

**Block 143, Lot 24.06
Area in Need of Redevelopment Investigation Report**

**Township of North Brunswick
Middlesex County, New Jersey**

June 13, 2024

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The original of this report was signed and sealed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 45:14A-12.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to determine whether 100 Fidelity Plaza (Block 143, Lot 24.06) (the “Study Area” or the “Area”), qualify as an “area in need of redevelopment” as defined in the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law *N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq.* (“LRHL”). This report is written pursuant to Section 6 of the LRHL, which provides the following:

- No area of a municipality shall be determined a redevelopment area unless the governing body of the municipality shall, by resolution, authorize the planning board to undertake a preliminary investigation to determine whether the proposed area is a redevelopment area according to the criteria set forth in Section 5 of P.L 1992/c.79 (C.40A:12A-5).
- The governing body of a municipality shall assign the conduct of the investigation and hearing to the planning board of the municipality.
- After completing its hearing on this matter, the planning board shall recommend that the delineated area, or any part thereof, be determined or not be determined, by the municipal governing body to be a redevelopment area.
- After receiving the recommendation of the planning board, the municipal governing body may adopt a resolution determining that the delineated area, or any part thereof, is a redevelopment area.

The Township Council of North Brunswick adopted Resolution 291-923 (“Council Resolution”) on September 18, 2023, authorizing the Planning Board to undertake a preliminary investigation to determine whether the Study Area is in need of redevelopment according to one or more of the statutory criteria (see Appendix A – Council Resolution).

The Council Resolution specifies that the investigation shall be to determine if the Study Area is a “non-condemnation” area, which means that condemnation, or eminent domain, would not be an option if the property is designated as an area in need of redevelopment.

The Redevelopment Study Area map (see Figure 1) constitutes a “map showing the boundaries of the proposed redevelopment area and the location of the various parcels of property included therein”. This report serves as the “statement setting forth the basis for the investigation” which is required by Section 6(b) of the LRHL (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-6).

CRITERIA FOR REDEVELOPMENT AREA DETERMINATION

The criteria contained in Section 5 of the LRHL that were considered in evaluating the Study Area are the following:

- 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. The discontinuance of the use of a building or buildings previously used for commercial, retail, shopping malls or plazas, office parks, manufacturing, or industrial purposes; the abandonment of such building or buildings; significant vacancies of such building or buildings for at least two consecutive years; or the same being allowed to fall into so great a state of disrepair as to be untenable.
- 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. 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. A growing lack or total lack of proper utilization of areas caused by the condition of the title, diverse ownership of the real properties therein or other similar conditions which impede land assemblage or discourage the undertaking of improvements, resulting in a stagnant and unproductive condition of land potentially useful and valuable for contributing to and serving the public health, safety and welfare, which condition is presumed to be having a negative social or economic impact or otherwise being detrimental to the safety, health, morals, or welfare of the surrounding area or the community in general.
- 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. 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. The designation of the delineated area is consistent with smart growth planning principles adopted pursuant to law or regulation.

Furthermore, Section 3 of the LRHL permits the inclusion of parcels that do not meet the criteria if they are necessary for the effective redevelopment of the area, stating:

“A redevelopment area may include lands, buildings, or improvements which of themselves are not detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, but the inclusion of which is found necessary, with or without change in their condition, for the effective redevelopment of the area in which they are a part.”

STUDY AREA AND LOCATION

OVERVIEW

The Township of North Brunswick is in the eastern portion of Middlesex County. The neighboring municipalities to the north (New Brunswick), east (Milltown and East Brunswick), and south (South Brunswick) are also part of Middlesex County, whereas the neighbor to the west (Franklin Township) is in Somerset County. Major thoroughfares which bisect North Brunswick Township include U.S. Highway 1 and State Route 130.

The Study Area includes Lots 24.06 of Block 143, which is located in the northeastern section of the Township, near the intersection of Highway 1 and Route 130. The Study Area includes frontage along both roadways and offers access to/from both from the Fidelity Plaza access drive. Outside of the Study Area, to the northeast, is the Shoppes at North Brunswick shopping mall, to the southeast and west are residential dwellings, and to the southwest are North Brunswick Township High School’s buildings and fields. Across Route 1 to the north are highway commercial uses including department stores and restaurants.

While a considerable portion of the Study Area has been developed with buildings and asphalt parking improvements, most of the Area is undeveloped and constrained by wetlands. These undeveloped portions

consist mainly of dense tree canopies. One body of water is located in the southwestern section of the property.

Per Middlesex County property assessment data (see Appendix B), Lot 24.06 includes an estimated 700 parking spaces. These parking lots are all connected by the Fidelity Plaza roadway, which wraps around the entire Study Area. As of April 2023, the owner of record is SPG 100 Fidelity Plaza LLC. The property is shown on the Township Tax Maps on sheets 52, 67, and 68, which are reproduced as Appendix C to this report.

