

CRAMER HILL 2030 NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

March 2022



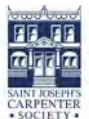
Prepared by:



Prepared for:



**CAMDEN COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIP**
IMPROVING OUR ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY ONE RESIDENT AT A TIME



**SAINT JOSEPH'S
CARPENTER
SOCIETY**



Acknowledgements

The Cramer Hill Neighborhood Plan is the result of a one-year planning process led by the Camden Community Partnership and St. Joseph's Carpenter Society in collaboration with Cramer Hill residents and community stakeholders who contributed their time, expertise and ideas to advance the community's vision for the next ten years.

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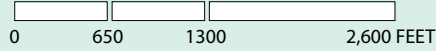
Introduction

The Cramer Hill 2030 Neighborhood Plan was prepared by the Camden Community Partnership (CCP) and St. Joseph's Carpenter Society (SJCS) with professional planning support from Kitchen & Associates (K&A). The plan is informed by a community-driven planning process engaging Cramer Hill residents and community stakeholders in discussions about needs and priorities for the future of the neighborhood.

This plan builds on previous planning initiatives – namely the 2009 Cramer Hill NOW! Plan and the Cramer Hill Transformation Plan (2020) – to establish goals and strategies guiding neighborhood revitalization initiatives over the next ten years.

Despite the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, a concerted outreach effort was made to engage the community in decisions guiding future neighborhood investments. Five key priorities emerged from that process:

- 1. Preserve and expand housing options across income and household sizes**
- 2. Maximize River Avenue potential as a thriving business corridor and focal point for community life**
- 3. Upgrade neighborhood systems for improved quality of life, future growth and resilience to the impact of climate change**
- 4. Expand opportunities for community life and vibrancy**
- 5. Revisit zoning and land use standards to reflect the community vision for the future**



Neighborhood Map



- Commercial Corridor
- River Line Light Rail
- Bus Route
- Major Bus Stop
- The Circuit Trails
- Primary Corridor
- River Line Station
- Bus Route #
- Census Tract Boundary
- Camden Greenway

Planning Area

Cramer Hill is a neighborhood with clear and well-defined boundaries. Spreading over 1.3 square miles of land along the northern section of the City of Camden, this community of 9,424 residents lies north of the City's downtown core and is bounded by the Delaware riverfront to the west, a regional Conrail facility to the east (Pavonia Yard), and the Cooper River to the south. Pennsauken Township forms the community's northern boundary at 36th Street. Cramer Hill boundaries coincide with two census tracts: Tract 6009, which runs from the Cooper River to 27th Street; and tract 6010, which makes up the northern portion of the neighborhood, running from 27th to 36th street.

Why a new Neighborhood Plan?

The Cramer Hill 2030 Neighborhood Plan provides the community an opportunity to revisit its long term goals and priorities for future investment. Much has happened in Cramer Hill since the 2009 Cramer Hill NOW! Plan. From shifts in demographic indicators to a more robust economic environment, this moment carries little resemblance with the context informing the previous neighborhood plan. Now that several of the recommendations emerging from that plan have been successfully implemented, the community is ready for a new look at its future. An updated plan focuses on current trends and opportunities and on the issues that matter to residents in today's date.

Planning Partners

Camden Community Partnership

Camden Community Partnership (CCP), formerly Cooper's Ferry Partnership, is focused on restoring Camden's neighborhoods and improving the lives of Camden's residents. Together with community leaders, residents, employers, educators, and other nonprofit organizations, CCP is actively engaged in ensuring the economic growth and security of residents now and in the future. CCP works and engages with the city's population through outreach, implementation of resident-driven neighborhood plans, community programs, citywide policy, park development and infrastructure projects. CCP has demonstrated a successful track record of fostering unique collaborations among diverse stakeholders and effectuating sustainable change through the city's neighborhoods, while following the core principles of the specific neighborhood plan.

Saint Joseph's Carpenter Society

St. Joseph's Carpenter Society (SJCS) is the largest community development corporation in Camden with presence in East Camden, Cramer Hill and other parts of the City. SJCS offers a variety of programs in support of neighborhood planning and community stabilization including homeownership, home repair programs and financial literacy. In recent years, SJCS has expanded its presence in Cramer Hill focusing on housing and economic development initiatives, community partnerships, and capacity building.

Planning Process & Community Engagement

The planning process informing the **Cramer Hill 2030 Neighborhood Plan** comes on the heels of a two-year community-driven planning effort leading to the preparation of the 2020 Cramer Hill Transformation Plan. A total of 16 community meetings were held between September 2018 and September 2020 to elicit the input from residents and community stakeholders on a wide variety of neighborhood topics. Upon award of the \$35M Choice Implementation Grant in 2021, additional outreach efforts were made by the Housing Authority of the City of Camden and its neighborhood implementation partners (CCP/SJCS) to keep the community up to date about implementation initiatives. Between open house sessions, visioning sessions, task force meetings and surveys, approximately 300 residents voiced their thoughts, vision and ideas for the future of Cramer Hill.

Cramer Hill Transformation Plan

The planning process for the Cramer Hill Transformation Plan was structured around the three core themes of HUD's Choice Neighborhoods Program: Housing, People and Neighborhood. Three task forces were established to focus on each of these themes. The Neighborhood Task Force, led by St. Joseph's Carpenter Society included local residents and planning partners representing public, private and non-profit organizations. Task forces met regularly to address issues and needs associated with neighborhood housing, infrastructure, amenities, public safety among other themes. Informed by baseline data and the results from various assessment efforts, the Neighborhood task force identified priorities, goals and strategies shaping the neighborhood component of the Transformation Plan.



Cramer Hill 2030 Neighborhood Plan

The Cramer Hill 2030 Plan builds on the wealth of information gained from the Transformation Plan to expand the scope of discussions about neighborhood goals and establish key priorities guiding investments for the next ten years.

In 2021, the Camden Community Partnership and St. Joseph's Carpenter Society formed a Steering Committee to help identify key themes for the updated neighborhood plan. Five priority themes emerged from this effort:

1. Housing
2. Infrastructure and Transportation
3. Environment, Open Space, and Land Use
4. Economic Development and
5. Public Safety

A series of thematic conversations around these themes was held with residents and community stakeholders in the Spring of 2021 through virtual meetings and followed by stakeholder interviews and focus group discussions.

Despite the challenges imposed by COVID-19, the planning team made a concerted effort to engage residents via email, phone calls, flyers and social media campaigns. Flyers were prepared in English and Spanish and distributed throughout the neighborhood, in businesses, schools, churches and community buildings. Between residents and community partners, over 70 people participated in the most recent round of planning events. Residents and businesses were given the opportunity to provide input on planning questions via a new website, www.cramerhillplan.com and posters with QR codes that were displayed throughout key locations in the neighborhood.





Neighborhood Birds-eye view



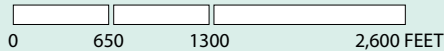
Neighborhood Overview

**Cramer Hill is home to
9,424 residents**

The Cramer Hill neighborhood features a solid residential core of mostly single-family homes, organized around a north-south commercial corridor (River Avenue) and surrounded by a ring of legacy industrial uses bordering the rail yard and the riverfront. Historically known as a multicultural community within the City of Camden, Cramer Hill has seen changes in its racial and ethnic make-up but diversity and cultural vibrancy continue to define the neighborhood's character. That diversity is reflected in the way residents personalize their homes and in the variety of ethnic restaurants, activities and community-oriented businesses along River Avenue.

The decline of industrial activities in the 1960s led to significant changes in the fabric of the neighborhood, leaving behind brownfields and vacant homes while also stripping the local community from its economic vitality. It was not until the early 2000s that a reversal to that trend of decline would occur. Over \$300 million were invested over the past twenty years targeting critical infrastructure projects, waterfront redevelopment and a number of brownfield redevelopment initiatives converting old contaminated sites into transformative neighborhood assets such as the Cramer Hill Mastery School, the Salvation Army Kroc Center and ActionPak, a manufacturing plant creating 300 new jobs in the area.

That trend of transformation continued through 2021, with the award of a \$35 million Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant targeting the redevelopment of Ablett Village at the western edge of the neighborhood. The grant leverages over \$100 million in further investments focusing on new housing and neighborhood improvements.

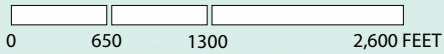


Neighborhood Assets



- Medical
- Education
- Parks
- Community Centers
- Fire Station
- Regional Assets
- Transportation
- Retail/Commercial Corridor

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Cooper Family & Comm. Medicine | Acelero Head Start | Baldwin's Run Boardwalk | Camden Church of Christ | Camden Fire Dept. Comp. 11 | River Ave Comm. Corridor |
| River Primary Care Center | Camden Promise Charter School | Epiphany Fellowship Church | St. Anthony of Padua Church | Cramer Hill Waterfront Park | RiverLine 36th St Station |
| Mastery-Cramer Hill School | 22nd & Harrison Park | Sisters of St. Joseph Neigh. Center | Cramer Hill Comm. Center | Salvation Army Kroc Center | River Line Light Rail |
| CDI Head Start | Veterans Memorial Park | Christus Lutheran Church | Congregation of Yahweh Church | ActionPak | Bus Route |
| Veterans Memorial Family School | Von Nieda Park | Camden Spanish 7th Day Adventist | Hope Church | Cramer Hill Nature Preserve | Bus Route # |



Recent Investments



Cramer Hill Waterfront Park - NJDEP • \$34 Million



The Kroc Center - The Salvation Army • 2014 • \$90 Million
 Building Addition • \$2.5 Million
 Solar Array • \$4.5 Million



Von Nieda Park - CCP • 2015 • \$3 Million
 Additional Improvements • \$1.6 Million



Baldwin's Run Daylighting - CCP • 2015 • \$1.3 Million



Petty's Island Sanctuary
 - NJNLT - In Progress • \$3 Million



State St Bridge Improvements
 - Camden County • 2013 • \$11.9 Million



Cramer Hill Nature Preserve
 - CCMUA • \$600,000



- The Circuit Trail**
 - DVRPC, City of Camden & CCP - In Progress
- Home Renovations**
 - SJCS Camden & CCP - Future - \$591,000
- River Road Improvements**
 - CCP - Under Const. • \$4 Million
- Nueva Vida I**
 - Cramer Hill CDC • 2009 • \$2.15 Million



Mastery-Cramer Hill
 • 2017 • \$34 Million



Centennial Village - Housing Preserv. Inc. • 2016 • \$3 Million



ResinTech - ResinTech Inc • Future • \$138.3 Million
 Solar Array • \$1.5 Million

- Recent Investments
- Future Investments
- Green Infrastructure

A Brief Neighborhood Timeline



1793: Early settlement of Cramer Hill includes Camden's Founding Family, The Coopers. Its early history defined largely by small farms and country estates, Cramer Hill was also home to two of Camden's earliest African-American settlements. The Samuel Cooper House, built in 1793 (pictured above), sheltered run-away slaves before the Civil War.



1853: Work Begins on the new Camden Water Works / Pavonia Reservoir. The reservoir located at the current site of Veterans Memorial Park provided a reliable water supply for the growing City of Camden.

1874: Alfred Cramer begins sub-dividing land, eventually selling 3000 building lots. Cramer's innovation of selling lots on installment plans was a pioneering development in housing finance.

1894: Town of Stockton Founded by Alfred Cramer includes the former villages of Pavonia, Cramer Hill, Dudley, Wrightville and Rosedale.



1895: Typhoid Fever outbreak blamed on foul water from Pavonia Water Works. The Delaware River water was increasingly polluted by industrial effluent. The old water works, located at the site of the current yacht club was closed and replaced with a system of artesian wells.

1902: Camden Reservoir at Pavonia breaks, flooding residents and businesses and making national news.

1905: East Side Park (now Veteran's Memorial Park) is built on the site of the abandoned reservoir.



1920's: Moro-Phillips Track (future Ablett Village) is Camden County's 1st Airport.

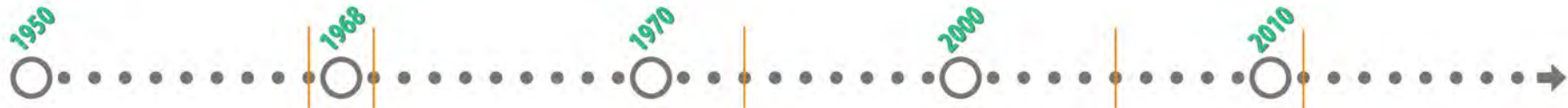
1929: Camden County Airport is relocated to Pennsauken due to the proliferation of smoke stacks in increasingly industrial Cramer Hill.



1940: Veterans Memorial Junior High School Built. P.W.A. Funds provide 45% of the funding to construct the new facility long desired by community advocates.

1942: Ablett Village built to provide needed housing for workers supporting the war effort.

1949: Former Mayor Frederick Von Nieda gathers support from city and county officials to replace Baldwin's Run, a long time health and safety hazard, with a new Cramer Hill Park, now named Von Nieda Park.



1965: Wolman City Within a City Plan unveiled. The proposal covers 280 acres with an expected cost of \$150 million. Significant portions of Cramer Hill receive blight designations. The waterfront plan is the beginning of a decade long effort to revitalize Cramer Hill's waterfront, left underutilized by the decline of Maritime Industry in the area.

1967: Camden Northshore "Save Our Homes" Committee forms to appeal the blight designation and fight redevelopment.



1968: 4 new developer proposals emerge for Camden's "Northshore" after collapse of Wolman Plan due to the developer filing for bankruptcy.

1969: Joseph J. Brunetti's Northshore proposal is selected by the Planning Board. The plan anticipates 1500 residents and 4000 dwelling units within the 280 acre development area.

1969: Northshore Parkway, expected to connect Admiral Wilson Parkway to the Betsy Ross Bridge, receives funding. The planned connection would run along the current Harrison Avenue.



1971: Cramer Hill Civic Association loses zoning appeal in Cramer Hill Apartments battle. Much of the remaining open land in the northern part of Cramer Hill is developed as scattered-site multi-family housing in contrast to the mostly single-family and row-home context.

1977: New Boys Club opens, as a supplement to the Rio Theater along River Road at 27th Street.

1992: Developer interest in the Cramer Hill waterfront re-emerges with Gary Campbell's "Community 2000" plan. Neighborhood civic groups continue opposition.



2000: Cramer Hill Neighborhood Advisory Council develops a community driven plan to revitalize Cramer Hill.

2003: Cramer Hill Tomorrow
2004: Cherokee Plan proposes 6000 new units and an 18 hole golf course on the Cramer Hill waterfront. The plan relies on significant relocation of residents, including Ablett Village and Centennial Village.

Community groups once again organize to keep their homes.

2008: Cathedral Kitchen opens at new location.

2009: New Redevelopment Plan, Cramer Hill NOW! Neighborhood and Waterfront Park Plan place focus on recreation and preservation along the river.



2013: New State St. Bridge, Camden

2014: The Salvation Army Kroc Center opens to the public

2015: Von Nieda Park & Baldwin's Run Daylighting, CCP

2017: Cramer Hill Mastery School

2019: Cramer Hill Nature Preserve, CCMUA opens to the public

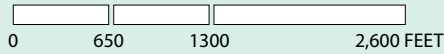
2019: River Avenue Improvements Project completed

2019: Petty's Island Preserve, NJ Natural Lands Trust

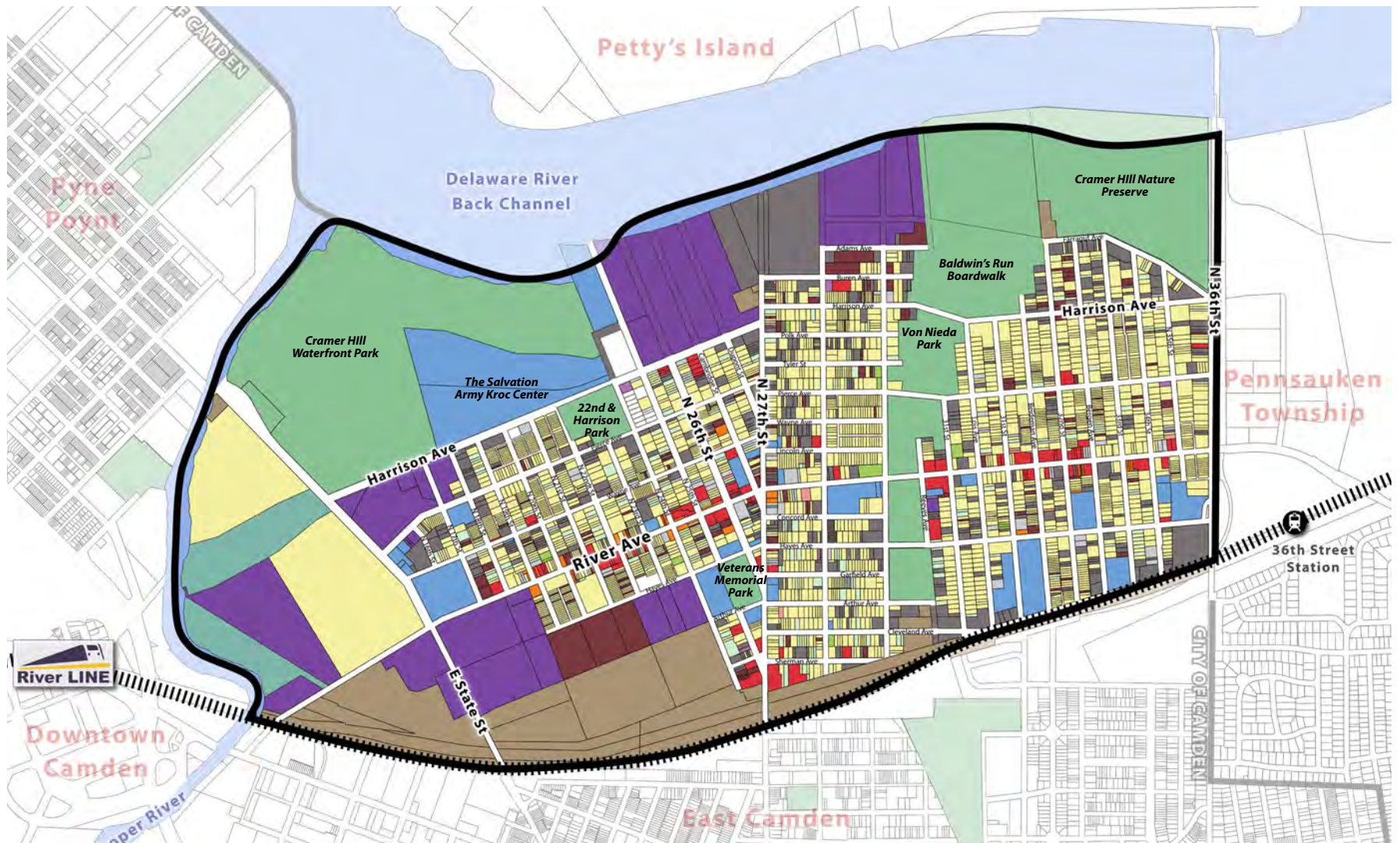
2020: ActionPak opens with 300 new jobs in the

2021: Cramer Hill Waterfront Park opens to the public

2021: Cramer Hill awarded Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant



Land Use



- | | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Residential | Industrial | Side Yard | Wetlands | Other | River Line Light Rail |
| Mixed-Use | Institutional | Park/Public Open Space | Utility | Vacant Land | River Line Station |
| Commercial | Garage | Garden | Surface Parking | Vacant Building | |

Land Use

Land use patterns in Cramer Hill reflect its maritime and rail-centered industrial history.

NEIGHBORHOOD CORE:

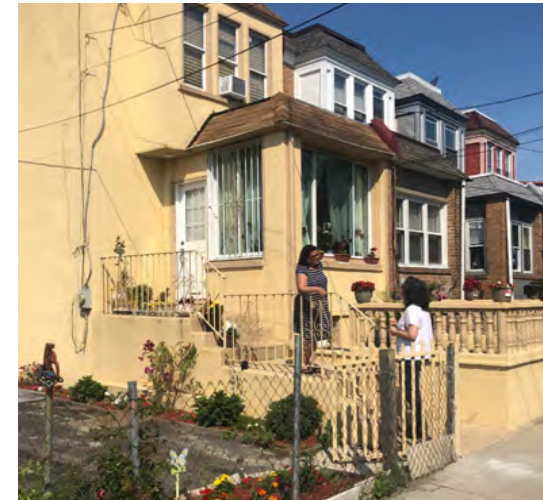
Comprises a dense, walkable residential fabric with a mix of single-family homes arranged in a variety of typologies - free standing, twins and rowhomes - sitting on individual lots and laid out in compact blocks. Institutional uses, such as schools and churches, are scattered throughout the residential fabric of the neighborhood.

RIVER AVENUE:

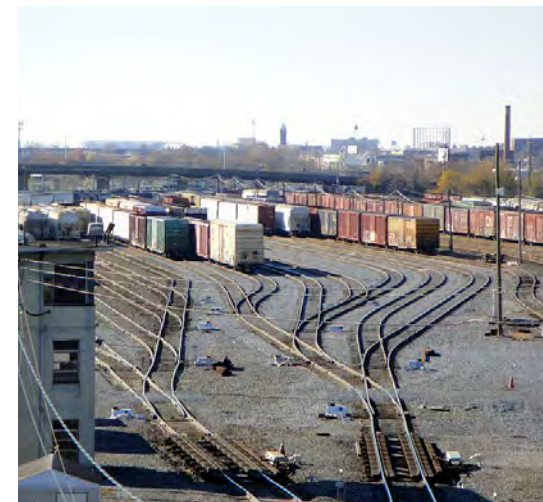
The community's primary artery features clusters of commercial uses including restaurants, pharmacy, insurance companies, neighborhood services and auto related businesses.

NEIGHBORHOOD EDGES:

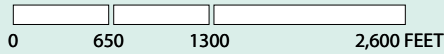
Bounded by rivers and the railroad, the neighborhood edges are dominated by larger parcels most historically used for industrial purposes. Two large multi-family apartment communities - Ablett Village and Centennial Village - occupy large tracts of land along the western end of the community, fronting on East State Street. While industrial uses persist near the tracks, much of the riverfront has been converted to passive and active recreational amenities. Few legacy industrial parcels remain in use on the waterfront and present an impediment to completion of the vision to transform the waterfront into a green community asset.



