



Working Towards an Equitable Lower Broadway

*Equitable Neighborhood Development Plan
Newark, New Jersey*

Developed in partnership with

**LA CASA DE
DON PEDRO**
EMPOWER AND REVITALIZE

Mission

The mission of La Casa de Don Pedro is to foster self-sufficiency, empowerment and neighborhood revitalization. Through La Casa's resident-centered education and development strategies, neighborhood revitalization initiatives, and family stabilizing programs and services, the organization works to ensure that Greater Newark's residents engage in and benefit from the region's growth.



Lower Broadway

Equitable Neighborhood Development Plan

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La Casa utilizes a service delivery model designed to meet the ever changing social services needs embedded across the life cycle of the children, individuals, and families in Newark's underserved communities.

01 | Introduction

Overview

Founded in 1972, La Casa began as an activist, community-based, grassroots organization committed to empowering the then marginalized Puerto Rican and Latino communities. Named in honor of Puerto Rican nationalist, Don Pedro Albizu Campos who advocated the twin virtues of self-sufficiency and empowerment, La Casa was born out of collaborative and unifying efforts to reverse the trajectory of social, cultural, political, and economic dislocations and marginalization of children and families.

La Casa utilizes a service delivery model designed to meet the ever changing social services needs embedded across the life cycle of the children, individuals, and families in Newark's underserved communities. Our programs recognize that the needs of our community's children, individuals, and families tend to be interconnected and require a holistic approach which links available programmatic resources across all of our divisions, while adhering to and promoting our organizationally shared values of equal opportunity, inclusiveness, and responsibility.

La Casa serves approximately 50,000 people each year. The agency's primary service area is Newark's North End, with a comprehensive community development initiative for its Lower Broadway community. Our community reflects a diverse demographic profile of largely Hispanic and African-Americans, with a growing West African community.

La Casa provides services in the following areas: Affordable Housing Development; Emergency Financial Assistance; Housing Counseling, including First Time Homebuyer Education and Foreclosure Prevention Counseling; Financial Empowerment Education; Neighborhood Revitalization; Community Organizing; Family Success Centers; Cultural and Recreational Programs; Domestic Violence Counseling; After School Enrichment; Early Childhood Education; Early Head Start; Head Start; English as a Second Language; Adult Basic Education; High School Equivalency classes; Immigration Services; Youth and Family Counseling; Health Initiatives, including HIV/AIDS prevention, support, and counseling services; Work Force Development and Job Placement Services; Lead Remediation; Low

Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP); and Weatherization.

Planning Process

La Casa de Don Pedro's 47 year history in Newark began with a group of concerned citizens coming together to discuss common issues, concerns, and areas of need in the North End of Newark. Born in the Lower Broadway community all those years ago, La Casa continues to include Newark resident's issues, concerns, and needs at the forefront of our program development and service delivery by prioritizing engagement of the Newark community. Whether it is hosting Community Forums where elected officials and police provide crucial information to residents, coordinating graffiti removal initiatives, tree and shrub planting with block associations, or holding seasonal block parties, input from neighborhood residents is an integral part of our efforts to identify, address, and resolve the issues that negatively impact the Quality of Life of our Lower Broadway family, friends, and neighbors.



282 Broad Street Affordable Housing Construction

La Casa's current neighborhood revitalization plan, "*Transforming Lower Broadway: Our Quality of Life Roadmap*" was published in August 2011 after a two-year participatory planning process that included over 300 community members from the Lower Broadway neighborhood in Newark, New Jersey. The ever evolving plan has been touched, inspired and authored by hundreds of residents, merchants, faith-based institutions, educators, social service providers, community activists and other stakeholders who are joined together to make Lower Broadway a safe, healthy and thriving community. Together, our work has progressed over many years, through urban renewal, comprehensive planning, changes in political leadership, housing booms and busts, welcoming new neighbors and saying goodbye to others. Yet, through it all, we continue to gather around the table to consider our current and future status.

