



# Route 1 Regional Growth Strategy

## Corridor Working Group Briefing Note #7



### Macro Urban & Economic Context

#### What We Did and Why It Is Important

The project team prepared an overview of the macro-scale development pattern of the Northeast describing the global and continental development patterns as well as the urban, economic, institutional, and transportation patterns. This information is useful in understanding the context of the Route 1 corridor, how it is affected, and the trends that are shaping the region.

The Route 1 corridor is located near the center of the Northeast market extending from Boston to Washington, DC, that serves 52 million people. It is driven by and connected to the global, continental, Northeast regional, and New York regional market activity. The continuing growth of the global economy will generate increasing economic activity in the Northeast, especially in the New York region.

The two major forces driving the economy of the Northeast are its relationship to the major transportation hub that connects it and the continental rail and highway network by air and sea to the world marketplace, and its close proximity to the enormous concentration of financial services in New York City. As the North American trading bloc develops, northern New Jersey will strengthen its role as the principal transportation hub on the Atlantic Coast connecting the US/North America to the global economy. At the same time, as the global economy continues to grow, the concentration of financial services in New York will grow with it. Together, these forces will result in greater long-term development pressures in the Route 1 corridor.

Growth pressures in the corridor are also increasing due to the new urban formation, the urban lattice, which has redefined the relationship of the Route 1 corridor to the Northeast. Development is no longer concentrated around the metropolitan centers along the Northeast Corridor. Instead, development pressures are emerging from multiple points within the lattice. The Route 1 study area has transformed from an undeveloped area within the Northeast to an active development zone with easy access to New York, Philadelphia, and the eastern Pennsylvania hubs.

#### What You Need To Know

Regions, as opposed to political jurisdictions, have emerged as the basic units within the new global economic geography and are the hubs that anchor the global trade network. As the principal points of production, consumption, knowledge, and services, they comprise the foundation blocks of the world economy. Within the Northeast, the New York region forms the largest financial center in the world and the largest trade hub along the Atlantic Coast, and it will continue to grow in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

With execution of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) of 1994, a continental grid developed in response to increased trade between Canada, Mexico, and the United States. Limited road and rail transportation capacity crossing the Hudson River has made the Northeast the "East Coast" of North America. Northern New Jersey's concentration of ports, airports, rail lines, and highways offers the best continental access. This places the primary ports of entry/exit in northern New Jersey - *points to the east of the Hudson do not have this scale of continental access*. The airports and seaports in northern New Jersey will generate increasing truck and rail transportation and support development activity through New Jersey and along the

New Jersey Turnpike east of the Route 1 corridor, reinforcing its importance as a major goods corridor connecting the New York region to Philadelphia and other North American metros.

The urban pattern of the Northeast has passed through three distinct stages of development since 1945. In the first phase of development after World War II between 1945 and 1960 (Figure 1), New Jersey was characterized by independent and sometimes isolated small towns connected by secondary and arterial roads to the much larger urban centers of New York City and Philadelphia. The Turnpike was completed in 1951, and construction of the Interstate highway system began in 1956.

The second phase of development, Suburban Expansion, occurred from 1960-1990 (Figure 2) and can be divided into two sub-phases. The first sub-phase began with the construction of the interstate highway system across the Northeast. The goal was to connect the major urban centers along a single, high-speed, limited-access corridor. I-95 was constructed in most part and the New Jersey Turnpike became an important connector for Northeastern states. This highway system paralleled the Northeast Rail Corridor (now Amtrak) line, which connects the major urban cores from Washington, DC, to Boston. The access points in the combined rail line and highway Interstate corridor gave rise to a linear development pattern, and New Jersey became a “corridor” state. Route 1 was bypassed and experienced little development during this period.

The second sub-phase (Figure 3) resulted from the construction of the urban lateral/ circumferential freeways and radial freeways, complimented by existing transit lines. In the New York and northern New Jersey area, I-287 formed a gigantic loop crossing three states, while to the south I-295 formed a by-pass for I-95 and a loop around Trenton. Suburban growth and employment centers followed the construction of these loops. During this phase the amount of traffic flow on the Turnpike/I-95 became so large that New Jersey became known as the transportation corridor linking the Northeast with the rest of the country.

The third phase (Figure 4) began in the mid-1980s and continued to evolve rapidly after 1990. A new pattern of urbanization emerged in the Northeast brought about by the forces of global integration, NAFTA, and the breakup of Conrail. These forces gave rise to a new set of nodes in eastern Pennsylvania, including Harrisburg, Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, and Allentown/Bethlehem, and Newburgh in New York State. These inland hubs function as continental distribution points and heavily interact with the four global hubs located in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. The development and transport pattern across the Northeast no longer resembles a linear structure but is now a gigantic urban lattice. After years as a transition zone between New York and Philadelphia, New Jersey has become its own place. At the junction point between the global and continental grids, New Jersey is an urbanized state at the center of the vast and interconnected Northeast urban and economic super structure. The Route 1 corridor study area lies at the center of lattice.

