



**TOWARD A *METROPOLITAN COMPLEX***  
**The Camden HUB Smart Growth Report**

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Camden County Board of Chosen Freeholders**

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**RUTGERS**  
CAMDEN

# **DRAFT Camden HUB Plan Report**

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## 1.0.0 INTRODUCTION

Camden is the poorest city in New Jersey and clearly one of the most distressed in the United States. Indeed, deterioration and disinvestment have now reached every neighborhood and census tract in the city. Like many similar scenarios of urban decline and suburban development around the nation, Camden's neighboring municipalities have not been spared the effects of sprawl. While they have, to a great extent, maintained a cultural and psychological distance from Camden, systemic social and economic realities of suburban development patterns have now begun to make it clear that they too are confronting serious challenges that cannot be met effectively by individual towns. With the enactment and implementation of the Municipal Recovery and Economic Revitalization Act (MRERA) that will funnel \$175 million in state funds to Camden and that has already attracted hundreds of millions more in private investment to the City, there is an even greater incentive for the inner ring towns to work with Camden and leverage these new investments for welfare of all.

The plight of Camden and its neighbors did not emerge in isolation. Camden's jobs and tax base as well as its status the commercial and transportation "hub" of southern New Jersey evaporated in the suburban exodus and ensuing sprawl. Rapid and unplanned suburban growth not only attracted residents of the first generation suburbs to mushrooming subdivisions in the eastern part of the County, but also induced Camdenites to leap frog those older, more compact towns for newer tract developments. This familiar pattern of sprawl both hollows out the urban center and forces older suburban communities to simultaneously shield themselves from urban problems that spill over their municipal borders and to seek ways of halting the out-migration of their own businesses, homeowners, houses of worship and tax dollars.

Camden and the older suburbs of the County face a choice. They can continue the current pattern of separate, uncoordinated strategies that may produce some isolated successes such as Collingswood's downtown revitalization or the Camden Waterfront, but which do not address the systemic dynamics that continue to draw off people, commerce and investments to outlying suburbs. Alternatively they can devise a regional development vision with a supporting strategy that employs their considerable environmental, institutional, social and infrastructure resources for mutual advantage.

Both the County and the State recognize that the present environment of declining tax bases and inevitable, along with escalating demands for health and social services in Camden and surrounding inner ring communities, will only increase requirements for external funding. The obvious answer to this dilemma is to promote sustainable development through a collaborative strategy that rationally takes advantage of all the assets available at the local, county and state level. From the local perspective, the advantage is escaping the *ratables chase* that only exacerbates the municipalities' declining fortunes by negatively impacting the character of their communities and neighborhoods. For the County and the State, the advantage is stabilizing the socio-economic situation, thereby reducing municipal demands for additional resources. For the

citizens of the HUB area, the advantage is preserving their *communities of place* and neighborhood identities.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, the multiplicity of municipalities, strong tradition of *home rule* and lack of policy/planning capacity in the HUB area create powerful barriers to towns acting in concert, even if it is demonstrably in their interest to do so. This collective action problem can only be solved with support and encouragement from higher levels of government.<sup>2</sup> It is with these considerations in mind that the Camden County Board of Freeholders sought and the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) funded the Camden HUB Smart Growth Planning Grant. This \$261,000 regional planning initiative brings Camden together with Audubon, Audubon Park, Cherry Hill, Collingswood, Haddon Heights, Haddon Township, Haddonfield, Gloucester City, Merchantville, Mount Ephraim, Oaklyn, Pennsauken, and Woodlynne in an effort to forge an *urban complex* under the New Jersey State Plan. Subsequently, DCA approved the inclusion of Lawnside into the Camden HUB project. If the HUB initiative is successful, these fifteen towns will adopt a common, smart growth development framework that enhances the policy and planning capacity of the region and guarantees priority state funding for all projects consistent with their smart growth plan.

### **1.1.0 Project Origins and Role of The Walter Rand Institute**

Toward the end of the Whitman Administration, the Camden County Board of Chosen Freeholders initiated discussions with the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs regarding a possible smart growth planning grant for Camden City. The original proposal was to focus primarily on the City itself. As the discussions proceeded it was agreed that the County would engage the Senator Walter Rand Institute for Public Affairs at Rutgers-Camden (WRI) to prepare the formal proposal and direct the project if it were funded. Working closely with the Board of Freeholders and the Office of State Planning (OSP), WRI developed a successful proposal that, at the suggestion of OSP, extended the grant to include Audubon, Audubon Park, Cherry Hill, Collingswood, Gloucester City, Haddon Heights, Haddon Township, Haddonfield, Merchantville, Mount Ephraim, Oaklyn, Pennsauken, and Woodlynne with Camden with the objective of forming an *urban complex* as defined under the State Plan.<sup>3</sup> As noted above, the town of Lawnside was subsequently added to the project.

WRI assembled a project team that included:

- Wallace, Roberts & Todd, LLC. - Physical Planning and GIS;
- Urban Partners - Economic Analysis;

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<sup>1</sup> The New Jersey State Plan identifies “communities of place” as towns or neighborhoods that share a common character rooted in their social and commercial interactions as well as their historical roots.

<sup>2</sup> Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action*, New York, Basic Books, 1965.

<sup>3</sup> Note that the Office of State Planning no longer exists. Under the McGreevy Administration, the State Office of Smart Growth replaced it, though it remained within the Department of Community Affairs.

- Voorhees Transportation Institute, Rutgers-New Brunswick - TOD Assessment;
- The Special Assistant to the Freeholder-Director.

In addition to its project management role, WRI assembled municipal master plans, provided research support on GIS mapping, organized and implemented the public participation and governmental outreach for the Camden HUB Plan.

## **1.2.0 VISION STATEMENT**

### ***County Leadership for a Clear and Sustainable Network of Healthy Communities***

This vision statement for the Camden HUB Plan was developed from an intensive investigation of the political, social and economic environment of the fifteen HUB municipalities as well as an assessment of the concerns expressed by a comprehensive outreach to stakeholders: citizens, nonprofit organizations, government officials, business and institutional leaders. It reflects a composite view of what the region's character should be and how to move toward that ideal.

It is abundantly clear that what attracts people most to the region is the quality of life promised by the neighborhoods, relationships and historical/cultural/recreational amenities available; in short, their communities. It is equally clear however that, while that quality of life depends in the first instance on the character of one's immediate community, the connection to other towns and regional centers also enhances the HUB region. Thus, the vision calls for a network of communities.

Citizens and community leaders also recognize that their quality of life is threatened by broader systemic trends associated with sprawl, and that sustaining their network of healthy communities requires capacity and resources beyond the capabilities of one or even a few towns. However, overcoming the impediments to collaboration and the inertia of the home rule tradition demands organization and governance above the municipal level. The logical source for this kind of capacity is county leadership, which can provide both a regional focus for policy and planning and can serve as a more effective voice for resources at the state level. State processes such as cross acceptance or models set forth in the State Plan clearly have not provided strong enough incentives for municipalities to rise above the local concerns and orientations that have prevented them from collectively addressing their common problems associated with suburban sprawl.

## **1.3.0 THE STUDY AREA**

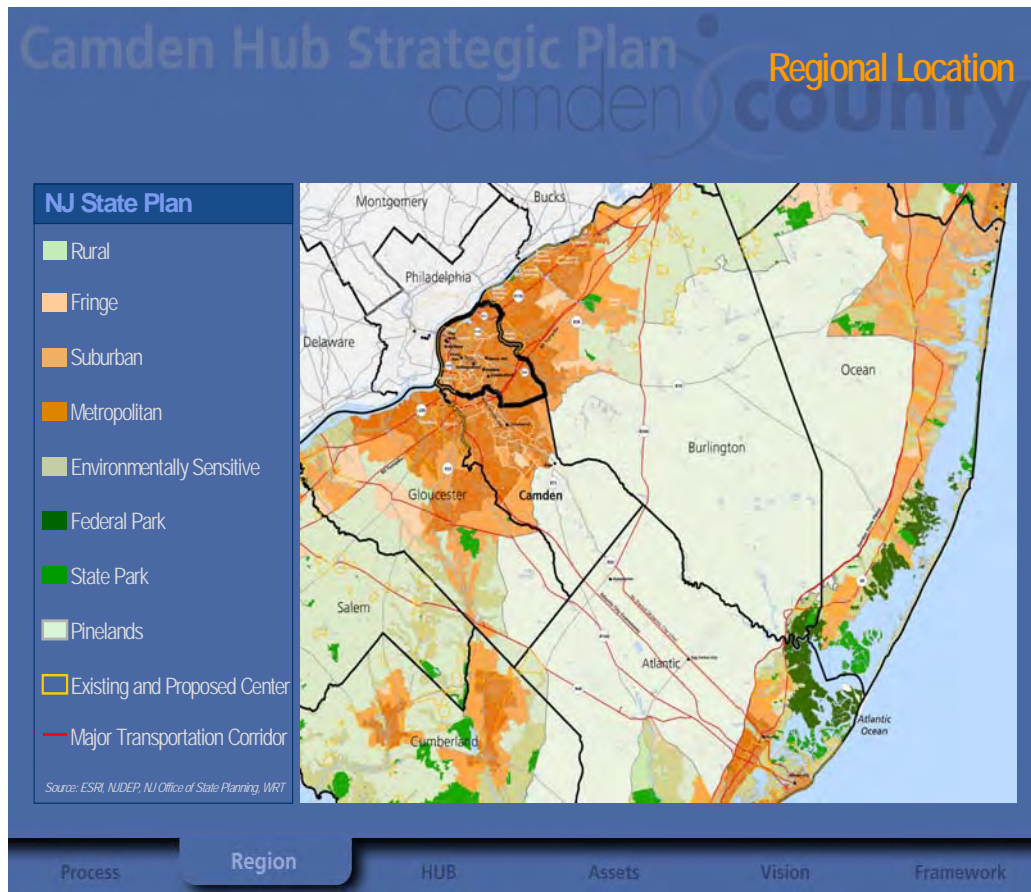
The Camden HUB Project incorporates fifteen contiguous municipalities that occupy roughly the northwestern third of Camden County. As in any such project, it is possible to argue that some additional towns could be included; indeed, other DCA Smart growth

grants have included entire counties (e.g., Hudson and Atlantic). Nevertheless there are strong historical and planning reasons to define the potential *urban complex* of Camden County in terms of the following municipalities.

1. Camden
2. Audubon
3. Audubon Park
4. Cherry Hill
5. Collingswood
6. Gloucester City
7. Haddon Heights
8. Haddon Township
9. Haddonfield
10. Lawnside
11. Merchantville
12. Mount Ephraim
13. Oaklyn
14. Pennsauken
15. Woodlynne

Map I below locates the Camden HUB area in the greater Philadelphia-South Jersey region. As can be seen, it is one of the most developed and densely populated areas in the region.

## MAP I



### 1.3.1 Logic of an *Urban Complex*

The Department of Community Affairs designated these communities as the study area for the Camden HUB because they were deemed the most likely in Camden County to fit New Jersey State Plan's description of an *urban complex*:

The State's eight urban centers (as designated under the State Development and Redevelopment Plan) often function within the context of a surrounding "complex" of municipalities. While the urban center is still the focus of activity, there exists a linkage between the surrounding municipalities and the center that is more direct and obvious than the linkage that exists between the urban center and the larger region or the State as a whole. The urban complex is...distinguished by a vast network of public water and sewer systems, transportation systems, cultural facilities, employment, housing, health/hospital services, commerce, higher education facilities and open space/recreation systems that allow the complex to function almost as a city unto itself.<sup>4</sup>

Under the State Plan, Camden City is one of New Jersey's eight urban centers, and the relationship of the additional fourteen municipalities to the City closely approximates the *urban complex* description. Most importantly, physical infrastructure, natural systems and underlying socio-economic dynamics link these municipalities in ways that suggest it should be considered an *urban complex*.

### 1.3.2 Challenges and Opportunities - A *Metropolitan Complex*

Like most concepts in planning, an urban complex, is an ideal description that may diverge from real life applications. In the case of the Camden HUB area, it is obvious, for example, that while Camden was once a true "focus of activity" for the surrounding towns, indeed for much of southern New Jersey, it is much less so today. Residents of this complex of municipalities no longer flock to Camden to shop, to see movies or to dine. Sprawl and the resulting shopping malls, multiplex cinemas, and high quality suburban restaurants have resulted in the degradation of Camden's role as a regional center. A highly symbolic event indicative of this trend was the movement of the *Courier Post*, the major daily newspaper in South Jersey from Camden to Cherry Hill, a town that rivals Camden in population size and far outstrips it in income, education, and commercial activity. Residents of the HUB area, including those in Camden itself, are more likely to shop, dine, worship and see movies in Cherry Hill.<sup>5</sup> In fact many pursue these activities beyond the HUB in Voorhees or even Evesham and Moorestown in Burlington County. Camden still has a significant role to play for surrounding towns as a county seat and home to major hospitals, Cooper Medical Center-UMDNJ and Our Lady of Lourdes. Even those roles are diminished as governmental transactions such as acquiring passports can now be accomplished in "County Stores" that have been placed in suburban locations and health care facilities have located outside the City and in many cases outside the HUB. Indeed, Philadelphia hospitals such as Thomas Jefferson,

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<sup>4</sup> New Jersey Office of State Planning, *Technical Memorandum 2*, June 16, 1993.

<sup>5</sup> We note that African American churches in Camden still retain many congregants who live in the suburbs, but many other synagogues, churches, parochial schools, etc. have migrated out.



University of Pennsylvania and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia have all opened new facilities in suburban Camden locations as they too have followed the migration of people and money.

As bleak as this picture appears, the massive investment of state and now private dollars in revitalizing Camden under the MRERA offers an opportunity not only to reinvigorate the city, but to reconnect it socially, economically, politically and even psychologically with the rest of the HUB. In fact, the MRERA recognizes this historic opportunity by mandating the formation of a Regional Impact Council (RIC) intended to integrate the development and redevelopment interests of Camden with immediate surrounding communities or a suitable regional collaborative that includes Camden.<sup>6</sup>

The RIC model, moreover, is consistent with the objectives of the State Plan which provides clear incentives for municipalities in a potential urban complex to collaborate for smart growth:

Policy 3 [under the State Plan] recommends that a special discretionary fund be made available to distressed municipalities, with added priorities for urban centers, and for municipalities within an urban complex. For purposes of this policy then, municipalities participating in an urban complex may attain equal status with urban centers. Policy 15 [under the State Plan] recommends that greater priority be given to municipalities and counties that engage in multi-jurisdictional planning and service delivery and that municipalities and counties in an urban complex receive higher priority than those in other forms of multi-jurisdictional programs. [Emphasis added]<sup>7</sup>

Given the policies and funding mechanisms in place under both the MRERA and DCA smart growth programs, the Camden HUB is emerging at an especially favorable time. As Camden's fortunes rise, surrounding municipalities that had tried to distance themselves from the City can now, with appropriate leadership, avail themselves of real advantages by working out a common development agenda that reflects a winning set of outcomes for all. The alternative is succumbing to the negative trends that are threatening the quality of life that makes the HUB communities so desirable to their residents.

It is unlikely that the ill effects of sprawl can be reversed to such a degree that Camden will fully regain its historic status as the "focus of activity" for the HUB region, or that a HUB urban complex will "function almost as a city unto itself." If, however, Camden's revitalization can be leveraged with state smart growth resources and rationally coordinated with other positive development opportunities in the ring communities, a *metropolitan complex* can emerge among the HUB municipalities. Such a *metropolitan complex* would meet the smart growth objectives of the State Plan and reconnect Camden to the region, but would acknowledge the reality that many surrounding towns have developed sufficient size and capacity that they will continue to supply many goods, services and amenities that were once available only in Camden.

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<sup>6</sup> See section ??? of the MRERA for a full description of the composition and responsibilities of the Regional Impact Council.

<sup>7</sup> New Jersey Office of State Planning, *Technical Memorandum 2*, June 16, 1993.

## 1.4.0 AN APPROACH TO SMART GROWTH PLANNING

The primary objective of the Camden HUB Project is to provide a smart growth framework that promotes a *metropolitan complex* among the HUB municipalities through the vision of County Leadership for a Clear and Sustainable Network of Healthy Communities. That smart growth framework was developed through an approach in which the current situation was assessed, common development issues were defined, assets in the HUB were inventoried, and policy/planning recommendations were worked out. Throughout the process input was sought from officials, community leaders, stakeholders, and the public at large.

### 1.4.1 The Current Situation

Assessment of the current situation includes an analysis of:

- The historical development of sprawl in the HUB region;
- An early effort at regionalism, the so-called Greater Camden Movement, and the reasons for its failure;
- The planning capacity and context in the HUB region;
- The effects of sprawl manifest in the HUB;
- The role and challenge of the home rule culture for smart growth in the HUB;
- The MRERA in Camden and its implications for the HUB Plan.

### 1.4.2 Common Development Issues

Based on the assessment of the current situation, common development issues that affect all the HUB municipalities are identified and presented in a GIS format as well as chart and tables. These common issues include social, economic, and land use problems. Overlaying all of these problems are the issues of political interests and governance that must be addressed if a *metropolitan complex* is to be forged.

### 1.4.3 Assets in the Study Area

Once the issues generated by sprawl are defined, we turn to an evaluation of the assets that the HUB municipalities can draw upon to collectively address these issues. As individual communities address their development needs they rarely evaluate the role of assets that they share with neighboring towns except perhaps to gauge what their competitive advantage might be? Major assets in the HUB region often provide chances for link municipalities in productive ways. Assets in the HUB include:

- Infrastructure such as transportation and water/sewage systems;

- Institutions such as education and healthcare organizations;
- Social capital such as nonprofit and community organizations;
- Economic assets such as business and labor force;
- Green assets such as rivers and parks.

#### 1.4.4 A Development Framework

The development framework for the HUB evaluates the common problems of the municipalities in light of their shared assets and proposes a systematic and comprehensive approach to guide development smart growth objectives and the HUB vision. The framework is presented as a series of GIS-based maps that illustrate specific recommendations.

#### 1.4.5 Policy Recommendations

Policy recommendations follow the development framework and cover not only planning and development strategies, but also governance and political issues.

#### 1.4.6 Outreach and Community Input

Throughout the process of developing the smart growth framework input was sought from key stakeholders and the public through a variety of mechanisms including public meetings, postings on the county website, focus groups, interviews with community leaders, updates in newspapers, appearances on local news programs, presentations to community organizations and regional planning bodies, and presentations to county and municipal leaders.

