fully developed community, Irvington has a complete network of electrical utility lines that serve all the actively used properties in Town. As properties are redeveloped, PSE&G will connect new buildings into the electrical grid and natural gas network. Because Irvington's population is not expected to increase significantly in the near future, the Township's overall electricity demand is expected to remain relatively constant, placing few additional burdens on existing power plants.

In 2000 and 2001, the combined forces of utility deregulation and aging power plants have raised the specter of a metropolitan or nationwide energy crisis. As of fall 2001, Irvington has not experienced any drastic changes in electricity prices, due to continuing State regulation, and the Township has not experienced chronic blackouts or brownouts. If the New York City/Newark metropolitan region is afflicted by an energy crisis, it is conceivable that Irvington could experience rolling blackouts, along with other communities. To prevent blackouts and brownouts, either power plant expansions or conservation measures would be needed. While the Township cannot make decisions about future power plant expansions, the Township can promote energy conservation for both residences and businesses.

6.6 TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE

TELEPHONE AND DIAL-UP INTERNET SERVICES

As a former Bell Company, Verizon operates and maintains the telephone wires that run throughout Irvington and is responsible for providing dial tone to Irvington households and businesses. As a result of the deregulation of the telecommunications industry in 1996, telephone customers can now choose different service providers for both local and long-distance calling. As an established community, most building in Irvington are already hooked up for telephone service via overhead wires. As new buildings are built, Verizon is required to link the new building into the telephone system upon the request of the builder or owner. However, no major wire extensions are expected to be necessary.

DSL

A number of companies are now also offering high-speed DSL connections in Irvington. Telocity, Verio, Earthlink, AT&T, Direct TV and PacBell all offer DSL packages for both business and residential use in Essex County. The DSL network is still in the process of being expanded nationwide, and there may be parts of Irvington (as in every city and town) where DSL is not currently available. Township should continue to encourage the expansion of the DSL network, as high-speed internet access can open up opportunities for education, communication, employment, and business. DSL speeds can vary widely, depending on the service package, but residential DSL is typically about 30 kb/second, whereas business DSL can reach as high as 125 kb/second.¹¹

CABLE

Comcast is the provider of services in Irvington. Comcast offers basic cable (with multiple television channels), digital cable (which provides a large number of channels at a higher quality), and internet connections. Cable internet connections can typically upload data at speeds of 150 kb/second, consistently one of the fastest connections currently available. By way of comparison, a typical residential DSL line has a speed of about 30 kb/second, and a dial-up 56k modem has a speed of 6 kb/sec.

In May 2000, the Township Council adopted an ordinance granting a renewal of consent for 15 years to allow Comcast to construct, connect, operate, and maintain cable television and communications systems in Irvington. The non-exclusive renewal consent grants Comcast permission to place infrastructure upon, across, or above and under highways, streets, alleys, sidewalks, easements, public ways, and public places in the Township. This includes poles, wires, cables, underground conduits, manholes, and other television conductors, fixtures, apparatus and equipment as may be necessary for the construction operation and maintenance in the Township of Irvington. Under the terms of the agreement between Comcast and the Township, Comcast is required to:

- Construct a return plan to allow the Township to originate programming from the Municipal Building for viewing on the existing local access Channel 36.
- Provide Irvington with a computer equipment and software (a.k.a. character generator) to enable the Township to operate an electronic bulletin board.
- Create a second and separate local access channel by October 2001. The Township contacted Comcast to waive the October 2001 deadline since a technical person could not be hired to monitor the local access channel.

CELLULAR COMMUNICATIONS

Over the course of the 1990s, cities and towns nationwide have become barraged with applications for cellular towers and antennae, which are used to provide continuous service to the users of cell phones and other wireless devices. Cellular companies have particularly targeted areas in major metropolitan centers and along major highways, where their customers travel. Sites all along the Garden State Parkway and I-78 in Irvington have been subject to applications for cellular towers. Many cellular towers have been installed on the rooftops of residential buildings. Cellular towers have provided some additional rental income to those landlords.

Because cellular technology is relatively new, its potential health impacts are uncertain. Reports were circulated in the late 1990s that cell phone use could be linked to some forms of brain cancer or other neurological disorders, but those reports were never confirmed. It is unknown whether residents living in proximity to a cellular antenna could be subject to some of the same health hazards.

While continuing to permit cellular antennae, the Township should also monitor developments in cellular technology and cellular-related health research. Depending on future developments, the Township can consider imposing restrictions on the location, size, and design of cellular towers or restricting cellular tower construction altogether, in order to protect the health of Irvington residents. In addition, the rapid proliferation of cell towers is considered a visual blight by some people, and placing some restrictions on the location of cell towers can help maintain the visual quality of the Township's neighborhoods.

6.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

6-1: Develop a Capital Improvement Program for sanitary sewers and storm sewers, which identifies needed improvements, repairs, and maintenance activities and itemizes the costs of those needs.

6-2: Identify additional funding sources for the purpose of cleaning and maintaining sanitary sewers and storm sewers, and for the purpose of increasing pipe capacity in locations prone to back-ups or flooding.

¹¹ www.cable-modem.net.

6-3: Explore strategies for further increasing the diversion of recyclable materials— particularly white paper and plastics — from the Irvington waste stream.

6-4: Establish performance benchmarks for waste collection, recycling collection, and hazardous waste collection, and monitor the program based on those benchmarks. Use the monitoring program as a basis for making future improvements.

6-5: Promote energy conservation by making information available on the techniques, benefits, and potential cost savings of energy conservation in Township Hall.

6-6: Encourage the expansion of both residential and business DSL services and infrastructure in Irvington.

6-7: Monitor developments in cellular technology and cellular-related health research.

- ***6-7-A: Explore the revenue-generating opportunity of installing cellular antennae on Township-owned and privately-owned property within industrial and commercial areas that are not close to residential areas.***
- ***6-7-B: Consider prohibiting the installation of cellular antennae on residential buildings, and/or limiting the height of such antennae, and/or requiring that such antennae are placed or designed in such a way as they would not be visible from surface streets.***
- ***6-7-C: The Township's Legal Department should research how other municipalities have dealt with this issue and identify what local legislation has been adopted that has legal standing.***

7 Circulation

The Township of Irvington is centrally located in the metropolitan region and is served by major highways and transit lines. The Garden State Parkway runs north-south through the center of town, and I-78 cuts through the southeastern corner of town, adjacent to the Coit Street Industrial Area. Both highways provide access to New York City, located about 10 miles to the east, via the Lincoln and Holland tunnels. Newark Airport is located only three miles to the east and can be easily reached via I-78. In addition, the Bus Terminal in Irvington Center serves as a major node for NJ Transit buses. Springfield Avenue is also a major bus corridor. The circulation and transportation system in Irvington has not changed significantly since the completion of the last Master Plan in 1979.

7.1 ROADS AND TRAFFIC

Major Interstate, State, and County roads in Irvington are depicted on Figure 7-1. Springfield Avenue (County Route 603) is Irvington's main road and provides a direct connection into downtown Newark. Other major roadways leading into Newark include Chancellor Avenue (C.R. 601), Lyons Avenue (C.R. 602), Clinton Avenue (C.R. 665 in part), and 18th Avenue. Major north-south routes include Coit Street/Grove Street (C.R. 509), Union Avenue/Myrtle Avenue, and Stuyvesant Avenue (C.R. 619). These roads not only serve local residents and businesses, but also provide cross-cutting routes for people traveling between destinations in adjacent towns. In particular, people living in areas west of Irvington cut through town using Springfield, Chancellor, Lyons, and Clinton to reach the Garden State Parkway, I-78, and downtown Newark.

ROADWAY CLASSIFICATION

Different roads serve different functions. Major highways handle fast-moving through-traffic, whereas local roads are designed for slow-moving traffic and access to private properties. The proposed classifications of existing roadways in Irvington are described in detail below and are depicted in map format on Figure 7-1. The classifications are based on a combination of RSIS (Residential Site Improvement Standards) and national standards, with modifications to reflect the characteristics of Irvington's roads. The following classification of roadways in Irvington is consistent with the Uniform Functional Classification of Streets established by the U.S. Department of Transportation in conjunction with the New Jersey Department of Transportation.

Expressways

Expressways are high-speed, high-capacity, limited-access highways. They are devoted entirely to the movement of motor vehicles and provide no direct access to abutting properties. They generally traverse large areas of an entire region or state, and connect with other major expressways. Design features typically include multiple travel lanes in each direction, separation of opposing traffic lanes by a continuous center barrier or median strip and grade-separated

interchanges with entrance and exit ramps. Expressways are generally designed for a capacity of approximately 24,000 to 36,000 vehicles per lane per day.

The Garden State Parkway and I-78 qualify as expressways.

Major Arterial Roads

Major arterial roads are intended to move high volumes of traffic between and through communities. Intersections are at-grade, widely interspersed, and often signalized. Some have planted medians or median barriers. In newly developing suburban areas, major arterial roads are typically designed with four or more lanes of traffic, left-turn pockets, minimal curb-cuts, and synchronized traffic signals. All these features are intended to channel large volumes of traffic through town. In older communities like Irvington, a more traditional pattern of development was established before the automobile became the primary mode of transportation. Roads that were not necessarily designed for high-volume or high-speed traffic have been turned into major arterial roads by default rather than by design. Arterial roads carry approximately 10,000 to 24,000 vehicles per day.

The following roads qualify as major arterial roads:

- Clinton Avenue
- Chancellor Avenue
- Coit Street/Grove Street (south of Clinton Avenue)
- Lyons Avenue
- Springfield Avenue
- Stuyvesant Avenue

Segments of several of these roadways are designated County truck routes. The truck routes are all in the vicinity of the Coit Street Industrial Area, adjacent to I-78, where heavy truck traffic is associated with industrial and warehouse uses in that area. The truck routes include:

- Coit Street, from the Hillside border to Lyons Avenue.
- Lyons Avenue, from Coit Street to the Newark border
- Chancellor Avenue, from Coit Street to the Newark border

Minor Arterial Roads

Minor arterial roads link residential neighborhoods with major arterial roads and expressways. Like major arterial roads, they serve abutting properties and utilize signalized intersections, but they carry less traffic and are typically narrower. Some have on-street parking as well. Minor arterial roads generally carry approximately 7,500 vehicles per day.

Figure 7-1: Interstate, State, and County Routes

Figure 7-2: Roadway Classifications

The following roads qualify as minor arterial roads:

- Ball Street/Cleremont Street/Mt. Vernon Avenue
- Mill Road/Union Avenue
- Grove Street (north of Clinton Avenue)
- Myrtle Avenue
- Eastern Parkway (south of Garden State Parkway entrance ramp)
- Sanford Avenue
- Eighteenth Avenue

Collector Roads

Collector roads link together arterial roads with local residential streets, but also provide direct access to properties. Generally, minor collectors have one travel lane in each direction and on-street parking. Traffic volumes are generally between 1,500 and 5,000 cars per day.

The following roads qualify as collector roads:

- Elmwood Avenue
- Orange Avenue
- Fortieth Street
- Paine Avenue
- Madison Avenue
- Union Place/Krotik Place
- Mt. Vernon Avenue
- Yale Avenue

Local Streets

Local streets have the primary function of providing access to abutting properties. They typically have one travel-lane in each direction and space for on-street parking. Sidewalks may be present on one side or both sides of the street. Each local street is expected to provide access to not more than 150 lots, with a normal traffic volume of less than 1,500 vehicles per day.

Nearly all of the remaining streets in Irvington qualify as neighborhood streets.

TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

No comprehensive analysis of traffic conditions has been completed since the Essex County TOPICS study of 1975. A limited study of downtown traffic conditions was completed in 1998 as part of the *Springfield Avenue Corridor Parking Study*. The result of that study indicated that traffic volumes along Springfield Avenue and Clinton Avenue have decreased significantly since 1975, as shown in Table 7-1 below.

It is unclear what has caused such a large decrease in traffic volumes, but it was probably a combination of factors. One factor may have been the construction of I-78, the Irvington portion of which was completed between 1975 and 1979. Prior to the construction of I-78, Springfield Avenue served as a major connecting route between downtown Newark and the suburbs of western Essex County, Union County, and Morris County. Another factor may have been the erosion of the industrial job base in both Newark and Irvington between 1970 and 2000.

Yet another contributing factor may have been the abandonment and demolition of vast housing projects along the Newark portion of Springfield Avenue, which resulted in a smaller traffic burden on the entire length of the road. After I-78 was completed, motorists who once relied on Springfield Avenue started using I-78 instead.

Table 7-1: Average Daily Traffic Volumes for Roadway Segments

<i>Sample Intersections</i>	<i>1975</i>	<i>1998</i>
Springfield Avenue		
from Maplewood border to Stuyvesant Ave.	25,000-30,000	23,000
from Stuyvesant Ave. to Sharon Ave.	30,000+	22,000
from Sharon Ave. to Newark border	25,000-30,000	21,000
Clinton Avenue		
from Stuyvesant Ave. to Springfield Ave.	20,000	13,000

Sources: Essex County, TOPICS: Southeast Section: Maplewood and Irvington, 1975. Irvington UEZ, Springfield Avenue Corridor Parking Study, December 1998.

While traffic volumes have decreased along Springfield and Clinton Avenue since 1975, ongoing downtown congestion results from "friction" factors, such as double-parking, truck and bus movements, pedestrian and bicycle conflicts, parking, driveway-related movements, left turns, and illegal maneuvers. Signal, striping, signage, and crosswalk improvements can help reduce some of this friction. Also, better enforcement is required to prevent double-parking.

As part of the Essex County TOPICS study of 1975, intersection volumes were calculated for several intersections, and a 1999 study — as part of the *Strategic Vision and Revitalization Study for the UEZ of Irvington* — had more recent calculations. These two studies each examined a different group of intersections. There are only four intersections that they both examined, and these are presented in Table 7-2. The table shows that all four sample intersections experienced a decrease in volume between 1975 and 1999. This is consistent with the findings on roadway segments, which also showed an overall drop in traffic volumes.

Table 7-2: Average Daily Intersection Volumes

<i>Sample Intersections</i>	<i>1975</i>	<i>1999</i>
Stuyvesant Avenue-Walker Avenue-Mill Road	16,750	13,870
Lyons Avenue-Union Avenue	20,150	19,460

Springfield Avenue-Grove Street	26,300	25,480
18 th Avenue-Grove Street	16,000	15,420

Sources: Essex County, TOPICS: Southeast Section: Maplewood and Irvington, 1975. Irvington UEZ, Strategic Vision and Revitalization Study, May 1999, Exhibit 4.

