

# WHITMAN PARK

## AREA IN NEED OF REDEVELOPMENT REPORT

Prepared for the City of Camden Department of Planning and Development  
and the Camden Redevelopment Agency (CRA)



Prepared by



Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC  
Planning and Design

with

The Enterprise Center

July 6, 2015

# WHITMAN PARK AREA IN NEED OF REDEVELOPMENT STUDY

Prepared for:

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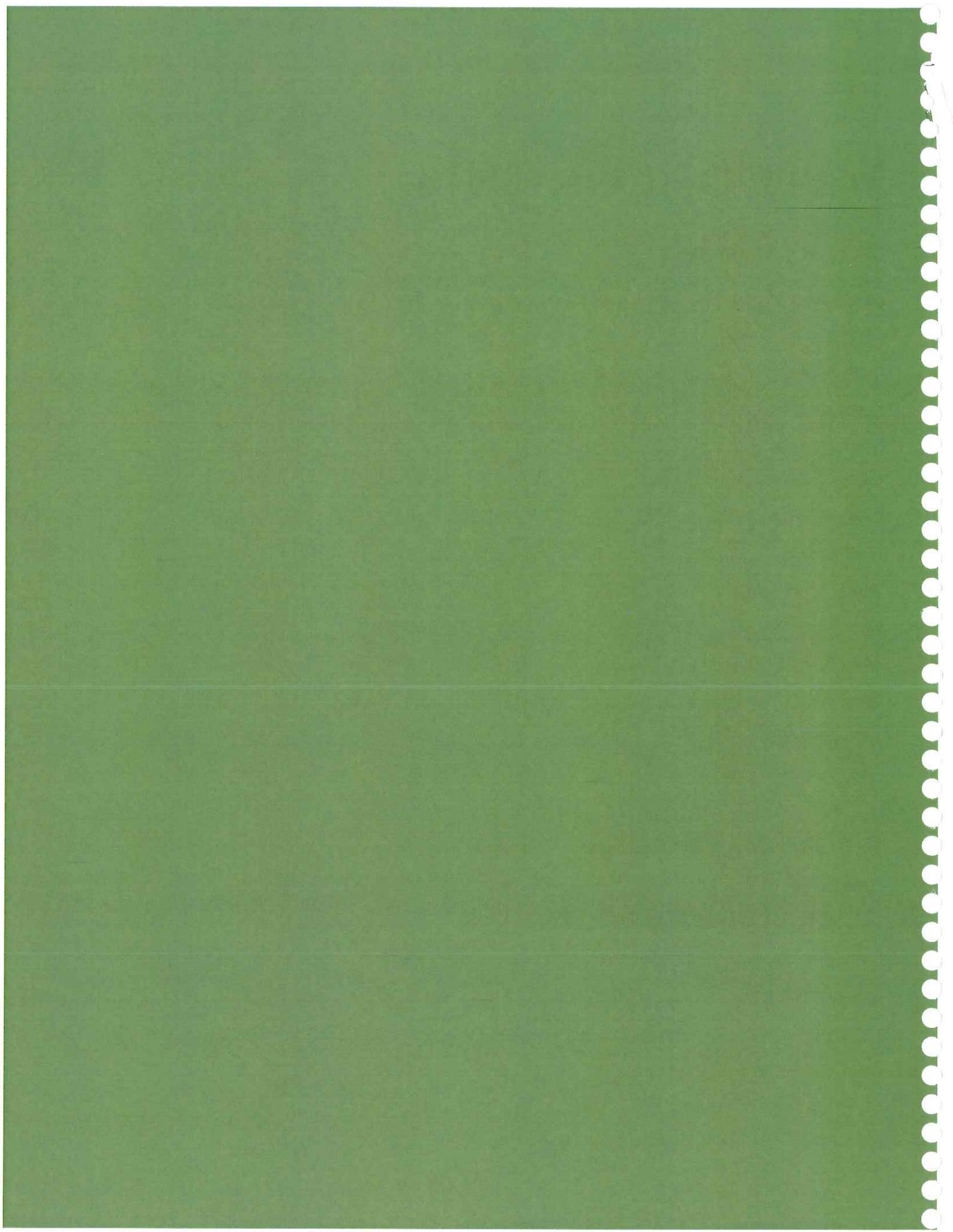
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# SECTION 1: STUDY AREA



## Introduction

On February 12, 2014, the Whitman Park Area in Need of Redevelopment (AINR) study and redevelopment plan were authorized by the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency Board of Commissioners through resolution 02-12-14C. This report has been prepared by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC and The Enterprise Center for the City of Camden Department of Development & Planning. The purpose of the AINR study is to determine whether the Whitman Park study area meets the requirements for designation as an "Area In Need of Redevelopment", as established under New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law N.J.S.A. 40A:12A.

The Whitman Park AINR relies on data gathered from the City of Camden, as well as field investigation of the site's land use, occupancy, and physical condition.

This report builds upon Camden's first Comprehensive Master Plan revision in twenty-five years, FutureCAMDEN. Adopted by the Planning Board on March 12, 2012, the plan establishes a framework for

the physical development of the City. FutureCAMDEN outlines the following recommendations relevant to the Whitman Park AINR:

- Reinforcing Camden's Role in the Philadelphia-South Jersey Region
- Improving Housing and Neighborhoods
- Achieving a Dynamic Economy
- Capitalizing on the City's Physical and Historical Assets
- Maintaining and Improving the Environment
- Integrating Camden's Transportation System
- Achieving Improved Public Facilities, Education and Safety
- Translating the Master Plan into Action

Whitman Park is prime for redevelopment and supports the goals of the Comprehensive Master Plan.

## Background and Context

A thriving center for manufacturing, industry, and commerce in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, immigrants settled in Camden and established ethnic neighborhoods throughout the city. Once farm fields, Polish immigrants settled in Whitman Park and established a thriving neighborhood with a commercial district along Mount Ephraim Avenue. The decline of industry and the Camden's economic well-being in the 1960s contributed to blight and Whitman Park's current struggles with vacancy, crime, and poverty. Along with the remaining contingency of Polish immigrants, a core of the neighborhood's largely African-American and Hispanic residents remain committed to the revitalization of Whitman Park.

Over the past 10-15 years, the City of Camden and Camden Redevelopment Agency have completed several plans and redevelopment strategies for Whitman Park. This report builds upon recommendations outlined in the subsequent planning initiatives for Whitman Park, including Camden's Comprehensive Master Plan, [FutureCAMDEN](#). Adopted by the Planning Board on March 12, 2012, FutureCAMDEN establishes a framework for the physical development of the City. The plan outlines the following recommendations supporting the land use plan for Whitman Park:

- Establish medium density residential land use through infill housing development and rehabilitation is recommended in this neighborhood area.
- Create a transit-oriented mixed-use development center around the PATCO Ferry Avenue station involving high density residential, office, limited retail and commercial services. Redevelopment of surface parking lots and underutilized commercial/ industrial service land east of the rail line would form the core of this new transit zone. Rehabilitation, infill and conversion of existing office and multi-family uses south of Sayre Avenue is also recommended to complete this new transit-oriented mixed-use development center.

- Develop medical and support uses opposite the Our Lady of Lourdes Medical Center, generally between Whitman Avenue and Copewood Street and west of Haddon Avenue to Davis Street.
- Create green corridor landscape buffers along the high speed rail line corridor.
- Compact and improved retail land uses along the east side of Mt. Ephraim Avenue from Whitman Avenue to Van Hook Street and along the west side of Haddon Avenue from Atlantic to Whitman Avenue is recommended.
- Renovate Brimm Medical Arts High School and build a new Elementary School #2 (vicinity of Jackson and Pershing Streets).
- Upgrade parks, recreation and open space along with community facilities throughout the neighborhood. Refurbish Whitman Park and Whitman Square. Create mini-park at Jackson and Morris Streets.

The Master Plan also recommended implementation of the following physical project activities specific to the Whitman Park:

- Rehab vacant stock- 170 units.
- Incorporate units designated for elderly households in new developments.
- Target infill/rehab activities along Haddon Avenue corridor in the vicinity of Atlantic Avenue.
- Develop mixed income housing as part of transit-oriented development at Ferry Avenue station.
- Prepare a neighborhood plan for Whitman Park and then a redevelopment plan for identified improvement action areas.

As a part of Camden's the [Master Redevelopment Plan](#), adopted in 2003, the City of Camden undertook a city-wide effort to create new and update outdated neighborhood plans. The Master Redevelopment Plan is the guiding document for Camden's economic recovery and revitalization, as required by the 2002 Municipal Rehabilitation and Economic Recovery Act. The plan recommends that the City and the State's Economic

Recovery Board (ERB) utilize program funds to support planning activities in those areas of the City, identified as “Transitional/Future Development Areas” that have not yet developed neighborhood plans or need to revise older plans. Whitman Park was identified as one of these areas and received ERB funding for the 2007 Whitman Park Neighborhood Plan.

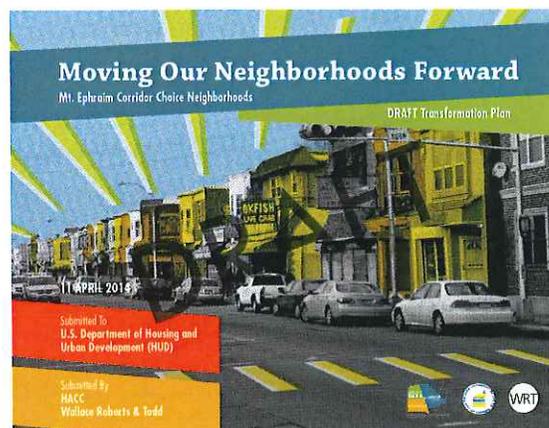
The purpose of the **Whitman Park Neighborhood Plan** was to develop strategies for neighborhood revitalization that reflected the needs and desire of the community. The Whitman Park Neighborhood Plan recommended:

- Redevelopment of the large institutional and industrial tracts to promote revitalization in Whitman Park’s established residential section.
- New transit-oriented development surrounding the Ferry Avenue Station to encourage renovation of Whitman Park’s existing residential units.
- New schools on vacant industrial properties to provide improved community services to the neighborhood and attract middle-class families to the community.
- A new boulevard along Davis Street, traffic-calming system on Louis and Norris Streets, and reconfigured Mt. Ephraim Avenue commercial district to create a safer, more attractive, and vibrant Whitman Park.

In 2012, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded the Housing Authority of the City of Camden (HACC) a \$300,000 Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant for the **Mt. Ephraim Corridor Choice Neighborhood**. The Mt. Ephraim Corridor includes the neighborhoods of Liberty Park, Centerville, and Whitman Park. The Choice Neighborhoods Initiative supports comprehensive neighborhood revitalization by using the redevelopment of distressed public housing as a catalyst for neighborhood wide transformation. The Mt. Ephraim Corridor Choice Neighborhood Transformation Plan establishes strategies to address community-wide priority concerns including, improved housing, safety, neighborhood improvements, employment and programs for youth.



**Whitman Park Strategic Neighborhood Plan:** The illustrative plan illustrates the recommended revitalization and new development of housing and community.



**Mt. Ephraim Corridor Choice Neighborhood Draft Transformation Plan:** The collaborative planning process resulted in a plan that reflects the visions and aspirations of the Mt. Ephraim Corridor neighborhood.

## Location and Context

The Whitman Park study area encompasses 288 acres and is located at the southern edge of the City of Camden (Figure 1). Defined as U.S. Census Tract 6015, the study area is bounded by Atlantic Avenue to the north, Haddon Avenue to the east, Ferry Avenue to the South, and Mt. Ephraim Avenue to the West.