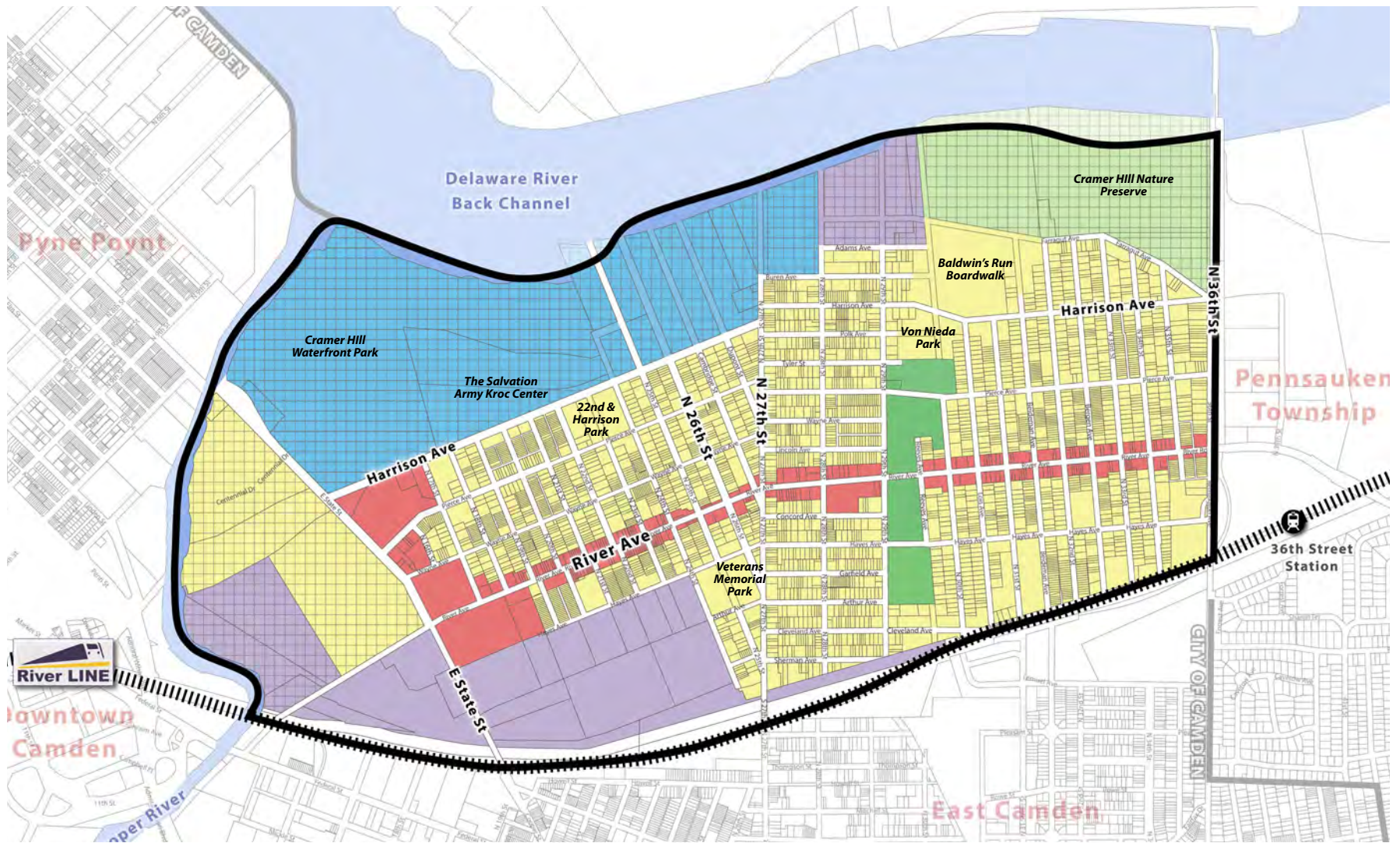
Neighborhood Core, Single-Family Homes



Neighborhood Edges, Conrail Pavonia Yard



Zoning



- C-2 Neighborhood Commercial
- CV-2 Open Space Conservation
- MW-2 Mixed Waterfront
- Stream and River Corridor Overlay
- River Line Station
- CV-1 Open Space Conservation
- LI-2 Light Industrial
- R-2 Medium Density Residential
- River Line Light Rail

Zoning

Development in Cramer Hill is regulated by the Cramer Hill Redevelopment Plan (2009).

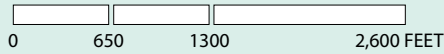
- // **RESIDENTIAL:** Approximately 51% of the neighborhood is zoned residential R-2 (medium density residential), which allows for a mix of single and multi-family housing types. Despite the prevalence of single-family homes in Cramer Hill, the current plan does not restrict any part of the neighborhood exclusively to single-family residential uses. Ablett Village and Centennial Village are also zoned R-2.
- // **INDUSTRIAL:** The Redevelopment Plan designates the southwest quadrant of the neighborhood adjacent to Conrail's Pavonia Yard for industrial uses. Other industrial sites, particularly along the waterfront are zoned as mixed-use district (MW-2) with the goal to foster a vibrant waterfront with public access and greenways.
- // **COMMERCIAL:** Properties along River Avenue and State Street (north side) are zoned commercial (C-2).
- // **OPEN SPACES:** Properties comprising the area now known as the Cramer Hill Nature Preserve and much of the undeveloped waterfront north of 29th Street are protected by an open space conservation.



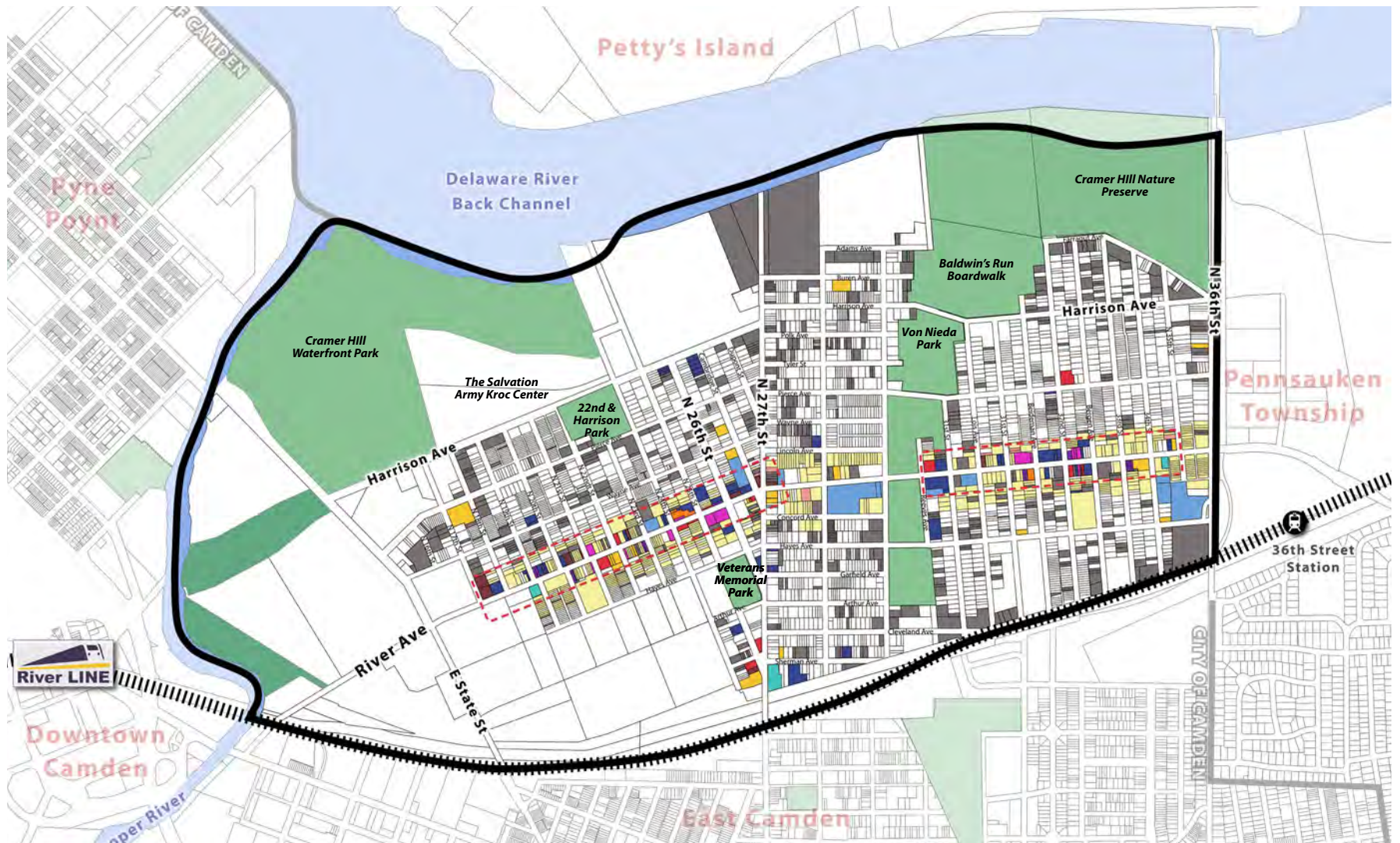
Typical single family homes permitted under R-2 zone



Retail establishment along River Avenue



River Avenue Commercial Corridor



River Avenue Commercial Corridor

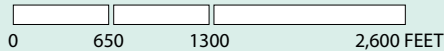
River Avenue, the neighborhood's primary commercial corridor, is home to over 60 businesses, many of which offer services specifically attuned to the diverse ethnic backgrounds of neighborhood residents. Businesses include restaurants, a pharmacy, a record store, and a supermarket, among others. The recently expanded Santana's Bakery is a prime example of a successful business that caters to Cramer Hill's hispanic community featuring specialties from a variety of nations. The bakery has become a neighborhood hub.



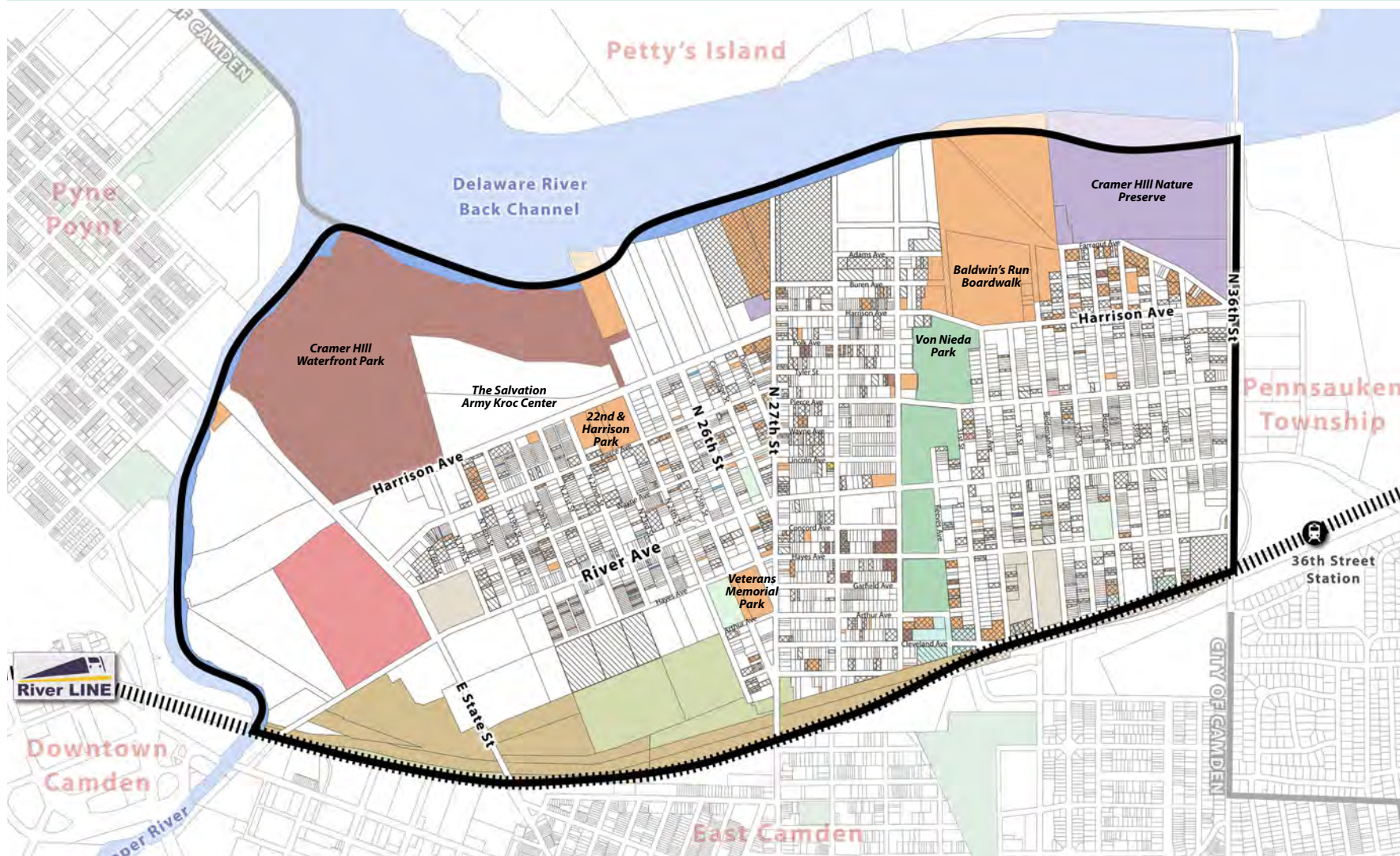
Crescent Beverage, located in an iconic building on the corner of River Ave and 25th St has been in business at that location since 1937.



Miguel's Pharmacy is a successful full service neighborhood pharmacy on River Avenue. The business has also proven to be a major community asset during COVID times.



Property Ownership



- | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Camden City | Camden County | NJ American Water | Vacant Building |
| Camden County MUA | Camden Housing Authority | NJ Transit | River Line Light Rail |
| Camden Board of Education | Camden Properties | Vacant Lot | River Line Station |
| Camden Charter School | Camden Redevelopment Agency | | |

Property Ownership

Most of the land in Cramer Hill is privately held with a significant portion of owner-occupied homes. City-owned land is distributed throughout the community with concentrations along Harrison Avenue near the Kroc center, at the eastern edge of Von Nieda Park and in the pocket between Harrison Ave and Farragut Street near the nature preserve. The largest parcels of city owned land on the waterfront are wetlands with the exception of the Yacht Club which was at one time the City of Camden's water pumping station. The few remaining sites along the waterfront are privately held and occupied by light industrial uses. NJ Transit and Conrail are major stakeholders in the community as owners of the large, active, Pavonia rail yard at the community's southeastern edge. A large swath of land that sits in-between Ablett Village and Centennial Village, owned by Camden County, appears to be covered by wetlands, and has been identified as a potential site for a future connector to Admiral Wilson Boulevard.



Cramer Hill CDC owned parcel along Hayes Ave



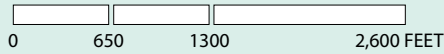
City owned parcels near 22nd & Harrison Park



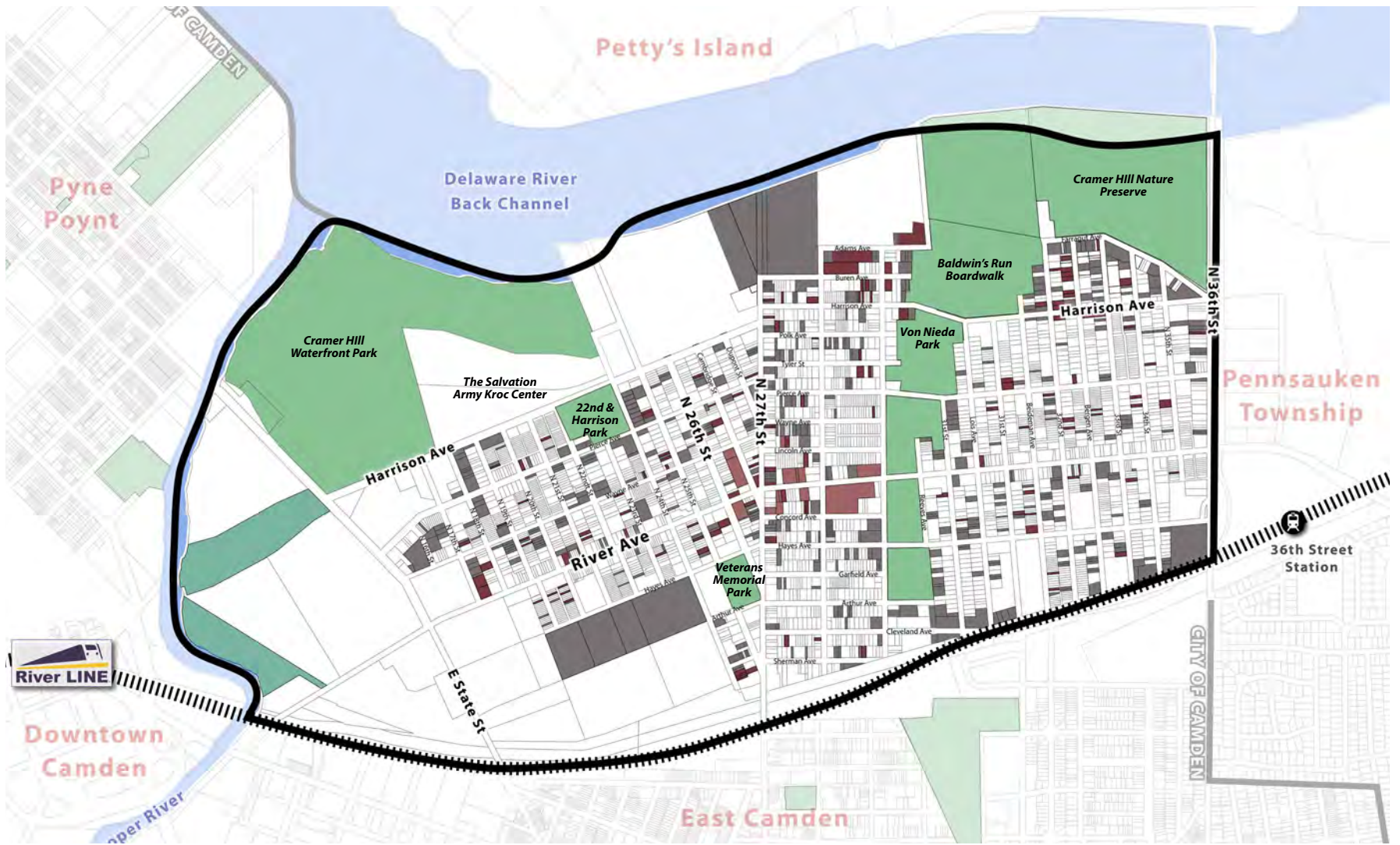
City and CRA owned parcels near Von Nieda Park



City and CRA owned parcels near CH Nature Preserve



Vacancy



- ||||| River Line Light Rail
- River Line Station
- Vacant Building
- Vacant Land

Vacancy

Industrial decline and shifting demographics have contributed to the vacancy that is apparent throughout Cramer Hill. In total, there are approximately 500 vacant properties in the neighborhood. Most vacant lots are small in size and are scattered throughout the neighborhood's residential fabric. Several of them have been formally or informally 'adopted' by owners of adjacent properties who maintain the lots and, at times, come together with other neighbors to landscape or create community gardens.

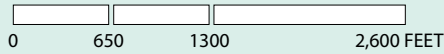
A few areas of concentrated vacancy create opportunities for land consolidation and potential redevelopment. One of those areas is located along Harrison Avenue, across from the Kroc Center and surrounding Harrison Avenue Park. A second area on the northern end of the community lands itself for future housing infill opportunities. Two significant parcels lie on 24th street - one between Harrison Avenue and the Delaware River and another situated behind Veterans Memorial School at Hayes Avenue. Large vacant parcels located along the Cooper and Delaware Rivers appear to be primarily wetlands. A stretch of land off of East State Street and owned by Camden County has been identified as a potential location for a future connector road between Harrison Avenue and Admiral Wilson Boulevard.



Vacant Land



Vacant structures



Parks and Recreation Spaces



- Commercial Corridor
- Primary Corridor
- River Line Light Rail
- River Line Station
- Parks

Parks and Recreation

Combining over 122 acres of park land and a nature preserve, Cramer Hill features one of the highest per capita rates of park space in the region.

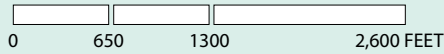
- **Von Nieda Park** is a County facility combining sports amenities, playground and 19 acres of outdoor community spaces.
- **The Salvation Army Kroc Center** has become a regional destination for recreation, sports and programs, featuring indoor pools, fitness, basketball courts and a black box theater. The facility is also home to a health clinic, a head start program and a food bank.
- **22nd and Harrison Avenue Park**, located across the street from the Kroc Center, serves Camden's little league teams and other local sporting groups.
- **The Cramer Hill Waterfront Park** restores waterfront access to Cramer Hill with a combination of outdoor amenities, including a fishing plaza, picnic areas, hiking trails and a kayak launch area on 62 acres of new open space.
- **The Cramer Hill Nature Preserve** provides a vast oasis for wild flora and fauna within walking distance from residential blocks.
- **Veterans Memorial Park**, located across the street from Veterans Memorial School, this park is widely used by the school community and provides relief in an area that is otherwise fully built out and lacking open spaces.
- **Petty's Island Preserve** was established as a conservation easement and wildlife habitat by the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust. Public access is permitted through scheduled programs provided by the Center for Aquatic Sciences.