Car Accidents and Pedestrian Safety

Like most towns, Irvington experiences numerous car accidents during the course of the year. Based on a sample of five months in early 1998 (the last year for which data is currently available from the Irvington Police Department), Irvington has approximately 150 collisions each month, or roughly 5 per day. Of that total, a handful each month involves a pedestrian (about 11 per month on average) or a bicyclist (about 3 per month). Also, nearly 130 people are injured each month in such collisions.

Roadway and intersection improvements can be used to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety at intersections, where most accidents tend to occur. The Township provides educational programs to elementary school children on traffic and pedestrian safety and participates in an annual seatbelt enforcement program.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

The Township of Irvington applies for funding from the State's Transportation Trust Fund Program on an ongoing basis to implement improvements to major roadways. The Township recently received a grant of \$282,000 for the reconstruction of Columbia Avenue, from Delmar Place to West Grove Terrace. Additional grant monies have been obtained for improvements on Smith Street and Woolsey Street. The following is a list of a few of the roadways that may be improved using money from the Trust Fund in the future:

- Resurfacing of Eastern Parkway, Phase I
- Resurfacing of Western Parkway, Phase I
- Resurfacing of 38th Street, Springfield Avenue to Chancellor Avenue
- Resurfacing of Woolsey Street, Chancellor Avenue to Lyons Avenue
- Resurfacing of Delmar Place, Western Parkway to Columbia Avenue

7.2 PARKING

Parking has been an ongoing issue in Irvington Center. Built before widespread auto use, many downtown properties lack on-site parking and rely on on-street parking spaces and municipal parking lots for their parking needs. The 1998 *Springfield Avenue Corridor Parking Study* concluded that although some areas in Irvington Center and along Springfield Avenue experience parking shortages, no new parking lots are needed. Instead, the Township can take steps to

better utilize the parking spaces that the Township already has, particularly the on-street parking spaces, the municipal parking lots, and the Nye Avenue Parking Garage (see Figure 7-3).

PARKING METERS

In late 2000, the Township re-installed parking meters in the downtown area. Although Irvington had parking meters and a Parking Authority for many years, the meters were eliminated and the Parking Authority was dissolved in the early 1990's. The meters were removed primarily because of vandalism problems. Unexpectedly, the elimination of the parking meters had a serious negative side effect. With the meters gone, commuters, residents, business owners, and employees started parking all day in downtown spaces. The Washington Avenue parking lot (beside the Bus Terminal) had a particularly low turnover rate, because many people starting using the lot as a park-and-ride. As a result, customers who wanted to shop in downtown could not find places to park, hurting business activity.¹²

Based on the findings and recommendations of the *Springfield Avenue Corridor Parking Study* (1998), the Township decided to reinstall meters along Springfield Avenue, along other downtown streets, and in three municipal parking lots in downtown — the Orange Avenue lot, the Bus Terminal-Washington Avenue lot, and the Civic Square lot. Most of the new meters were in place by October 2000. Re-installation of the parking meters is consistent with Master Plan's goal to bolster the commercial vitality of downtown. Freeing up the most convenient and centrally located parking spaces for shoppers will encourage more shoppers to visit downtown. Parking and meter improvements need to be coupled with pedestrian improvements, landscaping, and façade improvements, which altogether can make the shopping environment more vibrant and attractive.

The Township Police Department oversees meter operation, maintenance, and collection. The newly installed meters have been meeting Township expectations. Meters have resulted in greater turnover of parking spaces in downtown. Business owners and employees can purchase a monthly pass to park in metered spots throughout the Township.

¹² Irvington UEZ, *Springfield Avenue Corridor Parking Study*, 1998.

Figure 7-3: Public Parking Lots and Garages

The meters currently generate approximately \$5,000 per month, which supplements the Township's General Fund. When the meters were first installed, the rate was 25 cents for every 15 minutes. After some complaints about such a high rate (which is more typical of large cities than medium-size towns like Irvington), the rates were halved to 25 cents for every 30 minutes in most locations. This rate seems reasonable and affordable for Irvington. If one of the purposes of the meters is to provide parking for shoppers, the meters should allow a large enough window of time for shoppers to patronize a few stores, eat at a restaurant, visit a doctor or other professional, or simply explore the downtown area. Assuming that a typical shopping trip would last one to two hours, a person would have to pay only 50 cents to one dollar for parking at the new rate.

Unfortunately, the new meters have also been subject to vandalism. A variety of strategies can be considered to prevent and deter vandalism. The problem of vandalism should not, however, deter the Township from maintaining downtown meters, as they have proven effective in freeing up downtown parking spots for customers.

NYE AVENUE PARKING GARAGE

Built in 1975, the Nye Avenue Parking Garage has been significantly underutilized for many years. Demand is not the problem, because surface parking lots through downtown are full on a typical weekday. Even with the re-installation of parking meters, the free parking in the garage has attracted relatively few additional cars.

The poor condition, design, and location of the garage are the main reasons for its lack of use. Walking to and from the garage is not convenient. All pedestrian entrances have been chained off. The only way to walk into or out of the garage is through the garage doors on Nye Avenue. To reach the Springfield-Clinton intersection and the adjacent Bus Terminal, pedestrians have to walk west along Nye Avenue and then north along Union Avenue, a circuitous route. The whole walking trip takes about 10 minutes. The Township has made an effort to improve the garage. In 2001, the Township replaced and installed new lighting, installed signage, and increased maintenance. The garage, however, still suffers from inadequate security, making it unfriendly to pedestrians, particularly at night.

Moreover, the garage is not convenient for motorists. Most traffic is on Springfield Avenue and Clinton Avenue, and to reach the garage, cars have to drive to the southwestern edge of downtown near the Garden State Parkway. Despite signs pointing the way, the garage may be hard to find unless the driver is already familiar with the layout of downtown.

The *Springfield Avenue Corridor Parking Study* recommended that the Township create a task force to improve access to and utilization of the garage; establish a shuttle or a pedestrian path linking the garage to retail areas along Springfield Avenue; and establish a police presence and improve security at the garage. All these efforts would encourage greater use of the garage, particularly for downtown employees and park-and-ride commuters, who are generally more willing to use a parking garage than shoppers.

BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Businesses along the Township's commercial corridors (Springfield Avenue, Clinton Avenue, Lyons Avenue, Chancellor Avenue, and 18th Avenue) are dependent on pass-by traffic for patronage. Whereas downtown has a compact, clustered form of development that is conducive to pedestrian activity, the commercial corridors are long and linear in nature, favoring automobile access. Because they are already oriented towards cars, the proposed zoning is a mix of B-3 and B-4, which allows auto-oriented commercial development. Off-street parking is critical to maintaining the commercial vitality of these zones.

However, in the case of B-1 Neighborhood Business districts, the residents from the surrounding neighborhood are envisioned as the primary market, and walking is envisioned as the primary mode of access. These small districts have been mapped in areas with traditional corner stores or rows of pedestrian-oriented shops, which are the remnants of streetcar-oriented retail nodes from the early 20th century. In these locations, off-street parking would not be required, and on-street parking would be adequate, because very little business would be expected to come from pass-by traffic.

7.3 TRANSIT

RAIL SERVICE

Irvington is not currently served by passenger rail service. A spur of the Lehigh Valley/Conrail railroad line runs through the Coit Street Industrial Area, but it is used for freight traffic only. Although passenger service was briefly provided in 1915 along the line, it was quickly discontinued due to low patronage. Because of the branch line's circuitous route and short spur configuration, passenger service to Irvington would not offer a significant time savings for most commuters and would not provide a direct or convenient connection to most places of employment. Therefore, ridership and revenue expectations would be low, while the cost of service would be relatively high. It is no surprise that Conrail has expressed no interest in implementing commuter service along the line.

Because of these factors, it is not likely that passenger rail service will come to Irvington in the near future. Bus service is less expensive to provide and is more convenient for most people, because buses can reach many different destinations on local streets and because the downtown Bus Terminal is centrally located. It does not make sense to pursue passenger rail service at the current time.

BUS SERVICE

Several NJ Transit bus routes serve Irvington. Routes run all throughout the Township, but Irvington Center and Springfield Avenue have the most concentrated and frequent bus service. Bus routes that serve Irvington are listed in Table 7-3. Nine bus routes serve the Bus Terminal,

with about 900 bus arrivals and departures and approximately 13,500 passengers each weekday. In addition, two routes serve Springfield Avenue, with about 600 arrivals and departures daily.¹³

The number of bus trips and riders at the Terminal and along Springfield Avenue are extremely high relative to the Township's population of 60,000 residents, and they suggest that buses serve as a critical mode of transportation for residents. Buses provide connections to downtown Newark (including Newark Penn Station), midtown Manhattan (Port Authority Bus Terminal), Newark Airport, Irvington General Hospital, and other local and regional destinations.

Irvington is served by one of the most heavily traveled bus routes in the NJ Transit system — the #13. It provides a direct connection into downtown Newark via Clinton Avenue and Broad Street. For Irvington residents who work in downtown Newark, the #13 is direct and convenient. The connection to the Port Authority Bus Terminal in Manhattan is also a heavily traveled bus route. For Irvington residents, the #107 is the most direct connection into Manhattan. In addition, some residents of the adjacent towns make use of the #107. Although residents of Maplewood, South Orange, and Newark typically prefer the train (NJ Transit or PATH), the #107 is a good alternative for many people. Between 6:30 and 10:00 a.m., Exclusive Bus Lanes are provided through the Lincoln Tunnel, shaving some time off of the bus trip into Manhattan during the morning commute. The bus is also a less expensive option, as compared to the train.

By connecting people to job centers, major institutions, shopping centers, and major transportation hubs, the bus system plays a critical role in the economic and social life of the community. In addition, because many of Irvington's low-income residents do not own cars, the bus system provides the only means of transportation for some people. Seniors, teenagers, and young adults consistently patronize the bus system as well, again because many people in those groups have no car.

Planned Improvements

According to NJ Transit, there were no plans for re-routing or service changes in Irvington as of May 2001. The only recent service change in Irvington was that the # 94 service was provided to the south side of the Township on weekends, where there was previously a lack of weekend service. In general, NJ Transit recognizes that Irvington has a heavily-utilized bus network, so it is not a target for service cuts (unless the State requires uniform service cuts statewide).¹⁴

Table 7-3: Major NJ Transit Bus Routes Serving Irvington

<i>Routes Serving Bus Terminal</i>	<i>Major Destinations</i>	<i>Median Weekday Riders along Entire Route, April 2001</i>
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¹³ Irvington UEZ, *Irvington Center Transit Gateway Project*, March 23, 1999.

¹⁴ Telephone conversation with Steve Lax, NJTransit, May 16, 2001.

13	Broad St./Clinton Ave.	Newark, Belleville, Nutley, Clifton	18,070 ¹
26	Elizabeth	Elizabeth, Union, Hillside	1,970
27	Mt. Prospect	Newark, Belleville, Bloomfield, Nutley, Clifton	13,870
37	Lyons Ave./Newark Airport	Maplewood, Ivy Hill loop, Newark Airport	n.a. ²
42	18 th Avenue	Washington Park, Newark	290
90	Grove St. Crosstown	Franklin Ave., Newark subway	3,770
94	Stuyvesant Crosstown	Bloomfield Center, East Orange, Newark, Union, Roselle Park, Roselle, Linden	15,450
107	Irvington/New York	South Orange train station, Ivy Hill, Newark, NYC Port Authority Bus Terminal	5,890 ²
979	Raritan Center	Raritan Center	70
<i>Routes Serving Springfield Ave.</i>			
25	Newark, Doremus Ave.	Doremus Ave.	14,200
70	Newark	Newark Penn Station	6,400
<i>Routes Serving Other Parts of Irvington</i>			
1	18 th Ave., Grove St.,	Vailsburg, Newark	14,200
39	Chancellor Ave., Stuyvesant Ave.	Union, Newark	12,380
96	Newark	Valley Fair, Newark	1,370

1. The #13 bus had the largest ridership of any bus route in the NJ Transit system.

2. Ridership figure for the #37 and #107 buses are combined because they overlap in part. The majority of the ridership is on the #107, between the Irvington Bus Terminal and the Port Authority Bus Terminal in New York City.

Sources: APPS Inc, Field Survey of Irvington Bus Terminal, May 8, 2001, telephone conversation with Steve Lax, NJ Transit, May 17, 2001.

BUS TERMINAL

The downtown Bus Terminal is a huge asset for the Township and provides critical transit connections to major destinations throughout the metropolitan region. The terminal not only provides bus service to Irvington residents, but it serves as a major transfer station for residents throughout the Newark and Elizabeth areas, because several major bus routes converge there. The terminal is open every day of the week and has an indoor vendor who sells bus tickets, snack food, hot dogs, and beverages. With the high volume and frequency of bus service at the terminal, Irvington is one of the best-served municipalities for bus transit in northern New Jersey.

Despite the heavy use and critical function of the terminal, it is in need of improvement. The Bus Terminal building itself is too small to handle the large numbers of people who use the

terminal every day. As of January 2002, the rest rooms remain closed. Although outdoor areas are being improved with new benches, new lighting, and canopies, creating an expanded waiting area, these improvements will not be enough to serve the terminal into the future.

In 1999, the Irvington UEZ prepared a report entitled the *Irvington Center Transit Gateway Project* to address some of these concerns. The report found that the bus terminal was operating near capacity during peak hours in terms of bus activity. At times, the volume of buses is so high, that they back up onto Springfield Avenue or Clinton Avenue.

Also, the passenger waiting facilities were found to be inadequate for the large volumes of commuters during the morning rush hour. According to NJ Transit, the constrained indoor and outdoor waiting areas force people to spill out onto the driveways, where the buses pull up, resulting in safety hazards.¹⁵ Not only was there a shortage of circulation space (both indoors and outdoors) for passengers, but there was also inadequate seating, lighting, security, and maintenance in and around the terminal. On the adjacent city blocks, sidewalks and crosswalks leading to the terminal were found to be inadequate in number, width, quality, and upkeep.