### **How We Did It**

The project team studied the context of the global, continental, and Northeast scales. At the first two scales, key economic and trade pattern information was distilled to determine their effects on the growth of the Northeast. Four sub-regional areas were created at the Northeast scale – the institutional, research, economic, and transportation patterns – and three key evolutionary steps were researched – 1945, 1975, and 2000. By studying the relationships between the global and continental patterns, prospects for the long-term growth potential of the Northeast could be assessed. The study of the relationship of the urban, economic, institutional, and transportation pattern of the Northeast and its evolution provided an understanding of the macro-scale trends that created the current development pattern and are driving future development patterns across this large area.

Figure 1: First Phase of Development (1945 – 1960)

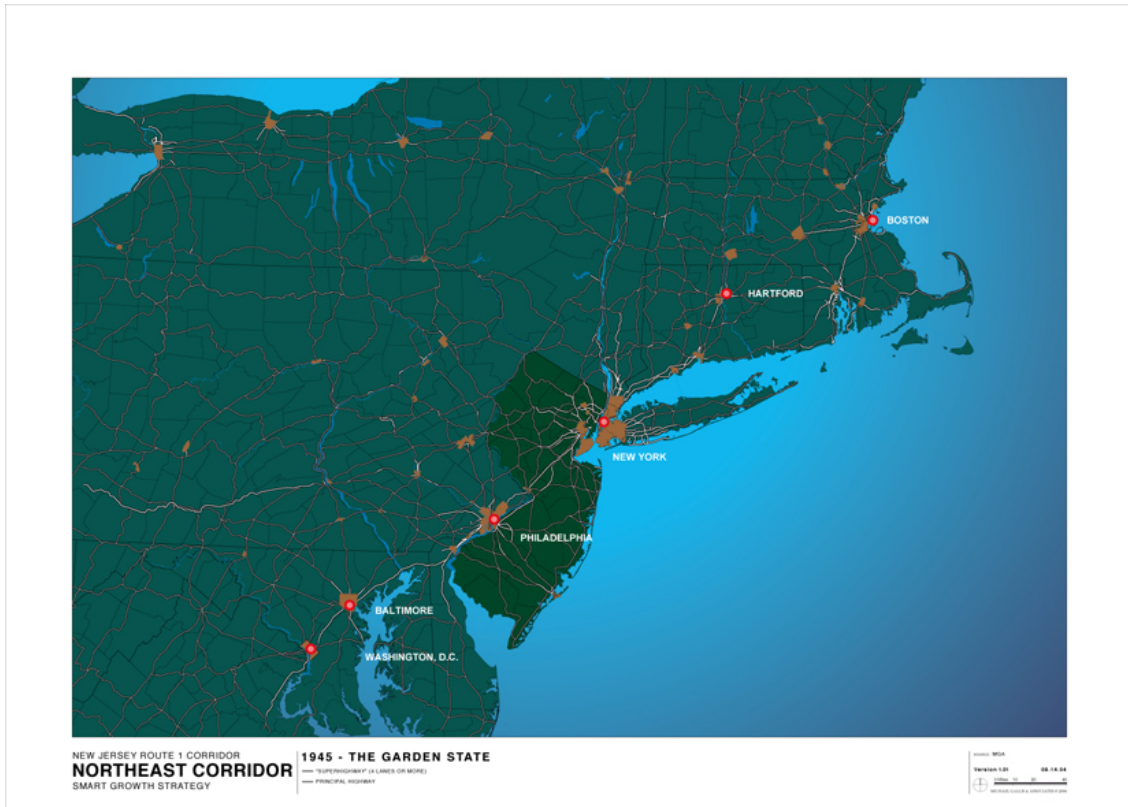


Figure 2: Suburban Expansion (1960-1975)