Transforming a neighborhood begins with knowing that we share a common vision for our community, and believing that it is achievable. It is about celebrating our successes and building upon them, and understanding that they are part of a greater goal. It is about identifying who needs to come together to achieve a safe, healthy neighborhood that appeals to a broad range of residents. This is our goal, and we understand that neighborhood transformation requires planning and action to become a reality. "*Transforming Lower Broadway: Our Quality of Life Roadmap*" documents our planning process, what was Lower Broadway, what it is, what we want it to be, and what it takes to get there. "*Transforming Lower Broadway: Our Quality of Life Roadmap*" identified 4 key priority areas:

1. Safety and Community Engagement
2. Economic Development and Affordable Housing
3. Access to Quality Education
4. Family Empowerment

Although much of the change envisioned in our original plan has not been achieved, we are currently faced with the prospect of another set of challenges that were not a priority in the earliest versions of this plan – gentrification and the possible displacement of long time low and moderate income households. We hope to utilize the resources and technical assistance of the END program to assist us in compiling data that will assist us in rallying the public and private sectors to support our inclusive revitalization strategies that will ensure that Lower Broadway will be a place where people of all economic classes, ages, races, and ethnicities can live, learn, work and thrive.

Vision and Goals

La Casa hopes that an updated plan that includes an analysis of recent development activity will provide us with strategies to combat gentrification and the resulting displacement of longtime Lower Broadway residents due to increasing rents and home sales prices. The driving principles behind our original plan's approach are simple and still in place:

- Engage the community to define and understand the root causes of the problems that prevent this neighborhood from achieving its vision
- Identify practical solutions with measurable goals
- Maximize the talents, resources and partnerships already in place
- Build new partnerships to move the agenda forward



Throughout this process, La Casa's early actions helped build up community momentum with early and steady success. These included strengthening the merchant's association, embarking on a study of local retail establishments, devising a façade and streetscape improvement program, providing a parking study, opening a financial opportunity center, and holding numerous community engagement activities. Community members were involved in sharing their opinions and perceptions of the neighborhood through responding to a resident satisfaction survey, participating in a visioning event we called "Transforming Lower Broadway" to identify the principal priority areas to address, delving deep in the issues by participating in priority committees, and identifying new

implementation partnerships to carry out the recommendations. La Casa was key in getting an Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance passed last year and we have developed over 150 units of affordable housing (most of them in Lower Broadway) over the years. La Casa was also instrumental in the implementation of streetscape and façade improvement programs, as well as a roll down gate mural program along the Lower Broadway commercial corridor in our efforts to improve the shopping experience and strengthen the small business community. La Casa anticipates continuing to affect change through additional policy changes, affordable housing development, and efforts to organize and strengthen our local small business community.

With over 14,000 residents, Lower Broadway is one of the most diverse neighborhoods in Newark. It remains a largely Hispanic community and has a wide mix of residents from Puerto Rico, Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico.

02 | About the Neighborhood

Brief History and Overview

Lower Broadway is a neighborhood located on the northern edge of Newark, New Jersey's central business district. Lower Broadway is marked by the immigrant populations who have passed through the community throughout Newark's history. As the Italian community moved to the suburbs in the 1960s, the neighborhood became home to recent Puerto Rican arrivals. In the late 1960s, the African-American community assumed leadership positions in Newark City government and members of Newark's Hispanic community began to organize as well. They came together to address their challenges and formed Familias Unidas, which created New Jersey's first bi-lingual daycare center. This organization later laid the groundwork for what is now one of Lower Broadway's anchoring institutions, La Casa de Don Pedro. Today, Lower Broadway is a 1.2 square mile neighborhood located on the northern fringe of Newark's central business district. Boundaries of the neighborhood are Interstate 280 to the

south, the Passaic River to the east, 4th and Bloomfield Avenues to the north, and Branch Brook Park and the Newark Light Rail to the west. With over 14,000 residents, Lower Broadway is one of the most diverse neighborhoods in Newark. It remains a largely Hispanic community (51% vs 32% in Newark) and has a wide mix of residents from Puerto Rico, Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico. The Black population has also increased steadily and includes African Americans as well as a growing West African population. One quarter of the residents are under the age of 18, and one out of every five households is headed by a female with children under the age of 18. The unemployment rate hovers around 14%.

Lower Broadway is primarily a residential neighborhood that is characterized in the north by smaller lots with single, and two-family homes (many of which have been converted into two- and three-family units) and in the south by higher density residential development, particularly in the vicinity of 7th Avenue. Residential uses are clustered

in the heart of the neighborhood, although nearly one third of the population lives in the three Mies van der Rohe designed towers on the southern edge of the neighborhood, The Colonnade and Pavilion apartment complexes. The rest of the community is primarily three story homes and small-scale apartment buildings. The average home in Lower Broadway is over 80 years old. The southern portion of Branch Brook Park provides some recreational amenities to Lower Broadway, however its location opposite a busy thoroughfare inhibits regular use by residents. Four local schools serve the community including McKinley Elementary School, Barringer High School, Franklin Elementary School, and St. Michael's School (parochial).

