4. Land Use and Zoning

4.1. Chapter Overview

4.1.1. Introduction

This chapter examines existing land use and zoning in the project area and identifies any potential impacts of the proposed project. Land use and zoning is described for an area extending approximately one-half mile east and west of the rail right-of-way along the project corridor. A more detailed examination is provided of existing land uses and zoning in the vicinity of the proposed sites for stations. Representative photographs of the study area and proposed station locations and parking facilities follow at the end of this chapter.

In New Jersey, the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) confers upon municipalities the right to enact regulations and policies governing land use and development within their borders, including the establishment of master plans and zoning ordinances. As a result, each municipality in the study area has differently named zoning districts. While these districts are generally similar, their particular details may be different. For example, Zone “B” in Leonia applies to a similar use as Zone “RM-A” in Englewood (both allow multi-family housing). For the purposes of this DEIS, the zoning is described generally so that an analysis of land use character and policy compatibility can more easily be described. Figures included in this chapter identify zones by their municipal designation, while the text summarizes the permitted uses.

In addition, although the MLUL confers upon municipalities the right to enact regulations and policies governing land use and development within their borders, the land use needs of legislatively mandated special districts can supersede local land use authority. This occurs in North Bergen and Ridgefield, where the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission (NJMC) possesses zoning jurisdiction over portions of the municipalities. Instances of this occurrence are noted in the narrative below.

4.1.2. Summary of Findings

- Land use
  - Project corridor improvements will occur within the existing rail right-of-way. As all right-of-way work will be confined to the existing right-of-way, the reactivation of the passenger rail service will not introduce a new land use (railroad) where one currently does not exist. As such, the improvement of the rail right-of-way for the purposes of re-establishing passenger rail service is consistent with the existing land uses within the railroad right-of-way and land uses immediately adjacent to the right-of-way.
  - The closure of 83rd Street and the construction of the 85th Street undergrade bridge will occur within an industrial area. The construction of the bridge does not present a land use conflict; however, due to the presence of the existing vocational-technical high school, safety measures will be installed to improve safe access between the high school and the nearby associated recreational facility.

- Land use impacts of parking loss
  - Under the Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative) roadway improvements proposed in the mitigated Build Condition will result in the loss of a total of approximately 225 on-street and off-street parking spaces in the vicinity of the proposed walk-up stations, including approximately 32 on-street parking spaces near Englewood Route 4 Station, 128 on-street parking spaces at Englewood Town Center Station, 15 spaces on-street at Englewood Hospital Station, and 50 on-street and off-street at Tenafly Town Center Station. The on-street parking loss may only be required during weekday AM and PM peak periods. Coordination with local municipalities will take place to determine if
parking restrictions are appropriate, the nature of these restrictions, and whether they should be implemented outside the peak periods. It is unlikely that land use would change as a result of this parking loss.

- Under the Light Rail to Englewood Route 4 Alternative, roadway improvements proposed in the mitigated Build Condition will result in the loss of approximately 32 on-street parking spaces near Englewood Route 4 Station. It is unlikely that land use would change as a result of this parking loss.

- Zoning
  - The corridor itself is either zoned industrial or transportation, or is not zoned, left instead as right-of-way, similar to the manner in which roads are identified on zoning maps. Consequently, the operation of light rail transit on the existing rail right-of-way does not conflict with existing zoning.

4.2. Methodology

Land use and zoning data was collected from municipal master plans and zoning ordinances provided by the study area municipalities or located through municipal code searches. As development and redevelopment is ongoing in the study area, reported data was field verified and updated to reflect current conditions. Field-verified data was mapped using GIS software and overlaid with the study area boundary and proposed project elements. Municipal code and master plan texts were used to describe the zoning and to verify whether municipal ordinances existed that presented a conflict with proposed project elements or proposed project operation.

4.3. Environmental Review

The following section describes the existing land use and zoning for each municipality along with any potential project impacts to existing land uses or conflicts with adopted zoning ordinances. Impacts were evaluated in terms of proposed changes to land use, mobility, and quality of life. An overview of the land uses along the entire study area corridor is depicted on Figure 4-1.

4.3.1. North Bergen

4.3.1.1. Existing Conditions

Figures 4-2 through 4-5 illustrate the land use and zoning in North Bergen.

Rail Right-of-Way

Land Use

The rail right-of-way itself is actively used for freight service and is considered a transportation/railroad use. The area immediately adjacent to the right-of-way is substantially light industrial, with office and commercial uses interspersed with moderate- to high-density residential uses located to the east. The portion of the corridor within the southern portion of North Bergen, south of 91st Street, is more heavily industrial, with a large area utilized for rail facilities.

Figure 4-2 depicts the existing land use in the vicinity of the proposed viaduct from 69th Street to 83rd Street and the proposed undergrade bridge that is proposed to connect 85th Street (which presently terminates at the rail right-of-way) with West Side Avenue. As seen in the figure, existing land use in the vicinity of the proposed viaduct and undergrade bridge and roadway extension is primarily industrial, with the exception of a technical high school located at 85th Street and Tonnelle Avenue. Land uses include several manufacturing and warehouse/distribution facilities and associated parking lots.
GENERALIZED LAND USE CORRIDOR STUDY AREA

Northern Branch Corridor

Figure 4-1

Land Use

- Residential
- Residential Built-Up Land
- Commercial Retail/Office
- Industrial
- Mixed Use
- Institutional Public Services
- Park/Recreation
- Wetlands
- Transportation/Communication Utilities
- Parking

Source: Bergen County GIS; NJMC GIS Data; Field Inspection
Electrical Substation

New overgrade bridge to be constructed by others

69th STREET TO 83rd STREET VIADUCT and 85th STREET UNDERGRADE BRIDGE & ROADWAY EXTENSION

LAND USE

Northern Branch Corridor

Figure 4-2

Land Use/ Land Cover

- Residential
- Commercial
- Retail/ Office
- Industrial
- Park/ Recreation
- Institutional Public Services
- Transportation/ Communication Utilities
- Wetlands

Source: Bergen County GIS; NJMC GIS Data; Field Inspection
Northern Branch Corridor

Figure 4-3

Fairview Zoning Districts
- RA: Low Density Single Family Residential
- R-B: Moderate Density One and Two Family
- R-C: Medium Density Three to Six Family

NJ Meadowlands District Boundary
- Environmental Conservation
- Heavy Industrial
- Intermodal A
- LI-A: Light Industrial A
- RC: Regional Commercial
- PU: Public Utilities

North Bergen Zoning Districts
- R-1: Low Density Residential
- R-2: Intermediate Density Residential
- R-3: Moderate Density Residential
- C-1: Highway Business
- C-2: General Business Mixed Use
- C-3: Industrial

Source: NJMC GIS Data; North Bergen Zoning Map; Ordinance.com
Northern Branch Corridor
Figure 4-4

Land Use/Land Cover

- Residential
- Commercial
- Office/Industrial
- Retail/Office
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Public Services
- Park/Recreation
- Transportation/Communication Utilities
- Utilities
- Wetlands
- Electrical Substation
- Half-Mile Study Area
- Proposed Alignment
- Proposed VBF
- NJ Meadowlands District Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Station - All Alternatives
- Station - Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative only)
- Viaduct
- Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR)
- Existing Tonnelle Av HBLR Station
- Tonnelle Avenue Station Parking

Source: Bergen County GIS; NJMC GIS Data; Field Inspection
91st STREET STATION AREA LAND USE

Northern Branch Corridor
Figure 4-5

- Station - All Alternatives
- Station - Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative Only)
- Viaduct
- Proposed Alignment
- Proposed Station Platform
- Proposed Parking Area
- Half-Mile Study Area
- Freight Only
- Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR)
- NJ Meadowlands District Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Electrical Substation

Land Use / Land Cover
- Residential
- Commercial
- Retail/Office
- Industrial
- Water
- Park/Recreation

Source: Bergen County GIS; NJMC GIS Data; Field Inspection
Zoning
The rail right-of-way itself is zoned as a transportation use. Light industrial zones are located adjacent to the right-of-way throughout most of North Bergen. Land adjacent to the western portion of the right-of-way, south of 91st Street in North Bergen is under the zoning jurisdiction of the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission (NJMC), and includes Regional Commercial, Intermodal, Light Industrial, and Environmental Conservation zones (refer to Figure 4-3).

To the east of the proposed viaduct and 85th Street undergrade bridge the area is zoned heavy industrial under North Bergen’s ordinance. West of the viaduct and bridge, the area is zoned by NJMC as heavy and light industrial, and intermodal. The Township of North Bergen has designated 85th Street to 91st Street as an “urban enterprise zone,” a zone created to stimulate economic development and job creation. Thus, any land uses that occupy this area must comply with the industrial zoning regulation while enhancing the uses that already occupy this area. The uses that line Tonnelle Avenue to the east and west fall within the highway business zone. East of Tonnelle Avenue the zoning permits primarily residential uses.