The main recommendations of the *Gateway* report were as follows:

- Improve passenger waiting areas and pedestrian circulation;
- Increase the amount of space for bus circulation;
- Incorporate new retail uses in the terminal area and create a central plaza; and
- Reduce the size of the parking lot and use the Nye Avenue parking garage for spill-over parking.

Three schemes were outlined for achieving these goals: (Scheme A) Renovation of existing building for new retail uses; elimination of interior waiting area; addition of cantilevered canopies over the boarding area for outdoor waiting. (Scheme B) Demolition of existing structure; construction of new structure with indoor and outdoor waiting areas, indoor and outdoor retail, kiosks, and a clock tower. (Scheme C) Demolition of existing structure; construction of new building with outdoor waiting areas. A preliminary conceptual plan was developed by NJ Transit that closely resembles Scheme B. The final plan may be further revised subject to input from the Township. As of May 2001, the Township is working with NJ Transit and the Highway Authority to determine how best to proceed with the revitalization project.

BUS STOPS AND SHELTERS

Bus stops and shelters are located throughout Irvington and allow residents to access the bus network. Currently, many bus stops are served by more than one bus route, meaning that two or more buses may pull up at the same time. In addition, as ridership levels continue to increase in the future, NJ Transit may add articulated buses on some routes, particularly during the peak

¹⁵ Telephone conversation with Steve Lax, NJTransit, May 16, 2001.

hours. Because of these two factors, the Township may eventually have to provide longer bus stops, potentially eliminating metered on-street parking spaces in Irvington Center.¹⁶

Some, but not all, of the bus stops have shelters. In general, shelters should be provided at heavily-used bus stops, and the Township should monitor bus stops to determine shelter needs. NJ Transit owns the bus shelters, but the Township is responsible for maintenance. Some bus stops are in poor condition, covered with graffiti, scratch-"iti", and adhesive stickers, or they are otherwise damaged. Severely damaged shelters should be either replaced or repaired. In particular, new bus shelters should be considered in the downtown area, as part of the downtown revitalization effort.

7.4 PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

DOWNTOWN

Downtown Irvington is the most pedestrian-intensive part of the Township. The compact building pattern, the mix of land uses, the pedestrian-oriented shops, the sidewalk amenities, and the transit activity are the components that make downtown a strong pedestrian realm. Downtown businesses rely on pedestrian activity. Most downtown buildings were erected between 1880 and 1930, and most of them were built without any on-site private parking lots. Thus, for the customer base, businesses rely on people who walk over from the adjacent neighborhoods, park in one of the public lots, or walk to or from a bus stop.

For the continued health of downtown business, it is critical that downtown remain a safe, comfortable, and convenient environment for pedestrians. Infill development should be encouraged on empty lots, "filling in" the gaps in the compact building pattern. Pedestrians tend to feel less safe in areas with vacant lots and buildings, so infill development helps promote walking. Moreover, new development needs to fit in with the traditional building pattern and design. These measures would increase the size and extent of the pedestrian realm, creating additional business opportunities.

In the late 1990s, the State Department of Transportation determined that the Springfield-Clinton intersection was one of the worst locations for pedestrian-related accidents in the State. The Springfield-Grove intersection was also identified as being prone to pedestrian accidents. In early 2000, the Township received a grant from the New Jersey Department of Transportation to develop and implement improvement plans for the two intersections. Of the total grant money, \$300,000 was earmarked for the Springfield-Clinton intersection, and \$100,000 was set aside for the Springfield-Grove intersection.¹⁷ Sidewalk and crosswalk improvements may also be undertaken as part of the Transit Gateway project around the Bus Terminal.

¹⁶ Telephone conversation with Steve Lax, NJTransit, May 16, 2001.

¹⁷ Letter from Commissioner James Weinstein, New Jersey Department of Transportation, to Mayor Sara Bost, Township of Irvington, January 31, 2000.

BUSINESS DISTRICTS

As discussed in Section 7.2 above, most business districts outside downtown have a primary orientation to the automobile, with the exception of the B-1 Neighborhood Business districts. The B-1 districts, like downtown, have a compact building form, mixed use, and other design features that are conducive to pedestrian activity. Future development and roadway and sidewalk improvements should maintain and enhance the pedestrian-orientation.

PARKS AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Having good pedestrian access to parks is critical, since most people reach their local parks on foot. Parks without large-scale recreational facilities do not attract much car traffic, and on-street parking is generally adequate for those few people who may drive.

Many of Irvington's parks and community facilities have good pedestrian access already. Irvington Park, for example, has a pedestrian entrance opposite each street that dead-ends into the park, allowing the residents in the adjacent neighborhoods to walk into and through the park easily. Such pedestrian-oriented features can increase the use and enjoyment of local parks.

Parks with large-scale recreational facilities — particularly those where large numbers of spectators are anticipated — need to have good auto access and parking in addition to good pedestrian circulation for large crowds. During high school games, many people drive to the high school playing fields, creating a sudden and sharp demand for parking in that location. For such events, drivers make use of the high school parking lot and the adjacent on-street parking area in Civic Square.

7.5 BICYCLE CIRCULATION

Irvington does not currently have a system of bicycle paths or lanes. To the extent that residents (particularly children) use bicycles to travel around town, they have to share local streets with cars and are required to follow traffic rules. Many local residential streets have low levels of traffic, and bikes can easily share the right-of-way. However, on arterial and collector roads, heavier levels of traffic, higher speeds, trucks, and buses may create safety hazards for bicyclists. Bicycle lanes and designated bike routes can improve safety. By providing dedicated space for bicyclists in the right-of way, bike lanes separate cars and bicycle traffic and prevent bicyclists from being squeezed into the parked cars alongside the road.

Creating a bicycle lane on an existing street in Irvington would require a change in the roadway configuration. A bicycle lane is typically four to six feet wide. To accommodate a bike lane, therefore, either one of the existing traffic lanes or some of the on-street parking would have to be eliminated. Such a change may be difficult to implement from a practical perspective, and it may be unpopular with residents or business owners. The location and design of any new bicycle lanes should create the least possible disruption to traffic and parking patterns and business activity. Because many children ride bikes, and because children have special safety needs, bike lanes should be concentrated in areas where children tend to ride their bikes — around elementary schools and public parks.

7.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

7-1: Develop a Capital Improvement Program for roads and sidewalks, which identifies needed improvements, repairs, and maintenance activities and itemizes the costs of those needs.

7-2: Implement sidewalk, crosswalk, and streetscape improvements (decorative paving, decorative lighting, trees and landscaping, undergrounding of overhead wires, installation of benches and new bus shelters, etc.) in Irvington Center, in order to enhance pedestrian circulation and attract more customers.

7-3: Increase nighttime surveillance of metered parking lots, metered streets in Irvington Center, and the Nye Avenue Parking Garage, through increased police patrols, SACBID-sponsored security, and/or neighborhood watch programs.

7-4: Continue efforts to establish a direct pedestrian linkage between the Nye Avenue Parking Garage and the Bus Terminal.

7-5: Improve pedestrian entrances into the Nye Avenue Parking Garage, as well as pedestrian circulation and visibility within the garage.

7-6: Explore the feasibility of establishing a vehicular entrance to the Nye Avenue Garage from Clinton Avenue.

7-7: Install parking meters for on-street parking spaces in B-1 Business Districts.

7-8: Encourage NJ Transit to increase bus service, as needed, to keep up with demand.

7-9: Continue working with NJ Transit and the New Jersey Highway Authority to revitalize the Irvington Bus Terminal and to improve pedestrian linkages between the terminal, the Nye Avenue Parking Garage, and the commercial areas along Springfield Avenue and Clinton Avenue.

7-10: Work with NJ Transit to repair or replace damaged bus shelters and to install new bus shelters in locations where they are needed.

7-11: Encourage "infill" development of vacant and underutilized lots in Irvington Center and in B-1 Business Districts. Through the provisions of the zoning code, require "infill" development to be sidewalk-oriented, like traditional buildings in those areas.

7-12: In conjunction with planning for new parks and the upgrading of existing parks, establish convenient and well-designed pedestrian linkages and signage from adjacent streets into the parks.

7-13: Develop a bicycle circulation plan that identifies potential locations for bicycle paths (off-road) and bicycle lanes (on-road).

7-14: As part of the zoning code, include requirements for installation of permanent bicycle racks in conjunction with normal parking requirements for commercial uses.

7-15: Work with NJ Transit to provide bicycle racks and lockers at the Bus Terminal.

7-16: Provide and/or improve bicycle racks at Township facilities, including Township Hall, the Library, and the Gatling Recreation Center.

7-17: Work with the School District to provide and/or improve bicycle racks at the public schools in the Township.

8 Community Facilities

Irvington's community facilities contribute to the quality of life in the Township, by providing vital services and amenities. Community facilities include schools, day care facilities, community centers, and various Township services, including the Police Department, the Fire Department, the Library, the Public Works services, and First Aid emergency services.

8.1 SCHOOLS

The Irvington Public School District had approximately 8,000 enrolled students during the 2000 – 2001 school year within twelve structures.¹⁸ The School District is comprised of nine elementary schools, two intermediate (or middle) schools and one high school. The schools are listed in Table 8-1 and shown in Figure 8-1. In 2001, the State approved and is funding an additional middle school.

Of the nine elementary schools, five have grades K through 5; two have grades from K through 6; one has grades K through 8; and one school is exclusively for 6th graders. Beginning with the 1999 – 2000 school year, all schools with kindergarten programs switched from half-day to full-day programs as part of the Whole School Reform model adopted by the district. There are two Middle Schools in Irvington: the University Middle School located at 255 Myrtle Avenue in the North Ward and Union Avenue Middle School at 427 Union Avenue in the West Ward. The Irvington High School, Frank Morrell Campus, which serves grades 9 to 12, is located at 1253 Clinton Avenue in the North Ward.

PHYSICAL PLANTS

The School District has been forced to eliminate most specialized spaces to meet enrollment needs. In addition, the School District has been slowly expanding its capacity through construction and purchasing. The Thurgood Marshall Elementary School was built in 1993 in the South Ward. The University Middle School, the most recently established school, is housed in the former Essex County Vocational Technical School Annex, which the District originally leased from the County to house a temporary middle school to address the overcrowding for the 4th, 5th and 6th grades. Temporarily called the "Florence Avenue School Annex," the school was recently renamed "University Six." The Economic Development Agency is currently in the process of purchasing this facility from the County on behalf of the School District.

¹⁸ Source: Irvington Board of Education

Figure 8-1: Community Facilities

With the exception of the Thurgood Marshall Elementary School, Union Middle School, and the University Middle School — which were recently built or renovated — the remaining elementary schools' and the high school's physical plants are in poor condition. The majority of the structures were built in the early half of the twentieth century and, with the exception of the schools mentioned above, it has been over 25 years since renovations were undertaken. Therefore, these schools are in need of complete overhauls. This need is recognized by the focus on the need for upgrading facilities in the School District's Facilities Management Plan.

Table 8-1: Schools in the Irvington Public School District

<i>Schools</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Grades</i>	<i>Year Built</i>	<i>Most Recent Addition</i>
Elementary Schools				
Grove Street	602 Grove Street	K-5	1904	1959
Florence Avenue	1324 Springfield	K-5	1906	1981
Mt. Vernon Avenue	36 Mt. Vernon Avenue	K-5	1909	1927
Augusta Street	97 Augusta Street	K-5	1913	1958
Thurgood Marshall	141-181 Montgomery Ave.	K-5	1993	None
Madison Avenue	163 Madison Avenue	K-6	1915	1958
Berkeley Terrace	811 Grove Street	K-6	1930	1962
Chancellor Avenue	844 Chancellor Avenue	K-8	1904	1924
University Six	1 University Place	6	1924	1951
Intermediate Schools				
University M.S.	255 Myrtle Avenue	7-8	1931	1994
Union Avenue M.S.	427 Union Avenue	7-8	1930	1994
High School				
Irvington HS, Frank Morrell Campus	1253 Clinton Avenue	9-12	1924	1973

Source: Irvington Board of Education

ENROLLMENT

Over the last five years, Irvington's schools have exhibited marked fluctuations in their enrollment levels. These fluctuations are due to the restructuring that has been taking place since

the adoption of Whole School Reform and the re-ordering of the district organization into elementary, middle school, and high school categories. Furthermore, renovations at certain schools during this period caused the shifting of children into other schools to accommodate construction schedules. Nearly every school building has enrollment levels that exceed their capacity, as shown in Table 8-2.

Table 8-2: Enrollment in Irvington Public School District, 1996-2001

<i>Schools</i>	<i>1996-97</i>	<i>1997-98</i>	<i>1998-99</i>	<i>1999-00</i>	<i>2000-01</i>	<i>Capacity</i>
Elementary Schools						
Union Avenue	820	811	212	863	782	815
Mt. Vernon Avenue	505	475	490	408	522	423
Chancellor Avenue	726	789	783	580	523	507
Madison Avenue	686	633	653	509	409	388
Grove Street	786	770	801	618	631	492
Berkeley Terrace	733	756	736	584	632	722
Augusta Street	355	350	335	340	300	343
Florence Avenue	759	794	825	688	525	478
Florence Ave. Annex (now University)	395	401	375	551*	916	916**
Thurgood Marshall	597	628	616	387	632	638
Intermediate Schools						
Union Avenue M.S.	211	211	200	863	782	782
University M. S.	595	550	549	555	782	485
High School						
Frank Morrell H.S.	1855	1771	1764	1673	1752	960

Source: Irvington Board of Education & NJ Dept. of Education

**In 1999-2000 the Florence Ave. Annex became the University 6 School, a school just for sixth grade*

***After renovations are completed, this will be the new capacity of the school*

FUTURE PLANS

The Irvington Public School District is a designated Abbott District. Abbott Districts are the product of the 1997 *Abbott v. Burke* State Supreme Court case in which the Court mandated that

26 of the State's most disadvantaged districts receive State funds, so that their per-student spending levels would be equivalent to wealthier districts. In order to receive funding, School Districts with the Abbott designation are required to submit plans detailing their areas of need.

The Irvington Board of Education has completed a Five-Year Facilities Management Plan (2000-2005) in fulfillment of this requirement. The Abbott Plan categories fall into four broad areas: (1) strategies to help students meet the Core Curriculum Content Standards; (2) professional development; (3) technology; and (4) facilities. The Irvington School District's plan is focused on facilities and technology.