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

Subdivisions (1980, 1991, and 2018)

The 87-acre Study Area (i.e., Lot 24.06) is the result of three subdivisions from the original Lot 24 in Block 143. These subdivisions occurred in April 1980, December 1991, and July 2018. The 2018 application approved the subdivision of Lot 24.04 into Lot 24.06 (the Study Area) and a separate new 5-acre lot (Lot 24.07). See Appendix D for Township Planning Records for the Study Area.

Study Area Development

The Study Area includes two (2) sections of frontage along U.S. Route 1, which are split by Lot 24.02. The Study Area's frontages along Route 1 measure approximately 239.1 feet and 259.5 feet. The Study Area also includes over 400 feet of frontage along Route 130. As previously mentioned, the Fidelity Plaza roadway offers access to both Route 1 and Route 130.

The site contains approximately 300,000 square feet of tenantable building area. The existing main building complex was constructed in 1953. This complex includes several interconnected buildings, identified as 100, 150, 175, and 180 Fidelity Plaza. At the time of the original construction, an approximately 3,400-square-foot utility building was also built. Adjacent to the utility building was a satellite tower, which has since been removed.

The main complex offers several tenantable units throughout its $\pm 200,000$ -square-foot ground level and $\pm 45,000$ -square-foot partial second floor. Since its erection, this complex has accommodated office and retail use, banking operations, computer processing, culinary endeavors, and more.

Two additions were constructed in the mid-1960s and in the early 1980s, to the west of the main building. The first addition included a $\pm 14,500$ square foot Money Center, and the second addition included a $\pm 19,600$ square foot Data Center. These additions are connected to the main building via hallways, and each includes an outdoor courtyard. Figure 2 below outlines a site plan of the existing buildings on the site. See Appendix E for historic building floor plans.

Property record cards from the mid-20th century indicate that buildings within the Study Area were originally occupied by the Boy Scouts of America and served as their national headquarters. The headquarters provided office space for executives, gathering spaces for community events, and even a store for boy scout apparel. The headquarters served as a national landmark, welcoming visitors and scouts from across the country.

Adjacent to the headquarters, constructed on Lot 24.02 (outside of the Study Area) was the Johnston Historical/National Scouting Museum (i.e., 300 Fidelity Plaza). The Boy Scouts vacated the Study Area in 1978, after the national headquarters relocated to Irving, Texas. Other past tenants of the Study Area's buildings include the Fidelity Union Bank Corporation and the current tenant, Wells Fargo.

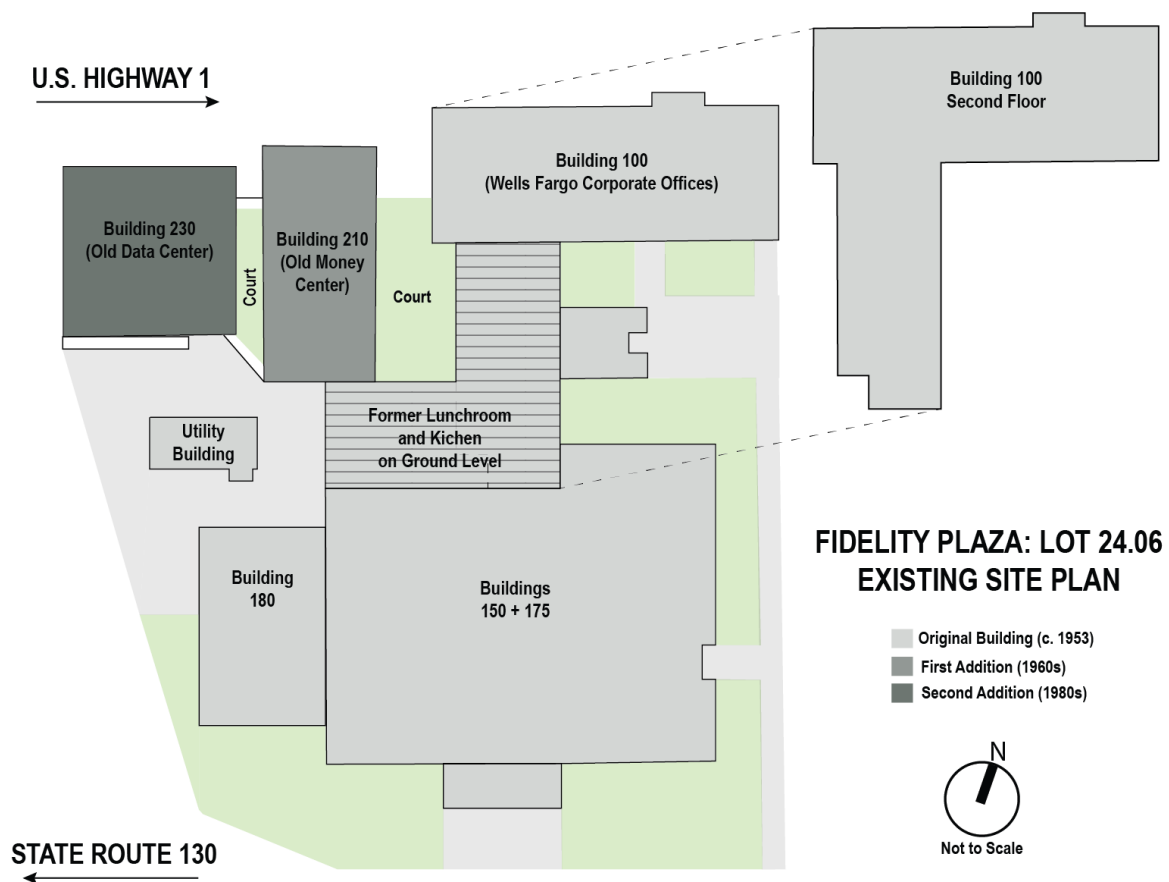


Figure 2 -Site Plan of Existing Buildings on Lot 24.06.