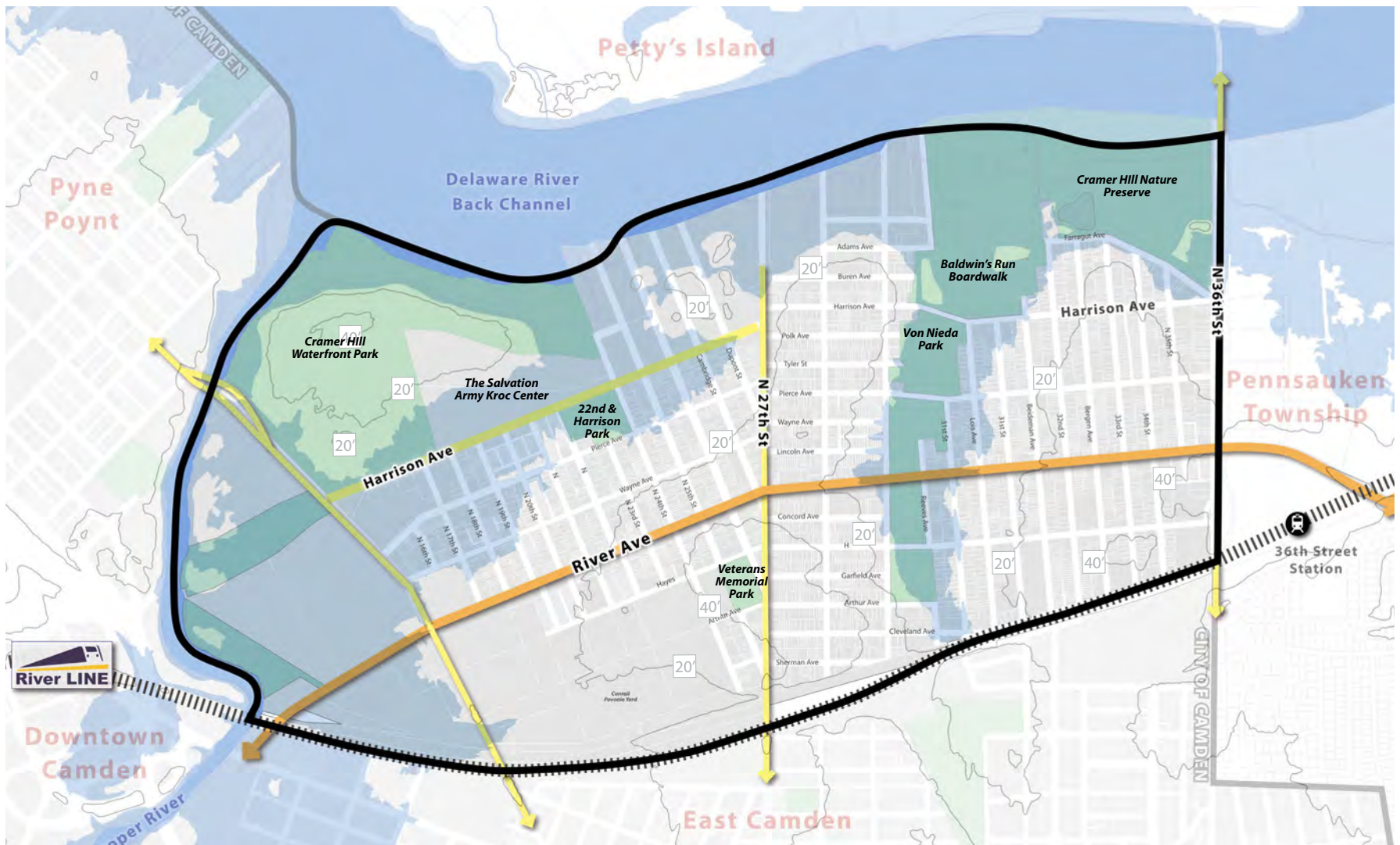
Von Nieda Park



Cramer Hill Waterfront Park



Flood Map



- Commercial Corridor
- Primary Corridor
- River Line Light Rail
- River Line Station
- 100-year Flood Zone
- Water Area
- Delaware River
- Contour Lines
- Contour Elevation

Flood Mitigation

Cramer Hill faces compounded tidal and stormwater flooding risks. A significant percentage of the community's lands lie within the 100-year flood zone of the Delaware River and its tributary, the Cooper River. As climate change pressures increase, flood risks from these tidal rivers are expected to increase, bringing additional risks for Cramer Hill homes and businesses located in the flood zone.

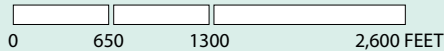
Stormwater flooding is also a problem in the neighborhood. Baldwin's Run, a stream that once bisected the neighborhood, was filled in in the 1950s to create Von Nieda Park. The park and surrounding roadways were often flooded during heavy rainfall making parts of the area impassable. Much work has been undertaken in recent years to mitigate flooding in Cramer Hill. The daylighting of Baldwin's Run's outfall and new stormwater infrastructure in the park have begun to address the chronic flooding. Restoration of the waterfront including the Cramer Hill Nature Preserve near 36th street is increasing the resilience of the shoreline. Camden's combined sewer system exacerbates the impact of stormwater flooding bringing additional risk of environmental contamination from the overwhelmed sewage system.



Neighborhood flooding has been dramatically mitigated by stormwater infrastructure improvements



Baldwin's Run daylighting project along with several other green infrastructure initiatives have helped minimize the impact of flooding



Contaminated Sites



- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Adams Oil Inc | 5 Magnetic Metals | 9 Camden City Vacant Land | 13 Express Marine Inc |
| 2 Recorded Publications Lab Inc | 6 Pavonia Yard Diesel Terminal | 10 Underwater Techics Inc | Commercial Corridor |
| 3 Steed Scrap Paper & Metal | 7 NJ American Water Co Wells 51 & 52 | 11 Lingo Inc | Primary Corridor |
| 4 Larry's Professional Servicecenter | 8 Farragut Sportsmans Marina | 12 Neeff Machine Co Inc | River Line Light Rail |
- River Line Station

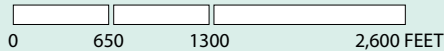
Contaminated Sites

Much work has been done over the years to remediate and convert old contaminated sites into community assets. The Kroc Center and the Cramer Hill Waterfront Park both sit on the site of the former Harrison Avenue Landfill. Cramer Hill Mastery School also replaces an old plant. But the neighborhood is still ringed by vacant or underutilized contaminated sites, especially along the riverfront and the railroad. Envisioning a future for these properties is a key component of this planning process.



The old Magnetic Metals property is one of the last sizable brownfield sites in the neighborhood. Limited direct access from major corridors restricts its use for industrial purposes.





Public Transportation



- Commercial Corridor
- Primary Corridor
- River Line Light Rail
- River Line Station
- Bus Route
- Bus Route #
- Major Bus Stop

Transportation

Input received from residents during the planning process indicated a strong dependence on cars for everyday trips. Even short trips to River Avenue and local schools are performed by car, sometimes for convenience, sometimes due to safety concerns. According to estimates from the American Community Survey 2015-2019, 80% of commuting trips are made by car and only 10% are made by public transportation. Two NJ Transit bus lines – 419 and 452 connect residents to jobs and services in Camden and the region. They run primarily on River Avenue, East State Street and Harrison Avenue. A River Line stop, located just outside of Cramer Hill, provides another transportation option to local residents. The stop is more regularly used by residents within the northern end of the neighborhood. Residents living closer to East State Street have reported a preference for direct connections to Camden’s downtown area via bus, where more options for regional connections can be found.

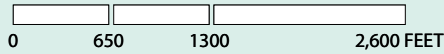
Frequency and the perception of safety are two of the main concerns expressed by residents with respect to bus services. Long waits and poor conditions at bus stops (lack of shelters and seats, poor lighting) discourage the use of buses as a regular mode of transportation.



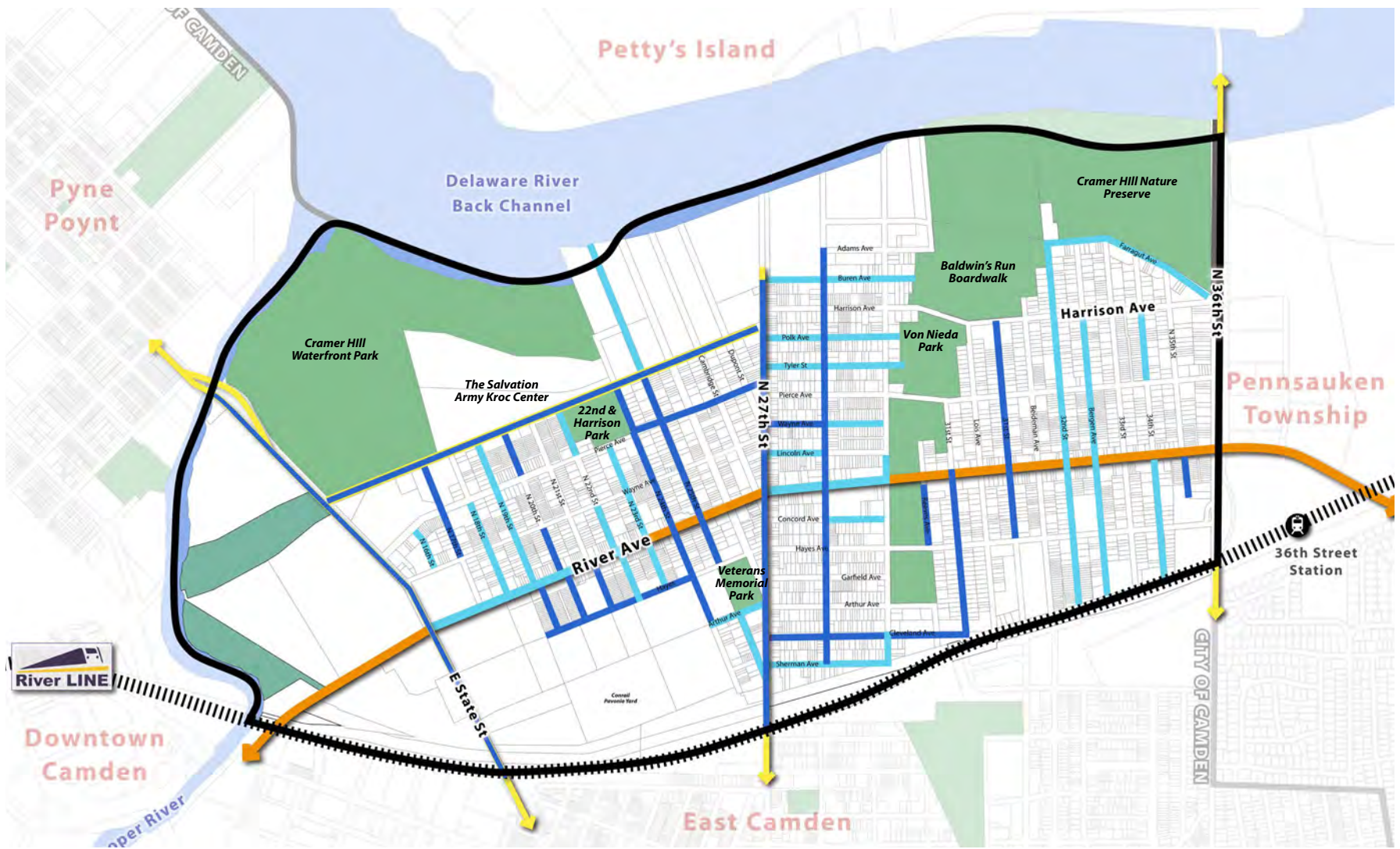
36th Street River Line Station



Bus Stop on State St at Centennial Village



Street Conditions



- Commercial Corridor
- Primary Corridor
- River Line Light Rail
- River Line Light Rail
- High Priority Street
- Low Priority Street

Street Conditions

Cramer Hill residents repeatedly cite the poor conditions of local roads as a significant quality of life issue. To have a better understanding of the existing conditions, the planning team documented road surface conditions for all of Cramer Hill. While more than half of the streets are in good or fair conditions, there are significant stretches of roadway in very poor conditions, an issue that is intensified with snow and rain.

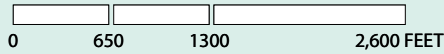
The state of repair of neighborhood roads does not appear to correlate to building conditions, land use or level of service. Blocks in worse conditions are frequently in sequence or clustered together. Nearly the entirety of Bergen Avenue, 32nd, 28th, 27th and 25th streets within the neighborhood are in poor conditions. The blocks of Buren, Polk, Tyler, Wayne and Lincoln clustered between 27th and 29th streets are all severely distressed as are most of the blocks on either side of River Avenue from 18th to 25th Street. A recent citywide assessment of street conditions identified several neighborhood corridors as in poor conditions. Such corridors are identified as high priority streets for repair and upgrades.



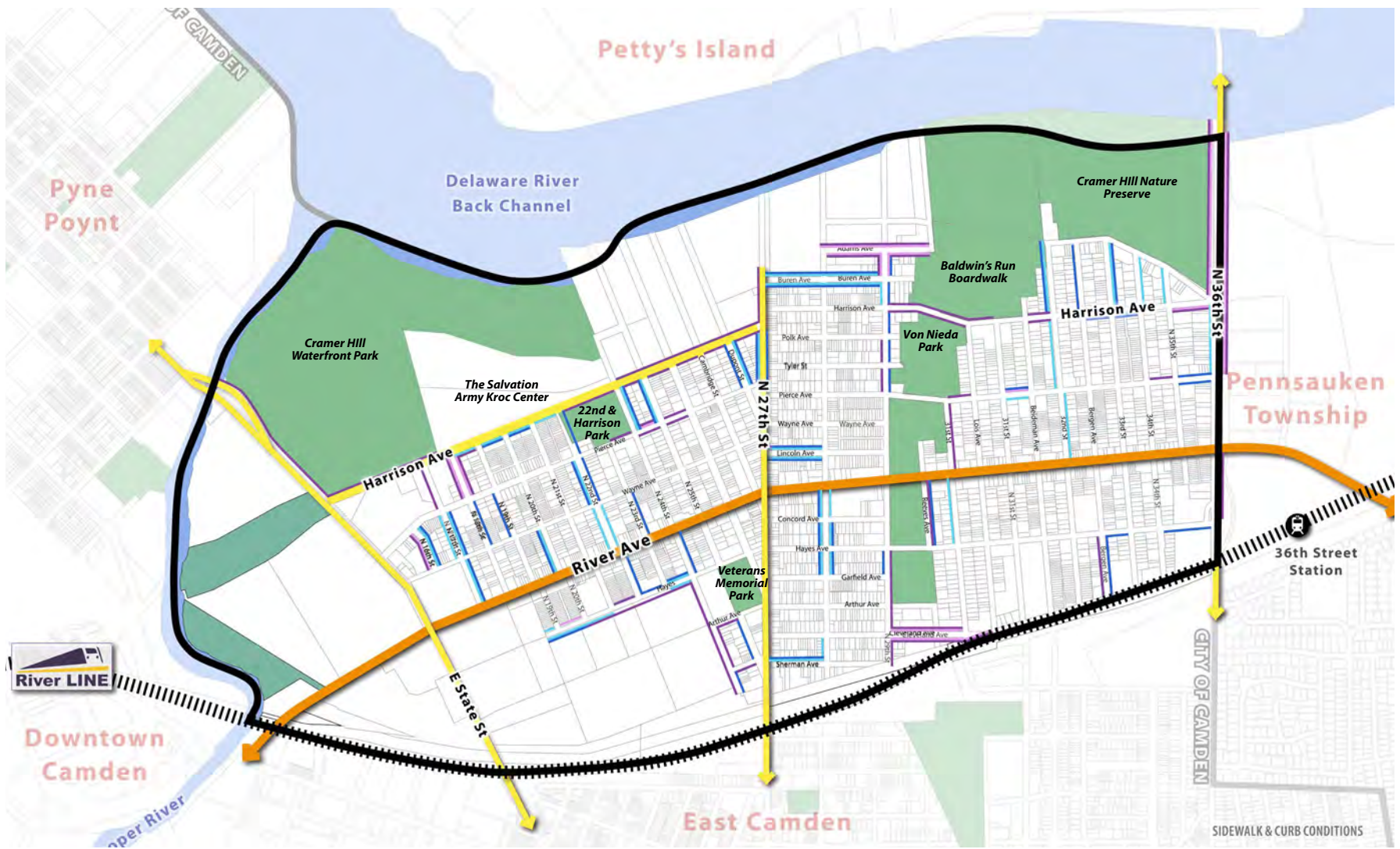
Typical street identified as in poor conditions



Unpaved street



Sidewalk & Curb Conditions



- Commercial Corridor
- Primary Corridor
- River Line Light Rail
- River Line Station
- Missing Curbs
- Missing Sidewalks
- Majority of Curbs need Replacement
- Majority of Sidewalks need Replacement

Sidewalk & Curb Conditions

Cramer Hill is a compact walkable community with a reasonably consistent sidewalk system. However, some significant gaps were identified during the block conditions survey, with missing sidewalks and stretches of unsafe and poorly maintained sidewalks. Harrison Avenue, which connects waterfront amenities such as the Kroc Center, Von Nieda Park and the Nature Preserve is in particular need of attention, with long stretches of missing or deteriorated sidewalks. Other blocks surrounding schools and leading to Von Nieda Park also lack consistency in sidewalks. Scattered throughout the neighborhood are sidewalks that are in disrepair largely due to vacancy of the adjoining property or lifting caused by overgrown tree roots.



Missing sidewalks and curbs



Sidewalks and curbs in need of replacement

Neighborhood Profile

Population

According to the 2020 US Census, Cramer Hill is home to 9,424 residents. Over the past 10 years, the neighborhood lost approximately 6% of its population, similarly to the City, which lost approximately 5,000 residents in that same period. The community is predominantly Hispanic with close to 80% of the population reporting Hispanic ethnicity. 35% of Cramer Hill residents are under 18 and just over 9% are over the age of 62.

ETHNICITY
79.5% OF THE POPULATION IS HISPANIC. (65% IN 2000)

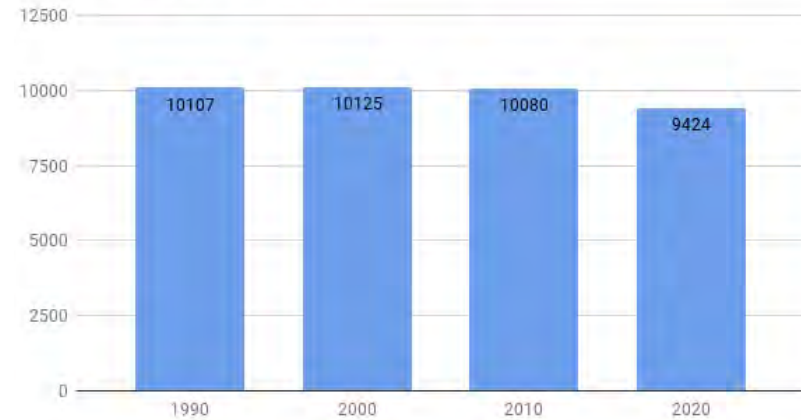
RACIAL COMPOSITION
12% WHITE
20% BLACK

POPULATION UNDER 18:
35.0% FOR CRAMER HILL
32.0% FOR CAMDEN

POPULATION OVER 62:
9.2% FOR CRAMER HILL
13.5% FOR CAMDEN

CRAMER HILL POPULATION

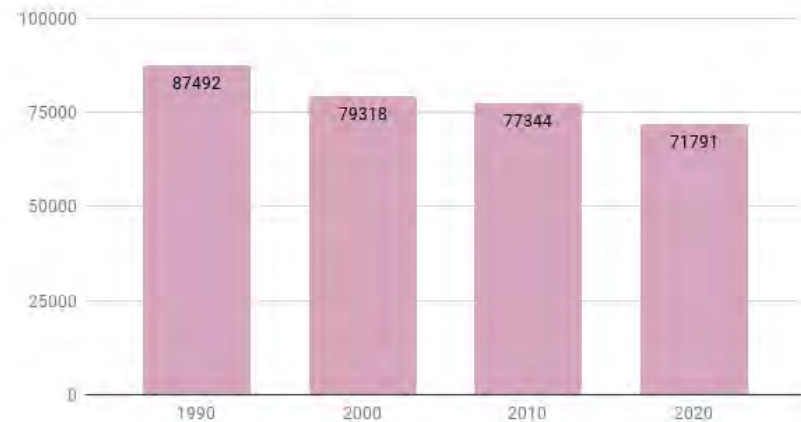
9,424 RESIDENTS



Source: U.S Census Data, 2020

CAMDEN POPULATION

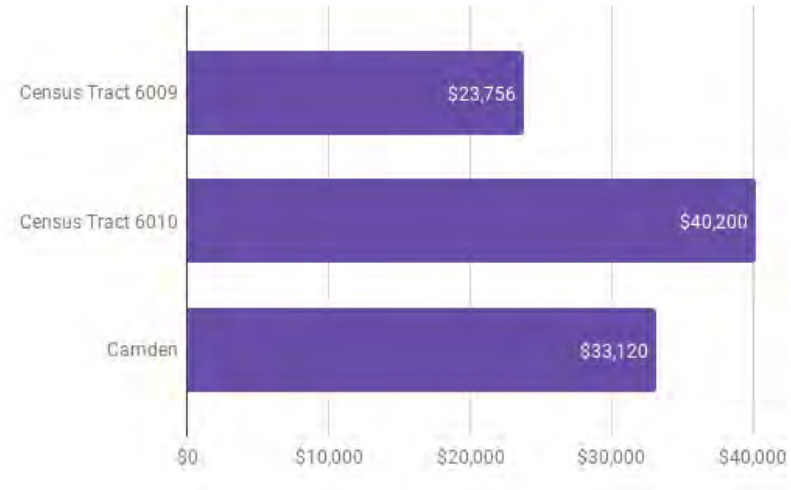
71,791 RESIDENTS



Source: U.S Census Data, 2020

Income

Within the two census tracts that make up Cramer Hill, there is a significant disparity in terms of income, education and employment statistics. Indicators for Census Tract 6010, the eastern half of Cramer Hill, show an average income of \$40,200, which is significantly higher than the City's average of \$33,120 and almost twice as high as the median income of \$23,756 reported for Census Tract 6009. Poverty and unemployment follow a similar trend. Census Tract 6010 outperforms Camden with a 22.4% poverty rate and 4.8% unemployment rate, while the poverty rate in Census Tract 6009 stands at 45.4% and unemployment at 11.5%, both below city averages.