The Plan found that the current school facilities are inadequate to meet both program and enrollment needs. The most pressing constraint is the lack of available land for new schools and school-related facilities, which hinders the rebuilding process. The Plan also calls for restructuring grade levels into three groups: PreK-5 elementary schools; 6-8 middle schools; and a 9-12 high school. As Table 8-3 illustrates, the Board of Education proposes a total budget of \$172 million to renovate the schools and build a new middle school.

Table 8-3: Proposed Expenditure, 2000-2005*

Irvington High School	\$ 30,217,701
Florence Annex	\$ 24,778,087
New Middle School	\$ 21,170,150
Grove Street	\$ 17,593,108
Mt. Vernon Avenue	\$ 17,533,005
Chancellor Avenue	\$ 15,847,163
Berkeley Terrace	\$ 14,151,152
Madison Avenue	\$ 13,610,922
Augusta Street	\$ 8,161,448
Florence Avenue	\$ 7,443,444
Thurgood Marshall	\$ 2,460,078
Total	\$ 172,966,258

Source: Irvington Board of Education

*Construction may take until 2010 to complete. Expenditures approved and funded by the State.

PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS AND ADULT FACILITIES

In addition to the public schools in Irvington, the Township has three parochial schools: (1) St. Leo's/Scared Heart Interparochial School, located at 121 Myrtle Avenue; (2) St. Leo's Center, located at 100 Linden Avenue; and (3) St. Paul's Apostle School, located at 285 Nesbit Terrace.

St. Leo's serves students from Pre-K to the 8th grade. The current enrollment is approximately 437 students and has a total capacity of 500 students. St. Leo's Center serves students from 9th to 12th grade. Current enrollment and capacity levels for St. Leo's Center were not available as

of September 2001. St. Paul's Apostle School serves students from Pre-K to the 8th grade. The current enrollment is approximately 225 students, and it has a total capacity of 250 students.

Also, the Township of Irvington offers adult education at Irvington High School.

8.2 CHILD CARE FACILITIES

There are 34 registered child care facilities located in Irvington. Registered facilities provide services for six or more children. Irvington's registered facilities are listed in Table 8-4 and shown on Figure 8-2. In addition to registered facilities, there are family day care facilities that provide services for five or fewer children. Family day care facilities are not tracked by the Township, and they are not listed in the table or shown on the figure. These family day care facilities are still required to be registered through the State and are tracked by Program for Parents, which is based in Montclair.

The number of day care facilities in Irvington has increased since it was designated an Abbott District. This is due to a condition in the plan which allows a portion of the funds to be used to provide 10 hours of day care each day for children aged 3 to 4 years old. The intent of this program is to serve disadvantaged children who may not be served in comprehensive pre-school education programs and provide support services to address the needs of their families. Providers are reimbursed by the State if they provide this service.

The availability of Abbott funding is not the only factor contributing to the recent rise in day care facilities. In addition, demographic trends played a role. Baby boomers started having children in large numbers in the 1980's and 1990's, which resulted in a large increase in school enrollment levels in the mid and late 1990's. As shown in Table 8-5, the number of children below the age of 5 increased by 5 percent from 1990 to 2000. If the population for this age group continues to increase at this rate, then the need for day care will continue to increase in the future.

Figure 8-2 shows the location of child care centers throughout the Township. Most of them are concentrated along the Springfield Avenue corridor, meaning they are centrally located within the Township overall. However, there are many residential neighborhoods that have no child care facilities at all. The West Ward has the largest number of child care facilities (13), whereas the East Ward has the least (4). The North Ward (with 7) and the South Ward (with 8) have intermediate numbers of centers.

Table 8-4: Child Care Facilities

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Ward</i>
1. Agape Children's Academy	830 Lyons	West
2. Apple Day Care	409 Myrtle Ave.	North
3. Butler's Little People Academy	10 Washington Ave.	East
4. Child Development Pre-School	942 Sanford Ave.	North
5. Christian Love Day Care	833 Lyons Ave.	West
6. Creative Concepts Child Development Center	62-70 Howard Street	South
7. Genesis Pre-school	1038 Clinton Ave.	South

8. Harmony Day Care Center	610 Nye Avenue	West
9. Home Away from Home	971 Clinton Ave.	South
10. Irvington Day Nursery	665 Stuyvesant Ave.	West
11. Irvington Head Start	10-12 Marshall St.	East
12. Kiddie Quarters	1174 Stuyvesant Ave.	West
13. Kids Will Always Be Special	1331 Springfield Ave.	West
14. Kingdom Kids Day Care	132 Elmwood Ave.	North
15. Learning Tree	380 Stuyvesant Ave.	North
16. Little Fingers Day Care	143 Ball Street	South
17. Little Image Day Care	1442 Springfield Ave.	West
18. Little People Pre-School	33 Myrtle Ave.	East
19. Mont-Vail Day Care	871 Sanford Ave.	North
20. New Jerusalem Christian	706 Nye Ave.	West
21. Norjenes Day Care Center	73 Harrison Place	South
22. Right Direction Day Care	1019 Stuyvesant	West
23. Rising Sun Academy	1146 Clinton Ave.	North
24. Sanford Heights Pre-School	844 Sanford Ave.	North
25. Solid Rock Baptist Church Development Center	644 Chancellor Ave.	South
26. The Leaguers, Inc.	113 Montgomery Ave.	South
27. Tiny Love Day Care	918 Springfield Ave.	East
28. Learning Tree	381 Stuyvesant Ave.	North
29. Toddler Town	613 Nye Ave.	West
30. Traveling Tots, Inc.	1397 Springfield Ave.	West
31. Traveling Tots II	1366 Springfield Ave.	West
32. Villa Maria Academy	1153 Stuyvesant Ave.	West
33. Villa Maria Academy 2	675 Chancellor Ave.	South
34. Well Spring	1240 Clinton Ave.	North
35. Karate for Youth	25 Mill Road	West

Source: Irvington Health Department, as of June 2002

Figure 8-2: Child Care Facilities

Table 8-5: Children below the Age of 5, Irvington Township, 1990-2000

	1990	2000	Change	% Change
Population	4,658	4,891	233	5%

Source: U.S. Census of the Population, 1990 and 2000

8.3 LIBRARY

The Irvington Public Library is located on Civic Square and occupies approximately 33,000 square feet of building area. The library has 203,334 volumes and provides 150 periodical titles. The Library is in the process of computerizing its card catalogue, and approximately 40 percent of the catalogue was computerized and searchable as of September 2001. The remaining 60 percent is listed in the card catalogue only. Internet access is provided via 10 public terminals (6 in the Adult area and 4 in the Children's). Six additional terminals are located in the Library's Technology Training Lab. The library also has meeting rooms available for use by Library patrons.

The Library offers a variety of programs. Children's activities include a story hour, a summer reading program, Halloween and Christmas parties, and Christmas singing programs. There is also an annual "Read Out", where local dignitaries read to an audience of children. For adults, the Library offers computer training programs that cover instruction in Internet usage, spreadsheets, word processing, and resume preparation. The Library has a Homebound Book delivery program to make their collection available to seniors in retirement communities. General programs include: a monthly Poetry Night, an annual Art Fair, African-American History Month programs, and various cultural programs throughout the year.

As of April 2001, the library served 32,394 patrons in the first four months of the year, an increase from the same period in the year before, when total patronage was 24,397¹⁹. According to the Library Director, the largest groups of users are children and teenagers.

The library system used to include two neighborhood branches that were closed since the last Master Plan was completed in 1979. These were the Union Avenue Branch (343 Union Avenue), located near the border of the West Ward and the South Ward; and the Baillet Branch (346 16th Street), located in the East Ward. These branch libraries were closed due to budgetary constraints. The Union Avenue library was closed in 1981 and the Baillet Branch was closed in 1995. At the time of each closing the majority of the respective stacks were incorporated into the remaining libraries while some materials were donated to the schools. The former Baillet Branch now houses the Irvington Neighborhood Improvement Corporation (INIC), a non-profit social service organization. The fixtures and buildings remain the property of the Township. The Union Avenue building remains the property of the Township and is used for ancillary office space.

The main facility is in need of significant building upgrades. Needed improvements include the repair and/or replacement of the marble ceiling on the outer portico for building integrity and safety; asbestos removal in the basement; air conditioning unit replacement; refurbishment of the public meeting room and bathrooms; and replacement of lighting fixtures for energy efficiency. Additionally, the State Archivist has recommended that the library renovate office space to accommodate the Irvington History Collection.

A measure for estimating the adequacy of the Irvington Public Library is to compare its collection to other New Jersey libraries serving roughly the same size population. In 1999 the library served a population of approximately 60,695 with a collection of 203,334 volumes thereby offering 3.4 volumes per capita, as shown in Table 8-6. By way of comparison, the average for similarly sized municipalities is 3.0 volumes per capita. This suggests that Irvington has an adequate total number of books in the system.

Table 8-6: Public Libraries in Irvington vs. Similarly-Sized Municipalities in New Jersey

	<i>Township of Irvington¹</i> <i>(2000 Population: 60,695)</i>	<i>Average Statistics for Libraries in Municipalities with 50,000 – 99,999 pop.</i>
Volumes Per Capita	3.35	3.01
Expenditures Per Capita	\$19.66	\$30.33
Circulation Per Capita	1.0	4.3
Local Tax Support Per \$1,000 in Equalized Valuation	\$1.08	\$0.66
Equalized valuation Per Capita	\$19,924	\$54,141

1. Numbers reported by the New Jersey State Library were updated to reflect the population count of 60,695 reported in the 2000 U.S. Census.

Source: New Jersey State Library, Analyses of New Jersey Public Library Statistics for 1999

However, the Library's current funding levels suggest that it will not have the ability to extend currently adequate resources into the future. In 1999, the library reported total expenditures of \$1,193,380, resulting in a per capita expenditure of about \$19.66 per year. The per capita average for municipalities with populations between 50,000 to 99,999 was \$30.33 per year. Although the Township has a higher level of local tax support (per \$1,000 of equalized value) than municipalities of the same size, as shown in Table 8-8, this does not suggest that the Library receives more money. The higher rate of local tax support is necessary because of the Township's lower equalized value.

¹⁹ Irvington Public Library

8.4 POLICE

The Headquarters of the Police Department is located in Civic Square, adjacent to Township Hall. The Internal Affairs Division is located on the ground level of the Nye Avenue Parking Garage. The Police Department has been grappling with high levels of crime for many years, compounded with a shortage of police officers. Irvington's overall crime rates decreased between 1997 and 2000, but the Township still has one of the highest crime rates in the state, as shown in Table 8-7. In 2000, its crime rate was higher than in any adjacent municipality, including Newark. Most crimes in Irvington are non-violent crimes, and car robberies are one of the most common crimes perpetrated in the Township. One of the most crime-prone areas of the Township is the area along the Irvington/Newark border. The Irvington and Newark Police Departments have joined forces to patrol the borders, sharing resources, information, and personnel.

Table 8-7: Incidences of Crime per 1,000 Residents

	1997	1998	1999	2000
Irvington Township	106.7	96.8	100.6	84.5
Hillside Township	66.9	57.0	52.7	55.2
Maplewood Township	52.0	37.9	35.3	25.8
Newark	110.7	91.3	83.8	75.7
Union Township	50.8	48.6	45.8	41.4
Essex County	76.3	66.2	62.6	55.6
New Jersey	40.9	37.1	34.2	31.6

Source: *New Jersey Uniform Crime Report, 1999*, www.state.nj.us/lps/njsp/ucr1998. *State of New Jersey, Division of State Police, Uniform Crime Report, 2000*.

The Department has about 186 uniformed personnel currently, many of which were hired in the 1990's, under grants provided by the federal government. Due to limited resources, the Police Department has reduced non-essential patrolling and focused on responses to 911 complaints. Part of the reason why the Township continues to have high levels of crime is that as Newark experienced an economic renaissance and received police-hiring grants in the 1990's, more and more criminals were driven from Newark and ended up in Irvington. The areas of East Ward and the South Ward, adjacent to the Newark border, were the worst impacted.

At the same time that crime was on the rise, Irvington was experiencing a severe shortage of police officers. A restructuring of the Police Department in the mid-1990's resulted in a dramatic reduction in the number of uniformed officers. A 1997 report issued by State determined that the Police Department needed a minimum of 231 uniformed officers and could possibly require an additional 26 officers for community policing.²⁰ Based on that assessment, Irvington has a

²⁰ New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice, *Irvington Police Department Technical Project*, September 1997.

shortage of 19 to 30 uniformed officers. The shortage of police officers is apparent when comparing Irvington to other communities. The Township received a grant to hire 15 police aides (uniformed, but not armed employees). This grant allowed the Police Department to place officers on street patrol and relieve them from tasks that could be assigned to non-sworn personnel. The Township and Board of Education received a grant, which matching funds, to place 15 officers in schools. The first 6 officers were placed in schools in 2002. While the grants have helped address law enforcement, the Department is still understaffed. Even though the number of officer *per resident* in Irvington is roughly equivalent to other communities, there are many more crimes per officer in Irvington, as shown in Table 8-8.

Table 8-8: Police Officers, Relative to Population and Crimes, 2000

	<i>Uniformed Officers per 1,000 Residents</i>	<i>Crimes per Officer</i>
Irvington Township	2.7	31.7
Hillside Township	3.4	16.5
Maplewood Township	2.4	10.8
Newark	5.1	14.8
Union Township	2.3	17.7
Essex County	3.7	15.2
New Jersey	4.6	6.9

Source: State of New Jersey, Division of State Police, Uniform Crime Report, 2000.

The Police Department is undergoing restructuring and improvements as of 2001 to provide reactive and proactive services to the Township. Some of these improvements that have been proposed include:

- Creation of database on crime and police performance.
- Installation of a state-of-the-art computer system.
- Increase in training with a goal of enhanced professionalism.
- Replacement of outdated equipment, including cars, and equipping police cars with new technologies.
- Use of hiring grants to increase the size of the police force and place officers in schools.
- Use of "community" policing techniques to reduce fear of crime and to have the community develop solutions for crime in their neighborhoods (increased police presence, reduced tolerance of loitering, cooperation with other Township departments to improve building maintenance and building design).
- Improvement of the perception of the Police Department in the community.
- Computerization of field reporting systems by using a core computer system coupled with a global satellite positioning system.

