

Purpose and Authority

Authority

Hudson County adopted its Master Plan in 2002 and conducted a re-examination in 2008. While it is not required by statute to update a County Master Plan, the County Planning Enabling Act (N.J.S.A. 40:27-2) states:

"The County Planning Board shall make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the county. The master plan of a county, with the accompanying maps, plats, charts, and descriptive and explanatory matter, shall show the county planning board's recommendations for the development of territory covered by the plan, and may include, among other things, the general location, character, and extent of streets or roads, viaducts, bridges, waterway and waterfront development, parkways, playgrounds, forests, reservations, parks, airports, and other public ways, grounds, places and spaces; and forests, agricultural areas, and open-development area for purposes of conservation, food and water supply, sanitary and drainage facilities, or the protection of urban development, as such other features as may be important to the development of the county.

The county planning board shall encourage the cooperation of the local municipalities within the county in any matters whatsoever which may concern the integrity of the county master plan and to advise the board of chosen freeholders with respect to the formulation of development programs and budgets for capital expenditures."

In accordance with the statute, the Hudson County Master Plan will discuss the aforementioned items in the elements of the plan, which include Land Use, Circulation, Economic Development, Housing, Community Facilities, Infrastructure, Conservation, and Historic Preservation.

The County Planning Enabling Act also does not require County Master Plans to be re-examined. However, Master Plan re-examinations are required for municipalities as per the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89. Hudson County believes in remaining up to date while utilizing modern-day planning principles and thus strives to adhere to the municipal standards for Master Plan re-examinations. In accordance with the MLUL, this Master Plan Re-examination Report, as it may apply to Hudson County, shall state:

1. **The major problems and objectives relating to land development in Hudson County at the time of the adoption of the last re-examination report;**
2. **The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date;**
3. **The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis of the Master Plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition, and recycling of designated recyclable materials and changes in state [and] county policies and objectives; and**
4. **The specific changes recommended for the Master Plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new Master Plan or regulations should be prepared.**

Why Make A Plan?

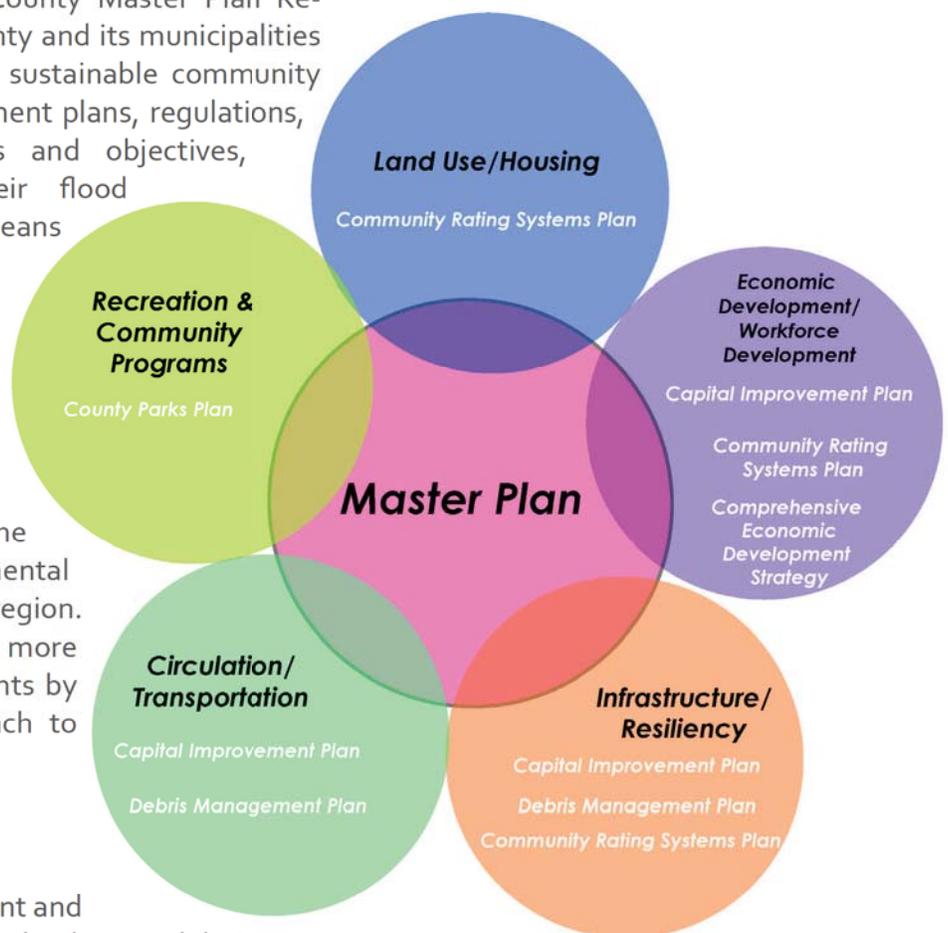
Hudson County has chosen to update its Master Plan in order to manage its ever-changing landscape. Each element of the plan is the county's guidance document for shaping the built environment through subdivisions, public rights-of-ways, facilities, utilities and capital improvements. The guiding principles set forth here establish priorities for the responsible use of public monies, act as model guidance for the county's twelve municipalities, and help the county adapt to the anticipated future.

