



**DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN  
FOR TRACTS A-D**

**AMENDED THROUGH  
OCTOBER 2024**

**NOVEMBER 7, 2024**

# **AGENDA**

- Overview / Purpose
- Redevelopment Plan Procedure / Statutory Requirements
- Project Area Description / Existing Conditions
- Evolution of Tract C Redevelopment Area
- Original & Enhanced Vision for Tract C
- Amendments to Bulk Regulations & Development Standards

# DOWNTOWN TRACTS A-D



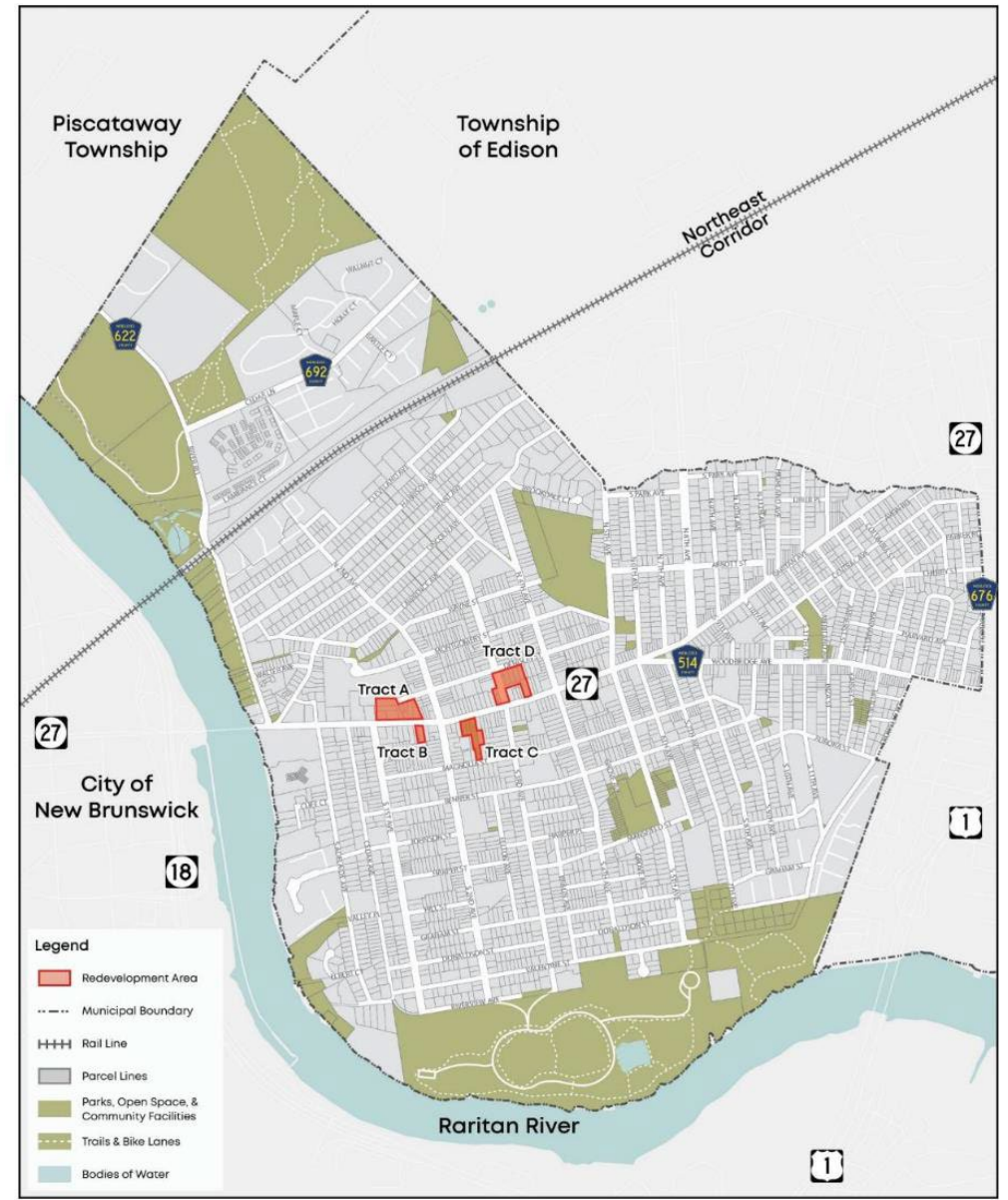
## DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR TRACTS A - D

Borough of Highland Park  
Middlesex County, New Jersey

Adopted by the Borough Council by Ordinance 21-2030 on September 14, 2021

Prepared by LRK, Inc.