8.5 FIRE

The headquarters of the Irvington Fire Department is located in Civic Square, adjacent to Township Hall. Also referred to as "Station One", the four-bay headquarters building was built in 1971 and is the focal point of most of the day-to-day operations and activities of the Fire Department. All of the department's administrative, fire inspection, training, arson investigation, communication, and fire-fighting command operations are conducted in the headquarters building.

There are two substations as well. Station Two is located at 87 Coit Street. It is a two-bay facility that was built in 1909 and serves as the "first response" unit for the South Ward. The former Station Three, which is no longer being used by the Fire Department, is located at the corner of Durant and Wagner. The building is currently occupied by a health organization. Station Four, located at 661 Grove Street, is a two-bay fire house that was built in 1931. It provides "first response" service to the East Ward. The Fire Department also has a drill tower off of Union Place, adjacent to the Chancellor Avenue Playground. Constructed in 1936, the drill tower is in need of major repair. Table 8-9 provides a list of fire-fighting equipment.

Table 8-9: Apparatus of the Irvington Fire Department, 2002

	<i>Station One Headquarters</i>	<i>Station Two 87 Coit St</i>	<i>Station Four 661 Grove St</i>	<i>Total</i>
Engines	3	1	1	5
Reserve Engines	2	1	1	4
Ladder Trucks	1	0	1	2
Reserve Ladder Truck	1	0	0	1
Rescue Truck	1	0	0	1
Command Vehicle	1	0	0	1
Staff Vehicles	10	0	0	10
Total	19	2	3	24

Sources: Irvington Fire Department Annual Motor Vehicle Inventory, 2002

In its *1999 Annual Report*, the Fire Department made the following recommendations for facility and equipment improvements:

- Renovate and reopen Fire Station Three at the corner of Durand and Wagner (constructed in 1926).
- Renovate Fire Stations Two (constructed in 1909) and Four (constructed in 1931) to make necessary upgrades.
- Renovate the Drill Tower (constructed in 1936).
- Make improvements at the three operating firehouses.
- Maintenance and update of computer equipment and computer training.

- Apparatus replacement schedule designed to acquire one new unit every three years.

In 1999 and 2000, the Fire Department was undergoing a round of layoffs, as the result of budget cuts. After the layoffs, the uniformed officers totaled 115, and the total number of civilian workers was four. The department was also undertaking reorganization strategies in order to perform fire inspection and investigation activities more efficiently.

As shown in Table 8-10, most fires in Irvington are accidental in nature. Many fires start in vacant or abandoned buildings, and in some cases, fires starting in these structures have spread to adjacent occupied structures. The Department of Housing Services has slated many buildings with hazardous conditions for demolition, but the rate of abandonment and deterioration exceeds the rate at which the Department of Housing Services can demolish hazardous buildings. Many abandoned buildings are not secured (i.e., boarded up), which attracts illicit activity and accelerates building deterioration and risk of fire.

Table 8-10: Causes of Investigated Fires, Irvington Township, 1998-1999

	1998		1999	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Accidental	197	52%	157	43%
Arson	97	26%	61	17%
Undetermined	83	22%	146	40%
Total	378	100%	364	100%

Sources: Annual Report of the Irvington Fire Department, 1998 and 1999.

The Fire Department is not only responsible for responding to fire and other emergencies; it is also responsible for inspecting various structures for compliance with the fire code. As new buildings have been built or renovated and other buildings experience natural aging and/or neglect, there has been an increasing need for fire code inspections. Inspection applications increased 46 percent between 1997 and 1998 and then increased again by another 80 percent between 1998 and 1999. With budget and personnel cuts, the Fire Department has had difficulty keeping up with applications.

8.6 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

The responsibilities of the Irvington Department of Public Works (DPW) include the maintenance of roads, sewers, sidewalks, and public buildings. Its office is located in Civic Square. In addition, the DPW has two public works garages, the Coit Street Garage at 406 Coit Street and the 16th Avenue Garage on 16th Avenue, which are described in this section.

The greatest impact upon the DPW's ability to deliver service is the large number of private abandoned and vacant properties within the Township. Vacant lots invite illegal dumping, and abandoned structures are at risk of becoming structurally unsafe due to lack of maintenance. In both cases, staff is diverted from regularly scheduled tasks, such as road and sewer maintenance,

in order to respond to the violations. Although many of these properties are privately owned, the DPW often dedicates manpower and time to cleaning them up, in order to prevent or eliminate public safety hazards. The Township works to be reimbursed for the costs of clean-up from property owners, but the collection rate for these actions is low.

16TH AVENUE GARAGE

The 16th Avenue Garage houses the Shade Tree, Parks, and Motorized Equipment Divisions of the DPW. Mechanical repairs for all Township vehicles, including Police and Fire vehicles, are conducted at this facility. The building itself dates from 1948, and the Township purchased the property from PSE&G in the early 1960's. It is a masonry building with a steel truss roof and consists of 28,000 square feet. The building is structurally sound despite its age, but it does require renovations to meet current building and safety standards for air handling and roof drainage.

COIT STREET GARAGE

The Coit Street facility houses the Streets and Sewers Division. It is also a drop off area for recycling, although curbside recyclable collection is available throughout the Township. The facility also serves as a storage yard for road salt. The building dates from the early 1940's and occupies 10,000 square feet. It is a brick masonry building with a wood truss roof and has not had any major renovations or rehabilitation work since it was built. The facility is in need of reconstruction and renovation, or consolidation with the 16th Street Garage.

8.7 TOWNSHIP PARKING LOTS AND THE NYE AVENUE GARAGE

The Township's public parking facilities include several surface-level parking lots and the Nye Avenue Garage. Parking meters were recently re-installed in the Township's surface lots, and there have been proposals for rehabilitating the Nye Avenue Garage. The Police Department's Parking Division has replaced the functions previously performed by the Township's Parking Authority and collects revenue from the parking meters. The DPW is responsible for cleaning the public parking areas. Parking is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7, which addresses the public parking lots in the context of parking in general in both downtown and the other business districts in the Township.

8.8 FIRST AID EMERGENCY SERVICE

The Township currently contracts with Atlantic Health Systems EMTAC, a registered emergency medical service provider, for the provision of first aid emergency services. EMTAC is the primary service provider for Irvington, although there are additional providers who give supplementary assistance. Irvington's Police and Fire Departments provide "first response" services in the case of traffic accidents. EMTAC is affiliated with St. Barnabas Hospital, and its dispatcher is the Cencom Division for Emergency Medical Dispatch Services, which is located in Summit, New Jersey. The Township monitors EMTAC's first aid response services on an ongoing basis, and as of September 2001, the Township was satisfied with EMTAC's overall performance.

In the future, the Township will continue to monitor EMTAC's services. If problems were ever to arise, the Township can consider establishing response-time standards and/or other standards that would be used as the basis for EMTAC's evaluation. These evaluation standards could be used as a basis for hiring another medical service provider as well, should the need ever be present.

In accordance with State regulations, the Township has an Office of Emergency Management, which is required to update the emergency management plan annually. That most recent update was completed in March 2001. The purpose of the emergency management plan is to protect lives and property in emergency situations by coordinating response activities of municipal and volunteer entities to ensure optimum deployment. The plan provides for actions to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from the effects of an emergency.

In a new era of homeland security, there are several land use items that should be noted in this master plan: temporary housing, fallout shelters, and public warning systems. The Irvington Department of Housing Services is the primary agency for providing temporary housing for citizens of Irvington. Additional support will be provided by the following agencies: the American Red Cross, the Essex County Department of Human Services and Welfare, the Salvation Army (Westside Office), the Irvington Board of Education, and the Irvington Housing Authority. The designated congregate shelters with the Township include the 12 public schools, St. Rocco's Center, and the Parkway Shelter House. There are three designated fallout shelters with a total of 100 spaces: the Public Safety Building at Civic Square, the Coit Street Firehouse, and the Grove Street Firehouse. Irvington's Public Warning System is controlled by the Police Department and/or the Fire Department's Communication Center. There are 13 sirens throughout the Township, but only four are operational.

8.9 COMMUNITY CENTERS

The Township owns and operates two community facilities in Irvington, the Irvington Senior Citizen Center and the Chris Gatling Recreation Center. The Senior Citizen Center is discussed in this section, and the Gatling Center is discussed in Chapter 9, which addressed all the recreation facilities in the Township as a whole.

CHRIS GATLING RECREATION CENTER

The Chris Gatling Center, named after an NBA player born in Irvington, is located on the corner of Union and Yale Avenues. The center has a game room, classrooms, computer room, a multi-purpose room, and a gym. The center offers a variety of recreational, educational and sports activities, such as after-school programs, homework assistance, dance classes, arts and crafts workshops, aerobics and weight lifting, and basketball leagues for different age groups. The Gatling Center strives to engage the youth and families in Irvington by improving academic performance, computer literacy, family living, and amateur athletics. The center serves approximately 200 patrons per day.

IRVINGTON SENIOR CITIZEN CENTER

The Irvington Senior Citizen Center, located at 1077 Springfield Avenue, is housed in a former movie theater. The interior consists of a single, large space, measuring about 6,000 square feet in size, in which various activities are offered. These activities include billiard tables and arts and crafts. The Center has a big screen television, and on certain days, a manicurist is available. The Center partners with Irvington General Hospital and St. Barnabas to provide a lecture series on topics relevant to health and aging. Other programs include a tax assistance service and an identification registration program. The Center does not have smaller, separate rooms for small-group activities.

Transportation to the Center is provided by two Township-owned buses. The buses make a regular loop to all the senior housing complexes in the Township, and they also run on an east/west and north/south axis through the Township. Bus service is offered between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. The facility is well used by the senior population living in the Township's senior complexes, partly because the bus loop serves those complexes.

Renovations are slated for the Center, with the Township committing funds towards improvements. These funds will be used to modernize the Center, including a new HVAC system and new furnishings and fixtures. The renovation will also include repairing the marquee and making the Center compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Center does not have a parking lot even though it is located on a major thoroughfare. The lack of a parking lot limits access to the Center, particularly for seniors who don't live along the bus loop. These seniors can use the bus service, but first they must call to schedule a ride. Pedestrian safety is also a concern. Seniors cannot easily cross Springfield Avenue due to the width of the street and the heavy volume of traffic.

8.10 RECOMMENDATIONS

8-1: Work with the Board of Education to identify several potential sites for the location of a new middle school.

- ***8-1-A: In identifying potential middle school sites, focus on sites that are currently vacant or abandoned.***

8-2: Increase safety around all of the Township's schools by installing rumble strips in the street and appropriate safety signage and striping, as described in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

8-3: As part of the zoning code, continue to allow a variety of potential locations for child care facilities and family day care.

- ***8-3-A: Encourage child care providers to seek locations along transportation routes to increase access to households that do not own motor vehicles.***
- ***8-3-B: Establish standards for child care facilities that exceed the minimum standards imposed through State licensing. Such higher standards may include larger size***

standards for indoor and outdoor areas, required drop-off facilities, minimum parking standards, and required landscaping, buffering, or fencing.

8-4: Work with the Board of Education to create "Community Schools" throughout the Township. Take advantage of the funding and new policy direction being promoted by the U.S. and New Jersey Departments of Education to establish schools as centers of the community. Such centers include after hours meeting space, library, computer labs, and recreational space.

- 8-4-A: Work with the UCC and the Board of Education to pursue turning the Grove Street School or Mt. Vernon School into the first "Community Schools" in the Township.*
- 8-4-B: Work with the Board of Education to determine how the "Community School" concept could be incorporated into its five-year \$172 million Capital Improvement Plan.*
- 8-4-C: Work with the Board of Education to identify a four-acre site for a new middle in the proposed Clinton Avenue Redevelopment Area.*

8-5: Identify additional funding sources, including foundation grants and loans, that can be used for library building upgrades, expansion of the book collection, and establishment of a home for the Irvington History Collection.

8-6: To the greatest extent possible, as part of the Township's Capital Improvement Plan, replace outdated equipment in the Police Department, the Fire Department, and the Public Works Department.

8-7: Seek capital funds to renovate Fire Stations Two and Four, as well as the Drill Tower.

8-8: Conduct a feasibility study to determine if Fire Station Three, located at Durand and Wagner, should be renovated and reopened.

8-9: Place the Fire Department on an apparatus replacement schedule designed to acquire one new unit every three years.

8-10: Pursue additional hiring grants to increase the size of the Police force and to increase Police surveillance, particularly during nighttime hours.

8-11: Work closely with the Police and Fire Departments and other code enforcement agencies to pursue "quality of life" violations, such as loitering, graffiti, non-compliance with zoning and building codes, and poor building maintenance.

8-12: Identify additional funding sources that can be used for the renovation of the facilities of the Public Works Department.

8-13: The Township should consolidate its DPW functions into one garage. In the short term, the Town should consolidate the Coit Street Garage with the 16th Avenue Garage and acquire Block 152, Lot 21 to provide parking for DPW workers. The Township should then sell the Coit Street Site. The salt storage facility, however, should temporarily remain at the Coit Street Site.

8-14: *In the long-term, the Township should identify at least one acre of land in the industrial area to construct a new 20,000 to 30,000 square-foot DPW facility with adequate parking and space for a salt dome. The Township must ensure that the new DPW garage is identified in the Coit Street Redevelopment Plan.*

8-15: *Identify additional funding sources that can be used to demolish abandoned and hazardous buildings and to secure (i.e., board up) such buildings prior to demolition.*

8-16: *Continue to monitor the performance of emergency medical services that are provided by private contractors.*

8-17: *As part of the Township's Capital Improvement Plan, ensure that the Township's sirens that are part of the Emergency Warning System are repaired and upgraded, and develop a maintenance plan to assure its operation in the future.*

8-18: *In light of the September 11th terrorist attacks, the Township should provide information about and signage for all shelters. The Township should also explore increasing the capacity of its fallout shelters.*

8-19: *Explore the feasibility of providing parking spaces (whether on-site or off-site) for use by senior citizens the Senior Citizen Center site.*

8-20: *Explore the feasibility of expanding Township bus service for seniors to and from the Senior Citizen Center.*

8-21: *Make crossing the street safer for seniors by changing the signal timing of the traffic lights.*

8-22: *Construct a second police station in the East Ward and seek funds to construct a Public Safety Complex that houses the Police and Fire Headquarters and Municipal Court. Based upon the Attorney General report, the Police Department should be increased by 40 police officers. The current police headquarters will not be adequate to handle additional personnel. In addition, the Public Safety Complex was poorly-designed and constructed over a brook and is experiencing environmental, plumbing, heating and ventilation issues. In the long-term, this facility should be re-built at its current site by using the employee parking areas surrounding the Public Safety Complex.*

8-23: *Continue to explore the feasibility of shared fire service/mutual aid agreement with neighboring communities, particularly with respect to interoperability of communication, multiple agency training, and shared special services (i.e., hazardous materials, confined space rescue, fast team and safety officer response).*

9 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Parks, recreation, and open space contribute to Irvington's quality of life. They provide greenery that enhances the look of the community, as well as facilities that residents can use for exercise and relaxation. By contributing to the quality of life, parks, recreation, and open space can help bolster property values and attract investment in housing and business. Irvington — as an older suburb built at relatively high densities — has long suffered from inadequate amounts of park space relative to population.