The study area's Ferry Avenue Station provides access to the PATCO high speed train line. Whitman Park is also highly accessible by car via the Route I-676 interchange. These transportation connections provide direct links to government, employment, retail, entertainment,

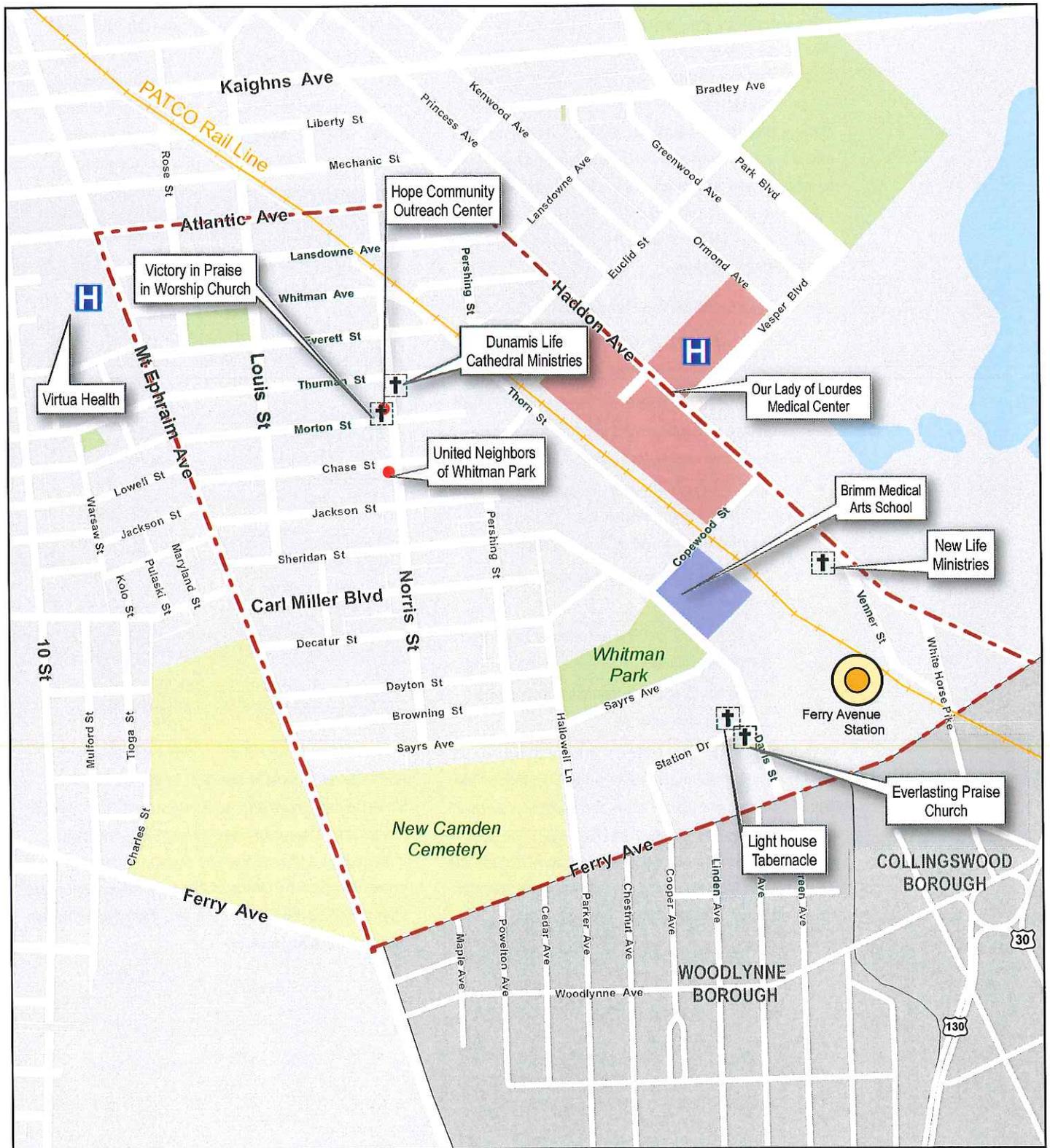
and social services found in downtown Camden and Philadelphia.

Major health facilities in and at the periphery of the study area include Virtua Hospital and Our Lady of Lourdes Medical Center (Figure 2). The City of Camden School District serves Whitman Park. Schools within the study area include Henry Bonsall Public School and Brimm Medical Arts High School. Open space within the neighborhood includes the 6 acre Whitman Park with recreation and community facilities.

Figure 1  
Regional Context



Figure 2 Study Area Boundaries



## Urban Enterprise Zone

Administered by the Department of Community Affairs, the Urban Enterprise Zones (UEZ) Program was created to revitalize New Jersey's most distressed urban communities. UEZ exists "to foster an economic climate that revitalizes designated urban communities and stimulates their growth by encouraging businesses to develop and create private sector jobs through public and private investment."<sup>1</sup> The UEZ Program accomplishes this by offering the following incentives to participating businesses:

- Reduced Sales Tax – currently 3.5%
- Tax Free Purchases on certain items such as capital equipment, facility expansions, and upgrades
- Financial Assistance from agencies such as NJEDA
- Subsidized unemployment insurance costs for employees who earn less than \$4,500 per quarter
- Energy Sales Tax Exemption for qualified manufacturing firms with at least 250 employees, 50% of whom are working in manufacturing
- Tax Credit Options (owners may elect one of the following)
  - Up to \$1,500 for new permanent full-time employees hired
  - Up to 8% Corporate Business Tax credit on qualified investments

Within the state of New Jersey, there are 32 active UEZ in 37 municipalities, including the City of Camden. The City of Camden enterprise zone encompasses nearly all of the Whitman Park study area (Figure 3). The 20% of Whitman Park not included in the UEZ zone include the New Camden Cemetery and several largely residential blocks north of the cemetery.

## Smart Growth

Smart Growth is described as "well-planned, well-managed growth that adds new homes and creates new jobs, while preserving open space, farmland, and environmental resources."<sup>2</sup> To create and maintain great neighborhoods, the Smart Growth Network developed the following set of ten principles:

Smart Growth Principle	Whitman Park
Mix land uses	•
Take advantage of compact building design	•
Create a range of housing opportunities and choices	•
Create walkable neighborhoods	•
Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place	•
Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas	
Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities	•
Provide a variety of transportation choices	•
Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective	•
Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions	•

In New Jersey, Smart Growth supports development and redevelopment in Centers, as identified by the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. Centers are compact forms of development with existing infrastructure that serves the economy, community, and environment. The Office of Planning Advocacy's State Plan classifies the City of Camden, including Whitman Park, as an Urban Center.

<sup>1</sup>"NJ Department of Community Affairs." NJ Department of Community Affairs. N.p., n.d. Web. 30 Apr. 2014.

<sup>2</sup>"Smart Growth." New Jersey Department of State. N.p., n.d. Web. 30 Apr. 2014.

Figure 3 Urban Enterprise Zone



- Whitman Park Boundary
- Water
- Park
- NJ Urban Enterprise Zone<sup>1</sup>

Data Source: City of Camden

<sup>1</sup>NJOIT 2013



## Existing Zoning

Zoning regulations describe permitted land uses within the study area (Figure 4). Whitman Park is primarily R-2 Residential. Several blocks along Mt. Ephraim Avenue and Haddon Avenue, the east and west boundaries of the study area are zoned C-1 and C-3 Commercial Zones. The Ferry Avenue Station and surrounding surface parking areas are zoned TOD.

### R-2 Residential

**PERMITTED USES.** In the R-2 Residential Zone, no building, structure or premises shall be used, and no building or structure shall be erected or structurally altered, except for the following permitted uses:

- Single-family detached dwellings.
- Semi-detached dwellings.
- Duplex (two-family) dwellings.
- Townhouse (attached/row) dwellings.
- Buildings, structures, and other uses owned and operated by the City of Camden for municipal purposes.
- Parks, playgrounds or recreation areas, community center buildings, and libraries.
- Public, private, or parochial educational institutions.

**ACCESSORY USES.** The following accessory uses shall be permitted in this zone:

- Inground and Above-Ground Swimming Pools and/or other structures customarily incidental to a private swimming pool on a property, subject to the requirements of Section 577-193.
- Accessory Buildings and Structures, subject to the requirements of Section 577-189.
- Off-Street Parking and Private Garages, subject to the requirements of Section 577-214, 230- 241.
- Fences and Walls, subject to the requirements of Section 577-197.
- Signs, subject to the requirements of Section 577-253.
- Porches, decks and patios, subject to the requirements of Section 577-190.

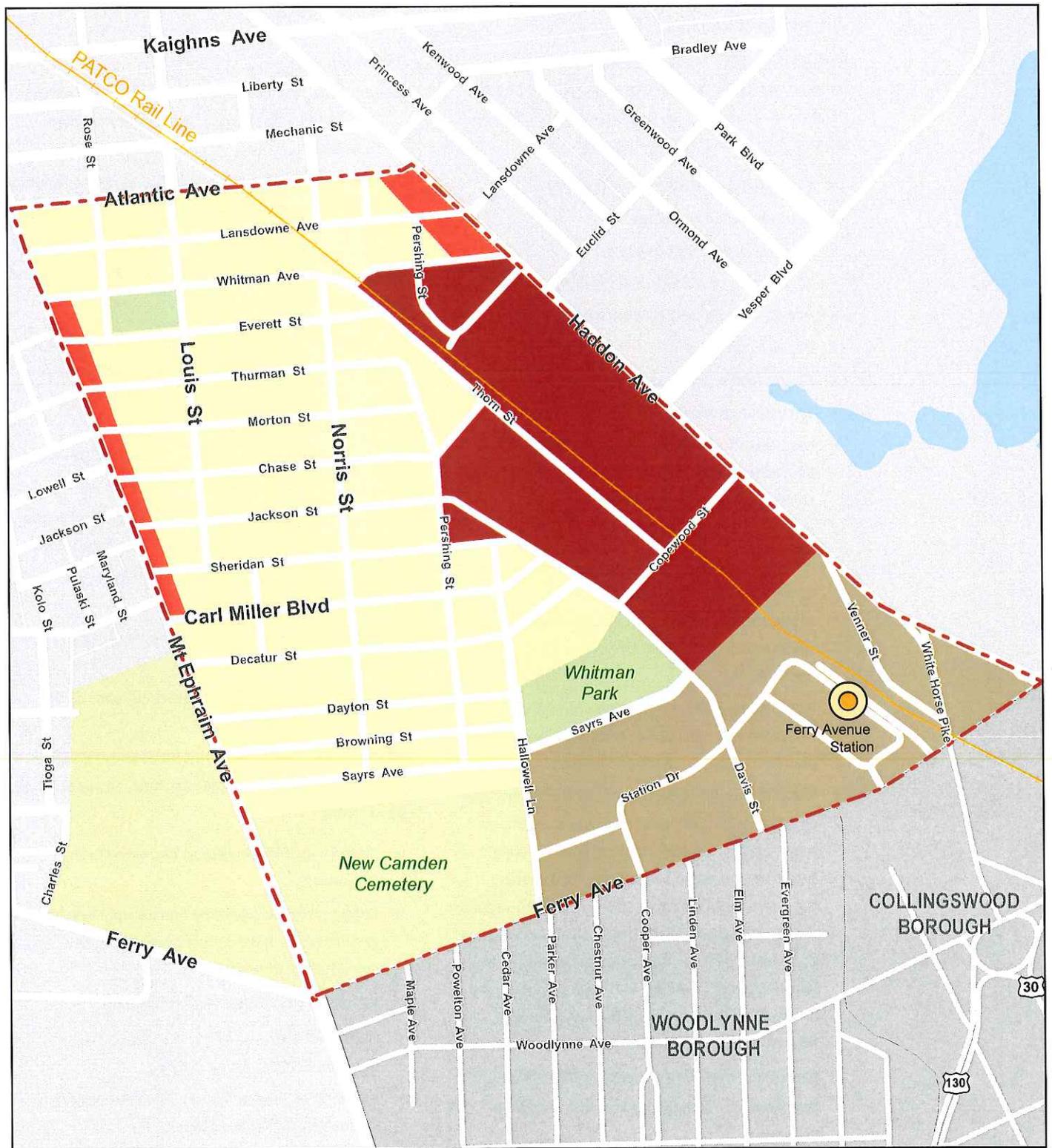
**PROHIBITED USES INCLUDE.** Any use not listed above shall be prohibited in the R-2 Residential Zone, and specifically the following:

- Signs in any form except as permitted in this Ordinance.
- Lodging houses, boarding houses, rooming houses, multi-family dwellings or any combination thereof.
- Wireless Telecommunication Facilities.