The report identifies what changes have occurred since the 2002/2008 Plans, which affect the municipal and county land use policy, assumptions, and objectives. These include the impacts of major events and contemporaneous issues (i.e., Superstorm Sandy and other storm events); changes in demographics; changes in housing conditions; physical changes to land use; major development projects and approvals; transportation infrastructure upgrades and improvements; shifts in local priorities; and local policies and regulations.

Purpose - Engaging and Strengthening Hudson County

The purpose of the Hudson County Master Plan Re-examination is to help the County and its municipalities incorporate smart growth and sustainable community approaches into their development plans, regulations, and hazard mitigation goals and objectives, particularly to increase their flood resilience. Flood resilience means measures taken to reduce the vulnerability of communities to damage from flooding and to support recovery after an extreme flood. "Growing smart" in Hudson County means using existing resources efficiently and preserving the land, buildings, and environmental features that shape the region. Communities can become more resilient to future flooding events by taking a multi-faceted approach to land use and development.

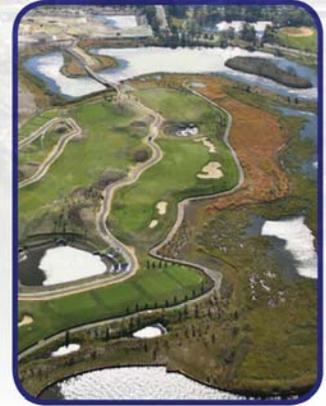
This approach should include locating development in safer locations, designing development and infrastructure so it is less likely to be damaged during flooding events, and revising zoning and ordinances to encourage these changes.



Using grant funding from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs' Post-Sandy Planning Assistance Grant Program, the Hudson County Division of Planning launched the Engaging and Strengthening Hudson County Planning Initiative. The initiative is an inclusive strategic planning process, which involves the collaboration of professional planners, engineers, government officials, businesses, organizations, and the public. In addition to the preparation of the Master Plan Re-examination, the initiative included the creation of three other plans that have been developed concurrently:

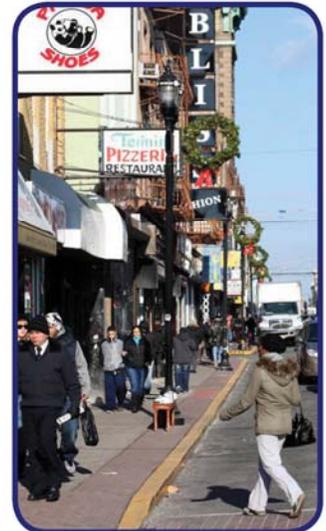
Parks Master Plan

The Hudson County Parks Master Plan will serve the existing and future needs of Hudson County residents and visitors, and simultaneously prepares a parks system that is resilient to future storm events. The plan includes a five-year plan for capital improvements in the nine (9) County Parks. By observing the conditions of all county parks and obtaining direct input from County, and the general public, the Parks Master Plan provided recommendations for each park through a targeted implementation plan to create a parks system that is less vulnerable to the potential damages of "Sandy" type storms in the future.



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy "CEDS" Plan

Hudson County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) creates an economic road-map to diversify and strengthen the county's economy. This CEDS meets all requirements as defined by the United States Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA), and will allow the county to apply for investment assistance under the EDA's Public Works or Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs. The analysis of existing economic, social, and physical conditions serves as the basis for county economic goals and objectives. The CEDS includes an action plan, identifies investment priorities and funding sources, develops performance measures to evaluate economic development impact, and provides a useful benchmark for evaluating potential opportunities.