The commercial district is home to a diverse mix of more than 100 businesses, situated primarily on Broadway and Bloomfield Avenues. These corridors are characterized by mixed-use buildings with apartments above ground-floor retail and service establishments, as well as one-story stand-alone commercial establishments. Over 70,000 cars and



La Casa's MLK Homes Development

53%

of homes are owned by outside investors. Residents report that these investors often renovate homes and raise rents, making them unaffordable for longtime residents.

over 43,000 bus riders pass through the corridor every week, making the Lower Broadway Commercial District the busiest traffic artery leading into downtown Newark. The Lower Broadway commercial corridor was recently upgraded with improved sidewalks, benches, plantings and façade improvements. With the volume of daily street car traffic these improvement efforts were a top priority of La Casa's previous community plans and La Casa was instrumental in gathering the residents, merchants, and stakeholders ensuring that their input was included in the final improvements made.

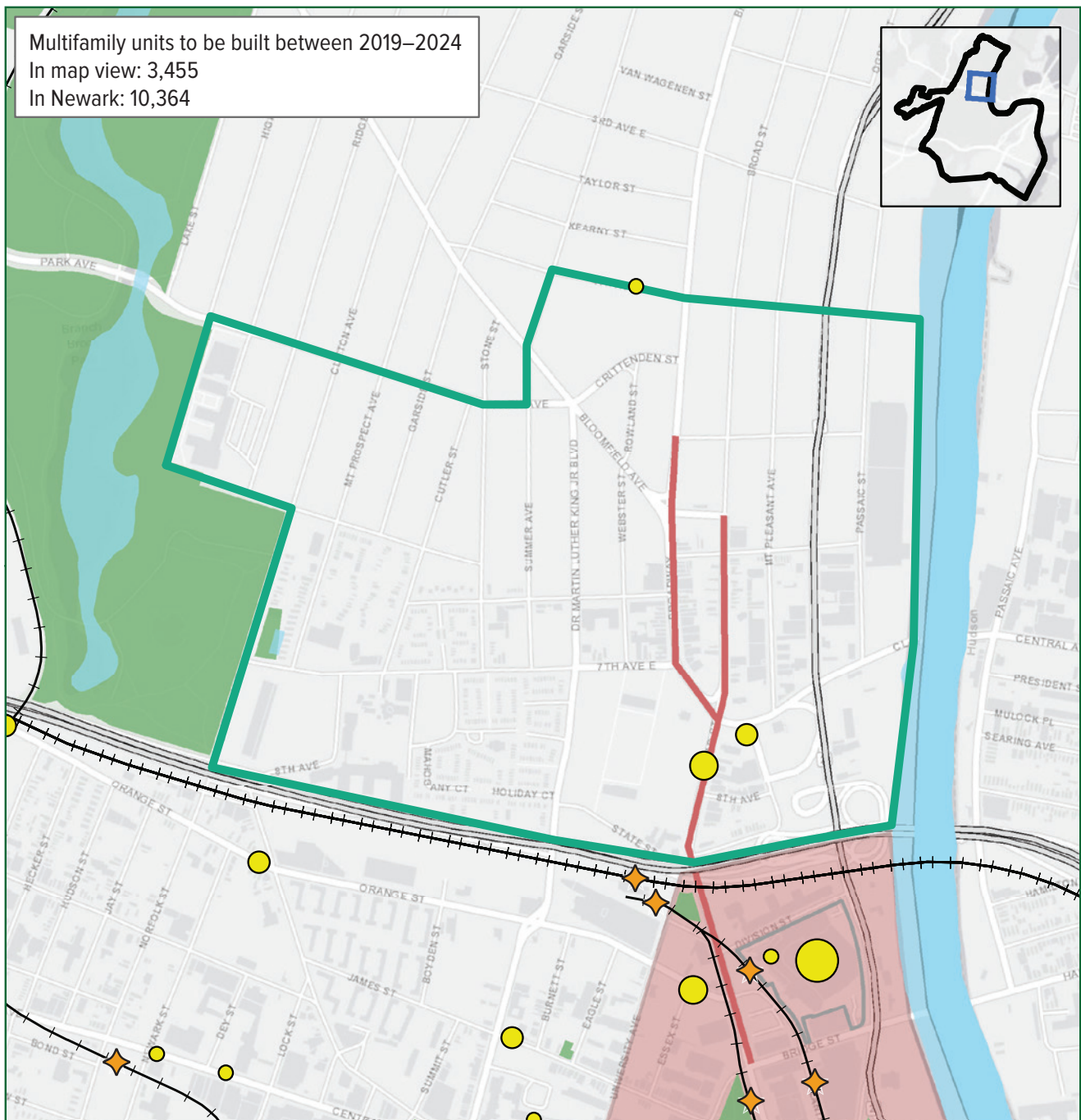
Industrial land uses prevail along the community's eastern boundaries — McCarter Highway and the Passaic River. Strip malls, gas stations, auto body shops, and other highway commercial uses have been replacing formerly industrial and vacant land along McCarter Highway. Lower Broadway has