**CONDITIONAL USES.** The following conditional uses shall be permitted in this zone:

- Place of Worship, subject to the requirements of Section 577-209.
- Community Residences for Persons with Head Injuries and for the Developmentally Disabled and/or Community Shelters for Victims of Domestic Violence, as required by N.J.S.A. 40:55D-66.1, subject to the standards and requirements for single-family detached dwellings located within this zone and to the requirements of Section 577-204.
- Family Day Care homes, subject to the requirements of Section 577-202.
- Parabolic dish antennae, subject to the requirements of Section 577-210.
- Public utility facilities, subject to the requirements of Section 577-191.
- Cemetery, subject to the requirements of Section 577-208.
- Home occupation and home professional offices, subject to the requirements of Section 577-201.

Figure 4 Existing Zoning



- R-2 Residential<sup>1</sup>
- C-1 Commercial<sup>1</sup>
- C-3 Commercial<sup>1</sup>
- TOD Transit Oriented Development<sup>1</sup>
- Whitman Park Boundary
- Water

Data Source: City of Camden  
<sup>1</sup>City of Camden Planning Board, 2011

## C-1 COMMERCIAL ZONE

PERMITTED USES. In the C-1 Commercial Zone, no building, structure or premises shall be used and no building or structure shall be erected or structurally altered, except for the following uses:

- Single-family detached dwellings.
- Semi-detached dwellings.
- Duplex (two-family) dwellings.
- Townhouse (attached/row) dwellings.
- Banks, financial and insurance offices.
- Business services.
- Club, social or fraternal.
- Convenience stores.
- Medical offices and facilities, including but not limited to doctor, dentist and veterinary offices, chiropractors and psychiatrists.
- Offices, office building and office complex.
- Personal services, including but not limited to barbershops, hairdressers, dry cleaning establishments, photographers, funeral homes, shoe repairs, tailors, laundromats and travel agencies.
- Professional and private offices, including but not limited to real estate, accounting, insurance, architects, psychologists and lawyers.
- Retail stores, including but not limited to the sale of antiques, art, dry goods, variety and general merchandise, clothing, fabrics, floor covering, furniture and home furnishings, food, books, hardware, hobby and art supplies, garden supplies, flowers, drugs, handicraft art, household supplies or furnishings, pets, sale or repair of jewelry, sporting goods, watches and clocks, optical goods, musical, professional and office supplies and packed goods when sold only on the premises
- Residential uses above non-residential first floor.
- Restaurants, not including carryout and drive-through.
- Retail food establishments.
- Shopping centers.
- Tavern or bar.
- Buildings, structures, and other uses owned and operated by the City of Camden for municipal purposes.
- Parks, playgrounds or recreation areas, community center buildings, and libraries.
- Public, private or parochial educational institutions.

ACCESSORY USES. The following accessory uses shall be permitted in this zone:

- Inground and Above-Ground Swimming Pools and/or other structures customarily incidental to a private swimming pool on a property, subject to the requirements of Section 577-193.
- Accessory Buildings and Structures, subject to the requirements of Section 577-189.
- Off-Street Parking and Private Garages, subject to the requirements of Section 577-214, 230- 241.
- Fences and Walls, subject to the requirements of Section 577-197.
- Signs, subject to the requirements of Section 577-253.
- Sidewalk café, subject to the requirements of Section 577-217.

PROHIBITED USES. Any use not listed above shall be prohibited in the C-1 Commercial Zone, and specifically the following:

- Signs in any form except as permitted in this Ordinance.
- Lodging houses, boarding houses, rooming houses, group homes, multi-family dwellings or any combination thereof.
- Wireless Telecommunication Facilities.
- Auto Body shop.
- Automobile Sales lot or building.
- Automobile Service Station, Gasoline Station, or Motor Vehicle Service Station.
- Car Wash.
- Junk yards and automobile graveyards.

- Lumber and building supply sales and storage.
- Hotel or Motel, or Extended Family Stay facility.
- Wholesale, storage, and warehouse facilities.
- Commercial Recreational facility.
- Farm Market.
- Garden Center.
- Home Center.

**CONDITIONAL USES.** The following conditional uses shall be permitted in this zone:

- Family Day Care homes, subject to the requirements of Section 577-202.
- Child Care Centers, subject to the requirements of Section 577-203.
- Parabolic dish antennae, subject to the requirements of Section 577-210.
- Public utility facilities, subject to the requirements of Section 577-191.
- Home occupations and home professional offices, subject to the requirements of Section 577-201.
- Bed and Breakfast, subject to the requirements of Section 577-205.

### C-3 COMMERCIAL ZONE

**PERMITTED USES.** In the C-3 Commercial Zone, no building, structure or premises shall be used and no building or structure shall be erected or structurally altered, except for the following uses:

- Banks, financial and insurance offices.
- Business services.
- Club, social or fraternal.
- Commercial Recreation facility.
- Convenience stores.
- Farm Market.
- Funeral Home.
- Furniture and home furnishings.
- Garden Center.
- Home Center.
- Medical offices and facilities, including but not limited to doctor, dentist and veterinary offices,

chiropractors and psychiatrists.

- Offices, office building and office complex.
- Personal services, including but not limited to barbershops, hairdressers, dry cleaning establishments, photographers, funeral homes, shoe repairs, tailors, laundromats, and travel agencies.
- Professional and private offices, including but not limited to real estate, accounting, insurance, architects, psychologists and lawyers.
- Restaurants, including sit-down, carryout, and drive-through.
- Retail food establishments.
- Retail sales, outdoor.
- Retail stores, including but not limited to the sale of antiques, art, dry goods, variety and general merchandise, clothing, fabrics, floor covering, furniture and home furnishings, food, books, hardware, hobby and art supplies, garden supplies, flowers, drugs, handicraft art, household supplies or furnishings, pets, sale or repair of jewelry, sporting goods, watches and clocks, optical goods, musical, professional and office supplies and packed goods when sold only on the premises.
- Shopping centers.
- Tavern or bar.
- Buildings, structures, and other uses owned and operated by the City of Camden for municipal purposes.
- Parks, playgrounds or recreation areas, community center building, and libraries.
- Public, private or parochial educational institutions.

**ACCESSORY USES.** The following accessory uses shall be permitted in this zone:

- Off-Street Parking, subject to the requirements of Section 577-214, 230-241.
- Multi-level Parking Structure, to the requirements of Section 577-232.
- Fences and Walls, subject to the requirements of Section 577-197.

- Signs, subject to the requirements of Section 577-253.
- Sidewalk Café, subject to the requirements of Section 577-217.

PROHIBITED USES. Any use not listed above shall be prohibited in the C-3 Commercial Zone, and specifically the following:

- Signs in any form except as permitted in this Ordinance.
- Lodging houses, boarding houses, rooming houses, group homes, multi-family dwellings or any combination thereof.
- Lumber and building supply sales and storage.
- Junk yards and automobile graveyards.
- Wholesale, storage, and warehouse facilities.

CONDITIONAL USES. The following conditional uses shall be permitted in this zone:

- Child Care Centers, subject to the requirements of Section 577-203.
- Parabolic dish antennae, subject to the requirements of Section 577-210.
- Public utility facilities, subject to the requirements of Section 577-191.
- Wireless Telecommunication facilities, subject to the requirements of Section 577-210 and 211.
- Residential Health Care facilities for the elderly.
- Age Restricted housing.
- Long Term Care Facility.
- Nursing Home.
- Congregate Care Facility.
- Assisted Living Facility.
- Continuing Care Retirement community.
- Auto Body shop.
- Automobile Service Station, Gasoline Station, or Motor Vehicle Service Station.
- Car Wash.

## TOD Transit Oriented Development

PERMITTED USES. In the TOD Transit Oriented Zone, no building, structure or premises shall be used and no building or structure shall be erected or structurally altered, except for the following permitted uses:

- Semi-detached dwellings.
- Duplex (two-family) dwellings.
- Townhouse (attached/row) dwellings.
- Multi-family dwellings.
- Bus terminals.
- Business services.
- Convenience stores.
- Banks, financial and insurance offices.
- Offices, office building, office complex and medical offices
- Personal services, including but not limited to barbershops, hairdressers, dry cleaning establishments, photographers, funeral homes, shoe repairs, tailors, laundromats and travel agencies.
- Professional Offices and private offices, including but not limited to real estate, accounting, insurance, architects, psychologists and lawyers.
- Restaurants, not including carryout and drive through.
- Retail Food establishments.
- Retail stores, including but not limited to the sale of antiques, art, dry goods, variety and general merchandise, clothing, fabrics, floor covering, lumber and building supplies, furniture and home furnishings, food, books, hardware, hobby and art supplies, garden supplies, flowers, drugs, handicraft art, household supplies or furnishings, pets, sale or repair of jewelry, sporting goods, watches and clocks, optical goods, musical, professional and office supplies and packed goods when sold only on the premises.
- Retail sales, outdoor.
- Shopping Centers.
- Commercial Recreation facility.

- Railroad passenger stations and railroad facilities and uses.
- Hotel or Motel, or Extended Family Stay facility.
- Theaters, museums, art galleries and concert halls.
- Visitor Information Center.
- Buildings, structures, and other uses owned and operated by the City of Camden for municipal purposes.
- Parks, playgrounds or recreation areas, community center buildings, and libraries.
- Public, private or parochial educational institutions.
- Railroad passenger stations and railroad facilities and uses.
- Grocery Store, carryout of prepared food.

ACCESSORY USES. The following accessory uses shall be permitted in this zone:

- Off-Street Parking and Private Garages, subject to the requirements of Section 577-214, 230-241.
- Multilevel Parking Structures, subject to the requirements of Section 577-232.
- Fences and Walls, subject to the requirements of Section 577-197.
- Signs, subject to the requirements of Section 577-253.
- Railroad accessory uses.
- Sidewalk cafes, subject to the requirements of Section 577-217.

PROHIBITED USES. Any use not listed above shall be prohibited in the TOD Transit Oriented Zone, and specifically the following:

- Signs in any form except as permitted in this Ordinance.
- Lodging houses, boarding houses, rooming houses, or any combination thereof.
- Auto Body shop.
- Junkyards and automobile graveyards.
- Wholesale, storage, and warehouse facilities.
- Car wash.

- Automobile Service Stations, Gasoline Stations, or Motor Vehicle Services Stations.

CONDITIONAL USES. The following conditional uses shall be permitted in this zone:

- Child Care Centers, subject to the requirements of Section 577-203.
- Parabolic dish antennae, subject to the requirements of Section 577-210.
- Public utility facilities, subject to the requirements of Section 577-191.
- Wireless Telecommunication Facilities, subject to the requirements of Section 577-210 and 211.
- Community Residences for Persons With Head Injuries and for the Developmentally Disabled and/or Community Shelters for Victims of Domestic Violence, as required by N.J.S.A. 40:55D-66.1, subject to the standards and requirements for semi-detached dwellings located within this zone and to the requirements of Section 577-204.
- Family Day Care homes, subject to the requirements of Section 577-202.
- Home occupation and home professional offices, subject to the requirements of Section 577-201.
- K-12 Schools (public, charter or private).

## Existing Land Use

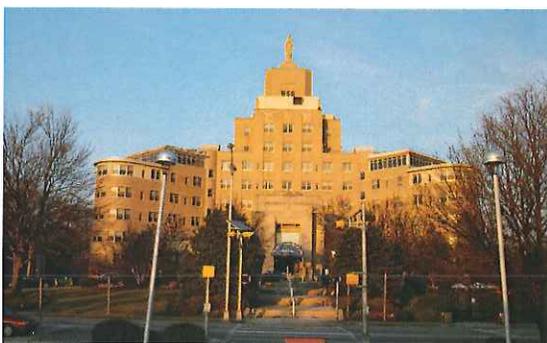
The Whitman Park study area is predominately characterized by **residential uses**. Residential areas are largely comprised of single-family attached units, but also include smaller areas of single-family detached units and a cluster of multi-family housing adjacent to the Ferry Avenue Station.

**Whitman Park Housing:** Much of Whitman Park residential uses are characterized by single-family attached units.



**Commercial uses** are concentrated along Mt. Ephraim Avenue and Haddon Avenue, creating the commercial main streets of Whitman Park. This land use category also includes **institutions**, including Our Lady of Lourdes Medical Center (1600 Haddon Avenue) and Dr. Charles E. Brimm Medical Art High School (1626 Copewood Street). Institutions located to the west of Whitman Park, on Mt. Ephraim Avenue include Virtua Hospital (1000 Atlantic Avenue) and Bonsall Public Elementary School (1575 Mt. Ephraim Avenue).

**Our Lady of Lourdes Medical Center:** The study area's largest institution is one of Camden's major employers and a regional medical facility.