### **2.0.0 THE PLANNING PROCESS**

The process through which the Camden HUB Plan was developed is based on a combination of the requirements of the New Jersey State Plan for *urban complex* approval, the scope of work as specified in the DCA smart growth grant and the determination of the Board of Freeholders and the Walter Rand Institute to engage a broad array of stakeholders at each stage of the process. Importantly, the HUB Plan is ultimately contingent on resolutions from each participating municipalities and acceptance of the Plan by the New Jersey Office of Smart Growth in the Department of Community Affairs.

#### **2.1.0 County and Municipal Authorization**

Attaining the *urban complex* designation for the Camden HUB requires two stages of authorization from the county and the participating municipalities. At the outset of the planning process, the Board of Freeholders as well as each of the participating municipalities must enact a resolution authorizing the planning process to go forward. The, upon completion of the plan, including all public participation requirements, the Board of Freeholders and each participating municipality must also enact resolutions accepting the smart growth framework under the plan. At this point, the plan is submitted to the Office of Smart Growth in the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs for review, approval and *urban complex* designation. (See Appendix I for a sample of the first municipal resolutions).

### **2.2.0 Steering Committee**

Once the initial authorization resolutions are enacted, a steering committee comprised of representatives of the county and each municipality was organized and informed through meetings and presentations throughout the process.

### **2.3.0 Visioning Process**

The first major activity in the planning process was a visioning session held at Rutgers University in Camden. That session brought together mayors, freeholders, development or planning officials from the county and municipalities, representatives of the Office of State Planning, representatives of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and the Walter Rand Institute team. (See Appendix II for a list of participants and the prioritized list of issues). The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) provided technical support for the exercise by supplying laptops in a local area network for (LAN) participants and training the WRI team in this technology. Working on the LAN, the participants, with facilitation by the WRI team, developed and prioritized a list of major issues and assets in the HUB area. This list provided initial guidance for the project team in its analysis. Given the broad impacts of the HUB Plan, however, the results of the visioning session were then shared with citizens and community leaders through three focus groups to refine a vision for the Camden HUB Plan.

### **2.4.0 Public Participation**

The scope of work specified under the DCA Smart Growth Grant called for public participation in the form of three public meetings at which the draft plan would be shared with citizens and input gathered. In consultation with the Board of Freeholders, the WRI team determined that the quality of the plan and the chances of its ultimate acceptance would be increased significantly if community input were sought in a variety of additional ways throughout the process. Therefore, in addition to the mandated public meetings, the initial visioning session and focus groups, the WRI team conducted forty

stakeholder interviews with community leaders, a second round of focus groups, presentations to civic groups and a regional planning meetings, arranged for newspaper and television coverage of the process, and posted maps and data on the county website.

### 2.4.1 Focus Groups

Two rounds of focus groups were conducted for the municipalities. The first concentrated on reviewing and critiquing the results of the initial visioning session and the second concentrated on reviewing and critiquing the first draft of the smart growth framework. In each round, the communities were divided into sets of three by geographic proximity. The three sets were organized as follows:

- Set I (River Towns) - Camden, Gloucester City, Pennsauken. Meeting held in the Freeholder Caucus Room, Camden City Hall.
- Set II (White Horse Pike Towns) - Audubon, Audubon Park, Collingswood, Mount Ephraim, Oaklyn, Woodlyne. Meeting held at the Camden County Improvement Authority, Magnolia.
- Set III (Eastern Suburbs) - Cherry Hill, Haddon Heights, Haddon Township, Haddonfield, Merchantville.

All focus groups were held at county facilities in locations that facilitated attendance by the three respective sets of municipalities.<sup>8</sup> Participants included private developers, individuals involved in nonprofit and faith-based activities and interested citizens. After reviewing the results of these focus groups it was determined that the interests of Camden and its residents were not effectively represented, and an additional focus group was organized to address that gap. Working with nonprofit organizations involved with WRI's regular Rand Roundtable, a forum for Camden nonprofits, a fourth focus group was held at Rutgers University to gather input from a group that more fairly represented the interests and views of Camden.

### 2.4.2 Community Leader Interviews

Following on the results of the visioning session and first round of focus groups, WRI designed and executed in-depth interviews on the Camden HUB with forty community leaders representing the public, private and nonprofit sectors in the region. (See Appendix III for a list of individuals interviewed and their affiliations). The interviews were open-ended discussions based on the key issues identified in the visioning and focus groups, and provided a useful an alternative set of insights on the HUB region as well as another reality check on the analysis underlying the smart growth framework. Notes from the interviews were analyzed through TextSmart, a content analysis statistical application that allows evaluation for consistency and reliability across interviews. The report on this

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<sup>8</sup> Note that Lawnside had not joined the HUB project at the time of these focus groups.

analysis appears in Appendix III and helped to shape not only the Camden HUB vision itself, but also several key policy recommendations reflected in the smart growth framework.

### 2.4.3 Public Presentations

Once a draft of the smart growth framework was completed and organized in a Powerpoint slide show, the project team presented it for feedback in several public forums:

- The Greater Camden Partnership Board Meeting
- The Land Use Planning Committee of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
- CamConnect, a Camden nonprofit dedicated to building a data warehouse to support civic engagement
- The Editorial Boards of the *Courier Post* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer*
- The Camden HUB Steering Committee
- Camden Greenways, a nonprofit dedicated to preserving and enhancing open space and recreational access to waterways
- A joint meeting of the Barclay Farms and Erlton Civic Associations, neighborhood organizations in Cherry Hill

### 2.4.4 Use of Internet and the Media

In an effort to inform the widest possible audience, WRI employed the Internet as well as the print and television media. The PowerPoint slide show was posted on the County's website and reproduced on CDs for interested individuals and groups. In addition, periodic articles and opinion pieces on the Camden HUB project, published by the *Courier Post* and the *Inquirer*, informed the public of progress and key issues in the HUB Plan. Finally, interviews with the WRI project team and select Freeholders involved directly in the HUB project appeared on CN8 *Newsmakers*, a local cable network program dedicated to covering important regional issues.

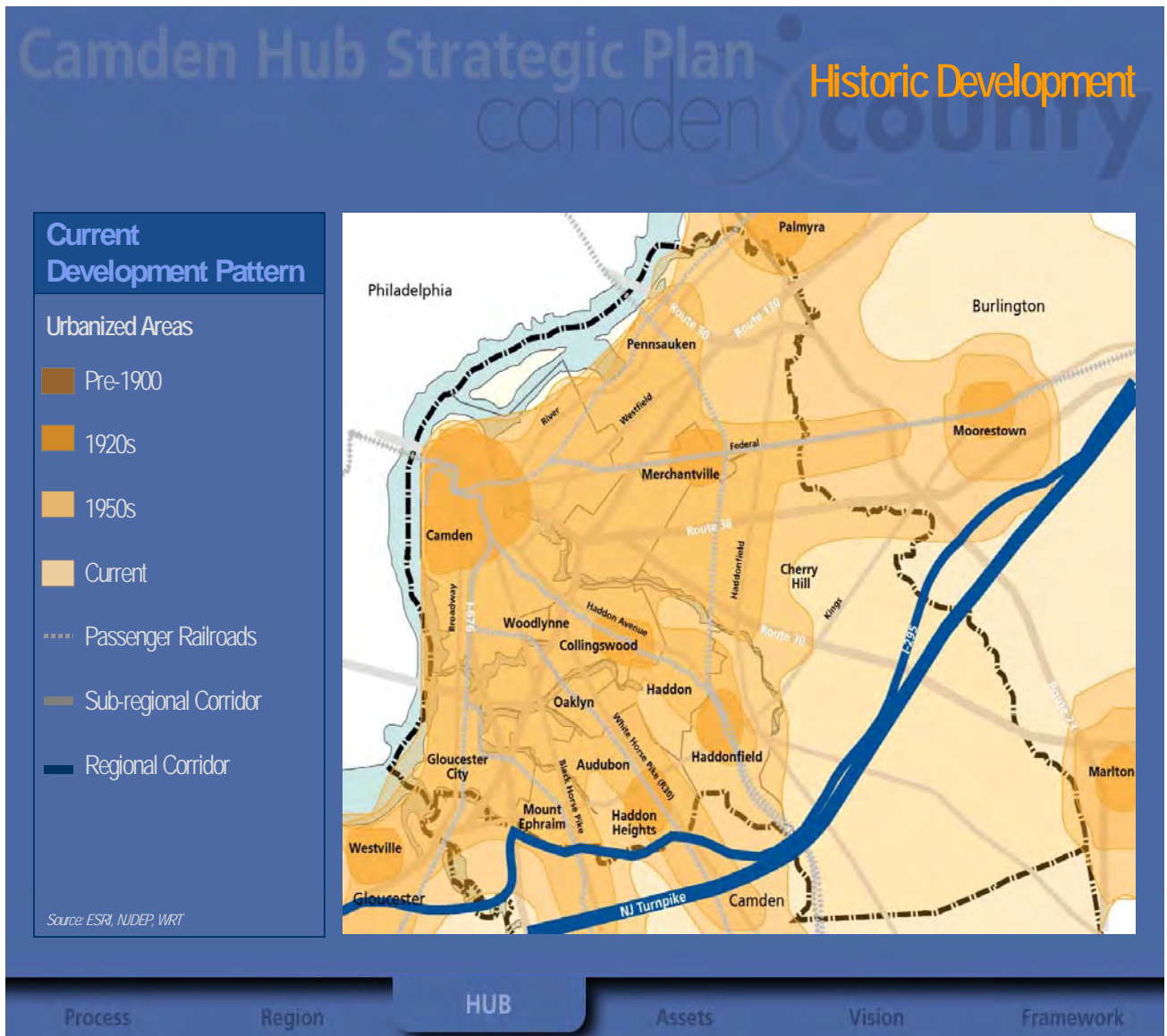
The combination of methods for gathering and disseminating information about the Camden HUB Smart Growth Plan insured one of the most thorough efforts at public participation among all the smart growth grants issued by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

## 3.0.0 THE CURRENT SITUATION

The starting point of the HUB Plan, like any exercise in strategic analysis, begins with an assessment of the current situation. Camden and the rest of the HUB communities did at one time function very much like an urban complex, with Camden as the focal point of commercial, social and cultural life. The relationship of Camden to its immediate suburbs

was based on transportation networks, particularly the roads, rail lines, and highways that radiated out of Camden and into southern New Jersey. Indeed, the historical development of the HUB region followed the main transportation arteries leading out of Camden. Map II below tracks the pattern of settlement and development in the Camden HUB.

## MAP II



As we can see, the HUB is highly developed, and from the pre-1900s to the present, the build-out of this area has proceeded along the transportation corridors, eventually filling in the entire region. The history underlying this development pattern reveals a classic pattern of unplanned growth driven more by political competition and economic rivalry

than rational strategy. It also reveals that the Camden HUB project is not the first effort at regional coordination in this region: that distinction goes to the aborted *Greater Camden Movement* of the early twentieth century.

### **3.1.0 Historical Development**

Camden County was incorporated in 1844, when the New Jersey State Legislature separated the townships of Camden, Waterford, Newton, Union, Delaware, Washington, and Gloucester from Gloucester County. The driving force in the creation of this new County was a group of Camden City businessmen led by John W. Mickle. Mickle, an officer in the ferry company connecting Camden with Philadelphia and in the Camden-Amboy Railroad, led the fight to assert Camden's political and economic independence. In short order, the New Jersey culture of home rule asserted itself and a rapid succession of new municipalities emerged in the county:

- 1844 - Delaware Township (later Cherry Hill) was carved out of Waterford Township, with boundaries extending from the Delaware River southeastward to what is now Evesham Road.
- 1845 - Winslow Township was formed from Gloucester Township.
- 1865 - Haddon Township was created from Newton Township, and included the present boroughs of Haddonfield, Collingswood, Audubon, Oaklyn, and Woodlynne, as well as a portion of Haddon Heights and the Fairview neighborhood of Camden.
- 1874 - Merchantville was formed from Stockton Township, which was subsequently annexed by Camden City in 1899.
- 1882 - Collingswood was formed out of Haddon Township.
- 1899 - Voorhees Township emerged from Waterford Township, honoring popular New Jersey Governor, Foster Voorhees.
- 1892 - Pennsauken was created out of Stockton Township.
- 1901 - Woodlynne was incorporated from Haddon Township.
- 1905 - Audubon and Oaklyn were incorporated from Haddon Township.
- 1941 - Audubon Park was created as a housing complex for workers at the New York Shipyard, in anticipation of the war effort at that Camden Facility.
- 1947 - Audubon Park was incorporated as a separate borough of 1,700 out of Audubon

The underlying political dynamic of the development pattern in Map II led to a fairly rapid balkanization of Camden County, especially the area surrounding Camden City. The development and interests of the various rail lines in the area fueled this balkanization initially. Not only did, the Pennsylvania Railroad, the Camden-Amboy Line and the Atlantic City Line exercise a great deal of political clout, but they also had a strong interest in preventing the emergence of larger or regional units of government that would have a greater capacity to impose regulation on passenger rates and freight tariffs. They also preferred to deal with smaller, less potent municipalities in order to better



control taxes on their extensive property holdings.<sup>9</sup> By the middle of the twentieth century, the Camden HUB had more or less taken shape and was functioning very much like an urban complex, as defined in the current State Plan. It was home to major retail and entertainment resources for the region, provided the seat of county government, and hosted major manufacturing operations, including Campbell's Soup, New York Ship Building, RCA, and Easterbrook Pen Corp. Unfortunately, what looked like a stable, if geographically fractured, set of municipalities at the end of World War II was poised for a rapid transformation by the forces of suburban sprawl, a transformation that would undermine Camden's historic place as a regional focal point and unleash a reconfiguration of the socio-economic underpinnings of the ring communities. This process of decline was spurred by the construction of the Camden (later Benjamin Franklin) and Walt Whitman Bridges, which bypassed Camden and destroyed its position as a transportation center providing ferry or steamship access to Philadelphia and other key Delaware River towns.

The fragmented development of municipalities in Camden County was not, however, a foregone conclusion. Shortly after Pennsauken was incorporated from Stockton Township, the Greater Camden Movement (GCM) blossomed in an effort to impose some order and rationality on municipal development. The GCM was organized and fostered by the political and commercial leadership of Camden, which interacted through the Republican Party Machine (led by the Baird Family), the Camden Board of Trade, and the elected leadership of surrounding municipalities. They hired national planners as well as highly respected advertising firms to promote the plan for a Greater Camden. Ironically the GCM championed the construction of the Benjamin Franklin Bridge, along with other major infrastructure investments. In addition politics played a role in derailing the Greater Camden Movement, especially the rivalry for county leadership between Haddonfield and Camden and the partisan struggle between the Old Guard Republican machine and the insurgent Democrats. The GCM, ultimately collapsed not only because of the commercial impact of the bridges and political battles, but also because it never addressed, as Alan Karcher pointed out, the widely disparate tax rates in the municipalities that were to partner with one another; without a plan to equalize tax contributions across municipalities, popular support never materialized.<sup>10</sup>

### **3.2.0 Planning Context**

Perhaps the most important effect of the demise of the Greater Camden Movement was to insure that planning and development decisions would remain primarily at the municipal level. While this model is consistent with the home rule tradition in New Jersey, Camden County's planning capacity frankly pales in comparison to other counties' not only in the state, but also in the southern region. The County's Planning Department has lost staff and capacity to the point where its functions have

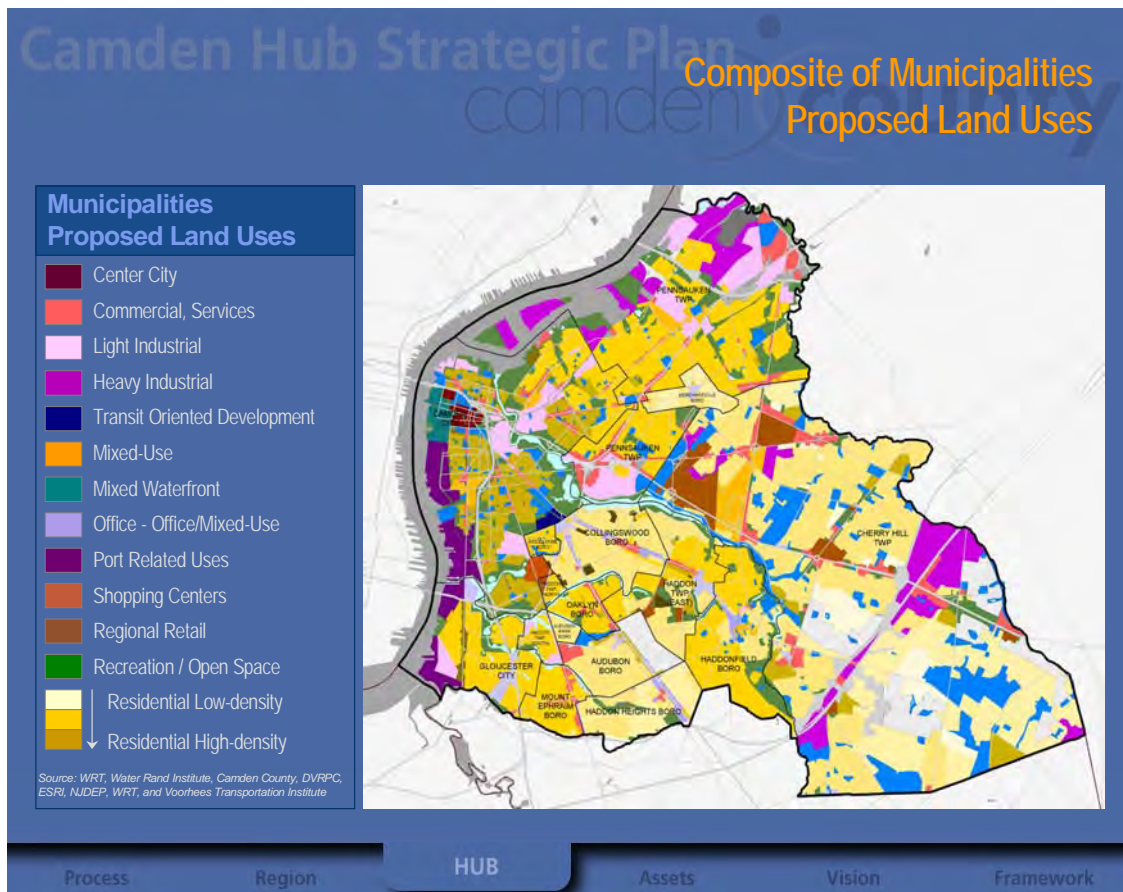
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<sup>9</sup> Alan J. Karcher, *New Jersey's Municipal Madness*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, N.J., 1998, pp155-157.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 160.