EXISTING ZONING

The Study Area is located within the O-R Mid-Rise Office Research Zone of the Township.

O-R MID-RISE OFFICE RESEARCH ZONE

The purpose of the O-R Mid-Rise Office Research District is to encourage large-scale coordinated development of office research facilities to capitalize on the tract's location at a grade-separated interchange on U.S. Route 1. The size and location of the tract lends itself to development at a greater intensity of land use than other available nonresidential areas in the Township. As such, development standards have been established to encourage integrated development for corporate office and research facilities.

Permitted Principal Uses (§205-81)

- Administrative, executive and editorial offices.
- Banks and financial offices.
- Medical and dental offices and clinics.
- Professional offices.
- Experimental, research or testing laboratories, provided that no operation shall be conducted or equipment used which would create hazardous, noxious or offensive conditions beyond the boundaries of the property involved.
- Administrative and general business offices where no manufacturing is performed.
- Educational services and for-profit primary and secondary schools and colleges.
- Finance and insurance offices.
- Hotel/convention facilities, provided that only those retail and service uses which are ancillary to the principal use shall be permitted.
- Computer and data processing facilities

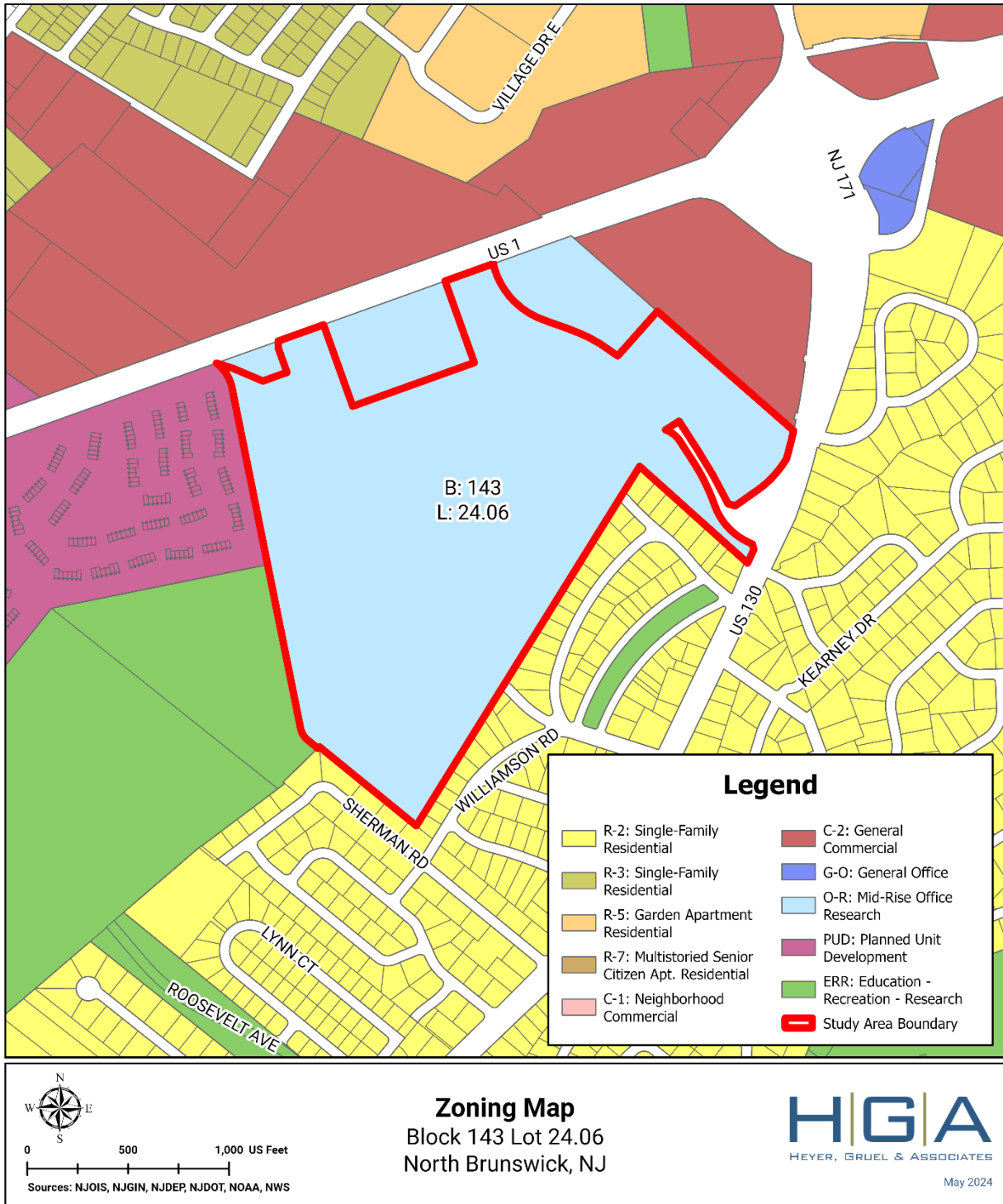


Figure 3 – Redevelopment Study Area Zoning Map

RELATIONSHIP TO PLANNING DOCUMENTS

2006 TOWNSHIP OF NORTH BRUNSWICK MASTER PLAN

North Brunswick's most recent Master Plan was approved in 2006. The following goals were derived from community outreach and remain relevant to this Redevelopment Study:

- Maximize the potential for expansion of the economic base, while assuring that development projects address roadway and utility infrastructure needs.
- Provide a balance of land uses in appropriate locations to address the needs of Township residents and businesses.
- Analyze the need for additional public facilities and services to address the existing and future needs of the Township.
- Provide an appropriate amount of active recreational spaces and passive open spaces to address the Township's current and future needs.

2018 NORTH BRUNSWICK MASTER PLAN RE-EXAMINATION REPORT

North Brunswick's 2018 Master Plan Re-Examination Report is the most recent update to the Township's 2006 Master Plan. This Re-Examination Report also included an amended Land Use Element.