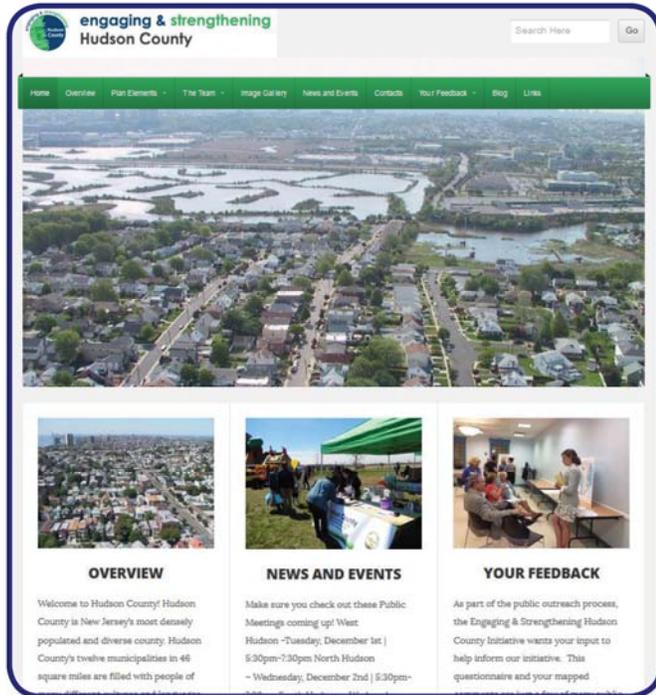
County Capital Improvement Plan

A typical five-year capital improvement plan (CIP) is an effective tool for properly planning for capital investments in county facilities and equipment to build community resiliency. Examples of resiliency-focused capital projects can include the elevation of public facilities or generators above flood hazard elevations, relocation of facilities out of flood zones, repair and upgrades of existing infrastructure, drainage capacity improvements, emergency equipment acquisitions, retrofitting buildings, and many others. The projects and strategies identified in the CIP comes from a variety of sources, including the 2015 *Hudson County All Hazard Mitigation Plan*, the 2014 *Hudson County Strategic Recovery Report* and other planning documents, as well as interviews with the County OEM and outreach to municipal stakeholders and the public. The CIP will estimate project-funding costs and identify long- and short-term priorities.



Community Engagement

The Hudson County Division of Planning conducted a broad, multi-faceted outreach strategy to encourage public participation in this planning process, including an online presence in the form of a website and questionnaire, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting, individual municipal stakeholder interviews, and meetings open to the general public.



Online Outreach

One of the first elements of the public outreach program was to create a project website for the overall initiative to provide details on meeting dates/locations, technical materials, meeting summaries, and educational articles to communicate specific topics/issues. The website, planhudco.com, which outlined the planning process, also invited public participation through an online survey. Website visitors could also map their comments on county-owned parks, roads and facilities by visiting <http://gis.hcnj.us/publicinput/>. The comments received from both online services allowed the county to gain a better understanding of how facilities are used, which areas lack connectivity between land uses, and how multi-modal transportation connections influence people’s lives in the county. This input helped the county plan for improved experiences and future resiliency.

Surveys

Hudson County prepared and utilized an online survey using Survey Monkey to garner input from the community. These responses shaped the goals, objectives, and guiding principles of the Engaging and Strengthening Hudson County Planning Initiative. Electronic surveys were made available at the three public meetings and were available on the master plan website. Fifty-two (52) respondents gave input about their satisfaction with the neighborhoods in which they live or work, the transportation network, county parks, economic development, and current resiliency efforts. Of the 52 responses, 26.18% of the respondents represented those who live in northern Hudson County (North Bergen, Guttenberg, West New York, Secaucus, Union City and Weehawken), 9.52% represented those who live in western Hudson County (East Newark, Kearny, Harrison), 54.76% represented those who live in southern Hudson County (Jersey City, Hoboken and Bayonne) and 4.76% represented those who lived outside of Hudson County. The average age of the participant was about 37 years old, and 86% of respondents have an Associates degree or higher. The summary of responses were one of the tools used to develop the recommendations set forth in the plan. A copy of the survey and it results can be found in the Appendix.



Stakeholder and Public Meetings

The Hudson County Planning Department organized a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting on July 28, 2015 at Hudson County Plaza in Jersey City that included attendees from other county departments (Engineering, Parks, Traffic, Economic Development, Emergency Management) municipal officials, transit agencies, and environmental organizations to provide feedback on plan priorities. All attendees were split into topic sessions to participate in a "Dotmocracy" exercise. In these breakout sessions, participants prioritized a list of county goals by topic (Land Use and Housing, Transportation, Recreation/Community Programs, Economic and Workforce Development and Infrastructure/Resiliency) where they were instructed to rank only three goals with one green (very important), one yellow (important) and one red (somewhat or not at all important) dot stickers.