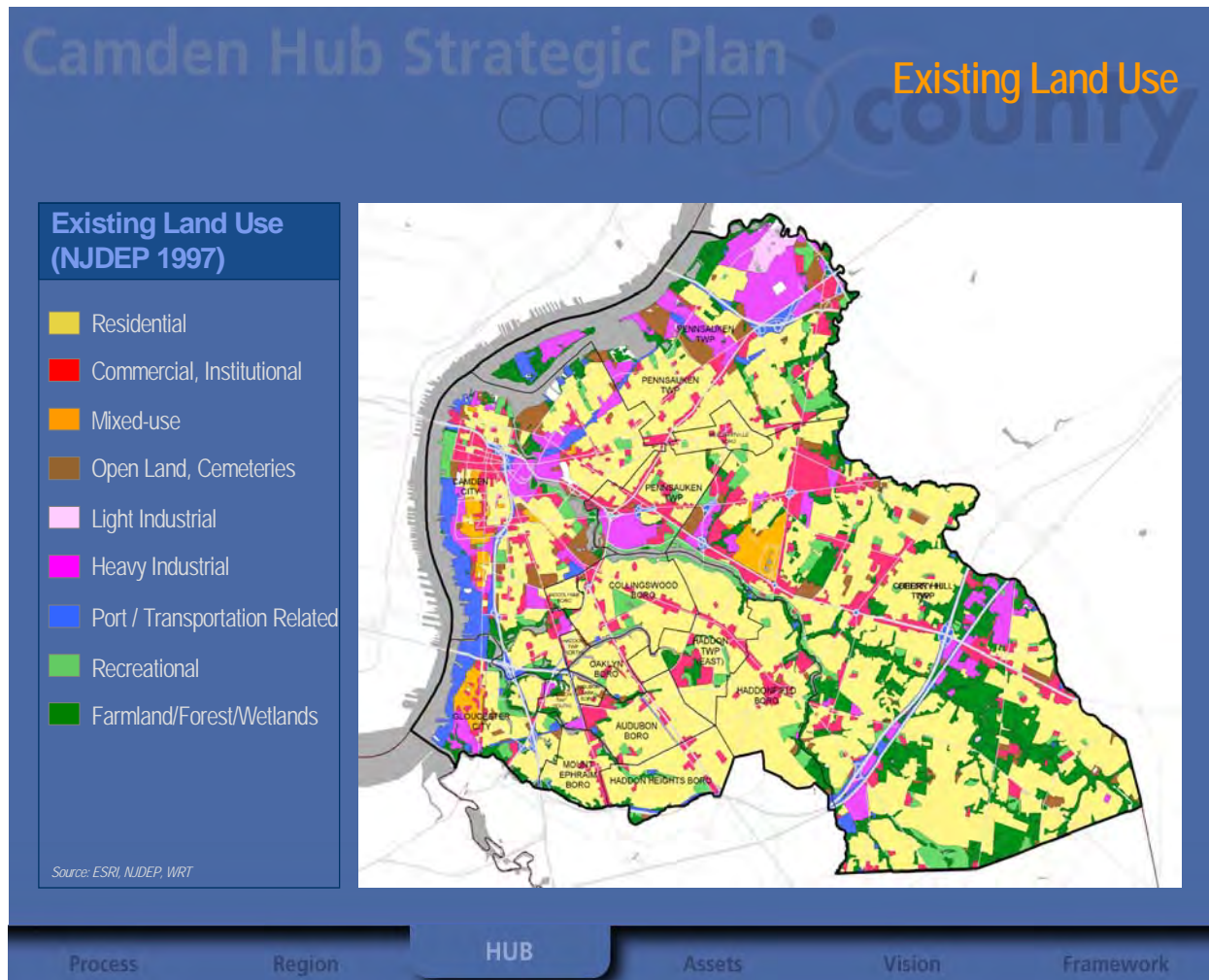
suffered significantly. The County’s master plan has not been updated since the early 1970s, and the thirty-seven (37) municipalities pursue their individual development projects with little regard to impacts on the HUB region as a whole or the neighboring municipalities that comprise it. The three towns along the Delaware Pennsauken, Camden and Gloucester City each, for example, look to develop their respective waterfronts and build marinas without consultation as to the effects one might have on the other. Individual municipalities have investigated the possibility of building regional arts and performance centers even as Camden City’s waterfront venues, only five or six miles away, seek to establish themselves as a regional performing arts destination. As distressing as this planning context maybe, it is difficult to fault the municipalities as they are each driven in a relentless search to maintain their property tax base and quality of life in their individual towns. The deepest tragedy of the current planning context, however, is that the ratables chase impels the municipalities to abandon their own master plans, which presumably were devised to reflect residents’ preferences for the kinds of communities in which they want to live. Map III below reflects the land use preferences for the master plans of municipalities within the HUB. Map IV then illustrates the current land use that diverges strikingly from the master plans.

### MAP III



The municipal master plan mapping above clearly reveals a preference for predominantly residential uses aligned in a rational manner that keeps them apart from commercial and industrial uses. When we compare this with existing land uses as shown in MAP IV, the deviations are readily apparent.

## MAP IV



As we see, the existing land uses are arrayed in a “crazy quilt” pattern in which commercial, and industrial uses are interspersed with residential uses, an arrangement that violates the substance of the municipal master plans and reflects the fiscal imperatives that demand each town and borough to scramble for as many ratable properties as possible without regard to either regional impacts or the zoning preferences of their own master plans. These two maps demonstrate dramatically the deleterious effects of suburban sprawl on an urban complex.

### 3.3.0 Sprawl Effects

The pattern of sprawl set in motion by post-World War II suburban expansion throughout the United States affected Camden and its environs particularly harshly. Once the Benjamin Franklin and Walt Whitman Bridges opened up southern New Jersey to the suburban exodus from Philadelphia, the demand for new housing spawned rapid development first in Delaware Township, which became present day Cherry Hill, and then beyond into southeastern parts of Camden County as well as Burlington and Gloucester Counties. As the demographic center of gravity shifted outward from Camden and its inner ring communities so too did commerce, industry, political power, tax bases, houses of worship, theatres, newspapers. A particularly troubling part of this transformation was the rapid increase in *de facto* racial segregation and poverty concentration, as an increasingly impoverished African American and Hispanic population came to define Camden City. By 1980, Camden had achieved a majority African American population, and was beginning to experience a rapid expansion of Hispanic residents. While this minority population has begun to move outward to adjacent and nearby towns, the ultimate effect has exacerbated Camden's by further eroding the City's taxpaying middle class.

#### 3.3.1 Leap Frog Development and the Hollow Core

The cumulative impact of post-war sprawl in the Camden metropolitan area has been to promote "leap frog" development with a hollow urban core. Although Camden is hardly unique in confronting this set of problems, the challenges facing it and its immediate suburbs are more daunting than other urban areas because Camden's decline has been so precipitous. Until very recently, the rest of Camden County remained relatively insulated from the urban decline, but the negative affects of sprawl have inevitably begun to appear in the wider HUB area. Perhaps the most appropriate metaphor for the challenge faced by the Camden metropolitan complex is the closing of the DeSimone Cadillac Dealership and the intersection of Routes 38 and 70 where Camden, Cherry Hill and Pennsauken come together and the opening of the DeSimone BMW Dealership at the intersection of Routes 70 and 73 where Marlton, Evesham and Voorhees townships come together. In terms of location and lifestyle, this change symbolizes the "leap frog" development that threatens not only Camden itself, but also the rest of the HUB region.

By the early 1960s, the southeastward migration of human and financial capital was already having a dramatic impact on the Camden metropolitan complex. As new homes were built in the suburbs to accommodate returning veterans and the post-war baby boom, the economic, cultural and civic institutions began to follow. In 1956, a new Jewish Community Center opened in Delaware Township/Cherry Hill along the Cooper River, reversing an earlier decision to build the facility in East Camden, closer to the historic settlement of Jews in the area. In the 1990s a new round of suburban out-migration led to the closing of that Center, and the opening of a newer one in a more

upscale neighborhood of eastern Cherry Hill, at the intersection of Kresson and Springdale Roads.

In 1961, the region's first enclosed shopping venue, the Cherry Hill Mall, opened alongside the improved Route 38, and residents voted shortly thereafter to change the town's name to Cherry Hill. By the mid-1970s, three new malls within a ten mile radius of the Cherry Hill Mall opened to serve newer suburbs that emerged beyond the HUB: Moorestown Mall, only five minutes down Route 38 from the Cherry Hill Mall in Burlington County; Deptford Mall, that better served the southern HUB area and rapidly developing tract developments in Gloucester County; and Echelon Mall in Voorhees, adjacent to eastern Cherry Hill. As sprawl has spread further outward in the 1990s, upscale shopping venues, Marlton Crossing, the Promenade and Designers Walk have concentrated along Route 73 between the Marlton Circle and Kresson Road as well as in East Gate Plaza adjacent the Moorestown Mall and with a dedicated exit from Interstate 295. This rapid retail growth not only threatens the Cherry Hill Mall's status as a regional attraction, but also the neighborhood shops and commercial strips along the four major transportation corridors in the HUB, Route 38, Route 70, Haddon Avenue and the Black Horse Pike.

Companies located in Camden began to relocate as well, including parts of RCA, Samuel Langston Company, Hussman Refrigeration, and the *Courier Post*. With no industrial listings in the state directory in 1946, Cherry Hill added 41 new such companies in the following two decades, including Easterbrook Pen Corp. and its 334 employees. Pennsauken as well began to attract industrial investments that once would have gone to Camden. From only one industrial firm in the 1940s, Rundle Sanitary Enamel Ware, Pennsauken expanded by the mid-sixties to 12 industrial parks with several companies employing over 50 workers. As the nation shifted from a manufacturing to service and information economy, jobs migrated out of the HUB to office parks and retail locations in newer suburban locations, further contributing to the hollowing out of the County's urban core.

When employment and residence remained concentrated in Camden, the journey to work was relatively short, involving either public transportation or a short walk. Before World War II, many Camdenites did not even own a car. As automobile ownership skyrocketed in the 1950s, government at all levels scrambled to provide adequate arterial access for growing distances between work and home. Camden's 1962 master plan called for an expansion of arterials that would maintain historic ties between the center city and the people who continued to work there but lived in the suburbs. Such projects were controversial in Camden, bringing displacement and protest in their wake. Interstate 676, which ultimately divided the City in two was delayed, and a north-south highway intended to link Camden's waterfront manufacturing was never built. Meanwhile, the New Jersey Turnpike and Interstate 295 just to its west created a new dynamic for the placement of business and residences. The widening of Route 70, Marlton Pike and Route 38 created attractive new interchanges with the interstates that also contributed to the engine of sprawl and eroded the advantages of the HUB. In 1992, Camden listed 225 retail establishments, employing 1,445 individuals. By contrast, Cherry Hill listed 672

establishments employing 10,414 people. Even more striking, retail sales in Cherry Hill exceeded Camden's by a margin of \$1,131,658 to \$164,000.<sup>11</sup>

In an effort to accommodate commuters in the post-war period, the Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA) helped construct the PATCO Hi-Speed Line. Completed in 1969, PATCO helped to sustain property values in some communities, notably Collingswood and Haddonfield. It also had the unfortunate and unintended consequence of spurring development of town homes and garden apartments in Lindenwold and Gibbsboro at the eastern terminus of the line, which made it possible to live inexpensively and commute to Camden, and more importantly, Philadelphia without having to live in either city. Instead of a boon to Camden, the PATCO line further spurred the departure of lawyers and other professionals who could still work in the City while living in attractive suburban communities. Ridership, moreover, never reached the point of relieving the major east-west traffic congestion that increasingly plagues the HUB.

The newer suburbs attracted families and individuals from Camden and older towns, not only because of job placements, shopping and transportation changes, but also because, like other urban centers, Camden's housing stock could not satisfy emerging market preferences. While the City retains some viable housing stock, as a whole, it is much older than other parts of the County, and its predominant character of row housing built for earlier age and economy make it uncompetitive compared to suburban homes with more square footage and more land. Many houses in Camden offer 1,000 square feet of living space or less, compared with almost three times that amount in many newer locations. The long pattern of disinvestments and outward movement has had the predictable effect of decreasing homeownership and increasing rentals in Camden as well as its close-in ring towns. While most HUB communities have a healthy mix of rentals, with Cherry Hill at the low end with 17% in 2000, 54% of Camden's housing is rental. This proportion includes many units that are Section 8 housing or owned by absentee landlords often delinquent in property taxes. Combined with the exodus of businesses, this pattern insured that Camden assessed property values would plummet and its tax rates would skyrocket, thereby dramatically exacerbating its socio-economic plight, and putting further pressure on neighboring towns as well as the County in general. Table 1 below illustrates Camden's predicament as well as its place in relation to the rest of the HUB metropolitan complex. Discounting Audubon Park, which is 74% rental property based on its unique origins as a housing complex for New York Ship workers in World War II, Camden has by far the highest tax rate and the lowest net valuation relative to its population of any HUB municipality. While Camden City is clearly in the worst fiscal straights as evidenced by the figures below and the extraordinary annual state aid necessary to fund basic municipal services, the rest of the HUB metropolitan complex also labors under relatively high tax burdens, which of course fall most severely on the smaller municipalities with the least and declining assessable property. Audubon Park is at the extreme, with a general tax rate of 5.22 which exceeds even Camden's. Pennsauken and Gloucester City, with significant manufacturing relative to their size are the only towns that enjoy a tax rate under 3.00.

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<sup>11</sup> New Jersey Department of Labor.

**TABLE 1: Property Values and Tax Rates in the HUB**

<i>Area</i>	<i>Net Taxable Valuation</i>	<i>General Tax Rate/\$100</i>	<i>County Equal Ratio</i>
<i>Audubon</i>	348779503	3.46	93.13
<i>Audubon Park</i>	9299277	5.22	100.00
<i>Camden</i>	802581064	4.50	94.05
<i>Cherry Hill</i>	4491277104	3.18	95.05
<i>Collingswood</i>	488312004	3.49	107.29
<i>Gloucester City</i>	363710691	2.94	103.97
<i>Haddon Twp.</i>	66057480	3.18	99.00
<i>Haddonfield</i>	989018692	3.32	95.57
<i>Haddon Heights</i>	397194558	3.54	99.25
<i>Lawnside</i>	126578705	3.33	102.09
<i>Merchantville</i>	162049344	3.67	103.40
<i>Mt. Ephraim</i>	169927253	3.59	105.01
<i>Oaklyn</i>	158170755	3.32	104.89
<i>Pennsauken</i>	1634644972	2.97	103.99
<i>Woodlynne</i>	50867178	3.63	105.50

*Source :Camden County Administrator*

### 3.3.2 Demographics

At the same time its business and manufacturing base was eroding in relation to surrounding suburbs, Camden’s share of the County population began a long, steady decline, dropping from 40 percent in the 1950s to less than 15 percent in the 2000 census. Not only did this decline signify a faltering tax base, but it also foretold the weakening of the City’s political influence. Combined with its population decline, Camden’s increasing poverty and accompanying sharp drop in voter turnout meant that the municipality that had once been indispensable to countywide election hardly mattered at all. In spite of the economic boom in the United States, and New Jersey in particular, during the 1990s, Camden remained mired in a poverty rate of 44 percent in 1995, the highest in the nation among cities of greater than 50,000. The inevitable decline in the City’s quality of life, as evidenced in increasing tax and crime rates as well as unacceptable schools and municipal service delivery drove more and more middle and even lower middle class to neighboring communities. At the same time, older inner ring towns in the HUB were experiencing the same outward movement of population as their residents sought the advantages of larger homes, better schools and more land in newer suburbs. Thus, even as the populations of these older, bedroom communities, especially those adjacent to Camden, began to flatten out or decline, their minority residents began to in real numbers and as a proportion of total population. Table 2 below shows these trends. Combined African American and Hispanic population in Woodlynne rose from 11.9 to 44 percent in the 1990s. In the same period, that population in Pennsauken climbed from 19.6 to 38 percent, and in Merchantville from 4.3 to 12 percent. Change concentrated on the Camden border where shifting demography was often accompanied by falling housing

prices and even abandoned structures, as along Camden Avenue in Pennsauken. Other communities evidenced more modest changes, Collingswood shifting from 5.6 to 13 percent African American and Hispanic. In each case, change concentrated to the west, along the Camden border, and thus overall population figures for the municipalities understated what was happening nearest to the City. For those cities that did not receive these newcomers, the total population trend was almost universally downward: Audubon Park (-4 percent), Gloucester City (-9 percent), Haddon Township (-1 percent), and Oaklyn (-5 percent).

**TABLE 2: Population/Race & Ethnicity Changes in Select HUB Municipalities**

<i>Area</i>	<i>Pop. Change 1970-90 (%)</i>	<i>Pop. Change 1990-00 (%)</i>	<i>% Afr. American &amp; Hispanic 1990</i>	<i>% Afr. American Hispanic 2000</i>
<i>Camden City</i>	-14.7	-9.0	87.6	92
<i>Audubon Park</i>	-22.9	-4.0	0.7	1.0
<i>Cherry Hill</i>	7.7	1.0	5.2	7.0
<i>Collingswood</i>	-12.2	-6.3	5.6	13.0
<i>Gloucester City</i>	-13.9	-9.2	1.2	3.0
<i>Haddon Twp.</i>	-18.4	-1.0	1.8	3.0
<i>Merchantville</i>	-7.4	-7.0	4.3	12.0
<i>Oaklyn</i>	-4.2	-5.0	1.6	3.0
<i>Pennsauken</i>	-4.6	3.0	19.6	38.0
<i>Woodlynne</i>	-17.8	10.0	11.9	44.0

*U.S. Census, 1970 - 2000*

Table 3 takes a more detailed look at the changes in racial and ethnic diversity within the HUB metropolitan complex. Most notably we see that overall there is a marked increase in diversity, although it is important to note, as above, that much of the increase in African American and Hispanic population outside Camden proper is concentrated in the western portions of nearby municipalities. Every one of the HUB towns lost white population, some fairly dramatically: Camden, -20%; Pennsauken, -23%; and Woodlynne, -40%. Conversely, every town except Camden, Haddonfield, Haddon Township and Lawnside showed an increase in black residents. The declines in Haddonfield and Haddon Township were not significant, but the 13.6% decline in Camden and the 8.0% decline in Lawnside, the HUB's two majority African American towns reflects the exodus of minorities in search of better schools and housing. Turning to Hispanic population, we see increases in all HUB towns, often more than doubling in size. In Camden, Hispanics now comprise 38.8% of the total population. We also note that the population of Asian and Pacific Islanders is the most rapidly increasing demographic in the HUB, most notably Vietnamese in Camden City and Woodlynne and Indian, Pakistani, Chinese and Koreans in Cherry Hill and Pennsauken. Even with this influx of immigrants, though, it is clear that the HUB will face a continued downward trend in its total population.