North Bergen Vehicle Base Facility
Land Use
The proposed North Bergen Vehicle Base Facility (VBF) is located southwest of the existing Tonnelle Avenue HBLR Station, east of West Side Avenue, as depicted on Figure 4-4. The Tonnelle Avenue HBLR Station parking facility lies west of Tonnelle Avenue between 49th and 50th Streets. This park and ride facility is equipped with handicap access and designated parking spaces, a drop-off area, and ticket machines.

The Tonnelle Avenue thoroughfare (US Route 1/9) runs north-south and is largely characterized by its industrial and light industrial pattern. Typical land uses include warehouses, auto body, and trucking establishments which are interspersed with commercial and “big-box” retail. North of the proposed VBF there are large commercial and industrial uses that include a supermarket and movie theater complex. On the northwest corner of 51st Street and Tonnelle Avenue there is a restaurant located opposite a wholesale warehouse located on the southeast corner of the intersection. The large lot between 74th Street and 79th Street, west of Tonnelle Avenue, is the site of former “big-box” retail uses and is the location of a home-repair retail facility. Directly north of this site is a “big-box” home improvement store.

On the east side of Tonnelle Avenue are light-industrial uses, gas stations and three large cemeteries: Flower Hill, Hoboken, and Macphelah Cemeteries. East of Tonnelle Avenue, residential neighborhoods with high-rise and single-family homes dominate. Located east of Tonnelle Avenue and opposite the Tonnelle Avenue HBLR Station are two mobile home parks. This residential use sits adjacent to a commercial automotive use that is located on the corner of 49th Street. Additional uses lining Tonnelle Avenue south of the HBLR station include a check cashing store, a car rental facility and a gas station.

Lining the west side of the existing right-of-way is West Side Avenue, a two-way, north-south roadway that is fronted by heavy industrial and commercial businesses. Some prominent uses include a site to be utilized as a rail transload facility, a telecommunications facility, and an automobile dealership/repair facility. A sewage treatment plant is located at 43rd Street and West Side Avenue adjacent to the rail right-of-way. The marsh and wetland protected area of the NJMC Hackensack Meadowlands District is located west of West Side Avenue providing a sharp contrast to its adjacent land uses.

Zoning
Figure 4-3 depicts the zoning districts in the vicinity of the North Bergen VBF and provides a summary of allowed uses in each zone. The North Bergen VBF area is located within an industrial district that extends east and west for the entire length of the rail alignment within the Township of North Bergen. Commercial zones, highway business and general commercial districts line Tonnelle Avenue to the east.
just north of the proposed VBF and continue north along Tonnelle Avenue. Beyond these commercial uses moving further east off of Tonnelle Avenue are residential zones.

West of the tracks, the zoning for the Township of North Bergen does not apply since this area is under the jurisdiction of the NJMC. Zoning district PU, public utilities, is located to the west of the rail right-of-way. West of the PU zone lies an environmental conservation district, which is comprised of marshland. This area is zoned by NJMC as a conservation area, which cannot be disturbed. The area northwest of the station area is zoned for intermodal use.

91st Street Station

Land Use

As seen in Figure 4-5, this section of 91st Street serves as an industrial corridor but also includes a new municipal pool complex and a new commercial retail complex. Warehouses and trucking/transportation service facilities are located on two corners of the 91st Street rail right-of-way. A large industrial building housing a truck freight company is located on the northeast corner of the right-of-way and 91st Street, and the new municipal pool complex is located on the southwest corner. 91st Street dead-ends at a warehousing facility northwest of the Northern Branch rail right-of-way.

A new commercial retail complex occupies the majority of the block extending from 85th Street to 91st Street between the rail right-of-way and Tonnelle Avenue. The complex offers approximately 440,000 square feet of leasable area, and is presently occupied by a super WalMart, PetSmart, BJ’s Wholesale Club, Staples, and a number of smaller retail stores and restaurants. The land uses that occupy the north side of 91st Street, between Tonnelle Avenue and the proposed station area, include an office building and truck depot.

The land uses that front the east side of Tonnelle Avenue provide a transition into single and multi-family residential located to the east. Fronting both the east and west sides of Tonnelle Avenue are several restaurants, local strip mall shopping facilities and office buildings. A waste management facility is located north of 91st Street.

Zoning

Similar to North Bergen VBF, the 91st Street station is subject to two sets of zoning ordinances: the Township of North Bergen and the NJMC (refer to Figure 4-3). The location of the 91st Street Station is bounded by the North Bergen zoning to the east and the NJMC zoning ordinance to the west.

The station area and parking facility are east of the rail alignment and within the North Bergen industrial zone. This industrial zone extends just west of the rail right-of-way and east 100 feet short of the uses that front Tonnelle Avenue. Part of this area, 85th Street to 91st Street, is designated by the Township of North Bergen as an “urban enterprise zone,” a zone created to stimulate economic development and job creation. Thus, any land uses that occupy this area must comply with the industrial zoning regulation while enhancing the uses of this currently unoccupied area. The uses that line Tonnelle Avenue to the east and west fall within the highway business zone. East of Tonnelle Avenue the zoning permits primarily residential uses.

The area west of the station site falls under the jurisdiction of the NJMC. The zone immediately adjacent to the rail right-of-way is industrial. Industrial uses continue to occupy the area out to the westernmost extent of the study area.

Northeast of the proposed 91st Street Station Area and east of Tonnelle Avenue lies the Borough of Fairview. The Borough of Fairview zoning districts located closest to the proposed 91st Street Station area permit industrial and commercial uses. Further east of the station, the zoning is predominately residential including low density residential. Further east is a general business district.
4.3.1.2. Potential Impacts and Mitigation

No Build Alternative
The No Build Alternative does not propose changes to the land use or zoning within the Northern Branch study area, no impacts will result from this Alternative. However, while no changes are proposed and no impacts will result, the No Build Alternative will not improve mobility between associated land uses within the study area.

Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative) and Light Rail to Englewood Route 4
Both Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative) and Light Rail to Englewood Route 4 are identical in their potential impacts and mitigation through North Bergen. Consequently, the discussion below applies to both alternatives.

Rail Right-of-Way

Impacts – Project corridor improvements will occur within the existing rail right-of-way, including the proposed HBLR viaduct which will extend the existing HBLR service over the existing freight rail yard. No additional right-of-way will be acquired and the existing alignment will remain in its current orientation. As all right-of-way work will be confined to the existing right-of-way, the reactivation of the passenger rail service will not introduce a new land use (railroad) where one currently does not exist. As such, the improvement of the rail right-of-way for the purposes of re-establishing passenger rail service is consistent with the existing land uses within the railroad right-of-way and land uses immediately adjacent to the right-of-way.

Due to the heavily urbanized and industrial land use development patterns adjacent to the rail corridor in North Bergen, the increased rail traffic required for light rail service will not result in conflicts with existing land uses.

The corridor itself is either zoned industrial or transportation, or is not zoned, left instead as right-of-way, similar to the manner in which roads are identified on zoning maps. Consequently, the operation of light rail transit on the existing rail right-of-way does not conflict with existing zoning.

Mitigation – The implementation of passenger rail service within the existing rail right-of-way is consistent with local land use patterns and zoning. No mitigation is necessary.

North Bergen Vehicle Base Facility

Impacts – The proposed North Bergen VBF would be located south of the existing freight yards. The proposed yard area would be located west of the Northern Branch alignment adjacent to uses that are industrial in nature. Although separate from the existing freight yards, the proposed VBF would appear to be an extension of an existing use, surrounded by similar industrial, infrastructure, and utility uses. There are no residential uses near the proposed VBF. As a result, the proposed VBF is compatible with...
existing land uses in its vicinity, and no land use impacts including mobility impacts would result from its development.

Mitigation – The proposed VBF is consistent with local land use and zoning. No mitigation is required.

**91st Street Station**

**Impacts** – The platforms for the proposed 91st Street Station will be located within the existing rail right-of-way and do not present a conflict with the existing surrounding industrial land uses. The parking area for the proposed station site will occupy a portion of an existing commercial use. While some of the existing parking will be displaced (see Chapter 5: Land Acquisition), the development of the station parking area essentially replaces one existing use with a new use of the same type: parking for parking. As a result, no adverse land use impacts will result from the development of this station site. A traction power substation will be located south of the station platform near the parking area. The design of the substation will be enhanced to harmonize with the existing development and design scheme in the area and/or landscaped as appropriate.

Additionally, the proposed 91st Street Station is located adjacent and within walking distance of a substantial new commercial and retail development in North Bergen. The shopping area is anchored by a Super Wal-Mart, PetSmart, and Staples, and includes many smaller retail stores and restaurants. The proposed 91st Street Station can be used to provide access to the facilities for employees, shoppers, and commuters and represents a benefit to the community in terms of job access and mobility.

Mitigation – The proposed station site is consistent with local land use and zoning. No mitigation is required.

### 4.3.2. Fairview

#### 4.3.2.1. Existing Conditions

Figures 4-5 and 4-3 (North Bergen Land Use and Zoning) illustrate the land use and zoning, respectively, in Fairview.