Although the high density of housing actually creates a great need for parks and open space, Irvington residents actually have very little parkland and open space available to them. In addition, many parks have suffered from maintenance and safety problems. In order to build up the Township's quality of life, and thereby bolster property values, this Element identifies opportunities for creating new parks, improving existing park and recreational facilities, and protecting open space resources.

9.1 PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Approximately 65 acres of land in Irvington are dedicated to parks and recreational facilities, which are shown on Figure 9-1. Of that total, Irvington Park, at 25 acres, is the largest single parcel of parkland in the Township. Irvington Park also happens to be the Township's only County park. Another 27 acres are made up of smaller Township parks, and the remaining 13 acres are school playgrounds and playing fields, owned and operated by the Board of Education.

IRVINGTON PARK

Irvington Park is a great asset to the Township for several reasons. It makes up nearly 40 percent of all the parkland in the Township, making a significant contribution to the park and recreational opportunities for Irvington residents. Not only does the park provide the largest uninterrupted green space in town, with areas for strolling and relaxing, it also provides a pond and a boathouse, a newly built playground, and tennis courts.

Irvington Park is also notable from an historic and design perspective. It was designed at the end of the 19th century by Frederick Law Olmstead — commonly regarded as the father of landscape architecture — and the park has some of the same design features as the two most famous Olmstead-designed parks: Central Park in Manhattan and Prospect Park in Brooklyn. Like those parks, Irvington Park is characterized by a gently rolling landscape, mature trees, flowering shrubs, decorative fencing, and good pedestrian access and circulation, all of which were carefully designed to immerse visitors in a natural setting.

TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The Township has 13 parcels of land dedicated to parks and recreation. Twelve of them are used for playing fields, playgrounds, and other outdoor facilities, and one of them is the site of an

indoor facility, the Gatling Recreation Center at the corner of Union and Yale Avenues. Township parks are listed in Table 9-1 and shown in Figure 9-1.

Township parks range in size from less than 5,000 square feet (Carolina Park, the smallest) to as large as 12 acres (the Chancellor Avenue Playground, the largest). The smaller-sized parks tend to serve as neighborhood destinations where residents can walk the dog, go for a stroll, or take the kids to play. The larger-sized parks and recreational facilities provide a locale for sporting activities, such as baseball, basketball, soccer, and swimming.

In Irvington Center, Civic Square Park and the Camptown Common are important Township-owned parks, not because of their size, but because of their central location and high visibility. Civic Square Park, located opposite the Town Hall, takes advantage of the Elizabeth River setting, with its characteristic masonry walls built by the Works Progress Administration during the Great Depression. With playground equipment and picnic tables, the park provides a restful green space in the midst of the built-up downtown area.

Camptown Common — a small sliver of land between Springfield Avenue and Nye Avenue — is not highly useable for recreational purposes, because of its limited land area, odd shape, and the heavy traffic along Springfield Avenue. Although it may once have served as the village green, it no longer functions in that capacity. Nevertheless, Camptown Common is a decorative park that announces the downtown area and has a strong impact on Irvington's image.

BOARD OF EDUCATION PLAYGROUNDS AND PLAYING FIELDS

Seven of the Township's eleven school sites — which are owned and operated by the Irvington Board of Education — have playing fields. In addition to playing fields, Irvington High School also has a running track. These facilities are primarily used for school sports programs and competitions, but residents are allowed to use the playing fields when they are not being used for school purposes. In Table 9-1, only that portion of the school site that is dedicated to playing fields is included in the acreage estimate. The remaining four sites do not have on-site playing fields but make use of adjacent Township-owned parks and playgrounds. In particular, the Chancellor Avenue Playground is used extensively for school sports activities.

Table 9-1 Existing Parks and Recreational Facilities

<i>Park or Facility</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Size (acres)</i>	<i>Amenities</i>
COUNTY PARKS			
Irvington Park	South Ward Grove St & Lyons Ave	24.8	Playground, Pond, Boathouse, Tennis &

Table 9-1 Existing Parks and Recreational Facilities

<i>Park or Facility</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Size (acres)</i>	<i>Amenities</i>
			Basketball Courts
Total County Parks		24.8	
TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES			
Camptown Common	West Ward Triangle btw Springfield Ave, Nye Ave, & Lincoln Pl	0.4	Servicemen's Clubhouse, Monument
Carolina Park	North Ward Carolina Ave & Orange Ave	0.1	
Chancellor Avenue Playground	West Ward Chancellor Ave, btw Union Ave & Garden State Pkwy	11.8	Playing Fields, Playground, Shelter, Basketball, Tennis & Squash Courts
Civic Square Park	North Ward Civic Square, btw Springfield Ave & Clinton Ave	2.0	Playground, Storage Shed, Basketball Hoop
Eberhardt Playground	East Ward Eberhardt Pl, btw Western Pkwy & Myrtle Ave	0.9	Playground
40th Street Playground	West Ward Fortieth St, btw Harding Terrace and Lentz Pl	3.2	Playground, Playing Field, Shelter House
Gatling Recreation Center	West Ward Union Ave & Yale Ave	0.6	Indoor Gym, Computer Lab, Weight Room, Game Room, Playground, Multi-Purpose Room
Greene Terrace Playground	South Ward Greene Terr & Philip Pl	0.6	Playground, Basketball Court
Grove Street Playground	South Ward Greene Terr & Philip Pl	0.5	Playground
Montgomery Park	South Ward Montgomery Ave & Hopkins Pl	0.7	Playground, Basketball Court
Orange Avenue Playground	North Ward Orange Ave, btw Orange Pl & Rich St	3.8	Swimming Pool, Pool House, Playground, Playing Fields, Basketball Court
Parkway Playground	East Ward Eastern Pkwy & Berkeley Terrace	2.5	Playground, Playing Field, Shelter
Union Avenue Tiny Tot Lot	West Ward Union Ave, btw Chancellor Ave and Lehigh Pl	0.2	Playground
Total Township Parks and Recreational Facilities		27.3	
BOARD OF EDUCATION PLAYGROUNDS AND PLAYING FIELDS			
Augusta Street School	South Ward Augusta St & May St	0.3	

Table 9-1 Existing Parks and Recreational Facilities

<i>Park or Facility</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Size (acres)</i>	<i>Amenities</i>
Berkeley Terrace School	East Ward Grove St & Berkeley Terrace	0.0	(school uses adjacent Township playground)
Chancellor Avenue School	West Ward Chancellor Ave & Nesbit Terrace	0.6	
Florence Avenue School	West Ward Springfield Ave & Florence Ave	1.0	
Grove Street School	East Ward Grove St & Seventeenth Ave	0.0	(school uses adjacent Township playground)
Irvington High School	North Ward Clinton Ave, btw Stuyvesant Ave & Drakes Ln	8.6	Playing Fields Running Track
Madison Avenue School	North Ward Madison Ave & Cummings St	0.4	
Mt. Vernon Avenue School	South Ward Mt. Vernon Ave, btw Cleremont Ave and Rosehill Pl	0.7	
Myrtle Avenue Middle School	North Ward Myrtle Ave & Del Mar Pl	1.4	
Thurgood Marshall School	South Ward Clinton Ave & Montgomery Ave	0	(school uses adjacent Township playground)
Union Avenue School	West Ward Union Ave & Rutgers St	0	(school uses adjacent Township playground)
Total School Playgrounds and Playing Fields		13.0	
TOTAL ALL PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES		65.1	
<u>OTHER OPEN SPACE (generally not usable for park or recreation purposes)</u>			
Clinton Cemetery	North Ward Union Ave, btw Yale Ave and Lyons Ave	12.0	
Hebrew Cemetery	East Ward Fourteenth Ave, btw Grove St and Newark border	3.2	
Elizabeth River	North Ward btw High School and Newark border	1.2	
Areas along the Garden State Parkway and -78	East Ward, South Ward, West Ward	not available	

Figure 9-1: Parks and Recreational Facilities

OTHER OPEN SPACE

Irvington has virtually no remaining open space. Olympic Park — the Township's last useable tract of open space — was converted into a business park in the 1970s. The few remaining parcels of open space are not generally useable for recreational activities, but they do serve as buffers and provide greenery to the Township. These include Clinton Cemetery (West Ward), Hebrew Cemetery (East Ward), several short segments of the Elizabeth River outside of Civic Square Park, and areas alongside the Garden State Parkway and I-78.

While the cemeteries and the expressway buffers can never be used fully for parks or recreation, areas adjacent to the Elizabeth River could be considered as the location for future parks or nature trails. Parks adjacent to the river would take advantage of the riverbed's pastoral setting.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE OUTSIDE IRVINGTON

There are two parks in Newark that are within walking distance of some Irvington residents.

- The closest is Vailsburg Park, which is located off of the Oraton Parkway near the northern tip of Irvington. Residents who live north of 18th Avenue can walk to that park in less than 10 minutes. Like Irvington Park, Vailsburg Park is an Essex County park and was designed by Frederick Law Olmstead.
- Newark's West Side Park is located between 16th Avenue and 18th Avenue, four blocks east of the Irvington border. The park is within a short walking distance of the residents living in the East Ward.

In addition to these small local parks, Irvington is located less than three miles from South Mountain Reservation, the largest park in Essex County. Within easy driving and biking distance of Irvington, South Mountain Reservation has trails and paths for day hikes. Currently, NJ Transit does not provide bus service to the park, limiting the ability of some Irvington residents from taking advantage of the park.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

Many of the Township's parks, park buildings, playgrounds, and playing facilities have fallen into a state of disrepair. Because of budget cuts, the Department of Public Works has been able to do only the most basic maintenance, such as lawn mowing and trash collection, over the past 20 years. Some Green Acres funding was used several years ago to expand some of the Township's parks, but none of that funding was used to improve pre-existing facilities.

As shown in Table 9-2, the Irvington Parks Department has submitted applications for two major grants for park improvements. The first grant (from the State's Green Acres fund, which was awarded in 2001) would provide funding for improvements to park structures. All of the physical structures in the Township parks — playgrounds, shelters (which provide meeting rooms and recreational space), and fences — are in need of repair or replacement. Many of the playground structures are more than 25 years old and may be dangerous for children to use, and many of the shelters have been rendered unusable as a result of deferred maintenance.

Table 9-2 Planned Improvements to Parks and Recreational Facilities

<i>Park or Facility</i>	<i>Planned Improvement</i>	<i>Status</i>
Township parks	Improvements to structures, including shelters and playground equipment	Grant of \$250,000 and loan of \$250,000 awarded by Green Acres in 2001
Township parks	Baseball field improvements	Application submitted in 2001 for \$130,000 Baseball Tomorrow grant

The second grant (from Baseball Tomorrow, a private foundation) would fund improvements to baseball fields.²¹ Aside from the projects that would be made possible by these grants, if the grant applications are approved, there are no other planned improvements, due to budget constraints.

PARK AND RECREATION NEEDS

Maintenance and Security in Existing Parks

In the public meetings conducted in conjunction with the preparation of the Master Plan, residents stressed park maintenance as a critical need. In fact, residents felt that improving the maintenance and security of existing parks should be a priority over adding new parks. Indeed, many of the parks in Irvington have been suffering from a lack of maintenance and are in need of major improvements. In addition to structure and baseball field improvements that the Parks Department is already pursuing, the Parks Department has identified the following needs:

- *Repaving of Walkways and Ball Courts.* First, the paved walkways and basketball courts in many of the Township parks have experienced cracking and buckling; they are in need of repair and sealing. In addition, the tennis courts in County-owned Irvington Park are in need of renovation.
- *Landscaping Improvements.* Trash collection and lawn mowing are only the most basic landscaping needs. Township parks also need tree pruning, weed removal, lawn care, new plantings, and fence repairs. In addition, gazebos or other special park destinations could provide a place for special events, a farmer's market, or photographs.
- *Cleaning and Repair of Pond in Irvington Park.* The pond is in need of cleaning and improved aeration, and the edge of the pond is in need of reinforcement.
- *New Seating.* There is a shortage of places to sit in the Township Parks. Seniors and parents, in particular, need places to sit while their children or grandchildren use the active recreational facilities.

²¹ Telephone conversation with Donald Maloy, Irvington Parks Department, May 7, 2001.

- *Gatling Recreational Center Gym Repairs.* The floor of the gym is a mix of granite and cement, which makes recreational activity difficult and dangerous. Improvements to the floor of the gym should be a high priority.
- *Track Improvements at Irvington High School.* The track is hard to run on, because of deferred maintenance, and it is not up to modern standards. A modern turf-surface track would be ideal.
- *Security.* All parks suffer from security problems. Additional police surveillance is necessary, and improving response times to emergency calls should be the top priority for increasing safety in parks. In addition, block watch programs, improved fencing and lighting, and restricted hours can help deter criminal activity.

New Parks

While the maintenance and security in existing parks is a top priority, Irvington also needs new parks. Irvington is severely deficient in parkland, relative to the dense population of the Township. In addition, the Township lacks many of the recreational facilities that residents are seeking.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has established standards by which to evaluate the quantity of parkland available to residents within a municipality. The NRPA recommends that a municipality provide between 6.25 to 10.5 acres of community, neighborhood, or pocket parks per 1,000 residents. The NRPA standard is a range (6.25 to 10.5) rather than a flat number, because communities vary widely in their natural and built conditions. Depending on a town's location, degree of urbanization, density of development, and proximity to regional parks or open space, the specific standard adopted by a community would be lower or higher in the established range or may fall outside the range altogether.