excellent transportation linkages by bus, rail, light rail and car. Its proximity to downtown Newark, multiple public transit modes, and easy access to major transportation lines, such as Route 21 and Interstate 280, make it an attractive location for businesses, residents, and workers. Newark's Broad Street Station is a quick walk away, allowing for a convenient 20-minute commute to New York City, access to Newark's Light Rail and easy connections to Amtrak trains that access the country's northeast railways.

Lower Broadway's proximity to the CBD and its rich public transportation linkages make it an attractive target for developers and this in turn has fostered unease among current residents who fear that increasing investment could lead to gentrification and displacement. While displacement has not been shown in recent data, the neighborhood and surrounding area is seeing significant development.

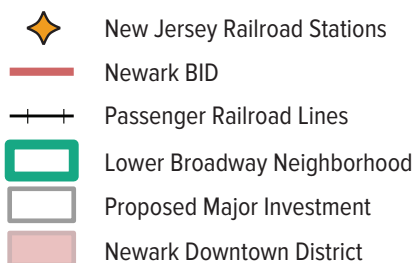
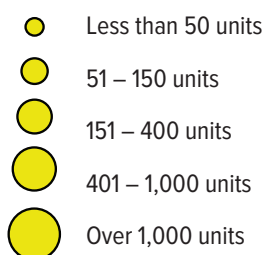
Projected Multifamily Units Built, 2019-2024

Newark, New Jersey



Date Created: 12/19/2019

Source: CoStar



There are 3,000 units of market rate rental apartments and condominiums approved by the Zoning and Planning Boards currently in the development pipeline within a half mile of the Lower Broadway commercial corridor.

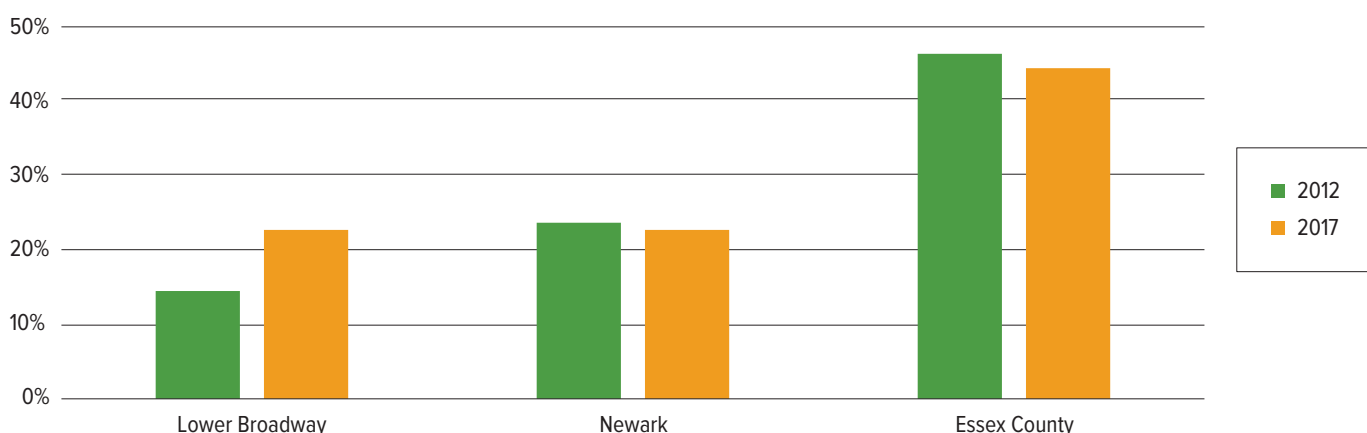
The bad news is that these approved developments are assuredly not designed with current residents in mind and will certainly draw thousands of new, and wealthier, residents to neighborhood. According to the American Community Survey, 66.7% of neighborhood households earn less than \$50,000 per year, nearly one-quarter of all residents live below the poverty line, and 53% of households are renters. Because there is still no formal mechanism or policy for enforcement of the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance (IZO) there is little chance that current residents will be able to afford to live in these new, market-rate developments. In addition, the managers of the City of Newark's proposed Land Bank do not plan on giving developers of affordable housing any preference.