**Transportation/infrastructure uses** include PATCO infrastructure and supporting facilities. The elevated rail line represents a substantial land use and creates a barrier between the study area's eastern edge. Located in the southeast corner of the Whitman Park, the Ferry Avenue Station includes over 15 acres of parking.

**Industrial uses** are primarily located along the PATCO rail line on Haddon Avenue and Thorn Street. The industrial areas are largely underutilized and deteriorated, including the 3.7 acre vacant Camden Laboratories site. Viable industrial establishments within the study area includes New Jersey Rivet Co (1785 Haddon Avenue), Fast Doors Inc (1661 Davis Street), and PBR Recycling (1601 Thorne Street).

### Existing Land Use Summary

Use	Acres	%
Residential, High Density or Multiple Dwelling	103	45%
Commercial Services	35	15%
Transportation/Infrastructure	32	14%
Cemetery	27	13%
Industrial	21	9%
Recreational Land	8	4%

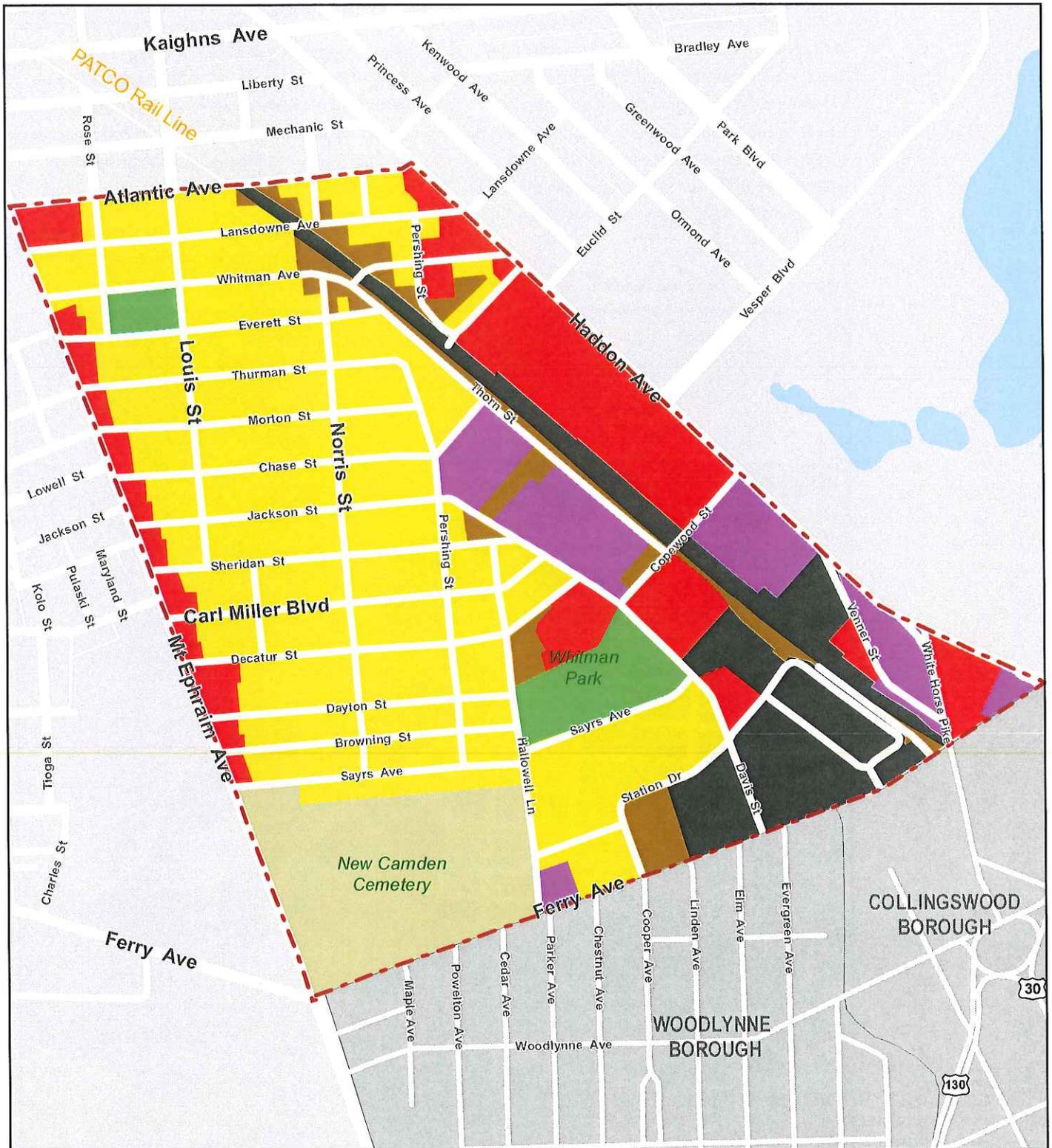
### Contaminated Sites

According to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), there are six known contaminated sites within Whitman Park. The following five sites are active sites with confirmed contamination. These sites have one or more active case with any number of pending and closed cases.

- 1344 Dayton Street
- Camden Laboratories (Copewood Street)
- RF Products Incorporated (Davis Street and Copewood Street)
- Our Lady of Lourdes (1600 Haddon Avenue)
- Charlie & Son Service Center LLC (1503 Haddon Avenue)
- Harry Pape & Sons (1427 Haddon Avenue)

The remaining site, 1344 Dayton Street, is pending with confirmed contamination. All six sites may require more environmental assessment and investigation during redevelopment to determine contamination and develop a plan for remediation.

Figure 5 Existing Landuse



- Cemetery
- Commercial/Services
- Industrial
- Transportation/Infrastructure
- Mixed/Other Urban or Built-up Land
- Recreational Land
- Residential, High Density or Multiple Dwelling

  WhitmanParkBoundary

Water

Data Source: City of Camden



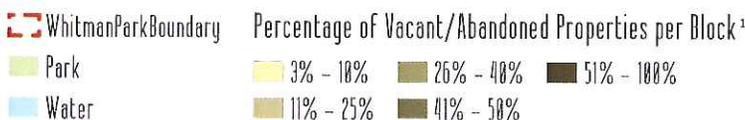
## Property Vacancy

In 2013, CamConnect conducted a field survey to verify property occupancy and building conditions. This survey supplements data recorded in the City of Camden’s database of abandoned properties. The survey and abandoned properties database revealed that **21% of all developable land in Whitman Park is vacant or abandoned**. Vacant housing in the City of Camden is 16.7% and 10.4% within the State of New Jersey.<sup>1</sup>

Residential parcels represent the majority of vacant or abandoned lands, indicative of the age of the housing stock (75% were built prior to 1959) and the lack of maintenance and investment. Areas of high vacancy are largely residential or industrial. Higher rates of vacancy are concentrated in the study area’s northeastern corner (Figure 7).

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Figure 6 Vacant and Abandoned Property Rates by Block



Data Source: City of Camden



<sup>1</sup>CamConnect, 2013

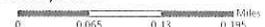
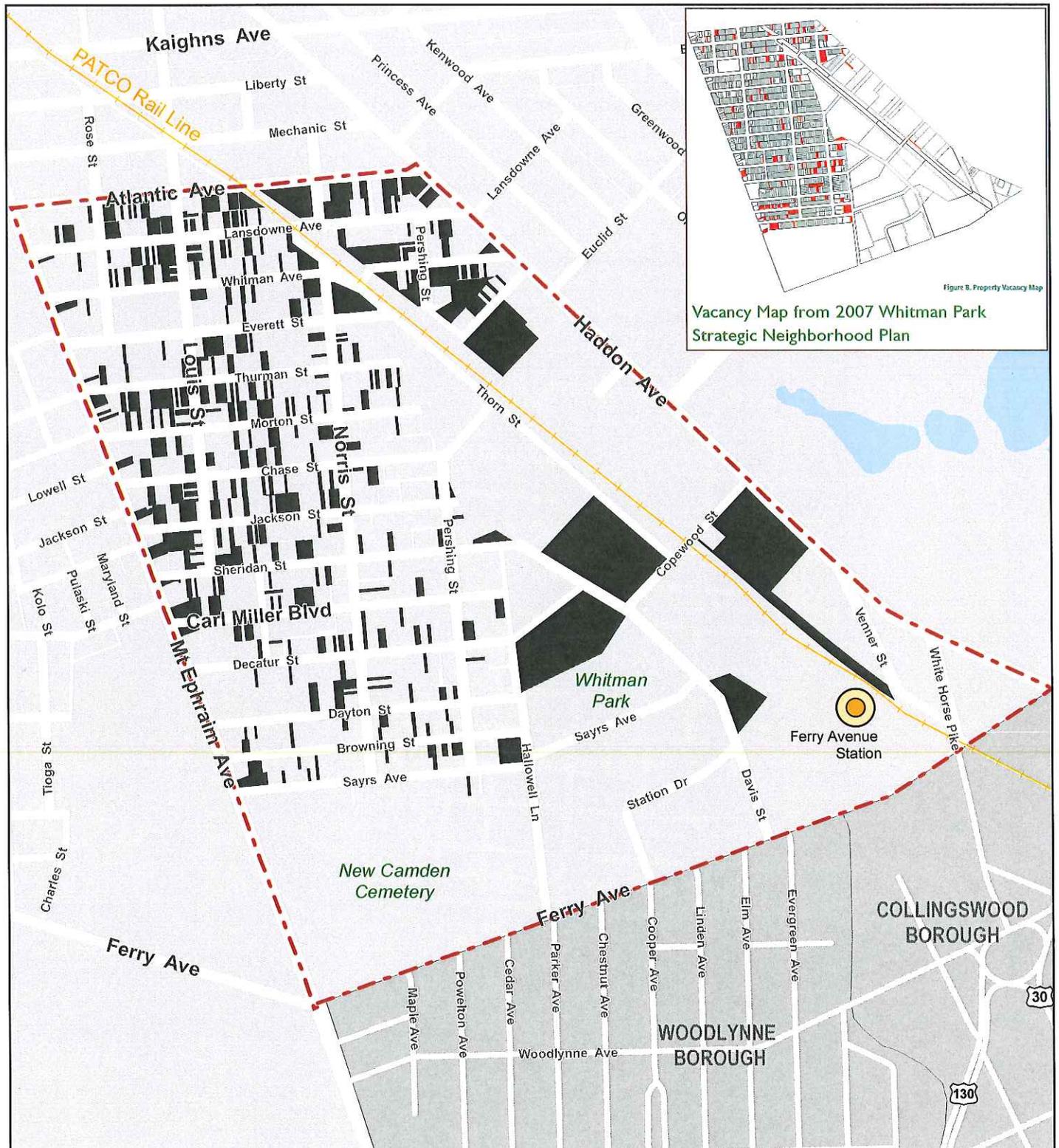


Figure 7 Vacant and Abandoned Properties



Vacancy Map from 2007 Whitman Park Strategic Neighborhood Plan

  Whitman Park Boundary   
  Vacant or Abandoned Property<sup>1</sup>  
 Water

Data Source: City of Camden

<sup>1</sup>CamConnect, 2013



## Property Ownership

Privately owned parcels represent the majority of land within Whitman Park. Largely comprised of small parcels, private lands encompass 86% of the study area. Homeownership in residential areas is typically higher around parks and generally in the area between Carl Miller Boulevard and Says Avenue (Figure 8). Areas with lower homeownership rates have high vacancy and rental properties.

The remaining 14% of Whitman Park is in public ownership (Figure 9). Much of this land is smaller, vacant properties. Large tracts of public land include the Ferry Avenue Station and Whitman Park.