In Irvington — as an older, inner-ring suburb with moderate-to-high intensities of development — there should be enough park space to compensate for the compact living conditions. Many residents may have little or no private yard space and rely entirely on their parks for open space, fresh air, and recreation. However, Irvington currently falls far below the minimum NRPA standard (6.25 acres per 1,000 residents). With about 65 acres of parkland and a current population of 60,695 residents²², Irvington's existing park ratio is only about 1.1 acres per 1,000 residents. This suggests that Irvington is drastically under-served in terms of park space.

How much park acreage should be added in Irvington?

Assuming that the population remains relatively stable at about 60,000 residents over the next 20 years, Irvington would need to add approximately 310 acres of parkland to meet the minimum NRPA standard. Achieving such a high standard would be extremely difficult and is not realistic. Irvington has no remaining open space that could be easily converted to parkland, and nearly all land in the Township has been subdivided into small lots and developed with housing

²² U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

and businesses. Such a large increase in parkland could require expensive and difficult property acquisition, lot assembly, and relocation of displaced residents.

A more appropriate and realistic park standard for Irvington would be about 3.0 acres per 1,000 residents. At 3.0 acres per 1,000 residents, Irvington would have to add about 105 acres of parkland. With potential redevelopment and clearance of abandoned properties, achieving 105 acres of new parkland is within the realm of possibility. It must be emphasized that this standard is intended as a goal, not as a mandate, that needs to be balanced with the other important Township goals, particularly economic development, housing revitalization, and improvements to infrastructure and community facilities.

Where should parkland be added?

Currently, parks are not equally distributed throughout Irvington. As shown in Table 9-3, the South Ward has the greatest concentration of parkland, due to the presence of Irvington Park. The East Ward has the least amount of parkland, less than four acres, suggesting that the East Ward has the greatest need for new parks. Ratios of parkland acreage per 1,000 residents are even more telling. On a population basis, the East Ward has only 0.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

Table 9-3: Existing Park Acreage Estimates by Ward

	<i>Existing Parks & Rec Facilities (acres)</i>	<i>Estimated Population, 2000¹</i>	<i>Acreage Per 1,000 Residents</i>
North Ward	16.3	13,960	1.2
East Ward	3.4	16,994	0.2
South Ward	27.6	14,567	1.9
West Ward	17.8	15,174	1.2
Total	65.1	60,695	1.1

Source: Claritas Marketview Reports, 2001; U.S. Census Bureau.

1. Estimate based on census block group percentages for 2000 projection prepared by Claritas, as applied to the Township population figure reported in the 2000 US Census. As of September 2001, information from the 2000 census was not available at the census block level.

Parkland should ideally be added in locations that would result in a more balanced proportion of parkland acreage relative to population. The standard of 3.0 acres per 1,000 residents should be applied not only to the Township as a whole, but to each ward as well. As shown in Table 9-4 below, this would imply that the most park acreage, about 44 acres, should be added in the East Ward. This would help compensate for the East Ward's lack of open space and its relatively dense population. Incidentally, the large amount of abandoned housing and vacant lots in the East Ward creates opportunities for new parks.

Table 9-4: Park Acreage Needs by Ward
(based on the standard of 3.0 acres per 1,000 residents)

	<i>Total Park Need (acres)</i>	<i>Existing Parks & Rec Facilities (acres)</i>	<i>Amount of Park Acreage to be Added</i>
North Ward	41.9	16.3	25.6
East Ward	51.0	3.4	47.6
South Ward	43.7	27.6	16.1
West Ward	45.5	17.8	27.7
Total	182.1	65.1	117.0

Source: Claritas Marketview Reports, 2001.

What type of parks should be added?

The amount of parkland in Irvington is not the only issue of concern. There must also be a variety of different parks and facilities that provide recreational choice. That is, residents should have a mix of small pocket parks, neighborhood parks, and community parks. The different types of parks can be defined as follows:

- *Pocket Parks.* Pocket parks are generally less than one acre in size and provide a local place for residents to stroll, visit with neighbors, walk the dog, play a game of pick-up basketball, and take the kids to use the playground. Pocket parks serve nearby residents who are within walking distance of the park. Generally, residents are willing to walk no more than five minutes (about a 1/4-mile or 1,300 feet) to a pocket park.
- *Neighborhood Parks and Schoolyards.* Neighborhood parks and school grounds have larger-scale playing fields and open space areas that attract residents from throughout a neighborhood or ward. These parks range in size from about one to five acres. Children and their families are generally willing to make use of the local schoolyard or neighborhood park, even if the walk is more than five minutes, because it provides more space than a pocket park. If the park is too far to reach on foot, children may ride their bikes, or parents may drive or take the bus with young kids.
- *Community Parks.* Community parks attract residents from throughout the Township, because they offer particularly large open space areas or unique facilities that cannot be found elsewhere. Community facilities are generally in excess of five acres, but they can be smaller. The size of the park is less important than the uniqueness of the facility. The more unique the facility, the greater its attraction to the community as a whole. For most residents, driving or riding the bus are the most convenient ways to reach these facilities.
- *Soccer Fields.* While there is a big demand for soccer, there are no soccer fields in the Township Irvington. Soccer fields could be created as an individual park or installed in a larger new park.

Currently, Irvington does have a range of pocket, neighborhood/school, and community parks. As shown in Table 9-5, there are six small stand-alone pocket parks, eight neighborhood parks, and five major community parks. Even though the high school is technically a “schoolyard,” it qualifies as a community park, because it has unique facilities like the football field and the track which attract residents townwide. In addition, Civic Square Park and Camptown Common qualify as community parks, not because of their size or facilities, but because of their prominent location in downtown and their important influence on the Township's image.

Table 9-5: Existing Parks and Recreational Facilities, by Category

	<i>Pocket Parks</i>	<i>Neighborhood Parks/ Schoolyards¹</i>	<i>Community Parks</i>
North Ward	Carolina Park	Madison Ave. School Myrtle Ave. Middle School	Civic Square Park Irvington High School Orange Ave. Playground
East Ward	Eberhardt Playground Grove St. Playground	Parkway Playground	None
South Ward	Greene Terr. Playground Montgomery Park	Augusta St. School Mt. Vernon Ave. School	Irvington Park
West Ward	Union Avenue Tiny Tot Lot	Chancellor Ave. School Florence Ave. School Fortieth St. Playground	Camptown Common Chancellor Ave. Playground Gating Recreational Center

1. Schools without on-site outdoor recreational facilities are not listed.

How many pocket parks, neighborhood parks, and community parks should be added?

With only six pocket parks in Irvington, most residents do not live within walking distance of a pocket park. To ensure that all Irvington residents have a pocket park within walking distance, each ward could use two to four additional pocket parks, based on the standard of a 1/4-mile waking radius. These small pocket parks would be particularly useful for senior citizens. According to the Parks Director, seniors use all the Township parks, but there are not enough places for seniors to stroll and sit, as most of the parks are dedicated to active recreational facilities like baseball fields and basketball courts.

The greatest need for pocket parks exists in the West Ward, which has only one pocket park — the Union Avenue Tiny Tot Lot. Located on the east side of the Garden State Parkway, this small park is separated from the major residential areas of the West Ward, and actually serves the South Ward better. In the East Ward and South Ward, pocket parks would be an ideal reuse for abandoned lots and sites where dilapidated buildings have been demolished.

While new pocket parks would enrich Irvington's quality of life, pocket parks have sometimes experienced security or maintenance problems. Any pocket parks that are established should be accompanied by a maintenance and security plan that is acceptable to the Township Police Department. Pocket parks that are owned and maintained by local residents could be gated and accessible by key only to park members.

Neighborhood parks are evenly distributed throughout the Township, such that nearly all residents live within about a 1/2-mile of a neighborhood/school park. Because residents would generally be willing to travel farther to a neighborhood park than to a pocket park, the half-mile distance is adequate. No additional neighborhood parks are expected to be necessary in the near future. However, because Irvington is so lacking in parkland, the Township should not hesitate to seize the opportunity for developing a new neighborhood park if the opportunity arises.

As residents have developed new sporting interests, they have developed needs for new sporting facilities. In particular, there is the need for an indoor pool, a dedicated soccer field, a golf driving range, a skate boarding facility, running trails, bicycle paths, and a hockey rink. Building all of these facilities may not be feasible for budget reasons, but the length of the list suggests that there is a great need for additional community parks with new sporting facilities.

Currently, the only ward without a community park is the East Ward, suggesting that the East Ward would be the best place for a new community park. The large number of vacant lots and abandoned housing in the East Ward creates opportunities for new parks. The South Ward also has a large number of vacant lots and abandoned houses that could provide opportunities for a new community park.

9.2 OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Nearly all land in Irvington has been subdivided and developed. Therefore, it does not experience the critical environmental issues faced by many suburban towns, such as open space and soil conservation, protection of sensitive wetlands and habitat areas, and preservation of natural resources. Nevertheless, Irvington does confront a handful of serious environmental issues. Flooding, illegal dumping, and surface water quality are concerns along the Township's two creeks, the Elizabeth River and Lightening Brook. Noise and emissions from automobiles are issues all over the Township, but especially in the areas next to the Garden State Parkway and I-78. Soil and groundwater contamination from brownfield sites and potential environmental impacts from industrial uses in the Coit Street Industrial Area are serious issues as well.

NATURAL CONDITIONS

Topography

Irvington has a gently rolling landscape. Two low ridgelines (approximately 200 feet above mean sea level) form the western and eastern edges of town, and the Elizabeth River Valley (approximately 100 feet above mean sea level) lies in between. Irvington Center and Civic Square are situated in the lowest part of the valley, along the Elizabeth River.

With slopes of 5 percent or less, most streets and lots are relatively flat. Lots that are flat are easier to build on and can accommodate more intense development and a wider range of uses, as long as drainage and flooding are not a problem. In a few isolated areas in the West and North Wards, slopes range from five to thirteen percent, and there may be individual sites whose slopes

exceed thirteen percent.²³ These areas could require special construction and would be better suited for residential than commercial use. Fortunately, all areas with steep slopes are found in residential neighborhoods. In general, properties with slopes over fifteen percent should not be developed, because they pose difficulty in construction and are highly susceptible to land and rock slides.

Geology and Soils

Irvington lies on the Piedmont Plateau lowlands, between the Appalachian Highlands in Morris County to the west and the Coastal Plain along the Hudson River and Atlantic shore. Irvington, like many areas of northern New Jersey, was subject to glacial scouring that scraped away loose topsoil and left behind the more dense and rocky substrata. This process carved out the low-lying ridges and valleys of the Plateau and resulted in new drainage patterns, creating the rolling landscape that we see in Irvington today.

Over the last 200 years, nearly all land in Irvington has been disturbed by human activity. The predominant soil type in Irvington is a mix of "Wethersfield" soils (the original natural soil type) and "Urban Land" (developed areas covered with impervious surfaces, such as buildings and pavement, which do not allow rainwater to be absorbed into the soil).²⁴ Natural Wethersfield soil is dense and comprised mostly of red sandstone, shale, and basalt. Water permeability in the topsoil is moderate and slow in the more dense lower layers, creating potential flooding problems.

In areas where there is a proportional mix of "Wethersfield" and "Urban Land" soils, less than half of the total land area is covered with impervious surfaces. In other words, buildings and pavement are interspersed with yards, parks, and open space, where the natural soils have remained intact. Where Urban Land is the predominant soil type, the original soils were cut and filled to such an extent that 40 to 80 percent of them were altered. The largest and most uniform area of Urban Land is found in the Coit Street Industrial Area. Impervious surfaces there cover more than 85 of the land surface. This area is known to have a sub-layer of Wethersfield soils.

Wetlands

According to the National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, there are virtually no wetland areas in Irvington. The pond in Irvington Park is the town's only freshwater pond, and it is classified as Palustrine Open Water. However, because the pond is manmade and lined with concrete, it does not have typical wetland attributes and cannot be considered a true wetland. There are no estuarine wetlands, as Irvington has no large bodies of water that are subject to tidal activity. The Township's two streams — the Elizabeth River and

²³ East Ward area between Grove Street and Eastern Parkway; North Ward area between Stuyvesant Avenue and Sanford Avenue; West Ward area between Nesbit Avenue and Union Place.

²⁴ At the time this Master Plan was being prepared, the U.S. Department of Agriculture was completing a new soil survey of Essex County. The figure shows a preliminary draft of the new soil survey for Irvington.

Lightening Brook — are not classified as wetlands, according to the NWI.²⁵ However, as discussed in the next paragraph, undesignated wetland areas may exist along the banks of these streams.

NWI is not a completely accurate survey of wetland areas. Most of the wetlands were identified using aerial photography and soil samples, meaning that small wetland areas (as may exist along the Township's two streams) could have been missed. According to the New Jersey Office of State Planning, there are 2.2 acres of non-tidal wetlands in Irvington, based on independent studies. Although maps of these areas are not available, it is likely that they are located adjacent to Elizabeth River or Lightening Brook.

State law would protect any previously unknown wetland areas that are discovered during the process of development. According to the State's Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act of 1987, all wetland areas are supposed to be protected from encroachment and contamination. Developers must obtain permits from the State Department of Environmental Protection before filling or disturbing wetlands, and development proposals must comply with the Wetlands Act.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Surface Water Contamination

Polluted storm water runoff and illegal dumping can cause surface water contamination. Roads and parking lots are the most common sources of polluted storm water. Both moving and parked cars drop oil, grease, gasoline, and dirt onto paved surfaces. These substances are dried and baked into the asphalt on sunny days and then bubble up again during rainy weather and drain away into storm sewers and the creeks. This problem is common in all urban and suburban areas, where there are large areas of paved surfaces (in the form of roads and parking lots).

During the field visits conducted in Irvington in 2000 for the purpose of the Master Plan, strewn trash was observed along the banks of both the Elizabeth River and Lightening Brook. The dumping of trash and other debris along the Township's two creeks is illegal and potentially contributes to surface water contamination. It is unknown exactly what substances have been dumped into the creek beds over time, aside from household trash and leaves. In addition, trash left in the streets can collect in the Township's storm drains, creating potential drainage and contamination problems.

Soil and Groundwater Contamination

The primary sources of soil and groundwater contamination are industrial and auto-related uses (i.e., factories, gas stations, and auto repair shops). On such sites, bits of industrial or automobile discharge end up embedded in the soil, and underground storage tanks (used to store oil or gasoline) may crack and leak over time. Soil and groundwater contamination from these sources, and the UEZ's efforts to pursue clean-up efforts, are discussed in Chapter 5.