2001 NEW JERSEY STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) was adopted on March 1, 2001. This 2001 Plan compared the planning policies at various government levels, with the purpose of establishing consistency among Local, County, and State planning practices. The SDRP allocates land into five (5) different categories called "Planning Areas." The Study Area is located in Planning Area 1, "Metropolitan."

The intent of the Metropolitan Planning Area (PA1) is to:

- Provide for much of the State's future redevelopment;
- Revitalize cities and towns;
- Promote growth in compact forms;
- Stabilize older suburbs;
- Redesign areas of sprawl; and
- Protect the character of existing stable communities

EVALUATION OF THE STUDY AREA FOR CONFORMITY WITH REDEVELOPMENT AREA CRITERIA

An analysis of the Study Area's existing land use, physical characteristics, history, operational needs, and other considerations was conducted using:

- Township of North Brunswick Tax Maps and GIS data
- Middlesex County Tax and ownership records for the property in the Study Area
- Aerial photos of the properties within the Study Area
- The 2001 New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan
- The 2006 North Brunswick Master Plan
- The 2018 North Brunswick Master Plan Re-examination Report
- Field Inspections of the Study Area, site, and surroundings on May 2, 2024
- Middlesex County Tax Assessment Data
- Middlesex County Property Records
- Township of North Brunswick Planning, Zoning, and Fire Department Records
- NJDEP Records

SALES HISTORY + PROPERTY VALUES

Table 1 below provides a summary of the location, ownership, and designation recommendations for each property within the Study Area.

Table 1: Property Sales and 2024 Assessed Value							
Block	Lot	Land Value	Improvement Value	Total Value	Sales History	Area	Owner
143	24.06	\$4,760,000	\$831,000	\$5,591,000	Sold 4/20/2023 DB 19197 / P 01899	87 acres	SPG 100 Fidelity Plaza, LLC

ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

Overview

It is noted that the environmental data figures presented below do not account for the 2018 subdivision, which divided Lot 24.04 into Lot 24.06 (i.e., the Study Area) and Lot 24.07 (outside of the Study Area).

According to data from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), the Study Area does not contain groundwater contamination or historic fill and is not designated within the NJDEP's Site Remediation Program. However, the Study Area is classified as a New Jersey Environmental Management (NJEMS) site (Figure 4). Applicable program interest results within the NJEMS include land use and air quality. All programs outlined below are active as of the writing of this report. See Appendix F for the Study Area's environmental reports from the NJDEP.