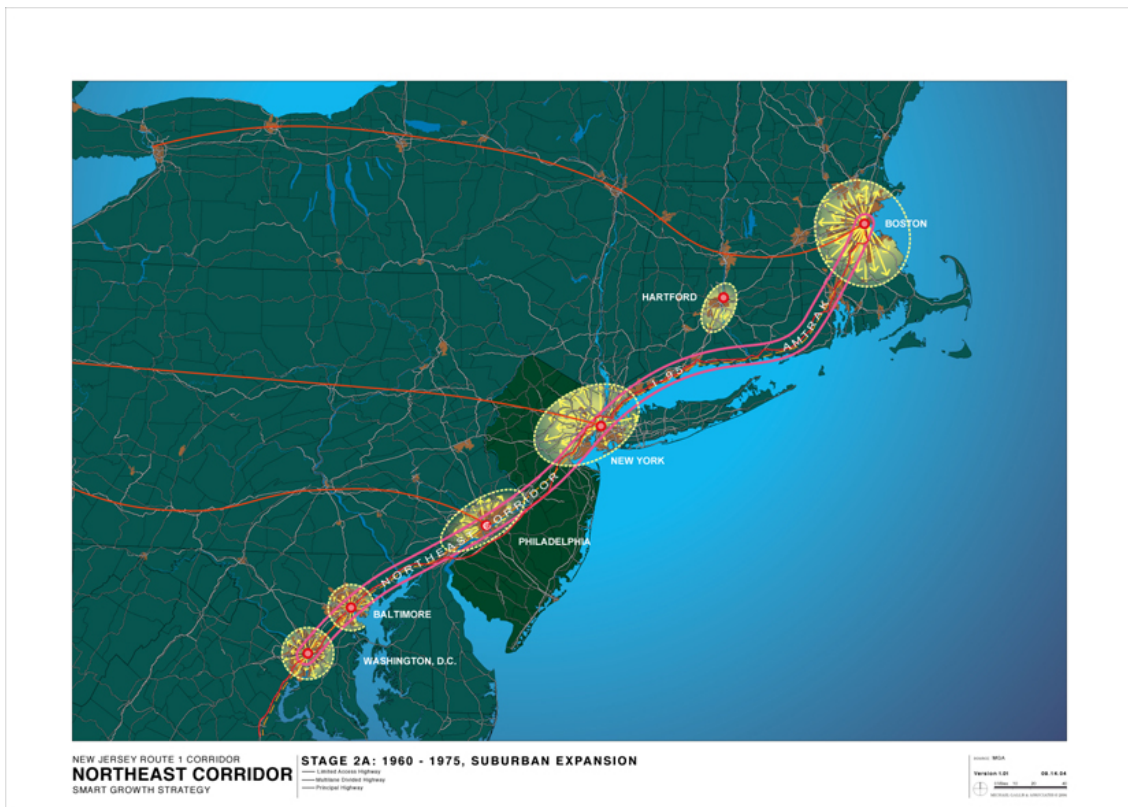


Figure 3: Suburban Expansion (1975 – 1990)

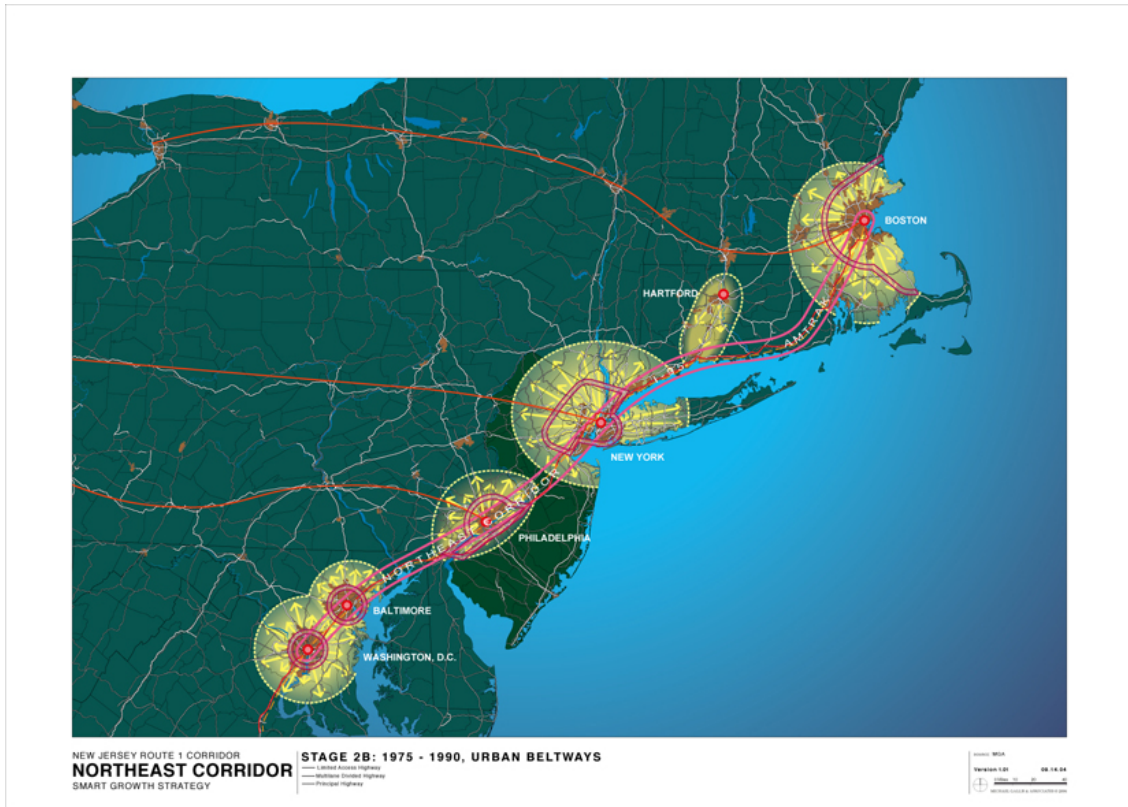


Figure 4: New Pattern of Urbanization (1975 – Ongoing)