**TABLE 3: Diversity in the Camden HUB**

<i>Area</i>	<i>White 1990</i>	<i>White 2000</i>	<i>Black 1990</i>	<i>Black 2000</i>	<i>Hispanic 1990</i>	<i>Hispanic 2000</i>	<i>Total 1990</i>	<i>Total 2000</i>
<i>New Jersey</i>	6130465	6104705	1036825	1141821	739861	1117191	7730188	8414350
<i>Camden County</i>	385350	360756	81665	92059	36022	49166	502824	508932
<i>Audubon</i>	9094	8938	19	48	106	139	9205	9182
<i>Audubon Park</i>	1149	1090	0	4	8	7	1150	1102
<i>Camden City</i>	16620	13454	49362	42628	27273	31019	87492	79904
<i>Cherry Hill</i>	62265	59240	2243	3121	1380	1778	69348	69965
<i>Collingswood</i>	14420	12388	465	955	393	812	15289	14326
<i>Gloucester City</i>	12536	11155	29	79	123	216	12649	11454
<i>Haddon Township</i>	14524	13980	122	173	145	226	14837	14651
<i>Haddonfield</i>	11336	11247	161	148	100	170	11628	11659
<i>Haddon Heights</i>	7778	7394	35	30	57	79	7860	7847
<i>Lawnside</i>	51	47	2744	2520	30	64	2841	2692
<i>Merchantville</i>	3934	3265	97	282	79	208	4095	3801
<i>Mount Ephraim</i>	4485	4383	14	18	41	89	4517	4495
<i>Oaklyn</i>	4383	4017	23	48	47	97	4430	4188
<i>Pennsauken</i>	27965	21479	5103	8641	1693	5126	34738	35717
<i>Woodlynne</i>	2268	1354	129	635	172	576	2547	2796

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

The population total for the HUB area, as reported by the 2000 census, stood at 270,837.<sup>12</sup> Fully two-thirds of that number is concentrated in three municipalities: Camden with 79,904; Cherry Hill with 69,965; and Pennsauken with 35,737. Between 1990 and 2000, the HUB's population fell by 3.2%, or 8,950, with most of the decline from Camden, which lost 7,590 people, an 8.7% decline. Gloucester City and Collingswood also recorded notable declines of 1,170 (-9.2%) and 960 (6.3%) respectively. Pennsauken and Cherry Hill registered the only significant gains of 249 (9.8%) 999 and 617 respectively, much of the former's increase coming from Camden's out-migration. Woodlynne experienced a larger percent increase, 9.8%, but that reflects its low base population of 2,547 in 1990 and like Pennsauken is attributable largely to Camden's losses.

<sup>12</sup> Note that these figures were collected before Lawnside was included in the study area, and its decrease from 2841 to 2692 is consistent with the general downward trend.

In the HUB study area, 27.6% of the residents are under age 18, while 13.8% are age 65 or older (TABLE 4 below). The populations of Camden and Woodlynne are particularly young, with 34.6% of Camden residents and 32.4% of Woodlynne residents under age 18. Relatively larger shares of senior citizens are found in Haddon Heights (20.0%), Audubon Park (18.3%), Haddon Township (18.2%), and Cherry Hill (18.0%).

**Table 4: HUB Age Distribution**

<i>Area</i>	<i>% 0-17 Years</i>	<i>% 18-34 Years</i>	<i>% 35-64 Years</i>	<i>% 65+ Years</i>
<i>HUB</i>	26.7	21.0	37.5	13.8
<i>Audubon</i>	24.8	20.0	39.4	15.9
<i>Audubon Park</i>	21.2	16.7	43.7	18.3
<i>Camden</i>	34.6	27.3	30.4	7.6
<i>Cherry Hill</i>	23.5	15.8	42.7	18.0
<i>Collingswood</i>	21.8	24.7	39.1	14.4
<i>Gloucester City</i>	26.5	21.2	38.5	13.8
<i>Haddon Twp.</i>	24.1	17.4	40.4	18.2
<i>Haddonfield</i>	27.2	12.6	44.3	15.9
<i>Haddon Heights</i>	22.6	18.2	39.2	20.0
<i>Merchantville</i>	25.7	19.9	40.5	13.8
<i>Mt. Ephraim</i>	23.3	20.2	39.6	17.9
<i>Oaklyn</i>	22.8	21.8	38.6	16.8
<i>Pennsauken</i>	27.5	20.7	37.7	14.2
<i>Woodlynne</i>	32.4	24.1	34.8	8.7

Source: U.S. Census

Even more significantly, trends in age distributions indicate that the County as a whole and the HUB in particular are getting older, with the greatest age cohort increases coming in the youngest and oldest cohorts. The tremendous increase of youngest age groups in Camden between 1990 and 2000, effectively masks this “graying” trend. Importantly, however, a more refined examination of age distributions reveals that while senior citizens are increasing rapidly in the HUB, the pre-retirement cohort, ages 55-65 is decreasing rapidly, suggesting that as individuals reach retirement age those that can retire elsewhere do.<sup>13</sup> Thus the HUB is not only getting older, it is also losing its more affluent retirees. As we examine increases in poverty below, this combination of factors will help to explain that phenomenon.

Rutgers Center for Urban Policy Research (CUPR) has prepared municipal population forecasts through the year 2020 for each community in the HUB (prior to the inclusion of Lawnside) as displayed in Table 5 below. These forecasts show relative stability in the overall population size, with a total growth of 1,300 persons. Not surprisingly, Camden City is projected to experience continued losses, a decline of 1,400 more individuals. These forecasts were completed prior to the 2000 census figures, which are included to give a sense of CUPR’s forecasting accuracy. The one municipality for which the CUPR

<sup>13</sup> For a complete analysis of these age cohorts see the Camden County United Way *Community Needs Assessment*, prepared by WRI, 2003.

projection significantly diverges is Camden, which recorded a population of 79,904, 4,350 less than forecast. Nevertheless, the CUPR figures are fairly close to the actual census data in the rest of the HUB. We also include, for comparison, a 2020 forecast from the DVRPC. The DVRPC projections show a much more drastic decline in the HUB population, almost 22,000 fewer people, with most of the differential in the forecasts for the three largest towns, Camden, Cherry Hill and Pennsauken.<sup>14</sup>

**Table 5: HUB Population Forecasts**

<i>Area</i>	<i>Census 2000</i>	<i>CUPR est. 2000</i>	<i>CUPR Est. 2020</i>	<i>CUPR Est. Change</i>	<i>DVRPC Est. 2020</i>
<b>HUB</b>	270837	274661	275999	1338	245360
<b>Audubon</b>	9182	8936	8856	-80	7990
<b>Audubon Park</b>	1102	1115	1087	-28	910
<b>Camden</b>	79904	84254	82856	-1398	73940
<b>Cherry Hill</b>	69965	70358	71875	1517	66240
<b>Collingswood</b>	14326	14702	14774	72	12390
<b>Gloucester City</b>	11484	12233	11575	-658	9120
<b>Haddon Twp.</b>	214651	14707	14805	98	13030
<b>Haddonfield</b>	11659	11279	12780	1501	10510
<b>Haddon Heights</b>	7574	7587	7589	2	6680
<b>Merchantville</b>	3801	3926	3927	1	3480
<b>Mt. Ephraim</b>	4495	4464	4647	183	3750
<b>Oaklyn</b>	4188	4323	4356	33	3620
<b>Pennsauken</b>	35737	34326	34346	20	31350
<b>Woodlynne</b>	2796	2451	2526	75	2350

Source: CUPR and DVRPC

Clearly the HUB metropolitan complex is facing a flat demographic future at best. Indeed, the population figures logically imply that people are moving out of the HUB region, since the population increase of 1,338 forecast over the next two decades is less than would be expected from normal birth and mortality rates. More distressing, however, is the fact that the HUB population and communities are becoming less affluent, even as the business ratables are declining as well.

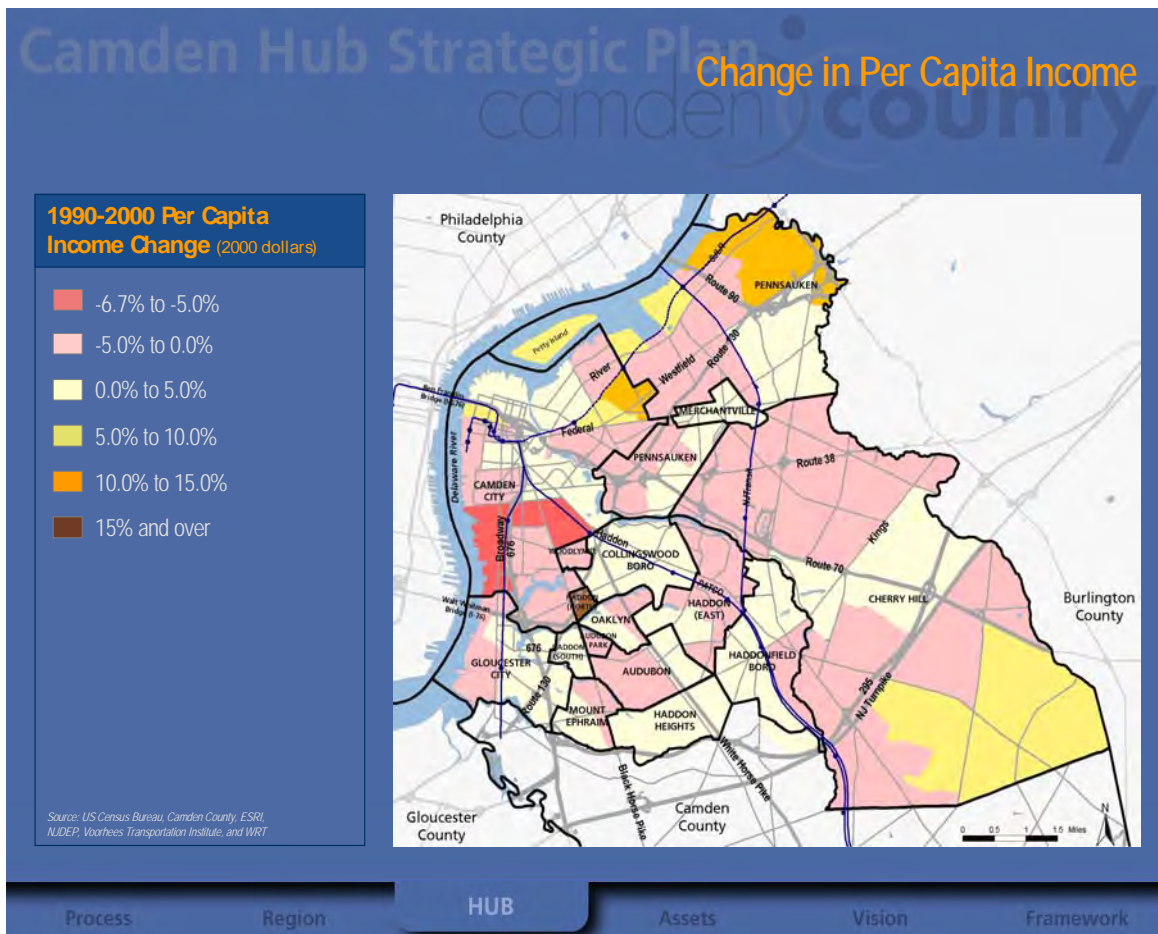
### 3.3.3 Economics

The median household income in Camden County (1990 Census data adjusted for 2002 dollars) is \$52,274. In Camden City the median household income is a startlingly low \$25,113, by far the lowest in the HUB. Audubon Park is the next lowest at \$35,474. In comparison, Haddonfield and Cherry Hill registered median household incomes of \$81,734 and \$78,634 respectively. Turning to changes in per capita income, we see a

<sup>14</sup> Since the CUPR projections were specifically designed for New Jersey, whereas the DVRPC was forecasting for the entire MPO, we will rely on the CUPR numbers in subsequent analysis, bearing in mind that the DVRPC figures only make the case more forcefully for a concerted smart growth policy initiative in the HUB

troubling trend, as poverty is clearly moving outward from Camden and its immediate neighboring communities. MAP V illustrates the shift in lower per capita income into the HUB. The pink and red areas demarcate declines in per capita income between 1990 and 2000. We can see a pattern that has essentially divided Cherry Hill into two communities separated more or less by Kings Highway. To a great extent this decline, evident in the other HUB towns as well reflects the increasing senior population and the departure of higher income households to larger home or more affluent retirement options.

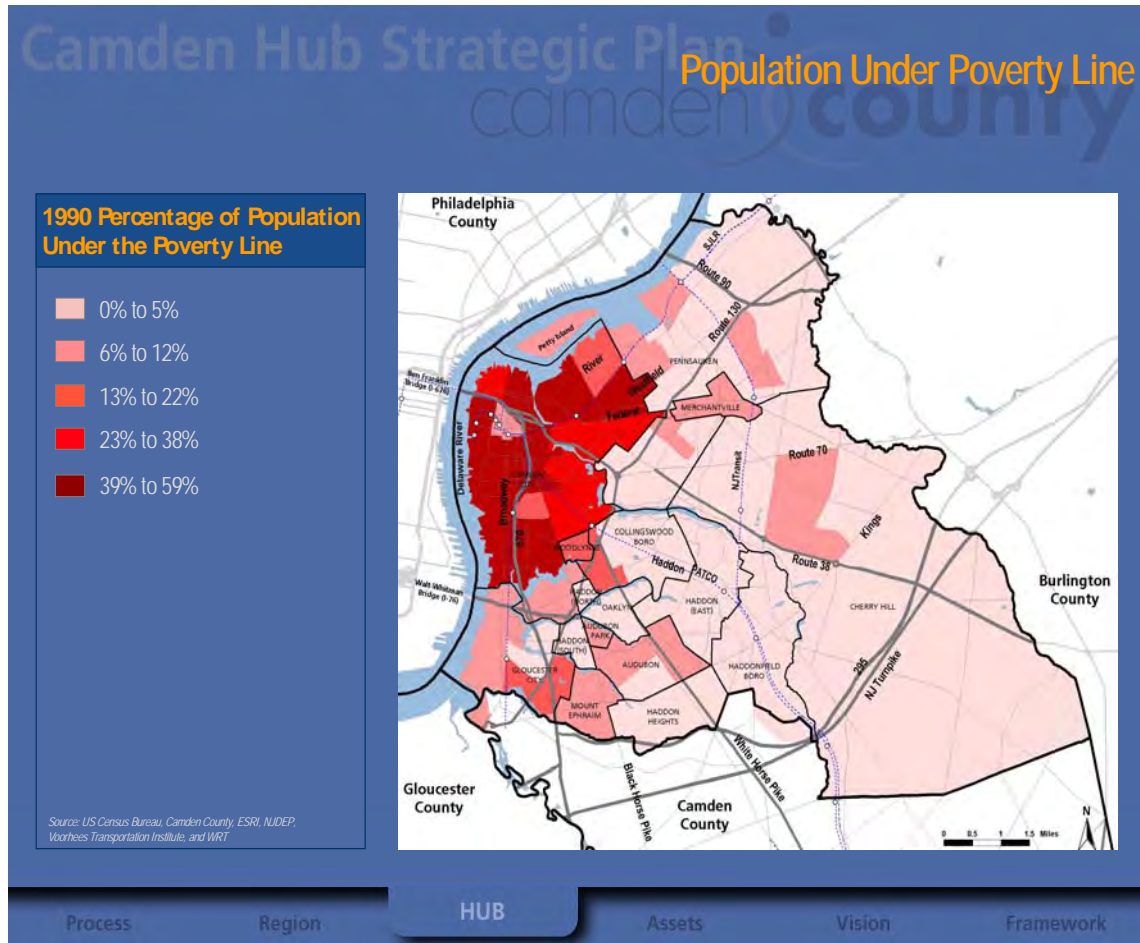
## MAP V



The burden on social services is also determined by the percentage of the population living under the poverty line. In 1998, 8.8% of the State's population lived under the poverty line, and Camden County had the third highest level in New Jersey, with 12.2% living in poverty. Shifting our focus to population living below the poverty line in the HUB metropolitan complex specifically, we see an economic dynamic that is consistent with the pattern of decline brought on by sprawl and reflected in the income figures.