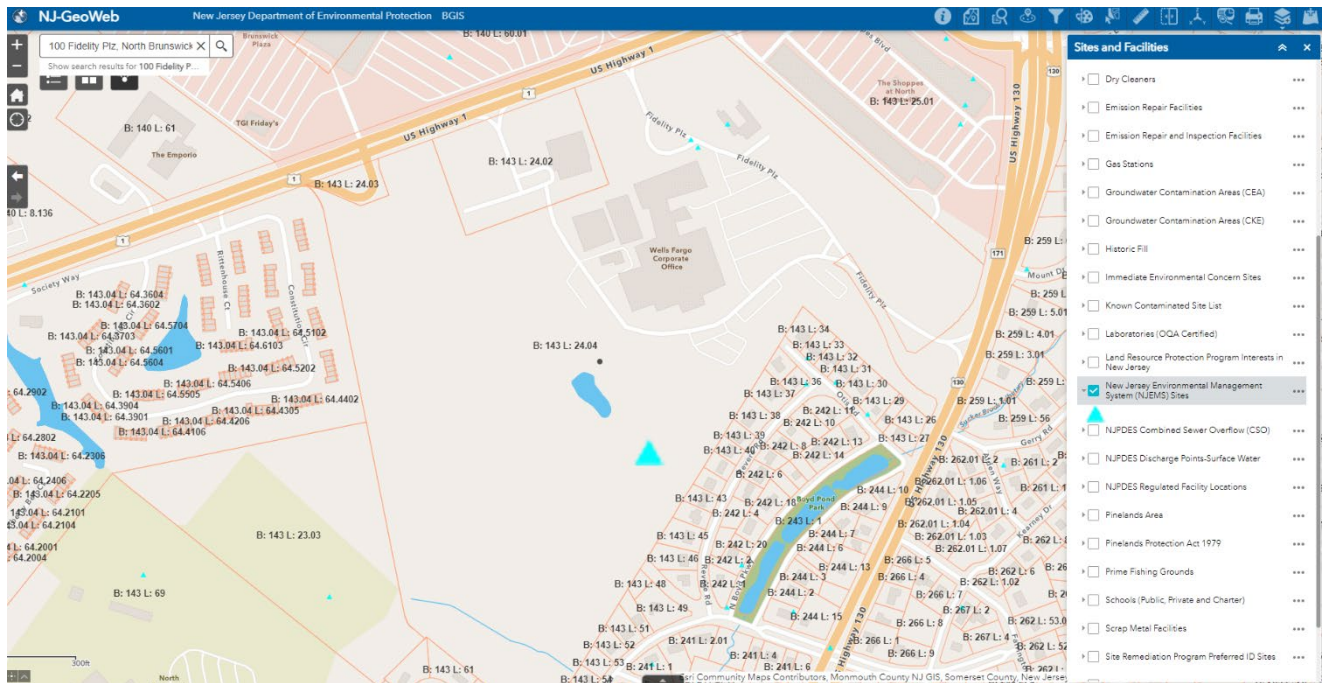


Figure 4 - NJ-GeoWeb NJEMS Sites - Accessed 4/22/2024

Land Use

The Study Area contains a large extent of wetlands (Figure 5), which have been categorized by the NJDEP as both “of ordinary and intermediate resource values.” The required transition area for these intermediate resource value wetlands is 50 feet. Further, the NJDEP has identified State open waters within the Study Area. As a result, a freshwater wetlands land use permitting report has been issued for the Study Area.

The official report outlines the property’s applications for wetlands boundary verification, as well as its issued Letters of Interpretation (LOI). The first wetlands verification application for the Study Area was initiated on December 19, 2011, and received approval on September 26, 2012. A second and third application were initiated and approved in 2014, and again in 2020. As of the writing of this report, the Area’s most recent LOI re-issuance from April 6, 2020, has expired.

Further, a land use authorization application for the Study Area was initiated on January 19, 2021, and withdrawn on May 24, 2023. Overall, no land use violations have been recorded for the Study Area.