The good news is that these new developments are occurring on longtime vacant lots or abandoned

commercial properties. However, as vacant and underutilized land is increasingly put into the development pipeline, there are signs that investors are also turning their attention to the neighborhood's existing housing stock. Anecdotally, residents of the neighborhood have reported increased solicitation from buyers offering cash for their homes. Residents report that these investors often renovate homes and raise rents, making them unaffordable for longtime residents.

While these priority areas continue to be La Casa's focus, recent investments and developments have opened up the possibility that Lower Broadway's much needed revitalization is leading to gentrification. A recent study found that 60% of all renters in Newark (41,000 households) are rent-burdened and that 57% of homeowners in Newark are mortgage-burdened. With the current influx of interest and investment in Newark from the corporate world and private developers, we fear that many of Lower Broadway's current residents will be displaced just as their neighborhood begins to see significant Quality of Life improvements.

Homeownership Rate

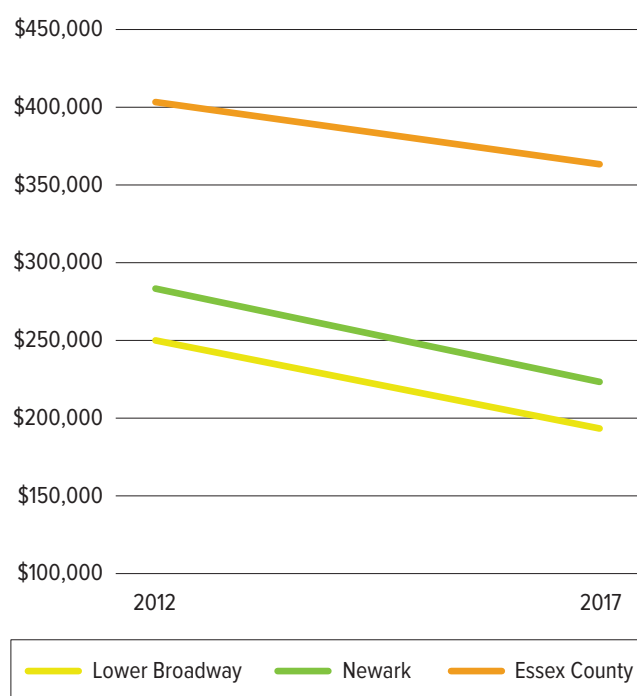


Source: American Community Survey

This is in contrast to an overall decline in the cost of renting across the Lower Broadway neighborhood potentially creating a bifurcated community in which longtime residents are increasingly pushed into the fringes of the community while new, wealthier residents occupy those areas with greatest transit and employment access or, in other words, opportunity.

While the Lower Broadway corridor is seeing increased development, longtime residents are not actualizing many of the benefits associated with new investment. Owner-occupied home values — representing 23% of the housing stock — have continued to decline or have only seen slight increases despite increased investment and development in and around Lower Broadway. In fact, throughout zip code 07104 which includes Lower Broadway, home sale prices peaked in 2006/2007, but have not recovered to pre-recession highs.

Median Home Value



“The majority of Lower Broadway’s housing stock is over 50 years old, with some dating back to the turn of the 20th Century. Having a strategy that includes the provision of lead remediation, weatherization, and rehabilitation resources for low- and moderate-income households is key to La Casa fulfilling its goal of improving the Quality of Life for Lower Broadway residents.”

—Louis E. Prezeau, Jr., Director of Community and Economic Development, La Casa de Don Pedro

03 | Vision for the Neighborhood

*What does equitable development mean?
What kind of neighborhood do you want?*

Lower Broadway will be a place where people of all economic classes, ages, races, and ethnicities can live, learn, work and thrive.

La Casa has engaged in neighborhood-based revitalization and development planning in the Lower Broadway neighborhood of Newark, NJ for the past 25 years with a focus for the last 10 years on four key priority areas identified in “Transforming Lower Broadway: Our Quality of Life Roadmap”:

1.