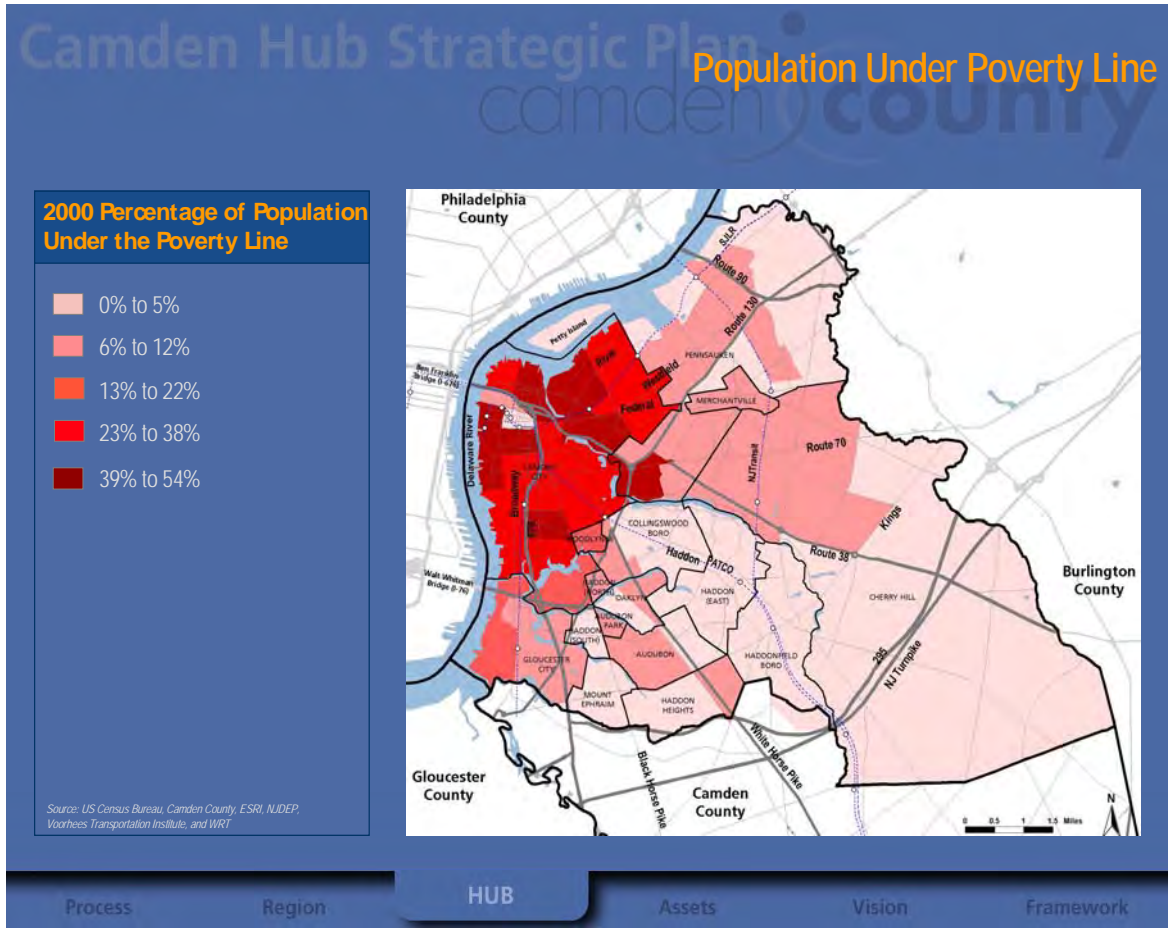
Maps VI and VII show the proportion of individuals below the poverty line in the HUB for 1990 and 2000

## MAP VI



The 1990 map immediately above shows the high concentration of poverty in the immediate vicinity of Camden, but it also illustrates the beginning of an outward movement into Audubon, Mt. Ephraim, Merchantville, and Cherry Hill between Routes 70 and 38, and west of Kings Highway. All of these areas registered poverty percentages in the 6% - 12% range. The 2000 map immediately below shows a dramatic shift to the southeast in the HUB's poverty data.

# MAP VII



The employment trends for the HUB region also show a downward trend, further reinforcing the conclusion that the negative effects of sprawl are manifest in the Camden metropolitan area. Table 6 shows detailed data describing municipal employment by industry for each municipality in the HUB for 1999. This data, derived from the New Jersey Department of Labor, includes those jobs that are covered by unemployment insurance. The totals do not include individuals who are self-employed, or certain public sector employees (e.g., elected officials). Camden County employment in the public and private sectors was 197,343 in 1999. The 14 municipalities in the original HUB study area account for 123,992, or 62% of that total. Not surprisingly, employment in the HUB is concentrated in the three largest municipalities, Cherry Hill has the greatest share of employed workers, with 47,909, or 38.6%. Camden follows with 31,672, or 25.5%, and Pennsauken is third with 22,678, or 18.3%. No other municipality in the HUB exceeds 5% of the total employment. We also note that a large majority of employment in Camden is in the government sector, health care and higher education.

[INSERT TABLE 6 HERE]

We can also project the sectors for job growth from the distribution of jobs by industry in Table 6. Year 1999 employment was concentrated in three industries: services, retail and manufacturing. The services sector, including business, health and legal services, is the prime source of jobs for most growing municipalities. The sole exception is Pennsauken, where the greatest source of employment is manufacturing. Retail trade is also a significant provider of employment in the HUB, most notably in Cherry Hill, which has 24.2% of its jobs in that sector.

Table 7, below, shows baseline municipal employment projections from 2000 Census data through 2020. The data is based on CUPR projections and adjusted by the WRI project team to reflect the most current U. S. Census data. Employment in the HUB is expected to grow by 10,400 jobs between 2000 and 2020. Camden City is the only municipality forecast to lose jobs in these projections. Notable employment gains are anticipated in only four municipalities, Cherry Hill (4,600), Pennsauken (2,300), Haddon Township (1,900) and Collingswood (1,300). The remaining HUB municipalities are projected to registered zero or very modest increases in employment

**Table 7: Municipal Employment Projections for the HUB , 2000 - 2020**

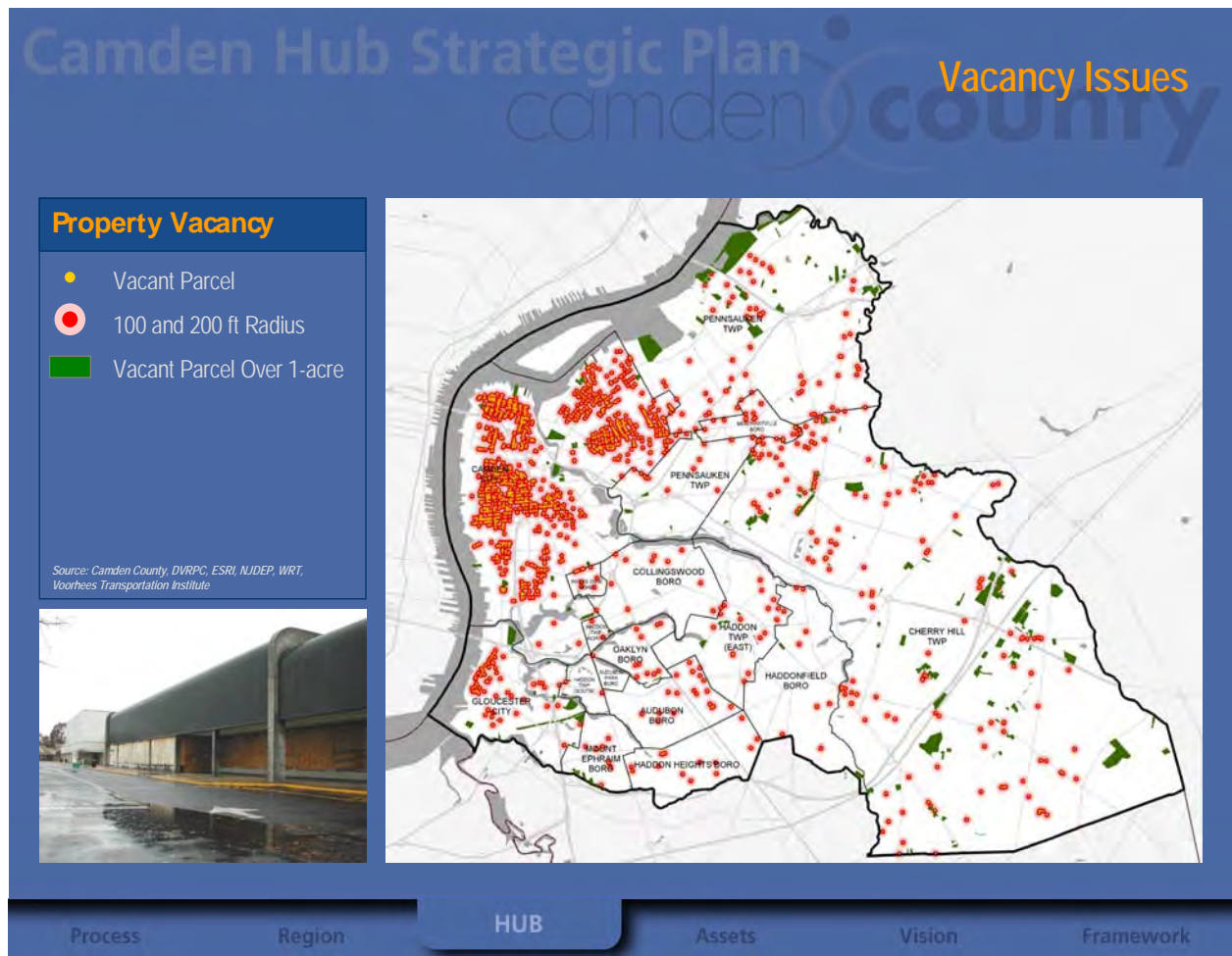
<i>Area</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>Change 2000-2020</i>
<i>HUB</i>	140700	151100	10400
<i>Audubon</i>	2600	3000	400
<i>Audubon Park</i>	100	100	0
<i>Camden</i>	36600	36500	-100
<i>Cherry Hill</i>	53600	57300	4600
<i>Collingswood</i>	3200	4200	1300
<i>Gloucester City</i>	3000	3000	0
<i>Haddon Twp.</i>	3900	5400	1900
<i>Haddonfield</i>	6600	7000	400
<i>Haddon Heights</i>	2400	3100	900
<i>Merchantville</i>	900	300	600
<i>Mt. Ephraim</i>	1300	1800	600
<i>Oaklyn</i>	1000	1000	0
<i>Pennsauken</i>	25400	27200	2300
<i>Woodlynne</i>	200	300	100

*Source: CUPR, Urban Partners, and N.J. Dept. of Labor*

**\*Given the overall economic picture of the HUB region, market projections are not encouraging. With more seniors on fixed incomes, gradually expansion of families and individuals living under the poverty line, limited job growth and shift in disposable income, business and retail to newer suburbs the HUB faces a steady, albeit slow downward path unless the dynamics of sprawl can be reversed.**

A powerful piece of evidence of this general weakness is the vacancies in commercial properties throughout the HUB. MAP VIII graphically illustrates the extent of the vacancy issue. Note that the empty strip mall property pictured below is in Cherry Hill, and reflects both the ratables chase and the shifts in market that push and pull retail establishments from one location to the next either within the HUB or beyond.

## MAP VIII



This map illustrates both the concentration of vacant parcels in Camden and its close-in suburbs, but also the dispersion vacant lots of significant throughout the HUB area.

### 3.3.4 Housing and Households

The final piece of the current situation in the HUB metropolitan complex is its household and housing conditions. In keeping with the general steady state of its population and sluggish economic performance relative to surrounding areas, the number of occupied



housing units has declined modestly, by 1,350 households during the 1990s. Camden City experienced the greatest drop, with 2,450 fewer occupied units. Housing also fell sharply in Gloucester City, which declined by 390 units. Cherry Hill offset these declines, gaining an additional 1,700 new households, though it is important to note that almost all of this occurred in the newer and more affluent eastern section of town. Table 8 compares all fourteen original HUB municipalities on occupied housing units and home ownership rates in the 1990s.

**Table 8: Households and Home Ownership in the HUB, 1990 - 2000**

<i>Area</i>	<i>Occupied Units, 1990</i>	<i>Occupied Units, 2000</i>	<i>% Home Ownership 1990</i>	<i>% Home Ownership 2000</i>
<b><i>HUB</i></b>	98572	97225	69.0	68.9
<b><i>Audubon</i></b>	3622	3673	73.0	73.9
<b><i>Audubon Park</i></b>	498	496	20.9	23.8
<b><i>Camden</i></b>	26626	24177	48.4	46.1
<b><i>Cherry Hill</i></b>	24529	26227	84.1	83.0
<b><i>Collingswood</i></b>	6399	6263	54.1	54.8
<b><i>Gloucester City</i></b>	4601	4213	73.5	73.4
<b><i>Haddon Twp.</i></b>	6242	6207	69.6	70.2
<b><i>Haddonfield</i></b>	4491	4491	83.4	84.5
<b><i>Haddon Heights</i></b>	3042	3049	78.1	78.1
<b><i>Merchantville</i></b>	1582	1524	65.1	60.4
<b><i>Mt. Ephraim</i></b>	1788	1818	80.9	80.0
<b><i>Oaklyn</i></b>	1846	1791	69.2	67.4
<b><i>Pennsauken</i></b>	12406	12389	80.7	80.4
<b><i>Woodlynne</i></b>	900	912	76.8	74.4

*Source: U.S. Census*

By 2000, approximately 69% of households in the HUB owned their own homes, essentially unchanged from a decade earlier. Ownership rates were the highest in Haddonfield and Cherry Hill, both easily exceeding 80%. Only three communities recorded ownership rates below 70%: Audubon Park at 24%, Camden at 46%, and Collingswood at 55%.

Although home ownership appears quite steady, the underlying forces of sprawl again pose a growing challenge to the stability of the HUB. Specifically, when we examine the trend in property taxes over the last decade, the affordability of home ownership, especially in the less affluent communities and neighborhoods of the HUB appears less secure than at first blush. Between 1990 and 2000, only Camden, Gloucester City and Lawnside recorded decreases, and the later two hardly moved downward at all. Every

other town experienced increases, the most significant ones coming in Audubon Park, Collingswood, Haddon Heights, Merchantville and Mt. Ephraim. It is important to note, however, that the tax increase in Collingswood reflects a conscious policy decision by its leaders and citizens to raise revenue as a basis for reinvesting in its main shopping district along Haddon Avenue, and that tax increase has been successfully leveraged to attract state support and private investment.<sup>15</sup>

For another perspective, we can turn to data on housing vacancies; we have already observed the extent of vacant commercial property in MAP VI above. Table 9, below, illustrates housing vacancy in the HUB, comparing 1990 and 2000 figures for the municipalities.

**Table 9: HUB Housing Vacancy 1990 - 2000**

<i>Area</i>	<i>%Vacancy* 1990</i>	<i>%Vacancy 2000</i>	<i>%Vacant Sale 1990</i>	<i>%Vacant Sale 2000</i>	<i>%Vacant Rent 1990</i>	<i>%Vacant Rent 2000</i>
<i>HUB</i>	6.2	8.4	3.1	5.0	12.2	14.5
<i>Audubon</i>	3.6	3.7	1.2	2.8	9.3	5.8
<i>Audubon Park</i>	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3
<i>Camden</i>	11.7	18.8	7.8	17.1	14.9	20.1
<i>Cherry Hill</i>	4.9	3.1	2.4	0.9	14.9	9.3
<i>Collingswood</i>	5.0	8.8	1.1	3.4	8.9	14.3
<i>Gloucester City</i>	6.7	8.5	1.5	5.8	18.7	14.8
<i>Haddon Twp.</i>	2.3	3.4	1.4	1.4	4.1	7.0
<i>Haddonfield</i>	3.6	3.1	2.5	1.7	6.7	6.4
<i>Haddon Heights</i>	3.5	2.7	2.0	1.7	8.1	6.7
<i>Merchantville</i>	4.5	5.2	2.3	3.1	8.0	8.0
<i>Mt. Ephraim</i>	3.0	3.3	0.8	3.3	11.4	2.9
<i>Oaklyn</i>	2.2	5.4	0.6	2.2	5.2	11.4
<i>Pennsauken</i>	2.4	4.3	1.5	3.2	5.8	8.1
<i>Woodlynne</i>	4.2	9.9	3.5	6.6	5.9	17.9

*Source: U.S. Census*

*\*Includes seasonal and migrant workers*

Housing vacancy was obviously on the rise among HUB municipalities during the 1990s, climbing from 6.2% to 8.4%. For 2000, rental vacancies were much higher than for ownership units, 14.5% compared to 5.0%. Camden City, not surprisingly showed the highest vacancy rate for both owner and rental units, 17.1% and 20.1% respectively. In Camden's ownership market, the vacancy rate almost tripled in the 1990s. Collingswood, Gloucester City, Oaklyn and Pennsauken also recorded significant increases in housing vacancy between 1990 and 2000. Among the HUB communities, only Cherry Hill

<sup>15</sup> A fuller description of the Collingswood investment appears below in section 3.4.1, Home Rule, Governance and Smart Growth.

experienced a notable decline in ownership and rental housing vacancies, and again this positive news is uneven, reflecting a robust market in the newer, more affluent section of Cherry Hill east of Interstate 295 rather than a uniformly strong housing market. In effect, there are two Cherry Hills in the HUB region, the western end of town that clearly has more in common with the older HUB municipalities that expanded in the postwar era, and the eastern end of town that is closer economically and socially to neighboring Voorhees and the western municipalities of Burlington County such as Evesham, Mt. Laurel, Marlton and Medford.

### 3.3.5 Education

The HUB has an array of educational institutions including public school districts in each municipality, three colleges and universities, and several adult education options.

Five of the area's 14 public school districts consist of only one school. These five municipalities --Audubon Park, Merchantville, Mt. Ephraim, Oaklyn and Woodlynne-- operate a single elementary and send students to high school in another district. Audubon Park and Mt. Ephraim funnel students to Audubon High School, while Oaklyn and Woodlynne use Collingswood High School. The remaining nine districts maintain multiple schools covering kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

Although most HUB school districts have sustained fairly stable enrollments, they are all plagued with a deep concern about adequate financing. This is an especially critical issue for moderate-income towns that enjoy neither the advantage of high levels of state aid available to poorer districts nor the benefit of a strong tax base in more affluent communities. School district size varies widely, from Merchantville with an enrollment of 339 students to 17,761 in Camden City (see Table 10, below).

**Table 10: School Size and Expenditure, 2001 - 2002**

<i>Area</i>	<i>Enrollment</i>	<i>Spending Per Student</i>	<i>State Aid as % of Budget</i>
<i>Audubon</i>	1838	\$8357	36
<i>Audubon Park</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Camden</i>	17761	\$12972	n/a
<i>Cherry Hill</i>	11060	\$9901	14
<i>Collingswood</i>	2088	\$10489	42
<i>Gloucester City</i>	2175	\$11918	n/a
<i>Haddon Twp.</i>	2232	\$8742	38
<i>Haddonfield</i>	2240	\$9103	7
<i>Haddon Heights</i>	1229	\$9926	13
<i>Merchantville</i>	339	\$10685	31
<i>Mt. Ephraim</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Oaklyn</i>	533	\$8351	37
<i>Pennsauken</i>	6016	\$9740	54
<i>Woodlynne</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a

Source: N.J. Department of Education

Reflecting the HUB's relatively stable population, school enrollments in the region have remained fairly steady, the only major shift occurring in Camden City, which, after several years of enrollment hovering around 20,000, has dipped below 18,000.