A discussion of the prioritization among each of the breakout session participants and expert leaders followed, where issues and areas of concern were documented. The results of the TAC meeting and the exercise aided in identifying goals, objectives

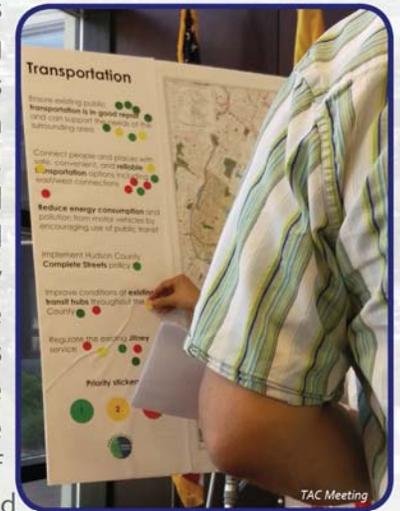


and recommendations that helped form the basis for the Engaging and Strengthening Hudson County Initiative. A summary of the recommendations and discussions are provided in the Appendix.

Three public meetings were conducted during the planning process to gather input from residents of the county. The meetings were held in northern, southern and western Hudson County locations to provide opportunity for residents of different parts of the county and to ensure the representation of the diverse needs and perspectives of the Hudson County community. Meetings were held on the following locations and dates:

1. December 1, 2015 - Secaucus Public Library, Secaucus
2. December 2, 2015 - Hudson County Community College, Union City
3. December 9, 2015 - Hudson County Freeholders Chambers, Jersey City

In addition, the County Planning Staff conducted stakeholder interviews with various representatives of nine (9) of the twelve (12) municipalities, including elected officials, engineers and planners. These meetings allowed for a dialogue between the County and the municipalities to discuss issues such as capital priorities and expenditures, transportation improvements, open space access and improvements, demographic trends and current development and proposed development patterns.



Vision Statement

Together, we will create a strong vision of a diverse, dynamic, equitable, flourishing, and resilient Hudson County, expressed through these four plans, which will guide us into the future.

Hudson County History

Past

Hudson County is New Jersey's most densely populated and diverse county. Hudson County's twelve municipalities in 46 square miles are filled with people of many different cultures and languages brought together by the county's energy and quality of life to form a community.

Hudson County has been shaped by many people, cultures, forces, and trends throughout its rich history. Jersey City was the site of the first permanent settlement in New Jersey, the Town of Bergen founded by Dutch colonists in 1660. The county's prime location on New York Bay made it a center for international trade and shipping. The shipyards established along the waterfront led to the development of railroads to help facilitate the transit of goods and these superior transportation connections attracted industries making a variety of goods and products sold all around the world. These industries propelled the rapid urbanization of Hudson County, attracting people to work and live, and the new residents built beautiful residential neighborhoods, many of which remain today and are preserved as historic districts.