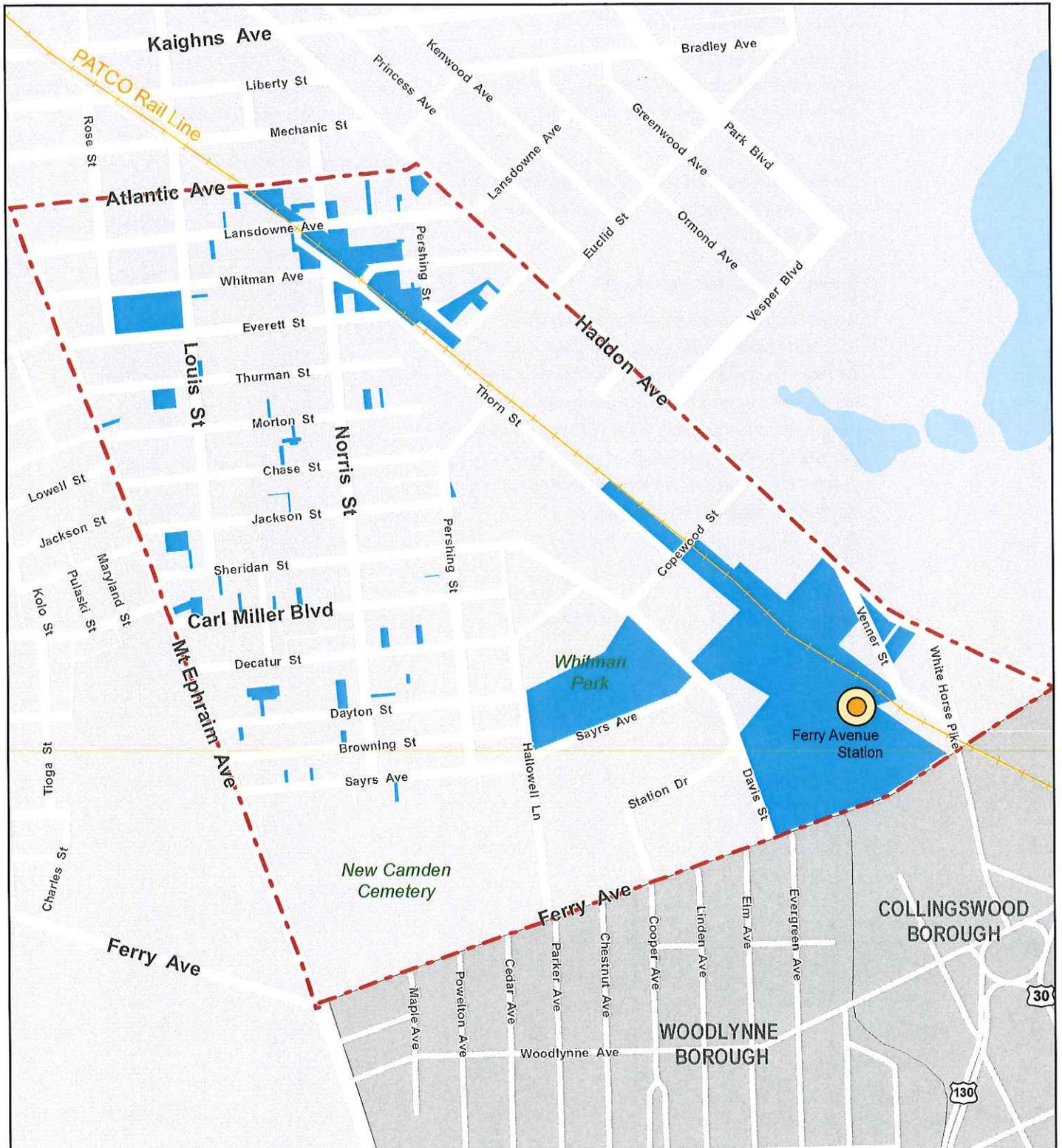
Figure 8 Vacant and Abandoned Property Rates by Block



Data Source:  
City of Camden

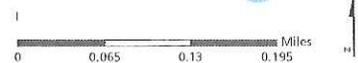


Figure 9 Public Ownership



-  Whitman Park Boundary
-  Public
-  Park
-  Water

Data Source: City of Camden



## Infrastructure

### Water System Components<sup>1</sup>

The Whitman Park neighborhood water main network is comprised of 12-inch and 38-inch pipes. Primary distribution mains run north and south in Mt. Ephraim Avenue.

Camden Water operates and maintains the City-owned 2-million gallon water tank is located at Whitman Avenue and Rose Street.

### Sewer System Components<sup>1</sup>

Within Camden, two primary interceptors convey combined sewage (sanitary and stormwater) flow to Delaware No. 1 Water Pollution Control Facility. City-owned force mains convey combined sewage from pump stations to the gravity sewer system, eventually discharging to the Water Pollution Control Facility. Camden Water operates and maintains the combined sewer pump station on Ferry Avenue.

### Floodplain<sup>1</sup>

Much of the area surrounding the Ferry Avenue Station falls within the 500-year floodplain. During major storm events, this area is subject to flooding.

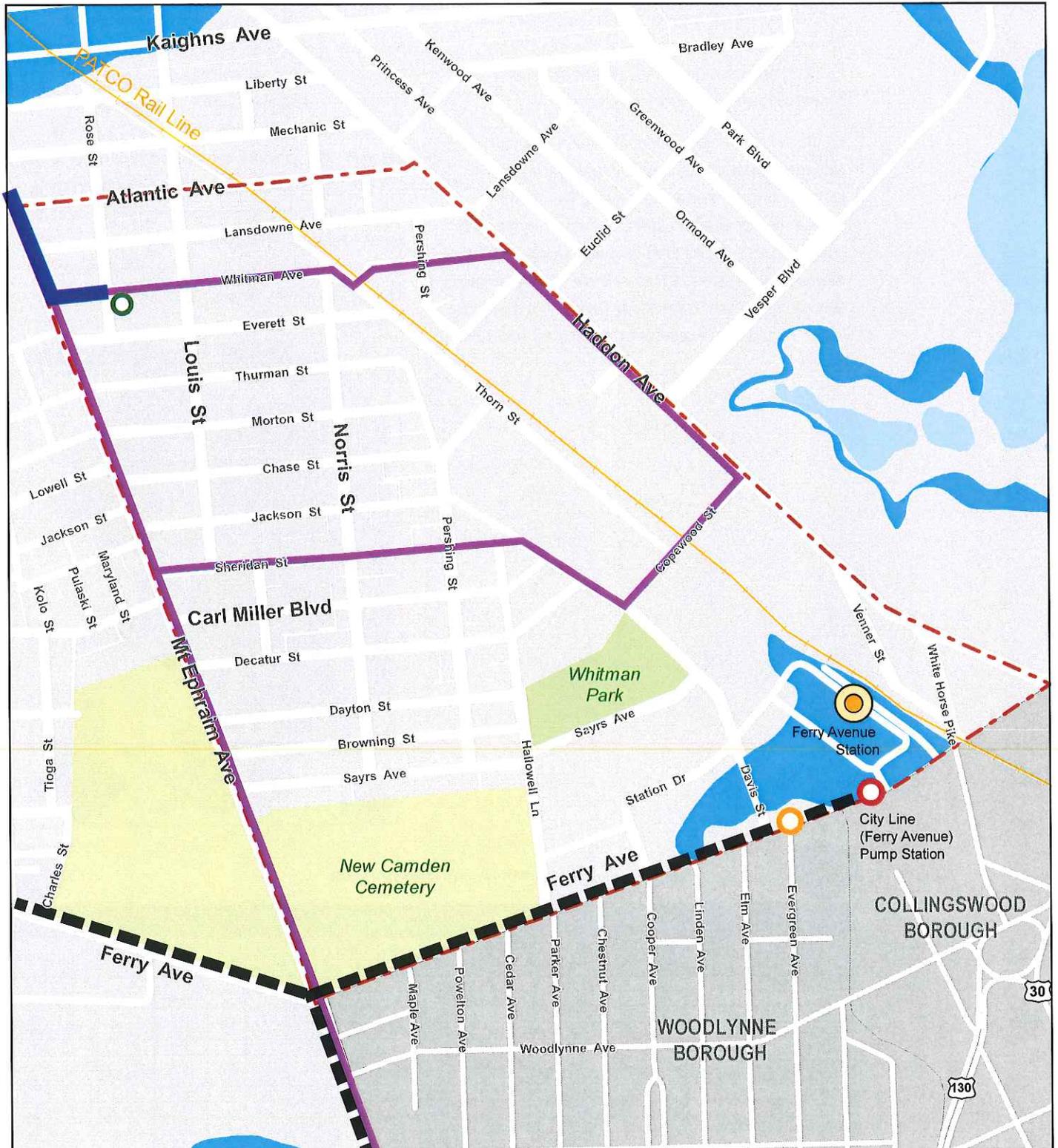
### Capital Improvements

The Camden Department of Utilities is responsible for capital improvements and has identified the following water and sewer improvements for Whitman Park.

- Water Storage Tank Painting- 2014 (ongoing)
- Wastewater Pump Station- 2014 (ongoing)

<sup>1</sup>“Camden Capital Improvement & Infrastructure Master Plan.” Camden Economic Recovery Board. 2003

Figure 10 Infrastructure



- Water System Components<sup>1</sup>**
- 12-inch Water Main
  - 30-inch Water Main
  - Water Tank

- Sewer System Components<sup>1</sup>**
- Sewer Interceptor
  - Pump Station
  - Combined Sewage Outfall

- 500-Year Floodplain
- Whitman Park Boundary
- Water

Data Source: City of Camden  
<sup>1</sup>Camden Economic Recovery Board, 2003

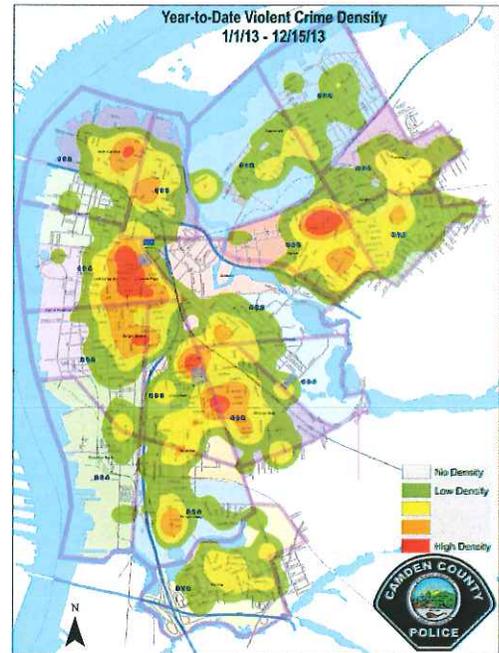


## Crime

In 2013, the City of Camden Police Department was disbanded and replaced by a new Camden County Police Department. Since the creation of the new force, almost all major crimes have decreased.

Whitman Park remains one of Camden's neighborhoods with the highest crime rates. Crime within Whitman Park are concentrated along the neighborhood's western border near Mt. Ephraim Avenue. Hotspots of crime activity, typically drug related, include the blocks between Norris Street, Decatur Street, Mount Ephraim Avenue, and Chase Street; along Norris from Everett to Chase; Atlantic Avenue between Rose Street and Louis Street.

Over the past few years, dozens of homicides and hundreds of shootings have taken place in Whitman Park. Drug activity represents a major portion of Whitman Park's crime. In May 2014, the FBI launched the largest drug takedown in Camden in a decade. Based in Whitman Park, the operation distributed drugs throughout the neighborhood and beyond, reaching into Camden, Lindenwold, Gloucester City, Sicklerville, and Philadelphia. While the May 2014 takedown was significant, drug activity is rampant and presents a major obstacle to the neighborhood's safety and revitalization.

