

TOD in Your Downtown *Forum Series*

Gentle Density Unlocking the Missing Middle in Housing



Thursday, May 29, 2025
9:30AM – 12:00PM

NJ TRANSIT Headquarters
Conference Room 2A – Town Hall
283-299 Market Street, Newark, NJ 07102



Transit Friendly
Planning

with support from



RUTGERS-NEW BRUNSWICK
Edward J. Bloustein School
of Planning and Public Policy



Program

9:30 am – Registration and Networking

Arrive early for bagels and coffee

10:00 am – Welcome

Stephanie DiPetrillo, Senior Research Project Manager,
Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center, Rutgers University

10:10 am – Introduction

Michael Swan, Assistant Director, Transit Friendly Planning, NJ
TRANSIT

10:20 am – Panel Discussion

Adam Tecza, Urban Design Practice Manager, FHI Studio now IMEG

Allison Ladd, Deputy Mayor and Director of Economic and Housing
Development (EHD), City of Newark

Chris Cosenza, Project Manager, LRK

Chris Sturm, Policy Director for Land Use, New Jersey Future

*Moderator: Courtenay Mercer, Treasurer, Downtown New Jersey; Founding
Principal + CEO, Mercer Planning Associates*

11:35 am – Audience Questions

11:55 am – Closing Remarks

Megan Massey, Director, Transit Friendly Planning, NJ TRANSIT

Speakers



Adam Tecza, PP, AICP

Urban Design Practice Manager, FHI Studio now IMEG

Adam Tecza is a planner and urban designer with more than a decade of experience working with municipalities, counties, non-profits, and private sector clients. He has led numerous multi-disciplinary teams in the creation of comprehensive plans, neighborhood plans, redevelopment plans, zoning ordinances, and urban design projects. He specializes

in working on complex projects where economic development, transportation, environmental, and land use challenges must be solved in tandem.



Allison Ladd

Deputy Mayor and Director of Economic and Housing Development (EHD), City of Newark, New Jersey

Allison Ladd spearheads Newark's housing and development efforts. Under her leadership, Ms. Ladd has focused on implementing Mayor Ras J. Baraka's equitable growth strategy: harnessing the many billions of dollars of new investment in Newark to create opportunities for all residents and businesses.

She came to Newark after serving as Deputy Director of the Washington, DC Department of Housing and Community Development Department (DHCD). Deputy Mayor Ladd assumed her new role in Newark with the intention of furthering Mayor Baraka's work to create a culture of participation and inclusion that enables inequality to be replaced by equitable opportunity, prosperity and growth, rather than the gentrification and displacement that has happened elsewhere.

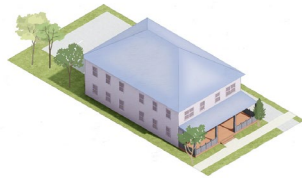


Chris Cosenza, PP, AICP

Project Manager, LRK

Chris is an Associate at LRK, and is a licensed professional planner with 20 years of experience in master planning, redevelopment planning, zoning, urban design, and architecture, including nearly a decade serving as a Land Use Administrator for Metuchen during its revitalization period. Chris is currently the municipal planner for Metuchen and

Highland Park, and briefly served as the interim planner for Princeton. He has worked with various government agencies, municipal officials, property owners, developers, and builders on a range of planning projects – including Smart Growth, TND, TOD, TSD, form-based codes, design guidelines, and pattern books—throughout New Jersey, as well as master planning projects in several other states, Canada, and Panama. At home, in East Windsor Township, he has served for nearly 20 years on the Township’s Zoning Board of Adjustment.



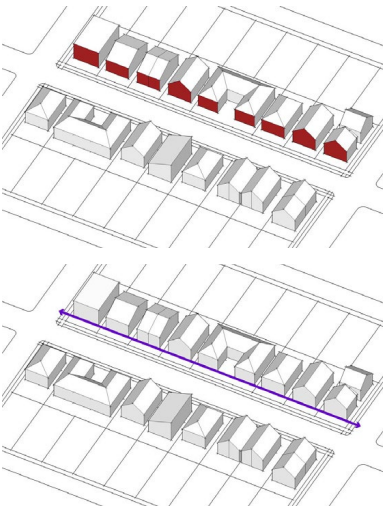


Chris Sturm

Policy Director for Land Use, New Jersey Future

As New Jersey Future's Policy Director for Land Use, Chris leads the team working to ensure every New Jerseyan can find a stable home in a community that is resilient, well-connected, healthy, and prosperous. Previously, she spearheaded NJF's efforts to transform water infrastructure, working with colleagues to launch successful collaborations including Jersey Water

Works, Lead-Free NJ, Sewage-Free Streets and Rivers, and the Clean Water, Healthy Families, and Good Jobs campaign. Chris has achieved lasting change in state laws, rules, and spending through policy development and advocacy, informed and strengthened by many partners, including those directly impacted. Her career experience includes serving as the assistant director of the Capital City Redevelopment Corporation. She holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan and a master's degree in Public Affairs from the Princeton School of Public and International Affairs, where she concentrated in Urban and Regional Planning.