Like enrollment figures, spending per student and state aid vary significantly across the HUB. (Camden and Gloucester City state aid were not included because their Abbott funding would render comparisons meaningless.) Spending ranged from a low of \$8,351 per pupil in Oaklyn to a high of \$12,972 in Camden. Adequate school funding is the most significant issue in the HUB districts, with six of seven school districts interviewed for this study listing it as their major concern. Of these interviewed districts, only Cherry Hill failed to mention school funding as a major issue. Tight budgets are especially common for smaller districts such as Audubon, Merchantville, Oaklyn and Woodlynne because they cannot achieve economies of scale available to larger districts. With the current state budget difficulties, though, districts of all sizes are facing staff and program cuts.

Faced with severe budget constraints, HUB school districts have begun to explore cooperative arrangements to achieve cost savings. Some occur on an ad hoc or district-by-district basis, while others bring together clusters of districts around larger initiatives.

The County Superintendent of schools has convened school districts in the HUB and throughout the rest of Camden County around a few recent programs. The \$3 million Tech 2000 initiative, which sought to put a computer in every classroom by 2000, was deemed a big success, with the addition of 2,900 computers and 3,000 teachers trained. The County has also established training and staff coordination programs for substitute teachers and nurses to meet the needs of many smaller districts. Cherry Hill, Collingswood, Haddonfield, Haddon Heights, and Haddon Township are part of a cooperative, 11-district group, the Southern New Jersey Standards Consortium, designed to raise educational standards through student assessments and professional development. The Consortium receives no state money, and finances itself with contributions from participating districts. Other examples of cooperation include Collingswood and Haddon Township offering joint foreign language courses on the Internet, pooling insurance and utility payments. These examples are important both as an insight into the challenge of fiscal stress confronting HUB school districts, and as an illustration of how the negative effects of sprawl can draw municipalities together in cooperative efforts despite the tradition of home rule.

### **3.4.0 Home Rule, Governance, and Smart Growth**

Of the serious challenges that the HUB region confronts as a result of suburban sprawl, none requires a more thoughtful response than home rule and governance. On the one hand, neighborhoods and communities define the quality of life that residents of the HUB find most attractive, and the tradition of home rule is an integral component of the communities of place that make up the HUB. Residents clearly associate home rule with control of their communities. On the other hand, home rule tends to promote the kind of

irrational, competitive land use and development we currently see both between the HUB and outlying suburbs and within the HUB itself. On the other hand, home rule apparently provides little protection for the quality of life valued by residents. In public meetings and presentations, residents and community leaders consistently decry the decline in economic fortunes, the traffic congestion, the ratables chase and sense of powerlessness in the face of sprawl. More importantly, the home rule tradition creates an impediment to cooperative strategies essential to smart growth planning. Without strong county leadership, the municipalities of the HUB will remain hamstrung in their efforts to address their common problems.

An effective way to understand the governance alternative for the HUB is to think about the differences between the organization of Major League Baseball and the national Football League. Baseball is organized in the home rule tradition, with each franchise city, much like a municipality, pursuing its own interests with little regard to the negative impact either on its competitors or on the larger enterprise of Major League Baseball. League expansion and technological change, much like sprawl, creates among the cities clear winners like the New York Yankees and losers like the Montreal Expos, as teams in favored media markets are able to retain television revenues --in effect their tax base-- for themselves as teams in weaker markets languish. Baseball fans, like residents, vote with their wallets and their feet, abandoning Baseball for other sports and entertainment options just as they tend to move out of urban centers and older towns for newer communities with better amenities and lower taxes. Football, on the other hand, operates under a very strong governance model, in which television revenues are shared for the benefit of individual franchises and the enterprise as a whole prospers. This cooperative, one might say smart growth strategy sustains a healthy network of franchises that fans find highly attractive, and that generates an expanding revenue base for all as the NFL can bargain more effectively with television.

The HUB municipalities have the option of clinging doggedly to a home rule tradition that, while perhaps politically satisfying, has done little to halt the underlying dynamics of sprawl. That is the Major League Baseball option in which every city focuses on its particular concerns and the Commissioner's Office exerts little influence on behalf of the larger enterprise. They also have the option of softening their commitment to home rule and adopting a smart growth plan in which some local control is sacrificed to the County in the interest of a more rational development strategy for the HUB. That is the National Football League model in which a strong Commissioners Office provides the leadership necessary to promote the strategic interests of the league.

In the HUB, development has proceeded largely on the Baseball model as municipalities have pursued their own plans and projects. There are, however, some hopeful signs that the time is ripe, not to abandon home rule, but to shift toward a governance model more conducive to a smart growth strategy. Among the plans and projects already under way in the HUB municipalities several major initiatives, including the HUB Plan itself suggest that Camden and its surrounding communities and the County leadership may be ready to explore smart growth options in a serious way.

### 3.4.1 Municipal Plans and Projects

- Camden County - Camden County has a master plan in place, *The Camden County Comprehensive Plan*. This document includes elements for land use, housing, economic development, transportation, natural resource conservation, agriculture, recreation, redevelopment, historic preservation, public facilities and services, and intergovernmental coordination. Unfortunately, the County Plan has not been formally updated since its adoption in 1972, and the County Planning Department's staff and capacity have eroded steadily through the 1980s and 1990s. Much of the planning and development work for the County is handled through the Camden County Improvement Authority (CCIA), which works closely with the Board of Chosen Freeholders. Recently, the CCIA has taken on a small, but capable GIS operation and a Director of Smart Growth. While encouraging signs, these are really opportunistic responses rather than a systematic effort at rebuilding the County's planning capacity, a necessary ingredient for smart growth and technical assistance to municipal planners.
- Audubon - Audubon Borough has two business district revitalization efforts planned for the Black Horse Pike and Merchant Street, which is slated to become a special improvement district. There are also plans for revitalization of the White Horse Pike business district. To be truly effective, these efforts must be connected to and coordinated with similar efforts of other towns along the Black Horse and White Horse Pikes.
- Audubon Park - There are currently no economic or redevelopment plans under consideration.
- Camden City - Camden is the focal point of major planning, redevelopment and economic revitalization activities that will have important implications for the HUB metropolitan complex.
  - ❖ The state has approved a new master plan for the City. Entitled, *Future Camden*, the plan emerged from a robust, bilingual public participation process and targets specific neighborhoods for strategic investment.
  - ❖ Waterfront development is well along, with a complex of venues: Campbell Field, the New Jersey State Aquarium, the Tweeter Center, the *Battleship New Jersey*, and the recently opened Victor Building Lofts. Dranoff Developers is planning to launch a second phase of loft redevelopment in the old RCA Building #9.
  - ❖ The enactment of the MRERA has led to the creation of a Strategic Capital Improvement Plan to direct a good deal of the \$175 million in state investment under the Act. In addition, the Act provides matching funds for major facilities expansions of Rutgers, Rowan, Camden County College, UMDNJ, Cooper Hospital and Our Lady of Lourdes. It also leverages state funding for an expansion of the Aquarium and creation of adjoining retail.

- ❖ The City has reached agreement for a multi million dollar private redevelopment intended to transform the Cramer Hill neighborhood and is poised to launch a major redevelopment in Lanning Square, adjacent to Center City. Broadway is targeted for a New Jersey Main Street redevelopment project. These projects will inevitably present displacement and relocation challenges from residents, even with the promise of fair market value compensation.
  - ❖ Capitalizing on the Waterfront and higher education/healthcare expansion, the Greater Camden Partnership has presented a plan and renderings for a comprehensive revitalization of the central business district and government center.
  - ❖ In addition to the high profile projects and plans the key neighborhoods of Fairview, North Camden, Parkside, and East Camden are at various stages of community planning projects.
- Cherry Hill - Cherry Hill is in the final phases of approving a new master plan. The most significant projects under way are the construction of a new, state-of-the-art Library on Kings Highway between Routes 70 and 38, and the redevelopment of the Garden State Race Track site where demolition is already underway. After several iterations of plans and court challenges to insure an affordable housing component, the township is proceeding with a mixed use redevelopment slated to include senior citizen housing, some high and medium density housing, open space and large as well as smaller retail stores. Although there was opportunity for community input, residents in adjacent neighborhoods along Route 70 east of Haddonfield Road, remain concerned about exacerbated traffic congestion and other impacts on the character of their communities stemming from Racetrack redevelopment.
- Collingswood - Collingswood reexamined its master plan during the 1998 Phase II Cross Acceptance Process. More importantly, political and community leaders in Collingswood decided to tackle the effects of sprawl in their own town, and made the courageous decision to seek a tax increase to spur investment and revitalization. The decision has paid off, as the municipality was able to attract additional support from the state, county, and private investment to dramatically remake its main business and commercial district along Haddon Avenue. It is now universally recognized as a smart growth success story. More importantly, this success has encouraged Collingswood to play a leading role in organizing a targeted smart growth project focused on the Haddonfield, Westmont, Collingswood and Ferry Avenue (in Camden) Stations along the PATCO Hi-Speed Line.
- Gloucester City - Redevelopment plans have designated a special improvement district, and the New Jersey State Planning Commission has designated this district as a “town center” under the State Plan.

- Haddonfield - Haddonfield has a well developed master plan, including a land use plan, housing plan, circulation plan, utility plan, and a community facilities, recreation and conservation plan. It also includes plans for historic preservation and Fair Share Housing. A Development Ordinance clearly regulates buffering, landscape preservation, traffic impacts, storm water management, and open space. Haddonfield has joined with other municipalities and the DRPA on the PATCO smart growth project cited above.
- Haddon Heights - The master plan for Haddon Heights was revised in 1996, with little change recommended. Aside from streetscape improvements along Haddon Avenue, there no economic development or redevelopment plans in place.
- Haddon Township - The Township has retained Public Solutions to design plans for special improvement districts along Haddon Avenue (to build on the town's participation in the PATCO project), White Horse Pike, and Black Horse Pike. Public Solutions will also propose a town house development program for Haddon.
- Merchantville - A new master plan was developed in 1996, and a New Jersey Main Street program is in place along the main business corridor. New housing developments along Alexander Avenue were approved, including senior citizen residences and five town homes.
- Mount Ephraim - Mount Ephraim has adopted a new, comprehensive master plan, including community facilities, recreation and conservation. The town is also pursuing a variety of redevelopment and community enhancement initiatives: a business district cooperative, including a special improvement district, community policing, and along the main business corridor of Mount Ephraim.
- Oaklyn - A master plan is in place for infrastructure and land use. No economic or redevelopment plans are under consideration or in process.
- Pennsauken is working with Public Solutions and a planning firm to develop major revitalization plans for Petty's Island, its Delaware Waterfront and adjacent neighborhoods. It is also engaged in a major redevelopment project at the intersection of Interstate 90, and Route 130. This is the planned site for a County Civic Center intended to host a minor league ice hockey team, expositions, events and regional sporting events, including high school championships. The Pennsauken projects clearly illustrate the need for a regional approach to planning and development, both because its waterfront revitalization ought to leverage rather than compete with similar plans in Camden and Gloucester City, and because its plans will displace a long time retail landmark, the Pennsauken Mart, which is currently considering a relocation in Camden along the Admiral Wilson Boulevard.



- Woodlynne - A master plan has been updated for Woodlynne Borough, and streetlight and transportation enhancement projects are underway. There is no major development or redevelopment initiative in place.

### 3.4.2 Cooperative Planning and Development

In addition to the HUB Plan, there are a number of regional or smart growth initiatives that relate to this effort.

- We have already noted the PATCO Hi-Speed Line project, funded by a smaller DCA smart growth grant. The WRI team has participated in the development of that plan, with members serving on the advisory board to the project. It is fully consistent with the objectives of the HUB Plan and is included as a key element of Transportation Oriented Development in the HUB.
- Under the MRERA, a Regional Impact Council (RIC) is required to insure that older inner ring communities such as Oaklyn, Woodlynne and Haddon Township (a separate portion of Haddon sit along Camden's border) and Pennsauken are connected to the revitalization of the City. Under the Act, a RIC must be established from among Camden and the immediately surrounding. The Department of Community Affairs has issued an opinion designating the HUB Steering Committee as a "regional cooperative", thereby empowering it under the MRERA to serve as the Regional Impact Council.
- The Ford Foundation has funded a regional, smart growth organizing effort under the auspices of the New Jersey Regional Coalition. Under the MRERA, the Coalition is allocated a representative on the RIC.
- Ford has also provided support to Camden Churches Organized for People (CCOP) to lead a faith-based community organizing effort in the County. This effort would extend CCOP's model and activities to several HUB towns.
- The Annie E. Casey Foundation and Ford are jointly funding the Alliance for the Revitalization of Camden (ARCC). Co-sponsored by the Concerned Black Clergy, CCOP and the Greater Camden Partnership, ARCC brings together regional leaders (e.g. hospitals, universities, banks, the WIB) with Camden residents and community leaders to develop an agenda for revitalizing Camden and reconnecting it in the region.
- There are also several shared service initiatives among the HUB municipalities. These include cooperative efforts in education noted above, as well as shared 911 capabilities and joint purchasing arrangements. While economic and fiscal realities naturally induce

municipalities to explore savings possibilities through shared services, home rule traditions prevent the development of more robust measures that would inevitably require a reduction in local control and ultimately elimination of some services in smaller towns.

### 3.4.3 County Leadership

Given the current situation in the HUB metropolitan complex, strong County leadership is critical to the success of any smart growth planning and implementation. Not only is it essential to solving the collective action problem among municipalities, but also to provide some level of coordination among their various and usually disconnected plans for development and redevelopment. As they each strive to individually tackle the negative impacts of sprawl, they are bound to miss opportunities for mutual advantage, and will likely continue the current pattern of land use and development that is inconsistent with the preferences expressed by their residents and in their master plans.

In addition, without coordination of regional development from the County, the numerous independent initiatives focused on regionalism in the HUB area will duplicate efforts, compete for the same resources and miss their own opportunities. More importantly, unless the County assumes a leadership position in the current environment, it will be sending a message to residents that nongovernmental collaborations are the appropriate organizations to direct smart growth.

## **4.0.0 ASSETS IN THE HUB METROPOLITAN COMPLEX**

As County and municipal leaders, as well as residents of the HUB consider a smart growth strategy, it is appropriate to consider not simply their challenges presented by sprawl and unplanned development, but also the assets at the disposal of the HUB metropolitan complex. These include natural assets, physical assets, quality of life offered by neighborhoods, historical resources, workforce and the area's diverse population. All of these endow the HUB with significant opportunity, but no individual municipality can leverage this array of assets as effectively as the 15 HUB communities acting in concert with county leadership and state support.

### **4.1.0 Natural Assets**

The most obvious natural assets enjoyed by the HUB municipalities are its riverfronts and park systems. One of the most densely populated and built out areas in southern New Jersey, the HUB has relatively little remaining open space. It does, however enjoy extensive access to both the Delaware and Cooper Rivers, as well as smaller streams in and around Newton Creek. The Delaware runs along the Pennsauken, Camden and Gloucester waterfronts and provide highly visible redevelopment opportunities that, with sound planning could benefit the entire HUB region. This potential for viewing the

Delaware as a regional asset is enhanced by its connection to the Cooper River that flows through Camden and into Pennsauken, Cherry Hill and Haddonfield. Together these two rivers and the Newton Creek form a “green backbone” of the HUB, which should be a focal point of smart growth planning. MAP IX depicts this green backbone in the HUB.

## MAP IX



The bubble diagram in MAP IX suggests how central these river systems are to the physical definition of the HUB area. These waterfronts can be closely tied to planning efforts that enhance regional development objectives. To do that, access and user friendly signage will have to be improved. The photograph above looks west from the roof of the Cherry Hill Hilton onto a scenic portion of the Cooper River and surrounding County Park that runs closely parallel to Route 70. As daily commuters move up and down that major artery, their image of the HUB is formed by traffic congestion with no indication of the adjacent parkland.

Along the Delaware River, considerable planning and investment are already underway to take advantage of the waterfronts and attract both tourists and more affluent residents.

As these plans and projects proceed, it will be important to make sure that these attractive venues are welcoming to longtime residents of the respective municipalities on the River and that they are complementary with each other as well as other plans in the HUB.

## 4.2.0 Physical Assets

The primary physical assets in the HUB metropolitan complex are its systems of roads, public transportation and sewage, all of which truly link the towns and neighborhoods. While much of this infrastructure is older, it is well developed, and with proper state financial and regulatory incentives to overcome the policy bias toward building new systems, could offer an attractive redevelopment opportunities.

### 4.2.1 Public Transit

The HUB enjoys a highly developed public transportation network that includes both rail and bus service connecting the HUB efficiently with Philadelphia, Trenton, and the Camden Waterfront. MAP X depicts the existing rail system in the HUB.

## MAP X



The three main components of the rail service in the HUB, as seen above, are the PATCO Hi-Speed Line connecting the towns along Haddon Avenue with Philadelphia, the recently completed South New Jersey Light Rail System (SNJLRTS) connecting the Camden Waterfront to Trenton, and the New Jersey Transit (NJT) Atlantic City Line connecting the HUB to Philadelphia's 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station and Atlantic City.

The PATCO line links several HUB communities. It offers significant opportunities for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), especially around the Walter Rand Transportation Center in Camden that also serves the Light Rail Line. The Rand Transportation Center is a focal point of the GCP's Downtown Revitalization Plan for Camden. The HUB includes all but two of the New Jersey stations for the PATCO Line, Ashland and the terminus in Lindenwold. A DRPA-funded study of parking capacity along the line and the DCA-funded PATCO smart growth grant for the Haddonfield through Ferry Avenue stations indicate that redevelopment opportunities are obvious to many in the HUB.

PATCO currently serves approximately 19,000 riders per day, with 4,800 using the Lindenwold station to access the line. The system has faced declining ridership in recent years, though the DVRPC forecasts a modest 1.2% to 8.5% increase for the first decade of the twenty first century.

The SNJLRTS is a 34-mile long line that intended to serve the northern riverfront suburbs. Current forecast indicate that there will be an opening day ridership of 4,500, with an expected increase to 16,000 most of whom will use the line to commute to jobs in Philadelphia. SNJLRTS will operate seven days a week, providing service from 6:00 a.m. through 10:00 p.m., with 15-minute headways during peak hours. Riders may transfer to PATCO at the Broadway Station adjacent to the Rand Transportation Center.