**Rail Right-of-Way**

**Land Use**

The rail right-of-way itself is actively used for freight service and is considered a transportation/railroad use. The area immediately adjacent to the right-of-way is substantially light industrial, with moderate- to high-density residential uses located to the east.

**Zoning**

The rail right-of-way itself is zoned as a transportation use. Light industrial zones are located adjacent to the rail right-of-way throughout Fairview.

#### 4.3.2.2. Potential Impacts and Mitigation

**No Build Alternative**

The No Build Alternative does not propose changes to the land use or zoning within the Northern Branch study area, no impacts will result from this Alternative. However, while no changes are proposed and no impacts will result, the No Build Alternative will not improve mobility between associated land uses within the study area.
Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative) and Light Rail to Englewood Route 4
Both Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative) and Light Rail to Englewood Route 4 are identical in their potential impacts and mitigation through Fairview. Consequently, the discussion below applies to both alternatives.

Rail Right-of-Way
Impacts – Project corridor improvements will occur within the existing rail right-of-way. No additional right-of-way will be acquired and the existing alignment will remain in its current orientation. As all right-of-way work will be confined to the existing right-of-way, the reactivation of the passenger rail service will not introduce a new land use (railroad) where one currently does not exist. As such, the improvement of the rail right-of-way for the purposes of re-establishing passenger rail service is consistent with the existing land uses within the railroad right-of-way and land uses immediately adjacent to the right-of-way.

Due to the heavily urbanized and industrial land use development patterns adjacent to the rail corridor in Fairview, the increased rail traffic required for light rail service will not result in conflicts with existing land uses or impacts to mobility. The provision of an additional mode of travel will improve mobility in the study area.

The corridor itself is either zoned industrial or transportation, or is not zoned, left instead as right-of-way, similar to the manner in which roads are identified on zoning maps. Consequently, the operation of light rail transit on the existing rail right-of-way does not conflict with existing zoning.

Mitigation – The implementation of passenger rail service within the existing rail right-of-way is consistent with local land use patterns and zoning. No mitigation is required.

4.3.3. Ridgefield

4.3.3.1. Existing Conditions

Figures 4-6 and 4-7 illustrate the land use and zoning in Ridgefield.

Rail Right-of-Way
Land Use
The rail right-of-way itself is actively used for freight service and is considered a transportation/railroad use. The area immediately adjacent to the right-of-way is substantially light industrial, with office and commercial uses interspersed with moderate- to high-density residential uses located to the east and west (refer to Figure 4-6).

Zoning
The rail right-of-way itself is zoned as a transportation use (refer to Figure 4-7). Zoning on the west side of the right-of-way in this area is under the jurisdiction of the NJMC. This area is a large light industrial and distribution zoning district. East and north of the proposed station site, all zoning is under the jurisdiction of Ridgefield Borough. North of the proposed Ridgefield Station, zoning on both the east and west of the right-of-way is a combination of office, commercial, and mixed-use, with one senior residential zone. East of these districts lie a large residential district that spans from the border of Fairview to an area northeast of Howard Avenue. To the west of the right-of-way, north of Hendricks Causeway lie small light manufacturing and public use districts, and a small area for single-family residences.
RIDGEFIELD STATION AREA LAND USE

Northern Branch Corridor
Figure 4-6

Land Use/ Land Cover
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial/Warehouse
- Water
- Park/Open Space
- Mixed Use

Legend:
- Station - All Alternatives
- Station - Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative Only)
- Viaduct
- Proposed Alignment
- Proposed Station Platform
- Proposed Parking Area
- Half-Mile Study Area
- Freight Only
- Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR)
- NJ Meadowlands District Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Electrical Substation

Source: Bergen County GIS; NJMC GIS Data; Field Inspection
RIDGEFIELD STATION ZONING

Northern Branch Corridor

Figure 4-7

Source: NJMC GIS Data; North Bergen Zoning Map; Ordinance.com
Ridgefield Station Area

Land Use

The proposed Ridgefield Station area is bound by Broad Avenue (US Route 1/9) to the east, the rail right-of-way to the west, Hendricks Causeway to the north and a series of warehouse facilities, surface parking lot and loading areas to the south. As seen in Figure 4-6, the proposed station site contains a new retail development consisting of a grocery store, restaurants, and a housewares store catering to the Korean community.

Immediately west of the right-of-way, Railroad Avenue provides access to numerous large, light-industrial warehousing and office uses. This portion of Ridgefield is within the NJMC. Three structures line Railroad Avenue from Pleasant View Terrace, in the south, to Hendricks Causeway, in the north: an expansive light-industrial warehouse and office building, an office and warehouse structure, and a vacant light-industrial and warehousing structure.

The land uses fronting Broad Avenue’s eastern edge transition from single- and two-family residential structures to commercial uses progressing north from Pleasant View Terrace. The first non-residential use, a two-story office/retail building, is located on the southeastern corner of the Broad Avenue and Mayer Court intersection. At the intersection of Broad and Edgewater Avenues there is a small town center area of Ridgefield where the Borough Hall and other commercial uses are found. East of the commercial land uses lining the eastern edge of Broad Avenue, residential structures generally characterize the area.

Zoning

The Ridgefield Station area is also subject to two sets of zoning ordinances, the Borough of Ridgefield and the NJMC. The proposed station area is located within a light manufacturing district. North of the station, a commercial district is located along a main strip and includes the intersection of Broad Avenue and Edgewater Avenue, Ridgefield’s town center, and extends south of Pleasantview Terrace between the right-of-way and Broad Avenue.

4.3.3.2. Potential Impacts and Mitigation

No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative does not propose changes to the land use or zoning within the Northern Branch study area, no impacts will result from this Alternative. However, while no changes are proposed and no impacts will result, the No Build Alternative will not improve mobility between associated land uses within the study area.

Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative) and Light Rail to Englewood Route 4

Both Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative) and Light Rail to Englewood Route 4 are identical in their potential impacts and mitigation through Ridgefield. Consequently, the discussion below applies to both alternatives.

Rail Right-of-Way

Impacts – Project corridor improvements will occur within the existing rail right-of-way. No additional right-of-way will be acquired and the existing alignment will remain in its current orientation. As all right-of-way work will be confined to the existing right-of-way, the reactivation of the passenger rail service will not introduce a new land use (railroad) where one currently does not exist. As such, the improvement of the rail right-of-way for the purposes of re-establishing passenger rail service is consistent with the existing land uses within the railroad right-of-way and land uses immediately adjacent to the right-of-way.
Due to the heavily urbanized and industrial land use development patterns adjacent to the rail corridor in Ridgefield, the increased rail traffic will not result in conflicts with existing land uses.

The municipal zoning ordinance of Ridgefield does not make a distinction between rail vehicle types that may operate on the Northern Branch Rail Corridor. Consequently, the operation of light rail transit on the existing rail right-of-way does not conflict with existing zoning. The provision of an additional mode of travel will improve mobility in the study area.

Mitigation – The implementation of passenger rail service within the existing rail right-of-way is consistent with local land use patterns and zoning. No mitigation is required.

Ridgefield Station
Impacts – The platforms for the proposed Ridgefield Station will be located within the existing rail right-of-way and do not present a conflict with the existing surrounding industrial land uses.

The parking area for the proposed station site will occupy a lot currently in use as a mixed-use retail development. The acquisition of the development is discussed in Chapter 5: Land Acquisition; however, the replacement of the facility with station parking does not represent a substantial land use change as Broad Avenue supports a busy downtown business district with many stores similar to those found in the complex to be acquired. The placement of the station at the intersection of Hendricks Causeway and Broad Avenue places it in close proximity to and with direct access to commercial and residential uses abutting Broad Avenue to the east and will not have an adverse effect on mobility. As a consequence, the station location is supportive of the adjacent land uses, a positive effect of locating the station where proposed. A traction power substation will be located east of the station platform within the proposed parking area. The design of the substation will be enhanced to harmonize with the existing development and design scheme in the area and/or landscaped as appropriate.

Mitigation – The proposed station site is consistent with local land use and zoning. No mitigation is required.

4.3.4. Palisades Park

4.3.4.1. Existing Conditions

Figures 4-8 and 4-9 illustrate the land use and zoning in Palisades Park.

Rail Right-of-Way

Land Use

The rail right-of-way itself is actively used for freight service and is considered a transportation/railroad use. Land uses immediately adjacent to the right-of-way are mostly warehouse and light industrial. This large-lot industrial pattern continues north along the alignment from Fairview Street in the south to West Edsall Boulevard in the north, just south of the Leonia border. A multi-family residential building is adjacent to the Borough’s Department of Public Works garage, adjacent to the rail right-of-way, north of the station site. West of the right-of-way are industrial uses, which act as a buffer between the recreational uses and the right-of-way (refer to Figure 4-8).