Source: American Community Survey, 2015-2019

Education

The difference between the two census tracts continue to be seen with educational attainment for High School and College as well as computer access with Tract 6010 again outperforming the city of Camden, while indicators for tract 6009 continue to lag behind city averages.

Computer and Internet Access

Approximately 91% of residents living north of 27th Street have computer and internet access. South of 27th Street, that number drops to 74%, which is below the City's average.

EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

High School Graduates

CT 6009 - 47.5%
 CT 6010 - 73.5%
 CITY OF CAMDEN - 71.8%

Bachelors Degree

CT 6009 - 3.8%
 CT 6010 - 12.8%
 CITY OF CAMDEN - 9.0%

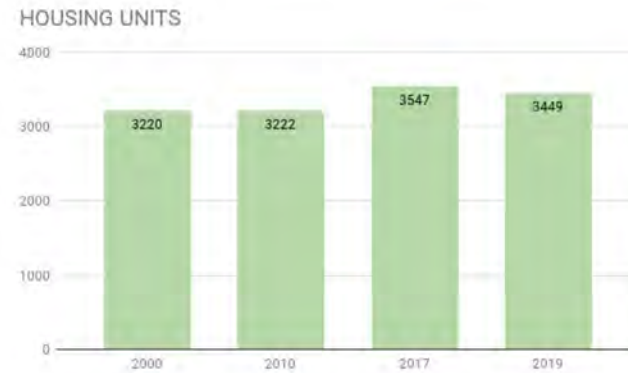
COMPUTER AND INTERNET ACCESS

CT 6009 - 74.0%
 CT 6010 - 91.7%
 CITY OF CAMDEN - 79.5%

Source: American Community Survey, 2015-2019

Housing Units

There are 3,449 housing units in Cramer Hill and while the neighborhood has historically had a high concentration of homeowners that percentage has declined from 50% in 1990 to 41% in 2019. Housing vacancy in Cramer Hill stands at 10.3% significantly lower than that of the City at 16.2%. While vacancy numbers outperform the city, the age of the housing stock is notable with nearly 50% of the neighborhood's homes being built before the 1950s and many dating to the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

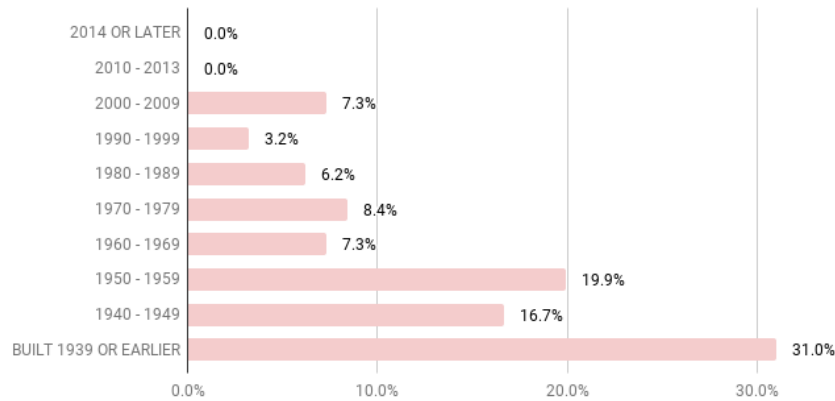


Source: American Community Survey, 2015-2019

Housing Stock

Approximately 50% of existing homes were built before 1950s.

HOUSING - YEAR STRUCTURE WAS BUILT

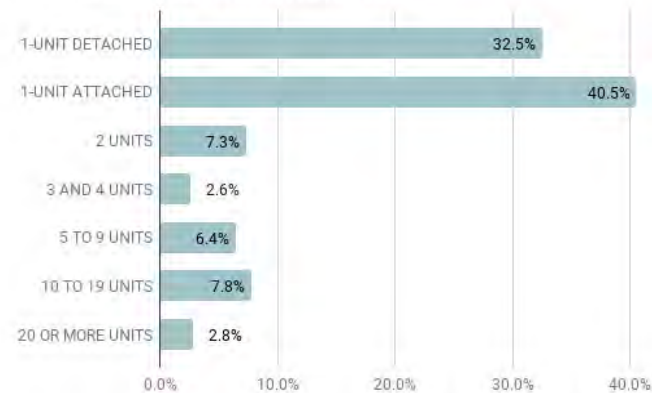


Source: American Community Survey, 2015-2019

Housing Types

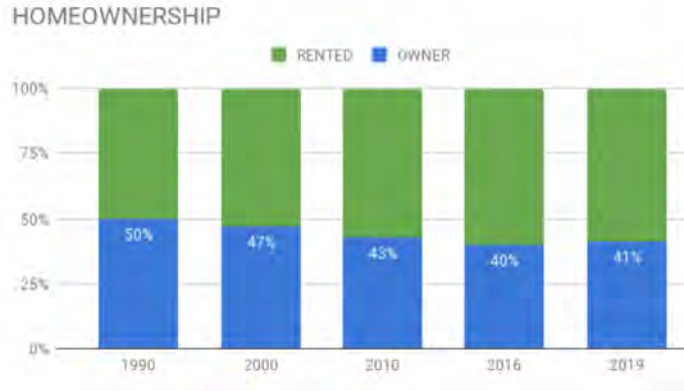
Single family homes attached and detached represent over 70% of all units. Twins and townhomes are most typical housing types.

HOUSING - UNITS IN STRUCTURE



Source: American Community Survey, 2015-2019

Homeownership Rate



Source: American Community Survey, 2015-2019

Housing Vacancy

Vacancy at 10.2% compared to 16.2% for the City of Camden

Source: American Community Survey, 2015-2019

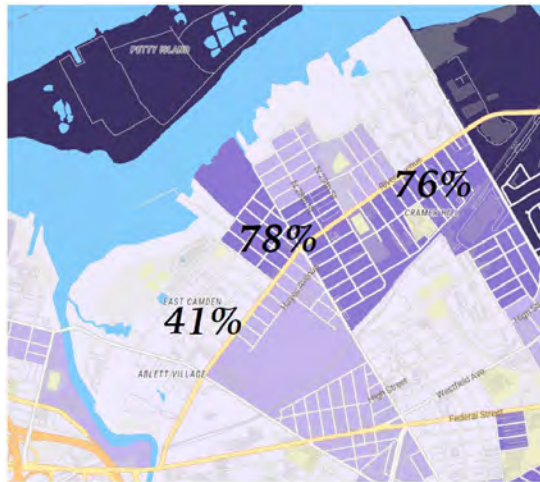
Median Housing Value

CT 6009 - \$93,500

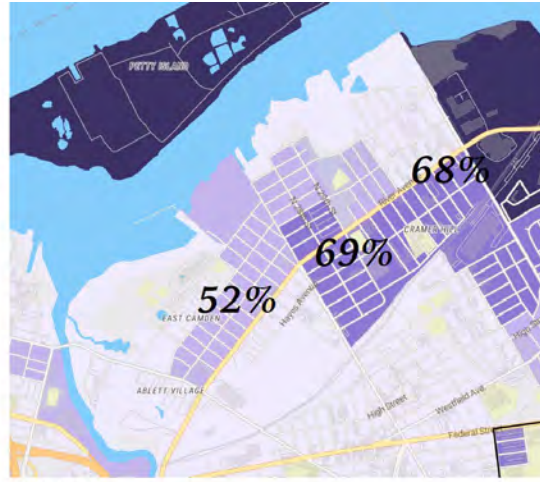
CT 6010 - \$109,900

Source: American Community Survey, 2015-2019

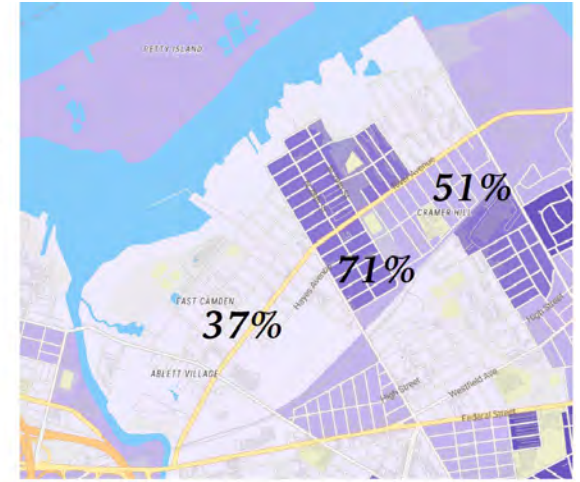
Homeownership by Census Block



2000



2010



2015-2019

Relevant Planning Initiatives

The **Cramer Hill 2030 Neighborhood Plan** is informed by a number of planning studies and initiatives. Alignment with these efforts is a key priority for the plan to ensure consistency and a positive environment for coordinated investments.

CRAMER HILL TOMORROW (2003)

Establishes a vision of Cramer Hill as a village within a city, a community with a vibrant commercial corridor and welcoming gateways with renewed public access to the waterfront. Cramer Hill Tomorrow was instrumental in mobilizing the community around a common vision and establishing the structure of the Cramer Hill CDC, a community development corporation actively involved in neighborhood development in the early 2000s.

CRAMER HILL NOW! (2009)

The Cramer Hill NOW! plan represents a renewal of community planning in Cramer Hill after community action brought residents victory in rejecting the Cherokee plan, which proposed massive redevelopment of the community's waterfront and sought to use eminent domain to relocate numerous homes and businesses. Cramer Hill NOW! expanded on the vision and goals established by the Cramer Hill Tomorrow plan. Developed in collaboration between the Cramer Hill CDC and Camden Community Partnership, formerly Cooper's Ferry Partnership, Cramer Hill NOW! acknowledges the significant impact of the neighborhood's riverfront in future development. Cramer

Hill NOW! outlines a number of initiatives that have come to fruition in recent years with several completed projects and others under way.

CRAMER HILL REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (2009)

The Cramer Hill Redevelopment Plan is the current governing document for zoning and land use in Cramer Hill. The plan was adopted in 2009 in direct response to the land use recommendations of Cramer Hill NOW! The ultimate goal of the Redevelopment Plan is to enable the Vision established in Cramer Hill Now of a green urban village connected to the riverfront with restored opportunities for economic development, improved institutions and more quality housing.

The Plan identifies a portion of Cramer Hill as "areas in need of redevelopment" and the remainder as an "area in need of rehabilitation". Land designated for redevelopment is primarily along the waterfront and at the perimeter of the neighborhood, including Ablett Village, Centennial Village and all parcels along the Delaware and Cooper Rivers. Most of the residential and commercial fabric of Cramer Hill is located within the area "in need of rehabilitation", designated for upgrades making residents eligible to receive assistance for critical home repairs and enabling the conversion of side lots to yards and gardens.

CAMDEN GREENWAY CIRCUIT TRAILS (2016)

A key component of the Greater Philadelphia Circuit Trails, the Camden plan provides a comprehensive connectivity plan for Camden county and the region, identifying existing and future trail connections and expanding opportunities for access to regional amenities via bicycle and walking trails. This plan is uniquely relevant for Cramer Hill as it describes a vision for a fully connected riverfront.

/// BICYCLE NETWORK IMPROVEMENTS (2016)

The plan establishes a network of greenways along the waterways throughout the city connecting to the regional Circuit Trail. It calls for pedestrian upgrades, bike routes, and bike paths along with critical upgrades and repairs to existing sidewalks.

/// CAMDEN PARKS & OPEN SPACE PLAN (2020)

The plan establishes a vision to ensure access to a high-quality park within a 10-minute walk for all Camden residents. The plan address the need for spaces promoting social gatherings, exercise, and flooding mitigation. The plan identifies priority areas according to four main categories: Equity, Absorb, Protect, and Cool. It focuses on the need to support communities with historic under-investment, address stormwater challenges, minimize coastal and riverine flooding, and mitigate urban heat islands.

/// CRAMER HILL TRANSFORMATION PLAN (2020)

Funded by a HUD Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant, the Cramer Hill Transformation Plan was the result of a two-year community-driven planning process targeting the redevelopment of the Ablett Village public housing site along with improved socio-economic outcomes for Ablett Village residents and a set of neighborhood improvements benefiting the entire Cramer Hill community. The Cramer Hill Transformation Plan informed a successful Choice Implementation Grant application leveraging \$35M of federal funds towards housing and neighborhood investments.

/// CAMDEN HEALTH ELEMENT (2021)

The plan establishes a policy framework to help improve the physical and emotional health of Camden residents. The Health Element provides a high-level vision and concrete strategies to promote health as a priority for Camden’s future growth and development. It describes the relationship between planning and public health, reviews current health conditions and social determinants, and proposes policies and actions to improve the environmental and social conditions for better health for all residents. This is intended to be adopted into the city’s master plan.



Community Vision

Residents' vision for the future of the neighborhood embraces change while preserving the features that make Cramer Hill a unique and attractive community to live.

Cramer Hill will embrace a future as a **regional destination** while maintaining its character as a **safe and quiet village** within the city.

A **walkable community** with a **vibrant commercial corridor** that serves the needs of its residents and reflects the **identity** of the people who call it home.

It will preserve its unique **connection with nature** and build on its **cultural diversity** to improve quality of life for all residents and ensure **equitable access** to housing, education, services, amenities and economic opportunity.

A community where residents have **access to resources and information** and feel **empowered** to create positive change for themselves, their families and their neighbors.

Guiding Principles

Four principles guide the strategies described in this Neighborhood Plan. They express essential values discussed during the planning process and serve as parameters against which proposed strategies were evaluated.

Resiliency

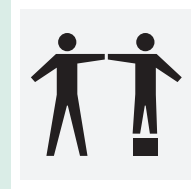
Ensure the capacity of individuals, families, organizations, institutions, businesses within the community to “survive, adapt, and grow no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience.”



(100 Resilient Cities, Rockefeller Foundation)

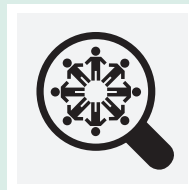
Equity

Equal access to housing, services, amenities, education and economic opportunities that allow individuals and families to pursue a life of their own choosing.



Identity

The collective identity that indicates particular and distinguishing features of a community. Factors that shape the unique identity of a community include spatial configuration, architecture, cultural, racial, and ethnic composition.



Empowerment

The process of enabling individuals and communities to actively participate and be part of the solutions that address their needs and aspirations.







Neighborhood Priorities

**Five priorities guide
the recommendations
included in this plan**

Housing

Preserve and expand housing options across income and household sizes

River Avenue

Maximize River Avenue's potential as a thriving business corridor and focal point for community life

Environment & Infrastructure

Upgrade neighborhood systems for improved quality of life, future growth and resilience to the impact of climate change

Community

Expand opportunities for community life and vibrancy

Land Use & Zoning

Revisit zoning and land use standards to reflect the community vision for the future

1 HOUSING

Preserve and expand housing options across incomes and household sizes

Much has changed with respect to housing conditions since the last neighborhood plan prepared for Cramer Hill. Although there has been no major development activity for many years, small and incremental investments made by local property owners and non-profit organizations have contributed to maintain the existing housing stock reasonably stable and attractive to low- and moderate-income families. Homeownership has remained reasonably stable and City efforts to address vacancy have helped stabilize residential blocks. But the confluence of recent neighborhood investments with the upcoming redevelopment of Ablett Village, via the HUD Choice Neighborhoods Implementation (CNI) grant, have the potential to significantly impact the local housing market. That, combined with a growing housing demand in the region and shifting demographics will most certainly result in development pressure and concerns over displacement and gentrification. Preparing the neighborhood for the next ten years requires a balanced approach to preservation and development with multiple strategies targeting both homeownership and rental housing and ensuring that Cramer Hill residents are able to remain in the community while creating opportunities for future residents to move in.

1.1 Preserve and expand homeownership opportunities

When residents speak of what they love about Cramer Hill, repeatedly the most prized asset is the sense of 'home' fostered by a multi-generational community where homeowners take pride in their houses, know their neighbors, and recognize local business owners. Homeownership is a central component of Cramer Hill's stability, but it has been slowly declining over the past decades. Reversing that trend is a key priority for the next 10 years. Likewise, as demand for the neighborhood grows, it is also important to prioritize affordability and avoid the risks of displacement and gentrification. Strategies to preserve and expand homeownership will help achieve these goals.



WHAT WE HEARD

- Property taxes and the costs of maintaining a home are high and sometimes prohibitive for residents on a modest income.
- There is growing concern about gentrification and pressure on existing homeowners to sell (wholesale homebuyers, home for cash, investors).
- High demand for housing in the neighborhood encourages conversion from owner-occupied to rental housing.
- Existing homes do not meet a broad variety of household needs and types (lack of accessibility and limited sizes, limiting options for extended families and multigenerational households).

a. Advocate for real estate tax relief programs to protect long-term residents from dramatic property value increases.

Rising property taxes are a top concern for long-term homeowners in the neighborhood. In today's market, this is an especially valid concern, considering rising home prices which directly impact tax rates. The state of New Jersey offers a range of property tax relief programs to help mitigate those concerns. Programs such as the Senior Freeze Program and Homestead Benefit Program help eligible homeowners with reimbursement of tax increases and tax credits. But tax relief initiatives at the local level may provide additional incentives to homeowners who invest in home repairs and upgrades. Tax abatement programs such as the one implemented by the City of Philadelphia exempt homeowners for all or part of the improvements made to their property.

b. Assisting long-term homeowners with home repairs and upgrades

The housing stock in Cramer Hill is largely defined by older homes, most of which were built before the 1950s. Although these same homes provide much of the charm and character that define the neighborhood, they also present challenges associated with ongoing and costly repairs, which are especially significant for households with limited or fixed incomes.

Assistance programs targeting homeowners with basic repairs will go a long way in helping residents stay in their homes. Programs like the Basic Systems Repair Program in Philadelphia provide a good model of government assistance with free emergency repairs to correct dangerous building conditions. In Camden, the myHome Home Repair Program managed by Saint Joseph's Carpenter Society offers up to \$5,000 in grants to homeowners in target areas towards health and safety renovation projects.

Qualified residents can use the funds to upgrade heating systems, install new roofs, new windows, and other essential improvements. This program has been available to Cramer Hill residents for a couple of years and has already benefited 67 families. New home repair programs should explore providing larger grants of up to \$10,000 to support residential façade improvements and sidewalk repairs to improve neighborhood conditions in tandem with enhancements to each home. A partnership between the City, Camden Community Partnership, and Saint Joseph's Carpenter Society, and other agencies can help secure a steady funding stream to maximize the reach of such programs in the neighborhood.



St. Joseph's Carpenter Society rehab program offers grants to homeowners in specific neighborhoods towards health and safety renovation projects. Qualified residents can use the funds for heating systems, new roofs, new windows, and neighborhood specific projects such as sidewalk repairs and porch lights.

c. Connect Cramer Hill renters to homeownership opportunities

A key step in expanding homeownership is to provide opportunities to local renters with well-established roots in the community. Residents with local friends and family ties, with children in local schools and jobs in the area may want to buy a home in the neighborhood and could benefit from programs assisting them in that process.

// Prepare residents with homebuyer counseling: Homebuyer counseling programs (for first-time homebuyers and others) are excellent tools for preparing prospective homebuyers for homeownership by teaching families the basics of financial management, the mortgage process and the responsibilities of owning a home. They also share information about financial incentives available at the state, county and local level including down payment assistance and forgivable grants. There are several organizations in the region focused on these types of programs, but the Homeowner's Academy offered by Saint Joseph's Carpenter Society is well known in the City of Camden and an excellent resource available to Cramer Hill residents. Regular outreach campaigns in the neighborhood will help identify interested residents planning to take their first steps towards homeownership or residents who are interested in homeownership after a period of renting.

// Explore vacant property rehabilitation programs: Look into programs like the Trenton housing program which designates individual residents as redevelopers of single properties and provides financial assistance to help them bring their properties up to code.



Approximately 20 families living in Ablett Village have demonstrated interest in pursuing homeownership opportunities in the neighborhood. To support their goals, the Housing Authority of the City of Camden has joined efforts with St. Joseph's Carpenter Society to enroll these families in the Homeowners' Academy.

d. Address predatory buyers

As a neighborhood on the rise, Cramer Hill has become a target for irregular real estate practices that push long-term homeowners to sell their properties at prices far below market values. Known as wholesale homebuyers or "we buy houses" businesses, these buyers target senior homeowners and people who are going through financial hardship using intrusive methods like repeated phone calls, letters and visits to convince owners to sell their properties. Properties are then purchased at a low price and immediately sold for much higher prices or converted into rental properties. This is a trend throughout the country and one that threatens to undermine homeownership and neighborhood stability if not addressed.

Homeowner education programs exist to educate and inform residents about their rights and protect their wealth. An ongoing

outreach campaign can help disseminate information and prevent real estate deals that deprive homeowners from their assets. At the City level, establishing a law to curb irregular practices in the real estate industry would go a long way in deterring unsolicited offers and ensure transparency in the process. The City of Philadelphia offers a good reference with the recently passed law regulating residential wholesalers. A similar effort could be considered in the City of Camden.

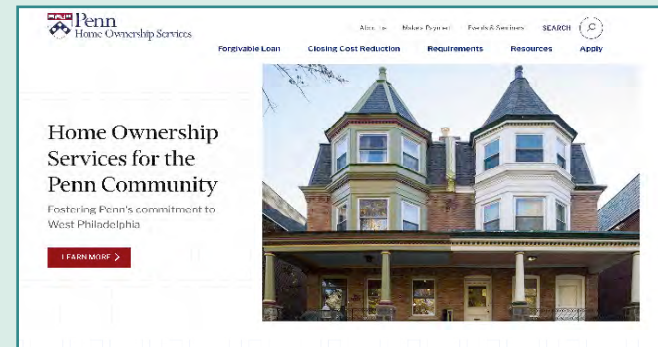
The City should also explore tools such as deed restrictions and other regulations to incentivize owner-occupants over investors.



The City of Philadelphia amended its City Code in 2021 to regulate the solicitation of purchases of real estate property. Under the new law, 'wholesalers' are required to obtain a license and comply with the same requirements imposed to real estate agents. This effort aims at curbing predatory tactics that typically impact longtime homeowners and heirs of deceased property owners.

e. Establish partnerships with major employers toward homeownership incentive programs.