The NJT Atlantic City Line offers service between the Camden HUB and Philadelphia to the west and Atlantic City to the east. 14 trains serve approximately 1,250 riders per weekday. On average, only 150 riders per weekday travel into Philadelphia on this line, because PATCO offers much more regular and efficient service to Center City Philadelphia.

New Jersey Transit also offers an extensive system of bus routes that originate from Camden and the Walter Rand Transportation Center to all HUB municipalities. 23 separate routes serve the region, and 18 provide interstate service to Philadelphia and Pennsylvania. The buses follow routes along major corridors, including Routes 130, 70, 38, 30, the Black Horse Pike, and Broadway. They provide service to Burlington, Gloucester, Mercer, Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, Salem, Ocean, and Monmouth Counties. In addition, NJT buses serve most PATCO stations in the HUB, providing transfer options for commuters.

Bus ridership increased markedly on most routes in the 1990s, rising 41% for weekday usage between 1993 and 2000. Weekday median ridership grew from 29,343 to 34,863 in that period. MAP XI below, illustrates the bus routes that currently serve the HUB metropolitan complex.

## MAP XI

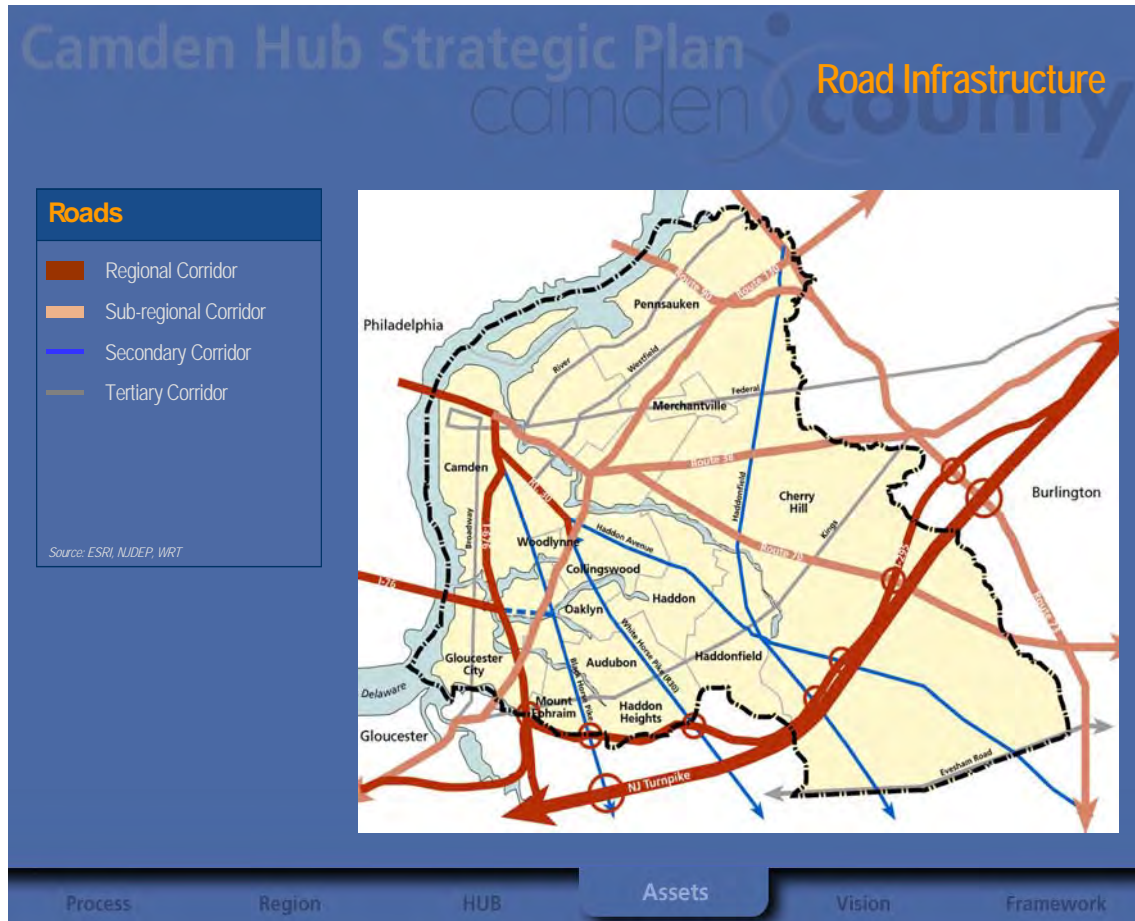


### 4.2.2 Roads and Highways

As important as public transit and TOD is to smart growth planning in the HUB, it is unrealistic to anticipate either a dramatic increase in the use of mass transit or, conversely, a significant decline in automobile ownership and use. Moreover, buses are the most likely public transit alternative to automobile travel, and that means that road and highway infrastructure will have to accommodate that option. Fortunately, the HUB has a very well developed system of roads and highways. This system that developed first along historic routes and trails, largely reflected the central role of Camden and the Delaware waterfront in the commercial development of the HUB region. Radiating outward from Camden, the original highway system connected outlying area of South Jersey with the urban center: farmers brought produce, South Jerseyans traveled these roads to shop in Camden and to avail themselves of government services. These roads also provided a mechanism for suburban expansion. Eventually the post- World War II

construction of interstate highways, especially the New Jersey Turnpike and I-295, fundamentally altered the location options for businesses and housing, as well as the distribution options for goods and produce. MAP XII shows the system of roads linking the HUB municipalities to one another and to the rest of the region.

## MAP XII



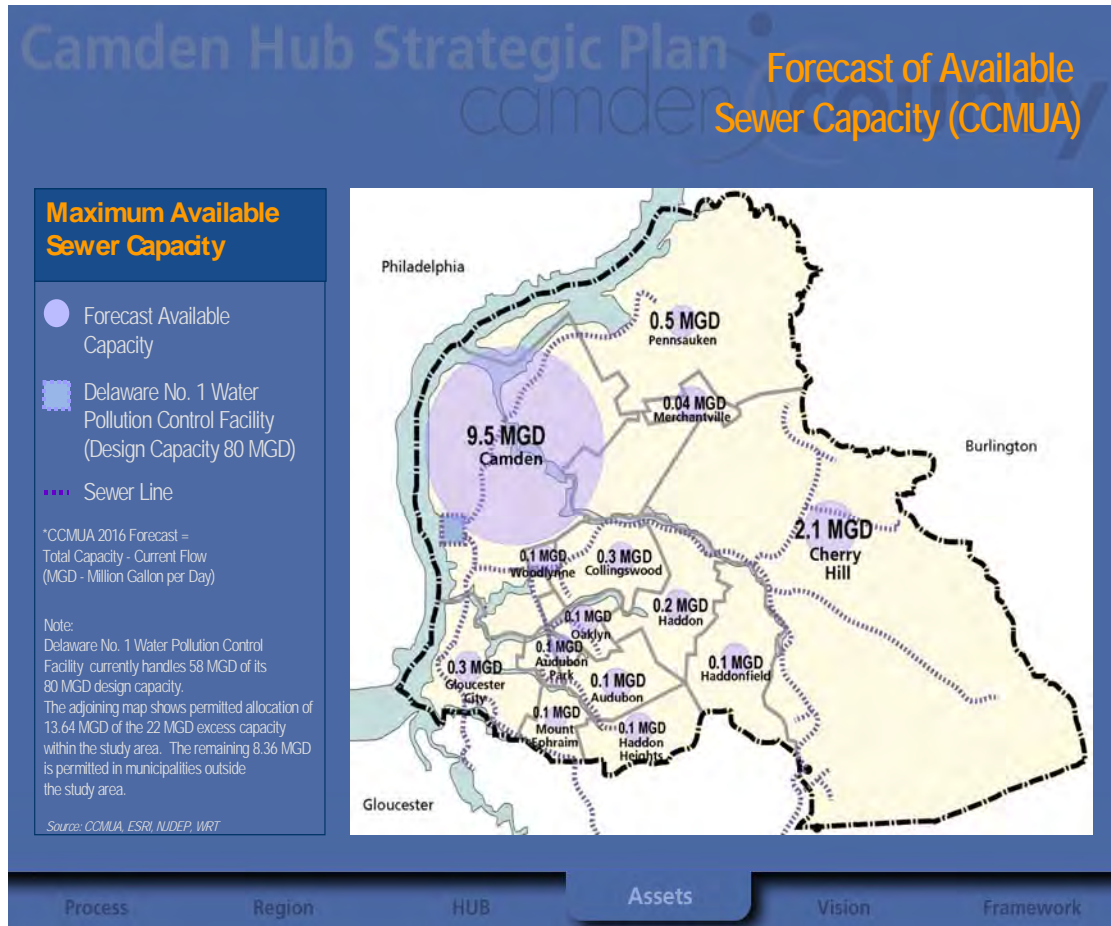
Whatever the historic dynamics underlying the development of road and highway infrastructure, the HUB municipalities clearly are well connected not only to one another, but also to the wider region and the rest of the Northeast Corridor.

### 4.2.3 Sewage Capacity

Sewage capacity is critical consideration in any planning or development initiative. To the extent that this component of physical infrastructure is in place and in sufficient supply, development and redevelopment opportunities are much easier to pursue. The HUB metropolitan complex is largely built out already, and many of the towns, as revealed in their municipal plans, are more interested in preserving their neighborhoods

than in attracting major economic development. It makes sense, therefore, from a smart growth perspective to locate development projects on sites that do not disrupt neighborhood integrity. Fortunately, the HUB has a good deal of sewage capacity in Camden and Cherry Hill and Pennsauken where the most land is available for development and redevelopment. MAP XIII shows the distribution of sewage capacity in the HUB.

## MAP XIII



Camden has an available sewage capacity of 9.5 million gallons per day; Cherry Hill has 2.5 million gallons per day; and Pennsauken, 0.5 million gallons per day. Despite its aging sewage infrastructure, which will receive a major capital infusion from the MRERA infrastructure investment plan, Camden has by far the most available capacity. Its advantage rests on its close proximity to the Camden County Municipal Utility Authority's pumping station and the consequently larger relative size of its sewage pipe. Clearly, a sound smart growth plan would direct major economic development projects to the municipalities where the most available capacity exists.



### 4.3.0 Neighborhoods

One of the most important assets in the metropolitan complex is the desirable character and quality of life in these municipalities provided by the numerous neighborhoods that define the HUB. MAP XIV shows the location of discreet neighborhoods throughout the HUB.

## MAP XIV



These neighborhoods constitute the “communities of place” embraced by the New Jersey State Plan. They also provide the foundation for the municipal master plans that seek to preserve and enhance the integrity of community life. The ratables chase and the exodus of people, money and business pose a threat to this asset, but planning to preserve them in the context of a smart growth strategy can insure the stability for HUB neighborhoods.

### 4.4.0 Historical and Cultural Assets

Like many urban centers and older communities, municipalities in the HUB are home to numerous historical assets that are well worth preserving both because they add to the quality of life for HUB residents and because they can provide focal points for

redevelopment. These assets include some important structures such as the Victor Building and the Walt Whitman House in Camden, the Scottish Rite Hall in Collingswood, or the Indian Mill Tavern in Haddonfield. However, the most critical historical assets to the vitality of the HUB are the historic main streets and commercial districts that anchor communities. Kings Highway in Haddonfield, the revitalized area of Haddon Avenue in Collingswood, and historic Yorkship Square in Camden’s Fairview neighborhood, are all prime examples of historical assets that are key to a sustainable network of healthy communities.

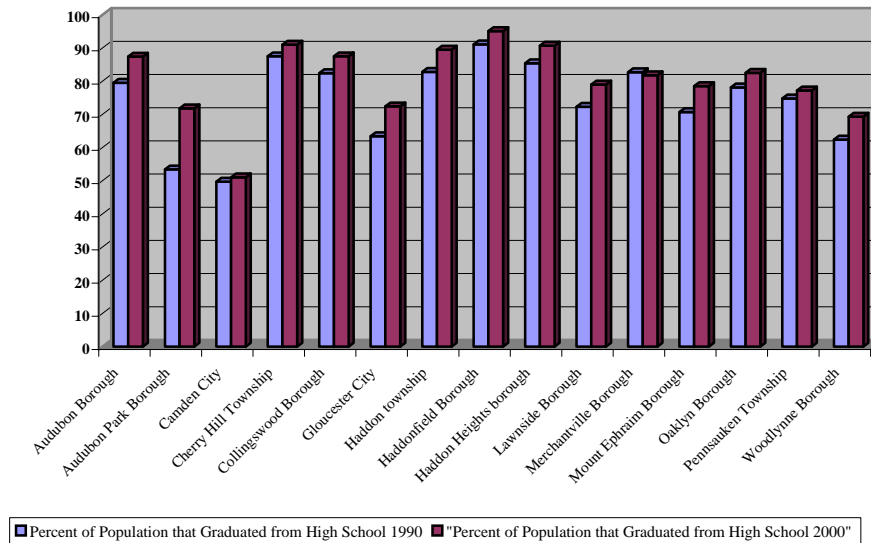
Cultural assets in the HUB include the Aquarium, the Tweeter Center, and the South Jersey Performing Arts Center on the Camden Waterfront. In addition, the HUB boasts a symphony orchestra, the Haddon Field Symphony, as well as convenient access to the major arts and cultural venues in Philadelphia. As one Cherry Hill resident noted in a public meeting, “People live in the HUB we can live in small communities and get to Center City in 10 minutes.

### 4.5.0 Workforce

The workforce in the HUB can be viewed as an asset in two respects. In the first instance, it should be noted that on the whole the workforce is well educated. Chart 1 below shows that the percent of the population with a high school diploma increased between 1990 and 2000 in each municipality, and except for Camden City and Woodlynne, every municipality exceeded 70%, and eight of the 14 exceeded 80%.

## CHART 1

**Camden Hub:  
Percent of Population with a High School Diploma between 1990 and 2000**



In another respect, the workforce in the HUB is an asset, albeit one that requires development. South Jersey is the fastest growing portion of the State, with 20,000 new jobs forecast in the Atlantic City area alone. The City of Camden has a large available labor pool, and the transportation resources to move them to jobs. With this in mind, further development of existing public transportation, especially extension of the SNJLRTS southward into Burlington County and improvement of bus and rail service to Atlantic City and other areas in need of additional labor at the unskilled or entry level. Meanwhile, job training and workforce development should target emerging jobs in the service sector.

#### **4.6.0 Diversity and Nonprofit Organizations**

The discussion of population and demographics highlighted the growing diversity of the HUB metropolitan complex. In an increasingly global economy, this diversity, not limited to Camden City alone, is a significant strength of the region.

The region also has the most robust nonprofit sector in South Jersey. Not only is there an array of nonprofit organizations in the HUB region, but as a recent WRI study for the Camden County United Way points out, residents are heavily engaged in nonprofit and civic organizations, 63% indicating in a survey that they are directly involved in at least one nonprofit organization. To the extent that smart growth requires an active and engaged citizenry, the HUB can count this as strength.

### **5.0.0 A SMART GROWTH FRAMEWORK**

Looking at the current situation and the assets available in the HUB, we can present a framework to guide smart growth planning for the 15 communities now included in the HUB. The framework and recommendations presented below were developed not simply through the analysis of the WRI team in consultation with the County, but also through the public outreach described earlier. Comments and criticisms received in the visioning, focus groups, stakeholder interviews, public presentations, and meetings with local civic associations shaped and reshaped the framework.

#### **5.1.0 The Green Backbone of the HUB**

MAP XV illustrates the green structure that is the foundation for the HUB Smart Growth framework. The rivers and parks in the HUB metropolitan complex are its most basic asset. They not only contribute to the quality of life that residents clearly seek in their neighborhoods and communities, but also offer a valuable resource that can be leveraged to help reverse the downward social and economic trends that currently threaten that quality of life. Taking full advantage of this green structure, will, however require strong

leadership and some hard decisions about where to concentrate specific types of development and redevelopment.

## **MAP XV**



The lighter green areas represent the rivers and parks in the HUB. The darker green overlay identifies brownfields in need of remediation for redevelopment projects. Addressing these remediation problems is critical to the viability of this HUB Plan, and should involve all levels of government working in partnership with potential private investors. The recent agreement with the City of Camden, the State and Cherokee Developers for revitalization of the Cramer Hill neighborhood, in the northern remediation zone is a good model. As Pennsauken and Gloucester City proceed with their own waterfront redevelopment plans, the County should strongly support their efforts to address environmental and remediation issues.

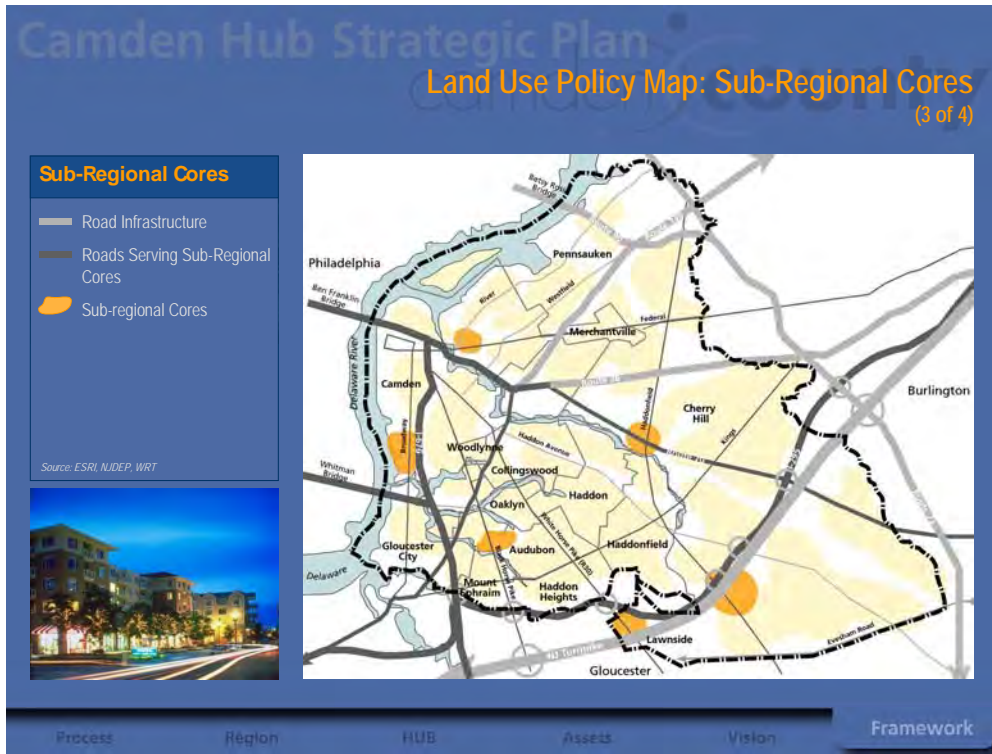
### **5.2.0 Corridors of Character**

Development patterns in the HUB have historically emerged along the main arteries radiating out of Camden. Whereas this development has proceeded in an unplanned





# MAP XVIII



# MAP XVIV



### 5.3.1 Local Cores

Enhancing and sustaining the local cores is largely consistent with existing municipal plans and projects. MAP XVI, for example, reflects key TOD projects at the local core level, most notably the PATCO Hi-Speed Line study. It also reflects the input of community leaders in interviews and focus groups that called for extending the SNJLRTS south to include a TOD opportunity in Gloucester City. Two additional new TOD proposals situate projects in: Pennsauken to enhance the Crossroads Regional Core (see below) and Merchantville along the NJT line. All of the other local cores identified in MAP XVI reflect existing commercial districts that serve the needs of communities, but that will require significant enhancements to keep surrounding neighborhoods healthy. These enhancements include, streetscaping, traffic management in the cores located along major arteries such as Route 70 and the Black Horse or White Horse Pikes, and signage to clearly identify these areas.