July 13, 2021



**LRK** Downtown Redevelopment Plan for Tracts A - D  
 Tract A: Block 1704 [173], Lots 41-49 and portion of Lot 20; Tract B: Block 2201 [13],  
 Lots 6 & 9; Tract C: Block 2202 [22], Lots 4, 32.02 & 33.01; Tract D: Block 1604 [158],  
 Lots 20-26, 42, 50-51 and portion of Lot 47; Block 1603 [162], Lots 36-38  
 Borough of Highland Park, Middlesex County, NJ

**Exhibit A**  
**Location Map**  
 0' 1/8 mi 1/4 mi  
 Scale: 1" = 1/4 mile

# **OVERVIEW**

- 2020: Initiated planning process to “jump-start” redevelopment
- 2021: Adopted Downtown Redevelopment Plan for Tracts A-D
- 2022: Issued a Request for Proposals (RFP)
- 2023: Selected conditional redevelopers for Tracts A & C
- 2024: Designated additional properties as “non-condemnation area in need of redevelopment” to expand Tract C
- 2024: Community Meeting to review Tract C Concept
- 2024: Proposed Amendments to Redevelopment Plan



# **PURPOSE**

- Amendment to the 2021 Redevelopment Plan
- Still applies to Tracts A through D
- “Repackaging” / reorganized for efficiency
- Enhanced Vision for Tract C
- Refinements to Tract C Zoning Standards
  - Height / Massing
  - Enhanced Design Standards
  - Required Public Benefits