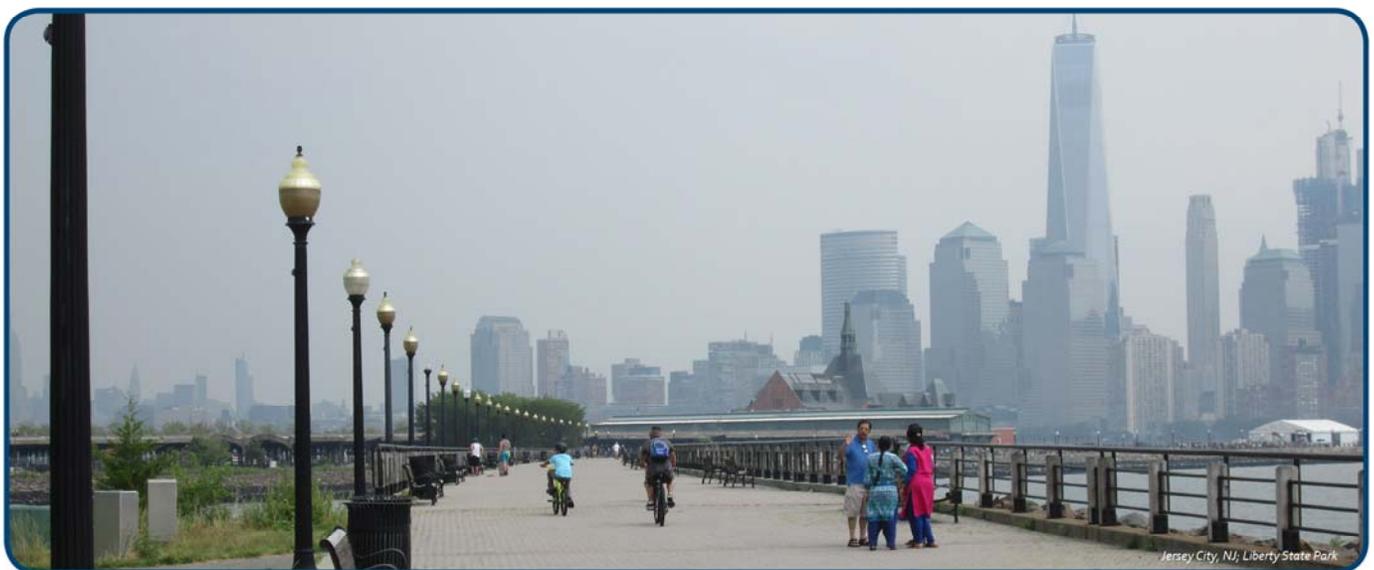
Hudson County has been the starting point for millions of immigrants arriving in the United States. After being processed at Ellis Island and admitted into the country, they took ferries to

the mainland, entering in Hudson County. Many would remain in Hudson County, while others took the Central Railroad of New Jersey to other destinations across the state and country.

Present

The past connects with the present in Hudson County, as the county's many assets continue to make it an attractive destination for many newly arrived immigrants, who come to live alongside long-time residents. Today, retail, financial firms, and services lead the county's economy. Abandoned industrial sites have been transformed into housing, offices, businesses, and community parks. Historic buildings are being restored and adaptively reused for different purposes in a variety of creative ways. Local businesses, shops, restaurants, and the physical urban form contribute to vibrant, walkable neighborhoods. The county has a range of housing forms which provide homes for people and families in all stages of life. The Hudson County community has formed many active community organizations which provide supportive services to county residents and celebrate our diverse cultural heritage.

The county is well connected with an extensive transportation network, including trans-Hudson tunnels, interstate highways, buses, several train lines, ferries, and a light rail system which serve county residents and commuters. Hudson County's ports and railroads, which contributed



greatly to its development in the past, remain to serve the needs of the economy in the present; these facilities make trucking and warehousing important industries for the county today.

Physically, the county has a great diversity of landscapes, from the skyscrapers of downtown Jersey City to the marshes of the New Jersey Meadowlands. Residents and visitors recreate in many local neighborhood parks, the beautiful County Park System and Liberty State Park, one of the region's most important open space assets. Collectively, these resources make Hudson County a great place to live, work, and have fun.

Hudson County has been a leader for innovative local and regional planning. The Hudson County Planning Board was the first county planning board in New Jersey to incorporate a Green techniques checklist into its land development application to promote sustainability in building and site design. The county is dedicated to supporting and expanding the economy. Government, industry, and business leaders came together to create the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy "CEDS" Committee, and developed the first "CEDS" Plan in New Jersey approved by the U.S. Economic Development Administration. In 2003, Hudson County residents approved the creation of an Open Space, Recreation, and Historic Preservation Trust Fund. Since its first funding cycle in 2005, the Trust Fund has aided the municipalities and non-profit groups in successfully carrying out open space and historic preservation initiatives that otherwise may not have been possible. Over the past 10 years, 129 projects have been awarded throughout the County, totaling over \$49 million in funds. The County has also taken steps to be prepared for emergencies, and established the USS Juneau Memorial Emergency Operations Center in Kearny. The County continues to reexamine its programs, policies, and plans in response to changing conditions, trends, and needs.