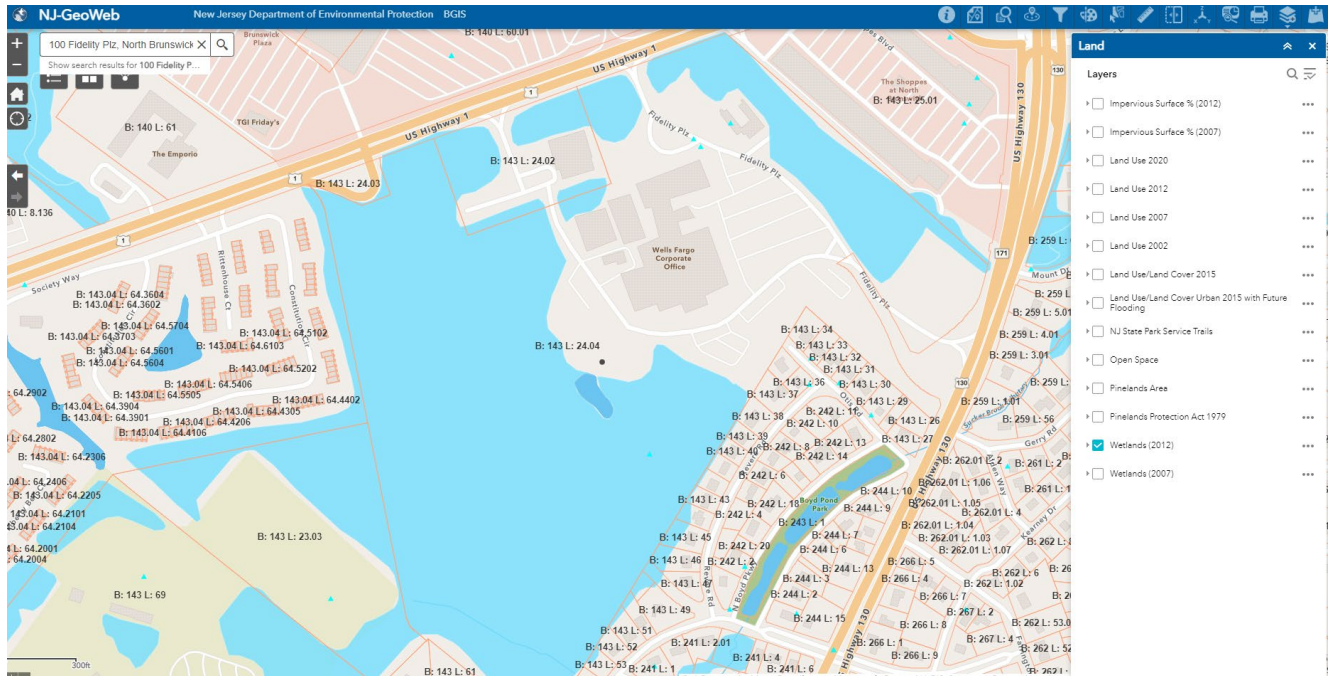


Figure 5 - NJ-GeoWeb Wetlands (2012) - Accessed 4/22/2024

Air Quality

The building complex measures nearly 300,000 square feet in area and requires several mechanical systems to operate. These large-scale operations have initiated regular inspections by the NJDEP, to ensure compliance with its air quality standards. A total of four (4) annual boiler adjustment inspections were conducted on June 6, 2023, and no violations were found.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The building complex within Lot 24.06 has welcomed several tenants over the years, from the Boy Scouts, to banking professionals, to computer engineers. However, shifts in occupancy and advancements in data processing have led to widespread vacancies, and likewise, extensive interior deterioration. During a site visit, substantial vacancy was observed and representatives from the property owner provided a verbal estimate that out of property's ±300,000 square feet of tenantable area, only around 60,000-70,000 square feet (20%-23%) is occupied.

A site visit was conducted on May 2, 2024, where patched ceilings, unsettled flooring, extensive water damage, and exposed wiring were evident in many of the complex's buildings. Conversations with the property manager revealed that several buildings have stood this way for nearly a decade. Furthermore, advancements in technology in recent years and the subsequent high operating costs forced Wells Fargo to reduce their presence within the complex. Once utilizing the entire tenantable area, the company now occupies less than a quarter of the site, making the complex inactive and unproductive. Its once state-of-

the-art Data Center now sits abandoned. Consequently, the Study Area may be designated as in need of redevelopment under criterion 'a,' which states:

- 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."

Discontinuance of a large portion (between 77% and 80%) of the site is evident in the figures presented below, and in the property's sales history assessment (Appendix B). Because of these conditions, the Study Area may also be designated under criterion 'b' of the LRHL, which states:

- b. "The discontinuance of the use of a building or buildings previously used for commercial, retail, shopping malls or plazas, office parks, manufacturing or industrial purposes; the abandonment of such building or buildings; significant vacancies of such building or buildings for at least two consecutive years; or the same being allowed to fall into so great a state of disrepair as to be untenable."

Block	Lot(s)	Location	Designation Recommendation
143	24.06	100-230 Fidelity Plaza	a and b

Main Building (Building 100)

The main building/Building 100 is the most occupied building within the complex and hosts the remaining corporate employees of Wells Fargo. This building also offers open computer workspaces that provide redundancy in the event of power or communication system disruptions as an alternate workspace for employees based elsewhere. Conversations with the property manager revealed that around 300 workers utilize the open workspaces each day during the week (Figures 6 and 7). The building also includes conference rooms and secure meeting rooms utilized by Wells Fargo (Figure 8). Signage of past tenants can still be found within the main building (Figure 9). While this building is the most occupied throughout the complex, it contains vacant office spaces (Figure 10).

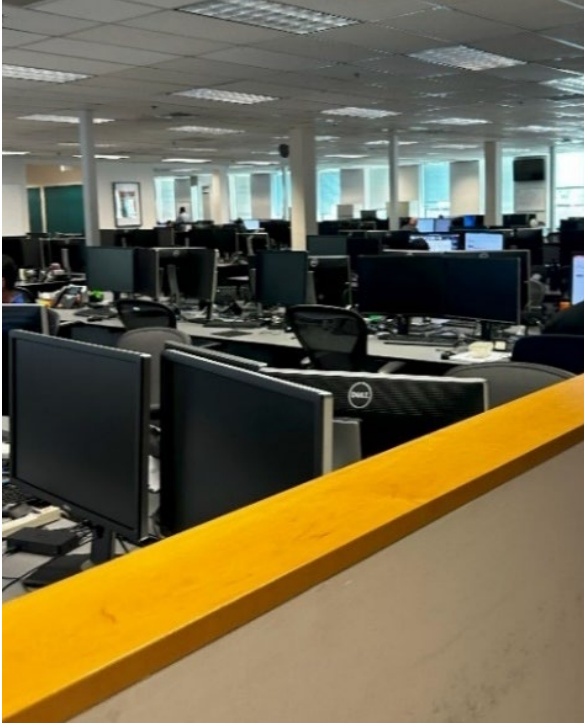


Figure 6 (Left) – Open workspaces for technology professionals.
Figure 7 (Right) – Signage within an open workspace, noting of the unassigned seating arrangement.