Zoning

The rail right-of-way is zoned as a transportation use. Light industrial zones are located adjacent to the right-of-way on both the east and west sides through Palisades Park (refer to Figure 4-9). East of the industrial district, the Palisades Park portion of the study area contains a mix of residential and commercial zones. Retail Business zoning districts line portions of Grand and Broad Avenues, as well as Route 46.
PALISADES PARK STATION AREA LAND USE

Northern Branch Corridor
Figure 4-8

Land Use/ Land Cover

- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial/ Warehouse
- Water
- Park/ Open Space
- Municipal Boundary
- Electrical Substation
- Proposed Station Platform
- Proposed Parking Area
- Viaduct
- Proposed Alignment
- Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR)
- NJ Meadowlands District Boundary
- Station - All Alternatives
- Station Light Rail To Tenafly (Preferred Alternative Only)

Source: Bergen County GIS; NJMC GIS Data; Field Inspection
Palisades Park Station - All Alternatives
Station Light Rail To Tenafly (Preferred Alternative Only)
Viaduct
Proposed Alignment
Half-Mile Study Area
Freight Only
Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR)
NJ Meadowlands District Boundary
Municipal Boundary

Palisades Park Zoning Districts
- One- & Two-Family Residential
- Senior Citizen Housing
- Industrial

Village of Ridgefield Zoning Districts
- Residential
- Open Space

Source: NJMC GIS Data; North Bergen Zoning Map; Ordinance.com
**Palisades Park Station Area**

**Land Use**

Located between Grand Avenue to the east and the Northern Branch right-of-way to the west, this portion of Palisades Park is generally light industrial and commercial in character. Bound by Fairview Street, Grand and West Ruby Avenues, and the rail right-of-way, the proposed station area is defined by one square block and is comprised of light-industrial, warehousing, and associated office uses (refer to Figure 4-8). An office building housing seven tenants is located on the southwestern corner of Grand Avenue and Fairview Street. A garden center with nursery and a three-story mixed-use structure are situated among the residential uses on the eastern edge of Grand Avenue.

North of the proposed station area, Fairview Street is lined with a multi-family residential building and small office buildings and associated parking lots. A small cluster of non-residential development is located on Grand Avenue opposite the site between West Ruby Avenue and Fairview Street. The remainder of the area east of Grand Avenue is predominantly residential in character. Clusters of mixed-office and commercial uses are interspersed amid the residential housing.

A collection of large structures is situated south of the proposed station area site, which provides a buffer from Route 46. Further south along the western side of Grand Avenue, a six-story, converted industrial building contains three nightclubs, retail and office space.

West of the proposed station area site is a light industrial structure with an area used for the storage of its distribution trailers. This property is accessed by crossing the rail line right-of-way at the end of West Ruby Avenue. Situated further west is the municipal pool, marking the southern terminus of Overpeck Park.

**Zoning**

Figure 4-9 summarizes the zoning districts in the vicinity of the station. The proposed Palisades Park Station Area is located within an industrial zone, which encompasses the western portion of the municipality, generally west of Grand Avenue.

4.3.4.2. Potential Impacts and Mitigation

**No Build Alternative**

The No Build Alternative does not propose changes to the land use or zoning within the Northern Branch study area, no impacts will result from this Alternative. However, while no changes are proposed and no impacts will result, the No Build Alternative will not improve mobility between associated land uses within the study area.

**Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative) and Light Rail to Englewood Route 4**

Both Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative) and Light Rail to Englewood Route 4 are identical in their potential impacts and mitigation through Palisades Park. Consequently, the discussion below applies to both alternatives.

**Rail Right-of-Way**

*Impacts* – Project corridor improvements will occur within the existing rail right-of-way. No additional right-of-way will be acquired and the existing alignment will remain in its current orientation. As all right-of-way work will be confined to the existing right-of-way, the reactivation of the passenger rail service will not introduce a new land use (railroad) where one currently does not exist. As such, the improvement of the rail right-of-way for the purposes of re-establishing passenger rail service is consistent with the existing land uses within the railroad right-of-way and land uses immediately adjacent to the right-of-way. The provision of an additional mode of travel will improve mobility in the study area.
The municipal zoning ordinance of Palisades Park does not make a distinction between rail vehicle types that may operate on the Northern Branch Rail Corridor. Consequently, the operation of light rail transit on the existing rail right-of-way does not conflict with existing zoning.

*Mitigation* – The implementation of passenger rail service within the existing rail right-of-way is consistent with local land use patterns and zoning. No mitigation is required.

**Palisades Park Station**

*Impacts* – The platforms for the proposed Palisades Park Station will be located within the existing rail right-of-way and do not present a conflict with the existing surrounding industrial land uses. The parking area for the proposed station site will occupy a lot currently in use as a warehouse with mixed-use retail development. The acquisition of the warehouse/retail is discussed in Chapter 5: Land Acquisition; however, the replacement of the facility with station parking does not represent a substantial land use change. Conversely, the placement of the station near Grand Avenue locates the facility in close proximity to, and with direct access to, commercial and residential uses north and east of the station site and will not adversely affect mobility in the study area. As a consequence, the station location is supportive of the adjacent land uses, a positive effect of locating the station where proposed. A traction power substation will be located east of the station platform within the proposed parking area. The design of the substation will be enhanced to harmonize with the existing development and design scheme in the area and/or landscaped as appropriate.

*Mitigation* – The proposed station site is consistent with local land use and zoning. No mitigation is required.

### 4.3.5. Leonia

#### 4.3.5.1. Existing Conditions

Figures 4-10 and 4-11 illustrate the land use and zoning in Leonia.

**Rail Right-of-Way**

**Land Use**

West of the Northern Branch rail right-of-way is Overpeck Park which spans from Palisades Park to I-80/95 (refer to Figure 4-10). Land uses to the east of the right of way are primarily residential with some recreational/open space and a small area of commercial and industrial uses north of Fort Lee Road. The rail right-of-way itself is actively used for freight service and is considered a transportation/railroad use.

**Zoning**

The rail right-of-way itself is zoned as a transportation use. Land to the west of the right-of-way is zoned for single-family residential, but the land is presently a Green Acres protected park (Overpeck County Park). Conversion of the park to single-family residential as would be permitted by zoning is unlikely to occur as Green Acres protections are for all intents and purposes irrevocable. East of the right-of-way is primarily zoned for residential use. A zone of Commerce and Light Industrial Use is found north of Fort Lee Road. Interspersed with the residential uses are some Parkland Districts (refer to Figure 4-11).
LEONIA STATION AREA LAND USE

Northern Branch Corridor
Figure 4-10

Source: Bergen County GIS; NJMC GIS Data; Field Inspection
LEONIA STATION ZONING

Northern Branch Corridor
Figure 4-11

Li. Borough of Leonia Station
LI. Borough of Palisades Park
P. Township of Teaneck

- Single Family Residential
- Multiple Family
- Office Building
- Commerce & Light Industrial District
- Parkland
- Business

Source: NJMC GIS Data; North Bergen Zoning Map; Ordinance.com
Leonia Station Area

Land Use
The location of the proposed parking area for Leonia Station is currently the site of an existing parking area adjacent to an office building on Willow Tree Road, on the north side of Fort Lee Road, east of the rail alignment (refer to Figure 4-10).

The area north of Fort Lee Road has active recreational facilities, including a walking and jogging track, tennis courts, athletic fields, and a clubhouse. Willow Tree Road directly abuts the rail right-of-way to the north ending in the Leonia High School parking lot. Along this road there is a mix of industrial, commercial and office uses. Station Park is located south of the proposed parking area, adjacent to the east side of the rail right-of-way, south of Fort Lee Road.

To the east of the parking area, beyond the adjacent office/industrial uses, are single-family and townhouse-style residential land uses. The single-family residential character extends beyond Grand Avenue to the east where larger single- and multi-family homes are found. A concentration of commercial, office, and mixed-use commercial/residential development lines Fort Lee Road, east of the rail right-of-way.

Zoning
Figure 4-11 summarizes the zoning districts in the vicinity of the Leonia Station. The entire area west of the right-of-way and north of the Palisades Park border to the Englewood border lies in a residential zone, in which the park is a permitted use. The area immediately east of the right-of-way and south of Fort Lee Road, surrounding Station Parkway, is zoned as municipal parklands. North of Fort Lee Road and adjacent to the right-of-way is a large commerce/light industrial district as well as Leonia High School. A small business district runs along Fort Lee Road, east of the industrial district and Station Park. The remaining areas are zoned residential.

4.3.5.2. Potential Impacts and Mitigation

No Build Alternative
The No Build Alternative does not propose changes to the land use or zoning within the Northern Branch study area, no impacts will result from this Alternative. However, while no changes are proposed and no impacts will result, the No Build Alternative will not improve mobility between associated land uses within the study area.

Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative) and Light Rail to Englewood Route 4
Both Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative) and Light Rail to Englewood Route 4 are identical in their potential impacts and mitigation through Leonia. Consequently, the discussion below applies to both alternatives.

Rail Right-of-Way
Impacts – Project corridor improvements will occur within the existing rail right-of-way. No additional right-of-way will be acquired and the existing alignment will remain in its current orientation. As all right-of-way work will be confined to the existing right-of-way, the reactivation of the passenger rail service will not introduce a new land use (railroad) where one currently does not exist. As such, the improvement of the rail right-of-way for the purposes of re-establishing passenger rail service is consistent with the existing land uses within the railroad right-of-way and land uses immediately adjacent to the right-of-way. The provision of an additional mode of travel will improve mobility in the study area.