Safety and
Community Engagement

3.

Access to Quality Education

2.

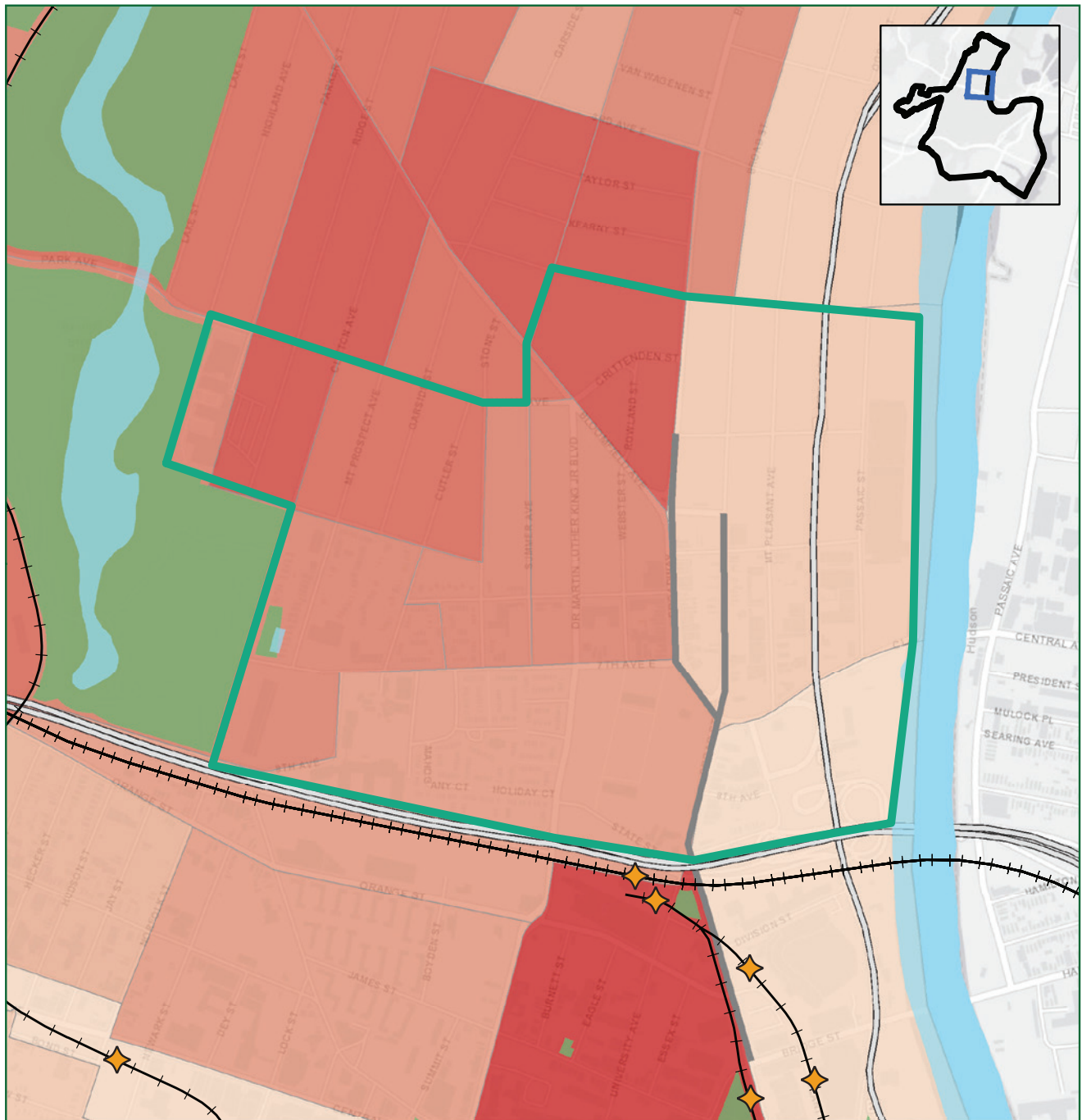
Economic Development
and Affordable Housing

4.