Figure 8 (Left) – Secure room for current Wells Fargo employees.
Figure 9 (Right) – Signage reflecting former banking, management, and computing tenants.



Figure 10 – Vacant office space within Building 100.

Old Money Center (Building 210)

The first addition to the main office complex was constructed in the 1960s. This space has accommodated various uses over the years, and most recently accommodated the Wells Fargo Money Center (Figure 11). Extensive disrepair is evident throughout this building. Ceiling and floor tiles are rotting and missing, and ductwork is exposed due to corrosion and water damage (Figure 12). Flood electrical outlets stick out of the floors, spanning across a space that has evidently been unoccupied for years. Long-term vacancies are further alluded within the space's deteriorating furnishings and finishes (Figure 13).



Figure 11 – Overview of the former Money Center, now entirely vacant and deteriorated.



*Figure 12 (Left)– Extensive corrosion within floor and ceiling tiles.
Figure 13 (Right) – A deteriorating rug, lined with mold.*

Old Data Center (Building 230)

The former Data Center was constructed as a second addition to the main complex in the 1980s. Equipped with high-tech machinery, this space was designed with raised floors and an open floor plan (Figure 14). This space presents some of the complex's worst disrepair; several floor tiles have been removed or damaged, water damage is extensive, and loose wiring is exposed (Figure 15). Piles of wood, scrap material, and trash have been scattered across the space. Pieces of machinery have been abandoned, reiterating the long-term abandonment of the Data Center (Figures 16 and 17). This building is evidently unwholesome and untenable (Figure 18).

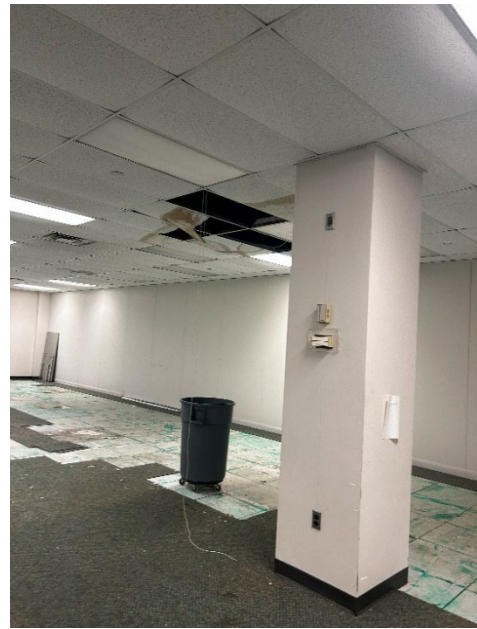


Figure 14 (Left) – Open concept floor plan of the old Data Center.
Figure 15 (Right) – Damaged ceiling and floor tiles and loose wiring within Building 230.



Figures 16 and 17 – Remnants of old computing machinery left behind.

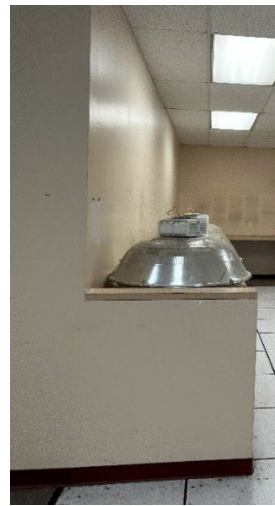


Figure 18 – Damaged floor tiles and wrapped column within the old Data Center.

Remaining Office Spaces

Building 180

The remaining buildings within the southern section of the complex demonstrate a similar degree of vacancy and deterioration to the old Data and Money Centers. These wide-open spaces present tiles and columns affected by water damage (Figure 19). Inactive light fixtures with exposed wiring remain in the building (Figure 20), and mechanical equipment has haphazardly been exposed within the entrance hallway (Figure 21).



*Figure 19 (Left)– Evidence of water damage within the ceiling tiles in Building 180.
Figure 20 (Right) – Inactive light fixtures left abandoned.*



Figure 21 – Exposed piping and meters within the hallway of Building 180.

Buildings 150 and 175

Buildings 150 and 175 demonstrate similar conditions to the other office spaces throughout the complex (Figure 22). These spaces include old air conditioning units hanging from the ceiling (Figure 23) and several instances of exposed wiring (Figure 24). Water damage is apparent within the ceiling tiles and floorboards. A deteriorating column was observed in an old computing room (Figure 25). Further evidence of disuse of the spaces is apparent in the vintage timecard machines (Figure 26).



Figure 22 – Vacant office space, formerly an Exceptions Department for Wells Fargo.



Figure 23 (Left) – Remains of an old air conditioning unit, plugged haphazardly into the ceiling.
Figure 24 (Right) – Exposed wiring from an old thermometer.



Figure 25 (Left) – Damaged column within an old computing room.
Figure 26 (Right) – Vintage timecard machine within an abandoned office space.

