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It Takes a Village

NJDOT Office of Local Aid Seeks to Grow Transit Village Initiative



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There are five core values that drive the New Jersey Department of Transportation’s (NJDOT) ongoing Commitment to Communities: Inform, Innovate, Collaborate, Empower and Evolve. While we at the New Jersey Department of Transportation have many great programs and initiatives to help local communities, the Transit Village Initiative particularly exemplifies these values by encouraging

townships and municipalities to grow through compact, mixed-use development around transit facilities. In turn, this preserves the character of the community and creates a safe and welcoming environment for all transit users.

Led by NJDOT and NJ TRANSIT, the Transit Village Task Force is designed to help municipalities create attractive,



Pictured: Somerville Train Station Transit Village

The Transit Village Task Force

- New Jersey Department of Transportation
- New Jersey Transit
- New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
- New Jersey Department of State Office of Planning Advocacy
- New Jersey Department of State Council on the Arts
- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
- New Jersey Redevelopment Authority
- New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency
- New Jersey Economic Development Authority
- Main Street New Jersey

vibrant, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods, where people can live, shop, work, and play without relying on automobiles. Using the design standards of transit-oriented development (TOD), our Transit Village Initiative creates incentives for municipalities to develop or revitalize the communities centered around transit facilities, which we hope will ultimately reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality by increasing transit ridership. Studies have shown that adding residential housing options within walking distance of a transit facility increases ridership more than any other type of real estate development. Therefore, one of the goals of the Transit Village Initiative is to inspire more housing, businesses, and people to join neighborhoods around transit facilities.

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Pictured: Somerville Train Station Transit Village

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At its inception in 1999, there were five municipalities who earned a Transit Village designation. Today, there are 35 municipalities participating in the initiative.

Among the benefits of earning designation is eligibility for NJDOT's Local Aid Transit Village Grant Program. This program funds projects that benefit areas surrounding transit facilities. Funding can be used towards streetscape improvements, wayfinding, sidewalk enhancements, bicycle racks, and aesthetic amenities. Other incentives are offered by the Transit Village Task Force and include additional funding and project assistance, which is available during the application process and throughout project planning, design and execution.

The Local Aid Transit Village Grant Program is only open to designated communities.

We want more municipalities to apply for designation, so they can take advantage of all the Transit Village Initiative has to offer. If your municipality has not yet been designated as a Transit Village, and you would like to learn more, NJDOT is here to guide you through the process.

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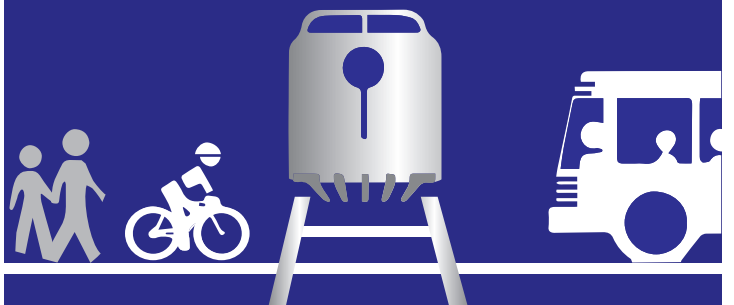


**Congratulations to Atlantic City
for becoming the most
recently designated
Transit Village!**



How to Achieve Transit Village Designation

1. **Attend a pre-application meeting with a Transit Village Coordinator**
Prospective applicants should contact Susan Weber (NJDOT) via phone call at 609.963.2240 or email at susan.weber@dot.nj.gov
2. **Identify an existing transit facility in your community, whether a bus depot, transportation center or train station**
3. **Adopt a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan or zoning ordinance**
4. **Identify specific TOD sites and ready-to-go projects**
5. **Identify bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements**
6. **Identify "place making" efforts near the transit facility, including community events and celebrations**



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Success stories from this initiative can be seen throughout the state. In 2010, Somerville received a Transit Village designation. Their application included Downtown Somerville, Main Street, Division Street, and a former landfill in the borough, where approximately 15 acres of an old landfill were restored. Somerville also built a ShopRite supermarket downtown, among many other impressive development projects.