Employer homeownership programs assist employees with home improvement grants, down payment assistance and short-term loans. The recent influx of major companies to Camden provides a unique opportunity to establish partnerships with local employers and promote homeownership through financial incentives targeting areas that are well served with infrastructure and services. Cramer Hill would greatly benefit from such initiatives as it offers a unique residential setting in the City attractive to working families.



The Penn Homeownership Services assists qualified employees from the University of Pennsylvania with home purchases and home improvements in the West Philadelphia area. The program includes opportunities for forgivable loans, refinancing options, home improvement grants and educational workshops.

f. Remove barriers to redevelopment of vacant properties for future homeownership opportunities.

There are approximately 500 vacant properties in Cramer Hill. These include vacant lots and abandoned structures burdened with tax liens and title issues, creating significant barriers to acquisition and redevelopment. Removing these barriers and streamlining land transfer and the acquisition processes will help get vacant properties back into the housing inventory and on the tax rolls. Scattered vacant parcels located in otherwise stable residential blocks should be prioritized for affordable homeownership with new homes that match the scale and character of surrounding properties. Within those areas, City owned properties could form a solid first homeownership redevelopment phase.



In the past 5 years, Camden Community Partnership secured funding for St. Joseph's Carpenter Society to acquire and renovate 20 vacant properties in the neighborhood. Those properties, previously owned by the CRA, sit in otherwise stable blocks and within walking distance from schools and neighborhood amenities.

1.2 Preserve and expand rental housing opportunities to meet neighborhood trends

Approximately 1800 housing units in Cramer Hill are renter-occupied, representing 58% of all homes in the neighborhood. One third of those units are located in rental communities such as Ablett Village (public housing), Centennial Village and Cramer Hill Apartments. The remaining units are standard rowhomes, duplexes or single-family homes owned and managed by small property owners. The redevelopment of Ablett Village by the Housing Authority of the City of Camden and Michaels Development via the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative will add close to 400 new rental units to the existing housing stock. This initiative will have a significant impact on the local housing market by introducing modern and affordable living options to a community that has seen little to no housing development for the past 20 years. Although most of the future units will serve as replacement housing for Ablett Village residents, the new development will set new standards for existing properties and can potentially impact housing prices in the area. Preserving the neighborhood affordability while improving the quality of the existing rental housing stock and expanding housing options to meet current and future demand are three top priorities for the future of rental housing in Cramer Hill.



WHAT WE HEARD

- // Code violations in rental properties and lack of enforcement result in dangerous conditions for residents.
- // Absentee landlords are not responsive to tenants' needs and do not maintain properties to acceptable standards by tenants and their neighbors.
- // Lack of rental options for multigenerational households forces families into overcrowded conditions.
- // There are few options for good quality rental housing for single households.

a. Preserve and upgrade existing rental homes as safe and livable housing options

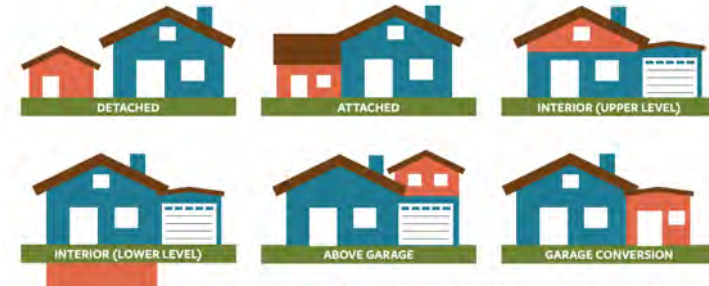
- // Empower residents to protect their rights as tenants: Landlords have the responsibility under New Jersey law to maintain their rental property in safe and habitable conditions. Comments received during the planning process indicate that property upkeep is inconsistent, resulting in substandard living conditions for numerous families in the neighborhood. Residents are often unaware of their rights as tenants and the resources available to help address potential issues. Information dissemination and tenant education programs will help residents navigate through services and resources available to address their concerns. Organizations such as Saint Joseph's Carpenter Society, South Jersey Legal Services, Legal Services of New Jersey and the Rutgers Law Clinic offer educational sessions about and legal services to City residents and can help connect them to other resources in the City.
- // Assist landlords in their efforts to maintain and improve rental properties: Small landlords who own and manage rental homes in the neighborhood could benefit from grants, short-term loans and other financial incentives to help them maintain and upgrade their properties. Programs like the Rental Improvement Fund in the City of Philadelphia provide a useful reference for landlord assistance initiatives available to property owners who own few units and commit to maintaining their properties affordable to low and moderate income residents.

1.3 Diversify housing options to accommodate the needs of all residents

Input received from the community pointed to an unmet demand for housing types geared to small households, special needs and multigenerational families. A variety of housing solutions can help fill that gap:



Community discussions around housing types



Accessory dwelling units provide an affordable and flexible housing option for larger families (Source:AARP)



Example of accessory dwelling unit built above garage (Photo: AARP)

a. Accessory dwelling units (ADUs)

ADUs are small homes or apartments that exist on the same property as a single-family home. ADUs provide an affordable and flexible housing option for large families, older adults and young residents. Residential blocks to the north of 27th Street could easily accommodate this housing option whether it be in new infill homes or within existing properties occupied by single family homes.

b. Multigenerational multifamily housing

There is an increasing number of households where grandparents are responsible for raising their grandchildren. Future senior and special needs projects in the neighborhood can incorporate larger units in their mix to accommodate the needs of these families.

c. Infill multifamily apartments

Small multifamily apartment buildings are a simple but effective way to introduce smaller housing options in the neighborhood. Vacant corner lots, for example, lend themselves to stacked flats and other multifamily building types accommodating studios, one- and two-bedroom homes.

d. Mixed use buildings

Apartments over retail are another effective way to introduce smaller units in a compact setting. Properties along River Avenue are well suited for that building type and would provide a positive addition to the commercial corridor.

e. Adaptive reuse

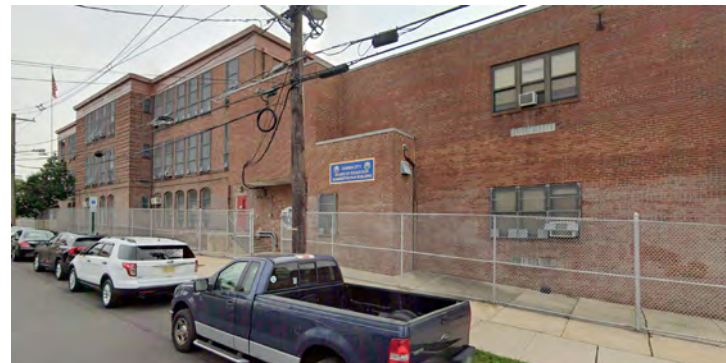
Cramer Hill has a few remaining vacant or underutilized properties with great potential for conversion into multifamily housing. The old Washington School building located on Cambridge Street presents great potential as a senior or special needs development located in the heart of the neighborhood. With approximately 1,800 sf of space in 2-3 floors, the old school building is well suited for an adaptive reuse project favoring senior or special needs housing. State financing options such as Historic Tax Credits, Aspire Program and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits can provide the funding required to revitalize this structure and re-integrate it into the fabric of the community as a much needed option for residents to live and age in the neighborhood of their choice.



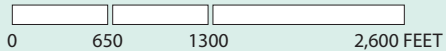
Example of small multifamily apartment building



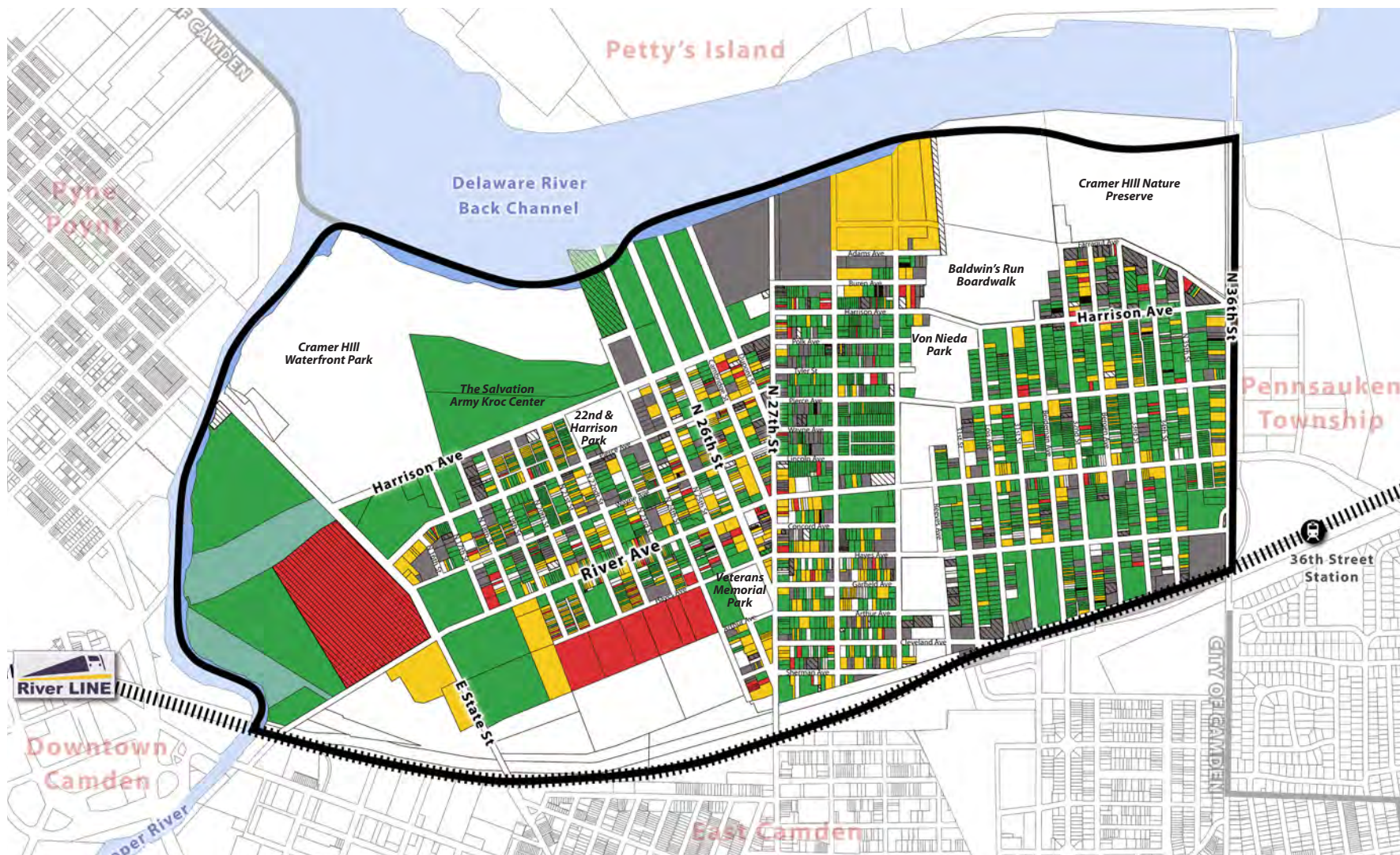
Example of mixed use building with residential uses above retail



Washington School Building



Property Conditions Map



||||| River Line Light Rail



River Line Station

Green Good

Yellow Fair

Red Poor

Black Suggest Demolition

Grey Vacant Land

Hatched City Owned Lot



RIVER AVENUE

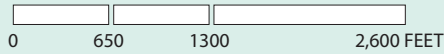
**“Small businesses are
the heart of this City”**

Miguel Arriaga, Cramer Hill business owner

Maximize River Avenue’s potential as a thriving business corridor and focal point for community life

As the main street of Cramer Hill, River Avenue reflects much of the neighborhood’s cultural diversity through a wide range of small businesses and services. A recent survey performed by the planning team identified approximately 60 businesses located between East State Street and 36th Street. From restaurants and food stores to auto services, beauty salons and other neighborhood establishments the corridor provides local residents with access to a convenient mix of shops and services within short distance from their homes.

Compared to other commercial corridors in Camden, River Avenue businesses rely more heavily on the demand generated by Cramer Hill residents since the neighborhood is somewhat isolated from the rest of the City, and River Avenue does not experience as much thru traffic as other corridors in town. But the significant improvements made in neighborhood infrastructure, housing, parks and economic development will shift that dynamic and help expand opportunities for local businesses through increased demand generated by new residents, workers and visitors to neighborhood amenities. In the next ten years, River Avenue can live up to its potential as an attractive focal point for the community and a thriving node of economic activity.



Commercial Corridor





WHAT WE HEARD

- /// Make the corridor more attractive. Address empty lots and vacant storefronts.
- /// Diversify the types of businesses and services along the corridor.
- /// Keep the corridor clean and safe for businesses and shoppers.
- /// Address parking. Limited parking availability deters people from shopping on River Ave.
- /// Support entrepreneurship with flexible spaces and affordable leases. Help existing businesses with simplified permitting processes.

2.1 Support existing businesses

As the Cramer Hill community moves to re-imagine River Avenue's potential as a thriving neighborhood corridor, local businesses will greatly benefit from financial and technical support to strengthen the physical character of the corridor and establish the organizational structure required to manage and maintain a dynamic business environment. Recent reforms to the state UEZ program have restored funding opportunities for small businesses in the state of New Jersey, bringing in a potential stream of incentives, grants and resources to commercial corridors like River Avenue. Five critical steps will take the community in that direction:

a. Strengthen the Cramer Hill Business Association

A thriving business corridor requires a solid organizational structure in support of existing and future business owners. Although there already is a well-established network of business owners in the neighborhood, a formalized approach to collaboration would help advance the community goals for the corridor. A well-organized business association can help recruit new businesses, establish a consistent branding and identity for the corridor, generate the leadership and representation required to seek funding opportunities, provide technical assistance, plan events, address safety concerns and share resources. A short-term goal in that direction includes training and capacity building opportunities for existing business owners in preparation for the roles and responsibilities associated with formalizing a business association. Exchange sessions with well-established associations in the region will greatly benefit Cramer Hill business owners, providing them with information and an opportunity to 'learn the ropes' from successful associations and

set themselves up for a positive start. LAEDA (Latin American Economic Development Association) will be a key partner in that effort, assisting businesses in the process of formalizing their association. As an economic development organization dedicated to strengthening entrepreneurship and supporting small businesses, LAEDA can also provide technical assistance to small businesses and emerging entrepreneurs.

b. Make the corridor safe, clean, and attractive

Although Cramer Hill is a generally safe neighborhood, business owners and residents expressed concerns about safety conditions along River Avenue, reporting incidents of armed robberies and thefts in recent years. Safety concerns impact the physical appearance of businesses who resort to extreme and sometimes unattractive security measures to protect themselves - fences, cameras, and controlled access are some examples of solutions adopted by some of the businesses along the corridor. Those same concerns also deter residents from supporting local shops as they feel unsafe walking on the avenue or from their homes. Residents reported using their cars for short trips to River Avenue, further intensifying traffic and parking issues and limiting the kind of foot traffic that is critical for the success of a commercial corridor.

A mix of strategies addressing the reality and perception of safety will help address local concerns while also enhancing the overall environment along River Avenue.

Establish a dedicated maintenance crew along River Avenue. Maintenance teams can help keep the corridor clean while providing additional eyes on the street. This model has been proven to work with services provided in recent years by the Camden Special Services District (CSSD). Residents and business owners reported a visible change in safety and neighborhood appearance when CSSD served the area. Unfortunately, services were interrupted in 2018 due to funding limitations. A partnership between Camden Community Partnership and Cramer Hill businesses will help identify new funding streams in support of that program.



The Main Street New Jersey Program provides a helpful working framework for commercial corridors. Their Four-Point Approach includes a mix of organizational, economic, design and promotional strategies for thriving corridors.

Develop a streetscape improvement program: River Avenue has gone through significant upgrades to the road infrastructure in recent years. Funded by a NJDOT grant, the project brought upgrades to underground infrastructure as well as improved street lighting and handicap accessible sidewalks. This effort can now be followed by a program of ‘soft’ streetscape improvements to help enhance the public realm with a cohesive identity and a welcoming environment for shoppers and businesses. A first improvement phase should prioritize the stretch between 24th Street and Bergen Avenue which includes 30 existing businesses within a 0.7 mile distance. The future streetscape program should address enhanced sidewalks, opportunities for street trees, improved street lighting, site furnishings and public art.

C. Establish a storefront improvement program

Several Cramer Hill businesses benefited from the Camden Business Façade Improvement Program originally established by the City of Camden back in 2011. The program helped qualified business owners in their efforts to maintain, rebuild or renovate storefronts and building facades with improvements that included masonry repair, window replacement, painting, lighting, landscaping, and fencing. With the newly restored UEZ program, the opportunity for funding in support of storefront improvements provides businesses and property owners a unique chance to upgrade their properties and to create a consistent identity for the corridor. A set of design guidelines will help establish a unified look for businesses and reinforce a specific character for River Avenue.



Example of streetscape improvements enhancing the character of a commercial corridor



The Cramer Hill Funeral Home on River Ave utilized UEZ funds for façade improvements

d. Establish a calendar of community events

Seasonal events provide wonderful opportunities to attract visitors and shoppers to the neighborhood and promote a festive environment that benefits business owners and residents. Input received from community members identified the desire to see street fairs, flea markets, holiday events and festivals as part of the neighborhood calendar. These types of events will favor businesses and create opportunities for community gatherings and celebrations of the neighborhood's cultural diversity. Local businesses can take a lead role in organizing events along River Avenue. Holidays like Christmas, Cinco de Mayo or other cultural celebrations can generate significant foot traffic and provide local businesses the opportunity to showcase their services and products.



A schedule community events celebrating local history, culture and community will enliven public spaces and build community.

2.2 Support entrepreneurship that celebrates the neighborhood's cultural diversity

As the City of Camden works to develop a welcoming business environment for small businesses, special attention should be given to entrepreneurship opportunities that celebrate the City's racial and cultural diversity. In Cramer Hill, the majority of the neighborhood population are immigrants and/or people of color. Several of the businesses along River Avenue cater to that market which only tends to grow in future years following demographic trends. River Avenue businesses can build on that trend and create a niche for themselves with a focus on products and programs that cannot be easily found in other parts of the City. Likewise, a targeted support to entrepreneurship among immigrants and/or people of color can lead to successful results as these groups represent a growing force as small business owners making significant contributions to the local economy.



Miguel's Pharmacy promotes cultural events in the community

a. Create opportunities for pop-up business events along the corridor

Pop-up events are affordable and effective ways to showcase new services and products from small businesses that may not have a permanent retail presence. Pop-ups can help activate the corridor, expanding options for goods around seasonal events. Thematic events organized around foods, clothing or crafts can create interest and increase foot traffic along the avenue. This is also a good opportunity to activate vacant storefronts



Pop-up shops can activate vacant spaces, bring seasonal activity and create opportunity for local entrepreneurs

b. Focus on food as an anchor activity for the commercial corridor

Cramer Hill is already well known for its variety of multicultural restaurants and food establishments. Businesses like Santana's Bakery already attract visitors from outside of the neighborhood for their special baked goods. Recruiting new food related businesses to join the River Avenue corridor will help reinforce that identity. Local food businesses should also coordinate their Initiatives with neighborhood events that draw customers from the broader region. Weekend soccer games at the Kroc Center could provide a good opportunity for a local restaurant to sell snacks and beverages during games. Special events at the Waterfront Park or Von Nieda Park can be enhanced with food trucks and stands representing River Avenue restaurants.



Santana Bakery is an anchor on River Avenue serving neighborhood residents and attracting customers from the surrounding area

c. Explore micro-retail and small business spaces

Small retail spaces provide entrepreneurs who are starting a new business a great opportunity to test out the market for their products with minimal investments in physical retail space. These types of spaces can be rented for short periods of time and at affordable prices and can help activate vacant storefronts, bringing new energy and additional opportunities to expand foot traffic on the avenue. Micro-retail spaces can vary in size and shape, occupying vacant spaces, kiosks or simply a section of an established business. Micro-retail is also a good option for online businesses who wish to establish small ‘brick and mortar’ footprints to promote their products.



Example of micro-retail space

d. Celebrate neighborhood identity through art

Community based artists can be integral partners of a vibrant commercial corridor. As small entrepreneurs, their work – whether it be fine arts, music, poetry or crafts – create interest and help attract visitors to the avenue. A recent series of mural projects in Cramer Hill demonstrates the power of arts in bringing communities together. A concrete step in that direction can be the establishment of a neighborhood art committee to identify local artists and explore ways to expose their work in the community. Concerts along the avenue, arts & crafts pop-up markets, dance classes at Von Niede Park are just a few examples of opportunities connecting art with economic activity along the avenue.



A collaboration between residents and local artists resulted in a new mural along River Avenue.

e. Establish a local business incubator space

Business incubators help startup initiatives with free or low-cost workspace, access to resources, technical assistance and working capital. Incubator spaces can help support new entrepreneurship initiatives creating economic opportunities for families and individuals in the community. Coordination between government, local institutions and non-profit organizations can help identify fields of interest and identify the partnerships required to bring that concept together. A food-based business incubator, for example, could benefit from the know-how of organizations like Cathedral Kitchen to help establish a working business model in support of new food-based initiatives. An incubator space on River Avenue would energize the corridor and create a focal point of economic activity with positive impact for the community. The old St. Anthony of Padua school building could provide just the ideal space for this initiative with its central location on the avenue and a solid infrastructure.



The Factory Workers in Collingswood is a good example of a makers space

2.3 Improve access and mobility options along the corridor

a. Optimize the use of existing parking resources

Input received from business owners and residents indicated that limited parking availability along River Avenue discourages shoppers from supporting local businesses. The City can work with local businesses to identify areas of high parking demand and devise most appropriate parking solutions. Ultimately, strategies addressing this issue will combine a more efficient use of existing parking spaces and expanded parking options. Two initial recommendations in that direction include the following:

- /// Prioritize on-street parking spaces for customers and short-term shopping visits. Parking spaces on River Avenue and some of the side streets can be optimized with 1-hour and 2-hour parking rules.
- /// Identify opportunities for shared parking resources: parking lots located on River Avenue that are not used during the corridor's business hours can add additional parking resources to local businesses. More remote spaces can be made available to business owners and their employees, releasing on-street spaces to shoppers. Church owned parking lots can also be made available outside of church services.