The municipal zoning ordinance of Leonia does not make a distinction between rail vehicle types that may operate on the Northern Branch Rail Corridor. Consequently, the operation of light rail transit on the existing rail right-of-way does not conflict with existing zoning.
Mitigation – The implementation of passenger rail service within the existing rail right-of-way is consistent with local land use patterns and zoning. No mitigation is required.

Leonia Station
Impacts – The platforms for the proposed Leonia Station will be located within the existing rail right-of-way and do not present a conflict with the existing surrounding land uses. The proposed parking plan is to construct a parking deck over an existing parking lot associated with an active office use east of the right-of-way by acquiring “air-rights.” In terms of land use impact, as this option would replace an existing parking facility with a new parking facility, the proposed use is consistent with existing land use. In addition, the proposed parking facility has access via Willow Tree Road to Fort Lee Road. The proposed location of the parking area would provide rail transit access to a large, nearby residential population, as well as providing access to a large county park. As a consequence, the development of the station site and parking area is supportive of adjacent land uses and will improve mobility and access to resources. Land use impacts would not result from the development of this facility.

A traction power substation will be located east of the station platform within the proposed parking area. The design of the substation will be enhanced to harmonize with the existing development and design scheme in the area and/or landscaped as appropriate.

Mitigation – The proposed station site is consistent with local land use and zoning. No mitigation is required.

4.3.6. Englewood

4.3.6.1. Existing Conditions

Figures 4-12 through 4-15 illustrate the land use and zoning in Englewood.

Rail Right-of-Way
Land Use
The rail right-of-way itself is actively used for freight service and is considered a transportation/railroad use. In the southern portion of Englewood, land uses east and west of the right-of-way are industrial and commercial in nature. East and west of the industrial uses, residential uses predominate with some interspersed commercial uses. In the central portion of Englewood, the town center area, uses immediately adjacent to the right-of-way are commercial and mixed-use commercial, comprising the City’s Central Business District (CBD). East and west of the CBD, land uses are primarily residential. The northern portion of Englewood is dominated by residential uses interspersed with some open space uses, including a cemetery, and Englewood Hospital.

Zoning
The rail right-of-way itself is zoned as a transportation use. In the southern portion of Englewood, zoning east and west of the right-of-way are Light Industrial and Office Industrial. East and west of the industrial zones are residential zones including multi-family and single-family. The central portion of Englewood, the town center area, is zoned Central Business District immediately adjacent to the right-of-way, and single-family zones predominate east and west of the CBD zones. The northern portion of Englewood is zoned for single-family residential interspersed with an Open Space. Land adjacent to the right-of-way at the Tenafly-Englewood border is zoned for service businesses (refer to Figure 4-12).
ENGLEWOOD
ROUTE 4
STATION AREA
LAND USE

Northern Branch Corridor
Figure 4-13

Source: Bergen County GIS; NJMC GIS Data; Field Inspection
Englewood Town Center Station Area Land Use

Northern Branch Corridor

Figure 4-14

Land Use/Land Cover
- Residential
- Parking
- Commercial
- Industrial/Warehouse
- Institutional/Community Facilities
- Park/Open Space
- Mixed Use

Legend:
- Station - All Alternatives
- Station - Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative only)
- Viaduct
- Proposed Alignment
- Proposed Station Platform
- Proposed Parking Area
- Half-Mile Study Area
- Freight Only
- Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR)
- NJ Meadowlands District Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Electrical Substation

Source: Bergen County GIS; NJMC GIS Data; Field Inspection

NJ Transit
The Way To Go.

Jacobs
ENGLWOOD HOSPITAL STATION AREA LAND USE

Northern Branch Corridor

Figure 4-15

- Station - All Alternatives
- Station - Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative only)
- Viaduct
- Proposed Alignment
- Proposed Station Platform
- Half-Mile Study Area
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial/Warehouse
- Park/Open Space
- Institutional/Community Facilities
- NJ Meadowlands District Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Electrical Substation
- Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR)

Source: Bergen County GIS; NJMC GIS Data; Field Inspection
Englewood Route 4 Station Area and Optional Englewood VBF

Land Use
The proposed station area is located south and under Route 4, adjacent to Nordhoff Place (refer to Figure 4-13). The proposed parking area would be located on the lot west of Nordhoff Place, just south of Route 4. The area north of Route 4, on the west side of the rail right-of-way has recently been redeveloped with a mixed-use complex including residential and commercial, office, and service uses. The optional VBF would be located on the east side of the rail right-of-way on parcels currently occupied by industrial uses, primarily warehouses. Uses to the west of the proposed VBF site are industrial. Uses to the east of the site are industrial and commercial. Uses to the north are commercial, and to the south are residential.

There are two main corridors in this area. The first corridor is South Van Brunt Street which includes a new mixed-use development comprised of residential, commercial, and office uses; further north along the corridor the uses are primarily industrial. Highway commercial uses are located immediately northwest of the site and are accessed from Route 4 and South Van Brunt Street. The second corridor is South Dean Street. The industrial character identified within South Englewood and Route 4 extends east of the site across the rail right-of-way. The parcels bound by Sheffield Avenue to the south, South Dean Street to the east, Route 4 to the north, and Overpeck Place to the west are utilized primarily for warehouse and office space with associated parking adjacent to these uses. These parcels represent the “Enterprise Zone” of Englewood and the proposed location of mixed-use residential developments in Englewood. With the exception of the multi-family residential development along Sheffield Avenue, light industrial and office structures are the primary land uses north along South Dean Street and east until Grand Avenue, which is lined with commercial uses. With commercial and office uses fronting either side of Grand Avenue, this mixed-use land use pattern in the area changes to residential east of Grand Avenue. This residential pattern continues to the east of Grand Avenue for the entire northern extent of Englewood, with slight interruptions of commercial uses fronting Grand Avenue.

Zoning
Figure 4-12 summarizes the zoning districts in the vicinity of the station. The area surrounding the proposed station area, west of the right-of-way to Overpeck Avenue to the west and north of Cedar Lane to Forest Avenue, is zoned for office-industrial and is identified by the City of Englewood as an “Enterprise Zone”. This signifies an area in need of redevelopment, which is currently occurring in this area. Traversing this office-industrial area and amidst these uses is Route 4. This major roadway feeds onto Nordhoff Place which acts as an access road for the new mixed-use development, and manufacturing and office uses that line the rail alignment to the west. At the intersection of Route 4 and Grand Avenue is a neighborhood service district. East of the right-of-way to South Dean Street from Cedar Lane to Englewood Avenue is dominated by a light industrial district, followed to the south and east by residential zones, interspersed with residential/office districts.

Englewood Town Center Station

Land Use
The proposed station area is to be situated between Palisades Avenue and Englewood Avenue. There is no parking proposed at this station location. A four-story municipal parking garage is located on the southeast corner of Englewood Avenue and the rail right-of-way (refer to Figure 4-14). A food oil company, one of the existing CSX rail freight customers, is located on the parcel just south of Englewood Avenue, across from the new garage, between South Dean Street and the right-of-way. Moving south along South Dean Street, the land use character remains consistent with light industrial and commercial uses.

Similarly, light industrial and commercial uses, including Englewood City Hall and restaurants, line North Van Brunt Street. Progressing north of Englewood Avenue to Palisade Avenue, the dense commercial town center of the City of Englewood becomes evident. Numerous commercial and mixed-use structures line South Dean Street, North Dean Street, Van Brunt Street, and Palisade Avenue.
Commercial uses generally occupy the ground floors while office space is generally available on second and third floors. West of the right-of-way and South Van Brunt Street, between W. Englewood Avenue and Palisade Avenue, is a new mixed-use development housing commercial and residential uses. One block west, at the corner of Williams Street and Palisade Avenue, is the public safety complex. Additional municipal uses are located south of the proposed station area, including the police and veterans social club (POW) building, the volunteer ambulance station, the Department of Public Works, and a medical office building.

Following the tracks north, uses transition into a mix of retail and commercial such as supermarkets and restaurants. At Demarest Avenue, open space areas lie on either side of the right-of-way. Immediately west, between the rail line and the open space, is a recording studio, housed in the former rail station. Uses to the east remain primarily commercial until Engle Street. East of Engle Street, uses transition from commercial to residential. This residential pattern continues until Englewood Hospital and includes two affordable housing developments.

**Zoning**

Figure 4-12 summarizes the zoning districts in the vicinity of the station. The proposed station area lies in the northernmost extent of the community services and business zone, bordering the Central Business District. West of the station area the lots permit a wide variety of commercial activities, including personal and professional services, retail stores, and government and professional offices. The northern uses that front Palisade Avenue are zoned for Central Business District, and follow the rail alignment through the town’s center to Demarest Avenue between Van Brunt Street and Engle Street, with a large residential district located further west.