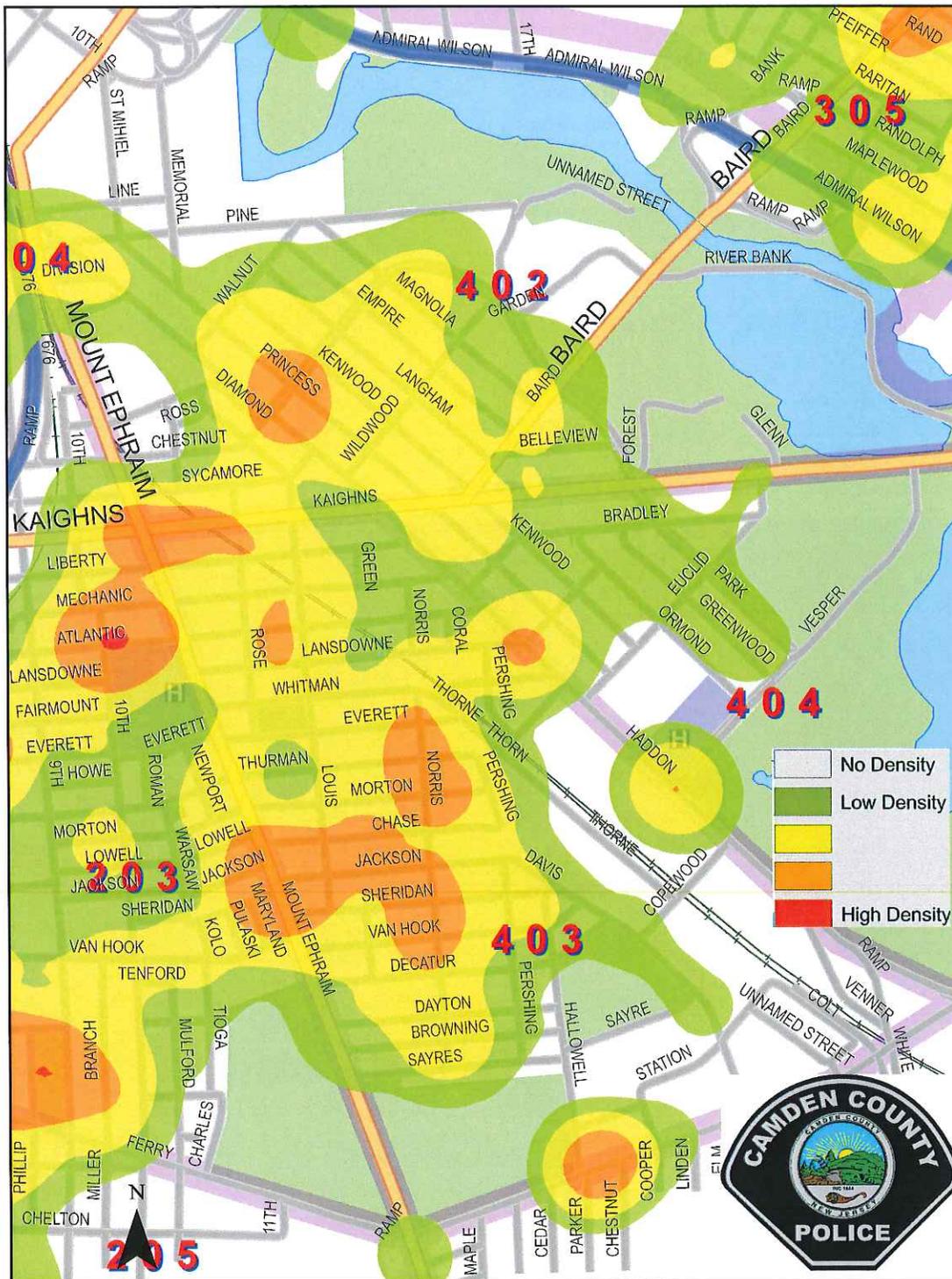


YEAR-TO-DATE CRIME (1/1-12/15)



CRIME TYPE	CENTERVILLE			LIBERTY PARK			WHITMAN PARK			LANNING SQUARE			COOPER PLAZA		
	YTD 2012	YTD 2013	% CHANGE	YTD 2012	YTD 2013	% CHANGE	YTD 2012	YTD 2013	% CHANGE	YTD 2012	YTD 2013	% CHANGE	YTD 2012	YTD 2013	% CHANGE
<b>VIOLENT CRIME</b>															
MURDER/MANSLAUGHTER	1	5	400%	1	3	200%	9	6	-33%	4	1	-75%	5	0	-100%
RAPE	3	3	0%	5	1	-80%	4	1	-75%	1	2	100%	14	6	-57%
ROBBERY	23	16	-30%	24	21	-13%	38	37	-3%	27	32	19%	62	77	24%
AGGRAVATED ASSAULTS	62	48	-23%	52	49	-6%	103	114	11%	16	31	94%	62	77	24%
Domestic	25	9	-64%	22	18	-18%	33	42	27%	5	8	60%	10	13	30%
<b>TOTAL VIOLENT</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>-19%</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>-10%</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>NON-VIOLENT CRIME</b>															
BURGLARY	41	27	-34%	35	27	-23%	80	63	-21%	80	22	-73%	36	38	6%
LARCENY-THEFT	77	49	-36%	67	48	-28%	114	108	-5%	122	84	-31%	163	171	5%
Larceny-Theft from Auto	24	8	-67%	23	19	-17%	34	24	-29%	70	40	-43%	78	79	1%
ARSON	1	4	300%	4	1	-75%	10	6	-40%	5	5	0%	6	2	-67%
MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT	37	27	-27%	34	14	-59%	46	29	-37%	10	12	20%	45	27	-40%
<b>TOTAL NON-VIOLENT</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>-31%</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>-36%</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>-18%</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>-43%</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>-5%</b>
<b>TOTAL CRIME</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>-27%</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>-26%</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>-10%</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>-29%</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>1%</b>

Figure 11 2013 YTD Crime Density - 4th District



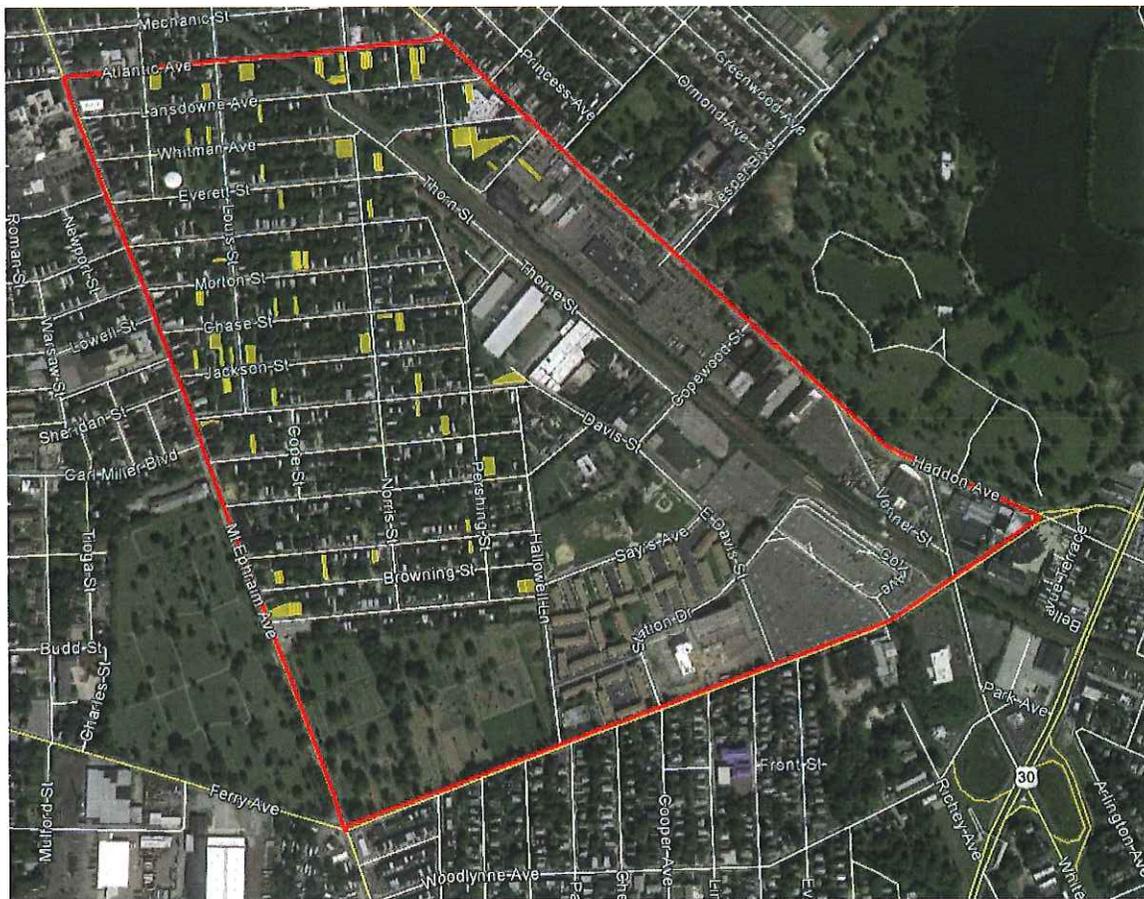
## Vacant Land - Private Property

Comparison of privately owned vacant land in the neighborhood from 2014 and 2004 show that there are numerous vacant parcels (privately owned) in the neighborhood that have remained so for a period of ten years prior to this study.

Figure 12 Vacant Land Data on 2004 Google Earth Aerial Map



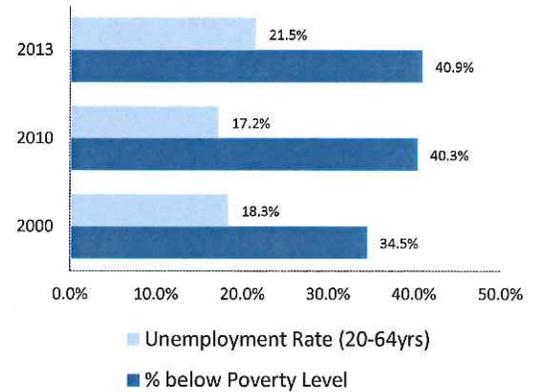
Figure 13 Vacant Land Data on 2014 Google Earth Aerial Map



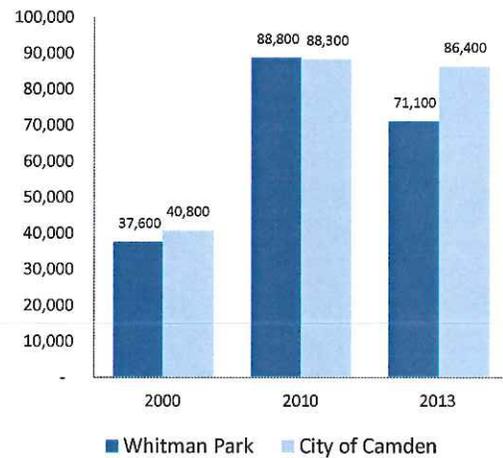
## Socioeconomic Data

Census and American Community Survey data from 2000, 2010, and 2013 indicate a decline in the socioeconomic health of the Whitman Park neighborhood. Population in the neighborhood decreased by 13% from 2000 to 2013 and by 8% from 2010 to 2013 compared to the City of Camden as a whole where years of population decline finally stabilized during that same period. Percentage of residents in Whitman Park who live below the Poverty Level is consistently higher than the same metric city-wide, and has been increasing since 2000. Unemployment rate in Whitman Park has also increased since 2000. The median home value in Whitman Park (which was on par with the median home value in the City of Camden in 2010) decreased by 20% between 2010 and 2013. As a comparison, the median home value city-wide decreased by only 2%.

Analysis of socioeconomic data in Whitman Park show that the trajectory of overall neighborhood decline is becoming steeper in recent years, and approaching a precarious level- warranting major interventions to reverse decades of distress.



Whitman Park Unemployment and Poverty Rates



Median Home Value

### U.S. Census Data Summary

	Whitman Park			City of Camden	
	2000	2010	2013	2010	2013
Total Population	6,424	6,058	5,578	77,344	77,356
% below Poverty Level	34.5%	40.3%	40.9%	36.3%	39.8%
Mean Household Income	29,780	34,770	34,510	37,635	38,003
Unemployment Rate (20-64 yrs)	18.3%	17.2%	21.5%	17.2%	22.9%
Median Home Value	37,600	88,800	71,100	88,300	86,400

## Private Investment Data

Analysis of private property tax data in Whitman Park reveals the following trends of disinvestment. Total amount of delinquent taxes in Whitman Park has been decreasing from 2011- 2013 and dropped sharply in 2014. While this appears as a positive indicator, further investigations reveal that this decline in delinquent taxes is not a result of property owners remitting payment, but rather the City taking over and demolishing chronically tax delinquent and blighted properties.