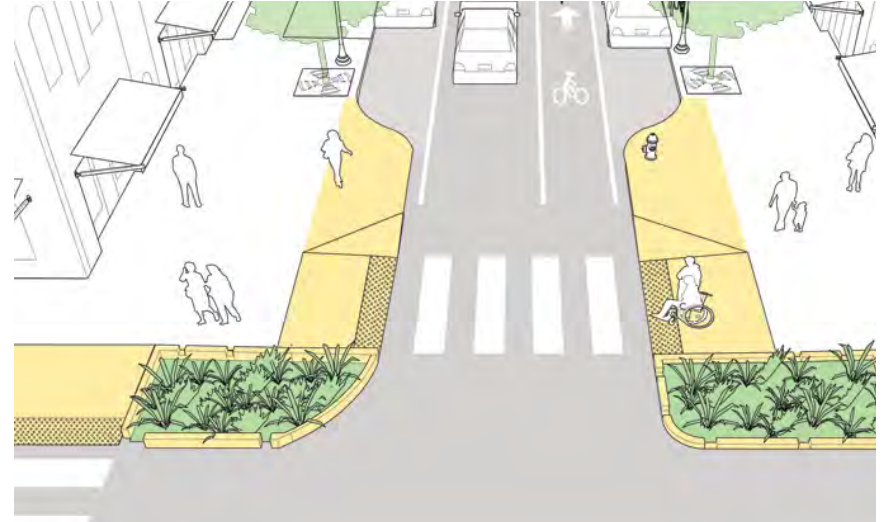
Underutilized parking lots on River Avenue can serve as additional parking resources for local businesses

b. Create a safe environment for pedestrians

Pedestrian safety is a top priority for a thriving commercial corridor. Whether arriving to the area by car, transit or foot, shoppers ultimately experience the corridor as pedestrians. Significant improvements were made to River Avenue as part of the most recent NJDOT initiative (2019), many of which aimed at improving walkability. Future enhancements should target small-scale initiatives including:

- /// Keep sidewalks clear of obstacles and ensure consistency from block to block: Narrow sidewalks along River Avenue are often encumbered with utilities fixtures and others physical obstacles. Efforts should be made to address these obstacles through removal, signage and alternative paths.
- /// Ensure consistent sidewalks from block to block: Work with property owners to install, replace and repair broken sidewalks.
- /// Adopt traffic calming solutions to slow down traffic and

reduce speed: solutions can include curb bump outs, raised pedestrian crosswalks and signage that prioritizes pedestrian traffic on the corridor. It is important to remember that River Avenue is on the school route for several schools in the neighborhood. Prioritizing pedestrians favor families and local school age children.



Raised crosswalks and curb extensions are examples of effective traffic calming solutions (from N.A.C.T.O – Urban Street Design Guide)

2.4 Re-imagine the intersection at River Ave and 27th Street as a focal point for the community

The intersection of River Ave and 27th Street presents a unique opportunity to convert an underutilized section of the commercial corridor into a neighborhood landmark and an attractive focal point for community activity. Formed by the intersection of three roads – River Avenue, 27th Street, and Cambridge Street – the area is uniquely configured to support the types of community-oriented events residents would like to see happen in Cramer Hill. From flea markets to food stands and restaurants with outdoor seating, from seasonal events to just simply a place where families can walk to for an ice cream on a summer afternoon, the area has the potential to become a local destination for residents and visitors from other parts of the City and region.

a. Promote beautification and placemaking initiatives

The transformation of the 27th Street intersection into a community focal point will start with a series of incremental steps based on temporary, low-budget physical interventions that enhance user's experience of the area without fundamentally changing its overall configuration. Key steps include:

- Carve out opportunities for permanent and temporary pedestrian spaces throughout the intersection. A combination of solutions like painted bump outs, street lighting, street furniture, banners and others will help create attractive spaces for community gatherings.



Temporary and low-budget improvements can help create a new community gathering space on River Avenue (from N.A.C.T.O – Urban Street Design Guide)

- Identify an opportunity for a street mural celebrating neighborhood character and identity. Camden has a wealth of artists representing the diversity of the Cramer Hill community who can partner with residents to design and implement an attractive asphalt mural marking that neighborhood gateway. Other public art projects such as murals and façade treatments can complement that concept and reinforce the neighborhoods' character through unique themes and colors.
- Establish alternative traffic routes for special community events. A closer look at current traffic patterns may suggest the need for changes that favor pedestrian access and safety. The community should also work with the City and Camden County Police Department to establish alternative routes that allow for partial or total closure of the intersection during special community events.

b. Promote mixed-use development through public-private partnerships

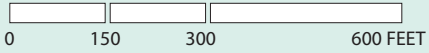
- Work with City agencies and private property owners around the five-point intersection to rehabilitate buildings and reinforce the use of ground floor spaces for retail and commercial purposes. Corner buildings along the five-point intersection have the unique advantage of visibility and exposure and can attract a number of businesses that benefit from pedestrian traffic and visibility, including food related businesses. A targeted assistance program to help property owners in their efforts to reopen their building facades and improve their appearance will go a long way in reactivating an important neighborhood intersection.
- Partner with property owners and CRA to identify infill redevelopment opportunities targeting medium density housing and new retail spaces. As of 2021, there were approximately 96 vacant lots and 32 empty structures in the immediate area around the five-point intersection. A detailed assessment of property conditions, market demand and collaboration with property owners and developers will inform potential redevelopment approaches that combine new housing options with ground floor spaces favoring non-residential uses.
- Revisit zoning and parking standards established by the Redevelopment Plan to favor additional retail and mixed-use projects (see Priority 5)



2699 River Ave provides a perfect example of the mixed-use character of River Avenue. With space for ground floor retail activities and residential units in upper floors, this small and well maintained building exemplifies an efficient use of land with a positive street presence. While currently vacant, the retail space can anchor the district with options for food and beverages including small restaurants, ethnic markets, ice cream and coffee shops. The space could also serve as a pop-up for small businesses to showcase their products for short periods of time.

c. Establish the Gateway Plaza planning and management committee

To further advance the strategies described above, a planning committee should be established bringing together local stakeholders to help establish a revitalization concept plan for the area.



River Ave & 27th Street Area Vacancy



- Vacant Lot
- Empty Structure
- Underutilized Lot



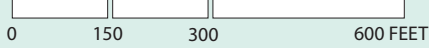
River Ave heading Northeast



27th St heading Southwest



River Ave heading Southwest



River Ave & 27th Street Area Opportunities



- a. Beautification and placemaking**
 - Pedestrian friendly spaces
 - Street mural celebrating neighborhood
 - Space for community events
 - Alternative traffic route for community events
- b. Mixed use development**
 - Public private partnerships
 - Micro business and start up opportunities
- c. Shared parking**
 - Church lots
 - Commercial lots
- d. Gardening hub**
 - Community garden and educational programs
- e. Infill Housing**
 - Small multi-family projects
- f. Facade improvement program**
 - River Avenue businesses
- g. 2699 River Avenue**
 - Recruit business for anchor activity



Birds-eye-view of River Ave & 27th St Intersection



Temporary improvements and low-cost solutions can help transform the intersection into a focal point for community life



3

ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

Upgrade neighborhood systems for improved quality of life, future growth and resilience to the impact of climate change.

Cramer Hill has experienced significant changes over the past ten years. The community vision for a reclaimed waterfront described on the 2009 Waterfront Plan is being realized through a series of important infrastructure and environmental projects: From the daylighting of Baldwin's Run to the clean-up and redevelopment of the old landfill into a regional park and recreation facility, these investments have laid out the ground work for the revitalization of Cramer Hill as a resilient community in harmony with nature while meeting the needs of modern urban living. Looking into the future, long term plans must be in place to continue to prepare the neighborhood for climate change. But, equally important, is the need to address long term concerns that impact the day-to-day of those who live, work and invest in the neighborhood. In the next ten years, Cramer Hill will embark on a concerted effort to repair and upgrade neighborhood streets, mitigate the impact of climate related events and reconnect residents with their environment.



WHAT WE HEARD

- /// Flooding issues have been minimized in recent years as a result of investments in stormwater infrastructure but there are still reports of problem areas.
- /// Street paving and inconsistent sidewalks are a problem for residents who have reported several incidents due to hazardous conditions for both drivers and pedestrians along neighborhood streets.
- /// Dark streets are another top concern for residents. They report feeling unsafe on neighborhood streets and avoid walking when it is dark. Dark streets also discourage families from letting their kids outside.
- /// Traffic generated by local schools create issues in residential areas, especially at drop-off and pick-up hours.

3.1 Identify opportunities for upgrades to the street system as green and complete streets

A coordinated effort between the City of Camden, CCMUA, Camden County Public Works, PSE&G, Camden Community Partnership and community stakeholders will help prioritize opportunities for coordinated infrastructure upgrades addressing pavement, sidewalks, stormwater, underground infrastructure, tree planting and street lighting. Critical steps in that direction have been taken with a Citywide assessment of street conditions and a county initiative identifying target corridors for upgrades to the underground infrastructure. Current improvements along Harrison Avenue and future housing projects associated with the Cramer Hill Choice Neighborhoods Implementation also provide an opportunity for significant infrastructure upgrades. With the potential of additional federal funds in support of infrastructure projects, this is a unique opportunity to implement a comprehensive set of improvements with long lasting benefits to the neighborhood infrastructure, environment and quality-of-life. The following areas were identified as priorities for coordinated improvements in the next ten years.

a. East State Street

The Cramer Hill Transformation Plan identified the redevelopment of Ablett Village as an opportunity to re-imagine East State Street as a safe and attractive neighborhood corridor connecting residents to key neighborhood amenities. Utilizing the NJDOT's framework of green and complete streets, the plan for East State Street includes the redesign of the road to balance vehicular circulation with safe and attractive spaces for pedestrians and bicycles. The plan also

includes opportunities for green stormwater infrastructure through rain gardens, curb extensions and trees. Replacement of the road's underground infrastructure and enhanced street lighting conditions should be incorporated in the scope of future plans for East State Street.

b. Harrison Avenue

As the main corridor connecting residents to the waterfront, Harrison Avenue plays an important role in the neighborhood circulation. Improvements to the avenue are already underway with green and complete street projects and the improved intersection with East State Street. Other initiatives to complete the effort should include sidewalk repairs on the residential side of the road, enhanced street lighting and tree planting.

c. 27th Street

As one of the main gateways to the neighborhood from East Camden, an improved 27th Street corridor can help alleviate traffic conditions in the area and become an attractive residential corridor leading to the waterfront. Current County plans to upgrade the underground infrastructure provide the opportunity for a comprehensive set of improvements in the context of green and complete streets and in coordination with PSE&G for street lighting. An improved 27th Street will advance housing goals for the neighborhood and opportunities for green stormwater infrastructure.

d. School Routes

Cramer Hill is blessed with the presence of four major schools serving families in the neighborhood. Upgrades to key streets surrounding schools and connecting them to major neighborhood corridors will help improve daily traffic

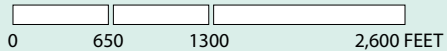
conditions in school areas and encourage families to consider walking, biking and shared rides as viable and safe options for school access. Wayne Avenue, Hayes Avenue and 31st Street are three key corridors to be considered for infrastructure upgrades.

e. Sidewalks

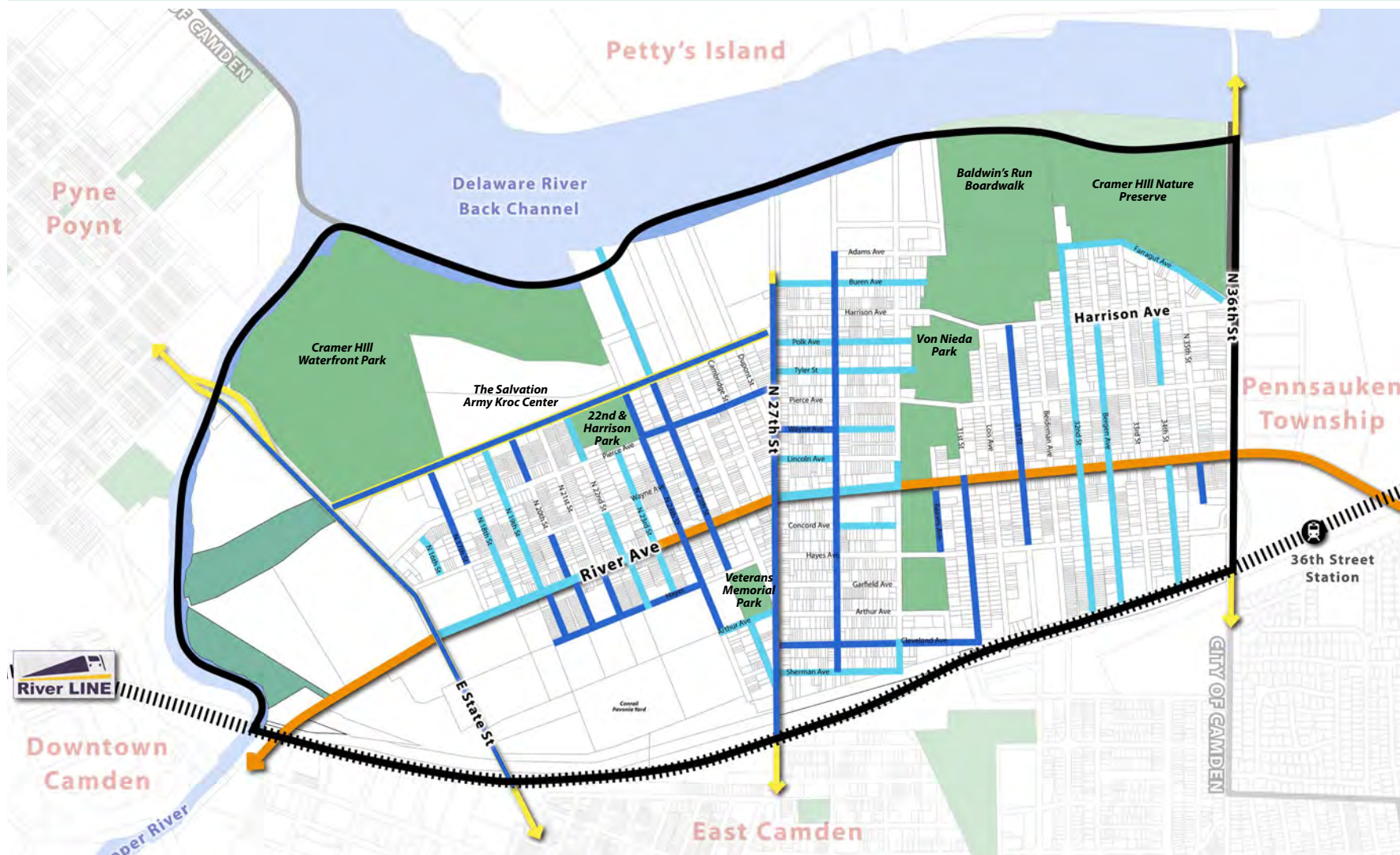
Coordination and potential funding opportunities for sidewalk maintenance and repair should be included in the scope of upgrades for the corridors described above. A potential approach in that direction includes a sidewalk repair program geared to individual property owners with properties along designated corridors. This item can also be part of the Home Repair Program supporting residents in their efforts to upgrade their homes.



The Complete & Green Streets for All Guide provides guidance to NJ municipalities implementing comprehensive street upgrade projects that prioritize equity and fairness in transportation options along with green stormwater infrastructure.



Street Conditions Map



- Commercial Corridor
- Primary Corridor
- River Line Light Rail
- 🚆 River Line Light Rail
- High Priority Street
- Low Priority Street

3.2 Implement a Safe Routes to School Program

Daily school traffic was reported by residents and local school administrators as a key concern in Cramer Hill. Together, schools in the area attract over 2500 children to the neighborhood, generating multiple trips per day, by car, bus, foot and transit. Drop off and pick up hours are particularly stressful for school families and surrounding residents. Although schools have worked individually to minimize traffic and circulation issues, a more comprehensive approach to school access will help look beyond traffic management and identify creative ways to accommodate the needs of staff and students with the needs of surrounding neighbors and the overall community. The Safe Routes to Schools Program provides a good step in that direction, partnering with schools and communities to identify safe and equitable ways to improve access to schools. Supported by the New Jersey Department of Transportation, this program facilitates planning and implementation of projects aimed at reducing traffic and promoting walking and bicycling as safe transportation options. An application for a Safe Routes to School Grant would be a first solid step in that direction.

3.3 Prepare the neighborhood for resilience

The Camden Parks and Open Space Plan identified several sections of Cramer Hill as priority areas for strategic green infrastructure. These areas reflect a 4-point analysis focused on flood risks, urban heat island effect, coastal and riverine flooding, and vulnerability for at-risk residents (see map x). The recommendations outlined below align with that framework describing a set of strategies and initiatives to help prepare the neighborhood for future climate related events:

a. Address flooding areas

Recent investments in stormwater infrastructure have significantly minimized flooding issues in the neighborhood. CCMUA's current efforts to cut off stormwater connections between Pennsauken and Camden will have a significant impact in reducing flow to Cramer Hill and further reduce flooding risks in the area. But input received from residents during the planning process demonstrates that there is still work to be done with a few remaining flood prone areas like River Avenue around Von Nieda Park, Cleveland Avenue and Harrison Avenue. While the City proceeds with its comprehensive efforts to separate combined sewer and stormwater infrastructure, other short-term place-based solutions can be identified to reduce the impact of flooding in the community:

- Install rain gardens in critical flooding areas: Cramer Hill has a well-established tradition of rain gardens as green stormwater management solutions that mitigate flooding

in flood prone areas. Five new gardens were installed in the neighborhood over the past 10 years. The most successful rain garden initiatives are those established through partnerships with local organizations and groups willing to take on the responsibility of maintaining the garden over time. A partnership with the Urban Promise Academy can help identify potential garden locations within their campus or on city owned land along Cleveland Avenue. Likewise, coordinated efforts with St. Anthony of Padua and Camden County Parks can target a new location for a rain garden along River Avenue. This project can be integrated as part of the gardening hub proposed on River and 29th Street discussed under Priority 2. Resident groups can also come together to help install and maintain gardens. CCMUA, The Camden Collaborative Initiative and the Rutgers Water Resources Program are critical partners in these initiatives.

➤ Tackle neighborhood flooding with property based stormwater solutions: Every household and property owner in Cramer Hill can take part in the effort to improve resilience and mitigate the long-term impact of climate change in the community. There are numerous organizations in the region dedicated to education and technical assistance to residential and small commercial property owners looking to implement stormwater solutions on their properties. Camden County Municipal Utility Authority and the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program are two important partners for future community initiatives and who already hold educational events via the Camden Collaborative Initiative. A targeted campaign to Cramer Hill residents could include the following resources:

- A do-it-yourself manual for stormwater solutions
- Classes and technical support
- Financial incentives through grants and discounted supplies (add Collingswood rain barrel / composter



Rain barrel



Adopt-a-Drain program by the Camden Community Partnership

b. Maintain and expand tree coverage on neighborhood streets

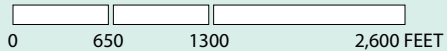
A 2019 assessment of street trees in Cramer Hill shows inconsistent coverage throughout the neighborhood. Property owners are responsible for planting, maintenance and removal of trees fronting their properties. That helps explain a more consistent pattern of healthy and well maintained trees in areas with a higher concentration of owner occupied homes versus the inconsistent coverage around areas with a predominance of rental homes. Addressing and minimizing these discrepancies is an important goal for the next ten years.

There are numerous benefits to street trees. Beyond health and mental benefits, trees can play a key role in offsetting rising temperatures, trapping pollutants and mitigating runoff and flooding. Cramer Hill residents agree that trees can make a significant difference in the neighborhood and have demonstrated interest in working with the City and local organizations such as the New Jersey Tree Foundation to organize tree planting efforts in the area. A proactive effort to assess the conditions of existing street trees and identify opportunities for new planting will address both safety and environmental concerns. This effort should include the following steps:

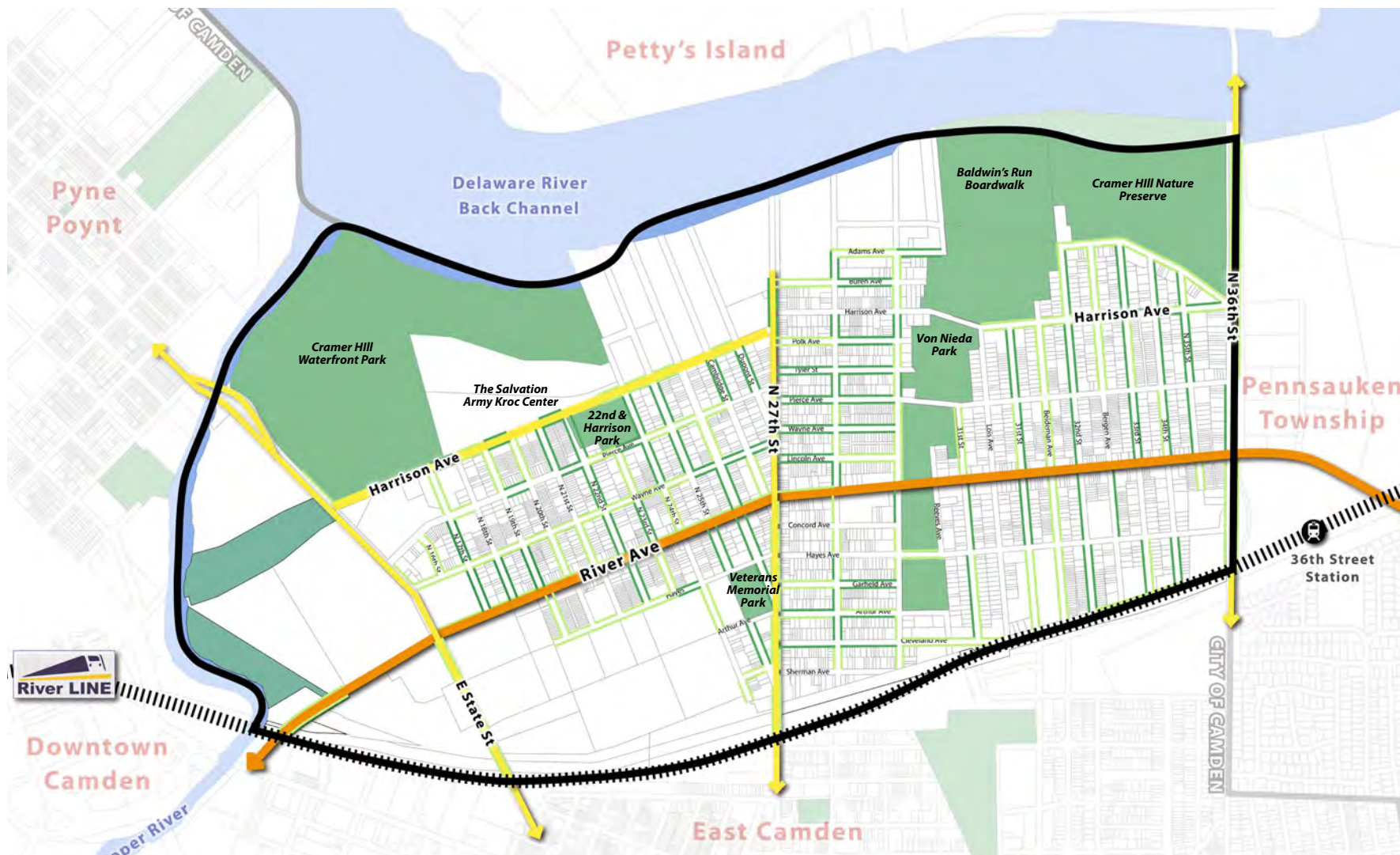
Maintenance: Proper maintenance of existing trees will go a long way in preventing major incidents due to falling trees during major storms. PSE&G maintains a 4-year tree maintenance schedule for every community it serves, but that is mostly focused around power lines. A more comprehensive assessment would help identify unsafe and unhealthy trees and potential need for removal / replanting. The NJ Urban

and Community Forestry Program (DEP) provides assistance to municipalities looking to develop and implement a tree management plan. The grant supports tree inventory, risk assessment, maintenance and tree planting initiatives.