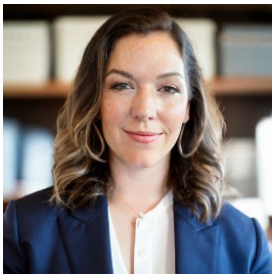
Courtenay Mercer, PP, AICP



Treasurer, Downtown New Jersey; Founding Principal + CEO, Mercer Planning Associates

Courtenay D. Mercer is the Founding Principal of Mercer Planning Associates, a boutique land use firm specializing in comprehensive planning, economic development, and community engagement. With a strong background in the public and nonprofit sectors, she has led complex planning initiatives across New Jersey, including as Director of Planning

for the NJ Office of Smart Growth, NJ Director of the Regional Plan Association, and Executive Director of Downtown New Jersey and Preservation New Jersey. A frequent speaker and thought leader, Mercer focuses on redevelopment, downtown revitalization, bike/ped safety, planning policy, and equitable engagement. She serves as Treasurer of Downtown New Jersey, is a former Trustee of the American Planning Association, and past President of its NJ Chapter. She lives and works in Jersey City, NJ.



Megan Massey, PP, AICP

Director, Transit Friendly Planning, NJ TRANSIT

Megan Massey is the Director of Transit Friendly Planning at NJ TRANSIT. The Transit Friendly Program was established in 1999 and has been committed to providing planning assistance to communities interested in planning for transit supportive land use and transit-oriented development at and surrounding NJ TRANSIT passenger facilities.

Prior to joining NJ TRANSIT in 2018, Ms. Massey worked for Hudson County as a Transportation Planner. In her work at the County, she managed corridor studies, the update to the Open Space Trust Fund, as well as several NJTPA funded planning efforts. Ms. Massey was recently appointed to the Planning Board in Red Bank and serves as a board member on the Environmental Commission. Ms. Massey has a Master of City and Regional Planning from Rutgers University.



Michael Swan, PP, AICP

Assistant Director, Transit Friendly Planning, NJ TRANSIT

Michael Swan is the Assistant Director of the Transit Friendly Planning Program at New Jersey Transit.

Michael helps lead the Program's local technical assistance projects, Transit Village Initiative, TOD projects, community engagement activities, and other transit friendly programming. With several years of experience in transportation and land use

planning, he has worked on TOD vision plans, long-range transportation plans, community master plans, and TOD projects. Michael has a Master of City and Regional Planning from the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University. Michael is a licensed Professional Planner in the state of New Jersey.



Stephanie DiPetrillo

Senior Research Project Manager, NJTOD, Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center, Rutgers University

Stephanie DiPetrillo is a Senior Research Project Manager at the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University's Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy. She leads NJTOD in collaboration with NJ TRANSIT's Transit Friendly Planning program, promoting the development of

vibrant, transit-centered communities. Her work explores the intersection of transportation and land use, with an emphasis on expanding transit access, enhancing service, and improving the built environment through strategic planning and design. Stephanie holds a BA in Economics and an MCRP from Rutgers University, and an MArch from the New Jersey Institute of Technology.



NJTOD, published since 2005, is designed to keep municipal officials, planners, and advocates up-to-date on the potential for development and redevelopment around transit stations. This partnership between NJ TRANSIT and the Bloustein School's Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center (VTC) at Rutgers University aims to enrich the transit-oriented development (TOD) conversation in New Jersey's diverse communities by highlighting what is happening in the state and around the country: best practices, model programs, legislation, and local problem-solving experiences. Visit us at: www.njtod.org, follow us, or register for our weekly newsletter at: go.rutgers.edu/njtod-news



Downtown New Jersey is a non-profit membership organization of individuals, businesses, developers, government agencies, and local and regional entities that are passionate about downtowns. Downtowns reflect our communities' unique identities, provide a focal point, a convenient local place of commerce, and offer a sense of place where people can gather and truly be a community. DNJ provides advocacy, education, and technical assistance resources dedicated to ensuring the vitality of our downtowns. Learn more at: www.downtownnj.com



The Transit Friendly Planning Program at NJ TRANSIT is a community-focused planning program at New Jersey's statewide public transportation agency. It offers decades of experience in assisting municipalities across New Jersey with community engagement, data, education, strategic partnerships, and technical assistance centered around station area planning. The Program strives to promote equitable, economically resilient, and environmentally sustainable development that improves the quality of life for all. Connect with us at: www.njtransit.com/transitfriendly