**HIGH  
LAND  
PARK**

## DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR TRACTS A-D AMENDED THROUGH OCTOBER 2024

**Tract A:** Block 1704, Lots 41-49, & Portion of Lot 20

**Tract B:** Block 2201, Lots 6 & 9

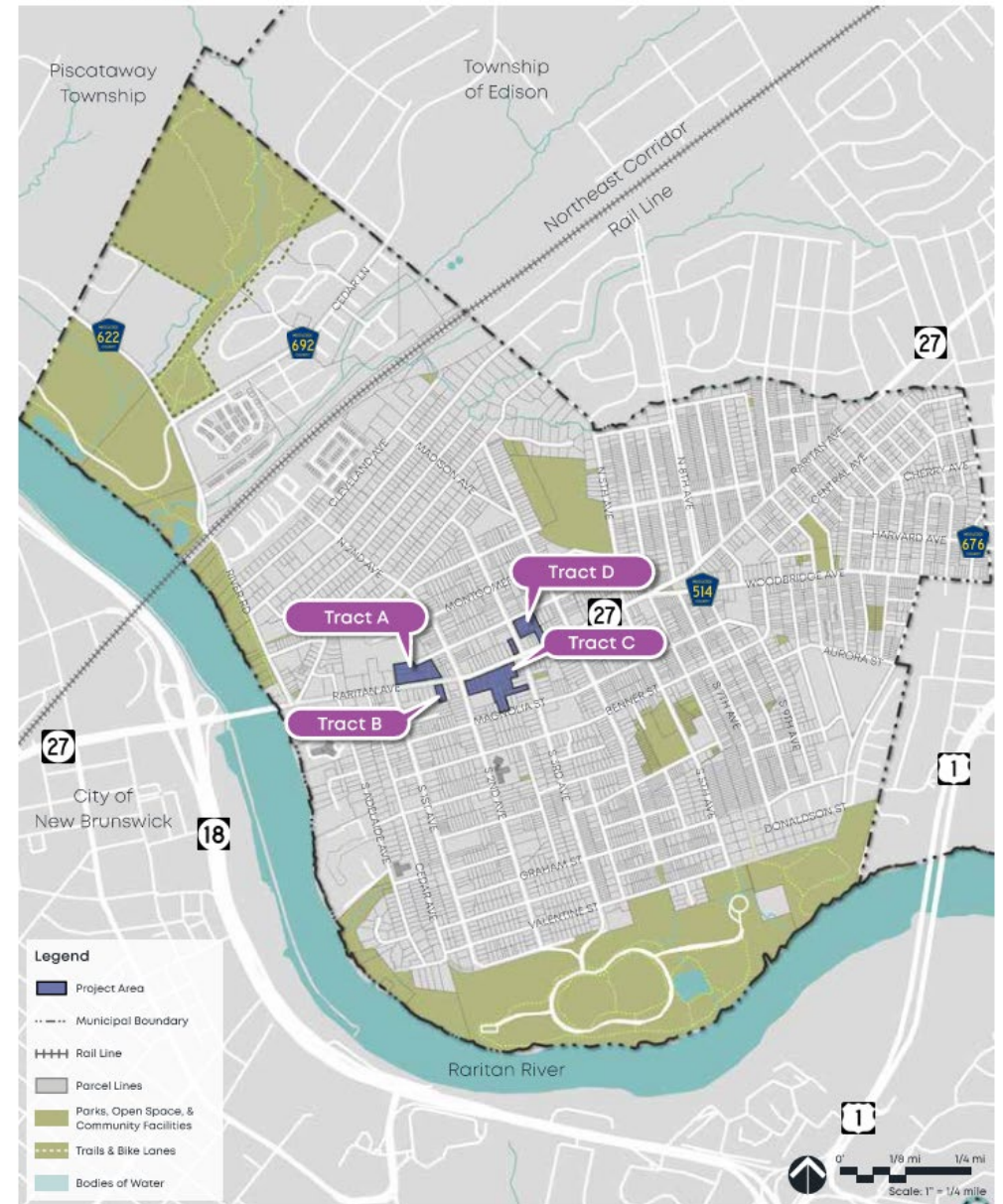
**Tract C:** Block 2202, Lots 1-4, 6.01, 7-9, 13, 19, 31, 32.02, 33.01, & 34-36

**Tract D:** Block 1604, Lots 20-26, 42, 50-51, & Portion of Lot 47; Block 1603, Lots 36-38

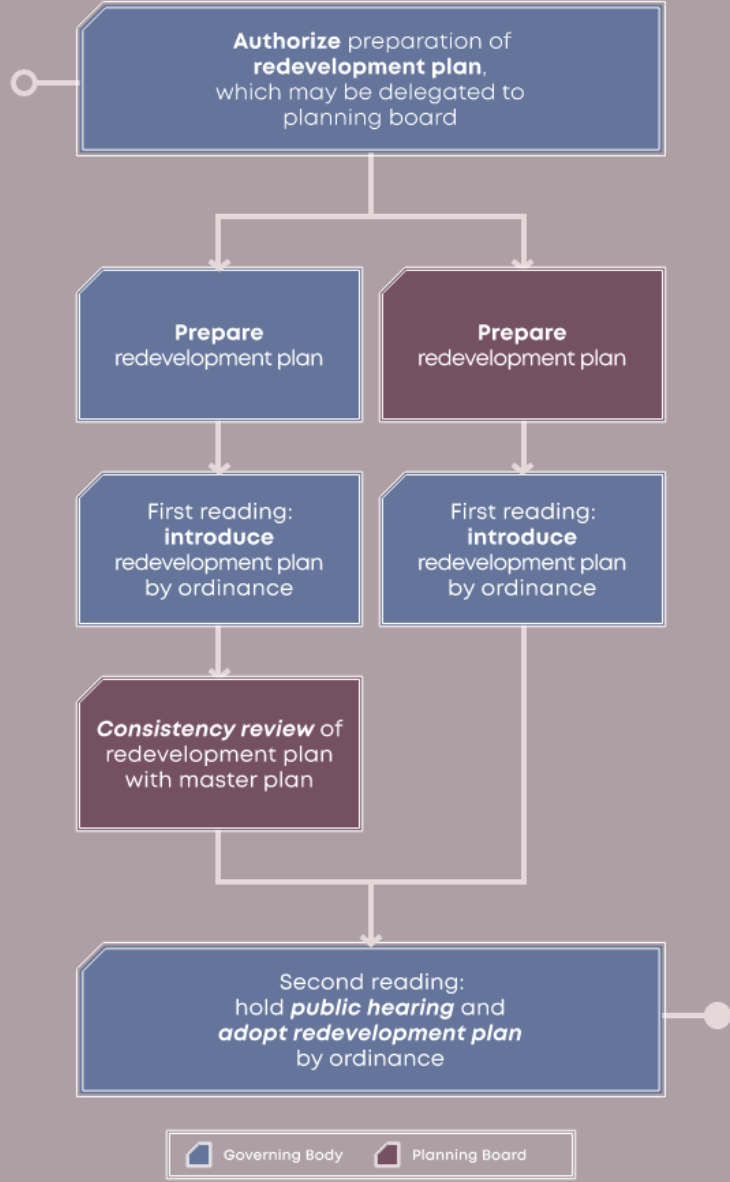
Borough of Highland Park, Middlesex County, New Jersey