- New tree planting:** Partnerships between the NJ Tree Foundation and local resident groups have already benefited sections of Cramer Hill. Residents and local organizations can coordinate tree planting efforts in residential blocks but focused attention should be given to neighborhood corridors and school routes as areas of high pedestrian traffic that would benefit from shading and a more welcoming environment. Tree planting efforts can also be coordinated with local schools as an educational activity.
- Front yard trees:** For areas where it may be challenging to add trees due to narrow sidewalks, overhead wires or other physical constraints, a partnership with individual property owners is recommended in support of front yard trees.
- Green buffers:** Linear buffers along industrial areas and the railroad will also help expand the tree canopy in the neighborhood. That approach will be especially meaningful along the southern end of the neighborhood in areas along the rail line and adjacent industrial uses. A partnership with Conrail, American Water and other large scale property owners can help identify priority areas for planting and landscaping. The effort can bring together residents with support of the NJ Tree Foundation and provide a great opportunity for environmental awareness and community projects.



Tree Coverage Map



- Commercial Corridor
- River Line Light Rail
- No Trees
- Primary Corridor
- River Line Station
- A Few Scattered Trees

program

- Adopt-a-Drain program

Education and recreation activities can help increase awareness about these natural assets and maximize their use by the community.



City property on River Avenue provides an ideal location for a community gardening hub



C. Increase residents' awareness of environmental issues

Cramer Hill's extensive waterfront provides residents with a unique opportunity to connect with their natural environment and enjoy the benefits of living in close proximity to nature.



A gardening hub can serve as a central resource for gardeners in the neighborhood

Establish a community gardening program: Community gardens are an easy and effective way to reconnect people of all ages to nature while promoting awareness about food sources, health and environmental issues. Cramer Hill provides a perfect setting for a neighborhood wide gardening program and has already taken steps in that direction through the Cramer Hill Choice Neighborhoods initiative. A partnership between the Housing Authority of the City of Camden, Rutgers University Cooperative Extension and Ablett Village residents led to the implementation of a community garden at the public housing site in 2021. The program also provides residents the opportunity to participate in gardening classes, take cooking lessons and learn the ropes of maintaining a community garden year-round. This concept can be expanded to serve the broader



Nature walks are one of the many ways residents and the community can enjoy and learn about the natural amenities surrounding the neighborhood

Cramer Hill community in support of private and shared vegetable gardens. A potential location for a neighborhood garden was identified on city owned property located on River Avenue and 29th street. That site was used in the past as a neighborhood garden but has been abandoned for years. Reimagined as a neighborhood gardening hub that functions as a garden but also as a central resource for educational programs, seed sharing, tool library, fresh food stands and other related activities, the site can become a focal community amenity in Cramer Hill. The success of this initiative relies heavily on community participation and solid management. Identifying the appropriate partner to carry this initiative is an important step for the next couple of years.

Connect residents to environmental amenities: Beyond their private backyards, Cramer Hill residents have access to a wealth of natural amenities but are not always aware of those amenities. Now that the waterfront is developing, there is an opportunity to reintroduce residents to their environment and learn about the plant and wildlife diversity that inhabits the area. Activities such as planned visits to the

WATERFRONT EDGE DESIGN GUIDELINES WEDG
BEST PRACTICES FOR WATERFRONT DESIGN IN CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY

**HOW TO PROMOTE
RESILIENCE, ECOLOGY,
AND ACCESS AT THE
WATER'S EDGE**

A WATERFRONT ALLIANCE PROGRAM

, kayaking, neighborhood interact with nature and enjoy their community from a new and different perspective. A network of walking paths and nature trails connecting different sections of the waterfront with the neighborhood will further reinforce the possibilities for active and

The Waterfront Edge Design Guidelines provide guidance for future waterfront development in Camden

4

COMMUNITY BUILDING AND VIBRANCY

Expand opportunities for community life and community organizing

A thriving and attractive neighborhood relies as much on the strength of community connections as on the quality of its physical environment. As a community of close to 10,000 people, Cramer Hill can benefit from concerted opportunities for community building and community life. Many of these efforts depend on residents' active involvement, leadership and initiatives.



WHAT WE HEARD

- // When Von Nieda Park was restored, there was a lot of activity and recreational opportunities for local families. This is no longer the case. The park is not heavily used due to limited programming and concerns over public safety. ATVs have pushed people away from the park.
- // The recreation center at Von Nieda Park has not been as active as it was in the past. The building was renovated but offers little in terms of activities. Families need a place to go year-round, a place for meetings and a place to meet their neighbors.
- // Although the neighborhood is significantly safer than other parts of Camden, there are still problems to be addressed. Nuisance issues like loud music and ATVs, illegal dumping and hotspots for drug activity are some of the top concerns.
- // Residents would like to see more opportunities for community gatherings. Festivals and regular community events bring people together.

4.1 Activate the use of parks and open spaces as places for community life

Consistent investments made over the past fifteen years have transformed much of the neighborhood's vacant land and brownfield sites into attractive parks and outdoor amenities. Today, every Cramer Hill resident lives within a 10-minute walk from a park. Maximizing the potential of those spaces with opportunities for community gatherings, health, wellness, arts and culture is a top priority for the next ten years.

a. Increase access and safe walking connections to parks

- // **Pedestrian trails:** Establish clear connections between park trails and neighborhood streets.
- // **Sidewalks:** Ensure a consistent network of sidewalks connecting residents to parks.
- // **Park lighting:** Provide adequate lighting levels to support pedestrian safety at park.
- // **Signage and wayfinding:** Use graphic and visual signage throughout the neighborhood with directional signage to parks. Include monument signs at each park with relevant information including maps, park hours, park rules and contact information.
- // **Bike racks:** Include bike racks near main access areas, playgrounds and other key spots at each of the neighborhood parks.

b. Energize park use with enhanced amenities and park furniture

Street furniture can help maximize park use, with opportunities for informal events such as picnics and family gatherings.

- /// Concession stands and kiosks
- /// Shade structures including pavilions and pergolas
- /// Seating and tables with a mix of permanent and movable furniture
- /// Trash and recycle bins



XXXX

c. Promote health and wellness activities

Active play is a great way to activate parks outside of weekends and 'good weather' days. Sports and wellness activities can attract new regular users to parks with uses throughout the day and into evening hours. Sports activities also help improve the reality and perception of safety in park areas. Suggested activities include:

- /// Outdoor fitness equipment
- /// Playing courts and fields
- /// Multipurpose space for outdoor classes (yoga, dance, others)
- /// Skate park
- /// Mental health



XXXX

d. Establish a calendar of seasonal park activities

From Easter to 4th of July or Halloween, holidays and other seasonal events can provide residents with opportunities to visit parks and enjoy time together as a community with outdoor activities. Several ideas for such events were floated during the planning process, including flea markets, food festivals, Christmas village, community picnics and summer parties. The Cramer Hill Waterfront Park and Von Nieda Park have great potential as locations for some of these events. Partnerships with local organizations can help the community organize and fund such initiatives.



XXXX

e. Establish partnerships for sports and recreation activities

Partnerships with local organizations in the region can help bring existing programs and activities to Cramer Hill parks. In 2020, a partnership between Camden County and the local YMCA brought a soccer 'mini-pitch to Von Nieda Park. The program is run by the YMCA and serves children from Cramer Hill and surrounding neighborhoods.



The Center for Aquatic Sciences at Adventure Aquarium participated in the planning process and identified Cramer Hill as a potential location for a satellite location focused on educational and youth development activities promoting connection with aquatic life and habitats in the area. A permanent location in Cramer Hill could bring yet another group of activities to the waterfront park.

4.2 Re-activate the Cramer Hill Community Center

Located in Von Niede Park near the playground with access from Reeves Ave, the community center has the potential to serve as a hub for community activity and help re-energize the use of the park. Although the space has been recently renovated, limited staffing and lack of funding for programs and activities have restricted its use. Partnerships with local non-profit and private organizations can help overcome these challenges by injecting additional resources into programs targeting youth recreation, adult classes, senior activities and others. Residents also expressed the desire to add a library and an indoor multipurpose space as a way to expand access to educational resources and keep local youth active and engaged in the community.



Community Center as is

4.3 Explore partnerships with the Salvation Army Kroc Center

Open since 2014, the Kroc Center brought a wonderful amenity to the waterfront, attracting residents from the region to its state-of-the-art recreational facilities and services. Cramer Hill residents benefit from a variety of services available to the community free of costs, including a health clinic, food pantry and childcare facility. The use of sports and recreation spaces require a paid membership which is seen by several residents as costly and unaffordable to local families. A partnership between the Kroc Center and private sector organizations can help identify ways to subsidize and minimize costs and help expand the use of the facility by local families.



XXXX

4.4 Help residents navigate City services and resources

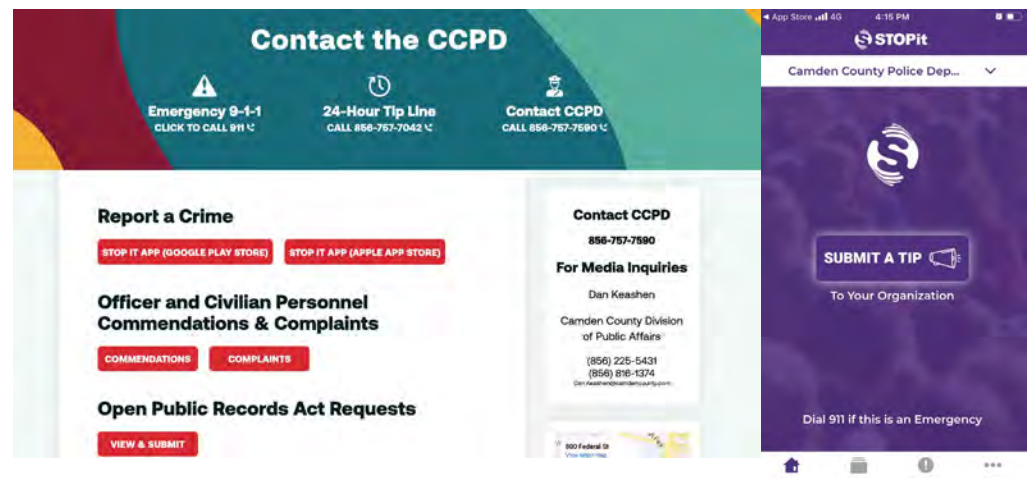
A key lesson learned during the planning process is that residents are poorly informed about the wealth of services and resources already available to them. The following initiatives can help fill that gap:

- Establish a neighborhood help desk center: A neighborhood help desk will go a long way in connecting people to resources while also providing agencies a channel to disseminate information about their programs and services. This program was originally identified as an opportunity during the Cramer Hill Choice Neighborhoods planning process and will be located in the future Hayes Avenue housing development.
- Create a 'Welcome to Cramer Hill' neighborhood brochure: New residents in the community will benefit from a welcome brochure describing essential information about City and community services. This initiative can be led and maintained by residents with support.
- Promote annual community resources event: Similar to job fairs, community resources events can provide a one-stop shop to local agencies and organizations seeking to disseminate information about their services. Such events can be combined with other activities such as holiday celebrations and recreation programs.

4.5 Help residents address nuisance issues

Awareness about the City of Camden's nuisance regulations and resources available to residents who want to report nuisance issues is key to empowering residents to take control of minor incidents that impact their quality-of-life in the neighborhood.

- Disseminate information about nuisance regulations at community meetings and through printed materials. Essential references can be included in the "Welcome to Cramer Hill" neighborhood brochure.
- Disseminate information about reporting tools available to residents who want to report an incident.
- Encourage residents to use the StoptIt platform through informational sessions and printed material.



XXXXX

4.6 Create opportunities for resident involvement

A series of steps can be taken to help engage residents in neighborhood affairs and build capacity in support of community initiatives. Ultimately new leadership can emerge from these efforts, paving the way for a more formalized civic organization.

- // Maintain a regular schedule of resident and stakeholder meetings to keep people involved and updated about progress on neighborhood projects and initiatives.
- // Organize residents around shared initiatives: A number of ideas for short-term and achievable projects have emerged during the planning process as a way to connect neighbors and build relationships. Initiatives such as clean-up teams, tree planting, neighborhood watch, community gardening and beautification projects are just some of those possibilities. A short-term step in that direction could be surveying and connecting residents according to their interests and providing them the tools to move their initiatives forward.
- // Promote initiatives at the block level: block level initiatives can bring residents together around targeted short-term projects that help improve their block and immediate surrounding areas. The “Better Blocks” program in East Camden provides a helpful reference for those types of initiatives.

5

ZONING AND LAND USE STANDARDS

Revisit zoning and land use standards to reflect the community vision for the future

Development in Cramer Hill is regulated by the 2009 Cramer Hill Redevelopment Plan. The Plan maps 6 zoning districts across the neighborhood: R-2 Medium Density Residential, C-2 Neighborhood Commercial, L-I-2 Light Industrial, MW-2 Mixed Waterfront and CV-1 and C-V2 Open Space Conservation Zones. A stream and river corridor overlay 'S' establishes environmental controls over multiple districts along the Delaware and Cooper River waterways. The 2009 remapping expanded Cramer Hill's commercial district along the length of River Avenue and the north side of East State Street, redefined the potential of the community's riverfront, introduced conservation and natural area zoning and maintained existing residential areas.

Fifteen years after the adoption of the Redevelopment Plan, Cramer Hill is a community in transformation. The once derelict riverfront gave place to regional recreation amenities; significant improvements in stormwater infrastructure have reduced chronic flooding and the area is increasingly seen as a neighborhood of choice for Camden families. As the community outlines its priorities for the next 10 years, alignment of the regulatory framework guiding land use and development decisions with the community vision and goals becomes a top priority. The zoning map and land use standards established by the Redevelopment Plan are due for review to reflect the community's vision for future development.

5.1 Revisit the R-2 regulation for more flexible housing options

Cramer Hill residents value the “village in the city” feel created by the community’s generous front and back yards, traditional homes and abundant greenery. Yet, residents have also identified the need for a greater variety of housing options that go beyond what is currently permitted by zoning. The residential district R-2 covers nearly the entirety of Cramer Hill’s residential fabric and permits construction of only single-family or duplex homes on lots as small as 2,000 sf.

Overlay districts employed in a similar manner to the ‘S’ district in the Cramer Hill Redevelopment Plan can be useful instruments in providing some flexibility to R-2 and help direct future residential development where it will be most beneficial while, at the same time, conserving the scale and character of residential blocks. Two key approaches are recommended in that respect:

a. Targeted Upzoning

Consider a Housing Opportunity Overlay to encourage higher density development in key areas of the neighborhood that are well suited for a variety of housing types, are supportive of the River Avenue commercial corridor and have convenient access to transit. The Housing Opportunity Overlay should:

- Target blocks surrounding the “5-Point” Plaza (River and 27th street) for multifamily housing and a focus on small units (studios, one and two-bedroom units).
- Encourage townhomes, flats and other higher density

housing types. The former Washington School building exemplifies the potential for multifamily use in the target area presenting a unique opportunity for senior or special needs housing.

- Permit nonresidential uses on the ground floor of residential buildings.

b. Targeted Downzoning

Consider a Residential Conservation Overlay to protect the neighborhood from overdevelopment and preserve the residential character with opportunities for appropriately scaled multi-family development. The proposed Residential Conservation Overlay would:

- Preserve the diversity of Cramer Hill’s residential blocks by increasing minimum lot size requirements for proposed subdivisions.
- Maintain the scale and character of the neighborhood by limiting new residential construction to 2.5 stories and requiring setbacks to be consistent with adjacent homes.
- Permit small multifamily rental units development on sizable corner lots and other locations throughout the neighborhood that are appropriate for higher density housing and could accommodate three or more units without impacting core residential blocks. Vacant corner parcels on the south side of Von Nieda Park, east of River Ave and vacant land around the intersection of 28th and Garfield street are good examples of potential locations for small multifamily structures.

5.2 Revisit C-2 standards for River Avenue to facilitate the development of a vibrant neighborhood commercial corridor

River Avenue runs the length of Cramer Hill from north to south and serves as the community's primary commercial corridor. The commercial district is home to a variety of neighborhood services, shops and restaurants but it is physically fragmented by residential uses, underutilized structures, and vacancy. The existing C-2 zoning allows for a broad array of commercial uses but burdens them with minimum parking and minimum square footage requirements, inhibiting the development of a vibrant and pedestrian friendly main street. The C-2 district also permits construction of single-family and duplex homes without active ground floor uses and allows conversion of former ground floor commercial spaces into residential uses. Targeting key sections of River Avenue with an Entrepreneurship and Small Business Incentive Overlay will promote pockets of opportunity, encouraging investment by small businesses and future entrepreneurs.

a. Entrepreneurship & Small Business Incentive Overlay

Establish an Entrepreneurship and Small Business Incentive Overlay zone that reduces regulatory hurdles for small business establishment and expansion. Encourage residential development as upper floor units above commercial spaces. Consider the following incentives and controls as part of the proposed overlay:

- Reduce minimum square footage requirements for commercial spaces to reflect current retail trends and

encourage establishment of small businesses that are unable to support the required minimum 2,000 sf of commercial space.

- Eliminate the requirement for sit down dining to encourage development of new food-based businesses with smaller footprints. Maintain prohibition of drive-thru restaurants.
- Enable opportunities for pop-up retail and seasonal/special event commercial activity along the corridor.
- Prioritize mixed use development along the core commercial stretch of River Avenue (between 24th Street and Bergen Avenue) with an emphasis on ground floor commercial spaces.



Adjustments to the C-2 district will favor mixed-use development with an emphasis on ground floor retail spaces and upper floor residential uses

5.3 Revisit conservation zones and align mapping with existing conditions

The 2009 Redevelopment Plan introduced conservation and overlay zones to manage some of Cramer Hill's most environmentally sensitive areas. Investment in stormwater infrastructure has reclaimed significant areas of the neighborhood at high risk for flooding in recent years. These areas include the daylight sections of Baldwin's Run and other areas where stormwater infrastructure has been installed. Other flood-prone formerly residential areas remain vacant and are unsuitable for new residential development. These environmentally sensitive areas should be incorporated into the CV-1 zone. R-2 zoning also covers several community parks in Cramer Hill. Maintaining these greenspaces is also critical to passive stormwater management. Parks with active recreation and community uses should be included into the CV-2 zone.

a. Reclassify open spaces for inclusion in conservation zones

Consider reclassification of areas with existing stormwater infrastructure, flood prone vacant land and community parks currently within the R-2 zone for inclusion in conservation zones CV-1 or CV-2. The following potential extensions of conservation zoning in Cramer Hill should be reviewed:

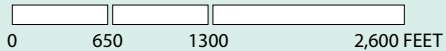
- Expand the CV-1 district into areas where land has been reclaimed for stormwater mitigation and open space such as the Baldwin's Run daylighting area west of Von Nieda Park.
- Incorporate vacant, low-lying and flood prone areas that are not suitable for residential development into the

CV-1 conservation district including low-lying portions of Farragut Street and the vacated 800 block of Reeves Avenue.