**Englewood Hospital Station**

**Land Use**

The proposed station is located behind Englewood Hospital, along North Dean Street. As seen in Figure 4-15, the hospital and a multi-level parking garage are located east of the proposed station area site. With the exception of the single-family homes lining Concord Street, the Englewood Hospital complex and Brookside Cemetery encompass the block bordered by North Dean Street, Engle Street, and Brownes Terrace. In this area, Engle Street is lined with offices, a country club and Brookside Cemetery. Further east, single-family residential homes are the primary land use. West of the rail right-of-way between Cambridge and Durie Avenues is a large park with athletic fields. The areas bordering the park on all sides are predominantly single-family residential.

**Zoning**

Figure 4-12 summarizes the zoning districts in the vicinity of the station. The station area is bound by two different zoning districts. An open space district is located west of the right-of-way and a residentially zoned district is located east of the right-of-way. Although located in a residential zone, Englewood Hospital is a non-conforming use. It has been located on this site since 1890, before this zoning regulation was created. South of Durie Avenue to Hamilton Avenue, on both the east and west sides of the right-of-way, only residential districts are present.

**4.3.6.2. Potential Impacts and Mitigation**

**No Build Alternative**

The No Build Alternative does not propose changes to the land use or zoning within the Northern Branch study area, no impacts will result from this Alternative. However, while no changes are proposed and no impacts will result, the No Build Alternative will not improve mobility between associated land uses within the study area.
**Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative)**

**Rail Right-of-Way**

*Impacts* – Project corridor improvements will occur within the existing rail right-of-way. No additional right-of-way will be acquired and the existing alignment will remain in its current orientation. As all right-of-way work will be confined to the existing right-of-way, the reactivation of the passenger rail service will not introduce a new land use (railroad) where one currently does not exist. As such, the improvement of the rail right-of-way for the purposes of re-establishing passenger rail service is consistent with the existing land uses within the railroad right-of-way and land uses immediately adjacent to the right-of-way.

The provision of an additional mode of transportation will improve mobility within Englewood; however, the land use pattern in Englewood is such that increased grade crossings will likely result in additional traffic congestion for vehicles seeking to cross the rail right-of-way. (Note that in the municipalities south of Englewood, developed land uses are concentrated on the east side of the right-of-way. In Englewood and Tenafly, the rail right-of-way bisects the community.) Traffic circulation issues are addressed in Chapter 9: Traffic and Parking.

The municipal zoning ordinance of Englewood does not make a distinction between rail vehicle types that may operate on the Northern Branch Rail Corridor. Consequently, the operation of light rail transit on the existing rail right-of-way does not conflict with existing zoning.

*Mitigation* – The implementation of passenger rail service within the existing rail right-of-way is consistent with local land use patterns and zoning. No mitigation is required.

**Englewood Route 4 Station**

*Impacts* – The platform for the proposed Englewood Route 4 Station will be located within the existing rail right-of-way and does not present a conflict with the existing surrounding industrial land uses. The parking area for the proposed station site will occupy a lot currently in use as a warehouse. The acquisition of the warehouse facility is discussed in Chapter 5; however, the replacement of the warehouse facility with a station parking facility does not represent a substantial land use change. Conversely, the placement of the station with access to Route 4 places it along a major thoroughfare in close proximity to commercial and residential uses to the east. As a consequence, the station location is supportive of the adjacent land uses and mobility, a positive effect of locating the station where proposed. A traction power substation will be located within the parking area. The design of the substation will be enhanced to harmonize with the existing development and design scheme in the area and/or landscaped as appropriate.

Due to traffic improvements recommended to address the increase in vehicular access to the station, and increased grade crossing closures in the vicinity of the station, approximately 32 on-street parking spaces would be lost along South Dean Street. This is the maximum number of spaces that may be lost, and depending upon discussions with the municipal officials, the number of lost spaces could be reduced or taken out of service only during the peak hours.

Due to traffic improvements recommended to address the increase in vehicular access to the station, and increased grade crossing closures in the vicinity of the station, approximately 32 on-street parking spaces would be lost along South Dean Street. This is the maximum number of spaces that may be lost, and depending upon discussions with the municipal officials, the number of lost spaces could be reduced or taken out of service only during the peak hours.

The loss of 32 parking spaces reduces parking capacity from approximately 314 to 282 on-street spaces within one-third of a mile of the station (refer to Chapter 9: Traffic and Parking). While the loss is not significant as 40% of the on-street parking is anticipated to remain available, the location of the loss would be a concern to the adjacent residents and businesses that rely on the parking for visitors or customers. However, the businesses do have a large lot behind the buildings and each of the residences has a driveway that can accommodate multiple vehicles. On-street parking for the visitors/customers would be available further up Dean Street, as well as west of the right-of-way on Forest Avenue. It is unlikely that land use would change as a result of this proposed reduction in on-street parking.
Mitigation – The proposed station site is consistent with local land use and zoning. No mitigation is required.

Englewood Optional Vehicle Base Facility
Impacts: The Englewood VBF is proposed as an alternate location to the VBF proposed in North Bergen. The VBF would be relatively quiet and clean, as light rail vehicles are electric powered and do not produce emissions when idling. Vehicle maintenance activities would not be louder or more intrusive than the existing warehouse uses. Consequently, in terms of land use, replacing the warehouse use with the VBF use does not represent a substantial change in land use or present a land use conflict with adjacent uses.

Mitigation – The proposed VBF is consistent with local land use and zoning. No mitigation is required.

Englewood Town Center Station
Impacts: The platform for the proposed Englewood Town Center Station will be located within the existing rail right-of-way and does not present a conflict with the existing surrounding land uses. A traction power substation will be located south of the station platform within the existing rail right-of-way. The design of the substation will be enhanced to harmonize with the existing development and design scheme in the area and/or landscaped as appropriate. There is no parking provided at this station as it is considered to be a walk-on as well as a destination station serving the commercial areas, that is, for employees and customers of the existing commercial uses. Consequently, the placement of the station in the middle of downtown Englewood is supportive of the adjacent land uses, a positive effect of locating the station where proposed. As a result, no adverse land use impacts will result from the development of this station site.

Due to traffic improvements recommended to address the increase in vehicular access to the station, and increased grade crossing closures in the vicinity of the station, approximately 128 on-street parking spaces would be lost, distributed along Palisade Avenue, South Van Brunt Street, North Dean Street, and West Englewood Avenue on South Dean Street. This is the maximum number of spaces that may be lost, and depending upon discussions with the municipal officials, the number of lost spaces could be reduced or taken out of service only during the peak hours.

The greatest loss of parking spaces is found east of the intersection of North Dean Street on Palisade Avenue. At this location 37 diagonal spaces will be taken to accommodate additional turning lanes to improve the functioning of the intersection. The loss of 128 parking spaces reduces parking availability from approximately 513 to 385 spaces within one-third of a mile of the station (refer to Chapter 9: Traffic and Parking). The location of the loss would also be a concern to the adjacent businesses and residents that rely on the parking for customers or visitors. However, the majority of the businesses have small lots behind their buildings, and a large parking area is located behind the businesses on North Dean Street, north of Palisade Avenue. Another large lot is located on Nathaniel Place north of Palisade Avenue. Additionally, the municipal parking deck is located in the area that would experience the loss of parking. The deck would accommodate the displaced vehicles. It is unlikely that land use would change as a result of this proposed reduction in on-street parking.

Mitigation – The proposed station site is consistent with local land use and zoning. No mitigation is required.

Englewood Hospital Station
Impacts: The platforms for the proposed Englewood Hospital Station will be located within the existing rail right-of-way and do not present a conflict with the existing surrounding land uses. A traction power substation will be located north of the station platform within the existing rail right-of-way. The design of the substation will be enhanced to harmonize with the existing development and design scheme in the
area and/or landscaped as appropriate. There is no parking provided at this station as it is considered to be a destination station serving the hospital and a walk-up station for nearby residents whose homes are within safe walking distance of the station. The placement of the station where proposed is therefore supportive of the adjacent land uses.

Due to traffic improvements recommended to address the increase in vehicular access to the station, and increased grade crossing closures in the vicinity of the station, approximately 15 on-street parking spaces would be lost, distributed along East Demarest Avenue and East Hudson Avenue. This is the maximum number of spaces that may be lost, and depending upon discussions with the municipal officials, the number of lost spaces could be reduced or taken out of service only during the peak hours.

This loss of parking would reduce on-street parking availability from approximately 543 spaces to 528 spaces. The location of the loss would be a concern to the adjacent residents and businesses that rely on the parking for visitors or customers. However, on-street parking for the visitors/customers would be available on Van Brunt Street, West Street, and North Dean Street for those used to parking on East Demarest Avenue, and further along East Hudson Avenue and the small lots associated with local businesses. It is unlikely that land use would change as a result of this proposed reduction in on-street parking.

_Mitigation_ – The proposed station site is consistent with local land use and zoning. No mitigation is required.

**Light Rail to Englewood Route 4**

_Rail Right-of-Way_

*Impacts* – Project corridor improvements will occur within the existing rail right-of-way from the border of Leonia to the proposed Englewood Route 4 Station. No improvements are proposed north of Englewood Route 4 for this Build Alternative; consequently, no impacts will occur north of Englewood Route 4 Station.