²⁵ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, <www.ecos.fws.gov/geotract/user_files>.

Industrial Pollution

At the public meeting conducted in conjunction with the Master Plan, some residents expressed concern about the potential cancer-inducing impacts of industrial activity in the Coit Street area. The Township is not aware of any current activities that may be increasing the risk of cancer or other life-threatening diseases. Further study is required to assess whether the impacts of existing uses may be causing these or other harmful health impacts.

The Coit Street Industrial Area has a very large concentration of brownfield sites. Contamination is a left-over of the industrial uses that have been located in the area for more than 100 years. Some of the environmental damage was done before regulations were put in place to limit the impacts on the environment. In conjunction with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the Township is working with property owners to clean up these brownfield sites, as discussed above and in Chapter 5.

Flooding

According to maps generated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the areas in Irvington most prone to flooding are found along the borders of the Elizabeth River. Those stream bed areas are potentially subject to a 100-year flood, defined as a flood that has a 1 percent chance of occurring in any given year. A few of the Township's public streets and private tax lots fall within this flood zone. In particular, Lincoln Place (between Lyons Avenue and Springfield Avenue) and Civic Square would be potentially flooded in the event of a 100-year flood. There are also several small, scattered areas subject to 500-year floods throughout the Township. Some small areas adjacent to Lightening Brook (along Stuyvesant Avenue and Franklin Terrace) are subject to flooding. Also, the western edge of Irvington Park and some of the adjacent blocks fall within the 500-year flood zone.

The FEMA maps, however, do not provide a complete picture of the Township's flooding problems. In public meetings, residents reported that some parts of the East Ward (west of Grove Street) are subject to flooding. Also, flooding is reportedly a problem at the point where the Elizabeth River flows into a culvert south of Yale Avenue. At times, blocked storm drains have also resulted in localized flooding on some streets. Flooding and storm drainage are also discussed in Chapter 6.

Traffic Noise and Emissions

During the public meetings held in conjunction with the Master Plan, residents complained about traffic noise from the Garden State Parkway. Not only traffic noise, but also emissions, can diminish the quality of life in neighborhoods located adjacent to expressways and major arterial roads. The constant sound of rushing cars can render some indoor rooms unusable and can ruin the enjoyment of adjacent yards and parks. Noise and emissions can have negative potential health impacts as well. Noise disrupts sleep and relaxation, and car emissions contribute to asthma and other respiratory ailments. Residential uses abutting Springfield Avenue, a heavily traveled route, may experience some of the same impacts as residential areas adjacent to the highways, albeit to a lesser degree.

In addition to automobile traffic, truck traffic creates negative roadway, noise, and emissions impacts on Irvington neighborhoods. Trucks travel through the Township, making deliveries to businesses, but the most truck activity is concentrated in the Coit Street Industrial Area and oriented to I-78. Trucks carry freight to and from the industrial sites and warehouses located in that area. Because of larger and heavier loads, trucks tend to release large amounts of emissions and generate more noise than automobiles. In addition, long rigs have difficulty negotiating the narrow streets and lots in the Coit Street area, and many of the sites do not have large enough loading areas to accommodate the long trucks. As a result, trucks are often parked in the streets or on sidewalks, and they are often forced to drive over the curb. This activity accelerates the deterioration of street and sidewalk pavement.

9.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

9-1: Work with residents, merchants, property owners, the Board of Education, the Police Department, and the Township Recreation Department to develop a security and maintenance plan for each park site. Consider creating a conservancy to help maintain parks.

- ***9-1-A: The plan should be a multi-faceted strategy, addressing police surveillance, capital improvements, maintenance, funding, lighting, fencing, and landscaping design in a coordinated fashion.***
- ***9-1-B: The plan should also address the involvement of volunteers through "clean-up days", "neighborhood watch programs", and other related activities.***

9-2: Continue to seek out grants and low-interest loans that the Township can use to make improvements and expansions to recreational facilities.

9-3: Identify at least three half- or quarter-acre sites in each ward that can be potentially used as the location of future pocket parks. Seek community groups or faith-based institutions to serve as caretakers of the pocket parks.

9-4: Identify at least one five- to ten-acre site or a series of sites that total five to ten acres in each ward that can be potentially used as the location of future active recreational facilities, such as a soccer field.

9-5: In identifying sites for potential new parks, focus on sites that are currently vacant or abandoned.

9-6: Explore the feasibility of establishing walking, running, and/or biking trails along portions of the Elizabeth River.

9-7: Work with residents in each ward to select potential park locations, based on the list of potential sites identified by the Township, and to plan and design these parks.

9-8: In developing a security and maintenance plan for park, share these draft plans with the Irvington Police Department and the Township Recreation Department, so that they can comment on those plans and offer suggestions.

9-10: Work with NJ Transit to establish weekend bus service from the Irvington Bus Terminal to South Mountain Reservation.

9-11: Work with the County to increase landscaping and reduce paved surfaces along County roads.

9-12: Develop a plan to increase landscaping and reduce paved surfaces along Township roads and in Township parking lots.

9-13: Increase landscaping requirements on commercial properties and in parking lots as part of the zoning code.

9-14: Post "No Dumping" signs, which include warnings of fines for illegal dumping, in areas adjacent to Elizabeth Creek and Lightening Brook.

9-15: Adopt updated environmental standards for industrial uses as part of the zoning code.

9-16: Continue working with State officials to clean up brownfield sites.

9-17: Work with the New Jersey Highway Authority to install noise barriers and/or plant additional evergreen trees or hedges alongside the Irvington section of the Garden State Parkway.

9-18: Require off-street loading facilities for warehouse and industrial sites, large enough to accommodate eighteen-wheeler trucks.

9-19: Work with the Camptown Business Improvement District to coordinate roadway and sidewalk improvements and to prevent damage to roadways and sidewalks from trucking activities.

9-20: Limit truck activity on Collector Streets and Local Streets by preparing a coordinated truck route plan that discourages the use of such streets by trucks.

9-21: Consider implementing traffic-calming measures (such as additional "Stop" signs, speed bumps, traffic circles, etc.) on appropriate Collector and Local Streets to discourage through-traffic.

9-22: Convert Civic Square Park into a major destination for residents, shoppers and employees. The new park would serve passive and active recreational needs as well as food and entertainment. The Township should hire a consultant with expertise in urban planning, architecture, landscape architecture, park planning, and traffic/transportation planning to convert the park. Key upgrades should include restoring the retaining wall along Civic Square, new architectural and ceremonial entrance into the park, a food court with tables, and a small amphitheatre. The one side of the park would be landscaped with updated play equipment.

9-23: Improve the aeration system in the pond in Irvington Park to increase the cleanliness of the water.

10 Historic Preservation

10.1 IRVINGTON: A BRIEF HISTORY

Irvington is located in the Elizabeth River Valley. The first inhabitants of the valley were the Hackensacks, a sub-tribe of the Lenni Lenape. Although no Hackensack village is known to have existed in Irvington, the valley attracted Indians hunting for game and fish. European settlers first sailed up the Passaic River in 1666, and Newark was settled in the 1670's. By the 1690's, Newark settlers moved westward along the Indian trail that later became Clinton Avenue. The trail led to the Elizabeth River and the open meadows of the valley.

Farming and the Advent of Camptown

During the early years of the eighteenth century, the area along Elizabeth River was carved out into a series of farms. Samuel Camp moved his family from Newark to the Elizabeth River Valley in 1725. In 1740, his son Joseph opened a general store on Clinton Avenue and later built a sawmill on the riverfront and a cider mill and distillery on the hill overlooking the river. By mid-century, the Camp family owned roughly one-third of the land in what is now Irvington, and the area came to be known as Camp's Town. As more farmers moved west from Newark, the area was incorporated as Clinton Township in 1834.

By about 1850, Clinton Township had grown into a village of about 900 people. Most residents were farmers, but there were some local professionals and merchants as well. In 1852, Township leaders decided to take on the name Irvington, after the famous author Washington Irving. On March 27, 1874, the State approved legislation that established the Township of Irvington, which became an independent municipality with its own mayor, trustees, police, and fire department.

The Streetcar Suburb

In the late 1800's, Irvington started changing from a rural village into a middle-class suburb of Newark. Between 1860 and 1890, the horse-drawn streetcars on Clinton and Springfield Avenues made it possible for someone to live in the village and commute into downtown Newark for work. However, because horse-drawn streetcars traveled at relatively slow speeds, it was not until the first electric streetcar was established along Springfield Avenue in 1890 that the village experienced a population boom. Within the space of the next 40 years, Irvington reached a population of approximately 56,000 people. Many of the incoming residents were foreign-born, and many of them were natives of Germany, England, and Ireland.

By the time of the Great Depression, Irvington had many of the familiar characteristics that it still has today: Victorian row houses, a compact pedestrian-oriented Center, and attractive neighborhoods with tree-lined streets, corner stores, churches, and small parks. During the same period, industry starting moving into the village, particularly in the Coit Street area along the Irvington branch of the Lehigh Valley Railroad line, providing local employment opportunities

for residents. Irvington came to be known as a prosperous, attractive, and safe community. As a testament to its well-to-do status, the Village built the grandiose Civic Center complex in the early part of the century. Voters also rejected attempts to be annexed to Newark, preferring to remain a self-governing entity.²⁶

The Problems of the Inner-Ring Suburb

After World War II, Irvington fell on harder times. The Garden State Parkway was built through town, eliminating the beautiful Oraton Parkway and cutting through previously tranquil neighborhoods. Well-to-do families moved from Newark and Irvington to outlying suburbs and rural areas, lured by the automobile and the scenic countryside of western and southern New Jersey. Meanwhile, Jews, African-Americans, and new immigrants from Poland, Italy, and the Ukraine moved in to work in the factories of Newark and Irvington.

In the late 1960's, riots and crime plagued Newark, and Irvington — as an older, inner-ring suburb — began to feel the effects of downtown poverty, racial conflict, and disinvestment. The problem of disinvestment continued throughout the 1970's and 1980's, when factories were closed and crime problems scared away residents and businesses. Storefronts were left vacant, and housing was abandoned, particularly on Irvington's eastern border with Newark. Irvington's white population gradually moved away, and African-Americans moved in from Newark to escape the deteriorating conditions of downtown.

The Trend Toward Revitalization

Starting in the 1990's, there was renewed hope for revitalization. The newly established Urban Enterprise Zone (UEZ) started developing plans to attract business into the Coit Street Industrial Area and to revitalize and rebuild deteriorated neighborhoods. There were new housing starts, clearance of abandoned buildings, new school construction, and renewed interest in the industrial area. At the same time, Newark started to experience the first hints of revitalization, after many years of abandonment and stagnation, with a new Performing Arts Center, a new ballpark, clearance of dilapidated housing, and downtown office renovations.

Although crime remained a serious problem in the 1990's, overall crime rates were reduced, as the result of community policing techniques and the hiring of additional police officers. To the west, new commuter service into midtown Manhattan made Maplewood and South Orange attractive destinations for new homebuyers, and the western parts of town became a destination for new Russian immigrants. When the Township undertook this Master Plan in 1999, Irvington was poised for a rebound after a half-century of hardship.

10.2 HISTORIC PLACES IN IRVINGTON

No sites, structures, or districts in Irvington have been listed on the National or State registers of historic places. Sites, structures, or districts that appear on one or both lists are eligible for tax

²⁶ Alan A. Seigel, *Images of America: Irvington*.

exemptions, grants, and loans that contribute to the rehabilitation and maintenance of the structure, as long as the exterior appearance is not significantly altered. Listed structures are not protected from demolition by the property owner, but they are protected from damage in the case of a federal or state public works project, such as a road widening project.

The State of New Jersey has determined that one structure in the Township is eligible for listing on the State Register. That structure is the boathouse in Irvington Park. The boathouse, as well as the park itself, was designed by Frederick Law Olmstead, the father of landscape architecture and the designer of Central Park in Manhattan and Prospect Park in Brooklyn. The park itself has many of the same design characteristics of those two famous parks, and thus, the park itself could also be considered an important historic site in the Township. As of fall 2001, the park has not been listed as eligible for the National or State Registers.

There may be many other sites, structures, and districts in Irvington that are historically valuable and worthy of long-term preservation. Irvington has a beautiful collection of wood-frame Victorian-era houses scattered throughout the Township, and some neighborhoods have entire blocks of such homes. There are also a number of turn-of-the-century churches with attractive masonry facades and stained glass windows. Some of the Township's school buildings date to the early 20th century, and Irvington Center has several distinctive commercial buildings that were built around 1900. Township Hall is a beautiful federal-style building, with fine detailing both inside and out, that may be worthy of historic designation.

The characteristics of each individual site or structure need to be examined by historical and architectural experts in order to determine their historical value and their eligibility for listing on the National and State Registers. Some of these sites may be representative of a distinct architectural period or style, or may be the work of a significant architect, or could have been the residence of an important historical figure, or could have been the location of a significant historical event. Some of these sites could potentially be opened to the public for viewing.

Photographs: historical and sample land uses

10.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

10-1: Undertake a survey of all buildings and sites in the Township, and identify buildings, sites, and districts with potential historic value, such as the Municipal Building on Civic Square.

10-2: Request that the State Historic Preservation Office review any sites identified by the Township for their eligibility for listing on the State Register of Historic Places.

10-3: Request that the U.S. Department of the Interior review any sites identified by the Township for their eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

10-4: Assist property owners of buildings or sites listed on the National or State Registers in their efforts to apply for tax exemptions, grants, or loans and to protect their properties from the adverse impacts of federal or state projects.

10-5: Consider adopting an Historic Preservation Ordinance that identifies buildings, sites, or districts of local historic value and that establishes an Historic Commission to comment on major development applications related to those buildings, sites, or districts.

Acknowledgements

This Master Plan could not have been completed without the dedication and hard work of the following groups and individuals.

MAYOR (elected May 2002)*

Wayne Smith

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D. Bilal Beasley, Council Member-at-Large, Second Vice President
Fred M. Bost, Council Member from the East Ward
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continued >>

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Acknowledgements (continued)

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Adopted

**Township of Irvington
Master Plan**

PREPARED BY

THE IRVINGTON PLANNING BOARD

~ in consultation with ~

The Irvington Master Plan Task Force

The Irvington Master Plan Advisory Committee

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