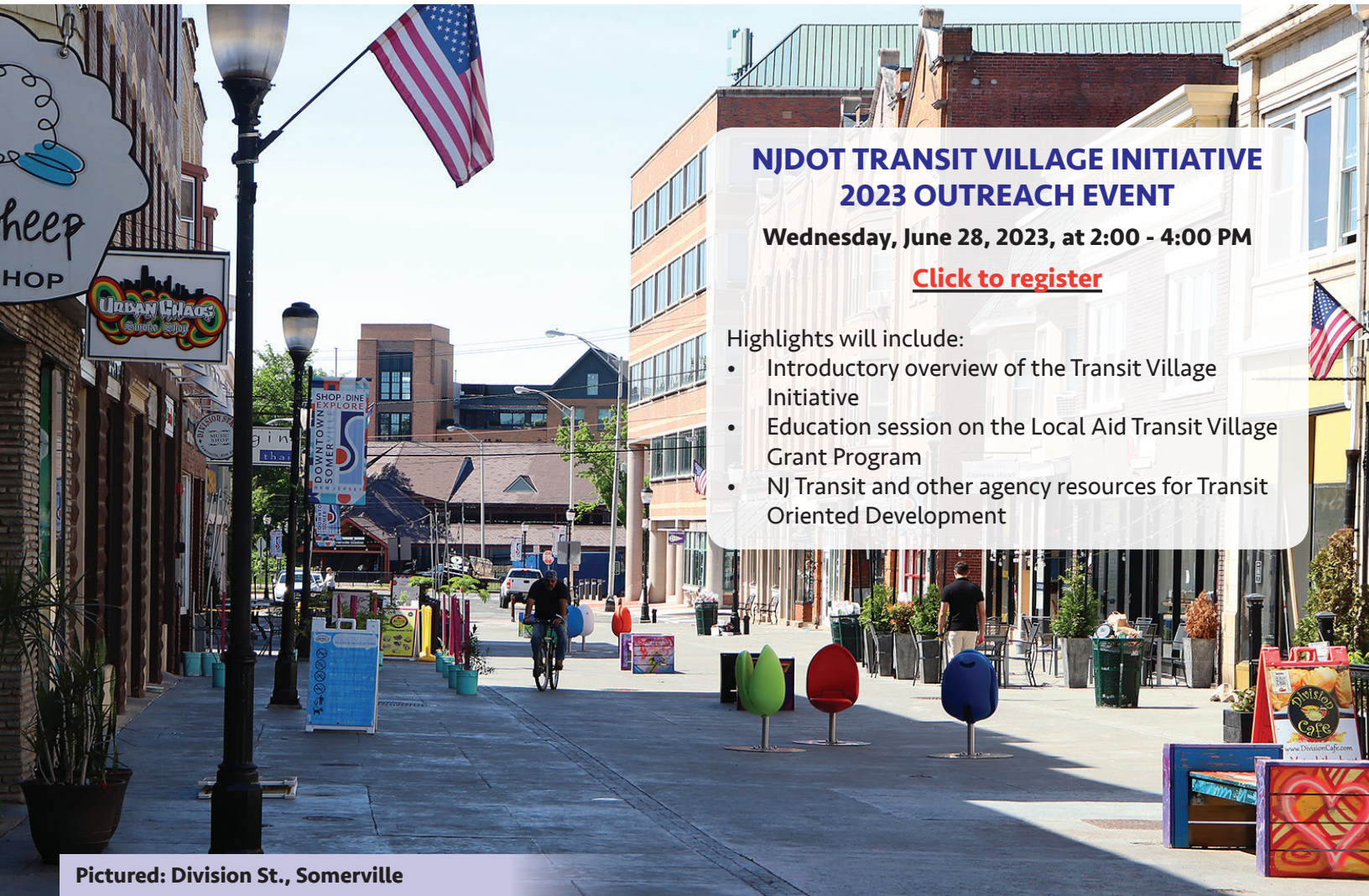
Newark, New Jersey's largest city, offers another great example of how a Transit Village designation can positively impact quality of life and spur economic growth.

In 2012, the city adopted a Complete Streets policy that ensures transportation projects are developed to safely accommodate users of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, motorists, and freight vehicles. In addition, the city began working on the implementation of bus lanes, level-boarding stations, off-board fare payment, and all-door-

boarding vehicles, which allow passengers to enter the bus at any entrance rather than just at the front door. Since earning a Transit Village designation in 2021, which is centered on Broad and Market Streets, Newark has transformed its downtown area into a vibrant city center – both day and night – that is accessible through any mode of transportation.

We believe it is important to improve upon and enhance our existing infrastructure to better accommodate all who walk, roll or ride. This is exactly what the Transit Village Initiative aims to do. I encourage every town centered around an existing transit facility to consider applying for designation and joining us as we create a cleaner, safer and more accessible New Jersey.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. If you have questions about any of the information shared or know someone who would like to receive our newsletters, please feel free to contact NJDOT's **Office of Community Relations at 609-963-1982.**



NJDOT TRANSIT VILLAGE INITIATIVE 2023 OUTREACH EVENT

Wednesday, June 28, 2023, at 2:00 - 4:00 PM

[Click to register](#)

Highlights will include:

- Introductory overview of the Transit Village Initiative
- Education session on the Local Aid Transit Village Grant Program
- NJ Transit and other agency resources for Transit Oriented Development

Pictured: Division St., Somerville