Prepared by **LRK, Inc.** | October 8, 2024

Map 1. Context Map



REDEVELOPMENT PLAN PROCEDURE SUMMARY



STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS OF A REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

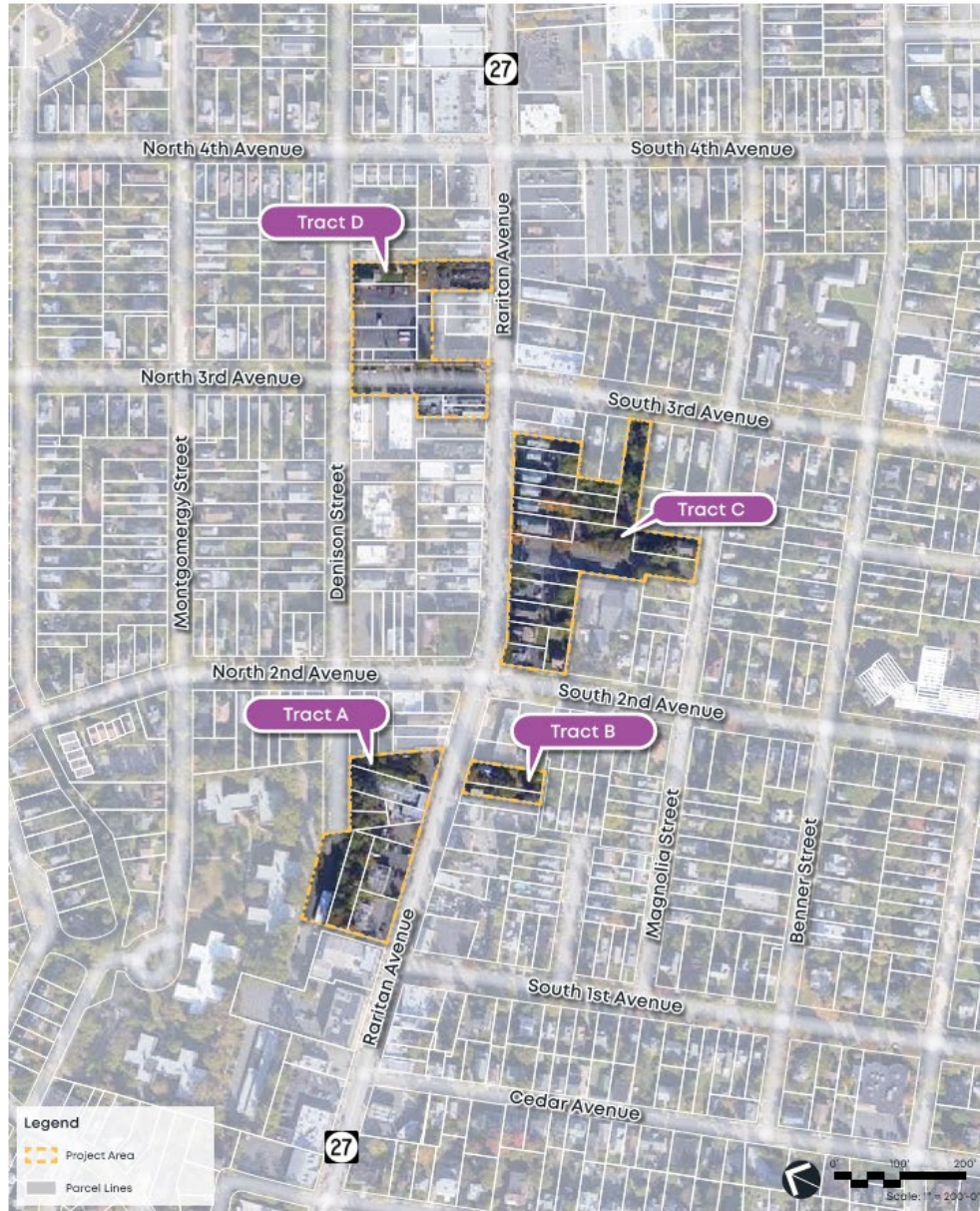
The redevelopment plan shall include an outline for the planning, development, redevelopment, or rehabilitation of the project area sufficient to indicate:

