New Jersey Sierra Club
WAREHOUSE POLICY STATEMENT

As of December 2019, New Jersey has 8 million square feet of warehousing space under construction, adding to the existing stock of 830 million square feet. Since 2018, more than 100 new warehouses have opened in New Jersey\(^1\). Future construction of warehouses and distribution centers is driven by expansion of on-line retailing and increased cargo handling at our ports and airports. Direct delivery from retailers, manufacturers, and warehouses rely heavily on distribution centers for order fulfillment, cross docking, packaging, and other value added services. E-commerce sales in the US which accounted for 10.6% of retail sales in 2019 are expected to rise to 16.2% by 2023\(^2\). "North Jersey’s marine terminals generate nearly 22,000 truck movements each day, but projections show growth up to 62,000 by 2026."

The accelerating demand for cargo storage space creates opportunities for communities. Vacated commercial malls, industry sites, and remediated contamination sites are excellent sites to locate warehouses. These warehouses and distribution centers provide economic benefits and, employment. If properly integrated into the transportation systems, the added ratable comes without burdening schools, garbage, sewage, water, and other public services.

Issues related to warehouse and distribution center developments impose challenges in community and regional planning. Truck traffic may result in congestion, roadway damages, air or noise pollution. Site location and conditions need to consider impacts neighborhoods, nearby communities, environmentally sensitive land, scenic vistas, and flood zones. Extension of sewage, water, highways, and other accommodations may stimulate sprawl development or adversely impact tourism and residential patterns. The addition of nonresidential ratable may affect affordable housing obligation creating other development issues. Facility design and purpose may impose special safety and first responder requirements.

**Policy:** New Jersey Sierra Club insists that warehouse and distribution center development minimizes impacts upon this planet’s resources and creates an environment that is highly efficient and non-polluting. To achieve these objectives, it shall be Chapter’s policy to:

1. Ensure the warehouse is properly integrated into the regional and community plan. Effort should be made to avoid warehouse development near farms, residential communities, population centers, etc. Encourage use of brownfields. Before any warehouse is approved, conduct a traffic study, air quality study and environmental impact study
2. Warehouses shall be located to maximize use of rail service or interstate highways. Rail is more energy efficient; keeping trucks off the highway improves traffic flows and minimizes highway degradation. Rail can also save 10 times the land of highways. (Cautionary note: Rail access may not be the most economic nor environmentally suitable criteria for locating warehouses.)
3. Construction of the facility should comply with the highest standards to incorporate clean energy technology and to reduce emissions. This includes integration of Solar generation systems on roof and parking lots, efficient use of exterior/interior lighting, electric or thermal exchange heating systems, and EV charging for cargo delivery truck, forklifts,
and local delivery trucks. For vehicles that require continuous power, electric power should be made available in lieu of engine idling.

4. To reduce excessive storm water runoff, consideration of water gardens and permeable surfaces for parking lots and roadways. If the design includes a “green roof”, it should include planting of native plants, wildflowers, plants beneficial to pollinators, and endangered or threatened species where feasible.

5. To minimize land use, vertical warehouse designs are preferred.

6. Warehouse and distribution center design should consider the ease of converting to another use or ease of disassembly.

(2) https://www.emarketer.com/content/us-e-commerce-2019
(3) See note regarding ports at https://www.infrastructureresportcard.org/state-item/new-jersey/

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