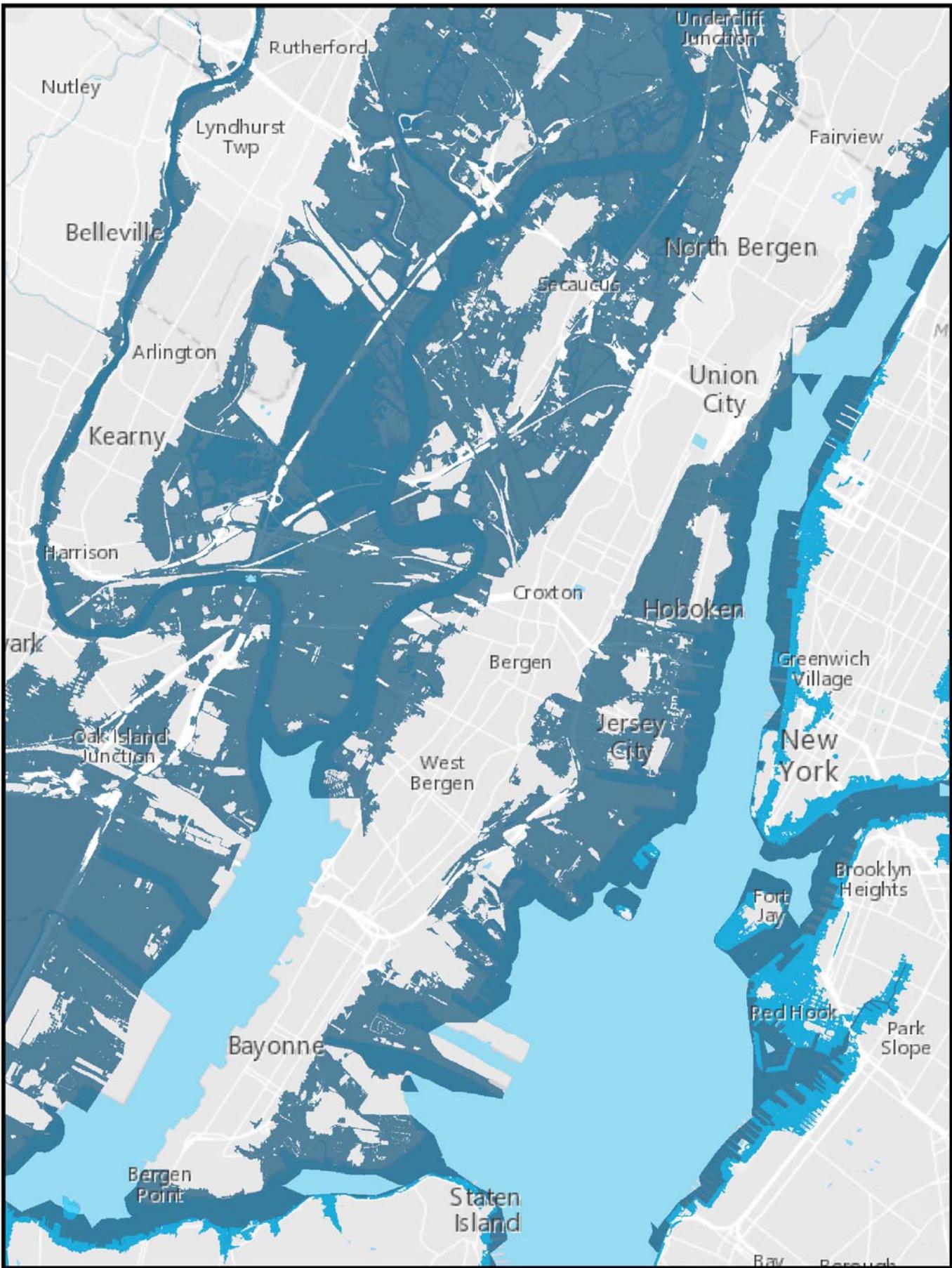
Geographically, Hudson County is located on two peninsulas, surrounded by the Hudson, Hackensack, and Passaic Rivers. The county's 72 miles of shoreline make it vulnerable to flooding and

storm surge from coastal storms. Hurricane Sandy powerfully impacted New Jersey, with Hudson County suffering as one of the most affected counties. Hudson County endured widespread damages and loss of service to public and private property and infrastructure caused by Hurricane Sandy. Emergencies responders, government officials, community groups, businesses, and individuals came together to provide assistance to those in need and recover from the storm.

Due to the effects of global climate change, Hudson County faces threats from sea level rise, and increasingly intense and frequent storms in the future, which put critical facilities, infrastructure, and residents at risk. The County has decided to take a proactive approach to prepare for the future, and has made resiliency to storm events a focus of planning and investment.

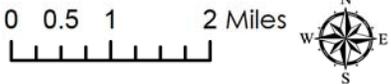


Source: Bayonne, NJ Superstorm Sandy flooding



Superstorm Sandy Storm Surge Extent

- NYC Superstorm Sandy Storm Surge Extent
- Superstorm Sandy Storm Surge Extent



Source: FEMA MOTF Hurricane Sandy Impact Analysis