### 5.3.2 Sub-regional Cores

The six sub-regional cores in MAP XVII are: the Broadway commercial district in Camden; the property on the north side of Route 30 in Camden (under review by the Camden Redevelopment Authority); the Black Horse Pike commercial district in Audubon; the Racetrack redevelopment in Cherry Hill; the Woodcrest Station area in Lawnside and Cherry Hill; and the light industrial park and surrounding commercial properties just north of Route 70 and west of I-295 and the N.J. Turnpike, also in Cherry Hill. Again, relevant municipalities have already identified each of these sites as a development or redevelopment opportunity. The advantages of putting them forward in the context of the HUB Plan are:

- State agencies, needed as partners in these projects, are legally bound to view funding requests for them more favorably if they are part of a designated urban complex;
- The HUB Steering Committee promotes networking and communication among the participating municipalities so that each is aware of the plans and projects of others and becomes accustomed to thinking regionally about how projects can address the collective challenges faced by the HUB metropolitan complex.

### 5.3.3 Regional Cores

The more challenging task for County leadership will be to gain agreement on the development of the four regional cores put forth in the Smart Growth Framework. Fortunately, three of the four already have basic resources and plans in place, and are consistent with the HUB vision.

- **The HUB Core** represents the central business district and Waterfront in Camden. The MRERA infrastructure investment, GCP plan for downtown



development, expansion of the Hospitals and Higher Educational Institutions, and Expansion of the State Aquarium all suggest that the HUB Core is well along.

- **The Crossroads Regional Core** is a mixed-use development reflecting the plans in Pennsauken for redevelopment of its Waterfront and surrounding neighborhoods. Anticipated land uses include new residential, open space and parkland, public space (the planned South Jersey Civic Center), and light industry where appropriate.
- **The Cherry Hill Mall Regional Core** reflects mixed use centered on an enhancement of the Cherry Hill Mall to make it more competitive with emerging upscale shopping venues in outlying suburbs. A key to this Regional Core would be high-density residential housing and traffic plans designed to promote pedestrian access to the Mall and surrounding shops or restaurants. This project should also include a regular bus or jitney service to connect this Regional Core with nearby PATCO and NJT stations
- **The I-295/NJ Turnpike Regional Core** was intended to be a Class-A office park situated adjacent to I-295, with a dedicated access ramp. The logic was to take advantage of the 600 acres of open space in that area and the location at the intersection of an interstate with a major corridor (Route 70). Reaction to the idea at public meetings with municipal officials and presentations to local civic associations in nearby neighborhoods raised legitimate concerns about the site. Objections to the site revolved around its proximity to wetlands, and more importantly the fear that rather than promote smart growth directed inward toward the HUB, this development might simply facilitate the exodus to outlying suburbs by providing easy highway access to high quality jobs.
  - ❖ With these legitimate, community-voiced issues in mind, County Leaders and the members of the HUB Steering Committee should consider an alternative site for a regional office park that would capture some of the projected increase in service sector jobs, particularly financial and professional services. With the entry of Lawnside into the HUB project, the most promising option for this kind of development would be to expand the current plan for sub-regional core at Woodcrest Station on the PATCO Line to a regional office park and transit village. The site enjoys not only the advantage of excellent public transportation, but also existing dedicated access to I-295. A caveat to this option is that residents in nearby neighborhoods would have to be engaged early in the planning process to address concerns about traffic congestion, already high in that area because of the nearby UPS depot. An earlier effort to situate the Regional Civic Center (now sited in the Crossroads regional Core) at that location foundered because citizens found out about the plans only after they were completed.

### 5.3.4 The Cooper River

A final element in rationally planning for a “sustainable network of healthy communities” in the HUB is making the most of the green backbone that is central to the HUB region. As it stands now, commuters can travel through the HUB and the image or identity they connect with the region is the congested arteries of Routes 70 or 38. The Delaware Waterfront is already seen as a powerful regional attraction, but the Cooper River also holds the potential to define and market the HUB. The fact that, in addition to offering a scenic park in the midst of a densely populated metropolitan area, the Cooper also provides one of the premier rowing venues in the world strongly suggests that it should be the basis of how residents and visitors see the HUB. While a boathouse is underway and NCAA rowing championships are regularly held there, the north side of the Cooper in Pennsauken and Cherry Hill also offers the possibility of higher end residential development with river views and access to the County Park.

The success of the Bishops View Apartments along Route 70 indicates that this area is extremely attractive because of its location. Currently, though it is dominated by automobile dealerships, underutilized office space, trailer homes, and an assortment of commercial establishments. Not only does this reflect unplanned, ratables-driven development, it misses an opportunity to take full advantage of the highly valuable real estate with views of the Cooper River. As the refinement of the HUB Framework proceeds, the County should work with the municipalities to devise a redevelopment plan that converts this area to residential uses, consistent with the HUB vision, and to relocate offices and businesses to locations that more rationally fit the objectives expressed in municipal master plans.

Because the kind of choices and decisions envisioned in the proposed HUB Framework inevitably lead to some communities “winning” and others “losing” in the ratables chase, the County must establish a process for insuring that municipalities can develop the resources to sustain these centers and restrain encroachment of commercial development on neighborhoods. The critical element of such a process will be the Planning Implementation Agenda (PIA) that will evaluate municipal projects and plans in light of their consistency with the HUB Framework. Assuming the County and participating municipalities adopt the Plan, and the State endorses it, any project that is deemed appropriate within the PIA should be put forth with the full support of the County and all HUB municipalities. It will then receive the highest priority for state funding as set forth in DCA’s *Technical Memorandum No. 2*. As important as these financial incentives are, County leaders will have to work hard with citizens and municipalities to insure that the strong tradition of home rule is balanced with the obvious benefits of collaboration around smart growth objectives.

## 5.4.0 Governance and Leadership

As early as the initial visioning session for the HUB Plan, it was abundantly clear that an array of common infrastructure, land use, planning and fiscal issues all indicated that a regional, smart growth approach would be beneficial to Camden and the surrounding towns, both individually and collectively. It was equally clear, however, that the underlying issue to be addressed was governance and leadership. Any effort to forge a collaborative development plan among municipalities eventually confronts the question of who will make final decisions and who is responsible for implementation. Without a mechanism for regional governance, there can be no effective regional planning. Indeed, the experience with the New Jersey State Plan is a perfect example of how a plan, nationally acclaimed for its vision and progressive agenda, can founder if there is no effective means of governance.

Regional or smart growth efforts have essentially two choices in addressing the governance and leadership question: (1) create a wholly new entity or (2) empower an existing authority to lead the effort. Variants of the first option can be seen in the Research Triangle Park of North Carolina or the Hackensack Meadowlands Commission in New Jersey. Such entities are extremely difficult to establish, requiring state legislative approval and/or financial commitment of major corporate partners. Neither of these ingredients is likely in the HUB, given the fact that the New Jersey Legislature only recently enacted the MRERA with provision for a Regional Impact Council, and the HUB has very few major corporate citizens with whom to partner. As we turn to the prospect of an existing entity to lead the HUB Plan, only two possibilities emerge, the DRPA and Camden County government. Engaging the DRPA in specific projects makes sense and is already under way. However, the fact that it is a bi-state agency with little interaction to most of the HUB municipalities creates insuperable obstacles.

Camden County government, on the other hand, enjoys several advantages, chief among them that it is the recipient of the HUB Smart Growth grant and the Board of Chosen Freeholders is directly and personally connected to the various HUB municipalities. Thus the HUB vision is ***County Leadership*** for Sustainable Network of Healthy Communities. To fulfill this leadership role, however, the County must adopt two equally principles. The Board of Freeholders must dedicate its talent and political will to leading the HUB process and they must commit to building a robust County planning capacity. The first principle has been satisfied throughout the HUB project, as the Freeholders assigned staff to work with WRI to gain initial resolutions from participating municipalities, arranging public meetings and stakeholder interviews, and publicly supporting the project. As the HUB process moves forward and goes public, the same level of commitment will be necessary, even as we listen to inevitable citizen and stakeholder questions.

On the matter of building an adequate planning capacity to realize the promise of the HUB project, some encouraging steps have already been made, but some additional, concrete measures should be undertaken. The Freeholders have in place a GIS Director and a County Smart Growth Director, both positions staffed by capable and experienced individuals. These positions are currently housed at the CCIA. As the HUB project

unfolds, the following four additional steps should be taken to assure that the County has the capacity in place to effectively lead.

#### 5.4.1 A New County Master Plan

As noted above, the County has not updated its master plan since the early 1970s. As the HUB project moves forward, the County should redo its master plan to include the HUB Framework and also try to address the sprawl issues in the County that are not confined to the HUB, but are no doubt connected with it. The preparation of the HUB PIA offers an excellent opportunity to seek technical and financial assistance from the State to pursue this important objective.

#### 5.4.2 Enhanced County Planning Capacity

As Camden County and the HUB municipalities move forward with this project, the County's planning capacity will have to be enhanced. Currently both the CCIA and the County Planning Department contribute to countywide planning, but the HUB project will require a new level of coordination not only between these two bodies, but also between the County and the municipalities. In addition, the County will need to draw on higher levels of technical skills and staff to manage smart growth in the HUB, and beyond. Nearby Burlington and Atlantic Counties provide convenient benchmarking and best practice examples to follow in this regard. In addition, the County leadership should decide on the precise roles and relationships for the CCIA and the Planning Department. At a minimum, there is a real opportunity to share common resources, perhaps through co-location.

#### 5.4.3 Smart Growth Policymaking at the County Level

Even with a more robust planning function, the Board of Freeholders should consider establishing a capability for planning and economic development reporting directly to the Freeholders. They effectively shoulder this responsibility already, but draw on technical resources in an ad hoc and opportunistic way. With their level of commitment to the HUB project and considering the serious planning and development challenges identified in this report, it is advisable to establish a professional development staff position for the Freeholders to work with them on policy and serve as a liaison with the Planning Department and CCIA. We note that the new Smart Growth Director plays this kind of role informally on the HUB project.

#### 5.4.4 Sharing the Benefits of Smart Growth Cooperation

As the County planning and development policymaking capacity increase, County leaders will be in a position to assess more creative ways to insure that as economic activity and development projects are directed to specific municipalities, in keeping with the HUB Framework, that all municipalities are share in the regional benefits. The PIA process includes provision for identifying legislative and policy proposals that would advance the smart growth objective of an urban complex, and the HUB partners, with County leadership may want to explore such options at that time. There are many examples of nationwide, and in-state o how to share resources among municipalities so that none are harmed by regional planning decisions.

Many programs for sharing resources revolve around shared municipal services, and this agenda should be pushed vigorously. We note that a smart growth collaboration in Sommerset County claims to have created millions of dollars of savings per year in shared service arrangements. Another customary approach to resource sharing is the pooling of tax receipts and distributing them according to a specific formula for equity among all municipalities participating in a regional collaboration. The best example of that model in New Jersey is the Hackensack Meadowlands tax sharing plan that distributes all new property tax dollars stemming from its redevelopment projects. The Commission explains the plan as follows:

The first step in the tax sharing formula calls for payment of county taxes by the municipality. What remains, minus the amount collected on ratables existing in 1970, is subject to the tax sharing plan.

Each community then directly retains 60 percent of the revenues left after payment of county taxes and deduction of pre-1970 ratables. Each community also receives a payment for school pupils living in [Hackensack Redevelopment] District residential development equal to the cost of educating these children and, finally each town receives a payment reflecting the percentage of property the community has in the Meadowlands District.

Communities whose total credits are larger than the amount subject to tax sharing receive payments from the tax sharing fund; communities whose total credits are larger than the amount subject to tax sharing pay into the tax sharing fund.

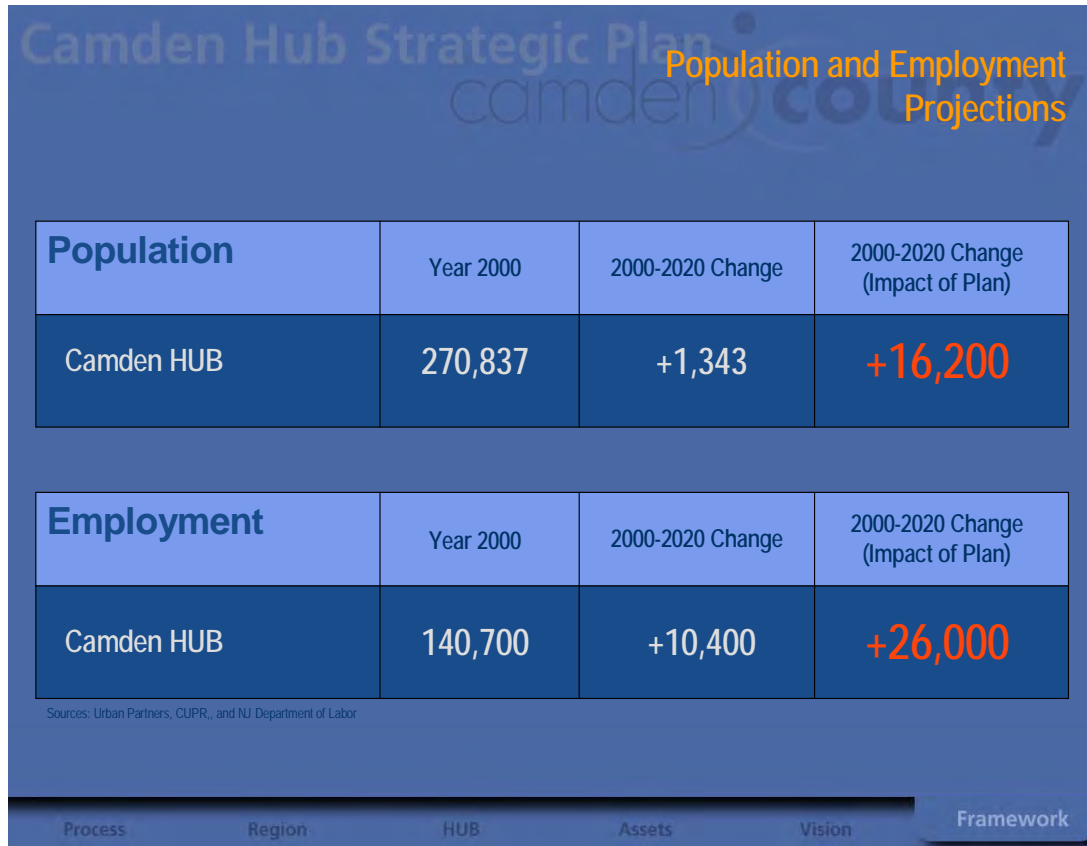
Obviously the Meadowlands formula is one of many possible ways of arriving at an equitable distribution of pooled tax resources. The County leaders should carefully explore other means of sharing regional benefits among HUB municipalities as well.

### **5.5.0 Smart Growth Forecast**

The forecasted effects of adopting and implementing the HUB Framework can be viewed at two levels. First, the flat projections for population and employment will be adjusted upward, and second, we can identify the particular areas of the HUB where population will increase. Chart 2 below, compares the population and employment forecasts for the

HUB if current conditions and the effects of sprawl are addressed and with the smart growth scenario proposed by the HUB Framework.

## Chart 2



The HUB Framework is projected to provide a net increase of 16,200 individuals and 26,000 over what is projected under current conditions. These figures will not radically change the housing density, traffic flow, or economic performance of the HUB. They will, however, reflect a much healthier development pattern for the HUB metropolitan complex. These new jobs and population will be concentrated in three key areas of the HUB: (1) the HUB Core that encompasses the Camden Waterfront and Center City; (2) Cherry Hill Mall Regional Core; (3) and the Crossroads Regional Core.

It is important to note that these forecasts do not take into account the future effects of MRERA-generated projects, including the massive Cramer Hill redevelopment, the conversion of the Cooper River area from its current land uses to mixed use residential, the impact of the Racetrack redevelopment, or the possible development of Woodcrest Station as an Office Park/Transit Village. The exact nature of these projects was

unknown or unanticipated at the time of our forecast was generated. All, however, can be expected to increase population and jobs in a manner consistent with the HUB vision.

## **6.0.0 NEXT STEPS**

Completion of the analysis for the HUB Framework sets the stage for three additional activities in which the County must publicly take on the leadership envisioned for it.

- The County, with the support of the Walter Rand Institute will must present this report and gather citizen feedback at three public meetings, scheduled for March of 2004;
- The County and each of the participating municipalities must pass resolutions adopting the HUB Framework.
- The County must lead an effort of municipalities and representatives of relevant state agencies to develop a planning implementation agenda for the HUB metropolitan complex.

**Upon successful completion of these steps, the County and the HUB municipalities will be ready to submit the HUB Framework, along with the PIA and adoption resolutions to the state for endorsement and formal designation as an urban complex, under the State Plan.**