No additional right-of-way will be acquired and the existing alignment will remain in its current orientation. As all right-of-way work will be confined to the existing right-of-way, the reactivation of the passenger rail service will not introduce a new land use (railroad) where one currently does not exist. As such, the improvement of the rail right-of-way for the purposes of re-establishing passenger rail service is consistent with the existing land uses within the railroad right-of-way and land uses immediately adjacent to the right-of-way.

The provision of an additional mode of transportation will improve mobility within Englewood; however, the land use pattern in Englewood is such that increased grade crossings will likely result in additional traffic congestion for vehicles seeking to cross the rail right-of-way. (Note that in the municipalities south of Englewood, developed land uses are concentrated on the east side of the right-of-way. In Englewood and Tenafly, the rail right-of-way bisects the community.) Traffic circulation issues are addressed in Chapter 9: Traffic and Parking.

The municipal zoning ordinance of Englewood does not make a distinction between rail vehicle types that may operate on the Northern Branch. Consequently, the operation of light rail transit on the existing rail right-of-way does not conflict with existing zoning.

_Mitigation_ – The implementation of passenger rail service within the existing rail right-of-way is consistent with local land use patterns and zoning. No mitigation is required.
Englewood Route 4 Station

Impacts – The platform for the proposed Englewood Route 4 Station will be located within the existing rail right-of-way and does not present a conflict with the existing surrounding industrial land uses. The parking area for the proposed station site will occupy a lot currently in use as a warehouse. The acquisition of the warehouse facility is discussed in Chapter 5; however, the replacement of the warehouse facility with a station parking facility does not represent a substantial land use change. Conversely, the placement of the station with access to Route 4 places it along a major thoroughfare in close proximity to commercial and residential uses to the east. As a consequence, the station location is supportive of the adjacent land uses, a positive effect of locating the station where proposed. A traction power substation will be located within the parking area. The design of the substation will be enhanced to harmonize with the existing development and design scheme in the area and/or landscaped as appropriate.

Due to traffic improvements recommended to address the increase in vehicular access to the station, and increased grade crossing closures in the vicinity of the station, approximately 32 on-street parking spaces would be lost along South Dean Street. This is the maximum number of spaces that may be lost, and depending upon discussions with the municipal officials, the number of lost spaces could be reduced or taken out of service only during the peak hours.

The loss of 32 parking spaces reduces parking capacity from approximately 314 to 282 on-street spaces within one-third of a mile of the station (refer to Chapter 9: Traffic and Parking). While the loss is not significant as 40% of the on-street parking is anticipated to remain available, the location of the loss would be a concern to the adjacent residents and businesses that rely on the parking for visitors or customers. However, the businesses do have a large lot behind the buildings and each of the residences has a driveway that can accommodate multiple vehicles. On-street parking for the visitors/customers would be available further up Dean Street, as well as west of the right-of-way on Forest Avenue. It is unlikely that land use would change as a result in this proposed reduction of on-street parking.

Mitigation – The proposed station site is consistent with local land use and zoning. No mitigation is required.

Englewood Optional Vehicle Base Facility

Impacts: The Englewood VBF is proposed as an alternate location to the VBF proposed in North Bergen. The VBF would be relatively quiet and clean, as light rail vehicles are electric powered and do not produce emissions when idling. Vehicle maintenance activities would not be louder or more intrusive than the existing warehouse uses. Consequently, in terms of land use, replacing the warehouse use with the VBF use does not represent a substantial change in land use or present a land use conflict with adjacent uses.

Mitigation – The proposed VBF is consistent with local land use and zoning. No mitigation is required.

Englewood Town Center Station

Impacts: No improvements are proposed north of Englewood Route 4 Station; therefore, no impacts are anticipated at this location.

Mitigation – None required.

Englewood Hospital Station

Impacts: No improvements are proposed north of Englewood Route 4 Station; therefore, no impacts are anticipated at this location.

Mitigation – None required.
4.3.7. Tenafly

4.3.7.1. Existing Conditions

Figures 4-16 through 4-18 illustrate the land use and zoning in Tenafly.

**Rail Right-of-Way**

**Land Use**

The rail right-of-way itself is actively used for freight service and is considered a transportation/railroad use. In the southern portion of Tenafly, land uses east and west of the right-of-way are primarily residential in nature from the rail right-of-way to the boundary of the study area in both directions. In the central portion of Tenafly, the town center area, uses immediately adjacent to the right-of-way are commercial and mixed-use commercial, comprising the City’s Central Business District (CBD). East and west of the CBD, land uses are primarily residential. This land use pattern continues to the border of Tenafly and Cresskill.

**Zoning**

The rail right-of-way itself is zoned as a transportation use. In the southern portion of Tenafly, zoning east and west of the right-of-way are residential, primarily single-family. The central and northern portions of Tenafly are zoned Commercial and Business immediately adjacent to the right-of-way, and single-family and open space zones predominate east and west of the Business/Commercial zones (refer to Figure 4-16).

**Tenafly Town Center Station Area**

**Land Use**

Located in the town center of the Borough of Tenafly, the proposed station site is located west of the rail right-of-way, adjacent to the parking lot behind the Clinton Inn, south of West Clinton Avenue (refer to Figure 4-17). The dominant land use in this portion of Tenafly is commercial, with some mixed-use buildings containing office and residential on the second and third floors. Commercial structures line Railroad Avenue from Westervelt Avenue to north of Riveredge Road. Similar land use patterns are evident along Washington Street.

A large strip mall, containing a supermarket, is situated on the northwestern corner of Riveredge Road and Railroad Avenue. As a major commercial area within the Borough, small surface parking lots are scattered throughout the town center. In addition to interior parking areas designated for particular businesses, a municipal lot for shoppers is located south of West Clinton Avenue, west of the rail right-of-way. Street parking is also available throughout the area.

The complex network of roadways east of the rail right-of-way in the middle of the town has created a number of oddly shaped blocks. These blocks have been utilized for various purposes including a park (bordered by Piermont and County Roads and Hillside Avenue), a parking lot (bounded by the rail right-of-way, Highwood Avenue and Jay Street), and commercial uses.

A church and school are located at the intersection of East Clinton Avenue and County Road. A second church is located further north, along County Road. Between the two churches is a mix of commercial retail and service uses, including a gas station and funeral home. Single-family homes are typical of the land use patterns outside of the town center.

**Zoning**

Figure 4-16 summarizes the zoning districts in the vicinity of the station. Business districts, represented by commercial zoning, are located on both sides of the right-of-way near the station and in the downtown area. Adjacent to these districts are residential districts intermixed with land zoned for open space.
TENAFLY STATIONS ZONING

Northern Branch Corridor
Figure 4-16

Source: NJMC GIS Data; North Bergen Zoning Map; Ordinance.com
TENAFLY TOWN CENTER
STATION AREA
LAND USE
Northern Branch Corridor
Figure 4-17

Land Use/ Land Cover
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial/Warehouse
- Parking
- Park/Open Space
- Mixed Use
- Institutional/Community Facilities

Source: Bergen County GIS; NJMC GIS Data; Field Inspection
TENAFLY NORTH STATION AREA LAND USE

Northern Branch Corridor
Figure 4-18
Tenafly North Station Area

Land Use

The Tenafly North Station is located south of the Cresskill border along Piermont Road. The proposed station area site is characterized by a wide range of uses. These include light manufacturing, commercial, recreational, educational and residential uses, as well as vacant land (refer to Figure 4-18). The proposed station area site is currently occupied by residential, commercial, industrial and light manufacturing/warehousing uses, and a performing arts studio. These parcels are located on three municipal blocks bordered by Summit Street to the north, Hudson Avenue to the south, Piermont Road to the west and Madison Avenue to the east.

North of the station platform sitting at the border of the Borough of Cresskill is Cresskill Commons, a multi-family residential complex. West of the rail right-of-way is Grove Street, an access road for a variety of uses, including the Department of Public Works facilities and the rifle and pistol club. Further south along Grove Street are two pool clubs, a surface parking lot utilized by the high school, and residential structures that includes an affordable housing component. Athletic fields associated with Tenafly High School are located on an adjacent parcel to the west. Residential land uses dominate the landscape west of the school.

East of the rail right-of-way, the land use is generally characterized as commercial/light industrial. The area located around the proposed station parking area to the north of North Summit Street and extending into the Borough of Cresskill contains light manufacturing and warehouse facilities, office buildings, automotive sales and service, and pockets of vacant land.

A former industrial site, located directly south of the proposed station area, has recently been redeveloped for commercial and residential use. The redevelopment effort includes a parking garage that borders Prospect Terrace. Residential land uses are generally characteristic of the area east of County Road.