Former Kitchen

At its peak occupancy, the complex contained a fully operating kitchen to serve its employees (Figure 27). The kitchen has not operated for years, following the complex's reduction of on-site employees. This lack

of occupancy is evident in the space's inactive appliances and abandoned furniture (Figure 28). Rust and mold have begun to accumulate around old wires and outlets (Figure 29), and animal droppings were observed throughout the kitchen area (Figures 30 and 31). These spaces present unsanitary and unwholesome conditions.



*Figure 27 (Left) – Former food preparation area to service the complex's employees.
Figure 28 (Right) – Abandoned appliances within the kitchen.*



*Figure 29 (Left) – Rusted and exposed wiring within the kitchen.
Figure 30 (Middle)– Evidence of animal droppings within on the kitchen floor.
Figure 31 (Right) – Evidence of animal droppings on a windowsill in a kitchen storage room.*

Site Exterior

The complex is serviced by an exterior utility/boiler room (Figures 32 and 33), and a network of generators (Figures 34 and 35). The utility building was constructed at the time of the original office building, and is accessed by a driveway from the Fidelity Plaza roadway. Several parking areas within this section of the Study Area remained empty (Figure 36), even in the middle of the workday. The exterior grounds are seen in Figures 37 and 38.



Figure 32 (Left) and Figure 33 (Right) – Separate Boiler room to service the complex of buildings.



*Figure 34 (Left) – New generator to service the complex.
Figure 35 (Right) – Old generators which serviced the complex.*



*Figure 36 (Left) – Empty parking lot within the southwestern section of the Study Area.
Figure 37 (Right) – Landscaped grounds of the entrance to Building 100.*



Figure 38 – Entry drive along the main entrance to Building 100.

Overall Complex Evaluation

As evidenced by the photographs above taken on May 2, 2024, the building complex satisfies LRHL criterion 'a' as containing substandard, unsafe, and dilapidated structures which are not conducive to wholesome living or working conditions. Its extensive vacancies and the visible lack of interior upkeep have caused many spaces to deteriorate and become increasingly unfit for tenants. In many instances, the pictures contained in this report speak for themselves. Most, if not all, of the buildings demonstrate signs of dilapidation that include leaks, exposed wiring, unsettled flooring, animal droppings, and general disrepair.

The visual evidence is reinforced by the past fire code enforcement violations, which include repeated violations for improper maintenance of fire-rated construction and detection systems, insufficient emergency lighting, and degrading ceiling tiles. These speak directly to unwholesome living conditions.

The facility is also largely obsolete for its intended purpose. Advancements in computer programming within the past two decades eventually rendered the site's Data Center (i.e., Building 230) inadequate.

Similar trends can be observed within the former Money Center (i.e., Building 210). These subsequently higher operating costs caused Wells Fargo to vacate most of the site during the 2010s, as outlined above.

The pictures contained in this report and the 30 fire code violations that have been issued for the Study Area complex since December of 2012 (see greater detail in Appendix G) demonstrate that there is substantial evidence to support a designation under criterion “a”.

As of the writing of this Redevelopment Study, all buildings within the complex besides Building 100 have more vacant tenant spaces than occupied spaces (i.e., the vacancy rate exceeded 50%) for nearly a decade or more. According to the property manager, significant relocations of Wells Fargo employees from the site took place throughout the early 2010s, which led to the present vacancy rate of approximately 80% for the Study Area. This significant reduction in tenants and increase in vacancy is further reiterated in the property’s assessment history (see Appendix B). According to sales history data, the property’s assessment on March 31, 2008, was \$16,200,000. At the time of its next sale, on July 14, 2020, the value had decreased to \$5,641,000 (a 65% reduction).

As a majority of the complex has been vacant for well over two years, there is also substantial evidence to support a designation under criterion “b”.

Block	Lot(s)	Location	Designation Recommendation
143	24.06	100-230 Fidelity Plaza	a and b

CONCLUSION

The figures listed above unveil the complex’s degenerative conditions. Extensive deterioration is evident in unsettled floorboards, animal droppings, dilapidated ceilings because of water damage, and exposed wiring and piping. The complex received a total of 30 fire code violations in 12 years, several of which were repeated infractions. This visual and recorded evidence of substandard conditions is extensive, thus establishing the relevance of criterion “a” of the LRHL.

The substandard and dilapidated conditions that qualify the Area under criterion “a” are reinforced by significant vacancies within the whole complex for a period of at least two years. The discontinuance of the use of the complex is evident in its 2024 occupancy rate between 20% and 23%. A comparable occupancy rate has been valid for the site since 2015, when a significant number of Wells Fargo employees vacated the complex. Within a complex offering around 300,000 square feet of tenantable space, the occupied area has not exceeded 70,000 square feet for nearly 10 years. Therefore, criterion “b” is satisfied with substantial evidence that the substantial vacancy threshold and duration have been met.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Township of North Brunswick Council Resolution

Appendix B: Deed and Tax Assessment Records

Appendix C: North Brunswick Tax Map Sheets 52, 67, and 68

Appendix D: North Brunswick Township Planning Records for Block 143, Lot 24.06

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This version of the report does not include the referenced appendices. A complete version including all appendices is available electronically.