- 1 | Its relationship to definite local objectives as to appropriate land uses, density of population, and improved traffic and public transportation, public utilities, recreational and community facilities and other public improvements.
- 2 | Proposed land uses and building requirements in the project area.
- 3 | Adequate provision for the temporary and permanent relocation, as necessary, of residents in the project area, including an estimate of the extent to which decent, safe and sanitary dwelling units affordable to displaced residents will be available to them in the existing local housing market.
- 4 | An identification of any property within the redevelopment area which is proposed to be acquired in accordance with the redevelopment plan.
- 5 | Any significant relationship of the redevelopment plan to:
  - (a) the master plans of contiguous municipalities;
  - (b) the master plan of the county in which the municipality is located; and,
  - (c) the State Development and Redevelopment Plan adopted pursuant to the "State Planning Act," P.L. 1985, c. 398 (C. 52:18A-196 et al.).
- 6 | As of the date of the adoption of the resolution finding the area to be in need of redevelopment, an inventory of all housing units affordable to low and moderate income households, as defined pursuant to section 4 of P.L. 1985, c. 222 (C. 52:27D-304), that are to be removed as a result of implementation of the redevelopment plan, whether as a result of subsidies or market conditions, listed by affordability level, number of bedrooms, and tenure.
- 7 | A plan for the provision, through new construction or substantial rehabilitation of one comparable, affordable replacement housing unit for each affordable housing unit that has been occupied at any time within the last 18 months, that is subject to affordability controls and that is identified as to be removed as a result of implementation of the redevelopment plan. Displaced residents of housing units provided under any State or federal housing subsidy program, or pursuant to the "Fair Housing Act," P.L. 1985, c. 222 (C. 52:27D-301 et al.), provided they are deemed to be eligible, shall have first priority for those replacement units provided under the plan; provided that any such replacement unit shall not be credited against a prospective municipal obligation under the "Fair Housing Act," P.L. 1985, c. 222 (C. 52:27D-301 et al.), if the housing unit which is removed had previously been credited toward satisfying the municipal fair share obligation. To the extent reasonably feasible, replacement housing shall be provided within or in close proximity to the redevelopment area. A municipality shall report annually to the Department of Community Affairs on its progress in implementing the plan for provision of comparable, affordable replacement housing required pursuant to this section.
- 8 | Proposed locations for zero-emission vehicle fueling and charging infrastructure within the project area in a manner that appropriately connects with an essential public charging network.