Family Empowerment

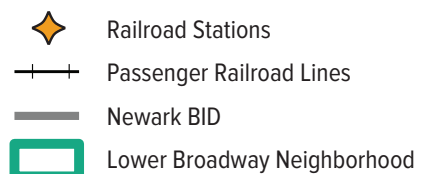
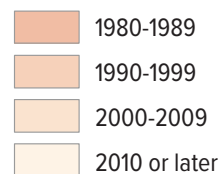
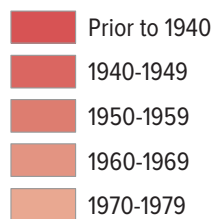
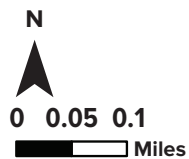
Median Year Housing Structure Built by Block Group

Newark, New Jersey



Date Created: 03/12/2020

Source: CoStar



04 | Goals, Strategies, and Actions

What needs to be achieved in order to create the neighborhood described in the vision?

Goal #1

Ensure that existing Lower Broadway residents can continue to afford to live in Lower Broadway.

Strategy 1: Develop infill affordable housing on City owned vacant lots and abandoned properties.

- **Action:** Complete construction on 6 units of affordable Lower Broadway Stabilization Projects at 73 Stone Street, 282 Broad Street, and 284 Broad Street.
 - » **Timeline** – Complete October 2020

- **Action:** Continue to work with the City of Newark to develop policies and procedures for a Newark Land Bank that would facilitate the disposition of City owned properties to affordable housing developers.
 - » **Timeline** – Complete January 2020
- **Action:** Advocate for the creation of a City of Newark Affordable Housing Trust Fund modeled on Jersey City's program.
 - » **Timeline** – Complete June 2020
- **Action:** Advocate for the replenishment of the State of New Jersey's Affordable Housing Trust Fund that will provide capacity building and housing subsidy funds to support the efforts of organizations such as La Casa that are building safe, healthy, affordable housing in communities like Lower Broadway.
 - » **Timeline** – Ongoing

Strategy 2: Access neighborhood and housing data and make it actionable

- **Action:** Complete the 2019 NeighborWorks Community Impact Measurement (CIM) project to obtain accurate neighborhood data and use results to strategically target La Casa's programmatic investments.
 - » **Timeline** – Complete October 2019
- **Action:** Gain access to MLS data for Lower Broadway and surrounding neighborhoods.
 - » **Timeline** – Complete January 2020
- **Action:** Gain access to pre-foreclosure and foreclosure data in order to:
 - » Connect Lower Broadway residents in pre-foreclosure to housing counseling, retention, mediation, modification, and refinance programs, resources, and services offered by La Casa and our partner organizations.
Timeline – Ongoing
 - » Purchase foreclosed homes in target area and place in redevelopment pipeline.
Timeline – Ongoing

Strategy 3: Ensure that new developments support current Lower Broadway residents.

- **Action:** Continue to work with the City of Newark to develop policies and procedures for enforcement of the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance (IZO) to ensure the set aside of affordable units in new developments in and around Lower Broadway.
 - » **Timeline** – Ongoing

57%

of homeowners in Newark
are mortgage-burdened

La Casa's team of organizers, supported by NeighborWorks America, NALCAB, and the Wells Fargo Regional Foundation, among others, are dedicated to empowering Lower Broadway stakeholders that are working towards the revitalization of their community.

Goal #2

Contribute to improvements in Lower Broadway Quality of Life.

Strategy 1: Provide targeted support to Lower Broadway residents to ensure that essential resources, programs, and services support a safe, healthy, and equitable Lower Broadway.

- **Action:** Connect neighborhood residents, institutions, and stakeholders to the Newark Police Department (NPD) to ensure friendly and effective Community Policing.
 - » **Timeline** – Ongoing

- **Action:** Conduct regularly scheduled Lower Broadway Community Forums with safety briefings from NPD's 2nd Precinct to identify hot spots and share/receive intelligence and information with/from Lower Broadway residents.

» **Timeline** – January 2020 & Ongoing

Strategy 2: Gain access to code enforcement data.

- **Action:** Analyze code violation data and connect affected homeowners in target area with supports that can assist in remedying code violations.

» **Timeline** – Ongoing

- **Action:** Connect residents with the Department of Public Works (DPW) to ensure that Lower Broadway homeowners and residents understand responsibilities, codes, rules, and regulations regarding trash pickup, recycling, snow removal, parking, property maintenance, etc...

» **Timeline** – Ongoing



- **Action:** Create a Lower Broadway loan pool for exterior improvements for existing owner occupants to make necessary repairs.

» **Timeline** – October 2020

Strategy 3: Work to improve education in Lower Broadway.