Zoning

Figure 4-16 summarizes the zoning districts in the vicinity of the station. The station platform falls within the commercial antenna and compost district, which extends north to the Cresskill border and halfway to Prospect Terrace. West of this zone lies Tenafly High School that is located in an open space zone, which permits public buildings, cultural facilities, and similar uses. Southwest of the open space district lies a residential district. The senior residence and business zoning district regulates development of the area bordered by the Cresskill municipal line to the north, Hudson Avenue to the south, Madison Avenue to the east and the Northern Branch rail right-of-way to the west. This zone, which permits public uses, schools, and nursing home facilities, would contain the proposed parking facility for the Tenafly North Station. South of the proposed parking area, the area is zoned for industrial with an affordable housing and commercial overlay zone. East of these areas lie a commercial district, then areas zoned for residential uses.

4.3.7.2. Potential Impacts and Mitigation

No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative does not propose changes to the land use or zoning within the Northern Branch study area, no impacts will result from this Alternative. However, while no changes are proposed and no impacts will result, the No Build Alternative will not improve mobility between associated land uses within the study area.
Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative)

Rail Right-of-Way

Impacts – Project corridor improvements will occur within the existing rail right-of-way. No additional right-of-way will be acquired and the existing alignment will remain in its current orientation. As all right-of-way work will be confined to the existing right-of-way, the reactivation of the passenger rail service will not introduce a new land use (railroad) where one currently does not exist. As such, the improvement of the rail right-of-way for the purposes of re-establishing passenger rail service is consistent with the existing land uses within the railroad right-of-way and land uses immediately adjacent to the right-of-way.

The provision of an additional mode of transportation will improve mobility within Tenafly; however, the land use pattern in Tenafly is such that increased grade crossings will likely result in additional traffic congestion for vehicles seeking to cross the rail right-of-way. (Note that in the municipalities south of Englewood, developed land uses are concentrated on the east side of the right-of-way. In Englewood and Tenafly, the rail right-of-way bisects the community.) Traffic circulation issues are addressed in Chapter 9: Traffic and Parking.

The municipal zoning ordinance of Tenafly does not make a distinction between rail vehicle types that may operate on the Northern Branch. Consequently, the operation of light rail transit on the existing rail right-of-way does not conflict with existing zoning.

Mitigation – The implementation of passenger rail service within the existing rail right-of-way is consistent with local land use patterns and zoning. No mitigation is required.

Tenafly Town Center Station

Impacts – The platform for the proposed Tenafly Town Center Station will be located within the existing rail right-of-way and does not present a conflict with the existing surrounding land uses. There is no parking provided at this station, but a passenger drop-off and handicapped parking location is proposed to be established north of the station platforms with access to West Clinton Avenue in an area currently occupied by a parking area. The use of a portion of the parking area for passenger drop off and handicapped parking is consistent with the existing use. The placement of the station in the middle of Tenafly’s downtown area will provide access to commercial and employment uses in the downtown and walkable access to the station for nearby residents. Consequently, the placement of the station is supportive of the adjacent land uses, a positive effect of locating the station where proposed.

A traction power substation will be located south of the station platform within the existing rail right-of-way. The design of the substation will be enhanced to harmonize with the existing development and design scheme in the area and/or landscaped as appropriate. As a result, no adverse land use impacts will result from the development of this station site.

Due to traffic improvements recommended to address the increase in vehicular access to the station, and increased grade crossing closures in the vicinity of the station, approximately 35 on-street parking spaces would be lost, as well as the 15 spaces associated with the existing lot. The greatest on-street loss would occur along Piermont Road between West Clinton Avenue and Hillside Avenue, where 14 diagonal spaces may be eliminated. This is the maximum number of spaces that may be lost, and depending upon discussions with the municipal officials, the number of lost spaces could be reduced or taken out of service only during the peak hours.

The loss of 50 parking spaces reduces parking capacity from approximately 1,314 to 1,263 total spaces. During the period of greatest occupancy, 580 spaces would be available within a one-third-mile distance of the station (refer to Chapter 9: Traffic and Parking). While the loss is not significant, the location of
the loss would be a concern to the adjacent residents and businesses that rely on the parking for customers or visitors. However, the majority of the businesses have parking areas behind their buildings, and there exists an additional parking area between the railroad and Piermont Road. It is unlikely that land use would change as a result in this proposed reduction of on- and off-street parking.

**Mitigation** – The proposed station site is consistent with local land use and zoning. No mitigation is required.

**Tenafly North Station**

**Impacts:** The platform for the proposed Tenafly North Station will be located within the existing rail right-of-way and does not present a conflict with the existing surrounding land uses, which are commercial, industrial, and residential. The proposed parking area for the station will be located east of the rail right-of-way on land currently occupied by a mixture of commercial and industrial uses.

This area of Tenafly is currently undergoing notable redevelopment, with a new large-scale residential development under construction south of the proposed station site parking area. Uses north of the parking area are a mixture of industrial and commercial uses. The acquisition of commercial and industrial properties for the development of the parking area is discussed in Chapter 5: Land Acquisition. The conversion of the existing uses to a parking lot for the station site does not represent an adverse change in land use. Parking areas are associated with the existing commercial and industrial uses, and the setting of the proposed station parking is undergoing change, as well.

A traction power substation will be located within the parking area. The design of the substation will be enhanced to harmonize with the existing development and design scheme in the area and/or landscaped as appropriate. As such, no adverse land use effects are anticipated from the development of this station site.

**Mitigation** – The proposed station site is consistent with local land use and zoning. No mitigation is required.

**Light Rail to Englewood Route 4**

**Rail Right-of-Way**

**Impacts:** No improvements are proposed north of Englewood Route 4 Station; therefore, no impacts are anticipated at this location.

**Mitigation** – None required.

**Tenafly Town Center Station**

**Impacts:** No improvements are proposed north of Englewood Route 4 Station; therefore, no impacts are anticipated at this location.

**Mitigation** – None required.

**Tenafly North Station**

**Impacts:** No improvements are proposed north of Englewood Route 4 Station; therefore, no impacts are anticipated at this location.

**Mitigation** – None required.
4.3.8. Areas North of Tenafly

**Impacts** – Grade crossing gates and flashers are the only improvement anticipated to occur with the existing rail right-of-way North of Tenafly. These improvements would only serve to improve the safety in the area. No additional right-of-way will be acquired and the existing alignment will remain in its current orientation. Freight trains will be shifted to overnight hours; however shifting this service will not introduce a new land use (railroad) where one currently does not exist.

**Mitigation** – No mitigation is required.

4.4. Summary of Potential Environmental Effects

Table 4-1 compares the two Build Alternatives—Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative) and Light Rail to Englewood Route 4 – in terms of their potential for adverse impacts on existing land use patterns or conflicts with local zoning. As the table describes, there are no zoning issues associated with either Build Alternative in any of the municipalities within the study area. Mobility issues and reduction in on- and off-street parking loss is currently identified in Englewood and Tenafly for Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative) and at the Englewood Route 4 Station for Light Rail to Englewood Route 4. NJ TRANSIT would coordinate with the affected municipalities to identify which traffic mitigation measures should be implemented, and during which time frames, and then determine which parking losses are deemed to be reasonable to accommodate the traffic improvements. It is unlikely that land use would change as a result of this proposed reduction of on- and off-street parking.

**Table 4-1: Comparison of Build Alternatives in Terms of Potential for Land Use and Zoning Impacts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Light Rail to Tenafly (Preferred Alternative)</th>
<th>Light Rail to Englewood Route 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Land Use</td>
<td>Zoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Bergen</td>
<td>No impact</td>
<td>No impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairview</td>
<td>No impact</td>
<td>No impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridgefield</td>
<td>No impact</td>
<td>No impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palisades Park</td>
<td>No impact</td>
<td>No impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leonia</td>
<td>No impact</td>
<td>No impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Englewood</td>
<td>Potential mobility issues and reduction in on-street parking near Englewood Route 4, Englewood Town Center, and Englewood Hospital Stations.</td>
<td>No impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenafly</td>
<td>Potential for mobility issues and reduction in on- and off-street parking spaces near Tenafly Town Center Station.</td>
<td>No impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areas North of Tenafly</td>
<td>No impact</td>
<td>No impact</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Public outreach to discuss the potential impacts has been ongoing. Outreach has consisted of meetings with elected officials, business administrators, town councils, and when invited, public information sessions. Periodic meetings of the Citizen Liaison Committee (CLC) provided additional opportunities for the dissemination of information. Topics routinely discussed ranged from quality-of-life issues, such as the project's impact on traffic and parking, emergency response, and school safety, to the larger issues of service frequency, funding and implementation timeline. Whenever possible, quantified data was provided to facilitate stakeholder dialog. For example, as the DEIS analyses advanced, emerging results on the impact to land use, traffic, property and tax base, noise, etc. was made available at CLC meetings.
to better inform stakeholders and residents. Larger audiences were reached when the same information was posted on the project's website, and project staff was always available to address individual concerns via telephone and email. The topic of Quiet Zones was raised more often in communities in which the alignment operated through residential sections, such as Tenafly. In those situations, the outreach stressed the need for applicant municipalities to work with the Federal Railroad Administration to understand the steps necessary to achieve Quiet Zone designation and the incumbent responsibilities. NJ TRANSIT will work with the municipalities to facilitate the establishment of Quiet Zone designations.