# DOWNTOWN TRACTS A-D

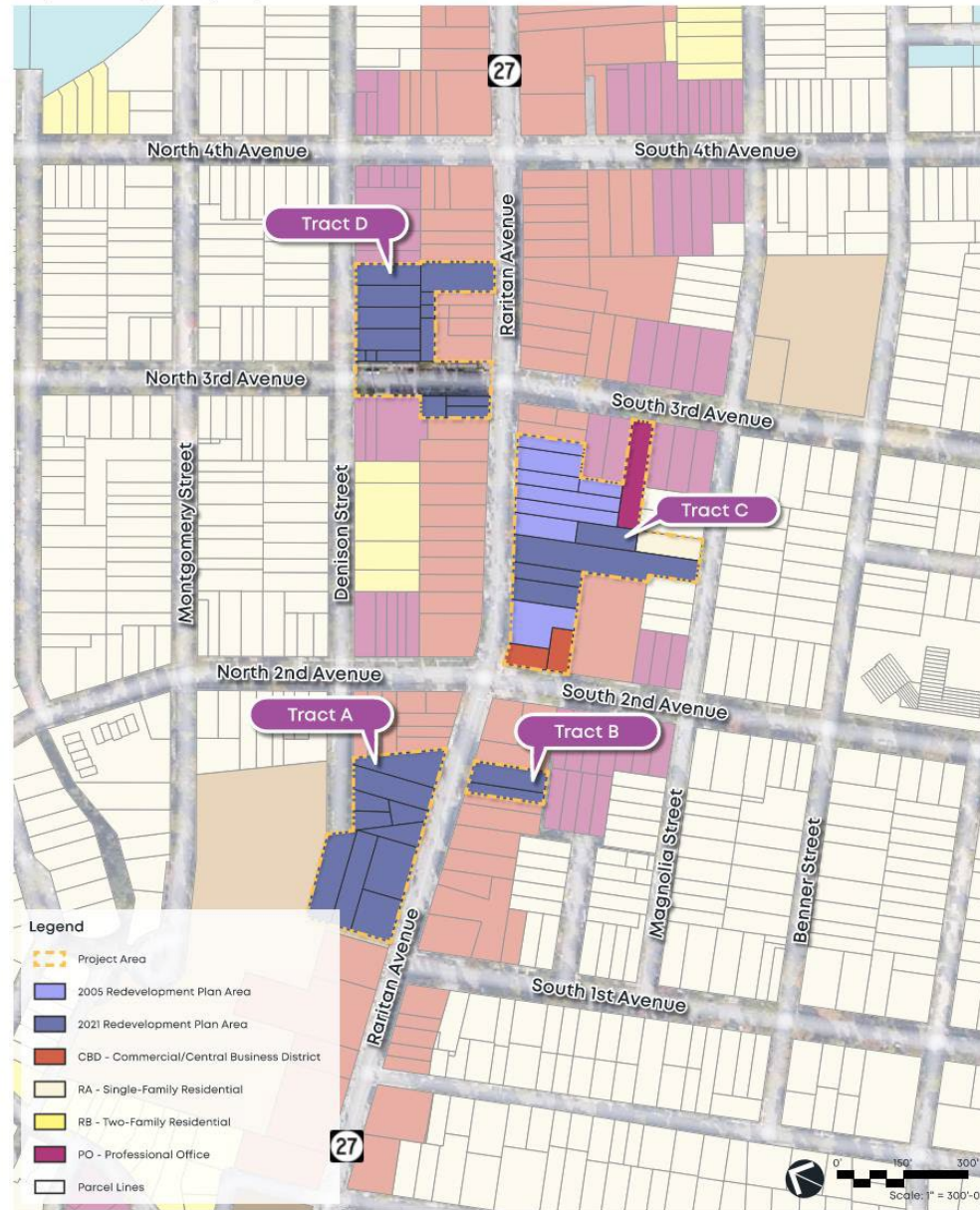
Map 3. Project Area Map



DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR TRACTS A - D AS AMENDED THROUGH OCTOBER 2024  
 Tract A: Block 1704, Lots 41-49, & Portion of Lot 20 | Tract B: Block 2201, Lots 6 & 9 | Tract C: Block 2202, Lots 1-4, 6-01, 7-9, 13, 19, 31, 32.02, 33.01, & 34-36 | Tract D: Block 1604, Lots 20-26, 42, 50-51, & Portion of Lot 47, Block 1603, Lots 36-38