- **Action:** Continue the expansion of our work with the Newark Board of Education, Head Start, Programs for Parents, and the 21st Century Program to ensure Lower Broadway residents have access to quality educational resources.

» **Timeline** – Ongoing

- **Action:** Organize and establish additional support groups and resources for parents of school age children.

» **Timeline** – June 2020 – Ongoing

- **Action:** Continue the expansion of La Casa's collaborations/partnerships with alternative educational programs such as the Cyber Bridge with Per Scholas and our High School Equivalency (HSE) partnership with Link Community Charter Schools.

» **Timeline** – Ongoing

Strategy 4: Support neighborhood renters

- **Action:** Continue to work with the City of Newark to develop policies and procedures for implementation of Right to Counsel legislation.

» **Timeline** – January 2020

- **Action:** Organize and/or provide technical assistance to tenant councils, block watches, and block associations.

» **Timeline** – Ongoing

Goal #3

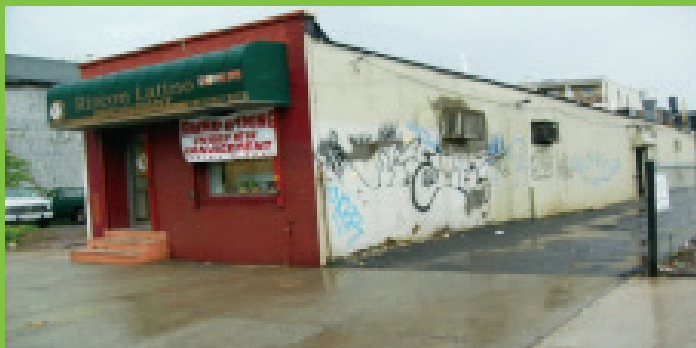
Attract, retain, and develop engaged and diverse resident, business, and entrepreneurial communities in Lower Broadway.

Strategy 1: Continue providing financial and technical support to the Lower Broadway Neighborhood Association (LBNA).

- **Action:** Secure an additional Wells Fargo Regional Foundation 5 year Implementation/ Continuation Grant in support of our Community Organizing and Neighborhood Revitalization efforts in Lower Broadway with the LBNA.
 - » **Timeline** – October 2019 – April 2020
- **Action:** Ensure the recruitment and participation of a Lower Broadway/LBNA cohort to leadership training and development events such as Greater Newark LISC's Newark Resident Leadership Academy; the City of Newark — Department of Public Safety's Citizen/Clergy Academy; and NeighborWorks America's Community Leadership Institute (CLI).
 - » **Timeline** – January 2020

- **Action:** Continue Lower Broadway Placemaking/ Branding efforts in conjunction with the Lower Broadway Neighborhood Association (LBNA).
 - » **Timeline** – Ongoing
- **Action:** Reactivate the Lower Broadway Merchants Association.
 - » **Timeline** – October 2020
- **Action:** Develop and strengthen LBNA and La Casa's relationship with the Bloomfield Avenue/ Lower Broadway Business Improvement District (BID); the Newark Community Economic Development Corporation (NCEDC); the Greater Newark Convention and Visitor's Bureau; and the Newark Downtown District (NDD).
 - » **Timeline** – June 2020
- **Action:** Identify engaged residents, blocks, churches, clubs, and buildings for development of additional block watches and block associations for inclusion in the LBNA.
 - » **Timeline** – January 2020

Impact: Before and After



05 | Metrics of Success

1. Newark Land Bank is established.
2. Affordable Housing Trust Fund distributes \$60,000,000 to affordable housing developers by September 2020.
3. La Casa completes construction of 6 units of new affordable housing in Lower Broadway by October 2020.
4. La Casa identifies 3 new eligible home owners and 3 eligible renters earning below 80% AMI.
5. City of Newark Affordable Housing Trust Fund is established.
6. Approval for Wells Fargo Implementation Continuation Grant is received.



7. Conduct Quarterly Lower Broadway Neighborhood Community Forums.
8. Right to Counsel Policies and Procedures memorialized.
9. Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance (IZO) enforcement Policies and Procedures memorialized.
10. Identify and sponsor 2020 Lower Broadway cohorts for Greater Newark LISC's Newark Resident Leadership Academy; the City of Newark — Department of Public Safety's Citizen/Clergy Academy; and NeighborWorks America's Community Leadership Institute (CLI).



*This Equitable Development
Plan is supported by:*

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EMPOWER AND REVITALIZE

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