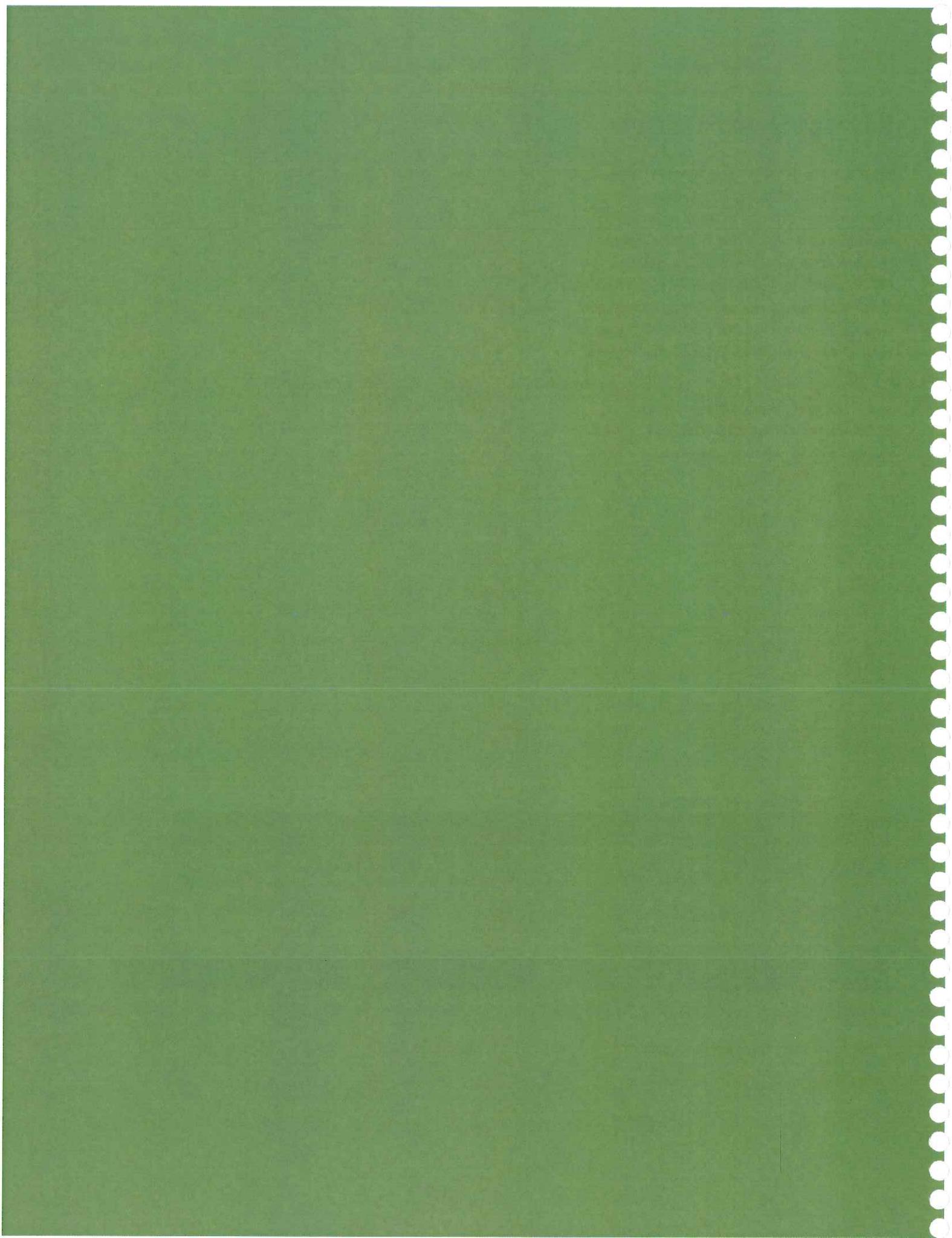
While the City of Camden has seen construction of 128 new homes from 2008-2013, none of these investments occurred in Whitman Park.

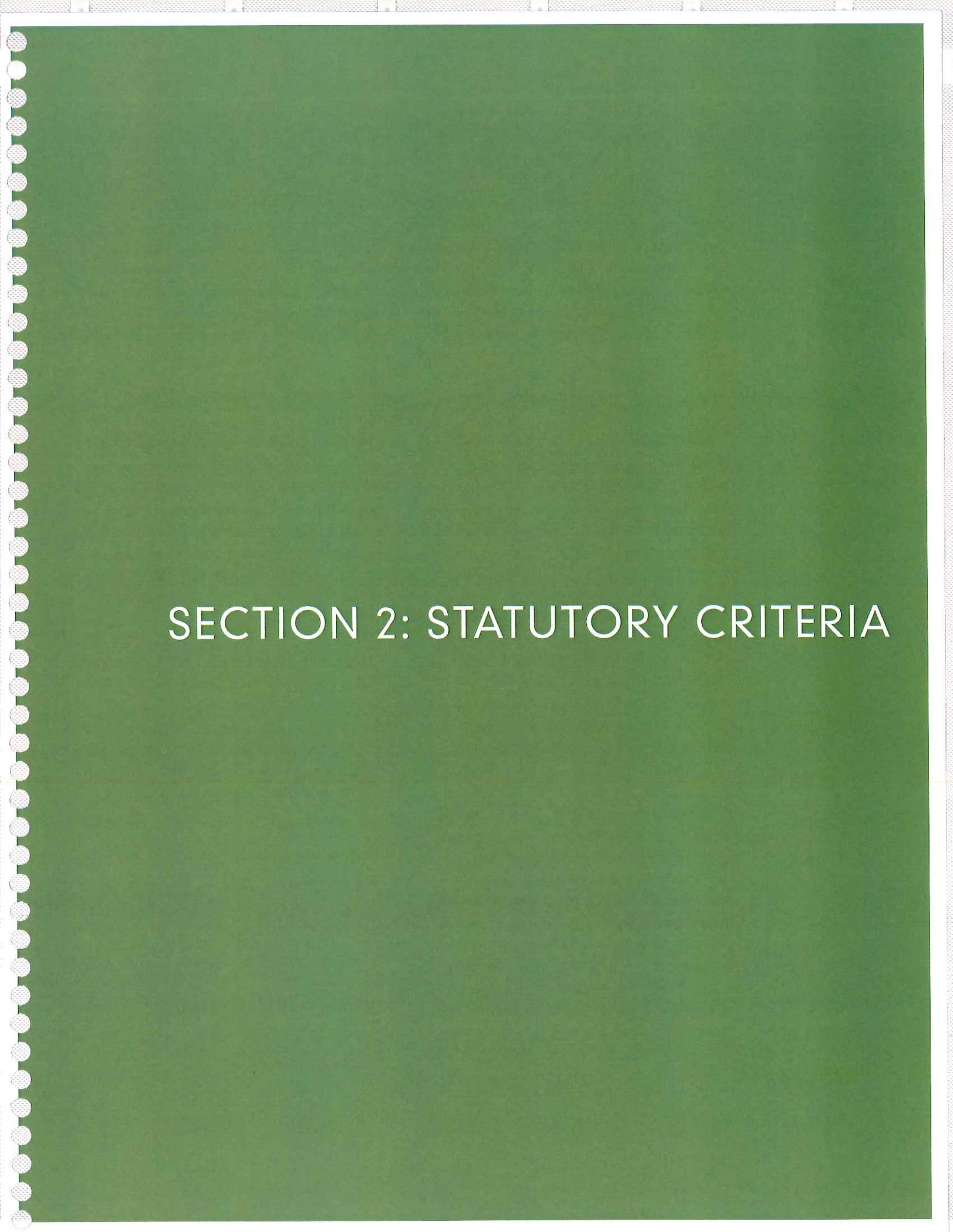
### Tax Delinquency Data in Whitman Park 2011 - 2014

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total Balance of Delinquent City Property Tax Accounts in Whitman Park (including interest)	\$16,555,413	\$11,239,123	\$5,787,396	\$341,046

### Code Enforcement Data in Whitman Park 2008-2013

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Unsafe Structures in Whitman Park	35	28	54	39	25	58
Building Permits Issued in Whitman Park	102	62	60	40	56	90
New Homes Constructed in Whitman Park	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Homes Constructed in City of Camden	4	27	47	9	23	18



The image shows a green cover with a white spiral binding on the left edge. The text "SECTION 2: STATUTORY CRITERIA" is centered on the cover in white, uppercase letters.

## SECTION 2: STATUTORY CRITERIA

## Statutory Criteria

Any determination of an area in need of development must be pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:12A as set forth in the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law. So that such a determination can be made, after investigation, notice, and proper hearing as provided in section 6 of P.L. 1992, c.79 (C.40A:12A-6), the governing body of the municipality by resolution concludes that within the delineated area at least one of the following conditions set out in the statute must be found to exist:

- A. Deterioration** (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5.a) – The generality of buildings are substandard, unsafe, unsanitary, dilapidated, or obsolescent, or possess any of such characteristics, or are so lacking in light, air, or space, as to be conducive to unwholesome living or working conditions.
- B. Abandoned Commercial and Industrial Buildings** (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5.b) – The discontinuance of the use of buildings previously used for commercial, manufacturing, or industrial purposes; the abandonment of such buildings; or the same being allowed to fall into so great a state of disrepair as to be untenable.
- C. Public and Vacant Land** (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5.c) – Land that is owned by the municipality, the county, a local housing authority, redevelopment agency or redevelopment entity, or unimproved vacant land that has remained so for a period of ten years prior to adoption of the resolution, and that by reason of its location, remoteness, lack of means of access to developed sections or portions of the municipality, or topography, or nature of the soil, is not likely to be developed through the instrumentality of private capital.
- D. Obsolete Layout and Design** (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5.d) – Areas with buildings or improvements which, by reason of dilapidation, obsolescence, overcrowding, faulty arrangement or design, lack of ventilation, light and sanitary facilities, excessive land coverage, deleterious land use or obsolete layout, or any combination of these or other factors, are detrimental to the safety, health, morals, or welfare of the community.
- E. Property Ownership and Title Issues** (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5.e) – A growing lack or total lack of proper utilization of areas caused by the condition of the title, diverse ownership of the real property therein or other conditions, resulting in a stagnant or not fully productive condition of land potentially useful and valuable for contributing to and serving the public health, safety and welfare.
- F. Fire and Natural Disasters** (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5.f) – Areas, in excess of five contiguous acres, whereon buildings or improvements have been destroyed, consumed by fire, demolished or altered by the action of storm, fire, cyclone, tornado, earthquake or other casualty in such a way that the aggregate assessed value of the area has been materially depreciated.