Map 9. Existing Zoning Map



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# EVOLUTION OF TRACT C



# 2005 REDEVELOPMENT AREA



**DOWNTOWN TRACTS A-D**

# 2021 REDEVELOPMENT AREA



**DOWNTOWN TRACTS A-D**

**AREA IN NEED STUDY**



**DOWNTOWN TRACTS A-D**

# EXPANDED REDEVELOPMENT AREA



**DOWNTOWN TRACTS A-D**

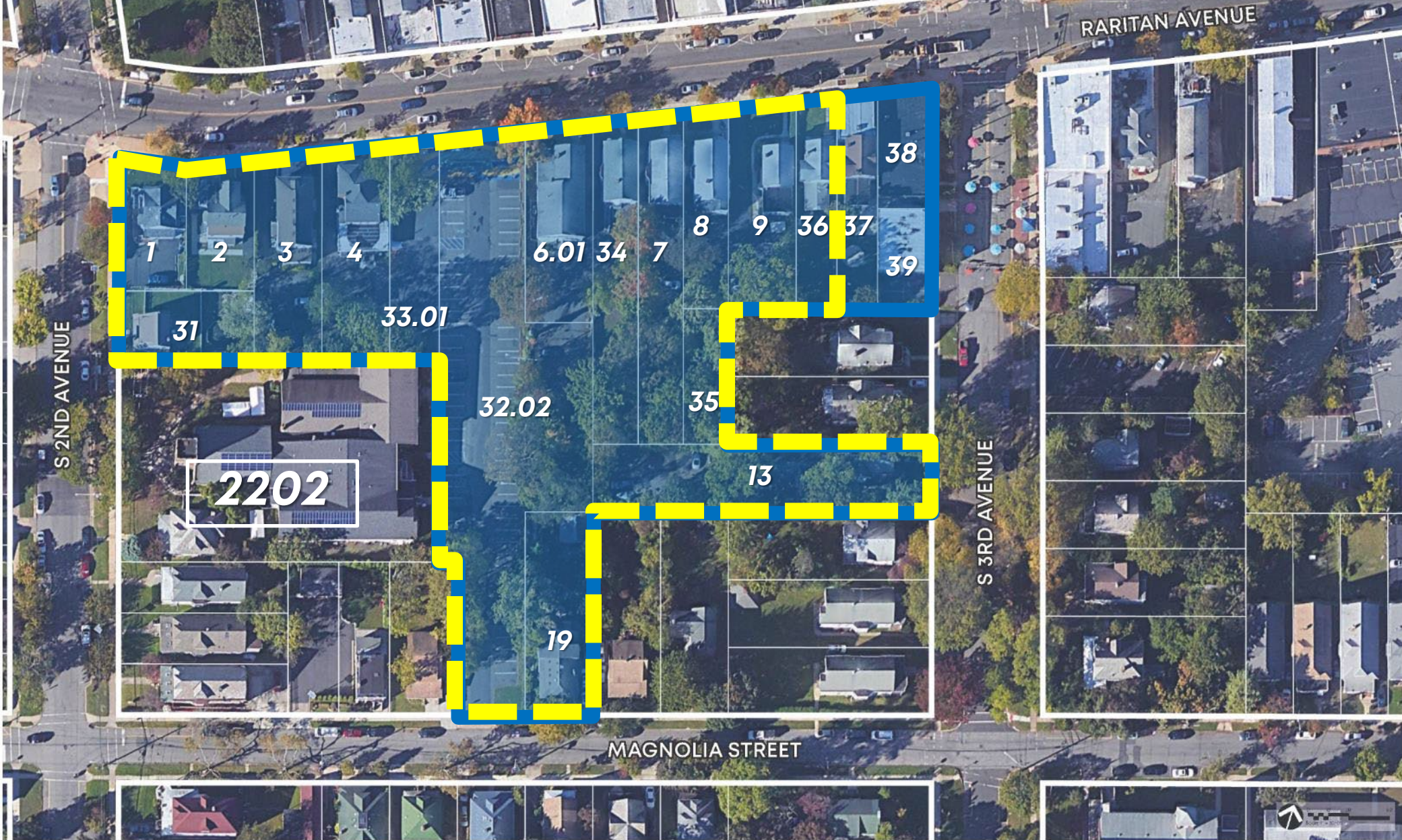
**2021 RDP AREA**





**DOWNTOWN TRACTS A-D**

# PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO 2021 RDP AREA



# ORIGINAL VISION FOR TRACT C

- Primary purpose to bring more people to live, work, and shop along Raritan Avenue
- Infill with one or more taller mixed-use or multifamily buildings
- Focal point to “terminate the vista”
- Connection / walkway from a public plaza to parking area to Magnolia Street
- Limited retail frontage
- Apartments above, and along ground level at the rear



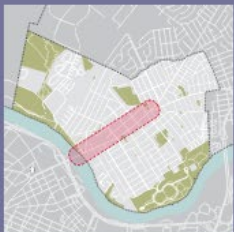
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## DOWNTOWN AREA LAND USE PLAN ELEMENT



Existing conditions along Raritan Avenue in the **downtown area** include numerous “gaps” in the streetscape created by vacant properties and exposed parking lots.



