

CNU IX SPEAKER

## **New Rail Towns: If We Build it, Will it Make a Difference?**

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*CNU IX: From Neighborhood to Region*

Notes from his presentation on June 8, 2001:

### **HUDSON-BERGEN LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT SYSTEM (HBLRTS)**

The HBLRTS is a 20-mile light rail system under construction along the Hudson River waterfront in Hudson and Bergen counties. The Initial Operating Segment, running through nine miles of Jersey City and Bayonne, was opened for service in April 2000. The entire system will have 32 station stops and is designed to carry 100,000 daily riders by the year 2010.

What makes New Jersey's Hudson River waterfront a prime area for commercial and residential development is a combination of real estate market conditions and its proximity to Manhattan. However, prior to the light rail, the existing transportation network in the area focused on moving commuters across the Hudson River into Manhattan, providing limited local service. The light rail system provides much needed north-south mass transit accessibility for intra-waterfront trips and for connections to the PATH system into Manhattan.

While the real estate market itself over the past several years would have created development in the area, the light rail system certainly enhanced those opportunities. In areas around existing PATH stations where development was likely to occur, the density of that development has been greater than originally anticipated. In other areas with historically poor access, redevelopment proposals began to emerge with the construction of the light rail system.

### **Specific Areas of Transit Oriented Development**

- Liberty Harbor North
- the Exchange Place area
- Newport
- West side of Hoboken – 9<sup>th</sup> Street
- Port Imperial
- Bergenline Avenue Station Stop
- Martin Luther King Drive Station Stop