**G. Urban Enterprise Zones** (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5.g)

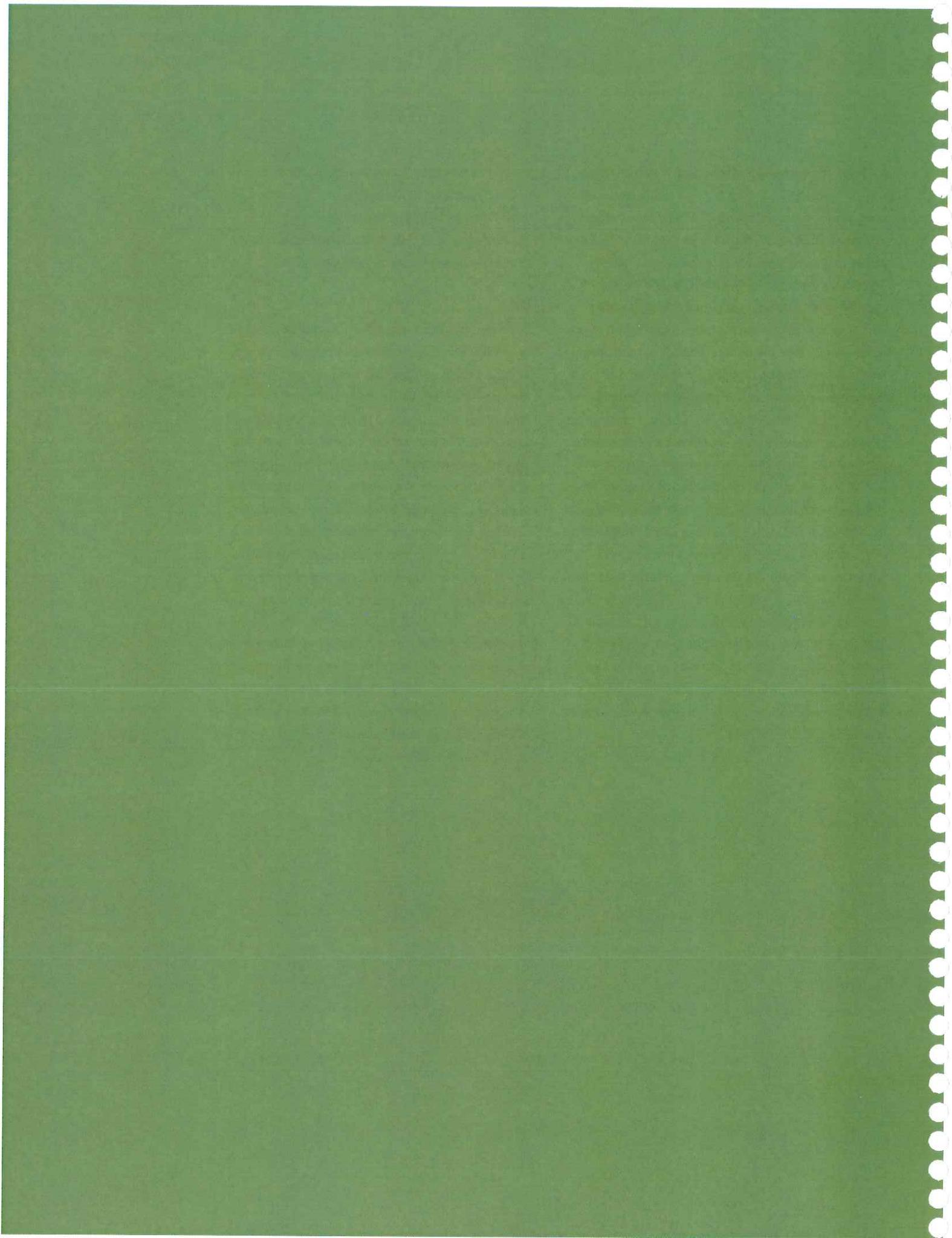
- In any municipality in which an enterprise zone has been designated pursuant to the "New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zones Act," P.L. 1983, c.303 (C.52:27H-60 et seq.) the execution of the actions prescribed in that act for the adoption by the municipality and approval by the New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zone Authority of the zone development plan for the area of the enterprise zone shall be considered sufficient for the determination that the area is in need of redevelopment pursuant to sections 5 and 6 of P.L. 1992, c.79(C.40A:12A-5 and 40A:12A-6) for the purpose of granting tax exemptions within the enterprise zone district pursuant to the provisions of P.L. 1991, c.431 (C.40A:20-1 et seq.) or the adoption of a tax abatement and exemption ordinance pursuant to the provisions of P.L. 1991, c.441 (C.40A:21-1 et seq.). The municipality shall not utilize any other redevelopment powers within the urban enterprise zone unless the municipal governing body and planning board have also taken the actions and fulfilled the requirements prescribed in P.L. 1992, c.79 (C.40A:12A-1 et al.) for determining that the area is in need of redevelopment or an area in need of rehabilitation and the municipal governing body has adopted a redevelopment plan ordinance including the area of the enterprise zone.

**H. Smart Growth Consistency** (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5.h)

– The designation of the delineated area is consistent with smart growth planning principles adopted pursuant to law or regulation. (<http://nj.gov/state/planning/maps/smartgrowthareasmap.pdf>)

**i. Properties Necessary for Redevelopment**

In evaluating the above-referenced statutory criteria, it should be recognized that a redevelopment area determination cannot be made until all of the properties comprising the study area are evaluated against all of the conditions cited above, such that an overall conclusion can be made with respect to the area. However, it should also be recognized that individual properties that do not meet any of the statutory conditions may still be included within an area in need of redevelopment, provided that for the study area as a whole, one or more of the expressed conditions are prevalent. This is set forth at N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-3, which provides in part that "a redevelopment area may include land, buildings or improvements which of themselves are not detrimental to public health, safety or welfare, but the inclusion of which is found necessary, with or without a change in this condition, for the effective redevelopment of the area of which they are a part."



## SECTION 3: DETERMINATION OF NEED

## Primary Findings

This study determines that specific parcels within the Whitman Park neighborhood meet the criteria for an area in need of redevelopment pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:12A as set forth in the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law.

Primary determination is based on **critterion A.**

**Deterioration** (N.J.S.A. 40A: 12A-5.a). Subject building are substandard – poor in quality as a result of either being abandoned or poorly maintained. Observation of building exteriors also show dilapidation including one or more of the following characteristics: missing windows and/or doors, damaged and aged siding and/or brick, damaged and aged key building components – porches, eaves, soffits, gutters, leaders. The substandard and dilapidated nature of this building is conducive to unwholesome living conditions.

Primary determination is also based on **critterion B.**

**Abandoned Commercial and Industrial Buildings** (N.J.S.A. 40A: 12A-5.b). Several buildings were once commercial, manufacturing, or industrial use, but are no longer serving that use. These buildings also appears abandoned and is being allowed to fall into so great a state of disrepair as to be untenable.

Primary determination is also based on **critterion**

**C. Public and Vacant Land** (N.J.S.A. 40A: 12A-5.c). Several properties are owned by the municipality, the county, a local housing authority, redevelopment agency or redevelopment entity, or they are private properties that are also unimproved vacant land that have remained so for a period of ten years prior this study, and that by reason of its location, remoteness, lack of means of access to developed sections or portions of the municipality, or topography, or nature of the soil, is not likely to be developed through the instrumentality of private capital. These vacant private properties have remained vacant for over a decade due to lack of market demand primarily affected by general neighborhood decline.

Primary determination is also based on **critterion**

**I. Properties Necessary for Redevelopment**

(N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-3). which provides in part that “a

redevelopment area may include land, buildings or improvements which of themselves are not detrimental to public health, safety or welfare, but the inclusion of which is found necessary, with or without a change in this condition, for the effective redevelopment of the area of which they are a part.” Due to the fragmented nature of parcel findings under Criteria A, B and C, it is necessary to include several non-impacted “bridging” parcels to allow for future redevelopment to occur at a large enough scale to create meaningful revitalization.

Primary determination is also based on **critterion D.**

**Obsolete Layout and Design** (N.J.S.A. 40A: 12A-5.d).

Factors that are detrimental to the safety, health, morals, or welfare of the community include the following:

- Population decline (page 26)
- Decline of Socioeconomic Indicators (page 26)
- Concentration of Crime (page 22)
- Increase of Unemployment Rate (page 26)
- Inordinately High % of Vacant Units (page 16)
- Inordinately High % of Renter Occupied Units (page 18)
- Absence of New Construction Residential Investment (page 27)
- Measures to Curb Tax Delinquency (page 27)
- History of Vacant Land (page 24)

Additionally, housing stock in Whitman Park is predominantly over 40 years old and the typical lot is narrow (15-18 feet) with no front or side yards. These factors also contribute to the detriment of safety, health, morals, or welfare of the community.

## Secondary Findings

The secondary criterion for this determination is based on **critterion H. Smart Growth Consistency** (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5.h). The entire Whitman Park neighborhood is classified in The Office of Planning Advocacy's State Plan as an Urban Center.<sup>1</sup> All properties that meet primary findings crieteria of A, B and C also meet this secondary finding. In New Jersey, Smart Growth supports development and redevelopment in Centers, as identified by the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

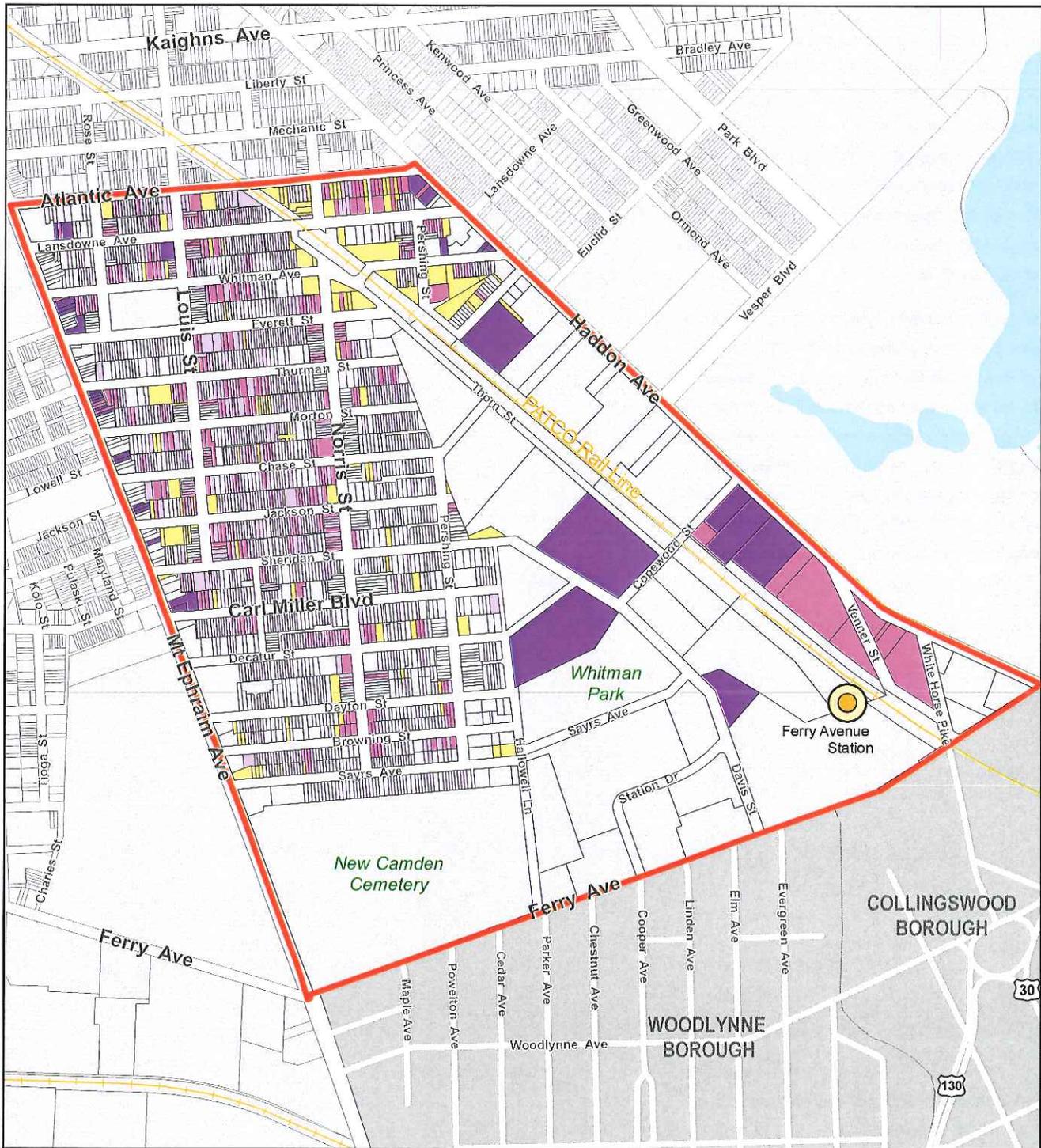
Secondary determination is also based on **critterion G. Urban Enterprise Zones** (N.J.S.A. 40A: 12A-5.g). Most of the parcels that meet primary findings of A, B and C fall within the Camden City Urban Enterprise Zone. Prompted by New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zone Act of 1983, the City of Camden was designed as an Urban Enterprise Zone in 1984. The UEZ program was created to revitalize distressed urban communication by fostering investment and creating private sector jobs.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Smart Growth." New Jersey Department of State. N.p., n.d. Web. 30 Apr. 2014.

<sup>2</sup> "City of Camden." City of Camden. N.p., n.d. Web. 05 May 2014.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Figure 12 Area in Need of Redevelopment



- Proposed Area in Need of Redevelopment
- Criterion A - Deterioration
- Criterion B - Abandoned Commercial & Industrial Buildings
- Criterion C - Public & Vacant Land
- Criterion I - Non-Conforming but Necessary

## Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that the entire Whitman Park neighborhood (Census Tract 6015) qualify for designation as an area in need of redevelopment in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:12A.

- Individual parcels meet criteria A, B, C, or I.
- All parcels in neighborhood meet criterion D factors that are detrimental to the safety, health, morals, or welfare of the community
- Most of the parcels in neighborhood also meet criterion G. Urban Enterprise Zone
- All parcels meet criterion H. Smart Growth Consistency

**The Whitman Park Area in Need of Redevelopment** report recommends that the Camden City Planning Board and City Council, after public notice and hearings, make a determination that the entire Whitman Park Neighborhood (Census Tract 6015) is in need of redevelopment and should be designated a redevelopment area.

APPENDIX A:  
PARCEL FINDINGS

APPENDIX B:  
PLANNING BOARD AND  
CITY COUNCIL  
AUTHORIZATIONS