## DOWNTOWN AREA STRATEGIES

The following strategies are specific to the downtown area and help advance the Goals for the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan.

- » **Custom-tailor infill/re-development** by utilizing site-specific redevelopment plans for uses desired by residents and to address varying property assemblages on a range of different block conditions.
- » **Expand the variety of active ground floor uses** to diversify the mix of retail, service, and entertainment uses including creative “maker spaces,” artist/crafts-person studios, and real estate offices to better activate the downtown area throughout all hours and add vitality in this challenging age of online retailing and e-commerce.
- » **Expand the Downtown resident customer base** for local businesses, encourage mixed-use development and expand the range of residential living opportunities, including ground-floor apartments on side streets and in courtyards in the downtown area.
- » **Establish a public gathering space**, like a town square, in order to bring people together at a special place, add activity for nearby businesses, provide a venue to promote the arts and host special events.
- » **Prepare a Parking Management Plan** that evaluates parking needs in relation to leveraging revitalization, infill, and redevelopment by better managing on-street parking, “right-sizing” parking requirements to actual demand, encouraging cooperative and shared parking arrangements, and permitting off-site parking as a strategy to develop smaller properties.
- » **Create a Mixed-Use Transition Zone** that consolidates/expands the Professional Office and Two-Family Housing Zones to better accommodate a mix of uses and small-scale “missing middle” multi-family uses on blocks that transition from the Central Business District to single-family neighborhoods.
- » **Encourage any level of upgrade and reinvestment** by working with programs such as Main Street Facade Improvement and Awning Assistance to maintain and enhance the look of the Central Business District.

# REFINING THE VISION FOR TRACT C

- Larger redevelopment area means more opportunities (and challenges) to address:
  - Preserve the initial vision
  - Additional public gathering spaces
  - Provisions for public parking spaces
  - Manage bulk regulations
  - Enhance development / design standards



# REFINING THE VISION FOR TRACT C



# EXISTING



# CONCEPT



**EXISTING**





# CONCEPT



# AMEND LAND USE REGULATIONS

- Permitted uses already provide flexibility
  - Community feedback: added flex spaces, event/party rental space
- Allow residential uses on the ground floor (limited frontage)
- Clarify that single-family homes are permitted where they are currently permitted (Lots 13 and 19)
  - Not required to participate in the project

# AMEND BULK REGULATIONS

- Adjust height requirements:
  - allow taller massing in center (5 stories already permitted)
  - step down to 3 ½ stories (less than what is permitted today)
- Provide deeper setbacks along Raritan Avenue to accommodate wider sidewalks (greater than what is permitted currently)
- Maintain deep setback from Magnolia Street
- Increased setbacks from Reformed Church

# **AMEND BULK REGULATIONS**

- **Maintain building coverage**
  - Clarify that amenity areas over parking areas do not count (similar to other ordinances)
- **Maintain impervious coverage**
  - Allowances for additional coverage if managed properly (i.e., green infrastructure strategies)

# **AMEND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

- Require building to be broken up into multiple / smaller forms
- Enhance building design / streetscape standards to ensure the frontage is walkable, enjoyable, and safe
- Require public open space (indoor and outdoor space)
- Require public parking spaces

# AMEND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

- Remove curb cuts along Raritan & North 2<sup>nd</sup> (closest to Raritan)
  - Flexible options for additional access form other streets
- Provide pedestrian access from Raritan Avenue to Magnolia Street
  - Minimum width and be universally accessible
- Wider sidewalks, improved tree pit infrastructure, additional trees
- Require green building / green infrastructure / stormwater management strategies



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