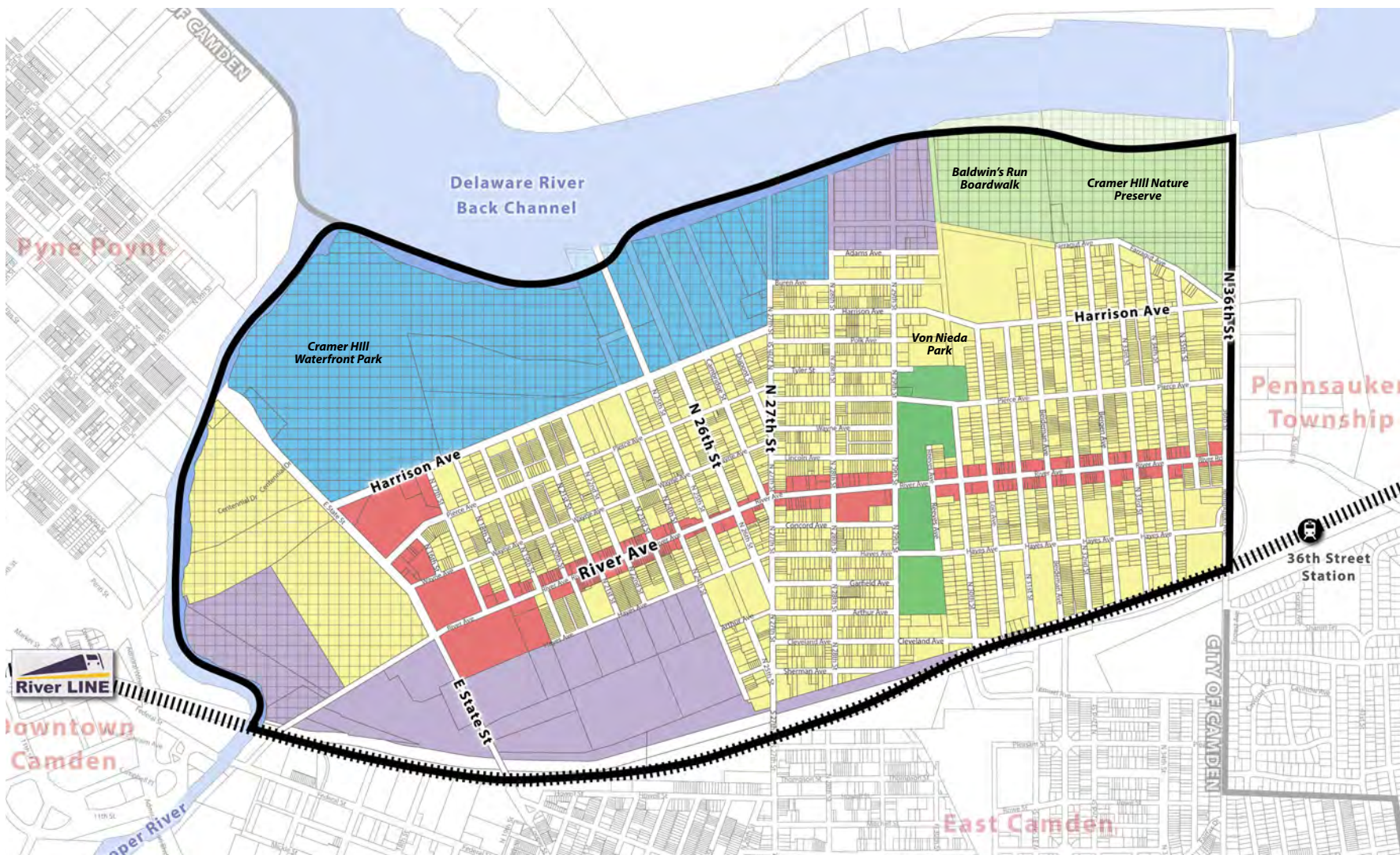
- Reclassify parks and recreational space currently zoned residential as CV-2 including Memorial Park, 22nd and Harrison Park and the expanded ball field in Von Nieda Park west of Tyler Avenue..



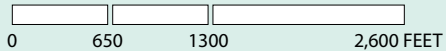
Von Nieda Park is one of the several open spaces in the neighborhood still zoned as R-2.



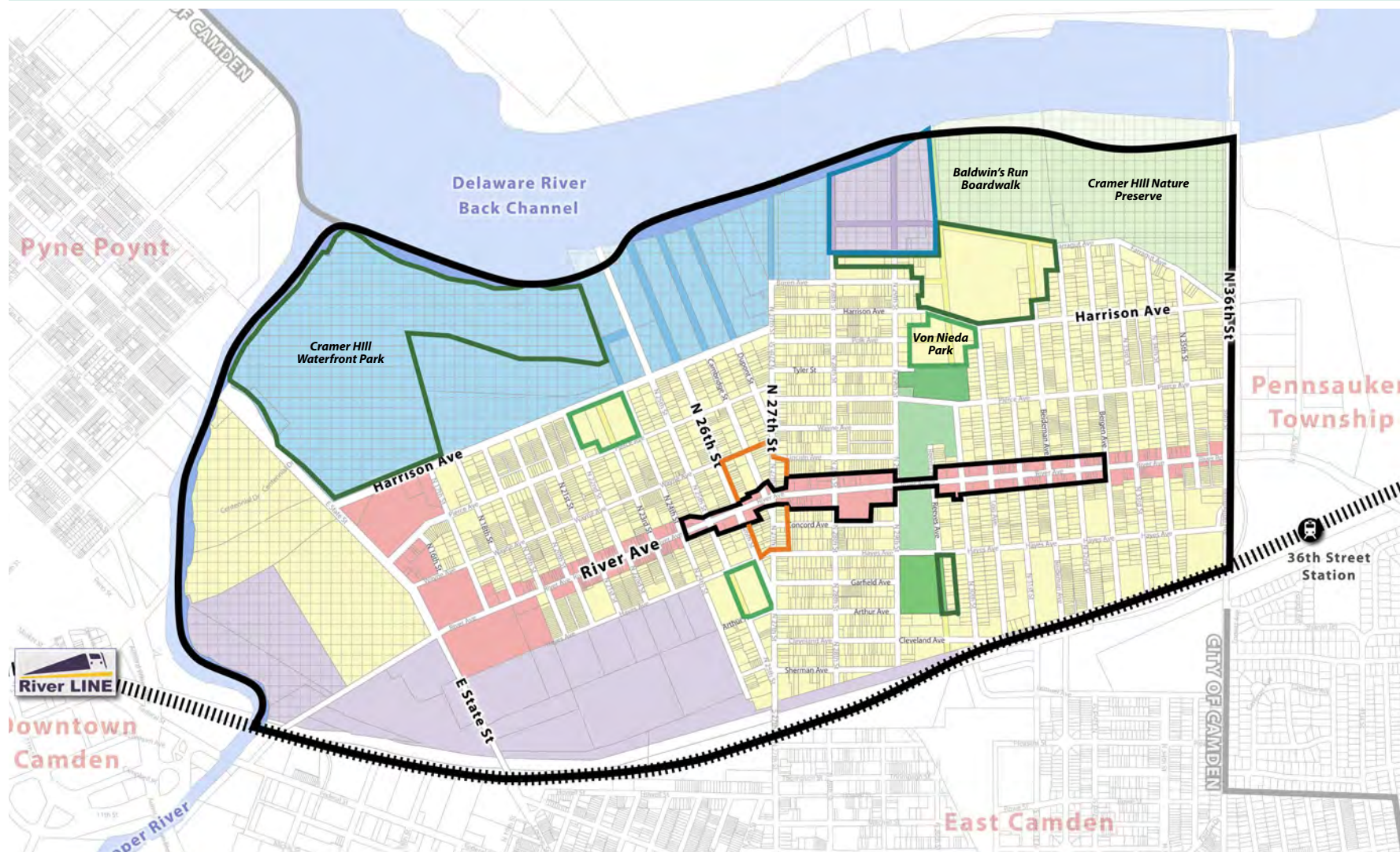
Current Zoning Map



- C-2 Neighborhood Commercial
- CV-2 Open Space Conservation
- MW-2 Mixed Waterfront
- S-2 Stream and River Corridor Overlay
- CV-1 Open Space Conservation
- LI-2 Light Industrial
- R-2 Medium Density Residential
- River Line Light Rail
- River Line Station



Proposed Overlay Map



- Residential Opportunity Overlay
- Economic Opportunity Overlay
- Extend CV-1
- Extend CV-2
- Extend MW-2
- River Line Light Rail
- River Line Station

5.4 Revisit industrial uses and align land use and zoning with the community's vision

Much of Cramer Hill's formerly industrial land has been repurposed and reclaimed in the past decade. Former brownfield sites have been converted into major community assets and industrial activity is mostly limited to light industrial uses such as transportation and recycling. Input received during the planning process pointed to the following priorities for considerations in the next 10 years regarding industrial properties:

a. Redevelop Magnetic Metals

Located on Hayes Ave, this formerly industrial 8-acre property has been vacant for approximately 10 years. The tract is immediately adjacent to existing homes and a future affordable housing development. The site has been recently cleaned up to commercial standards, which would allow for redevelopment into commercial or light industrial uses. Unless it is consolidated with one of the adjacent industrial properties to the south and west, the site has no direct access to a major road which limits its potential for industrial or commercial activities. A new vision for reuse of the property could include residential uses. That approach would help revitalize a whole section of the neighborhood by complementing the existing residential fabric with new housing opportunities. Further dialogue with the community will help identify the best use for the property and required adjustments to zoning reflecting anticipated goals. On the short-term, additional studies and analysis of the property's environmental conditions would inform potential directions for redevelopment.

b. Address non-conforming industrial uses

Zoning changes established by the 2009 Redevelopment Plan rendered some of the existing industrial uses in the neighborhood into non-conforming uses. Riverfront Recycling and Express Marine on the waterfront are two businesses that fall in that category. Established in what was originally an industrial zone, these businesses are now part of the Waterfront Overlay District which supersedes the underlying uses favoring open spaces and waterfront oriented activities. Moving forward, the City and community should work with property owners to establish goals for property improvement and maintenance in order to minimize the negative impact (truck traffic, noise, air pollution) of their activities and enhance their physical appearance. On the short-term, expansion plans and renovations can provide opportunities to push for enhancements that benefit the community and advance the goals of the redevelopment plan. On the long-term, a dialogue with the community would help identify the best use of the property should it be available for sale.



The Magnetic Metals is one of the last sizable brownfield properties in the neighborhood.



Riverfront Recycling and Express Marine remains as a legacy industrial use along the waterfront

5.5 Introduce parking controls to incentivize pedestrian friendly development consistent with Cramer Hill's vision and character

The Cramer Hill Redevelopment Plan defers to the City of Camden Zoning Code for parking standards. These standards encourage development inconsistent with the existing neighborhood fabric and create obstacles for establishing and expanding businesses on the commercial corridor. For example, currently 1,000sf of retail or personal services requires 5 off-street parking spaces with up to two additional spaces for each residential unit above. To meet these requirements, a mixed-use building with 2,000 sf of commercial space and two 3-bedroom units must provide a 14-space parking area. Accommodating these requirements presents a hardship to development for most existing properties on River Ave and if met fosters a development pattern detrimental to the creation of a compact walkable commercial zone. Easing parking requirements associated with new housing and commercial development throughout the neighborhood can facilitate the development of affordable housing, reduce curb cuts and help maintain the walkable, traditional neighborhood character that makes Cramer Hill feel like a village in the city. The following updates to parking regulations should be investigated:

- /// Alleviate parking requirements for new homes without access from rear parking alleys.
- /// Prohibit front-yard parking pads and street facing garages in new residential development.

- // Reduce or eliminate off-street parking requirements for new infill multi-family development where property dimensions prohibit providing off-street parking.
- // Eliminate or reduce off-street parking requirements in the C-2 zone for commercial space and mixed-use development where lot sizes and/or property dimensions render providing parking impractical or require additional curb cuts on River Avenue and East State Street.

5.6 Update the Redevelopment Plan for consistency with City of Camden Zoning Code

The Cramer Hill Redevelopment Plan was adopted in 2009 and predates the current City of Camden Zoning Code. References within the Redevelopment Plan currently direct to sections within the superseded version of the code and do not align with the current document. Zoning districts described in redevelopment plan are incomplete and redundant to the city code. The redevelopment plan should be re-aligned with the current code for consistency and clarity.

- // Revise the redevelopment plan to reference the relevant sections of the current City of Camden Zoning Code.
- // Eliminate sections of the Redevelopment Plan redundant to the city code in order to eliminate potential inconsistencies in district regulations.



Implementation

The implementation of a neighborhood plan will require solid coordination between multiple partners in the public, private and non-profit sectors with ongoing involvement from residents and stakeholders. The plan is anticipated to be fully implemented within a period of ten years with critical milestones along the way.

The following Implementation Matrix provides a quick summary of established priorities, proposed recommendations and projects outlined in this document. It describes preliminary assumptions regarding roles and potential partnerships required to move proposed strategies into implementation along with anticipated timeframes and funding sources.

PRIORITY 01 | HOUSING

Preserve and expand housing options across incomes and household sizes

GOAL	RECOMMENDATIONS	Metrics	Implementation Timeline	Key Partners	Anticipated Funding Sources
1.1 Preserve and expand homeownership opportunities	a. Advocate for real estate tax relief programs to protect long-term residents from dramatic property value increases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Homeownership rate ■ # of Homeowners benefiting from home repair program per year ■ # of prospective Cramer Hill homebuyers enrolled in homeownership training program ■ # of new for-sale units per year 	3 to 5 years	City of Camden / CCP	City of Camden / Camden County / NJ DCA / NJ HMFA / Private corporations / Private foundations
	b. Assist long-term homeowners with home repairs and upgrades		6+ years	CCP / SJCS	
	c. Connect Cramer Hill renters to homeownership opportunities		3 to 5 years	CCP / SJCS / Housing Authority of the City of Camden / CRA	
	d. Address predatory buyers		1 to 2 years	City of Camden / CCP	
	e. Establish partnerships with major employers toward homeownership incentive programs.		3 to 5 years	City of Camden / CCP / Private corporations	
	f. Remove barriers to redevelopment of vacant properties for future homeownership opportunities.		6+ years	City of Camden / CRA / CCP / SJCS	
1.2 Preserve and expand rental housing opportunities to meet neighborhood trends	a. Empower residents to protect their rights as tenants	■ # of residents attending educational programs	1 to 2 years	City of Camden / SJCS	City of Camden / NJ DCA / Private foundations
	b. Assist landlords in their efforts to maintain and improve rental properties	■ # of property owners benefiting from landlord assistance program	3 to 5 years	City of Camden / SJCS	City of Camden / NJ DCA / Private foundations
1.3 Diversify housing options to accommodate the needs of all residents	a. Accessory dwelling units (ADUs)	■ # of housing units built	6+ years	City of Camden / CRA / CCP / Private developers	City of Camden / NJ DCA / NJ HMFA / Private developers / Private foundations
	b. Multigenerational multifamily housing				
	c. Infill multifamily apartments				
	d. Mixed use buildings				
	e. Adaptive reuse				

PRIORITY 02 | RIVER AVENUE

Maximize River Avenue’s potential as a business corridor

GOAL	RECOMMENDATIONS	Metrics	Implementation Timeline	Key Partners	Anticipated Funding Sources
2.1 Support existing businesses	a. Strengthen the Cramer Hill Business Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established business association Number of active members 	1 to 2 years	Cramer Hill business owners / LAEDA / CCP / SJCS	NJ Main Street Program / NJ DCA / local businesses / NJ EDA / City of Camden / Camden County
	b. Make the corridor safe, clean, and attractive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established maintenance crew Streetscape plan is implemented 	3 to 5 years	Cramer Hill business owners / CCP / SJCS	
	c. Establish a storefront improvement program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of businesses assisted by the program 	3 to 5 years	City of Camden / CCP	
	d. Establish a calendar of community events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of events planned and implemented 	3 to 5 years	Business association / Cramer Hill residents / CCP	
2.2 Support entrepreneurship that celebrates the neighborhood’s cultural diversity	a. Create opportunities for pop-up business events along the corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of pop-up events per year 	3 to 5 years	Business association / LAEDA / City of Camden	NJ EDA / NJ DCA / City of Camden / Private property owners / local businesses
	b. Focus on food as an anchor activity for the commercial corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of food related businesses recruited Number of food related events 	6+ years	Business association / LAEDA / City of Camden	
	c. Explore micro-retail and small business spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety of retail spaces 	6+ years	Business association / LAEDA / City of Camden / River Ave Property owners	
	d. Celebrate neighborhood identity through art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New art projects along River Avenue 	3 to 5 years	Business association / CCP / property owners	
	e. Establish a local business incubator space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business incubator created 	6+ years	CCP / LAEDA / SJCS	
2.3 Improve access and mobility options along the corridor	a. Optimize the use of existing parking resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of new spaces available through shared resources 	3 to 5 years	City of Camden / private property owners / Cramer Hill business association	NJ DCA / local businesses
	b. Create a safe environment for pedestrians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent sidewalks and street lighting along River Ave 	6+ years	City of Camden / private property owners / Cramer Hill business association	
2.4 Re-imagine the intersection of River Ave and 27th Street as a focal point for the community	a. Promote beautification and placemaking initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects are implemented 	3 to 5 years	Gateway Plaza committee / CCP / NJ DOT / Camden County	City of Camden / NJ DCA / NJ HMFA / Private finance
	b. Promote mixed-use development through public-private partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New mixed-use projects in target area 	6+ years	CRA / CCP / Private developers	
	c. Establish the Gateway Plaza planning and management committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee created 	1 to 2 years	Cramer Hill business association / CRA / CCP / SJCS	

PRIORITY 03 | ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

Upgrade neighborhood systems

GOAL	RECOMMENDATIONS	Metrics	Implementation Timeline	Key Partners	Anticipated Funding sources
3.1 Identify opportunities for upgrades to the street system as green and complete streets	a. Upgrade East State Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engineering and design of East State St Project Implementation 	3 to 5 years	CCP / Housing Authority of the City of Camden / The Michaels Organization / Camden County / CCMUA / Local schools / Property owners / SJCS	Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant / NJ DOT / NJ DCA / Camden County / NJ School Routes Program
	b. Upgrade Harrison Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engineering and design of Harrison Ave Project Implementation 	3 to 5 years		
	c. Upgrade 27th Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engineering and design of 27th St Project Implementation 	6+ years		
	d. Upgrade School Routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School route corridors project Implementation 	3 to 5 years		
	e. Upgrade Sidewalks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of properties with improved sidewalks 	6+ years		
3.2 Implement a Safe Routes to School Program		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program implemented 	3 to 5 years	Local schools / School families / NJ Safe Routes Program / City of Camden	Local schools / NJ Safe Routes Program / City of Camden
3.3 Prepare the neighborhood for resilience	a. Address flooding areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New green infrastructure implemented Property based program 	3 to 5 years	Camden Collaborative / CCMUA / NJ Tree Foundation / CCP / Camden County / City of Camden / Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program	CCMUA / NJ DCA / Camden County
	b. Maintain and expand tree coverage on neighborhood streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of new street trees planted 	6+ years		
	c. Increase residents' awareness of environmental issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New educational and recreation programs 	1 to 2 years		
	d. Incorporate best practices in green development as standards for future development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards adopted in new development projects 	6+ years		

PRIORITY 04 | COMMUNITY BUILDING AND VIBRANCY

Expand opportunities for community life and community organizing

GOAL	RECOMMENDATIONS	Metrics	Implementation Timeline	Key Partners	Anticipated Funding sources
4.1 Activate the use of parks and open spaces as places for community life	a. Increase access and safe walking connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved connections to parks 	3 to 5 years	City of Camden / Camden County Police / Camden County / CCP / Center for Aquatic Sciences / Cramer Hill residents	Choice Implementation Grant / NJ DCA / Camden County / City of Camden / PSE&G / Center for Aquatic Sciences
	b. Energize park use with enhanced amenities and park furniture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amenities and park furniture is installed 	3 to 5 years		
	c. Promote health and wellness activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New infrastructure with outdoor equipment / health and wellness programs available to residents 	3 to 5 years		
	d. Establish a calendar of seasonal park activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calendar created and events implemented 	1 to 2 years		
	e. Establish partnerships for sports and recreation activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of sports and recreation programs available at local parks 	3 to 5 years		
4.2 Re-activate the Cramer Hill Community Center		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community center is revitalized and is widely available to residents for community initiatives 	3 to 5 years	SJCS / CFP / CHRA	CN Implementation Grant / NRTC / others TBD
4.3 Explore partnerships with the Salvation Army Kroc Center		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Cramer Hill residents who become members of the Kroc Center Number of Cramer Hill residents who benefit from programs and services 	3 to 5 years	CCP / Kroc Center / Cramer Hill residents	CCP / Kroc Center / Private foundations
4.4 Help residents navigate City services and resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish help desk center Create a "Welcome to Cramer Hill" brochure Annual community resources fair 	3 to 5 years	CCP / SJCS / Cramer Hill residents	NJ DCA / City of Camden /
4.5 Help residents address nuisance issues		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information disseminated to residents through printed materials, website and informational sessions 	1 to 2 years	Camden County Police / City of Camden / Cramer Hill residents	NJ DCA / Camden County Police

PRIORITY 05 | ZONING AND LAND USE STANDARDS

Revisit zoning and land use standards to reflect the community vision for the future

GOAL	RECOMMENDATIONS	Metrics	Implementation Timeline	Key Partners	Anticipated Funding sources
5.1 Revisit the R-2 regulation for more flexible housing options	a. Targeted Upzoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Updates to Cramer Hill Redevelopment Plan 	3 to 5 years	City of Camden / Cramer Hill residents	City of Camden
	b. Targeted Downzoning				
5.2 Revisit zoning and land use standards to reflect the community vision for the future	a. Entrepreneurship & Small Business Incentive Overlay				
5.3 Revisit conservation zones and align mapping with existing conditions	a. Reclassify open spaces for inclusion in conservation zones				
5.4 Revisit industrial uses and align land use and zoning with the community's vision	a. Redevelop Magnetic Metals				
	b. Address non-conforming industrial uses				
5.5 Introduce parking controls to incentivize pedestrian friendly development consistent with Cramer Hill's vision and character	a. Alleviate parking requirements for new homes without access from rear parking alleys.				
	b. Prohibit front-yard parking pads and street facing garages in new residential development.				
	c. Prohibit front-yard parking pads and street facing garages in new residential development.				
	d. Eliminate or reduce off-street parking requirements in the C-2 zone for commercial space and mixed-use development where lot sizes and/or property dimensions render providing parking impractical or require additional curb cuts on River Avenue and East State Street.				
5.6 Update the Redevelopment Plan for consistency with City of Camden Zoning Code	a. Revise the redevelopment plan to reference the relevant sections of the current City of Camden Zoning Code				
	b. Revise the redevelopment plan to reference the relevant sections of the current City of Camden Zoning Code				



For further information and comments please visit
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